

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Genoa Township, located in Livingston County between the cities of Howell and Brighton, is a growing community that faces the difficult challenge of accommodating ever increasing development while retaining its unique natural and rural characteristics. Values and goals of the community were developed with input from residents, landowners, the Planning Commission and the Township Board. Ultimately, it is their aspirations for Genoa Township that have become the principal basis for recommendations discussed in this Master Plan. This plan attempts to balance the various demands and interests to ensure each development decision is consistent with the overall vision for the Township.

The analysis and recommendations in this plan provide the foundation for zoning and other Township development ordinances. With this in mind, all sections of the plan will be used as tools to provide a quality community while it protects the natural features that create a sense of identity for Genoa Township.

**Population Housing & Economics:** Like much of Livingston County, the population of Genoa Township has been steadily increasing since the late 1980's. The population of Genoa Township was 19,821 persons in 2010. By the year 2040, the population is projected to grow to approximately 23,061 persons.

**Protection of Natural Features:** Genoa Township contains numerous natural features including lakes, creeks, woodlands, and rolling topography. These features make an important contribution to the quality of life in the Township. The plan recommends a number of means to accommodate development while protecting the valuable resources that are critical to Genoa Township's quality of life.

Development densities should be limited in areas that contain fragile natural features and pristine natural conditions. Any negative impact of sanitary drainfields should be minimized through restricting residential densities in areas not served by public sanitary sewer, in particular, areas with poor soil conditions.

Design for development needs to incorporate preservation of natural topography and vegetation. Setbacks and site plan design standards should be established to protect natural features. Steep slopes, streambanks and lakeshore need to be protected during development. Stormwater needs to be managed and natural drainage ways protected.

**Existing Land Use:** Single family residential and vacant/agricultural land were the most predominant land uses in the Township in 2013. Single family residential is dispersed throughout the Township, but with higher densities in areas with public utilities along Grand River

*The Genoa Township Master Plan is divided into a number of sections, including the following fundamental areas:*

- *Population, Housing & Economics*
- *Environmental Conditions*
- *Existing Land Use*
- *Future Land Use*
- *Transportation*
- *Greenways & Bikepaths*
- *Implementation*

Avenue, around the Tri-Lakes area, Lake Chemung, and near the cities of Brighton and Howell. Most of the commercial land uses are located along the Grand River Avenue corridor. There are three distinct industrial areas, all along the Grand River Avenue, north of I-96.

**Public Utilities:** Portions of the Township are served by public sanitary sewer and water. The northwest and central portion of the Township is served by water and sanitary sewer systems developed in cooperation with adjacent townships. Areas around the City of Brighton are also served by sewer and water. While utilities were built, in part, to protect water quality, the availability of utilities has certainly influenced the pattern and pace of development.

**Future Land Use:** A future land use pattern is recommended based on existing land use patterns, transportation conditions, availability of public facilities, natural resource protection market trends and community goals. It is important to note that the future land use plan represents a 10-15-year vision for the community, which should be reviewed every at least every 5 years per the Michigan Enabling Act. Prior to any rezonings taking place, the future land use pattern and growth boundary described in this plan should be referenced.

- The plan establishes a growth boundary. Areas within the growth boundary include the Grand River Avenue/I-96 corridor between Brighton and Howell and areas surrounding the City of Brighton. Land within the Township are separated into three areas; the primary growth areas, secondary growth areas and rural reserve areas:
- Primary growth areas are areas that are currently served or available to be served by public sewer and water. These areas include single family on lots between  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre and multiple family residential at higher densities. This area also includes the commercial centers, industrial parks and mixed-use centers.
- Secondary growth areas do not have sewer and water, but due to their proximity to the cities of Brighton or Howell, are appropriate for infill with low density residential. Typical lot sizes will be around one acre or clustered developments at an overall density of two acres per dwelling.
- Rural reserve areas outside of the growth boundary will be maintained at a relatively low intensity rural character of development, typically more than 2 acres per dwelling unit, and agricultural uses.
- Commercial land uses are located generally along the Grand River Avenue corridor. Neighborhood commercial areas are designated for smaller scale retail and service establishments

intended to serve the needs of nearby residential neighborhoods. General commercial areas are designated for larger scale retail businesses which serve the community at large. An area for regional commercial is designated around the intersection of Grand River Avenue and Latson Road.

- A Genoa Town Center is designated along Grand River Avenue at Dorr Road. This area is planned to become a mixed-use town center with local businesses, neighborhood service establishments and traditional residential neighborhoods. Residential uses will provide a variety of housing types including apartments on upper floors above commercial uses, traditional townhouses and single family homes on smaller lots. This area will be integrated into a pedestrian-friendly, walkable area with sidewalks connecting all uses and community parks and plazas.
- Future land uses are planned south of the new Latson Road interchange to accommodate high quality, walkable commercial and an opportunity for large-scale campus uses. The intent is to retain the existing commercial development north of the interchange and provide a destination south of the interchange while limiting impacts on existing residential areas. Development in this area is intended to be phased, starting with the areas closest to the new interchange, supported by utility extensions and a newly widened S. Latson Road (formerly Nixon Road). The plan recommends this area be assessed within 5 years for potential expansion south, taking into consideration future impacts on utilities and road capacities, while protecting the nearby rural residential character.
- Industrial areas are proposed within the areas most suitable for this type of development with the infrastructure to support these uses and adequate buffers from other land uses.
- Public/Quasi-Public includes land areas occupied by government, civic or utility uses.

**Transportation:** A number of transportation management strategies are recommended for consideration as the Township grows. Road widening or other major improvements will be limited. Access management standards need to be applied to the location and spacing of driveways to protect the roadway level of service. With new developments, roads need to provide a safe and efficient vehicular circulation system with a continuous street network that provides connections between neighborhoods.

**Greenways and Bike Paths:** The maintenance of greenways and the development of bike paths are proposed throughout the Township. Bike paths are proposed along major roads such as Grand River Avenue, Latson, Brighton, Dorr and Crooked Lake Roads.

Conservation greenways should be maintained along drainageways and in natural habitat areas.

**Greening Grand River Avenue:** Adding a median to Grand River Avenue has long been planned but never implemented. This plan proposes the Township work with MDOT and the Livingston County Road Commission to study the possibility of a narrow median from the interchange at Lake Chemung to Howell city limits.