

Community Services and Facilities

Well-maintained community facilities and utilities are important to the longevity of a thriving community. The availability of public recreational facilities, schools, and municipal facilities has a direct relationship to the desirability and quality of life in a community.

Bloomfield Township has maintained a steady population over the last three decades and the community desires top notch services to fulfill the needs of its 42,000 residents. While a lack of available land will prevent a dramatic population change in the future, pressure to increase, improve or modify public services is an important ingredient in maintaining Bloomfield Township's high quality of life. Real estate and business investment decisions are made, in part, upon the availability of a community to meet their present and future needs cost-effectively.

The Township currently maintains a well-organized structure to handle the needs of its residents. The responsibility of implementing various recommendations will require cooperation among multiple departments and various jurisdictions. These efforts should be organized in a way so that efficiency is paramount, and duplication of efforts is avoided.

Utilities and Roadways

While public sewer and water is provided by Bloomfield Township, many properties rely on private on-site well and septic systems. Some areas of the Township served by septic systems are therefore prone to flooding and subjected to septic system failure. A long-term objective for the community involves continued collaboration with the County's efforts to develop an evaluation and maintenance assurance program for on-site sewage disposal systems.

The Township must continue to evaluate and assess the capacity and quality of the water and wastewater facility services. Planned land uses and economic development goals should be incorporated into these assessments. When private development does occur, an incentive program should be considered to provide opportunities for public improvements and infrastructure upgrades that will better serve the development and the community.

As a participating community in the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Initiative (SWPPI), a continued effort will be made to identify and eliminate illicit stormwater connections and discharges through landowner awareness education and enhanced mapping capabilities. Public input was received regarding the environmental impacts of storm water runoff from the brining of local gravel roads. By eliminating illicit connections and excess road runoff, the Township will

be able to quickly and efficiently handle storm water runoff without causing flooding or other environmental problems.

An additional resource that the Township may consider to properly handle storm water events and enhance the aesthetic character of the area is to consider “green infrastructure.” Green infrastructure offers a more natural means for handling storm water. For example, wetlands and pervious pavement allows water to slowly infiltrate into the groundwater table, without the burden of flooding, and is a low-cost alternative to permanent infrastructure.

The Township desires strong “entrance features” to the Township to enhance and establish firmly its identity within the area. These locations serve as gateways to the community and create an immediate impression on visitors and residents alike. Ornamental street lights, banners, signs, sidewalks, landscaping, green space and other streetscape enhancement standards should be reviewed and incorporated into the Township’s ordinance to enhance the community and improve its visual appeal.

Telecommunication infrastructure, while not as prominent as streets and sidewalks, are also an important element of community mobility. Mobile devices such as laptops, cell phones and personal digital assistants (PDAs) are an important lifestyle element of residents and business people alike. A coordinated wireless broadband network in Bloomfield Township of single or multiple network(s), including but not limited to, wireless, DSL, and fiber, will provide residents and businesses with access to high-speed broadband. Providing internet access to every resident, school, community organization, business and visitor of the Township will ensure an enhanced quality of life. Bloomfield Township should promote careful planning of future infrastructure to protect community aesthetics and promote safety by planning for well-sited and well-designed personal wireless service facilities that fit unobtrusively in the Bloomfield Township environment.

Recreational Facilities and Public Spaces

Recreational opportunities for local residents are plentiful, despite the fact that Bloomfield Township does not have public parks. The amount of recreational amenities in the community are exceptional, specifically the number of golf courses within the Township. Bloomfield Township has five. This far exceeds

the facility development standards recommended in Michigan’s Parks and Recreation Guidebook.



Efforts to acquire park land in the past failed to reach consensus and land converted to residential uses. 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. However, the Township continues to seek out opportunities to improve upon the available recreational opportunities in the community. Given the lack of vacant property for possible park acquisition, Bloomfield Township must rely on its institutional uses and possible land redevelopment opportunities.

School sites are critical to helping the Township meet recreational needs. Almost all of the twenty-five schools in the municipal boundary have recreational amenities such as playground equipment, tennis courts, athletic fields and running tracks. The Township should continue to work closely with all four School Districts – especially the Bloomfield and Birmingham Districts, which have school property in the Township – and non-profit organizations to identify ways for improving recreational opportunities on school sites and to ensure that recreational needs continue to be met in the event that school sites are no longer available.

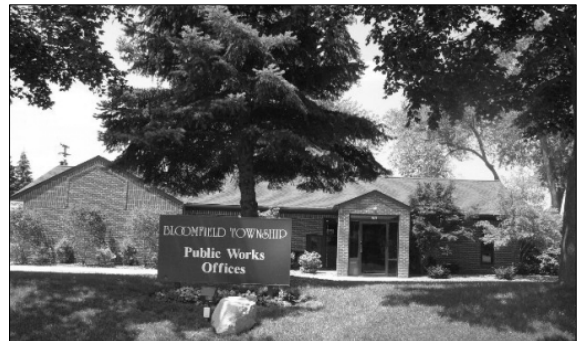
Seniors are offered programming events and facilities through Bloomfield Township Senior Services. The public has shared their concerns regarding improving opportunities for area seniors, since over half of the community population is over 50 years old. The Greater Bloomfield Senior Association became the Bloomfield Township’s Senior Services Department in 2007 and is housed in the Wing Lake Elementary School. As part of the 2006 Capital Improvements Program, a new senior center is planned to help expand service to the area’s senior citizens.

Ways to satisfy recreation/open space needs for all ages should be studied and implemented, including providing connections to existing sidewalks and pathways through public/private partnerships and requiring private recreation facilities and open space in conjunction with new residential developments.

Municipal Facilities and Services

The major municipal buildings within the Township were constructed during the periods of high population growth in the 50’s, 60’s and 70’s. Many of these buildings are now considered inadequate to service today’s technology and equipment. Municipal buildings and equipment are now faced with servicing and protecting nearly double the housing stock that existed in the 60’s.

The Township underwent a facility audit in 2003-2004 to determine what facilities and equipment were needed to support and ensure the efficient and cost effective delivery of services for Water, Roads, Fleet Maintenance and Ground Services. Recommendations from this report are being utilized to plan for a civic campus within the Township, as well



as recommend other municipal improvements to fire and public safety through proposed bonds and millages.

An additional component to community services that is important in Bloomfield Township is community involvement and awareness. Every effort should be made in the coming years to keep pace with technology and the desire for residents to easily access and understand information pertaining to Township matters. There are several tools available to help accomplish this: establishing regular public office hours, newsletters, public meetings, cable television programming, helpful brochures and websites. Most of these options are already a regular part of the Township's outreach repertoire. The Township should continue to update and upgrade information resources to increase community awareness of current events, regulations, policies, procedures, and other data. Techniques to increase the "user-friendliness" of material will increase community involvement in decisions, activities, and events thus fostering a greater sense of community in the Township.

Institutional Facilities

The extensive number of school sites and places of worship in the Township require the consideration of a long-range land use planning policy for two primary reasons. The first relates to expansions to these facilities. As membership to these facilities along with the level of activity increases, expansions to structures and parking lots may be needed. In addition, as needs change, multiple purposes for the buildings may be desired. An example of this is that many churches offer after school programs, recreation opportunities, day care, and other weekly operations beyond their typical weekend services. It is important for the Township to promote the expanding services offered because they will enrich the lives of residents and can offer services the Township may not be able to accommodate. However, these changes should be closely monitored through site plan and special land use approvals to ensure there aren't any negative impacts to surrounding land uses or the transportation system.



The second situation to consider is the redevelopment of a portion, or all, of a school or institutional site. As development pressure increases due to rising property values and diminishing undeveloped land, the Township may face proposals to convert institutional sites to new uses such as single family residential, multiple family residential, or even a non-residential uses. In these cases, reuse must be compatible with the predominant land use pattern of surrounding parcels. For example, if the site is located within a

residential neighborhood, an opportunity for a neighborhood park could assist in developing a park system through land reuse and redevelopment.

The four School Districts in Bloomfield Township provide residents with tennis courts, playgrounds, picnic facilities, athletic fields and Little League Sports. These institutional and cultural resources are important in attracting residents and businesses to the community and should be showcased to promote their presence in the community.

Bloomfield Township Public Library is another vital Institutional use available to Township residents. The centrally located, full service Library has more than 280,000 volumes of books, audio-visual materials for checkout, electronic databases and services, and computers for public access. It began an expansion in 2006 that will increase its size and the number of available meeting rooms.

Private Facilities

Many recreational and social opportunities are provided by non-public entities such as tennis and swim clubs, health clubs and year-round ice rinks. As private businesses, residents are provided these services through membership or user fees. Because the facilities provide valuable recreational opportunities that currently cannot be offered by the Township due, in part, to land availability, use of these private facilities should be encouraged.



Bloomfield Athletic Club

Community Facilities Implementation

The following list provides the actions required to implement Community Facilities element.

Actions	Priority	Responsibility
Improve the Township’s sewer and water capacity to satisfy long term needs.	Long Term	DPW EESD
Adopt and enforce design standards for landscaping, signs, lighting, and similar elements of urban streetscapes for access points.	Short term	PBD
Create development incentives for private-sector funding of public improvements & upgrading.	Short term	DPW, PBD, EESD
Protect community aesthetics & promote safety by planning for well-sited and well-designed personal wireless service facilities that fit unobtrusively in the Township’s environment.	Short term	DPW PBD EESD
Inventory existing pathways and sidewalk systems and evaluate areas for future connections to provide a safe non-motorized network within the Township.	Short term	DPW PBD EESD
Prepare a Parks and Recreation Plan that will analyze and recommend an assembly of land and purchasing options.	Short term	PBD, DPW, EESD
Provide incentives to developers to fund public improvements and infrastructure upgrades.	Short term	PBD, DPW
Market the available Township tools and services available to all residents.	Mid Term	PBD, PR
The Township should continue to use current public safety programs and services to pro-actively increase the feeling of safety in neighborhoods and for local businesses.	Ongoing	PBD, PD
Assemble a directory of existing recreational opportunities available on school grounds that are accessible to all residents. Assemble a directory of existing recreational opportunities (public and private) that are available for all age groups.	Short term	PBD, PR
Partner with schools to provide safe, non-motorized trails and paths that link area facilities.	Mid Term	PBD, DPW, EESD
Collaborate with private facilities to create a helpful website and brochure showcasing local recreational and cultural resource opportunities.	Short term	PBD, PR
PR= Public Relations, PBD= Planning & Building Department, DPW=Department of Public Works, PD=Police, EESD=Engineering & Environmental Services *The Township Board may be involved in all of the above implementation.		