## CHAPTER 3. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS

The goals, objectives, and actions in this chapter were created with citizen and stakeholder input collected throughout the master plan process.

The St. Joseph Charter Township Community Vision document, completed in December 2015 and included in the appendix of this Master Plan, articulates a future vision for the Township. The emerging guiding statement is as follows:

# "A community of healthy living opportunity connected to nature."

- Guiding Statement of the St. Joseph Charter Township Master Plan

This statement represents the overarching goal to be realized throughout implementation of the Master Plan.

What does "A community of healthy living opportunity connected to nature" mean? To the participants in the Township visioning effort, it means taking advantage of opportunities and overcoming obstacles. The opportunities and obstacles that currently exist are summarized as:

 St. Joseph Charter Township is a community of great beauty, service and convenience.

Predomintantly a bedroom community, the Township is as an attractive, stable, and desirable place to live offering a range of services and amenities; and with a location relative to Lake Michigan and featuring two natural waterways in Hickory Creek and the St. Joseph River, there is a natural beauty to be nurtured and cherished.

However, while some commercial or retail services and amenities are within convenient proximity to residential areas, not all have the same level of access nor is that the intent. It was identified in the community engagement process that not all desire the same level of access or lifestyle.

Opportunities include identifying areas within the Township for increased choices regarding access or connectivity along with appropriate corresponding housing solutions.

 It is a community with physical barriers that lacks a strong identity.

Although defined by its connection to nature, healthy living, and relaxed and family-friendly lifestyle, the Township still lacks a consistent and identifiable environment. I-94, the St. Joseph River, and Hickory Creek represent both physical barriers and assets that, if breached and or enhanced, will help unify the comunity and establish a more cohesive identity and environment.

Opportunities include creating or enhancing edges, gateways, and destinations, which celebrate the Township's unique character and spirit with signage, landscape, lighting, and architectural features.

The Township is a great place to live that could thrive with stronger social connections.

Recreational opportunities within the Township are key amenities for residents and visitors. They help overcome barriers that exist within the Township, strengthen social connections, and reinforce the Township's commitment to "a community of healthy living opportunity connected to nature."

Effectively, recreational opportunities become identifiers and destinations within different areas and neighborhoods of the Township. Opportunity exists to further enhance and link these recreational assets to residential, commercial, and retail environments. As much as possible, pedestrian-friendly environments should be encouraged.

Considering each proceeding point yields goals which, when achieved, will result in taking advantage of opportunities and overcoming obstacles. The goals are in four categories:

- 1. Community and Place
- 2. Transportation and Connectivity
- 3. Natural Areas
- 4. Economic Development

Each goal has associated with it an objective(s) detailing what is to be accomplished and the action(s) needed to be completed in order to achieve the stated objective.

#### **COMMUNITY AND PLACE**

A key category is to promote and develop the sense of Community and Place in the Township. This would focus on the experience of the Township rather than its structure. This is sometimes dismissed as being solely esoteric. However, there are substantive positive impacts associated with the concept of Community and Place.

Younger people, while not fully rejecting the traditional American dream of a home in the suburbs with good schools and space for their children to play, do want "more". Essentially, they want increased access to cultural, athletic, dining, and educational venues. Those are factors that directly influence their locational decisions in addition to more traditional factors. This is particularly true for those persons referred to as "Generation X" especially those at end of the cohort who are in their mid-thirties or earlyforties and some "Millennials" who are in their early thirties or late twenties.

As the Township population ages, the natural migration is for older residents to seek alternative housing with the bulk of the existing housing stock being purchased by younger individuals. This is a population cycle that has repeated itself countless times.

By promoting and developing the sense of Community and Place, St. Joseph Charter Township will maintain and enhance its attractiveness to the next generation of home buyers. This will ensure property values are supported resulting in tax revenues that allow the Township to continue to provide services that current and future residents expect.

The following goals and associated objectives and actions are designed to encourage a sense of Community and Place in St. Joseph Charter Township.

## Goal 1: Encourage a variety of housing choices

Objective: Maintain the core of single-family detached homes which forms the basis of the Township housing stock while encouraging the development of some other housing types. Referred to as the Missing Middle, these represent a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types compatible in scale with existing single-family homes that help meet the growing demand for walkable living. This will broaden the mix of housing stock and enhance the attractiveness of the Township to future home buyers.

Action 1.1: Develop a new Zoning Map reflecting the areas where mixed-use development is permitted. This can be done as an overlay district in defined or "floating" areas.

Action 1.2: Review the Zoning Ordinance to determine if any existing regulations inhibit implementation and amend as necessary.

Action 1.3: Promote housing types often referred to as Missing Middle Housing in advantageous locations within the Township and in particular to improve transitions between residential, commercial, and other development areas.

Action 1.4: Maintain and rehabilitate the existing housing stock. This can include amending ordinances, enhanced code enforcement, adopting design guidelines for additions and renovations, and providing educational opportunities or resources.

## Goal 2: Preserve and enhance the identity of the Township.

**Objective:** Promote the character of the Township in a consistent and coherent manner. When entering or within the Township, a person should know they are in St. Joseph Charter Township.

Action 2.1: Enhance gateways to the Township at I-94, Niles Road, Napier Avenue, Hilltop Road, and Cleveland Avenue which may include unique signage, landscape, and architectural features.

**Action 2.2:** Provide activities and destinations unique to the Township for residents and visitors.

Action 2.3: Inventory and document the unique elements of each neighborhood and ensure Zoning Ordinance requirements are appropriate to the desired characteristics.

Action 2.4: Coordinate transportation and land use planning to ensure road improvements are done in a strategic way benefiting both users of the thoroughfare and adjacent development.

## TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY

Transportation should provide both internal and external connections. It should not be limited solely to motorized transportation.

# Goal 1: Provide safe, efficient, and connected transportation that serves multiple modes.

**Objective:** Improve the network of trails, sidewalks, and streets that link Township neighborhoods, parks, and commercial areas.

**Objective:** Improve east and west internal mobility within the Township.

**Action 1.1:** Develop a Capital Improvements Plan to prioritize projects and funding.

**Action 1.2:** Integrate Complete Streets policies and or guidelines and coordinate with transportation planning agencies.

**Action 1.3:** Improve intersections to promote walkability, bikeability, and aesthetics.

Action 1.4: Coordinate with Berrien County Public Transportation and develop a bus rapid transit link along the Hollywood Road Corridor and the Niles Road Corridor.

Action 1.5: Establish a Park-and-Ride at I-94.

Right: Walgreens Pharmacy located near the corner of Hilltop Road and Niles Road.

Far Right: Knauf Park Entry Sign along Vineland Road.

### Goal 2: Preserve and enhance the identity of the Township

**Objective:** Provide increased opportunities to extend the walkability between the Township and other areas.

Action 2.1: Prioritize and implement projects identified in the Non-Motorized Infrastructure Map and continue to work with other agencies and local units of government to link non-motorized infrastructure.

**Action 2.2:** Complete, fund, and implement a wayfinding and signage plan.

**Action 2.3:** Establish and/ or improve trail heads throughout the Township.

Action 2.4: Reference the Sidewalk Inventory Map to prioritize and implement targeted sidewalk improvements, i.e. Maiden Lane, Napier Avenue, Hilltop Road, etc.

**Action 2.5:** Construct a pedestrian and/ or multi-modal bridge over the St. Joseph River.



Action 2.6: Incorporate requirements for pedestrian, bicycle, and other low-speed vehicles pathways in neighborhoods and developments.

#### **NATURAL AREAS**

Key features in the Township such as Hickory Creek and the St. Joseph River represent an opportunity to achieve "a community of healthy living opportunity connected to nature."

# Goal 1: Maintain, expand, and protect public access and connectivity to the natural features of the Township.

**Objective:** Increase awareness, appreciation, and protection of natural features by improving access and providing additional activities that encourage use and where appropriate a healthy lifestyle through physical activities.

Action 1.1: Continue to develop a Hickory Creek Trail with corresponding trail heads and crossings that inter-connect with others such as the Village of Stevensville, City of St. Joseph, and City of Benton Harbor



Action 1.2: Consider a Trail Feasibility Study to determine existing conditions, access and connections, type of trails, property acquisition and/or easement, community engagement and education, cost estimation, and inter-agency coordination.

**Action 1.3:** Improve wayfinding and access to existing park and recreational areas.

Action 1.4: Launch an initiative to ensure that residents live within the desired 20-minute walk to natural areas.

Action 1.5: Consider amending the Zoning Map (zoned residential today) for conservation, preservation, and enhancement of natural areas, wetlands, etc.

Action 1.6: Promote green infrastructure and storm water management in conjunction with the Berrien County Master Plan and Low Impact Development Manual for Michigan.



#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

While the Township is nearing build-out, there are some limited sites available for development. In addition, there is the potential to in-fill in existing areas.

# Goal 1: Provide additional access to goods and services at key locations within the Township.

**Objective:** Make opportunities available for residents to have access within a 20-minute walkable distance.

Action 1.1: Identify locations for additional commercial/ retail, office, and mixed use development. Ensure alignment with the Township Zoning Ordinance.

Action 1.2: Explore opportunities to provide wireless internet at public and semi-public locations and community-wide expanded internet capabilities or services.

## Goal 2: Enhance the development of the Niles Road corridor.

**Objective:** Build upon the trend of a variety of land uses along the Niles Road corridor.

Action 2.1: Identity locations for additional commercial/retail, office, and mixed use development.

Left: D&M Supermarket located near the corner of Colfax Avenue and Napier Avenue.

**Action 2.2:** Examine the efficacy of establishing a Niles Road Corridor Improvement Association.

Action 2.3: Acquire further education and understanding of place-based design and the advantages of form-based codes or similar design guidelines.

# Goal 3: Continue to attract additional users to the industrial sites in the Township.

**Objective:** Provide additional employment opportunities and enhance the overall tax base of the community.

**Action 3.1:** Collaborate with others to develop a strategic marketing plan to promote the existing industrial sites.

**Action 3.2:** Work to become recognized as a Michigan Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC).

# Goal 4: Strengthen intergovernmental and interagency ties to enhance development.

**Objective:** Work cooperatively with surrounding communities to improve success at retaining and attracting new investment opportunities.

Action 4.1: Explore opportunities and develop procedures to further influence community-wide planning and development. Examples may include current efforts such as the Twin City Harbor Study, TwinCATS Long Range Plan, Southwest Michigan Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, and yet to be identified future efforts such as the Napier Avenue corridor plan.

## CHAPTER 4. FUTURE LAND USE

The characteristics of the land in St. Joseph Charter Township and the ways people use the land change over time. Vacant or underutilized land develops and uses on specific properties shift as economic, social, environmental, and cultural trends change. Changes in zoning regulation, infrastructure, and transportation can also lead to changes in land use patterns over time. In order to make sound decisions regarding future land use, it is important to have an understanding of existing land uses and the relationships between them.

The Future Land Use Plan and Future Land Use Map describe a generalized framework intended to guide land use and policy decisions within the Township over the next 20 years. The Future Land Use Map in this chapter shows general locations for the primary land uses described in this chapter. It is important to note that it is not intended to be used as a tool for identifying land use on a parcel by parcel basis, but rather to identify appropriate areas or districts that can accommodate certain land uses within the Township.

#### Future Land Use Areas:

- · Low Density Residential
- · Medium Density Residential
- · Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Neighborhood Mixed Use
- Industrial/ Business Park
- · Community Facilities
- · Water Oriented
- Recreation and Open Space

### Low Density Residential

Single-family dwellings comprise the majority of the Township's residential areas and should continue to do so. Low Density Residential areas provide for freestanding dwellings or homes on a single residential lot, organized into neighborhoods or subdivisions. Detached single-family homes in St. Joseph Charter Township include a variety of housing styles, sizes, and price points, and should be largely owner-occupied. Low Density Residential neighborhoods should be well-served by parks, schools, and Township infrastructure and services.

• Corresponding Zoning District: R-1, R-2



Right: View of the Hilltop Road and Cleveland Road intersection.

### **Medium Density Residential**

Consists of single and two-family dwellings on smaller lots. Two-family or attached residential units are single-family homes that share a common wall such as duplexes, townhomes, and rowhomes. Single-family attached uses assist in diversifying the Township's housing stock, providing opportunities for first-time home-buyers and empty nesters. Medium Density Residential areas identified in the Future Land Use Map consist primarily of existing areas scattered throughout the community. However, the Township should remain flexible in considering Medium Density Residential development in appropriate transition areas near commercial uses or main corridors.

Corresponding Zoning District: R-3, R-4

### Multi-Family Residential

Multi-Family Residential areas consist of structures with multiple housing units that utilize common entrances, hallways, and shared amenities. Examples include apartments, condominiums, and senior housing. Multifamily development is currently limited to a small number of properties scattered throughout the community. In addition to areas designated Multi-Family Residential, the Township should consider multi-family units within the Neighborhood Mixed-Use and Commercial land use designations.

• Corresponding Zoning District: R-5

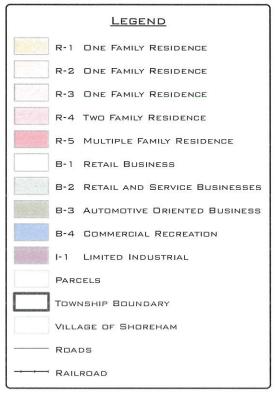
#### Commercial

Commercial uses provide for the general retail and service needs of St. Joseph Charter Township's residents as well as the needs of visitors and those passing through the community. Commercial areas include a range of uses such as restaurants, retail shops, entertainment venues, offices, grocery stores, service uses, and more. Many of the commercial areas within the Township are along main corridors adjacent to residential properties and should be developed accordingly by accommodating auto-oriented yet pedestrian-friendly development with some opportunities for residential above ground floor retail.

• Corresponding Zoning District: B-1, B-2, B-3



Right: View of the Interstate 94 off-ramp, Niles Avenue, and the Nyes Apple Barn.

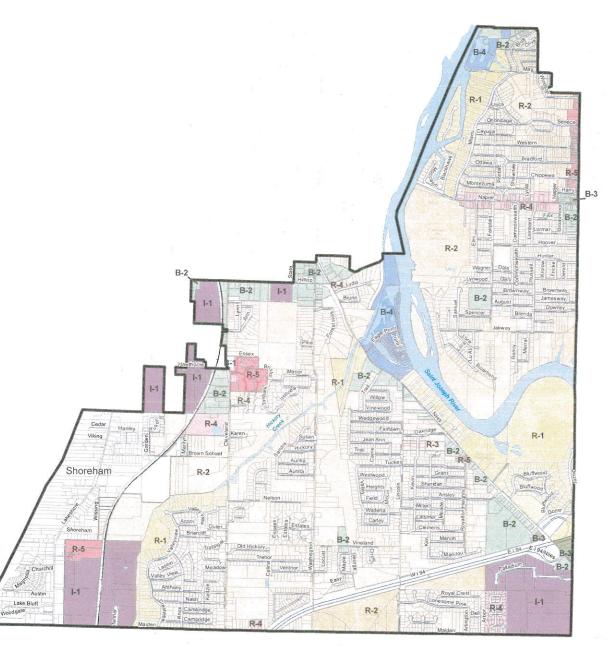


# Current Zoning Map

Lake Michigan

NOTE: REFER TO THE VILLAGE OF SHOREHAM ZONING MAP LOCATED IN THE APPENDIX.

DATA SOURCES: BERRIEN COUNTY GIS STATE OF MICHIGAN GEOGRAPHIC DATA LIBRARY





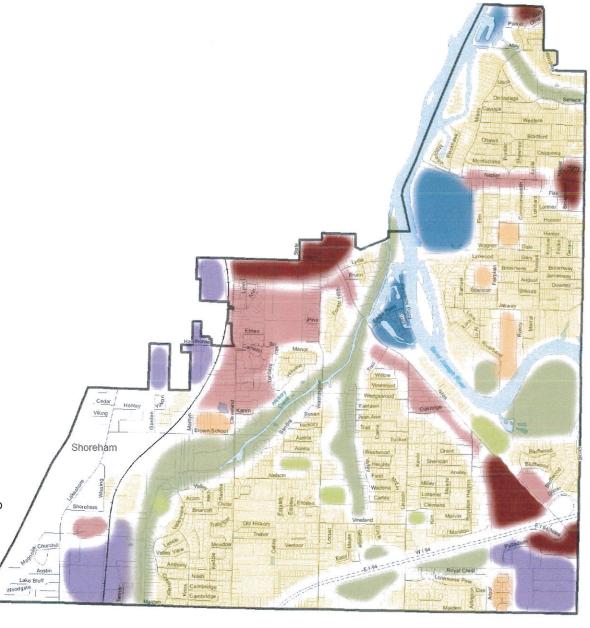
### Future Land Use Map

Lake Michigan

NOTE: REFER TO THE VILLAGE OF SHOREHAM FUTURE LAND USE MAP LOCATED IN THE APPENDIX.

ATA SOURCES:

T. JOSEPH CHARTER TOWNSHIP MASTER
TRITEN COUNTY GIS



### Neighborhood Mixed-Use

Neighborhood Mixed-Use areas provide a mix of residential and commercial uses. Developments may include a mix of housing types, including multi-family units, and a variety of retail, service, and office uses. These neighborhood mixed-use areas would occur primarily along busier corridors that already have some commercial uses adjacent to residential uses. Mixed-use areas should be characterized by development patterns that provide a vibrant, safe, attractive, and walkable pedestrian environment.

• Corresponding Zoning District: There is no corresponding zoning district.

#### Industrial/ Business Park

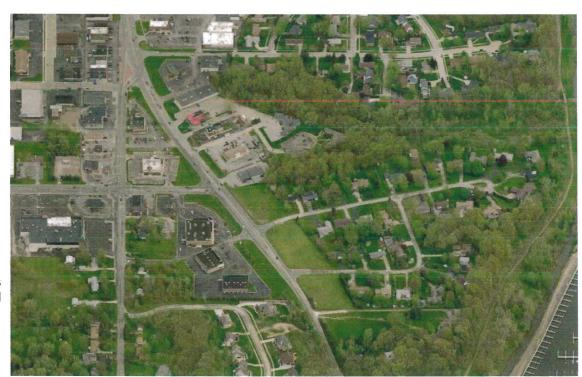
Industrial and Business Park areas should consist of a range of business uses, including service and consumer-oriented business and light manufacturing. The uses in these areas provide many employment opportunities and generally require large lots, buildings, parking lots, loading areas, and transportation to and from the site. These areas are concentrated in the northwest, southwest, and southeast portions of the Township currently zoned Light Industrial.

• Corresponding Zoning District: I-1, I-2

### **Community Facilities**

This category includes public and semi-public uses such as institutions and community facilities that contribute to the Township's overall quality of life. This includes both a number of public facilities such as schools, fire stations, and the Township Hall, as well as private facilities such as religious institutions. Throughout the Township, these uses provide necessary community services and amenities for residents and visitors.

 Corresponding Zoning District: None, however, they are permitted land uses.



Right: View of the Niles Avenue and Hilltop Road intersection.

#### Water Oriented

This category includes uses related to the St. Joseph River currently zoned Commercial Recreation. Water Oriented uses includes private marinas, boat slips and docks, as well as a mix of some residential, commercial, service, lodging, and limited industrial uses compatible in a waterfront setting. Development and reinvestment in this area should strive to leverage the waterfront as a community amenity by improving public access to the waterfront and enhancing views.

Corresponding Zoning District: B-4

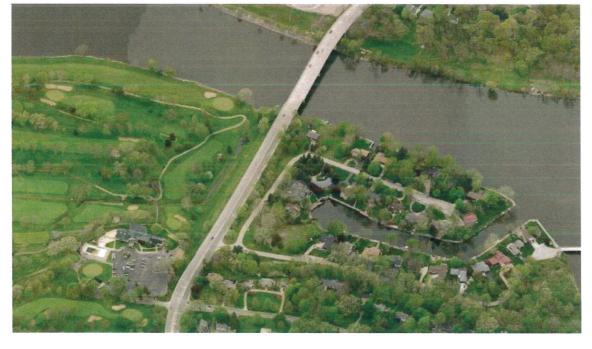
### Recreation and Open Space

This category includes parks, open spaces, conservation areas, and important natural features such as the river, creek area, wooded areas, and wetlands. Recreation and open space is a valued asset in the community and can be either public or private. It is recommended that the Township continue to work with appropriate agencies and property owners to ensure the community remains well served by these areas. Over time, it is envisioned these recreation and open space areas allow for a series of connected spaces throughout the community, linking key recreational amenities to residences and services.

 Corresponding Zoning District: None, however, they are permitted land uses.

#### **Next Steps**

Once these areas or districts have been established by the community, the next step is to begin implementing the changes to land use described in this chapter. As such, the Future Land Use Plan and Future Land Use Map should serve as the basis for development review as well as revisions and amendments to the Township's Zoning Regulations.



Left: View of the Berrien Hills Golf Club and the Napier Avenue bridge across the St. Joseph River.