

# Master Plan 2040

Adopted September 12, 2024

Amended on September 11, 2025  
to incorporate the Montrose Community Housing Study

**RESOLUTION NO.**  
**PLANNING BOARD RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION OF THE MASTER PLAN**  
**ON SEPTEMBER 12, 2024**

At a regular meeting of the Planning Board of the City of Montrose, County of Genesee, State of Michigan, held at the City of Montrose Offices Building, 139 S. Saginaw Street, Montrose, Michigan, on the 12<sup>th</sup>, day of September, 2024 at 7:00 o'clock p.m.,

**PRESENT MEMBERS:** Ashley Putnam, Todd Baryo, Warren Edwards, Connor Pangle

**ABSENT MEMBERS:** Anthony Brown, Ray Foust, Paul Wixson

The following resolution was **moved** by Edwards and **seconded** Baryo by to adopt the following:

**WHEREAS**, The City of Montrose has established a Planning Board under the Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended; and,

**WHEREAS**, The Montrose Planning Board is required by Section 31 of said Act to prepare and adopt a master plan as a guide for the physical development of the city; and,

**WHEREAS**, The City of Montrose Planning Board, with the assistance of a specially appointed Master Plan Steering Committee, oversaw a planning process that included significant public input through a variety of engagement methods, including workshops, surveys, and public meetings; and,

**WHEREAS**, The proposed master plan was presented to the public at a hearing held on September 12, 2024, before the Planning Board, with notice of the hearing being provided in accordance with Section 43 of said Act; and,

**WHEREAS**, The City of Montrose Planning Board has determined that the plan is appropriate for the future development of the city;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, The content of this document, together with all maps attached to and contained herein, with the revisions as noted during this meeting, is hereby adopted by the Planning Board as the City of Montrose Master Plan on this 12<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2024

**RESOLUTION NO.**

**AYES:** Todd Baryo, Warren Edwards, Connor Pangle, Ashley Putnam

**NAYS:** None

**RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED**

Christina M. Rush  
Christina M. Rush, City Clerk

STATE OF MICHIGAN )

Ss: )

COUNTY OF GENESEE )

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified and Clerk for the City of Montrose, Genesee County, Michigan, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the City of Montrose, at a regular meeting of the City of Montrose Council on the 12<sup>th</sup>, day of September, 2024.

Christina M. Rush  
Christina M. Rush, City Clerk

**CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION OF CONCURRENCE  
CITY OF MONTROSE MASTER PLAN AS ADOPTED BY THE CITY PLANNING  
COMMISSION**

At a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Montrose, County of Genesee, State of Michigan, held at the City of Montrose Offices Building, 139 S. Saginaw Street, Montrose, Michigan, on the 24<sup>TH</sup> Day of September, 2024, at 7:00 o'clock p.m.,

**PRESENT MEMBERS:** Mayor Colleen Brown, Robert Arnold, Andrea Martin and Todd Pangle

**ABSENT MEMBERS:** Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Richard, Ryan Heslop and Aaron Burch

The following Resolution was **moved** by council member Todd Pangle and **seconded** by Andrea Martin to adopt the following:

**WHEREAS**, The City of Montrose has established a Planning Commission under the Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended; and,

**WHEREAS**, The Montrose Planning Commission is required by Section 31 of said Act to prepare and adopt a master plan as a guide for the physical development of the city; and,

**WHEREAS**, The City of Montrose Planning Commission, with the assistance of a specially appointed Master Plan Steering Committee, oversaw a planning process that included significant public input through a variety of engagement methods, including workshops, surveys, and public meetings; and,

**WHEREAS**, The proposed master plan was presented to the public at a hearing held on September 12, 2024, before the Planning Commission, with notice of the hearing being provided in accordance with Section 43 of said Act; and,

**WHEREAS**, The City of Montrose Planning Commission did adopt the City of Montrose Master Plan at their regular meeting held on September 12, 2024; and,

**WHEREAS**, The Montrose City Council supports the recommendations and proposals contained in the adopted Master Plan pertinent to the future development of the city;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, That the Montrose City Council does hereby concur with the action of the Planning Commission by means of the passing of this resolution, hereby adopted on this 24<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2024.

**Resolution No.**

**AYES:** Todd Pangle, Robert Arnold, Andrea Martin, and Mayor Colleen Brown

**NAYS:** None

**RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED**

STATE OF MICHIGAN )

Ss: )

COUNTY OF GENESEE )

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified and Clerk for the City of Montrose, Genesee County, Michigan, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the City of Montrose, at a regular meeting of the City of Montrose Council on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2024.

  
Christina M. Rush, City Clerk



# City of Montrose Master Plan 2040

# Acknowledgments

Adopted September 12, 2024

Prepared By:



City of Montrose  
Genesee County, Michigan  
139 S. Saginaw Street  
Montrose, MI 48457  
[cityofmontrose.us](http://cityofmontrose.us)

Assistance Provided By:

**WADE TRIM**  
555 S. Saginaw Street, Suite 201  
Flint, MI 48502  
[wadetrim.com](http://wadetrim.com)

**CIB COMMUNITY IMAGE BUILDERS**  
PLANNING | MARKETING | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

17195 Silver Parkway #309  
Fenton, MI 48430  
[cibplanning.com](http://cibplanning.com)

## **City Council**

Colleen Brown, Mayor  
Robert Arnold  
Aaron Burch  
Andrea Martin  
Todd Pangle  
Mark Richard  
Ryan Heslop

## **Planning Commission**

Ray Foust, Chair  
Anthony Brown, Vice Chairman  
Josh Sincessin  
Connor Pangle  
Ashley Putnam  
Paul Wixson

## **Master Plan Steering Committee**

Colleen Brown  
Ray Foust  
Connor Pangle  
Deb Gross  
Neil Rankin

## **City Staff**

Neil Rankin, Manager  
Tina Rush, Clerk  
Jennifer Whiting, Treasurer  
Christine Schultz, Secretary

This page is intentionally left blank



# Table of Contents

Adopted September 12, 2024

Amended September 11, 2025 to incorporate the Montrose Community Housing Study

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Authority and Purpose	2
Plan Organization	2
Differences and Relationships between the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance	2
Concurrent Planning Effort: Economic Development and Marketing Strategy	3
Public Engagement	3
<b>2. Community Profile</b>	<b>11</b>
Regional Analysis	12
Population Profile	14
Housing Analysis	17
Economic Analysis	20
Natural Features Assessment	23
Existing Land Use Analysis	25
Community Facilities Assessment	29
Transportation Assessment	32
<b>3. Community Vision</b>	<b>37</b>
Goals and Objectives Defined	38
Natural Environment and Sustainability	38
Housing and Neighborhoods	38
Business and Economic Development	38
Mobility and Connectivity	39
Community Character and Culture	39
Governance and Community Services	40
<b>4. Circulation Plan</b>	<b>41</b>
Why Complete Streets?	42
Circulation Plan	42
Access Management	49
<b>5. Future Land Use and Development Plan</b>	<b>51</b>
Future Land Use by Category	52
Redevelopment Ready Sites	56

<b>6. Downtown Framework Plan</b>	<b>59</b>
Existing Conditions	60
DDA Incentive Programs	60
Strategic Opportunities	61
Strategic Recommendations	62
<b>7. Action Strategy</b>	<b>65</b>
Tenets of Successful Implementation	66
Zoning Plan	67
Implementation Matrix	70

## **Addendum: Montrose Community Housing Study**

# Chapter 1: Introduction



Montrose Depot public gathering space and rental hall

The City of Montrose Master Plan 2040 is intended to guide development in Montrose for the next 15 to 20 years. As such, it has been deliberately designed to be simple, straightforward, and general. It takes into consideration community decisions about existing land use, redevelopment, economic development, zoning, circulation, infrastructure and community facilities. It is intended to be representative of the ideas and attitudes of City elected and appointed officials, staff, and citizenry. An effective Master Plan will, therefore, leave a legacy on both the built and natural environment while promoting a land use pattern that is consistent with community goals.

The City of Montrose is located in mid-Michigan in Genesee County, 22 miles northwest of the City of Flint and 20 miles south of the City of Saginaw. The City of Montrose has been an organized community since the year 1899 when it was incorporated as a village. In 1980, the village became a city. Montrose is home to RetroFoam of Michigan, the Montrose Depot, and the Montrose Historical and Telephone Pioneer Museum. It is also home to the annual Montrose Blueberry Festival, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2021. The Blueberry Festival features varied events and activities, including parades, blueberry pancake breakfast, flea market, car show, races, beer and wine tasting, dances, games and a carnival.



City of Montrose  
**Master Plan 2040**

The intent of this Master Plan is to serve as a guide for the future growth and development of the City of Montrose, which will, in turn, promote the health, safety, welfare, and convenience of the people who live and work in the City. It is both a realistic assessment of current conditions, and an expression of the future goals and vision of the City, defining the form and character it seeks to achieve. The Plan will provide guidance to both the public and the private sectors regarding a range of topics, including future land use and economic and residential growth decisions. Finally, the Plan will be responsive to the changes that occur within the City. The development of land can be dynamic and alter significantly over time. Therefore, the Plan must be flexible to these changes while still advancing the goals and aspirations of the community.

## Authority and Purpose

Article 1, Section 125.3807 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008 gives a summary of the purpose of a master plan:

*The general purpose of a master plan is to guide and accomplish, in the planning jurisdiction and its environs, development that...is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical; considers the character of the planning jurisdiction and its suitability for particular uses, judged in terms of such factors as trends in land and population development; and will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare.*

*Additionally, the master plan should provide a general statement of the community's goals and a comprehensive vision of the future. It should also serve as the statutory basis for the Zoning Ordinance, and as the primary policy guide for local officials considering development proposals, land divisions, capital improvements, and other matters related to land use and development, pursuant to section 203(1) of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Michigan Public Act 110 of 2006.*

Every community's master plan is unique, focusing on important issues and challenges specific to that community. This Master Plan is designed to highlight local issues and to identify solutions to meet local needs.

The planning process is designed to involve the conscious selection of policies relating to growth and development in a community. The Master Plan serves to promote these policies through the following:

1. Provides a general statement of the City's goals and provides a comprehensive view of the community's preferred future.
2. Serves as the primary policy guide for local officials when considering zoning land division, capital improvement projects, and any other matters related to land development. Thus, the Master Plan provides a stable and consistent basis for decision making.
3. Provides the statutory basis for the City's Zoning Ordinance, as required by the City and Village Zoning Act, Public Act 207 of 1921.
4. Helps to coordinate public improvements and private development activities to assure the judicious and efficient expenditure of public funds.
5. Establishes a common, united set of adopted planning policies, goals, objectives, and strategies between City Council and the Planning Commission to guide future development.

## Plan Organization

In order to communicate the most complete and accurate picture of the existing conditions within the City of Montrose, as well as its goals for the future, the Master Plan is divided into seven chapters. The Introduction chapter provides an overview of master planning and the planning process. Chapter 2 contains a community profile which documents existing conditions within the City. The final five chapters contain Montrose's vision and key recommendations for future growth and development. These chapters include:

- Community Vision
- Circulation Plan
- Future Land Use and Development Plan
- Downtown Framework Plan
- Action Strategy

## Differences and Relationships between the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance

Zoning is the basic means for controlling the classification and regulation of land use. It is binding law. The Zoning Ordinance controls land uses based on contemporary conditions. Zoning divides the community into districts, or zones, and imposes different land use controls on each district, specifying the allowed uses of land and buildings, the intensity or density of such uses, and the bulk of buildings on the land.

The Master Plan, on the other hand, is a set of policies, not laws. While the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map regulate current and proposed land use, the Master Plan and its maps and policy statements are intended to guide land use and decision-making over the long term. The Master Plan is the community's "vision", while the Zoning Ordinance governs the pathways to achieving that vision. Michigan law requires that the Zoning Ordinance be based on a Master Plan. Consequently, the Master Plan provides the foundation upon which zoning decisions are ultimately made. With an adopted Master Plan, those zoning decisions consistent with the plan are typically considered valid by the courts.

## Concurrent Planning Effort: Economic Development and Marketing Strategy

Concurrent with the development of this Master Plan, the city prepared an Economic Development and Marketing Strategy. Although separate documents, the Economic Development and Marketing Strategy and this Master Plan work together to achieve the preferred vision for the future of the City of Montrose.

The economic development component of the strategy answers the question of "why invest in Montrose." It expresses an optimistic tone and positive expectations for the future, outlines key economic development actions, and establishes performance measures that are both meaningful and readily updated.

The most successful communities have a clear strategy that describes how they intend to attract investment, build tax base, create jobs, visitors and new residents. The marketing component of the strategy must establish a framework for a coordinated telling of Montrose's unique story.

## Public Engagement

This Master Plan was developed with significant input received from members of the community, achieved through a variety of engagement methods. Several community leaders including members of the elected and appointed bodies of the city contributed toward the development of the plan. Hundreds of citizens and stakeholders provided input during the course of the planning process.

Public engagement methods included a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis Session, public survey, Community Visioning Workshop, Public Open House, and a Public Hearing.

The following is a summary of the five primary engagement methods employed during the development of this Master Plan.

### Economic Development SWOT Session

On April 13, 2023, the City of Montrose convened a committee, consisting of local business owners, the DDA, members of City Council and members of the community to complete a SWOT Analysis as a way of obtaining perceptions of the City's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The intent of the sessions was to gain insight and establish a community identity and understand how the City fits into the larger region. The results of the SWOT Analysis are summarized below.

### Strengths

The largest asset of this community are the people—businesses and residents alike share a high level of pride and loyalty to each other and their community. They feel a deeply rooted bond to this charming small town and the strong social fabric among community members is supported by the six churches in the City as well as the Masons, Knights of Columbus, and the American Legion.

The location is centralized between three large employment centers in Flint, Saginaw and Owosso; all within about a 30 minute commute from Montrose. It is situated along M-57, which is a 105-mile east-west state trunkline highway that connects US-131 to M-15 main. M-57 boasts high traffic counts, which is an asset and opportunity for the City to capitalize upon. Access to I-75 is in close proximity to downtown Montrose. The Huron & Eastern rail lines pass through downtown, which offer local businesses easy access to rail transportation. The downtown has a high degree of walkability with connections to trails, bike paths, and the surrounding Township.

Montrose offers reliable infrastructure, and recent investments have been made in upgrades to the water and sewer utilities. The City maintains a competitive advantage due an excess water capacity; an important component of business attraction. Fiber optics are available in the downtown area managed by Spectrum and CenturyLink. The City enjoys power stability with an upgraded power station. The Department of Public Works and city services are top notch. The Downtown Development Authority is preparing to receive additional funding and they are offering façade grants and improving better incentives for businesses.

The high-quality of the school system and the athletic programming offered throughout the schools attracts residents; the Montrose athletic program is known as a powerhouse throughout the county. Additionally, the schools have a very productive and positive partnership

with the City. Along those same lines, the Jennings Foundation serves as a strong community partner and resource for funding programs and projects within the community. Additionally, the City has a good community library that is utilized by many residents.

The housing stock is affordable and relatively inexpensive when compared with the rest of Genesee County. The City and surrounding area offer many rural spaces, which attracts farmers and others seeking an agrarian lifestyle. Non-motorized water sports are gaining traction along the Flint River and the Barber Park boat launch located in the Township near the downtown area offers an economic opportunity that could be expanded in the future. The City is known for the annual Blueberry Festival which takes place the third full weekend of August and has been going strong for 50 years. Another community anchor and resource that is undermarketed and underutilized is the approximately 2,000 square foot Depot Building owned by the DDA, which is centrally located near downtown and was recently renovated after being moved and restored.

## Weaknesses

Some weaknesses for the City include an overall lack of land for business expansion due to the small size of the City, which is approximately one square mile and surrounded by Montrose Township on all sides. The majority of downtown buildings are vacant and not marketable due to renovation needs from fire damage and long-term storage use. As travelers pass through downtown along M-57, there is little incentive to stop and explore the area. Similarly, there is a lack of incentive for long-term property owners to sell the vacant structures, some of which have been owned for 60+ years and many would not meet building code standards. However, the City is seeking out avenues to address these issues.

The City maintains relatively high tax rates and water rates when compared to the rest of the county. There is very little mixed-use development which translates to a lack of diversity of the tax base downtown. The area's churches are large landowners, with some owning over 18 acres. However, they have signaled they are open to relieving some of their land for affordable housing development, which is also an opportunity for the City. When it comes to housing, it was mentioned that more affordable housing is needed. The existing stock is on the aging and there is insufficient senior housing, which poses a challenge for aging baby boomers.

## Opportunities

Many of the assets listed above also present as opportunities for future economic development. And, with the right perspective, weaknesses are also opportunities for improvement. There are several opportunities for potential growth and redevelopment within the City of Montrose. At a high level, there is opportunity for commercial and retail redevelopment downtown, especially considering the high traffic counts on M-57. Development could occur either through renovation of the two existing buildings with historical significance or through demolition and rebuilding. Focusing on mixed use zoning formats can support/build/complement the surrounding retail establishments. The existing zoning ordinance would need to be reviewed and updated to allow for mixed-use development.

There is an opportunity for additional housing development if the local churches that own large parcels would be willing to sell the property to build workforce and/or senior housing. Additional opportunities for housing development are located on two properties downtown that are currently owned by the Land Bank. They are located at the end of Coke Street behind the apartment complex, and there is a property that may need wetland mitigation on the northeast corner by Forest Creek apartments. At the end of Robinhood Drive, an opportunity exists to develop barndominiums, which have a rustic aesthetic reminiscent of repurposed pole barns converted into living spaces.

Another opportunity would be to explore the possibility of working with the Township to enact a 425 Agreement and expand the City boundaries into what is the existing Township. The area that could be expanded is 80 acres on the southeast side of the City boundary owned by the Township where infrastructure could be expanded to attract development.

The existing 35 acre-industrial park at the end of Grover Street has been purchased by RetroFoam, which has been subdivided into 22 parcels and could be sold off to developers or individual businesses. Water and sewer runs to the property but not through the property. An opportunity for a local development finance authority (L DFA) could be enacted to leverage funding and resources to aid in the development of the park.

The former high school at the northeast corner of Saginaw and Hickory could be transformed into a community park with a pavilion, splash pad and playground. There is a need for youth programming and it could potentially be hosted by this area and the Depot building.

## Threats

The threats or challenges that a community faces are typically defined and shaped by neighboring communities that can, in some instances, be considered competitors for businesses and residents. In Montrose's case, challenges arise with the downtown buildings and lack of light industrial land availability, with the competitive factor being Vienna Township. When considering downtown redevelopment, the frontage rules and setback requirements for M-57 may become a challenge. Plus, there is a lack of new housing that could attract new residents to the community. Like many municipalities, Montrose was affected by the economic downturn of 2008, and the City feels it is only now overcoming that decade of loss. The higher tax rate in the area is also a threat to future economic development.

From an economic demographic perspective, Montrose is experiencing a population decline and a labor participation decrease. On the other side of the coin, the region could benefit from more job opportunities, which could provide the framework to retain new residents and establish a stronger sustainable future for the community by increasing the population of young people and families. Like many communities, community members focused on status-quo mentality and not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) outspoken opposition is a threat/challenge to potential development within the area.

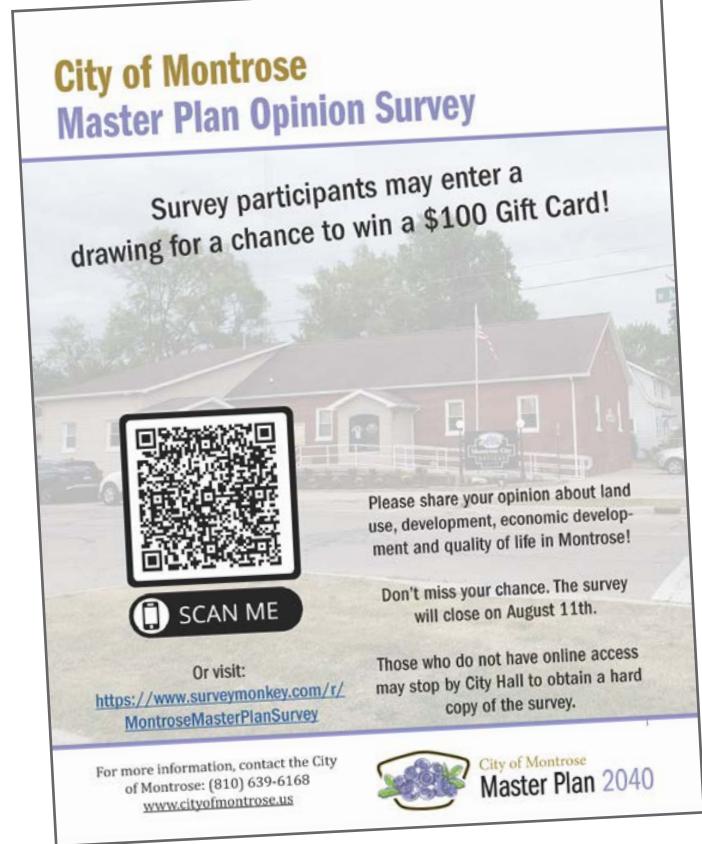
From a broad perspective, another threat to the community are the jobs that are being replaced by technology, and how that could affect future jobs and retail in the area.

## Online Survey

An online survey was made available to the public between June 27 and August 11, 2023. The survey was advertised on the City's website and social media outlets. Hard copies of the survey were also made available at the City offices during business hours. A total of 131 online surveys were completed as of August 17, 2023. Citizen surveys help guide the planning process for the future. The results of the survey are summarized below.

Filters were applied to the survey results to evaluate differences in opinion between various segments of respondents. For the purposes of this analysis, the following four respondent segments were considered:

1. Younger Respondents (29 years or younger – see Question #1 – 10 total)
2. Older Respondents (65 years or older – see Question #1 – 22 total)
3. Montrose Residents (City of Montrose residents only – see Question #3 – 87 total)



The image shows a survey flyer for the City of Montrose Master Plan. The top half features a photograph of a red brick building with a white fence and an American flag. The text "City of Montrose" and "Master Plan Opinion Survey" is displayed in a blue and yellow gradient. Below this, a large text box contains the message: "Survey participants may enter a drawing for a chance to win a \$100 Gift Card!" A QR code is in the center, with a "SCAN ME" button below it. To the right, text encourages sharing opinions about land use, development, and quality of life, and notes the survey closes on August 11th. At the bottom, there's information for those without online access to pick up a hard copy at City Hall, and the City of Montrose Master Plan 2040 logo.

Online survey flyer

4. Business Stakeholders (work, operate a business, commercial, or industrial property in the City of Montrose – see Question #6 – 31 total)

The survey summary narrative, below, identifies instances where differences in the responses across the respondent segments were especially notable.

## Age

The age of the survey respondents was generally older, with people age 30 to 49 representing the largest group of respondents (45 percent), followed by respondents age 50 to 64 (31 percent).

## Household Size

The largest percentage (29 percent) of respondents said there were only two individuals living in their household. Less than 10 percent said they lived alone. 23 percent indicated 3 people in their household and the remaining 39 percent said 4 or more people lived in their household.

## Residence Status

67 percent of respondents were residents of the City of Montrose.

## Residence Tenure

Of the Montrose Residents respondent segment (87 total), the greatest percentage (37 percent) have lived in the City for more than 20 years. An additional 22 percent have lived in the City between 10 and 19 years, while 18 percent have lived in the City between 5 and 9 years. Only 22 percent have lived in the City for less than 5 years. Among the Older Respondents segment, 65 percent have lived in the City for more than 20 years.

## Moving Intention

Of the Montrose Residents respondent segment, 83 percent indicated that they do not intend to move out of the City in the next 5 to 10 years.

## Relation to Community

Respondents were asked to indicate their relationship and/or association with the City. The question allowed for multiple responses. 18 percent of respondents work in the City, 11 percent attend school in the City, 9 percent own or operate a business in the City and less than 1 percent own a commercial or industrial property in the City. 16 percent of respondents indicated "other," many of whom indicated that their children and/or grandchildren attend school in the City.

## Positive Aspects

When asked what the City of Montrose's most positive aspects are, the 5 most common answers were:

1. Small town atmosphere (76 percent)
2. Safe neighborhoods and community (65 percent)
3. Proximity to family or friends (42 percent)
4. Quality of the school district (39 percent)
5. Limited or no congestion (37 percent)

Small town atmosphere was the top choice for all respondent segments except the Younger Respondents, whose top choice was safe neighborhoods and community, followed by small town atmosphere. All respondent segments shared the same top 5 aspects, except for the Business Stakeholders segment, where community spirit or civic mindedness made the top 5 and limited or no congestion fell out of the top 5.

## Negative Aspects

When asked what the City of Montrose's least favorable aspects are, the 5 most common answers were:

1. Lack of dining options (74 percent)
2. Downtown district is not vibrant enough (61 percent)
3. Lack of shopping, retail, and service options (54 percent)
4. Blighted or deteriorating businesses (50 percent)
5. Lack of entertainment options (48 percent)

In general, the various respondent segments were consistent in their responses, with lack of dining options as the top choice for each segment. Lack of youth activities made it into the top 5 for both the Younger Respondents and Older Respondents segments.

## What Would You Change?

Participants were given the option to provide a write-in response about what they'd change about the City of Montrose. The most common topic centered around downtown revitalization. Other commonly addressed topics included lowering taxes, adding more dining options, and undertaking road improvements.

## Convenience Shopping

The majority of participants (46 percent) said they most commonly go to Clio/Vienna Township for their convenience shopping and service needs. The second most popular answer was Montrose (37 percent). All other answer choices were below 8 percent each.

## Comparison Shopping

Most participants (32 percent) said they most commonly go to Clio/Vienna Township for their comparison shopping and service needs. The second most popular answer was the Greater Flint Area (22 percent) followed by Online (20 percent). The remaining options were 10 percent or lower each, including Montrose which received only 5 percent of responses. Among the Montrose Residents segment, the most common answers were Clio/Vienna Township (34 percent) followed by Online (22 percent). Birch Run was a popular write-in answer.

## Dining & Entertainment

The largest number of respondents (37 percent) said they most commonly go to Clio/Vienna Township for their dining and entertainment needs. Another popular answer was the Greater Flint Area (25 percent). There was a larger drop off in popularity for the other answers – each being below 13 percent, including Montrose at 7 percent.

## Commuting

When asked what their primary mode of transportation to work was, 95 percent of respondents said they used their personal vehicle. All remaining answer options represented no more than 2 percent each.

## Transportation Barriers

Respondents were given the option to write-in answers to the question, "What barriers exist that prevent you from using your preferred mode of transportation or a different mode of transportation?" The most common answer, by far, was "none." Other options included a lack of bicycle paths and poor sidewalk conditions, especially in the winter.

## Future Housing Types

Respondents were asked what type of housing should be developed in the City of Montrose in the next 5 to 20 years. The top answer choice by a large margin was smaller single family detached homes at 62 percent. The following were the top 5 answer choices overall:

1. Single family detached homes – small (<1,500 sq ft) (62 percent)
2. Single family detached homes – large (>1,500 sq ft) (42 percent)
3. Single family attached homes (townhouses, condos) (31 percent)
4. Senior housing – independent living (31 percent)
5. Small-scale multi-family (4 units or less) (17 percent)

Smaller single family detached homes was the top answer for all respondent segments. However, there were some differences between the respondent segments. Older Respondents indicated senior housing – independent living at a higher rate (53 percent) in comparison to the overall results. Younger Respondents indicated single family attached homes (townhouses, attached condos) at a higher rate 38 percent in comparison to the overall results.

## Land Use Development Strategies

Participants were given a list of land use development strategies the City could employ over the next 5 to 20 years. They were asked to assign a level of importance to each strategy ranging from not important to high importance. The strategies which were noted by the highest percentage of respondents as being of either moderate or high importance were:

1. Enhance and direct new development to Downtown Montrose (84 percent moderate or high importance)
2. Improve the appearance and quality of existing homes and neighborhoods (50 percent)

3. Improve/expand recreational facilities and programming (46 percent)
4. Preserve natural features (floodplains, wetlands, woodlands, etc.) (42 percent)

All four respondent segments listed enhancing and directing new development to the City's downtown as the most important goal.

## Phrases

Participants were asked what three phases came to mind when thinking of Montrose today. The three most common phrases were Small Town, Safe, and Run-down. Next, participants were asked what three phases came to mind when thinking of Montrose in the future. The three most common phrases were Vibrant, Small, and Friendly.

## Visitor Experience

Respondents were asked how they believe visitors experience the City of Montrose on a scale from very positive to very negative. The most common response was neutral (55 percent). 31 percent said they believe it was some degree of negative and the remaining 14 percent said they believe it was some degree of positive. This skew was consistent among all respondent segments.

## Encouragement

Respondents were prompted to convince someone unfamiliar with Montrose to relocate here. Popular answers followed subjects pertaining to small town atmosphere, safe community, good schools, and friendly people. Among the Montrose Residents segment, another popular topic was good proximity to highways and other towns.

## Economic Development

Participants were asked what effective economic development means to them. They were asked to rank 9 different economic development initiatives from most to least important. The economic development initiatives deemed to be of greatest importance were:

1. Launching new businesses in the city
2. Expanding the growth of existing businesses in the city
3. Attracting businesses to the city

Among the Younger Respondents segment, the most common answer was "creating new jobs in the city."

## Future Planning

Those who took the survey were asked what they would like to see in the City that doesn't currently exist. Popular write-in answers included more dining options, grocery stores, and commercial uses in general.

## Community Visioning Workshop

Montrose hosted a Community Visioning Workshop on September 14, 2023, as part of the Master Plan development process. The meeting was held at the Montrose Depot in the City of Montrose. A summary of the workshop is provided below.

### Community Values

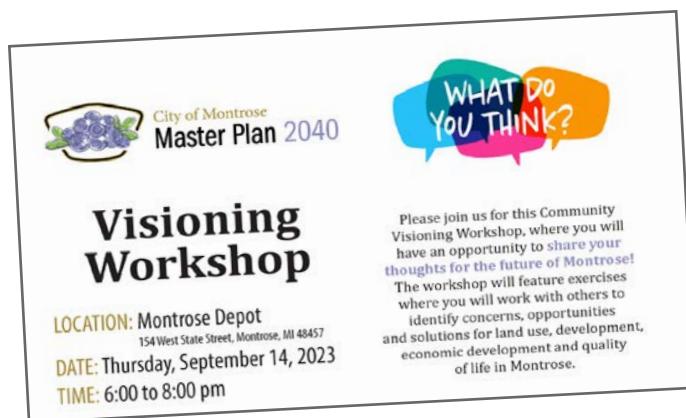
Attendees started the meeting by filling out the first of three exercises. In this exercise, they were asked to individually list a maximum of three assets the City should protect as well as a maximum of three problems to be solved. Thirteen people participated in the exercise.

The most popular assets to protect were parks, followed by road quality, and downtown, specifically, the Montrose Depot. Other answers included police and fire, commercial businesses, and small town feel. The most popular problem to be solved was, by far, employment/business retention. Other answers included blight in downtown, housing affordability, nonmotorized facilities/walkability, and road quality.

### Finding Solutions

Following the first worksheet, attendees were placed into three small groups. Using a large posterboard, they were asked to identify three problems facing the City and identify potential solutions. After they did so, the posterboards from each group were placed for everyone to see. Attendees were given three dot stickers and asked to place one sticker on each solution they thought was best. The most common problems and corresponding solutions were:

Problem	Solution
Downtown appearance	Increase grants to promote business; more greenery
Better communication between city & businesses	People-friendly leaders
More recreation ideas for drawing people downtown	Senior housing plan; improved downtown atmosphere; community activities; better lighting and landscaping



Visioning workshop flyer

### Downtown Planning

Staff gave a presentation on Downtown Development Authority (DDA) strategies. The presentation focused on topics including façade improvement, building improvement, business incentives, streetscaping, and park development.

After the presentation, attendees were given their next exercise. For this exercise, participants were given a list of 12 different improvement strategies for the DDA with corresponding explanations. They were asked to list each strategy on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 – Not Important, 4 – Great Importance). Once they completed that column, they were to identify their top three improvement strategies. The most popular improvement strategies were:

1. Develop Business Retention & Recruitment Program
2. Special Event Space
3. Offering Façade Grants

### Redevelopment Sites

The final exercise involved attendees reconvening into three small groups. Groups were given a map outlining eight redevelopment ready sites within the city limits. Then, the groups identified their top three redevelopment ready sites and outlined challenges, re-use opportunities, recommendations, and implementation steps to be taken.

#### Group 1

1. Site 7 – Northwest Undeveloped Properties
  - Single-family residential
2. Site 8 – End of Oak and Maple Streets
  - Single-family residential
3. Site 2 – End of Coke Street
  - Single-family residential



Visioning Workshop attendees

### Group 2

1. Site 2 – End of Coke Street
  - Condos (residential)
2. Site 7 – Northwest Undeveloped Properties
  - Condos and townhouses (residential)
3. Sites 5 & 6 – Downtown: North & South Sides
  - Indoor farmer's market

### Group 3

1. Site 1 – Vacant Lot Next to Good Shepherd Church
  - Cottage (single-family residential)
2. Site 2 – End of Coke Street
  - Rental (single-family residential)
3. Site 3 – End of Robinhood Drive
  - Traditional subdivision

## Public Open House

The city invited all interested persons to attend a public open house that was held on Thursday, August 8, 2024, from 5pm to 7pm, at the Montrose City Office. The open house provided an opportunity for citizens and stakeholders to review and comment on preliminary recommendations related to future land use, community character, circulation, natural resources, infrastructure, and quality of life.

The open house format did not include a formal presentation. Rather, various displays and exhibits were set up in the City Hall meeting room and participants could view the preliminary recommendations at their leisure, engage with members of the project team, and share their thoughts about the future of the community. Many of the exhibits allowed for participants to submit comments

through sticky-notes, while general comment sheets were made available.

## Public Hearing

A public hearing on the draft Master Plan was held by the City Planning Commission on Thursday, September 12, 2024 at 7pm. The public hearing was noticed in accordance with the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. The public hearing offered a final opportunity for any citizen to provide comments related to the Master Plan. After the public hearing was closed, the Montrose City Planning Commission voted unanimously to adopt the Master Plan.

## Welcome to the City of Montrose Master Plan Open House!

The purpose of this public open house is to present and gather public feedback on the preliminary findings and recommendations of the Montrose Master Plan. Feedback from this open house will be considered and incorporated into the final master plan report that will ultimately be adopted by the Montrose Planning Commission and City Council.

There is no formal presentation. Topic-based "stations" have been set up for you to review preliminary recommendations at your leisure. Please ask questions and verbally share your comments with members of the project team and City officials. Thanks for coming and we look forward to hearing from you!

**What is a Master Plan?**  
Required by state law, a master plan is a community-driven policy document used by community leaders to guide decisions about land use and development. The master plan lays out "where we should go" based on resident priorities and findings drawn from the inventory process. These priorities are the basis for actions that City leaders can pursue through policy and actions. The master plan is designed to be comprehensive, future-oriented, and accessible to the public. Having a master plan in place and following the plan helps local decision-makers keep the long-term success of the community as the top priority as opposed to short-term gains.

There will be an opportunity to provide your feedback at certain stations in this open house. Please take note of these opportunities and follow the instructions to share your thoughts. There are also general comment sheets available to share any comments you have about this project.

### Formal Public Hearing

A formal public hearing has been scheduled for Thursday, September 12, 2024 at 7pm. The public hearing will be at the Montrose City Offices. You are welcome to attend and share any comments related to the Montrose Master Plan during the public hearing.



This page is intentionally left blank

# Chapter 2: Community Profile



Forest Creek Apartments

This chapter provides a detailed profile of the City of Montrose. The evaluation and analysis of socioeconomic data, existing land use, community facilities and other background information was conducted early on in the planning process. The Community Profile answers the question - “where are we today?” - and provides a foundation for the planning recommendations that were outlined in the preceding chapters of this Master Plan.

This chapter includes eight subsections, as follows:

1. Regional Analysis
2. Population Profile
3. Housing Analysis
4. Economic Analysis
5. Natural Features Assessment
6. Existing Land Use Analysis
7. Community Facilities Assessment
8. Transportation Assessment



City of Montrose  
Master Plan 2040

## Regional Analysis

The City of Montrose is located in mid-Michigan in Genesee County, 22 miles northwest of the City of Flint and 20 miles south of the City of Saginaw. The City of Montrose is not an isolated community. Therefore, the Master Plan needs to acknowledge the City's regional context. Through recognition of regional conditions and trends, this Master Plan will be more realistic and reasonable in terms of guiding the future utilization of land resources within the City.

### Regional Influences

The City of Flint is the "core" and largest community within Genesee County and is the seat of County government. Flint and the immediately surrounding urban area provides a strong and broad employment base for residents throughout the County. Flint's urban area also serves as a destination for shopping, entertainment, education and culture. Over the years, this City has been one of the greatest influences upon the overall development of Genesee County, as well as Montrose.

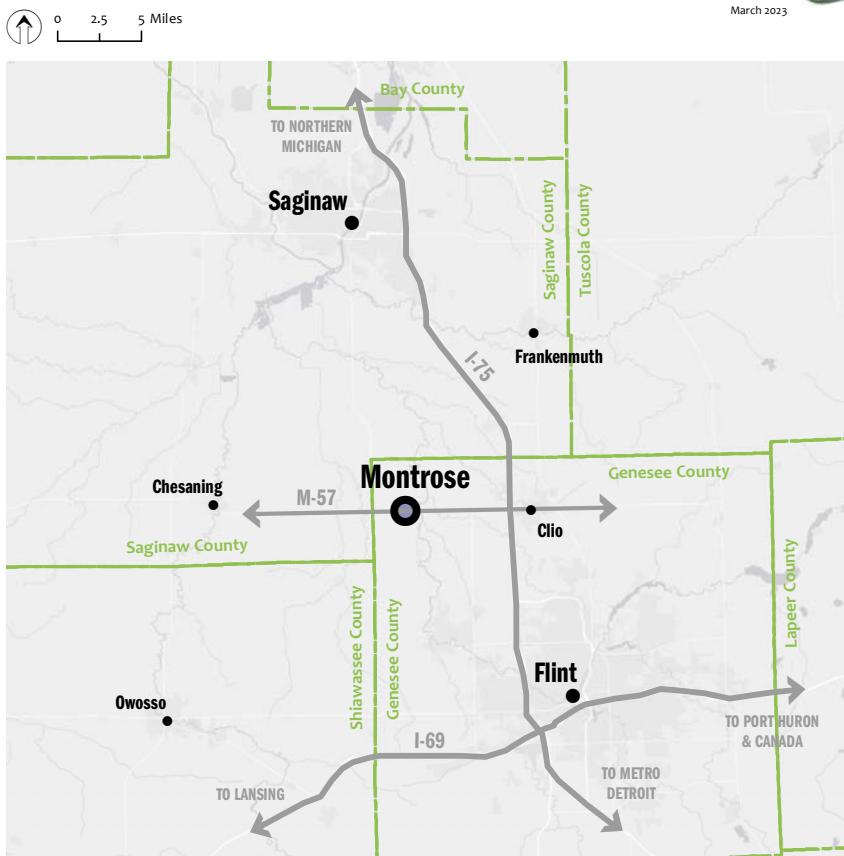
Even though Montrose is within a short distance of larger urban centers such as Flint to the southeast and Saginaw to the north, the City has been able to maintain its small town character. Suburban growth and development extending from these larger areas, however, have begun to factor into growth of the greater Montrose area.

Another major influence upon the Montrose area is Interstate 75, one of the primary north-south transportation arteries in Michigan. In addition to excellent transportation access, this highly trafficked corridor provides Montrose, due to its proximity, with a high level of regional connectivity. This is especially true during summer weekends and holidays, when thousands of vacationers from the urban areas of southern Michigan travel to and from the recreational areas of northern Michigan.

### Relevant Regional Planning Efforts

The adopted plans of the surrounding communities may directly impact the future development of Montrose. Therefore, it is important to recognize such plans and evaluate their importance to the City's future growth and development. An evaluation of relevant regional plans is provided below.

### Map 1: Regional Location

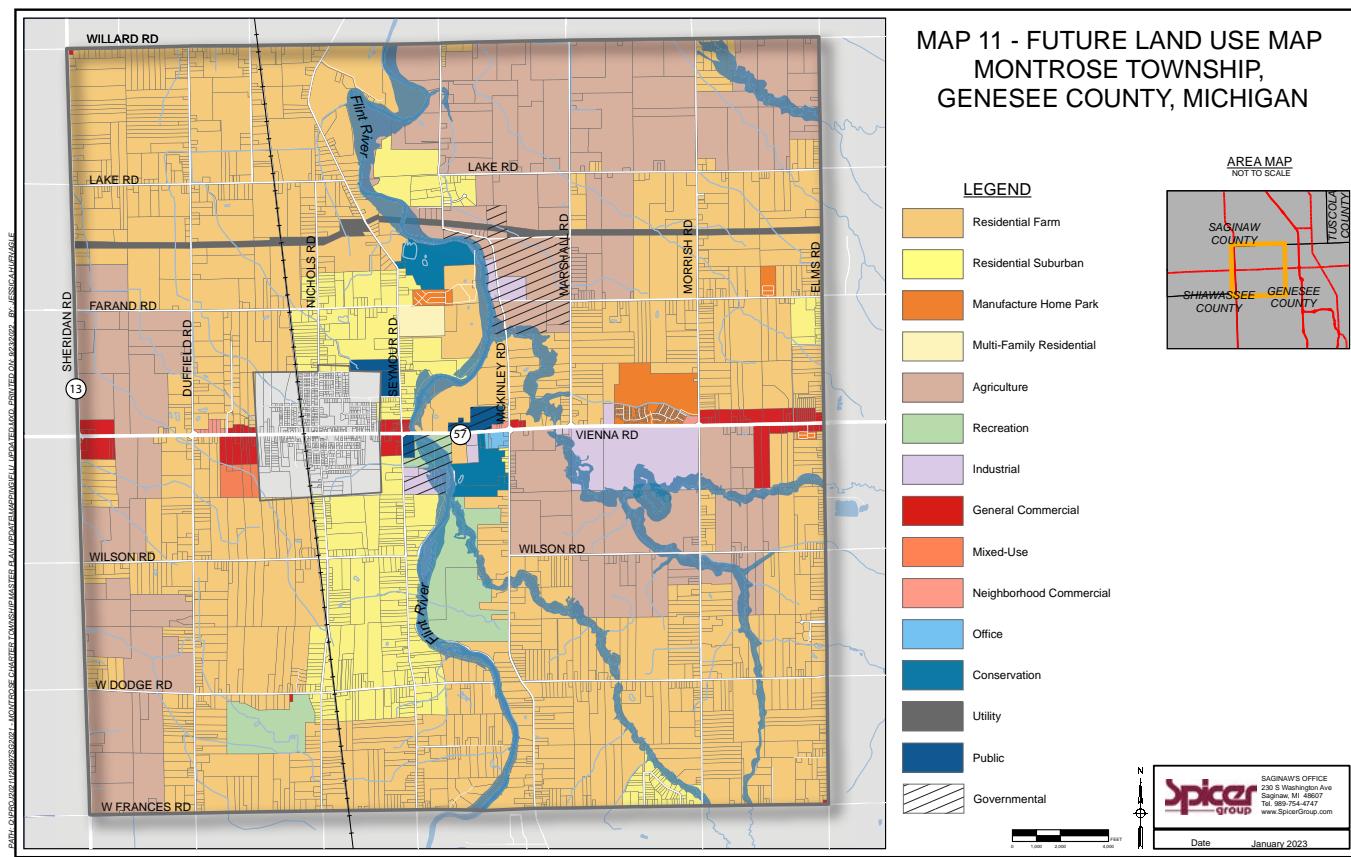


### Montrose Township Master Plan (2023)

Montrose Township surrounds the City of Montrose on all sides. In April 2023, Montrose Township adopted a new Master Plan. The future land use map of the Montrose Township Master Plan prescribes the future land uses within the Township. The Township has planned for General Commercial use along M-57 adjacent to both sides of the City of Montrose. Southeast of the City, a Mixed-Use area is proposed (behind the General Commercial uses fronting M-57). Properties adjacent to the western side of the City (west of the railroad) are generally planned for Residential Farm use. The Residential Farm future land use classification would allow for low density residential growth, continued agricultural use and residential activities of a semi-rural character. Properties adjacent to the eastern side of the City (east of the railroad) are generally planned for Residential Suburban use. The Residential Suburban future land use classification would allow for residential development of a more suburban nature, to be served by public water and sewer facilities.

### Montrose Township Recreation Plan (2019)

In 2019, Montrose Township released their most recent 5-year Recreation Plan. The document is intended to serve



Future Land Use Map from the Montrose Township Master Plan (adopted April, 2023)

as a guide in the planning for future park and recreation opportunities, services, and implementation. This plan lays the foundation to build on activities and services provided by parks and recreation.

The plan talks about several projects and locations relating to the City of Montrose. Some key subjects include a multi-use trail extending along Vienna Road into the City and several potential corridors and trailheads originally laid out by the Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission in their 2007 Regional Trail Plan. The potential locations include an extension of the Trolley Line Trail from Clio, a proposed rail line trail, and a trailhead at the Montrose Depot site within the City.

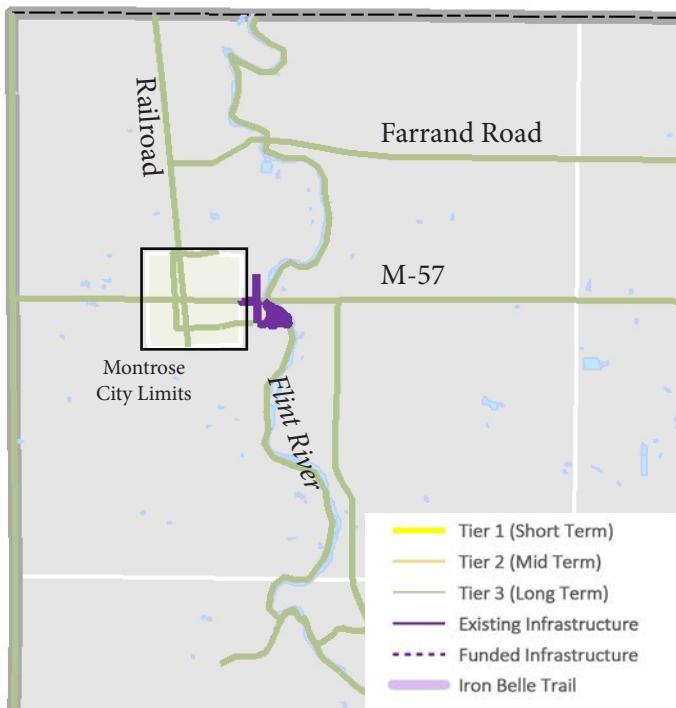
### Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission: Our County, Our Future Plan & Non-Motorized Trails Report (2020)

The Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission (GCMPC) Our County, Our Future Plan is the organization's long-range transportation plan. In addition to vehicle transportation, the Plan covers a multitude of subjects related to the County and communities within it. The plan

focuses on transportation, community development, and the environment.

Relevant to the City of Montrose, the plan shows one development project and several proposed nonmotorized trail routes. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds have been allocated for improvements to Blueberry Park. According to the plan, these funds were programmed for 2019. As of 2023, these improvements have been made.

As part of the Our County, Our Future Plan, several reports were prepared to elaborate on various subjects outside of the main document. The Non-Motorized Trails Report elaborates on the proposed trails for the Montrose area. While the City isn't explicitly mentioned in this report, a Trail Priorities map is provided, showing several routes in the Montrose area to be constructed. All corresponding routes are designated as "Long Term" priority.



Montrose Area excerpt from the Genesee County Trail Priorities Map

## Population Profile

This section documents the population characteristics of the City to identify historical patterns and project future trends. It also examines the City's age and racial distribution, those with disabilities, and other relevant household characteristics. Where appropriate, the data described in this chapter is benchmarked to County and State demographics.

Throughout this chapter, various population, housing and economic data sources are utilized. These include the U.S. Census Bureau's decennial census reports (including the 2020 Census) and the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) estimates (for the 5-year span of 2017-2021). Another key data source is Esri Demographics data. Esri Demographics is a global collection of authoritative demographic data for over 170 countries and regions, supplying context and adding insight to the maps and location-based analyses of organizations worldwide. Notable for this analysis, Esri Demographics offers up-to-date estimates for the year 2022 and forecasts for 2027.

## Population Trends

**Table 1** details population trends for the City, Township, County, and State between 1980 and 2020. During this time period, the City's population has fluctuated, increasing between 1980 and 1990 (6.2 percent), declining between 1990 and 2010 (-8.5 percent), and once again increasing between 2010 and 2020 (5.2 percent). Overall,

the City of Montrose has seen a slight population increase of 37 residents (2.2 percent) between 1980 and 2020.

Between 1980 and 2020, both Montrose Township and Genesee County as a whole declined in population. Genesee County's population declined from 450,449 in 1980 to 406,211 in 2020, a decline of 9.8 percent. In contrast, the State of Michigan grew at a rate of 8.8 percent between 1980 and 2020.

## Population Projections

**Table 2** lists population projections for the City of Montrose and Genesee County that were developed for the GCMPC 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan. For both the City and County, the population over the next 20 years is projected to remain steady - slight decline for the City (-0.9 percent) and slight increase for the County (0.1 percent).

(Note: The figures in **Table 2** are the approved 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan Population Projections. They were produced based on the Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) geography calibrated using 2014 Census population estimates. This accounts for the difference from the actual 2020 population counts for Montrose and Genesee County shown in **Table 1**.)

The City's 2020 population stands at 1,743. Given the GCMPC projections, it is assumed that the City of Montrose's population will remain essentially the same over the next 20 years.

## Population Projections Disclaimer

Providing population projections in Michigan has been difficult over the last 40 years due to several macro-economic forces that have been impacting the State's economy and its residents. These changes include major shifts in the auto industry, reduction in the manufacturing and construction sectors, younger adults desiring to move to growing job markets, often with vibrant urban communities, a nearly decade-long single state recession at the beginning of the aughts, and substantial national demographic shifts from the American Midwest to the South and Southwest.

Traditional population forecasting relies upon extrapolating several demographic statistics related to fertility, mortality, and migration, but standard models do not take into account often intangible macroeconomic forces. These difficult-to-measure external factors have affected Michigan's migration patterns more than several other regions of the country in the past couple of decades with multiple new factors likely affecting Michigan's population for the next 50 years. These factors include ongoing effects of globalization on jobs and trade; changes to workforce related to au-

**Table 1: Population Trends, 1980-2020**

Unit of Government	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	% Change '80-'20
<b>City of Montrose</b>	<b>1,706</b>	<b>1,811</b>	<b>1,619</b>	<b>1,657</b>	<b>1,743</b>	<b>2.2%</b>
Montrose Township	6,164	6,236	6,336	6,224	6,005	-2.6%
Genesee County	450,449	430,459	436,141	425,790	406,211	-9.8%
Michigan	9,262,070	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	10,077,331	8.8%

Source: 1980 - 2020 U.S. Census

**Table 2: Population Projections\*, 2020-2040**

Unit of Government	2020	2025	2035	2040	% Change '20-'40
<b>City of Montrose</b>	<b>1,575</b>	<b>1,569</b>	<b>1,557</b>	<b>1,561</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>
Genesee County	405,553	402,253	402,689	405,931	0.1%

\*Note: Figures are the approved 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Population Projections. They were produced based on the Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) geography calibrated using 2014 Census population estimates. This accounts for the difference from the actual 2020 population counts shown in Table 1.

Source: 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan Socio-Economic Projections Report

tomation and artificial intelligence; impacts of technology; spread of broadband; impacts of climate change; continued changes in the American family; impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on living and working patterns; and changes to U.S. immigration policy, which are not factored into these projections. We expect that some of these external factors will begin to have impacts upon American migration and growth patterns towards the end of this planning cycle, but a more nuanced understanding of these macroeconomic forces is beyond the scope of the types of projections included within this Master Plan.

## Age Distribution

Using Esri data, **Table 3** compares the distribution of citizens by age groups for the City of Montrose, Montrose Township, Genesee County and Michigan in 2010 and 2027. The table divides the City's population age groups to generally correspond with stages of human development. Each stage carries common characteristics that can be generally applied when assessing future needs. For example, adjustments in programs and services (elderly/child care, schools, recreation, etc.) may be prompted by changes in the City's dependent population (generally those persons under 19 and over 65 years of age). The age-life distribution is defined in five categories:

- 0-4 years
- 5-19 years
- 20-44 years
- 45-64 years
- 65 years and Older

The largest age group within the City is the 20 to 44 years age group. In 2010, this group included 32.9 percent of the total population. It is forecasted to fall to 31.8 percent by 2027. This group is commonly considered to be a "family formation age" group; a decrease in this age group may lead to a decrease in the younger children population.

The greatest percentage change is forecasted to occur in the 65 and older age group, from 12.8 percent of the population in 2010 to 18.4 percent of the population in 2027 (5.6 percentage point increase). No other age group is forecasted to increase as a percentage of the total population between 2010 and 2027. The 5 to 19 years age group is forecasted to see the greatest decline, from 23.8 percent of the population in 2010 to 20.2 percent of the population in 2027.

In 2010, the City's median age was 36.1 years. This figure is low in comparison to both the State of Michigan (38.8 years) and Montrose Township (40.7 years). Although the City's median age is comparatively low, it is forecasted to rise from 36.1 years in 2010 to 38.9 years by 2027. Similarly, the median age for both Montrose Township and Michigan is also expected to rise between 2010 and 2027 (see **Figure 1**).

Table 3: Age Distribution, 2010-2027

Age Range	City of Montrose			Montrose Township		
	% in 2010	% in 2027	Change in %, 2010-2027	% in 2010	% in 2027	Change in %, 2010-2027
0 - 4 Years Old	6.2%	5.5%	-0.7%	5.7%	5.1%	-0.6%
5 - 19 Years Old	23.8%	20.2%	-3.6%	21.4%	17.9%	-3.5%
20 - 44 Years Old	32.9%	31.8%	-1.1%	29.2%	28.3%	-0.9%
45 - 64 Years Old	24.1%	24.1%	0.0%	30.0%	26.1%	-3.9%
65 Years and Older	12.8%	18.4%	5.6%	13.7%	22.7%	9.0%
Age Range	Genesee County			Michigan		
	% in 2010	% in 2027	Change in %, 2010-2027	% in 2010	% in 2027	Change in %, 2010-2027
0 - 4 Years Old	6.4%	5.6%	-0.8%	6.0%	5.3%	-0.7%
5 - 19 Years Old	21.5%	18.1%	-3.4%	20.8%	17.7%	-3.1%
20 - 44 Years Old	30.7%	30.1%	-0.6%	31.5%	30.9%	-0.6%
45 - 64 Years Old	27.7%	24.9%	-2.8%	28.0%	24.6%	-3.4%
65 Years and Older	13.7%	21.4%	7.7%	13.7%	21.4%	7.7%

Source: 2010 Census and 2022 ESRI Demographic and Income Profiles

## Race and Ethnicity

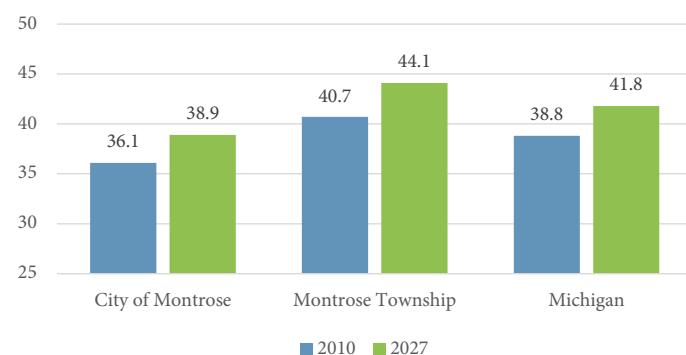
The nation's racial and ethnic distribution is becoming increasingly diverse as minority groups are gaining a greater share of the total population, according to demographic studies and projections. This is the case for the City of Montrose. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 96.8 percent of the City's population was White Alone in 2010. By 2020, this figure had declined to 88.2 percent. Notable increases occurred in the Two or More Races category (from 0.7 percent to 8.0 percent) and the Black Alone category (0.7 percent to 1.8 percent). Persons of Hispanic Origin (Any Race) increased from 2.4 percent to 4.2 percent of the population between 2010 and 2020.

## Households and Average Household Size

**Table 4** highlights the total households in the City of Montrose, Montrose Township, Genesee County and Michigan in 2010 and the forecasted change through 2027. In 2010, Montrose featured 668 total households, which increased to 710 total households by 2020. By 2027, Esri data forecasts that this number will increase to 724 total households. This is a total increase of 56 households or 8.4 percent between 2010 and 2027.

The number of persons per household constitutes household size. Since the 1970's, the nationwide trend has been a decline in household size. This trend has occurred due to fewer children per family, higher divorce rates, and an increasing number of elderly people living alone. Knowing whether the household size is increasing or decreasing

Figure 1, Median Age, 2010-2027



Source: 2010 U.S. Census and 2022 Esri Demographic and Income Profile

helps to identify the community's housing needs. If the household size is decreasing, this means that new, smaller housing units may be required to accommodate for more people to live. In some municipalities, the new housing units are being built to accommodate the demand for housing created by lower household sizes despite an overall decline in populations.

**Table 4** documents average household size in 2010 with forecasts for 2027. Notably for the City of Montrose, the average household size is forecasted to increase slightly from 2.46 in 2010 to 2.47 in 2027. However, the opposite is occurring within Montrose Township, Genesee County and Michigan, whose average household sizes are all forecasted to decline.

**Table 4: Total Households and Average Household Size, 2010-2027**

Unit of Government	2010		2027		Change, 2010-2027	
	Total Households	Avg. HH Size	Total Households	Avg. HH Size	Total Households	Avg. HH Size
<b>City of Montrose</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>2.46</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>2.47</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>0.01</b>
Montrose Township	2,189	2.79	2,136	2.55	-53	-0.24
Genesee County	169,202	2.48	164,552	2.37	-4,650	-0.11
Michigan	3,872,508	2.49	4,067,530	2.42	195,022	-0.07

Source: 2010 U.S. Census and 2022 ESRI Demographic and Income Profiles

## Household Characteristics

This subsection examines households in terms of the relationships among the persons who share a housing unit. **Table 5** examines four different household types based on relationship:

- Married-couple families
- Cohabiting couple household
- Male householder, no spouse/partner present
- Female householder, no spouse/partner present

In 2021, 33.9 percent of Montrose's households were married-couple families. The second largest household type was female householder with no spouse/partner present (33.7 percent). Male household with no spouse/partner present represents 16.8 percent of households. Montrose's household characteristics are unique when compared to Montrose Township, Genesee County and the State of Michigan. Montrose has a much lower percentage of married couple family households and comparatively high percentages of cohabiting couple households and female householder with no spouse/partner present households.

## Housing Analysis

This section details the characteristics of the City of Montrose housing stock by type, occupancy, age, and value characteristics. Where appropriate, the data described in this chapter is benchmarked to Township, County, and State demographics.

### Total Housing Units

In line with Montrose's population growth between 2010 and 2020, the total number of housing units within the City has increased since 2010 (see **Figure 2**). However, the forecasted housing unit growth through 2027 indicates a leveling out of housing units. Between 2022 and 2027, Esri forecasts a net change of only four new housing units within the City.

Figure 2, Total Housing Units, City of Montrose, 2010-2027



Source: 2010 U.S. Census and 2022 Esri Housing Profile

**Table 5: Household Characteristics, 2021\***

Unit of Government	Total Households	% of Total Households					
		Married-Couple Family	Cohabiting Couple Household	Male Householder, no spouse/partner present	Female Householder, no spouse/partner present	Households with one or more people under 18 years	Households with one or more people 65 years and over
<b>City of Montrose</b>	<b>882</b>	<b>33.9%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>16.8%</b>	<b>33.7%</b>	<b>33.2%</b>	<b>26.8%</b>
Montrose Township	2,206	54.3%	9.5%	18.7%	17.5%	27.7%	40.1%
Genesee County	164,905	42.1%	8.2%	18.9%	30.8%	28.5%	31.6%
Michigan	3,976,729	46.8%	6.9%	18.9%	27.3%	28.1%	31.1%

Note: American Community Survey data are estimates and include a margin of error which is often more pronounced for lower populated geographies, such as the City of Montrose.

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 6: Housing Occupancy and Tenure, 2022

Unit of Government	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units				Vacant Housing Units	
		Number	% of Total Units	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied	Number	% of Total Units
<b>City of Montrose</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>94.6%</b>	<b>60.8%</b>	<b>33.7%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>5.4%</b>
Montrose Township	2,304	2,177	94.5%	88.9%	5.6%	127	5.5%
Genesee County	182,113	165,686	91.0%	63.4%	27.6%	16,427	9.0%
Michigan	4,588,989	4,067,530	88.4%	63.1%	25.3%	533,321	11.6%

Source: 2022 ESRI Housing Profiles

## Housing Occupancy and Tenure

Housing occupancy measures the number of occupied housing units and vacant housing units. Tenure identifies whether those occupied units are inhabited by renters or homeowners. Occupancy and tenure data is shown in **Table 6**. As of 2022, nearly 95 percent of Montrose's available housing is occupied, while only 5.4 percent is vacant. Generally, a healthy housing market will feature a vacancy rate of approximately 5% to ensure there is sufficient available housing stock. Genesee County and the State of Michigan have much higher rates of vacancy than the City of Montrose.

The majority of housing units in Montrose (60.8 percent) are occupied by owners as opposed to renters (33.7 percent). Montrose's owner occupancy rate is comparable to Genesee County and the State of Michigan, but is much lower than Montrose Township. This is reflective of a greater diversity of housing stock and rental units within the City in comparison to the Township.

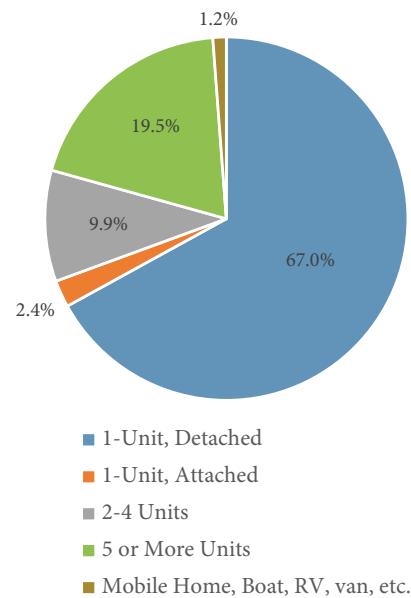
## Housing Units by Type

**Figure 3** illustrates housing units by type for the City of Montrose according to the 2021 American Community Survey. The figure shows a relatively broad mixture of housing unit types, with 1-unit detached structures comprising two-thirds of the City's housing stock. This 1-unit detached structure percentage (67.0) is lower than Montrose Township (90.1 percent), Genesee County (74.4 percent) and Michigan (72.5 percent). The remainder of the City's housing stock is comprised of units in 5 or more unit structures (19.5 percent), units in 2 to 4 unit structures (9.9 percent), 1-unit attached structures (2.4 percent) and mobile home, boat, RV, van, etc. units (1.2 percent).

## Age of Structure

A rule of thumb suggests that the economically useful age of a housing unit is approximately 50 years. Beyond that age, major repairs may be required and modernization may be needed to include amenities that are considered standard for today's lifestyle. When a community's housing

Figure 3, Housing Units by Type, City of Montrose, 2021



Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

stock approaches this age, rehabilitation, demolition, and new construction rates may increase.

According to the 2021 American Community Survey, nearly 45 percent of the housing stock in the City of Montrose was built before 1960. These units are at least 60 years old. Approximately 30 percent of the City's housing stock was built during the 1960's and 70's, while 15 percent was built during the 1980's and 90's. Approximately 10 percent of the City's housing units were constructed in 2000 or later.

## Housing Value

A comparative measure of the housing stock is housing value. Data in **Table 7** compares the estimated 2022 and forecasted 2027 average value of owner-occupied units for the City, Township, County, and State level. In 2022, the average value of owner-occupied housing units in the City of Montrose was \$153,804. This is lower than the Township, County, and State average housing values. However,

Table 7: Average Value of Owner-Occupied Units, 2022-2027			
Unit of Government	2022	2027	% Change, 2022-2027
<b>City of Montrose</b>	<b>\$153,804</b>	<b>\$226,103</b>	<b>47.0%</b>
Montrose Township	\$202,222	\$241,448	19.4%
Genesee County	\$192,165	\$235,450	22.5%
Michigan	\$247,974	\$285,613	15.2%

Source: 2022 ESRI Housing Profiles

Esri forecasts that the City's average value of owner-occupied housing units will increase to \$226,103 by 2027, a rate of 47.0 percent. This is the highest growth rate of those entities compared in the table. This would bring Montrose's housing values closer in line with Genesee County as a whole.

## Housing Affordability

The housing stock in a community should be affordable to its residents. If housing costs are prohibitive, housing needs remain unmet in spite of housing unit availability.

One method to measure housing affordability is to determine monthly housing costs as a percentage of household income. Generally, if a household is paying more than 30% of household income for housing (mortgage or rent, plus utilities), they are considered "cost burdened." For Montrose, monthly owner cost figures are provided by the American Community Survey from 2021.

Based on a sample of housing units with a mortgage, 28.5 percent of owners in Montrose paid more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs. This percentage for Montrose is higher than the nation-wide average of 27.1 percent for the same period. Based on a sample of the City's renter-occupied housing units, 34.3 percent of renters paid more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs. This percentage for Montrose was lower than the nation-wide average of 46.0 percent for the same period.

With 28.5 percent of home owners with a mortgage and 34.3 percent of renters being cost burdened, housing affordability may be a concern within Montrose. This is especially true as home values and rents have risen in recent years due to a competitive housing market, and now most recently by the Covid-19 pandemic-induced run on housing. As noted earlier (**Table 7**), Montrose's average housing value is expected to increase nearly 50 percent over the next five years. This suggests that housing affordability may become a greater concern in the short-term.

## National and Emerging Housing Type Trends

The Great Recession that hit in late 2007 brought a housing market crash whose impacts are still felt today. Recovery from the recession has occurred, and in recent years has even flourished. However, the characteristics of today's housing market is substantially different from a decade ago, driven by various demographic changes occurring within the United States. These changes include racial and ethnic diversification, a growing immigrant population, and an increasing percentage of non-traditional households. However, the growth and evolving housing preferences and needs of the various age generations within the United States has also had a major impact on housing supply and demand.

### Baby Boomers

Once preferring large-lot detached homes, the aging Baby Boomer Generation (born 1946 to 1964) is expanding the nation's senior population and increasing demand for downsized units and housing that caters to the needs of seniors. Despite a preference for many to age in place, a large number of Baby Boomers will be in search of new housing. According to housing market researcher Arthur C. Nelson, when those age 65 and older move, 80% will vacate single-family houses, but only 41% will move back into single-family units; the other 59% will locate in multiple-family units. Often, these units are found in active senior living communities and/or care facilities.

### Milennials

A major player in today's housing market, the Millennial Generation (generally between 26 and 41 years old as of 2022) will account for 75% to 80% of the owner-occupied housing absorbed by people under 65 before 2020. Unique from their parent's living preferences, many within this generation prefer housing in mixed-use urban environments and increasingly view renting as an advantageous option.

## Gen Z

Generation Z (generally 11 to 25 years old in 2022) is the next generation who are entering the housing market. Recent research has shown that Gen Z's have a similar housing preference to Millennials in that they prefer to live in walkable communities with easy access to shopping, schools, recreational areas and entertainment destinations. However, with the increasing ability to work remotely, they have more flexibility in their housing locations and tend to live in more affordable and less-populated areas such as smaller towns and suburbs. Single-family homes (including rentals), townhouses and garden-style apartment communities tend to be in-demand housing types for this generation.

## Opportunity to Capitalize on Emerging Housing Trends

Montrose should work to ensure housing choice for individuals of all lifestyles and ages through the provision of a diversified and affordable housing stock. This strategy could result in the City's ability to retain and attract a greater percentage of younger residents (Millennials and Gen Z), and offer more options for older populations to age in place.

## Economic Analysis

Economic characteristics comprise a major part of census data. Economic characteristics are important because they help determine a community's viability and ability to fuel regional commercial, residential and industrial growth. The economic strength of Montrose is related to the number and type of employment opportunities in the labor

market area as well as the level of educational attainment by its residents.

## Income and Poverty

An important determinant of a community's quality of life is the income of its residents. Median household income (that level of income at which half of all households earn more and half of all households earn less) is a broad measure of relative economic health of a community's populace. At the national level, recessions and inflation have combined to negatively impact the spending power of the dollars households bring home. In a very real sense, a dollar does not purchase as much as it once did.

In 2022, the estimated median household income for the City of Montrose was \$47,586. According to Esri, this value is forecasted to grow to \$53,383 by 2027, a 12.2 percent increase (see **Table 8**). In comparison, the median household incomes for the Township, County and State in 2022 ranged from \$54,000 to \$64,000. The City is forecasted to see the smallest increase between 2022 and 2027.

According to American Community Survey data for 2021, 25.0 percent of persons within the City of Montrose for whom poverty status is determined fall below the poverty level. In comparison, the poverty level for Genesee County as a whole is 16.9 percent, while Montrose Township is 16.2 percent and the State of Michigan is 13.3 percent.

The City's relatively low expected income growth between 2022 and 2027 and relatively high poverty level (in comparison to the Township, County and State) point to the

Table 8: Median Household Income, 2022-2027

Unit of Government	2022	2027	% Change, 2022-2027
<b>City of Montrose</b>	<b>\$47,586</b>	<b>\$53,383</b>	<b>12.2%</b>
Montrose Township	\$61,651	\$74,586	21.0%
Genesee County	\$54,212	\$62,416	15.1%
Michigan	\$63,818	\$75,735	18.7%

Source: 2022 ESRI Demographic and Income Profiles

Table 9: Educational Attainment, 2021

Unit of Government	Population 25 Years and Over	% High School Graduate or Higher	% Bachelor's Degree or Higher
<b>City of Montrose</b>	<b>1,288</b>	<b>84.9%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>
Montrose Township	4,403	86.2%	12.8%
Genesee County	280,008	91.2%	22.2%
Michigan	6,923,132	91.6%	30.6%

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

need for Montrose to engage in various economic development and job creating initiatives.

## Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is an important factor in analyzing the capacity of the local work force and the economic vitality of the community. The educational attainment of the citizens plays a role in determining the types of employment industries that are suitable or necessary.

**Table 9** highlights the educational attainment of the residents of Montrose, Montrose Township, Genesee County and the State of Michigan in 2021 by indicating the percentage of citizens (age 25 and older) that have achieved the educational level of high school graduate (or higher) and those that have obtained their bachelor's degree (or higher).

Montrose has a high school graduate percentage of 84.9 percent, which is comparable to Montrose Township (86.2 percent) but is lower than the County (91.2 percent) and State (91.6 percent). Similarly, Montrose's bachelor's degree holder percentage of 12.9 percent is comparable to the Township (12.8 percent) but is low when compared to the County (22.2 percent) and State (30.6 percent).

## Employment

Employment by occupation and employment by industry are two related, yet individually significant indicators of community welfare. Employment by occupation describes the trades and professions in which Township residents are employed, such as a manager or salesperson. Employment by industry specifies the field in which that manager or sales person is employed. For instance, two sales persons may be present in the "Sales and Office Occupations" category of the employment by occupation table, but may be

Table 10: Employment by Occupation, 2022

Category	Unit of Government			
	City of Montrose	Montrose Township	Genesee County	Michigan
<b>Total Employed</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>2,463</b>	<b>166,043</b>	<b>4,673,732</b>
<b>White Collar</b>	<b>44.6%</b>	<b>51.6%</b>	<b>55.6%</b>	<b>59.3%</b>
Management	5.6%	6.2%	9.0%	10.9%
Business/Financial	5.4%	1.6%	4.1%	5.5%
Computer/Mathematical	1.3%	0.8%	2.3%	3.0%
Architecture/Engineering	0.7%	3.0%	2.2%	3.0%
Life/Physical/Social Sciences	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	0.9%
Community/Social Service	1.5%	2.1%	1.9%	1.9%
Legal	0.9%	0.4%	0.5%	0.8%
Education/Training/Library	3.4%	4.3%	5.0%	5.0%
Arts/Design/Entertainment	0.0%	1.5%	1.3%	1.6%
Healthcare Practitioner	4.9%	9.4%	8.2%	7.0%
Sales and Sales Related	10.3%	11.6%	9.6%	8.8%
Office/Administrative Support	10.6%	10.4%	11.2%	10.9%
<b>Blue Collar</b>	<b>40.4%</b>	<b>31.1%</b>	<b>26.6%</b>	<b>25.0%</b>
Farming/Fishing/Forestry	0.7%	1.0%	0.2%	0.5%
Construction/Extraction	9.3%	8.5%	4.8%	4.5%
Installation/Maintenance/Repair	5.2%	6.1%	3.5%	3.1%
Production	6.3%	7.5%	8.8%	8.7%
Transportation/Material Moving	18.9%	8.0%	9.3%	8.2%
<b>Services</b>	<b>15.0%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	<b>17.5%</b>	<b>15.8%</b>
Healthcare Support	0.7%	3.3%	5.1%	3.6%
Protective Service	0.3%	1.2%	1.6%	1.5%
Food Preparation/Serving	5.7%	7.6%	5.5%	5.5%
Building Maintenance	5.2%	3.5%	3.3%	3.4%
Personal Care/Service	3.1%	1.8%	2.0%	1.8%

Source: 2022 ESRI Civilian Labor Force Profiles

employed in two different fields. That is, a sales person in the manufacturing industry and a sales person in the real estate trade would be categorized within those different classifications in the employment by industry table.

Employment data by occupation for Montrose, Montrose Township, Genesee County and Michigan for 2022 is detailed in **Table 10**. In total, 679 citizens of Montrose are employed. Broadly, the City's occupations are generally evenly distributed across White Collar occupations (44.6 percent) and Blue Collar occupations (40.4 percent), while the remainder are Service occupations (15.0 percent). In comparison to the Township, County and State, the City has a smaller percentage of White Collar occupations and a higher percentage of Blue Collar occupations.

The largest particular occupations employing City residents are:

- Transportation/Material Moving (18.9 percent)
- Office/Administrative Support (10.6 percent)
- Sales and Sales Related (10.3 percent)
- Construction/Extraction (9.3 percent)
- Production (6.3 percent)

Employment data by industry for Montrose, Montrose

Township, Genesee County and Michigan for 2022 is detailed in **Table 11**. Of the 679 employed citizens of Montrose, the largest percentages are employed in the following industries:

- Health Care/Social Assistance (14.1 percent)
- Retail Trade (12.7 percent)
- Construction (11.2 percent)
- Educational Services (9.1 percent)
- Admin/Support/Waste Management (8.4 percent)
- Transportation/Warehousing (8.4 percent)

## Commuting Habits

**Table 12** shows the travel time to work for those who commute to a job and live in Montrose, Montrose Township, Genesee County and Michigan. This data provides information about the location of jobs in the region, identifying what percentage of Montrose residents must travel outside of the local area for employment. Notably, a relatively high percentage (25.4 percent) of Montrose residents who commute to a job have a commute time less than 10 minutes. The other units of government compared in the table have much lower percentages of commuters with short commute times. At the same time, a relatively large percentage (35.4 percent) of Montrose residents who commute to a job must travel between 30 and 59 minutes,

**Table 11: Employment by Industry, 2022**

Category	Unit of Government			
	City of Montrose	Montrose Township	Genesee County	Michigan
<b>Total Employed</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>2,463</b>	<b>166,043</b>	<b>4,673,732</b>
<b>Percent of Total Employed by Industry:</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>99.8%</b>	<b>100.4%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	<b>0.6%</b>	1.2%	0.4%	1.0%
Mining/Quarrying/Oil & Gas	<b>0.0%</b>	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Construction	<b>11.2%</b>	7.6%	6.0%	5.9%
Manufacturing	<b>6.6%</b>	15.2%	16.2%	17.9%
Wholesale Trade	<b>2.8%</b>	1.7%	2.1%	2.4%
Retail Trade	<b>12.7%</b>	16.9%	12.5%	10.4%
Transportation/Warehousing	<b>8.4%</b>	3.2%	4.6%	4.2%
Utilities	<b>0.0%</b>	0.3%	0.7%	0.8%
Information	<b>2.4%</b>	1.7%	1.2%	1.2%
Finance/Insurance	<b>1.9%</b>	3.0%	3.4%	4.1%
Real Estate/Rental/Leasing	<b>0.0%</b>	2.4%	1.9%	1.6%
Professional/Scientific/Tech	<b>4.7%</b>	3.8%	4.6%	6.1%
Management of Companies	<b>0.0%</b>	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Admin/Support/Waste Management	<b>8.4%</b>	3.4%	3.6%	3.4%
Educational Services	<b>9.1%</b>	6.5%	8.2%	8.5%
Health Care/Social Assistance	<b>14.1%</b>	16.7%	18.4%	15.5%
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	<b>0.3%</b>	1.4%	1.4%	1.6%
Accommodation/Food Services	<b>5.9%</b>	9.1%	7.1%	6.9%
Other Services (Excluding Public)	<b>6.5%</b>	4.6%	4.9%	4.7%
Public Administration	<b>4.4%</b>	1.0%	3.1%	3.6%

Source: 2022 ESRI Civilian Labor Force Profiles

Table 12: Travel Time to Work, 2021

Unit of Government	Less than 10 minutes	10 - 29 Minutes	30 - 59 Minutes	60 Minutes or More	Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)
<b>City of Montrose</b>	<b>25.4%</b>	<b>32.0%</b>	<b>35.4%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>24.8</b>
Montrose Township	6.4%	45.9%	41.3%	6.4%	30.8
Genesee County	13.2%	53.1%	23.2%	10.6%	26.6
Michigan	13.7%	53.1%	26.9%	6.3%	24.5

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

especially when compared to the County (23.2 percent) and State (26.9 percent).

## Natural Features Assessment

Many outstanding natural features grace the City such as the nearby Flint River, wetlands, wildlife habitats, mature vegetation, and open space. Natural features are assets which should be preserved and enhanced. Consideration should be given to the benefits natural features provide and the irreversible losses that occur when they are neglected and destroyed.

Natural features often present development constraints, including addition of significant cost, to the construction of a project. It is possible to prevent negative environmental impacts before they occur with proper planning and enforcement of regulations which effectively manage natural features. Identifying and preserving natural features will help Montrose retain its small-town character and maintain the quality of its natural resources. The following are important benefits of natural features:

- Wetlands functions (groundwater purification, preservation of Flint River water quality, flood control, pollution reduction, unique plant and animal habitat)
- Recreation opportunities, (hunting, fishing, skating, swimming, sledding, walking, skiing)
- Aesthetics (views, serenity, rural character)
- Pollution reduction (CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, noise, water, waste)
- Increased variety of wildlife and vegetation
- Educational opportunities (natural history, biology, geology, ecology)

**Map 2, Natural Features** illustrates significant natural features within the City, including wetlands, woodlands and water features.

## Soils

Native soils affect site design and construction cost and are also a basis for determining the presence of regulated wetlands. The USDA released updates to Genesee County Soil Survey in 2018, classifying soils and describing the suitability of native soils for various types of development. Soil suitability was judged according to limitations for foundations for building, septic tank disposal fields, roadway location, and depth of seasonal high water. In areas without other natural features constraints (i.e. steep slope, wetlands), the City of Montrose is made up of primarily well and moderately suited soils.

## Topography

The topography of the City of Montrose is generally flat with limited elevation changes and few areas of steep slopes. The generally flat topography of the City of Montrose poses few constraints to development.

## Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for mapping and determining areas of floodplains. A 100-year floodplain is defined as any area where there is a one percent chance of a flood occurring within any given year. According to the available FEMA data, there are no 100-year floodplains in the City of Montrose.

## Wetlands

Wetlands are important natural resources which provide both aesthetic and functional benefits. Since industrialization, over 70% of Michigan's wetlands have been destroyed by development and agricultural activities. Michigan enacted the Geomare-Anderson Wetland Protection Act (Michigan Public Act 203 of 1979) to protect the State's remaining wetlands. The State of Michigan may require permits before altering regulated wetlands, and their presence may prohibit development in some locations.

# Map 2: Natural Features

April 2023



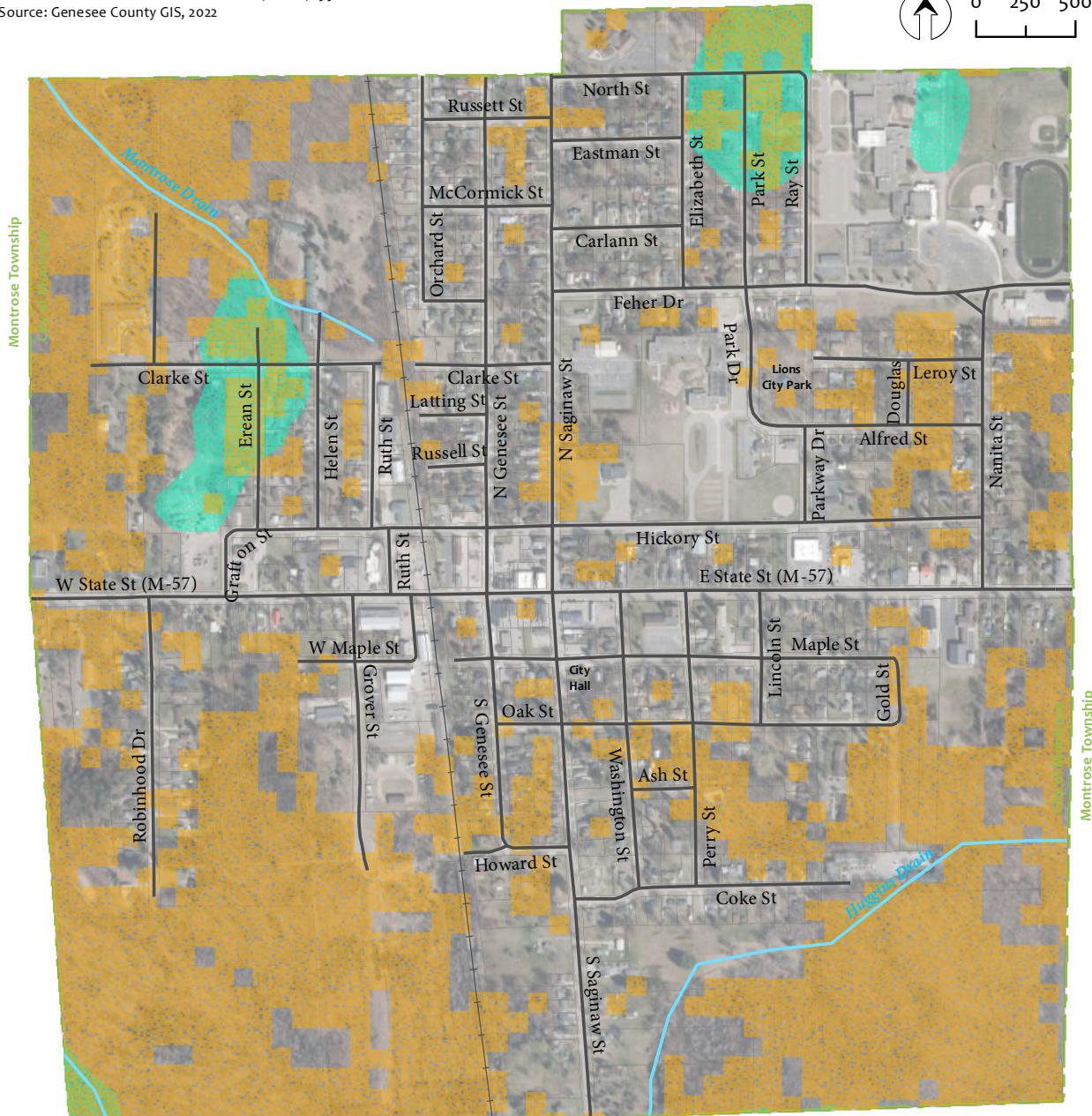
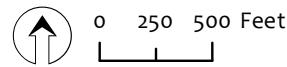
## Base Layers:

- Roads
- Railroad
- Creek and Drains
- Montrose City Limits

## Natural Features:

- Wetlands
- Woodlands

Wetlands Source: National Wetlands Inventory, 2016  
 Woodland Source: National Land Cover Dataset, USGS, 1992  
 Parcel Source: Genesee County GIS, 2022



The wetlands shown on the Natural Features Map generally fall within low lying areas, around the Montrose Drain, and along creeks and water courses branching out of the Flint River. The map delineates the general boundaries of significant wetlands, but not necessarily all the wetlands regulated under the State Wetlands Act.

Local wetlands protection can help preserve these important resources and can be achieved in a variety of ways. Foremost is ensuring that developers have received all necessary Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) reviews or made permit applications, prior to final action on any proposed projects.

## Woodlands

United States Geological Survey (USGS) data for Montrose shows the existence of numerous woodlands throughout the City (see the Natural Features Map). These woodlands are valuable as wildlife habitat and for aesthetic enjoyment. Woodlands also moderate certain climate conditions, such as flooding and high winds, by protecting watersheds from siltation and soil erosion caused by stormwater runoff or wind. Woodlands can also improve air quality by absorbing certain air pollutants, as well as buffer excessive noise generators. Woodlands are scattered throughout the City, but are most heavily concentrated in the northwest, southwest and southeast sectors of the City.

## Natural Features Assets

The nearby Flint River in Montrose Township is one natural asset which contributes to the aesthetic and recreational character of the City. The City can help realize the full aesthetic and recreational potential of the river by partnering with the Township to improve the visual linkages between the Flint River, downtown Montrose, and area parks.

Open Space is a contributor to the small town character of Montrose. Open space still accounts for approximately 35 percent of the City's land area. Montrose should identify and maintain areas in the City that provide residents with opportunity to conveniently experience the benefits of the natural environment.

## Existing Land Use Analysis

The focus of this section is an examination of current land use patterns and their impact on future land development. One of the most important aspects of a master plan study is a firm understanding of the types of land use activities that are currently taking place within the community. A knowledge of these factors and site conditions furnishes planners and community leaders with basic information by which future residential, commercial, industrial, and public land use decisions can be made.

**Map 3, Existing Land Use**, and the companion acreage tabulation chart (**Table 13**), provided on the following pages, will serve as key references for the consideration of land use and infrastructure improvements in the future.

## Land Use Context

Montrose was once a distribution center for the goods and services needed by surrounding farms and a collection center for their products. Now, as a bedroom community to Flint and Saginaw, it has experienced modest population growth as a result of new residential trends. These trends include population moving away from urban residential areas to more rural areas but with easy access to the I-75 corridor. Over the past 20 years, most of the development seen in the area has been centered along M-57, near I-75. This corridor has grown to offer various goods and services much closer to the City of Montrose than previously available. If development continues, Montrose and other nearby communities could see an increase in population, resulting in increased investment from private entities. The M-57 connection to Vienna Township is crucial for the development of Montrose.

## Existing Land Use Categories

As shown in **Table 13**, the entire City encompasses 558.3 acres of land. Of this acreage, 16.2 acres or 2.9 percent is dedicated road and railroad rights-of-way. The remaining acreage has been divided into six different existing land use classifications. Each classification is described below.

### Single-Family Residential

This category includes single-family detached structures used as a permanent dwelling, and accessory structures, such as garages, that are related to these units.

Such development occupies 195.3 acres, or 36.0 percent, of City land area. Homesites are found within well established residential neighborhoods and are equally distributed in all areas of the City of Montrose.

### Multiple-Family Residential

This land uses category is defined both by the existence of townhouses, multi-family apartment structures, and other group living quarters, as well as those properties containing two or more units on the same site.

Multiple-Family Residential land uses occupy 32.0 acres, or 5.7 percent of the land area of the City. Multiple-family residential uses are scattered throughout the City and include larger complexes including the Forest Creek Apartments, Montrose Manor Apartments, and Beech Trail Apartments.

# Map 3: Existing Land Use



March 2023

## Base Layers:

- Roads
- Railroad
- Creeks and Drains
- Montrose City Limits

Source: Wade Trim Analysis, 2023

Parcel Source: Genesee County GIS, 2022

## Existing Land Use:

■	Single-Family Residential	■	Commercial/Office
■	Multiple-Family Residential	■	Rights-of-Way
■	Industrial	■	Vacant/Open Space
■	Public/Quasi-Public		

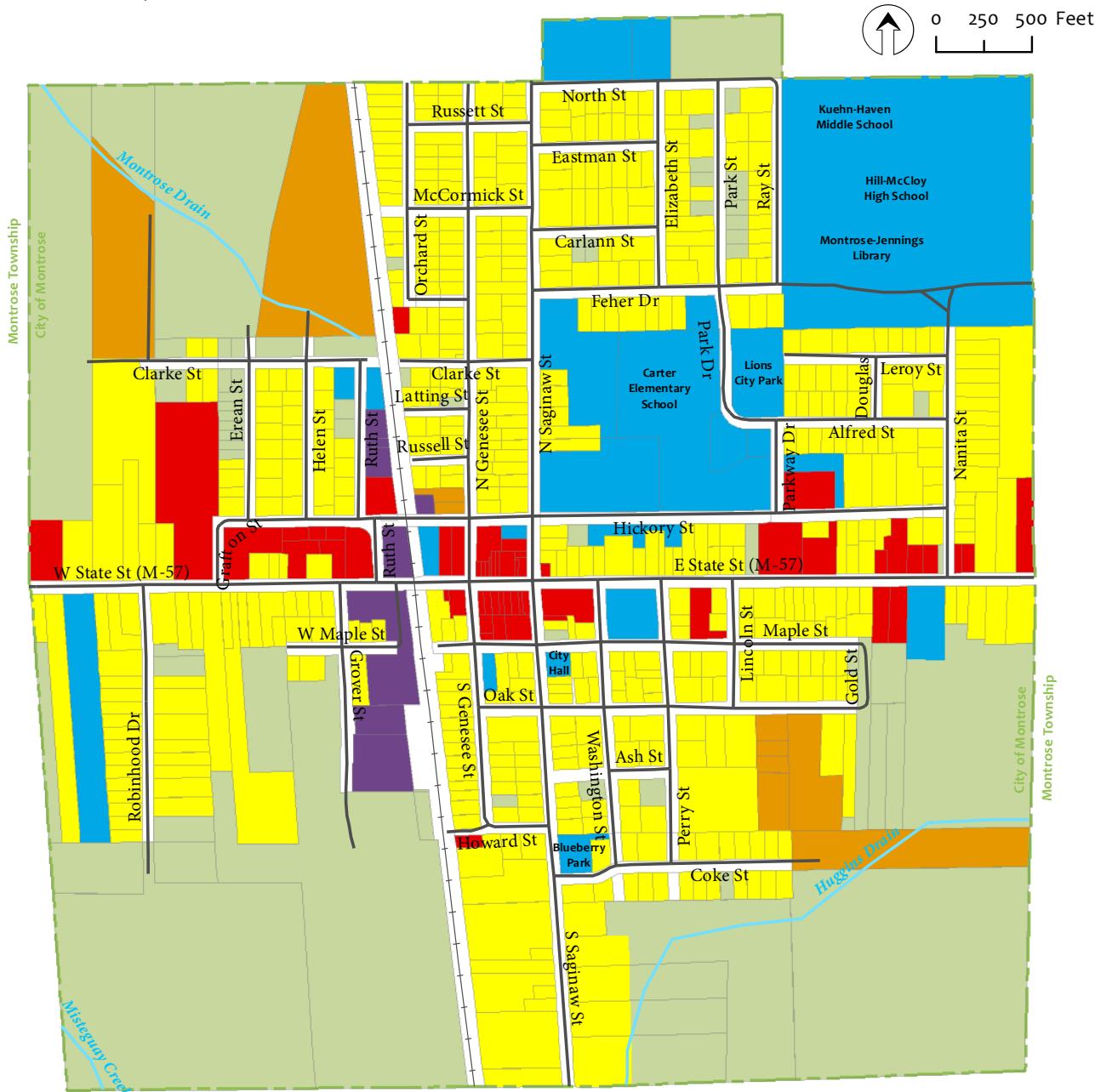


Table 13: Existing Land Use, 2023		
Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total
Single Family Residential	195.3	35.0%
Multiple Family Residential	32.0	5.7%
Commercial/Office	25.6	4.6%
Industrial	8.1	1.5%
Public/Quasi-Public	81.8	14.7%
Vacant/Open Space	199.3	35.7%
Rights-of-Way	16.2	2.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>558.3</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Wade Trim Analysis, February 2023

## Commercial/Office

This category includes structures used for commercial purposes, regardless of scale, as well as offices for professional and business services.

This use designation occupies 25.6 acres, or 4.6 percent, of the land area of the City. Commercial and office uses are almost exclusively found along the M-57 corridor. The greatest concentration of businesses are found in downtown Montrose. These are locally-oriented establishments which include restaurants, coffee shops, personal service establishments, and professional offices.

To both the west and east of downtown, M-57 supports larger commercial establishments that cater to the travelers along M-57 and the greater Montrose community. Example establishments include grocery stores, hardware stores, automotive supply stores, restaurants, general retail stores, and gas stations.

## Industrial

Industrial land use areas are categorized by the existence of wholesale activities, warehouses, and industrial operations whose external physical effects are restricted to the site and do not have a detrimental effect on the surrounding areas.

Industrial land uses account for 8.1 acres, or 1.5 percent, of City land. All of the industrial uses are found adjacent to the railroad, both north and south of M-57. Industrial establishments include Iverson's Lumber Company, Polymaster, RetroFoam, M-57 Transport, Precise Auto Body, and Montrose Trailers.

## Public/Quasi-Public

This land use classification includes lands occupied by public and quasi-public uses including, but not limited to, public schools, private schools, governmental offices, places of worship, fraternal organizations, and parks.

Such development occupies 81.8 acres, or 14.7 percent, of the City land area. The largest facilities are the public school sites located in the northeastern section of the City.

## Vacant/Open Space

Vacant/Open Space land uses account for 199.3 acres, or 35.7 percent, of the City of Montrose's land area. This category includes all vacant properties and/or non-developed property in the City, including vacated rights-of-way. Properties with this land use occur throughout the City.



Downtown Montrose

# Map 4: Community Facilities

March 2023



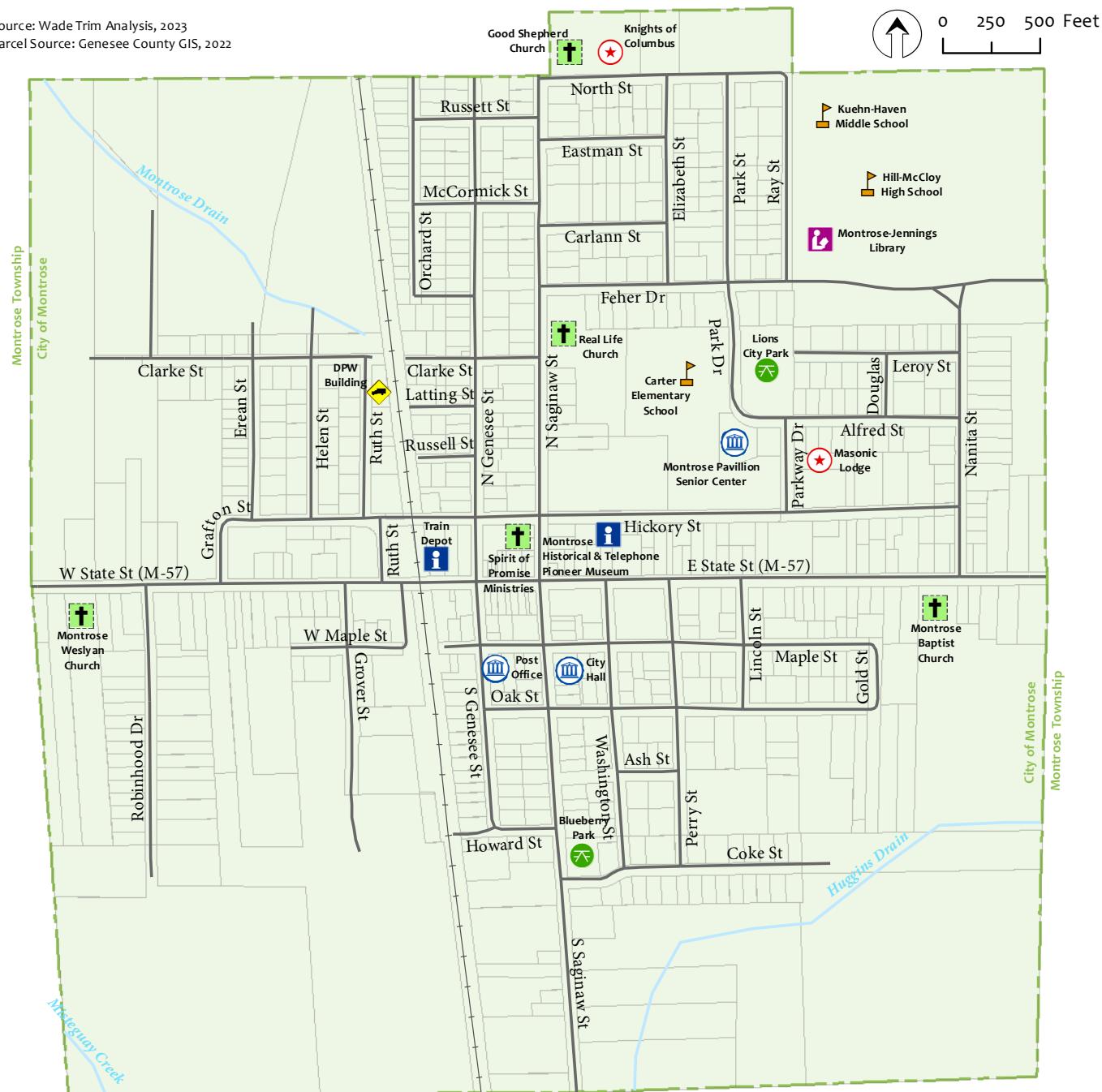
## Base Layers:

- Roads
- Railroad
- Creek and Drains
- Montrose City Limits

## Community Facilities:

	Civic Facilities		Public Works Facilities		Fraternal Organizations
	Educational Facilities		Libraries		Historical Site/Museum
	Public Parks		Places of Worship		

Source: Wade Trim Analysis, 2023  
Parcel Source: Genesee County GIS, 2022



## Community Facilities Assessment

Community facilities form a network of services to meet the physical, social, cultural and protective needs of the community. In this respect, they help determine the desirability of a community as a place to live and work. Many studies have been published that emphasize the role that community facilities play in a person's satisfaction with their community.

## City Offices and Agencies

### City Hall

The present City Hall building is located at 139 South Saginaw Street. The City offices offer a wide array of services available to the public including the offices of City Manager, City Clerk, City Treasurer, Utility Billing Department and also serves as the office for the City Building Inspector and City Assessor.

### Senior Center

The Montrose Township Senior Center is located at 200 Alfred Street. The Center is currently owned by Montrose Community Schools, leased by Montrose Township, and operated through a mutual agreement between the City and Township.

### Police Protection

Police protection is currently provided through a contract with the Township of Montrose. The police department is located at the Montrose Township municipal complex at 11444 North Seymour Road (within Montrose Township). Emergency services are available through Genesee County's 911 Central Dispatch.

### Public Works

The City Department of Public Works is housed on 149 Ruth Street in a facility built in 1972 located in the northwestern quadrant of the City, conveniently located in an industrial district with access to major streets. The Department of Public Works is headed by a director and employs two full-time employees, as well as seasonal help. The department's primary responsibilities are to maintain the public facilities, water distribution system, and sewer system including all maintenance on the major and local street system.

### Fire Department

The City of Montrose is served by an on-call fire department operated by Montrose Township and located at the Montrose Township municipal complex. The City has agreed to contract for these services as a result of the settlement (awards) when the Village became a City in



Inside the Montrose History Museum

1980. In addition to fire protection services, the department also provides Montrose City residents with timely rescue response.

## Other Governmental Agencies

### Montrose Township

Montrose Township offices are presently located at 11444 North Seymour Road in Montrose Township.

### Montrose Schools

Educational facilities in the Montrose Community consist of one high school (Hill-McCloy), one middle school (Kuehn-Haven), one elementary school (Carter), and one Head Start program. All three facilities are located within the City limits except for a small portion of the middle school that extends into the Township. Schools of higher learning are available within commuting distance in the greater Flint and Saginaw areas.

# Map 5: Utilities

March 2023



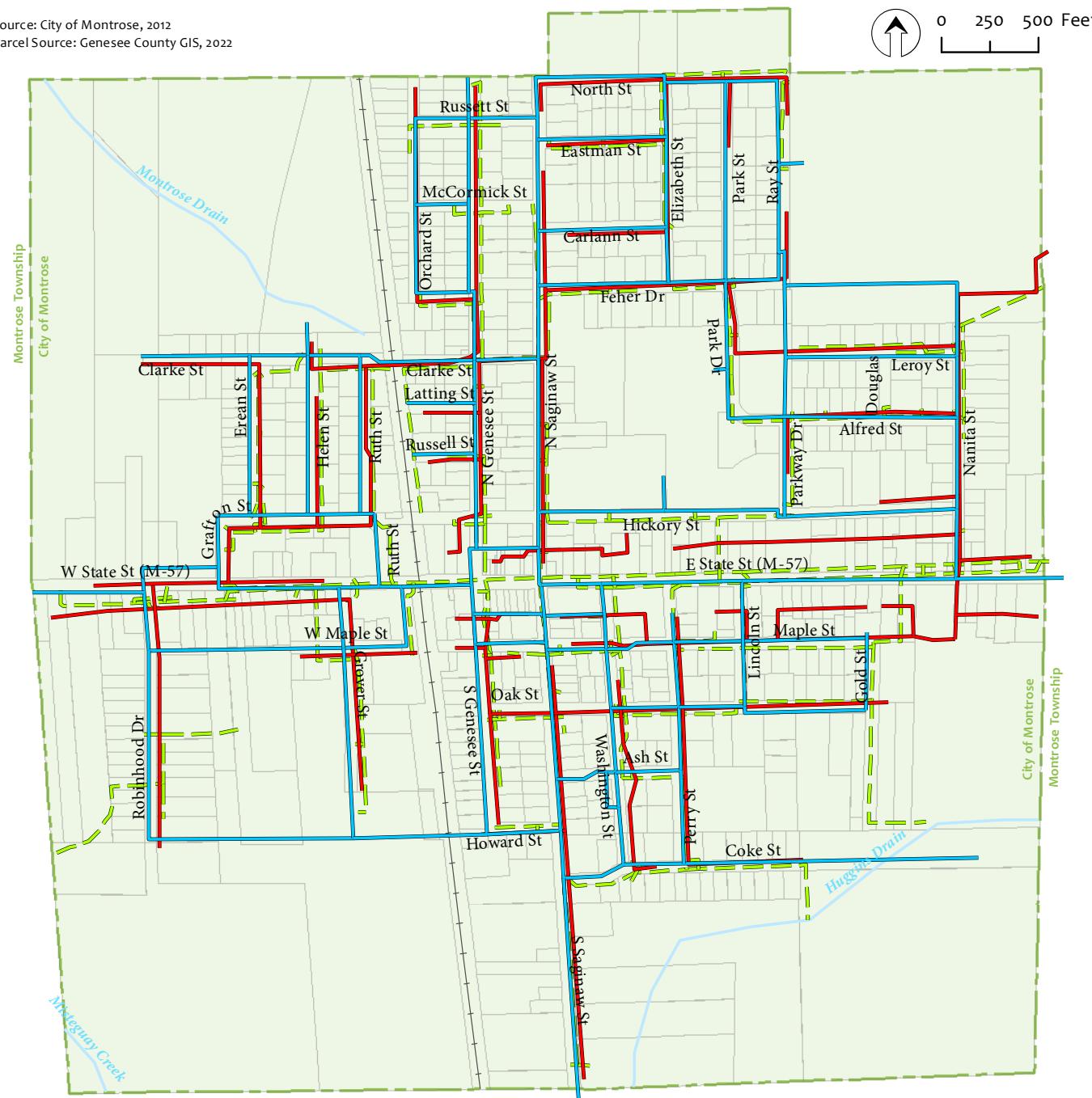
## Base Layers:

- Parcels
- Creeks and Drains
- Montrose City Limits

## Utilities:

- Water
- Sanitary Sewer Lines
- Storm Sewer Lines
- Railroad

Source: City of Montrose, 2012  
Parcel Source: Genesee County GIS, 2022



## Library

The Montrose-Jennings Memorial Public Library is owned by Montrose Township and operated with financing provided by both the City and the Township. It is maintained as a branch of the Genesee District Library System. It is located within the City limits in a 4,000 square foot building completed in 1987 on the corner of Feher Drive and Ray Street in the northeast quadrant of the City, adjacent to the high school facility. This facility has available an additional community room which will seat 75 to 100 persons for various civic and social clubs to gather and conduct business.

## Institutional

### Places of Worship

The City of Montrose is currently home to six places of worship of various religious denominations. Churches are found scattered throughout the City.

### Organizations and Non-Profit Agencies

In addition to the many places of worship that serve Montrose, the community is also served by a number of civic organizations and non-profit agencies including, but not limited to, the Chamber of Commerce, Masons, Eagles, Lions, Knights of Columbus, Historical Association, and American Legion. All of these organizations contribute to the community's sense of pride.

### Medical Facilities

Although some medical and dental offices are located within the City, emergency medical facilities are located outside of the City. These include urgent care facilities in the Clio and Birch Run areas and hospitals in the greater Flint and Saginaw areas.

There are presently no facilities within the City limits that cater to the aged or convalescing. Montrose Township has two senior care facilities on M-57 to the east of the City: Hampton Manor of Montrose and Medilodge of Montrose.

### Parks, Open Space, and Recreation

The City currently has two parks. Lions City Park is located in the northeast quadrant on the corner of Alfred Street and Park Drive. Lion's City Park has a pavilion with grills and picnic tables, electricity and water. Restroom facilities are available.

Blueberry Park is located in the southeast quadrant on the corner of S. Saginaw Street and Coke Drive. Blueberry Park has a playscape, a pavilion with picnic tables, walking pathway, restrooms and other amenities.



Lion's City Park

Montrose Township's Barber Park is located just outside the City limits on Seymour Road, with frontage on both sides of the Flint River. The large park contains a variety of facilities including sport courts, athletic fields, pavilions, walking paths, boat launch, fishing dock, restrooms, and parking.

## City Infrastructure

### Water

The City of Montrose is a member of the Genesee County Water Distribution System administered by the County Drain Commissioner. The system receives its water from the Karegnondi Water Authority pipeline that comes from Lake Huron, where it is treated and pumped to homes and businesses in Genesee County.

All developed areas of the City are served with public water from mains supplied by a 12-inch line, which enters the City on the east at M-57. The 12-inch line feeds a 10-inch loop, which circles the developed areas of the City. And which, in turn, feeds 8-inch, 6-inch and 4-inch distribution lines. The 10-inch line traverses the Industrial Park and passes adjacent to the high school, the multiple family areas, and the undeveloped areas of the City. The 12-inch line runs along M-57 to the Nichols Road intersection, while the 10-inch loop crosses M-57 at the Grafton Street/Robinhood Drive area. As a back up to the Genesee County water supply system, the City maintains, on standby, a well for back up water to the City during emergencies.

As constructed, the mains with the maximum diameter serve the area with the greatest demand potential whether they are residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional. Within system design capacity limits and the amount of capacity purchased by the City, new development can

readily be accommodated provided that the developer can finance the costs of constructing a lateral main and the required tap-in fees. The City administration must determine the remaining system capacity, both physical and purchased, and monitor new development proposals to insure that planning for upgrading the water system takes place on a timely basis.

**Map 5, Utilities** shows the location of the water mains now existing in the distribution system.

### Sanitary Sewer System

The City of Montrose is also a member of the Genesee County Sewage Disposal System, again administered by the County Drain Commissioner. An 18-inch interceptor directly connects the City to a sewage treatment plant, which is located about one mile northeast of the City. As with the Water Distribution System, capacity in the Sewer System is shared with other local governmental units on a purchase arrangement.

Sewage collection system design is a different problem from water distribution design. Instead of a pressurized loop, which can be tapped to provide an adequate supply of water, the sewer system depends upon gravity in most cases to provide the impetus for system flow. In Montrose, 8-inch, 10-inch, 12-inch and 15-inch collection lines come together at the interceptor from different points in the City. This means that system capacity diminishes greatly at locations away from the interceptor. The City administration must determine and monitor the capacity at critical points in the system so problems are not created by new development.

**Map 5, Utilities** shows the location of the sanitary sewer mains now existing in the collection system.

### Storm Drainage System

The City has very little change in elevation within its boundaries from a high of about 675 feet near the southern City limits, to a low of about 655 feet in the bed of the Montrose Drain at the northwest corner of the City. For most of the City there is even less drop, since the drain is excavated and its banks are about five feet higher. With such little natural relief, City officials must be sensitive to potential drainage problems generated by the roofs and paved parking lots of new developments.

### Power

Consumers Energy Company provides both electrical and gas services to City. Consumers Energy serves Genesee County and 61 other counties in the State outside of Genesee County.

### Solid Waste and Recycling Services

Private contractors provide trash collection and recycling services in the City (currently Republic Services). City officials must continue to assess alternatives for the economical provisions of this service to the community and be prepared to participate in a collective effort with other communities, as appropriate.

## Transportation Assessment

One of the most critical components in the overall development and viability of a community is mobility. Mobility gives residents the ability to enjoy and function within the community, plays a significant role in the success of businesses and industries, and allows for outside investment and attracts visitors to the community. Mobility is linked to many other key planning elements, such as sustainability, demography, and economy. A solid, efficient transportation network accommodating a variety of modes forms the structure around which settlements are arranged.

### Transportation Network

#### Streets and Highways

The City of Montrose has a total of 10.6 miles of public streets, of which 8.6 miles are owned and maintained by the City. As shown in **Map 6, Transportation Hierarchy**, there are only a few privately owned streets in the City.

Aside from the few privately owned streets, the only other public road agency with jurisdiction in the City is the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), who owns and maintains M-57. Related to M-57, City officials should become more familiar with the decision-making processes of MDOT so that the City can be better informed of what decisions are made and, therefore, is in a better position to influence those decisions in ways which further Montrose's goals and needs.

#### Rail Transportation

The Huron & Eastern Railway travels in a north-south direction through the heart of the City. The railway leads to Saginaw to the north and Durand to the south. Only two street crossings of the railroad are available at M-57 and at Hickory Street.

#### Air Transportation

Commercial air transportation is available to Montrose residents through the nearby airports of Bishop International in Flint and MBS International outside of Saginaw. Detroit Metropolitan Airport is the largest commercial airport in the State and is a 1.5 hour drive from Montrose.

# Map 6: Transportation Hierarchy

March 2023



## Base Layers:



Parcels



Rivers and Streams



Montrose City Limits

## Transportation Network:



Minor Arterial



Major Collector



Minor Collector



Local



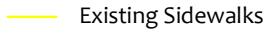
Uncertified or Private Road



Railroad

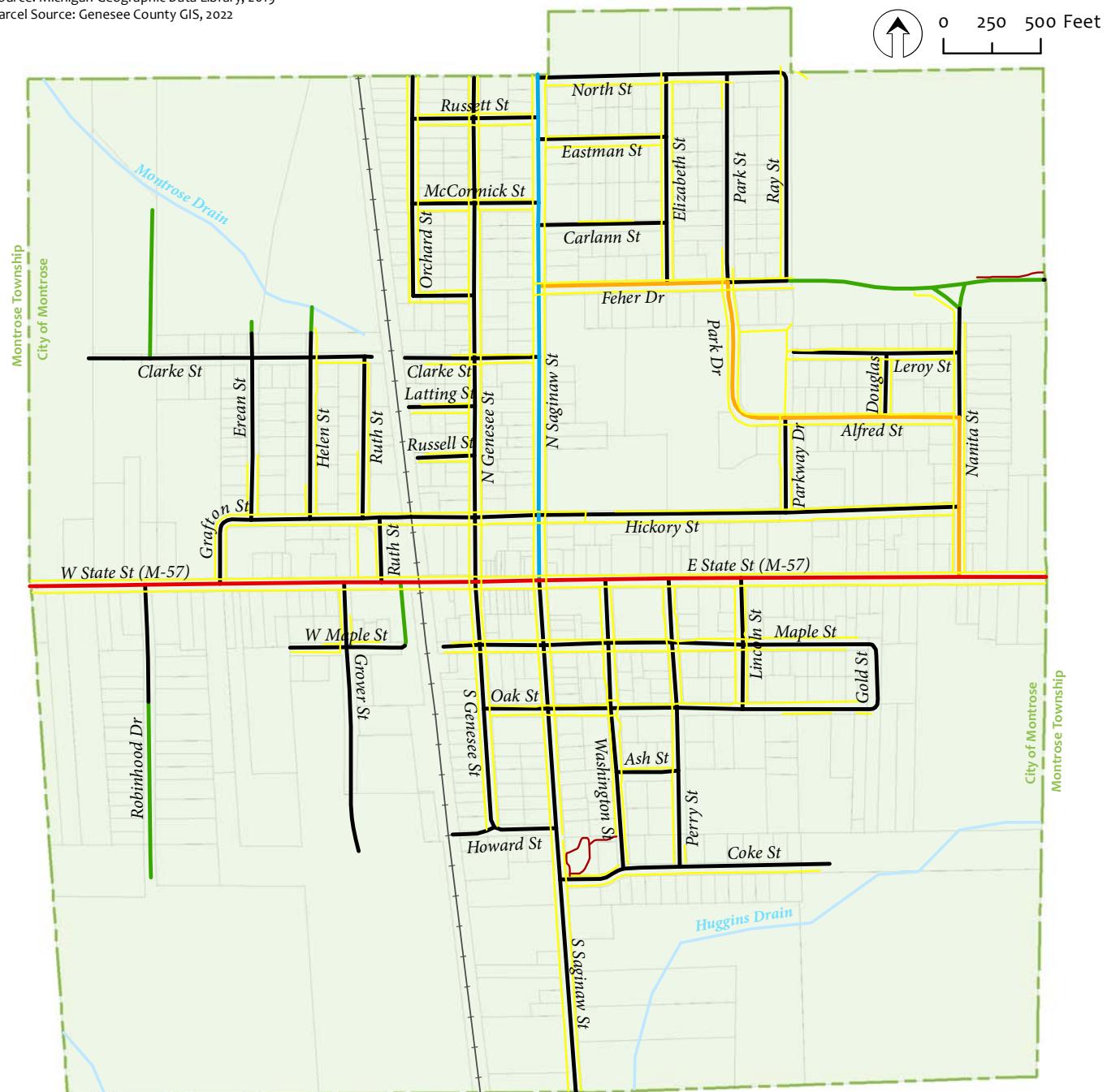


Existing Shared Use Paths



Existing Sidewalks

Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2019  
Parcel Source: Genesee County GIS, 2022





Development along State Street (M-57)

## Pedestrian and Non-Motorized Transportation

The majority of streets in the City contain paved sidewalks on both sides, including the downtown area and most of the residential neighborhoods. This allows for safe and convenient pedestrian traffic within the residential neighborhoods and to/from the downtown area.

At present, the City's sidewalk network is largely built-out. The current network is generally well maintained. Most of the City's sidewalks are relatively narrow, at 4 feet in width. Future proposed sidewalks are found on Clarke, Erean, Helen, Carlann, Park, Perry, Oak Street, and Robinson Drive. Otherwise, a small amount of short connections need to be made.

In recent years, the City has worked closely with Montrose Township to plan and construct shared use pathways to connect key destinations and institutions. Presently, a shared use pathway runs along both Seymour Road and Allen Drive connecting Barber Park in Montrose Township with the school facilities in the City of Montrose.

As noted earlier in this chapter, the GCMPC's Our County, Our Future Plan recommends the expansion of shared use pathways and trail routes throughout the County, including within and around Montrose.

## Road Hierarchy

### National Functional Classification (NFC)

**Map 6, Transportation Hierarchy** shows the National Functional Classification for the City's roads. The National Functional Classification (NFC) is a federal classification system for all public highways, roads, and streets. This classification system provides the basis for federal aid eligibility of roadways (United States Code, Title 23).

In Michigan, MDOT has the primary role in cooperation with appropriate local agencies in updating and revising the NFC. Updates and revisions are subject to Federal Highway Administration approval.

The two primary considerations in classifying highway and street network functionally are: access to property; and travel mobility as defined by trip travel time or operating speed. For example, local roads provide access to property, but would be rated low in mobility. Montrose roadways are categorized as either minor arterial, major collector, minor collector, local, or uncertified/private.

Arterial roadways generally provide high levels of mobility at greater speeds. These roads are used for long uninterrupted travel along multiple well designed access controlled lanes. Minor arterials are similar in function to principal arterials, except they carry trips of shorter distance and to lesser traffic generators. M-57 functions as a minor arterial in Montrose.

Collectors provide a lower degree of mobility than arterials. They allow for increased local access, have lower operating speeds and are used for shorter trips. Collector roadways function to collect traffic from local roads and distribute it to arterials. Saginaw Street, north of M-57, functions in this capacity and is considered a "major" collector. The combination of Feher Drive, Park Drive, Alfred Street and Nanita Drive also function in this capacity and are classified as "minor" collectors.

Local roads allow for the greatest access to all types of land uses, have the lowest operating speeds, and have the least stringent design standards. The vast majority of the City's roads fall within this classification.

At the lowest level in the hierarchy are Uncertified/Private Roads. These roads are privately owned with the primary purpose of providing access within individual developments such as apartment complexes and shopping centers.

## Road Conditions

The condition of roads in the City were assessed by the City of Montrose and GCMPC as part of their annual PASER conditions survey, most recently in 2022. Road condition (namely pavement condition) was assessed on a scale of one to ten, one being the worst condition and four being the best. The extent of surface deterioration is based on the observed amount of pavement cracking, faulting, joint deterioration, wheel tracking, patching, and roughness, etc. For the sake of simplicity, all roads were grouped in to five categories based on their 1-10 rating: New, Good, Fair, Poor, and Not Rated. The five road condition categories can be defined as follows:

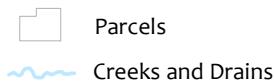
# Map 7:

## Transportation Analysis

May 2024



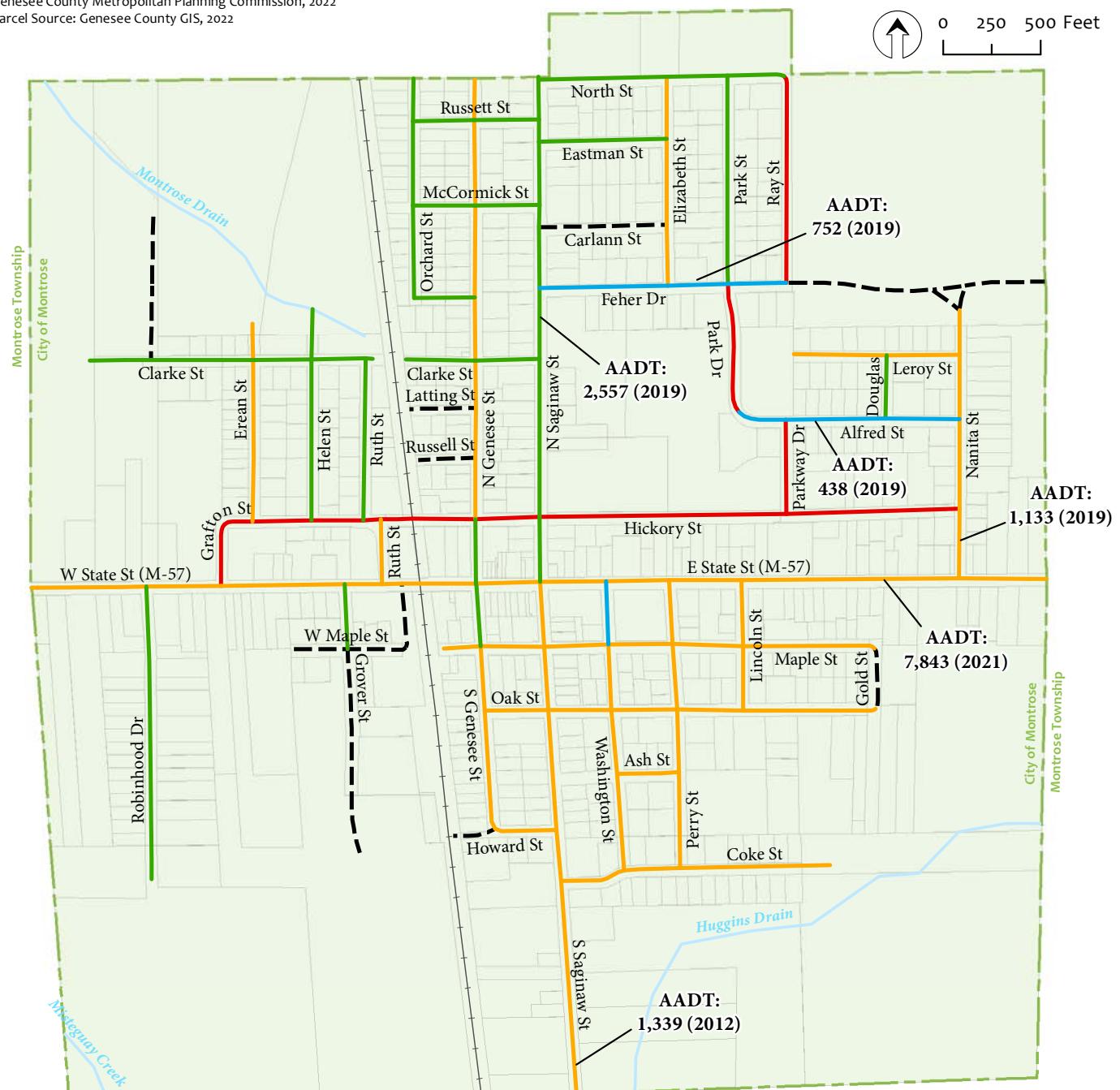
Base Layers:



Road Conditions 2022:



Source: City of Montrose, 2022 (Feher Drive updated 2024)  
 Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission, 2022  
 Parcel Source: Genesee County GIS, 2022



- New/Like New: No visible pavement deterioration. PASER ratings 9-10.
- Good: Very little/occasional pavement deterioration, requiring routine maintenance operations. PASER ratings 7-8.
- Fair: Frequent occurrence of surface deterioration, requiring more extensive maintenance. PASER ratings 4-6.
- Poor: Extensive occurrence of surface deterioration, requiring possible road surface reconstruction. PASER ratings 1-3.

The current condition of the roads within the City is shown on **Map 7, Transportation Analysis**. A breakdown of pavement conditions within the City is shown in **Table 14**.

Approximately 3 percent of the roads surveyed have a “New/Like New” pavement surface. These roads are found in the eastern portion of the City and have been recently resurfaced.

Approximately 30 percent of roads surveyed displayed a surface condition of “Good.” Because they contain only minor pavement deterioration, these roads require little routine maintenance. Roads in this category include North Saginaw Street and are most commonly found in the northern and northwestern portion of the City.

Roads classified with a surface condition of “Fair” comprise the largest percentage (45.3 percent) of all the roads surveyed. This classification indicates that more extensive maintenance operations will be required because of frequent pavement deterioration. Some of the more highly trafficked streets in the City are classified in this category, including M-57 and South Saginaw Street.

Roads classified as “Poor” (13.2 percent of those surveyed) demonstrate extensive pavement deterioration, indicating the street may be in need of major repairs such as surface reconstruction or repaving. Roads in Poor condition are found in the northern half of the City and include the entirety of Hickory Street.

**Table 14: 2022 Road Conditions**

Road Rating	Miles	Percent of Total
New	0.3	2.8%
Good	2.9	27.4%
Fair	4.8	45.3%
Poor	1.4	13.2%
Not Rated	1.2	11.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: City of Montrose

## Traffic Volumes

**Map 7** displays 24 hour Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) counts within the City of Montrose. These counts were obtained from MDOT (for M-57) and from the GCMPC. With a count taken in 2021, M-57 carries nearly 8,000 vehicles per day through the City. The major north-south route through the City, Saginaw Street, carries approximately 1,400 and 2,500 vehicles per day, based on two counts taken by the GCMPC.

# Chapter 3: Community Vision



Murals and storefronts in downtown Montrose

Before a community can actively plan for its future growth and development, it must first set certain goals and objectives that define the boundaries of its needs and aspirations. These goals and objectives must reflect the type of community desired and the kind of lifestyle its citizens wish to follow, given realistic economic and social constraints.



**City of Montrose  
Master Plan 2040**

## Goals and Objectives Defined

Goals are basic statements that set a critical path, provide direction, and describe to the organization how the desired outcome should look. Goals are a critical part of the planning process in that they are flexible, defining for the organization, and timeless. Goals stay with the organization until they are achieved. Goals are ambitious and general. They address issues and specific needs or problems, but they are grand in scope and speak to fundamental change and directly serve the mission of the organization. A total of six goals have been established for the City of Montrose and are organized around the following topics:

1. Natural Environment and Sustainability
2. Housing and Neighborhoods
3. Business and Economic Development
4. Mobility and Connectivity
5. Community Character and Culture
6. Governance and Community Services

Following each topic and goal is a set of objectives. Objectives are the means to achieve a goal. An objective is a plan of action that sets a more specific task within a goal. Often, they assign responsibility, set schedules, and gauge success.

Action strategies are a task and statement that set forth the “what, when, where, and how” of an objective. Action strategies and priorities for implementing the goals and objectives are included in the Action Strategy chapter of this Master Plan.

## Natural Environment and Sustainability

### Goal

Strive for the protection of important natural resources which provide residents the opportunity to conveniently experience the benefits of the natural environment, provide habitat for wildlife, support community character, and enhance the overall quality of life.

### Objectives

1. Direct new development away from environmentally sensitive areas such as woodlands, wetlands, steep slopes, and areas subject to flooding.
2. Encourage the acquisition and use of land as a conservation measure to protect specific natural features.
3. Encourage new residential developments to be sited in a manner that protects the natural character and scenic views of the area by maintaining proper setbacks and by providing landscaping screening as appropriate.

4. Promote a healthy quality of life by capitalizing on the city's walkability, close access to the Flint River, and area recreational opportunities.
5. Develop storm water best management practices to minimize the negative impacts development can have on runoff and water quality.

## Housing and Neighborhoods

### Goal

Preserve and reinvest in Montrose's neighborhoods, which provide the stable foundation of Montrose living, while supporting the development of new housing choices to meet the changing needs of residents.

### Objectives

1. Rehabilitate and maintain the existing housing stock and continue to enforce existing housing, rental, and maintenance codes to ensure neighborhoods remain strong and vital.
2. Support new lifestyle housing choices such as townhomes, rowhouses, stacked ranches, lofts and life-work units within downtown and adjacent mixed-use sites.
3. Ensure that, while meeting objectives for affordable housing and varied housing options, detached single-family homes remain the predominant housing type, and are not detrimentally encroached upon by higher density housing.
4. Ensure that new development reflects the scale and character of adjacent existing residential development and neighborhoods.

## Business and Economic Development

### Goal

Retain existing businesses and promote the development of new businesses in defined locations which satisfy local market needs and provide a positive contribution to the local tax base without compromising the City's traditional and compact character.

### Objectives

1. Maintain and leverage a thriving downtown district, featuring a diverse mixture of land uses, community institutions and civic spaces.
2. Encourage and support business start-ups and entrepreneurial endeavors.
3. Continue to place great effort on redevelopment of sites throughout the City; within or adjacent to

downtown, ensure that redevelopment supports the vibrancy and walkability of downtown.

4. As new commercial and mixed-use development occurs, consider upper floors for resident populations.
5. Maintain and continue to improve relations between business owners and City government.
6. Expand and deepen relationships with local institutions, community groups, business development groups and the DDA to maximize the use of scarce time and money.
7. Support the goals and actions outlined in the City's Economic Development Strategy.

## Mobility and Connectivity

### Goal

Provide a safe and convenient transportation system which offers a variety of travel choices and balances the needs of all users.

### Objectives

1. Promote ongoing, harmonious relationships with the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Genesee County Road Commission, and other agencies which maintain the transportation linkages within the City.
2. Maintain an interconnected network of sidewalks, prioritizing improvements near schools, parks, and downtown.
3. Create a network of bike routes linking cultural resources, schools, parks, and activity centers throughout the City and beyond.
4. Continue to build a strong partnership of public and private entities and residents to support regional trail initiatives.

## Community Character and Culture

### Goal

Celebrate and promote Montrose's unique and highly valued small-town character as a key contributor to community culture, social wellbeing, and overall quality of life.

### Objectives

1. Improve the overall aesthetic character and encourage the maintenance and restoration of structures within downtown.



## Smart Growth Principles

ADAPTED FOR THE CITY OF MONTROSE

What is smart growth? Smart growth is development that supports economic growth, strong communities and environmental health. The following "principles" of smart growth are accepted by this Master Plan as an overarching framework for growth and development within the City of Montrose:

1. Mix land uses	2. Take advantage of compact building design
	
3. Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices	4. Create Walkable Neighborhoods
	
5. Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place	6. Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas
	
7. Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities	8. Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices
	
9. Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective	10. Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration in Development Decisions
	

2. Encourage the preservation of the City's historic character by preserving or restoring historically significant properties, and promoting new developments consistent with the existing character.
3. Incorporate unique and functional community design components with all new developments, public spaces, and streetscapes.
4. Promote the development of public spaces that are easy to access, are comfortable, offer varied activities, provide opportunities for public art, and that will continue to nurture social interaction.
5. Foster and expand community arts and culture through partnerships with regional and local organizations and support of arts and culture focused community events.
7. Continue to prioritize good governance and leadership by operating in an open and financially stable manner, focusing on maintaining high levels of citizen involvement and achieving measurable results.

## Governance and Community Services

### Goal

Continue to provide all segments of the population with high quality and affordable community services and facilities, including expanding recreation facilities and opportunities in the City.

### Objectives

1. Provide a plentiful supply of potable water to all developed areas of the City that can be economically expanded to accommodate future development.
2. Provide a sanitary sewer system, which serves all developed areas of the City, and which can be economically expanded to accommodate future development.
3. Provide a storm drainage system and appropriate developmental controls designed to minimize the effects of flooding on all areas of the City.
4. Plan for the continued improvement of the City's public facilities and services through capital improvement programming, coordinated with adjoining jurisdictions, and other public agencies.
5. Promote the development of recreational facilities which provide community residents with a variety of physical activities.
6. Encourage and support community volunteerism by providing opportunities for citizens motivated to contribute to the community's well-being, and to satisfy one's personal need for fulfillment, sense of accomplishment, and self-esteem.

# Chapter 4: Circulation Plan



Electric vehicle charging station with Montrose City Hall in the background

The City of Montrose strives towards providing an equitable and sustainable transportation system that will serve its current and future residents into the middle of the 21st century and beyond. Towards that end, the city's leadership understands that a long-term plan is necessary to accomplish a balanced circulation system of vehicular and nonmotorized transportation that serves the needs of all users equally.



City of Montrose  
**Master Plan 2040**

The purpose of this section is to outline a 5 to 20-year vision for a circulation system of “complete streets” and nonmotorized facilities that will provide a convenient and safe option to link people, schools, businesses, parks, natural resources, and cultural and historic landmarks to each other within the city as well as connect to adjacent communities and resources.

## Why Complete Streets?

The ability of people and goods to efficiently flow without unexpected stops or unprecedeted congestion is an important part of the quality of life in a community as well as a vital part to a community’s economic well-being and growth. Yet, a circulation network that emphasizes efficient traffic flow primarily for a single mode of travel over other circulation goals and modes of travel leads to an unbalanced, unsafe and inefficient transportation system.

Complete streets contribute to livable communities that make getting around easier for people with disabilities, older adults, and children. They also increase safety and contribute to better public health, while decreasing traffic demands. The following are key benefits of complete streets:

- 1. Safety** - Safety is a key concern in designing transportation networks, both for motorists as well as pedestrians and bicyclists. According to a Federal Highway Administration publication, crashes involving pedestrians are twice as likely to occur in places without sidewalks. Complete streets design the streets with the pedestrian in mind and engage in comprehensive safety improvements. A study by the Transportation Research Board found that installing pedestrian and bicycle facilities can reduce the risk of crashes by 28 percent. In addition, the installation of some pedestrian features, such as medians and traffic-calming measures, can lead to speed reduction in motorists and safer pedestrian and bicycle conditions.
- 2. Economic Development** - An increased level of pedestrian and bicycling activity can improve business and bring revenue to the surrounding area. Complete streets projects increase foot traffic and have been successful throughout the nation in attracting new businesses. The walkability of a neighborhood can also increase property values. A survey of 15 real estate markets across the country in 2009 found that a 1-point increase in the walkability of neighborhood (as measured by WalkScore.com) resulted in an increase of home values by \$1,000 to \$4,300 (values adjusted for 2024 inflation). In addition, streetscaping projects, such as planting street trees in the right of way, can increase the selling prices of homes.

- 3. Public Health** - Complete streets support active living habits. The walkability of a neighborhood is directly linked to the health of its residents. A study done by Social Science & Medicine found that people who live in walkable neighborhoods participated in 35 to 45 more minutes of physical activity per week and were less likely to be overweight than similar people living in neighborhoods that are less walkable.
- 4. The Environment** - The transportation industry is one of the leading contributors to carbon dioxide emissions in the United States. Nonmotorized forms of transportation, such as walking and biking, can have the biggest impact on reducing emissions, but transit is also a lower emissions mode.
- 5. Accessibility** - Many roads are designed to meet the needs of automobiles, however at least one-third of Americans do not drive and use other forms of transportation. These groups include children, adolescents, some older adults, individuals with disabilities, and low-income individuals. Complete streets aim to allow safe and comfortable travel for everyone, including people in these groups.

## Circulation Plan

The Future Circulation Plan Map (**Map 8**) sets forth recommendations for the development of public rights-of-way in a manner consistent with and supportive of recommendations for future land use. The Future Circulation Plan Map does not anticipate any changes to the existing National Function Classification designations (i.e., Minor Arterial, Major Collector, Minor Collector) of streets within the city as shown on **Map 6** (Transportation Analysis). The recommendations on the Future Circulation Plan Map focus on safety enhancements, improvements for more complete streets with pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and the development of nonmotorized facilities. The future circulation network is designed to link Montrose’s most important community facilities and establish easy to navigate connections for people to walk and bike in their neighborhoods and around the city.

Below is a description of the circulation system types and strategies outlined on the Future Circulation Plan Map.

### Main Street

State Street (M-57) between Ruth and Washington Street is designated on the Future Circulation Plan Map as “main street.” This stretch of road is the primary route to and from the City of Montrose. Downtown Montrose is centered around the intersection of State Street and Saginaw Street. Given the primacy of State Street, it is essential that the City of Montrose coordinate with MDOT to ensure

# Map 8: Future Circulation Plan



February 2024

## Future Street Circulation:

### Future Nonmotorized Circulation:

## Base Layers:

## Main Street

Page 1 of 6

## Downtown Str

## Shared Street

### — Existing Shared Use Paths

#### Proposed Shared Use Paths

## Proposed shared U

### — Existing Sidewalks

## Proposed Sidewalks

○ Pedestrian Safety Enhancements

— Railroad

## Graphs and Diagrams

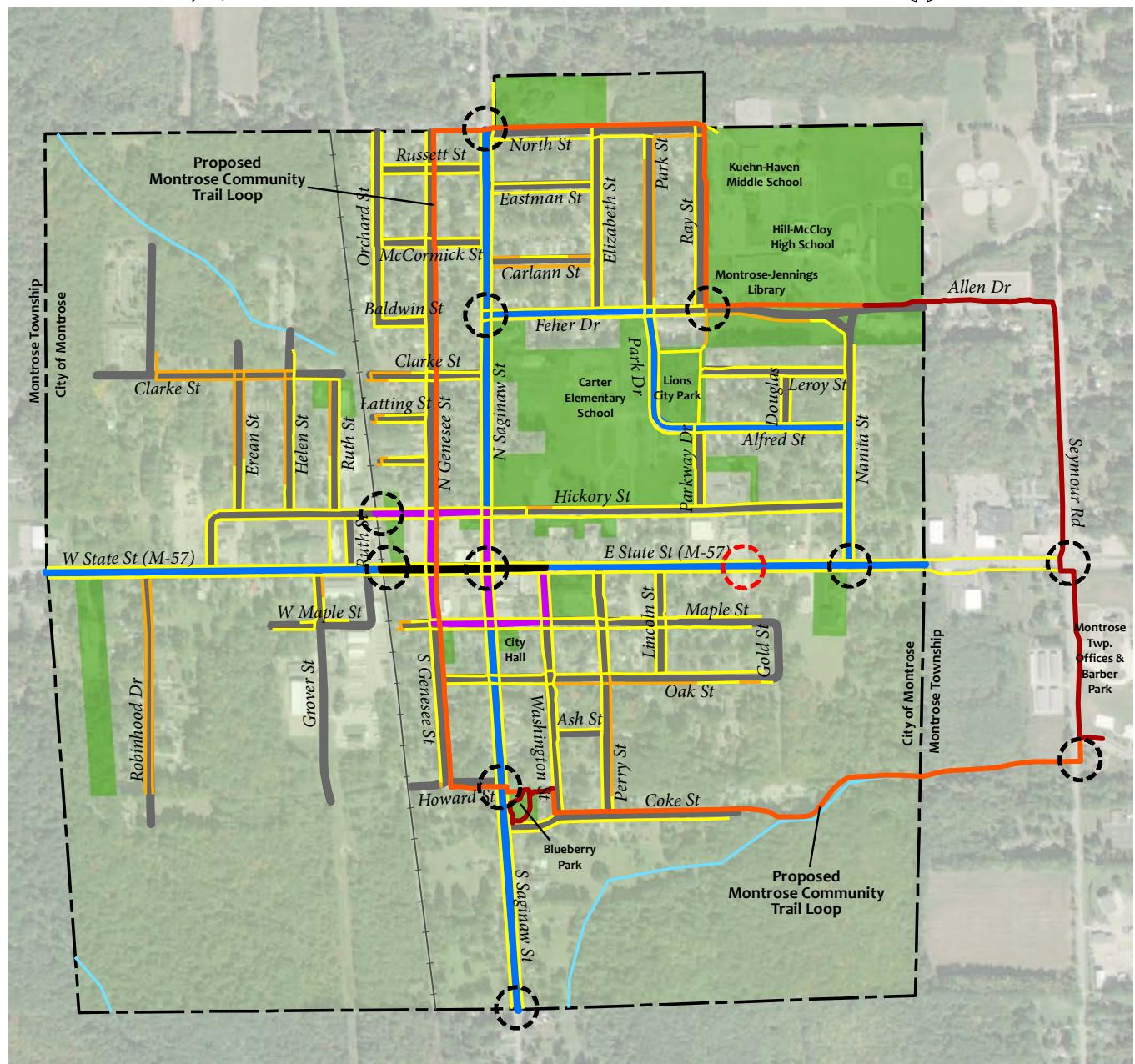
## Creeks and Drains

## Montrose City Limits

Source: Wade Trim Analysis, 2023

Parcel Source: Genesee County GIS, 2022

A scale bar with a north arrow. The text "0 250 500 Feet" is to the right of the bar. The bar itself is divided into three segments by vertical tick marks, with the first segment labeled "0", the second labeled "250", and the third labeled "500".



# City of Montrose Master Plan 2040



## What is a Complete Street?

Complete streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all legal users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities can safely move along and across a complete street. The right-of-way is designed to enable safe access for all users as part of a complete street. There are no strict requirements to qualify as a complete street. The community context must be taken into consideration and therefore each complete street is unique. Some complete streets may include special bus lanes and accessible public transportation stops, while others may have wide paved shoulders with narrower travel lanes. The concept of complete streets is not to create the perfect street for every traveler, but rather to design a network of streets that emphasizes different modes of transportation and is accessible by everyone.



that it is designed as a complete street to accomplish numerous goals, including:

- Maintain a high quality aesthetic as they key gateway into the city, contributing to the city's small-town character and appeal
- Support safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle travel
- Accommodate on-street parking
- Support local business and "street life", creating safe and comfortable spaces for social connections along the street
- Ensure safe and efficient vehicular travel of people and goods, but in a manner which does not compromise the other goals listed above

The recommended street cross-section design for main street is included in this section. This multi-modal street will accommodate: vehicular travel (two travel lanes and a center left turn lane); on-street parallel parking on both sides; streetscape amenities; and, wide sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians, support business and entertainment activities. Buildings fronting main street should be placed at the front property line (zero build-to-line), except where they may be set back no more than 10 feet to accommodate architectural features, public spaces, pedestrian amenities, or outdoor seating. Private off-street parking and loading and unloading activities must be provided in the rear of buildings.

### Downtown Streets

"Downtown streets" have a similar function as a main street, but in the context of Montrose, these streets feature much lower traffic volumes and are less likely to be the primary access to downtown businesses. As shown on the Future Circulation Plan Map, these streets include segments of Saginaw, Genesee Washington, Hickory and Maple Streets within one or two blocks of downtown.

Downtown streets must be designed as complete streets to accomplish numerous goals, including:

- Maintain a high quality aesthetic, contributing to the city's small-town character and appeal
- Support safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle travel
- Accommodate on-street parking
- Serve as transition zones between adjacent residential neighborhoods and downtown, creating safe and comfortable spaces for social connections along the street

- Support local businesses by providing secondary accesses, including loading and unloading spaces
- Ensure safe and efficient vehicular travel of people and goods, but in a manner which does not compromise the other goals listed above

The recommended street cross-section design for downtown streets is included on the next page. This multi-modal street will accommodate: vehicular travel (two travel lanes); on-street parallel parking on one or both sides of the street; streetscape amenities; wide sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians and to support secondary business entrances; and, signage and/or markings for bicycle travel. Buildings fronting downtown streets should be placed at the front property line (zero build-to-line), except where they may be set back no more than 10 feet to accommodate architectural features, public spaces, pedestrian amenities, or outdoor seating. Private off-street parking and loading and unloading activities are recommended to be provided in the rear of buildings.

## Shared Streets

The Future Circulation Plan Map recommends for selected streets within the city to be designed with shared lane markings. These “shared streets” have significant potential to accommodate bicycle travel, in addition to vehicular and pedestrian travel. Shared streets provide a bicycle-priority route designed to offer convenient, low-stress access to local destinations and through neighborhoods. A combination of access management, traffic calming, and crossing treatments work in concert to enhance bicycling experience.

Marked shared lanes (“sharrow lanes” or “sharrows”) are a newer alternative that are often incorporated into bike routes today. Sharrows are pavement markings that provide positional guidance to bike riders as to where they belong within the roadway and to alert motorists that bicyclists should be anticipated in the roadway and where they may be riding. These sharrow markings are used in areas where it is too narrow for bike lanes, has high incidences of wrong-way riding, and/or high parking turnover. The markings, generally placed every 200 feet and within 100 feet of every intersection, should also be used with “share the road” or “bike route” signs. Bicyclists should be positioning themselves to be crossing over the center of the sharrow’s chevron arrows.

In addition to bicycle markings and signs, shared streets should include traffic-calming measures and crossing improvements designed to enhance the comfort and priority of bicyclists traveling along the route.

State Street (M-57) outside of downtown is identified as a shared street. State Street already features marked bike lanes on either side of the street; thus, the recommendation for State Street is to maintain its current bicycle friendly design (refer to the recommended street cross-section on the next page).

As shown on the Future Circulation Plan Map, additional shared streets include segments of Saginaw, Feher, Park, Alfred, and Nanita Streets. None of these streets presently include marked bike lanes or bike route signage, but could easily be retrofitted to include such signage and/or markings. Recommended shared street design cross-sections are included in this section.



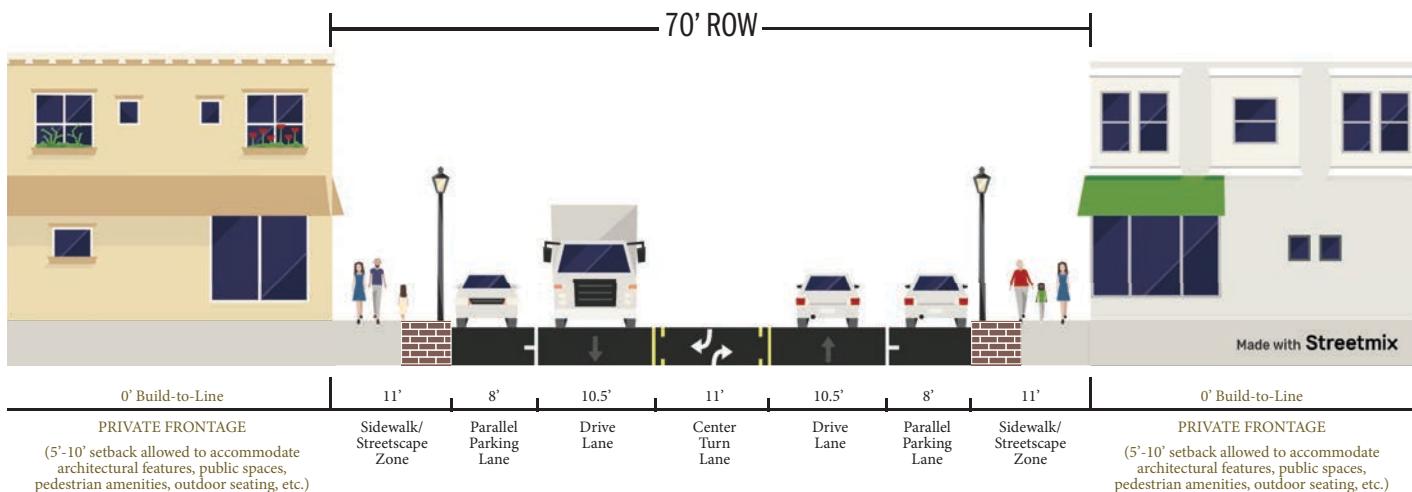
Shared Street Design Considerations - Sharrows, traffic calming, and crossing improvements

Source: Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks, U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, December 2016

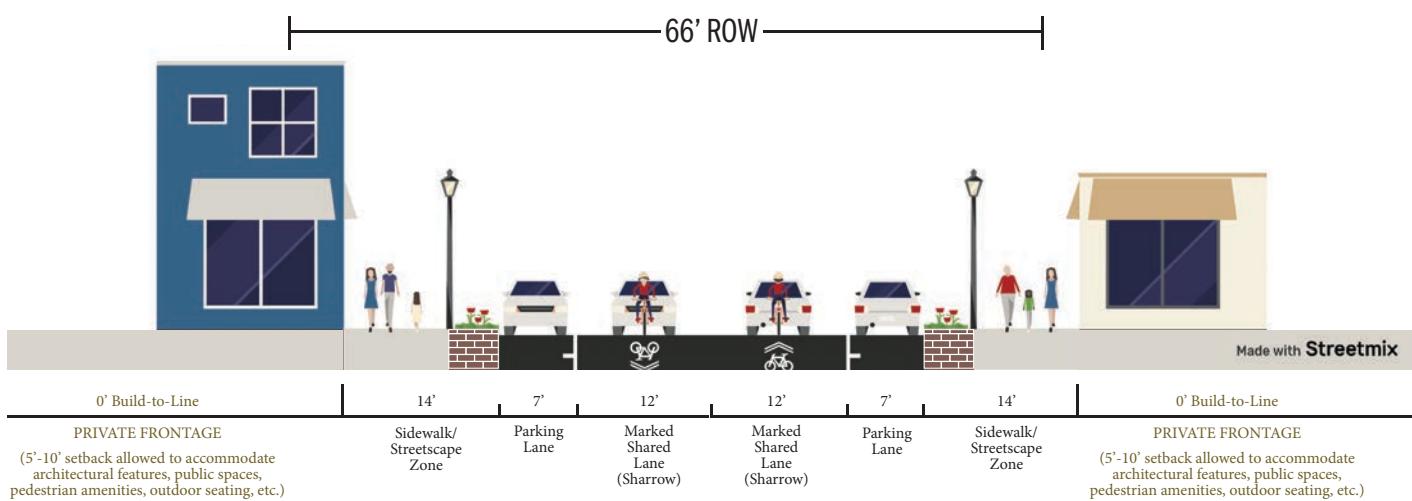


## Future Circulation Plan: Street Design Types

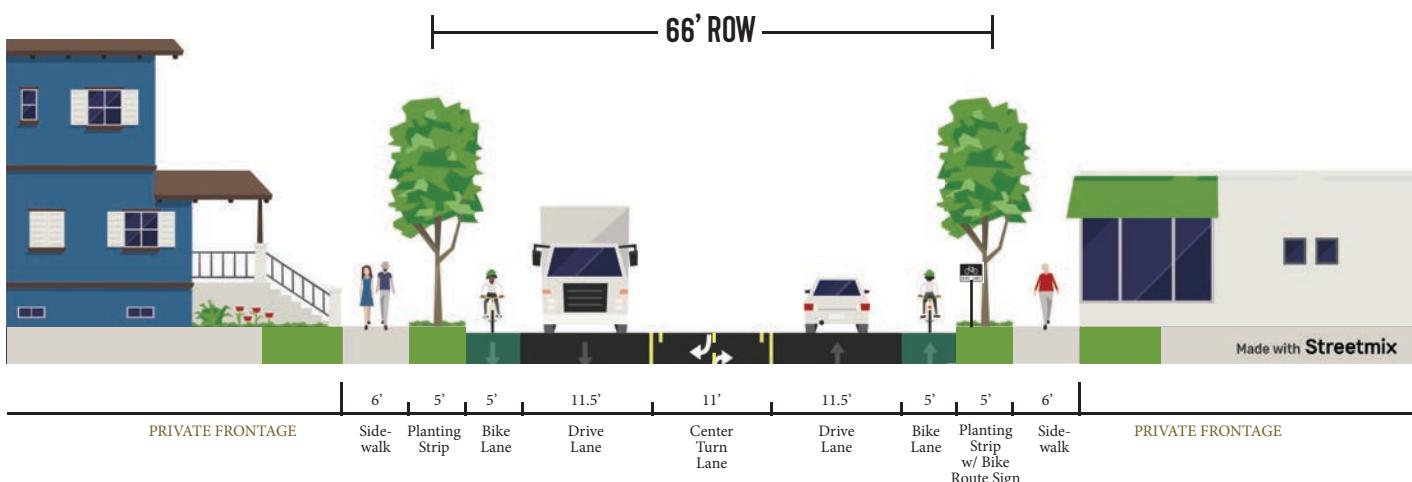
### Main Street (State Street, between Ruth and Washington)



### Downtown Street



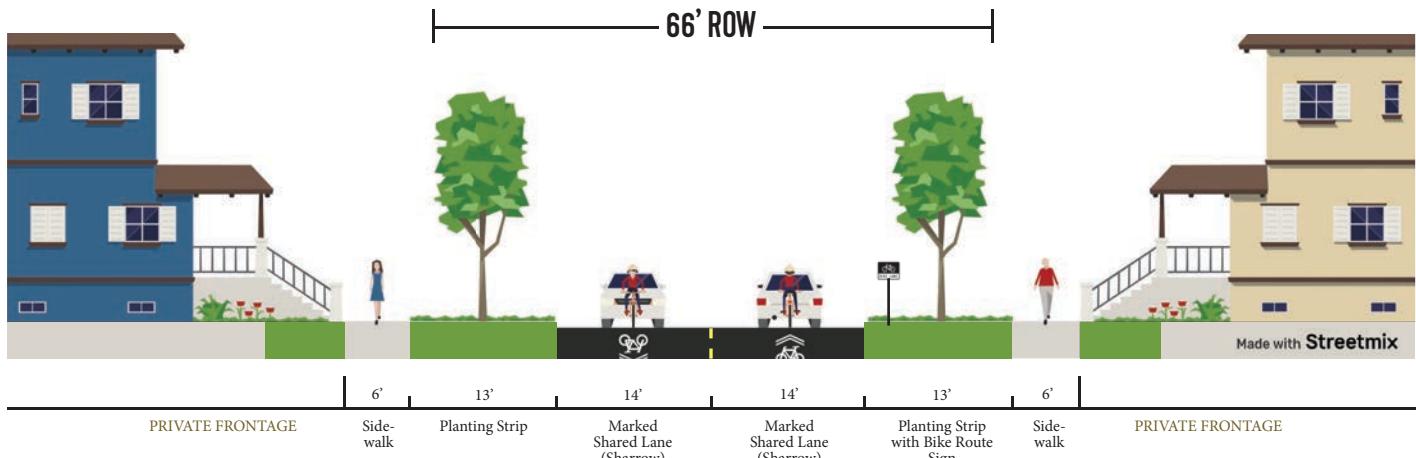
### Shared Street (State Street Context)





## Future Circulation Plan: Street Design Types (cont.)

### Shared Street (Saginaw, Feher, Park, Alfred and Nanita Streets Context)



### Shared Use Paths

The Future Circulation Plan Map recommends the development of several shared use paths connecting key destinations within and beyond the city.

Shared use paths are multi-use pathways that accommodate both pedestrians and wheeled users. Developed independent of roadways and designed to carry higher amounts of nonmotorized traffic, the shared use path is often the optimal solution; however, they are expensive to construct and maintain, often requiring the purchase of dedicated right-of-way. Separated from roadways by a parkway zone, shared use paths should be at least 10 feet wide to accommodate two way traffic. For paths with more than 300 users per hour, paths should be widened to at least 12 feet.

A shared use path “loop” route tentatively called the Montrose Community Trail Loop is proposed in the Future Circulation Plan. This loop could build upon the existing shared use pathway that currently connects Montrose Township Hall/Barber Park and the school facilities within the City of Montrose. From its current end point on Allen Drive, the proposed path would extend along the north side of Allen Drive to Ray Street, then along the east side of Ray Street to North Street, then along the north side of North Street and ultimately connect to Genesee Street. The shared use path would then extend along the east side of Genesee Street, through downtown, to Howard Street and Blueberry Park. From Blueberry Park, the shared use path would generally run along the north side of Coke Street

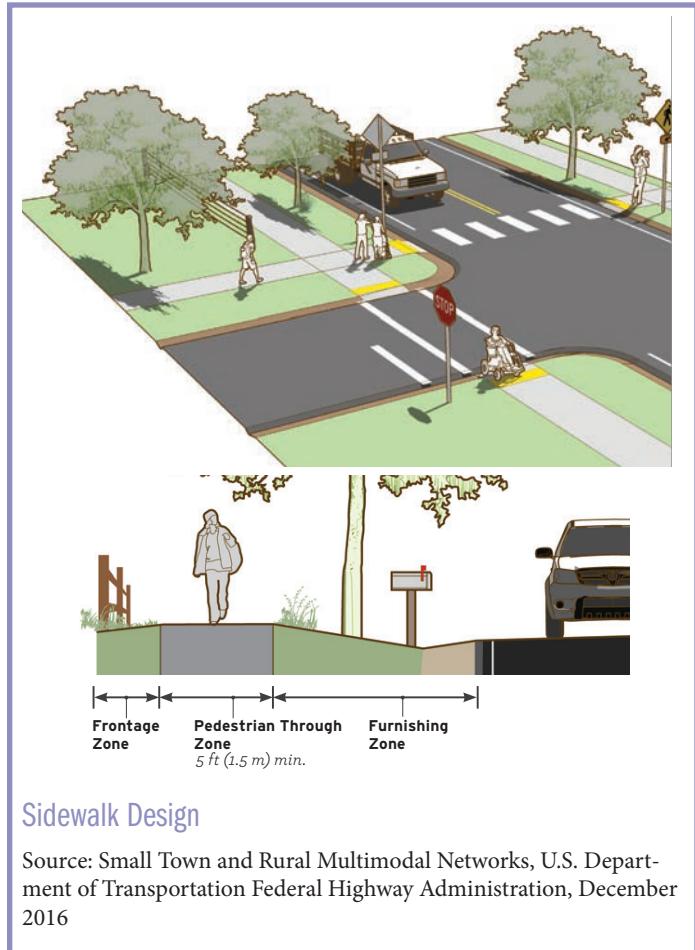
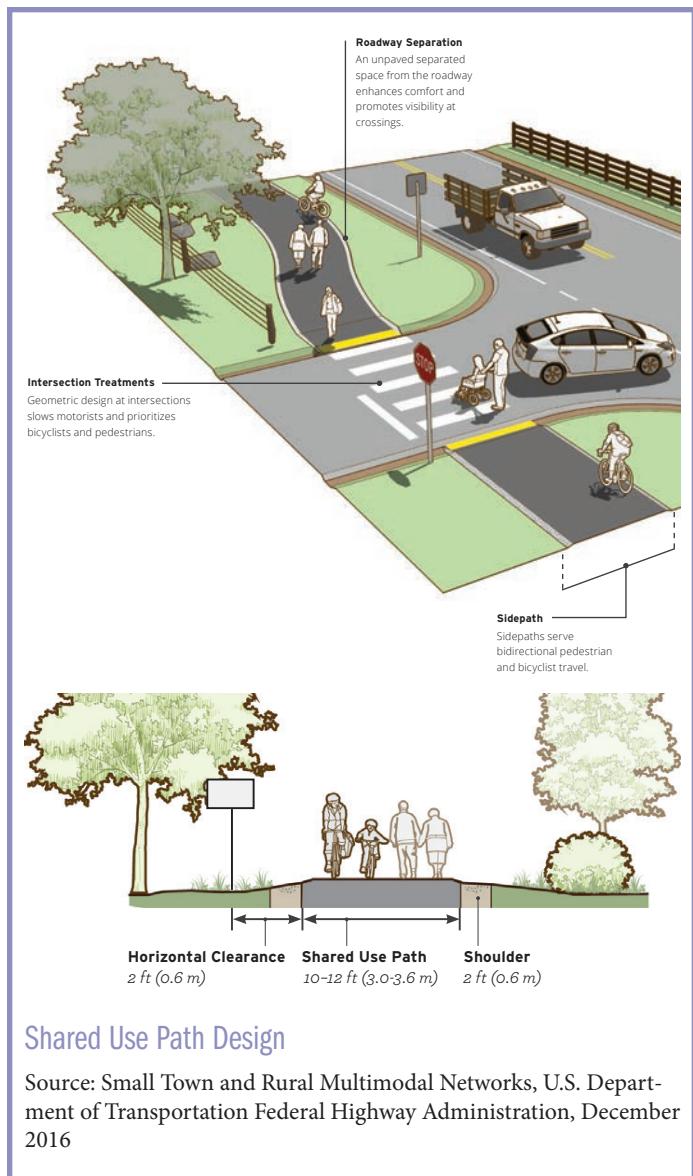
until Coke Street dead ends. At this point, the path would become an “off-road” shared use path, cutting through privately owned property within the city and Montrose Township and connect to the Barber Park entrance, completing the loop. This final segment would require the purchase of property and/or the securing of easements.

The proposed Montrose Community Trail Loop is an ambitious plan that will require coordination with regional entities, Montrose Township, and private property owners. It will likely be completed in segments over an extended time period. Outside funding in the form of grants will be required to implement the trail loop system.

### Sidewalks

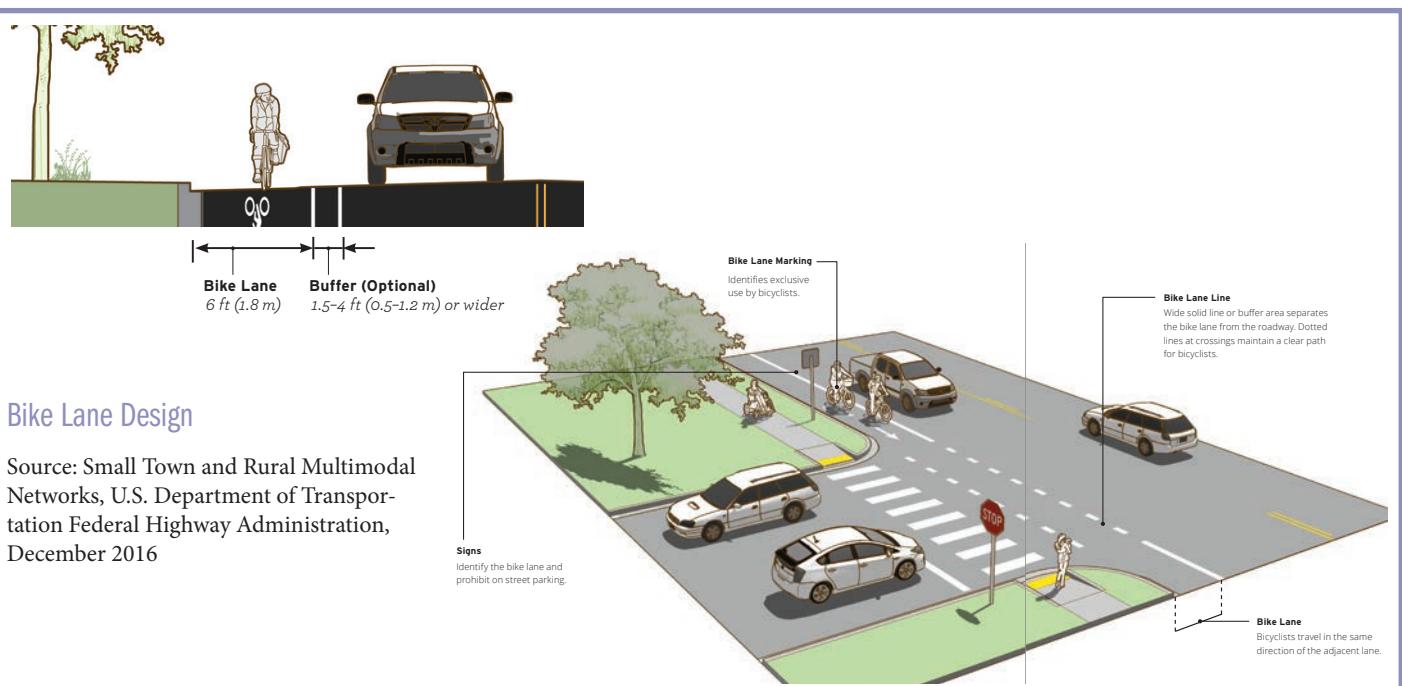
Presently, the majority of streets in the city are framed by sidewalks on both sides. However, there are numerous sidewalk gaps in the system. Completion of these gaps is a key recommendation shown on the Circulation Plan Map.

Sidewalks are the basis of any nonmotorized system. They are typically located adjacent to the road network and range between 48 to 60 inches wide. The American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) permits 48 inch-wide sidewalks while the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recommends a minimum width of 60 inches. The landscaped buffer strip between the sidewalk and the street (“parkway zone”) should be a minimum of five feet wide, while narrower strips are permitted.



## Shared Use Path Design

Source: Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks, U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, December 2016



## Pedestrian Safety Crossings

Intersection and other pedestrian safety crossings improve the overall safety, walkability, and identity of Montrose. The following strategies are recommended. Locations for specific crossing and safety enhancements are identified on the Future Circulation Plan Map.

### Intersection Crossings

The Future Circulation Plan Map shows pedestrian crossing improvements needed at key intersections. Although each intersection has unique needs with unique solutions, general intersection treatments such as curb extensions, textures, pavement markings, crosswalks, tightening corner curb radii, and installing pedestrian refuge islands are recommended to improve traffic management and safety. At a minimum, countdown pedestrian signals are recommended at all signalized crossings.

### Mid-Block Crossings

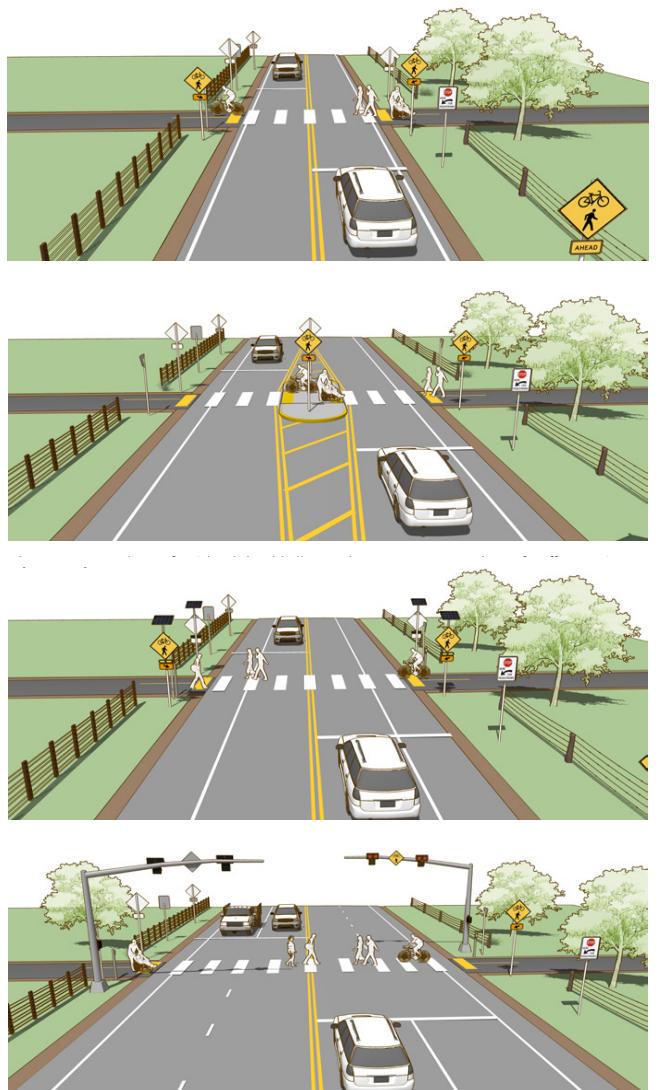
Mid-block crossings should be strategically located to provide safe crossing of a road at locations where there is no street intersection, but where higher volumes of pedestrian and bicycle users have a need to cross the road. Design features should include signage (ranging from a standard pedestrian crossing sign to a HAWK pedestrian beacon signal), pavement markings, and refuge islands for wider road segments.

### Railroad Crossings

Railroad crossings can present safety issues for pedestrians, particularly those using wheeled devices such as wheelchairs and scooters. There are a number of ways pedestrian safety can be improved at railroad crossings. Passive devices include signage, fencing, swing gates, and pavement markings. Active devices include flashers and audible active warning devices. The Future Circulation Plan Map shows needed improvements where Hickory Street and M-57 cross the railroad. Neither of these railroad crossings presently have pedestrian safety devices. Enhanced pedestrian safety measures should be explored at both crossings.

## Access Management

Access management and internal circulation are critical elements in creating a safe and efficient roadway system. The capacity of a regional or major road can be enhanced, and its useful life extended, by careful attention to access controls and circulation between adjacent sites. This coordination and review will also likely reduce the total number of access drives as well as the total number of conflict points. The city has the ability to implement access management standards which will allow for the proper planning and placement of access drives in the city. If not



### Mid-Block Crossing Design Options

(from Top to Bottom):

- Marked crosswalk
- Median safety island
- Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB)
- Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)

Source: Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks, U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, December 2016

implemented as new development occurs, the city will be faced with the difficult task of eliminating access drives on a piecemeal basis.

During the life of this plan, the primary area of focus for access management will be State Street (M-57) outside of downtown Montrose. The concept of access management is based on granting owners of property along a specified roadway, specifically those owning commercial, office or industrial, access to their property, but not unlimited access. There are many access management standards which can be implemented within the city. These include driveway spacing, limiting the number of access drives, and shared drives. When implementing access management policies, the city should utilize the Michigan Access Management Guidebook prepared by MDOT as a guide to assist in determining appropriate standards. As part of the Master Plan, the city has noted the following objectives for access management.

### **Joint Access Easement**

One method of reducing the need for access drives onto a major road is to provide joint or cross access easements between sites. During the site planning process, consideration should be given to the alignment of parking lot maneuvering lanes which would allow for continuous and safe travel between parking lots. Joint access easements allowing for such travel should be required prior to site plan approval. These documents will require review by the City Attorney, as well as the City Engineer.

### **Maximizing Corner Clearance**

Curb cuts for properties located on a corner parcel require special attention. Access drives and curb cuts should provide the maximum amount of spacing possible from the intersection to the curb cut. Further, in most cases, the access drive should be limited to the secondary roadway rather than the primary. This will help in channeling vehicles to a common intersection rather than creating new turning areas. AASHTO standards for intersection and corner clearance should be utilized as a guide when implementing this access management technique.

### **Maximize Clear Vision**

Particular attention should be given to the areas of the city where commercial access drives would be located on curves or portions of roadways with varying topographic height. Clear vision for motorists in this area should be reviewed carefully due to potential blind spots. If possible, access drives should be located in such a manner where clear vision in both directions is maximized.

### **Maximize Drive Offset**

The Planning Commission, in their review of site plans, needs to pay particular attention to driveway offsets.

Driveways and roadways on opposite sides of the road can increase the potential for conflict. Therefore, if drives cannot be aligned across a street, the distance between driveway centerlines should be maximized.

# Chapter 5:

# Future Land Use and Development Plan



Montrose Blueberry Festival

The Future Land Use Map is a general expression of the desired pattern of development for the City of Montrose over the next 20 years. This map for the city is an effort to provide a basis for promoting the full development of Montrose in a logical and efficient fashion. Its design was developed in conjunction with, and respondent to, the city's identified goals and objectives and, thereby, suggests appropriate measures for building upon existing conditions. It is important to note that the land use recommendations, as presented on the Future Land Use Map, do not necessarily relate to property lines or existing uses. This map is a pictorial guide for future development. Uses that predate the adoption of this map may go on without change. However, changes in use of property may be guided by the regulations implemented to ensure the vision of the Future Land Use Map.



City of Montrose  
Master Plan 2040

This Future Land Use Plan has been developed in recognition of numerous key trends and opportunities, as detailed in this report and listed below, which have a significant impact on the future of the City of Montrose:

1. Montrose's small town character, community pride, and high quality school system, all of which are highly attractive to potential new residents.
2. Montrose's centralized location between three large employment centers (Flint, Saginaw and Owosso). Additionally, the increasing prevalence of remote work arrangements allows greater flexibility to choose a place to live which may not be directly tied to employment location.
3. The attractiveness of Montrose's setting in a largely rural and agrarian area, but with convenient access to recreational facilities (the Flint River, Genesee County Parks, etc.) and "big city" amenities (nearby shopping, employment and cultural destinations).
4. Montrose's proximity to the I-75 corridor and the continuing growth and development along the corridor.
5. The availability of quality and affordable housing represents an opportunity to attract new residents, especially younger persons and families and first-time homebuyers.
6. The increasing number of elderly persons within the City is driving the need for housing stock and amenities that are desired by and/or needed to serve an overall aging population.
7. Montrose's reliable and recently upgraded infrastructure systems, including water, sewer, power and fiber optics, provides a competitive advantage for new growth and business attraction.

8. The availability of larger tracts of land within the City that have access to utilities and which can support new development – both residential and industrial.
9. Incentives and programs available to support existing and prospective businesses, as offered by the Montrose Downtown Development Authority and numerous local and regional economic development partnerships.

In future efforts to implement this Future Land Use strategy, the users of this Plan must recognize that planning generally, and land use planning in particular, is a repetitive cycle: planning, implementation, evaluation, and revision. In order to carry out this cycle, it is necessary to keep track of where we started, where we are, and where we intend to go. It is our hope that this Future Land Use Plan will help to accomplish this aim.

## Future Land Use by Category

Eight future land use categories are proposed for the City of Montrose. The geographic arrangement of land use recommendations is depicted on the Future Land Use Map ([Map 9](#)), and the acreage distribution is summarized in [Table 15](#).

### Single Family Residential

The single family future land use classification is intended to provide an area for the development of single-family homes that generally conform with the established density and character found in existing neighborhoods. Two family dwellings (duplexes, in-law suites, etc.) may also be allowed within the classification, but only after careful review to ensure that such units can appropriately blend in and not detract from the overarching single family residential character of the neighborhood.

**Table 15: Future Land Use Distribution**

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total
<i>Single Family Residential</i>	168.4	30.2%
<i>Mixed Residential</i>	175.2	31.4%
<i>Multiple Family Residential</i>	29.2	5.2%
<i>Mixed Use</i>	25.3	4.5%
<i>Central Business District</i>	6.5	1.2%
<i>Commercial</i>	19.4	3.5%
<i>Light Industrial</i>	42.4	7.6%
<i>Public/Quasi-Public</i>	75.2	13.5%
<i>Rights-of-Way</i>	16.7	3.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>558.3</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Wade Trim Analysis, February 2024

## Map 9: Future Land Use

Adopted September 12, 2024



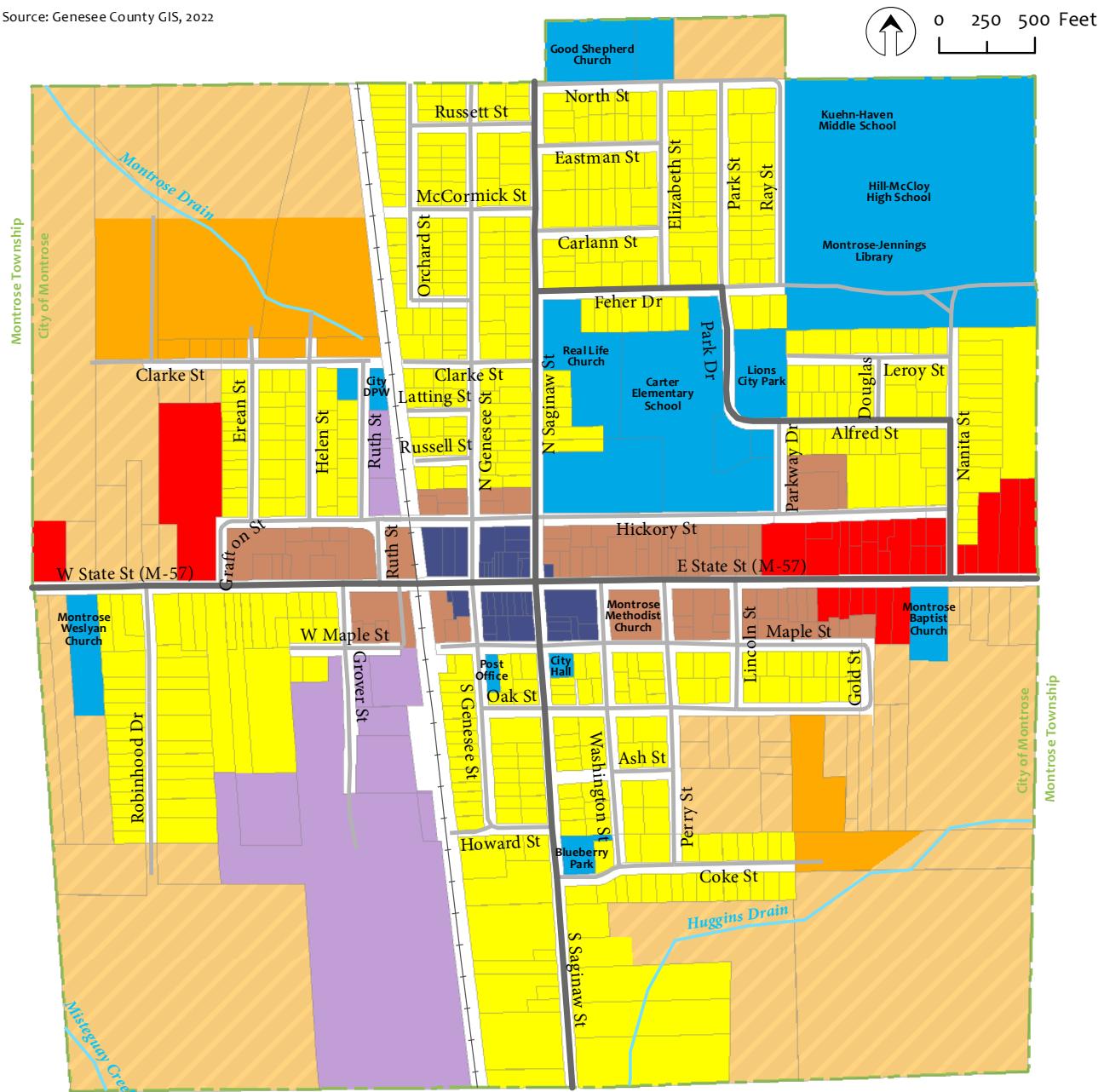
### Base Layers:

- Major Roads
- Other Roads
- Railroad
- ~~~~ Creeks and Drains
- Montrose City Limits

### Future Land Use:

 Single Family Residential	 Mixed Use	 Light Industrial
 Mixed Residential	 Central Business District	 Public/ Quasi-Public
 Multiple Family Residential	 Commercial	 Rights-of-Way

Parcel Source: Genesee County GIS, 2022



City of Montrose  
**Master Plan 2040**

Approximately 170 acres of land is designated for single-family residential use, primarily encompassing the existing developed neighborhoods within the City. New and infill residential development within these existing neighborhoods must, in terms of both scale and design, must be compatible with the scale and design of existing homes within the neighborhood.

These residential areas are walkable and sidewalks are provided throughout the neighborhoods. Neighborhood parks, places of worship, and similar public and semi-public facilities can be appropriately located within these neighborhoods to serve the needs of residents. It is recommended that the single family residential future land use classification support an average density of three to five units per acre.

## **Mixed Residential**

The intent of this future land use classification is to accommodate a mixture of residential use characterized predominantly by small lot detached single family development and attached single family development. This classification may also include housing developments catering to a senior population, including senior active living developments and residential care facilities. This category is not intended to accommodate conventional multiple-family apartment development or mobile/manufactured home park development.

Development within this category will be carefully designed to ensure the protection of the natural characteristics of the property, encourage high-quality architectural design standards and facilitate the construction of site amenities to serve the residents of the development and community as a whole. They will also be sufficiently screened where adjacent to lower density single family neighborhoods.

Cluster housing designed to conserve environmentally sensitive areas for natural and aesthetic enjoyment is specifically encouraged. Open space plans should delineate the nature and extent of existing conditions on site which include physical structures, natural features (wetlands, woodlands, etc.), topography, and drainage patterns. Open space/resource retention areas should systematically link with other natural corridors to create connectivity and passages to neighboring developments. Open space plans should graphically show potential interconnections with adjacent resource lands with conservation value. Central green space should be provided where possible to create common areas for residents. Community recreation facilities should be encouraged to develop within the common areas.

Areas within the City classified as mixed residential are largely undeveloped presently and represent notable opportunities for new mixed residential development. In total, this category encompasses approximately 175 acres or 31% of the City. Densities ranging between 5 and 8 dwelling units per acre may be allowed. However, the granting of additional density may be considered by the City upon demonstration by the owner of exceptional public benefit that would not otherwise be achieved by a conventional development.

## **Multiple Family Residential**

The multiple family residential category is intended to provide areas for high density, affordable, and predominantly rental housing that departs from traditional subdivision development. This category includes existing developments such as Forest Creek, Montrose Manor, and Beech Trail apartments. Landscaping treatments and greenbelts should be mandated through zoning to screen multiple family developments from adjacent single family areas. The recommended development density is up to 15 units per acre.

About 30 acres of land are designated for high-density multiple family residential development. These areas are in northwest and southeast quadrants of the City where multiple family residential developments already exist.

Due to the absence of a demonstrated need at this time, the Future Land Use Map does not show a specifically planned location for future mobile or manufactured home park development. In the event that there is demonstrated need for a new mobile or manufactured home park, such a project could be considered within the multiple family residential future land use classification. Several additional criteria must also be considered in the selection of a location for a mobile or manufactured home park:

- Access to a public road or roads capable of handling the traffic generated, with at least two points of entry/exit to/from the development.
- Availability of existing or proposed public water and sewers, community facilities and services.
- Substantial and effective buffering from incompatible adjoining land uses.
- Non-buildable sites such as tracts substantially located in a floodplain or wetland are excluded from consideration.
- Suitable location within a transitional area between less intensive residential uses and more intensive non-residential uses.

A marketing study, submitted at the time of application, will be required to justify the amount of land needed for mobile or manufactured home park development.

## **Mixed Use**

This future land use classification is designed to accommodate a combination of uses either contained within an individual structure or among structures on the same site, generally containing a mix of residential, commercial, office, and quasi-public uses.

Lands designed as mixed use are primarily located along State Street (M-57) outside of downtown Montrose. These are existing developed areas that already contain a mixture of uses. West of downtown, this area mainly includes commercial and industrial uses amongst scattered residential parcels. East of downtown, most properties contain residential dwellings, but office, commercial and institutional uses are interspersed amongst the residential parcels. Given the context of these lands immediately adjacent to downtown, mixed use development is appropriate, which may include buildings with street level retail and/or office use, with office and/or residential spaces on the floors above. The adaptive reuse of residential units for home occupations, specialty shops, and office uses is encouraged. Developments with a combination of commercial or mixed-use buildings on the same site with residential building types could also be appropriate. Because the mixed use areas include existing residential uses and properties, new mixed use development must be sensitive to the surrounding residential properties through appropriate choices in building scale, building design and site screening treatments.

## **Central Business District**

The central business district future land use classification encompasses downtown Montrose, which serves as the focal point and commercial center for the City and outlying areas. Land uses within this planning area are intentionally not segregated to provide for a multi-dimensional, distinctive, dynamic and interesting downtown district.

A zoning overlay for the downtown should be drafted which preserves the existing scale, pattern, design, and location of buildings. Additionally, the City's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) should continue working with property owners to encourage the preservation and restoration of historic building facades.

Ground-floor space should be reserved for pedestrian-oriented restaurants, retailing and services, with offices and housing above, but with the flexibility to lease ground floor space for offices to keep the space filled. The adaptive reuse

of residential units for home occupations, specialty shops, and office uses is encouraged. Other appropriate uses may include places of worship, funeral homes, restaurants, taverns, breweries/wineries/distilleries with retail and restaurant components, workshops and maker spaces for artists and craftspersons with retail components, service stations, lodging, etc. Industrial uses, however, should not be permitted to develop or expand within the central business district.

## **Commercial**

This future land use category is intended to support predominantly freestanding commercial and office uses that serve both the local and regional market. Commercial and office uses will benefit from having frontage along M-57. Shared driveway access between neighboring parcels should be encouraged when feasible to limit the number of access points. A margin of greenspace that includes trees and shrubs should be provided between the right-of-way line and off-street parking areas. In addition, all outdoor trash storage areas should be screened from public view. Furthermore, signage along M-57 should be regulated to reduce its visual impact along the streetscape.

In the plan, all commercial activity has been focused in the M-57 corridor, which totals approximately 20 acres. It contains most of the City's existing general commercial activity as well as some noncommercial uses such as homes and some undeveloped land.

The commercial future land use classification takes advantage of the traffic flow along M-57 for the business community and it provides a buffer between the highway and the residential areas of the City. Proposed commercial rezonings should be phased according to demonstrated market demand and based upon set review criteria that evaluate potential impacts on municipal services and the surrounding natural, physical, and aesthetic environment.

## **Light Industrial**

The light industrial future land use classification is designed to incorporate existing industrial operations and provide for industrial expansion near existing uses. The Future Land Use Plan envisions the expansion of light industrial uses for the purposes of minimizing nuisance impacts such as, smoke, noise, increases in traffic volumes, dust, etc. Light industrial uses are defined as wholesale operations, warehouse facilities, and manufacturing processes which involve pre-fabricated materials and which generally do not create a significant nuisance to adjoining properties.

The main elements of sound industrial site design include controlled access, service areas located at the sides and rear of buildings, convenient access, visitor parking and on-site circulation, screening of outdoor storage, work areas, and equipment, and emphasis on the main building entry and landscaping. A variety of building and parking setbacks should be provided in order to avoid long monotonous building facades and to create diversity. Structures should be located on “turf islands”, where the office portion of the building does not directly abut paved parking areas. A minimum five to seven foot landscape strip should be provided between parking areas and the office portion of a structure. Building setbacks within industrial areas should be proportional to the scale of the structure and in consideration of existing adjacent development.

Planned light industrial areas are found to the northwestern and southwestern quadrants of the City, immediately west of the railroad. Totaling approximately 40 acres, these areas include existing light industrial establishments as well as land for new light industrial development. The area south of Maple Street, west of the railroad is the larger of the two planned light industrial areas. This area offers a prime opportunity for the development of new light industrial uses in an industrial park setting.

## Public and Quasi-Public

This future land use category has been established to accommodate many of the existing public and quasi-public facilities within the City. This includes the public schools facilities in the northeast quadrant of the City, as well as numerous other public and quasi-public uses found throughout the City. This land use classification is not intended to be all encompassing of public and quasi-public uses, rather, it recognizes that given the nature and size of the facilities, it is not likely that a change in use will occur.

## Redevelopment Ready Sites

Communities must think strategically about the development and redevelopment of properties. Investments should be targeted in areas that have the potential for positive future development. Focusing on the redevelopment and reuse of a single property or a specific node can catalyze further development around it. To ensure lasting change, the following concepts identify a community-generated vision for “redevelopment ready sites” within the City of Montrose. These properties may be in the form of vacant land, a superfluous surface parking lot, a former industrial site, a historic building that has fallen on hard times, or even vacant storefronts or upper stories along a commercial street. Pushing these properties into more productive uses will help community leaders meet multiple goals,

from increased tax revenue to a better quality of life for existing residents.

By engaging the public and formulating a framework of desired outcomes for priority sites, the city creates a predictable environment for redevelopment projects.

## Redevelopment Ready Sites Identification

Listed below and shown on Map 10, eight sites within the city have been identified and will be targeted as redevelopment ready sites:

1. Vacant Lot North End
2. Vacant Land Southeast
3. End of Robinhood Drive
4. Grover Street Industrial Park
5. Downtown - South Side
6. Downtown - North Side
7. Vacant Land Northwest
8. East of Oak and Maple Streets

These sites came to the forefront during the various public engagement opportunities, including the citizen survey and visioning workshop. They have significant potential for development/redevelopment and, if developed, would greatly contribute to the improvement of the community in line with the vision and recommendations of this Master Plan.

Conditions may change and new opportunities may arise that will result in the city focusing on different or new redevelopment ready sites. Over time, the city should continually identify redevelopment ready sites (in addition to those highlighted in this section) and package them for marketing and solicitation of developers.

## Redevelopment Challenges

Site development and redevelopment poses a variety of challenges. The following is a listing of challenges that the City of Montrose faces as it seeks site development and redevelopment of its eight redevelopment ready sites:

1. Lack of control of the land due to ownership by multiple private property owners (particularly applicable to sites #2, #3, #5, #6, #7 and #8)
2. High cost of rehabilitating existing buildings on site, including historic buildings, which may be in poor condition (particularly applicable to sites #5 and #6)
3. Possible environmental contamination from prior uses, leading to site remediation costs (particularly applicable to sites #5 and #6)

# Map 10:

## Redevelopment Ready Sites

April 2024

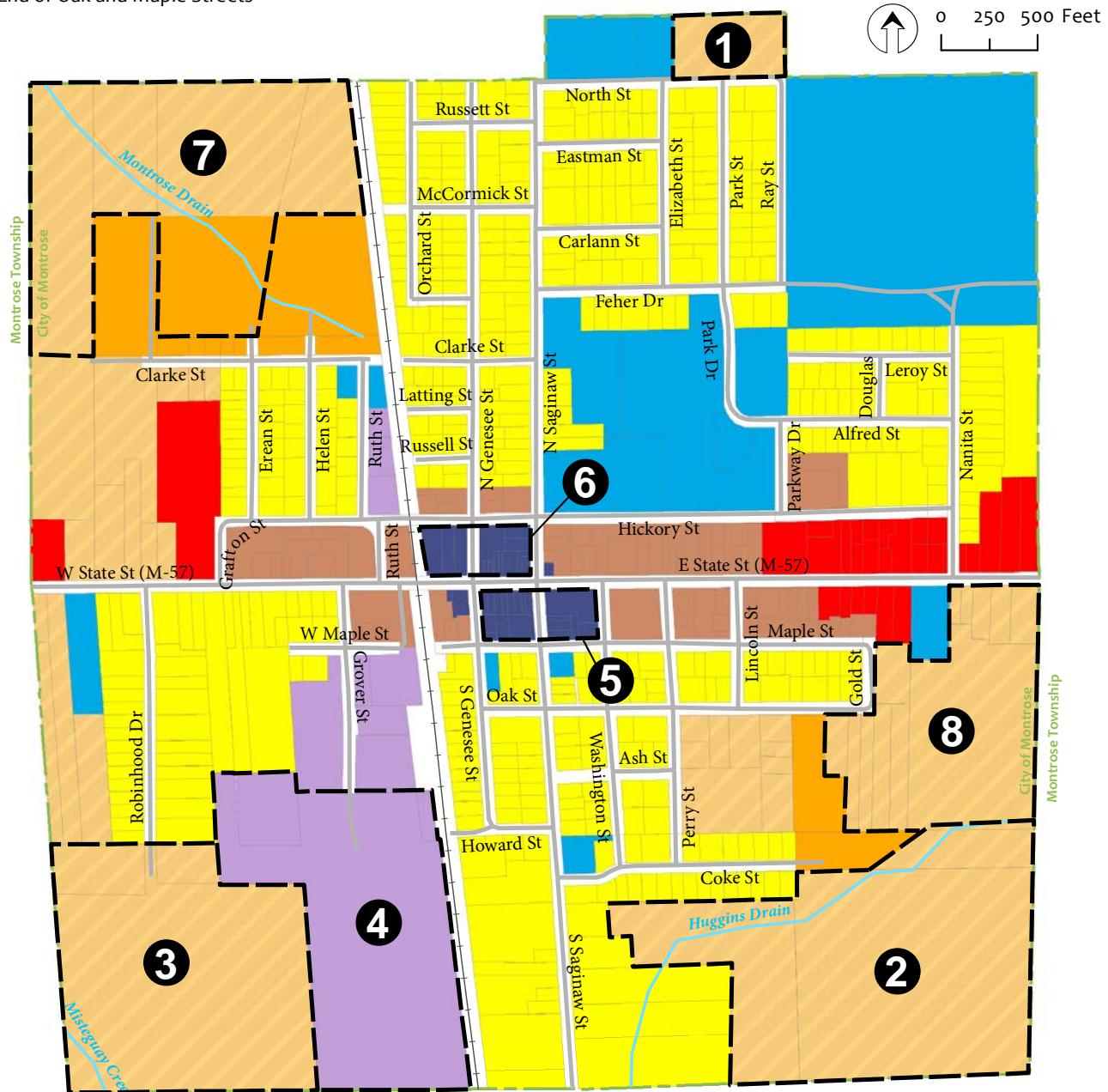


### Redevelopment Ready Sites List:

1. Vacant Lot North End
2. Vacant Land Southeast
3. End of Robinwood Drive
4. Grover Street Industrial Park
5. Downtown - South Side
6. Downtown - North Side
7. Vacant Land Northwest
8. End of Oak and Maple Streets

### Future Land Use:

	Single Family Residential		Mixed Use		Light Industrial
	Mixed Residential		Central Business District		Public/Quasi-Public
	Multiple Family Residential		Commercial		Rights-of-Way



4. Zoning designations/requirements which serve as barriers to “creative” redevelopment concepts (applicable to all sites)
5. Need for additional parking, but a lack of space on-site to accommodate parking (particularly applicable to sites #5 and #6)
6. Lack of public infrastructure (water, sewer or roads) (particularly applicable to sites #2, #3, #4, #7 and #8)

## Redevelopment Strategies

The city, with the support of private and public partners, has the ability and necessary tools to combat these challenges. The following strategies are recommended as means for the city to overcome the various redevelopment challenges.

### Market redevelopment sites and solicit developers

- Clearly articulate and communicate the vision for each priority redevelopment site. The category descriptions of the Future Land Use Plan are a starting point for prospective redevelopment, but additional site investigation may be necessary and the city may wish to prepare high quality concept sketches and illustrations as marketing tools.
- Post business information packets on the city’s website, which contain demographics, available incentives and testimonials from successful business owners already in the city
- Work with local partners (DDA, County, MEDC, etc.) to promote the vision
- Promote sites on online databases such as Zoom Prospector, OppSites, and the MEDC Real Estate Database

### Eliminate zoning barriers

- Proactively rezone priority redevelopment sites to a district that would support the proposed redevelopment
- Create and adopt a new mixed residential zoning district which allows for creative residential development proposals
- Review and amend the zoning ordinance to incentivize new residential development within downtown and mixed use districts

### Incentivize redevelopment

- Establish and promote clear incentives to demonstrate the city is a willing partner in redevelopment for certain types of projects. City incentives may include tax abatements, DDA sign/facade improvement programs, and DDA funded capital improvements.
- Consider a new DDA program to provide “gap financing” for impactful investment projects through the use of project specific tax increment financing
- Catalogue available outside funding resources and serve as a conduit between property owners and funding agencies, including the MEDC and EGLE

# Chapter 6: Downtown Framework Plan



State Street in Downtown Montrose

Centered around the intersection of State Street (M-57) and Saginaw Street, downtown Montrose serves as the historic focal point and commercial center for the city and outlying areas. It is a traditional mixed-use district, with distinctive and varied commercial establishments, service facilities, cultural institutions, civic spaces, and living spaces. Based on an analysis of existing conditions and future opportunities, this chapter outlines a strategic framework for future enhancements within downtown Montrose.



City of Montrose  
**Master Plan 2040**

## Existing Conditions

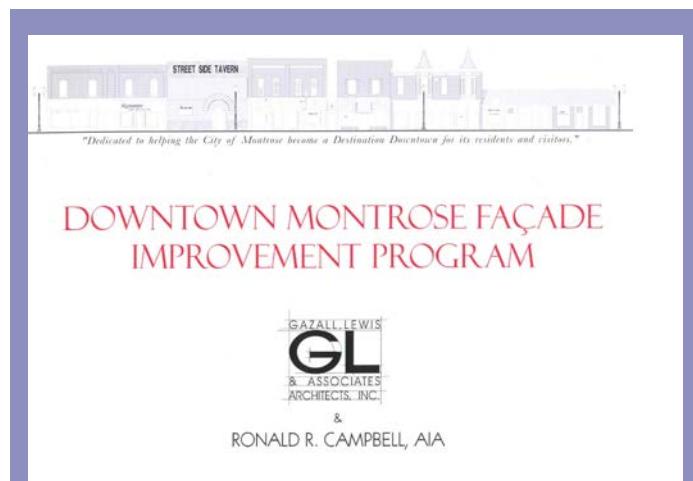
Downtown Montrose is generally bounded by the Huron & Eastern Railroad on the west, Hickory Street on the north, Washington Street on the east, and Maple Street on the south. Downtown Montrose is primarily accessed by State Street (M-57). M-57 connects Montrose with the City of Chesaning, approximately 15 miles to the west. M-57 connects Montrose to I-75 located 6 miles to the east. Just beyond I-75 along M-57 is the City of Clio.

According to Esri data, a population of slightly more than 40,000 is located within a 15 minute drive of downtown Montrose. When extended to a 30 minute drive, downtown Montrose reaches a population of just over 400,000. This 30 minute drive time geographic area includes nearly all of the greater Flint metropolitan area and the southern portion of the Saginaw metropolitan area. It also reaches the communities of Birch Run, Bridgeport, Chesaning, Clio, Durand, Flushing, Frankenmuth, Mount Morris, New Lothrop, Otisville, St. Charles, and Swartz Creek.

Recognizing the need to strengthen and facilitate public and private investments within downtown Montrose, a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was formed by the city in 1993. The DDA District encompasses the entirety of downtown Montrose as well as additional properties beyond, particularly along State Street both east and west of downtown.

A seven member DDA Board was also established at that time to govern the activities within the DDA District. The Montrose City Council, however, has final authority for establishing the annual budget of the DDA. The establishment of a DDA enabled the capture of tax increment revenues as a means of financing public improvements. This was accomplished when the city adopted a Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan. The purpose of this plan was to provide for the acquisition, construction and financing of the necessary street, sidewalk, streetscape, parking improvements and other facilities needed in the DDA District to achieve the general objective of the DDA to promote economic growth.

A design guidelines report, entitled Downtown Montrose Facade Improvement Program, was prepared for the DDA in 2009. This report provides a framework for the design of future building and landscape initiatives for both new and rehabilitation projects. The report included a series of proposed facade design renderings and recommendations to be used as illustrative examples of the guidelines.



The DDA's design guidelines report includes a series of proposed facade design renderings and recommendations to be used as illustrative examples of the guidelines.

## DDA Incentive Programs

The DDA budgets funds to assist building owners in improving their downtown properties. The assistance is in the form of matching grants for exterior improvements to the downtown buildings.

### Facade Incentive Program

A facade incentive program is currently available which provides financial assistance to business owners and real estate owners with property located in the downtown district target area (the north and south sides of West State Street, anchored by Saginaw Street on the east end and Genesee Street as the west end point), for the purpose of improving their building façades and increase the aesthetic appeal of the downtown district. The ultimate goal of the program is to improve the economic vitality of downtown Montrose by encouraging private investment through historic sensitive rehabilitation. The program offers a 50%/50% matching grant of up to \$10,000 for eligible exte-

rior improvements made to a qualified building within the DDA boundaries.

## Sign Incentive Program

The goal of the DDA's sign incentive program is to connect the gap in cost between unattractive signage and highly functional, attractive signs which complement downtown Montrose's buildings and result in creating a more attractive downtown district. The intent of the program is also to encourage three dimensional, symbolic, projecting signs emphasizing the pedestrian-friendly nature of downtown Montrose.

## Strategic Opportunities

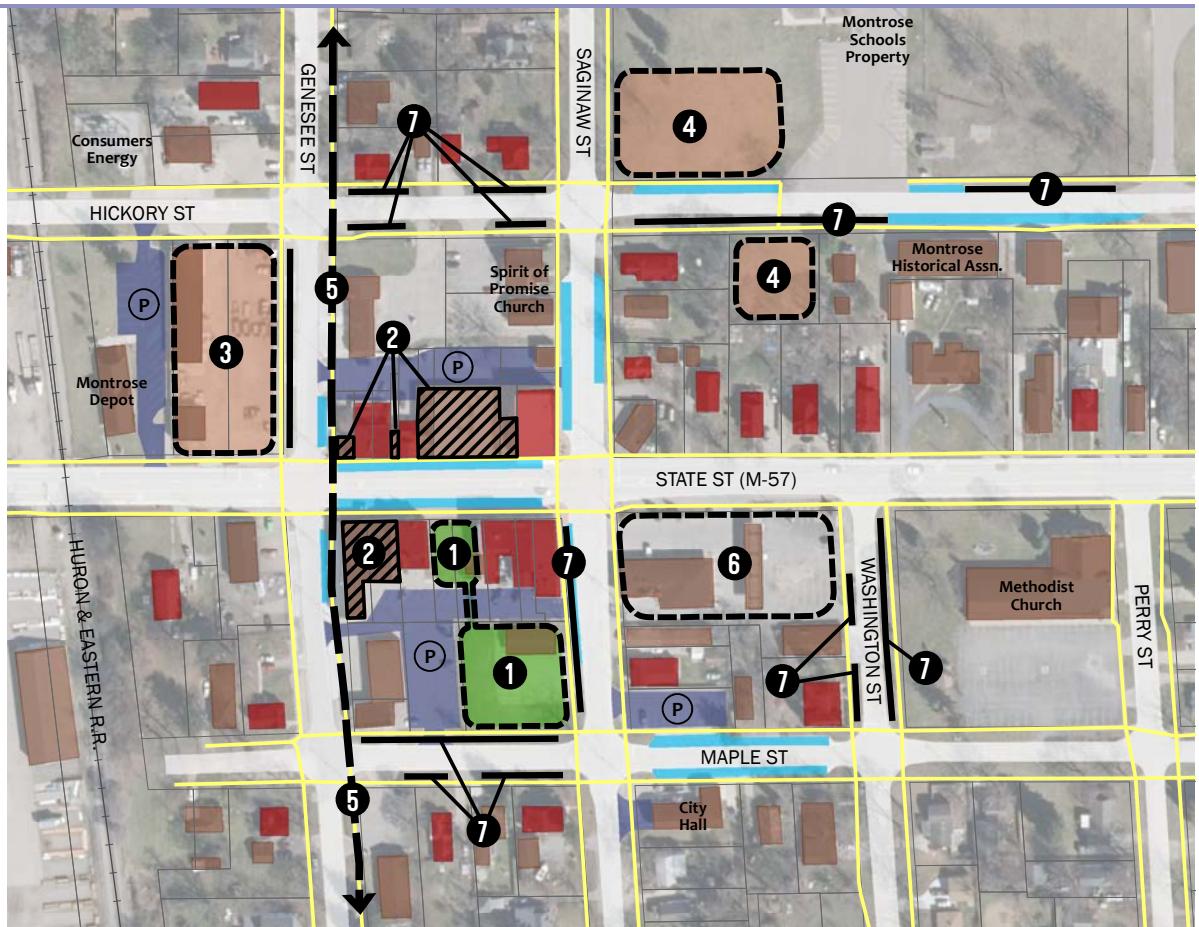
Based on an examination of existing conditions, as well as public and stakeholder input received during the planning process, a number of strategic opportunities exist to enhance the vibrancy and economic strength of downtown Montrose. These strategic opportunities are highlighted and described in the map below.

## Aspirational Vision for Downtown

The City of Montrose envisions downtown as the business, entertainment, cultural and social hub for the greater Montrose community. Downtown Montrose will be a place of 24/7 activity for persons of all ages and interests, with thriving businesses, varied entertainment opportunities, inviting public spaces, recreational opportunities, historic storefronts, mixed housing options, and streets and sidewalks that are safe and accommodating to all. Downtown Montrose will be a place unique among the region, which, once visited, will not be forgotten.

### Strategic Opportunities:

- 1** Proposed Civic Plaza Multi-functional space for events, farmers' market, pop-up retail sales, public art, and similar civic uses.
- 2** Upper Story Mixed-Use Opportunity to construct second story for office, residential lofts, and other uses.
- 3** Site Redevelopment Redevelopment of this underutilized site with prime location on M-57 for mixed-use.
- 4** School Properties New public space or mixed-use development opportunity
- 5** Shared Use Path Widened sidewalk/shared use path as part of proposed community trail loop.
- 6** Site Redesign Site redesign or enhancements needed to mitigate impact of this auto-oriented use.
- 7** On-Street Parking Retrofit existing streets to include public on-street parking.



## Downtown Montrose: Strategic Opportunities



### Existing Conditions:

- Buildings (One Story)
- Buildings (Two Story)
- Parcel Lines
- (P) Public Off-Street Parking
- (P) Public On-Street Parking
- Sidewalks

## Strategic Recommendations

The idea of using sense of place as an economic development tool is not unique to Montrose. Indeed, the State of Michigan is building the state's economic development model on the idea of placemaking. Simplified, the idea of placemaking is to celebrate those elements that define a community -- the spaces, the culture and the quality of life -- to attract a range of new businesses and investments.

The importance of "placemaking" cannot be underestimated, and Montrose's leaders recognize the key role that it plays in attracting investment and development. To this end, the City of Montrose has established the following strategic recommendations for enhancements to downtown Montrose which are largely built upon the principles of placemaking.

### General Recommendations

- Consider additional adding landscaping in the form of planter boxes and/or street trees to increase the overall appearance of downtown.
- Consider locations and take advantage of opportunities for incorporating public art and interpretive displays into the downtown setting.
- Incorporate additional (and seasonal) natural amenities and vegetation throughout the downtown.
- Adopt incentives in the Zoning Ordinance to encourage the use of sustainable building materials and energy efficiency.
- Provide enhanced connections between the Montrose Depot and the downtown core, such as a widened sidewalk with amenities, informational kiosks promoting the depot and its history, or increased programming/activities at the depot site.
- Assist business ventures that are interested in establishing in Montrose and look for potential advantages that would encourage locating downtown.
- Continue working with downtown businesses to assist with marketing, special events and business consulting.

### Land Use

- Promote and encourage active ground floor uses including retail and service uses such as shopping, restaurants, cafes, and salons to enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Encourage office and employment uses, especially on upper floors of mixed-use buildings.
- Allow and incentivize residential units, especially lofts and apartments above storefronts and attached residential units on the periphery of downtown.
- Certain existing sites, such as gas stations and other auto-oriented uses, do not fit well into the historic fabric of downtown. To minimize their impacts, the city should seek to screen such uses through the installation of decorative walls and other treatments.

### Building Character

- Continue efforts to preserve and enhance existing buildings and facades, particularly in the State Street block between Genesee and Saginaw Streets. The DDA's existing facade improvement program is a key tool to stimulate this effort.
- The redevelopment of vacant and underutilized parcels should reflect the community's desire to honor the traditional small town urban approach of buildings directly fronting the streets and parking to the rear of the sites (if required at all), with an architectural character and massing that creates visual interest and continuity with the existing historic buildings.
- Support tools and techniques that create attractive and interesting first floors of buildings.
- Encourage the screening of service facilities, such as waste receptacles, delivery areas, mechanical equipment, and utilities.

### Public Spaces

- To facilitate additional activity and draw visitors to the downtown, the city should seek to convert certain underutilized space to more active use as special event space. In addition to concerts in the park and other festivals, these spaces could be used to support a local farmers' market.
- Incorporate and arrange seating and other amenities in appropriate areas to encourage social interaction.

- Work with community, business and civic organizations to host community-wide events, gatherings and celebrations.
- Connect existing sidewalks and pathways to key public spaces.

## Circulation

- As part of road improvement projects, adhere to the Street Design Types as recommended in the Future Circulation Plan.
- Provide non-motorized linkages within and through downtown, including sidewalks, bicycle lanes, bicycle routes, and the proposed Montrose Community Trail Loop shared use path/widened sidewalk along Genesee Street.
- Paint robust and highly visible crosswalks throughout the downtown.
- Provide more bike racks.

## Parking

- To provide additional public parking downtown, defined on-street parking striping should be provided along certain segments of Genesee, Saginaw, Hickory, Washington and Maple Streets.
- Allow and encourage porous/pervious pavement on surface parking lots.
- Require trees and planting islands within large surface parking areas.
- Utilize distinctive surface materials and other techniques to accommodate multiple uses such as public gatherings, recreation and parking.
- Utilize distinctive surface materials to establish clear pedestrian walkways in parking areas with linkages to an integrated system of sidewalks and pathways.
- Place vegetative screening and plantings at appropriate locations around parking areas.
- Provide for adequate bicycle and electric vehicle parking facilities.

## Signage

- Develop a distinctive wayfinding system that helps vehicles and pedestrians navigate within the downtown.
- Develop an interpretive signage system that highlights the historical, cultural and natural features of the downtown.

## Lighting

- Promote energy efficient light fixtures compatible with the standards established by the International Dark Sky Association.
- Apply light fixtures that focus light downwards.
- Utilize timers, motion-sensitive lights and other light-saving devices in appropriate areas to minimize over lighting.
- Ensure that the design of light fixtures are compatible with the surrounding character.

This page is intentionally left blank

# Chapter 7: Action Strategy



Tree planting volunteers

The objective of the Master Plan is to provide the guidelines through which the city can improve and operate. A plan is of little value to the community unless it is used to guide decisions and operations of the city. The implementation of the various planning elements requires the development and effectuation of ordinances and techniques, along with a public information program to inform residents of the merits and objectives of the Master Plan. Likewise, in order to achieve maximum benefits, the planning process must be designed to permit periodic assessment of data and the continued review of plan elements. The city should continue to promote new and updated zoning provisions, code enforcement, and create a capital improvements plan in accordance with the visions and strategies used to develop the Master Plan.

The plan is designed to be a road map for action, incorporating strategies, specific projects, and programs that will achieve the desired results. This section identifies the actions needed to transform the plan's vision into reality.



**City of Montrose  
Master Plan 2040**

## Tenets of Successful Implementation

The input received through the planning process provided a foundation to help achieve the city's vision. Community support, commitment, and involvement must continue.

### Commitment

Successful plan implementation will be directly related to a committed city leadership. While elected and appointed officials will have a strong leadership role, many others, including city staff and leaders from the community's many institutions and organizations, will also be instrumental in supporting the plan. However, the commitment not only includes these individuals, but an additional array of stakeholders. Citizens, landowners, developers, and business owners interested in how the City of Montrose develops must unite toward the plan's common vision.

### Guidance for Development Decisions

This plan is designed for routine use and should be consistently employed during any process affecting the community's future. Private investment decisions by developers, corporations, and land owners should consider the plan's direction as it is the guide for future growth and stability of the community.

### Role of the Planning Commission

A role of the Planning Commission is to provide recommendations to the City Council and city administration. This planning function is a continuous process which does not terminate with the completion of the Master Plan. Planning is an ongoing process of identification, adjustment, and response to problems or opportunities that arise. In order to sustain the planning process, generate positive results, maintain momentum, and respond to change, the plan should be reviewed and updated every five years, at a minimum (refer to the Planning Enabling Act). In addition, the Planning Commission or other designated committees, can prepare sub-area or topic-based plans for specific issues or areas of concern as specified in the Master Plan.

The Planning Commission's work does not end with the adoption of this plan. Every year, the Planning Commission should establish/update its annual work plan based upon this plan's recommendations.

### Coordination between Boards and Commissions

In no certain order, the Planning Commission, City Council, Zoning Board of Appeals, Downtown Development Authority, and other groups are essential for the implementation of the plan. To that end, there should be a regularly scheduled coordination session between these groups to discuss work plans and priorities for the year. Resources

can be allocated and schedules developed to minimize the duplication of effort and conflicting interests.

### Downtown Development Authority's Role

The DDA should be viewed as the development arm of city government, as opposed to just a funding source for public improvements. The DDA can leverage private investment using its ability to capture tax increment, both current and future, and direct it toward specific development projects. Without this investment, many projects would not be feasible, ensuring they would not be built and the city loses new tax revenue moving forward.

### Capital Improvement Program

The city has and will continue to maintain an updated and effective Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). A CIP is used to evaluate, prioritize and structure financing of public improvement projects. The CIP provides a basis for systematic review of proposed improvements related to the Master Plan by the City Council, and creates an opportunity to coordinate timing, location and financing of those projects.

The role of the Planning Commission in the CIP process is primarily to identify potential projects as related to the Master Plan, coordinate material submitted by others, and work with financial officials in assembling facts for decision by the City Council.

### Public Understanding and Support

The necessity of citizen participation and public understanding of the planning process and the plan cannot be over-emphasized. A carefully organized public education program is necessary to organize and identify public support in any community development plan. A lack of citizen understanding and support can seriously limit implementation of the planning proposals. The failure to support needed bond issues, failure to elect progressive officials, and litigation concerning taxation, special assessments, zoning, and public improvements are some of the results of public misunderstanding of long-range plans.

In order to organize public support most effectively, the city must emphasize the reasons for the planning program and encourage citizen participation in the adoption of the plan and the continued planning process. Public education can be achieved through informational presentations at various local functions, newspaper articles, and preparation of simple summary statements on plans for distribution. Participation by residents in various civic groups is evidence of community involvement.

## Programs and Funding

Successful implementation of projects will depend on the ability of the city to secure the necessary financing. Besides the general fund, millage proposals and other traditional funding mechanisms, there are several sources of funding available to the city. In many cases, the city has in the past, or currently benefits from such funding.

## Zoning Plan

According to section 2(d) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, the Master Plan shall include a "Zoning Plan" depicting the various zoning districts and their use, as well as standards for height, bulk, location, and use of building and premises. The zoning plan serves as the link between the Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance, and to ensure consistency between the two documents, it guides the Planning Commission in what to consider updating in the Zoning Ordinance.

This Master Plan has established a total of 8 future land use classifications (see the Future Land Use Map and Chapter 5).

The presently adopted City of Montrose Zoning Ordinance has established a total of 7 zoning district designations, as follows:

- SF1, Single-Family Residential
- SF2, Single-Family Residential
- MFR, Multiple-Family Residential
- MHP, Mobile Home/Manufacturer Home Park
- CBD, Central Business District
- GBD, General Business District
- IND, Industrial District

**Table 16** highlights how each of the 8 future land use classifications is intended to be accomplished through zoning district designations. As noted, amendments to the City of Montrose Zoning Ordinance are needed in order to implement the recommendations of this Master Plan. These recommended amendments include:

- Review and consider needed amendments to the SF1 District pertaining to permitted uses and development standards appropriate for traditional neighborhood development.
- Amend the existing SF2 District or create a new Mixed Residential District which accomplishes the intent of the Mixed Residential future land use classification.
- Review and consider needed amendments to the MFR District pertaining to permitted uses and development standards to allow for missing-middle housing and creative residential redevelopment initiatives.
- Create a new Mixed Use District which accomplishes the intent of the Mixed Use future land use classification.
- Review and consider needed amendments to the CBD District pertaining to permitted uses and development standards to allow for a dynamic mix of uses within a traditional downtown context.

**Table 16: Relationship Between the Future Land Use Classifications and Zoning Districts**

Future Land Use Classification	Current Zoning District(s)
Single Family Residential	SF1, Single-Family Residential
Mixed Residential	n/a - Consider developing a new district
Multiple Family Residential	MFR, Multiple-Family Residential
Mixed Use	n/a - Consider developing a new district
Central Business District	CBD, Central Business District
Commercial	GBD, General Business District
Light Industrial	IND, Industrial District
Public/Quasi-Public	n/a - Most zoning districts allow public and quasi-public uses.

Beyond the above, the following are additional recommended zoning ordinance considerations and amendments necessary to implement the vision statements and strategies of this Master Plan (see Chapter 3):

- Review the zoning ordinance and consider amendments that incentivize or require buffers around important natural features, including woodlands, wetlands, ponds, streams and drains.
- Consider zoning changes to allow for sustainable energy production.
- Review the zoning ordinance and consider amendments that encourage the use of Low Impact Development strategies in new development and redevelopment projects.
- Conduct a closer investigation of the city's neighborhoods ensure that the zoning ordinance supports appropriate development consistent with the historic context of the neighborhood.
- Review the zoning ordinance and consider allowing and regulating accessory dwelling units.
- Review and update zoning ordinance provisions to ensure high-quality residential development and redevelopment. This would include potential amendments to support new lifestyle housing choices such as townhomes, rowhouses, stacked ranches, lofts and life-work units. Such developments would be allowed in strategic locations, particularly near or within mixed-use districts with access to major roads and when adequately supported by public infrastructure.
- Review the zoning ordinance and seek to eliminate barriers and disincentives to residential development projects that are desired by the community. This would include consideration of a new planned unit development option, which allows for regulatory flexibility for unique projects that meet certain community benefits qualifications.
- Review and update the zoning ordinance's design standards to ensure attractive and high-quality development throughout the city. Specific attention should be paid to development and redevelopment within mixed-use and commercial districts.
- Review the zoning ordinance and seek to eliminate barriers and disincentives to non-residential and mixed-use development projects that contribute to the local economy and are supported by the community.

Finally, after adoption of the Master Plan, it is recommended that the Planning Commission examine the currently adopted City of Montrose Zoning Map in light of the new Future Land Use Map. The Planning Commission may consider proactive changes to the Zoning Map upon adoption of this Master Plan. However, the Planning Commission is not obligated to amend the Zoning Map and may instead choose to allow private property owners, over time, to petition the city for zoning district changes which the Planning Commission may approve if such changes are consistent with the Master Plan. As a reference for this examination, the map on the next page (**Map 11**) highlights areas in the city where the currently adopted Zoning Map may not align with the Future Land Use Map.

## Map11:

# Future Land Use and Zoning Comparison



April 2024



Areas of Misalignment with FLU Recommendation

Currently Adopted Zoning Districts:

- SF1, Single-Family Residential
- SF2, Single-Family Residential
- MFR, Multiple-Family Residential
- MHP, Mobile Home/Manufacturer Home Park

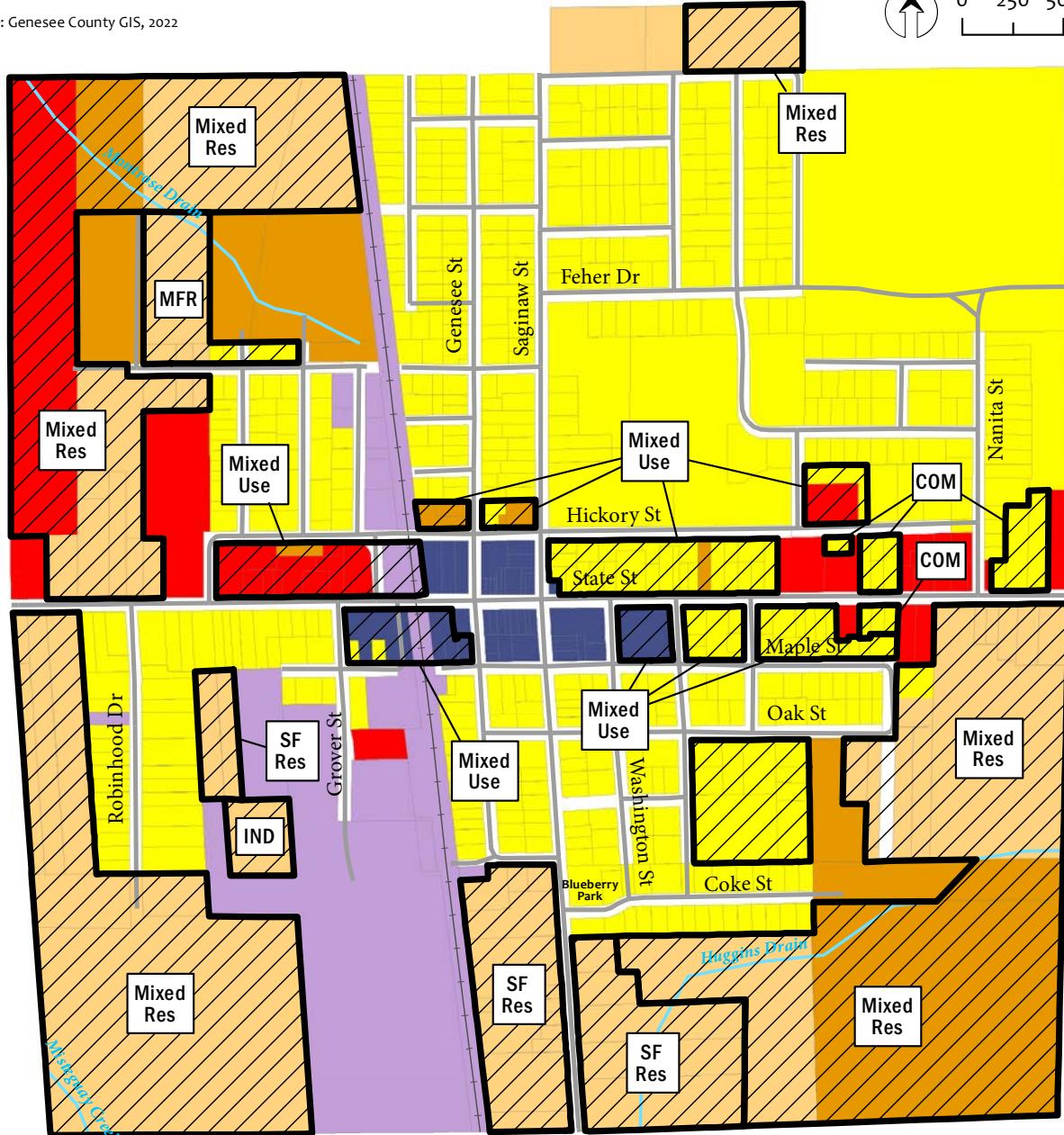
- CBD, Central Business
- GBD, General Business
- IND, Industrial

Base Layers:

- Roads
- Railroad
- Creeks and Drains
- Montrose City Limits

Parcel Source: Genesee County GIS, 2022

0 250 500 Feet



## Implementation Matrix

In order for the Master Plan to be implemented, the city and community partners must carry out the actions needed to achieve the goals and the community's vision for Montrose's future. To aid the city in implementation of the plan's recommendations, an Implementation Matrix has been prepared. The Implementation Matrix is organized around the six major themes established in the Community Vision chapter (Chapter 3) of the Master Plan. These six themes are as follows:

1. Natural Environment and Sustainability
2. Housing and Neighborhoods
3. Business and Economic Development
4. Mobility and Connectivity
5. Community Character and Culture
6. Governance and Community Services

Under each theme, various "actions" are presented. Each action includes a time frame in which the action should be carried out and the task leader(s) that are likely to carry out the action. The task leader listed first should be the primary lead on the action item; others listed are recommended collaborators.

Timeframe Key
<b>Now</b> – Begin work immediately upon plan adoption
<b>Near</b> – Begin work within 1 to 2 years
<b>Next</b> – Begin work within 3 to 5 years
<b>Ongoing</b> – Actions that require continuous monitoring or effort

Responsibility Key
<b>BC</b> – Business Community
<b>DDA</b> – Downtown Development Authority
<b>PC</b> – Planning Commission
<b>CA</b> – City Administration/Staff
<b>CC</b> – City Council

Funding Key
<b>GF</b> – Includes public funds from the city general operating budget. Public funds may also include local government bonds.
<b>TIF</b> - Tax increment revenues through the city's Downtown Development Authority
<b>PVT</b> – Includes funds from private sources, such as foundations, corporations, or personal property owners.
<b>OUT</b> – Includes funds from sources generally outside of the city, such as county, state and federal funds through grants and loan programs and other allocations.

Natural Environment and Sustainability			
Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Funding
Implement an urban forestry program to increase the city's tree cover	Near	CC, PC, CA	GF, PVT
Identify best practices for sustainable site and building design and consider actions and policies, including possible zoning changes, that encourage or require their use as part of new development and redevelopment projects	Near	CC, PC, CA	GF, PVT
Create promotional materials for residents and businesses describing the various sustainable practices that can be deployed in the city	Near	CC, PC, CA, BC	GF, PVT
Conduct an inventory of community and non-profit groups who provide services to vulnerable population groups, like homeless youth, low-income seniors, and others, and make this information available to citizens	Near	CC, PC, CA	GF

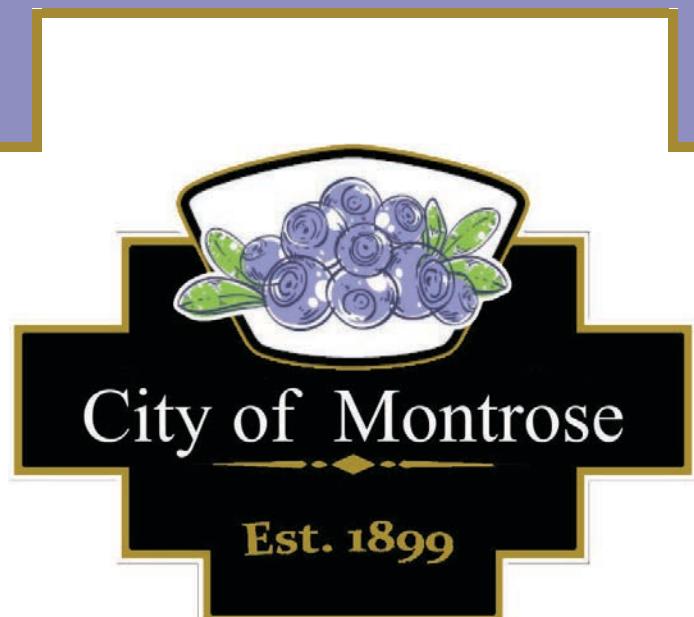
Housing and Neighborhoods			
Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Funding
Review the current residential neighborhood code compliance and enforcement program and consider options to increase its effectiveness	Now	CC, PC, CA	GF
Conduct a housing study to more fully evaluate housing needs and opportunities to increase housing inventory, including new lifestyle housing choices and more affordable housing types	Now	CC, PC, CA	GF, OUT
Implement the recommendations of the city's housing study	Ongoing	CC, PC, CA	GF, OUT

Business and Economic Development			
Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Funding
Establish a task force with responsibility for working to implement the recommendations of the City of Montrose Economic Development and Marketing Strategy	Now	CC, PC, CA, BC, DDA	GF, OUT, TIF
Develop and update online and print tools to promote awareness of downtown businesses	Near	CA, BC, DDA	GF, TIF
Develop a "Guide to Doing Business" for the benefit of property owners, business owners and developers to navigate city development review requirements and procedures.	Near	PC, CA	GF
Develop a marketing plan to identify potential users of existing commercial and industrial buildings that are vacant or underutilized	Next	CA, BC, DDA	GF, TIF
Partner with Genesee County, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, and other local, regional and state partners on business attraction and employment training	Ongoing	CA, BC, DDA	GF, OUT, TIF

Mobility and Connectivity			
Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Funding
Identify and seek outside funding in support of road enhancements and non-motorized improvements	Ongoing	CC, PC, CA, DDA	GF, OUT
Engage with local and regional organizations and advocacy groups such as Genesee County, bicycle users, seniors, and schools to promote non-motorized travel and improvements within the city	Ongoing	CC, PC, CA, DDA	GF, OUT
Ensure that the pedestrian, bicycle and non-motorized amenity recommendations of this plan are completed in conjunction with scheduled road improvement projects	Ongoing	CC, PC	GF

Community Character and Culture			
Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Funding
Consider establishing site and architectural design guidelines for commercial buildings outside of the Central Business District	Near	CC, PC, DDA	GF
Establish a committee to identify and foster partnerships with local and regional organizations in support of community arts and culture programs and initiatives.	Near	CA, BC	GF, PVT
Engage with community groups (master gardeners, scout troops, etc.) that may be able to offer volunteer or low-cost assistance with beautification efforts	Near	CA, BC	GF, PVT
Promote the history of the city in public and semi-public spaces through placemaking strategies like public art, historical landmarks, and signage.	Next	CC, PC, DDA, CA	GF, PVT, TIF
Continue to provide assistance to businesses to incentivize exterior improvements within the DDA District	Ongoing	DDA, CA	TIF, PVT

Governance and Community Services			
Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Funding
Review and update the City of Montrose Zoning Ordinance per the recommendations of the Zoning Plan	Now	PC, CC, CA	GF, OUT
Regularly review and update this Master Plan, as necessary	Ongoing	PC	GF, OUT
Use the vision statements and strategies of this Master Plan (Chapter 3) as a guide when reviewing proposals for new development and redevelopment	Ongoing	PC, CC, CA	GF
Prepare and annually update a Capital Improvements Plan as a guide for major infrastructure and public service improvements	Ongoing	CC, PC, CA	GF
Identify and seek outside funding in support of public infrastructure and services improvements	Ongoing	CC, PC, CA	GF, OUT
Prepare and regularly review and update the city Parks and Recreation Master Plan	Ongoing	CC, PC, CA	GF
In line with the city Parks and Recreation Master Plan, seek outside funding and undertake needed parks and recreation facility improvements	Ongoing	TB, PC, TA	GF, OUT
Hold an annual joint meeting with the City Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Downtown Development Authority, and similar bodies to ensure coordination and collaboration on city initiatives	Ongoing	CC, PC, DDA, CA	GF



555 S. Saginaw Street  
Suite 201  
Flint, MI 48502  
[wadetrim.com](http://wadetrim.com)

Florida • Georgia • Michigan • Nebraska • New York  
North Carolina • Ohio • Pennsylvania • Texas

# Montrose Community Housing Study

Adopted by the City of Montrose Planning Commission  
on September 11, 2025

City of Montrose  
139 S. Saginaw Street  
Montrose, MI 4857  
[www.cityofmontrose.us](http://www.cityofmontrose.us)

RESOLUTION NO. 01-25

PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION  
MONTROSE COMMUNITY HOUSING STUDY /  
MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

City of Montrose  
Genesee County, Michigan

The following Resolution was offered by Member Anthony Broash and supported by Member Mr. Edwards

**WHEREAS**, The City of Montrose has established a Planning Commission under the Planning Enabling Act, State Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended; and,

**WHEREAS**, The Planning Commission is required by Section 7 of said Act to make and adopt a master plan as a guide for the physical development of the City; and,

**WHEREAS**, The City adopted a Master Plan in September 2024 as a guide for the physical development of the City; and,

**WHEREAS**, The City Planning Commission recognizes housing as a key issue in the community; and,

**WHEREAS**, The City Planning Commission has prepared a Community Housing Study which evaluates housing needs and opportunities and establishes an action plan containing recommendations to support increased housing supply, diversity, and affordability within the City; and,

**WHEREAS**, The City Planning Commission desires to adopt the Montrose Community Housing Study as an amendment and addendum to the 2024 Master Plan; and,

**WHEREAS**, The Montrose Community Housing Study was presented to the public at a hearing held on September 11, 2025, before the Planning Commission, with notice of the hearing being provided in accordance with Section 43 of Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, The Montrose Community Housing Study, with the revisions as noted during this meeting, is hereby adopted by the Planning Commission as an amendment and addendum to the 2024 Master Plan this 11<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2025.

AYES: All-Yes

NAYS: No-Nays

ABSENT: Connor Pangle, Ashley Putnam

Christina M. Hudson, City Clerk

# Montrose Community Housing Study

**Adopted September 11, 2025**

**Prepared for:**

City of Montrose

139 S. Saginaw Street, Montrose, MI 48457

[www.cityofmontrose.us](http://www.cityofmontrose.us)

**With input from:**

Montrose Charter Township

11444 N. Seymore Road, Montrose, MI 48457

[www.montrosetownship.org](http://www.montrosetownship.org)

**Prepared By:**



Wade Trim

500 Griswold Street, Suite 2500, Detroit, MI 48226

[www.wadetrim.com](http://www.wadetrim.com)

# Table of Contents

Adopted September 11, 2025

<b>Chapter 1: Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Regional Context and Influences.....	2
State and Regional Housing Plans.....	2
<b>Chapter 2: Existing Conditions Analysis .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Demographic Analysis.....	4
Housing Characteristics.....	12
Citizen Perceptions on Housing.....	22
Residential Land Use Analysis.....	25
<b>Chapter 3: Housing Gap Analysis and Future Projections.....</b>	<b>36</b>
National Housing Type Preferences .....	36
Local Housing Type Preferences .....	37
Future Housing Need.....	41
<b>Chapter 4: Planning Recommendations .....</b>	<b>44</b>
State and Regional Goals .....	44
Montrose Community Housing Goals.....	45
Montrose Community Action Strategies.....	48
Implementation Resources.....	61

# Chapter 1: Introduction

Housing availability is important because it enhances community wellbeing and economic vitality. The purpose of this Montrose Community Housing Study is to examine the housing needs and current assets within both the City of Montrose and Montrose Charter Township. It investigates housing affordability and accessibility by researching the community's needs, housing characteristics, land use, infrastructure, supply, and demand. Additionally, it explores the perspectives of Montrose community members on the housing market and their own housing needs.

The housing market has grown increasingly competitive, which is characterized by changing demand, limited supply, and a slowdown of housing development. As a small rural city and township, Montrose housing costs are comparatively less than neighboring urban centers. However, the area faces challenges due to an aging housing stock, limited housing choices, and escalating development costs, posing obstacles to affordable housing development. These challenges are also faced within the State of Michigan, and across the broader United States.

To address these challenges, the State of Michigan released its first statewide housing plan in 2022. This Montrose Community Housing Study intends to provide specific recommendations and strategies based on the unique conditions within the Montrose community. However, the strategies are guided by goals and values outlined in the Michigan Statewide Housing Plan and the regional goals set by the East Michigan Housing Partnership.

This Montrose Community Housing Study will provide research about the local community profile, housing analysis, existing and future land analysis, and projected housing demand and supply needs for the future. These will be organized by three sections. The first section will include an existing community and housing profile to understand what the current community housing needs are and what current housing exists. This will include the community demographics, housing characteristics, and current zoning and existing land use maps. The next section is a gap analysis highlighting the differences between the existing community housing demand and the existing housing supply, along with future land use maps and future population projections. The last section will outline policy recommendations to support increased housing supply, choice and affordability.

## Amendment to the City of Montrose Master Plan

This Montrose Community Housing Study was adopted on September 11, 2025 by the City of Montrose Planning Commission as an amendment to its Master Plan. (The current City of Montrose Master Plan was adopted on September 12, 2024.) The required steps to amend a master plan per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended, were followed, including an officially noticed public hearing held by the City of Montrose Planning Commission.

## Regional Context and Influences

The City of Montrose and the surrounding Montrose Charter Township are in mid-Michigan in Genesee County, 22 miles northwest of the City of Flint and 20 miles south of the City of Saginaw. The City of Flint is the core and largest community within Genesee County and is the location of county government. Flint and the immediately surrounding urban area provide a strong and broad employment base for residents throughout the county. Flint's urban area also serves as a destination for shopping, entertainment, education, and culture. Over the years, Flint has been one of the greatest influences upon the overall development of Genesee County, as well as Montrose. Montrose has been able to maintain its small-town character, despite being located near a larger urban center. However, suburban growth and development extending from Flint has begun to factor into the growth of the Montrose community.

Another major influence upon the Montrose area is Interstate 75, one of the primary north-south transportation arteries in Michigan. In addition to excellent transportation access, this highly trafficked corridor provides Montrose, due to its proximity, with a high level of regional connectivity. This is especially true during summer weekends and holidays, when thousands of vacationers from the urban areas of southern Michigan travel to and from the recreational areas of northern Michigan.

Montrose was once a distribution center for the goods and services needed by surrounding farms and a collection center for their products. Now, as a bedroom community to Flint and Saginaw, it has experienced modest population growth because of new residential trends. These trends include population moving away from urban residential areas to more rural areas but with easy access to the I-75 corridor. Over the past 20 years, most of the development seen in the area has been centered along M-57, near I-75. This corridor has grown to offer various goods and services much closer to the City of Montrose than previously available. If development continues, Montrose and other nearby communities could see an increase in population, resulting in increased investment from private entities. The M-57 connection to Vienna Township is crucial for the development of Montrose.

## State and Regional Housing Plans

The Michigan Statewide Housing Plan addresses the complex barriers to attaining safe, healthy, affordable, and accessible housing. It was developed with the support of organizational partners across the state and thousands of residents participated in a public survey, focus groups, meetings, and interviews. The statewide housing targets include building new or rehabilitating housing units to increasing the number of affordable units, market rate units, homeownership opportunities, and workforce housing. Additionally, the targets address reducing the equity gaps in homelessness, accessible housing, and homeownership. There are eight priority areas that guide the statewide goals and strategies. These eight priorities are equity and racial justice, housing ecosystem, eliminating homelessness, housing stock, older adult housing, rental housing, homeownership, and community and education.

The Michigan Statewide Housing Plan addresses these challenges through both statewide efforts and regional efforts. Genesee County is located within the East Michigan Housing Partnership, which has organized its own regional goals and strategies. The East Michigan Housing Partnership has much more specific and measurable ways to address the regional housing goals, stemmed from the eight statewide priorities. This Montrose Housing Study is meant to support these goals and action items specifically within the Montrose Community.

# Chapter 2: Existing Conditions Analysis

Any housing study must begin with a firm understanding of the existing conditions within the community. This includes an analysis of demographic characteristics, housing characteristics, community perceptions on housing, established residential land use patterns, infrastructure availabilities, established zoning patterns, and planned future uses. Understanding these factors helps planners and community leaders with basic information by which future housing decisions can be made.

## Demographic Analysis

Throughout this chapter, various population, housing, and economic data sources are utilized. These include the U.S. Census Bureau's Decennial Census reports and American Community Survey (ACS) estimates (for the 5-year span of 2018-2022). Another key data source is Esri Demographics data. Esri Demographics is a global collection of authoritative demographic data for over 170 countries and regions, supplying context and adding insight to the maps and location-based analyses of organizations worldwide. Notable for this analysis, Esri Demographics offers up-to-date estimates for the year 2022 and forecasts for 2027. Finally, Wade Trim (the technical consultant for this Housing Study) utilized the Envision Tomorrow™ Balanced Housing Model for certain data estimates. The Balanced Housing Model is a tool that leverages demographic data to better understand a community's housing profile and needs.

### Population Trends

According to U.S Decennial Census reports, in 2020 the population of the City of Montrose (1,743) was about one third the size of Montrose Charter Township (6,005), for an overall community population of 7,748. **Table 1** details population trends for the city and township from 1960 to 2020. Throughout this time, the population for both the city and township has fluctuated. For the City of Montrose, the overall trend has been population growth; however, a notable population decline was experienced between 1990 and 2000. Since 2000, the population trend for the city has been positive, increasing from 1,619 to 1,743 residents. Overall, the population of the city increased by 18.9% between 1960 and 2020. For Montrose Township, the overall trend between 1960 and 2020 shows a growth of 20.0%. However, this overall growth is largely attributed to the population gain between 1960 and 1970. Since 2000, the population trend in the township has been a decline, from 6,336 in 2000 to 6,005 by 2020.

**Table 1.** Population Trends, 1960-2020

Government Units	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	Change '60 - '20
City of Montrose	1,466	1,789	1,706	1,811	1,619	1,657	1,743	18.9%
Montrose Township	5,006	6,468	6,164	6,236	6,336	6,224	6,005	20.0%

Source: 1960-2020 U.S Census

## Population Projections

Unfortunately, there are no up-to-date population projections for the City of Montrose or Montrose Township that can be utilized for this study. The Genesee County's 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan includes population projections for every municipality within the county; however, those projections are based on population estimates that are more than 10 years old. A more current population projection source, the Michigan Statewide Population Projections through 2050, was made available in April 2024 by the Michigan Center for Data and Analytics. However, this data is only available at the state and county levels.

To establish a working estimate of future population within the city and township, a simplified population projection is included in **Table 2**. This population projection uses several methods to extrapolate future population for the city and township based on the state and county projections documented in the Michigan Statewide Population Projections through 2050 report. As noted in the table, Genesee County's population is expected to decline between 2020 and 2040, from 406,211 to 372,921. This declining projection for Genesee County as a whole is undoubtedly influenced by the City of Flint's historically significant population decline (the City of Flint is the seat and largest city in Genesee County). However, for the state of Michigan as a whole, the population is expected to increase from 10,077,331 in 2020 to 10,216,995 by 2040.

**Table 2** uses two methods to extrapolate city and township population in 2040: the first method assumes the local population will maintain its current (2020) share of the county's population in 2040; the second method assumes that the local population will maintain its current (2020) share of the state's population in 2040. However, because Genesee County's population is expected to decline through 2040, while Michigan's population is expected to increase, this results in varying estimates for the city and township. After evaluating the two methods, Wade Trim concludes that the second method - constant share of Michigan's population - is the most appropriate and will be utilized for the purposes of this Housing Study. This method results in a projected population of 1,767 for the City of Montrose and 6,088 for Montrose Township by 2040, representing a growth rate of 1.4% between 2020 and 2040.

**Table 2.** Population Projections, 2040

Government Units	2020 (1)	Population Projections by Method			2040 Consultant Estimate (5)	Change '20-'40
		2040 (2)	2040 (3)	2040 (4)		
City of Montrose	1,743	--	1,600	1,767	1,767	1.4%
Montrose Township	6,005	--	5,513	6,088	6,088	1.4%
Genesee County	406,211	372,921	--	--	--	-8.2%
Michigan	10,077,331	10,216,995	--	--	--	1.4%

Source (1): 2020 U.S. Census.

Source (2): Michigan Statewide Population Projections through 2050, Michigan Center for Data and Analytics, April 2024.

Source (3): Constant Share of the Genesee County 2040 Population.

Source (4): Constant Share of the Michigan 2040 Population.

Source (5): Consultant Estimate used in this Housing Study. This estimate was chosen due to the significant impact that the City of Flint's historically declining population has on the overall population of Genesee County. This consultant estimate also takes into consideration historical population growth trends for the City of Montrose and Montrose Township dating back to 1960. Finally, this estimate is based on the numerous key trends and opportunities that are likely to have a positive impact on the future of the Montrose community, as noted in this study.

The chosen population growth rate of 1.4% for the Montrose community is based on the following considerations:

- Genesee County's projected population decline is heavily influenced by the City of Flint's historically declining population. Although the Montrose community is certainly impacted by the City of Flint, it is geographically separated from Flint and shares few other similarities with Flint.
- The city and township population projection for 2040 that is based on the local share of Michigan's population is more consistent with historical growth trends in the Montrose community dating back to 1960.
- It is reasonable to anticipate modest growth through 2040 in contrast to significant population decline. This is based on numerous key opportunities that are likely to positively impact the future of the Montrose community, including:
  1. Montrose's small town character, community pride, and high quality school system, all of which are highly attractive to potential new residents.
  2. Montrose's centralized location between three large employment centers (Flint, Saginaw and Owosso). Additionally, the increasing prevalence of remote work arrangements allows greater flexibility to choose a place to live which may not be directly tied to employment location.
  3. The attractiveness of Montrose's setting in a largely rural and agrarian area, but with convenient access to recreational facilities (the Flint River, Genesee County Parks, etc.) and "big city" amenities (nearby shopping, employment and cultural destinations).

4. Montrose's proximity to the I-75 corridor and the continuing growth and development along the corridor.
5. The availability of quality and affordable housing represents an opportunity to attract new residents, especially younger persons and families and first time homebuyers.

## Age Distribution

Using Esri Demographic data, **Table 3** compares the distribution of citizens by age groups for the City of Montrose, Montrose Township, Genesee County and Michigan in 2010 and 2027. The table divides the city's population age groups to generally correspond with stages of human development. Each stage carries common characteristics that can be generally applied when assessing future needs. For example, adjustments in programs and services (elderly/childcare, schools, recreation, etc.) may be prompted by changes in the city's dependent population (generally those persons under 19 and over 65 years of age). The age-life distribution is defined in five categories:

- 0-4 years
- 5-19 years
- 20-44 years
- 45-64 years
- 65 years and Older

The largest age group within the city is the 20 to 44 years group. In 2010, this group included 32.9% of the total population. It is forecasted to fall to 31.8% by 2027. This group is commonly considered to be a "family formation age" group; a decrease in this age group may lead to a decrease in younger children. The township's population is similar, but slightly older than the city. In 2010 the largest age group in the township was the 45 to 64 years group at 30% of the total population and by 2027 it is forecasted to fall to 26.1% (3.9% decrease).

In both the City of Montrose and Montrose Township, the greatest percentage change is forecasted to occur in the 65 and older age group. The city's population 65 years and older is forecasted to comprise 18.4% of the city population (5.6% increase), and the township is forecasted to have 22.7% of the population in the 65 years and older age group (9% increase). No other age group in either the city or township is forecasted to increase as a percentage of the total population between 2010 and 2027. In the city, the 5 to 19 years age group is forecasted to see the greatest decline, from 23.8% of the population in 2010 to 20.2% of the population in 2027. In the township, the 45 to 64 years age group is forecasted to see the greatest decline, from 30.0% of the population in 2010 to 26.1% of the population in 2027. The data in **Table 3** clearly illustrate an aging population for both the city and township. Aging populations tends to increase demands for healthcare, special housing needs, and decrease the workforce participation rates.

In 2010, the city's median age was 36.1 years. This figure is low in comparison to both the State of Michigan (38.8 years) and Montrose Township (40.7 years). Although the city's median age is comparatively low, it is forecasted to rise from 36.1 years in 2010 to 38.9 years by 2027. Similarly, the median age for Montrose Township is also expected to rise between 2010 and 2027, from 40.7 years to 44.1 years (see **Figure 1**).

The data in **Table 3** and **Figure 1** clearly illustrate an aging population for both the city and township. Aging populations tends to increase demands for healthcare, special housing needs, and decrease the workforce participation rates.

**Table 3.** Age Distribution, 2010-2027

Age Range	City of Montrose			Montrose Township		
	% in 2010	% in 2027	Change in % 2010-2027	% in 2010	% in 2027	Change in % 2010-2027
0 - 4 Years Old	6.2%	5.5%	-0.7%	5.7%	5.1%	-0.6%
5 - 19 Years Old	23.8%	20.2%	-3.6%	21.4%	17.9%	-3.5%
20 - 44 Years Old	32.9%	31.8%	-1.1%	29.2%	28.3%	-0.9%
45 - 64 Years Old	24.1%	24.1%	0.0%	30.0%	26.1%	-3.9%
65 Years and Older	12.8%	18.4%	5.6%	13.7%	22.7%	9.0%
Age Range	Genesee County			Michigan		
	% in 2010	% in 2027	Change in % 2010-2027	% in 2010	% in 2027	Change in % 2010-2027
0 - 4 Years Old	6.4%	5.6%	-0.8%	6.0%	5.3%	-0.7%
5 - 19 Years Old	21.4%	18.1%	-3.4%	20.8%	17.7%	-3.1%
20 - 44 Years Old	30.7%	30.1%	-0.6%	31.5%	30.9%	-0.6%
45 - 64 Years Old	27.7%	24.9%	-2.8%	28.0%	24.6%	-3.4%
65 Years and Older	13.7%	21.4%	7.7%	13.7%	21.4%	7.7%

Source: 2010 Census and 2022 ESRI Demographic and Income Profiles

**Figure 1.** Median Age, 2010-2027



Source: 2010 Census and 2022 Esri Demographic Profile.

**Figure 2** illustrates the population distribution by gender and age for Montrose Township and the City of Montrose. These population pyramids help compare the communities and their housing needs based on the age groups. Montrose Township's population pyramid is wider at the top, which is reflective of an older population. The City of Montrose's population pyramid is wider at the bottom, meaning that there are more young kids and young families.

**Figure 2.** Population Pyramids, 2022



Source: Esri Demographic Profile, 2022

## Race and Ethnicity

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 96.8% of the City of Montrose's population was White Alone in 2010. By 2020, the City of Montrose's population diversified leaving 88.2% of the population White Alone. Notable increases occurred in the Two or More Races category (from 0.7% to 8%) and the Black Alone category (0.7% to 1.8%). Persons of Hispanic Origin (Any Race) increased from 2.4% to 4.2% of the population between 2010 and 2020.

Similarly, Montrose Township is a majority White township, but with a diversifying population. In 2010, 95.4% of the population was White alone. By 2020, the population slightly diversified and 90.1% of the population was White alone. Again, similar demographic trends occurred in Montrose Township with the increase in Two or More Races category (from 1.7% to 6.7%) and the persons of Hispanic Origin (from 2.5% to 3.3%).

## Household Characteristics

### *Households*

**Table 4** highlights the total households in the City of Montrose, Montrose Township, Genesee County and Michigan in 2010 and the forecasted change through 2027. In 2010, the City of Montrose featured 668 total households, which increased to 710 total households by 2020. By 2027, Esri data forecasts that this number will increase to 724 total households. This is a total increase of 56 households or 8.4% between 2010 and 2027. In 2010, Montrose Township featured 2,189 total households, which anticipated to decline to 2,136 total households by 2027. This is a total decline of 53 households or 2.4% between 2010 and 2027.

### *Average Household Size*

The number of persons per household constitutes household size. Since the 1970's, the nationwide trend has been a decline in household size. This trend has occurred due to fewer children per family, higher divorce rates, and an increasing number of elderly people living alone. Knowing whether the household size is increasing or decreasing helps to identify the community's housing needs. If the household size is decreasing, this means that new, smaller housing units may be required to accommodate smaller households. In some municipalities, the new housing units are being built to accommodate the demand for housing created by lower household sizes despite an overall decline in population.

**Table 4** documents average household size in 2010 with forecasts for 2027. Notably for the City of Montrose, the average household size is forecasted to increase slightly from 2.46 in 2010 to 2.47 in 2027. However, the opposite is occurring in Montrose Township, Genesee County and Michigan, whose average household sizes are all forecasted to decline.

**Table 4.** Total Households and Average Household Size, 2010-2027

<b>Governmental Units</b>	<b>2010</b>		<b>2027</b>		<b>Change '10-'27</b>	
	<b>Total Households</b>	<b>Average HH Size</b>	<b>Total Households</b>	<b>Average HH Size</b>	<b>Total Households</b>	<b>Average HH Size</b>
City of Montrose	669	2.46	724	2.47	56	0.01
Montrose Township	2,189	2.79	2,136	2.55	-53	-0.24
Genesee County	169,202	2.48	164,552	2.37	-4,650	-0.11
Michigan	3,872,508	2.49	4,067,530	2.42	195,022	-0.07

Source: 2010 Us Census and 2022 ESRI Demographic and Income Profiles

### *Household Relationships*

This subsection examines households in terms of the relationships among the persons who share a housing unit. **Table 5** examines four different household types based on relationship:

- Married couple families
- Cohabiting couple household
- Male householder, no spouse/partner present
- Female householder, no spouse/partner present

In 2021, 54.3% of Montrose Township's households were married-couple families. Other household types comprise much smaller percentages of the township's total households. The City of Montrose has a much different household make-up, with only 33.9% of households being married couple families. The second largest household type for the city is female householder with no spouse/partner present (33.7%). In comparison, only 17.5% of the township's households are female householder with no spouse/partner present.

**Table 5.** Household Characteristics, 2021\*

Units of Government	Total Households	% of Total Households					
		Married Couple Family	Cohabiting Couple Household	Male Householder, no spouse/partner present	Female Householder, no spouse/partner present	Households with one+ people under 18 years	Households with one+ people 65 years and older
City of Montrose	882	33.9%	15.6%	16.8%	33.7%	33.2%	26.8%
Montrose Township	2,206	54.3%	9.5%	18.7%	17.5%	27.7%	40.1%
Genesee County	164,905	42.1%	8.2%	18.9%	30.8%	28.5%	31.6%
Michigan	3,976,729	46.8%	6.9%	18.9%	27.3%	28.1%	31.1%

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

### **Income and Poverty**

An important determinant of a community's quality of life is the income of its residents. Median household income is the level of income at which half of all households earn more and half of all households earn less. It is a broad measure of relative economic health of a community's population. At the national level, recessions and inflation have reduced the spending power of the dollar for households. As a result, the dollar no longer stretches as far as it once did.

In 2022, the estimated median household income for Montrose Township was \$61,651, which is much higher than the City of Montrose at \$47,580. Both the city and township, however, have lower median household incomes than the State of Michigan as a whole (see **Table 6**). According to Esri, the City of Montrose's median household income is forecasted to grow to \$53,383 by 2027, a 12.2% increase, while Montrose Township's median household income is

forecasted to growth to \$74,586, a 21.0% increase. The township's forecasted growth in median household income outpaces both Genesee County and the State of Michigan.

Reflective of its lower median household income, 25% of persons within the City of Montrose for whom poverty status is determined fall below the poverty level. In comparison, the poverty level for Montrose Township is 16.2%. The State of Michigan has a poverty level of 13.3%, which is lower than both the city and township.

The city's relatively low expected income growth between 2022 and 2027 and higher poverty level (in comparison to the Township, County and State) may point to the need for the city to engage in various workforce and economic development as well as job creating initiatives. However, these workforce and economic development initiatives rely upon accessible and affordable local housing to retain workers and residents contributing to the local economy.

**Table 6.** Median Household Income, 2022-2027

<b>Governmental Units</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>Change '22-'27</b>
City of Montrose	\$47,586	\$53,383	12.2%
Montrose Township	\$61,651	\$74,586	21.0%
Genesee County	\$54,212	\$62,416	\$18.7%
Michigan	\$63,818	\$75,735	18.7%

Source: 2022 ESRI Demographic and Income Profiles

## Housing Characteristics

This section details the characteristics of the City of Montrose and Montrose Township housing stock by type, occupancy, age, and value. Where appropriate, the data described in this chapter is benchmarked to county and state statistics.

### Total Housing Units

In line with the City of Montrose's population growth between 2010 and 2022, the total number of housing units within the city has also increased, from 726 in 2010 to 756 in 2022 according to Esri data. However, the estimated housing unit growth through 2027 indicates a leveling out of housing units, increasing by only 4 units over the 5-year span. For Montrose Township, the total number of housing units has declined from 2,385 in 2010 to 2,304 in 2022 according to Esri data. Esri estimates that the total housing units in the township will continue to decline to 2,255 total housing units by 2027.

## Housing Occupancy and Tenure

Housing occupancy measures the number of occupied housing units and vacant housing units. Tenure identifies whether those occupied units are inhabited by renters or homeowners. Occupancy and tenure data is shown in **Table 7**. As of 2022, nearly 95% of the City of Montrose's available housing is occupied, while only 5.4% is vacant. Housing occupancy percentages within Montrose Township are similar to the city, with 94.5% occupied units and 5.5% vacant units in the township.

Generally, a healthy housing market will feature a vacancy rate of approximately 5% to ensure there is sufficient available housing stock. Genesee County and the State of Michigan have much higher rates of vacancy than the city and township.

Most of the housing units in the City of Montrose (60.8%) are occupied by owners as opposed to renters (33.7%). In comparison, the owner-occupancy percentage within Montrose Township is much higher at 88.9%, while the renter occupancy percentage (5.6%) is much lower. This is reflective of a greater diversity of housing stock and rental units within the city in comparison to the township.

**Table 7.** Housing Occupancy and Tenure, 2022

Unit of Government	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units				Vacant Housing Units	
		Number	% of Total Units	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied	Number	% of Total Units
City of Montrose	756	715	94.6%	60.8%	33.7%	41	5.4%
Montrose Township	2,304	2,177	94.5%	88.9%	5.6%	127	5.5%
Genesee County	182,113	165,686	91.0%	63.4%	27.6%	16,427	9.0%
Michigan	4,588,989	4,067,530	88.4%	63.1%	25.3%	533,321	11.6%

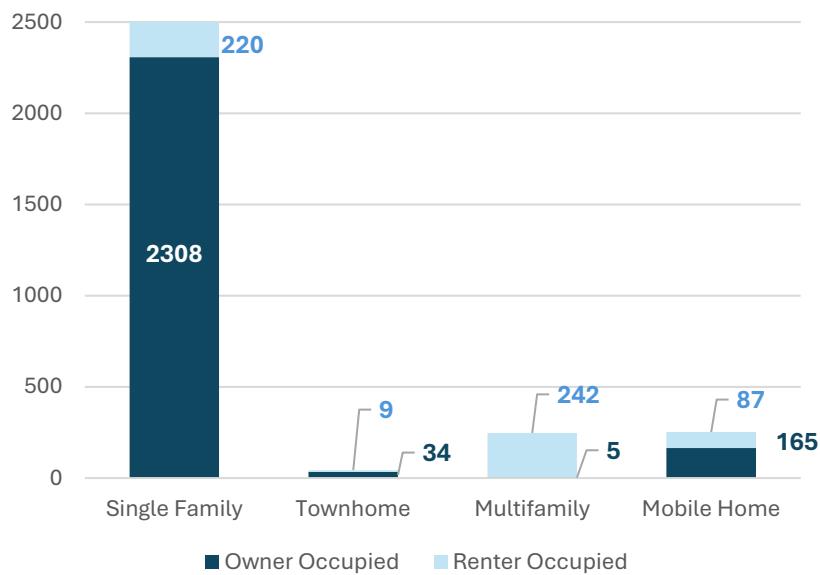
Source: 2022 Esri Housing Profiles.

## Housing Units by Type and Tenure

### Montrose Community Overview

**Figure 3** illustrates housing units by type within the Montrose community (both the City of Montrose and Montrose Township) according to the 2022 American Community Survey. The figure shows a mixture of housing unit types, with single family detached structures comprising of 82% of the total housing units. **Figure 3** displays a prioritization of single-family owned units and a lack of missing middle units and rentable units.

**Figure 3.** Montrose Community Housing Type by Tenure, 2022



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022

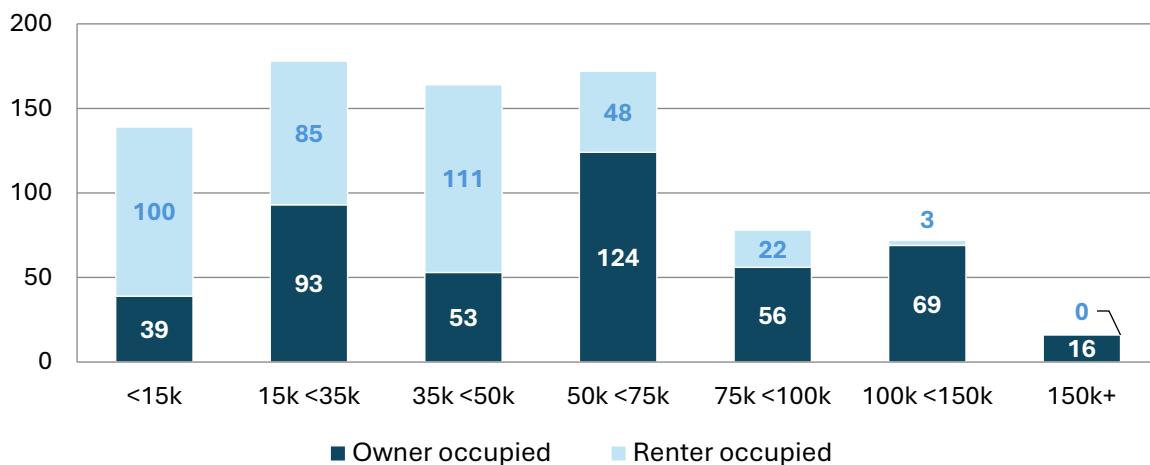
#### *City of Montrose Housing Type and Tenure*

Within the City of Montrose, 75% of housing structures are single family detached structures. The remainder of the city's housing stock is comprised of units in multifamily unit structures (30%) and townhomes (2.5%). There are no mobile homes within the city. The City of Montrose has far more renter-occupied units in proportion to the total housing units, when compared to Montrose Township. Most of the rental units in the city are multifamily units (65.6%).

**Figure 4** describes the City of Montrose's housing tenure by the household's median income. It is typical for lower income households to occupy rental units compared to owner occupied housing. This is true for the City of Montrose, with the highest proportion of renters having household incomes of less than \$50,000.

Within the city, most of the renter-occupied units are multifamily housing types (242 units), but there are also 118 single family homes and 9 townhomes that are rented.

**Figure 4.** City of Montrose Housing Tenure by Median Household Income, 2022



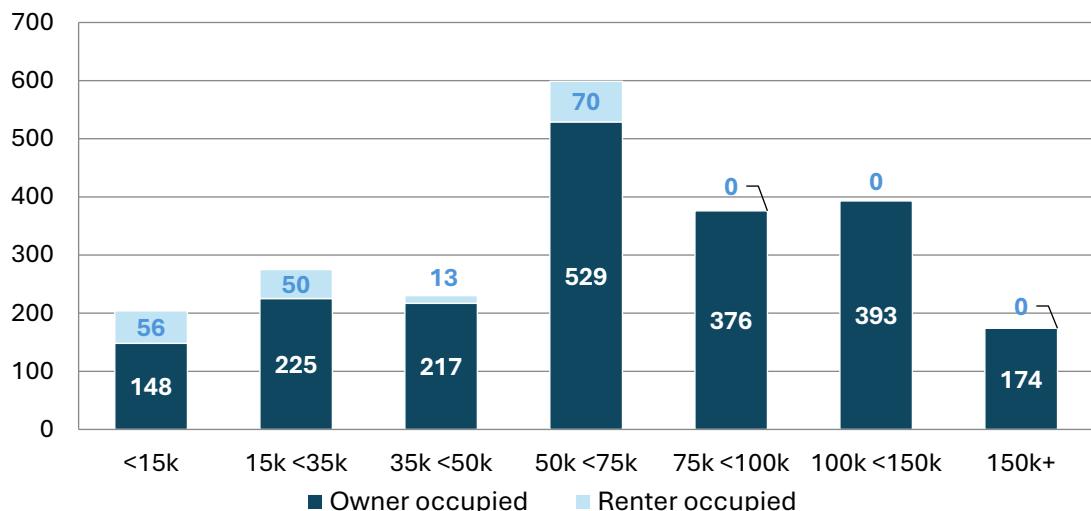
Source; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022

#### *Montrose Township Housing Type and Tenure*

Within Montrose Township, single family detached housing makes up 90.1% of the total housing units. The remainder of the Montrose Township's housing stock is comprised of townhomes (0.09%) and mobile homes (11.1%).

**Figure 5** describes Montrose Township's housing tenure by the household's median income levels. As shown, there are fewer renter occupied units within Montrose Township when compared to the city, with only 8.4% of the total occupied housing units in the township being rented.

**Figure 5.** Montrose Township Housing Tenure by Median Household Income, 2022



Source; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022

## Age of Structure

A rule of thumb suggests that the economically useful age of a housing unit is approximately 50 years. Beyond that age, major repairs may be required, and modernization may be needed to include amenities that are considered standard for today's lifestyle. When a community's housing stock approaches this age, rehabilitation, demolition, and new construction rates may increase.

According to the 2022 American Community Survey, nearly 45% of the housing stock in the City of Montrose was built before 1960. These units are at least 60 years old. Approximately 30% of the city's housing stock was built during the 1960's and 70's, while 14% was built during the 1980's and 90's. Approximately 12% percent of the city's housing units were constructed in 2000 or later.

Montrose Township has a slightly newer housing stock, with most of the housing stock built around the 70's. Approximately 30% of the township's housing stock was built before 1960. Therefore, all these units are at least 60 years old and requiring more major repairs. Approximately 43% of the township's housing stock was built during the 1960's and 70's, and 15% was built during the 1980's and 90's. Approximately 13% of the township's housing units are relatively modern and constructed in 2000 or later.

## Housing Value

A comparative measure of the housing stock is housing value. Data in **Table 8** compares the estimated 2022 and forecasted 2027 average value of owner-occupied units for the city, township, county, and state. In 2022, the average value of owner-occupied housing units in the City of Montrose was \$153,804. Comparatively, the average value of owner-occupied housing units in Montrose Township was much higher at \$202,222. However, both the city and township housing values are lower than the State of Michigan as a whole. Esri forecasts that the city's average value of owner-occupied housing units will increase to \$226,103 by 2027, a rate of 47%. Montrose Township's housing values are expected to increase to \$241,448 by 2027, a growth rate of 19.4% from 2022.

**Table 8.** Average Value of Owner-Occupied Units, 2022-2027

Governmental Unit	2022	2027	Change, '22-'27
City of Montrose	\$153,804	\$226,103	47.0%
Montrose Township	\$202,222	\$241,448	19.4%
Genesee County	\$192,165	\$235,450	22.5%
Michigan	\$247,974	\$285,613	15.2%

Source: 2022 Esri Housing Profile.

## Housing Affordability

The housing stock in a community should be affordable to its residents and workers. If housing costs are prohibitive, housing needs remain unmet despite housing unit availability. This often leads to community displacement. In recent years, housing affordability has become an increasing issue and concern across the nation, with housing price increases far outpacing household incomes. Numerous other factors, such as inflation and the cost of construction, are also contributing to a nation-wide housing affordability concern.

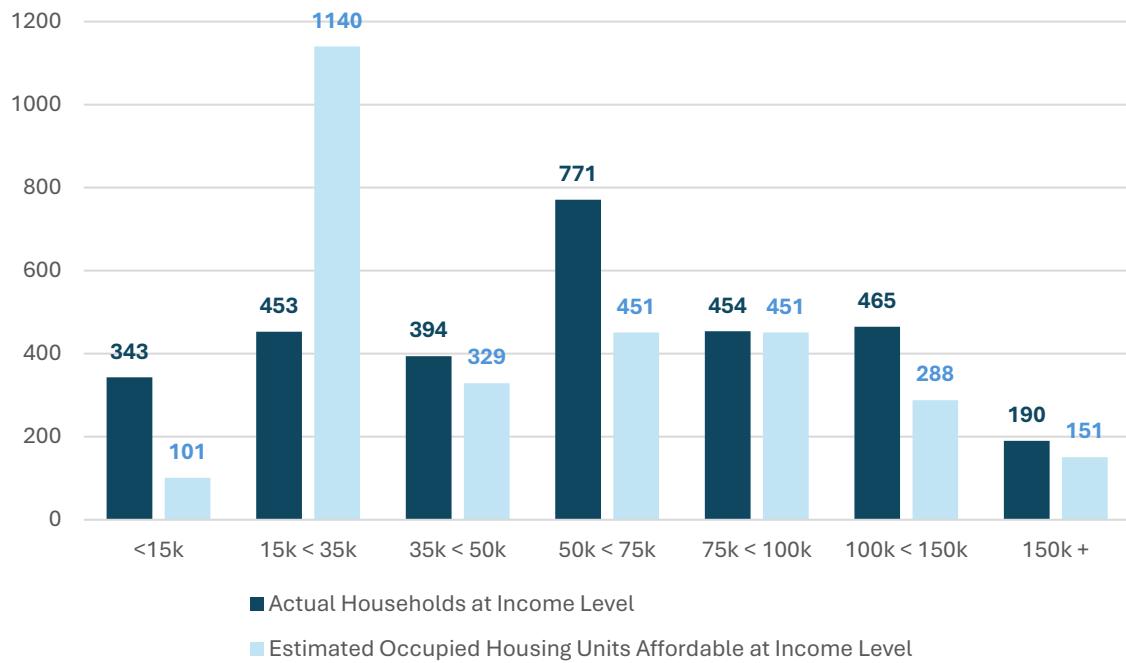
One method to measure housing affordability is to evaluate monthly housing costs as a percentage of household income. Generally, if a household is paying more than 30% of pre-tax household income for housing (mortgage or rent, plus utilities), they are considered cost burdened.

Transportation costs are significant expenses linked to housing and can vary based on location and neighborhood characteristics. The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) found people in denser, mixed-use neighborhoods with easy access to jobs, services, and transit typically have lower transportation costs. According to the Housing and Transportation (H+T) Affordability Index from CNT, combined housing and transportation costs should not exceed 45% of the household income. For the City of Montrose the index is 49%, while in Montrose Township it is 58%.

### *Montrose Community Overview*

**Figure 6** compares household incomes within the Montrose community (both the city and township) to units that are affordable at each income level based on 2022 ACS estimates and Wade Trim analysis using from the Balanced Housing Model tool. As shown in the figure, there is a significant deficit of housing units that are affordable to the \$15,000 or less income bracket (343 households but only 101 affordable housing units). It is most likely that these lowest-income households are living in unaffordable units. There is also a deficit in the \$50,000 to \$75,000 income bracket (771 households but only 451 affordable housing units) as well as the \$100,000 to \$150,000 income bracket (465 households but only 288 affordable housing units). Some of these households may be living in unaffordable housing units, but they also may be living in lower-value housing units that are affordable.

**Figure 6.** Montrose Community Household Incomes and Housing Units Affordable at each Income Level, 2022



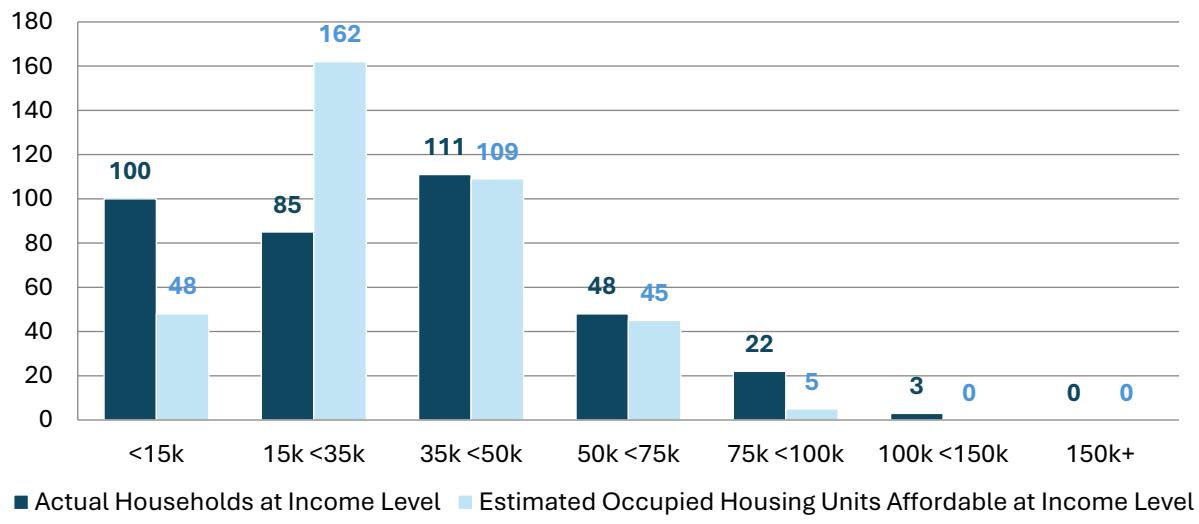
Source; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022 and Wade Trim analysis using the Balanced Housing Model tool

#### *City of Montrose Housing Affordability*

As previously noted, the City of Montrose's housing values are lower than Montrose Township and Genesee County averages. Additionally, the median household income is \$41,750 compared to the township at \$68,566. Yet, data suggests that the city's housing stock is more affordable than the township's housing stock, with more attainable housing options for the lower income brackets. Within the city, 60% of the rental units are affordable, while 72% of the owner-occupied housing units are affordable. It should be noted that it is typical for owner occupied units to become more affordable compared to rental units over time. Renting provides flexibility without the higher upfront costs of a downpayment and property maintenance. However, ownership provides long term stability and potential investment growth in the housing market.

Based on 2022 ACS data derived by Wade Trim through the Balanced Housing Model tool, 40% of renters within the city pay more than 30% of their income on housing. According to the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, this percentage for the City of Montrose was lower than the nation-wide average of 49% for the same period. These renting households paying more than 30% of their income include the income brackets making less than \$50,000. As shown in **Figure 7**, the largest proportion of rental housing units are affordable for the income brackets \$15,000 to \$35,000. There is a deficit of rentable units affordable for households making less than \$15,000.

**Figure 7.** City of Montrose Rental Household Incomes and Rental Units Affordable at each Income Level, 2022



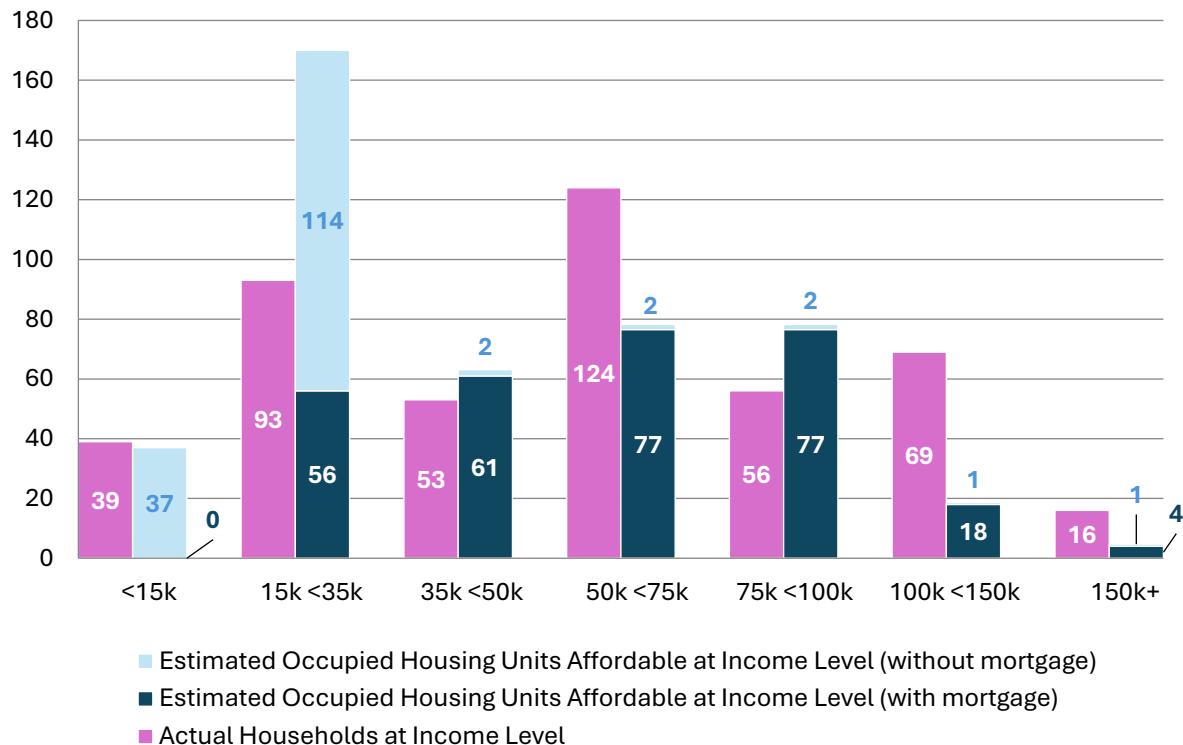
Source; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022  
and Wade Trim analysis using the Balanced Housing Model tool

Based on a sample of housing units with a mortgage, 28% of owners in the City of Montrose paid more than 30% of their household income on housing costs. This percentage for the city is slightly higher than the nation-wide average of 27.1% for the same period.

However, there are a high number of housing units that are affordable for households making less than \$15,000 and households making \$15,000 to \$35,000 (**Figure 8**). This means that there are likely many households paying far less than 30% of their income on housing costs.

According to Wade Trim analysis using the Balanced Housing Model, within the City of Montrose, persons 25 years old or younger are the least likely to own homes, and persons 45 years or older are the most likely to own homes within the city, including lower earning household groups. Households making \$100,000 likely face no affordability barriers to housing.

**Figure 8.** City of Montrose Owner Household Incomes and Owner Units Affordable at each Income Level, 2022



Source; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022  
and Wade Trim analysis using the Balanced Housing Model tool

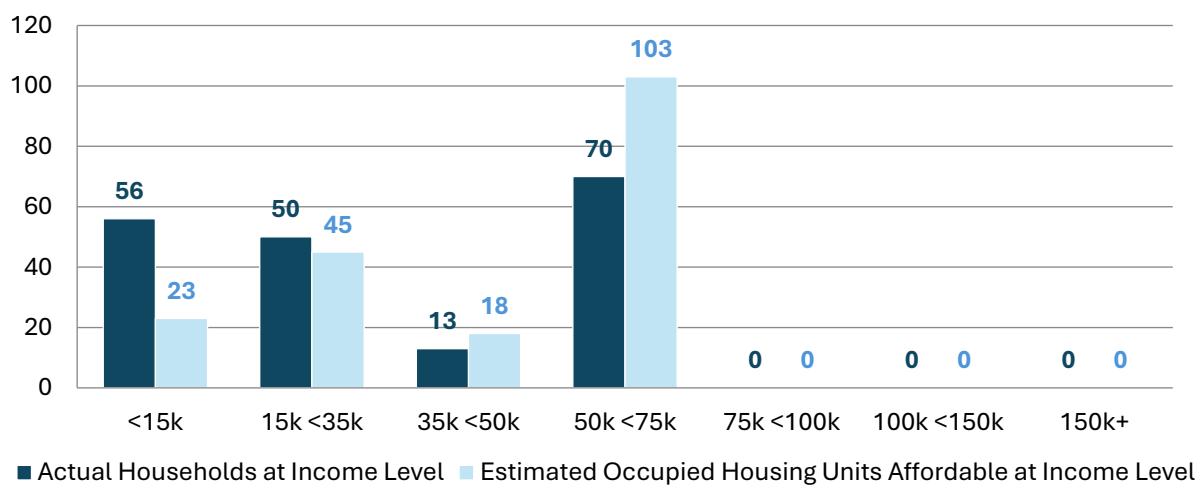
With 28% of homeowners with a mortgage and 40% of renters being cost burdened, housing affordability may become a larger concern within the City of Montrose. This is especially true as home values and rents have risen in recent years due to a competitive housing market, and now most recently by the Covid-19 pandemic-induced run on housing. As noted earlier (**Table 8**), the City of Montrose's average housing value is expected to increase nearly 50% over the next five years. This suggests that housing affordability may become a greater concern in the short-term.

#### *Montrose Township Housing Affordability*

Montrose Township's housing values on average are higher than the City of Montrose. The same is true for Montrose Township's median household income. Within the township, 34% of the rental housing is affordable and 79% of the owner-occupied housing is affordable. Compared to the city, the owner-occupied housing is more affordable, but the rental housing options are limited.

Based on 2022 ACS estimates and Wade Trim analysis derived from the Balanced Housing Model tool, within Montrose Township, 68% of renters pay more than 30% of their household income on housing. This is higher than the national average of 49%. These renters paying more than 30% of their household income are mostly within the income brackets making \$50,000 or less. As described in **Figure 9**, the largest proportion of rental housing units are affordable for the \$50,000 to \$75,000 income bracket. There is a deficit of rentable units affordable for households making less than \$35,000, indicating that it is much more difficult to locate rental housing for lower earners within the township.

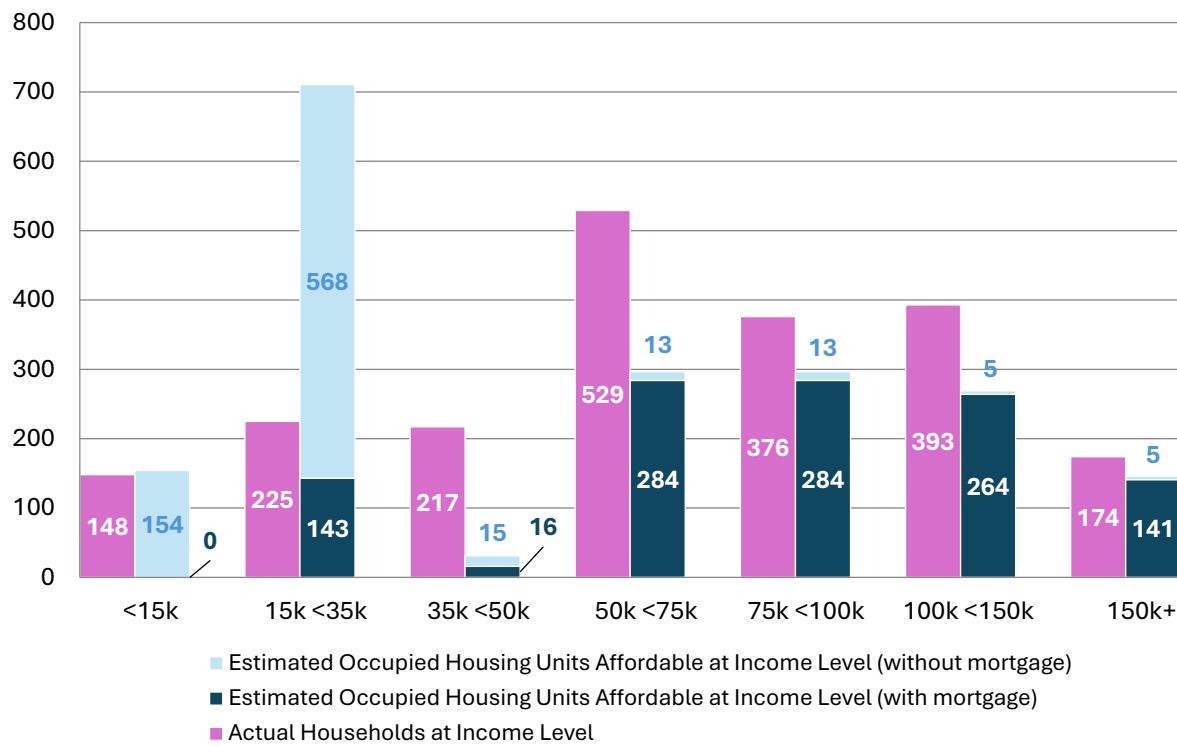
**Figure 9.** Montrose Township Rental Household Incomes and Rental Units Affordable at each Income Level, 2022



Source; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022  
and Wade Trim analysis using the Balanced Housing Model tool

Homeownership in Montrose Township is more affordable on average than the city. For owner occupied housing units with a mortgage, 22% of owners in Montrose Township pay more than 30% of their household income on housing. This percentage is lower than the national average of 27.1%. **Figure 10** shows there is a large surplus of owner-occupied housing units that are affordable for the \$15,000 to \$35,000 income bracket. However, there is a deficiency in units that are affordable for higher income brackets in the township. It is very likely that most of the higher income households are living in housing units that are well within their affordability range.

**Figure 10.** Montrose Township Owner Household Incomes and Owner Units Affordable at each Income Level, 2022



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022  
and Wade Trim analysis using the Balanced Housing Model tool

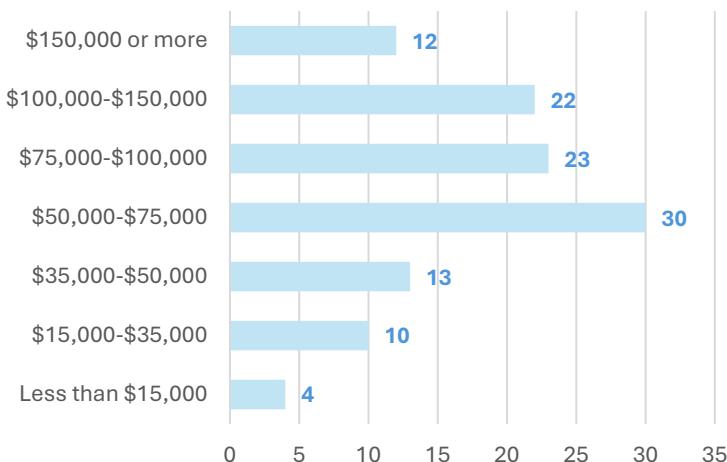
## Citizen Perceptions on Housing

### Background and Respondent Profile

An online survey of the Montrose community was conducted between August 10 and September 30, 2024. The survey received a total of 117 responses. The community's responses provide insight into the needs and preferences of community members, as well as best approaches to addressing housing needs. The results are summarized below.

Of the respondents, 64% were from Montrose Township and 35% were from the City of Montrose. The age of the respondents ranged from 20 to 84 years, with an average age of 50 years. Of the respondents, 35% of the households included their partner or spouse only, and 31% was made up of a family unit including a spouse or partner and children under 18 years of age. Most of the respondents indicated that they were working (67%), and 26% indicated that they were retired. **Figure 11** highlights the household incomes of the survey participants, with the largest percentage having a household income between \$50,000 and \$75,000,

**Figure 11.** Household Income Profile of Survey Participants



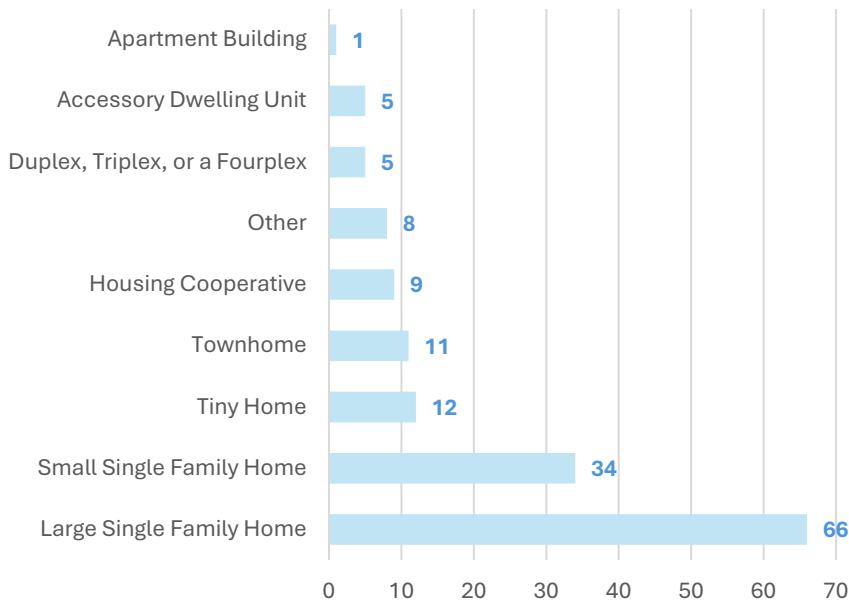
Source: Montrose Community Survey, 2024

Most of the survey respondents were homeowners (89%), with 64% of the respondents owning their home with a mortgage and 25% owning a home without a mortgage. The rest included 10% of the respondents renting or living in another person's home. Additionally, most of the respondents live in either small single-family homes (50%) or large single-family homes (41%).

## Housing Preferences

The survey respondents' top reasons for choosing to live in their neighborhood were that it included their desired housing type (46%), the price and affordability (44%), and there was access to their job or school (32%). Additionally, most respondents indicated they were satisfied (38%) or neutral (31%) about their housing situation. With this information in mind, when asked what type of housing they would prefer to live in, despite the local availability or affordability, most responded that they would live in a large single-family home (56%) or a small single-family home (29%) (see **Figure 12**). This aligns with the household compositions of the respondents, the majority living of whom live with their partner or spouse and children. However, they also expressed a preference for potentially living in tiny homes, townhomes, and housing cooperatives.

**Figure 12.** Survey Participants Preferred Type of Housing



Source: Montrose Community Survey, 2024

## Housing Costs/Affordability

Most of the respondents (61%) described themselves as being cost-burdened by housing, meaning that they spend more than 30% of their income on housing. Within this group, 51% spend between 30-50% of their income on housing, while 9% were severely cost-burdened, spending over 50%. In contrast, about 38% of the respondents described their housing situation as affordable, spending less than 30% of their income on housing).

## Barriers to Housing

Survey participants suggested that the primary barriers to living in their preferred home included that it was too expensive (46%) and that the housing type did not widely exist (21%). However, 25% of the respondents indicated that there were no barriers to their preferred housing.

## Additional Housing Accommodations

Most of the respondents indicated that they already had or that they did not need additional accommodations such as housing subsidies, senior housing, or supportive housing with social services (93%). However, 20% of the respondents indicated that they would prefer to live in specialty housing alternatives including senior housing (10 respondents), housing that is prorated based on income (8 respondents), and accessible housing for those with disabilities (4 respondents).

## Residential Land Use Analysis

This subsection highlights the established pattern of residential land use and housing within the community, along with an evaluation of allowable and planned future residential uses and housing types.

### Current Residential Land Use and Housing Types

The present allocation of residential land use and housing types within the Montrose Community is outlined in **Map 1**. Of the approximately 21,800 acres of total land within the City of Montrose and Montrose Township (not including road and railroad rights-of-way and rivers), nearly 45% is presently occupied by residential land use. These residential land uses are particularly concentrated within the city but are scattered throughout the community.

The map categorizes residential land uses by housing types, with the following categories established:

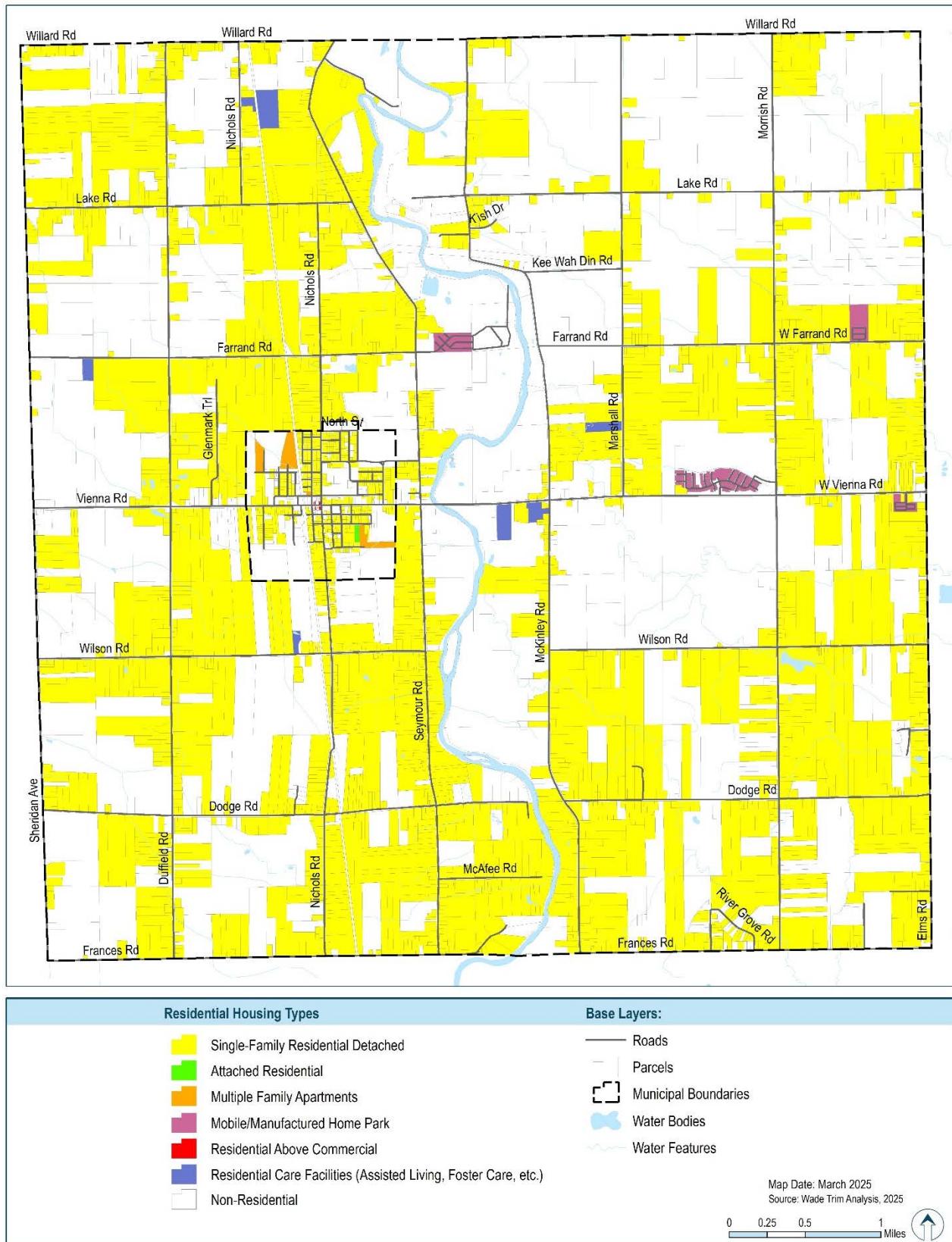
- Single-Family Residential, Detached
- Attached Residential
- Multiple Family Apartments
- Mobile/Manufactured Home Park
- Residential Above Commercial
- Residential Care Facilities (Assisted Living, Foster Care, etc.)

As shown in the map, current housing types within the community are nearly exclusively limited to single-family detached homes (2,576 properties out of 2,603 total residentially occupied properties), with any other housing type found on less than 30 properties. In terms of acreage, single-family detached uses occupy 9,735 acres out of 9,917 total residentially occupied acres within the community. Only a few properties within the City of Montrose are occupied by attached residential dwellings and multiple-family apartments. Within downtown Montrose, a few businesses feature upper-story apartments (either currently or historically occupied). In total, there are 4 mobile or manufactured home park communities, all of which are within Montrose Township. Finally, several residential care facilities, such as nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and adult foster care group homes, are also found within Montrose Township.

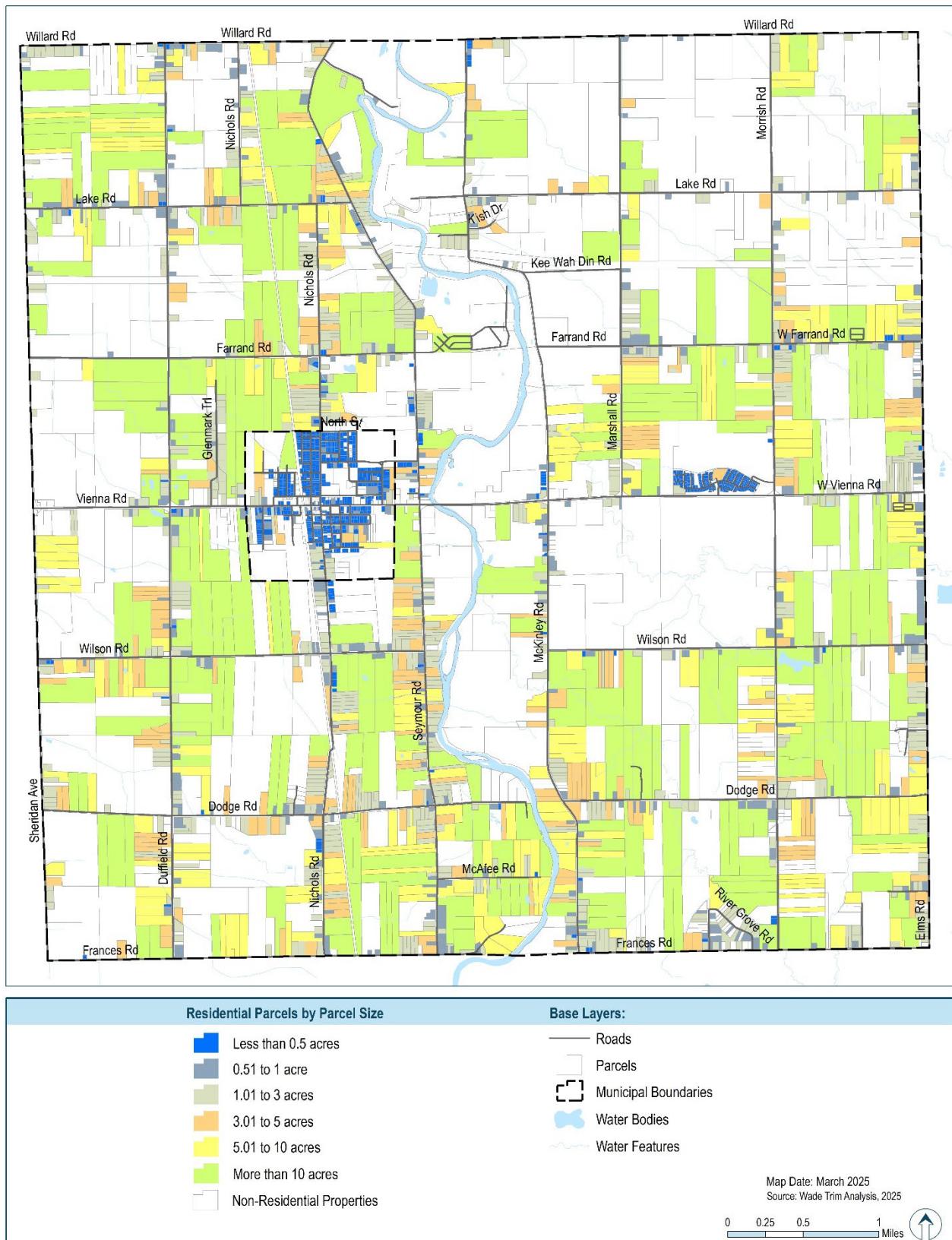
#### *Residential Land Use by Parcel Size*

**Map 2** displays residentially occupied parcels color coded by parcel size. This helps provide a view of housing density within the City of Montrose and Montrose Township. Property sizes can also influence housing affordability. Because of land values, a dwelling on a smaller lot has the greater potential of being less expensive/more affordable in comparison to a dwelling on a larger lot. As shown on the map, most of the residential properties within the City of Montrose are less than 0.5 acres in size, while a very small percentage of residential properties in the township are less than 0.5 acres in size. Most properties in the township are well over 1 acre in size, with many properties approaching 10 or more acres in size. The median size of residentially occupied property in the Montrose community is 3.54 acres.

**Map 1.** Residential Land Use by Housing Type



**Map 2.** Residential Properties by Parcel Size



### *Residential Care Facilities Inventory*

To specifically evaluate senior housing needs in the Montrose Community, this Housing Study identified local assisted living and senior housing arrangements in the city and township. At present, there are a total of 9 senior living and/or assisted living facilities within the city and township, which can, in total, accommodate approximately 100 persons. The most common age for residents to enter assisted living facilities is between 75 and 85 years. As of 2022, there are approximately 150 citizens in the city and township that are 75 years or older. Although it is not possible to determine how many of these 150 citizens require assisted living arrangements, these figures, coupled with the general trend of an aging population, provide evidence for the importance of specialized senior housing to support resident's ability to age in place within Montrose.

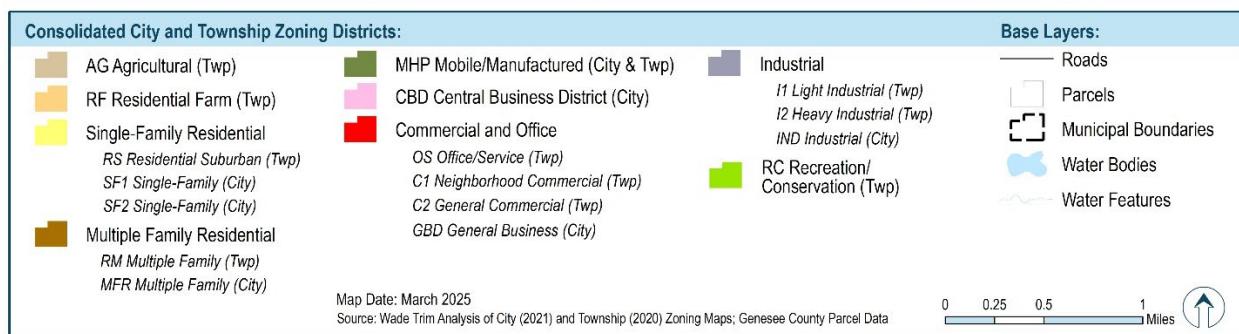
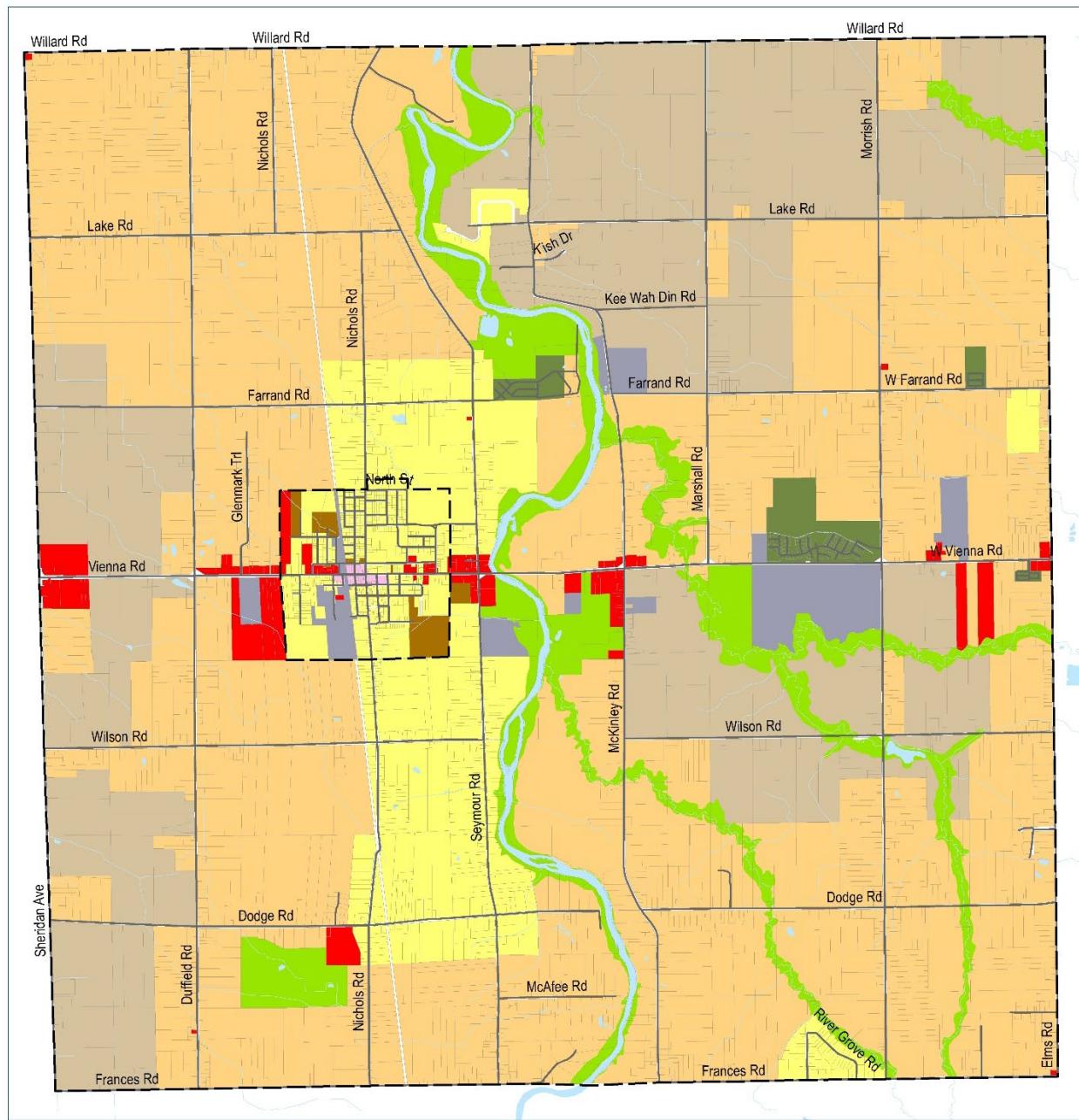
### **Allowable Residential Land Uses and Housing Types**

Any future development of land within the Montrose Community must adhere to local zoning regulations, including use allowances, densities, setbacks, and a myriad of other regulations. Both the City of Montrose and Montrose Township have adopted and enforce a local zoning ordinance. Each zoning ordinance is unique to the community. **Map 3** highlights the geographic distribution of the currently adopted zoning districts for the city and township. As shown on the map, the city has established 7 total zoning districts, while the township has established 11 total zoning districts.

The majority of properties within the City of Montrose's are either zoned SF1 Single-Family Residential or SF2 Single-Family Residential District. Within the SF1 District, only single-family residential housing is allowed. Within the SF2 District, two-family housing may be allowed, but only after special land use review and approval. A greater diversity of housing types are allowed within the MFR Multiple Family Residential District, while the Central Business District (downtown Montrose) allows upper-story residential units within mixed-use buildings. Although a MHP Mobile/Manufactured Home Park District has been established, no land is presently zoned MHP District. New residential development on properties zoned SF1 District must provide a minimum lot size of 7,500 square feet, while the SF2 District requires a minimum lot size of 9,000 square feet.

As shown on **Map 3**, the majority of the Montrose Township's land area is either zoned AG Agricultural or RF Residential Farm District, while the RS Residential Suburban District also makes up a substantial percentage of the township. Over the years, these three zoning districts have worked to protect and reinforce the township's overwhelmingly rural and single-family residential land use pattern. Only the RM Multiple Family District and MHP Mobile/Manufactured Home Park District offer any reasonable option for a residential housing type other than single-family residential, yet these two districts account for a very small percentage of the township's land area. New residential development on properties zoned AG, RF, and RS District must provide a minimum lot size of 1 acre. (Within the RF and RS Districts, if public water and sewer is available, smaller lot sizes are allowed.)

**Map 3.** Consolidated City and Township Zoning Districts



## Planned Residential Land Uses and Housing Types

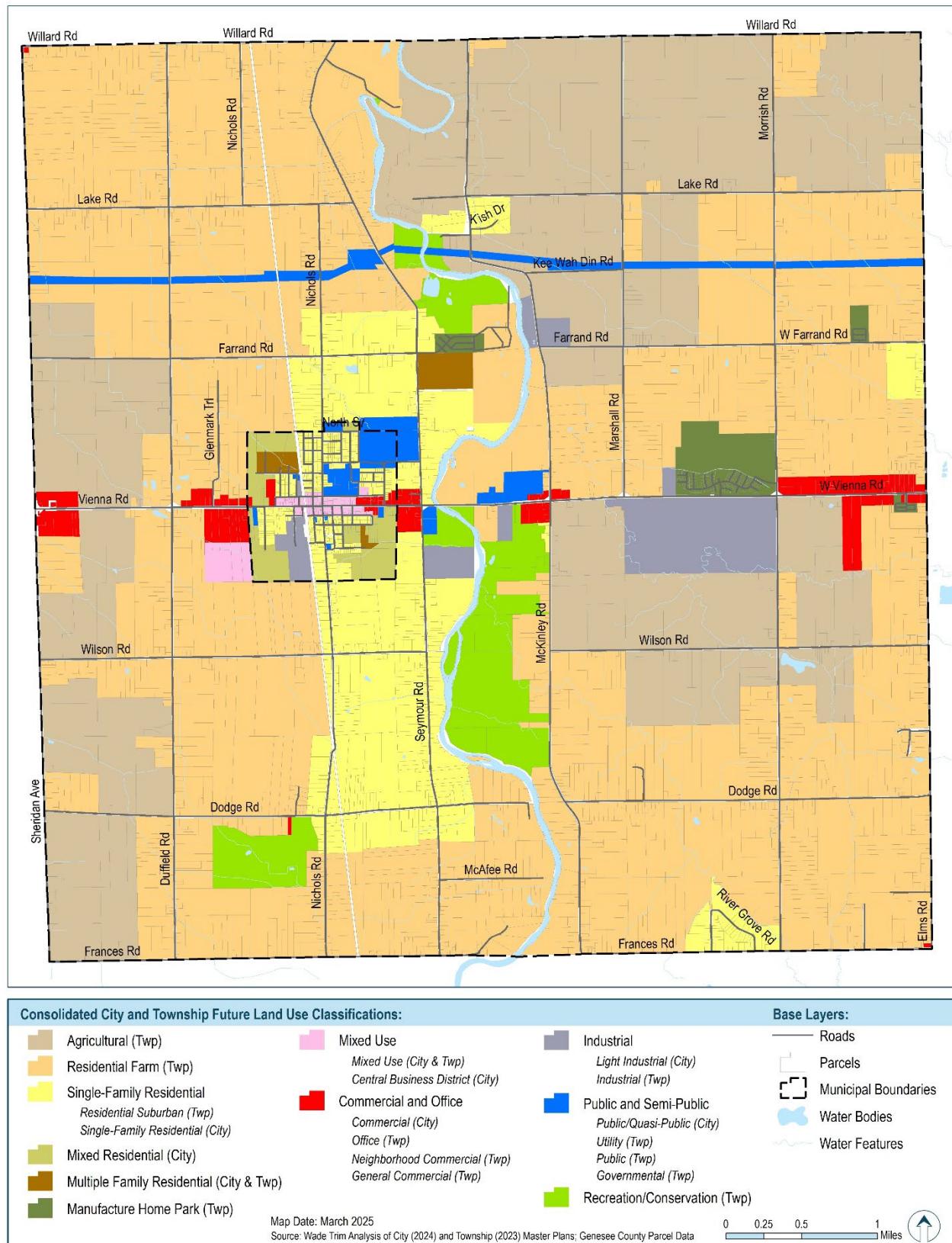
Both the City of Montrose and Montrose Township have prepared and adopted a master plan. A master plan is a long-term policy guide for future growth and development of each community. A key component of any master plan is the future land use plan. The future land use plan is an expression of the desired pattern of land use and development, which is based on community preferences and values. The City of Montrose Master Plan was adopted in 2024, while the Montrose Township Master Plan was adopted in 2023.

**Map 4** highlights the future land use classifications that the city and township have established within their master plans. As shown on the map, the city has established 8 future land use classifications while the township has established 14. Although the zoning ordinance adopted by each community is what dictates the type and character of development that may be allowed today, the future land use categories established by each community show their intent for future growth patterns over time.

Several residential future land use classifications are outlined in the City of Montrose Master Plan. Most of the city's established neighborhoods are planned for Single Family Residential use (30% of the city's land area), while a large number of undeveloped properties are planned for Mixed Residential use (31%). The Single Family Residential classification would accommodate both single-family and two-family housing types, while the Mixed Residential classification is intended to accommodate a mixture of residential use characterized predominantly by small lot detached single family development and attached single family development. The Mixed Residential classification would also accommodate residential care and senior housing facilities. About 5% of the city is planned for future Multiple Family Residential use. Finally, residential use is also encouraged within the city's planned Mixed Use (5%) and Central Business District (1%) classifications. (Percentages were taken from the City of Montrose Master Plan.)

The Montrose Township Master Plan establishes a planned future land use pattern that is similar to its current rural residential land use pattern. The future land use classifications in the township largely mirror the township's zoning districts, with the majority of properties planned for Agricultural and Residential Farm use (29% and 55% of the township's land area, respectively), with a notable land area north, east, and south of the city planned for Residential Suburban use (9%). Areas planned for Manufactured Home Park accommodate only about 1% of the township, while areas planned for Multi-Family Residential land use account for 0.25% of the township. (Percentages were taken from the Montrose Township Master Plan.)

**Map 4.** Consolidated City and Township Future Land Use Classifications



## Public Infrastructure Service Areas

The availability of public water and sewer systems is a major determinant of the character and intensity of development, as higher intensity land uses require a higher level of public infrastructure and services. In rural areas such as Montrose Township, the lack of public water and sewer service generally means that only low density and intensity uses can be accommodated.

**Maps 5, 6 and 7** highlight the location of existing public and sewer systems within the City of Montrose and Montrose Township.

### *Water System*

The City of Montrose and Montrose Township are members of the Genesee County Water Distribution System administered by the County Drain Commissioner. The system receives its water from the Karegnondi Water Authority pipeline that comes from Lake Huron, where it is treated and pumped to homes and businesses in Genesee County.

All developed areas of the City of Montrose are served with public water from mains supplied by a distribution main which enters the city on the east along M-57. Future development within the city could feasibly tap into the city's current public water system, provided the owner/developer constructs the necessary connections to the system.

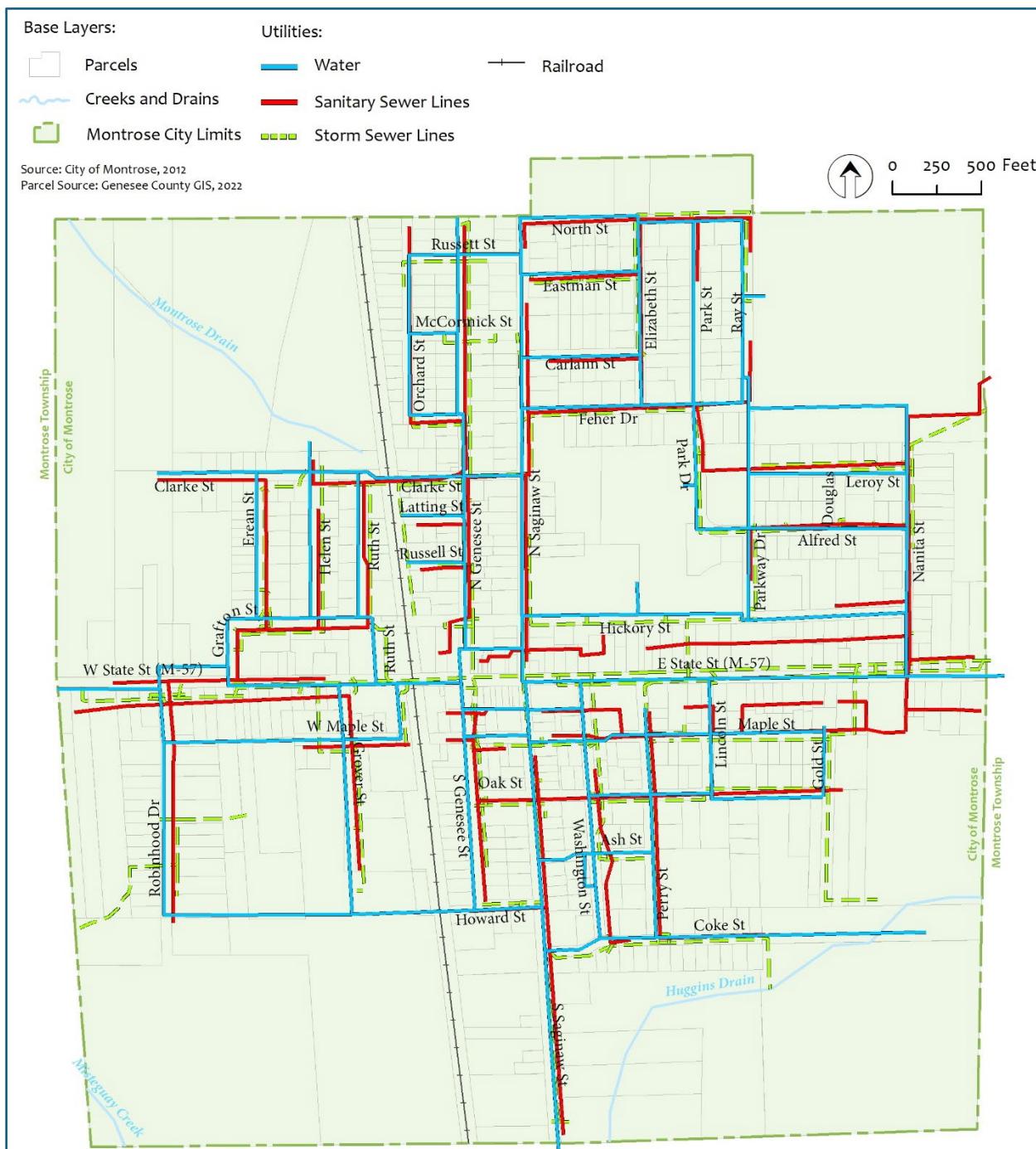
Only a relatively small portion of Montrose Township is served by the public water system. Public water distribution mains are present along Vienna Road (M-57), between McKinley and the eastern city limits, Seymour Road, between Farrand and the southern township border, Wilson Road, between Nichols and Seymour, and Nichols Road, between the south city limits and Wilson Road. New development within these areas could feasibly tap into the current public water system, provided the owner/developer constructs the necessary connections to the system. All properties within the township not connected to the public water system must utilize on-site drinking water wells.

### *Sanitary Sewer System*

The City of Montrose and Montrose Township are also members of the Genesee County Sewage Disposal System, again administered by the County Drain Commissioner. Nearly the entirety of the city is served by the public sewer system. Future development within the city could feasibly tap into the city's current public sewer system, provided the owner/developer constructs the necessary connections to the system.

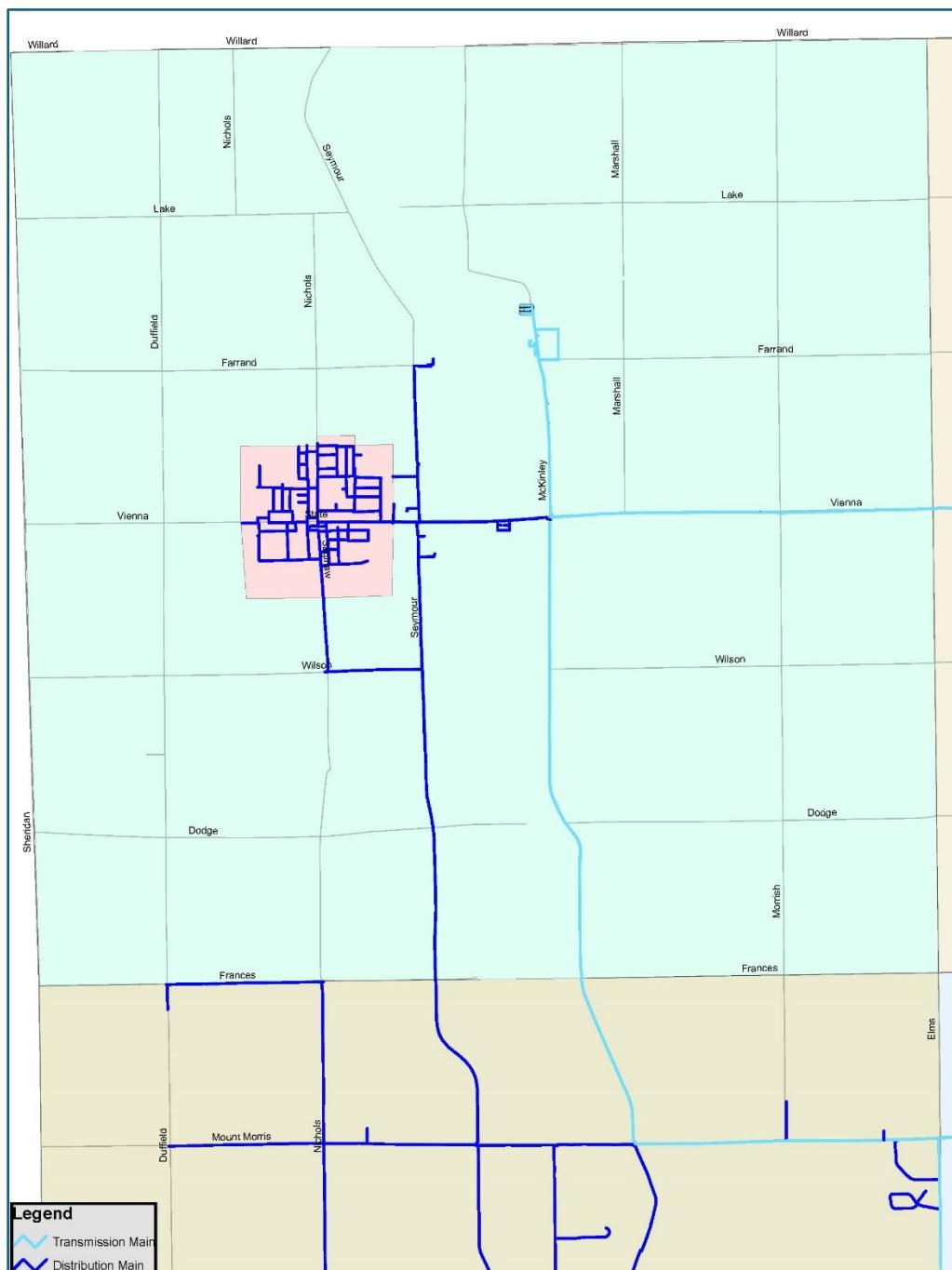
Only limited portions of Montrose Township are served by the public sewer system. These areas are generally found to the east of the city, generally along Seymour Road and Vienna Road (M-57). New development within this area could feasibly tap into the current public sewer system, provided the owner/developer constructs the necessary connections to the system. However, the remainder of the township lacks public sewer and property owners must rely on on-site septic systems.

**Map 5.** Public Water and Sewer Systems within the City of Montrose



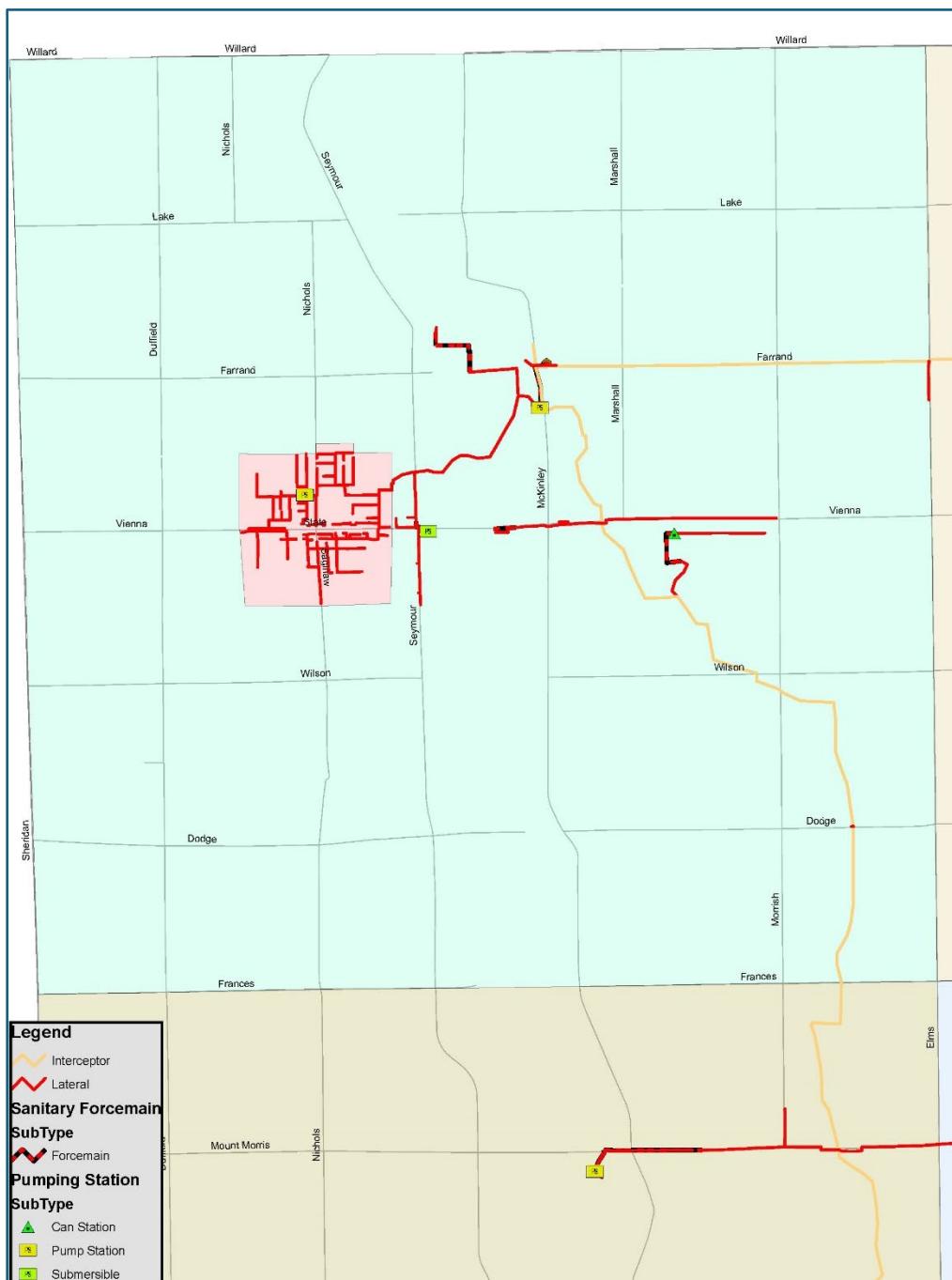
Source: City of Montrose Master Plan 2024

**Map 6.** Public Water System within Montrose Township



Source: Montrose Township Master Plan 2023

**Map 7.** Public Sewer System within Montrose Township



Source: Montrose Township Master Plan 2023

# Chapter 3: Housing Gap Analysis and Future Projections

To better understand future housing needs, this chapter examines past and emerging trends that are shaping local housing preferences.

## National Housing Type Preferences

The Great Recession that hit in late 2007 brought a housing market crash whose impacts are still felt today. Recovery from the recession has occurred, and in recent years has even flourished. However, the characteristics of today's housing market is substantially different from a decade ago, driven by various demographic changes occurring within the United States. These changes include racial and ethnic diversification, a growing immigrant population, and an increasing percentage of non-traditional households.

### Generational Preferences

However, the growth and evolving housing preferences and needs of the various age generations within the United States has also had a major impact on housing supply and demand.

#### *Baby Boomers*

Once preferring large-lot detached homes, the aging Baby Boomer Generation (born 1946 to 1964) is expanding the nation's senior population and increasing demand for downsized units and housing that caters to the needs of seniors. Despite a preference for many to age in place, many Baby Boomers will be in search of new housing. According to housing market researcher Arthur C. Nelson, when those age 65 and older move, 80% will vacate single-family houses, but only 41% will move back into single-family units; the other 59% will locate in multiple-family units. Often, these units are found in active senior living communities and/or care facilities.

#### *Gen X*

Currently, Generation X (those who are generally between 43 and 60 as of 2024) is the highest-earning homebuyer group, with a median household income of \$114,300 in 2021, according to statistics provided by U.S. Bank. A source from the National Association of Realtors states, roughly 75% of Gen Xers prefer detached single-family homes, the highest among any generation at present.

#### *Millennials*

A major player in today's housing market, the Millennial Generation (generally between 28 and 43 years old as of 2024) will account for 75% to 80% of the owner-occupied housing absorbed by people under 65 before 2020. Unique from their parent's living preferences, many within this generation prefer housing in mixed-use urban environments and increasingly view renting as an advantageous option. Additionally, many Millennials tend to delay or forego marriage, while also waiting longer to have children. They are also more likely to be living with their parents, and for longer than previous generations.

### Gen Z

Generation Z or Gen Z (generally 13 to 27 years old in 2024) is the next generation who are just entering the housing market. Recent research has shown that Gen Z's have a similar housing preference to Millennials in that they prefer to live in walkable communities with easy access to shopping, schools, recreational areas, and entertainment destinations. However, with the increasing ability to work remotely, they have more flexibility in their housing locations and tend to live in more affordable and less-populated areas such as smaller towns and suburbs. Single-family homes (including rentals), townhouses and garden-style apartment communities tend to be in-demand housing types for this generation.

### *Opportunity to Capitalize on Generational Housing Preferences*

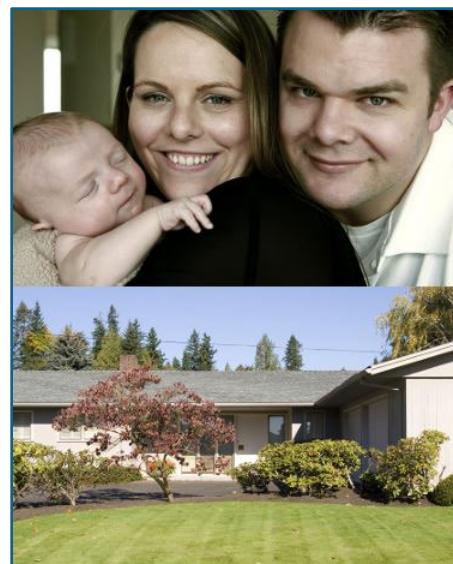
Given the changing generational preferences across the nation, the city and township should work to ensure housing choice for individuals of all lifestyles and ages through the provision of a more diversified and affordable housing stock. This strategy could result in the community's ability to retain its existing older population (Baby Boomers), who desire to "age in place" within the community, and maintain and attract a greater percentage of younger residents (Millennials and Gen Z).

## Local Housing Type Preferences

Tapestry segmentation data is made available through Esri. Esri tapestry segmentation provides detailed summaries of communities across the United States. Residential areas are grouped together into smaller, more manageable segments based on shared demographic, socioeconomic, and lifestyle characteristics. Neighborhoods with the most similar characteristics are grouped together, and neighborhoods showing divergent characteristics are separated. Esri tapestry segmentation data can be used to understand a community's complexity. Each segment provides insight into patterns at the neighborhood and community level. For the purposes of this Housing Study, tapestry segmentation data provides insights into housing type and residential living preferences.

### City of Montrose

According to Esri, the City of Montrose is entirely made up of the "Traditional Living" tapestry segment. Esri describes the Traditional Living segment as residents living primarily in low-density settled neighborhoods in the Midwest. The households are a mix of married-couple families and singles with an average household size of 2.51, a median age of 35.5, and a median household income of \$39,300. Many families encompass two generations who have lived and worked in the community; their children are likely to follow suit. In terms of housing, the Traditional Living segment typically live in owned single-family housing or duplexes with a median value of \$82,200.



Representative Image of the Traditional Living Tapestry Segment,  
Source: Esri

## Montrose Township

Esri data indicates that Montrose Township is comprised of two tapestry segments: "Salt of the Earth" and "Southern Satellites." Of these two segments, the largest is Salt of the Earth, comprising 84% of the township's population. The Salt of the Earth segment is described as residents entrenched in their traditional, rural lifestyles. Citizens are older, and many have grown children that have moved away. The median household size is 2.59, median age is 44.1 years, and median household income is \$56,300. In terms of housing, the Salt of the Earth segment prefers a single-family home, primarily owner-occupied, with a median value of \$154,300.

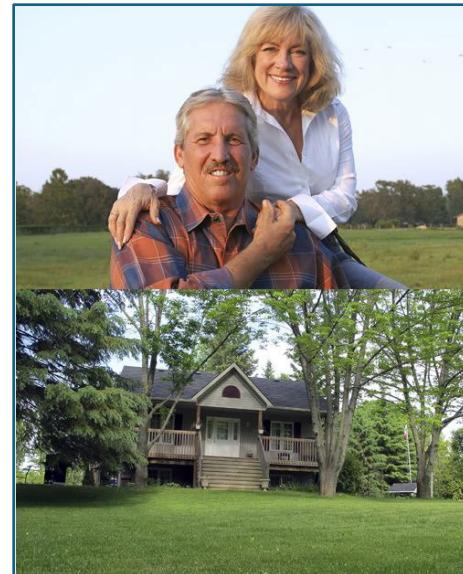
The Southern Satellites tapestry segment enjoys country living and features slightly older, settled married-couple families. The average household size is 2.67, median age is 40.3 years, and median household income is \$47,800. In terms of housing, most of the Southern Satellite tapestry segment own their own homes. Two-thirds of the homes are single-family structures, while one-third are mobile homes. The median value of housing units for this tapestry segment is \$128,500.

## Potential Targeted Population Groups

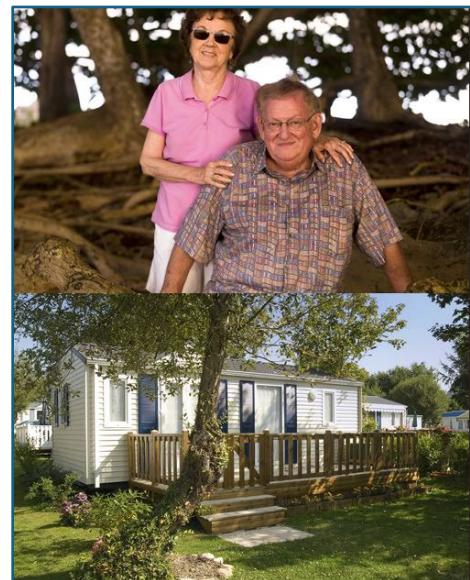
Esri tapestry segmentation data can be a helpful tool to provide insights on what a local municipality could work toward to create an environment that is attractive to certain "targeted" tapestry segments. For example, if a city would like to attract young entrepreneurs, it could examine the lifestyle, housing, and community life characteristics that are desired by young entrepreneurs. With that information in hand, the municipality can establish plans and policies that work toward providing or improving the desired community amenities.

To identify potential tapestry segments that the Montrose community would want to target, we have profiled tapestry data for several "benchmark" communities in the surrounding region. In total, four benchmark communities were selected. These communities and their top four tapestry segments are listed below:

- Fenton (Genesee Co.)
  - Rustbelt Traditions (49%)



Representative Image of the Salt of the Earth Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri



Representative Image of the Southern Satellites Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri

- Traditional Living (18%)
- **Bright Young Professionals** (14%)
- **Midlife Constants** (14%)
- Owosso (Shiawassee Co.)
  - Traditional Living (27%)
  - Hometown Heritage (26%)
  - **Midlife Constants** (14%)
  - Small Town Sincerity (8%)
- Howell (Livingston Co.)
  - Old and Newcomers (34%)
  - Metro Fusion (21%)
  - **Bright Young Professionals** (21%)
  - **Front Porches** (13%)
- Milford (Oakland Co.)
  - **Midlife Constants** (36%)
  - Green Acres (25%)
  - **Front Porches** (21%)
  - In Style (17%)

In reviewing these benchmark communities, there are three tapestry segments found in multiple benchmark communities but are not present within the Montrose community. These segments are called out in bold font above and are: Bright Young Professionals; Midlife Constants; and Front Porches. Described below, these segments are candidates for the Montrose community to target.

#### *Bright Young Professionals*

According to Esri, Bright Young Professionals is a tapestry segment consisting of young, educated, working professionals. The household type is primary couples, with above-average concentrations of both single-parent and single-person households. More than one out of three householders are under the age of 35. The average household size is 2.41, median age is 33.0 years, and median household income is \$54,000. Labor force participation is high, generally white-collar work, with a mix of food service and part-time jobs (among the college students). They find leisure going to bars/clubs, attending concerts, and going to the beach, and also enjoy a variety of sports, and eating out at fast-food and family restaurants. In terms of housing, multiunit buildings or row housing make up 56% of the housing stock, while the remainder is single-family units. There are slightly more renters than homeowners in this segment.



Representative Image of the Bright Young Professionals Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri

### *Midlife Constants*

Midlife Constants residents are seniors, at or approaching retirement. Although located in predominantly metropolitan areas, they live outside the central cities, in smaller communities. Their lifestyle is more country than urban. They are primarily married couples, with a growing share of singles. The average household size is 2.31, median age is 47.0 years, and median household income is \$53,200. They are sociable, church-going residents belonging to fraternal orders, veterans' clubs, and charitable organizations and do volunteer work and fundraising. They also contribute to arts/cultural, educational, health, and social services organizations. Leisure activities include movies at home, reading, fishing, and golf. In terms of housing, they prefer single-family homes with a median value of \$154,100 in settled neighborhoods with slow rates of change.



Representative Image of the Midlife Constants Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri

### *Front Porches*

According to Esri, Front Porches is a blend of household types, with more young families with children and more single households than average. Friends and family are central to Front Porches residents and help to influence household buying decisions. The average household size is 2.57, median age is 34.9 years, and median household income is \$43,700. This tapestry segment is composed of a blue-collar workforce with a strong labor force participation rate. They participate in leisure activities including sports, playing board games and video games. In terms of housing, half of households live in older single-family dwellings, while nearly one in five homes is a duplex, triplex, or quad. Just over half of the homes are occupied by renters.



Representative Image of the Front Porches Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri

### *Housing and Community Amenity Strategies to Attract Targeted Population Grops*

The three targeted segments represent a broad spectrum of ages, employment status, and household characteristics. Based on an analysis of lifestyle, housing, and community life characteristics desired by the targeted tapestry segments, the Montrose community should consider policies and strategies that provide and/or enhance the following amenities:

1. Accommodate a greater variety of housing types, including duplex, triplex, townhouses, and apartments
2. Promote and embrace rental housing as an important option

3. Stabilize and enhance single-family neighborhoods with quality housing stock
4. Protect and celebrate small town character
5. Invest in social and community welfare, such as cultural programs, community events, and social organizations
6. Improve and expand recreational facilities and programs

## Future Housing Need

### Projected Total Housing Units

There are no published housing unit projections for the Montrose community. Therefore, this Housing Study uses various estimates and assumptions to establish a benchmark for the number of housing units that are needed by the year 2040. **Table 9** outlines the methodology used to estimate the projected total housing units needed in the Montrose community by the year 2040. The base data for this projection is the 2020 Census. Using estimates for population, average household size, households, and housing vacancy in 2040, a total housing count in 2040 can be calculated. For the City of Montrose, it is estimated that there is a need for 765 total housing units to accommodate a slightly growing population and a slightly declining household size. This is an increase of 18 housing units from 2020. For Montrose Township, it is estimated that there is a need for 2,738 total housing units to accommodate a slightly growing population and a moderately declining housing size. This is an increase of 402 units from 2020. For the entire Montrose community (city and township), there is a need for 3,503 housing units, a growth of 420 units from 2020.

### Future Housing Type Distribution

**Figure 3** earlier in this Housing Study highlighted the current distribution of housing types within the Montrose community, which consists of 82% single-family homes, 1% townhomes, 8% multi-family dwellings, and 8% mobile homes. If this current distribution were maintained for the 420 new housing units needed by 2040, this would result in 346 new single family detached dwellings, 6 townhouse/attached dwellings, 34 multi-family dwellings, and 34 mobile/manufactured home dwellings across the Montrose community (see **Table 10**). However, the data and analysis outlined in this chapter demonstrates a greater need for housing type diversity to accommodate the Montrose community's changing demographics and an opportunity to attract "target" populations who have a preference for a greater diversity of housing types. For this reason, this Housing Study recommends that the city and township create a planning and regulatory environment that is more supportive of housing diversity. Although the specific distribution of new housing units by type will vary, **Table 10** outlines a recommended allocation of new housing unit types within the community.

**Table 9.** Housing Projections, 2040

<b>Characteristic/Year</b>	<b>City of Montrose</b>	<b>Montrose Township</b>	<b>City and Township</b>
<b>2020</b>			
Total Population	1,743	6,005	7,748
Average Household Size	2.46	2.64	--
Total Households	710	2,220	--
Housing Vacancy Rate	5.0%	5.0%	--
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>2,336</b>	<b>3,083</b>
<b>2040</b>			
Total Population (Consultant Estimate, See Table 2)	1,767	6,088	7,855
Average Household Size (Based on Historical Trend between 2010 and 2020 of -0.01 per decade for the city and -0.15 per decade for the township)	2.43	2.34	--
Total Households (Estimate based on Total Population divided by Average Household Size)	727	2,601	--
Housing Vacancy Rate (Assumption Equivalent to 2020 Rate)	5.0%	5.0%	--
<b>Total Housing Units</b> (Assumes that each Household will Occupy a Housing Unit, plus 5% vacant units)	<b>765</b>	<b>2,738</b>	<b>3,503</b>

Source: 2020 U.S. Census; Wade Trim Analysis

**Table 10.** Future Housing Type Distribution Projections, 2040

Housing Type	Current Distribution (2022)		New Units Maintaining Current Distribution (2040)		New Units Targeting Greater Housing Type Diversity (2040)	
	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total
<b>Total Housing Units (City and Township)</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3,083</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>420</b>
Single Family Detached Dwellings	82%	2,528	82%	346	25%	105
Townhouses/Attached Dwellings	1%	43	1%	6	35%	147
Multi-Family Dwellings	8%	247	8%	34	35%	147
Mobile/Manufactured Home Dwellings	8%	252	8%	34	5%	21

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022; Wade Trim Analysis

# Chapter 4: Planning Recommendations

Based on the insights gained into local housing needs in the preceding chapters, this chapter outlines goals, actions, and implementation strategies for housing within the Montrose community. These planning recommendations have been crafted to further the overarching goals established by the City of Montrose in its 2024 Master Plan and Montrose Township in its 2023 Master Plan. Additionally, the recommendations outlined in this chapter are intended to be consistent with the general objectives of the Michigan Statewide Housing Plan and the East Michigan Housing Partnership.

## State and Regional Goals

### Michigan Statewide Housing Plan

The Michigan Statewide Housing Plan (MSHP) addresses the complex barriers to attaining safe, healthy, affordable, and accessible housing. The Plan has established eight priority areas and has developed specific action strategies to further the goal for each priority area. The goals of the Michigan Statewide Housing Plan are listed by priority area below. This Montrose Community Housing Study supports the statewide goals and priority areas.

1. **Equity and Racial Justice:** Address long term disparities in housing access and generational wealth building by striving for equitable access to housing.
2. **Housing Ecosystem:** Strive for a housing ecosystem that is diverse and interconnected with other priorities of the Statewide Housing Plan. This includes the construction of housing, data and research on housing, and internet accessibility for housing.
3. **Preventing and Ending Homelessness:** Prioritize stability for people that have experienced homelessness and need additional support, as well as those that experience chronic housing instability.
4. **Housing Stock:** Increase the supply of affordable, accessible, and attainable housing. This is driven by a need to develop, rehabilitate, and preserve housing for all levels of incomes.
5. **Older Adult Housing:** Expand the supply of affordable, accessible housing units specifically for older adults (65 years or older). This is important because Michigan has a growing aging population.
6. **Rental Housing:** Prioritize rental housing and rental affordability as a housing option for those who cannot afford or do not want to own a home.
7. **Homeownership:** Increase the homeownership for low- and moderate-income households, overall, and help vulnerable homeowners keep their homes. This is important for financial benefits, generational wealth building, and community stability.
8. **Communication and Education:** Focus on inclusive communication and education to support affordable and attainable housing, understanding of housing programs and services, and enhancing awareness of fair housing rights.

## East Michigan Housing Partnership

The East Michigan Housing Partnership seeks to contextualize the Michigan Statewide Housing Plan priorities from a customized regional perspective, through goal setting and collaboration. This Montrose Community Housing Study embraces the regional goals and priority areas established by the East Michigan Housing Partnership, as listed below.

1. **Information and Collaboration:** Increase collaboration on housing with state agencies, philanthropy, local governments, tribal nations, education, and private sector organizations.
2. **Construction Industry and Licensed Skilled Tradespersons:** Expand housing availability through construction and tradesperson capacity. This is supported through workforce development in the construction and trade industry.
3. **Stable and Affordable Housing:** Increase access to stable and affordable quality housing for households with extremely low incomes.
4. **Full Spectrum Housing Development:** Increase the supply of the full spectrum of housing that is affordable and attainable to Michigan residents.
5. **Rehabilitate and Preservation:** Increase the rehabilitation and/or preservation of housing stock.
6. **Reduce Evictions:** Keep people housed by reducing the number of evictions.
7. **Quality Rental Housing:** Increase the quality of rental housing.
8. **Increase Homeownership:** Increase homeownership among households with low to moderate income levels.
9. **Housing Stability:** Assist Michigan residents to increase housing stability through financial literacy and wealth building.

## Montrose Community Housing Goals

Goals are essential statements that guide a community by outlining desired outcomes. They are flexible, defining, and enduring, remaining relevant until achieved. Goals address specific needs while promoting fundamental change that aligns with the community's mission. One goal has been established for the City of Montrose and Montrose Township pertaining to the following topics:

- New Housing Development
- Accessibility and Affordability
- Rehabilitation and Preservation
- Sustainable Development

A series of objectives have then been established to further each goal. Also included is a statement of how each objective is connected to one or more of the Michigan Statewide Housing Plan (MSHP) goals.

## New Housing Development

*Goal: Expand housing development to meet the diverse needs of Montrose Community members.*

### *Objectives:*

1. Increase the full spectrum of housing units. Support new lifestyle housing choices such as townhomes, rowhouses, stacked ranches, lofts, and life-work units within downtown Montrose, adjacent mixed-use sites, and in other strategic locations that are adequately served by public infrastructure and community services. **[MSHP Goals #4, #6 and #7]**
2. Support the development of active senior living facilities and residential care facilities that cater to an aging population, allowing citizens to "age-in-place" within the Montrose community. **[MSHP Goal #5]**
3. Explore strategies to promote the development of housing options that meet the City of Montrose and Montrose Township's specific needs, prioritizing inclusivity over purely market-driven approaches. **[MSHP Goals #1, #4, #6 and #7]**
4. Encourage new development that harmonizes with the scale and character of existing neighborhoods, fostering a diverse range of housing options that enriches the Montrose community's unique identity and environment. **[MSHP Goals #2 and #4]**
5. Enable necessary services and facilities, including public sewer, water, and streets to be extended in an efficient manner to meet current and future development needs. **[MSHP Goal #4]**
6. As new commercial and mixed-use development occurs, consider the incorporation of residential dwellings, such as upper-story loft units. **[MSHP Goal #4]**

## Accessibility and Affordability:

*Goal: Provide an adequate amount of accessible and affordable housing based on the needs of the Montrose Community.*

### *Objectives:*

- Expand the supply of affordable, accessible housing for older adults (65 and older). **[MSHP Goal #5]**
- Promote improvements in the quality of existing rental units and increase the overall number of rental units within the community. **[MSHP Goals #4 and #6]**
- Explore opportunities to expand the supply of affordable housing to increase homeownership for low- and moderate-income households. **[MSHP Goals #4, #6 and #7]**

## **Rehabilitation and Preservation:**

*Goal: Expand housing rehabilitation and preservation for renters and owners to improve the quality of the housing stock.*

### *Objectives:*

- Rehabilitate and maintain the existing housing stock and continue to enforce existing housing, rental, and maintenance codes to ensure neighborhoods remain strong and vital. **[MSHP Goals #1 and #4]**
- Improve the quality and health of existing rental units through regular maintenance checks and updates. **[MSHP Goals #1 and #4]**
- Ensure that while meeting objectives for accessibility and affordability, detached single family homes remain the predominant housing type within the Montrose community and are not detrimentally encroached upon by higher density housing. **[MSHP Goal #4]**

## **Sustainable Development:**

*Goal: Prioritize sustainable development by balancing conservation, development, and responsible use of resources.*

### *Objectives:*

- Balance housing development and community needs with environmental conservation, directing new growth away from environmentally sensitive areas whenever possible. **[MSHP Goal #4]**
- Reduce sprawl by encouraging concentrated and connected growth. **[MSHP Goal #4]**
- Regulate the design of new residential developments to limit the fragmentation of habitat corridors, such as along water courses, hedgerows, and fence rows. **[MSHP Goal #4]**
- Develop with storm water best management practices to minimize the negative impacts that residential development can have on runoff. **[MSHP Goal #4]**
- Promote healthy quality of life through intentional development that emphasizes walkability and non-motorized access, as well as access to natural and recreational areas. **[MSHP Goal #4]**
- Prioritize the use of local building materials, native vegetation, and local construction businesses and workers. **[MSHP Goals #1, #2 and #4]**
- Prioritize energy efficiency and weatherization in construction and housing preservation. **[MSHP Goal #4]**

# Montrose Community Action Strategies

## Zoning Amendment Recommendations

As the primary means of regulating existing and new residential development within each community, it is of critical importance that each community conduct a review of their currently adopted zoning ordinance and proceed with crafting and adopting amendments necessary to support the goals of this housing study. This would require the collective effort of the local elected and appointed officials and staff of each community, including the Montrose City Council and Planning Commission, and the Montrose Township Board and Planning Commission.

The City of Montrose and Montrose Township Master Plans contain numerous housing-related objectives whose implementation would be aided through zoning ordinance amendments. Additionally, both Master Plans contain specific zoning ordinance amendment recommendations. The following housing-related objectives and recommendations are included within the Master Plan documents and should become the focus for zoning ordinance reviews and amendments by each community. These housing-related objectives and recommendations are organized by topic.

### *New Housing Development*

Objectives/Recommendations from the City of Montrose Master Plan:

- Review and consider needed amendments to the SF1 District pertaining to permitted uses and development standards appropriate for traditional neighborhood development. (City, page 67)
- Amend the existing SF2 District or create a new Mixed Residential District which accomplishes the intent of the Mixed Residential future land use classification. (City, page 67)
- Review and consider needed amendments to the MFR District pertaining to permitted uses and development standards to allow for missing-middle housing and creative residential redevelopment initiatives. (City, page 67)
- Review and update zoning ordinance provisions to ensure high-quality residential development and redevelopment. This would include potential amendments to support new lifestyle housing choices such as townhomes, rowhouses, stacked ranches, lofts and life-work units. Such developments would be allowed in strategic locations, particularly near or within mixed-use districts with access to major roads and when adequately supported by public infrastructure. (City, page 68)
- Create a new Mixed Use District which accomplishes the intent of the Mixed Use future land use classification. (City, page 67)
- Review and consider needed amendments to the CBD District pertaining to permitted uses and development standards to allow for a dynamic mix of uses within a traditional downtown context. (City, page 67)

Objectives/Recommendations from the Montrose Township Master Plan:

- The Planning Commission would like to see an increased emphasis on site design for future development in the Township. In the future, they can consider some or all of the following amendments to the zoning ordinance; increased zoning regulations that emphasize aesthetics, improvements to ingress/egress entrances, lighting, sidewalks, setbacks, landscaping, and discourage strip frontage. (Twp., page 66)
- New residential developments in rural sections of the Township should be designed in a manner that will enhance the natural environment. (Twp., page 49)
- Discourage strip frontage residential development along major roads (M-13, M-57, Elm, and Seymour) and encourage clustered and/or medium density single family housing development in those areas. (Twp., page 49)
- Require new residential developments to be logical extensions of existing residential areas to enable necessary services and facilities, including sewer, water, and streets to be extended in an efficient manner. (Twp., page 49)
- Locate new residential developments in a manner that will minimize conflicts with incompatible land uses. In those instances where residential land uses are contiguous to commercial, or industrial uses, provide for visual or physical buffers. (Twp., page 49)

Additional Zoning Recommendations for both Communities to Consider:

- Review the zoning ordinance and adopt amendments to ensure that senior housing and residential care facilities may be developed in appropriate locations and are appropriately regulated. Specific types of housing and care facilities include age-restricted lifestyle communities, senior independent housing, senior dependent housing, assisted living, convalescent/nursing facilities, adult foster care homes, and adult foster care congregate facilities.

### *Accessibility and Affordability*

Objectives/Recommendations from the City of Montrose Master Plan:

- Review the zoning ordinance and consider allowing and regulating accessory dwelling units. (City, page 68)

Objectives/Recommendations from the Montrose Township Master Plan:

- Seek a means of encouraging the development of suitable housing for the Township population. (Twp, page 49)

Additional Zoning Recommendations for both Communities to Consider:

- Review minimum dwelling unit floor areas and adopt amendments to eliminate unnecessary barriers to the construction of relatively smaller housing units in line with market demand.
- Review the allowable uses within each residential zoning district and, where appropriate, adopt amendments to list missing middle housing types and residential care facilities principal permitted uses instead of special land uses.

- Review the zoning ordinance and eliminate any barriers that would prevent or disincentivize new housing or modifications to existing housing designed to meet the needs of older adults or individuals with disabilities.
- Review the zoning ordinance and eliminate any direct or indirect barriers or disincentives to the development of rental housing units.

### *Rehabilitation and Preservation*

Objectives/Recommendations from the City of Montrose Master Plan:

- Conduct a closer investigation of the city's neighborhoods ensure that the zoning ordinance supports appropriate development consistent with the historic context of the neighborhood. (City, page 68)
- Review and update the zoning ordinance's design standards to ensure attractive and high-quality development throughout the city. Specific attention should be paid to development and redevelopment within mixed-use and commercial districts. (City, page 68)

Objectives/Recommendations from the Montrose Township Master Plan:

- The Planning Commission would like to see an increased emphasis on site design for redevelopment of properties in the Township. In the future, they can consider some or all of the following amendments to the zoning ordinance; increased zoning regulations that emphasize aesthetics, improvements to ingress/egress entrances, lighting, sidewalks, setbacks, landscaping, and discourage strip frontage. (Twp., page 66)
- Promote preservation and code enforcement to maintain residential areas. (Twp., page 49)

### *Sustainable Development*

Objectives/Recommendations from the City of Montrose Master Plan:

- Review the zoning ordinance and consider amendments that encourage the use of Low Impact Development strategies in new development and redevelopment projects. (City, page 68)

Objectives/Recommendations from the Montrose Township Master Plan:

- Reduce sprawl by encouraging cluster design and conservation easements to conserve wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitats, steep slopes, and other environmentally sensitive areas. (Twp., page 49)

Additional Zoning Recommendations for both Communities to Consider:

- Consider establishing new residential development options that allow for flexibility in design and layout of residential developments (i.e., smaller lot sizes, attaching of units) in exchange for the protection of sensitive natural resources and the provision of community open space.

### *Streamlining Procedures and Regulations*

Objectives/Recommendations from the City of Montrose Master Plan:

- Review the zoning ordinance and seek to eliminate barriers and disincentives to residential development projects that are desired by the community. This would include consideration of a new planned unit development option, which allows for regulatory flexibility for unique projects that meet certain community benefits qualifications. (City, page 68)

Objectives/Recommendations from the Montrose Township Master Plan:

- Develop the zoning ordinance to determine ways to simplify and streamline the permitting process and make it user-friendly. (Twp., page 53)

## **Housing Rehabilitation and Preservation Recommendations**

Housing rehabilitation and preservation are important initiatives to maintain local housing quality and affordability. Additionally, these initiatives enable local community members to modify their current housing to better meet their needs. Housing preservation and rehabilitation initiatives tend to include weatherization, efficiency upgrades, accessibility retrofits, and housing repair. Both rehabilitation and preservation are most often accomplished by individual homeowners or landlords. However, there are also programs available to support these efforts.

### *Housing Education*

Education can play a crucial role in helping the City of Montrose and Montrose Township address housing access, quality, and preserving local housing opportunities. By connecting residents with resources and knowledge about their local housing options, financial resources, and maintenance practices, the community can empower individuals to make informed decisions that enhance their living conditions, leading to neighborhood stability and quality. Additionally, educational programs around available subsidies, grants, and loans for homebuyers and renters can additionally increase access to attainable housing.

It is recommended that the City of Montrose and Montrose Township support existing housing education programs and help connects community members to the appropriate resources. Below are important programs to promote and support:

- Education around the **Fair Housing Act** promotes inclusivity and prevents housing discrimination. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development's website provides a full overview of the Act.
- Genesee County Habitat for Humanity has two homebuyer courses:
  - The **Fair Housing and Intro to Homebuyer Education Class** is an in-person course in collaboration with the Genesee County Land Bank.
  - The **Online Homebuyer Education Class** is with eHome America which is specifically about financial management.

### *Weatherization and Energy Efficiency*

The cold winter and warming summers of central Michigan means that housing weatherization is essential for healthy environments and affording energy costs of heating and cooling the homes. Weatherization helps to prevent air leakage and improve insulation to reduce the energy spent on heating and cooling buildings. Additionally, energy efficiency can include many methods to reduce energy consumption over time, including energy efficient light bulbs and home practices to save on energy. Weatherizing a home includes air sealing, insulating, and repairing or replacing the mechanical needs such as water heaters, furnaces, and ventilation fans. These initiatives reduce the energy used in a home, but they can also significantly reduce costs over time and can improve the environmental quality and health inside the home.

Below are important programs for the Montrose community to support and promote:

- Genesee County has a weatherization program with the Genesee County **Community Action Resource Department (GCCARD)**, which provides weatherization services such as replacing water heaters and water bill assistance to low-income families, including the elderly, people with disabilities, and families with children.
- The **Weatherization Assistance Program of Michigan** is managed through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. It provides eligible low-income households energy conservation and related health and safety services including a home energy audit, air sealing, and other energy efficiency updates
- Consumers Energy's **Helping Neighbors Program** provides free home visit to identify opportunities for energy efficient upgrades, installation of energy saving upgrades, and helpful tips to save energy. The potential installations include smart thermostat installation, water pipe insulation, and door sealing.

### *Housing Repair and Quality*

Approximately 70% of the City of Montrose and Montrose Township's housing stock is about 50 years old or older. Therefore, many homes in the community may require more significant repairs to maintain current living standards. These repairs are crucial, as neglecting them can lead to high costs, especially when maintaining an older home. Proper maintenance not only preserves housing quality, but it also tends to increase property values, creating wealth-building opportunities for homeowners.

Regularly maintaining rental housing is also important for the community. Proactive maintenance checks from landlords helps to identify potential hazards before they escalate into more serious problems. Having a proactive approach to rental inspections also helps to foster tenant satisfaction and retention. Additionally, well-maintained properties are more attractive to potential renters, reducing vacancy rates and ensures steady income for landlords. Finally, it contributes to the overall stability of the rental market, benefitting both the tenants and the property owners.

The City of Montrose and Montrose Township can reinforce quality housing by requiring regular rental inspections and code enforcement. These should be coupled with tenant protections to prevent community displacement.

- The Genesee County **Home Improvement Program (HIP)** and **Urgent Repair Program** provide financial assistance to low-income homeowners to bring the homes up to being decent, safe, and sanitary.
- The Habitat for Humanity Genesee County has two programs to support housing repairs.
  - The **Critical Repair Program** provides low to moderate income homeowners with health and safety concerns by repairing roofs, structural damage, porches, electrical, HVAC, accessibility ramps, and other related housing repairs.
  - The **Building Resident Action by Neighborhood Design (BRAND)** provides grassroot organizations that are eligible to apply to up to \$10,000 grant for projects that create a visible and lasting physical change in the community.
- The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has a **Home Lead Services Program** to help renters and homeowners find, fix, and reduce exposure to lead in paint, dust, soil, and drinking water. Additionally, the **Lead Prevention Fund** helps qualifying homeowners cover 50% of the cost of a lead abatement project.
- MSHDA has a **Property Improvement Program (PIP)** which provides loans for Michigan homeowners to make repairs and improvements on livability or utility needs.
- The USDA Michigan Office has a **Home Repair Loan and Grant** program for very low income homeowners in eligible rural areas. The grants are for homeowners 62 and older.

#### *Accessibility Retrofits*

The Montrose community features an aging population, but generally has a limited inventory of accessible housing units for seniors and/or senior care facilities. Therefore, home accessibility retrofits to existing dwelling units will be critical to meet the accessibility needs of the occupants. These retrofits often include adding ramps, handrails, levered door handles, bathroom modifications (walk-in shower, grab bars, toilet modifications), lowered kitchen counters, wheelchair lifts, widening doorways, and similar improvements. These modifications are important to allow for the growing senior population to age in place. Aging in place is sometimes more feasible than the costs of moving to an assisted living center or to a different home.

- United Way of Genesee County has a program called the **UAW/United Way Wheelchair Ramp Program** which builds wheelchair ramps for disabled residents.
- Michigan United Cerebral Palsy has two programs for residential accessibility retrofits:
  - The **Ramps for Independence program** provide ramps for people with disabilities, seniors, veterans, and low- and moderate-income households.
  - The **Quick Ramps for Kids** program provides households with disabled children in wheelchairs with a prefabricated ramp.

## Housing Development and Redevelopment Strategies

Communities must approach development and redevelopment of properties strategically. Diversifying development methods can help prevent obstacles and promote long term changes. This may involve various new housing projects, property redevelopments, housing renovation, and housing preservation efforts. Investments should be focused on areas with the potential for long term positive benefits while minimizing risks of negative impacts. The goals outlined within this Housing Study can guide these investments and strategic initiatives.

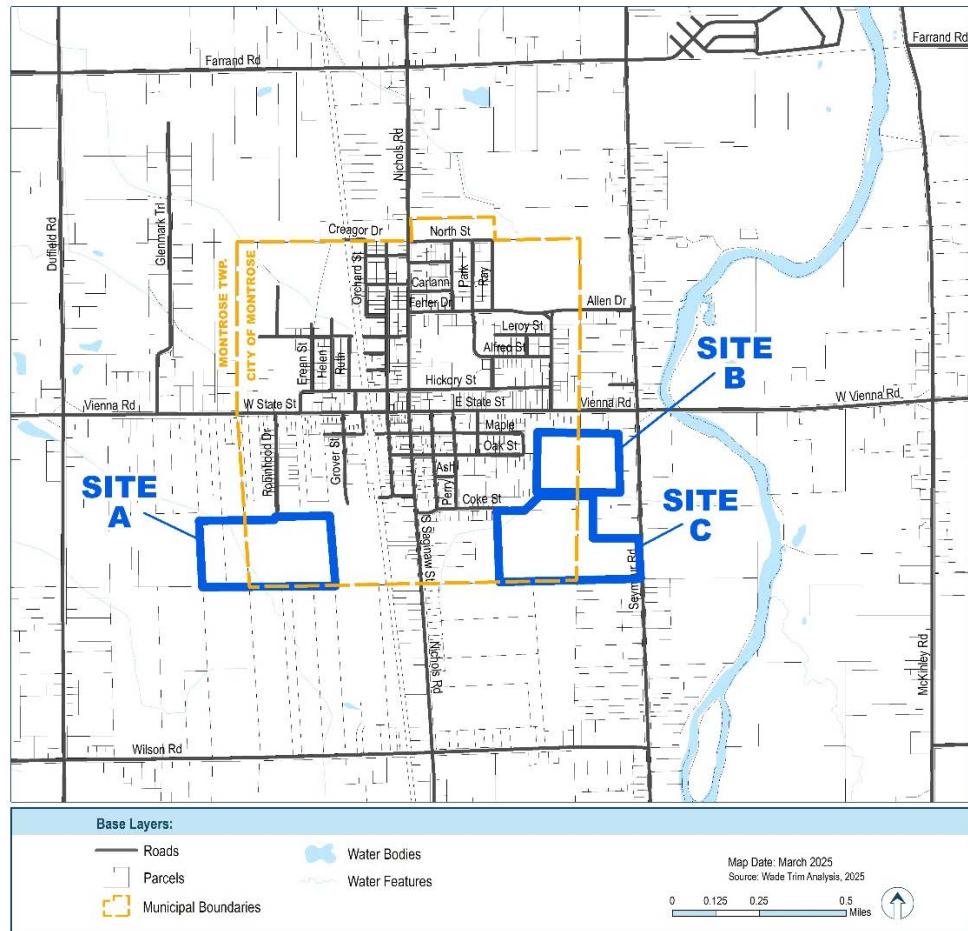
Chapter 3 of this Housing Study included future projections of new housing needed within the Montrose community through 2040 and a recommended allocation of new housing unit types (see **Table 9** and **Table 10**). For the entire Montrose community (city and township), there is a projected need for approximately 420 new housing units between 2020 and 2040.

### *Housing Development Site Concepts*

Three concepts for new housing development within the Montrose community have been prepared within this Housing Study. These prospective housing developments are preliminary and conceptual, and should only be used to explore and highlight the type and character of development that could potentially be accommodated. They are not meant to be prescriptive or binding on the owners of these properties. As with any other location within the community, actual development would occur only at the initiative of the property owner(s), in line with market demand, supported by available infrastructure systems, and as regulated by local zoning. Additionally, conditions may change and new opportunities may arise that will result in the City and/or Township focusing on different or more favorable prospective housing development sites.

The three locations for new housing development are highlighted on **Map 8**. Each site appears to be advantageously located and suited for housing development due to factors such as sufficient property size, availability/proximity to existing public infrastructure, and current planning and zoning designations. The three sites are summarized in **Table 11**. The concept plans for each site are included as **Figures 13 through 15**.

**Map 8.** Prospective Housing Development Sites Locations



**Table 11.** Prospective Housing Development Sites Summary

Site	Location	Location/ Municipality	Approximate Size	Planning and Zoning Status		Availability of Infrastructure
				City	Township	
A	End of Robinhood Drive	City of Montrose, with potential for expansion into adjacent properties within Montrose Township	50 acres, including the adjacent properties in Montrose Township	Zoned SF2, Planned for Mixed Residential	Zoned C2, Planned for Mixed Use	Both Public Water and Sewer
B	End of Maple and Oak Streets	City of Montrose with potential for expansion into adjacent properties within Montrose Township	30 acres, including the adjacent properties in Montrose Township	Zoned SF2, Planned for Mixed Residential	Zoned RM, Planned for Multiple Family	Both Public Water and Sewer
C	Between Coke Drive and Seymour Road	City of Montrose and Montrose Township	45 acres	Zoned MFR, Planned for Mixed Residential	Zoned RS, Planned Residential Suburban	Both Public Water and Sewer

#### *Site A*

Prospective housing development Site A is located at the end of Robinhood Drive within the southwest corner of the City of Montrose immediately adjacent to Montrose Township. Including the adjacent properties within Montrose Township to the west, the site contains roughly 50 acres of land. It consists of multiple properties, all of which are privately owned. The site could be easily accessed by extending Robinhood Drive into the property. Robinhood Drive leads to Vienna Road (M-57) to the north. The subject site could also potentially be connected to Grover Street to the northeast of the site.

The concept plan for this site explores the possibility of developing a mixed-residential development consisting of small lot single family detached dwellings, townhouses/attached residential units, and multiple family units. There is a forested buffer between the existing residential development on Robinhood Road and the proposed development, which would remain. The single family housing continues the character of the surrounding residential area of Robinhood Road, and the townhomes/attached residential units would blend appropriately with the single family detached units. A central park or civic green space area is recommended as a common community amenity. Sidewalk connections are proposed throughout the development to maximize the walkability of the site and connect the site to the adjacent neighborhoods. This site would represent an approximately 15-minute walk to downtown Montrose.

The site is densely wooded. This Housing Study recommends preserving a large natural buffer zone around the site. There is a creek that runs through the southwest corner of the site. Portions of several adjacent properties within Montrose Township are located to the west of the creek. These properties could become a later phase of development.

**Figure 13.** Prospective Housing Development Concept - Site A

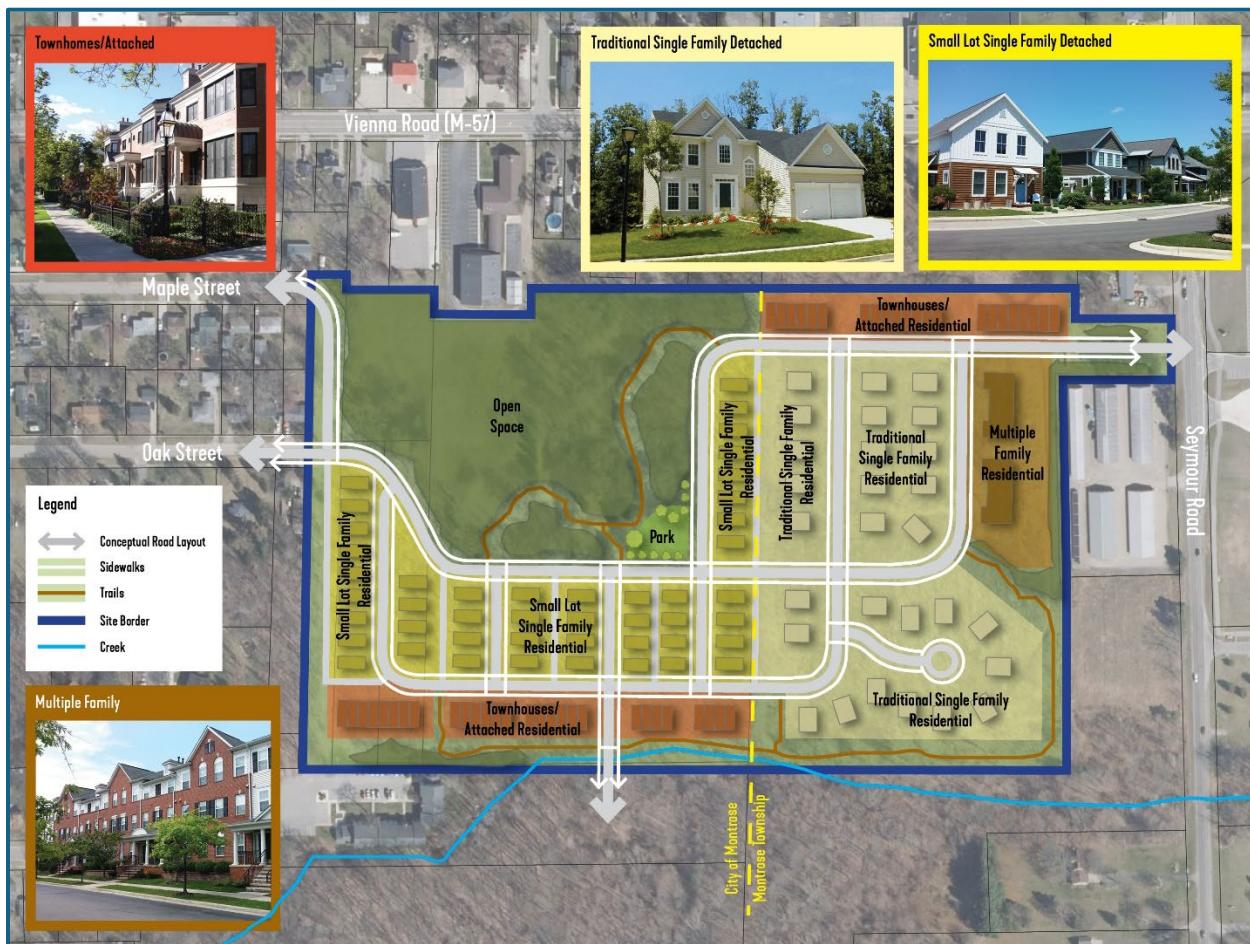


## Site B

Prospective housing development Site B comprises portions of several largely undeveloped properties within the City of Montrose and Montrose Township, generally between Maple and Oak Streets within the City and Seymour Road within the Township. One of the properties is an undeveloped right-of-way owned by the City, while the remaining properties are privately owned. The properties, in combination, comprise approximately 30 acres of land.

To maintain the character of the single-family neighborhoods to the west, while simultaneously expanding the development of smaller, more affordable housing types, this Housing Study examines a mixed-residential development consisting of single family detached units, townhouse/attached units, and multiple family units. The conceptual street layout would result in a vehicular connection between Maple and Oak Streets and Seymour Road. This site could also provide a connection to prospective housing development Site C, which is adjacent to the south. Internal and external sidewalk connections are proposed throughout the development. This site is an approximately 10 minute walk to downtown Montrose and a 10 minute walk to Barber Park. The northwestern portion of this site is wooded and likely contains wetlands, which are proposed to be preserved.

**Figure 14.** Prospective Housing Development Concept - Site B



### Site C

Prospective housing development Site C comprises portions of several largely undeveloped properties within the City of Montrose and Montrose Township, generally between Coke Street and Seymour Road. It is adjacent to Site B to the south. All of the properties are privately owned and, in combination, comprise approximately 45 acres of land.

This Housing Study examines the development of a mixed-residential development consisting of traditional single family detached dwellings, townhouse/attached residential dwellings, multiple family residential units and senior care facilities. The entire development could be designed to achieve the "age-in-place" concept, catering to older citizens and providing the full spectrum of housing options, from active senior living to assisted living. Additional space near Seymour Road would allow for a future phase of development. A centralized park feature is envisioned, with a pedestrian circulation system that provides safe and convenient connections within and beyond the development. The conceptual road layout would enable vehicular connections between Coke Street and Seymour Road.

There is a creek that runs along the northwestern and northern portion of the site. Open spaces along and beyond the creek are envisioned.

**Figure 15.** Prospective Housing Development Concept - Site C



## Housing Development and Redevelopment Challenges

Site development and redevelopment poses a variety of challenges. The following are common challenges that the City of Montrose and Montrose Township will face as they work to encourage the development or redevelopment of targeted properties.

1. Lack of control of the land due to ownership by multiple private property owners
2. Zoning designations/requirements which serve as barriers to "creative" redevelopment concepts
3. Lack of public infrastructure and/or insufficient infrastructure capacities (water, sewer, or roads)

## Housing Development and Redevelopment Strategies

The City and Township, with the support of private and public partners, have the ability and necessary tools to combat these challenges. The following strategies are recommended as means for each unit of government to overcome the various redevelopment challenges.

### *Market Redevelopment Sites and Solicit Developers*

- Clearly articulate and communicate the vision for each prospective development/redevelopment site. The conceptual plans in this Housing Study are a starting point for prospective redevelopment, but additional site investigation may be necessary, and the City and Township may wish to prepare high quality concept sketches and illustrations as marketing tools.
- Work with local partners (DDA, County, MEDC, etc.) to promote the vision
- Promote sites on online databases such as Zoom Prospector, OppSites, and the MEDC Real Estate Database

### *Eliminate Zoning Barriers*

- Proactively rezone prospective development/redevelopment sites to a district that would support the proposed redevelopment
- Create and adopt a new zoning districts and/or residential development options that would allow for creative mixed-residential development proposals
- Review and amend the zoning ordinance to incentivize new residential developments in areas served by public infrastructure and services

### *Incentivize Redevelopment*

- Establish and promote clear incentives to demonstrate the City and Township are willing partners in redevelopment for certain types of projects. Incentives may include tax abatements, and publicly funded capital improvements.
- Catalogue available outside funding resources and serve as a conduit between property owners and funding agencies, including the MEDC and EGLE

# Implementation Resources

Implementation of the recommendations of this Housing Study can only be accomplished over time through a proactive effort across both communities. Implementation of these recommendations can be aided by both private financial resources, through public-private partnerships, and public funding sources.

## Public-Private Partnerships

Developers tend to focus on large markets with higher values and the potential for greater profit margins within larger cities. This leads to challenges for development in smaller, outlying communities, because the incomes and housing values tend to be lower. Therefore, the City of Montrose and Montrose Township will have to find creative ways to generate new housing development, on both the construction and land development ends of the market.

Cost is often the primary factor in deciding when and where to construct. Nearly 30% of the costs of new construction projects are regulatory, so finding ways to reduce those costs is critical. Gathering specific market data on potential sales prices or rental structures, as well as understanding the local demand target demographics is essential. The City and Township may wish to facilitate discussions with local realtors and lenders to help identify this information. The information within Chapter 3 of this Housing Study is a starting point for housing needs discussions.

Builders are typically able to offer lower-priced options when they can develop higher densities or if they can acquire land at a very low cost. The prospective development sites concepts were created with higher density in mind. Foreclosed properties owned by the municipality or land owned by the Genesee County Land Bank are also prime opportunities for more affordable land.

Public-private partnerships (P3's) can help encourage development by lowering costs for developers and bringing in private financing where public funding may be limited or unavailable. P3's are arrangements with local municipalities, developers, or non-profit entities. Either the community or the P3, can look for ways to encourage new housing construction including but not limited to:

- **Assembling/acquiring land.** Local municipalities can assist with land assembly, including acquisition of land. If possible, this land can be improved with necessary infrastructure and then sold to developers. If the community is acting as the developer, this will help lower development costs, and the savings can be passed on to the individual builders.
- **Obtaining zoning approvals.** The community can rezone and or proactively site plan the project. This simplifies and reduces the costs on a developer who will then only need to install the infrastructure and then obtain building permits for the construction.
- **Extending infrastructure to the site.** This is one of the most expensive parts of development. If the community can install utilities to the property already purchased, typically at a lower financing rate, this will greatly improve the ability to attract builders. With roads, sewer, and water already installed, the community will then be able to sell

individual lots to builders and eliminate the risk that comes with developing an entire project. This also gives the community flexibility with the builder and ability to ensure high-quality construction.

## Public Funding Resources

Seeking and securing outside public funding sources can significantly improve the financial feasibility of a prospective development or redevelopment project. Below are funding opportunities that would be applicable to the Montrose community.

- MEDC Brownfield Tax Increment Financing
  - Helps facilitate redevelopment of brownfield and historic properties to housing development, infrastructure improvements for housing development, and site preparation for housing development.
- MEDC Community Revitalization Program
  - This is an incentive program that is designed to encourage and promote structural renovations and redevelopment of brownfield and historic preservation sites located in traditional downtowns and high-impact corridors. This program provides gap financing in the form of performance-based grants, loans, or other economic assistance for eligible investment projects in Michigan.
- Our Housing Future's Developers Housing Impact Fund Program
  - This program through Genesee County is designed to help Genesee County build 500 housing units for people and families of various household income levels, first time buyers, and people facing housing instability.



**WADE  
TRIM**

500 Griswold Street  
Suite 2500  
Detroit, MI 48226  
[wadetrim.com](http://wadetrim.com)

Florida • Georgia • Michigan • Nebraska • New York  
North Carolina • Ohio • Pennsylvania • Texas