

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN



Adopted
January 2026

The Bedford Township Planning Commission approved and adopted this Master Plan as a guide for the physical development of Bedford Township, Michigan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Grant Andrews", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Grant Andrews, Chair
Planning Commission

January 14, 2026

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Bedford Township Planning Commission

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Bradley Helm, (Former Member, term ending 12-31-2025)

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Todd Bruning, Trustee

Joe Gore, Trustee

Craig Montri, Trustee

Josh Stump, Trustee

Community Development and Planning Department Staff:

Jodie Rector, Planning & Zoning Coordinator

Katrina Ingram, Planning & Zoning Administrative Assistant



Assisted by The Mannik & Smith Group, Inc.

TOWNSHIP OF BEDFORD
COUNTY OF MONROE, MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP Planning Commission
MASTER PLAN APPROVAL AND ADOPTION

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), Act 33 of 2008, authorizes the Bedford Township Planning Commission to prepare a Master Plan for the use, development and preservation of all lands within Bedford Township; and

WHEREAS, the Bedford Township Planning Commission prepared a proposed Township Master Plan and Future Land Use Map, and submitted them to the Township Board for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, on September 16, 2025, the Township Board of Trustees reviewed the proposed Master Plan and authorized its distribution to the following entities, in accordance with Section 41(2) of the MPEA: Monroe County Board of Commissioners, Whiteford Township, Ida Township, and Erie Township, and other interested entities; and

WHEREAS, notice was duly provided to the above listed entities as required by the MPEA;

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission solicited public input throughout the planning process through a resident online survey conducted in the spring of 2025, an open house in September 2025, regular public meetings, and a formal public hearing held on December 10, 2025, to receive additional public comment on the proposed Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Township Board of Trustees finds the proposed Master Plan to be desirable and consistent with the Township's goals for land use, preservation, and development.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Bedford Township Planning Commission hereby approves and adopts the proposed 2026 Master Plan including all of the chapters, figures, maps and tables contained therein on this date, January 14, 2026.

YEAS: LAKE, DERSCH, MONTRI, BUSCHMANN, WALTERS, TREMBLAY AND ANDREWS

NAYS: NONE

ABSENT: NONE



Grant Andrews, Chair
Planning Commission

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bedford Township's next chapter begins now, as the community tackles decisions that will shape its future growth and identity. Strategically located where southeast Michigan meets northwest Ohio, this community of approximately 32,000 residents serves as a vital link between the Detroit metropolitan area and Toledo. While often considered Toledo's largest suburb, Bedford Township keeps its distinct character, defined by the historic villages of Temperance, Lambertville, and Samaria—each contributing unique qualities to the broader community fabric.

The 2026 Bedford Township Master Plan responds to shifting demographics, infrastructure needs, and development pressures while safeguarding the rural character and small-town atmosphere that residents value. This comprehensive update replaces the 2015 Master Plan and outlines a roadmap for balanced, sustainable growth through 2050.

With its strong transportation connections and agricultural heritage, Bedford Township is well-positioned for thoughtful development. The community has grown steadily since 2010, and projections anticipate a population of almost 34,000 by 2050—making Bedford the fastest-growing area in Monroe County.

The Master Plan reflects extensive community input gathered through multiple engagement methods:

- **Resident Survey:** 664 responses identifying key priorities and concerns.
- **Public and Community Stakeholder Meetings:** Joint sessions with Township officials and open forums with residents.
- **Regional Coordination:** Collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions and County agencies.

KEY COMMUNITY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Demographic Shifts:** By 2050, residents aged 65 and older are expected to make up approximately a third of the total population, up from a fifth today. This trend requires a focus on housing options, public services, and infrastructure that support residents at this and every stage of life.
- **Infrastructure Needs:** Aging roads, limited utility capacity, and gaps in pedestrian infrastructure require substantial investment. Residents consistently prioritize road improvements, sidewalk connectivity, and traffic management.
- **Economic Diversification:** While preserving its residential character, the Township aims to broaden its economic base—particularly through strategic commercial development along Lewis Avenue and within the village centers.
- **Rural Character Preservation:** Managing growth while protecting farmland and open space is central to Bedford's long-term identity and sustainability.

MASTER PLAN FRAMEWORK

The 2026 Master Plan outlines six core goal areas:

1. **Great Neighborhoods & Housing**
Strengthen existing neighborhoods while increasing housing diversity for all income levels and life stages. Strategies include promoting housing rehabilitation, enhancing walkability, and concentrating on higher-density development in village centers.
2. **Quality Community Facilities & Services**
Maintain and improve public infrastructure, parks, and services to support a high quality of life. Priorities include emergency services, park upgrades, expanded non-motorized pathways, and regional collaboration.

3. **Economic Development & Vitality**

Encourage growth through targeted business attraction and retention. Emphasis is placed on mixed-use development in village centers and comprehensive planning along the Lewis Avenue corridor.

4. **Transportation & Infrastructure**

Create a safe, multimodal transportation network. Key actions include road upgrades, expanded pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, access management, and integrated utility planning.

5. **Community Character, Farmland & Open Space Preservation**

Protect rural landscapes and agricultural activity while allowing compatible growth. Strategies include preserving farmland, protecting viewshed, supporting value-added agriculture, and discouraging high-intensity land uses, such as large-scale solar and wind facilities, data centers, and similar uses from locating in rural areas.

6. **Collaboration and Partnerships**

Strengthen regional cooperation to address cross-jurisdiction challenges related to land use, transportation, and infrastructure.

SUBAREA STRATEGIES

Recognizing the Township's diverse character, the Plan identifies seven distinct subareas, each with tailored development strategies:

- Suburban Residential Area: Enhance neighborhood character and increase housing options.
- Village Centers: Foster walkable, mixed-use development.
- DDA Area: Continue improvement plan to foster economic development and connect to the Lambertville Village Center.
- Commercial Nodes: Focus commercial development in the DDA Area and the Lewis Avenue Corridor.
- Lewis Avenue Corridor: Advance corridor-wide redevelopment and traffic solutions.
- Agriculture/Rural Area: Preserve farmland and support compatible rural uses.
- Research and Development Area: Promote high-quality industrial and tech-based campus development.

FUTURE LAND USE VISION

The Future Land Use Plan guides growth while protecting Bedford's character through nine distinct land use categories—from agricultural preservation zones to mixed-use village centers. This framework supports flexible, innovative development aligned with community needs.

Key land use priorities include:

- Directing higher-density residential development to areas with existing infrastructure.
- Preserving prime agricultural land, especially in the northern Township.
- Creating vibrant, walkable village centers with a mix of residential and commercial uses.
- Protecting natural resources, open spaces, and environmental features from incompatible development including high-intensity land uses such as large scale solar and wind facilities, data centers, and similar uses.

The 2026 Bedford Township Master Plan provides a clear, community-driven path forward. Through strategic planning, public engagement, and regional collaboration, Bedford Township can accommodate future growth while preserving the values and qualities that make it a desirable place to live, work, and invest.

INTRODUCTION

Bedford Township is strategically located where southeast Michigan meets northwest Ohio. Situated approximately 50 miles southwest of Detroit and directly bordering Toledo, the Township serves as a vital bridge between two states and their economic centers. This unique position places Bedford Township within a distinctive regional context shaped by Great Lakes geography, a robust transportation network, thriving agricultural lands, and a strong sense of place and community. The Township includes the historic unincorporated villages of Temperance, Lambertville, and Samaria—each contributing to its character and identity. While often considered Toledo's largest suburb, Bedford Township maintains its own distinct identity, shaped by traditions rooted in both Michigan and Ohio.

The 2026 Bedford Township Master Plan seeks to balance the Township's rural character and heritage with the evolving needs of residents and businesses. It provides a proactive strategy to ensure future development enhances, rather than compromises, the qualities that make Bedford a desirable place to live, work, and invest. With a population of approximately 32,000, the Township has experienced steady growth over the past decade, presenting both opportunities and challenges in managing development while preserving community character.

PURPOSE AND LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY OF THE MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan outlines a long-term vision for the Township's growth and development through 2050. Its purpose is to articulate community's goals and identify strategies for land use, development, infrastructure, and quality of life improvements. It serves as the Township's primary policy guide for future growth, supporting sound planning and zoning decisions.

Authority for the preparation of this Master Plan is granted under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended), which requires zoning decisions to be grounded in a comprehensive plan that promotes public health, safety, and general welfare. The Plan will be reviewed every five years to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to community needs and evolving conditions.

HOW THE PLAN IS TO BE USED

The Master Plan serves several key purposes:

- **Policy Guidance:** It outlines a unified vision and shared goals that guide the Planning Commission, Township Board, and other local bodies in decisions related to zoning, development, and capital improvements.
- **Coordination Tool:** The Plan provides a framework for aligning public investments—such as road and utility improvements—with areas that offer the greatest community benefit. It also supports private development decisions and capital planning through integration with the Township's Capital Improvement Plan.
- **Educational Resource:** The Plan offers clarity to residents, developers, and regional partners regarding the Township's long-term direction.

Importantly, the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map do **not** replace other Township ordinances, including the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map. Rather, they provide the policy foundation for those regulatory tools.

PLAN UPDATE

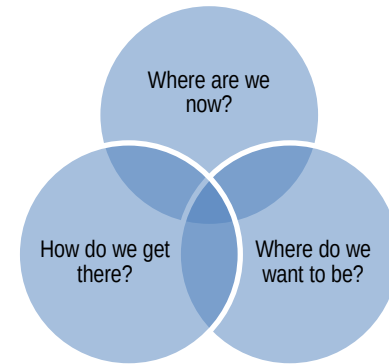
This document updates the 2015 Bedford Township Master Plan, recognizing that communities evolve over time. Changing conditions, new opportunities, and emerging challenges require regular reassessment. Current state law mandates Master Plan review every five years to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process involved three major phases:

1. *Where are we now?* This phase involved analyzing demographics, socio-economic trends, and land use patterns. Township assets and infrastructure were updated and mapped. These findings are detailed in the Community Description Appendix, organized into demographics and physical conditions.
2. *Where do we want to be?* Through extensive public engagement—including an online survey, open houses, workshops, and meetings with stakeholders—community goals, priorities, and concerns were identified to shape the Township's future vision.
3. *How do we get there?* The final phase focused on developing goals, strategies, and land use recommendations to achieve the vision. A comprehensive draft of the Plan was reviewed by Township officials, neighboring communities, and the public before final adoption.

Figure 1. Planning Process



PLAN ORGANIZATION

The 2026 Bedford Township Master Plan provides a framework to guide growth over the next 25 years. It addresses five core planning areas: land use, housing and livability, economic development, transportation and infrastructure, and agriculture and open space preservation. Maps, tables, and illustrations provide clear visual explanations of key ideas.

The Plan is organized as follows:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction**
Explains the Plan's purpose, legal authority, intended use, and the planning process.
- **Chapter 2: Regional Setting and Land Use Patterns**
Describes existing patterns, current land use issues and trends, and highlights Bedford's regional context and relevant planning initiatives.
- **Chapter 3: Community Goals and Objectives**
Section 1: Presents six overarching goals with more specific objectives developed through community input:
 1. Neighborhoods and housing
 2. Public facilities and services
 3. Economic vitality,
 4. Transportation and infrastructure,
 5. Farmland and open space preservation, and
 6. Regional collaboration.
 Section 2: Provides targeted strategies for seven geographic subareas:
 1. Suburban Residential Area
 2. Village Centers
 3. Township Downtown Development Authority Area
 4. Commercial Nodes
 5. Lewis Avenue Corridor

- 6. Agriculture/Rural Area
- 7. Research and Development Area
- **Chapter 4: Future Land Use**
Describes future land use categories and presents the Future Land Use Map to guide zoning and development decisions.
- **Chapter 5: Implementation Strategies**
Offers tools and steps for translating the Plan into action, including zoning changes, capital planning, public education, and regular updates.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION APPENDIX

- **Community Description**
Contains background data, including population trends, socio-economic conditions, and an inventory of environmental and built features. This section is divided into three parts:
 - Population, Demographic, and Socio-Economic Characteristics
 - Natural Features and Physical Conditions
 - Utilities and Transportation
- **Community Engagement**
Summarizes the public involvement process, including the results of the 2025 Resident Survey (664 responses), open house, public meetings, and workshops with officials and stakeholders. It highlights community priorities, concerns, and shared visions.

USING THIS DOCUMENT

The Master Plan is designed for use by multiple audiences:

- **Township Officials**
Should use the Plan as the primary policy guide for land use and infrastructure decisions. Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5 are especially relevant to their work.
- **Developers, Property Owners, and Businesses**
Can use the Plan to understand expectations and opportunities across different areas of the Township. Chapters 3 and 4 are particularly useful.
- **Residents**
Can reference Chapters 2, 3, and 4 to understand how the Township will grow while preserving its character and quality of life.

This document replaces the 2015 Bedford Township Master Plan and will guide local development decisions through 2050. Regular reviews every five years will ensure the Plan continues to reflect the needs, priorities, and aspirations of the Bedford Township community.

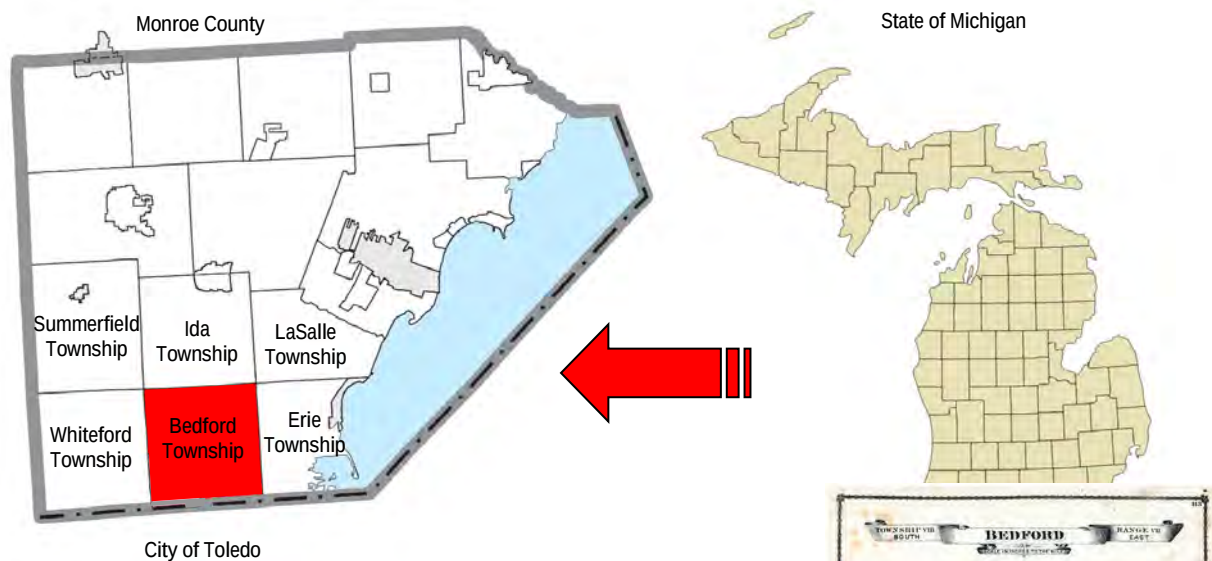
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REGIONAL SETTING AND LAND USE PATTERNS

Bedford Township is located in Monroe County in southeast Michigan. Bedford Township is the most populated municipality in the County and the second most populated Township in the State of Michigan after Macomb Township (Macomb County). Sharing a southern border with the City of Toledo, Ohio, about 50 miles southwest of the City of Detroit, the Township lies within the urban growth corridor which extends from Detroit to Toledo. It is considered part of both the Metro Detroit and Toledo Statistical Area but experiences its greatest urbanization pressure from the Toledo area.

Bedford Township covers a total area of approximately 25,130 acres or 39 square miles. It is bordered by Whiteford Township to the west, Ida Township to the north, Erie Township to the east, and by Toledo, Ohio to the south. Figure 2 below illustrates the geographic location of Bedford Township in relation to surrounding areas.

Figure 2. Regional Setting



Source: Adapted from Wikipedia

In 1850, it encompasses the unincorporated villages of Lambertville, Sylvania, and Temperance.

Bedford Township is known for its strong sense of local pride and community. The Township has grown from a small group of pioneering families to a vibrant community. Today, the Township's character blends elements of both urban and rural environments with the southern half of the Township primarily residential and suburban in character and rural and agricultural areas in the northern half of the Township. While mostly residential, commercial and industrial uses are located in the southern portion of the Township in the villages and along the southern and eastern border of the Township.



EXISTING LAND USE

According to SEMCOG data, residential development is the most prominent land use in the Township, covering more than 58% of its area (after deducting 20% attributed to agriculture). Agricultural uses, located primarily in the northern half of the Township, account for approximately 20% of the land area. Other land uses, based on SEMCOG classifications, include recreational (3.6%, combining recreational/open space, cemetery, and golf course), institutional (1.7%), commercial and office (1.8%), and industrial uses (1.4%). The remaining land, approximately 14%, includes utility and transportation corridors, vacant land, non-parceled areas, and water. Overall, based on 2010 aerial photography and SEMCOG land cover data, 46% of the Township's land cover is considered open space and 37% wooded areas, with the remainder classified as impervious or small bare areas and water bodies.

Table 1. 2020 Land Use

Land Use	Acres-2020	Percent of Total Area
Agricultural / Rural Residential	13,939.6	55.3%
Single-family Residential	5,194.3	20.6%
Attached Condo Housing	20.6	0.1%
Multiple-family Residential	258.3	1.0%
Mobile Home	172.3	0.7%
Mixed Use	23.2	0.1%
Retail	197.6	0.8%
Office	115.6	0.5%
Hospitality	39.0	0.2%
Medical	47.6	0.2%
Institutional	427.9	1.7%
Industrial	343.7	1.4%
Recreational/Open Space	410.2	1.6%
Cemetery	10.0	0.0%
Golf Course	499.5	2.0%
Parking	10.1	0.0%
Extractive	16.4	0.1%
Transportation, Communication, and Utilities	297.9	1.2%
Vacant	1,598.2	6.3%
Water	70.3	0.3%
Not Parceled	1522.8	6.0%
Total	25,215.2	100%

Source: American Community Survey and SEMCOG Community Profiles.

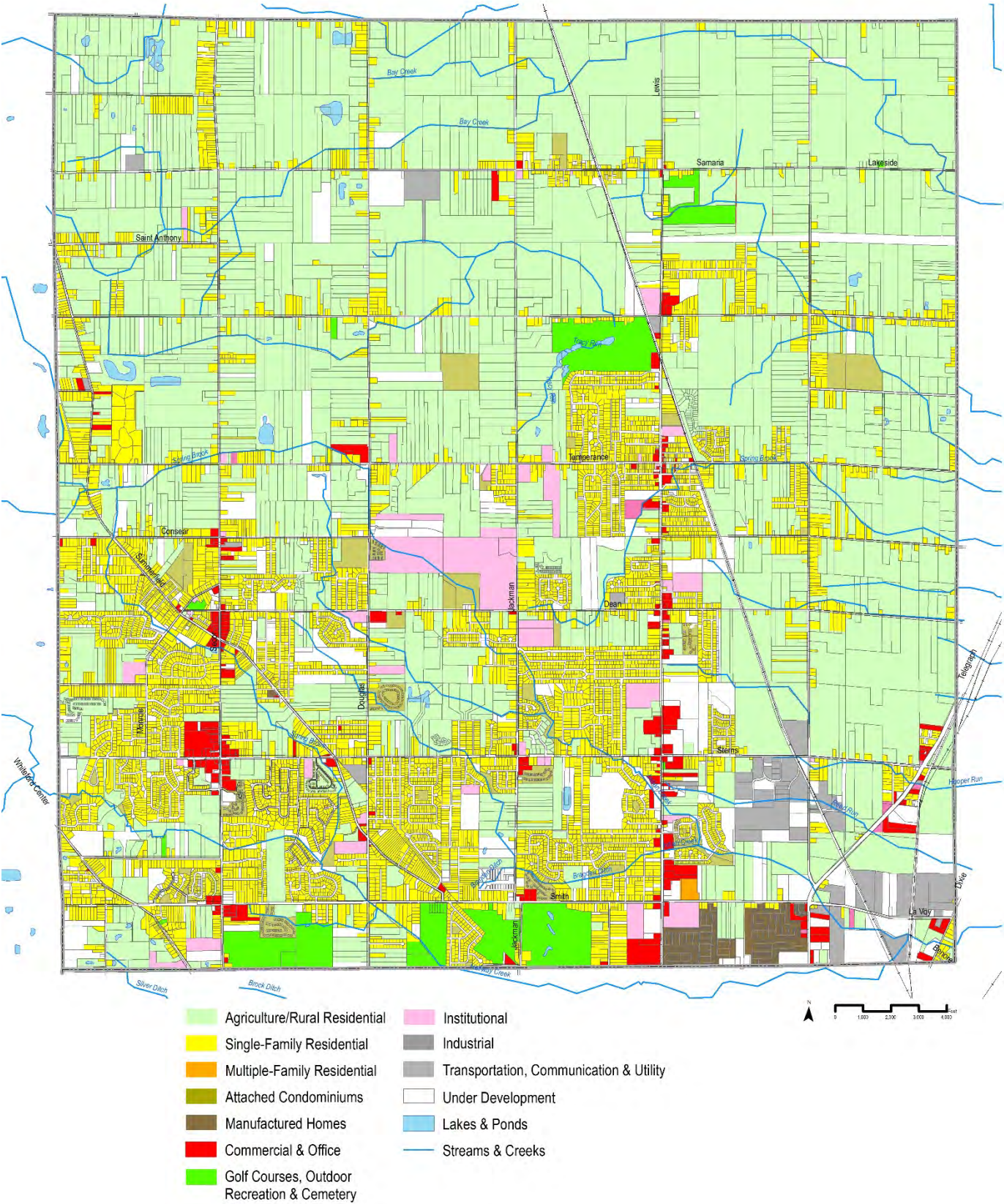
Table 2. 2020 Land Cover

Type	Description	Acres	Percent of Total
Impervious	Buildings, roads, driveways & parking lots	2,828.3	11.2%
Trees	Woody vegetation & trees	9,362.9	37.1%
Open Space	Agricultural fields, grasslands & turf grass	11,547.4	45.8%
Bare	Soil, aggregate piles & unplanted fields	1,264	5%
Water	Rivers, lakes, drains & ponds	205.7	0.8%

Source: SEMCOG Land Cover data was derived from SEMCOG's 2010 imagery.

*: Acreages are approximate and for planning purposes only

Figure 3. 2025 Land Use/Land Cover Map



Source: 2020 SEMCOG Land Use/Land Cover data updated through a Windshield Survey

CURRENT LAND USE ISSUES AND TRENDS

HOUSING

Similar to many other suburban communities in Southeast Michigan, Bedford Township has developed with predominantly single-family residential neighborhoods. While these areas may have been successful when originally developed, current land use and housing trends indicate they will not be sustainable forever. Bedford's public schools, the existing housing stock, and residential neighborhoods are recognized as assets and strengths for the community. The Township Master Plan supports Bedford's existing neighborhoods while also seeking opportunities to improve on the diversity of the housing stock by including new housing types for people of all ages, income, and lifestyles.

Housing Issues and Trends

- Bedford Township's proximity to employment centers continues to fuel Bedford's status as a bedroom community. On average, residents drive approximately 24 minutes to work, which is less than state and national average. Coupled with the affordability and the marketability of being in close proximity to Toledo, Bedford will continue to remain a marketable community to call home for families and single professionals that yearn for a small town atmosphere.
- According to SEMCOG's building permit data, between 2010 and 2024, 937 new single family residential units were added to the housing stock along with 362 multi-family dwelling units, 10 duplexes, and 30 attached condominiums/townhouses.
- By 2023, there were 11,133 single-family detached houses, 1,458 multi-unit (attached units and apartments), and 524 mobile homes/manufactured houses in the Township. Of these, 11,024 units were owner occupied, and 1,707 were occupied by renters.
- Population projections estimate a 6% increase in population between 2020 and 2050, an increase of 1,907 residents, giving Bedford the largest growth of any community in Monroe County.
- There will be a need for senior households concurrent with the aging of the population. Bedford's median age has increased by 2.7 years between 2010 and 2023. The median age of Township residents is 45.4 years of age, while southeast Michigan's average is 39 and Monroe County, 42.6.
- While the County and the Township are generally considered to have a relatively affordable housing market, like many areas in the state and the nation, it is experiencing rising costs. There is a need for mixed-income neighborhoods and for housing opportunities for starting families and residents who need more affordable options. According to Rocket Homes, in June 2025, the median home sale price was \$272,500, a 6.9% increase over the last year.

What is Missing Middle Housing

Missing Middle Housing includes duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, and small apartment buildings. They are called "Missing" because most cities banned them in the 1940s, and "Middle" because they fall between single-family homes and large apartment buildings in size and cost. These buildings look like large houses but hold multiple homes. They fit naturally into existing neighborhoods while supporting walkable streets and local shops.

Two Types:

Standard Missing Middle

(4-8 homes per building)

- 2 to 2.5 stories tall (cottage courts are 1.5 stories)
- One parking space per home
- Blend in with neighborhood character

Upper Missing Middle

(12-19 homes per building)

- 3 or 4 stories tall
- Larger, deeper buildings
- Best used carefully in quiet neighborhoods or freely in busier areas

Why Missing Middle Matters

These housing types can help solve housing shortage by offering more affordable options in walkable neighborhoods. They meet a growing demand from people who want to live car-free or car-light while keeping neighborhood character.

Note: Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) such as garage apartments are helpful for housing but are not considered Missing Middle since they are additions to existing properties.

- Market demand for rental housing in Monroe County is expected to increase due to factors such as rising home prices and limited affordability, which will cause more people to remain in the rental market. According to a market study conducted through the County Link Plan 2.0, the County is experiencing a substantial annual increase of new renter households, significantly more than the number of migrating homebuyers. Out of these renters, 40% prefer attached building units such as apartments, walk ups, and townhouses, while the majority, 60%, are seeking detached, subdivided housing, detached accessory dwellings, and small cottages to rent.



Source: missingmiddlehousing.com

ECONOMY

The Township continues to possess many attributes which put the community in an attractive position. Although *Manufacturing* has long been the strong point of the local economy, *Health Care* as well as *Leisure and Hospitality Services*, are important industry sectors along with *Natural Resources*, *Mining*, and *Construction*, as well as *Information and Financial Services*.

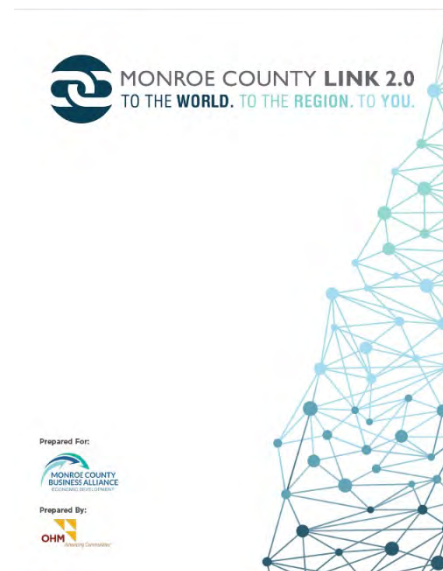
According to many experts, most of the future economic growth in Michigan will come in the high-technology and services sectors, including health care, fiscal management, highly skilled manufacturing, human services and the food industry. While the recovering manufacturing sector will remain a major component of our state's economy, most of the jobs already lost will not be returned. Rather than compete for a decreasing number of manufacturing jobs, the experts say, communities and regions should embrace this New Economy.

The New Economy is a term used to describe the transition from a manufacturing-based economy to a service-based or innovation-based economy. In the new economy, communities and regions are encouraged to build from within, expanding existing businesses and supporting new entrepreneurial enterprises. To rebuild or retain economic vitality, the experts say, communities will need to attract and retain educated and talented people.

Economic Issues and Trends

- To diversify the economy, efforts should be made to attract new employers, as well as to reserve suitable sites and the infrastructure necessary to support the types of employment centers needed for the future. Already, SEMCOG forecasts that jobs by industry will show more diversity in Bedford Township by 2050.
- The number of residents working in Bedford Township in 2023 was 7,181 while the total number of residents aged 15 or under (5,745), not in the labor force (10,966) or unemployed (680) amounted to a total of 17,391. This disparity results in a large number of Township residents representing 71%, not working or traveling to other communities for employment.

- *Manufacturing, Healthcare Services* as well as *Information and Financial Activities* are major employment sectors which will remain strong in the next 30 years. The segments of the economy that are mostly expected to grow in the next 30 years include *Natural Resources, Mining, and Construction, Leisure and Hospitality, and Professional and Technical Services and Corporate HQ.*
- Existing factors which support economic development in Bedford Township include:
 - Access to diverse transportation systems, including interstate highways (I-75 and U.S.-23), railroads and rail yards, and proximity to an international airport (Detroit Metro) and air cargo airports (Willow Run, Toledo Express),
 - The presence of public water and sewer services and the availability of reliable electrical and natural gas services,
 - Economic development agencies at the local, County, and state levels,
 - A diverse labor pool with access to job training and development programs, and
 - Proximity to major population, manufacturing, and higher education areas (Toledo, Detroit, Ann Arbor).



TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Traffic levels are recognized as an issue for the community particularly in the southern area of the Township along Secor Road, Smith Road, and around the commercial node centered at Sterns and Secor roads, Secor and Smith, and Sterns and Lewis. Over time, as development continues to occur in Bedford Township, traffic levels are likely to increase, thus creating a need for additional roadway improvements. Transportation improvements are costly and should be supplemented with transportation management practices that will maximize the efficiency and capacity of the existing road network to extend the useful life of the infrastructure. A well-coordinated and efficient transportation system is composed of various modes of travel with sufficient capacity to manage the necessary and desired movement of people and materials with minimum conflict with other land uses.

As part of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, communities that plan for public streets must coordinate with other road agencies. While most of the road jurisdiction in Bedford Township rests with the Monroe County Road Commission, the Township must continue to stay involved in future transportation planning by continuing positive working relationships with the County Road Commission, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), and the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG). SEMCOG and TMACOG are responsible for developing the Regional Long Range Transportation Plan, which lists planned improvements within the region for the next 20 years. Communication with SEMCOG and TMACOG is therefore critical to ensuring needed local projects are incorporated into their Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The community-wide online survey and public input meetings held during the information gathering phases of the Master Plan development process provided great insight as to residents' issues and concerns. Several of the more common planning issues are highlighted below.

Transportation and Infrastructure Issues and Trends

- Improvements to primary and local roads in Monroe County depend on limited funding, requiring careful planning and implementation of prioritized projects, since funding is not available for all of the needs.
- Pavement reports for public roads between 2021 and 2024 showed a decrease in road surfaces in poor conditions and an increase in roads in fair conditions, while roads in good conditions remain at

approximately the same level. This indicates current levels of investment in road improvements are inadequate.

- Unplanned land use changes can create a need for improvements to the transportation, water, and sewer systems, resulting in unplanned public expenditures with limited public benefit.
- Improvements to transportation, water, and sewer systems can stimulate growth, which is not necessarily appropriate unless proper planning and zoning is in place to guide suitable development.
- Bedford Township lacks an interconnected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, despite a strong demand for such a system.
- Public transportation serves limited portions of the County, is provided by Lake Erie Transit (LET) and the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) and does not provide a level of service that makes it an attractive option for meeting the daily transportation needs of most residents. Public transportation options connecting the County with regional destinations do not exist.

AGRICULTURE & OPEN SPACE

Agriculture and open spaces are a key component of Bedford Township. Not only does agricultural production contribute to the area's economy, but farmland also contributes significantly to the open space and natural resource benefits, including rural character, scenic beauty, cultural heritage, recreational opportunities, and environmental



benefits.

Agriculture and Open Space Issues and Trends

- Farming is part of Bedford Township's heritage and identity.
- Bedford Township has significant amounts of soil, considered prime farmland and soil of local importance.
- Locally produced food and farm products provide a base for a sustainable future.
- Farmland can improve environmental quality with regard to protecting groundwater recharge areas, providing flood water storage capacity, and creating wildlife habitat – which are values that are often destroyed by development.
- Farmland adds value to the Township's quality of place because it possesses aesthetic values which produce a sense of place and rural character, thus adding value to surrounding non-farm uses.
- Agricultural uses generally do not create a significant demand for public services and improvements relative to other land uses, especially in comparison to the revenue generated through taxes.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

Factors outside Bedford's borders are essential to consider in the planning process. Planning activities of the region, County, and neighboring communities are discussed below.

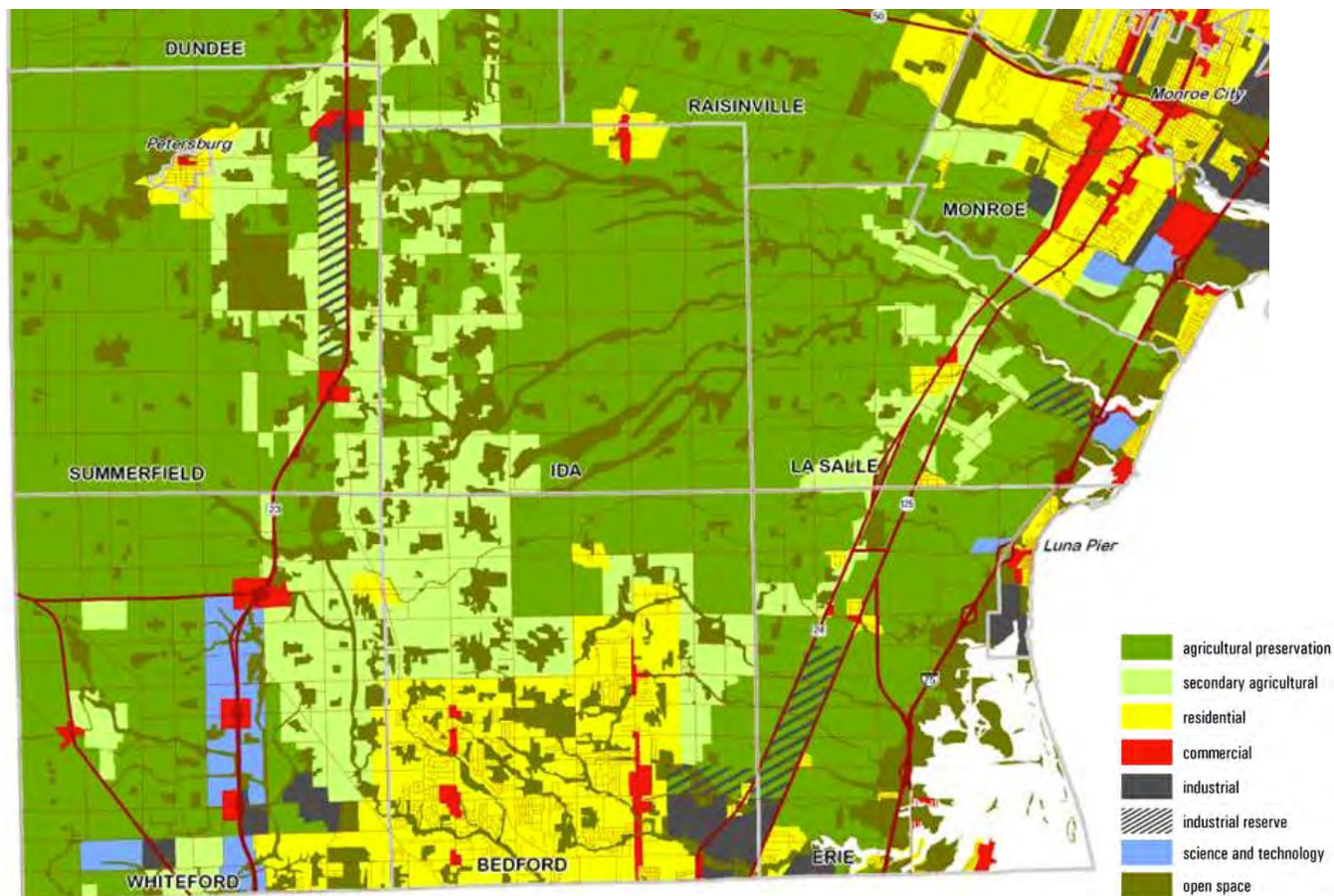
Regional Council of Governments

Bedford is located in the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) region, which encompasses the following seven counties: Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, and Wayne. SEMCOG provides regional planning services and supports local government planning in the areas of environment, education, community and economic development, and transportation. The Township is also part of the region covered by the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG), which provides information and support related to the environment and transportation.

Monroe County

The 2010 Monroe County Comprehensive Plan identified a broad pattern of future desired land uses around Bedford Township including agricultural, open space, residential, and industrial land uses (Figure 4). Within the Township, agricultural uses are generally planned in the northern portion of the Township while residential land uses occupy the southern portion. Natural areas and open spaces are found associated with low lying areas along creeks and drains as well as in a centrally located area which encompasses the community schools, parks, and other facilities. Future commercial land uses are planned along both Lewis Avenue and Secor Road incorporating the commercial centers of Lambertville and Temperance. Industrial uses are located in the southeast corner of the Township along the Telegraph Road and South Dixie Highway corridors.

Figure 4. Monroe County Future Land Use Map



Source: Monroe County Comprehensive Plan, 2010

Whiteford Township

According to the Whiteford Township's 2019 Master Plan, future land uses in Whiteford Township for areas adjacent to Bedford Township to the west, are planned primarily for agricultural land uses with densities at one dwelling unit/5 acres or more and rural single-dwelling residential at densities of one dwelling unit/2 to 5 acres. Some areas south of Smith Road and at the intersections of Summerfield and Adler roads as well as Whiteford Center and Adler roads are planned for low density single family residential at one dwelling unit/1 to 2 acres.

Summerfield Township

According to the Summerfield Township 2018 Master Plan, areas adjacent to Bedford Township are primarily planned for single-family residential uses with a minimum density of one dwelling unit per acre.

Ida Township

The Ida Township 2019 Master Plan indicates that areas located north of Bedford Township are planned for agriculture and very low to low-density residential development. The recommended residential densities for the area planned as agriculture are one dwelling unit/5 acres and one dwelling unit/1 to 2 ½ acres lots for areas planned for low density residential. The intent of these categories is to preserve agricultural lands and other significant natural features, to establish low density farm and non-farm residential uses, and to promote compatible open space uses. These areas are generally served with on-site septic and well systems.

LaSalle Township

The LaSalle Township 2018 Master Plan proposes agricultural land uses for areas adjacent to Bedford Township. The desired residential density within agricultural land uses is one dwelling unit for every 10 acres. These areas are intended to preserve the rural character established within LaSalle and promote the use and preservation of agricultural land use.

Erie Township

Erie Township 2018 Master Plan designates land adjacent to Bedford Township south of Dean Road planned to be industrial for the adjacent area located between Telegraph Road and Dixie Highway and general commercial along Telegraph Road.

The majority of the land, contiguous to Bedford Township north of Dean Road, is planned for Agricultural Conservation and Preservation. This future land use designation is intended to encourage the long-term protection of farmland resources and provide opportunities for very low-density residential development in support of existing rural character, agriculture, natural resources, and open spaces.

The City of Toledo, Ohio

A band of open spaces which follow Halfway Creek to Greenwood Park from the southeastern edge of Bedford Township to almost Douglas Road delineates the northern edge of the City of Toledo and the beginning of Bedford Township.

According to the Toledo Comprehensive Land Use Plan updated in 2024, areas north of the City which are adjacent to Bedford Township include the Trilby, Tamaron, and North Towne neighborhoods. Land uses planned for these areas largely include single dwelling residential uses as well as parks and open spaces, with some pockets of multi-dwelling residential uses. The area located east of Telegraph Road is generally planned for higher density developments including commercial and industrial uses.

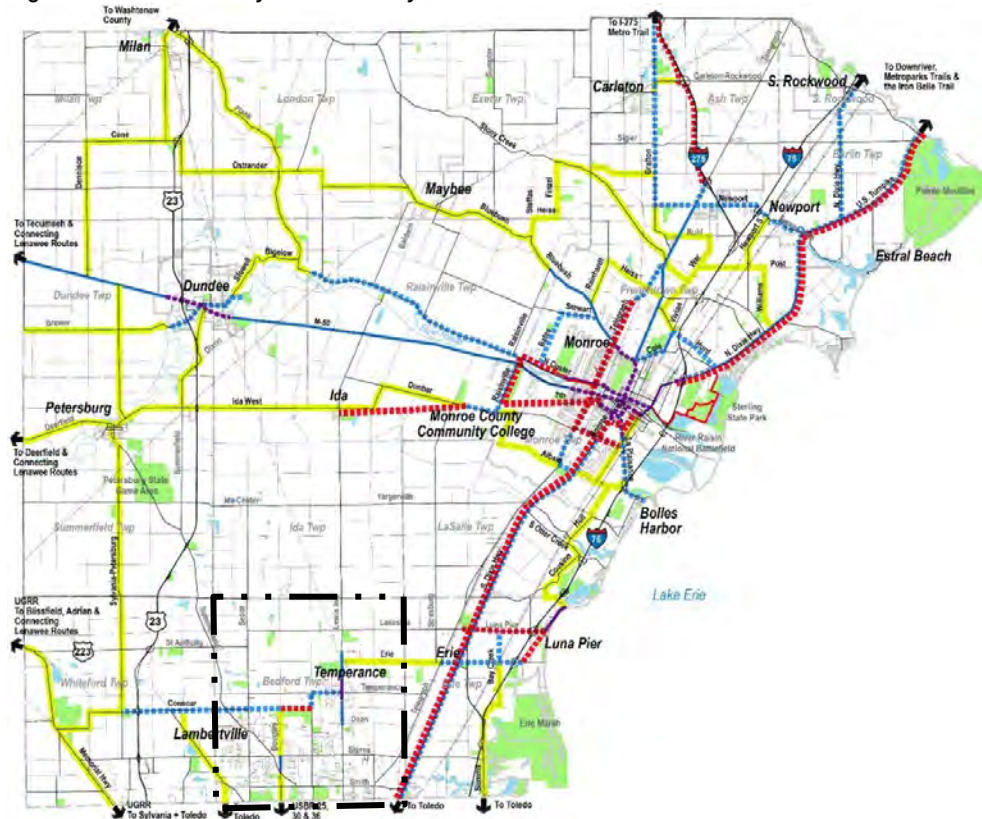
RELEVANT PLANNING INITIATIVES

The *Monroe County Link Plan 2.0* outlines a vision for Monroe County to attract investments and nurture local businesses, empower communities, and foster a robust infrastructure. The Plan identified an area spanning Bedford and Erie Townships as one of the priority development areas. Currently zoned for light industrial use, listed for sale, and located alongside the CSX rail line, this area presents opportunities for development. However, the site also offers sub-optimal soil quality and the absence of direct sewer access, situated half a mile away in Bedford Township. Considering these existing conditions, potential uses may include agri-business or meat processing. The plan outlined a vision for this priority area to create a cohesive district where traditional farming can meet innovation, creating a harmonious blend of agricultural productivity and sustainable practices. This development area could also serve as a showcase for the seamless integration of renewable energy and advanced technologies into a premier agribusiness location.

The *Monroe County Trail and Bicycle Plan* focuses on a countywide network to connect to other, regional corridors or systems. Considering national, state, and regional existing and planned systems traversing Monroe County along with the County's important regional destinations, the following key countywide connections and segments can be distinguished.

1. The River Raisin Heritage Trail continued extension known as the Monroe Area Loop Trail along North Custer Road in Frenchtown Township, circling back to the City of Monroe south of the River Raisin by way of Raisinville Road and South Seventh Street.
2. The Sterling State Park trail repair and levee stabilization.
3. The 100-mile County Cornerstone bicycle route following rural roadways connecting the County's villages and small towns which goes through Bedford Township.
4. North Dixie Highway, closing the north-south regional gap to the Downriver Linked Greenways in Wayne County and to the statewide Michigan Iron-Belle Trail.

Figure 5. Monroe County Trail and Bicycle Network



Source: Monroe County Trail and Bicycle Plan, 2021

There are currently only two short segments of Bedford's roadways that have bike lanes. They include Douglas Road from Summerfield to Sterns Roads, and Lewis Avenue in Temperance, from Dean to Erie Roads.

The *2023 Bedford Township Parks and Recreation Plan* articulates a vision that centers on creating a Township-wide network of parks and trails that connects neighborhoods, schools, and community facilities while preserving natural areas and providing modern amenities that serve residents of all ages and abilities.

The Master Plan establishes four strategic goals to guide development efforts. The first priority focuses on maintaining and renovating existing facilities to ensure they remain clean, safe, and accessible, including upgrading aging playground equipment and improving athletic fields. The second goal emphasizes developing new park facilities that respond to residents expressed needs, particularly walking and bicycling paths, inclusive playgrounds, pickleball courts, splash pads, and enhanced ball fields. The third goal addresses the strong community desire for a Township-wide non-motorized transportation system that would link parks, schools, and neighborhoods through connected pathways. Finally, the fourth goal ensures sustainable operations through fiscally sound administrative strategies, including seeking dedicated funding sources and building community partnerships.

The action plan prioritizes immediate improvements at the Township's most popular parks: White Park, Carr's Grove Park, Parmelee Park, and Lewis Ansted Park. Key initiatives include upgrading playground equipment with inclusive designs, adding pickleball courts to meet growing demand, improving ball fields with enhanced dugouts and fencing, developing permanent restroom facilities, and creating walking trails that connect parks to surrounding neighborhoods. The plan also calls for expanding parking at high-use facilities and developing comprehensive trail connections that would transform Bedford into a walkable, bike-friendly community.

The implementation strategy recognizes that the current annual parks budget is insufficient to achieve these ambitious goals. Success depends on a multi-faceted funding approach that includes pursuing state and federal grants and potentially seeking voter approval for a dedicated parks millage.

The *Bedford Township Capital Improvement Plan* (CIP) has recently been approved by the Bedford Township Planning Commission and adopted by the Bedford Township Board of Trustees. The CIP outlines a schedule of necessary expenditures associated with maintaining and improving the capital assets owned by Bedford Township including basic facilities, services and installations needed for the functioning, operation, recreation, and transportation of the community. Since Bedford Township owns a sanitary sewer plant, adopting and annually updating a Capital Improvement Plan is required per State law.

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COMMUNITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives offered in this section rely on a careful analysis of the numerous factors that characterize Bedford Township and the specific opportunities and challenges the Township and the region are facing. This is documented in the Existing Land Use, Current Land Use Issues and Trends, as well as the Community Description sections of the Master Plan. In addition, the Township Planning Commission solicited input from community residents through a resident survey, public meetings, a joint meeting of public officials, and a community open house. The community engagement effort is summarized in an appendix to the report. In response, the Goals and Objectives section of the Master Plan provides a broad framework for land use decision making in the Township.

The current issues, opportunities, and challenges facing Bedford Township are summarized as follows:

- An increase in development pressure with renewed demand in the housing market.
- Demographic and economic trends in the region - the aging of the population and the “hollowing” of the middle-aged and young family groups - affect the Township’s ability to thrive.
- Need to accommodate a growing number of senior citizens as well as provide a diversity of housing choices addressing the growing need for “missing middle” and affordable housing opportunities.
- A desire to retain the Township’s rural character, agricultural heritage, and viability.
- The need to diversify the economy for future prosperity.
- Increased traffic and stress on the roadway system, particularly the Township’s main arteries, coupled with deterioration of the public infrastructure including roads, water, and sewer.
- Lack of property maintenance and vacant buildings result in potentially destabilized neighborhoods and areas.
- Increased demand for walking, bicycling, and recreation opportunities.

In response to this, overarching Township goals were developed which align with the key Smart Growth approach to how communities develop:

1. Enhance the livability of Bedford Township by supporting a range of housing opportunities and creating functional and attractive neighborhoods.
2. Foster a strong sense of place with continued investments in the Township park facilities and services.
3. Plan for economic growth and a mix of uses along Lewis Avenue and at key target intersections and attract businesses that support and meet the needs of both residents and visitors.
4. Maintain a safe and efficient transportation network and diversify transportation options.
5. Encourage and shape the Township’s growth while balancing the preservation of open space, farmland, and natural features.
6. Enhance collaboration with Monroe County, adjacent townships, and other stakeholders to promote consistent areawide land use planning and needed infrastructure development.
7. Discourage development that requires large amounts of resources and diminishes the Township’s rural character, such as large-scale solar and wind energy facilities, data centers, and similar uses.

Smart Growth Principles

The ten principles of Smart Growth offer a framework for communities to achieve balanced growth, protect community character, improve quality of life, and strengthen local economies.

They are:

1. Mix land uses.
2. Take advantage of compact design.
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
4. Create walkable neighborhoods.
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
7. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
8. Provide a variety of transportation options.
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/about-smart-growth

COMMUNITY GOALS

GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS & HOUSING

Goal 1 | Strengthen and enhance Bedford's residential neighborhoods, providing a range of high-quality housing opportunities that meet the needs of all residents.

Objectives:

- 1.1. Ensure that new developments harmoniously integrate into the environment and complement the character of existing uses by developing design standards that reflect the Township's high quality expectations.
- 1.2. Support existing neighborhoods and foster compatible development/redevelopment of vacant properties.
- 1.3. Expand housing opportunities to cater to all stages of life, including young professionals, young families, aging adults, and others within the lower and medium income range.
- 1.4. Promote and direct higher density housing development in the Village Centers, and in other, limited areas of the Township, fostering a mix of uses including residential development integrated with commercial and office uses, community services, and improved walkability and connectivity to adjoining areas.
- 1.5. Promote rehabilitation of aging housing and eliminate blight.
- 1.6. Increase street and sidewalk connectivity to promote walkable, livable neighborhoods.
- 1.7. Strengthen buffers between conflicting land uses such as low and high intensity residential developments.
- 1.8. Support new residential development in areas of the Township with adequate infrastructure.

QUALITY COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

Goal 2 | Maintain and improve the Township's public facilities and services to ensure safety, functionality, and a high quality of life.

Objectives:

- 2.1. Ensure adequate police, fire, and emergency services.
- 2.2. Support parks and recreation improvements as well as increased community events.
- 2.3. Establish and expand non-motorized pathways that connect parks and other destinations within the Township and outside the community.
- 2.4. Maintain Township-owned buildings, infrastructure, and equipment.
- 2.5. Review the Township's capital improvement plan annually as directed by the Township Board.
- 2.6. Enhance collaboration with adjacent townships to address multi-jurisdictional issues such as those related to land use planning, public services, and transportation.
- 2.7. Maintain an up-to-date Community Recreation Plan approved by the MDNR and pursue state grant funding for parkland acquisition and development.
- 2.8. Collaborate with the Bedford DDA, schools, libraries, senior services, and regional partners for services and community events.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & VITALITY

Goal 3 | Plan for economic growth and a mix of uses along the Lewis Avenue corridor and other limited areas of the Township and attract businesses that support and align with the needs of residents.

Objectives:

- 3.1. Encourage redevelopment or reuse of underutilized commercial and industrial sites.
- 3.2. Apply high standards for design, landscaping, and signage in commercial and industrial areas.
- 3.3. Encourage mixed-use developments in Village Centers.

- 3.4. Foster the growth of commercial, office, research, and light industrial sectors, providing year-round stable employment opportunities that align with Township residents' needs.
- 3.5. Develop a comprehensive plan for the Lewis Avenue corridor to identify strategies for redevelopment, traffic calming, access management, pedestrian/bicycle accommodations, streetscape improvement, economic development, mixed-use opportunities, and other land use initiatives.
- 3.6. Strengthen buffers between conflicting land uses such as businesses and residential areas.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal 4 | Develop a safe, efficient, and multimodal transportation network that supports local mobility while protecting Bedford Township's character.

Objectives:

- 4.1. Maintain and enhance the Township road system for the safe and effective flow of all users.
- 4.2. Work with the Road Commission to implement access management solutions aimed at improving safety along Lewis Avenue and other major Township arteries.
- 4.3. Expand non-motorized opportunities in alignment with the regional network to increase walking and biking.
- 4.4. Prioritize improvements that enhance safety and respect community context.
- 4.5. Implement access management practices to preserve roadway function along the Township's major arteries in the southern half of the Township.
- 4.6. Support and expand public transit options.
- 4.7. Widen roads where there are high density areas and traffic is very congested.
- 4.8. Plan for future water and sewer service areas to guide responsible growth.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER, FARMLAND & OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

Goal 5 | Encourage and shape the Township's future growth while balancing the preservation of open space, farmland, cultural, and natural features.

Objectives:

- 5.1. Preserve the Township's character by minimizing impacts on farmlands, woodlands, and wetlands.
- 5.2. Protect farmland, open space, and natural resources from incompatible development, including high-intensity land uses such as large-scale solar and wind facilities, data centers, and similar uses that could strain infrastructure, increase energy demands, and disrupt scenic and environmental quality.
- 5.3. Support active farming and the economic viability of agriculture by promoting value-added farm activities, such as agritourism, farm stands, vineyards, wineries, home businesses, and other local initiatives.
- 5.4. Promote the preservation of eligible historic structures and properties.
- 5.5. Encourage policies that conserve energy and protect the environment.
- 5.6. Encourage farmers to enroll their farms in the P.A .116 preservation program.

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Goal 6 | Enhance collaboration with adjacent Townships, Monroe County and other stakeholders to achieve areawide consistent land use planning and needed infrastructure development.

Objectives:

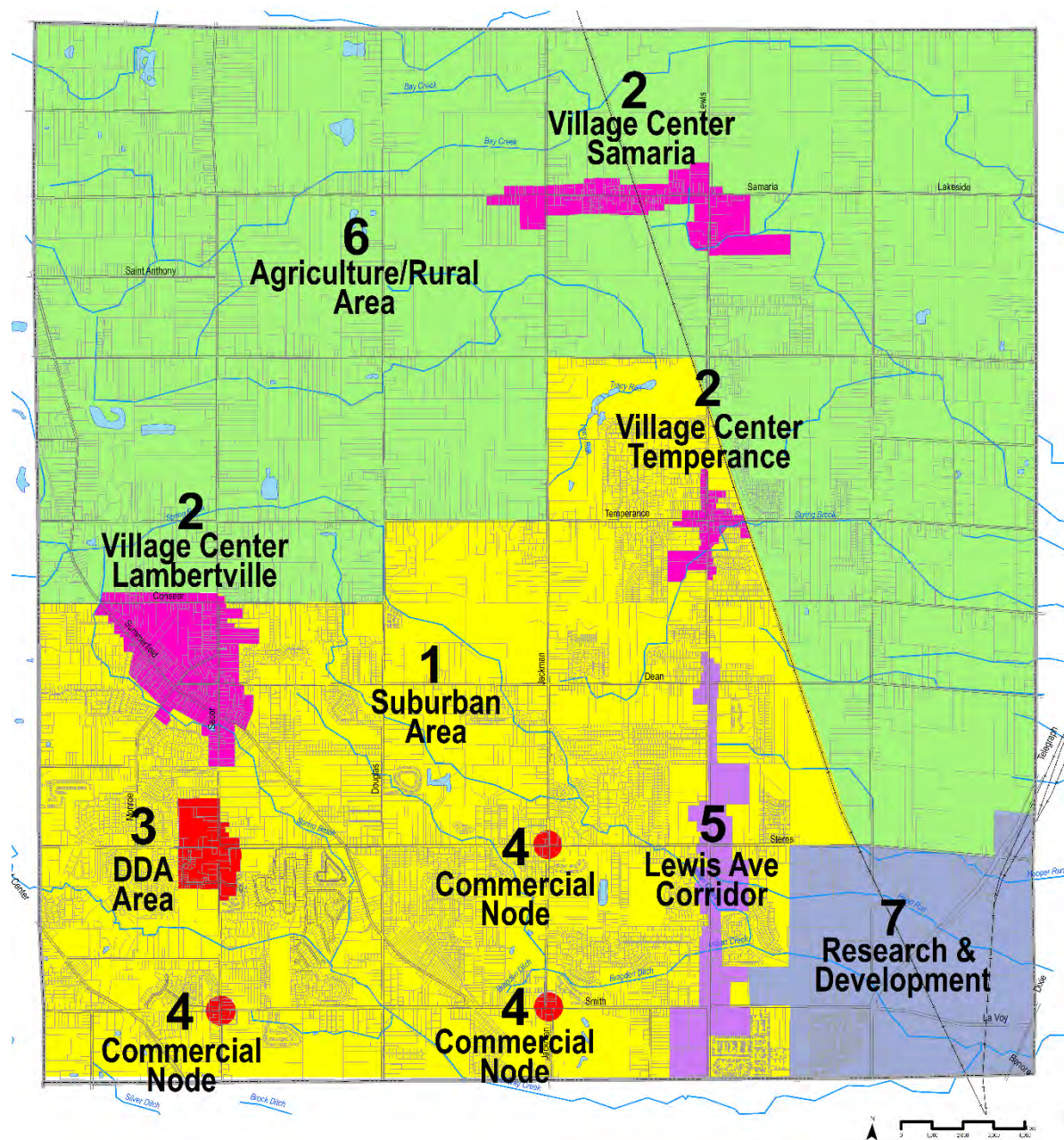
- 6.1. Collaborate with other units of government, as needed to address specific multi-jurisdictional issues as they arise, such as those related to land use planning, recreation, public services, or transportation.
- 6.2. Establish an intergovernmental group comprised of adjoining Townships, Monroe County, and others to develop areawide land use initiatives.

SUBAREA STRATEGIES

Beyond the Township's overall goals and objectives, this Master Plan identifies seven distinct subareas that require targeted strategies for future growth. The Township distinguishes these subareas based on their unique land use patterns, preservation needs, transportation networks, and community services. Each subarea features tailored development strategies that build on its distinctive character. The Bedford Township subareas include:

1. Suburban Area
2. Village Centers
3. Township Downtown Development Authority Area
4. Commercial Nodes
5. Lewis Avenue Corridor
6. Agriculture/Rural Area
7. Research and Development Area

Figure 5. Township Subareas



1. SUBURBAN AREA

Like many suburban communities in Southeast Michigan, Bedford Township features extensive single-family residential neighborhoods. Though these areas thrived when they first developed, evolving land use and housing trends challenged their long-term viability. Bedford's excellent public schools and established neighborhoods anchor the community's strength. This Master Plan champions Bedford's existing neighborhoods while seeking to expand housing diversity to serve residents of all ages, incomes, and lifestyles.

The suburban subarea dominates the Township's southern half, covering the majority of developed land. This area accommodates primarily low and medium density single-family homes, including site condominiums, alongside parks, accessory buildings, and specialized facilities such as utilities, cemeteries, golf courses, and recreational amenities.



Preferred Development Strategies

1. Strengthen neighborhoods by promoting housing rehabilitation and enforcing property maintenance standards through targeted code enforcement.
2. Diversify housing options by permitting smaller lots, compact homes, and accessory dwelling units where appropriate.
3. Support lifelong residency by creating housing choices that allow residents to age in place.
4. Build complete neighborhoods by ensuring new development connects residents to essential amenities like parks, schools, the library, and employment centers.
5. Leverage existing tools like planned unit development and open space development regulations to create cohesive neighborhoods.
6. Establish incentives and architectural guidelines/standards for high-quality mixed residential development within or in proximity to Bedford's existing Village Centers.
7. Enhance quality of life by requiring new developments to include connected sidewalks, green spaces, bike paths, street trees, and attractive lighting.
8. Protect neighborhood character by strengthening standards that buffer residential areas from commercial and non-residential development.
9. Add sidewalks and/or pathways to accommodate safe walking and bicycling and to connect neighborhoods to each other and to community facilities and destinations such as schools, parks, shopping, and places of employment.
10. Expand transportation networks by partnering with regional agencies and neighboring communities to strengthen both vehicle and pedestrian connections.
11. Target infrastructure investments by upgrading utilities in developed and planned residential areas while avoiding extensions into agricultural preservation zones.
12. Protect natural resources by monitoring flood hazard zones and environmentally sensitive areas.
13. Preserve agricultural integrity by restricting large-lot development to areas that will not fragment active farmland.
14. Align regulations by regularly updating the Zoning Ordinance to reflect Master Plan objectives and development strategies.

2. VILLAGE CENTERS

This subarea encompasses the Villages of Samaria, Temperance, and Lambertville. They blend commercial, office, and residential uses, from low-density housing to senior communities. Each Village Center cultivates its distinct identity—Lambertville and Temperance project small-town suburban charm while Samaria maintains more of a rural character. These centers will continue fostering pedestrian-friendly environments where residents live, work, shop, and gather.

These centers support diverse land uses including commercial establishments, offices, single-family homes, duplexes, medium and high-density residential development, senior housing, and specialized facilities such as utilities, recreational venues, hospitality businesses, professional services, and community gathering places.



Preferred Development Strategies

1. Cultivate neighborhood commercial uses by prioritizing local services like grocery stores, restaurants, and convenience stores in walkable, mixed-use developments that share parking and connect seamlessly to residential areas.
2. Maintain village scale by restricting large-scale commercial development and prohibiting industrial use.
3. Create complete communities by promoting higher-density residential development in mixed-use areas that enable residents to live, work, and play within walking distance.
4. Add housing flexibility by permitting accessory dwelling units with compatibility standards and restrictions on short-term rental use.
5. Maximize land efficiency by promoting taller buildings with ground-floor retail and upper-floor residential or office space.
6. Activate streetscapes by encouraging buildings to be closer to the street with reduced setbacks.
7. Improve traffic flow by promoting shared driveways and parking facilities.
8. Strengthen Village connections by encouraging infill development with traditional street patterns and bicycle/pedestrian links between communities.
9. Create smooth transitions by establishing buffer areas between compact development and rural residential areas through cluster and open space design.
10. Enhance compatibility by requiring robust landscape screening between residential and commercial areas.
11. Expand mobility options by partnering with neighboring jurisdictions to develop public transportation and alternative travel modes.

3. BEDFORD TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA) AREA

This subarea incorporates the Sterns/Secor business district which has been designated as the Township DDA since 1996 to enable the capture of tax increment financing and support improvements that promote economic growth. The area blends commercial, office, and residential uses. Proposed future improvements include continued pedestrian connections, traffic calming measures, and pedestrian amenities.

This area supports diverse land uses including commercial establishments, offices, single-family homes, duplexes, medium and high-density residential development, senior housing, and specialized facilities such as utilities, recreational venues, hospitality businesses, professional services, and community gathering places.



Preferred Development Strategies

The Authority has identified specific development strategies which may be summarized as follows:

1. Improve district safety by supporting monitoring and security measures for existing and new private developments.
2. Enhance business district aesthetics by encouraging façade improvements, renovations, and expansion of retail establishments.
3. Promote new development by participating in efforts to encourage private investment in conjunction with public improvements.
4. Improve pedestrian and non-motorized transportation infrastructure in conjunction with private development projects.
5. Foster public/private partnerships to address infrastructure limitations and capacity needs.
6. Support marketing and promotional techniques to ensure continued viability of the DDA development area.
7. Connect the DDA Business District with the Lambertville Village Center by encouraging medium/high density residential development along Secor Road.

4. COMMERCIAL NODES

This subarea includes the existing commercial nodes at Smith/Secor, Smith/Jackman, and Sterns/Jackman which blend primarily commercial and office uses.

These areas would support diverse land uses including commercial establishments, offices and specialized facilities such as utilities, recreational venues, hospitality businesses, professional services, and community gathering places. However, to promote coordinated development patterns, the primary focus for new commercial and office development should be directed toward the DDA District and the Lewis Avenue Corridor.

Preferred Development Strategies

1. Cultivate professional offices and neighborhood commercial uses by prioritizing local services like grocery stores, restaurants, and convenience stores in mixed-use developments that share parking and connect seamlessly to neighboring residential areas.
2. Prevent scattered development by actively discouraging piecemeal commercial projects and uncoordinated strip development.
3. Improve traffic flow by promoting shared driveways and parking facilities.
4. Enhance compatibility by requiring robust landscape screening between residential and commercial areas.



5. LEWIS AVENUE CORRIDOR

Lewis Avenue serves as Bedford Township's primary commercial corridor, linking Toledo to Monroe County. The corridor contains three distinct segments: the southern end consists of a wider roadway with higher traffic capacity, the central section anchors the Temperance Village Center, and the northern portion maintains a rural character.

The corridor features diverse commercial, office, and residential development. Land uses range from retail stores, offices, banks, and restaurants to mixed-use buildings, entertainment venues, and specialized businesses including automotive services, printing facilities, and storage operations. The corridor offers significant opportunities to enhance safety and visual appeal through traffic calming measures, access management, elevated site design standards, and placemaking strategies that encourage walkable development.



Preferred Development Strategies

1. Develop a comprehensive corridor plan that addresses traffic calming, access management, pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure, streetscape enhancements, economic development, and mixed-use opportunities.
2. Manage traffic flow by promoting shared driveways and parking facilities as well as other access management measures.
3. Enhance corridor safety through active partnership with the Monroe County Road Commission.
4. Transform Temperance by leveraging its strategic location to create higher-density, mixed-use neighborhoods that attract millennials and empty nesters seeking walkable lifestyles.
5. Revitalize underused properties by actively pursuing redevelopment opportunities that blend office, retail, services, entertainment, and residential uses.

6. AGRICULTURE/RURAL AREA

Bedford Township's agricultural heritage defines this subarea, which spans the northern half of the Township and western border areas. Farmland has steadily given way to residential development and fallow fields over time. This area now faces two critical challenges: preserving open space and maintaining viable agricultural operations.

This area supports farms, single-family homes, parks, and accessory structures. Special uses include golf courses, campgrounds, recreational facilities, lumber mills, cluster housing, schools, and churches. Development standards require single-family homes on minimum 2.5-acre lots with 165-foot widths and 900 square feet of floor area.

Preferred Development Strategies

1. Preserve rural character by protecting open spaces and scenic viewsheds that define the area's identity.
2. Champion agricultural preservation through active land conservation programs.
3. Prevent farmland fragmentation by discouraging the subdivision and conversion of large agricultural parcels.
4. Limit the development of high-intensity land uses such as large-scale solar and wind facilities, data centers, and other similar uses by requiring impact assessments and establishing regulations to mitigate potential negative impacts.
5. Minimize visual impacts by requiring development proposals to assess and reduce their effects on rural landscapes.
6. Encourage smart growth by promoting cluster development and planned unit developments that preserve open space and views.
7. Prevent sprawl by adopting zoning that stops scattered large-lot development in viable agricultural areas.
8. Balance development needs by allowing smaller lot sizes that maintain rural character while preserving farmland.
9. Diversify rural housing by promoting varied housing types and smaller lots in appropriate areas like Samaria.
10. Add housing options by allowing accessory dwelling units with compatibility standards and short-term rental restrictions.
11. Support agricultural enterprises by permitting agritourism, farm stands, wineries, cideries, breweries, and other value-added agricultural businesses.
12. Strengthen the agricultural economy by attracting processing facilities and support operations that create markets for local farm products.
13. Target preservation efforts by identifying priority agricultural areas based on soil quality, current farming activity, and existing preservation agreements.

7. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AREA

The Township's southeast corner contains industrial and technology-based development with excellent access to Telegraph Road and I-75. Partnerships with the Monroe County Business Alliance will drive business retention, attraction, and entrepreneurship to diversify the tax base. Collaboration with local businesses will create an inviting development climate by streamlining processes and increasing efficiency.

The industrial park in the southeast corner primarily accommodates light industries requiring substantial acreage for their operations.

Preferred Development Strategies

1. Strengthen partnerships by actively supporting the economic development network including the Business Alliance, Community College, and state economic development agencies.
2. Create attractive business campuses by promoting integrated developments with walking paths, extensive landscaping, water features, and high-quality amenities.
3. Protect neighboring areas by requiring robust landscape screening that minimizes industrial development's visual impact.
4. Leverage regional connections by recognizing Toledo as part of the broader market base for economic development.



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FUTURE LAND USE

The Bedford Township future land use map presents a vision for the future growth and development of the Township in terms of the allocation of land for specific types of uses. The main purposes of the map include:

- Assuring for the future land use needs of the community by recommending that particular areas be dedicated for specific uses, even if the demand for these uses is not yet present, and by recommending that existing land use patterns that are consistent with the plan be preserved in order to promote their long term viability.
- Assisting the Township Planning Commission in reviewing zoning change requests and in determining if such requests are consistent with the future plan for the Township.
- Assisting residents, developers, economic development agencies, public utility authorities, educational interests, and others in providing guidance for selecting suitable locations for future uses that will promote land use patterns that are compatible, sustainable, efficient, and economical.

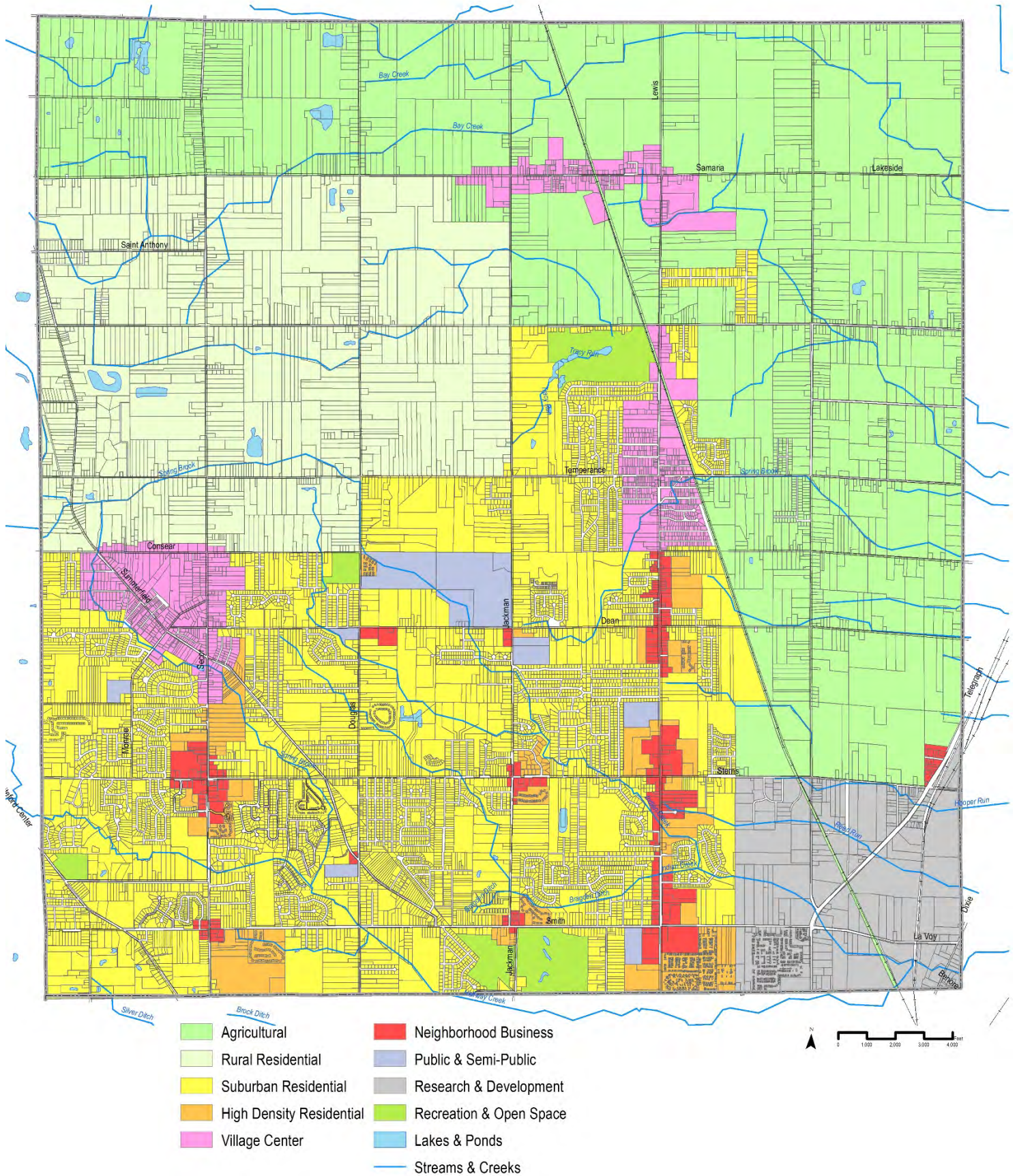
The Bedford Township future land use map was developed using the following steps:

1. Analysis of physical and existing conditions;
2. Input from the public and formulation of overall community goals;
3. Identification and definition of various land uses to be included in the map;
4. Development of a future land use map concept; and
5. Refinement of the map, including public review and input.

In addition to being consistent with overall community goals, the future land use plan for Bedford Township was devised based on the following criteria:

- Bedford Township will sustain its current population and is projected to increase steadily by 6% over the next 25 years. The challenge for the Township is to provide suitable land for this development in logical and defined locations while maximizing the use of existing governmental services and infrastructure.
- The overriding goal is to maintain open space, protect prime farmland, and limit the development of high-intensity land uses such as large-scale solar and wind energy facilities, data centers, and similar uses that are incompatible with Township goals.
- The most desirable pattern of farmland and open space preservation is based on the physical properties of the land and water resources, existing land ownership patterns, and the presence of natural resources worthy of preservation.
- The goals of improving the livability and sustainability of Bedford Township are achieved not only by an orderly pattern of future land uses but also through the provision of employment and economic growth opportunities, convenient transportation, quality affordable housing options, and social amenities which together enrich daily lives.
- Providing economic development opportunities in a changing economy will require the allocation of not only land resources and infrastructure, but an economic climate and a quality of life necessary to attract new investment. The limited sites that are well-suited for either manufacturing or for new and innovative science and technology industries need to be identified and preserved before they are lost to other uses.
- Maintaining the infrastructure which supports existing neighborhoods and economic centers is as important, if not more important, than extending the infrastructure to serve new or isolated development. The long term economic and environmental health of the Township depends on an efficient and well-maintained interconnected system of open space, transportation, water, sewer, and stormwater.

Figure 6. Bedford Township Future Land Use Map



FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

The following land use categories establish Bedford Township's framework for future development. Each category defines the intended character, appropriate uses, development standards, and corresponding zoning districts that will guide growth over the next 20 years. Figure 6 on page 24 depicts the location of the future land uses and Table 3 on page 29 summarizes the description of each future land use designation.

AGRICULTURAL

Agricultural areas are intended to specifically identify areas that are best suited for agricultural production and long term preservation. The agricultural areas are located in the north and eastern portions of the Township, contain USDA defined prime farmland soils or soils of local importance, and include farmland enrolled in the P.A. 116 program. These areas are currently used as farmland and have been cleared, drained, or otherwise been improved for agricultural production and are located in areas of large parcels with some residential development.



Agricultural lands should be reserved for farming and food production, greenhouses, orchards, livestock, open space, and similar uses which would be compatible with and would help promote the exclusive agricultural nature of these areas. Limited residential development should occur at a minimum development density of one dwelling unit per 5 acres; development associated with farming is encouraged. Commercial or industrial development which is associated with or supportive of the exclusive agricultural designation may be considered.

This land use category corresponds to the AG zoning district.

SECONDARY AGRICULTURAL/RURAL RESIDENTIAL

Secondary Agricultural and/or Rural Residential areas are intended to allow for continued agricultural production but are considered less well-suited for intensive agricultural uses due to factors such as less productive soil conditions, existing land uses, and land division patterns. These areas are intended to provide a suitable transition between the more intense agricultural uses and the suburbanized areas of the Township. They are generally located in the northern half of the Township.

The Secondary Agricultural/Rural Residential category generally includes land that is being used as cropland or orchards and is outside the urbanized area of the Township. Uses similar to those recommended for the Agricultural areas are appropriate, although small farms, hobby farms, rural residential development, and other uses which do not require significant public investment in terms of community infrastructure and services may be considered.

Agriculture should remain the predominant use in these areas; however, residential uses are acceptable if designed to conform to the rural atmosphere found in the surrounding area. Residential estates development at a minimum development density of one dwelling unit per 2 ½ acres is acceptable as are other community-oriented uses such as day care and adult foster care facilities, churches, as well as public and private recreation facilities. Other non-farm uses that may be considered compatible include tourist oriented agricultural businesses, and kennels and veterinary facilities. Home based businesses may also be permitted under limited conditions.

This land use category corresponds to the AG-2 zoning district.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

The Suburban Residential category is intended to accommodate neighborhood development and housing for people seeking suburban style amenities found in modern construction such as two and increasingly three car-attached garages, larger setbacks for landscaped yards, decks, play equipment, and private swimming pools.

Generally acceptable land uses include single-dwelling residential development at a density of one dwelling unit per 7,200 to 15,000 square feet. When served by public sanitary and water system, open space subdivisions and cluster housing are encouraged as a development option with reduced lot sizes and the creation of common open spaces. Other types of uses which serve and are compatible with residential settings, such as public buildings, schools, houses of worship, local parks, and similar uses are also acceptable. Home-based businesses, however, should be carefully regulated in this area to prevent negative impacts on residential neighborhoods.

This land use category corresponds to the R-1, R-2A, R-2B, and R-3 zoning districts.

MEDIUM/HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

The Medium/High Density Residential category is intended to provide a denser style of residential development including two-family and multi-family units to accommodate a diversity of housing and alternatives to traditional subdivision development.

Permitted uses include missing middle housing such as duplexes, garden apartments, townhouses, multiple-family upscale condominiums, as well as convalescent or nursing homes. Manufactured home parks are included in this category and are limited to the southeast corner of the Township. The residential density for this land use category ranges from 2 units/8,000 square feet for duplexes to 1 unit/1,000 square feet for the higher density elderly housing development. However, density bonuses are encouraged for residential development which provides parks, common spaces, or non-motorized connections which offer community benefit.



This land use category must be served adequately by public facilities and services such as water, sewer, storm drainage, and refuse disposal. Due to the higher density and trip generation potential of these developments, the land uses must have direct access to a major thoroughfare or collector street. As with previous categories, open space planning and cluster housing are encouraged as a development option with the creation of common open spaces. Home-based businesses, however, will require special consideration in this area to prevent negative impacts on residential neighborhoods.



This land use category corresponds to the following zoning districts: RT, RM-1, RM-2, RME, and MHP districts.

VILLAGE CENTER

The Village Center category is planned in areas of the existing rural villages of Samaria, Temperance, and Lambertville. These areas are appropriate for a mix of commercial, office, and residential land uses. It is a designation which attempts to recognize areas with historically concentrated uses in rural areas. The Village Centers should continue to be unique in character with a pedestrian-oriented environment where residents can live, work, shop, and socialize. It should continue to give people a sense of place and civic pride.

Ground-floor space along streets should be reserved for pedestrian-oriented retail and services, with offices and housing located above. The adaptive reuse of residential units for home occupations, specialty shops, and office uses is encouraged. Other appropriate uses include places of worship, funeral homes, restaurants, taverns, service stations, and lodging.

This land use category corresponds to all residential, office, and commercial zoning districts incorporating the overlay zones of Samaria, Temperance, and Lambertville. In the specific case of Samaria, the category also includes some limited industrial zoning districts.

NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS

Neighborhood businesses are the areas of the Township recommended for retail, services, offices, and the types of uses which provide for employment, commerce, and economic growth. The future land use plan recommends Neighborhood Business development in commercial nodes and along corridors including Lewis Avenue, Secor Road, and the intersections of Sterns Road with Secor, Douglas, and Jackman Roads. Although widely different commercial types are grouped together within this category (walkable business areas, professional offices, neighborhood and community shopping centers, strip commercial developments), neighborhood business uses should be on major thoroughfares, served by public utilities, and should be located to avoid negative impacts on traffic patterns, adjacent land uses, and environmental quality.

The neighborhood business land use category is intended to provide locations to meet the day-to-day convenience shopping and service needs of nearby residents. Permitted uses within the Neighborhood Business areas include retail businesses, personal service establishments, professional and business offices, auto-oriented businesses, grocery stores, restaurants, and some limited larger scale commercial uses. Individual businesses within the Neighborhood Business area should not exceed 25% of the net parcel area. The purpose of the floor area restriction is to ensure that the Neighborhood Business areas remain focused on serving the day-to-day needs of the community and neighborhood market area rather than expanding to service a regional market area.

Neighborhood Business land uses are encouraged to provide shared access and parking areas, appropriate screening, and exhibit quality landscape and architectural design and building materials.

This land use category corresponds to all office, C-1, C-2, as well as limited C-3 zoning districts.



PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC

This category reflects the location of the existing public and semi-public uses in Bedford Township. These uses are generally areas in public ownership or non-taxable property, such as schools, churches, public utility facilities, and other municipal and community facilities. The Township currently has a centrally located institutional center which incorporates White Park, Bedford's Senior/Junior High Schools, the Bedford Library, and the Township Hall. This area is the Township's civic center and an ideal area to focus future community activities and accommodate non-motorized pathways. Public and semi-public uses may be appropriate in all use areas if designed to fit into the established character of the surrounding area.

This land use category corresponds to any of the zoning districts with the exception of the industrial districts.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

New industrial land uses are planned to develop principally within the recently developed industrial park in the Township's southeast corner. This area is generally intended to accommodate low impact light industries, which have comparatively high acreage requirements. Future industrial development should incorporate sound industrial site design principles.

The main elements of sound light industrial site design include controlled and convenient access; service areas located at the sides and rear of buildings; visitor parking and on-site circulation; screening of outdoor storage, work areas, and equipment; and emphasis on the main building entry and landscaping. A variety of building and parking setbacks should be provided in order to avoid long monotonous building facades and to create diversity. Structures should be located on "turf islands," where the office portion of the building does not directly abut paved parking areas. A minimum five to seven foot landscape strip should be provided between parking areas and the office portion of a structure. Building setbacks within industrial areas should be proportional to the scale of the structure and in consideration of existing adjacent development.

Smaller scale, low impact light industrial uses and manufacturing or services that do not require heavy truck traffic such as repair and welding shops or light assembly, are encouraged to develop in the adjacent office/commercial park industrial land use areas. Buffering and screening should be used to mitigate the visual impact of industrial uses from adjacent residential properties.

This land use category corresponds to the industrial zoning districts.

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Open Space areas represent areas to be preserved due to their environmental importance, their limitations due to flooding or wetlands, or their importance as parks, historic sites, cemeteries, or other public open spaces. Although somewhat fragmented geographically, many of the open space areas in Bedford Township represent a green infrastructure system interconnected through floodplains and linear open spaces along the Township's system of drains and creeks. Although ideally intended to serve as a refuge for natural features and wildlife, some other uses are compatible with the Open Space designation, such as certain types of forestry, outdoor recreation, agriculture, residential, and other uses.

This land use category corresponds to any of the zoning districts.

Table 3. Summary - Future Land Use Categories

Future Land Uses	Intent	Uses	Character	Location	Zoning Districts
Agricultural	Preserve prime farmland for agricultural production	Farming, food production, livestock, greenhouses, orchards, forestry, and open spaces	Farmed land with limited residential development (farmstead)	North and northeast portions of the Township	AG
Secondary Agricultural/Rural Residential	Preserve rural character and provide transition between more intense agricultural uses and the urbanized areas of the Township	Small farms, hobby farms, and rural single-family residential developments	Rural character with open spaces development at a density of 1 dwelling unit/ 2 ½ acre	Northwest portion of the Township	AG-2
Suburban Residential	Accommodate neighborhood development	Single family homes	Suburban character at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit/15,000 square feet served by public sanitary and water system	South portion of the Township	R-1, R-2, R-3
Medium/High Density Residential	Accommodate additional options for housing	Duplexes, garden apartments, townhouses, multi-family condos, convalescent/nursing homes, and some mobile home parks	Medium to high intensity residential development served by public sanitary and water system	South portion of the Township with Mobile Home parks in section 106	RT, RM-1, RM-2, RME, MHP
Village Center	To promote a concentrated, pedestrian-oriented environment recognizing the historical rural villages	Mix of residential, retail services, and offices such as adaptive reuse for home occupations, specialty shops, and office uses with residential above	A walkable mixed-use area with offices and housing above retail or restaurant on the first floor	To include the unincorporated villages of Samaria, Temperance, and Lambertville	R-1, R-2, R-3, RT, RM-1, RM-2, MHP, PBO, PBO-1, C-1, C-2 *
Neighborhood Business	Areas located at nodes and along corridors to provide the Township residents retail, service, and office needs	Retail businesses, personal service establishments, professional and business offices, auto-oriented businesses, grocery stores, restaurants, and limited larger scale commercial uses	Individual business not to exceed 25% of the net parcel area	Lewis Avenue, Sterns/Secor Road, and the intersections of Sterns and Smith Roads with Douglas and Jackman Roads	PBO, PBO-1, C-1, C-2, limited C-3

Future Land Uses	Intent	Uses	Character	Location	Zoning Districts
Research & Development	To accommodate low impact light industries	Small scale low impact light industrial uses and manufacturing, or services not requiring heavy truck traffic	High-quality site design with controlled and convenient access, screening of outdoor storage, work areas, and equipment	Southeast corner of the Township	I-1, I-2, I-3
Public & Semi-Public	To accommodate the community facilities	Schools, churches, public utility facilities, and municipal facilities	Designed to fit into the established character of the surrounding area	Throughout the Township	All except industrial districts
Recreation & Open Space	To preserve open space and environmentally sensitive land	Parks, historic sites, cemeteries, and open spaces	Preserved natural features and open spaces	Throughout the Township the system of drains, creeks, wetlands, and woodlands	All districts

Note *: With some industrial districts in Samaria.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The Master Plan is essentially a statement of goals, objectives, and strategies designed to provide a framework for future growth and redevelopment. As stated in the introduction of this document, the Master Plan is the only officially adopted document that sets forth an agenda for the achievement of these goals and strategies. It helps develop a balance of orderly change in a deliberate and controlled manner that permits appropriate growth. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made. The Plan forms a philosophical basis for more technical and specific implementation measures. The Township must recognize that development and change will occur either with or without planning, and that the Master Plan will have negligible effect upon future development unless adequate implementation programs are established. This section identifies actions and programs that are essential for implementing the Plan.

ZONING REQUIREMENTS

Zoning is the development control that has been most strongly associated with planning. Originally, zoning was intended to inhibit nuisances and protect property values. However, zoning should also serve additional purposes that include:

- Promoting orderly growth in a manner consistent with land use policies and the Master Plan;
- Promoting attractiveness in the Township's physical environment by providing variation in lot sizes, architectural features and appropriate land uses;
- Considering special, complex or unique uses through mechanisms such as planned unit developments, overlay districts, or special land use permits;
- Guiding development away from conflicting land uses (e.g., industrial uses adjacent to residential areas); and
- Preserving and protecting existing land uses and natural features in accordance with the Master Plan.

The Zoning Ordinance and the future land use map in themselves should not be considered as the major long-range planning policy of the Township. Rather, the Master Plan should be regarded as a statement of planning policy, and zoning should be used to assist to implement that policy.

ZONING AND OTHER ADJUSTMENTS

Zoning adjustments for Master Plan implementation are as follows:

- Reviewing the Zoning Ordinance to determine whether districts, permitted uses, and standards implement the policies of the Master Plan. Specific adjustments may include the addition of regulations addressing missing middle housing and architectural design standards.
- Examining the Township's subdivision and development design standard ordinances to ensure that connectivity in the street network and a continuous, interconnected non-motorized transportation system are reinforced in the regulations and standards where practical and feasible.
- Incorporating provisions in the Zoning Ordinance which would allow for density bonuses for proposals which offer community benefit such as the provision of parks, open spaces, and non-motorized connections.
- Amending the Zoning Ordinance to limit development of high intensity land uses such as large scale solar and wind facilities, data centers, and other similar uses by requiring impact assessment and adding regulations including minimum setback requirements from residential uses, buffer/screening requirements, and other site development standards to mitigate negative impacts.

Additional initiatives for Master Plan implementation include:

- Preparing a corridor plan for Lewis Avenue to consider opportunities for enhancing the visual appearance of the corridor through development standards related to architecture, access management, complete streets features, green infrastructure, landscaping, lighting, and signs. These standards could be applied through an overlay zone, which would create additional design standards for building articulation, exterior building materials, side and rear façades, other architectural features, sign regulations, landscaping requirements, parking lot placement and screening, service area screening, fencing, and lighting standards.
- Work with property owners to preserve farmland and significant natural features through the use of open space or cluster housing type development.
- Continuing to assist the Township Board in developing a six-year Capital Improvement Plan to ensure public improvements are coordinated with the Master Plan.
- Developing and publishing development guide handouts such as a site plan review manual that outlines the Township's development policies and guidelines.

PLAN EDUCATION

Citizen involvement and support are necessary as the Plan is implemented. Local officials should constantly strive to develop procedures that make citizens more aware of the planning and zoning process and the day-to-day decision making which affects implementation of the Plan. A continuous program of discussion, education, and participation is extremely important as the Township moves toward realization of the goals contained within the Master Plan.

PLAN UPDATES

The Plan should not become a static document. The Township Planning Commission should re-evaluate and update portions of it on a periodic basis. In accordance with Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, the Township is required to review the Plan every five years to determine whether to commence the procedure to amend or adopt a new Plan. However, the Planning Commission should set goals for the review of various sections of this Plan on a yearly basis. The Master Plan should also be coordinated with the Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan to provide proper long-range planning for parks and recreation improvements.

COORDINATION WITH ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

As part of the Master Plan adoption process and in accordance with Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, Bedford Township sent the proposed draft Plan for review and comments to neighboring jurisdictions, Monroe County, regional agencies, and any registered public utility company, railroad, or other governmental entity. Following receipt of comments from the adjacent communities and other agencies, a public hearing was held, the comments were considered, and revisions were made to the Plan. The final Plan was approved and adopted by the Township Planning Commission and the Township Board.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

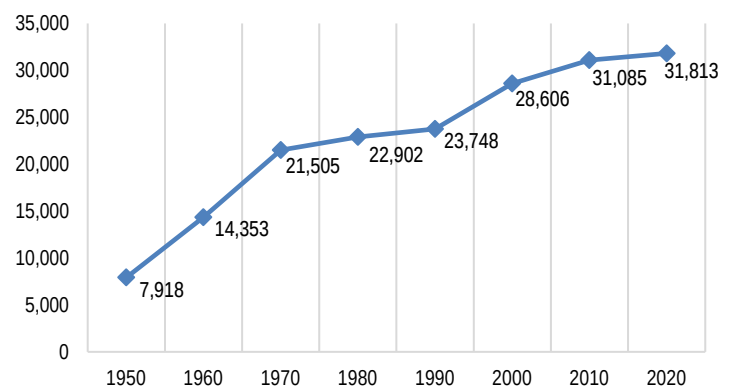
An understanding of the community being planned for, its demographics and the resources it has to offer, is the foundation of a well-devised Master Plan. Using the most current information is important to understand what forces are driving current policies. Understanding the current demographics of Bedford will help community officials better understand their constituents and help guide future changes. This section draws from multiple data sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau's decennial census, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), and the 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (ACS).

POPULATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

Bedford has experienced steady growth from 7,918 people in 1950 to 31,813 residents in the 2020 census, maintaining its position as the largest growing community in Monroe County. The 2020 population of 31,813 represents continued growth from the 2010 population of 31,085, though at a more moderate pace of 2.3% over the decade. Recent population estimates show the population has continued to grow to 32,322 as of July 2024.

Figure A1. Bedford Township Population, 1950 – 2020

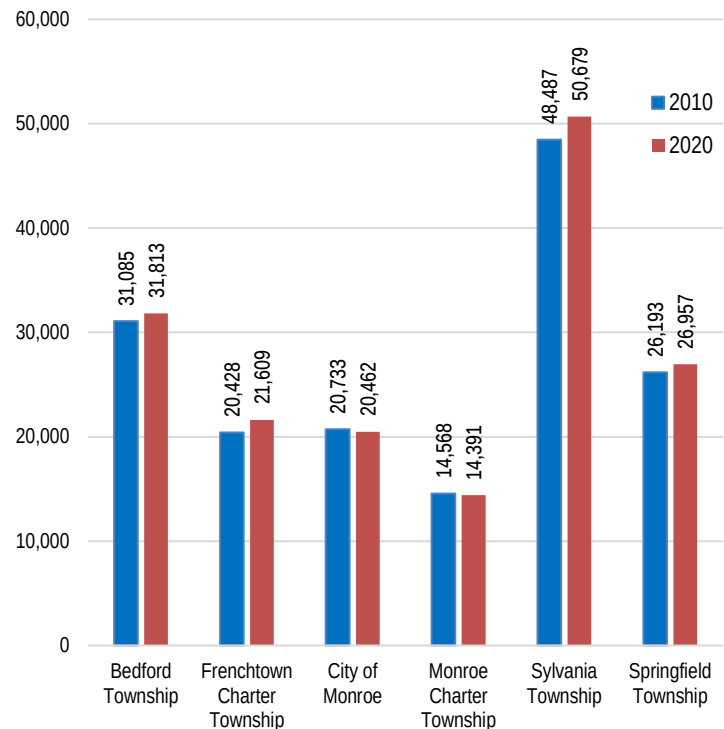


Population Comparisons

Between 2010 and 2020, Bedford's growth rate of 2.3%, while more modest than the previous decade's 8.7% increase, continues to outpace many of the most populated county communities. This growth occurred during a period when Monroe County grew overall by only 1.8%, demonstrating Bedford's continued attractiveness as a residential community. The Township's growth has been more sustainable, and steadier compared to the rapid expansion of the 2000s.

Other communities in Monroe County witnessed both growth and loss. Frenchtown Township's population grew (5.8%) in the last decade while Monroe Township and the City of Monroe lost 1.2% and 1.3%, respectively. In adjacent Lucas County, both Sylvania and Springfield Townships gained population by 4.5% and 2.9%.

Figure A2. Adjacent Community Population Comparison, 2010 – 2020



Population Projections

Current population projections, developed by SEMCOG, estimate continued growth for Bedford through 2050 (Figure A3). The Township is projected to reach 33,720 residents by 2050, representing a 6% increase over the next 30-year period.

Monroe County as a whole is projected to grow by 3.7% over the next 30 years, from 154,809 residents in 2020 to 160,611 by 2050. Bedford Township's 6% growth rate significantly outpaces most other major Monroe County communities. The Village of Dundee is projected to experience the highest growth at 14.5%, increasing from 5,323 to 6,093 residents, though this is a much smaller absolute increase due to its smaller base population. Frenchtown Charter Township, the County's second-largest municipality, is projected to grow by 3.4% (21,609 to 22,351), while the City of Monroe, despite being a regional center, is expected to see minimal growth of just 0.6% (20,462 to 20,598). Monroe Charter Township shows the most conservative projection at 0.3% growth.

This data positions Bedford Township as Monroe County's primary growth engine among larger communities, reflecting its strategic location, family-friendly character, and appeal to residents seeking quality of life between the Detroit metropolitan area and northwest Ohio. The Township's steady growth trajectory suggests sustainable development that can accommodate new residents while preserving the community characteristics that make it attractive.

Population Distribution

The SEMCOG population distribution map of Bedford Township continues to show that the largest population densities are found in the southern portions of the Township. The areas in the north and east portions of the Township are more rural and have much smaller populations.

Figure A3. Bedford Township Population Projection, 2020 – 2050

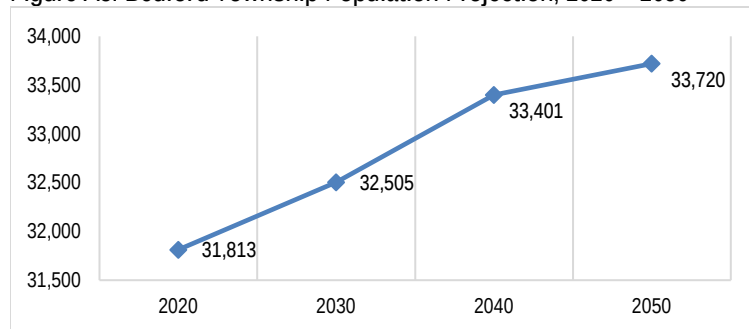


Figure A4. Selected Community Population Projection, 2020 – 2050

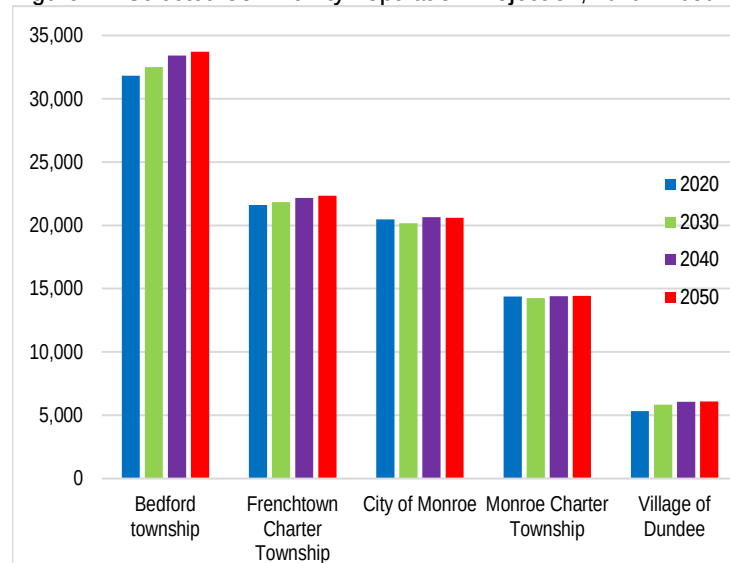
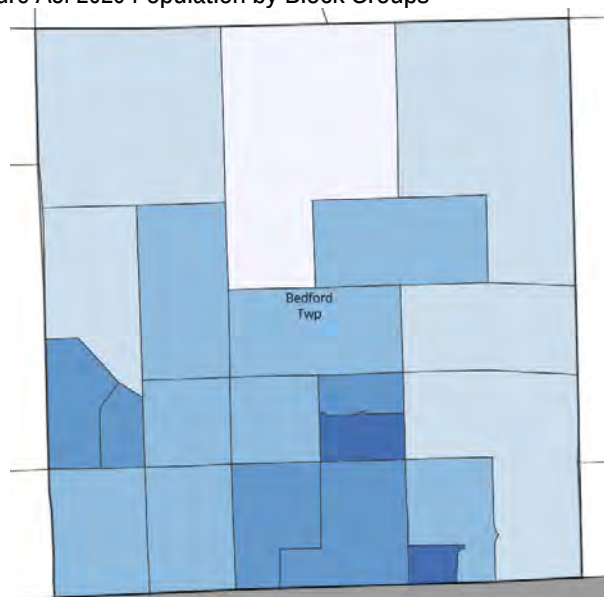


Figure A5. 2020 Population by Block Groups



Population Age

The aging trend found in earlier planning periods has intensified significantly:

- **Youth (Under 18):** This population has declined by 10.9% since 2010, being approximately 21.1% of the current population.
- **Seniors (65+):** As of 2023, seniors are approximately 19.3% of the population (compared to 14.9% in 2010), marking a 46.9% increase in this age group.
- **Working Age Adults:** The core working-age population (25-64) stays stable but is a smaller share due to the aging trend.

Bedford Township's median age has increased to 45.4 years as of 2023, up from 42.7 years in 2010 but being a continued aging trend from 37.5 years in 2000. This places Bedford slightly above the Monroe County median age of 42.6 years and reflects the broader demographic transition occurring throughout the region.

These trends are expected to continue and intensify as the large Baby Boomer cohort moves through their senior years. By 2050, seniors (65+) are projected to make up 28% of Bedford Township's population - a dramatic increase from 22% in 2023 and 15% in 2010. Simultaneously, the youth population (18 and below) is expected to decline further to 17% by 2050, down from 21% in 2023 and 24% in 2010. These trends are more pronounced in Bedford Township than in Monroe County (25% seniors, 18% youth by 2050) or Southeast Michigan overall (21% seniors, 19% youth by 2050), showing that Bedford is aging faster than the broader region.

Figure A6. Population by Age, 2000-2010

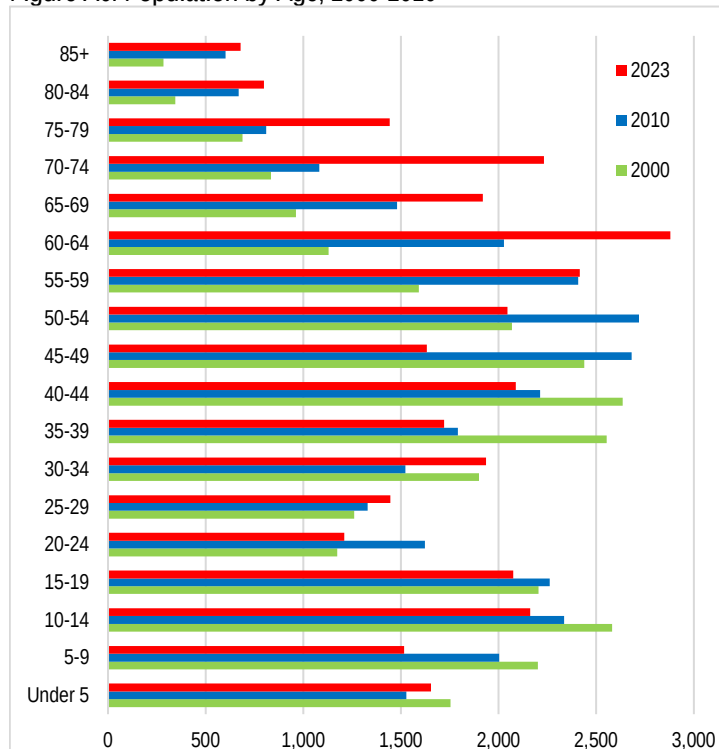


Figure A7. Percent Population Age 18 and Below, 2010 - 2050

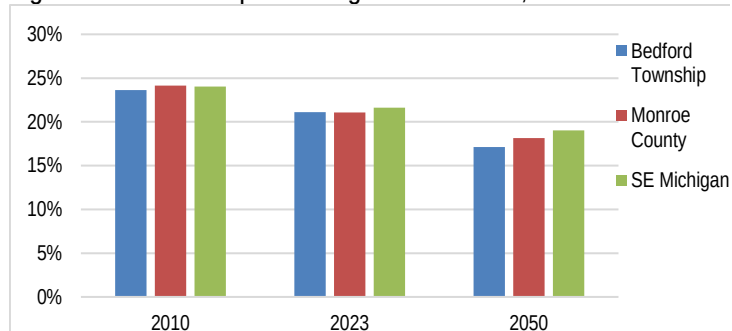
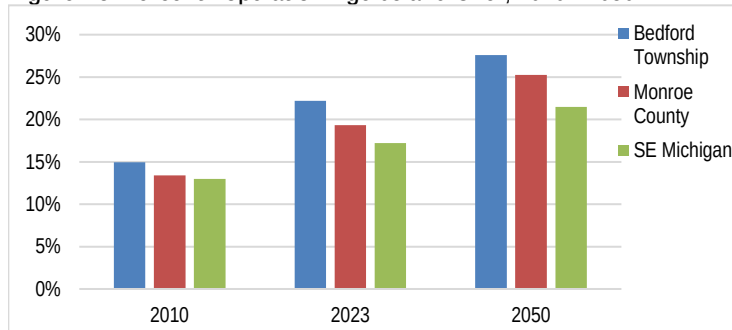


Figure A8. Percent Population Age 65 and Over, 2010 - 2050

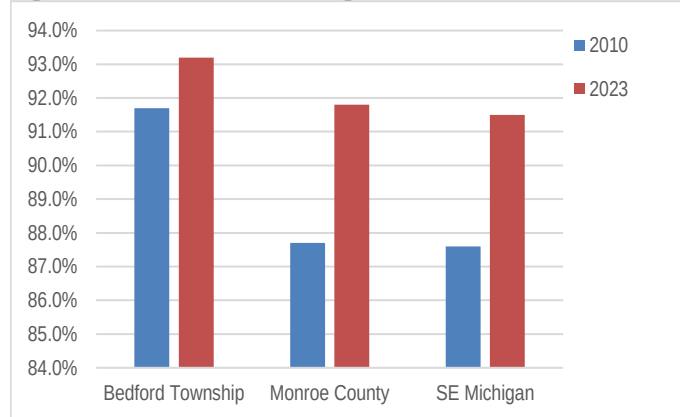


Educational Attainment

Data from the American Community Survey show that over 93% of residents have a high school diploma or higher, slightly more than Monroe County or southeast Michigan residents.

In addition, 29% of Township residents have a bachelor's or advanced degree, compared to 21% for Monroe County and 34% of southeast Michigan residents.

Figure A9. Education Level – High School Graduate



Bedford School District

Student enrollment in the Bedford Public Schools District has seen an overall decrease since 2000 when the average daily enrollment was reported to be 5,404 students. The 2023 school year reported the average daily enrollment of 4,120 students. The highest count for the average daily enrollment was in 2005 with 5,434 students reported.

Recent American Community Survey data (2019-2023) show continued educational improvements:

- High School Graduation: 91.8% of residents have a high school diploma or higher (down slightly from 92% in 2010 but still above regional averages).
- Higher Education: 23.4% of residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher, with an added 11.6% holding associate degrees.
- Graduate/Professional Degrees: 8.4% of residents hold advanced degrees.



Student enrollment trends in the Bedford School District reflect the broader demographic changes:

- Enrollment has continued to decline from the level of 4,721 students in 2013, consistent with the reduction in school-age population.
- This trend aligns with the 11.2% decrease in the 5-17 age group seen in recent census data.
- The district has adapted programming and facilities to serve the changing demographic composition.

HOUSING

Bedford Township showed an increase of 6% housing units between 2010 and 2023, mostly reflected in single family residential growth. The Township's housing stock has continued to evolve while keeping its predominantly single-family character.

Housing Stock Composition (2023 American Community Survey)

- Single Family Homes: 11,133 units (85% of total housing stock)
- Multi-Family Units: Approximately 1,458 units (11% of total), including apartment complexes and larger multi-unit buildings
- Mobile Homes: 524 units (4%)

Housing Development Trends (SEMCOG Building Permit Data)

Since 2010, Bedford has added 1,272 net new housing units through 2024, with the most significant development occurring between 2015-2017. Recent building permit patterns show:

- Single Family: 937 units (70.0% of new construction).
- Two Family/Duplex: 10 units (0.7% of new construction).
- Attached Condo/Townhouse: 30 units (2.2% of new construction).
- Multi-Family (3+ units): 362 units (27.0% of new construction).
- Total Units: 1,339 permits issued, 67 demolitions resulting in 1,272 new units.

Development Patterns (SEMCOG Building Permit Data)

- Annual Average: Approximately 85-90 new units per year over the past decade.
- Peak Construction Years: 2016 (197 net units) and 2017 (251 net units).
- Multi-Family Development: Concentrated in specific years (2014: 22 units, 2015: 60 units, 2016: 110 units, 2017: 144 units, 2021: 192 units).

Housing Tenure

Current housing tenure patterns, according to the 2023 American Community Survey show:

- Owner-Occupied: 84% (increased from 81.6% in 2010).
- Renter-Occupied: 13% (decreased from 13.5% in 2010).
- Vacant Units: 3% (decreased from 4.5% in 2010).

Key Housing Trends:

- **Single-Family Dominance:** Bedford has actually become more single-family oriented, increasing from 82.4 percent to 84.9 percent of housing stock.
- **Multi-Family Shift:** The growth in multi-family housing has been concentrated in larger apartment-style developments (3+ units) rather than smaller duplexes or townhouses.
- **Development Patterns:** Recent construction (2010-2024) shows:
 - o 70% single-family homes,
 - o 27% larger multi-family developments,
 - o Only 2.9% duplexes and townhouses combined.
- **Missing Middle Housing:** There has been a notable deficiency in "missing middle" housing types (duplexes, townhouses) that provide transitional density between single-family and large apartments.

This pattern suggests Bedford has kept its suburban character while accommodating growth primarily through traditional single-family development and larger apartment complexes, with limited small-scale multi-family options.

Housing Value

In 2000, the median housing value in Bedford was \$183,930 (in 2010 dollars). By 2010, the median housing value increased to \$258,795 (in 2023 dollars). Meanwhile, the median gross rent decreased 0.9% from \$797 in 2000 (2010 dollars) to \$1,170 in 2010 (2023 dollars).

According to the 2023 American Community Survey, housing market conditions have experienced the following changes since 2010:

- Median Home Value (2023): \$235,500 (in 2023 dollars). Change since 2010: 9% decrease when adjusted for inflation.
- Median Gross Rent: \$1,250. Change since 2010: 6.9% increase since 2010 when adjusted for inflation.

The decline in real housing values likely reflects broader regional market corrections following the housing boom of the early 2000s, while rent increases show continued demand for rental housing.

The table below illustrates the change in housing values from 2010 to 2023. Bedford Township's decrease in median housing value was comparable to Monroe County's decline but contrast with the increase experienced across the Southeast Michigan region. Conversely, Bedford Township saw an increase in median gross rent that exceeded the changes in both Monroe County and Southeast Michigan.

Table A1. Housing Value (in 2023 dollars)

	Median Housing Value		Change	Median Gross Rent		Change
	2010	2023		2010	2023	
Bedford Township	\$258,795	\$235,500	\$-23,295	\$1,170	\$1,250	\$80
Monroe County	\$239,549	\$215,700	\$-23,849	\$1,085	\$1,017	\$-68
Southeast Michigan	\$240,777	\$242,700	\$1,923	\$1,174	\$1,180	\$6

Bedford Township's housing market from 2000 to 2023 reflects the broader economic cycle that has shaped Southeast Michigan, but with some distinctive local characteristics. After experiencing robust growth in the 2000s - with median home values rising from \$183,930 to \$258,795 - the Township has seen a market correction since 2010, with values declining 9% to \$235,500 by 2023.

However, this decline was more modest than many regional markets, and Bedford has kept its position as a premium housing market within Monroe County, with median values approximately \$20,000 above the County average.

The rental market tells a different story, with median gross rent increasing 6.9% from 2010 to \$1,250 - outpacing both County and regional trends. This divergence between declining home values and rising rents suggests a fundamental shift in housing demand, potentially driven by the Township's aging demographic profile, changing household formation patterns, and Bedford's continued desirability as a residential location. The rental market strength, combined with more accessible home prices, positions Bedford Township as both an attractive option for first-time homebuyers and a viable market for rental property investment, reflecting its role as a desirable, well-located community in the Detroit-Toledo corridor.

ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Bedford Township's economic landscape has diversified significantly with the current employment base showing:

- Total Jobs: 9,633 in 2019 (Pre COVID recession) and 9,729 projected for 2050.
- Daytime Population in 2023: 24,572 with 7,181 workers (29%) working in the community and 17,391 non-working residents (71%). The non-working residents include 5,745 ages 15 and under, 10,966 not in the labor force, and 680 unemployed.
- Key Employment Sectors: Healthcare services, manufacturing, information and financial services, and retail trade.

Major employers continue to include Bedford Public Schools and manufacturing firms, with growth in healthcare and professional services sectors.

Employment Projections (2019-2050):

- Growing Sectors: Healthcare services (+6.9%), Professional & Technical services (+13.4%), Leisure & Hospitality (+11.3%).
- Declining Sectors: Retail trade (-24.5%), Information & Financial services (-11.8%).

Income and Economic Well-being

Median Household Income (2023):

- \$86,369 (in 2023 dollars) which is a 4.8% decline since 2010 when adjusted for inflation.
- Bedford's median income is still 14.7% higher than Monroe County (\$75,272).
- Per Capita Income: \$42,181 (7.3% increase since 2010, when adjusted for inflation).

Income Distribution (2023):

- \$200,000 and above: 9% of households
- \$150,000-\$199,999: 11% of households
- \$125,000-\$149,999: 11% of households
- \$100,000-\$124,999: 11% of households
- \$75,000-\$99,999: 13% of households
- \$50,000-\$74,999: 18% of households
- Below \$50,000: 27% of households

Poverty Indicators:

- Persons in Poverty: 7.7% (from 4.6% in 2010).
- Households in Poverty: 7.4% from 4.7% in 2010).

While Bedford has higher income levels than regional averages, the increase in poverty rates and decline in real median income shows economic pressures.

Transportation and Commuting

Work Transportation (2023):

- Drive Alone: 83.2% (from 86.6% in 2010).
- Work at Home: 9.7% (increase from 3.8% in 2010).
- Carpool: 5.6% (decrease from 7.8% in 2010).
- Mean Commute Time: 22.9 minutes (from 24 minutes in 2010).

Planning Implications

The demographic and economic data reveal several key planning considerations:

1. Aging Population: The 46.9 percent increase in seniors since 2010 requires enhanced age-friendly housing options, healthcare services, and transportation alternatives.
2. Economic Transition: Shift toward service-based economy with declining traditional retail and manufacturing employment.
3. Housing Market Maturity: Stable development patterns with focus on infill and redevelopment rather than greenfield expansion.
4. Infrastructure Needs: Aging population and established development patterns require ongoing infrastructure maintenance and modernization.

These trends position Bedford Township as a maturing suburban community with stable demographics, strong economic fundamentals, but evolving needs that require adaptive strategies.

The substantial increase in remote work reflects post-pandemic changes in employment patterns, while the continued dominance of commuting to work reflects the suburban character of the community.

NATURAL FEATURES AND PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

The natural features of Bedford Township have played a key role in influencing growth and development. Like much of Michigan's southern Lower Peninsula, the Township's landscape was formed through glacial action. The movement of the glaciers shaped the topography and created many diverse types of soils. Plant communities, in turn, developed in response to soil conditions.

GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY, AND SOILS

Monroe County and Bedford Township owe their general lack of topographic relief to ancient lake beds. The bedrock in the Township is directly overlain by a layer of clay till, deposited as a till plain by receding glaciers. This till layer is, in turn, overlain by glacial lakebed sediments, composed of various textures, but primarily lake plain clay and lake plain sand. Beach ridges, deposited as ancient Lake Erie successively rose and fell over time, left long sandy ridges running roughly parallel to the present Lake Erie shoreline.

The Township is relatively flat with a gentle slope from west to east. With the exception of the southeast corner of the Township, which is characterized by a small area of level silty loam, Bedford soils are predominantly sandy and loamy, nearly level, and susceptible to wetness and flooding. According to the Soil Survey of Monroe County (USDA, 1981), there are three major soil associations in Bedford Township: Oakville-Tedrow, Pewamo-Selfridge-Blount, and Lenawee-Del Rey.

A significant percentage of the soils are considered either prime farmland soils or soils of local importance (Figure A10). Prime farmland are those areas with soils considered by the USDA as having the best combination of physical and chemical properties for producing food, forage, fiber, and oil seed crops. In addition to prime farmland, state and local soil conservation agencies have found "farmlands of local importance" which are considered nearly as productive as prime farmland. In Bedford Township, the farmlands of local importance are generally sandier soils which have especially high potential for the production of vegetables and other specialty crops.

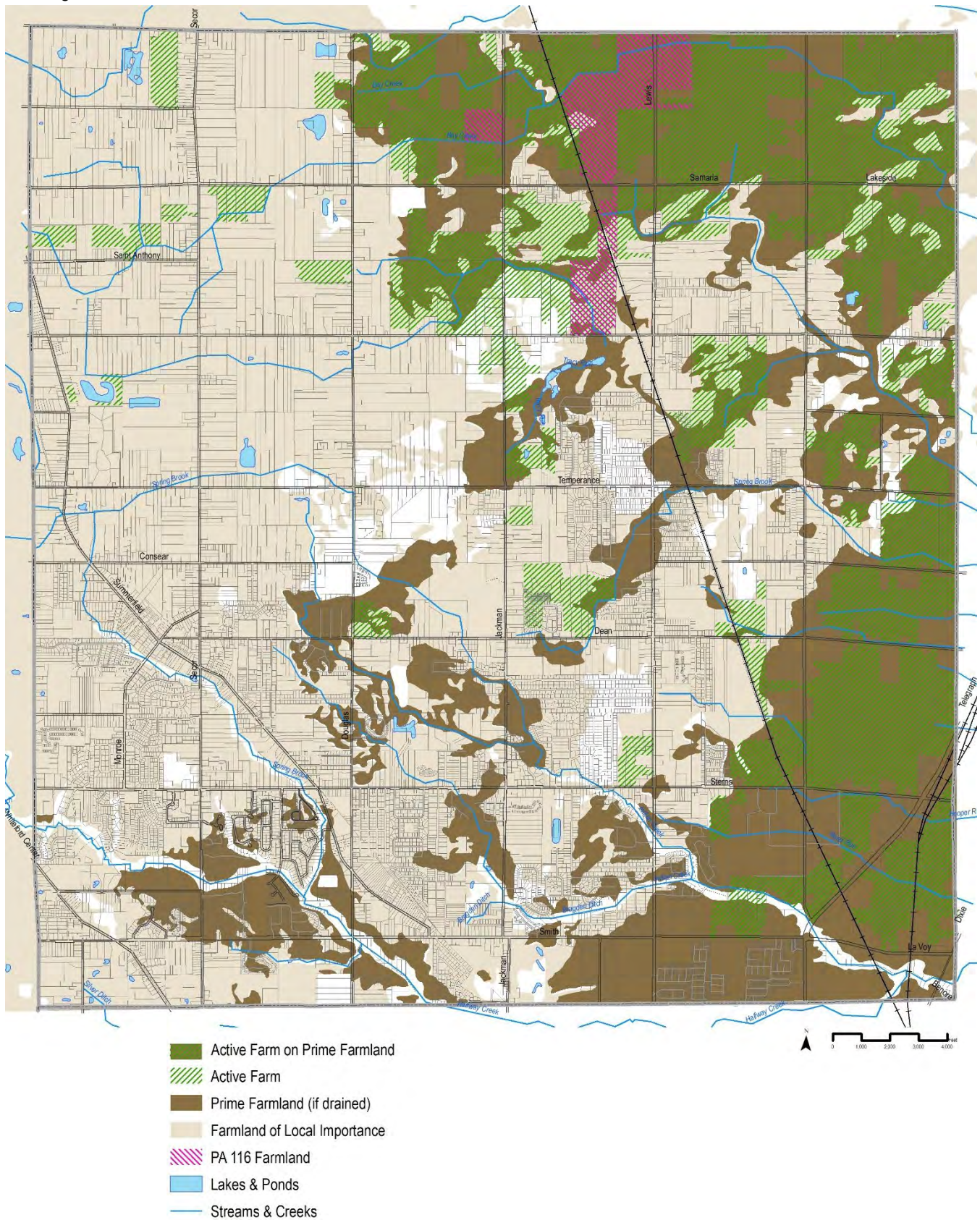
Figure A10 also finds farmland enrolled in the State Farmland and Open Space Preservation program (P.A. 116). This program enables farm owners to enter into a development right agreement with the State of Michigan. The agreement ensures that the land stays in agricultural use for a minimum of 10 years and is not developed for any non-agricultural use. In return for keeping the land in agricultural use, the landowner may be entitled to certain tax benefits, and the land is not subject to special assessments for sanitary sewer, water, lights, or non-farm drain projects.

WETLANDS, DRAINAGE, AND FLOOD ZONES

Bedford Township is located in an area drained by an extensive network of small creeks and drains which flow from west to east in Lake Erie (Figure A11). Except for several dug ponds, there is little open water in the Township. The creeks and drains which account for the majority of the drainage within Bedford are: Indian Creek, Halfway Creek, Bragden Ditch, Reed Run, Hooper Run, Spring Brook, Tracy Run, and Bay Creek. (LaPointe Drain, Center Drain, Reau Drain, North River, Lavoy and Flat Creek).

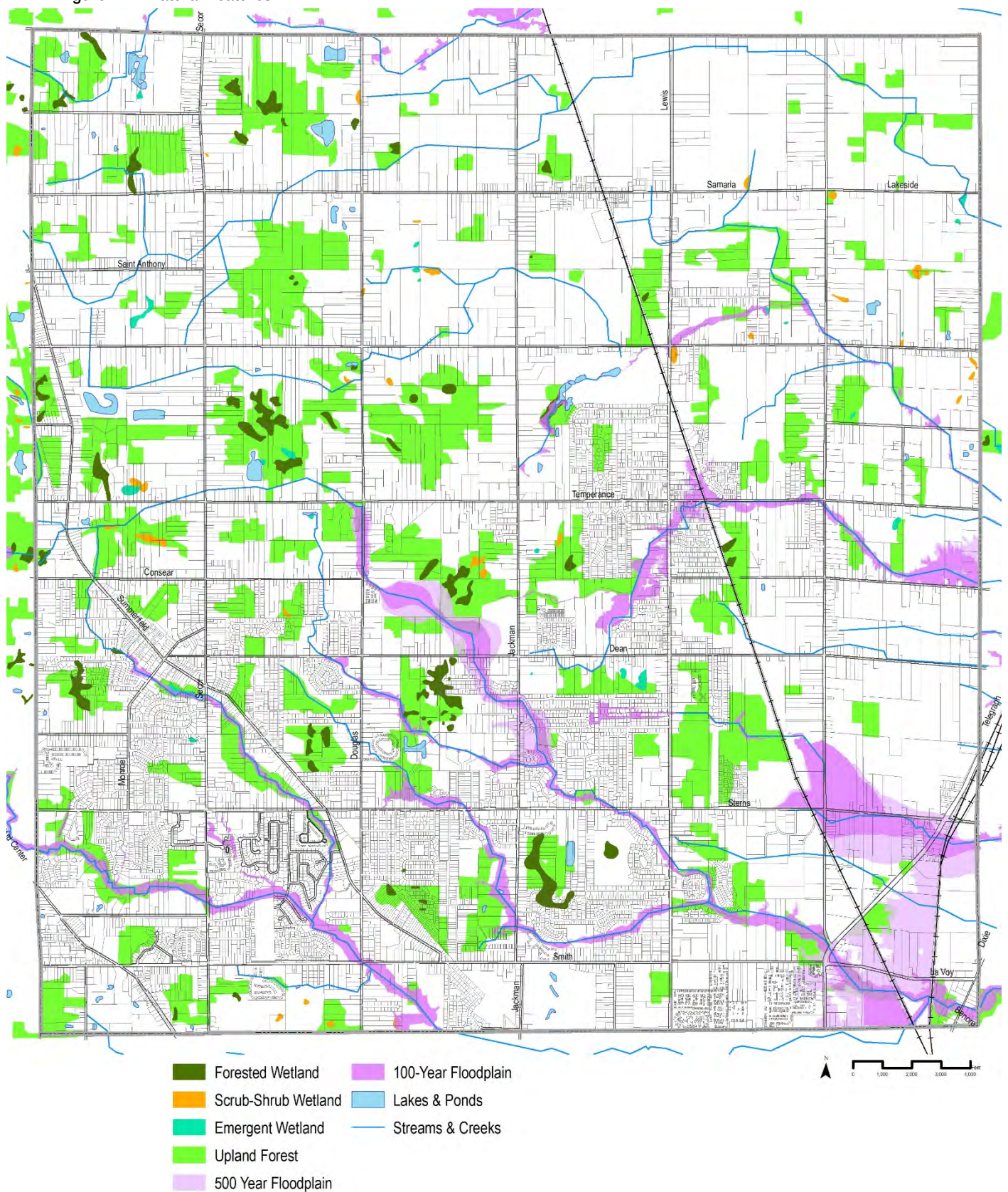
The Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) has mapped the presence of flood hazard zones in Bedford Township. For flood insurance purposes, the Township was mapped and divided into different flood hazard areas based on the frequency or probability of flooding. The 100-year flood zones have a 1 percent chance of flooding in any given year, while the 500-year flood zones have a 0.2 percent chance. The mapped floodways are the area's most severely affected by flooding and thus have high velocity waters during flood events.

Figure A10. Prime Farmland



Source: USDA National Resources Conservation Service, Soil Survey, Monroe County

Figure A11. Natural Features



Source: MIRIS and updated FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map data

WOODLANDS

Prior to 1800, much of the Bedford area was forested with both upland dry (white oak, black oak, pin oak) and mesic (beech, sugar maple, basswood) forests, with some areas covered by lakeplain prairie. Today, there are only a few scattered remnants of the large prairies and oak openings that once existed, and which have become increasingly rare throughout the region. More common are the forested areas, although even forested land is mostly scattered fragmented woodlots rather than large, unbroken areas of natural habitat.

Forested areas in the Township today consist primarily of upland hardwood forests (oak-hickory) in higher elevations and on sandier soils and lowland hardwood forests (elm-ash-maple) found in poorly drained areas, in floodplains and along streams. The northwest quarter of the Township holds the largest forested areas, along with scattered areas of shrub and grassland and wetlands.

HISTORIC SITES

Bedford Township has some historic sites and buildings of local and state significance. The Bedford District No. 6 School on East Sterns Road, known as Banner Oak School, is listed on the State Register of Historic Places. The schoolhouse's period of significance is listed as 1866-1900.

There are also many historic cemeteries and burial grounds. These resources are found on the community facility map (Figure A18).



COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Community facilities in Bedford include Township offices, public safety, schools, and parks, all of which are provided to serve the needs of residents and businesses. Utilities, including public water and sanitary sewer services, are also discussed here.

Government Facilities

Bedford residents are represented by an elected seven-member board consisting of three officers and four trustees – all of which are elected every four years. Limited by law for taxes that can be levied without voter approval, Township officials must be creative in delivering quality services with the least possible burden to taxpayers. The Bedford Township administrative offices are found on Jackman Road, south of Dean Road.

Police and Fire Services

Police service is partially contracted through the Monroe County Sheriff Department, which keeps a sub-station behind the Township Hall on Jackman Road. Added police protection is provided by Michigan State Police patrols. Three fire stations provide Bedford Township with fire protection service. Fire Station 1 (formerly 30) is located in Temperance on west Temperance road, Station 2 (formerly 47) is found on Dean Road in Lambertville, and Station 3 (formerly 56) is located on Lewis Avenue north of Sterns Road.

Schools, Library, and other Institutions

The service area of the Bedford Public School District very closely approximates the boundaries of Bedford Township. The district contains one High School and a Junior High School on adjacent grounds, as well as three elementary schools distributed throughout the Township and including Monroe Road Elementary, serving the northwest area of the Township, Jackman Road Elementary, serving the southeast area of the Township, and Douglas Road Elementary, serving the remainder of the Township. The Bedford Public Schools administration offices are found on Sterns Road (Figure A12). In addition, Bedford includes New Bedford Academy, a public charter school found on Secor Road in Lambertville, and State Line Christian School, a private school located on Lewis Avenue in Temperance.

The Bedford Township Library is located on Jackman Road in the center of the Township. The library holds approximately 47,000 volumes, and offers other services including art loans, speakers, and children's programs.

Serving the residents of Southern Monroe County and Northern Toledo, the Monroe County Community College, Whitman Center found in Temperance offers a wide range of credit courses applicable toward an associate degree, as well as many Lifelong Learning classes.

Parks and Recreation

A variety of regional recreational facilities and opportunities are available to residents of Bedford Township. The regional parks are generally large facilities with a large service area and with opportunities for camping, swimming, boating, hiking, golf, and other activities which are usually beyond the ability of a local community to provide. Within Monroe County, there are several regional level facilities including Sterling State Park, Erie State Game Area, Petersburg State Game Area, as well as other State game areas, boat launch sites, historic sites, and other areas of interest.

The Monroe County Parks provide other large areas for active sports, picnicking, special events, exercise, and play. Vienna Park, located in the eastern part of the Township, consists of 57 acres with restrooms, parking, ball diamonds, picnic sites, play equipment, and open space. This park is similar to the Township's community parks in that it offers a wide range of recreational opportunities, including walking, picnicking, playgrounds, field sports, and disc golf. The Toledo Metroparks and City of Toledo parks also provide a wide variety of regional recreational opportunities for Bedford residents.

The Township owns and runs six community parks: Carr's Grove, Parmelee, Samaria, White, Lewis Ansted, and Wheeler Preserve. With the exception of Wheeler Preserve and Lewis Ansted, which are intended to be passive nature parks, the community parks have been designed to offer a wide range of recreational activities, including play areas, picnic areas, and active sports. The parks range in size from 5.3 to 48 acres and are fairly well-distributed throughout the Township, with three parks in the northeast quarter and three in the southwest quarter.



Bedford Township also owns several smaller parks and "tot-lots." These facilities are, for the most part, undeveloped, dedicated open space, although a few (Colonial – Cranbrook and Silas & Julia Smith) have some play equipment and other facilities. These parks range in size from 0.1 to 8.7 acres. They are mainly open landscape areas within subdivisions and are generally not intended to serve as activity areas.

Figure A12. Community Facilities

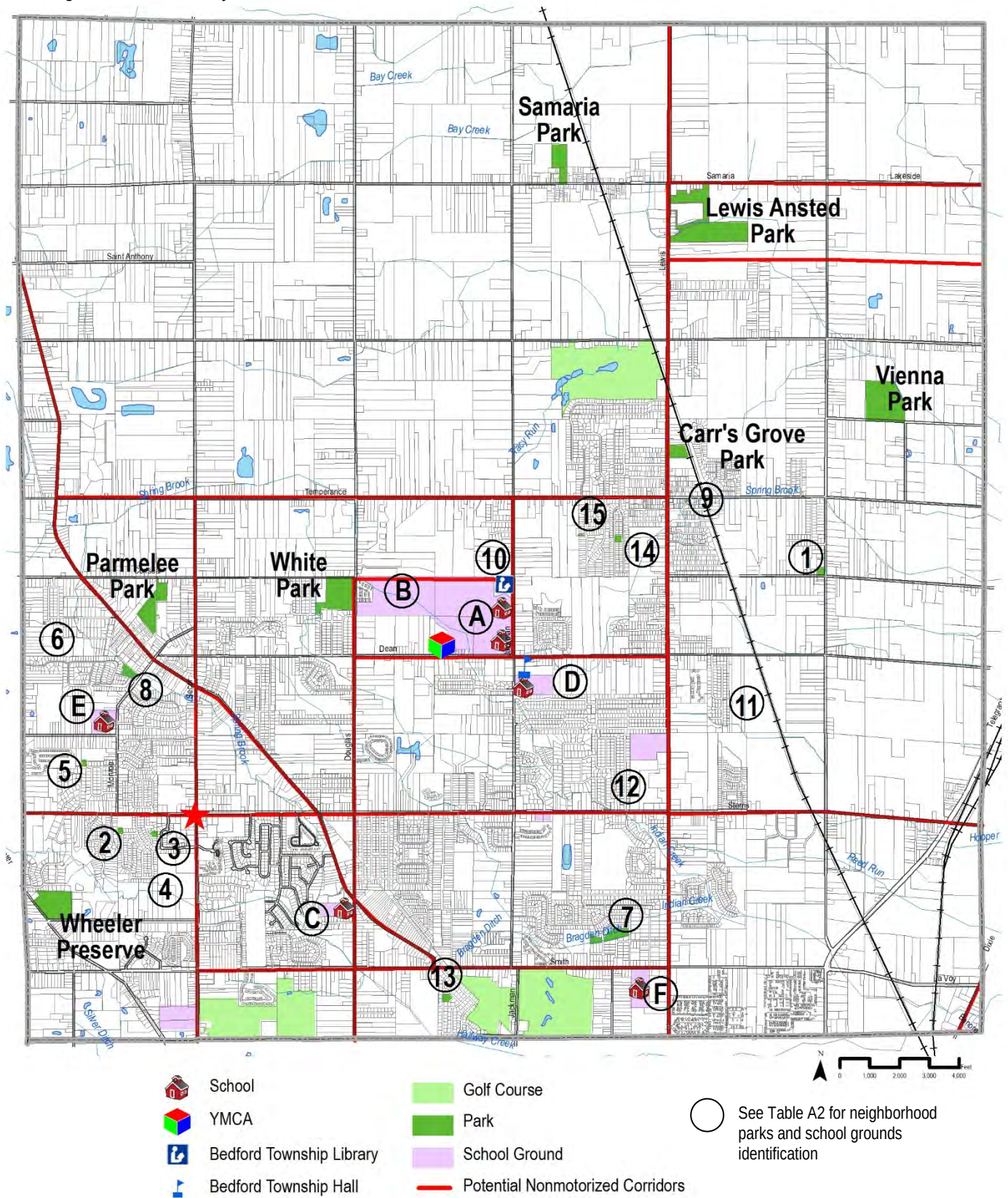


Table A2. Parks and Recreation Facilities

Park	Location	Acres	Map Symbol
Mi State Parks & State Game Areas			
Crystal Water State Game Area	London Township	650	
Erie State Game Area	Erie Township	1,000+	
Petersburg State Game Area	Summerfield Township	935	
Pointe Mouillee State Game Area	Berlin Township	1,000+	
Sterling State Park	Frenchtown Township & City of Monroe	1,001	
Cambridge State Historic Park	Lenawee County	183	
Lake Hudson Recreation Area	Lenawee County	2,650	
W.J. Hayes State Park	Washtenaw, Lenawee, Jackson Counties	654	
Ohio State Parks			
Maumee Bay State Park	Lucas County	1,200	
HCMA Metroparks			
Lake Erie	Gibraltar	1,571	
Toledo Metropolitan Parks			
Bend View	Lucas County	50	
Farnsworth	Lucas County	65	
Oak Openings	Lucas County	3,700	
Pearson	Lucas County	320	
Providence	Lucas County	300	
Secor	Lucas County	500	
Side Cut	Lucas County	210	
Swan Creek	Lucas County	412	
Wildwood Preserve	Lucas County	460	
Monroe County Parks			
Waterloo Park	Monroe Township	9	
Heck Park	Frenchtown Township	15	
Nike Park	Frenchtown Township	80	
Vienna Park	Bedford Township	57	
West County Park	Dundee Township	57	
Toledo-Lucas County Recreational Facilities			
Lucas County Recreational Center	Lucas County	88	
Toledo Zoological Park	Toledo, Ohio	33	
Walbridge Park	City of Toledo	72	
Ottawa Park	City of Toledo	312	
Nona France Whitehouse	Lucas County	200	

Park	Location	Acres	Map Symbol
Bedford Township Community Parks			
Carr's Grove Park		5.3	
Parmelee Park		8.8	
Samaria Park		13.2	
White Park		28.1	
Lewis Ansted Park		48.0	
Wheeler Preserve		22.0	
Bedford Township Neighborhood Parks			
Bicentennial Park		1.0	1
Colonial (Cranbrook)		0.9	2
Colonial (Middlebury)		1.3	3
Colonial (Ridgedale)		1.2	4
Colonial (Wellsley)		1.2	5
Cottonwood		0.3	6
Hooverdale - Windingbrook		8.7	7
Jamie Park (Kimberly Oaks)		4.8	8
McClanathan St.		0.1	9
Shenandoah Hills		0.5	10
Silas and Julia Smith Park		2.1	11
Tanglewood		0.8	14
Woodstream Acres		0.8	15
Bedford Public Schools			
Bedford Senior/Junior High		152.9	A
Indian Creek (Former Park Area)		22.8	B
Douglas Road Elementary		11.5	C
Jackman Road Elementary		20.1	D
Monroe Road Elementary		12.6	E
Smith Road Elementary (Leased - not running as a school)		17.7	F
Subdivision & Manufactured Home Parks			
Bridgeway		2.6	
Canterbury Forest		0.9	
Crosscreeks (Indian Creek Common Area)		14.6	
Crosscreeks (Ryan Common Area)		1.7	
Green Hills Community Park		13.4	
Inverness		0.7	
Lambert Estates		1.2	
Northtowne Meadows		1.6	
Valleybrook Park		2.8	

Park	Location	Acres	Map Symbol
Wildhaven		3.2	
Private Parks and Recreation Facilities			
Bedford Hills Golf Course		132.2	
Giant Oak Golf Course		141.2	
Maplewood Golf Course		133.5	
Tamaron Country Club		57.6	
Brookwood Swim Club		5.3	
Douglas Meadows Stables		20.6	
Fox Meadows Riding Academy		11.2	
Hunter's Run Riding Stables		49.6	
Forestview Lanes		9.3	
YMCA		9.2	

The remaining recreational facilities within the Township are not directly under the jurisdiction of the Parks Commission or Bedford Township. These facilities contribute to meeting some of the community's recreational needs.

The elementary schools all have outdoor play areas, which are often available for the use of residents outside of school hours. The high school has a full range of facilities which are also often available to the public and are also used for community education programs and activities. In addition, the school district owns a large natural area which serves as an outdoor learning center and is an important site for hiking and nature study.

Several of the developed subdivisions in the Township, as well as the manufactured home parks, provide play areas and open space. These sites are generally one to two acres in size and, for the most part, are small spaces which do little to serve the recreational needs of the local residents or the larger community.

Private parks and recreation facilities include large golf courses, riding stables, and campgrounds. There are also a private swim club and a bowling alley in the Township. The recently constructed Francis Family YMCA, built in collaboration with the school system and the community, helps to meet the indoor recreational needs of the community.

UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION

Bedford Township is linked to the overall region by nearby interstates and highways. Interstate 75, found just outside Bedford's limits to the east, is a major transportation corridor that serves the entire United States. Traveling north/south, I-75 ends north at Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan and south near Miami, Florida. Within the Lake Erie region, I-75 provides the most important connection between Detroit and Toledo, making this interstate essential for both the movement of people and goods as it travels through the eastern part of Monroe County. U.S.-23, another north/south freeway, is located just west of Bedford Township and links northwest Ohio to Ann Arbor and then north to Flint before merging with I-75. While the I-75 corridor presents many opportunities for development for Monroe County, the U.S.-23 corridor has remained less developed. Major interchanges for I-75 are found at Sterns, Erie, and Samaria Roads. U.S.-23 interchanges are located at Sterns, Consear, and Saint Anthony Roads.

Two major north-south trunklines cross the southeast corner of Bedford and link to Township north to Monroe and south to Toledo: U.S.-24 and M-125. U.S.-24, Telegraph Road, serves primarily as a major commercial corridor from Pontiac to the Ohio State Line. In Monroe County, Telegraph Road is primarily rural in character south of Albain Road to the Ohio border with only a few commercial businesses interspersed from Albain to Erie Roads. M-125 runs parallel to U.S.-24, connecting downtown Monroe and Toledo.

Bedford Township includes County primary roads and local roads, characterized by a network of section mile roads and internal subdivision roads which generally lack in connectivity.

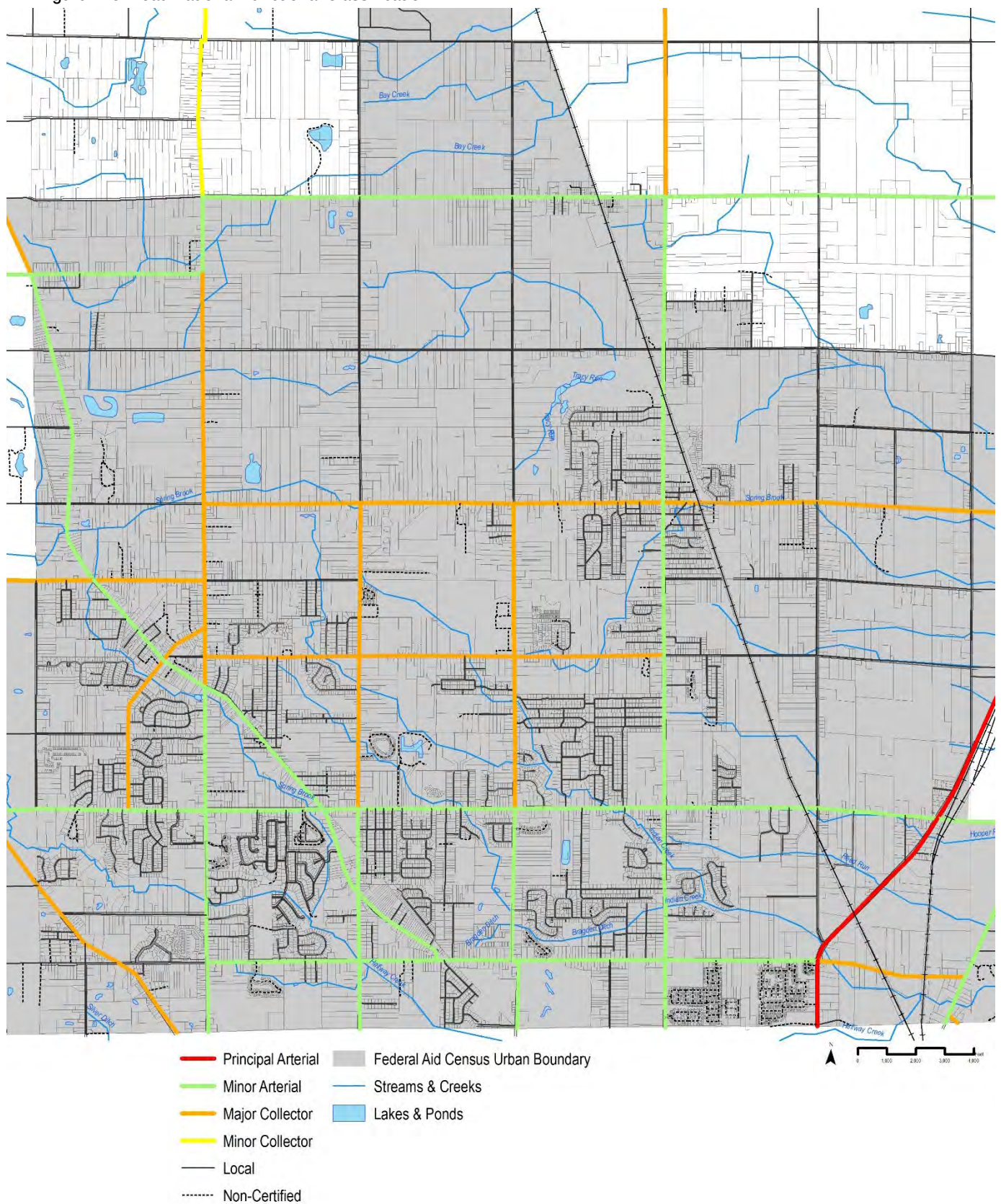
Bedford Township's road network has strong ties to the Detroit and Toledo metropolitan areas, which results in assistance from both the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) and the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG). Parts of Bedford Township have been identified as part of the Toledo Urbanized Area by the Federal government. This part of Bedford Township qualifies for federal funding for various transportation needs, most of the time with a 20 percent local match needed to obtain federal funding.

ROAD FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

Michigan roadways are classified by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) according to a hierarchical functional system known as the National Functional Classification (NFC), which is used for planning and funding purposes. This road classification also corresponds to roadway traffic volumes. Federal aid roads eligible for funding include all principal arterials, minor arterials, major collectors, and minor collectors which are part of the Federal Aid Census Urban Boundary (Figure A13). Bedford's road network includes five classes of roads as described below.

- **Principal Arterial Roads.** Telegraph Road (US-24) is the major roadway through Bedford Township. This roadway serves a vital function towards connecting the Township with the adjacent cities of Monroe and Toledo.
- **Minor Arterial Roads.** These roads are similar to Principal Arterials but with trips being carried shorter distance to lesser traffic generators. They include Smith (Secor to east boundary), Sterns, Summerfield, Saint Anthony, Secor (Saint Anthony to Samaria), and Samaria (Secor to east boundary) as well as portions of Secor (south boundary to Summerfield), Douglas and Jackman (both, south boundary to Sterns), and Lewis (south boundary to Samaria).
- **Major Collector Roads.** Collector roads funnel traffic from residential areas to arterial roads, with some providing direct access to residences. They include Whiteford Center, Monroe Road, Dean (Secor to Lewis), Consear, Temperance (Secor to east boundary), La Voy, Secor (Summerfield to Saint Anthony), Douglas (Sterns to Temperance), Jackman (Sterns to Temperance), and Lewis (Samaria to north boundary).
- **Minor Collector Roads.** Only Secor, north of Samaria, is classified as a minor collector road in Bedford.
- **Local Roads.** The remaining roadways in Bedford are classified as local roads and include portions of section miles roads as well as subdivision neighborhood streets that provide access to residences.

Figure A13. Road National Functional Classification



Source: SEMCOG Interactive Map

- The Township's most travelled roadways with an annual average daily traffic greater than 10,000 vehicle trips include Telegraph (from the Ohio line to Smith), Lewis (from the Ohio line to Dean), Secor (from Ohio line to Dean), Smith (from Jackman to Lewis), and Sterns (from Whiteford Center to Jackman).
- Roads with an annual average daily traffic from 5,000 to 10,000 vehicle trips include are Dixie Highway, Telegraph (north of Smith), Lewis (from Dean to Temperance), Jackman (from Ohio line to Smith), Douglas (Ohio line to Smith), Secor (from Dean to St. Anthony), Smith (Secor to Jackman and Lewis to Telegraph), Sterns (Jackman to Telegraph), and Dean (from Douglas to Jackman).
- Roads with 5,000 or less include Lewis (north of Temperance), Jackman (Smith to Temperance), Douglas (Smith to Temperance), Secor (North of St. Anthony), Smith (Secor to Jackman and Lewis to Dixie Highway), Sterns (from Telegraph to Dixie Highway), Monroe, Summerfield, Consear, St. Anthony, Dean (from Secor to Douglas and Jackman to Lewis), Temperance (from Secor to Telegraph), Samaria (from Secor to Township Line).

Adopted, January 14, 2026

TRAFFIC SAFETY

Auto accidents occur more often on the major roads and intersections of the Township. Locations of relatively high accidents based on SEMCOG crash data between 2019 and 2023 are presented in Tables A3 and A4.

Table A3. High Frequency Intersection Crash Rankings

Local Rank	County Rank	Region Rank	Intersection	Annual Average 2019-2023
1	3	78	Lewis Ave @ Rauch Rd W	1
2	4	151	Lewis Ave @ Smith Rd	0.8
3	6	293	Cloverlane Rd @ Smith Rd	0.6
3	6	293	Douglas Rd @ Smith Rd	0.6
5	17	730	Douglas Rd @ Consear Rd	0.4
5	17	730	Douglas Rd @ Summerfield Rd	0.4
5	17	730	Secor Rd @ Woodmont Dr	0.4
5	17	730	Sterns Rd @ Quail Hollow Dr	0.4
9	59	1,895	Consear Rd @ Suzann Dr	0.2
9	59	1,895	Crabb Rd @ Vienna Rd W	0.2

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile

Table A4. High Frequency Road Segment Crash Rankings

Local Rank	County Rank	Region Rank	Segment	From Road - To Road	Annual Average 2019-2023
1	3	63	Sterns Rd	Secor Rd - Summerfield Rd	1.6
2	10	240	Sterns Rd	Monroe Rd - Secor Rd	1
2	10	240	Lewis Ave	Samaria Rd W - Ida Center Rd	1
4	22	395	Smith Rd	Douglas Rd - Summerfield Rd	0.8
4	22	395	Telegraph Rd	Smith Rd - Sterns Rd	0.8
4	22	395	Secor Rd	Sterns Rd - Summerfield Rd	0.8
7	32	683	Lewis Ave	County Boundary - Smith Rd	0.6
7	32	683	Sterns Rd W	Jackman Rd - Lewis Ave	0.6
7	32	683	Smith Rd	Jackman Rd - Lewis Ave	0.6
7	32	683	Telegraph Rd	Sterns Rd - Temperance Rd E	0.6

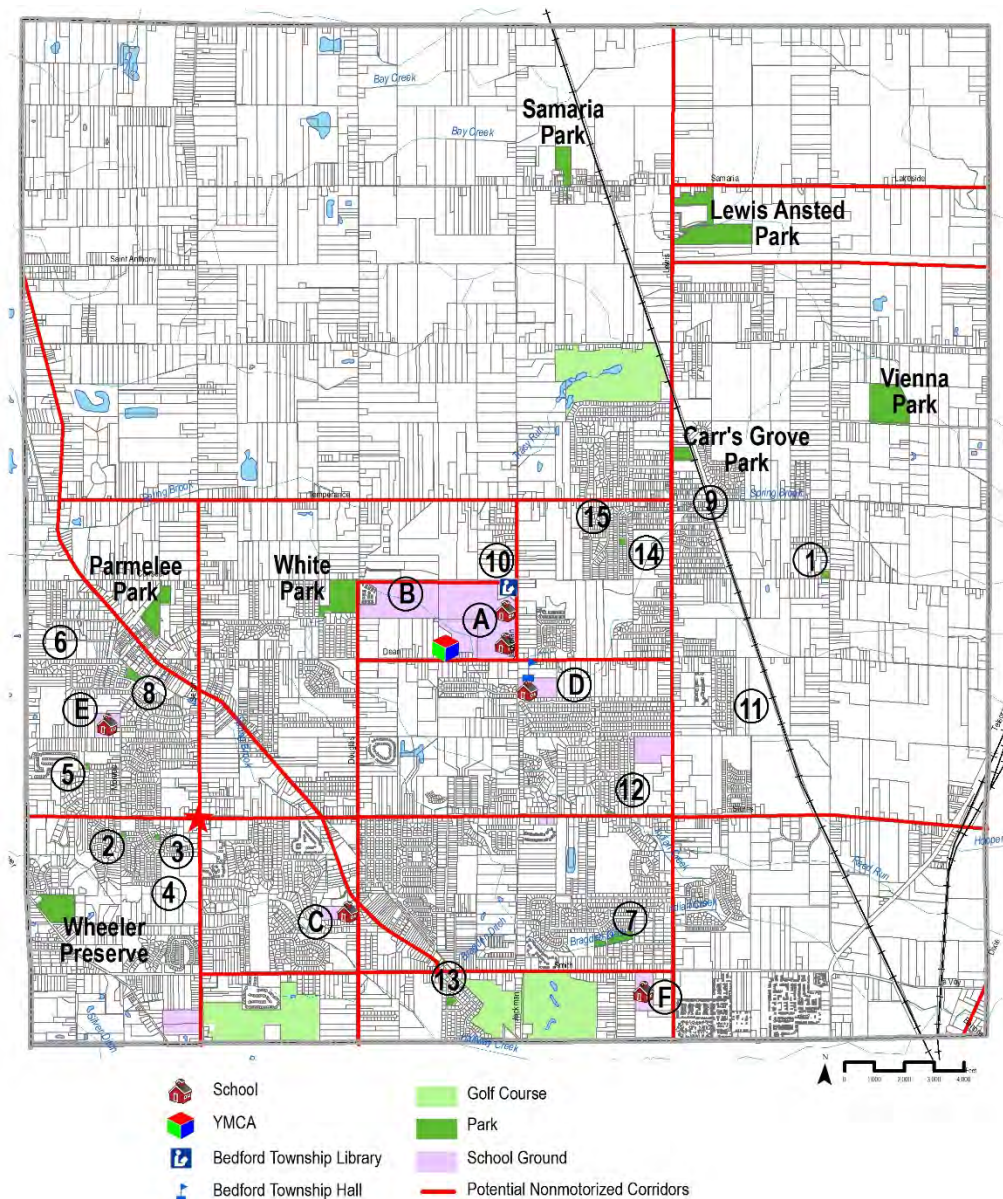
Source: SEMCOG Community Profile

NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION PLAN

In 2010, Complete Streets legislation was passed in Michigan (P.A. 135 and P.A. 134) amending the definition of streets in the Michigan Department of Transportation Public Act 51 and the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33). Streets should now be designed to accommodate all users - motorists as well as people in assistive devices, pedestrians, bicyclists, and people of all ages and abilities, including children, youth, families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities.

Bedford Township hopes to make it safer and easier for more people to bicycle and walk throughout the Township with the establishment of non-motorized transportation facilities. The Non-Motorized Concept Plan has been updated (Figure A15) to guide non-motorized facility planning, design, and construction for Bedford Township. The Plan is intended to serve as a basis for future grant applications and funding requests. Having a Township Non-Motorized Plan becomes important to ensure the coordinated development of non-motorized facilities. Township residents highly support more pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Figure A15. Non-Motorized Concept Plan



TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Although the roads in Bedford Township are typically within the jurisdiction of either the Monroe County Road Commission or MDOT, the Township has a strong interest in improving and keeping its road system.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a strategic capital planning document used by the County Road Commission to program federal and state funding for transportation projects. The TIP must include at least four fiscal years and is updated annually. The projects include where Federal transportation funds will be used or are regionally significant for the Regional Transportation Plan. The TIP includes the list of priority projects to be conducted and must be consistent with SEMCOG's 2040 Regional Transportation Plan, and other planning studies.

Table A5 presents the Township's planned road improvements from the Monroe County Road Commission for the next few years.

Table A5. Road Improvement Program Projects in Bedford Township, 2025-2028

Road	From	To	Length miles	2025	2026	2027	2028
Benore	M-125	State Line	0.08				HMA Multi Overlay
Consear	Adler	Secor	1.10	Single Chip Seal			HMA Overlay
Dean	Secor	Douglas	1.01			HMA Mill and Fill	
Dean	Douglas	Jackman	1.01				HMA Mill and Fill
Dean	Jackman	Lewis	0.98				HMA Mill and Fill
Douglas	State line	Smith	0.45		Overband Crack Fill	Microsurface	
Douglas	Smith	Sterns	0.99		Overband Crack Fill	Microsurface	
Jackman	State Line	Smith	0.50				Overband Crack Fill
Jackman	Smith	Sterns	0.99		Overband Crack Fill	HMA Mill and Fill	
Jackman	Sterns	Dean	0.99	Microsurface			
Lavoy	US-24	M-125	0.98				HMA Multi Overlay
Lewis	State line	Smith	0.44	Microsurface			
Lewis	Smith	Sterns	1.00	Microsurface			
Lewis	Sterns	Dean	1.00		Microsurface		
Lewis	Dean	Temperance	1.00		Microsurface		
Lewis	Temperance	Erie	1.00		Microsurface		
Lewis	Erie	Pickard	0.99		Microsurface		
Lewis	Pickard	Rauch	1.01		Microsurface		
Monroe	Sterns	Summerfield	1.06		Microsurface		
Rauch	Wells	Secor	1.13				
Samaria	Secor	Douglas	1.02	Overband Crack Fill			
Samaria	Douglas	Jackman	1.00	Overband Crack Fill			
Samaria	Jackman	Lewis	1.00	Overband Crack Fill			
Samaria	Lewis	Crabb	1.00				Overband Crack Fill
Samaria	Crabb	Minx	1.00				Overband Crack Fill
Secor	State Line	Smith	0.45			Base Stabilization & HMA Multi Overlay	
Secor	Smith	Sterns	0.99			Trench Widening & HMA Overlay	
Secor	Sterns	Summerfield	0.81	Overband Crack Fill	Trench Widening &		

Road	From	To	Length miles	2025	2026	2027	2028
Microsurfacing							
Secor	Consear	Temperance	0.50			Overband Crack Fill	Microsurface
Secor	Temperance	Erie	1.00			Overband Crack Fill	Microsurface
Secor	Erie	St. Anthony	0.50			Overband Crack Fill	Microsurface
Secor	St. Anthony	Samaria	0.50	Overband Crack Fill			Overband Crack Fill
Secor	Samaria	Rauch	1.02	Overband Crack Fill			
Smith	Whiteford Center	Secor	0.57		Overband Crack Fill	Microsurface	
Smith	Secor	Douglas	1.00			HMA Mill and Fill	
Smith	Douglas	Jackman	0.99	Trench Widening & HMA Overlay		Overband Crack Fill	
Smith	Jackman	Lewis	1.00		Overband Crack Fill		
Smith	Lewis	US-24	1.00	Microsurface			
St. Anthony	Summerfield	Secor	1.12	Overband Crack Fill			
Sterns	Adler	Secor	1.10	Microsurface			
Sterns	Secor	Douglas	1.00	Microsurface			
Sterns	Douglas	Jackman	1.03	Microsurface			
Sterns	Jackman	Lewis	0.93	Microsurface			
Sterns	Lewis	Crabb	1.04	Microsurface			
Sterns	Crabb	US-24	0.79	Microsurface			
Sterns	US-24	Twp Line	0.20	Microsurface			
Summerfield	St. Anthony	Erie	0.52			Overband Crack Fill	
Summerfield	Erie	Temperance	1.01			Overband Crack Fill	Microsurface
Summerfield	Temperance	Consear	0.55			Overband Crack Fill	Microsurface
Summerfield	Consear	Secor	1.01		Overband Crack Fill		
Summerfield	Secor	Sterns	1.12		Overband Crack Fill		
Summerfield	Sterns	Smith	1.29		Overband Crack Fill		
Temperance	Secor	Douglas	1.02		HMA Overlay		Overband Crack Fill
Temperance	Douglas	Jackman	1.00		HMA Overlay		Overband Crack Fill
Temperance	Jackman	Lewis	0.98	Overband Crack Fill		Microsurface	
Temperance	Lewis	Crabb	1.01		Overband Crack Fill	Single Chip Seal	
Temperance	Crabb	Minx	1.01		HMA Overlay	Single Chip Seal	
Whiteford Center	Stateline	Twp Line	1.32				Overband Crack Fill

Source: Monroe County Road Commission 5-Year Primary Road Plan 2024-2028

WATER, WASTEWATER, AND UTILITIES

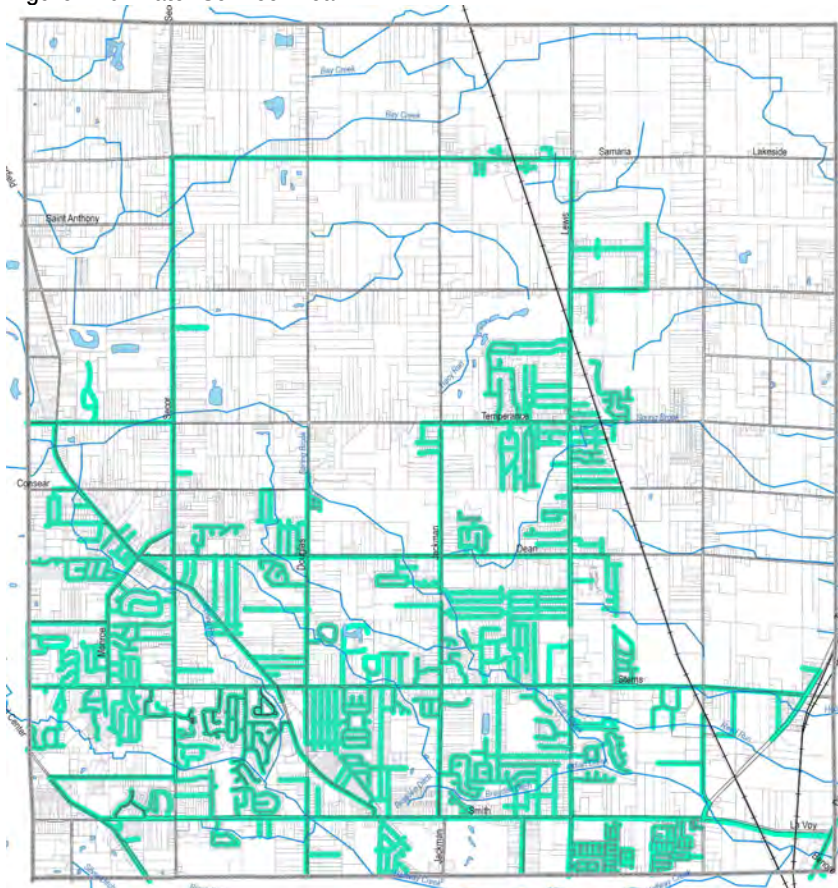
Bedford Township, as well as Erie Township, LaSalle Township, and the City of Luna Pier, receives its public water supply from the City of Toledo through the South County Water System. Approximately 9,790 households in Bedford Township are served by this system, with more than 13,383 total connections in service. Water is pumped from Lake Erie. The main pumping station for the South County system is found near the intersection of Lewis Avenue and Smith Road less than one-half mile from the Ohio state boundary.

This pumping station has a capacity of 8 million gallons per day (MGD). Average daily water usage for the system ranges from 2.4 MGD in the winter to around 5.3 MGD in the summer. Four 500,000 gallon elevated storage tanks are found in the Township, in addition to a two-million gallon reservoir located underneath the current pumping station. Chemical treatment, chlorination, and odor removal occur within the City of Toledo, and chlorination occurs once again in Bedford Township before the water is pumped out into the County. A second connection to the Toledo water distribution system came into operation in 2006. The design includes a pumping station capable of providing service to the entire system in an emergency, a two-million gallon reservoir, and any necessary balancing valves. The connection is at the intersection of Benore Road and Dixie Highway in Bedford Township.

The South County system is also sharing repair costs and emergency interconnection with the City of Monroe's plant. With this, the South County Water System will be able to accommodate development in the southern part of Monroe County for years to come. However, when the contract between South County Water and the City of Toledo ends, it will become necessary to consider other options for a water source.

The South County Water System prioritizes high water quality standards and adheres to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations for drinking water safety. Recent water quality assessments have detected per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) at levels exceeding the Environmental Working Group's (EWG) health guidelines, although still below proposed legal limits.

Figure A16. Water Service Area

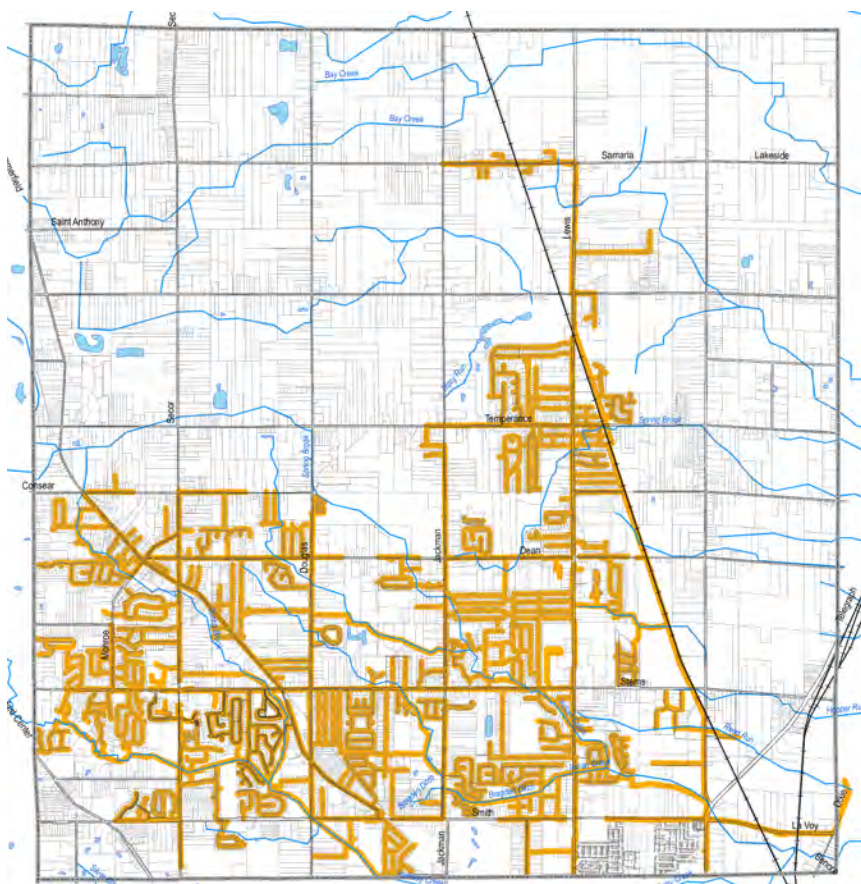


Source: Bedford Township Data

The majority of Bedford Township households are served by public sewers. Bedford Township has the second largest waste treatment facility in Monroe County. Originally built in the early 1970s, much of the treatment plant has been upgraded with modern and more efficient equipment. The recent improvements extended the useful life of the plant for another 25-30 years, ensuring safe and efficient infrastructure for providing a public service. The plant has an average daily flow of 3.5 MGD, and a maximum treatment capacity of approximately 6 MGD. The peak daily flow of the plant is around 4.5 MGD. However, the plant has seen peak flows over 10 MGD during storms and sometimes reaches its maximum hydraulic capacity of 13.2 MGD.

The sewage treatment plant is found in the southeast corner of the Township, with most of the sewer service serving areas of the Township south of Temperance Road. However, service extends north along Lewis Avenue to Samaria Road and also to parts of Erie Township. The plant provides primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment of sewage.

Figure A17. Sanitary Sewer Service Area



Source: Bedford Township Data

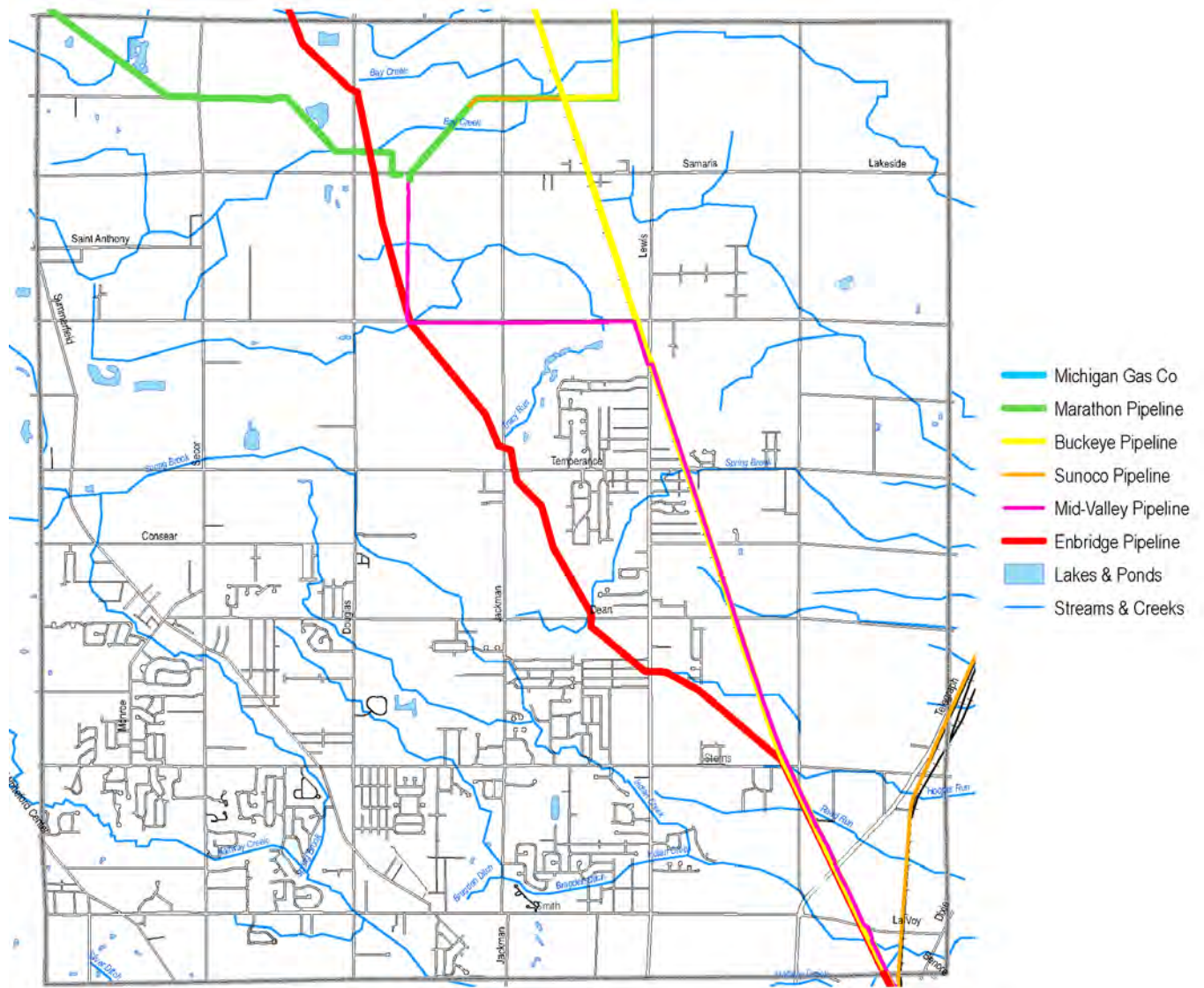
Bedford Township is continuing to grow at a fairly rapid rate due to Toledo-related suburban development. With continued population growth, expansion of the current treatment facility is a possibility for the future.

Consumers Energy provides the Township with electricity, while Michigan Gas Utilities supplies nearly the entire Township with natural gas.

With the rising costs of natural gas, homeowners are beginning to look into alternative heating sources for their homes. While sources like propane and wood have been around for years, other new sources include biomass (either in the form of biodiesel oil or corn pellets), solar energy and even geothermal heating sources. Most of these sources have the main advantage of being renewable, although they offer higher initial costs for residents to set up.

A complex system of pipelines, both for natural gas distribution and for liquid oil transport underlie Monroe County. The major pipelines are depicted on the map, but as this information is subject to update and change, it cannot be considered a reliable source of pipeline locations. New pipeline corridors connecting to refineries in Detroit are currently under development

Figure A18. Pipelines



Source: Monroe County Data

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Public Transportation

The Lake Erie Transportation (LET) Commission was created by an interlocal agreement with the City of Monroe and Frenchtown Township in 1980 under Public Act 7, as a government designated non-profit entity. It operates Lake Erie Transit, which offers a variety of bus transportation services in Monroe County using federal, state, and local funding, and fare box revenues. Its state and federal funding is administered on a pass-through basis by the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transit (SMART), which also oversees major equipment acquisitions and assures that equipment purchases follow federal regulations. Bedford Township receives services which help support the program through a local millage.

Dial-a-Ride services are also available to residents of Bedford Township. Riders can be picked up at their homes and be taken to any destination within the Township.

Railroads

The Ann Arbor Railroad, which runs southeast to northwest, crosses the eastern half of the Township and keeps a spur in the Bedford Industrial Park. The CSX Railroad, which runs southwest to northeast, crosses the southeastern corner of the Township. Although it is not within Bedford Township, the DTI Railroad runs from southwest to northeast.

Airports

Several private and commercial airports are found within 60 miles of the Township's borders. Toledo Suburban Airport is located along the southwestern border of the Township, and the Toledo Express Airport is 15 miles further south. Detroit Metropolitan and Willow Run Airports are located within 30 miles to the north. Monroe Custer City Airport is found 10 miles to the northeast. In addition, there are several small, private airports within a 10-mile radius of the Township.

Port Facilities

Port facilities are available in Toledo, Monroe, and Detroit for inter-lake and sea going service. The Port of Toledo is one of the largest inland ports in North America and offers direct access to ports worldwide.

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The planning process for the 2026 Bedford Township Master Plan update included a multi-faceted community engagement outreach which was received through an online survey of residents, a joint meeting of public officials, a community open house, and public meetings.

2025 RESIDENT SURVEY

The Bedford Township Planning Commission conducted an online survey to get Township residents' views on issues that affect their quality of life in Bedford Township. The survey was posted on the Township website, and printed copies were made available at the Township Hall. Notices were posted at Township Hall and on the Township's Facebook page. Over 664 residents completed the survey from May 8, 2025, through June 13, 2025.

Bedford Township residents overwhelmingly want to preserve the small-town, rural character that drew them to the community, but they also want improvements to infrastructure and services that may require the very development they oppose.

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS & COMMUNITY PROFILE

Respondent Profile

- 93% Homeowners (619 responses), with the remaining 7% renters or non-resident business owners and/or employees.
- 62% live in the Temperance zip code area (414 responses), 33% in the Lambertville zip code area (222 responses), and 2% in the Samaria zip code area (10 responses)
- 73% have lived in Bedford for 11+ years
 - o 10% live there 50 years or more
 - o 23% lived there 31-49 years
 - o 22% lived there 21-30 years
 - o 18% lived there 11-20 years

Employment Patterns

- 363 respondents work outside Bedford (219 in Ohio, 76 outside Monroe County in Michigan, and 68 work in Monroe County, outside Bedford Township)
- 171 works in Bedford Township
- 170 are retired

Respondent Profile, 2014:

- 93% homeowners
- 4% renters
- 2% business owners
- 1% absentee property owners
- 63% live in Temperance
- 35% in Lambertville
- 1% other Bedford Location
- 0.3% in Samaria
- 25% 11 to 20 years
- 22% 31 to 49 years
- 19% 21 to 30 years
- 11% 50 years or more
- 6% less than 2 years

Location of Employment, 2014:

- 44% Ohio
- 29% Bedford Township
- 15% Monroe County outside Bedford
- 12% Michigan, outside Monroe County

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

Community Assets - What Residents Love About Bedford

Top Reasons Bedford is a great place to live (Q5):

1. Safe neighborhoods/low crime (457 responses)
2. Small community and rural charm (367 responses)
3. Good location (289 responses)
4. Close to family (223 responses)
5. Quality schools (199 responses)

Quality of life rating (Q6):

- 62% rate quality of life as "Good"
- 15% rate it "Fair"
- 14% rate it "Excellent"
- 9% say it "Needs Improvement"

Top strengths (first three account for 75% of all strengths mentioned - Q7):

1. Community/Small Town Feel (147 mentions) - Includes sense of community, community spirit, involvement, support, as well as rural charm, quiet, small-town character
2. Safety/Low Crime (126 mentions) - Includes low crime, safe neighborhoods, peace, visible police/fire
3. Schools (118 mentions) - Includes good schools, public school system, strong staff/support
4. Location/Proximity (89 mentions) - References to convenient location relative to larger cities (Toledo, Detroit) and accessibility
5. Parks and Recreation (67 mentions) – Includes parks, YMCA, green spaces, and walking trails
6. Local businesses and services (54 mentions) – References to local shopping, restaurants, and business variety
7. Rural character (48 mentions) – References to rural feel, farmland, and open spaces
8. Low taxes (41 mentions)

Community Challenges - What residents think is most needed

Topmost needed improvements (Q8):

1. Road and infrastructure (312 mentions) – References to general road repairs, maintenance (subdivision/private roads), widening (Sterns & Secor), and general infrastructure needs
2. Sidewalks and walkability (187 mentions) – References to sidewalk and bike path need and general walkability/connectivity
3. Parks and recreation (156 mentions) – References to park maintenance, upgrades, and recreational facility improvements (While Park and Indian Creek specifically mentioned)
4. Traffic management (98 mentions) – References to traffic flow, congestion, intersection improvements, and traffic safety
5. Development growth management (89 mentions) – Includes controlling growth and limiting development
6. Schools (76 mentions) – References to school buildings, programs, and educational issues
7. Commercial development (71 mentions) – References to unwanted business and commercial development
8. Tax and fiscal issues (68 mentions) – References to tax reduction and fiscal management

Top Reasons for Living in Bedford, 2014:

- 53% Location
- 45% Small town charm of Bedford
- 41% Family
- 33% Schools
- 15% Housing costs
- 14% Job

Quality of Life Rating, 2014:

- 57% rated quality of life as "Good"
- 16% said it "Needs Improvement"
- 14% rated it as "Adequate"
- 8% of residents rated it as "Excellent"
- 2% showed having a "Poor" quality of life.

Top Strengths, 2014:

- Schools
- Great parks
- Library
- Safe and friendly
- Sense of community pride
- Location
- Housing & neighborhood
- Effective community services
- Low taxes

Top Needed Improvements, 2014:

- Road improvements
- Pedestrian connectivity
- Consistent planning/zoning decisions
- Fill vacant commercial/retail properties
- Property maintenance
- School funding
- Activities for families
- Police
- Better snow removal
- Focus attention on Temperance
- Increase tax base

What is particularly attractive/unattractive in Bedford? (Q9)

Residents were asked to respond to several open-ended questions. Common themes have been identified as follows.

Attractive:

1. Natural environment (198 mentions) – References to trees, farmland, open spaces, wooded areas, and natural landscaping
2. Parks (147 mentions) – Includes references to community parks, recreational facilities, and public spaces
3. Well-maintained properties (112 mentions) – References to attractive homes, well-kept yards, and neighborhood appearance
4. Small town character/rural feel (89 mentions) – References to attractive homes, well-kept yards, and neighborhood appearance
5. Cleanliness (71 mentions) – References to clean roads, lack of litter, and general tidiness
6. Seasonal decorations (58 mentions) - References to Christmas lights and holiday decorations in the Bedford Township Downtown Development Authority Area
7. Downtown areas (55 mentions) – References to downtown Temperance and Lambertville areas
8. Schools and public buildings (51 mentions) - References to school grounds and library
9. Business areas (47 mentions) - References to stern/Secor and general business areas
10. Landscaping and beautification (42 mentions) - References to landscaping around businesses, intersections, and public areas (Stern/Secor area)

What's attractive, 2014:

- Parks
- Francis Family YMCA
- Schools
- Library
- Township Hall
- Most neighborhoods
- Small town feel
- Open space
- Sterns/Secor area
- New fire station
- Low profile commercial signage
- Kroger pocket park.

What's unattractive, 2014:

- Roads and potholes
- No pedestrian connectivity or bikeways along major corridors
- No community core
- Underutilized existing downtown areas
- Unkept homes and other property nuisance
- Strip malls
- Vacant properties
- Promoting Township "sprawl"

Unattractive:

1. Dollar General and chain store proliferation (87 mentions) – References to excessive Dollar General stores, chain businesses, and strip mall development
2. Poor road conditions (82 mentions) – References to road quality, potholes, unpaved roads, and infrastructure deterioration
3. Unkept properties/blight (79 mentions) – References to poorly maintained homes, businesses, and properties with junk
4. Excessive development (71 mentions) – References to too many new housing developments, apartments, and overdevelopment
5. Downtown Temperance (52 mentions) - References to downtown Temperance area being run-down
6. Poor park maintenance (48 mentions) – References to parks being in disrepair, poorly maintained, or unattractive
7. Empty/vacant buildings (45 mentions) – References to abandoned buildings, empty storefronts, and unused commercial space
8. Lack of Sidewalks (42 mentions) – References to missing sidewalks and poor pedestrian infrastructure
9. Traffic congestion (39 mentions) – References to traffic problems, congestion, and intersection issues
10. Trailer parks (35 mentions) – References to trailer parks, particularly the one on Summerfield Road

Bedford Township residents find their community attractive because of its natural character, well-maintained parks, and small-town atmosphere. On the other hand, residents find commercial chain proliferation, road deterioration, and inconsistent maintenance standards as Bedford's non attractive qualities.

OPINIONS ON BUSINESS AND SERVICE NEEDS

What other Businesses or services may be needed? (Q10)

Businesses

1. Restaurant (156 total mentions) with:
 - Chick-fil-A (32 mentions)
 - Upscale sit-down restaurants (28 mentions)
 - Other fast casual (25 mentions)
 - Local/non-chain restaurants (22 mentions)
2. Grocery store alternative to Kroger (47 mentions)
3. None, no more development (46 mentions)
4. Recreation and entertainment facilities (42 mentions)
5. Retail stores (35 mentions) – Clothing, general retail, and specialty shops
6. Gas stations (18 mentions) in underserved areas (18 mentions)
7. Healthcare services (16 mentions) such as dentists, medical care, and high quality childcare
8. Industrial and manufacturing (15 mentions) to improve tax base

Other recurring themes noted:

- Desire for locating new commercial development along the Lewis Avenue corridor, avoiding the high traffic area of Sterns/Secor
- Quality concerns about chain businesses
- Preference for re-use of existing buildings as opposed to new construction
- Support for light Industrial development

Services

1. Internet/cable/communications (45 mentions)
2. Waste management services (42 mentions)
3. Recreation/community facilities (38 mentions)
4. No other services (31 mentions)
5. Transportation services (26 mentions)
6. Healthcare services (25 mentions)
7. Infrastructure/utilities (24 mentions)
8. Community events/programs (22 mentions)

Bedford Township residents want selective, high-quality business development focused on restaurants, grocery store competition, and recreation facilities, while resisting further chain store proliferation and generic development. Residents find telecommunications competition, waste management services, and community recreation facilities as their top service priorities.

Businesses Most Needed, 2014

- More specialty restaurants
- Niche stores complimenting Bedford community
- More family entertainment
- A live/work/play-type community
- Recreation center
- Wal-Mart
- Meijer
- Other large department stores

Services Most Needed, 2014

- Sidewalks
- Pedestrian connectivity
- Bike trails
- More kid activities
- Better snow removal
- Bug spraying
- Police
- Increase property inspection/maintenance programs
- Urgent care

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CHARACTERISTICS RANKING

Community Services (Q 11)

1. Bedford Branch library: 538 mentions for excellent rating
2. Fire & EMS: 394 mentions for excellent rating
3. Police protection: 315 mentions for excellent rating
4. Public schools: 273 mentions for excellent rating
5. Parks and recreation: 242 mentions for excellent rating
6. Water service and quality: 234 mentions for excellent rating

Community Characteristics (Q 12)

1. Housing quality: 302 mentions for excellent rating
2. Dining opportunities: 294 mentions for excellent rating
3. Housing diversity: 291 mentions for excellent rating
4. Vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle safety: 392 mentions for poor rating
5. Cultural & entertainment opportunities: 290 mentions for poor rating
6. Shopping opportunities: 249 mentions for poor rating
7. Job opportunities: 189 mentions for poor rating

High-Ranking Community Services/ Qualities, 2014

1. Bedford branch library
2. Fire & EMS
3. Parks
4. Public schools
5. Housing quality

Low Ranking Community Services/ Qualities, 2014

1. Cultural & entertainment opportunities
2. Job opportunities
3. Vehicular/pedestrian/bike safety road conditions
4. Main Road Conditions
5. Residential street conditions

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Residents' Top 5 Most Important Priorities:

1. Park improvement & development: 402 mentions as top 5
2. Streetscape improvements (landscaping, lighting, curb, sidewalks): 350 mentions as top 5
3. Community beautification: 311 mentions for top 5
4. Pedestrian connectivity (bike lanes and pathways): 301 mentions for top 5
5. Agricultural lands protection: 260 mentions for top 5
6. Natural resources preservation: 254 mentions for top 5
7. Infrastructure expansion to accommodate growth: 214 mentions for top 5

Top 5 Community Priorities, 2014

1. Preserve natural resources
2. Community beautification
3. Pedestrian connectivity such as bike lanes and trails
4. Protect remaining agricultural lands
5. Attract/keep services, retail & professional offices

Lower Priorities:

1. Housing diversity: only 78 mentions for top 5
2. Commercial signage guidelines to promote aesthetics: only 80 mentions for top 5
3. Attraction of large retail establishments: only 102 mentions for top 5
4. Community identity only 104 mentions for top 5

FUTURE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OPINIONS

Comments on Bedford's Future Growth and Development (Q 14)

1. Preserve Rural Character/Limit Development (87 mentions) - Desire to keep small-town, rural character and limit further development
2. Infrastructure Concerns (52 mentions) - Concern about road conditions, traffic, and drainage
3. Pedestrian/Bicycle Infrastructure (48 mentions) - Strong demand for sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian safety
4. Parks and Recreation Improvement (41 mentions) - Request for improved parks and recreational facilities
5. Against Retail Chains Store Sentiment (38 mentions) – Opposition to retail chain stores, particularly Dollar General

Other Comments, 2014

1. More pedestrian connectivity, bike lanes, trails, and sidewalks
2. Neighborhoods are the key to Bedford and should be kept free from blight and their infrastructures kept/ updated

6. Downtown Temperance Improvement (30 mentions) - Call for downtown Temperance revitalization
7. Youth/Family Focus (28 mentions) - Attracting young families and addressing youth needs
8. School System Concerns (25 mentions) - Concern about Bedford Schools' quality and competitiveness

SUMMARY

Bedford Township faces a community identity challenge where residents want to preserve rural character while simultaneously demanding high-level services and infrastructure improvements. This creates an impossible contradiction that threatens the community's future sustainability.

- **The Challenge:** How to fund necessary infrastructure improvements and attract young families without destroying the rural character that attracted current residents in the first place.
- **The Demographic Shift:** An aging population, concerns about school quality, and development of senior housing are likely to threaten long-term economic sustainability as the tax base shifts away from families with children.
- **The Infrastructure Issue:** Current roads, utilities, and services cannot manage existing population, let alone added growth, but improvements require the tax revenue that development provides.

A carefully managed approach is needed to:

- Implement a temporary development slowdown while infrastructure catches up
- Create clear standards for acceptable development that preserves character
- Invest heavily in pedestrian infrastructure and park improvements
- Focus remaining development in specific corridors and areas rather than scattered growth
- Address school system concerns to keep and attract young families
- Establish ongoing community dialogue

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

Based on comprehensive feedback from Bedford Township Planning Commission members south early in the planning process (April 2025), several clear themes appear about the Township's future direction. The following summarizes the collective vision and priorities found through the initial feedback.

1. Assets, Strengths, and Opportunities to Build Upon

- **Natural Resources and Community Character.**
Bedford Township's greatest assets center on its unique blend of rural, urban, and suburban convenience that creates a distinctive small-town atmosphere. The Township's proximity to Lake Erie and beautiful parks system provides both recreational opportunities and scenic beauty that defines much of its character. These characteristics, combined with easy access to the Detroit Metropolitan Airport and Toledo facilities, positions Bedford as an attractive community for residents seeking both tranquility and connectivity.
- **Community Services and Amenities.**
The Township library functions as an important center for community life, offering something for everyone across all age groups. The existing parks system, while needing enhancement, provides valuable recreational spaces where families can gather, children can play, and residents can enjoy activities like walking. These facilities foster the community spirit that residents value through local events and traditions.
- **Strategic Market Position**
Bedford Township offers a compelling location as a lower-cost alternative to neighboring communities in Ohio including Perrysburg, Sylvania, Monclova, and Waterville. With more reasonable taxes, the Township is well-positioned to attract residents seeking quality of life at an affordable price. This is particularly relevant as the area becomes a premier retirement destination for Toledo residents in their 50s and 60s who are drawn to the more laid-back feel and newer housing developments designed for this demographic.
- **Economic Development**
Significant opportunities for business growth are found in concentrated commercial areas, particularly around existing road intersections like Sterns/Secor, Sterns/Jackman, Sterns/Lewis, Temperance/Lewis, Consear/Secor, and Smith/Secor. The potential for mixed-use development and the strengthening of three distinct village areas in Lambertville, Temperance, and Samaria stands for a transformative opportunity to create vibrant, walkable communities while preserving agricultural and industrial zones.

2. Weaknesses, Threats, and Areas for Improvement

- **Infrastructure Deficiencies**
The most pressing challenges facing Bedford Township center on infrastructure limitations that constrain growth and quality of life. Roads require significant attention, with members specifically citing the need to widen Sterns and Smith roads, as well as Secor Road between Smith and Sterns, though these improvements are constrained by County priorities. Traffic congestion in mixed-use areas creates safety concerns for residents trying to navigate between their neighborhoods and local businesses.
- **Pedestrian and Connectivity Gaps**
The Township lacks adequate pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, including sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signals, and bike lanes. This deficiency limits walkability and connectivity between residential areas and commercial centers. Modern infrastructure demands extending beyond roads to include internet, television, and telecommunications services that meet contemporary expectations.
- **Parks and Recreation Maintenance**
While the parks system serves as a community asset, facilities require revitalization. Structures appear tired, and grounds including grass areas, parking surfaces, and fencing need improvement. This maintenance backlog threatens the Township's ability to continue attracting families and active residents.

- **Commercial Development Challenges**

The Lewis Avenue corridor is both a significant opportunity and a weakness. This area requires development focus as a top priority, with the Township needing to work proactively with real estate representatives to promote growth. Outdated zoning ordinances, such as restrictions preventing gas stations within 500 feet of schools, create barriers to investment. The Township's approach to zoning has been reactive rather than intentional, limiting its ability to promote vacant properties and create an investment-friendly environment.

- **Housing Diversity**

The community lacks sufficient smaller and affordable housing options that would benefit residents across different life stages and income levels. This gap limits the Township's ability to accommodate diverse demographic needs and could constrain future growth.

3. Future Vision for Bedford Township

- **Balanced Growth Strategy**

Twenty to 25 years from now, Planning Commission members envision Bedford Township as a community that has successfully balanced growth with character preservation. The Township will keep its small-town atmosphere while accommodating family-friendly developments and expanded recreational opportunities. This vision includes the development of three distinct, walkable village areas that offer diverse amenities while preserving agricultural and industrial zones.

- **Demographic-Responsive Planning**

The future Bedford will be designed with intentional consideration of its evolving demographics, particularly the growing baby boomer population seeking retirement-friendly communities. Planning decisions will align with the needs of residents across all life stages, from young families to aging adults, ensuring that infrastructure, housing, and services meet diverse community needs.

- **Fiscal Responsibility and Governance**

The Township's future success depends on keeping fiscally responsible governance guided by the Master Plan. Decision-making will consistently prioritize residents' best interests, ensuring that property taxes stay reasonable while supporting and improving valued amenities. Annual budgets will be sufficient not only to keep but to enhance existing facilities and infrastructure.

- **Infrastructure and Connectivity Excellence**

Future Bedford will feature modern infrastructure that meets demands, including improved roads, expanded sidewalk networks, and enhanced telecommunications capabilities. Traffic safety will be prioritized in mixed-use areas, with improvements implemented along key corridors. Public transportation options will connect downtown areas, making it easy for residents to travel between different community centers.

- **Economic Development Success**

The Township will maximize use of existing vacant retail buildings while supporting sustainable commercial real estate development in appropriately zoned areas. Local businesses will thrive through targeted support including grants, low-interest loans, and marketing assistance. The community will have successfully developed anchor retail establishments that support economic growth while keeping the Township's character.

- **Community Engagement and Quality of Life**

Future Bedford will be characterized by strong community engagement, with local businesses, schools, churches, and residents actively taking part in community events. The township will have invested successfully in Bedford Public Schools, ensuring the education system meets residents' expectations. Quality single-family and appropriately located multi-family residential developments will provide housing options that support community growth while maintaining neighborhood character.

- **Environmental Stewardship**

While maintaining fiscal responsibility, the Township will implement sustainable practices in development and infrastructure improvements. Environmental protection will be balanced with economic development needs, ensuring long-term community health and well-being without sacrificing growth objectives.

JOINT MEETING

A joint meeting of the Bedford Township Board of Trustees and the Planning Commission took place at the Township Hall on May 14, 2025. A total of 16 participants signed up. The participants were asked to vote on the objectives that they felt were most important to them for each of the goals presented. Both goals and objectives were taken from the 2015 Master Plan. The following is a summary of the feedback.

GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS & HOUSING

Goal: Strengthen and enhance Bedford's residential neighborhoods, offering a range of high-quality housing opportunities that meet the needs of all residents.

Objectives:

1. Promote rehabilitation of aging housing and eliminate blight - 13 votes.
2. Increase street and sidewalk connectivity to promote walkable, livable neighborhoods - 11 votes.
3. Ensure design standards reflect the Township's character and quality expectations - 8 votes.
4. Support existing neighborhoods and encourage compatible infill development - 7 votes.
5. Promote higher-density housing in the traditional, mixed-use character of the Village Centers (Samaria, Temperance, and Lambertville), and in other, limited, designated areas of the Township - 4 votes.
6. Provide for a range of housing types, including innovative types like accessory dwelling units to accommodate all stages of life including young families and aging adults - 3 votes.
7. Strengthen buffers between conflicting land uses such as low and high intensity residential developments - 1 vote.
8. Support new residential development in areas of the Township with adequate infrastructure - 1 vote.
9. Provide for development on larger lot size in the northern area of the Township.

QUALITY COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

Goal: Keep and improve the Township's public facilities and services to ensure safety, functionality, and a high quality of life.

Objectives:

1. Ensure adequate police, fire, and emergency services - 12 votes.
2. Support parks and recreation improvements and community events - 10 votes.
3. Maintain Township-owned buildings, infrastructure, and equipment - 9 votes.
4. Review the Township's capital improvement plan annually as directed by the Township Board - 8 votes.
5. Enhance collaboration with adjacent Townships to address multi-jurisdictional issues such as those related to land use planning, public services, and transportation - 3 votes.
6. Maintain an up-to-date Community Recreation Plan approved by the MDNR and pursue state grant funding for parkland acquisition and development.
7. Collaborate with the Bedford DDA, schools, libraries, senior services, and regional partners for services and community events.
8. Community event building and more parking locations.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & VITALITY

Goal: Promote economic growth and attract businesses that support local jobs, enhance the Township's tax base, and strengthen Village Centers.

Objectives:

1. Encourage redevelopment or reuse of underutilized commercial and industrial sites - 15 votes.
2. Apply high standards for design, landscaping, and signage in commercial and industrial areas - 11 votes.
3. Encourage mixed-use developments in Village Centers - 5 votes.

4. Attract and support diverse commercial, office, and industrial uses - 5 votes.
5. Strengthen buffers between conflicting land uses such as businesses and residential areas - 5 votes.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal: Develop a safe, efficient, and multimodal transportation network that supports local mobility while protecting Bedford Township's character.

Objectives:

1. Plan for future water and sewer service areas to guide responsible growth - 11 votes.
2. Refine the non-motorized transportation plan building on the regional network and expanding walking and biking opportunities - 9 votes.
3. Prioritize improvements that enhance safety and respect community context - 8 votes.
4. Implement access management practices to preserve roadway function along the Township's major arteries in the southern half of the Township - 8 votes.
5. Support and expand public transit options.
6. Widen roads where they are in high density areas and traffic is very congested.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER, FARMLAND & OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

Goal: Preserve the Township's rural landscapes, agricultural lands, and natural features as key elements of its identity and economy.

Objectives:

1. Support agriculture as a major land use and economic driver - 9 votes.
2. Explore tools like conservation easements and purchase of development rights to preserve farmland and open space - 8 votes.
3. Promote conservation of open spaces, scenic views, and environmental features - 7 votes.
4. Encourage policies that conserve energy and protect the environment - 3 votes.
5. Encourage farmers to enroll their farms in the PA 116 preservation program.

SUMMARY:

Based on the final tally from the Bedford Township Master Plan workshop, several priorities appear from the input received:

- Economic revitalization stands out as one of the top concerns, with participants overwhelmingly supporting the redevelopment of underutilized commercial and industrial sites (15 votes) and applying high design standards to commercial areas (11 votes).
- Housing quality and neighborhood improvement also resonated strongly, particularly the need to rehabilitate aging housing and cut blight (13 votes) and increase street and sidewalk connectivity for walkable neighborhoods (11 votes).
- Public safety and infrastructure are core priorities, as shown by strong support for adequate police, fire, and emergency services (12 votes), and planning future water and sewer service areas (11 votes).
- The community showed great interest in preserving Bedford's rural character through agricultural support (9 votes) and conservation tools (8 votes), while also embracing non-motorized transportation improvements like walking and biking opportunities (9 votes). Parks and recreational improvements also have meaningful support (10 votes).

Participants appear to show the least interest in new residential development or higher density housing options, suggesting the community prefers improving existing neighborhoods over expansion. This pattern shows Bedford Township officials want strategic investment focused on rehabilitating what exists and on keeping rural character.

OPEN HOUSE

A public open house was held at the Township Hall on September 29, 2025. The six participants were asked to vote on the objectives they felt were most important for each of the updated goals presented. Their feedback generally aligns with previous input: residents emphasized preserving the Township's rural character, improving street and sidewalk connectivity, and ensuring adequate police, fire, and emergency services.

GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS & HOUSING

Goal 1 | Strengthen and enhance Bedford's residential neighborhoods, providing a range of high-quality housing opportunities that meet the needs of all residents.

Objectives:

- 1.1. Ensure that new developments harmoniously integrate into the environment and complement the character of existing uses by developing design standards that reflect the Township's high quality expectations.
- 1.2. Support existing neighborhoods and foster compatible development/redevelopment of vacant properties.
- 1.3. Expand housing opportunities to cater to all stages of life, including young professionals, young families, aging adults, and others within the lower and medium income range - 1 vote.
- 1.4. Promote and direct higher density housing development in the Village Centers, and in other, limited areas of the Township, fostering a mix of uses including residential development integrated with commercial and office uses, community services, and improved walkability and connectivity to adjoining areas.
- 1.5. Promote rehabilitation of aging housing and eliminate blight -1 vote.
- 1.6. Increase street and sidewalk connectivity to promote walkable, livable neighborhoods - 3 votes.
- 1.7. Strengthen buffers between conflicting land uses such as low and high intensity residential developments - 1 vote.
- 1.8. Support new residential development in areas of the Township with adequate infrastructure - 1 vote.

QUALITY COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

Goal 2 | Maintain and improve the Township's public facilities and services to ensure safety, functionality, and a high quality of life.

Objectives:

- 2.1. Ensure adequate police, fire, and emergency services - 3 votes.
- 2.2. Support parks and recreation improvements as well as increased community events - 1 vote.
- 2.3. Establish and expand non-motorized pathways that connect parks and other destinations within the Township and outside the community - 1 vote.
- 2.4. Maintain Township-owned buildings, infrastructure, and equipment.
- 2.5. Review the Township's capital improvement plan annually as directed by the Township Board.
- 2.6. Enhance collaboration with adjacent townships to address multi-jurisdictional issues such as those related to land use planning, public services, and transportation.
- 2.7. Maintain an up-to-date Community Recreation Plan approved by the MDNR and pursue state grant funding for parkland acquisition and development.
- 2.8. Collaborate with the Bedford DDA, schools, libraries, senior services, and regional partners for services and community events.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & VITALITY

Goal 3 | Plan for economic growth and a mix of uses along the Lewis Avenue corridor and other limited areas of the Township and attract businesses that support and align with the needs of residents.

Objectives:

- 3.1. Encourage redevelopment or reuse of underutilized commercial and industrial sites - 1 vote.
- 3.2. Apply high standards for design, landscaping, and signage in commercial and industrial areas - 2 votes.
- 3.3. Encourage mixed-use developments in Village Centers.
- 3.4. Foster the growth of commercial, office, research, and light industrial sectors, providing year-round stable employment opportunities that align with Township residents' needs.
- 3.5. Develop a comprehensive plan for the Lewis Avenue corridor to identify strategies for redevelopment, traffic calming, access management, pedestrian/bicycle accommodations, streetscape improvement, economic development, mixed-use opportunities, and other land use initiatives.
- 3.6. Strengthen buffers between conflicting land uses such as businesses and residential areas.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal 4 | Develop a safe, efficient, and multimodal transportation network that supports local mobility while protecting Bedford Township's character.

Objectives:

- 4.1. Maintain and enhance the Township road system for the safe and effective flow of all users.
- 4.2. Work with the Road Commission to implement access management solutions aimed at improving safety along Lewis Avenue and other major Township arteries.
- 4.3. Expand non-motorized opportunities in alignment with the regional network to increase walking and biking - 2 votes.
- 4.4. Prioritize improvements that enhance safety and respect community context - 1 vote.
- 4.5. Implement access management practices to preserve roadway function along the Township's major arteries in the southern half of the Township.
- 4.6. Support and expand public transit options - 1 vote.
- 4.7. Widen roads where they are in high density areas and traffic is very congested.
- 4.8. Plan for future water and sewer service areas to guide responsible growth - 1 vote.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER, FARMLAND & OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

Goal 5 | Encourage and shape the Township's future growth while balancing the preservation of open space, farmland, cultural, and natural features.

Objectives:

- 5.1. Preserve the Township's character by minimizing impacts on farmlands, woodlands, and wetlands - 4 votes.
- 5.2. Support active farming and the economic viability of agriculture by promoting value-added farm activities, such as agritourism, farm stands, vineyards, wineries, home businesses, and other local initiatives - 3 votes.
- 5.3. Promote the preservation of eligible historic structures and properties - 1 vote.
- 5.4. Encourage policies that conserve energy and protect the environment - 1 vote.
- 5.5. Encourage farmers to enroll their farms in the P.A .116 preservation program - 1 vote.

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Goal 6 | Enhance collaboration with adjacent Townships, Monroe County and other stakeholders to achieve areawide consistent land use planning and needed infrastructure development.

Objectives:

- 6.1. Collaborate with other units of government, as needed to address specific multi-jurisdictional issues as they arise, such as those related to land use planning, recreation, public services, or transportation.
- 6.2. Establish an intergovernmental group comprised of adjoining Townships, Monroe County, and others to develop areawide land use initiatives.