

# Montrose Community Housing Study

**Draft June 27, 2025**

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# 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 \_\_\_\_\_, 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

Governmental Units	2010		2027		Change '10-'27	
	Total Households	Average HH Size	Total Households	Average HH Size	Total Households	Average HH Size
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%

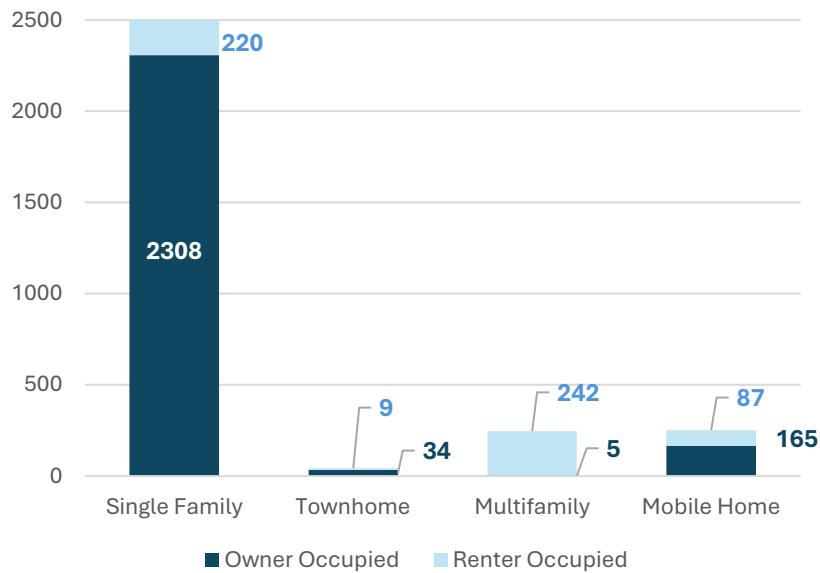
Source: 2022 Esri Housing Profiles.

## 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

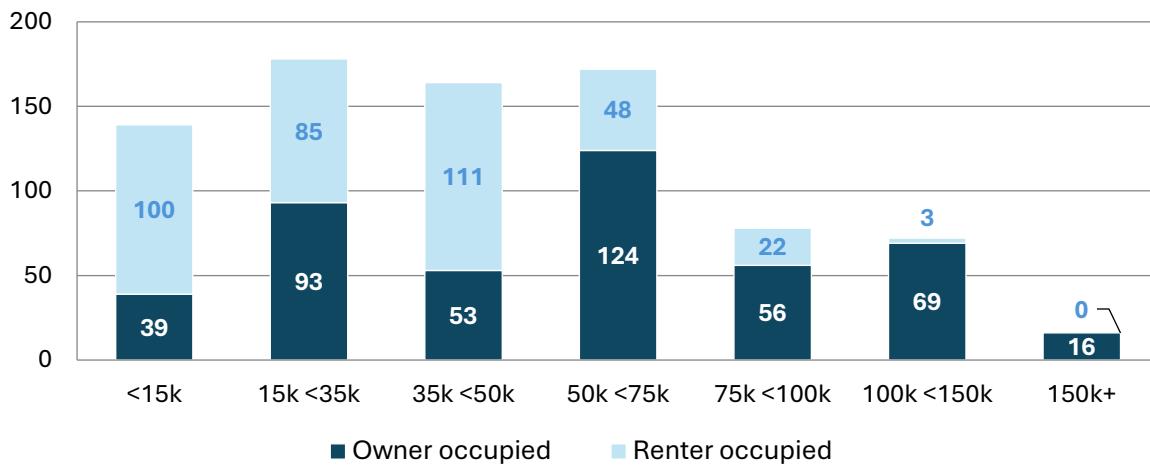
#### *City of Montrose Housing Type and Tenure*

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



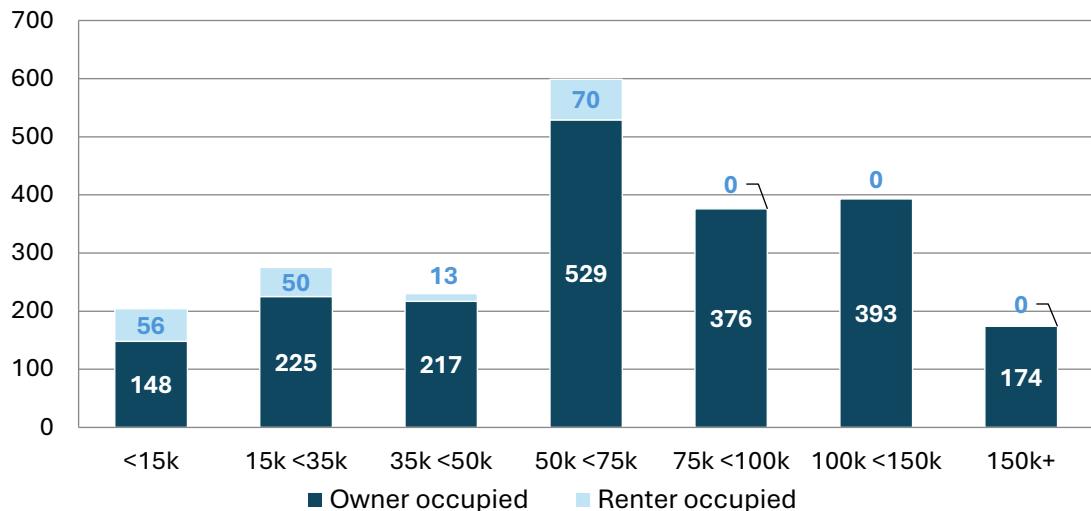
Source; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022

#### *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.

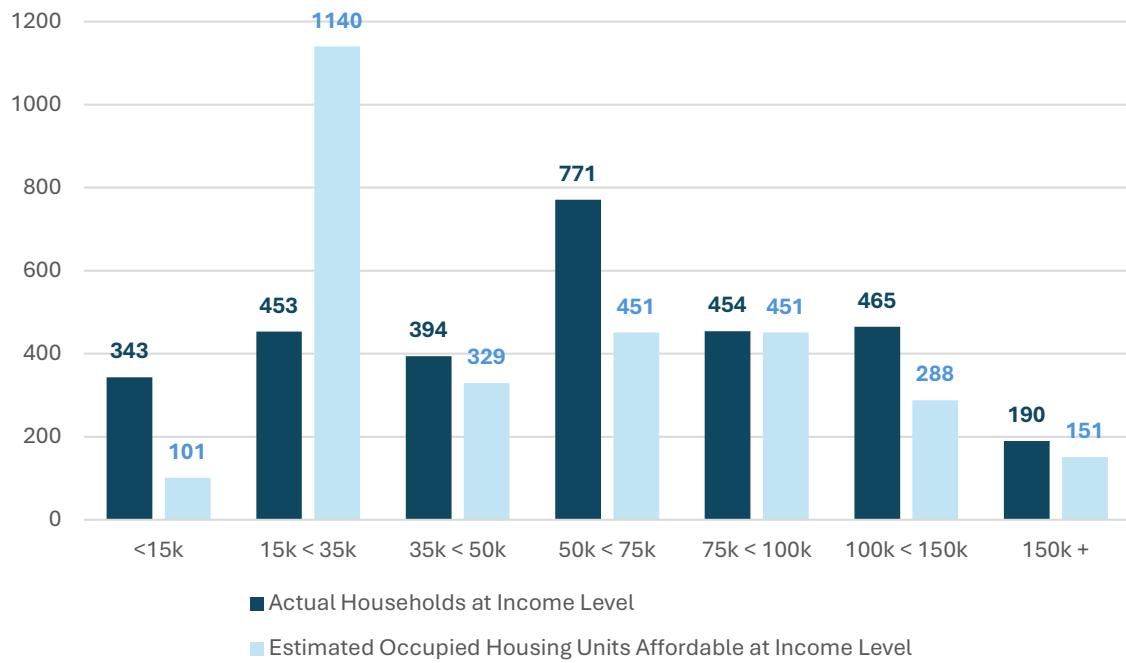
One method to measure housing affordability is to evaluate monthly housing costs as a percentage of household income. Generally, if a household is paying more than 30% of pre-tax household income for housing (mortgage or rent, plus utilities), they are considered cost burdened.

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



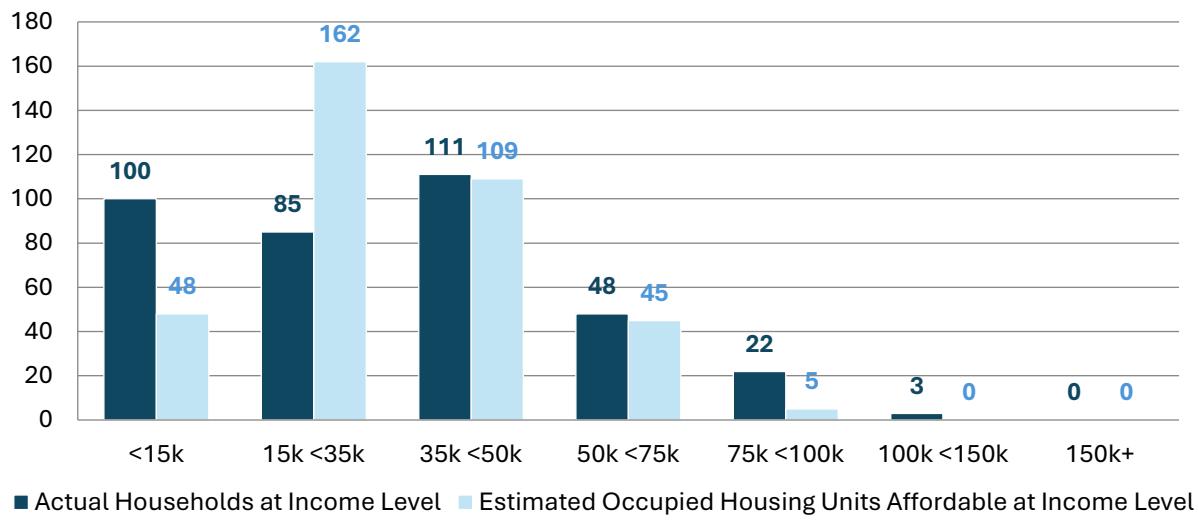
Source; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022 and Wade Trim analysis using the Balanced Housing Model tool

#### *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



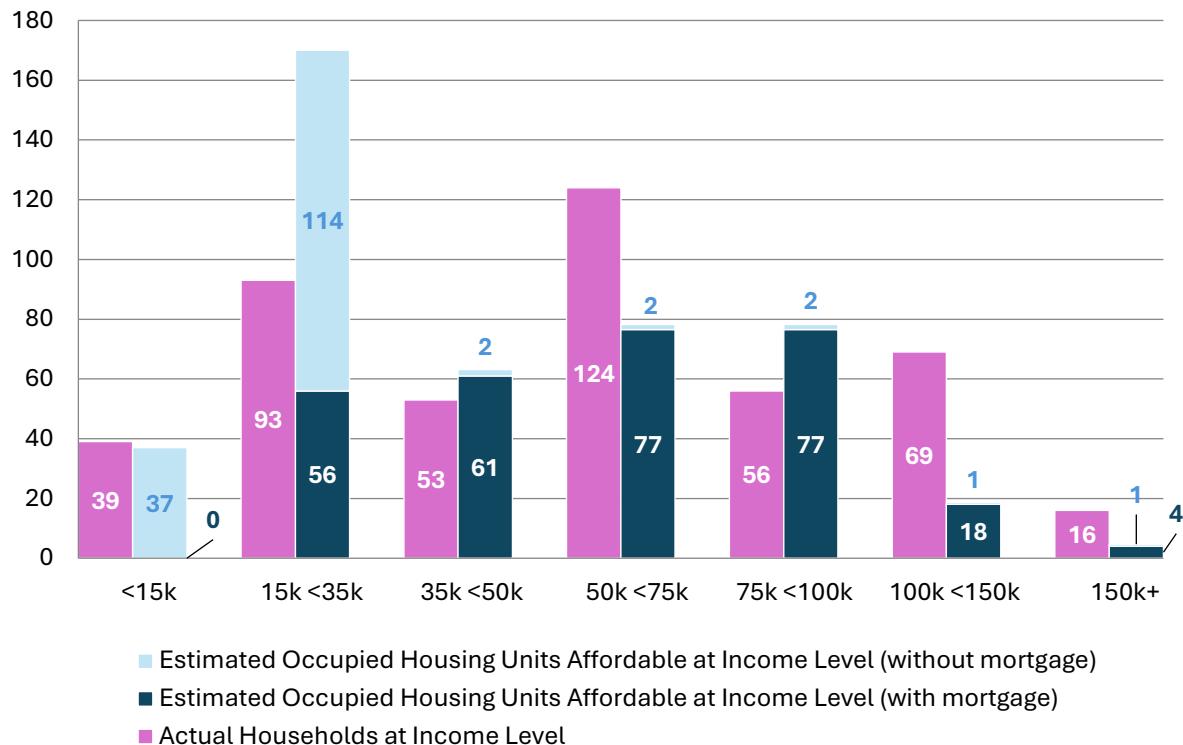
Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022  
and Wade Trim analysis using the Balanced Housing Model tool

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

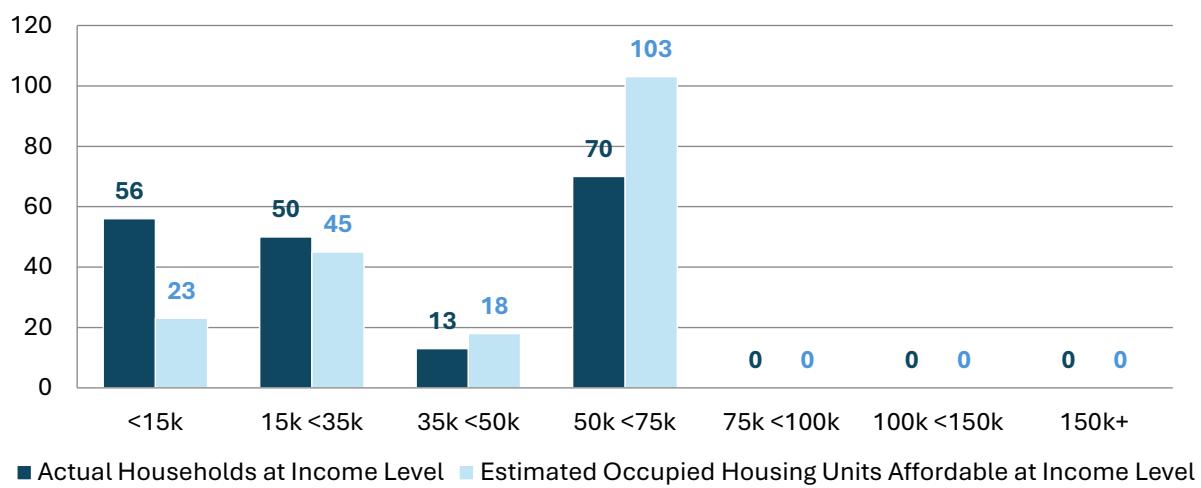
With 28% of homeowners with a mortgage and 40% of renters being cost burdened, housing affordability may become a larger concern within the City of Montrose. This is especially true as home values and rents have risen in recent years due to a competitive housing market, and now most recently by the Covid-19 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.

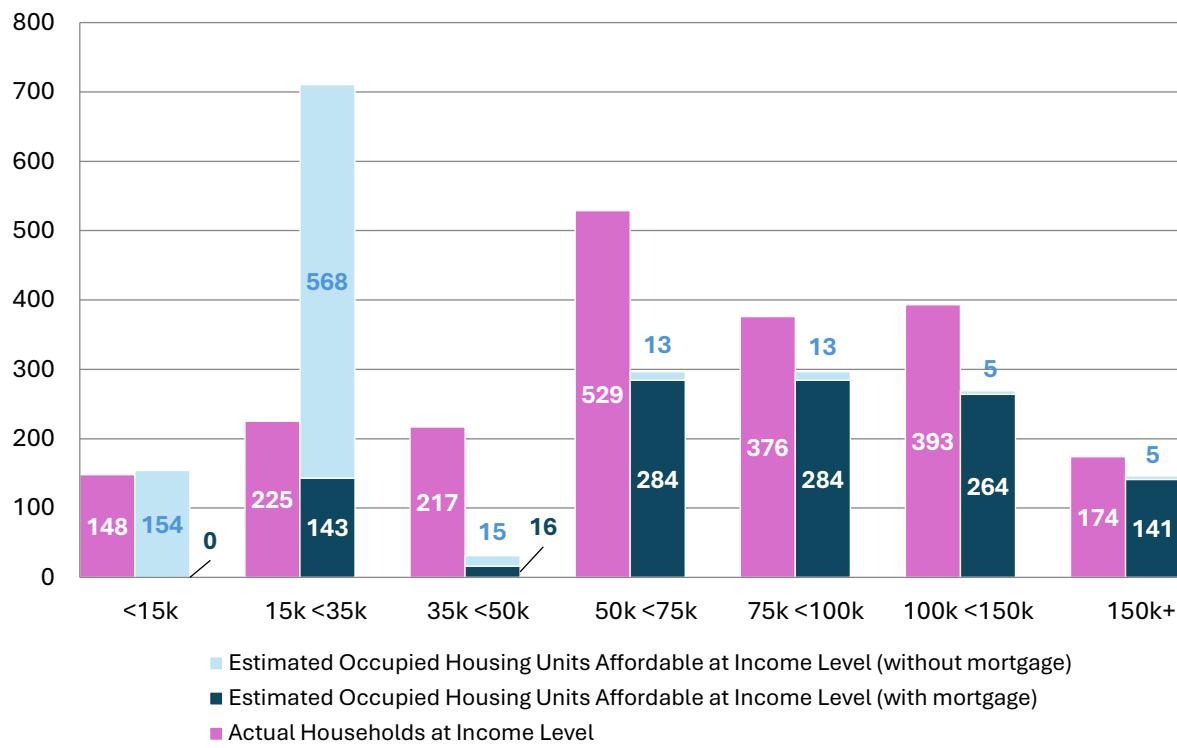
**Figure 9.** Montrose Township Rental Household Incomes and Rental Units Affordable at each Income Level, 2022



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

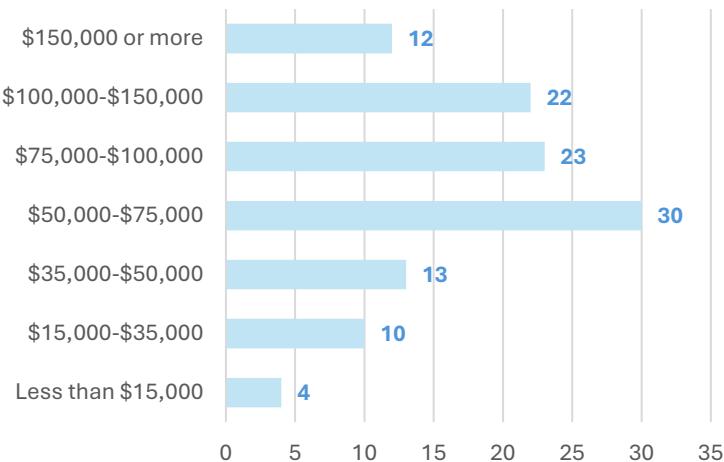
## Citizen Perceptions on Housing

### 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



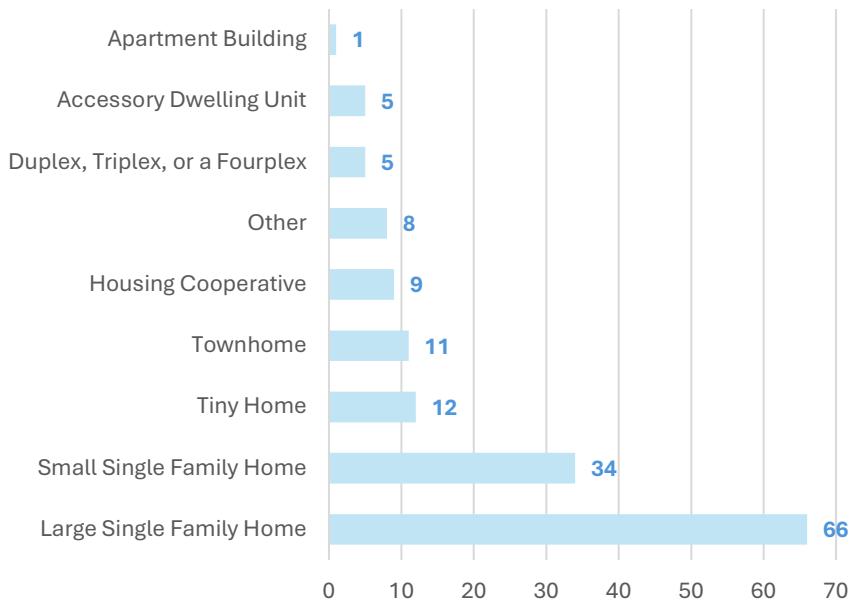
Source: Montrose Community Survey, 2024

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:

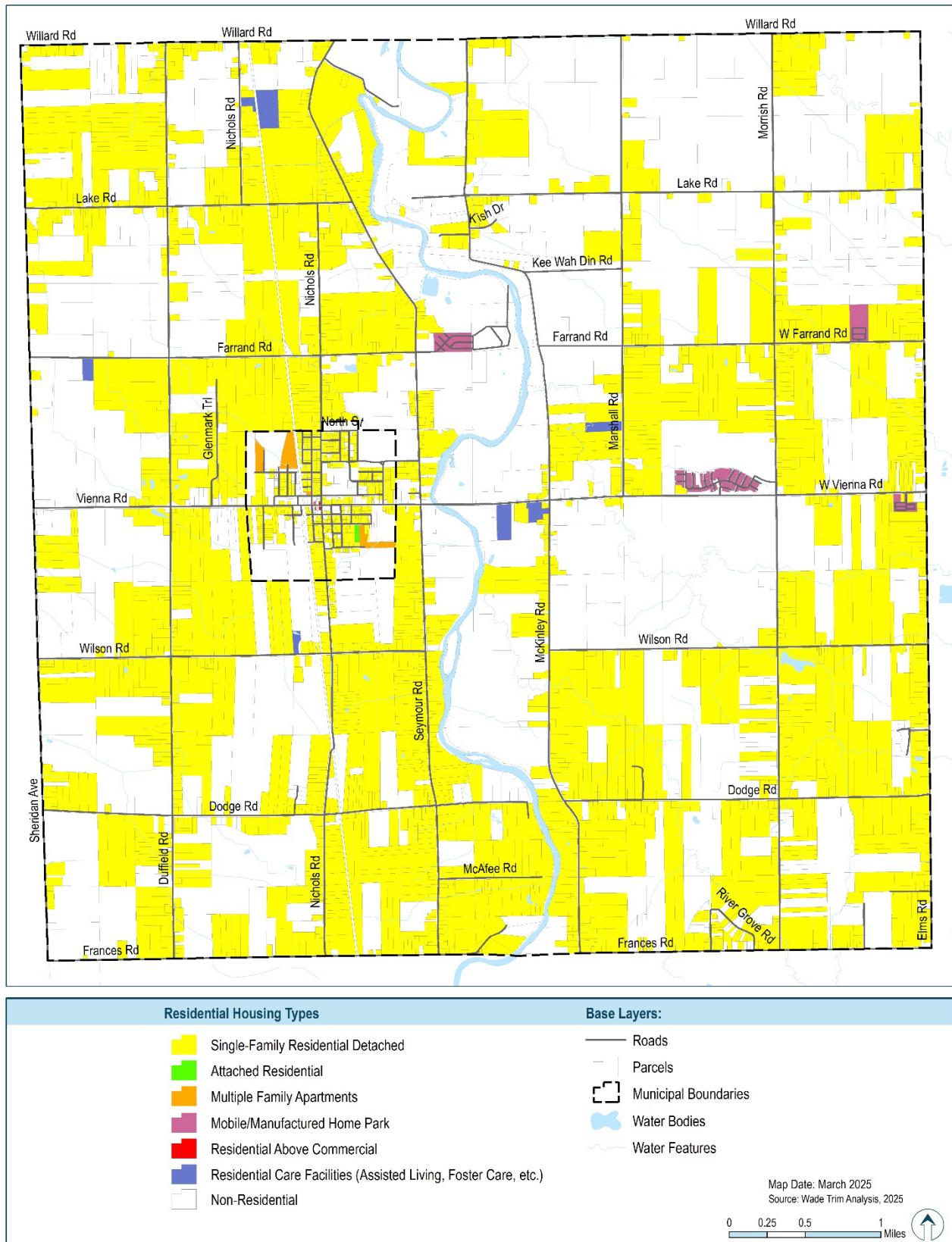
- Single-Family Residential, Detached
- Attached Residential
- Multiple Family Apartments
- Mobile/Manufactured Home Park
- Residential Above Commercial
- Residential Care Facilities (Assisted Living, Foster Care, etc.)

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.

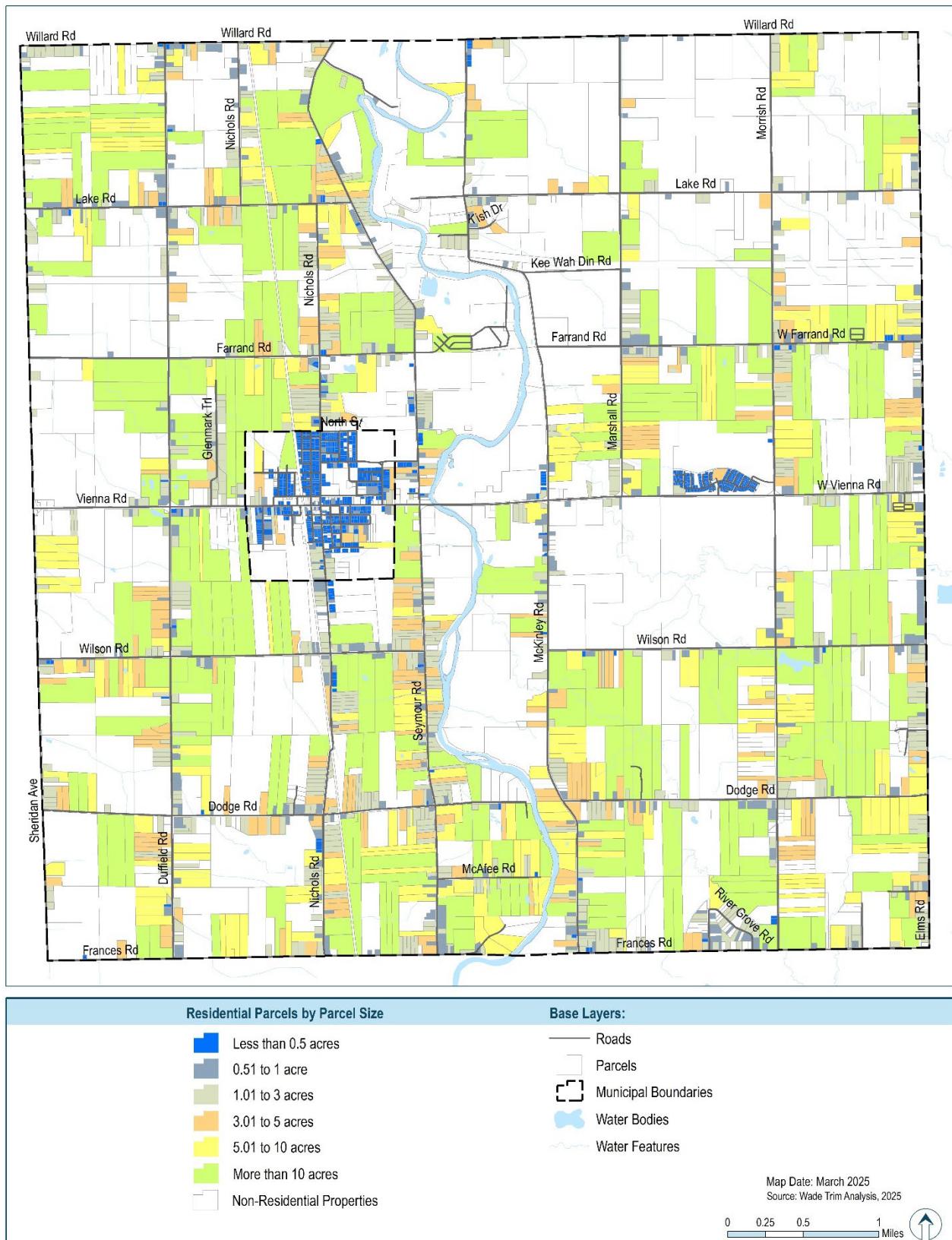
#### *Residential Land Use by Parcel Size*

**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.

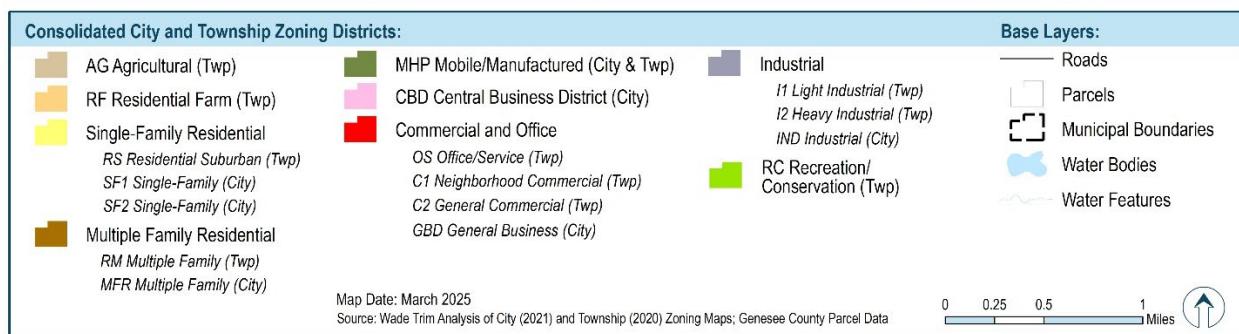
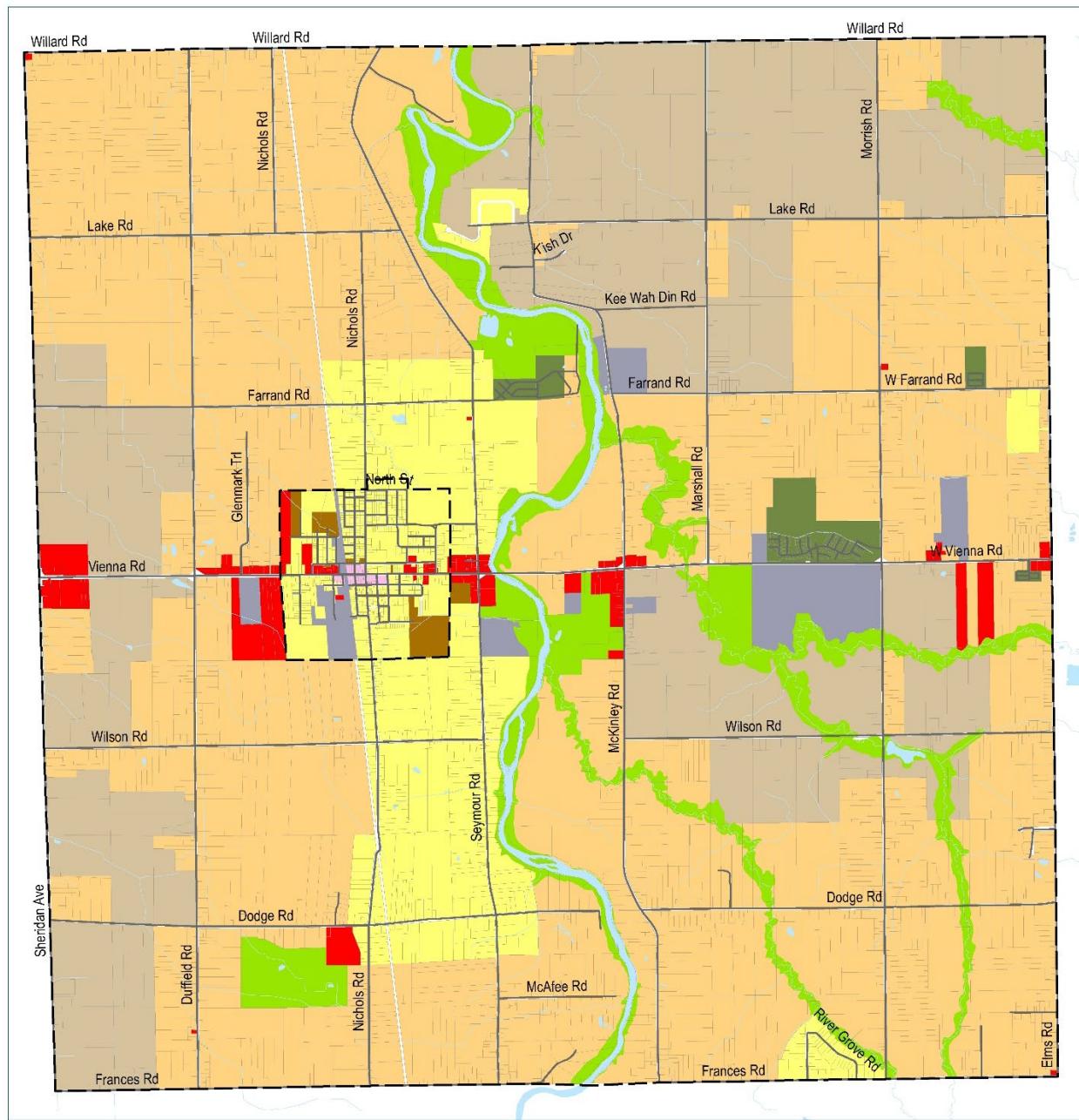
### **Allowable Residential Land Uses and Housing Types**

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

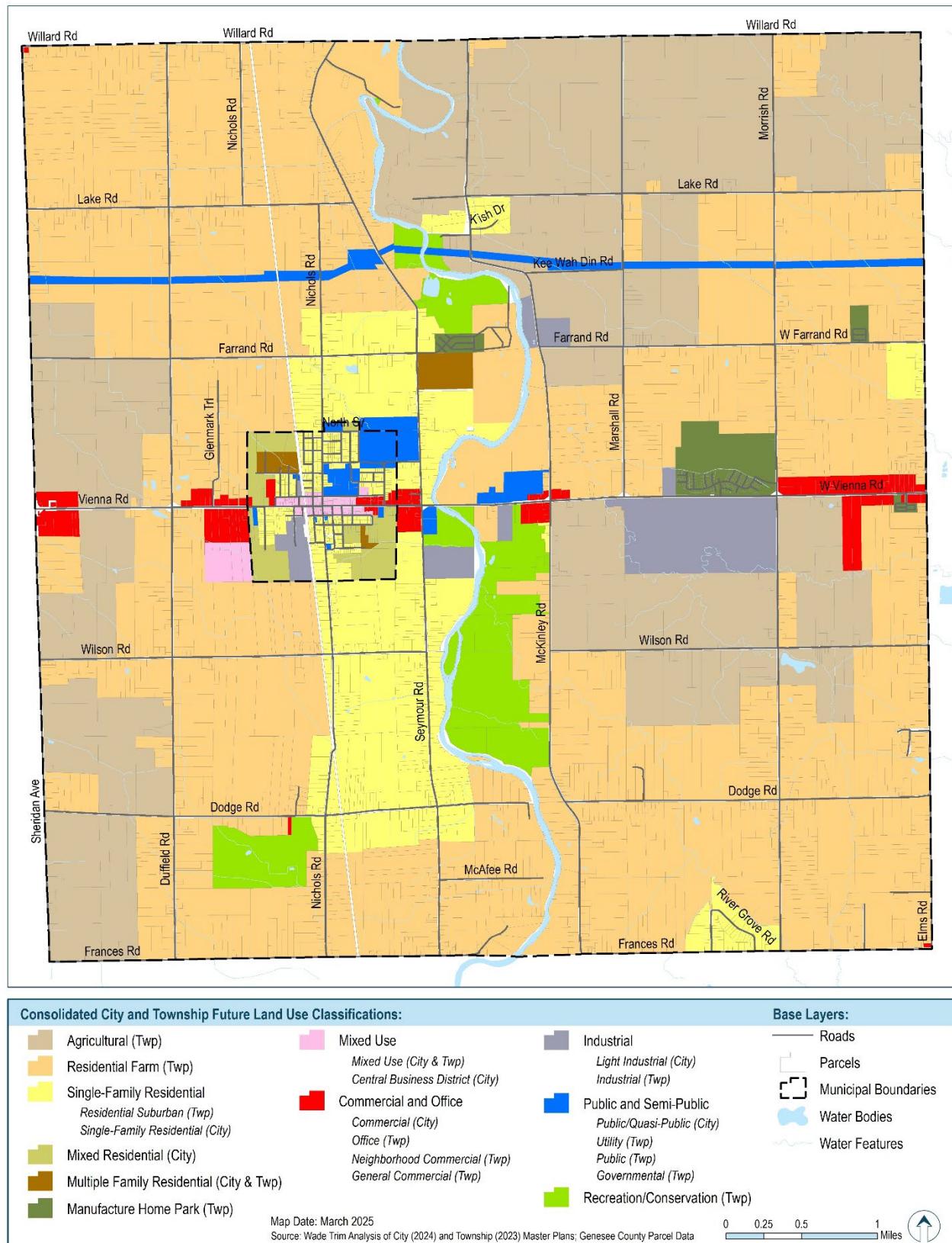
Both the City of Montrose and Montrose Township have prepared and adopted a master plan. A master plan is a long-term policy guide for future growth and development of each community. A key component of any master plan is the future land use plan. The future land use plan is an expression of the desired 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.

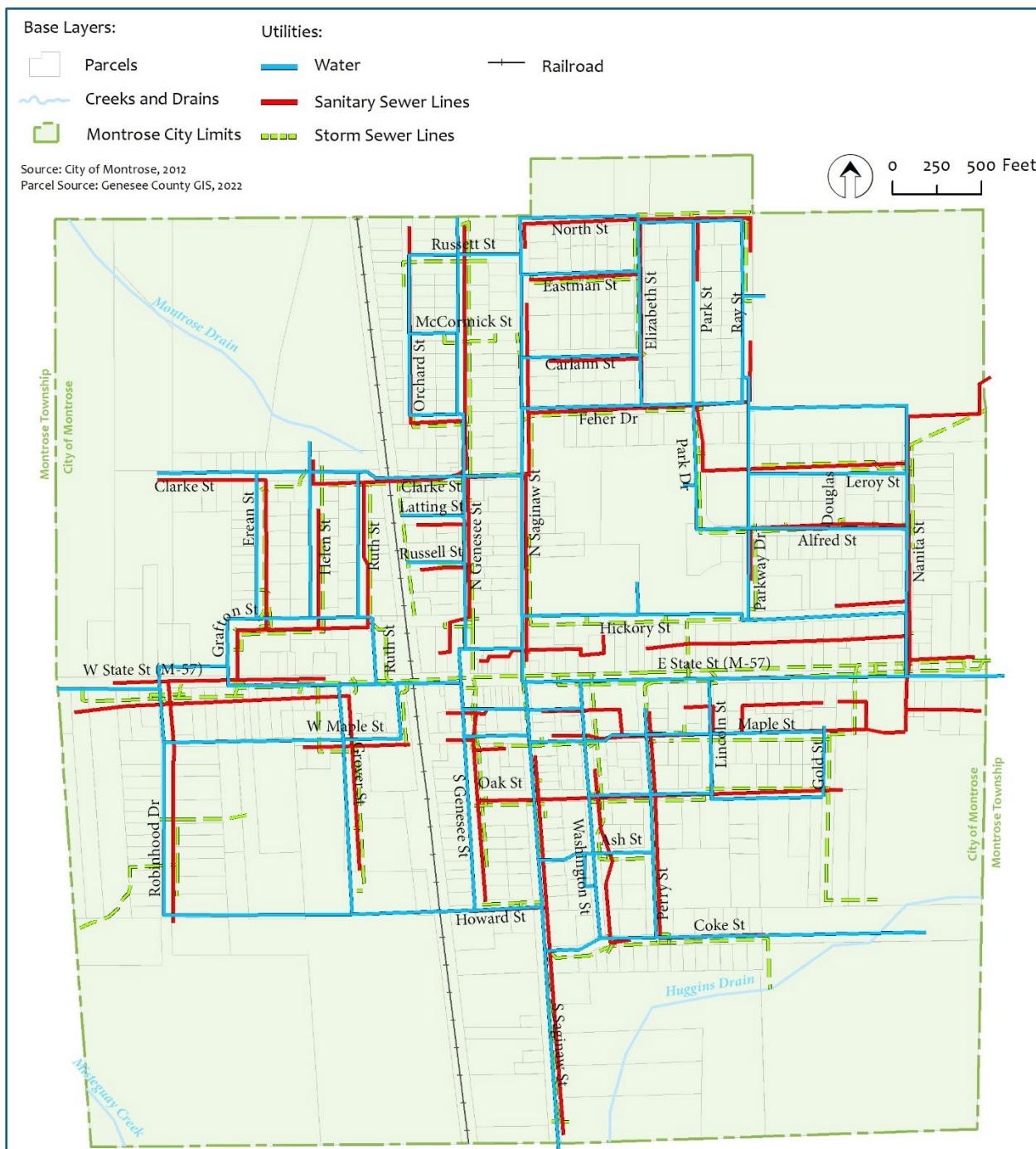
Only a relatively small portion of Montrose Township is served by the public water system. Public water distribution mains are present along Vienna Road (M-57), between McKinley and the eastern city limits, Seymour Road, between Farrand and the southern township border, Wilson Road, between Nichols and 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.

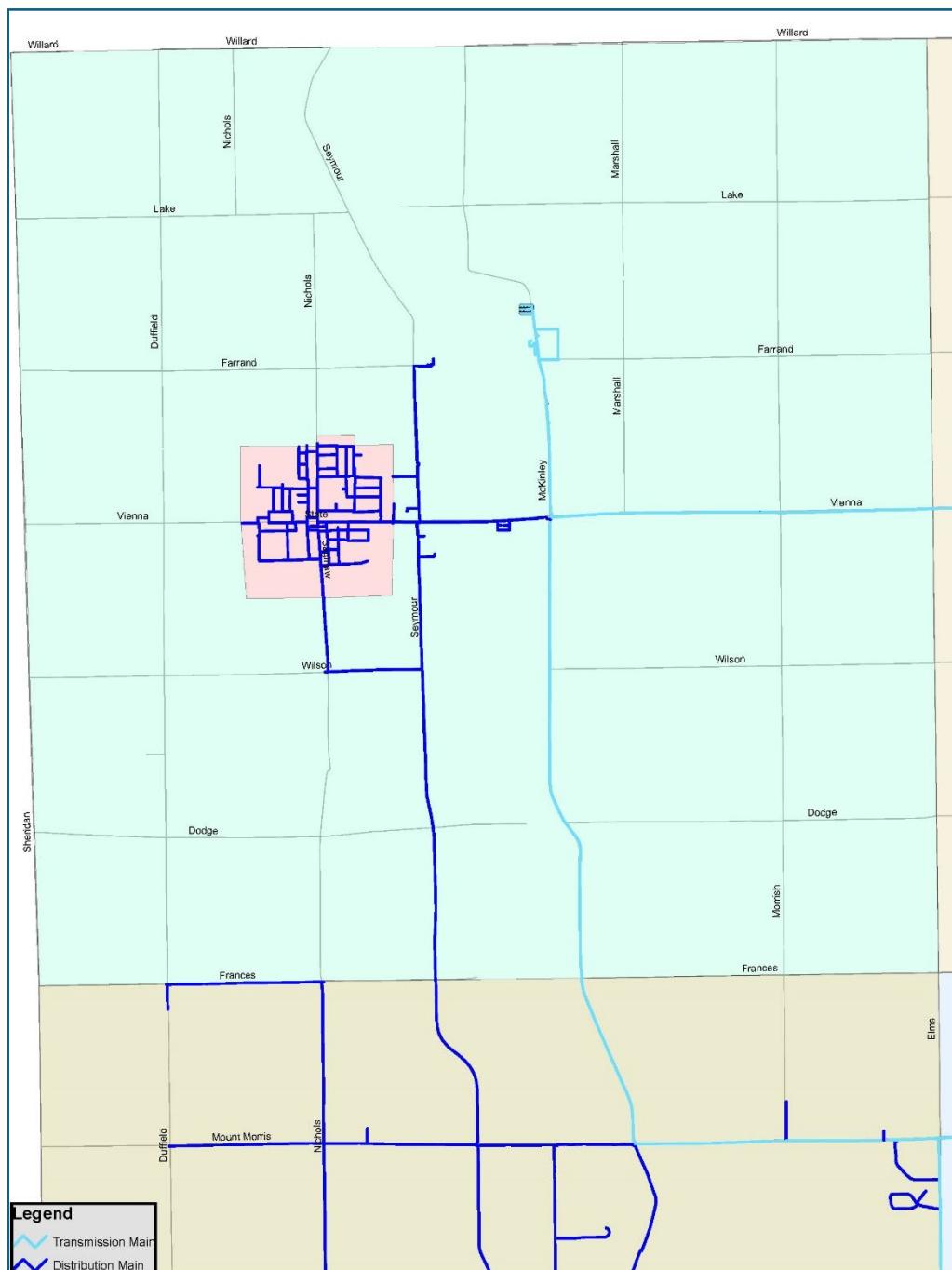
Only limited portions of Montrose Township are served by the public sewer system. These areas are generally found to the east of the city, generally along Seymour Road and Vienna Road (M-57). New development within this area could feasibly tap into the current public sewer system, provided the owner/developer 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



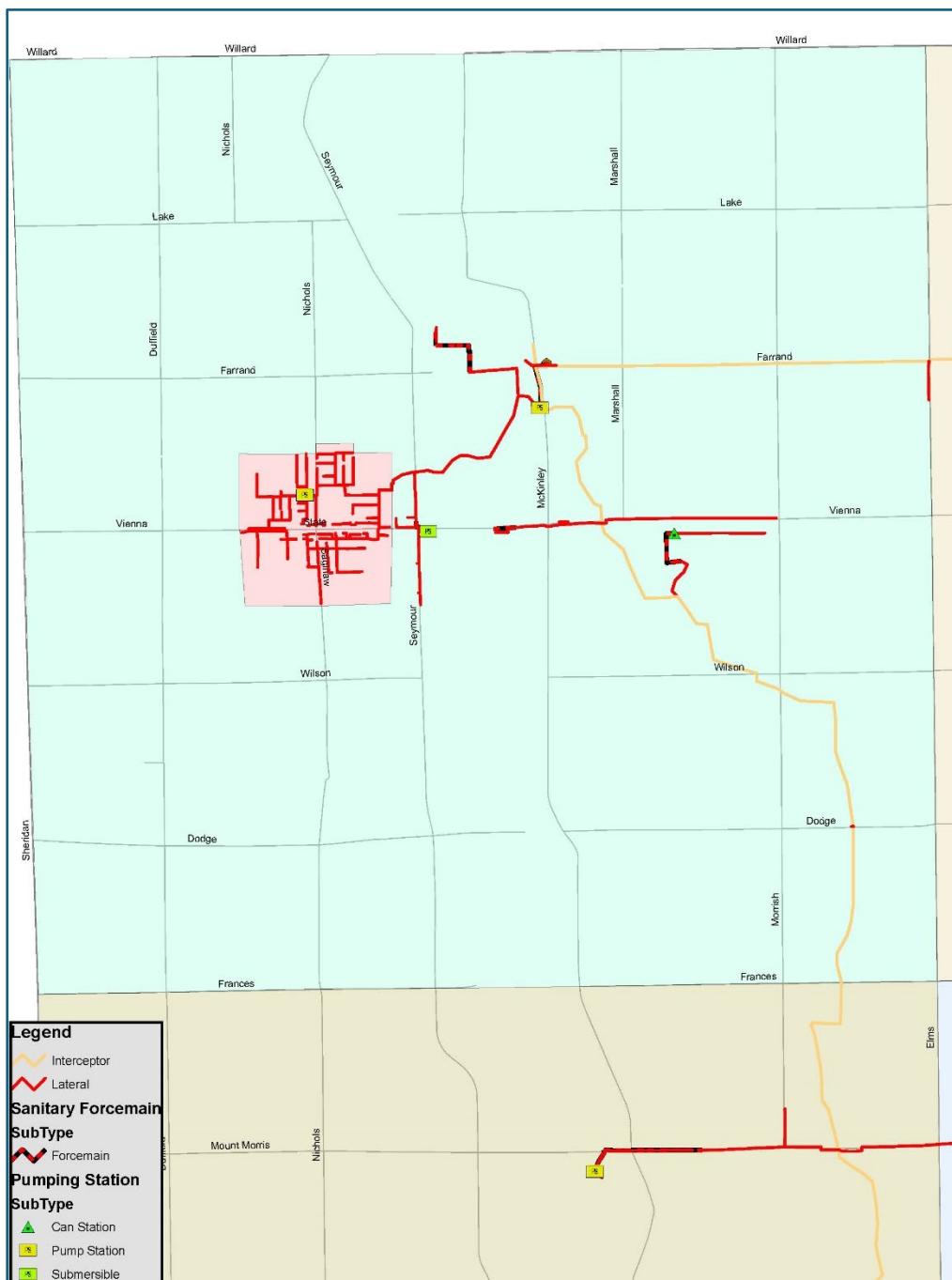
Source: City of Montrose Master Plan 2024

**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*

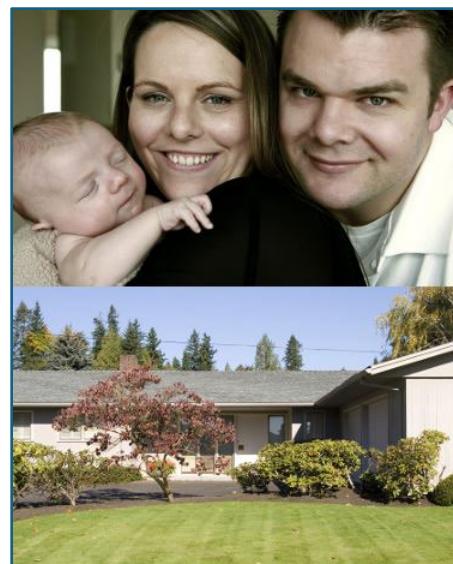
Given the changing generational preferences across the nation, the city and township should work to ensure housing choice for individuals of all lifestyles and ages through the provision of a more diversified and affordable housing stock. This strategy could result in the community's ability to retain 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 Monrose 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.

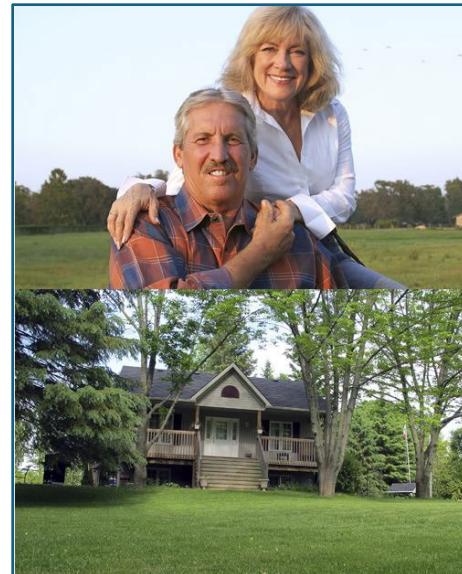
The Southern Satellites tapestry segment enjoys country living and features slightly older, settled married-couple families. The average household size is 2.67, median age is 40.3 years, and median household income is \$47,800. In terms of housing, most of the Southern Satellite tapestry segment own 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

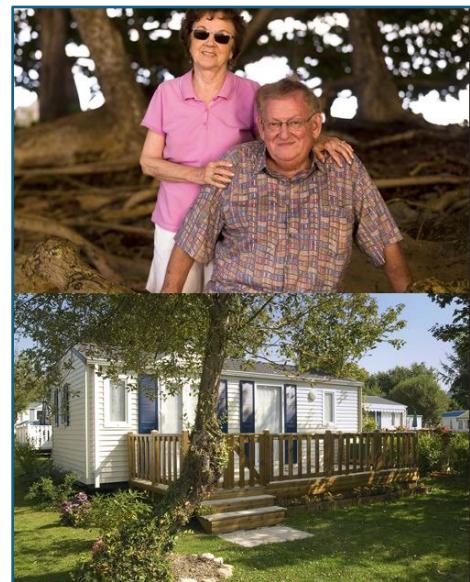
Esri tapestry segmentation data can be a helpful tool to provide insights on what a local municipality could work toward to create an environment that is attractive to certain "targeted" tapestry segments. For example, if a city would like to attract young entrepreneurs, it could examine the lifestyle, 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.

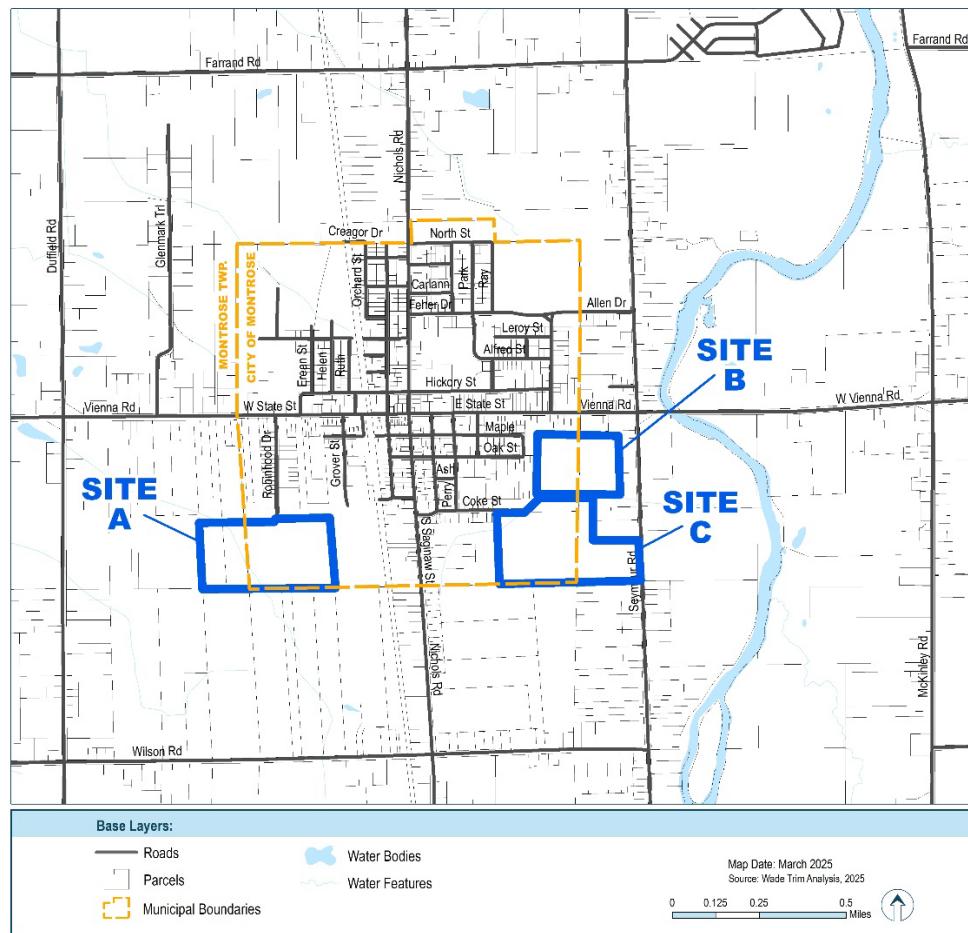
Chapter 3 of this Housing Study included future projections of new housing needed within the Montrose community through 2040 and a recommended allocation of new housing unit types (see **Table 9** and **Table 10**). For the entire Montrose community (city and township), there is a projected need for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

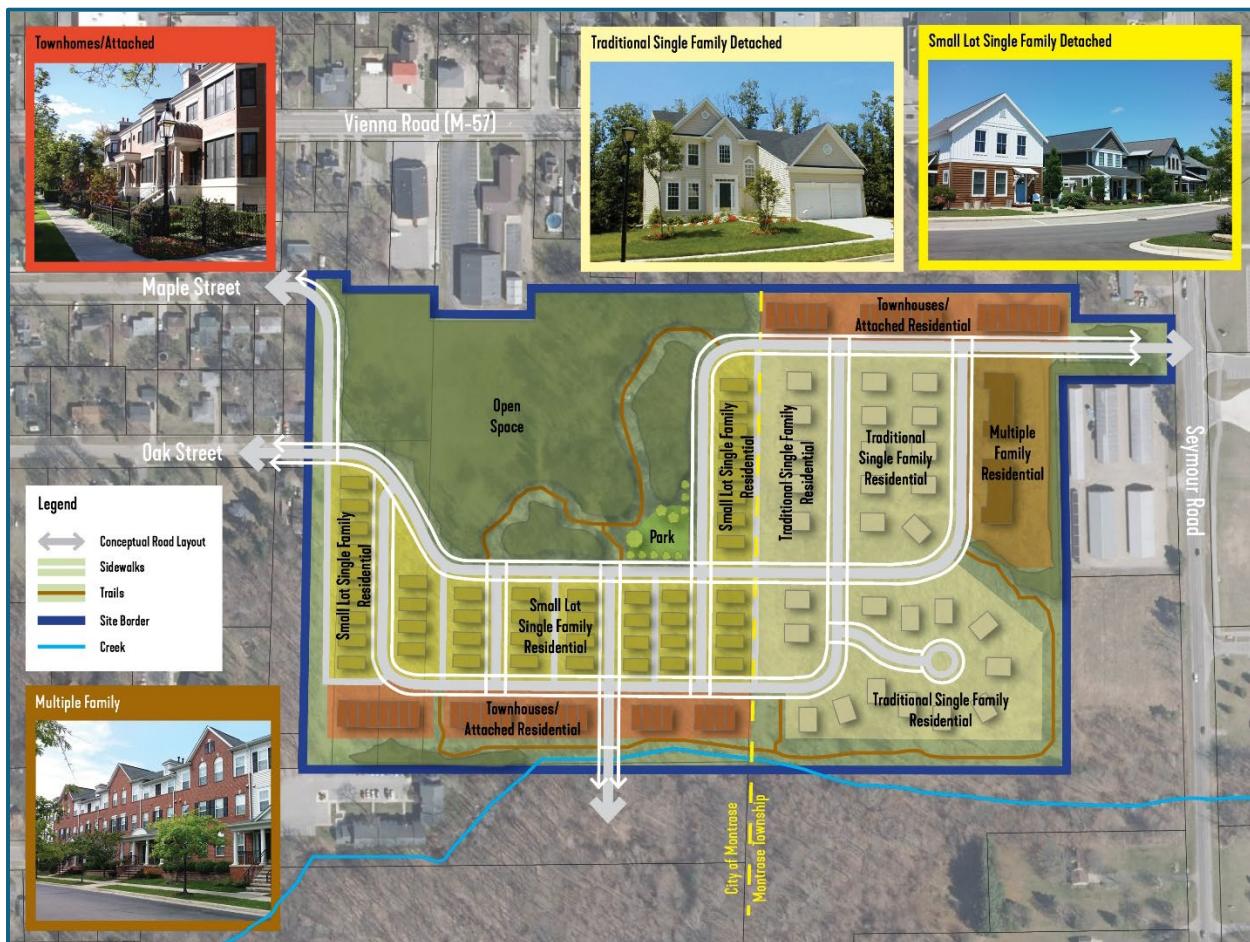


## Site B

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.