

## AGENDA REPORT

TO: Mayor Pat Humphrey and the Clare City Commission  
FROM: Ken Hibl, City Manager  
DATE: September 2, 2016  
RE: Authority to Distribute Master Plan for Comment & Grant Authority for Approval of Plan

For the Agenda of September 6, 2016

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**Background:** With the assistance of McKenna Associates, the City of Clare Planning Commission has spent the past nine months updating the City's Comprehensive Master Plan and the City's Future Land Use Map. The process included multiple focus group discussions, public hearings, and lengthy, in-depth discussions amongst the Planning Commission members, the City Staff, and planners from McKenna Associates. The end result is a new draft Plan (*copy att'd*) and Future Land Use Map (*copy att'd*).

To complete the process of updating the City's Master Plan, the City Commission is required to authorize distribution of the draft Plan and Land Use Map to all surrounding and affected governmental bodies (Clare and Isabella County, all surrounding municipalities and townships, local schools and universities, libraries, etc.) for review and comment. The Zoning & Enabling Act allows 63 days for comment, at which time the Planning Commission is provided an opportunity to review all comments received and incorporate those comments into the Plan or reject them. The Plan can then be approved.

The Master Plan is typically prepared by and approved by the City Planning Commission. However, there is a provision of the Michigan Zoning & Enabling Act that allows the governing body to withhold the approval authority unto itself. Our current Master Plan was approved by our Planning Commission.

The City Commission is asked authorize the distribution of the revised Master Plan and Future Land Use Map and concurrently decide whether it desires to withhold approval authority of the Plan unto itself or allow the Planning Commission to be the approval authority of the Plan and Map.

**Issues & Questions Specified:** Should the City Commission authorize the distribution of the revised Master Plan and Future Land Use Map and concurrently decide whether it desires to withhold approval authority of the Plan unto itself?

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**Alternatives:**

1. Authorize distribution and relinquish approval authority to the Planning Commission.
2. Authorize distribution and withhold approval authority for the City Commission.
3. Do not authorize distribution of the Plan and Map
4. Set aside decision regarding this matter to a later date.

**Financial Impact:** There is no immediate, direct fiscal impact.

**Recommendation:** I recommend that the City Commission authorize distribution and relinquish approval authority to the Planning Commission by adoption of Resolution 2016-104 (*copy attached*).

**Attachments:**

1. Updated Master Plan.
2. Updated Future Land Use Map.
3. Resolution 2016-104.

# COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

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## CITY OF CLARE, MICHIGAN

Adopted by the Planning Commission: \_\_\_\_\_, 2016

Prepared with the assistance of:

**McKenna Associates**

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# RESOLUTION 2016-\_\_\_PC

City of Clare  
Clare and Isabella Counties, Michigan

## RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE MASTER PLAN AND FUTURE LAND USE MAP

At a meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Clare, Clare and Isabella Counties, Michigan, held on \_\_\_\_\_, 2016 at 6:30 P.M. at City Hall,

The Planning Commission determined that:

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33, of 2008, requires the Planning Commission to make and adopt a basic plan or parts of a plan corresponding with major geographic sections or divisions of the City, including areas outside of current municipal boundaries, as a guide for the physical development of the municipality; and

**WHEREAS**, Notices of Intent to prepare an updated Master Plan were sent to all required entities and other governmental agencies, consistent with the provisions of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33, of 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission has made careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and the future needs of the City and surrounding land areas, and have met consistently to research and prepare a draft of the updated Master Plan and Future Land Use Map; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission held a public hearing in accordance with the procedures of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33, of 2008, and said plan was on display before the public hearing in accordance with P.A. 33, of 2008; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Planning Commission of the City of Clare on this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016 hereby adopts the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map for the City of Clare; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Plan in its final form be adopted, attested to and transmitted to all entities required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes:

Nays:

Absent:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Planning Commission of the City of Clare, Clare and Isabella Counties, Michigan.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Planning Commission Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Planning Commission Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The participation and cooperation of community leaders and residents in the preparation of the Master Plan 2016 is greatly appreciated. In particular, we acknowledge the efforts of the following individuals:

## **City Commission**

Patrick Humphrey, Mayor

Jean McConnell, Mayor Pro-Tem

Bob Bonham, Commissioner

Gus Murphy, Commissioner

Karla Swanson, Commissioner

## **Planning Commission**

Joshua Clark, Chairperson

Darren Acton, Commission Member

Steve Barnes, Commission Member

Glenda Carmoney, Commission Member

Angie Cozat, Commission Member

Elaine Demasi, Commission Member

Brett Moser, Commission Member

Jan Winter, Commission Member

Nick Wyman, Commission Member

## **City Manager**

Ken Hibel

## **City Clerk**

Diane Lyon

## **City Attorney**

Jaynie Smith Hoerauf, Atty.

## **Planner**

McKenna Associates



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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*Resolution of Adoption  
Acknowledgments*

<b>1. Goals and Objectives</b> .....	<b>1.1</b>
Introduction .....	1.1
Planning Process .....	1.2
City of Clare Vision .....	1.3
General Planning and Development Goals .....	1.4
Single Family Residential Development Goals .....	1.6
Multiple Family Residential Development Goals .....	1.7
General and Downtown Commercial Development Goals .....	1.8
Industrial Development Goals .....	1.9
Transportation and Circulation Goals .....	1.10
Community and Recreational Facilities Goals .....	1.11
Lake and Environment Goals .....	1.12
<b>2. Demographic Analysis</b> .....	<b>2.1</b>
Introduction .....	2.1
Population .....	2.2
<b>3. Housing Analysis</b> .....	<b>3.1</b>
Introduction .....	3.1
Type of Housing .....	3.2
Residential Development Considerations .....	3.6
Conclusions .....	3.7
<b>4. Existing Land Use</b> .....	<b>4.1</b>
General Overview .....	4.1
Transportation Corridors .....	4.2
Existing Land Use .....	4.3
Land Use Issues .....	4.7
<b>5. Community and Recreation Facilities</b> .....	<b>5.1</b>
Introduction .....	5.1
Government Facilities .....	5.2
Social and Cultural Facilities .....	5.4
Public Utilities .....	5.6
Parks and Recreation Facilities .....	5.7
Public School Facilities .....	5.10
<b>6. Transportation Analysis</b> .....	<b>6.1</b>
Regional Context .....	6.1
Complete Streets .....	6.2
Existing Non-Motorized Transportation .....	6.4
Vehicular Circulation .....	6.4
Federal Functional Classification .....	6.4
State of Michigan Act 51 Classification .....	6.5
Other Transportation Modes .....	6.6
Future Transportation Plan .....	6.8

<b>7. Opportunities and Constraints</b> .....	<b>7.1</b>
Development Patterns .....	7.2
<b>8. Economic Analysis</b> .....	<b>8.1</b>
Introduction .....	8.1
Municipal Finances .....	8.8
Summary .....	8.16
<b>9. Future Land Use Plan</b> .....	<b>9.1</b>
Introduction .....	9.1
Future Land Use Plan .....	9.3
<b>10. Implementation</b> .....	<b>10.1</b>
Introduction .....	10.1
Public Policy and Administrative Action .....	10.2
Information and Education .....	10.3
Zoning Tools .....	10.3
Building Code Enforcement .....	10.8
Public Investments .....	10.9
Economic Development Measures and Finance Tools .....	10.11
Historic Districts .....	10.11
Financing Tools .....	10.12
HUD Section 202 .....	10.15
Other Implementation Recommendations .....	10.16
Transportation .....	10.20
Maintaining Water Quality .....	10.21
Stormwater Management .....	10.21
Strategic Action Plan .....	10.22
Implementation Summary Tables .....	10.23
Public Policy, Administrative Action and Other Improvements .....	10.24
Zoning Ordinance Amendments .....	10.25
Natural Features and Environmental Considerations .....	10.26
Economic Development .....	10.27

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Total Population	2.2
Table 2.2	Population Trends	2.3
Table 2.3	Community	2.3
Table 2.4	Average Household Size	2.4
Table 2.5	Household Characteristics	2.5
Table 2.6	Age Group Comparisons	2.6
Table 2.7	Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years and Older	2.7
Table 2.8	Employment of Residents by Occupation and Industry	2.8
Table 2.9	Annual Household Income	2.9
Table 2.10	Percentage of Families whose Incomes in Past 12 Months is below the Poverty Level	2.9
Table 2.11	Population Projections	2.11
Table 3.1	Housing Units	3.2
Table 3.2	Housing Characteristics, Ownership	3.3
Table 3.3	Housing Construction by Decade Age	3.4
Table 3.4	Residential Properties / Assessed and Taxable Growth	3.5
Table 4.1	Existing Land Use	4.3
Table 8.2	Increase in Revenue Sources as a Percentage of Total Revenue Increase	8.10
Table 8.3	Real Property Classes by Percentage of Total Real Property Tax Base	8.12
Table 8.4	Expenditure by Category as a Percentage of Total Expenditures Increase	8.15
Table 9.1	Master Plan Zoning Ordinance Comparison	9.18

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 8.1	Downtown Floor Area by Category and Number of Establishments	8.3
Figure 8.2	Actual and Projected Revenues	8.8
Figure 8.3	Revenue Sources by Percentage of Total Revenues (Estimated)	8.9
Figure 8.4	Actual and Projected Expenditures	8.13
Figure 8.5	Expenditure Categories by Percentage of Total Expenditures (Estimated)	8.14

## LIST OF MAPS

Map 1	Grant Township Expansion Area	2.13
Map 2	Existing Land Use	4.5
Map 3	Transportation Plan	6.13
Map 4	Opportunities and Constraints	7.11
Map 5	Future Land Use	9.19





## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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### Introduction

In the fall of 2015, the City of Clare Planning Commission initiated an update to the City's Master Plan to guide decisions affecting future development and redevelopment in the community. Environmental, social, political and economic conditions that affect the natural and built environment are continuously changing. Therefore, the planning process, which seeks to anticipate the impacts of those changes, must also be continuous. The Planning Commission recognized this fact and chose to embark upon the process of updating the 2007 Master Plan and its 2009 Master Plan Amendment – For the Grant Township Expansion Area.

The Master Plan describes planning and implementation strategies to provide guidance for development, redevelopment, infill development and preservation of the built and natural environments. Its intent is to provide future land use designations for the City of Clare and to establish the overall goals, objectives and policies to guide the decisions related to development in the City with a vision for the next 20 years.

This updated Master Plan represents the consolidation of data collection, field surveys, many meetings and discussions by the City Planning Commission, City Administration and citizens. This updated Master Plan expands upon the fundamental basis of the City's previous Master Plans.

## Planning Process



The Master Plan contains analyses and recommendations regarding population, housing, existing land use, community and recreation resources, transportation, economic development, the future land use pattern, and implementation recommendations. Each component of the Master Plan is prepared in response to the planning issues that are identified and defined through research and analysis. To ensure the success of the Master Plan, the participation of residents, elected and appointed officials and community business leaders is essential. The community must understand the entire Master Plan process and must have the opportunity to provide input during the drafting of the plan. The planning process provides several occasions for input and participation of Clare residents.

During the development of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan in 2007, a visioning workshop was held with over 60 people in attendance. The visioning workshop's purpose was to explain the Master Plan process, to provide background information on Clare, to elicit ideas and to form consensus about those ideas. In this manner, the Planning Commission becomes informed about the desires of the populace through

their interactions.

The comments, priorities and information collected at the visioning workshop were then used to develop the 2007 Master Plan goals and objectives. A goal is general in nature, expressing a statement of an ideal for the City, while an objective describes a more specific means to attain the stated goal. A policy is a definite course or method of action selected in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions.

To update the plan and its goals and objectives, an inclusive process was proposed that included meetings with stakeholders, a survey to garner current public input, and several public meetings with the Planning Commission.

On December 16, 2015, five stakeholder sessions were held at City Hall in the City Council chambers. Members of the community were invited by the City Administration with the expectation that they would represent a broad cross-section of the community. These stakeholder were broken down into five separate groups by interest or expertise including: Finance and Accounting; Real Estate and Development; Residents and Seniors; Business Community and Manufacturing; and Education and Health Care. Dozens of individuals were invited and 27 participated. These stakeholder meetings were followed by a meeting the same evening with the Planning Commission where the results of the stakeholder meetings were presented with the commission.

To garner broader public input, a survey was prepared to ascertain how residents and users of/visitors to the community felt about the City and its land uses. Survey respondents were asked what they would like to see for the community many years into the future on topics that included commercial, recreation, retail, and housing. The survey was available on-line for four weeks (Feb. 8, 2016 through Mar. 4, 2016).

The survey was distributed by several means: 1) City administration sent out the link

to the survey to many of its email contacts; 2) a link was created from the City website homepage to the survey; 3) several organizations were requested to share the link on their social media feeds; and 4) the high school was asked to distribute the survey to their civics/government students. Two hundred and seventy persons responded. The survey results were reviewed, and the findings were presented to the Planning Commission at its March 9, 2016 meeting. The small town character, the strong sense of community, the pedestrian friendly nature of the Downtown, the excellent schools, the extensive recreational facilities, the affordable lifestyle, the safe nature of the City and the natural water and woodland features are just a few of the many assets that Clare residents mentioned.

As a part of the Master Plan update, the 2007 Master Plan's Goals and Objectives were discussed in detail at the Planning Commission's March 9, 2016 meeting to determine their current relevance and to determine if they'd been completed in the intervening years. The plan is designed to allow development to meet current and future needs, while preserving those features most valued by Clare's residents. Numerous modifications to the 2007 Goals and Objectives were made as a result of these discussions.

The goals and objectives noted below address many land use related issues in the City under the following topics: single family residential development; multiple family residential development; general and Downtown commercial development; research and industrial development; transportation and circulation; community and recreational facilities; and lake and the environment. General planning and administrative issues related to the implementation of the Master Plan are also addressed. The plan concentrates on goals, objectives and implementation strategies that will further its vision as noted herein.

## **City of Clare Vision**

The City of Clare will be a community that maintains its small town atmosphere yet will still seek to offer a variety of retail and service-oriented businesses, recreational activities, employment opportunities and housing choices to its residents. Clare, in coordination with adjoining Townships, will manage growth so that the growth makes the best use of the residential and commercial areas, infrastructure and land resources. New development will be sustainable and will enhance existing development. New development will be able to tolerate economic depression and will be fiscally sound. New development will fortify the economy of Clare and will not be implemented at the expense of existing development. New development will enable the community to maintain a high quality of life and support existing infrastructure, businesses and housing.

## General Planning and Development Goals

**A:** To guide, plan and accommodate future growth and development in a manner that:

- Respects the traditional, historic and small town character of the City.
- Promotes an efficient and well ordered land use pattern.
- Economizes community facilities with sustainable development.
- Respects natural environmental features.
- Promotes local business.
- Supports the friendly, family oriented atmosphere of the City.
- Is fiscally responsible and addresses the needs of a range of household income levels.

### Objectives

1. Accommodate future growth within Clare and the adjacent Grant Township while maintaining an appropriate and compatible scale, use, intensity, and purpose for the additional growth.
2. Encourage land use decisions that will reinforce a sense of community.
3. Encourage the preservation of unique and/or historical features.
4. Protect important natural features in and adjacent to the community.
5. Encourage the on-going maintenance and improvement of properties, buildings, and public facilities and services.
6. Encourage the reuse of older buildings as an alternative to new construction.
7. Encourage development that will support and complement existing infrastructure to ensure the greatest efficiency in infrastructure use.

### Policies:

1. Reference the Master Plan for making planning decisions and for recommending priorities for long-range capital improvement programming.
2. Review the Master Plan annually and formulate updates to goals, objectives and policies as needed.
3. Amend the City Zoning Ordinance as necessary to implement the recommendations made in the Master Plan including modifications to existing districts and creation of Agricultural, Rural Residential, High Density Residential, Regional Commercial, Central Business, and Office zoning classifications.
4. Decide to eliminate nonconforming, incompatible structures and uses to permit more appropriate uses when possible.
5. Identify a grant writer to pursue funding sources to meet the above objectives.
6. Continue to encourage citizen participation and involvement in all facets of City of Clare community life.
7. Establish beautification programs to reward property stewardship.
8. Develop programs to address the need for a safe and secure City.

**B:** To work cooperatively with adjacent Townships and planning related entities to maintain a mutually beneficial arrangement for area development and for the provision of services in a manner that:

- Respects the goals and objectives of all parties involved.
- Creates new development opportunities.
- Promotes efficient use of and improvement to the infrastructure and services.
- Enhances the economic viability of the area.

**Objectives:**

1. Establish open communication networks with adjacent Townships and planning entities to establish growth boundaries.
2. Implement techniques to share economic development success with adjacent Townships.
3. Investigate alternative methods to economic growth with the adjacent Townships.
4. Pursue funding from the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Environmental Quality, the Clare School District and other sources to provide and improve facilities.
5. Implement the 2008 Urban Cooperation Agreement with Grant Township in a manner that directs new construction and development in accordance with the current Master Plan.

**Policies:**

1. Distribute the Master Plan to adjacent Townships and planning entities to clarify the goals and objectives of the City of Clare.
2. Dedicate staff resources to meetings with adjacent Townships and planning entities.
3. Dedicate staff resources or City funding to the investigation of alternative economic growth ideas such as seeking the assistance and funding available through Federal, State, Regional and Local Agencies.

## Single Family Residential Development Goals

To reinforce the single family character and integrity of the neighborhoods in the City in a manner that:

- Maintains the current housing stock.
- Ensures the continued, long-term viability of the residential areas.
- Plans for a variety of new residences to meet the needs of current and future residents.
- Provides new housing that is sensitive to its environment.

### Objectives:

1. Encourage owner-occupied residential dwellings in all single family residential neighborhoods.
2. Promote small town character by preserving and protecting historic homes.
3. Maintain and improve the economic value of all residential areas by monitoring and encouraging reinvestment in single family housing areas, especially in blighted and low owner-occupied areas.
4. Encourage new residential development that provides diverse housing options like detached condominiums and cluster housing while maintaining current single family densities.
5. Encourage new residential development that complements the character of the existing neighborhoods with high standards of housing design and construction.
6. Encourage the development of new residential neighborhoods that respect the natural environmental features of the subject properties.
7. Encourage new development with access to community amenities.

### Policies:

1. Pursue historic preservation mechanisms and do not allow further commercial encroachment into established residential areas.
2. Enforce existing codes to address neighborhood blight, such as parking on lawns, litter control, and run-down houses.
3. Establish housing assistance programs and investigate financial alternatives to provide the means for reinvestment in and the refurbishing of existing residential housing.
4. Discourage the conversion of single family dwellings to multiple family housing.
5. Control the expansion of existing and proposed nonresidential uses which are adjacent to residential areas and require a buffer separation between commercial expansion and residential areas with open space, greenbelts, structures and other buffers as needed.
6. Provide for a range of residential land use densities and housing types to meet the needs of the City's population.
7. Require the layout of new residential developments to be logical extensions of existing neighborhoods. This applies to lot layout, road and sidewalk extensions, and open space plans.
8. Encourage higher density housing on lands that have or are planned to have the road and utility capacity to support such development.
9. Modify the Zoning Ordinance to require new development to provide the open space and other infrastructure and amenity improvements necessary for the development of quality residential neighborhoods.
10. Institute new rental housing inspection programs to address the existing high rate of rental housing and to ensure the public health and safety of the community while combating blight and vacant homes in the City's residential districts.
11. Encourage the incorporation of existing vegetation and other natural features into the design of new residential developments.

## Multiple Family Residential Development Goals

To recognize that multiple family housing serves as an important housing choice for the community and ensure that the multiple family housing should:

- Satisfies the needs of people with different income levels.
- Satisfies the needs of people with different lifestyles.
- Addresses the needs of the elderly population.

### Objectives

1. Provide the appropriate balance of multiple family residential densities such as mixed use buildings, lofts, attached condominiums, manufactured housing, retirement villages, nursing homes, and apartments in Clare.
2. Prevent the encroachment of multiple family residential uses into existing single family neighborhoods.
3. Enhance the quality of existing multiple-family developments.
4. Support the construction of a variety of senior housing developments for differing needs and incomes.

### Policies:

1. Modify the Zoning Map to limit multiple family residential developments to areas currently existing and master planned for such use and where they act as buffers between lower density single family residential and higher intensity land uses.
2. Promote investment in site improvements for existing multiple family dwellings.
3. Require the provision of adequate infrastructure like sidewalks and amenities for new multiple family developments.
4. Establish provisions to require that new multiple family developments be sensitive to the environmental features of the site.
5. Aggressively adopt codes to address multiple family area blight such as building maintenance and litter control.

## General and Downtown Commercial Development Goals

To ensure a sustainable commercial environment for businesses within the City in a manner that:

- Effectively and efficiently serves the needs and desires of the City of Clare residents.
- Maintains the existing commercial base.
- Strengthens the City's tax and employment base.
- Respects the historic character of Downtown Clare.

### Objectives:

1. Provide opportunities for future retail, office, restaurant, and entertainment developments in Downtown Clare so that it can flourish as the commercial focus of the City.
2. Limit strip commercial development from occurring along the major roadways outside of Downtown Clare while encouraging new Regional Commercial to locate near the intersection of US-127/McEwan/Colonville Road.
3. Encourage the adjacent Townships to limit their commercial districts or to develop special commercial districts that would not compete with either Downtown Clare or the emerging north-end commercial district.
4. Ensure high quality commercial architecture, signage and landscaping that is compatible with the established character of Clare.
5. Support and encourage compatible mixed-use development in the Downtown and near the Downtown area.
6. Encourage preservation and restoration of unique Downtown buildings to enhance the historical character of the City.
7. Provide additional residential dwellings in the Downtown area including upstairs residential lofts and new mixed-use buildings.
8. Attract residents and visitors to the Downtown area.
9. Maintain and improve relations between business owners and the City government.
10. Create visual and physical improvements that will link the emerging north end commercial district with the Downtown.

### Policies:

1. Provide reasonable area for commercial expansion of the Central Business District.
2. Encourage the redevelopment of abandoned or neglected commercial properties in commercial areas such as conversion of the second story floors in the commercial buildings to residential flats.
3. Enforce sound land use and zoning policies, which control the expansion of strip commercial and the unplanned location of isolated commercial activities.
4. Develop and implement appropriate design standards and regulations for future development in Downtown Clare, including architectural standards, lighting and signage standards.
5. Maintain and improve the enforcement of building codes and ordinances for existing and future commercial development.

## Industrial Development Goals

To encourage the type of research and light industrial use that:

- Makes a positive contribution to the local tax base.
- Provides local jobs.
- Respects and enhances the established character of the community.

### Objectives:

1. Provide opportunities for Clare to flourish as a center for high technology research and light industrial activity.
2. Promote industrial uses that are environmentally clean, primarily research oriented or light industrial.
3. Promote the compatibility of industrial uses with adjacent uses and ensure proper buffering between the industrial and less intensive adjacent uses.
4. Ensure that the architecture, landscaping, and signage associated with industrial establishments is attractive and compatible with the established character of the City.
5. Emphasize access control and sensitive site design for all industrial development.
6. Redevelop any potential Brownfield sites.

### Policies:

1. Actively solicit high technology industrial development using a comprehensive development package addressing developer concerns.
2. Implement policies that require industrial uses that are located near existing residences to provide landscaping and other elements to minimize any potential conflict between the uses.
3. When expansion becomes necessary, provide land use opportunities for an additional or expanded industrial park.
4. Seek funding for the redevelopment of any Brownfield sites from the MDEQ.
5. Seek assistance and funding from the Federal, State, Regional, and Local sources for economic development.

## Transportation and Circulation Goals

To provide and maintain a safe, efficient transportation system that:

- Promotes accessibility throughout the community.
- Accommodates the vehicular transportation needs of Clare.
- Encourages the development of a multi-modal transportation system, including non-motorized travel throughout the community.

### Objectives:

1. Establish a transportation network that addresses the needs of Clare and the adjacent Townships.
2. Maintain the existing traditional grid pattern for future streets.
3. Recognize the need for alternative forms of circulation, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and encourage non-motorized trail development.
4. Discourage fast moving traffic through the Downtown area and redirect truck traffic around the Downtown through a truck bypass.
5. Provide comfortable, safe pedestrian movement throughout Clare and particularly in the Downtown.
6. Improve the function and appearance of local streets.
7. Encourage the implementation of shared parking facilities along US-10 and US-127.

### Policies:

1. Coordinate motorized transportation movement with the adjacent Townships, the Michigan Department of Transportation and the County Road Commissions, including a possible truck route around Downtown Clare.
2. Coordinate non-motorized bicycle and pedestrian transportation movements with the adjacent Townships, the Michigan Department of Transportation, the County Road Commissions, rail trail supporters, the Clare Public School Board, and the City to complete the extensive network envisioned for Clare.
3. Research and implement traffic calming measures for implementation in Downtown Clare.
4. Develop and improve pedestrian walks, where possible, to link uses such as shopping, offices, and residential areas to parks, open spaces, and activity centers.
5. Actively support the development of new regional pathways within the Clare area and ensure that the City becomes a hub for this emerging regional path network.
6. Evaluate diagonal parking on McEwan in the center of the Downtown with a “road diet” from four to three lanes while adding a center turn lane and evaluate the installation of parallel parking for one side of Fifth Street in the Downtown.

## Community and Recreational Facilities Goals

To provide a high level of quality, responsive services to City taxpayers in a manner that:

- Maintains current services and facilities through sound operation and efficient delivery practices.
- Improves and expands upon a range of services to support future population growth in a planned, effective manner.
- Provides adequate community recreation and park opportunities for all residents of the City.

### Objectives:

1. Maintain fiscal responsibility with regard to the maintenance and expansion of community facilities.
2. Maximize the efficient use of existing community facilities and encourage the addition to or reuse of community facilities in the Downtown which are consistent with the City's plan.
3. Investigate new land locations for future community facilities as opportunities arise.
4. Encourage the provision of all utilities with new construction by the developer.
5. Complete pedestrian and bicycle linkages between Clare's parks to assure a cohesive, linear open space and recreation system that is accessible to all residential neighborhoods.
6. Maintain a cooperative working agreement with surrounding communities, Townships and entities for the maximum efficiency of existing and future facilities.
7. Promote strong Police, Fire, Public Services, and Parks and Recreation Departments.
8. Promote an intelligent, creative public educational system that addresses the needs of the community.
9. Create year-round recreation and cultural center that houses indoor recreation facilities that includes a performing arts space.

### Policies:

1. Prepare and annually update a comprehensive capital improvements plan for City facilities and major equipment expenditures.
2. Require that adequate public infrastructure be in place prior to the initiation of any new residential, commercial or industrial land development, including road connections and sidewalks, as applicable.
3. Promote long term beautification of the City, and specifically the park system, with an effective maintenance and litter policy.
4. Improve the quality of existing facilities with equipment updates.
5. Ensure the City's Recreation Master Plan is updated as required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to maintain eligibility for grant funds.
6. Implement the recommendations of the City's Recreation Master Plan by actively pursuing grant opportunities.
7. Coordinate recreation program development and encourage cooperative use, development and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities between the City, Township, and Clare schools.
8. Provide the mechanism to complete the missing segment of the rails-to-trails linkage through Clare.

## Lake and Environment Goals

To provide for the protection and balanced use of the City's natural resources and environment in a manner that:

- Supports local property values.
- Maintains the natural beauty and character of the area.
- Addresses the ecology of the area in a sensitive manner.

### Objectives:

1. Encourage the preservation and enhancement of vegetation and trees while promoting the formation of an urban canopy to augment the City's overall character.
2. Coordinate planning efforts with the adjacent Townships to protect the Shamrock Lake, the South Tobacco River, and groundwater water quality.
3. Maintain and enhance the scenic value of Shamrock Lake and the South Tobacco River.
4. Promote responsible environmental practices in the community.
5. Encourage clustered residential development to preserve open space and viable agricultural areas.
6. Continue to encourage environmentally safe and cost-effective solid waste management systems, which include recycling, composting and other techniques which may further reduce the City's waste stream.
7. Preserve open space and recreational land where significant natural features and active farm land exists.

### Policies:

1. Require high quality landscaping for all developments.
2. Provide City administrative support to identify potential funding sources for the environmental de-siltation clean up of Lake Shamrock and assist with project implementation.
3. Require the preservation of lake viewsheds for all new construction along Lake Shamrock's shoreline.
4. Review all site development for control of runoff and minimization of erosion.
5. Maintain and improve open space along the lakefront.
6. Educate City residents about the ecology of inland lakes and streams and how various lake uses may affect surface water and groundwater environmental quality.
7. Work with the adjacent Townships and other entities to address environmental issues such as storm water drainage, runoff, and surface and groundwater quality related issues.



## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

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### **Introduction**

A key element to planning a community's future land use and community facility needs is an analysis of its demographic characteristics. This section includes discussions of trends in population characteristics, age structure and composition, and household composition, and their impacts on the City's demographics. The data and trends identified in the analysis of each factor provide a base from which to develop strategies to address the needs of Clare's residents. Due to the Master Plan encompassing the Grant Township Expansion area, datasets for these areas are included where possible.



## Population

The City of Clare is one of many small, older towns located throughout the heart of Michigan. These Michigan communities have experienced slow-downs in population growth, or decreases in population, in recent years. These changes mirror the demographic shifts taking place throughout many rural parts of the United States; however, several townships around Clare have recently experienced significant increases in population. It appears that the population is not necessarily slowing as much as sprawling out from the City of Clare. While Clare claimed nearly 14% of Clare County’s population in 1980, the 2010 Census reported that its share of County population had slipped to around 10% while adjacent Grant Township’s population has increased by more than a third in the same period and is now as populous as Clare.

The population of the City has fluctuated just above 3,000 people for the past forty years, (see Table 2.1 Total Population). After rapid growth in the 1960s and 1970s, Clare lost 279 people, 8.1% of its population, during the economic downturns of the 1980s. The City of Clare experienced slight population growth between 1990 and 2000. Due to the Great Recession and a national trend of declining birth rates, an aging population, reductions in household sizes, and shrinking of rural communities, the City of Clare has declined in population between 2000 and 2010 again.

**Table 2.1: Total Population** – City of Clare

Year	Population	Numerical Change	Percent Change
1960	2,442	—	—
1970	2,639	197	8.1%
1980	3,300	661	25.0%
1990	3,021	-279	-8.5%
2000	3,173	152	5.3%
2010	3,118	-55	-1.7%
2013*	3,795	677	21.7%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey and, McKenna Associates

\* Includes the Grant Township Expansion area

In 2008, the City of Clare and neighboring Grant Township entered into an Urban Cooperation Agreement where parts of or entire sections of Grant Township will be incorporated into Clare as these areas develop. Map 2.1 illustrates these areas of Grant Township that have been effectively annexed into the City of Clare for development and planning purposes. In 2009, an amendment to the Clare Master Plan titled “Master Plan Amendment – For the Grant Township Expansion Area” was adopted by Clare’s Planning Commission on November 11, 2009, and this Master Plan amendment includes this expansion area. In Table 2.1, the 2013 Total Population is an estimate by the U.S. Census, and it includes both the City of Clare and the Grant Township Expansion area. This data will help to track future changes brought about by the 2008 UCA with Grant Township.

Table 2.2, Population Trends, compares the number of people within the City of Clare to the population in nearby communities over time, illustrating a population growth pattern common throughout Michigan. Older cities and villages, such as Clare, have seen their populations remain fairly constant or decline, while Townships that previously had sparse predominately rural populations, such as Grant Township

and many other communities within Clare and Isabella Counties, have experienced high population growth rates over the past few decades. However, Vernon Township has not experienced such growth as a portion of the growth has been absorbed by boundary annexations by the City of Clare. Isabella County's population increase has primarily occurred in the Townships surrounding Mount Pleasant, and the County Master Plan recommends maintaining most of Vernon Township as very low density "agricultural conservation" or "rural conservation" land uses.

**Table 2.2: Population Trends – City of Clare and Surrounding Communities, 1980-2010**

Community	1980 Population	1990 Population	1980-1990 % Change	2000 Population	1990-2000 % Change	1980-2000 % Change	2010 Population
City of Clare	3,300	3,071	-8.5%	3,173	5.0%	-3.8%	3,118
Clare County	23,822	24,952	4.7%	31,252	25.2%	31.1%	30,926
Grant Township	2,227	2,636	18.4%	3,034	15.1%	36.2%	3,259
Isabella County	54,100	54,624	0.9%	63,351	16.0%	17.1%	70,616
Vernon Township	1,389	1,308	-5.8%	1,342	2.6%	-3.4%	1,369

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

### Household Size and Composition

According to the U.S. Census, the City of Clare grew by 151 households (12.29%) between 1990 and 2000 while contracting by 26 households (-1.9%) between 2000 and 2010. This decrease in the number of households in the City is not mirrored by the surround townships or counties, but this is consistent with statewide trends. Older and smaller communities were harder hit by the Great Recession's housing crisis that increased the number of vacant homes and homes that converted from owner occupied to renter. The number of households in the surrounding Townships and Counties also grew faster than population, as shown in Table 2.3, Number of Households by Community, below.

**Table 2.3: Community – City of Clare and Nearby Communities, 1990-2013**

Community	1990	2000	% Change	2010	2013
City of Clare	1,229	1,380	12.29%	1,354	1,620*
Clare County	9,698	12,686	30.8%	13,208	13,215
Grant Township	952	1,151	20.9%	1,251	*
Isabella County	17,591	22,425	27.5%	24,773	24,817
Vernon Township	458	488	6.6%	528	*

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, McKenna Associates

\* Includes the Grant Township Expansion area

Table 2.4, on the following page, illustrates that household sizes have been declining in Clare in a similar fashion as the State and Nation as a whole.



**Table 2.4: Average Household Size** – City of Clare and Surrounding Communities, 1990-2010

Community	1990 Persons per household	2000 Persons per household	% Change 1990-2000	2010 Persons per household
City of Clare	2.32	2.20	-5.1%	2.22
Clare County	2.54	2.42	-4.7%	2.36
Grant Township	2.75	2.62	-4.7%	2.59*
Isabella County	2.74	2.55	-6.9%	2.49
Vernon Township	2.86	2.68	-6.3%	2.57*
Michigan	2.66	2.56	-3.8%	2.49
United States	2.63	2.59	-1.5%	2.58

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, \*2010-14 ACS Estimates

As Table 2.5, Household Characteristics illustrates the make-up of families and households in the City of Clare changed significantly between 1990 and 2010. The number of total households in the City increased by 9.2% during this period while the number of family households has remained the same and married couple families declined. During the same period, individuals living alone or households in which not all members are related – has grown by 23.9%. Around one third of these people living alone are 65 years old or older, but most of the growth in single-person households was in people under the age of 65.

In 2010, one quarter of City households contained individuals 65 and older, and providing services and care to elderly residents is likely to remain a continuing concern including providing housing options tailored for this age group.



**Table 2.5: Household Characteristics**—City of Clare, 1990-2013,

Household Characteristics	1990 City	% of Total	2000 City	% of Total	1990-2000 Change	2010 City	2013 Clare and Grant Expansion
Total households	1,229	—	1,380	—	12.3%	1,354	1,620
Family households	764	62.1%	784	56.8%	2.6%	764	915
Married-couple family	548	44.6%	564	40.0%	2.9%	488	586
Female householder, no husband present	176	14.3%	180	13.0%	2.3%	213	—
Non-family households	465	37.8%	596	43.2%	28.2%	590	621
Householder living alone	414	33.7%	525	38.0%	26.8%	499	—
Householder 65 years and over	242	19.7%	245	17.8%	1.2%	177	—
Households with individuals under 18 yrs.	402	32.7%	433	31.4%	7.7%	429	—
Households with individuals 65 years and over	416	33.8%	426	30.9%	2.4%	334	—

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, \*McKenna Associates and 2013 American Community Survey available data

The age composition of the City of Clare population reflects larger trends in population and birth rates over the past few decades. As Table 2.6, Age Group Comparisons, illustrates, the City of Clare has a lower median age than Clare County as a whole, but higher numbers of seniors and children than Isabella County. Isabella County's population is difficult to compare to the City's or to Clare County's, as the presence of Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant draws a large student population to that community, skewing the median age downwards. The 2012 Isabella County Master Plan notes that most of the other communities in that County have median ages above the Statewide median of 38.9 years, similar to Clare County.

**Table 2.6: Age Group Comparisons** – City of Clare and Surrounding Counties, 2000-2013

Age	2000 City of Clare		2000 Clare County		2000 Isabella County		2010 City of Clare		Clare County	Isabella County	2013 City & Grant Expansion
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	Total	Total
Under 5 years	224	7.1%	1,815	5.8%	3,317	5.2%	256	8.2%	1,758	3,634	383
5 to 9 years	218	6.9%	2,145	6.9%	3,513	5.5%	204	6.5%	1,620	3,505	207
10 to 14 years	210	6.6%	2,293	7.3%	3,737	5.9%	186	6.0%	1,843	3,384	168
15 to 19 years	244	7.7%	2,144	6.9%	8,798	13.9%	190	6.1%	2,021	9,126	180
20 to 24 years	210	6.6%	1,436	4.6%	12,173	19.2%	282	9.0%	1,678	15,390	392
25 to 34 years	388	12.2%	3,412	10.9%	7,299	11.5%	407	13.1%	2,923	8,007	501
35 to 44 years	414	13.0%	4,368	14.0%	7,751	12.2%	348	11.2%	3,504	6,365	371
45 to 54 years	380	12.0%	4,203	13.4%	6,775	10.7%	370	11.8%	4,709	7,616	480
55 to 59 years	113	3.6%	2,039	6.5%	2,349	3.7%	212	6.8%	2,421	3,612	191
60 to 64 years	123	3.9%	1,999	6.4%	1,917	3.0%	135	4.3%	2,282	2,845	237
65 to 74 years	261	8.2%	3,196	10.2%	3,078	4.9%	189	6.1%	3,679	3,704	308
75 to 84 years	242	7.6%	1,725	5.5%	1,995	3.1%	206	6.6%	1,872	2,160	198
85 years and over	146	4.6%	477	1.5%	649	1.0%	133	4.3%	682	963	137
Median age (years)	37.2		40.5		25.1		36.1		39.5	25.1	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, McKenna Associates

### Racial Composition

The population of the City of Clare is close to homogeneous with respect to racial composition. In 1990, 98.3% of the population was white while in 2014, the American Community Survey estimates that the City is 94.8% white while the Grant Township Expansion area is 98.0% white. Clare County has a similar racial composition to the City, while Isabella County is slightly more diverse, with the Census categorizing 89.2% white, 3.4% American Indian, 2.4% black or African American, and 1.6% Asian.

### Education

Clare residents attained significantly improved basic education levels in 2010 than in 1990, according to Census statistics. Over 86.5% of City residents over 25 had earned a high school diploma in 2010, compared to only 74.7% in 1990, and the combined City and Grant Township Expansion area have similar educational attainment levels with slightly lower high school graduation rate but higher numbers of college graduates.

Educational achievement still lags behind Isabella County, as the University in Mount Pleasant boosts that community's education levels, as shown in Table 2.7, Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years and Older.



**Table 2.7: Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years and Older – 1990 - 2015**

Education Level	Cit of Clare			2015 City & Grant Expansion	2010 Clare County	2010 Isabella County	2010 State of Michigan
	1990	2000	2010				
Less than 9th grade	10.5%	5.8%	2.6%	5.3%	5.2%	3.2%	3.5%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	14.8%	13.1%	10.9%	10.2%	12.2%	7.6%	8.4%
High school graduate	33.8%	36.5%	44.0%	37.3%	40.8%	33.2%	31.5%
Some college, no degree	19.8%	21.5%	17.9%	18.4%	24.5%	23.0%	23.4%
Associate degree	7.8%	6.4%	6.7%	8.6%	7.1%	7.3%	8.1%
Bachelor's degree	8.0%	11.3%	9.3%	11.3%	6.1%	14.6%	15.5%
Graduate or professional degree	5.3%	5.4%	8.7%	8.0%	4.2%	14.6%	9.6%
Percent high school graduate or higher	74.7%	81.2%	86.5%	83.6%	82.6%	89.2%	88.0%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	13.3%	16.7%	18.0%	19.3%	10.3%	25.8%	25.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, McKenna Associates, ESRI 2015 Estimate

## Employment

The occupations of Clare’s residents are fairly similar to those held by residents of the surrounding counties, as shown in Table 2.8, Employment of Residents By Occupation and Industry, below. In 2014, Clare’s residents were somewhat more likely to be employed in service occupations and sales and office occupations than residents of the neighboring counties and Michigan. City of Clare exceeds the surrounding political divisions in both finance and insurance, real estate and rental and leasing and educational services, and health care and social assistance

Unfortunately, the area has recently suffered from the general downturn in Michigan’s economy. With the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reporting a statewide unemployment rate of 4.5% in November 2015, the most recent month for which data is available, Clare County suffered from 6.7% unemployment. Isabella County fared better, likely buffered by University-related employment, with an unemployment rate of only 3.7%. With the ongoing recovery from the Great Recession, the statewide employment picture has slowly been improving since 2009.

**Table 2.8: Employment of Residents by Occupation and Industry – City of Clare and Surrounding Counties**

OCCUPATION	Clare		Clare County		Isabella County		Michigan	
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1,195		10,289		32,795		4,293,574	
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	245	20.5%	2,303	22.4%	9,403	28.7%	1,490,512	34.7%
Service occupations	356	29.8%	2,450	23.8%	8,886	27.1%	789,547	18.4%
Sales and office occupations	340	28.5%	2,466	24.0%	8,572	26.1%	1,033,226	24.1%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	124	10.4%	1,288	12.5%	2,499	7.6%	332,116	7.7%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	130	10.9%	1,782	17.3%	3,435	10.5%	648,173	15.1%
<b>INDUSTRY</b>								
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1,195		10,289		32,795		4,293,574	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	9	0.8%	376	3.7%	1,106	3.4%	56,755	1.3%
Construction	26	2.2%	873	8.5%	1,253	3.8%	204,227	4.8%
Manufacturing	125	10.5%	1,349	13.1%	2,702	8.2%	746,413	17.4%
Wholesale trade	38	3.2%	188	1.8%	448	1.4%	105,437	2.5%
Retail trade	150	12.6%	1,268	12.3%	3,969	12.1%	491,344	11.4%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	37	3.1%	537	5.2%	977	3.0%	176,791	4.1%
Information	6	0.5%	128	1.2%	497	1.5%	68,697	1.6%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	117	9.8%	555	5.4%	1,513	4.6%	236,416	5.5%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	26	2.2%	508	4.9%	1,629	5.0%	398,271	9.3%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	397	33.2%	2,278	22.1%	9,408	28.7%	1,036,163	24.1%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	147	12.3%	1,190	11.6%	6,913	21.1%	406,413	9.5%
Other services, except public administration	78	6.5%	638	6.2%	1,180	3.6%	206,631	4.8%
Public administration	39	3.3%	401	3.9%	1,200	3.7%	160,016	3.7%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey

## Income

The annual household income of City residents is significantly lower than the average incomes of Clare County residents, Isabella County, and the State at large in 2014. This disparity across the Counties has likely continued since 2007, considering the difference in unemployment rates mentioned previously. With the statewide median household income at \$48,432, the Clare region is significantly lagging behind wealthier parts of the State, with Clare County having one of the lowest median incomes in the Lower Peninsula. In addition to unemployment, this lower income may be impacted by the labor participation rate in the area. Lower participation rates will negatively impact the average household income.

**Table 2.9: Annual Household Income** – City of Clare and surrounding Counties, 2014

Household Income	Clare City %	Clare County %	Isabella County %	State of Michigan %
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>3,118</b>	<b>13,145</b>	<b>24,804</b>	<b>3,843,997</b>
Less than \$10,000	21.6%	9.7%	15.4%	7.9%
\$10,000-\$14,999	14.9%	9.9%	8.2%	5.7%
\$15,000-24,999	11.9%	17.4%	13.0%	11.5%
\$25,000-\$34,999	10.9%	13.8%	11.6%	11.2%
\$35,000-\$49,999	14.4%	19.1%	14.0%	15.0%
\$50,000-\$74,999	8.9%	16.9%	16.9%	19.0%
\$75,000-\$99,999	8.6%	7.6%	9.4%	12.1%
\$100,000-149,999	7.3%	4.0%	8.0%	11.3%
\$150,000-199,999	0.8%	0.9%	2.0%	3.5%
\$200,000 or more	0.5%	0.6%	1.5%	2.8%
Median Income	<b>\$26,767</b>	<b>\$34,399</b>	<b>\$36,880</b>	<b>\$48,432</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey

In 2014, 28.8% of Clare families were below the poverty line, compared to 12.1% statewide. Of graver concern is that 58.6% of families with children under 5 years old had incomes fall below the poverty line. A somewhat lower portion of Clare County's families as a whole fell below the poverty line in 2014 while Isabella County's population more closely followed the statewide average, as shown in Table 2.10, Families with Incomes In Past 12 Months Is Below the Poverty Level.

**Table 2.10: Percentage of Families whose Incomes in Past 12 Months is below the Poverty Level** – City of Clare and Surrounding Counties, 2014

	City of Clare	Clare County	Isabella County	Michigan
All families	28.8%	21.3%	15.3%	12.1%
Families with related children under 18	46.5%	40.8%	24.2%	20.1%
Families with related children under 5	58.6%	45.5%	32.9%	23.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey

## Population Projections

Population in the City of Clare grew very slowly in the period from 1990 to 2000 and has been on the decline since then. Considering current economic and demographic trends in the State of Michigan, it is reasonable to expect only slow growth, and possibly even a loss of population in the immediate future.

Earlier Master Plan estimates that have predicted growth are now seen to be extremely optimistic while the 2007 plan that illustrated modest decline has proven to be more accurate. The City's 1999 Master Plan predicted that the population could reach 4,400 by 2020, using a 1996 estimated population of 3,475, a forecast of Clare County's population growing 48% from 1990 to 2020, and an assumption that the City of Clare would grow at a similar rate to Clare County over that period. Considering that the 2000 Census and 2004 Census estimated population significantly lower than the 1996 estimate, and that the City grew at only one fifth the rate of the County's growth from 1990 to 2000, the 1999 Master Plan grossly over-estimated the region's growth. Table 2.11 illustrates three growth models, and the two estimates with modest growth or small declines will likely be more accurate.

The information on the previous pages reveals a number of parameters that could affect City population growth in future years. There are many macroeconomic, social, and political factors in play that are affecting the population growth in Michigan. Native-born population shifts in the United States are tending to move to warmer climates in the South and Southwest, while the Plains, Midwest, and Northeast are seeing declines. The Mountain region has seen large population increases in the last twenty years as younger populations have been moving to those areas for perceived Quality of Life advantages.

Immigration has been a large determinate of growth in the United States over the course of the last 150 years, but the in-flow of immigrants has slowed due mainly to geo-political issues that have controlled the number of immigrants allowed. Michigan with its economy transitioning from a manufacturing base to a more service orientated base is no longer an immigrant destination, and it has only be receiving a modest portion of new residents. Census projections for Michigan show modest growth over the next 20 years.

Local population growth in the Clare region will likely be driven by more microeconomic activities. Central Michigan University is driving much of the economic activity in Isabella County with spill-over potential into Clare County as a great opportunity. Sprawl has been having a large impact upon the Quality of Life in Mount Pleasant, and Clare has a great opportunity to capture Mount Pleasant area residents who want to live in a smaller town without all of the growth and congestion.

Population growth projections are prepared on the assumption that current demographic trends and land use policies will continue. Linear regression analysis uses historical population data to determine trends, and uses those trends to project future growth. Table 2.11, Population Projections, below, presents three projections of future population, two based on regression analyses of population data. The first estimate includes past data from 1960 to 2010, taken from the U.S. Census and U.S. Census estimates. This projection indicates continued growth of almost 550 people over the next 25 years, reaching a population of 3,687 by 2040 – an increase of 18.2% from the 2010 Census population.

The second estimate takes into consideration that most of the growth in that period occurred before 1980, and that national and state-level economic and demographic conditions have changed drastically from the 1960s and 1970s. This second estimate uses only the Census data from 1980 to 2010, as an attempt to define these more recent trends. This projection indicates a lower future population, and estimates that



the City's population will in fact slightly decline, reaching 2,976 in the year 2040, a reduction of 4.6% over the next 25 years. MDOT's population estimate illustrates a population decline through 2020 with very modest growth to 2040, at a .9% increase.

These three estimates can be taken together to provide a range within which the future population can be expected to fall. The Growth example is retained for illustrative purposes only as most all demographers now expect Michigan to only slowly grow over the next 25 years or more. The forecasts indicate that, barring significant changes from recent economic and demographic trends or changes to land use policy in Clare, the City's population will probably change only very slightly in the near future either modestly increasing or decreasing over the next 25 years.

With the 2008 Urban Cooperation Agreement with Grant Township in place, these projections will be affected because they are designed with the municipal boundaries remaining the same. Until 2008, most of the growth around the City of Clare occurred in parts of urbanizing Grant Township. Now and into the future, most of this growth will be taking place within the expanding City of Clare so the demographic estimates will be skewed as the City's boundaries will be expanding to include much of this new development. Density within the City will likely continue to stagnate or modestly decline while the City will be responsible for extending its utilities and services into the Grant Township Expansion area. This expansion will impact the cost of services and should be carefully watched over the next twenty-five years.

**Table 2.11: Population Projections – City of Clare**

Year	Projected Population (1960-2010 trend)	Projected Population (1980-2010 trend)	Projected Population (MDOT Estimate)
2010	3,118	3,118	3,071
2015	3,351	3,074	3,047
2020	3,419	3,055	3,057
2025	3,486	3,035	3,068
2030	3,554	3,015	3,078
2035	3,621	2,995	3,089
2040	3,687	2,976	3,099
<b>% Change 2010 to 2040</b>	18.2%	-4.6%	0.9%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; McKenna Associates, Inc., M-DOT



# Map 1 Grant Township Expansion Area





## HOUSING ANALYSIS

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### **Introduction**

This chapter of the Master Plan analyzes the City’s housing stock and development trends, and provides projections for new housing construction. This information will serve as a guide for the formulation of the Future Land Use Plan. A comprehensive plan for the future is vital to the preservation and improvement of the City’s neighborhoods and housing stock. The plan will create opportunities for revitalization, growth and new development, while preserving Clare’s special character.

This chapter provides an in depth analysis using detailed housing data, relying extensively on the U. S. Census Bureau, City Assessment records, the City’s building permit records, and other data sources. Specifically, this chapter analyzes the following housing characteristics:

- Type of Housing
- Age of Housing
- Value of Housing
- Affordability of Housing



## Type of Housing

Since being identified in the 2006 Master Plan, the housing trend towards multi-unit and rental developments continues. 2010 U.S. Census estimates only 50.5 percent of the 1,442 housing units in the City of Clare were conventional single-family, detached units. The housing unit mix is shown in Table 3.1. Housing with three (3) or more units continues to be the second most predominant type of housing, with Mobile Homes and Duplex housing a distant third and fourth. Since 1990, the single-family housing unit type has continued to lose percentage, while the multiple family, (three (3) or more units), housing type has continued to gain. By adding in the 2013 housing statistics from the Grant Township Expansion area, the trend away from single family housing is only slightly moderated. The relative percentage of three or more unit structures, 38.7% in Clare, is significantly greater than both Clare County at 4.2% and the State of Michigan percentage at 15.3%. Along with the decrease in the single unit housing type in Clare, the City has experienced a decrease in the percentage of owner occupied housing units from 1990 to 2010 with 51.1% owner occupied housing units in 1990 dropping to 47.6% in 2010 (See Table 3.2 below). During the same time period, Clare had a corresponding increase in the relative percentage of renter occupied housing from 40.7% in 1990 to 52.4% in 2010.



The number and percentage of housing units that were vacant in 1990 and 2000 varied slightly from 110 units to 107 units while this number significantly jumped to 185 units in 2010. Vacancies were found in both rental units and units intended for owner-occupancy. There are a significant number of rental units in the central portion of the City, primarily on the west side of McEwan Street, just south of the Lake Petit Park. Clare County's vacancy rate increased only 1.7% from 2000 to 2010 (42.9% to 44.2%) where this high rate represents a large number of seasonal vacation homes. The State of Michigan saw it's vacancy rate climb from 10.6% to 14.6%. during the same period.

**Table 3.1: Housing Units – City of Clare, 1990-2013**

Category	1990		2000		2010		2013*	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
1 Unit (attached & detached)	845	63.2%	833	56.0%	802	50.5%	968	54.8%
2 Units	56	4.2%	77	5.2%	101	6.4%	26	1.5%
3 Units or more	323	24.1%	483	32.5%	558	37.0%	619	35.1%
Mobile Homes	97	7.2%	94	6.3%	97	6.1%	152	8.6%
Other (Boat, RV, Van, etc.)	17	1.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>1,338</b>		<b>1,487</b>		<b>1,442</b>		<b>1,765</b>	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000, 2010, American Community Survey, and McKenna Associates.



**Table 3.2: Housing Characteristics, Ownership** – City of Clare, 1990 - 2010

Category	1990		2000		2010	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Owner Occupied	683	51.1 %	722	48.6%	688	47.6%
Renter Occupied	545	40.7%	658	44.2%	735	52.4%
Vacant	110	8.2%	107	7.2%	185	11.6%
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>1,338</b>		<b>1,487</b>		<b>1,608</b>	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000, American Community Survey

### Age of Housing

Table 3.3 provides a snapshot of the age of housing in the City of Clare, organized primarily by decade. Most of the housing units in the City were constructed prior to 1990, with the median year of construction being 1966. There are areas of two story homes over 60 years of age close to Downtown that would be ripe for renovation and preservation. The area just west of McEwan Street south of the railroad comprised primarily of smaller, clapboard ranch homes in an area affectionately called “Dogpatch” has seen several homes recently being renovated.

A significant number of homes were built around Lake Shamrock at the end of the 20th Century. Many homeowners chose to build in this area due to proximity to the lake, while some chose the area just outside of the City boundaries to take advantage of the lower tax rates in Grant Township. Prior to the Great Recession, Clare had a new residential development just east of Downtown on land that was once a nursery. The housing development, called White’s Subdivision, still has several available housing sites.

Also of note is the significant area of multiple family rental housing in the area just south of the river and west of McEwan Street. These structures are, for the most part, large, two story sided structures with exterior access to the units. A ranch-style affordable rental development is also located in this area with seniors occupying many of the single story housing development units. There are no condominium developments whatsoever within the City limits and few downtown housing units are located on the second stories of the commercial buildings.

Based upon the City of Clare’s City Clerk records, twenty new housing units have been built since 2000. Since 2009, only two new units have been built. This information does not directly correlate to the information provided in Table 3.3—a compilation of responses from the U.S. Census—nor does it include the multi-family units. The significant decrease in the number of new housing units since 2000 is likely a reflection of the finite amount of available land for single-family development within the City and the general weakness of the rural Michigan economy.

**Table 3.3: Housing Construction by Decade Age – City of Clare, 2010**

Years	Number of Housing Units	% of Total
<b>2005 or later</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1.9%</b>
2000 to 2004	0	0.0
1990 to 1999	78	4.9%
1980 to 1989	367	23.1%
1970 to 1979	377	23.7%
1960 to 1969	178	11.2%
1950 to 1959	146	9.1%
1940-1949	165	10.3%
1939 or earlier	228	14.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,588</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010

### Value of Housing

Home value is important both to homeowners and to local governments. For the homeowner, a house is generally the household’s largest single investment. For local governments, residential property tax is one of their primary income sources.

Clare has seen a significant loss in the value of owner-occupied housing. The median value for owner-occupied units was \$47,600 in 1990, \$78,500 in 2000, \$107,500 in 2010, dropping to \$93,500 in 2014. According to the American Community Survey, the lowest year was 2012 at \$89,700. While the median home value data from the Census is valuable, it does not distinguish between the different types of housing available in the City of Clare. Clare’s housing ranges from historic houses to new single-family development, and includes both new and older housing areas. There are varied neighborhoods with different styles of housing and different development patterns within the City as a whole. The 2014 American Community Survey reported home values ranging from less than \$50,000 to \$299,999. Forty-one percent of homes were valued between \$50,000 and \$99,999 while thirty percent were valued between \$100,000 and \$149,999 with only about 3% of the homes were valued more than \$200,000. In the Grant Township Expansion Area, the median value was \$100,962 in 2013 with twice the number of homes valued over \$150,000 than in Clare proper – 26% to 13%.

Table 3.4 indicates that for all residential properties, assessment values have significantly declined since 2006. Impacts of the Great Recession continued to negatively impact the housing values through 2014 when residential assessments began to slowly increase. There was a 2.98% increase in residential assessed values from 2014 to 2015.

**Table 3.4: Residential Properties / Assessed and Taxable Growth**  
 — City Of Clare, 2006 - 2015

Growth	2006	2015	% Increase 2006 to 2015
Residential Assessment	44,425,200	37,519,700	-15.5%
Residential Taxable	34,605,314	35,462,530	2.5%

Source: City of Clare Assessing

While the value of housing has started to increase once again, these values will take a significant period of time to recover to pre Great Recession levels. These reductions affect both the home owner and the City. Municipal income growth is significantly restrained through Michigan’s Headlee Amendment that limits the increases in total taxable value that the City may retain as property values increase. The Economic Analysis in Section 8 of this plan will discuss these impacts further.

### Housing Affordability

As the median home value rose from \$47,600 in 1990 to \$93,500 in 2014, the median household income has stagnated in the last fifteen years. In 1990, the median income was \$17,861 growing to \$27,299 in 2000, but it has declined to \$26,767 in 2014. The median home value has significantly outpaced median household income growth in the 1990 to 2014 period. The affordability factor can be analyzed as the ratio of household income to the cost of buying a house. The higher the ratio, the less affordable it is for someone to become a homeowner.

The 2000 Census reported a median home value of \$78,500, or 2.875 times the median household income. In 2014, this ratio has increased to 3.493 times value-to-income. This value-to-income ratio now significantly exceeds the United States’ historically average of 2.6 price-to-income ratio, clearly illustrating a lack of affordability as cost of housing in Clare has risen while income has stagnated. According to a 2013 Forbes Magazine article, Boston and Sacramento had similar housing affordability ratios.

This affordability issue is a concern as it illustrates a hardship for an increasing number of residents, and it maybe a reason for the higher number of renters to owners in the community than State and National averages. Housing unaffordability may prevent growing families from moving to larger homes or may prevent renters from becoming homeowners. During the term of a home loan, homeowners are building equity as they pay off their loans and their houses become assets, which isn’t true for renters.

Data is also available from the 2014 American Community Survey Census on homeowner costs and gross rent paid as a percentage of household income. Gross rent includes mortgage, property tax, and utility costs. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development considers housing to be “affordable” if a household pays no more than 30% of its income on these costs. According to the 2000 census, only 13% of owner households paid more than 30% of their income on selected monthly owner housing costs. In 2014, this number had increased to 26.9% of the owner households with gross rents exceeded the number. Of renter households, 32.8% paid more than 30% of their income on housing costs in 2000 while the number increased to 55.2% in 2014. Both the owner occupied and renter households in Clare have high rates of home unaffordability.



## **Residential Development Considerations**

A number of factors are important when considering the City's potential for future population and housing stock growth.

### **Land Availability**

In reaching its 2008 agreement to expand the municipal borders into Grant Township, the City of Clare addressed one of the concerns identified in the 2007 Master Plan. The City now has significant land available for new residential development.

Clare does have several unique residential opportunities Downtown. Within its commercial core, there is a significant amount of space above the businesses for loft-style housing accommodations. This type of housing is desirable for both millennials and active seniors.

The Clare Castle senior development has illustrated a success model of developing senior housing in Downtown Clare. Centrally locating seniors is a tremendous benefit for local service providers and the seniors alike. The central location means the seniors are able to live independently longer while being near to desired services including the library, post office, restaurants, hospital, doctor's offices, coffee shops, etc. Section 2 Demographics clearly illustrates that Clare has a large number of households over 65 years of age. Both the demographic analysis and Clare Castle's waiting list illustrate senior housing demand far outpacing supply.

### **Utility and Public Service Capacity**

Clare has a wide range of public services as discussed in Section 5. The City has a full time Police, Fire and Public Works Department in place and an excellent school system. If future residential population growth occurs, these services can be expanded with the additional tax revenues.

### **Transportation System**

Clare is a pleasant, walkable community with sidewalks, bike trails and a vibrant Downtown that has most of the everyday commercial services within its boundaries. The 2014 American Community Survey states that the mean travel time to work is 22.1 minutes and 77.9% of the workers drove alone. With Mt. Pleasant only 15 miles away, it is expected that a large number of residents do commute out of Clare for work.

Additionally, Clare is serviced by a county bus transit system and a highly efficient highway system. US-127 runs north and south along the eastern boundary of the City and US-10 runs east and west through Clare. The future development of residential on the edge of the City should be closely tied to the capacity and development of the road and non-motorized transportation networks to ensure that the new residential areas are safely and directly connected to the Downtown by both systems. Transportation is further analyzed in Section 6.

### **Environmental Quality**

Environmental protection and preservation should be of primary concern whenever development is proposed in Clare. Residential development can negatively impact the recharge rate of underground aquifers and increase the rate of storm water run-off and the risk of groundwater contamination, if it is not carefully monitored. The soil erosion caused by the storm water run-off in turn causes the natural water system to silt up, thus polluting the streams and lakes. Lake Shamrock has been significantly impacted by silt accretion.

Development that removes massive woodlands can destabilize the soil, remove native habitats, increase ambient temperatures, decrease the effective air cleansing power of the trees and destroy the natural beauty of the community. In the interest of protecting the environmental quality of the City, Clare should consider regulations such as woodland, wetland, and agricultural ordinances that would regulate new development, residential or otherwise, in order to restrict development in sensitive groundwater recharge and ecological areas. Environmental regulations serve to protect valuable natural features which in term increase the residential housing value.

### **Efficiency of Development Patterns**

Efficient development patterns should be considered as well for all future residential housing. Municipal public services can be delivered much more efficiently and cost effectively where development is compact. Large lot development on suburban lots is the most costly type of development to provision with public services, such as public sewer and water service, roads, policing, and fire coverage, because more public infrastructure is needed for each housing unit. The existing traditional, compact residential development pattern in Clare is efficient and should be extended into the Grant Township Expansion areas. When negotiations are underway with developers to be serviced by the City in areas that fall under the 2008 Grant Township UCA, more compact development patterns should be required.

Clare should also consider, however, developing alternative housing such as condominium, townhouse and mixed-use type development within the City and particularly within the Downtown area. Updating of the City's zoning ordinance is necessary to ensure that these types of development are permitted as a right instead of requiring time consuming special approvals.

## **Conclusions**

In the past few years, residential growth in the City of Clare has stagnated. The current economic realities are having significant impacts upon many of the community's homeowners and renters. Opportunities do exist however. In the Downtown district, alternative residential housing choices suited for downtown living should be encouraged. In other communities, demand for this type of housing is often outpacing traditional suburban-style developments. With land now available in the Grant Township Expansion area, those interested in traditional suburban housing choices but located near a small quaint town can also be accommodated.





## EXISTING LAND USE

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### **General Overview**

The general pattern of land use in the City of Clare has been formed by several key parameters, including the abundance of natural woodland resources in the vicinity, the presence of the railroad and its proximity at the crossroads of transportation corridors to the north and west. Clare began as a lumbering town due to the abundance of natural pine forests around the City. The lumbering industry necessitated railroad tracks to transport the timber products to markets in more densely populated communities. Downtown Clare began as a center to service the timber industry but with the rail transportation came new residents, farmers, merchants and visitors.

In the late 19th and early 20th century, Clare's community and civic land uses grew and clustered together along McEwan Street, which developed as the City's main street.

In the mid-20th century, the South Tobacco River was dammed creating Lake Shamrock. With creation of the lake and with easy railroad and highway access, Clare became a destination for summer tourists to enjoy the scenic north country. At the juncture of two highways, US-10 and US-127, Clare is still a stopping point today for many visitors as they head to northern Michigan on holiday.



Clare historically developed without any significant pressures from its surrounding urban centers. The closest communities of size are Mt. Pleasant and Harrison. Located approximately 15 miles south of Clare, Mt. Pleasant is the home of Central Michigan University and the Saginaw Chippewa Soaring Eagle Casino. Harrison, the county seat of Clare County, is located about the same distance to the north of Clare. The closest village to the west is Farwell and to the east is Coleman with the City of Midland approximately 32 miles to the southeast. The land in between these town centers is primarily returning forest or agricultural land.

Clare, with its substantial resources, supplies much of its own commercial and retail services, utilities, schools, and health care. With a portion of the area residents working in Mt. Pleasant, some commercial and retail services are obtained in Mt. Pleasant. Due to the presence of a variety of large big-box stores, some comparison shopping also occurs there as well. Residents may also travel to Mt. Pleasant for university classes and casino entertainment and Harrison for County court functions.

## Transportation Corridors

The major transportation corridors of US-127, M-115, and the railroads have had a significant impact on the development patterns. The Existing Land Use Map on page 4 – 6 indicates that most of the commercial growth has historically centered along McEwan Street (Business US-127). Some commercial uses and the majority of the traditional industrial development are concentrated in the area along what was once the Pere Marquette Railroad, the east-west railroad, in the City. The south side industrial park was developed at the end of the 20th Century, bringing industrial uses to the southeast corner of the City, and a new north side industrial park was developed in the early 2010s near the interchange of US-10/US-127/McEwan Street.

Accessibility to the regional transportation network of US-10, US-127 and to a lesser extent the railroads will continue to be an important development consideration, as businesses rely on the delivery of goods to and from remote locations and some Clare residents use the network to reach employment and entertainment.

The extensive grid network of local roads existing in Clare has condensed residential development on modest size lots with easy access to commercial and industrial development, either by car or by foot. These residential areas are within easy walking



distance of community facilities and natural resources amenities like the Tobacco River and Lake Shamrock. With the growth of bicycling tourism, the Pere Marquette Trail will influence the future development of service establishments like restaurants and shops for people utilizing the trail.

## Existing Land Use

The City of Clare conducted a property survey in the winter of 2015-16 to identify where changes had occurred since McKenna Associates completed windshield surveys to observe existing land uses in the City of Clare in May 2006 and in preparation for the 2009 Master Plan for the Grant Township Expansion area. From this data, an Existing Land Use map was prepared to show the relative locations of various uses. The following section presents the results of the existing land use analysis.

**Table 4.1: Existing Land Use**—City of Clare and Grant Township, 2016

Existing Land Use	Sum Acres	% Total
Agricultural	1,504.57	28.16%
Single Family Residential	1,285.02	24.05%
Multiple Family Residential	59.88	1.12%
Commercial	366.18	6.85%
Industrial	197.59	3.70%
Public/ Semi Public	644.70	12.07%
Vacant	1,200.36	22.47%
Water	84.70	1.59%
Total	5,343.00	100.00%

Reference: Existing Land Use Map

## Land Use Categories

1. **Agricultural:** Agricultural lands are large parcels of land actively used for commercial agricultural purposes. With the inclusion of the Expansion area, this land use greatly increases. This land use classification includes 1513.23 acres of land for a total of 28.03% of the total area of the City.
2. **Single Family Residential:** Single Family Residential land uses are improved single land parcels or portions of parcels having a one family detached dwelling unit. The residential land use category includes acreage parcels and subdivision-style lots. Large concentrations of existing homes are found in the Expansion area to the north and west of the City limits. Single Family Residential is 1359.92 acres for a total of 25.19% of the City
3. **Multiple Family Residential:** Multiple Family Residential land uses are improved land parcels occupied in whole or in part by structures containing dwelling units for two (2) or more households including duplexes, flats, apartments, row houses, terrace dwellings, nursing homes and mobile home parks but excluding commercial dwellings such as hotels, motels and campgrounds. These more intensive residential uses are located primarily in the area just south of the Tobacco River and Lake Shamrock but there are also multiple family dwellings on the far east and west side of the City. This category includes 61.22 acres and 1.13% of the total area of Clare.
4. **Commercial/Office:** Commercial/Office land uses are improved land areas and buildings where products, goods or services are sold or used for professional services, such as medical and dental centers, financial institutions, professional offices and business offices. These uses are concentrated along McEwan Street in the Downtown area and near the US-10/US-127/McEwan Street interchange. The area occupied by Commercial/Office use is 373.17 acres or 6.91% of the total City of Clare area.
5. **Industrial:** Industrial land uses are parcels devoted to the assembling, fabricating, manufacturing, packaging, warehousing or treatment of products, wholesaling, storage and/or servicing of heavy equipment. The industrial land uses are primarily located in two industrial parks, one at the southeast corner of the City and the other just east of the US-10/US-127/McEwan Street intersection with a limited amount of industrial located adjacent to the railroad tracks. Industrial land comprises 201.73 acres or 3.74% of the City area.
6. **Public/Semi-Public:** Public land is comprised of areas and facilities that are publicly operated and available to be used by the general public. Public uses include public schools, government buildings, public recreation facilities, City-owned cemeteries, and parks. The City Hall and other municipal buildings fall into this category. Semi-Public land uses include land and accessory facilities that are privately owned or operated, used by a particular group of persons, and do not have profit as their principal intent such as churches, private clubs, parochial schools, sports clubs, private air landing strips, and similar uses. Public and Semi-Public land includes 603.70 acres or 11.18% of the Clare area (church category in Grant Expansion area must be added to this classification).
7. **Vacant:** Land not used for any active use defined above, including farming. Vacant land includes woodland and wetland areas as well as open, uncultivated, undeveloped, uninhabited and unused space. Vacant land accounts for the 1,200.52 acres or 22.24% of City area.
8. **Water:** The Water land use category is comprised of the large water bodies named on the Existing Land Use Map. These water bodies include the Tobacco River and Lake Shamrock. Water area in Clare equals 84.7 acres or 1.57% of the City.

## Map 2 Existing Land Use

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## Land Use Issues

This analysis has uncovered several land use issues which affect the quality of life, function and attractiveness of the community.

### Multiple Family Developments

One issue of concern raised during the Stakeholder sessions is the development of large parcels of land as Multiple Family rental developments. Clare currently has over 32.5 percent of the housing units now consisting of multiple family dwellings, 3 units or more and over, with more in the planning stages. Clare has 220.14 acres zoned for Multiple Family use throughout the community and many of those acres are not yet developed. This current pattern of vacant land use that is zoned for future Multiple Family Residential development should be examined carefully and perhaps modified on the Future Land Use Map to align with the desire of the community to reduce the percentage of Multiple Family development in Clare.

### Transportation Relationships and Land Use

Clare is at the intersection of two major highways US-10 and US-127. These transportation routes bring many people in close range to Downtown Clare. The corridors provide opportunities for the City to draw people off the expressway and into the community. The four gateway areas into the community from the highways and M-115 currently are not distinctive or particularly attractive.

These four gateway locations could potentially improve the visibility of the Downtown. The establishment of gateway areas will require thoughtful planning and design by defining the character of Clare in a positive light. On the flip side, an increase in traffic volume from the expressway interchanges will require careful management to ensure the Downtown maintains its small town, pedestrian-friendly environment.

With the new commercial development at the City's north end, there will likely be a significant increase in traffic in this area. A visual and physical disconnect between the Downtown and the north end exists and must be addressed. Developing the connection will help to bring shoppers and travelers into the Downtown from this expanding development area. Wayfinding signage and streetscape enhancements should be utilized to bridge the gap between the two districts.

Currently, there are periods during the day when traffic becomes relatively heavy at the main Downtown intersection, especially with trucks trying to make the necessary turns at the intersection of Fifth Street and S. McEwan Avenue. The development at the north end will likely exacerbate to this situation, and steps should be taken through traffic light timing modifications, truck routing changes, and physical improvements to the intersection to alleviate this issue.

### Relationship to Surrounding Adjacent Townships and Development

Clare has a professional working relationship with the surrounding Townships. Clare has two 425 agreements in place including a 2008 Urban Cooperative Agreement that included all or parts of twelve sections of land in Grant Township adjacent to the City. This 2008 agreement envisions additional Single Family developments as well as other commercial and industrial uses to be developed in the Grant Township Expansion area. The 425 agreements can be mutually beneficial with the proper zoning ordinance regulations in place. Because Grant Township is unzoned, the City of Clare should prepare a zoning plan that addresses this new situation that the City will be zoning portions of township land as they are developed and come

under the requirements of the Urban Cooperative Agreement. This action will require amendments to the City of Clare's Zoning Ordinance to add new districts including Agricultural, Rural Residential, High Density Residential, and Regional Commercial while making modifications to other districts.

### **Protection of Natural Features and Agriculture Uses**

Clare has remaining natural woodland and wetland areas within the City boundaries that help define Clare as the gateway to Michigan's "Up North" country. As these remaining parcels are developed, the natural features will be altered and the community's up-north character will be diminished. The City currently does not regulate natural features such as woodlands and wetlands so the challenge will be to develop general guidelines that will achieve the proper balance between new development and the preservation of the natural features. The Grant Township Expansion area has significant portions of agricultural land that should be developed in a rational pattern that reduces sprawling non-compact development that is resource intensive to serve.

### **New Commercial and Industrial Development at City's North End**

An emerging commercial node is developing on the northern edge of the City at the intersection of US-10/US-127/McEwan Street with the City's northern Industrial Park to its east. These new developments will significantly alter what has been vacant or rural land while bringing new vehicular traffic in this area including heavy trucks. Buffering between the intensive commercial and industrial uses to the surrounding less intensive residential uses will be necessary. Linkages, both non-motorized and visual, must be made with the older parts of Clare.

### **Connectivity and Recreational Land**

The Grant Township Expansion area has significant developable land, but there are limited linkages east and west from Clare proper into Grant Township. This is due in part to the US-127 freeway on the City's eastern boundary and the S. Tobacco River on the west side. Solutions to address this lack of connectivity in the form of new vehicular and non-motorized paths should be evaluated and then action steps taken to correct these connectivity gaps.

There are also no recreational lands currently under development for the Grant Township Expansion area while new residential developments are anticipated. As the City takes new lands under its control as part of its agreement with Grant Township, it should take active steps to provide new recreational options for these residents.



## COMMUNITY AND RECREATION FACILITIES

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### Introduction

A primary purpose of municipal government is delivery of services designed for the health, safety, and welfare of the local population. The City of Clare has numerous quality community facilities that serve both City residents as well as the surrounding Townships. The responsibility of providing these services is shared by several public entities. Administrative services, recreation, utilities, roads, public infrastructure and other services are provided and/or managed by the City, Clare and Isabella Counties, Clare Public Schools, various other public agencies, and partnerships among these agencies. The City is committed to ensuring ha the facilities under its control are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant and seeks to bring such facilities into compliance as they are renovated or as funding becomes available to do so.

This inventory groups community facilities into the following categories:

- Government Facilities
- Social and Cultural Facilities
- Public Utilities
- Parks and Recreation Facilities
- Public School Facilities
- Hospital

## **Government Facilities**

### **City Hall**

The City of Clare municipal offices are located at 202 West Fifth Street, one block west of McEwan Street. The City Hall, built in 1932, consists of two floors of approximately 3,600 square feet each. Within this space, there are six (6) full time and two (2) part time employees providing general City services, including the Manager, Clerk, Finance Director/Treasurer, Director of Public Works, Parks and Recreation Department, and part-time Assessor. A small meeting room is located on each floor of the City Hall.

Renovations in the 1960s and 1970s changed the façade of the building from its historical appearance. Needed changes to the facility include increased meeting space, restoration of the original exterior, renewed infrastructure including communications networks, and floor plan improvements.

### **Public Safety Facility**

Both the Police Department and the Fire Department share a Public Safety building at 207 W. Fifth Street between Beech and Maple Streets. This location is immediately adjacent to Clare Memorial Park in the center of Downtown. This utilitarian building is aging and is not an appropriate structure for one of the primary entrances into the City's Downtown district.

### **Police Department**

Police service is provided to the City by the Clare Police Department. The Police Department maintains a 24-hour coverage of the City with at least one officer on patrol at all times. Mutual aid agreements with the Clare County and Isabella County Sheriff Departments ensure a high level of service for the City and surrounding areas. City Police Department staffing includes eight full-time officers including a chief and school liaison officer, five part-time officers, and several auxiliary/reserve officers. Current facility needs include larger storage areas for uniforms, equipment, and extra supplies.

### **Fire Department**

The Clare Fire Department provides emergency services to 108 square miles around the City of Clare, including all of Grant and Sheridan Townships in Clare County and portions of Vernon and Wise Townships in Isabella County. A millage of 1.1 mills is assessed in all of these areas and is dedicated to operations. The department utilizes pay-on-call firefighters for staffing. The station holds several fire protection vehicles, including two Class 'A' pumper trucks, a 1,800-gallon water tender, a 76' ladder platform, and two field fire units. The Fire Department maintains mutual aid agreements with both the Clare County and Isabella County Fire Departments.

### **Department of Public Works**

The physical infrastructure of the City is often the most apparent gauge of the quality and effectiveness of local government. Responsibility for maintenance of City property, facilities, and equipment is charged to the Department of Public Works (DPW). The DPW garage is located on Maple Street, on the south side of the City. Current facilities are adequate, but available land contiguous to the garage may need to be acquired to provide space for future growth of the Department. Co-locating the DPW garage with a new police and fire department joint facility should be considered.

The DPW currently maintains all public water systems, sanitary sewer systems, and storm drains throughout the City. Due to some concerns regarding long-term water



supply capacity, the City has just initiated an evaluation of its existing water supply system to ensure sufficient future capacity. Potential options will be publicly vetted before any improvements are made. The department also maintains the Cherry Grove Cemetery and services all City vehicles and equipment. All road and sidewalk maintenance, repair and construction, and snow removal for City-owned streets are provided by the DPW. This department also oversees the City's utility billing, yard waste collection, and brush chipping service, and manages the trash contract for garbage and curbside recycling collection.

### Post Office

The historic post office building is located Downtown on the southwest corner of Fifth and McEwan Streets. The building contains Depression-era murals, painted as part of Worker's Progress Administration federal work program. These murals represent a significant cultural and historical asset to the City and should be maintained in good condition.

### Library

A new Pere Marquette District Library was completed 2008 on 4<sup>th</sup> Street, just east of McEwan in the heart of the Downtown. The facility includes reading rooms, computer room, separate children and teen areas, barrier-free access, and community meeting space.

### Airport

The City of Clare operates the Clare Municipal Airport in the northeastern quadrant of the City. It is a general aviation airport with two runways. Runway 22 is 3500 feet long running in the SW NE direction while Runway 27 is 2,500 feet long running almost due east-west. The City's Capital Budget calls for construction of a parallel taxiway and extension.





## Social and Cultural Facilities

As social and cultural facilities reflect the interests and values of their communities, the types found in each can radically differ. These facilities tend to enrich the quality of life for all residents.

### Cemeteries

Cherry Grove Cemetery, owned by the City of Clare, and the privately owned Street Cecilia's Cemetery are located along Schoolcrest Avenue in the northeast quadrant of the City. Both cemeteries represent significant areas of open space and passive recreation for the City.

### Churches and Religious Institutions

Many religious facilities serve Clare area residents and play a key role in the community and the surrounding area. Often, these church buildings are older and enhance the heritage and traditional character of the City. Preservation and maintenance of these resources should be encouraged. These facilities also provide additional social and recreational opportunities for the residents of the City and surrounding Townships; however, inappropriate expansion of these facilities can do irreparable harm to neighborhoods and the Downtown through the intrusion of parking lots and structures that are not in keeping with their surroundings. It is imperative that the City work closely with the leadership of the religious institutions to ensure that facilities are good neighbors to the surrounding residents and businesses.

### Art Alley

In the summer of 2015, the community installed the first phase of the "Art-Traction" project with the creation of the Art Alley in the north south Downtown alley located to the west of McEwan Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Murals were painted by volunteers from designs from two artists. One of the goals of the Art-Traction project is to improve Clare's visual arts and cultural offering for tourists, encouraging them to extend their visits. The Art Alley is to be augmented by sculptures, viewing bench, and specialty lighting.



### Clare Railroad Depot

The City of Clare directed the relocation of its historic train depot from its former land-locked location between two active rail road tracks to its current location south of Clare Memorial Park. The Clare County Arts Council is becoming the first tenant at the historic depot, and the depot will be its location for programming and offices. As funds become available, the council will be joined by a railroad museum and the City’s Pere Marquette Rail Trail Welcome Center. The building will also house the Clare Chamber of Commerce and the Clare County Visitor’s Bureau.

### Ideal Theatre

Built in 1930, the historical Ideal Theatre seats 450. The theatre shows first run films and may be rented for special events.

### Doherty Hotel

This historic hotel opened in 1924, and it is under the fourth generation of Doherty family operation. The hotel has 157 hotel rooms and can accommodate wedding and conferences up to 300 attendees. The facility includes a heated indoor pool and Jacuzzi. The hotel has a historic bar room that includes murals dating from the 1930s, and the hotel offers several special packages specifically tailored to a variety of interests and area offerings.

## Public Utilities

### Public Water Service

The City of Clare provides public water and sanitary sewer service to all residents and businesses within the City. The capacity of both City water towers is .8 Million Gallons Per Day (MGD) or 800,000 gallons, and the water treatment plant produces approximately 500,000 gallons per day. To provide supply, the City has two high service pumps that produce about 1,100 gallons per minute (gpm) each to the south water tower across from City Hall. A booster station supplies water to the north tower with three pumps that produce about 400 gpm each.

The current water plant is located in the southwest corner of the City off Maple Street, next to the DPW building. The City has just begun to evaluate the long-term capacity of its water system. The outcome of these evaluations will determine what changes, if any, are necessary to the system.

### Wellhead Protection Area

The City's Wellhead Protection Plan (WHPP), approved by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality in 2001, provides for the protection of the public water supply from contamination. The Wellhead Protection Area extends southwest of the City, into Isabella County and Vernon Township. The WHPP includes a contaminant source inventory, which map locations of potential contamination sources sections on responsibilities and public participation, and strategies for managing the protection area. Recommended actions include creating an overlay zoning district for the wellhead protection areas, developing public education and waste collection programs, and monitoring abandoned wells in the area to prevent further contamination. If a new wellhead area is built, studies would have to be conducted to determine if a new Wellhead Protection Area was necessary in that part of the City and in the neighboring townships.

### Sanitary Sewer System

The wastewater treatment plant serving the City was built in 1989 with service capacity for 10,000 persons. Current demand of 600,000 gallons per day is approximately 48% of the plant's 1.25 million gallons per day capacity. The wastewater treatment plant is located on the east side of the City along Eberhart Road, south of the airport. An old facility was decommissioned and demolished in 2011.

### Storm Water System

Storm drains are located throughout 70% of the City to facilitate the flow of storm water toward the Tobacco River. The system is not mapped, however, and the City is in need of a formal storm water management ordinance.

### Street Network and Maintenance

Colonville Road was recently expanded to three lanes from just east of the US-127 ramps east through the entire new industrial park area where it narrows back to two lanes before reaching Eberhart Avenue. This project was partially funded by an U.S. Economic Development Administration grant that supported the development of the new north industrial park.

Street maintenance is a serious concern due to age of the roads and the currently limited resources for maintenance and rehabilitation of the 6.36 miles of state trunkline and 24.94 miles of majare and minor local streets under the City's jurisdiction. A property tax millage was narrowly defeated in November 2015, and the issue is



expected to be returned to the electorate in the near future to approve a 3 mil levy for five years. This millage would generate approximately \$266,000 per year versus the former 0.75 mil road maintenance millage that generated approximately \$67,000 per year and expired in 2015.

The State's Act 51 funds are devoted to routine street maintenance (snow removal, street sweeping, pot-hole patching, curb repairs, street lights and personnel to accomplish those tasks). Streets are designed to have a 20 year life expectancy, and the City's streets are nearly all beyond their life expectancy. The longer period between maintenance cycles leads to each street segment requiring a more expensive level of treatment. Roads that only required a thin overlay may then require as mill and overlay, full overlay, or complete reconstruction due to the damage caused by the delay. Each delay escalates cost due to increased wear and tear on the road and damage to the subsurface base.

Additional resources are necessary so that the City can catch up with the maintenance backlog. A renewal millage is a good public policy choice because the voters are able to evaluate the success of the millage versus just permanently raising the overall millage rate. A dedicated millage also has the benefit that it can only be used for its intended purpose versus funds added to the General Fund may be redirected by the City Commission to other objectives.

## **Parks and Recreation Facilities**

Parks and recreation facilities are an important service any community can provide to its residents. Although lives do not depend on it, providing and maintaining park space for residents to enjoy has a significant impact on quality of life, personal health, property values, and aesthetic appeal.

The City of Clare completed a Parks and Recreation Master Plan in 2005. This plan was updated in 2010, and it is currently in the process of being updated again. This document provides detailed analyses of recreation facilities, partnerships with community organizations and the Clare Public Schools, and goals for facilities and programs in the City. As a result of the planning process, the City created a Parks and Recreation Department to manage and implement recreation opportunities in Clare. The City's current Parks and Recreation Master Plan is incorporated into the Master

Plan by reference and should be consulted for greater detail regarding recreation facilities and future planning goals.

### City Parks

The parks within the City include:

- **Brookwood Athletic Complex.** 29.4 acres with tennis courts, football field, track, baseball and softball fields, soccer field, and concession stand. The facility is shared with the school district and its home to the school's athletic programs.
- **Clare Memorial Park (City Park).** 0.8 acres with gazebo.
- **Maple Street Park:** Pocket park with small pavilion and climbing wall
- **Pettit Park:** 5 acres with 21 campsites (16 electric) on the S. Tobacco River, pavilion and restrooms
- **Shamrock Park:** 9.8 acres overlooks Lake Shamrock with one lit Little League diamond, two pavilions, playground area, fishing, and seasonal ice skating
- **Stamina Stadium Sports Park:** 13.2 acres with four baseball/softball diamonds, tee-ball field, concession stand, batting cages, and .5 mile McIreland Nature Trail.

The city also has two undeveloped park parcels. One parcel is designated to become an outdoor recreation complex on the south side of the City. Construction began there in 2016.

Herrick Recreation Area, a unit of Isabella County Parks, is located just outside the city's boundaries to the southeast. The 113 acre park includes 73 campsites, five rustic cabins, swimming beach, playground and two pavilions. This site is well-located just to the south of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail.



### Other Recreational Activities

A boat launch is located at the southeastern corner of Shamrock Lake with parking for two trailers, and the lake offers good sport fishing. Two snowmobile trails provide connectivity for the City for winter activities. One trail is east west along the Pere Marquette Rail Trail while the other comes from the south with a starting point just west of Rosebush.

Rail trails and bikepaths are a great way to increase recreational choices within a community, and Clare is well situated to further develop its bikepath infrastructure for tourists as well. The Pere Marquette Trail from the east has developed into a tremendous community asset when it was connected directly into the Downtown within the last few years. Efforts are underway to eliminate the gap on the west side of the City where the trail ends less than two miles from Downtown. Within the City, the Kevin Sherwood trail provides connectivity between the City and the emerging commercial node at the US-10/US-127/McEwan Road intersection.

The City also owns and operates the Cherry Grove Cemetery, which, with the adjacent Street Cecilia's Cemetery, provides opportunities for walking and nature watching. They are located directly east of the school complex with access from Schoolcrest Avenue.

As a part of the restoration of the Clare Train Station, plans are underway to develop a welcome center that would act as a trailhead for the regional trail system, with restrooms and a local railroad museum.



## Public School Facilities

One of the critical factors for families and businesses choosing where to relocate is the quality and accessibility of the school system. The City of Clare and much of the surrounding area to the north and east are served by the Clare Public Schools. Covering approximately 125 square miles, the district serves 1,519 students with approximately 90 faculty members.

There are four schools that serve Clare Public Schools district:

- **Clare Primary School** is located on Wheaton Avenue and serves 580 students from kindergarten through fourth grade. The school, built in 1972, was added to in the fall of 2003.
- **Clare Middle School**, also on Wheaton Avenue, enrolls 465 students in grades five through eight. The middle school building was built in 1922 with an addition built in fall 2003. A number of historic Depression-era murals adorn the walls of the middle school auditorium and represent a significant cultural asset to the City.
- **Clare High School** is located at the corner of Schoolcrest and Cedar Streets and enrolls approximately 450 students with a retention rate of over 99%.
- **Clare Pioneer High School**, on the western edge of the City, houses the district's alternative education programs, including adult education.

The public school facilities offer recreational opportunities to area residents and the district cooperates with the City Parks and Recreation Department to provide joint programs.

## Hospital

The City of Clare is blessed by having a hospital located in the center of its downtown district. Many smaller communities no longer have a full service hospital located within its boundaries, and residents must travel great distances to receive medical care. Hospitals are important pillars of communities through both the provision of jobs and health services. Mid-Michigan Medical Center - Clare is a vital economic development driver, and every effort should be made to assist them with any land use changes that they may require in enlarging or reconfiguring their facility.





## TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

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### **Regional Context**

The City of Clare straddles the boundary of Clare and Isabella Counties in the heart of Michigan’s Lower Peninsula. Clare County’s Grant Township surrounds the City to the west, north, and east, while Isabella County’s Vernon Township borders the City to the south. The City of Clare is approximately 15 miles south of the City of Harrison, the county seat of Clare County, and 15 miles north of the City of Mt. Pleasant, the county seat of Isabella County. Centrally located between Michigan’s major cities and “up-north” recreation areas, Clare is just 60 miles northwest of Saginaw, 85 miles north of Lansing, and within a two hour drive of Grand Rapids and two and half hour drive of Detroit.

Two major regional highways meet in Clare. US-127 connects Mt. Pleasant, Lansing, and Jackson from the south to Grayling, Mackinaw City, and the Upper Peninsula via I-75 to the north. US-10 provides access from Saginaw, Bay City, and Midland on the east side of the state to Reed City and Ludington on Michigan’s west coast, ultimately connecting to Wisconsin via the Lake Michigan Car Ferry. Clare serves as a major northern Michigan gateway, and even boasts the second busiest highway rest area in the state.



## Complete Streets

Complete Streets is a comprehensive transportation policy and design approach that requires all streets to be designed, planned, constructed and operated with all users considered regardless of their ages and abilities and for all modes of transit. Complete Streets enables safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for those walking, biking, driving cars, driving delivery vehicles, or riding public transit.

Complete Streets includes: 1) pedestrian infrastructure including sidewalks, curb-cuts, bump-outs, improved cross-walks, and ADA compliant facilities; 2) traffic calming measures including shorter curb radii, center medians, angled face-out parking, and road diets; 3) bicycle facilities including protected bike lanes, shared-use paths, signage, bicycle parking facilities; and 4) public transit improvements. The City has reinforced its commitment to Complete Streets through an amendment to the Access Management Standards the Clare City Code.

The Transportation Plan (page 6.13) illustrates the Future Transportation Plan for the City. Many of the proposals are for intersection improvements and right-of-way preservation of the arterial road network. A network of non-motorized paths and on-street bikeway connections has also been identified to connect the City's various natural and community facilities.

## Complete Streets Policy

There is no single formula or prescription for a Complete Street. Streets are “complete” when they fit into the context of the surrounding area. Not all Clare streets will include all of the elements below, but this list represents what the City will strive to achieve when evaluating future transportation projects.

- **Pedestrians:** Clare’s streets will include sidewalks with unobstructed walking space, adequate lighting, benches, trees, shading, roadway separation and on-street parking, easy access to walkable destinations, and safe and frequent road crossings.
- **Bicyclists:** Clare’s streets will include spaces to bike comfortably shared with traffic, or clearly marked bike lanes with appropriate separation based on speed and volume of vehicle traffic, adequate bicycle parking, intersection treatments, and destinations accessible by bike.
- **Vehicles:** Clare’s streets will be safe and convenient for driving. Signals will be timed to reduce congestion, on-street and off-street parking will be easily accessible, signed, and appropriately priced, and streets will be designed to promote safe driving speeds.
- **Streets as places:** Clare’s streets will be places for people to inhabit. They will not simply link destinations; they will be destinations in themselves. These features include places for social gathering, exercising, and relaxing.
- **Adding value:** Clare’s streets will enhance property value and be coordinated with land use development standards to support commerce through connectivity, design aesthetics, street life, and access.
- **Transit:** Clare’s streets will support access to existing and future transit systems in the region.

Supporting Complete Streets in Clare will complement existing development patterns; enhance the attractiveness and use of the Central Business District; enhance the existing commercial corridors; extend traditional neighborhood development patterns as sites are developed; improve connectivity with the Grant Township Expansion areas; and improve upon the walkability of the City.

## Protecting Vulnerable Users

It is generally recognized that traffic volumes on the major streets through Clare are high. This is due, in part, to Clare being the largest city in Clare County and being at the intersection of US-10 and US-127, two freeways and with their respective business loops bringing traffic through the community. While higher traffic volumes are desirable for business, excessive volumes and higher speeds cause downtowns and commercial corridors to become less attractive for users and investment

## Existing Non-Motorized Transportation

Non-motorized transportation currently consists of the Pere Marquette Rail Trail that ends at the eastern edge of the Downtown, the Kevin W. Sherwood Trail that runs north along the west side of McEwan Street from the south side of the Tobacco River to the south side of the US-10/US-127 interchange. According to the City Manager, seventy percent (70%) of the city has a well-established and well-maintained network of sidewalks connecting most residents with the Downtown. Maintenance of the sidewalk system is funded through a voter-approved five-year replacement program under which the city shares replacement costs with property owners. ADA accessible ramps are not available on all sidewalks, and the City has been making an attempt to build handicap accessible sidewalk ramps throughout the community when possible. These ramps will make Clare's sidewalks more user friendly for walkers, skateboards, rollerbladers, and for persons with disabilities. The City has very little in the way of existing bicycle facilities, although many of the local streets are safe for biking and safe pedestrian crossings. To provide improved network connectivity, improvements are necessary for bicycle parking, wayfinding, and arterial bikeway treatments. This plan recommends connections that would make Clare a major hub in non-motorized transportation within the region.

## Vehicular Circulation

The ability of people and goods to efficiently and safely flow without unexpected stops or accidents is an important part of the quality of life in a community as well as a vital part to a community's economic well-being and growth.

### Circulation Analysis

One way to evaluate the street system is to determine how well each street serves its purpose. Streets are classified in two ways: [1] a national ranking system called "Functional Classification" and [2] by standards found in Act 51 of 1951 by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

## Federal Functional Classification

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) developed the National Functional Classification (NFC) to classify all highways, streets, and roads according to their function. This system has been in place since the 1960s and is recognized as the official road classification system by the FHWA. The following paragraphs list each category in the NFC.

- **Interstates and Other Freeways & Expressways:** Limited access roadways either designated as a part of the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways or designed to similar standards with directional travel lanes, often separated by a physical barrier with controlled access and egress points.

While only one freeway exit is located in the City limits, Clare is significantly influenced by the US-10 and US-127 freeways on the north, south, and east sides of the City because both of the freeway's business routes direct traffic into and through the Downtown. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is responsible for the maintenance of these freeways and their bridges and access ramps

- **Principal Arterials:** Principal arterials serve major metropolitan centers by providing a high degree of mobility and may also provide mobility through rural areas. These roadways serve primary centers of activity, carry high traffic volumes, and carry both through and local traffic. Unlike their access controlled counterparts, abutting land uses may be served directly from the road right-of-way.

No roads in the City of Clare are designated as principal arterials.

- **Minor Arterials:** Minor arterials are similar in function to principal arterials but they generally carry less traffic and function to carry trips of shorter distances. Accessibility is greater but stops are more frequent due to signalized intersections.

No roads in the City of Clare are designated as minor arterials. .

- **Major Collectors:** Major collector roads are important travel corridors and provide service to arterial roads and often connect major population and employment centers. They provide direct access to parcels and direct traffic from residential areas to arterials.

McEwan Street and Fifth Street serve as major collectors within the City of Clare.

- **Minor Collectors:** Minor collectors often collect traffic from local roads and private property and provide connections to more developed areas.

Colonville Road is a minor collector.

- **Local Roads:** Local roads primarily provide access to adjacent properties and include most residential streets. These roads are not eligible for federal aid funding. All of the remaining roads within Clare are local roads.

## State of Michigan Act 51 Classification

Michigan's Act 51, PA of 1951, as amended, is the mechanism under which the State of Michigan shares gas tax revenues for road maintenance with communities. Municipalities are awarded funds based on the mileage of roadway within their boundaries.

The State of Michigan retains a portion of the gas tax revenues, which are allocated to MDOT for maintenance and upgrading of the interstate highways and state trunklines within the local jurisdiction. The remaining funds are allocated to local units of government by a set formula, and ultimately, depends upon the length of roadway in each classification.

Under Act 51, roads are divided into five categories – State Trunkline Highways, County Primary Roads, County Local Roads, Major Local Streets and Minor Local Streets. In regards to funding and responsibility, local municipalities are only directly concerned with the last two categories. Besides the freeways, there are no designated State TrunkLine or County roads within Clare.

Designed to carry higher volumes of traffic at greater speeds, Major Local Streets receive more funding per mile than Minor Local Streets which typically serve only residential areas. The City of Clare has jurisdiction over 23.44 miles of public streets. This responsibility includes 7.09 miles of Major Local Roads and 16.35 miles of Local Minor Streets.

### **City Road Characteristics**

The principal east-west street in Clare is Fifth Street, which is also the business route of US-10. McEwan Street runs north-south and carries the business route of US-127. Both of these streets are classified as rural major collector roads (see above) and are under City maintenance responsibility. The standard right-of-way for City streets is sixty-six (66) feet.

Within the City, the road network is organized generally in a grid, establishing a series of blocks throughout the neighborhoods surrounding the Downtown. However, the grid is interrupted by significant features like the railroad tracks in the southwest corner of the City, the schools and cemeteries along Schoolcrest Avenue, Shamrock Lake in the northeast, and the S. Tobacco River to the west.

## **Other Transportation Modes**

### **Public Transportation**

The City of Clare is served by Clare County Transit, which operates dial-a-ride bus and van service throughout the County. The 33-vehicle transit system served 128,900 riders in 2011-12 with seven-day-a-week service; typical fares are \$1.00 for in-town service and \$2.00 for service outside of a city, with senior and handicapped fares at 50% of the regular fare. Clare County Transit celebrates nearly 35 years of operating service. Since its founding, approximately three million rides and 15 million passenger-miles have been provided.

### **Air and Rail Transportation**

The Clare Municipal Airport, located in the northeast corner of the City, provides general aviation services and has two operating paved runways. The closest commercial airport is MBS (Midland, Bay City, Saginaw) International in Freeland (approximately 45 miles southeast of Clare). Clare is not served by passenger rail, although the Great Lakes Central Railroad operates freight service through the City. The nearest passenger rail station is 83 miles south in East Lansing, with connections to Chicago.

### **Intercity Bus Transportation**

Both Greyhound and Indian Trails provides intercity bus transportation from the emerging northend commercial district located at US-10/US-127/McEwan Street intersection. Both companies operate their pick-up and drop offs from Cid's Marathon Gas Station at 10197 S. Clare Avenue

### **Additional Transportation Issues**

As Clare and the region together continue to grow, transportation will remain a significant community issue. Clare's location as a gateway to popular "Up North" recreation and vacation areas and as a crossroads for state and regional roadways make transportation issues critical in determining the successful future of the City. There are several issues related to the current transportation and circulation network of the City that demand further study.

A major issue in Clare is the presence of heavy truck traffic in the Downtown area. Clare's main streets, Fifth and McEwan, are both business routes for US-10 and US-127 respectively, resulting in a great deal of regional through traffic intersecting in the middle of the Downtown. Traffic is funneled through the town generating noise and making the area less desirable and less safe for pedestrians. In addition, there is a



freeway system gap that requires trucks that are either heading north on US-127 and desiring to head east on US-10 or traffic heading west on US-10 desiring to head south onto US-127 south to exit in Clare, and use city streets to perfect the route changes. In addition to the congestion issue, there is particular concern regarding the physical turning movements of tractor-trailers at the intersection of the two business routes. There have been discussions regarding a truck route through the southern industrial district, but the issue has not yet been fully resolved.

As development occurs in the Grant Township Expansion area, there will be a greater need to address the limited east west connectivity that exists within the City and the Grant Township Expansion area. On the City's east side, there are no motorized or pedestrian linkages for two miles (from Colonville Road on the north south to Fifth Street/Business US-10). On the City's west side, there are no east west connections from Colonville Road south for almost 1.5 miles to Main Street/Business US-10. To address these gaps in the City's transportation network, locations for new road and non-motorized path connections have been illustrated on the Future Transportation Map. Up to three roadway connections would address this serious connectivity issue: 1) a new east-west connector from either Rock Ave east from Grant Avenue to N. McEwan Street or continuation of Oakland Ave east to N. McEwan Street; 2) east-west extension of Brookwood west to Grant Avenue; and 3) east-west extension of Forest Avenue / Washington Road east under US-10/US-127 to Washington Road east of the freeway. To address the non-motorized gaps, two pathway connections are also recommended: 1) pathway through Pettit Park west from the existing Sherwood Pathway to Grant Avenue, and 2) a pathway along the new Washington Road roadway connection under US-10/US-127. These modifications would considerably improve the City's overall transportation network.



## Future Transportation Plan

The Transportation Map sets forth recommendations for the development of public right-of-way in a manner consistent with and supportive of recommendations for Future Land Use. The Transportation Map maintains the existing, functional classification and Act 51 designations, as well as signal locations. The recommendations focus on intersection improvements, gateway creation, and improvements for more complete streets with pedestrian, bus transit, and bicycle facilities. The network is designed to link Clare's community facilities, link downtown and the emerging northern commercial node at the US-10/US-127/McEwan Street intersection, and establish easy to navigate connections for people to walk and bike in their neighborhoods and around the City.

### Sidewalk Network

Clare embraces walkability as a primary goal for the transportation system. The City's sidewalk system has significant gaps within it, especially east of McEwan Street and area southwest of Downtown. There are portions of the City that lack links in the residential sidewalk network and additional sidewalks are needed to complete the pedestrian pathway system.

This plan recommends a full build out of the sidewalk network in all areas of the City. Residential sidewalks should be a minimum of 5 feet wide and have a minimum of 5 feet of landscape separation from the roadway. Where right-of-way permits a 10 foot landscape separation in residential areas is desired.

### Transit Connections

Discussions have begun regarding reestablishing passenger rail service from Ann Arbor to Traverse City and Petoskey. The City should continue to monitor this situation and strongly advocate for a train stop in Clare. The City should also consider working with the intercity bus companies to relocate their pick up/drop off location from the northend of the city into the Downtown. Prior to the opening of a train station, the Doherty Hotel would be a central location. Once a train stop is established, the bus stop could be relocated to the train station.

If rail transit is reestablished, it will be important to ensure that sidewalks, non-motorized pathways, and signage are all utilized to improve the connections to the new transit hub.



### **Pathway Network**

Improvements to the pathway network in Clare are intended to support residents' health and access to important local destinations. With bicycle network improvements, more Clare residents will be able to make safe, short trips, to parks, schools, and even downtown entertainment and shopping, all without getting in the car. Path network improvements are recommended based on the need for separation from vehicle traffic, existing signal locations to cross major roadways, and alignment with desirable community destinations, like schools, parks, public facilities, and commercial areas.

Many of Clare's neighborhood streets are comfortable to bike on now, and could be improved with simple signs. Some corridors can serve as more prominent system links with on-street pavement markings like conventional bike lanes and marked shared lanes. Most people don't feel comfortable biking with heavy traffic; on these corridors complete separation is desirable. This plan recommends pathway connections from each of the City's quadrants into the Downtown, completion of the link to the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail pathway from west of the City, connections to various recreation and school nodes within the community, connections to new developments in the former Grant Township portion of the City, and a connection to proposed US 127 pathway. The following types of bike facilities are recommended:

### **Shared Use Paths**

Shared use paths are paved concrete or asphalt paths wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists. They are typically a minimum of 10 feet wide with 2 feet of clearance on either side of the path. Shared use paths offer cyclists a safe place to bike off-street when there is no space for a bike lane, or it is unsafe to bike on the street.

### **Conventional Bike Lanes**

Bike lanes create a dedicated space for cyclists on a roadway. They are appropriate on streets with moderate to heavy traffic. Bike lanes are indicated by on-street markings, which can be supplemented with signage. Bike lanes reinforce proper roadway etiquette, raise the visibility of bicyclists, and help both bicyclists and drivers behave predictably when sharing road space. For safe cycling, bike lanes should be 4 feet to 6 feet wide.



### **Marked Shared Lanes or Sharrows**

Marked shared lanes use a double chevron and bicycle marking, or “sharrow,” in a lane intended for the joint use of motorized and bicycle traffic. Chevron symbols direct bicyclists to ride in the safest location within the lane, outside of the door zone of parked cars and areas where debris is likely to collect. Generally, marked shared lanes are a low-cost treatment suitable for lightly traveled collector and arterial roads.

### **Signed Bike Routes**

Bike route signs raise all users’ awareness and acceptance of cycling. They make all residents aware of the most bike-friendly routes in their communities. Bike route signs are appropriate for any roadway that provides an essential link in a bicycle system, and can offer important, affordable motorist education and traffic calming. “Bike Route” signs should be implemented with a system of wayfinding signs that provide directions to specific destinations. These types of bikeway signs provide useful information and directions for cyclists, drivers and pedestrians alike.

In addition to supporting the health and quality of life of City residents, improving the City’s pathway network may also function as an economic development driver.

Biking on regional trails is a growing pastime nationally, and Clare should take advantage of its location on a highly utilized Pere Marquette Rail-Trail. The US-127 Trailway is in the design and development phase which would provide a direct connection to the Fred Meijer Trail to the south, which serves as a major backbone of Michigan’s emerging non-motorized network.

Clare’s small town charm and convenience should be utilized to increase bike tourism.

Tourists and bicycling enthusiasts can either use Clare as a hub to explore the trail network from or as a day or overnight destination from points beyond the City. There are two camping facilities (Pettit Park and Herrick Recreational Area) within or adjacent to the City and a downtown hotel that can serve this growing tourist segment. There are tremendous opportunities for the development of bicycle serving businesses in the Downtown including full-service bike shops, coffee shops, ice cream parlors, souvenir shops, restaurants, and bars.



### Intersection Treatments and Traffic Calming

In addition to modifications to the roadway configuration and multimodal network alignment, intersection modifications can improve the overall safety, walkability, and identity of Clare. Intersection treatments like curb extensions, textures, pavement markings, crosswalks, eliminating free-flow right turn lanes, tightening corner curb radii, and installing pedestrian refuge islands can improve traffic management and safety at intersections. The following treatments are recommended.

### Pedestrian Crossing Recommendations

Crosswalks are recommended minimally at all signalized crossings and on the crossing leg parallel to the arterial network. Crosswalks are encouraged for pedestrian safety and there are likely places where further study is needed to determine if mid-block crossings are warranted. Painted crosswalks alert drivers of where to expect people crossing. Crosswalks are typically two white lines across the street, but other designs draw more attention to the crossing and tend not to wear away as quickly. Special paving or colored markings may also be used. Additionally, countdown pedestrian signals are recommended at all signalized crossings. Countdown signals show how much time remains before the traffic signal changes and are designed to reduce the number of pedestrians who start crossing when there is not enough time to complete their crossing safely. Pedestrian crossing signs may also be considered.

### On-Street Parking and Lane Narrowing

Added on-street parking and lane narrowing is recommended along both Fifth and McEwan Streets in the Downtown. On-street parking not only provides access to businesses, it supports sidewalk separation from vehicles and calms traffic by visually narrowing a roadway and creating additional buffer space between pedestrians and automobile traffic. Further, narrowing lanes from high-speed 12-foot-wide lanes to 10-foot-wide lanes encourages motorists to slow down and underscores a transition to a calmer context. Fifth Street should be evaluated to determine if through the use of lane narrowing, one side of on-street parking would be able to fit within the existing right-of-way within the area between Maple and Hemlock Streets. Along McEwan Street from 3rd Street north to State Street, the roadway should be evaluated to determine if back-in diagonal parking would fit with a four-to-three lane road diet where two lanes in each direction are replaced with single drive lanes, a central turn lane, and back-in diagonal parking



### **Core Intersection**

The intersection of Fifth Street and McEwan Street is the most important intersection in the City. While it features many quality design elements, it is still intimidating for pedestrians. Crossing distances could be improved with curb extensions, or even right-turn corner islands, or “pork-chop” islands. These islands create a refuge between right-turn lanes and the through lanes, splitting up the crossing movement.

### **Downtown Gateway Intersections**

Gateway features are encouraged at City entrances; however, gateway features should be incorporated at the entrances into the downtown as well. Gateways can be bold statements, such as arched entryways, or can be more simply marked by signs and landscaping. Gateway areas are desirable places to site wayfinding signs and other identity features, such as banners and public art installations. Public art installations along the public right-of-way, such as sculptures and murals, can greatly accentuate the transportation network and improve the sense of place.

### **On-Street Bike Crossings**

Intersections where the marked on-street bike network is on both streets should include bicycle crossing signs and wayfinding signs. Additionally, pedestrian crosswalks and bicycle pavement markings should be installed at the intersections and approaches.

### **Off-Street Bike Crossings**

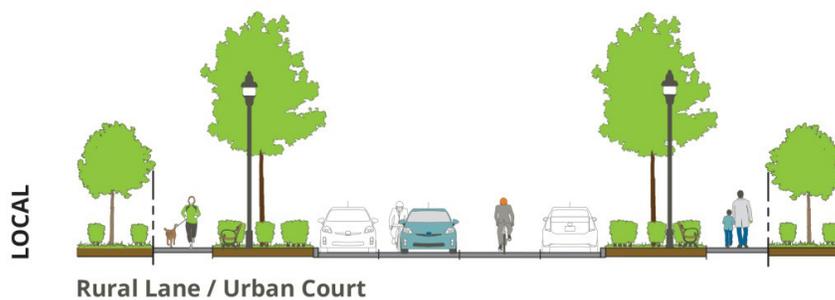
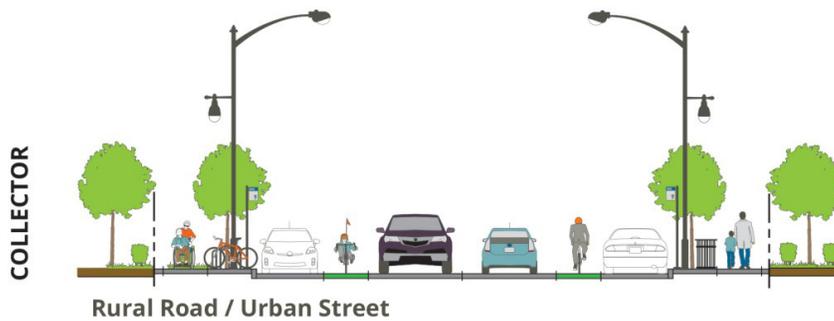
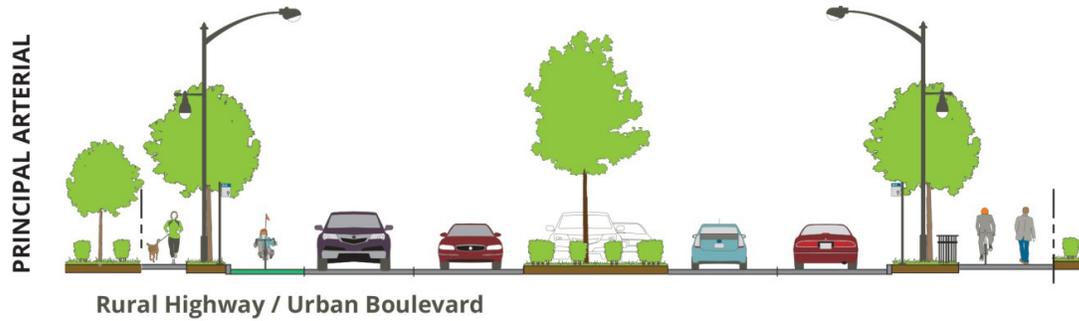
Intersections where the off-street bicycle network meets the on-street bicycle network should include bicycle-pedestrian crossing signs and wayfinding signs. Additionally, crosswalks for shared use paths should be as wide as the shared use path and marked with trail crossing signs. Bicycle pavement markings should be installed at the intersection and approaches.

# Map 3 Transportation Plan

BACK OF MAP

## Corridor Design

The following cross sections are representative illustrations of corridor design concepts to implement the Transportation Plan. Variations on these concepts, including dimensions and design components may vary block-by-block, as determined in the design and construction process.



### **Site Access Management**

Another method for improving pedestrian and traffic circulation in the Downtown and along the business routes is called access management. This design approach reduces the number of points of access to the street from adjacent properties. This benefits pedestrians by reducing the number of points along a sidewalk where they may encounter an automobile, and it benefits traffic by reducing the potential number of points where another vehicle entering the street may be encountered. A comprehensive access management plan should be developed for the downtown area and the business route corridors. This plan should include guidelines for consolidating access points to the businesses along the street. Where it is not possible to accomplish access consolidation, medians would be effective in reducing conflicts with left-turning vehicles.

One method of achieving consolidation or elimination of access points is through strategic location of off-street parking lots and replacing some off-street parking with on-street parking. The DDA and the City should examine the potential for acquisition and consolidation of land in the downtown area to construct public parking areas. If properly located, some shop owners will no longer require individual parking lots and the need for multiple driveways could be eliminated. A possible enticement to get a shop owner to close a direct access point is to ensure that a well-defined path for motorists to get to the rear parking area will be provided. Another possible enticement would be to permit the store-owner to expand into what was previously a rear parking area, by compensating the loss of parking with convenient public parking.

It should be noted that access management is often opposed by downtown merchants, as it is viewed as a limitation to accessing their business. For that reason, an access management plan must be developed with the cooperation of representatives of the merchants. Access management should also be developed with the understanding that while direct vehicular access to each individual property may be eliminated, sufficient parking convenient to those businesses will be provided.

### **Commercial Corridor Enhancement**

A commercial corridor enhancement program should be developed to improve the aesthetics of the two business loops outside of the downtown area. Both corridors are visually chaotic and detract from the overall character of the community.

This corridor improvement plan should be developed to enhance the commercial corridors and to promote appropriate and high-quality commercial and mixed use development. The plan should include the proposed methods, designs, and financing for improving the streetscape, landscaping, and utilities along these thoroughfares. Items which should be addressed are: redevelopment of vacant buildings and lots; additional landscaping and street tree requirements; decorative lighting and street fixtures; underground conduits for utilities; on-street parking and other traffic calming measures; traffic circulation and access management; integrated wayfinding system to compliment Downtown wayfinding system, and other improvements.



## OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

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Important aspects to consider when developing the Master Plan for the City of Clare are the physical characteristics of the community. These features can vary from the existing natural landscapes to the existing improvements built within the City. It is important to identify those features that will be influential in future development so that the goals and policies of the Master Plan can be augmented to both compensate and complement the current physical characteristics within Clare.

## Development Patterns

The City of Clare has seen several distinct types of land use development in its history. The Opportunities and Constraints Map on page 7-6 illustrates the generalized development patterns within Clare and some of the distinct features. These existing development patterns can be considered opportunities for the City of Clare or constraints, or both. The following is an analysis of development patterns that have occurred within the City. This analysis should be carefully considered during the Comprehensive Master Plan process.

### Historic Downtown

Clare is fortunate to have a historic Downtown that is vibrant, pedestrian in scale and architecturally interesting. Within the Downtown area, the walkways, decorative streetscape elements and the one and two story historic brick buildings provide Clare with a truly unique image that many communities strive for today. The district has an existing network of sidewalks for easy pedestrian movement through most of the Downtown area, although the network is somewhat inconsistent on the east and southwest sides of the community.

Downtowns are also perfect locations for developing “third places” where people recreate and interact. “First places” are where people live. “Second places” are where people work. Third places are where people choose to spend some of their free time. These places are anchors of the community where community life and civic engagement occurs. Examples include: community centers, senior centers, coffee shops, bars, microbreweries, post offices, restaurants, passive parks, barber shops and beauty salons, recreation centers, YMCAs/YWCAs, movie theaters, libraries, and social clubs. Due to the central location of the Downtown, it is a perfect environment where third places can develop. Historic buildings are good for developing these types of business and community functions due to the often low cost of establishing businesses there and the smaller flexible spaces found in older buildings. Efforts should be made to support the development of additional third places in Downtown Clare.

The Downtown Development Authority along with the MEDC and other agencies are assisting businesses with successful entrepreneurial techniques to encourage businesses to locate in Clare. Additionally, Clare has an active Downtown Development Authority (DDA) that had utilized the four point Main Street Approach to assist the Downtown in remaining economically sound by implementing successful marketing strategies and hosting community events to attract new patrons, businesses, and jobs. The DDA is working with the City to unify and improve the street appearance of the Downtown with specific Design Guidelines.

The Downtown is currently in the process of having a large portion of the Downtown listed on the National Register of Historic Places. As of May 2016, the draft application has been accepted by the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office, and the required public approval process has begun. This process tends to take four to six months to receive final approval from the National Park Service, which is the Federal agency responsible for the National Register.

Listing on the National Register of Historic Places provides multiple benefits:

- First, any federally funded project that may impact a property listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register must go through a Section 106 historic review process to determine if the federally funded project will have an impact upon the resource. Once listed, any roadway project in the historic district that includes a portion of federal funds must go through the review process. Though the Section 106 Review doesn't provide actual protection, the review process

enables the community to evaluate alternatives and rally preservation against potential demolition or significant alteration caused by the federal funding. Often, an alternative that does not destroy the resource or that minimizes the negative impact upon the resource will be selected because of Section 106 Review.

- Second, all income producing properties (apartment, commercial, and industrial buildings) are eligible for a 20% Historic Tax Credit on all eligible rehabilitation activities.
- Third, National Register listed properties are eligible for grant funds from either the State or Federal governments, when funds are available.
- Fourth, listing on the National Register provides an opportunity to leverage this listing for marketing, promotional, and sense of pride reasons.

Downtown Clare has businesses that provide banking, clothing, restaurants, entertainment and hotel accommodations like the Doherty Hotel and Conference Center, a historic movie theater, and many other establishments. Downtown is also home to the full-service MidMichigan Medical Center hospital. The recently installed Art Alley is a good beginning towards leveraging art as an amenity for the tourists and residents alike. The Art Alley is to be expanded with additional installations over the next couple of years.

Many of the businesses occupy only the first story of the two story buildings, and there are many opportunities to develop loft-style residential apartments. These units often appeal to the younger set or the empty nester generation. The recently construction Clare Castle senior housing development has been an overwhelming success. Centrally located, the apartments allow seniors to be in close proximity to many of the services they require. There is a great opportunity for additional senior housing developments within the Downtown as evidenced by Clare Castle's success. The former Consumers Energy Regional Service Center on Third Street is a relative large downtown redevelopment opportunity that is located right adjacent to the eastern terminus of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail on Third Street. The site has some levels of contamination, and the City should work with Consumers Energy to complete the Phase I and II environmental assessments which will support its redevelopment.

Clare is fortunate to have a core of pleasant homes in and around the Downtown, some that are historic and some more recent brick and frame homes. Affordable rental apartments also provide a captive retail market in the Downtown area. Downtown housing could help the City with its desires to increase home ownership, to create housing opportunities for the young and for seniors, and to provide high-end housing.

### **Opportunity for “Missing Middle” Housing Developments**

Housing in and adjacent to the Downtown is the best location for the “Missing Middle” housing options. Since the end of World War II, there has been limited construction of non-single family homes in most of the United States. Two of the largest demographic groups in the United States today are Millennials and retiring Baby Boomers. Both groups are interested in non-single family home living options. Larger percentages of Millennials are interested in living in urban environments with less desires for home and car ownership than previous generations whereas the Baby Boomers are interested in living options that do not require maintaining single family homes. The Missing Middle housing choices include duplexes, quadplexes, courtyard apartments, townhouses, lower density mixed-use buildings, and live-work spaces.

Supporting the opportunity for Missing Middle construction housing will enable the creation of new housing stock that is desired by the United States two largest demographic groups. This housing also supports the downtown businesses by





creating a group of residents who will be “captive” users of the Downtown businesses. These residents often choose trips by foot to nearby Downtown businesses versus driving to shop.

Downtown Clare has limited civic spaces where public events and passive recreation can occur within the Downtown. Currently, most development is focused along the two main thoroughfares and extends less than a block back from these two roads. The City should evaluate establishing a public square that would provide an attractive civic space, deliver passive recreation areas for visitors and residents, and support new intensive mixed-use developments around the square. This square would be able to be surrounded by new structures that would enclose the square. This space would serve as a development tool by creating an urban space that demands more intensive development. Potential sites that should be evaluated include the block surrounded by W. State Street on the north, N. McEwan Street on the east, W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street on the south, and Beech Street on the west. This site has few structures on it, and the facing blocks would be able to accept new mixed-use mid-rise development with limited impacts upon the adjacent residential blocks. Other potential sites for a city square include blocks immediately to the east and south-east of the above site. New developments lining the square should be mixed-use in nature so that commercial and residential users of the buildings would also inhabit the square. Higher density Missing Middle housing structures would also be appropriate for facing the square. Due to the large amount of surface parking located in each of these potential sites, a parking deck would likely be required to replace the existing surface parking.

When reviewing new development proposals for the Downtown, the City must ensure that the development enhances the appearance of the Downtown in its siting, density, and finish. Suburban-styled buildings not located to the property line with parking lots and large expanses of blank walls inhibit the vitality of downtown district and should be avoided.

### Commercial Strips

Both commercial strips (East and West Fifth and McEwan Streets) outside of the Downtown have significant stretches where they are dominated by auto-centric strip commercial developments. These development types tend to be aesthetically dull and pedestrian unfriendly single story buildings. Layouts often place automobile parking in the front with limited landscaping and little architectural detailing on the buildings. Proper design and access management controls can improve the appearance and function of these types of developments.

## **Residential Districts**

Much of the City of Clare has been developed with a variety of single family home styles and sizes ranging from historic Victorian homes to mid-century Four Squares to modern ranches. In more affluent communities, this variety of single family housing stock is often a great asset. In Clare, this housing stock variety is more of a mixed blessing due to the higher rate of absentee landlords and low home ownership rates found in the City. Rental housing is often not maintained to the same standards that owner-occupied housing is, and the City has been evaluating ways to combat the blighting impact that poorly maintained homes is having on some existing neighborhoods. Clare's low household income is a likely cause for the lower homeownership rates as households with poor credit have difficulty in obtaining mortgages.

## **City Services and Resources**

Clare has an amazing concentration of City services for a community of its size. Numerous public buildings exist in the Downtown currently to house those departments like the City Hall, Public Safety, and the Department of Public Works Buildings. The Post Office and the District Library are also both located in the Downtown. The historic Clare Railroad Depot has been recently moved from a landlocked site, and renovations are being completed so that it can house a variety of community organizations. The Clare County Arts Council is now located on the lower level and the Clare Chamber of Commerce will be occupying the ground floor. Additional space on the ground level will serve as the Pere Marquette Rail Trail welcome center. In January 2016, a caboose was brought to the site, and it will house a local railroad museum as well. People often want to live within close proximity to city services, and all these concentrated activities should assist the City in maintaining its Downtown core vitality.

With Clare's Urban Cooperation Agreement with Grant Township being approved in 2008, the City now has an abundance of developable land available for new expansion. Industrial, large lot commercial and certain residential development should be focused in these areas while redevelopment efforts should be ongoing within the Downtown district and along the City's commercial corridors. All development activities in the area to the south of the City in Vernon Township should be conducted in a cooperative manner with the township.

## **Clare Consolidated School District**

Clare Consolidated Schools offers fully accredited, educational, social, and recreational opportunities for the residents of the City of Clare and the larger school district. The schools are located within the Downtown area and many families live within close proximity to the schools that their children attend. There are certain retail establishments and service establishments catering to the younger population that prefer to be located within close proximity to school locations. This accessibility to the younger population should be promoted in Clare.

The Clare Public Schools have a relatively flat enrollment trend with slow declines in student numbers that likely mirror the demographic trends within its service area and the shrinking family size. Two issues of concern are the percent of Economically Disadvantaged students and the decrease in the system's fund balance. In the 2014-15 school year, 48% of the students qualified as Economically Disadvantaged. The fund balance has quickly dropped from 38% in 2010-11 fiscal year to just 10.8% in 2014-15 school year.

An additional, unique asset is that both the Clare Middle School and the City's Post Office house a fabulous series of rare publicly-owned, Work Projects Administration

painted murals that could be promoted to attract visitors to the community. When preparing the Master Plan, the City of Clare must consider what type of development will be compatible with the community schools and what type of development will be desired within close proximity to existing and any future school facilities.

### **Recreation Areas**

The City of Clare has a reasonable diversity of community recreational facilities for a City of its population. These facilities have been possible due in part to a joint facilities sharing agreement with the school system. This agreement has enabled the City and the school system to provide its residents with extremely high quality recreational facilities and services, as noted in the Community Facilities Section. The availability of these facilities should be actively advertised as a positive Clare feature. This partnership has been supplemented with the City voters renewing a Parks Millage in 2012. A portion of the funds enabled the purchase of 26.2 acres of property on the City's south side that will become a recreational complex with ten soccer fields of varying sizes, multi-use field, paved exercise trail with stationary circuit training equipment, skate park, butterfly garden, two picnic pavilions, and concession stand. Funding for the construction of the complex is ongoing, and completing this project should be major recreational goal.

With the Grant Township Expansion area, the City of Clare should continuously evaluate the opportunities for adding new parks in these districts. These areas are not currently served by any of Clare's existing recreation facilities, and they would be underserved if the Grant Township land is residentially developed. Through the Site Plan Review process, developers should be encouraged to set aside parts of their developments for public recreation areas.

Pettit Park is a tremendous community asset, and there are opportunities to expand this park to the west and north on undeveloped property. The park has also been identified as a prime location where a non-motorized pathway could be created that would run west from the Sherwood Trail along McEwan Street to Grant Avenue. This new pathway would create a much needed connection to the western part of the Grant Township Expansion area.

Rail trails and bikepaths are a great way to increase recreational choices within a community. Clare is well situated to further develop its bikepath infrastructure for tourists as well. Within the City, the Kevin Sherwood trail provides connectivity between the City and the emerging commercial node at the US-10/US-127/McEwan intersection. A major goal should be to extend the current trail from Pettit Park into the Downtown and north to Colonville Road.

### **Pathway Development Opportunities**

Bicycle tourism is a rapidly growing American pastime. The City is well located at the northwestern terminus of one Michigan's well know rail trails—the Pere Marquette Rail Trail—that extends 28 miles southeast to Midland. Every effort should be made to leverage the community's placement in the middle of an emerging major Michigan bicycling network.

Multiple studies illustrated that pathways encourage neighboring residents to ride instead of drive, encourage regular biking and walking trips, and increase property values for properties located near pathways. There are several opportunities to expand pathway development within the City of Clare.

First, the Sherwood trailway should be extended from its terminus at Pettit Park all the way south through the Downtown to the new south side recreational complex. This

extension would create a vital non-motorized spine between the emerging north end commercial node at the US-10/US-127/McEwan intersection to the new soccer park. East west connections from the City's neighborhoods should be made into this north south spine. Signed bike routes should be developed east west from this north south Sherwood spine along John R Street to the west, and east along Wilcox Parkway, Schoolcrest Avenue and East State Street.

As the former Grant Township areas are developed, new non-motorized pathway connections should be made to ensure that all residents can easily reach a pathway without having to cross a major road. Recommended east west connections include west from McEwan Street through Pettit Park to Grant Street and along a new roadway connection west along Washington Road. These pathways may connect directly into the expanded Sherwood pathway spine or these new pathways may include new connections into the Downtown.

With the growth of bicycle tourism, Clare must improve its connections with the emerging regional bikepath network. With the proposed US 127 pathway connecting Clare with Mount Pleasant and Alma to the south, the region is poised to become a major Michigan bike riding destination. Two of Michigan's major bike pathways will be connected—Fred Meijer Heartland Trail and the Pere Marquette—with Clare in the middle of this new linked system. Depending upon the route, Clare can become either a major hub where bicyclist explore from for a day or two or act as a day or overnight destination on a tour.

Efforts must be made to close the missing nearly three mile link to the Pere Marquette State Trail that exists west of the City boundary. With this missing segment filled, there would be nearly 90 continuous miles of pathway from Midland west to Baldwin. At Reed City, the Pere Marquette crosses the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail State Park that acts as a north south spine to Mid-Michigan's trail network. As the US-127 trailway is developed into Clare, all efforts must be made to ensure that the route is brought all the way into the Downtown. This action will ensure the largest economic development impact as it will help to create a nationally recognized bike riding destination with 100s of miles of paved path riding available.

### Lake Front Development Area

Much of the City of Clare's Shamrock Lake and South Tobacco River access is occupied by a large number of single family homes. These attractive homes are primarily year-round residences. The homes are characterized by larger lots, mature trees and homes oriented towards the lake.

Even with this residential lake development, the City of Clare is able to provide resident and visitor access to the Shamrock Lake and Tobacco River waterfront with its five acre Pettit Park west of McEwan Street and its ten acre Shamrock Park east of McEwan. With these two parks, the City is able to provide a large number of community activities and recreational opportunities like picnicking, ice skating, prime fishing and even camping, while retaining some control over the preservation of important natural features along the waterways.

The difficulty with Shamrock Lake currently is that the forty-five year old, man-made lake has now silted up so significantly that extensive weeds and shallow depths are an issue. With the recent reformation of the Lake Shamrock Lake Committee, the City should support lakefront residents in their efforts to fund dredging of the lake. This support may include assisting with the creation of a special assessment district (SAD) to pay for the necessary dredging activities.





### **North End Commercial Development Node**

New commercial development is in the planning stages at the US-10/US-127/McEwan intersection. This development includes the construction of a long-anticipated Walmart store. Additional commercial development is expected in the immediate vicinity, and it is anticipated to continue northward along S. Clare to Surrey Road. Physical design regulations and signage requirements should be developed to ensure that these new developments are visually appealing and do not have an impact upon the environment.

As these new businesses begin to operate, there will likely be impacts upon the existing businesses along the City's commercial corridors and within the Downtown. Business retention and training efforts should be developed to assist these existing businesses in competing with the larger businesses that will locate in this new commercial district.

As a part of this support, the City should undertake efforts to ensure that new signage is erected to direct traffic from this north end commercial node into the Downtown core. Enforcement of signage and blight regulations should also be instituted to improve the appearance of the existing businesses.

### **Industrial Parks**

The City of Clare is fortunate to have two industrial parks. The southern park, located in the southeastern corner of the City near where Business US-127 merges back onto US-127, is nearly built out. The newer northern industrial park is east of the proposed Walmart on Colonville Road. It is expected that this park will be suitable for industrial expansion for the length of this Master Plan. Non-motorized pathways should be extended to each park. With commercial and industrial development generating significant traffic along Colonville Road, a pathway outside of the actual roadway should be included as the properties along the road are developed.

### **Natural Features**

Clare has nature trails and some wooded, wetland, and farmland within its boundary. The City is surrounded with many pristine natural features including lakes, wetlands, woodlands and rolling hills that offer beautiful, scenic viewsheds. These natural features offer habitat for many types of plants and animals.

The natural areas can be viewed as both an opportunity and a constraint to future development within the City of Clare. Lakes, wetlands, woodlands, and farmland are often viewed as development constraints because they severely limit what can or should be developed on particular properties. On the other hand, these features should also be viewed as opportunity to provide scenic beauty and serenity, to clean the environment, and to save energy. As a gateway to the north, Clare must also take proactive steps to ensure that it retains those natural features that make it a pleasant Northern Michigan community that isn't tarnished by sprawl and suburban development. Where possible, the City of Clare should encourage a balance of development with preservation of natural features with all new developments.

### **Gateways and Entryways**

Clare has four prominent visitor gateway opportunities, and these gateways allow for the community to identify itself in a positive manner to visitors. Located at the interchange of two busy highways, the City of Clare is ideally situated to attract new residents and businesses. The community should take every opportunity to leverage this central location and highlight its pride. The north and south gateways should be located near the US-127 interchanges while the east west gateways should be located along Business US-10 east of the City and at the Pere Marquette trail/M-115 entry west of the City

These intersections also present a challenge to Clare to overcome due to the tendency for busy transportation routes to generate excessive amounts of traffic and noise, particularly truck and rail traffic, which can divide the community. Clare should consider an alternate truck route to mitigate some of the traffic at the main downtown interchange. The active railroad that runs through Downtown Clare currently services industry and the existing massive grain elevator on McEwan Street. The railroad could potentially provide future passenger rail service between Detroit and Traverse City that would bring tourists and visitors to the City.

Four downtown entryways should also be enhanced as a part of the Downtown and north-end commercial wayfinding effort. These Downtown entry points should be placed where the land use changes from one-story strip commercial to more urban two story front lot line developments. This entry signage will help build recognition for the visitors/residents that they are moving into an important community hub.

All these physical development patterns contribute to the sense of place and the definition of Clare. The challenge is to understand these patterns in order to develop a Master Plan that will highlight the complementary physical characteristics, while minimizing or eliminating the negative features of the community.

### **Outside Economic and Demographic Forces**

Macroeconomic changes in the United States and across the globe are driving many younger people to move from smaller communities into larger cities. Larger cities and regions offer a wider variety of economic opportunities that are not readily available in smaller communities. Clare and most other smaller communities in the United States are facing these same economic forces.

Offshoring of industrial jobs and globalization are directly impacting the ability of smaller businesses to compete with larger corporations in a global market. Larger communities offer businesses more and varied services, wider employment base, and business specializations necessary to compete in a globally competitive environment. These broader forces are holding down wages in more rural markets while directing new business growth into larger more dynamic regions.

The demographics found in Section 2 illustrate that the City of Clare and Clare County are falling behind much of the rest of Michigan's Lower Peninsula in income. Many of Michigan's smaller communities along the coasts facing these same macro-economic forces have successfully transitioned their local economies away from shrinking agribusiness and small-town manufacturing to tourism-based economies.

With this in mind, it must be recognized that these tourist-based economies are more cyclical in nature and provide mostly modest service sector wages when compared to more diversely-based economies. Even with the understanding of the pitfalls of tourism-based economies, Clare should consider increasing its tourism sector through the expansion of the Art-Traction Program and its regional trail network to take advantage of its reputation as a Gateway to Northern Michigan. To offset the typically lower wage jobs found in the tourism sector, they can be filled by individuals who desire flexibility or provide supplemental income for a household.

Due to historic educational and business developments, both Mt. Pleasant (Central Michigan University) and Midland (Dow Chemical) are respectively better positioned to combat these outside economic and global forces than Clare is; however, these communities may be losing their quaint appeal because of sprawl that comes with late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> Century development. Small town living appeals to many residents living in the region. Clare can excel by offering a picturesque and quaint small town atmosphere that these communities are in the process of losing by become a community of choice for those working in both communities. To achieve this goal, Clare must carefully manage all new development so that it enhances Clare's existing charm, not detracting from it.

# Map 4 Opportunities and Constraints





## ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

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### **Introduction**

The decisions made by the City of Clare through this Master Plan will not only affect the future land use of the City but its economic future as well. To understand the implications of these decisions for the local economy, the existing economic framework of the City must be analyzed. The economic analysis provides an assessment of economic forces which influence the future demand for commercial, industrial, office and even residential land uses. All land uses are affected by market factors to some degree; however, commercial land uses, particularly retail uses, are critically dependent on the economic health of the area, especially as compared to residential land uses.

Clare is a mature community with the Downtown business district serving as its primary commercial district with additional commercial along the business routes and an emerging node at the intersection of US-10/US-127/McEwan Street. Clare is fortunate in that it does have undeveloped land for future expansion in the perimeter areas of the City, and the 2009 Grant Township Expansion approval ensures that significant developable land is available to the City. This economic analysis will examine the current status of retail, office, manufacturing, and other non-governmental economic categories to provide an understanding of the community's general economic environment. From that point, the plan will draw conclusions about the City's market potential and determine the appropriate development patterns to provide the optimum economic future for the City of Clare.

### **Land Use Analysis**

As with any mature city, the improvement of undeveloped land and the redevelopment of existing property are essential steps to maintaining a fiscally secure community. One viable option for Clare is to expand the local tax base through the attraction of additional commercial and industrial development. Downtown Clare is a viable commercial district that is of utmost importance to its residents. While new commercial retail, dining, and entertainment establishments just outside of the Downtown area will certainly contribute to the tax base, the focus of long-term improvement should be in the Downtown.

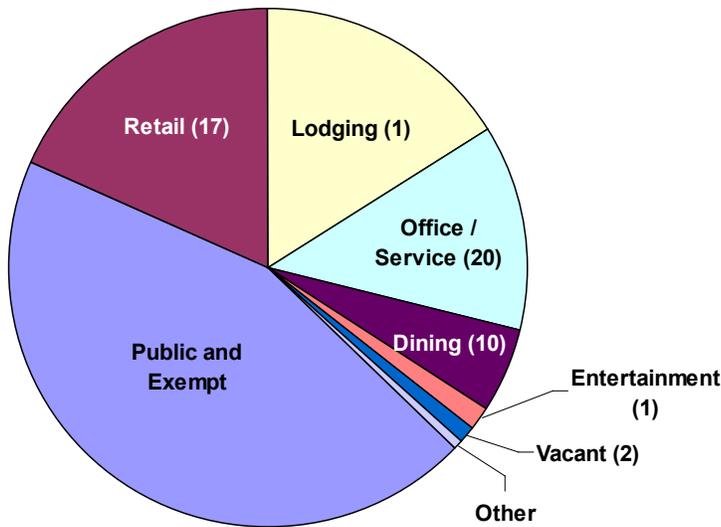
### **Downtown Study**

Though slightly dated, the 2005 Downtown Clare Market Study analysis of the economics of the downtown will still be applicable today. This study, prepared for the City's Main Street program, provides valuable data and analysis for land use trends and related economic projections in the Downtown area.

Visitors to the Downtown were surveyed about their purposes for going Downtown. Sixty-three (63%) percent patronized banks, offices, or other professional services, while thirty-seven (37%) percent made daily or weekly retail shopping trips, dining or entertainment to Downtown. These figures indicate that while Downtown Clare is serving as an important destination for professional services (medical, legal, etc.) and financial transactions, area residents are finding retail, dining, and entertainment options outside the Downtown. Survey questionnaire responses support this conclusion, showing that visitors consider Clare's Downtown to have excellent customer service and personal attention, but a limited selection of options for shopping and entertainment.

The Downtown Clare Market Study concludes with recommendations that the Downtown build on the rich history of Clare by celebrating its small town, Irish heritage and that the City capitalize on the Clare's community landmarks such as the Doherty Hotel with festivals and marketing promotions to attract new visitors and new types of commercial establishments. The study suggests that the City develop a quality Downtown vision that includes a mix of specialty shops, everyday retail stores, regionally-known entertainment venues, and unique residential opportunities.

**Figure 8.1:** Downtown Floor Area by Category and Number of Establishments – 2005



Source: *Downtown Clare Market Study, July 2005*

### Floor Area Analysis

A floor area analysis is an examination of the space occupied by specific categories of uses. For our purposes, the analysis will focus on uses in the Downtown area. In Figure 8.5, tax-exempt uses (government, fraternal organizations, and educational and religious institutions) accounted for nearly half of the Downtown floor area. While these uses may not contribute to the tax base of Clare, they perform critical functions as community activity centers, community identity structures, and focal landmarks for the City. The 17 general retail businesses in the Downtown made up the next largest portion (18.4%), with the Doherty Hotel alone accounting for 16.2% of the total floor area. Professional offices and services represent the greatest number of establishments (20) but only 12.7% of ground-floor space. Ten restaurants and bars in the Downtown accounted for only 5.3% of space, while one entertainment venue, the theater, made up 1.4% of floor area in the Downtown. Two properties (1.0%) were vacant, and 2,362 square feet (0.7%) were in other uses such as warehousing, residential, etc.

### Downtown Commercial Growth

The market study also presents an analysis of potential market share and supportable floor space for commercial uses in the Downtown. Over the next five years, the study estimated 8,137 square feet of additional retail space and 2,292 square feet of restaurant space could be reasonably accommodated in the Downtown. Regional population growth projections suggest that Downtown Clare could serve some of this growth that is taking place outside of the City proper. Current review of the population statistics indicate a slight decline in number of residents thus a more conservative number of 10,400 square feet of commercial space could be accommodated in the Downtown over the next five years.

An interesting statistic is that the floor area analysis only identified 3,588 square feet of vacant ground-floor space in the Downtown, less than one-third of the conservative estimated growth potential. Future commercial development within the Downtown will likely require the redevelopment of existing properties. The City should consider a mixed-use approach for redevelopment areas to provide an economic incentive for such redevelopment, as leasing or selling dual use areas is inherently more beneficial

in that it attracts users not only to the ground floor spaces but to the second floor spaces as well.

Since Cops and Doughnuts took over operating the City Bakery in 2009, the bakery has become a major tourist attraction, welcoming over 350,000 into Downtown Clare each year. This new business has significantly increased tourist traffic coming into Downtown Clare off of the US-10 and US-127 freeways. There are great opportunities for new stores to be established to serve these transient visitors. In addition, the Art-Traction efforts should be expanded so that visitors stay longer and have a more dynamic arts and cultural experience than just visiting a single bakery. In addition to the existing potential for growth in the Downtown to serve the existing community, the growth of bike tourism is another great opening for Clare to serve as the hub to the emerging bike network in central northern Michigan.

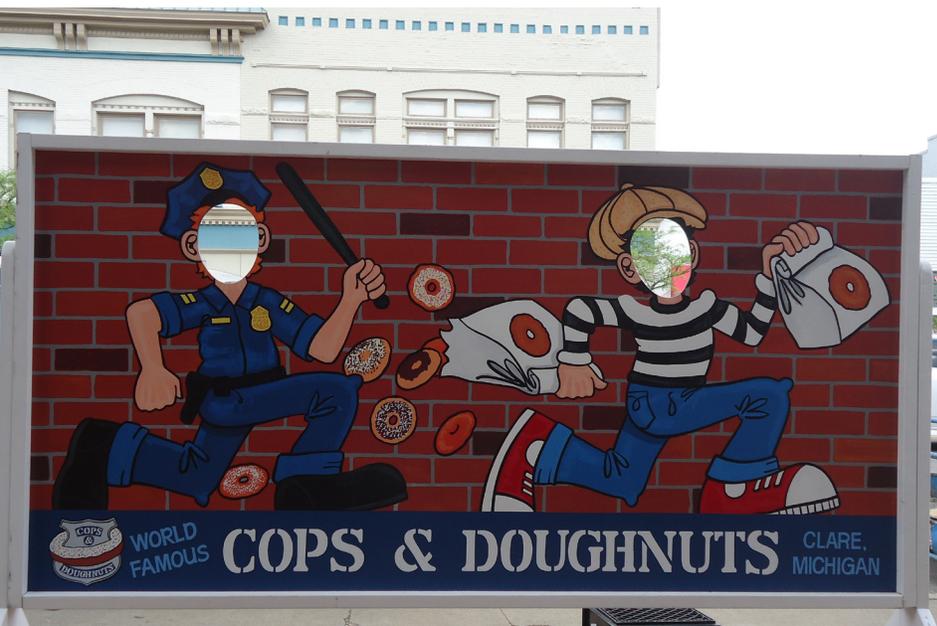
The development and redevelopment of the Downtown's upper stories of commercial buildings should be encouraged and actively supported. Full utilization of second-floor spaces, for example, could provide unique loft-living spaces or unique offices spaces. This development would nearly double the available commercial area in the Downtown. These uses are more typical in historic Downtown settings, in part due to accessibility and visibility issues. An added benefit is that these new downtown occupants would be 'captured' users of downtown businesses and services.

While a mixture of uses such as neighborhood and specialty commercial uses, entertainment venues, professional offices and residential uses in a Downtown core district provides the ingredients necessary for a vibrant, exciting City, the emphasis should be on containing the mixed uses in a concentrated defined Downtown area. The expansion of commercial uses in a sprawling fashion along streets into existing, single family residential neighborhoods should be actively discouraged, as this action erodes the fabric of those neighborhood areas and doesn't increase the intensity of use within the core.

### **Downtown Residential**

Despite the need to monitor the spread of commercial activity into single family residential areas, the presence of residential land uses in the Downtown is a significant asset which should be encouraged to develop in harmony with retail, entertainment, and office uses. Downtown residents add life to the district, creating activity in the evenings and weekends when typical commercial activity usually slows. Downtown residents also serve as a 'captive' market for retail and services which cater to daily needs (fresh food markets, banking, restaurants). With the largest two census groups in the United State—Millennials and Baby Boomers—both looking for urban living options free of home ownership and auto dependence, it is expected that downtown living options will be in demand for an extended period. The Downtown survey supported this hypothesis. Based upon the favorable responses to new housing Downtown and the limited supply of existing housing in the Downtown, the marketing study concluded that there was a potential demand for 20 to 40 new market rate housing units in the Downtown area.

The Downtown Clare Market Study and the 2000 U.S. Census identified nine residential units in the Downtown, all of which were occupied in 2000. Based on economic indicators and demand, the Downtown can be expected to accommodate 4-8 new residential units per year over the next five years. These units may be townhome condominiums or upper-story apartments over new or existing Downtown commercial uses. Developing mixed-use zoning criteria will allow this type of development to occur more readily and bring around-the-clock vitality to Downtown Clare.



### Promotion and Tourism

Special events and festivals draw people into the Downtown and blaze the path for future trips to shops, restaurants, the theater, and other local merchants. There are a number of activities that are currently being used to promote the Downtown. Seasonal events such as the Irish Festival, Summerfest, and Yoder's Amish Auction already draw large numbers of people to the area. Based on the results of the demographic analysis, Downtown activities should be oriented primarily to singles, mature couples, families, and college students. Events should emphasize the distinctive, small town character of Clare and provide opportunities for interactions among diverse groups of area residents. The sense of community was a desirable attribute of Clare that was significant to the participants in the visioning session. City festivals and events definitely provide the opportunity to foster a greater sense of community.

The festivals and events, if properly promoted, can also be effectively used to increase City tourism on a regular basis while bringing new customers to local businesses. Coordination among Downtown business owners to host sidewalk sales, holiday celebrations, and themed specials hold the potential to greatly increase patronage from locals and tourists alike. Joint advertising, including lodging and dining packages, as well as tourism-oriented businesses and unique retail experiences can broaden Clare's commercial base by drawing dollars from outside the immediate area. With deliberate and coordinated planning, events like these can have a positive and lasting impact on the Downtown and on the City as a whole.

The City should take immediate steps to capitalize on other opportunities within the City limits to showcase itself and draw customers to the Downtown as well. For example, completion of the Pere Marquette Rail Trail Welcome Center at the Clare Historic Depot will assist in making Downtown Clare a hub or starting point for exploration the area's expansive and growing cycling infrastructure. Signage and completion of linkages into the Downtown will enable cycling visitors to explore businesses for food, shopping, and entertainment.

Nature-based tourism should be investigated and promoted as more people are now seeking out unique natural areas and outdoor-related activities for their vacations. Nature tourists seek discovery, adventure, camping, canoeing, fishing, hunting, nature photography, etc. Clare already has some camping, fishing, canoeing opportunities within the City, as well existing natural features like the S. Tobacco River, Shamrock

Lake and other natural wooded areas. Nature tourism could be a successful alternative business enterprise for Clare. Paramount to this tourism type, however, is the preservation of the quality of the natural environment. Environmental quality and the number of natural features in and around Clare will directly impact the long term success of this type of nature-based tourist business endeavor.

### **Business Incubators**

According to the U.S. Census' 2014 American Community Survey, currently nearly half of all residents are employed either in a professional management capacity or in sales and office capacity. With plenty of available developable land within the City, Clare has the opportunity to expand the tax base and provide additional employment opportunities in a responsible and reasonable manner.

A means of encouraging the development of new office, service, retail, and research/technology business operations, is to establish a "business incubator" at a location. A business incubator is a facility that provides flexible space near or below market cost; shared services; access to computers, fax machines and general office equipment; and technical assistance to entrepreneurs and early-stage businesses. Tenants typically include manufacturing, office, service or technology firms, but incubators may also be used to provide opportunities for growth of new retail businesses. The primary goal of a business incubator is to develop successful business operations that will outgrow their start-up space in the incubator and leave to establish viable, freestanding business operations within the City.

Carefully designed and managed business incubators can create jobs, improve the tax base, and strengthen and diversify the local economy. Business incubators are commonly owned and managed by non-profit organizations (like a Chamber of Commerce or local business association) or by local economic development organizations (like a DDA or LDFA). The business incubator concept could be applied within the Downtown or even within the industrial parks.

Creation of a "hacker space" in an industrial building can also function as a business incubator. A community-operated workspace is developed where people can meet, socialize, and collaborate. Hacker spaces are often industrial spaces operated by a non-profit that owns and runs the space for its members. These spaces include CNC, 3 Dimensional printing, computer labs, woodworking, and metal working areas with equipment that is owned in common. Hacker spaces can often be where individuals test manufacturing and innovation ideas before opening stand-alone businesses.

When creating a business incubator or hacker space within the City, the following characteristics should be incorporated:

- Establish within an existing building at a central location either within or adjacent to the Downtown;
- Locate where it is convenient to existing support services and complementary businesses;
- Provide flexible space options, from individual offices to small suites and open bay warehouse/laboratory/distribution space;
- Share secretarial/office management services, including receptionist, voice mail, conference room, and access to computers, fax machines and general office equipment; and

- Provide access to on-site or off-site technical assistance services, such as small business development consultants, financial assistance, and other business development resources.

### **Industrial Development**

The City of Clare has two healthy industrial park developments that currently provide a source of employment and tax base for the community. Each has room for expansion. It is imperative, however, that the City recruit environmentally friendly light industrial and high technology uses so the natural beauty and the water resources of the City are not damaged or destroyed. Any financial gain from the industrial tax base would be quickly diminished by environmental degradation.

Near the southern industrial park, it is important to note that vacant land could function as a City entry gateway from US-127. High architectural standards, superlative landscape features and coordination with the City are necessary for any future development of this important parcel. To reduce the impact of trucks needlessly driving through the Downtown, routing of truck traffic is also important in this area.

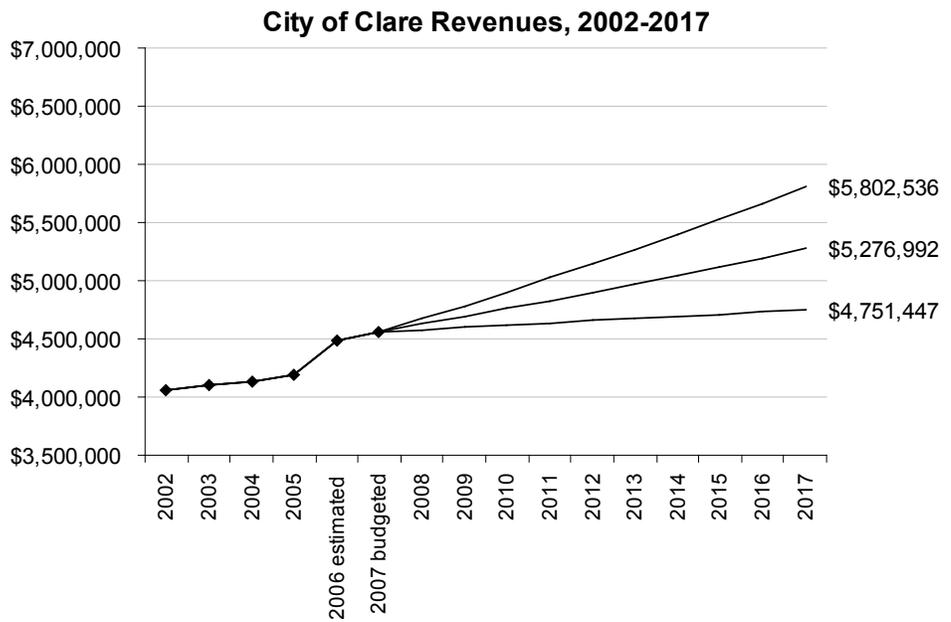
In all of the areas discussed in this chapter, communication and coordination between the City, the Chamber of Commerce, the DDA, the Industrial Development Corporation and other community stakeholders will be vital to encourage new development, redevelopment and reinvestment in the City and particularly in the Downtown. The encouragement of development and redevelopment activities are a critical piece of the economic health and well-being of Clare. Land use and development policies affect property values and therefore City revenues and expenditures. An evaluation of the City's revenues and expenditures follows below.

# Municipal Finances

## Revenue

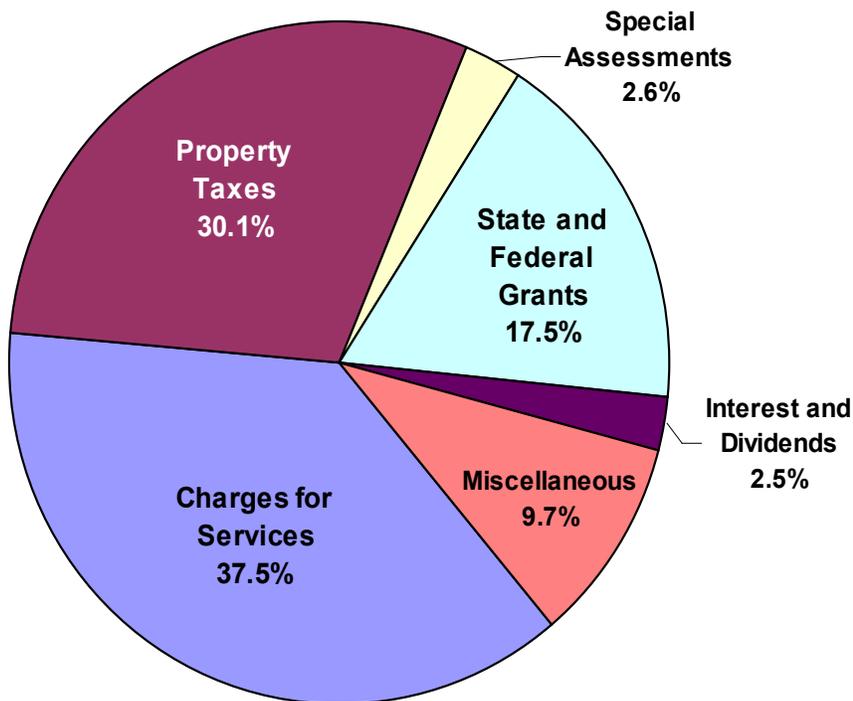
The City's total revenues for 2013-2014 were \$6,428,616, growing from \$4,838,926 in 2005-2006. These totals include the City's General Fund, as well as individual funds for sewer, water, sidewalks, local and major streets, Fire Department, and the cemetery. The City's total revenues increased \$1,589,690 or 24.7% during that period. The average annual increase in total revenue was 3.1% over the eight-year period. The City's total revenue from 2006 to 2014 and projected through 2025 is depicted in Figure 8.2.

**Figure 8.2: Actual and Projected Revenues – City of Clare, 2006 to 2025**



## Revenue Projection

Figure 8.3: Revenue Sources by Percentage of Total Revenues (Estimated)—2005-2006



The revenue projections shown in Figure 8.2 are based on the overall revenue trend from 2002 through the 2007 budget year and do not account for additional business opportunities, development or redevelopment growth. Projections were calculated based on an assumption of constant percentage growth. Figure 8.2 shows that the total revenue trend was increasing over the study period, with a large jump between 2005 and 2006. The high projection is based on the average percentage change (2.44% annually) from 2002 to 2007. The low projection extends the average percentage change from 2002 to 2004 (0.41%), a period of steady growth. The medium projection is an average of the high and low projections for each year. The total revenue projected in 2017 based on the mid-point projection is \$5,276,992.

The City's estimated revenues in 2005-2006, categorized by source of funds, are depicted in Figure 8.3. The largest source of revenues is charges for services (water, sewer, fire, etc.), which constituted 37.5 percent of total 2005-2006 revenues. Other important sources of revenue include property taxes (30.1 percent) and state and federal grants (17.5 percent). The remaining sources of funds collectively account for less than 15 percent of total revenues.

### Changes in Revenue Sources

As discussed above, the City's total revenues increased 10.5 percent from 2005-06 through 2013-14. The amount of revenue generated from each revenue source also changed over time. The increase in each revenue source, as a percentage of the increase in total revenue, between 2005-06 and 2013-14 is presented in Table 8.1.

**Table 8.2: Increase in Revenue Sources as a Percentage of Total Revenue Increase**  
 – City of Clare, 2005-06 to 2013-2014

Revenue Source	Percentage of Total Revenue Increase 2006 to 2014
Property Taxes:	6.8
Licenses and Permits:	0.2
From Federal Government:	15.8
From State Government:	-0.7
Charges for Services	13.3
Fines and Forfeits	-0.5
Interests & Rents	-0.2
Other Revenues	65.2
Other Financing Sources	-4.4
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>95.5</b>

Source: McKenna Associates with data from the City of Clare's online Finance Dashboard.

Property taxes constitute over one quarter of the City's revenues; however growth in property taxes accounted for less than seven percent of the growth in the City's total revenues from 2005-2006 to 2013-14. The significant increases in miscellaneous revenues resulting from capital outlays for water quality improvement actions undertaken by the City and construction of the northern industrial park.

As identified as a concern in the 2007 Master Plan, State revenue sharing funds, historically an important component of local government revenue, have continued to be an issue. The lowest total for both Constitutional (required by the State constitution) and Statutory (required in State statutes) revenue sharing was in FY2011-12 when only \$285,205 was returned to the City of Clare. Since then, revenue sharing from the State of Michigan has slightly increased to \$308,520 in FY 2014-15. In 1999-2000, the City received over \$407,000 in revenue sharing funds, well over 10% of its revenues. In 2014, state revenue sharing only comprised 4.7% of the City's entire budget. The City Treasurer has conservatively estimated that over \$1,400,000 cumulatively have been lost since the State started reducing its revenue sharing payments to balance its own financials in the early 2000s.

## Property Taxes

Adjusted for inflation, the City's total taxable value increased \$40,287,457, or 90% from 1995 through 2015 to \$85,012,095. The average annual inflation-adjusted increase in taxable value was 3.3% during this period while the Assessed Value annual inflation-adjusted increase was 3.7% during this same period.

Property taxes are levied on both real and personal property. Subsequent sections analyze the City's tax base (the amount and types of property from which property taxes are collected) and the trend in property tax revenues. The following brief description of property taxes is taken from the Citizen Research Council of Michigan:

The distinction between real and personal property is relatively straight forward. Real property is basically land and buildings. Personal property is generally movable and not affixed to the land. Personal property includes a broad array of assets, including most equipment, furniture, and fixtures used by businesses. In addition, electric transmission and distribution equipment, gas transmission and distribution equipment, and oil pipelines are all considered personal property.

In 2014, the voters of the State of Michigan voted to support personal property tax reform that would exempt all personal property for business tax payers that have less than \$80,000 in true cash value of personal property. It also created a phased-in exemption of all industrial property used in industrial processing or in "direct integrated support" of industrial processing. Real property accounted for 84.8% of the City's 2015 taxable value. As the 2014 personal property tax reform is phased in through 2023, this percent of total real taxable value will continue to increase. A portion of the loss in personal property tax revenues will be replaced by a state essential services assessment that began on January 1, 2016, and this millage rate ranges from 2.40 to .9 mills and will decline as the exempted personal property ages. This essential services assessment will make up a portion of the City's lost personal property revenues; however, not all personal property is affected by these changes. Tax payers with over \$80,000 in personal property liability in commercial or utility classifications will not be affected by the 2014 law, and industrial property that is not used for industrial processing or "direct integrated support" of industrial processing will continue to be assessed.

- **Real Property Tax Base:** In 2015, the total taxable value of property in Clare \$85,012,095, which was 94.3% of the state equalized value. The total taxable value of property in the City in 2005 was \$74,413,478, which at the time was 77.9% of the state equalized value, or assessed value. During the Great Recession, the difference between state equalized value and taxable value drastically lessened in most Michigan's communities as property values declined including in Clare where the gap between taxable and assessed value reduced to less than six percent.

These differences in taxable and assessed/equalized value are due to Michigan's 1978 Headlee Amendment. This amendment was instituted due to large tax increases being forced upon property owners in many communities across the state. Under Headlee, property tax assessments are only constitutionally able to be raised by a maximum rate which is either 5% or the inflation rate, whichever is less. This rule limits how fast taxes can be increased in communities, and gaps develop between what properties are worth (state equalized value) and what the property can be taxed (taxable value). This property tax gap in values is only eliminated upon sale when the two values are brought back together.

Establishing the assessed value of real versus personal property involves

different methodologies, although all taxable property is required to be assessed at 50% of true cash value, the state equalized valuation. Real property assessments are developed by comparing similar properties and analyzing sales and cost data to establish assessment changes.

The amount of property tax owed is determined by multiplying the local tax rate times the taxable value of a parcel of property. Under Michigan law, the City's real property tax base is categorized into six classes:

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Residential
- Timber Cut Over
- Developmental

**Table 8.3: Real Property Classes by Percentage of Total Real Property Tax Base—City of Clare and Selected Communities, 2005**

	Clare City	Harrison	Mount Pleasant	Clare County	Isabella County
Agricultural	0.0	0.1	0.0	4.6	10.9
Commercial	44.1	20.2	35.5	7.9	20.7
Industrial	5.3	2.6	3.1	1.1	1.8
Residential	50.6	77.1	61.2	86.5	66.2
Timber Cut Over	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Developmental	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.4

Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., with data from Michigan Department of Treasury.

The most salient characteristic of the City's real property tax base evident in Table 8.2 is the size of the commercial portion of the tax base. Commercial real property constitutes 44.1 percent of the City's real property tax base, a much larger portion than in the nearby communities of Harrison, Clare County, Isabella County and even Mt. Pleasant.

In 2015, the numbers for Clare continue to illustrate similar characteristics with 41.5% of the property commercial, 10.8% of the property industrial, and 47.7% residential. These numbers demonstrate the success of Clare to grow its industrial base and continued strength of its commercial developments. Clare has a larger percentage of industrial real property than its neighbors while the City's larger commercial and industrial bases is offset with a lower portion of the tax base in the residential classifications than the comparison communities.

- **Personal Property Tax Base:** Personal property assessments use acquisition costs adjusted by depreciation multipliers to reflect declining values as an asset ages. Since personal property is not subject to the limits of Michigan's Headlee Amendment, the methodology used to assess personal property virtually assures that the assessed and taxable values will be the same.

Due to the voter approved changes to the State Constitution in 2014, Clare's portion of personal property tax revenues is expected to decline through 2023.

All business owners with true cash value of personal property under \$80,000 are now exempted under the 2014 law and all industrial personal property utilized for industrial processing will be exempted, but these exemptions will be phase in through 2023.

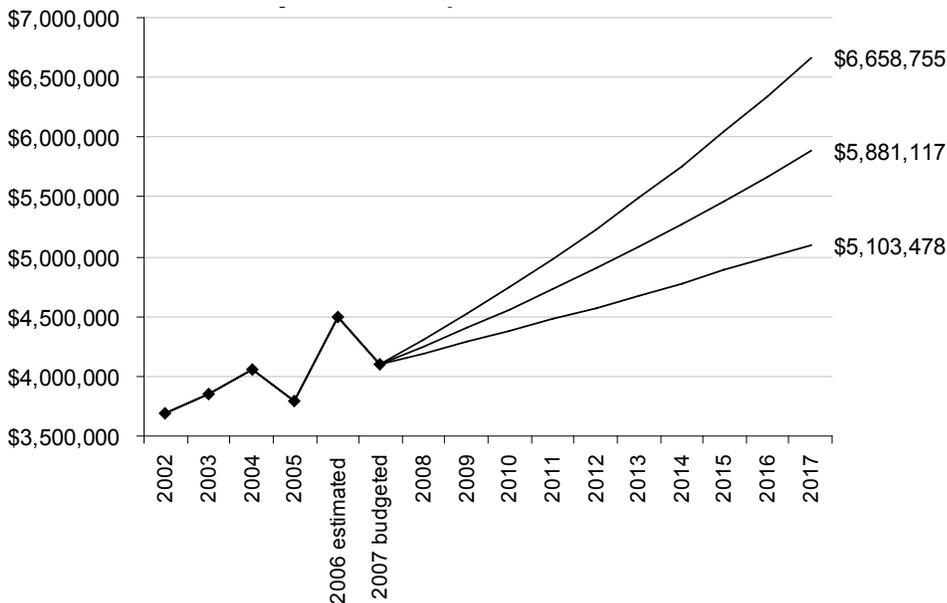
In 2005, personal property constituted 13.2 percent of the City’s taxable property value. As of 2015, the percent had grown to 16.4% of the City’s taxable value.

According to the City Treasurer/Finance Director, the Personal Property Tax reductions to the City’s finances appear to be mitigated through the state reimbursing municipalities for losses from the small parcel exemption. He has indicated that the revenue losses won’t be as damaging as first expected. The industrial processing losses will be made up in part through the state essential services assessment. In spring 2016, the Treasurer/Finance Director stated that it is difficult to clearly assess how the personal property tax changes will impact the City into the future. Due to the fluidity of the requests for small parcel exemptions and how large the essential services assessment reimbursements to the City will be each year, it is necessary for the City to closely monitor how these changes will impact its finances over the next seven phase-in years and beyond.

### Expenditures

In FY 2013-14, the City’s total expenditures were \$6,214,216, which is a \$1,714,566 increase from the City’s total estimated expenditures of \$4,499,650 in FY 2005-2006. Without adjusting for inflation, the City’s total expenditures increased 27.6% from 2006 through 2014. The average annual increase in total expenditures was 3.45% over the eight year period. The corresponding average annual increase in total revenues was 3.1% during the same period. The City’s total expenditures from 2006 through 2025 (budgeted) are depicted in Figure 8.4.

**Figure 8.4: Actual and Projected Expenditures—City of Clare, 2006 to 2025**



### Expenditure Projection

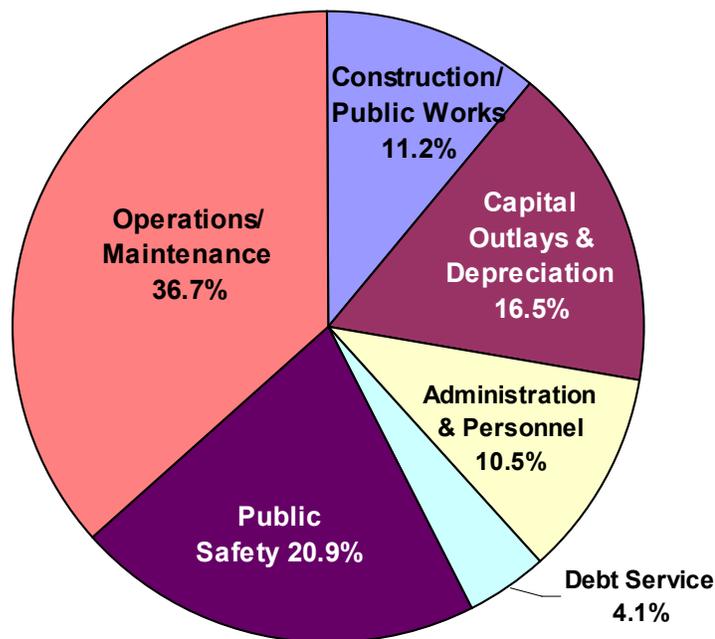
The expenditure projections beyond 2007 (shown in Figure 8.3) are derived in a similar manner as the revenue projections. Although the total estimated expenditures for 2006 are quite a bit higher than 2005 (which was an atypically low year), the figures reasonably fit the general trend observed in 2002-2004.

The high expenditure projection was derived from the average annual percent change (4.97%) between 2002 and 2004. The low projection presumes that the average annual percent change between 2002 and 2007 (2.21%) will continue. The medium projection is the average of the high and low projections, resulting in a 2017 figure of \$5,881,117. Each of the projections is founded on the 2007 budgeted expenditures total to limit the variations found in the 2005 and 2006 figures, but again does not account for any future development, redevelopment, additional grants or other factors that could offset expenditures significantly.

### Expenditures by Function

The City's estimated expenditures in 2005-2006 by category are depicted in Figure 8.5. Clearly, the largest expenditure was for operations and maintenance (36.7% of total expenditures), with public safety (20.9%) and capital outlays and depreciation (16.5%) each representing over one-sixth of the annual expenditures.

**Figure 8.5: Expenditure Categories by Percentage of Total Expenditures (Estimated)**  
– City of Clare, 2005-2006



### Changes in Expenditures

As discussed above, the City's total expenditures increased 27.6% from 2006 through 2014. Expenditures in each category also changed over time. The increase in each category of expenditures, as a percentage of the increase in total expenditures, between 2006 and 2014 is presented in Table 8.3.

**Table 8.4: Expenditure by Category as a Percentage of Total Expenditures Increase** – City of Clare, 2006 to 2014

Expenditure Category	FY 2006	FY 2014	Percentage Increase
General Government	\$604,773	\$652,065	3.1%
Police & Fire	\$823,943	\$1,013,081	12.3%
Other Public Safety	\$26,685	\$33,334	0.4%
Roads	\$226,338	\$346,455	7.8%
Other Public Works	\$1,570,085	\$1,655,657	5.5%
Health and Welfare	\$12,278	\$87,696	4.9%
Community & Econ Development	\$157,355	\$299,828	11.4%
Recreation & Culture	\$166,119	\$299,828	8.7%
Capital Outlay	\$584,796	\$1,790,407	78.0%
Debt Service	\$348,377	\$335,693	-0.8%
Extraordinary/Spec. Items	\$111,265	\$0	-7.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,672,014</b>	<b>\$6,214,216</b>	

Source: McKenna Associates, 2016, with data from City of Clare.

As Capital Outlay varies greatly year to year due to what capital projects are being undertaken by the City, this line item should be ignored in this analysis. This chart illustrates greatest increase in expenditures was for public safety during the 2006 to 2014 time period. Funding for parks and recreation activities are paid for through a dedicated millage. During this time period, expenditures for construction/public works have remained nearly flat and debt repayments have decreased significantly as a percentage of total expenditures.

### Projected Annual Revenues and Expenditures

If there was no future development, redevelopment or increased revenue sources, City expenditures could potentially exceed revenues in five years. The projected weighted relationship of expenditures to revenues would not be sustainable long term but steps to prevent such an occurrence have already been implemented by the City of Clare. Generally the basic steps to balance any projected difference between revenues and expenditures include increasing revenues through increased taxes, increasing charges for services and expanding of the tax base while reducing expenditures either with cost saving measures or by modifying the level of services provided. The City of Clare has been actively pursuing mechanisms to increase City revenues through the implementation of recommendations made by various studies such as the [Downtown Clare Marketing Study](#), for example and by organizations such as the City's Main Street Program and DDA, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, and the Middle Michigan Development Corporation. The emphasis of the City's plan is to increase the tax base to provide additional revenues without decreasing services or increasing property taxes.

## Summary

The City of Clare is uniquely poised to capitalize on emerging market opportunities that will ensure the prosperity and vitality of the City and in particular the historic, traditional Downtown business district. The City has exciting potential for new commercial, office, residential and industrial investment that hinges on an ambitious plan of action. The primary tenants of the Marketing Study include the following:

- Retain existing businesses to provide stability and to improve the vitality of the City.
- Improve existing businesses with high standards of site and architectural improvements to upgrade the visual quality of the City, particularly in the Downtown area.
- Attract new niche businesses to round out the Downtown's commercial offerings with a balanced mix of uses consistent with market demand.
- Expand the Art-Traction program to develop broader arts programming in the City for tourists and residents alike.
- Promote the City as a unique destination, both for area residents and tourists with features and activities that the people want and the market will support with a primary destination focus on the Downtown area.
- Establish a unifying set of design guidelines for the City and especially for the Downtown that improves the aesthetics of the community.
- Develop the Downtown as the major focus of community, cultural, recreational, civic and entertainment activities.
- Encourage residential opportunities and employment clusters in the Downtown to increase the daily activity and increase the demand for day-to-day retail, service and entertainment options.
- Conserve and revitalize commercial land use areas in the City by eliminating incompatible uses, encouraging the development of vacant land parcels and redevelopment of existing parcels to efficiently and effectively utilize the land available.
- Continue to coordinate economic development with state, county, and regional programs.
- Continue to promote the two industrial parks in the City to new and existing businesses.



# FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

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## **Introduction**

The Future Land Use Plan for the City of Clare is based upon the foregoing analysis and the goals and objectives. By addressing each feasible development pattern, the scope of the Plan is comprehensive. At the same time, the Plan should be viewed as a general framework for development, in which a suggested arrangement of land uses and circulation is identified, leaving flexibility to accommodate changing needs and conditions. It must be recognized that the Plan represents an overall policy document and that all elements and concepts cannot be achieved in the near term, but will be realized only through continued effort and follow-through.

The Plan should serve as a primary guide in evaluating proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance and/or current Zoning Map. As mandated by the state enabling legislation, the Plan should also be updated every five years to reflect changes in the community. Future amendments to the Plan should be considered with care and deliberation by the City's Planning Commission.

The Future Land Use Plan Map on page 9-25 and the supporting text is based on the fundamental planning principles summarized below:

- **Long Range:** The Plan identifies and responds to existing and anticipated issues affecting land development over the next twenty years. The population projections and economic analysis are particularly helpful in the development of the Future Land Use Plan.
- **Comprehensive:** In the Plan, all major types of land use appropriate to the City are considered. The existing land use can become difficult to change when it involves numerous parcels of land under separate ownership. This fact is recognized and considered when developing the Future Land Use Plan.
- **Generalized:** To avoid detailed or site-specific issues of minor consequence in the context of the Plan, broad principles of land use inter-relationships are incorporated. The Plan is not the Zoning Ordinance which gets to site specific uses. Broad stroke considerations such as utility availability, the road system analysis, historic and cultural resources, and environmental concerns are important factors that are pertinent to the Future Land Use pattern.
- **Regional:** The preparation of the Plan also considers conditions beyond City boundaries which may have impact on the City. Compatibility and coordination of land uses with surrounding communities is particularly important to the Future Land Use Plan.

# Future Land Use Plan

Generalized land use areas are identified on the Future Land Use Plan and reflect the patterns of existing land use, the analysis of existing conditions, the population projections, the community goals and objectives, and other aspects discussed in previous sections.

## Basic Concept

The basic concepts for the Future Land Use Plan are as follows:

- The City of Clare shall be a community that maintains its vibrant, small town atmosphere.
- The City shall provide a variety of business, housing, recreational and employment opportunities.
- The City shall encourage the orderly expansion of new development that maintains a high quality of life in the community. New development will not be implemented at the expense of existing development or infrastructure.
- The Future Land Use Plan shall encourage sustainable development that encourages the integration of uses into compact areas.
- The Future Land Use Plan shall provide a concentrated area for businesses, services and entertainment in the Central Business District.
- Regional Commercial will be focused in a new emerging district near the intersection of US-10/US-127/McEwan Road.
- Neighborhood Commercial districts shall be placed in less intensive development areas that are complementary to both the Downtown Central Business District and the single family neighborhoods.
- Office districts shall be implemented in areas along thoroughfares where existing single family housing structures could be maintained but transitioned to an office type use while maintaining the residential appearance of the neighborhood. Small retail uses would also be permissible.
- High Density Single Family Residential districts shall be provided to create a buffer transition use between Single Family Residential and higher intensity uses like Multiple Family districts.
- Low impact, light Industrial districts shall be concentrated around existing industrial development and shall be encouraged to develop in attractive, industrial park-type settings.
- The preservation of the natural environment and the acquisition of additional open space and park land shall be encouraged to provide new open space and recreation options for the Clare residents.
- The historically and culturally significant areas of the community shall be given particular consideration toward protection with all development proposals.
- New land use categories and new development patterns will be allowed in the Grant Township Expansion area.

Following is a description of each of the land use categories contained on the Future Land Use Map.

## **Agricultural**

With a minimum lot size of twenty acres, the Agricultural designation seeks to maintain viable agricultural operations with the recognition that limited large-lot residential uses may be accommodated. Any residential development should be clustered to minimize the infrastructure needs and maximize the preservation of rural open space and active agricultural areas. Open space should be contiguous to previously-designated natural areas to create continuous ecological corridors. Agricultural land is planned to comprise 21.13% of the total area.

### **Use**

Agricultural areas are limited to active farming uses and customary accessory uses.

### **Lot Size**

This designation is for parcels of twenty acres or larger.

### **Lot Coverage & Building Mass**

Due to lot size, lot coverage would not be a concern in this district. Farm operation structures (large barn, silos, and other structures) should not be built adjacent to roadways or property lines. Small roadside stands for the sale of farm-raised produce and food goods manufactured on site with a percentage of on-site produced materials would be permitted.

### **Building Placement & Setbacks**

Building placement is where the buildings are located on a lot relative to property lines, typically regulated through setbacks. Any residential structure must adhere to the building setback requirements found within the Zoning Ordinance. All large farm structures should be setback from the road right-of-way and from the adjoining property lines. They should also be clustered in a location that preserves as much farming land as possible. Houses may be sited near or back away from the road right-of-way; however, they should be sited in a way that preserves as much agricultural land as possible.

### **Character**

As working farm properties, all the structures should reflect traditional farm architecture found within rural parts of Michigan and the Midwest.



## Rural Residential

The Rural Residential land use designation is intended to accommodate existing residential development while providing for future growth of suburban-style large lot homes. Located primarily in the northwest quadrant of the Grant Township Expansion area, the Rural Residential designation largely maintains the existing pattern of development. New subdivisions should focus on conservation design with clustered housing and connected open spaces to preserve the character of the area while allowing for growth. Rural Residential is planned to comprise 22.82% of the total area.

### Use

Rural Residential areas are limited to one family residential type uses and customary accessory uses.

### Lot Size

This residential designation is for parcels of five acres or larger.

### Lot Coverage & Building Mass

Due to lot size, lot coverage would not be a concern in this district. Homes should mirror the types of structures found in rural areas with larger newly built homes.

### Building Placement & Setbacks

Any residential structure must adhere to the building setback requirements found within the Zoning Ordinance. Houses should be sited back away from the road to preserve the rural character of the district, and they should be sited in a way that preserves as much open space as possible.

### Character

These homes should be designed in a manner that reflects the rural character of Michigan with a mixture of materials, abundance of windows, significant landscaping including large trees clustered around the main structure, and elevations comprised of multiple projections and variety of architectural details. The housing sites should be well landscaped to minimize the house's appearance on the rural landscape.



## **Single Family Residential**

The City of Clare's urban Single Family Residential character is an important and positive attribute of the community. These areas are located throughout the City and represent 763.48 acres or 14.05% of the total land area being devoted to this designation. As described in the Housing Analysis (Section 3), the City has a variety of housing types ranging from historic homes in traditional block patterns to subdivisions with winding roads and newer single family homes. The City wishes to retain its small town atmosphere and should continue to work to maintain and improve neighborhood and housing conditions.

Single Family Residential land uses are improved single land parcels or portions of parcels having single family detached dwelling units on them. The residential land use category includes acreage parcels, City and subdivision-style lots with important neighborhood amenities such as sidewalks, street trees and connections to neighborhood parks. The following standards are intended to maintain the character of the district, recognizing that property owners may wish to maximize their development.

### **Use**

Single Family Residential areas are limited to one family residential type uses and customary accessory uses.

### **Lot Size**

This designation is intended for one to 4.1 units per gross acre with a minimum lot size of 10,500 square feet. The R-1 zoning classification would be the implementation tool for this Future Land Use designation. Consideration should be given to maintaining the City's block type structure of the lots and road layout as this block layout is consistent with the small town neighborhood atmosphere.

### **Lot Coverage & Building Mass**

The overall size and massing of residential buildings are regulated by lot coverage, setbacks, and building height limits in the R-1 zoning ordinance designation. Houses in this Single Family Residential category should be built or modified with respect for traditional mass and scale. In no instance should the development of the property negatively impact the value of the surrounding properties and neighborhood. Adequate open space in the form of front, rear, and side yard setbacks, reasonable lot coverage and building height limits should be required to protect the character of the neighborhood and the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

### **Building Placement & Setbacks**

Building placement is critical for maintaining the character of the residential sections of the City, providing adequate light and air, and ensuring public safety. To improve street side views and maintain the small town character, the side of the building facing the street should maintain a facade that is not dominated by garage doors. Front facing garages should be set back toward the rear of the parcels or side loaded garages utilized where the garage door(s) face one of the neighboring parcels. Additionally, the use of open front porches should be encouraged to permit neighbor interaction.

Waterfront rear yard setbacks on Shamrock Lake are critical for maintaining views to the water which gives these lots their value. The City currently requires a rear yard setback of 25 feet. Parcels along the lake rarely have even shorelines relative to each other and conflicts with lake views could occur if a relative standard is not applied. The City should consider adopting an established residential building setback for the lake front lots that respects the existing setbacks of adjacent properties to determine the necessary rear yard (lakeside) setbacks of lakeside parcels.



### Character

The character of the residential homes in this Single Family district varies from large traditional Victorian homes to simple cottage style homes. The median home size across the country has increased dramatically from the early 20th century to the present. It is important, however, that the look and feel of homes remain consistent with the traditional architectural elements of the existing, historic dwellings. These elements include peaked roofs, front porches, one to two stories, traditional building materials and a vertical orientation. In order for the City to ensure that new residential development respects the existing traditional development, the City should follow adopt standards that require:

- Traditional design elements be incorporated into the designs such as peaked roofs, front porches, one to two stories, traditional building materials, and a vertical orientation;
- Maintenance of the open area between the street and the yard area of houses;
- Continuity of sidewalks;
- Utilization of the grid street network for new development;
- Planting of canopy street trees and yard shade trees; and
- Consideration for installing front porches when building additions or new construction is undertaken.



## High Density Single Family Residential

The High Density Single Family Residential land use category includes areas adjacent to either Neighborhood Commercial, Office, or Multiple Family where the use can act as a transitional use to buffer adjacent Single Family Residential development. New homes in these areas would typically be constructed within subdivisions or site condominium developments with paved streets, sidewalks and public water and sewer. The High Density Single Family Residential land use could also be constructed on existing lots in the City. Approximately 69.20 acres or 1.27% of the Clare land use is devoted to this Future Land Use category.

### Use

High Density Single Family Residential areas include single family detached and attached residential uses such as houses, condominiums and townhouses and customary accessory uses. A mixture of detached and attached units could be included in this district. Single family homes on smaller lots, such as in a Planned Residential Unit Development, could also be included in this category. Large building apartment type condominiums, however, are not permissible in this category.

### Lot Size

This designation is intended for 4.2 to 9.1 units per gross acre with a minimum lot size of 4,800 square feet with minimum 40 foot width. The minimum parcel size for this type of larger scale development is 3 acres. A new residential zoning classification will have to be created to address the High Density Single Family category. Consideration should be given to maintaining the City's block type structure of the road layout as this block layout is consistent with the small town neighborhood atmosphere.

### Lot Coverage & Building Mass

The overall size and massing of residential buildings should be compatible with existing residential developments in the area with no more than 30% lot coverage for just a house and 40% lot coverage for garage and house. The detached, high density homes or condominiums in this category should still respect Clare's traditional mass and scale. These developments should be complementary to the character of the neighborhood and shall not impact the surrounding area in a negative manner.

### Building Placement & Setbacks

Building placement is especially important as the density of the development increases. This High Density Residential category is still intending to maintain the small town character with minimum front yard setbacks of 15 feet and 5 feet side yards. The use of open porches, interconnecting sidewalks and recessed garages is encouraged to permit neighbor interaction.

### Character

The character of the homes in the High Density Single Family Residential district should be in keeping with the existing small town character of Clare. Again, important traditional architectural elements such as peaked roofs, front porches, one to two stories, traditional building materials, and a vertical orientation should be included.

## Multiple Family Residential

The location of Multiple Family Residential development and the relatively small area of this use relative to the current Zoning Map together are indicative of the City's desire to limit the land area available for Multiple Family Residential Future Land Use category. Additional land may be identified adjacent to the downtown where "Missing Middle" market rate housing (duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, courtyard apartments, townhouse/rowhouses, mixed-use buildings, and live-work spaces) may be developed. The percentage of land use designated is 180.71 acres or 3.33%. For the most part, the Multiple Family Residential areas are consistent with the location of the current Multiple Family developments. The R-2 zoning district is the most reasonable zoning district to implement this category.

### Use

Multiple Family Residential land uses are improved land parcels occupied in whole or in part by structures containing dwelling units for two (2) or more households including duplexes, flats, apartments, terrace dwellings, nursing homes and manufactured housing parks but excluding commercial dwellings such as hotels, motels and campgrounds. The preferred housing style is high quality townhouses or attached condominiums.

### Density

In large part, the density of Multiple Family Residential areas will be determined by the site plan and the specific conditions contained in the Zoning Ordinance. Generally, the density will be between 6.1 and 15 units per acre. Additional density may be warranted for projects that exhibit exceptional site layout and building design. The minimum lot size for a 2 family dwelling is 21,000 sq. ft. and the minimum parcel size for 3 units and over is 3 acres.

### Building Size

Because Multiple Family developments are more densely developed than Single Family developments, the provision of open space within the development is critical. Multiple Family developments should include common open spaces for the residents of the development.

Multiple Family design standards should be established to regulate the parking design and layout, building design and layout, landscaping and setbacks. A very high standard of development is desired within the Multiple Family Residential category. Architectural detail should be provided to ensure that the development is compatible in appearance with the traditional character of the community. Well-designed townhouse units are generally preferred over any additional conventional apartment buildings.

### Building Placement

Developments within the Multiple Family Residential category should face the street with parking located behind the buildings or in garages to maintain the pedestrian orientation of the City. Adequate spacing should be provided between buildings for open space and to allow window openings. Access drives in new developments should be connected with abutting local streets. Multiple Family developments should generally have more than one point of access to enter and leave the development.

Manufactured Housing community developments would be most appropriate on parcels of land within this Future Land Use district where they will have minimal impact on adjacent or nearby uses, and where there is access to commercial and public services, including sanitary sewer service and public transit.

At this point, however, the need for additional manufactured housing park acreage



is not apparent as there are existing facilities in the City. Therefore, no additional developments are planned at this time. The Manufactured Housing developments are only planned to continue at their current locations. If a need is demonstrated in the future, the following criteria shall be used to identify appropriate manufactured housing community locations:

- Manufactured housing community developments shall have a means of access to an arterial or collector road or a state highway.
- Manufactured housing community developments shall have access to a public sanitary sewer system with adequate capacity or an approved community sanitary sewer treatment system.
- Manufactured housing community developments shall be located within approximately one mile of retail business services in the City.
- Manufactured housing community developments shall be screened from adjacent development and separated from conventional single family development. The screening may consist of abundant landscaping or a natural woodland buffer that is 50 foot wide at a minimum.
- Manufactured housing community development shall not be located where it would result in cut-through traffic in existing residential neighborhoods.
- Manufactured housing communities shall generally be adjacent to other high density residential uses, such as multiple family residential developments and are intended to serve as a transitional use between high density residential and nonresidential districts.
- Manufactured housing communities shall not be placed on sites in a designated floodway or other high-quality natural area.
- Manufactured housing communities shall not be placed on a parcel size less than 15 acres.

Any development of a manufactured/mobile home development shall be required to meet the highest standards promoted by the City and Michigan's Manufactured Housing Commission. Extensive open space, recreation areas, storm water retention areas and landscaping shall be required so that the park becomes an asset to the community.

The Future Land Use map designates a special use area south of E. Colonville Road, north of Pettit Park, and west the commercial and multifamily use areas along the west side of McEwan Street. This area is intended to allow for a transition in density to the area designated for rural residential use further west. Planned residential unit development zoning and/or a new high density single family zoning district will likely be used to accomplish this. Design that respects the natural features and landform in this area will be required as part of the planning process.

## Neighborhood Commercial

The Plan designates Neighborhood Commercial uses for parcels adjacent to the Downtown core area and for areas along McEwan Street and East Fifth Street. This district is typically less intense than the Downtown Central Business District and recognizes the existing commercial development in the area. The Neighborhood Commercial District includes 158.06 acres or 2.91% of the total Clare land use area.

### Use

Neighborhood Commercial uses are characterized by establishments that serve the local and regional market, such as restaurants (fast food and standard), supermarkets and commercial centers with Neighborhood Commercial uses like dry cleaners and beauty shops. This district provides for the sale of convenience goods and personal/business services for the day-to-day needs of the City. Larger scale retail (Big Box) uses are not appropriate in this district. Automobile fueling and services can be included in the land use category only if they are located on major collector roads such as McEwan Street. The uses in this category are intended to be accessed by automobile or by the pedestrian. Pedestrian access should also be encouraged through site design such as a front door on the main street, internal sidewalks linked to the city network, and by placing the parking areas in the rear of the buildings.

### Lot Coverage & Building Mass

Neighborhood Commercial uses occupy smaller one and sometimes two story buildings with surface parking on the site. The City should consider reducing the parking requirements for Neighborhood Commercial uses to reduce the amount of pavement on these parcels. This would increase ground permeability for storm water and reduce surface runoff, thereby helping to protect the water quality of nearby Lake Shamrock. Building mass should be appropriate to the proposed use and compatible with the adjacent residential uses.

### Building Placement & Setbacks

Neighborhood Commercial uses should have buildings set close to the road. It is preferable for these uses to provide parking to the sides and rear, where appropriate. Sites for Neighborhood Commercial establishments are typically dependent on high traffic, accessibility and visibility. These uses have the potential to generate high vehicular traffic volumes, bright lights, noise, and often undesirable visual clutter. Therefore, the interface between Neighborhood Commercial uses and Single Family Residential uses must be carefully treated with landscape buffers.

To minimize the potential negative effects of Neighborhood Commercial uses on City neighborhoods, such businesses are planned to be restricted to a concentrated district and are not to be permitted to spread and encroach into neighborhoods. Potential negative impacts on residential districts are to be minimized by providing transitional High Density Residential and Multiple Family land uses where possible that serve as a buffer between Single Family Residential and Neighborhood Commercial land uses. In areas where there is no land use transition, special attention should be paid to ensuring that the off-site impacts of commercial uses are minimized with visual screening and landscaping.

### Character

This district should utilize existing home structures to house businesses where possible. The sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting requirements for the City should be emphasized in these areas. It is important that Neighborhood Commercial uses are not developed with typical franchise architecture and details, but instead with high quality building materials and architectural elements similar to the City's Downtown commercial architecture.





## Central Business District

The Plan identifies a solid core of the Downtown Central Business District between Wheaton Avenue and Mineral Street along McEwan Street occupying 99.65 acres or 1.83% of the total land use in Clare. It includes one block to the east of McEwan and one to two blocks to the west of McEwan depending upon the location. The district is described as a mixed-use district of commercial, retail, office and residential uses. The Downtown area is oriented toward the pedestrian and encourages high quality architectural design that follows the basic tenets of the traditional Downtown development. The intent of this district is to permit flexibility in future land use and development for the City of Clare so that it continues to develop with a concentration of mixed uses. At the same time, the Plan proposes the long-range development in a way that will provide compatible relationships between the Downtown uses and the surrounding land uses and circulation patterns.

### Use

The vision for the Downtown is that it will continue to grow as a mixture of commercial, retail, entertainment, office and residential uses. The commercial and entertainment uses are particularly important on the ground floors. Public uses, such as the City Hall, are also encouraged to continue or expand in this district. New dense “Missing Middle” residential developments (duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, courtyard apartments, townhouses and rowhouses, lower density mixed-use buildings and live-work structures) are encouraged within this district to bring day and evening activity into the Downtown area. Any new development should fit into the historic fabric of existing uses in the area. Uses and site features that are automobile-oriented, such as automobile service businesses and drive-through facilities should be prohibited in the Downtown.

### Lot Coverage & Building Mass

The lot coverage and building mass should take its design cues from the City’s historic commercial buildings. Buildings within this district cover as much as 100% of the lot. New development should not overwhelm existing development in scale and mass but rather respect the continuity of building form in the Downtown. Buildings located at key intersections, such as McEwan and Fifth Street should have a higher vertical elevation to reinforce the Downtown as the center of the City. In order to encourage multiple story buildings, a minimum and maximum building height should be provided. Single story structures should be prohibited in this category.

### Building Placement & Setbacks

The building placement of the new Downtown structures should be built to the front lot line along McEwan and the side streets and carefully designed so as not to overwhelm existing development in other areas.

Buildings should be contiguous along the street frontage without large gaps or breaks for parking or parking lot access. Development in the area should incorporate shared access drives and parking lots located beneath or behind the buildings. Landscaping and other screening should be provided to help accomplish the objective of minimizing impacts on adjacent residential uses. On-site parking should not be required for new development as municipal parking lots should be utilized to provide the necessary parking for the uses within the district.

### Character

Maintaining and enhancing existing historic architecture is the primary tenant of the Plan for the Downtown area. Buildings should front, and have the primary entrance, along the main street. Pedestrian connections should be reinforced through inviting facades and at least one public, pedestrian entry facing its

primary street frontage. When located on a corner, the main entrance should be directed to the busier street. Secondary entrances should be provided on side streets and from parking areas.

The façades facing the street should reflect the established façade model of City's Downtown commercial buildings, with individual storefront bays and large windows or showcases. New development should incorporate traditional building elements, such as architectural detailing around windows and doors, rectangular windows, articulated cornices, masonry building materials and color, signs, and awnings.

These basic elements should be formalized in a set of illustrated design standards and regulations for the Downtown to ensure that the Downtown retains its pedestrian-friendly, historical character. The City should consider creating an overlay district for the Downtown Central Business District that would enforce design standards and preserve historic buildings. Building character should reflect the high quality architectural richness of the Downtown buildings.

### **Regional Commercial**

The Plan designates the Regional Commercial land use category to accommodate larger retail and service uses (department stores, home improvement warehouses, hotels, etc.) on larger parcels of land with adequate public services and roadway access. All of the land designated for Regional Commercial use is clustered around the US-10/US-127/McEwan Road interchange and is intended to allow for uses too large for the established character of Downtown Clare. All development should be attractive and well-designed, as this area serves as a gateway to the City of Clare. Strong landscaping requirements with generous landscaped buffer setbacks from adjacent roadways and residential and agricultural land uses along with architectural guidelines should be established to prevent the conversion of the Regional Commercial area into a typical, placeless highway interchange that could be found anywhere in the Midwest. The designated Regional Commercial land use on the Future Land Use Map represents about 356.66 acres or 6.57%% of the City of Clare area.

#### **Use**

Intensive large-scale auto-dependent commercial uses.

#### **Lot Coverage & Building Mass**

Lots will be subdivided between buildings in excess of 7,500 square feet, large parking lots, and landscaped areas set aside for screening and buffering. Long expanses of undecorated walls should be broken up into bays with decorative architectural features including decorative cornices, horizontal decorative bands, ornamental roof projections, and windows installed on all elevations.

#### **Building Placement & Setbacks**

Buildings will be setback from the property lines with parking located in front with landscaping buffering the parking from the roadway. Direct protected pedestrian access must be provided from the public sidewalk directly across the parking lot to the main building entrance.

#### **Character**

Buildings must be built with a majority of masonry on all elevations with only exterior insulation and finishing system (EIFS) panels utilize for limited decorative elements and prohibited from installation at grade.





## Industrial

The Industrial Land Use District includes parcels that are devoted to research and development testing firms; the assembling, fabricating, manufacturing, packaging, warehousing or treatment of products; wholesaling; storage and/or servicing of heavy equipment. The Industrial uses are located primarily in two industrial parks and along the railroad tracks. This Future Industrial Land Use category comprises 490.36 acres or 9.03% of the City of Clare area

### Use

The Future Land Use Plan encourages light industrial uses that are environmentally friendly without any demonstrable negative impacts. High architectural standards shall apply to the design of both the site and the architecture with significant, attractive landscape elements incorporated to buffer adjacent uses. A campus type setting for the light industrial or high technology uses is strongly encouraged as this limits the number of curb cuts and access points and creates a more visually appealing development. Adverse impacts to adjacent uses must be minimized and industrial uses should be conducted within completely enclosed buildings.

### Lot Coverage & Building Mass

This Master Plan calls for new industrial buildings to complement the character of the traditional architecture in Clare. Conventional massive, warehouse or “Big Box” type buildings without any architectural features should be avoided. Adequate space for the necessary landscape buffer adjacent to different land uses must be provided. Again, careful consideration should be given to creating landscaped open space and minimizing impervious surfaces.

### Building Placement & Setbacks

The industrial buildings should be of the highest architectural standards, especially as both Industrial Parks are located near City gateways. Campus-like settings with the industrial buildings set back from the roadway with appealing green space along the roads are desired. At the southern industrial park, the City should work with the developer to acquire additional space along Business US-127 loop to create a City of Clare gateway feature. When the Industrial District abuts different land uses, heavily landscaped buffer areas 50 to 100 feet in depth should be provided to provide adequate screening for surrounding uses. Street trees and canopy shade trees should be planted densely across each site including in parking lot islands.

### Character

The Industrial Land Use development should transmit an architectural statement that is respectful of the City’s traditional character yet reflective of a high technology, cutting edge industrial center. Metal, Quonset-type buildings should not be permitted. By creating an industrial park-like setting with diverse and visually appealing architecture, the developments have the opportunity to make statements for the community while providing real green space for both the industrial employees and the residents of Clare.

The Future Land Use map designates a special use area at the southwest quadrant of the intersection of E. Colonville Road and S. Eberhart Avenue. While some of this land is currently in agriculture, the area contains significant bodies of water and woodlands. Development in this area must be undertaken in such a way as to respect the natural features and landform. The land could be appropriate for a number of land uses, up to including business park and light industrial uses that are undertaken in a campus-type setting or which are otherwise arranged so as to fit the character of the land. Special zoning techniques, such as conditional zoning, may be appropriate to accomplish this objective.

## Public/Semi Public

This Public/Semi Public Future Land Use category includes public and semi-public land uses. Public land is comprised of areas and facilities that are publicly operated and available to be used by the general public. Semi-Public land uses include land and accessory facilities that are privately owned or operated, used by a particular group of persons, and do not have profit as their principal intent. The Future Land Use Map of Clare includes 478.88 acres of Public/Semi-Public land which represents 8.81% of Clare's total land area.

### Use

Public uses include public schools, government buildings, the City Hall, the Police and Fire Stations, the Public Works facilities and other municipal buildings. Semi Public land uses include churches, private clubs, parochial schools, sports clubs, private air landing strips, cemeteries, and similar uses.

### Lot Coverage & Building Mass

The lot coverage and building mass of Public and Semi Public buildings should continue to be consistent with Clare's small town flavor. Both the Public and Semi Public buildings have important symbolic value for the community and as such should have the appropriate mass and scale that is consistent with the community's historic character.

Public and Semi Public buildings should be designed to incorporate accessibility to residents and visitors of all ages and incomes by car, transit, bicycle, or on foot. Parking lots should be placed so that they do not dominate the building or site. Green spaces planned for Public and Semi Public use should be maintained and landscaped to ensure that they do not become nuisances.

### Building Placement & Setbacks

The location of Public and Semi Public structures should express the central importance of community and public life. Consideration should be given to the value of these sites and buildings, both existing and new, as focal landmarks for the community. They should be located to call attention to or to reinforce cultural and /or historic features of the community and its identity. Furthermore, Public and Semi Public land uses and buildings should be located to support community needs by providing convenient locations for community and neighborhood meetings and events.

A central, highly visible location is symbolic of the important role. These uses and buildings can and should be used to emphasize and define the community's public spaces, to terminate vistas and/or to form gateways to the community.

### Character

Clare is fortunate in that it has a concentration of Public and Semi Public lands already within or close to the Downtown area and its residential population. The buildings have for the most part been designed to enhance the residential neighborhoods and their individual identity and character. They often define the City's public spaces, which in turn, can provide a memorable and significant frame for ceremonial, commemorative and other civic events.

Because Public and Semi Public buildings are important to the community life of City residents, they are held to a higher standard of development. The highest quality design with stately, quality building materials and landscaping are required to convey a sense of permanence and importance. All new structures falling in this Future Land Use category should continue to be held to this high architectural standard and should enhance the community.



## Recreation

The City of Clare is fortunate in that it has many recreational facilities that service the residents on 363.51 acres or 6.69% of the Clare land use area. This Recreation category includes a variety of different public parks and open spaces. These lands are located to provide needed community recreation areas and facilities, City aesthetics, and environmental protection. The Future Land Use Plan includes the preservation and enhancement of these properties and facilities as they are expected to satisfy the local recreational needs and services required by City residents in the years to come.

There are three new recreational facilities in the planning stages for the City. The first is immediately adjacent to the S. Tobacco River off Brookwood Drive. The second is the extension of the existing Pere Marquette bicycle and hiking trail through the City along with a connection to the US-127 Trail that is under development from the south. The third is the creation of a sports complex on the south side of the City.

- **Brookwood Drive Property:** While the property is currently privately owned, the developer and property owner has expressed a desire to donate this property to the City. The property contains wooded wetland areas that could be developed in a passive manner with walking pathways and interpretive signage that would provide information regarding the natural ecosystem in place. The preservation of this property in its natural state would create a natural greenway for wildlife while helping to filter the waters of the S. Tobacco River system.
- **Pathway Development:** The extension of the Pere Marquette Trail is currently in the planning stages. It will complete the trail through the City to facilitate non-motorized travel, to link the Downtown to neighborhoods, and to provide the connection between the eastern Pere Marquette Trail downtown terminus and the trail west of Clare. Completion of the trailway welcome center at the train depot and expansion of the pathway network is vital for the economic development of the City of Clare and health of its residents.
- **Sports Complex:** The City has acquired a parcel on the south side of the City that is to be developed into eight soccer fields (sizes vary per user), a multi-use field, a skateboard park, and a walking pathway. Fundraising to construct the improvements is currently underway.

## Water

A little over 1.56 percent of the City of Clare's Future Land Use is water, most of which is comprised of Lake Shamrock and the S. Tobacco River. These lake and river amenities are worth protecting and preserving with specific recommendations to reduce pollution and increase the quality of the lake and river water in Clare.

- **Urban Forestry Program:** Begin a program to inventory, protect, maintain, and plant an urban forest that provides a dense canopy across the entire community. The City should consider a tree ordinance to protect existing trees and enact improvements to the landscape requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. These improvements should include the requirement for the planting of canopy street trees along all streets and in all parking lots, and to provide the appropriate number of large canopy shade trees on all parcels.
- **S. Tobacco River Natural Area:** Preserve additional floodplain area along the S. Tobacco River as a natural features corridor for wildlife and to protect the River from non-point source pollution.



- **Reduce Impervious Surfaces:** The City should examine Zoning Ordinance requirements for parking and lot coverage to find ways to reduce the amount of impervious surface required or allowed on lots.
- **Water Quality Improvement:** The City should continue to assist with the planning for the dredging and restoration of Shamrock Lake as the lake is a substantial asset to the community both as a recreational amenity and a surface water resource.

### **Growth Strategy and Sustainable Development**

The City is interested in managed growth and new development. The intent is to focus on the infill of potential development sites and redevelopment sites within the City of Clare along with controlled growth within the Grant Township Expansion Area. It must be stressed that expansion into any perimeter areas outside the City's municipal boundaries should follow these standards:

- Every effort must be made to extend the existing road networks in a similar pattern into the newly annexed areas. In neighborhood residential areas to the north, this involves the extension north of existing north/south local roads and the creation of new east/west local roads designed to carry the grid pattern established in the City.
- Utilities must be extended throughout, expanding as efficiently as possible from the current system.
- Lots sizes, architectural and site design characteristics, and permitted uses of new areas should be compatible with and complimentary to the adjacent area from which the annexed area is extending from.
- The City of Clare should continue to update its Master Plan to responds as the Grant Township Expansion area develops to ensure that the new development is completed in a manner that supports the City and minimized environmental harm. The City should ensure that its standards are upheld including but is not limited to, site and architectural design, land use, and treatments of road networks, streetscapes, and frontage.

## Zoning Plan

Per the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008, a Zoning Plan is required that correlates the Future Land Use categories of the Master Plan with the zoning districts found on the current official Zoning Map for the City of Clare. The Future Land Use Plan characteristics described on the preceding pages complete the descriptive portion of the Zoning Plan.

**Table 9.1: Master Plan Zoning Ordinance Comparison**

<b>Future Land Use Category</b>	<b>Zoning District</b>
Agricultural	New Zoning District
Rural Residential	New Zoning District
Single Family Residential	Residential R-1
High Density Single Family Residential	New Zoning District
Multi-Family Residential	Residential R-2
Neighborhood Commercial	Commercial C-1
Central Business District	Commercial C-1/New Zoning District
Regional Commercial	Commercial C-1 and C-2/New Zoning District
Industrial	Industrial and Industrial Park
Public/Semi-Public	Residential R-1/Residential R-2/Commercial C-1
Recreation	Residential R-1/Residential R-2

Please note that several Future Land Use categories do not currently have Zoning Districts associated with them. The City of Clare's Zoning Ordinance does not zone Agricultural, Rural Residential, or High Density Single Family Residential districts, and this Master Plan recommends the establishment of such zoning district classifications. The Zoning Ordinance should also be amended to establish two new zoning districts that would regulate commercial uses—the Central Business and Regional Commercial land use categories—that are currently being addressed under the Commercial zoning classifications. During the proposed modifications to the Zoning Ordinance, the Public/Semi-Public and Recreation Land Use categories placement in the Zoning Ordinance districts should also be clarified. New zoning district categories may also be established to better regulate these uses, design, and placement including establishing form-based zoning in the commercial, office, and multi-family residential districts.

# Map 5 Future Land Use





## IMPLEMENTATION

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### Introduction

This Master Plan represents a 20-year vision for the future of the City of Clare. This document is a vision that recognizes the best characteristics of the City and works to enhance those characteristics while providing a guide for new development. Implementation is the key to the success of the City's Master Plan vision. This Implementation Section presents tools and techniques that citizens, civic leaders, and City officials should consult as a guide in making the appropriate community decisions. The tools and techniques identified are available for use by Michigan communities under current enabling legislation. The City has already been actively pursuing many of these implementation tools to accomplish community goals. Generally speaking, the tools fall into these categories:

- Public Policy and Administrative Action.
- Zoning Tools (implemented by the planning actions and decisions of the City Commission, the Planning Commission, and other appointed boards).
- City Building Regulations and Ordinances.
- Public Investments.
- Economic Development Measures and Finance Tools.

# Public Policy and Administrative Action

## Plan Adoption

The first implementation strategy is the adoption of the Clare Master Plan by the City's Planning Commission under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008, as amended.

## Cooperation Between Units of Government

The health and vitality of the City of Clare greatly impacts the surrounding communities, particularly those in Clare and Isabella Counties. The City has a tradition of cooperation with adjacent County and Township entities in order to foster quality services and development in a managed and controlled manner. The existing Conditional Land Use Transfer agreements (425 Agreements) under Public Act 425 of 1984 illustrate this cooperation. The support of this new Master Plan by Clare and Isabella Counties and their corresponding Townships will further enable the City to implement the objectives set forth in this Plan.

Continued cooperative efforts with other governmental and planning entities are critical to successful planning efforts. For example, road improvements affect the quality of life for City residents and workers, but some decisions regarding roads in or immediately adjacent to the City, such as US-10 and US-127, are made by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). Clearly, these other agencies must be aware of the City's land use planning objectives in order to develop compatible transportation plans. The development of corridor plans can facilitate intergovernmental cooperation by communicating in detail the transportation objectives of the City to MDOT.

## Continuous Planning

Community planning is a dynamic process that does not end with the completion of the Master Plan. Cities experience constant change and planning involves identifying and responding to this change. Under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008, as amended), the Clare Planning Commission is required to review and re-evaluate the Master Plan every five years, as events or changing needs of the City may impact the Plan. As such, the Clare Master Plan should be regarded as a continuing work in progress, not as a finished document.

When conducting land use decisions, the City must refer back to the guidance offered within the Master Plan. All of Clare's other longer term planning activities (Parks and Recreation Plan, Capital Asset Plan, etc) should be in agreement with the Master Plan's goals and objectives.

In addition to the Master Plan, more detailed plans for specific areas and issues such as the Downtown area, architectural design standards, the industrial park expansion areas and the US-10 and US-127 gateway areas have been identified as needing further study in order to achieve the community's goals.

- **Establishment of Priorities.** The Master Plan contains a multitude of recommendations. Being the legal basis for conducting zoning within Clare, the Master Plan should be annually revisited to ensure that it and the Zoning Ordinance are consistent with each other.

During this review, a careful analysis of the priorities, recommendations and their timing laid out in the plan should be conducted so as to determine work items for the following year. Participants involved in this review should include City staff, the Planning Commission, the City Commission, the Downtown Development Authority, and others who would participate in implementation of the Plan.

## Information and Education

The success of the Master Plan depends to a great extent on efforts to utilize the plan on a regular basis for guiding land use and Capital Planning decisions by the City, and for prioritizing staffing and administrative duties. Elected and appointed officials and city administration must be aware of the Master Plan's recommendations, and they must actively utilize the document. Second, it is important to inform and educate citizens about the Plan and the need for regulatory measures to implement the Plan. Successful implementation requires the support and participation of residents, property owners, and business owners.

## Zoning Tools

### Zoning Regulations

Land development review and regulation is the primary regulatory tool used by the City to implement the Master Plan. In order to realize the Master Plan vision, the City must ensure that ordinances and regulations permit the style and type of development recommended by the Plan and desired by the community. A comprehensive review of the City's ordinances, particularly the Zoning Ordinance, General Ordinances related to property maintenance, and the Subdivision Ordinance, is necessary to determine the scope of amendments needed to achieve the goals of the Master Plan.

- **Create Architectural Design Standards.** Most Zoning Ordinances are developed to separate uses and to control vehicle placement. To have thriving downtowns, these regulations must be modified to enable the development of areas that have a traditional urban layout and appearance that predates the negative impacts of the automobile on urban areas. Since adoption of the 2007 Master Plan, a technical Downtown Development District Development Standards Overlay district was created in the Zoning Ordinance to address this regulatory issue. These design standards are written in precise regulatory language that is difficult for non-practitioners to understand. It is recommended that these development standards be expanded into a design standards manual that it can be used to communicate specific detailed written and graphic concepts and ideas to supplement the Zoning Ordinance. The manual should be made available to developers and property owners to guide them in the preparation of good, consistent architectural design plans that create attractive new architecture and promote building renovation. The manual will be one tool in the Building Façade Improvement Program for Downtown. In the process, the City can evaluate the effectiveness of architectural design standards in Zoning Ordinance to determine where improvements in language and regulation are necessary.
- **Create New Zoning Districts.** The Zoning Ordinance should be evaluated for its applicability to the Future Land Use Plan and categories. To reflect the new Future Land Use designations, the ordinance will have to be amended with the creation of several new zoning districts.
- **Upgrade the Existing Zoning Regulations.** Continue to raise the minimum required landscaping, building design, parking standards, and other similar zoning requirements. This will improve the appearance of new development within the City and help ensure that this new development is compatible with existing development. Requirements for landscaping must be increased to ensure the creation of an urban canopy including street trees, parking lot landscaping, and site landscaping requirements. Evaluate the existing

zoning regulations to ensure that the regulations allow for “Missing Middle” housing styles, and address any review difficulties found that currently hinder the development of such housing. It is now a requirement of the new Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Public Act 110 of 2006 as amended, that the Planning Commission shall, at least once per year, prepare an annual Planning Commission report for the City Commission on the administration and enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance. This report is to include recommendations for amendments and supplements to the Zoning Ordinance.

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

The land use classifications on the Future Land Use Map provide the basis for evaluating future rezoning requests. Zoning actions that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map usually receive deferential and favorable judicial review if challenged. The Master Plan should be the principal source of information in the evaluation of all rezoning requests.

With new areas of the Grant Township Expansion area now under the purview of the City’s Master Plan, there are several proposed new zoning districts that must be created so that the land uses envisioned within the Master Plan exist in the City’s Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Plan as described in Section 9 of this plan should be implemented.

### **Site Plan Review Requirements**

Site plan review standards are an effective land use decision-making tool. Before approval of a use is granted, the proposed development must be in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations. Site plan review can be used to ensure that development projects are consistent with the community’s desire for quality appearance and environmental protection, provided that the appropriate standards have been adopted by the community. Clare has implemented Site Plan Review procedures in its Zoning Ordinance. Review of these procedures to ensure design and environmental resource protection is advised.

- **Groundwater.** Groundwater protection regulations generally seek to prevent the introduction of harmful substances in the community’s groundwater. The protection of a community’s groundwater aquifers and recharge areas is critical for a number of reasons, both social and ecological. The City should establish measures aimed at secondary containment, wellhead isolation areas and prohibition of floor drains that discharge directly into soils or septic tanks. In addition, the City should require residents who live near Lake Shamrock and are currently using private sanitary systems (septic) to connect to the public sanitary sewer.
- **Wetlands.** Wetland regulations are instituted to ensure that wetlands are protected from the potentially harmful impacts of development. Wetlands are crucial for maintaining water quality, managing stormwater runoff, ensuring groundwater recharge, and providing important habitat, and therefore, must be protected. Some principal objectives of wetland protection regulations are to provide a protective buffer around wetlands to mitigate the impact of urban run-off and to prevent the filling, dredging, and alteration of wetlands, including alterations to drainage that would impact wetland hydrology. Also, the deposition of hazardous or polluting materials is usually prohibited in a wetland or its buffer. Where wetlands are unavoidably impacted, their mitigation is often required.

Part 303 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (Act 451 1994) provides the regulatory framework for wetland protection. Part 303 makes the distinction between those wetlands that are contiguous to a lake,

stream, pond, Great Lake, etc., and those that are not. Wetlands are generally considered to be contiguous if they are within 1,000 feet of a Great Lake, or 500 feet of an inland lake, stream or pond. Wetlands of all sizes considered “contiguous” to such a water body are regulated by the MDEQ. Generally, non-contiguous wetlands of five or more acres are regulated by MDEQ, although any wetlands that are found to be essential to natural resources preservation may be regulated. The Act does provide for local governments to enact more restrictive ordinances for wetlands than contained in the statute. With the S. Tobacco River and Lake Shamrock, Clare should coordinate and collaborate with MDEQ to enact a more stringent wetland ordinance.

- **Woodlands.** Woodland Protection Ordinances are implemented to protect valuable woodlands located in a community. Woodland regulations seek to promote development that minimizes impacts on a community’s woodland resources, by limiting the clearing of large stands of trees. Conventional development without specific regulations to protect natural resources frequently encroaches upon, despoils, or eliminates important trees and other forms of vegetation and natural resources. Trees and woodlands, when preserved and maintained in an undisturbed and natural condition, constitute important physical, aesthetic, recreational, and economic assets to existing and future residents, businesses and the general public. Woodlands benefit the community in a number of ways, such as protecting against erosion and sedimentation, noise buffering, aesthetics, animal habitat, and air filtration and cooling. Some principal objectives of woodlands protection regulations are to identify woodland areas, stands, or individual historic or landmark trees or species for protection, preservation, proper maintenance, and use, and provide for replacement where preservation is not possible, and minimize the impact of grading, clearing, erosion, siltation, before, during, and after development. Strengthening woodland standards in the zoning ordinance as part of Site Plan Review would allow Clare to expand requirements such as a tree survey into the development process and establish a system, which identifies healthy and historic or landmark trees or stands of trees for preservation.

### Overlay Zoning

Overlay zoning allows the City to enforce an additional set of regulations on special areas within an existing zoning district. In an area where an overlay zone is established, the property is placed simultaneously in the two zones, and the property may be developed only under the applicable conditions and requirements of both zones. The overlay zoning has been used in other communities to address special conditions and features, such as historic areas and environmentally sensitive areas (Groundwater Protection or Watershed Protection), without disrupting the underlying zoning plan. In the City of Clare, overlay zoning would be an effective tool for achieving the following objectives:

- Establishing site development and architectural standards for major gateways into the City (overlay zoning already exists in the Downtown district).
- Preserving historic neighborhoods.
- Protecting the waterways.

### Planned Unit Development

The Planned Unit Development (PUD) involves the use of special zoning requirements and review procedures that provide design and regulatory flexibility, so as to encourage innovation in land use planning and design. Planned developments should achieve a higher quality of development than might otherwise be possible.

Applied judiciously, PUD's are a useful zoning technique to achieve development in accordance with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan.

The City has an existing Planned Residential Unit Development option in the Zoning Ordinance. The City should examine the PUD ordinance and perhaps amend it to more easily accommodate commercial and residential mixed-use development. With the expansion of the municipal boundaries, there are numerous options in the expansion areas to utilize this tool to preserve open space while allowing for new development.

### **Conditional Rezoning**

Public Act 579 of 2004 allows for the conditional rezoning of property based upon a proposal presented by an applicant. This approach permits the City to approve a rezoning contingent upon the developer fulfilling conditions attached to the rezoning approval. Conditional rezoning allows flexibility in site design, and may also ensure that undesirable uses will not occur on a particular site if rezoned. This tool should not be used as the sole implementation method for flexible use areas, but it may be appropriate for difficult sites where a rezoning would be acceptable if properly designed. The use of conditional rezoning would assure the City that certain design and use standards would be met in the new development if rezoned.

### **Performance Standards**

Rather than simply regulating development on the basis of dimensional standards, many communities are establishing performance standards to regulate development based on the permissible effects or impacts of a proposed use. These standards should be used to supplement conventional zoning standards for the purposes of regulating noise, dust, vibration, odor, glare and heat, safety hazards, and environmental impacts such as water pollution.

The City of Clare should enhance performance standards within the Zoning Ordinance. Performance standards can be particularly useful in achieving environmental and resource protection goals. If based on a strong body of research, standards can be developed that relate to critical natural resource and environmental areas such as Shamrock Lake and the S. Tobacco River.

### **Setbacks and Other Standards**

It is important to review required setbacks and other dimensional standards to be certain that they promote the desired type of development. Some deficiencies may exist in the Zoning Ordinance standards. With Clare's 2009 approved 425 Agreement with Grant Township, the City has a large number of potential parcels that should be regulated carefully with applicable Zoning Ordinance standards so that the community appears to be coherent and consistent.

- **Natural Features Setback:** The intent of the Natural Features Setback is to ensure that development is setback from natural features to prevent physical harm, impairment and/or destruction of or to natural features. Natural features may include dunes, open space, bluffs, ridges, etc. The absence of a natural features setback requirement may result in intrusions in or onto natural features, which subsequently deteriorate the quality and service of the natural feature. Clare should adopt regulations similar to those in other communities that define natural features and establish setback standards during development.

Shoreline and Lake Protection Provisions

Communities with abundant natural water features such as those located in Clare often adopt regulations which assist in evaluating whether land uses among

properties are compatible with the lake, water, and shoreline uses. Regulations help to preserve the quality of the lake and river waters and shorelines, ensure future uses of the waters and shorelines are compatible with one another and with existing uses, reduce congestion and density of the shorelines, and protect riparian and /or littoral landowners from overuse and abuse by others using the lake, river, and shorelines.

- **Floodplain Regulations:** Floodplains are areas of low-lying topography adjacent to riparian corridors that become inundated during a flood-stage event. The damage that is caused by flooding can represent significant costs to the community, most of which are avoidable and unnecessary. Rapid growth and the spread of development often exerts great demands upon the natural resources, increasing the potential for flooding, and filling or drainage of lowlands and wetlands.

Floodplain regulations seek to reduce the damage caused by these flood events by prohibiting inappropriate land uses in within these areas. These regulations also protect the unique riparian environment often found in the floodplain and preserve the natural character of those streams or rivers. Floodplain regulations protect and preserve watercourses and wetlands and minimize or eliminate disturbances to them while preventing damage from erosion, turbidity or siltation, the loss of life, health, and property, fish, wildlife, and vegetation, and the destruction of the natural habitat.

The most effective floodplain regulations generally prohibit structures within a 100-year flood plain, require a permit for operations or acts that alter the topography of lands that are subject to a 100 year floodplain, and identify appropriate uses within a 100-year floodplain.

### **Manufactured Home Community Regulations**

A Manufactured Home Community ordinance is intended to provide for the location and regulation of manufactured housing parks, and to ensure necessary community services in a setting, which provides a high quality of life for residents. Regulations established by Michigan Public Act 96 of 1987, as amended, in conjunction with the Manufactured Housing Commission Rules govern all manufactured housing parks throughout the State. The City may adopt standards that exceed the State law or the Manufactured Housing Commission Rules, so far as they are in accordance with applicable State laws and have the approval of the Manufactured Housing Commission. These higher standards are intended to ensure that manufactured housing parks meet the same development and site plan standards established for other comparable residential development and to promote the health, safety and welfare of the City's residents.

### **Condominium Regulations**

During the past three decades, site condominium developments have become a popular alternative to subdivisions as a way of developing land, in large part due to changes in the State's condominium laws. The Condominium Act (Michigan Public Act 59 of 1978) was significantly modified in 1982 to permit condominium ownership of land. Developers often prefer site condominium development for single family developments because the approval process can be much shorter than the platting process required for land subdivision. The Condominium Act can also be used to facilitate redevelopment of old plats, since condominiums can "overlay" a subdivision and thereby avoid time-consuming and cumbersome re-platting process.

The Condominium Act requires condominiums to comply with local ordinances.

Condominium regulations are an important part of the Zoning Ordinance for the City. They can incorporate specific desired design standards to help implement the Master Plan goals and objectives.

### **Subdivision Regulations**

The City's Subdivision Ordinance outlines the procedures and standards used in exercising the City's authority to review and approve proposed subdivisions, pursuant to the Subdivision Control Act of 1967 /the Land Division Act (Michigan Public Act 288 of 1967, as amended). Subdivision control ordinances typically specify the design of lots and blocks, access, and such necessary internal improvements as streets, drainage, water, and sewer facilities.

The Land Division Act places restrictions on the power of a municipality to approve or reject plats. Nevertheless, many legal experts believe that the Act gives municipalities much greater authority than they have typically exercised. The City's Subdivision Ordinance should be thoroughly reviewed and revised to allow the City to exercise its full scope of authority over subdivision design. For example, the City should examine the possibility of including additional requirements for open space amenities, street trees, and similar property enhancements.

### **Keyhole (Funneling) Regulations**

Keyhole (or funneling) regulations limit the use of waterfront lots to provide lake access for larger developments located away from the waterfront. While Clare has very little waterfront that is undeveloped, it does have a few large parcels along the S. Tobacco River where this could potentially happen in the future. Typically, keyholes occur when a small waterfront lot is purchased by a back lot owner who then grants access (by license or easement) or a share in ownership of the waterfront lot to back-lot owners or residents.

When keyholes are allowed that provide additional access to lakes or rivers, there is greater water use than would normally occur if the lots were used as single family residences. Adjoining property owners may also be negatively affected due to significant increase in use by more people than traditional single family homes.

The City should examine the possibility of amending the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance to control access to the lake and river. The City should also develop a lake management plan. Local regulatory approaches to limiting keyhole development include making keyhole lots a special use approval and regulating the number of docks along the water frontage.

## **Building Code Enforcement**

### **Code Enforcement Program**

The implementation of an effective code enforcement program is critical to preserving a high quality community. Code enforcement officials maintain the quality of life and the physical appearance of the City by enforcing the City's general codes and ordinances regarding such items as commercial and residential buildings, signage, nuisances, animals and zoning. Due to the after effects of the Great Recession, there is a need to evaluate the code enforcement program to verify that it is effectively applying the City's ordinances to address property maintenance issues that may have recently developed due to foreclosures and job losses.

## Rental Inspection Program

The Master Plan's public survey clearly identified the public's concern regarding the appearance and maintenance of residential properties within Clare. Section 3 of this plan illustrates Clare continuing to have the residential rental percentage increase over home ownership. Because of these two items, it is strongly recommended that a comprehensive rental inspection program be instituted to ensure that all rental properties within the City are properly maintained and safe for occupancy.

Two of the Great Recession's after affects have been widespread loan foreclosures destabilizing formerly sound residential neighborhoods through virtually abandoned homes and the purchase of formerly home-owner occupied homes by investors for rentals. Rental homes are often not maintained to the same standards of owner-occupied homes, and exterior deferred maintenance can lead to blight while interior deferred maintenance can lead to significant safety issues. Periodic inspections will ensure that the properties are maintained in a safe and aesthetically pleasing manner while ensuring they are safe for tenants and first responders.

The City of Clare is not required by state or national law to adopt a rental inspection program; however, rental inspection programs are required in Michigan cities with populations over 10,000 residents. With the high rate of rentals in the City, it would be appropriate to establish a program to ensure the public health and safety of the residents living in and adjacent to rental properties.

A rental inspection program typically includes the establishment of a rental code which complies with the National Property Maintenance Code, yearly or biennial inspections of rental properties, a fee schedule for inspections, a process for handling complaints about rental units, and penalties for rental code violations. Many communities also require rental inspections when a change of tenants occurs.

## Public Investments

### Public Realm Enhancements

As an emerging tourist destination, it is important for the City to invest in public realm improvements city-wide (Downtown, along the commercial corridors, and in the residential neighborhoods) that would differentiate Clare from other communities. The public realm includes sidewalks, landscape planter strip between sidewalks and streets, wayfinding signage, streetscape furniture, public parking lots, parks, pathways, and public utility infrastructure (water towers, manhole covers, utility boxes for information or electricity infrastructure).

All of these necessary physical objects provide great opportunities for enhancements to the public realm. Instead of utilitarian objects, the public realm can be enhanced through concerted design efforts without significant increases in cost. A community that invests in its infrastructure in this manner creates a unique sense of place for its residents and increases a community's pride of place. As a tourist destination, this activity also creates an "authenticity" which is an asset in attracting visitors. For example, instead of purchasing ordinary bike racks for the Downtown, art objects can be commissioned that further develop Clare's charm and identity. This process converts a regular piece of street furniture into a functioning sculptural object. The City's Public Realm Enhancements could easily dovetail directly into Art-Traction program, and they should be coordinated together.

### **Public Facilities**

Public facilities should be continually evaluated to determine if they are still functioning at their peak capacity/efficiency and to determine if there are not better or more effective ways to complete the necessary tasks.

The existing Public Safety garage on W. Fifth Street near the center of Downtown sits on valuable real estate that could be redeveloped into mixed-use buildings to support the growth of the Downtown. A new development on the site may also be able to serve as a significant amenity to the adjoining City Park. A study should be undertaken to determine if the building should be replaced with a state-of-the-art facility shared with Department of Public Works, and the existing site sold off to allow for more appropriate central business district use.

The City's water wells are being evaluated to determine if the existing well field will be able to continue to provide enough water necessary for the City's system. Once this evaluation process is complete, careful planning should be undertaken to determine if and where a new water facility should be located.

### **Capital Improvements Program**

Capital improvements programs evaluate, prioritize, and structure financing of public improvement projects including any major capital outlays for infrastructure and major durable good purchases. The Township should continue to prepare and annually update a six year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The CIP is a valuable tool that the City administrative leadership, City Council, and Planning Commission should utilize to evaluate, budget and schedule major infrastructure investments. This method allows for systematic review of proposed improvements and major capital expenditures related to not only the Master Plan while creating the opportunity to coordinate timing, location, and financing of those projects. The City of Clare is actively pursuing various capital improvement projects either independently or in conjunction with Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

### **Transportation Network Improvements**

Transportation impacts an entire community in a multitude of ways including how handicapped individuals are able to move around the community without barriers, how people are able to safely use non-motorized paths to move without the need for a vehicle, and how goods and services are delivered. To ensure all transportation users are considered, the City should adopt a Complete Streets Policy as described in Chapter 6.

Numerous improvements to the City's transportation network are envisioned by the Master Plan including improvements to both the non-motorized networks and motorized networks. Implementation should include all of the projects found within the Master Plan's Future Transportation Plan.

Improvements to the non-motorized network include expanding the City's sidewalk program into all of the existing and new residential neighborhoods. Creation of a shared-use path network that connects major sites including schools, parks, commercial districts, and other nodes while creating linkages to all neighborhoods and the Downtown is a key activity. Non-motorized improvements would include: 1) making the Kevin W. Sherwood Trail the City's pathway spine by extending it south from Pettit Park through the Downtown to the proposed recreational complex on the south side and extending it north and east to the northern industrial park; and 2) completing the regional pathway connections including west from Downtown to the Pere Marquette State Trail and south to the proposed US-127 trail. With the Grant Township Expansion area, new east west linkages must be created both east of and west of the city proper

into the expansion area.

Improvements to signage for bicyclists should be completed to assist in wayfinding for visitors, route identification for users, and assist motorists as to where to expect to interact the non-motorized users. These enhancements would include improvements to non-motorized crossings.

Motorized transportation network improvements include the creation of new connections east west from the City proper into the Grant Township Expansion area, both east and west of the city proper. To address truck traffic through the community, improvements to the Truck Route bypass through the south industrial park should be made so that through-truck traffic trying to make the US-10/US-127 connections that aren't serviced by freeway ramps be kept out of the downtown with the most direct and least congested route possible.

Other motorized transportation network improvements would include: installation of traffic calming features where appropriate; improvements to the intersection of McEwan and Fifth Street; implementation of site access management principles where appropriate; evaluation of reverse angle parking along McEwan Street in the Downtown; and improvements to all major commercial corridors through advertising signage controls, wayfinding, architectural controls, and landscaping improvements.

## **Economic Development Measures and Finance Tools**

### **Special Purpose Districts**

Certain recommendations in the Master Plan can be accomplished using a targeted approach through creation of special districts. Special purpose districts that may be applicable in the City include the following:

### **Neighborhood Area Improvements Act**

Michigan Public Act 208 of 1949 authorizes municipalities to designate neighborhood areas for the purpose of planning and carrying out local public improvements for the prevention of blight in such areas. The Act calls for preparation of neighborhood betterment plans by the Planning Commission. The Act also provides methods of financing improvements within the neighborhoods, including special assessment districts and the issuance of neighborhood improvement bonds. This Act might prove useful in continuing the improvement of some of the older neighborhoods within the City.

## **Historic Districts**

Two levels of historic designation—national or local—can be currently obtained in Michigan (the State designation program is currently dormant). National designation enables income producing properties to receive a Federal Historic Tax Credit up to 20% of the eligible rehabilitation costs of the project, protection from federally-funded projects through the Section 106 Review program, and honorific recognition through listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Local designation provides for the establishment of Local Historic Districts which require alterations to the exteriors of designated building to be approved by the locally created Historic District Commission. Local and National designation (in communities under 5,000 people) enables buildings to be eligible for grant and loan funds through the Michigan Strategic Fund's Michigan Community Revitalization Program. The state funds may be combined with the Federal Historic Tax Credit program to fund historic preservation projects.

As the City is completing National Register designation of the Downtown core, it should

consider including historic residences that are outside of the proposed Downtown historic district into new neighborhood historic districts. Such designations have been proven to enhance neighborhood property values while encouraging good design with appropriate infill and redevelopment projects. Historic districts are another way that the City of Clare can influence the character of new development within the City and preserve the traditional character of the older developments.

### **Brownfield Districts**

The Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act, Public Act 381 of 1996, (Act 381, as amended) establishes finance methods to fund environmental response activities at contaminated properties. This program provides municipalities, such as Clare, with the tools to develop and implement Brownfield redevelopment financing plans. Properties eligible for Brownfield Act financing include blighted or functionally obsolete structures. Eligible activities include infrastructure improvements, demolition, lead or asbestos abatement, and site preparation. The City may establish one or more of its own Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities.

A BRA may use a Tax Increment Financing to pay back a developer for activities needed to facilitate the redevelopment of the site. Once the developer has been paid back for initial site remediation, the additional captured property taxes may go into a local site remediation fund to pay for cleanup and rehabilitation activities on other brownfield sites within the community.

An important feature of a BRA is the ability to capture state and local school taxes, but only from the taxes paid by the user of the redeveloped contaminated site. BRAs may also issue revenue and TIF bonds and notes or borrow from the MDEQ's Revitalization Loan Fund.

## **Financing Tools**

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

### **Dedicated Millage**

Special millages can be used to generate revenue for a specific purpose. Types of dedicated millages may include recreation, road maintenance, police, fire, museum, zoo, and other special dedicated millages.

### **Special Assessments**

Special assessments are compulsory contributions collected from the owners of property benefited by specific public improvements, such as paving and drainage improvements, to defray the costs of such improvements. Special assessments are apportioned according to the benefits afforded to the property affected. The City has operated a sidewalk replacement program which utilizes a 50/50 homeowner and City matching system where the homeowner is billed by special assessment.

### **Bond Programs**

Bonds are one of the principal sources of financing used by communities to pay for capital improvements. General obligation bonds are issued for specific community projects and are paid off by the general public with property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for the construction of projects that generate revenue, like parking

structures. These bonds are then retired using income generated by the project.

- **Shared Credit Rating Program - Michigan Municipal Bond Authority (MMBA):**

This program created under Act 227 of 1985 offers municipalities the opportunity to take advantage of the State's credit rating. Because the MMBA is authorized to issue bonds to make loans to Michigan municipalities through the purchase of municipal obligations, the Authority allows municipalities to borrow funds for their capital and operating needs without going to the expense or trouble of entering the bond market on their own. Many small communities are at a disadvantage when issuing debt in the bond market because they frequently have no bond ratings and potential investors know little about their finances or local economy. In addition, some communities tend to borrow infrequently, in small amounts, and because such debt issues are not particularly attractive to the financial markets, borrowing costs for such communities can be high.

The Authority sells tax-exempt bonds in the national municipal bond market. Proceeds from the sale are used to make loans to eligible Michigan communities by purchasing their bonds. In essence, the MMBA "bundles" smaller local debt issues into a larger, bond issues and then offers them to the national market. By consolidating numerous local bond issues, local units will save on printing costs, rating agency fees, legal fees, and credit enhancements. As participating communities make principal and interest payments to the Authority to repay their debt, the Authority uses these payments to repay the Authority's bond.

### **Downtown Development Authority (Public Act 197 of 1975)**

Downtown Development Authorities (DDA) are quasi-public development corporations that provide downtown management services. Allowed activities include: funding infrastructure projects, conducting marketing activities, purchasing and developing property, underwriting enhanced maintenance and public safety services within the district, and conducting district management activities. These services develop desirable environments for businesses and residents while implementing economic development projects. A variety of financing techniques are available to DDAs, including bond issues, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), operating millages, and public and private contributions. When a Tax Increment Finance district is established, the state equalized value of all properties in the district is recorded. Every year thereafter, the property tax revenue generated by any increase in the taxable value is captured by the DDA to finance improvements set forth in the development plan. Often bonds are issued to finance capital improvements, and a portion of the tax increment revenues are used to repay the bonds. The DDA tool has been used by numerous communities of all shapes and sizes in the State of Michigan.

The City has an established and effective DDA program. The City is currently utilizing the TIF funds to finance several Downtown programs and to help finance several capital projects such as improvements to the Downtown parking lots.

### **Local Development Financing Authority (Public Act 281 of 1986)**

A Local Development Financing Authority (LDFA) is intended to assist industrial development, to promote economic growth, and prevent unemployment. Eligible activities include the support of business investment in districts where the primary activity is the manufacture of goods or materials, agricultural processing, or high-tech activities such as product development, engineering, product testing, or research and development. A LDFA may use Tax Increment Financing, and only one LDFA may be created in the community.

### **Corridor Improvement Authority (Public Act 280 of 2005)**

This legislation established a method of improving commercial corridors that may not resemble traditional downtown districts. The Corridor Improvement Authority Act allows local governments to create one or more Corridor Improvement Authorities (CIA) to address established, deteriorating commercial corridors located outside their downtown areas. The primary benefit of this tool is to: provide local governments with the authorization to levy and collect taxes; issue bonds and other forms of indebtedness; use Tax Increment Financing for making improvements within the district; and engage in a wide range of activities to promote economic development and redevelopment in commercial corridors.

In order to be eligible to create a CIA, the development area must have a minimum size of 5 acres, consist of at least 50% commercial property, and be zoned to allow mixed-uses, including high-density residential. A municipality must also expedite the local permitted and inspection process in the development area and promote walkable non-motorized interconnections throughout the development area.

The Corridor Improvement Authority would allow the City of Clare to undertake a wide range of activities to promote economic development and redevelopment in commercial areas outside of the Downtown district. Opportunity areas include north and south McEwan outside of the Downtown, West Fifth Street, and the emerging northern commercial district at US-10/US-127/McEwan Road interchange.

### **Principal Shopping District/Business Improvement District (Public Act 120 of 1961)**

This Act provides for the establishment of principal shopping districts and for the establishment of Business Improvement Districts or Zones. Municipalities are permitted to complete street and pedestrian improvements, acquire property for and construct parking facilities (including parking garages), along with other facilities that “serve the public interest.”

The municipality may also create a board for the management of certain ongoing activities, including various initiatives to promote economic development (i.e. market studies, public relations campaigns, and retail and institutional promotions). In addition, the maintenance, security, and operation of the principal shopping district may be carried out through this board. For ease of description, this board is often referred to as a Downtown Management Board (DMB) and the area it represents as the Principal Shopping District (PSD)/Business Improvement District (BID)/Business Improvement Zone (BIZ).

The DMB may be funded through grants and contributions and may also use the proceeds of special assessment levied by the governing body on property within the PSD specifically for maintenance, security, and operation purposes. All assessments are levied in accordance with the City’s special assessment policies and procedures.

PSDs are a useful tool for addressing issues such as parking construction and operation by shifting responsibility and accountability to a single organization. The organization is business driven, yet closely linked to the City through the appointment process and funding arrangements. It is therefore an organizational expression of the partnership between the City and local business interests. Its powers to conduct cooperative advertising and promotion, public relations, maintenance, and general operations are broad enough to address many of the previous strategies.

### **Commercial Rehabilitation Act (Public Act 210 of 2005)**

The Commercial Rehabilitation Act enables local units of government to create one

or more rehabilitation districts in which rehabilitated commercial property may receive property tax reductions for one to 10 years from the municipality (excluding personal property and the land upon which the rehabilitated facility is located).

These tax reductions or abatements may be used to encourage redevelopment in the community; however, they do reduce the amount of tax revenues collected by the City. Therefore, this tool should be used judiciously.

### **State Rehabilitation Act**

Act 344 of the Public Acts of 1945 is the underlying Michigan urban renewal statute. It provides powers and procedures for local governments to acquire, assemble, and finance the redevelopment of blighted areas for general rehabilitation purposes.

## **HUD Section 202**

This is a federally sponsored program which provides mortgage financing and rent subsidies for the construction and maintenance of elderly housing. Only non-profit, private organizations (such as churches, unions, fraternal and other non-profit organizations) are eligible sponsors, but local governments usually cooperate in the assembly of land, applications, public improvements and supportive actions. Such projects are tax exempt, but the State returns a portion of the original property tax amount back to local taxing jurisdictions through a Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) fee.

### **Property Improvement Program**

This is a program of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) that provides low interest loans for home improvements through local lending institutions. Chemical Bank is an approved lender in Clare County. The Property Improvement Program (PIP) is not targeted to any specific area, but can be utilized City-wide. Interest rates on loans are related to income. Improvements must substantially protect or improve the basic livability of a single-family or manufactured home. Major systems repairs, replacements and energy efficient upgrades qualify.

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

CDBG is an annual allocation of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to local governments for a wide range of community development activities, including housing rehabilitation, public and neighborhood improvements, and economic development activities that primarily benefit low and moderate-income persons or eliminate slums or blight within the community. The City of Clare has recently received over \$170,000 through the State CDBG program to help fund the improvements to Colonville Road.

### **Grants**

Public grants from various state and federal agencies are available for specific municipal projects. For example, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grants are available for park development and land acquisition. All MNRTF proposals must include a local match of at least 25 percent of total project cost. Projects eligible for funding include: acquisition of land or rights in land for recreational uses or for protection of the land for environmental importance or scenic beauty; and development proposals for public outdoor recreation or resource protection purposes (i.e., picnic areas, beaches, boating access, fishing and hunting facilities, winter sports areas, playgrounds, ball fields, tennis courts, and trails, etc.). Indoor facilities are

considered only if their primary purpose is to support outdoor recreation. Examples include nature interpretive buildings and park visitor centers. Outdoor recreation support buildings such as restrooms and storage buildings, are also eligible. Eligible local government recipients must have a recreation plan no more than five years old and approved by the Department of Natural Resources.

MDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a competitive transportation enhancement grant program that funds projects such as non-motorized paths, streetscapes, and historic preservation of transportation facilities that enhance a community's intermodal transportation system and provide safe alternative transportation options. These investments support place-based economic development by offering transportation choices, promoting walkability, and improving the quality of life. The City utilized transportation enhancement funds to complete streetscape improvements on the north end of town and in the Downtown but there are gaps still present where the streetscape enhancements do not exist.

Private and non-profit sources for grants also exist. Utility companies and the foundations such as the Home Depot Foundation or the Community Foundation are a common source for private grants for municipal projects.

## **Other Implementation Recommendations**

### **Urban Forestry Program**

Implement a community-wide urban forestry program. An urban forestry program encourages the development of a healthy urban forestry canopy that is comprised of a diversity of types of street trees and site landscaping. An urban forestry program values the existence of a dense canopy across the entire community, and it ensures the long-term maintenance of the forest through public and private sector investment and public education.

Street trees provide a pleasing charm to neighborhoods and they will assist in differentiating the City of Clare from its more rural agrarian neighbors. Communities with a dense urban canopy support the development of community character and define a unique sense of place.

There are a multitude of benefits of having a fully functioning urban forest. It reduces stormwater run-off through capturing rainfall in the canopy, absorbs stormwater through the tree's root system, and filters water runoff. Urban forests filter air through absorption of pollutants (carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxides, and others) and reduce ozone emitted from cars. Trees also remove particulate air pollution as well. An urban forest sequesters carbon from the air. A number of public health benefits are associated with humans living in greener environments including improving attention, decreasing asthma rates, and improving physical and mental health. Road maintenance costs are reduced on streets that are shaded by a complete tree canopy. Tree cover reduces heat island effects across the entire community and site specifically as well (compare a well shaded parking lot versus an unshaded one in the middle of summer). Buildings that are shaded in summer have significant reductions in cooling costs. In winter, properties protected by evergreen screens have reduced heating costs due to wind breaks afforded by the trees. Other studies have found that a rich forested landscape has several other benefits including less crime, improved neighborhood connectivity, and better sense of wellbeing. In addition, dense urban canopies enhance animal and plant habitats along with increasing biodiversity.

Business districts with tree cover have been shown to have shoppers visit longer, travel further to visit, and spend more time once they've arrived. Other studies have

shown that residential property valuations increase in areas with generous tree cover.

Generally accepted guidelines recommend that 40% tree cover is appropriate for cities in the Eastern portion of the United States. To achieve this rate of cover in Clare, a long-range urban forestry program is recommended. This program would include public outreach to educate the community as to the benefits of urban forests, amendments to development ordinances that require the installation of trees with all new developments (street trees, site trees, and parking-area trees), grant writing program to raise funds for tree installation, and municipal budgeting to establish a modest annual tree installation and street tree maintenance program.

While implementing this program, an assessment of how effective the existing parking lot landscaping requirements must be conducted, and recommended changes should be implemented that will improve the City's tree canopy.

The urban forestry program benefits will develop over a period of decades so it is necessary to formulate a plan that is able to be implemented and sustained far into the future.

### Open Space Acquisition and Protection

Small towns that have been regularly selected as the “Ten Best Small Towns” in America as chosen annually by Livability.com have several recurring attributes. They leverage the nearby natural amenities and outdoor adventures, welcome tourists, support a vibrant arts and cultural scene, support a local food economy, and exude a welcoming vibe. The outdoor amenities are found in nearly every city listed in their best community listings. Expanding Clare's tourism market is an important land use and economic development tool, so preserving open spaces and natural features within the community and nearby are essential future activities. The following details a variety of open space acquisition and protection tools.

- **Land Trust/ Conservancy:** Land trusts, also known as land conservancies, are local, regional, state, national, or international nonprofit organizations directly involved in protecting land for its natural, recreational, aesthetic, historical, or agricultural value. They may be established for a single piece of property, or many actively pursue and manage open space across an entire region. Land trusts employ a variety of measures to protect land, including acquisition/purchase, receiving and holding conservation easements, and facilitating the transfer of ownership of conservation easements to other conservation groups. Because these groups are non-profits, they can generally act faster than local governments when conservation opportunities present themselves.

Conservancies and land trusts can offer the technical and financial assistance for acquisition of land for conservancy purposes. They often work in cooperation with government agencies to plan for open space protection. Some land conservancies also manage land owned by others or advise landowners how to protect and preserve the natural character of their land. Land conservancies also accept donations of land or conservation easements. The Chippewa Watershed Conservancy is dedicated to the preservation and stewardship of natural and open space in the Chippewa River watershed including Clare, Isabella, Gratiot, Mecosta, and Montcalm counties.

- **Open Space/ Conservation:** Easement Open space, or conservation, easements are legally binding restrictions that run with the land in perpetuity. Because of the easement, change of ownership does not undermine the original commitment to ensure open space preservation. The easements also provide an economic benefit to the donor/seller by giving a financial benefit (either through cash or

value of the donated easement) to them. Easements are much less expensive than outright acquisition, and it retains the land in private use thus continuing to provide revenue to the municipality.

Although the initiation of easements by the landowner is voluntary, the development rights that are transferred are maintained in a legally binding manner. Easements are often donated, but can also be purchased. Those making charitable donations of permanent easement rights can benefit from federal income and estate tax relief, provided that the land be used for outdoor recreation, maintenance of natural habitats and ecosystems, scenic enjoyment, or historical significance. The enforcement and monitoring of such easements is often entrusted to a land conservancy. One of the many functions of the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy involves promoting the Chippewa River by encouraging landowners to place conservation easements on lands that will protect water quality and sensitive natural areas.

Although they function in the same manner, open space and conservation easements are somewhat different. Open space easements, which are meant to maintain open space for human use, allow limited activities such as agriculture or recreation to take place on the subject property while keeping the encroachment of development at bay. The conservation easement, on the other hand, is not necessarily meant to protect land for human use, but to protect land that is environmentally sensitive or unique.

- **Land Purchase:** The most simple and straightforward option to preserve natural areas and open space in a community is through direct purchase. Although this can be an expensive option, there are ways to pursue land acquisition in an economically feasible manner, such as land banking (land is systematically purchased and set aside), or lease-back/sell-back, whereby the governmental unit purchases the land and either leases or sells it with deed restrictions. There are also a variety of financing options and means available to leverage funds available to municipalities. They include sale of bonds to raise capital for land purchase, dedicated millages, state and federal grants for acquisition of land for parks and recreation, donations of funds from foundations, and acquisition by a third party, such as a local, regional, statewide or national land trust.

When attempting to purchase property, timing may be an issue. Tools that may be employed to lengthen the time to raise funds to purchase include Options to Buy or Rights-of-First Refusal. Leasing may also be an option.

One concern is that property values are often artificially escalated when property owners suspect that a public entity wants to acquire their land. Also, citizen support for public acquisition may be difficult to develop in areas not experiencing intense development pressure because of the perception that the need does not exist. A second consideration that must be evaluated is that property purchased by the community is property that no longer contributes to the municipality's tax base and must now be maintained.

- **Donation:** While a community or land trust cannot force a landowner into donating property, interested landowners can donate their property to a land trust, municipality, or other organization. Public education on the critical importance of the community's natural resource base can go a long way in cultivating landowners to consider land donation. Land can be donated outright, or landowners may opt for the "reserved life estate" option. The "reserved life estate" option allows the property owner to live on the property for the rest of their lifetime, after which time property ownership transfers to the community or land conservancy. A landowner can also sell their land to an organization

at less than the fair market value. The difference in price can be claimed as a tax deduction. This avenue of land acquisition does not insure that the highest quality land is obtained though.

- **Deed Restriction.** Restrictions can be placed upon private property that limits its future uses, including in the form of Subdivision Deed Restrictions and Condominium Documents. Subdivision deed restrictions are used in conventional, platted subdivisions. Site condominium restrictions are usually found in a project's master deed and by-laws. These restrictions can accomplish many objectives, such as: wetland and water body buffers, preservation of existing wooded areas, limitations on pesticide and fertilizer application, natural/indigenous landscaping, impervious surface limitations, etc.

While these restrictions can be similar to those of a conservation easement, they are only enforceable by the prior owner or other involved parties. A site condominium's property owners' association has the power to assess residents, and each resident is a shareholder in the condominium project. In a site condominium, the restrictions are legally binding, and thus must be recorded with the proper authorities. This offers a stronger mechanism for maintaining these restrictions than is possible in a subdivision plat.

Unfortunately, these restrictions may be canceled at any time upon an agreement between the parties to the agreement. Also, like any other development restriction that runs with the land, new landowners must be made aware of the restrictions.

- **Development Right Transfers:** Two types of development right transfer programs exist – Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR). In both instances, the property owners voluntarily enter the program to transfer development rights to their property to preserve natural features, open space, or agricultural uses from future development.

In the instance of TDR programs, the property owner of a site or parcel within an area that has been deemed for preservation voluntarily sells their rights for future development to a developer or other interested party who then transfers these development rights to a parcel(s) that has been designated to accept additional development. Through the Zoning Ordinance, the municipality identifies both the development and preservation areas.

With PDR programs, funds are raised from governmental, private, and non-profit sources to purchase the development rights outright. These development rights are then held by the entity in perpetuity. The property owner benefits through reduced carrying costs because the land no longer can be developed to its original highest and most intensive use while the municipality and its residents are able to preserve an asset in its undeveloped state.

### **Reinstitution of Main Street Program**

The City should consider reestablishing the Main Street program for the Downtown district. The Main Street Four Step Approach (Design, Organization, Promotion, Economic Restructuring) has been successfully utilized in downtowns large and small country-wide. This method leverages the community, property and business owner interest in seeing a vital and active downtown core. Technical assistance may be provided through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to restore the historic store fronts in the Downtown to their original splendor.

The DDA and the City may consider the following implementation strategies to strengthen and support their Downtown:

1. Conduct a new Strategic Downtown Plan to determine the changes that have taken place since the plan was completed in the early 2000s. Develop a broad team to implement the market analysis recommendations. For example, the DDA could establish a property database to list available vacant properties and pertinent statistics to encourage business recruitment. Another possibility is to establish an artistic window display program for all store fronts, vacant and occupied, to assist in business retention.
2. Work with the City to create mandatory, detailed design guidelines for Downtown commercial buildings. The National Main Street program has resources available to help recommend particular design guidelines that are helpful in Main Street communities. The detailed design guidelines, once created, can be used to educate property owners and tenants about the care and maintenance of historic buildings and recommend appropriate improvements to their properties.
3. Encourages the development of second story condo or rental units in the Downtown district through the development of incentives to encourage mixed-use development. Incentives might include a low-interest loan fund for facade improvements, building upgrades, and mixed-use developments.
4. Develop a comprehensive promotion strategy to encourage additional shopping, entertainment and dining opportunities in Clare's Downtown.
5. Establish a comprehensive wayfinding map and signage program to encourage travelers to leave US-10/US-127 to visit and tour the Downtown or visit the Downtown from the emerging regional commercial district at the US-10/US-127/McEwan Road intersection.
6. Develop attractive gateways on all four edges the City to welcome visitors into Clare and install entryway signage as a part of the wayfinding program at the edges of the Downtown that identify entry into the downtown district.
7. Support downtown residential development in coordination with the City's Downtown Development Authority (DDA).
8. Expand the Art Alley program beyond the single alley and implement the broader Art-Traction program to develop and leverage existing and newly created arts programming for tourists and visitors alike. Decorate public infrastructure (telephone boxes, fire hydrants, manhole covers, bike racks, garbage cans) with art as part of the expanded arts project to build a tourist amenity and increase the community's sense of pride.

## Transportation

The City of Clare is fortunate to have multiple modes of transportation within a short distance of the Downtown. It has easy access to two major vehicular highways (US-10 and US-127), as well as access to a major bike rail trails and railroad transportation.

The City's airport is located just east of town. The City should continue to maintain, promote and improve the Clare Municipal Airport. The airport is an important feature to attract interested fliers to the community.

The vehicular junction points with the US highways, McEwan St north and south of town and the Pere Marquette/Fifth Street east of town, should be developed as artistic gateways to the community so travelers are drawn from the highway into Clare. The City should also investigate a truck traffic by-pass south of the Downtown

to help create a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere in the downtown core area. Downtown's residential grid street network should be promoted for all new development to continue the traditional, small town friendly character that is vital to Clare's regional competitiveness.

## **Maintaining Water Quality**

Shamrock Lake and the S. Tobacco River are important features of the City. It would be difficult to overstate how important water quality is to the quality of life and the image of the City. This Plan has documented the source of the Lake Shamrock threat as being siltation due to storm water runoff from the roads and improper land cover, (which causes higher rates of storm water runoff and diminishes the natural filtering capacity of land). Pesticides, herbicides, and excess fertilizers can also degrade the quality of the water.

## **Stormwater Management**

Poorly developed stormwater management regulations, or the lack of stormwater management regulations, can have a tremendous impact on water quality and habitat. Traditional stormwater management that collects rain water in roadway ditches and storm sewers where it is piped to the nearest tributary, leads to streambank and streambed erosion because of the sheer force and volume of water deposited. Traditional stormwater management interrupts the natural hydrologic cycle, allowing unfiltered run-off to directly enter streams or rivers, instead of following natural drainage patterns or percolating in the ground. This stormwater is often warmer than that of the stream or river, impacting its ability to support aquatic life while the stormwater tends to have collected more nutrients and pollutants than the rain water itself.

Stormwater management regulations are often developed in one of three methods: (1) excess water is stored on or near the site, slowly being released into the stormwater system over a longer period of time after the wet weather event ends; (2) reduction of stormwater through the use of green infrastructure including pervious paving, bioswales, green roofs, and other techniques designed to allow the infiltration of the stormwater directly on-site ; and/or (3) proposed developments designed to ensure that runoff is not significantly increased. All three of these techniques can be deployed to provide a more holistic stormwater management approach. Low-impact development or design can also be encouraged or mandated whereby techniques are utilized to mimic natural systems, taking advantage of biofiltration, constructed wetlands, and other landscape design elements to accomplish stormwater management. These and other types of green or more holistic stormwater management techniques should be evaluated for insertion into Clare's subdivision control ordinance and site plan review procedures.

Preservation and enhancement of the natural environment mandates serious efforts to protect water quality. It is imperative that the City support a plan to accomplish the de-siltation of the lake and the improvement of its water quality. Once corrected, Lake Shamrock should be measured and monitored on a regular schedule (i.e. annually or semi-annually) to track changes in water quality from year-to-year and to assure quick response to detected degradation.

## Strategic Action Plan

The Master Plan for the City of Clare is a vision that points the way to an improved future. As a non-regulatory visioning document, it only becomes reality through implementation of the recommendations. There are many steps presented throughout the Plan.

To be successfully implemented, a plan must be strategically enacted where earlier steps reinforce later actions. Due to limitations on resources and staffing, a strategy must be deployed that ensures that the Master Plan Vision is sequentially brought into reality. The following strategy is built upon three interrelated steps that mutually reinforce one another: 1) increase the community's quaintness, 2) improve the City's overall quality of life, and 3) expand tourism. The outside economic and demographic forces described in Section 7 are beyond the City's ability to influence change; however increasing the community's livability and attractiveness will directly impact decisions of potential residents and business owners within Clare's economic sphere which will directly impact their locational decisions.

The following recommended actions are chosen to support this strategy:

### **Adoption of the new Master Plan officially by the Planning Commission.**

- Communication and coordination of the City's plans and actions with neighboring municipalities.
- Performance of a comprehensive review of and amendments to the existing Zoning Ordinance.
- Establishment of a rental inspection program to ensure that all City rental properties are maintained and safe and blight is eliminated.

### **Implement an urban forestry program.**

- Implement recommendations for improvements to the City's motorized and non-motorized transportation systems as described in the Future Transportation Plan.
- Prioritize completing the connection to the Pere Marquette State Trail to the west of town while supporting the region emerging as one of the Midwest's premier bike riding destinations including completion of the proposed US-127 trail into Downtown.
- Support the expansion of the art alley and Art-Traction efforts.

### **Create a public realm enhancement program.**

- Complete the designation of the Downtown as a Historic District and develop a program to market its benefits to property and business owners.

### **Evaluate the possibility for replacing the existing Public Safety garage on W. Fifth St and selling the existing site for new development.**

- Utilization of all possible funding sources and actively pursue grant writing.
- Work with Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to accomplish the goals and objectives discussed above.
- Support private sector efforts to dredge Shamrock Lake.
- Continual evaluation of this Master Plan and the City's Recreation Master Plan preferably on an annual basis and definitely update the Plan every five years.

## Implementation Summary Tables

This and the following pages contain tables summarizing the strategic actions necessary to implement the Master Plan. These steps should be regularly referred to and updated as projects and actions are completed. Some of the tasks listed in the tables are one-time events (such as Zoning Ordinance amendments), while other tasks are on-going efforts (implementing a city-wide urban forestry program).

## Public Policy, Administrative Action and Other Improvements

Recommendation	Priority	Time Frame	Responsibility
Distribute this Master Plan to adjacent Counties, Townships, municipalities and agencies.	High	< 3 months	PC, CC
Confirm strategies for Master Plan implementation.	High	< 3 months	PC, CC, A
Adoption of the new Master Plan officially.	High	< 6 months	PC, CC
Support the Downtown District, the DDA, and its programs.	High	Ongoing	PC, CC, A
Establish rental inspection program to biannually inspect all residential rentals.	High	< 3 months	CC, A
Establish rental rehab grant/loan program to provide funding to rehab rental properties.	High	< 6 months	CC, A
Adopt a Complete Streets Policy.	High	< 1 year	CC, A
Complete bike welcome center at the train depot and implement the western connection in town for the Pere Marquette rail trail.	High	6 months – 2 years	PC, CC, A
Upgrade code enforcement program.	High	< 1 year	CC, A
Establish a committee to implement Public Realm Enhancements.	High	< 18 months and ongoing	PC, CC, A
Create comprehensive Gateway plan and install improvements at identified US highway interchanges.	High	< 18 months	A
Establish a grant program to enable renters to purchase their own properties.	Medium	< 18 months	CC, A
Prepare, annually update and adopt a comprehensive capital improvements plan for City facilities and major equipment expenditures.	Medium	Ongoing	PC, CC, A
Identify locations for East West connections into the Grant Township Expansion Area and raise funds for creating the necessary connections.	Medium	Two years	PC, A
Dedicate City staff resources to Township meetings and planning entities to maintain open communication.	Medium	Ongoing	A
Dedicate staff resources to investigating economic growth ideas (i.e. seeking assistance through the Michigan Workforce Development Agency).	Medium	6 months – 2 years	A
Consider the establishment of one or more Historic Districts in residential areas.	Medium	6 months – 2 years	PC, A
Identify a grant writer to pursue funding sources for various projects.	Medium	6 months – 2 years	A
Investigate traffic calming measures and make improvements to truck route.	Medium	6 months – 2 years	PC, CC, A, DDA Board
Partner with schools and surrounding townships to build indoor recreation center.	Medium	3-5 years	CC, A
Develop and improve pedestrian walks to link the Multiple Family areas to the Downtown community.	Medium	Ongoing	A
Encourage citizen participation in community planning decisions.	Medium	Ongoing	PC, CC, A
Review Master Land Use Plan and update if necessary.	Low to medium	Every 3-5 years	PC
Update Parks and Recreation Plan.	Low	Every 5 years	CC,A

# Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Recommendation	Priority	Time Frame	Responsibility
Create or modify zoning regulations to implement Master Plan recommendations including new districts.	High	6 months	PC, CC
Upgrade minimum landscaping, parking, performance standards and other similar zoning standards or create new regulations as needed to regulate high quality development.	High	6 months to one year	PC, CC
Perform a comprehensive review of the existing Zoning Ordinance.	High	6 months to 2 years	PC, CC
Rezone the necessary parcels and adopt the overlay districts to implement the Future Land Use Plan.	Medium	2 years	PC, CC
Examine, revise and create land division (Subdivision, Condominium etc.) regulations as necessary to implement the Master Plan.	Medium	6 months – 2 years	PC, CC
Create Architectural Design Standards for the Central Business District in ordinance format.	Medium	6 months – 2 years	PC, CC, DDA
Include Future Land Use Considerations as criteria to be evaluated in a rezoning.	Medium	6 months to ongoing	PC, CC
Create Architectural Design Guidelines for the remaining areas outside of the CBD of the City.	Low	3-5 years	PC, CC

**KEY**

- A = Administration
- CC = City Commission
- COC = Chamber of Commerce
- CCAC = Clare County Arts Council
- DBG = Downtown Business Group,
- DDA = Downtown Development Authority Board
- PC = Planning Commission

## Natural Features and Environmental Considerations

Recommendation	Priority	Time Frame	Responsibility
Implement an urban forestry program.	High	6 months to one year	PC, CC, A
Develop and enforce a comprehensive storm water management program.	Medium	1-2 years	PC, A
Assist property owners in securing funding to dredge Lake Shamrock.	Medium	1-2 years	PC, CC, A
Encourage incorporation of existing vegetation and other natural features into the design of new developments.	Medium	2-3 years	PC, A
Educate residents about lake and river ecology and how various uses may affect surface water and groundwater environmental quality.	Medium	Ongoing	PC, A
Raise awareness of the benefits of green building standards among the development community, business owners, and residents of the City.	Medium	Ongoing	PC, A
Adopt a Natural Features Preservation Ordinance.	Low	2-5 years	PC, CC

# Economic Development

Recommendation	Priority	Time Frame	Responsibility
Promote activities to attract people to the Downtown businesses.	High	Ongoing	DDA
Implement the Main Street façade renovation program.	High	6 months to 2 years	DDA
Support MidMichigan Medical Center – Clare hospital and its continued growth.	High	Ongoing	CC, A
Expand the Art Alley and Art-Traction program.	High	Ongoing	A, COC, DBG, CCAC
Implement Corridor Improvement Authority areas or other appropriate financing mechanisms for the business areas outside the Downtown core.	High	6 months to 2 years	CC, A
Maintain a business retention program.	Medium	Ongoing	DDA
Establish housing assistance programs for the elderly and needy, working with the Michigan State Housing Authority.	Medium	1-2 years	CC, A
Monitor the Industrial Park areas to determine if expansion is necessary.	Medium	3-5 years	PC, CC, A
Establish beautification programs to reward property stewardship in the business community.	Medium	1-2 years	PC, DDA, A
Evaluate the opportunity to create a City Square in the Downtown.	Medium	3-5 years	PC, CC, A
Evaluate the Public Safety Garage for Replacement.	Medium	3-5 years	CC, A
Evaluate on-street and off-street parking needs for commercial uses.	Low	2-5 years	DDA, A



**RESOLUTION 2016-104**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CLARE CITY COMMISSION AUTHORIZING DISTRIBUTION OF THE CITY'S UPDATED COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN AND FUTURE LAND USE MAP AND RELINQUISHING APPROVAL AUTHORITY OF THE MASTER PLAN AND LAND USE MAP TO THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION.**

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Clare has submitted an updated Comprehensive Master Plan and Future Land Use Map to the Clare City Commission for review, consideration, and authorization to distribute said documents to local governmental entities for comment, thereby commencing the mandated 63-day comment period for said Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Commission has considered and reviewed said documents and determined the documents are complete and ready for distribution and comment.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the Clare City Commission hereby authorizes the distribution of the City's revised Comprehensive Master Plan and Future Land Use Map and directs its City Staff to make the required distribution.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the City Commission highly commends and offers its appreciation to the City's Planning Commission for its diligent, comprehensive, dedicated, and insightful update of the City's Master Plan and Future Land Use Map and hereby relinquishes approval authority of the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map to the City Planning Commission – where said authority rightfully belongs. .

**ALL RESOLUTIONS AND PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS INsofar AS THEY CONFLICT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS RESOLUTION BE AND THE SAME ARE HEREBY RESCINDED.**

The Resolution was introduced by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ and supported by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_. The Resolution declared adopted by the following roll call vote:

**YEAS:**

**NAYS:**

**ABSENT:**

Resolution approved for adoption on this 6<sup>th</sup> day of September 2016.

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Diane Lyon, Clare City Clerk