

February 15, 2007

Commissioner David Potts, Chairperson  
Oakland County Coordinating Zoning Committee  
1200 North Telegraph Road  
Pontiac, MI 48341

SUBJECT: County Code No. MP 06-12, Planning & Economic Development Services' review of the draft Charter Township of Bloomfield Master Plan Update

Dear Chairperson Potts and Committee Members:

The Bloomfield Township Planning Commission is proposing to replace its 1991 master plan with a newly prepared master plan update. The following is a review and analysis of the draft plan. The plan includes text, charts, and maps that describe the existing and desired future development of the community.

Under the 2002 amendments to the Township Planning Act, which were in effect when we received the plan, Bloomfield Township is required to send a copy of the draft plan to Oakland County and neighboring communities for comment prior to adoption. Oakland County had between 75 and 95 days to submit comments on the draft plan. The February 27, 2007 Oakland County Coordinating Zoning Committee (CZC) meeting falls within the 95-day comment period. Neighboring communities had 65 days to submit comments directly to Bloomfield Township and were required to send a copy of any comments to the County as well. Once the County's 95-day comment period has expired, the Planning Commission can hold a public hearing on the plan and take final action to adopt the plan.

According to the Bloomfield Township Planning Department, the Cities of Troy, Birmingham, Sylvan Lake, Pontiac, Auburn Hills, and Bloomfield Hills; the Villages of Beverly Hills, Franklin, and Bingham Farms; and West Bloomfield Township were sent copies of the draft plan. All of these communities received notice of the CZC meeting. Comments have been received from Auburn Hills and Sylvan Lake and are attached.

### **Public Participation Process**

The Bloomfield Township Planning Commission started their master plan update in 2006. *"Four public forums were conducted as part of the Planning Commission's review of key elements and draft chapters of the Master Plan. Over the course of all four meetings, there were approximately 200 residents and interested stakeholders who attended."* (Page 4) The Township also used the Internet and cable television to publicize their efforts and invite participation.

### **Plan Contents**

The Plan is divided into the following eight chapters: Introduction and Vision; Township Profile; Future Land Use; Housing and Neighborhoods; Natural Features; Local Economy and Marketplace; Transportation; and Community Facilities.

Bloomfield Township is a suburban residential community, centrally located in Oakland County. The U.S. Census figures paint an interesting picture of the development of Bloomfield Township. In 1950, the Township had a population of only 3,851 persons. In the next two decades, the Township experienced rapid growth, and by 1970 the population had grown to 42,788. However, in the ensuing 30 years, the population hardly fluctuated. In 2000, the Census showed 43,023 residents in the Township, a population gain of only 235 in the past 30 years. This suggests that the Township is near its buildout capacity. By 2030, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) forecasts that Bloomfield Township will have a slight decline in population and will be at 39,180 persons.

Bloomfield Township residents are older, more educated, and more affluent than the county average. The median age is 45 years of age in the Township compared to 36.7 years in Oakland County. Sixty-six percent of Township residents have a Bachelor's Degree, Graduate Degree, or Professional Degree compared to 38% of County residents. The median household income in 1999 for Bloomfield Township was \$103,897. This compares to the median household income for Oakland County of \$61,907. Higher educational attainment and professional and management employment are responsible for the higher median incomes.

In terms of land use, 67% of the Township is in a single family residential use (with another 2.4% as attached single family units). Much of the community's housing stock dates back to the period between 1950 and 1970 when the Township experienced its greatest growth; therefore, property maintenance is stressed for these 30+ year old homes. Established neighborhoods comprise most of Bloomfield Township, however new construction continues to occur due to tear downs and rebuilds. *"The amount of demolished unit permits has seen a dramatic growth in the past five years with more demolition permits issued between 2000 and 2005 than during the entire previous decade (228 compared to 200)."* (Page 34) Ensuring that this new housing is compatible with existing neighborhood character is a key concern in the plan. As part of the implementation strategy, the Bloomfield Township Planning and Building Department is given the responsibility of preparing review standards for new residential infill development. These standards can then be used by the over 100 homeowner associations in the Township, many of which provide design review oversight of new construction.

Water makes up 8.5% of the Township and is the next largest land use. Most of the lakes are located in the western half of the Township, with the majority located in the northwestern corner. Twenty-three named lakes are identified in the plan and range in size from 3 to 190 acres. Nineteen of the Township's lakes are over five acres in size. All of the lakes are considered private since no public access sites are located on any of the Township's lakes. Residential development surrounds most of these lakes; the main concern is the impact on water quality due to runoff and fertilizer use. The plan recommends that lakefront homeowners maintain a natural vegetative buffer at the water's edge to provide filtering and wildlife habitat.

Commercial, office, and industrial land uses together only account for approximately 3.5% of the Township's acreage. Commercial and office uses are primarily located along the two main north-south transportation routes in the Township, Telegraph Road and Woodward Avenue. Along Telegraph Road, commercial and office uses are concentrated in nodes rather than strung out along the entire frontage. The three main clusters are between the Township's northern

boundary and Square Lake Road, at Long Lake Road, and at Maple. These locations contain some big box developments along with shopping centers and other retail and service uses. Office is the dominant use along the Woodward frontage that is located within Bloomfield Township. Industrial uses are confined to only one location along Franklin Road, north of Square Lake Road. Vacant industrial land zoned for research and technology uses exists adjacent to the City of Pontiac.

Institutional uses consist of schools, churches, and municipal offices. These uses are scattered around the Township, with many located along the Telegraph Road corridor. A large school site is located on Square Lake Road, south of I-75. There are no public recreation sites located within the Township. Private recreation consists of membership only golf courses and country clubs.

Even though the Township is considered mainly built out, vacant land does exist. According to the land use inventory, approximately 6% of the Township is vacant, which translates into 819 acres. These vacant parcels are scattered throughout the Township, mostly in residential areas, and therefore, their development as infill residential will need to be monitored to ensure compatibility with existing residential neighborhoods.

The plan includes an extensive chapter on natural resources. Maps showing natural features, soils, watershed boundaries, steep slopes, well and septic service, and wildlife corridor opportunities are included. Significant amounts of wetlands exist in the Township, and the effects of invasive species on wetlands, such as purple loosestrife are explained. The Township is mainly in the Rouge River Watershed but a small portion of the Township adjacent to the City of Pontiac is located in the Clinton River Watershed. Because of the large number of water features present in the Township, emphasis is given to storm water management and water quality. *“Bloomfield Township has long been committed to protecting water quality, as evidenced by efforts to regulate soil erosion and sedimentation, alternatives to fertilizer usage, and an extensive public education and outreach program aimed towards educating residents on how they can play a part in protecting these valuable resources.”* (Page 42)

The Natural Features chapter addresses two environmental items of particular interest to property owners. In addition to the water quality implications and recommendations for lakefront property owners mentioned above, the plan addresses the impacts of insect pests on the Township’s tree cover. Gypsy moths and the emerald ash borer have had a significant effect on trees in southeast Michigan. Pictures of these pests and explanations of their destructive abilities provide basic public education for homeowners in protecting their own trees.

Other elements addressed in the plan include transportation and community facilities. As noted, the two main north-south routes are Telegraph and Woodward Avenue. Main east-west roads are Maple, Long Lake, and Square Lake Roads. Because of the way Bloomfield Township is almost geographically bisected by other cities (Pontiac in the north, Bloomfield Hills in the center, and Birmingham to the south), signage announcing the entryway into Bloomfield Township along these routes is important. Key gateway locations are noted in the plan, and signage at these locations will help establish the Township’s identity.

The lack of public parkland is acknowledged in the plan. *“While the existing population totals alone warrant the consideration of a public park, the limited vacant land in the Township (5%) will challenge local officials to find suitable land at a reasonable cost.”* (Page 80-81) Therefore, partnerships with the schools to provide recreational opportunities are suggested, as there are at least 20 public and private schools located within the Township.

There is not a separate chapter dealing with implementation of the plan. Rather, recommendations are embedded in the various chapters and are summarized as action steps at the end of chapters. Action steps are identified for future land use, housing and neighborhoods, natural features, economic development, transportation, and community facilities. Responsibility and priority have been assigned to each action step. Responsible parties vary depending on the recommendation but include the Planning Commission, Planning and Building Department, Department of Public Works, or other Township Departments.

### **Future Land Use Map**

The visual representation of the Township’s policies is shown on the Future Land Use map (attached). The Future Land Use map mainly mirrors the Existing Land Use map due to the built out nature of the community. *“The community land use patterns have evolved in a relatively orderly manner and are built upon, with slight modification, rather than altered in a significant manner.”* (Page 23)

The largest planned land use is single family residential at 72.4% of the total. The Future Land Use Map shows an increase of 706 acres of single family residential over the Existing Land Use map, indicating that most of the vacant land is planned for single family use in the future. The master plan text does not indicate the density of this classification but stresses the need for scale and character compatibility of new homes with the surrounding neighborhood. Locations are also shown for Attached Single Family Residential and Multiple Family Residential. Attached Single Family Residential use is mainly located in the northeastern corner of the Township along I-75. Multiple Family Residential is shown in several locations, primarily in the southern Telegraph corridor, the northern Woodward corridor, and along I-75 adjacent to the City of Auburn Hills. No new locations are shown for either the Attached Single Family Residential or Multiple Family Residential classifications, although redevelopment of existing sites may be possible.

The following four classifications of Business use are shown on the map: Office, Commercial, Mixed-Use, and Technology Park/Light Industry. No new locations are shown for office or commercial uses. Their locations on the Future Land Use map represent where these uses currently exist. However, the plan suggests there may be commercial and office redevelopment opportunities that would include site upgrades such as improved building design, access, buffering, and landscaping.

The Mixed-Use classification represents a new concept introduced in this plan. The largest area of Mixed-Use is planned for the south side of Long Lake Road at Telegraph. Currently, this area contains separate commercial, office, and multiple family uses. This location is viewed as a central focus for Bloomfield Township as the municipal offices are located just to the south. The Township would like to see a new town center develop here where retail and service uses could

be combined with condominium units on the second floor. A pedestrian orientation is favored, and additional neighborhood commercial could be added to serve both the adjacent single family neighborhoods and the new condominium residents. To a smaller degree, the mixed-use concept is applied to the southwest corner of Square Lake Road and Telegraph, and to the southeast corner of Big Beaver and Woodward. At these locations, Mixed-Use will serve as a transition to the nearby residential and provide opportunities for neighborhood retail/service uses.

Technology Park/Light Industrial is limited to one location north of Square Lake Road along Franklin, at the border with the City of Pontiac. Bloomfield Township is interested in attracting high technology, research, and medical service uses in this location where some vacant parcels still exist.

Institutional/Civic and Recreation uses are located throughout the Township. These two classifications include existing governmental facilities, school sites, churches, utility sites, and the five private golf courses in the Township. While no new locations are shown for these classifications, new schools, churches, or parks are allowed in areas planned for Single Family and Attached Single Family Residential but should be located on major roads.

#### **Comparison of the draft 2006 Future Land Use map to the 1991 map**

There are some changes between the two maps, although Single Family Residential continues to be the predominant planned land use. The new category of Attached Single Family Residential consists of existing duplex, townhouse, and condominium developments that were previously classified as One Family or Multiple Family Residential.

The more intense non-residential land uses continue to be located along the major arteries of Telegraph Road, Square Lake Road, I-75, and Woodward Avenue. As noted, Mixed-Use is a new classification planned at the following three high intensity use intersections: Telegraph and Square Lake Road, Telegraph and Long Lake Road, and Woodward and Big Beaver. This category replaces the Community Business, General Business, Office, or Multiple Family classifications previously planned at these locations. In the northwest portion of the Township, along the border with the City of Pontiac, sizable areas that were planned for Light Manufacturing on the old map are now being planned for Institutional/Civic and Recreation. This change makes that portion of the border more compatible with what is planned in Pontiac.

Another major change between the maps is the elimination of approximately 80 acres that were annexed into the City of Pontiac in 2001. This property, with some frontage on the east side of Telegraph Road between Orchard Lake Road and Square Lake Road, had been planned for General Business and Research Park on the 1991 map. It is now the site of the Bloomfield Park mixed use development, which is under construction.

Some minor changes have been made along Square Lake Road, at Telegraph and at Woodward, where three sites have been changed from either Community Business or General Business on the old map to Office on the new map. Along Woodward south of Big Beaver, two sites have changed from either Local Business or General Business to Office.

In addition, some changes have been made to the categories used on the new map compared to the 1991 map. The three former Business classifications of Local Business, Community Business, and General Business now have been combined into one classification of Commercial. Community Facilities have been renamed Institutional/Civic, while Parks & Open Space, which included school sites, is now Recreation. Existing schools have been moved to the Institutional/Civic classification on the new map. Attached Single Family Residential, Mixed-Use, and Technology Park/Light Industry are new categories. Technology Park/Light Industry is a combination of areas previously planned Research Park and Light Manufacturing on the old map. Finally, Vehicular Parking has been eliminated as a future land use classification.

### **Coordination with Surrounding Community Boundaries**

Under state law, the county's review is required to include a statement indicating whether the proposed plan is "inconsistent with the plan of any city, village, or township" that received notice of the draft plan. Each of the adjacent communities has been encouraged to provide Bloomfield Township with comments if they have any concerns, especially since the Township shares its borders with eleven different communities.

**North Boundary – City of Pontiac:** Pontiac 2010 A New Reality: A Comprehensive Plan for the City of Pontiac was adopted in December 1991 and has been amended several times since. The Future Land Use Map was last amended in November 2005. Bloomfield Township shares the majority of its northern border with the City of Pontiac, which is where both communities have some of their highest intensity uses planned.

At the western portion of this border, Pontiac has planned for Heavy Commercial/Distribution west of Telegraph Road and Retail/Office east of Telegraph. In this area, Bloomfield Township has planned for Commercial. To the east in Pontiac, the Pontiac Municipal Golf Course lies along the border. Pontiac has planned the golf course land for Low-Medium Density Residential (1-7 dwellings/acre) along Golf Drive and Medium Density Residential (1-20 dwellings/acre) where the boundary turns to the southeast. Bloomfield Township has planned for Institutional/Civic along Golf Drive, and then Recreation (part of the Pontiac Municipal Golf Course) and Commercial where the boundary turns to the southeast.

The boundary then turns to the south where Pontiac has planned for an area of Parks, Schools, and other Recreation and Open Space. Further south, extending to Telegraph Road and then to the east, Pontiac has planned a large vacant area for High Density Residential/Office/Retail. This is the site of the Bloomfield Park mixed use development currently under construction. Bloomfield Township has planned for Commercial along this portion of the border.

East and west of Franklin Road, Pontiac has an existing residential area planned Low Density Residential (1-5 dwellings/acre) and Low-Medium Density Residential. This is adjacent to an area planned for Bloomfield Township's highest intensity use, Technology Park/Light Industry. The Existing Land Use map for Bloomfield Township shows that there are vacant parcels on the east side of Franklin, adjacent to the homes in Pontiac. Acknowledging a possible conflict of uses in this area, the plan states "*New development should include attractive architectural features and excellent site design with attention paid to significant landscaping, strong buffers between incompatible uses, and managed access.*" (Page 29) The plan further states, "*Where*

*residential areas exist side-by-side with active commercial and industrial land uses, the Township should continue to insist upon the provision of buffers, which may include landscaping offering 100% screening, attractive fences and walls, and landscaped berms.” (Page 62)* Attention to these details by the Bloomfield Township Planning Commission during site plan review should help overcome possible land use conflicts in this area.

East of the residential, the City of Pontiac now has its most intense uses planned at the border. The Public Services classification refers to St. Joseph Mercy Hospital on the west side of Woodward Avenue, and Medium Density Residential is on the east side of Woodward. Along this portion of the boundary, Bloomfield Township has planned for Single Family Residential, with Office along the eastern frontage of Woodward Avenue.

Finally, Pontiac has its most intensive land use classification of Industrial planned from the railroad to Opdyke Road. Bloomfield Township essentially has residential (Single Family and Attached Single Family Residential) surrounding the Industrial. On the surface, this appears to be an incompatible border with residential adjacent to industrial but there are some mitigating factors. The Industrial is the Center Point campus. Most of the office and industrial buildings are set back significantly from the edge of the property, and the railroad acts as an additional buffer for the residential to the west of Center Point. In addition, this represents an existing condition where these land uses have been able to co-exist.

**North Boundary – City of Auburn Hills:** The City of Auburn Hills Master Land Use Plan was adopted in November 2002. The Auburn Hills plan is unique in that it has only three land use classifications; Residential, Non-Residential, and Public, with a variety of densities proposed for the Residential classification. Bloomfield Township shares the eastern portion of its northern border, along South Boulevard between Opdyke and Adams Roads, with Auburn Hills. The border is predominantly planned for residential in both communities, with non-residential uses at the Opdyke Road and Squirrel Road intersections with South Boulevard.

Auburn Hills has planned for small areas of Non-Residential just east of Opdyke and just west of Squirrel, and Bloomfield Township has planned for Commercial opposite both these locations. Auburn Hills has planned for higher density Residential (9-17 dwelling units/acre) adjacent to these Non-Residential areas and adjacent to the I-75 expressway, and lower density Residential (1.2-4.5 dwelling units/acre) along the remainder of the border. Bloomfield Township has planned for Multiple Family Residential (no density given) adjacent to the Commercial and I-75, and Single Family Residential (no density given) along the remainder of the border. This portion of the border is very compatible. In the email received from the Auburn Hills planner, he indicates that the City of Auburn Hills Planning Commission has no objection to the proposed plan.

**East Boundary – City of Troy:** The City of Troy Future Land Use Plan was adopted in January 2002. Bloomfield Township shares its entire eastern border with the City of Troy. This border, which extends from South Boulevard to just south of Big Beaver, is almost entirely planned for Low Density Residential in Troy. The only exception to this is a small area of Low Rise Office between I-75 and Square Lake Road. Single Family Residential is also the dominant land use planned by Bloomfield Township with a few exceptions. One exception is an area planned for

Office between I-75 and Square Lake Road, adjacent to the Low Rise Office in Troy. Another exception is an area of Multiple Family Residential on Big Beaver just west of Adams. Bloomfield Township also has planned for an area of Attached Single Family Residential (no density given) north of the expressway and four areas of Institutional/Civic at various locations along the border. This is a very compatible border.

**Internal Boundary - City of Bloomfield Hills:** The Master Plan of Land Use, City of Bloomfield Hills was adopted in August 1987. The City of Bloomfield Hills shares nearly its entire border with Bloomfield Township. The predominant land use planned along this border by both communities is single family; One-Family Residential (no density given) in Bloomfield Hills and Single Family Residential (no density given) in Bloomfield Township.

Exceptions to single family are mainly located at Woodward Avenue in both the northern and southern portions of the City of Bloomfield Hills. In these locations, Bloomfield Hills has planned for Transitional Residential (no density given) and Multiple Family Residential at Woodward and Hickory Grove in the north. This is adjacent to Multiple Family Residential in Bloomfield Township. At its southern end of Woodward Avenue, Bloomfield Hills has again planned for Transitional Residential, which is adjacent to Single Family Residential in Bloomfield Township. The only other use at the border is institutional. Bloomfield Hills also has planned for an area of Institutional (school) at Opdyke and Hickory Grove, which is kitty corner from Institutional/Civic in Bloomfield Township. In addition, three other Institutional/Civic sites in Bloomfield Township are at the city/township border at various locations. This border is very compatible.

**Southeast Boundary – City of Birmingham:** The Birmingham Future Land-Use Plan was prepared in 1979 and has been amended since that time, most notably for the downtown area. Bloomfield Township shares a non-continuous border with the City of Birmingham, separated by the City of Bloomfield Hills. The northern portion of this border follows an irregular route from Woodward Avenue on the west to Adams Road on the east. From the north along Woodward, Birmingham has planned for Office and Low-Intensity Commercial, Low-Density Multifamily Residential (not to exceed 20 units per acre), and General Commercial. Bloomfield Township has planned for Mixed-Use at Woodward and Big Beaver, and Office for the remaining Woodward frontage, creating a compatible border. Then, along a convoluted route to Adams Road, Birmingham has planned for Single-Family Residential (2-9 dwelling units/acre) and Open Space and Recreation, with a small area of Low-Density Multifamily Residential at Adams Road. Bloomfield Township has planned for all Single Family Residential (no density given) except for an area of Multiple Family Residential (no density given) at Adams Road. This border is also very compatible.

The western portion of the border extends from Quarton Road on the north to Fourteen Mile Road on the south. Birmingham has planned for Single Family Residential, Open Space and Recreation, or Institutional along this entire border except for a small area of Neighborhood Commercial at the intersection of Maple and Cranbrook Roads. Bloomfield Township has planned for all Single Family Residential except for a small area of Office and Commercial at the same intersection, creating another very compatible border.

**South Boundary – Village of Beverly Hills:** The draft Village of Beverly Hills Master Plan is awaiting approval from the Village but a public hearing on the draft has been held. Bloomfield Township and Beverly Hills share a non-continuous border along Fourteen Mile Road. At the western edge, the border starts approximately ½ mile west of Lahser and continues to the City of Birmingham boundary a ¼ mile west of Evergreen/Cranbrook. The border picks up again at Evergreen/Cranbrook and continues to approximately ¼ west of Southfield Road. Along the western most part of this border, Bloomfield Township has planned for Single Family Residential with two small sites of Institutional/Civic. This is adjacent to Low Density (16,000 to 25,000 square foot lots) and Estate Density (over 25,000 square foot lots) in Beverly Hills.

Along the remaining part of this border, from Evergreen Road east, Bloomfield Township has planned for Recreation. This is the Birmingham Country Club. On the adjacent south side of Fourteen Mile Road, Beverly Hills has planned for Low Density, Public (Hidden Rivers Nature Preserve), and Medium Density Residential (12,000 to 16,000 square foot lots). Both portions of this Bloomfield Township/Beverly Hills border are fairly harmonious.

**South Boundary – Village of Bingham Farms:** The Village of Bingham Farms Master Plan was adopted in September 2004. Bloomfield Township and Bingham Farms share a short boundary along Fourteen Mile Road east of Telegraph. Multiple Family Residential (no density given) is planned along the southern boundary of Bloomfield Township from Telegraph Road east to Bingham Road. Across Fourteen Mile Road, Bingham Farms has planned this area for High Density Residential (Special Study Area, 2.5 dwelling units/acre) and Low Density Residential (0.7 dwelling units/acre). From Bingham Road to the eastern boundary of the Village, Bloomfield Township has planned Single Family Residential (no density given) and Bingham Farms has planned Low Density Residential and Moderate Density Residential (0.8-2.5 dwelling units/acre). This is a fairly consistent border.

**South Boundary – Village of Franklin:** The Master Plan, Village of Franklin was adopted by the Village Planning Commission on January 23, 2007, and it is awaiting Village Council approval. Bloomfield Township and Franklin share a two-mile harmonious border along Fourteen Mile Road from just east of Inkster to Telegraph Road. Franklin has planned this border exclusively for single family residential, either Medium Low Density (22,500 square foot minimum lots) or Low Density Residential (30,000 to 42,000 square foot lots). Bloomfield Township has planned for Single Family Residential for this entire border except for one parcel of Institutional/Civic at Telegraph and one small parcel of Commercial (Franklin Cider Mill) at the northeast corner of Franklin and Fourteen Mile Roads. It should be noted that the master plan text calls the cider mill site Commercial while the map shows it as Office. This inconsistency should be resolved before the plan is adopted.

**South Boundary – Southfield Township:** The Southfield Township Master Plan was adopted in November 2002. Southfield Township consists of three distinct geographic areas, one of which is adjacent to Bloomfield Township. The triangular shaped parcel, on the south side of Fourteen Mile Road at Inkster, is in Southfield Township. It consists of nine residential parcels and seven homes, and is planned for Single Family Residential. It is adjacent to Single Family Residential in Bloomfield Township, making this a very consistent border.

**West Boundary – City of Sylvan Lake:** The draft City of Sylvan Lake Community Master Plan is currently out for County and neighboring community review. The draft plan will be presented to the Oakland County Coordinating Zoning Committee on March 27, 2007. Bloomfield Township and Sylvan Lake share a short border along the north side of Orchard Lake Road. At this location, the City of Sylvan Lake is proposing the Whitfield School Redevelopment Area. Bloomfield Township has the adjacent parcel planned for Institutional/Civic (DTE utility site). The redevelopment that Sylvan Lake envisions for the Whitfield School area would consist of mixed commercial and residential uses and would take advantage of the Clinton River Trail immediately to the north. The City of Sylvan Lake sent a letter explaining their vision for this area and enumerated their concerns about the perceived negative impact of this utility site. In their letter, the City of Sylvan Lake requests that Bloomfield Township 1.) change the future land use classification for the DTE site from Institutional/Civic to Mixed-Use, and 2.) discourage DTE from further expansion of their activity at this site. It is hoped that the Bloomfield Township Planning Commission will consider these concerns during their deliberations before the adoption of the plan.

**West Boundary – West Bloomfield Township:** The Charter Township of West Bloomfield 2005 Master Land Use Plan Update was adopted in July 2005. West Bloomfield and Bloomfield Townships share an approximately 5.5 mile border from Orchard Lake Road south to almost Fourteen Mile Road. In West Bloomfield, this entire border is planned for either Single Family Residential (Low and Low-Medium Density) or Quasi Public/Private with two exceptions. At Orchard Lake Road there is a small amount of Shopping Center-Retail, and at Walnut Lake Road a small amount of Non-Center Retail is planned. In Bloomfield Township, this entire border is planned for either Single Family Residential or Institutional/Civic with two exceptions. A small area of Commercial is planned at Orchard Lake Road, and Commercial and Office are shown at the northeast corner of Maple Road. Generally speaking this is a very harmonious border; in some cases, the residential subdivisions span the two Townships.

### **Analysis**

To the casual commuter, Bloomfield Township might appear to be a growing community as new commercial buildings, a senior housing facility, and some new homes have been built recently on Telegraph Road. However, as the master plan illustrates, Bloomfield Township is nearly built out. The Township has already experienced its growth period and is now anticipating a slight population decline by 2030. Therefore, the emphasis in the plan is on maintaining the Township's high residential quality and providing opportunities for redevelopment.

A new concept introduced in this plan that encourages redevelopment is the mixed use town center at Long Lake Road and Telegraph. What is envisioned is an area with a neighborhood feel and pedestrian orientation that allows for second-floor residential over retail or office uses. Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services staff agrees that adding residential to the mix of land uses is important. This new housing type could appeal to both young adults and empty-nesters, and would provide new housing choices within the Township. Including residential will give a 24-hour population to the town center, providing more vitality to the area and a built-in market for the commercial uses.

The plan contains only a limited description of the mixed use concept, but indicates as part of the implementation strategy, the need to update the zoning ordinance to provide for mixed use development. Bloomfield Township might wish to review a new overlay ordinance being developed by West Bloomfield Township to create its own mixed use “downtown”. This new zoning ordinance uses a design-based approach (form based coding) that may have some applicability in Bloomfield Township.

Another potential catalyst for redevelopment is the construction of Bloomfield Park on Telegraph north of Square Lake Road. When originally proposed, Bloomfield Park was intended to be a multi-story high intensity, mixed use development in Bloomfield Township. The Township did not approve the project, and the developer ultimately was successful in getting the property annexed into the City of Pontiac. Due to financial considerations, the project may now be scaled back but ground breaking has occurred. Given the controversial nature of the project, it is understandable that the Township does not focus on it, but it is surprising that no mention is made of Bloomfield Park in the plan, especially in the Local Economy and Marketplace chapter.

### **Conclusion**

Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services staff commends Bloomfield Township on its master plan update. The plan is well written and provides a good overview of Township services and future planning efforts. The chapter on Natural Features should be of particular interest to residents because it supplies information on exotic species, insect pests, and lakefront property management. This chapter is a good start to the public environmental education efforts recommended in the plan.

Based on the review of the surrounding communities’ master plans, the draft Charter Township of Bloomfield Master Plan Update is **not** inconsistent with the plan of any city, village, or township that received notice of the draft plan. Comments have been received from Auburn Hills and Sylvan Lake and are attached. Sylvan Lake’s comments relate directly to boundary coordination, and hopefully will be considered before adoption of the plan.

Oakland County has not prepared a countywide development plan, so there is no countywide plan to which to compare the Bloomfield Township Master Plan.

Sincerely,

Charlotte P. Burckhardt, AICP, PCP  
Principal Planner

Enclosures