

2025 Master Plan

Baroda Township, Berrien County, Michigan



2025 Master Plan

Baroda Township

Berrien County



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1. OVERVIEW

I- INTRODUCTION	1
1. Planning Mission	
2. Planning Process	
II- AREA CONTEXT	3
1. Location	
2. Previous Planning Efforts	
3. Plan Organization	

CHAPTER 2. COMMUNITY PROFILE

I- HISTORY	5
II- COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS	6
1. Population	
2. Age	
3. Housing	
4. Employment	
5. Income	
III- LAND-USE	12
1. Agricultural	
2. Residential	
3. Commercial	
4. Industrial	
5. Institutional	
6. Parks/Open Space	
IV- INFRASTRUCTURE	14
7. Transportation	
8. Utilities	
V- NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	15
9. Lakes and Creeks	
10. Wetlands	
11. Groundwater	
12. Soil	
VI- KEY FINDINGS	17

CHAPTER 3. FRAMEWORK PLAN

I- VISION	20
1. Issues	
2. Priorities	
II- GOALS	21
1. Land-Use	
2. Community Character	
3. Economic Development	
4. Infrastructure	
5. Sustainability	

CHAPTER 4. FUTURE PLAN

I- LAND-USE	25
1. Future Growth Area (FGA)	
2. Cluster Neighborhood	
3. Agriculture	
4. Residential	
5. Neighborhood Center	
6. Corridor	
7. Parks/Open Space	
II- INFRASTRUCTURE	33
1. Roads and Streets	
2. Trails and Greenways	
3. Scenic Roads	
4. Utilities and Public Improvements	

III- FUTURE LAND-USE MAP	33
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CHAPTER 5. NEXT STEPS

I- CATALYTIC ACTIONS	36
II- PLAN FOR FUNDING	
III- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	

APPENDIX

1. Community Survey

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW

I- INTRODUCTION

Baroda Township's Master Plan provides a land-use-based vision for the Township. This plan is based on the current land-use mix and physical conditions of the Township, as well as its future community sustainability and growth. The Township is located in the central part of Berrien County in the southwest corner of the state. The area has an ample supply of mobility resources in all transportation modes as well as significant diversity in natural resources. Tourism and cultural resources have further created opportunities to attract visitors from Chicago and throughout the region. These resources lend themselves to a vision that supports maintaining a quality of life for its residents that is strongly sustainable.

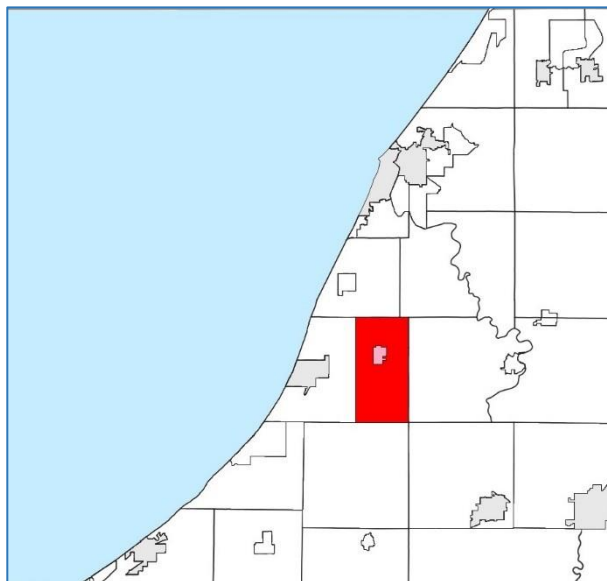


Figure 1- Township Location

The primary goal of this Master Plan is to address the challenges that the Township currently faces, as well as its future potential, by supporting a coordinated sensible framework for Township improvement and development while maintaining its character and sustainability.

An efficient network of roads, various housing options, and the preservation of natural and agricultural resources are among several important issues desired and expressed during the community engagement process.

The Master Plan aims to be sensitive to the residents' multiple needs and responsive to the community's land-use constraints and opportunities. It seeks to achieve and maintain a quality of life that sustains its long-term character by mixing tourism, agricultural, and natural resources.

Those who call Baroda Township home wish to preserve its diversity of uses and ensure its sustainability as well as growth. This goal can only be realized through coordinated land use policies and a renewed commitment to a development strategy that balances the preservation of the Township's resources while also capitalizing on the opportunities these resources provide.

The Master Plan aims to guide the Township in shaping its physical development, preservation, capital investment, and growth. It also serves as a policy statement reflecting the community's character, its residents' values, and their vision for the future. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act specifically gives the Township Planning Commission and the Township Board the authority to prepare and adopt a plan. Once prepared, adopted, and maintained, this Plan will serve as an advisory guide for the development and the Master Plan further aims to enable the Township to establish a direction for physical development and preservation, capital investment, and growth.

Baroda Township's Master Plan was last updated in 2017. General planning practice suggests, and the Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires, that the plans be reviewed every five years to keep them current. The current update was delayed due to issues related to COVID-19. The 2025 Plan, while incorporating many land-use policies of the last plan, generally aims to place emphasis on conservation and resource protection to ensure long-term sustainability and quality life for the residents of Baroda Township.

1. Planning Mission

The Baroda Township Master Plan provides a land-use vision for the Township based on current conditions, desires of the residents and the future community sustainability and development goals. The purpose of this 2025 Master Plan is to build on previous goals, and many successes in shaping a stronger community over the last ten years and addresses the challenges the Township faces. The plan aims to ensure future sustainability, by providing a well-coordinated, sensible framework for community development and maintenance of community character. A network of family-owned farms with efficient land-use, diverse housing, and enhanced natural spaces remains a key Township goal, promoting long-term community sustainability and increasing land value.

2. Planning Process

The Master Planning process provided opportunities for public input through an online survey, input-gathering exercise with public officials, and public meetings. The planning process consisted of three principal phases.

- 1) Community Assessment:** This work consisted of the evaluation of land-use patterns, physical conditions, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, open space, and aesthetics. The assessment also included several community tours, meetings with Township officials, and staff to define issues and concerns.
- 2) Community Vision, Goals, and Strategies:** The Consultant team undertook an extensive community survey to get input from residents. This effort resulted in identifying some of the issues as well as establishing a framework for a vision for the Township and establishing goals and objectives for the Plan.
- 3) Final Land-Use Plan:** The above activities resulted in developing the Draft Master Plan document for public review and comment, and approval by the Plan Commission, and the Township Board.

II - AREA CONTEXT

1. Location

Baroda Township is a general law township of Berrien County in Southwest Michigan. The community is about 178 miles southwest of Detroit, Michigan and about 87 miles southeast of Chicago, Illinois. The Township is strategically located at the center of the County with close access to Interstate 94, a major national transportation route, as well as Routes 12 and 31. Baroda Township covers a land area consisting of 3 by 6 miles or an area of about 18 square miles. The Township land area is about 17.8 square miles and 0.077 square miles (0.2%), is water.

The Township is in the central portion of the county, with Lake Charter Township and Bridgman to the west, Lincoln Charter Township and Stevensville to the north and northwest, Royalton Township to the northeast, Oronoko Charter Township and Berrien Springs to the east. Buchanan Township sits to the southeast of the Township, while Weesaw Township is located to the south and southwest.

Except for the North and Eastern parts of the Township, the land consists of rolling hills. Combined with its proximity to the lake, this makes it well-suited for land cultivation. A large segment of land consists of family farms with many devoted to fruits and vegetables. Farmers would typically ship their crops along the railway to the St. Joseph port, then across Lake Michigan to Chicago to be sold in markets.

While the Village of Baroda is the principal center of population in the Township, several new and older residential subdivisions exist throughout the Township such as Singer Lake and other smaller residential communities along major transportation corridors such as Cleveland Avenue and Stevensville-Baroda Road. The diversity of farms producing a variety of products has given the Township a special character and charm which continues to attract local and regional tourists to the area. These attractions have become a major source of income for many in the Township.



Figure 2- Township Location

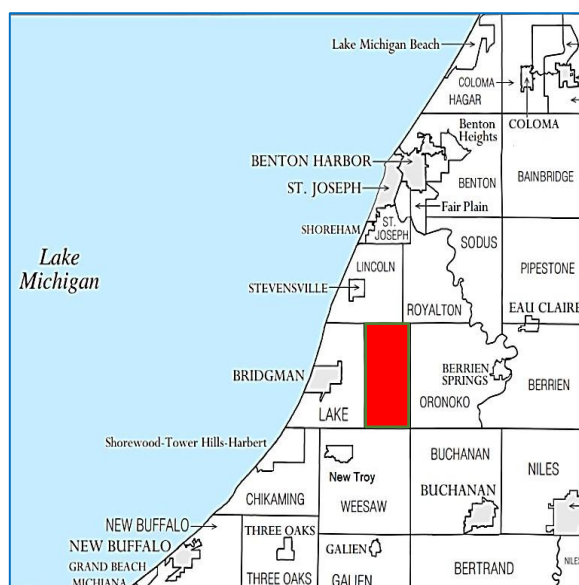


Figure 3- Township Location

2. Previous Planning Efforts

Over the last decade in collaboration with the Village of Baroda, the Township updated its long-range planning studies on at least two occasions. The last plan provided a series of guidelines for development of the Township and the Village. This Plan will serve as an update to prior plans - just as the content of the 2017 Master Plan was guided by the 2010 Master Plan. The current Plan illustrates the type and density of development desired for both the Village of Baroda and the Township. The Planning Commissions of the Village and the Township, after review of the plan, found it acceptable as a guide for future growth and development of the community.

While the current planning efforts are independent studies for the Village and the Township, the efforts are being fully coordinated by the Consultant team to ensure a well-organized effort consistent with the vision for both communities. The 2025 Township Master Plan aims to establish a future development strategy that brings together other Village and Township plans and studies plus plans from other agencies. The new Plan provides a future community development strategy that will guide future land-use decisions considered by the Planning Commission and the Township Board. This document also serves as an update to the Township Capital Improvement Programs for the Township.

3. Plan Organization

This 2025 Master Plan is organized into five different parts or chapters. Each chapter, contains relevant information, public input or analysis of data or trends. Specifically, the Plan consists of the following elements:

Chapter 1: Overview; provides an overview of the plan development and process.

Chapter 2: Community Profile; provides an assessment of existing conditions, and trends for both the physical and social profile of the community and the region. The chapter further describes the Township's current land-use and transportation setting.

Chapter 3: Framework Plan; an overall vision for the Township, along with the future development framework and recommended strategies to address identified issues are outlined. Section 8 outlines the goals, objectives, and strategies necessary to achieve the vision and framework set forth in the Plan.

Chapter 4: Future Plan; describes future land-use and how to achieve the vision for the Township in the next 20 years. This will include a set of recommendations to maintain sustainability and quality of life in the Township.

Chapter 5: Next Steps; highlights a list of action steps and specific activities that should be taken to implement different goals and strategies in the Comprehensive Plan.

As a part of the planning process, the Township also prepared a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). This document is separate from the 2025 Master Plan and has been approved by the Township Board. The CIP outlines the next steps for the beginning of implementing the Plan and identifies capital outlays for the high-priority items.

CHAPTER 2

COMMUNITY PROFILE

I - HISTORY

In the late 1800s early industrial settlements in Berrien County emerged primarily due to the railroad industry. As a result, a railroad transportation corridor was built by the Indiana and Lake Michigan Railway Company. The railroad provided services for both commerce and commuters from South Bend, Indiana to St. Joseph, Michigan. Baroda and Bridgman were two of a number of communities built along the railroad corridor.

Baroda Township dates its history back to 1923 when a dispute between communities of Baroda and Bridgman led to Baroda Township separating from Lake Township and becoming a new general law township in the County. However, the history of the Township goes back to the 1830s when the first settlers arrived and began clearing the land, draining the wetlands, and building homes and farms. The founder of Baroda was Michael Houser. He had a strong desire to build a town in the area with the primary source of economic engine being a new railroad station on his land. He was successful in his effort and was able to build a town and sell lots to the new settlers. Houser then platted a town and sold lots on very generous terms. He offered a free lot to every person who would build a store or other building worth \$500. Houser sold lots for homes for \$35. Houser named the area Baroda after a city in western India. The Baroda post office was established in 1891. The Village of Baroda was incorporated in 1907, and the Township was organized in 1923.

The Township is characterized by rolling hills, with scenic views of vineyards and aromatic orchards. The Township hosts annual festivals with a quaint hometown feel. The small-town character, friendly, and neighborly atmosphere are representative of both the Township and the Village of Baroda. The two communities share a true camaraderie and are viewed as the heart and soul of the region.



Image 1



Image 2



Image 3

The community has been able to maintain its historical rural character while continuing to evolve into a modern farming community. Today along with farming and wineries, tool and die industries provide employment opportunities next to bed and breakfast establishments which attract many into the area, providing a relief for modern life by offering a cherished lifestyle that has sustained the community to date.

II - COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

The 2020 U.S. Census and subsequent sample surveys conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau through the American Community Survey (ACS) program provide the most recent population profile of Baroda Township. Where possible, data from the 2020 Census and ACS have been updated with later releases (2022) to ensure the availability of the most reliable data for analysis. For some factors, the Township data is paired with Berrien County information to provide a regional comparison.

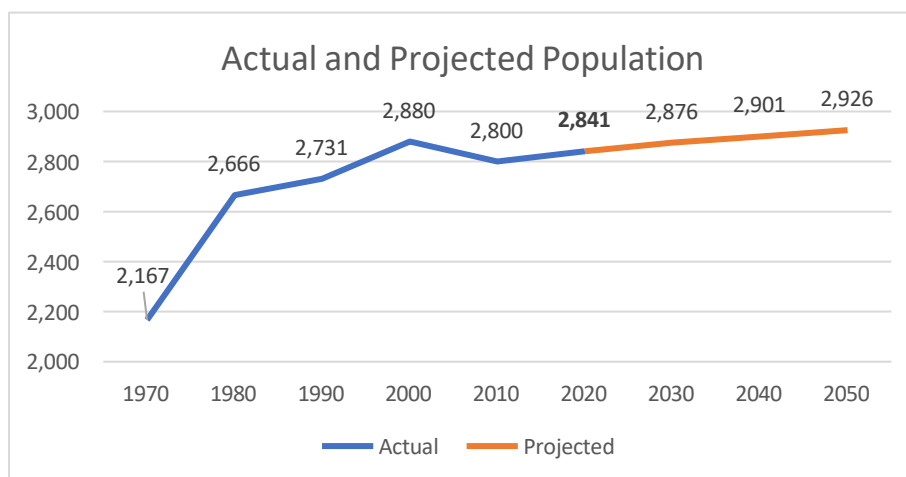
1. Population

While the population has been expanding in recent decades, our assessment indicates that after reaching a peak population of 2,880 in the year 2000, Baroda Township experienced a decline in population over the following 10 years. After rebounding slightly in 2020, the estimated population is projected to continue a slight increase over the next 30 years with modest growth. One factor is that the Township is poised to see a renewal of younger persons moving into the area as seniors relocate.

Table 1 - Population Actual and Projected

Population	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
	Actual						Projected		
	2,167	2,666	2,731	2,880	2,800	2,841	2,876	2,901	2,926
<i>Change (Number)</i>		499	65	149	-80	41	35	25	25
<i>Change (Pct.)</i>		23.03%	2.44%	5.46%	-2.78%	1.46%	1.21%	0.87%	0.86%

Table 1.1 - Population Actual and Projected



2. Age

Similar to the national trends, Baroda Township continues to age. The ACS data shows that the last decade reported a modest change in pattern for all age groups. During the decade between 2000 and 2020, the largest group of the population was 35-54, which comprised an average of 26% of the population. The second largest age group over that period was 20-34 representing around 20% of the total population.

Table 2 also shows the most recent Census population by age group between 2020 and 2022. Most age categories experienced nearly no change. Pre-school ages 0 to 4 report a decrease of 2%. College-age adults between the ages of 20 to 34 increased by 2%, while those over the age of 65 remained 2% unchanged.

Table 2 - Age Groups by Number and as a Percent of the Total

Year	Pre-School		School Age				College - Adults				Older Adults		Seniors		Number
	0-4		5-9		10-19		20 - 34		35 - 54		55 - 64		65 >		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
2022	105	3.7%	191	6.7%	306	10.8%	370	13.0%	949	33.4%	448	15.8%	472	16.6%	2,841
2020	125	4.4%	181	6.4%	361	12.7%	430	15.2%	711	25.1%	489	17.2%	538	19.0%	2,835
2010	161	5.7%	176	6.3%	371	13.2%	446	15.9%	858	30.6%	360	12.9%	429	15.3%	2,801

Source: U.S. Census, ACS-2022, 5 yr Est.

Table 2.1 - Age Groups by Number and as a Percent of the Total

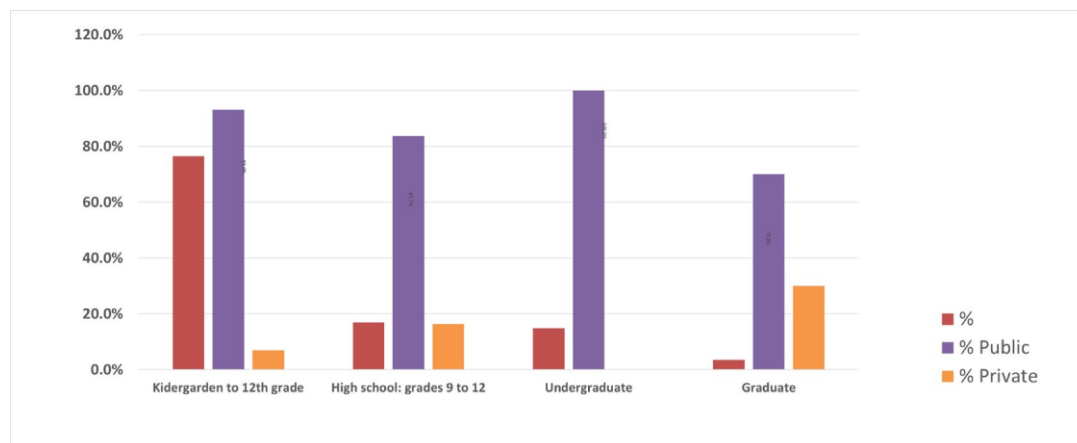


Table 3 - Demographic Cohorts by Number and as a Percent of the Total

Demographic Cohorts	2010		2020	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Young Children (0-4)	161	5.75%	125	4.41%
School Age (5-19)	547	19.53%	542	19.12%
Young Adults (20-34)	446	15.92%	430	15.17%
Adults (35-64)	1,218	43.48%	1,200	42.33%
Seniors (65 and over)	429	15.32%	538	18.98%
Total	2,801		2,835	

Another way to consider this is by demographic cohorts. Young children and school-age children comprised 25.3% of the population in 2010. The most recent 2020 census shows a decline in those demographic cohorts to 23.5% of the population. This is in stark contrast to adults aged 35 to 64 and

those over 65 who, 10 years ago, made up 58.8% of the population and now represent 61.3% of the population.

The Township is served by several public and private schools. The total number of the student population is reported to be about 580. A breakdown of the student population is provided in the following Table 4. While many students attend other school districts serving the area, the majority of the Township population attend Lakeshore School District. The following table lists the school system and the enrollment. As can be noted, as a whole enrollment has declined slightly in recent years.

Table 4 - School Enrollment

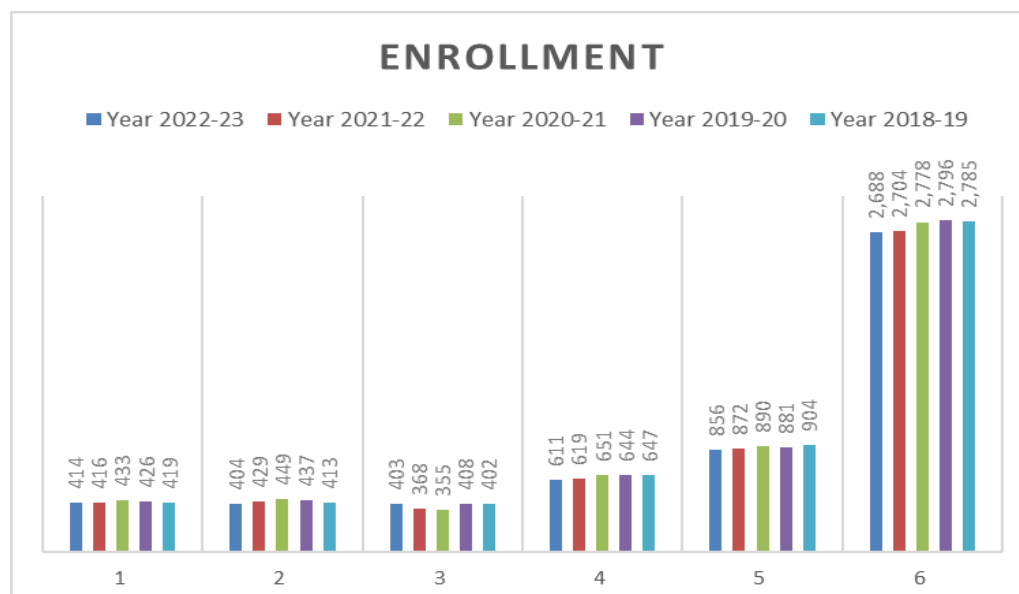
School Enrollment						
Description	Total	%	Public	%	Private	%
Kindergarten through 8th grade	443	76.4%	412	93.0%	31	7.0%
High school: grades 9 through 12	98	16.9%	82	83.7%	16	16.3%
Undergraduate	86	14.8%	86	100.0%	0	0.0%
Graduate	20	3.4%	14	70.0%	6	30.0%
Total Enrollment	580					

Source: ACS-2022 5, yr Est.

Table 5 - Lakeshore School District

School	Year				
	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19
Stewart Elementary	414	416	433	426	419
Roosevelt Elementary	404	429	449	437	413
Hollywood Elementary	403	368	355	408	402
Lakeshore Middle	611	619	651	644	647
Lakeshore High School	856	872	890	881	904
Lakeshore School District Total	2,688	2,704	2,778	2,796	2,785

Table 5.1 - Lakeshore School District



3. Housing

The total number of housing units in the Township is reported to be 1,315. This is an increase of 4.5% of the number of units. The majority of the homes are typically owner-occupied, although some of the homes are rented as short-term rentals during tourist season.

In 2010 rental household size was slightly higher than the owner at 2.35 members per unit. Also notable is the significant increase in the reported vacant units between 2020 and 2022 which is estimated to be due to the impact of COVID on tourism.

Table 6 - Housing Characteristics

Type	Baroda Township				Berrien County			
	2010	2020	2022	% Change 2020-2022	2010	2020	2022	% Change 2020-2022
Total housing units	1,287	1,258	1,315	4.5%	76,824	76,821	76,948	0.2%
Owner-Occupied	958	962	1,038	7.9%	45,564	45,580	47,928	5.2%
% of Total	74.4%	76.5%	78.9%	2.5%	59.3%	59.3%	62.3%	3.0%
Renter-Occupied	184	210	185	-11.9%	17,048	18,375	15,383	-16.3%
% of Total	14.3%	16.7%	14.1%	-2.6%	22.2%	23.9%	20.0%	-3.9%
Vacant Units	145	86	92	7.0%	14,212	12,866	13,436	4.4%
% of Total	11.3%	6.8%	7.0%	0.2%	18.5%	16.7%	17.5%	0.7%
Average HH Size-Owner	2.50	2.50	2.48	-0.8%	2.50	2.46	2.45	-0.4%
Average HH Size-Renter	2.25	3.09	2.53	-18.1%	2.33	2.17	2.18	0.5%

Half of Baroda Township homes, both owner-occupied and renter-occupied, were built before 1980 at 50% and 55.7% respectively. The largest number of housing units built in the Township for homeownership was between 1980 and 1999 and for rental between 1960 and 1979. A comparison of homes built in Berrien County during the same period records a majority of owner-occupied units and renter-occupied units were built before 1980, at 70.5% and 74.8%.

Table 7 - Year Built

Year Built	Berrien County				Baroda Township			
	Owner	%	Renter	%	Owner	%	Renter	%
2020 >	354	0.7%	155	1.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
2010 to 2019	1,715	3.6%	505	3.3%	54	5.2%	8	4.3%
2000 to 2009	4,608	9.6%	376	2.4%	140	13.5%	28	15.1%
1980 to 1999	7,442	15.5%	2,916	19.0%	320	30.8%	46	24.9%
1960 to 1979	12,729	26.6%	5,471	35.6%	213	20.5%	58	31.4%
1940 to 1959	12,284	25.6%	3,298	21.4%	125	12.0%	22	11.9%
< 1939	8,796	18.4%	2,662	17.3%	186	17.9%	23	12.4%
Total	47,928		15,383		1,038		185	

Source: ACS-2022, 5 yr Est

Table 8 shows owner-occupied single-family detached and attached homes represent the majority of the 1,038 total units. Few renter-occupied apartment units are available in the community. A moderate number of mobile homes are available and offer families and individuals additional options for homeownership and rental opportunities.

Table 8 - Occupied Housing Units

Type	Owner	%	Renter	%	Total
Detached/attached	682	74.2%	43	36.1%	725
2 apartments	9	1%	36	30.3%	45
3 or 4 apartments	0	0.0%	11	9.2%	11
5 to 9 apartments	0	0.0%	2	1.7%	2
10 or more apartments	0	0.0%	13	10.9%	13
Mobile home or other	228	24.8%	14	11.8%	242
Total	919	100.0%	119	100.0%	1,038

Source: U.S. Census, ACS-5 yr Est.

4. Employment

The Township employment status has relatively remained stable for the last two. The primary explanation for this condition is expected to be the significant number of small family businesses and the diversity of the businesses in the Township. This diversity has given the Township significant resiliency to the economic conditions.

Table 9 - Employment Status

Description	2022	2020	2010
Total Pop. 16 years & up	2,323	2,270	2,206
In labor force	1,640	1,579	1,523
Civilian labor force	1,640	1,579	1,523
Employed	1,574	1,533	1,431
Unemployed	66	46	92
Unemployed %	4%	3%	6%

Source: U.S. Census, ACS-5 yr Est.2024

Table 10 - Occupation by Industry

Employment Type	2022	2020	2010
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1,574	1,533	1,431
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	39	35	74
Construction	118	86	92
Manufacturing	369	353	213
Wholesale trade	9	9	9
Retail trade	119	124	119
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	148	137	142
Information	20	8	15
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	48	59	64
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	173	156	112
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	165	194	230
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	112	147	127
Other services, except public administration	105	135	179
Public administration	149	90	55

Source: U.S. Census, ACS-5 yr Est.

In 2022, the total number of civilians employed is reported to be about 1,574. This is slightly higher than 2020 and about 10% higher since 2010. Among different employment categories, it appears manufacturing provides the highest number of employment opportunities. Entertainment, recreation, and other services provide the second-highest number of opportunities.

Table 11 - Work and Community

WORK AND COMMUTING - Workers 16 and over

Description	Total	Male	Female
Workers 16 years and over	1,531	773	758
Means to Work			
Car, truck, or van	89.2%	93.3%	85.1%
<i>drove alone</i>	79.4%	87.7%	70.8%
<i>carpooled</i>	9.9%	5.6%	12.5%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Walked	0.8%	1.2%	0.4%
Bicycle	0.6%	0.5%	0.7%
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	1.3%	1.9%	0.7%
Worked from home	8.0%	3.0%	13.2%
Travel time to work			
Less than 10 minutes	11.2%	11.2%	11.2%
10 to 29 minutes	69.0%	61.1%	78.2%
30 to 34 minutes	8.9%	11.7%	5.8%
35 to 59 minutes	5.4%	7.6%	2.9%
60 or more minutes	5.4%	8.4%	2.0%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	22.4	24.7	19.7
Place of Work			
In State of residence	97.3%	95.0%	99.6%
<i>in County of residence</i>	92.7%	86.7%	98.9%
<i>outside County of residence</i>	4.6%	8.3%	0.8%
Outside State of residence	2.7%	5.0%	0.4%

5. Income

Baroda Township's median income is higher than the County as a whole. The income growth for the last decade for the Township is about 58% while the growth for the County is about 44%. Both of these numbers are higher than the inflation rate for the same period.

Table 12 - Income

Year	Baroda Township	Change	Berrien County	Change
2022	\$ 69,712	\$ 12,781	\$ 60,379	\$ 7,879
2020	\$ 56,931	\$ 12,731	\$ 52,500	\$ 9,875
2010	\$ 44,200	x	\$ 42,625	x

III - LAND-USE

1. Agricultural

Agricultural uses are the predominant land-use in the Township. The farms are typically family farms, producing a variety of crops, including grapes, corn, and other fruits and vegetables.

A number of clusters of agricultural land is also enrolled in the Michigan Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program, commonly known as PA 116. The bulk of this farmland is located in the south-central portion of the Township, with some scattered areas elsewhere. PA 116 is intended to protect farmland and open space via agreements that limit development and offer certain tax incentives. Essentially, the agreements require open land to remain as such for a minimum of 10 years; in exchange for certain income tax benefits and indemnity from special assessments related to municipal infrastructure extensions.

2. Residential

The 2020 Census identified about 1,300 housing units in the Township. The existing residential units consist of single-family residential, which are typically on smaller lots, less than an acre lots, rural residential, which are typically more than an acre lots, multifamily consisting for two to four housing units and manufacturing. As a whole, residential uses occupy about 707 acres in the Township. The residential uses are scattered throughout the Township with concentration along major transportation corridors or clustering around environmentally attractive sites or other smaller subdivision.



Image 4 - Typical vineyard farm



Image 5 - An example of a typical farm with mixed farming activities



Image 6 - A typical small family farm



Image 7 - Modern new residential housing

3. Commercial

Most of the commercial land uses in the Township are connected to local industrial uses or businesses along major transportation corridors. Cleveland Avenue, Lemon Creek Road, Shawnee Road, and Stevensville-Baroda Road all have a variety of commercial uses. These uses consist of traditional industrial uses or car repair shops as well as agricultural-related businesses such as nursery stores. Commercial uses also include several wineries and accommodation businesses that are scattered in different parts of the Township. The total identified commercial area is expected to be about 120 acres.



Image 8

4. Industrial

The Township has a limited amount of industrial uses. Most of it consists of fabrication and light industrial uses. A substantial number of these businesses are located within the Village of Baroda.



Image 9 - Manufacturing in Baroda

5. Institutional

While most of the institutional uses are located within the boundaries of the Village, one church, St. Joseph Orthodox church, was identified in the Township. Two existing cemeteries are also located within the Township (Ruggles and Hinman Cemeteries).



Image 10

6. Parks/Open Space

There are two parks in the Township. One is within the Village, Village park. This facility consists of 5.2 acres and is fully equipped with play fields and courts as well as playgrounds and other park amenities. Hess Lake park, in the Township, covers an area of 29 acres and includes the 17 acres of Hess Lake. The park is adjacent to several parcels of land that remain natural and offer an opportunity for future expansion of the park. Singer Lake is another recreational area in the Township that is often used as a recreational spot for tourists. The open space system is primarily covered by wooded areas along the Hickory Creek. The green corridor along this creek in effect divides the Township into two separate parts.

II- INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Transportation

The 2020 Census data shows that more than 89% of Baroda's 1,531-person workforce over 16 years of age used private automobiles to travel to work. Of these, 79.4% drove alone to work. The mean travel to work time for a Baroda resident in 2020 was 22.4 minutes. Baroda Township does not have a public transportation system, so residents typically use cars.

Baroda Township has access to a road network in all directions that is worry-free for motorists. In most areas, the rural character of the Township is generally well suited for motorists with the lack of natural or manmade obstacles. The primary roads in the Township consist of the following. These roads have a range of 1,000-5,000 daily traffic.

- Cleveland Avenue
- Lemon Creek Road
- Shawnee Road
- Stevensville-Baroda Road



Image 11



Image 12

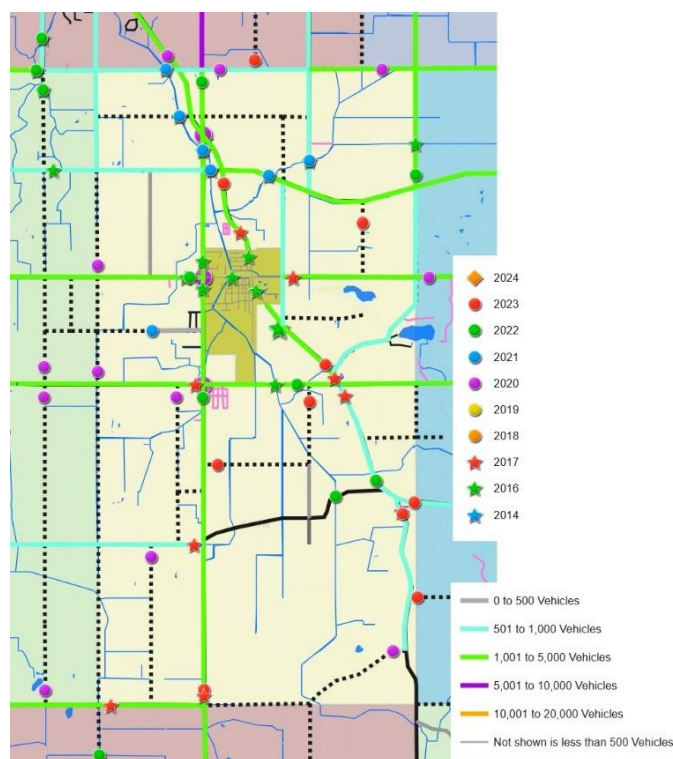


Figure 4- Transportation

2. Utilities

With the exception of the Village of Baroda, the availability of utilities in the Township is limited as most of the residents rely on electrical for heat and other uses. The water services are largely provided by private wells; some areas have access to the Village and Lake Township's water systems. Sewer is provided by the Village, Lake Township, or private septic systems. A major gas line traverses the Township and provides service where access to the pipeline is readily available. Municipal water is also available in the following locations:

- Cleveland Avenue
- Shawnee to Holden Road
- The Village
- Subdivision behind the old Hardings

V - NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Baroda Township is situated in the southwestern portion of Michigan's Lower Peninsula approximately 10 miles from the Indiana border. The Township is 18 square miles in area and is generally characterized by Hess Lake, Singer Lake, gently rolling hills, nearby vineyards and wineries, a high-water table, and high-quality, low-density residential areas. Patches of wooded areas and forested lands are scattered throughout the Township in the lower elevation areas and along Hickory Creek and local drainage ways. The Village of Baroda is also a chartered community within the Township. The following sections present the general natural character of the Township.

1. Lakes and Creeks

Hess Lake, a 17-acre water body between Lemon Creek Road and Tuttle Road, serves as an aesthetic and recreational amenity in the community. Hess Lake is the defining feature of Township Park. Additionally, Singer Lake is approximately 26 acres and stretches between Baroda Township and Oronoko Township. Aside from the preservation of open space via Hess Lake Park, these two lakes have served as magnets for residential

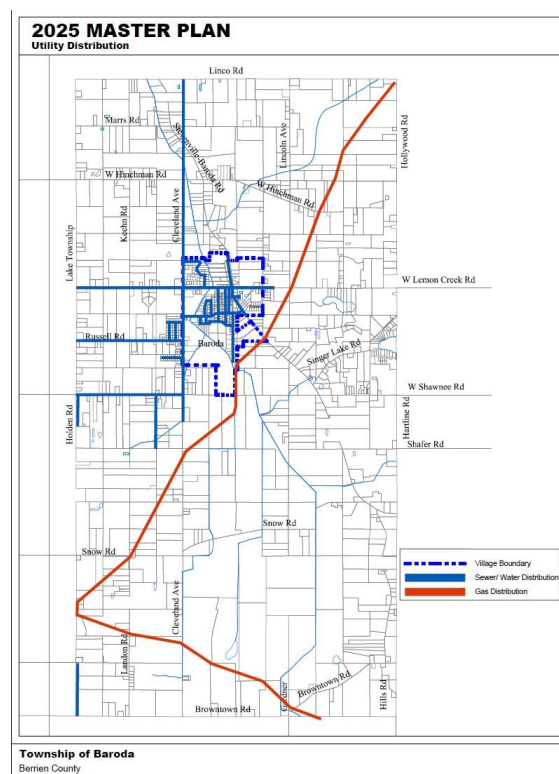


Figure 5 - Utility Distribution



Image 13

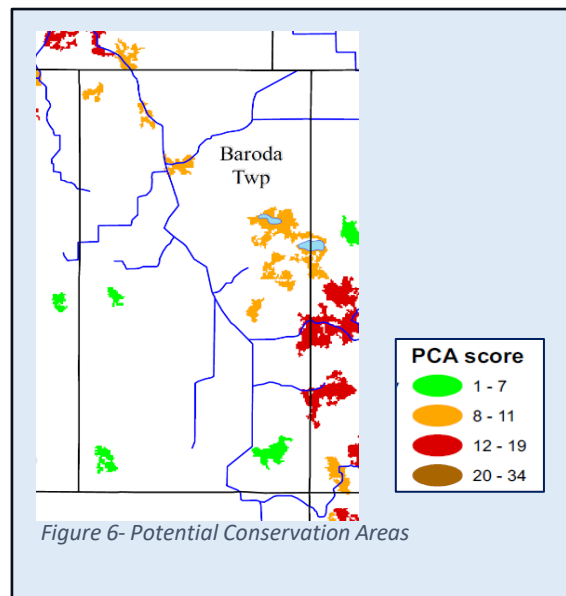


Image 14

development and often are used by tourists and residents for a variety of water-based recreational activities. While no rivers exist in Baroda, Hickory Creek flows through the Township, originating in Oronoko Township to the East and heading in a Northwesterly direction. The creek empties into the St. Joseph River in St. Joseph Township to the North. East branch of Galien Creek also crosses a smaller area on the Southwestern part of the Township. Several tributaries traverse through the Township and empty into Hickory Creek.

2. Wetlands

According to the data assembled by the State of Michigan using data from the National Wetland Inventory, several large wetland areas are present in the Township. Figure 6 illustrates generally the potential wetland area throughout the Township. As can be noted most of the wetlands are located south of the Village of Baroda, and north of the Village along Hickory Creek. While wetlands can limit development potential, wetlands offer many invaluable environmental benefits ranging from flood protection to maintaining the water table and filtering underground aquifers, and creating opportunities for wildlife to flourish in the Township. Southwest Michigan Planning Commission also has prepared a plan that identifies several areas around Hess Lake and Singer Lake as well as Hickory Creek with high conservation values.



3. Groundwater

Groundwater is the only source of water for many of the Township residents and businesses. It is therefore important that the quality of groundwater in the Township is protected from potential sources of contamination. As development occurs in Baroda Township, natural resources will inevitably be impacted. The groundwater supplies in the Township, even though abundant, can be affected as more area becomes impervious and with greater demand placed on groundwater supplies.

Protection of underground water resources is important to the sustainability of the Township. Such protection involves less use of fertilizers and better management of surface runoff from residential lawns and farming activities as well as affluent for septic systems.

4. Soil

Many areas of Baroda Township experience drainage issues and are considered wet or “muck.” Muck is a general soil type comprised primarily of organic material (at least 20%) from drained wetlands. These and similar saturated soils are predominant throughout much of Baroda. Even though this saturation can restrict development intensity, it has the potential to provide the ideal soil type for many agricultural products such as vegetables and similar products.

A number of clusters of agricultural land are also enrolled in PA 116. PA 116 is intended to protect farmland and open space via agreements that limit development and offer certain tax incentives. The bulk of this farmland is located in the south-central portion of the Township, with some scattered areas elsewhere. Essentially, the agreements require open land to remain as such for a minimum of 10 years; in exchange for certain income tax benefits and indemnity from special assessments related to municipal infrastructure extensions. The size of the parcel must be a minimum of 40 acres in area.

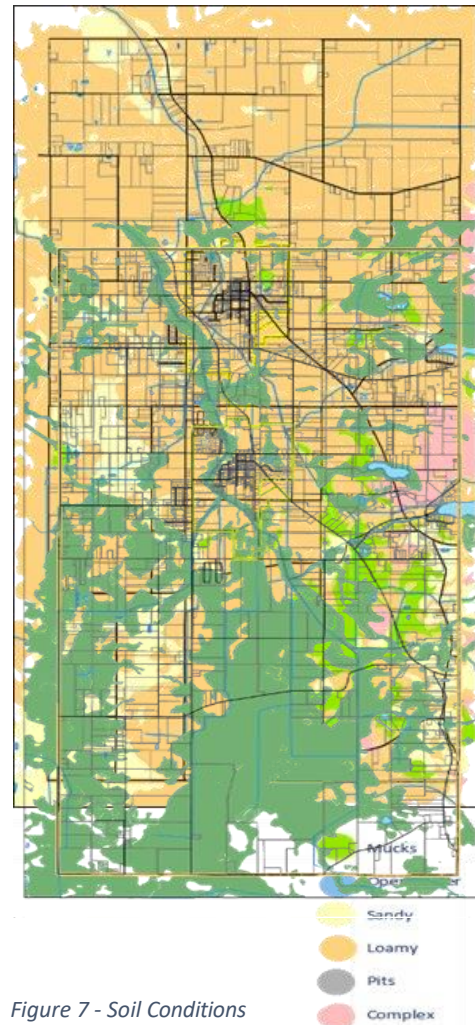


Figure 7 - Soil Conditions

VI - KEY FINDINGS

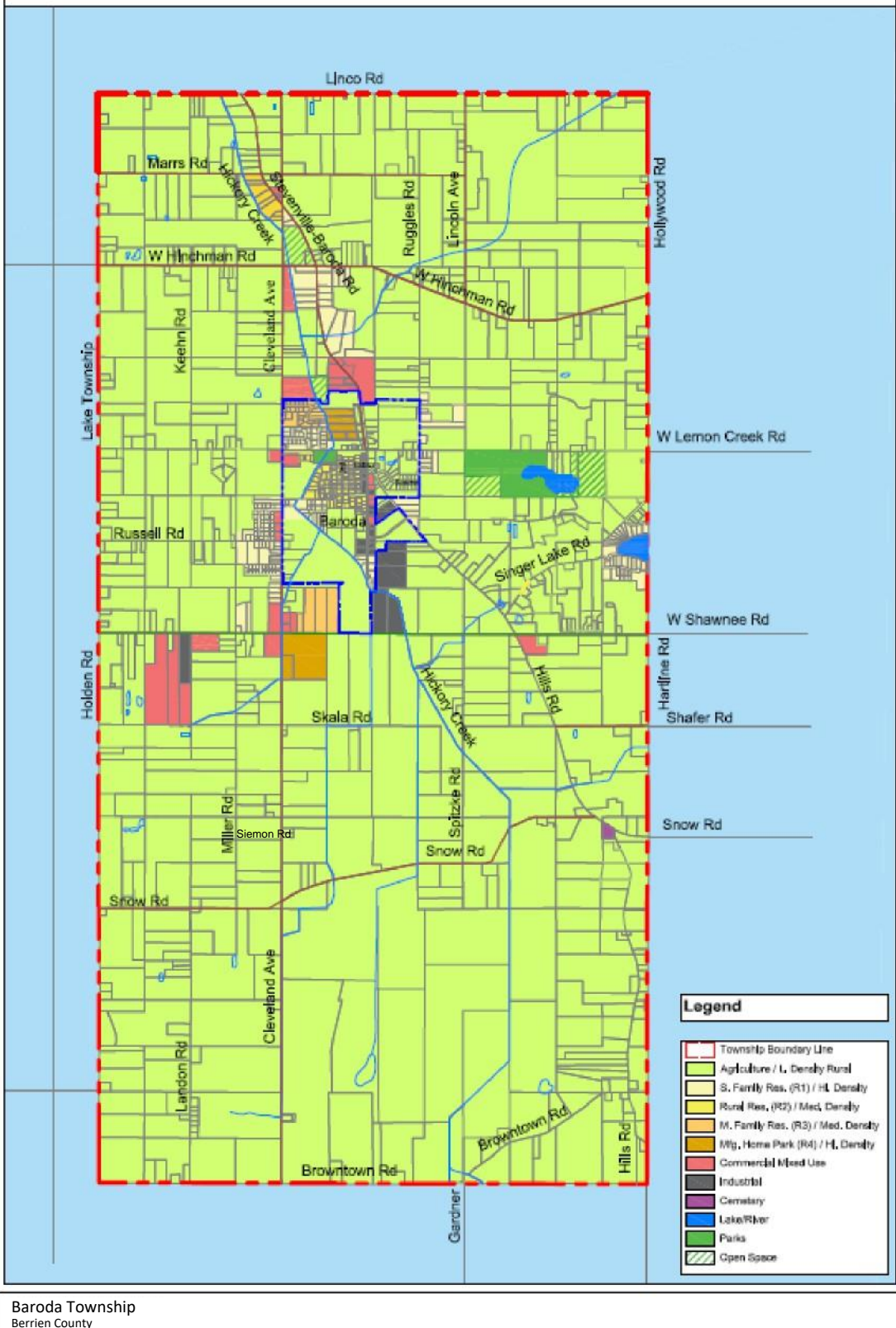
The analysis of the information presented in this section indicates several significant trends influencing the future of Baroda Township. Some needs are more likely to be provided either in the Village of Baroda or regionally, primarily in Berrien County. The factors are summarized as follows:

1. The population is generally stable and an expected slight upward trend in the near future. However, the national and regional trends indicate an aging population. Efforts should be employed to attract younger families into the area to ensure sustainability. Just 5.5% of the population in Baroda Township is between the ages of 20 and 24.
2. As the population ages, it's essential to create more opportunities for seniors. This includes offering alternative housing options, expanding recreational activities suitable for older adults, and ensuring access to medical services within the community.
3. The housing conditions are generally good but are threatened by two factors. Conversion of many single-family homes to short-term rentals and accommodation uses. Such uses may change the rural character of the area. The second factor is the age of the housing. The maintenance cost of such homes typically becomes an impediment as older homes require larger investments for maintenance and thus make them less affordable.
4. While the total number of renters has relatively stayed the same, the average household size of renters in the Township has sharply increased, indicating a shift in housing demand for families.

5. The average median income for residents of the Township based on the 2022 American Community Survey is higher than the County average as a whole. This indicates the ability to continue to afford middle- and upper-income housing. Such owners however do require community amenities, which often are not provided by the community.
6. Employment diversity in the Township is fairly high and that gives substantial stability to the community. Additional efforts may be required to expand the diversity of the workforce to ensure the availability of jobs in the future.
7. Small-town characteristics have historically been desirable and tend to draw population. Without proper planning, however, growth and development could undermine the very features that attract it in the first place. While Baroda may not face significant growth pressures at the present time, it is important that measures, such as development guidelines and preservation of farmland, as well as cottage industry development policies, are in place to manage any future growth.
8. A substantial portion of the Township's land area is comprised of wetlands and wooded areas. Former drainage ways also offer an opportunity to become natural greenways and blueways corridors and connecting different parts of the Township.
9. The majority of Township residents receive potable water from underground wells. To protect the quality of water resources in the community and in the region, it will be important for the Township to evaluate development's impact on a site-by-site basis and put in place measures that ensure underground protection.
10. One major feature of any rural setting is the availability of small farms. With the growth of tourism and the establishment of large-lot residential developments by second-home buyers, the sense of a small town could be lost. It is important that the Township encourage maintaining small farms and limit splitting land to smaller lots for residential development.

2025 MASTER PLAN

Existing Land-Use



Baroda Township
Berrien County

Figure 8 – Existing Land-Use Map

CHAPTER 3

FRAMEWORK PLAN

The Future Development Framework for Baroda Township is a set of collaborative goals and strategies shaped by input from various stakeholders, Township officials (including Township staff), and residents. These inputs have guided the identification of the future character of the community, intended land uses, and preservation of their unique characteristics while taking advantage of opportunities that already exist in the community.

The Township's vision for the Plan evolved from these inputs as outlined in the following sections. The community input has further shaped a set of goals for the planning of the Township. Based on these goals, the consultant team has identified different strategies to promote such goals or support the implementation of them. The goals as a whole support a collaborative approach to plan for future land-use, sustainability and quality of life, and/or future infrastructure and connectivity needs. The Township staff, leadership, and the Planning Commission had a strong role in formulating the identified goals and objectives to support them.

The Baroda Township Master Plan is developed based on a vision expressed by the citizens and a set of issues identified in the community survey. The recommended priorities reflect the expressed opinion of citizens established. The vision, identified issues, and priorities are outlined in the following sections.

I- VISION

Baroda Township at its core is a Midwestern community with a diverse heritage and character. For almost two centuries, the Township has balanced its agrarian heritage with the opportunities provided for the development of robust economic diversity.

Through the community survey questionnaire, the citizens' input, stakeholders' and Township officials' comments, and sentiments consistently embraced the sustainable principles of land-use planning and presented ideas and concepts to promote preservation, protect community character, and support economic development.

I - Preservation

Baroda Township contains a thriving agricultural industry and rural economy that must be protected through managed growth and development policies.

II - Managed Growth

Given its location, and development trends, Baroda Township is well-positioned for continued growth. The Land-Use Plan will protect agricultural land while advancing the foundation for economic diversity.

III - Sustainability

Baroda Township offers a wealth of environmental assets. The Land-Use Plan must protect these assets by protecting natural resources, limiting the impacts of new development and maintaining quality of life for rural communities.

IV - Coordination

Implementation of the Township Land-Use Plan should be closely coordinated with the Village of Baroda and other agencies.

Figure 9 – Future Plan Guided Principles

1. Issues

The most important issues identified by residents include:

- Attractiveness of commercial areas (87%)
- Loss of open space (87%)
- Loss of “small town” feel (82%)
- Lack of retail services (82%)
- Job opportunities (78%)
- Farmland fragmentation (70%)
- Recreation facilities (61%)
- Code enforcement (65%)

2. Priorities

The residents identified the following tasks as high-priority items for the Township.

- Preserving natural areas (94%)
- Revitalize storefronts in downtown Baroda (92%)
- Preserve rural character (88%)
- Creating job opportunities locally (87%)
- Expanding communications infrastructure (86%)
- Better enforcement of the zoning ordinance (65%)
- Increasing housing opportunities for seniors (64%)
- Support policies that limit growth

II - GOALS

Comments and input received from the citizens have generated a set of goals and objectives for different elements of the Plan. These goals further guide the development of a framework plan for future land-use direction in the Township. By incorporating the identified goals and the vision, the Plan will reflect a much stronger appreciation for the citizen's needs and the long-term sustainability of the community. The following categories identify different elements of the Plan with associated goals and strategies for Baroda Township for the 2025 Plan.

GOALS:

1. Land-Use
2. Community Character
3. Economic Development
4. Infrastructure
5. Sustainability

Figure 10 – Framework Plan Goals

1. Land-Use

- **Farmland and Open Space Preservation:** Preserve open space and agricultural land, particularly valuable farmlands, through reduction of fragmentation, support of family farms, and development encroachment.
- **Manage Development:** Limit new development to areas that can be fully supported by the existing infrastructure and are generally adjacent to the urbanized areas. (Urban Fringe Area)
- **Cluster Development:** Consider diverse land uses generally using the cluster development concept of land-use planning.

2. Community Character

- **Revitalize Downtown:** Collaborate with the Village of Baroda to promote revitalization, introduction of mixed housing, and fringe development.
- **Community Design:** Support public arts and architectural design in all new developments and gateways to create a sense of arrival in the Township.
- **Public Roads:** Create a sense of arrival and enhance scenic charm for the roads where opportunity exists by natural landscaping and generous frontage setbacks.

3. Economic Development

- **Improve Branding:** Support the application of creative and effective branding approaches to enhance Baroda for cottage industry as well as modern industrial businesses to improve the overall economic conditions.
- **Destination Development:** Enhance marketing efforts to create a unique destination in Southwest Michigan for living, working, shopping, and dining.

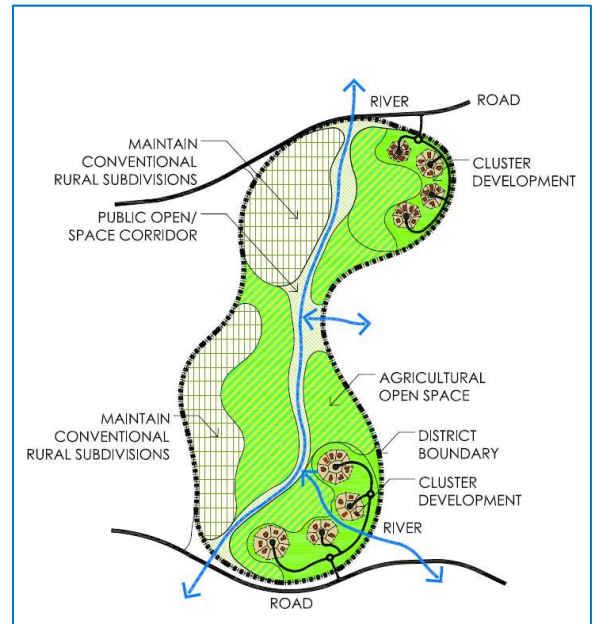


Figure 11

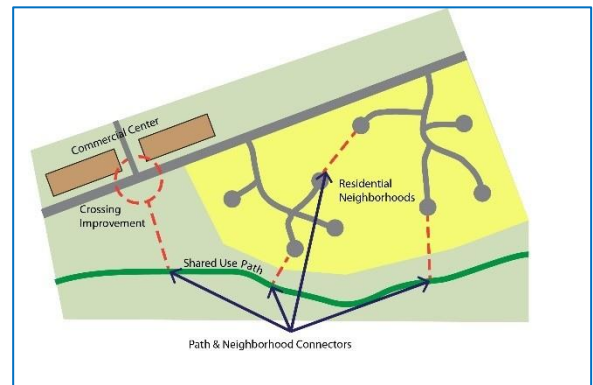


Figure 12



Image 15

4. Infrastructure

- **Broadband:** Continue efforts to ensure the availability of broadband internet throughout the Township.
- **Connectivity:** Ensure the availability of a superb multi-modal transportation system for all of the Township.
- **Trails:** Work with the County to link the Township trail system to the countywide system. Plan for a trail system along existing waterways and major arterials of Cleveland Avenue, Lemon Creek Road, and Shawnee Road.
- **Scenic Roads:** Hills Road, Stevensville-Baroda Road, and Singer Lake Road offer opportunities for the establishment of a scenic road.



Figure 13 - Localized Sewer Distribution allows higher density on a short-term and extension of sewer system in the long term.

5. Sustainability

- **Parks and Open Space:** Protect existing natural areas as open space and green corridors. Expand existing Hess Park with additional park facilities and open play areas.
- **Natural Areas:** Protect natural areas as green and blue corridors linking all sections of the Township.



Image 16 – Visually separated pedway on a rural road.



Image 17 – Hickory Creek and its tributaries bisect the Township and offer ample opportunity for conservation and recreation

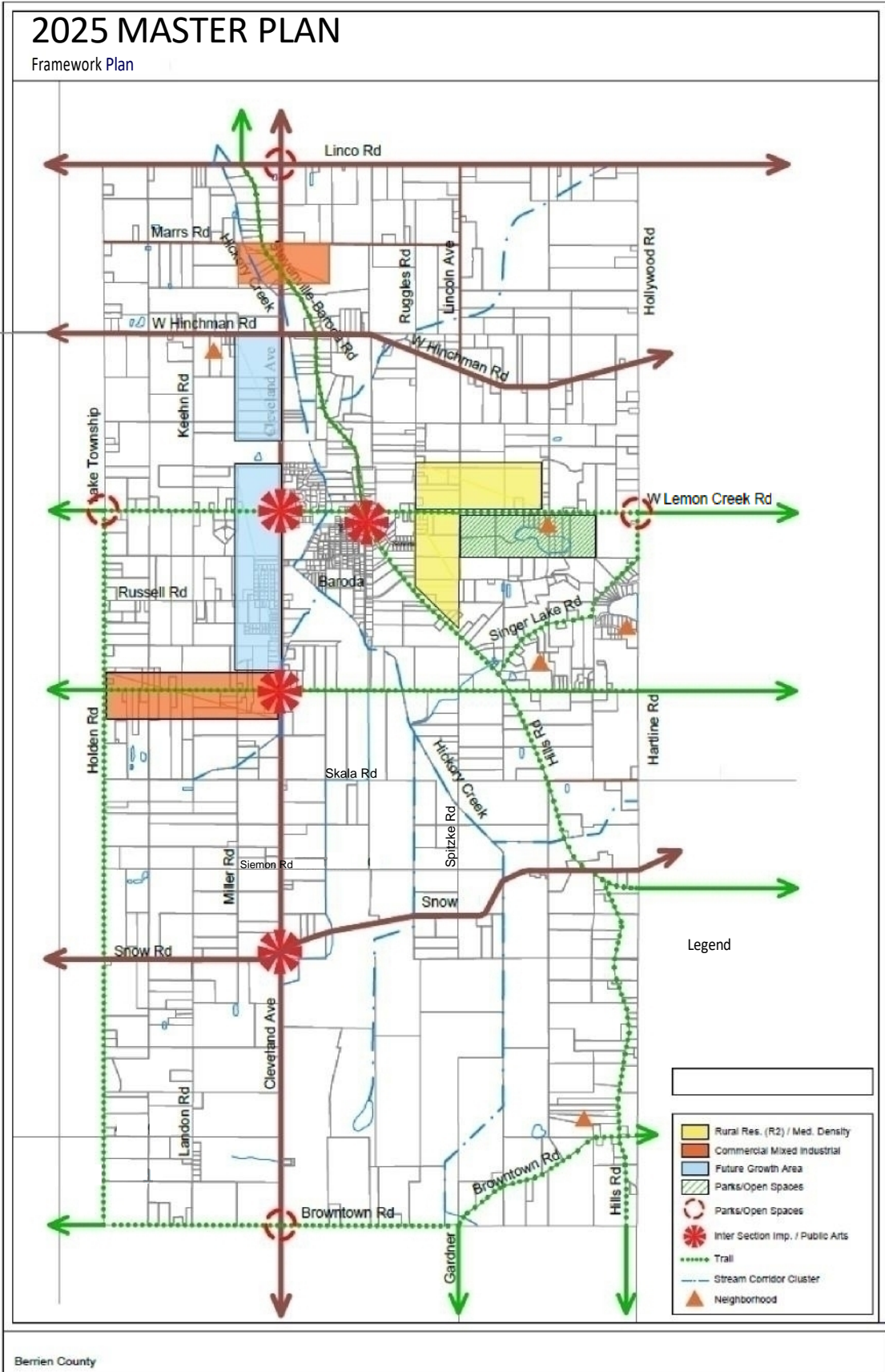


Figure 14 – 2025 Master Plan Framework Plan

CHAPTER 4

FUTURE PLAN

The Future Plan articulates appropriate land uses for the Township for the next 10-20 years. The policies and recommendations presented in this chapter recognize the vast diversity of the Township and its population. With this diversity in mind, the Plan aims to present a flexible and balanced approach for future decision making. This will allow the Township to manage new growth while protecting and enhancing the Township's rural character and natural environment.

The Future Plan is guided by the four principles identified in Chapter 3: Preservation, Managed Growth, Sustainability, and Coordination. These principles have influenced the policy direction for the Land-Use Plan. They also support the priorities for the Township as outlined by the residents and as it engages in the implementation of the Plan. As anticipated, the Township will use these principals to direct most new residential and commercial growth into several land-use typology categories ranging from Future Growth Areas to Natural and Open Space. The Township will further focus on agricultural preservation, open space protection, and the development of business centers that can create new employment and investment opportunities for the Township.

The Future Plan is organized into several sections, each describing a specific pattern or character for different land-use categories prevalent in the Township. These land-use types establish the framework for the proposed Land-Use Plan. The recommendations included for different land uses are intended to form the basis for development of zoning decisions and development of zoning amendments as desired by the Township.

I- LAND-USE

The Land-Use Plan is intended to shape the future physical character of the Township by recommending a series of proposals which will focus development in several identified Target Areas. The Plan also establishes a process in which development is not impeded, while sustainability and preservation of the Township's resources are achieved. The primary focus of the Future Plan, however, will be to direct development toward urbanized areas in contiguous "Future Growth Areas (FGA)." The Plan further supports for already developed clusters by promoting policies which strengthen such communities and create complete neighborhoods. The Corridor land-use prototype aims to support an orderly process for several corridors in the Township that could be developed in the near future for appropriate uses.

Land-Use Categories

The Future Plan proposes seven different land-use categories for Baroda Township. Each use designation describes the primary land-use and development intensity of parcels under Township jurisdiction. Under State laws, the Township's zoning code is the regulatory tool that can be used to implement land-use policies. As such, the Township Subdivision and Zoning codes are expected to be amended to reflect the proposed recommendations of this Plan.

1. Future Growth Area (FGA)
2. Cluster Neighborhood
3. Agriculture
4. Residential
5. Neighborhood Center
6. Corridor
7. Parks, Open Space

Figure 15 – Land-Use Categories

1. Future Growth Area (FGA)

The Future Growth Area (FGA) is a comprehensive land-use designation comprising all land uses found within the FGA-designated area and adjacent to the Village of Baroda. The FGA is a land area that is defined by location, not by a single land-use. The FGA does not intend to prescribe a specific land-use, but is intended to be used as a tool to manage growth and prevent uncontrolled development around the Village and other developed areas.

It is recommended that the existing land uses – mostly agricultural or residential – remain intact. Development in the FGA is generally intended to support adjacent infrastructure and proximity to the urban core of the Township. FGA-designated districts could perhaps be the primary location for most future development in the Township.

In addition to the requirements for infrastructure and public services, the FGA areas should typically be master planned and compatible with adjoining uses. This will require coordination between the Township and the Village. Such coordination will allow the continuation of a sense of community and prevent the development of disjointed subdivisions. Further coordination may be required with respect to existing development or structures within the FGA District that do not have access to public facilities. Most of these structures are expected to eventually be connected to the municipal public facilities.

Primary Use: Land-use typology within the FGA district should typically retain its existing uses. With the exception of the existing residential uses, most of the land should remain as Agriculture or Open Space until future development occurs, where a zoning change to the proposed use will be required. Outside the FGA, the remaining portions of the Township should maintain agricultural and open space character to preserve the Township's rural character.

Future Growth Area	
EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE LAND-USE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Residential▪ Mixed Use▪ Parks, Recreation, Open Space▪ Institutional▪ Agriculture	
ZONING	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Planned Development (10 Ac. Min.)▪ Residential (2-40)▪ Agriculture (2 Ac. Min.)▪ Density: 2-4 units per Ac.▪ Intensity: FAR 0.5-2	
BUILDING TYPE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Single Family, detached & attached▪ Mixed Use: 2-3 story▪ Commercial: 1-2 story▪ Corridors: 2-3 story	

Figure 16 – Future Growth Area

2. Cluster Neighborhood

The Cluster Neighborhood land-use category includes numerous concentrated residential communities and rural subdivisions – typically 5- 10+ housing units – that are scattered throughout the Township. Large lot, single-family detached homes are the predominant housing type and are typically found concentrated in a rural or natural scenic setting.

Existing Cluster communities are not typically connected to municipal infrastructure and/or utilities. Streets do not have curbs and gutters, and homes are served by wells for water and septic systems for sanitation. In such communities, efforts should be made to strengthen rural character by supporting infill housing or introducing new housing on larger lots. Preservation and integration of open space and agricultural land is essential for Cluster Neighborhoods. For larger development clusters, localized utilities should be considered.

Primary Use: Future land-use in the Cluster Neighborhood designated areas will primarily consist of large lots of suburban-style residential uses. New development in most cases will be in the form of infill development with a similar character to the existing uses with respect to form, scale, and style. Large lot infill residential uses (1-2 acres) may be permitted where required by existing site conditions. New planned development immediately adjacent to existing clusters may be permitted, provided they consist of a minimum of 10 acres with appropriate infrastructure. Inclusion of other uses or amenities which foster the creation of a “complete neighborhood” may also be encouraged. Non-residential uses should be limited only to major corridor sections that are within the neighborhood, or locations that conform to existing land uses.

Cluster Neighborhood
EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE LAND-USE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Residential Infill
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Planned Residential▪ Parks, Recreation, Open Space▪ Agriculture
ZONING
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Planned Residential (10 Ac. Min.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Residential▪ Agriculture▪ Density: 0.5-1 units per Ac.▪ Intensity: FAR 0.2-0.5
BUILDING TYPE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Single Family, Detached & Attached▪ Mixed Use: 2-3 story▪ Corridors: 2-3 story

Figure 17 – Cluster Neighborhood

3. Agriculture

The Agriculture land-use category aims to protect the Township's farming heritage by safeguarding its fertile farmland from non-agricultural uses and development that could negatively impact farming as a lifestyle and business practice. This land-use is characterized by high value farmlands, as well as a scenic rural landscape and green or waterway corridors.

Residential uses in Agriculture district will be limited in density and must be complementary to agricultural uses, consisting of two primary household units and a workers' unit that will coexist alongside the farmland. Developments not linked to agricultural or agricultural residential purposes should not be permitted. New facilities supporting agricultural operations should preserve open spaces and environmental features, including existing wooded areas, waterways, and wetlands. The preservation and enhancement of family farms is also an important objective that ensures the continuation of farming or the establishment of agribusinesses in the Township. To maintain this tradition, the subdivision of farmland to less than 20 acres should be refrained.

Primary Use: Areas designated as Agriculture are primarily intended for the cultivation of the land, production of crops, and raising of livestock. In general, the majority of the Township should remain as agricultural land, occupied by family farms and small businesses that rely on the production of products, i.e. nurseries, vegetables, etc. as the sole source of income.

Agriculture
EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE LAND-USE
▪ Agriculture
▪ Residential, Ancillary
▪ Agribusiness, Farmers Market, Ancillary
▪ Parks, Recreation, Open Space
ZONING
▪ Agriculture (2 Ac. Min.)
▪ Density: 1 unit per 5 Ac.
BUILDING TYPE
▪ Single Family, Detached & Attached
▪ Barns and related storage structures

Figure 18 – Agriculture



Image 18 – Consolidated farm buildings create a much more efficient process for small farms

4. Residential

New residential development is anticipated to occur primarily in FGA or Cluster Neighborhood designated areas. Residential characteristics in the Township are expected to consist of the following two residential district types:

A. Rural Residential: This residential district consists of low-density single-family housing developed at densities of 0.5-1 units per acre. Subdivisions may include large lot single-family residential units and high proportions of open space (typically 40-70%). Some may take the form of cluster of residential units on smaller lots to conserve open space, agricultural land, and sensitive or scenic natural features. Although separate sanitary service and water is not required for such Rural Residential areas, elements of green infrastructure and natural open spaces will be the predominant visual elements for this district. Rural Residential subdivisions must be planned with varied types of residential structures, ample open space, rolling hills (where present), generous building setbacks, and rural fencing along the primary road.

Primary Use: Single-family detached and attached units, forestry, traditional land cultivation, complementary uses, including open space and recreation, equestrian uses, schools, places of worship, and other institutional uses.

B. Suburban Residential: Low-density Suburban Residential units can be developed in or adjacent to neighborhoods that promote a sense of community, and offer opportunity for transition. This type of use can concentrate in densities and locations where it can be served efficiently by infrastructure, public facilities, and the transportation network. Neighborhoods will be developed as compact and pedestrian oriented, with a range of lot sizes and measurable open space. Development densities may average up to 4.0 dwelling units per acre, depending on the adequacy of roads, utilities, and full complement of public services and facilities.

Primary Use: Single-family residential detached and attached housing, continuation of agricultural uses, open space, civic and recreation, and mixed-uses where appropriate.

Rural Residential
EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE LAND-USE
▪ Single Family Residential
▪ Planned Residential (Cluster)
▪ Parks, Recreation, Open Space
▪ Agriculture
▪ Agribusiness
ZONING
▪ Residential Infill: 0.5-2 unit per Ac.)
▪ Agribusiness, Ancillary
▪ Density: 0.5-1 units per Ac.
▪ Intensity: FAR 0.2-0.5
BUILDING TYPE
▪ Single Family, Detached & Attached
▪ Corridors: 2-3 story

Figure 19 – Rural Residential

Suburban Residential
EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE LAND-USE
▪ Single Family Residential
▪ Planned Residential (Cluster)
▪ Parks, Recreation, Open Space
▪ Agriculture
ZONING
▪ Single Family Residential
▪ Planned Residential (10 Ac. Min.)
▪ Agriculture
▪ Density: 2-4 units per Ac.
BUILDING TYPE
▪ Single Family, Detached & Attached
▪ Townhouse, Multifamily (2-3 story)
▪ Corridors: 2-3 story w/ ample set back

Figure 20 – Suburban Residential



Image 19 – Suburban style housing subdivision next to a large lot cluster neighborhood

5. Neighborhood Center

Neighborhood Centers are target areas that are suitable for commercial-oriented uses aimed at serving the needs of the nearby communities. Neighborhood Centers are typically located at an intersection on a major arterial or collector road. Infill and redevelopment should be encouraged in these areas where applicable.

The Neighborhood Center should include a system of interconnected sidewalks and trails that will provide access to parks, recreation, and various forms of transportation and link to other activity centers in close proximity.

The Future Plan identifies three potential locations that are suitable for development as a Neighborhood Center.

- Cleveland Avenue, Stevensville-Baroda Road, and Mars Road
- Hinchman and Cleveland Avenue
- Cleveland and Shawnee Road

Primary Use: Convenience retail, personal and professional services, institutional and community place/or gathering places (e.g. churches, community centers, etc.), along with a variety of mixed-uses with higher density that serve the population of a rural community.

Neighborhood Center
EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE LAND-USE
▪ Retail Commercial Uses
▪ Office, Professional
▪ Multifamily Residential (Urban)
▪ Institutional Uses
ZONING
▪ Commercial, Business
▪ Multifamily
▪ Agriculture
▪ Intensity: FAR 0.5-1
BUILDING TYPE
▪ Commercial, retail, office (1-2 story)
▪ Multifamily Residential (2-3 story)
▪ Institutional

Figure 21 – Neighborhood Center

6. Corridor

The Corridor-designated target areas are typically located on major transportation routes. Corridors can be regulated in a manner that enhances mobility while creating an inviting and aesthetically pleasing road frontage that can accommodate multiple modes of transportation and uses.

Parking is an important element of road character. Parking lots can be placed to the side or in the back to limit the number of curb cuts. This will allow for the development of larger blocks, which in turn could permit larger development with higher intensity. Linkage to pedestrian facilities and access management are all important considerations that should be included in the planning and design of the roads.

Corridors must accommodate a variety of uses ranging from residential to commercial and mixed uses. Adequate buffering, mix of uses, sharing of parking, architectural style, and massing of the buildings are important considerations for these roadways.

Primary Use: Future land-use for each Corridor will vary significantly as each Corridor has its own unique character. Primary uses for each Corridor must reflect the opportunity that each Corridor offers. The recommended uses for each Corridor include:

- **Cleveland Avenue:** Auto-oriented commercial retail uses, offices, and commercial mixed uses. Application of Complete Street principals should be integrated in planning of this Corridor and uses assigned to it.
- **Shawnee Road:** Business Park, Light Industrial. Agricultural uses elsewhere in the Corridor.
- **Stevensville-Baroda-Hills Road:** Commercial and lower-intensity office uses, as well as medium-density residential uses. Agricultural uses elsewhere in the Corridor. Ample set back and fence line to create an inviting and aesthetically pleasing road frontage, where appropriate.

Corridor
EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE LAND-USE
▪ Commercial Uses
▪ Office, Light Industrial
▪ Mixed Use
▪ Institutional uses
▪ Planned Residential (10 Ac. Min.)
ZONING
▪ Commercial, Business Park
▪ Light Industrial
▪ Multifamily
▪ Agriculture
BUILDING TYPE
▪ Multifamily Residential (2-5 story)
▪ Commercial, office (1-4 story)
▪ Institutional (1-3 story)

Figure 22 – Corridor

7. Parks, Open Space: The protection of natural resources and open space in the Township is key to preserving the character of the community and balancing urban growth with the availability of natural resources. Natural resources in the Township consist of several land categories that include:

- Parks and recreation facilities
- Streams and green corridors
- Forest land
- Natural and scenic roads, vistas and places

Parks, Open Space	
EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE LAND-USE	
▪	Parks, recreation, open space
▪	Agriculture, Tourism
▪	Forestry
▪	Conservation and Preservation
ZONING	
▪	Parks, Open Space
▪	Conservation
▪	Agriculture
BUILDING TYPE	
▪	Trails, Recreational uses
▪	Single Family Residential (Ancillary to Agriculture)

Figure 23 – Parks, Open Space

The Future Plan proposes to create an interconnected network of green spaces that conserves natural ecosystems and provides associated benefits to the Township’s ecosystem. While most of the Township is covered by one watershed (Hickory Creek), the topography lends itself to the creation of a hierarchical ecosystem that connects upland forests to small streams and drainage ways covering most of the land in the southern and central part of the Township. Taking a watershed approach to conservation allows for natural conservation through a combination of both land and water stewardship efforts.

The Future Plan supports the development of an open space and conservation framework which includes farm and working lands, parks, trails and greenways, forests and wetlands in their natural and manmade state. These elements can be linked by a series of green corridors along streams and drainage ways connecting the highest part of ecosystem to the lowest part. This approach can bring nature to residents, while preserving the agricultural lifestyle. The watershed approach to conservation will also promote plant and species preservation and maintenance of ecological processes in order to carry and filter stormwater runoff, store and clean fresh water, clean urban air, and prevent – or ameliorate the effects of – habitat fragmentation.

Natural resources can be preserved through a combination of public and private efforts, including the purchase of land by the Township, expanded conservation easements along streams (100’ width), private donations, cluster developments, transfer of development rights, and development regulations limiting development to the minimal necessary.

Primary Use: Active and passive recreational uses, environmentally sensitive developments that support agricultural, horticultural, forestry, and related working lands uses, educational and research practices, tourism, waterways and other types of natural open spaces protected habitats. Subdivision of land for commercial and residential development is discouraged within conservation designated areas.

II- INFRASTRUCTURE

Future development of infrastructure will consist of transportation facilities, such as roads and trails, community facilities such as parks, and public improvements such as water and sewer facilities.

The public facilities and infrastructure improvements are referenced throughout the Plan, particularly in Chapter 3, Framework Plan. These elements of the Plan will require substantial planning and coordination by the Township. The Township must establish priorities for these improvements over the next ten years. Priority public improvement consists of the following:

- 1. Roads and Streets:** The plan identifies three major roads for future improvements. These include Cleveland Avenue, Lemon Creek Road, and Shawnee Road.
- 2. Trails and Greenways:** Non-motorized facilities with high priority are those that are already supported by the County or the regional agencies. These proposed trails will improve the linkage of the Township with the rest of the County. The high-priority trails should include Cleveland Avenue, Lemon Creek Road, and Shawnee Road (West)
- 3. Scenic Roads:** Hills Road and its extension Stevensville-Baroda Road, as well as Singer Lake Road offers an opportunity for the establishment of a scenic road that crosses the whole Township. While the establishment of a scenic road should be a long-term effort, the Township must start planning for such a designation. The most important action for such a designation is the establishment of development guidelines through zoning guidelines in the short term. In the long term, a trail should be considered as improvements are made to these roads.
- 4. Utilities and Public Improvements:** To realize the land-use objectives of the Plan and ensure proper management of the growth, it is important that all utilities are available for future development. The availability of such utilities is particularly critical for Future Growth Areas.

III- FUTURE LAND-USE MAP

The proposed land-use categories and the supporting Future Land-Use Map reflect the current vision for Baroda Township. The map of land-use categories provides a framework for the development of neighborhoods, commercial and employment centers, and rural preservation and environmental conservation. The Future Land-Use Map represents an amalgamation of the proposed development typologies described above, and how they fit within the context of the existing undeveloped area. Outside of these designated areas, the existing land uses generally remain untouched, preserving most of the remainder of planning areas as agriculture-based uses.

The Future Land-Use categories and the Future Land-Use Map are provided solely with the intention of offering guidance to the Plan Commission, Township Board, and other decision makers. It is important to note that the Future Plan does not make formal suggestions to rezone any properties to align with these Future Land-Use designations, but instead provides support for these Future Land-Use designations during a rezoning case evaluation, or any code amendment or revisions that the Township may consider in the future.

Future Land-Use category designated areas were developed by considering development character, utility service lines, natural features, existing parcel lines and roadways. Particularly for areas near or within the boundaries of FGAs, discretion by the Township Planning Commission is required. To facilitate such decisions,

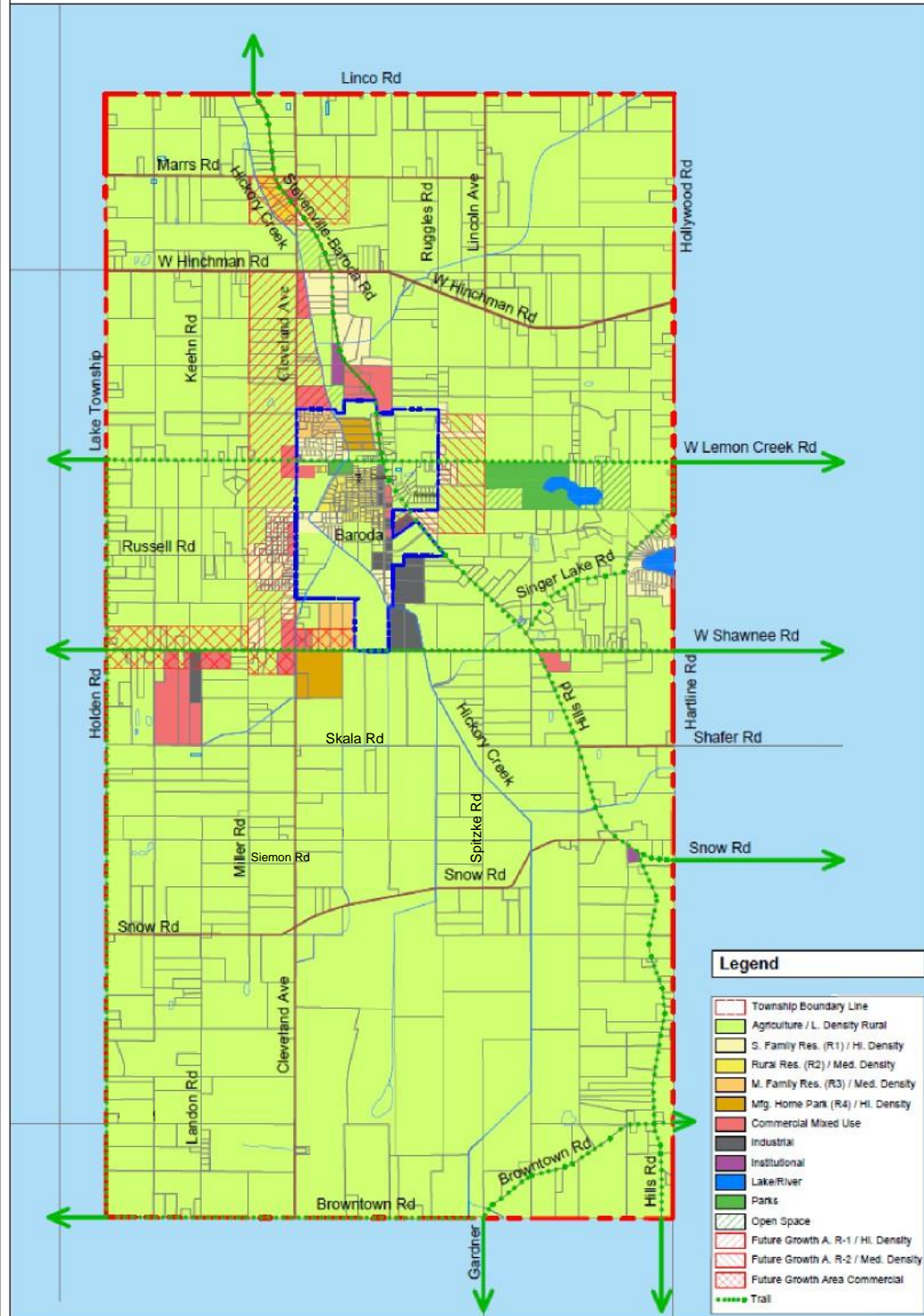
the following considerations should be applied:

- Existing development context of property.
- Environmental context of the property.
- Development activity or proposed activity occurring within the Village of Baroda.
- Plans to construct utility infrastructure, roadways, or other public facilities.

Each rezoning proposal needs to be evaluated using the land-use category, goals, and policies outlined in this Master Land-Use Plan. Because this is a Master Plan and not intended to provide site-level guidance with regard to development decisions, discretion should be applied when evaluating a proposed rezoning request using the Future Land-Use Map and specified land-use categories and typologies.

2025 MASTER PLAN

Future Land-Use



Baroda Township
Berrien County

Figure 24 – 2025 Master Plan Future Land-Use

CHAPTER 5

NEXT STEPS

This chapter highlights a list of action steps and specific activities that should be taken to implement different goals and strategies in the Comprehensive Plan. The recommendations presented in this chapter recognize the diversity of the Township and aims to allow the Township to manage its growth while protecting and enhancing the Township's rural character and natural environment.

The Master Plan is guided by the four principles identified in Chapter 3; Preservation, Managed Growth, Sustainability, and Coordination. These principles have influenced the policy direction and support the priorities for the Township as it engages in the implementation of the Plan. These steps or policies behind them, were identified in different sections of the Plan. But as the Township continues to evolve, changes are expected, and modifications should be accepted to respond to technology or market conditions variations.

I- CATALYTIC ACTIONS

An important step toward the Plan implementation should be the identification of plan elements that are considered “catalytic” projects that would begin to attract desirable land-use and development outcomes in the Township. Some of such projects are identified in the Framework Plan. It is important that the Township and Village of Baroda identify certain elements as critical to the implementation of the Plan as several of the actions require full collaboration. These elements must be given importance in the implementation decisions. The following lists some of the activities that will require prioritization.

1. Approval of the Plan and Map amendment for the Township.
2. Update the Zoning code and establishment of an Overlay Zoning District for the Future Growth Area.
3. Establishment of an economic development board to promote Baroda Township and to create a stronger sense of identity.
4. Development of gateway zones with ample street amenities and improvements.
5. Completion of other activities, sewer, and water extension, which will assist in the creation of shovel-ready sites for development.
6. Transportation improvements and streetscaping should be integrated into any development or revitalization efforts, as such activities lay the foundation for a new framework for the Township.

II- PLAN FOR FUNDING

Available funding is the most important factor affecting the success of any plan. Most of the outlined recommendations can be funded through a variety of sources including regional and local sources, private resources, or the community at large. The Township must commit to a long-term capital improvement plan which is dedicated for the next five to ten (5-10) years. It is imperative that the Township collaborate with other agencies and organizations to generate the required funding for infrastructure or other public improvements.

III- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

As a part of the planning efforts, the Township has also prepared a separate Plan identifying capital needs and priorities. This Plan is expected to be approved by the Township Board. For review of this plan, please refer to the Township for projects identified in the CIP plan.

APPENDIX

1. Community Survey