

# DEXTER TOWNSHIP

## MASTER PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

6880 DEXTER-PINCKNEY ROAD  
DEXTER, MI 48130

TELEPHONE: 734-426-3767

WWW.DEXTERTOWNSHIPMI.GOV

*"A Community For All Seasons"*

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## AGENDA

### March 18, 2026

### 6:00 PM

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**1) Call to Order**

**2) Approval of Agenda**

**3) Approval of Meeting Minutes – December 18, 2025.**

**4) Call for Public Comment on Agenda Items**

*a. Please state your name and address. Limit comments to 3 minutes. Please note that the public comment period is not a question-and-answer period; any questions from the public will be answered at a later date. If you would like a respond, please include your contact information on the sign in sheet.*

**5) Discussion Items:**

**a. Introduction of the Committee:**

- i. Brief Review of the Committee Charge and Committee Expectations*
- ii. The Process of Amending a Master Plan*

**b. 2024 Master Plan Overview**

- i. Dexter Township Master Plan Cornerstones*
- ii. Future Land Use, Zoning Plan, and Action Plan*

**c. Master Plan Review Committee Discussion Issues**

- i. Short-Term Rentals*

Dexter Township Master Plan Review Committee Agenda  
March 18, 2026

*ii. Bed & Breakfasts*

*iii. Agrotourism*

*iv. Renewable Energy*

*v. Data Centers*

*vi. Housing*

*vii. Other Items Warranting Discussion*

**6) Other Issues, Comments and Concerns from the Committee Members**

**7) Adjournment**

Master Plan Review Committee Meeting Minutes 12/18/2025

Meeting called to order at 6:08pm

Due to the organizational nature of this first meeting, there was no agenda present to approve

Planning Commission Chair Steve Burch requested that committee members, and the present staff person, introduce themselves:

Linda Selbert	Dexter Township Resident
Joseph Speigle	Dexter Township Resident
Chandra Hurd	Planning Commission, Secretary
Dan Barry	Planning Commission
Alicia Abbott	BOT representative
Fletcher Reyher	Township Staff, Director of Planning and Zoning

Mr. Burch thanked the group for joining this committee to take up potential items that the township could face as we move forward. Mr. Burch also explained that our Master Plan did not include Data Centers, Biofuel Recovery Projects, and the Michigan Housing Act that was passed last December, requiring all Michigan Townships and communities to re-evaluate their housing attitudes, needs and ideas for the next 20 years.

Mr. Burch appointed Chandra Hurd to act as the chair of the meeting.

Chair Hurd asked if there was a motion to elect Trustee Abbott to perform the secretary duties. Motion was made by Linda Selbert and second by Joseph Speigle. Roll call vote: Selbert yea, Speigle yea, Berry yea, Abbott yea, Hurd yea. 5 yeas 0 nays

Director of Planning and Zoning, Fletcher Reyher, explained how he created the draft committee charge.

Director Reyher walked the committee through what is needed for this first meeting:

- Establish a schedule
- Editing the committee charge
- Identifying master plan topics to review
- Send this comprehensive report to the BOT to establish and fund this committee.

Through discussion the committee agreed to send Director Reyher our thoughts on the committee charge by January 5<sup>th</sup> at the end of business. This allows time to edit the committee charge if needed.

Mr. Burch will send each committee member the information listed in Michigan House Bill 5557 with the appropriate excerpts on land use, zoning and growth management.

Director Reyher walked the committee through the process of amending the Master Plan.

Trustee Abbott recommends watching the public comments section of the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners Meetings. This is a place to see what other rural townships are facing.

Chair Hurd reiterates to the committee that amending the masterplan is a lengthy process and that the Master Plan review Committee will not be the body that makes the amendments. This committee will be making recommendations that the planning commission should focus on.

Chair Hurd explained that staff support is critical to this committee through explaining the “why” a subject is important.

Linda Selbert initiated discussion on Data Centers and are we, the township, “ripe for the picking”?

Mr. Spiegel reminded us that Dexter Township is a target due to the high transmission lines that run through our township.

Director Reyher explained that the large commercial properties are not near the high voltage transmission lines making the search for developers more difficult. Director Reyher will present information regarding the land/water make up of existing Data Center developments in other townships at our next meeting.

Through discussion, the committee agreed to the following meeting dates (all to start at 6pm):

- March 18, 2026
- April 8, 2026
- June 17, 2026
- September 16, 2026
- December 16, 2026

Motion to adjourned made by: Dan Berry and second by Trustee Abbott

5 yeas 0 nays

Meeting Adjourned 7:22pm



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LONNIE SCOTT  
SUPERVISOR  
MICHELLE  
STAMBOULELLIS  
CLERK  
BRAD METZ  
TREASURER  
ALICIA ABBOTT  
KAREN NOLTE  
KAREN SIKKENG  
LAURA SANDERS  
TRUSTEES

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## MASTER PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE CHARGE

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### I. Role

- a. The Master Plan Review Committee (“Committee”) shall be formally established by the Board of Trustees, with appointment authority delegated to the Planning Commission Chair. The Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Planning Commission, which shall be the primary reporting and receiving body for the Committee’s recommendations. Final recommendations of the Committee shall be transmitted to the Planning Commission for consideration and further action.
- b. The Master Plan Review Committee shall be composed of five (5) members appointed by the Planning Commission Chair as follows:
  - i. Two Planning Commission members
  - ii. One Township Board member
  - iii. Two residents of the Township
- c. The purpose of the Committee is to review, evaluate, and provide recommendations regarding updates to the Dexter Township Master Plan. The Committee’s work shall focus on policy-level guidance and long-range planning issues. The Committee’s recommendations shall emphasize consistency with existing Township ordinances and zoning regulations and shall be framed at a policy level appropriate for inclusion in or guidance from the Master Plan.
- d. The formation of the Master Plan Review Committee is specifically intended to address gaps in the current Master Plan related to emerging and evolving land uses that were not adequately anticipated at the time of adoption. The existing Master Plan does not sufficiently address certain contemporary land use issues, including but not limited to short-term rentals; renewable energy facilities; data centers; diverse housing needs; biofuel generation; agritourism-related uses; and bed and breakfast–type lodging, to the extent such uses are not clearly or consistently addressed in the existing Master Plan. The Committee’s work is intended to help position the Township to respond proactively, consistently, and in a manner supported by clear policy guidance to these types of requests by ensuring the Master Plan provides clear policy guidance for future land use decisions.

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## II. Scope of Work / Data Review

- a. The Committee shall review and consider relevant background materials, including but not limited to:
  - i. The existing Dexter Township Master Plan and any prior amendments
  - ii. Applicable national, regional, county, and state planning documents
  - iii. Demographic, housing, land use, transportation, agricultural, and environmental data relevant to Township planning
  - iv. Infrastructure, public services, and natural resource considerations
  - v. Public input received through noticed meetings, outreach efforts, or surveys
- b. The Committee may request additional data or technical assistance through planning staff as necessary to fulfill its charge.

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## III. Open Meetings Act

- a. The Master Plan Review Committee is subject to the Open Meetings Act (“OMA”), which requires:
  - i. All meetings of the Master Plan Review Committee shall be properly noticed and published in accordance with the OMA.
  - ii. A quorum (majority of appointed members) shall be required to conduct business.
  - iii. All deliberations and decisions shall occur at properly noticed public meetings. Deliberations by email or other non-public means are not permitted.
  - iv. A public comment period shall be provided at each meeting.
  - v. Meeting minutes shall be taken and maintained, documenting the date, time, place, members present and absent, motions, decisions, and all roll call votes.
  - vi. Committee members may not attend meetings remotely except as permitted by statute, including military service or as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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## IV. Suggested Timeline

- a. **Organizational Meeting:** Introductions; overview of charge; election of chairperson; establishment of meeting schedule.

b. **Meetings 1-2:** Identification of initial data needs; review of the existing Master Plan and supporting data; discussion of key planning themes; identification of priority topics and areas requiring further analysis; receipt of public input.

c. **Meetings 3-4:** Development of preliminary findings and policy-level recommendations; refinement of priorities; preparation of draft findings and recommendations; determination of whether additional meetings are necessary.

d. **Final Meeting:** Adoption of final findings and recommendations by roll call vote. The Chairperson, in coordination with planning staff, shall prepare a written recommendation addressed to the Planning Commission.

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## **V. Planning Commission Review**

a. The Planning Commission shall receive and consider the Committee's recommendations at a publicly noticed meeting.

b. Following Planning Commission review, recommendations may be forwarded to the Board of Trustees as appropriate, including requests for authorization, funding, or consultant assistance related to a Master Plan update.

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*This charge is intended to provide clear direction, accountability, and transparency for the Master Plan Review Committee while maintaining consistency with prior advisory committees.*

# ***Procedures to Adopt or Amend a Master Plan***

- Overview of Michigan Planning Enabling Act Requirements
- Compliance Flow Chart
- Sample “Notice of Intent” Letter
- Sample Cover Letter Requesting Comments on Draft Plan
- Sample Compliance Statement to County
- Sample Resolution Asserting Township Board Right to Approve Master Plan
- Sample Township Board Resolution to Adopt/Amend Master Plan
- Sample Planning Commission Resolution to Adopt/Amend Master Plan
- Sample Planning Commission Resolution to Recommend Master Plan Adoption/Amendment to Township Board

*Revised October 2023*



Michigan Townships Association  
P.O. Box 80078, Lansing, MI 48909-0078  
(517) 321-6467  
[www.michigantownships.org](http://www.michigantownships.org)

*Michigan Townships Association staff prepared this publication for informational and educational purposes to assist township officials in township governance, statutory compliance and day-to-day township administration. The information provided is not intended as legal advice, and townships are urged to consult with their local legal counsel on questions of law.*

*Certainly, no sample language should be used unless, after careful review, it is the professional judgment of your legal counsel that using the sample documents and guidelines attached will accomplish the particular objectives and intentions of your township.*

*Although this material is the result of much thought and effort, neither the authors nor the Michigan Townships Association assume any responsibility for the results of using these guidelines word-for-word in individual cases.*

# Overview of Michigan Planning Enabling Act Procedures to Adopt or Amend a Master Plan

## **Notice of Intent to Plan: The law specifies who must receive a notice.**

Before preparing a master plan, a township planning commission must send to all of the following, by first-class mail or personal delivery, a notice explaining that the planning commission intends to prepare a master plan and requesting the recipient's cooperation and comment (MCL 125.3839):

- The planning commission, or if there is no planning commission, the legislative body, of each municipality located within or contiguous to the township (township, city or village).
- If there is no county planning commission, then the regional planning commission for the region in which the township is located. If there is a county planning commission, the township planning commission may consult with the regional planning commission, but is not required to do so.
- The county planning commission, or if there is no county planning commission, the county board of commissioners, for the county in which the township is located.
- Each public utility company and railroad company owning or operating a public utility or railroad within the township. (*The public utility companies and railroad companies are required to reimburse the township for any copying and postage costs incurred in transmitting the proposed master plan or final master plan.* MCL 125.3841)
- Any government entity that registers its name and mailing address for this purpose with the planning commission. Other governmental entities that can register to become a part of the planning process include downtown development authorities (DDAs), tax increment finance authorities (TIFAs), school boards, road commissions and other local governmental units. (*The registered entities are required to reimburse the township for any copying and postage costs incurred in transmitting the proposed master plan or final master plan.* MCL 125.3841)
- If the master plan will include a master street plan, the county road commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

The required notice may be made by personal or first-class mail delivery of a hard copy or by electronic mail. However, the planning commission preparing the plan shall not make such submittals by electronic mail unless, in the notice, the planning commission states that it intends to make such submittals by electronic mail and the entity receiving that notice does not respond by objecting to the use of electronic mail. Electronic mail may contain a link to a website on which the submittal is posted if the website is accessible to the public free of charge.

There is no time limit for noticing the other local units of your township's intent to plan. MTA recommends developing your own township standards. See page 7 for a sample letter of intent to plan.

## **Distribution of the Proposed Plan for Review and Comments**

The planning commission's proposed draft plan must be submitted to the township board for review and comment. The process of adopting a master plan cannot proceed unless the township board approves distribution of the proposed draft. This ensures that both the planning commission and the township board generally support the proposed plan. (MCL 125.3841)

Once approved for distribution, the proposed master plan is sent to the “notice list”—the same list that originally received the notice of intent to plan. See the sample cover letter on page 8. The public utility companies, railroad companies and registered governmental entities are required to reimburse the township for any copying and postage costs incurred in transmitting the proposed master plan or final master plan. (MCL 125.3841)

The secretary of the planning commission shall, at the same time, submit to the county planning commission (or the county board of commissioners if there is no county planning commission) a statement signed by the secretary of the planning commission that the requirements of MCL 125.3841 have been met and must provide a list of names, with addresses and date of submittal, of everyone receiving the plan. See the sample compliance statement on page 9. The notice of the public hearing to be held following the comment period may also be included with the plan. (MCL 125.3841)

### **Comment Period**

Each of the entities receiving the proposed original master plan may submit comments within 63 days after the proposed master plan was sent to that entity. If the plan is an amendment to the original master plan, the review procedure is shortened a little with all entities receiving a copy to submit comments within 42 days. The comments are advisory only.

If the county planning commission or the county board of commissioners submits comments, the comments must include at least both of the following statements, as applicable:

(a) A statement whether the county planning commission or county board of commissioners considers the proposed master plan to be inconsistent with the master plan of any municipality located within or contiguous to the township or the planning region in which the township is located.

(b) If the county has a county master plan, a statement whether the county planning commission considers the proposed master plan to be inconsistent with the county master plan.

These statements are advisory only. (MCL 125.3841)

### **Public Hearing**

After the comment period for all entities ends, the planning commission must hold at least one public hearing on the proposed plan. (MCL 125.3843)

The planning commission must publish notice of the meeting at which the public hearing will be held in a newspaper of general circulation in the township at least 15 days before the date of public hearing. The planning commission must also submit the notice of the public hearing to each of the entities receiving the proposed plan for comments. (The notice may be included with the proposed master plan submitted for review.) (MCL 125.3843)

### **Approval**

To approve the master plan or plan amendment, the township planning commission must approve a resolution adopted by the affirmative votes of not less than a majority of the members of the planning commission (one more than half of the total number of positions on the planning commission, minus any vacant positions). The resolution must refer expressly to the maps and descriptive materials intended by the planning commission to form the master plan. (MCL 125.3843)

A statement recording the planning commission’s approval of the master plan, signed by the chairperson or secretary of the planning commission, must be included on the inside of the front or back cover of the master plan, and on the future land use map, if it is separate from the text of the master plan. Following the approval, the planning commission secretary must submit a copy of the master plan to the township board. (MCL 125.3843)

### **Where the Township Board has Final Approval of Master Plan**

Approval of the proposed master plan by the planning commission is the final step for adoption of the master plan, **unless** the township board by resolution has asserted the right to approve or reject the master plan. See page 10 for a sample resolution to assert the township board right to approve or reject the master plan. In that case, after approval of the proposed master plan by the planning commission, the township board must approve or reject the proposed master plan. (MCL 125.3843)

If the township board rejects the proposed master plan, the township board must submit to the planning commission a statement of its objections to the proposed master plan. The planning commission must consider the township board's objections and must revise the proposed master plan to address those objections. The procedures for holding a public hearing and planning commission approval must be repeated until the township board approves the proposed master plan. All public notice requirements apply throughout the process.

A statement recording the township board's approval of the master plan, signed by the township clerk, must be included on the inside of the front or back cover of the master plan and, if the future land use map is a separate document from the text of the master plan, on the future land use map.

To approve the master plan or plan amendment, the township board must approve the plan by a resolution adopted by the affirmative votes of not less than a majority of the members of the township board (one more than half of the total number of positions on the township board, minus any vacant positions). The resolution must refer expressly to the maps and descriptive materials intended by the planning commission to form the master plan. (MCL 125.3843)

### **Effective Date**

The plan takes effect upon final adoption by the planning commission or township board, as applicable. Following adoption, the secretary of the planning commission must submit copies of the adopted master plan to the same entities to which copies of the proposed master plan were required to be submitted. (MCL 125.3843)

### **Public Information**

To promote public interest in and understanding of the master plan, a planning commission may publish and distribute copies of the master plan or of any report, and employ other means of publicity and education.

A planning commission must consult with and advise public officials and agencies, public utility companies, civic, educational, professional, and other organizations, and citizens concerning the promotion or implementation of the master plan. (MCL 125.3851)

### **Plan Amendments**

Amendments to the township master plan follow the same procedures, except the comment period for all entities is shortened to 42 days. (MCL 125.3845)

If the amendment is only a: (a) Grammatical, typographical or similar editorial change, (b) Title change, or (c) A change to conform to an adopted plat, then the amendment may be made without following the procedures in MCLs 125.3839, 125.3841 or 125.3843 (notice of intent to adopt, submission of draft to other entities for comment, or public hearing).

### **Plan Review**

At least every 5 years after adoption of a master plan, a township planning commission must review the master plan and determine whether to take any action to amend the master plan or adopt a new master plan. This review and the planning commission's findings must be recorded in the planning commission minutes. (MCL 125.3845)

# Quick Steps to Adopt or Amend a Master Plan

## Step 1: Notice to Plan

The township must send notice of the township's intent to adopt a plan. (See sample on page 7.)

### Who must be mailed the "notice of intent" to plan?

The planning commission of any township, city or village located within or contiguous to the township (if there is no local planning commission, the notice goes to the local legislative body); the county planning commission (if there is no county planning commission the notice goes to the county board of commissioners and the regional planning commission); railroads and public utilities; and any governmental entity that registered with the township, such as a downtown development authority or tax increment finance authority. If the master plan includes a master street plan, notice must also be sent to the county road commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation. (MCL 125.3841)

### Who may be mailed the "notice of intent" to plan?

If there is a county planning commission, the township may submit a copy of the proposed master plan to the regional planning commission, but is not required to do so. (MCL 125.3841)

## Step 2: Distribution of the Proposed Plan

After the plan is drafted:

1. Planning commission submits draft plan to the township board for review and comments.

2. Township board authorizes the planning commission to distribute the proposed plan to the notice list.

3. The proposed master plan is distributed to the notice list. A **statement of compliance**, signed by the planning commission secretary that lists the name, address and date of submittal of each entity receiving a copy of the proposed plan, must be sent to the county planning commission, or county board of commissioners if there is no county planning commission. (See sample on page 9.)

## Step 3: Comment Period *(Comments are advisory only)*

**For a NEW Master Plan:** Any entity submitting comments on the proposed plan must do so **within 63 days** of receiving it.

OR

**For AMENDMENTS to a Master Plan:** Any entity submitting comments on the proposed plan must do so **within 42 days** of receiving it.

## Step 4: Public Hearing at a Regular or Special Meeting *(Cannot be held before the comment ends)*

1. Notice of the meeting at which the public hearing will be held must be sent to all entities that received a copy of the proposed master plan (may be included with the proposed plan mailing).

2. Notice of the public hearing must be published in a local newspaper at least 15 days before the date of the hearing.

## Step 5: Final Approval

1. At or after the meeting at which the public hearing is held, the planning commission adopts the plan by resolution approved by a majority of the members of the planning commission. (See sample on page 12.) The planning commission secretary submits the plan to the township board.

2. Planning commission approval is final **unless** the township board has final approval of the master plan. (See samples on pages 10 and 11.) The township board may send the plan back to the planning commission to request changes.

## Step 6: Distribution of the Plan

The master plan is effective upon final adoption. Once approved, the final master plan must be submitted to all of the entities that received the proposed plan for comment.

# Sample Notice of Intent to Prepare a Master Plan

To: \_\_\_\_\_ [*Township, City, Village, or other entity to be noticed*]

From: \_\_\_\_\_, Secretary  
\_\_\_\_\_ Township Planning Commission

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This notice is to inform you that the \_\_\_\_\_ Township Planning Commission is preparing a new master plan [OR *updating* OR *amending its existing master plan*].

In accordance with Section 39 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, MCL 125.3839, this notice is to inform our neighboring local governments, planning entities, and any public utilities and railroad companies of \_\_\_\_\_ Township's intent to prepare a master plan (*or "amend our master plan"*). The \_\_\_\_\_ Township Planning Commission welcomes your cooperation and comments on the proposed plan.

The \_\_\_\_\_ Township Planning Commission will send you a copy of the proposed master plan as soon as we have completed the draft for review.

***[The following section is optional and does not have to be offered if the noticing township does not want to provide copies of the proposed plan by electronic mail. If the township does offer provide copies of the township plan by electronic mail, digital files or electronic mail comments from the receiving entities should also be accepted:]***

If you would like to receive the draft copy of the master plan in digital format, please submit a written request via email and include an email address. This office prepares all its digital documents in \_\_\_\_\_ [*Word, WordPerfect, PDF, etc.*] format.

**[Optional:]** The proposed plan will also be posted and available free of charge on the township's Web site at: [www.\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](http://www._____).

Any comments you submit may be sent in digital format via email to: [*township or planning commission email address*].

Under MCL 125.3841(2)(f), each public utility company and railroad company owning or operating a public utility or railroad within the local unit of government, and any government entity that registers its name and address for this purpose with the secretary of the planning commission, shall reimburse the township for any copying and postage costs incurred in receiving a hard copy of the proposed master plan or final master plan.

# Sample Cover Letter Requesting Comments on Draft Master Plan

*(Include with the draft plan OR plan amendments)*

To: \_\_\_\_\_ [*Township, City, Village, or other entity to be noticed*]

From: \_\_\_\_\_ Township Planning Commission

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a draft of the proposed new \_\_\_\_\_ Township master plan [*OR proposed amendments to the master plan*].

In accordance with Section 41 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, MCL 125.3841, the enclosed proposed master plan is [*OR proposed amendments to the master plan are*] required to be sent to you, or you requested to receive it.

All local governments and other entities receiving a copy of a proposed new plan [*OR proposed amendments to the master plan*] have up to 63 days to review a proposed new plan [*up to 42 days to review plan amendments*].

Any comments you submit may be sent in digital format via email to: [*township or planning commission email address*].

Under MCL 125.3841(2)(f), each public utility company and railroad company owning or operating a public utility or railroad within the local unit of government, and any government entity that registers its name and address for this purpose with the secretary of the planning commission, shall reimburse the township for any copying and postage costs incurred in receiving a hard copy of the proposed master plan or final master plan.

Thank you for your cooperation and comments.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_ Township Planning Commission

# Sample Compliance Statement to County

*(Include with the draft master plan OR plan amendments sent to the **county planning commission** or the **county board of commissioners**, if there is no county planning commission.)*

To: \_\_\_\_\_ County Planning Commission [OR *County Board of Commissioners*]

From: \_\_\_\_\_ Township Planning Commission

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

In accordance with Section 41 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, MCL 125.3841(e), a copy of the enclosed proposed master plan was sent to the planning commission or legislative body of each municipality located within or contiguous to \_\_\_\_\_ Township, and to \_\_\_\_\_ [*the regional planning commission for the county in which the township is located, if there is no county planning commission or if the township planning commission has chosen to submit a copy to the regional planning commission*].

A record of the name and address of each planning commission or legislative body to which a copy of the proposed master plan was submitted, with the date of submittal, is attached.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_ Township Planning Commission

**TOWNSHIP OF \_\_\_\_\_**  
**COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_, MICHIGAN**  
**Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_**  
**RESOLUTION ASSERTING TOWNSHIP BOARD**  
**RIGHT TO APPROVE MASTER PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare or amend a Master Plan for the use, development and preservation of all lands in the Township; and

WHEREAS, the MPEA authorizes a township board to assert by resolution its right to approve or reject the proposed master plan or plan amendment approved by the planning commission;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, pursuant to MCL 125.3843(3), the \_\_\_\_\_ Township Board reserves to itself the right to approve or reject a proposed master plan or master plan amendment approved by the planning commission; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED THAT, after approval of a proposed master plan or master plan amendment by the planning commission, the \_\_\_\_\_ Township Board shall approve or reject the proposed master plan or master plan amendment. A statement recording the Township Board's approval of proposed master plan or master plan amendment, signed by the Township Clerk, shall be included on the inside of the front or back cover of the master plan and, if the future land use map is a separate document from the text of the master plan, on the future land use map.

The foregoing resolution offered by Board Member \_\_\_\_\_.  
Second offered by Board Member \_\_\_\_\_.

Upon roll call vote the following voted:

"Aye": \_\_\_\_\_  
(list names of members voting "aye")

"Nay": \_\_\_\_\_  
(list names of members voting "nay")

The Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) , Clerk

*(Sample adapted by MTA staff from material developed by Ross A. Leisman, Attorney, Mika Meyers Beckett & Jones, PLC, and used with permission.)*

TOWNSHIP OF \_\_\_\_\_  
COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_, MICHIGAN  
Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_

**TOWNSHIP BOARD RESOLUTION TO ADOPT (or AMEND) MASTER PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare a Master Plan for the use, development and preservation of all lands in the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission prepared a proposed new (OR *updated*) Master Plan and submitted the plan to the Township Board for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, on \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_ Township Board received and reviewed the proposed Master Plan prepared by the Planning Commission and authorized distribution of the Master Plan to the Notice Group entities identified in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, notice was provided to the Notice Group entities as provided in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on \_\_\_\_\_ to consider public comment on the proposed new (OR *updated*) Master Plan, and to further review and comment on the proposed new (OR *updated*) Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Township Board finds that the proposed new (OR *updated*) Master Plan is desirable and proper and furthers the use, preservation, and development goals and strategies of the Township;

WHEREAS, the MPEA authorizes the Township Board to assert by resolution its right to approve or reject the proposed Master Plan;

THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. **Adoption of 20\_\_ Master Plan.** The Township Board hereby approves and adopts the proposed 20\_\_ Master Plan, including all of the chapters, figures, maps and tables contained therein. Pursuant to MCL 125.3843 the Township Board has asserted by resolution its right to approve or reject the proposed Master Plan and therefore the approval granted herein is the final step for adoption of the plan as provided in MCL 125.3843 and therefore the plan is effective as of \_\_\_\_\_.

2. **Distribution to Notice Group.** The Township Board approves distribution of the adopted plan to the Notice Group.

3. **Findings of Fact.** The Township Board has made the foregoing determination based on a review of existing land uses in the Township, a review of the existing Master Plan provisions and maps, input received from the Planning Commission and public hearing, and with the assistance of a professional planning group, and finds that the new (OR *updated*) Master Plan will accurately reflect and implement the Township's goals and strategies for the use, preservation, and development of lands in \_\_\_\_\_ Township.

4. **Effective Date.** The Master Plan shall be effective as of the date of adoption of this resolution.

The foregoing resolution offered by Board Member \_\_\_\_\_.

Second offered by Board Member \_\_\_\_\_.

Upon roll call vote the following voted:

"Aye": \_\_\_\_\_

(list names of members voting "aye")

"Nay": \_\_\_\_\_

(list names of members voting "nay")

The Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) , Clerk

(Sample adapted by MTA staff from material developed by Ross A. Leisman, Attorney, Mika Meyers Beckett & Jones, PLC, and used with permission.)

TOWNSHIP OF \_\_\_\_\_  
COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_, MICHIGAN  
Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_

**PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION TO ADOPT (or AMEND) MASTER PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare a Master Plan for the use, development and preservation of all lands in the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission prepared a proposed new (OR *updated*) Master Plan and submitted the plan to the Township Board for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, on \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_ Township Board received and reviewed the proposed Master Plan prepared by the Planning Commission and authorized distribution of the Master Plan to the Notice Group entities identified in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, notice was provided to the Notice Group entities as provided in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on \_\_\_\_\_ to consider public comment on the proposed new (OR *updated*) Master Plan, and to further review and comment on the proposed new (OR *updated*) Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that the proposed new (OR *updated*) Master Plan is desirable and proper and furthers the use, preservation, and development goals and strategies of the Township;

THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. **Adoption of 20\_\_ Master Plan.** The Planning Commission hereby approves and adopts the proposed 20\_\_ Master Plan, including all of the chapters, figures, maps and tables contained therein.

2. **Distribution to Township Board and Notice Group.** Pursuant to MCL 125.3843 the Township Board has not asserted by resolution its right to approve or reject the proposed Master Plan and therefore the approval granted herein is the final step for adoption of the plan as provided in MCL 125.3843 and therefore the plan is effective as of \_\_\_\_\_. In addition, the Planning Commission approves distribution of the adopted amendments to the Township Board and Notice Group.

3. **Findings of Fact.** The Planning Commission has made the foregoing determination based on a review of existing land uses in the Township, a review of the existing Master Plan provisions and maps, input received from the Township Board and public hearing, and with the assistance of a professional planning group, and finds that the new (OR *updated*) Master Plan will accurately reflect and implement the Township's goals and strategies for the use, preservation, and development of lands in \_\_\_\_\_ Township.

4. **Effective Date.** The Master Plan shall be effective as of the date of adoption of this resolution.

The foregoing resolution offered by Planning Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_.

Second offered by Planning Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_.

Upon roll call vote the following voted:

"Aye": \_\_\_\_\_

(list names of members voting "aye")

"Nay": \_\_\_\_\_

(list names of members voting "nay")

The Chair declared the resolution adopted.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) , Secretary

*(Sample adapted by MTA staff from material developed by Ross A. Leisman, Attorney, Mika Meyers Beckett & Jones, PLC, and used with permission.)*

TOWNSHIP OF \_\_\_\_\_  
COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_, MICHIGAN  
Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_

**PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION TO APPROVE (or AMEND) MASTER PLAN AND  
RECOMMEND ADOPTION TO TOWNSHIP BOARD  
(Where Township Board has Final Approval)**

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare a Master Plan for the use, development and preservation of all lands in the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission prepared a proposed new (OR *updated*) Master Plan and submitted the plan to the Township Board for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, on , 20 , the Township Board received and reviewed the proposed Master Plan prepared by the Planning Commission and authorized distribution of the Master Plan to the Notice Group entities identified in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, notice was provided to the Notice Group entities as provided in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on to consider public comment on the proposed new (OR *updated*) Master Plan, and to further review and comment on the proposed new (OR *updated*) Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that the proposed new (OR *updated*) Master Plan is desirable and proper and furthers the use, preservation, and development goals and strategies of the Township; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCL 125.3843 the Township Board has asserted by resolution its right to have final approval or rejection of the proposed new (OR updated) Master Plan.

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. **Approval of 20 \_\_\_\_ Master Plan.** The Planning Commission hereby approves and recommends for adoption the proposed new (OR updated) 20 Master Plan, including all of the chapters, figures, maps and tables contained therein.
2. **Distribution to Township Board.** Said new (OR updated) approved Master Plan shall be forwarded to the Township Board for approval or rejection.
3. **Findings of Fact.** The Planning Commission has made the foregoing determination based on a review of existing land uses in the Township, a review of the existing Master Plan provisions and maps, input received from the Township Board and public hearing, and with the assistance of a professional planning group, and finds that the new (OR *updated*) Master Plan will accurately reflect and implement the Township's goals and strategies for the use, preservation, and development of lands in \_\_\_\_\_ Township.
4. **Effective Date.** This resolution shall take immediate effect.

The foregoing resolution offered by Planning Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_.  
Second offered by Planning Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_.

Upon roll call vote the following voted:

"Aye": \_\_\_\_\_ (list names of members voting "aye")

"Nay": \_\_\_\_\_ (list names of members voting "nay")

The Chair declared the resolution adopted.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) , Secretary

*(Sample adapted by MTA staff from material developed by Ross A. Leisman, Attorney, Mika Meyers Beckett & Jones, PLC, and used with permission.)*



# DEXTER TOWNSHIP

## PLANNING & ZONING

6880 DEXTER-PINCKNEY ROAD  
DEXTER, MI 48130

TELEPHONE: 734-426-3767

[WWW.DEXTERTOWNSHIPMI.GOV](http://WWW.DEXTERTOWNSHIPMI.GOV)

*"A Community For All Seasons"*

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### Memorandum

**To:** Dexter Township Master Plan Review Committee

**From:** Fletcher Reyher, AICP, Director of Planning and Zoning

**Date:** March 18, 2026

**Subject:** Key Master Plan Components for Potential Amendments

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#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of the Committee is to serve in a strictly advisory capacity by reviewing the existing Dexter Township Master Plan and providing policy-level guidance and recommendations to the Planning Commission. The Committee is not charged with drafting zoning ordinance amendments or making regulatory decisions, but rather with identifying potential policy gaps and long-range planning issues that may warrant future consideration.

If amendments to the Master Plan are ultimately recommended, three sections of the Plan are particularly important to evaluate:

1. The Five Cornerstones (policy foundation of the Plan)
2. The Future Land Use Map (FLUM)
3. The Zoning Plan and Implementation / Action Plan

Together, these elements establish the Township's long-term vision and the tools used to implement that vision.

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#### **The Five Cornerstones:**

The Master Plan is built around five guiding themes referred to as the Cornerstones. These Cornerstones represent the Township's long-term policy direction and reflect both community input and the Township Board's strategic planning priorities.

Any amendment to the Master Plan should be evaluated against these Cornerstones to ensure the Township's long-range vision remains consistent and internally aligned.

#### **1. Preservation of Agricultural Lands & Rural Character**

- Core Idea: Protect the AG-Core area to maintain farmland, open space, and the Township's rural identity.

- This cornerstone recognizes that a large portion of the Township’s rural character is tied to the preservation of agricultural land. The Master Plan identifies an Agricultural Core area that should be prioritized for long-term preservation.
  - The Plan recommends several tools to move beyond simple large-lot zoning and toward more permanent farmland preservation mechanisms, including:
    - Open Space Community Overlay (clustering)
    - Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)
    - Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)
    - PA 116 farmland preservation
    - Agri-tourism support
  - These tools aim to maintain the viability of agriculture while allowing limited development to occur in appropriate locations.
- 

## **2. Protection of Our Natural Resources**

- Core Idea: Safeguard groundwater, wetlands, lakes, and tree canopy.
  - The Township contains significant environmental assets, including wetland complexes, lakes, and extensive tree canopy. Groundwater protection is particularly critical because all properties rely on groundwater as their sole drinking water source.
  - The Plan emphasizes linking environmental protection directly to land use regulation and long-term water quality goals. Recommended policy directions include:
    - Increasing wetland buffer requirements (from 10 ft to 25 ft)
    - Developing groundwater protection programs with EGLE
    - Establishing lake water monitoring and stewardship
    - Protecting heritage trees and educating residents about invasive species
- 

## **3. Management of Our Traffic**

- Core Idea: Ensure development does not overwhelm road capacity while expanding non-motorized transportation options.
  - Traffic management is a growing concern among residents. While traffic counts show relatively modest growth rates, survey responses indicate increased perception of congestion, particularly at key intersections.
  - The Master Plan recommends:
    - Data-driven traffic management using Level of Service (LOS) modeling
    - Requiring traffic impact studies for new development
    - Evaluation of key congestion points
    - Expansion of regional non-motorized trail connections, including the Border-to-Border (B2B) Trail
- 

## **4. Thoughtful Planning for Future Development**

- Core Idea: Allow limited, well-controlled growth that supports convenience without urbanizing the Township.
- Dexter Township is surrounded by established commercial centers in Dexter, Chelsea, and Pinckney. As a result, the Master Plan does not recommend large commercial districts within the Township. Instead, it focuses on limited, convenience-oriented services that support local residents.
- Key policy concepts include:
  - Allowing small convenience-oriented commercial uses

- Supporting broadband expansion
  - Encouraging clustered housing and open space development
  - Utilizing existing sewer infrastructure where appropriate
- 

### 5. Creating a Sustainable Community

- Core Idea: Balance economic, environmental, and social sustainability for long-term resilience.
  - Sustainability strategies focus on incremental actions that local government can reasonably implement. These strategies emphasize long-term resource protection while maintaining the Township’s rural character.
  - Examples include:
    - Encouraging Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
    - Supporting EV charging infrastructure
    - Allowing rooftop solar by right
    - Promoting green stormwater practices
    - Expanding recycling and composting programs
    - Strengthening regional planning collaboration
- 

#### Future Land Use Map (FLUM):

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) serves as the Township’s primary policy guide for land use decisions, including rezonings and long-term development patterns. Any significant changes to land use policy or growth patterns should be reflected on the Future Land Use Map to maintain consistency between planning policy and zoning implementation.

The FLUM translates the Master Plan’s Cornerstones into a spatial framework that guides where different types of development should occur. The map is based on a land suitability analysis that identified areas most appropriate for agriculture, residential development, and conservation.

The FLUM identifies six general land use categories:

Future Land Use Category	General Purpose
Agricultural Preservation	Protect working farmland and large agricultural parcels
Rural Residential	Maintain large-lot rural living patterns
Conservation Subdivision	Clustered residential development preserving open space
Lake Residential	Small-lot residential near inland lakes
Neighborhood Commercial	Limited convenience-oriented commercial uses
Institutional / Preservation	Public land, parks, and conservation areas

The FLUM serves as the primary policy guide for zoning decisions, rezonings, and long-term land use patterns. Any changes to land use policy or growth patterns should be reflected on the Future Land Use Map to maintain consistency between planning policy and regulatory implementation.

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#### Zoning Plan and Action Plan:

The Master Plan includes a Zoning Plan and Implementation Action Plan that identifies specific regulatory changes needed to implement the Plan’s policies. The Plan concludes that new zoning

## Key Master Plan Components for Potential Amendments

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districts are generally not required, but several targeted amendments to the zoning ordinance are recommended. These include:

### Zoning Implementation Priorities

- Incorporation of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program
- Allowing Agri-Tourism uses within the Agricultural district
- Increasing wetland setback requirements
- Permitting renewable energy systems such as rooftop solar
- Encouraging EV charging infrastructure
- Updating Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) regulations

### Action Plan:

The Master Plan also includes an implementation schedule identifying priority actions, responsible partners, and approximate timelines. These actions translate policy goals into concrete steps such as ordinance amendments, infrastructure coordination, and regional planning initiatives.

### Implementation Action Plan Progress Tracker:

#### Preservation of Our Agricultural Heritage:

Initiative	Target Year	Partners	Status
Encourage agricultural property owners to continue participation in the Farmland & Open Space Preservation Program (PA 116)	2023–2025	Michigan Office of Rural Development and Agriculture	Ongoing
Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow Agri-Tourism activities as a Special Land Use	2024	Township Board	Ongoing
Amend Article 14 to include a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) option to preserve core agricultural land	2024	Huron River Watershed Council	Not Started

#### Protection of Our Natural Resources:

Initiative	Target Year	Partners	Status
Amend Section 23.06 to increase the wetland setback from 10 feet to 25 feet	2024	Township Board, Huron River Watershed Council	Ongoing
Coordinate with Michigan EGLE to evaluate groundwater recharge areas and develop protective ordinances	2027	EGLE	Not Started

**Management of Our Traffic:**

Initiative	Target Year	Partners	Status
Work with partners to evaluate the Island Lake Road and Dexter-Pinckney Road intersection focusing on either an intersection realignment or installation of a roundabout to mitigate traffic backups.	2024	Washtenaw County Road Commission, Webster Township and the City of Dexter	Not Started

**Creating a Sustainable Community:**

Initiative	Target Year	Partners	Status
Amend the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions to prevent their use as Short Term Rentals (STR's)	2024	Township Board	Not Started
Promote the use of EV Charging stations. Consider an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that requires EV charging stations at certain public and private facilities.	2025	DTE	Not Started
Amendment to Article 16: General Provisions to include renewable energy facilities as a use permitted by right on residential properties.	2026	Township Board	Completed
Work with Washtenaw County on the preparation of a Township hazard mitigation plan.	2028	Washtenaw County	Ongoing

**Thoughtful Planning for Future Development:**

Initiative	Target Year	Partners	Status
Continue collaboration with the Washtenaw County Broadband Committee to provide and increase high speed internet services to the Township.	2023-2024	Washtenaw County	Ongoing
Consider creating a zoning district that encourages affordable, smaller residential lots within a walkable neighborhood that could be used in conjunction with the Open Space Community Overlay District.	2023-2025	Township Board	Not Started

**Conclusion:**

The Cornerstones, Future Land Use Map, and Zoning / Implementation Plan function together as the central framework of the Dexter Township Master Plan. As the Committee reviews the Plan, particular attention should be given to whether these components continue to reflect the Township's long-term vision and whether any policy gaps have emerged since the Plan's adoption in 2024.

# Cornerstone

## Preservation of our Agricultural Heritage

Dexter Township has a variety of open spaces. These include 4,368 acres of agricultural land and 5,313 acres of MDNR, Metropark, and University of Michigan properties. Combined, these properties make up fifty (50%) percent of the total Township acreage. Together, these properties create the framework for a rural setting; a setting attractive to those seeking a lifestyle away from a city. It is unlikely that the 5,313 acres will be developed since it remains in public and university ownership and the properties are used for outdoor recreation and research. However, the 4,368 acres of agricultural land could be at risk.

Both the 2007 and 2022 community surveys indicated a strong preference by residents to protect agricultural activities within the Township. However, without ownership of the development rights little can be done to prevent the sale of agricultural property for residential development. Ordinance #43, the Dexter Township Zoning Ordinance (2020), Section 5.02 allows for single family residential on a minimum lot size of 5 acres or 1 acre with certain conditions. Since the last master plan in 2011, former agricultural properties have been converted into large lot single family parcels.

The map entitled, “Core Preservation Areas” (Map 10) defines three core zones in the Township. The Stable Zone is composed of State of Michigan, Huron-Clinton Metropark, and University of Michigan properties. These exist along the eastern and northern edges of the Township. The Moderately Developed Zone accommodates a significant portion of the Township’s subdivisions which are developed along Dexter-Pinckney Road, Island Lake Road near the City of Dexter, and along North Territorial Road. The remaining zone, called the AG-Core is located in the south-central portion of the Township and comprises much of the remaining agricultural properties and farms. This is the zone that needs to be preserved in order for Dexter Township to maintain its agricultural heritage and rural character.

### BUILDING BLOCKS

- » Continued use of Ordinance #43, Article 15 the Open Space Community Overlay District (OSC) to preserve open space and encourage the clustering of residential development.
- » Incorporate into Ordinance #43 the zoning tool referred to as the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR). Using the Core Preservation Areas utilize the AG-Core as the “sending” zone and the Moderately Developed Zone as the “receiving” zone. This program allows the private exchange of development rights using the minimum lot requirements between sending and receiving zones.
- » In coordination with the Washtenaw County Health Department develop a detailed map of soils that cannot support septic systems, have seasonal high-water tables, and high groundwater tables, and significantly limit the use of engineered on-site disposal systems on these properties.
- » Enact, with voter approval, a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program placing a priority on agriculturally productive land.
- » Encourage renewal of Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program (PA 116) certificates.
- » Develop a farm-link program matching retiring farmers with current farmers or new farmers to keep land in agricultural production (<https://landforgood.org/resources/farm-link-programs/>).
- » Consider adding agri-tourism uses in Ordinance #43; Agri-tourism uses help supplement and add additional income to the agricultural operation.



# Cornerstone

## Management of Our Traffic

The comparison between the 2007 and 2022 surveys noted an increase in priorities focused on improving the quality of roads within the Township, traffic management, and non-motorized trails. Average annual daily traffic (AADT) counts available from the Washtenaw County Road Commission (WCRC) and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) indicate a low annual increase in traffic counts on primary county roads within the Township. The map entitled, “National Functional Classification,” (Map 16) shows the available AADT counts and estimated percentage of growth.

The WCRC data suggests that the selected road segments have an annual growth rate between 1% and 2%. However, between 2007 and 2022 residents perceive the traffic as a larger issue and open-source comments refer to traffic congestion and the lack of road capacity to manage the added residential growth. Each new residential dwelling typically generates 5 daily trips and 1 per peak hour.

Traffic congestion is a local perception and usually defined by the wait time to get through an intersection. A review of the data suggests there are three points where peak hour traffic gets congested. The first point is traffic entering the Township through downtown Dexter. The signals at Main Street and Baker, and Main Street and Broad Street cause significant delays especially in the PM Peak. Second, although there is no signal, the narrow rail underpass further slows traffic. Lastly, the intersection at Dexter-Pinckney and Island Lake Road causes delays. All these traffic points add to the low level of service (LOS) experienced entering the south portion of the Township. The 2019 Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS) 2045 congestion forecast map still classifies the Island Lake Road segment between Dexter-Chelsea Road and Dexter-Pinckney as congested.

Non-motorized use has gained in popularity and WATS has been a regional advocate for trail development. The WATS 2018 Non-Motorized Trail Plan calls for the continuation of the B2B Trail through the County. A portion of the B2B traverses through the Hudson Mills Metropark on the east side of Dexter-Pinckney Road. The proposed Northwest Connector envisions a trail connecting Hudson Mills Metropark to the Mike Levine Lakelands Trail State Park. Survey respondents (78%) either strongly encouraged or encouraged the utilization of biking, hiking and walking trails in the Township.

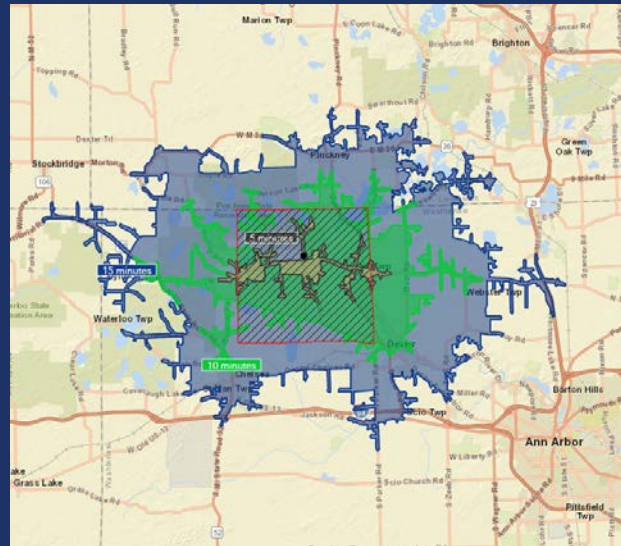
### **BUILDING BLOCKS**

- » Develop a baseline model, such as Synchro, that determines the Level of Service (LOS) at intersections and primary arterials throughout the Township. This model would then be used to evaluate the added traffic impact associated with new development and provide the Township with the necessary data to manage development outcomes.
- » Require developers to submit a traffic impact assessment that models the Level of Service (LOS) at key intersections to ensure that the LOS doesn't drop below level D.
- » Collaborate with WCRC and Webster Township on a study for the Island Lake Road and Dexter-Pinckney Road intersection to determine directional traffic flow, AM/PM Peak Hour counts and Level of Service (LOS) with a focus on potential intersection redesign.
- » Prepare a Township non-motorized plan that incorporates regional trail plan segments and determines potential shared roadways and design considerations for paved shoulders.
- » Work with WCRC, the City of Dexter, and MDOT to identify and correct dangerous road design and traffic patterns.

# Cornerstone

## Thoughtful Planning for Future Development

Sentiments toward commercial development have changed since the 2007 Survey. Those selecting that they “do not want commercial development” or “commercial development should be discouraged” fell compared to the 2022 Survey. Conversely, those selecting “commercial should be allowed with land use regulations” and “appropriate land use regulations” increased. When asked to identify what type of commercial development would be appropriate, grocery store and restaurant were selected. In the open-ended responses respondents suggested a farmers’ market and outdoor gathering spaces. Overall, responses in favor of commercial development focus on convenience and not destination businesses.



Dexter Township is uniquely positioned to access three commercial districts: Dexter, Chelsea and Pinckney. A 5, 10, and 15-minute drive time analysis from the intersection of Dexter-Pinckney Road and North Territorial Road was created. The adjacent map denotes the coverages within the Township in relation to the respective business districts and verifies the degree of access to these centers is within a reasonable drive. As a result, the Township is in a position where planning for a commercial district may not be necessary. However, a very concentrated business cluster may be appropriate to satisfy errand-oriented trips, such as a convenience store, farmers’ market, and/or coffee shop-bakery. The median household income in Dexter Township is forecasted to increase from approximately \$112,000 in 2022 to \$125,000 in 2027. Current expenditures for food purchased away from home is estimated at \$14 million and food purchased for the home is estimated at \$20 million and these expenditures are slated to increase. Obviously, the majority of these consumer expenditures flow (leak) outside of the Township to the surrounding business districts.

Other development-related initiatives that should be pursued involve the deployment of high-speed internet throughout the Township. Post-COVID work arrangements have shifted to remote, in-home offices, and hybrid work environments both of which require dependable, high-speed internet. Embodied in this shift from office-to-home work environment means a probable reduction in traffic which is a win-win for the Township. Further, survey respondents prefer large lot single family residences and open space subdivisions. Another way to preserve open space is to cluster smaller homes together within a larger tract of land.

### BUILDING BLOCKS

- » Recognize the business districts in Dexter, Chelsea, Pinckney and Ann Arbor as Dexter Township’s downtown. However, consider a small commercial hub at the Dexter-Pinckney / North Territorial intersection focused on errand-orientated businesses.
- » Continue collaboration with the Washtenaw County Broadband Committee to provide and increase high speed internet services to the Township.
- » Consider creating a zoning district that encourages affordable, smaller residential lots within a walkable neighborhood that could be used in conjunction with the Open Space Community Overlay District.
- » Encourage, or require, through zoning to utilize Multi Lakes Sewer Authority’s and/or Portage - Base Lakes Authority sanitary sewer services and minimize unused capacity.

# Cornerstone

## Creating a Sustainable Community

Sustainability is the ability to exist and develop without depleting natural resources for the future. The United Nations defined sustainable development in the 1987 report entitled, “Our Common Future” (also known as the Brundtland Report) as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The concept of sustainability is composed of three pillars: economic, environmental and social. To some degree sustainability is linked to population growth. Although Michigan’s population doesn’t increase at the same rate as east and west seaboard communities, recent trends have indicated Michigan will see modest growth and this growth will likely see a migration to urban areas in the State. The greater Ann Arbor urban area will continue to grow due to its excellence in the education, healthcare and technology sectors, and this growth will place added development pressures on surrounding communities like Dexter Township. At the local level sustainability is the balance between economic development and environmental outcomes and their impact on society.

Local sustainability strategies focus on those measures that can be advanced and implemented by the local unit of government. Often these sustainable community strategies are rarely legislative in nature but take the form of incremental projects and initiatives.

### **BUILDING BLOCKS**

- » Provide opportunities for affordable housing through the use of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU’s), smaller lot sizes, and encouraging cluster housing development.
- » Participate or encourage residents to use regional public transit options.
- » Provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.
- » Protect productive and prime agricultural lands to ensure future food production.
- » Collaborate with adjacent communities to address regional planning and transportation issues as a way to direct growth and preserve sensitive natural resources and farmland.
- » Encourage, or require through zoning, the installation of EV charging stations in commercial developments.
- » Incorporate EV charging stations in Township facilities, local and regional parks.
- » Promote energy efficiency in homes by permitting residential rooftop solar energy by right, providing materials and resources on weatherization, and encouraging the use of sustainable building materials.
- » Monitor and advocate for the replacement of tree canopy along County roads and within private developments that require local approval.
- » Continuation of Township-wide recycling and evaluate the concept of leaf composting in lieu of burning.
- » Promote the expansion of non-motorized shared pathways.
- » Reduce storm water runoff through green storm water infrastructure enhancements such as porous pavement, rain barrels, and bioswales.
- » Assess the Township’s vulnerability to risk including but not limited to toxic substances, transportation failings, and climate change.
- » Consider an overlay zone around Township lakes to control chemical usage.






## FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) for Dexter Township has its foundation in the land suitability analysis. As outlined in the Land Use chapter, the land suitability analysis was developed to determine what properties were suitable for agricultural preservation and those properties suitable for non-agricultural purposes in the future. The result of that analysis concluded that a defined agricultural core existed in the south-central portion of the township and properties outside this core area would likely be developed for lower density, rural residential development. As a result, the FLUM has

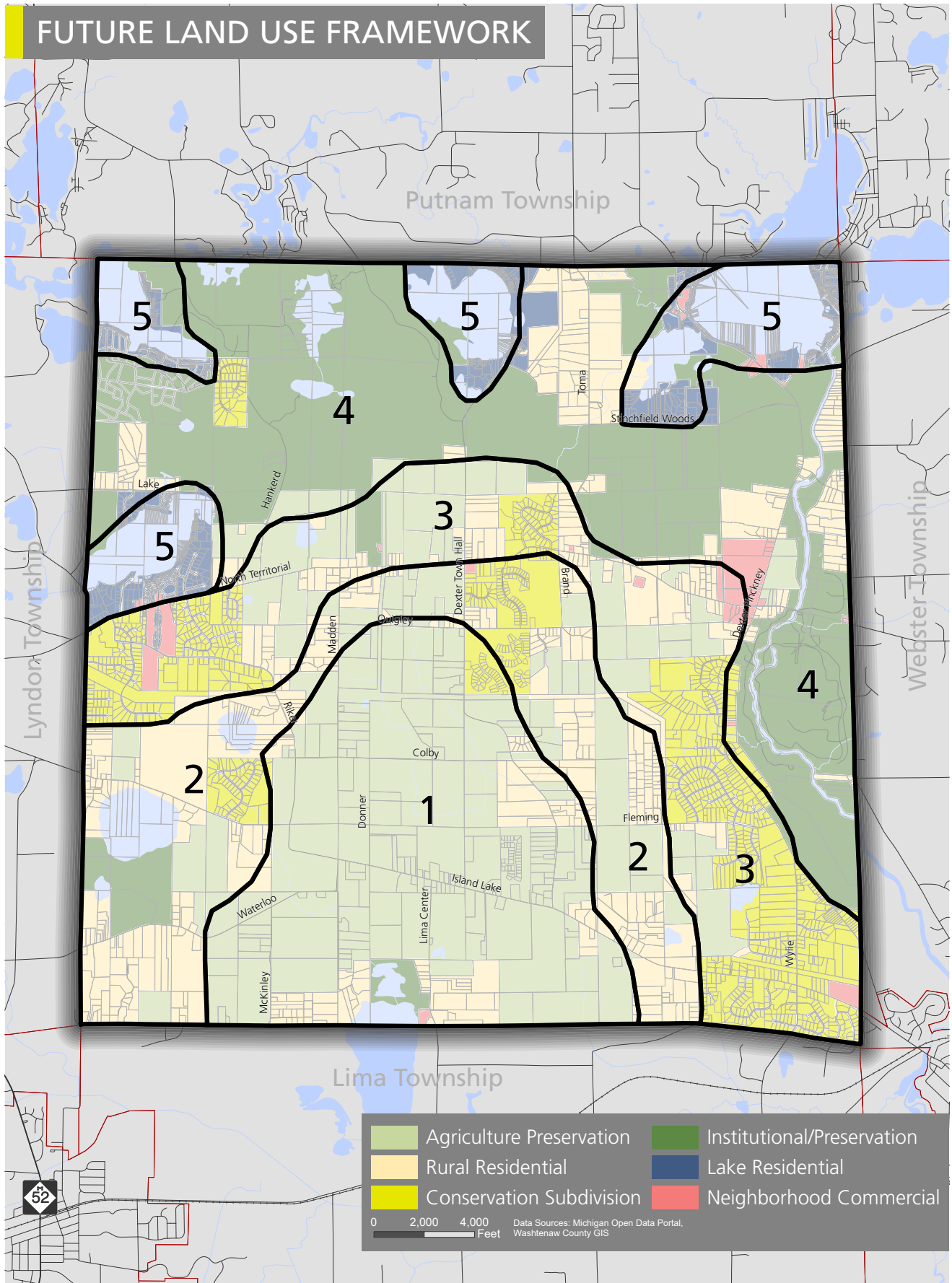
five distinct land use patterns as noted in Table 15 titled “Future Land Use Framework”.

Collectively these five framework typologies paint a picture of a low-density, rural community with access to significant open spaces and outdoor recreation amenities. Except for several small local businesses there are no large commercial districts within the Township, which is consistent with the Cornerstones, where the Township recognizes and supports the adjacent downtowns of Dexter, Chelsea, and Pinckney rather than encouraging commercial development within the Township. The map on the following page shows generally where these land use patterns are located in the township (the numbered black outlines on the map).

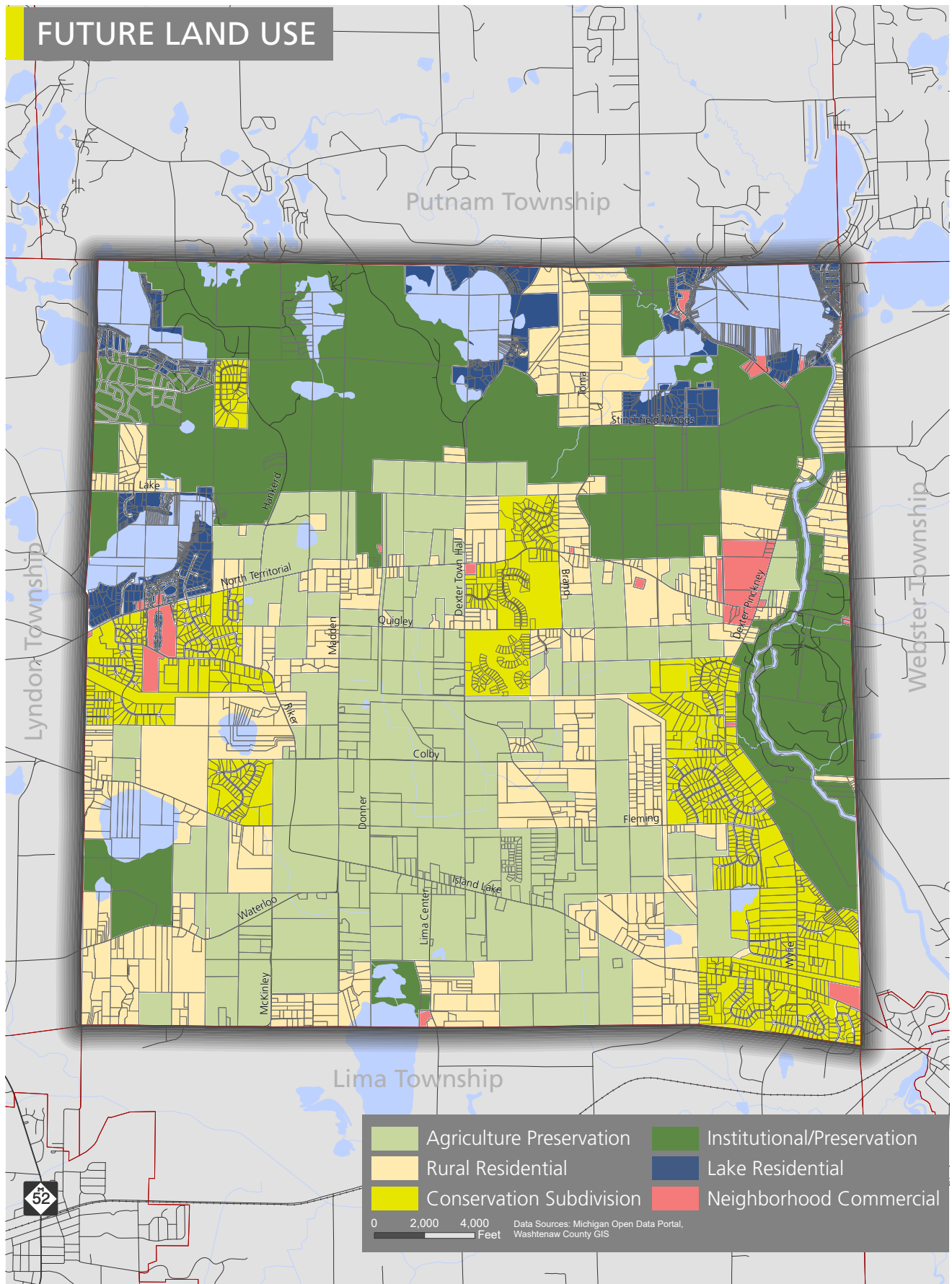
**Table 15: Future Land Use Framework**

Type		Land Use Pattern	Description
1		Working Agricultural	Located in the south-central portion of the Township.
2		Low Density Rural Living	Located in the southern portion of the Township emanating from Agricultural Preservation area.
3		Low Density Suburban Living	Includes many of the platted and site condominium subdivisions that are adjacent to HCMA, UM, and State properties.
4		Natural and Sensitive Areas	Properties along the eastern edge and north portion of the Township.
5		Waterfront	Residential and commercial adjacent to the Township’s inland lakes.

Map 21: Future Land Use Framework



Map 22: Future Land Use Map



**Table 16: Future Land Use & Existing Zoning**

Proposed FLUM	Intent	Proposed Uses	Zoning District(s)	Acreage
Agricultural Preservation	Preserve working agricultural properties and high value agricultural land.	Farms, orchards, vineyards, and large lot residential single family.	AG	6,123
Rural Residential	Provide for large lot rural style living and maintain the agricultural and rural nature of the Township core.	Farms, orchards, vineyards, and large lot residential single family.	RC, RR, PR	4,349
Conservation Subdivision	Provide for subdivision style development in a way that preserves the natural and rural character of the land by encouraging the clustering of smaller lots within the subdivision and the preservation of land around the clusters.	Low to medium density single family residential in planned developments.	RR	2,687
Lake Residential	Permit small lot and residential cottage style development around the lakes using regulations intended to accommodate small lots and protect water quality.	Waterfront single family residential.	LR	1,662
Neighborhood Commercial	Provide for limited commercial and light industrial uses within the Township.	Small, single site retail and service businesses that serve local residents.	C	292
Institutional / Preservation	Maintain public and quasi-public properties, parks, and conservation lands.	Large open spaces with some limited passive recreation amenities.	CU, PA, PR	5,824

## ZONING PLAN

Based on the relationship of Future Land Use Map (FLUM) to the Township zoning ordinance (#43) there are no new or modified zoning districts needed to accomplish the implementation of the future land use map. There are, however, several recommended revisions that should be considered to implement the Cornerstones and these include:

- 1. Transfer of Development Rights.** Incorporate into Article 14; Planned Unit Development, a provision that encourages the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR's) from the core agricultural zone to the moderately developed zone based on the land suitability analysis. A TDR program seeks to preserve landowners' asset value by moving the right to build a house(s) from a location where agricultural preservation is encouraged to a location where development is encouraged. The TDR process is usually associated with a planned unit development and the development rights are transferred from the sending zone (agricultural core) to the receiving zone (moderately developed zone). The approved planned unit development is eventually recorded at the County Register of Deeds which memorializes the transfer of development rights from the sending parcel to prevent future development on the same parcel.
- 2. Agri-Tourism.** Allow within the Agricultural District (AG) agri-tourism opportunities, Section 5.03. These activities, conducted on the agricultural property, help provide an additional revenue stream to the property owner.
- 3. Wetlands.** Amend Section 23.06 C. to increase the setback from a wetland from 10 feet to 25 feet to provide extra protection from fertilizer and pesticide infiltration.
- 4. Renewable Energy.** Amend Article 16; General Provisions to include a section on personal scale renewable energy, such as, solar, residential wind, and geothermal facilities.
- 5. Electric Vehicles (EV's).** Amend Article 16; General Provisions to include use of electrical vehicle (EV) charging stations in public facilities, parks, and commercial businesses.
- 6. Accessory Dwelling Units.** Accessory dwelling units (ADU's) provide added housing opportunities in housing markets with high demand and low supply, like the greater Ann Arbor market. However, accessory dwelling units are being converted into short term rentals (STR's) which negates their value as an additional long-term housing unit. Consider amending the Accessory Dwelling Standards, Section 17.02(D), in the zoning ordinance to prohibit the use of ADU's for STR's.



Agri-Tourism



Accessory Dwelling Units

**Table 17: Action Plan**

Preservation of Our Agricultural Heritage		Partners
Encourage agricultural property owners to continue in the Farmland & Open Space Preservation program (PA 116)	2023-2025	Michigan Office of Rural Development and Agriculture
Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow Agri-Tourism activities as a Special Land Use under Article 28.	2024	Township Board
Amend Article 14 to include the elective use of the Transfer of Development Rights option to further the preservation of core agricultural properties.	2024	Huron River Watershed Council
Protection of Our Natural Resources		Partners
Amend Section 23.06 C. to increase the wetland setback from 10 feet to 25 feet.	2024	Township Board, Huron River Watershed Council
Coordinate with Michigan EGLE to evaluate where groundwater recharge areas are located within the Township and then construct an ordinance that prevents contamination of this resource	2027	EGLE
Management of Our Traffic		Partners
Work with partners to evaluate the Island Lake Road and Dexter-Pinckney Road intersection focusing on either an intersection realignment or installation of a roundabout to mitigate traffic backups.	2024	Washtenaw County Road Commission, Webster Township and the City of Dexter
Creating a Sustainable Community		Partners
Amend the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions to prevent their use as Short Term Rentals (STR's)	2024	Township Board
Promote the use of EV Charging stations. Consider an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that requires EV charging stations at certain public and private facilities.	2025	DTE
Amendment to the Article 16: General Provisions to include renewable energy facilities as a use permitted by right on residential properties.	2026	Township Board
Work with Washtenaw County on the preparation of a Township hazard mitigation plan.	2028	Washtenaw County
Thoughtful Planning for Future Development		Partners
Continue collaboration with the Washtenaw County Broadband Committee to provide and increase high speed internet services to the Township.	2023–2024	Washtenaw County
Consider creating a zoning district that encourages affordable, smaller residential lots within a walkable neighborhood that could be used in conjunction with the Open Space Community Overlay District.	2023–2025	Township Board



# DEXTER TOWNSHIP

## PLANNING & ZONING

6880 DEXTER-PINCKNEY ROAD  
DEXTER, MI 48130

TELEPHONE: 734-426-3767

[WWW.DEXTERTOWNSHIPMI.GOV](http://WWW.DEXTERTOWNSHIPMI.GOV)

*"A Community For All Seasons"*

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## ***Discussion Issues and Policy Considerations***

Dexter Township Master Plan Review Committee

March 18, 2026

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**Purpose:** To review, evaluate, and provide recommendations regarding updates to the Dexter Township Master Plan.

**Focus:** Policy-level guidance and long-range planning issues. Address gaps in the current Master Plan related to emerging and evolving land uses that were not adequately anticipated at the time of adoption.

**Committee Recommendations:** Should be consist with existing Township ordinances and zoning regulations and framed at a policy level appropriate for inclusion in or guidance from the Master Plan.

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The following topics were identified as areas where emerging or evolving land uses may warrant discussion during the Master Plan review process. These issues focus on long-range planning considerations rather than specific zoning amendments.

For each topic, the Committee should consider whether the current Master Plan adequately reflects Township policy or whether additional policy guidance may be appropriate.

In several cases, these uses are already addressed through the Township's Zoning Ordinance or through recent Township Board direction. The Committee may determine that the Master Plan should either clarify existing policies or that no amendment is necessary.

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### **Short-Term Rentals (STRs):**

Short-term rentals typically involve renting a dwelling for periods shorter than thirty (30) days through online platforms. These uses have expanded rapidly in many communities, particularly in areas with lakes, recreational amenities, or tourism activity. STRs can be defined as a *“commercial activity consisting of renting a dwelling or unit for a term of not more than thirty (30) nights.”*

### **Local Context**

The Township's current zoning ordinance does not permit short-term rentals as a distinct land use. The Township Board previously considered whether to adopt a general ordinance allowing / regulating short-term rental but ultimately declined to adopt such regulations. As a result, short-term rentals remain prohibited under the Township's current zoning framework.

The current Master Plan references short-term rentals only once (pg. 69), within the Zoning Plan, which recommends amending the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions of the zoning ordinance to ensure ADUs are not used as short-term rentals.

The Township Board has directed the Planning Commission to review the Bed and Breakfast provisions of the zoning ordinance to clarify that Bed and Breakfast establishments represent the primary lodging use permitted in residential areas and that such uses maintain on-site owner occupancy while guests are present.

### **Potential Planning Considerations**

Short-term rentals can introduce a transient occupancy pattern within areas historically planned for permanent residential use. Common planning concerns associated with STR activity include:

- Noise and late-night activity
- Parking congestion on narrow residential or lake roads
- Trash management and property maintenance
- Coordination with emergency services

These issues raise broader planning questions about whether transient lodging uses are compatible with residential neighborhoods and lakefront areas.

### **Potential Master Plan Consideration**

While STRs are currently prohibited, the Committee may wish to evaluate whether the Master Plan should more clearly articulate the Township's rationale for maintaining residential districts primarily for long-term occupancy.

### **Possible Policy Considerations:**

- Maintaining the stability of residential neighborhoods
  - Preventing the conversion of housing into transient lodging uses
  - Protecting the character of lakefront and rural residential areas
-

## **Bed and Breakfast Establishments:**

Bed and Breakfast (B&B) establishments represent the primary small-scale lodging use currently contemplated in the Township's zoning framework. These uses generally involve limited guest accommodation within a dwelling where the property owner remains on site during guest stays. The Township Zoning Ordinance defines Bed and Breakfast as "*A residential facility that is owner-occupied in which overnight accommodations are provided or offered for compensation, including the provision of bathing and lavatory facilities and a breakfast meal.*"

### **Local Context**

Bed and Breakfast establishments are currently a special land use in all residential zoning districts and are subject to standards outlined in Sec. 17.04(K) along with the special land use standards outlined in Article 28 – Special Land Uses.

The Township Board has directed the Planning Commission to review the existing Bed and Breakfast provisions to ensure they clearly distinguish this use from short-term rental activity and reinforce the expectation that the property owner remains on site while guests are present

This review process is currently underway by the Planning Commission and Township staff.

### **Potential Planning Considerations**

Bed and Breakfast establishments may provide limited tourism opportunities while remaining compatible with rural residential environments because they typically involve:

- Small numbers of guests
- On-site owner management
- Operation within an existing residential structure

Because the owner remains on the property, these uses are often viewed as less disruptive than lodging uses that operate without on-site management.

### **Potential Master Plan Consideration**

The Committee may wish to consider whether the Master Plan should explicitly recognize Bed and Breakfast establishments as the Township's preferred form of small-scale lodging that maintains owner occupancy and compatibility with surrounding residential areas. B&Bs are only mentioned one time in the Master Plan (pg. 31) in the context of revenue generating for farms.

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## **Agritourism and Special Event Facilities:**

Agritourism activities allow farms to diversify income through tourism, recreation, and educational experiences connected to agricultural operations. Examples may include farm markets, winery tasting rooms, seasonal festivals, educational programs, and farm-related events.

The Township's Master Plan already recognizes agritourism as a potential opportunity within the Agricultural District. The Plan notes that agritourism activities conducted on agricultural properties can provide additional revenue streams for farms while connecting visitors to local agriculture. Examples identified in the Master Plan include barn weddings, farm markets, corn mazes, winery tastings, demonstration farms, and seasonal agricultural events.

### **Current Township Ordinance**

The Township zoning ordinance already permits several agritourism-related activities, including wineries and special event facilities, subject to Planning Commission review through the Special Land Use process.

The Zoning Ordinance defines a Special Event Facility as:

“A facility where large-scale public or private events are held on a regular basis, provided that the facility is incidental and accessory to the primary agricultural or residential use of the site. Special event facilities may include the sale and consumption of food, beverages, and other goods.”

To maintain compatibility with rural areas, Special Event Facilities must meet several ordinance standards, including:

- Minimum 20-acre lot size
- Minimum 600 feet of road frontage
- Access from a paved major or minor thoroughfare
- the presence of a commercial farm operation
- Outdoor dining or entertainment areas located at least 100 feet from any lot line
- Planning Commission review of hours of operation

Accessory uses may also include managerial facilities, restaurants, educational facilities, and limited lodging for guests associated with the event facility. These standards are intended to ensure that event venues remain connected to agricultural uses rather than operating as stand-alone commercial event centers within rural areas.

### **Potential Planning Considerations**

Agritourism can support the long-term viability of farms by diversifying income sources and increasing public awareness of agriculture. Activities such as farm markets, seasonal festivals, winery tastings, and educational programs can strengthen connections between residents and the Township's agricultural community.

At the same time, certain agritourism activities (particularly larger events) may generate impacts that differ from traditional agricultural operations. Potential considerations may include:

- Increased traffic on rural roads
- Noise associated with events or large gatherings
- Seasonal visitor activity and parking demand
- Lighting associated with evening events

**Potential Master Plan Consideration**

The review committee may want to consider whether the Master Plan’s current language is sufficient to:

- Highlight the potential benefits of agritourism for farm viability and community engagement.
- Acknowledge the impacts of larger events on rural infrastructure and quality of life.
- Reference the Township’s existing ordinance standards as guidance for balancing economic development with rural preservation.

The Master Plan could either maintain its current language if the committee feels the existing recognition is adequate, or it could be updated to more explicitly address community impact, community compatibility, and the role of Planning Commission review in ensuring agritourism supports the Township’s agricultural goals.

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## **Renewable Energy and Biofuel Production:**

Renewable energy technologies are expected to become increasingly common as utilities and energy providers move toward Michigan's goal of achieving 100 percent clean energy generation by 2040.

Renewable energy infrastructure may include:

- Wind energy systems
- Solar energy installations
- Battery storage facilities
- Biofuel production facilities

These technologies can provide opportunities for landowners and agricultural operations to diversify income sources. In particular, anaerobic digesters at livestock farms can produce renewable natural gas through the digestion of organic materials such as manure and food waste. The resulting biogas may be used to generate electricity, heat, or vehicle fuel while also providing a waste management benefit.

Although renewable energy technologies were not extensively addressed in the Township's current Master Plan, these uses have become more common in rural communities and may introduce new land use considerations related to siting, scale, and compatibility with surrounding properties.

### **Current Township Ordinance**

Dexter Township has already established zoning regulations addressing several renewable energy technologies, including:

- Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS)
- Solar Energy Systems
- Biofuel Production Facilities

In November 2024, the Township Board approved amendments to the Zoning Ordinance allowing utility-scale wind, solar, and biofuel production facilities as Special Land Uses, subject to Planning Commission review and specific development standards. These standards address issues such as site design, setbacks, landscape buffering, and decommissioning requirements.

The Zoning Ordinance also regulates smaller-scale renewable energy systems, including residential windmills and roof-mounted or ground-mounted solar installations.

### **Potential Planning Considerations**

Renewable energy development can present several land use considerations for rural communities, including:

- The potential conversion of agricultural land for energy production
- Visual impacts on rural landscapes
- Environmental considerations related to water resources, soils, and wildlife habitat
- Infrastructure needs and long-term site restoration after facility decommissioning

**Potential Master Plan Consideration**

Because the Zoning Ordinance already regulates renewable energy facilities, the role of the Master Plan would be to provide general policy guidance rather than establish regulatory standards.

The Committee may consider whether the Master Plan should more clearly address renewable energy development in relation to:

- Supporting the long-term viability of agriculture, including farm-based renewable energy opportunities
- Protecting natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas when evaluating potential locations for energy infrastructure
- Maintaining the Township’s rural character while accommodating emerging energy technologies
- Providing general guidance on balancing economic opportunities with potential land use impacts

## **Data Centers:**

On February 17, 2026, the Dexter Township Board of Trustees approved a 180-day moratorium on all requests seeking approval to construct and operate data centers in the Township, effective immediately. The intent is to allow the Township more time to study the short and long-term impacts and costs of data center development in the Township.

At the state level, House Bills 5594–5596 (Data Center Regulation Act) would introduce a one-year moratorium on data center development, preventing state and local government from issuing permits for data centers until April 2027, giving lawmakers time to address concerns about energy demands and community impacts.

Michigan is attractive for data center development due to its cold climate (which reduces cooling costs) and tax exemptions approved by the Legislature. These market pressures make it important for the Township to establish clear Master Plan policy.

## **Township Position**

Dexter Township recognizes the growing interest in large-scale data centers, driven by the demand for cloud computing and digital infrastructure. At the same time, data centers are associated with substantial electrical demand, large building footprints, and impacts on the Township’s rural character, natural resources, and existing infrastructure.

The Township’s goal is to ensure that any proposed data center development is carefully evaluated and regulated to protect community interests, natural features, and quality of life for residents. The current 180-day moratorium provides time to assess the potential short- and long-term impacts and to consider policy and ordinance updates that align with the Township’s Master Plan and vision for sustainable growth.

## **Key Issues**

- High energy use – facilities often require 100–500+ MW power loads
- High water use for cooling systems – competes with local needs and affects watersheds
- Environmental impacts related to energy consumption, cooling, and backup generation
- Large building footprints (100,000–1,000,000+ sq ft) inconsistent with rural character
- Limited local economic benefit – relatively few long-term jobs created
- Potential strain on rural infrastructure and electrical transmission systems
- Need for stricter regulations and transparency regarding impacts
- Requirements for renewable energy use

## **Planning Rational**

**Electrical Infrastructure Impacts:** Large-scale data centers require significant electrical capacity and transmission infrastructure that may not be compatible with the Township's rural infrastructure and land use pattern.

**Limited Local Economic Benefit:** While data centers represent significant capital investment, they typically generate relatively few long-term employment opportunities compared to other employment uses.

**Land Consumption:** Large building footprints and extensive security infrastructure can be inconsistent with the Township's desired development pattern and rural character.

**Environmental Considerations:** Data centers may introduce environmental impacts related to energy consumption, cooling systems, and backup generation that are inconsistent with the Township's sustainability goals.

### **Potential Master Plan Consideration**

The Committee should consider whether policy language should be added to guide future decisions. Outright prohibition of data centers in the zoning ordinance is not legally defensible; accordingly, the Township's approach must focus on meaningful regulation rather than exclusion.

The Master Plan should establish the policy foundation for a strong regulatory framework that protects rural character, agricultural land, and environmental resources while setting clear expectations for where and how data centers may be considered.

### **Regulatory Approach**

The Master Plan should direct data centers to limited, specifically defined locations that meet infrastructure criteria and establish policy expectations for strong performance standards. The goal is not accommodation for its own sake, but ensuring that if a data center is proposed, the Township has a defensible, well-grounded regulatory framework that prioritizes agricultural preservation, rural character, and environmental protection.

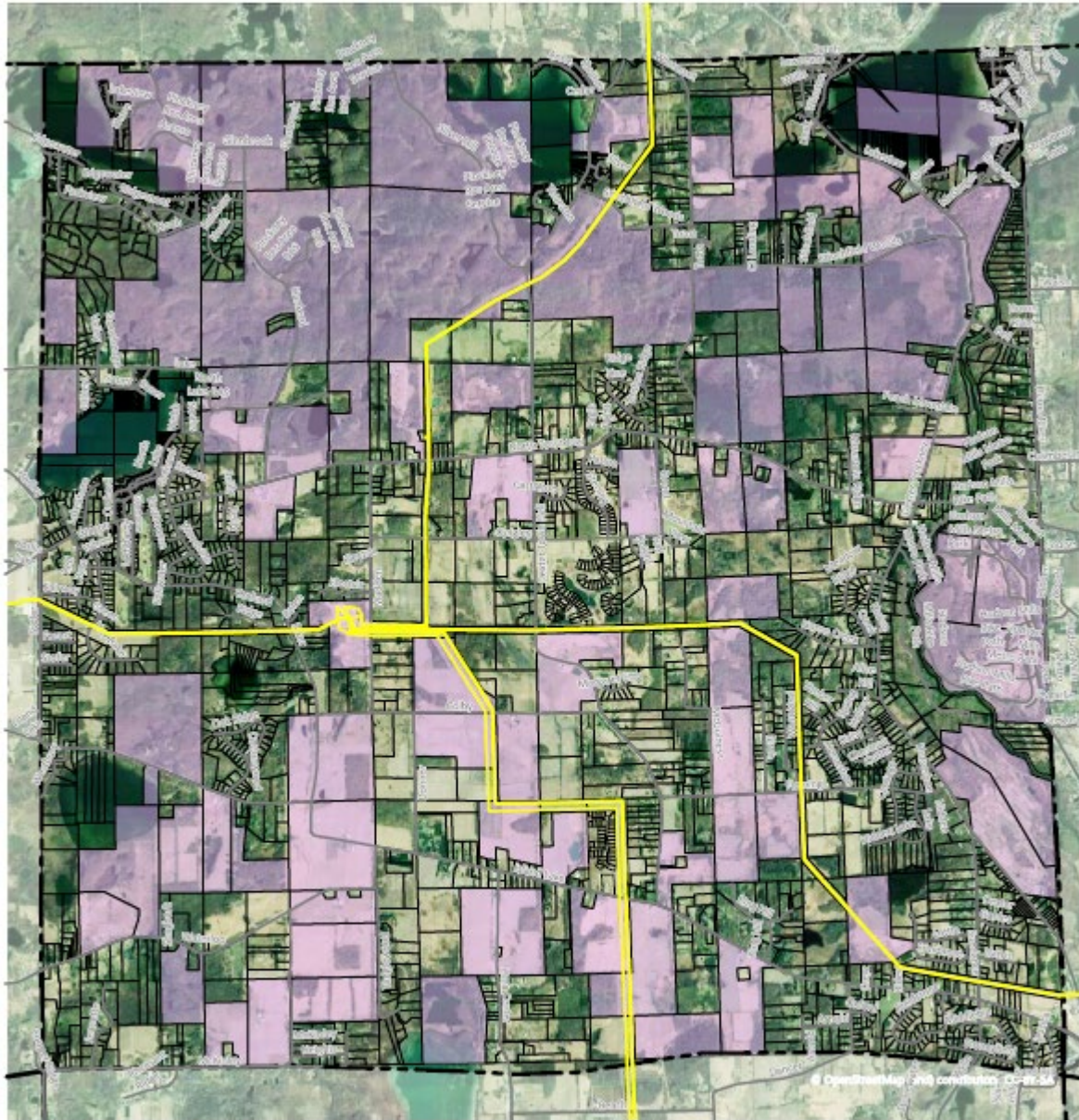
### **Draft Master Plan Policy Language**

- Define Data Centers: *“A facility primarily used to house computer servers, data storage systems, networking equipment, and associated infrastructure including cooling systems, backup power generation, and telecommunications equipment.”*
- Allow for digital infrastructure industries, including hyperscale and edge data centers, in limited areas that leverage reliable electrical power, fiber networks, and transportation corridors while minimizing impacts on surrounding land uses.
- Direct large-scale data centers to areas with existing industrial character, high-voltage electric transmission access, and proximity to fiber backbone infrastructure.
- Require data center facilities to incorporate buffering, architectural screening, noise mitigation, and energy-efficient design.
- Data center developments should be strongly encouraged to utilize renewable energy sources, waste heat recovery, and water-efficient cooling technologies.

### **Recommended Implementation Actions**

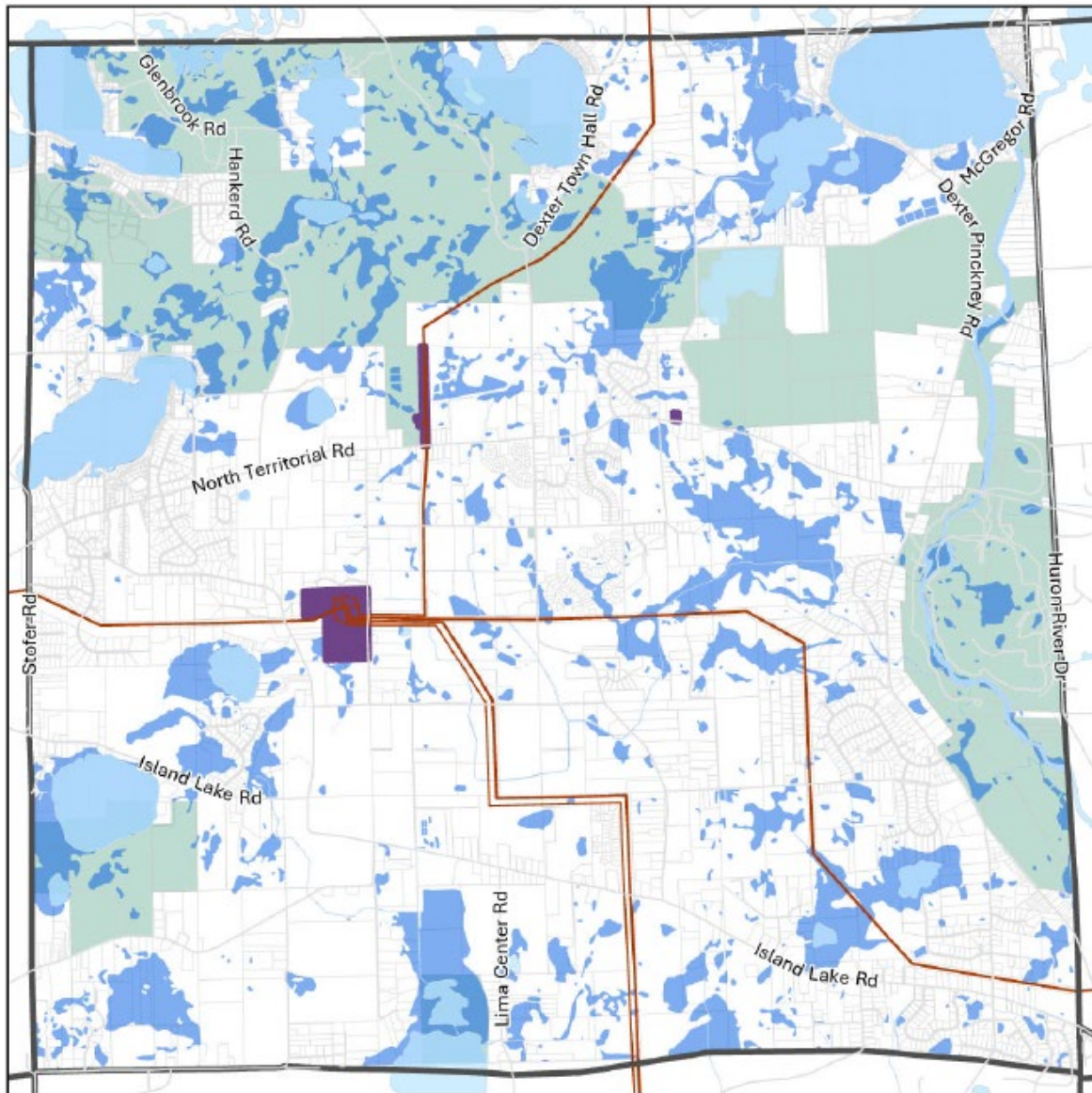
- Update zoning to define Data Center / Digital Infrastructure Facility
- Establish data centers as a special land use requiring Planning Commission review
- Coordinate with utilities on electrical capacity planning
- Map fiber internet and electrical transmission capacity
- Develop design and buffering standards

The maps below illustrate two layers of geographic context relevant to data center siting in Dexter Township. The first map shows high-voltage transmission lines overlaid with parcels of 50 acres or more. The second map shows the same transmission lines overlaid with protected and environmentally sensitive lands, including parks, state land, lakes, rivers, and wetlands, which represent meaningful constraints on where large-scale industrial development could feasibly occur. Together, these maps are intended to support the Committee's policy discussion.



**Dexter Township Transmission Lines**

- Transmission Lines
- Parcels 50 acres or greater



- Transmission Lines
- Electric Substations
- Protected Lands
- Wetlands
- Lakes and Rivers
- Parcels

Electrical Infrastructure, Wetlands,  
and Protected Lands  
Dexter Township  
Washtenaw County, Michigan



This map is for reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may not be accurate. The information is provided with the understanding that the conclusions drawn from such information are solely the responsibility of the user. Any assumption of legal status of this data is hereby disclaimed.

Date: Washtenaw County, SEMCOG, State of Michigan  
Prepared by: Carlsle/Wortman Associates, Inc.  
Date: December 9, 2025



## **Housing Needs:**

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), as amended by Public Act 153 of 2024 (HB 5557), requires master plans to include a housing component that assesses current and future needs, including housing for all income levels, and promotes diverse, affordable, and attainable housing.

### **Current Plan Strengths**

The Dexter Township Master Plan (2024) incorporates several elements responsive to these requirements:

- Anticipates 329 new residents and 350 new households by 2045 (pg. 8)
- Provides social characteristics of the Township including age, race, disability, education attainment, and income (pgs. 5–12)
- Recommends considering a zoning district that encourages affordable, smaller residential lots within a walkable neighborhood in conjunction with the Open Space Community Overlay District (pg. 63)
- Recommends providing opportunities for affordable housing through ADUs, smaller lot sizes, and cluster housing development (pg. 64)
- Action Plan recommends amending ADU provisions to prevent their use as Short-Term Rentals (Table 17, pg. 70)

### **Areas for Strengthening**

The Master Plan should strengthen the connection between its recommendations and the new state requirements through clear policy statements that:

- Acknowledge the need to plan for diverse housing options
- Identify areas where these options are appropriate
- Develop more specific strategies to achieve housing goals

The Plan's Future Land Use Framework (Table 15) identifies three land use patterns related to housing: Low Density Rural Living, Low Density Suburban Living (Conservation Subdivision), and Waterfront. Additional language may be necessary to show how a variety of housing types could be incorporated into these patterns.

### **Pending State Housing Legislation**

The following package of bills proposes statewide zoning reforms to increase housing supply and reduce local restrictions. The Committee should be aware of this legislation as it may constrain future local land use decisions:

- HB 5529 - This bill establishes in the Land Division Act a minimum parcel size, for land divisions, and minimum lot size, for subdivisions, of not more than 1,500 square feet for a detached single-family residence if the parcel is accessible to and will be served by public water and public sewer.

- Since not lots are served by both public water and public sewer in Dexter Township, there would not be an immediate effect. However, some single-family neighborhoods may choose not to hook into public water or sewer to avoid these regulations.
- HB 5530 - This bill amends the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act to state that "*A zoning ordinance must not impose a minimum parcel size of more than 1,500 square feet on land zoned for a detached single-family residence if the parcel is accessible to and will be served by public water and public sewer.*"
  - The impact would be the same as HB 5529.
- HB 5531 - This bill amends the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, specifically the site plan process. The amendments limit additional studies to only "studies or other documents that are reasonably necessary to evaluate the proposal to which the site plan relates considering the nature, scope, and intensity of the proposed use." The amendments then address what subsequent studies can be requested, and that the local government "*shall not request additional studies or documents to impose new or additional requirements to the change or to reopen issues previously reviewed and approved.*" The amendments also give municipality 60 days after receipt of a site plan, that the local government shall approve, reject or conditionally approve the site plan or initial site plan approval. Initial site plan approval does not include "*administrative completeness determinations, conceptual or sketch plan reviews, or recommendations made as part of the review process.*" Reasons for denial and how to appeal must be included in any denial.
  - The impact would be that final site plan would need to be efficient to meet the 60-day window and that reasons for denial would need to be well-written. The 60 days may not be enough in some instances, particularly if a special land use or conditional rezoning was associated with the development proposal.
- HB 5532 - This bill amends the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, specifically the protest petition process for rezonings in cities or villages. For rezonings that increase the authorized number of dwelling units, different rules for the petitions are proposed - owners of at least 60% of the area of land proposed for rezoning or owners of at least 60% of the area within 300 feet of the boundary of land proposed for rezoning.
  - It would essentially make those protest petitions more difficult. For Dexter Township, a City of Dexter annexation and rezoning would then have an easier hurdle for the rezoning.

Other items that are being contemplated are:

- ADUs, permitting them by right on properties where residential uses are allowed and single-family dwellings have been established, and establishing regulations for their treatment, including excluding them from dwelling unit density calculations, setback and dimensional requirements relative to the principal dwelling, and exempting them from parking requirements.
  - The Township allows ADU's in some instances but not Lake Residential. The impact would be additional units in lakefront areas, impacts on water and sewer systems, and a lack of design control.

- Duplexes by right in single family zones (unclear if there is a limitation like service by public water and sewer).
  - The Township does not allow duplexes in single-family areas. This could result in more units which would have impacts on sewer and water systems and roads.
- Minimum floor area requirement of 500 square feet.
  - The Township's minimum floor area for a single-family or multiple-family dwelling is 1,000 sf with an additional 100 sf for each bedroom. This proposal would allow for smaller dwelling units in all zoning districts.
- Parking minimum of 1 parking space per 1 residential unit
  - The Township's Zoning Ordinance requires 2-several parking spaces per dwelling-unit. In the Lake Residential Zoning District, parking minimums are a restraint on growth and the size of houses. The proposal would take that tool away.
- Front yard minimum of 15 feet and 5 feet for side yards - unclear where it would apply
  - While the side yard setbacks would work in the LR, they would be much smaller for the RR. The front yard setback would be contrary to the very specific front yard requirements by street in the Township and affect the character of areas and possibly health and safety.

### **Relationship with Short-Term Rentals**

If HB 5585 passes and ADUs are permitted by right without owner occupancy requirements, it may conflict with the Township's current direction on restricting ADUs from use as STRs. The Committee should note this potential regulatory tension in its recommendations.

## **Other Items for Committee Discussion**

The following additional topics were raised during the Committee's review process and may warrant discussion, though they were not assigned to a specific member for primary analysis.

### **Fertilizer Ordinance**

Dexter Township staff have been working in partnership with the Huron River Watershed Council to develop a local fertilizer management ordinance intended to protect the Township's lakes, rivers, wetlands, and other water resources from nutrient pollution. This draft ordinance will be considered by the Township Board in the coming months.

Excess nutrients from lawn fertilizers can enter nearby waterbodies through stormwater runoff. These nutrients can contribute to algal blooms, declining water quality, and ecological degradation, which can negatively impact recreational use, aquatic habitat, and property values. The proposed ordinance establishes basic standards intended to reduce these impacts while still allowing responsible landscape management.

The draft Dexter Township Fertilizer Ordinance (Ordinance No. 45) includes the following key provisions:

- **Seasonal Application Restriction:** Application of manufactured fertilizers would be prohibited between November 15 and May 1, when frozen or saturated ground conditions increase the likelihood of nutrient runoff into nearby water resources.
- **Waterbody and Wetland Protection Buffer:** Fertilizer application would be prohibited within 50 feet of the high-water mark of surface waterbodies and wetlands, establishing a natural buffer to reduce nutrient loading into lakes, streams, rivers, and wetlands.
- **Definition of Fertilizer:** The ordinance regulates manufactured fertilizers commonly used for lawn and landscape maintenance. Organic materials such as compost, manure, lime, and wood ash are not included in this definition.
- **Agricultural Exemption:** Agricultural operations producing farm products are exempt from the ordinance provided they follow the Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices (GAAMPs) for nutrient utilization as published by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.
- **Enforcement:** Violations would be treated as a municipal civil infraction, with a civil fine of \$200 per violation, with each day a violation continues considered a separate offense. The Township's Ordinance Enforcement Officer would administer enforcement.

The proposed ordinance is designed as a targeted water-quality protection measure, primarily focused on fertilizer use near sensitive water resources rather than broad regulation of lawn care activities across the Township.

Staff will continue working with the Huron River Watershed Council and Township Board to provide outreach and educational materials to residents if the ordinance is adopted, helping property owners understand best practices for protecting local water resources.

**Land Division Act – Public Act 58 of 2025**

Public Act 58 of 2025 (formerly HB 4081/SB 23), signed December 23, 2025, significantly amends Michigan's Land Division Act. Key changes include:

- Raises the maximum non-subdivision lot splits for the first 10 acres from 4 parcels to 10 parcels
- Allows local governments to authorize even more splits beyond this threshold
- Takes effect March 24, 2026 / March 24, 2027

Milestone	What It Means	Effective Date
<b>Local Ordinance Authority</b>	<b>Municipalities can “opt-in” early.</b> Townships, cities, and villages gain the legal authority to pass ordinances that <i>allow</i> these higher-density divisions immediately.	<b>March 24, 2026</b>
<b>Statewide Default Increase</b>	<b>This becomes the automatic state law.</b> If a local municipality <i>has not</i> passed its own ordinance on the matter, the default state-level limit automatically increases to 10 parcels for the first 10 acres.	<b>March 24, 2027</b>

The Committee should consider what this means for Dexter Township's agricultural preservation goals and whether Master Plan language should be updated to acknowledge this shift in state law and its potential impacts on rural land fragmentation.

Submitted: Thursday, February 26, 2026  
Please publish in the Sun Times News on: Wednesday, March 04, 2026

**NOTICE OF  
DEXTER TOWNSHIP  
MASTER PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING  
AND 2026 MEETING SCHEDULE**

**Wednesday, March 18, 2026  
6:00 P.M.**

**Dexter Township Hall  
6880 Dexter-Pinckney Road, Dexter, MI 48130  
(734) 426-3767**

**PURPOSE**

The Dexter Township Master Plan Review Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the Planning Commission and Township Board. The purpose of the Committee is to review, evaluate, and provide policy-level recommendations regarding the Township Master Plan. The Committee's work focuses on long-range planning issues and identifying areas where the current Master Plan may not provide sufficient policy guidance for emerging and evolving land uses. The Committee's recommendations are intended to help ensure the Master Plan provides clear, consistent policy direction to guide future land use decisions. Members of the public are invited and encouraged to attend and participate in the discussion.

**2026 MEETING SCHEDULE**

The Master Plan Review Committee will also meet on the following dates:

April 8, 2026  
June 17, 2026  
September 16, 2026  
December 16, 2026

All meetings will be held at 6:00 P.M. at Dexter Township Hall, 6880 Dexter-Pinckney Road, Dexter, MI 48130, unless otherwise posted.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Members of the public are welcome to attend and provide comments at the meetings. Written comments should be addressed to the Master Plan Review Committee, 6880 Dexter-Pinckney Road, Dexter, MI 48130, or sent via email to the Director of Planning and Zoning at [dpz@dextertownshipmi.gov](mailto:dpz@dextertownshipmi.gov). All correspondence must be received by 12:00 PM (noon) on the meeting date.

This notice is posted in compliance with PA 267 of 1976 as amended (Michigan Open Meetings Act), being MCL 15.265(4), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended, being Title 42 Chapter 126 and Title 47 Chapter 5 of the United States Code. Dexter Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities at the meeting upon seven days' notice to the Master Plan Review Committee. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Office Manager at the address and/or phone number above.

Michelle Stamboulellis, Dexter Township Clerk

Dated: February 26, 2026