



Section Two Existing Conditions

An evaluation of Brighton Township’s existing conditions is essential towards understanding the community’s unique physical and social environment. Analyzing past and present demographic and physical data may help anticipate future needs. As part of the planning effort for this Plan, a wide range of community data including demographic, land use destinations, transportation system, and natural features, and regional facilities were inventoried to provide important guidance for pathway recommendations.

Demographics

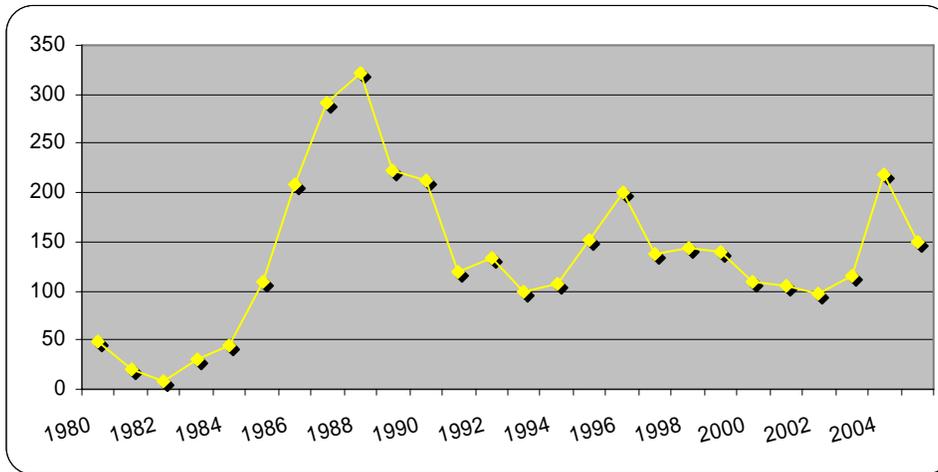
Population and Housing. Population and housing data was gathered from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). Recent trends and projections indicate a continued increase in terms of population and the number of households. *Figure One* illustrates the relationship between population and housing in Brighton Township between 1990 and 2030. In 2000, over 75% of the households were made up of traditional married-couple families and 44% of all households contained children under the age of 18. The median age in Brighton Township was 37.6 in 2000.

**Figure One
Population and Housing, 1990 - 2030**

Brighton Township	1990 Census	2000 Census	% Change 1990-2000	April 2006 Estimate	2010 Forecast	2030 Forecast	% Change 2000-2030
Population	14,541	17,673	21.5%	18,760	19,983	24,409	38.1%
Households	4,577	5,950	30.0%	6,578	7,044	9,190	54.5%

Sources: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), Community Profile for Brighton Township

Figure Two
Residential Building Permits, 1980 - 2005



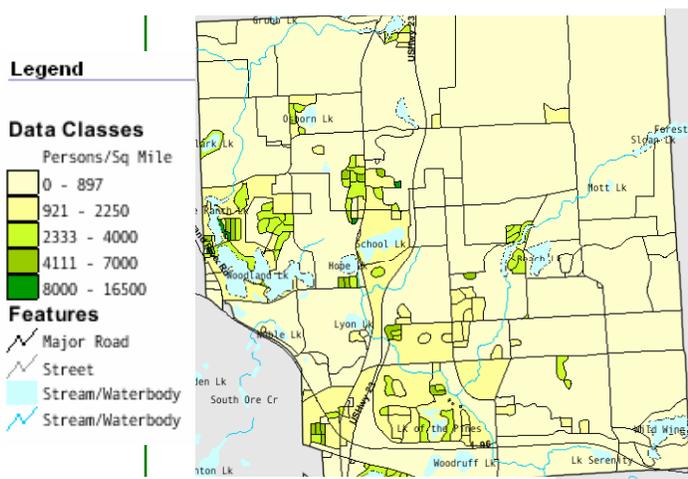
Source: SEMCOG

interest rates, inflation, size and age of households, and consumer preferences. *Figure Two* illustrates the building permits issued in Brighton Township between 1980 and 2005. The amount of residences steadily increased throughout the 1980's, with a slight decrease in development in the early 1990's. Brighton Township has generally had at least 100 new residences per year, with another peak in construction in 2004.

Construction Activity.

An indicator of economic health of a community and rate of growth can be determined through trends in residential construction. Building permit information tends to fluctuate in accordance to market demands paralleling the national economic strength. Many factors contribute to the patterns of residential construction including

Figure Three
Residential Density, 2000



Source: US Census Bureau

Residential Density.

In addition to determining how much growth is occurring, it is also important to determine where the concentration of people are located, often referred to as density. As depicted in *Figure Three* the vast majority of the Township is considered low density, with less than 900 persons per square mile. The areas with the highest density include older established subdivisions and neighborhoods surrounding lakes, mostly in the southwestern portion of the Township. It is important to note that since the 2000 U.S. Census, the Township has seen the introduction of attached condominium units in the Township, which leads to an increased density of residents.

Land Use Destinations

Activity Nodes. Brighton Township is primarily a residential community with residential uses accounting for nearly 40% of the total land in 2000 (SEMCOG). *Map One Existing Land Use* illustrates the existing land uses, as adopted in the 2002 Master Plan. Non-residential uses are scattered primarily along Grand River and Old U.S. 23. Four activity nodes have been identified, based on existing and future land use patterns, that will serve as destinations to meet the everyday commercial and service needs of local residents. These nodes are identified at the intersections of Grand River and Old U.S. 23, Grand River and Hilton, Old U.S. 23 and Spencer, and Old U.S. 23 and Hyne. The activity nodes are depicted on *Map Two Land Use Destinations*.

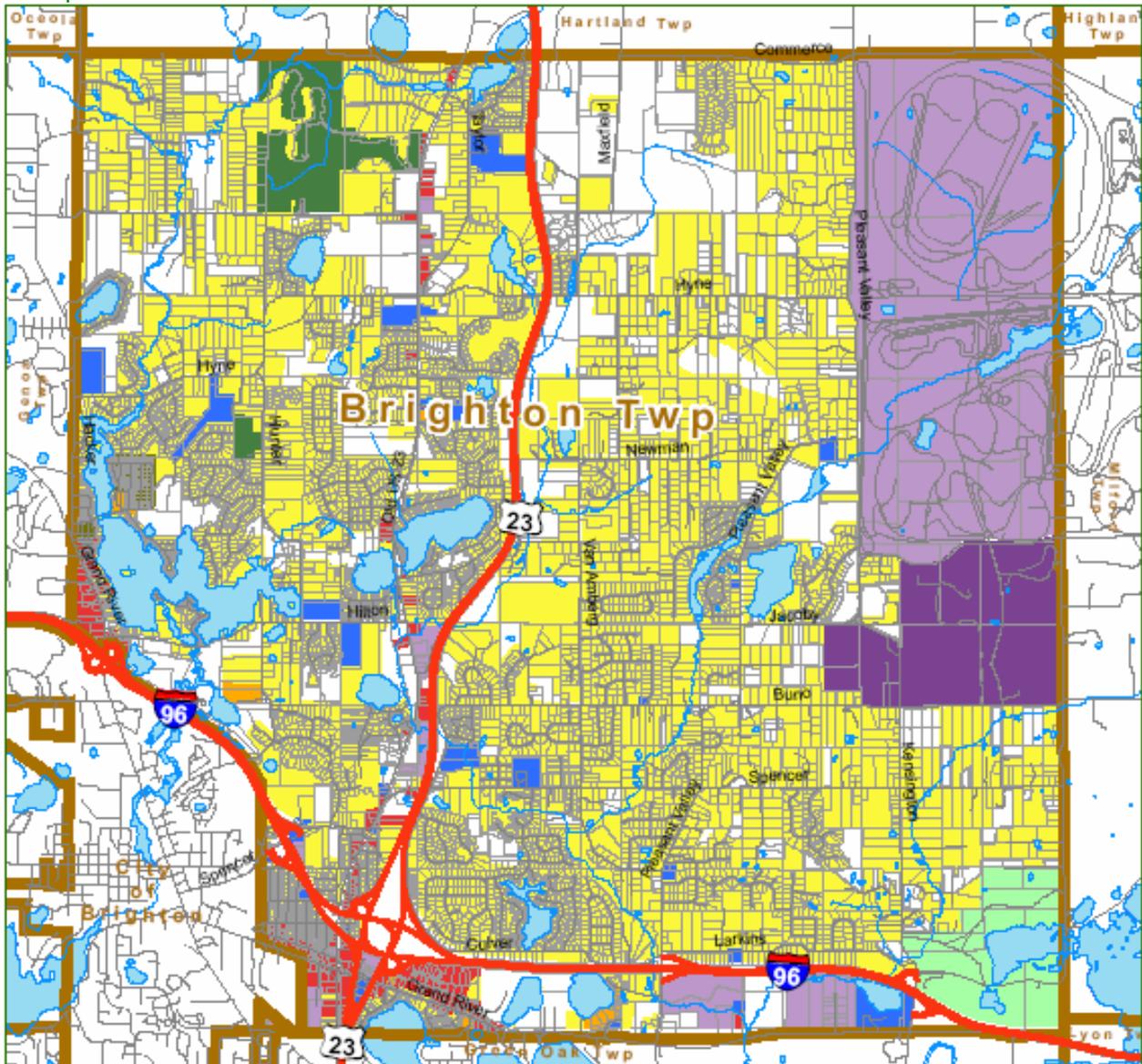
School Facilities. Four public schools, incorporating four different districts serve Brighton Township residents. Spencer Elementary School, located on Spencer near Van Amberg, and Hilton Road Elementary school, which is located on Hilton west of Old US-23, are part of the Brighton Area School District. Lakes Elementary and Farms Intermediate Schools are both on Taylor and are under the jurisdiction of Hartland



Consolidated Schools. Portions of the Howell Public School District and Huron Valley School District also serve Brighton Township, however no facilities are located within the Township. In addition to these public schools, a number of Township students attend private schools in the Township such as Cornerstone Presbyterian and Shepherd of the Lakes. These school facilities are depicted on *Map Two Land Use Destinations*.

Public Facilities. Brighton Township contains a handful of buildings that serve the public interests of the residents. These facilities may be destinations for community meetings or events. Public facilities within the Township include the Township Hall on Buno, north of Spencer, the State Police Station on the east side of Old U.S. 23, between Spencer and I-96 and two fire stations located on Old U.S. 23 south of Hyne and on Weber just west of Old U.S. 23. These public facilities are depicted on *Map Two Land Use Destinations*.

Brighton Township Pathways Plan



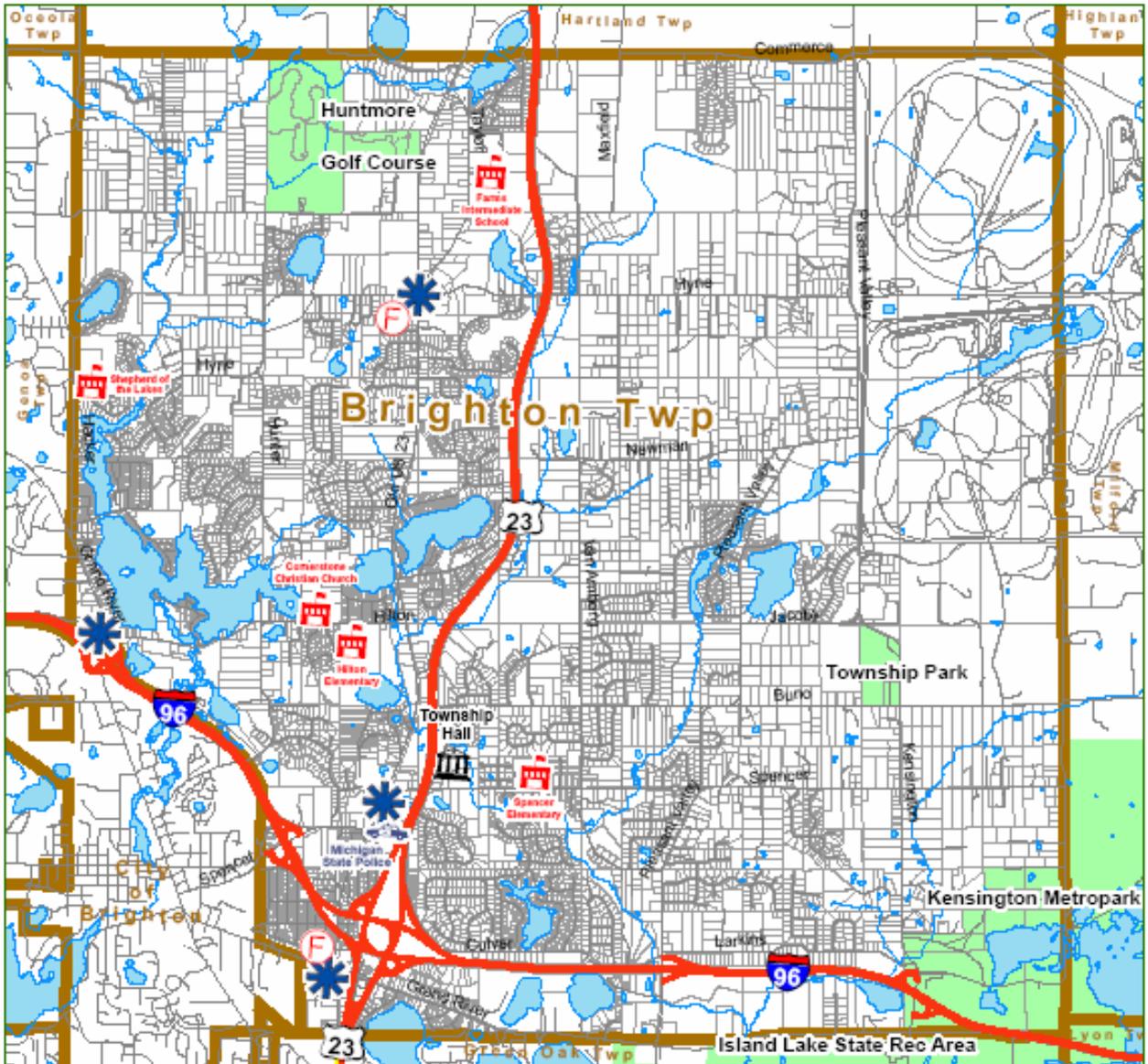
Map One
Existing Land Use
 Brighton Township, Michigan

- Single Family Residential
- Multiple Family Residential
- Manufactured Housing
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Public Recreation
- Private Recreation
- Water
- Undeveloped
- Gravel Pits

Adopted September 2006
 Data Sources:
 Base Map - MCGI, Brighton Twp. Master Plan

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles

Brighton Township Pathways Plan



Map Two
Land Use Destinations
 Brighton Township, Michigan

-  Activity Node
-  Township Hall
-  School
-  Fire
-  Police
-  Parks

Adopted September 2006
 Data Sources:
 Base Map - MCGI, Brighton Twp. Master Plan

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles





Brighton Township Pathways Plan

Parks in the Brighton Township Area. Recreation facilities, parkland and pathways are offered by various entities within or abutting the Township as described below:

- **Township Park.** This 60 plus acre park is a joint venture between Brighton Township and Sunset Sand and Gravel. The park is expected to be developed within the next couple of years and will feature passive recreation areas, picnic areas, fishing dock, wading beach, tot lot, jogging path, fitness course, sledding hill, cross country skiing areas, and an active recreation area with tennis courts and fields for soccer, lacrosse, and rugby.
- **Huntmore Golf Club.** Formerly the Golf Club of Michigan, Huntmore is the only golf course located within the Township. This 18-hole public course on 290 acres, has a rich and diverse landscape, enhanced by gently rolling meadows, abundant hardwood forests, native grasses, one hundred acres of untamed wetlands and natural lakes and streams.
- **Island Lake Recreation Area.** This Michigan State Park is located along the Township's southeastern edge, and covers 3,466 acres. The park offers camping, hunting, shooting/archery range, fishing, canoeing/kayaking, picnicking, snowmobiling, cross country skiing. In addition, the park contains four miles of paved trail that connects to Kensington Metropark and the Lyon Township Bike Trail, more than 18 miles of trails for hiking, running and hunting, and more than 14 miles of mountain bike trails.



- **Kensington Metropolitan Park.** A Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Park Authority property, Kensington covers 340 acres in the southeast corner of the Township and offers a diverse range of recreational opportunities including an 18-hole golf course, ball diamonds, swimming, boating, hiking, fishing, picnicking, bicycling, horseback riding, ice skating, cross-country skiing and sledding.

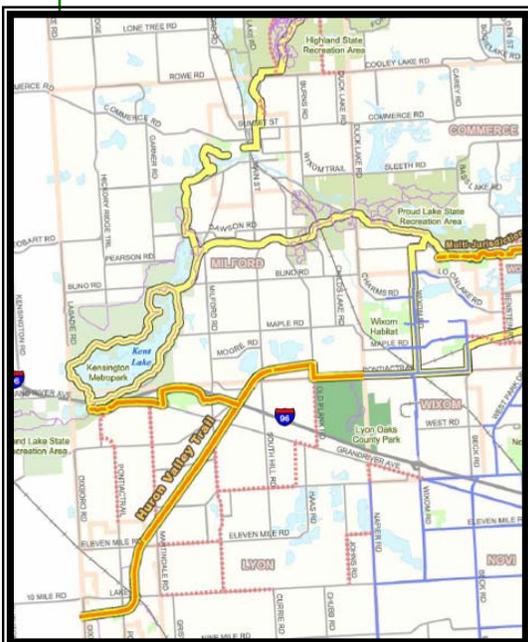
- **Schools and Public Facilities.** Schools are the primary source of recreation in the Township. The various public and private schools offer numerous athletic fields, playgrounds, and acres of open space. In addition, the many public facilities offer opportunities for passive recreation and the North Fire Station on Old U.S. 23 offers ball diamonds for residents use.

Brighton Township Pathways Plan

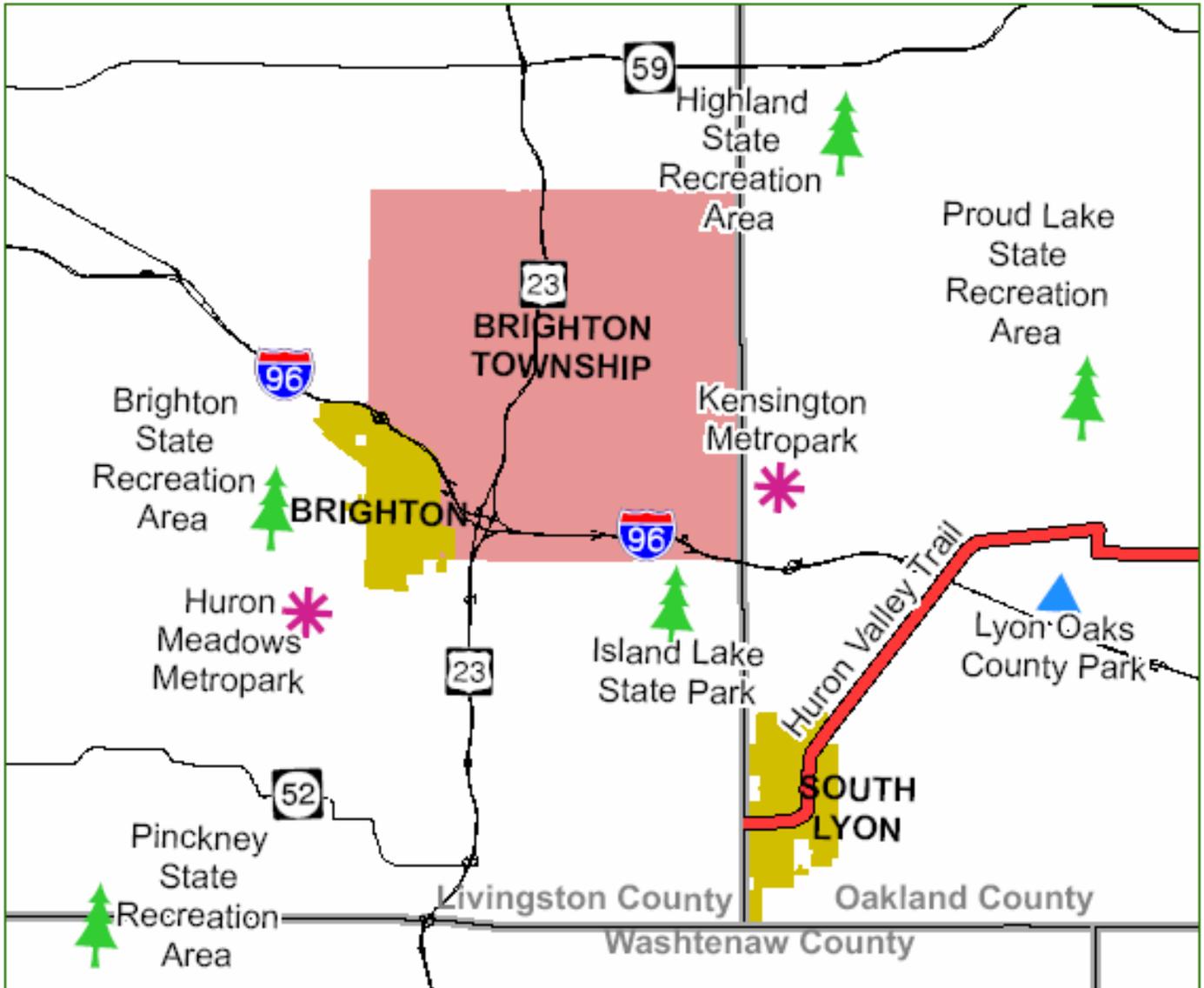
- **Surrounding Communities.** A number of recreation opportunities are available just outside of the Township limits. Additional playfield space is accessible to Brighton Township residents at locations in neighboring communities including school and City facilities which offer playgrounds, athletic fields, tennis courts, track facilities and swimming pools.

Regional Recreation. In addition to local community facilities, Brighton Township residents have the benefit of numerous regional recreation facilities provided by the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Park Authority, Livingston, Oakland and Washtenaw Counties, and the State. The following parks and trails described below and depicted on *Map Four Regional Attractions* are all located within a short trip from Brighton Township.

- **Brighton Recreation Area (Michigan State Park).** Located in Howell, this 4,947-acre park offers campsites, organization camp, and cabins. Facilities include picnic equipment, playgrounds, beach house, boat launch, and complete equestrian facilities.
- **Highland Recreation Area (Michigan State Park).** This 5,524-acre park located in White Lake Township has campsites, an organization camp, and cabins. Facilities include picnic equipment, playgrounds, beach house, boat launch, and nature trails.
- **Huron Meadows Metropark (Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority Park).** Located along the Huron River three miles south of Brighton, this 1,539-acre park features an 18-hole public golf course, golf-activity center, picnicking, and hiking.



- **Huron Valley Trail.** The Huron Valley Trail is a network of paved trails utilizing the former railroad corridor connecting the cities of Wixom and South Lyon. It begins at Lyon Oaks County Park, accessible from Pontiac Trail, and follows the former "Airline Railroad" corridor westward through Milford Township. At I-96, a connector trail heads west toward Kensington Metropark and Island Lake State Recreation Area, where a unique boardwalk provides access from Island Lake Recreation Area to Kensington Metropark.



Map Three

Regional Destinations

Brighton Township, Michigan

-  Michigan State Parks
-  Huron - Clinton Metro Parks
-  Oakland County Parks



Adopted September 2006

Data Sources:
Base Map - MCGI, Brighton Twp. Master Plan



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- **Lyon Oaks (Oakland County Park).** This 1,024-acre park was recently developed in the spring of 2002. The park, located west of Wixom on Pontiac Trail, will contain a new Arthur Hills designed 18-hole golf course, driving range, banquet and meeting facilities, dog park, nature center, picnic areas, and a trail system.
- **Pinckney Recreation Area (Michigan State Park).** This 11,000-acre recreation area located in Pinckney has campsites and an organization camp. Facilities include picnic equipment, playgrounds, a beach house, and a boat launch.
- **Proud Lake Recreation Area (Michigan State Park).** Located along Wixom's western border, this 4,000-acre recreation area has campsites, an organization camp, mini cabins, and tent rentals. Facilities include picnic equipment, playgrounds, a beach house, and boat launch.

Regional Plans. Several significant planning efforts that relate to non-motorized transportation have developed in the region and surrounding communities that influence the Pathways Plan.

- **Southeast Livingston Greenways Plan.** In 2000, a Greenways Plan for Southeastern Livingston County was developed, including Brighton, Green Oak, Hamburg, and Genoa Townships and the City of Brighton. The Plan outlines a system of open spaces and trails to connect people and places.
- **Southeast Michigan Greenways Plan.** In 1998, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy developed a vision for Southeast Michigan Greenways. The Plan developed a conceptual vision for an interconnected greenway system for the seven counties of southeast Michigan, including Livingston, and is intended to give communities and counties guidance regarding the acquisition of land for public greenway use.

Transportation System

The transportation system affects the delivery of and accessibility to recreational facilities and services. The current transportation system in Brighton Township is predominantly oriented toward the automobile. The system of roads and freeways in and near the Township provides reasonably good access by automobile. However, access to recreation facilities can be difficult for certain segments of the population, primarily children, who do not have access to an automobile. Currently there are no forms of

Brighton Township Pathways Plan

mass transit that serve the Township and the limited amount of existing pathways that were installed as required for new development are disconnected and do not follow a cohesive system that can be used for transportation.

Road Right-of-Way. All of the public roads in the Township are under the jurisdiction of the Livingston County Road Commission or Michigan Department of Transportation. The amount of existing and planned right-of-way (ROW) must be examined at the time of design and construction of any pathways to determine the location of the pathways along the corridors. Generally, the paths should be located one-foot inside the edge of the master-planned right-of-way in order to accommodate future road improvements. *Figure Four* lists the existing and planned right-of-way for all of the roads that pathways are proposed along. Although there are several areas where no platted or deeded ROW exists, a minimum statutory 66 foot wide road easement exists along all public roadways, and is available for pathways.

Figure Four			
Public Road Right-of-Way/Easements			
Road	Segment	Existing	Planned
Buno	Pleasant Valley to Kensington	66 ft.	100 ft.
Culver	Spencer to Pleasant Valley	66 ft.	100 ft.
Grand River	Hacker to Hilton	66-120 ft.	120 ft.
	City of Brighton to Old U.S. 23	100 ft.	120 ft.
	Old U.S. 23 to Pleasant Valley	100 ft.	120 ft.
	Pleasant Valley to Kensington	100 ft.	120 ft.
Hacker	Hyne to Grand River	66 ft.	120 ft.
Hilton	Grand River to Hunter	66-93 ft.	120 ft.
	Hunter to Old U.S. 23	66-93 ft.	120 ft.
Hunter	Hyne to Hilton	66-93 ft.	120 ft.
Hyne	Hacker to Hunter	66-120 ft.	120 ft.
	Hunter to Old U.S. 23	66-93 ft.	120 ft.
	Old U.S. 23 to Pleasant Valley	66-93 ft.	120 ft.
Kensington	Pleasant Valley to Jacoby	66 ft.	120 ft.
	Jacoby to Buno	66 ft.	120 ft.
	Buno to Spencer	66 ft.	120 ft.
	Spencer to Larkins	66 ft.	120 ft.
	Larkins to Grand River	66 ft.	120 ft.
Larkins	Pleasant Valley to Kensington	66-83 ft.	100 ft.

Figure Four

Public Road Right-of-Way/Easements

Road	Segment	Existing	Planned
Newman	Van Amberg to Pleasant Valley	66 ft.	120 ft.
Old U.S. 23	Hartland Twp. to Hyne	120 ft.	120 ft.
	Hyne to Hilton	120 ft.	120 ft.
	Hilton to Spencer	140 ft.	120 ft.
	Spencer East to Spencer West	120-145 ft.	120 ft.
	Spencer to Grand River	100-120 ft.	120 ft.
	Grand River to Green Oak Twp.	100 ft.	120 ft.
Pleasant Valley	Commerce to Hyne	66 ft.	120 ft.
	Hyne to Kensington	66 ft.	120 ft.
	Kensington to Newman	66 ft.	120 ft.
	Newman to Jacoby	66-93 ft.	120 ft.
	Jacoby to Buno	66-93 ft.	120 ft.
	Buno to Spencer	66-93 ft.	120 ft.
	Spencer to Larkins	66-93 ft.	120 ft.
Spencer	Larkins to Grand River	66-156 ft.	120 ft.
	West Township Border to Old U.S. 23	66 ft.	120 ft.
	Old U.S. 23 to Buno	66-75 ft.	120 ft.
	Buno to Van Amberg	66-125 ft.	120 ft.
	Van Amberg to Pleasant Valley	66-174 ft.	120 ft.
	Pleasant Valley to Kensington	66-93 ft.	120 ft.
Taylor	Kensington to Kensington Metropark	66 ft.	120 ft.
	Old U.S. 23 to School	66 ft.	100 ft.
Van Amberg	Newman to Buno	66 ft.	120 ft.
	Buno to Spencer	66-93 ft.	120 ft.

Source: OHM & Livingston County Road Commission

Traffic Volume. Traffic volume data is measured by average daily traffic counts (ADT), which is an estimate of typical daily traffic on a road. Information for the Township’s ADT was collected to help understand the amount of traffic on these roads. *Figure Five* on the following page depicts the ADT counts gathered for the roadways that pathways were considered for within the Township.

Figure Five
Average Daily Traffic

Road	Segment	24 Hour Count (Date Taken)	Road	Segment	24 Hour Count (Date Taken)
Buno	Spencer to Village Square	2,448 (08/16/04)	Hunter	Hilton to Hyne	3,152 (05/28/03)
	Village Square to Van Amberg	1,400 (08/16/04)		Hyne	Hacker to Hunter
	Starshine Trail to Pleasant Valley	429 (05/29/03)	Hunter to Old U.S. 23		5,388 (06/22/04)
	Pleasant Valley to Kensington	314 (06/03/03)	Old U.S. 23 to Maxfield		4,201 (05/29/03)
	Kensington to Muir	6,033 (06/02/03)	Corlett to Pleasant Valley	3,092 (05/29/03)	
Culver	Spencer to Kenicott	2,653 (06/03/03)	Jacoby	Pleasant Valley to Kensington	2,429 (06/03/03)
	Kenicott to Pleasant Valley	2,360 (06/03/03)		Pleasant Valley to Stobart	2,768 (06/03/03)
Grand River	Hilton to Herbst	32,482 (06/16/05)	Kensington	Jacoby to Buno	6,296 (06/09/03)
	Old U.S. 23 to City of Brighton	23,405 (06/24/04)		Spencer to Larkins	12,341 (06/09/03)
	Old U.S. 23 to Academy	21,314 (05/19/03)		I-96 East Ramp to Grand River	15,414 (07/15/04)
	Academy to Pleasant Valley	14,833 (06/21/04)	Larkins	Pleasant Valley to Kensington	657 (06/09/03)
	Pleasant Valley to Kensington	8,710 (06/21/04)		Newman	Van Amberg to Corlett
Hacker	Grand River to Bendix	7,712 (05/13/02)	Taylor		Corlett to Pleasant Valley
	Bendix to Hyne	10,959 (05/14/02)		Old U.S. 23 to End of Pavement	2,598 (05/29/03)
	Hyne to Clark Lake	5,254 (05/14/02)		End of Pavement to Dead End	375 (05/19/05)
Hilton	Grand River to Flint	9,059 (06/30/03)	Van Amberg	Pleasant Valley to Spencer	276 (06/05/03)
	Hunter to Old U.S. 23	9,112 (06/30/03)		Spencer to Buno	4,311 (06/05/03)

Source: SEMCOG

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Crash Rates. Large traffic volumes on roads do not necessarily lead to greater traffic hazards; however, they tend to accentuate traffic hazards. The ability of any road to carry larger volumes of traffic is related to the design of the road, number of lanes, and number of ingress and egress points along the road, all of which must be considered when designing on and off-road pathways. *Figure Six* shows the ten intersections with the highest frequency of crashes within the Township as of 2004. Many of these intersections have since received upgrades that may improve traffic circulation.

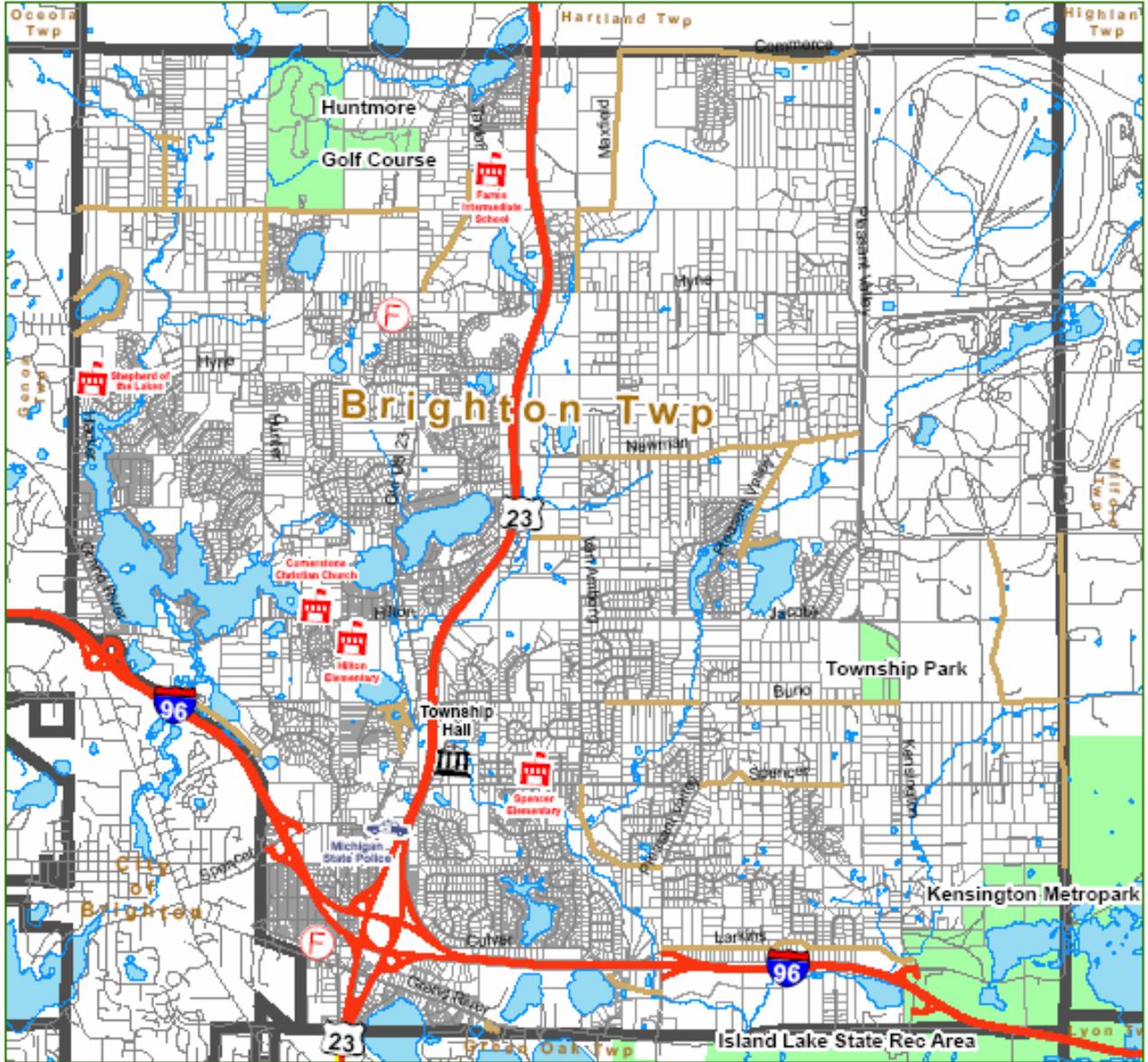
Figure Six
High Crash Intersections

Intersection	Twp. Rank	County Rank	Total Crashes 1999-2004
Grand River at Old U.S. 23	1	6	178
Grand River at Hilton	2	13	136
Grand River at Kensington	3	27	83
Old U.S. 23 at Spencer (northern intersection)	4	33	75
Hilton at Old U.S. 23	5	42	57
Eastbound I-96 at Northbound US 23 Ramp	6	44	56
Spencer at Westbound I-96 Spencer Ramp	7	51	54
Buno at Culver Rd. at Spencer	8	54	51
Grand River at Westbound I-96 Grand River Ramp	9	56	49
Hyne at Old U.S. 23	10	65	43
Old U.S. 23 at Spencer (southern intersection)	10	65	43

Source: SEMCOG

Paved Roads. *Map Four Road Conditions* illustrates the public roads in the Township that are paved and those that are gravel. Pathways are proposed primarily on paved roads, however there are certain segments that are currently gravel that provide logical extensions of pathways to connect to activity nodes or parks or to finish a continuous loop. It may be appropriate to construct crushed stone or rock pathways along some of these segments until a greater need is established. There are no plans at this time to pave any of the gravel roads.

Brighton Township Pathways Plan



Map Four
Road Conditions
 Brighton Township, Michigan

-  Unpaved Public Roads
-  Paved Public Roads
-  Township Hall
-  School
-  Fire
-  Police
-  Parks



Adopted September 2006
 Data Sources: Roads - OHM
 Base Map - MCGI, Brighton Twp. Master Plan



Brighton Township Pathways Plan

Planned Road Improvements. When planning for pathways, it is important to coordinate the timing of the design and construction with planned road improvements in order to reduce costs. The following road improvements are planned by Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and/or the Livingston County Road Commission (LCRC):

- **Kensington & Jacoby Roads (LCRC Summer 2006).** This is a roundabout construction project that will include 0.4 mile of roadway.
- **Grand River East (LCRC 2007).** Widen Grand River east of Old US-23 to Pleasant Valley to five lanes.
- **Pleasant Valley Bridge (MDOT 2009).** Resurfacing of the Pleasant Valley Bridge over I-96.
- **Kensington Bridge (MDOT 2009).** Replacement of the Kensington Bridge over I-96.

In addition to the above planned improvements, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), in the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan, has proposed the following projects. These projects represent priorities for the future based on anticipated needs, land uses, and development conditions and forecasts of available revenues. While these projects have been identified, they are not funded like the above four projects.

- **Old U.S. 23.** SEMCOG has recommended the widening of Old U.S. 23 to five lanes as follows:
 - ✓ (SEMCOG RTP 2006-2010). Grand River to Spencer West.
 - ✓ (SEMCOG RTP 2011-2015). Grand River to Lee.
 - ✓ (SEMCOG RTP 2016-2020). Spencer East to Hilton.
 - ✓ (SEMCOG RTP 2021-2025). Hilton to Hyne.
 - ✓ (SEMCOG RTP 2026-2030). Hyne to M-59.
- **I-96 Bridge.** (SEMCOG RTP 2006-2010). Widen the I-96 Bridge over U.S. 23 to five lanes.
- **Spencer Bridge** (SEMCOG RTP 2011-2015). Widen the Spencer Bridge over U.S. 23 to five lanes.

Brighton Township Pathways Plan

- **Spencer East (SEMCOG RTP 2016-2020).** Widen Spencer to five lanes from Old U.S. 23 to Van Amberg.
- **Hyne (SEMCOG RTP 2016-2020).** Add intersection turn lanes and modify alignment from Hacker to Old U.S. 23.
- **Kensington (SEMCOG RTP 2021-2025).** Add intersection turn lanes from I-96 to Hacker.
- **Hilton (SEMCOG RTP 2026-2030).** Add intersection turn lanes and modify alignment from Grand River to Old U.S. 23.
- **Pleasant Valley (SEMCOG RTP 2026-2030).** Widen Pleasant Valley from Grand River Avenue to I-96 to three lanes.
- **Spencer West (SEMCOG RTP 2026-2030).** Widen Spencer to five lanes from I-96 to Old U.S. 23.

Natural Features

The natural environment is a critical element of the physical basis upon which the community develops. The conservation of these natural features will increase the quality of life for the residents of the Township and will serve a variety of aesthetic and recreation functions as well as protect the rural character of the community. *Map Five Natural Features* depicts the key natural features within the Township.

Topography. The attractive topography of Brighton Township consists primarily of gently rolling hills with a few steep areas. Steep areas, which range in gradients from 15% to greater than 25%, need to be carefully examined before excavation is permitted which may destroy this attractive resource.



Surface Water. Brighton Township is fortunate to contain several small bodies of water, over twenty named lakes, many more ponds, and several streams which account for about 1,000 acres, many of which are used for recreational purposes.

Brighton Township Pathways Plan

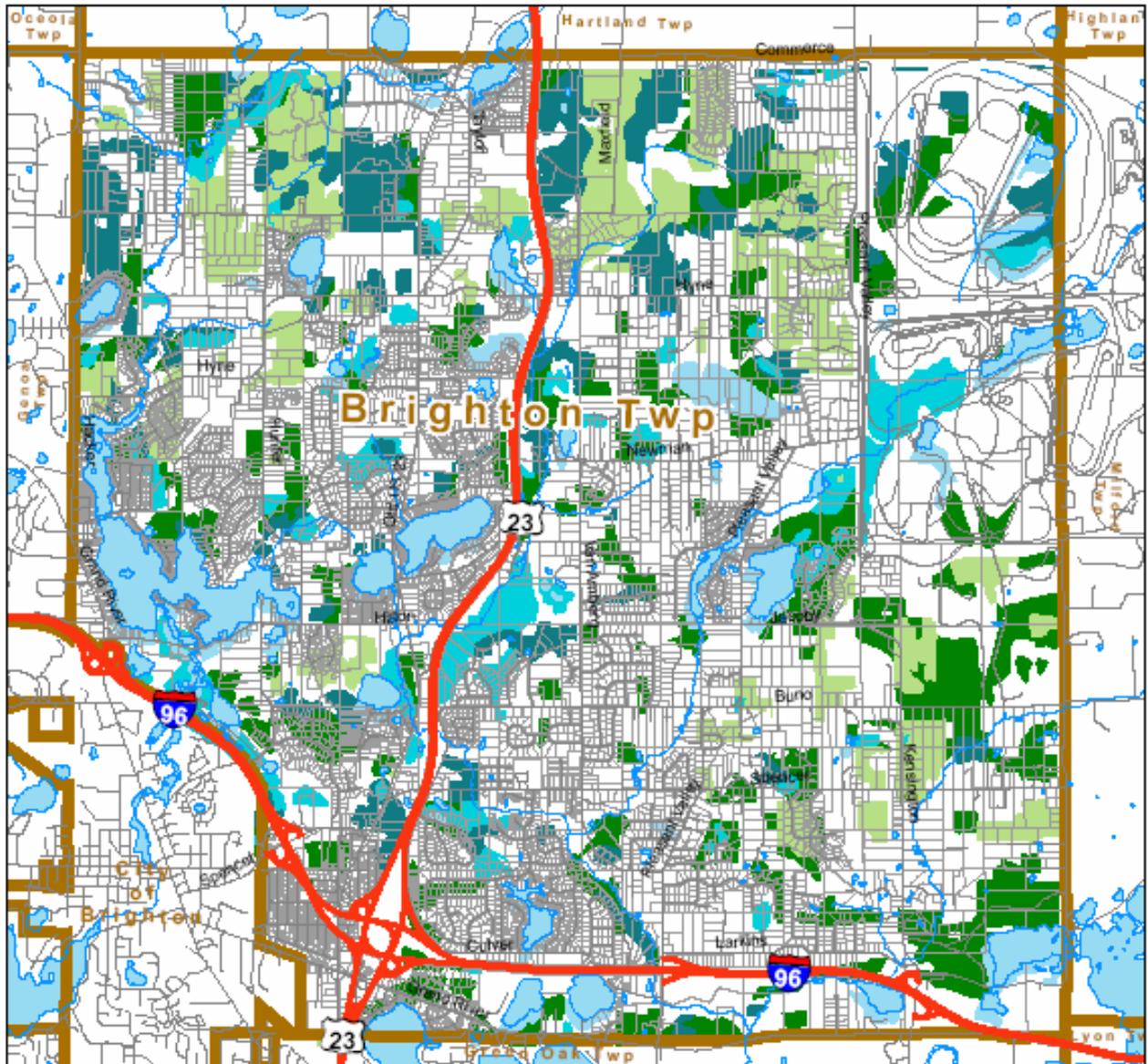
Wetlands. Wetlands are transitional areas between the aquatic ecosystems and the surrounding upland areas, and are vital to the maintenance of high quality surface and ground waters. This may include areas that are seasonably wet, by a surface or ground



water influence, to areas that are more permanently saturated throughout the year. Wetlands within the Township consist of mixed wooded, lowland hardwood, conifer, emergent, deep marsh and shrub/scrub wetlands. All wetlands that are contiguous with (within 500 feet) a waterway or any wetland that is greater than five acres in size are regulated by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). The Township also regulates wetlands over 2 acres through its own Wetland, Wetland Edge and Watercourse Protection Ordinance.

Woodlands. While many of the woodland areas were cleared over the years as the Township developed, some significant areas of woodlands remain scattered throughout the Township. Woodlands and hedgerows along property lines and roads provide a natural buffer and give the Township much of its “rural character.” Woodland areas in the Township consist of Central Hardwood and Pine Forests.

Brighton Township Pathways Plan



Map Five

Natural Features

Brighton Township, Michigan

-  Agricultural Land
-  Non-Forested Wetlands
-  Forested Wetlands
-  Woodlands
-  Water



Adopted September 2006

Data Sources:
Base Map - MCGL, 1995 SEMCOG, 2001 Tetra Tech



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