



Planning Commission
97 North Broad Street
Hillsdale, Michigan 49242-1695
(517) 437-6440 Fax: (517) 437-6450

Planning Commission Agenda **June 18, 2025**

- I. Call to Order 5:30 pm**
 - A. Pledge of Allegiance
 - B. Roll Call
- II. Public Comment**
 - Any agenda item – 3 min. limit
- III. Consent Items**
 - A. Approval of agenda
 - B. Approval of Planning Commission 5/21/2025 minutes
- IV. Old Business**
 - A. No old business.
- V. New Business**
 - A. 2026 City Master Plan Update.
 - a. Begin discussions
- VI. Zoning Administrator Report**
- VII. Commissioners' Comments**
- VIII. Public Comment**
 - Any Commission related item – 3 min. limit
- IX. Adjournment**
 - Next meeting: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 at 5:30 pm

City of Hillsdale
Planning Commission
City Hall Council Chambers
5/21/2025
5:30 PM

- I. Roll Call.
Rogers -Absent
Laycock- absent
Morrisey absent
Present: Shelley, Kniffin, Moore, Winters
- II. Amendment to the agenda. Administrator Beeker requested we add a request to set a public hearing to review a rezoning request for 151 S West St.
Moved by winters
2nd by Kniffin
All in favor
- III. Public Hearing: Hillsdale College
Some discussion regarding the rezoning procedures.
Public hearing opened by Chair
No public comment
Public hearing closed by Chair
Moved Winters
2nd Shelley
All in favor
- IV. New Business
Set public hearing for June 18, 2025 for a rezoning request for 151 S West St
Motion to approve Kniffin
Second Winters
All in favor
- V. Motion to adjourn: Kniffin
Second winters
All in favor



TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Zoning Administrator

DATE: June 18, 2025

RE: 2026 City Master Plan Update

Background: It is time once again to be thinking about what may or may not be needed to update our city master plan. The Planning Zoning Enabling Act (PZEA) requires that the master plan be amended every five years or completely rewritten every twenty years. The City has had a policy of amending every five years.

Master Plan

2021 Edition

The City of **HILLSDALE** MICHIGAN



RESOLUTION #

0468

A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE CITY OF HILLSDALE MASTER PLAN

THE CITY OF HILLSDALE ORDAINS THAT:

WHEREAS, Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended, provides for a Municipal Planning Commission to prepare and adopt a Master Plan for the physical development of the City; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Hillsdale Planning Commission has prepared a physical development plan for the City of Hillsdale in compliance with said P.A. 33 of 2008, including relevant charts, maps, and text; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Hillsdale Planning Commission has provided opportunity for public input into the Master Planning Process; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Hillsdale Planning Commission held an public hearing on August 18, 2021, in order to provide additional opportunity for public comment; and,

WHEREAS, at the above referenced public hearing, the citizens of the City of Hillsdale were afforded the opportunity to provide oral and written comments on the draft plan, which comments have been carefully considered by the Planning Commission; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Hillsdale Planning Commission is now satisfied that the Master Plan is ready for adoption;

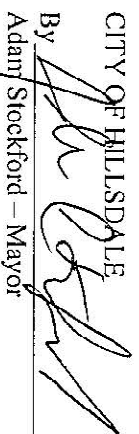
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Hillsdale Planning Commission does hereby recommend for adoption to the Council of the City of Hillsdale the City of Hillsdale 2021 Amended Master Plan, said plan to be dated as adopted this day of September 7, 2021; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Hillsdale does hereby direct the Mayor and City Clerk to sign this Resolution signifying adoption of the City of Hillsdale 2021 Amended Master Plan, to file attested copies of the Plan with the Hillsdale City Clerk and the Hillsdale County Planning Commission.

Passed at a regular meeting of the Council of the City of Hillsdale held on the seventh day of September, 2021.

CITY OF HILLSDALE

By


Adam Stockford – Mayor

By


Katy Price – City Clerk

Date Proposed:

7/31/2021

Date Published as Proposed:

7/31/2021

Date Passed:

9/17/2021

Date Published as Passed:

Effective Date:

*The 2021 edition of the City of Hillsdale S Master Plan was approved by the Hillsdale Planning Commission following a public hearing held on **August 18, 2021** and adopted by Council on **September 20, 2021**.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. A. Moore". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Planning Commission Chair



CITY OF HILLSDALE, MICHIGAN

www.cityofhillsdale.org

Acknowledgements:

This document has been prepared by the City of Hillsdale Planning Commission, in coordination with city staff, community organizations and local stakeholders. The Planning Commission would especially like to thank the individuals who participated in the Master Plan Charrette for their assistance in the development of this Plan Amendment.

Alan Beeker, Zoning Administrator
Kelly LoPresto, Economic Development

Planning Commission Members:

Eric Moore – Chair
Ron Scholl – Vice-Chair
William Morrissey – Mayor Pro-Tem
Penny Swan – Secretary
Kerry Laycock
Elias McConnell
Jacob Parker

Prepared by the City of Hillsdale Planning Commission

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History

Historical research has revealed long-lost details about Baw Beese and his people in Hillsdale County. Those first settlers credited Baw Beese and his tribe of about 100 for helping their pioneer families by providing meat and traditional medicinal care through the long hard winters. The Potawatomie were known as successful planters and growers of maize (corn), who fished and hunted in fruitful locations. Baw Beese led his people around the county to three primary spots. The first was near the shores of Baw Beese Lake (supposedly named after the old chief by an early settler, Colonel William Fowler), where they fished; the second was near the corner of Squawfield and Waldron Roads, where they grew maize; and the third was just south of Somerset, where they hunted. The native inhabitants also made forays into Ohio and Indiana, as well as into neighboring Michigan counties.

Most Southern Michigan Indians had been relocated to reservations in Iowa and Kansas by 1838. However, because the majority of settlers in Hillsdale County admired and appreciated the local Indian population, Baw Beese and his people continued to co-exist with their white neighbors until the autumn of 1840. After one of the local pioneers wrote a letter to then President William H. Harrison requesting the removal of Baw Beese's people from the land he had rightfully purchased, federal troops were sent to roundup the "Red Men" to be escorted out of the county. It was a sad day when Baw Beese left. Schools were let out to bid the old chief and his people farewell. With Baw Beese driving a horse-drawn buggy in the lead, the federals took the Indians from the camp at Squawfield, through Jonesville and Litchfield to Marshall. From Marshall they went west, then down the Mississippi, up the Missouri River and eventually to a reservation at Council Bluffs, Iowa where Baw Beese feared his mortal enemy, the Sioux. Later, many members of the Hillsdale County band were relocated to the reservation north of Topeka, Kansas. Descendants of Baw Beese's village remained on that Kansas reservation throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. There is some historical evidence that some of the original inhabitants hid in the forests, or were hidden by settlers, and remained in the area. Other reports indicate that small groups of the Indians taken west returned to Hillsdale County and took up the ways of white men, eventually assimilating into the Euro-American culture.

The first English-speaking white settler in what later would become the city of Hillsdale was Jeremiah Arnold, of De Peyster, New York, who arrived in 1834, pitched a tent and then built a log cabin on the site of the present day fairgrounds. In that same year, Chauncey Ferris and John Cook opened a well-stocked store in Jonesville. In 1835, the Jonesville Presbyterian Church was constructed, the first church building in the county. In 1839, the first newspaper, the Hillsdale County Gazette, was published on April 13, by James K. Kinman, an attorney and one of the early pioneers who credited Baw Beese for saving the lives of his sick family during a severe winter. The Whig-Standard, forerunner of The Hillsdale Daily News, did not appear in print until 1846. As an attorney, Kinman later gained fame as the defense council for the notorious international counterfeiter, horse thief and outlaw Sile Doty, who was convicted in 1852 in the Hillsdale

Circuit court and incarcerated throughout the Civil War in Jackson State Prison.

In 1843, the railroad reached Hillsdale from Adrian and the first steam engine of the Erie and Kalamazoo line rolled into the small village. For ten years thereafter, Hillsdale became the "jumping off place" for the Wild West until the railroad was continued through to Coldwater and Chicago in 1853. Hillsdale was itself a little wild during that period as rogues and rascals took the trains to the last stop on the line. From that time until the 1950s Hillsdale was known as a railroad center, with as many as 26 passenger trains a day going in and out of the city. The Interstate highway system caused commercial passenger operation to cease, but freight operations continue to this day.

The railroad lines passing through the county were known by various names: the Erie and Kalamazoo, the Michigan Southern, the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern, and finally the New York Central. Its subsidiaries or branches, originally independent lines were known as the Detroit, Hillsdale and Indiana, which ran from Ypsilanti to Bankers, and the Fort Wayne, Jackson and Saginaw, later known as the Fort Wayne Branch.

In 1844, at Spring Arbor, a group of Free-Will Baptists organized and opened a pioneer school of higher education called Michigan Central College. Primarily due to the access of the railroad, the college relocated to Hillsdale in 1853 and was renamed Hillsdale College. Two original Hillsdale settlers served as college trustees for many years. Chauncey Ferris was elected the first treasurer in 1853 and John Potter Cook served for more than 20 years.

Jonesville was the site of the first county seat. Later, during a political battle between Jonesville and Hillsdale, Osseo was for a brief period the county seat. The issue was settled in 1843 when political power shifted to Hillsdale. The first county courthouse built in 1843 on the current courthouse square burned in 1847 or 48, destroying most of the county's original documents. A second courthouse, called the "old stonepile," was constructed in 1850-51 and served until the current building was constructed in 1898.

The first exhibition of the Hillsdale County fair, nicknamed the "Most Popular Fair on Earth," was organized in 1850 and held on the courthouse lawn in 1851. The original plat for the City of Hillsdale designated the present day fairground as the location of the city. However, the city center was subsequently moved to the current downtown. During the Civil War (1861-1865) hundreds of Hillsdale County residents served in the Grand Army of the Republic. The percentage of male students enlisting from Hillsdale College was higher than that of any other Michigan college and probably higher than that of any non-military college in the North and certainly the American West.

Hillsdale was incorporated as a village in 1847 and received its city charter in 1869. It has long been the county's center of

government, commerce and cultural activities. Besides the railroad, many successful businesses have operated here. A gristmill was founded by Cook and Ferris and sold in 1869 to F.W. Stock. Stock's Mill became the largest flourmill east of the Mississippi River and remained so throughout the 20 century. The mill was an important employer and economic asset to the entire county for more than a century and a half.

(SOURCES: Condensed from Pioneer Period: 1825-1843 edited and copyrighted by Dan Bisher.)



Population Characteristics

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Historic Record of the Population

There were 8,141 people in the City of Hillsdale according to the 2017 US Census. Between 1960 and 2000, the City grew by 7.9%, or an average annual rate of 0.2%. At the same time, the population of Hillsdale County, inclusive of the city, grew by 33.9% or an annual growth rate of 0.8%. The City comprised 22.0% of the County's total population in 1960. That percentage had dropped to 17.7% in 2017, suggesting a trend of suburbanization away from the City to outlying areas. These numbers do not include the student population of Hillsdale College, whose 1,500 students reside on the city for approximately eight months of the year.

Year	City of Hillsdale		Hillsdale County	
	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
1960	7,629	—	34,742	—
1970	7,728	1.3%	37,171	7.0%
1980	7,432	-3.8%	42,071	13.2%
1990	8,170	9.9%	43,431	3.2%
2000	8,233	0.8%	46,527	7.1%
2010	8,305	0.9%	46,688	0.3%
2017	8,141	-1.9%	45,879	-1.7%

Future Population Estimates

Year	City of Hillsdale	Hillsdale County
2010	8,305	46,688
2015	8,339	47,563
2020	8,374	48,455
2025	8,408	49,363
2030	8,443	50,289

Accurately estimating the future population of a small community can be a difficult task. Changes in population are not limited to a net change in the number of people due to births and deaths. Such changes are also a function of such factors as migration, fertility, the availability of housing, and life expectancy. The City of Hillsdale has historically experienced relatively low increases in its population. The population has averaged an increase of just 0.2% per year since 1960. If the surge of growth that occurred between 1980 and 1990 had not occurred, the City would have experienced population decline instead of its very low growth during that 40 year period. Since 1990, the population has averaged an increase of 2.4% per year. If this trend continues, the city's population may grow slightly over the next 20 years. The following table represents a population projection for the City of Hillsdale through 2030. The estimates are based on a linear (straight line) projection which in turn is based upon the historic change in population between 1990 and 2010, representing a 5 year growth rate of 0.4%. It is assumed that the population will cyclically fall and rise over the 20 year period. Source: Region 2 Planning Commission

The table also shows a population projection for Hillsdale County (inclusive of the city's population). The County's population projection model is based upon the same linear projection model utilized for the City. The County has experienced significant growth during that 20 year time period with an annual growth rate of 0.4%. A number of reasons may account for the disparity between the City and the County including the continued suburbanization of townships in general in Michigan. However, it should be noted that the County grew 0.3% during the first decade of the 21st century while the City grew 0.9% during the same time period.

Population by Sex and Age

The median age for a resident of the City of Hillsdale was 30.2 years in 2010, considerably younger than his or her counterpart countywide (40.5 years). This difference is primarily due to the fact that over half (56.3%) of Hillsdale County's population was at least 35 years old as opposed to less than half (44.6%) of the City's population.

Race and Ethnicity

Both the City of Hillsdale and Hillsdale County can be said to have a homogeneous population. The overwhelming majority of the population in both the City and County are white. However, minority groups are present. For example, various Native Americans and people of Asian descent comprise 0.6% of the City's population. Hispanics (Latinos) comprised 3.9% of the City's population.

Characteristic	City of Hillsdale	Hillsdale County
	% of Total	% of Total
Total Population	100.0	100.0
White	91.6	94.3
Black or African American	1.9	0.7
American Indian and Alaskan Native	0.2	0.6
Asian	0.9	0.5
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0.0	0.0
Some other race	1.9	1.5
Hispanic (Latino)	3.5	2.4

Disabilities

An estimated 14.7% of Hillsdale County residents were disabled in some manner in 2019, according to the American Community Survey. Disability status increased correspondingly with an increase in the age of residents. The percentage of residents with disabilities under 18 years of age was 4.1%, while an estimated 13.0% between the ages of 18-64 suffered from some form of disability. The largest age group to be living with some form of disability was 65 years of age or older, an estimated 32.2%. By comparison, the estimated State average for those 65 years of age or older was 34.3% during the 2019 reporting period.

Estimated Disability Status of the Civilian Population in Hillsdale County — 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Characteristic	Total	Disabled	Percent of Total / Subgroup
Total Civilian Non-institutionalized Population	45,328	6,641	14.7%
Under 18 years	9,959	408	4.1%
18 to 64 years	26,834	3,482	13.0%
65 years and over	8,535	2,751	32.2%



Education

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Educational Attainment

The American Community Survey estimated the educational attainment of each resident at least 25 years old in 2019. Less City of Hillsdale residents (87.5%) had a high school diploma than Hillsdale County residents (88.2%). Bachelors and/or graduate degrees were possessed by 25.6% of City residents and 17.3% of County residents.

Estimated Educational Attainment — 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Educational Level	City of Hillsdale		Hillsdale County	
	Population	% of Total	Population	% of Total
Population 25 years and over	4,391	100%	31,260	100
Less than 9th Grade	153	3.5%	1,268	4.1%
9th-12th Grade, No Diploma	395	9.0%	2,427	7.8%
High School Graduate	1,549	35.3%	12,156	38.9%
Some College, No Degree	895	20.4%	7,326	23.4%
Associate's Degree	274	6.2%	2,662	8.5%
Bachelor's Degree	611	13.9%	3,334	10.7%
Graduate or Professional Degree	514	11.7%	2,087	6.7%
High School Graduate or Higher	3,843	87.5%	27,565	88.2%
Bachelor's or Higher	1,125	25.6%	5,421	17.3%

School Enrollment

The American Community Survey estimates that a greater percentage of City of Hillsdale residents were enrolled in some type of school than Hillsdale County residents. This difference may be due to the estimate that 58.5% of the City residents enrolled in school attended a college or graduate school.

Estimated School Enrollment— 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Educational Level	City of Hillsdale		Hillsdale County	
	Population	% of Total	Population	% of Total
Population 3 years and over enrolled in school	2,798	100.0%	10,278	100.0%
Nursery School, Preschool,	121	4.9%	591	5.8%
Kindergarten	86	3.1%	548	5.3%
Elementary School (grades 1-4)	259	9.3%	1,875	18.2%
Elementary School (grades 5-8)	380	13.6%	2,399	23.3%
High School (grades 9-12)	316	11.3%	2,264	22.0%
College, undergraduate	1,567	56.0%	2,404	23.4%
Graduate, professional school	69	2.5%	197	1.9%



Occupations and Income

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Employment Status

The American Community Survey provided estimates of employment status for residents at least 16 years of age in 2019. Less than 60% of City of Hillsdale and Hillsdale County residents were included in the labor force.

Estimated Employment Status— 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Characteristic	City of Hillsdale		Hillsdale County	
	Population	% of Total	Population	% of Total
Population 16 years and over	6,673	100.0%	36,966	100.0%
In Labor Force	3,692	55.3%	20,308	54.9%
Civilian Labor Force	3,689	55.3%	20,295	54.9%
Employed	3,497	52.4%	19,421	52.5%
Unemployed	192	2.9%	874	2.4%
Not in Labor Force	2,981	44.7%	16,658	45.1%

Employment by Occupation

It is estimated that most employed City of Hillsdale residents were engaged in one of the following occupations: 1) management, business, science, and arts; 2) service; and 3) sales and office occupations (listed in descending order). Combined, those occupations account for the jobs of 74.6% of the City's employed residents. Those occupations made up 63.5% of the jobs held by Hillsdale County's employed residents. A significant number of City and County residents were also employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations.

Estimated Employment by Occupation— 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Occupation	City of Hillsdale		Hillsdale County	
	Population	% of Total	Population	% of Total
Employed Population 16 year and over	3,497	100.0%	19,241	100.0%
Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations	1,179	33.7%	5,680	29.2%
Service Occupations	773	22.1%	3,159	16.3%
Sales and Office Occupations	658	18.8%	3,490	18.0%
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations	163	4.7%	2,068	10.6%
Production, Transportation, and Material-moving Occupations	724	20.7%	5,024	25.9%

Employment by Industry

Estimated Employment by Industry— 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Industry	City of Hillsdale		Hillsdale County	
	Population	% of Total	Population	% of Total
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining	29	0.8%	690	3.6%
Construction	101	2.9%	1,204	6.2%
Manufacturing	599	17.1%	4,869	25.1%
Wholesale	37	1.1%	429	2.2%
Retail	403	11.5%	1,992	10.3%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	86	2.5%	1,151	5.9%
Information	24	0.7%	155	0.8%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing	102	2.9%	610	3.1%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administration, Waste, Management	138	3.9%	798	4.1%
Educational, Healthcare, Social Assistance	1,334	38.1%	4,831	24.9%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, Food Service	476	13.6%	1,250	6.4%
Other Services	92	2.6%	799	4.1%
Public Administration	76	2.2%	638	3.3%
Employed Population 16 years and over	3,497	100.0%	19,241	100.0%

The American Community survey estimates that the educational, health and social assistance sector, which accounted for 38.1% of employed City residents between 2019, took the lead over all other forms of employment including manufacturing, which accounted for 17.1% of employed residents. In Hillsdale County those industries were also major employers, but with the manufacturing sector edging the lead with 25.1% of employed county residents, and educational, health care and social assistance coming in second, employing 24.9%. The arts/entertainment sector (13.6%) qualified for third place as a major employer of City residents and retail as third place employer of County residents (10.3%)

Household Income and Benefits

The American Community Survey estimates that the median household income in the City (\$30,968) in 2019 was only 64% of the median household income countywide (\$48,392). It is important to note that median household income includes other sources of income which may have contributed to the disparity, such as pensions and social security.

Estimated Household Income and Benefits— 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Income	City of Hillsdale		Hillsdale County	
	Population	% of Total	Population	% of Total
Households	2,955	100.0%	18,107	100.0%
Less than \$10,000	306	10.4%	1,165	6.4%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	247	9.4%	849	4.7%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	480	16.2%	2,292	12.7%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	281	9.5%	2,058	11.4%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	548	18.5%	2,767	15.3%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	490	16.6%	3,591	19.8%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	298	10.1%	2,281	12.6%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	194	6.6%	1,191	12.1%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	37	1.3%	545	3.0%
\$200,000 or more	74	2.5%	368	2.0%
Median Household Income	\$30,968	—	\$48,392	—

Commuting to Work

Urban living often reduces commuting distances making walking or bike riding possible. In the City of Hillsdale an estimated 17.7% of people reported that they walked to their place of work in 2019; an estimated 4.4% of Hillsdale County's population reported walking to work. Commuting time for the average City resident to travel to work was estimated at 15.6 minutes, 25.3 minutes in the County.

Commuting to Work — 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Characteristics	City of Hillsdale		Hillsdale County	
	Population	% of Total	Population	% of Total
Workers 16 years and over	3,351	100.0%	18,989	100.0%
Car, Truck or Van — Drove Alone	2,179	65.0%	15,256	80.3%
Car, Truck or Van — Carpooled	271	8.1%	1,567	8.3%
Taxicab	25	0.7%	1,567	0.2%
Walked	593	17.7%	47	4.4%
Other Means	27	0.8%	845	1.2%
Worked at Home	256	7.6%	222	5.5%
Mean Travel Time to Work	15.6 minutes	—	25.3 minutes	—



Housing Characteristics

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Types of Residential Structures

One unit detached homes generally comprised the greatest segment of housing units between 2013 and 2017. For example, it is estimated that well over half of the housing units within the City (59.8%) were one unit detached, as were well over three-quarters of housing units countywide (80.9%). Conversely, the City has a much higher percentage of units in multiple-family developments.

Residential Structures — 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Characteristics	City of Hillsdale		Hillsdale County	
	Structures	% of Total	Structures	% of Total
Total Units	3,178	100.0%	21,960	100.0%
1 Unit Detached	1,810	57.0%	17,795	81.0%
1 Unit Attached	65	2.0%	161	0.7%
2 Units	165	5.2%	380	1.7%
3 or 4 Units	541	5.2%	347	1.6%
5 to 9 Units	341	10.7%	555	2.5%
10 to 19 Units	170	5.3%	329	1.5%
20 or More Units	367	11.5%	438	2.0%
Mobile Home	95	3.0%	1,943	8.8%
Boat, RV, Van	0	0.0%	12	0.1%

Number of Rooms per Residential Unit

Estimated Rooms per Structure — 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Rooms	City of Hillsdale		Hillsdale County	
	Structures	% of Total	Structures	% of Total
1 Room	60	1.9%	126	0.6%
2 Rooms	107	3.4%	292	1.3%
3 Rooms	460	14.5%	1,341	6.1%
4 Rooms	493	15.5%	2,699	12.3%
5 Rooms	400	12.6%	4,248	19.3%
6 Rooms	568	17.9%	4,332	19.7%
7 Rooms	374	11.8%	3,229	14.7%
8 Rooms	329	10.4%	2,395	10.9%
9 or more Rooms	387	12.2%	3,298	15.0%

Year the Residential Structure was Built

The age of a structure is an important planning consideration. In general, the older a structure is, the more likely the need for major repairs and improvements to make it marketable. Because major repairs and improvements are often very costly, older housing is at greater risk of decline. If this issue is ignored, structures may degrade to the point that they are converted to multiple units or even need to be demolished, thereby contributing to the blight of a neighborhood. For this reason, some communities encourage high levels of owner occupied housing. A greater percentage of the City of Hillsdale's housing stock is older than that of Hillsdale County. For example, it is estimated that 57.3% of the housing units in the City were built prior to 1960. Conversely, 40.2% of the housing units countywide were built in the same time period. A number of issues and problems, such as blight and home ownership, are associated with an aging housing stock and can be anticipated.

Estimated Year Structure Built — 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Year	City of Hillsdale		Hillsdale County	
	Structures	% of Total	Structures	% of Total
2014 or later	15	0.5%	219	1.0%
2010 to 2013	34	1.1%	207	0.9%
2000 to 2009	90	2.8%	2,157	9.8%
1990 to 1999	189	5.9%	2,712	12.3%
1980 to 1989	218	6.9%	2,159	9.8%
1970 to 1979	586	18.4%	3,487	15.9%
1960 to 1969	365	11.5%	2,183	9.9%
1950 to 1959	308	9.7%	1,845	8.4%
1940 to 1949	262	8.2%	1,056	4.8%
1939 or earlier	1,111	35.0%	5,935	27.0%



The Economy

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Introduction

Since its founding, Hillsdale's economy has depended on its position on the map. It is the County seat and largest city in Hillsdale County. It is the site of Hillsdale College and so provides a home to faculty, staff, students and visitors. And, its position on the railroad brought warehousing and early industry to Hillsdale. Now, Hillsdale's central Midwest location and close proximity to the automotive sector explains more of its industrial activity. Surrounding the City of Hillsdale is a vast network of farms, villages and agricultural activity. The local economy provides related support services for these sectors such as schools, hospital (the Hillsdale Community Health Center), and commercial enterprise to meet the needs of its citizens for restaurants, groceries, banking, automotive purchases and repair, and other service and retail consumption. Employment is therefore provided for government administrators, doctors, lawyers, judges, professors, teachers, bankers, engineers, management and all levels of skilled, semi-skilled, retail and service sector support staff.

The City of Hillsdale has a fairly diverse economy not solely dependent upon any one industry. There are approximately 50 industrial facilities located within the City or having a Hillsdale zip code. While support services to the automotive industry are very important to the local economy, other unrelated industries provide close to half of the available manufacturing jobs. Of the total manufacturing jobs available in Hillsdale County, over 35% are located in or around the City.

However, like most cities and small towns in the Midwest, hundreds of manufacturing jobs have been lost since 2008, and it is unlikely that these jobs will ever come back. Although manufacturing productivity is at an all-time high in the United States, the number of workers that are required to produce the same number of goods has diminished as capital has replaced labor in the production process. The top six (6) employers in the City of Hillsdale are not industrial. Hillsdale College is by far the largest employer providing almost six times as many jobs as the largest industrial employer.

Unemployment Rates

There are three general classifications of employment used by the Michigan Employment Security Commission (MESC) for statistical documentation of employment figures. They are manufacturing, non-manufacturing and government. In 1990 manufacturing jobs reached an all-time high increasing 15.2 percent from 1986 to 5,500 jobs. At the same time manufacturing jobs accounted for over 42 percent of total employment. Hillsdale has since succumbed similarly to state trends as unemployment raises slowly post 9-11. The local economy is still largely dependent on manufacturing, and is slowly deferring to health and education services.

Unemployment Rates — 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Year	City of Hillsdale	Hillsdale County
2019	5.2%	4.3%

Property Taxes and Values

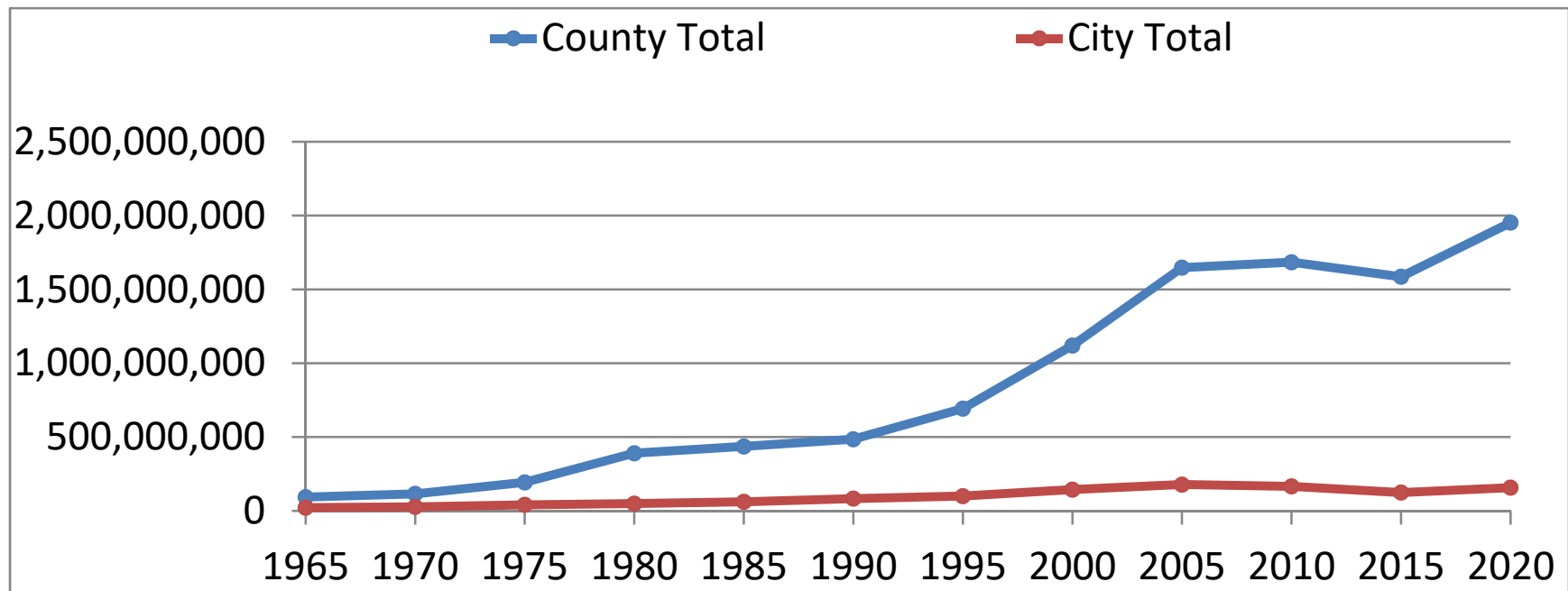
State Equalized Value. In Michigan, property is assessed annually by the city or township assessor at 50% of its “True Cash Value.” This assessed value may be adjusted by the local Board of Review, County Equalization (by the County Board of Commissioners) and State Equalization (by the State Tax Commission). The resulting final value is known as the State Equalized Value (SEV).

Changes in State Equalized Values— Hillsdale County Assessor

Year	City Total Real Property	% Change (City)	County Total Real Property	% Change (County)	City Total Real Property as % of County Total
2015	124,519,700	-	1,585,964,483	-	7.85%
2016	125,580,200	0.85%	1,676,026,974	5.68%	7.49%
2017	134,913,900	7.17%	1,731,788,041	3.33%	7.79%
2018	137,993,400	2.28%	1,756,405,063	1.42%	7.86%
2019	143,261,332	3.82%	1,826,768,881	4.01%	7.84%
2020	157,500,400	9.94%	1,952,840,085	6.90%	8.07%

Changes in State Equalized Value over time

Countywide values have increased much more dramatically over time than those of the City. This can be at least partially attributed to agricultural land values remaining steady or even increasing in value while residential, commercial and industrial property values have declined in recent years. In addition, average home prices in rural areas are dramatically higher than those seen in more densely populated urban areas. This is due, in large part, to the aging housing stock within the city compared to outlying areas, particularly around lakes and in newer rural subdivisions.





Land Use

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Residential

Of the developed land in the City, residential uses outnumber other uses of the land in total acres. In 2015, there were 885 acres of land devoted to all types of residential use. This is 38.3% of all developed land. Of the various residential land use classifications, single-family uses outnumber all others in total area used. This classification comprises 83% of the residential uses and slightly over 31% of all developed land. Multiple-family land uses utilize the second largest category in the residential classification followed by two-family uses and so on.

Residential land uses increased by 11.4% between 2015 and 2020. In total acres, single-family uses increased the most. Multiple-family uses, however, increased between 2015 and 2020 and two-family uses decreased 9% during the same period. This may begin to reflect a trend toward stabilization in demand for all types of housing. Mobile homes and farmsteads represent an insignificant proportion of the overall land use picture in the City.

Commercial

Commercially, the City's growth has slowed since 2015. Commercial land uses make up 11.7% of the total developed land in the City. Increasing commercial activity helps strengthen the local economy as well as providing additional employment.

Industrial

Industries use fewer community services proportionate to taxes paid when compared to residential and commercial uses. They also provide relatively high paying jobs. The money from these jobs trickles down through the local economy in the form of new housing and increasing demand for commercial activity.

Between 2015 and 2020 all industrial uses of land decreased to 15.2%. The decreases in land dedicated for light industrial and utilities, transportation and communication industries may be attributed to slowed development of vacant industrial land within the industrial park. Heavy industrial uses have shown even greater decreases.

Property Assessment

Property Assessment — 2020 Region 2 Planning Commission

Classification	Percentage of Total Land Area:
Residential	38.3%
Commercial	11.7%
Industrial	15.2%
Exempt	33.3%
Other	1.5%
Classification	Percentage of Total Land Area:
Low-Intensive Development	53.6%
High-Intensive Development	11.5%
Institutions	33.3%



Community Facilities & Services

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Schools

Existing Facilities and Standards

Until the 1970s, the majority of American children walked to school. Today less than 15 percent do, mostly because they cannot. Busing and the School of Choice program has contributed to this trend. In planning for our school and children's future, we should remember three facts; smaller schools produce higher-performing students, walking to school produces healthier children, and busing and parental chauffeuring exacerbate rush-hour traffic. With regard to placemaking, the Hillsdale School District provides an advantage in the fact that the school buildings are still located within the city limits.

Hillsdale Community Schools

Carl L. Bailey Elementary School is located on the east side of Manning St., between Barry and East South Streets in the South Part of the City. The school was built in 1935 with an addition in 1971. The school has a student capacity of 500. The complex comprises 1.6 acres.

S.J. Gier Elementary School is located on the north side of Spring Street. It was built in 1952, with additions in 1972, 1978 and 1992. They are currently in the process of adding a gymnasium. It has a student capacity of 500. The school complex comprises 4.4 acres

Davis Middle School is located near the center of City. It was built in 1929 as a High School, with additions in 1966 and 1977. The school contains 31 classrooms and has a student capacity of 900. The school sits on 3.9 acres.

Hillsdale High School is located on the southwest side of the City, south of the Davis Middle School. It was built in 1959, with an addition completed in 1967. The building contains 38 classrooms and has a student capacity of 900. The school sits on 23.1 acres.

Bus Service — The Hillsdale Community School District serves a 68 square mile area and portions of seven (7) Townships with the City of Hillsdale as its geographic center.

Private and Charter Schools

Hillsdale Preparatory is a local charter school. It opened in August of 1997 and serves grades Kindergarten through 7th grade. It provides a full curriculum.

Will Carleton Academy is a local charter school and serves grades Kindergarten through 12th grade. It is located on W. Hallett St. on the West side of the City. It provides a full curriculum, arts and athletic program.

Hillsdale Academy is a private school operated in cooperation with Hillsdale College. It serves grades Kindergarten through 12th grade and provides a full curriculum, arts and athletic program.

Hillsdale County Intermediate Schools

Parke Hayes Administrative Building is located at 310 W. Bacon St. The first floor is committed to administrative office space and conference areas. The lower level provides space for the Early-on and special education infant/toddler programs. Intermediate School District administrative services for General and Vocation Education Programs are within the administrative building complex. The infant/toddler program provides service to children and parents including evaluation, educational instructional services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and parent educational sessions.

Renaissance School, located at the Parke Hayes Administrative Building, is an alternative educational setting for middle school students who need help with academic and behavioral issues. Opened in 2004, the school is a cooperative venture between the Hillsdale County Intermediate Schools and the local K-12 districts in Hillsdale County, and the Will Carleton Academy. Curriculum is centered on practical life experiences, and the infusion of services addressing the needs of the whole child and the family.

The mission of the school is to enrich the lives of Hillsdale County residents by providing collaboration between schools, community groups and human service providers for educational excellence in alternative programming, the advancement of the arts, and the building of strong community and family ties.

Greenfield School is located at 3710 Beck Rd. and is the County center for special educational students with severe disabilities. Transportation is provided to students throughout the County for educational programs and services located at the Beck Rd. facility including preschool (ages 2-6), moderately cognitive impaired, severely cognitive impaired, severely multiply impaired, and autistic impaired. Support services are also available for physical therapy, occupational therapy, hearing impaired, and visually impaired.

Dean Jennings Administrative Facility is located within the same complex as the Greenfield School. Special Education administrative services include the Director of Special Education and monitoring. Consultant services are provided throughout the County and located at this location as well. These services include physiological evaluation service, consultant service for students with emotional impairment, speech therapy service, visually impaired consultant services, hearing impaired consultant services, and transition services.

Hillsdale Area Career Center is located in the Hillsdale Industrial Park at 279 Industrial Drive. The facility was originally built as a manufacturing facility and was purchased in 1997 by the Intermediate School District. It was later remodeled for the present day Career & Technical Education School. Career and Technical Education programs provide 11th & 12th grade students with the opportunity to acquire skills necessary for successful career entry, advancement and/ or continuing education. These skills are transferable as well as job specific and basic to students' general education providing them with the foundation for life-long learning. Approved programs being offered for 11th & 12th grade students are, health science programs, multimedia marketing program, drafting & design technologies, construction trades program, and criminal justice program.

Colleges

Hillsdale College is a co-educational, private residential college. Founded in 1844 and chartered in 1855, it offers traditional fields of concentration, as well as a number of interdisciplinary choices. Hillsdale College offers baccalaureate degrees and one post graduate degree.

Jackson College-LeTarte Center, Hillsdale is a community college serving approximately 550 students in Hillsdale County. Jackson College offers Associate Degrees in Applied Sciences, Arts, Science and General Studies. In 2014, Jackson College launched its first Bachelor degree – Bachelor of Science in Energy Systems Management.

Hillsdale Beauty College is a school of cosmetology originally established in 1928. They offer a comprehensive program designed to help students develop the advanced skills needed to have successful careers in the challenging field of cosmetology.

Recreation

Hillsdale has nine city parks. They provide approximately 375.13 acres of space. They include Wildlife Sanctuary, Cold Springs, Keekoose, Fields of Dreams, Lo Presto Field, Stock's Park, Waterworks, Owens, and Sandy Beach. Also, there is the Baw Beese Trail, Meyer Parkway, Jim Inman Park and Slayton Arboretum. Three of these parks have access to Baw Beese Lake, which allows for water related activities. Other recreational facilities include a new pedestrian way; a portion of the system is currently in place. Asphalt paths are available from Fayette Street out to Sandy Beach which is part of the North Country Trail System. There are also two nine-hole and one 18 hole golf courses open for public use.

Fire Protection

The Hillsdale City Fire Department (HCFD) is located at 77 E. Carleton Road less than one block from City Hall. Built in 1966, the fire station is a one story building with office space, living quarters, kitchen and a dormitory for fire personnel. In addition, the station has five truck bays, two of which can be accessed from the rear of the facility.

The Fire Department is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The HCFD has two pumpers; the main engine is a 2000 Pierce with a 750 gallon water tank and a 2,000 gallon per minute pump. The Engine also carries rescue equipment which includes 'jaws of life' cutting tools and saws as well as other extrication equipment. The Engine is also equipped to State standards with Medical First Responder supplies. The reserve Engine is a 1989 E-One Pumper which is also equipped with a 750 gallon tank and a 1,250 gallon per minute pumping capacity. The HCFD also owns a 1983 Pierce Aerial vehicle. The Aerial has an 85 foot ladder with bucket and a 1,500 GPM pump. The HCFD also maintains two additional vehicles, a 1994 Ford F-350 with extended cab for wild land firefighting and a 1996 Ford Ambulance that has been converted to carry rescue equipment for Confined Space Rescue and Ice and Open Water Rescues.

The HCFD is a combination department with four fulltime fire officers consisting of a Fire Chief, Captain and two Lieutenants. The fulltime staff is complemented by 25 part-paid firefighters.

HCFD responds to an average of 750 calls for service per year. These calls include structural fires, vehicle fires and gas emergencies, (natural gas, propane or fuel spills). Service calls also include, fire alarms and vehicle accidents. The HCFD also respond to a wide variety of medical emergencies including chest pains, cardiac arrests, lacerations, and other injuries. The HCFD works with the City Code Enforcement Office and conducts over 600 various inspections per year. The HCFD works with area businesses to establish safe occupancy rating and means of egress. The staff is also active in fire safety education through fire extinguisher training for various businesses and industries. In addition to businesses, staff also hold

fire house tours along with early childhood education programs, including the 'Firefighter Phil Program', annual 'Kid's Fest' and the 'Payback for Education Program'. HCFD staff are also active with scout groups, church youth organizations and homeschool groups.

As is the case with most cities as old as Hillsdale, the building stock is vast and various. The City includes two colleges and multiple schools, public and private. The downtown includes multiple commercial and residential buildings that were built as early as the 1850s. The City also includes an Industrial Park. As the County Seat, the City is home to the County Courthouse, offices, sheriff department and jail. The City housing includes homes that date from the Victorian era to current and the various building styles can create challenges for the HCFD. In spite of the multiple challenges, the HCFD maintains a class 4 ISO rating.

Police Protection

The Police Department, located in City Hall, provides 24-hour service and manned patrols. Phone calls are answered by the Police Department and Hillsdale County Central Dispatch and dispatched to the fire, public utilities, and street department. The county provides an emergency 911 phone system. The City Police provides primary road and traffic patrol, bike patrol, conducts investigations, responds to criminal complaints, and assists with crowd control, fire calls, and special event activities.

The City Police Department maintains the highest standards of professional excellence by believing in pro-active community policing. The Department provides the community with many community-relations projects (with one being the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program).

The Department consists of 9 full-time state certified police officers: 1 Police Chief, 3 Sergeants, 1 detective, and 9 patrol officers. Also, the Department has a support staff of 1 civilian dispatcher, 1 administrative secretary, 5 school crossing guards, and 5 reserve police officers. The 4 patrol cars provide sufficient service with usually three 1-man cars on patrol.

Detainment facilities are provided by the Hillsdale County Sheriff's Department which has a jail capacity for 67 prisoners.

The Probate Court, Circuit Court of the County and District Court are all located within the City. There is currently not adequate court room space. Issues have arisen in the recent past with regard to transport, space etc. Video arraignment has helped to alleviate some of the problem.

Library

Library services, in one form or another, have been offered for nearly 125 years in the City of Hillsdale. In 1879 a group of women established a library association formed with the intention to “circulate good literature among the people of Hillsdale”. The books they collected would eventually become the foundation of the Mitchell Public Library, which opened its doors in 1908 on the corner of Manning and McCollum Street.

The Mitchell Public Library served Hillsdale for 95 years until the construction of the Hillsdale Community Library in 2003, a two million dollar state of the art library building located on the corner of Manning and Bacon Street in the Central Business District. Growing from the initial collection of 2,666 volumes, the Hillsdale Community Library collection currently stands at over 44,000 and continues to grow with books, eBooks, audiobooks and videos.

The library facility includes a dedicated space for children’s programming, a Young Adult area, expanded technology, and spacious community meeting rooms. The meeting rooms provide programming space for the library as well as space for local organizations to use for presentations and meetings.

City Hall

The Municipal Building (City Hall) is located on a triangle parcel formed by E. Carleton, N. Broad, and N. Hillsdale Streets. It contains the offices of City Manager, Zoning, Assessor, Police Department, Recreation Department, Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Director and Council Chambers. This building was constructed in 1911 as the City Hall. It is a three story, five-sided, classical revival-style building and it is listed as a contributing structure on the National Register of Historic Places.

The building was entirely rehabilitated in 1998. A total of \$1.755 million was expended to update and restore the building. The historic value of the building was preserved throughout the renovation project. The building is the only known five-sided governmental building in Michigan.

City Hall is isolated on an “island” surrounded on all sides by converging streets, making parking and accessibility a challenge. In 2006, two adjacent parking areas were completed to alleviate some of the problem: in the year 2007, M-99 was re-routed to the west side of City Hall and the eastern avenue was changed to one way traffic. This allows for some additional parking.

Health Services

Since beginning as a sanitarium in 1915 and as a hospital in 1920, Hillsdale Community Health Center (HILLSDALE HOSPITAL) has grown from a humble establishment to a state-of-the-art, 21st century healthcare facility. The Center includes 88 physician members, 32 health professionals, 47 acute care beds, 39 skilled nursing facility beds and the ten-bed Dempster W. Muffitt Center for Psychiatric Care. In March 2013, the Center opened the MacRitchie North Wing. The addition features 19 beds for the Center's Skilled Nursing Unit, while the lower level is dedicated to the hospital's Obstetrics Department.

The Hillsdale Community Health Center has continued to expand their physical plant, services, and expertise to meet the needs of the community. With a philosophy to serve the community and continually strive for excellence, HILLSDALE HOSPITAL has grown into a facility that serves Hillsdale County residents and attracts patients from many other areas. HILLSDALE HOSPITAL has a large Home Care Department, Home Oxygen and Infusion Chemotherapy Center. HILLSDALE HOSPITAL is a technologically advanced health center, utilizing a 64 slice CT scanner and magnetic resonance imaging, state-of-the-art lab equipment for in-house diagnostics, and high-tech critical care and emergency departments, a productive surgery department, including four surgical suites and an ophthalmology suite. The third floor is dedicated to the Hillsdale Center for Joint Replacement with private suites for orthopedic patients as well as a sleep lab diagnostic center.

HILLSDALE HOSPITAL has also increased their presence beyond the physical plant with home health services and the walk-in clinic located on Carleton Rd. near the Kroger Plaza.



Natural Features

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Geology, Soils, Topography

As the glaciers of the ice age melted, glacial runoff cut across the till plains and moraines forming outwash plains and glacial channels. These surface formations cover most of the City and consist of assorted glacial drift deposits including boulders, gravel, sand and clay. The soils in Hillsdale and surrounding areas are consequently mainly Fox Sandy Loam with Plainfield Loamy Sands found in the northwest corner of the City and Griffin Sandy Loam found adjacent to the St. Joseph River. Both the Fox and Plainfield series soils are well-drained and have slight to moderate limitations for building. Griffin series soils are imperfectly drained and impose severe limitations on development due to the excessive moisture present in the soils.

The present topography is moderately hilly with a downtown elevation of 1,099 feet and a City range of 1,050 feet to 1,150 feet. In general, slopes within the City range from 0-6 percent.

Lakes and Rivers

According to the Michigan Lake Inventory, there are 388 bodies of water covering approximately 4,300 acres in Hillsdale County. Several significant lakes are located within or next to the City of Hillsdale. The major body of water is Baw Beese Lake. It covers more than 400 acres. King Lake is a 30 acre lake located about one mile south of Hillsdale. Barber Lake, which is a series of shallow lakes, covers about 160 acres immediately east of the City. In addition, a 10 acre body of water known as the Mill Pond is located in Hillsdale next to the fairgrounds. There are more than 600 acres of water in close proximity of Hillsdale residents.

In addition to the lakes, St. Joseph River flows from Baw Beese Lake in a northwesterly direction through the City. Flooding that occurs from the St. Joseph River is primarily due to spring runoff or a heavy summer rainfall. The greatest daily rainfall occurred on June 26, 1978 (6.07 inches of rain).

The National Flood Insurance Program was created to provide insurance at more reasonable rates than otherwise available. The City of Hillsdale adopted flood hazard regulations and currently participates in a floodplain management program. This program makes it possible for the residents to qualify for flood insurance.

Groundwater Quality

All residences in the City have access to City water. The City has 6 wells, which are 90 to 100 feet deep. The water is taken from a glacial rift which is recharged by surface runoff and springs. The quality of the groundwater is generally good. The City operates a water treatment facility which dispenses 4 million gallons of water per day and has the capacity for 7 million gallons. The plant filters iron and other minerals from the water supply, insuring quality water for all of the City's residents. The City has entered the Michigan Wellhead Protection Program to educate the citizenry and protect the ground water supply areas.

Wellhead Protection Area

The City of Hillsdale relies exclusively on groundwater for its drinking water source. In response to the concern over safety of public water supplies, the City has instituted a Wellhead Protection Program (WHPP). WHPPs develop long-term strategies aimed at protecting community drinking water supplies. The purpose of developing a WHPP is to identify the Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA) and develop long-term strategies aimed at safeguarding the area from contamination. A WHPA is defined as the surface and subsurface areas surrounding a water well or well field, which supplies a public water system, and through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move toward and reach the water well or well field within a 10-year time-of-travel. The State of Michigan requires communities to identify seven elements to be included in the WHPP. These elements along with a brief description are below.

- **Roles and Responsibilities** – Identify individuals responsible for the development, implementation, and long-term maintenance of the local WHPP.
- **WHPA Delineation** – Determine that area which contributes groundwater to the public water supply wells.
- **Contaminant Source Inventory** – Identify known and potential sites of contamination within the WHPA and include in a contaminant source inventory list and map.
- **Management Strategies** – Provide mechanisms which will reduce the risk of existing and potential sources of contamination from reaching the public water supply wells or well field.
- **Contingency Planning** – Develop an effective contingency plan in case of a water supply emergency.
- **Siting of New Wells** – Provide information on existing groundwater availability, the ability of the City Board of Public Utilities to meet present and future demands and the vulnerability of the existing wells to contamination.
- **Public Education and Outreach** – Generate community awareness in the WHPP by focusing on public education and the dissemination of WHPP information.

It is the intent of this Master Plan to encourage protection of the City's public water supply wells through the establishment of a Wellhead Protection Zoning Ordinance. Within the ordinance, zoning regulations will limit land uses and practices that may degrade groundwater quality within and outside the WHPA.

The most significant sources of water supply contamination are landfills, surface impoundment areas, subsurface percolation from septic tanks and cesspools, open dumps, uncapped or improperly capped abandoned wells, injection wells and underground storage tanks. These uses represent both point and non-point contamination sources. Point source is the term used to describe contaminants, which originate in the immediate area of the well or tap. All of the above, if located in close proximity to the water supply source, are examples of potential point source polluters. Contaminants from these uses may seep directly down through the soil to the water source.

Non-point source contamination is much more difficult to control because the cause of the problem may actually be located a considerable distance from the well. This type of contamination is caused by pollutants that filter into an underground aquifer and then migrate slowly through the groundwater aquifer to off-site wells and water sources. Prevention of this type of contamination must involve a collective effort on the part of property owners and local officials from a large geographic area. It is the recommendation of this Plan that all existing and future wells be protected from both point and non-point source contamination to the greatest degree possible. It is also the intent of this Plan to recognize the importance of groundwater protection within the City of Hillsdale.

Urban Forestry

The City of Hillsdale has a long history of proper care and maintenance of its urban forest resource. Because of this long term dedication, the City of Hillsdale has been a Tree City USA community since 1977. With nearly 5,000 trees to maintain along its streets and within its parks, the City of Hillsdale is proud to be a member of the more than 3,400 cities nationwide that can call their city a Tree City. In order to become eligible for Tree City USA status, four standards, established by the National Arbor Day Foundation, must be met. They are:

1. A tree board or department
2. A tree care ordinance
3. A community forestry program with an annual budget of at least \$2.00 per capita
4. An Arbor Day observance and proclamation

Each quarter the Shade Tree Committee meets to discuss various tree related issues and provide input to the City Forester. In 1975 the city established its tree ordinance which became the groundwork master plan for the planting, maintenance, preservation and removal of city owned trees within the city and city parks. The intent of the ordinance is also to encourage the protection of trees, plants and shrubs to promote the city's aesthetic value. In addition, ordinances were established to seek restitution from individuals who engaged in the unauthorized removal of city owned trees or any damage thereof.

In 2010 the City of Hillsdale adopted the Public Tree Planting Program that allows interested individuals and or businesses to purchase trees for the city to be planted in the city right of ways or city parks. The program also allows for residents or businesses to donate money towards the purchase and planting of trees as well. It is the goal of the City's Forestry department to plant a minimum of twenty (20) to thirty (30) trees each spring based on the amount of funds available.

Planning Commission should consider developing a tree conservation program for private property.



Utilities and Transportation

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Utilities

The Hillsdale Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has been the municipally owned and operated provider of electric, water and wastewater services to the City of Hillsdale and the outlying areas” since 1892.

Electricity

The Hillsdale BPU is a member of the Michigan South Central Power Agency (MSCPA) which provides power to five communities in the regions. The BPU provides electric power to nearly a third of Hillsdale County's residents in the following communities:”

- City of Hillsdale
- Communities of Osseo, Pittsford and Bankers
- Townships of Adams, Cambria, Jefferson, Hillsdale, Fayette and Pittsford
- The lake areas of” Barber, Baw Beese, Bear, Bel-Air, Cub, King and Wilson

Water and Wastewater

The Hillsdale BPU serves the City with quality drinking water and environmentally safe wastewater treatment. The City's water comes from deep and abundant aquifers located near the northern city boundary. The water system is looped with high capacity mains and two large water towers. The wastewater treatment plant meets the highest standards of environmental quality and safely discharges the treated water into the St. Joseph River. A state-of-the-art iron removal and water treatment facility prepares our drinking water for potable use. Please feel free to review our annual consumer report on the quality of our tap water. Only residents and businesses located within the City of Hillsdale may be connected to the BPU's mains.

Roads and Streets

The City of Hillsdale's street system can be broken into three classifications: State trunkline, Major streets, and Local streets. There is one state trunkline, M-99, which is the primary north-south entrance into Hillsdale. M-99 extends northward from Bacon Street along N. Broad Street and Will Carleton Road towards the City of Jonesville and into Jackson County, and south of Bacon Street along S. Broad Street, then east and south towards the State of Ohio. Just east of Hillsdale, M-99 adjoins with M-34, which extends east into Lenawee County toward the City of Adrian. The City of Hillsdale maintains two one-way streets: S. Manning which flows south from Bacon St., and West St. which flows north to M-99.

Major streets facilitate traffic flow in the area and typically connect local streets to the state trunkline. Some major streets in the City include: Carleton, Bacon, Hillsdale, Mechanic, Howell, State, Spring, Galloway, Wolcott and Reading Avenue. Mechanic Street is a major route to the industrial park, which is located in the northwest section of the City. Most of the other major streets are denoted "major" because they provide an entrance to the City for visitors who live outside the City. The third category, local streets, are comprised of all other streets with access to residences, etc. The Hillsdale street system is primarily a grid system.

The City of Hillsdale uses the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) system to evaluate the condition of road segments and rank projects. The PASER system rates each segment on a scale of 1-10 with 1 being the worst condition, and 10 being the best condition (new pavement). A map of the city streets is located in the Map Appendix.

The Baw Beese Trail is a non-motorized 10 foot wide asphalt path extending from the north at the intersection of M-99 and Arch Ave. then along the St. Joseph River towards downtown Hillsdale. From there the paved trail follows the former

N.Y. Central Railroad right-of-way to the east and past the Baw Beese Lake park system. The City of Hillsdale owns the

undeveloped railroad right-of-way that extends eastward between Sandy Beach Park and terminates at the west edge of the downtown area in Osseo MI. A second 'spur' of the Baw Beese Trail, named the KeeKoose Spur, extends to the northeast past Keekoos Park from the downtown area. In the future, the hope is that these paths will be linked with other parks in the City along with others in Hillsdale County to create a continuous linear park system. (See parks/path map)

The bicycle route in the City of Hillsdale utilizes a designated curb-lane on city streets which 'loops' northward from the Baw Beese Trail between the downtown area and Hillsdale College. The streets used for this purpose include Oak St., College St. and N. Manning St. Designated bike routes could be added to M-99 to promote more bike travel between the Colleges and downtown.

Ratings: By The Numbers		
10,9,8	7,6,5	4,3,2,1
New – Very Good Preventative Maintenance	Good – Fair Rehabilitation	Poor – Failed Reconstruction
Estimated Costs \$0-\$3,000 per mile	Estimated Costs \$5,000-\$100,000 per mile	Estimated Costs \$130,000-\$500,000 per mile

Rail Transportation

The Indiana Northeastern Railroad operates Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) owned track in the City of Hillsdale and throughout Hillsdale County. This Michigan portion of the system extends from Ray, through Montgomery, Reading, Hillsdale, Jonesville and onto Coldwater. There is a branchline connection from Jonesville to Litchfield. The railroad currently serves no companies in Hillsdale, however the administrative office and some maintenance operations are housed in the city. The line provides shipment of grain, agricultural products, lumber, plastics, tallow, steel and flour. Indiana Northeastern Railroad is primarily a freight hauling railroad. A small passenger tourist operation that is based in Coldwater, Little River Railroad, does provide limited charter passenger service on the line.

Air Transportation

The Hillsdale Municipal Airport is a licensed public use/general utility airport located one mile east of the City at the intersection of State and Milnes Road. It has one 5,000 foot paved and lighted runway and is open year round. Recently, the FAA issued two new GPS based approach procedures that enable aircraft to access the airport in less than ideal weather conditions and do so at an increased safety margin. Additionally, the airport is equipped with an Automated Weather Observation Station that reports real time weather information to a display in the terminal building, to all incoming aircraft that are radio equipped and the National Weather Service.

A full parallel taxiway, new terminal building and ramp/hangar area is planned for the near future. The expansion project is on-going, with a partial taxiway and new entrance drive to be complete in 2016. Additional phases are projected through 2025. The estimated number of operations is 10,000 (take-offs/landings) per year and growing. Usage is split evenly between recreational, private and corporate operators. Commercial use is primarily freight and charter service.

Public Transportation

Hillsdale Area Dial-A-Ride, operated by the City of Hillsdale, is the only public bus service in the City. This service runs within the Hillsdale City limits and is a demand response system with curb to curb service. Hours of operation are from 7:15 - 4:15 Monday through Friday. There are four (4) lift equipped buses. Ridership in the 2014 fiscal year was 31,355, with winter months showing the highest use. School age children make up 45% of the riders; 35% are senior citizens and 20% are disabled. Dial-A-Ride is an open door provider of public transportation responsible to the residents of the City of Hillsdale. The administrative offices and garage are located in the new facility completed in 2010. The offices are located at the west end of the Manufacturing and Technology Park at 981 Development Drive.



Problem Resolution

The inventory section of this plan helps the City of Hillsdale Planning Commission identify problems which allows for effective evaluation and amendments to existing zoning ordinances. The most serious concerns, although not an exclusive list, are summarized below:

- The Land Use Plan is updated every 5 (five) years to reflect new land trends and to reflect growth management policies for certain areas of the city.
 1. The Plan's Land Use Plan map must be updated to reflect changing land use trends, brownfield redevelopment areas, new development, etc.
 2. Intergovernmental cooperation will improve relationships with surrounding townships.
- The Central Business District (CBD) must update the strategic and development plans.
 1. Programs encourage second and third floor redevelopment in the CBD.
 2. Encourage promotion and organization of events, merchants, and downtown attractions.
- Creative solutions to overnight downtown parking should be sought.
- The City continues to experience traffic flow and infrastructure problems.
 1. Walkability in and around the city should be improved.
 2. The general condition of some streets and other infrastructure such as storm water drains are deteriorating.
- The City needs new residential developments of all types.
 1. There is a need for more senior residential developments in the city.
 2. Certain residential properties and areas of the City continue to lack proper maintenance which threatens property values of surrounding properties and neighborhoods.



Goals and Objectives

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I. Long Term Goals

1. Establish vibrant corridor businesses.
2. Establish a vibrant downtown.
3. Strengthen and promote the manufacturing park.
4. Improve drivability and walkability safely within the City through the restructuring of streets and sidewalks.
5. Promote and maintain historic architecture.
6. Develop existing water and waterway access.
7. Improve utilities, including fiber optic cable.

II. Long Term Action Steps

1. Encourage efficient, clear, consistent development plan review process.
 - a. Regular update of City Master Plan (City Planning Commission)
 - b. Regular update of City Capital Improvement Plan (City Planning Commission)
 - c. Regular review and update of City ordinances (City Staff)
 - d. Promote abatement and grant programs (Assessor and Economic Development)
2. Create and strengthen relationships with County and State agencies (City Manager)
3. Promote programs to attract new development (Economic Development, TIFA)
4. Develop river, lake, and park resources
5. Develop long-range plans for infrastructure improvements (DPS, City Engineer)
6. Study transportation system (Planning, DART)
7. Improve Drivability
8. Promote Fiber optic Cable

Index
Citywide Economic Development
Improved Drivability, Walkability, and Safety
Support Neighborhood Revitalization
Promote and Maintain Historic Architecture
Develop Existing Water and Waterway Access
Improve Utilities

III. Short Term Goals

A. CITYWIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- a. Commercial Development: Encourage the development of commercial uses to support the needs of the City of Hillsdale and the surrounding area, providing convenient shopping and related services to area residents and assuring compatibility of commercial areas with residential and other areas.
 1. Goals
 - (1) Encourage clustered commercial development rather than ‘sprawl’ or strip development.
 - (2) Locate commercial establishments for access to efficient transportation systems and for the convenience of residents.
 - (3) Locate commercial uses to avoid incompatible adjacent uses.
 - (4) Encourage diversification in the type of commercial and business establishments in order to meet a greater range of citizen needs.
 - (5) Develop commercial businesses that enable residents to spend locally.
 - (6) Preserve the architectural integrity of older commercial areas as they are redeveloped and restored.
 2. Action Steps
 - (1) Utilize current tools to ensure greater green space and better landscaping.
 - (2) Review zoning ordinance safeguards to minimize the negative impacts of commercial activities on roads, adjacent land uses, and the environment.
 - (3) Evaluate the expansion of Form-Based Zoning ordinances in commercial areas.

- b. Industrial Development: Foster industrial development and redevelopment, with emphasis on the development of light, clean industry that will diversify the local economy, strengthen the City tax base, and protect the local environment from degradation.
 - 1. Goals
 - (1) Encourage commercial/residential mixed use redevelopment of abandoned industrial sites outside of industrial parks.
 - (2) Redevelop existing abandoned industrial sites.
 - (3) Support grant request for Brownfield redevelopment support and blight elimination.
 - (4) Leverage high-speed internet infrastructure to attract technology-related businesses. (EDC)
 - (5) Support start-up industries to locate in redeveloped sites. (EDC)
 - (6) Monitor and update zoning ordinances to remain current with needs and trends of industry.
 - (7) Assure industrial sites' access to major thoroughfares without disrupting secondary and tertiary roadways.
 - (8) Encourage industrial development in areas where soils are suitable, minimizing potential for groundwater contamination; favor uses that do not pollute the air, soil, water, or compromise the quality of life of residents; this includes appropriate buffering, including landscaping, of each new or expanding site.
 - (9) Promote and find technology-based companies, especially data storage.
 - 2. Action Steps
- c. Development Regions: The City has established three main development regions, each with its own characteristics and needs.
 - Vibrant M-99 Corridor Businesses
 - 1. Goals
 - (1) Encourage walkability and limit the number of automobile access points in M-99 redevelopment projects.
 - (2) Encourage a uniform streetscape and the development of attractive gateways to the community.
 - (3) Extend and develop pedestrian and bike paths
 - 2. Action Steps
 - (1) Develop Form-Based zoning to create a uniform streetscape for the Corridor.
 - (2) Extend and maintain bike lanes.

- (3) Continue Wayfinding Signs plan.
- (4) Remove Blight
- (5) Support Fairgrounds restoration
- Prosperous Industrial Park
 - a. Goals
 - (1) Encourage commercial/residential, mixed-use redevelopment of abandoned industrial sites outside of industrial parks.
 - (2) Support industrial development
 - (3) Encourage the development of light, clean industry clustered in industrial parks that will diversify the local economy, provide a stable tax base and will protect the local environment from degradation
 - (4) Redevelop existing abandoned industrial sites.
 - (5) Allow light industrial uses that provide economic benefit to the community and that do not result in negative consequences to bordering neighborhoods.
 - (6) Provide high-quality business locations with existing essential infrastructure
 - (7) Increase local employment opportunities
 - (8) Assure industrial uses have access to major thoroughfares and do not disrupt secondary and tertiary roadways.
 - (9) Encourage industrial development in areas where soils are suitable and potential for groundwater contamination is minimized.
 - b. Action Steps
 - (1) Support grant requests for Brownfield redevelopment support. – Ongoing
 - (2) Encourage industrial development to locate in well planned locations where these uses can be clustered and assure a high degree of compatibility with surrounding land uses. – Ongoing
 - (3) Encourage location of industrial uses where sufficient infrastructure can support these uses. - Ongoing
 - (4) Buffer industrial uses from residential uses. - Ongoing
 - (5) Favor uses that do not pollute the air, soil, water, or are offensive to neighboring land uses because of noise, sight, or odor. - Ongoing
 - (6) Research and write grants for blight elimination
 - (7) Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption (IFT)
 - (8) Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA)
 - (9) Leverage high-speed internet infrastructure to attract technology related businesses. (EDC)
 - (10) Support start-up businesses to locate in redeveloped sites. (EDC)
 - (11) Partner with BPU to attract new business
 - (12) Promote and find technology-based companies, especially data storage

c. Downtown Revitalization

a. Goals

- (1) Foster redevelopment and restoration of existing commercial areas
- (2) Preserve the historical character of the downtown business district centered on the architectural style most common in the area
- (3) Enhance the unique qualities of the downtown business district with flexibility in zoning and land use
- (4) Encourage redevelopment and use of second and third floors of buildings to include residential and other uses
- (5) Concentrate on redevelopment and restoration of existing commercial areas rather than promoting new commercial development in fringe or strip areas.
- (6) Preserve the historic character of the downtown business district centered on a historic theme and architectural style most common in the area.
- (7) Enhance the unique qualities of the downtown business district by creating flexibility in zoning and land use.
- (8) Encourage the redevelopment and use of second and third floor buildings in the downtown business district to include residential and other uses.
- (9) Support continued rehabilitation of the City's historic fabric
- (10) Rehabilitation and maintenance of Public and private buildings.
- (11) Encourage alternate forms of transportation
- (12) Develop resources for electric vehicles

b. Action Steps

- (1) Amend Parking Ordinance to allow more on-street overnight parking
- (2) Create bike lanes along major streets.
- (3) Install bike racks in highly visible areas
- (4) Continue and promote the TIFA façade program and restoration grants (TIFA Board)
- (5) Enforce existing code (City Code Enforcement Office)
- (6) Seek programs and grants for Blight Removal
- (7) Encourage non-profit involvement especially the arts
- (8) Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Abatement (OPRA)
- (9) Rental Rehabilitation Grants
- (10) Redevelopment Ready Communities Program (RRC)
- (11) TIFA Business incentive programs
- (12) Creation of Local Historic District

B. IMPROVED DRIVABILITY, WALKABILITY, AND SAFETY

- a. Improve Paser ratings on City streets
- b. Expand and improve walking trail facilities and security
 - 1. Install Call boxes along trail
 - 2. Expand parking facilities
- c. Reconfigure M-99 (Broad St.) to better manage traffic, support economic development and improve walkability.
 - 1. Work with MDOT to design road alterations
- d. Require sidewalks in new development projects
 - 1. Create streetscape ordinances

C. NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION:

The City of Hillsdale features a high percentage of older stock, most of it well worth preserving and rehabilitating in order to enhance the quality of life of residents and increase property values.

- a. Goals
 - 1. Support neighborhood revitalization
 - 2. Encourage a variety of new residential development that will assure safe and sanitary housing to meet the needs of existing and future residents
 - 3. Provide affordable housing for working families and senior residents
- b. Action Steps
 - 1. Adoption of form-based code and historic preservation tools.
 - 2. Consider zoning changes that better manage multi-family housing and work to preserve single-family housing where appropriate.
 - 3. Analyze & Recommend Neighborhoods for future Neighborhood Enterprise Zone (NEZ)
 - 4. Zone for appropriate mixed-use in residential neighborhoods that encourages redevelopment, walkability and small business development.
 - 5. Locate new residential development in areas where potential conflicts with incompatible land uses can be avoided.
 - 6. Amend ordinances that allow for variable density of residential uses to be mixed with commercial uses.
 - 7. Creation of Local Historic Districts
 - 8. Increase Neighborhood involvement through competition
 - 9. Research Adopt-A-Neighborhood and implement with non-profits
 - 10. Seek programs and grants for Blight Removal
 - 11. Create neighborhood pocket parks or gardens on empty lots
 - 12. Neighborhood Enterprise Zones (NEZ)
 - 13. Market Hillsdale as a great place to live

D. DEVELOP EXISTING WATER AND WATERWAY ACCESS

- a. Study potential hazards, water quality and natural features of the St. Joseph River
 - 1. Remove dam and drain Millpond
 - 2. Organize annual cleanup of trash
 - 3. Clear riverbanks of brush, invasive plants and fallen trees
- b. Evaluate existing, select parks as potential nature preserves
- c. Expand amenities in Waterworks, Owens and Sandy Beach parks
 - 1. Plant large, native species trees
 - 2. Build new indoor/outdoor facility for gatherings in Owens park
 - 3. Build storage facilities for dock renters in Owens or Sandy Beach parks
 - 4. Replace existing boat launch in Waterworks park
 - 5. Install new breakwater along park road

E. IMPROVE UTILITIES

- a. Evaluate and upgrade Electric, Water and Wastewater infrastructure
- b. Improve Storm Water control
 - 1. Create storm water ordinance
 - 2. Replace or install new storm water infrastructure in conjunction with other projects.



Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan map shown in the appendix has been developed by the Planning Commission to help carry out the goals and objectives addressed in the previous section of the plan. The plan is intended to provide the community with a set of development objectives and suggests that certain uses be encouraged in predetermined areas throughout the corporate limits.

The plan is also intended to be used in conjunction with the zoning map with zoning functioning as the tool to carry out development objectives of this plan. It is not, however, the purpose of the plan to parallel exact boundaries found on the City's zoning map. Rather, the plan is designed to be general and flexible with the ability to change as economic conditions alter land use patterns. The plan can and should serve as the basis for determining future zoning decisions. Land developers and redevelopers of parcels already built upon should be able to use the plan as a guide for finding suitable sites in appropriate locations for a proposed development.

The Land Use plan was developed after careful consideration of many factors that collectively interact to suggest areas where opportunities and needs must be addressed. Factors considered in the development of this plan are as follows:

- Existing population and population projections.
- Educational composition of the community.
- Occupation and income characteristics.
- Housing indicators.
- Economic conditions
- Existing land use patterns.
- Community services and facilities.
- Natural features.
- Transportation facilities and networks.

Consideration of these factors has led to the development of various land use classifications that can be found on the Land Use Plan map for the City of Hillsdale.

1. Low-Density Residential

Low-density residential uses are suggested for existing and proposed areas where single-family dwellings will be located on individual parcels or upon individual building envelopes in the case of single-family condominiums.

Areas suggested for low density residential development shall be encouraged to be used exclusively for singlefamily dwellings. Lots will be encouraged to be serviced by municipal water and sewer systems and paved streets although it is recognized that in some cases, where extension of these municipal services may not be feasible, that individual or a collective septic and water system may be employed with certain developments if natural features such as soils and topography are capable of supporting this type of development.

2. Moderate-Density Residential

Moderate-density residential uses are encouraged where single-family and two-family dwellings are located currently or may be built in the future. Development at higher densities will require that all new developments be supplied with municipal water and sewer and storm water systems.

3. High-Density Residential

High-density residential uses are suggested to be developed for multiple-family dwellings in areas where municipal water and sewer can be extended to the site and new developments or redevelopment will be required to connect to water and sewer services provided by the City.

4. Mixed Development

Mixed developments may include residential, office, limited commercial and under some unique circumstances may include certain types of light industrial uses particularly when the industrial use involves the adaptive reuse of an existing vacant industrial building. Areas suggested for mixed development typically are transitional areas once used for industrial near downtown or residential purposes. Changing road networks, economic conditions and surrounding land uses have caused the once predominate land use to be less desirable, frequently making resale of the properties for a residential use difficult. Mixed development areas are usually found along major streets and thoroughfares where low-impact office and commercial uses can be made compatible with surrounding industrial or residential uses. The intent of mixed development areas in the City is to subject all new development or redevelopment projects to rigorous landscape, buffering, lighting, and parking requirements in the zoning ordinance so as to blend these uses with the surrounding environment. Historic preservation of existing residential structures and conversion to another use is highly encouraged.

5. Office Use

Office uses are encouraged in areas surrounding the Central Business District. These uses include medical, legal, architectural, insurance, and other office complexes. Adaptive reuse of existing structures and residential dwellings are suggested. Historic preservation of these structures is highly encouraged.

6. Central Business District (CBD)

The CBD includes the downtown area with a high density of buildings per acre and stores dependent upon municipal parking for commercial and office patrons. Commercial uses are preferred for first floor uses while office and residential uses are allowed under certain circumstances and subject to zoning regulations as upper floor uses in the CBD.

7. Commercial

Commercial areas are designated throughout the City to provide areas for retail trade outside the CBD and offer on-site parking. Most of the commercial area is along M-99 where access to a primary arterial can be provided so as to minimize congestion of traffic.

8. Industrial

Industrial zones are reserved for existing and future industrial development of the City. Both light and heavy industry may locate in designated areas throughout the City. New industrial development is proposed in the City's Manufacturing and Technology Park. Vacant industrial structures that become available outside the industrial park will be encouraged to be reused for an industrial purpose whenever feasible. When it is not feasible for these structures to be reused for an industrial purpose, adaptive reuse to another use or multiple uses will be considered for review as a mixed development. Reuse of a vacant industrial structure or land must be made compatible in design and character with the surrounding land uses.

9. Public/Quasi-Public

Public/quasi-public areas include publicly owned buildings or land including City parks and recreational lands, libraries, schools, churches, municipally owned buildings and services, fraternal organizations, and Hillsdale College with all of its buildings and land even though it is a private institution.

10. Limited Use

Limited use areas have been designated throughout the City because natural or environmental constraints limit development. Constraints to development might include floodplains, wetlands, slope, utility or railroad right-of-ways to name a few. The designation of Limited Use does not necessarily mean that development will be prohibited. It may be necessary, however, for the City to more carefully review proposed developments and impose additional regulations in the site plan review process. This will ensure that the environment, as well as surrounding land use, is protected and measured mitigation employed when necessary.

11. Medical Care Expansion Area

The medical care expansion area is located to the south and west of the hospital. Under the policies set forth in this Plan, the existing single-family residential uses found in the Medical Care Expansion Area are encouraged to continue indefinitely. However, it is recognized that the needs of the community may be so great for additional medical care services at some time in the future that additional land may be necessary to accommodate hospital growth. The City should consider utilizing the Three Meadows area for future medical service expansion.

13. College Area

The college area encompasses the occupied areas of the college campus. The Plan recognizes that some college events such as football games, music concerts, or dramatic events do not fit within the residential parameters. The area is unique utilizing architectural design, lighting, signage, and landscaping to buffer and shield the surrounding residential areas from college activity.



Comprehensive Development Plan

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Residential Development Plan

Residential land users comprise the largest acreage of developed area in the City of Hillsdale. Existing single-family neighborhoods are scattered throughout the City with the highest concentrations found closest to the downtown district and fronting primary arterial roadways. The residential areas of the City comprise pre-war along with post-war residential subdivisions. Residential density lessens as you move away from the downtown district.

Existing vacant land near the City outskirts often lacks municipal services such as water, sewer, and paved streets which would reduce development costs for a prospective developer. In addition, some land is marginal for development due to floodplains, wetland areas, or limited access. However, vacant land is not the only alternative to growth. Redevelopment of existing vacant and blighted properties pose an exciting potential for new mixed use development that would enhance walkability and have access to city services.

The Land Use Plan suggests low density residential uses for a majority of the vacant land at the periphery of the City's corporate boundaries. Low density residential use of these parcels is consistent with existing uses that surround them. The exceptions to proposed single-family use near the city edge are high density residential uses on the east and west edges. High density use is proposed in the area around State and Wolcott on the east side of the City and on Fayette on the west side near existing multiple-family developments. New moderate-density use is proposed in the Barber/Mauck area and south of Bacon on the west side of the City.

A majority of city parcels are targeted for low density residential development by this Plan. The criteria used in targeting these parcels is availability of municipal water and sewer, paved streets, availability of utilities like gas and electric, and the lack of environmentally sensitive physical features such as wetlands and floodplains. These parcels all have ample access. Any landlocked parcel is automatically excluded for potential development.

The demand for housing in the City is expected to increase slightly over the life of this plan. A number of factors are contributing to this increased demand. As the population of the City grows, there will be a need for more housing of all types. Additionally, as the population is growing there is a trend toward a decrease in the size of the average household. Decreasing densities will put an additional strain on the existing housing stock.

Housing Plan

The dominant pre-war era housing stock gives the City of Hillsdale a distinct historic flavor. These quaint, tree-lined neighborhoods add to its quality living environment. At the same time, the overall age of the housing stock presents maintenance challenges that can become blight issues if not monitored properly.

A significant portion (65 percent) of the community's housing stock was built prior to 1940. From a planning perspective this becomes important as housing stock built prior to 1940 will be at an age where major code related updates may be necessary. In many cases, occupants of this housing stock are the original owners who are now elderly or low income and often on fixed incomes and may be financially incapable of making necessary repairs. In other cases, the housing stock has been converted to a multiple-family use while still others have been sold to first time buyers who are usually young and lack financial resources necessary for major repairs.

Other factors contribute to the increasing demand for all types of housing. The average number of persons per household in the City has been declining from approximately three (3) per household in 1980 to 2.46 at present. Consequently, an increasing population has a greater need for additional housing units than a decade ago. In addition, the population of the City is expected to continue to expand.

In consideration of these factors, combined with opportunities to meet the goals and objectives of this plan, the City of Hillsdale must continue successful programs aimed at increasing the quality and safety of existing housing and focus on new programs that will provide a measure of stability of residential neighborhoods. The City must also encourage new housing starts if it is to grow to meet the demands of a new and changing population. The following programs and/or policies are recommended:

- The City should continue with its Use and Occupancy permit inspection program to assure that existing structures are safe and decent for those occupying them.
- The City should encourage support groups to help those needing assistance with property maintenance.
- A historic preservation program including historic preservation districts should be researched and implemented if feasible in predetermined areas in the City.
- The City should continue its efforts in enforcement of the property maintenance code which prohibits or greatly restricts storage of material, equipment, and abandoned vehicles.
- The City should continue its participation in the Redevelopment Ready Communities Program as well as consider other available through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.
- The City should encourage and promote the development of the Three Meadows project, by utilizing flexible design and zoning in this area with regard to different types of residential development.
- The City should use all resources such as zoning regulations and site plan review to encourage mixed use developments.

Industrial and Commercial Development Plan

Jobs created by commercial and industrial land users make possible the survival of a community as dollars generated from employment filter down through the local economy. The continued viability of commercial and industrial sectors of the community must be encouraged and supported as a major asset to Hillsdale. However, the physical relationship of these uses to residential land use needs careful consideration to avoid or reduce undesirable nuisances.

Recent developments in internet connectivity open up a whole new sector of technology employment opportunities in Hillsdale. In 2014, Hillsdale became one of the best connected areas in the country after 72 strands of high speed optic fiber were brought to Hillsdale through the Merit REACH-3MC project. This project helped construct additional fiber-optic infrastructure providing increased redundancy and internet performance. A 40 Gbps direct connection between Chicago and Ann Arbor provides a high-capacity redundant path to the major internet connection points east and west. The final Merit upgrade is a 40 Gbps path between Hillsdale and Lansing. In addition, Hillsdale has a 96 strand fiber-optic connection south to Ohio through the Oarnet fiber network. There are now four 10 Gbps fiber pathways in and out of Hillsdale, thereby creating four way redundancy allowing equally fast upload and download speeds.

The recent fiber upgrades enables the City of Hillsdale to host jobs in the technology sector. In response, the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) changed the name of the Hillsdale Industrial Park to the Hillsdale Manufacturing and Technology Park to acknowledge the possibility of attracting high tech firms to Hillsdale. The Hillsdale Planning Commission has adopted a 165 acre Technology Overlay District (TOD) in the Hillsdale Manufacturing and Technology Park to allow protection for the technology companies that locate in the park. The TOD would require berms, landscaping and distance between the traditional light industrial uses in the park and any new technology companies.

Finally, the availability of high speed internet connections, even into residential areas, will allow for much more home-based technology employment. The Planning Commission and City Council should work to align city ordinances to allow for home –based employment in the technology sector.

In conclusion, the City of Hillsdale continues to encourage new Industrial and Commercial development through the following strategies:

- actively seek out technology firms to locate in the Hillsdale Manufacturing and Technology Park
- actively advertise the fiber connectivity available in Hillsdale to high tech manufacturing firms which depend on high speed internet connections
- review and revise City ordinances to allow and encourage home based technology employment

Downtown Development Plan

Central Business Districts (CBD) across the country have experienced serious difficulties remaining viable. A number of reasons have contributed to the decline of the CBD including the lure of larger vacant parcels on the outskirts of municipalities: the ability to construct large stores and pedestrian malls on these large parcels; convenient parking; on-line shopping “The Amazon.com Syndrome”; etc.

The CBD of Hillsdale remains a viable commercial presence in the community in spite of ongoing commercial development along the M-99 Corridor. Like other municipalities, the City of Hillsdale CBD continues to look for new ideas that will attract new businesses. Currently, the CBD boasts a variety of commercial establishments and services including banks, stores, restaurants, and specialty shops. The CBD remains viable due to the diversity of shops which offer retail goods not found in other commercial areas outside the downtown area.

Much of the City of Hillsdale CBD is on the National Register of Historic Places. Many of the structures in the CBD are contributing historic structures. The age and varied building styles present maintenance challenges, however the Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA) district offers a Façade Rehabilitation Grant. The Rental Rehabilitation Program from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) and the Redevelopment Ready Communities Program from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) are just a few of the programs available to help downtown building owners in rehabilitating their aging buildings.

Existing Downtown Conditions

Land and Building Use — Land uses in the CBD include commercial and residential. The buildings in the CBD have varying levels of occupancy. Ground floors are reserved for commercial or office space only. The upper floors may be residential in addition to commercial and office. Many of the upper floor space available is underutilized due to the need for maintenance and code-related upgrades.

Upper floors should be viewed as potential expansion to the CBD. These spaces are untapped resources that could be attractive to developers. Various programs are available to aid in the reclamation of these spaces. Various programs also exist to aid in the upgrade and maintenance of building facades and roofs.

Walkability — The rerouting of M-99 through the downtown and the various one-way streets make circulation within the CBD awkward and unfriendly to visitors.

Vehicular circulation through the CBD should be addressed from both a walkability and economic development perspective. In 2007, MDOT re-routed truck traffic through the middle of the CBD, increasing truck traffic along Broad Street and effectively giving the impression of a bifurcated downtown. Hillsdale Street is one-way in the north direction adjacent to City Hall. North Manning Street is one-way in the south direction between Bacon and Hallet streets. North West Street is one-way in the north direction between Bacon and Carleton streets. A walkability study should be performed to document the issues and create an implementation plan to correct them. MEDC has expressed a willingness to work with the City and MDOT to resolve some of the circulation issues.

Signage — Signs convey information to people. The City is in need of uniform, concise signage throughout to help direct visitors to the downtown, colleges and services. Organizations have expressed interest in helping fund the new signage. The City's ordinance is a tool which can be effectively used to coordinate signage in the CBD. Improved signage helps balance the visual order of the urban environment, improves the historic character and makes it easier for visitors who travel the CBD.

Signs, including business and advertising signs, need to complement the character or unified image that the CBD is trying to project. Signs that are too large, too bright, too modern or do not contribute to a harmonious theme should be discouraged or limited. Business signage should be regulated so that it contributes to the overall theme such as hand painted or stenciled lettering on glass, above doors, or on awnings.

Entry Markers — Entry markers can be used to welcome visitors to the downtown. These markers could be constructed of a material that would be in character with a theme developed for the downtown (i.e. brick, wrought iron, etc.).

Informational signage, such as those which might direct traffic to public parking areas could also be designed in character with a theme developed for the downtown. Street names could be attached to building corners for convenience and again in character with a theme. Entry markers are also widely used by communities to notify people that they have entered a municipality's jurisdiction. They give the community identity and mark territorial boundaries. They may also express a slogan or the community's pride such as community organizations or school accomplishments.

Economic

- Encourage a mix of retail business as the primary use of first floor buildings. Secondly, encourage office use of first floors in areas where the demand for retail space is lower, such as on secondary streets and at the periphery of the CBD.
- Encourage an adaptive reuse of vacant second and third floor space for office or residential purposes.
- Support the Hillsdale Business Association and coordinate activities with the Chamber of Commerce.
- Pursue tenants for vacant and underutilized structures.
- Conduct a market study to determine the demand for various types of retail businesses not found in the CBD.

Aesthetics

- Develop a unified theme to provide an image for development and redevelopment efforts.
- Research the feasibility and community interest in creating an historic preservation district in the CBD.
- Improve signage in the CBD centered on a unified theme.
- Explore zoning regulations that would prohibit the covering or alteration of historic facades.
- Protect mature trees whenever possible.

Circulation and Parking

- Continue to provide safe efficient flow of automobile traffic while discouraging truck traffic in the downtown area.
- Provide sidewalks that are well maintained and convenient for downtown shoppers.
- Continue to provide free municipal parking for specified periods.
- Facilitate the re-routing of M-99 along with new prospective parking, streetscape and traffic flow.
- Remove one-way streets within the City. Recreate a direct entrance into downtown Hillsdale along Hillsdale Street and West Street.
- Re-create the intersection of North Street and North Broad to allow North Street to cross North Broad.
- Redevelop and expand Ferris Street parking lot to increase parking and create an attractive transition to the North Broad businesses and apartments.

Streetscape Improvements

The majority of people traveling to and from the CBD will arrive in a vehicle. They will enter the downtown from any number of routes. The first impression of a City often begins at the street level.

North Howell and North Broad are the most prominent streets in the central business district with many businesses having frontage along these streets. Secondary streets include North, McCollum, East Bacon, and Waldron. In addition, alleys running parallel between North Howell and South Manning provide access to municipal parking lots.

Primary streetscape improvements should continue along North Howell and include street furniture such as benches and trash receptacles that are compatible with the downtown theme. Other improvements might include brick pavers at intersection crossings, "knuckles" at side street intersections, additional trees and tree guards.

The alleyways that run parallel to North Howell and South Manning are important considerations for any streetscape plan. These alleys are highly visible to vehicular and pedestrian traffic since municipal parking is so readily available in this area and many of the North Howell businesses have rear entrances. Therefore, pedestrian lighting, brick pavers, and greenery in this area will considerably improve the appearance. Additional landscaping, including green islands in the municipal parking lots, would benefit the overall image of the rear entrance areas.

The lack of an intersection at North Street and North Broad Street (M-99) in downtown Hillsdale is a hindrance to walkability and easy access to our downtown. One can see the shops across the street, but neither the driver nor the walker can legally cross North Broad (M-99) at North Street to get there. The driver is forced to turn around to find an alternate crossing, the closest being McCollum Street to the south.

Due to the lack of a crosswalk at North Street and North Broad, the Post Office and City Hall become pedestrian and vehicular islands. In order to access downtown from the Post Office and City Hall, you must walk a long block south which discourages the shopper from one entire City block of shops on Howell Street, or the walker can walk north one block to cross at the stop light at Carleton Road which crosses an extra wide, diagonal corner that is especially dangerous even with the light.

A traffic and walkability study should be done to analyze this problematic traffic pattern. Hillsdale Street and N. West Streets should be opened to two way traffic in order to welcome and allow visitors, faculty, staff and students from Hillsdale College to enter downtown Hillsdale. North Street should also be opened to traffic crossing North Broad (M-99).

Building Facades

The most valuable resource the City of Hillsdale central business district possesses is its vast number of historically significant structures. The facades are relatively untouched from their original architecture. This is not universally true as some facades in the CBD have been altered or reconstructed due to fire, vandalism, or energy conservation needs. In other cases, it may be necessary to demolish an entire structure because it is no longer economically viable or poses a safety risk to the public. In most cases, it is possible to restore or redesign either a facade or an entire building in character with the surrounding CBD.

Accomplishing this unified architectural appearance in downtown building facades will require an aggressive approach by City officials in setting public policy and subsequently zoning regulations that will spell out specifically what an individual may do or not do with their building facade. This type of zoning is referred to as Form-based zoning and is prevalent in the new Placemaking movement.

Another approach might be to create a governing body that would deal specifically with historic preservation efforts of the City. In many communities this preservation commission is comprised of architects, historians, surveyors, planners, city officials, and residents in some combination. These historic preservation commissions are permitted and have authority by statute under Act 169, Public Acts of Michigan, 1970 and is commonly referred to as the Historic Districts, Sites, and Structures Act. The purpose of the Act is stated below and discussed in more detail in the following section:

Safeguard the heritage of the local unit by preserving a district in the local unit which reflects elements of the unit's cultural, social, economic, political, or architectural history.

Stabilize and improve property values in that district. Foster civic beauty.

Strengthen the local economy.

Promote the use of historic districts for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the citizens of the local unit and of the state.

Tax Incremental Finance Authority

Hillsdale's Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA) has done many things to improve and increase the downtown area's viability. By law (PA 450 of 1980), TIFA districts may undertake the following tasks:

- Prepare and analyze economic change in the downtown district.
- Study and analyze the impact of urban growth in the downtown district.
- Plan and propose the construction, restoration or preservation of a public facility, building, etc. which will promote economic growth.
- Implement any plan of development in the district necessary to achieve the objectives of the Act.
- Acquire or dispose of property.
- Improve land and buildings.
- Lease and collect fees for use of any building or property under its control.
- Lease any building under its control.
- Accept grants, donations, etc. from public or private sources.

The purpose of the Act is to halt property value deterioration, increase property tax valuation, to eliminate deterioration, and promote economic growth. Communities have been successfully using incremental financing to improve the business climate of their downtowns since 1975. A variety of programs have been initiated by finance authorities, many of which use tax increment financing (TIF) to help fund public improvements. The use of TIF funds are permitted for public improvement projects the City is presently using under the Tax Increment Finance Authority Act 450 (TIFA).

The basic premise behind tax increment financing under Act 450 is that public investment in public improvement projects will improve the overall economic condition in a downtown district and result in private investment which would otherwise not have occurred without public investments. The Act requires that a development plan and tax increment finance plan first be developed before capturing TIF revenue. Once these plans are adopted, the City may capture tax increments that result from an increase in property tax valuation above and beyond a base year when valuations are frozen at that base and use the TIF revenue for public projects identified in the development plan.

The City established the TIFA in 1997. The board has overseen various projects that helped establish new viable businesses downtown. These businesses, in turn, rehabilitated properties within the TIFA district. The TIFA currently oversees a Façade Grant, Downtown Beautification and Restaurant Attraction Program. They are currently working on establishing a Business Attraction Program.

*Capture history available in the appendix

Mixed Development Plan

Mixed developments are land uses that may include a variety of land use types on an individual parcel or within a particular development area such as single-family, multiple-family, office, and low-impact commercial uses. They are intended to preserve the historic character of the community particularly, although not exclusively, around the CBD. In most cases, mixed developments will be encouraged in "transition" areas where residential uses which were once predominate are now less desirable for that purpose, but are useful structures for other types of use. In some cases economic conditions and surrounding land uses have changed in an area making reuse of a structure less desirable for residential purposes. In other cases road networks or transportation patterns change making existing dwellings very attractive for office or low impact commercial purposes. In still other cases, the existing land uses are already mixed and it's the City's intention to encourage a further mix in land use types.

Limited Development Area Plan

Within the City of Hillsdale are lands which, because of natural and man-made constraints are difficult to develop. Physical constraints to development are generally present on those lands that are environmentally sensitive to encroachment by man.

Wetlands are identified by the presence of water-loving vegetation; hydric soils, and saturated or seasonably flooded substrata. They function as natural water filters treating surface water as it recharges aquifers below. They also function as a mechanism for erosion control and provide habitat for fish and wildlife. Finally, they have recreation potential for bird watching, nature study, and other educational opportunities. Protecting these resources by encouraging development away from wetlands is a goal of this plan. It may be necessary to provide zoning that is flexible enough for a potential developer to build around these environmentally sensitive areas by increasing densities in other areas more conducive to development: a tradeoff for preserving existing wetlands. This could be accomplished through new zoning regulations. Floodplains are another type of environmentally sensitive land. They are nearly level alluvial plains that border a stream or wetland and are subject to flooding unless artificially protected. A "50 year floodplain" is one which could be expected to flood on an average of once in 50 years. Some floodplains flood annually while others only periodically. Development in floodplain areas magnify the flooding potential because a house, for example, displaces space which would otherwise accommodate flood water. The presence of seasonal water threatens both property and lives. The community has an obligation to limit the amount and type of development that takes place in a floodway area. This plan recognizes the need to limit development in the floodplain areas and suggests a limited use for these areas.

Soils also play a role in the ability of a parcel to handle a particular type of development. Some soils have severe and moderate limitations such as excessive slopes, high water tables, instability and ponding. Engineering techniques exist that may overcome some limitations. Development on soils with severe limitations can result in basements that flood or

foundations that crack. These become community problems when property owners request the City to provide drainage on ponding soil or municipal sewer to the site when septic systems fail. Discouraging intensive development on soils with severe limitations before it occurs is in accordance with the development goals of this plan.

A soil survey has been completed for the City by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. The Planning Commission should use the publication extensively when reviewing development requests.

Zoning is the tool most frequently used in regulating land uses in environmentally sensitive areas. The Planning Commission has created a Parks & Recreational Facilities (PRF) district which will protect natural resources from unnecessary encroachment when encroachment will result in social, biological or economic harm to the community or the land surrounding a proposed development project.

Other areas in the City have limited development potential but unlike the environmental constraints that have been present for centuries, man-made barriers have resulted in areas that have marginal potential for development. These areas are designated on the Land Use plan map for limited use because of access problems such as being landlocked, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, abandoned landfills or abandoned mining operations. These man-made obstacles do not necessarily mean that an intensive development will not be allowed; rather the designation of “limited use” simply acknowledges that the Planning Commission recognizes it will be difficult for a use other than the current use to be expected at these sites. When a change in use does occur, this plan suggests that it be a use compatible with surrounding uses and under no circumstances a more intensive use than surround area.

Recreation Action Plan

An inventory of existing recreational facilities made available to the community by the City reveals a variety of recreational activities, (baseball/softball, soccer, fishing, swimming, boating, nature education, family reunions/weddings, concerts, disc golf, cycling, walking/running, basketball and volleyball). The City of Hillsdale boasts seven parks, each offering any number of these activities. Due to a rich history behind their creation, there is added historical value as well. In addition, the City maintains 7.5 miles of paved bike path for cyclists, runners, walkers, and skaters. The City works in collaboration with the Hillsdale Community Schools to share facilities throughout the year. Youth and adult basketball leagues, volleyball leagues, baseball, football and soccer are some examples of those activities in which the two entities share facilities. Davis Middle School and Hillsdale High School host Hillsdale Recreation in the youth tackle football league and youth/adult basketball and volleyball leagues during the winter months. The City owned facility, Fields of Dreams, is home field for the high school boys' and girls' soccer in the spring and fall and makes the baseball fields available for pick-up games and an annual fundraising tournament. Fields of Dreams also hosts Central Michigan Soccer Association (CMSA) for its spring and fall club soccer leagues. Sand volleyball courts at Sandy Beach provide practice sites for high school, college and local women's sand volleyball leagues. Owen Memorial Park is used by the high school, academy and college for cross country training and competition and has become a popular venue for community fundraising events.

Facility programming is done through the City Recreation Department and regular maintenance of the parks is carried out by the Department of Public Services. The two departments communicate the needs of each park as well as share ideas for upgrades. Suggestions by the public are well received and considered. A five year Joint Recreation Plan recognizes the need for recreational facilities and places emphasis on improvement to the existing facilities rather than the creation of new. The City has been able to fulfill many of these improvement projects by partnering with local service groups, grant funding and the generosity of its citizens through donations and volunteerism.

The renovation of Mrs. Stock's Park was the first of these partnership efforts beginning eleven years ago. The renovation of this downtown park continues today and future plans are still in the making. This project began with a City Council appointed committee and the Hillsdale Garden Club. Mrs. Stock's Park has grown from an unkempt eyesore to the winner of five national gardening awards. The park hosts a series of summer concerts, weddings, family gatherings and picnics. Through collaborative efforts of the City, donations from the community, Hillsdale Garden Club and grants from the Hillsdale County Community Foundation, Mrs. Stock's Park Committee continues to move toward realizing its vision. With the pond now in good condition, a powered pavilion constructed, new wrought-iron fencing, beautiful gardens in place and an irrigation system to maintain them, improvements continue. Plans are underway for lighting throughout the park, a memorial garden and plumbed restrooms.

Once a local hot spot, Sandy Beach had fallen into extreme disrepair due to severe budget constraints. In 2009, Hillsdale Rotary Club presented the City with a plan to revitalize Sandy Beach. The project will be completed in five phases, four of which have been completed to date. Improvements to the park have included renovation of the bath house/concession building, complete excavation of the beach, newly poured walkways, new ADA certified play equipment, a docking system and a new septic system installed by the City. The final phase, to begin in the spring of 2015, provides for the addition of a basketball court, an upgrade to the sand volleyball courts and parking lot improvements.

The local Kiwanis Club has, within the past year, adopted Cold Springs Park for major renovation. This project, while not mentioned in the current Joint Recreation Plan, is worthy of mentioning not only because of the enormity of renovation, but because of the extent of collaboration. This project will involve the City of Hillsdale, Kiwanis Club, Michigan State University, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), and Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) as well as a plethora of community volunteerism. Not only does this project involve restoring the original site back to a healthy, thriving state, but an expansion of the park through the purchase of adjacent property. Kiwanis plans to partner with the high school in order to restore the adjacent school owned woodlot property in an effort to tie it into the park. The project is in the planning stage, but Kiwanis is hopeful to break ground in 2016 with a ten year projection for completion.

Fields of Dreams is a facility originally developed in a collaboration with the Army Corps of Engineers. Funding for improvements to the facility has come from an endowment under the administration of the Hillsdale County Community Foundation, private donations, tournament fundraisers run by the Recreation Department, Hillsdale Youth Baseball

Charity Fund and the Ladies Beautification League. The last of six dugouts were installed in the summer of 2014. Other improvements have included resurfacing of three baseball diamonds, purchase of new bleachers and refurbishment of existing structures, pouring of cement slabs under bleachers and a community paint mural provided for by the Ladies Beautification League and other concession stand improvements. A new project funded by memorials left by two local families, concessions revenues and tournament revenues and a grant from the Hillsdale County Community Foundation is slated to be completed in the spring of 2015. This project is for custom seating fabricated by a local tradesman, cement walkway two shade trees, and a lighted flagpole. Epoxy coating on the plumbed restroom floors is scheduled to be done as well.

The City should take advantage of its location on the headwaters of the St. Joseph River. As property becomes available, the City should attempt to gain possession to incorporate into its park system and/or encourage private development of river front property into recreational uses such as canoe liveries or fishing docks. Alternatively, river front property should be encouraged to be developed privately in a way that takes advantage of its water-front asset for dining, residential views, and park-like setting.

The City should take advantage of its position on the North Country Trail to maximize the use and availability of its trail system, most notably the 70 mile portion of the Baw Beese Trail. The trails should be better signed and advertised to make it accessible to outsiders. Wayfinding Signs should clearly mark the Trail head and access points along with delineating a clear route to the downtown and other shopping and eating areas in the City.

Transportation and Circulation Plan

Street and Traffic Analysis

Walkability — the rerouting of M-99 through the downtown and the various one-way streets make circulation within the CBD awkward and unfriendly to visitors.

Vehicular circulation through the CBD should be addressed from both a walkability and economic development perspective. In 2007, MDOT re-routed truck traffic through the middle of the CBD, increasing truck traffic along Broad Street and effectively giving the impression of a bifurcated downtown. Hillsdale Street is one-way in the north direction adjacent to City Hall. North Manning Street is one-way in the south direction between Bacon and Hallet streets. North West Street is one-way in the north direction between Bacon and Carleton streets. A walkability study should be performed to document the issues and create an implementation plan to correct them. MEDC has expressed a willingness to work with the City and MDOT to resolve some of the circulation issues.

Circulation and Parking

- Continue to provide safe efficient flow of automobile traffic while discouraging truck traffic in the downtown area.
- Provide sidewalks that are well maintained and convenient for downtown shoppers.
- Continue to provide free municipal parking for specified periods.
- Facilitate the re-routing of M-99 along with new prospective parking, streetscape and traffic flow.
- Remove one-way streets within the City. Recreate a direct entrance into downtown Hillsdale along Hillsdale Street and West Street.
- Re-create the intersection of North Street and North Broad to allow North Street to cross North Broad.
- Redevelop and expand Ferris Street parking lot to increase parking and create an attractive transition to the North Broad businesses and apartments.



Plan Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan developed by the Planning Commission will be of value only if put into use by local officials and City residents. In order for this plan to be effective, it has to be implemented. Implementation can take the form of additional study or planning, adoption of a zoning ordinance or amendments, creation of new general ordinances and capital improvements planning. The zoning ordinance is the most common tool used for plan implementation. The zoning ordinance puts into law the policies set forth in the Land Use Plan. The plan has identified a number of problems and deficiencies in the current zoning ordinance that will require revisions or amendments.

The plan has also identified areas that may need further study and planning. Community planning involves much more than reviewing proposed development plans and zoning related matters. It also involves grasping abstract concepts and developing visions of how a community should look in the future. The future extends beyond the life of any one individual of the community. Community planning requires that we consider the impact of all decisions on future generations. Therefore, this plan is only the beginning and will require additional study to implement all programs and policies which are recommended. Some projects or policies identified in the plan can be implemented with little capital expenditure. Other programs may require substantial capital outlay. There is also a need to consider the priority that each project should receive so that a systematic approach can be employed to help resolve issues identified in the plan.

Capital improvements programming is the orderly process of developing a comprehensive financial plan to accomplish needed public improvement projects in a community. The program is designed to be a balanced and coordinated approach that aligns the public improvement needs of the City with the financial capabilities necessary to implement the desired projects. Capital improvements programming provides several advantages to the community. Through it, public improvement projects can be determined and priorities assessed in a coordinated long-range plan. In the same manner, the financial resources which are necessary can be anticipated.

A capital improvements program also allows the City adequate time for the planning and engineering of projects. In the same manner, the capital improvements program helps the City anticipate the timing and application for Federal and State grants necessary for the financing of projects.

Finally, capital improvements programming allows local citizens the opportunity to participate and provide input into the community's public improvement needs.

Because capital improvements usually involve large capital expenditures, they can rarely be financed solely out of the local revenue alone. A number of financing methods have been developed to assist localities in financing costly, multi-year projects. Financing methods include generation of current revenue (e.g. user fees, general taxation), reserve funds, bonds, special district authorities, special assessments, state and federal grants, tax increment financing, and impact fees.

The Comprehensive Plan has identified a number of projects worthy of being funded. The following tables identify these projects and list possible funding sources for the projects at all levels of government. The table also lists the parties which are responsible for carrying out the implementation of the projects.

Residential Development

Project	Possible Funding Sources	Implementation Responsibilities	Planning Commission Priority
Continue Use and Occupancy Inspection Program	General Fund, Permit Fees	City of Hillsdale	High
Assist Low to Moderate Income Residents to Maintain Homes	CDBG, MSHDA, FHA Low-Interest Loans	City of Hillsdale, Homeowners	High
Help Senior Citizens Improve the Condition of their Homes	MSHDA, HUD 202 (Elderly Housing), Private Funding Sources, Volunteers	City of Hillsdale, Homeowners	High
Protect and Improve Existing Single-Family Housing Stock	MSHDA, Private Funding Sources	City of Hillsdale, Homeowners	High
Assist in the Planning and Development of Three Meadows residential neighborhood	General Fund, NEZ Low-Interest Loans, Private Funding Sources	City of Hillsdale Homeowners	High
Assist in the Planning and Development of a Retirement Community and Senior Housing	Private Funding Sources	City and County of Hillsdale, Senior Center, Homeowners	Medium
Evaluate Side Street Parking in Certain Areas of the City	County Millage, MSHDA, Tax Credit Investment	City of Hillsdale	High

Commercial Development

Project	Possible Funding Sources	Implementation Responsibilities	Planning Commission Priority
Pursue Tenants for Underutilized Buildings	TIFA, MSHDA, Private Funding Sources	MEDC, TIFA	High
Support Facade Improvements in CBD	MEDC, MSHDA, Low Interest Loans, TIFA	TIFA	Medium
Create a Detailed Development Plan for the CBD	TIFA	TIFA	Medium
Assist redevelopment of the Keefer House	TIFA, Private Funding Sources, MEDC	City of Hillsdale	Medium
Streetscape Improvements in the CBD	General Fund, MDOT, TIF, Private Funding Sources	City of Hillsdale	Medium
Encourage Commercial Development along M-99 where there are Existing Commercial Establishments	Special Assessments, EDC, MEDC, MDOT	City of Hillsdale	Medium
Encourage Commercial Location within the City	Special Assessments, EDC	TIFA, Service Groups	High
Encourage bike traffic by creating bike lanes and installing bike racks	MEDC, MDOT	TIFA, City of Hillsdale	Medium
Install City Wayfinding Signage	Hillsdale College, MEDC	North Country Trail	Medium
Install Baw Beese Trail Wayfinding Signage	City of Hillsdale	Assoc. - Chief Baw Beese Chapter	Medium
Encourage New Industrial Development within the City's Industrial Park	Michigan Department of Commerce, private funding sources, special assessments, tax abatements	EDC	High
Work with Industrial Developers to Expand Existing Industries	Michigan Department of Commerce, special assessments	City of Hillsdale	High
Re-certify Manufacturing Park	EDC	EDC	Medium
Attract High Technology Companies	EDC	City of Hillsdale, EDC	Medium
Attract Remote Workers	Office of Economic Development	City of Hillsdale	Medium



State and Federal Statutes

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A number of state and federal legislative acts impact local planning efforts in the City of Hillsdale. Some legislation is intended to have a regulatory effect on municipalities while others provide a mechanism to initiate planning programs. Those pieces of legislation having the greatest impact on a community are outlined below:

Michigan Statutes

- **Inter municipality Committees (PA 200 of 1957, MCL 123.631-123.637)** — An act “to provide for the creation by 2 or more municipalities of an inter municipality committee for the purpose of studying area problems; and to provide authority for the committee to receive gifts and grants.”
- **Intergovernmental Contracts Between Municipal Corporations (PA 35 of 1951, MCL 124.1-124.131)** — an act “to authorize intergovernmental contracts between municipal corporations; to authorize any municipal corporation to contract with any person or any municipal corporation to furnish any lawful municipal service to property outside the corporate limits of the first municipal corporation for a consideration; to prescribe certain penalties; to authorize contracts between municipal corporations and with certain nonprofit public transportation corporations to form group self-insurance pools; and to prescribe conditions for the performance of those contracts.”
- **Land Transfer Act (PA 425 of 1984, MCL 124.21-124.30)** — An act “to permit the conditional transfer of property by contract between certain local units of government; to provide for permissive and mandatory provisions in the contract; to provide for certain conditions upon termination, expiration, or nonrenewal of the contract; and to prescribe penalties and provide remedies.”
- **Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008, MCL 125.3810-125.3885)** — An act “to codify the laws regarding and to provide for county, township, city, and village planning; to provide for the creation, organization, powers, and duties of local planning commissions; to provide for the powers and duties of certain state and local governmental officers and agencies; to provide for the regulation and subdivision of land; and to repeal acts and parts of acts.” An act “to provide for city, village and municipal planning; the creation, organization, powers and duties of planning commissions; the regulation and subdivision of land; and to provide penalties for violation of the provisions of this act.” Please note that the Michigan Planning Enabling Act replaces the Municipal Planning Act (PA 285 of 1931, MCL 125.31-125.45), effective September 1, 2008.
- **Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (PA 110 of 2006, MCL 125.3101-125.3702)** — An act “to codify the laws regarding local units of government regulating the development and use of land; to provide for the adoption of zoning ordinances; to provide for the establishment in counties, townships, cities, and villages of zoning districts; to

prescribe the powers and duties of certain officials; to provide for the assessment and collection of fees; to authorize the issuance of bonds and notes; to prescribe penalties and provide remedies; and to repeal acts and parts of acts.” Please note that the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act replaces the City and Village Zoning Act (PA 207 of 1921, MCL 125.581-125.600), effective July 1, 2006.

- **The Mobile Home Commission Act (PA 96 of 1987, MCL 125.2301-125.2350)** — An act “to create a mobile home commission; to prescribe its powers and duties and those of local governments; to provide for a mobile home code and the licensure, regulation, construction, operation, and management of mobile home parks, the licensure and regulation of retail sales dealers, warranties of mobile homes, and service practices of dealers; to provide for the titling of mobile homes; to prescribe the powers and duties of certain agencies and departments; to provide remedies and penalties; to declare the act to be remedial; to repeal this act on a specific date; and to repeal certain acts and parts of acts”.
- **Control of Junkyards Adjacent to Highways Act (PA 219 of 1966, MCL 252.201-252.211)** — An act “to regulate junkyards and to provide penalties.”
- **Highway Advertising Act (PA 106 of 1972, MCL 252.301-252.325)** — An act “to provide for the licensing, regulation, control, and prohibition of outdoor advertising adjacent to certain streets and highways; to prescribe powers and duties of certain state agencies and officials; to promulgate rules; to provide remedies and prescribe penalties for violations; and to repeal acts and parts of acts.”
- **Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (PA 451 of 1994, MCL 324.101-324.90106)** — An act “to protect the environment and natural resources of the state; to codify, revise, consolidate, and classify laws relating to the environment and natural resources of the state; to regulate the discharge of certain substances into the environment; to regulate the use of certain lands, waters, and other natural resources of the state; to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state and local agencies and officials; to provide for certain charges, fees, assessments, and donations; to provide certain appropriations; to prescribe penalties and provide remedies; and to repeal acts and parts of acts.”
- **Local Historic Districts Act (PA 169 of 1970, MCL 399.201-399.215)** — An act “to provide for the establishment of historic districts; to provide for the acquisition of certain resources for historic preservation purposes; to provide for preservation of historic and nonhistoric resources within historic districts; to provide for the establishment of historic district commissions; to provide for the maintenance of publicly owned resources by local units; to provide for certain assessments under certain circumstances; to provide for procedures; and to provide for remedies and penalties.”

- **Condominium Act (PA 59 of 1978, MCL 559.101-559.276)** — An Act “relative to condominiums and condominium projects; to prescribe powers and duties of the administrator; to provide certain protections for certain tenants, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities relating to conversion condominium projects; to provide for escrow arrangements; to provide an exemption from certain property tax increases; to impose duties on certain state departments; to prescribe remedies and penalties; and to repeal acts and parts of acts.”
- **Land Division Act (PA 288 of 1967, MCL 560.101-560.293)** — An act “to regulate the division of land; to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare; to further the orderly layout and use of land; to require that the land be suitable for building sites and public improvements and that there be adequate drainage of the land; to provide for proper ingress and egress to lots and parcels; to promote proper surveying and monumenting of land subdivided and conveyed by accurate legal descriptions; to provide for the approvals to be obtained prior to the recording and filing of plats and other land divisions; to provide for the establishment of special assessment districts and for the imposition of special assessments to defray the cost of the operation and maintenance of retention basins for land within a final plat; to establish the procedure for vacating, correcting, and revising plats; to control residential building development within floodplain areas; to provide for reserving easements for utilities in vacated streets and alleys; to provide for the filing of amended plats; to provide for the making of assessors plats; to provide penalties for the violation of the provisions of this act; to repeal certain parts of this act on specific dates; and to repeal acts and parts of acts.”
- **Downtown Development Authority (PA 197 of 1975, MCL 125.1651-125.1618)** — An act “to provide for the establishment of a downtown development authority; to prescribe its powers and duties; to correct and prevent deterioration in business districts; to encourage historic preservation; to authorize the acquisition and disposal of interests in real and personal property; to authorize the creation and implementation of development plans in the districts; to promote the economic growth of the districts; to create a board; to prescribe its powers and duties; to authorize the levy and collection of taxes; to authorize the issuance of bonds and other evidences of indebtedness; to authorize the use of tax increment financing; to reimburse downtown development authorities for certain losses of tax increment revenues; and to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state officials.”
- **Local Development Finance Authorities (PA 281 of 1986, MCL 125.2151-125.2174)** — An act “to encourage local development to prevent conditions of unemployment and promote economic growth; to provide for the establishment of local development finance authorities and to prescribe their powers and duties; to provide for the creation of a board to govern an authority and to prescribe its powers and duties; to provide for the creation and implementation of development plans; to authorize the acquisition and disposal of interests in real and

personal property; to permit the issuance of bonds and other evidences of indebtedness by an authority; to prescribe powers and duties of certain public entities and state officers and agencies; to reimburse authorities for certain losses of tax increment revenues; and to authorize and permit the use of tax increment financing.”

Federal Statutes

- **National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Title 42, Chapter 55, Sec. 4321)** — “The purposes of this chapter are: to declare a national policy which will encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment; to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man; to enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation; and to establish a Council on Environmental Quality” (Sec. 4321).
- **National Historic Preservation Act (Title 16, Chapter 1A, Subchapter II, Sec. 470)** — It shall be the policy of the Federal Government, in cooperation with other nations and in partnership with the States, local governments, Indian tribes, and private organizations and individuals to— (1) use measures, including financial and technical assistance, to foster conditions under which our modern society and our prehistoric and historic resources can exist in productive harmony and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations;
- (2) provide leadership in the preservation of the prehistoric and historic resources of the United States and of the international community of nations and in the administration of the national preservation program in partnership with States, Indian tribes, Native Hawaiians, and local governments; (3) administer federally owned, administered, or controlled prehistoric and historic resources in a spirit of stewardship for the inspiration and benefit of present and future generations; (4) contribute to the preservation of nonfederally owned prehistoric and historic resources and give maximum encouragement to organizations and individuals undertaking preservation by private means; (5) encourage the public and private preservation and utilization of all usable elements of the Nation’s historic built environment; and (6) assist State and local governments, Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations and the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States to expand and accelerate their historic preservation programs and activities” (Sec. 470-1).
- **National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (Title 42, Chapter 50, Sec. 4001)** — It is the purpose of this chapter to “(1) authorize a flood insurance program by means of which flood insurance, over a period of time, can be made available on a nationwide basis through the cooperative efforts of the Federal Government and the private insurance industry, and (2) provide flexibility in the program so that such flood insurance may be based on

workable methods of pooling risks, minimizing costs, and distributing burdens equitably among those who will be protected by flood insurance and the general public” (Sec. 4001(d)).

- **Clean Air Act (Title 42, Chapter 85, Subchapter I, Part A, Sec. 7401)** — “The purposes of this subchapter are—
- (1) to protect and enhance the quality of the Nation’s air resources so as to promote the public health and welfare and the productive capacity of its population; (2) to initiate and accelerate a national research and development program to achieve the prevention and control of air pollution; (3) to provide technical and financial assistance to State and local governments in connection with the development and execution of their air pollution prevention and control programs; and (4) to encourage and assist the development and operation of regional air pollution prevention and control programs” (Sec. 7401(b)).
- **Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Title 33, Chapter 26, Subchapter I, Sec. 1251)** — “The objective of this chapter is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation’s waters. In order to achieve this objective it is hereby declared that, consistent with the provisions of this chapter— (1) it is the national goal that the discharge of pollutants into the navigable waters be eliminated by 1985; (2) it is the national goal that wherever attainable, an interim goal of water quality which provides for the protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife and provides for recreation in and on the water be achieved by July 1, 1983; (3) it is the national policy that the discharge of toxic pollutants in toxic amounts be prohibited; (4) it is the national policy that Federal financial assistance be provided to construct publicly owned waste treatment works; (5) it is the national policy that area wide waste treatment management planning processes be developed and implemented to assure adequate control of sources of pollutants in each State; (6) it is the national policy that a major research and demonstration effort be made to develop technology necessary to eliminate the discharge of pollutants into the navigable waters, waters of the contiguous zone, and the oceans; and (7) it is the national policy that programs for the control of nonpoint sources of pollution be developed and implemented in an expeditious manner so as to enable the goals of this chapter to be met through the control of both point and nonpoint sources of pollution” (Sec. 1251(a)).
- **Safe Drinking Water Act (Title 42, Chapter 6A, Subchapter XII, Part A, Sec. 300f)** — “The term ‘publicwater system’ means a system for the provision to the public of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances, if such system has at least fifteen service connections or regularly serves at least twenty-five individuals. Such term includes (i) any collection, treatment, storage, and distribution facilities under control of the operator of such system and used primarily in connection with such system, and (ii) any collection or pretreatment storage facilities not under such control which are used primarily in connection with such

system” (Sec. 300f(4)(A)).

- **Noise Control Act of 1972 (Title 42, Chapter 65, Sec. 4901)** — “The Congress declares that it is the policy of the United States to promote an environment for all Americans free from noise that jeopardizes their health or welfare. To that end, it is the purpose of this chapter to establish a means for effective coordination of Federal research and activities in noise control, to authorize the establishment of Federal noise emission standards for products distributed in commerce, and to provide information to the public respecting the noise emission and noise reduction characteristics of such products” (Sec. 4901(b)).
- **Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (Title 42, Chapter 82, Subchapter I, Sec. 6901)** — “The Congress hereby declares it to be the national policy of the United States that, wherever feasible, the generation of hazardous waste is to be reduced or eliminated as expeditiously as possible. Waste that is nevertheless generated should be treated, stored, or disposed of so as to minimize the present and future threat to human health and the environment” (Sec. 6902(b)).
- **Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Title 16, Chapter 35, Sec. 1531)** — “The purposes of this chapter are to provide a means whereby the ecosystems upon which endangered species and threatened species depend may be conserved, to provide a program for the conservation of such endangered species and threatened species, and to take such steps as may be appropriate to achieve the purposes of the treaties and conventions set forth in subsection (a) of this section” (Sec. 1531(b)).
- **North American Wetlands Conservation Act (Title 16, Chapter 64, Sec. 4401)** — “The purposes of this chapter are to encourage partnership among public agencies and other interests— (1) to protect, enhance, restore, and manage an appropriate distribution and diversity of wetland ecosystems and habitats associated with wetland ecosystems and other fish and wildlife in North America; (2) to maintain current or improved distributions of wetland associated migratory bird populations; and (3) to sustain an abundance of waterfowl and other wetland associated migratory birds consistent with the goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, the United States Shorebird Conservation Plan, the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan, the Partners In Flight Conservation Plans, and the international obligations contained in the migratory bird treaties and conventions and other agreements with Canada, Mexico, and other countries” (Sec. 4401(b)).

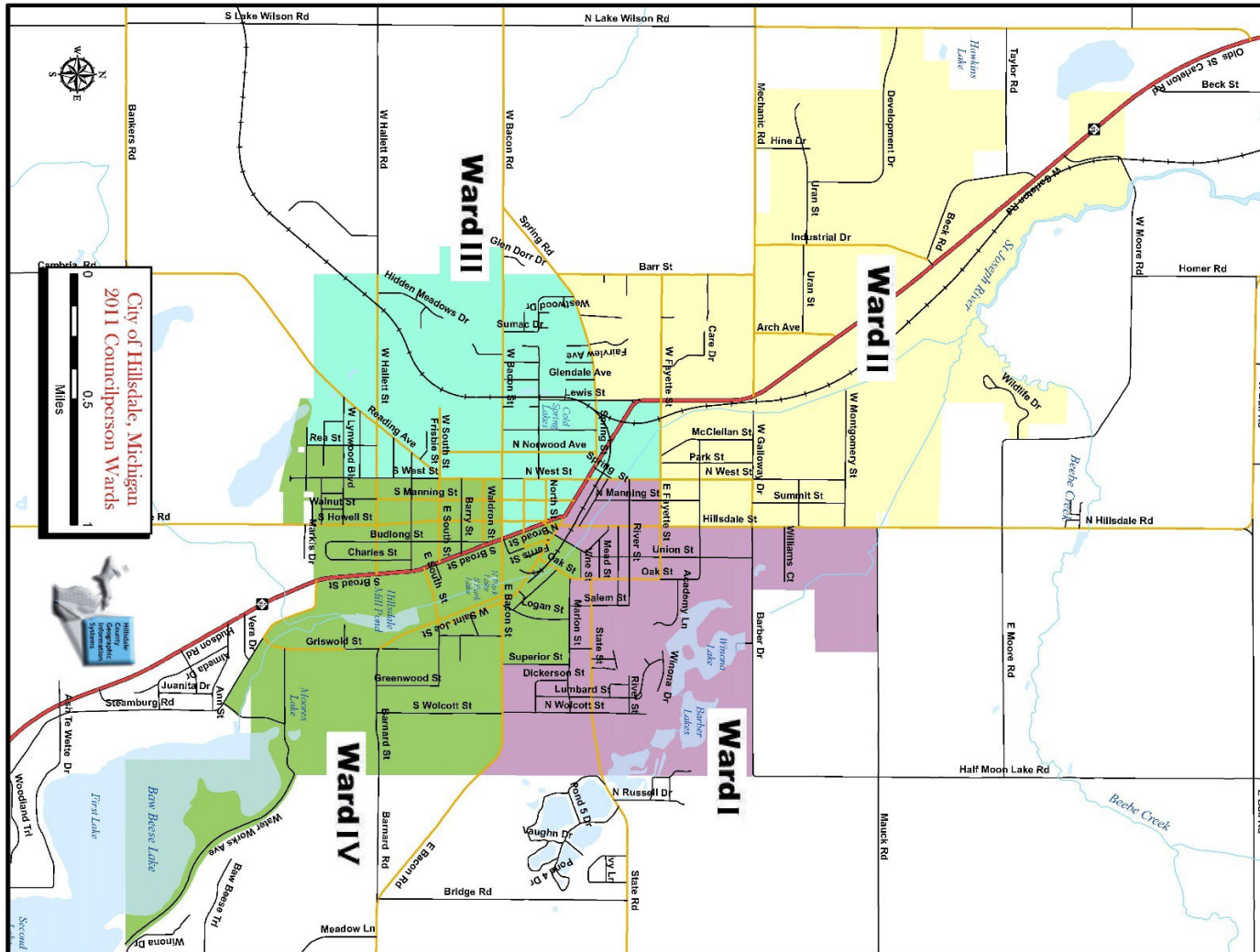


Maps Appendix

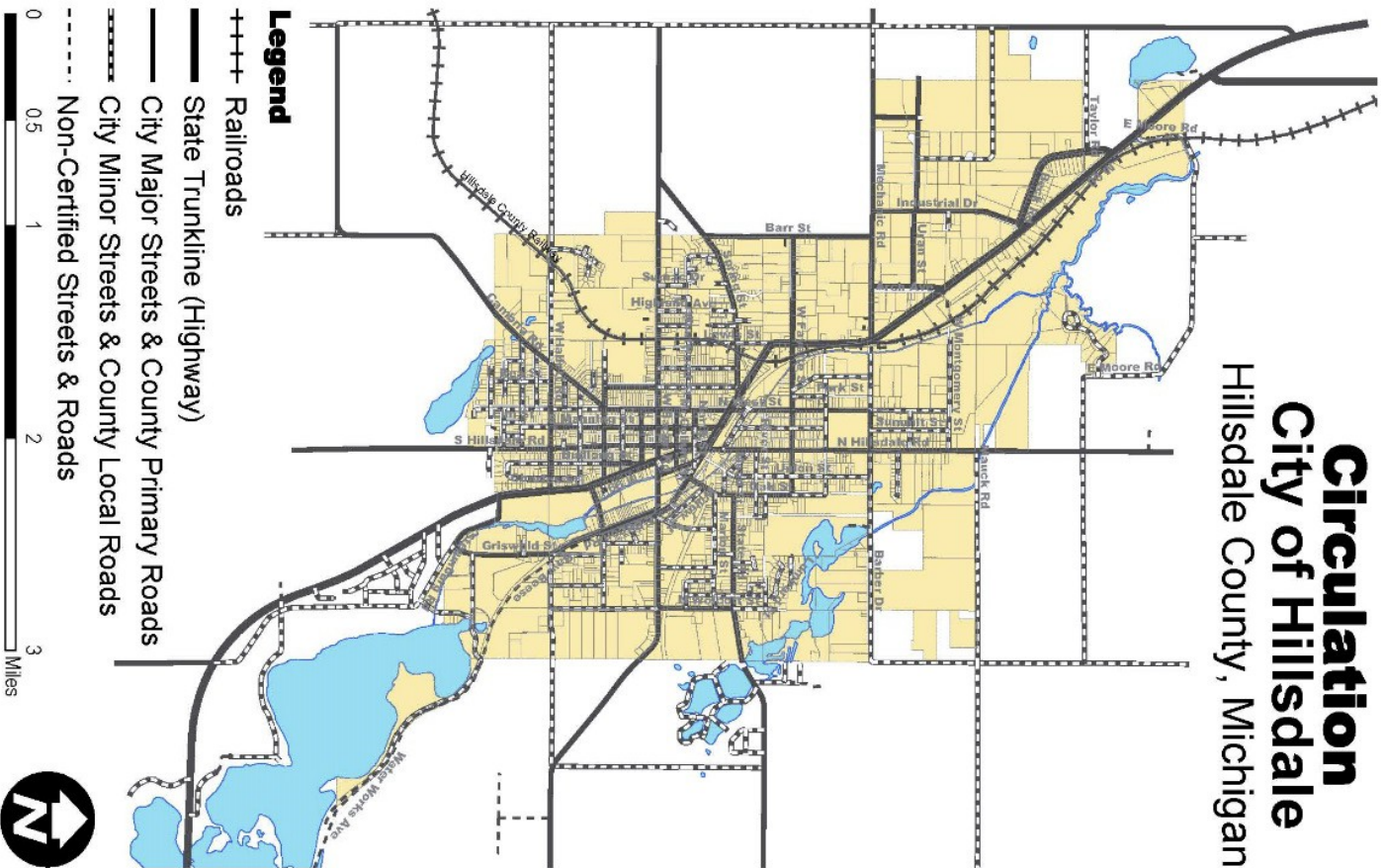
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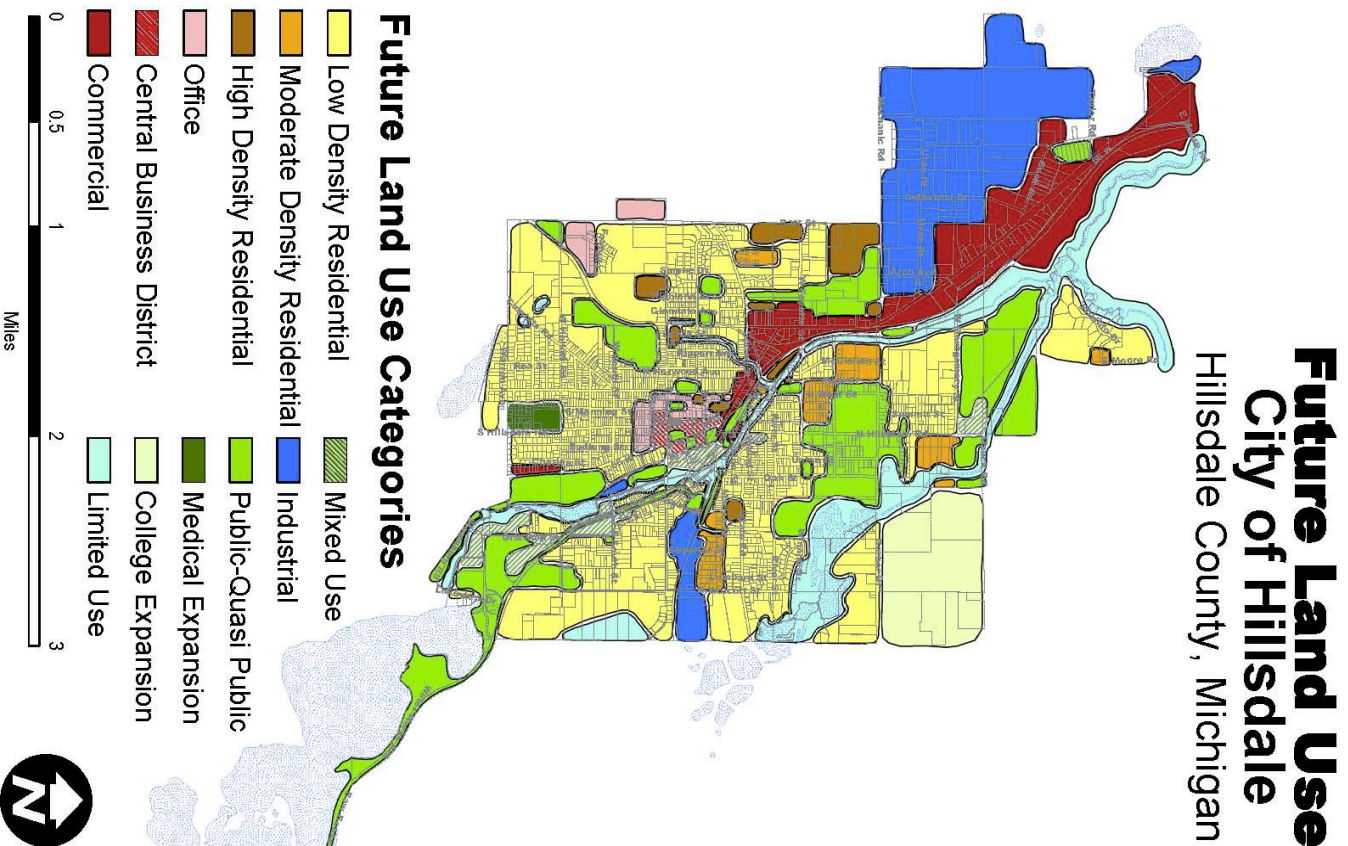
Adopted Wards



Circulation Map



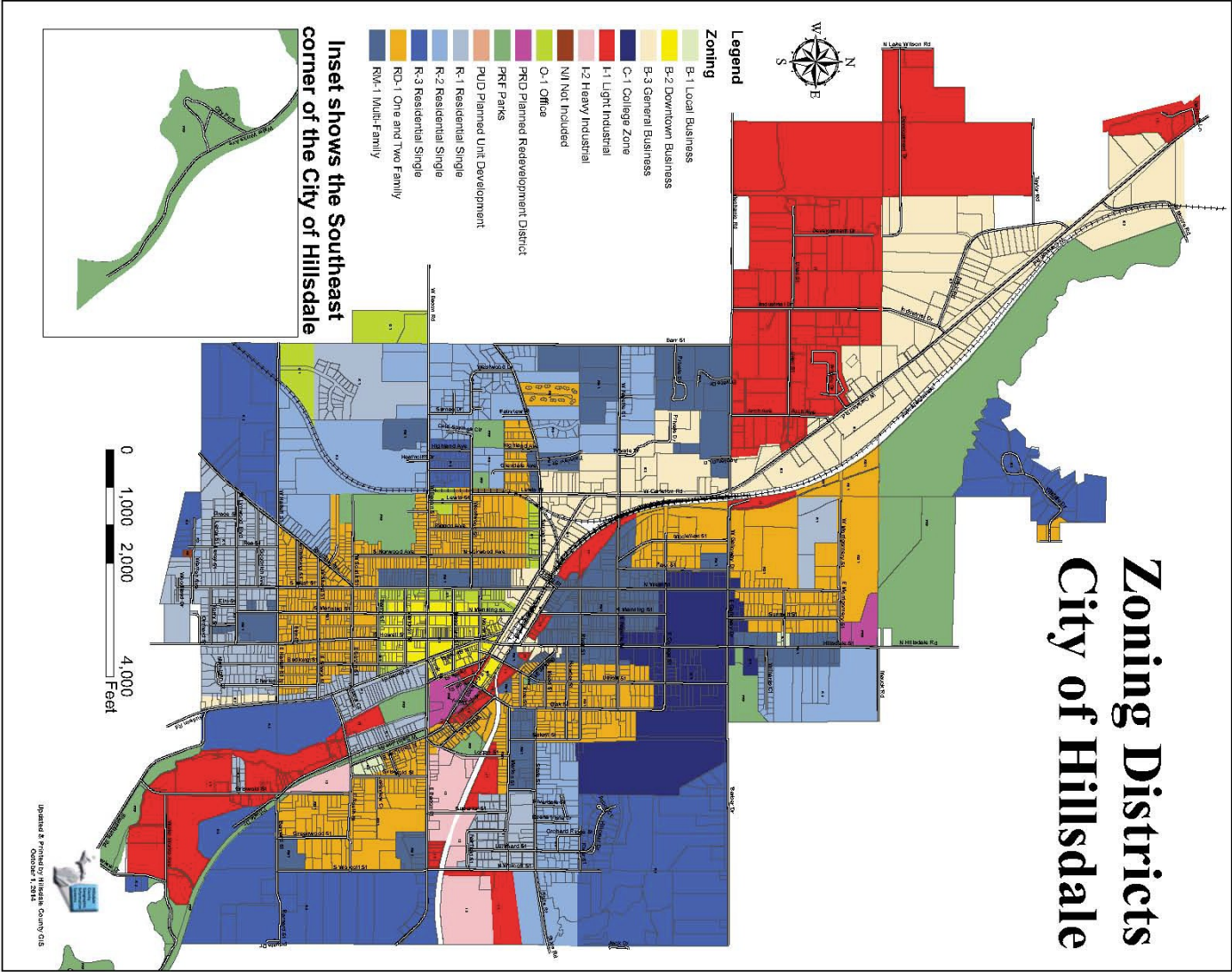
Future Land Use

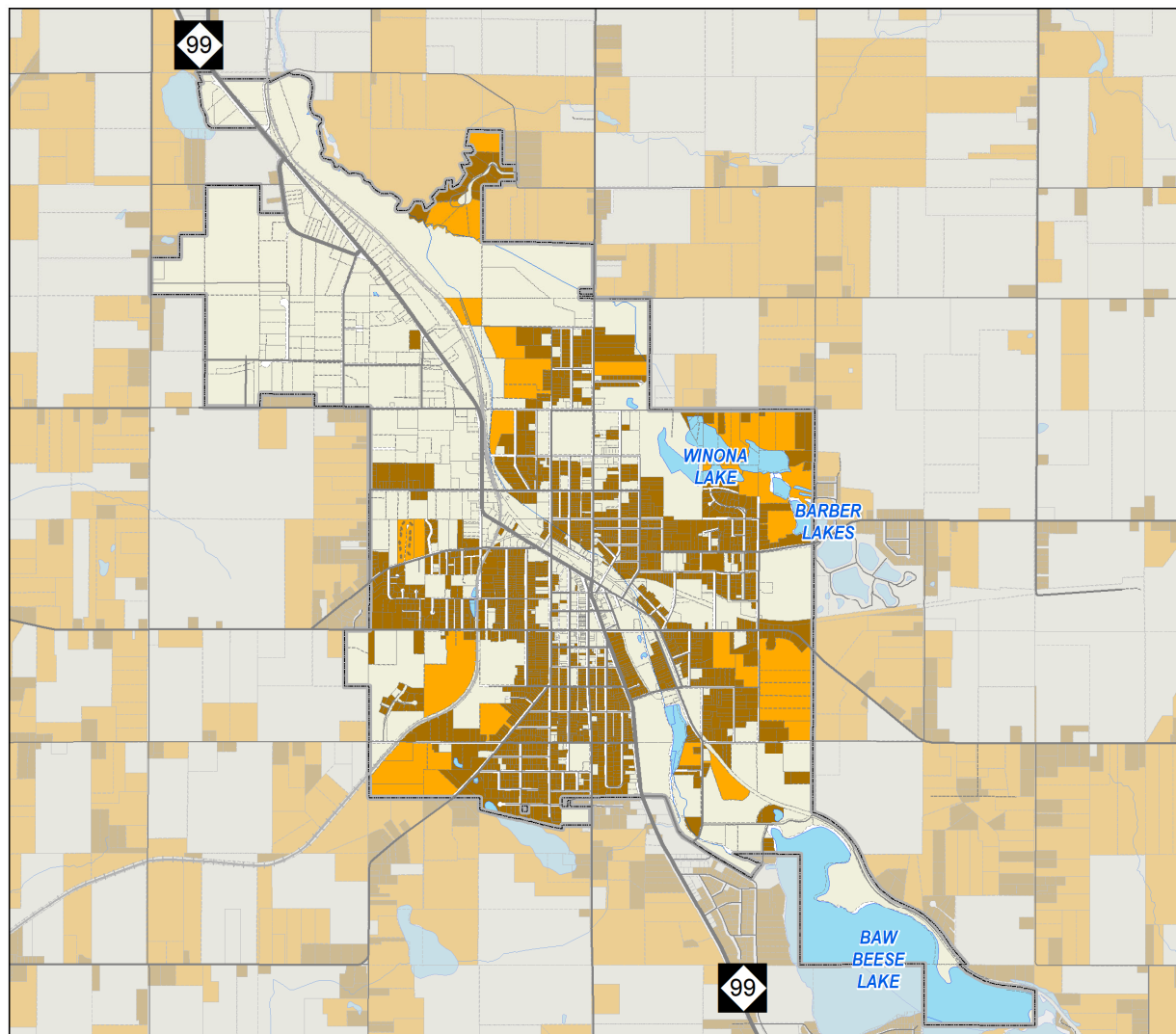


111



Zoning Districts





Property Assessment *Residential Uses*

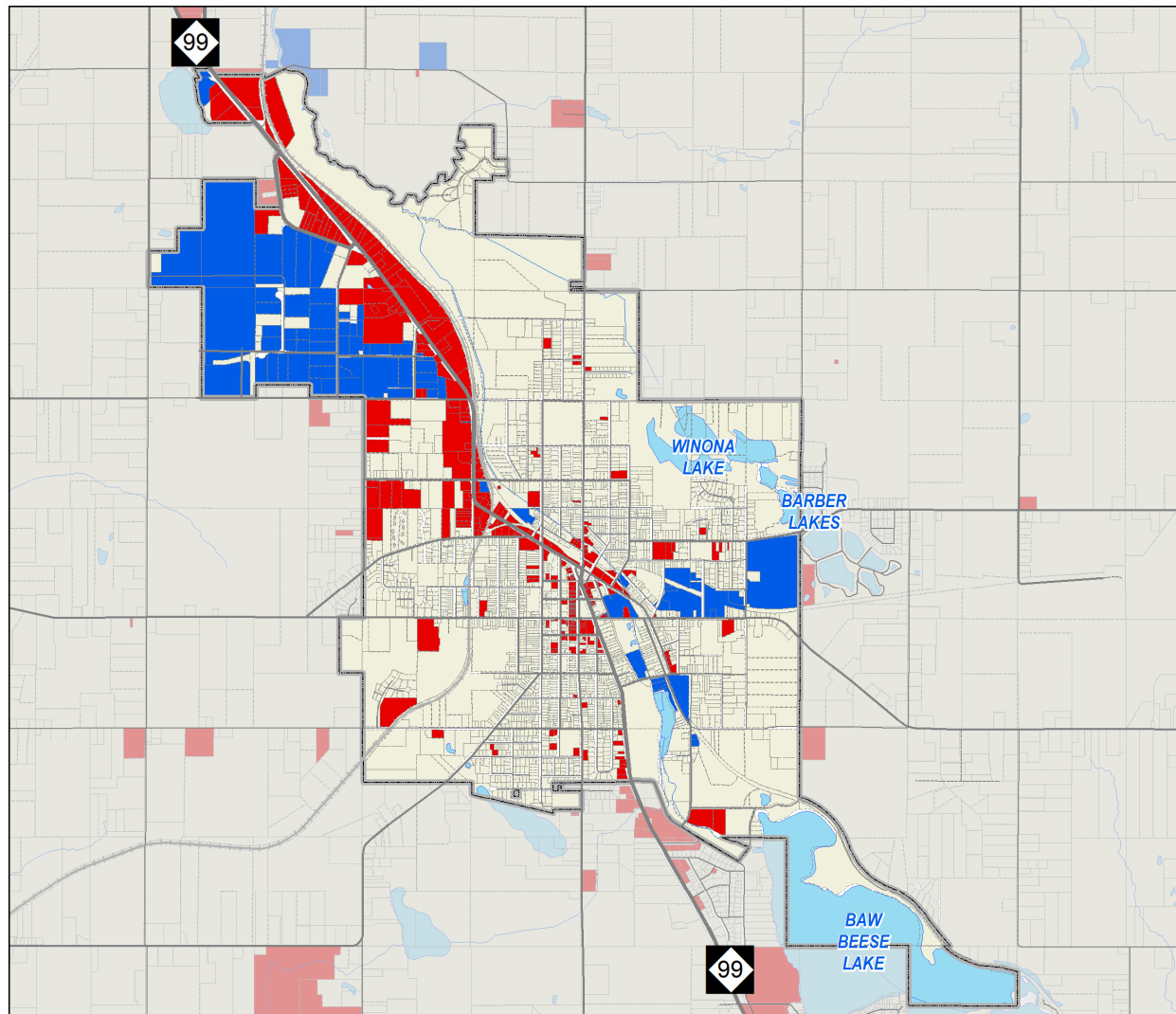
Legend

- Compact Residential Lots (< 5 ac)
- Large Residential Lots (5+ Acres)

Parcel Layer Source
Hillsdale County Equalization
and Land Information/GIS



Property Assessment (Residential Uses)



Property Assessment *Exempt Uses*

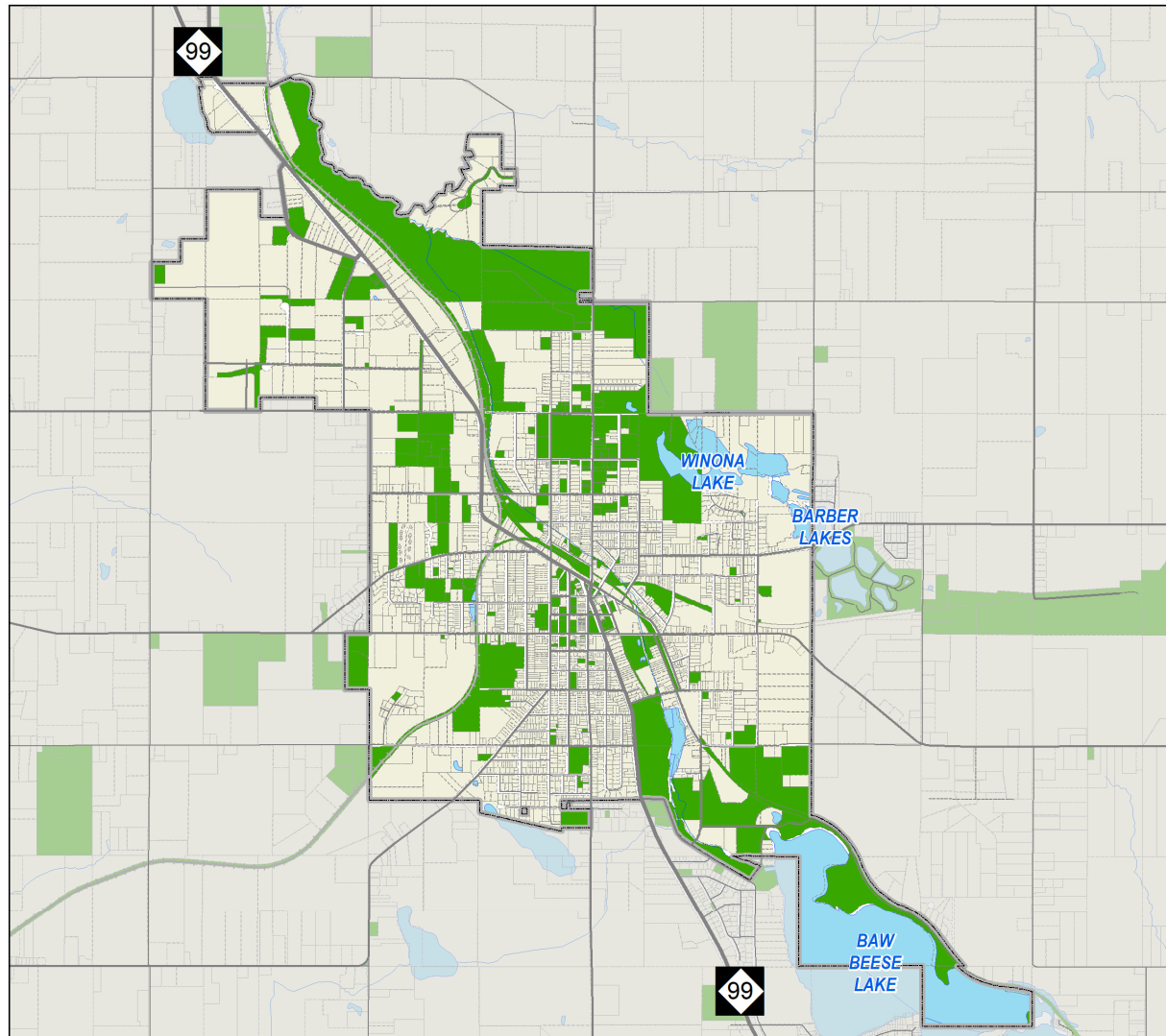
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- Commercial
- Industrial

Parcel Layer Source
Hillsdale County Equalization
and Land Information/GIS



Property Assessment (Exempt Uses)

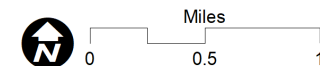


Property Assessment *Exempt Uses*

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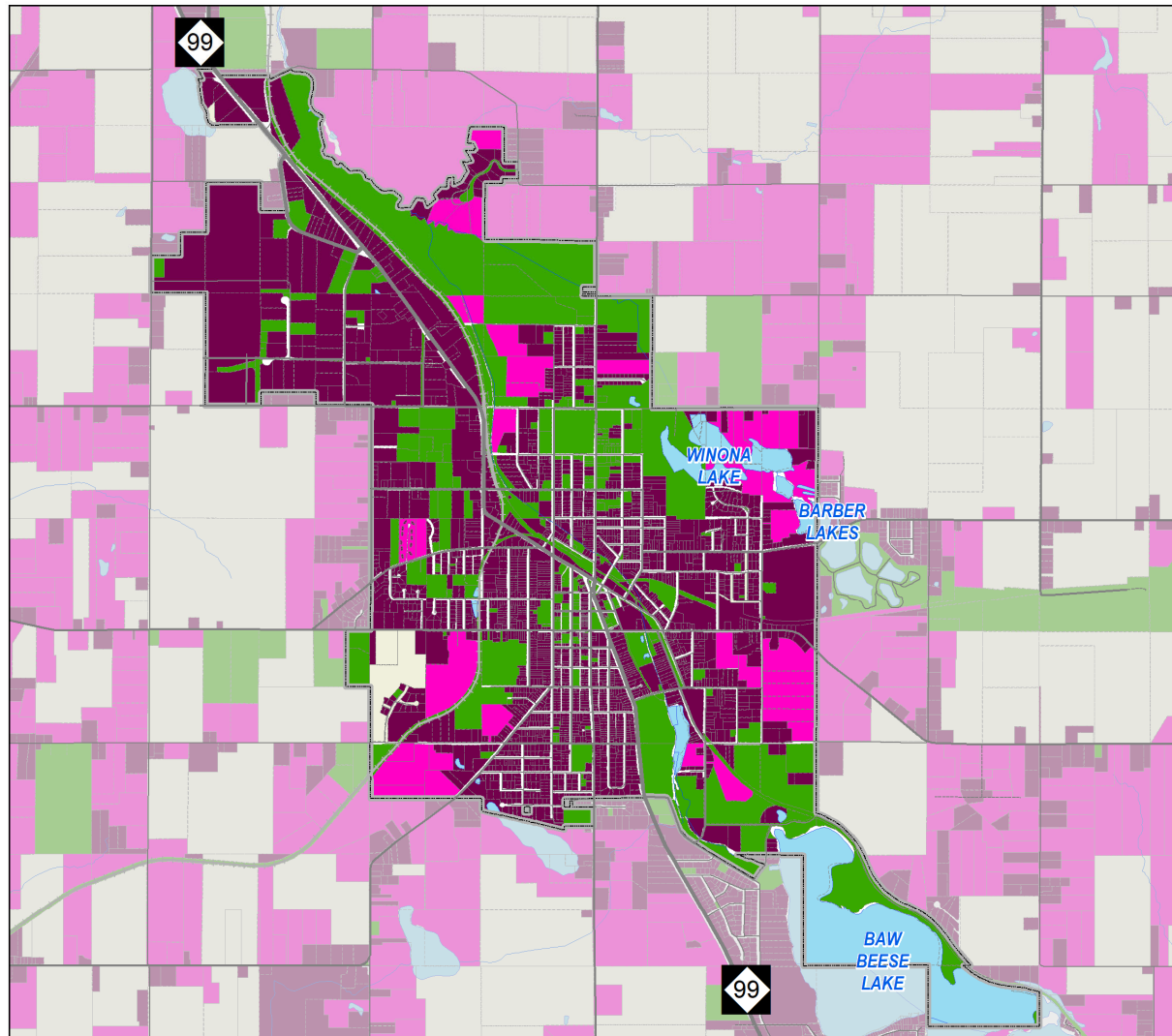
Exempt

Parcel Layer Source
Hillsdale County Equalization
and Land Information/GIS



Property Assessment (Exempt Uses)

Property Assessment (Residential Uses)



Property Assessment *Residential Uses*

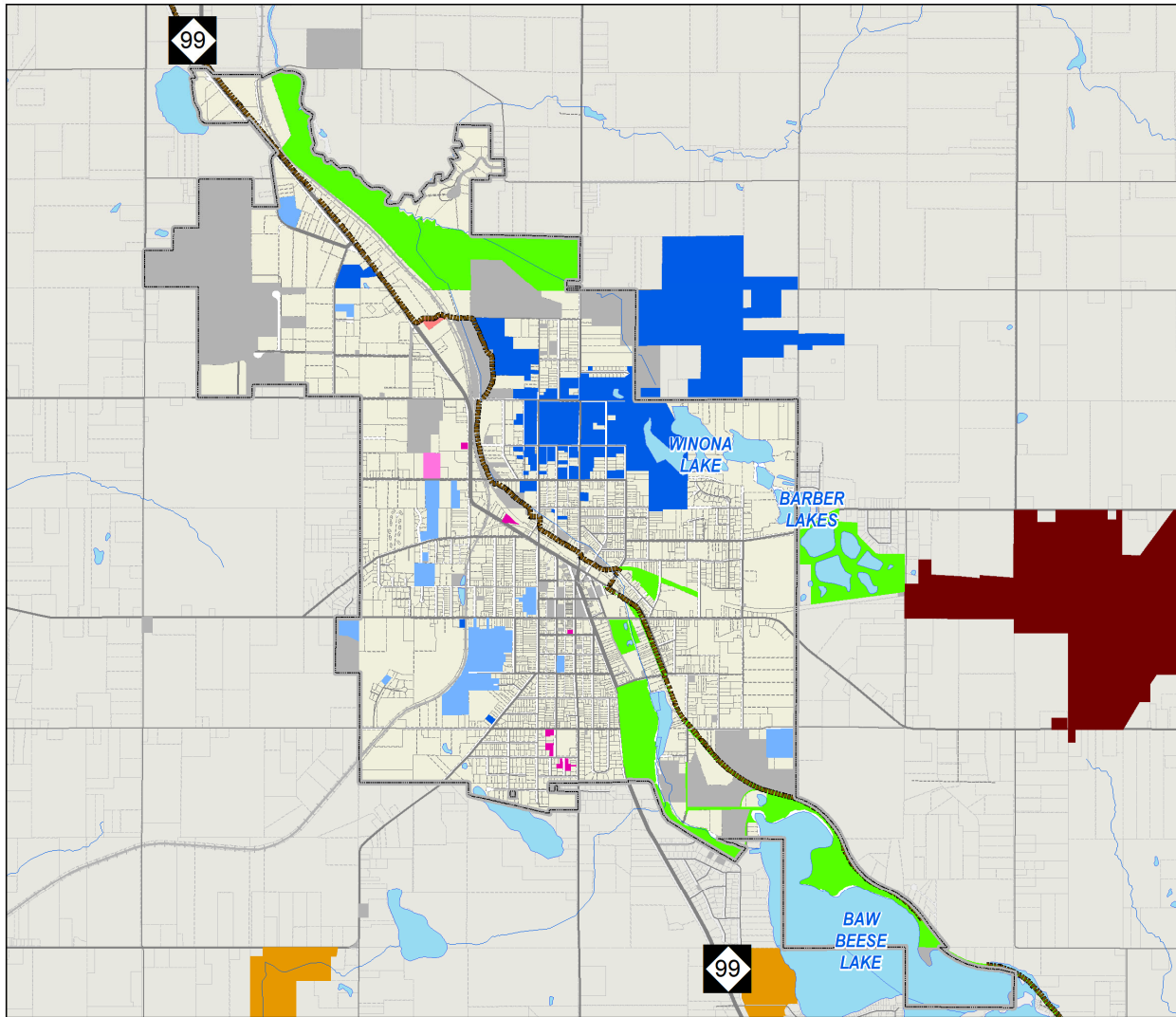
Legend

- Low-Intensity Development
- High-Intensity Development
- Institutions (Exempt)

- Low-Intensity Development = Residentially Assessed Lots of 5 + acres.
- High-Density Development = Industrially and Commercially Assessed Lots and Residentially Assessed Lots of <5+ acres.
- Institutions = Exempt Lots.

Parcel Layer Source
Hillsdale County Equalization
and Land Information/GIS





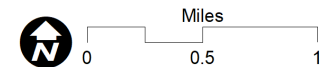
Major Community Facilities

Legend

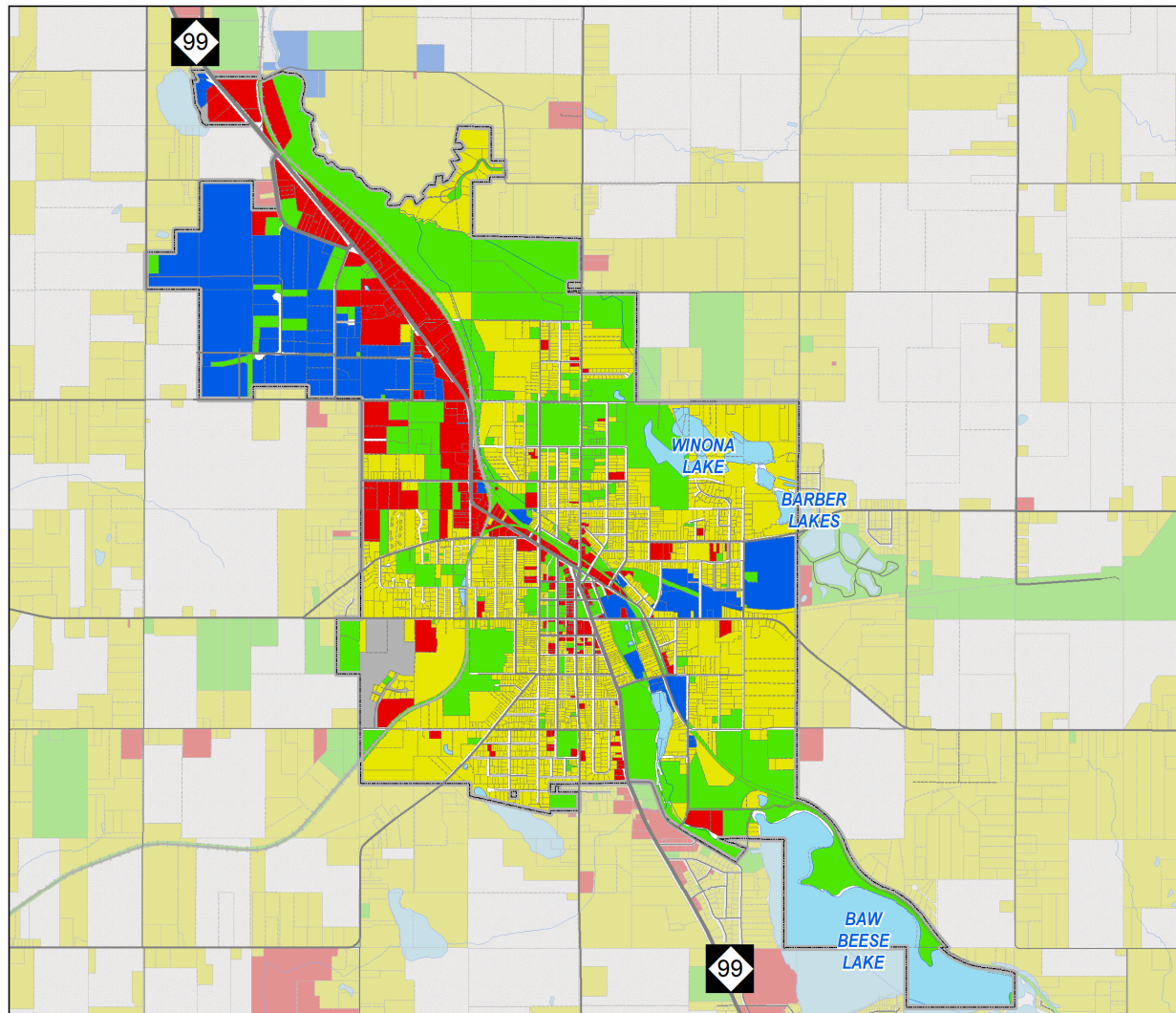
Major Community Facilities

- Municipal & County Parks
- State Parks & Private Nature Preserves
- Private Recreation Facilities
- Regional Trails & Scenic Railroads
- Hospital Campuses
- Jails & Prisons
- College & University Campuses
- Public School Campuses
- Airports
- Landfills & Transfer Stations
- Other Municipal & County Facilities

Parcel Layer Source
Hillsdale County Equalization
and Land Information/GIS



Major Community Facilities



The City of
HILLSDALE
MICHIGAN

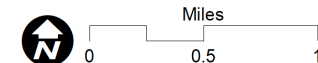
Property Assessment *All Uses*

Legend

- Agricultural
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Exempt
- Other

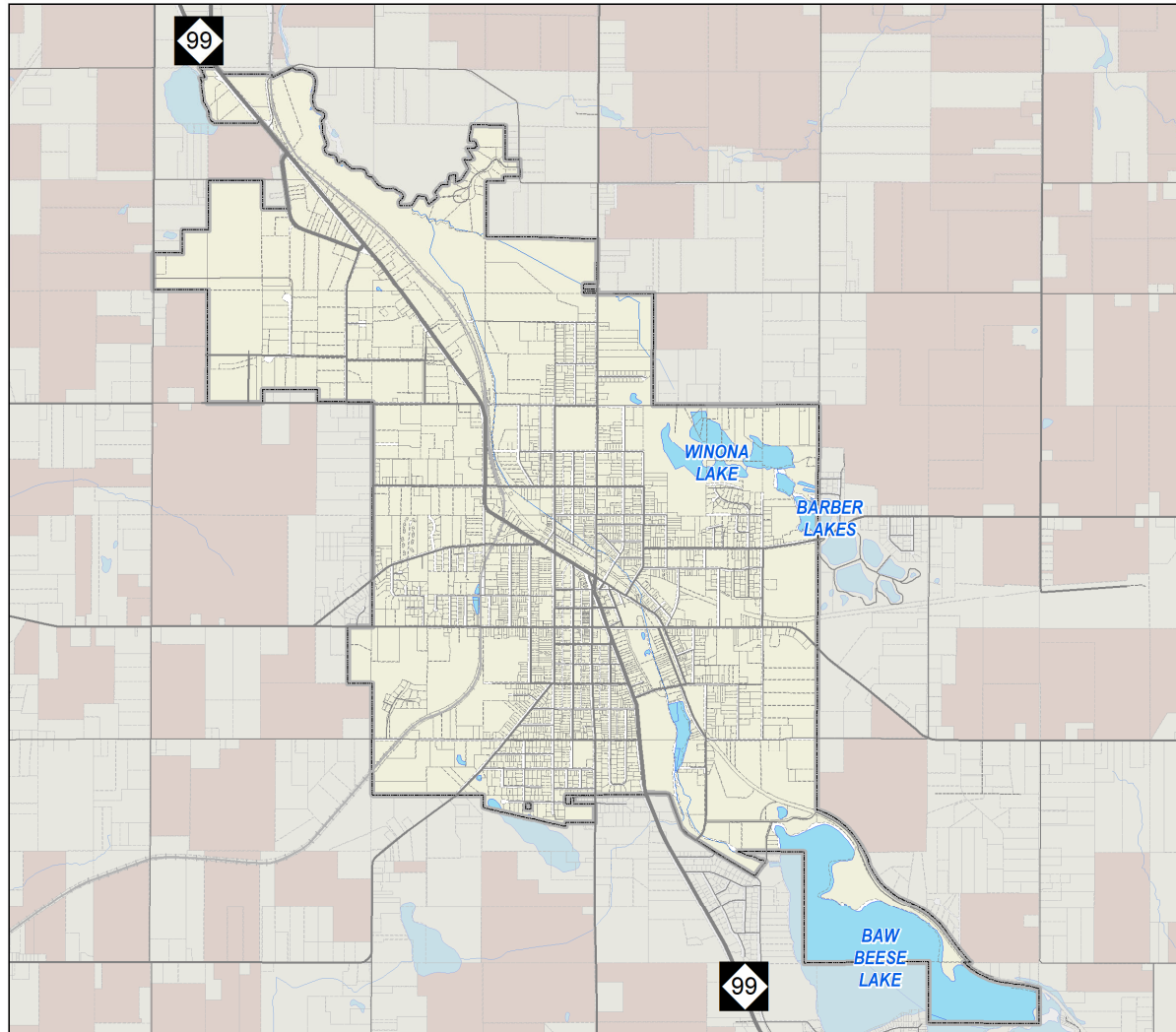
Parcel Layer Source
Hillsdale County Equalization
and Land Information/GIS

Region 2
Planning Commission




Property Assessment (All Uses)

Property Assessment (Agricultural Uses)



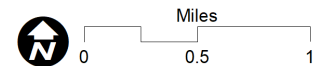
Property Assessment *Agricultural Uses*

Legend

 Agricultural

Parcel Layer Source
Hillsdale County Equalization
and Land Information/GIS

Region 2
Planning Commission



City Street PASER Map

