



# BUENA VISTA CHARTER TOWNSHIP TOMORROW

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## **BUENA VISTA TOMORROW**

*The following sections correspond to where the Township is going, its goals and objectives, opportunities for redevelopment and the future land use plan. Key areas for development were identified by working closely with elected and appointed officials, Township staff and residents, and community members.*

*Some of the statements listed in the Public Participation section may represent existing conditions, but they are included here because they are assets, facts and observations the community would like to fix, keep and/or aspire to create for a better “tomorrow.”*

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

On January 30, 2020, Buena Vista Charter Township contracted with Dr. Dawn Hinton of Saginaw Valley State University to undertake a community needs assessment. This assessment provides community leaders with a snapshot of local policy, systems, and environmental change strategies currently in place and helps to identify areas for improvement.

The assessment uses both qualitative and quantitative data to outline existing conditions and potential future developments or items the community would like to fix, keep, and aspire to attain.

To provide as comprehensive a community needs assessment as possible, three different evaluation sources were used. The use of different evaluation sources enables triangulation and hence a better overall assessment. These were:

1. Analyses of secondary, government data sources for trends relating to the Buena Vista Charter Township population, earnings and unemployment, poverty, education, health and housing. When possible, the intersectionality of the data with race, age and gender was analyzed.
2. Surveys with participants of the Mega Fest and from those who attended the Food Truck Festival. This data was collected on July 27, August 20, and September 17, 2019.
3. Focus group meetings with individuals from the Buena Vista Charter Township; these populations were identified by the supervisor of BVCT. The individuals who participated included residents, elected officials and employees of BVCT. These focus groups were conducted on September 9, September 25 and November 7, 2019.

In addition, data from the United Way of Michigan ALICE database was considered in providing additional information regarding individuals who are employed, have limited assets, and other income constraints.

Below you will find a synopsis of the identified priorities for Buena Vista Township according to its residents and state-wide data.

<b>Goal 1</b>	<i>Improve and progress current infrastructure</i>
<b>Goal 2</b>	<i>New and/or rehabilitated housing developments</i>
<b>Goal 3</b>	<i>Affordable housing developments</i>
<b>Goal 4</b>	<i>Reduce education attainment barriers</i>
<b>Goal 5</b>	<i>Increase public relations</i>
<b>Goal 6</b>	<i>Appropriate avenues for community beautification</i>
<b>Goal 7</b>	<i>Attract and retain permanent residents</i>
<b>Goal 8</b>	<i>More support to ALICE population</i>
<b>Goal 9</b>	<i>Increase access to entry-level employment</i>
<b>Goal 10</b>	<i>Implementation of healthy lifestyle initiatives</i>

*\*Based on 2020 BVCT Community Needs Assessment*

*\*Goals not listed in particular order*

***GOAL 1: Improve and progress current infrastructure***

- Secure development opportunities to bring a major grocery store to the community
- Township is well positioned for the development of additional trucking and logistics uses
- Additions to the Business Park supporting future industrial development include an Amazon Warehouse and F.P. Horak commercial printing

***GOAL 2: New and/or rehabilitated housing developments***

- Future site development should not occur within the floodplain
- Existing farmland should remain farmland; farmland preservation should be promoted
- Provide public trainings on how to properly maintain a home

***GOAL 3: Affordable housing developments***

- A smaller proportion of households are married couple households when compared to other areas
- A larger proportion of households are female headed when compared to other areas

***GOAL 4: Reduce education attainment barriers***

- Attract educational uses to the Buena Vista Town Center property to increase and promote post-secondary educational opportunities
- College-readiness support for first-generation high school graduates

***GOAL 5: Increase public relations***

- Encourage more pride in Buena Vista community and its members; announcements highlighting students and parents
- Within the township there are many public events and attractions; Twilight Movie Night, Soap Box Derby, Saginaw Boxing Association

***GOAL 6: Appropriate avenues for community beautification***

- Buffers have been added to Arlington Park to increase aesthetics of the neighborhood
- Incorporate defined transitions from major roads to the local neighborhood roads; i.e. landscaped entrance ways

***GOAL 7: Attract and retain permanent residents***

- Incorporate medical professional offices to the Buena Vista Town Center property
- The Buena Vista Community Center, Kueffner Park, Lions Park and the adjacent soapbox derby are recreational assets
- Nexteer Automotive and Duro-Last being located in the Township has proven beneficial

***GOAL 8: More support to ALICE population***

- Of those who own a home in Buena Vista, 14% live below the poverty line
- Of those who rent in Buena Vista, 44% live below the poverty line
- Expand comprehensive mental health resources

***GOAL 9: Increase access to entry-level employment***

- Increase the availability of sit-down restaurants (such as the Cheesecake Factory) for residents and visitors (from I-75)
- Implement professional development and skilled trades trainings

***GOAL 10: Implementation of healthy lifestyle initiatives***

- Encourage community participation with the Buena Vista Farmers Market; the most commonly identified barrier for health and nutrition is affordability and accessibility
- Encourage engagement with the Buena Vista Farmers Market Committee
- Township parks offer opportunities for tennis, baseball, basketball, picnics, and shuffleboard
- Heart Disease and Cancer are the leading causes of death in Saginaw County for males and females, regardless of race or gender

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The following goals and objectives will provide a framework that will guide future land use decisions. The community outreach, analysis, and research identified several issues that will impact the future development of Buena Vista.

The following goals, each with their respective objectives, provide guidance on how Buena Vista Township should direct future development.

Goal statements are general in nature and represent land use related ideals toward which the Township wishes to strive. They represent the ultimate purpose of an effort stated in a way that is broad and immeasurable. Goals express a consensus of community direction to public and private agencies, groups, and individuals.

Following each general goal is a set of objectives. Objectives are more specific and are intended to provide a means to attain the stated goal. Objectives are measurable and identify the way in which the goal can be attained.

In some instances, objectives are specific statements which can be readily translated into detailed design proposals or actions.

## AGRICULTURE

Retain and promote prime agriculture lands in the Township while encouraging opportunities for innovative programs to support agricultural activities.

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### GOAL 1

Retain prime agriculture lands in the Township

#### OBJECTIVES

- 1a. Create a systematic agriculture preservation plan that considers transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, and PA 116 farmland preservation
- 1b. Encourage the establishment of public and private local facilities through which Township grown produce can be sold.
- 1c. Encourage the next generation of farmers through education and work co-op programs.

### GOAL 2

Encourage opportunities for innovative programs to support agricultural activities.

#### OBJECTIVES

- 2a. Promote agritourism as a way to preserve agriculture properties, educate the public on how agriculture affects their life, and limit the conversion of agricultural land to commercial or residential developments.
- 2b. Encourage the use of high tech, sustainable agricultural methods.

## **NEIGHBORHOODS**

Strengthen the quality residential character of the community by improving current neighborhoods, assuming that growth meets the needs of the community, and providing convenient access to supporting activities.

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### **GOAL 3**

Promote a diverse range of quality housing choices for all phases of life.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- 3a. Develop a neighborhood Revitalization Strategy that strengthens existing, targeted neighborhoods with public improvements, housing infill, low interest loans and grants for housing renovation and seminars on home improvement and maintenance.
- 3b. Encourage the maintenance, redevelopment and rehabilitation of older multiple-family housing developments.
- 3c. Encourage the development of senior housing options for those 55 years and older to meet the needs of the growing senior population to allow residents to “age in place”.
- 3d. Support development of affordable workforce housing to meet community needs.

### **GOAL 4**

Preserve, protect, and beautify existing neighborhoods in keeping with the community vision.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- 4a. Enforce existing property maintenance codes through code enforcement and establishing a Beautification Committee to enhance the overall appearance of the community.
- 4b. Promote green building practices and incentivize the use of pervious pavement, rain gardens, swales, alternative energy sources, and other best management practices.
- 4c. Neighborhood scale amenities, such as parks, schools, recreational facilities, and open space should be encouraged when new or redevelopment occurs.
- 4d. Recruit and promote new charter schools in the community.

## GOAL 5

Develop design criteria to promote smart growth in the Township.

### OBJECTIVES

- 5a. Design residential development standards to be directly related to the natural capacity of the land.
- 5b. Develop and/or enhance zoning standards which encourage innovative development patterns that result in open space buffers or other appropriate transitions between residential and nonresidential uses.
- 5c. Encourage the development of higher density housing, such as apartments, townhomes, senior housing and mixed-use housing in areas where infrastructure is available or would be provided by the development.

## **PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE**

Promote and implement measures that will make the Township a cleaner, healthier, and more environmentally friendly community.

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### **GOAL 6**

Maintain a “right-sized” system of parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities to meet the needs of the community.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- 6a. Maintain and upgrade existing parks and recreational facilities as necessary.
- 6b. Provide space for active and passive recreation and encourage site development that is sensitive to the area’s natural characteristics.
- 6c. Provide incentives (density bonuses, creative design, clustering, etc.) to ensure quality open space is incorporated into private development.

### **GOAL 7**

Preserve and conserve environmental features for present and future residents.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- 7a. Establish performance-based regulations that encourage land preservation.
- 7b. Protect property that provides exceptional habitats for plants, fish and wildlife species or can be reclaimed to provide for biodiversity or other environmental needs.

## BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Create an environment that is conducive to development, redevelopment and the growth of businesses. Support existing business districts with appropriately sited and attractively designed retail, service, and entertainment establishments.

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### GOAL 8

Develop Fort Saginaw Mall / Town Center district.

#### OBJECTIVES

- 8a. Collaborate with a real estate brokerage firm to market the Town Center site.
- 8b. Work with County, State and Federal agencies to identify programs and offer incentives to businesses looking to establish within the Town Center.
- 8c. Provide space for active and passive recreation and encourage site development that is sensitive to the area's natural characteristics.
- 8d. Encourage and develop innovative design standards in line with smart growth principles.
- 8e. Undertake streetscape improvements within the Town Center District to create cohesive districts that residents and visitors recognize as distinct districts with elements of green design (low impact development).

### GOAL 9

Redevelop Other Outer Drive Properties.

#### OBJECTIVES

- 9a. Aggressively target blight by working with the BV Hotels Task Force to demolish and / or redevelop the hotel properties along Outer Drive.
- 9b. Establish priority areas for code enforcement; adopt a phased approach to make noticeable impact in priority areas.
- 9c. Develop relationships with local businesses to determine what needs they have in accommodating overnight business visitors, meetings, training sessions, etc., and work with developers to provide these needs on Outer Drive.

## **GOAL 10**

Promote General Business in the Township.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- 10a. Encourage the siting of grocery, pharmacy, and personal care facilities in the Township.
- 10b. Emphasize redevelopment of vacant commercial buildings for additional commercial use instead of favoring new sites.
- 10c. Market to vacationers heading north to promote the Buena Vista community.
- 10d. Collaborate with local businesses to promote a positive image of Buena Vista.
- 10e. Encourage businesses to take an active role as members of the Buena Vista community.

## **RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, AND INDUSTRIAL**

Encourage diversity in the Township's Industrial base through recruitment of high-tech, research, light manufacturing, and warehouse uses.

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### **GOAL 11**

Promote Industrial Uses in the Township.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- 11a. Develop design standards that seek high quality industrial design.
- 11b. Confine future development to areas that have the appropriate infrastructure and access to public services.

### **GOAL 12**

Encourage the redevelopment of existing industrial sites and buildings.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- 12a. Partner with Saginaw County to redevelop existing brownfields.
- 12b. Create infill development design guidelines that ensure that new development fits the existing community characteristics.

### **GOAL 13**

Promote the strong transportation network of the Township.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- 13a. Continue to market access to I-75, M-46, and M-81.
- 13b. Consider the development of a transportation hub utilizing the Saginaw River on the RACER Trust property.
- 13c. Harry Browne Airport should be further improved to serve the industrial and technological needs of industry in the Township.
- 13d. Preserve rail access for future industrial development.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC SPACE**

Encourage an efficient and safe multi-modal transportation network that facilitates economic growth while integrating various modes of transportation to ensure a higher quality of life for Buena Vista's residents.

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### **GOAL 14**

Promote intergovernmental cooperation in transportation planning.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

14a. Work with MDOT and Saginaw County Road Commission to increase the safety and comfort of Township roads and intersections, especially near I-75, M-81, and M-46. Additionally, the Township should collaborate with transit providers to provide alternative transportation options. The Township should participate in regional transit discussions. Employ traffic calming measures as necessary to protect pedestrians and increase vehicular safety.

14b. Based on the road network hierarchy, develop standards for each functional classification. Work with neighboring local, County and State jurisdictions to establish safe, attractive and equitable standards for public rights-of-way.

### **GOAL 15**

Increase the length, quality, and accessibility of the non-motorized transportation network within the Township.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

15a. Establish sidewalks and pathways that support multi-modal access throughout the Township.

15b. Provide gathering areas for people of all age groups and physical abilities, including a diversity of settings to accommodate groups of various sizes. Provide accessible pathways to gathering spaces and public amenities. Where seating is provided, incorporate a variety of seating to accommodate a range of physical abilities. Ensure permanent ADA-compliant and ADA-accessible seating every  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile.

## GOAL 16

Provide for “Complete Streets” on all Buena Vista Township roadways that emphasize safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel to all users.

### OBJECTIVES

- 16a. When road construction occurs, include sidewalks, bicycle lanes/paths, wider shoulders, street trees, and other low-impact landscaping elements to complement the roadway.
- 16b. Provide well-designed crosswalks to increase motorist awareness and pedestrian safety.
- 16c. Maintain residential streets to promote safety and aesthetics.
- 16d. Accommodate increases in traffic volumes through road maintenance, intersection improvements, signalization improvements and upgrading the road network.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Provide Buena Vista Township with the necessary facilities and services for a healthy and safe community.

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### **GOAL 17**

Maintain and improve quality of life in the community by upgrading the aging infrastructure in the Township.

### **OBJECTIVES**

17a. Promote existing infrastructure such as access to natural gas, quality electrical service, and other utilities.

17b. Utilize Best Management Practices and Low-Impact Development Practices in new construction projects that minimizes / controls / diverts surface water runoff.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

Provide a safe community to live and work in by addressing the needs of the community and enhancing the quality of life.

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### **GOAL 18**

Create a safe environment for the Buena Vista residents.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- 18a. Provide a safe, secure environment with sound community support and quality in Township Public Safety.
- 18b. Strengthen the bond between the public safety departments and the community.

### **GOAL 19**

Partner with the business community to improve public safety in the Township.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- 19a. Buena Vista Police Department business programs – regular visits outside of working hours, Police/Citizens Academy.
- 19b. Promote Fire Prevention for both residential and commercial members of the community.

## **COMMUNITY FOCUS**

Promote Buena Vista Township as a family-friendly, inclusive community of choice for all types of people and seek to maintain and improve communications among residents, business owners and policy makers.

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### **GOAL 20**

Improve the communication with residents, neighbors, and visitors.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- 20a. Coordinate efforts with supporting agencies and organizations.
- 20b. Educate the community on civic affairs, current initiatives and available resources.

### **GOAL 21**

Promote a positive image of the Township.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- 21a. Improve the image of Buena Vista by promoting its many positive assets.
- 21b. Enhanced business retention program, with schedule for regular visits to targeted businesses.

### **GOAL 22**

Build on regionalism.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- 22a. Cooperate with nearby communities through the exchange of information on development and redevelopment issues, and other shared interests, such as community facilities and services, and development along shared boundaries.
- 22b. Promote an approachable, friendly, and transparent Township government.
- 22c. Collaborate with surrounding communities to provide a place for residents with year-round recreation opportunities.

## **REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

The purpose of this Plan is to identify areas where the Township can realistically affect change. As an extension of the future land use categories, specific redevelopment areas have been identified for the Township. Many of the Township's options are defined and fixed by regional forces over which the Township has limited control. In considering the various redevelopment options presented, the Township needs to take into account the relative difficulty of an option and the ability of an option to be supported by the market alone, or whether financial and administrative assistance will be required. It must also be acknowledged that in order for the Township to effectively address the underlying fundamental issues that are associated with redevelopment, options must extend beyond traditional, status quo approaches.

## FORMER BUENA VISTA HIGH SCHOOL

Existing Conditions	Potential Redevelopment Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vacant High School Campus, Zoned A-2</li> <li>● Large amount of open green space</li> <li>● Located across from Nexteer</li> <li>● Access to I-75</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rezone to M-1, Industrial (Limited Manufacturing)</li> <li>● Industrial use to take advantage of access to I-75</li> <li>● Provide complementary uses to the nearby industrial uses such as hotel, restaurant, or professional offices</li> </ul>



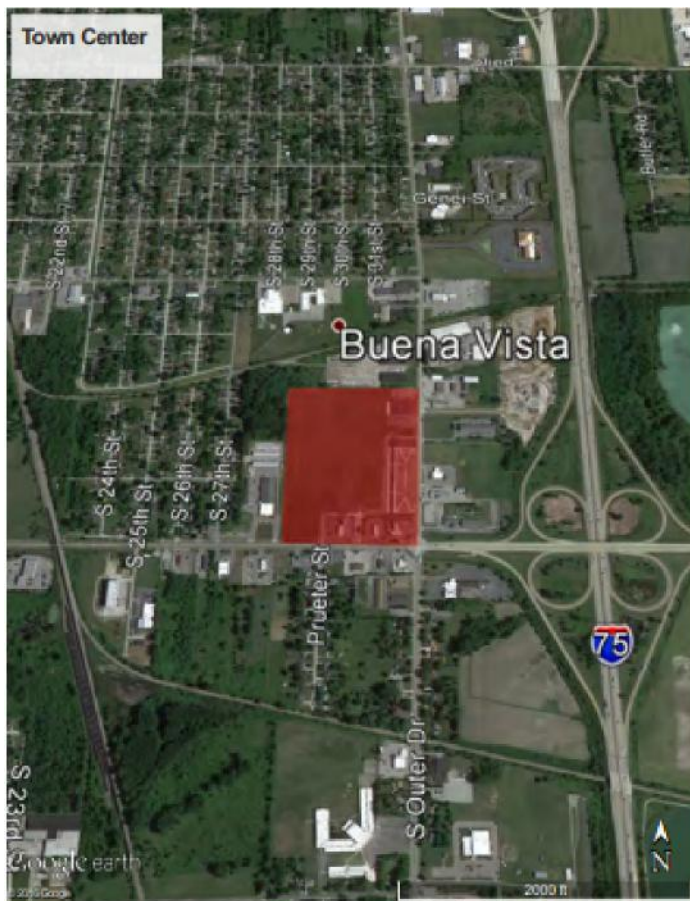
# KROGER

Existing Conditions	Potential Redevelopment Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vacant commercial plaza, Zoned B-2, Commercial</li> <li>● Adjacent to senior housing</li> <li>● Access from Dixie Highway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Indoor storage</li> <li>● Commercial retail</li> <li>● Potential community health</li> <li>● Professional offices</li> </ul>



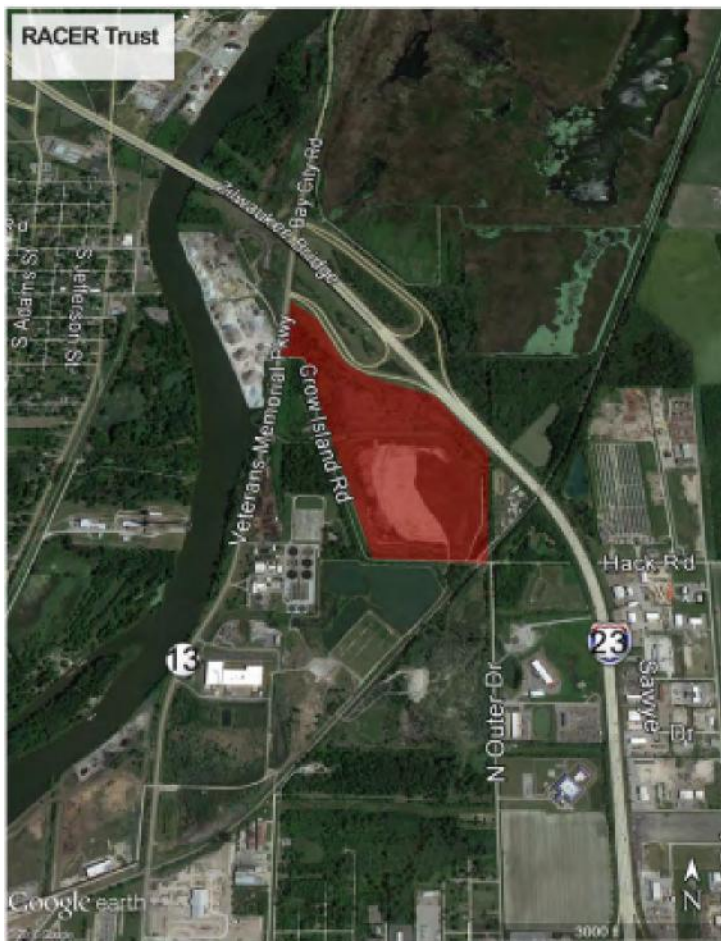
## TOWN CENTER

Existing Conditions	Potential Redevelopment Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vacant property zoned TC, Town Center</li> <li>● New Town Green</li> <li>● Access to I-75</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Commercial use to take advantage of access to I-75</li> <li>● Grocery Store or Pharmacy</li> <li>● Potential site for a Charter School</li> </ul>



## RACER TRUST

Existing Conditions	Potential Redevelopment Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 233 acres of vacant land, Zoned M-2</li><li>● Access to I-75</li><li>● Access to rail</li><li>● Access to the Saginaw River</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Multi-modal transportation hub</li><li>● Intensive industrial use</li></ul>

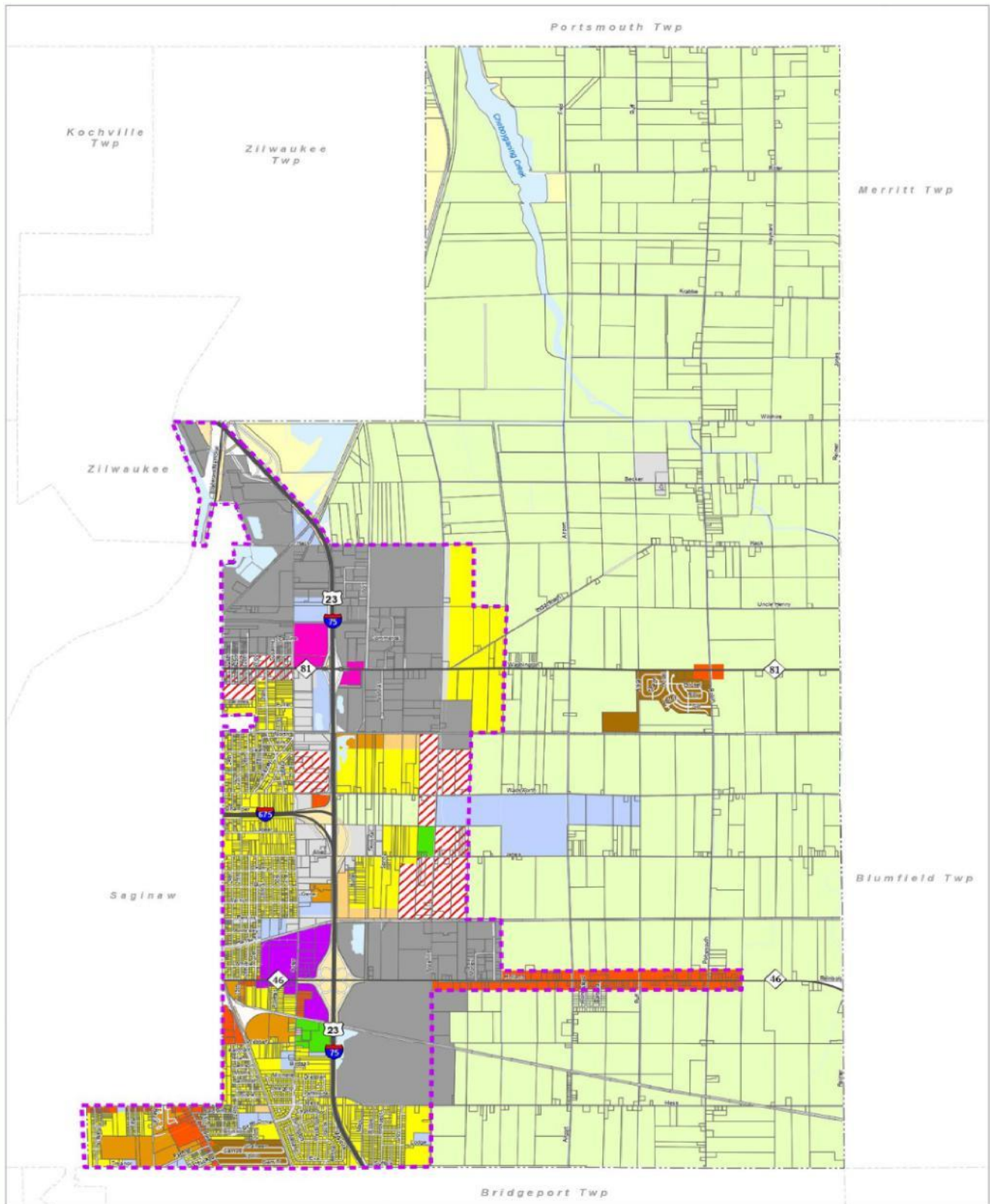




## **ZONING PLAN**

Per the requirements of Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended, below is the Buena Vista Township Zoning Plan, which describes the relationship between the Township's Future Land Use categories and their corresponding zoning districts.

<b>Future Land Use Category</b>	<b>Corresponding Zoning District</b>
Agricultural/ Rural Residential	A-1, Agricultural (Farmland Preservation) A-2, Agricultural (Dispersed Residential)
Preservation	A-1, Agricultural (Farmland Preservation) A-2, Agricultural (Dispersed Residential)
Low Density Residential	A-2, Agricultural (Dispersed Residential) R-1, Residential (Single Family)
Medium Density Residential	R-2, Residential (One and Two Family)
High Density Residential	R-3, Residential (Multi Family)
Manufactured Home Park	MH, Mobile Home Park
Public/ Institutional	AP, Airport
Neighborhood Commercial	B-1, Commercial (Local Business)
Community Commercial	B-2, Commercial (Intensive)
Freeway/ General Commercial	B-3, Commercial (Wholesale and Business Service)
Town Center	TC, Town Center
Light Industrial/ General Commercial	M-1, Industrial (Limited Manufacturing) B-2, Commercial (Intensive)
Light Industrial	M-1, Industrial (Limited Manufacturing)
Intensive Industrial	M-2 Industrial (Intensive Manufacturing)
Outdoor Recreation	N/A
Road Transportation	N/A



## Future Land Use

Buena Vista Charter Township, Saginaw County, Michigan

### FUTURE LAND USE



## **FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION DESCRIPTIONS**

Sixteen land use designations are included in this Future Land Use Plan. The description of the planned uses sometimes includes design characteristics and site amenities that have been identified as desirable for future new development and redevelopment – walkability, high quality architectural design and materials, and a greater emphasis on urban form in the public rights-of-way being the main objectives. The design characteristics and site amenities called out in this Future Land Use Plan invite the creation of Zoning Ordinance regulations or planned unit development agreements to assure the resulting sites will be consistent with the descriptions envisioned in this Master Plan Amendment. Only the Future Land Use designations that are represented in the Master Pan are described below.

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***1. Agricultural/Rural Residential.*** The primary future land use for Buena Vista Township is agriculture. Agricultural land uses include farming (the production of food and other crops). Agricultural land use accounts for the majority in Buena Vista Township and much of it is protected through Public Act 116. Agricultural enterprises provide numerous benefits to the people residing in the Township and it is the intent to promote the use and preservation of agricultural land uses. The majority of Buena Vista Township is recognized by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources as Prime Farmland. The intent is for these areas to be preserved as active farmland, as they include the most productive farmlands in Saginaw County. Preservation of this farmland is considered critical to the long-term role of agriculture as a primary economic base. The plan discourages premature conversion to residential or commercial use. The Michigan Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (P.A. 116) helps ensure continued viability of agricultural use of these areas but it is not a long-term solution to the preservation of farmland. Saginaw County has one of the highest percentages of Farmland Agreements in the state. As of 2005, 65-76% of county farmland was enrolled in P.A. 116. Only three other counties in the state are included in this percentage bracket: Huron, Lenawee, and Tuscola.

The restriction of development under P.A. 116 allows for the continued rural character and agricultural heritage of the community. To further protect the value of the land in the Agriculture future land use areas, permitted and special approval uses in this area should be expanded. As conventional farming becomes less secure, alternative income producing activities need to be available to the farm owner, so that he or she may resist developing their property for residential development, if they choose to do so. For instance, value-added agricultural uses could be encouraged in the Agriculture area. These types of activities might include farm production facilities, boutique commercial uses, wineries, agritourism and similar facilities. By providing more flexibility for these uses, these properties can remain in a rural / agricultural state and avoid the conversion to residential and/or commercial development necessary to remain economically viable.

**2. Preservation.** This is generally undeveloped land, intended to conserve a natural environment, maintain fallow land or protect land not suitable for significant development. This land includes wetlands, part of the Crow Island State Game Area, floodplain and vacant property. The proportion of Rural Preservation Land is relatively small in Buena Vista Charter Township because so much of the land east of the urban Growth Boundary is rich farmland. Most Rural Preservation Land is in the northwest or north part of the Township.



**3. Public / Semi-Public.** This future land use category includes existing public and semi-public uses and land, including the property on which Harry W Browne Airport, Buena Vista Township, and public utilities operate. Though in many cases, the Township lacks the statutory authority to govern how this land is developed, the intent of this Plan is for the Public / Semi-Public planned land to be developed to:

- Contain site and structure improvements on the most buildable portion of the site, preserving natural drainage systems, open space, natural character, and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Be designed and developed to “stand the test of time”, with high quality materials, cutting edge site design and impactful contributions to the public space within the Township.

**4. Low Density Residential.** This category of land use permits single-family, conservation and open space residential development – as well as public parks and institutional uses (such as religious institutions) – at a density of 1/4 to 1 acre per dwelling unit. This category is intended to encourage and preserve attractive traditional neighborhood environments. It also permits customary agricultural operations with certain restrictions.



**5. Medium Density Residential.** This future land use category serves as a transition between lower-density residential and higher-density residential land, and – similarly to the low density residential – requires a density of between 1/4 and 1 acre per dwelling unit. Typical uses include single family dwellings, two family dwellings, and senior housing.

**6. High Density Residential.** This land use classification serves as further transition between residential uses and commercial uses. The typical uses in this category consist of apartment complexes and condominiums, with density usually consisting of more than seven units per acre. The increase in high density residential land use addresses the need for additional senior housing options in the Township.



**7. Manufactured Home Park.** Manufactured homes may be either mobile homes or modular homes that are factory produced and then transported to residential complexes for placement and assembly. Mobile Home Park complexes are controlled by the State of Michigan and are virtually exempt from most local zoning requirements other than designating where they can be placed. The manufactured home parks usually remain under single ownership with sites rented for manufactured homes. It is also noted that factory-made modular homes can normally qualify as an on-site dwelling unit outside of a manufactured home park if they meet applicable zoning ordinance requirements. Manufactured home parks can vary from medium density to high-density depending on their layout. The State of Michigan normally requires that a vacant site be available for short-term or long-term development as a manufactured home park.

In Buena Vista Charter Township it is recommended that the following requirements be applied to manufactured home parks:

- Lot setbacks and landscaping requirements should provide for the quality interface of the project with adjacent land uses.
- Any site for a manufactured home park is intensive and must be within the Urban Growth Boundary and must be served by public sanitary sewers and public water supply.
- The site shall be located on or in convenient access to a major road and is also an effective buffer between low-density housing and more intensive uses.

Mobile home parks are important to a community because they provide some amenities to residents that are not normally available in other housing projects and because they provide affordable housing for start-up families and retired or nearly retired persons. The plan acknowledges the location of the existing manufactured home parks, but does not encourage expansion or the creation of new communities.

**8. Commercial Classifications.** The following describes commercial land planned for the Neighborhood Commercial, Community Commercial, Town Center, Freeway /General Commercial and Light Industrial / General Commercial future land use designations, which are presented from least to most intensive of planned land use:

- Neighborhood Commercial – Neighborhood Commercial is the least intensive commercial land use classification, and is intended to meet the day-to-day office (employment) and retail needs of Township residents and visitors.
- Community Commercial – This classification is intended for large-scale commercial projects including shopping malls, “big-box” retail, retail complexes, large-scale and multi-story office parks, theaters and amusement centers. It should also be available for mixed use developments of commercial and residential uses.



Traditional suburban “strip mall” style development should be discouraged. Instead, new urbanist development principles, such as building lined roadways, pedestrian focused development, and articulated facades with visual interest should be encouraged.

- Town Center – The Town Center is planned for mixed-use, high-quality development that suits the needs of residents, while capturing the demand generated by the close proximity to I-75. Potential uses include commercial, residential, public / institutional, and research and development. Development of the Town Center should convey a sustainable character, including appropriate landscaping, stormwater management, and open space. The Town Center may be developed using the underlying zoning regulations or as a Planned Unit Development (PUD).
- Freeway / General Commercial - Freeway and general commercial includes travel-oriented consumer uses, quick stop activities, truck-related facilities, repair shops and other uses that are unusual and range from retail to virtually light industrial uses.
- Light Industrial / General Commercial – This designation is intended to provide a general commercial and restricted industrial district designed for a variety of compatible business,warehouse, wholesale, office, and limited industrial uses. This classification serves as a transition from high intensity uses to less intensive uses.



**9. Light Industrial.** The intent of the Light Industrial classification is to encourage attractive industrial development that is in keeping with the Township’s suburban character. The facilities are often part of a small-scale industrial or commerce park or have smaller, freestanding buildings. Transport is usually by truck so that railroad access is not usually necessary or likely.

**10. Intensive Industrial.** Intensive Industrial classification provides the majority of employment opportunities for Buena Vista Township. The uses allowed in these areas are generally considered heavy industrial.

**11. Outdoor Recreation.** The Township has two major parks in its boundaries; Kueffer Park on Towerline Road is the major Township owned park. Lions Park, including the Soap Box Derby Hill, is between South Outer Drive and the I-75 Freeway. It is owned by the Buena Vista Township Lions Club but is leased long-term to the Township.

**12. Road Transportation.** Major transportation properties in Buena Vista Charter Township currently include the I-75 Freeway, four active railroad tracks, and two private Saginaw River terminals. These land uses are not expected to either increase or decrease in the future.



## **MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING**

Much of the conversation surrounding the mismatch between current housing stock and demographic trends focuses on the need for “missing middle housing”. A response to the outdated multi-family housing types developed in decades past, missing middle housing developments are those types between single unit detached homes and mid-rise apartment buildings on the density and typology scale.

According to the Smart Growth Network (SGN), in its National Conversation on the Future of Our Communities, 2013, these housing types “are classified as missing because very few have been built since the early 1940s due to regulatory constraints, the shift to auto-dependent patterns of development, and the incentivization of single-family home ownership”.

The eight defining characteristics of missing middle housing – according to the Smart Growth Network are as follows:

- 1. Walkable Communities.** According to SGN, the most important characteristic of missing middle housing is that it must be built in walkable urban areas close to services and amenities such as restaurants, markets, and work.
- 2. Medium Density but Lower Perceived Densities.** SGN notes that perception and design is key when it comes to the perceived densities of missing middle housing. In short, those missing middle housing is typically medium density (16 dwelling units/acre to 35 dwelling units/acre), context sensitive design and small building footprints help the densities feel more tenable to existing residents and neighbors.
- 3. Small Footprint and Blended Densities.** Densities should be blended and small- to medium sized building footprints maintained for ideal urban infill sites, “even in older neighborhoods that were originally developed for single-family homes but have been planned and often zoned to evolve with slightly higher densities”, according to SGN.
- 4. Smaller, Well-Designed Units.** Many urban experts believe that a common mistake of architects and builders that has resulted in obsolete denser housing types is the impulse to force typically suburban units and building types into the urban core. SGN advocates for smaller, better designed units to help keep costs down and widen the affordability of housing in urban cores.

**5. Off-street Parking Does Not Drive the Plan.** Since missing middle housing is best built in walkable environments, there is often a need for less parking than even zoning standards call for. When large parking areas are built, “the buildings become inefficient from a development potential or yield standpoint and can shift neighborhoods below the 16 dwelling unit/acre density threshold”. The 16 dwelling unit/acre density threshold is the point at which a neighborhood generally can support public transit and streets where walkable services and retail become viable.

**6. Simple Construction.** Simple construction methods support two important pieces in the missing middle housing equation – profitability to the developer and affordability to the purchaser.

**7. Creating Community.** With the common spaces typical of many of the forms of missing middle housing, such as courtyards and bungalow courts, the opportunity for neighbor interaction and community-building is often greater than with traditional single-family and high-rise apartment development.

**8. Marketability.** The marketability of many of the missing middle housing types is key to their success in a competitive market; adding to the attractiveness of many of the forms is the ability to provide a scale and experience similar to single-family homes. For example, when occupants enter from a front porch with a dedicated entrance, rather than sharing interior common space entrances in typical apartment buildings.

As a response to the lack of housing typology diversity, Buena Vista Township – given its proximity to the City of Saginaw and direct access to I-75, M-81, and M-46 – could benefit greatly by this type of housing development. Developers are strongly encouraged to provide missing middle housing in Buena Vista Township.

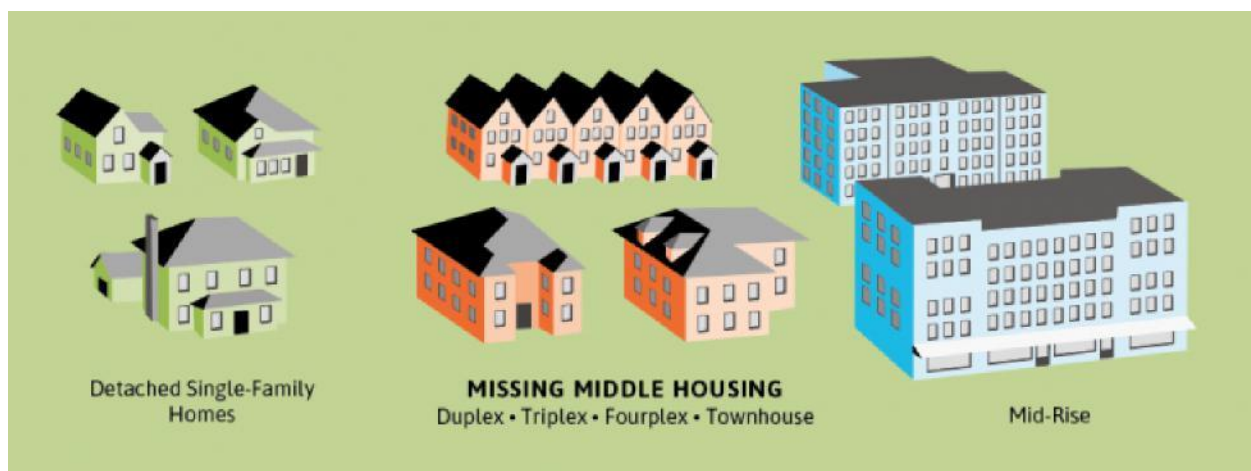


Image Source: [planh.ca](http://planh.ca)

## **FUTURE LAND USE TOTALS BY CATEGORY**



In this section, the future land use designations are presented by sub-area, with the sum and percentage total acres planned for each being shown. The largest planned land use categories by sub-area are:



<b>Future Land Use Category</b>	<b>Sum Acres</b>	<b>% Acres</b>
Agricultural/ Rural Residential	15,506.65	70%
Preservation	344.03	1.55%
Low Density Residential	1,693.95	7.65%
Medium Density Residential	65.47	0.3%
High Density Residential	199.67	0.9%
Manufactured Home Park	199.08	0.9%
Public/ Institutional	482.44	2.18%
Neighborhood Commercial	1.68	0.01%
Community Commercial	315.82	1.43%
Freeway/ General Commercial	147.72	0.67%
Town Center	72.66	0.33%
Light Industrial/ General Commercial	436.99	1.97%
Light Industrial	318.97	1.44%
Intensive Industrial	2,115.37	9.55%
Outdoor Recreation	54.92	0.25%
Road Transportation	195.86	0.88%
Total	22,151.29	100%

**GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**



The following tables present guidelines for how future development within the Township should be developed. These tables also contain guidelines for site and structural elements that are not desirable in future developments.



***DO'S AND DON'TS OF DEVELOPING BUENA VISTA***

<p><i>DO</i></p>	<p>To preserve open space, employ conservation development zoning option for lower-density residential developments.</p>	
<p><i>DON'T</i></p>	<p>Uncoordinated, site-by-site approach to lower-density residential development; “traditional” subdivision planning without an open space preservation component.</p>	

<p><b>Open Space</b></p>	<p><i>Examples</i></p>	
<p><b>Residential</b></p>	<p><i>Examples</i></p>	
<p><i>DO</i></p>	<p>Residential developments denser than single-family should provide housing types not currently represented in the community to encourage millennials and baby boomers establishing Buena Vista as home, and visual interest (see “Missing Middle Housing” section)</p>	
<p><i>DON'T</i></p>	<p>Traditional “apartment complex” style development, which often has an institutional look and feel, and does not add to the high-quality visual fabric of a community.</p>	



Commercial		Examples
<i>DO</i>	Employ new urbanist development principles when planning future commercial development, including building-lined roadways, pedestrian orientation and articulated facades with visual interest.	
<i>DON'T</i>	Suburban “strip mall” style development, with a site-by-site approach lacking in cohesion, attention to detail and with an emphasis on auto orientation.	

Cross Access		Examples
<i>DO</i>	Shared access between adjacent sites, thereby reducing curb cuts and presenting a more coordinated approach to development; also employ service drives, access easements and pedestrian / bicycle linkages.	
<i>DON'T</i>	More than one curb cut onto single properties and a site-by-site approach to access management.	

## Multiple Use

*Examples*

*DO*

Provide mixed-use developments with neighborhood commercial development on road frontages (if single-story mixed-use development) and residential behind, or residential above ground level commercial or office space.



*DON'T*

The development of single-use sites where conditions for successful mixed-use development exist.



## Public Space

*Examples*

*DO*

Provide gathering areas for people of all age groups and physical abilities, including accessible non-motorized facilities, in every development.



*DON'T*

Provide “token” gathering areas without an understanding of the conditions by which people are comfortable using public space.



## IMPLEMENTATION

### *GETTING STARTED*

This chapter of the Plan presents tools and techniques that citizens, community leaders, and Township staff can use to implement the land use plan. These implementation measures are workable if there are people in the community with vision and tenacity who are willing to invest the time and effort required to make them work. Community improvement requires a compelling vision; persistence; the flexibility needed to respond to changing needs, opportunities, and circumstances; and an ability to achieve consensus.

The tools and techniques identified in this chapter are capable of being implemented under current enabling legislation. Legislation has been proposed in recent years that would give communities additional tools to implement land use recommendations, such as, regional impact coordination, impact fees, and tax incentives. Inasmuch as adoption of any such new legislation is uncertain, this chapter focuses on the tools that are available under current law.

### *POLICY AND PROGRAMMING*

#### Public Information and Education

The success of the Master Plan depends to a great extent on efforts to inform and educate citizens about the Plan and the need for regulatory measures to implement the Plan. Successful implementation requires the support and active participation of residents, property owners, and business owners. A thoughtfully prepared public education program is needed that creates a sense of ownership by Township residents. For example, a series of hearings entirely dedicated to the Master Plan before the Planning Commission will enable the public to review and comment on the plan. A joint workshop should be conducted by the Township Board and Planning Commission to discuss the implementation of this plan. Public input at this point should be focused on implementation, not revising the content. The hearing at which the adoption is scheduled should be well publicized to promote as much attendance as possible. Upon adoption of this plan, a second joint workshop should be conducted to update the residents as to the direction the Township will take towards its future. Substantial advertisement is essential to draw residents to the meetings. The Township must continuously keep its residents updated on progress of the plan. Citizens, business groups, and public agencies must all be involved in the implementation of this plan to make it successful.

#### Condensed Brochure

The Township can produce a more reader-friendly form of the Plan. Most individuals will not take the time to read a one-hundred-plus page document. However, a small brochure with reduced versions of the Future Land Use Map combined with condensed versions of the Goals and Objectives and Implementation Plan sections would make an attractive alternative. These brochures could be distributed to individuals at Township Hall, on the website, or even mailed to residents and businesses in Buena Vista.

**Maintaining the Plan**

Another way for the general public to stay informed about the Master Plan is to keep the Planning Commission and Township Board actively involved in maintaining it. The Plan should be an active document and continually reviewed and updated. An annual, joint meeting between the Commission and Board should be held to review the Plan and any amendments that may have become necessary. This will help ensure that the Plan is not forgotten, and that its strategies and recommendations are implemented. Then, every five years or earlier if the Commission feels appropriate; another full-scale Master Planning effort should be undertaken. These steps will not only help keep the public aware of the Plan, but they will also make certain the plan does more than “sit on a shelf and collect dust.”

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS**

### **Cooperation between Units of Government**

Implementation will require cooperation between governmental units. Maximum impact will be achieved only if the Township is able to achieve cooperation from other units of government and agencies. For example, road improvements will affect quality of life, but decisions regarding some Township roads are made by the Saginaw County Road Commission and Michigan Department of Transportation. Clearly, these other agencies must be aware of the Township's land use planning objectives.

### **Lean Zoning**

Lean Zoning is a concept of removing barriers from development and reducing red tape. The Township can promote Lean Zoning practices by reviewing the development process and identifying roadblocks that can delay or increase the cost of doing business in the Township. For instance, the Township could develop a set of criteria for development in the Town Center that when met, could reduce the number of meetings required for approval. Another option is that the required information for the reuse of an existing building may be reduced.

### **Pre-application Conferences**

A pre-application conference consists of a meeting between a prospective developer or redeveloper of property and Township representatives. Typically, the Township's representatives consist of members of the Departments of Planning, Building, and Public Services. Elected and appointed officials are generally not included in such meetings, as their presence can influence the free exchange of information which is the desired outcome of such a meeting. During the meeting, the developer asks Township staff their opinion on the approach being pursued, the style of architecture, building materials, general site layout, etc. Township staff provide preliminary comments, and may even be in a position to inform a prospective developer how such a proposal would be received by Township officials and the general community. Pre-application conferences can often help move projects through the development process much more smoothly, and permit a prospective developer to know when a particular proposal should be pursued, modified, or removed from consideration. In the long run, pre-application conferences can save everyone time and money.

### **Public Engagement**

Public engagement is a way to gather meaningful, informed, actionable data from the community. It provides an opportunity for the government to build trust with the public. As technology changes, new methods of communication provide decision makers with low-cost, wide reaching ways of soliciting input. Social Media such as Facebook and Twitter can be utilized to seek meaningful input during the development phase of projects to identify potential issues and adjust plans accordingly. Refer to the Township 2022 Public Participation Plan for more information on public engagement.

## **Township Beautification**

### ***BLIGHT CONTROL***

Blight can have a negative impact on the health, safety, and welfare of the community. To address this concern, the Township should consider the development of a Beautification Committee to take a systematic approach to removing blight from the Township. By focusing on a neighborhood by neighborhood approach, the Committee can produce a noticeable improvement that can have a positive effect on the remainder of the Township. Blight can be combated by developing a community clean-up program and enforcing existing building codes.

### ***PUBLIC ART***

Public art can have a great impact on a community. It can create attachment and pride in one's community. Public art can act as an economic driver by providing employment for local artists and acting as a center for culture and tourism. The addition of the Buena Vista Farmers Market and its mural support progress towards developing pride in Buena Vista. The Township may wish to include the promotion of public art as part of the Beautification Committee.

## **Establishing Priorities**

The Master Plan contains a multitude of recommendations. There may be insufficient staff or volunteer support to implement all of the recommendations in a carefully planned, deliberate manner. Consequently, a process for establishing priorities must be established as soon as the Master Plan is adopted. Participants involved in setting priorities should include Township department heads and appropriate staff, the Planning Commission, and other Township officials who should be involved in implementation of the Plan.

## **Vacant Nonresidential Buildings Policy**

Over the past several years, communities across Michigan have dealt with large retail and industrial buildings that sit vacant without much activity. These vacant buildings can impact the economic viability of the community as they appeal to the Michigan Tax Tribunal to have their tax assessments cut by 50 percent. The Township should develop a strategy to address these properties before they become a problem. During the development phase, reuse opportunities should be taken into consideration as part of the design of the building. Code enforcement strategies should be developed to prevent existing buildings from becoming an eyesore.

## **Redevelopment Ready Communities Program**

According to the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program measures and certifies communities that integrate transparency, predictability and efficiency into their development practices with the goal of realizing a community-supported redevelopment vision that is inviting to investors. The RRC has developed a set of Best Practices for communities to follow to build a clear and transparent development process. The six RRC Best Practices include:

1. Plans and Public Engagement
2. Zoning
3. Development Review
4. Boards and Commissions
5. Economic Development and Marketing
6. Redevelopment Ready Sites (Post-Certification)

## **LAND USE CONTROLS**

### ***ZONING REGULATIONS***

Zoning is the primary regulatory tool used by the Township to implement the Master Plan. These regulations and procedures should be amended to reflect the recommendations identified in this plan.

### ***CONVENTIONAL ZONING PROCEDURES***

#### **Rezoning to Implement the Master Plan**

The land use classifications on the Future Land Use Map provide the basis for evaluating future rezoning requests. Zoning actions that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map usually receive deferential and favorable judicial review if challenged. The Master Plan should be the principal source of information in the investigation of all rezoning requests. The Township may initiate rezonings necessary to place land in conformance with the Future Land Use Map, or they may wait for property owners to come forward.

#### **Planned Development**

Planned development involves the use of special zoning requirements and review procedures that provide design and regulatory flexibility, so as to encourage innovation in land use planning and design. Planned developments should achieve a higher quality of development than might otherwise be possible. Continued use of planned development is recommended to achieve development in accordance with the goals and objectives of this Plan. Planned development can be used as the regulatory tool to permit open space zoning or cluster development and to facilitate mixed use development in the Town Center area.

#### **Performance Standards**

Rather than simply regulate development on the basis of dimensional standards, many communities are establishing performance standards to regulate development based on the permissible effects or impacts of a proposed use. Performance standards should be used to supplement conventional zoning standards. Performance standards can be developed to regulate noise, dust, vibration, odor, glare and heat, safety hazards, and environmental impacts such as air and water pollution. The complexity of the performance standards should be based in part on the capacity of Township staff to administer the standards. Performance standards can be particularly useful in achieving environmental and resource protection goals. If based on a strong body of research, standards can be developed that relate to critical environmental areas (such as floodplains, wetlands, lakes, woodlands, groundwater recharge areas, and unique wildlife habitats), and natural resource areas (such as forest lands).

#### **Incentive Zoning**

Incentive zoning allows a developer to exceed the dimensional limitations in the Zoning Ordinance if the developer agrees to fulfill conditions specified in the Ordinance. Incentive zoning should be considered to promote innovative land planning techniques identified in the Plan. For example, a possible increase in density can be used as an incentive for developments that implement open space zoning standards.

### **Nonconforming Uses**

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act of 2006, allows the creation of different classes of nonconforming uses. This allows a community to create a preferred class of nonconforming uses that meet a defined set of criteria. The Township should consider amending the zoning ordinance to allow a preferred class of nonconforming uses. These uses would then be treated as an allowed use, granting them the ability to update and maintain their property in a manner beneficial to the Township.

### **Transitional Use Zoning**

When a zoning district with less intensive use is adjacent to a similar, but more intensive use zoning district, it may be appropriate to allow more intensive uses under certain circumstances. The Township should review the allowed uses in their zoning districts, determine if transitional use zoning is appropriate, and develop criteria for their approval.

## ***INNOVATIVE ZONING TECHNIQUES***

### **Overlay Zoning**

Overlay zoning allows the Township to impose a new set of regulations on a special area within an existing zoning district. In an area where an overlay zone is established, the property is placed simultaneously in the two zones, and the property may be developed only under the applicable conditions and requirements of both zones. Thus, the overlay district regulations supplement the regulations of the underlying zoning district. Overlay zoning has been used in other communities to address special conditions and features, such as historic areas, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas, without disrupting the underlying zoning plan.

### **Development Agreement**

Although there is no explicit legislative authority for such agreements, many Michigan communities have used development agreements to achieve a mutual understanding between the developer and Township concerning the conditions under which development can occur. Development agreements are often negotiated as part of a planned development approval, allowing the community and developer to address complex issues that cannot be adequately addressed on a typical site plan. Development agreements might prove useful to achieve desired developments, especially if or when a mixed use development is proposed.

### **Complete Streets**

A Complete Streets Plan addresses all facets of the transportation system in the Township including roads, bicycle ways, pedestrian ways, public transportation, railroads, and freight facilities and routes. It describes the extent and character of the transportation system and its interconnections considering all legal users of the right of way. It can also address specific “fixes” for greater walkability and bikeability.

**Inclusionary Zoning**

Inclusionary zoning is the practice of providing a percentage of affordable housing to be included during the development of new residential projects. Developments that propose a certain percentage of affordable housing are typically allowed incentives such as higher density or reduction of dimensional requirements. Inclusionary zoning programs can help transition residents from living in rental units to homeownership.

**Low Impact Development**

Low Impact Development (LID) is incorporating green infrastructure into projects to manage stormwater in an environmentally sensitive way. Utilizing LID strategies during the development design phase can improve water quality and aesthetics, and reduce costs. LID strategies include using permeable pavement, rain gardens, and bioswales. The Township may wish to amend the zoning ordinance to encourage Low Impact Development strategies.

## **FUNDING MECHANISMS AND TOOLS**

### ***PUBLIC FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS***

#### **Capital Improvements Program**

A comprehensive Capital Improvements Program should be adopted by the Township of Buena Vista on an annual basis. Buena Vista Charter Township currently has a CIP in place for water projects valid through the year 2030. Michigan law (Public Act 285 of 1931, as amended, §125.39) requires that “the Planning Commission, after the Commission shall have adopted a master plan, shall prepare coordinated and comprehensive programs of public structures and improvements. The Commission shall annually prepare such a program for the ensuing six (6) years, which program shall show those public structures and improvements in the general order of their priority, which in the Commission’s judgment will be needed or desirable and can be undertaken within the six-year period.” The program should set the Township’s priorities for infrastructure improvements, utility upgrades, development and improvement of community facilities, and the purchase of major pieces of equipment.

The program should be prepared and adopted by both the Planning Commission and Township Board, and then reviewed annually at a joint meeting of both. Currently only the Township Board participates in the preparation and adoption of the CIP. Capital programming influences land redevelopment decisions. By properly coordinating utility upgrades and other capital improvements with its planning program, the Township can control the pace of redevelopment. Capital programming should be viewed as more than just a ministerial act. Using the Master Plan to delineate the location and type of development desired and the Capital Improvements Program to schedule the provision of services, the Township can inform developers when development of a particular parcel will be encouraged and the type of development that will be allowed. The need for several important capital improvements have been identified in this Master Plan; most notably road and non-motorized transportation improvements.

### ***FUNDING TOOLS***

Successful implementation of the Master Plan will depend on the ability of the Township to secure necessary financing. Besides the general fund, the following sources of revenue are available to the Township:

#### **Dedicated Millage**

Special millages can be used to generate revenues for a specific purpose. For example, one Michigan community has a special land acquisition fund that is supported by a one-quarter mill property tax. A land acquisition fund would be a useful tool to promote open space preservation in the Township or assemble property for redevelopment. Millages can also be used to generate funds for capital improvements. Finally, a sidewalk millage could be used to address sidewalks gaps and streetscape improvements within the Township.

### **Special Assessments**

Special assessments are compulsory contributions collected from the owners of property benefitted by specific public improvements (paving, drainage improvements, etc.) to defray the costs of such improvements. Special assessments are apportioned according to the assumed benefits to the property affected. Special assessment funding might prove useful to implement some of the recommendations for the TCD and adjacent commercial corridors. Special assessments are also useful in upgrading street lighting in residential areas, and street trees and streetscaping in highly visible areas. The most important point regarding special assessments to keep in mind is that they must be supported by those in the area of the assessment, or they are doomed to failure. Therefore, before a special assessment is presented to the public, it must be well thought out, and the benefits versus costs well demonstrated.

### **Bond Programs**

Bonds are one of the principal sources of financing used by communities to pay for capital improvements. General obligation bonds are issued for specific community projects and are paid off by the general public through property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for construction of projects that generate revenues. The bonds are then retired using income generated by the project (for example, water and sewer service charges). While bonding is a very common method of funding projects, it is important to remember that this is long-term debt, and that it is dependent on the growth in the tax base. Therefore, it is essential that property values are protected, and that the reputation of the community is well maintained to keep its bonds an attractive investment. It is also important to know how much debt a community can realistically afford. If a community is too heavily committed to paying off debt, its credit rating can be damaged. Bonds are useful; however, their use should be balanced with the other methods of funding available to a community.

### **Tax Increment Financing**

Tax increment financing is authorized by the Downtown Development Authority Act, Neighborhood Authority Act, Corridor Improvement Act, and the Local Development Finance Authority Act. When a tax increment finance district is established, the state equalized value of all properties in the district is recorded. Every year thereafter, the property tax revenue generated by any increase in the total state equalized value is "captured" by the authority to finance the improvements set forth in a development plan. Often, revenue bonds are issued to finance the improvements, and the tax increment revenues are used to repay the bonds.

### **MDNR Recreation Grant Programs**

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grants are available for park development and land acquisition. The Township has effectively used this program in the past to finance park land acquisition and development. In the future, the Township may wish to seek MNRTF funding for acquisition of land principally for open space and natural resource preservation purposes, and to implement its Recreation Master Plan.

### **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)**

CDBG's can be used for numerous community improvement projects in addition to housing rehabilitation. Criteria, however, require that they be used primarily to improve housing opportunities, and recreational and social opportunities for distressed portions of the community. CDBG funds can also be used for community economic development. Therefore those areas of Buena Vista where the lower income households live should be identified and targeted for projects needed to improve conditions in those areas. Small area neighborhood plans would aid in identifying what types of projects would benefit areas in decline to stabilize those areas, and permit them to reverse the conditions which are negatively impacting them. By using CDBG funds in distressed portions of the community, funds that would have been spent in completing those improvements are freed up to be used elsewhere. Therefore, while the residents of a distressed portion of the community benefit directly from the CDBG program, the Township in general benefits by having funds that would have been spent available for other improvements.

### **RRC Technical Assistance (Match Funding)**

RRC Technical Assistance (RRC TA) Match Funding is a resource available to eligible communities actively engaged in Redevelopment Ready Communities. RRC may provide funding support for various projects needed to reach or maintain the RRC Essentials or RRC Certified designation. While exact investment parameters may vary based on numerous factors, RRC TA match funding can cover up to 75% of a project's cost with the remaining amount coming directly from the community or its partners. RRC TA match funding can be used to help a community cover the cost of professional services for most items identified as red/yellow in its RRC baseline report. All RRC TA match funded projects are expected to result in deliverables which meet the Certified expectations, even if the community has declared its intent to achieve Essentials level.

## **ACTION PLAN**

### **Introduction**

This section presents tools and techniques that residents, community leaders, and Township staff can use to implement this Master Plan. These implementation measures are workable if there are people in the community with vision and commitment who are willing to invest time and effort required to make them work. The tools and techniques identified herein are available for use by Michigan communities under current enabling legislation. This section also provides specific recommendations for implementing certain strategies set forth previously.

### **Action Plan**

The Buena Vista Master Plan and its goals and objectives recommend a future vision for the community. This vision is to build upon Buena Vista's existing assets and make the most of opportunities that can attract new development and residents to the community while protecting the Township's natural beauty and resources. To put it simply, the plan for Buena Vista is to create an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable community where people want to live, work, visit and play.

The goals and objectives of this plan should be reviewed often and be considered in decision making by the Township. Successful implementation of this plan will be the result of actions taken by elected and appointed officials, Township staff, the Downtown Development Authority, the Planning Commission, public agencies, and private residents and organizations.

The tables on the following pages present a detailed summary of all of the recommended implementation activities, including partners for completing the activity, and available funding resources for each activity.

**IMPLEMENTATION MATRICES**

The charts on the following page summarize the recommended actions and strategies for Buena Vista Township. The charts present a detailed summary of all the recommended implementation activities, the responsible parties for completing the action and available funding resources for each activity.

**KEY**

Priority	
Most Important	A
Very Important	B
Important	C

Timeframe	
1-5 Years	A
6-10 Years	B
Ongoing	C
As Available	D

**Collaboration**

Collaboration with others is a key priority for the Township, especially in regards to the redevelopment of its corridors and transportation projects as such developments impact the larger region. Regional planning efforts at the State and County level are particularly important to consider in conjunction with Township efforts. For this reason, an additional column is added to each implementation matrix which, when marked with an “X”, indicates that the project should be a joint planning effort and accomplished with other entities.

The Buena Vista Township Planning Commission will annually report on the progress made towards realizing the Master Plan's goals and objectives through the Annual Planning Commission Report.

Category	Department
COMDEV	Community Development
PARREC	Parks and Recreation
PUBS	Public Safety
DPWW	Department of Public Works / Water
PC	Planning Commission
DDA	Downtown Development Authority

## **AGRICULTURE**

Retain and promote prime agriculture lands in the Township while encouraging opportunities for innovative programs to support agricultural activities.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Collaboration Opportunity</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>FUNDING</b>	
					<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
Create a systematic agriculture preservation plan that considers transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, and PA 116 farmland preservation	B	D	X	COMDEV		
Encourage the establishment of public and private local facilities through which Township grown produce can be sold.	B	A	X	DDA / PC	X	X
Promote agritourism as a way to preserve agriculture properties, educate the public on how agriculture affects their life, and limit the conversion of agricultural land to commercial or residential developments.	B	A		COMDEV		
Encourage the use of high tech, sustainable agricultural methods.	B	C		DDA / PC		

## NEIGHBORHOODS

Strengthen the quality residential character of the community by improving current neighborhoods, assuming that growth meets needs of the community, and providing convenient access to supporting activities.

Project	Priority	Timeframe	Collaboration Opportunity	Responsibility	FUNDING	
					Public	Private
Develop a neighborhood Revitalization Strategy that strengthens existing, targeted neighborhoods with public improvements, housing infill, low interest loans and grants for housing renovation and seminars on home improvement and maintenance.	A	A	X	COMDEV	X	X
Encourage the maintenance, redevelopment and rehabilitation of older multiple-family housing developments.	B	C	X	DDA / PC	X	
Encourage the development of senior housing options for those 55 years and older to meet the needs of the growing senior population to allow residents to “age in place”.	B	A	X	DDA / PC		
Support development of affordable to low-moderate income housing to meet community needs.	C	C	X	DDA / PC	X	
Enforce existing property maintenance codes through code enforcement and establishing a Beautification Committee.	A	C		COMDEV / PC		
Neighborhood scale amenities, such as parks, schools, recreational facilities, and open space should be encouraged when new or redevelopment occurs.	A	C		COMDEV / DDA / PC		
Design residential development standards to be directly related to the natural capacity of the land.	A	A		DDA / PC		

Develop and/or enhance zoning standards which encourage innovative development patterns that result in open space buffers or other appropriate transitions between residential and non-residential uses.	A	A		COMDEV		
Encourage the development of housing, including apartments, townhomes, senior housing and mixed-use housing in areas where infrastructure is available or would be provided by the development.	A	D		COMDEV / DDA / PC		

**PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE**

Promote and implement measures that will make the Township a cleaner, healthier, and more environmentally friendly community.

Project	Priority	Timeframe	Collaboration Opportunity	Responsibility	FUNDING	
					Public	Private
Maintain and upgrade existing parks and recreational facilities as necessary.	A	C	X	PARREC	X	X
Provide space for active and passive recreation and encourage site development that is sensitive to the area’s natural characteristics.	B	B	X	PARREC / PC	X	X
Provide incentives (density bonuses, creative design, clustering, etc.) to ensure quality open space is incorporated into private development.	C	A		PARREC / PC		
Establish performance-based regulations that encourage land preservation.	C	A		PARREC / COMDEV		
Protect property that provides exceptional habitats for plants, fish and wildlife species or can be reclaimed to provide for biodiversity or other environmental needs.	B	A		PARREC / DDA / PC		

## BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Create an environment that is conducive to development, redevelopment and the growth of businesses. Support existing business districts with appropriately sited and attractively designed retail, service, and entertainment establishments.

Project	Priority	Timeframe	Collaboration Opportunity	Responsibility	FUNDING	
					Public	Private
Collaborate with a real estate brokerage firm to market the Town Center site.	A	A		DDA / PC		
Work with County, State and Federal agencies to identify programs and offer incentives to businesses looking to establish within the Town Center.	A	A	X	COMDEV / DDA / PC		
Encourage innovative design in line with smart growth principles.	A	A		DDA / PC		
Install signage, security cameras, and lighting in Town Green.	A	A		DDA / DPWW	X	
Undertake streetscape improvements within the Town Center District to create cohesive districts that residents and visitors recognize as distinct districts with elements of green design (low impact development).	A	B	X	DDA / COMDEV / DPWW / PC	X	X
Aggressively target blight by working with the BV Hotels Task Force to demolish and/ or redevelop the hotel properties along Outer Drive.	A	A	X	DDA / PC / DPWW	X	X
Establish priority areas for code enforcement; adopt phased approach to make a noticeable impact in priority areas.	A	A	X	COMDEV / DDA / PC		

Develop relationships with local businesses to determine what needs they have in accommodating overnight business visitors, meetings, training secession, etc., and work with developers to provide these needs on Outer Drive.	B	A	X	COMDEV / DDA		
Encourage the siting of grocery, pharmacy, and personal care facilities in the Township.	A	A		DDA / PC / COMDEV		
Emphasize redevelopment of vacant commercial buildings for additional commercials instead of favoring new sites.	A	A		DDA / PC / COMDEV		
Market to vacationers heading north to promote the Buena Vista community	A	A	X	COMDEV / PC / DDA	X	X
Collaborate with local businesses to promote a positive image of Buena Vista	A			COMDEV		
Encourage businesses to take an active role as members of the Buena Vista Community	B			COMDEV		

## **RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Encourage diversity in the Township’s Industrial base through recruitment of high-tech, research, light manufacturing, and warehouse uses.

Project	Priority	Timeframe	Collaboration Opportunity	Responsibility	FUNDING	
					Public	Private
Develop design standards that seek high quality industrial design.	A	A		COMDEV / PC		
Confine future development to areas that have the appropriate infrastructure and access to public services.	A	D		COMDEV / DDA / PC		
Partner with Saginaw County to redevelop existing brownfields.	A	A	X	COMDEV / DDA / PC	X	
Create infill development design guidelines that ensure that new development fits the existing community characteristics.	A	A		COMDEV		
Continue to market access to I-75, M-46, and M-81.	A	A		COMDEV / DDA		
Consider the development of a transportation hub utilizing the Saginaw River on the RACER Trust property.	A	B	X	COMDEV / DDA / PC	X	X
Harry Browne Airport should be further improved to serve the industrial and technological needs of industry in the Township.	B	B	X	COMDEV / PC	X	X
Preserve rail access for future industrial development.	C	C		COMDEV / PC		

## TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC SPACE

Encourage an efficient and safe multi-modal transportation network that facilitates economic growth while integrating various modes of transportation to ensure a higher quality of life for Buena Vista’s residents.

					FUNDING	
Project	Priority	Timeframe	Collaboration Opportunity	Responsibility	Public	Private
Work with MDOT and Saginaw County Road Commission to increase the safety and comfort of Township roads and intersections, especially near I-75, M-81, and M-46. Employ traffic calming measures as necessary to protect pedestrians and increase	A	B	X	COMDEV / DPWW / PC	X	
Based on the road network hierarchy, develop standards for each functional classification. Work with neighboring local, County and State jurisdictions to establish safe, attractive and equitable standards for public rights-of-way.	A	A	X	COMDEV / DPWW / PC		
Establish sidewalks and pathways that support multi-modal access throughout the Township.	A	A	X	COMDEV / DPWW / PC		
Provide gathering areas for people of all age groups and physical abilities, including a diversity of settings to accommodate groups of various sizes. Provide accessible pathways to gathering spaces and public amenities. Where seating is provided, incorporate a variety of seating to accommodate a range of physical abilities. Ensure permanent ADA-compliant and –accessible seating every 1/4 mile	C	B	X	COMDEV / DPWW / PC	X	X

When road construction occurs, include sidewalks, bicycle lanes/path, wider shoulders, street trees, and other low-impact landscaping elements to complement the roadway.	A	D	X	COMDEV / DPWW / PC	X	X
Provide well-designed crosswalks to increase motorist awareness and pedestrian safety	A	C	X	COMDEV / DPWW / PC	X	X
Maintain residential streets to promote safety and aesthetics.	A	D	X	COMDEV / DPWW / PC	X	X
Accommodate increases in traffic volumes through road maintenance, intersection improvements, signalization improvements and upgrading the road network.	C	B	X	COMDEV / DPWW / PC	X	

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Provide Buena Vista Township with the necessary facilities and services for a healthy and safe community.

Project	Priority	Timeframe	Collaboration Opportunity	Responsibility	FUNDING	
					Public	Private
Promote existing infrastructure such as access to natural gas, quality electrical service, and other utilities.	B	A		COMDEV / PC / DDA		
Maintain and improve quality of life in the community by upgrading the aging infrastructure in the Township.	B	A	X	COMDEV / DPWW / DDA / PC	X	
Utilize Best Management Practices and Low-Impact Development Practices in new construction projects that minimizes/controls/diverts surface water runoff.	A	A		COMDEV / DPWW / DDA / PC		

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Provide a safe community to live and work in by addressing the needs of the community and enhancing the quality of life.

					FUNDING	
Project	Priority	Timeframe	Collaboration Opportunity	Responsibility	Public	Private
Provide a safe secure environment with sound community support and quality in Township Public Safety.	A	A	X	PUBS	X	
Buena Vista Police Department business programs – regular visits outside of working hours, Police / Citizens Academy	A	A	X	COMDEV / PUBS		
Strengthen the bond between the public safety departments and the community	A	A		PUBS		
Promote Fire Prevention for both residential and commercial members of the community.	B	B		PUBS		

## **COMMUNITY FOCUS**

Promote Buena Vista Township as a family-friendly, inclusive community of choice for all types of people and seek to maintain and improve communications among residents, business owners and policy makers.

Project	Priority	Timeframe	Collaboration Opportunity	Responsibility	FUNDING	
					Public	Private
Coordinate efforts with supporting agencies and organizations.	B	C	X	COMDEV		
Educate the community on civic affairs, current initiatives and available resources.	A	A		COMDEV		
Improve the image of Buena Vista by promoting its many positive assets.	A	A	X	COMDEV / DDA / PC	X	X
Enhanced business retention program, with schedule for regular visits to targeted businesses.	B	A	X	COMDEV		
Cooperate with nearby communities through the exchange of information on development and redevelopment issues, and other shared interests, such as community facilities and services, and development along shared boundaries.	A	A	X	COMDEV / PC		
Promote an approachable, friendly, and transparent Township government.	A	A				
Collaborate with surrounding communities to provide a place for residents with year-round recreation opportunities.	B	A	X	COMDEV / PARREC	X	X