

Lee Township Master Plan

Version – September 2023

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Executive Summary

The Lee Township Master Plan is a basic plan prepared as a foundation for the Township's near and mid-term planning. Although this Plan may include specific land use policies or propose specific land use arrangements, it has no regulatory power. This Plan does, however, provide the basis and impetus needed to support future regulations.

This Plan is expected to be modified and improved as community input (via surveys, committee group discussions and other public meetings) is gathered. Lee Township is a predominantly rural area. It is experiencing very little commercial, residential, or industrial development at the present time. Key issues generally emerge from Township-wide public forums, including public safety and ordinances, reliable broadband service, and access to water. These will be paramount to the dialogue.

It is the Township Board's intent to act in a manner that includes:

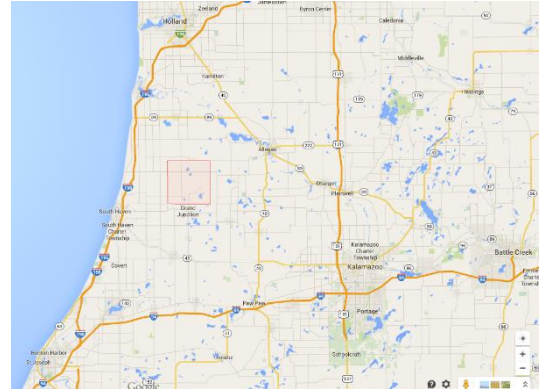
- Maintaining and improving upon the fiscal strengths of the township.
- Promoting a safe and inclusive community.
- Improve roads and basic infrastructure.
- Improve access to necessary services that allow residents to work and thrive.
- Protecting the township's natural amenities - such as lakes and wetlands.
- Encouraging business growth.

In its present state, this Plan is a working document. It will serve the Township Board, committees, and public interests in future planning and decision making.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Lee Township is a General Law Township located in Allegan County in the State of Michigan. At the time of the 2020 Census estimates, the population was 3,823. This is a decline of 192 people since the 2010 Census.

The township is mainly a rural population, with most people living around the lakes and the unincorporated town of Pullman. A small portion of the Allegan State Game Area lies within the Township and attracts campers, snowmobilers, cross-country skiers, horse trail riders, hikers, bird watchers and hunters. Lee Township is located inland approximately 10 miles from the shores of Lake Michigan, and halfway between the cities of South Haven and Saugatuck.



Decades ago, Lee Township was home to many summer resorts. Though the resorts are all gone, there are still many seasonal residents living in private summer cottages. The CSX has a rail line that goes through in a north-south direction. The CSX line also carries Amtrak traffic, but there is not a stop in Pullman. No major highways go through Lee Township.

The population has experienced consistent declines over the past two decades, shrinking by 100 residents from 2000-2010 (to 4,015) and 192 between 2010-2020 (to 3,823), per the 2020 ACS (American Community Survey 5-year estimates). As of 2020 there are a total of 1,150 households, with 1,012 families residing in the township. There are a total of 1,751 housing units (1,156 occupied and 595 unoccupied). The median age of Lee Township citizens is 35.7 years of age. This is up from 28 years of age as reflected in the 2000 census. The gender makeup of the township is 49% male and 51% female. The racial makeup is 65% White, 32% Hispanic, 1% African American, and 2% from two or more races.

The per capita income for the Township as of the [2020 census](#) is \$16,169. The unemployment rate in Lee Township markedly improved from 2010 (13.8%) to 2.7% and reflected national rate at 0.7%. Unfortunately, 30% of the total population lives below the poverty line. This includes 40% of those under the age of 18, and 19% of those aged 65 years or older. This remains more than double the State and County poverty rates.

Lee Township's declining population between the years 2000 and 2020 is projected by the Census Bureau to continue. This is despite a steady growth in the population of Allegan County. The effect of a shrinking property tax base on Township revenue is further constrained by the decline in overall property value. This cycle, if left unchecked, will increase the number of abandoned properties and further degrade this community's appeal - continuing the current negative cycle.

This Master Plan for Lee Township is a vision on how the Township will grow and progress over the next twenty years. It is a document developed through investigation of demographic and land use trends, and the vision that local citizens have for the Township. The basic purpose of

the Plan is to promote planning and decision making in a manner that is economically viable and environmentally sound while encouraging growth.

The Master Plan will help ensure that Lee Township remains a safe, desirable community by enabling residents, business owners, and developers to make investments with reasonable expectations for the future. In essence, the Plan balances the sometimes-competing interests of environmental protection and individual land ownership over all community interests.

Plan Elements

This Master Plan consists of several components, including:

- Background research regarding housing, population, and other current conditions within the Township.
- Public input, an essential part of the Master Plan process, is critical to having an understanding what Township residents and landowners think of the issues.
- Development of goals, objectives and strategies that define how the Township will address identified concerns and trends.
- Implementation of strategies that should be evaluated on an annual basis.

When the above components are combined, a picture is created that will serve as a guide for the Township as it faces important decisions now and, in the years to come. These decisions may include policy changes, budget allocations, special land use approvals, and day-to-day issues.

Planning Framework

Overall, the Master Plan is based upon several Township characteristics, each of which must be considered by the Township Board as the Plan is implemented and updated. These characteristics include:

Community Character: The community's character, as desired by residents and landowners, determines the Plan's goals. A strong emphasis is placed on maintaining Lee Township's rural character.

Community Needs: What are the needs within the community? Is safe affordable housing available? Are public areas, such as parks, being utilized and maintained? Does the Township have a functional and representative feedback mechanism in place that promotes understanding of the public's needs?

Available Services: Are the existing services adequate for current and future demand? Public services may include fire protection, public water access, roads maintenance, waste disposal, and drains.

Regional Planning: Lee Township does not exist in a vacuum. There are other regional issues such as transportation, environmental protection, and utility plans, which must be considered as well. Sharing copies of the Plan and communicating about it with neighboring township, county, and regional planners, as well as other appropriate entities, will facilitate regional planning and coordination of efforts.

Implementation

The Township Board should continuously strive to ensure effective use of this document. In the most general terms, if the Township's vision drives all decisions, community leaders will be implementing the Plan. What follows are additional practices that will ensure Plan implementation:

Refer To the Master Plan in Ordinance Decisions

One of the principal benefits of having an adopted Master Plan is the foundation it provides for sound decisions.

Encourage Other Decision-Making Bodies to Use the Master Plan

The Master Plan should help guide everyday decisions. Working together with entities such as the Allegan County Road Commission, the various school districts, adjacent communities, and other invested parties, can positively impact the management of the Township.

Keep the Plan Current

The vision outlined in the Plan will not occur overnight. The Master Plan is an outline for the future that guides day-to-day decisions. However, even with this in mind, the Plan should not be applied or used rigidly, since changing conditions can affect the original intentions of the Master Plan. Each challenge should be acknowledged, and the Plan amended, as necessary.

On the other hand, while the Plan needs to be a flexible instrument, its recommendations should not be taken lightly. Adjustments are made only as necessary, and justified based upon changing conditions or shifts in community philosophy.

The Master Plan & Ordinances

The relationship of the Master Plan and Township Ordinances is often misunderstood. Stated concisely, the Master Plan is a *guide* for the future. Ordinances regulate the public health, safety, and general welfare of persons and property in the present time. The Master Plan is not a binding legal document; however, the Master Plan is the foundation upon which regulations may be recommended, justified, and built.

Chapter 2: Demographic Analysis

In order to adequately plan for its future, a community needs to understand trends occurring in its population. This chapter provides an overview of basic descriptive statistics. This includes housing, employment, and income level statistics. This will provide Township decision-makers with a frame of reference regarding area demographics. Note that most of the data in this section was derived from Federal Census 2010 through 2020.

Housing Trends and Density

Lee Township continues to have a relatively overall low population density. As of the year 2020, Lee Township had approximately 106 people and 32 occupied housing units per square mile. The largest concentration of population in Lee Township is in the Town of Pullman, around Osterhout Lake, and Lower and Upper Scott Lakes. Residential dwellings are primarily serviced with well water and private septic systems. The exception to this is Pullman's downtown area, which is serviced by a Township owned central water supply.

Housing

From 2013 to 2020, Township housing units declined 240 from 1,991 to 1,751. Approximately 34% of the homes are vacant representing more than double the County (14%) and State (13%) percentages. Sixty percent of the homes have been built since 2000 and 69% are single-family, 27% are mobile homes and 4% are considered multi- units in the census data. Mobile homes are scattered throughout the Township and are located primarily on individual parcels. Single-family homes are also scattered throughout the township and are generally located on large-lot parcels. Single-family homes on smaller lots are primarily located in unincorporated Pullman and are also located along the township's lakeshores. Of additional note is that 40% of the homes are classified as rental occupied.

The value of owner-occupied homes in Lee Township declined from \$87,900 in 2000 to \$68,500 in 2020. That brings Lee Township home values to 1/3 the value of Allegan County homes at \$189,700 and significantly lower than the State average housing value of \$172,000.

Households and Age

The number of households in Lee Township has declined 10% over the past decade and stands at just over 1,150. Most Lee Township households are married couples (61%), reflecting a lower percentage than the county average, and like the state average (see Table IV). The number of single-parent female households (21%) in the township is significantly higher than county (11%) and state (16%) averages. Non-family households consist of single people, or unrelated persons, living together. Lee Township's average of non-family households is the same as than that of Allegan County and lower than the State at 16%. About 12% of Lee Township's households are non-family. The average household size in Lee Township is 3.2 persons per household. This is higher than state and county averages of 2.7 and 2.5 persons, respectively.

The presence of children in Lee Township is significantly higher at 34% than both County (24%) and State (22%) averages. The number of senior citizens is the same as the county and state averages of 17%. Overall, the median age in Lee Township is 35.7 and lower than both the County and State at 40 years old.

Table IV Household Types

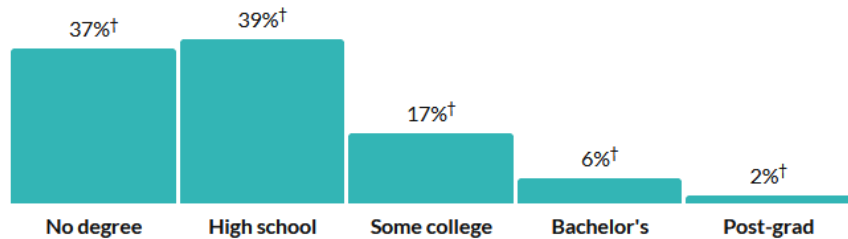
	Lee Twp.	Allegan Co.	Michigan
Married-couple families	61%	70%	59%
Single-parent families			
Female	21%	11%	16%
Male	5%	7%	6%
Non-family households	12%	12%	19%
Individuals under 18 years of age	34%	24%	22%
Individuals 65 years and over	17%	17%	17%

Income and Educational Attainment

The disparity between the township’s per capita income compared to County and State has grown in the past decade. At \$16,169 it is half that of the rest of Allegan County (\$32,115) and the State average of \$34,768.

High School graduation rates have also declined since 2013 (73.7%) to 63.4%. This is significantly lower than the State or County High School graduation rates which remain above 91%. Eight percent of our population has a bachelor’s degree or higher whereas within the State 31% has a bachelor’s degree or higher and within the County 24% has a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Population by highest level of education



* Universe: Population 25 years and over

[Show data / Embed](#)

Nearly 30% of our residents remain under the poverty line. This includes 40% of the children and 19% of our senior population.

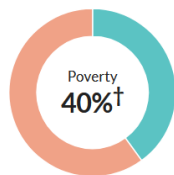
Poverty

29.6%

Persons below poverty line

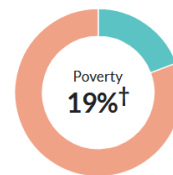
more than double the rate in Allegan County: 8.9%
more than double the rate in Michigan: 13.3%

Children (Under 18)



■ Poverty
■ Non-poverty

Seniors (65 and over)



■ Poverty
■ Non-poverty

Summary

Over the last decade, Lee Township has not grown substantially. There are few areas where Lee Township and its residents differ significantly from the County and the State of Michigan and should be considered in planning and decision making. These include:

- Population decline - 5%
- 30% poverty rate– More than double that of State and County %
- Per capita income – Half that of State and County
- High school graduation (63% Township vs 91% State) and College attainment rates (8% Township vs 31% State)
- 34% housing vacancy rate – Double that of State and County
- Housing value – Half of State and County values

Because of the general lack of commercial services, there is a lack of industry. Thus, Lee Township’s sustainability remains highly dependent upon a property tax base that continues to diminish in asset value. This challenge is compounded by shrinking resident occupancy. The residents that remain in Lee Township appear to do so because of the lower cost of living, which is generally much lower than the County and State cost of living.

Without concerted efforts to increase industry, to increase property values, to raise the quality of life, to increase the level of education, and, to increase the income levels for Lee Township families, one should expect continued, significant challenges in the performance of even the most basic functions of township governance, such as tax collection and ordinance enforcement.

Chapter 3: Community Services

Despite being a rural township with a relatively small population, Lee Township directly provides Fire and First Responder Services to its citizens and to neighboring townships. Lee Township relies upon an agreement with the Allegan County Sheriff’s Department for limited police services. Lee Township provides public water service to residents and businesses within a relatively small area of downtown Pullman. There is a Township managed cemetery, and a volunteer Free Library. Lee Township also supports modest summer dust control and road repair through a road millage. There has been no demand, or need, for municipal sewer services.

Public Safety

The Allegan County Sheriff Department and the Michigan State Police provide principal police protection throughout Lee Township. The Township Board contracts with the Sheriff Department for one full time Deputy. Emergency Services are provided by Lee Township First Responders. Lee Township presently has a contract for life support ambulance service through Life EMS. All calls for service are efficiently dispatched via the County’s “911” system.

Water and Wastewater Disposal

With the exception of the small public water system in Pullman, the entire township relies on private wells and septic systems for potable water and waste disposal. In addition to hundreds of traditional septic fields within the township, “raised mound” beds have emerged as a wastewater disposal solution in areas with high water tables. As population density increases and septic

systems age, it is important to keep in mind the potential need, and expense, of public water and sewer systems. Failing septic systems can pollute drinking water and surface water. Run-off from failing septic systems and yard chemicals is often associated with inland lakes that become weed-choked and polluted. Small lake lot parcels also compound the problem as they have limited areas for reserve septic fields.

School Systems and Parks

Fennville Public Schools and Bloomingdale Public Schools serve the township. However, the only school facility located within Lee Township is Pullman Elementary School (which is part of the Bloomingdale School District). Pullman Elementary provides recreational fields and has open space available for community use. Lee Township also has public spaces and boat launches on three of the area's largest inland lakes.

Beautify Pullman developed a "Town Square" for public gatherings that is privately owned and operated. Other recreational areas in Lee Township include the Allegan County State Game Area which is operated by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and provides hunting and snowmobile trails.

Broadband

Since the beginning of the Master Plan process, affordable and reliable broadband internet services was identified as the primary concern by Lee Township residents. With financial resources beginning to become available in this area, Lee Township began organizing efforts to improve access to broadband to its residents. In October of 2021 Lee Township provided representation on the Allegan County Broadband Action Workgroup. Township Board passed a motion to prioritize ARPA funds to broadband and commissioned and completed an engineering and feasibility study for the Pullman area. In 2022, the Township Board secured \$431K in funding from Allegan County and distributed a resident broadband survey. A partnered with Bloomingdale Communication has provided an avenue for a grant proposal to USDA Russ Round 4 Reconnect and other funding sources.

Non-Profits

In the past decade, several not-for-profits organizations have been started by residents and neighboring interests making significant investments in our community. These include:

- People Helping People
- Beautify Pullman
- Pullman Community Development Project

Summary

While the Township's population remains small, it provides for the most essential public services. Lee Township prioritizes efforts and resources on broadband as it has the potential to directly influence many of the concerning trends identified in the above census analysis. There appears to be growing non-governmental interest in the community.

Chapter 4: Natural Features

Water Features and Wetland Systems

Three inland all sports lakes lie within Lee Township. These include Upper and Lower Scott Lakes; located less than 1 mile east of Pullman, and Osterhout Lake, which is in the south-east quadrant of Lee Township. Of these three, Osterhout, is the largest lake, with a total surface area of 168 acres. Lower Scott Lake is 133 acres, Upper Scott Lake is 100 acres and Lester Lake is 60 acres. Residential lots line much of these inland lakeshores.

County Drains

There are several county drains in the Township. These are maintained by the Allegan County Drain Commission. The primary purposes of county drains are to expedite drainage for agricultural production or to alleviate flooding problems. One of the issues with maintaining the formal drainage system is the expense of special assessment districts that pay for drain maintenance. Homeowners of large lots with county drains running through them can be caught by surprise with a sizable assessment levied to clean out what the homeowner thought was a natural creek on their property.

To compound the situation, while the homeowner may not want the disruption or expense of a drain cleaning operation on their property, a farmer located upstream may be relying on the neighboring section of drain being cleaned. There are several miles of county drains which make up the following six formal drains within Lee Township:

- Scott Creek and Branch
- Pullman and Branch
- Peterson
- Lee
- Dokey
- Burch & Phillips

Summary

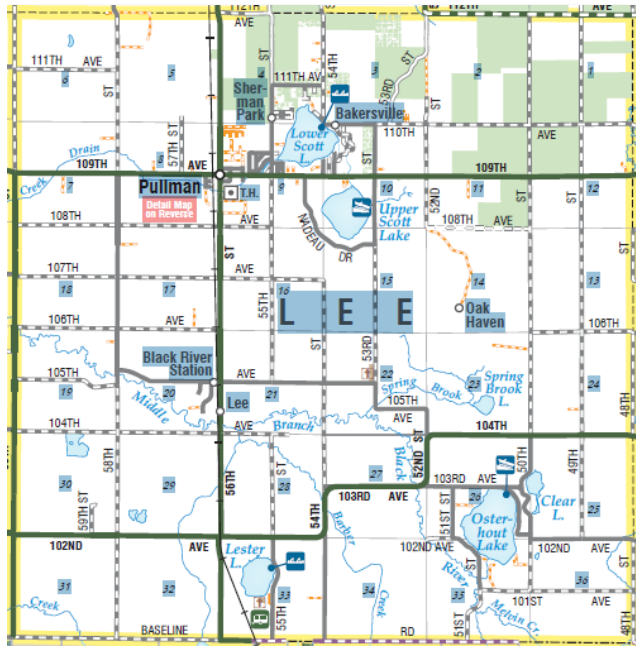
As Lee Township moves forward in making development decisions, it will be imperative to consider all components of the landscape; not only to retain the rural character and beauty of the area, but also to protect wildlife habitats, and to preserve the quality of the surface and ground waters within Lee Township.

Chapter 5: Transportation

Roads

Lee Township's road system is primarily a grid. The primary east/west route through Lee Township is 109th Avenue, and the primary north/south route is 56th St. The township is situated 7 miles from Interstate 196 to the West, and 30 miles to Interstate 131 to the East. Lee Township has 49 miles of gravel roads and 20 miles of paved roads. As in many rural townships, road maintenance, (grading, dust control, paving, and sealing) is a significant township budget expenditure. Residents want washboard-free gravel and smooth, safe pavement to travel on.

County Road Classification Map



-  County Primary Road–Paved
-  County Primary Road–Unpaved
-  County Local Road–Paved
-  County Local Road–Unpaved
-  County Local Road–Unpaved/Seasonal (see note below)
-  County Local Road–Impassable/Seasonal (see note below)

Non-motorized Transportation

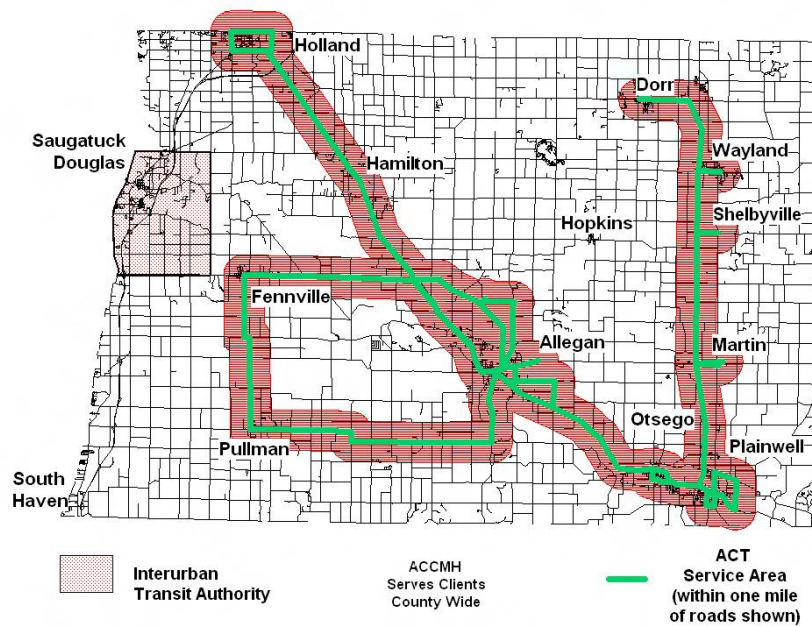
There are no on-road or off-road bicycle lanes or pathways in Lee Township, nor are there any planned in the immediate future.

The Kal-Haven Trail, which runs from South Haven to Kalamazoo, is located just south of Lee Township and provides recreational opportunities for walkers, runners, and cyclists. Equestrian riding trails are also available along certain segments of the Kal-Haven Trail.

Due to the rural nature of Lee Township, public sidewalks only exist at the main crossroad for downtown Pullman.

Public Transit

There is no formal public transit service in Lee Township, however it is served by Allegan County Transportation Services. There is no rail service presently in Lee Township, although Amtrak rail service runs through Pullman and other parts of Lee Township. Amtrak can be accessed in the neighboring town of Bangor (approximately 15 miles south of Pullman). Amtrak has routes from Bangor that run east to Detroit and west to Chicago. Allegan County Transportation provides a reservation-based bus service which transports any county resident to jobs and services within designated areas of Allegan County (see map below).



Summary

Private road standards and a schedule to upgrade such roads should be continued through Lee Township's Road Committee and efforts to maintain the township road millage is paramount. The Township's proximity to Interstate 196 should be considered advantageous to commercial enterprise.

Chapter 6: Land Use

The predominant land use in Lee Township is large platted agricultural; much of which is dispersed along county roadways. It follows that the primary industry in Lee Township is agricultural operations- including fruit, vegetable and greenhouse production and operations. The single largest tracts of contiguous land are owned by Oak Haven and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Several subdivisions are located in and around the unincorporated town of Pullman which is also the township's primary business district.

The Scott Lakes and Osterhout Lake have single-family residential development along their shorelines. Lower Scott and Osterhout Lake have the highest density of development. Pollution from failing or inadequate septic systems and agricultural run-off in these areas has been particularly damaging to surface waters. Allegan County has banned the use of phosphorus-based fertilizers that are used on crops and lawns. These chemicals are known to increase the nutrients and thus accelerate the vegetation growth in the lakes. While the State and County have strengthened septic system requirements, these rules are generally applied to new or significant construction. Many lakefront cottages have septic systems that are over their useful lifespans.

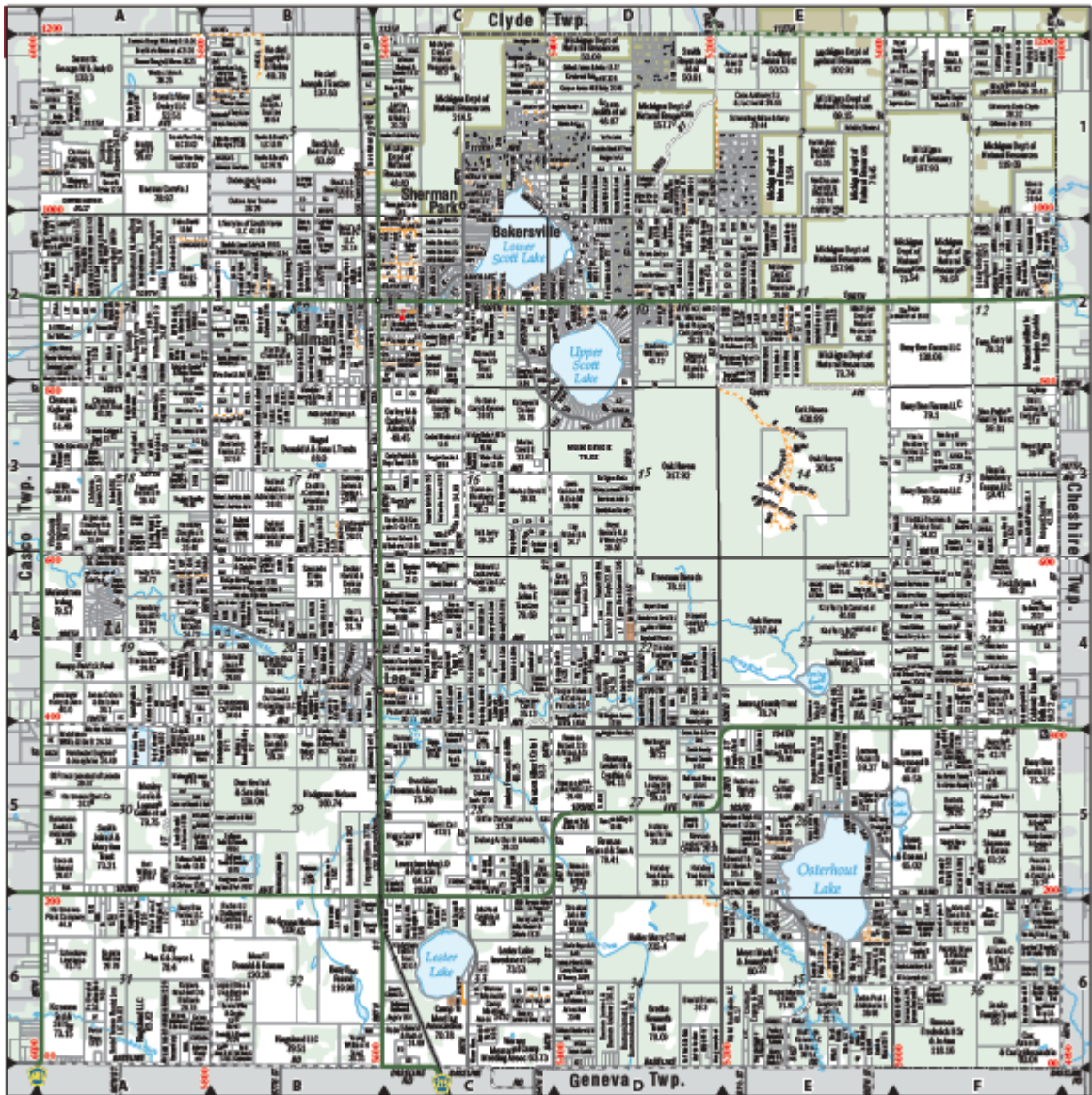
Except for the US Post Office, Lee Township owned buildings and cemetery, and Pullman Elementary School, the current commercial land use within the township has been comprised of a small number of sole proprietor and family-owned businesses.

In 2022 Pullman Solar (AES Corporation) began operation of its 200-acre solar plant which feeds directly into the Consumers Energy electrical grid.

Summary

While there does not appear to be a large demand for land within Lee Township, there remains a demand for affordable single-family, residential development. Additionally, there are only a handful of family-owned businesses within the township that have existed and persisted over several decades. All other businesses tend to turn over and/or close within 2 to 5 years.

Lee Township
Allegan County, Michigan



Chapter 7: Township Land Use Policy

Currently Lee Township's role in Land Use Policy is limited to Building Code enforcement, land division review, and in managing the small number of ordinances that the township does have in place to ensure the peace and safety of its residents. It is the purpose of this Master Plan to determine if future land use policy is necessary, and if so, what role the Lee Township Board will perform in such policy.

Areas of consideration may include:

- Industrial Development - cannot likely be accommodated in Lee Township at the present time due to non-existent provision of municipal water and waste-water systems.
- Commercial Land Uses
- Productive and Prime Agricultural Lands
- Low-Density Residential Development – 10 to 20 units per 40 acres, or 2.5 - 5-acre minimum lot size.
- Medium Density Residential Development - 1 unit per acre.

Chapter 8: Goals, Strategies, and Implementation Measures

During the Master Plan process, the Township developed the following:

- **Community Vision:** The Master Plan process set forth a vision statement that identifies the desired future vision for Lee Township. Lee Township vision statement: ***Working Together for a Better Tomorrow.***
- **Public Input Process:** A public input process was a key component of the Master Plan process. This included public meetings and solicitation of public opinion to ensure that the plan reflects the interests of Lee Township residents and landowners. The Township Board maintains engagement from the community through annual master planning work sessions as part of the strategic planning process.
- **Goals and Objectives:** The Goals and Objectives of the Master Plan are to articulate Lee Township's desires for the near future, and to incorporate the vision into Lee Township Board's decision making and governance.
Lee Township should remain an uncongested, rural community where residents are surrounded by peaceful elements of the natural environment. Future development should blend with the character of the natural environment rather than overpower it. Agricultural land uses should remain economically viable because they are accommodated in developmental design, and not overtaken by it. Commercial and light industrial developments may be elements reflective of the future character of Lee Township. These developments would replace those businesses lost in the past 2 decades. A defined and conveniently located commercial area will continue to provide local commercial needs for Lee Township residents. Large complexes, of multi-family developments, are not appropriate for the township. Small-scale, multi-family housing may provide affordable, safe housing for families, and when possible, should be located near recreational areas.

Major suburban infrastructure is neither needed nor anticipated in this planning cycle.

In order for our Master Plan to be implemented successfully it is guided by specific goals, objectives, and strategies. In basic terms, community goals represent a sort of “wish list,” and take the form of broad directives. These broad directives are carried out through the development of specific strategies. The development of goals and strategies is an interpretive process that is designed to take stated community desires and distill them into a program of actions which is then recorded in a Master Plan. The Plan points to attainable implementation measures with stated goals that are realistically expected to be accomplished. The goals and strategies presented in the following section of the Plan establish the guiding principles and priorities that will allow community decision makers to achieve Lee Township’s community vision.

Community Vision Statement

Working Together for a Better Tomorrow

The following goal categories may help foster and implement Lee Township’s vision for:

- Population stabilization and growth
- Poverty rate reduction
- Improvement in High school graduation rates and college attainment
- Housing value improvement

Goal Categories

1. Economic Development

Goal: Encourage economic and business growth that improves upon quality of life and allows residents to work and thrive.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. Improve graduation rates.
2. Pullman Broadband Initiative.
3. Encourage business growth.
4. Encourage property investment to improve standard of living.

2. Public Safety

Goal: Develop a multi-year plan for public safety that promotes a safe and inclusive community.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. Safer buildings through ordinance enforcement.
2. Review ordinances.
3. Support law enforcement efforts and Fire/EMS services.

3. Natural Features and the Environment

Goal: Protect and preserve the natural resources and features that are important components of Lee Township’s character.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. Support lake associations’ efforts to maintain healthy lakes.
2. Support efforts from DNR and Drain Commission on maintaining natural resources and waterways.

4. Roads and Basic Infrastructure

Goal: Maintain multi-year plan for road maintenance, and improvements to basic infrastructure.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. Support Road Committee work in identifying and prioritizing areas in need.
2. Maintenance of public water system to serve residents and businesses in affected areas.
3. Maintain township infrastructure.
4. Focus effort on maintaining millage support.

5 -Year Master Plan Goals & Accomplishments (2019-2023)

1. Economic Development

Goal: Encourage economic and business growth that improves upon quality of life and allows residents to work and thrive.

Objectives and Strategies:

Improve High School graduation rates.

Lee Township awarded 17 Pullman Pride scholarships to graduating seniors.

Provide reliable broadband internet service through Pullman Broadband Initiative.

- 2019-2021 -Reliable internet identified as primary concern by Township residents at master plan meetings.
- 2021-present – Lee Township representative to serve on Allegan County Broadband Action Group.
- Jan. 2022 - Passed a motion to prioritize ARPA funds to Broadband.
- Feb. 2022- Commissioned and completed an engineering and feasibility study for the Pullman area.
- June 2022 - Secured \$431K in funding from Allegan County
- July 2022 – Resident broadband survey distributed.
- Nov. 2022 - Partnered with Bloomingdale Communication to submit grant proposal to USDA Russ Round 4 Reconnect.
- 2023-Three additional providers working to secure State and Federal funds to provide service within Lee Township (Mercury Wireless, Midwest Energy, 123.net).

Encourage business growth.

- Pullman Solar Farm - Public Open House held June (2023) in conjunction with annual Pullman Pride Day celebration.
- New businesses highlighted in Township newsletter.

Encourage investment in community to improve quality of living.

Over the past 5 years building improvements in the township have exceeded 8 million dollars.

2. Public Safety

Goal: Develop a multi-year plan for public safety that promotes a safe and inclusive community.

Objectives and Strategies:

Maintain exemplary service to residents and neighboring communities.

- Fire Department and EMS services merged, including cross training by departments.
- Ambulance service transition from AMR to LIFE EMS in 2020.
- Full time Fire Chief hired 2022.
- Replaced Fire Department Ladder Truck in 2022.
- Secured grant from Michigan Township Par Plan for security cameras for Township Hall, Office, and Transfer Station.

Safer buildings through ordinance enforcement.

Ordinance Officer hired with priority on addressing blight concerns.

Provide public safety through ordinance reviews.

- Township ordinance prohibiting recreational marijuana establishments within the township adopted June 2019.
- Special Event Ordinance Adopted June 2022.

3. Natural Features and the Environment

Goal: Protect and preserve the natural resources and features that are important components of Lee Township's character.

Objectives and Strategies:

Address threats to the environment.

- Secured EGLE tire grant funds and removed approximately 8,000 scrap tires from Township Transfer Station and an additional 22,000 tires (pre-1991) from residential piggyback grant (2019-2023).
- Annual Township sponsored Free Dump Days for community clean-up efforts.

Support Lake Associations.

Collect and maintain funds for Lower Scott Lake Board for lake improvement efforts.

Maintain Township Infrastructure.

- Upper Scott Lake dam repairs completed January 2019 and Lower Scott dam restoration project completed in December 2021.
- A failed culvert replaced on 56th along with sidewalk repair, storm drain repairs, curbs, and road improvements at downtown intersection completed in 2023.

4. Roads and Basic Infrastructure

Goal: Maintain multi-year plan for road maintenance, and improvements to basic infrastructure and road use.

Objectives and Strategies:

Maintenance of Township roads within annual resources.

- Lee Township Road Committee works annually with County Road Commission to identify areas in critical need.
- Millage funds used to pave and preserve approximately 1.5 miles annually.
- Township budgets for annual dust control on unpaved roads.
- In the past 10 years the Township has chip coated and fog sealed 17 miles asphalt and added hot asphalt mix to 8 miles of roadway.

Maintenance of public water system.

- Annual inspection and recertification completed.
- Working with EGLE in assessing capacity needs of public water system and township needs.

Maintain public support for road millage.

Signs placed at areas of improvement to increase public awareness.

Transportation/Public Use of Roadway.

The Township approved a county-wide ORV Ordinance in 2021 and in 2022 included all Lee Township roads with access.