

ST.  
MATHIAS  
TOWNSHIP

# 2014 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



**Adopted May XX, 2014**

# **St. Mathias Township 2014 Comprehensive Plan**

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*St. Mathias Township gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the above mentioned individuals  
for assisting with the creation of this Comprehensive Plan.*

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Comprehensive Plan Vision:**

Striving to maintain and improve the wellbeing and quality of life of St. Mathias Township for residents and future generations while nurturing the rural atmosphere and protecting the environment.

### **Legal Authority**

The authority to develop and execute a comprehensive municipal plan for the Township of St. Mathias by the St. Mathias Town Board of Supervisors is granted in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 462.351 through 462.356. This Comprehensive Land Use Plan for St. Mathias Township legally replaces its Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1998.



### **Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan**

The St. Mathias Township Comprehensive Plan is a township document which acts as a planning tool to aid in future decisions about the physical growth and development of the township. The plan has set forth the objectives of the township with respect to land use. The plan itself is the first stage of the planning process that a community undertakes.



## BACKGROUND

### Planning Process

St. Mathias Township began the process of replacing their 1998 Comprehensive Plan in early 2013. An Ad-Hoc Task Force was established at that time to oversee these efforts. This Ad-Hoc Task Force prepared, distributed, and tabulated a resident survey in the summer of 2013, in an effort to garner input from Township residents on a variety of different topics.

After much review of these survey results, and lengthy discussion, in the fall of 2013 the Ad-Hoc Task Force and Township Board of Supervisors voted to retain the services of Region Five Development Commission to lead them through the creation of a new Comprehensive Plan for St. Mathias Township.



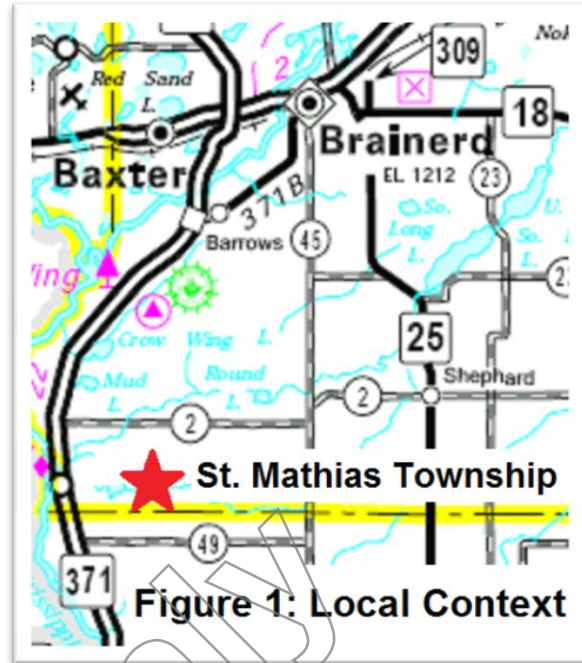
Planners from Region Five met with the Ad-Hoc Task Force and Township Supervisors in late 2013 to formulate a framework for this project.

At the kickoff meeting for this project, planners gave a presentation to the Ad-Hoc Task Force that included an outline / timetable for completion of the project, a demographical and statistical overview of St. Mathias Township, as well as a first take on goals and objectives based on resident input garnered from the community survey.

The Ad-Hoc Task Force met several additional times in early 2014 to work on this project. In these meetings the goals and objectives of this project were

reviewed and revised, as well as a Potential Future Land Use Map created, all per the Ad-Hoc Task Force.

Upon completion of a draft of this document, a Public Hearing, after proper notification, was held to receive resident input. After said required Public Hearing was held, this plan was formally adopted by the duly elected Township Supervisors of St. Mathias Township.

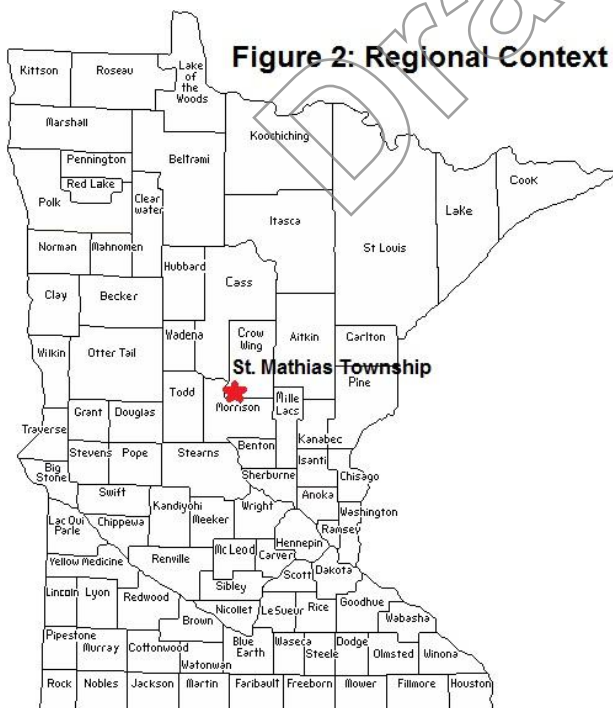


## Location

St Mathias Township is in Central Minnesota, approximately 15 miles south of Brainerd. It is located in the south western corner of Crow Wing County with its west border abutting Fort Ripley Township, north border Crow Wing Township

and east border Daggett Brook

Township. It shares its southern border with Morrison County's Ripley East Township.



## Township History

The early history of what later became St. Mathias Township has been defined by transitions in Native American culture, the outcome of struggles between the governments of

Britain and France to stake claims to vast areas of the North American continent, and the American colonists' victory in the Revolutionary War.

From the early 1700's, the Dakota (also known as the Sioux) co-existed here, albeit tensely, with the Ojibwa (also known as the Chippewa). The Ojibwa had migrated into the area following settlement of the eastern areas of the continent by British and French subjects, which forced eastern tribes westward into Dakota Territory.

In 1763, when it lost the French and Indian Wars, France ceded its claim to lands east of the Mississippi River to Britain.

The Dakota lost their claim to the area in the Battle of Crow Wing, which occurred in 1768 near the confluence of the Nokasippi and Mississippi Rivers at a site now included within Crow Wing State Park. The prevailing Ojibwa, armed by French traders, expelled the Dakota from lands east of the Mississippi, although skirmishes in areas now comprising Crow Wing and Cass Counties continued for years.



When the British lost the Revolutionary War to the American colonists in 1783, they ceded their claims to territories east of the Mississippi to the new United States. In 1837, the United States signed a treaty with the Ojibwa nation, which ceded its claims to the area. In return, the Ojibwa received certain payments and a guarantee that they would be able to retain a "privilege of hunting, fishing and gathering the wild rice upon the lands, the rivers and the lakes" included in the territory ceded.

Then, as a result of the Treaty with the Winnehagos in 1846, who were being relocated northward into the area to free their native territories in Iowa for white

settlement, the United States Secretary of War ordered the establishment of a military post near the junction of the Mississippi and Crow Wing Rivers. The site was selected because the rivers and their junction were a common boundary shared by the Dakota and Ojibwa and, with the 1846 treaty, the Winnebago, who requested protection.

In 1848, the U.S. Army dispatched an advance party from Fort Snelling to look at the site. The following year--also the year when the Territory of Minnesota was



established, the Army built a military fort on the west bank of the Mississippi River. First named Fort Marcy after the Secretary of War who had ordered its construction, the installation was shortly afterwards renamed Fort Gaines and then Fort Ripley. The site is now part of Camp Ripley.

The new military installation included a substantial reservation of territory lying to the east. More than two-thirds of what became St. Mathias Township was part of this reservation. The eastern boundary of the reservation

ran north-south at a slight angle through the latter day township: some of it still defines property lines and is visible through fence lines and different agricultural and forest usages of the land.

In 1858, Minnesota was admitted to the Union as a state.



In April 1880, Congress directed the War Department to return most of the Fort Ripley military reservation lands to the Interior Department for sale to settlers.

In 1882, Mooersville Township was organized. It consisted of the plats referred to as Township 43, Ranges 31 and 32. In 1892, after some considerable (unnamed) friction between residents of these two congressional townships, Township 43 Range 31 detached itself from Mooersville and became known as St. Mathias Township. Its name was taken from the St. Mathias Church. The petition for its organization was granted by the county commissioners on June 7th of 1892. Although the petition for its organization is not on file, the "Returns from first election" takes its place.

The officers elected were John H. Gibson. Arvid Junzens, A.D. Edison - as supervisors: V.L. Whitford as clerk; G. Mattes as treasurer: R.H. Capistrant and V.L. Whitney as justices; Win.



S. Green as constable; and John Elman and James Montgomery as pound masters. The remaining Range 32 became an unorganized territory and remained so until 1904 when it was organized as Fort Ripley Township.

The 1900 census was the first taken after St. Mathias's organization and showed a population of 439. St. Mathias has remained a fairly well populated township. In the course of its history, seven school districts have been organized. Five of them remained active until 1960, when most rural county elementary schools were consolidated into the Brainerd School District and children were transported by bus to the city schools.

Two churches were established in the township: the Church of St. Mathias in 1887, which was composed of French and German Roman Catholics and has had a dominating influence on the community, and the Church of God in 1885 at Gorstville. The latter church faded into virtual nonexistence with the demise of the Gorst Mill prior to 1900. A cemetery, now maintained under an initiative of the township board to preserve the history of the township, is located near the site of the church, which is no longer standing. Although there has never been an incorporated village in the township, a store and post office were established near the Church of St. Mathias. The store remained until the 1970's, when it was converted to a bar and grille. The post office, established in 1888, was discontinued in 1908.

For the sum of one dollar, Louis O. Manard granted the Township of St. Mathias perpetual rights to a half acre of land to be used as the site of its town hall. This donation was made on March 12, 1918, at the township annual meeting, when residents present resolved to raise and use \$8,300 along with \$8,150 that had previously been allocated for a tool shed as funds for the building of a town hall, a 16 x 24-foot building.

Currently, the township board consists of three supervisors, a clerk, and a treasurer. The supervisors are the decision-makers on the board, voting on decisions; the clerk and treasurer record and process the transactions of the



township. The responsibility of the Board is to allocate tax dollars in such a way as to provide for the needs of its citizens. The board is elected from and by the registered voters of the Township. The board's general goals and policies are established at the annual meeting of residents, held in March. The town board uses this information, the Crow Wing County Zoning Ordinance, Minnesota State Statutes applicable to townships, and other regulations and appropriate governing policies as the framework for its decisions and actions.

### **St. Mathias Town Hall History**

On April 6, 1918, at a regular town board meeting, the St. Mathias board moved to build a town hall. At this time, monthly meetings were being held at the local school. Specifications for the building were established, bids were let. Lewis DeRosier was awarded



the bid on April 20. His bid was the lowest at \$480. Lewis was also awarded the paint job at \$35. A wood barrel stove was put in connected to a brick chimney.

For the first 40 plus years, meetings were held in this building. There was no insulation, just the bare studs. In the 1960's, the board determined it would be a good idea to finish off the inside with insulation and paneling. Three election booths were built in.

In 1986, the wood stove was removed and an electric wall heater was installed. It was enough to take the chill out, but, when it got really cold, especially during March elections, an extra heater was plugged in.

With a small parking area and the increase of people attending meetings, the Township Board met with the St. Mathias Park Board to move the township meetings to the park center. In 2001, regular monthly meetings were moved to the park. In lieu of renting the park building, the town board agreed to pay for the plowing of the park parking lot and driveway.

A committee was established in March 2012 to examine the future of the town building. They were given a budget of \$5,000 to make necessary repairs. A new roof was put on and new windows installed. More repairs need to be made. The committee was also asked to research how the building could be utilized. One of the suggestions was to make it a place for a book exchange for the local residents. It could also be a meeting place for small groups. Another suggestion was to move the building to St. Mathias Park.

The future of this historic building is in the hands of the residents, hopefully for generations to come.





### **Pine Grove Cemetery History**

The Pine Grove Cemetery in St. Mathias Township is one of the visible remnants of history of the area. The first known burial was seven year old Henriette Gorst, December 9, 1882. But there were probably earlier burials.



Many of the markers were made of wood and several fires have swept through the area during its history. The evidence that remains are indentations in the ground and burial sites framed with rocks. The remarkable aspect of this cemetery rests with the beautiful pine woods and the mystery that surrounds it.

The cemetery is located on a hill overlooking the Little Nokassippi River. It was officially established in 1883 with the deed being recorded March 7, 1888. And in 1905, the cemetery became official with a plot map drawn. Just south of the cemetery and across the river was a settlement called Gorstville or Gorst's Mill. Established in 1881, it had a lumber mill and a grist mill. A school was located nearby and a minister came by regularly to hold services in the schoolhouse. The community thrived into the 1890's until the timber supply became sparse and the estimated 100 residents began drifting away.

Little is known about those buried in Pine Grove Cemetery. What is known is that there are at least two Civil War veterans. There may be more as many of the original settlers were Civil War Veterans. Also, many of those buried are children, as small pox, flu and diphtheria epidemics passed through the area. There was also a potter's field section designated for the southwest corner of the cemetery. The total number of burials will never be known.

The cemetery was kept up until the 1940's. The last burial was Anna Pfiefer Shannon in 1940. She cared for the cemetery until her death since her husband, both parents, and many of her childhood friends, were buried there too. In the next 50 years, the site became a shambles of brush, weeds and debris.

In September 1994, restoration began when the St. Mathias Town Board established a cemetery committee at the request of interested residents. As there was no official ownership, the Township became the owner and subject to any liabilities connected with it. And, It was also one of the few sites of historical significance that existed in the township and it needed to be preserved. A group of interested residents formed the committee.

In the spring of 1995, cleanup began with the help of local residents and the sentence-to-serve work crew. Brushing, raking, tree trimming, fixing the fence and gate, it was an amazing effort! It opened up a whole new view of the history of the area.

Since then, the cemetery has been regularly maintained with mowing and landscaping efforts. Some trees had to be removed as they had reached their prime. In 2012, a Boy Scout troop requested to do some work at the cemetery as part of community project. They put up a permanent flag pole, two benches, and performed other landscaping projects to beautify the cemetery.

The cemetery is located approximately two miles west of Crow County Road 121 on 10th Street. About one mile of the road is minimum



maintenance. It is fairly well maintained in the spring, summer and fall. However travel is at your own risk. During the winter months, the cemetery is only accessible by snowshoes, cross country skis or snowmobile as the road is not plowed and is impassable by vehicle.



The future of the cemetery is to continue to maintain it and to research the history surrounding it. Research was done on the two Civil War Veterans and it can be read at the Crow Wing County Historical Museum. The committee is still looking for more information on the area and hopefully someday may be able to share it all in book form one day.

### **Riverside Union Church History**

by Pastor Harvey Peterson

The history of Riverside Union Church goes back to the year 1907. It was organized by a mission group from Pennsylvania, who established Sunday schools in various places throughout rural areas of the country. A Sunday school was formed in a country school, District 19, in neighboring Daggett Township, section 29. The school was located at the intersection of what is now called Buehler Road and Oakridge Road. The mission group from Pennsylvania was known as the American Sunday School Union.

By 1913, a church was built made of hand hewn logs. It was built diagonally across the intersection in a field now owned by Milo Buehler. At this time, the church was organized and chartered as the East Daggett Brook Presbyterian

Church. The church was open mostly during the summer months because the snow prevented access during the winter months.



In 1947 ground was broken for what we now know as Riverside Union Church. The name was taken from the old Sunday School Union and its proximity to the Nokassippi River. The congregation moved into the basement in 1949 where they could meet in relative comfort from the heat of a wood furnace. The upper level was ready for occupancy by 1951. The first service was the wedding of Lois Sewell. Originally, the building had no indoor plumbing. By 1965, an addition was added with indoor plumbing.

In 2001, the congregation needed a larger facility to fulfill the ministerial work. A new church was built in Section 13. It was dedicated on the second Sunday of 2002. It has served the people well.

### **A History of St. Mathias Catholic Church**

In 1887, Monsignor J.F. Buh traveled to this community to offer Mass in the homes of the French settlers. This was the beginning of the parish of St. Mathias.

The establishment of St. Mathias Church and Parish took root when the missionaries came to the area to help the people who were settling there. There was a settlement called Crow Wing located along the Mississippi River. It was the site of the first Catholic Church in Crow Wing County established around



1868. The settlement waned when the railroad developed to the north going through Brainerd. Mass services were discontinued in the church by 1879.

St. Mathias Church is one of the oldest parishes in the diocese of Duluth, Minnesota. In old church directories, St. Mathias first shows up as a mission of St. Francis Church in Brainerd, but being served by a priest, Fr. Arthur Lamothe, from Little Falls which was in the St. Cloud diocese.

In July 1920, the Crosier Order from Onamia began 76 years of serving the people. Fr. John Tertooogen, OSC was the first pastor from Onamia. There were over 75 families by this time.

Because of the large number of people, the old church had become outgrown. It was decided to build a new church in the early 1920s. The farmers began digging the basement in December 1923, and on August 26, 1928 and the first Mass was said in the new church. The total cost of the church was \$10,677.62.



In 1996 the Crosier Fathers from Onamia turned the pastoral duties of St. Mathias back to the Duluth Diocese. There was some apprehension when this happened. With shortage of priests, what would that mean? In 1999, it was decided that St. Mathias would be clustered with St. Andrew's Parish in Brainerd. Later, the Brainerd area became a cluster of 3 parishes, St. Francis, St. Andrew and St. Mathias.

St. Mathias parish is multi-generational, family orientated, and located in a beautiful rural setting. Today, through working, praying, and playing together, St. Mathias continues to have a strong community. There are approximately 240 households in the parish. And membership is growing. One can see and hear this on Sunday morning from the hum of little voices and the pews being filled. With the continued effort of the people, we will see St. Mathias Church and community in another 125 years.

### **The Magnan Mill History**

by Mervin Eisel

Part of St. Mathias Township was included in the original Fort Ripley Military Reservation. The reservation was established in 1848. The Congressional Committee of Military Affairs, on February 3, 1880, passed "An Act to Restore to public domain, a part of the Reservation, known as Fort Ripley, in the State of Minnesota....." This part was east of the Mississippi River and excluded lands that were granted for a railway right-of-way. This land included about two-thirds of the western part of St. Mathias Township.



After this land was open to settlers, two French Canadian brothers, David and Gene Magnan, came to the area searching for a swift river on which they wanted to build a mill. They selected a site on the Nokassippi River in St. Mathias section 18.

Their mill ground flour and sawed lumber. It was a roller flour mill powered by a water turbine. They had customers for grinding flour and sawing lumber from as far away as Royalton and Rice.

Some time between 1890 and 1900, the mill was damaged by a flood. In about 1895, the mill was destroyed by fire. The turbine still exists. Another part of the mill is at the Weyerhaeuser Museum in Little Falls.

## Demographics and Statistics

St. Mathias has grown steadily in population from 1970 through today, as shown in Table 1. There are likely many reasons for this, including the economic growth and employment opportunities of the nearby regional centers of Brainerd / Baxter and Little Falls, and the quality of life St. Mathias Township provides to residents. Regardless of cause, St. Mathias Township has seen its population nearly double in the past four decades.

**Table 1**  
**Historical Population**

Jurisdiction	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
St. Mathias Township	398	440	441	490	622
Brainerd	11667	11489	12353	13,178	13590
Baxter	1556	2625	3695	5555	7610
Crow Wing County	34826	41722	44249	55,099	62500
Minnesota	3806103	4075970	4919479	4,919,479	5,303,925

Source: US Census

Periodically the State of Minnesota's Demographic Center provides projections for population change by local unit of government – traditionally at the City and Township level, as shown in Table 2. Projections are based on a variety of methods – with the average of these being used. While these projections are just that, projections, the Township would be wise to at minimum review these when planning for the future and making decisions that have intermediate and long term impacts.





**Table 2****Population Projections by County, Township and City**

County	Location	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Aitkin	County total	18000	18700	19010	19370	19630
Cass	County total	32860	34500	35810	36250	36600
Crow Wing	Baxter city	9678	10701	11607	12251	12814
Crow Wing	Brainerd city	14406	14578	14689	14661	14613
Crow Wing	Crow Wing township	2051	2245	2416	2536	2640
Crow Wing	Daggett Brook township	616	653	684	704	721
Crow Wing	Fort Ripley city	57	53	50	44	42
Crow Wing	Long Lake township	1228	1289	1341	1373	1399
Crow Wing	St. Mathias township	649	683	712	730	745
Crow Wing	County total	69810	73960	77520	79750	81610
Mille Lacs	County total	33000	35970	38540	40630	42390
Morrison	Platte township	304	297	288	278	268
Morrison	Ripley township	841	891	933	965	992
Morrison	County total	36050	37470	38630	39450	40110

Source: MN Demographic Center 2007

**Table 3****St. Mathias Township Persons by Gender**

Persons by Gender	Male	Female
St. Mathias Township	321	301
Crow Wing County	31260	31447
Minnesota	2670741	2708398

Source: American Community Survey 2010

**Table 4**  
**Average Household Size**

Jurisdiction	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
St. Mathias Township	2.9	2.85	2.82	2.77	2.7	2.69
Brainerd	2.23	2.22	2.21	2.2	2.18	2.23
Baxter	2.87	2.83	2.77	2.71	2.64	2.55
Crow Wing County	2.43	2.41	2.39	2.37	2.33	2.37
Minnesota	2.52	2.51	2.49	2.47	2.46	2.48

Source: American Community Survey

Table 4 demonstrates that the average household size has slowly decreased over the past decade in St. Mathias Township, as well as in area communities and the State of Minnesota. A variety of reasons may explain this, primarily demographics, but it all comes down to attributes of the individual household.

Related, births projected to occur over almost the next two decades are anticipated to hold approximately steady for the area, as outlined in Table 5. One should note that these numbers are only for births that occur within the counties listed. Many factors can alter these numbers – including the geographical locations of hospitals. Also, one should note that these do not include births to county residents that take place in other places.

**Table 5**  
**Projected Births by County**

Location / Year	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Minnesota	75,042	77,384	77,180	75,950	76,104
Aitkin County	140	129	120	116	114
Cass County	364	339	326	327	319
Crow Wing County	784	778	778	792	779
Mille Lacs County	387	386	394	415	422
Morrison County	449	437	424	421	411

Source: Minnesota Demographic Center 2007

**Table 6**  
**Annual Unemployment Rate**

Location / Year	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
US	4	5.8	5.5	4.6	5.8	9.6	8.1
MN	3.1	4.5	4.6	4.1	5.4	7.4	5.6
Crow Wing Co.	4	5.3	5.3	6	6.9	8.8	7.4
Aitkin Co.	6.1	6.6	6.9	6	8	9.9	7.7
Cass Co.	5.4	6.1	7.1	6.5	6.8	10.6	8.9
Mille Lacs Co.	4.4	6.5	7.1	6.9	9	11.9	8.8
Morrison Co.	4.6	5.8	5.8	5.6	7.5	9.5	7.2

Source: MN Department of Employment & Economic Development LAUS

Table 6 shows that, for the most part, the annual unemployment of Crow Wing County, surrounding counties, the state, and the nation are beginning to decline after the "great recession". Over the past decade Crow Wing County has statistically had an unemployment slightly higher than the State of Minnesota's average, and slightly below the Nation's average. When compared to neighboring Counties, Crow Wing unemployment numbers are approximately average of the region.

**Table 7**  
**St. Mathias Township Household Income**

Household Income	Number
Less than \$10,000	10
\$10,000 to \$14,999	12
\$15,000 to \$24,999	14
\$25,000 to \$34,999	43
\$35,000 to \$49,999	42
\$50,000 to \$74,999	88
\$75,000 to \$99,999	73
\$100,000 to \$149,999	47
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0
\$200,000 or more	0
Median household income (dollars)	56,803
Mean household income (dollars)	62,852

Source: American Community Survey 2010

**Table 8**  
**St. Mathias Township Educational Attainment**

Population 25 years and over	Number	Percent
Less than 9th grade	21	3.60%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	33	5.70%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	221	37.90%
Some college, no degree	107	18.40%
Associate's degree	116	19.90%
Bachelor's degree	49	8.40%
Graduate or professional degree	36	6.20%

Source: American Community Survey 2010

**Table 9**  
**St. Mathias Township Housing Units**

Total housing units	Number	Percent
1-unit, detached	312	91.20%
1-unit, attached	0	0.00%
2 units	0	0.00%
3 or 4 units	0	0.00%
5 to 9 units	0	0.00%
10 to 19 units	0	0.00%
20 or more units	0	0.00%
Mobile home	30	8.80%
Boat, RV	0	0.00%

Source: American Community Survey 2010

The data profiled in Table 9, Housing Units, may in itself seem rather mundane. But, when one considers historical population trends, and future population projections, as shown in Table 1 and Table 2, respectively, then factor in the historically declining household size in the area, as shown in Table 4, St. Mathias Township could realistically expect increased demand for housing within the township, and further, the township should not be surprised if it sees further growth in home construction.



These demographic and statistic population / housing trends and projections could also have a widespread impact on other attributes of the Township, such as transportation and other infrastructure.

**Table 10**  
**St. Mathias Township Home Heating Source**

Occupied housing units	Number	Percent
Utility gas	3	0.90%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	139	42.20%
Electricity	26	7.90%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	87	26.40%
Coal or coke	0	0.00%
Wood	74	22.50%
Solar energy	0	0.00%
Other fuel	0	0.00%
No fuel used	0	0.00%

Source: American Community Survey 2010

**Table 11**  
**St. Mathias Township Home Values**

Owner-occupied units	Number	Percent
Less than \$50,000	13	5.20%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	10	4.00%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	18	7.20%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	49	19.60%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	103	41.20%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	49	19.60%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	8	3.20%
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0.00%
Median (dollars)	227,800	

Source: American Community Survey 2010

Table 11 outlines the fact that approximately 20% of St. Mathias Township homes are valued between \$150,000 and \$199,999, and over 41% of all homes are valued at between \$200,000 - \$299,999.

**Table 12**  
**St. Mathias Township Housing Occupancy**

HOUSING OCCUPANCY	Number	Percent
Total housing units	342	342
Occupied housing units	329	96.20%
Vacant housing units	13	3.80%

Source: American Community Survey 2010

According to Table 12, over 96% of all homes in St. Mathias Township are occupied, pointing to a tight housing market. Further, historical population patterns and projections for increased growth, may put further strain on this already tight housing market.

**Table 13**  
**Home Foreclosures**

Location (County)	2011 Total #	2012 Total #	2011-12 Change %	2011 Rate	2012 Rate	2012 Rank
Crow Wing	358	281	-22%	1.44%	1.13%	13
Aitkin	71	74	4%	0.95%	0.99%	18
Cass County	123	99	-20%	1.07%	0.86%	24
Mille Lacs	193	163	-16%	2.11%	1.79%	3
Morrison	109	93	-15%	0.86%	0.73%	35

Source: Sheriff Sale Data compiled by MN Home Ownership Center. [www.hocmn.org](http://www.hocmn.org)

Table 13 shows that while the number of home foreclosures have decreased in Crow Wing County, it still affects greater than 1% of homes in the county annually.



**Table 14**  
**County Health Ranking**

Location (County)	County Ranking
Crow Wing	50
Aitkin	77
Cass County	87
Mille Lacs	85
Morrison	82

Source: CountyHealthRankings.org -2013

Table 14 shows the county rankings, out of 87 Counties within the State of Minnesota, in regards to overall health. This table shows that residents of Crow Wing County are healthier, on average, than residents of the surrounding Counties. However, Crow Wing County still ranks in the bottom half of Minnesota Counties in terms of overall resident health.

Many factors come into play with these rankings, including mortality, resident lifestyle habits, occurrences of serious ailments, and other factors. For a complete synopsis of how this information is compiled, please visit [www.countyhealthrankings.com](http://www.countyhealthrankings.com).

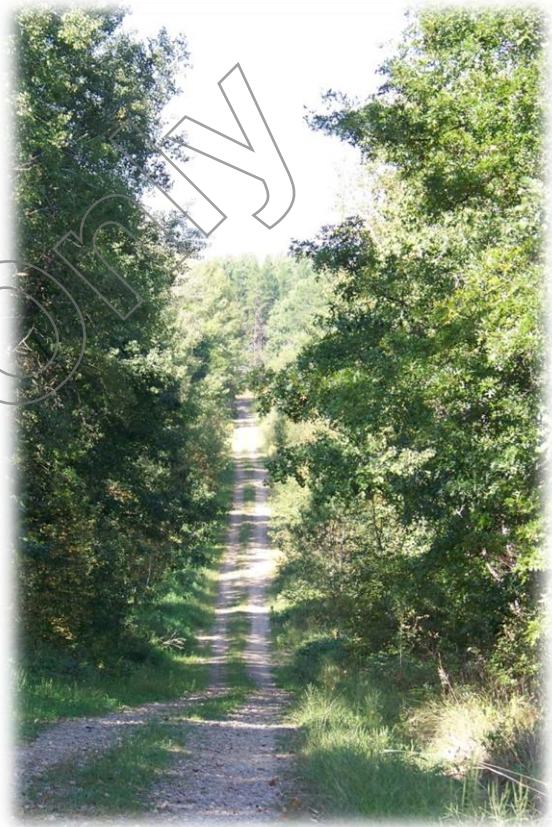


## **Comprehensive Plan**

A Comprehensive Plan, or "Comp Plan" for short, is a statement of what St. Mathias Township wants to become. It is a collection of principles-based on community defined vision; and an assembly of concepts which have been established to support the principles and the vision. These principles and concepts reflect the community's vision in its desires for growth, maintaining a rural atmosphere, and respect for the land and the environment. The "Master Plan", which demonstrates how the community can move forward, is somewhat broad in scope, recognizing that there are many factors influencing how and why the community will change. Therefore, it deals more with concepts, patterns and relationships than specific rules and ordinances.

## **Previous Plans**

This document is a continuation of the ongoing planning process in St. Mathias Township. It legally amends the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, the latest official Comprehensive Plan for St. Mathias Township. The Township has used this planning process as an opportunity to evaluate and reinforce the existing growth and development policies and to evaluate previous planning efforts in order to update and reinforce past decisions that are still valid. A major premise of this Plan, therefore, is to utilize portions of previous community plans whenever applicable.





## Methodology

This Comprehensive Plan is the product of several entities and systemic, ongoing, forward-looking processes including:

- An Ad-Hoc Citizen Planning Task Force appointed by the St. Mathias Township Board of Supervisors composed of a cross section of the community.
- Input from the St. Mathias Board of Supervisors.
- Input from St. Mathias Residents through the Township's 2013 Community Survey.
- The gathering of demographic and historical data from a variety of sources including St. Mathias Township, Crow Wing County, Region Five Development Commission, the State of Minnesota and the US Census. Review of prior planning documents, reports, studies, etc., and,
- Assistance from Township Staff.



## Purpose

This document is the Comprehensive Plan for St. Mathias Township, Crow Wing County, Minnesota. This Plan sets forth the basic guiding principles that have been embraced by St. Mathias Township to shape its future. It evolved through the interchange of information, analysis and response between the citizens, community leaders, staff and public officials within the Township and surrounding areas through a planning process undertaken in 2013 - 2014.

## The Plan

While the Table of Contents presents a clear listing of what is contained in this document, the reader will benefit from a brief overview of the organization of the Plan. This Introduction presents an abridged summary of the planning process and the framework within which the Plan was developed.

The Demographic Characteristics chapter provides an overview and assessment of demographic trends within the Township and surrounding areas. An area's overall population characteristics such as age, household size, etc. are critical influences on its future. Population, household and other demographic information helps define existing conditions within the community. This information also provides a basis for future expectations with regard to growth, housing needs, economic development, land use needs and other important components of the Comprehensive Plan.



The subsequent several chapters focus on specific planning topics including:

- Land Use and Water
- Agriculture and Forestry
- Residential / Housing
- Transportation
- Commercial / Business
- Community Facilities
- Recreational
- Quality of Life

Each of these chapters contains an Inventory and Analysis of existing conditions related to the respective topic within and affecting St. Mathias Township. Existing conditions and patterns of development in the Township and surrounding area have a great influence on its future. Thus, accurate, complete and up-to-date information on existing conditions is essential to a successful Comprehensive Plan.

Each of these chapters also contains an overview of the Issues identified by project participants relating to that chapter's specific topic. Following that is a Policy Plan, which includes a set of Goals and Strategies as well as suggested



short and long term action items. A Goal is a general statement of community aspirations indicating a broad social, economic or physical state of conditions that the community officially agrees to strive to achieve in various ways, such as through the implementation

of the Comprehensive Plan. A Strategy is an officially adopted course of action, position, policy or strategy intended to be followed to implement the community Goals. The Goals and Strategies express in detail the Township's aspirations for the future. Short and Long Term Action Items are suggested actions that address the goals and strategies outlined, and in no way should they be considered mandatory or required – they are simply the 2014 St. Mathias Township Comprehensive Plan Ad-Hoc Citizen Task Force's best strategized course of action to achieve the Goals and Strategies outlined.

Experience has shown that no system of land use designation, public facilities, transportation, etc. can survive strong economic pressures to change. Therefore, it is appropriate that such systems be periodically reevaluated in light of changing social and economic conditions.

Consequently, it is from precisely this inevitability of changing conditions that a community's Goals and Strategies derive their true value, because it is in the Goals and Strategies that the Township has the opportunity to communicate its aspirations regarding the type of living environment that its citizens strive to achieve. Therefore, while external factors influencing land use, public facilities, transportation, etc. will change, the goals and strategies will continue to provide the best perspective from which to view proposed changes.

The Goals and Policies distilled from this process also contain suggested short and long term action items. These are more specific recommendations based on the input from the community survey and Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Plan Task Force related to the future growth and development of the Township.

### **Project Participants**

This project required the coordination of many participants. A group of citizens, staff, elected officials and other stakeholders whose members were appointed by the Township made up the Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force. Members represented a broad cross section of interests and perspectives throughout the community. This group reviewed and commented on





all work products and focused on preparing and recommending a complete set of Goals, Strategies and Short and Long Term Action Item recommendations for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan.

St. Mathias Township secured the services of planning consultant Region Five Development Commission to facilitate the development of this Plan, and was assisted by the Crow Wing County Planning and Zoning Office.

### **Planning Process**

The planning process began with the St. Mathias Township Board of Supervisors.



After much discussion, an Ad-Hoc Citizen Task Force was created to work on this undertaking. Through Spring and Summer 2013 the Task Force met multiple times and created a resident survey, which was deployed in summer, 2013.

After reviewing survey results, the Task Force recommended that their planning efforts be taken to the next level by retaining professional planning assistance to help create the new Comprehensive Plan document. Region Five Development Commission was called in early fall, 2013 and asked to meet with the Task Force and Township Board to discuss a plan for completion of this project.

Planners from Region Five met twice with St. Mathias township to discuss a course of action for completing the Township's comprehensive plan, and were retained at that time to assist.

The Task Force met on November 19, 2013. At this meeting a presentation was given outlining what a Comprehensive Plan is and is-not and the scope of work for this project, as well as a demographical and statistical overview of St. Mathias Township and surrounding area.

This Ad-Hoc Task Force met several additional times over the late 2013 and early 2014 where they reviewed demographics and statistics of the Township and surrounding area, and developed, reviewed and edited the Goals, Objectives and Short and Long Term Action Items in this document, as well as prepared the Potential Future Land Use Map, outlining future development goals for the St. Mathias Township.

These Goals, Objectives and Short and Long Term Action Items and well as Potential Future Land Use Map was approved by the Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Plan Task Force at their February, 2014 meeting, crafted into a full Comprehensive Plan document, and presented to the St. Mathias Township Board of Supervisors at their March, 2014 for their review. A Public Hearing was held by St. Mathias Township on (DATE), and formally approved and adapted on (DATE).



## Goals and Objectives

### Land Use And Water

Goal: To protect and preserve the natural environment of St. Mathias Township's rivers, streams, lakes, woodlands, agriculture, open spaces and wetland areas in manner consistent with existing development patterns and the comprehensive plan.

Policy 1: Encourage enforcement of all applicable shoreland and wetland regulations.

Policy 2: Assist with the enforcement of the county ordinances, involving the placement of well, septic tank and other soil absorption systems, especially near water courses and wetlands.

Policy 3: Strive to prevent the filling of wetland and low areas without careful analysis of the consequences on the hydrology of the area and the impact on wildlife and surrounding area.

Goal: To encourage the use of natural and open space lands in a manner that will preserve the natural habitat and keep the rural feel of St. Mathias Township.

Policy 1: Encourage reforestation or reclamation of the land harvested of timber. Promote services provided by partners such as the DNR, USDA, Crow Wing County, and others to encourage responsible forestry and land stewardship.

Policy 2: Assist local public and civic groups with tree planting programs.

Goal: Capitalize on natural resources in an environmentally friendly manner for the benefit of St. Mathias Township and its residents.

Policy 1: Promote Township's trails, parks and other natural attributes.

Policy 2: Support the responsible use of trail systems within the township.

Policy 3: Be open to opportunities to expand natural recreation and tourism within the township.

Goal: To protect the groundwater located under St. Mathias Township for current and future generations.

Policy 1: Work with strategic partners in the protection of the quality of groundwater through various methods, and publicize opportunities for water quality testing.

Policy 2: Identify and work with partners to mitigate risks to groundwater depletion by carefully observing volumes and quantities of water pumped from aquifers.

### **Agriculture & Forestry**

Goal: Maintain agriculture as a viable industry for current and future generations in St. Mathias Township.

Goal: To maintain the family farm as an integral segment of the Township's economic and social structure.

Policy 1: Encourage programs that support family farm policies including



support programs and financing mechanisms.

Policy 2: In an effort to preserve the townships' agricultural feel, consider proposals for smaller parcel development that do not detract from the rural character of the area.

## **Residential / Housing**

Goal: To provide for all housing types in the Township consistent with St. Mathias development patterns.

Policy 1: Ensure that smaller parcels considered for housing development have adequate means of water, sewer and other infrastructure.

Policy 2: Encourage the upgrading of substandard housing.

Policy 3: Allow for housing types which vary in cost and size therefore enabling all family income levels.

Policy 4: Work to mitigate blighted properties in an effort to promote the health, safety, aesthetics and well being of the Township.

Goal: To allow for recreational residential development in those areas where such development will not adversely affect the natural environment or water quality.

Policy 1: Be open to recreational or seasonal residential development.

Policy 2: Encourage the enforcement of the applicable shoreland standards which regulate recreational development on lake and river shores.

Policy 3: Discourage recreational residential development in areas where the environment would be damaged or harmed through improper development.

Policy 4: Discourage the use of multiple dwelling units or structures on lots incapable of providing suitable sanitary, water and other services.

## **Transportation**

Goal: To maintain and improve the established system of roads, highways and bridges within the Township, in a manner consistent with safety, efficiency and intended purposes, as resources allow.

Policy 1: Maintain roadways according to a plan approved by the Township in regards to plowing, grading and maintenance.

Policy 2: Seek the consultation and support of County and State highway officials with regard to road and highway improvements, if necessary.

Policy 3: In an effort to reduce conflict between motorized, non-motorized and pedestrian traffic, as well as landowners and neighbors, the Township encourages responsible use through a variety of partnerships (residents, user groups, service groups, law enforcement, etc.) to enforce regulations on trails, roadways and private property.

Policy 4: Partner with other local units of government on transportation initiatives in an effort to reduce costs and increase efficiency.

Goal: Be open to new transportation corridors (roads, highways) to areas where new development can occur thereby strengthening the tax base.

Policy 1: Require developers to construct township standard roadways into new developments.

Policy 2: Follow the developed transportation plan of the county and seek meaningful road projects that will aid the Township residents.

Policy 3: Be open to new construction of roadways that will link areas of the Township together.

Policy 4: Coordinate integration with the County's public transit system.

### **Commercial / Business**

Goal: To provide for suitable areas in the Township where commercial and business development can take place and be accessible to the greatest number of residents, tourists, and passersby.

Policy 1: Encourage the responsible zoning of areas within the Township where development of commercial activity will be centered rather than scattered throughout the Township.

Policy 2: Capitalize on the volume of traffic moving through the township.

Policy 3: Consider commercial centers where public services, including main travelled roadways, utilities, and other public functions occur.

Policy 4: Explore development opportunities in a responsible and sustainable manner in an effort to create and retain jobs, strengthen tax base, and bring new dollars into the Township.

Policy 5: Discourage commercial development or activities where residential home values, residents and the natural environment will be adversely affected.

Goal: Further develop the commercial / business / industrial areas approved by the Township.

Policy 1: Be open to development opportunities that create and retain jobs, strengthen tax base, and bring new dollars into the Township.

Policy 2: Work with Economic Development organizations such as Brainerd Lakes Area Economic Development Corporation (BLAEDC), Region 5 Development Commission, and others to assist existing businesses to grow, and developing new businesses.

### **Township Assets**

Goal: Engage in long term planning for Township assets.

Policy 1: Create a Capital Investment Plan that outlines goals for the Township's infrastructure and suggests ideas for paying for it.

Policy 2: Review the Comprehensive Plan on a regular basis to ensure it is consistent with the ideas and values of township residents, updating as necessary.

Policy 3: Strengthen communications between the Township and Crow Wing County

### **Zoning, Land Use And Recreation**

Goal: Protect the township's resources in an environmentally friendly manner for the benefit of St. Mathias Township and its current and future residents.



Policy 1: Support the Townships' existing trails, parks and other natural attributes, while maintaining the rural agricultural setting.

Policy 2: Be open to additional outdoor recreational development that enhances responsible use and is considerate of Township residents and property owners.

Goal: Support suitable areas within the Township for open space development.

Policy 1: Encourage preservation of those unique natural areas for public open space use and provide for special protection areas.

Policy 2: Utilize, where ownership permits, lake, river and stream banks, woodlands, open areas and similar property for recreational purposes.

Policy 3: Develop park and recreational areas that will have the most benefit to the Township residents and visitors, with the least detrimental effects.

Goal: Be open to, through local land use control, private land use developments which are recreational in nature and will serve the general public.

Policy 1: Be open to the development of waterfront and recreational land use development.

## **Quality Of Life**

Goal: Strive to improve the quality of life for current residents and future

generations.

Policy1: Promote expansion, implementation and adoption of

communications technology, such as broadband internet and wireless, for business, educational and private use.

Policy 2: Support efforts to expand the cultural and social fabric of our community.

## Implementation

Use and flexibility is required for a Comprehensive Land Use Plan to be an effective tool. Things will no doubt change dramatically in St. Mathias Township over the next 10 + years. This plan will need to have flexibility to react to these changes.

Providing suggested implementation strategies / action items is one of the best ways to implement a comprehensive land use plan. Focusing on these action items allow the use of many tools over time to achieve the desired results and outcomes. The methods and ways of today may be outdated in ten years. Elected Officials, Appointed Commission members and Township Staff will need a current working knowledge of all of the means in which the goals, policies and action items presented in the plan can be attained.

This plan lists a number of strategies that, when



combined, have the potential to positively impact the future of St. Mathias Township. The Township's resources are typically scarce, so it is not realistic to assume that St. Mathias Township can implement all of them at once. Therefore, it's necessary to focus the Township's resources on those that have the most potential to have the biggest impact.

## Review and Revision

Comprehensive planning is a continuous process and thus this Comprehensive



Plan should be monitored and updated when necessary. The Township Board of Supervisors should carefully review proposed changes and their implications and actively seek citizen comment on such proposals. If changes

are found to be appropriate, they should be formally added to the Plan by legal amendment. In addition, every five years, the entire Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed and modified to ensure that it is an up-to-date expression of community goals and intentions.

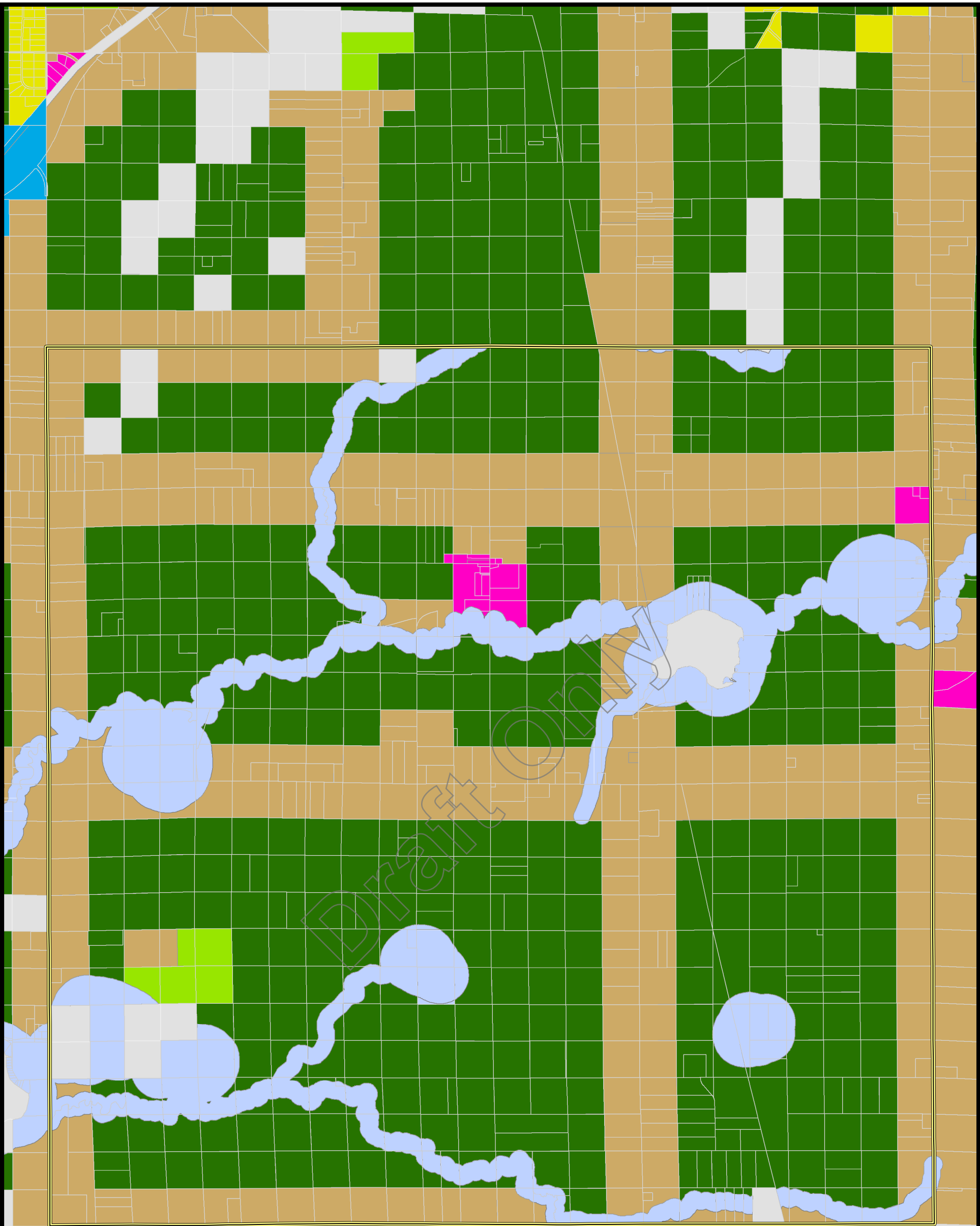
## Implementation Steps

Each year, Township staff should brief the Board of Supervisors on the “state of the Comprehensive Plan.” This briefing should reacquaint the Township Board with the content of the Plan, discuss emerging facts that have a bearing on the accuracy of the Plan projections, discuss land use and development activities within the last year and those on the docket for the upcoming year, and suggest an annual agenda of planning activities to assist in the implementation of the Plan.

Review the Plan in five years and again in ten years to determine whether the Plan recommendations are still current. Revise those sections that are determined to be in need of an update.







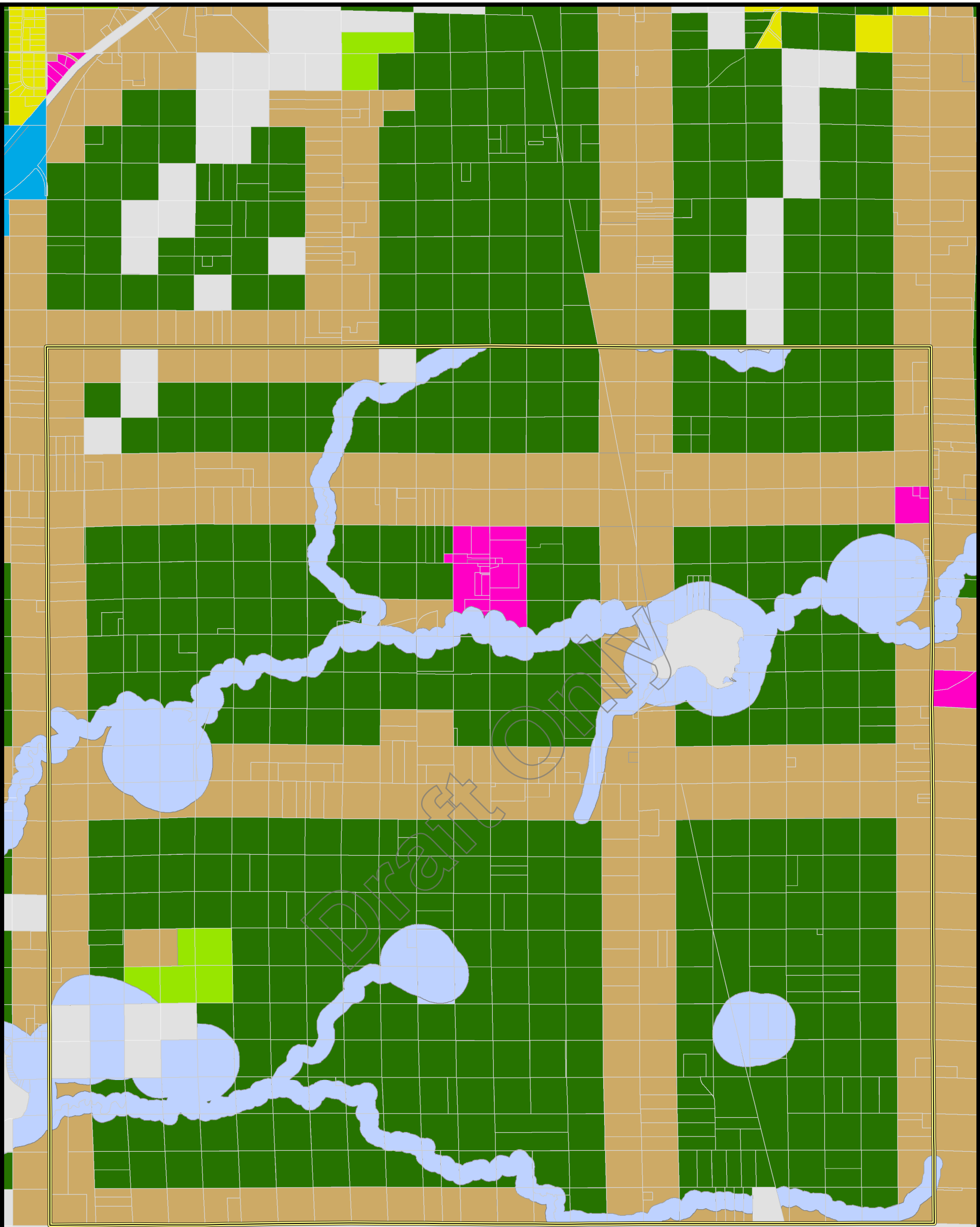
Legend



Municipal **LandUse Classification**  
Parcels **Land Use Classification**

- |                                      |                              |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Agricultural/Forestry District       | Rural Residential - 10       |
| Airport District                     | Rural Residential - 5        |
| Commercial District 1                | Rural Residential - 2.5      |
| Commercial District 2                | Rural Residential - 1        |
| Commerical/Heavy Industrial District | Sensitive Shoreland District |
| Commerical/Light Industrial District | Shoreland District           |
| Rural Residential - 20               | Urban Growth District        |
|                                      | Waterfront Commerical        |

Gray Cells are currently unzoned.



Legend

Municipal  
Parcels

Land Use Classification

- Agricultural/Forestry District
- Airport District
- Commercial District 1
- Commercial District 2
- Commerical/Heavy Industrial District
- Commerical/Light Industrial District
- Rural Residential - 20

Gray Cells are currently unzoned.

- Rural Residential - 10
- Rural Residential - 5
- Rural Residential - 2.5
- Rural Residential - 1
- Sensitive Shoreland District
- Shoreland District
- Urban Growth District
- Waterfront Commerical



sent 293  
recd 112

293

## 2013 SURVEY RESULTS

293 Surveys sent 112 Surveys returned?

### Is the road you live on gravel or blacktop?

Gravel	56	Blacktop	51
Not Live here			4

### 1. How would you rate the blacktopped county roads in St. Mathias Township with regard to:

Avg - Opinion	Poor				Excelle	Have	No	Surveys
	1	2	3	4	5	Opinion	Opinion	answers
3.47 Safety	6	3	35	42	9	95	10	105
3.46 Summer Maintenance	4	8	35	41	10	98	13	111
3.32 Winter Plowing	12	7	28	37	13	97	13	110
3.53 Winter Sanding	13	13	29	26	11	92	18	110
3.61 Right-of-Way Maintenance	5	3	44	36	8	96	15	111

### 2. How would you rate the gravel county roads in St. Mathias Township with regard to:

	Poor				Excelle	Have	No	Surveys
	1	2	3	4	5	Opinion	Opinion	answers
3.24 Safety	3	15	35	31	6	90	20	110
3.24 Summer Grading	8	13	31	25	13	90	20	110
3.14 Right-of-Way Maintenance	4	19	34	23	8	88	22 *	110
2.98 Winter Plowing	12	15	32	21	8	88	22	110
<del>Right-of-Way Maintenance</del>	5	19	28	10	6		64 *	

\* Category was in twice

### 3. In St. Mathias Township, how would you rate:

	Poor				Excelle	Have	No	Surveys
	1	2	3	4	5	Opinion	Opinion	answers
3.58 Law Enforcement	1	8	33	30	15	87	24	111
2.89 Fire Protection	3	7	42	17	8	77	34	111
3.17 Animal Control	10	3	37	16	10	76	35	111
3.30 Emergency Response	3	10	33	21	9	76	35	111
4.00 Community Facilities	0	3	25	34	33	95	16	111
1.79 High Speed Internet Service	44	13	15	5	1	78	34	112

Expressed

Opinion

90.5%

88.3%

88.2%

83.6%

86.5%

Expressed

Opinion

81.8%

81.8%

80.0%

80.0%

Expressed

Opinion

78.4%

69.4%

68.5%

68.5%

85.6%

69.6%



Is your primary residence in St. Mathias Township

Yes

89 No 32

Where I live in St. Mathias Township my sense of the housing density is

Not Enough	About right	Too Many	No Opinion
4	64	21	22

My sense of the housing density in the township as a whole is

Not Enough	About right	Too Many	No Opinion
5	71	13	22

In the future, I believe that housing density should remain the same:

Strongly disagree

Strongly Agree

1	2	3	4	5	No Opinion
6	3	27	22	34	19

Number of houses within 1 square mile

Number of persons "has" number of houses:

0 has 1	10 has 15	20 has 2	30 has 3
1 has 1	11 has 6	21 has 0	
2 has 3	12 has 7	22 has 1	1 person said 30 but doesn't live h
3 has 6	13 has 2	23 has 0	1 person said 65 but doesn't live h
4 has 7	14 has 2	24 has 1	
5 has 10	15 has 2	25 has 3	
6 has 7	16 has 1	26 has 0	
7 has 4	17 has 0	27 has 0	
8 has 12	18 has 0	28 has 0	
9 has 0	19 has 0	29 has 0	

How would you rate the blacktopped county roads in St. Mathias Township?

Would like road to be blacktopped

Driving in winter is treacherous

CR 21 south of Sleepy Hollow poorly plowed

No shoulders on Sleepy Hollow and 122

Intersection Sleepy Hollow and St. Mathias is very dangerous, poor visibility

CR 121 needs resurfacing

50th ave from Sleepy Hollow north 1 mile to next intersection not plowed in winter when other roads are

Also, CR121 plowed before CR2 which has more traffic

More salt on St. Mathias Road in winter

No shoulder, some roads are narrow.

Need more sand/salt in winter

Cut the grass in the ditches more

Need shoulders on roads

Winter plowing and sanding is terrible. Roads need to be plowed before 5:30 a.m. so people can get to work

I am only referring to the 1 mile stretch of 50th ave that meets up to Sleepy Hollow Rd. The winter is pathetic. The other 2 miles of 50th are very well kept. Someday there will be a very serious accident as somebody will slide right onto Sleepy Hollow.

County does "just right" job

It really depends on the winter snows, some winters have been easy

We have a very disrespectful snow plow driver, who is going to pay for the mailboxes. I would like to talk to his supervisor.

Okay

Winter travel on county roads are poor and have icy ruts left on almost all winter long

Ok, but 21 is not sanded enough in winter during am for the amount of traffic and buses

I would like to see an increased number of wide paved shoulders to increase safety for bicycle riders

County road 21 is downright hazardous in the winter due to snow plow response or lack of sanding

Crow Wing Co seems to only keep the "around lakes" road in good condition and the rest is terrible

50th street terrible

Plowing sooner would be great

Mow ditches twice a year instead of once a year please

131 needs shoulders and refinishing

County road 45 is sometimes plowed late, after 7:45 a.m.

The southern most mile of 50th Ave in St. Mathias Township needs rebuilding. The blacktop was very poorly built when first laid down.

Ditch mowing late fall is ok, but we could use a cleaning/mowing in the late springtime to cut hay/ time to mow ditches

St. Mathias road full of potholes

Could use more salt/sand in winter

May need traffic light at St. Mathias 21 and Crow Wing 2

County Road 45 needs to be resurfaced now!!!

Sleepy Hollow Road needs to be widened to 12' lanes or and 6' shoulders and/or clear back trees and brush the full 66' ROW

The only road I know of is 50th, the road was poorly built, sod was buried when it was raised that rots and the settles and it wasn't built wide enough and class 5 was not thick enough (Blacktop is not structural, it is basically dust control)

CR 45 is usually the last to be plowed and or sanded, snow compacts and remains as ice

Summer maintenance--I like lots of potholes and cracks. This slows down traffic and makes people want to take a different route. Winter plowing--They try to knock as many mail boxes down as they can with heavy snow. Winter sanding--They sand the road the plow it off?

How would you rate the gravel roads in St. Mathias Township?

Plow sooner please

Mow twice a year instead of once a year please

Winter plowing needs to be done quicker especially when drifted. Six inches to plow often results in very poor road conditions. Roads with more clay base need to be graded sooner after the rain.

Seems only roads around the lake are taken care of, the road is terrible

Winter snowplowing seems timely and sufficient

Need to plow and early and kept

Roads need to be graded more often and plowed more often in the winter. Roads get very bumpy. Need new dirt more often. Cut the ditches.

What about the township blacktopped road? Poor plowing and poor construction on it

Not much ditch mowing or brushing removal

With all the new traffic on these gravel roads, they either grade them more or put blacktop on some of them

Plowing is often 24-36 hours later than anticipated. Repairs due to flooding last year was a poor band-aid.

You can't grade with "sod", tall grass, grade more

Grades gravel into ditches

Corner by Ray Sewell's get slippery at times

We live on the county line 273rd st, very poor snowplowing and summer grading

My road, no gravel added in 25 years

*- could this be part Morrison county takes care of?*

For the most part, it is good, but could cut ditches earlier, sometimes hard to see stop signs with long grass

Ditch mowing late fall is ok, but we could use a cleaning/mowing in the late springtime to cut hay/ time to mow ditches

Grading is okay. Dave is not qualified to build roads prior to blacktopping.

The gravel road we live on has the worst maintenance on it I've ever witnessed and I've lived my whole life on gravel roads. It takes 1-2 days to be plowed out and sometimes a week will go by without six inches of snow removed because it didn't all come at one time. This winter saw the most now accumulated in some time for the area but that does not give an excuse for the poor removal of snow.



There were many times the school bus got stuck down our road because the roads were not cleared. After talking with the man in charge of snow removal, it was blatantly clear he just wanted to be "right" and not come to a better solution to the problem at hand. I think it's a shame that someone like him has a position of power but refuses to listen to repeated complaints about obvious problems in the area. Our road sees poor snow removal (large drifts left in the road), extended periods of snow covered roads, icy conditions because of no snow removal, grading that leaves large chunks of side debris in the middle of the road, substandard class 5 gravel that is like driving on grease after spring thaw and rainfall and washout from rain that doesn't get repaired for weeks at a time. I really love living where we do, it's a great place to raise a family, but the continued abuse our vehicles face from poor road maintenance causes financial strain that could be avoided if adequate grading and plowing was done.

Too many trees too close to the road or hanging over the road by Geisenhofs. The brush piles there were not burned last winter and are now an eye sore and animals tend to make their homes in them. And concerning winter snowplowing, we had a lot of snowfall this past winter, but I feel the gravel roads don't get plowed out soon enough. I had to use 3 vacation days for 3 separate snowfalls, stuck at home because we could not get out. This is a huge concern for me, because all I can think of is what if someone had a medical emergency during this time? How can anyone get in (ambulance) or get out to go to the emergency room?

Either get a different person to plow, or contract 2 people, one on each end, to plow. People need to get to work, and not everyone that lives out there has a big truck to get through the snow. We shouldn't have to wait all day for the road to be plowed.

The hill by Geisenhof's should be graded down so it isn't such a steep hill to traverse up during snow events. I get stuck going up it all the time.

It just always feels to me the bare minimum is only done on the gravel roads and that's it. During the 14 years we have lived here, nothing has improved, in fact, I think it's gotten worse (referencing the snow plowing, especially).

We also have an issue on our property where there is water drainage coming into a low spot on our property from the neighboring property. I do not know the details, but we were never contacted that the farmer was going to be digging and draining water from their fields...but it occurred and now we get all the run-off. We don't appreciate that we were not communicated this, and don't appreciate the extra water.

In St. Mathias Township, how would you rate:

We have to go with a slow satellite service because high speed is not available in our area

Don't need law enforcement

Good to see sheriff drive through once in awhile!

Emergency response: From Brainerd to CR 45 to 2 to St. Mathias, 10 miles extra

Overzealous local DNR/Game Warden patrolling and enforcement

Don't have high speed internet

Water tank at St. Mathias Park for fire, double for skating rink

Lots of drunk driving that seems to go on unenforced, no one seems to really care despite multiple near fatal incidents

Have lots of issues with dogs chasing deer

No signal in our area (internet)

We had quick response on sheriff calls plus see deputy vehicles often

Road kill cleanup seems fast

Internet is terrible out here!

Thankfully I haven't needed fire, law enforcement or a first responder

Fiber optic cable installed along CR 2, no connection yet, why?

I haven't needed any services thankfully. The high speed internet is a joke. We use clearwire

High speed internet.....we have that?

Need more high speed internet options, a land-based system like CTC would be great.

High speed internet...from who?? I'm forced to go to satellite. DSL or cable would be nice. Also due to St. Mathias local, wireless internet seems to be hit/miss.

High speed internet.....need....no high speed service available accept satellite

I want broadband internet and there are few options and nothing affordable

We bundle with phone line, it's lousy a lot of the time especially with videos and movies

Law enforcement: The county does a good job. The DNR does nothing in regards to controlling ATV damage

Need dog control (barking)

No internet or cell phone service where we are at, must use satellite internet, not good

High speed service should be available at lower price, ex. Crow Wing Power

Land use question--Neighbor has "built" motocross facility on property. Noise level concerns.

Draft Only

In St. Mathias Township, how important is the preservation of:

All of the above contribute to quality rural living and care of the planet. They must be preserved for future generations.

We need to preserve what we have

People of township have say of their own land. Not someone else's land. Constitution states what is allowable.

Water quality is basic, very important

Do not reduce the minimum 15 acres

Keep lid on requests that break down standards of acreage, water use, "landfill" on property. Recycling options here?

The new ATV trail is a travesty. Phil Trusty pushed it through because he bought Crow Wing Campground and wanted more money. Shame on the commissioners to allow residents to be used as dollar bills.

Draft Only

In St. Mathias Township, how much do you value the presence of the following in our community:

To encourage a neighborliness

Would like to see more cultural activities in the township.

Would like to see more community township events.

How would it be encouraged and who would be responsible for it?

Not aware of cultural opportunities

Really!

Really going to miss the pub

Recreational opportunities.....need four wheeler fun.

It would be nice if the park board would purchase the bar and grill to keep the proceeds to better the area.

Life is busy so extras are not very important for us at our stage of life

Community events are not known. Is there a place where this info is posted?

Do not support spending taxpayer dollars for any of the above.

Less government, let people be free.



How supportive are you of the following in St. Mathias Township?

We chose what we want to do in life and respect that of others as long as they are respectful of neighbors.

Supportive of entities that enhance rather than threaten a safe rural environment to live in.

Any of the above should not deplete farmland, forests, wetlands, water quality or wildlife!

It should be up to the people that own the land. No intervention of township.

More gravel pits and motorized trails and MORE small business

Motorized trails are "1" exception for snowmobile a "5". ATV's make a mess out our roads and ditches, raise a lot of dust and are generally a nuisance.

Town is dying, need to do something? (Muni bar?)

All trails should be multipurpose is open to public use.

Do NOT want ATV trail.

I don't want any designated ATV trails that would bring in outside traffic. Local ATV use is acceptable at this time.

Motorized trails.....a 5 for snowmobile.

I live here because it is a beautiful, unpolluted, moderately populated area

We have too much ATV damage to driveways. They should ride on the road, not in the ditches

Common sense, sustainable land use

We live here for the peaceful, rural setting.  
Very against the ATV trail

The board should not stand in the way of people trying to make a living. Most farmers and business people are good stewards of the land.

Business is what makes this country great, not government supporting people from cradle to grave. In Grand Cayman Island there is 0 unemployment. If you don't work or can't support yourself, don't look for the government to take care of you.

## HOUSING DENSITY COMMENTS

I don't think we should add any more subdivisions.

It's why we moved here, more housing, we move!

Keep it at 5 or 10 acre lots

Need to maintain 10 acre minimum for building

Don't want to see things built up

Minimum lot size 10 acres, no housing developments

With higher housing density, we would lose what could never be regained (farmland, forest, wildlife, etc

Rural areas like this should have at least 10 acres, more would be good, less would be detrimental

Surely no more!

Person with 16 houses per square mile---too many!

Would like to see minimum lot size, 10 acres

Higher density may be appropriate in some areas

Housing density along Sleepy Hollow road is about right. There are other parts of the township that could increase housing

The township must grow. I understand there will be a higher density. I just don't like it

If you have more housing in the area, you will have a bigger tax base to make improvements

Let the landowners decide. It is not the government's business

Don't need 100 acres for one house

The area is largely agricultural based and the road system is not developed to support larger businesses with increased traffic volumes. Ordinary residential housing does not strain or produce wear/tear on the roads the way heavy commercial traffic would.

For many years, the minimum lot size should be at least 5 acres if not 10. perhaps if this needs to be changed in the distant future, it could be looked at then.

The idea of cluster developments in certain controlled areas that have the least impact is acceptable if need be.

Allowing small tracts on over the hill road is not fitting with the general area. We don't need another rural "trailer" park.

Again, the board should not stand in the way of progress. The market will dictate what is needed. Developments need to be done right (no trailer parks)

Lines drawn to Quest 3 and 4, no lines were filled in.....Constitutional right to use your own property as you see fit as long as you don't endanger or restrict neighbor

No lines were filled in, only the comment line.....If people have land and want to develop, that's up to them. If they want to farm, let them farm. Don't let everybody control what you want to do.

For question 2 and 3 responded not enough and wrote in.....but directed growth in response to conditions in Brainerd Lakes area

For question 5 answered strongly disagree and commented.....need to be proactive with Brainerd/Baxter developments

I do not support a plan which restricts a person's use or sale of their property. I need to know how restricts in the comprehensive plan benefit the township. Leave land use and zoning at the county!

If people want to move/build in our area, they should be allowed to do so on an affordable few acres without having to purchase many multiple acres.

Draft Only

In your opinion, what are the three best features of the township?

Rural atmosphere  
Roads well maintained  
Quiet

Park

Rural feeling  
Friendly  
Pasture land

Quiet  
Private  
Location

St. Mathias Park  
St. Mathias Church

Land isn't all busted up in little lots. So I'm not living in town, yet roads are all good.

Rural  
Scenic  
Wildlife

St. Mathias Park

Community (Rural)  
Church  
Park

St. Mathias Park  
Church  
People

Park  
Roads

Forests  
Farms  
Wildlife

The people, what can I say, they work together, care about each other  
The church, historical centerpiece of the township  
Close enough to town, still not too close, same for bigger towns

St. Mathias Park  
Church  
St. Mathias Bar and Grill until it closed

Rural, widely spaced residential housing, plentiful mix of forest, wetland, agriculture

The community  
No housing developments, nice and quiet  
Farms are wonderfully taken care of

People  
Neighbors  
Community center  
Quietness, solitude

Good people  
Quiet with the exception of Camp Ripley

Park

The residents  
We are mostly unbothered by members

Small town, friendly community where everybody knows each other

Large lots that are well taken care of for the most part  
Most people keep to themselves  
Easy access to voting

Rural  
Community

Low crime rate  
Friendly people

That it's a rural community

Rural character and rural living  
Township supervisors who listen  
Sense of community

Church  
Park  
Neighbors

Communication  
Active involvement  
Young energy

People  
Neighbors  
Community center  
Quietness, solitude

The park  
Mixed open space and woods  
Nokasippi River



The natural open setting  
Low density and traffic  
Quiet and no light pollution

Last summer I called Tom Ross? I got his name from Peggy T. I told him of the potholes in 50th street. He addressed it right away. Thank you. Also, I can live in the country but be on tar roads.

Friendly  
Supportive  
Rural

Rural living

Rural  
Wildlife  
Nokasippi

Park  
Sense of community

Neighbors, people are friendly  
Park facility

Not real dense population  
Agricultural base

Beauty of the area

Rural setting  
People in the area  
Community center

Love the deer  
The few neighbors  
Know people that live there

Quiet

Park, park, park  
Church  
Community

Farmland  
Forestry management  
water quality

Variety of land use  
Location

Would like to see minimum lot size 10 acres

I don't think we should add any more subdivisions

Privacy, privacy, privacy, and good neighbors  
Natural environment

Location  
Land features  
committed residents

Private property ownership  
farming on a smaller family scale  
Close to area lakes

Rural character  
Good people  
General environment (nice woods, wetlands, etc)

Country

Rural atmosphere  
Air quality  
Open spaces

St. Mathias Bar  
Natural setting for living (peaceful and quiet)  
Friendly people

Green space, fields and forests

The park and ballfields  
The church  
The farms and a good work ethic

People  
Proximity to Brainerd

Less government, they don't bother us

Country living  
Good people  
Sense of community

Rolling landscape  
Low Traffic  
Natural water features

The people  
Big lots

Voting structure

In your opinion, what are the three most important concerns facing the township?

Losing small business

Roads

Don't duplicate county zoning

Litter

Control spending

Cutting up and into small parcels for houses

ATV Trail

Internet and cable access

Controlled growth plan

Attract small businesses

I have heard poor internet service and phone reception are a negative aspect.

Enough money for road maintenance

St. Mathias Bar, it's a longtime meeting place

Keeping younger people living here, jobs, etc., in the area.

Housing developments

Some people use the road right-of-way for personal use

Re-opening St. Mathias Bar

Re-opening road by Eckelman's

Property owned, doing what they want with their land

Roads

Road and bridge maintenance

Revenue

Valuation

Town people moving to country, then they want all the comforts of town

Too many houses, and we'll be living in town then

Fix roads

Winter snowplowing

Taxes

High speed internet

New people to township who demand paved roads. Paved roads are not needed everywhere

The total disrespect of others property!!!

Poor roads, would benefit from a little more businesses

Leave gravel roads gravel

Maintenance needs to be improved

Tar roads need shoulders on them

I'm fairly new to the area but the one mile stretch of 50th needs to be maintained in the winter. A lot of people travel this road and it was unsafe. It needs to stay tar. When are the meetings? Advertise what's going on. Brian Gapinski 218-838-0956

Pressure to increase density

Pressure to decrease land sizes

Pressure to give public access to private landholder's property

Strict enforcement of ATV trail usage

The limited access to public property

Illegal activities like drugs and alcohol

New people to township who demand paved roads. Paved roads are not needed everywhere.

Preservation of green space

Finding ways to maintain the rural beauty of the township while welcoming others

Township relationship with other units of government

That we don't ever sell public road right-of-way back to private land owners

Road maintenance

Right-of-way brushing and mowing

Feral cat problems killing wildlife, needs control on them

Town hall

Tarring township roads

Bridges

Poor road maintenance

Poor communication with road maintenance supervisors

Narrow gravel roads that pose safety concerns

Continued road development and maintenance

Fiscal, maintaining a lean budget to keep taxes as low as possible

Obtaining modern internet access, high speed with unlimited access

Fiscal responsibility

Cars drive too fast

People trying to move in. Let people divided up that land that no wanted and yet they okayed it

Black top roads

Big government

Excess government rules and regulations, leave me alone and stay out of my business!!

Better road maintenance and repair

Preservation of large land tracts

Control of ATV's

Impact of township of ATV trail usage on gravel roads, speed

Try to keep taxes as low as possible while maintaining quality roads

Tar gravel roads where there are many houses

Maintaining roads (snowplowing and grading)

Keep Nokasippi clean!

Reopen the bar

Taxes

Environment

Commercial large scale farming

Runoff

Limited ATV trails

Maintenance of 50th Ave

Pave or maintenance of roads and bridges

Place to safely ride 4-wheelers and ATV'S

Housing boom

Unregulated dance hall

Intoxicated drivers and underage drinking

Keeping the rural setting/characteristic of the township

Preserving the old town hall and the township history that comes with it

Regulating ATV's

Road, gravel

Internet service

Winter plowing

Keeping the budget low

Setting priorities that focus on maintenance of what we have

Stopping the expansion of ATV trails

Condition of some of the roads

Do a better job maintaining right-of-ways

Commercial farm irrigation, housing encroachment (too many), destroying forest land

The loss of the St. Mathias restaurant bar and grill meeting and eating place close to home.

Keeping crime low



Motorized (ATV) traffic on our county roads, wear and tear, maintenance costs

Providing the needed services, while keeping taxes low

Road repair

Tax increases and growth

We need a convenience store

Too many dogs

ATV trails

Lack of internet service

Pressure to build up

Controlling ATV's?

Forests

Swamps

Farmland

The reopening of the only bar/restaurant.

Stop parceling of large acreage into less than 10 acre lots

Bridges, we shouldn't be closing roads and abandoning roads because the bridge needs replacing and be careful of conflict of interest!

Growth and development must be influenced by what is happening in Baxter and Brainerd

Providing a "long" road network on a sparse tax base for residents who have become used to more urban facilities.

Addressing conflicts of commercial farming and rural residential living (smelly animals, loud noises, water quality) with residents wanting quiet rural life.

Don't waste money

Don't bother people

Keep the good ol boy network out of government (suppose a member has a business and people buy from him, then he will vote in their favor)

Better township roads

ATV trail to be shut down

Agricultural needs, ie. center pivots

Excessive off road vehicle use

Development concerns

In your opinion, what are the most important concerns the township may have to address in the next five and/or ten years?

St. Mathias Park

Subdivision of land into smaller pieces

Lack of local government control, county doesn't listen

Road maintenance

Converting to blacktop

Fire protection

Internet

Taxes

Small business

Taxes

Town people moving to country, then they want all the comforts of town

Too many houses and we'll be living in town then

Road and bridge maintenance

Revenue

Valuation

Road maintenance

Internet service

50th Avenue

Work with population growth, hope we keep getting young people in our area, don't want to get old and dry up

Enough money for road maintenance

Internet

Cell phone reception

Forest clear cutting

Water clarity and quality

My ownership in the township is for recreation and agriculture. I only use CR 45 and sometimes CSAH 2. I have little idea concerning the other roads in the township.

Too many new laws, with each new law, we lose the freedoms we moved out here for

Fix bridge

Roads

Paved roads

Feed lots

High speed internet

St. Mathias Bar and Grill or something similar needs to be around for community, have events

Taxes

Overdevelopment, loss of agriculture and high housing density  
Deterioration of infrastructure, repaving roads etc

Deteriorating road conditions  
Closure of the bar and grill  
Wildlife over population

Roads  
Bridges

Keep it like it is

Limits of funding  
Losing that "small town" feel by treating us like strangers when we wanted to speak out about closing the gravel road by the old cemetery.

Protecting the environment  
Community cohesiveness

Paved roads  
Feedlots

Maintaining roads  
Preserving forests and wetlands  
Promote septic system compliance with county ordinances

Conservation of ground water table levels  
Preservation of lake and river quality  
Careful planning of any new homes to include screening of trees and berms with plantings to have a little impact on the rural atmosphere of St. Mathias.

In the next 5 to 10 years 50th ave will need repair. I have heard rumor that some want to put it back to gravel. This is absurd and makes no sense. I will join any committee to fight that from happening. Taxes are ridiculous. I used to live in Baxter and had twice the size house and it was cheaper taxes with city service, etc. BUT we need good roads.

Roads  
Housing boom

Township officials that dictate rather than following the Constitution

Taxes  
Aging population  
Environment I own 80 acres of hunting land. No buildings.

Keeping the river clean!  
Tar the roads

Try to keep taxes as low as possible while maintaining quality roads

Increase pressure to increase density.  
Water use, concerns of low levels are tested with increase use for irrigation

More land divisions  
Over reach of state and county oversight

Lowering taxes (Are you going to mass mail the results!!)

Keeping it rural

Over building and population

Internet service, younger generation depend on internet service  
Staying within the zoning regulations of 15 acre lots

Development

Keeping the rural look and feel while maintaining good roads and making sure homes are maintained and no junk yards.  
Keep St. Mathias safe and beautiful

Settling differences over land use

We are not someone's personal recreation area. We are landowners that pay taxes and have rights.  
Others living outside our area want to push their recreational agendas on us.

Outside forces destroying our quiet way of life,  
More houses from the north (especially),  
ATV traffic  
(Christian rock concerts,  
BIG scale farming and irrigation,  
Feed lots,  
Commercial interests,  
timber harvesting.  
Thanks for asking!

Controlling ATV's  
Maintaining the park and facilities for community use  
Highway safety  
Orderly housing development

Road Repair  
Lyme disease  
Increasing population

Thanks for asking!

4 wheelers and snowmobiles

Urban sprawl (Keep it country living)

Maybe industrial revolution. We need jobs

So low key business that help the community that can prosper

Growth and development must be influenced by what is happening in Baxter and Brainerd

Providing a "long" road network on a sparse tax base for residents who have become used to more urban facilities.

Addressing conflicts of commercial farming and rural residential living (smelly animals, loud noises, water quality) with residents wanting quiet rural life.

Don't waste money

Don't bother people

Keep the good ol boy network out of government (suppose a member has a business and people buy from him, then he will vote in their favor)

City slickers moving in

Some road work

Urban sprawl and landowners wanting to lot off acreage

Gravel roads

Lot sizes

grading roads

Density of homes

Feedlots

Big farms

Water needs, ie. agricultural center pivots, etc

Development

Budget concerns

Maintaining natural heritage

Re-do the whole ATV problem

ATV's are fine the way they are, don't give them a race track around our homes