

# BEDFORD TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN UPDATE

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BEDFORD TOWNSHIP

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## 1.0 Master Plan

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### 1.1 What is a Master Plan?

The Master Plan recognizes existing Township land use patterns and physical constraints and directs future development in such a way as to maintain and improve the level of community public facilities and services. It provides a vision for the future and includes goals, objectives, and strategies in order to achieve that vision. The Master Plan update also provides a guide line for future land use, recreation facilities, transportation, economic development, community facilities, and capital spending.

The materials and concepts in the Master Plan will be used to assist elected officials, staff, and citizens of Bedford Township with making informed decisions regarding public and private land uses. It is a long range plan that assists in guiding the Township over a period of 10-20 years. The plan is a living document that denotes the Township's vision for the future.

### 1.2 Legislative Authority for the Township Master Plan

Per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008 as amended, the Township Planning Commission "shall make and approve a Master Plan as a guide for development." The Master Plan is not an ordinance it does not change the zoning of property. It is policies, strategies, and goals to improve and enhance the community over a projected period of time. The Master Plan update creates a framework for public participation and community involvement, which promotes regional cooperation and contributes to Bedford Township's quality of life.

According to the Act, "a Master Plan shall include maps, plats, charts, and descriptive, explanatory, and other related matter and shall show the planning commission's recommendations for the physical development of the planning jurisdiction." The purpose of a Master Plan is to guide and accomplish development "that is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical. 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 and will in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare."

Further, the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act of 2006 requires that the zoning ordinance be based on a plan to promote health, safety, and welfare. Zoning is the instrument for the regulation of land use and it has the force of law.

### 1.3 Who Uses the Plan?

The Master Plan is intended to be a comprehensive source that stake holders can use to understand the community and planned initiatives. The Plan will serve different purposes, depending on the interests of the user. These users can be:

- Decision makers, such as elected officials and Township Advisory boards. They will use the Plan to help make policy decisions and take actions relevant to the goals and objectives outlined in the Plan.
- Business owners and developers in and outside of the community will use the Plan to understand the Township's approach to promoting economic development and learn where certain types of development are most appropriately located.
- Residents of Bedford Township will use the Plan to learn about new community initiatives.
- Township staff will use the Plan as a guide for advising decision makers on Township policy questions and to guide development of work plans and new programs.