PLANNING COMMISION
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
November 10, 2026
6:30

1. **CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, ROLL CALL**

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA and MINUTES OF October 6, 2026**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Limit to 3 minutes

4. **NEW BUSINESS:** NONE

5. **OLD BUSINESS:** Discussion and input on Master Plan (see attached)

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Limit to 3 minutes

7. **Adjournment**

Next special meeting November 10, 2026, at 6:30

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CHAPTER 7: IMPLEMENTATION

The following section presents tools and techniques community leaders, Boards and Commissions, Township Administration, and the general public can use to implement the Master Plan. The techniques can be used individually or in tandem to achieve the objectives and eventually the overall goals of the Plan. While the direct impact of some techniques cannot be immediately assessed, over time these procedures can effectively guide land use and development in Yankee Springs Township.

CONTINUOUS PLANNING

The first implementation strategy is the adoption of the Master Plan by the Yankee Springs Township Board of Trustees (after recommendation by the Planning Commission). However, planning is a continuous process, which does not terminate with the completion of the Plan. The Township will continue to undergo change over time. Planning is an on-going process of identification, adjustment, and response to problems or opportunities that arise. In order to sustain the planning process and generate positive results, maintain momentum, ~~and~~ respond to change, and be in compliance with State Statute; the Plan should be reviewed and updated every five years, at a minimum.

Periodic adjustment to the Master Plan may be required as population, economic trends, and local and regional development patterns fluctuate and change. In addition, the Planning Commission or other designated committees, under the direction of the Township Board, can prepare organizational plans for specific issues or areas of concern as amendments to the Land Use Plan. Such supplemental plans may include corridor plans, housing maintenance programs, or a recreation plan.

As discussed throughout this planning process, the Planning Commission's work really *begins* with the completion of the Master Plan. Every year the Planning Commission should establish/update its annual work plan based in part on this implementation section. These elements are intended to be suggestions for items to be included on the Planning Commission's work plan. Other items will surface throughout the planning process.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

A successful Master Plan must educate the citizens of the community on both the overall goals desired for the Township and the individual regulatory measures that are available to implement the desired goals. An informed public can then offer its support to establishing regulations designed to further the vision that they helped establish for the community. It became clear through the public input process that there are a number of misconceptions in the community regarding the planning process and the authority of the Township related to land use. Nonetheless, their interest in planning is

high, and they have valuable and creative insight that should be shared with the Township. In order for these ideas to be communicated to the right people in the proper manner, the Township must educate its citizens on general planning procedures.

For example, the public input results demonstrated that residents do not want any more housing in the Township, but the Township recognizes that the State and Federal government prioritize housing, including funding and ~~the reality~~ that growth is going to occur. The goal is to lawfully manage growth and allow it only in conformance with the Township's guidelines. In order to prevent long delays at public hearings and an unfriendly atmosphere for developers, the Township should work with the public so that they are aware of the Township's authority and adopted standards and all parties can work together.

TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE

The Zoning Ordinance is the primary regulatory tool used by the Township to implement the Master Plan. Districts are established through zoning for the purpose of regulating the use of land and buildings, their height and bulk, the proportion of the lot that may be covered by them, and the density of development. This classification through regulation assists in the orderly development and growth of the community. In addition, zoning is used to protect property values and investments. Because of the real and/ or perceived impact zoning has on the use of land and related services, a direct relationship must exist between the Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.

Land use classifications on the Future Land Use Map and the corresponding land use category descriptions in the text of the Master Plan provide the basis for evaluating future zoning amendments, decisions initiated by the Planning Commission, or rezoning requests presented by petitioners.

Based on the recommendations in the Plan for the residential, commercial, and industrial areas, and based on the ever-evolving zoning tools that are available, the Township should consider a technical review of the Zoning Ordinance. A technical review will determine which provisions of the Ordinance are no longer consistent with the policies of the Land Use Plan, provisions that should be included to implement the policies of the Land Use Plan, and which provisions can be more clearly written to withstand legal scrutiny.

The technical review will be a methodical process that results in a list of suggested text amendments necessary to update the Zoning Ordinance in accordance with the Plan.

Beyond this initial review, there should also be continuous review of the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that it continues to satisfy the goals and objectives of this Plan and meet the Community's vision. In particular, site plan review and special land use approval standards should be maintained to ensure they stay current with the Community's objectives. Similarly, the Township Zoning Map should also be

consistently reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect changes in the Community consistent with the future land use plan. This is typically done on an annual basis.

REZONING

A review of the Zoning Map should be conducted to determine consistency with the Future Land Use Map. While the two will likely not be the same, the Future Land Use Map provides the template or direction for future changes to the Zoning Map. Therefore, property zoned for a higher intensity or density than designated on the Future Land Use Map, would be of particular interest. Rezoning these properties prevents a vacant lot from being developed in a manner that is no longer consistent with the Township's vision.

Other parcels that are zoned at a lower intensity or density, for instance a parcel zoned Rural Residential in the Gateway Mixed Use area, do not necessarily need to be rezoned at this time. A developer would likely seek such a rezoning when they submitted an application to develop the property.

SUBDIVISION AND PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Land division regulations are an important tool for the implementation of this Plan. The Township has regulations to cover all of the various forms of land division – land divisions, subdivisions, site condominiums, and planned unit developments – but these regulations should be reviewed to ensure that they continue to represent the vision and intent of the Township.

For example, the subdivision regulations contain design standards that regulate the design and layout of lots, streets, and developments. It is critical that these standards require the necessary amenities and stipulations on development to protect the rural character that residents here treasure. While traditional subdivision plats have become much less popular in the advent of site condominiums and planned unit developments, the design guidelines are universal and apply to many forms of development.

A more specialized form of development has evolved recently that will be critical to future development in the Township. Planned Unit Development (PUD) is cited frequently in this Plan as a tool that can be used to realize the goals of various land use categories and achieve a higher quality of development than might otherwise be possible. This tool allows for flexible application of the zoning standards in exchange for higher quality development and preservation of valuable open space areas. This section of the current regulations should be carefully reviewed and updated. This will allow for PUD's to most effectively implement the goals and objectives of the Plan and will provide incentives so they are more likely to be used to create such development in the future.

OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT

Rural open space development is an alternative to conventional site development that is intended to promote the preservation of rural character. Conventional site development often results in residential sprawl that consumes large amounts of land and divides open spaces into fragments that do not contribute to a rural appearance and are not conducive to agriculture, wildlife habitat, or other rural open space uses.

Conventional site development places lots on every available acre of the site. Open space development (also known as cluster zoning) allows for the grouping of dwellings onto part of the site so that the remainder can be preserved as open space. The clustering of dwellings can be placed either within woodlands, to preserve agricultural land and open space, or on the open space, preserving the woodlands and other existing natural features.

The development also typically has a large setback from the road allowing rural view sheds along the corridor to be preserved. The goal is to devise better use of undeveloped property resulting in higher quality development as opposed to destroying natural features to create conventional development.

Zoning Ordinance requirements must be revised to be no more difficult for rural open space developments than for conventional residential development. This development alternative is most effective when the Township offers a small incentive for open space development to the developer in the form of a small density bonus. A density bonus is contingent upon the developer preserving a sufficient amount of natural features and open space and appropriate infrastructure for the dwellings.

FINANCING TOOLS

Successful implementation of the Master Plan will depend on the ability of the Township to secure necessary financing for proposed improvements. Besides the general fund, the following sources of revenue are available to the Township:

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The Barry Community Foundation has multiple avenues for procuring funds to assist with community improvement projects. A couple of these include: Small Town Dreams Initiative, Grants from the Angel Fund, and the BCF Community Grant.

GUN LAKE TRIBE

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The Township should explore opportunities to partner with the Gun Lake Tribe and pursue potential financial assistance for projects that attract visitors, enhance community amenities, and support local economic development. Yankee Springs Township's proximity to Gun Lake Casino presents an opportunity to encourage casino visitors to explore local businesses, recreational opportunities, and community destinations. Potential funding or partnership opportunities could support tourism initiatives, recreational improvements, signage, public spaces, and other projects that generate community-wide benefits.

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BARRY COUNTY AND REGIONAL FUNDING PARTNERSHIPS

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The Township should explore opportunities for financial assistance and partnerships with Barry County and regional agencies to support community development, economic growth, housing, and property redevelopment. Potential resources may include the Barry County Economic Development Alliance, Barry County Land Bank, Barry County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, and housing programs administered through state and federal agencies, including the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These partnerships may provide access to grants, redevelopment incentives, technical assistance, and other funding opportunities to advance Township priorities.

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DEDICATED MILLAGE

Special millage rates can be approved to generate revenues for a specific purpose.

SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS

Special assessments are compulsory contributions collected from the owners of property benefited by specific public improvements (paving, drainage improvements, etc.) to defray the costs of such improvements. Special assessments are apportioned according to the assumed benefits to the property affected. Special assessment funding would prove useful to implement utility and road improvements in those areas with substandard and unimproved roads, and maintaining improved subdivision roads.

MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND

This fund replaced the Michigan Land Trust Fund in October 1985. All proposals for local grants must include a local match of at least 25 percent of total project costs. Projects eligible for funding include: acquisition of land or rights in land for recreational uses or for protection of the land for environmental importance or scenic beauty; and development proposals for public outdoor recreation or resource protection purposes (i.e., picnic areas, beaches, boating access, fishing and hunting facilities, winter sports areas, playgrounds, ball fields, tennis courts, and trails, etc.). Indoor facilities are

considered only if their primary purpose is to support outdoor recreation. Proposed local government fund recipients must have a recreation plan no more than five years old and approved by the Department of Natural Resources.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

These grants are 50/50 matching grants for land acquisition or outdoor recreation development funding. Eligible projects could receive a reimbursement from the Federal government equal to half the total project cost. The other half would have to be in the form of cash outlay, donation of land, or by credit for certain locally assumed costs. To be eligible, the Township must have an approved, up-to-date recreation plan that has been formally adopted by the Township Board.

Facilities which may be developed with these funds include, but are not limited to, picnic areas, beaches, boating facilities, fishing and hunting facilities, winter sports areas, playgrounds, ball fields, and tennis courts.

BOND PROGRAMS

Bonds are one of the principal sources of financing used by communities to pay for capital improvements. General obligation bonds are issued for specific community projects and are paid off by the general public with property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for construction of projects that generate revenues. The bonds are then retired using income generated by the project (for example, water and sewer service charges).

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

The Downtown Development Authority Act, Local Development Finance Authority Act, and Brownfield Redevelopment Act authorize tax increment financing. When a tax increment finance district is established, the state equalized value of all properties in the district is recorded. Every year thereafter, the property tax revenue generated by any increase in the total state equalized value is "captured" by the ~~DDA (Downtown Development Authority), LDFA (Local Development Finance Authority), or~~ BRA (Brownfield Redevelopment Authority) to finance the improvements set forth in a Master Plan. Often, revenue bonds are issued to finance the improvements, and the tax increment revenues are used to repay the bonds. A brownfield area may be the most likely to be effective in the future for Yankee Springs Township. The County already has a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority with a plan in place. That plan would simply need to be adopted to include potential brownfield sites in the Township. Then, if approved, brownfield funds may be made available to applicants at this site for purposes of redevelopment, environmental cleanup, and other high costs that prohibit development because of the status of the site. There are a few potential sites that may

be included in such an effort, including an old gas station site on Chief Noonday Road and the former Misak Landfill.

Housing Plan

Yankee Springs Township is committed to including housing as a core provision of its Master Plan. This portion of the Township's Master Plan seeks to include a range of housing types, affordability, ages and other characteristics in order to serve the housing demands of a diverse population.

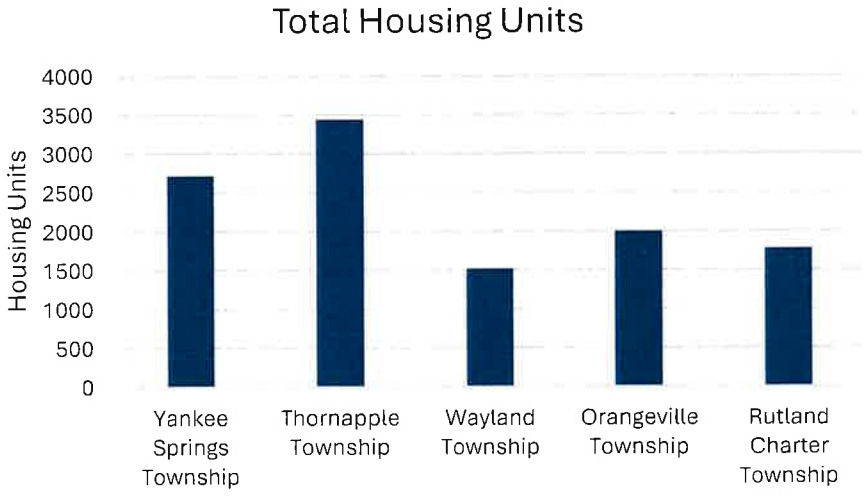
In accordance with House Bill 5557, which amended the Michigan Planning Enabling Act to *"expressly include housing as a core provision of a master plan"*, the following analysis has been conducted. This analysis expands upon the existing demographics and unit count, while also providing a generalized forecast for housing demands. Further, this section of the Plan will incorporate elements from the Goals and Objectives.

Housing

The quality, affordability, and availability of a community's housing stock have a significant impact on the overall community vitality. Trends relating to the number of housing units, households, year of construction, and amount of owner-occupied and renter-occupied all assist in evaluating the health of the Township's housing stock.

As of 2024, the Township had an estimated 2,714 housing units (dwelling units). Of these 2,717 housing units, 91.8% were classified as being owner-occupied. Comparatively, Barry County has a homeownership rate of 87.3%.

The graphic below provides a comparison of housing units across municipal jurisdictions. Thornapple Township, located just north of Yankee Springs, had the highest count of housing units, which is due to its closer proximity to The Grand Rapids metro region and the inclusion of the Village of Middleville.



Source: 2024 5 Year ACS Census Data, DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics - Census Bureau Table

The 2024 ACS (American Community Survey) data indicated Yankee Springs Township had a total of 2,714 housing units. The American Community Survey data is an ongoing survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, which provides annually updated data on housing characteristics, among other metrics. Between the 2020 Decennial Census and the 2024 5 Year ACS Census, the housing count has a positive difference of 129 units. From May 2020 to June 2025, the Township received applications for 64 new single-unit residential dwellings, or an approximate 13 new homes per year.

Age of Housing

The age of the housing stock can also provide important insights for a community, as the condition of the housing stock may be related to its construction age. Older housing stock can also provide a sense of character to the community.

Based on the number of occupied housing units via the 2024 Census, 24% of the housing units within the Township were constructed between 1990 to 1999. The second highest construction era for homes within the Township was 2000 to 2009, which saw 18.2% of the housing units erected. The table below provides further details relating to the years of construction, based on data available via the United States Census Bureau.

Total Housing Units (2024)	Total	Percentage
American Community Survey (2024)	2,714	100%
Built 2020 or later	49	1.8%
Built 2010 to 2019	350	12.9%
Built 2000 to 2009	495	18.2%
Built 1990 to 1999	661	24.4%
Built 1980 to 1989	217	8.0%
Built 1970 to 1979	394	14.5%
Built 1960 to 1969	108	4.0%
Built 1950 to 1959	179	6.6%

Source: 2024 5-year ACS: DP05: ACS Demographic and ... - Census Bureau Table

Advancing Housing in the Township

Housing, and the ability to achieve attainable dwelling units, is at the forefront in communities across the State of Michigan. Yankee Springs Township, recognizing that housing is a critical issue for members of the community, seeks to encourage proactive investment in housing options. As such, part of the housing plan within this Master Plan

document will be the annual review of the Township's Zoning Ordinance to determine if barriers exist to development and affordability of homes within the municipal boundary.

More specifically, consideration shall be given to the following types of housing within the Township, which could be conducted by an annual review of the existing zoning regulations. The zoning regulation analysis should emphasis the following:

» A range of housing types permitted in each zoning district across the Township.

» Potential costs to construct housing types within the Township, whether that be in conjunction with sewer and water connection fees, land use development regulations or other types of financial barriers that may be mitigated by changes at the Township level.

» Analysis of existing market trends and home sale values in relation to the average area median income in order to determine affordability of homes within the Township.

» Attainability for first time home buyers or those seeking to downsize into a smaller unit in order to reduce property maintenance and housing maintenance demands.

Single Unit Dwellings are those that predominately provide housing for one (1) group of people, such as a family. As the Township is predominately rural in nature, Single Unit Dwellings are located throughout the Township, typically associated with large lots (parcels) or located on one of the many lakes in the township.

Considerations

Additional considerations pertaining to Single Unit Dwellings may include the following:

» **Minimum lot size modifications:** evaluating if the current lot size standard best fits with the character of the Township or if further revisions are appropriate.

» **Minimum dwelling size:** evaluate if modifications to the minimum dwelling size would allow for an increase in housing construction within the Township. Further, evaluate if modifications in reducing the minimum dwelling size would enhance *Aging in Place* practices. Additionally, modifications to the minimum dwelling size would have a positive impact on reduction of construction costs for new units, making smaller footprint sized units more attainable to area and regional residents.

» **Setback provisions:** evaluate if modifying existing setback provisions from property lines would impact the ability to construct on various parcels across the Township. Knowing that the establishment of setbacks from property boundaries creates a *building envelope*, due consideration should be given to ascertain if the building envelops on a standard lot size within the Township supports housing development or if it provides unintended barriers.

Two Unit Dwellings

Two Unit Dwellings, commonly referred to as a duplex, provide housing to two (2) separate groups of people, within one single building/structure. These groups of people may entail a

lone individual, a couple, or an adult and child/children under the age of 18. As the Township is predominantly rural in nature, additional considerations may be warranted in order to emphasize and promote housing diversity within the municipal boundaries.

Considerations

Additional considerations pertaining to Two-Unit Dwellings may include the following:

- **Minimum lot size modifications:** evaluating if the current lot size standard best fits with the character of the Township or if further revisions are appropriate.
- **Minimum dwelling size:** evaluate if modifications to the minimum dwelling size would allow for an increase in housing construction within the Township. Further, evaluate if modifications in reducing the minimum dwelling size would enhance Aging in Place practices. Additionally, modifications to the minimum dwelling size would have a positive impact on reduction of construction costs for new units, making smaller footprint sized units more attainable to area and regional residents.
- **Setback provisions:** evaluate if modifying existing setback provisions from property lines would impact the ability to construct on various parcels across the Township. Knowing that the establishment of setbacks from property boundaries creates a building envelope, due consideration should be given to ascertain if the building envelops on a standard lot size within the Township supports housing development or if it provides unintended barriers.
- **Permitted use:** determine if two-unit dwellings should be allowed as a "by-right" or permitted use within certain districts of the Township that permit housing. Two-unit dwellings could take the form of duplexes or Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU).

Triplex & Quadplex Unit Dwellings

Triplex (3-unit) and quadplex (4-unit) or greater dwelling units are those that provide housing for multiple groups of people. Typically, housing can be apartment complexes or larger scale homes that have been modified to accommodate multiple-units, typically averaging less square footage per unit than a single-unit dwelling. Multi-unit complexes can typically be found in denser/developed areas of the community, perhaps closer to the Gun Lake area or along the M-179 corridor due to the need for more advanced infrastructure, such as public water and sanitary sewers.

Considerations

Additional considerations pertaining to Multi-Unit Dwellings may include the following:

- **Minimum lot size modifications:** evaluating if the current lot size standard best fits with the character of the Township or if further revisions are appropriate. Additional review should be given to determine the minimum lot size required to adequately support multi-unit dwellings.

- **Minimum dwelling size:** evaluate if modifications to the minimum dwelling size would allow for an increase in housing construction within the Township. Further, evaluate if modifications in reducing the minimum dwelling size would enhance investment in the creation of multi-unit buildings.
- **Setback provisions:** evaluate if modifying existing setback provisions from property lines would impact the ability to construct on parcels within the Township that are serviced by municipal water and sanitary sewer. Knowing that the establishment of setbacks from property boundaries creates a *building envelope,* due consideration should be given to ascertain if the building envelopes within the Township supports housing development or if it provides unintended barriers.
- **Zoning Districts –** Determine which zoning districts would be most appropriate for multi-family housing.

MCKENNA

Memorandum

TO: Yankee Springs Township Planning Commission

FROM: James McManus, AICP, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: **Master Plan/Action Plan Update Comments**

DATE: October 26th, 2026

The following is a list of comments/suggestions for the Action Plan items that the Planning Commission can consider as they are updating the document.

Plans, Policies and Ordinances

1. Review the Zoning Ordinance… Keep
2. Amend the Zoning ordinance to incorporate the Zoning Plan recommendations into the Ordinance.
3. Develop of 5 year CIP that incorporates Township funding with implementation priorities and update the Plan annually.
4. Work with adjacent Gun Lake…. Keep
5. Review and initiate amendments to the Zoning Map Keep
6. Work with adjacent communities and the DNR to adopt a Joint recreation Plan….
7. Incorporate a "Pathways Plan"…. Keep
8. Conduct the required 5 year review…. Keep
9. Review and amend the Sign Ordinance (#1 – Economic Development) Move to this section.
10. Encourage the development of a planning committee with Wayland Twp and the Gun Lake Tribe to evaluate joint planning opportunities on the M-179 corridor.
11. Work with the local school districts and other educational institutions and environmental advocacy groups to provide education on environmental protection for wetlands and lakes

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Transportation

1. Collaborate with the Barry County Road Commission to identify county roads in the Township where a Complete Streets program could be initiated.

2. Collaborate with MDOT to incorporate Complete Streets elements within the M-179 Corridor Overlay district and along M-37 within the Mixed Use Planning Area.

3.

   A) Develop a sidewalk plan..... Keep

   B) Support the creation of a township general law sidewalk ordinance that will assist in the implementation of the Sidewalk Plan and maintenance of the sidewalk network.

   4) Wayfinding.... Keep

5) Collaborate with MDOT to complete a speed limit study of the M-179 corridor and implement speed reduction BMPs.

Economic Development

1) Work with the State of Michigan..... Keep

2) Coordinate with the Barry County Brownfield..... Retain

3) Collaborate with the Barry County Land Bank to identify potential incentives and funding options for new development and redevelopment projects.

Housing

1) Promote housing styles and typologies that will serve current and future residents throughout their life cycle.

2) Encourage Mixed Uses, including upper floor apartments, within the M-179 Corridor Overlay District and in other appropriate locations in the Township.

3) Collaborate with Barry County on the distribution of MSHDA and HUD funds for housing maintenance, rehabilitation and development in Yankee Springs Township.

4) Support new housing development in areas served by public utilities or where utilities can be extended.

5) Encourage the creative development of new residential areas through the use of Open Space Design or Planned Unit Development.