

## Public Input Synopsis

In 2025, Grant Township distributed public surveys along with summer tax bills. In addition to the mailed version, the survey was available online, and flyers were posted with information on where residents could take it electronically or get a paper copy. A total of 209 people participated in the survey. The survey asked a variety of questions on satisfaction, housing, economic development, parks and recreation. A summary of those results follows here with full results available in the appendix.

- Almost 38% of respondents were between 46 and 65 years of age. An additional 35% of respondents were between 66 & 75 years of age, with another 21% of respondents over the age of 76.
- Over 47% of respondents were full-time residents, another 43% were seasonal residents.
- The top three reasons for living in Grant Township were the beauty of the area (37%), recreational opportunities (32%), and great retirement destination (25%).
- Just over 63% of respondents find out what is happening in the Township by word of mouth, another almost 49% from social media.
- Almost 81% of respondents felt that more needed to be done to protect lakes and rivers in the Township, 57% felt forest land needed more protection and another 52% were concerned about groundwater.
- When asked about the type of recreational facilities they would like to see, respondents expressed interest in having more bike paths (52%), wider paved shoulders (45%), and additional water access sites (44%).
- 55 % of respondents felt that the Township was doing a good job to protect the natural environment and additional 10% felt they were doing an excellent job.
- Respondents only occasionally used the beach (56%) or the community center (54%).
- Over 49% of respondents DO NOT support the development of Utility-Scale Solar Energy Facilities on agricultural land, another 25% had no opinion or were unsure.
- Over 57% of respondents DO NOT support the development of Utility-Scale Wind Energy Facilities on agricultural land with an additional 22% of respondents having no opinion or unsure about it.
- Over 64% of respondents DO NOT enjoy viewing solar energy facilities.
- Almost 65% of respondents DO NOT enjoy viewing wind energy facilities.
- Over 67% of respondents are concerned about the loss of farmland due to alternative energy facilities.
- Over 64% of respondents are concerned about the loss of rural vistas due to alternative energy facilities.
- Almost 53% of respondents are concerned about the noise from the inverters used in solar energy facilities.
- 36% of respondents felt the landowners should be able to enter into lease agreements with alternative energy facilities to maximize profit on their land, with 37% having no opinion and almost 27% disagreeing.



**WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK!**

Help shape the future of our community by taking our brief survey. Share your thoughts and priorities today. Let's build a better Grant Township together!

SCAN THE QR CODE  
OR VISIT THE  
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SURVEY!



[www.surveymonkey.com/r/GrantTwpMP2026](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GrantTwpMP2026)

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4041 Indian Lake Road  
National City, MN 55874B

- Over 61% of respondents felt that Township owned facilities were in good condition with an additional 22% saying they were in excellent condition.
- Respondents were asked about where they would prefer more development amount 3 options, almost 79% said walking paths, almost 71% said parks and 64% said the beach.
- Almost 40% of respondents would NOT support a millage only for road improvements.
- Over 88% of respondents feel the maintaining existing roads was the most important transportation goal, paving the shoulders for non-automobile travel was second at 57% and providing access to the beach was over 53%. The least important transportation goals were roundabouts (67%), traffic bypasses (42%), and establishing new ATV trails (39%).
- Respondents identified several intersections in Grant Township as unsafe, most often mentioning Indian Lake Road (especially at Saginaw, Plank, Sand Lake, and M-65), Sand Lake Road (at M-55, Indian Lake, and Townline), and Plank Road (at Indian Lake, Saginaw, and Miller). Common concerns included poor visibility from tall grass or brush, speeding, inadequate or missing signage, and narrow gravel roads. Many also noted that limited police presence and the use of golf carts or ORVs on higher-speed roads contribute to overall road safety concerns.
- 81% of respondents do NOT feel that the Township should expand commercially.
- Over 60% of respondents feel that mobile or temporary businesses should be allowed on public property.
- 62% of respondents were retired and over 28% were employed.
- Almost 57% of respondents do NOT feel that marijuana businesses are appropriate.
- Almost 82% of respondents feel that there should be a limit to the number of marijuana businesses.
- 47% of respondents feel that marijuana businesses do NOT contribute positively to the local economy.
- 58% of respondents do NOT feel that marijuana businesses have a positive impact on the quality of life in the Township.
- Almost 70% of respondents do NOT support consumption lounges.
- Almost 76% of respondents do NOT believe that marijuana should be allowed at special events.
- Over 43% of respondents do NOT feel that vacation rentals are a problem in residential areas, over 26% feel that they are and 30% were unsure or had no opinion.
- Almost 52% of respondents feel that short-term rentals should be held to a certain number, over 25% do NOT and another 22% were unsure or have no opinion.
- Almost 63% of respondents feel that there should be a business permit process for short-term rentals, almost 21% do NOT.
- Almost 55% of respondents feel that there should be an annual inspection for short-term rentals, another 24% feel that there should NOT.
- Over 51% of respondents feel that there should be an annual inspection process for ALL rental units, another almost 27% of respondents feel that there should NOT be and 22% were unsure or have no opinion.
- Single family homes were the most popular type of housing that respondents felt should be pursued at just over 33%, 18% felt that senior housing and attached single family homes were next.
- 43% of respondents support accessory dwellings, another almost 31% are unsure or have no opinion.

- Over 51% of respondents support garage apartments, 21% were unsure or had no opinion.
- Almost 78% of respondents are looking to move in 5 or more years.
- Respondents cited several reasons for considering a move from Grant Township. The most common reasons included aging and difficulty maintaining homes, desire to be closer to family, jobs, or medical services, and downsizing after retirement. Others mentioned concerns about blight, poorly maintained or unsightly properties, and too many short-term rentals affecting neighborhood quality. A few noted high taxes, homes with accessibility challenges, or simply wanting a change of scenery.
- When asked where they might move, respondents gave a variety of answers. Several mentioned relocating closer to family or back to their hometown, including Tawas, National City, Sand Lake, and West Branch. Others indicated plans to move to southern or warmer climates, Southeast Michigan, or out of state. A few noted humorously or somberly that they would move only to the cemetery or the grave. Some respondents also expressed frustration with local blight and property maintenance issues, stating they would prefer to live in a community with less decay and better upkeep.
- Over 94% of respondents are satisfied with Grant Township as a place to live, own property, own a business and visit.
- Over 71% of respondents are satisfied with the current recycling program.
- Over 66% of respondents rate the quality of services provided by the Township as good, another almost 19% feel they are excellent.
- Almost 58% of respondents have used the Township website for information.
- 44% of respondents feel that the Township needs to enforce Zoning better, however another 41% were unsure or had no opinion.
- Almost 65% of respondents were unsure or had no opinion when asked if the Township was responsive to questions about planning and zoning, just 26% said that they were.
- Almost 76% of respondents were unsure or had no opinion when asked if planning and zoning applications were processed in a timely manner, only 19% of respondents said that they were.

## CURRENT PLAN GOALS-1998 GOALS Good place to start by evaluating what still is relevant.

### **Growth Management**

Grant Township has experienced significant population growth, leading to increased commercial activity, public services, and local government responsibilities. The Township recognizes that unmanaged growth could harm natural resources, community character, land use patterns, and infrastructure efficiency. Therefore, it aims to guide future development responsibly, balancing opportunities for growth with the aspirations of residents and the area's environmental and cultural characteristics. Effective growth management also emphasizes regional cooperation and ensuring new development is compatible with surrounding land uses.

Goal: Guide future development in a manner which is consistent with the natural limitations of the land, the preservation of natural resources and rural character, the availability of necessary public facilities and services including road infrastructure and emergency services, and the cost-effective use of tax dollars.

#### Objectives

- 1) Preserve the Township's natural resources through a coordinated future land use strategy and related regulations which permit reasonable use of land while discouraging unnecessary destruction or loss of natural resources, including farmlands, wetlands, woodlands, lakes and streams.
- 2) Encourage the seeking of funding for public sewer or water where the intensity of existing or planned development requires such services or where the public health, safety, or welfare is at risk, specifically in the area surrounding the 7 Inland Lakes.
- 3) Guide development into areas where public facilities and services have adequate capacity to accommodate growth and increased development intensities and where the provision or expansion of public facilities is cost-effective.
- 4) Co-ordinate appropriate levels of public facilities and services in the township, if needed, as new growth occurs.
- 5) Wherever legally permissible, local regulations should require new developments to pay for the direct and indirect public services costs to the Township associated with that development. These costs should not be imposed on existing residents. Exceptions should be made where public interests and benefits may be at stake.
- 6) In recognition that the Township is a critical link in a regional network of communities, the Township should develop a meaningful communication program with area municipalities and county agencies to discuss local and area-wide public facilities and services needs, land use conditions and trends, contemporary planning issues, and strategies to address short- and long-term needs and issues.
- 7) Provide regular opportunities for substantive public input on growth and development issues facing the Township and the future character of the Township.
- 8) Establish effective land development review procedures to ensure new land uses are designed to minimize negative impacts upon existing uses, protect important natural resources, and assure public health, safety, and welfare.

#### Community Character and the Environment

Protecting Grant Township's rural character is a top priority for residents. Rural character is generally associated with limited urban development and open spaces such as farmland, woodlands, wetlands, and fields, which also provide vital environmental functions like wildlife habitat, flood control, water purification, groundwater recharge, and air quality. Although natural resources and sensitive environmental features are abundant, they are vulnerable to gradual encroachment, which can cause long-term ecosystem damage. Maintaining rural character does not require halting growth; managed development can preserve these qualities by incorporating open space and resource protection into site planning. Increased environmental

knowledge, awareness, and education, combined with a comprehensive planning approach, can help minimize degradation and maintain interconnected natural areas that support diverse wildlife and native plant habitats.

Goal: Preserve the rural and overall dominant character of Grant Township and its environmental integrity.

#### Objectives

- 1) Assure that future land development be designed in scale with existing developed areas and respect the existing surroundings, through reasonable standards addressing building size, height, and other development features.
- 2) Encourage land development which actively strives to preserve open spaces as part of a development project (such as on-site woodlands, wetlands, lakes, and fields), including the use of such tools as conservation easements, land trusts, and density bonuses for projects designed to permanently preserve important open spaces.
- 3) Encourage the maintenance of historically significant structures and a structurally sound housing stock, and the rehabilitation or removal of blighted structures and yard areas.
- 4) Separate incompatible land uses by distance, natural resources, or by landscape buffers which adequately screen or mitigate adverse impacts.
- 5) Assure that the quantity and quality of new development does not unreasonably create increases in air, noise, land, and water pollution, or the degradation of land and water resource environments including aquifers and groundwater.
- 6) Development densities and intensities in environmentally sensitive areas should be limited and all development and land uses should be in compliance with applicable local, county, state, and federal regulations.
- 7) Encourage the use of easements, land trusts, and/or deed restrictions when and where appropriate to preserve environmentally sensitive areas and important open spaces.
- 8) Review all proposed development in light of its potential impact upon wetlands, woodlands, and other natural resource areas.
- 9) Educate the public about waste management and the Township's fundamental reliance upon groundwater resources for potable water supplies and the potential detrimental effects of irresponsible land development and refuse disposal practices.
- 10) Adopt and enforce zoning and other regulations to address contemporary issues facing the Township and threats to the desired character of the community, including regulations addressing the maintenance of yard areas, trash disposal, and new technology such as outdoor wood stoves.

#### Farmland Protection

Farmland has historically been a dominant land use in Grant Township, contributing to economic stability, local food production, and the Township's rural character. Large agricultural parcels and limited competing

uses have allowed farming to persist, but factors such as economic pressures, a declining number of young farmers, rising taxes from nearby non-farm development, and land use conflicts threaten its viability. Current Agricultural zoning, which permits small non-farm lots, undermines long-term farmland preservation. Effective protection of agricultural resources depends on managing the number and size of new non-farm lots and limiting residential, commercial, and industrial encroachment into key farming areas.

Goal: Encourage the continuation of local farming operations and long-term protection of farmland resources.

Objectives:

- 1) Designate areas which support long term farming and encourage the continuation of agricultural operations through complimentary zoning provisions.
- 2) Minimize nuisance problems (destruction of crops, complaints about legitimate day-to-day farming operations, etc.) in designated agricultural areas by limiting the encroachment of incompatible land uses and establishing a special disclosure program. This disclosure program could better assure that new builders/owners of homes in designated agricultural areas are aware of the fact that the primary and preferred use of land in such designated agricultural areas is agriculture, and that they should expect the normal smells, odors, noises, dust, and use of approved pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers and fungicides appropriately applied as a part of daily farm life in the area.
- 3) Limit the amount of non-farm residential development permitted in designated agricultural areas without necessarily requiring large lot sizes which force the farmland owner to give up unnecessary acreage to accommodate a new residence.
- 4) To the extent that residential development occurs in agricultural areas, encourage such development to be placed on less productive farmland.
- 5) Support and maintain P.A. 116 farmland preservation agreements.
- 6) Support state legislation aimed at permitting the transfer of development rights and purchase of development rights as a means of allowing a farmer to continue farming operations while receiving a reasonable financial return on the development potential of the farmland property and consider the adoption of local regulations to facilitate these programs.

### **Residential Development**

Residential development is expected to be the primary land use change in Grant Township over the next 10–20 years due to its rural character, natural resources, open spaces, and proximity to urban services. Key limitations to new development include environmentally sensitive areas, soil suitability for septic systems, and the capacity to provide adequate public services. While the actual land needed for moderate population growth is relatively small, unchecked development could threaten natural resources, including farmland, and require significant public investment. Zoning regulations, such as one-acre lots or very large

lots, play a critical role in determining the pace of land conversion and the preservation of open space and agricultural lands.

Goal: Provide opportunities for residential development of varying densities in a manner which is compatible with the Township's rural character and natural features, public infrastructure and services, and cost-effective delivery of future public services.

Objectives:

- 1) Encourage the continued dominance of single-family housing as the principal housing option in the Township and identify land areas, through planning and zoning, most appropriate for single family housing. Such areas should not encroach indiscriminately into designated agricultural areas.
- 2) While maintaining single family housing as the primary housing option, seek to assure housing alternatives to meet the varying economic, family stage, and lifestyle needs of the Township's current and future residents. These alternatives should provide higher density living arrangements.
- 3) Identify limited areas in the Township where higher density residential development can be adequately accommodated. Priority should be given to locations which have access to major thoroughfares and necessary public services.
- 4) Land capacity should be an important consideration when determining the appropriate density of development, and development densities should not undermine important environmental features.
- 5) Discourage haphazard land divisions resulting in long narrow parcels or parcels with substantial amounts of undeveloped land to the rear, unless such low-density residential development is consistent with other standards and ordinances of the Township.
- 6) Discourage strip residential development along the frontage of existing state and county roads to minimize traffic safety hazards and the "landlocking" of interior acreage.
- 7) Encourage innovative residential development which incorporates the preservation of natural resource systems and open spaces, and the preservation of the Township's rural character, within the site planning process. One such innovation, where multiple lots or dwelling units are created, should include the development of only a portion of the original parcel and placing the balance of the parcel in a permanent open space status.

### **Commercial and Industrial Development**

Grant Township's commercial development primarily serves local residents, tourists, and highway travelers, with opportunities for growth supported by the population base and M-55 traffic. Future commercial development should be concentrated in designated areas, minimize impacts on public services and residential traffic, and avoid interfering with nearby land uses, while maintaining the safety and efficiency of M-55. The Township has little industrial development, limited to gypsum extraction, due to inadequate public services, infrastructure, and population to support traditional manufacturing. However, light industrial operations, such as assembly of pre-manufactured materials, could be appropriate, providing economic benefits without the need for extensive infrastructure expansion.

Goal: Provide opportunities for limited expansion of commercial and industrial uses that minimize negative impacts upon adjacent land uses, responds to the predominant rural character of the community, and is compatible with available public services and infrastructure.

Objectives:

- 1) Identify locations in the Township, through planning and zoning, considered appropriate for commercial and industrial land uses, taking into account the constraints and opportunities presented by the Township's natural features, such as topography and soils, and the availability of public facilities and services, including road infrastructure.
- 2) Recognize the significance of the M-55 corridor as an opportunity for the location of new commercial and industrial uses, while not encouraging a development pattern which will undermine the primary function of the highway -the safe and efficient movement of highway traffic.
- 3) Provide opportunities for new commercial and industrial land uses which assure such uses are in scale with surrounding land uses, including such features and building size and height, setbacks, and open space areas.
- 4) Future commercial and industrial land uses should not be permitted to indiscriminately encroach into residential and agricultural areas but rather be clustered in appropriately identified locations.
- 5) Encourage consolidated commercial centers and industrial parks rather than strip commercial and industrial development patterns.
- 6) Provide opportunities for a mix of commercial uses that predominantly target local day-to-day consumer needs.
- 7) Require landscaping and screening measures to assure commercial and industrial uses do not adversely impact the normal use and enjoyment of adjoining land uses.
- 8) Provide opportunities for home-based occupations within residential dwelling units under conditions which will support the residential character, appearance, and quality of life experienced by surrounding residential properties and neighborhoods.

**Roads and Public Services**

Tax revenues help fund public services, but new development also increases demands on these services. To manage costs, growth should be compact, with higher-density development located near existing or planned service areas. Currently, police, fire, and road services meet residents' needs, but rapid growth driven by market forces or zoning could require significantly higher Township expenditures to maintain service quality.

Goal: Provide and maintain a road network which moves vehicular traffic in an efficient and safe fashion and maintain and expand other public facilities and services in support of the planned future land use pattern and as necessary to assure public health, safety, and welfare in a cost-effective manner.

Objectives



- 1) Identify those areas of the Township which, due to existing conditions and the planned future land use pattern presented in this Plan, may be in need or will need improved public services including police and fire protection and roads.
- 2) Establish a realistic schedule of capital improvements which identifies the timing, cost, funding source, and need for each planned road and public facility and service improvement. Improvements should be planned in a priority-based manner and tax dollars should be wisely spent.
- 3) Discourage improvements that will have the effect of encouraging excessive growth and development or encouraging growth and development at a rate that the Township cannot assure adequate public health, safety, and welfare.
- 4) Identify priority road segments for maintenance and improvement, based upon the planned future land use pattern presented in this Plan and existing and projected traffic patterns.
- 5) Minimize the potential for traffic congestion and safety hazards along roadways by limitations on the number and/or frequency of curb cuts and on the number, size, and shape of new land divisions along county roads.
- 6) Continually monitor local attitudes toward recreational facilities in the Township and take appropriate planning and capital improvement actions to acquire and develop local park land and/or recreational programs should a demonstrated need arise.
- 7) Develop and maintain a regular meaningful communications program with adjoining municipalities and regional agencies to discuss and investigate public facilities and services needs, opportunities for shared facilities and services, and alternative strategies for improving local public services, including contracted services, shared services, and Township-operated services.
- 8) Explore and develop community groups and activities that address the social needs of all age groups and provide healthy and constructive environments for spending leisure time.
- 9) Zoning Administration Enforcement: Clear procedures and strong enforcement of zoning regulations.

## OTHER COMMUNITY GOALS WE HAVE USED AND YOU MAY LIKE TO USE AS WELL

Housing	
To create and sustain diverse, safe, and affordable housing options within well-designed, livable neighborhoods that meet the needs of all residents, while preserving and enhancing existing residential areas through quality development, maintenance, and community-focused planning.	
Encourage Safe, Affordable, and Diverse Housing	Promote a variety of housing types to accommodate different income levels, household sizes, and life stages. Support both single-family and multi-family options, including mixed-use and higher-density developments near parks and community amenities.
Foster Well-Designed, Livable Neighborhoods	Support creative and walkable neighborhood design with sidewalks, bike paths, open spaces, and parks. Ensure new development aligns with the capacity of local infrastructure and preserves the character of surrounding areas through appropriate density and buffering.

Protect and Enhance Existing Residential Areas	Maintain the quality of established neighborhoods by preventing incompatible uses, encouraging reinvestment, and supporting rehabilitation of substandard housing through partnerships with programs like MSHDA.
Promote Safe and Well-Maintained Housing Stock	Explore rental inspection programs and offer incentives to landlords to ensure housing remains safe, sanitary, code compliant and well-maintained across all short- and long-term rentals.
Accelerate Building Process	Streamline permitting and zoning processes to reduce barriers making some uses such as duplexes and accessory dwelling units allowable by right, avoiding the special use permit process.
Support First-time Owners & Homebuyers	Promote the knowledge of existing programs and agencies that provide resources and education for first-time homebuyers on financing, affordability, and home maintenance. Partner with nonprofit housing organizations to help residents qualify for affordable homeownership opportunities.

Natural Resource Goals	
To protect and enhance the Township's natural resources by promoting responsible land use and development practices that safeguard water quality, preserve ecosystems and wildlife habitats, support sustainable forestry, and balance resource extraction with environmental stewardship for the benefit of current and future generations.	
1. Protect Water Quality	Promote land use practices that safeguard surface and groundwater by limiting development near sensitive areas, managing stormwater, preserving shoreline greenbelts, and using data such as aquifer vulnerability maps. Work with agencies to address contamination, enforce regulations, and participate in regional sewer planning and public education.
2. Encourage Environmentally Responsible Development	Ensure development minimizes environmental impact through erosion control, soil suitability analysis, and responsible site design—especially on steep or erosion-prone land. Collaborate with agencies to uphold best practices.
3. Preserve Natural Ecosystems and Open Space	Protect forests, wetlands, wildlife corridors, and open spaces through zoning tools, conservation incentives (e.g., TDR/PDR), and thoughtful site planning. Support biodiversity, prevent invasive species, and promote open spaces for recreation and ecological health.
4. Promote Sustainable Forestry	Recognize forests as key environmental and economic assets. Use Prime Forestlands mapping to guide development, support responsible forest management, and educate landowners on conservation tools and tax benefits. Collaborate with MDNR and conservation groups to enhance forest Alternative
5. Support Wildlife and Habitat Protection	Encourage land use that maintains and enhances critical wildlife habitats, especially those of ecological or economic importance.

## Forestry Goals

To conserve and enhance the Township's Forest resources by promoting sustainable forest management, protecting critical forest lands from fragmentation, increasing public awareness, and fostering collaborative, informed land use decisions that support environmental health and responsible growth.

1. Promote Reforestation and Sustainable Forest Management	Support reforestation and the responsible management of forest lands, especially on productive soils, by adopting policies that encourage retention and educating landowners on sustainable forestry practices.
2. Preserve Forest Resources	Identify and protect key forest areas through land use planning, conservation tools (e.g., TDRs, PDRs), and policies that direct development toward already developed areas to minimize fragmentation of forest land.
3. Raise Public Awareness and Engagement	Educate the community, property owners, and officials on the economic and environmental value of forests, the difference between open space and forest land, and land preservation options through workshops and outreach.
4. Support Informed Land Use Decisions	Host public forums and workshops to build consensus on priority forest areas for preservation and promote smart growth practices like infill development, adaptive reuse, and Brownfield redevelopment.

## Agricultural Goals

To sustain and enhance the agricultural landscape of the Township by supporting active farming practices, preserving valuable farmland and open spaces, fostering community engagement and education, and implementing flexible land use policies that balance agricultural productivity with thoughtful growth and development.

1. Support Continued Agricultural Use	Encourage the ongoing use of active prime farmland by promoting feasible agricultural practices and preserving key agricultural lands identified by prime or locally important soils.
2. Preserve Farmland and Open Space	Protect agricultural areas through state programs (e.g., P.A. 116), zoning tools (e.g., TDRs, PDRs), conservation easements, and strategic land use policies that reduce conflicts between agriculture and development.
3. Promote Agricultural Awareness and Education	Share information about agriculture's economic role in Baldwin Township and educate the public on land preservation, smart growth strategies (e.g., infill, PUDs), and the distinction between open space and working farmland.
4. Engage the Community	Conduct surveys and host workshops to involve residents, farmers, and officials in discussions about agricultural preservation, land use tools, and future development strategies.
5. Enable Flexible Land Use for Farmers	Allow agricultural landowners to create smaller parcels for residential or farming purposes while maintaining the rural character and productivity of the land.

### Alternative Energy Goals

To responsibly integrate renewable energy developments within the township by fostering collaboration between developers and local authorities, implementing balanced zoning standards that protect property owners, agricultural land, and the natural environment, while ensuring public safety and planning for long-term site decommissioning.

1. Proposed Developments	Encourage developers to work locally with the Township to site needed utility-scale solar, utility-scale wind, and off-site battery energy storage systems.
2. County Planning & Zoning	Ensure that the zoning ordinance contains renewable energy standards that developers consider workable but which protect non-participating property owners through setbacks, screening, and noise standards, ensure protection of the natural environment including soil, surface water, groundwater, and wildlife, ensure adequate emergency services personnel, equipment, and training are available, ensure decommissioning is planned for, protect prime agricultural land, and protect the township residents in general.

### Technology Goals

Increase access to reliable, high-speed internet in underserved and unserved areas by investing in broadband infrastructure and partnerships. This effort aims to close the digital divide and support education, healthcare, and economic opportunity.

1. Identify and prioritize	Develop a phased plan to ensure coverage to the underserved and unserved areas within the Township with reliable high-speed internet access.
2. Promote Installation of Fiber Infrastructure	Collaborate with regional fiber providers for infrastructure investment.
3. Accelerate Deployment	Streamline permitting and zoning processes to reduce barriers of high-speed fiber-optic infrastructure to support long-term digital connectivity and economic growth.
4. Increase Affordability and Accessibility	Ensure that all residents, regardless of income level, can afford and access high-quality internet service.

## Utility Goals

Expand and improve access to natural gas, electrical, and telecommunication services throughout Hayes Township to support residential and agricultural development, improve energy efficiency and enhance quality of life.	
1. Partner with Utility Providers	Establish formal collaboration with regional natural gas utility providers to develop expansion plans that are financially and logistically feasible.
2. Secure Funding for Infrastructure Expansion	Apply for state or federal grants (e.g., USDA Rural Development, Michigan Economic Development Corporation programs) to support the planning, engineering, or construction of new service lines.
3. Develop a Phased Implementation Plan	Create a multi-phase infrastructure development plan, prioritizing high-need areas such as dense residential neighborhoods and agricultural zones.
4. Coordinate with County and Regional Planning Efforts	Align natural gas expansion objectives with county-wide utility plans and regional infrastructure development strategies.

## Zoning Goals

Legal Compliance	Ensure that the zoning ordinance contains regulations which are clear and help to implement the goals in this Master Plan.
	Coordinate growth and development through the appropriate land use controls.
	Investigate updating the zoning ordinance to allow for small lot and concentrated developments with open space or conservation easements.
	Include flexible regulations within the zoning ordinance to allow for creative development and to address unique situations.
	Update the zoning ordinance to allow for Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) in multiple districts.
	Provide clear regulations for nonconformities that are not overly restrictive to property owners.
	Require sanitary facilities on developed lots.
	Ensure that all lots have access to a road.
Residential Character	Provide clear regulations for accessory buildings and ensure that the regulations fit the type of community.
	Provide standards for the use and storage of recreational vehicles to provide for the enjoyment of property and to protect neighboring property values.
	Provide dwelling standards and setbacks which allow property owners to fully utilize their property while also ensuring protection of natural resources and protection of neighboring properties.
	Ensure protection of neighboring properties by regulating stormwater retention and drainage standards.
	Allow property owners to erect fences which provide privacy, meet their needs, allow emergency service access, and are aesthetically pleasing.
	Ensure structures do not impede vehicular travel or visibility.
	Require landscaping for new developments in order to visually enhance the property.

	Require buffers or transition areas between residential and non-residential uses and offer multiple screening options to give flexibility to the property owner.
	Ensure that lighting does not negatively impact drivers, pedestrians, neighboring property, and the dark night sky.
Community Character	Ensure parking standards are appropriate to the area and are flexible.
	Regulate signs in a content-neutral manner and adopt regulations which allow free speech and a variety of sign types and sizes while ensuring that signs are not a nuisance and do not result in a negative aesthetic effect on the area.
	Maintain appropriate districts with allowable permitted and special uses which are appropriate to each district in order for property owners to fully utilize their property.
	Ensure the list of uses is updated with new uses.

Zoning Continued	
Administrative Process	Maintain a comprehensive and straightforward site plan review and special use process which can be completed in a timely and seamless manner.
	Ensure that the zoning appeals process is spelled out and straightforward.
	Provide for administrative procedures which are clear and consistent.
	Ensure that the zoning appeals process is spelled out and straightforward.
	Provide for administrative procedures which are clear and consistent.
	Ensure wireless regulations are up to date and permit wireless coverage while protecting the surrounding area from negative impacts.
	Provide efficient and effective enforcement of existing zoning regulations.