

### Industrial Plan Element

The Goals and Objectives established during the Master Plan process for future industrial development in the Township center around three general ideas:

- Promote the redevelopment of industrial parks and individual buildings and plan for new industrial development with access to major roadways to encourage job-creating businesses to the Township.
- Encourage quality design and site planning with development standards; protect and buffer residents from the negative impacts of industrial development.
- Encourage development of Research and Development uses of a sufficient size and location to attract viable R&D Users which will further the employment opportunities in the community
- Continue planning for and promote development of the Technology Village Area.

### Background

---

A master plan typically evaluates the needs of its community for industrial development and identifies suitable locations for industry. Over the years local, regional and statewide reliance on one industry, automotive manufacturing, has led to a somewhat predictable industrial development pattern: individual industrial buildings and warehouses located near major transportation lines. Today, the declining automotive manufacturing industry, combined with growing alternative industries, reflect a different approach to industrial development. This master plan update takes into consideration the analysis completed in 2004, along with the 2008 Technology Village Area Plan, to set forth goals and objectives aimed at retaining existing businesses while attracting new businesses.

Sustainable industrial and “research and development” businesses provide a community with a number of benefits including increased tax base and employment opportunities. Such businesses often serve as incubators for new technology. Local industrial development supports local commercial development as well.

The form of many industrial uses being developed today are clustered within industrial parks. Industrial parks offer the community more intensive development concentrated within a specific area where roads, driveways, and utilities can be planned cohesively, unlike individual developments. There are currently a few industrial park developments of varying sizes in the Township; the other industrial uses are scattered as single-user developments.

Grand Blanc Township has the strength of its geography to attract the attention of many growth sector firms due, in large part, to the variety of transportation modes for industry. Interstate-75, which has traditionally

## Charter Township of Grand Blanc

been the area of growth within Automation Alley, cuts through the Township. Three exits along this interstate offer excellent access north and south. The exit to I-475, which runs north off I-75 to Flint is located at the western edge of the Township. The CSX Rail line bisects the Township as it runs north-south, offering opportunities for rail transportation. Bishop International Airport is located approximately three miles west of the Township.

### **The Changing Economy—and its effect on job creation in Grand Blanc Township**

The Great Lakes Region, State of Michigan, and local communities have long relied on the manufacturing industry as the foundation of their economies. As that sector continues to downsize, consolidate, and outsource, communities lose jobs and tax base. The region cannot rely on the automotive industry returning as a major employment sector. However, this does not mean the complete elimination of manufacturing in the state. In fact, a recent report from neighboring Oakland County (adjacent to Grand Blanc Township's southern border) shows that from January–September 2009, “traditional sectors” (predominantly automotive) have created or retained 2,336 jobs in Oakland County, versus 1,851 jobs created or retained by alternative industries. Michigan is well-positioned to adapt existing manufacturing facilities to new industries. Grand Blanc has several facilities that could accommodate new uses.

In order to strengthen the economy, Michigan communities must focus on creating the best climate for retaining existing businesses and recruiting new businesses. This means providing adequate land, buildings, and infrastructure to support industry needs. It also means addressing quality of life issues, including education, recreation and culture.

Creating the climate to attract companies requires planning, regional cooperation, financial initiatives, investment in IT infrastructure, and access. On a local, regional and state level, economic development activity is centered around growth industries.

### **Regional and Statewide Approaches to Economic Development**

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), the State of Michigan's economic development agency, has developed “Michigan's Diversity Strategy.” This strategy is based on emerging trends in job creation as well as an alignment with the strengths Michigan has in research, engineering, and manufacturing. The MEDC is specifically targeting four industries that have growth potential in Michigan:

1. **Alternative Energy—Wind Energy:** The MEDC expects demand in this industry to rise, with the new State of Michigan Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), which requires that 10% of the state's energy be generated from renewable sources by 2015. Twenty-six other states have instituted an RPS. This represents new possibilities for

### **Enhancing the Knowledge Economy will be Key to Future Success**

Communities with **research and development capacity** will likely do relatively well in the **knowledge, technology-led economy** that is emerging globally. However, those communities that do not succeed as research and development or other high-knowledge centers will probably find themselves competing with the rest of the world to be the cheap labor pool of choice, and thus may join the widening disparity between winner and loser communities worldwide.”

*- Michigan Knowledge Economy Index: A County Level Assessment of Michigan's Knowledge Economy (Michigan State University Center for Community and Economic Development)*

### Opportunities for Higher Learning in Grand Blanc Area

Grand Blanc is fortunate to be located near several colleges and universities including:

- Baker College: a private career college offering certificate, associate's, bachelor's and master's programs
- Kettering University: a well-regarded engineering school offering undergraduate and graduate degrees
- Mott Community College: Two-year college with over 10,000 students enrolled
- University of Michigan—Flint: one of three campuses in the UM system with over 6,000 students enrolled
- Central Michigan University\*
- Davenport University\*
- Eastern Michigan University\*
- Ferris State University\*
- Spring Arbor University\*

\*Satellite Campuses

manufacturing firms in the state.

2. **Defense and Homeland Security:** In the last decade, the federal government has spent between \$400 billion—\$800 billion on defense. Michigan's engineering and manufacturing capabilities are well-suited to the development of ground vehicles and alternative fuels, along with high-tech polymers and coatings. The Michigan Defense Contract Coordination Center (DC3) was created in 2007 to match the needs of the federal government with Michigan companies.
3. **Aerospace:** Aerospace-related industries continue to grow in the US. With the availability of manufacturers and suppliers, there are opportunities within Michigan to capitalize on idled automotive facilities for aerospace needs.
4. **Medical Devices:** Advances in medicine and technology, combined with an aging population suggest that medical-related industries, notably medical devices, will be a growing industry. With the capacity for manufacturing and high-quality medical research institutions, Michigan is able to take a leading role in this industry.

Regional efforts at economic development include Automation Alley, which covers Genesee County, Livingston County, Macomb County, Monroe County, Oakland County, St. Clair County, Washtenaw County, Wayne County and the City of Detroit. This organization focuses on technology, academia, manufacturing, engineering, production, and R&D to encourage entrepreneurship of technology-based businesses in the region.

Dialing in on the regional boundaries, the Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce, which serves the City of Flint and all of Genesee County, seeks to improve the regional economy by helping communities diversify the local economy, increase investment and job creation, and enhance economic development processes. The Chamber has identified the following sectors as likely targets for business retention and recruitment activities. These sectors match well with those sectors identified by the State of Michigan and Automation Alley, as well as with neighboring Oakland County.

- Transportation, distribution, and logistics
- Alternative energy/Alternative fuel
- Homeland security
- High-tech services
- Corporate offices
- Advanced manufacturing
- Health science/bio-medicine
- Water infrastructure-related businesses

### Location Factors for Industry

Many of today's technology firms have the ability to locate in a variety of places. Location decisions are often based on where employees wish to live. Common elements of places where knowledge-based individuals

are attracted to include: vibrant and diverse centers that have culture and arts; greenways; proximity to international travel; and easy access to the internet. Proximity to institutions of higher education, international travel, supporting businesses, internet access, excellent transportation systems (access to highway, road conditions) are also important. Such companies also look for places where government regulations and tax systems promote business development and investment.

### Industrial Analysis

Three distinct categories of industrial users are discussed within the Industrial Plan: 1) light industrial users such as office/warehouse and wholesaling businesses; 2) General Industrial users including heavy manufacturing and users with outdoor storage needs; and 3) research and development users including technology, research and development firms.

As noted in 2004, forecasting anticipated demand for future industrial uses requires evaluation of both future population and land area. Many factors can influence the industrial market including access, existing supply in surrounding communities, regional markets, and so on.

There are two common methods of forecasting future supportable industrial area: 1) based on total population, and 2) based on total land area. See Table I-1

**Population Approach:** According to Urban Planning and Design Criteria, a typical planning standard for industry is 12 acres per 1,000 population. Based on an estimated 2025 population of 50,000 people (Township and City of Grand Blanc combined), approximately 600 acres of industrial land are potentially supportable within the community.

**Land Area Approach:** The total land area method forecasts that within a rural community, industrial land typically consumes approximately 2-5 percent of total area. For small cities under 100,000 population, industrial typically consumes 7 percent of total land area. Given the rural-suburban nature of the Township, the 21,151 acres of land area within the community suggests a range of 1,057 acres (5%) to 1,480 acres (7%) of industrial area.

The light and general Industrial areas on the Industrial Plan reflect a total of approximately 837 acres, and approximately 223 acres are planned for Research and Development, which is a hybrid category that includes office, industrial, and warehousing components. Based on general guidelines, the Industrial Plan falls within the range of national guidelines. Despite the decline in automobile manufacturing, the availability of existing facilities and industrially zoned land provide opportunities that may attract to Grand Blanc Township manufacturing uses, or other uses that require the type of infrastructure available.

### LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

Promote the redevelopment of industrial parks and individual buildings and plan for new industrial development with access to major roadways to encourage job-creating businesses to the Township.

#### Action Strategies

- Zone appropriate areas throughout the Township for light and general industrial uses.
- Industrial areas should be located in limited areas with access to major roadways and interstates.
- Develop a tiered-use zoning approach for light industrial districts that limits permitted uses when adjacent to residential neighborhoods to minimize impacts on residents.
- Limit more intensive industrial uses to areas not adjacent to residential neighborhoods.
- Promote the use of shared driveways and internal connections between individual users to reduce the impact of truck traffic on roadways

**LAND USE  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Encourage quality design and site planning with development standards.

**Action Strategies**

- Develop landscape standards that require screening along road rights-of-way.
- Permit quality landscape materials to be used that would not detract or hide main buildings.
- Ensure sign standards are adequate to complement right-of-way treatment and not overwhelm the streetscape.
- Require screening between uses to carry the same theme and provide for alternative screening including preservation of existing vegetation, use of supplemental plantings, screen walls, etc.
- Screen rooftop appurtenances from view from property lines and public roads based on zoning ordinance standards.

**Land Use Recommendations**

**Light and General Industrial**

The majority of the current industrial land uses in the Township have traditionally been composed of light industrial and general Industrial businesses. Over 73 percent of all industrial land area is composed of light and general Industrial uses. The Master Plan designates industrial areas throughout the Township with the highest concentration near existing development on Holly Road, south of I-75, Dort Highway near the GM Plant and Dort Highway south of Maple Road (see Map 5).

Light and General Industrial categories were distinguished within the Master Plan to provide for areas suitable for industrial users whose impacts on surrounding development can vary due to their operational needs. Light industrial users including office, light assembly, and indoor

**Table I-1. Supportable Industrial Area**

METHOD	VALUE	INDUSTRIAL AREA FORECASTED
<b>2025 Population</b>	50,200	600 acres
<b>Grand Blanc Township</b>	42,000	
<b>City of Grand Blanc</b>	8,200	
<b>Land Area (5-7% of total)</b>	21,151 acres	1,057—1,480 acres
Projected population based on the Genesee County Transportation Plan 2005-2035		

warehousing types of businesses are designated for industrial areas near residential neighborhoods to reduce their impacts. Additional screening and buffering between uses is anticipated. Where land is not adjacent to residential and the surrounding character and infrastructure support it, General Industrial use is designated. Where industrial parcels exist as stand-alone developments, access management techniques should be required to reduce the number of single driveways serving individual parcels on major roads.

There are a few changes in the 2009 Master Land Use Plan Update. One is to designate the parcel adjacent to the Trillium development to Flexible Development, to provide opportunity for development in this area beyond industrial uses. Another is to designate a portion of vacant land, formerly designated industrial, south of Baldwin Road, east of the railroad, to Rural Estate, due to the natural conditions of this area. The last change is to designate as Light Industrial the area along Holly Road, south of Baldwin Road.

Areas identified for industrial purposes are concentrated, where feasible, to encourage the development of industrial parks. A business or industrial park is typically a multi-building development planned to accommodate a range of uses, from light industrial to office/research facilities.

## Charter Township of Grand Blanc

In order to promote industrial park development, areas of sufficient size and location are needed. In general, planned sites should be large enough to handle two or more separate uses, internal roadways, loading areas, landscaping and screening. It is anticipated that most users will depend on trucks for transferring of inventory so access to major roadways and interstates is important.

### Research and Development

R&D users encompass a variety of occupiers. A typical R&D building is a one- or two- story building designed for one or two users and often features the capability of being subdivided as flex space. R&D users usually want tight security and good visibility from adjacent street and highways. Corporate identity and image are important, even for startup companies. A well-designed building with strong entrance treatment, good visitor access, and parking and an attractive lobby are preferred over a more generic design. Open space elements like attractive outdoor eating and recreational areas for employees are a plus. Flexibility is still an essential requirement for R&D tenants, because many are in a constant state of evolution. Many users require showrooms or demonstration areas. Location needs to be convenient to highways and transit but also provide important amenities for workers like on-site or nearby retail stores, recreation facilities, daycare, and open space. A campus setting is strongly preferred.

The success of high-tech industrial and research businesses depends on more than planning areas within the community. There are other steps that the community can take to encourage development of these types of businesses. Research parks represent an attempt to harness creativity and innovation to spur economic development within a region. Since competition can be high, coordination with a regional economic development entity such as the Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce can further the success of locating an R&D user to the Grand Blanc community.

In order to attract quality researchers and support staff, firms look at the make-up of a community closely. Quality of life, school systems, the availability of goods and services, and the like become key to attracting researchers and support staff. Providing these amenities can also be a goal for the community.

The research nature of these types of users typically require highly skilled personnel, so parks are often affiliated with local universities. The community can take a lead role by developing an economic development program that coordinates the important elements to promote R&D uses.

### Flexible Development

As noted earlier, there are areas within the Township where a more flexible approach to development is desired. It is anticipated that these areas will include a mix of uses, from commercial to industrial to

## LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

Encourage development of Research and Development uses of a sufficient size and location to attract viable R&D Users which will further the employment opportunities in the community.

### Action Strategies

- Zone an area large enough to support research and development uses.
- Create an economic development program to promote the area to R&D users and to coordinate marketing efforts with the County and universities.
- Develop building and site design standards that call for quality development commensurate with the goal of locating premier R&D users to the area.

**LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Continue planning for and promote development of the Technology Village Area.

**Action Strategies**

- Design conceptual layout for the Technology Village Area.
- Develop partnerships aimed at refining the Technology Village Area concept, retaining existing high-tech businesses, and recruiting new businesses.
- Create sustainable development standards that encourage high-quality development that protects and preserves the area's natural resources.
- Develop a Technology Village Area marketing plan.
- Establish benchmarks and timeline for Technology Village Area implementation strategies.

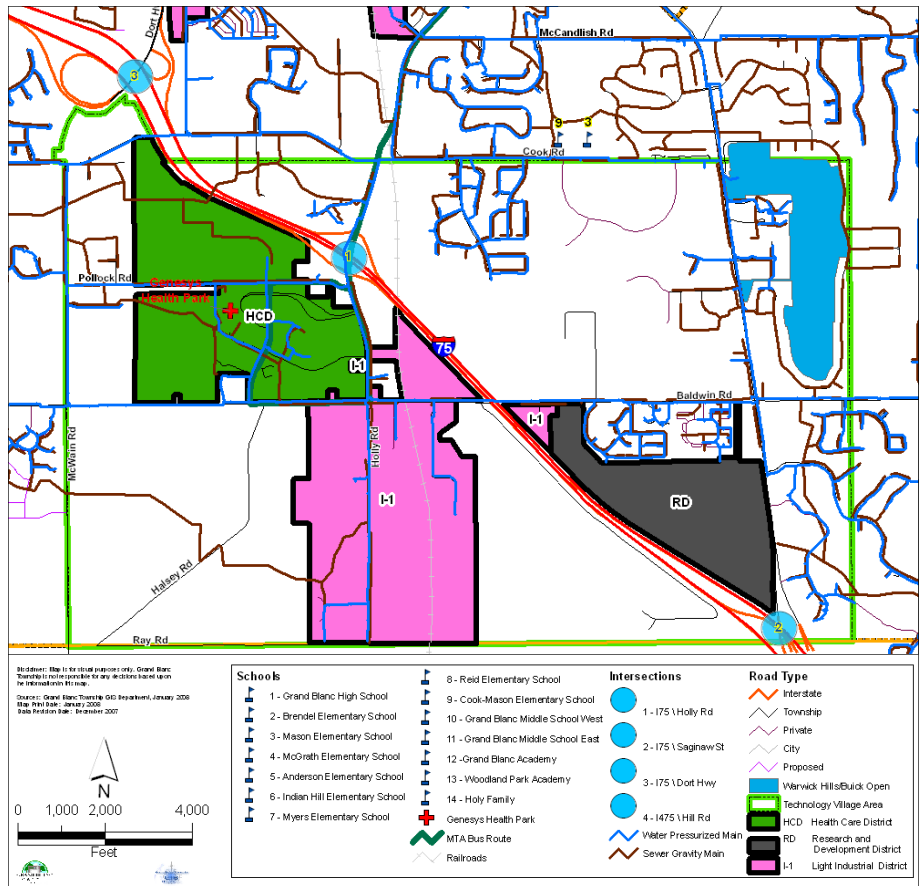
research and development. It is not possible at this time to determine the amount of industrial or research and development acreage.

**Beyond Industrial & R/D: Technology Village Area**

In 2008, the Charter Township of Grand Blanc took a leadership role in the region by planning for a technology-driven mixed-use district called Technology Village. The Technology Village Planning Area consists of approximately 4,103 acres, and is located in south-central Grand Blanc Township (See Map I-1). The plan encourages creation of a technology-driven center that is attractive to high-tech businesses by offering a district for knowledge-based employment, along with recreation, culture, diversity and entertainment.

The boundaries of the Technology Village Planning Area (Map I-1) have been defined to encompass half of the Township's frontage along I-75. Within these boundaries are three freeway interchanges (at Saginaw Street, Holly Road, and Dort Highway), the Genesys Regional Medical

**Map I-1 Technology Village Planning Area**



Center, and the bulk of the Township's areas that are planned and zoned for either Research and Development, Light Industrial, or Health Care. The area is served by infrastructure including Township water and sewer service, CSX rail, and MTA transit service.

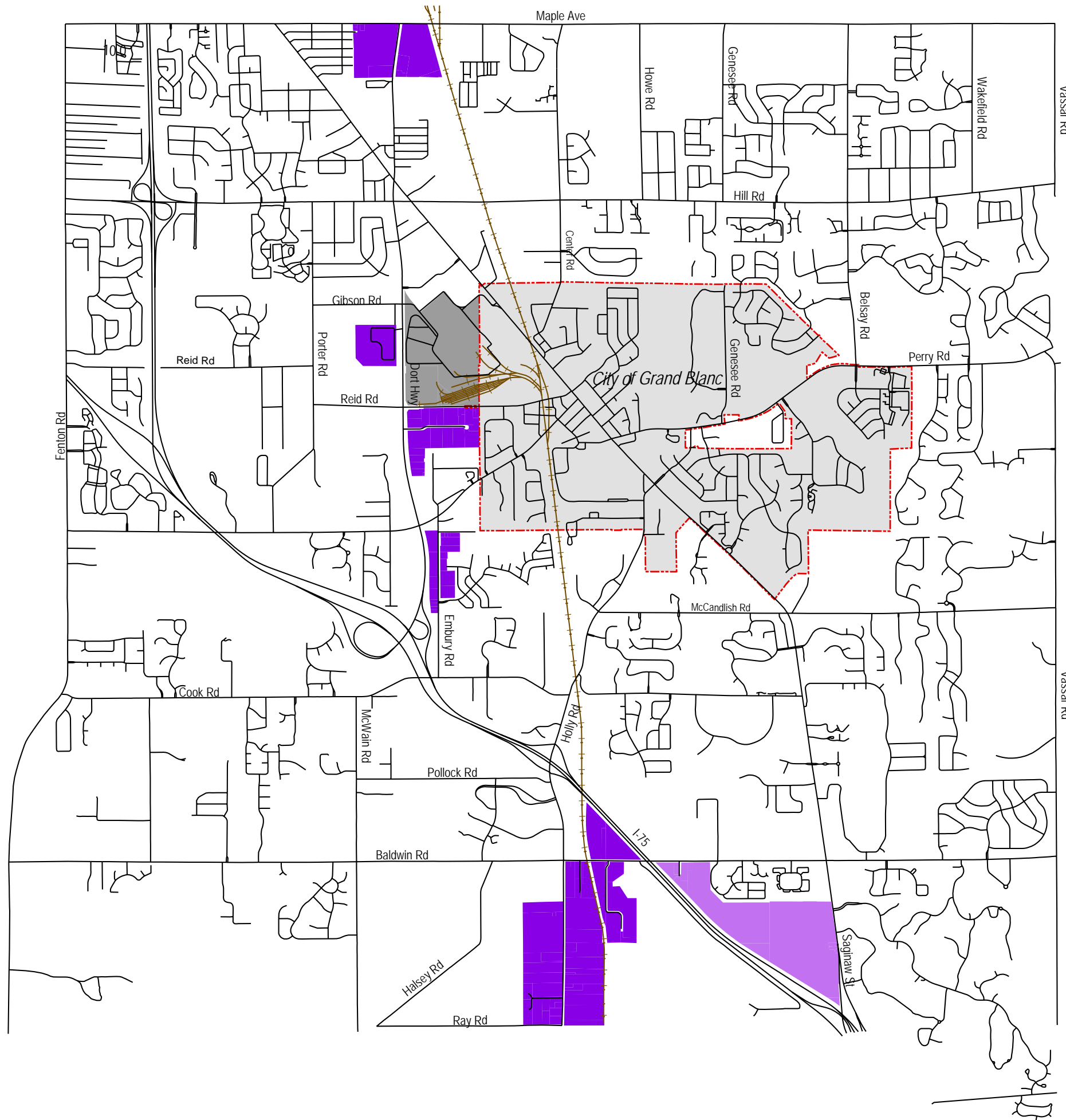
### Goals and Objectives of the draft Technology Village Plan include:





1. Develop an Area Plan amendment to the Master Plan that would allow for the realization of a Technology Village Area
  - Design a conceptual lay-out for Village uses: a village district (a denser development form that incorporates residential, restaurant, entertainment, retail and personal service uses); high-tech districts (medical campus, research and development and light industrial facilities, and educational institutions); public spaces; recreation uses; and multi-use pathway network that connects places in Technology Village as well as to places in Grand Blanc Township and the region.
  - The conceptual layout must respectfully integrate the rural character present in the southwest portion of the Technology Village Area, and the natural features present throughout, but particularly those in the southeast portion of the Area.
  - Amend the Capital Facilities Program, as necessary, to ensure that the infrastructure required by uses in the Village is in-place before development occurs (i.e. stormwater management, wireless capabilities).
  - Amend the Thoroughfare Plan, as necessary, to ensure that network facilitates accessibility and traffic safety.
  - Incorporate smart growth principles into the goals, objectives and implementation strategies for the Technology Village area.
2. Develop partnerships with private entities, other civic organizations and educational institutions
  - Initiate a dialogue with local governments that have successfully implemented a technology village concept.
  - Collaborate with the knowledge-based businesses and institutions to ensure that the plan and implementation strategies result in the desired Technology Village concept as well as to recruit high-tech businesses and educational institutions to the Technology Village area.
  - Explore and create incentives for initially attracting knowledge-based businesses and colleges and universities to the area.
3. Promote sustainable development and protect and preserve the area's natural resources
  - Promote participation in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) certification program.
  - Incorporate policies in the Master Plan that facilitate incorporation of the natural environment into the site design.

## Charter Township of Grand Blanc

4. Develop a marketing plan once the Master Plan has been amended.
  - Build a website specifically dedicated to the Grand Blanc Technology Village.
  - Brand the Technology Village Area with a logo and other unique elements.
  - Prepare marketing materials on available property for high-tech, medical, and Technology Village property.
  - Create and annually re-evaluate a detailed marketing strategy.
  
5. Establish benchmarks and a timeline by which to gauge success.
  - Develop and describe planning benchmarks in the Technology Village Master Plan.
  - Develop short-term and long-term strategies to achieve benchmarks.

This page intentionally blank



-  CITY OF GRAND BLANC
-  RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
-  LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
-  GENERAL INDUSTRIAL

NOTE: THE GRAND BLANC TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN INCLUDES THE LAND USE PLAN MAP AND ALL TEXT, MAPS, CHARTS, TABLES, AND OTHER GRAPHICS IN THE FULL MASTER PLAN REPORT.

**MAP 5**  
**INDUSTRIAL AREA PLAN**  
**JUNE 3, 2010**  
*CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND BLANC*



**BIRCHLER ARROYO**  
 ASSOCIATES, INC.