

Section **3.0**

EXISTING LAND USE

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INTRODUCTION

The character of our physical environment is influenced by many factors. Chief among these is the use of land, its distribution within the community, and the relationship of these uses to one another. These ingredients strongly influence the overall character and image of the community. They also influence quality of life and our relative degree of satisfaction with our surroundings.

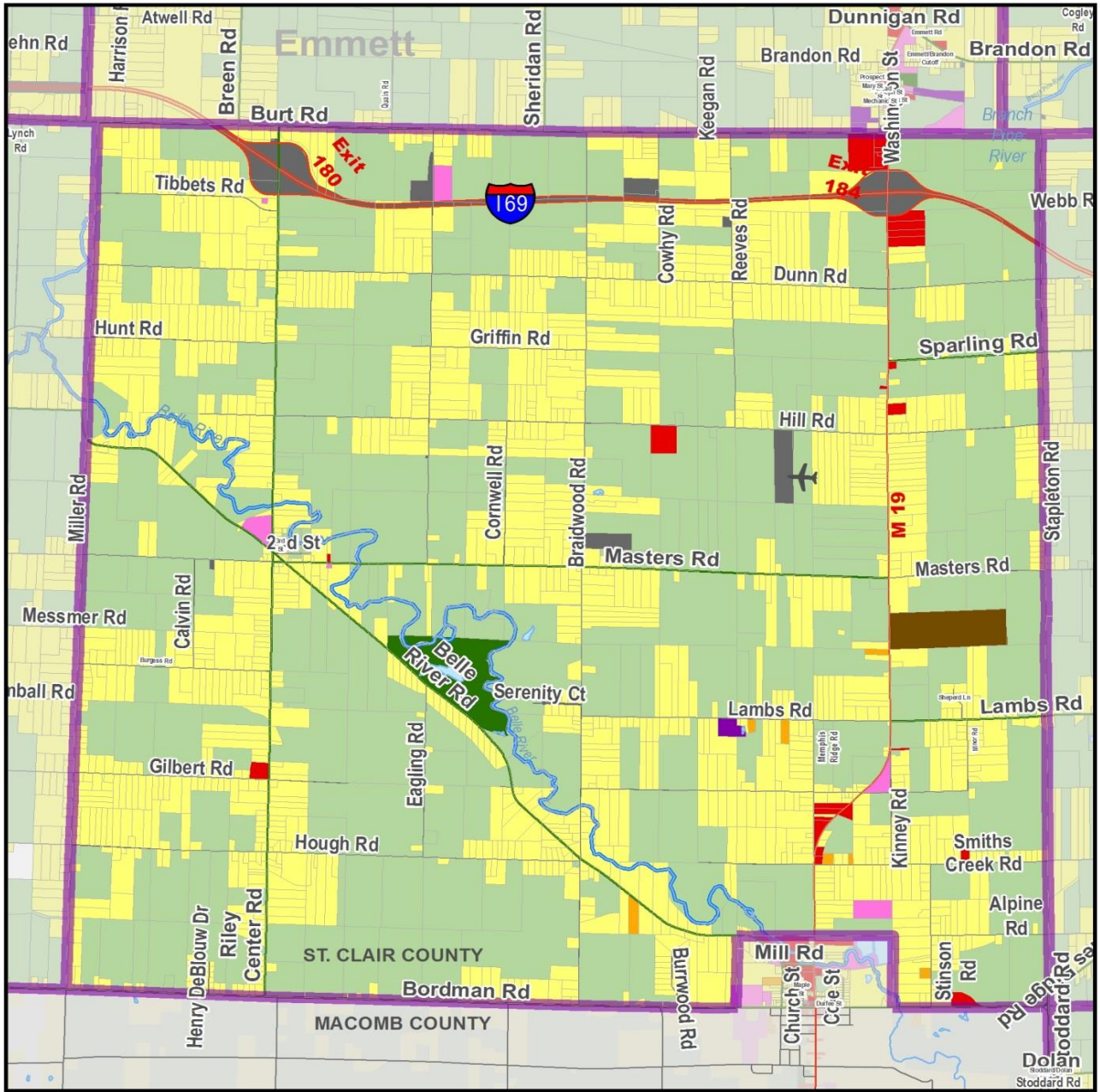
Land use characteristics and relevant physical features are among the most perceivable aspects of the land use planning process. These features establish the observable setting upon which the future of the community will be based. They also influence the development potential of the community.

The main feature of this chapter is an examination of the Township's land use characteristics on a classification basis. Each of the Township's individual land use categories are discussed, including the amount of land devoted to each category and the distribution of the uses within the community. Current information will also be compared to previous land use surveys to illustrate trends.

The existing use of land was evaluated in order to accurately provide a base from which to make current and long-range planning recommendations. The following information is based primarily on the SEMCOG 2008 Land Use/Cover dataset. The map portrays the existing use of the land; not the zoning or master plan designation. Map 10 shows existing land use in Riley Township based on the SEMCOG dataset.

MAP 10

Riley Township Master Plan



- | | |
|--|--|
|  Community Boundary |  Commercial |
| Land Use |  Industrial |
|  Agricultural |  Parks, Recreation, and Open Space |
|  Single-Family Residential |  Extractive |
|  Multiple-Family Residential |  Transportation, Communication, Utilities |
|  Governmental / Institutional |  Water |

Existing Land Use



LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

The following is a description of the various land use classifications used in the survey.

Agricultural/Cultivated/Grassland/Shrub: Land that is presently unused, idle or agricultural land.

Single-Family Residential: Areas containing single-family dwelling units and accessory structures. This category includes single family dwellings on large acreage which is currently farmed.

Multiple-family Residential: Included in this category are all apartments and buildings occupying a single lot which accommodates two or more individual residential units and their accessory structures.

Public and Semi-Public: Uses for public purposes such as schools, churches, and similar public and semi-public purposes.

Commercial and Office: Land areas where retail sales and service establishments are found. Includes offices.

Industrial: Uses with or without buildings where materials are processed, fabricated, assembled, or manufactured; or where equipment, materials or wastes are stored out-of-doors.

Park/Recreation/Open Space: Land areas and facilities such as cemeteries, park areas and similar cultural facilities.

Transportation Communication and Utilities (TCU): Roads, FAA-approved air strips, communication lines and utilities.

Extractive: Included in this classification are areas of mining and soil removal.

Water: Areas, either natural or human made, that are covered with water year-around.

LAND USE ANALYSIS

The following paragraphs describe the patterns of land use found throughout the Township.

Agricultural

There is a relatively large amount of agricultural, open or vacant land in the Township. Most of it is utilized for agriculture. While Riley Township does have a relatively substantial amount of acres in agriculture, there is also open space in the areas around the Belle River and on large lot single-family home sites.

Single Family Residential

Most of the residential development in the Township is in the form of single family residences. Though there are a few houses with more than one dwelling unit, most of which were single-family homes converted into multiple family houses (duplexes and apartments). However, most houses are placed on large lots or acreage parcels as a single family dwelling.

Multiple Family Residential

The Township has a few pockets of multiple family residential scattered throughout the community – 33 acres in total.

Commercial

While there is no real concentration of commercial activity in Riley Township, most of the commercial land uses are located along M-19 (Kinney Road/Burnell Road), especially between Gilbert and Smiths Creek roads. Uses include a restaurant, office building, a storage complex and Kohler Propane. There are a few other commercial uses scattered throughout the Township, especially along the M-19 and I-69 corridor. These businesses include gas stations-convenience stores, horticultural retail, and craft retail. However, the communities of Armada, Memphis, Capac and Richmond provide the convenience shopping goods for Riley residents.

Industrial

A concentration of industrial uses does not exist within the Township. A few industrial uses in Riley Township are dispersed amongst the residences and farms.

Government and Institutional

The public uses in Riley are also scattered throughout the Township. They consist of a church on Kinney Road, the Township Hall and offices on Belle River Road, and cemeteries on Masters Road and Tibbets Road.

Transportation Communication and Utilities

Utilities noted include several towers, two high-voltage electrical lines and pipelines. ITC owns the two high-voltage electrical lines crossing the township from east to west. Sharpe's Strip Air Field is located on the south side of Hill Road, west of M-19 and is a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approved emergency air strip.

Park, Recreation, Open Space

There are three areas of formal recreation land. The Belle River Golf Course and Country Club located adjacent to the river on Belle River Road. The Trillium Trail Nature Area can be found just north of the City of Memphis, between M-19, Smiths Creek and Stinson. The third formal recreation is the Riley Township Park funded by a CMI Grant and County Parks millage money. Further, the St. Andrew's Church on Kinney Road is home to an AYSO soccer field and the Eastwings occupy a radio control airplane field on M-19.

Finally, in addition to the uses described above, Riley Township also has a number of acres covered with woods. Such natural areas can provide recreation opportunities, such as horseback riding and hunting, to the land's owners and offer natural views to passersby. The Belle River provides some opportunities for swimming and fishing.

Extractive

There is a large property on the east side of M-19, south of Masters Road that is currently being utilized for extractive purposes.

CONCLUSION

The development patterns identified on the Existing Land Use Map provide a base from which to begin the process of developing a Township Master Plan. Once identified, trends can be encouraged or discouraged.

The biggest change in land use in Riley Township is the replacement of agricultural land with residential uses. According to SEMCOG, 40 building permits for the construction of new dwelling units were approved in Riley Township between 2010 and 2024. In a rural community such as Riley where open spaces define the community's character, continued residential development such as this has a visual effect on the landscape, as well as reducing the ease and efficiency of farming.

TABLE 7: RILEY TOWNSHIP EXISTING LAND USE SUMMARY – 2008

Existing Land Use in Riley Township		
SEMCOG 2008 Land Use	Acres	Percent
Agricultural	13,830	56.4%
Single-Family Residential	9,659	39.4%
Multiple-Family Residential	33	0.1%
Commercial	171	0.7%
Industrial	13	0.1%
Governmental/Institutional	80	0.3%
Park, Recreation, and Open Space	175	0.7%
Transportation, Communication & Utility	376	1.5%
Extractive	126	0.5%
Water	69	0.3%
Total	24,534	100%

TABLE 8: RILEY TOWNSHIP ZONING ACREAGE

Zoning in Riley Township		
Zoning District	Acres	Percent
AR – Agricultural-Rural	21,700	88.4%
R-1 – Residential	222	1.0%
RC – River Conservation	2,380	9.6%
EC – Extensive Conservation	231	1.0%
Total	24,533	100%

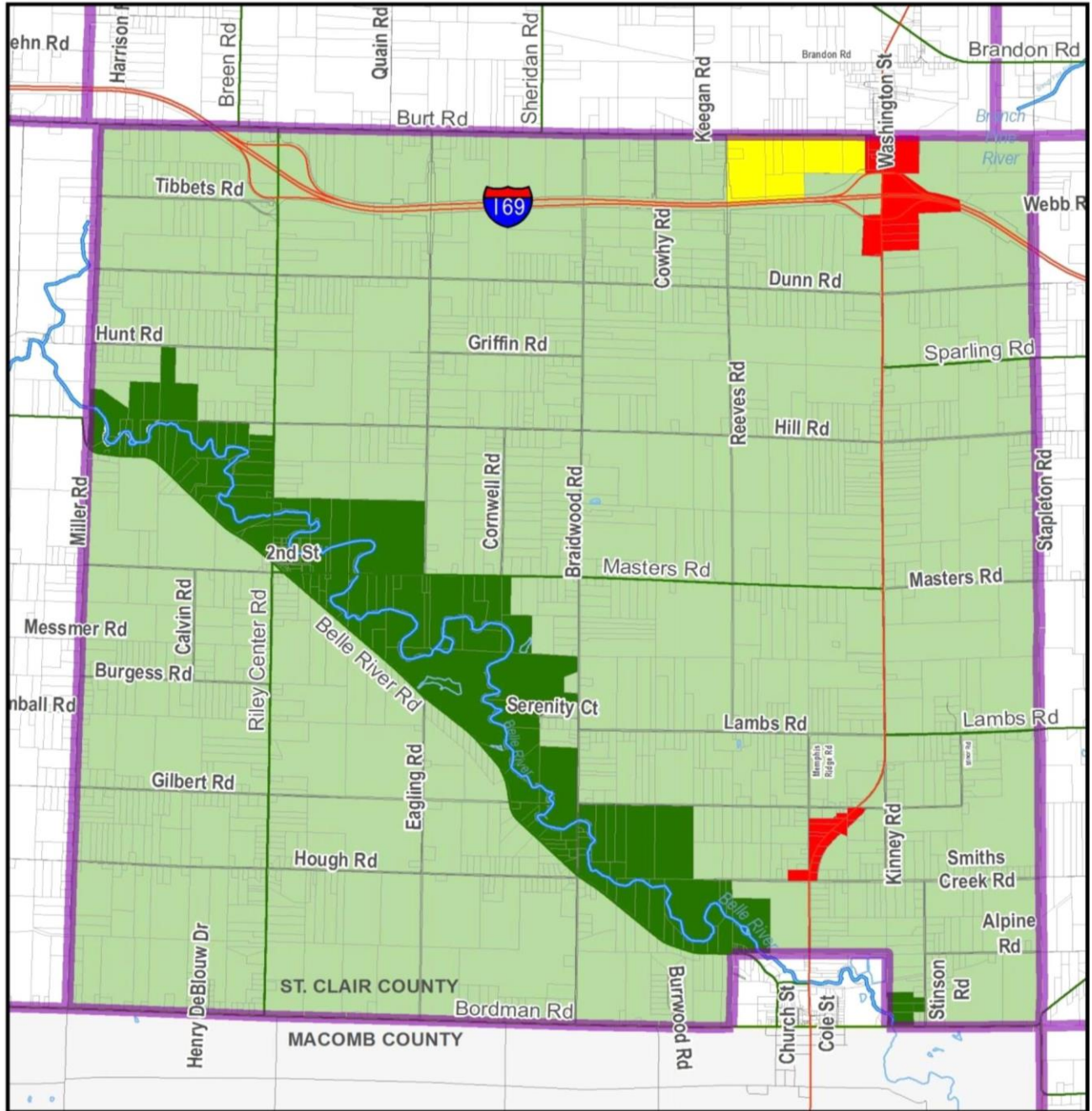
ZONING

Zoning is a form of policy adopted by a municipality that often reflects the existing land use pattern. All of the various zoning districts and regulations should add up to a statement of policy regarding how land is to be used. Sometimes, this does not happen. Land use policy may become the result of the sum of many individual decisions; each arrived at separately over time. Elections have the effect of changing the persons who establish policy and such changes may make the charting of a consistent direction quite difficult, unless a Master Plan is followed.

The quantity of land included within each of Riley's four zoning districts is shown in Table 8. Just over 88% of the Township's total land area (minus rights-of-way), or some 21,700 acres, are zoned for Agricultural-Rural purposes. River Conservation amounts to almost the rest of the Township with about 10%. See Map 11.

MAP 11

Riley Township Master Plan



-  Community Boundary
-  Parcels
- Community Code**
-  AR - Agriculture-Rural Residential
-  EC - Extensive Commercial
-  R-1 - Residential
-  RC - River Conservation

Riley Zoning

