

Memorandum

DATE: June 13, 2025

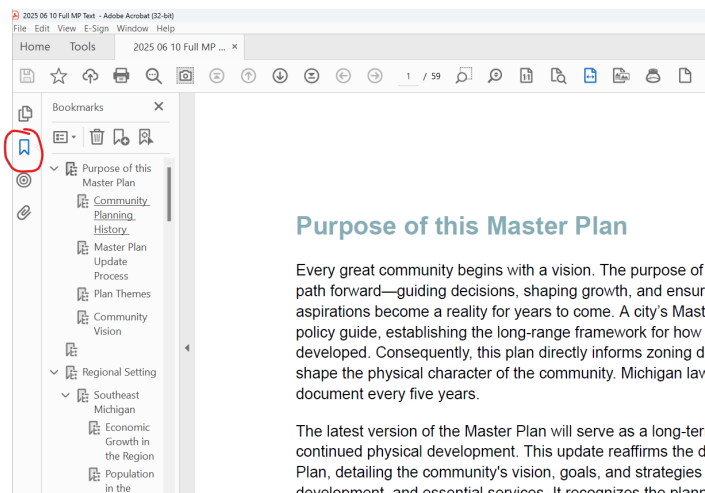
TO: Rochester Hills Planning Commission

FROM: Jill Bahm, AICP, Partner, Joe Tangari, AICP, Principal Planner Julia Upfal, AICP, Senior Planner, Ian Hogg, Staff Planner, Giffels Webster

SUBJECT: Rochester Hills Master Plan – Phase 5!

The City of Rochester Hills's efforts towards a new Master Plan are nearly complete! The Planning Commission reviewed the working website at its meeting last month. Since that time, we have recognized the limitations of preparing the website without a firm grasp on the text itself. At the end of the day, the information is the most important piece of the planning process. To that end, we have taken a bit of a detour and compiled a document with all of the text and a few of the maps for context. We ask the Planning Commission to review this text for discussion at the upcoming study session on Tuesday, June 17.

Note that this document has no photos and is not intended to be completed in this format. We will add photos and maps to the website once we are set with the content. We believe the content is nearly complete but acknowledge that additional information may be needed. When reviewing the attached draft – open the “bookmark” button in your PDF reader (see icon circled in red at right), and you will see the outline of the text. This should allow you see all the content at a glance and jump to different sections.



Engagement. As our last engagement opportunity before the community open house, we visited the OPC on June 2, 2025 and shared the main themes of the Master Plan. They were very favorable to this and reiterated their priorities of making the city more walkable and also preserving natural features.

Next Steps. Following the Planning Commission discussion, we will resume the website development. We are planning on reviewing that again with the Planning Commission on July 15. After this, hopefully we will be ready to move into the **community open house on August 5** as an event where stations will be set up by planning neighborhood. Following these activities, the **Planning Commission will meet after the open house, with City Council** to discuss the final draft plan and ask Council to allow staff to distribute the plan for the required 63-day public review period. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and consider adoption of the Master Plan after this review period. We anticipate this to be in the mid- to late fall.

Purpose of this Master Plan

Every great community begins with a vision. The purpose of this master plan is to chart a clear path forward—guiding decisions, shaping growth, and ensuring that our shared values and aspirations become a reality for years to come. A city's Master Plan serves as a fundamental policy guide, establishing the long-range framework for how land should be used and developed. Consequently, this plan directly informs zoning decisions and other regulations that shape the physical character of the community. Michigan law requires us to review this vital document every five years.

The latest version of the Master Plan will serve as a long-term (10-20 year) guide for the City's continued physical development. This update reaffirms the direction set in the 2018 Master Plan, detailing the community's vision, goals, and strategies for land use, community development, and essential services. It recognizes the planning and zoning activities of the recent years between plans where efforts were made to refine the form-based districts, consolidate non-residential zoning districts, and create special standards for the Brooklands district. The plan will serve as a blueprint for land use, ensuring that future growth is intentional, coordinated and reflects the community's objectives. By establishing clear, long-range policies, the Master Plan informs decisions about public and private land use and the provision of public facilities, ultimately shaping our environment in a lasting way.

Community Planning History

For over four decades, the City of Rochester Hills has been dedicated to thoughtful land use planning and policymaking. It all began in 1964 when the community, which existed as Avon Township, adopted its first Future Land Use plan. Since then, the City has proactively reviewed and updated the Master Plan in 1974, 1979, 1986, 1992, 1999, 2007, 2012, and 2018, planning for the next steps to innovatively guide the city's dynamic growth and transformation.

From its origins as a rural township, Rochester Hills has evolved through various stages: transitioning from its rural setting to a developing community on the suburban fringe, becoming a developed suburban township, and ultimately emerging as a full-service city. Today, Rochester Hills stands as a high-quality, stable suburban community, continually evolving to meet the needs of its residents while maintaining its commitment to excellence. In fact, in 2025, the City of Rochester Hills was ranked #9 by [US News & World Report](#) as one of its “Top 250 Best Places to Live” in the entire US and #1 in Michigan.

Master Plan Update Process

The Master Plan Update process began in 2024 by broadening the engagement opportunities for residents and businesses. With a variety of forums and platforms to encourage dialog and discussion with 2,000+ participants (see the Community Engagement page for a complete

description of engagement opportunities and feedback), the Rochester Hills Master Plan focused on five main components of the community:

- **Housing:** The types and affordability of housing options available, impacting residents of all ages and income levels.
- **Transportation & Mobility:** The network of roads, public transportation, and pedestrian/cycling infrastructure that allows residents to access goods, services, jobs and community facilities.
- **Natural Features:** The parks, waterways, green spaces, and environmental resources that contribute to the community's character and quality of life.
- **Community Health:** The overall physical and mental well-being of residents, influenced by access to healthcare, healthy lifestyles, a safe environment, and social connections.
- **Economy:** The structure and diversity of businesses and industries that provide jobs and generate revenue, impacting the community's overall prosperity.

Plan Themes

Through the process, the following “filters,” or planning themes, were applied during each conversation and assessment relating to the Master Plan and its policies to ensure alignment with the feedback and values that emerged from public input and the discussion of staff and officials:

- **Age-friendly:** An age-friendly community is one that's designed to be welcoming and supportive of people of all ages, from children to older adults. It prioritizes the well-being and needs of all residents, fostering a sense of belonging and connection across generations.
- **Sustainable:** A sustainable community meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It strives to find a balance between environmental, economic, and social well-being.
- **Innovative:** An innovative community is one that fosters creativity, embraces new ideas, and actively seeks solutions to challenges. It provides an environment where residents and organizations can collaborate and experiment to drive progress.

Community Vision

The community participated in scenario planning in the beginning of the process as a way of thinking about the long-range future of the City. This framework outlined a variety of outcomes that pulled into focus a “preferred” future or long-range vision for the community that illustrates the way in which community components are interconnected. Using demographic and economic data, community input, and Planning Commission direction, a vision for the future emerged: **This vision aims to maintain stability and the suburban lifestyle in Rochester Hills, while strengthening pedestrian connectivity and preserving natural resources.**

Vision: Timeless Tradition

- The long-range focus for this Master Plan is preserving the stability and quality of life that centers on the city's desirable suburban single-family neighborhoods.
- The city will maintain its current patterns of land use and development practices. Single-family detached housing will continue to be the preferred choice for residents.
- As a family-friendly community, and one where residents age-in-place, the City will explore housing options that accommodate older residents and promote mobility for residents of all ages.
- Recognizing that the local and regional transportation network primarily supports personal automobile travel, the City will strive to support other transportation modes, focusing on strengthening the sidewalk and pathway network.
- Community facilities, parks, and preserved open spaces are some of the keys to the city's success; resources will be dedicated to sustainability and the ongoing maintenance of aging infrastructure and public services.

In the years following this plan's adoption, the City will focus on implementation activities that include additional study/exploration of ideas, zoning amendments, and advocacy/education. On a regular basis, the plan's measures of success will be reviewed to gauge how implementation is advancing the goals and objectives of the plan, and, using the planning filters (age-friendly, sustainable, innovative) where refinements may need to be made.

The Master Plan continues by exploring the influences of the [region](#), understanding [community input](#), and outlining the [land use plan](#). Following that are additional discussions on [housing](#), [economic development](#), [transportation and mobility](#), [preservation and sustainability](#), and [community amenities](#). The Plan ends with an [implementation plan](#) that charts the course for action strategies to move the City forward.

Regional Setting

The City of Rochester Hills is not an island - the community is part of a larger region with unique opportunities and challenges. The City is situated in eastern Oakland County and covers 32.91 square miles. It is located approximately nine miles east of Pontiac and 28 miles north of Detroit. Surrounding communities include Oakland Township (north), City of Troy (south), City of Auburn Hills (west), and Shelby Township (east in Macomb County). The City of Rochester is located in the northeast corner of the city and is largely surrounded by the City of Rochester Hills. M-59, an east-west state trunkline highway, runs through the southern portion of the city. This highway affords nearly immediate access to I-75 to the west of the city and I-94, through Macomb County to the east.

Southeast Michigan

The City of Rochester Hills is included in the Detroit Metropolitan Area. The central location and access of Rochester Hills provides people with the opportunity to live in Rochester Hills and commute to jobs in Oakland, Macomb, and Wayne counties. Similarly, businesses in Rochester Hills have a large population pool from which to draw employees as well as clients, patrons, and shoppers.

Economic Growth in the Region

According to SEMCOG, the seven-county regional planning agency that spans the Metropolitan Detroit area, the overall forecast from 2020 to 2050 shows the region with moderate growth in total households and jobs. Overall regional population growth will remain slow at 0.21% per year. Total employment in Southeast Michigan is estimated to grow, on average, only 0.28% per year between 2019 and 2050. (Source: 2023 Economic and Demographic Outlook for Southeast Michigan through 2050). Economic growth is not estimated at the local level, but the City of Rochester Hills is, and will continue to be, a desirable community for many prominent businesses and industries. More information on economic impacts are found in the [Economic Development](#) chapter.

Population in the Region

According to SEMCOG, in 2023, people aged 45 to 64 accounted for 26.5% of the SEMCOG region's population, compared with 25.1% nationally. The share of the population 65 and older is similar in the region and the nation, 17.2% and 16.8%, respectively.

In comparison, the younger age cohorts, that is, those under 45, constitute a smaller share in the region than in the nation. Those aged 25 to 44 account for only 25.9% of the region's population compared with 26.8% nationally (in the Rochester Hills, that figure is even lower at 24.3%); and those under 25 make up 30.4% of the region's population compared with 31.3% nationally (nearly identical to Rochester Hills at 31.2%). Locally, with the City of Rochester Hills

being largely built out and constrained by protected natural features, significant population growth is unlikely.

The map below illustrates the 2050 Regional Development Forecast by SEMCOG. This interactive map allows you to view the regional forecast as a whole, or zoom in to the City of Rochester Hills.

[SEMCOG MAP HERE: [SEMCOG 2050 Regional Development Forecast](#)]

Oakland County

Oakland County is located in Southeast Michigan and is among the wealthiest counties in the state with a median household income of \$95,296 in 2023, compared to \$78,538 for all U.S. households. It is the second most populated county in the state, experiencing steady growth throughout the 20th century. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) predicts the population to remain fairly steady with a slight increase through 2040. Oakland County contains both highly developed urban areas, as well as open spaces and rural areas, with diverse topography, rivers, and lakes. According to Oakland County's Existing Land Use data for 2024, 40.4% of the county was made up of single-family residential areas, followed by recreation/conservation (14.7%), and road right-of-way (10.5%). Oakland County's top employment sectors are information and financial services, professional and technical services, and healthcare services.

Planning in Neighboring Communities

In addition to the wider regional influences given above, planning and zoning efforts in neighboring communities can influence the city's growth and development.

Oakland Township borders the city to the north. The primary future land use designation along the adjacent border is single family residential, with one corner at Dutton and Adams Roads designated multiple-family residential. The township's 2024 Master Plan designates the southeastern corner of the township, adjacent to the northeast boundary of the city of Rochester Hills, as Recreation Conservation. This area includes Stoney Creek Metropark.

Shelby Township is located directly east of Rochester Hills. Future land use designations in the 2017 Master Plan near the common border include Public/Recreation (for Stoney Creek Metropark), Transportation Industrial, Manufactured Housing, Mixed Residential, Moderate Density Residential, Community Commercial, and Regional Commercial. Commercial designations are assigned to areas around major intersections.

The City of Troy borders the City of Rochester Hills to the south. The majority of the future land use along this edge is single-family residential (with lots roughly an acre or more), followed by Neighborhood Nodes around busy intersections, and pockets of Recreation and Open Space. There is also a public/quasi-public designation located in the northeast corner of the

city, as well as a small pocket along the northwestern border, as identified in the 2024 Master Plan.

The City of Auburn Hills is located to the west of Rochester Hills and has two land use plans that govern its east edge bordering Rochester Hills. The 2019 Master Land Use Plan for Auburn Hills designates the area along the shared border from South Boulevard north to Walton Boulevard as Residential 2.0, 4.5, 9.0, and 15.0 dwelling units per acre, Non-residential along Auburn Road and north of M-59, and Public (Oakland University). In 2016, Auburn Hills adopted the Northeast Corner Neighborhood Master Plan Update for the area between Walton Boulevard to the south and Dutton Road to the north. This Plan designates the shared border as Multiple Family just north of Walton Boulevard and Single Family Residential for the remainder of the border.

The City of Rochester's north, west, and south boundaries abut Rochester Hills. In Rochester, most of the future land uses designated in the city's 2025 Master Plan are residential, with some existing light industrial at the south boundary with Rochester Hills. Along the western boundary, there is some land designated Quasi-Public, which is Ascension Providence Rochester Hospital, which sits partially in Rochester Hills.

Community Engagement

This plan belongs to everyone in the City of Rochester Hills. Through open dialogue, creative workshops, and thoughtful feedback, this plan reflects the voices that make the community special. Community input is the heart of what comes next. Over 2000 people participated in the community engagement process and shared their vision of the future of Rochester Hills in a variety of different ways. The community engagement process involved five different phases with each phase focusing on a different aspect of the planning process. Due to the number of community engagement opportunities, a short summary of each event will be provided below. Additional details and detailed summaries of the community engagement opportunities will be provided on the 2025 Master Plan Update website.

Phase 1: Understand

The goal of this phase was to review and assess whether the 2018 Master Plan's Guiding Themes used as the "guard rails" that guide the master planning process need any refinement. These guiding themes included:

- **Improve community health:** Ensure access to health care and healthy food and promote active lifestyles for residents of all ages.
- **Support the needs of all age groups:** Improve walkability, mobility and availability of age-friendly activities. Ensure a variety of diverse housing choices are available.
- **Promote sustainability:** Support changing modes of transportation, protect natural resources, promote low-impact building techniques and preserve open spaces and natural features.
- **Improve non-motorized transportation facilities:** Make land use recommendations that limit impacts to the existing transportation network. Accommodate alternative transportation modes, including autonomous vehicles.

A summary of each event that occurred in Phase 1 can be found below.

Leadership Visioning Survey - A survey was provided for City Staff to provide feedback on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and emerging trends in Rochester Hills. A similar survey of City Staff occurred in 2017 before the 2018 Master Plan. Many of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats remained the same or very similar in 2024. The key topics that survey respondents focused on were development, open space, traffic, housing & population, sustainability, and community amenities/administration. The results were discussed at the January 29, 2024 Joint City Council and Planning Commission meeting.

Joint Meeting of the Planning Commission and City Council - A joint meeting between the City Council and the Planning Commission occurred on January 29, 2024. An overview of the Master Plan process as well as an overview of the 2018 Master Plan was provided for City Council and Planning Commission members. Additionally, the results of the Leadership Visioning exercise were provided.

Master Plan 101 - In collaboration with the Mayor's office, a video that provided an overview of the master plan process was released on January 29, 2024. This video outlined what a master plan is and how it shapes the built environment. To date, over 460 people have viewed the video on the City's YouTube channel.

Phase 2: Envision

The goal of this phase was to explore and understand what the community envisions for the future. Develop scenarios that reflect these visions.

A summary of each event that occurred during this phase can be found below.

Planning Commission Study Session - On March 19, 2024, a summary of the Phase 1 engagement process was provided to the Planning Commission. Additionally, a draft version of the Meeting Toolkits was shown to the Planning Commission members. Members were able to participate in the Meeting Toolkit process and see what types of questions were included in the Toolkit.

Question of the Day - The community was asked a “Question of the Day” five times over a two-week period using the Master Plan Social Pinpoint site and the City’s social media pages. In total, there were over 160 comments and over 250 interactions on the Social Pinpoint Site. Five themes were prevalent in the responses from participants: **Connectivity, Transportation, Open Space, Development, Community Amenities/Administration.**

Mayor’s Business Council Meeting - On March 22, 2024, City Staff met with the Mayor’s Business Council and provided an update to the Business Council on the Master Plan process. An overview of the planning process was provided as well as an opportunity for business leaders to provide their input.

Generally, participants believed that Rochester Hills is a great place to conduct business and appreciate the City’s efforts to make Rochester Hills a viable place to have their organization located in. A more educated workforce and more available suitable real estate were among the top needs for businesses. The majority of businesses see themselves growing with Rochester Hills or operating at their current level in the foreseeable future.

Homeowner’s Association Meeting - On April 4, 2024, Homeowner’s Association Presidents from across the City were invited to participate in a facilitated discussion using the Meeting Toolkits. In total twenty-six (26) individuals participated in the discussion and were divided into the five (5) Neighborhood Planning Areas.

Comparable themes to the “Question of the Day” activity in Phase 1 were apparent from the HOA Presidents’ responses. These themes revolved around: **Connectivity, Traffic/Transportation, Parks and Open Space, Development, and Amenities and Community Assets.**

Older Persons Center (OPC) Meeting - On April 8, 2024, Giffels Webster and City Staff joined the Mondays with the Mayor meeting at the OPC to discuss the Master Plan process. In total, over fifteen (15) residents participated in the decision and provided their input on what they like about Rochester Hills.

Participants expressed a desire for more sidewalks and bike paths, which would improve walkability and access to commercial and recreational sites throughout the City. Additionally, residents shared that improvements in traffic management and infrastructure should be a priority, as well as maintaining a low-density feel.

Small Group Workshops - On April 22, 2024, small group workshops and discussions were held with a variety of key stakeholders in Rochester Hills. Questions for this engagement opportunity centered around what these groups envision as the future of the City, reflecting on what is working, and what needs works. The groups that were identified as key stakeholders were:

1. Local Business Leaders
2. LDFA Committee Members
3. Places of Worship
4. Key Staff
5. Nonprofits
6. Residents
7. Boards and Commissions

Each discussion provided insight into how each of these groups viewed their role in Rochester Hills. Overall, each stakeholder group had a slightly different take on what the future of Rochester Hills would like. However, each mentioned group highlighted that Rochester Hills is a great place to live and work, while also mentioning that innovation should remain a priority for the City.

Meeting Toolkits - The Meeting Toolkits provided members of the community with an opportunity to hold their own discussions on the long-range planning process for the City of Rochester Hills. Four completed Meeting Toolkits were returned to the City and similar themes were prevalent in each of the returned Toolkits. Participants were asked two questions:

1. What would you do to make your neighborhood better? More livable? Think about places you've visited and what you liked best about them?
2. What is special about your neighborhood area? What do you want to protect? On the map, identify resources (parks, goods/services, employment options and housing choices) that are currently accessible. How many of those are accessible by walking or biking?

Residents shared that would like the City to make improvements to its non-motorized transportation network by adding more sidewalks and bike paths. Parks and preserving open space were a key priority, with many participants wishing to see development practices that put protecting greenspace and open space as a key concern. Improved traffic management and safety for pedestrians were key elements of the discussions that were held using the Meeting Toolkits.

Community Quality of Life Survey - The survey closed on May 10, 2024 and received over 500 responses from residents representing each of the five Planning Neighborhoods. Roughly 90% of residents stated that they viewed their quality of life as either excellent or above average. Traffic congestion, development pressures, and increasing population were viewed as challenges facing the City of Rochester Hills. Overall, residents had a positive view of the City, but were also able to provide insight into what issues and topics they were most concerned about.

Planning Commission Study Session - On May 21, 2024, a summary of the Phase 2 Community Engagement process was provided to the Planning Commission. This overview covered the results of the meetings with Mayor's Business Council, Homeowner's Associations,

Older Persons Center (OPC), Small Group Workshops, Meeting Toolkits, and the Community Quality of Life Survey. Members of the Planning Commission were able to discuss the results of Phase 2 and ask questions regarding the next steps for the Master Plan Update.

Planning Commission Study Session - On June 18, 2024, an overview of the Preferred Scenarios was presented to the Planning Commission. The three scenarios presented were: Tomorrow as Today, Enhancing Connections, and Rochester Hills Reimagined. Data supporting each of these scenarios was also presented and discussed with the Planning Commission.

Phase 3: Strategize

The goal of this phase was to use the preferred future scenario as the basis for the Master Plan Update and explore what changes need to be made in this Master Plan.

A summary of each event that occurred during this phase can be found below.

Economic Survey - A consulting firm, The Chesapeake Group with and through Giffels Webster, conducted a consumer spending survey to receive data on current market conditions in Rochester Hills. Participants were asked to share information on their habits with regards to spending, housing, and other related activities and topics. A summary of the survey is included in the Economic Development section.

Planning Commission Study Session - On July 16, 2024, the Planning Commission participated in an exercise that covered the Preferred Scenarios from the previous meeting. Planning Commission members were asked to list the pros and cons of each scenario and decide which scenario would guide the next phase of the Master Plan Update. The result of the great discussion resulted in a decision to continue work on deciding on the best Preferred Scenario.

Planning Commission Study Session - The Planning Commission met again to continue their discussion on which Scenario should guide the Master Plan process. Members of the Commission participated in an interactive work session where they were assigned roles based on different stakeholders in the community. These ranged from young families, senior citizens, and large businesses. The exercise led to a good discussion that resulted in a clearer consensus of which scenario should be used as a guide, but additional input is needed.

Small Group Workshops - On September 23rd, key stakeholders were once again invited to participate in a facilitated discussion on the future of Rochester Hills. The discussion centered on the three scenarios that were presented to the Planning Commission. Participants, many of whom were present for the Phase 1 small group discussions (April 2024), were asked to share their feedback on which scenario should influence the Master Plan process. In the following section a summary of the discussions for each of the groups is provided.

“Thinking About the Future” Survey - Three scenarios were created as a tool to help guide the Planning Commission in setting policy directions for the Master Plan. The Planning Commission has met several times to discuss the three potential scenarios, which are intended to illustrate outcomes based on needs and wants of the community. Additionally, the small groups that met in April were reconvened in September to discuss and share feedback on which

scenario they believe should guide the Master Plan. A survey was also created and shared with the community to gauge values and goals for key community indicators.

Youth Council Meeting - On October 2, 2024, 14 members of the Youth Council were able to participate in the scenario discussion. They were able to share which scenario should be used as a guide for the Master Plan. Members deemed Scenario #2 to meet the City's motto and desire for innovation and that should be prioritized during the Master Plan process.

Planning Commission Study Session - On October 15, 2024, the Planning Commission discussed the resident survey and support for improving walkability, preserving open space, and strengthening neighborhoods. Redevelopment of existing commercial properties was discussed in terms of potential for mixed use development that could support limited housing while relieving development pressure in existing neighborhood areas.

Joint Meeting of the Planning Commission and City Council - On November 18, 2024, Planning Commissioners and City Council members discussed the planning efforts to date before breaking into groups to discuss development potential and areas of concern in the neighborhood planning areas. Common themes included noting recent development that fell short of expectations, identifying potential open space, opportunities to improve pedestrian safety, and highlighting existing affordable and attainable housing areas in the City. A few groups suggested considering development potential for school sites, should consolidation occur in the future.

Planning Commission Meeting: Housing Study Session - On November 19, 2024, The Planning Commission briefly revisited housing data and projections for the future before hearing from local developers about the challenges they see for housing in the City of Rochester Hills and in neighboring communities. Some developers identified requirements for building materials and landscaping as adding to the cost of development, raising the price for new homes. Additional factors include the expectations buyers have for the size of homes; Planning Commissioners noted the City is a place people "grow into," rather than for first-time home buyers. Recommended strategies include redevelopment of formerly developed land and exploring the use of new financing tools (like the Brownfield Authority).

Planning Commission Meeting: Transportation and Community Health Study Session - On December 17, 2024, The Planning Commission reviewed the connections between transportation and community health:

- Access to Health Resources: Transportation systems connect residents to medical services, healthy food, and recreational facilities.
- Active Living Opportunities: Walkable and bike-friendly infrastructure encourages physical activity, reducing risks of chronic diseases.
- Air Quality and Public Health: Reducing car dependency lowers emissions, improving air quality and reducing respiratory issues.
- Social Connectivity: Public transportation and pedestrian-friendly areas foster social interaction, improving mental health and reducing isolation.
- Safety Considerations: Well-planned streets reduce traffic accidents, protecting pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

The 2021 Transportation Plan and 2018 Master Plan were reviewed and the aligning goals were discussed, along with the public input regarding transportation and community health themes.

Many people noted the desire to create more walkable areas, improve road conditions and safety, reduce congestion, and improve public transportation. The Planning Commission discussed the importance of strengthening and supporting safety, connectivity, maintenance and physical improvements, accessibility, and efficiencies of the transportation system. These objectives help the City become more age-friendly for residents of all ages and abilities.

Planning Commission Meeting: Sustainability Study Session – On February 18, 2025 In this interactive session, the Planning Commissioners discussed issues surrounding sustainability within the format of a “bracket challenge.” The Planning Commissioners were divided into three groups and asked to fill out their “sustainability bracket” using the 16 sustainability topic cards. The bracket was divided into four different divisions, each based on one of the following categories: Infrastructure, Environment, Community, and Economy.

Each group was asked to compare and contrast each of the matchups and decide which sustainability factor they believed was strongest and that should be prioritized in the Master Plan. The “champions” for each of the groups were:

Group 1: Bikeability and Walkability

Group 2: Research Innovative Technologies

Group 3: Research Innovative Technologies & Quality Local Jobs

Group 3 decided to have a tie for the Economic division because they believed Innovative Technologies and Quality Local Jobs go hand in hand.

Overall, the Planning Commissioners shared that they believed that these types of initiatives will require support from the Ordinance and have “teeth” to them in order to ensure compliance.

Phase 4: Plan

The goal of this phase was to develop a Future Land Use Plan Map and supporting recommendations based on the existing conditions analysis, public input, and goals and objectives. A narrative of the intent of each land use category will be provided in tabular form. Graphics and implementation details illustrating specific proposals will be included as appropriate.

A summary of each event that occurred during this phase can be found below.

Planning Commission Study Session - On April 15, 2025, the Planning Commission reviewed and discussed the Future Land Use changes and updated map and provided feedback. The 2018 Future Land Use categories were consolidated and simplified for the 2025 Master Plan Update. In addition, the Planning Commission reviewed the Master Plan website and shared their feedback on the overall design and content of the draft form of the website.

Youth Council Meeting - On May 7, 2025, the Youth Council reviewed and discussed the recent updates to the 2025 Master Plan Update website. Members shared that they liked the idea of the website and are excited to see when it’s complete. Additionally, the Youth Council was asked to share their feedback on the different components and sections of the Master Plan

Update. They were asked if any information or topics were missing and how best to measure success.

Small Group Workshops - On May 19, 2025, small group workshops and discussions were held with a variety of key stakeholders in Rochester Hills. Participants were shown the format and outline of the 2025 Master Plan Update website and provided feedback on the layout and content of the website. In addition, each stakeholder group was asked to share feedback on the goals and objectives of each plan section and offer insight into how to measure success of the Master Plan Update.

Older Persons Center (OPC) Meeting - On June 9, 2025, Giffels Webster and City Staff joined the Mondays with the Mayor meeting at the OPC to provide an update on the Master Plan process. An overview of the Master Plan themes and sections were shown to attendees. Individuals shared feedback on the different plan sections and provide additional insight into the future of the City.

Phase 5: Act

The goal of this phase is a completed Master Plan Update that will be presented in a Hubsite (ArcGIS) with a short document in PDF format that provides guidance and direction for short and mid-term action plans. Realization of the community's vision, as identified in the Master Plan will only come to fruition through decisive actions that result from an implementation strategy.

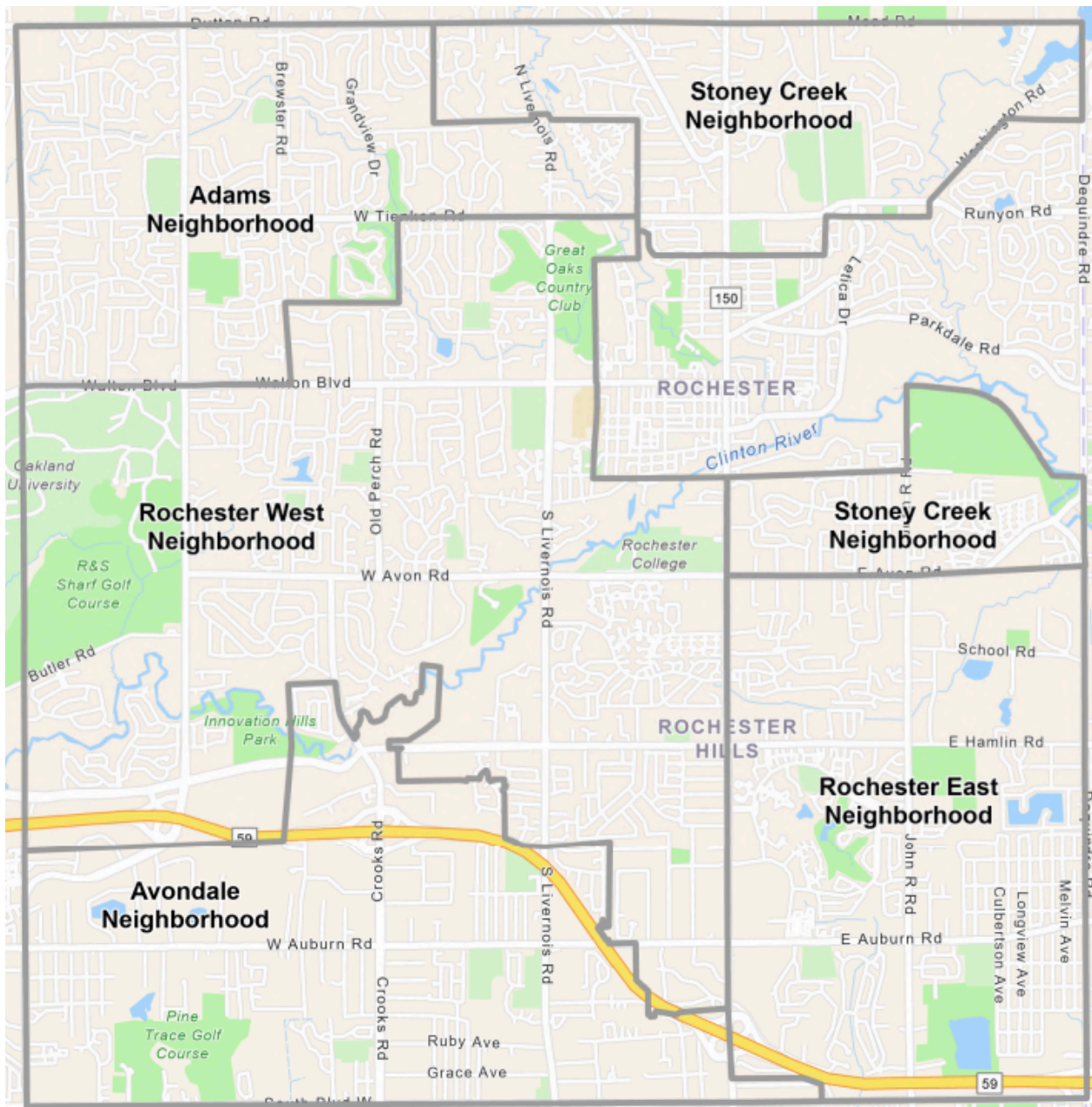
Coming soon!

Neighborhood Planning

This Master Plan Update supports the City's long history of forward-thinking land use planning. Unique to this planning process is the focusing in on "planning neighborhoods" that help the community envision land use closer to where they work, live, and play. Each neighborhood aligns with the high school district boundaries.

More information on the neighborhood plans is found here:

<https://city-of-rochester-hills-master-plan-1-rochesterhills.hub.arcgis.com/pages/6ecc2766688047499503dd993e7a07e8>



Land Use Plan

During the planning process, people spoke about their favorite places—beautiful parks, tree-lined neighborhood streets, and special destinations. These places didn't happen by accident. They are the result of careful land use planning, shaped by the choices the community has made over time. This chapter explores how the City can continue to create neighborhoods, businesses, and green spaces that make Rochester Hills a great place to live, work, and play.

As introduced in the [Purpose](#) section, the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map are tools to be used by the Planning Commission and City Council during land use decision-making, capital improvement planning, development review, and ongoing reevaluation and refinement of the city's ordinances. Implementation of the general recommendations and specific action strategies will occur over time and will depend upon many factors, including the overall economic climate, changing development and demographic trends, availability of infrastructure, local budget constraints and political priorities.

Why Land Use is Important

Even in a community that cherishes its current character, planning for the future remains essential. Balancing preservation with progress ensures that the qualities people love—neighborhood charm, open spaces, and a strong sense of community—are protected for generations to come. Thoughtful land use planning allows us to anticipate change, manage growth responsibly, and make room for new opportunities without losing what makes the City special. It's about honoring the present while laying the groundwork for a resilient, thriving future.

Community Input

Throughout the planning process, one message rings clear: people value where they live and work - they do not envision a future with large-scale development or dramatic change. This plan reflects that sentiment, prioritizing the preservation of neighborhoods, open spaces, and cherished character. While the plan recognizes that some change is inevitable, the approach is guided by careful stewardship, ensuring that any new growth or development harmonizes with the values and desires of those who call this place home. Supporting mindful development and redevelopment, and working together with property owners and the development community, the City will strive to protect what matters most while thoughtfully preparing for the future.

For example, the “Thinking about the Future” survey (751 responses) illustrates an understanding of both the challenges that may exist in the City, while expressing a desire to maintain the qualities that make the City special. While just over a quarter (26%) of respondents believed the City should focus on a variety of housing types and for housing for all-income levels, nearly half (43%) shared that the City should have a balance between housing types, but still prioritize single-family homes. The remaining third (31.64%) of respondents think the City should only consider and plan for low-density, single-family homes. A similar pattern emerged

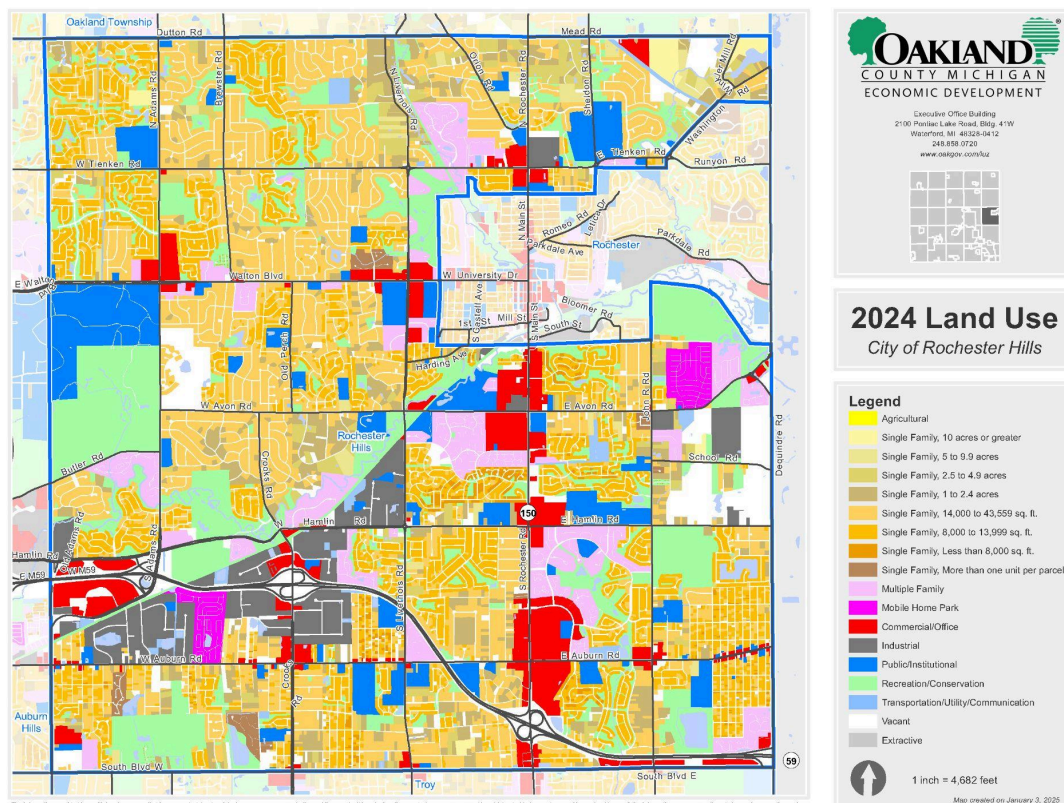
for transportation, where nearly half (47%) support a variety of walking, biking, and public transit options in the city, about 38% said that the personal vehicle is their transportation mode of choice.

The community recognizes the challenges for aging residents and would like supportive housing and transportation options (50%), but just about a third (30%) said the existing infrastructure/housing stock should be sufficient.

These findings were expressed time and again throughout the process. One area in which people agree, however, is on the preservation of open spaces and natural features. There is strong interest in walkability as well. Support for these elements is strong across age and interest groups.

Existing Land Use: Where We Are Today

- Single family residential is the City's largest land use, with 8,900 acres and 42.4% of the land area. Multiple family residential comprises about 5% of the City's land area.
- Roads and rights-of-way are the next largest land use, with 3,319 acres and nearly 16% of the City's land area.
- Recreation/conservation rounds out the top three with 2,829 acres of land, or 13% of the land area.



Future Land Use Strategies

Since the adoption of the 2018 Master Plan, the city has coordinated efforts to reform its existing zoning standards in a manner that promotes opportunities for economic development while ensuring necessary regulations are enforced. In addition to the inclusion of a new Form Based Code in the Brooklands District, and the consolidation of the FB Flex Business Overlay Districts, the City also recently consolidated zoning districts to expand flexibility and development opportunities for like-uses. To that end, the City consolidated existing business districts including the Office Research and Technology District (ORT) to simplify regulations and increase use-flexibility.

The B-1 and B-2 District consolidation resulted in the creation of a new NB Neighborhood Business District offering expanded opportunities for goods and services to be located closer to the neighborhoods they serve. Larger uses were changed to conditional uses to provide additional scrutiny and discretion over these types of uses that may have impacts to the residential areas.

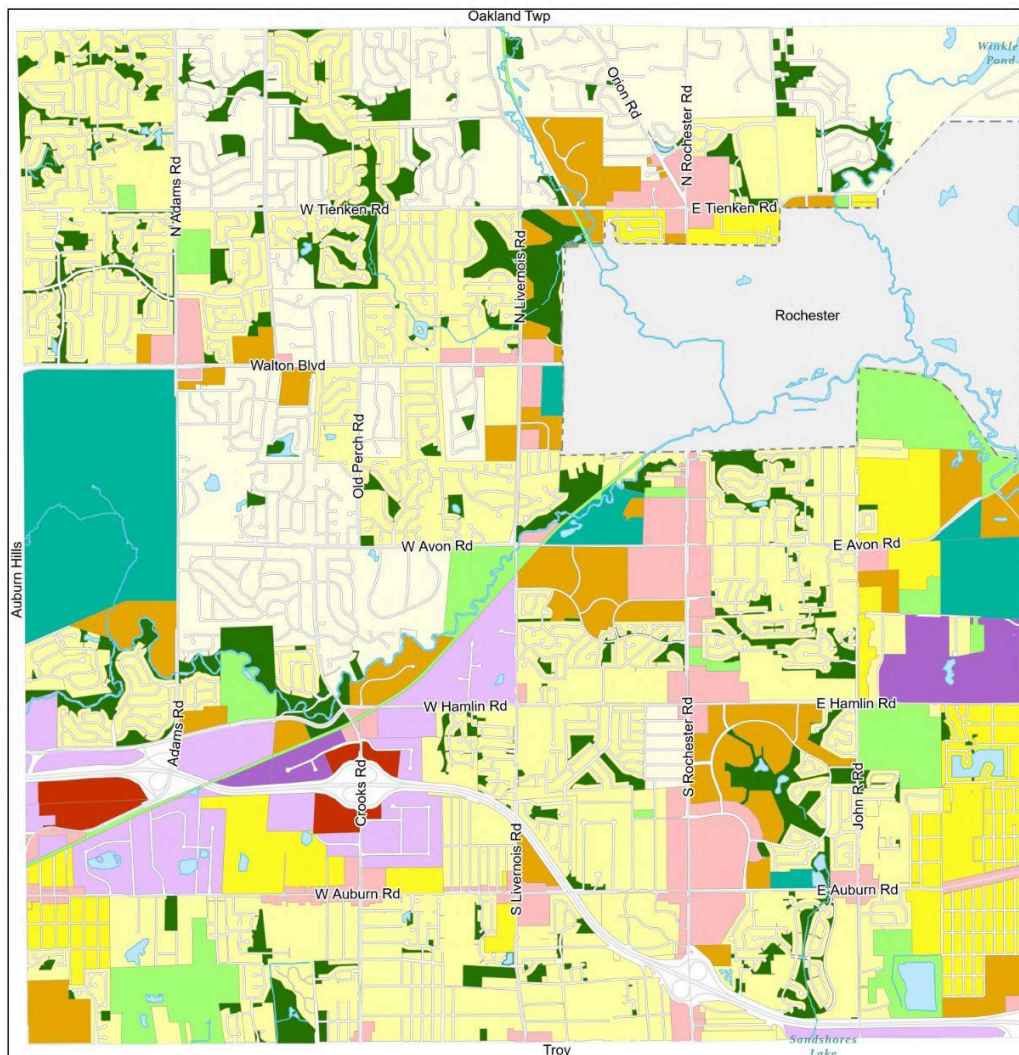
Other changes included the consolidation of the B-3 and B-5 Districts. The Planning Commission recognized that the uses within these districts were mostly the same and determined that consolidation would simplify zoning administration. Although this amendment could have expanded opportunities for gas stations and car washes, the amendment included locational restrictions on both uses, limiting gas stations to only the intersections of major thoroughfares and car washes to sites with frontage on a major road.

Finally, the overhaul included the renaming of REC Regional Employment Center Districts and the elimination of the ORT District for simplification and clarity. ORT parcels were reallocated into the O Office, EC Employment Center, and HB Highway Business Districts. Parcels that were changed from ORT to EC were granted new opportunities for light industrial and private recreational uses, but carefully designed use standards ensure compatibility with surrounding development.

While these amendments resulted in expanded development opportunities within the respective zoning districts, the City considered necessary standards to ensure that this flexibility was appropriately balanced to mitigate the potential for conflicting uses.

Future Land Use Map

With the consolidation described above, this Future Land Use Map (below) is easier to read and understand, with fewer colors and categories representing the city's preferred long-range future land use arrangement. The map identifies general locations for various land uses envisioned by the Planning Commission. Following are descriptions of the future land use categories illustrated on the map.



- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Open Space Residential | Lt. Ind/R&D |
| Suburban Residential | Hybrid Industrial |
| Neighborhood Residential | Institutional/Campus |
| Multiple Family Residential | Parks and Public Open Space |
| Mixed Use | Conservation Open Space |
| Regional Commercial | |



0 1 2 Miles

giffels
webster

Future Land Use Descriptions

The text below accompanies the map and describes the general locations, uses, and land use patterns associated with each land use category.

Open Space Residential: This designation reflects the natural feel of existing neighborhoods in the northern part of the City, including areas zoned Rural Estates and R1, with residential lots predominantly ½ to one acre in size. No new areas are proposed for this zoning.

Suburban Residential: This designation reflects existing single-family neighborhoods, with varying densities based on established development and aligns with R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts. Lot sizes range from three to four units per acre. New housing on arterial roads may be attached if compatible with surrounding densities.

Neighborhood Residential: This designation is found along major roads and supports housing for empty-nesters and young professionals seeking attached or detached, low-maintenance homes near city amenities, with a density of four to six dwellings per acre. Manufactured housing communities are also included in this category, although no new communities are planned. This designation aligns with MR, R-3, and R-4 zoning.

Multiple Family Residential: This category accommodates a wide range of development types, including attached single-family dwelling units, senior housing, or apartment complexes.

Mixed Use: Most commercial corridors fall under this category. Development along Rochester Road will serve the broader community due to high traffic, whereas other corridors will serve the local neighborhoods. Housing may be part of a use mix, consistent with local development patterns.

Public Recreation/Open Space: The city's publicly owned parks and trail facilities are included in this land use category. There may be some privately-owned recreational facilities included when connections such as shared-use paths are provided to adjacent public recreation facilities.

Regional Commercial: This area includes the existing shopping center at Adams/M-59, with the addition of the area around the Crooks Road/M-59 interchange and is intended to serve the larger region. **Conservation Open Space:** This land use category includes protected open space that has been preserved in conjunction with development.

Hybrid Industrial: Areas planned for industrial use are suitable for light manufacturing that won't negatively impact nearby non-industrial areas. In the Hamlin/Avon Landfill area, light industrial development will focus on low-impact design and sustainability, energy generation, or recreation.

Institutional/Campus: This land use category includes colleges and institutional uses such as Ascension Providence Hospital, and Leader Dogs for the Blind as well as the City's DPS facility.

Light Industrial/Research and Development: This designation includes workplace areas that serve light industrial and research/development users. Some areas, such as those south of M-59 are expected to transition to more office and research park uses.

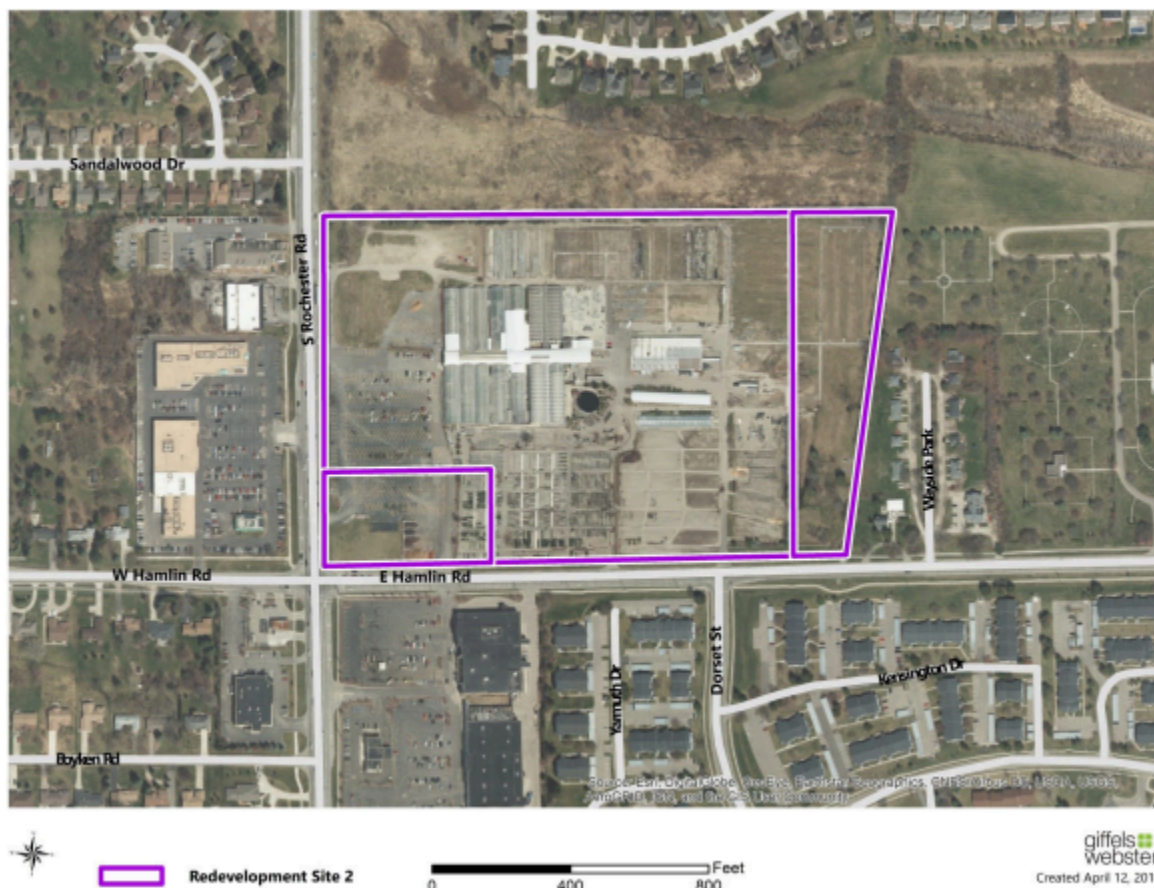
Public Recreation/Open Space: The city's publicly owned parks and trail facilities are included in this land use category. There may be some privately-owned recreational facilities included when connections such as shared-use paths are provided to adjacent public recreation facilities.

Conservation Open Space: This land use category includes protected open space that has been preserved in conjunction with development.

Redevelopment Opportunities

The previous Master Plan included a few “redevelopment” sites that showcase how land use strategies could be applied in the City. These are included again by way of examples, but do not suggest redevelopment is imminent nor the only way that redevelopment might occur.

Bordines



Aerial View of Redevelopment Site 3

Background

Location. This area is located at the northeast corner of Rochester and Hamlin Roads. The site is currently developed with a plant nursery and retail operation. A large multiple family area exists to the south/southeast of the site across Hamlin Road, a large and relatively dense single-family area exists to the southwest, and an assisted living facility exists directly to the north of the site. Commercial uses exist at the northwest, southwest, and southeast corners of the intersection of Rochester Road and Hamlin Road, and institutional uses have a large presence on the north side of Hamlin Road west of the commercial area.

History. A concept for development known as The Gardens of Rochester Hills, proposed in the early 2000s, included four story buildings with over 300,000 square feet of retail space, a 84,000 square feet nursery, a theater, and 72 dwelling units, in a walkable environment, somewhat like the Village of Rochester Hills. Due to the Great Recession, this ambitious plan was not realized.



This is an early 2000's Site Plan for redevelopment of the Bordine's property. It was well received by the community, but not implemented. This concept focuses mainly on retail, and included about 300,000 square feet of retail uses. This type of retail-dominated development may not be realistic in today's market.

Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use Map designates this area as "Mixed Use". Anticipated uses include a mixture of commercial, office, attached and multiple family dwelling units, and other public uses. Detached single family residences are not permitted in mixed-use areas.

Concepts for the Redevelopment

Land Use. A mix of commercial uses, including small, independent and/or local retail shops and restaurants is envisioned in this location; big-box retail is discouraged. This location would be ideal for attainable housing, including townhomes, attached condominiums or apartments.

Building Form. Place non-residential buildings closer to Rochester Road and liner buildings along Hamlin Road to begin to establish a more walkable core for this intersection and to strengthen connectivity between existing residential areas along Hamlin Road. Some front-yard parking may be appropriate, especially along Rochester Road, but parking should primarily be located internal to the site.

While a future development could include multiple-family dwellings and attached single-family dwellings, townhouses or attached dwellings are other types that could also be accommodated. The "Missing Middle" housing types discussed in the Housing Section would be appropriate with the nearby existing neighborhoods while offering a variety of housing options.

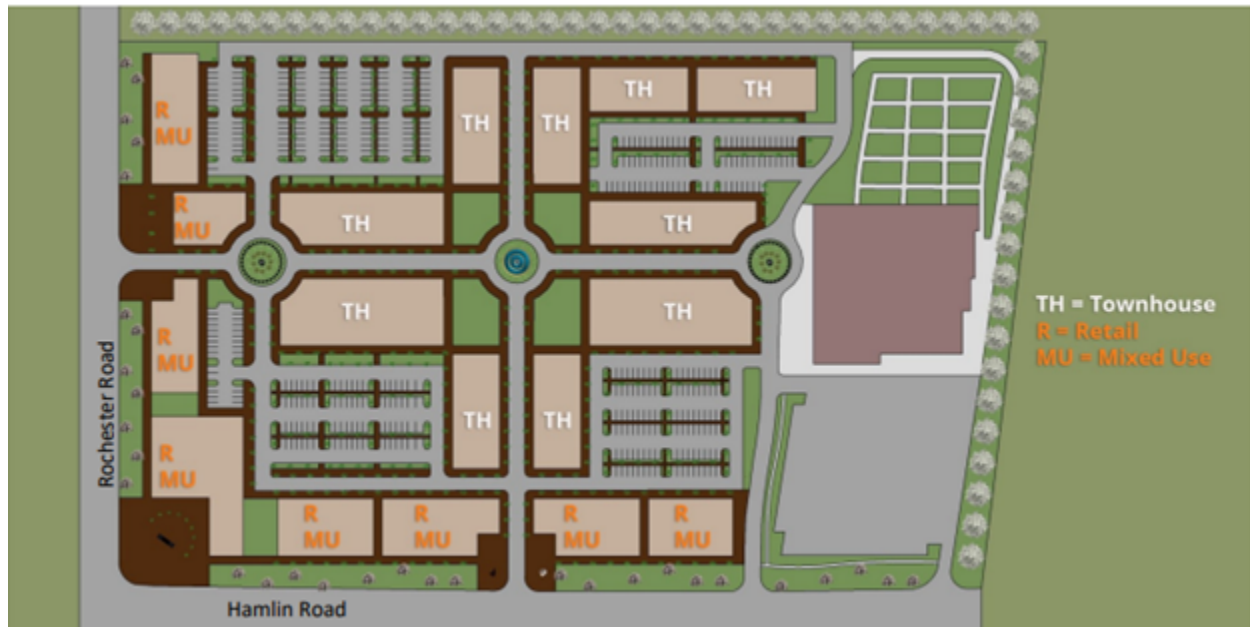
A "cottage court" development demonstrates how smaller units, clustered together, could potentially be added at the north and west end of this site and potentially other locations in the city. These housing types typically offer ample front porches and are designed to face a commons area, contributing to a neighborhood feeling. The spaces between buildings may serve as private yard space as well as common courtyards.

Transportation. The City of Rochester Hills has jurisdiction over Hamlin Road. All parts of the site should be served by non-motorized transportation facilities that connect to the SMART bus stops on Rochester Road, adjacent pathways, sidewalks, roadways, and sites as identified in the city's Transportation plan. In the future, the city may wish to explore adding additional crosswalks and traffic calming measures to slow traffic and improve safety.

Sustainability. Development on this site should be based on a framework of sustainable building and site design practices that offers a model for development and redevelopment elsewhere in the city. The use of low-impact design, pervious paving materials, and native landscape materials should be prioritized.

Development of the District. The property is currently zoned a combination of CB Community Business, R-4 One Family Residential, and O Office, with a Flex Business Overlay. The Flex

Business Overlay district is an optional method of development that permits mixed use that may include residential, institutional, office, business, and commercial uses in buildings up to four stories on this site. The city encourages the development of small independent and local businesses rather than stand-alone big-box retail and has limited any one retail business to a maximum of 75,000 square feet.



Above: Plan view indicating Concepts for Redevelopment

Redevelopment Concept. An alternative to the Gardens of Rochester Hills proposal would focus on housing as the main land use, supported by retail, dining and entertainment uses. This modifies the previous concept by adding more housing. Additional recommendations include:

- Allow attached single family homes
- Place non-residential buildings closer to Rochester Road and Hamlin Road
- Provide additional design guidance in the Master Plan
- Make four corners more walkable
- Incorporate public art

Housing

A place to call home is at the heart of every thriving community. This section explores how to provide diverse, affordable, and high-quality housing options for everyone, ensuring that all residents can find their perfect fit. Housing is the largest land use category in the city (almost 49%), followed by road rights-of-way (nearly 16%) and recreation/conservation (about 13%). With over 42% of the City's land developed with single-family homes, it isn't surprising that housing for current and future residents has been a continuing discussion, including through the development of the 2018 Master Plan, the six (6) years after its adoption and again was a key focus of the community engagement opportunities held to develop the 2025 Master Plan.

At the heart of our city's development lies housing, which comprises nearly half of all land use at almost 49%—a significant lead over road rights-of-way (nearly 16%) and recreation/conservation (about 13%). With over 42% of our land dedicated to single-family homes, providing diverse and adequate housing for both current and future residents is, understandably, a continuous and critical conversation. This ongoing dialogue has been at the center of city planning, from the creation of the 2018 Master Plan, through the subsequent six years, and most recently, a primary driver of the community engagement opportunities that informed the 2025 Master Plan.

Why Housing Matters

Housing isn't merely a place to live; it is the basis of our quality of life and the economic health of our city. The availability of diverse housing, alongside effective transportation options, dictates our choices about where we reside, work, and how we connect with our community. A robust housing market is often a direct reflection of a strong local economy and a desirable place to live.

In Rochester Hills, our housing landscape is dominated by single-family detached homes, comprising a substantial two-thirds of all housing. The majority of our housing stock, approximately 50%, was constructed between 1970 and 1989 (median year 1983). Critically, only 16% of homes were built prior to 1970. These older, typically smaller homes represent some of the most attainable housing options. This demographic reality is set against a national trend of increasing home sizes, from 1,400 square feet in 1970 to 2,700 in 2014, and currently averaging 2,205 square feet in 2024.

This combination of factors creates a significant challenge: residents looking to downsize or purchase their first home may struggle to find suitable and affordable options within the city. Although some variety exists in the rental and purchase markets, the overwhelming majority of Rochester Hills' housing consists of larger, higher-priced homes for sale. Furthermore, our aging population faces particular burdens as older homes often necessitate considerable financial and physical investment for repair and adaptation to meet their changing needs.

Community Input

Throughout the planning process and engagement opportunities, the topic of housing was widely discussed. Many residents of Rochester Hills noted they moved here with their families

specifically for the quality of the residential neighborhoods and the quality of the school district. As residents age, they express wanting to remain in the community to remain close to family, friends, and the amenities the City of Rochester Hills offers its residents. The younger participants, primarily voiced through the Youth Council, agreed that Rochester Hills is a great place to raise a family, and hope they can live here in their adult and family-forming years ahead.

In one of the surveys available during the planning process, residents were asked, “What do you think about planning for future housing in the City of Rochester Hills,” over 40% agreed that “The City should focus on a balance of housing types, but mainly single-family homes.” Just over a quarter of those responding agreed with “the City should encourage a wider variety of housing types for all ages and income levels.”

Many people recognize that downsizing for seniors is difficult because even with the value of their homes increasing, new housing options have also increased in value. The same challenges face potential residents and younger families looking to live in the City. Housing may be difficult to find because of the increase in the median housing value. An individual’s current home may have gone up in value, but their next home has most likely also gone up in value. The Brooklands district and Avondale planning neighborhoods were frequently mentioned as offering opportunities for a variety of housing types in the future.

While the development of limited new housing units may be necessary to accommodate the existing market gaps that may exist, the other significant concern raised during the community input sessions was the perception of over development within the City, leading to environmental degradation, increased traffic and loss of the overall character that originally drew residents to the City. The flip side of the housing issue is the concern about over-development in the City of Rochester Hills.

Housing Goals and Objectives

What do we want?

- Attractive, safe, quiet and well-maintained neighborhoods
- Diversified range of housing for all ages

Why?

- To enable older residents to stay in the city
- To attract younger residents
- To attract families

Potential obstacles/related considerations?

- Zoning regulations should support housing types desired by current and future residents
- Infill residential development should be consistent with surrounding development

- Residential development should respect and enhance natural features within a development

Housing Objectives:

- Encourage maintenance of and reinvestment in existing neighborhoods.
- Preserve natural features and open spaces in and around residential areas to soften the impact of development, provide opportunities for passive and active recreation, and enhance property values.
- Ensure that infill and redeveloped residential properties are compatible with the surrounding area and adjacent parcels in terms of architectural style and building materials.
- Provide a diverse range of housing options that meet the affordability, maintenance, and lifestyle needs of current and future residents.
- Promote the inclusion of neighborhood parks and gathering spaces within residential developments.

Build-Out Analysis - Note this is from the 2018 MP - Staff is working on the analysis and map to accompany this section.

Housing Strategies

The Goals and Objectives outline the city's vision for attractive, safe, quiet and well-maintained neighborhoods that provide a diversified range of housing options for all ages. This variety of housing types, based on the existing development patterns around the city, are intended to provide additional housing options to allow residents as they age or their situation evolves to stay in the city while attracting younger residents and families to the City with the high quality of life amenities provided within the City at price points and housing types that are desirable.

Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map is the way the City illustrates intended land uses. This map guides land use decisions, policies, and zoning. This is different from the zoning map (and related zoning ordinances), which provide the legal framework for how land can be used. Given the existing build-out of the community and character of existing neighborhoods, there are no significant changes to the planned residential densities on the Future Land Use Map from those identified on the 2018 Master Plan.

One simple change has been made to better describe the land use categories through renaming them and refining the text to highlight the context for the designated areas. The residential land use categories include the corresponding zoning districts and are as follows:

- **Open Space Residential:** This designation reflects the natural feel of existing neighborhoods, mostly found in the northern part of the City – primarily north of the Clinton River. This category includes four areas zoned Rural Estates as well as areas zoned R1. These residential areas are predominantly ½ - one-acre in size. No new areas are proposed for this zoning designation, as there are few undeveloped parcels sufficient in size for this type of more rural, sprawling development.
- **Suburban Residential:** These designations are based on the existing single-family development pattern and permit varying densities of detached single-family development based on the established character of the neighborhood. These areas typically align with the R-2 (found in the northwest quadrant of the city), R-3 (found in the central part of the city), and R-4 zoning districts (found in the southern part of the city, and include residential neighborhoods built in a grid pattern of streets). Lot sizes range from three to four dwelling units per acre, based on existing development patterns. When located on an **arterial road**, new housing in this category could be attached (like row houses and townhomes), provided that the density is compatible with surrounding residential development.
- **Neighborhood Residential:** This land use designation is intended to provide residential areas that accommodate homes on smaller lot sizes with an expectation that these areas may be well-suited to empty-nesters and young professionals looking for accessible housing, home sites with lower maintenance, and housing within walking distance of goods, services and employment centers. These areas support a density of four to six dwellings per acre, consistent with surrounding residential development. Manufactured housing communities are also included in this category, although no new communities are planned.

This land use designation aligns with zoning districts Mixed Residential, R-3, R-4, and RMH (manufactured housing park) when located along major thoroughfares. Attached dwellings may be appropriate as a transition along major thoroughfares, or to preserve natural features, when new development meets the density of adjacent neighborhoods. When this Master Plan refers to the density of “surrounding development,” the intent is to assess residential areas adjacent or abutting a proposed development.

- **Multiple Family:** This category may accommodate a wide range of development types, including attached single-family dwelling units, senior housing, or apartment complexes. In general, the expected density range of development in the multiple family category is expected to be between eight and 12 dwelling units per acre, depending upon the type and design of the project. This category aligns with the City's RM-1 Multiple-Family zoning district. No new areas are designated for multiple-family residential.

Housing Types

- **Single-Family Homes.** As was reiterated in this planning process, single-family homes are a staple of the community and should be encouraged in various sizes. Situated in neighborhoods that connect to each other and to surrounding commercial areas, single-family homes appeal to a wide segment of community residents, whether they be homeowners or renters.
- **Small-Scale Attached Homes.** This term refers to a range of small-scale multi-unit housing types that are compatible in size and form with single-family homes but offer more than one dwelling unit per building. Examples include duplexes, triplexes,

quadplexes, and townhouses. The 2018 Master Plan referred to these housing types as “missing middle housing,” as they span the options between detached houses and large apartment buildings. However, the term “Missing Middle” suggests a gap in housing stock; the city’s housing inventory does include examples of the forms included in the term. This gap is not only a City issue, but also is an issue facing the region, state, and country as a whole. Duplex and attached single-family residential homes comprise about nine percent of the city’s housing options. These housing types could be appropriate in the Neighborhood Residential or Multiple Family Residential areas, when consistent with surrounding development.

- **Multiple-Family Housing.** The city envisions multiple-family housing to include attached single-family dwelling units, senior housing, or apartment complexes at an approximate density of eight to 12 dwelling units per acre, depending upon the type and design of the project. There are several apartment complexes in the city but limited areas in which to build housing at this density. However, there may be opportunities to include such housing within a mixed-use development. Any new development would include a traffic analysis, an assessment of available utilities, and an environmental impact study. Currently, there are no new planned multiple family housing areas within the City.
- **Mixed Use Housing.** Development that includes residential and non-residential uses (typically office, retail, and restaurant uses) is considered a “mixed use development.” Uses in these developments may be side-by-side (“horizontal mixed use”) or residential uses may be above non-residential uses (“vertical mixed use”). The latter is the type of housing that has been developed in several instances through the FB Flex Business Overlay District along with the Gerald mixed use development in the Brooklands. Allowing uses to mix within the city’s existing commercial corridors can improve walkability, offer additional housing types, provide flexibility for redevelopment, and support economic development. Allowing for the mixing of uses in a compact building form is efficient development and provides options for the redevelopment and enhancement of old shopping centers.

Housing Plan

This plan continues the vision of the 2018 Master Plan by supporting and maintaining the diverse housing types that exist today. One of the city’s greatest strengths is its appeal for residents young and old. The City of Rochester Hills offers kids and older adults many opportunities to stay physically and socially active. It’s important to recognize, however, the growing number of older adults in the community. SEMCOG projects a 21.5% increase in households with seniors aged 65+ between 2020 and 2050; additionally, the number of households with children is expected to dip from 32% in 2020 to 29% by 2050. a variety of strategies to ensure older residents can stay in the community will be needed. To continue being an **age-friendly community**, these include:

- **Supporting Homeowners of All Ages**
 - **Resource/Neighborhood Hubs:** Creating a city/neighborhood resource hub that connects older adults with vetted local contractors for home repairs, potentially offering guidance on navigating permits and finding reliable help.

- Tool Lending Programs: Building a toolkit can be expensive for new homeowners; older homeowners may have more tools than they're able to use. A tool lending library within neighborhood areas or the city as a whole can be a good way to promote sharing.
- Partnerships for Minor Repairs: Collaborating with local volunteer groups or organizations that could assist with minor home repairs for seniors who may have difficulty with these tasks.
- Providing maintenance services through the City such as mows and plows, etc.
- **Neighborhood Preservation.** This plan recognizes that the preservation of existing neighborhoods and the way of life they provide is key to preserving the character of Rochester Hills, even as the city sees the mixing of uses and new development. Through its Capital Improvement Plan, the City strives to be proactive with new infrastructure and large capital expenditures. However, private streets and neighborhood infrastructure may also need upgrades/repairs. As is mentioned in the preservation and sustainability section, homeowners associations may need support with making needed repairs to aging detention ponds, local streets, and sidewalks. Education for HOA's will help promote environmental stewardship in regards to tree removals and general open space maintenance and best practices.

In other areas of the city that don't have an HOA, such as many of those in the Avondale planning neighborhood, tend to include a higher concentration of older homes than elsewhere in the city. In these areas, the city should encourage the on-going maintenance of these neighborhoods that keeps home values stable as well as preserves the country-like atmosphere that makes them distinctive. A framework for this area should address maintaining existing housing stock, upgrading infrastructure where upgrades are desired, and providing for redevelopment that does not out-scale existing homes.

Some neighborhoods, particularly in the Brooklands area, have lot sizes that do not necessarily match those required by the zoning ordinance. This could be an area of study - to assess whether those lot sizes might be worth folding into the Zoning Ordinance in the R-4 district.

- **Promote Visitability.** As the population continues to age, demand for new homes that are safe and provide barrier-free access will continue to increase. Preservation, is a term coined for design strategies such as zero-step entries and wide passages that are intended to ensure homes are adaptable to meet the needs of all residents – and their visitors. Incentives or standards to make new homes visitable – and resources to help homeowners make existing homes visitable – may be needed. One example of encouraging age-friendly design comes from the City of Sarasota, FL, who [created an incentive program](#) that addresses important points of access to entries, bathrooms, kitchens, and other elements of homes. Additional strategies could include demonstration projects and educational workshops that address low-cost, high-impact projects.
- **Encourage Universal Design.** While many people are aware of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and laws around access in public spaces, not as many may be

aware that these laws primarily address the bare minimum for access. Universal design involves designing products and built spaces so that they can be used by the widest range of people possible. As noted above, educational campaigns and workshops can help raise awareness of the ways in which housing, and non-residential public spaces, can better support residents.

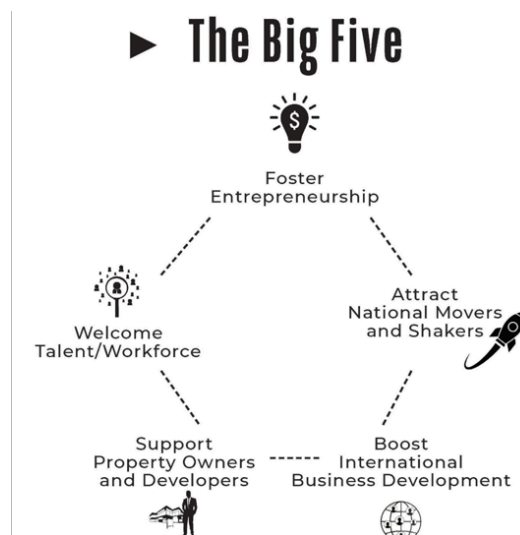
- **Support housing in mixed use areas.** Particularly for infill development and commercial corridor redevelopment, housing at a density consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods can be a good way to offer housing variety in a walkable setting where there may be goods, services, and public amenities within a half-mile walking distance (about a 10-minute walk).

Economic Development

A strong economy means more than just jobs—it means opportunity, innovation, and resilience. This section highlights strategies to attract businesses, support entrepreneurs, and keep the local economy vibrant. Rochester Hills is well-established as a top location for business and innovation. With a combination of leading industries, top-tier talent, resources in higher education, and a strong tax base, the City's economic infrastructure is resilient and well-positioned for future growth and innovation. This economic prosperity is reinforced by the city's commitment to long-term planning and quality development. A delicate balance between the needs of industry and the city's residential character ensures a high quality of life for residents. This Master Plan seeks to guide future development in a manner that maintains this balance, supporting growth and investment in high value sectors of the economy, while ensuring that new development is compatible with the City's character and high community standards.

[In 2021, the City adopted an economic development strategy to guide sustainable growth and attract and retain new businesses, talent, and investment.](#) The document lays out the “Big 5” strategies that should be pursued by the City: Foster entrepreneurship, welcome talent/workforce, support property owners and developers, boost international development, and attract national movers and shakers.

Serving as a companion to the City's Economic Development Strategy, the Master Plan highlights strategies for integrating economic development considerations into the planning and development process, emphasizing the importance of business development, regional partnerships, and the City's competitive advantages, with thoughtful consideration of the built environment.



Why Economic Development Matters

The local economy is shaped by the people, buildings, and businesses that make up the City, and a strategic approach to economic development helps to ensure the prosperity of all. Business attraction and retention efforts support job opportunities for residents and strengthen the local tax base to fund public services, infrastructure, and educational opportunities. Meanwhile, community development efforts through placemaking and public space enhancements, strengthen the city's sense of place and attract and retain visitors and residents.

Community Input

While this economic development strategy is largely guided by market research, data, and trends, equally important are the findings gathered from community development efforts.

Beyond statistics, conversations, surveys, and other qualitative research helped better understand the decisions and values that guide investments in the city.

Several key themes and important findings relevant to economic development were uncovered during the public input process.

With quality schools, access to parks and open space, safe neighborhoods, and a vibrant and diverse local economy, Rochester Hills offers a high quality of life that is a draw for residents and businesses alike. The city's broad range of commercial goods and services, particularly restaurants and retail, were emphasized during several conversations with the community from different stakeholder perspectives. While business owners recognized the value that quality-of-life amenities offer their employees, these sentiments were echoed by residents, who highlighted how access to safe and welcoming commercial destinations and public spaces contribute to their overall satisfaction with the City. Nearly two-thirds (62%) of survey respondents answered that the quality of life in Rochester Hills has improved since they moved to Rochester Hills.

"People take pride in their homes and neighborhoods. Great shopping and excellent schools. Safe, friendly environment. Many parks, close to downtown Rochester, which offers family focused fun seasonal events for all generations."

"I am lucky that both of my children have recently bought houses in Rochester Hills. It was important for them to provide the same neighborhood for their children that they experienced growing up."

Rochester Hills' location is a key advantage for many who choose to locate in the City.

For residents and businesses alike, Rochester Hills offers convenient access to major highways and regional job centers. While residents prefer the location due to its quiet residential setting and proximity to big-city amenities, discussions with businesses during the Mayor's Business Council and small group workshops highlighted the importance of transportation access, supply-chain networks, and the city's strong talent pipeline as locational advantages.

"Rochester Hills, MI is a great place to invest and grow a business. It provides a great environment with efficient infrastructures, convenient accessibility to all automotive key players, and a very business-friendly local administration." Xavier Ovize, CEO AdduXi, Founder of French Corne (2021 Economic Development Strategy)

While the range of goods and services is viewed as a key advantage, enhancements to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure are needed to make it easier to visit destinations within the City. Although respondents to the survey and in-person engagement opportunities offered positive feedback with the range of goods and services in the City, many comments noted that traffic is a problem and there are limited alternatives to driving. Beyond enhancements to connectivity, more compact development and the mixing of uses will make it easier to conveniently access shops, dining, and entertainment. The recent investment and revitalization of the Brooklands neighborhood was frequently recognized by participants as a model for future pedestrian-friendly development elsewhere in the City.

“While there are many trails and sidewalks around the city, you still really need to use a car. Retail and especially groceries are typically out of range for walking, and the sidewalks don’t always cover the whole route.”

Unique experiences and specialty goods and services are desired and will help strengthen Rochester Hills’ sense of place and identity. During the public input process, many participants noted the abundance of national brands and franchises in Rochester Hills and expressed a desire for more “mom-and-pop” offerings and eclectic shopping and dining experiences. While participants highlighted the value of the City’s quality schools, parks, and medical facilities, they also emphasized the importance of cultivating more distinct and authentic ‘Rochester Hills’ experiences.

“I would love to see more of this stuff that’s been getting pushed out of downtown Rochester like independent art stores and karate dojos and other businesses that don’t make a ton of money but give people a sense of community.”

Economic Development Goals and Objectives

What do we want?

- Thriving local businesses
- Employed workforce
- Convenient selection of goods and services
- Competitive marketplace
- Diverse tax base and resilient economy

Why?

- To provide high-wage jobs for residents
- To provide entry-level jobs for younger residents
- To offer access to local goods and services for residents

How will we do it?

- Support entrepreneurship and business growth for a balanced economy.
- Offer incentives and flexible zoning to upgrade commercial and industrial sites.
- Promote a mix of commercial, office, and industrial uses to foster collaboration and workforce appeal.
- Focus infill commercial development in nodes, not strips, for better land use and accessibility
- Strengthen Brooklands as a key retail hub through infill and revitalization
- Attract office and corporate headquarters to M-59 for visibility and economic impact

Market Study Overview

In addition to the findings from community input, the City conducted a market study to understand trends in development relevant to this planning effort. A summary of the market study results can be found [HERE](#).

The market study includes four key economic development opportunities for Rochester Hills.

1. Market Penetration.
2. Synergy.
3. Niches and Clusters.
4. Mixed-Use Development.

While housing trends are discussed in greater detail in the housing section of this plan ([LINK](#)), the market study provided key insights on commercial, office, and industrial markets.

Commercial: The Rochester Hills resident demand is sufficient to fill vacant spaces and support additional commercial space. There is potential for 485,000 square feet of retail goods and related services space. This includes an additional 50,000 square feet of food and beverage related businesses.

Office: Even with remote work becoming more common, Rochester Hills has a growing demand for office space to accommodate its expanding population and service needs. The growth in demand indicates that about 300,000 square feet of space will be marketable in the next ten years – both in home based or outside the home. The increase in demand can be used to fill vacant spaces or for new structures. The increases in demand are sufficient to potentially create about 100,000 square feet of new non-home-located office spaces in the foreseeable future.

Industrial: The flex-space market in Rochester Hills is currently the most robust of industrial-related development. Often used for industrial, warehousing, and office activities, this market is anticipated to remain strong, with demand for smaller structures (25,000 - 40,000 square feet) in demand for the next five to ten years.

Economic Development Strategies

Design Standards

In zoning, building form often has a greater impact on neighborhood compatibility than the types of land uses that may be permitted within a district. Building elements such as height, setbacks, orientation, and design shape the way that a building fits into the surrounding context and interacts with the public realm. While high-intensity and auto-oriented uses often require separation due to traffic, noise, and pedestrian safety, uses of lower-intensity are typically complementary and more compatible with each other. Mixed use, small-format retail, office, entertainment, personal service, dining facilities, lodging and multiple-family residential can be situated harmoniously within the same district when unified by design standards that promote thoughtful design, building placement and scale.

In accordance with the 2018 Master Plan, recent zoning changes in the Brooklands District included the implementation of a new form-based code to thoughtfully regulate the design and placement of new developments in a manner consistent with the surrounding area. The zoning changes have helped to support the evolution of the District by promoting a mix of complementary uses, while preserving the Brooklands' unique identity.

Similarly, the Flex Business Overlay District was also updated in 2022-2023 reduce building intensity by reducing building height and increasing setbacks. This continues to encourage mixed-used development in appropriate areas. The overlay district allows applicants to opt between applying the conventional zoning regulations from the base zoning district or using a form-based code that is only applicable in the overlay. Unlike the base district, the overlay allows for a broader range of uses including mixed-use development. As a part of Master Plan implementation, the City may wish to consider whether this zoning treatment is appropriate in other areas designated as future “Mixed-Use.”

While a full form-based code may not be suitable for all parts of the City, the use of commercial design standards is a potential strategy to achieve high-quality, durable construction and ensure that new development is complementary to the surrounding environment. By crafting these regulations to be flexible and adaptable, the City can establish a consistent baseline for design quality without constraining the creative and functional needs of future development.

Encourage mixed-use and infill development

Findings from the market study and public input indicated a need for additional mixed-use and infill development in appropriate locations. While a measured approach to new development is important, concentrations of complimentary mixes of land uses will enhance walkability and make it easier for residents to access the goods and services that they need. Mixed-use development, when appropriately designed, serves as a strategic approach to providing new housing options without disrupting the character of established single-family neighborhoods.

Infill development describes development within vacant and underutilized parcels in already-developed areas, commonly seen as an alternative to “greenfield” development, or the proliferation of sprawl. Infill can include building on empty lots, redeveloping existing buildings or parking lots, and repurposing obsolete land uses, while benefiting from the sustainable reuse of existing roads, utilities, and infrastructure. In addition, by concentrating shops and entertainment closer to where people already live and work, infill helps to reduce car dependency and increase walkability. Many of the older shopping centers in Rochester Hills are ideal locations for infill development.

In Rochester Hills, new infill and mixed-use development should only take place in locations where it will be of minimal disruption to the surrounding neighborhoods and suburban character. While traffic is a frequent complaint from the community, it’s important to keep in mind that regional traffic will continue to increase until more widely available and utilized transportation options are available. Therefore, new development/redevelopment should focus on connectivity and mobility for those transportation options currently available within the City - providing more walkability and access from neighborhoods and to other nearby amenities to contribute to a more livable and well-connected environment. The new Future Land Use map (LINK) indicates areas where mixed-use is proposed to strategically expand along key corridors and in locations with potential for infill development.

Recent investments in the Brooklands neighborhood serve as a frequently cited example of this pattern of development that residents appreciate and want to see elsewhere. New infill and a

greater mixing of uses have helped make the Auburn Road corridor a more vibrant, walkable destination with amenities for residents living within the larger Brooklands neighborhood. Ongoing efforts to focus on redevelopment and infill opportunities within this corridor will help strengthen its unique identity, spur new investment, and promote growth that is consistent with the needs of the surrounding neighborhood.

Brownfield Redevelopment

Brownfield redevelopment strategies seek to safely reuse previously developed sites that require environmental remediation. Often, this includes former industrial, commercial, or institutional properties, such as factories, gas stations, and warehouses, that have become challenging to redevelop because of environmental concerns and contamination. Redeveloping these sites is important because it helps to eliminate “eyesores”, expand development opportunities, make use of existing infrastructure, and improve public health and safety, while creating alternatives to the development of undeveloped land and open space or “greenfield” sites.

In Michigan, the redevelopment of brownfields is supported through Act 381 of 1996, known as the Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act. This law allows local governments to establish Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities and use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to provide reimbursements for eligible environmental and redevelopment costs. Rochester Hills has a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority that was established in 2002 to promote revitalization within the City. Beyond the TIF, the City’s Brownfield efforts have helped the City leverage additional resources to promote the safe remediation and redevelopment of these properties.

In the fall of 2023, the City was awarded a transformational [\\$75 million Restoration and Remediation grant](#) from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) to help with the assessment, monitoring and remediation of brownfield properties in the City. The reimbursement grant is available to any property within the City that has contamination through 2031. With almost 700 acres of historically contaminated land from former landfills, the City is offering subgrants to land owners and parties with an interest in purchasing or developing properties to help incentivize and encourage the redevelopment of local brownfields, providing additional support for contaminated sites to overcome these complexities. A number of sites have begun assessments to determine what steps need to be taken to improve the properties and to allow for their development. Madison Park, the former Veterans and Cardinal Landfills, consist of nearly one hundred acres at the northeast corner of M-59 and Adams Road. The site has been approved for an office and retail development per a consent judgment (court order) in 1981. Because of changes in the market since, the City will be considering an amended consent judgment as part of the remediation efforts associated with this site.

A number of other sites have been approved for assessments in the eastern part of the City between Hamlin and Avon and between Dequindre and John R. This area has a concentration of landfills and was inventoried in 2010 in the [Environmental Concerns Inventory for the Rochester Hills Landfill Planning Area](#) and has the most land area available for potential future development. Development in these areas offer a significant opportunity for the City to increase

economic investment for industrial/tech and office uses. That investment, along with grant funds and other strategic funding may make such redevelopment feasible.

While the City recognizes the need for additional housing, brownfield sites are often difficult to restore to levels of contamination safe for residential uses and are most amenable to commercial and industrial redevelopment opportunities. But there are exceptions. The Legacy of Rochester Hills overcame the hurdles and developed over 300 luxury apartments on the former Christensen Dump. A brownfield plan was approved for this property which allowed for the over \$13 million dollars in remediation costs to be recouped over a period of twenty-four years through a TIF capture. This project was a win for the city as it substantially improved the environmental conditions of the area and brought a previously fallow property back into productive use. The City continues to support the redevelopment of its contaminated properties for the best use of the property as feasible and compatible with the surrounding area. (INSERT PICTURE OF LEGACY HERE)

Placemaking and Community Identity

Effective economic development requires a multi-faceted approach. While support for business and industry is paramount to ensuring a consistent tax base, jobs, and investment flow, equally important is long-term planning and policies that shape place and community identity. Beyond the traditional economic drivers, enhancing the physical character of the City through placemaking, public art, and investments in public space help to foster civic pride and strengthen the overall economy.

Placemaking is a collaborative process that enhances public spaces by building upon existing assets to strengthen identity, character and connection to place. These efforts often include discretionary investments by the public and private sector, such as public art, landscaping, amenities, and design features that create memorable experiences and reflect local culture. While placemaking can take many forms, it should always be implemented in a manner that strengthens, rather than disrupts, the surrounding character of nearby development.

Recognizing the importance of placemaking and public space enhancements, the City adopted the Gateways and Streetscapes Master Plan in 2023 (LINK). This plan includes strategic guidance for gateway signage that highlights key entries into the city and streetscape design elements that define the public realm and enhance the pedestrian experience. In support of this vision, the City also embarked upon a new effort to establish coordinated wayfinding signage in parks and civic spaces to strengthen navigation and overall sense of place.

The City should continue with efforts to implement the Gateways and Streetscapes Master Plan, prioritizing high-impact corridors and key entry points identified in the plan. As discussed earlier in this chapter, design standards will help to ensure that new commercial development offers complementary enhancements to the streetscape. While ordinance changes to support these types of private improvements may be necessary, additional public investments will be contingent on available funding. Identifying potential funding partners, grants, and technical assistance will help reduce the City's financial burden and effectuate faster implementation. Continued coordination with state and regional partners, business owners, and community

stakeholders will help to identify resources and ensure that improvements are consistent with the City's long-term vision.

Supporting the Industrial Base

Export base theory is an economic development concept that focuses on the idea that region's growth is driven primarily by industries that export goods, or "basic industries." By bringing income into the local economy, dollars can be circulated through "non-basic" businesses, such as restaurants, retail, and local services. This cycle is often compared to a "leaky bucket," recognizing that as new income is generated, some of it inevitably "leaks" out through spending on imported goods and non-local services. A strong export base is paramount to continue "filling the bucket."

In Rochester Hills, the industrial base plays a fundamental role in the City's economy. The City boasts many high-performing manufacturing, robotics, automotive, and automation companies that serve national and global markets, making them essential basic industries. These businesses not only generate jobs and attract outside capital, but also help to sustain a local network of supplies, contractors, and service providers. Rochester Hills has also seen strong levels of foreign direct investment, with many international companies choosing to establish North American operations in the City due to its skilled workforce, strategic location, and business-friendly environment.

Nationally, the manufacturing sector is undergoing a transformation driven by increased automation, reshoring of supply chains, and a growing emphasis on advanced technologies like artificial intelligence. Rochester Hills' manufacturing base, highly skilled workforce, and focus on innovation positions the city to benefit from these shifts. This is reflected in the City's consistently low industrial vacancy and absorption rate, a demonstration of the strength and competitiveness of the local industrial market.

The City should continue its partnerships with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and Oakland County Economic Development to support an ongoing business expansion, attraction, and retention effort that includes regular communication with leading industries about their needs for talent and growth. In addition, partnerships between the private sector and Oakland University to strengthen the local talent pipeline should be encouraged.

To support these economic development efforts, the City of Rochester Hills created a Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA) . An LDFA is a public entity established under PA 281 of 1986, as amended by Public Act 57 of 2018. LDFA's are designed to promote economic growth and job creation by helping to facilitate infrastructure improvements and other incentives to support eligible industries. LDFA's may generate revenue in several ways, but primarily rely on Tax Increment Financing (TIF). This involves capturing the incremental change in property taxes resulting from new development within the LDFA district. The Rochester Hills LDFA's boundaries surround key technology parks within the southwest section of the city. In partnership with other local and regional taxing jurisdictions, the LDFA helps to financially support business development and infrastructure projects that attract new businesses such as the reconstruction of Austin, Devondale, Hamlin and Leach Roads. ADD IMAGE OF LDFA BOUNDARIES

Within the LDFA, the properties along Leach Road are ripe for investment. In 2024, the LDFA funded the paving of the road, water main and stormwater improvements, and installation of a sidewalk making this street the next logical area for redevelopment. The street that was once exclusively single family homes has transitioned primarily to non-residential uses including contractors yards, small businesses and offices. Because of the city's low vacancy rates and the challenge to find ample space for businesses to grow within Rochester Hills, the City encourages strategic land assembly to make this road an extension of the types of businesses found on Waterview and Technology Drives, located on either side of Leach.

The LDFA has also supported initiatives that retain businesses in the community and spur job creation such as targeted industry events, talent recruitment events and the RHISE Cup. Overall, the mission of the LDFA is to support the business community that represents the tax increment district and provides a public benefit to the community as a whole. The City's LDFA is set to expire at the end of 2025. Because of the success of the LDFA, the City will be requesting an extension of the LDFA as well as conducting a thorough analysis of the district to determine if amendments to the boundaries are desirable as well as potential future efforts the LDFA could fund.

Support Economic Resiliency in an Aging Population

As Rochester Hills continues to evolve, the aging population presents challenges and opportunities for economic development. According to SEMCOG data, while seniors over 85 only make up 2.5% of the population in Rochester Hills, this segment is expected to double by the year 2050, matching the broader national trend. This shift will influence demand for housing, healthcare, transportation, and supportive goods and services. Planning for this transition will ensure the City is well-positioned to adapt to the changing needs of residents while supporting businesses that serve this growing market.

To remain proactive, the City should encourage development that promotes accessibility. Beyond housing, this means ensuring that business development efforts target industries that cater to older adults, including health care and personal services. In addition, accessibility should remain a priority for new development, public facilities, and right-of-way improvements, providing the resources and infrastructure for seniors to maintain independence and participate in the local economy. By considering the needs of seniors the city will not only improve quality of life outcomes, but also create new job opportunities and strengthen the local economy.

As the City explores policy strategies to accommodate the aging population, they should consider the potential economic benefits of advancing age-friendly housing, amenities, and goods and services. The Future Land Use map considers the appropriate locations for expanding mixed-use opportunities, creating the potential for developments that incorporate housing with age-friendly goods and services that help to relieve the need for auto-dependency. Additional review of zoning for senior services and housing, including adult foster and group care, may be necessary as the city continues to experience the growth of this population segment.

Beyond accommodations for the local senior population, growth in healthcare technology and medical devices is expected as demands for these services continue to increase. The City should support its existing healthcare-related industries, while promoting opportunities to new businesses across the broader supply chain. The city's strategic location, transportation access, highly-skilled workforce, and existing suppliers make it a competitive market for companies in healthcare innovation and well-positioned to serve as a strategic hub for emerging technologies.

Engage Youth in Economic Development

Future generations play a key role in the long-term sustainability of the local economy. To create a future-ready workforce, the City should continue to foster its culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. By connecting young people with local industries and educational opportunities, the City can build upon strategies to retain talent and ensure a steady pipeline of skilled workers. Involving youth in planning and economic development strategies will help to bring a fresh perspective and empowers the next generation to shape the future of their community.

The City actively engages with the youth population to ensure that long-term planning considers the impact that the next generation will have on future demand. The Rochester Hills Youth Council plays a key role in this collaboration, by providing high school students with the opportunity to learn about local government and share their perspectives on issues facing the community. Not only do these discussions help to ensure that planning is aligned with the future needs of the community, they also help foster leadership skills and instill a stronger sense of belonging to those involved.

Transportation and Mobility

Getting people where they need to go should be safe, convenient, and sustainable. Whether by car, bike, or public transit, this section outlines how to connect people, places, and possibilities. The City's transportation system is the network of roads, public transportation, and pedestrian/cycling infrastructure that allows residents to access goods, services, jobs and community facilities. Rochester Hills has a Transportation Master Plan that sets forth a set of specific recommendations for transportation infrastructure projects. This plan supports the goals of that document, and also explores the link between transportation and community health.

Why Transportation and Mobility Matters

Transportation is a key aspect of community health; a system that supports physical activity, such as walking and biking, supports improved health outcomes, and alternatives to private vehicle travel improve air quality, with complementary health benefits. A well-balanced transportation system can provide:

- **Access to Health Resources:** Transportation systems connect residents to medical services, healthy food, and recreational facilities.
- **Active Living Opportunities:** Walkable and bike-friendly infrastructure encourages physical activity, reducing risks of chronic diseases.
- **Air Quality and Public Health:** Reducing car dependency lowers emissions, improving air quality and reducing respiratory issues.
- **Social Connectivity:** Public transportation and pedestrian-friendly areas foster social interaction, improving mental health and reducing isolation.
- **Enhanced Safety:** Well-planned streets reduce traffic accidents, protecting pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

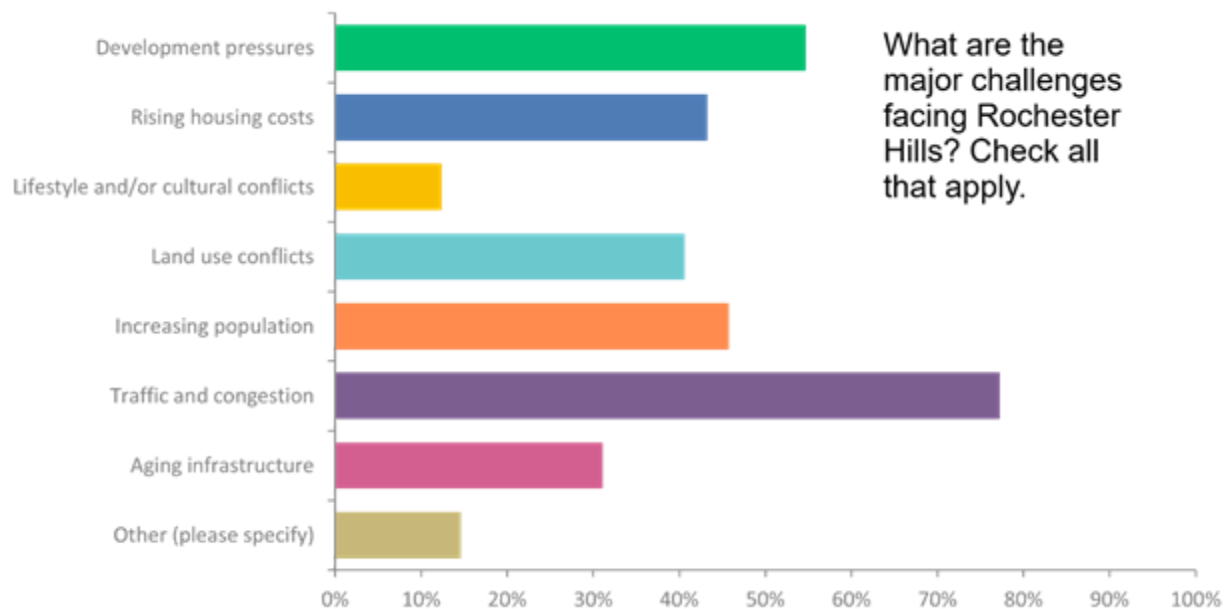
The city's transportation system can also be designed to foster the city's age-friendliness objectives. As of 2023, approximately 9% of city residents had a disability; most of these individuals are not eligible to drive. A system that provides alternatives to driving, including support for walking, biking, transit, and micro-transit, will support the ability of all residents to navigate the community. For older residents, active transportation opportunities can reduce social isolation, promote health, while accessible design that accommodates people with mobility challenges benefits everyone. A complete network of sidewalks and pathways can also support greater independence for children.

Providing alternatives is also one of the most effective tools available to us for fighting traffic congestion, which has one of the most-cited challenges to Rochester Hills by residents for many years, as seen in the chart below, taken from the master plan survey results. Rochester Hills also has several stretches of road that are among the most crash-prone in Southeast Michigan (see the crash layer on the interactive map on this page).

Finally, innovation in the transportation sector is something the city must tap into in the future. Even as it seeks to reduce dependency on cars, support for electric vehicles, increased reliance on deliveries and curbside pickup, and the potential for autonomous vehicles to arrive on our streets should all be considered as Rochester Hills looks to develop its ordinances and capital improvement plans.

Community Input

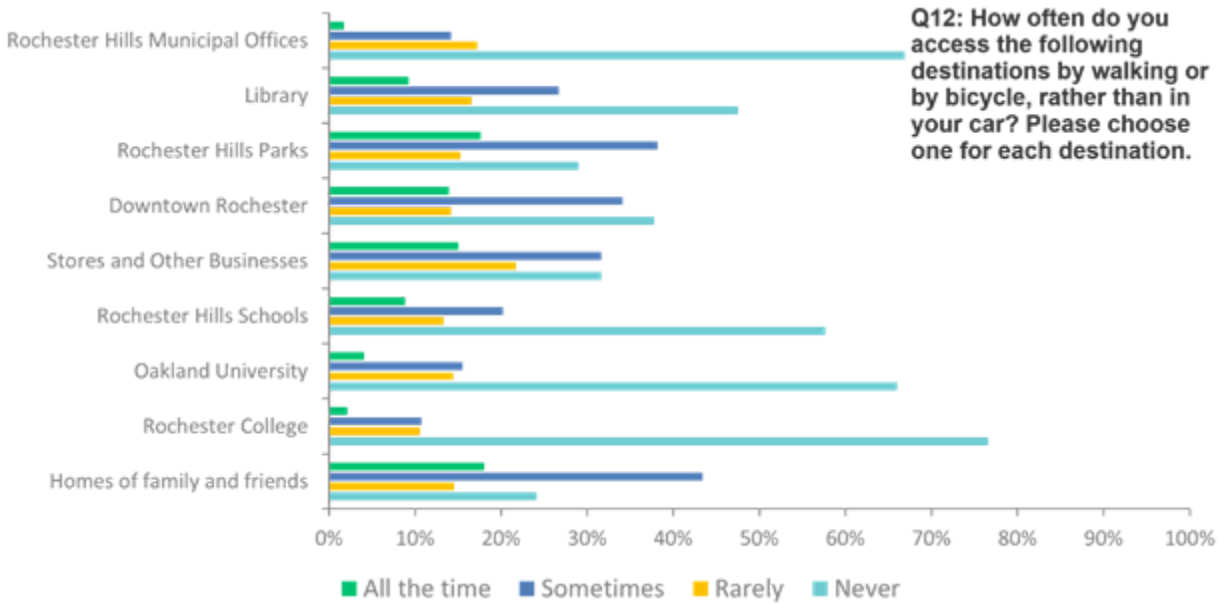
When asked what would be the first thing they would change if they were in charge of



Rochester Hills for a day, survey takers frequently highlighted traffic issues, specifically emphasizing the following:

- Reduce traffic congestion
- Improve road conditions
- Enforce speed limits
- Better traffic management (ex: install smart traffic lights)

Additional input also highlighted a desire for walkability, access to parks and open spaces, and connectivity between neighborhoods. As shown below, people do currently take advantage of the city's existing non-motorized transportation infrastructure.



Transportation and Mobility Goals and Objectives

The transportation goals of this plan are intended to be complementary to the Transportation Master Plan.

What do we want?

- An efficient and safe multi-modal transportation network

Why?

- To improve traffic safety
- To reduce traffic congestion by offering non-motorized options for local travel
- To appeal to residents and businesses looking for a community with a variety of transportation options
- To provide transportation choices that improve independence for residents of all ages and abilities
- To improve community health by encouraging non-motorized travel

Where? Throughout the city

Potential obstacles/related considerations?

- Current land use pattern dictates motorized travel
- Current road design supports motorized travel

- High volume of crashes city-wide.

Transportation and Mobility Strategies

Transportation and mobility strategies are integral to other land use policies and contribute to the success of housing, economic development, and community amenities. They also influence and are influenced by preservation and sustainability. At a high level, strategies include:

- Promote the use of accepted traffic calming and access management techniques that make all travel safe and efficient.
- Provide a safe, efficient non-motorized pathway system that provides links to various land uses throughout the city that gives residents choices about their modes of travel.
- Promote public education about roadway planning and decision making to help residents and property owners understand the short- and long-term goals of transportation projects.
- Require transportation infrastructure decisions that support the land use recommendations of the Master Land Use Plan.
- Explore innovative traffic designs and flexible engineering standards to improve the safety and efficiency of travel for motorized and non-motorized travel.
- Explore opportunities for alternative transportation methods for those who don't have access to a car.
- Monitor and plan for future trends in transportation in terms of autonomous/connected vehicles.

Rochester Hills adopted its most recent Transportation Master Plan in 2021. This is a 10-15 year plan for improvements to the city's transportation system, including capital improvement

Rochester Hills Transportation Master Plan, 2021

Vision Statement	Goals
<i>The transportation system of Rochester Hills will be a reliable network that provides travel options for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The transportation network will emphasize safe and efficient travel.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for a safer transportation system by continuing to implement access management techniques and proven safety countermeasures. • Ease strategic areas of traffic congestion through a multi-pronged approach. • Enhance and maintain existing multi-modal facilities and create new connections where safety and access are priorities. • Prepare for advanced technologies, such as connected and autonomous vehicles and developing smart corridors. • Maintain current infrastructure, including roads and non-motorized pathways. • Explore public transportation options along select major corridors.

recommendations for specific road segments. The plan identifies opportunities to better accommodate bicycles, create new connections for pedestrians, and integrate transit into the city's transportation system. Safety and congestion were also examined in detail, with action items to address both.

The Transportation Master Plan included this map of recommended improvements, each of which is explained in detail in the plan. Gateways and Streetscapes Master Plan.

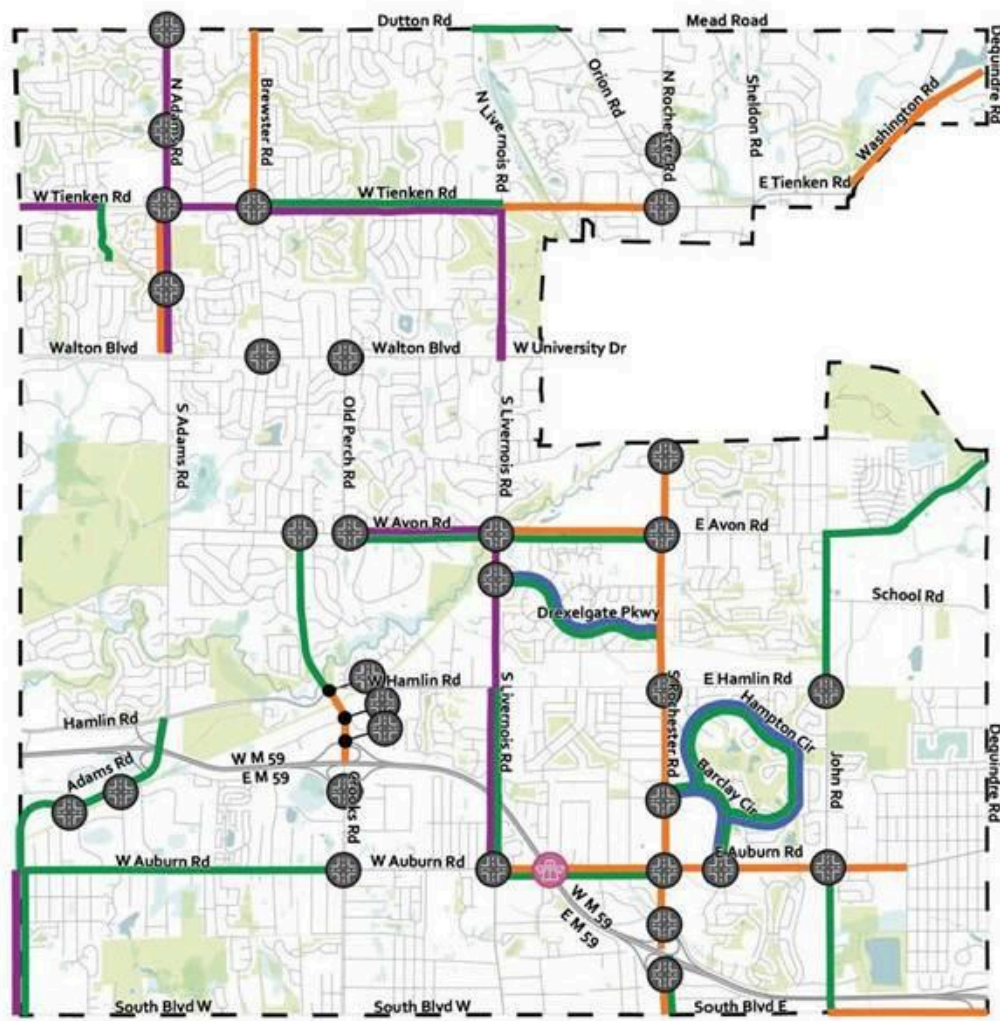


Figure 5: CORRIDOR AND INTERSECTION RECOMMENDATIONS



Rochester also adopted a new Gateways and Streetscapes Master Plan in 2023. The Streetscapes Master Plan included in this document built on the Transportation Master Plan and the city's 2018 Master Plan to develop comprehensive street design standards for the city. While

this plan was less concerned with the movement of traffic, its framework for street design will be a key factor in future road projects, and the recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure support the city's vision of becoming a community that provides safety for all road users.



Pathways Plan

Rochester Hills has an extensive network of 8-foot shared use pathways running primarily along its major thoroughfares. This system does not have a number of gaps, which have been identified and mapped by the city. The City plans to ultimately add an additional 27 miles of pathways to complete this system. These additions will provide greater opportunity and convenience for all residents, but will particularly support the participation of Rochester Community Schools and Avondale Schools in the Safe Routes to School program.

Preservation and Sustainability

The City of Rochester Hills has natural resources and cultural heritage worth protecting. Here, we focus on strategies to preserve what makes the community unique and special while embracing sustainable practices for the generations ahead. Integrating sustainability as a core principle of the Master Plan will ensure the City of Rochester Hills remains livable, resilient, and economically strong for future generations. Integrating sustainability into the Master Plan as one of the main “filters” positions the City to address critical challenges such as infrastructure resilience, environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and community well-being in a more meaningful way. By bringing sustainability to the forefront, the 2025 Master Plan serves as a roadmap that balances development with resource conservation, enhances quality of life, and positions the City as a leader in responsible planning.

Rochester Hills is known for being “innovative by nature,” which is clear through the City’s emphasis on maintaining its natural resources, preserving cultural and historical assets, and remaining a great place for people to live, work, and raise a family. This section of the Master Plan focuses on describing the City’s goals and objectives of preservation and sustainability community wide. The recommendations ensure that the City will continue to be a leader in innovation and preservation and sustainability.

Why Preservation and Sustainability Matters

A sustainable community meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It strives to balance environmental health, economic growth, and social well-being as all being equally important for community success. As the City continues to evolve, the City’s long-range plans, in all areas, should support current and future residents and businesses, the natural environment and a healthy social environment. By integrating sustainability into the master plan, the City can:

- Protect natural resources like clean air, water, and green spaces.
- Build strong infrastructure that is efficient, can withstand the changing environment, and can meet future demands.
- Support businesses and jobs that provide long-term economic stability.
- Foster a high quality of life throughout the city, ensuring safe neighborhoods, good transportation options, and healthy lifestyles.

Community Input

Throughout the Master Plan Update community input process, residents, business leaders, and other key stakeholders were able to share their feedback in a variety of ways as fully described in the **Community Engagement** section.

Preservation and sustainability were common topics that were mentioned as a top priority by participants throughout the process. In the Staff Visioning survey, open space and preservation alongside financial stability were seen as strengths for the City. Staff saw opportunities for the City to continue to be a leader in the preservation of open space but also recognized that it is a

difficult situation to balance preservation against development or redevelopment pressures for expanded housing options or nonresidential development.

The Community Quality of Life survey asked which environmental issue was the most pressing in Rochester Hills. Over 60% of participants shared that the loss of tree coverage was their main concern regarding environmental issues within the City. In addition, nearly half of respondents shared that the loss of open space was a key issue that the City should address in the future. In each of the small group workshops and key stakeholder meetings, preservation of open space and fiscal stability were common themes found within participants feedback and was identified as a topic that should be prioritized in the Master Plan. One respondent stated, **“Green space and open space are becoming the most valuable commodities for a community.”** This sentiment was a consistent theme found throughout the community engagement process. Based on the community input and feedback throughout the Master Plan process, the 2025 Master Plan focuses on preserving the City’s existing open spaces, historical sites, and remaining a fiscally responsible community for present and future Rochester Hills residents.

Preservation and Sustainability Goals and Objectives

What do we want?

- A city that is naturally beautiful and ecologically healthy
- A city that shares its evolving story with the community and preserves its history for future generations
- A sustainable, energy-efficient community

Why?

- To care for the legacy we leave to future generations
- To tell the story of the community with built and natural environment
- Mitigate the long-term environmental changes and make a community more resilient

How will we do it?

- Use innovative tools to protect wetlands, woodlands, and water resources.
- Implement low-impact design and stormwater management
- Preserve and promote the city's history through key structures and sites.
- Minimize development impacts on historic properties and encourage their reuse.
- Maintain and update historic sites inventory and map.
- Increase awareness and investment in historic preservation.
- Provide zoning flexibility and support for maintaining historic resources.
- Share preservation assistance options with property owners and buyers.
- Create a citywide Sustainability Plan

Preservation and Sustainability Strategies

Natural Features

The City has a long history of protecting natural resources and prioritizing the preservation and restoration of wetlands and woodlands within the City, especially where development impacts natural features. There are several boards and commissions established by the City that actively promote environmental protection and preservation. The City is known for being one of the first communities to adopt wetland and woodland ordinances, providing regulations to minimize impacts to these natural features. The City has a natural features setback regulation, requiring 25 feet of natural area adjacent to water features to prevent intrusion or harm to these features. A steep slope ordinance was also created for these same reasons.

The City has been recognized as a Tree City USA from the Arbor Day Foundation for over 35 years. Because of the numerous programs and resources the City dedicates towards tree preservation, Rochester Hills has also received the Tree City USA Growth Award, which honors communities that demonstrate higher levels of tree care and community engagement during the calendar year. Initiatives that support the natural resources in the community include:

- [Free Street Tree Program](#)
- [Community Canopy Program](#)
- [Phragmites Treatment Program](#)
- [Plant Native. Rochester Hills!](#)
- [Outdoor Engagement Programs](#)

The City is primarily part of the Clinton River Watershed, which includes 760 square miles and covers 71 communities in five counties. [The Clinton River Watershed Council \(CRWC\)](#) is headquartered in Rochester Hills and is located at the Avon Nature Study Area, which is also home to City Hall. With convenient access to the Clinton River, the CRWC is dedicated to protecting, enhancing, and celebrating the Clinton River and its watershed. As the landlord to the CRWC, Rochester Hills should continue to work with CRWC to evaluate the current location and building and look at options to help this growing organization meet its future needs and the ability to accomplish their important mission.

The City has been a leader in obtaining green space for permanent protection of quality open space for the community. Over 138 acres of properties with prioritized natural features have been acquired by the City as part of a Green Space millage since 2005. The Green Space Advisory Board (GSAB) was established for the purpose of developing strategies and making recommendations regarding the expenditure of millage funds to:

- Permanently preserve natural green spaces, wildlife habitats and scenic views
- Protect woodlands, wetlands, rivers and streams
- Expand the Clinton River Greenway and other trail corridors

In addition to acquiring land, as the next phase of protecting our natural resources, Rochester Hills voters approved a ballot proposal in 2013 to revise the permissible use of tax revenues derived from the Green Space Millage to be used to fund the protection, care and maintenance of, and to improve pedestrian accessibility to and within, green spaces and natural features owned, acquired or controlled by the City. A long term management plan was developed for a [Natural Features Stewardship Program](#) in late 2015.

The Master Plan Update recognizes the City's current efforts regarding sustainability and recommends that the City continues to fund, promote and expand these efforts. The City, in partnership with ASTI Environmental, updated its [Natural Features Inventory](#) in 2024. The inventory builds on the 2005 natural features inventory data and sought to understand the current status of the natural features within Rochester Hills and provide insight as to whether ordinances such as the City's natural features ordinances were working. The results of the inventory indicated that despite development over time, the City retained much of its wooded areas and wetlands. The inventory was then incorporated into an award winning, web-based interactive storymap called [Our Environmental Story](#), which provides a wealth of information about the various types and benefits of natural features that are found in the City.

The Natural Feature Inventory demonstrates the City's commitment to preserving and protecting the city's natural features that help define the identity of Rochester Hills. By utilizing the updated natural features inventory the City is better equipped to understand any potential impacts that future developments may have on the existing natural features, the quality of those natural features, and how those natural features relate to the larger environmental system within the City. The natural feature inventory will also aid the City's Green Space Advisory Board, in identifying potential areas of land that the City could look to purchase and preserve as open space. The preservation of natural features, as reiterated through the Master Plan's public input sessions, are not only key resources for proper environmental stewardship but also offer residents an opportunity to connect with nature. The City will continue its current efforts to protect and preserve those natural areas identified as a part of the Natural Features Inventory, while seeking out new and innovative strategies to keep Rochester Hills as a leader in natural resource preservation and protection.

ADD NATURAL FEATURE MAP

Infrastructure Management

Managing infrastructure and planning for the future go hand-in-hand. Roads, stormwater management, and pathways and sidewalks were consistently mentioned as forms of infrastructure that participants in the community engagement process would like to see the City continue to make improvements. The City of Rochester Hills offers residents and business owners access to quality infrastructure and actively seeks out new methods and opportunities to improve infrastructure throughout the City. To learn more about roads, pathways, and traffic management in the Master Plan, please visit the **Transportation** section of the Plan. In addition, the City's [Capital Improvement Plan](#) (CIP), is a multi-year planning instrument used to identify needs and financing sources for public infrastructure improvements. The purpose of a CIP is to facilitate the orderly planning of infrastructure improvements, to preserve and protect the City's existing infrastructure system, and to provide for the acquisition or scheduled replacement of equipment in order to ensure the efficient delivery of services to the city.

Stormwater runoff is rain or snowmelt from a site that is not absorbed into the ground. This runoff comes from the impervious or hard surfaces such as roofs, driveways, streets and parking areas. It is captured through storm drains and pipes, creeks and basins, where it is released over time to mimic the release prior to development. Stormwater management has

increasingly become a topic of concern for many neighborhoods that have aging stormwater systems that may or may not have been maintained properly.

Homeowner Association (HOA) representatives and other residents shared during the planning process that the way stormwater is managed in the City should be reviewed. Currently most HOA's are in charge of the long term maintenance of stormwater infrastructure within subdivisions, including the stormwater ponds and overall collection system. Data from the Great Lakes CAP Team (formerly known as GLISA) demonstrates that precipitation levels and annual average temperature have been steadily increasing over the years. Per the Great Lakes CAP Team, Southeast Michigan has a 21% increase in the total amount of precipitation from 1953 to 2023. In addition, Southeast Michigan has seen its annual average temperature increase by 2.9 degrees from 1953 to 2023. These steady increases in precipitation and temperature overtime show that future infrastructure planning in Rochester Hills and the region should account for these changes and trends as more frequent and intense storm events can be anticipated. There are currently seven projects identified in the City's CIP exclusively for improved stormwater management.

The City of Rochester Hills recognizes its role in ensuring that all residents and businesses have access to quality infrastructure, which includes stormwater management. The City will seek new opportunities to invest in improved stormwater management and understand the best course of action within the City's neighborhoods.

Historic Preservation

The City of Rochester Hills has a rich heritage dating back to the early 1800's. In 1978, the former Avon Township established a study committee that evaluated and eventually recommended areas of the township to be designated as historic districts. Upon adoption of the Historic Preservation Ordinance in 1979, several areas were officially designated Historic Districts and a Historic Districts Commission was appointed to guide the preservation and protection of resources within these districts. The City has two main historic districts, Winkler Mill and Stoney Creek, with a third noncontiguous Historic District which comprises a number of independent historic sites throughout the City. The established historic districts serve as a way for the City to preserve its over 200 year history for future generations and enables residents to build a relationship with the place they call home. When a community invests in historic preservation and establishes clear guidelines on how to protect these sites, that community is better suited for a stronger sense of community for current and future residents.

Historic preservation was a topic routinely mentioned by participants in the community engagement process and is a key topic for the Master Plan. One resident shared, **"We can promote business investment in the existing business corridors by providing incentives for redevelopment without jeopardizing the undeveloped and historical portions of the city."** The participant shared that there is a way to balance development with the preservation of open space and historic sites. This sentiment was routinely shared when discussing historic preservation within the City and in the years to come.

Key objectives of the Master Plan focus on historic preservation and maintenance of historic properties. The City will continue to update its historic site and district maps to ensure that accurate information is displayed for those hoping to learn more about their property. Currently, the City provides a list of resources for historic site property owners and the City will seek out new resources and continue to provide guidance on how to care for historic properties and will seek out potential new historic sites and designations for sites throughout the City.

- Develop specific design guidelines for each of the contiguous historic districts within the City and assess the need for RH specific overall guidelines that would be more generally applicable to the noncontiguous historic district.
- Ensure historic district commission review is fully integrated into the site plan review/development process for nonresidential historic resources in the city.
- Develop ways to further promote the existence of the historic resources in the City and the rules and regulations that are associated with them
- Work with Oakland County to promote historical assets within the community as a potential tourism opportunity.
- Increase communication with those residents that currently reside within the City's historic districts to proactively develop guidelines, regulations and solutions for modernizing historic buildings in a manner consistent with Department of Interior regulations.
- Review how a sidewalk/pathway system servicing the Stony Creek Historic District can be developed to improve safety while minimizing impacts to the integrity of the district.

ADD HISTORIC DISTRICTS MAP

Community Amenities

Great communities are built on great experiences. From parks and libraries to recreation centers and public spaces, this section celebrates the amenities that bring people together and enriches lives. The City of Rochester Hills is well known for the amenities it offers residents and visitors from the region. Whether it's the great system of parks, excellent schools, or high level of service from first responders and City administration, Rochester Hills is a leader in providing outstanding amenities for its residents and has repeatedly been recognized as one of the best places to live, most recently in 2025 as #1 in Michigan and #9 in America as reported by the U.S. News & World Report. The Master Plan recognizes that the current level of access and opportunities to use the amenities offered to residents will continue to be the standard. The City also recognizes that there is a need to innovate and find new opportunities to invest in community assets to remain a great place to live, work, and raise a family for current residents and be a means to attract future residents. By seeking out new opportunities to invest in community assets, Rochester Hills residents' quality of life will continue to be at a high level. In addition, adequate and well-maintained community assets can improve property values, increase economic and environmental resilience, and serve as a way for residents to connect with one another and enhance social connections amongst themselves. This section of the Master Plan will discuss the goals and objectives associated with community amenities and provide a breakdown of topics where the City will look to innovate and enhance the current level of community amenities.

Why Community Amenities Matter

Planning for the future of what community amenities and city administration will look like in the years to come is an important part of the Master Plan Update process. Community input and feedback on the current community amenities available to residents and receiving input on the types of amenities residents would like to see in the future is important. Rochester Hills is a leader in providing adequate community amenities and services for its residents and values the feedback shared by its residents. Understanding what amenities and services residents would like to have access to allows a community to better understand the type of investments it may need to make in the future to attract new residents, but also ensure that current residents continue to have access to updated and state of the art community spaces.

Community Input

Throughout the Master Plan Update community engagement process residents and key stakeholders shared that the City is a leader in the type and level of community amenities and services the City administration provides its residents. Parks, schools, and the city administration were all viewed favorably by residents, staff, and other stakeholders. Parks and open spaces were routinely listed as amenities that residents view most favorably. In the Community Quality of Life survey, participants were asked to share the three most important qualities they look for in the community. Over 450 individuals responded and shared that schools, access to nature, and city services are the top three qualities they look for in a

community. This preference shared by survey takers demonstrates the importance of community amenities and services for a community and illustrates the importance of planning for a future that emphasizes these aspects of a community. City administration and the high-level of service by City employees were routinely listed as reasons why stakeholders enjoyed living and working in Rochester Hills. When asked to list three things that they like about Rochester Hills, one participant shared that the City has “great leadership, management, and staff.” Quality city services and amenities were consistently listed reasons why people want to live in Rochester Hills, but also areas where the City should continue to be a leader in and look for ways to innovate and address any concerns or issues regarding community amenities. The 2025 Master Plan Update recognizes the variety of ways that Rochester Hills provides its residents with access to great schools, parks, and fantastic service from its employees and recommends that the City continue to prioritize these assets into the foreseeable future.

Community Amenities Goals and Objectives

What do we want?

- Parks and recreation facilities and programming for all residents and visitors
- Adequate and well-maintained infrastructure
- Excellent public services

Why?

- To support socially and physically healthy community
- To plan for and budget resources for infrastructure expenditures
- To provide the high level of service city residents deserve and expect

How will we do it?

- Expand recreational facilities to meet residents’ needs.
- Close gaps in the city’s off-street pathway system.
- Partner with schools, and others to share facilities.
- Engage neighborhoods in planning and supporting local parks.
- Connect schools, sidewalks, and parks to the pathway system.
- Upgrade aging infrastructure with state-of-the-art materials.
- Assess and improve Police and Fire facilities as needed.
- Collaborate with neighboring communities and the County on public services.
- Keep recreation and capital improvement plans current.

Community Amenities Strategies

Recreational Facilities

Parks and open space are key community assets and Rochester Hills has no shortage of recreational opportunities for its residents and visitors from across the region. Recreational facilities and open space provide a variety of benefits for residents and the City itself. When people can connect with nature and one another their quality of life can improve through physical exercise and opportunities to visit with friends and family. Properties parks and open space see real benefits in the property values and ability to attract new residents and enrich the livelihoods of existing residents. The City will look to continue its long history of investing in recreational opportunities and seek out new ways to provide residents and visitors with additional access to connect with nature and one another. During the mayor's State of the City address, it was announced that over the next 5 years the City will invest \$35 million aiming to make Rochester Hills's park system among the best in the country. To learn more about access and connectivity within the City and the Master Plan, check out the **Transportation** section.

Throughout the community engagement process, parks and recreation and open space were consistently listed as reasons why people enjoy living in Rochester Hills. Many participants shared that continuing to invest in parks and open space should remain a top priority for the City to invest in and seek out innovative methods to improve the quality of parks and improve access to the City's parks and open space. The City of Rochester Hills has an excellent parks system that provides residents and visitors a variety of different programs and experiences when visiting the City's parks. The Rochester Avon Recreation Authority (RARA) provides exceptional recreational programming, including sports, fitness classes, and community events that promote active and healthy lifestyles.

The City's Parks and Natural Resource Department recently updated their Master Plan and Strategic Plan in 2023. These plans can be found in the **Related Plans** section.

ADD COMMUNITY FACILITIES MAP (SCHOOLS, PARKS, PUBLIC SAFETY, LIBRARY, ETC.)

Additional Amenities

Rochester Hills boasts a rich array of community facilities that serve residents of all ages and interests. The city's public library is a cornerstone of learning and connection, offering a wide range of resources, programs, and events for families and individuals alike. For adults 50 and over, the Older Persons' Commission (OPC) stands out as a vibrant social and activity center, offering enrichment classes, fitness and aquatic programs, travel opportunities, and supportive services to foster engagement and well-being. Additionally, higher education is well represented in the area, with institutions like Rochester University, Oakland University (OU), and Oakland Community College (OCC) contributing to the intellectual and cultural vitality of the region. Together, these facilities and institutions make Rochester Hills a dynamic and supportive place to live, learn, and grow.

City Administration and Public Services

The City of Rochester Hills prides itself on providing residents and businesses with a high level of service and exceptional public services. In the 2023 Resident Survey, residents shared that they had a high-quality of life and highly rated the level of service in Rochester Hills. Additional details regarding the Resident Survey can be found [here](#). The same sentiments regarding the level of service and access to quality public services were shared during the community engagement process. Many respondents mentioned that the level of safety and access to quality public services were reasons they moved to Rochester Hills. The City will continue to maintain and improve its current level of services available to current and any potential residents. During the recent State of the City address, the Mayor shared the City became debt free, for the first time in City history, in March of 2025, which exemplifies the City's commitment to stability and fiscal responsibility while providing excellent public services for its residents.

Maintaining a high level of safety within the community will continue to be a top priority for the City in the coming years. Currently, Rochester Hills partners with the Oakland County Sheriff's Office, which provides police services for the City. In total there are five fire stations that are strategically placed to cover all parts of the City.

In addition to excellent public safety facilities and services, Rochester Hills is home to two great school districts: Rochester Community Schools and Avondale Schools.

Non Profits and Religious Institutions

Rochester Hills is enriched by a vibrant network of nonprofits and places of worship that play a vital role in community life. Organizations like the Community Foundation of Greater Rochester, Rochester Area Youth Assistance, and the Rochester Regional Chamber of Commerce actively address local needs—from supporting families and youth to fostering economic growth and cultural vitality. Places of worship serve as hubs for fellowship, service, and outreach, often collaborating with the city and local nonprofits on initiatives such as food drives, volunteer programs, and neighborhood events. These partnerships strengthen the City's social fabric, ensuring that residents have access to support, resources, and opportunities to connect. Together, nonprofits, faith communities, and the city work hand-in-hand to create a caring, resilient, and inclusive Rochester Hills.

Collaboration with Neighboring Communities

As the 3rd largest City in Oakland County, and 18th largest in the state,, Rochester Hills plays a key role in the greater Southeast Michigan region. As a City with a great park and school system, it continues to be a desired location for people to live and raise a family. To continue to be a great place to raise a family or start a business, the City will continue to partner with neighboring communities and seek out partnerships that enhance regional services. These partnerships with neighboring communities may include working together to improve

infrastructure, providing additional transportation options and traffic improvements, and attracting new economic development opportunities or looking to redevelopment sites within the City. Rochester Hills has a long history of being a leader within Oakland County and Southeast Michigan and will actively continue to serve as a role model for nearby communities and communities throughout the State of Michigan. For more information, check out the ***regional planning*** section.

Age-Friendly Communities

The City of Rochester Hills is a great community for people of all ages. Additional efforts can improve the livability for its aging residents - and benefit the entire community. Michigan has taken significant steps to become an age-friendly state, making it the first in the Midwest and among the first in the nation to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States in October 2019. This designation is part of a broader initiative, also aligned with the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, to help communities better support residents of all ages—especially as the population ages and the number of adults over 65 is set to outnumber children under 18.

The state's [Age-Friendly Action Plan](#) provides a blueprint for helping adults 50 and older live well and safely in their communities, with a focus on areas such as community and information, respect and social inclusion, social participation, transportation, community and health services, and elder abuse prevention. The plan uses AARP's "Eight Domains of Livability" as a framework—covering outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, and community and health services.

Several Michigan municipalities—including Auburn Hills, East Lansing, Grand Rapids, Jackson, Lansing, Novi, Royal Oak, and Southfield—have joined the Age-Friendly Community network, with many more in the planning stages. These communities are working to implement policies and programs that make neighborhoods more walkable, provide accessible transportation, ensure access to key services, and support affordable, adaptable housing. Using these strategies, framework, and resources available, the City can continue to nurture an environment where people of all ages can thrive and remain engaged for as long as possible.

Implementation

Turning vision into action takes teamwork and strategy. This section details the steps, partnerships, and resources needed to bring every part of the master plan to life. The implementation program is based on the goals and objectives discussed earlier. Some of these goals are carried over from the previous Master Plan. A specific Zoning Plan outlines steps that can be taken toward implementation through amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

The tables that follow assign actions to the goals and objectives, leaving room to establish priority levels for short-term, mid-term, and long-term items as the next step following adoption of this plan. This chapter should be reviewed periodically and at least annually to assess progress and adequately budget for specific strategies. Following plan adoption, the first action step should be to determine the “lead,” a board, commission, group, or individual who is responsible for specific project initiation and coordination.

Zoning Plan

The Zoning Ordinance is one of the primary tools for implementing the Master Plan. Many of the land use recommendations, goals and objectives found in this plan can be aided by amendments to the city’s Zoning Ordinance. Amendments can range from minor changes to text all the way to the creation of new districts, which will be needed for the new Residential 5 land use category.

Future Land Use Designation	Intended Zoning District
Open Space Residential	RE Residential Estate, R-1 One Family Residential
Suburban Residential	R-2, R-3, and R-4 One Family Residential
Neighborhood Residential	Mixed Residential, R-3 and R-4 One Family Residential
Multiple Family	RM-1 Multiple Family Residential
Mixed Use	Community Business District (predominantly)

	Note: This land use designation reflects the mix of zoning and uses in these areas
Regional Commercial	Highway Business District
Hybrid Industrial	Industrial District
Light Industrial/R & D	Employment Center District
Public Recreation/Open Space	Varies Note: This land use designation aligns with the location of existing parks and public open space. This designation is primarily located in areas currently zoned for single-family residential.
Conservation Open Space	Varies Note: This land use designation aligns with the location of existing conservation areas.
Institutional/Campus	Special Purpose District

Implementation

The best plans are those that are implemented in a consistent, incremental, and logical manner. The implementation matrix that follows is designed to show how the goals of the Master Plan are fulfilled by the action strategies. All boards, commissions, and authorities are encouraged to read through all of the strategies to understand how they all work together to create a better community to live, work, and play.