

ARGENTINE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN



***ADOPTED
JANUARY 30, 2023***



RESOLUTION 2023-2

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A MASTER PLAN FOR ARGENTINE TOWNSHIP

At a regular meeting of the Argentine Township Board of Trustees, called to order by Supervisor Saad on January 30, 2023, at 7:00 pm;

Present: Saad, Graves, Schmidt, Hallman, James;

Absent: [NONE];

The following resolution was offered by James and supported by Hallman;

WHEREAS, the Planning Enabling Act (*PA 33 of 2008*) provided for a township planning commission to prepare, amend, and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the community; and

WHEREAS, the Argentine Township Planning Commission has prepared a Master Plan for the Township, in compliance with the Planning Enabling Act, including relevant charts, maps, and text; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has provided opportunity for public input into the Master Planning process; and

WHEREAS, the Township Board approved and subsequently distributed a draft copy of the Master Plan to all bodies required by the Zoning Enabling Act for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, no person or entity submitted comments indicating that the proposed Master Plan is substantially inconsistent with the Master Plan of any adjacent community; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a duly-noticed public hearing on the Master Plan on January 14, 2022; and

WHEREAS, based on the consideration of public comments, the Planning Commission is satisfied that the Master Plan is ready for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the Township Board asserts its right to approve the Master Plan, in accordance with the Planning Enabling Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Argentine Township Board of Trustees, upon recommendation from the Planning Commission, has reviewed and approved the Master Plan.

YEAS: Saad, Graves, Schmidt, Hallman, James

NAYS: [NONE]

ABSENT: [NONE]



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Board of Trustees

Brian Saad, Supervisor

Joseph Graves, Clerk

Norman Schmidt, Treasurer

Tom Hallman, Trustee

Gwynne James, Trustee

Planning Commission

Gregory Smith, Chair

Matt Frederick, Member

Robert St. John, Sr, Member

Roger Kelley, Member

Gwynne James, Township Board Representative

Phyliss Pross, Recording Secretary

Township Staff

Becky Nemecheck

Leslie Renckly

Others

Genesee County GIS Department

Genesee County Water Resources Commissioner

Genesee County Road Commission



Master Plan Prepared by Carlisle Wortman Associates



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1. Introduction



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Master Plan

Planning is a process that involves the conscious selection of policy choices related to land use, growth, and physical development of the community. The purpose of the Argentine Township Master Plan is to state the goals and identify the objectives and strategies regarding land use and development that the Township will pursue to achieve those goals.

1.2 How is the Master Plan Used

Master Plans serve many functions and are used in a variety of ways, as described below.

- 1) Most importantly, the Master Plan is a general statement of the Township's goals and objectives and provides a single, comprehensive view of the community's desires for the future.
- 2) The Master Plan serves as an aid in daily decision making. The goals and objectives outlined in the Master Plan provide guidance for the Planning Commission, Township Board, and other Township bodies in their deliberations on zoning, subdivision, capital improvements, and other matters related to land use and development. The Master Plan provides a stable, long-term basis for decision making, providing for a balance of land uses specific to the character of Argentine Township.
- 3) The Master Plan provides the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are made. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (*PA 110 of 2006*) requires that zoning ordinances be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare. It is important to note that the Master Plan and accompanying maps do not replace other Township Ordinances, specifically the Zoning Ordinance and Map.

- 4) The Master Plan attempts to coordinate public improvements and private developments. For example, public investments such as road or other infrastructure improvements should be located in areas identified in the Master Plan as resulting in the greatest benefit to the Township and its residents.
- 5) Finally, the Master Plan serves as an educational tool, providing citizens, property owners, developers, and adjacent communities a clear indication of the Township's direction for the future.

In summary, the Argentine Township Master Plan is the only officially-adopted document that sets forth a comprehensive agenda for the achievement of goals and objectives. It is a long-range statement of general goals and objectives aimed at the unified and coordinated development of the Township in a manner that compliments the goals of nearby governmental units, wherever possible. It helps develop a balance of orderly change in a deliberate and controlled manner. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.

1.3 Authority to Prepare Master Plan

The Township's authority to prepare a master plan comes from the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008), which states:

- (1) A local unit of government may adopt, amend, and implement a master plan as provided in this act.*
- (2) The general purpose of a master plan is to guide and accomplish, in the planning jurisdiction and its environs, development that satisfies all of the following criteria:*
 - a) Is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical.*
 - b) Considers the character of the planning jurisdiction and its suitability for particular uses, judged in terms of such factors as trends in land and population development.*

- c) Will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare.*
- d) Includes, among other things, promotion of or adequate provision for 1 or more of the following:*
 - i. A system of transportation to lessen congestion on streets and provide for safe and efficient movement of people and goods by motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal users.*
 - ii. Safety from fire and other dangers.*
 - iii. Light and air.*
 - iv. Healthful and convenient distribution of population.*
 - v. Good civic design and arrangement and wise and efficient expenditure of public funds.*
 - vi. Public utilities such as sewage disposal and water supply and other public improvements.*
 - vii. Recreation.*
 - viii. The use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability.*

1.4 Historical Context

This Master Plan represents Argentine Township's most-recent master plan. The previous Master Plan was last amended in 2014.

Because communities are constantly changing, the information contained in a master plan becomes outdated over time. As conditions change, so do opportunities and expectations for the future. It is essential to periodically update the information contained in the Master Plan and reevaluate its basic vision and implementation programs. State law requires review of master plans at least every five years.

1.5 Planning Process

The process used to develop this Master Plan consists of three main phases, described below.

- 1) **Where are we now?** The first phase involves a review of demographics, economic conditions, natural resources, and the physical context of the Township. In this phase, Township resources are inventoried, updated, and mapped to document existing resources and assess their conditions. A community-wide survey was also conducted to gather opinions and preferences from residents and property owners.
- 2) **Where do we want to be?** The second phase in the planning process involves development of goals, objectives, and strategies outlining the community's vision for what it wants to be in the future.
- 3) **How do we get there?** The final phase involves identifying specific steps and policies for the Township to pursue in order to achieve the community's vision, including updating the future land use map to illustrate the desired arrangement of land uses within the Township.

1.6 Regional Setting

It is important to consider the region surrounding Argentine Township. The Township is surrounded by rural communities, growing suburban communities, and several cities. Appropriate planning across borders will help facilitate compatible land use patterns between communities.

The Township is located between southeastern Michigan and the Saginaw Bay region. The cities of Fenton and Linden are located to the east. The village of Byron is located to the west, and the village of Gains is located to the north. Gaines Township lies to the north; Vernon Township to the northwest; Burns

Introduction

Township to the west; Cohoctah Township to the southwest; Deerfield Township to the south; Tyrone Township to the southeast; Fenton Township to the east, and Mundy Township to the northeast.

The City of Flint, Genesee County's largest city and the county seat, is roughly 12 miles northeast of Argentine Township; the City of Ann Arbor is roughly 35 miles south; and the City of Detroit is roughly 45 miles to the southeast.

Silver Lake Road is the main east/west route through Argentine Township, connecting it with US-23 to the east. The lack of immediate freeway access has contributed to the Township's continued rural/agricultural character.

A [Regional Map](#) is located in Section A.1 of Appendix A, page A-1.

2. Background Studies



2. BACKGROUND STUDIES

Before developing a master plan and land use plan for Argentine Township, a comprehensive inventory of physical, cultural, and natural resources must be conducted. Information gathered through this process is necessary for the accurate projection of future development patterns and the establishment of management policies.

2.1 Historic Growth and Development Trends

Argentine Township was founded in 1836. The first settlers in the Township were James H Murray and William Lobdell. Mr. Murray purchased 40 acre lots in order to secure water privilege along Ore Creek. Soon after acquiring this land, Mr. Murray constructed a dam, sawmill, and grist mill. This was followed by a post office, general store, and other commercial establishments.

The Wolcott Mill and the Grand Trunk and Western Railroad helped settle the Township and establish an agricultural lifestyle.

Although no longer being used as a grist mill, the mill in the village area was listed by the State Register of Historic Places as the last operational water-powered custom grist and feed mill in the state and the structure will remain an important centerpiece of the Township's history.

As surrounding communities grew, such as the Flint Metropolitan area, City of Fenton, and the City of Linden, residential growth in Argentine Township also increased.

Residential growth after World War II has changed the agricultural character of the Township from a community that was totally reliant upon agricultural uses to a community that provides attractive residential settings for residents involved in manufacturing or other forms of employment. Today, only a small percentage of the Township's population is actively engaged in agricultural uses. This reflects a growing trend away from agriculture to manufacturing and service-related industries and reflects the gains of productivity in the agricultural industry.

2.2 Population

Several important recent population trends in Argentine Township are as follows:

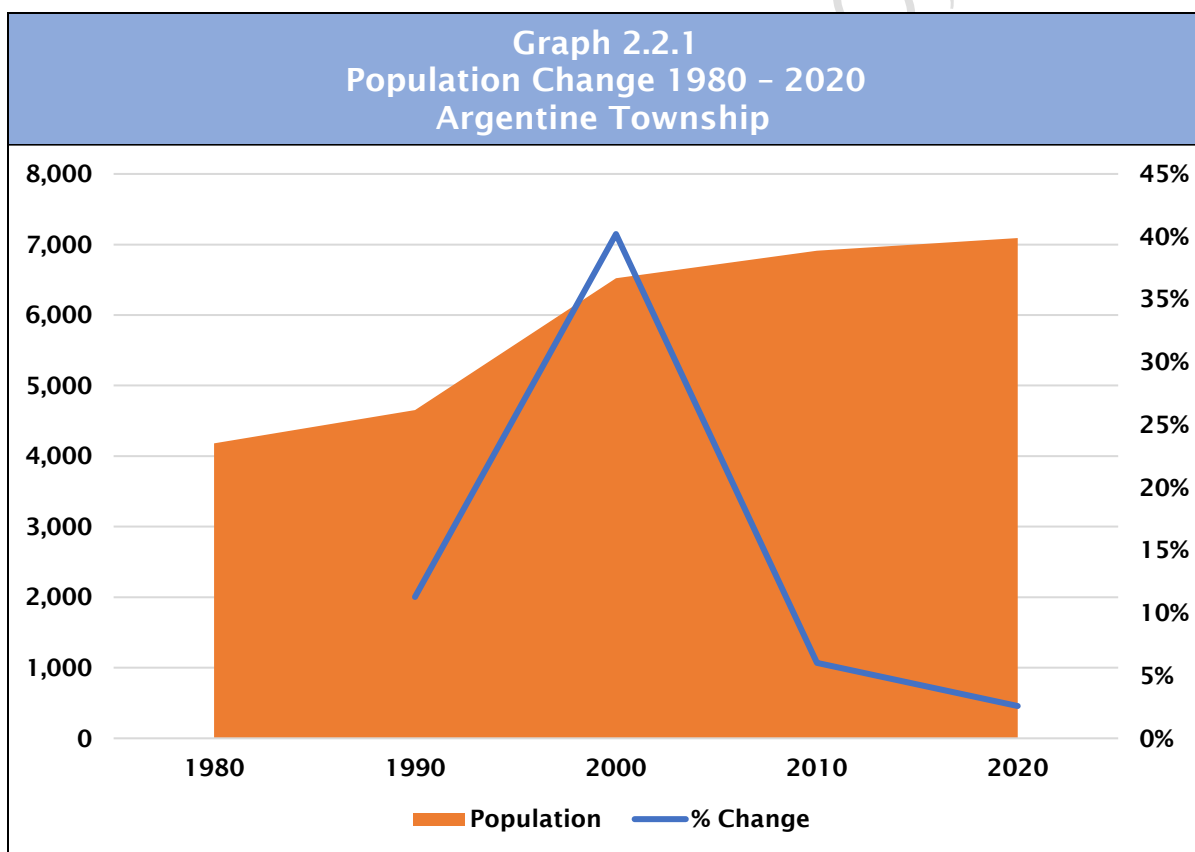
- The population has continued to increase, but at a much slower rate.
- The population growth is strong relative to most of the Township's neighbors and the County.
- The median age of residents is higher than that the State and the County.
- The age distribution is skewed to people in the final years of working and early retirement, which has been a growing cohort, with another notable group of school age children, which has been a decreasing cohort.

According to the 2020 Census, the population of Argentine Township is 7,091.

The population has grown by 178 people over the 10-year period between 2010 and 2020 and by 2,911 people over the 40-year period between 1980 and 2020. While the Township's population has grown significantly since 1980, the largest growth was between 1990 and 2000. The most recent periods, between 2000 and 2010 and between 2010 and 2020, have seen a more modest population growth.

Table 2.2.1 Population Change 1980 - 2020 Argentine Township			
Year	Population	# Change	% Change
1980	4,180	-	-
1990	4,651	+ 471	+ 11.3%
2000	6,521	+ 1,870	+ 40.2%
2010	6,913	+ 392	+ 6.0%
2020	7,091	+ 178	+ 2.6%
Total change 1980-2020		+ 2,911	+ 69.6%

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census)



(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census)

From 1980 to 2020, the Township saw larger population growth than most of the surrounding communities.

Several surrounding communities saw similar population growth, such as Tyrone Township, Deerfield Township, City of Linden, and City of Fenton. Some surrounding communities, such as Vernon Township, Village of Byron, and Genesee County experienced population decreases.

Table 2.2.2 Population Change 1980 - 2020 Argentine Township and Surrounding Communities						
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	% Change 1980-2020
Deerfield Township	2,611	3,000	4,087	4,170	5,764	120.7%
Tyrone Township	6,077	6,854	8,459	10,020	11,986	97.2%
City of Linden	2,174	2,407	2,861	3,991	4,142	90.5%
Argentine Township	4,180	4,651	6,521	6,913	7,091	69.6%
City of Fenton	8,098	8,434	10,582	11,756	12,050	48.8%
Fenton Township	11,744	10,073	12,968	15,552	16,843	43.4%
Mundy Township	10,786	11,536	12,191	15,082	15,281	41.6%
Cohoctah Township	2,436	2,693	3,394	3,317	3,246	33.2%
Gaines Township	5,209	5,391	6,491	6,820	6,664	27.9%
Burns Township	3,273	3,019	3,500	3,457	3,280	0.2%
Vernon Township	5,038	4,989	4,980	4,614	4,273	-15.1%
Village of Byron	689	573	595	581	545	-20.9%
Genesee County	450,449	430,459	436,141	425,790	406,211	-9.8%

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

The median age in the Township has been continued to increase, with a noticeable increase in those 65 years and older and a noticeable decrease in those under 18 years of age. The population is older than both the County and the State.

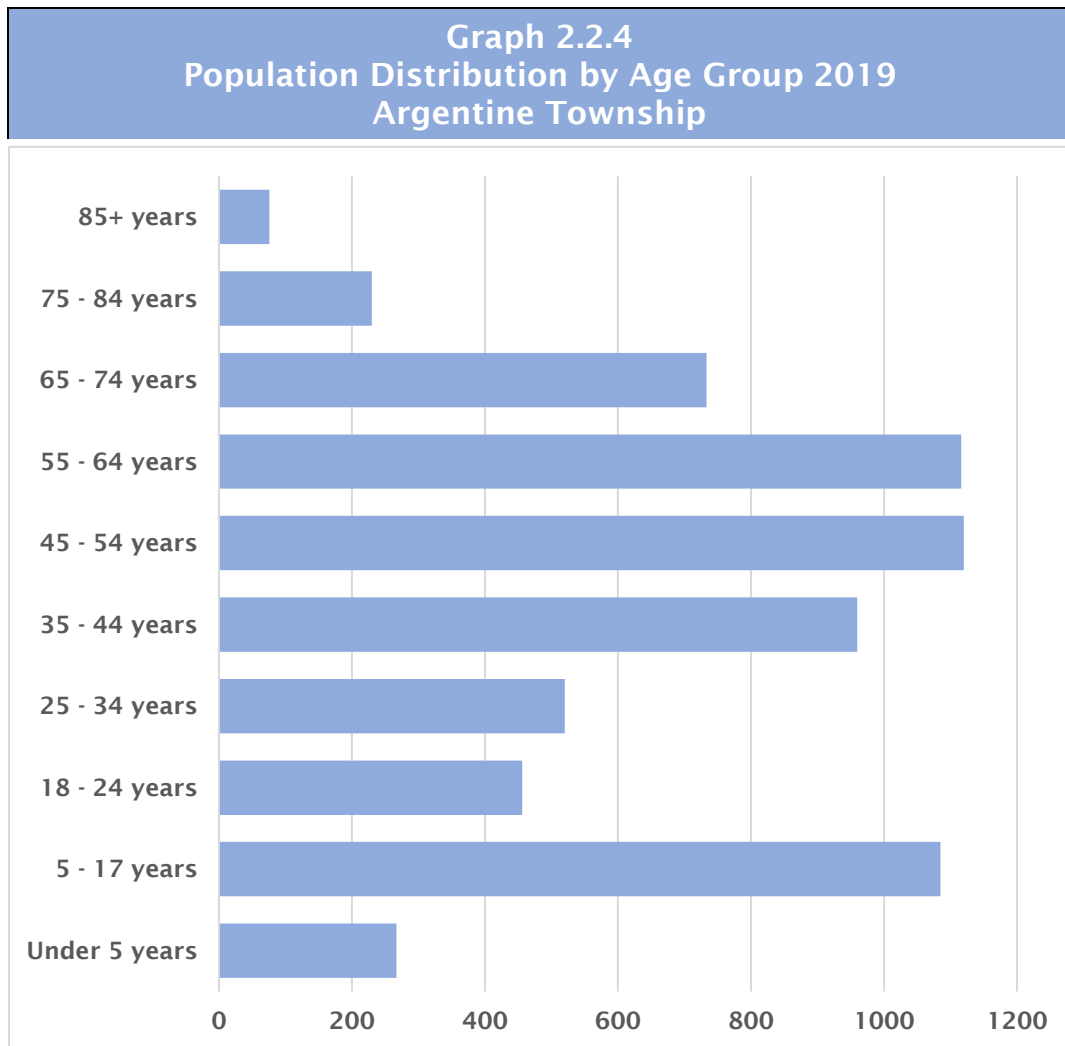
Table 2.2.3 General Population and Age Characteristics Argentine Township, Genesee County, State of Michigan									
	Argentine Township			Genesee County			State of Michigan		
	2000	2010	2020	2000	2010	2020	2000	2010	2020
Population	6,521	6,913	7,091	436,141	425,790	406,221	9,938,444	9,883,640	10,077,331
Median Age	34.4	40.3	48.1	35.0	38.5	40.5	35.5	38.9	39.7
Under 18 years	1,937	1,763	1,352	119,601	106,579	92,788	2,595,767	2,344,068	2,177,878
Percent of Total	29.7%	25.5%	20.6%	27.4%	25.0%	22.7%	26.1%	23.7%	21.9%
65 years and over	460	730	1,092	50,607	58,189	69,337	1,219,018	1,361,530	1,666,343
Percent of Total	7.0%	10.5%	15.3%	11.6%	14.0%	17.0%	12.3%	13.8%	16.7%

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

The largest population groups in the Township are people aged 45-54 years old and 55-64 years old, followed by people aged 5 to 17 years old.

Table 2.2.4 Population Distribution by Age Group 2019 Argentine Township		
	Persons	%
Under 5 years	267	4%
5 - 17 years	1,085	17%
18 - 24 years	456	6%
25 - 34 years	520	8%
35 - 44 years	960	15%
45 - 54 years	1,120	17%
55 - 64 years	1,116	17%
65 - 74 years	733	11%
75 - 84 years	230	4%
85+ years	76	1%

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)



(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

2.3 Housing

Most housing in Argentine Township is single-family dwelling units, roughly 89 percent. They are primarily occupied by owners and married households. A relatively large percentage, roughly 23 percent, of households are non-family households.

General Housing Characteristics

General housing characteristics for the Township are described below.

Table 2.3.1
General Housing Characteristics 2019
Argentine Township

HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE	
	2019
Total Households	2,465

Family households	1,889
Married couple HH	1,533
Percent of total	62.2%

Non-family household	576
Percent of total	23.3%

Householder living alone	462
Living alone and 65+	132

Persons in households	6,506
Persons per household	2.64

HOUSING UNITS AND OCCUPANCY	
	2019
Total Units	2,791

Occupied Units	2,465
Owner Occupied Units	2,292
Percent Owner Occupied	93.0%

Renter Occupied Units	173
Seasonal/Vacation Units	-

Vacant housing units	326
Owner vacancy rate	1.1
Renter vacancy rate	15.6

Persons per owned unit	2.68
Persons per rented unit	2.07

UNITS IN STRUCTURE	
	2019
1 unit, detached	2,505
1 unit, attached	0
2 to 4 units	64
5 to 9 units	67
10 or more units	6
Mobile homes	149

VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED UNITS	
	2019
Number owner-occupied	2,292
Less than \$50,000	213
\$50,000 to 99,999	132
\$100,000 to 199,000	681
\$200,000 or more	1,623
Median value	\$216,000

RENTAL RATES	
	2019
Renter-occupied units	173
Less than \$500	0
\$500 to \$999	121
\$1,000 to \$1,499	40
\$1,500 or more	12
No Cash Rent	0
Median Rent	\$787

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

In the community survey, 80 percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that there was a good variety of housing options in the Township. Support was strongest for detached single-family dwellings. There was also strong support for accessory dwellings, senior housing, and affordable housing.

Household Size

In 2010, Argentine Township had the second highest number of persons per household, compared to neighboring communities. The household size decreased slightly in 2019, but the average household size remains larger than most surrounding communities.

Table 2.3.2 Persons Per Household 2010 - 2020 Argentine Township and Surrounding Communities			
	2010	2020	Change
City of Linden	2.52	2.92	0.40
Tyrone Township	2.87	2.79	-0.08
Burns Township	2.69	2.66	-0.03
Argentine Township	2.84	2.64	-0.20
City of Fenton	2.27	2.60	0.33
Village of Byron	2.28	2.56	0.28
Deerfield Township	2.83	2.55	-0.28
Fenton Township	2.58	2.54	-0.04
Gaines Township	2.82	2.40	-0.42
Mundy Township	2.41	2.37	-0.04
Vernon Township	2.40	2.37	-0.03
Cohoctah Township	2.77	2.21	-0.56
Genesee County	2.53	2.46	-0.07

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

Building Permits

As noted below, Argentine Township has experienced a notable increase in the number of building permits for housing starting in 2016, but the number of building permits for new housing remains lower than most of the nearby communities in Genesee County.

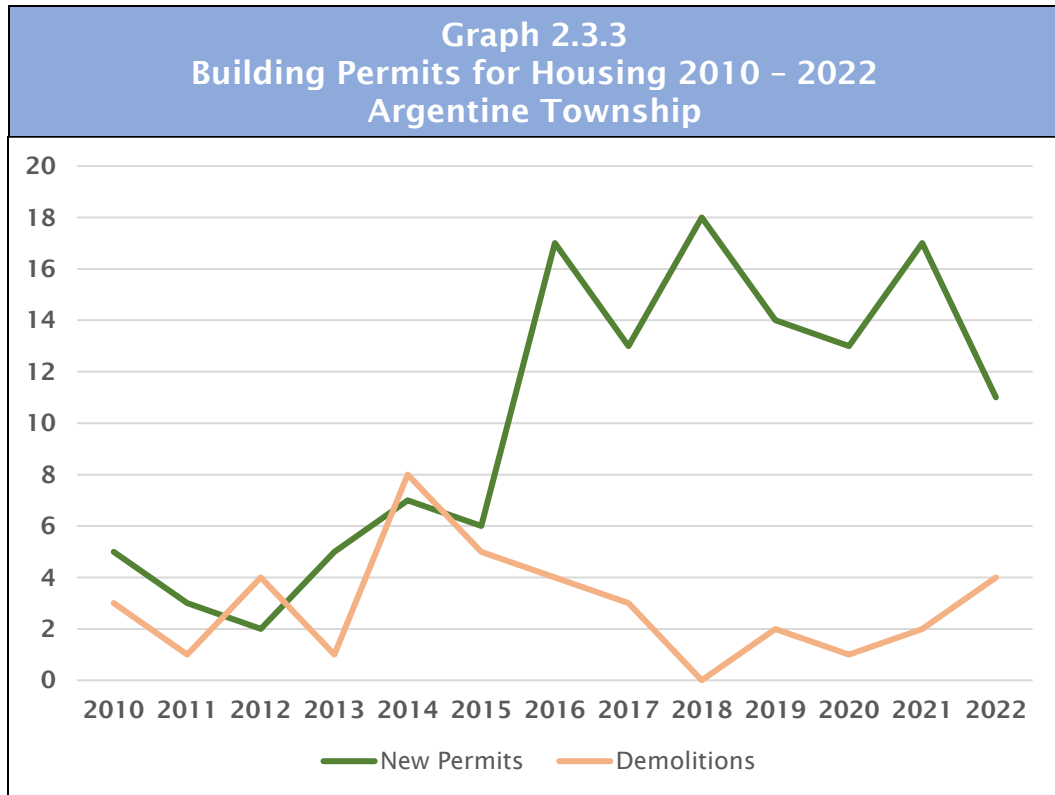
Building permits can serve as an indicator of growth and development within a community, reflecting demand for new housing.

In the community survey, 73 percent of respondents described the level of residential development over the past 10 years as about right.

The permits noted below are for new housing and demolition of existing housing. Additions, garages, and accessory buildings are excluded from this this total.

Table 2.3.3 Building Permits for Housing 2010 - 2022 Argentine Township		
	New Permits	Demolitions
2010	5	3
2011	3	1
2012	2	4
2013	5	1
2014	7	8
2015	6	5
2016	17	4
2017	13	3
2018	18	0
2019	14	2
2020	13	1
2021	17	2
2022	11	4
Total	131	38

(Source: Argentine Building Department)



(Source: Argentine Building Department)

2.4 Income and Poverty

Median household income in Argentine Township is higher than the County and State. It is near the middle relative to neighboring communities.

The Township's per capita income is higher than the County and State. It is near the middle relative to neighboring communities.

Table 2.4.1 Median Household and Per Capita Income 2019 Argentine Township and Surrounding Communities		
	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income
Tyrone Township	\$100,444	\$43,051
Fenton Township	\$91,467	\$43,037
Deerfield Township	\$82,976	\$31,982
Gaines Township	\$79,625	\$32,829
Argentine Township	\$73,693	\$32,946
City of Linden	\$72,933	\$37,704
Cohoctah Township	\$72,633	\$33,299
Mundy Township	\$65,847	\$36,091
City of Fenton	\$62,950	\$30,836
Burns Township	\$61,612	\$29,451
Vernon Township	\$59,632	\$27,574
Village of Byron	\$59,375	\$25,100
Genesee County	\$48,588	\$27,295
State of Michigan	\$57,144	\$31,713

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

The percent of residents below poverty level in the Township is significantly lower than the County and the State but is higher than many of the surrounding communities.

Table 2.4.2
Percent Below Poverty Level 2019
Argentine Township and Surrounding Communities

	Percent Below Poverty Level
Village of Byron	14.6%
Vernon Township	12.5%
City of Fenton	11.1%
Deerfield Township	10.7%
Argentine Township	7.8%
Cohoctah Township	6.7%
City of Linden	6.5%
Mundy Township	5.6%
Gaines Township	5.1%
Fenton Township	4.9%
Burns Township	4.8%
Tyrone Township	4.7%
Genesee County	18.9%
State of Michigan	14.4%

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

2.5 Economic Base

While Argentine Township is primarily a residential and agricultural community, there are commercial and industrial activities, primarily focused in the village area and along Silver Lake Road.

In the community survey, 63 percent of respondents agreed that the level of non-residential development was about right over the past 10 years.

Property Value

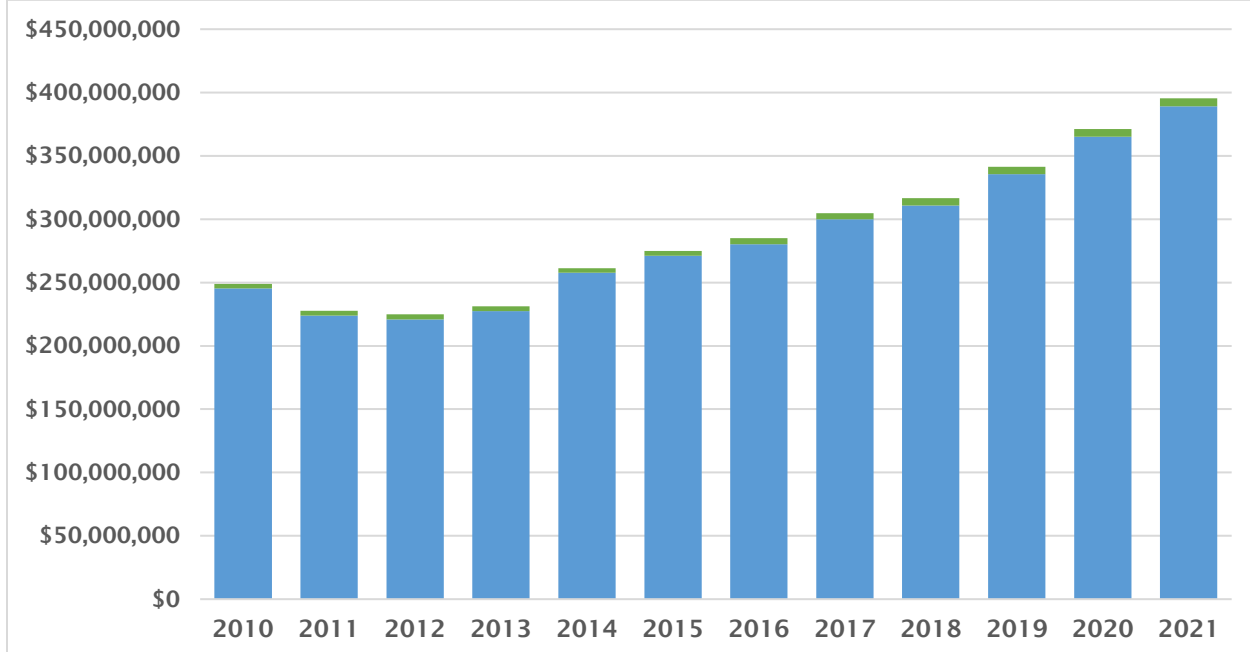
Property values can serve as an indicator of the economic health of the community and provide the basis for funding public services.

After a significant reduction in the state equalized value of properties in the Township during and immediately following the Great Recession, the value started to increase in 2013 and has since grown substantially higher than it was before the downturn.

Table 2.5.1
State Equalized Value 2010 - 2021
Argentine Township

	Agriculture	Commercial	Industrial	Residential	Real Total	Personal	Ad Valorem Total
2010	\$25,900,300	\$7,780,300	\$496,900	\$211,111,300	\$245,288,800	\$3,518,200	\$248,807,000
2011	\$24,902,700	\$7,713,600	\$469,100	\$190,847,900	\$223,933,300	\$3,723,950	\$227,657,250
2012	\$22,276,600	\$7,373,600	\$440,100	\$190,881,200	\$220,971,500	\$3,901,500	\$224,873,000
2013	\$18,334,361	\$7,159,400	\$414,400	\$201,529,830	\$227,437,991	\$3,871,800	\$231,309,791
2014	\$17,900,700	\$7,103,900	\$413,800	\$232,301,375	\$257,719,775	\$3,602,400	\$261,322,175
2015	\$18,429,500	\$7,541,600	\$416,800	\$244,823,200	\$271,211,100	\$3,747,100	\$274,958,200
2016	\$19,117,700	\$7,698,400	\$425,100	\$252,922,810	\$280,164,010	\$4,970,900	\$285,134,910
2017	\$19,419,800	\$7,855,700	\$425,100	\$272,200,373	\$299,900,973	\$4,771,000	\$304,671,973
2018	\$20,078,800	\$7,748,700	\$440,500	\$282,598,600	\$310,866,600	\$5,682,800	\$316,549,400
2019	\$21,332,100	\$8,473,900	\$450,100	\$305,350,600	\$335,606,700	\$5,817,900	\$341,424,600
2020	\$21,967,900	\$8,639,500	\$461,600	\$333,978,150	\$365,047,150	\$6,005,200	\$371,052,350
2021	\$22,405,200	\$9,293,000	\$473,100	\$357,023,600	\$389,194,900	\$6,151,500	\$395,346,400

Graph 2.5.1
State Equalized Value 2010 - 2021
Argentine Township



Employment

Although the Township is primarily a residential community for those who work elsewhere, it does have a local employment base. A limited number of manufacturing, banking, small retail, restaurants, and personal service establishments provide employment and economic opportunities.

Respondents in the community survey reported working in many areas, including communities to the north and in southeastern Michigan. The most common reported workplaces listed by respondents are: Flint (22); Argentine Township/work from home (20), Fenton (19), Linden (12), Brighton (9), and Howell (8).

2.6 Circulation

The transportation system within Argentine Township relies primarily on public roads. Most developed residential areas do not provide pedestrian circulation options, but a pathway has recently been added along Silver Lake Road. Limited public transportation is available.

A [Road and Circulation Map](#) is located in Section A.2 of Appendix A, page A-2.

Road System

The Genesee County Road Commission has authority over all public roads within the Township and has responsibility for this maintenance, repair, and construction. Construction and maintenance projects for public roads must be coordinated through the Road Commission.

Private roads within the Township are limited to residential developments. The homeowners' association or groups of property owners generally has authority for maintenance, repair, and construction of these roads, subject to Township ordinances.

County primary roads are the highest-volume road classification within the Township. The county primary roads include Silver Lake Road, Seymour Road, Seymour/Argentine Road, Ray Road, Lobdell Road, and Duffield Road. All county primary roads in the Township are paved.

County local roads provide for the collection and distribution of traffic between the primary roads and provide access to property. These roads are primarily rural or residential in character and carry lower volumes of traffic. County local roads in the Township are a mix of paved and unpaved.

Private roads provide access to individual properties. They are primarily residential in character and are the lowest-volume roads.

In the community survey, 62 percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the road system is adequate for current traffic levels. When asked about the condition of various roads, 47 percent of respondents described paved public roads as excellent or good condition, 18 percent of respondents described unpaved public roads as excellent or good condition, and 45 percent of respondents described subdivision roads as excellent or good condition. In the community survey, 60 percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed on considering alternative transportation management, such as traffic circles.

Non-motorized Pathways

The LAFF Pathway is a non-motorized, multi-community pathway. The pathway is intended to eventually connect Argentine Township, Fenton Township, the City of Linden, and the City of Fenton.

Phase 1 of the LAFF Pathway runs generally parallel to Silver Lake Road, from Lobdell Road to Chestnut Way through the Linden Community Schools campus. Construction started in 2020. Phase 2 of the LAFF Pathway runs generally parallel to Silver Lake Road, from Ripley Road to Jennings Road.

The community survey showed strong support for non-motorized transportation. In the community survey, 76 percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that additional transportation options, like nonmotorized pathways or public transportation should be available. Additionally, 85 percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that new (*residential*) developments should provide internal sidewalks, and 81 percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that new (*residential*) developments should provide pathways along public roads.

Railroad

A railroad runs diagonally from the southeast to the northwest across the northern portion of the Township. The single-rail line runs from Holly to Duran and is owned by Canadian National Railway Company.

The railroad provides transport for freight, but it does not provide direct support for any properties or uses within the Township.

All railroad crossings are at-grade and are signal controlled. The crossing at North Seymour Road has been identified for improvements as part of the 2022 Local Grade Crossing Surface Program Projects.

Water

The Shiawassee River Water Trail runs from Holly to Chesaning through the Township, running east and west across the southern portion of the Township. It is a State-recognized water trail that has also been designated a National Water Trail by the National Park Service. A canoe/kayak launch is located along the river at the McCaslin Road bridge.

In the community survey, 83 percent of respondents strongly supported or supported water access.

2.7 Public Safety

Argentine Township provides public safety through its own fire and rescue department and police department.

Fire and Rescue

The Township has its own fire and rescue department with on-call staff that is supported by seven fire and rescue vehicles, one motorized rescue boat, and one four-wheel-drive personnel transport vehicle. The department operates out of a station located next to the Township Hall, in the village area. The staff and equipment are currently supported by a Township-wide assessment of \$130 per residential unit or improved parcel and \$50 per vacant parcel.

In the community survey, 66 percent of respondents described the current level of fire protection services as either excellent or good. Of those who have had an interaction with the Township's fire protection services in the past five years, 95 percent described their experience as either excellent or good.

Police

The Township has its own police department staffed with full-time and part-time officers that is supported by a fleet of four-wheel drive emergency patrol vehicles. The department provides 24-hour, seven-days-a-week protection. The staff and equipment are currently supported through a Township-wide assessment of \$170 per residential unit or improved parcel.

In the community survey, 68 percent of respondents described the current level of police protection services as excellent or good. Of those who have and an interaction with the Township's police protection services in the past five years, 76 percent described their experience as excellent or good.

2.8 Schools

Argentine Township is located within three school districts. The eastern two-thirds of the Township is within the Linden Community Schools district. The western third of the Township is within the Byron Area School district. Northern portions of the Township are within the Swartz Creek Community Schools district.

There are four public schools located in the Township, all of which are a part of Linden Community Schools. The main campus, located in the eastern side of the Township, includes the high school, middle school, elementary school, transportation facility, and administrative offices. This campus serves all six communities within the Linden Community Schools district. There is an additional elementary school on Silver Lake Road, west of that campus, that primarily serves the local community.

A [Schools Map](#) is located in Section A.4 of Appendix A, page A-4.

2.9 Parks and Recreation

Argentine Township and Linden Community Schools worked together to adopt a Parks and Recreation Plan in 2015. The goal was to improve the community's park and recreation opportunities, in recognition of growing interest in recreation; the desire to be active, healthy, and consciousness of the environment; and that quality park and recreation opportunities contributes to a quality, sustainable community in which to live and play.

This five-year Parks and Recreation Plan has served as a planning tool for Township and School officials to make decisions related to park and recreation activities.

The Parks and Recreation Plan identified the following goals:

- Continue efforts to develop non-motorized pathway/trail systems through the community.
- Continue to promote canoeing, kayaking, and fishing along the Shiawassee River while being conscious of its water quality, drainage integrity, and wildlife and aquatic ecosystems.
- Continue to promote safe, diversified, and accessible recreational facilities and programming for the students and residents within the Linden Community School District at the existing school properties.
- Community park development and beautification plan.

2.10 Solid Waste and Recycling

Argentine Township is served by private contractors for the collection of refuse and recycling throughout the Township. There are no licensed or proposed landfills within the Township. Other than minor issues regarding collection and transportation, there is adequate capacity to handle additional waste from anticipated growth and development within the Township.

The Township has a preferred waste handler, responsible for collection of refuse, recycling, and yard waste, which is brought for disposal or processing at facilities outside of the Township.

2.11 Natural Resources Inventory and Capability

The natural environment of Argentine Township creates opportunities and limitations on the type and extent of future development. Certain areas may be unsuitable for septic systems, unstable for building foundations, and poorly drained. While these factors place natural restrictions on development, other natural resource factors present opportunities. The rural nature of the Township

and beauty of its waterways offer a unique and pleasant natural setting.

It is essential to examine these natural resource factors in detail to determine both the opportunities for and constraints on future development. This examination includes an inventory of natural resources and an examination of the capability of these natural resources to support future development.

A [Natural Features Map](#) is located in Section A.5 of Appendix A, page A-5.

Soils

Soils play an essential part in how land can be developed and used.

There are four basic types of soil associations, or classifications, within in the Township, described below.

- Boyer-Sprinks-Cersco: These soils are nearly level to gently sloping, well-drained, loamy sand on outwash plans and terraces, level, somewhat poorly-drained, fine sandy barns underlain by fine, sandy barns to sand, on bottomlands. This soil group covers roughly 1/4 of the Township and is located along the Shiawassee River basin.
- Miami-Meka Muck: These soils are undulating to rolling, well-drained barns and loamy sands that have a clay-loam to loamy sand subsoil, on uplands, and are very poorly-drained muck soils in potholes and swales. This soil covers roughly 1/2 of the Township and is located in the center and to the south.
- Del Rey-Lenawee: Level to gently sloping, somewhat poorly-drained barns and silty clay-loam subsoil, on lake plains. This soil occupies roughly 1/8 of the Township and is located to the north.
- Conover-Brookston: These soils are level to gently sloping, somewhat poorly-drained barns that have clay-loam subsoil on till plains. This soil

occupies roughly 1/8 of the Township and is located in the northwest.

The soils in the northern portion of the Township are somewhat poorly-drained soils. The soils in the southern portion of the Township are well-drained soils in uplands and very-poorly drained soil in depressed areas and swales. Soils along the Shiawassee River are well-drained on outwash plains and terraces and poorly-drained soils on bottomlands, common for river beds fringed with floodplains and wetlands.

A [Soils Map](#) is located in Section A.6 of Appendix A, page A-6.

Soils are also classified with respect to their ability to support agriculture, described below.

- **Prime Farmland.** These soils, as defined by the US Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. It could be cultivated land, pastureland, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas. The soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply are those needed for the soil to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when proper management and acceptable farming methods are applied. It has an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable salt content, and few or no rocks. Prime farmland is permeable to water and air. It is not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods, and it either is not frequently flooded during the growing season or is protected from flooding.

- Prime Farmland if Drained. These soils describe lands that would be prime farmland if drained, with field tiles, for example. This land may be subject to a higher water table or contain soils that are more poorly drained.
- Farmland of Local Importance. These soils are lands that has been farmed for a significant period of time but does not have all of the characteristics of prime farmland.
- Not Prime Farmland. These soils describe lands that do not possess ideal physical or chemical characteristics for farming.

A [Farmland Soils Map](#) is located in Section A.7 of Appendix A, page A-7.

Groundwater

Most areas within the Township rely on private wells to provide drinking water.

Based on information from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, many areas within the Township may have higher levels of arsenic in ground water (*greater than 10 ppb*). This can require special filtration or could even limit development.

Because of the reliance on private wells, the protection of groundwater from sources of contamination is of paramount importance in the Township.

Wetlands

There are many wetlands in the Township, primarily within the southern three-quarters of the Township.

Wetland soils have a frequent presence of water saturation, when not drained or tilled. They also contain heavy concentration of organic material, such as peat, marl, and decomposed vegetation. These soils are unsuitable for development

but are important for supporting wetland vegetation and fish and wildlife habitat. They are also valuable for filtering sediment out of surface water runoff and as natural stormwater management.

Wetland areas have been generally identified by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the US Fish and Wildlife Services National Wetlands Inventory.

Regulated wetlands are protected by Part 303 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (*PA 451 of 1994*) and the Argentine Township Wetland Ordinance (*Ordinance 40*). Certain activities within these wetlands, such as dredging, filling, or grading, require review and approval by the State and the Township.

Waterways and Floodplains

The most unique and significant natural features in the Township are the many lakes and the Shiawassee River. Most land within the Township is within ¼ mile of a major lake or stream. A majority of the Township is located within the Shiawassee River watershed, which eventually flows into the Saginaw River and Saginaw Bay.

The lakes, rivers, and creeks were shaped by glacial activity that deposited rock, soils, and blocks of ice, that embedded in the soil and eventually melted, leaving depressions.

Portions of the Shiawassee River, North Ore Creek, Porter Drain, Jones Creek, and lake areas are within the 1 percent (*100-year/Zone AE*) floodplain, as established by the Federal Emergency Management Administration's Flood Insurance Rate Maps. The Township is a participating community in the National Flood Insurance Program, with the most recent maps effective on September 25, 2009.

The Genesee County Drain Commissioner Surface Water Management maintains county drains throughout the Township. These drains include both open drains, typically supporting agricultural activity, and stormwater management systems, typically a part of a residential development. Maintenance and improvement of these drains are supported by an assessment on properties within the associated drain district.

Woodlands

The Township was once covered by woodlands, but they have largely been cleared to allow for agricultural fields. Some scattered woodlots remain of these virgin forests.

Major woodlands containing mixed hardwoods and pines exist. Upland hardwood species include oaks, maples, ash, and other hardwoods. A few pine plantations are also located within the Township.

Slopes

The surface geology of the Township formed roughly 10,000 to 12,000 years ago when glacial activity deposited rock, soils, and large blocks of ice. This activity shaped the current topography.

The northern portion of the Township is generally level to gently sloping. The southern portion of the Township is undulating to rolling, with uplands and depressed areas and swales. There is a well-defined area along the Shiawassee River with level to gently-sloping, common for riverbeds fringed with floodplains and wetlands.

Land Capability

Land capability provides a general indication of which areas in the Township are the most capable and the least capable of supporting development, based on natural resources. The land capability study was developed using information related to soils, wetlands, and floodplains.

This study is useful for general planning purposes. Detailed study and examination should be conducted for specific sites.

A [Land Capability Map](#) is located in Section A.9 of Appendix A, page A-9.

2.12 Sanitary Sewer & Septic Fields

A majority of Argentine Township relies on individual, on-site septic fields for sanitary wastewater treatment. Portions of the Township are served by two sanitary sewer systems. Proper management of sanitary effluent is essential when considering development and protecting the environment.

Sanitary Sewer

The Township began planning a centralized sanitary sewer system in 1979, now known as District Number 7. The system was planned to serve the more densely developed areas of the Township, especially areas around the lakes. The principal objective was to improve water quality within the lake systems. This sanitary sewer system uses a combination of traditional gravity and lift stations with treatment in sewage lagoons near Bird Road. The Genesee County Division of Waste and Water Services operates and manages this system today.

As those sewage lagoons were approaching full capacity, Township and Genesee County officials worked together to create another sanitary sewer system, known as District Number 3. The principal objective of this district is to provide service

for future growth and development within the Township.

As of January 2022, District 3 has 85 taps available in the Township, and District 7 has 379 taps available in the Township.

A [Sanitary Sewer Map](#) is located in Section A.8 of Appendix A, page A-8.

Septic Fields

Areas outside of the sanitary sewer districts rely upon individual, on-site septic fields.

The functionality of these systems is dependent upon the soils they are installed in. Septic field failures are often the result of poor soil permeability or high water table. Compacted clays and silt soils do not allow wastewater to percolate through the soil. Failures of these systems allow sewage to pollute groundwater and surface water, possibly contaminating drinking water.

The following soils within the Township may create serious limitations for septic fields or require an engineered septic system.

Table 2.12.1 Soil Limitations for Septic Field Location Argentine Township	
	Soil Abbreviations
Breckenridge	Bt
Brookston	Bw
Carlisle	Cc, Cd
Colwood	Cp
Conover	CvA, CvB, CwA, CwB
Del Rey	DiA, DrA, DrB
Gilford	Gd
Lenawee	Le
Lupton	Lu
Minoa	MuA
Morley	MvB, MvC
Oakville	OkB
Rifle	RI
Sloan	Sm, Sn

2.13 Existing Land Uses

The existing land uses for Argentine Township are shown in [Current Land Use Map](#) in Section A.10 of Appendix A. Areas are classified within the following land use categories:

- Agricultural and Open Space
- Low-density Residential (*Single-family houses*)
- High-density Residential (*Multiple-family and mobile home community*)
- Commercial
- Manufacturing
- Public/Institutional (*Schools, public parks, government*)
- Transportation/Utilities (*Sanitary sewer treatment plants*)
- Parks/Recreation

The predominant land use within the Township is agriculture and open space (15,860 acres), followed by single-family residential (4,613 acres). The remaining land uses include transportation/utilities (181 acres), public/ institutional (131 acres), commercial (63 acres), higher-density residential (58 acres), and manufacturing (2 acres).

Table 2.13.1 Current Land Uses 2020 Argentine Township		
	Number of Parcels	Acres
Developed		
Residential		
Lower-density Residential	2,831	4,613
Higher-density Residential	4	58
Commercial	27	63
Manufacturing	2	2
Public/Institutional	14	131
Transportation/Utilities	9	181
Parks/Recreational	2	16
Undeveloped		
Agricultural and Open Space	566	15,860
Water	953	953
Vacant	476	550

The total area of the Township is 36.3 square miles. The land area is 35.1 square miles. The water area is 1.2 square miles.

The [Current Land Use Map](#) is located in Section A.11 of Appendix A, page A-11.

2.14 Zoning Districts

The current Zoning Ordinance in Argentine Township was established in 2009. The majority of the Township is within the AG Agricultural Residential District or the R-1 One-Family Residential District. The southern portion of the Township, around Silver Lake Road, is primarily R-2 One-Family Residential. Commercial and industrial districts are located along Silver Lake Road, with a concentration in the village area.

The following list describes the Township's current zoning district categories. Zoning district boundaries are defined in the current Zoning Map.

The [Current Zoning Map](#) is located in Section A.10 of Appendix A, page A-10.

AG Agricultural Residential

The AG Agricultural Residential District is composed of those areas of the Township whose principal use is and ought to be farming. The regulations of this district are designed to conserve, stabilize, enhance, and develop farming and rural residential activities, to minimize conflicting uses of parcels, lots, building, and structures detrimental to or incompatible with these activities, and to prohibit uses of parcels, lots, buildings and structures which require streets, drainage and other public facilities and services of a different type and quantity than those normally required by these activities.

R-1 One-Family Residential

The R-1 One-Family Residential District is designed to encourage single-family residential use in a rural-residential setting. The intent is to provide for an environment of low-density, one family detached dwellings along with other residentially related facilities which serve the residents of the districts.

R-2 One-Family Residential

The R-2 One-Family Residential District is designed for an environment of high-density, one-family detached dwellings along with other residentially related facilities which serve the residents of the districts.

RM Residential Multiple Family

The RM Residential Multiple-Family District is designed to provide areas for multiple-family dwelling structures and related uses, which will generally serve as zones of transition between nonresidential districts and one-family residential districts.

MHP Mobile Home Park

The MHP Mobile Home Park District is intended to provide areas of such size and location as will encourage proper mobile home residential development, adjacent to essential community services, and otherwise protect the health, safety and welfare of mobile home residents.

C-1 Local Commercial

The C-1 Local Commercial District is intended to provide areas for commercial activities that meet the day-to-day convenience shopping and service needs of persons residing in adjacent residential areas.

C-2 General Commercial

The C-2 General Commercial District is intended to provide areas for commercial activities that cater to the needs of a larger diversified business environment than is served by the C-1 Local Commercial District.

M-1 Light Manufacturing

The M-1 Light Manufacturing District is intended to accommodate wholesale activities, warehouses, and industrial operations which rely upon procedures which are structured as to permit the manufacturing, compounding, processing, packaging, assembly and/or treatment of finished or semi-finished products from previously prepared material.

M-2 Heavy Manufacturing

The M-2 Heavy Manufacturing District is intended to accommodate manufacturing, assembling, and fabricating activities of semi-finished or finished products from raw materials as well as from previously-prepared materials.



3. Goals and Objectives



3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives formulated by the community establish the framework for public and private decision making. Goals and objectives directed to improving the quality, comfort, and vitality of the community and its residents should remain valid and provide a consistent basis for ongoing planning processes and decisions and guide public investment and development.

Goals reflect broad statements that provide a focus for future decisions and describe the desired end results of the planning process.

Objectives are more specific planning statements that are used to qualify the goals and provide more detailed direction for planning efforts.

Strategies are very specific, action-oriented statements that are intended to achieve the goals and objectives.

The goals in this Master Plan are grouped into seven categories:

- Community Character
- Agricultural
- Residential
- Natural Resources and Environment
- Economic Development
- Circulation
- Parks and Recreation

3.1 Community Character Goal & Objectives

Development and redevelopment should contribute to the character of the community, preserving and enhancing the special characteristics of the Township.

Objective 1: *Preserve and promote the scenic, rural character of the Township.*

Strategies

- 1) Encourage the incorporation of rural and natural elements into new developments.
- 2) Preserve natural topography to maintain the character of the landscape.
- 3) Preserve tree rows and woodlands.
- 4) Ensure that development along major roads are setback or landscaped to preserve the rural, agricultural, and natural viewsheds.
- 5) Consider using police department or others to enhance code enforcement activities.

Objective 2: *Preserve and promote the character and importance of the village area.*

Strategies

- 1) Encourage the use of traditional development patterns in areas surrounding the village area.
- 2) Provide physical connections to and within the village area, such as pathways, sidewalks, and roads.
- 3) Promote the preservation and redevelopment of historic structures.
- 4) Encourage the improvement of streetscapes with street trees, way-finding signage, bicycle accommodations, and other amenities.

- 5) Promote the village area as the commercial hub of the Township.

Objective 3: *Ensure that the Silver Lake Road corridor provides an attractive appearance that reflects the village and rural character of the Township.*

Strategies

- 1) Require landscaping and streetscaping for new development and redevelopment.
- 2) Promote the use of access management, such as shared driveways, cross-access, and service drives, to improve accessibility, safety, and traffic flow.
- 3) Discourage strip mall style developments in favor of more compact forms of development that are more consistent with the village area.
- 4) Limit the impact of signs, including billboards, along this corridor.

3.2 Agricultural Goal & Objectives

Agricultural activities should be preserved and promoted to maintain the desired rural character of the community.

Objective 1: *Promote the preservation of land necessary for agricultural activities.*

Strategies

- 1) Promote the enrollment of farmland in the Michigan Farmland Preservation Program (*PA 116 of 1974*).
- 2) Encourage the preservation of areas identified as having prime agricultural soils.
- 3) Discourage non-agricultural development and uses in areas identified as having prime agricultural soils.

- 4) Explore and encourage the sale of development rights of prime farmland to non-profit land trust or conservancy organizations.
- 5) Limit fragmentation of prime agricultural areas by preventing haphazard lot splits that prevent or limit agricultural operations.
- 6) Explore the potential for a local purchase of development rights program.

Objective 2: *Allow and encourage a variety of agricultural activities that are consistent with the community's character.*

Strategies

- 1) Encourage and foster direct sales of agricultural products from local farms to consumers, local stores, local restaurants, and schools.
- 2) Explore and encourage new economic opportunities that support continued agricultural operations.
- 3) Explore potential for agritourism and accessory uses to support agricultural activities.

3.3 Residential Goal & Objectives

Residential areas and opportunities should be of a type, density, and character consistent with and complimentary to the traditional village area and rural areas.

Objective 1: *Allow a variety of housing types and residential living opportunities in appropriate areas, including detached single-family, attached single-family, multiple-family, mixed-use, senior, and affordable housing.*

Strategies

- 1) Promote low residential density development in areas least capable of supporting residential development due to land or infrastructure capacity.

- 2) Avoid higher residential density development in environmentally-sensitive areas.
- 3) Direct medium and higher residential density development, like attached single-family and multiple-family, to areas capable of supporting the residential development and are served by sanitary sewer systems, primarily in the village area and along Silver Lake Road.
- 4) Limit higher residential density developments, like mobile home communities, to areas with direct access to county primary roads and that are supported by a sanitary sewer system.
- 5) Provide opportunities for a range of senior housing options, from independent, reduced maintenance living, to assisted living facilities to ensure that residents can continue to age in place.

Objective 2: Ensure that the design and character of residential development and uses are consistent with and promote the current and desired character of the Township.

Strategies

- 1) Ensure developmental standards for residential development are consistent with the established and desired character of the area, such as setbacks, lot coverage, and building height.
- 2) Ensure adequate buffering and screening between residential areas and non-residential areas and uses.
- 3) Encourage residential development that preserves the Township's rural character through the use of cluster development or planned unit developments that preserve open spaces, natural areas, and working farmland.

- 4) Promote residential development that has a positive impact on the ability of the Township and schools to provide public services.
- 5) Limit haphazard lot splits that result in lots that are difficult to use or split in the future.
- 6) Limit overcrowding of residential dwellings and development around lakes and rivers.

3.4 Natural Resources & Environment Goal & Objectives

Natural resources and the environment contribute to the quality of life and are essential to the health and wellbeing of residents and should be protected and preserved.

Objective 1: *Protect the Township's natural resources and environment from the adverse impacts of development, for both ecological purposes and human enjoyment.*

Strategies

- 1) Limit overcrowding, keyholing, and intensive or hazardous uses in areas near lakes and rivers.
- 2) Promote the preservation and introduction of natural vegetative buffers around bodies of water and wetlands.
- 3) Promote stormwater management that uses on-site infiltration and limits direct runoff.
- 4) Require all stormwater runoff be treated and managed to limit sedimentation and contamination.
- 5) Promote the preservation of wetlands, floodplains, and woodlands in their natural state.

- 6) Promote the preservation of and limit development of steep slope areas.
- 7) Encourage larger lots and consolidation of lots to minimize overcrowding of lake areas.
- 8) Proposed low-density and low-impact land uses in areas where natural resources are least capable of supporting other uses.

Objective 2: *Prevent and reduce pollution and protect residents from exposure to hazardous materials or conditions.*

Strategies

- 1) Promote and encourage removal of tree stumps in submerged lands that pose a hazard to navigation and recreation.
- 2) Protect surface waters through limitations on lawn chemicals, septic location, and stormwater management.
- 3) Educate the public on the impact of lawn chemicals on the water.
- 4) Regulate and limit potentially hazardous uses to prevent adverse impacts to neighboring properties and the environment.

3.5 Economic Development

Promote and encourage a variety of commercial development that primarily serves the needs of Township residents and is complementary to the Township's current and desired.

Objective 1: *Recognize and promote the village area as the focal point of commercial activities.*

Strategies

- 1) Foster commercial development within the village area, including the redevelopment of unused or underused properties.
- 2) Reinforce the village area as the focal point of local history and the community.
- 3) Encourage lower-impact commercial uses, such as small retail, small restaurants, and offices.
- 4) Foster commercial uses that directly serve the Township's residents, providing services that will allow residents to shop and work closer to home.

Objective 2: *Focus larger commercial development within Silver Lake Road.*

Strategies

- 1) Discourage and limit new commercial development outside of areas along the Silver Lake Road corridor.
- 2) Limit and reduce the impact of commercial development on vehicular transportation on Silver Lake Road by limiting and reducing the number of curb cuts and encouraging connections between properties.
- 3) Allow higher-impact commercial uses, such as larger retail, larger restaurants, drive-through restaurants, and limited manufacturing.
- 4) Maintain physical and visual separation between commercial uses and residential areas while promoting connections between them.

Objective 3: *Ensure commercial development enhances the appearance of the community and reduces the impact on residential uses.*

Strategies

- 1) Encourage or require the use of high-quality design and materials in new

commercial developments.

- 2) Require landscaping that provides an adequate buffer between commercial uses and adjacent residential uses and public roads.
- 3) Allow flexibility for commercial developments that provide substantial and recognizable benefits to the community beyond what is required.
- 4) Limit industrial uses to light manufacturing, high-tech manufacturing, and other manufacturing that has a low impact on the community.
- 5) Requiring exterior lighting that does not impact surrounding properties, adjacent streets, or dark skies.
- 6) Encourage street-oriented buildings, with parking located to the rear or side and a principal entrance on the street façade.
- 7) Encourage the continuation and development of agricultural and agritourism activities.
- 8) Consider establishment of a downtown development authority to fund improvements within the village area and along Silver Lake Road.

3.6 Circulation Goal & Objectives

Improve and maintain the Township's vehicular and nonmotorized transportation systems and limit the impact of future development on these systems.

Objective 1: *Maintain and improve the road system to provide safety, capacity, and efficiency in a manner that is consistent with the character of the area.*

Strategies

- 1) Work with the Genesee County Road Commission to identify road system maintenance and improvement priorities, especially the Silver Lake Road corridor.

- 2) Promote cross-access to reduce traffic impact on primary roads.
- 3) Encourage or require reduction in curb cuts to improve the flow of traffic and safety.
- 4) Ensure that all new private roads are designed and constructed in an appropriate manner and will be maintained in a good condition.
- 5) Review the impacts of developments on the road system as part of site plan and special land use reviews.
- 6) Limit uses and developments likely to generate higher levels of traffic to roads able to support the traffic
- 7) Explore the potential for a millage dedicated to road maintenance and improvements.

Objective 2: Develop and maintain a network of nonmotorized pathways throughout the community to provide recreational opportunities and a transportation alternative.

Strategies

- 1) Work with LAFF Pathway organization to develop extensions of the LAFF Pathway.
- 2) Coordinate pathway planning with adjacent communities.
- 3) Require or encourage new developments or redevelopments to provide pathways along public road frontages.
- 4) Require or encourage new developments to provide pathways or sidewalks within the development.
- 5) Require or encourage pathway connections between adjacent uses and developments.
- 6) Ensure pathways are barrier free and accessible.

- 7) Research available funding sources and apply for federal, state, and local grants for development of pathways.
- 8) Consider a millage for the development and maintenance of pathway system in the Township.

3.7 Parks and Recreation Goal & Objectives

Parks and recreational opportunities contribute to quality of life and improve health and wellbeing and should be encouraged and promoted for Township residents and visitors to the community.

Objective 1: *Work with community partners to develop appropriate parks and recreational opportunities.*

Strategies

- 1) Work with Linden Community Schools to update and maintain the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- 2) Work with LAFF Pathways to improve and extend the LAFF Pathway.
- 3) Work with Shiawassee River Water Trail Coalition and Friends of the Shiawassee River to improve water trail access.
- 4) Research grants and other available funding opportunities to make parks and recreation improvements.

Objective 2: *Ensure new developments provide adequate parks and recreational opportunities.*

Strategies

- 1) Encourage or require new developments, such as site condominiums, multiple-family, and commercial, to provide pathways along public streets.

- 2) Encourage or require new residential developments to provide internal sidewalks and pathways.
- 3) Encourage or require new residential developments to provide some common space for use as parkland for active or passive recreational activities.





4. Future Land Use Plan



4. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The future land use plan for Argentine Township proposes future development patterns in a time frame of the next 10 to 20 years. Specific land use categories are identified and incorporated in graphic form, as depicted in the Future Land Use Map. The following section describes the intent of each category in written form.

The future land use plan is based on consideration of a number of factors, as outlined throughout this Master Plan. Those factors include:

- Population and population trends
- Infrastructure and availability of utilities
- Existing land uses
- Existing zoning
- Compatible uses
- Community goals and objectives
- Citizen opinions
- Natural features

The [Future Land Use Map](#) is located in Section A.12 of Appendix A, page A-12.

4.1 Agricultural

Agricultural areas are intended for commercial agricultural uses and extremely low-density rural residential uses. They are proposed for areas in the Township where prime farmland soils are located and/or in areas where the infrastructure is not able to accommodate more-intensive uses. It is anticipated that these areas will be dependent on individual well and septic systems. Lot areas should be at least one acre but are ideally larger in order to support agricultural uses.

4.2 Rural Residential

Rural Residential areas are intended for low-density, single-family residential and limited agricultural uses. They are proposed for areas in the Township where pressure for additional residential development is higher and road infrastructure is best able to accommodate the use. It is anticipated that these areas will be dependent on individual well and septic systems and should have appropriate soils and water tables. Lot areas should be at least one acre, although many existing lots in these areas may be less than one acre.

4.3 Urban Residential

Urban Residential areas are intended for medium and higher-density, single-family residential, limited two-family residential, and institutional and governmental uses normally associated with residential neighborhoods, including, but not limited to schools and places of worship. They are not intended for agriculture or raising of livestock. They are proposed for areas in the Township with sanitary sewer systems or near those areas, including the village area. It is anticipated that these areas will generally be served by public sanitary sewer systems. Minimum lot areas should be at least 20,000 square feet for areas served by public sanitary sewer systems and at least one acre for those areas not served by public sanitary sewer systems.

4.4 Lake Residential

Lake Residential areas are intended for medium and higher-density, single-family residential uses. They are proposed for areas in the Township with established residential areas surrounding lakes to recognize the unique characteristics of these areas. It is anticipated that these areas will be served by public sanitary systems, due to the smaller size of existing lots and to protect water quality.

4.5 Multiple-Family Residential

Multiple-family residential areas are intended for buildings and uses containing multiple dwelling units, such as apartments, attached condominiums, or townhouses. They are proposed for areas in and surrounding the village area. These areas are intended to have more dwelling units per acre than areas for single-family dwellings. Given this density, these areas should be served by sanitary sewer and have access to paved county roads. To ensure consistency with the traditional development patterns in the village area, attention should be paid to architectural style, creation of useful public space for residents, and landscaping.

4.6 Mobile Home Residential

The Mobile Home Residential area is intended for mobile home communities. It designates the Pine Ridge Park Mobile Home Park, north of Silver Lake Road at the intersection of McCaslin Lake Road. Additional mobile home residential areas are not designated at this time, as critical concerns exist about school capacity, school financing, and sanitary sewer capacity. The Township believes it provides its fair share of mobile home residential opportunities and does not anticipate planning for more mobile home residential areas in the near future without a demonstrated need, proof that there are not suitable sites in adjacent communities, and adequate infrastructure to support the use.

4.7 Local Commercial

Local Commercial areas are intended for smaller commercial uses that primarily serve the day-to-day needs of the community's residents. They are proposed for areas in and around the village area. To support the goal of enhancing the character and importance of the village area, these uses should be designed and located to enhance the appearance and functioning of the area. Large commercial uses and drive through uses are not compatible with these areas.

4.8 General Commercial

General Commercial areas are intended for larger commercial uses that serve the day-to-day needs of the Township's residents, but they may serve the larger region or visitors to the area, such as grocery stores, offices, larger stores, or drive throughs. They are proposed for areas with larger lots, located primarily along Silver Lake Road east of the village area. Because these uses rely upon and generate greater traffic volumes, they should be along a primary, paved road.

4.9 Light Industrial

Light Industrial areas are intended for industrial uses having limited external and environmental impacts, such as light manufacturing and warehousing. Uses are intended to be enclosed within a building with no or minimal external impacts on adjacent properties. Setbacks and landscaping should provide buffering between these uses and residential areas and public roads. They are proposed for areas with existing industrial uses and on the north Side of Silver Lake Road near the intersection with Seymour Road.

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4.10 Heavy Industrial

Heavy Industrial areas are intended for industrial uses that have the potential to create greater external and environmental impacts than light industrial uses. Uses include for heavy manufacturing, that processes raw materials or outdoor activities. There are no areas proposed for heavy industrial, as there is a preference for light and clean industrial activities and a concern for available capacity of sanitary sewer systems. These areas should only be considered for areas adequately served by sanitary sewer and primary roads.

4.11 Institutional

Institutional areas are intended for public, quasi-public and institutional uses, such as schools, public facilities, utilities, and places of worship. They are proposed for areas with existing or anticipated institutional uses. There is no minimum lot area, as lot area may vary greatly depending on the type of institutional use.

4.12 Open Space

Open space areas are intended for undeveloped lands and recreational areas associated with residential developments. They are shown for areas with existing common areas that are used for open space, but they may be included as part of future residential developments. There is no minimum lot area.

4.13 Zoning Plan

The table below shows the future land use areas and the corresponding current zoning districts and anticipated future zoning districts.

Table 4.13 Zoning Plan		
Master Plan Future Land Use Designation	Current Zoning District	Anticipated Zoning District(s)
Agricultural	AG Agricultural	AG Agricultural
Rural Residential	R-1 Rural Residential	R-1 Rural Residential
Urban Residential	R-2 Urban Residential	R-2 Urban Residential
Lakes Residential	R-2 Urban Residential	LR Lakes Residential
Multiple-family Residential	RM Multiple-family Residential	RM Multiple-family Residential
Mobile Home Residential	MHP Mobile Home Park	MHP Mobile Home Park
Local Commercial	C-1 Local Commercial	C-1 Local Commercial
General Commercial	C-2 General Commercial	C-2 General Commercial
Light Industrial	M-1 Light Manufacturing	M-1 Light Manufacturing
Heavy Industrial	M-2 Heavy Manufacturing	M-2 Heavy Manufacturing
Institutional	AG Agricultural R-1 Rural Residential R-2 Urban Residential	INS Institutional
Open Space	R-1 Rural Residential R-2 Urban Residential	R-1 Rural Residential R-2 Urban Residential or OS Open Space



5. Action Plan



5. ACTION PLAN

The Master Plan for Argentine Township is only worthwhile if it can be effectively implemented. Implementation can be achieved through a variety of ordinances, capital improvements, activities, and education. This requires a commitment by the Township of both financial resources and policy implementation. The following is a summary of implementation strategies that the Township should pursue.

5.1 Zoning Ordinance

Zoning is the development tool most closely associated with planning. It was originally intended to limit nuisances and protect property values. However, it can also serve the following additional purposes:

- Promoting orderly growth in a manner consistent with the land use policies and future land use map, identified in the Master Plan;
- Promoting attractiveness and variety in the Township's physical environment by providing for developmental standards for districts to ensure consistency within that district and provide a variety of districts suited for different uses;
- Accommodating special, complex, or unique uses through review process able to consider the uses, such as planned unit developments and special land uses;
- Guiding development away from areas undesirable for development, such as wetlands and prime farmlands;
- Promoting developments that are consistent with the Master Plan.

The Zoning Ordinance, including the text and the map, is one of the most effective ways of implementing the goals, objectives, and land use recommendations of the Master Plan. It represents day-to-day tools to enact the Master Plan.

Following adoption of this Master Plan, the Township should review its Zoning Ordinance, including the text and the map, and make any changes necessary to ensure consistency with and promote the goals and objectives of this Master Plan.

5.2 Subdivision Control and Division Ordinances

Another method to implement the Master Plan is through the Township's Subdivision Ordinance, site condominium regulations, and Land Division Ordinance.

The subdivision or division of land impacts how that land can be developed and used in the future. It should be done in a manner consistent with the Master Plan.

Following adoption of this Master Plan, the Township should review its Subdivision Control Ordinance and Land Division Ordinance and make any changes necessary to ensure consistency with and promote the goals and objectives of this Master Plan.

5.3 Special-purpose Ordinances

Management of certain development and land use activities may also be addressed in other special-purpose, general-law ordinances. Sometimes these ordinances can be more effective than a zoning ordinance to advance the goals and objects of a master plan.

Currently, the Township has the following special-purpose ordinances that are related to development or land use:

- Water Conservation (*Ordinance 5*)
- Sanitary Sewers (*Ordinance 10*)
- Public Housing (*Ordinance 14*)
- Prohibit Discharge of Stormwater (*Ordinance 15*)
- Prohibit Building on Land Not Served by Public Roads (*Ordinance 22*)
- Flood Damage Prevention (*Ordinance 27*)
- Sewer (*Ordinance 28-30*)
- Speed of Vessels (*Ordinances 13 and 34*)
- Dish Satellite Signal Stations (*Ordinance 33*)
- Regulate Placement of Mobile Homes (*Ordinance 37*)
- Wetlands (*Ordinance 40*)
- Driveway Culverts (*Ordinance 41*)
- Erection of Docks (*Ordinance 46*)
- Residential Driveways (*Ordinance 59*)
- Blight (*Ordinance 60*)
- Floodplain (*Ordinance 61*)
- Adult Entertainment (*Ordinance 62*)
- Open Burning (*Ordinance 63*)
- Fireworks (*Ordinance 64*)
- Regulating the Acceptance of Private Roads (*Ordinance 68*)
- Adopting 2015 Property Maintenance Code (*Ordinance 72*)
- County Sewer (*Ordinance 74*)
- Sanitary Sewer (*Ordinance 75*)
- Non-motorized Pathway (*Ordinance 76*)
- Prohibition of Marihuana Establishments (*Ordinance 77*)
- Bridge and Navigability (*Ordinance 80*)
- Burn (*Ordinance 81*)

Examples of other potential special-purpose ordinances related to development and land use include:

- Natural features buffer ordinance;
- Private road ordinance;
- Engineering design standards; and/or
- Environmental impact study ordinance.

Following adoption of this Master Plan, the Township should review its existing special-purpose ordinances related to development or land use and make any changes necessary to ensure consistency with and promote the goals and objectives of this Master Plan, changed state statutes, case law, and with other Township ordinances.

The Township should also consider other special-purpose ordinances related to development or land use that may help the Township achieve the goals and objectives of this Master Plan.

5.4 Master Plan Education

The involvement and support of citizens and public officials is necessary for successful implementation of this Master Plan. The Township should strive to develop procedures to make its officials and citizens aware of this Master Plan, planning processes, and day-to-day decision-making processes related to this Master Plan. A continuous program of discussion, education, and participation will be extremely important as the Township works to achieve the goals and objectives of this Master Plan.

Specific activities to promote master plan education may include:

- Posting the Master Plan on the Township's website.
- Ensuring all elected and appointed officials have a copy of the Master Plan.
- Preparing press releases or educational pieces on details of the Master Plan for distribution to local media, organizations, and associations.
- Conducting an annual open house for residents to meet with the Planning Commission, learn about the Master Plan, ask questions, and make suggestions.
- Preparing brochures or flyers highlighting specific elements of the Master Plan.

5.5 Capital Improvement Plan

Capital improvement plans are a planning and fiscal tool that helps coordinate the location, timing, and funding of major, nonrecurring expenditures over a period of the next six years. They help facilitate the orderly planning of new infrastructure investments and other significant investments. Goals and objectives outlined in the Master Plan should be reflected in any capital improvement plan adopted by the Township.

A capital improvement plan can have a significant impact on the extent, timing, and direction of development. For example, infrastructure improvements to sanitary sewers, drainage, and roads will support and encourage development in those areas and discourage development in other areas due to their absence.

Areas to address or include in a capital improvement plan may include the following:

- Repair and paving of primary and local county roads;
- Graveling, grading, dust control, and ditching of county gravel roads;
- Improving or expanding pathways;
- Improving access sites to the Shiawassee River;
- Supporting the Parks and Recreation Plan;
- Maintenance and operation improvements to sanitary sewer systems;
- Clean-out, maintenance, and repair of county drains; and
- Improving fire and rescue and police capabilities.

While the Township does not have control over all of the above activities, it can partner with the responsible agencies. Having a clear plan and funding available for a project may help a project qualify for additional funding and an expedited schedule.

Funding for elements of capital improvement plans can come from a variety of sources, including general funds, a dedicated millage, assessments, user fees, or grants.

5.6 Coordination

Working with other entities and agencies ensures coordination, efficient use of resources, and maximum benefit for the Argentine Township.

The Township should work with the Genesee County Drain Commissioner to plan the maintenance and improvements to the sanitary sewer systems and to facilitate maintenance of and improvements to county drains.

The Township should work with the Genesee County Road Commission to plan and manage road maintenance and improvements and to ensure the Lobdell Lake Dam is well maintained.

The Township should work with the LAFF Pathways to plan expansion and maintenance of the LAFF Pathway.

The Township should work with the Shiawassee River Water Trail Coalition and Friends of the Shiawassee River to promote and make improvements to support the Shiawassee River Trail.

The Township should work with the Linden Community Schools to achieve the goals of the shared Parks and Recreation Plan.

The Township should work with lakes associations and the Genesee County Drain Commissioner to promote improvements to water quality

5.7 Master Plan Updates

The Master Plan should not become a static document. The Planning Commission should aspire to review it on an annual basis and identify portions that may need updating. The Planning Enabling Act requires the Planning Commission to review the Master Plan within five years of adoption and determine whether or not amendments or a new master plan is necessary.

Updating Database

This Master Plan is based on certain assumptions concerning existing conditions and growth in the Township, detailed in the Background section. It is important to regularly review this background material to determine if it is still valid. If this background material has changed, the Planning Commission should

determine what the changed conditions mean for the goals and objectives of this Master Plan.

Areas of the background material and existing conditions to pay special attention to include:

- Population. This Master Plan is based on population growth and characteristics documented in the Background section. Changes to growth and characteristics can impact the need and demand for different types of development.
- Housing. This Master Plan assumes relatively stable growth in the number of dwelling units with primarily single-family houses.
- Adjacent Communities. Changes in the master plans and zoning of adjacent communities may affect desired uses within the Township.
- Agriculture. This Master Plan assumes moderate pressure on the majority of agricultural lands. A greater demand for housing or commercial development or changes in agricultural economics may impact the level of pressure.
- Transportation. This Master Plan does not anticipate significant improvements to the road system or paving of unpaved roads.
- Utilities. This Master Plan does not anticipate an expansion of sanitary sewer lines or other utilities that are essential to development. Any expansion of such utilizes should be reviewed to determine the potential impact on land use and development.
- Commercial Development. This Master Plan anticipated a limited need for commercial development within the village area and along the Silver Lake Road corridor.

Reviewing Goals and Objectives

The Planning Commission should conduct a periodic review of this Master Plan, including the goals, objectives, and future land use, following review of updated information and conditions. An annual review is ideal, but the Planning Enabling Act requires a review at least every five years.

This review should determine if the identified goals, objectives, and future land use are still applicable or are no longer relevant, due to changes in conditions or policies. Those items determined to be no longer relevant should be amended or deleted from this Master Plan.

Amendments of this Master Plan require a similar process as its original adoption, including notification and public hearing. In addition to any changes to this Master Plan, details of the amendment process should also be documented.

5.8 Guide for Zoning Decisions

Zoning map amendments and special land use review should consider the land use plan and goals of this Master Plan.

Zoning Map Amendments

When considering a zoning map amendment request (*also known as a rezoning*), the primary questions are: 1) Whether or not the request is consistent with the master plan; 2) Was there an error in the master plan; 3) Have there been changes in conditions since the master plan was adopted; and 4) Have there been changes in the goals and objectives in the master plan.

Answering these questions provides guidance as to whether or not a zoning map amendment request is appropriate and consistent with the Township's vision. It also provides the Township with legally-defensible decision making and provides an explanation for its decisions.

Special Land Uses

When considering a special land use request, consultation with the future land use map and goals and objectives in this Master Plan provide guidance as to whether or not the special land use is appropriate and consistent with the Township's Vision. It also provides the Township with legally-defensible decision making and provides an explanation for its decisions.



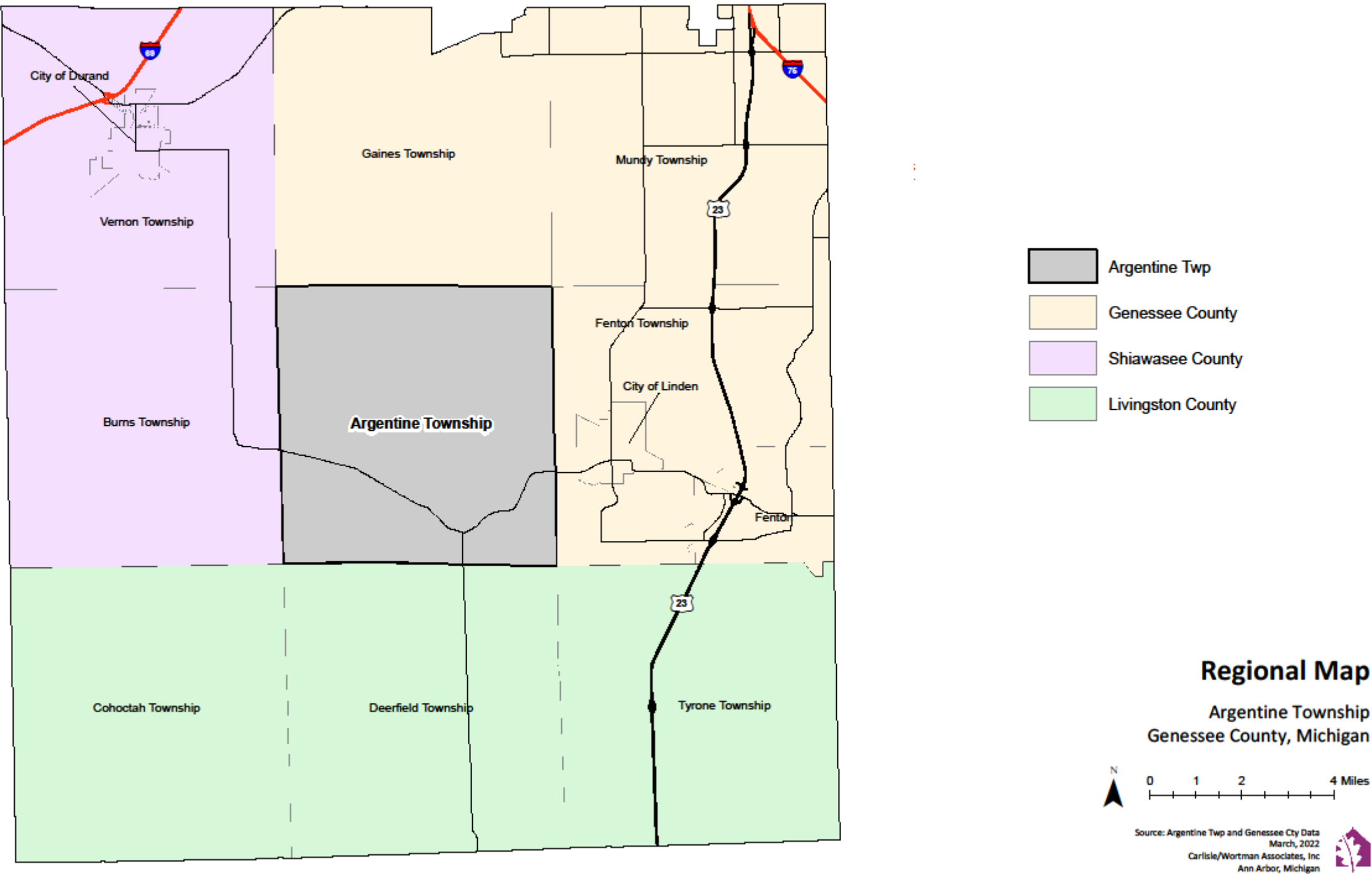


Appendix A: Maps

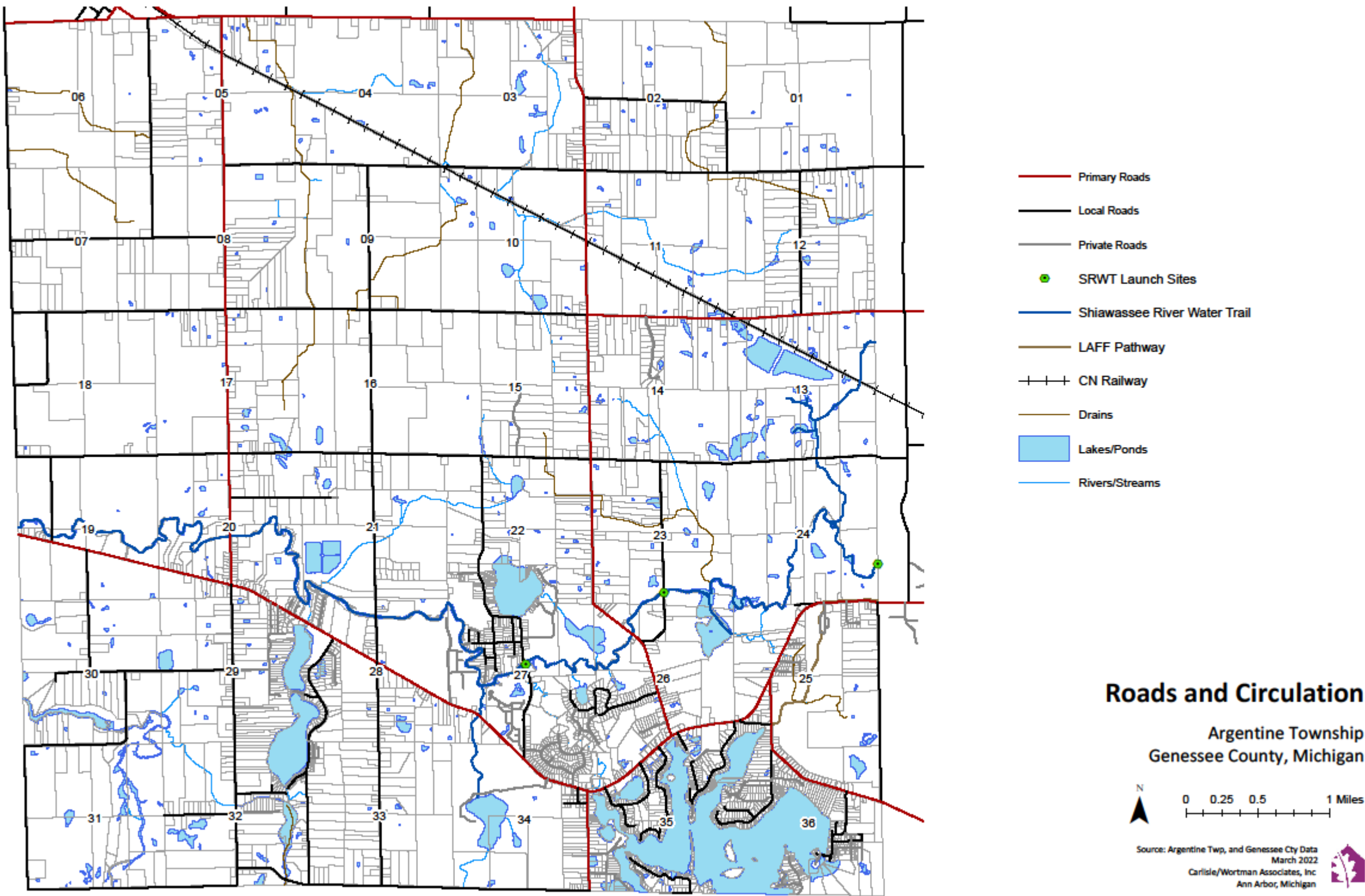




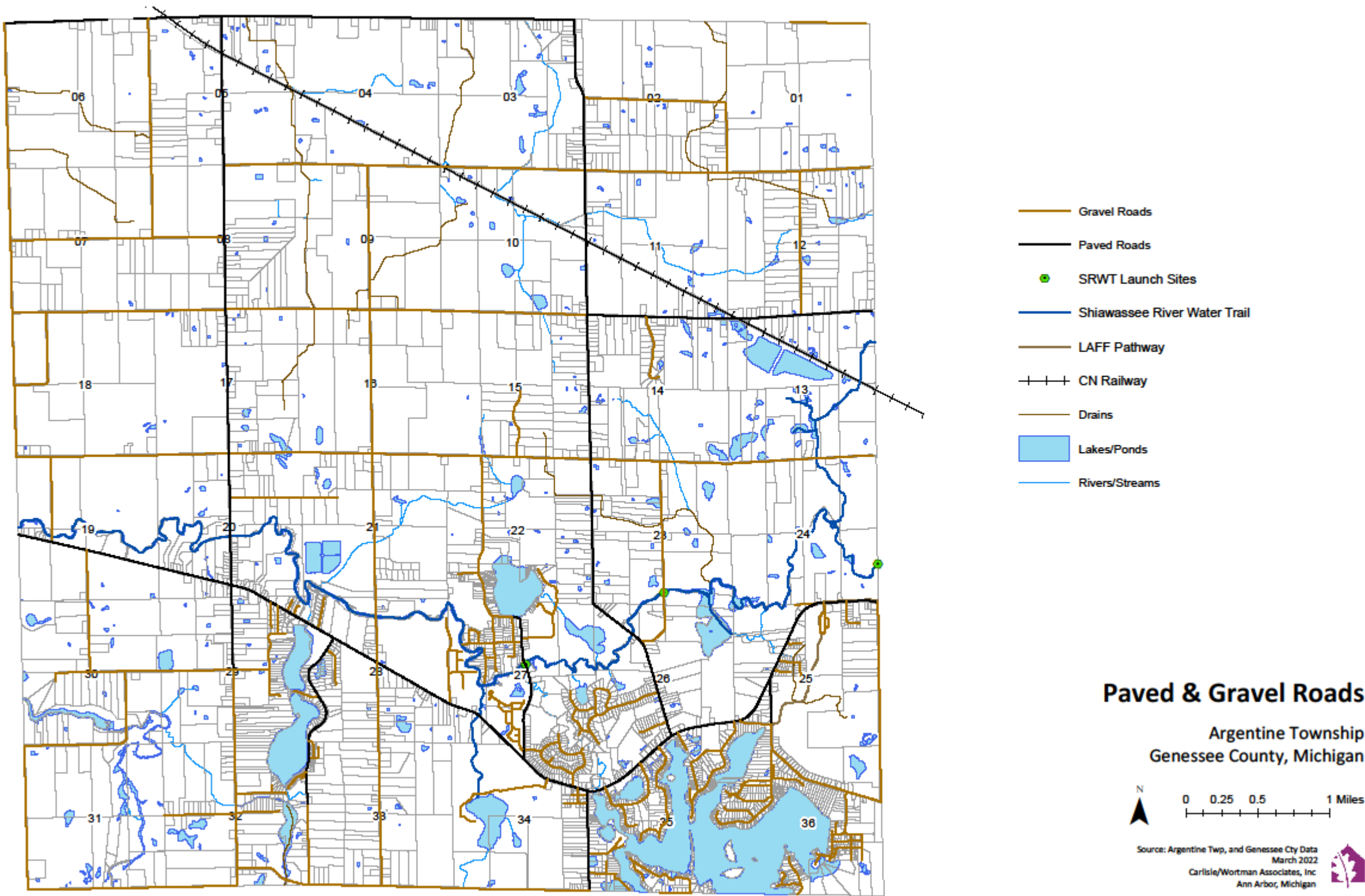
A.1 Regional Map



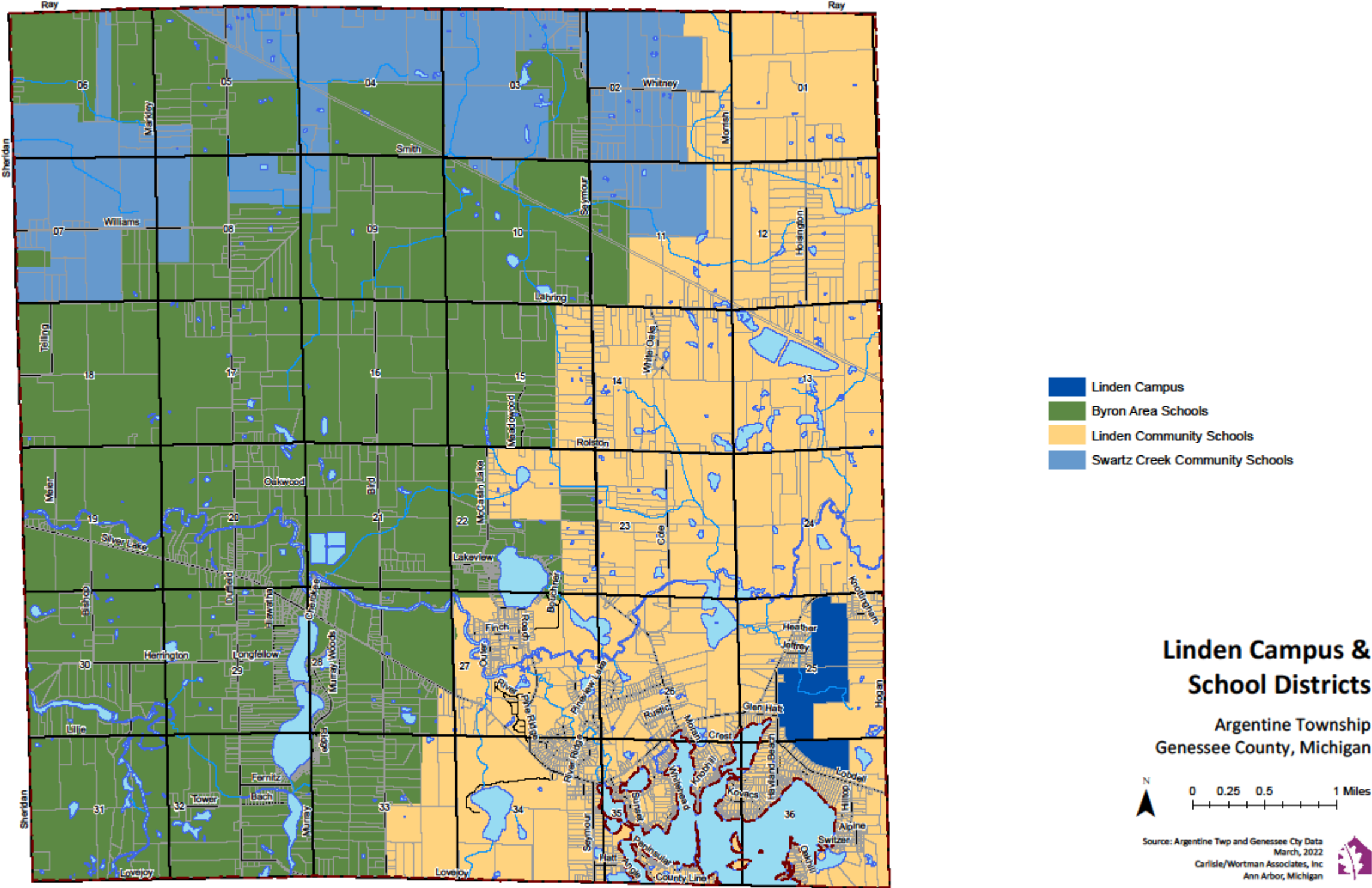
A.2 Roads and Circulation Map



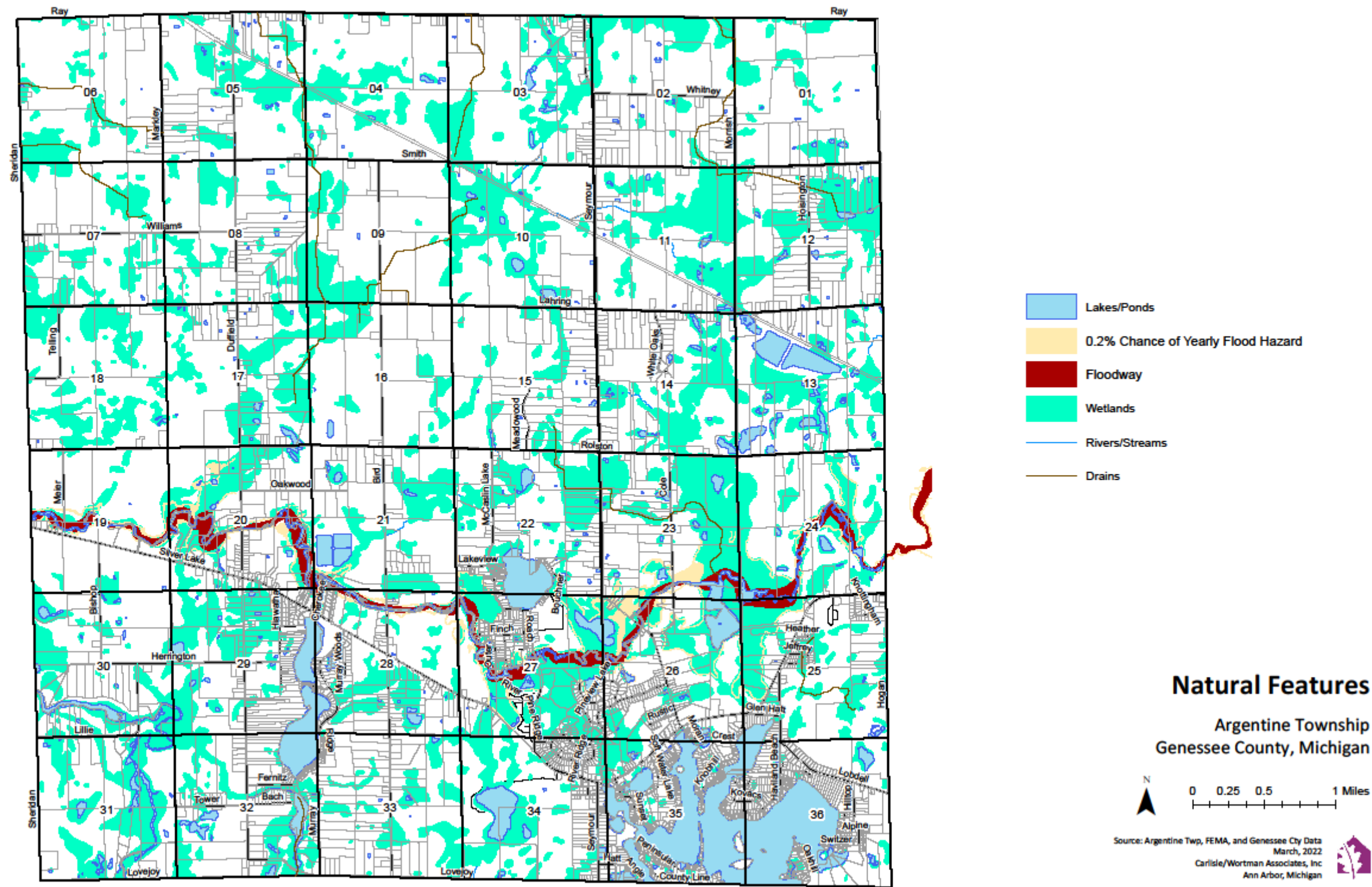
A.3 Paved and Gravel Roads



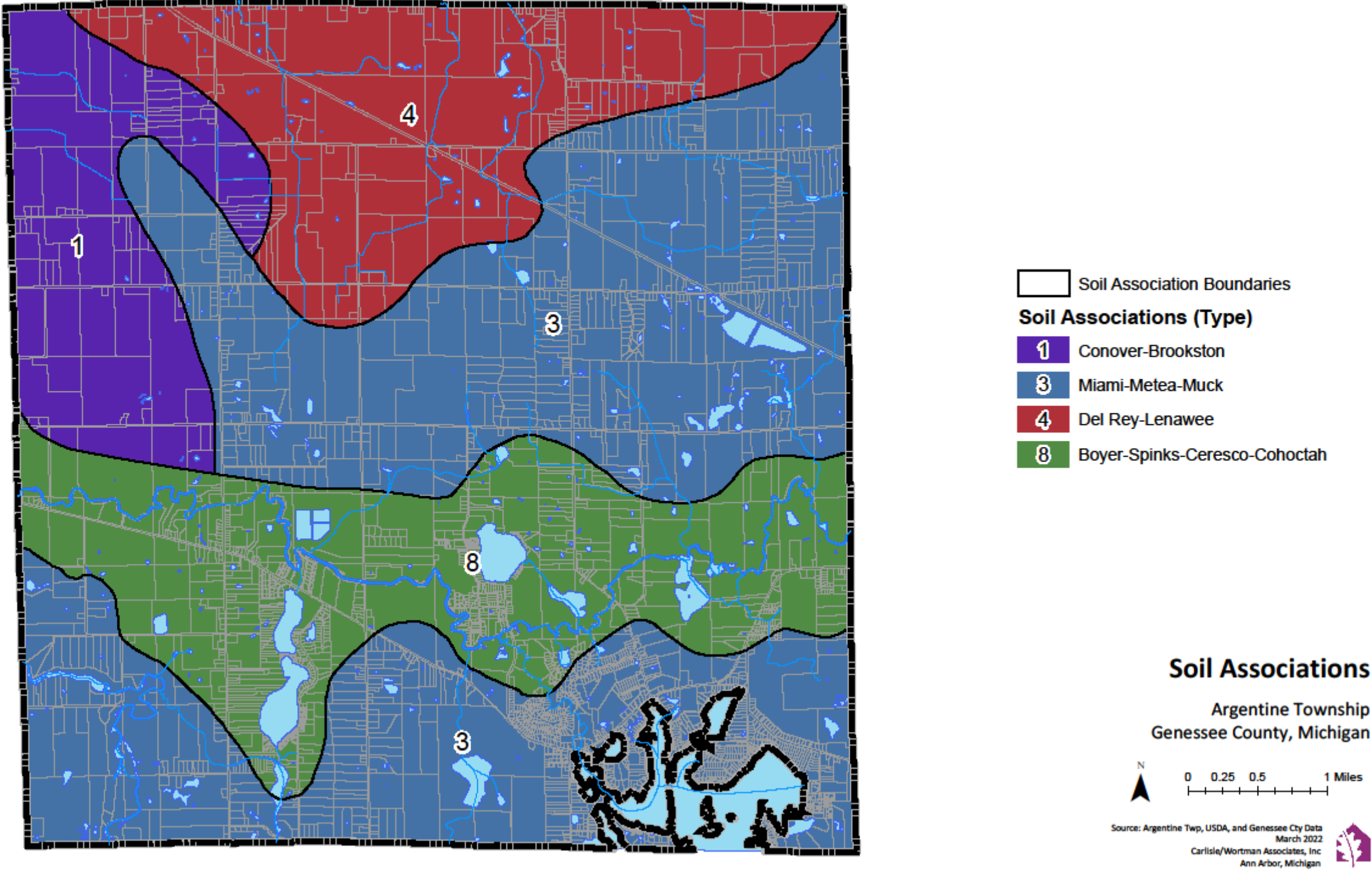
A.4 Schools Map



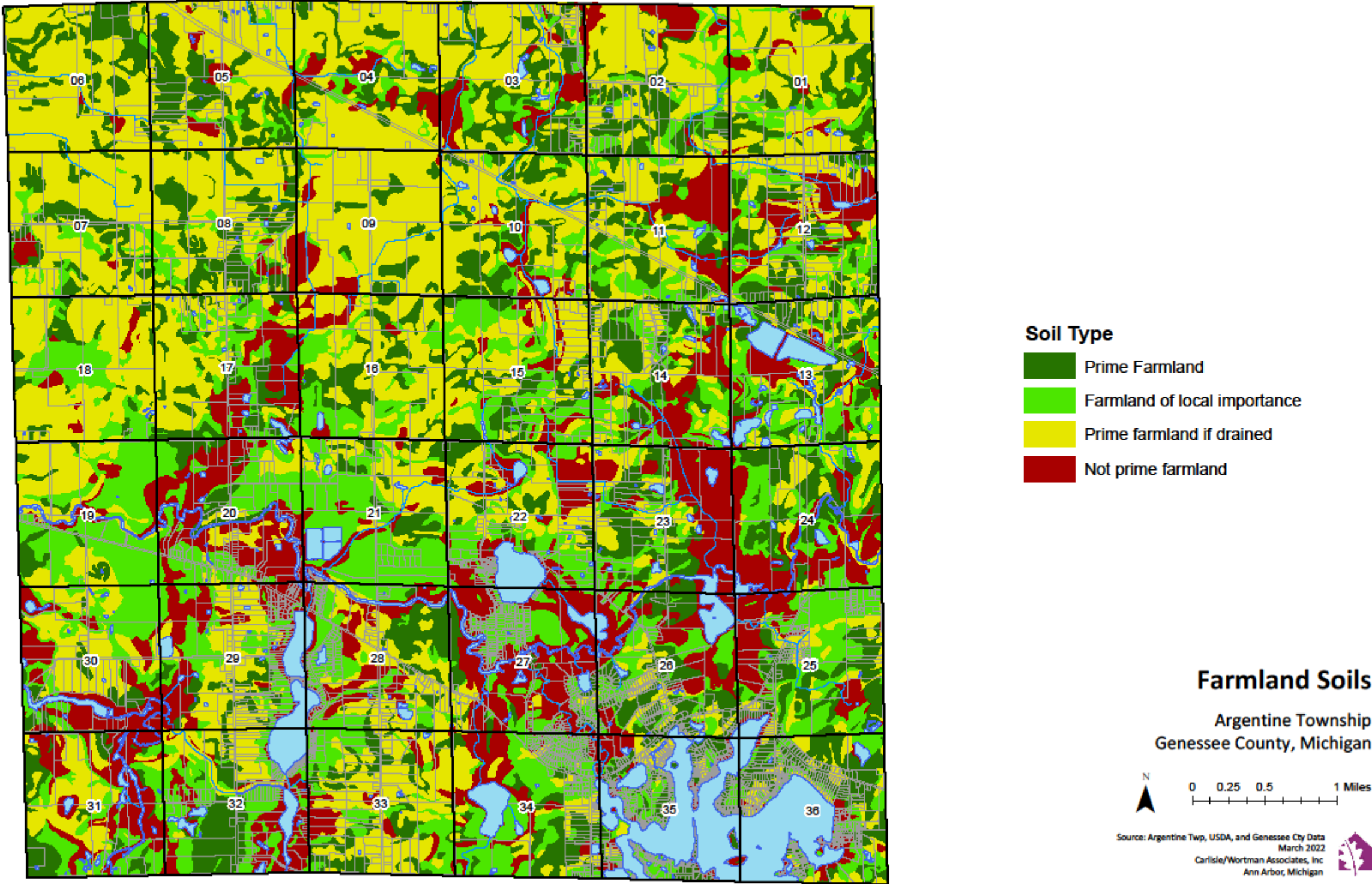
A.5 Natural Features Map



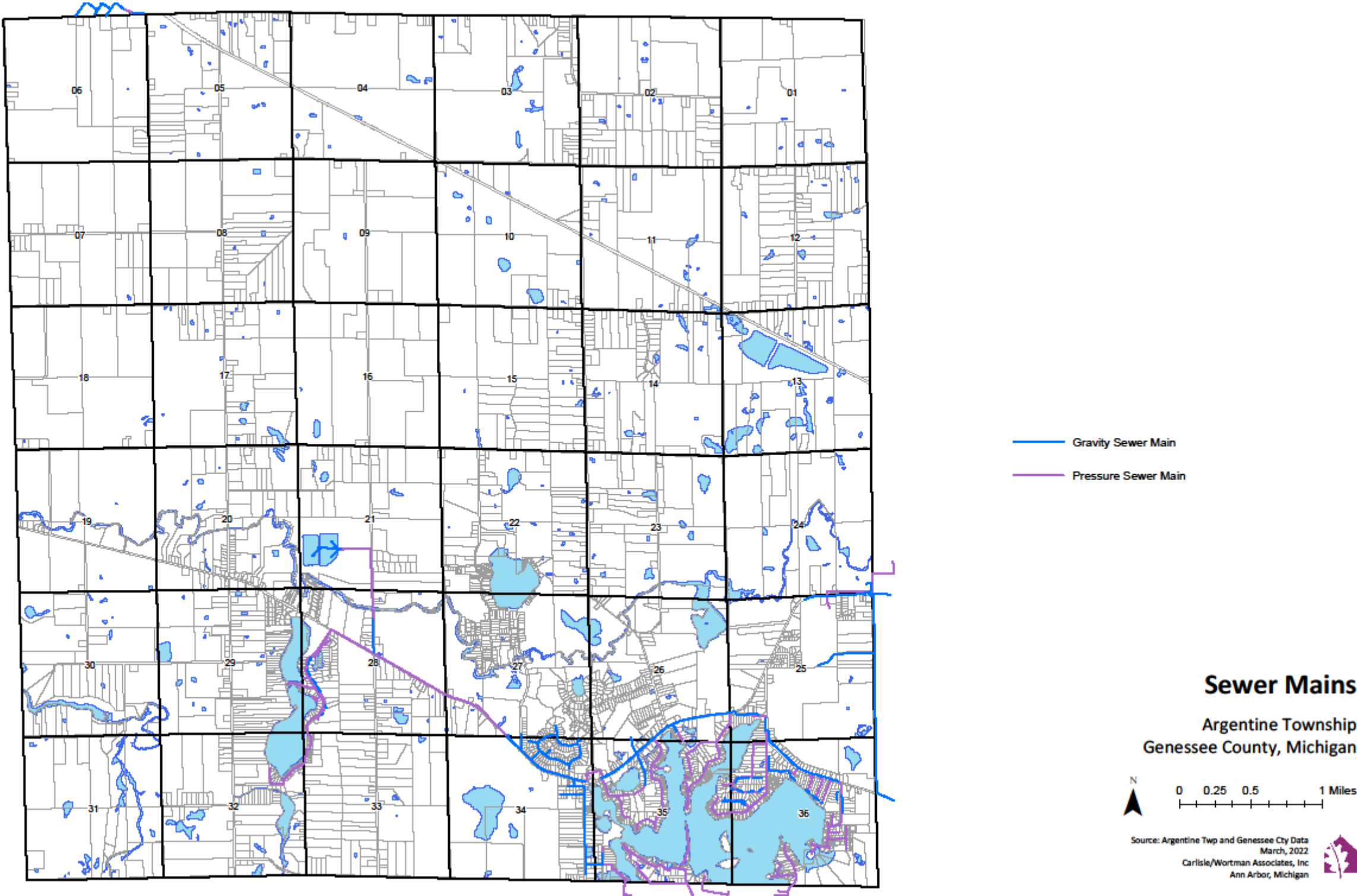
A.6 Soils Map



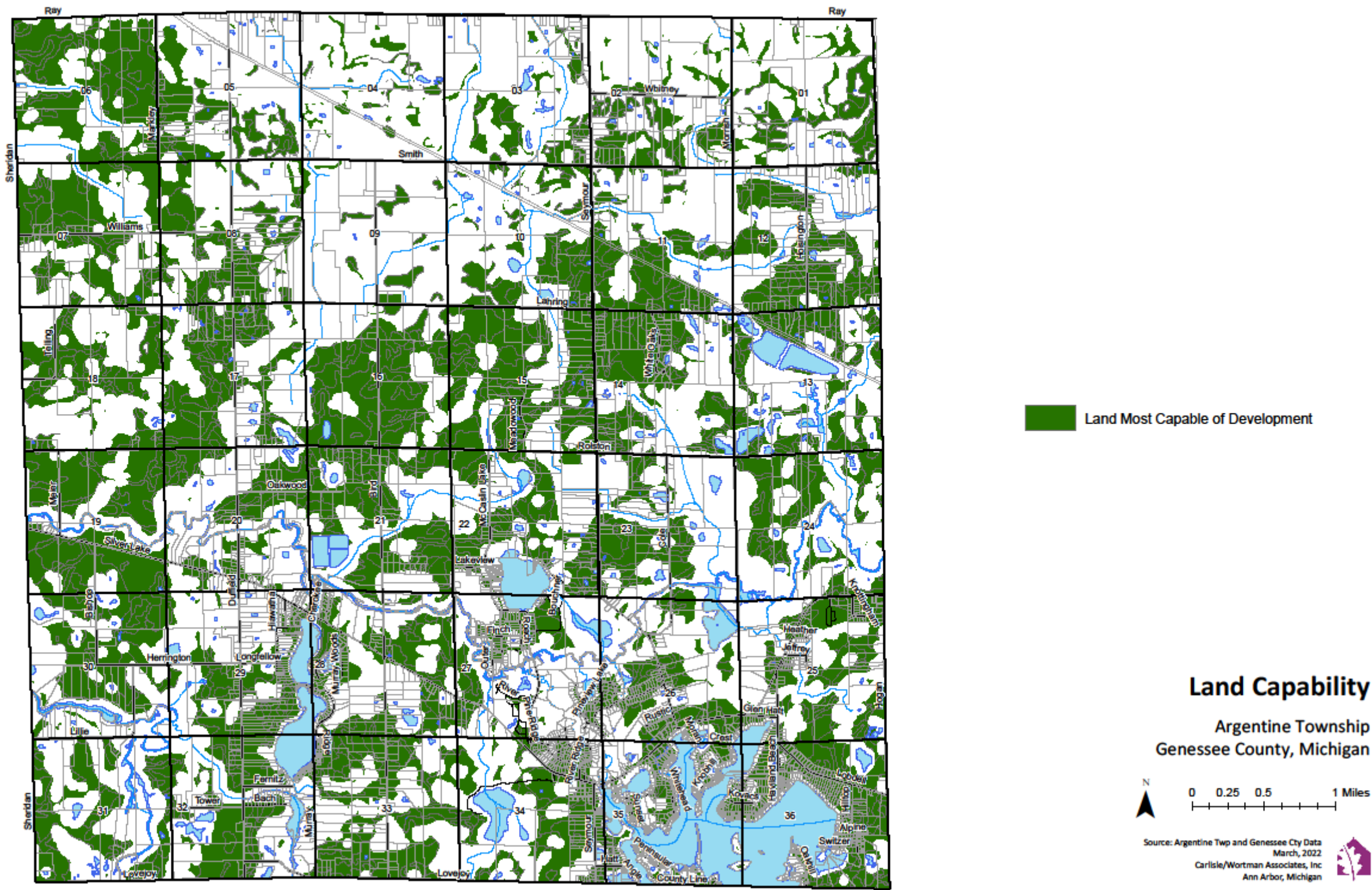
A.7 Farmland Soils Map



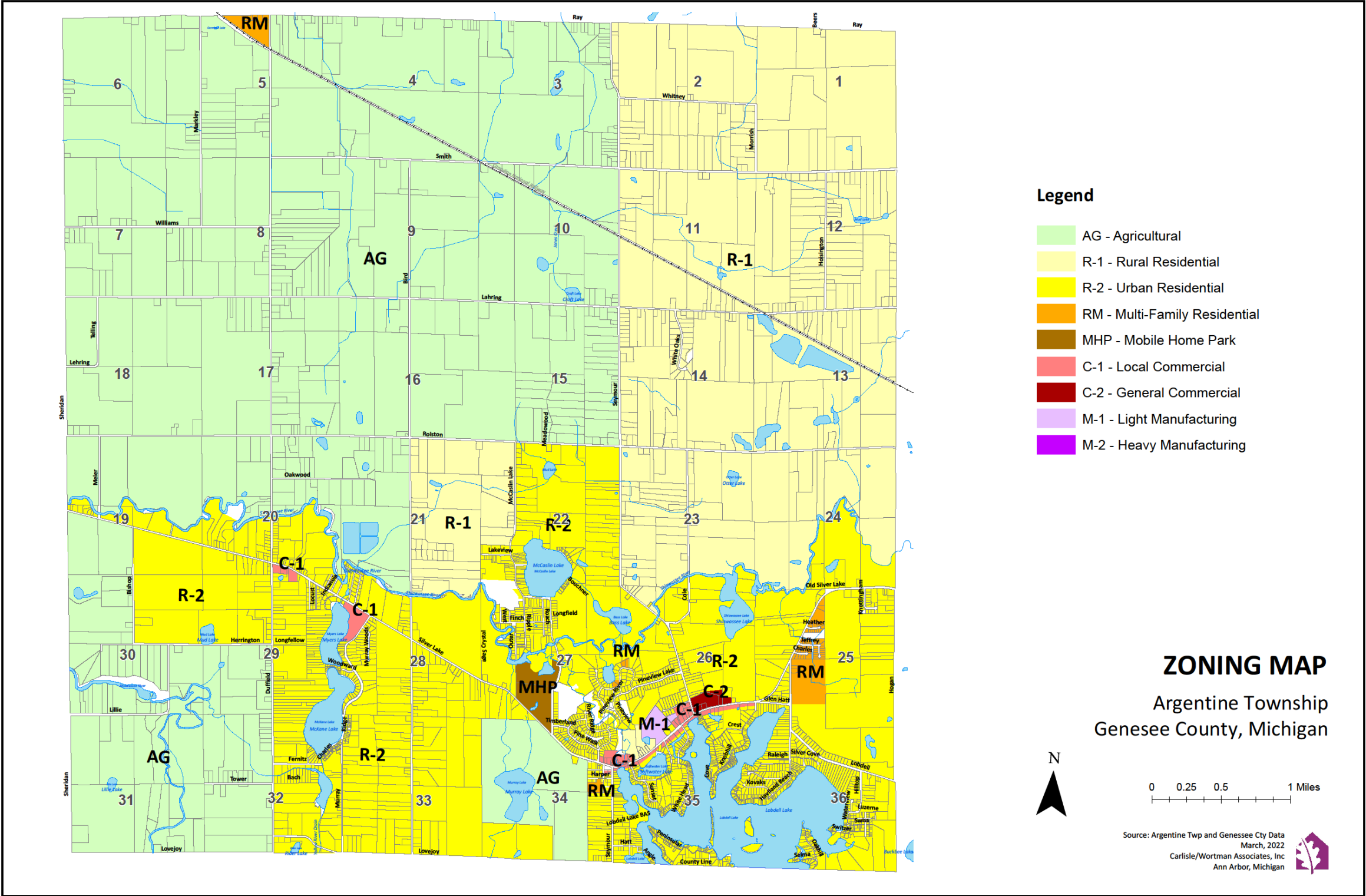
A.8 Sanitary Sewer Map



A.9 Land Capability Map

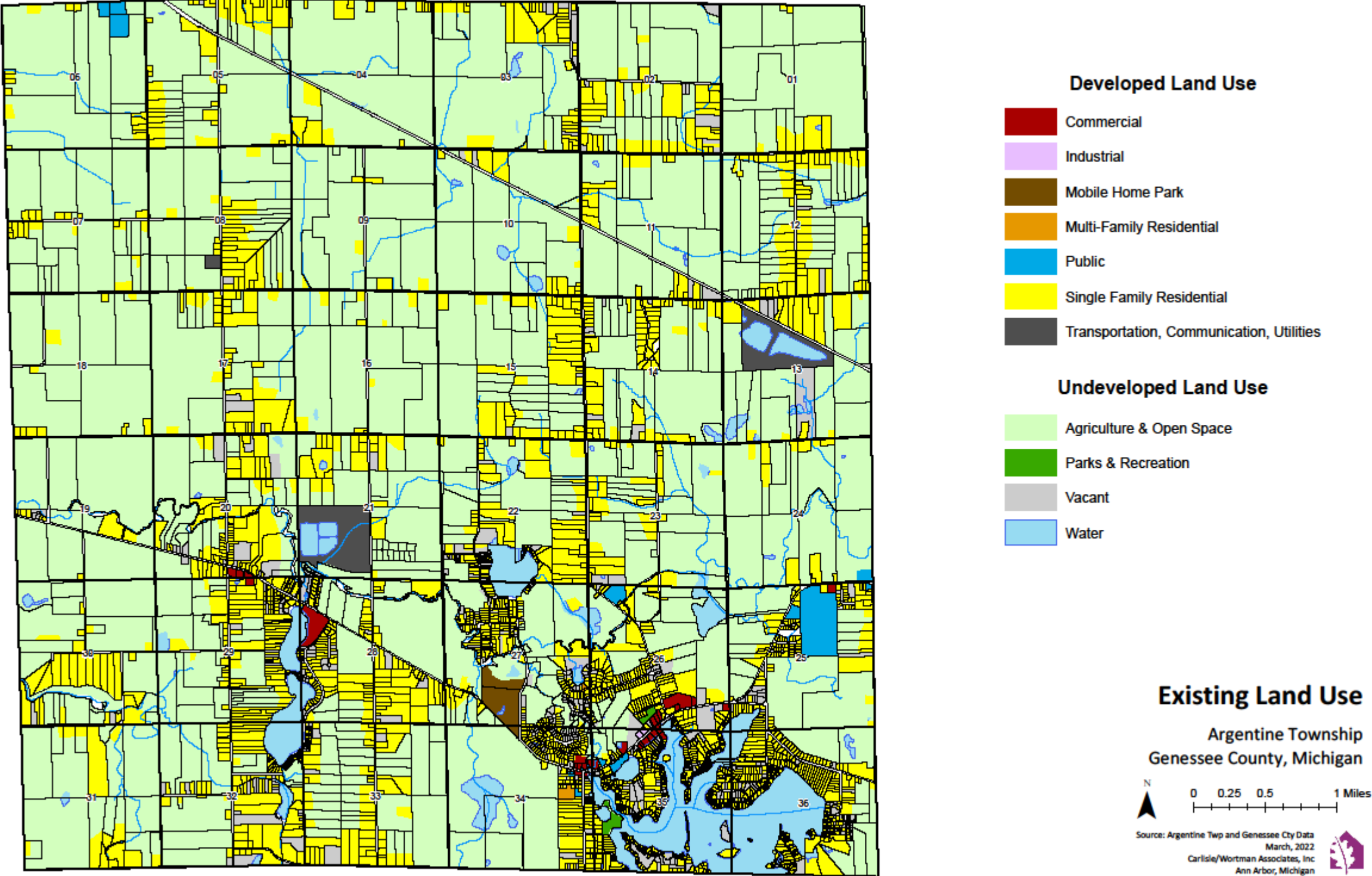


A.10 Current Zoning Map

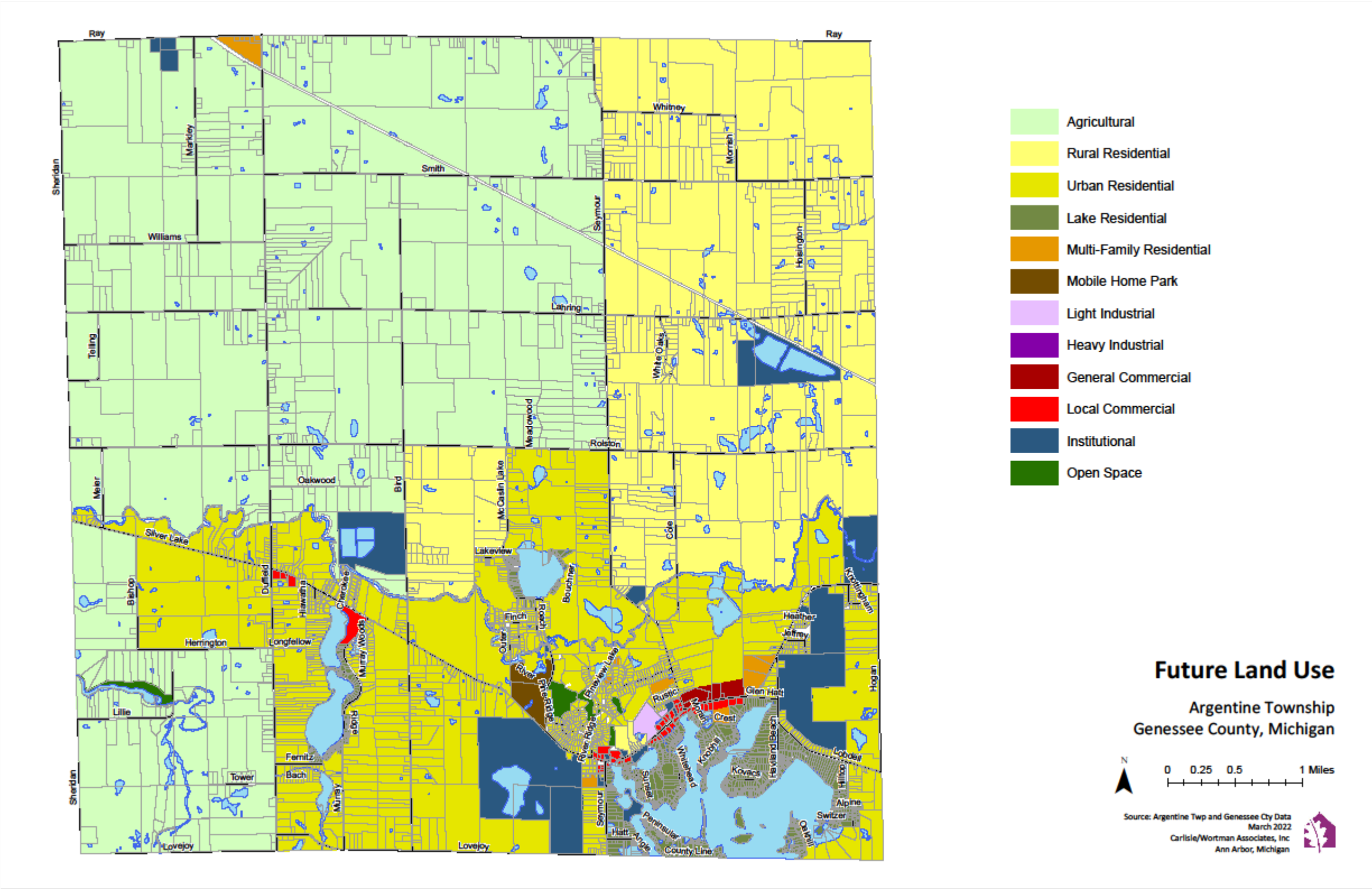


The above map is for planning purposes and does not replace or supersede the official zoning map.

A.11 Current Land Use Map



A.12 Future Land Use Map



Appendix B: History



The history of this Master Plan is documented in this Appendix.

B.1 Adoption

This Master Plan was adopted by Argentine Township, as noted below.

Intent to plan notices sent:

March 3, 2021

Approved for distribution by the Township Board:

April 25, 2022

Planning Commission public hearing:

July 14, 2022

Planning Commission recommendation:

January 12, 2023

Township Board adoption:

January 30, 2023



