

THE CITY OF HARRISON

MASTER PLAN

2024

DRAFT

For Planning Commission Review

June 6, 2024

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COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Prior to European settlement, it is believed that much of the Midwest was settled by Indian Tribes that were part of the Hopewell civilization. These mound-builders declined by 500 AD. By the time the French introduced the fur trade in Michigan around the turn of the 17th Century, the Anishinaabe peoples had settled much of the State. The three main Anishinaabe nations in Michigan include: Ojibwe (Chippewa), Odawa (Ottawa), and Bode'wadmi (Potawatomi), which comprised the Council of the Three Fires. At first contact, the three Tribes were agrarian peoples with corn as a main foodstuff with some wild rice, squash, and kidney bean cultivation. Most of their settlements were along the Great Lakes and main rivers while much of the interior of the State were only seasonally occupied for hunting and gathering wild fruits and vegetables. Trade with the French had an impact on the traditional way of life and battles between the French, English, and eventually Americans increased aggression and war activities within the Council of the Three Fires and with other Tribes including the Iroquois Confederacy.

First contact with Westerners on the East Coast and Canada had ripple effects on Indian Tribes all the way west into Michigan and the Midwest. Disease, trade, and dislocation on the Eastern seaboard had far reaching impacts that extended into the territory that would eventually become Michigan. Some Tribes that were in Michigan at first contact were pushed further west as a result of all of the turmoil and dislocation caused by European settlement on the eastern seaboard of North America.

By 1760, the Odawa controlled much of the western half of the Lower Peninsula while the eastern half was under the Ojibwa. The area including much of the eastern Lower Peninsula to the east of Harrison was ceded by the Treaty of Saginaw (aka Treaty with the Chippewa) in 1819, principally with the Ojibwe, but the treaty also included the Odawa and Potawatomi. This furthered the settlement of Michigan by non-Indians, which had begun in earnest with the Treaty of Detroit in 1807. This earlier treaty ceded SE Michigan and the lower 2/3rds of the Thumb, opening up the region around Detroit for European settlement. These two treaties laid the framework for the Treaty of Washington (1836) which ceded the western half of the Lower Peninsula and the eastern half of the Upper Peninsula including the area where Harrison was later founded. With much of the Michigan Territory now opened to settlement, the Erie Canal, which opened in 1825, fueled rapid European settlement of much of Michigan.

With the territorial dispute with Ohio over, Michigan was able to join the American union in 1837. The Michigan State legislature named what is now called Clare County for Sauk Indian chief Kaykakee in 1840. An Irish surveyor switched the name to Clare County after his home Irish County in 1843.

With European settlement, logging became the main industry in Clare County. Like the rest of Michigan, the area was lumbered using water to drive logs down many streams until the Lake George and Muskegon Railroad, a logging railroad, revolutionized lumbering in the state. This railroad began operating in Clare County in 1877, and Winfield Scott Gerrish is credited with this innovation. Though this railroad only operated for five years, it was the precursor to later logging railroads that supplemented winter and water transportation of cut timber. With all of the lumbering activities, the region was also susceptible to spring forest fires, and the County was struck by significant fires in 1874, 1879, 1884, 1887, 1889, and 1891.

In 1877, the Clare County Board of Commissioners voted to move the county seat from Farwell to Budd Lake, which was named after the Budd family, which had previously settled near the now named Budd Lake. Harrison was platted in 1879 by the Flint and Pere Marquette Railroad, which set aside property

for the new county facilities that were being relocated from Farwell. The settlement was named in honor of former U.S. President William Henry Harrison. The City also gained the reputation as “Michigan’s Toughest Town” with over 2,000 residents, 22 saloons, 12 restaurants, and five hotels, comprised mostly of hard-living lumberjacks. In 1885, the community was incorporated as a village, the same year in which a major fire in northeastern Clare County almost burned the newly settled village to the ground. Several years later, Harrison voted in 1891 to become a city, around the time that the forestry industry in Clare County declined due to little remaining White Pine forest. The City then began a period of decline as workers and industry left for new work opportunities.

Wilson State Park, site of the former Wilson Brothers Sawmill and Company Store, was deeded to the City in 1901. In 1920, the City deeded the land to the State of Michigan for a State Park, which opened in 1927. The Civilian Conservation Corps built the park’s beautiful beach house and the residence building at the park entrance from 1939 to 1941.

Improved roads and vehicles along with the wealth generated by Michigan’s auto industry supported the emergence of Michigan’s up-north vacation culture and economy. Harrison and the Clare County’s lake communities became a summer holiday/weekend destination, beginning in the 1920s and accelerating after World War II. The City soon took up the moniker of “Twenty lakes within twenty minutes”, and the tourist economy remains an important part of Harrison’s economy and culture.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The purpose of this Master Plan is to serve as a living document to guide Harrison's future development based on community needs and desires. A Master Plan is comprehensive in scope, but also provides more specific actions and site locations for implementing the community’s goals.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), Public Act 33 of 2008, requires that the planning commission create and approve a Master Plan as a guide for development and to assess the ongoing validity of the recommendations of the Master Plan at least once every five years after adoption. The City of Harrison is currently operating under a Master Plan adopted in 2017.

The City adopted its first Master Plan back in 1992, and this plan was replaced by a newly adopted Master Plan in 2001. This plan was subsequently replaced in 2017 through Michigan’s Rising Tide Initiative. This planning initiative focused efforts on developing concepts “to attract business investment and talent by creating a sustainable path toward economic sustainability and growth”. The 2017 Harrison Master Plan was completed by a team of consultants lead by Beckett & Raeder and supported by Place & Main; ArnettMuldrow; LandUseUSA; and Advanced Redevelopment Solutions; however, the vision detailed in the plan hasn’t received the outside support necessary to be successful.

This is the fourth Master Plan for the City. This plan is an entirely new Master Plan; it is not an update to the 2017 document. The City desired a plan that addressed some outstanding land use issues facing the community including development on existing small lots, lack of housing diversity, improved conditions for business investment, and provision of a vision for the Zoning Ordinance to support new development and investment. Unlike typical master plans, this plan focuses on land use and planning issues facing the City that are within the capacity and control of the City, its staff, and volunteers to address.

OTHER PLANS AND PLANNING EFFORTS

2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

This plan was created for the City of Harrison, but was done in collaboration with neighboring Hayes Township, which completely encircles the City of Harrison. The overall goal was to create a bicycle and pedestrian-friendly environment for the City of Harrison and Hayes Township by promoting safety and access throughout the community. The plan identifies and prioritizes infrastructure improvements as well as strategies for education and community engagement. One drawback of this early nonmotorized plan is that it did not focus much effort into ensuring that the City's network connected into surrounding Hayes Township. The success of the City system is reliant upon making it convenient and widely used by everyone within the immediate vicinity desiring to travel to Downtown Harrison, Budd Lake and the Wilson State Park, and other destinations. It completely ignored building connections to desired destinations within the Township that would increase the desire and demand for a robust nonmotorized network. The plan also did not identify any opportunities to develop any connections into regional opportunities including the US-127 Pathway, Hamilton Township and Dodge Lake, other nearby lakes with seasonal houses, and towards Lake George and Snow Snake Resort.

2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Harrison's Parks and Recreation Master Plan is focused on enhancing and expanding Harrison's non-motorized network. Key actions for the next five years identified in the plan include development of a Nature Trail connecting City Park to surrounding neighborhoods and schools, development of a Dog Park on an underutilized public park, and development of Towns Square in downtown Harrison. All of these projects further the livability and quality of life goals articulated by Harrison residents and community leaders during the plan's preparations.

City of Harrison DDA Development Plan

The Harrison Downtown Development Authority adopted a downtown plan in order to facilitate improvements in the district. The current plan, adopted in 2007, establishes a unified vision supported by specific goals and projections. The projects are financed through the authority's tax increment financing (TIF) mechanism. The DDA is committed to helping enhance non-motorized infrastructure and making the downtown district a more inviting place for all roadway users. The organization is also dedicated to implementing a series of traffic calming measures through the use of Safe Routes to School funds.

City of Harrison Zoning Ordinance

The Harrison Zoning Ordinance acts as the local land use enforcement mechanism with very specific land use controls that, by application of the Zoning Map, provides specific regulations for each parcel of land within the City. Overall, the existing Zoning Ordinance provides a foundation for land development actions within the City. However, upon adoption of this Master Plan, the City will begin the process to review and revise its Zoning Ordinance to ensure the general standards, development requirements, and district regulations support the goals and objectives articulated in the Master Plan.

Hayes Township Master Plan Update 2022

In 2022, Hayes Township updated its Master Plan. This plan outlines the basis for the future vision for the Township that completely encircles the City of Harrison. The plan includes the analysis component that supports the Community Goals and Objectives, Future Land Use Plan, and Plan Recommendations. These recommendations that most directly impact Harrison include: 1) retaining the rural aesthetic of the community; 2) development of a town center immediately north of the City limits along N. Clare Avenue/US Bus 127; 3) implementation of Complete Streets and expansion of nonmotorized improvements; 4) improved design controls along major routes; and 5) recreational program improvements.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

A successful master plan projects the community's future vision for itself in clear and simple terms. This plan serves as the roadmap for guiding future land use decisions by the City, its officials, and its boards with the goal of incremental changes guided by this plan will bring the City closer to its vision that it outlined for itself during the 20-year term of the Plan.

Without a clearly articulated plan, no community will be able to accomplish its land use and development goals. A key tool to capturing this long-range vision is through community engagement. This approach ensures that all of the community members are asked in a manner in which they're comfortable to engage with the planning process. Proper engagement ensures that all community members are able to have their thoughts, wishes, and/or concerns heard. The results of the engagement are then validated through the various layers of the review process, eventually being affirmed by the final engagement steps – the Implementation Workshop and the Public Hearing.

Without community involvement, master plans will likely be ignored and not referred to after adoption. This issue occurs in most Michigan communities. This plan has been designed to address this major implementation issue. It is focused on land use and development issues facing the City of Harrison, and the Master Plan is tailored to solely focus on those steps and actions that are within the purview and control of the City and its various entities.

Steering Committee

An ad hoc Steering Committee was formed to assist the Planning Commission with Master Plan development. This body is freed from the Planning Commission's workload and the formal strictures of Robert's Rules, and the committee is comprised of individuals with a broad range of interests and skills. The ad hoc committee allows for non-voting summer residents of the City and business and property owners who all have vested interests in the City's future to participate. In addition to the City Manager and Zoning Administrator, the committee was comprised of the Planning Commission vice-chair, two local business owners including a member of the Harrison Area Economic Development Corporation, and a member of the Board of the Budd Lake Association. This advisory body assisted with the preparation for community engagement and provided feedback and insight throughout the Master Plan's development.

Community Engagement

There are several phases of the community engagement process. Firstly, all of the Steering Committee meetings were publicly noticed and open to the public. The public was also encouraged to seek out members of the Steering Committee to present their concerns and provide their vision for the future of the City.

The second community engagement component was the online citizen opinion survey. This survey was targeted to identify resident concerns including housing choice, community character, downtown development, land use issues, and quality of life concerns/goals. The Steering Committee helped to fine tune the questions to the specific issues facing the City. Five hundred and thirty-three people either took the survey electronically or hard-copy, which were available at either the library or City Hall. Links were posted on the City website, articles appeared in the *Clare County Cleaver* and online *Clare County Review* and messages encouraging residents, summer residents, and visitors to take the survey were posted on multiple social media pages. The Steering Committee and Planning Commission were both asked to invite their friends to take the survey via email and to post about the survey's availability on their social media feeds too. Of the respondents, 313 were full-time residents of the City, representing 14.5% of the year-round population. The remainder of survey participants were either seasonal residents (147 people or 27.4% of respondents), Hayes Township residents, or others. The response rate was very high, which ensures that a variety of perspectives are heard, and 41 individuals under 18 took the survey.

The final main component of the community engagement activities was the Implementation Workshop. This workshop was held on May 14, 2024 at City Hall with over two dozen in attendance. At the workshop, Wade Trim prepared several interactive stations where core concepts of the Master Plan including expanding housing choice, permitting of housing development on the City's narrow lots, increasing the number of as-right uses permitted within the commercial and industrial districts, downtown development, and continuing efforts to address blight. The attendees confirmed several of the concepts presented while the Future Land Use Map was refined from input received at the workshop.

The last community engagement step in the Master Plan adoption process was a noticed Public Hearing, which took place on [REDACTED]. *Insert details from the Public Hearing.*

Planning Commission

Two members of the Planning Commission served on the Steering Committee. This representation is important in ensuring that the interests and concerns of the Planning Commission are identified and addressed in the Master Plan while also providing feedback to the Planning Commission members not serving on the Steering Committee. These members also ensure that the Planning Commission felt that its interests were being voiced throughout the work of the Steering Committee.

Once the draft Master Plan was completed, the Steering Committee made a recommendation to the Planning Commission that it plan was ready for the Planning Commission to begin the formal review and adoption process.

The Planning Commission reviewed the draft plan, made some minor edits and recommendations to the consultant team that were incorporated into the draft plan. This final draft was then formally recommended to the City Council in [REDACTED] for its review. City Council accepted the recommendation of the Planning Commission at its [REDACTED]-meeting and approved the Master Plan for distribution to the State-

mandated review agencies. Input received by the Planning Commission from the review agencies and the Public Hearing attendees was incorporated into the draft plan and the Commission adopted the City of Harrison Master Plan 2024 on _____.

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COMMUNITY PROFILE

Gaining an understanding of a community through socioeconomic data is an important component of the comprehensive planning process. An appropriate Master Plan socioeconomic profile will include significant data on population, housing, and local economy. All of these aspects of the City have direct impacts and influences on future land use decisions. These data identify trends that impact population growth or decline, aging characteristics of the population, and future demand for a variety of public services.

Demographic Context

This socioeconomic profile uses both the decennial census data and the most recent American Community Survey five-year estimates (2017-2021 ACS) from the US Census Bureau as well as data from Esri, a GIS data company.

Population Trends

Population trends are the most important factor influencing land use decisions in any community. If the population of a community is growing, there will be a need for more housing, commerce, industry, parks and recreation, public services and facilities, or roads while a stagnant or shrinking community indicates a changing community with a differing set of needs.

Table X shows the population trends for City of Harrison, surrounding Hayes Township, Clare County, and the State of Michigan. In 1970, the City's population was 1,460, and it grew to 2,150 in 2020. Since 2000, the rate of growth has significantly diminished, growing by 2.0% over that 20-year period, or 0.1 percent per annum.

The table shows Harrison's population trends with its five surrounding townships, Clare County, and the State of Michigan. Since 2000, all of the nearby communities have seen a gradual population decline except for Greenwood and Hatton Townships. Hatton Township didn't start to experience a population decline until after 2010 while Greenwood Township grew modestly from 2010 to 2020, increasing by over 65 residents. Clare County population peaked in 2000 and Michigan's population had not changed significantly since 1980, growing only 600,000 residents in the intervening 30 years.

Age Distribution

Information on age distribution within a population can assist a community in matching public services to community characteristics and in determining special needs of certain age groups. For example, the younger population tends to require more rental housing units and smaller homes, while the elderly population may have a need for senior housing and nursing home facilities. City policy makers may also use age distribution analysis in order to project future service needs for housing, education, recreation, and medical care. It is of equal importance in planning to anticipate which age groups are likely to increase during the planning period and which ones are declining. Examples of this are the aging "baby boomers" and their children; both forming waves of population rise and fall as they move through their lifecycles.

For the purpose of this report, six age groups are identified. The first age group represents the *preschool* population at 0-4 years old. The *school age* population is represented by those between the ages of 5

and 19. *Young adults* are persons aged 20-34 years old. The *family formation* age group is represented by persons 35-54 years of age. *Empty nesters* between 55-74 years old make up the fifth group while *seniors*, 75 years and over, comprise the last group.

Table X shows the age groups in the City, Hayes Township, Clare County, and State as projected by Esri in 2022. For all of the age groups that will support population growth, the City has the highest percentages of preschool and school age residents as compared to Hayes Township and the County but lags Michigan. Regarding empty-nesters and seniors, the City has a lower percentage as compared to Hayes Township and the County but again exceeds the State of Michigan. Without in-migration of new residents, this shrinking of the younger age groups indicate that the population is likely to continue to decline as the number of individuals reaching child-rearing years is dropping.

Table X further illustrates the aging of the City with a median age of 44.5 years, which is almost three and one half years older than Michigan's median age.

Population Projections

Through the understanding of the populations, the study of demographics makes educated estimates regarding the future growth of a community. Demographers use birth rates, death rates, age, and in/out migration rates to project the future size of a community's population.

Most demographic studies will build their estimates based upon county-wide data. In Michigan, these estimates were built upon some basic assumptions for continue population growth, and their models didn't account for changes in migration pattern like the large out-migration of young Michiganders for other States, which started around the turn of the Millennium and is still being felt today.

Currently the State's population projections through 2045 show steady decline for Clare County, with the County's population declining by 22.4% by 2045. **Table X** shows Clare County declining from 30,856 in 2020 to 23,931 in 2045. Population decline impacts the ability to provide services to the residents as there are fewer people paying to support the services, and in low density areas, fewer people increases the cost to provide the service per person because program overhead has to be spread across fewer users.

Population projections that originated from around the turn of the 21st Century now seem quite flawed for the State of Michigan. They anticipated continued population growth for most of the State, but these projections were grossly inaccurate. In 2019, the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and the Budget's Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives report titled "Michigan Population Projections by County through 2045", found that the State's peak population was 10,055,315 residents in 2004 with economic related emigration causing the State to decline after that year. Michigan only reached its previous peak population number again in 2020.

This State of Michigan report projects a modest population growth to occur in Michigan as the Baby Boomers retire and people immigrate into Michigan for job opportunities. One drag on Michigan's growth is its natural change (births minus deaths) has declined from 98,000 more births than deaths in 1970 to only 19,450 more in 2015. By 2030, the natural change is expected to go negative as there will be more deaths in the State than births. This is estimated by the age of residents and the birth rate. In-migration is expected to allow Michigan to continue to grow modestly until about 2040 when it is projected to begin to decline again.

This information becomes significantly more volatile when looking at the county data. The estimates see a range of counties shrinking by almost 20% in parts of northeastern Lower Peninsula, the Thumb, and the Upper Peninsula while some counties growing by 12.5% in the southern Lower Peninsula. More rural communities have been facing population stagnation for decades due to many younger people moving to urban areas. This impacts the rural natural change rate by both reducing the population and driving down the number of people in prime child-bearing years. This change also increases the community's mortality rate as the average population age rises.

Providing population projections in Michigan has been difficult over the last 40 years due to several macro-economic forces that has been impacting the State's economy and its residents that do not easily factor into standard demographic models. These outside factors include: major shifts in the auto industry (Michigan's largest industry); reduction in the manufacturing and construction sectors; younger adults desiring to live in vibrant urban communities with good job prospects; substantial national changes in the development of the American family; and demographic shifts from the American Midwest to the South and Southwest. There are several external factors including ongoing globalization, impacts of technology, spread of broadband, impacts of climate change, and changes to U.S. immigration policy that cannot be factored into these statistical projections either.

Other newer factors are also at play as well including the advent of back-to-the-city movements having success in many of Michigan's larger urban areas while buoying smaller communities' downtowns as well. The long-term land use impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on where people are choosing to live and work has yet to fully mature regarding the ability of people to work remotely as well and affect living choices long term. The resulting resurgence of Michigan metropolitan areas may also impact the natural change rate that isn't covered in these statistics by providing desired options for young Michiganders to stay in Michigan in their youth instead of migrating out of the state.

Though there are inherent concerns regarding the accuracy of the data, if current trends do not change, it is likely that the City of Harrison will be losing year-round population for the term of this Master Plan.

Racial Make Up

Another important characteristic of a community is its racial composition. Knowing the racial make-up of a community helps to identify the diverse needs of its population. The census bureau separates race into six different categories: White; Black or African American; American Indian and Alaska Native; Asian; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander; and Some Other Race. The Census Bureau also tracks the Hispanic ethnicity.

For all intents and purposes, the City's population is white. With all the races combined, the City is 3.3% non-white while it is only 1.7% Black in 2020. These numbers are significantly lower than reported in the 2017 Master Plan, but those numbers were based upon US Census estimates that can be very turbulent due to small sample sizes in smaller geographies.

Household Size

The number of persons per household constitutes household size. Since the 1970's, the nationwide trend has been a decline in household size. This trend is occurring due to a number of reasons including:

declining number of children per family, higher divorce rates, growing number of elderly living alone, increasing numbers of individuals not having children, and until recently, the growing number of young people moving away from families to live on their own.

Knowing whether the household size is increasing or decreasing is very important. If the household size of a community is decreasing, this means that new housing units might be required. This can even be true if the overall population of a community is declining. In some municipalities, new housing units are being built to accommodate the demand for housing created by lower household sizes, in spite of declining overall populations.

Household size may also be measured by number of persons living in the household. **Table X** shows the household size in 2010 and 2021. There appears to be volatility in these numbers due to survey size within the City and the Township, but the numbers do illustrate the trend of more 1-Person households and decline of 4-or-more person households for the County and the State, with these estimates being less volatile.

Table X shows the average household size does vary between renters and owners, often with the renter households being larger in the County as compared to Michigan. This statistic has also been steadily declining as changes have been occurring within America's nuclear family.

Household Characteristics

This section examines households in terms of the relationships among the persons who share a housing unit. Some households are families, consisting of two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption, while others are non-family households composed of persons living alone or with unrelated persons.

Household characteristics for the City, Hayes Township, the County and the State and other surrounding communities in 2021 are compared in **Table X**. The highest percentage of households in the City are Nonfamily Households at 47.7%. This percentage is the highest of all the units of government compared in the table. Other significant percentages in Harrison include Householder 65 Years and Older at 42.1%, the highest and the lower percentage of Married-Couple Families at 37.1%.

Total Housing Stock

Housing stock is the most basic measure of housing that refers to the type of housing units found in a community. In this chart, the U.S. Census Bureau separates housing units into multiple categories with the following choices selected: 1-Unit Structures (single-family homes); 1-Unit, Attached; 2-Units; 3-4 Unit Structures; Units in 5 to 9; 10 or More Units; Mobile Home; or Trailer Units, and Other (Boat, RV, Van, etc). **Table X** shows the distribution of housing units for the City, Hayes Township, Clare County, and Michigan. Currently, the City has a decent mix of housing stock available with 42% (all non-1-Unit units) available for the 37% of renters within the City

In comparison to Hayes Township and the County, the City has the lowest percentage of mobile homes in comparison, at only 4.0% versus 14.7% and 16.3% respectively.

Home Ownership

The home ownership rate is often another important determinant of a community. High home ownership rates often result in communities with stable neighborhoods with less incidents of blight and longer resident tenure. Areas with higher percentages of rental housing often lead to neighborhoods with increased resident turn-over and the potential for landlords that are not directing sufficient funding into regular and periodic property maintenance. The increased resident turnover and declining housing quality impact the overall appearance of the neighborhood and may drive loops of continuing disinvestment fueling more housing turn-over and further neighborhood decline.

Table X compares owner and renter occupancy rates. Though relatively steady over the last sixty years, it does often fluctuate during periods of prosperity (increasing) and economic uncertainty (decreasing). The City of Harrison has a rental rate of 36.9%, which is twice the Hayes Township rate and nine points over the State of Michigan rental rate of 27.9%.

Table X shows detailed Census statistics concerning owner and renter occupancy as well as seasonal vacancy rates for 2020. Vacant housing units are classified by the U.S. Census Bureau into two categories. Vacant Seasonal, and Vacant Other. Seasonally vacant units are those that are vacant during a period of time, but are occupied temporarily, typically summer months in Michigan communities. Other vacant units are those that are vacant throughout the year, often waiting to be sold or rented or are awaiting refurbishment.

High rates of year-round vacant housing may be a concern as it may reflect weakness in the housing market or declining population. Knowledge of Seasonally Vacant units is important in many Michigan communities due to the high percentage of seasonal homes and impacts their occupants' presence has on year-round and seasonal services. In communities with large numbers of seasonally vacant homes, it is important for a Master Plan to consider the needs and desires of the seasonal residents and tourists as they often contribute a significant portion to the community's economy. In many communities, these part-time residents are a potential well of future residents who may choose to move year-round to the community upon retirement or after children have left their childhood homes. The Master Plan should consider desires and wishes of seasonal residents and visitors where possible and where they don't conflict with those of the year-round residents. Creating a balanced plan may contribute to the conversion of seasonal residents to year-round residents.

The US Census illustrates in **Table X** that Harrison has a sizeable population of seasonal residents with 72.7% of its vacant units are only seasonally vacant, meaning that they're occupied a part of the year. Both Hayes Township and Clare County have modestly higher seasonally vacant rates of 79.5% and 83.5% respectively while Harrison's seasonally vacant rate exceeds the State of Michigan's rate by 26.7 percentage.

Age of Structures

Analyzing the age of housing units is a way to measure the physical quality of the total housing stock of a community. Generally, the economically useful expectancy of residential structures is approximately 50 years. Beyond that age, many building systems reach their life expectancy and require replacement or maintenance costs will begin to significantly increase. In addition, homes built prior to 1980 often contain asbestos, lead paint, and lead water service, which may all cause health problems if not properly maintained or remediated when replaced.

Older homes may also not be as desirable for modern living – smaller rooms, multiple levels, smaller windows, no in-house office – that all impact desirability. There are exceptions to this rule, however. Some older housing may have already received significant renovations or are desirable due to high quality or historic features/finishes.

For this report, housing units are divided into ten categories. **Figure X** shows the percentage of housing units in each category for the City, Hayes Township, Clare County, and Michigan. As can be seen in the figure, Harrison and Michigan have similar distributions of housing ages. In terms of older housing (built earlier than 1959), the City and the State are generally similar while the Township and the County that experienced rapid growth from 1970 to the Millennium. This may signify that Harrison’s housing has a higher need for rehabilitation or repair as compared to Hayes Township or the County.

Housing Values and Rent

Analyzing housing values and rent is an important tool to assess both the quality and affordability of housing. It is of crucial importance that a community maintains both quality and affordable housing.

The distribution of housing and rental values for Harrison, Hayes Township, Clare County, and the State of Michigan in 2021 are shown in **Table X**. The City’s rent is the lowest of all four units, at 54% of the State’s average rent of \$944. At \$86,600, the cost of a home in the City is nearly \$17,000 more than Hayes Township, but it is significantly lower than the County’s (by \$8,400) while it is half the cost of an average Michigan home.

Income and Poverty

Studying income and poverty levels is a good way to measure the relative economic health of a community. Three measures of income (median household, median family, and per capita) are illustrated in **Table X** for Harrison, Hayes Township, Clare County, and Michigan. Household income is a measure of the total incomes of the persons living in a single household. Family income is a measure of the total incomes of a family unit. Because families often have two incomes, and do not include single persons living alone, median family incomes are typically higher than median household incomes. Per capita income is a measure of the incomes of every citizen of an area, including children. Because per capita income is based on the average of all individuals, they are much lower than family or household incomes.

Table X shows the family, household, and per capita income levels for 2021. Overall, the income levels for Harrison are the lowest in all the comparison community categories except for the Median Household Income where the City was approximately \$3,000 higher than Hayes Township.

Table X also gives the percentages of families who were found to be below the poverty level. The percentage for Harrison is higher than all of the comparison jurisdictions with the 65 years and older category at 21.7% was the highest, eight percentage points higher than the County, the nearest jurisdiction at 13.7%.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is another important factor in analyzing the capabilities of the local work force and the economic vitality of the community. The educational attainment of the citizens of a community plays a major role in determining what types of employment industries are suitable or possible in regards to the workforce's skills and their educational attainment.

The U.S. Census Bureau reports on a number of educational statistics including percentage of citizens in a community who graduated from high school as well as those who went on after high school to complete bachelor's degrees. **Figure X** illustrates the educational attainment levels for Harrison, Hayes Township, Clare County, and Michigan. In terms of high school graduate percentage, the City has 88.1% with a high school diploma, which is above average for the Township and the County; however it lags the State average by 3.5%. The bachelor's degree rate, at 9.9%, is higher than Hayes Township, but it lags the County and is one-third of the State average of 30.6%.

Employment

The U.S. Census Bureau presents standard employment data in terms of employment by industry and occupation. Employment by industry is a basic tool for analyzing what type of industries employ the citizens of Harrison.

Table X shows the Employment by Industry for Harrison, Clare County, and the State in 2021. As can be seen by the table, Harrison has three primary industries, which employ over 45% of its citizens. The three industries are: Retail Trade (17.1%), Accommodations and Food (17.0%), and Health Care/Social Assistance (11.2%). Manufacturing and Educational Services are the next two largest groups at 8.0% each. When comparing the City to Clare County construction plays a much larger role in the percentage of county-wide employees in that industry.

Table X shows the Employment by Occupation data in term of the actual occupations held by the City residents. The Office and Office Related and Sales and Sales Related occupations were the most numerous with 14.4% and 13.5% respectively of the residents with occupations in those fields while the Transportation/Material Moving occupation was the next highest at 11.6%.

An additional pair of statistics that is valuable in understanding a community's workforce and the stresses and strains on the workforce is the time it takes to for them to get work and how they are getting to work. The Census Bureau tracks both by asking respondents to estimate the time required to get to work each day and how they're commuting to work. In rural communities, understanding how far people are traveling to their jobs provides information about the local employment environment and the number working from home indicates either a high number of home occupations and home-based businesses or telecommuting to work.

Due to the rural nature of Clare County, those individuals who do not work locally in town are required to travel a mean travel time of 28.2 minutes to work, which is the shortest time of peer communities but almost four minutes longer than the State. The lower commute time versus Hayes Township and the County is likely due to the close proximity of the City to U.S. 127, which allows for more distance to be covered quickly along the access-controlled freeway than other county residents who must drive on two-lane roads to work or to reach U.S. 127.

Due to the spread-out nature of the City's work options and lack of transit options, **Table X** shows low public transit ridership in Harrison while the work from home percentage significantly lags the County and the State.

The unemployment rate is another economic indicator that illustrates the health of the community. In May 2023, Clare County's unemployment rate was reported by the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget at 6.3%, ranking the County thirteenth highest rate, tied for 70th with Ogemaw County. In June 2023, the seasonally unadjusted unemployment rate for Michigan was 4.1%, while the adjusted rate was 3.6%.

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NATURAL FEATURES

The natural environment plays a major role in land development. Depending upon the natural environmental conditions, they may significantly impact development, including steep slopes, wetlands, and other natural features. Conversely, the natural environment is often harshly impacted by development. An example would be the filling in of a wetland for development. When preparing the Future Land Use map, it is important to understand the community's natural environment so that development is situated where it will have the least amounts of environmental impact.

In any environmentally sensitive area within a community, development should be prevented. Environmentally sensitive areas are lands whose destruction or disturbance will affect the life of a community by either:

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

Each of these effects is detrimental to the general welfare of a community, resulting in social and economic loss.

The purpose of this section is twofold. First, the goal is to identify areas in the City that are most suited for development. The focus is on areas that will minimize development costs and provide amenities without adversely impacting the existing natural systems. The second goal is to identify land that should be conserved in its natural state and is most suitable for conservation, open space or recreation purposes.

Climate, geology, topography, woodlands, wetlands, and soil conditions are among the most important natural features impacting land use in the City of Harrison. Descriptions of these features follow.

Climate

The climate of Clare County is seasonal, as the region experiences considerable changes in temperatures and precipitation throughout the year. As a four-season region, the average wintertime low temperature is 11 in January while the average high in July is 82 degrees. There is an average of 32 inches of rain throughout the year with 55 inches of snowfall in the winter. The region receives 165 days of sun per year while there is measurable precipitation 123 days per year. On average, there are six days per year with temperatures over 90 degrees and 16 days where the nighttime temperature is below zero Fahrenheit. The growing season is 153 days long.

Geology

The geology of Clare County, as well as the entire Lower Peninsula of Michigan, is described in terms of surface geology or quaternary geology (materials deposited by continental glaciers), and bedrock geology (sedimentary rocks underlying the glacial deposits).

The quaternary geology of the City developed during the Wisconsin glaciation, 21,000 to 13,600 years ago through continental glacial activity. As the glaciers melted and retreated from the landscape, large amounts of sand, gravel, clay, and loam were deposited. Massive glacial lakes formed at the front of the retreating glaciers. Clare County was among those submerged in glacial water.

The melting glacier was laden with fine soil particles, which eventually settled to the bottom, creating clay and loam soils. The glacial melt water streams also deposited fine sand into shallow glacial lakes. The sand channels are several miles wide in places, but the sand in them is general only five to ten feet thick.

Where the glaciers remained longer, there was more deposits made. That is why the southern part of the County is much lower with typically more fertile soils below the generally east-west moraine line while the northern soils tend to be more sandy. Many of the County's lakes were formed when the large chunks of ice were buried by glacial till and the ice chunk eventually melted and the till dropping into the ice chunk's former depression with Budd Lake being a local example.

The sand deposits were further altered by wave action from these glacial "Great Lakes," creating small sand dunes and low beaches across the landscape as the water levels declined and the lakes retreated to their current area of coverage. The sub-surface geology of Harrison is sedimentary bedrock that was laid down during the Pennsylvanian ages of the Paleozoic Era. Bedrock is covered by glacial deposits and, generally, depending upon the thickness of the glacial deposits, are located at depths from 40 to 300 feet below the surface. The bedrock was formed from ancient seas, which covered the area some 250 to 600 million years ago. The shallow marine seas deposited layers of silt, clay, sediments, marine animals, plants, coral, and other calcareous materials. These deposits formed sandstone, shale, coal, and limestone bedrock.

Topography

The topography of Harrison is general flat around the Budd and Little Long Lakes with some rolling hills in the western half of the City. There is a small north-south ridge that runs from Main Street south to south of Stone Street between Fourth Street on the west and Old County Farm Road. The elevation within the City ranges from a high of 1302 feet above sea level just north of the sewage lagoons to a low point of 1,094 feet near Little Long Lake. This means that there is a total elevation difference of approximately 208 feet between the City's highest and lowest points.

Generally the terrain of the City is the flattest in the eastern half of the City while the western half of the City is hilly.

Where there are steep slopes within the City, they should be protected from inappropriate development that would require significant terracing and impact the City's natural topography.

Woodlands

Woodlands information for Harrison is derived from the Michigan Resources Information System (MIRIS) land use cover data provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. There are two general categories: upland and lowland forests. Upland forests include mostly central hardwood trees such as red oak, white oak, sugar maple, red maple, black cherry, beech, basswood, and ash. Tree species in the lowland forest include silver maple, green ash, aspen, cottonwood, and elm. **Map 2** shows the general

locations of upland and lowland forests in Harrison. These groups are further divided into seven natural community types including dry northern forest, dry-mesic northern forest, mesic northern forest, boreal forest, dry southern forest, dry-mesic southern forest, and mesic southern forest. Classification of these Forest types is based on species composition, differences in soil chemistry, moisture, and composition, hydrology, geographic distribution, and landscape setting.

According to our existing land use survey, woodlots cover X% of the City.

As identified in the natural features materials from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in 2017, X acres of the City is identified as Forested/Shrub Wetland while an additional X acres is identified as Woodland (X%). As shown on **Map X**, Forested/Shrub Wetland is spread throughout the City with most of the Emergent Wetland located between Budd and Little Long Lake. Most of the City's Woodlands are also found long the western boundary of the City, and much of the land along Budd Lake's shoreline is located within the 100-year flood plain.

Because of many benefits associated with wooded areas, woodlands should be seen as a real asset to the City. They provide a direct connection to Clare County's surrounding forested lands, an attribute that many residents appreciate. For human inhabitants, forested areas offer scenic contrasts within the landscape and provide recreational opportunities such as hiking and nature enjoyment. In general, woodlands improve the environmental quality of the whole community by reducing pollution through absorption, reducing the chances of flooding through greater rainwater infiltration, stabilizing and enriching soils, moderating the effects of wind and temperature, and providing habitats for wildlife.

Wetlands

Wetlands are defined by the existence of water, either on the surface or near the surface during a portion of the year. Poorly drained soils and water-loving vegetation may also be present. Wetlands are often referred to as marshes, swamps, or bogs. Residents of Michigan have become more aware of the value of wetlands. Beyond their aesthetic value, wetlands improve stormwater quality of lakes and streams by filtering polluting nutrients, organic chemicals, and toxic heavy metals. Wetlands are closely related to high groundwater tables and serve to discharge or recharge aquifers. In addition, wetlands support and abundance of wildlife including waterfowl, and wetland vegetation protects shorelines from erosion.

As shown on Map X, Harrison has a small amount of wetland areas. In total, wetlands cover only X acres for x percent of the City. The highest concentration of wetlands is found in the southeastern corner of the City by Weldon and Dean Roads. Another larger wetland area is south of Townline Lake Road and west of Wilson Road in the northeastern corner of the City. Other small wetlands are near the Middle and High School and along the western boundary of the City. The City should work to conserve these wetland areas because of their great value to the community.

Soil Associations

Soil characteristics help define the land's capacity to support certain types of land uses. Soils most suitable for development purposes are well drained and are not subject to a high water table. Adequate drainage is important for minimizing storm water impacts and the efficient operation of septic drain fields. Adequate depth to the water table is necessary to prevent groundwater contamination from septic systems. A high water table also limits the construction of basements. Though civil engineering

techniques can be employed to improve drainage and maintain adequate separation from the water table, such techniques are expensive to construct and maintain.

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Services 1998 mapping of Clare County, there are three soil associations within the City. The general locations of these associations are shown on **Map 2**. The map is not designed for site specific applications. Rather, it can be used to compare land suitability for large areas.

Each soil association is composed of several soil series. Each series making up one association may occur in another, but in a different pattern and/or combination. A description of the three soil associations within Harrison follows:

Graycalm-Montcalm – the predominate soil association within the City. It is found in nearly level to steep slopes. Its features are that it is well to excessively well drained soils that have a sandy and loamy subsoil.

Montcalm-Menominee-Nester – this soil association is found just within the southeastern corner of the City. These soils are found in level to rolling areas that are moderately to well-drained with a sandy and loamy subsoil.

Lupton-Markey – this soil association is found between Budd and Little Long Lakes. These soils are found in flat areas and they're poorly drained with a mucky subsoil.

Mancelona soil is found around both Budd and Little Long Lakes. Montcalm and Graycalm soils are evenly distributed through much of the with Grayling interspersed mainly in the northern half of the City. Several other soils are distributed throughout the City.

Surface Water

Two lakes comprise the City's surface water bodies, Budd Lake and Little Long Lake, and they serve as important components of the region's water cycle. Any precipitation does not get absorbed into the soil will either enter one of these water bodies or a wetlands.

Via the north branch of the Tobacco River, Little Long Lake flows into Lake Huron through the Tittabawassee watershed. Water quality and protection of the City's water resources are of upmost importance to the year-round and summer residents and visitors. Both lakes can be easily polluted by leaking septic systems, contaminated ground water flows, contaminated surface water flows, excess fertilizer application, or intentional dumping of hazardous wastes.

It is important to prevent leaching of contaminants into these waters because they may harm animals living in these water bodies, cause algae and weed blooms, and other issues that will adversely impact the environment. In addition to despoiling the natural environment, it will likely harm the region's tourist economy. Budd Lake is a spring-fed 175 acre lake that is an all sports lake with a state park located along its northwestern shoreline. The lake is an angler favorite hosting an annual fishing derby in May.

Both lakes are located in the northeastern corner of the City with Little Long Lake extending eastward into neighboring Hayes Township. Budd Lake includes a special assessment district, operated by the Budd Lake Improvement Board, which raises funds for weed control and environmental testing of the lake through an assessment to waterfront and adjacent property owners. Actions include weed control,

aerators, muck pellet, and ongoing lake quality testing designed to control exotic aquatic plants including Eurasian Watermilfoil and Curlyleaf Pondweed.

Insert Topography, Environmental Resources, Soils Maps here

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Community Services and Facilities

Municipal Services

The City provides its services out of a complex on Sullivan Drive south of Main Street west of the downtown. The first facility that was built was the Harrison Community Fire Department circa 2000 with the City Hall opening in 2017, which includes City offices and the Department of Public Works.

The City provides water and sewer services and a private garbage collection company provides the trash hauling services for residential customers within the City. Commercial/industrial customers select their own service based upon their needs. Building inspection and permitting services are handled by Clare County Community Services Department while the City has its own Code Enforcement Officer.

There are no County drains that operate within the City. The Drain Commission's responsibility is to safely convey all surface water flow away from private properties, into drains and rivers, and eventually into Lake Huron. All properties within the State of Michigan must limit the amount of surface water that leaves their property during or immediately following a rain event so as to limit the likelihood of flooding of adjoining properties and properties further downstream. Where there are public drains, the Drain Commission may carry-out drain repair projects through the creation of special assessment districts where maintenance costs are appropriated to all beneficiary properties.

The City also operates Maple Grove Cemetery, which is nearly eight acre parcel on the northern edge of the City, and the City cemetery abuts St. Athanasius Catholic Cemetery.

Public Safety

The City relies upon the Clare County Sheriff's office to provide police protection within the City, and the City funds one sheriff's deputies to patrol within the City only. The dispatch, Sheriff's Office, and County Jail are all located within the City.

The Harrison Community Fire Department provides fire protection services within the City and the Townships of Arthur, Franklin, Frost, Greenwood, Hamilton, Hatton, Hayes, Redding, and Summerfield. They provide both fire and EMS support services.

Water and Sanitary and Storm Sewer Services

The City of Harrison provides drinking water to all of the properties within the City except for those properties on the east side of Budd Lake. This water is supplied by a municipal well with a wellhead protection area that includes much of the northwestern quadrant of the City. Those properties outside of the service area rely upon their own personal wells.

Wellhead protection areas are designed to protect municipal wellheads from contamination by identifying an area where potentially harmful activities are limited including septic systems and underground storage tanks.

Nearly all of the City's residents are connected to the City's sanitary sewer system, which limits the likelihood of contamination to the City's surface waterbodies. There are some properties on both sides

of Budd Lake that are not connected to the City's sewage system. They're generally the closest to the City's northern and southern borders. The City's sewage treatment plant is located in the southwestern quadrant of the City.

Most of the City's local streets do not have underground stormwater systems. They rely upon ditches along the roadway to convey water away from the roads. In the instances where there are stormwater catchments along the roadways, these are within the County or State highway right-of-way and are the responsibility of the roadway owners.

Parks and Recreation

The City operates several parks within the City with its main facility, Harrison City Park on W. Spruce Street with two softball diamonds, two baseball fields, gazebo, walking trail, two tennis courts, two pickleball courts, horseshoe pits. Saxton Park is located on Budd Lake adjacent to downtown with picnic tables and boardwalk/overlook of the lake. Town Square Park is located on the southwestern corner of E. Main Street/M-61 and S. Second Street. The square includes a band shell and splash pad.

Additional recreational locations include the Budd Lake Public Boat Launch, which provides access to the lake for residents and visitors, and Wilson State Park, a 36 acre lakeside park and campground with small beach.

The Clare County Fairgrounds are also located within the City limits. The fairgrounds host the Clare County Fair, which celebrated its 140th year in 2023. The grandstand may hold up to 1,900, banquet facilities, 95 full-service campsites, barns, and outbuildings.

Harrison Community Schools

The Harrison Community Schools district covers approximate 250 square miles in the northeastern part of Clare County, serving 1,270 students in 2023. The district includes all of Summerfield, Frost, Franklin, Greenwood, and Hayes Townships and portions of Winterfield, Hatton, and Hamilton Townships in Clare County and a portion of Sherman Township in Gladwin County.

Voters approved a millage in 2017 to significantly upgrade and expand the district's facilities. Larson Elementary School was significantly expanded in 2021 to become the district's only elementary school, unifying all of the educational locations at the main schools campus southwest of the Downtown. Upgrades were also made to both the Harrison Middle and High Schools.

Public Library and Historical Society

The Harrison District Library provides library services to the City and Greenwood and Hayes Townships. Non-residents may purchase an annual membership. The Library moved in 2023 into the historic Surrey House at 125 E. Beech Street in the downtown, which was renovated for the facility. The new location has over 7,400 square feet available.

The City of Harrison does not have its own historical society or historical museum. The Clare County Historical Society has a complex that is located in Grant Township. It includes a museum, one room school, blacksmith shop, frontier cabin, and a picnic pavilion

Post Office

The City of Harrison has a US Post Office branch, circa mid-late 1970s, is located in downtown along S. First Street, ½ block south of Main Street.

Communications

Charter Communication provides wired broadband communications within the City through its cable network. AT&T also provides internet service through its wired telephone network within the City.

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TRANSPORTATION

The City of Harrison's current transportation system is predominately auto orientated. For those with automobile access, this system provides reasonably good access for daily needs travel for residents and businesses located within City as well as regional destinations in adjacent communities. The City does have bike lanes along both E. Main Street/M-61 and First Street/U.S. 127 Business Route.

Transportation infrastructure takes up a significant amount of land and financial resources. A 1998 City inventory of streets found that 223 acres of City fell within the road rights-of-way. At the time, it comprised 22 percent of all of the City's developed land!

The major access route to Harrison is U.S. 127, which runs up the middle of Michigan's Lower Peninsula from the Ohio border SE of Hillsdale, MI to where the highway intersects with I-75 south of Grayling. This highway and its interconnections with several other major Michigan transportation routes ensures that the City is easily accessible for visitors and accessible for businesses to reach major Michigan and Midwestern markets.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) developed the National Functional Classification (NFC) to group streets and highways into classes, or systems, according to the level of service they are intended to provide. This system was introduced in 1968, and by the early 1970s, all streets and highways within the federal network were required to be classified. Transportation engineers and planners around the country recognize the NFC as the unofficial road classification system for all roads within their communities. Harrison's roads are under the jurisdiction of the City's Department of Public Works and the Clare County Road Commission. The definitions and classifications are based on the Functional Classification Guidelines, as outlined in the 1989 FHWA document. The City's streets and highways are classified based on the NFC and its jurisdiction identified below.

National Functional Classification (NFC)	Road
Interstate	None
Principal Arterial	None
Minor Arterial	M-61/Park Street/First Street; W. Main Street
Major Collector	N. First Street; E. Townline Lake Road east of N. First Street.
Minor Collector	Spruce Street west of M-61/S. First Street; Harrison Road south of M-61
Local Streets	All other public streets within the City

Federal Functional Classifications

Interstates and Other Freeways and Expressways: are the prominent road type in the NFC hierarchy intended to carry the major portion of trips entering and leaving urban areas, as well as a majority of the trips bypassing the area. Principal arterials have planned rights-of-ways of 120 feet or greater, and provide high speed, uninterrupted travel with limited access or restricted access to regionally important urban areas and amenities, such as airports. This system is a major source for interstate travel and fall under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). No road in the City meets this classification; however US-127 in adjoining Hayes Township is within this classification.

Principal Arterials: serve major metropolitan centers focusing on providing a high degree of mobility and may also serve rural areas. These roadway provide both through and local traffic, and they do provide access to abutting land uses. No roads in Harrison are classified as Principal Arterials.

Minor Arterials: serve a similar in function to principal arterials, but they generally carry less traffic and connect to smaller urban centers. The minor arterial system interconnects with and augments the principal arterial system by providing for trips of moderate length with less traffic mobility. Accessibility is greater but stops are more frequent due to signalized intersections. Minor arterial streets are generally spaced from 1/8 – 1/2 mile in the central business district to 2 – 3 miles apart in the suburban fringes, but are normally not more than 1 mile apart in fully developed areas. Minor arterial planned rights-of-ways are usually 120 feet wide, and M-61/Park Street/S. First Street to Main Street and West Main Street meets this classification.

Major Collectors: provide access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas. These streets differ from the arterials in that they usually enter neighborhood areas to distribute residents throughout the entire system to and from their destinations. Collector streets also collect traffic from local streets and channel them into the arterial system. Major collectors are important intra-county travel corridors and provide service to county seats not on an arterial route, to larger towns not directly served by the higher systems, and to other traffic generators of equivalent intra-county importance. Major collectors planned rights-of-ways are generally 120 feet wide. N. First Street and E. Townline Lake Road east of N. First Street are major collectors.

Minor Collectors: Minor collectors are identified to collect traffic from local roads and private property and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance of a major collector or arterial road. These roads are generally spaced on half section lines. Spruce Street west of S. First Street and Harrison Avenue south of M-61 are minor collectors.

Local Streets: comprises all streets and roadways not identified in one of the higher systems. Local streets primarily provide direct access to abutting land and to minor collector streets. Movement of through traffic is usually discouraged on local streets. All of the remaining public roads in the City are designated as Local Roads.

In the City, private roads also provide access to some properties and/or subdivisions. Design requirements are often based on Clare County Road Commission standards; however, careful attention is required to ensure that private roads that are accessing only a few properties are not overdesigned for the access needs, saddling the current and future property owners with increased maintenance costs and impacts of needlessly increased impervious surfaces. A careful balance between access needs of safety personnel and expense and design requirements must be maintained.

State of Michigan Act 51 Classification

Michigan's Public Act 51, PA of 1951, as amended, is the mechanism under which the State of Michigan shares state gas tax revenues for road maintenance with its municipalities. Eligible units of government are awarded funds based on the mileage of roadway within their boundaries.

The State of Michigan retains a portion of the gas tax revenues, which are allocated to MDOT for maintenance and upgrading of the interstate highways and state trunklines within the local jurisdictions. The remaining funds are allocated to local units of government by a set formula, and ultimately, the allocation depends upon the length of roadway in each classification.

Under Act 51, Michigan's roads are divided into five categories – State Trunkline Highways, County Primary Roads, County Local Roads, City Major Streets and Local Streets. In regard to State funding and responsibility, the City of Harrison is concerned with the last two categories – City Major Streets and Local Streets. Both M-61 and US Business Route 127 are State Trunklines, and they are maintained by the Road Commission. County Primary Roads in the City include: E. Townsline Lake Road east of N. First Street/Bus 127 and N. Harrison Road south of M-61. There are 4.63 miles of Major Streets and 15.59 miles of Local Streets in the City. Designed to carry higher volumes and heavier weighted vehicles at greater speeds, City Major Streets receive more funding per mile than Local Streets which typically serve only residential areas. City Major Streets include Norway Street between N. Fourth and N. Second Streets; Beech Street between N. Fourth and N. Lake Streets; E. Main Street east of M-61; Oak Street between S. Broad Street and M-61/S. First Street; Pine Street between S. Second Street and M-61/S. First Street; Spruce Street west of M-61/S. First Street; Sullivan Drive; S. Fifth Street; Broad Street between W. Beech and W. Oak Streets; Second Street between Spruce Street and US Bus 127; and Wilson Road; Lakeview Street; N. Grant Avenue north of E. Clarence Road;

Private roads make up the remainder of the roads within the City. All new private roads must be designed to meet minimum Clare County Road Commission specifications. Special attention needs to be given to the planning and design of private roads to ensure that they promote the orderly development of land, access for future road extension, and safe and efficient travel. While the continued maintenance of private roads is the responsibility of the property owners served by the road, the City needs to have mechanisms in place to ensure that the roads are maintained in a condition suitable for travel and passable for emergency vehicles.

Under Public Act 51, county road commissions are authorized to develop a system of seasonal roads. The commissions do not have to provide maintenance from November to April on these roads. If they so choose, they may also limit access during these months to limit damage to the unmaintained road or to prevent unwarranted access to private vacation homes along these roads. There are no County seasonal roads within the City.

In addition to the County seasonal roads, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources maintains a forest road network, and the map of these roads is updated and published April 1st of each year. The normal and continuing use of state forest roads is to provide the general public with access to state forest lands for a variety of recreational purposes and to provide the DNR with road access for management and land protection purposes. The public may use these roads as long as the DNR permits the roads to remain open for general public use. The only MDNR Forest Roads in the City are the roads within Wilson State Park.

Railroad Transportation

There is no railroad operating in Harrison. The railroad from Clare to Harrison was removed in 1944 and little evidence is visible today. The Great Lakes Central provides the nearest freight service, including services to Clare and Farwell.

There is no passenger rail service in northcentral Michigan. The nearest stops are along the Blue Water Amtrak route, which runs from Port Huron west to Lapeer, Flint and on to Chicago and the Pere Marquette Route, which runs from Grand Rapids to Chicago.

Air Travel

The nearest general aviation airports are Clare County Airport north of the City in adjoining Hayes Township and Clare City Airport in the City of Clare.

Major feeder commercial service airports are Midland-Saginaw-Bay City (approximately 50 miles to the southeast), Traverse City (approximately 65 miles to the northwest), Flint (approximately 90 miles to the southeast), Grand Rapids (approximately 87 miles to the southwest) airports while the nearest full-service commercial airport is located at Detroit Metropolitan Airport (approximately 180 miles to the southeast).

Bus Service

The nearest intercity bus service is provided by the Straits Bus Route with stops in Houghton Lake and City of Clare. The Straits Bus route travels through the center of Michigan from Mackinac City to Lansing.

Local transit is provided by Clare County Transit Corporation, which was established in 1981 to provide services to Clare County residents. Their on-call services are available from 6 AM to 11 PM Monday through Friday. They offered 44,525 rides in 2021-2022, which was 13.8% increase over the year earlier. They provide dial-a-ride services with fixed routes operating between Clare and Harrison and Clare and Lake.

Nonmotorized Transportation

Nonmotorized transportation includes all non-vehicular transportation including walking, bicycle riding, and wheeled transit that includes wheelchairs and small wheeled transit including skateboards, roller blades, and other lighter small wheeled equipment. Nonmotorized transportation is used both for casual and necessary trips, and these networks score as highly desirable.

Nonmotorized transportation is the most equitable form of transportation as all individuals have access to the nonmotorized network. Approximately one third of all Michiganders do not have access to a personal vehicle – being either too young, too old, not having access to a car, or without driving privileges – and the nonmotorized network serves everyone equally.

Being able to provide safe convenient connections to major traffic generators including the downtown, the school's complex, the fairgrounds, the State Park, and connections north and south into Hayes Township would be keystones to developing the City's network. With the advent of electric bicycles (e-bikes), more individuals are choosing to ride, and having a connected network will drive additional users. The City does have a start on improving nonmotorized cycling infrastructure with its bike lanes along both Main Street/M-61 and First Street/U.S. 127 Business Route; however, these facilities will likely only be used by a small segment of the population as most riders do not choose to ride in the roadway unless in a protected bicycle facility. Unprotected bike lanes are not appropriate for riders under 14 either because preteens do not have the situational awareness necessary to use the bike lane safely. Protected bike lanes or side paths would be the best types of nonmotorized facilities to be developed within the City as they would serve all potential users.

The Old US27 proposed bike route would provide north-connectivity through southern Clare County to the City of Harrison where it would follow the Leota Grade northwest into Summerfield Township. This route would also connect the City to one of the State’s main east-west nonmotorized connectors, the Pere-Marquette rail trail that would provide a linkage to one of Michigan’s main north-south nonmotorized arteries, the White Pine Trail, in Reed City and southeast to the City of Midland. Efforts are underway to create the Mid-Michigan community pathway (aka Old US-27) from Mount Pleasant to Clare, and extending it to Harrison would provide additional connectivity north into Clare County.

Additionally, US Bicycle Route 20 passes through the City of Clare and Village of Farwell before turning north and traveling through Lake George before hitting M-61 and heading west, eventually ending in Ludington with further ferry service to Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

Insert Transportation Network Map

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Existing Land Use

To be able to rationally plan for future uses within the City, it is vitally important to have a clear understanding of the existing land uses. The Existing Land Use Map identifies ten land use categories within the City, allowing us to understand where residential, commercial, industrial, public uses, and recreation are presently occurring along with vacant/undeveloped land.

With an understanding of the City's current uses of land and their locations, married with the results of the earlier demographic and physical analysis, it is then possible to develop a reasonable and achievable plan for the City. All of these analysis efforts underpin the recommendations that build the Future Land Use Map and the Plan's implementation recommendations.

This final step of the analysis portion of the master planning process reviews the previous existing land use map for any evolving trends that have occurred since the previous plan was completed. The 2017 existing land use map was reviewed, and the only significant land use changes identified were the expansion of the Robert M. Larson Elementary School at the school complex which creates the underutilized Hillside Elementary in Downtown, and the development of the Tractor Supply Warehouse commercial use adjacent to commercial complex that is just north of intersection of Park Street/US Bus 127 and Mostetler Road.

To provide added detail to the Existing Uses Map, the number of land use categories has been doubled to ten distinct categories from the 2017 Master Plan's five classifications. These added categories allow for more fine-grained analysis of the City's current land uses. The Residential Land Use category was divided into five separate categories: Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Lake Residential, Multi-family Residential, and Manufactured Housing Park while Recreation lands was also added. In addition, Commercial Use was broken out on the map from Vacant while all of the Public / Semi-Public uses that were mapped as Church, School, City, County, and State, and Quasi-Public were combined by their use into a single category. Except for smaller churches, these properties tend to be larger in size (over two acres in size) and used periodically/seasonally.

The 2024 Existing Land Use Map utilized the 2017 map along with aerial photography to refine the map. It was further revised with input from the Master Plan Steering Committee and the public during the Master Plan Implementation Workshop.

The following existing land use categories have been utilized to analyze the City's land use patterns for this Master Plan:

Low Density Residential

This category identifies single-family homes on lots greater than 20,000 square feet. These properties include single-family homes on large suburban lots; accessory structures, such as pole barns and garages; and manufactured homes outside of mobile home parks. Density would be less than two units per acre.

Low Density Residential land accounts for X acres, or X% of the City. This housing stock is made of up a mixture of older larger lots adjacent to the Downtown, larger lots near the lakes, and new suburban style homes on the edges of the City.

Medium Density Residential

This category identifies single-family and duplex units that are located on lots ranging in size from 8,000 square feet up to 20,000 square feet. These properties would include single family and duplex homes on mid-sized residential lots at a density of between two and five and one-half units per acre.

Medium Density Residential land uses account for X acres, or X% of the City. Housing meeting this definition is found mostly within the oldest neighborhoods around the Downtown with some of the larger lots around Budd Lake meeting this definition as well. The predominate nature of this housing stock is urban houses on larger urban residential lots.

Lake Residential

This category is comprised mostly of smaller homes and cottages on lots smaller than 8,000 square feet. These properties are mostly smaller lake-front and lake front adjacent single-family homes with lots that platted prior to 1970. The property density would exceed approximately five and one half units per acre.

The Lake Residential land use accounts for X acres, or X% of the City's total land. Housing that meets this category are found mostly around Budd Lake, in the neighborhood between Budd and Little Long Lakes, and in areas immediately adjacent to the waterfront. There are a few properties located in the Downtown adjacent neighborhoods that also meet this land use definition.

Multi-family Residential

This land use is comprised of apartment buildings larger than two units including triplexes, quadplexes, and apartment buildings and complexes, and their related accessory buildings such as garages, community buildings, and pool houses.

The City has some small apartment units scattered throughout the City, but the largest concentrations of apartment uses are located between Main and Spruce Streets, west of the Downtown. Other medium density residential uses may be found south of the fairgrounds and along Richard Drive. This land use occupies 34 acres, or 1.4% of the City.

Manufactured Housing Park

Only housing communities comprised of manufactured homes meet this land use designation. Two mobile home parks are located in the City. One park is located southwest of the intersection of Mostetler and Old County Farm Roads while the second community is located northwest of the intersection of Byfield Drive and Main Street/M-61. These two housing communities occupy 33 acres, or 1.4% of the City.

Commercial

Commercial land uses include properties on which goods are sold or personal services are provided. Uses that would qualify as commercial include stores, restaurants, offices, dealerships, and entertainment venues.

The majority of the 76 acres of commercial property, comprising 3.2% of the City are located within the Downtown district or extend along Park/First Street/U.S Bus Route 127 north and south of the Downtown.

Industrial

Parcels used for the purpose of manufacturing, processing, or storage of finished products and may also include logistics uses as well meet the Industrial land use classification. Mining and quarrying of materials are also industrial in nature.

The City has one small industrial park, located south of the Sullivan Drive and Spruce Street intersection with another industrial use, Gamble's Redi-Mix, located at the southwestern corner of Mostetler Road and Park Street/US Bus 127. Industrial uses make up 52 acres, 2.2% of the City.

Public / Semi-Public

Land uses owned and operated by public agencies including municipal offices and storage buildings and yards, community/recreation centers, jails, municipal courts, schools, cemeteries, churches, hospitals, fairgrounds, and private recreation areas under five acres all comprise Public and Semi-Public land uses.

Total school property is 114 acres or 6.9% of the developed area. The public / semi-public land uses, comprise a total of nearly 504 acres, which accounts for 21.2% of the total City area and 30.9% of the developed land in the City.

Recreation

Active and passive recreation areas, sports complexes and athletic fields, public parks, boat ramps, campgrounds, and private recreation areas larger than five acres are identified as recreational land uses.

The recreation areas within the City include Harrison City Park, Wilson State Park, Saxton Park, and the Budd Lake and Little Long Lake boat launch facilities. These sites cover 137 acres, 5.8% of the land.

Undeveloped

This category identifies all of the land within the City that is currently undeveloped, vacant, or road right-of-way. This land use designation includes vacant lands and properties, undeveloped subdivisions and tracts, wooded areas, and wetlands. Vacant lands and parcels are found in all parts of the City and in all sizes including large tracts to the south and west of the Downtown.

The undeveloped areas include approximately 193 acres of lakes and 546 acres of land in the City. The combined total accounts for approximately 31.5% of the total acreage of the City.

Understanding the City's existing land uses and their locations is vitally important to inform the recommendations that are made in the visioning and future planning portion of this Master Plan. Without an understanding of the City's present conditions, it would not be possible to create a reasonable future vision for the community. Future development is significantly impacted by current conditions so all of the analyzes portions of the Master Plan support and inform the development of the City's vision for itself, goals and actions and implementation steps necessary to attain that vision. The Existing Land Use map informs the development of the Future Land Use Map, but it is the community's vision for itself, reflected in the Future Land Use, that is the City's land use vision for itself.

Insert Existing Land Use Map here

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GOALS AND ACTIONS

Before a community can actively move forward toward implementation, it must first establish a vision for its future in the form of a set of goals and action steps that will be necessary to achieve that desired vision. The goals must align with the community's needs and aspirations, be realistic and built upon a clear understanding of the community's existing conditions and recognize its financial and capacity limitations.

Background

This Master Plan is being designed with implementation at its core. This approach is a significant departure from the City's previous 2017 Master Plan that focused a significant amount of its effort on the analysis portion of the plan while recognizing the emerging demographics that indicate that there will likely be little population growth for the foreseeable future in Central Michigan. The 2017 approach is like most recent master plans developed in Michigan with a broad listing of desired goals and actions, regardless of the local capacity for implementation, responsible party, or expected development potential of the community. Eight separate goals with 36 specific actions were identified within the previous Plan, and they were to be carried out by a variety of agencies and organizations beyond the City's control including: the school district, library, chamber of commerce, Mid-Michigan Development Corporation, Hayes Township, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the Downtown Development Authority, HAEDCO, MDOT, USDA, FB, and BLAA (*last two ?*) In addition to the entities beyond the City's control, implementation agencies under the City's purview included the City, City Council, City staff, and the Planning Commission.

This standard approach would lead to plans that would be overwhelming to even the most ardent group of local land use practitioners and members of the Planning Commissions, Zoning Board of Appeals, City Council, and municipal staff. It is no wonder that these master plans, once adopted, would be filed away where they would rarely be consulted until the next update process. Master planning evolved to become an exercise that was completed to allow for the community to utilize its power to wield zoning, but the resulting broad plans based on general planning and community development concepts would often undermine the community in being able to actually achieve its desired land use goals.

This solely aspirational approach led to many goals that were far beyond the scope of a land use plan or capital plan, and many recommended goals and objectives would far exceed the capacity of a small community that relies on a few paid staff, elected officials, and a small cadre of volunteers to implement its master plan.

These master plans would not support the planning process in leading to concrete results. A community's future vision and land use desires may have been well formulated and articulated, but due to the large number of goals and actions that were not within the purview of the Planning Commission or other local officials and volunteers, there would be no change in the community's development trajectory. Any specific action items that were implementable were lost with the overwhelming broader vision.

Land Use Focus

This Plan focuses its efforts toward implementation with far fewer goals and targeting actionable steps that are within the purview of the City and its agents. Many of the land use and capital investment goals and actions from the previous plan are nested within the action steps described below with most of the goals to be implemented or directed by the Planning Commission. To ensure success of impacting the future development direction of the City, many of the Master Plan's goals would be accomplished through a comprehensive review of the City's Zoning Ordinance.

These goals were initially discussed with the Master Plan Steering Committee at their October 18, 2023 and January 10, 2024 meetings. These goals were presented at the XXX, XX, 2024 Implementation Workshop that was held at City Hall and attended by X participants. The finalized draft plan was presented to the Planning Commission for its review at its XXX, XX, 2024 Meeting where the visionary components of the Plan were presented for the Commissioner's consideration including the following goals and actions. They were revised prior to the Plan's distribution to the review agencies as part of the adoption process, and the public were able to formally comment on the goals and action steps at the Public Hearing held on [REDACTED].

Most of the specific land use and capital plan goals are included within the initial Physical Land Use Goals section while the some broader public policy items are included in the Public Policy section.

Physical Land Use Goals

1. **Retain the Small-town and "Up North" Character of the Community** – Most residents stated they enjoy living in the City due to its small-town atmosphere, access to the outdoors/natural resources and lakes, and the overall quieter environment:
 - a) Review and evaluate the Future Land Use Map of the City to reduce the locations where commercial development would be permissible and amend the Zoning Ordinance to mirror the recommendations of the Future Land Use Map
 - b) Besides new development within Downtown district, encourage all new commercial destination/specialized development to occur within the Downtown while allowing for auto-centric commercial to develop in designated areas along First Steet/US-127
 - c) Revise the Zoning Ordinance to strengthen urban design requirements within Downtown C-1 district and review the buffering and design requirements within the C-2 District to limit the impacts of auto-related downstate appearing commercial sprawl along First Street/US-127
2. **Support Access to Recreation/Outdoor Activities** – Local residents overwhelming identified open space and recreational access as important quality of life benefits that they enjoy living in Harrison.
 - a) Close gaps in sidewalk network and ensure that schools, parks, the Downtown are connected via sidewalks and bikepaths
 - b) Revise Zoning Ordinance requirements to require bike path development along identified bicycle routes and increase sidewalk requirements within neighborhoods to six feet
 - c) City Council consider adopting a Complete Streets ordinance or resolution
3. **Support Efforts to Reduce Blight** - Reduction of blight was another strongly identified goal, including both residential and commercial properties
 - a) Ensure that the Code Enforcement Officer has sufficient resources to encourage compliance
 - b) Develop marketing pieces to describe process and benefits of code enforcement
4. **Downtown Development** – Improvement to the Downtown both aesthetically and more businesses

- a) Review Zoning to allow for mixed use developments and review design requirements to improve Downtown zero-lot line developments
 - b) Consider allowing residential uses within the commercial districts
 - c) Evaluate eliminating parking requirements within the C-1 district
 - d) Identify Redevelopment Ready Sites within/adjacent to the Downtown district that will catalyze commercial development
5. **Economic Development** - Improving workforce opportunities within the City through sound land use policies
- a) Ensure sufficient industrial land is available and zoned for industrial use and ensure that all required utilities are available at these locations
 - b) Review Zoning Ordinance to ensure that New Economy uses and new light manufacturing uses are permitted as-a-right with the I-1 Light Industrial and C-2 General Commercial districts
6. **Non-conforming Lots and Structures**— Due to the period of development, many of the City’s lots predate the Zoning Ordinance regulations, and renovations and reconstructions of residential properties often require dimensional variances from the Zoning Board of Appeals
- a) Review the Zoning Ordinance’s dimensional requirements to determine if revisions would be able to reduce the ZBA cases while having limited impacts upon neighboring parcels
 - b) Review Zoning Ordinance to allow for the reconstruction of nonconforming buildings on nonconforming lots as long as the new structure does not increase the existing building’s nonconformities
7. **Recreation and Parks** – Increasing parks and recreation opportunities within the City was a desired goal of the residents.
- a) Ensure that all new developments assist the City in developing new parks within underserved parts of the City
 - b) Ensure that all existing and future parks and recreational facilities are connected into the City’s nonmotorized network
8. **Support efforts to expand housing choice within the community** – Provide a more balanced set of tenancy options (rental and owner and at differing price-points) that provides affordable workforce housing that meets the needs of all residents and supports seniors to be able to age in place within the City:
- a) Consider Zoning Ordinance amendments that would permit accessory dwelling units on AR and C-1 districts
 - b) Consider changes to the Zoning Ordinance to allow for low-rise “missing middle” housing (duplexes, cottage courts, row/townhouses, small apartments, and low-rise mixed use building) to be developed near the Downtown
 - c) Consider allowing senior housing within the C-1 and C-2 districts

Public Policy Goals

These broader goals are beyond the direct purview and control the City’s elected and appointed officials and staff; however, they are still important for the long-range development of the City. They are included so as to ensure that the items remain on top-of-mind for these individuals. Opportunities may present themselves with other agencies and should be acted upon whenever possible.

- 1) **Improve the Region's Safety –**
 - a) Partner with Clare County to undertake actions and improvements that will mitigate the impacts of local hazards and supports Clare County's Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- 2) **Encourage intergovernmental cooperation between Harrison, Hayes Township, and Clare County -**

Due to the limited local capacity to develop, fund and operate desired services including youth, recreation, and senior services –work cooperatively to accomplish these tasks:

 - a) Strengthen the relationship with Hayes Township and identify opportunities to share municipal services
 - b) Prepare a joint Parks and Recreation Master Plan with Hayes Township to be eligible to apply for grants to improve recreational facilities that will serve both seasonal and year-round residents.
 - c) Consider developing a working group to address joint development issues and focus on improving the aesthetic character of US Bus 127 through both communities.
 - d) Support workforce and economic development initiatives jointly.

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FUTURE LAND USES

The Future Land Use Plan identifies the desired pattern of land development in the City of Harrison for a period extending approximately 20 years into the future. The Future Land Use Plan is a general statement of the City's land use and development goals and provides a single, comprehensive view of the community's desire for its future. This chapter describes the basis for the plan and the intended character of each land use classification, with each corresponding to areas identified on the City's Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use Map is the basis of the City's Zoning Map.

What is a Future Land Use Plan?

A Future Land Use Plan is a guide to the physical development of a community. Based on the social and economic values of the community, it translates those values into a scheme that describes how, why, when, and where to build, rebuild, or preserve the community.

There are many general characteristics of a Future Land Use Plan. The first characteristic of the Plan is that it is long range, covering a time period of as much as twenty years. Not only does the Plan present a vision of the community in the future, it also recommends procedures and policies that can help the community to get there.

A second characteristic of the Plan is that it is meant to be general in nature. The Future Land Use Plan is not meant to be specific, recommending land uses property by property. It only provides land use recommendations for generalized locations in the community. This is one of the strengths of the Future Land Use Plan, allowing for the community to determine exact locations and boundaries for the proper land use classifications.

Lastly, a Future Land Use Plan is a statement of policy and a guide covering such community desires as quantity, character, location, and rate of growth and indicating how these desires are to be achieved. It is important to understand that the Plan has no legal authority, unlike legal documents such as a zoning ordinance, general municipal ordinances, or subdivision regulations. The Plan serves as a guide in the formulation of these legal documents. Government bodies and officials such as the City Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Administrator should use the Plan as a guide in their day-to-day decision-making processes.

The Future Land Use Plan underpins the City's Zoning Ordinance regulations. Without it, State and Federal courts would likely strike down the City's Zoning Ordinance as being arbitrary and capricious if the Zoning Ordinance doesn't directly tie the recommendations and vision laid out in the Master Plan into the regulatory framework of the Zoning Ordinance and the Zoning Map. This connection between a well-considered Master Plan that protects the community health, safety, and welfare and the specific land use regulations of the Zoning Ordinance is how the courts permit such stringent regulations of private property.

Basis for the Plan

Making informed decisions about the future growth and redevelopment of communities is very challenging. Communities have become centers of complex and interrelated activities. Employment and residential areas are interconnected and supported by public and private facilities such as streets, water, sewer, county drains, parks, and services such as, garbage pick up, police and fire protection,

medical and emergency services, recreation and entertainment, and personal services. Many of these facilities and services are interrelated, as are the land uses they support or serve. A Future Land Use Plan can only be created after this thorough understanding of all the elements in a community’s land use system is gained.

In the proceeding sections of this Master Plan, many elements of City were analyzed including demographic data, environmental features, existing development patterns, existing transportation network, and community goals and objectives. These elements, in addition to an understanding of regional conditions and market trends, combine to form the basis for the Future Land Use Plan.

Plan Recommendations

Eight land use classifications are identified for this iteration of the City’s Master Plan. This includes a new Medium Density Residential district to be able to better address the existing smaller lots within the City. To support the goals of natural resources protection, the Plan also retains the two Overlay areas. The various future land uses are portrayed on **Map X** and the total acreages for each category are shown in **Table X**.

**Table X
Future Land Use Acreage**

Future Land Use Acreage		
Land Use Type	Total Acres	Percentage
Low Density Residential	X	X
Medium Density Residential	X	X
Mixed Use Neighborhood	X	X
Mobile Home Park	X	X
Greater Business District	X	X
Central Business District	X	X
Light Industrial	X	X
Preserve/Parkland	X	X
Wetland (Overlay)	X	X
Wellhead Protection Area (Overlay)	X	X
Total	2,382	100.0%

Source: Wade Trim

The overriding principle behind the Future Land Use Plan is to maintain and protect the existing small-town, up-north character of Harrison as the gateway to central Northern Michigan. The future land use categories, as described below, are intended to uphold this principle while guiding the future growth of the City.

Low Density Residential

Intent – The Low Density Residential Land Use designation is to provide for single family and duplexes in larger lot residential neighborhoods

Uses – Low density residential uses is the primary use with other complimentary uses such as cemeteries, churches, schools, and park

Medium Density Residential

Intent – The Medium Density Residential Land Use designation for single family uses on smaller lot residential neighborhoods

Uses – Low density residential uses is the primary use with other complimentary uses such as cemeteries, churches, schools, and park

Mixed Use Neighborhood –

Intent – This land use designation envisions permitting a mixture of neighborhood commercial and higher density residential uses near the Downtown

Uses – Medium density houses including single-family, duplexes, row houses, small multi-family buildings, live-work spaces and commercial uses within a generally residential framework

Mobile Home Parks

Intent – To support the development of affordable housing, this designation permits the development of mobile and manufactured housing developments

Uses – Higher density residential developments that meet the State of Michigan’s minimum standards for mobile home parks

Central Business District

Intent – To support the development of an intensive business district that serves as the commercial center of the City by supporting a mixture of ground-floor commercial uses with commercial, office, and residential uses on upper floors of zero lot-line buildings in a physical design that supports pedestrianism

Uses – Includes a mixture of retail and restaurant commercial uses, office, residential, entertainment, institutional, and public uses

Greater Business District

Intent – Focused mainly along First Street/US Bus 127, this designation supports both auto-orientated commercial further from the Downtown and pedestrian-orientated retail nodes that serve adjoining residential districts

Uses – Includes commercial uses ranging from auto-orientated large scale commercial developments with big and medium box retail to personal service establishments and restaurants

Light Industrial

Intent – To provide a location for the exclusive use of light industrial uses that are dependent upon convenient access to transportation routes

Uses – Light duty manufacturing facilities, transportation, storage, and logistics facilities

Preserve/Parkland

Intent – This designation is to provide areas for the development/operation of parkland, open space, conservation areas, and to protect environmentally sensitive areas

Uses – Public parks, passive recreation areas, fairgrounds, and open space

Wetlands (Overlay)

Intent – To provide information so that wetland areas within the City may be identified so that they may be preserved and protected and that their existence may be taken into account during site planning and site development

Uses – Appropriate passive uses that do not disturb the wetlands including recreation areas and areas protected from development

Wellhead Protection Area (Overlay)

Intent – To protect the City’s groundwater drinking supply from potential contamination by ensuring that all uses within the overlay area are evaluated during the City’s Site Plan Review process

Uses – Limit any potential primary or accessory uses on sites that may contaminate the drinking water supply through storage or use of chemicals, solvents, petroleum products, and other materials that may migrate through soil and negatively impact drinking water supplies

Using the Plan

Now that the Future Land Use recommendations have been laid out for the City, it is appropriate to describe how to put the Plan to use. It is important to remember that the Master Plan and its Future Land Use Map are not a legal document but a policy document. The Plan should not be confused with the Zoning Ordinance or the City's official Zoning Map. In fact, the Zoning Map and Future Land Use Map may not even look the same. The key difference is that Zoning is local land use regulations while the Master Plan prescribes a vision for land use in the future and serves as a guide to achieve that vision.

One of the principal benefits of having an adopted Master Plan is the foundation it provides for zoning decisions. As the City Council or Planning Commission is faced with making zoning and land use decisions, the respective bodies should consider the recommendations as set forth in the Master Plan. Rezoning, site plan reviews, and special land uses should conform with the principles found in the Master Plan. Capital improvement investments should also be made in accordance with the recommendations of the City's Master Plan.

Flexibility is a definite strength of the Master Plan. The Future Land Use Map is not intended to be specific to any individual parcel but be focused on determining the type of land uses permitted within the general vicinity while the Zoning Map is specific to individual parcels.

Changing trends, circumstances, unanticipated opportunities, and unforeseen problems may require an amendment to the Master Plan. If a new development proposal does not conform to the specifics found within Master Plan or outlined in the Future Land Use Map, the Master Plan may be reviewed and a determination made if the proposal meets the Plan's vision and recommendations. If so, the Plan may be amended to allow for the proposed development to continue through the review process. Further steps may include a rezoning, special land use approval, and site plan review. If not, an amendment should not be commenced and the proposal should be rejected as not meeting the City's vision as detailed within the Master Plan. If an amendment does occur, it is important to note that the rest of the Plan remains in effect. It will only become irrelevant or obsolete if the Master Plan is not updated to address physical or social changes occurring in the municipality.

In order to keep the Master Plan up to date, it is important to schedule periodic reviews of the Master Plan. Per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, it is required that the Planning Commission conduct a review to determine if the Master Plan amendments or changes are necessary every five years. If the review indicates that the plan still reflects the community's vision and conditions, the Planning Commission may complete its mandated five-year review internally by recording the findings within its meeting minutes. However, if significant time has passed since an intensive review has been completed or economic, social, or land use conditions have changed in the community since the last formal master plan update, the Planning Commission would then be compelled to commence formal actions to amend its existing Master Plan or to adopt a new one.

Insert FLU Map Here

IMPLEMENTATION

Zoning Plan

According to requirements within Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, all master plans are to include a Zoning Plan when the community utilizes zoning to control land development. This portion of the Plan serves as a clear connection between the community’s Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance, which underpins the community’s power to regulate land through the Zoning Ordinance and its Zoning Map. This section provides that legal nexus between the documents and protects the City from potential litigation regarding application of the Zoning Ordinance.

Bulk and Density Comparisons

One requirement of a Zoning Plan is that it must correlate the zoning district’s height, area, bulk, location and uses with the land use designations within the Master Plan while also explaining how the land use categories on the Future Land Use map correlate with the Zoning districts shown on the Zoning Map.

To meet this requirement, the following table matches the Master Plan’s land use categories with the City’s Zoning districts, and the height, area, bulk, and uses allowed within the Zoning Ordinance would be generally appropriate for the corresponding land uses.

Land Use Designation	Zoning District
Low Density Residential	A-1 – Open Space R-1 – Low Density Residential R-2 – Medium Density Residential R-3 – Seasonal Residential
Medium Density Residential	R-2 – Medium Density Residential R-3 – Seasonal Residential
Mixed Use Neighborhood	R-2 – Medium Density Residential R-3 – Seasonal Residential C-1 – Downtown Commercial C-2 – Corridor Commercial
Mobile Home Park	MH – Mobile Home District
Central Business District	C-1 – Downtown Commercial (Downtown Development Authority Overlay) C-2 – Corridor Commercial
Greater Business District	CR – Commercial Resort C-1 – Downtown Commercial C-2 – Corridor Commercial OS – Office -Service
Industrial	L-1 Light Industrial
Preserve/Parkland	CR – Commercial Recreational,
Wetlands (Overlay)	All Districts (W-1 – Wellhead Protection Overlay)
Wellhead Protection Area (Overlay)	All Districts

Zoning Plan Recommendations

A second and valuable component of the Zoning Plan is identifying recommendations of the Master Plan that will require changes to the Zoning Ordinance to be implemented.

The first recommendation is that the Planning Commission have a Zoning Ordinance Audit conducted to: ensure compliance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act of 2006; compliance with various State and Federal statutes; ensure consistency with recent court cases; identify fragmented or inconsistent zoning ordinance language; identify incorrect or irrelevant cross references; recognize contradictory or redundant policies; illustrate effectiveness, or lack thereof, of Ordinance to address emerging technologies; verify effectiveness of Ordinance in addressing emerging planning trends including zoning reform efforts; assist with the development of workforce housing; and ensure effectiveness in addressing local issues and concerns.

Following the Zoning Ordinance Audit, utilize its results to draft new zoning language to ensure that the goals of the Master Plan begin to be implemented while regulations that do not support the Plan's implementation are removed. Items to be addressed through the Zoning Ordinance Audit include:

- Review Section 3.11 Schedule of Dimensional Requirements to determine if the setbacks and lot sizes are appropriate and may be refined to lessen number of applicants that require dimensional variances for residential properties
- Evaluate if the current parking requirements in Section 7.1 are appropriate and to determine if the parking requirements exceed the Institute of Transportation Engineers parking standards listed in the Sixth Edition of the Parking Generation Model and determine if the current parking minimums and maximums are appropriate and consider eliminating parking requirements within the C-1 Downtown Commercial District
- To legally strengthen the City's power to regulate signs, make recommendations to the City's adopted Sign Ordinance to add a purpose clause and a substitutions clause
- To ensure that developments meet the desires outlined in the Master Plan, consider the elimination of Article 8 – Planned Unit Development
- To ease site development and reoccupations, consider adding the opportunity for Administrative Site Plan approval to be completed by the Zoning Administrator in certain instances
- To support new housing options within the City, review the requirements of the Office Service, Greater Business and Overlay, and Central Business to allow for mixed-use multi-story buildings

Master Plan topics to be addressed by Zoning Ordinance amendments include:

- Conduct review of Zoning Map and adopt rezonings to align the Future Land Use Map with the Zoning Ordinance Map
- Evaluate the Zoning Ordinance language to limits an owner's ability to clearcut woodlots prior to development
- Revise Section 7-3 Sidewalks Requirements to prioritize development of new pathways identified with the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
- Revise Section 7.5 Street Trees to require construction of tree wells that will ensure healthy tree growth and limits tree mortality
- Review design standards within the C-1 Central Business and C-2 General Business districts to ensure developments that promote pedestrianism and urban vitality within the C-1 District and increases the minimum design requirements within the C-2 District to preserve the up-north character of the community and to limit the appearance of typical suburban sprawl
- Consider adopting landscaping requirements for commercial developments and stipulate the use of native plants for all required plantings

- Consider a Zoning Ordinance amendment to allow accessory dwelling units to be allowed for A-1 Open Space and R-1 Low Density Residential Zoning Districts
- To support retention of dark skies, develop user friendly requirements mandating the use of dark sky friendly lighting fixtures for all commercial, institutional, and industrial uses, and encourage residential adoption as well
- Evaluate parking lot design requirements to address appropriate buffering and interior parking lot landscaping requirements and bicycle parking requirements for new developments
- In a community that relies upon pristine natural environment, review City development requirements and consider requiring environmentally friendly systems to be incorporated into new developments (bioswales, green roofs, pervious paving, increased tree coverage)
- Review Article 4 – Special Uses to determine certain uses should become permitted uses by right or additional uses should be permitted, but reviewed by the Planning Commission through the Special Used process.
- Consider development regulations that will limit tree loss during development through tree preservation requirements

In November 2023, the State of Michigan passed new laws that restrict the ability for local units of government to limit the siting of large-scale renewable energy facilities within their borders. The full impacts of this action are still unknown at this time as the rules of the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC), the State agency that is tasked with implementing these new rules, won't be finalized until fall 2024. Local communities will be able to review large-scale renewable energy facility siting, but local rules may be no more stringent than the MPSC's.

While the Zoning Ordinance that will result from this effort will go a significant way towards implementing the many concepts of this Plan, additional efforts by the Planning Commission and the City Council will be necessary to assist in achieving the vision created and zoning changes identified within this Zoning Plan.

Implementation Steps

This section outlines the most effective and direct approach towards successful implementation of the Master Plan. In many communities, a long list of options and opportunities are presented in this portion of the document that are often beyond the capacity of the community to implement or outside of the scope of land use actions. This type of extensive listing of projects overwhelms the Planning Commission, the legislative body, and the local administration, often leading to the plan not being reviewed or looked toward implementation steps until the next time to update the plan.

To avoid this scenario, a short set of work items has been identified. This Action Plan is built on the premise that these implementation steps should be interlocking and mutually supportive. To assist in the implementation, the list does separate the priorities into Next Steps, Intermediate Steps, and Long Range Steps.

All planning, land use, and capital decisions should be made through the lens of the goals and actions identified during the development of the Master Plan and incorporated into the Goals and Actions section. It would be appropriate for the Planning Commission, City Council or other municipal body to

proceed with items that are not specifically identified within the Plan as long as they meet the Goals and Actions outlined in Chapter X.

Next Steps

- Conduct a Zoning Ordinance Audit and address issues identified
- Implement the recommendations of the Zoning Plan
- Adopt a Complete Streets resolution and evaluate Zoning Ordinance to determine how to improve nonmotorized transportation within the City and connections with Hayes Township
- Develop a working group with Hayes Township to address zoning and planning issues facing both communities and consider drafting a joint Parks and Recreation Plan

Intermediate Steps

- Ensure the Code Enforcement Officer has sufficient resources to increase compliance including development of informational materials regarding the process and reasons for code enforcement
- Evaluation of Master Plan goals to determine order of implementation and changes necessary to City's General Ordinances that will support enhancing the City's small-town "up north" character
- Work with the MEDC to market Redevelopment Ready Sites within the City
- Work with Harrison Schools regarding the redevelopment of the former Hillside Elementary School

Long Range

- Conduct a review of the City's development review procedures to improve processes and reduce review time and expense
- Continue to foster collaboration between the City, Hayes Township, and the County
- Support continued development of nonmotorized transportation options