

# AGENDA

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Planning Commission  
Wednesday, September 11, 2024 ❖ 6:30 p.m.  
(Dinner starts at 6:00 p.m.)

**LOCATION: Robert W. Grusnick Public Safety Building**  
**1899 N. Squirrel Road ❖ Auburn Hills MI**

PHONE: 248-364-6900 [www.auburnhills.org](http://www.auburnhills.org)  
Meeting minutes are on file in the City Clerk's office.

**1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

**2. ROLL CALL OF PLANNING COMMISSION**

**3. PERSONS WISHING TO BE HEARD** (regarding items not on the agenda)

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – July 31, 2024

**5. PETITIONERS** – None

**6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS** – None

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

7a. Workshop – Auburn Hills Green Infrastructure Plan Update

*Facilitated by:*

*Ryan Dividock*

*Supervisor – Planning, Zoning & Land Use*

*Planning and Local Business Development Division*

*Economic Development Department*

*Oakland County, Michigan*

**8. COMMUNICATIONS**

**9. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING** – Wednesday, October 9, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. – Council Chamber

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

➤ **NOTE:** Anyone planning to attend the meeting who needs special assistance under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is asked to contact the City Clerk's Office at 248-370-9402 or the City Manager's Office at 248-370-9440 48 hours before the meeting. Staff will be pleased to make the necessary arrangements.





**CITY OF AUBURN HILLS  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
NOT YET APPROVED**

July 31, 2024

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson Ouellette called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: **Carolyn Shearer, Ray Saelens, Darlene MacMillan, Jack Ferguson, Cynthia Pavlich, Laura Ochs, Greg Ouellette**  
Absent: Sam Beidoun, Dominick Tringali  
Also Present: Director of Community Development Steve Cohen, Assistant to the Director of Community Development Devin Lang, City Engineer Tim Juidici (OHM), and City Engineer Hannah Driesenga (OHM)  
Guests: 8

**LOCATION:** Council Chambers, 1827 N. Squirrel Road, Auburn Hills, MI 48326

**3. PERSONS WISHING TO BE HEARD**

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 5, 2024**

**Moved by Saelens to approve the minutes of June 5, 2024.**

**Second by Ferguson.**

**VOTE: Yes: Shearer, Ferguson, MacMillan, Saelens, Ochs, Pavlich, Ouellette**

**No: None**

**Motion Carried (7-0)**

**5. PETITIONERS**

**5a. Oakland Christian School – Parking Expansion (7:02 p.m.)**

**Public Hearing/Motion – Recommendation to City Council for Special Land Use Permit, Site Plan, and Tree Removal Permit approval to construct a new parking area with a parent drop-off/pick-up loop.**

Mr. Cohen explained that this is a request from Oakland Christian School (OCS) to construct an additional ninety-three (93) parking spaces (net 79 parking spaces) and a parent pick-up/drop-off loop at 3075 Shimmons Road. The 2.16-acre impacted area is zoned R-1A, One-Family Residential District. The new parking area at the school's primary entrance will expand the facility's overall parking capacity from 194 to 273 spaces.

The project results from an agreement between the City of Auburn Hills and OCS to swap land to allow for the realignment of the Shimmons Road curve, which had been envisioned and discussed between the parties for over a decade. The road redesign will improve sight lines and safety in the area by creating a softer curve, along with an extended sidewalk in the vicinity. The proposed new road alignment required the City to acquire property owned by OCS by deed. In return, the City has committed to vacate and transfer the existing right-of-way where the road currently exists to allow the school's parking lot expansion.

Mr. Cohen explained that OCS removed 85 protected trees on its property without City authorization and has apologized for the mistake. These trees are the same trees that would have been removed after OCS obtained Site Plan/Tree Removal Permit approval. The OCS parking expansion area will be appropriately revegetated as part of the project in accordance with the City's ordinances.

Mr. Juidici provided information regarding the reconstruction of Dexter and Shimmons Roads and an update on the Shimmons Road reconstruction project. The road reconstruction project is expected to be completed by August 20, 2024, just before school begins.

Mr. Juidici further discussed that current traffic patterns and counts now justify the City's potential facilitation of a new signal at the intersection of N. Squirrel Road and Shimmons Road based on a recent study conducted by their firm. The conditions now meet a warrant, which is a condition that an intersection must meet to justify a signal installation per the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.



**Susan Brock, Superintendent of Oakland Christian School, 3075 Shimmons Road, Auburn Hills, MI, and Jim Butler, PEA Group, 1849 Pond Run, Auburn Hills, MI,** were available to answer any Commission questions.

The Commission asked about the following:

1. The length of time that Shimmons Road will be closed;
2. How the tree removal incident occurred;
3. The number of trees removed prematurely;
4. The plan for water retention for the parking lot redesign;
5. A contingency plan if the road reconstruction project is incomplete by August 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Juidici explained that the road closures beginning August 1<sup>st</sup> are expected to last approximately 3-4 weeks.

Ms. Brock stated that the school was working with the same contractor the City used for the tree removal. There was a miscommunication between OCS and the contractor that the school's tree removal project would begin after the City's tree removal project was completed. The contractor removed all the trees for the road and school projects at one time in one day. Ms. Brock apologized for the misunderstanding between OCS and the contractor and assured the Commission that replacement trees would be planted as required by the City's landscape ordinance.

Mr. Saelens and Ms. Ochs expressed concern about the premature tree removal incident.

Mr. Cohen advised the Commission that everything would be done appropriately moving forward and in accordance with ordinance requirements, albeit out of order. Mr. Cohen explained that 85 protected trees were removed, and 87 replacement trees will be planted. The trees will be a mix of evergreen and deciduous in compliance with the City's ordinance.

Mr. Cohen explained to the Commission that the City has been working with the school and the previous property owner for approximately ten years to redesign the Shimmons Road curve.

Mr. Juidici explained that they have been working with PEA to finalize the details regarding the water retention. The existing pond is older, and capacity will be addressed during the engineering phase.

Ms. Brock stated that if the reconstruction is not complete by August 20<sup>th</sup>, the school could delay the start of the school year by a week or so. In addition, the school is working with the neighboring Church of Christ on Bald Mountain Road to use their lot temporarily for parking. OCS is also working on a contingency plan for parking during the construction of the new parking lot.

Mr. Ouellette opened the public hearing at 7:17 p.m.

Bill Kokenos, 3321 Grove Lane, Auburn Hills, is president of the Auburn Grove Condominium HOA. He stated that the HOA supports the project but is concerned about the traffic impacts of the current road project on the subdivision, given the road closures. He is concerned that cut-through traffic and large construction vehicles cause dangerous conditions. He also noted that the community fully supports a traffic light at the Shimmons Road and Squirrel Road intersection.

Mr. Juidici stated that numerous "road closed" signs and barricades would be erected when the new curve ties into the existing Shimmons Road. The City will be working with the contractor to prevent the issues raised by Mr. Kokenos.

Mr. Cohen and Mr. Juidici explained that the City Council would discuss installing a light at the intersection of Shimmons Road and N. Squirrel Road during the upcoming budget cycle. Mr. Juidici reiterated that traffic volume conditions now warrant a traffic light to be utilized based on a recent study conducted by the City. The cost of the traffic light would be approximately \$350,000. Commissioners expressed their support for a traffic light at this intersection. Ms. Pavlich suggested increasing the number of intersection police patrols until the traffic light is installed.



Dale Ermshler, 5350 Great Fosters Drive, Rochester, has children who attend Oakland Christian School. He concurred with the necessity of a traffic light at the intersection, especially given the number of young, inexperienced drivers attempting to exit the parking lot.

Wendy Paton, 3201 Zaher Drive, stated that the removed trees were all hardwood trees. She explained that the trees were removed all in one day. She asked what type of trees would be used as replacements. Mr. Cohen stated that the City requires a diversity of evergreen and deciduous trees. Approximately ten different species of trees will be planted on the property.

Ms. Ochs asked if the City had enough staff to monitor construction projects. Mr. Cohen stated yes and that the tree removal was an unusual incident that happened quickly.

Mr. Saelens suggested trimming the trees at the intersection of Shimmons Road and N. Squirrel Road to improve sight distance.

A resident (unidentified) agreed that trimming the trees at the intersection would help. She suggested planting some red maples as replacement trees. She also suggested adding another lane to the exit so that the vehicles turning right do not have to wait for the left-turning cars to have a gap in traffic. It was determined that red maple trees are included in the project's landscape plan.

There being no further public comments, Mr. Ouellette closed the public hearing at 7:47 p.m.

**Moved by Ochs to recommend to City Council approval of the Special Land Use Permit, Site Plan, and Tree Removal Permit for the Oakland Christian School parking expansion subject to the conditions of the City's Administrative Review Team.**

**Second by Ferguson.**

**VOTE: Yes: Saelens, Ochs, Shearer, MacMillan, Ferguson, Pavlich, Ouellette**

**No: None**

**Motion Carried (7-0)**

**6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None.**

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

**7a. Motion – Cancel the August 14, 2024 Auburn Hills Planning Commission Meeting**

**Moved by Saelens to cancel the August 14, 2024 Auburn Hills Regular Planning Commission meeting.**

**Second by Pavlich.**

**VOTE: Yes: Saelens, Ochs, MacMillan, Ferguson, Pavlich, Shearer, Ouellette**

**No: None**

**Motion Carried (7-0)**

**7b. Selection of Planning Commission members to attend the Planning Michigan Conference – September 25-27, 2024 in Grand Rapids**

Mr. Cohen stated that four members of the Planning Commission may attend the conference. Newer members will be given priority. He asked that any members interested in attending notify him within the next week.

**8. COMMUNICATIONS**

The City of Pontiac has provided notice that they are initiating the process of completing a Master Plan update for its community.

**9. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting is on Wednesday, September 11, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Auburn Hills Council Chambers.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairperson Ouellette adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.



Submitted by:

Susan McCullough, MiPMC III, CMC

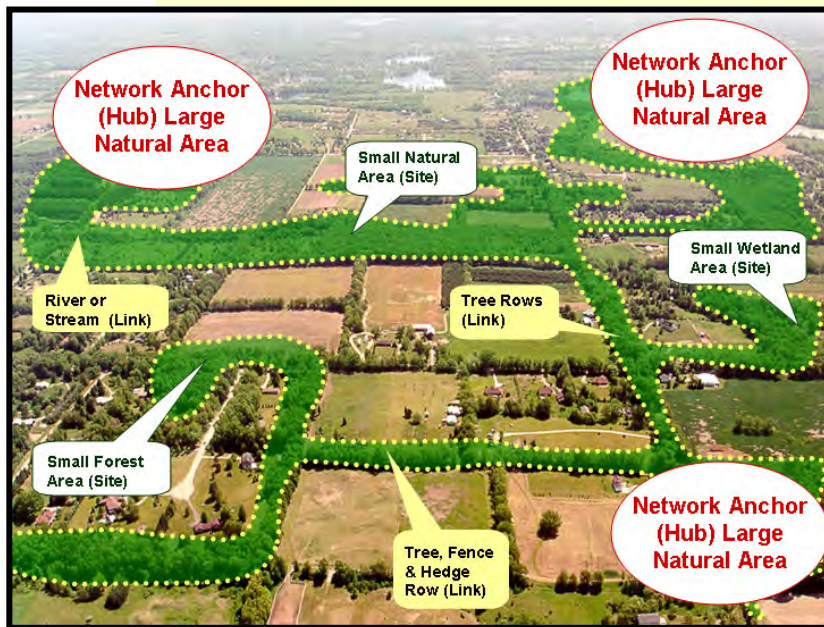
Recording Secretary



# Oakland County's Green Infrastructure Vision

*~Our Natural Legacy~*

## City of Auburn Hills



**Design Session**  
December 12, 2006



**Trails**



**Natural Areas**

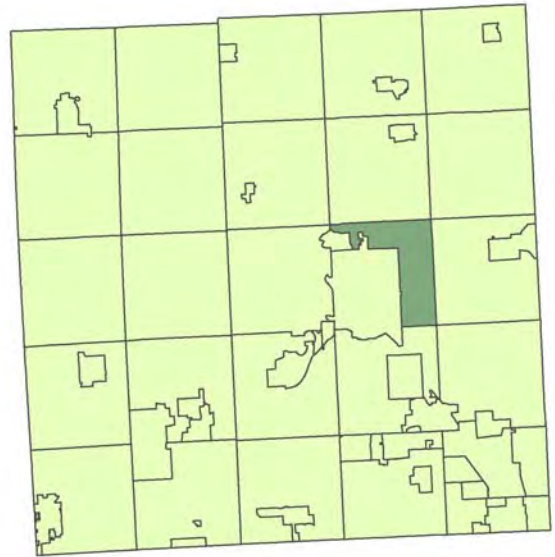


**Water Resources**



# City of Auburn Hills Design Session

December 12, 2006



**Steve Cohen**, City Planner

**Donna Folland**, Oakland Land Conservancy

**Shawn Keenan**, Water Resources Coordinator

**Brian Marzolf**, Director of Parks and Recreation Department

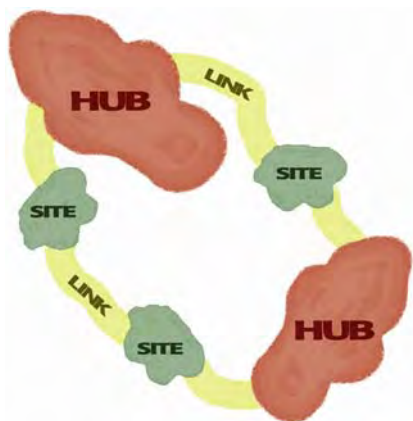
**Ron Melchert**, Director of Public Works Department

**Richard Olsen**, City Engineer





# Table of Contents



- Introduction
- Draft-Design Session Green Infrastructure Map
- Background Resource Maps
  - GIS Model
  - 2004 Potential Natural Areas
  - Water Resources
  - Recreational Opportunities
  - Road Bounded Areas
  - Master Plan
  - 2005 Land Use
  - Topography
  - Level of Protection
- Process for Hands-on Assessment
- Next Steps
- Natural Area Advisory Group Contact Information
- References



# Introduction





# Natural Links

## Oakland County's Green Infrastructure Network

### Project Description:

The Green Infrastructure Network is a proposed concept to protect and link Oakland County's remaining ecologically valuable lands. These lands would include, for example, large natural areas, important wildlife habitats, wetlands, riparian corridors and areas that reflect key elements of Oakland County's biological diversity. The concept is based on the cooperative efforts of the Oakland County Natural Area Advisory Group, with the intent of maximizing the effectiveness of public and private land conservation efforts. Building on numerous successful projects, the focus will be on locating existing green infrastructure elements throughout Oakland County and identifying opportunities for local consideration and implementation.

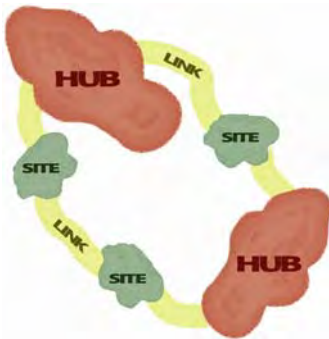


### Worth Protecting:

Over 93,000 acres of Potential Natural Areas  
More than 1,400 natural lakes  
Over 89,000 acres of parkland  
Headwaters of five major rivers

### Green infrastructure networks consist of the following components:

**Hubs:** Hubs anchor the network and provide an origin or destination for wildlife. Hubs range in size from large conservation areas to smaller parks and preserves. Hubs provide habitat for native wildlife and help maintain natural ecological processes.



**Sites:** Smaller ecological landscape features that can serve as a point of origin or destination or incorporate less extensive ecological important areas.

**Links:** The connections that hold the network together and enable it to function. Links facilitate movement from one hub to another.

### What is Green Infrastructure?

Green infrastructure is the interconnected network of open spaces, natural areas and waterways. This network supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources and contributes to our health and quality of life. Focusing on conservation values and the services provided by natural systems in concert with, instead of in opposition to, land development.

### What are the benefits of Green Infrastructure?

Green infrastructure provides a mechanism to identify and blend environmental and economic factors creating a multitude of social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits.

- Provides a sense of place and a unique identity
- Decreases cost of public infrastructure (e.g. stormwater management & water treatment systems)
- Increased both active and passive recreational opportunities
- Increased property values
- Helps preserve our unique quality of life
- Maintains the naturally functioning ecosystems
- Helps to attract new businesses and well-qualified workers

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jim Keglovitz, Environmental Stewardship Program, Oakland County, Planning & Economic Development Services Phone (248) 858-5447

**HELPFUL WEB SITES:** Green Infrastructure Planning: [www.greeninfrastructure.net/](http://www.greeninfrastructure.net/)

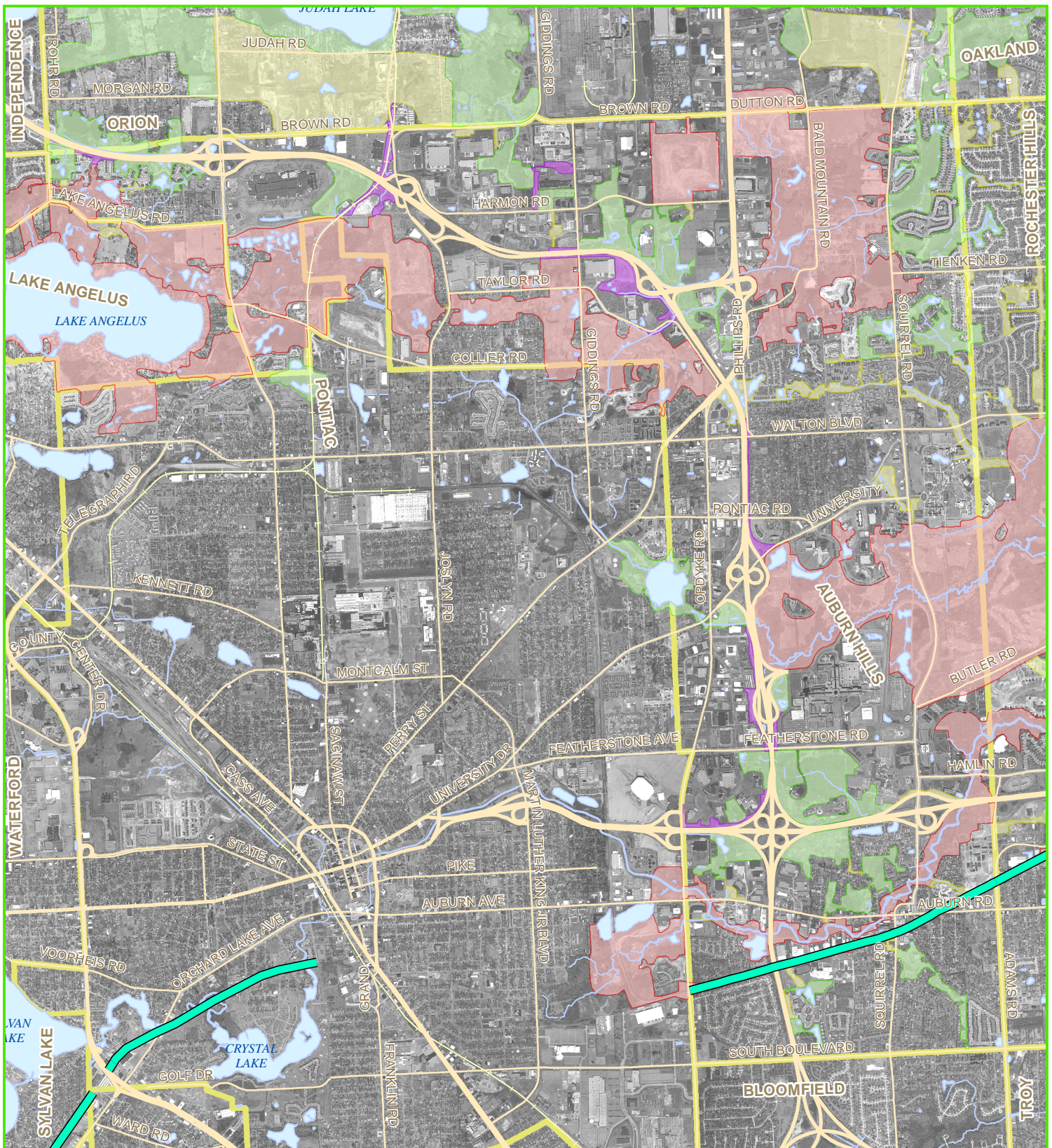
Oakland County's Environmental Stewardship Program: [www.oakgov.com/es](http://www.oakgov.com/es)



# Design Session Draft Green Infrastructure Map







## Green Infrastructure



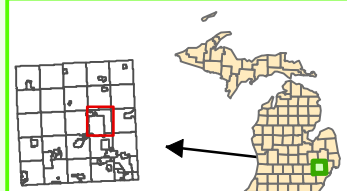
L. Brooks Patterson, County Executive

**Environmental Stewardship Program**  
**Planning & Economic Development Services**

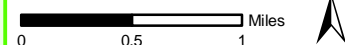
\*\*The information provided herewith has been compiled from recorded deeds, plats, tax maps, surveys and other public records. It is not a legally recorded map or survey and is not intended to be used as one. Users should consult the information sources mentioned above when questions arise.\*\*

## City of Auburn Hills Green Infrastructure-DRAFT

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: red; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Hub                       | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; border-bottom: 2px solid yellow;"></span> Municipal Boundaries |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: green; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Site                    | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; border-bottom: 2px solid cyan;"></span> Recreational Link      |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Link                   | 2006 B&W Orthophotography   |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: purple; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Other Restoration Link |   |



Map Created on December 14, 2006





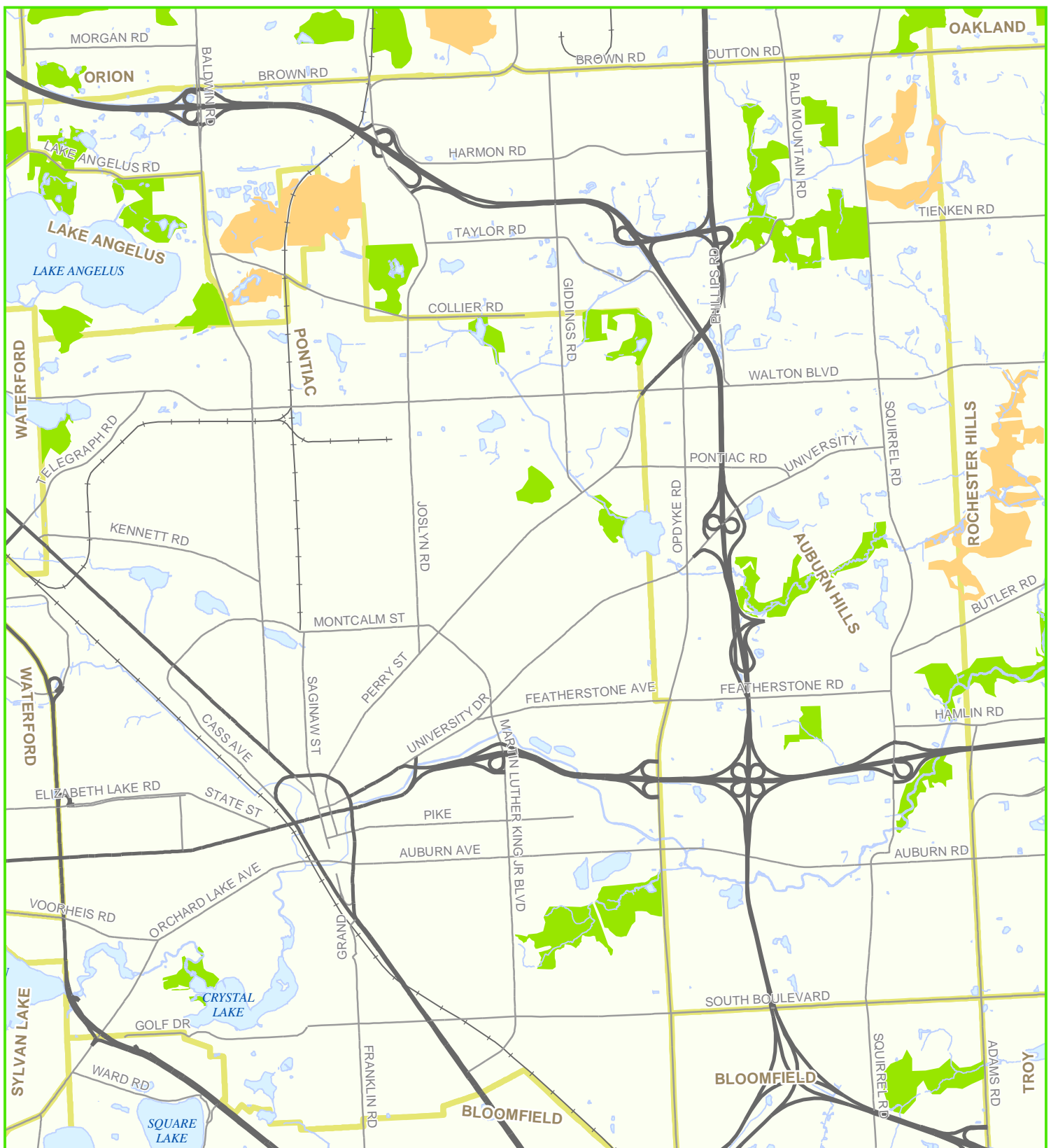
# Background Resource Maps











## Green Infrastructure



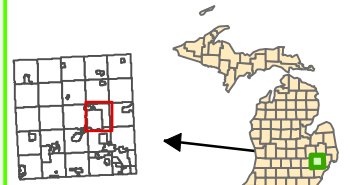
L. Brooks Patterson, County Executive

**Environmental Stewardship Program**  
**Planning & Economic Development Services**

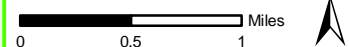
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## City of Auburn Hills 2004 MNFI Natural Areas

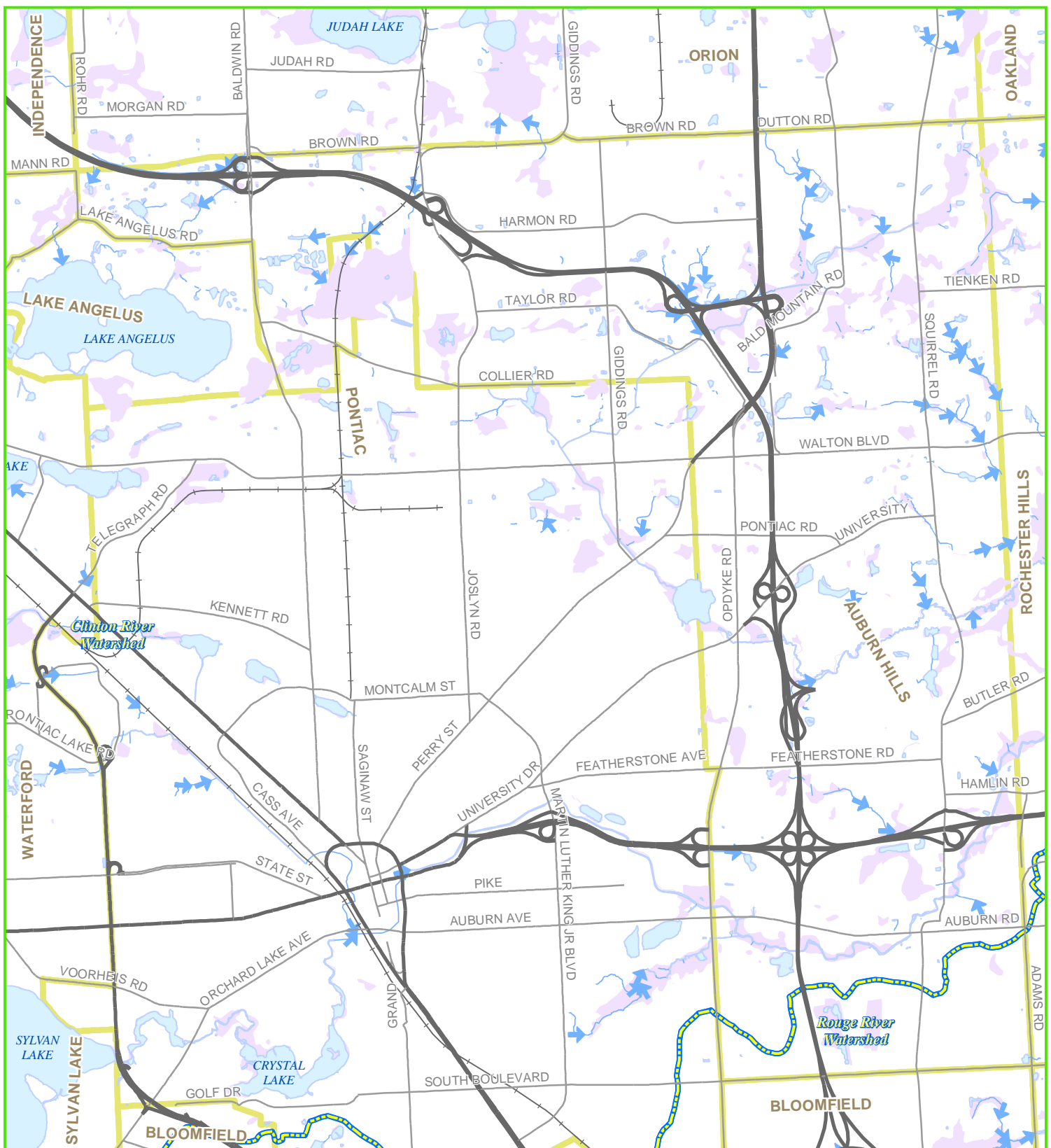
- Municipal Boundaries
- 2004 MNFI Natural Area**
- Priority One Natural Area
- Priority Two Natural Area
- Priority Three Natural Area



Map Created on December 14, 2006







## Green Infrastructure



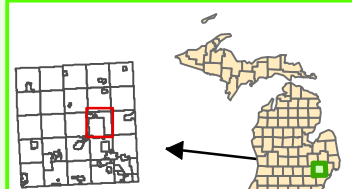
L. Brooks Patterson, County Executive

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## City of Auburn Hills Water Resources

- Stream Flow Direction
- Municipal Boundaries
- Major Watershed
- Wetlands as identified on NWI and MIRIS maps and soil areas which include wetland soils

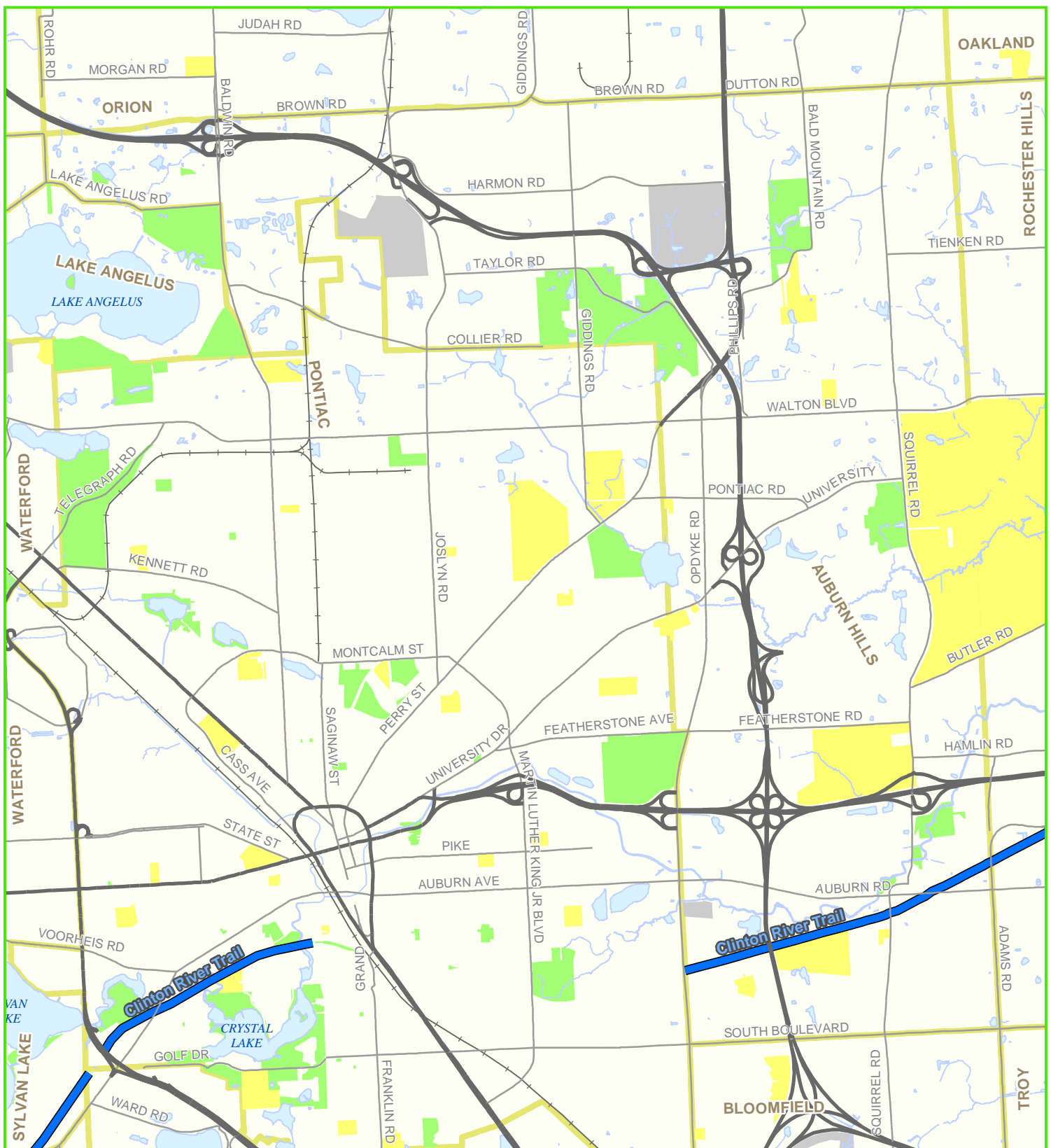


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0 0.5 1 Miles







## Green Infrastructure



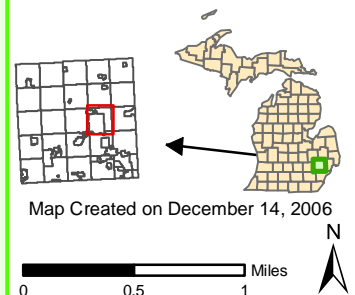
L. Brooks Patterson, County Executive

**Environmental Stewardship Program**  
**Planning & Economic Development Services**

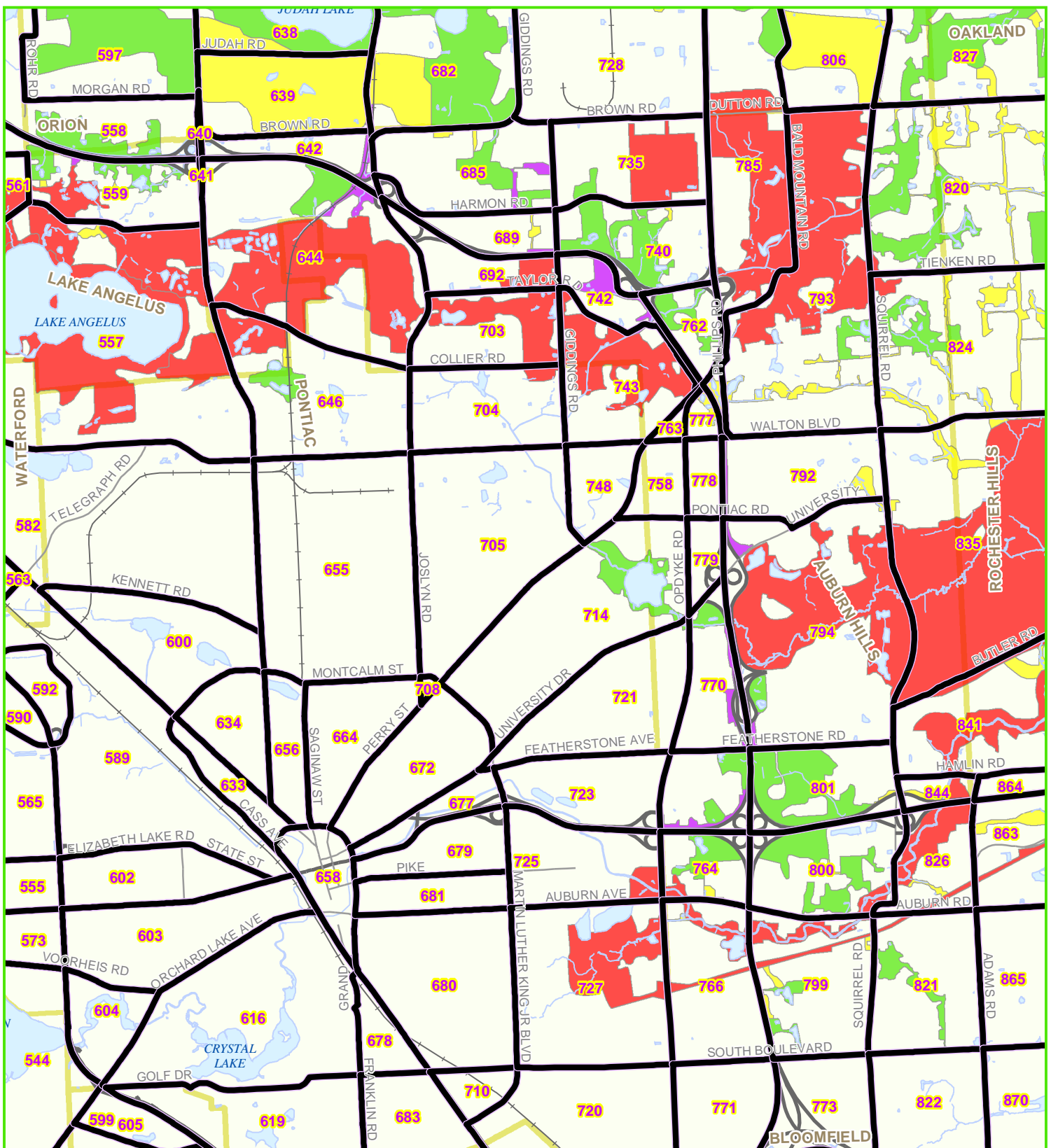
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## City of Auburn Hills Recreational Opportunities

- Municipal Boundaries
- Trails
- Public Recreation Land
- School
- Private Recreation Land







## Green Infrastructure



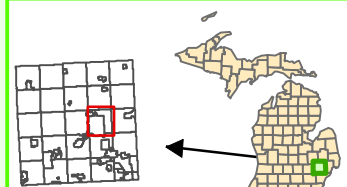
L. Brooks Patterson, County Executive

**Environmental Stewardship Program**  
**Planning & Economic Development Services**

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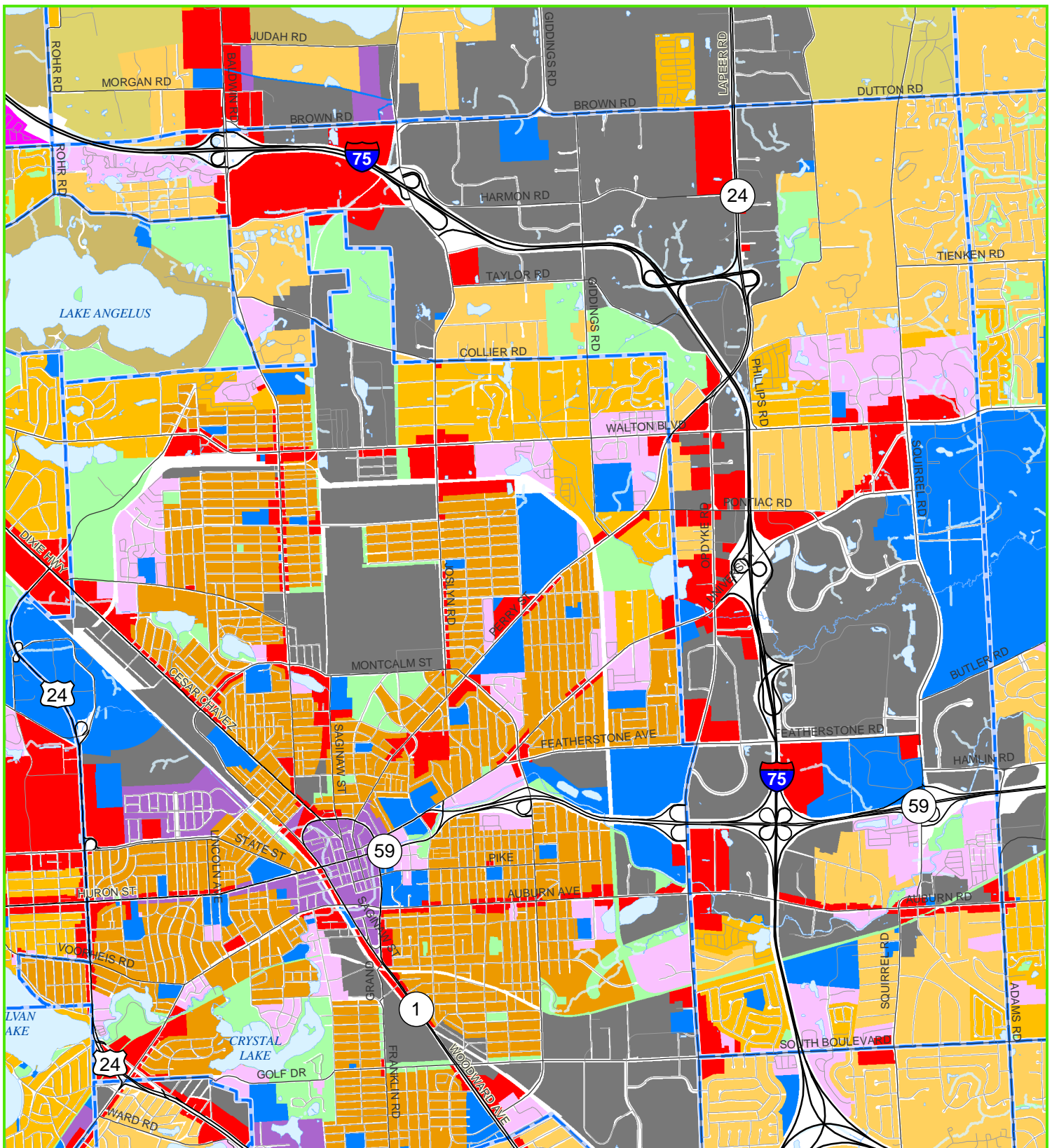
## City of Auburn Hills Road Bounded Areas

- Municipal Boundaries
- Link
- Road Bounded Area
- Site
- Hub
- Other Restoration Link



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 0 0.5 1 Miles





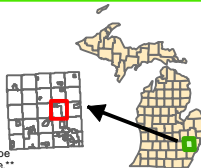
## City of Auburn Hills

### Composite Master Plan



L. Brooks Patterson,  
County Executive

Environmental Stewardship Program  
Oakland County Planning & Economic Development Services



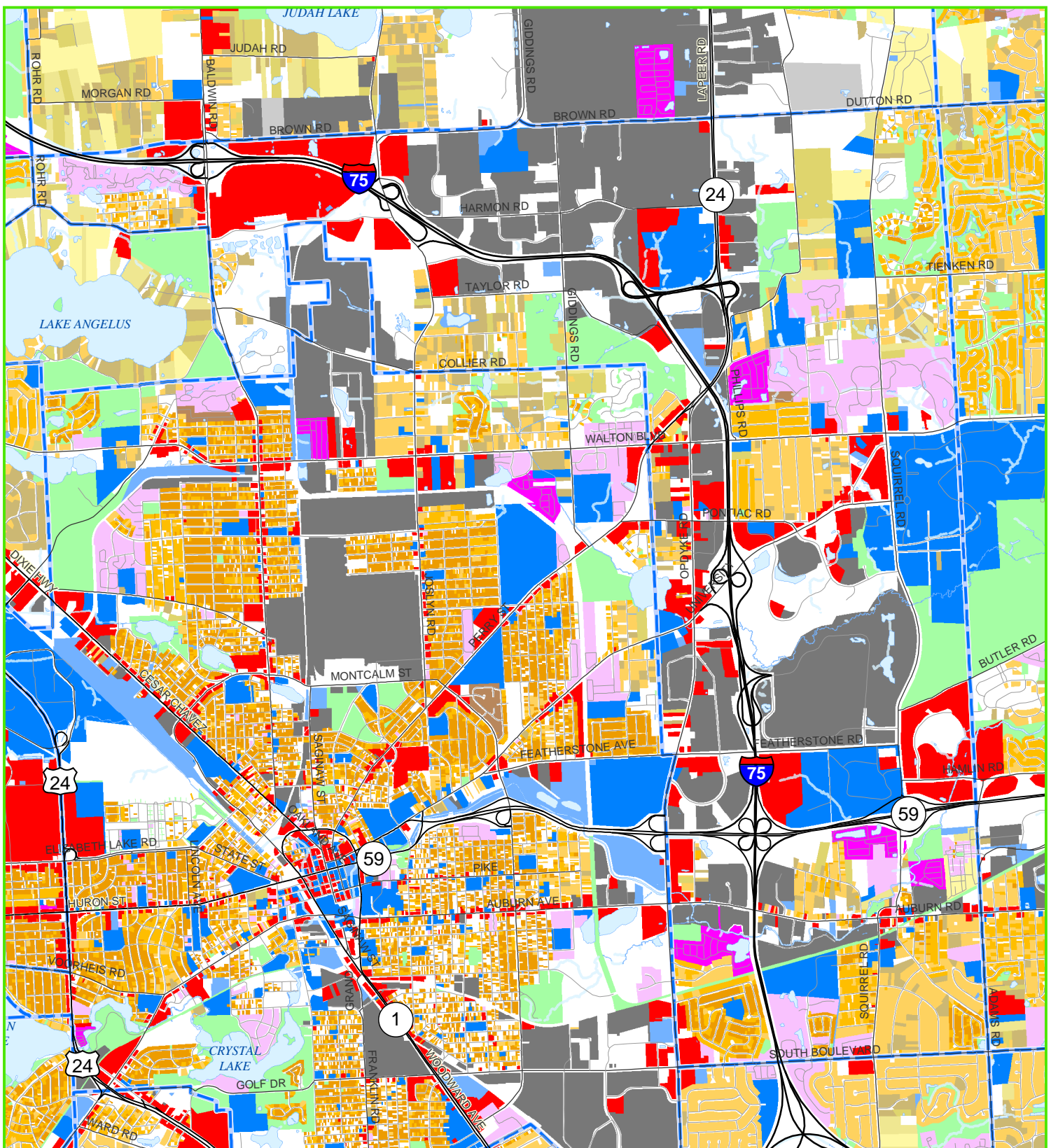
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- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| Single Family, 10 acres or greater      | Mobile Home Park        |
| Single Family, 5 to 9.9 acres           | Commercial/Office       |
| Single Family, 2.5 to 4.9 acres         | Industrial              |
| Single Family, 1 to 2.4 acres           | Public/Institutional    |
| Single Family, 14,000 to 43,559 sq. ft. | Recreation/Conservation |
| Single Family, 8,000 to 13,999 sq. ft.  | Mixed Use               |
| Single Family, Less than 8,000 sq. ft.  | Reclamation Plan        |
| Multiple Family Residential             |                         |

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Miles  
0 0.5







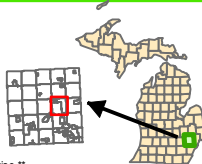
## City of Auburn Hills

### 2005 Land Use

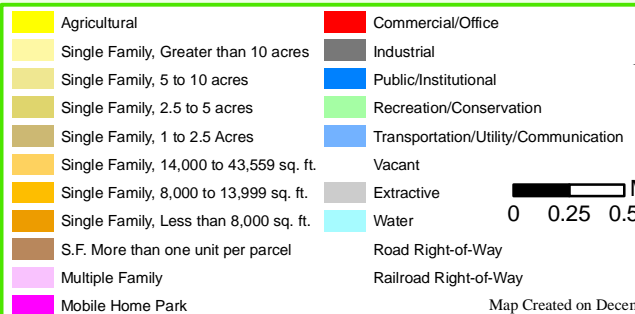


L. Brooks Patterson,  
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Environmental Stewardship Program  
Oakland County Planning & Economic Development Services



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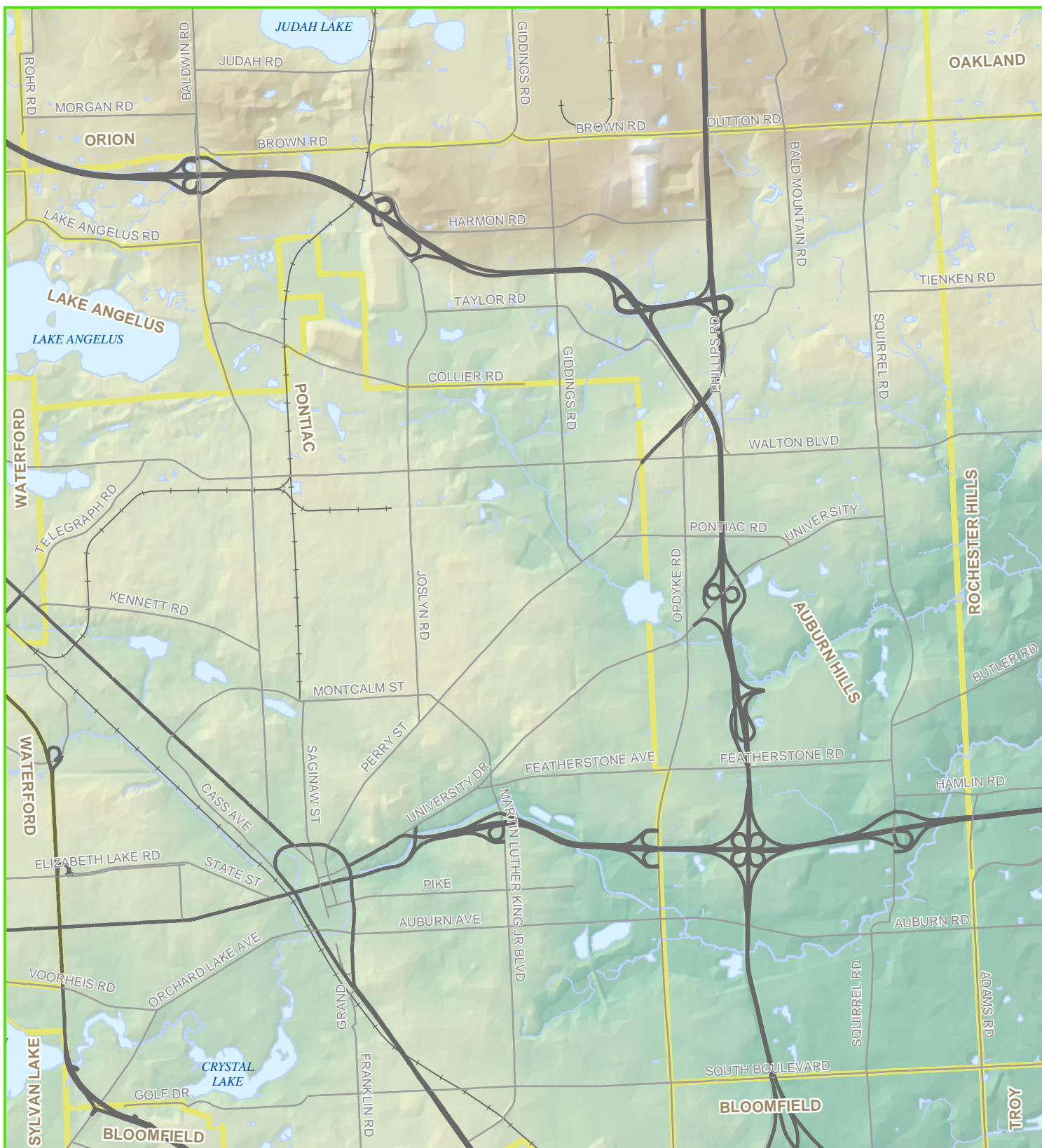


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## Green Infrastructure

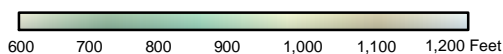


L. Brooks Patterson, County Executive

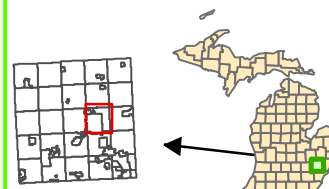
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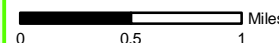
## City of Auburn Hills Topography



Municipal Boundaries



Map Created on December 14, 2006







### Increasing Experimental Latrines (Latrine Placement Study) - Community Survey -



City of Ashland 2016

#### Environmental Stewardship Program

Outdoor Cooking/Smoking of Food and Fuelwood  
The photo captures the location of the latrine study area. The photo is taken from the street and shows the location of the latrine study area. The photo is taken from the street and shows the location of the latrine study area.



Map the location of the latrine study area. The map shows the location of the latrine study area. The map shows the location of the latrine study area.

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# Process for Hands-on Assessment





# Process for Hands-on Assessment

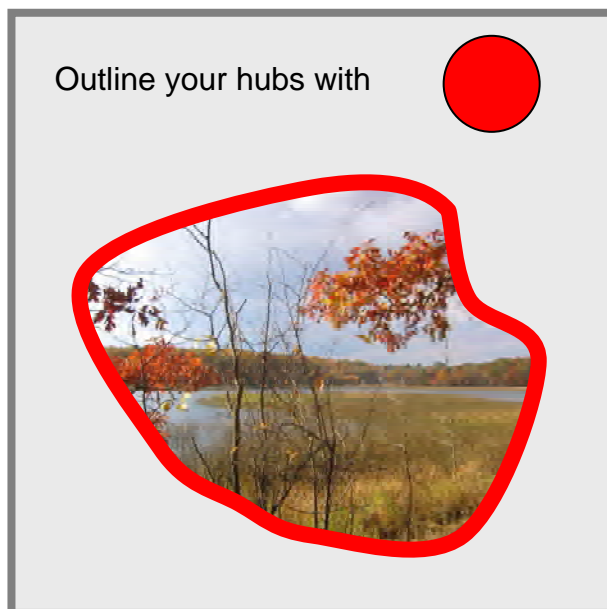
## Ecological Network

### 1. Orientate yourself to the various resource layers and the given area of focus.

MNFI  
Road  
Wetlands  
Aerial  
GIS Model  
Topography

**Hint** - Some resource layers will be more useful than others. Determine the ones that best address your needs and place the others to the side for reference.

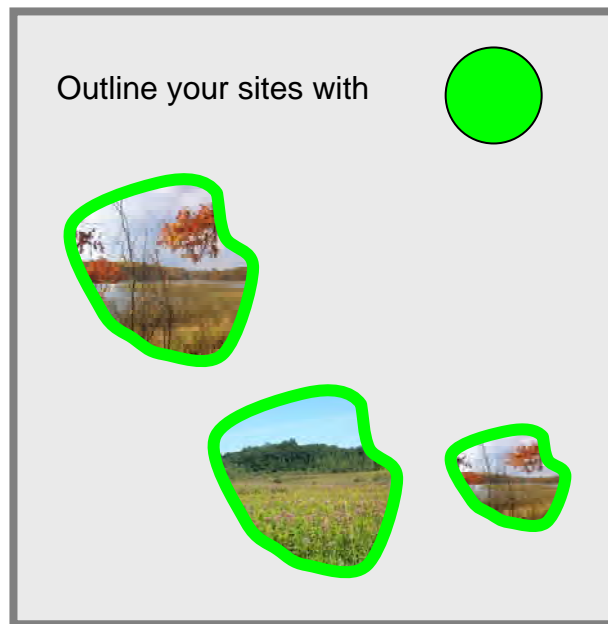
### 2. Determine habitat hubs within your given area.



**Hint** - hubs anchor the network and provide an origin or destination for wildlife. The Potential Natural Area coverage provides a good place to start.

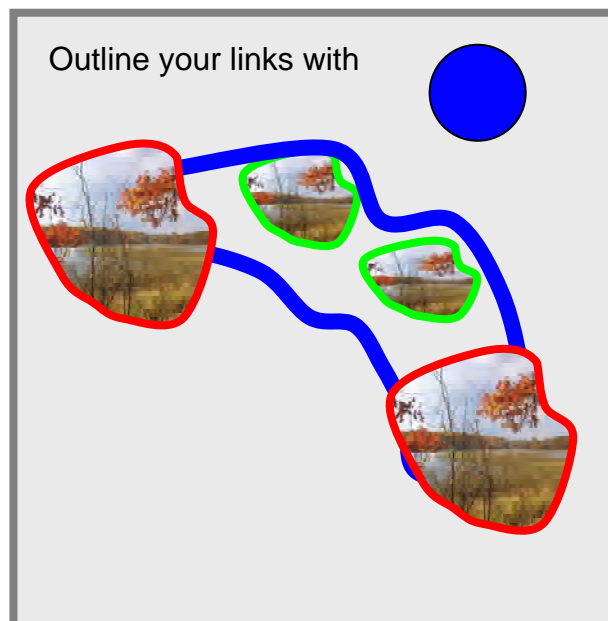


3. Identify smaller ecological landscape features (sites) that can serve as a point of origin or destination or incorporate less extensive ecological important areas.



**Hint** - Look for lower ranked Natural Areas along with smaller woodlots and wetlands

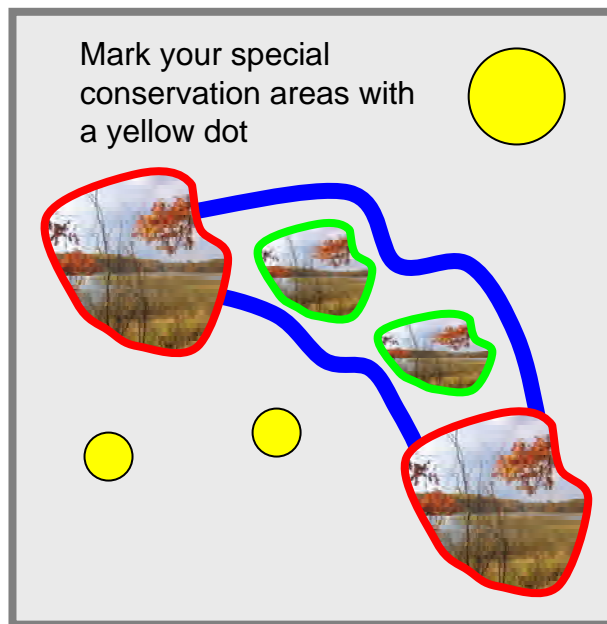
4. Create the best possible connections between hubs using the smaller ecological landscape features (sites) as stepping stones. Use riparian linkages whenever possible.



**Hint** - In general, the wider the corridor the better and the longer the corridor the wider it should be.

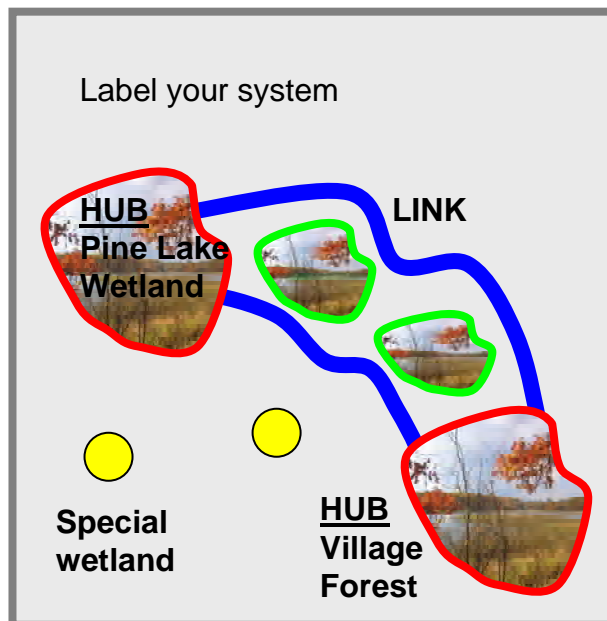


5. Identify Special Conservation Areas that fall outside the system or have a unique connection or importance within the community.



**Hint** - Appropriate areas may be wetland, pond, woodlot stream or wildflower patch known only to local residents.

6. Label your system (hubs & links) and add names that help identify the site locally.

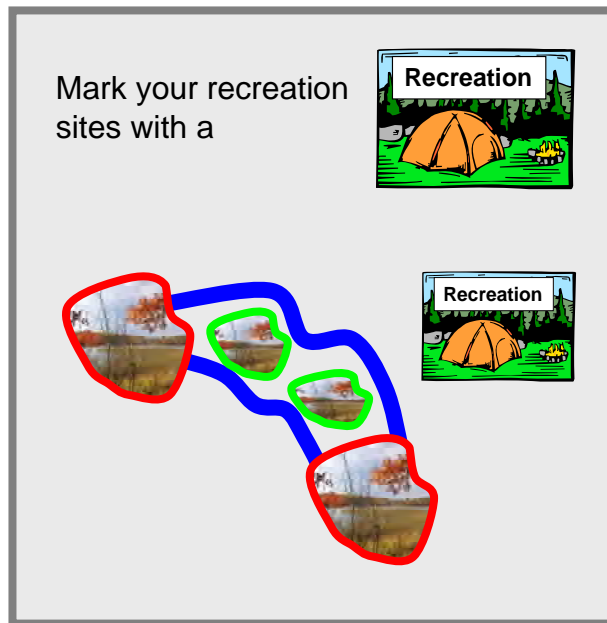


**Hint** - Using Green Infrastructure terminology (Hubs, Sites and Links) helps us visualize the framework. Adding names to hubs will help give them a local identity.



## Recreational Network

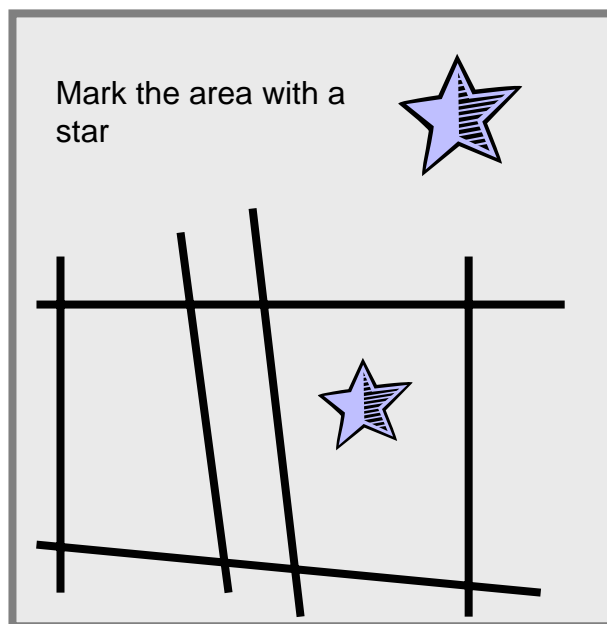
7. Use the existing countywide trail coverage; add additional recreational hubs/sites within your given area.



**Hint** – This could be a park, town center, school, nature center or the same hub identified in the ecological network portion of the exercise.

## Preservation Approach

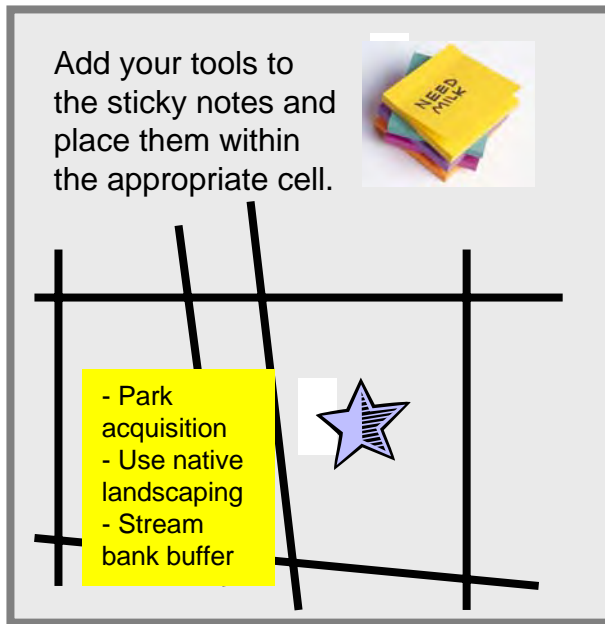
8. Using the cell (major road bounded area map) determine one area that is under the greatest threat or pressure.



**Hint** – If an area was called out as a hub but will be developed in the near future it may require immediate attention.



9. Using the cell (major road bounded area map) determine the most appropriate tools within each priority cell that would help accomplish your Green Infrastructure goal.



**Hint** - Use the provided list of tools taken from the Shiawassee Huron Headwaters Preservation Project or add your own.



# Natural Area Advisory Group Contact Information





# Natural Area Advisory Group

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# Next Steps





# Next Steps

- Participate in hands on exercise
- Verify the draft Green Infrastructure Vision Map
- Determine best land management tools (using road bounded areas when possible)
- Review master plans, ordinances and related planning documents
- Establish conservation goals, funding options, and tracking mechanisms
- Amend Master Plans to favor preservation of green infrastructure, and encourage green development proposals and better site design
- Adopt Local Ordinances for Resource Protection  
woodland, wetland, riparian, stream, and floodplain ordinances  
(Documents should clearly outline permitted and prohibited development activities in relation to these natural features.)
- Revisit community Regulations & Development Standards for lot sizes, setbacks, parking and street standards, drainage regulations
- Offer Incentives to developers to integrate green development design  
density compensation, buffer averaging, stormwater credits, transferable development rights, etc.
- Adopt regulations and policies that guide development within a framework of ecological structure and function.
- Educate homebuyers & community residents about the open space conservation concept
- Provide long-term support
- Check the Oakland County Green Infrastructure website for updates:

[www.oakgov.com/peds/program\\_service/es\\_prgm/green\\_infras/gi\\_project.html](http://www.oakgov.com/peds/program_service/es_prgm/green_infras/gi_project.html)



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