

CLIMAX TOWNSHIP

2035 MASTER PLAN

PREPARED BY:
PREIM GROUP LLC

PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL 2/08/2016

TOWNSHIP BOARD ADOPTION 3/10/2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction/Community History I-1 to I-5
Physical Features	...II-1 to II-2
Wetland Inventory Map	
Social Features (Demographics)	..III-1 to III-5
Existing Land Use/Community Facilities	..IV-1 to IV-1
Public Input/Community Goals	...V-1 to V-2
Land Use/Zoning Plan	..VI-1 to VI-2
Zoning Map	
Future Land Use Map	
Implementation	..VII-1 to VII-1
Appendix – Example of Community Survey	

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION/HISTORY

This initial element of the plan is intended to provide background for the plan, beginning with an understanding of the process that takes place leading to final review and adoption. Part of this process includes the review of the current plan, which was defined as the Climax Township 2010 Land Use Plan, which was adopted in March of 1990.

Planning Process

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, provides the outline for developing the plan and the process for review and adoption. Generally, all plans are now deemed as “master plans”, replacing the current “land use plan”, which was intended to serve as the foundation for the zoning ordinance. This new plan is based upon seven (7) elements, which serve as building blocks leading up to the Future Land Use Map and Implementation. Once the Planning Commission is comfortable with the draft plan, it is forwarded on to the Township Board, which then authorizes its distribution to all surrounding units of government (including the County). Following a 63-day review period, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing. Following this additional public comment, the Planning Commission makes any modifications and then adopts the new plan. It is also recommended (and required in some communities) that the Township Board adopt the master plan, in this way creating a consistent Township support for any future decisions that rely on the plan, such as requests for rezoning.

Community Summary

The 2010 Plan included a brief community history that has been summarized as follows: Colonel John Mullett, a surveyor, became the first white visitor to the Township in the fall of 1826. The following spring another surveying party came and settlement began in the early 1830's. One of these early settlers, Daniel Eldred, is credited with the name and served as the area's first postmaster in 1836. Then generally known as Climax Prairie, the post office was renamed Climax. Climax Township was incorporated in 1836 and the Village of Climax was then incorporated in 1899. The population grew steadily, increasing from 301 persons in 1840 to a then maximum of 1,389 in 1870. The 1890 Census included 1,107 persons, with this declining to a 1900 Township population of 998 persons after the Village became incorporated. The Village of Scotts, located along the Township's west boundary, is unincorporated and shares its main street (36th Street) with Pavilion Township.

The “prairie” was ideal for farming in the 1800's and Climax Township continues to be a rural farming community to this day. The Township also serves as a bedroom community, with residential development supporting employment opportunities in both the Battle Creek and

Kalamazoo labor markets. Small outgrowths of commercial development exist south and west of the Village of Climax and east of the Village of Scotts, but overall, the Township is agricultural, with residential development on larger parcels.

Location

Climax Township is located in southeastern Kalamazoo County in southwestern Michigan. Its United States Public Land Survey coordinates are Township 3 South, Range 9 West from the Michigan Meridian. It is bordered on the north, west, and south by the Kalamazoo county townships of Charleston, Pavilion, and Wakeshma respectively, and on the east by Leroy Township in Calhoun County. The Township lies on glacial outwash and till plains and consists primarily of level terrain and soils well suited for agriculture.

Climax Township is a primarily rural township. One concentration of population resides in the incorporated Village of Climax, which is located near the Township's northern boundary. Another concentration of population exist near the unincorporated Village of Scotts, located on the Township's western boundary.

History

Early accounts of the settlement of the area that is now Climax Township refer to many Indian burial mounds and other earthworks. One account describes an "OldFort" on a high knoll southwest of the Village of Climax and garden beds laid out in tracts, separated by trenches. All or most of these traces of earlier occupation were obliterated by the turn of the century.

In the fall of 1826 Colonel John Mullet, a surveyor, became the first white visitor to the prairie. The following spring another surveying party headed by Robert Clark sectioned the prairie. The prairie was ideal for farming, and settlement began in the early 1830's. One of the early settlers, Daniel Eldred, is credited with naming the area by stating "This caps the climax of everything I ever saw." Eldred also served as the area's first postmaster, beginning in 1836. Then known as Climax Prairie, the postal station was renamed Climax. The Village of Climax was incorporated in 1899.

Another of Climax Township's early settlers was Hiram Moore, who invented a combine for the harvest of grain. Moore's machine combined the functions of the reaper, for which Cyrus McCormick is credited, and the thresher. Granted his first patent in March of 1836, Moore successfully cut and threshed grain in the field north of the Village of Climax using the machine and a team of 20 horses. Moore's machine was eclipsed by the reaper developed by McCormick, however, his machine eventually was destroyed by a fire caused by an overheated bearing.

Two men in two-wheeled sulkeys completed the first rural free delivery mail in the state on December 3, 1896, another landmark event in the history of the area. Three hundred farms received mail in the first delivery. Prior to the inauguration of rural free delivery, any

enterprising individual could pick up rural families' mail at the post office and require a fee upon delivery to the farm.

Pre-Settlement History

The native grassland is known as "Climax Grassland" and formerly occupied 324 hectares in Sections 25, 26, 34, 35, and 36 of Charleston Township (T2S R9W) and Sections 1, 2, and 3 of Climax Township (T2S R9W). It is associated with the greatest number of pre-settlement sites of any prairie in the county, albeit none has been confirmed by professional archeologists. No fewer than 13 numbers in the state sites files have been assigned to garden beds, mounds and earthworks reported by early settlers residing on and near the prairie. One earthwork was known to local residents as "Old Fort" (according to the former County Surveyor Frank Hodgman). It was located on the crest of a knoll in the southwest part of the Village of Climax, in the SE ¼ of Section 3. At the time of the American settlement of Climax Prairie, the knoll was occupied by large oaks, but as late as the 1880's it was still possible to discern that the summit of the knoll was surrounded by a ditch 60-90 centimeters deep and 3 meters or more wide, with the earth from this excavation banked up on the sides of the ditch. A similar but smaller fort was formerly located near the center of the NE ¼ of Section 1. Here was a circular embankment 60 centimeters high and enclosing area of 0.1 – 0.2 hectares (Source: William M. Cremin and David G. De Fant "The Indian and the Prairie: Prehistoric and Early Historic Utilization of Native Grassland Environments in Kalamazoo County, Michigan, with Emphasis on Gourd-Neck Prairie in Schoolcraft Township", *The Michigan Archeologist*, Vol 33, No. 3, September 1987, pp. 130-1).

Natural Resources

The topography of Climax Township consists primarily of level or gently rolling terrain. The primary soils of the Township are Kalamazoo-Schoolcraft, Kalamazoo-Oshtemo and Riddles-Sleeth. The Kalamazoo-Schoolcraft soils are located primarily in the northern half of the Township on upland plains. These well-drained soils were deposited by glacial outwash and have high value as farmland. The main limitations to farming these areas have included droughts, erosion and slopes. They are well suited to cultivated crops and most building site development.

The Kalamazoo-Oshtemo soils are located mostly in the northeast corner of the Township. They are nearly level to rolling glacial outwash and morainic deposits. Kalamazoo-Oshtemo soils are well drained and, like Kalamazoo-Schoolcraft soils, excellent for agriculture, excepting the problems of erosion, droughts and slope. They are well suited to use by sanitary facilities, recreation, woodland and urban development as well as cultivated crops and building sites.

The southern portion of the Township is made up Riddles-Sleeth soils. These soils are found on rolling uplands and nearly level plains and are less well drained than other soils in the

Township. Consisting of glacial till and outwash, these soils support cultivated crops but are limited by erosion problems in rolling areas and wetness in low areas.

Research in early land surveys of the area has shown that the pre-settlement vegetation of the Township consisted largely of two types: oak savanna in the northern portions and northern coniferous-hardwood forest to the south. The oak savannas supported anywhere from one to fifteen trees per acre—primarily white and yellow oaks and one pure stand of bur oak. Climax Prairie, the oak opening which initially lured settlers to the area, lies on the northern boundary of the existing Township. The northern coniferous-hardwood forest of the southern portion of the Township consisted primarily of beech, hemlock and sugar maple. Other vegetation types of course existed in the Township, including alder thickets and wet prairies along its northeastern boundary.

There are no sizeable lakes in the glacial till plain area which makes up the greater portion of the Township. It does, however, include sections of the Portage River, Little Portage Creek and Bear Creek.

Public Services

Residents of Climax Township are under the jurisdiction of the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Department. Ordinance enforcement is provided by Township Ordinance Enforcement Officers. Fire protection is provided by Departments from both Climax and Pavilion Townships. Each department is made up of approximately 24 volunteer persons and each is headed by a paid, appointed Chief. One unit is housed in the Village of Climax while the other originates in the Village of Scotts. Both departments have a variety of fire and rescue equipment and operate under the County's 911 system. Volunteers respond to calls via a pager system.

Climax Township lies within the Climax-Scotts School District. Climax-Scotts Community Schools also serve students residing in Calhoun County's Leroy Township, Kalamazoo County's Charleston, Pavilion and Wakeshma Township, and the City of Battle Creek in Calhoun County. The school system includes one high school (serving grades 9-12), one middle school (serving grades 5-8) and one elementary school (serving grades K-4), all of which are located in the Township. In addition, one private Baptist-affiliated school is located within the Township.

The Village of Climax maintains its own water, street service and storm drainage systems. The remainder of the Township's roads and streets are serviced by the Kalamazoo County Road Commission. Ambulance/paramedic services are available to Township residents. Vicksburg Ambulance Service covers the southern portion of the Township while the Galesburg-Charleston Ambulance Service serves the northern portion of the Township.

Transportation

Public transportation in Climax Township is available to senior citizens and the handicapped through Care-A-Van, a county-sponsored shuttle van system. Bus and rail passengers must travel into Kalamazoo or Battle Creek for service. The County maintains a system of bituminous and gravel roads throughout the Township and a Grand Trunk Railroad line bisects the Township between the Villages of Climax and Scotts.

SECTION 2

PHYSICAL FEATURES

The physical features generally begin with the natural environment and then extend to the man-made improvements that have shaped the direction for development within the Township. As a rural Township, that has not seen much concentrated development in areas outside the Village of Climax and the unincorporated area of Scotts, the typical man-made features would be the county road system and the rail line (Grand Trunk).

Natural Environment

Water: The water resources within the Township include two small lakes (McGinnis in Section 3 and Lafavers in Section 8 and 9) and both wetlands and floodplains, with most of these areas linked to the Portage River and Little Portage Creek tributaries. The National Wetlands Inventory provides for the basis of the designation of open space within the Township. It is the intent to identify these natural drainage areas in support of planning efforts, with the current underlying zoning (A-Agriculture District) to be reviewed based upon any use beyond traditional agriculture.

Soils: The Township is generally defined by three soil complexes, with the Kalamazoo-Oshtemo series in the northwest corner (Portage River), the Kalamazoo-Schoolcraft series in the north/central area, connecting both Scotts and Climax Village, and the Riddles-Sleeth series in the southern half of the Township, where Little Portage Creek and Bear Creek cross into the Township from Wakeshma.

Man-Made Improvements

Roads: One constraint related to the natural pattern of development is a county road system developed around this natural wetland environment, with few roads that follow the traditional location along section lines from north to south or east to west. Those that do continue, such as 36th Street and R Avenue, are not heavily travelled as the connections are to rural areas within the adjoining communities. 44th Street, which serves as Main Street through the Village of Climax, terminates as it extends to the south, with most traffic passing north of the Township (along MN Avenue) or west of the Township (along 34th/35th Streets). Both Leroy Township to the east and Wakeshma Township to the south have little development along any road extensions into those communities.

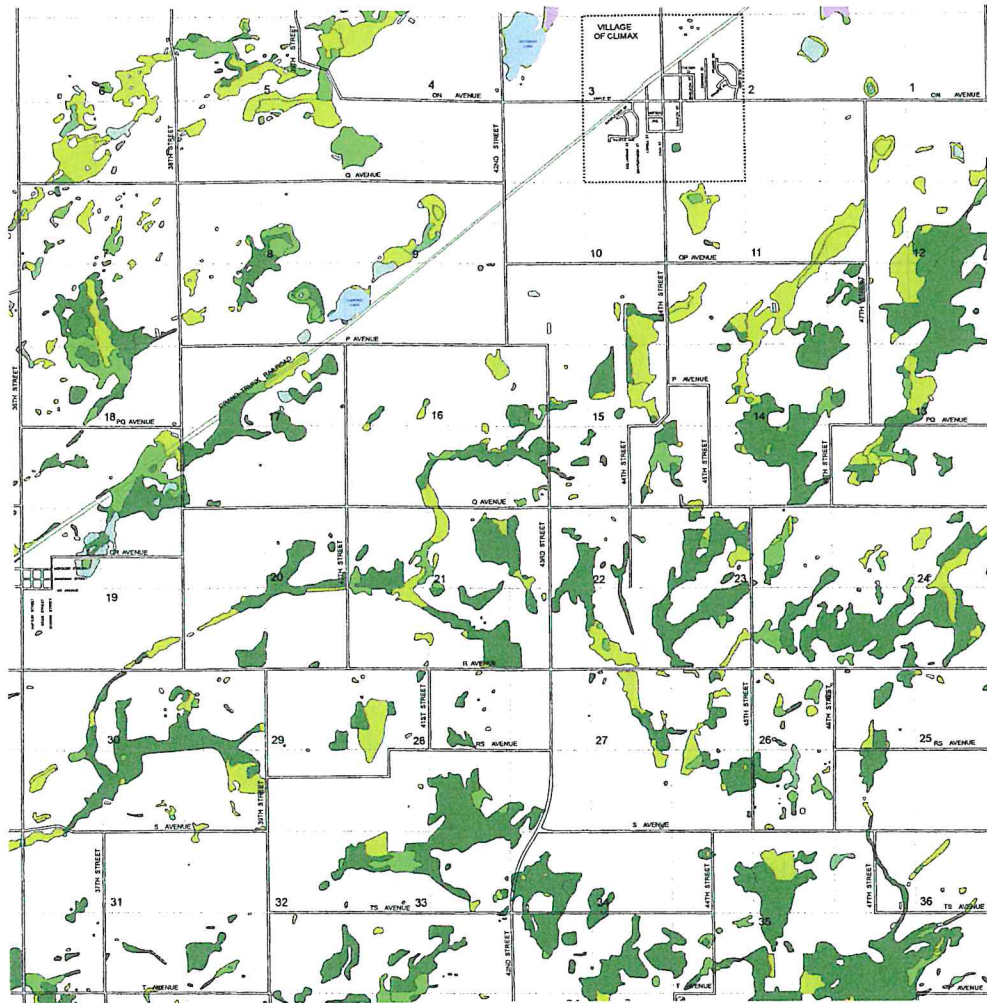
Rail: The Grand Trunk line runs through the northwestern portion of the Township connecting Climax Village and Scotts. This also impacts the natural pattern of development, as road crossings can be limiting factors for travel, as well as for continuous agricultural parcel development.

Parks: Kalamazoo County provides for a variety of parks, two of which are in close proximity of the Township. Coldbrook Park is just north of the Township in Charleston Township and Scotts Mill Park is located just west of the Township in Pavilion Township. The

intent within this plan is to link the two Village areas independently and collectively to these park resources through a non-motorized plan of bike path and bikelane improvements. The Village of Climax and Climax Township have a bike path on the north side of ON Avenue (Maple Street), which extends to the mobile home park. Possible extension north to McGinnis Lake, and/or extension along 42nd Street north to Charleston Township, would allow for further connection to Coldbrook Park.

Climax Township
Kalamazoo County, Michigan

**FEMA Flood Hazard Areas
and
National Wetlands Inventory**



LEGEND

FEMA Flood Hazard Area

- 0.20% Annual Chance Flood Hazard (500 Yr. Flood)
- Zone A (100 Yr. Flood)
- Zone AE (100 Yr. Flood)

National Wetlands Inventory

- Aquatic Bed
- Emergent
- Scrub-Shrub
- Forested
- Unconsolidated Bottom



0 2,000 4,000 Ft

Scale: 1" = 4,000'

Prein&Newhof
Phone: 269-372-1158
Printed: April 2015

FILE: \\C:\Users\jdoyle\Documents\2015\2015_04_01_Climax_Township_Flood_Hazard_Map.mxd, 11:47 AM, 4/1/2015, 11:47 AM

SECTION 3

SOCIAL FEATURES

This element of the Plan is to review the characteristics of the community relating to population change over time, the breakdown into age categories, and how this age grouping may influence housing and future population growth over the next 20 years. The data is based upon the United States Census, which allows for some interpretation based upon the nature of the survey and other national and state trends that influence the results. From the perspective of the Plan, population and housing growth may lead to further expansion of areas for new residential development. If "growth management" is the focus or if limited growth is anticipated over time, there may not be the need for increased capacity in residential land use designations.

Population

Table 1 provides a breakdown of population change for Climax Township over the last 20 years. While the intent of the master plan is a 20-year look into the future, the past plays an important role in the overall direction for the community.

Table 1 - Population

1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010	% Change 1990-2010
2,221	2,412	191 +9%	2,463	51 +2%	242 +11%

(NOTE: The above totals include the Village of Climax, with the 2010 population of 767 persons within the Village and 1,696 persons in the balance of the Township.)

The Township's population growth between 1990 and 2000 (191 persons) was followed by a smaller increase between 2000 and 2010 (51 persons), and the percentage increase declined from roughly 9% to 2%. When compared to the population change for the surrounding townships (Table 2), it is clear that the location of Climax Township remains quite rural and that surrounding influences will not likely lead to substantial population change into the future.

Table 2-Population Comparison

	2000	% Change 1990-2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010	% Change 1990-2010
Charleston	1,813	37 +2%	1,975	162 +9%	199 + 11%
Leroy	3,240	214 +7%	3,712	472 +15%	686 +23%
Pavilion	5,829	329 +6%	6,222	393 + 7%	722 +13%
Wakeshma	1,414	36 +3%	1,301	-113 -8%	-77 -5%

For land use planning purposes, the comparison in Table 2 provides an indication of the direction of where population growth may occur. Given that Climax Township's growth is equal to or slightly less than that for the surrounding communities, with the exception of Wakeshma Township to the south (which lost population), this influence may not be as great as is typically seen with sprawl-type growth. The larger population and faster growing Townships to the east (Leroy in Calhoun County) and west (Pavilion) have growth that is either central or further away from the Climax Township boundary. The unincorporated Village of Scotts, with population in both Pavilion and Climax Townships, is not a growth area, but could serve as a focus area for future development.

Sex/Age Breakdown

Of the 2010 population of 2,463 persons, there were 1,248 males and 1,215 females, a roughly 51/49 split. The number of persons age 65 & over (362 or over 14% of the population) was higher than that for the county as a whole (12%). The number of males (175) to females (187) age 65 & over reflects national trends toward a longer life expectancy for the female population. The overall aging population possibly opens up opportunities for more senior housing options, especially for those living alone. The desire of the younger generations to live in more urban settings, whether for employment or for amenities more suited to their lifestyle, may reduce future population growth.

Generational Profile

Much of what is now presented for age breakdown is linked to generational categories. These categories are an attempt to somewhat define people, despite a broad mix of varying personal characteristics. From the perspective of marketing for housing, services or other economic needs, these five categories, shown in Table 3, provide the opportunity to determine where a community may wish to target growth in population through a mix of housing choice.

Table 3

GENERATION	BIRTH RANGE	AGE RANGE *	CENSUS GROUP*
Silent Generation	(1925-1945)	(65-85)	(65 & Over)
Baby Boom	(1946-1964)	(46-64)	(50-64)
Gen X	(1965-1976)	(34-45)	(35-49)
Gen Y	(1977-1987)	(23-33)	(25-34)
New Millennial	(1988-)	(00-22)	(0-24)

* These age ranges are based on the Census year of 2010. The Census grouping is how the age breakdowns can best be combined to most closely match the categories.

Initially, it should be noted, that no one person fits this exact generational profile in terms of target marketing. Within the *Silent Generation* there are many people living active lives in their own homes, while many are now residents of active retirement communities, and still others are living in assisted living facilities and nursing homes. With housing choices limited in some communities, this population may need to "retire"

elsewhere to find needed services, such as medical care, or simply choose to relocate to be closer to family or for a warmer climate.

The *Baby Boomers* are probably the most profiled category, likely because of their size but also because of the post World War II growth in the media and marketing directed at this generation. As with their parents generation, they have varying types of housing expectations, although most continue to live in single family homes, whether in subdivisions or on larger parcels. In most instances, they make up a large percentage of people who own homes in rural areas. They are also the population that will support retirement communities, often as second homes, and increased demand for medical services. Their existing and future reliance on much needed services, as well as personal wants, may influence community makeup for many years to come.

The *Generation X* population is more difficult to define, although they now encompass those in their prime working and parenting years. They are also the population expected to take up the demand for housing that may be shed by the *Silent Generation*. In a more robust economy, it is this group that may have more options as to housing, yet their lower population numbers may reduce their ability to support the services needed by the large Baby Boom cohort.

The *Generation Y* population, also known as the *Baby "Boomlet"*, brings forth a young generation that enjoys much of the trappings of being raised by the baby boomers. This includes educational pursuits and expectations in life, that may not always follow those same steps of their parents. In many instances, they are either not having children or deferring marriage and/or childbirth until later in life. This group is in their early working years and they are most often associated with the desire for a more urban existence. It is this group that will shape community development in the years ahead, through housing decisions and lifestyle choices.

The *New Millennials* are, as of yet, not a target of housing demand and supply, but it is anticipated that this category will follow their older *Generation Y* counterparts and seek a more urban existence. Whether a community can attract this group, which is primarily in their educational years, will be dependent upon the housing type (apartments) available, as well as commercial services and activities.

Table 4

GENERATION	CENSUS GROUP	2010 CLIMAX TOWNSHIP	% OF TOT. (2,463)
Silent Generation	(65 & Over)	362	14%
Baby Boom	(50-64)	566	23%
Gen X	(35-49)	531	22%
Gen Y	(25-34)	218	9%
New Millennial	(0-24)	786	32%

As can be seen from Table 4, the Township has a mixed population by age group, with the median age established at 42 years. This median age is higher than that for more urban areas, where higher density housing options support young families just starting out. An additional key will be to provide housing options which allow the older generations (those 50 & Over) to "age in place", possibly with some housing options (requiring less maintenance) around, and possibly within, the village areas.

Housing

While population statistics reflect the total increase or decrease occurring in a community, the analysis of housing statistics is often the key to land use planning for new residential development. Table 5 provides a breakdown between housing units and households, which are defined as "occupied" housing units. It also lists the number of vacant units, with a very low 5% vacancy rate at the time of the Census survey, as well breakdown of owner and renter occupied units.

Table 5 - Housing

	Housing Units	Households	Vacant Units	% Vacant
2010	966	914	52	5%
	Owner-Occ.	% Household	Renter Occ.	% Household
2010	816	89%	98	11%

The nature of housing, in relation to population change, is often linked to population per household. Based upon a population of 2,463 persons, there are 2.65 persons per household for owner-occupied units and 3.04 persons per household for renter occupied units. Typically, these numbers would be reversed, but more family members may be living together to share expenses due to economic conditions.

Population Projections

There are numerous methods of conducting population projections but they can be categorized in primarily three ways. One category focuses on the natural increase in population associated with the number of births exceeding the number of deaths. An often used method is the "cohort-survival" method, using the age/sex breakdown for that community and projecting: a) the number of potential births from the base of females in the 15 to 44 "fertility" age range; and b) the number of anticipated deaths based upon average life expectancy. This method is most often based on the current census of population.

A second category relates to the net population increase associated with the immigration (or in-migration) of people into the community minus the out-migration that may occur. This becomes much more difficult to calculate. Adding this projection to the natural increase, sometimes referred to as the "cohort-component" method, provides for both categories to be utilized in one projection.

A third approach is simply to use the pattern over the past to project the future population. This "trend" or "growth rate" method to project future population tends to remove the fluctuations from economic related cycles that may influence a 10-year period. Based upon the minimal increase in population between 1990 and 2010 (242 persons or approximately 11%), it may be possible to use a 2.5% growth rate for each 5-year period over the next 20 years, with this based upon the following assumption:

- A. The Township will be influenced by limited development pressure, with the primary increase due to land sales/land division, freeing up new parcels for development. Such activity would result from residential valuations increasing beyond agricultural valuations. Demand for housing generated by increased employment opportunity, due to proximity to both the Kalamazoo and Battle Creek (Ft. Custer) labor markets, could potentially increase this rate.

Table 6 - Population Projections

2010 Census	2015 Projection	2020 Projection	2025 Projection	2030 Projection
2,463	2,524	2,587	2,652	2,718

This projection would lead to roughly 255 new residents, with this equating to approximately 100 new housing units (at 2.5 persons per unit) over the 20-year period.

SECTION 4

EXISTING LAND USE **&** **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

The Master Plan is based upon the historic pattern of development, as outlined in Section 1, the current use of land (this Section) and the direction for future development (Section 6). Often, the Zoning Ordinance pre-dated the Master Plan, resulting in land being zoned that has not been developed for that purpose. The Master Plan, as part of determining future direction, may not rely on current zoning or existing land use if it is determined that other locations may be more suitable in support of such use. In other instances, the use ceases to exist and it is not anticipated that it will be re-established in that location.

Existing Land Use/Zoning: As an agricultural community, the vast majority of land within Climax Township is used for agriculture or larger lot residential development. The underlying zoning for most of these areas is the “A” Agriculture District. The more intensive pattern of development is found adjacent to the Village of Climax and the unincorporated Village of Scotts (part in Pavilion Township). These areas include small concentrations of historic commercial development, with abutting single family residential areas. More intensive residential zoning is found west of the Village of Climax (a mobile home park zoned “R-6”) and just east of 36th Street (Abutting the commercial frontage in Scotts and zoned “R-3”). A former campground in Section 17 (zoned “RE” Recreational) does not support the continuation of the current plan designation (Open Space & Parks).

Community Facilities: A community is most often identified by its central population concentration where commercial storefronts historically provided the destination for those living in the more rural areas of the Township. In the case of Climax Township, this is within both the Village of Climax and the Village of Scotts. Of additional benefit to this community identity is the local school system. The Climax Scotts Community School District includes a senior high/junior high complex (372 South Main) in the southwest corner of the Village of Climax and an elementary school (11250 East QR Avenue) within the Village of Scotts. The school website lists enrollment at 214 students in the K-5 elementary school and 306 students in the 6-12 junior/senior facilities. With an additional 24 students in an alternative setting, this brings the total enrollment to 544 students.

In addition to school facilities associated with recreational opportunities, the Township (as previously indicated) is blessed to have two large county parks just outside its boundary. Prior community population surveys have indicated a lack of desire for more parks in the Township given the presence of these facilities. Connections between the two Village areas and to these park systems (through bike path and bikelane extensions) would serve the residential concentration areas within the Township.

SECTION 5

PUBLIC INPUT & COMMUNITY GOALS

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008) requires that the Master Plan be reviewed every five years, with the Planning Commission determining whether the Plan is in need of update or that the current plan is sufficient to support decisions over the next five-year period. In this particular case, the last plan was completed in 1990 and was considered the 2010 plan, given the intent that master plans are a 20-year projection into the future. This new plan, to be completed in 2015, follows that timeframe by becoming the 2035 Master Plan. In order to follow that 2010 plan, and reduce expenses associated with this undertaking, the Township has utilized some of the findings from the 2010 plan by requesting input on the same general questions associated with that community survey of residents. Generally, those findings continue to support retention of the rural character of the Township as the primary objective. This implies limited new residential development and preservation and/or expansion of agricultural use where appropriate.

Public Meetings/Public Hearing: The Township initiated this master planning process with a community survey in 2011. An example of the survey and the results are included in the appendix to the Plan. This planning process has also included meetings with the Planning Commission and the required public hearing (on February 8, 2016), notice of which is in a newspaper of general circulation in the Township not less than 15 days before the hearing. It has also included the community survey, utilizing the same format that was used for the 2010 Plan, to gauge consistency with the survey results. It is these survey results, with analysis and input from the Planning Commission, that serve to create the goals & objectives associated with the master plan and future land use.

The future land use designations, and their supportive goals, are as follows:

Open Space GOAL: To protect and preserve those areas in the Township which are most sensitive to development. These would include areas defined as wetlands, floodplains or areas with concentrations of hydric soils, such as muck or peat.

In addition, the Open Space designation would extend to public facilities and/or recreational facilities. Toward this goal, school facilities and the non-profit facilities (American Legion) provide support for this direction.

Agriculture GOAL: To support agriculture as the primary industry in the Township. One way to avoid conflict is by limiting the areas of more intensive commercial and residential development to areas abutting or within the Villages of Climax and Scotts.

Low Density Residential GOAL: To support the opportunity for residential development throughout the Township, with the rural areas supporting larger parcels through land division and the areas abutting or within the Village areas providing for smaller parcels through land division, lots through subdivision or building sites through condominium development.

Medium/High Density Residential GOAL: To only support more intensive residential development where such development could potentially be served by public utility systems, should such systems be extended into the Township. This would include the mobile home park area just west of the Village of Climax or the area abutting the elementary school within the (unincorporated) Village of Scotts.

Commercial GOAL: To support expansion of the existing commercial development within the Villages, south and west of the Village of Climax and along the historic main street within the Village of Scotts.

Industrial GOAL: To support the continued use of industrial parks within the City of Battle Creek (Ft. Custer) and those within proximity to the Township, such as in Charleston Township, along I-94, or in Pavilion and Comstock Townships, along N Avenue and Sprinkle Road (Midlink).

SECTION 6

LAND USE PLAN **&** **ZONING PLAN**

The Master Plan is both the narrative and the map, while the Zoning Plan is the connection of the Plan to the Zoning Ordinance, with reference to which zoning district(s) are compatible with which land use designations. These are presented in order of intensity or density, from the least intensive open space, through the residential designations to the commercial and industrial areas of the Township. This then provides the narrative explanation of plan designations with locations shown on the Master (Land Use) Plan Map.

Open Space

This land use designation is initially based upon a process of compiling data on the natural features (geographic profile) within Climax Township. This data includes primarily wetland and floodplain data and similar information related to protecting areas less suitable for development. The prior plan used significant soil data and the various combinations of soils prevalent within any community allow for a determination of which characteristics are most beneficial.

A secondary intent of this land use designation is to provide areas of the Township where passive recreational benefit can be achieved from these same open space areas where feasible. While man-made drains may be utilized to connect these areas for drainage purposes, similar linkages may also benefit the community in other ways, including recreational opportunities. Achieving some balance between public benefit and private property rights is the basis for long term protection of these areas. School and non-profit facilities that support recreation are also included within this designation.

Zoning Plan: Implementation of this plan designation can occur in a variety of ways, although compatibility will be achieved to the greatest extent through the "RE" *Recreation District*. It is anticipated that changes to this district will be made once this new master plan has been adopted.

Agriculture

This land use designation is based upon the desire to retain agricultural land where it does exist as well as differentiate these areas from large lot single family development where feasible. In addition, such use is intended to blend with the natural environment and conserve these areas through use of best agricultural management practices.

Zoning Plan: Implementation of this plan designation is through the "A-1" *Agricultural District*. It may also be beneficial to consider the creation of a new "AB" *Agricultural Business District*.

Low Density Residential

This land use designation is directed at supporting single family residential development.

This can be in the form of large lot parcels or through platting (lots) or site condominium projects (units). The intent is to provide for residential development in areas where supporting infrastructure is in place or improvements could be made in the most cost effective manner.

Zoning Plan: Implementation of this plan designation is through either the “R-1” *Single Family Residential District (Low Density)* or “R-2” *Single Family Residential District (Medium Density)*.

Medium/High Density Residential

This land use designation is directed at supporting more intensive residential development, from two-family development, multiple family (3+ units) and dwellings within mobile home parks. Close proximity to commercial and other residential development areas would be anticipated. The intent is to support such use in areas where infrastructure improvements are most feasible as part of any long term capital improvement programming for the Township.

Zoning Plan: Implementation of this plan designation is through the “R-3” 1 to 2 Family District, the “R-4” Multiple Family District, or the “R-6” Mobile Home Park District.

Commercial

This land use designation is directed at providing locations in the Township where business of an office, retail or service nature can be established. The desire is to support new commercial development in areas that already exist or could be expanded. This includes areas within the Village of Scotts and some area surrounding the Village of Climax.

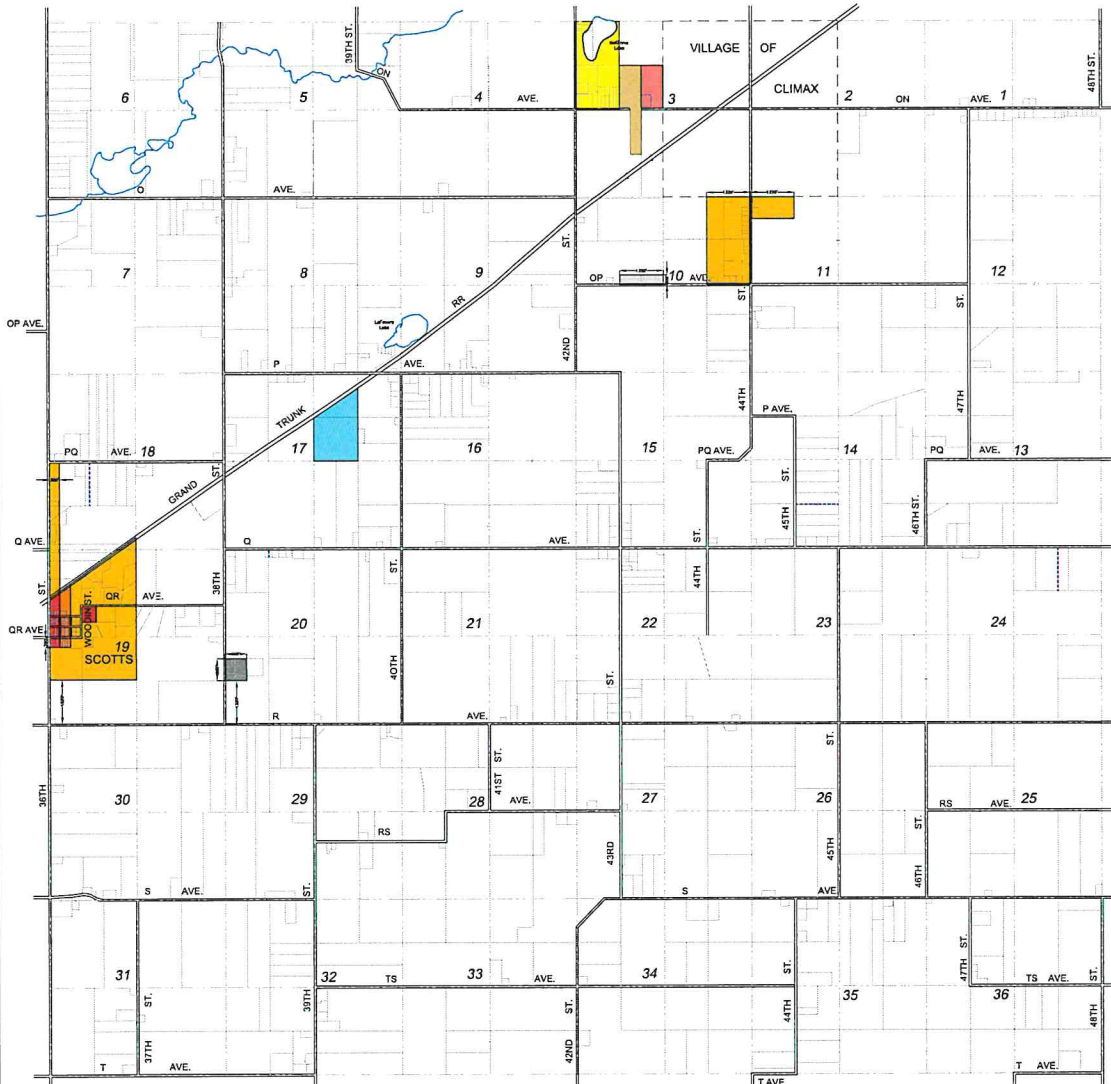
Zoning Plan: Implementation and compatibility with this land use plan designation would be based upon consistency with the “C-1” *Local Commercial District* or the “C-2” *General Commercial District*. Compatibility with adjoining residential areas is the primary consideration for any commercial expansion in the Township.

Industrial

This land use designation is directed at supporting industrial business of a service nature. Due to limitations on supporting infrastructure, larger manufacturing operations are more feasible within industrial park settings and this plan supports economic development efforts within those areas.

Zoning Plan: Implementation of this designation would be through the “I-1” *Restricted Industrial District* or the “I-3” *Service Industrial District*. While more intensive manufacturing operations are not intended, some provision has been made for such business development.

ZONING MAP OF CLIMAX TOWNSHIP KALAMAZOO COUNTY, MICHIGAN

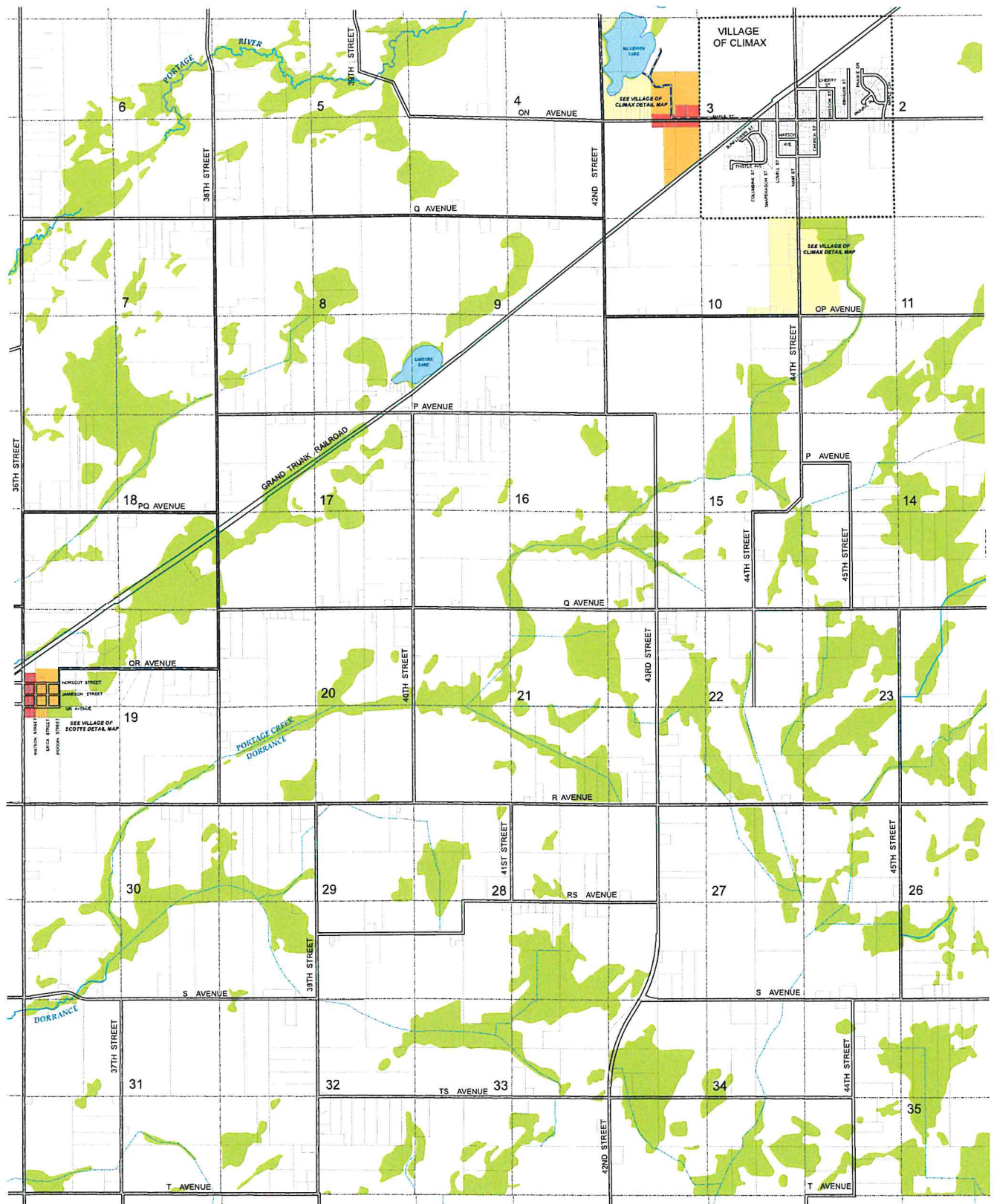


LEGEND

 A-1 AGRICULTURE	 C-1 COMMERCIAL - LOCAL
 R-1 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL - LOW	 C-2 COMMERCIAL - GENERAL
 R-2 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL - MEDIUM	 I-1 INDUSTRIAL - RESTRICTED
 R-3 1 AND 2 FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	 I-3 INDUSTRIAL - SERVICE
 R-6 MOBILE HOME PARK	 RE RECREATIONAL



Prein & Newhof
Engineers Surveyors Planners and Architects
169 PORTAGE STREET
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN 49007
PHONE: (616) 345-1158
DATE: APRIL 18, 2002



LEGEND

- Agricultural
- Residential Low Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Commercial
- Open Space

Climax Township Kalamazoo County, Michigan Master Plan 2035

January 2015

SECTION 7

IMPLEMENTATION

The Master Plan is concluded with a final element that lays the groundwork for efforts to implement the plan. Throughout the process there are changes that may dictate amendments to the zoning ordinance or to define the need for further study. Traditionally, this final element would serve as an outline for the 5-year review, with success based upon the ability to achieve these recommendations.

Zoning Ordinance Text: The *Zoning Plan* provides the linkage between the Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. One such recommendation would be to amend the “RE” Recreation District to expand that as more related to Open Space preservation. An additional recommendation would be to look at agricultural land use and determine whether other options or approaches would better align the Township with the Department of Agriculture (Rural Development) GAAMP’s (Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices).

Zoning Ordinance Map: The Planning Commission may also wish to initiate changes in zoning if they believe the only way to properly implement the Plan is through amendments to the map (rezoning). This is typically left up to private property owners, who would then use the plan as the basis for support of their zoning requests. Failure to have the Plan support such requests would lead to an amendment to the Master Plan in advance of, or in conjunction with the request for rezoning. Several areas currently zoned for more intensive development than anticipated within the Plan, can remain as zoned, but may not be suitable for further expansion without greater evaluation within a master plan amendment.

Other Uses: One aspect of this plan is to focus on making improved connections between the Village areas and other community facilities. A non-motorized plan could be developed that includes bike path extensions or bike lane improvements. While bike paths (8-10’ in width) are generally safer, bike lanes (4’) expand the road surface to reduce conflict with vehicular movement. The Kalamazoo County Road Commission may work with the Township to initiate such widened shoulders as part of future road improvement projects.