

VILLAGE of BELLEVUE

MASTER

PLAN

September 3, 2024

Prepared By The

VILLAGE of BELLEVUE
PLANNING COMMISSION

And

VILLAGE COUNCIL

Assisted By

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Statements of Approval

Village of Bellevue Planning Commission

**This is to certify that this Master Plan
is the
Village of Bellevue Master Plan
approved by the
Village of Bellevue Planning Commission
on September 26, 2024.**

**Scott Roberts, Chairperson
Village of Bellevue Planning Commission**

Village of Bellevue Village Council

**This is to certify that this Master Plan
is the
Village of Bellevue Master Plan
approved by the
Village of Bellevue Council
on May 14, 2024.**

**Nicole Roberts, Clerk
Village of Bellevue**

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Chapter One OVERVIEW

Introduction

Bellevue residents take pride in the rural scenic resources and small town community character that the village offers and its role within the more regional landscape. Village residents understand the importance of planning for a livable and enjoyable community and have taken an active role in shaping the way in which the community grows and develops. Residents, the business community, and officials have worked jointly to gain an understanding and appreciation for those community issues that pose challenges and opportunities, and this Plan strives to squarely address the community's future course.

This Chapter provides an overview of the Village of Bellevue Master Plan and the Master Plan's role, importance, preparation process, and principal policies. Understanding the fundamentals of the Master Plan will enable both local and regional residents, business owners, entrepreneurs and officials to appreciate the role the Plan plays in ensuring the future welfare of the community and its place within the regional landscape.

What is the Master Plan?

Purpose / Enabling Authority

Just as individuals and families plan for their future well being, so must municipalities. This Master Plan is a "plan" – it is a physical document consisting of text, maps, and figures that establishes a plan for how growth and associated land development should be guided to enhance the future welfare of Bellevue. The following key words and phrases can generally describe the Master Plan:

FUTURE ORIENTED: The plan concerns itself with long-range planning to guide and manage growth and development, and the manner in which the village should evolve over the next 10 to 20 years in response to growth and preservation interests.

GENERAL: The plan establishes broad future land use and public services principles and policies.

COMPREHENSIVE: The Plan is comprehensive in that it addresses all principal types of land use and the practical geographic boundaries of each.

DYNAMIC: The Plan is intended to be continually evolving in response to community aspirations, changing conditions in the village and surrounding areas, and new growth management strategies.

This Master Plan was prepared by the Village of Bellevue Planning Commission under the authority of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A 33 of 2008, as amended. The Act may be viewed at www.legislature.mi.gov.

Purpose of the Master Plan

Section 7(2) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MCL 125.3807) provides:

The general purpose of a master plan is to guide and accomplish, in the planning jurisdiction and its environs, development that satisfies all of the following criteria:

(a) Is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical.

(b) Considers the character of the planning jurisdiction and its suitability for particular uses, judged in terms of such factors as trends in land and population development.

(c) Will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare.

(d) Includes, among other things, promotion of or adequate provision for 1 or more of the following:

(i) A system of transportation to lessen congestion on streets.

(ii) Safety from fire and other dangers.

(iii) Light and air.

(iv) Healthful and convenient distribution of population.

(v) Good civic design and arrangement and wise and efficient expenditure of public funds.

(vi) Public utilities such as sewage disposal and water supply and other public improvements.

(vii) Recreation.

(viii) The use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability.

This Master Plan is not a law or regulatory document, but a "policy plan" to be implemented through, in part, zoning and other regulatory and non-regulatory tools. For example, though the Master Plan is not a zoning ordinance, the Master Plan's recommendations and policies serve as a basis for updating the current Bellevue Zoning Ordinance.

**Zoning Ordinance
Must be Based on a Master Plan**

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, which provides Michigan municipalities with the statutory authority to adopt zoning regulations, requires that a municipality's land development regulations "...shall be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare, to encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability, to limit the improper use of land, to conserve natural resources and energy..." The Act may be viewed at www.legislature.mi.gov.

The Bellevue Master Plan addresses this statutory requirement and ensures a strong legal foundation for the village's zoning regulations.

Elements of the Master Plan

This Master Plan consists of the following key components:

Chapter One (Introduction) presents an overview of the purpose and role of the Plan, the process followed in its preparation, key planning policies, and a summary of village conditions.

Chapter Two (Planning Issues, Goals and Objectives) presents important planning issues facing the village today, and associated goals and objectives that address these issues.

Chapter Three (Future Land Use Strategy) presents future land use policies and identifies the intended dominant land uses in each area of the village.

Chapter Four (Coordinated Public Services) presents policies addressing the coordination of public services with the planned future land use pattern and the village's overall welfare, focusing on roads and circulation, sewage disposal and potable water, storm water management, emergency services, and recreation.

Chapter Five (Implementation) presents key measures to effectuate the policies of the Plan.

The Appendices present an overview of existing conditions and trends in the village, addressing cultural features such as transportation, land use, recreation and public services; natural features such as soils, topography, and water resources; and demographic features such as population growth, employment, and education.

**Importance and Application
of the Master Plan**

The importance and application of the Bellevue Master Plan are demonstrated in:

- the long-term interests of the village
- the day-to-day administration of the village's planning and zoning program

Long Term Interests

There are a number of interests shared by residents and officials today that can be expected to continue for years to come and be similarly shared by future residents and officials. Some of these important interests include:

- Protecting the village's character.
- Protecting the quality of life.
- Minimizing tax burdens.
- Ensuring appropriate land use and adequate services to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.
- Ensuring compatibility with the use and development of neighboring properties.

The Master Plan supports these long-term interests by providing a future-oriented strategy that seeks to further these interests. Chapter Two establishes goals and objectives, and Chapter Three establishes future land use strategies, to secure these and other long-term interests.

Day-To-Day Administration

In addition to furthering the long-term interests of the village, the Master Plan also plays an important role in the day-to-day planning and zoning efforts of the village:

- **Advisory Policies:** The Plan is an official advisory policy statement that should be readily shared with existing and prospective landowners and developers. The Plan informs all of the long term intentions of the village regarding land use and encourages development proposals more closely integrated with the official policies of the Plan.
- **Regulatory Programs:** The Plan establishes a practical basis for the village to revise, update, or otherwise prepare regulatory programs intended

to ensure that the policies of the Master Plan are implemented.

- **Review of Land Development Proposals:** Chapter Two includes a list of village goals and objectives that should be reviewed when consideration is given to future proposed rezoning requests, site plans, and related land use proposals, to further establish a record upon which the proposal can be evaluated. Chapter Three provides policies regarding the planned future land use pattern in the village – valuable reference points upon which land use proposals should be evaluated.
- **Public Services Improvements:** The identification of a planned future land use pattern enables the village to prioritize areas in need of current or future public services improvements and plan accordingly. Chapters Four and Five provide important guidance in this area.
- **Intergovernmental Coordination:** This Plan provides the basis for village officials to communicate effectively with surrounding Bellevue Township and other nearby communities regarding both the impact of their planning and zoning actions and opportunities for mutual gain through coordinated land use and public services efforts.
- **Factual Reference:** This Plan includes a factual overview of trends and conditions in the village. This factual profile can educate local officials and residents and aid in the review of development proposals, encourage constructive discussion of planning issues and policies, and serve as a base line for future studies.

How The Plan Was Prepared

Prior to the adoption of this Village of Bellevue Master Plan, the village’s official planning policies were embodied in the 2006 Bellevue Community Master Plan, a joint planning effort between the village and Bellevue Township. Considerable effort was expended in the development of the joint plan to address the planning needs of both communities in a coordinated manner, recognizing the mutual reliance of each community on the other and the benefits of planning for both as a single planning area. Preparation of the 2006 joint plan included extensive public participation programs.

With the dissolving of the Bellevue Joint Planning Commission in 2012 and the weakened legal standing of the role of the joint plan as the village’s official master plan, the village turned its attention to the development of its own master plan. Following the creation of the Village of Bellevue Planning

Commission, the Commission began actively working on the development of this Plan in the fall of 2014.

The Planning Commission recognized that, though no longer of strong legal standing, the previous 2006 Bellevue Community Master Plan continued to present valuable information, goals, objectives and policies specific to the village. Officials believed that the substantial public input gathered during the early stages of the 2006 Plan project still had applicability today within the context of the village. The Planning Commission decided to use the joint plan as a “base” for the development of a new village master plan. The Planning Commission directed its efforts at reviewing the 2006 joint plan and identifying desirable revisions to create a document specific to the village. These revisions addressed both plan organization and format; modifications of goals, objectives and policies as applicable; and the updating of factual information such as demographic and land use data.

The Planning Commission assembled an initial complete draft of the new Plan and after review and refinement, developed a draft suitable for presentation to the community. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the draft Plan and subsequently finalized the Plan for adoption.

Key Vision Themes of the 2006 Bellevue Community Master Plan

- A traditional village with a vibrant downtown full of small town charm.
- Attractive and respected school system that serves local families and draws new residents to the community.
- Strong economic opportunities that attract investment and provide ample employment opportunities throughout the Bellevue community.
- Attractive recreation opportunities and services dedicated to public parks and community recreation facilities.
- Safe and friendly neighborhoods that are attractive and well maintained providing housing opportunities for young families and seniors.
- Transportation is conducive to residential living, business priorities, and non-motorized travel.
- Bellevue is admired for its natural beauty and progressive small town atmosphere.

This Master Plan is based on, in part, the extensive data collection and analysis carried out in the development of the 2006 Bellevue Community Master Plan, and the critical planning issues that surfaced during the preparation of the 2006 Plan. The preparation process led to the identification of key planning issues that have contributed to this Plan's goals, objectives and policies.

Throughout the development of the Plan, the village followed the procedural requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A 33 of 2008, as amended, including notification of neighboring communities of its intent to prepare a plan and the village's subsequent solicitation for input on the plan. The Act may be viewed at www.legislature.mi.gov.

Overview of Planning Policies

This Plan presents a coordinated strategy that addresses growth, development and preservation. The Plan supports the continuation of Bellevue as a pedestrian-friendly place of business, of a local "small-town" character, surrounded by stable residential neighborhoods and supportive facilities such as schools, religious institutions, parks, and other social amenities.

The existing downtown area is intended to maintain its local and historic flavor. The Plan provides opportunities for some expansion of the downtown business area but discourages inappropriate encroachment into residential areas. The Plan supports preservation of the downtown's historic buildings and facades. Commercial uses in the downtown are intended to be comparatively small in scale and principally address the consumer needs of local residents and visitors. Commercial uses of a more general character, which may rely on a more regional population where convenient highway access is most beneficial, are planned for the southern limits along M-78.

The balance of the village is planned principally for residential growth of varying density including single family and two-family dwellings, multiple family developments, senior citizen and assisted living facilities, and other living arrangements.

The Plan does not designate any specific location in the village for industrial growth, in recognition of the constraints presented by the existing community fabric including its existing neighborhoods, circulation system and access issues. However, the village recognizes the economic value of facilitating industrial expansion in appropriate locations and to this end, the village will consider innovative proposals for the accommodation of industrial expansion in the village

as well as assist Bellevue Township in facilitating appropriately located industry along the village's borders.

Village Overview

The following is a brief overview of Bellevue. A more detailed review of the village's trends and conditions is presented in the Appendices.

The Village of Bellevue is a rural community of approximately 1,300 persons, located in the southwest corner of Eaton County in the southcentral region of Michigan. The village is nearly square in shape and covers approximately one square mile. The village is fully surrounded by Bellevue Township.

Regional access to Bellevue is principally afforded by Interstate 69, which travels west and south from Port Huron on Michigan's east shoreline to the Indiana state line south of Coldwater, and passes within three miles of the village. Exit 48 along I-69 provides direct access to M-78, which travels through the village (South Main St. and West Capital Ave.). Regional access is also available from two public airports within an hour of the village, the Capital City Airport in Lansing and the Kalamazoo/ Battle Creek International Airport in Kalamazoo, in addition to smaller private airports in the regional area.

The Village of Bellevue reflects limited topographic relief and comparatively small and limited pockets of woodlands and wetlands. Its natural resource highlights are the Battle Creek River and the Keehne Environmental Area. The Battle Creek River flows through Charlotte and Bellevue Township and then passes through the village before emptying into the Kalamazoo River near Battle Creek. The 17-acre Keehne Environmental Area lies along the western edge of the village and is comprised of extensive wetland environments.

The Village of Bellevue exhibits a strong mixed-use character, common in the evolution of village settlements. Commercial development generally follows the Capital Avenue and Main Street corridors near the center of the village, with the majority of storefronts being within several blocks of the Capital Avenue/Main Street intersection. This commercial center also includes numerous public and semi-public uses such as the village hall, religious institutions and parks. The majority of the balance of the village, and comprising the largest portion of the village, is comprised of residences. Limited farming and extraction operations comprise portions of the village, along its southern periphery.

The 2020 Census recorded 614 dwelling units in Bellevue. The village's residential areas are comprised principally of a traditional grid road layout. The village offers a range of housing densities, typically from one to seven units per acre. The majority of the village, comprised of single-family dwellings, reflects densities of one to four units per acre. A manufactured housing community and multiple family dwellings are present in the village's east side.

The 2021 American Community Survey recorded 516 households in the village, 57.4% of which were married or other cohabitating couple family households. Of the non-couple households, approximately two-thirds of the households were headed by a female. The village reflected an average household size of 2.6 persons and an average family size of 3.0 persons.

A seven-member village council governs Bellevue. Government administration and services are funded by a millage and, in some cases, a user-fee. The village maintains its own police department, which also provides mutual aid to other agencies in Eaton County. The village operates two park sites and is home to one cemetery, owned by Bellevue Township. Public sewer and water service is available throughout the village except to limited portions of its southern section. The Village works with regional communities and the Eaton County Resource Recovery Department to provide convenient recycling services.

The village is served by Bellevue Community Schools, a public school district that also serves the majority of Bellevue Township, the majority of the southern half of Kalamo Township to the north, parts of Convis and Pennfield Townships to the south, a portion of Walton Township to the east and a portion of Assyria Township to the west. The village is home to both the high school and elementary school.

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Chapter Two PLANNING ISSUES, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Introduction

The primary goal of this Plan is to establish a basis for future land use, development, preservation and public services in Bellevue. To effectively plan for the village's well-being with regard to these matters, it is beneficial to identify important planning issues facing the community and clarify its long term goals and objectives. This chapter discusses important planning issues facing Bellevue today and presents goals and objectives to guide the village into the future.

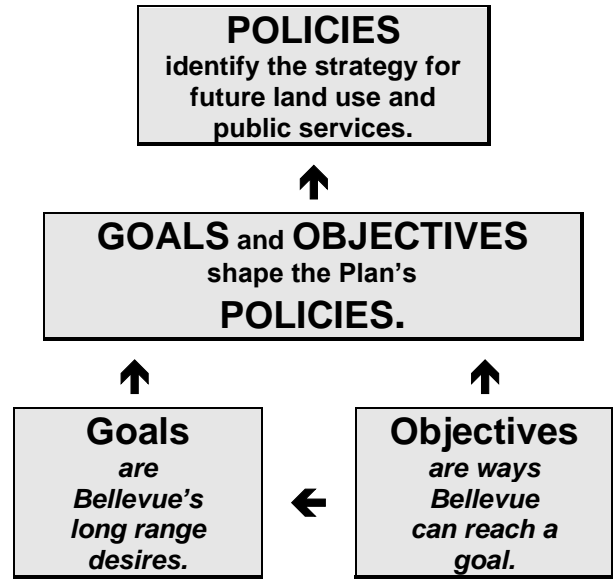
Planning Issues, Goals & Objectives

A number of key planning issues are apparent today. These issues vary in scope and are clearly inter-related. The future quality of life and character of the village will be largely shaped by the village's strategy to address these issues.

Each issue presented in this Chapter is followed by a set of goal and objective statements. Planning goals are statements that express the village's long range desires. Each goal has accompanying objectives that are general strategies that the village will pursue to attain the specified goal.

The Importance of Goals and Objectives

- **Bellevue Vision:** The goals and objectives provide current and future residents with an overview of the intended future character of the community.
- **Shape Policies:** The goals and objectives identify and outline the basic parameters that should be used in guiding land use and public services policies.
- **Evaluate Development Proposals:** The goals and objectives serve as references upon which future rezoning and land development proposals can be evaluated.



Goals, Objectives, and Policies of the Plan

The planning issues and associated goals and objectives are divided into the following major categories:

1. Growth Management
2. Public Facilities and Services
3. Economic Development and Downtown Bellevue
4. Community Character
5. Natural Resources and the Environment
6. Housing
7. Recreation
8. Circulation and Mobility
9. Regional Coordination

The planning issues presented in the following pages are not intended to be all inclusive. Rather, they are presented as the primary issues that the community must address as it establishes a future for itself. These issues will evolve over time and should be reexamined periodically and the appropriate modifications made.

The numbered planning issues above correspond to the numbered summary discussions on the following pages.

The objectives listed on the following pages should not be interpreted as limitations on the village's efforts to reach its goals. The village's commitment to the following objectives does not preclude it pursuing other objectives that it determines are beneficial. In addition, the objectives are not time specific. The village may choose to act on certain objectives within a shorter time frame than others.

1. GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The Village of Bellevue is a desirable place to live. The village reflects a strong small-town character, an identifiable downtown business district, stable neighborhoods, and local parks, all within a surrounding rural landscape with abundant open spaces. The village offers excellent access to highways and nearby employment centers. As the state's economic conditions improve and the Bellevue School District continues to make incremental improvements to its facilities and programs, it is reasonable to expect the village's future to be characterized by growth and development, and redevelopment.

Bellevue's character and quality of life will be impacted by the way it chooses to manage growth. Successful growth management includes minimizing unnecessary loss or degradation of natural resources; coordinating development with adequate public services including emergency services; accommodating growth and development in a manner that preserves the desired community character; encouraging economic development; and ensuring compatibility between adjacent land uses.

The "Smart Growth" movement surfaced more than 20 years ago in response to past growth practices including sprawl, unnecessary and excessive public infrastructure costs, and loss of open spaces and natural resources. The result has been a growing interest in charting more sustainable futures for our communities, both regionally and locally. The principals of Smart Growth are summarized in the box on this page.

This Plan supports the ten principals of Smart Growth for Bellevue, recognizing that the relevance and application of each principal must be context-sensitive to the Village according to the discretion of local officials.

Smart Growth Principals

Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities

Take advantage of compact development design

Create a range of housing opportunities and choices

Create walkable neighborhoods

Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas

Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration

Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place

Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective

Mix land uses

Provide a variety of transportation choices

GOAL: Guide growth and development in a manner that supports "smart growth," including assuring land use patterns compatible with public facilities and services and the cost-effective use of tax dollars, preserving the traditional small-town character of the village, and minimizing conflicts between differing land uses.

Objectives

1. Develop a rational land use strategy that provides an appropriately balanced scope of uses.
2. Develop a rational land use strategy that maintains the role of Bellevue's downtown area as the primary center of commerce, supported by a complimentary mix of uses, and which preserves the village's historic and pedestrian-friendly character.
3. Encourage compact forms of growth and development that result in a fully integrated fabric of compatible land use patterns across the village, and which facilitates ease of motorized and non-motorized travel.

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4. Guide development into areas where public facilities and services have adequate capacity to accommodate the anticipated growth and increased development intensities, and/or where the provision or expansion of public facilities is cost effective.
5. Discourage public services improvements that will have the effect of encouraging development at a rate beyond the village's ability to ensure adequate public health, safety.
6. Wherever legally permissible, require new developments to pay the village for the direct and indirect public services costs associated with that development. These costs should not be imposed on existing residents except where the general public will realize substantial benefits.
7. Continually monitor local attitudes about public facilities and services and provide regular opportunities for substantive public input on growth and public services issues.
8. Encourage a constructive partnership between the village and private sector parties to facilitate development projects that support the policies, goals and objectives of this Plan.
9. Maintain reasonable controls on commercial and industrial uses such as noise, odors, glare, vibration, and similar operational features.
10. Separate incompatible land uses by distance, natural features, or man-made landscape buffers that adequately screen or mitigate adverse impacts.
11. Evaluate rezoning petitions, site plans, and other development decisions according to the policies, goals and objectives of this Plan.
12. Update zoning and other tools, as necessary, to implement the Plan's policies, goals and objectives.

2. PUBLIC FACILITIES and SERVICES

The quality of life one experiences is shaped of many variables and what is a priority variable for one may not be so for another. Bellevue has and will continue to have the potential to enhance the quality of life for local residents through the facilities and services it provides. These facilities and services may include open space and recreation; roads, sidewalks and trails; emergency services; special services to the elderly and disadvantaged individuals; and more.

The link between economic prosperity and the provision of public facilities and services is strong and tax revenues dictate, in part, the extent and quality of public services. The extent to which services are provided, and can be enhanced, is dependent on local tax revenues and other income sources. Although development will increase the village's tax base, the same development will place additional demands upon public services. Contrary to traditional planning wisdom, research has shown that development does not necessarily "pay its way," particularly as it applies to traditional single family residential development. Farming and commercial and industrial development, and high-density residential development, has been shown to typically have a more positive impact upon the economic stability of a community.

But there are also strategies that are not so dependent on economic prosperity to enhance public services:

- Minimize duplication of services and other unnecessary public services and facilities costs.
- Target facilities and services where it can impact the greatest number of recipients.
- Regularly monitor satisfaction levels among residents and target identified deficiencies, including emergency services and the scope of and access to recreation opportunities by all age, income and physical condition groups.

Michigan's economic down turn has placed unique hardships for local communities and Bellevue has not escaped these hardships. Since 1990 when the village's population reached a high of 1,401, the community's population has been dropping. The village's population dropped to 1,282 in 2010 before increasing to 1,308 in 2020. The aging of the community and decreasing employment opportunities, along with past perceptions of a declining Bellevue School District, has further led to the village's decreasing population. An end result has been an increased challenge to maintain public facilities and services at a level residents expect, let alone the pursuit of improvements.

Bellevue is facing challenges to maintain public facilities and services at a level residents have come to expect, let alone the pursuit of improvements.

In addition, the aging population of the community bring with it special demands for housing, entertainment and medical care.

For the village's youth, the Bellevue School District is the most important public service/facility. A school system is a critical component of local perceptions of quality of life. The Bellevue School District has been faced with perception issues that have encouraged some families to leave the area. Community concern has led to the revamping of the school operations, improving the overall educational opportunities available within the district. Though the District is a separate and independent governmental authority, cooperative efforts between the District and village are an important element in ensuring that the future of the District, and the education of the village's youth, is exemplary.

Increased recreational and cultural programs would further enhance Bellevue's ability to retain and attract young residents, and provide opportunities for village residents and families to become active within the community.

GOAL: Enhance the quality of life of village residents through comprehensive and quality-based public services and facilities, consistent with the small-town character of the community, and in coordination with current and anticipated needs of residents and the existing and planned land use pattern.

General Objectives:

1. Evaluate all considerations for public services/facilities improvements according to, in part, the planned future land use pattern for the village and an analysis of all available options including cooperative agreements with neighboring communities and regional entities.
2. Evaluate development plans according to, in part, measures to protect public health, safety and welfare in association with motorized and non-motorized circulation, emergency services, and flood potential.
3. Require fire protection infrastructure for all development that is of such size and/or intensity that the infrastructure is deemed critical for public health, safety and welfare.

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4. Ensure adequate storm water management as part of site development efforts to minimize demands on off-site public storm water systems.
5. Continually monitor local attitudes about public services and facilities including recreation; education; roads and sidewalks; and police protection, fire protection, and other emergency services.
6. Explore financially feasible options to enhance services and facilities where deficiencies may be identified.
7. Explore the development of one or more community centers to provide additional opportunities for recreation, education and social programs for both the village's youth and senior citizens, independently or in cooperation with other entities.
8. Maintain regular communications with the Bellevue School District regarding education and facility needs and develop an effective partnership to pursue strategies aimed at addressing deficiencies.

Recreation Objectives:

1. Should sufficient public sentiment warrant, develop and maintain an MDNR-approved recreation plan that provides eligibility to compete for state and federal recreation grant dollars.
2. Encourage recreation facilities in close proximity to population areas, and as part of residential development projects, to provide close-to-home opportunities.
3. Coordinate efforts with local communities to provide recreation opportunities and programs in a manner that is cost-effective and responsive to local needs.
4. Enhance maintenance levels of local park facilities including the exploration of cooperative efforts with the county and volunteer groups.
5. Explore opportunities that existing or future abandoned limestone quarries may provide for recreation purposes.
6. Encourage the expansion of library facilities through cooperative efforts with Bellevue Township.

School District Objectives

1. Encourage school officials to regularly update and refine programs and activities that are competitive with those offered by surrounding districts and facilitate a successful transition into higher education institutions and the professional workforce.
2. Encourage community involvement in school events to support funding of new programs and facilities.
3. Promote the safe family-friendly attributes of the Bellevue region to attract school-age families to the area.
4. Make available public facilities such as the library and public parks as educational tools that promote the history and natural environments of the Bellevue region.
5. Develop partnerships with higher education institutions to promote trades and service training.
6. Promote sports and academic opportunities offered through the public school system.

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and DOWNTOWN BELLEVUE

The economic stability of Bellevue is critical to the success of its future. An economically strong Bellevue will:

- enhance local employment opportunities
- maintain stable neighborhoods
- strengthen local education programs
- maintain and enhance public facilities and services including roads, parks and emergency services
- attract new residents, families and businesses
- enhance the overall perception of the village and its desirability as a place to reside and do business

Downtown Bellevue is the heart of the community and the foundation of its economic activity, and it has been faced with its share of recent challenges. The village has experienced a declining population and this has led to a decrease of investment in downtown and local businesses. A loss of interest in these downtown businesses has led to a declining downtown. A decline in the local downtown and available services has encouraged village residents to spend consumer dollars elsewhere, in surrounding regional communities.

In addition, the aging of the Bellevue’s residents has established a greater urgency to find new ways to attract younger generations of families and individuals to the area, to help enhance economic activity and support the needs of this segment of the community.

Commercial and industrial development can improve the community’s overall economic stability. Economic development efforts can capitalize not only on the day-to-day needs of the local community, but also on special village assets that can draw visitors to the community where additional consumer dollars may be spent.

However, the potential for the village is substantial. Vacant storefronts provide opportunities for restoring historic buildings and provide space for new commercial services that cater to current needs and trends. Increased housing in the area, including housing above downtown storefronts, surrounding neighborhoods, and housing in the surrounding townships, can infuse the viability of existing and new commercial endeavors. The close proximity of I-69 and I-94 can attract businesses and industries looking for opportunities within the context of a small town, and further expand employment opportunities and the in-

migration of new residents and families. Encouraging sustainable high paying jobs in Bellevue, such as research, management and technical service operations, will not only attract new residents but will also help to retain young residents.

Encouraging downtown Bellevue as a traditional mixed-use village will further enhance its economic stability. Accommodating housing in the downtown area and within walking distance will encourage convenient local patronage of businesses. Accommodating noncommercial uses can also attract potential consumers to the area as they may visit local parks, religious institutions, and similar noncommercial facilities.

Goal: Enhance economic growth and stability through the diversification of commercial and industrial development opportunities and enhancing the position of downtown Bellevue as a vibrant mixed-use commercial district in the regional landscape, where residents, families and visitors want to shop, recreate and gather.

General Objectives:

1. Encourage business districts that are visually and spatially inviting as a place to gather, including streetscape improvements, public event spaces, and outdoor eating, and discourage business districts defined by parking lot corridors.
2. Encourage unified and consolidated business centers rather than the creation and incremental expansion of strip commercial corridors.
3. Explore the development of a business park, including the consideration of land and infrastructure needs and costs.
4. Encourage retail and service infill development in downtown Bellevue before the introduction of new commercial sites outside of the downtown.
5. Support and coordinate economic development efforts with the county and other regional entities.
6. Encourage economic development through the marketing of the special assets of Bellevue and the regional area including the village’s historical character, the Battle Creek River, the surrounding townships’ rural character, agri-tourism, and other tourism opportunities.
7. Encourage local patronage of local businesses through local awareness programs including public announcements, downtown business and services brochures, and special events to elevate awareness of local establishments.
8. Work with regional entities to emphasize, for the benefit of the public, the unique character of the region and the assets that each community offers

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in shaping the desirability of the area as a place to live and do business.

9. Explore the implementation of tax breaks and low interest development loans to provide incentives for new businesses.
 10. Develop a recruitment strategy to actively seek out successful businesses looking for relocation or expansion into a small rural community such as Bellevue, and advertise the benefits of Bellevue as a place of business including its proximity to I-69 and I-94, the “town and country” opportunities, and the village’s historic and small-town character.
 11. Encourage commercial and industrial development that is in character and scale with the village’s character and surrounding land uses, considering such features as building size and height, architectural design, setbacks, signage, lighting, landscaping and screening, and open spaces.
 12. Limit commercial uses to those that principally cater to local consumer needs, including tourists and other visitors to the area, and discourage uses that will undermine the viability of the downtown commercial district.
 13. Limit industrial uses to those which are predominately characterized by assembly activities and similar “light” operations that do not require the processing of raw materials, nor negatively impact surrounding land uses and the community as a whole.
 14. Encourage industrial uses within industrial park settings, characterized by open spaces and landscaping.
 15. Provide opportunities for home-based occupations under conditions that will support the desired character, appearance, and quality of life for surrounding residential areas.
4. Facilitate and/or organize seasonal and special events that bring residents and visitors to the downtown area such as park events, concerts, sidewalk sales, farmer’s market, and walking tours, geared to all age groups.
 5. Encourage development that is in character and scale with the downtown’s historic and small-town character, considering such features as building size and height, architectural design, setbacks, signage, lighting, streetscape enhancements, and open spaces.
 6. Encourage opportunities for the inclusion of residences above storefronts.
 7. Encourage an active Downtown Development Authority to restore downtown Bellevue so that it will once again become a sustainable retail and commercial core where local businesses can thrive.
 8. Enhance and maintain connections between downtown Bellevue and local parks and neighborhoods that allow for safe and convenient pedestrian activity and encourage resident and local business interaction.
 9. Improve neighborhood parks adjacent to downtown.
 10. Include the village’s safe, friendly and affordable housing opportunities, in a traditional neighborhood setting, as part of a marketing strategy to attract new persons, families and businesses.
 11. Encourage local business owners to consider extended hours to capture the consumer needs of residents that may commute to outlying employment centers.
 12. Develop an annual calendar of events to attract persons to the village and its downtown area and advertise regularly the upcoming events.
 13. Utilize the DDA to fund large-scale improvements to the downtown streetscape, underground infrastructure and marketing strategies.

Downtown Objectives:

1. Encourage the incremental restoration of downtown Bellevue as a traditional village that attracts a mixture of local businesses and services.
2. Market downtown Bellevue as an attractive and vibrant traditional rural village downtown.
3. Develop a downtown streetscape program to further enhance the downtown as an enjoyable place to shop, gather and spend time.

4. COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The role of a community's character in contributing to quality of life and creating a sense of place in which residents, families and businesses want to surround themselves is vital. A community's character is defined by the attributes and assets that make the community unique, and that establish a sense of place that is unlike most other places.

The Village of Bellevue is a community of varied character. Its character is defined by, in part:

- a historic downtown district
- a town center surrounded by traditional neighborhood patterns
- varied housing opportunities
- downtown parks
- the Battle Creek River corridor
- walkability
- residents and businesses
- the surrounding rural landscape

The diversity of the village's character contributes to the area's desirability as a place of residence and business. The preservation of these characteristics and overall identity is an important part of the village's long term welfare.

Community character and sense of place can:

- Instill community pride and upkeep of properties
- Enhance property values
- Encourage persons and businesses to invest in the community
- Attract young knowledgeable workers and entrepreneurs
- Instill a sense of comfort among residents and families.

Community character and sense of place can be enhanced and defined by:

- Attractive business centers with public spaces for gathering
- Business centers that attract people day and night through mixed-use activities
- Building architecture
- Streetscape images
- Ease of mobility throughout the community
- Close-by natural open spaces and recreation options.
- Social integration and equality
- Attractive neighborhoods

The economic prosperity of Bellevue is directly linked to community character and sense of place.

Community character and sense of place is a function of specific actions by both the public and private sectors, and it does not evolve by chance. The importance of these community features has never been so pressing as Bellevue battles the recent economic downturn and defines its individual role and place in the region.

GOAL: Protect and enhance the character of the village, emphasizing its small-town and historic character, its traditional downtown area, and its compact neighborhoods.

Objectives

1. Encourage development designed in scale with the immediate surroundings and the dominant small-town and historic character of the village, through reasonable standards addressing density, building size and height, and other development features.
2. Enhance development and redevelopment efforts through the landscaping and screening, streetscape improvements, public gathering spaces, and other development features.
3. Introduce appropriately designed and landscaped signage along key entrances into the village, and through the village, that highlight the village's identity and place within the region.
4. Encourage the placement of signs or markers at designated historic sites to highlight the historic resources of the village.
5. Encourage development which actively strives to preserve natural open spaces (woodlands, wetlands, and fields).
6. Encourage the maintenance of historically significant structures.
7. Encourage a structurally sound housing stock and the rehabilitation or removal of blighted structures and yard areas.
8. Implement a historic district through the heart of the downtown, in order to preserve and protect the historic buildings and homes along the main thoroughfares through Bellevue.
9. Enhance the sidewalks, streetscape, and building façades to resemble historic downtown Bellevue.
10. Encourage business centers that exhibit an attractive appearance and foster an inviting character.
11. Encourage the focus on Bellevue history in downtown neighborhoods through streetscape improvements and beautification to strengthen a sense of community character.

5. NATURAL RESOURCES and the ENVIRONMENT

One cannot speak of community character preservation in Bellevue without acknowledging the importance of its natural resources. These resources include drainage ways, ground water, farmland and other soil resources, the air, and its wetlands and woodlands. Perhaps most significant of the village's natural resources is the Battle Creek River corridor including the wetland and wooded areas along the river corridor. The village's natural resources are important in shaping its character and also provide vital environmental roles including wildlife habitats, flood control, water purification, groundwater recharge, and air quality enhancement. These same resources play a fundamental role in recreation in the community.

Proactive site development practices are critical in preserving natural resources, including the prevention of stream bank erosion and sedimentation of water courses, maintaining shade-producing stream bank vegetative cover, minimizing the discharge of pollutants into surface waters, minimizing impervious surfaces, and promoting desirable aquatic organisms.

Directly related to the preservation of the river corridor is the importance of the preservation of floodplain environments due to their unique contribution to public health, safety and welfare including wildlife habitats, flood control and property protection, recreation opportunities, and enhancing the visual character of the community.

Increased environmental knowledge, awareness, and education, when incorporated into a comprehensive planning strategy, can minimize the potential for environmental degradation.

GOAL: Preserve the integrity of the village's natural resources including the Battle Creek River corridor and its associated woodlands and wetlands.

Objectives

1. Document and periodically update resource inventory data such as water bodies and drainage courses, wetlands, woodlands, ground water recharge areas, and sites of contamination, for use in land planning studies and land use and development decisions.
2. Encourage land development that actively strives to preserve natural open spaces as part of the development plan and recognizes the importance of preserving environmental corridors across multiple parcels and the community as a whole.
3. Ensure that the quantity and quality of new development does not unreasonably create increases in air, noise, land, and water pollution, or the degradation of land and water resource environments including groundwater.
4. Enhance public health, safety and welfare through land use and site development practices aimed at protecting water resources including streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands and ground water.
5. Guide more intensive land uses away from environmentally sensitive areas and important natural features.
6. Ensure that all development is in compliance with applicable local, county, state, and federal environmental regulations.
7. Review proposed development in light of its potential impact upon on-site and regional natural resource areas.
8. Explore the acquisition of important open space resources for recreation and environmental preservation purposes.
9. Encourage the use of conservation easements to preserve important open spaces in association with land development projects.
10. Encourage the use of native vegetation in association with new development projects, redevelopment efforts, stream corridor preservation, and reforestation.
11. Educate the public about measures that help to protect the environmental integrity and recreation value of water resources including management of yard waste and fertilizer use, minimizing impervious surfaces, maintenance of shoreline vegetation, and avoidance of erosion.

6. HOUSING

The Village of Bellevue is very interested in providing a full range of housing options within an overall urban setting. Opportunities for rural and suburban residential lifestyles are plentiful in Bellevue Township and the greater surrounding region. The village has the necessary public sewer and water facilities to facilitate housing of a traditional village character. The higher-density housing will:

- facilitate more affordable housing
- enable a greater number of residents and families to make Bellevue their home
- enhance the long-term viability of its downtown district and commercial services elsewhere
- expand housing options for all persons and families, including the variable life stages that characterize the village's residents
- make most efficient use of the village's public services infrastructure
- reduce development pressures in surrounding planned farmland preservation areas

The village's existing single-family residential areas reflect a strong traditional neighborhood design including small lots, rectilinear street systems and sidewalks. These and other traditional design principals encourage a sense of place and identity, interaction among neighbors, and a feeling of safety and intimacy among neighbors. Accommodating alternative development patterns, including in the case of multiple family neighborhoods, requires careful placement and design to limit impacts upon the character of existing residential areas, the community's dominant small-town character, and the cost-effective delivery of public services.

Just as important as the accommodation of healthy residential neighborhoods is assuring the maintenance and stability of existing neighborhoods including residential structures and yards.

Attention must also be directed at enhancing the stability and desirability of existing residential neighborhoods. Some of the neighborhoods reflect blight conditions of varying degrees. While these conditions are not pervasive and the worst cases are principally limited to isolated instances, blight conditions can undermine efforts by other neighbors to maintain and invest in their own properties, and such a trend can be destructive to the residential stability of the village and its overall desirability as a place to reside and do business.

GOAL: Ensure a healthy residential environment in which persons and families can grow and flourish, that is of an overall urban character that reflects the traditional small-town character of the community, and which provides for a range of housing options to address the varied housing needs of existing and prospective residents.

Objectives:

1. Encourage attractive housing options to meet the needs of all persons and families including small-lot subdivisions, multiple family housing, and senior citizen facilities.
2. Encourage a housing stock that ensures affordable housing to all, including starter homes, while also ensuring all dwellings are of appropriate design to complement nearby conditions and the community as a whole.
3. Beautify streetscapes and neighborhood corridors with street trees and pedestrian furnishings.
4. Build on existing neighborhood infrastructure to increase walkability and connectivity to park facilities and downtown businesses.
5. Encourage the rehabilitation of blighted homes and properties.
6. Implement a village wide inspection program to ensure the proper appearance of homes and sites.
7. Enforce blight regulations.
8. Encourage revitalization through historic neighborhood tax increment districts in areas and neighborhoods experiencing significant decline.
9. Encourage residential development that incorporates in the site planning process the preservation of on-site natural resource systems and open spaces.
10. Encourage the reclamation of abandoned quarries in a manner that provides abundant on-site recreation opportunities within a high-density residential setting.
11. Discourage accessory residential structures and use that undermine the residential character and peacefulness of the neighborhood, or increases conflicts between neighbors, such as accessory buildings of excessive size or inappropriate location.
12. Discourage the encroachment of commercial and industrial uses into residentially planned areas except under limited and controlled circumstances such as in the case of appropriate home occupations and planned mixed-use areas.
13. Encourage the development of higher density housing for mature households (55+ years) in close proximity to downtown and existing traditional neighborhoods.

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14. Utilize state and federal funding programs to provide lower interest financing and grants for housing rehabilitation.
15. Organize neighborhood groups that manage neighborhood meetings regarding safety, blight, noise and yard maintenance issues.
16. Concentrate development efforts towards housing opportunities that provide low maintenance and accessible living such as townhomes and condominiums.
17. Pursue Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for housing rehabilitation.
18. Undertake an historical structure survey of the village and if the survey uncovers substantial structures in reasonable condition, establish an historic preservation commission and historic preservation district to preserve the architectural character and presence of such structures.

7. RECREATION

The opportunity and ability for residents to maximize the enjoyment of their leisure time is directly related to recreation facilities and programs available for their use. Quality leisure time is essential for the health and vitality of individuals, families, and communities as a whole. The village operates two parks –Jefferson Park and Washington Park. Butler Park and the Keehne Environmental Area are also located in the village and part of the Eaton County park system, under the management of the Eaton County Parks and Recreation Commission. Keehne Environmental Area, a 17-acre facility, is in a state of disrepair. The other three park facilities are well maintained and heavily used. Butler Park includes a boat launch along Battle Creek River. MDOT also maintains a small boat launch along the river, at the M-78 crossing.

The presence of the Battle Creek River in the village represents a tremendous recreation opportunity including canoeing, fishing, boating, hiking and sight-seeing. Maximizing river-based recreation facilitates close-to-home recreation opportunities, and the potential to attract a more regional population and enhance economic development efforts.

Successfully addressing the current and future recreation needs of Bellevue requires a purposeful strategy. Such a strategy must address a wide scope of issues including, but not limited to, total acreage dedicated to recreation, the location of park facilities, trails and linkages between park facilities and neighborhood areas, accessibility to the physically handicapped, the specific recreation opportunities and programs offered at park sites, and maintenance.

Recreation planning should be an important part of the village's planning efforts. These planning efforts must address existing recreation sites in and near the village and explore ways to maximize the potential of these sites. Planning must also explore the need and appropriateness for new park sites to address future recreation needs.

The day-to-day and long-term maintenance of park facilities is a critical part of a successful recreation program that delivers a high-quality recreation experience at each park site.

GOAL: Develop a comprehensive and financially sound village-wide recreation program that addresses the existing and projected recreation needs of all age, family structure, and disability groups including close-to-home recreation opportunities and their proper maintenance.

Objectives:

1. Continue to build on existing parks and facilities within neighborhoods to provide ample park and open space within the areas where people live and interact.
2. Pursue recreation improvements in a manner that recognizes the recreation facilities of greatest need.
3. Regularly explore the acquisition of additional park acreage in future populated areas and/or where growth is anticipated, where it is demonstrated that existing recreational facilities are not adequate and/or do not provide close-to-home facilities.
4. Develop park master plans for all existing and future park sites to assure facilities, site characteristics, and functional considerations are addressed in a comprehensive and integrated fashion, and periodically review and update such plans to address changing needs and conditions.
5. Maintain and design all existing and future park site improvements with special concern for accommodating the access and other needs of all age groups and the handicap population.
6. Establish a strategic park maintenance program to ensure a high-quality recreation experience at each park site and the maximum functionality of each site, including the pursuit of grants and funding to clean and beautify existing facilities.
7. Work with the Eaton County Parks and Recreation department to restore the Keehne Environmental Center for recreational and leisure activities.
8. Reclaim abandoned limestone quarries for reuse as lakefront parks and open space.
9. Work with the Bellevue Conservation Club to incorporate community events and recreation opportunities during hours in which club members are not using the facility.
10. Solicit the participation of local youth and volunteer organizations to undertake regular clean-up initiatives of the Battle Creek River corridor.
11. Maintain an effective community recreation-monitoring program whereby recreation needs and issues are routinely reviewed and appropriate planning undertaken.
12. Maintain open and continuous lines of communication with nearby communities in order to plan recreation facilities and programs in a more

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comprehensive and cooperative manner, including the exploration of a centrally located community and senior recreation center providing transportation and recreation services to area residents.

13. Pursue practical avenues to encourage community participation in recreation planning.
14. Update the village's five-year recreation plan according to MDNR requirements to ensure continued eligibility to complete for recreation grant dollars.

8. CIRCULATION and MOBILITY

Community circulation extends far beyond just accommodating vehicular traffic. More and more attention is being focused on ensuring road systems take into consideration all potential user needs including pedestrians, bicyclists, and persons of all ages and physical conditions. Similarly, the value of circulation systems between communities that facilitate non-motorized travel have also been recognized as an important part of long range planning including economic development. Well planned and designed community and inter-community circulation systems can limit the reliance on the automobile and resulting environmental impacts, improve the health of local residents, provide opportunities for economic development initiatives, and improve the quality of leisure time.

The village is committed to providing non-motorized circulation throughout the village in a manner that fosters safe and convenient travel, community interactions, leisure time activities, and economic development.

Transportation networks in Bellevue include streets and the pedestrian areas along streetscapes including sidewalks. Most primary roads in the village are paved two lane streets that serve neighborhoods and downtown. On-street parallel parking is allowed along most streets in both the residential and commercial areas. The primary issue in regards to village roads and transportation is the condition of the streetscapes and sidewalks. Most village roads in downtown and a significant portions of the road segment in the residential areas have existing sidewalks and pedestrian street crossings. However, the sidewalks and streetscapes are in disrepair and are not inviting or safe facilities for pedestrian traffic.

In addition, pedestrian crosswalks in the downtown are not adequately identified and do not provide safe and obvious crossing areas.

GOAL: Maintain a transportation network throughout the village that encourages efficient and safe travel by vehicular, pedestrian, and other non-motorized modes.

Objectives

1. Identify priority road segments for systematic maintenance and improvement, based upon the planned future land use pattern and existing and projected traffic patterns.
2. Discourage high-traffic generating land uses and development patterns along secondary roads.
3. Pursue access management measures to minimize the potential for traffic congestion and safety hazards, including limitations on the number, size, and shape of new land divisions and limitations on curb cuts.
4. Encourage the inclusion of pedestrian/bicycle paths in association with new residential and non-residential developments to facilitate safe and convenient non-motorized movement for all potential users.
5. Develop a community-wide streetscape improvement plan to facilitate the conversion and upkeep of all street corridors for the benefit of all potential users and economic development initiatives.
6. Provide safe pedestrian crossing at major intersection in downtown Bellevue through obvious line striping and crosswalk signage.
7. Encourage the linking of residential and commercial centers through sidewalks and other non-motorized trails.
8. Enhance the streetscape to resemble the traditional village downtown with historic lighting and street furnishings.
9. Improve the visual and physical attributes along Capital Avenue between Elizabeth and Adams Streets by incorporating street trees and landscaping while also reclaiming automotive storage areas for active retail and commercial uses.

9. REGIONAL COORDINATION

The Village of Bellevue exists within a regional network of communities, none of which are islands unto themselves. The village is fully surrounded by Bellevue Township and is within six miles of eight other municipalities. The village is one of the 31 communities that comprise Eaton County and one of the many other communities in the greater regional landscape. The village and nearby municipalities can greatly benefit by cooperatively pursuing common goals in the areas of land use and public services where mutually beneficial. Planned land uses, public services and preservation efforts should take into consideration conditions in these abutting communities. Land use planning efforts should seek to establish a land use pattern compatible with surrounding conditions provided the goals of Bellevue are not undermined.

GOAL: Guide future development and public services in a manner that recognizes the position of Bellevue within the larger region and the mutual impacts of local planning efforts.

Objectives

- 1) Where practical, identify a planned future land use pattern that seeks to ensure compatibility among land uses in adjacent Bellevue Township.
- 2) Maintain a meaningful communication program with area municipalities and county agencies to discuss local and area-wide public facilities and services needs, land use conditions and trends, preservation goals and objectives, planning issues including vehicular and non-motorized modes of travel and recreation, and mutually beneficial strategies to address short and long-term needs.
- 3) Establish and maintain cooperative efforts among local communities and Bellevue Public Schools to pursue common community goals.

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Chapter Three FUTURE LAND USE STRATEGY

Introduction

The Village of Bellevue's principal planning components are contained in the Future Land Use Strategy, as discussed in this Chapter Three, and the Public Services Strategy discussed in Chapter Four. The Future Land Use Strategy identifies the desired pattern of land use, development and preservation throughout the village. Chapter Four presents guidelines regarding public services to help ensure that future public services are coordinated with the planned land use pattern, and the achievement of the Plan's goals and objectives.

Implementation of the policies of this Chapter and Plan rests with the regulatory and non-regulatory tools of the village – most importantly the Village of Bellevue Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance generally regulates the type, location, bulk, and intensity of land development. The village may also adopt other supporting regulatory and non-regulatory tools to further the implementation of the policies of this Plan. Chapter Five discusses implementation strategies in more detail.

The foundation on which the Future Land Use Strategy is rooted is the goals and objectives in Chapter Two. These include, in part, encouraging compact development and growth areas, protection of the village's downtown business district and its historical character, and the provision of varied housing options. The Future Land Use Strategy is based on an analysis of the village's natural and cultural features such as community attitudes, existing land use, and the street system. The opportunities and constraints presented by these and other characteristics were evaluated in the context of the goals and objectives in Chapter Two to arrive at a planned future land use pattern.

It is important to recognize that neither the Future Land Use Map nor the explanatory text of this Chapter is intended to stand on its own. Both the policy discussions and map are inseparable and must be viewed together.

Planning Areas

The Future Land Use Strategy divides the village into planning areas and identifies the predominant land use pattern planned for each. These areas collectively formulate the planned land use pattern. These areas are as follows:

- **Commercial Areas**
 - Downtown Bellevue Center
 - South Main Commercial Area
- **Residential Area**
- **Public Areas**

It is not the intent of this Plan to identify the specific land uses that should be permitted in each of these planning areas. This Plan presents broad-based policies regarding the dominant land use(s) to be in each. Specific permitted land uses will be determined by the zoning provisions of the village, based upon considerations of compatibility. There may be certain existing land uses that do not "fit" with the planned future land use pattern. This should not be necessarily interpreted as a lack of village support for the continuation of such uses. Zoning regulations will clarify this matter.

Boundaries: The boundaries of these areas are illustrated on the Future Land Use Map at the end of this chapter. There is frequently room for discretion at the exact interface between the boundaries of two planning areas and appropriate uses at these points of interface. However, the boundaries presented in this Plan have been considered carefully. Significant departures are strongly discouraged except for unique circumstances and only when the public health, safety and welfare will not be undermined. For example, the specified boundaries of the Downtown Business District are not intended to be incrementally expanded into adjacent residential neighborhoods, and the Main Street Commercial Area on the south end of the village is not intended to evolve into an extended strip corridor.

Commercial Areas

The Future Land Use Strategy identifies two Commercial Areas. Each of these is discussed in the following pages.

Within each area, all development should be of a character and design that encourages compatibility with adjacent and nearby land uses and the desired small-town and historic character of the village including site layout, principal buildings and accessory facilities. Such compatibility should be based on, in part, appropriate signage; building height, size, bulk and architecture; setbacks; and landscaping and screening.

Special care must be exercised during all phases of the review and approval of specific development proposals to ensure that proposed uses, buildings and other site modifications, and their interface with surrounding properties, enhances their compatibility. Site development should incorporate the inclusion of non-motorized travel and measures to enhance the safety and comfort of non-motorized travel along street corridors and elsewhere.

Development and redevelopment should respect the historic character of Bellevue and advance this defining feature of the community. Adequate buffers and/or screening mechanisms should ensure new commercial development minimizes impacts on adjacent and nearby residential properties.

Downtown Bellevue Center: The Downtown Bellevue Center (Center) includes the village's principal business district, generally defined by S. Benton St. to the north, W. Caroline St. and the railroad to the south, N. Main St. and Battle Creek River to the east, and N. Elizabeth to the west, and more clearly delineated on the Future Land Use Map. The Center embodies the identity of Bellevue. This business area is defined by a small-town character and a pedestrian friendly environment, with storefronts close to the streets and the absence of strip parking areas. It is a meeting place for many. The long-term viability of the Center is a key component of the Future Land Use Strategy. The Plan strongly supports the continued role of the Center as the heart of commercial and community activity within the greater fabric of the village.

Development should be designed of such scale, architecture and amenities to preserve the Downtown Bellevue Center as a historic and pedestrian-friendly commerce center. Development and redevelopment efforts should be coordinated with the desired small-town character and identity of the area, considering

such features as building size and height, façade treatments, lighting, signage, streetscapes and related features. Commercial uses should be principally limited to those that address the day-to-day retail, office and entertainment needs of the local population and visitors, and should be of a comparatively small size. Opportunities for complementary institutional and civic uses compatible with the intended character of the Center should remain. Uses that are characterized by the generation of traffic patterns that may undermine pedestrian comfort and safety are discouraged.

Opportunities for the expansion of the Downtown Bellevue Center should be carefully considered. Development proposals involving expansion should generally focus on properties immediately abutting existing businesses rather than occurring haphazardly or in a leap-frog pattern. Expansion of the Center should be limited and incremental only, and should occur only where compatibility among land uses can be ensured and the stability and desirability of nearby residential neighborhoods and businesses can be maintained.

South Main Commercial Area: The South Main Commercial Area is located along the village's south edge on the east side of S. Main Street, and includes a single retail establishment along with available acreage for new development. The South Main Commercial Area is not intended to extend north beyond the residences along Sharkey Street extend more than approximately 500' east of Main St.

The South Main Commercial Area is not intended to evolve into a large commerce center and undermine the viability of the Downtown Bellevue Center. The South Main Commercial Area is intended as a mix of commercial uses including uses that cater to local consumer needs, the highway traveler, and those of a more regional market. However, "big box" stores are not considered appropriate.

The South Main Commercial Area serves as one of the primary entrances into the village. Its visual character impacts perceptions of the community as a whole and its desirability as a place of commerce and residence.

Though not delineated as such on the Future Land Use Map, the Plan also supports opportunities for the incremental conversion of existing residential frontage on the west side of Adams Street to commercial or other compatible non-residential uses.

The South Main Commercial Center should undergo improvements to heighten public safety and visual amenities. These improvements should include

streetscape improvements that address, in part, landscaping and lighting, signage, limitations on the frequency and number of driveways, and the use of shared service drives.

Residential Area

The Future Land Use Strategy identifies the largest portion of the village as "Residential Area." The majority of the land developed for housing is characterized by single family dwellings, with multiple family dwellings primarily limited to northeastern portions of the village. The Plan recommends continued opportunities for new and varying housing options and that the options be integrated with one another to encourage a cohesive community. Densities of up to six dwellings per acre are recommended throughout the Residential Area. Higher densities may be appropriate based on an assessment of surrounding conditions, available services, and other pertinent factors. However, the Plan supports limiting densities commonly associated with multiple family dwellings, 10 or more dwelling units per acre, to the northeast portion of the village.

The current farmland and extraction operations in the southwest corner of the village are designated as "Residential" in recognition that extraction operations are temporary in nature and the end use of extraction operations is frequently residential development. Farmland in the perimeters of urban communities commonly is incrementally converted to residential as farming operations become increasingly economically challenging. However, given the unique nature of this area, the Village recognizes that other uses may be appropriate in this location with appropriate measures to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas including recreation and industry. The Plan supports ongoing extraction operations and farming until such time compatible alternative uses are sought.

The Future Land Use Strategy encourages a mixed housing pattern of varying densities composed of predominantly single-family dwellings, along with an appropriate mix of two-family and multiple family dwellings. Where comparatively large housing projects are proposed, the Plan supports the integration of these varying housing options on the project site.

As the Plan supports a mixed-density development pattern, special care must be exercised during rezoning and development plan review proceedings to ensure compatibility between existing and new development. This compatibility can be encouraged through reasonable density transitions, special setbacks, landscaping and screening, and other site design measures.

The development densities and scale of future housing projects should be coordinated with available levels of public services including sewage disposal, potable water, and road infrastructure.

The Residential Area includes some limited but active farm operations. Their residential classification is not intended to suggest that the farm operations are inappropriate or should otherwise be converted to residential use. Local farming activities have a positive impact in defining the overall character of the village. On the other hand, the Plan recognizes that some farm activities may not be compatible with encroaching high density residential areas. The Plan further recognizes that the long-term viability of these farm operations may decline. Potential new residents in the village should recognize that the traditional smells, noises, pesticide applications, and generally recognized agricultural activities associated with responsible farming may well continue for some time.

The provision of opportunities for new residential development on existing vacant and/or agricultural land should not detract from the importance of appropriate maintenance and improvements to the village's existing housing stock and neighborhood quality of life.

In addition to the above, key policies of the Residential Area are:

1. The primary use of land should generally be limited to single family and two-family residences, including opportunities for comparatively higher density small-lot subdivisions where adequate provisions are made for potable water and sewage disposal.
2. Secondary uses should be limited to alternative living arrangements such as townhouses, apartments, retirement centers, and similar housing options, and for uses that directly support and enhance desirable residential areas such as schools, religious institutions, and recreation facilities.
3. Development densities approaching six dwellings or more per acre may be reasonable but only after special review to determine if the project is appropriate on the proposed property. Minimum guidelines that should be considered are:
 - a. Available infrastructure and services.
 - b. Environmental impacts.
 - c. Anticipated impacts upon existing residential development and/or neighborhoods.
 - d. Availability of public or private community sewer and water service.

Traditional Neighborhood Design: “Traditional Neighborhood Design” (TND) initiatives part of new neighborhood proposals are strongly encouraged as a means to preserve the village’s small-town character and neighborhood quality of life. This form of development incorporates and fosters a unique sense of neighborhood. The principles of TND are reflected in traditional village development patterns, many of which are evident in the village’s core area. TND supports comparatively high density residential development centered around a town square consisting of a central public space devoted to commercial and civic uses. The residences include a mix of housing styles including single family, townhouses and apartments. Streets are very “walkable” and pedestrian linkages are evident throughout. Streets typically follow a grid-like pattern and alleys are encouraged instead of driveways.

These village development patterns are generally recognized as offering an exciting alternative to otherwise sprawling subdivisions of little character. These village nodes provide convenient consumer services, foster a sense of mutual caring for one another, and embody a sense of vitality and identity. They offer opportunities for cost-effective public services and housing for all family stages. The higher density residential development within these village patterns encourages less encroachment of housing in the more rural and farm-based surroundings.

What may be equally effective in accommodating residential development while preserving the overall small town character of the village is the incorporation of a sense of unique identity within each evolving neighborhood. This may be accomplished through housing design, open space buffers, pedestrian-friendly circulation and linkages to nearby civic areas, special signage, and other development tools.

Open Space Communities: Development patterns that incorporate the preservation of open spaces are strongly encouraged. To this end, the Plan supports opportunities for what is frequently referred to as “clustering” and “open space communities.” This form of development provides for the clustering of dwellings on a portion(s) of the development parcel, so that the balance of the parcel can be retained in an open space status. The open space can include natural areas such as woodlands and wetlands, wildlife habitats, and close-to-home park areas. The individual open space areas within a development site may be as small as a quarter-acre or less, may be in the form of open space corridors through the neighborhood, and/or be of a varying character. These open space areas can be reserved by the use of conservation easements, deed restrictions, or similar tools. Open space communities have been shown to be economically viable and perhaps more profitable than typical low-density

subdivision developments, while simultaneously enhancing nearby property values and the preservation of the local environmental integrity. This form of development may be particularly beneficial in the outlying portions of the village.

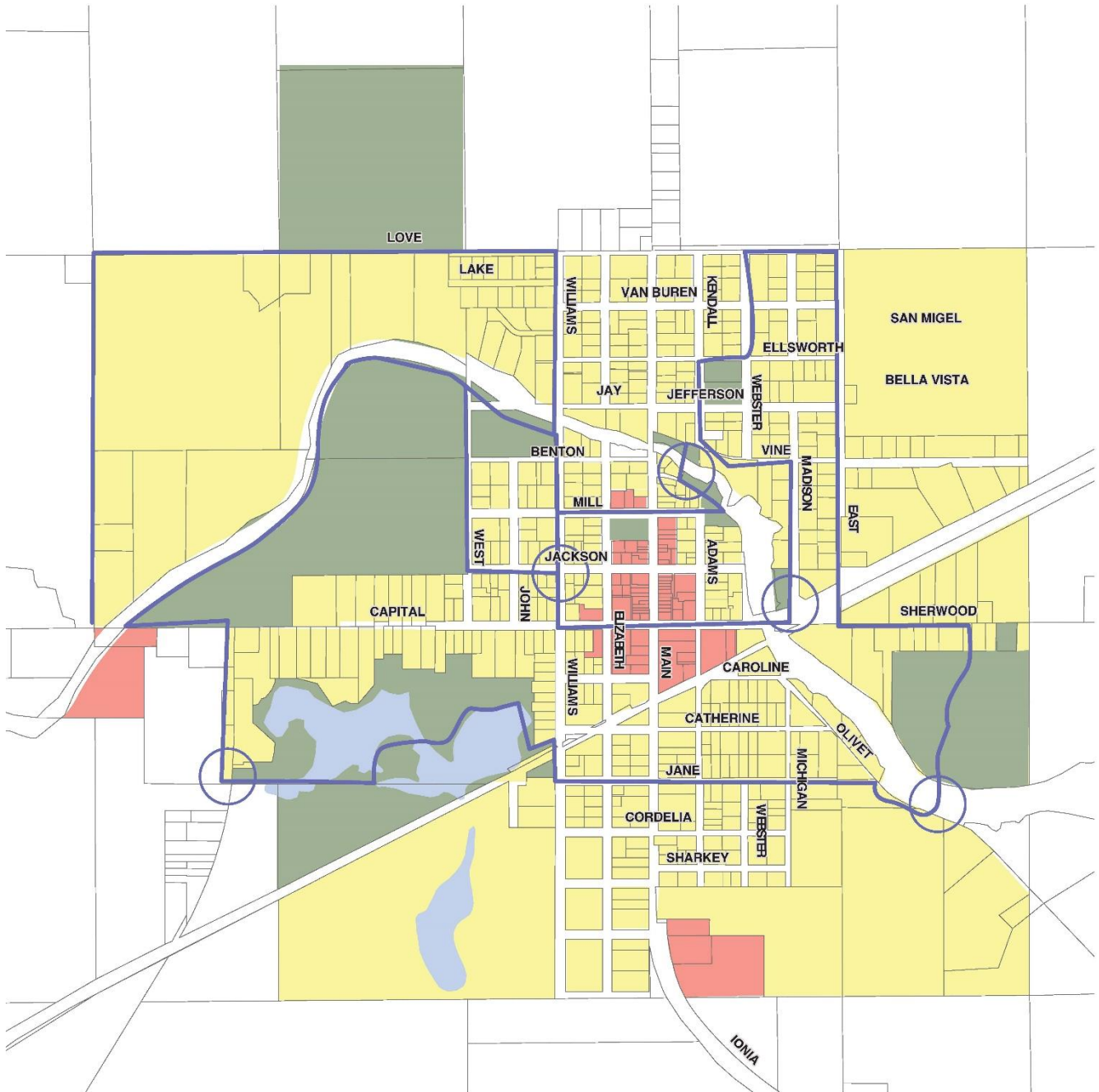
Public Areas

The Future Land Use Strategy identifies a number of Public Areas. The specific properties vary in character but are all related to governmental functions. Nearly all are owned by the respective governmental agency providing the function. These properties include city parks and other city properties, Bellevue School District facilities, and religious institutions. All of the publicly designated properties provide important community services. The Public Areas classification is established to recognize the presence of these facilities, the critical services they provide to the village and regional area, and the Plan’s support for their continued presence in the community.

The classification of properties as Public Areas is not intended to prohibit the conversion of these properties to alternative uses if sites or facilities become outdated or otherwise undermine the continued delivery of the public service in a cost-effective and sound manner. The conversion of such properties should generally coincide with the planned use of immediately surrounding properties to ensure compatibility.

Phased Zoning

This Plan recommends that the rezoning of land to a more intensive zoning district be done in a phased or incremental manner. For example, while the Plan may identify village locations that are appropriate to accommodate commercial development, the Plan does not recommend “across the board” or immediate rezonings of such land. The Plan recommends that rezonings to more intensive districts occur incrementally over time to ensure the village is capable of: 1) meeting the increased public service demands; 2) managing village-wide growth and development; 3) adequately reviewing rezoning requests as they apply to specific properties; 4) insuring rezonings are in response to a demonstrated need; and 5) minimizing unnecessary hardships upon the landowner as a result of property assessments and/or the unintended creation of nonconforming uses and structures.



VILLAGE OF BELLEVUE
Future Land Use

- Residential Area
- Commercial Area
- Public Areas
- Non-Motorized Pathway
- Pathway Access Nodes
- Pedestrian Bridge

BELLEVUE MASTER PLAN

September 3, 2024

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Chapter Four COORDINATED PUBLIC SERVICES

Introduction

Chapter Three describes the planned pattern of land use throughout the village. Chapter Four discusses the public services strategy to be coordinated with the planned pattern of land use. The character and feasibility of land use and development is influenced by the extent to which public services are available. In addition, the character of public services can directly impact the perceived quality of life among residents in the community.

An important principle of this Plan is that no development should occur unless public services are adequate to meet the needs of that development. On the other hand, public service improvements and the increased development that may result from the improvements should not jeopardize the village's interest in managing growth and development. Thus, it is important that public service improvements be coordinated with the planned future land use pattern.

Circulation / Complete Streets

As new residential and non-residential land uses are introduced in the village, demands upon the road network will increase. The additional residential development anticipated in this Plan will result in higher traffic levels. This increased traffic may lessen the level of service along some of the village's roads. Conversely, it must be recognized that road improvements may well attract new development which, in turn, will create additional demands.

The village's road system currently fulfills its function reasonably well for vehicular traffic, within the context of the system layout. This is due, in large part, to the comparatively low development density throughout most of the village and the several primary roads that cross the village and collect and move much of the traffic including Main Street and Capital Avenue.

On the other hand, opportunities for safe pedestrian and non-motorized travel are far more limited. Safe pedestrian and non-motorized travel has received greater and greater focus within the planning arena, on local, regional, state and federal levels. The provision of opportunities for safe and comprehensive pedestrian

and non-motorized travel has been found to encourage health in individuals, provide alternative means of recreation, and lessen congestion, air pollution, consumption of fossil fuel, and the cost of living. The importance of safe and comprehensive pedestrian and non-motorized travel led the Michigan Legislature to amend the Planning Enabling Act in 2010 to require a "complete streets" element in a master plan. The Act may be viewed at www.legislature.mi.gov.

"Complete streets" generally refers to the design of road corridors that take into account the circulation needs of all potential users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users. The "complete streets" program emphasizes safety along roads for all users including all age groups. While recognizing that there is no single "complete streets" design solution that applies to all roads in all communities, the program emphasizes the need for new roads to be designed, and existing roads be improved, to facilitate their safe and efficient use by all prospective users within the context of the particular community's needs and character.

In a village setting, implementation of a "complete streets" program can be implemented through a wide range of measures including the provision of a comprehensive and well-maintained sidewalk network, bike lanes along primary thoroughfares, frequent and well-marked cross-walks including changes in pavement textures, at-grade crosswalks, linkages between downtown, parks and other activity areas with surrounding neighborhoods, and other measures.

Policies:

- 1) Functional classification of roads will dictate the priority of improvements when all other conditions are generally equal, with the most heavily traveled roads receiving the greatest priority.
- 2) All proposed road construction will be evaluated carefully for local and regional impacts on traffic flow, congestion, public safety, and land use. Road construction should be coordinated with other local and regional road improvements to address traffic movement in a unified and comprehensive manner.

- 3) The village will undertake a non-motorized circulation plan to document deficiencies and establish a strategy for incrementally implementing a “complete streets” program that addresses individual neighborhoods, business areas, and parks, and more village-wide circulation opportunities.
- 4) All future roads will be designed and constructed to village standards, which will incorporate “complete streets” design features.
- 5) The village will evaluate proposed developments within the context of “complete streets” to ensure all users of the developments are afforded opportunities for safe and efficient travel, including within and between neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- 5) The costs associated with the expansion of public sewer and potable water services shall be borne by the private sector requesting such improvements except where the village determines that the proposed improvements will generate village-wide benefits worthy of village funding.
- 6) In addition to coordination with the Future Land Use Strategy, any public sewer or water service improvements should occur in a phased and incremental manner so that an overly large geographic area of the village is not intensely developed at a rate beyond the village’s ability to effectively manage growth and development.

Sewage Disposal and Potable Water

The Village of Bellevue provides sanitary sewer and potable water services to nearly all of its residents and businesses in the village. These services address health and public safety needs but these services are frequently taken for granted as residents don’t think twice when turning on their faucets or using bathroom facilities. Maintenance of these services and the network of infrastructure on which they rely are critical in ensuring the continued welfare of the village.

Policies:

- 1) All on-site sewage disposal and potable water facilities will be constructed and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the Eaton County Health Department and other applicable local, county, state and federal agencies.
- 2) Decisions to incrementally expand public sewer or water service will be based on an analysis to ensure proposed improvements are to be implemented in the most cost-effective means available, including recognition of the immediate and projected demands on the system improvements once such services become available in the previously unserved area.
- 3) Public sewer and potable water service improvements will not be undertaken where the resulting improvements will result in development densities or intensities for which the village is not capable of providing other necessary public services including fire and police protection.
- 4) Public sewer and potable water services and associated infrastructure shall be incrementally improved to address enhancements in technology and state or federal requirements.

Storm Water Management

As buildings, parking lots and other impermeable surfaces associated with new development cover portions of the village’s land surface, the quantity of storm water runoff increases. The vegetated landscape that previously absorbed and slowed much of the water associated with rainfall is replaced by impervious surfaces. Unless specific preventive measures are taken, this condition encourages flooding, soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution of area water resources. The village’s water resources, including the Battle Creek River, are vulnerable to degradation.

Though flooding, soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution may originate from site-specific circumstances, their impact can extend to adjacent properties and more regional areas including other downstream communities. Storm water management aims to minimize flood conditions and control the quality and quantity of runoff that is discharged into the watershed system (streams, rivers, wetlands, lakes, etc.) from a development site.

Policies:

- 1) Increased runoff that may occur as a result of development will be appropriately managed to avoid placing excess demand on the capacity of the storm water system into which the runoff is discharged.
- 2) Increased runoff that may occur as a result of property development will be appropriately managed to ensure that the quality of the runoff discharged does not undermine the environmental integrity of the village’s surface and ground waters.
- 3) Storm water management measures will emphasize “green infrastructure” – planned networks of natural lands, functioning landscapes and other open spaces that minimize alterations to the natural landscape and lessen the reliance on storm sewer and similar “grey” infrastructure.

- 4) Proposed land uses will not be permitted if the level of service currently provided by existing storm water management systems and/or existing drainage patterns will be decreased, unless necessary improvements to such infrastructure or drainage courses are part of the coordinated development plan.
- 5) New and existing land uses will comply with all local, county, state, and federal regulations regarding storm water management and soil erosion, including the regulations of the Eaton County Drain Commissioner, except where local officials determine less stringent standards in site-specific instances are appropriate and will not undermine the public health, safety and welfare.
- 6) All development will be reviewed within the context of its impact on nearby water courses to ensure discharge practices do not undermine the environmental integrity of these resources.

Emergency Services

The Village of Bellevue provides its residents with police and fire protection services, both stationed near the N. Main St./W. Jackson Ave. intersection in the downtown area.

Bellevue is a member of a mutual aid agreement with other agencies in Eaton County that allows Bellevue police officers to go outside of the village when requested, such as responding to calls outside of the village when the Eaton County Sheriff's Department is not available and assisting other municipalities by responding to calls when there is no officer on duty in the municipality or where the municipal officer needs assistance. Local municipalities provide this same assistance to Bellevue. Though not nearly as frequent, Bellevue officers also provide assistance to Barry County and Calhoun County due to the proximity of the village. The County Sheriff's Department and the State Police also provide services on a limited basis.

The Bellevue Community Fire Department consists of 26 paid on-call firefighters and emergency medical technicians who respond to fire, rescue, hazardous materials and medical emergencies in a 106 square mile area within Barry, Calhoun, and Eaton Counties. In addition, the Department provides automatic mutual aid for structure fires to five surrounding departments.

Ambulance service is provided by Eaton Area EMS Services stationed in Charlotte, MI. In addition, Bellevue Community Fire Department/Medical First Responders provide emergency medical treatment to persons in need and prepare persons for ambulance transport if such service is necessary. The First Responders play a critical role in providing emergency

treatment during the period when an ambulance is on route.

As community growth and land development increases, so does the demand for emergency services. There are no widely accepted standards for police protection levels. Adequate police levels are typically dictated by local public perceptions. Commonly referenced standards regarding fire protection suggest a maximum service radius from a fire station in low density residential areas of approximately three miles, and an approximately three-quarters to two mile radial service area in commercial, industrial, and high density residential areas. All areas of the village fall within this recommended service area.

Policies:

- 1) The village will require the provision of fire protection infrastructure (wells, water lines, etc.) for all new developments which are of such size and density that on-site infrastructure is considered critical. On-site fire protection infrastructure will generally be considered necessary for subdivision and similar residential neighborhood developments that concentrate building sites on lots less than approximately one-half acre.
- 2) The village will continually monitor emergency services needs and services to minimize service deficiencies and explore improving service levels where deficiencies may be identified. Considerations for service improvements will include joint services with neighboring municipalities.

Recreation

The Village of Bellevue offers a number of outdoor public recreational facilities, most particularly Jefferson Park and Washington Park. The village is also home to Butler Park and the Keehne Environmental Area, facilities operated by the Eaton County Parks and Recreation Commission. The Keehne Environmental Area is in a state of disrepair and is of only limited value for recreation purposes in its current state. More regional facilities operated by the county provide further opportunities for residents to enjoy and experience the outdoors and the natural environment.

Like many other public services, demands for recreation facilities and opportunities will likely grow as the village's population grows.

The type and accessibility of nearby recreational opportunities can impact the well being of local residents of all ages. "Accessibility" includes the ease and safety of getting to a park facility without the reliance on an automobile and the ease of moving

comfortably throughout a park site by all users including all age groups and the physically challenged.

Policies:

- 1) The village will periodically monitor the extent to which area residents are satisfied with the scope and accessibility of recreation opportunities in the local area.
- 2) The village will develop and maintain an MDNR-approved five year recreation action plan that provides a specific action plan aimed at providing needed village facilities and facility enhancement, and enable the village to compete for state and federal recreation grants to improve recreation opportunities.
- 3) Where there is a demonstrated demand for recreation improvements, the village will strive to provide recreation facilities in a manner that recognizes the particular needs of its residents.
- 4) The village will encourage the provision of open space and recreation areas within future residential development projects such as platted and condominium subdivisions, to facilitate close-to-home recreation opportunities.

Chapter Five IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

This Master Plan establishes a strategy for growth, development and preservation in Bellevue. The Plan is comprised of graphic and narrative policies intended to provide basic guidelines for making reasonable, realistic community decisions. It establishes policies and recommendations for the proper use of land and the provision of public services and facilities. The Plan is intended to be used by local officials, by those considering private sector developments, and by all residents interested in the future of the village.

The Plan is a policy document. *As a policy document, this Plan's effectiveness is directly tied to the implementation of its policies through specific tools and actions.*

The completion of the Plan is one part of the planning process. Realization or implementation of the goals, objectives and policies of the Plan can only be achieved by specific actions, over an extended period of time, and through the cooperative efforts of both the public and private sectors.

Implementation of the Plan may be realized by actively:

- 1) Ensuring knowledge, understanding, and support of the Plan by village residents and the business community, and the continued communication with and involvement of the citizenry.
- 2) Regulating the use and manner of development through up-to-date reasonable zoning controls, building and housing codes, and other regulatory and non-regulatory tools.
- 3) Providing a program of capital improvements and adequate, economical public services to facilitate and accommodate desirable land development, redevelopment, and public services and facilities.

The purpose of this Chapter is to identify implementation tools and where applicable, specific actions to be pursued.

Public Support, Communication and Community Involvement

Citizen participation and understanding of the general planning process and the specific goals, objectives and policies of the Plan are critical to the success of the village's planning program. Understanding and support of the Plan by local citizens and entrepreneurs can greatly enhance its implementation. This enhancement may be found in citizen support for bond proposals, special assessments, zoning decisions, and development proposals.

In order to organize public support most effectively, the village must emphasize the necessity of, and reasons for long-range planning and the development of the Master Plan. The Village must encourage citizen participation in on-going community planning efforts.

Specific actions to be undertaken to encourage public understanding and support of the village's planning program, and the continued communication with and involvement of the citizenry, are as follows.

- 1) Ensure that copies of the Master Plan are readily available at the Village Hall.
- 2) Post the Future Land Use Map of the Master Plan in the Village Hall where it is clearly visible.
- 3) Post the Master Plan on a village web site.
- 4) Post a regularly updated listing of current events pertaining to planning and zoning matters at the village hall and on a village web site.
- 5) Through public notices, a newsletter, village hall postings, and other means, apprise residents of the village's planning efforts and of meetings that will address development and public service improvement proposals as the projects move through each stage of review and deliberation.
- 6) Periodically hold special meetings for the specific purpose of discussing the village's planning efforts and providing residents with the opportunity to share concerns and suggestions.

Objectives Action Plan

The objectives presented in Chapter Two serve as strategies to reach the goals of this Master Plan, also presented in Chapter Two, and to put in place the policies of Chapter Three (Future Land Use Strategy) and Chapter Four (Coordinated Public Services). Some of the objectives require comparatively short periods of focus for successful implementation (one or several years) while others may require a longer implementation period and continued maintenance as a regular annual effort each and every year.

The Chapter Two objectives are of limited value unless they are routinely and regularly reviewed and an annual action plan is developed to identify those objectives to pursue in the coming year and each subsequent year, and the recommended village entity that should take the lead in furthering the selected objectives. Undertaking the implementation of a comparatively high number of objectives during a single year is not likely realistic and may well lead to very little being accomplished. Identifying a realistic set of annual objectives to direct implementation efforts toward may ultimately lead to a far more successful long-term implementation program.

The Planning Commission and Village Council should meet annually:

- to prioritize objectives to be pursued in the coming several years and those that should take priority in the immediate year ahead
- to identify the entity to take charge in the respective objective's implementation
- to identify the steps to be taken for the objective's implementation
- to identify from where funding is to be provided (if funding is necessary).

Prioritization of the objectives should be based on such factors as:

- public safety
- economic stability and growth
- comparative need
- comparative impact community wide
- the number of residents and/or businesses that benefit

Land Development Codes and Programs

Zoning Ordinance

A zoning ordinance is the primary tool for implementing a Master Plan. A zoning ordinance regulates the use of land. The ordinance generally divides a community into districts and identifies the land uses permitted in each District. Each district prescribes minimum standards that must be met such as minimum lot area, lot width, and building setbacks.

The Village of Bellevue has been administering a zoning ordinance since 1971 and prepared a completely updated zoning ordinance in 2007. With the adoption of this Master Plan, the village's zoning ordinance should be carefully reviewed to identify updates that may be beneficial to implement the policies of the Plan and facilitate efficient day-to-day zoning administration.

Since 2006, zoning regulations for Michigan communities are adopted under the authority of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, P.A. 110 of 2006, as amended. The purpose of zoning, according to the Act, is to (in part):

“regulate the use of land and structures; to meet the needs of the state’s citizens for food, fiber, energy, and other natural resources, places of residence, recreation, industry, trade, service, and other uses of land; to insure that use of the land shall be situated in appropriate locations and relationships; to limit the overcrowding of land and congestion of population, transportation systems, and other public facilities.”

The Zoning Enabling Act may be viewed at www.legislature.mi.gov.

The ultimate effectiveness of a zoning ordinance in implementing a master plan is dependent, in part, on the overall quality of ordinance administration and enforcement. If administrative procedures are lax, or if enforcement is handled in an inconsistent, sporadic manner, the result will be unsatisfactory. The Planning Commission, Village Council, and staff are responsible for carrying out zoning/development related functions including the review of development plans and site inspections. These functions can require special expertise and a substantial investment of time. Adequate staff and/or consulting assistance are necessary to ensure that these essential day-to-day functions are met and appropriate development is facilitated.

Zone Plan: The following pages present a Zone Plan for Bellevue. The Zone Plan establishes a foundation for the village’s zoning regulations. The Zone Plan is comprised of three elements.

- 1) Important Components of the Bellevue Zoning Ordinance
- 2) Overview of Recommended Zoning Districts and Relation to Future Land Use Strategy/Map
- 3) Zoning District Site Development Standards

The above numbered elements of the Zone Plan correspond to the numbered elements on the following pages.

1. Zone Plan – Part One:

Important Components of the Bellevue Zoning Ordinance.

The following identifies important general elements that the village’s Zoning Ordinance should include to ensure its ease of use and effectiveness in advancing the goals, objectives and policies of the Master Plan. *The ordinance should be reviewed within the context of these elements:*

- 1) **Procedural Matters/Plan Review:** The Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed to ensure it includes clear and comprehensive step-by-step provisions addressing procedural matters such as the application for and issuance of zoning permits, application procedures and approval standards for special land uses, application procedures and approval standards for ordinance amendments including the zoning map, application procedures and approval standards for matters before the Zoning Board of Appeals such as variance requests and appeals of administrative decisions, and violation and enforcement procedures.

The zoning permit application procedures should include clear requirements for the submittal of a plot plan or site plan illustrating proposed alterations and improvements to property. Such a plan is critical in assisting local officials determine if the development complies with all standards of the Zoning Ordinance and if it is designed to encourage compatibility with surrounding land uses.

The provisions should ensure such plans include comprehensive information pertinent to the development including (but not limited to) the delineation of existing natural features, the extent of alterations to such features including limits of clearing and grading, and the salient features of the development including buildings, parking, screening, lighting, grading and storm water management. The provisions should also provide for a comprehensive set of approval standards addressing such matters as access management

and vehicular/pedestrian circulation, emergency vehicle access, environmental protection, conformance with the purposes of the respective district, and compatibility with surrounding conditions.

- 2) **District Provisions/Special Land Uses:** The ordinance should include a clear and comprehensive presentation of zoning districts including the purpose, authorized uses, and site development standards for each district. To this end, the districts should differentiate between uses authorized “by right” versus as “special land uses.”

Uses permitted by right are the primary uses and structures specified for which a particular district has been established. An example may be a dwelling in a residential district. Special land uses are uses that are generally accepted as reasonably compatible with the primary uses and structures within a district. However, because of its particular character, a special land use may present potential injurious effects upon the primary uses within the district or is otherwise unique in character, and it may not be appropriate in certain situations or on certain parcels. These unique or special circumstances may be a result of traffic, noise, public services demands, or visual or operational characteristics.

Special land uses require special consideration in relation to the welfare of adjacent properties and to the village as a whole. An example may be a kennel in a residential district or a mining operation in an agricultural district.

- 3) **Site Development Standards:** In addition to the standards presented in the Zoning Ordinance for each district, such as minimum lot area and width, the Ordinance should be reviewed to ensure it presents clear and comprehensive standards addressing other fundamental site development issues such as:

- proper access to ensure public safety and welfare including access management along thoroughfares, accessibility to property for general and emergency vehicles, and proper design and maintenance of private roads.
- off-street parking and loading to ensure adequate facilities are provided on a development site and are of adequate design to encourage safe and efficient circulation.
- landscaping and screening provisions intended to ensure new development (commercial, industrial, institutional, etc.) is compatible with surrounding conditions and supportive of the desired character of the village.
- sign regulations that ensure local signage does not contribute to traffic safety hazards, visual

clutter, confusion for vehicle drivers, visual blight, and decreased property values.

- environmental safeguard provisions to ensure new development minimizes disturbances to the village’s natural resources including standards addressing sewage disposal, grading, impervious surfaces, natural features setbacks and storm water management.

4) **Nonconformities:** The Zoning Ordinance should address lots, uses and structures that are nonconforming due to changes to the zoning ordinance, and the extent to which such lots, uses and structures can be replaced, expanded, enlarged, or otherwise altered.

5) **Site Condominium Regulations:** The Zoning Ordinance should address site condominiums. Site condominiums come in many forms, but they typically involve residential developments that look identical or nearly identical to platted subdivisions. The principal differences between the two is that while privately owned lots comprise the entirety (or near entirety) of a platted subdivision, site condominiums are comprised of privately owned (or rented) building envelopes where there are no “lot lines” and greater portions of the development are commonly owned. Site condominiums are not comprised of “lots” in the traditional sense but the condominium units function in a similar manner. Zoning regulations must clearly address this form of development and correlate site condominium development with “lot” regulations to ensure such development is subject to the same review procedures and standards as otherwise applicable to other residential development of similar physical character (platted subdivisions).

6) **Clustering / Open Space Developments:** As a tool to facilitate the conservation of important natural resources and ecosystems, this Plan supports what are commonly referred to as “cluster developments” and “open space developments” in association with platted subdivisions, condominium subdivisions, and similar neighborhood developments. This development option is a beneficial alternative to residential development frequently associated with large lot “rural sprawl,” which consumes open space and creates lots that are too small for farming or meaningful habitat protection.

This form of development provides for the clustering of smaller lots than what is normally required, on only a portion of the development parcel, so that the balance of the parcel can be retained as open space and for the preservation of important environmental resources. As much as 50% or more of a site, and preferably the most environmentally significant, may be preserved in its existing natural state, with

individual house lots occupying the remaining acreage. These “open space” areas can be reserved by the use of conservation easements, deed restrictions, or similar tools. A critical component of clustering should be the inclusion of new interior roads to serve the new lots, rather than stripping new dwellings along existing road frontages. Provisions must recognize the specific requirements of Sec. 506 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. The Act may be viewed at www.legislature.mi.gov.

One of the most effective means to encourage the open space development option is through more flexible development standards than otherwise available, such as standards pertaining to permissible densities, lot sizes, and setbacks.

7) **Planned Unit Developments (PUDs):** “Planned unit development” provisions in a Zoning Ordinance typically permit a more flexible form of development than normally permitted by the district in which the site is located or the other districts established in the Ordinance. PUDs are expressly authorized by the Zoning Enabling Act with the intent to facilitate development that, in part, encourages innovation in land use and variety in design, layout, and type of structures constructed; achieves economy and efficiency in the use of land, natural resources, energy, and the provision of public services and utilities; encourages useful open space; and provides better housing, employment, and shopping opportunities. PUDs are sometimes used as a means to facilitate residential cluster development discussed in (6) above, but are more frequently used to facilitate development that provides a mix of housing units and nonresidential uses in one unified site design. The specific PUD provisions of an ordinance dictate the character and scope of development that may occur under such a development option.

8) **Special Issues:** A very beneficial part of a zoning ordinance, commonly referred to as “Special Provisions”, can be used to address a host of land use issues that have relevance to the particular community. The particular scope of issues addressed under “Special Provisions” should be tailored to the particular community. However, common issues addressed under “Special Provisions” include, but are not limited to, some of the following:

- conditional approvals
- moving buildings
- essential services
- one dwelling per lot
- single family dwelling standards
- temporary dwellings
- accessory uses, buildings, and structures

- outdoor furnaces
- home occupations
- keeping of livestock (dwelling related)
- swimming pools
- outdoor display, sales, and storage
- outdoor recreational vehicle storage
- temporary non-residential buildings/uses

9) **Clarity:** The clarity of a zoning ordinance’s wording and organization will greatly impact the ability of officials to administer the ordinance in a consistent manner, validly enforce the ordinance’s provisions, and facilitate a user-friendly document for officials, applicants and the general public. This clarity must be reflected in the wording of individual provisions as well as linkages between chapters including the avoidance of conflicting provisions.

10) **Compliance with Current Law:** The Zoning Ordinance’s provisions must comply with current law to ensure its validity and the ability of officials to enforce the Ordinance. The village’s zoning regulations should be continually updated to address any changes to the Zoning Enabling Act, which has been amended multiple times since its adoption in 2006. The most current version of the Act may be viewed at www.legislature.mi.gov.

Zone Plan – Part Two:

Overview of Recommended Zoning Districts and Relation to Future Land Use Strategy/Map.

Table 5-1 presents guidelines for the presentation of zoning districts in the village’s Zoning Ordinance to implement the Future Land Use Strategy presented in Chapter Three of the Master Plan (including the Future Land Use Map).

Zone Plan – Part Three:

Zoning Districts Site Development Standards.

Table 5-2 presents guidelines for basic site development standards for zoning districts to implement the Future Land Use Strategy presented in Chapter Three of the Master Plan (including the Future Land Use Map).

Table 5-1

Overview of Recommended Zoning Districts and Relation to Future Land Use Map

The following table presents guidelines for the presentation of zoning districts in the village’s Zoning Ordinance to implement the policies of Chapter Three including the Future Land Use map. The table identifies how each zoning district is intended to implement each of the planning areas discussed in Chapter Three, including the primary and secondary types of uses envisioned for each district.

Secondary uses identified in the table, or others specified in the Zoning Ordinance, should typically be subject to special review to determine if the proposed use is appropriate on the subject site based on, in part, compatibility with surrounding land uses, environmental conditions and public services.

This table does not preclude the village from pursuing other special purpose districts to further implement the Master Plan including “planned unit development” districts to address special issues.

Zoning District (example names)	Primary Relationship to Future Land Use Map	Primary Intended District Uses	Examples of Secondary District Uses
AG Agricultural	Residential Area	Agriculture and single-family residential	Kennels, golf courses, religious institutions, camping, day care facilities and bed and breakfasts.
R-A Single Family Residential	Residential Area	Single -family residences.	Two-family residences, religious institutions, golf courses, funeral homes and day care facilities.
R-B Single/Two-Family Residential	Residential Area	Single -family residences.	Two-family residences, religious institutions, golf courses, funeral homes and day care facilities.
R-C Single/Two-Family Residential	Residential Area	Single -family residences.	Two-family residences, religious institutions, golf courses, funeral homes, day care facilities and mobile home parks.
R-D Multiple Family	Residential Area	Single and two-family dwellings, apartments, townhouses, and similar living arrangements.	Hospitals, bed and breakfasts, religious institutions, golf courses, and funeral homes.
B-1 Central Business	Commercial Area (Downtown Bellevue Center)	Retail, office and personal service uses, restaurants, medical and dental services, and banks.	Bed and breakfasts, religious institutions, schools, and lodging.
B-2 General Business	Commercial Area (South Main Commercial Area)	Retail, office and personal service uses, restaurants, medical and dental services, auto sales, and printing and publishing.	Bed and breakfasts, religious institutions, schools, motels and hotels, service stations, mini-storage, and outdoor recreation.
B-3 Business Office Service	Commercial Area	Offices, medical and dental services, banks, barber shops, and similar uses.	Bed and breakfasts, religious institutions, schools, and group day care/foster care.
I-1 Light Industrial	Commercial Area	Industrial uses of a comparatively “light” character such as the assembly of small parts and equipment sales and servicing.	Auto collision shops, kennels, gas stations, cell towers, and other uses that are more marginal than the primary uses.
I-2 Heavy Industrial	Commercial Area	Industrial uses of a comparatively “light” character such as the assembly of small parts and equipment sales and servicing, and warehousing.	Auto collision/service stations, kennels, junk yards, and other “heavier” industrial activities that are more marginal than the primary intended uses.

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**Table 5-2
Zoning District Site Development Standards**

The following table presents general guidelines for basic site development standards of the zoning districts to implement the Future Land Use Strategy (Chapter Three). All guidelines are approximate and serve as a framework for more detailed standards. The guidelines establish a realistic concept for each district, with recognition that specific conditions may suggest variations from the guidelines such as height provisions for farm buildings, setback provisions for non-residential uses that abut residential uses, and lot width provisions for lots fronting on principal thoroughfares. It is also recognized that conditions may surface that suggest the need for divergences from the guidelines to resolve conflicts or otherwise ensure the public health, safety and welfare.

In addition, the Zone Plan supports a Planned Unit Development (PUD) District according to the Zoning Enabling Act to provide opportunities for flexibility while supporting the goals of the Zoning Ordinance and Master Plan.

Zoning District (example name)	Minimum Lot Area	Minimum Lot Width and Frontage	Maximum Building Heights	Maximum Lot Coverage	Minimum Yard Setback (each)		
					Front	Side	Rear
AG Agricultural	1 acre	110 ft.	<u>2 stories</u> 35 ft.	35%	65 ft.	20 ft.	35 ft.
R-A Single Family Residential	15,000 sq. ft. to 1 acre	75 ft. to 110 ft.	<u>2 stories</u> 35 ft.	20% to 30%	35 ft. to 50 ft.	10 ft. to 20 ft.	35 ft.
R-B Single/Two Family Residential	7,200 sq. ft.	60 ft.	<u>2 stories</u> 35 ft.	35%	30 ft.	8 ft.	35 ft.
R-C Single/Two Family Residential	7,200 sq. ft.	60 ft.	<u>2 stories</u> 35 ft.	35%	30 ft.	8 ft.	35 ft.
R-D Multiple Family Residential	20,000 sq. ft.	80 ft.	<u>2 stories</u> 35 ft.	35%	30 ft.	8 ft.	35 ft.
B-1 Central Business	---	---	<u>2 stories</u> 30 ft.	---	---	10 ft.	10 ft.
B-2 General Business	---	---	2 stories	---	10 ft.	10 ft.	20 ft.
B-3 Business Office Service	---	---	<u>2 stories</u> 30 ft.	---	20 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.
I-1 Light Industrial	---	---	35 ft.	---	30 ft.	25 ft.	30 ft.
I-2 Heavy Industrial	---	---	35 ft.	---	40 ft.	25 ft.	30 ft.

General Notes to Table 5-2

1. The above front yard setback guidelines assume measurements from the road right-of-way line.

Subdivision and Land Division Ordinances

When a developer proposes to divide land, the developer is, in effect, planning a portion of the village. To ensure that such a development is in harmony with the Master Plan, the division or redivision of residential and nonresidential land must be adequately reviewed. A subdivision ordinance establishes requirements and design standards for the development of plats including streets, blocks, lots, curbs, sidewalks, open spaces, easements, public utilities, and other associated subdivision improvements. The Land Division Act, P.A. 571 of 1996, as amended, provides the authority to adopt local ordinances to administer the provisions of the Act including the platting of subdivisions. The Act may be viewed at www.legislature.mi.gov.

With the implementation of a subdivision ordinance, there is added insurance that development will occur in an orderly manner and the public health, safety and welfare will be maintained. For example, subdivision regulations can help ensure developments are provided with adequate utilities and streets, and appropriately sized and shaped lots. Adopting a local ordinance addressing the creation of subdivisions can encourage a more orderly and comprehensive manner for the review and approval of subdivision plats.

Of equal importance is a “land division ordinance.” While a subdivision ordinance addresses unified residential developments of multiple units (plats), some of the residential development in the village is a result of incremental land divisions. A land division ordinance assures that incremental divisions not part of a subdivision meet certain minimum standards such as access, lot area and lot width. The Act also provides municipalities with the authority to adopt a land division ordinance, which can ensure consistency in review and approval practices.

Other Special Purpose Ordinances

While zoning and subdivision regulations are the most frequently used tools for the regulation of land use and development, the control of land use activities can extend beyond their respective scopes. Special purpose ordinances can complement zoning and subdivision regulations and further the implementation of the Master Plan. Such ordinances may address matters pertaining to noise, public nuisances, outdoor assemblies, junk, weeds, and other conditions. Village officials should evaluate its current special purpose ordinances and determine what new ordinances, and/or amendments made to current ordinances, may be beneficial to further implement the Master Plan.

Capital Improvements Programming

The use of capital improvements programming can be an effective tool for implementing the Master Plan and ensuring the orderly programming of public improvements. In its basic form, a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a complete list of all proposed public improvements planned for a six year period (the time span may vary), including costs, sources of funding, location, and priority. It is a schedule for implementing public capital improvements that acknowledges current and anticipated demands, and recognizes present and potential financial resources available to the community. The CIP is not intended to encourage the spending of additional public monies, but is simply a means by which an impartial evaluation of needs may be made.

The importance of a CIP is illustrated by Sec. 65 of the Planning Enabling Act, which reads in part:

“To further the desirable future development of the local unit of government under the master plan, a planning commission, after adoption of a master plan, shall annually prepare a capital improvements program of public structures and improvements, unless the planning commission is exempted from this requirement by charter or otherwise. If the planning commission is exempted, the legislative body either shall prepare and adopt a capital improvements program, separate from or as a part of the annual budget, or shall delegate the preparation of the capital improvements program...subject to final approval by the legislative body. The capital improvements program shall show those public structures and improvements, in the general order of their priority, that in the commission's judgment will be needed or desirable and can be undertaken within the ensuing 6-year period... Consequently, each agency or department of the local unit of government with authority for public structures or improvements shall upon request furnish the planning commission with lists, plans, and estimates of time and cost of those public structures and improvements.”

The CIP outlines the projects that will replace or improve existing facilities, or that will be necessary to serve current and projected development within a community. Advanced planning for public works through the use of a CIP ensures more effective and economical capital expenditures, as well as the

provision of public works in a timely manner. Few communities are fortunate enough to have available at any given time sufficient revenues to satisfy all demands for new or improved public facilities and services. Consequently, most are faced with the necessity of determining the relative priority of specific projects and establishing a program schedule for their initiation and completion.

Maintaining a Current Master Plan

Successful planning requires the maintenance of a current Master Plan. The Master Plan should be updated periodically. The Plan must be responsive to community changes if it is to be an effective community tool and relied upon for guidance. Periodic review of the Plan should be undertaken by the Planning Commission, Village Council, and other officials to determine whether the Plan continues to

be sensitive to the needs of the community and continues to chart a realistic and desirable future.

Community changes that may suggest updates to the Plan include, but need not be limited to, changing conditions involving available infrastructure and public services, growth trends, unanticipated and large-scale development, and changing community aspirations. The importance of maintaining a current Plan is reflected in the Planning Enabling Act's requirement that a Planning Commission review its Master Plan at intervals not greater than five years and to document the Commission's findings.

Amendments to the Plan, or the preparation of a wholly new Plan, should follow the minimum procedures delineated in the Planning Enabling Act in addition to measures the village believes will enhance the planning process.

Important questions to be asked during a review of this Plan should include, at a minimum:

- Does the Plan present valid and current inventory data (Appendices and elsewhere)?
- Does the discussion of planning issues and specific goals/objectives continue to be appropriate today?
- Do the future land use and public services policies of the Plan continue to reflect preferred strategies to address development, preservation and public services?
- Have there been any new and/or significant development projects that have raised concerns about the village's future, or the future of a particular area of the village, that may suggest changes to the Master Plan's goals, objectives and/or policies regarding development, preservation and public services?
- Have there been any other major changes in the village that were not anticipated under the current Master Plan?
- Have any specific development decisions been made (such as rezonings and site plan approvals) that may have appeared contrary to the Master Plan and, if so, do such decisions suggest the need to revise the Plan to be more responsive to local conditions?
- Have any text amendments been made to the Zoning Ordinance that suggest Master Plan revisions in association with the Plan's goals, objectives and/or policies?
- Is the character of local growth and development (residentially, commercially and other) since the Plan was adopted (or last updated) in keeping with Plan's vision (goals, objectives, and policies)?
- Are there significant discrepancies between the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map, recognizing that the Zoning Map is current law and the Future Land Use Map portrays the future vision?
- Are there conditions and/or trends in surrounding Bellevue Township, particularly along the village's borders, which may suggest modifications to the village's policies addressing future land use and public services?
- Does the Master Plan comply with current law?

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Appendix A DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

Introduction

The demographic features of the Village of Bellevue paint a picture of the residents of the community including as they are today and as they have evolved over the years. Included in this chapter is a review of the current population within the context of population figures and projections, age distribution, race, households and families, and education attainment. Chapter Two of this Plan summarizes important planning issues facing Bellevue and draws conclusions based, in part, on the information presented in this Chapter.

Population Growth Trends

The 2020 U.S. Census (Census) recorded a Bellevue population of 1,308 persons, an increase of 2.8% from its 2010 population of 1,282. The village's 2020 population of 1,308 persons was 41 persons more than its population in 1960 (1,277). The village's highest population since 1960 was recorded in 1990, reaching 1,401 persons. The estimated village population in 2022 was 1,318. See Table A-1.

TABLE A-1
Population Trends & Growth Rates

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

(previous ten-year growth rate indicated by "%")

YEAR	VILLAGE of BELLEVUE
1960	1,277
1970	1,297 1.6%
1980	1,289 -0.6%
1990	1,401 8.7%
2000	1,365 -2.6%
2010	1,282 -6.1%
2020	1,308 2.8%

The varying growth rates of Bellevue and the county since 1960 have resulted in a 53.8% decrease in the proportion of Bellevue residents comprising the total county population. The village's population comprised 2.6% of the county population in 1960 and 1.2% of the county's population in 2020.

The village's continuing population decline is a demographic change common throughout small Michigan towns. As unemployment rates have continued to rise, more families and individuals experience difficulty finding employment in Bellevue and are forced to migrate toward developed urban centers to find work. Additionally, past local concerns with the Bellevue school system also resulted in families with school-aged children to relocate to more attractive school districts. The school system has since witnessed major improvements (see Chapter Two).

Social and Economic Characteristics

Race

The 2020 Census showed the Village of Bellevue to have a very homogeneous racial composition, with 94.5% of the village population classified as “white.” The village’s homogeneity is typical of rural Michigan communities.

TABLE A-2
Race Profile, 2020 (By Percent)
Source: 2020 U.S. Census

RACE	VILLAGE of BELLEVUE
White Only	92.5
Black/African American Only	1.2
American Indian, Alaska Native Only	0.7
Asian Only	0.5
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander Only	0.0
Some Other Single Race Only	0.8
Two or More Races	4.3

Age

The village’s population in 2020 can be divided into near equal thirds according to the following approximate age groups:

- Less than 23 years of age
- 23 – 49 years of age
- 50 years of age and greater

According to the 2020 U. S. Census, Bellevue is a comparatively young community with a median age of 36.8 years. This is an increase of 4.0% over its 2010 median age of 35.4 years. Its 2020 median age of 36.8 years was 7.5% less than that of the state as a whole (39.8) and 10.5% less than Eaton County (41.1). The 49.2% of the village’s population that was under 35 years of age in 2020 was noticeably higher than the 42.4% of the county population and 44.2% of the state population that fell within this same age range. The village’s largest single ten-year age group, persons from 10 – 19 years of age, comprised 16.3% of its population. Though comparatively young, the village is maturing as is the nation as a whole. The village’s median age of 36.8 years in 2020 reflects a 4.8% increase over its 2000 median age of 35.1 years.

Households and Families

The 2020 Census recorded 477 households in the Village of Bellevue, 70.8% of which were family households. The village has an average household size of 2.6 persons and an average family size of 3.0 persons. 44.2% of the village households in 2020 included a married couple. Of the 26.6% of families not comprised of a husband-wife family, approximately half of the families were headed by a female.

TABLE A-3
Household Type and Size
(by percent, except where otherwise noted)
Source: 2020 U.S. Census

	VILLAGE of BELLEVUE
HOUSEHOLD TYPE	
Married-couple family	44.2
Other family:	26.6
(Male householder)	9.0
(Female householder)	17.6
Non-family household	29.1
PERSONS Per HOUSEHOLD	2.6 persons
PERSONS Per FAMILY	3.0 persons

Education Attainment

97.8% of the residents of the Village of Bellevue, of 25 years of age or older, had attained an education level of high school graduation (or equivalent) or higher, and 13.6% had attained a bachelor's or graduate degree (including professional degree).

TABLE A-4
Highest Level of Education Attainment
(for persons 25 years of age, by percent)
Source: 2020 U.S. Census

HIGHEST EDUCATION ATTAINMENT	VILLAGE of BELLEVUE
Less Than 9th Grade	0.4
9th to 12th, no diploma	1.9
High School Diploma	30.6
Some college, no degree	32.7
Associates Degree	18.1
Bachelor's Degree	13.6
Graduate/Professional Degree	2.8
High school graduate or higher	97.8
Bachelor's degree or higher	13.6

Economy

The Bellevue area was established through the mining of limestone and with that came agriculture to support local families. Mining and farming operations provided jobs and a sustainable source of revenue for Bellevue area residents for generations. Although there is still some mining and farming done outside of the village, the majority of the residents are seeking employment in surrounding cities. Bellevue is primarily a bedroom community with few employment opportunities to support residents.

- The village's 2020 (US Census) median household income was \$55,983.
- The village's 2020 (US Census) median family household income was \$59,773.

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Appendix B EXISTING LAND USE and ZONING

Introduction

The distribution of land uses throughout the Village of Bellevue is the result of a number of factors. Some of these factors include the proximity to larger cities, transportation routes including rail lines, availability of farmland, and zoning. As Bellevue has become more of a bedroom community, supporting the larger surrounding metropolitan areas, a number of changes have occurred in land use patterns allowing for new uses to be developed and planned. This chapter summarizes key aspects of the village's current land use pattern including current zoning patterns.

Land Use

The Village of Bellevue reflects a strong mixed use character, common in the evolution of village settlements. Commercial development generally follows the Capital Avenue and Main Street corridors, with the majority of storefronts being within several blocks of the Capital Avenue/Main Street intersection. This commercial center also includes numerous public and semi-public uses such as the village hall, religious institutions and parks. The majority of the balance of the village, and comprising the largest portion of the village, is comprised of residences. Limited farming and extraction operations comprise most of the balance of the village.

Table B-1 summarizes the relative proportions of the village occupied by principal land uses. The land use classifications pertain to the manner in which the respective acreage is actually being used based on a visual assessment of the land.

TABLE B-1
Village of Bellevue
Existing Land Use

Source: Village of Bellevue, 2016

Land Use Classification	Acres	%
Residential	348.0	50.4%
Public/Semi-Public (schools, religious facilities, cemeteries, etc.)	129.5	18.8%
Right-of-ways	82.0	11.9%
Resource Extraction (includes some residentially-zoned land)	59.0	8.6%
Leisure / Recreation (county and village parks)	36.0	5.2%
Commercial	24.0	3.5%
Agricultural	10.0	1.4%
Industrial	1.5	0.2%
TOTAL	690	100.0%

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A summary of the each of the land use classifications in Table B-1 is as follows:

Residential: The residential land use classification comprises any single, two, and multiple family dwellings and associated outdoor areas. Residential areas in the village are focused primarily in the neighborhoods surrounding the downtown. The 2020 U.S. Census recorded 586 dwellings in the village, 97.1% of which were occupied. 84.3% of the dwellings were comprised of single-family dwellings including mobile homes although mobile homes accounted for less than 1% of all dwelling units. 69.6% of the housing units were owner-occupied and the balance were renter-occupied. The village's housing stock is comparatively old, with 53.1% of the dwellings constructed prior to 1940 and no new dwellings erected since 2000 except for the four new dwellings that were added to the housing stock in 2022. Nearly three-quarters of the dwellings include two or three bedrooms and 90.3% of the occupied dwellings relied on utility gas as a heating fuel, the balance principally relying on electricity. The median value of owner-occupied units was \$82,500.

Commercial: The commercial land use classification comprises such businesses as retail, service, and entertainment. Bellevue's commercial development is focused primarily in the downtown, centered at the Capital Avenue and Main Street intersection. A number of vacant commercial buildings are present in this land use classification, particularly in the village's downtown area. Examples of the businesses within the village's downtown area include hair cutting and care services, insurance and real estate offices, financial institutions, auto body repair, restaurants, medical services, service stations, grocery store, tavern, hardware and convenience sales, and car wash. The most recent and significant expansion of commercial activity in the village is the Dollar General store that was established in 2010. The store covers approximately 8,000 sq. ft. and is located along M-78 at the south end of the village.

Social/Institutional: The social and institutional classification includes public facilities such as schools, churches, cemeteries and municipal services such as fire and police stations.

Leisure/Recreation: The leisure and recreation classification includes any public or quasi-public areas that serve as parks or used for specific sports or recreational activities. Three neighborhood parks are located in the residential neighborhoods in the village. Keehne Environmental Area is a 17-acre county owned park that lies within the village limits.

Resource Extraction: The resource extraction classification includes the limestone mining in the southwest portion of the village, west of Elizabeth Street and south of the railroad.

Agriculture: The agriculture classification includes the limited farming activities, principally to the west of M-78 along the village's southern edge.

Map B-1 illustrates the existing land use pattern of the village according to the above land use classifications. To fully understand the distribution of existing land uses in the village, Table B-1 should be examined in conjunction with Map B-1.

Zoning

Land use differs from zoning. Land use is the actual activity that is presently taking place on a given parcel of land including how the land has been developed. Zoning pertains to how a given parcel is classified, and how it may be lawfully used, according to the village’s Zoning Ordinance. Table B-2 illustrates the current zoning classification of properties in the village, by acreage. There is commonly a clear overlap between existing land use and existing zoning but this overlap is not always present. For example, a parcel may be zoned “residential” under the village’s Zoning Ordinance even though a church may be lawfully occupying the parcel and authorized in the respective residential district of the Ordinance.

Under the current zoning, (Map B-2), the village is broken into eight districts: single family residential, two family residential, commercial, cemetery, recreational, agriculture, light industrial and heavy industrial. Reviewing Maps B-1 and B-2 together reveals the spatial patterns of the zoning districts in relation to how land is actually being used. To take advantage of the available transportation, the industrial districts are located along the railroad and the southwest quarter of the village. The commercial districts are primarily focused around the downtown along Capital Avenue and Main Street. Both single and two family residential districts make up the majority of the remaining village area. The acreage of each zoning district is shown in Table B-2.

A comparison of Map B-1 (Existing Land Use) and Map B-2 (Existing Zoning) illustrates that the zoning classification of a particular parcel does not necessarily represent the actual use of the parcel as developed (or as vacant). While zoning is used to manage how land uses develop in the community, analysis of existing land use patterns is a more accurate representation of the actual distribution of various activities.

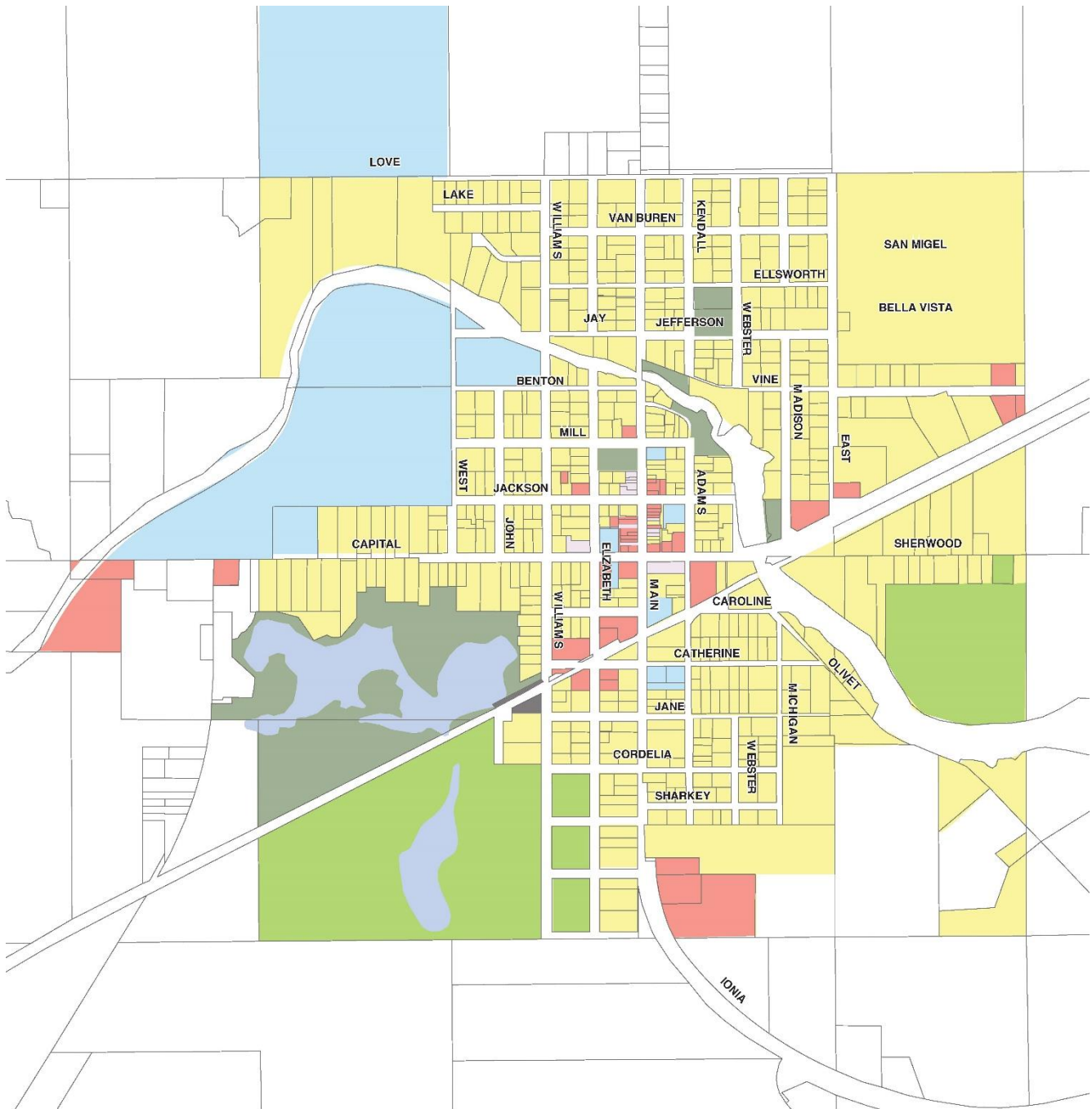
TABLE B-2
Village of Bellevue
Zoning by Acres

Source: Village of Bellevue, 2016

Zoning District	Acreage	%of Total
AG: Agricultural	0	0%
RA: Single Family	0	0%
RB: Single and Two Family	458	66.4%
RC: Single and Two Family	39	5.7%
RD: Multiple Family	16	2.3%
BOS: Business Office Service	0	0.0%
CBD: Central Business District	14	2.0%
B-2: General Business	26	3.8%
I-1: Light Industrial	3	0.4%
I-2: Heavy Industrial	52	7.5%
PUD: Planned Unit Development	0	0.0%
Right-of-Way	82	11.9%
TOTAL	690	100%

Source: Village of Bellevue, 2016

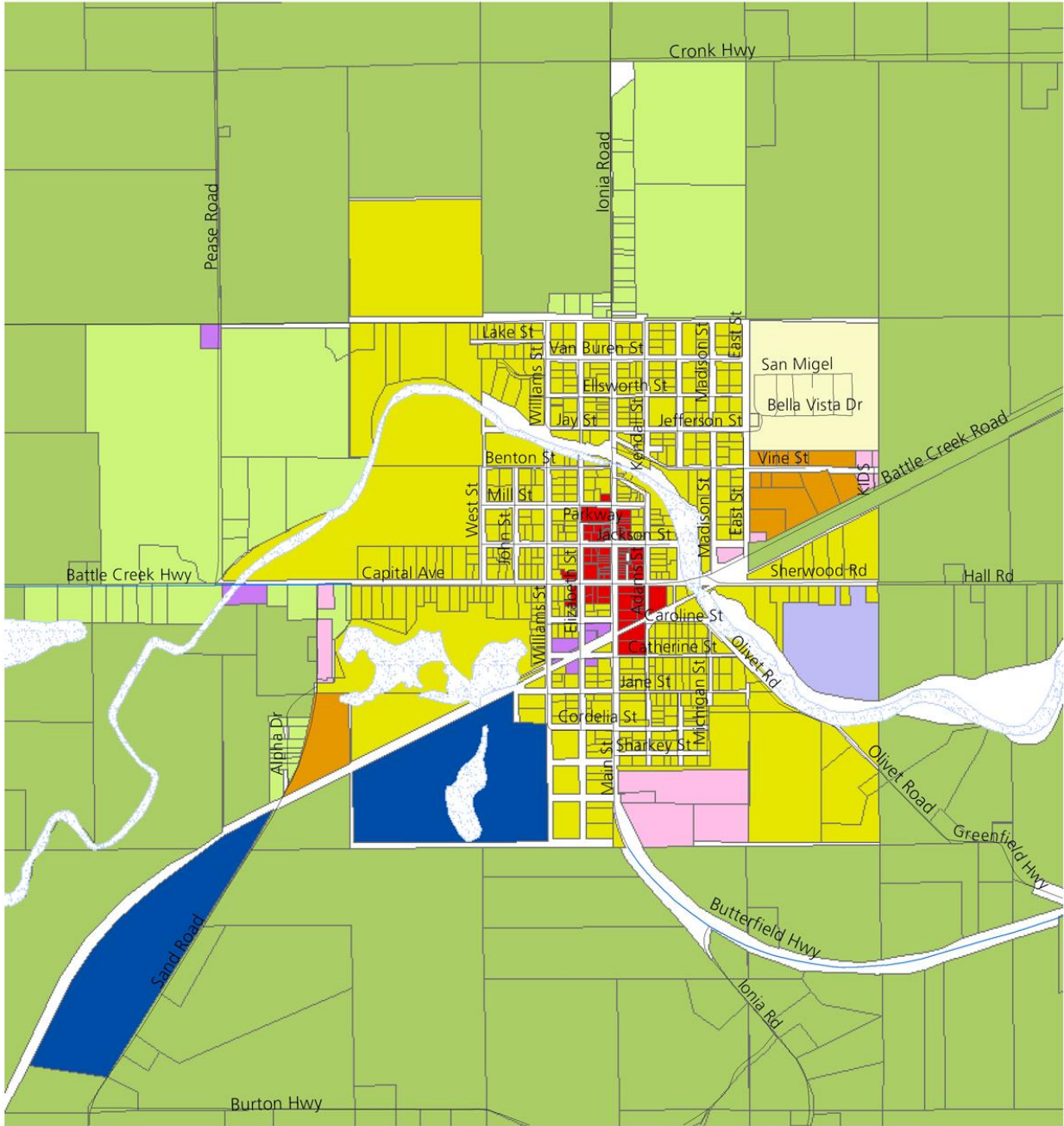
Map B-1
Village of Bellevue – Existing Land Use



VILLAGE OF BELLEVUE
Existing Land Use

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Residential |  Resource Extraction/Agriculture |
|  Commercial |  Leisure/Recreation |
|  Office |  No Present Activity |
|  Social/Institutional | |

Map B-2
Village of Bellevue – Existing Zoning



BELLEVUE VILLAGE

Zoning

Data Source: Village of Bellevue, 2004



- | | |
|--|--|
| ■ (AG) Agriculture | ■ (CBD) Central Business District |
| ■ (RA) One Family Residential | ■ (GB) General Business District |
| ■ (RB) One & Two Family Residential | ■ (I1) Light Industry |
| ■ (RC) One & Two Family Residential (and Mobile Home) | ■ (I2) Heavy Industry |
| ■ (RD) Multiple Family Residential | |

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Appendix C PARKS and RECREATION

Introduction

The Village of Bellevue offers a number of outdoor public recreational facilities. Recreational facilities offered by Bellevue Township and the more regional facilities operated by the county provide further opportunities for residents to enjoy and experience the outdoors and the natural environment. Additional recreational facilities are provided by quasi-public organizations offering various activities and services. This chapter provides an overview of parks and recreation opportunities in the village. Map C-1 identifies natural and cultural resources in the village.

Parks

Keehne Environmental Area lies along the western edge of the village. The 17-acre facility consists principally of a boardwalk and gravel trail winding through a maze of marsh and flooded areas. Although the park is under the supervision of the Eaton County Parks and Recreation Commission, the majority of the park is in the village. The facility is used for fishing, walking and sightseeing, and provides educational opportunities for residents and students including the observation of natural systems and the aquatic environment.



The restoration and repair of the park and facilities has been determined to be a primary concern of the community. Community members have voiced strong support toward fixing the boardwalk and cleaning the shoreline of the park. The boardwalk is in dire need of restoration in areas where railings are missing or loose. Additional bank cleanup and algae management would benefit the fish and wildlife, which use this fragile ecosystem. Furthermore, residents would be more likely to use the area if it were safe, clean, and inviting.



Butler Park is a small area along the east bank of the Battle Creek River on the north side of the Capital Street Bridge. The park offers picnic tables, parking, and a public boat launch. The park is maintained by the county, and open to the public for any recreational uses such as picnicking, fishing, and boating.

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Jefferson Park is centrally located on the block between Kendall and North Webster Streets, and Jefferson and Ellsworth Streets. The park covers one city block surrounded by residential properties. The park includes basketball courts and a skate board area that provides numerous obstacles and features for use by skateboarders, roller bladers, and other sporting enthusiasts. The park is focused toward the youth of the community, providing active outdoor recreation centrally located in this neighborhood park.

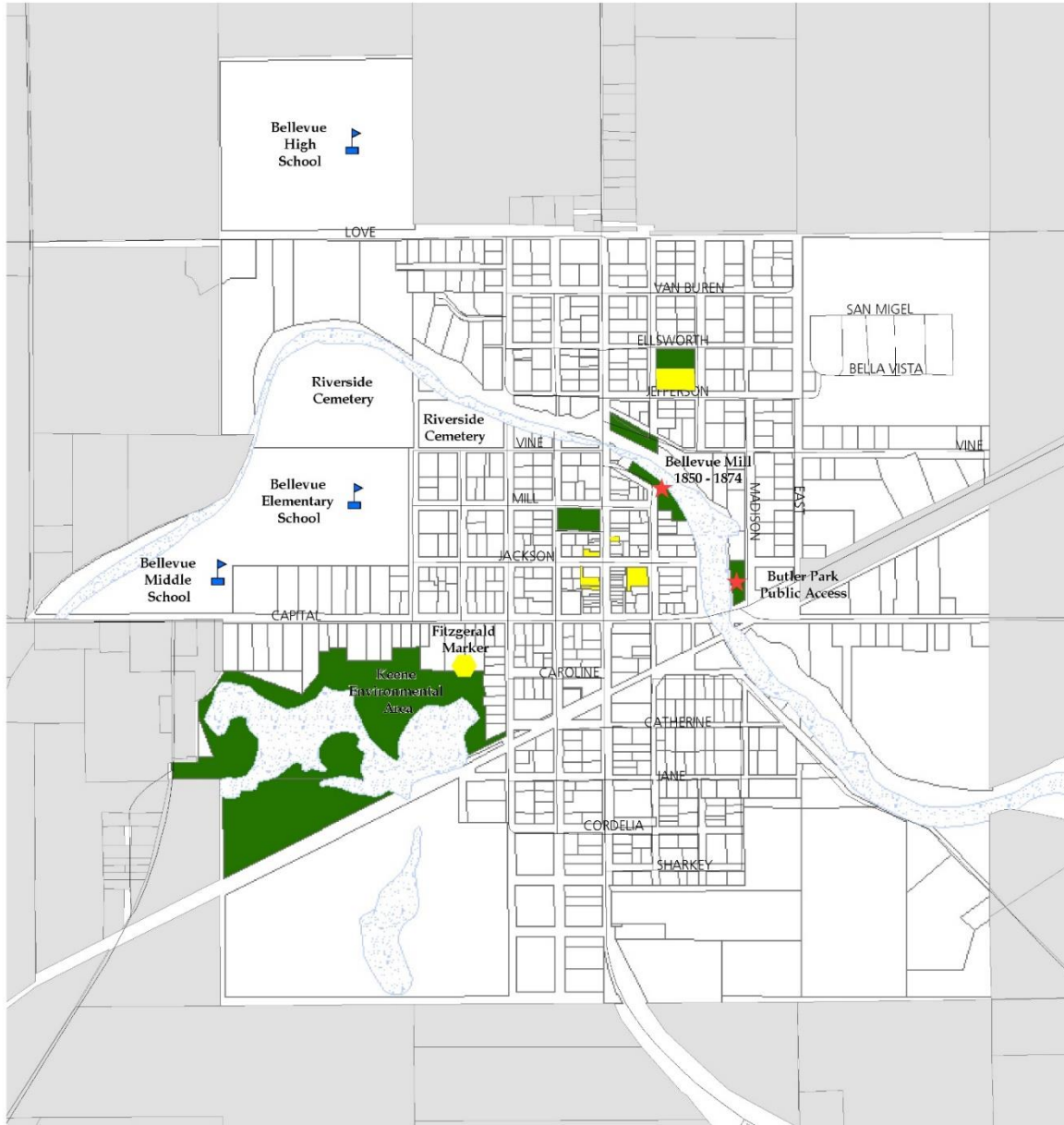
Washington Park is another neighborhood park located between North Elizabeth and Main Streets, and Mill and Park Place. This park offers a large pavilion and gazebo structures for public events such as a farmers market and private gatherings. It has a playground for children of all ages. Washington Park is maintained by the village's public works department along with the help of a host of community groups including Friends of the Park, Lions Club, and 20th Century Club. Shaded green space allows residents to enjoy the outdoors within their neighborhood.

Community members value this type of local neighborhood park and have voiced interest in developing similar parks throughout the village.



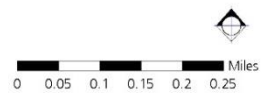
The Michigan Department of Transportation Boat Launch is a small boat launch site at the base of the W. Capital Avenue (M-78) Bridge, on the south side in front of the Bellevue Wastewater Treatment Plant. The site is along and facilitates access to the Battle Creek River, and affords small boat launching including canoes, kayaks and small fishing boats. The site is also popular for fishing from the banks of the river.

Map C-1 Village of Bellevue Natural and Cultural Resources



VILLAGE OF BELLEVUE Natural and Cultural Resources

Data Source: Beckett & Raeder, Inc. 2004



- Municipal Facilities
- Recreation, Parks, and Open Space

Beckett & Raeder

Open Space

Open space preservation is crucial to maintaining recreation and leisure opportunities and enhances the desirable character of the village. Setting aside new areas for public use or wildlife protection enables the village to ensure adequate open space resources to meet future demands. Open space includes land available for active and/or passive recreation and conservation of natural environments. Within the built environment open space may include setbacks or buffers, unpaved walkways, parks, and any land surface generally open to the sky.

The Village of Bellevue has a number of parks, previously mentioned, which are considered open space areas. In addition to these parks, a number of privately owned areas that are not parks also provide open space elements though they may be subject to subsequent development. The shoreline habitats along undeveloped portions of the river corridor provide an essential buffer between the water resource and nearby development, and provide substantial open space as well as habitat and natural resource protection.

The village also has a number of other open space areas, consisting principally of pockets of woods and meadows and the Riverside Cemetery. In addition to providing an important service, the cemetery is of an overall open space character and presents a special environment for leisure time and for certain wildlife.



Other Recreation Opportunities

Other local townships, villages and cities offer parks and recreation opportunities of which Village of Bellevue residents can take advantage. The county owns and manages several large resource-based facilities and the Yankee State Game Area and the Ionia State Recreation Area are in neighboring Barry and Ionia counties. Vast recreational resources exist directly within the Battle Creek River system. Canoeing, fishing, boating, and sight-seeing are all activities which are readily available with little requirement for additional services or facilities. The dominant rural landscape of the regional area provides opportunities for hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling.

The Bellevue Conservation Club, located in Bellevue Township along the Butterfield Highway, offers a number of public services and acts as a meeting space. Shooting sports are the primary use of this facility. As a private organization, the Club is accessible only to members of the Club with exceptions for meetings and other planned events such as graduation parties, wedding receptions, and birthday and retirement parties.

An additional nearby recreational facility that is operated under a private organization is the RV campground owned by the Travel Trailer Club of the Midwest. This facility provides camping and RV services within an 80-acre parcel of land situated in Bellevue Township on the north side of the Baseline Highway.

Appendix D

TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

Village of Bellevue residents rely entirely on the automobile for transportation in and around the village. The village has jurisdiction over its road system while Eaton County maintains jurisdiction over the public roads throughout the regional townships (excluding state highways). Streets within the village are maintained by the village's Department of Public Works. The condition of these streets is important to provide safe and efficient access within the village. However, also of importance are the conditions associated with the two major thoroughfares and five major county roads that provide access to and from the village. Map D-1 presents the transportation network in the village and surrounding Bellevue Township and the functional classification of those roads that are classified by the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Regional Access

Regional access to Bellevue is principally afforded by Interstate 69, M-78, and Battle Creek Highway West. I-69 travels west and south from Port Huron on Michigan's east shoreline to the Indiana state line south of Coldwater, and passes within three miles of the village. Exit 48 along I-69 provides direct access to M-78, which passes through Bellevue and links I-69 with M-66 further west. South Main St. and West Capital Ave. comprise M-78 within the village. Battle Creek Highway begins at M-78 in the village and travels northeast to Charlotte. All of these three thoroughfares are used extensively by persons travelling day-to-day to and from Battle Creek and Lansing. Regional access is also available from various airports in the regional area including in Lansing and Kalamazoo.

Local Road Network

Except for the presence of M-78, and Battle Creek Highway West, the local road network of the village is largely of a comparatively tight grid characteristic of a traditional village settlement area. Aside from M-78 and nine short private roads including roads within the Belle Vista Manufactured Home Community, all roads are under the jurisdiction of the village.

Of importance is the functional classification of the village's roads as established by the Federal Highway Administration (FHA). The FHA classifies road segments according to the extent to which the road is intended to facilitate traffic movement over long and short distances versus access to abutting property. This classification is referred to as the National Functional Classification (NFC). The relative hierarchy of the classification as applied to Bellevue follows.

Interstates and Other Freeways are at the top of the NFC hierarchical system and frequently include freeways and state highways between major cities. Interstates and freeways function to primarily facilitate long distance travel including access to important traffic generators such as major airports and regional shopping centers. *There are no interstates or freeways in the village, the closest being I-69 to the east.*

Principal arterials function similarly to interstates and freeways except that they facilitate shorter travel distances and access to lesser traffic generators. Principal arterials frequently include state highways between large cities. *There are no principal arterials in the village or within three miles.*

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Minor arterials are similar in function to principal arterials, except they carry trips of shorter distance and to lesser traffic generators. *M-78, including, South Main St. and West Capital Ave., is the only minor arterial in the village.*

Major collectors function with a much greater focus on providing access to property rather than long distance travel, and frequently funnel traffic from residential or rural areas to arterials. Major collector road segments in the village are limited to Love St., Battle Creek Highway West, North Main St., and East Capital Ave.

Minor collectors are similar to major collectors except for the still greater focus on providing access to property rather than long distance travel. *There are no minor collectors in the village.*

Local Roads serve primarily to provide access to adjacent properties and minor collectors. Local roads in the village include all public roads not noted above.

Table D-1 presents the NFC for public roads in the village. The NFC system has financial implications. Federal aid for road projects is limited to roads classified as minor collectors or higher.

Table D-2 identifies the private roads in the village.

**Table D-1
Village Public Roads/NFC System**

NFC Minor Arterials		
M-78, including South Main St. and West Capital Ave		
NFC Major Collectors		
Battle Creek Highway West East Capital Ave.	North Main St. Love St.	
NFC Local Roads		
Adams Street	Jay Street	Parkway
Benton Street	Jefferson Street	Sharkey Street
Capital Avenue	John Street	Sherwood Road
Caroline St	Kendall Street	Spaulding Court
Catherine Street	Lake Street	Tanners Alley
Cordelia Street	Love Street	Van Buren Street
East Street	Madison Street	Vine Street
Elizabeth Street	Main Street	Webster Street
Ellsworth Street	Michigan Street	West Street
Jackson Street	Mill Street	Williams Street
Jane Street	Olivet Road	

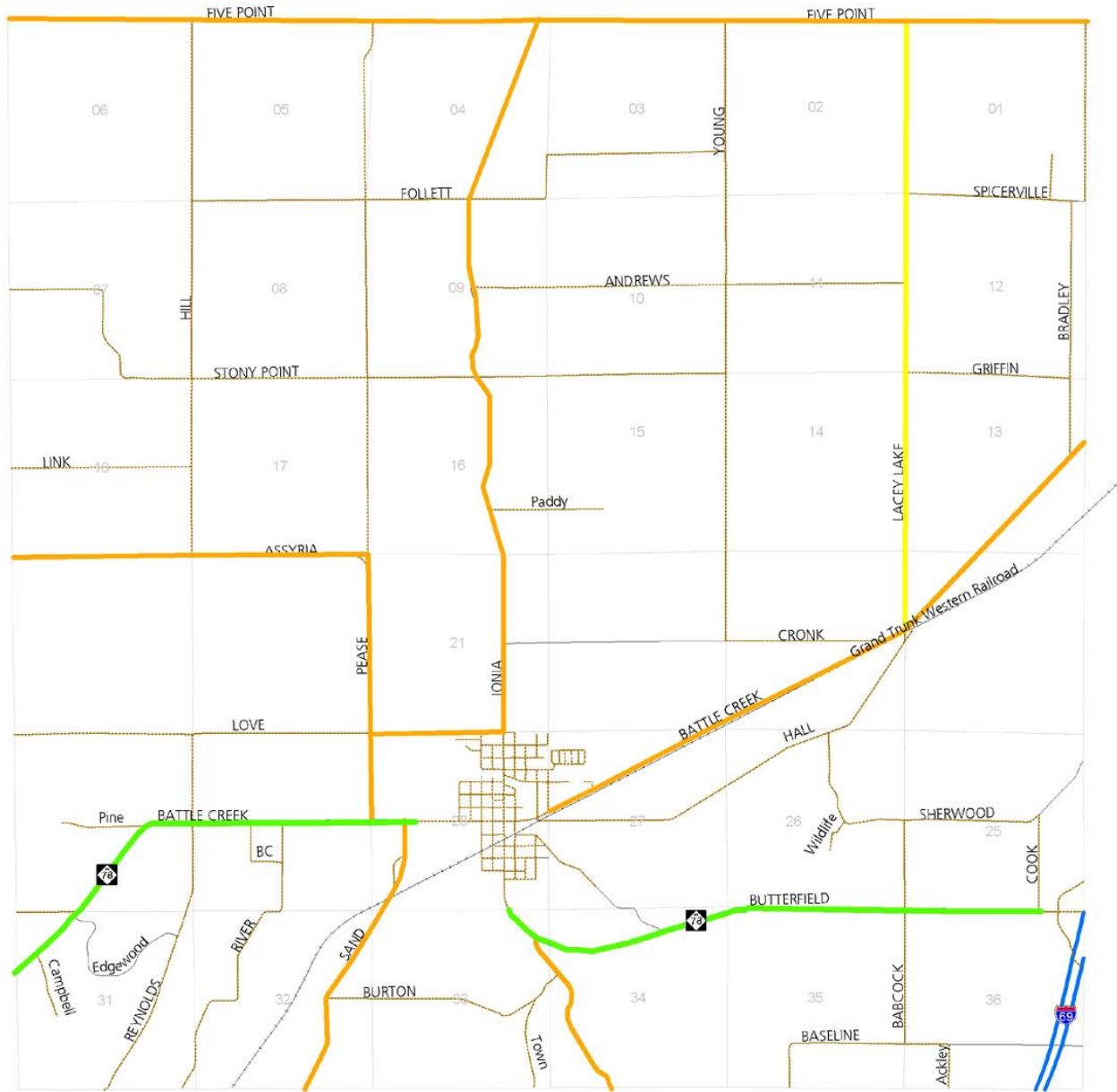
Source: Michigan Department of Transportation and Village of Bellevue

**Table D-2
Village Private Road System**

Non-NFC Local Roads / Private		
Belle Vista Drive	San Paulo	SanI Salvador
San Juan	San Ramon	Santa Cruz
San Migel	San Tomas	Santa Fe

Source: Village of Bellevue

**Map D-1
Village of Bellevue
Existing Road Network**



**BELLEVUE
Existing Road Network**

Data Source: Eaton County GIS.
Map Source: Beckett and Raeder Inc.

National Functional Classification

- Rural or Urban Minor Arterial
- Rural Major or Urban Collector
- Rural Minor Collector
- Section Lines
- Rural or Urban Interstate
- Paved County Road
- Unpaved Roads and Village Streets



Beckett & Raeder

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Transportation networks in the Village of Bellevue include streets and the pedestrian areas along streetscapes. Most primary roads in the village are paved two lane streets that serve neighborhoods and downtown. On street parallel parking is allowed along most streets in both the residential and commercial areas in the village. The primary issue in regards to village roads and transportation is the condition of the streetscapes and sidewalks. Most village roads in downtown and a good percentage of roads in the residential areas have existing sidewalks and pedestrian street crossings. However, the sidewalks and streetscapes are in disrepair and are not inviting or safe facilities for pedestrian traffic.



The primary issue in regards to village roads and transportation is the condition of the streetscapes and sidewalks. Most village roads in downtown and a good percentage of roads in the residential areas have existing sidewalks and pedestrian street crossings. However, the sidewalks and streetscapes are in disrepair and are not inviting or safe facilities for pedestrian traffic.

Examples of poor streetscapes exist along Capital Avenue between Elizabeth and Adams Streets. Furthermore, pedestrian crosswalks in the downtown are not adequately identified and do not provide safe and obvious crossing areas. Residents would like to enhance the roads and downtown by implementing streetscape and pedestrian enhancements to provide safe and inviting pedestrian and automotive transportation networks throughout the village.



Appendix E

NATURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

The Village of Bellevue includes a number of important natural resources. These resources help to define the character of the village, provide important environmental benefits and, in some cases, provide opportunities for financial gain and economic development. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the principal natural resources of the village.

Minerals

The Bellevue area was the first region in Michigan to begin mining the rich limestone reserves, found in the area during the mid-1800's. The historic Dyer Kiln, pictured below, operated in the Bellevue area from 1880 through 1899, providing the mortar for construction of the State Capital Building in Lansing. Limestone mining operations continue primarily under the operations of the F.G. Cheney Limestone Company including an active pit in the southwest corner of the village.



Hydrology

The Battle Creek River is the Village of Bellevue's primary water resource. The river flows out of Narrow Lake, and then passes through Charlotte swinging southwest through Bellevue Township and the village before emptying into the Kalamazoo River near Battle Creek. Warm water fish species and migratory waterfowl exist throughout the river system providing opportunities for hunting, fishing, and bird watching. Water levels are sufficient to support boating and canoeing activities along most stretches within the township and village.

The village is a part of the 187,000-acre Battle Creek Watershed. The Battle Creek Watershed Project implemented a watershed management plan to meet demands of stakeholders along the watershed while improving water quality. Currently the Battle Creek River is one of the most significant contributors to sedimentation and pollutants into the Kalamazoo River. Organizations and government agencies involved in the watershed project encouraged community support to restore the river to provide a safe and healthy hydrological resource to be used for recreation, drinking, irrigation, and fish and wildlife.

Wetlands

Wetlands as defined by the US Fish and Wildlife Service are:

"...lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water. For purposes of this classification wetlands must have one or more of the following three attributes: (1) at least periodically, the land supports predominantly hydrophytes; (2) the substrate is predominantly undrained hydric soil; and (3) the substrate is nonsoil and is saturated with water or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season of the year."

A more general definition would be land that is regularly wet or flooded with a water table at ground level or above for the majority of the year. Wetlands are one of the most biologically productive ecosystems in the world, and therefore perform a variety of functions. Wetlands provide fish and wildlife habitat, control storm water and flooding, improve water quality, act as a water recharge area, manage shoreline erosion, and support a diverse biological ecosystem. Protection of these significant ecosystems originally fell under the Goemaere-Anderson Wetlands Act of 1979, and the regulatory provisions are now part of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. A copy of the Act may be viewed at www.legislature.mi.gov. The State of Michigan oversees regulation and permitting of wetland uses.

Nearly all wetlands in the village are classified as "emergent" and are primarily along the Battle Creek River flood plain.

Woodlands

Woodlands cover only limited areas of the village, the principal areas being along the Battle Creek River corridor adjacent to the wetland areas and most particularly south of the high school between the river and Love St. The woodlands are primarily composed of lowland hardwoods. Lowland hardwoods are generally found in low-lying areas such as floodplains and wetlands that hold surface water part of the year. Red Maple, Silver Maple, Black Ash, Cottonwood, and swamp White Oak are all tree species characteristic of this environment. Lowland hardwoods are generally protected due to the difficulty in farming or logging within these undevelopable soils, and the wetland environments with which they are closely associated.

Topography

The topography of the Village of Bellevue and surrounding region consists of primarily flat terrain. Nearly the entire village ranges from 260' to 270' above sea level. The exception is the northeast tip of the village in the area of the high school, which approaches 280' above sea level. The village generally slopes from its perimeter toward the Battle Creek River corridor where the village's lowest elevations are present. The river corridor is an environmentally sensitive area, highly susceptible to bank erosion and sedimentation. The village's lowest elevations are where the river exits the village along its western border at M-78.

While the village does not have significant elevation gains, some areas have been affected by mining operations and impose development limitations due to steep slopes and erosion. This is most prominent in the village's southeast corner in association with Cheney Limestone Company operations.

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