



Sylvan Township Comprehensive Plan Revised 2014



Sylvan Township

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Sylvan Township Base Map
Roadway Detail Diagram
Proposed Roadway/Transportation Plan
Proposed Land Use Map
Parks and Recreation Map

The Sylvan Township community is situated geographically in a position where development pressure has occurred and is expected to continue. This community of 2,702 (2010 census) people is located in the southern portion of Cass County, west of the City of Baxter, the city of East Gull Lake on the North and surrounds the of the City of Pillager. Sylvan Township is defined by its many lakes, rivers, agricultural and wooded areas; all of which fuel the demand of residential homes and growth pressures.

The majority of land within Sylvan is designated as agricultural and rural residential. Residential development occurs primarily around the many lakes and rivers of the Township. A priority for supporting the current quality of life that Sylvan enjoys will be to plan for future development. This must include balancing the pendulum between growth pressures and preserving the natural environment, while still allowing functioning farm sites to prosper.

The Township has a successful history of comprehensive planning, with the last Comprehensive Plan updated in 2004. Sylvan Township is proactive in nature with an active Town Board and Planning Commission. In 2003 the Township began work on the creation of a commercial district which will guide commercial uses within the Township.



NATURAL HISTORY

Sylvan Township is situated atop sand aquifers and was created by glacial movement 11,000 to 30,000 years ago. The Township is characterized by nearly level to rolling to steep, sandy, loamy or gravelly and organic soils on outwash plains and lake plains, and at the margins of terminal moraines.

The original vegetation consisted of a mixture of hardwood, pine forests, and grasslands. Multiple glaciations dominated the development of the landscape within Sylvan Township. The Township includes several lakes and rivers. They include:

| <u>Lakes</u> | | <u>Rivers/Creeks</u> |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Hardy Lake | Little Red Sand Lake | Crow Wing River |
| Harlan Lake | Pillager Lake | Gull River |
| Hole-In-The-Day Lake | Sylvan Lake | Seven Mile Creek |
| Kramer Lake | Mile Lake | Pillager Creek |

HISTORY

Sylvan Township was organized on April 2, 1912. The Township was named after Sylvan Lake, known for its beautiful evergreen woods. The earliest European settlers were mainly trappers, traders, and lumbermen. A few farmers settled in the southern portions of Sylvan Township. Native Americans lived in present day Sylvan Township as well. Sylvan Township has the largest Native American burial groupings in the Mississippi Headwaters and one of the largest within the state of Minnesota.

The lumber industry was historically connected with development within Sylvan Township and Cass County. By 1920s the logging boom began to slow and farming operations began to flourish. During the mid 1900s tourism within Cass County and Sylvan Township began to develop into a profitable business. Today, tourism, mining, manufacturing, farming, and smaller commercial development are just some of the uses within the township.

POPULATION INFORMATION

The following table shows population growth from 1970 to 2000. The population has continued to grow in part because of expanding new residential development that has occurred within the Township.

| Year | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 |
|----------------------------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Population | 465 | 846 | 1,268 | 1,965 | 2,702 |
| Source: U.S. Census | | | | | |

Additional information regarding age, employment, education, and tax records is found in the Appendix.

What follows is a document that includes five sections: Community Perspectives, Policy Plan, Inventory, Transportation Plan, and Land Use Plan. It presents the communities' perspectives on both the existing conditions and future growth of the Township. The overall planning process is indicated on the graphic that follows.

BASE MAP – LOCATED IN THE APPENDIX

In order to increase the amount of community input into the update of the Comprehensive Plan, several different processes were employed.

A survey was sent out to all addresses in the Township. One hundred forty eight Township residents (22 seasonal residents and 126 year around residents) responded to the survey.

The second process was to invite a class of seniors in the high school to fill out the same survey to gain the perspective of the younger portion of the population. (The seniors may or may not have been residents of the Township). There were 20 students surveyed.

The third process was to bring in members of the community to participate in a visioning session. This group was picked at random from the tax rolls with additional members assigned from the Board of supervisors and members of the Planning Commission. There were 16 participants in the visioning with 4 Township residents facilitating. This group was asked to look forward 5 years and project their vision of a successful Township.

While there were a wide range of thoughts express and opinions aired there were a number of common threads revealed in the final analysis. The following are conclusions drawn from the various processes broken down over into nine areas of concern:

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The natural environment was the strongest element coming out of the survey. The quality of life in Sylvan Township was ranked high by both the year around residents and the seasonal residents. Over ninety five percent of both groups either ranked quality of life as good or excellent. The natural environment (woods, fields, water and wildlife) was ranked as an asset by 81.5% of the year around residents and 100% of the seasonal residents listed it as an asset.



Water quality was listed as something they would want to protect with 51% of year around residents and 54% of seasonal residents listing it as number one or two. Year around residents and seasonal residents listed woods, fields, lakes and rivers as something they would like to see preserved with a support of 72% and 85% respectively.

Conservation and sustainable development ranked one and two for both groups as something they would support as part of protecting the natural environment.

Discussions and voting among the visioning group concurred with that of the survey group. The overriding thought was to protect the natural features of Sylvan Township with thoughtful design and building. Their hope was to encourage waterfront owners to maintain buffers. And in general they wanted to make protection of water, both above and below ground, a top priority.

The youth perspective from their survey indicated that they were most concerned with protecting water quality and the natural amenities of woods, fields, lakes and rivers. Their reasoning, however, might have been due to the recreational value noted later in their survey.

PACE OF GROWTH

Survey respondents viewed annexation and rapid growth as two major threats to current Township life. Annexation rated 2.59 on a 1-6 scale with 1 being the high. The year around residents view this as a higher threat than those who are seasonal.

Respondents chose to live in Sylvan because of the rural or country living setting (78%) which runs into conflict with rapid growth. At the same time proximity to Brainerd/Baxter was ranked as an asset by both year around residents and seasonal residents (63%-65%). Rapid growth was rated 2.7 on the 1-6 scale.

As a resolution to the conflict of rapid growth and protection of what now exists, conservation or sustainable development received support with over half of the year around residents making it a number 1 or 2 priority with seasonal residents rating slightly lower. On a 1-6 scale the combined rating was 2.9.

The students in their survey were not nearly as concerned with annexation as they were about rapid growth and shared the concern of keeping a balance between the environment and practical use of the land. They apparently see rapid growth as a threat to that balance.

The vision group anticipate population growth to pick up pace again. They predict a population of 3000-3100 by 2018. They suggest that the growth will be managed by use of larger lot sizes. They also anticipate a 5 year mandatory sewer inspection cycle as a means of protecting the water quality.

TOWNSHIP ATMOSPHERE AND RURAL CHARACTER

Survey respondents ranked quality of life as good to excellence. Year around residents rated the small town/rural environment higher than the seasonal residents with a respective ranking of 76% and 54% rating it as a great asset.

As a group the survey respondents gave rural or country living the highest score (78.7%) as a reason for living in Sylvan Township.

In regard to community the respondents did not show much interest in adding community events, and increasing community involvement did not have a great deal of appeal.

The students appear to feel the same about living in the country however a proximity to Brainerd/Baxter was very important to them.

The discussions of the visioning group confirmed the desire to maintain the rural settings with little comment on the sense of community or community activities.

AGRICULTURAL

Agriculture was not given high importance with a bottom ranking by the survey group (4.51 rating). The same was true for the students.

The vision group however placed more value on the agriculture lands as a means of preserving and protecting. Ag prices of today may cause an expansion of active agriculture land bucking the historical trends. They did see some agriculture land that has been “thoughtfully” rezoned to accommodate growth. The vision group also expects greater control of feedlots as a means of protecting water quality.

RESIDENTIAL

For the survey group better land stewardship (sewage treatment, runoff control, prairie restoration, reforestation etc.) was seen as a high priority (2nd most important) for future land development.

Conservation and sustainable development were important as well. Survey respondents said keeping that balance between environmental issues and practical use of land and water was a high priority. This was the highest rating of the entire survey.

The students gave a very high priority to cleaning up neighborhoods and the adult survey concurred with 55% of them with the same desire.

The vision group anticipates a Township with wireless connectivity for the entire Township. They see more solar power in play and natural gas available to all residents. They also suggest the use of the technology available to enhance our early warning systems and as an aid in public service announcements.

COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL

The survey did not address many issues related to commercial or industrial uses. In regard to the question of who should manage zoning, the respondents indicated that as a lower priority with 35% choosing that as a local unit of government priority. The survey group did offer some support providing incentives to help business grow and to attract new ones with 39% approving. The student group concurred.

The vision group, however, saw the Township managing both commercial and residential planning in the future. They also advised for a “common sense” but attractive set of zoning regulations. The vision group also saw a future with more locally owned businesses.

TRANSPORTATION

The survey group when discussing changes for transportation, wished to improve two areas. The first, with 30.7% responding that they would like to improve the appearance of Township roadsides and the second with 46.7% responding listed control of damage by off road vehicles a priority.

When discussing priorities for Township government 85% thought plowing and maintaining roads was most important. 64% of respondents considered Township roads either good or very good with only 2 indicating poor or very poor. Nearly 50% in the survey ranked snow removal as good or very good. Student response to the survey was very similar to the adults.

The vision group agreed that the Township has a good maintenance program. They saw biking and hiking trails expanded by 2018 and all roads in the summer and winter should be well maintained in 2018.

ADMINISTRATION / PUBLIC SERVICES

The survey group rated the need for sharing of more services as a means to save money at 3.21 on a 1-6 scale. Year around residents thought more highly of holding down costs than the seasonal residents.

A large number of those taking the survey indicated that they did not know enough about the government operations or the level of cooperation between Sylvan Township and Cass County with 31% of year around and 59% of seasonal responded with "don't know".

Keeping taxes low was the second highest priority for the Township coming in very close to the number one choice of road management. When asked about the best way to communicate there was a split with the year around resident choosing direct mail and the seasonal residents opting for email.

The student opinions followed the adult survey, keeping taxes low ranked slightly higher than maintaining roads. Like the adult these topics still ranked number one and two.

The vision group saw a wider community of Pillager School, the City of Pillager and Sylvan Township working together on projects.

They also saw a cooperative effort between the City of Pillager and Sylvan Township to provide police protection.

RECREATION

It was not surprising that the area of recreation had the highest interest on the part of the students. Outdoor recreational opportunities were most popular to the students as a reason to live in Sylvan Township. Proximity to Brainerd/Baxter was highly rated most likely for the entertainment and shopping value for students. Their highest ranking reason to live in Sylvan Township was the natural environment. Enhancement of lakes and river systems was highly valued, probably due to the recreation opportunities offered by water. Adults surveyed echoed the appreciation of outdoor activities with 46% of year around residents and 73% of seasonal residents listing this as an asset. When ask about things worthy of attention in the future parks and trails was ranked 3.75 on the 1-6 scale with seasonal residents ranking this higher than the year around residents.

The vision group saw future cooperation with other entities to promote multi use trails. The future development of the Township property on Sylvan Lake drew the most comment and excitement in the area of recreation. There was a desire to keep this property natural, provide a fishing pier, ski trails and bird watching opportunities. In keeping with the spirit of cooperating with other entities the vision group saw a joint effort with the Pillager School Forestry Program in managing the park forest.

In general the themes that seemed to move to the forefront for all three groups were to:

- Maintain the natural characteristics of the Township preserving woods, forests and quality waters
- Keep costs down with innovation and cooperation
- Manage growth thoughtfully, creatively, but strongly to protect the environment
- Add recreational opportunities
- Encourage better stewardship of land and water through education and persuasion
- Educate residents in regard to governmental operation
- Cleanup some of the blighted areas and situations.

The purpose of the Policy Plan is to describe in writing what the community desires to produce or accomplish with regard to the physical environment. The plan also provides guidelines as to how these desires are to be achieved.

This chapter identifies general Township goals and supporting policies. The policy statements can be used as a benchmark against which development requests, proposed plans, programs, and actions can be assessed. Policies should provide a decision-making framework for all public and private actions and development within Sylvan Township.

The Policy Plan does not provide information on the timeliness and priorities for needed community improvements. Instead, it provides a series of criteria which can be used to direct actions undertaken by public and private groups in response to community needs. Moreover, the policies should be considered and utilized collectively. In some cases, a single policy may define and outline a course of action. More frequently, however, a group of policies will be applied to a given situation.

The flexibility and adaptability of the Policy Plan is particularly useful when unanticipated development decisions emerge. The Policy Plan is intended to complement maps, Township plans, and the Cass County Land Use Management Ordinance. In some instances, policies may not address a new situation in the community. In this case, the Policy Plan should be updated or modified.

In the sections which follow, the terms “goals,” “objectives,” and “policies” are frequently used. These terms are defined as follows:

- Goals:** The generalized end products which will ultimately result in achieving the kinds of living, working, and recreation environments that are desired.
- Objectives:** A more defined statement of direction or action that will achieve the Township’s goals.
- Policies:** Definite courses of action which lead to goal achievement. They serve as guides to help make present and future decisions consistent with the stated goals.

TOWNSHIP POLICIES

Values important to the residents of Sylvan Township were identified through a process utilizing three different approaches in an effort to gain input from the citizenry of the Township.

These efforts included:

1. A survey sent to all property owners in the Township, of which 148 residents responded.
2. A survey of 20 high school seniors.
3. A visioning session with 16 residents.

The input from these procedures provided a foundation of information regarding the desires and concerns of residents.

This information will guide to goals and policies developed in the Policy Plan.

Natural Environment

Goal Statement: Protect the natural environment of Sylvan Township while accommodating growth and redevelopment within the Township.

Objective 1: Protect the environmental and scenic qualities of the rivers, lakes, and wooded areas of the Township.

Policies:

1. Create educational opportunities regarding the value of the environment through community education, volunteerism in open space maintenance, community newsletters, and citizen stewardship activities.
2. Promote shoreland preservation through the enforcement of County shoreland regulations.
3. Maintain natural vegetative buffer areas along the river, lakes, and wetland areas.
4. Regulate utility and telecommunication tower heights to reduce their visual impact on the community.

5. Promote low impact lighting for future development. Lights should be reflected downward to prevent glare or light on adjoining properties, rights-of-ways, or skyward.
6. Promote composting of organic wastes.
7. Prohibit growth within archaeological areas.

Objective 2: Protect environmentally sensitive areas from degradation due to development. Such areas include poor soils, steep slopes, woodlands, wetlands, lakes, floodplains, shorelands, high water tables, and natural wildlife habitat.

Policies:

1. Design and properly maintain individual sewage treatment systems in areas constrained by soils with poor percolation rates, floodplains, wetlands, drainage swales, or utility easements.
2. Require soil testing in new developments to determine soil quality.
3. Prevent erosion, dust, and soil sedimentation and require erosion control plans prior to new development.
4. Promote the preservation of significant trees and tree stands. This can be accomplished through either cluster development or large lot subdivisions.
5. Promote forest stewardship and suggest zero net loss.
6. Promote the use of native plants, grasses, shrubs, and trees in development site restoration.
7. Work with Cass County to implement strategies for the control of invasive/exotic plant species in waterways, greenways, natural areas, and open spaces.



Land Use

Goal Statement: Preserve the unique characteristics of the Township which include agricultural areas, open spaces, lakes, and rivers by requiring that future development be held to the scale and character of the Township. Designate land use areas within Sylvan Township which are intended to maintain and promote active farming and forestry activities.

Objective 1- Agriculture Land Use: Encourage the preservation of agricultural areas within the Township. The purpose of this land use is to promote and protect those portions of Sylvan Township where agricultural and/or forestry activities are dominant and are expected to continue to be vital elements of the local economy or where there is a pattern of large tract ownership or extensive recreational use of property.

Policies:

1. Support existing agricultural operations within the Township.
2. Reduce development densities in Agricultural areas to discourage the introduction of residential land uses where active farming is still being maintained.
3. Protect groundwater quality by following regulations and standards for agricultural and recreational uses within the Township. Support Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and County efforts to develop strong feedlot regulations.

4. Promote buffer areas within residential areas to maintain open space between developments and farming areas.
5. Identify environmental or archaeological sensitive areas within the agricultural areas on the Land Use map.
6. Educate residents within agricultural areas of the benefits of protecting environmentally sensitive areas by use of Best Management Practices.

Objective 2 - Residential Land Use: Through enforcement by Cass County, the Township will regulate future development in rural residential areas to conserve and protect the natural scenic values of the Gull River and Crow Wing River and smaller lake areas.

Policies:

1. Require and incorporate paved roads at the time of development in new residential developments which meet or exceed Township Ordinances.
2. Ensure that neighborhoods are connected via roads and trails to discourage isolated neighborhoods and promote traffic relief on Township collector and arterial roads.
3. Support the use of the state building code in all construction of single family homes.
4. Encourage green space cluster developments which will incorporate open space and communal drainfields.
5. Work with Cass County to develop rules and regulations pertaining to yard and outdoor storage maintenance.
6. Multi-family housing units need special attention to insure that the utility infrastructure available in rural areas is adequate.

Objective 3: Commercial Land Use: Enable an orderly development of commercial enterprises within the commercial zoning district.

Policies:

1. Enforce performance standards set forth in the Sylvan Commercial Ordinance that ensure that lot size, height, density, and uses are consistent with the desired character of the Township.
2. Ensure that all new commercial developments have their own functionally designed and managed wastewater treatment system.
3. In conjunction with the MPCA, ensure that stormwater management plans and practices are met.
4. Require that commercial uses have proper set back distances from residential uses.
5. Provide adequate buffer areas next to less intensive residential uses.
6. Where appropriate, promote joint utilization of parking and other related supportive services within the Sylvan Commercial District (Tier 1 and Tier 2).
7. Require any new development within the commercial district to conduct an archaeological site review prior to final approval.
8. Implement rules to ensure that future commercial development incorporates green spaces and the preservation of natural vegetation.

Objective 4- Industrial Development: Promote limited industrial development within Sylvan Township's General Business and Commercial District in order to maintain or expand the Township's employment base.

Policies:

1. Promote industrial site designs that integrate the facility with the natural features of the land and provide an aesthetically attractive appearance.
2. Consolidate industrial uses into compact and functional districts.
3. Develop specific site and building performance standards and locate commercial land use areas on the Land Use map.
4. Provide adequate buffer areas for industrial uses which are adjacent to less intensive uses.

Community Facilities / Infrastructure

Goal Statement: Maintain and improve community facilities including those lands, buildings, services, and utility infrastructures or infrastructure facilities that benefit the residents and define the quality and safety of living within Sylvan Township.

Objective 1: Be proactive in the planning and maintenance of community infrastructure facilities and services.

Policies:

1. Promote and encourage cooperation and coordination between governmental units in the provision of public facilities and services.
2. Encourage private/public sector cooperation in the provision of public improvements.
3. Consider establishing intergovernmental capital improvement plans, where practical, to be cost effective and to reduce duplication of efforts or investments.
4. Continue planning efforts to identify public facility needs.

Objective 2 – Sanitary Sewer: Insist on regulation and monitoring the discharge of sewage and other waste to prevent contamination of the surface and ground waters in the Township.

Policies:

1. Monitor and maintain all utility systems on an ongoing basis to ensure a safe and high quality standard of service.
2. Require that new development connect to either an individual sewage treatment system (ISTS) or an engineered neighborhood communal sewage treatment system approved by the County and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) when required.
3. Prohibit ISTS in areas that are environmentally constrained in ways that would result in system failure or potential pollution of water resources.

Objective 3. Water System: Require a safe and potable water supply for Sylvan residents and businesses.

Policies:

1. Require all new development to connect to a private well or a neighborhood communal well capable of providing potable water to the residence or business.
2. Implement appropriate well head protection of abandoned facilities.
3. Establish water resource protection guidelines for all land uses as a means of protecting the quality of ground water and surface water resources.
4. Discourage future development that can not handle on-site stormwater and drainage.
5. Promote cluster septic and water concepts in shoreland development areas. Meet all shoreland standards for location of wells and ISTS in shoreland areas.
6. Encourage land owners and residents to use proper lawn and yard management practices.
7. Provide education regarding the need for periodic testing of well water.
8. Support Cass County's Comprehensive Water Plan and shoreland management regulations where appropriate within the Township.

Objective 4- Storm Water: Manage storm water in a manner that does not result in negative impacts to the Township or neighboring properties.

Policies:

1. Work with the County to ensure proper storm water management and water quality.
2. Restrict or prohibit development on wetlands, floodplains and other natural features that perform important environmental functions in their natural state. Where desirable and practical, employ such natural features to handle storm water or provide recreation.

3. Encourage natural vegetative buffer areas along the river as well as all lakes, wetlands, creeks, and drainageways.
4. Require new development design to adequately address all on-site storm water needs and requirements such that no increase of flow over predevelopment conditions will occur to adjoining properties because of the new development.

Objective 5 - Parks and Recreation: Provide active, passive, and cultural recreational opportunities that utilize the Township's natural features and promote citizen participation at a level that can be managed and maintained within the Township.

Policies:

1. Coordinate planning with the County, neighboring communities, and related governmental agencies to promote and incorporate a trail system throughout Sylvan Township.
2. Utilize citizen participation in the planning, development, and operation of recreational open space.
3. Develop and incorporate trail systems for recreational vehicles (ATV's).
4. Examine County land use regulations and work with Cass County to resolve conflicts between development regulations and the Township's Comprehensive Plan goals.
5. Promote the establishment of low maintenance park and trail facilities as well as the maintenance of those facilities by volunteers in order to minimize strain on the Township's resources and budget.

Objective 6 - Buildings: Encourage the preservation and maintenance of facilities that are important in maintaining Sylvan Township's rural character.

Policy:

1. Preserve those areas, places, buildings, structures, and other features which have significant architectural, historical, community, or aesthetic value.
2. Support the use of the State Building Code in order to construct and maintain quality and safe residential housing stock and commercial buildings.

- 3 Encourage the use of storm shelters in structures constructed without basements.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY

Goal Statement: Prepare and implement a Comprehensive Plan to provide a clear vision of the Township's goals and objectives and, when necessary, state how those goals and objectives are to be realized through new development and redevelopment.

Objective 1 Implement the Township's policies and plans in conjunction with the ordinances of Cass County in order to retain local control of decisions affecting land use and development, protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the public, and ensure the fair and equitable use of property.

Policies:

1. Actively participate in multi-jurisdictional planning efforts that affect issues like: the Highway 210 corridor, shoreland and bluff land protection areas, waterways, trail incorporation and annexation issues with the communities of Pillager, Baxter, East Gull Lake, and other adjacent Townships, as well as Cass County, on overall planning related issues (i.e., transportation, land use development, subdivision design, environmental protection, governmental services, etc).
2. Aggressively review all new developments to verify their consistency with the Comprehensive Plan as well as the Township/County development regulations.
3. Periodically review the Comprehensive Plan, amending it as necessary to reflect current community needs and priorities.
4. In conjunction with Cass County, provide for effective and thorough inspection policies to ensure that all new construction in the Township is erected and maintained in a safe manner and in compliance with all applicable codes, policies, and County Ordinances.

Objective 2 Encourage a high level of public participation in the on-going decision-making of the Township.

Policies:

1. Maintain effective communication with residents of the Township and businesses through direct contact, open meetings, outreach programs, and newsletters.
2. Maintain strong communication with Cass County, the School District and all neighboring communities to address ongoing Township, County, and school issues.
3. Continue to provide opportunities for individuals to participate in advisory boards and contribute to the on-going decision making of the community.
4. Encourage volunteer groups in order to strengthen and improve the opportunities for all people to participate in governmental affairs.
5. Require that all decision-making on development proposals be thoroughly documented, factually based, and carefully analyzed.

TRANSPORTATION

Goal Statement: Establish a comprehensive transportation system that effectively moves people and vehicles within the Township and between regional activity centers, by means of a local transportation plan that is coordinated with County, regional, and State plans.

Objective 1 Approach transportation in a comprehensive manner, giving attention to all modes and related facilities.

Policies:

1. Transportation planning and implementation shall be coordinated with the neighboring jurisdictions of Pillager, Baxter, East Gull Lake, May Township, Fairview Township, and Cass County.
2. Early and continuing citizen involvement shall be provided in transportation planning and implementation projects.
3. Give attention to all available transportation modes including trucks, automobiles, rail, bicycle, and pedestrians in the Township transportation planning.

Goal Statement: Establish a functional hierarchy of roads to provide effective motor vehicle movement through the Township, County, and region.

Objective 1: Provide for safe and convenient movement for both local and regional traffic.

Policies:

1. The mobility needs of all persons shall be considered in the planning and development of the transportation system.
2. Direct driveway access to County and Township roads shall be minimized and limited (consistent with County driveway spacing requirements and the Sylvan Township Driveway and Road Standards Ordinance) ensuring adequate distance between intersections and utilization of appropriate traffic control methods and devices.
3. Proper visibility, design, and control of all intersections shall be required to promote safety.
4. Road intersection safety shall be achieved through the appropriate use of road lighting and sign controls.
5. A phased program to improve hazardous and poorly designed intersections and access points shall be established so as to increase the safety to both motorized and non-motorized traffic.

Objective 2: Define primary roadway system routings and connections in the undeveloped areas of the Township.

Policies:

1. A functional classification system shall be followed in the planning and design of the Sylvan road system.
2. Through the subdivision process, rights-of-way for future roadway system routes shall be dedicated.

Goal Statement: Develop a transportation system that offers safe and convenient traffic movement and site access.

Objective 1: Upgrade existing substandard roadways.

Policies:

1. New roads shall be constructed and existing roads upgraded in compliance with applicable Township, County, or State standard specifications for construction.
2. All new developments in the Township shall incorporate paved roads consistent with the community's adopted design plates. Access to pedestrian traffic should be considered in design (see detailed diagram in the Appendix).
3. The Township shall work to phase out existing gravel roadways by evaluating their function in relation to the long term transportation system and continually work to upgrade or eliminate them as necessary.

Objective 2. In conjunction with Cass County, MnDOT, and the Office of Freight and Railways, coordinate and develop a road and highway system that provides safe and convenient traffic movement and access to individual properties throughout the Township.

Policies:

1. Work with multi-jurisdictions (i.e., County, State, Office of Freight and Railways and adjoining municipalities to develop a limited access system via service and collector roads along Highway 210.
2. Promote corridor development based on controlled access concepts.
3. Ensure adequate distances between accesses to properties and utilize appropriate traffic control methods and devices.
4. Work with the County, State and railroad to improve safety with crossing arms, sights, and signage where feasible.
5. Encourage Cass County to assist in approving plat road alignments for highest maintenance efficiency.
6. Ensure that future roads are paved or hard surfaced prior to construction of a new development through the use of Development Agreements and financial securities.



ROADWAY DETAIL DIAGRAM LOCATED IN THE APPENDIX



7. Road Supervisors to review all new road expansion. Ensure that new roads are connected or provide sufficient access to avoid isolated neighborhoods.
8. Encourage development on collector road and street systems that complements the County Road and State Highway system. Discourage dead end subdivisions.
9. Implement a road improvement policy and coordinate with the Cass County road system.

Objective 3. Develop a system of priorities for improving the various elements of the Township's transportation system.

Policies:

1. Consistent with County transportation plans, a Capital Improvement Plan shall be prepared and periodically updated for transportation facilities including the upgrading of existing substandard roads.
2. Coordinate Township road improvement projects with the other governmental jurisdictions to economize on limited funding and to avoid duplication of efforts.

Goal Statement: Integrate land use planning with Township transportation systems.

Objective 1: Establish and develop a road system which is sensitive to homogeneous neighborhoods, activity areas, and the rural character of the Township.

Policies:

1. Transportation facilities shall be planned to function in a manner compatible with adjacent land use.
2. Transportation facilities shall be designed to conserve natural resources and minimize the total need for ongoing public investment.

Objective 2: Take full advantage of visibility and accessibility opportunities of the Highway 210 corridor in establishing a positive community image.

Policies:

1. The Township shall work with Cass County and the State of Minnesota in the development of Highway 210 frontage roads.
2. The Highway 210 intersections shall be promoted for the establishment of highway oriented commercial businesses which benefit from the high traffic volumes and visibility along the roadway.

Goal Statement: Establish a comprehensive trail system that provides both transportation and recreational pedestrian and bicycle opportunities in Sylvan Township.

Objective 1: Ensure the provision of pedestrian and bicycle facilities which are consistent with the safe and convenient circulation needs of the pedestrian and the bicyclist.

Policies:

1. The Township's roadway system shall complement and facilitate local movements provided by bicycles and pedestrians and, where appropriate, ATV users.
2. Where feasible and practical, the Township shall promote pedestrian and bicycle trails in conjunction with road and highway improvements.

3. Where practical, pedestrian and bicycle trails shall be setback from the travel surface and shoulder of the roadway.
4. Restrict the use of motorized vehicles to limited areas which have been designated to protect public safety and property and minimize impacts the natural environment.
5. Promote proper use of ATVs and snowmobiles on designated trails.
6. Incorporate easements for trails into new subdivisions where appropriate.
7. Promote creation of an ATV club to take responsibility of trail layout and maintenance.

Objective 2: Coordinate trail planning with the County, State and adjoining governments to provide trail connections beyond Sylvan Township's boundaries.

Policies:

1. Work with the neighboring communities of Pillager, Baxter, East Gull Lake, May Township, and Fairview Township to incorporate a trail system giving priority to establishing trail corridors in areas surrounding commercial areas and creating a connection between isolated neighborhoods.

INTRODUCTION

Sylvan Township constitutes the southernmost township in Cass County and bordering the Crow Wing River and the Gull River, which flows into the Mississippi River on the south. The City of Baxter borders our Township on the east. The City of East Gull Lake on the north and the City of Pillager sits within Sylvan Township on the southern border next to Morrison County. The population of Sylvan Township has grown from 1,268 persons in 1990 to 2,702 persons in 2010, an increase of over 113 percent in the last 20 years.

The State Highway Department, Cass County, or the Township, depending upon roadway jurisdiction, has historically addressed transportation planning in the Township. The Transportation Plan is based upon the total transportation system and how it relates to and serves the land use patterns within the community. While it is acknowledged that the transportation system encompasses several modes of transport (i.e., automobile, rail, pedestrian, and bicycle) this plan shall focus primarily upon the community's roadway network.

It should be recognized that the transportation system serves to tie together, and in some cases separate various land use activities in the community. The Transportation Plan therefore recognizes a relationship between transportation and land uses. The Transportation Plan must include options to support transportation opportunities which allow people to stay in their homes throughout the various stages of life.

The purpose of this plan is to demonstrate a means by which the Township may address the future transportation needs of the community in an integrated and well-planned fashion. Central to this objective is the preparation of a plan that establishes a well conceived hierarchy of roadways. Actual improvements are reliant on many factors including development of vacant land, capital improvement planning by the County and the Township, State transportation priorities, and funding. Recognizing the constraints, the Transportation Plan recognizes long term objectives.

ISSUES

While the Township's existing transportation system serves the needs of the community, several noteworthy issues exist. These issues are summarized below.

Incomplete Roadway Network

A significant transportation concern in the Township are incomplete networks which exist in the northeast and southeast areas of the community. While such condition reflects existing physical barriers in the area, it is important that a proactive approach to transportation planning take place to meet the transportation needs of a growing area population and provide a functionally efficient roadway network.

Roadway Conditions

The Cass County highways within the Township have been found to be both well constructed and properly maintained. There are, however, some concerns involving the condition of some Township roads. These concerns relate primarily to existing gravel surfacing and deteriorating roadway shoulder areas. Of particular concern with such gravel roads are their inherent characteristics such as dust, grade upkeep, and noise, all of which diminish the attractiveness of neighborhoods.

This problem is being partially addressed through the adopted road standards ordinance, which requires all newly constructed roads in the Township to have bituminous surfacing. This ordinance does not, however, address the improvement of existing gravel roads. There is a need for the Township to maintain a roadway capital improvement plan to guide improvement and investments to the existing roadways.

A new concern the last few years is that many of the gravel roads that are left in the Township are shared with other jurisdictions or are private roads which limits the Townships ability to improve them. As of the summer of 2013 the Township had 7.74 miles of gravel roads left in the Township, 1.71 miles of these are shared with other jurisdictions. Of this 7.74 miles the Township can improve 2 miles, the balance are park roads, minimum maintenance roads, shared and paper roads (roads that have been recorded but not yet improved). The Township also had 47.35 miles of bituminous surfaced roadways. Within the next five years the Township plans to have the remaining two miles improved.

In the last ten years the Township has increased the number of installed Beaver Levelers, which has greatly improved the occasional flooding problem of roadways in low lying areas. The Township has also concentrated on brushing concerns along our roadways and cleaned and improved some of the ditches to control water flow.

Traffic Volumes

Population growth within Sylvan Township and surrounding areas has been accompanied by increases in the volume of traffic carried by area roadways and highways, most notably Highway 210. According to the Highway 210 Corridor Management Plan, volumes on the 210 corridor between Motley and Baxter have steadily escalated.

Average annual daily traffic (AADT) current and projected are:

Current AADT on Highway 210:

1. Motley to Pillager – 5,000
2. Pillager to CR 18 - 6,400
3. County Highway 18 to Memorywood Drive - 8,100

Projected AADT on Highway 210 (2020)

1. Motley to Pillager – 7,200
2. Pillager to CR 18 – 9,200
3. County Highway 18 to Memorywood Drive – 11,600

Obviously, such future traffic volumes will escalate demands upon the Township's transportation network.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES MAP REMOVED

Access Limitations

Highway 210, the Township's County roads, and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Rail Line all impose stringent access/crossing limitations. It is therefore the responsibility of the Township to respond to such limitations in a functionally efficient and well planned manner. To be recognized is that these limitations actually establish parameters for future transportation and land use planning.

Highway 210

Highway 210 is the primary carrier of traffic through the Township. The highway runs through the Township in an east-west fashion and functions as the community's "gateway." The corridor's access and visibility give Sylvan a tool in which to project a positive image which is both progressive and vital.

In addition to the issues mentioned above, we have areas of isolated neighborhoods, we have poor sight lines, rail road crossings and access limitations along Highway 210 as well as image opportunities along this route. We have poor east west linkages, and an incomplete roadway network mainly due in part to environmental barriers. We also lack a good trail system.

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

Roadways within Sylvan Township are classified as State, County, or local. The functional classification system for the Township's roadways is based on anticipated usage from five to ten years in the future, and is constructed consistent with standards for functional classifications described in the Functional Classification Table on the following page. The following specific classifications are identified within the Township.

Arterials

Arterial roadways function as major transportation arteries. They serve to connect large population centers to cities in other portions of the State. These roadways are designed for high speed movements and for high vehicle volumes, including commercial traffic and are intended to serve longer trips. Direct lot access to arterial roads is strongly discouraged. The only arterial roadway within Sylvan Township is Highway 210.

Major Collectors

Major collectors are roadways which place emphasis on both mobility and land access. Major collectors typically connect neighborhoods within and between sub-regions. Direct lot access to major collector roads is discouraged. Major collector roadways within the Township are County Roads 1, 18, 36 and 51/132nd St SW.

Minor Collectors

Minor collectors provide service between major collectors and arterial roads to provide critical connections to sub-regions to relieve local traffic, unlike major collector streets, limited direct lot access is allowed when determined necessary

Local Roadways

All Township roadways that do not fall into the functional classifications discussed above are local roadways. Their primary function is to provide property access. Typically, these are town-owned roads.

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION MAP – REMOVED – SEE BASE MAP IN THE APPENDIX

Roadway Functional Classification System Characteristics

| Characteristic | Functional Class | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| | Principal Arterial | | Minor Arterial | Collector | Local Street |
| | Interstate Freeway | Other Principal Arterial | | | |
| System Mileage | Suggested federal upper limits for Interstate and other principal arterials combined: urban 10% | | Suggested federal limitations for principal arterials and minor arterials combined: urban 15-25% | Suggested federal limitations: urban 5-10%, rural 20-35% | Suggested federal limitations: urban 65-80%, rural 63-75% |
| Percent of Travel (VMT) | Suggested federal upper limits for Interstate freeways and other principal arterials combined: 40-65% | | Suggested federal limitations for principal arterials and minor arterials combined: 65-80% | Suggested limitations: 5-10% | Suggested federal limitations: 10-30% |
| Intersection | Grade separated | Desirable: grade separated. Minimum: high-capacity controlled at-grade intersections | Traffic signals and cross street stops | 4-way stops and some traffic signals; local street stops | As required |
| Parking | None | None | Restricted as necessary | Restricted as necessary | Unrestricted |
| Large Trucks | No restriction | No restriction | Restricted as necessary | Restricted as necessary | Restricted as necessary |
| Management Tools | Ramp metering, preferential treatment for transit, Interchange spacing | Ramp metering, preferential treatment for transit, traffic signal progression, staging of reconstruction, Intersection spacing | Traffic signal progression, land access management, preferential treatment for transit | Number of lanes, traffic signal timing, land access management | Intersection control, cul-de-sacs, diverters |
| Vehicles Carried | Urban: 25,000 - 150,000 Rural: 5,000 - 50,000 | 15,000 - 100,000 2,500 - 25,000 | 5,000 - 30,000 1,000 - 10,000 | 1,000 - 15,000 250 - 2,500 | Less than 1,000 Less than 1,000 |
| Posted Speed Limit | Urban: 45 - 55 Rural: Legal limit | 40 - 50 Legal Limit | 30 - 45 Legal Limit | 30 - 40 35 - 45 | Maximum 30 Maximum 30 |
| Right-of-way | 300' | 100' - 300' | 60' - 150' | 60 - 100' | 50' - 80' |
| Transit Accommodations | Priority access and movement for transit vehicles in peak periods where needed | Priority access and movement for transit vehicles in peak periods where possible and needed | Preferential treatment where needed | Cross sections and geometric designed for use by regular route buses | Normally used as bus routes only in non-residential areas |

PROPOSED ROADWAY SYSTEM PLAN MAP LOCATED IN THE APPENDIX

ROADWAY SYSTEM PLAN

The proposed Roadway System Plan is found in the Appendix and associated functional classifications are shown on page 41. The plan is based on the following principles:

1. The functional classification system in Sylvan Township should conform to the system criteria summarized on page 41.
2. The plan is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Cass County Transportation Plan
3. The plan reflects long term vehicular travel demand.
4. The plan shall promote coordination and compatibility between Township, County, and State transportation systems.
5. The functional classification system for Sylvan Township includes the following:
 - a. Arterials
 - b. Major collectors
 - c. Minor collectors
 - d. Local roads

Arterial Roads

Highway 210 is the only designated arterial roadway in Sylvan Township. The highway runs east to west through the Township, paralleling the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Rail Line. The highway functions as the Township's "gateway" and provides an opportunity to project an image that is both progressive and vital.

The recent upgrade of Highway 210 has prompted MNDOT to complete a Corridor Management Plan, refer to map in the Appendix. This adopted plan is intended to manage access, improve safety and improve mobility within the corridor. As part of this effort, future highway and railroad grade crossing improvements are identified.

Consistent with the Highway 210 Management Plan, the following long range improvements are anticipated along Highway 210 in Sylvan:

Improved Intersections. The following intersections are anticipated to be the major access points to Highway 210:

1. East County Road 36/11th Avenue
2. County Road 18/17th Avenue
3. West County Road 36/Upper Sylvan Road
4. West Sylvan Drive
5. 33rd Avenue North/Crow Wing River Drive SW
6. East County Road 1/37th Avenue
7. West County Road 1/39th Avenue

T Intersections. The Transportation Plan identifies a number of T intersections onto Highway 210. Some of the T intersections are to be removed as the Transportation Plan progresses:

1. The T intersection at West Gull River Road is intended to be removed when a frontage road between West Gull River Road and 17th Avenue SW can be constructed.
2. In review of the T intersection at 24th Avenue and 130th Street and 25th Avenue and Wilderness Drive, the State would like to investigate the possibility of realigning these streets to create a single full intersection.
3. The T intersection at East Crow Wing River Drive SW will be eliminated when a frontage road is constructed linking full intersections at West Sylvan Drive and 33rd Avenue.

Service Roads

The State plan encourages the Township to identify service road locations that would serve to limit direct Highway 210 access, ease congestion at the major Highway 210 intersection and would serve as a local road for future commercial, industrial, and residential land uses adjacent to Highway 210 corridor.

In their initial investigation of frontage road corridors, the Township attempted to identify a corridor that extended from Pillager to County Road 18 south of Highway 210. Through their investigation and during public comment, this length of frontage road was determined too aggressive. The Comprehensive Plan identifies conceptual frontage road corridors that run parallel to Highway 210 at the following locations:

1. South of Highway 210 from 33rd Avenue SW to West Gull River Road SW.
2. South of Highway 210 from 24th Avenue SW to County Road 18/17th Avenue SW.
3. North and south of Highway 210 from Little Pine Trail SW to 11th Avenue SW.

These frontage road corridors are conceptual. The frontage shall be sited and constructed in conjunction with subdivision design and development. The frontage road intersection with the Township's major collector shall be setback from Highway 210 based on County spacing guidelines to ensure proper stacking distance from Highway 210 and proper sight lines along these major collectors. The frontage roads serving commercial land use areas shall be designed to accommodate large trucks and heavy equipment.

Major Collector Roads

County Roads 1, 18, 36 and County Road 51/132nd St SW within the Township are designated as major collector roads. County Roads 18 and 36 serve as north-south thoroughfares, and County Roads 36 and County Road 51 serve as east-west thoroughfares. Such roads serve to channel traffic both within the Township and to outlying locations.

Direct property access to major collector roads should be strongly discouraged. To reduce reliance upon such roads for local trips, a local street network should be created (through subdivision design) which promotes neighborhood connections.

Minor Collector Roads

Minor collectors are similar to major collectors in that they are primary transportation routes. They differ from major collectors, however, in that they typically function at lower speeds of travel and offer greater access opportunities.

The Transportation Plan conceptually designates several Township roads as future minor collector roads. Such designations (and associated road design and access limitations) are intended to lay the framework for an efficient and well-planned future transportation network. Generally speaking, the locations of the various minor collector roads are dictated by desired spacing requirements and existing Highway 210 access locations. It should be noted that the designated minor collector routes are conceptual in nature and represent long term and preferred conditions. Routing and alignment locations may change reflective of actual field conditions.

As shown on the Transportation Plan, the following minor collector roads have been identified:

1. 43rd Avenue. 43rd Avenue between Highway 210 and Spring Road.

2. 33rd Avenue. 33rd Avenue north of Highway 210.
3. Sylvan Drive. Sylvan Drive north of Highway 210 extending to the west side of the Gull River.
4. Upper Sylvan Road. Upper Sylvan Road north of Highway 210 including a future northerly extension.
5. 11th Avenue. 11th Avenue north of Highway 210.
6. Spring Road. Spring Road in the northwest corner of the Township, including a future easterly connection to County Road 1.
7. 125th Street. An east/west connection between County Road 1 and County Road 18. This connection includes existing segments of 125th Street and Sylvan Lane.
8. Little Pine Road. 11th Avenue South from Highway 210 into Baxter.
9. County Road 36. County Road 36 is in the southeast area of the Township.
10. Hradsky Road. County Road into Baxter.

Local Roads

Local roads are those roadways that are not classified as arterials or collectors. These roads serve adjacent properties and are designed as low speed, low capacity facilities. Medium distance travel is purposefully directed away from local roads to the collector and arterial system. Local roads primarily serve residential areas. While it is not the purpose of the Transportation Plan to identify local roadway locations, specific attention to such configurations should be given as part of individual development applications ensuring proper access to nearby collector streets.

STREET IMPROVEMENTS

To both lessen future maintenance costs and improve the attractiveness of community neighborhoods, the Township now mandates the construction of bituminous roadways as a requirement of subdivision approval.

Minimum maintenance roads will continue to exist where the Township deems they are appropriate, based on access needs, land use patterns, and financially practical improvements.

Driveways

The Township has implemented a Driveway Ordinance to insure that all new driveways constructed abutting Township Roads are constructed to Township standards.

INTRODUCTION

Based on the foundation established by the Planning Tactics and Policy Plan, this chapter outlines the Land Use Plan for guiding and directing future Township growth and development. This chapter gives attention to land use, environment, and transportation. Through this format, the Township establishes a comprehensive perspective and decision-making instrument to guide new growth through the year 2025.

BASIS FOR THE TOWNSHIP PLAN

The Township's growth has been accelerating over the past two decades with the introduction of nearly 1,500 new residents.. Township leaders believe that, due to the Township's natural features and proximity to the City of Baxter and Brainerd, this trend will continue.

Development that is occurring today will define Sylvan Township in the future. Rather than react to new development, the Township has decided that it needs to be proactive in defining its future land use and transportation characteristics.

Through the Planning Tactics, the following objectives were identified and serve as the basis for the Sylvan Township Comprehensive Plan:

- **Define future land use patterns.** Historically, the Cass County Zoning Ordinance has allowed the intermixing of a variety of agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial land uses within the Township. This philosophy was effective in the past, however, with the increase of non-agricultural land uses entering the Township, land use compatibility issues have become more prevalent. The current Land Use Plan will more narrowly define the land use categories and provide a geographic application as a means of providing some segregation of incompatible land uses.
- **Protect agricultural resources.** Farming is the primary land use within the Township. The Land Use Plan will strive to protect agricultural areas and active farms from the premature encroachment of non-agricultural land uses that may interfere or limit continued farming activities.
- **Protect Sylvan Township's environmental amenities.** Sylvan's rural features and natural environment define the Township's character. These natural amenities are to be protected when evaluating new development

proposals. With this priority defined, the Land Use Plan will emphasize the following strategies:

1. Exclude development from environmentally or archeologically sensitive areas (e.g. lakes, floodplains, wetlands, drainageways, Native American burial sites).
 2. Safely integrate new development into the Township's natural features through improved site planning and subdivision design (conservation, cluster subdivision, greenway protection, woodland preservation).
 3. Enforce environmental protection ordinances including floodplain, shoreland, and wetland regulations.
- **Improve local involvement in land use planning.** Planning and development decisions are implemented through Cass County. The Township wishes to be more involved with the long term land use decisions within Sylvan Township while maintaining a strong ties to the County. In this respect, the Land Use Plan outlines the Township's land use and growth expectations through 2025. The Township will be more proactive in the following areas:
 1. Outlining zoning and performance standards it wishes the County to implement within Sylvan Township.
 2. The Township wishes to be proactive in the review and approval of all development applications in Sylvan Township including minor subdivisions and Variance requests.
 3. The Land Use Plan geographically outlines the land use patterns that will be encouraged in the Township.
 4. New growth should pay for itself related to required improvements to avoid burdening existing Township residents.
 - **Coordinate land use planning with long range transportation infrastructure needs.** Historically, new subdivisions have occurred in a piecemeal manner, resulting in isolated neighborhoods served by long, dead-end cul-de-sacs. This development pattern increases Township service costs related to plowing and road maintenance and creates a heavy reliance on the County highways for local trips. Future development must consider the Township's long range transportation needs, providing local and minor collector road networks that will complement County and State highway systems.



LAND USE PLAN

The map located in the Appendix represents the Long Range Land Use Plan for Sylvan Township. The following pages provide descriptions of the land use classification and the Township goals for new development.

Below are links for more information:

www.sylvantwp.com

www.co.cass.mn.us – see quick links/maps

PROPOSED LAND USE CONCEPT MAP LOCATED IN THE APPENDIX

AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY USES

Agriculture is the predominant land use in Sylvan Township, however, the Township's land use composition is rapidly changing. An efficient and profitable agriculture/livestock/forestry industry is an economic benefit to the Township. It provides added opportunity to crop-based agriculture and creates service industries that provide employment and future economic activity. An efficient industry also produces high quality food, fiber, and wood products for consumers at reasonable prices and enhances wildlife habitat. Agricultural areas are intended to promote the orderly development of agriculture/livestock/forestry and to reduce the risk of pollution and damages to natural resources, and to maintain and improve the quality of the Township.

Recognizing the importance of Sylvan farm economy, the purpose of the agricultural land use classification is to promote and protect those portions of Sylvan Township where agricultural and/or forestry activities are dominant. These agricultural uses are expected to continue to be vital elements of the local economy. The Land Use Plan identifies areas for continued agricultural uses in the northwestern, central, and northeastern portions of the Township where there is a pattern of large tract property ownership. These areas have active farm sites and should be protected from the encroachment of non-agricultural uses.

The intrusion of non-agricultural development into agricultural areas can be detrimental to active farming. Compatibility issues between rural residential neighborhoods and active farms will continue to arise related to noise, odor, dust, and other issues inherent to farming operations. New Developers will provide Agricultural Easement documentation that will be attached to the abstract before land development and will obtain new home owner signatures on said documentation for Township records. In maintaining and preserving active farming within Sylvan Township, the community should enforce the following guiding principles for agricultural areas:

- Discourage the encroachment of suburban development into these areas. This shall occur by maintaining a maximum density of one unit per 40 acres.
- Ensure that homes in new subdivisions are set back from active farms, tilled fields, and feedlots prior to the granting of subdivision approval.
- Discourage the introduction of incompatible commercial and industrial uses within agriculture areas.

- Develop guidelines that would establish areas where feedlot operations may operate.



As Sylvan continues to expand and grow, the Township may wish to re-examine agricultural areas to ensure compliance with these standards, while continuing to preserve the ongoing production of active farming.

RURAL RESIDENTIAL USES

Rural residential uses are those areas outside the shoreland use classification prescribed for very low density residential development. Rural residential land use classifications will permit low density single family development that must be designed and integrated with the Township's environmental features. Sylvan Township has outlined four rural residential classifications having varying densities that will be applied based on location within the Township, environmental features, and the area's ability to support the prescribed density. Rural residential classifications include RR-10, RR-5, RR-2.5 and RR-1.

To facilitate a more consolidated and managed growth pattern, the Land Use Plan prescribes the rural residential land use to areas adjoining existing development in Sylvan Township. Within these areas of the Township, infill development is encouraged as a means of interconnecting neighborhoods with local roads and planning for long range minor collector road systems that will complement the existing community and State highway network. Land uses within this category shall be limited to agriculture, forestry, and single-family units.

The Township wishes to manage growth as a means of promoting quality development and requiring new growth to pay for itself. In this respect, the following rural residential efforts shall be implemented:

- The Township will increase performance standards for new residential development. Working with Cass County, the Township will outline minimum standards to promote quality single family homes, control the proliferation of home extended businesses, and address the issue of outdoor storage as a means of protecting property values and ensuring attractive neighborhoods.
- New subdivisions must pay for themselves and not create a financial burden on the balance of the Township. All new subdivisions shall be required to have public local roads designed and paved to Township standards. Installation of the roads shall be at the developer's expense and approved by the Township engineer.
- New development shall be integrated with the natural features of the Township. Within the rural residential area, the preferred development pattern is the conservation clustered subdivision. This subdivision technique is intended to protect environmentally sensitive areas and preserve open space by clustering residential lots in a portion of the development site and preserving open space through a land trust. This conservation development is a means for accomplishing the Township's desired rural development patterns.

RR-10 and RR-5

The Rural residential RR-10 shall have a base density of one unit per 10 acres and allow a density incentive of one unit per five acres when a conservation cluster subdivision is implemented. The RR-10 land use has been designated in areas as a buffer to existing farm operations and in areas having numerous environmental features such as wetlands, water bodies, steep slopes, and rolling topography. The lower density is intended to promote a less disruptive development pattern to the Township and more protective of the Township's environmental amenities.

The Rural Residential RR-5 shall have a base density of one unit per five acres or one unit per 2.5 acres if a conservation cluster subdivision is used. The RR-5 has been designated in the eastern portion of the Township, serving as a density transition between the higher density shoreland development and urban growth anticipated in the City of Baxter, and the lower density area of the Township.

Within the RR-10 and RR-5 land use classifications, two subdivision options will be available – standard rural subdivisions and the conservation cluster subdivision. The Township wishes to promote the conservation cluster subdivision as the preferred residential design in the rural residential areas. In this regard, the Township will consider establishing density incentives as a means of encouraging the conservation cluster subdivision.

Standard Rural Subdivision

The Township will allow a standard rural subdivision meeting the following criteria:

- Minimum Lot Size: RR-10 - one unit per 10 acres. RR-5 - one unit per five acres.
- Minimum lot size must include sufficient buildable land to accommodate building placement, well, and independent sewage treatment system (ISTS) in accordance with County Codes.
- The subdivision design shall encourage through-street designs as opposed to cul-de-sacs to avoid isolated neighborhoods. Subdivisions shall be required to provide needed right-of-way to facilitate the Township Transportation Plan and possible future trails.

- All new subdivisions shall meet the street design standards of the Township.

Conservation Cluster Subdivision

The Township will encourage conservation cluster subdivisions through density incentives. The conservation cluster subdivision shall meet the following standards:

- Fifty percent or more of the land within the subdivision will be preserved as open space. This open space is intended to protect environmentally sensitive areas, provide neighborhood recreational opportunities, preserve aesthetic view sheds, and provide pedestrian trails. The long-term preservation of the open space is insured through the establishment of conservation easements which run to a land trust.
- Maximum density for a conservation cluster subdivision shall be one unit per five acres in the RR-10 and one unit per 2.5 acres in the RR-5.

Neighborhood designs shall encourage a sense of community.

- All new clustered subdivisions may be designed to accommodate either individual ISTS or a community sanitary sewer system. All community sanitary sewer systems must be MPCA approved and engineer designed. Prior to Township or County approval, the applicant must provide an operation and service plan that outlines the long term operations, maintenance, repair, and replacement responsibilities for the community system. The plan must address long term financing of all operations and maintenance.
- New development must address stormwater management as part of overall plat design so as to not negatively impact adjoining properties with stormwater drainage.
- The subdivision design shall encourage through-street designs as opposed to cul-de-sacs to avoid isolated neighborhoods. Subdivisions shall be required to provide needed right-of-way to facilitate the Township Transportation Plan.
- All new subdivisions shall meet the street design standards of the Township.

RR-2.5

The Township has areas of existing 2.5 acre lots in established neighborhoods. In areas adjoining these existing neighborhoods, the Township will continue this 2.5 acre development pattern. The RR-2.5 land use classification will allow one dwelling unit per

2.5 acres of buildable land. Net density shall be calculated on buildable land exclusive of lakes, wetlands, steep slopes (greater than 30 percent), tributaries, or floodplains.

The Land Use Plan identifies future RR-2.5 land use areas. The net result of this land use will preserve environmental features by oversizing the lots.

The Township will require new RR-2.5 subdivisions to be sensitive to natural resources within the defined rural residential areas. The following strategies will be implemented to integrate new RR-2.5 subdivisions within environmentally sensitive areas:

- The Township will require applications for new RR-2.5 subdivisions to include a resource inventory of the development site. A resource inventory shall be a survey that identifies information on existing environmental conditions including wetland delineation, natural vegetation, slope areas, hydric soils, high value forested areas, natural drainage ways, streams, etc. and allow an accurate evaluation of subdivision design relating to existing conditions. Plats must be designed so that lot and roads are incorporated within the natural environment.
- The Township/County will implement development regulations relating to buildable lot size, wetlands, floodplains, shoreland protection, tree preservation, and slope protection.
- The Township will promote greenway corridors that will serve to protect environmentally sensitive areas from the encroachment of development.

Standard Rural Subdivision

The Township will allow a standard rural subdivision meeting the following criteria:

- **Minimum Lot Size:** One unit per 2.5 acres of contiguous buildable land exclusive of environmental features.
- Minimum lot size must include 2.5 acres of buildable land to accommodate building placement, well, and independent sewage treatment system (ISTS) or community sanitary sewer system (CSSS) managed by a resident's association in accordance with County codes and State Law with review by the Township.
- The subdivision design shall include, when possible, through-street designs as opposed to cul-de-sacs to avoid isolated neighborhoods. Subdivisions shall be

required to provide needed right-of-way to facilitate the Township Transportation Plan and possible future trails.

- All new subdivisions shall meet the street design standards of the Township.

Conservation Cluster Subdivision

The Township will encourage conservation cluster subdivisions. The conservation cluster subdivision shall meet the following standards:

- Fifty percent or more of the land within the subdivision will be preserved as open space. This open space is intended to protect environmentally sensitive areas, provide neighborhood recreational opportunities, preserve aesthetic view sheds, and provide pedestrian trails. The long-term preservation of the open space is insured through the establishment of conservation easements which run to a land trust.

Neighborhood designs shall encourage a sense of community.

- All new clustered subdivisions may be designed to accommodate either individual ISTS or a community sanitary sewer system (CSSS). All community sanitary sewer systems must be MPCA approved and engineer designed. Prior to Township or County approval, the applicant must provide an operation and service plan that outlines the long term operations, maintenance, repair, and replacement responsibilities for the community system. The plan must address long term financing of all operations and maintenance and monitoring by the Township.
- Variable lot sizes may be considered in a clustered subdivision reflective of buildable areas of the subdivision, open space protection, and the type of sewer system proposed.
- New development must address stormwater management as part of overall plat design so as to not negatively impact adjoining properties with stormwater drainage.
- The subdivision design shall include, when possible, through-street designs to avoid isolated neighborhood. Subdivisions shall be required to provide needed right-of-way to facilitate the Township Transportation Plan and possible future trails.

- All new subdivisions shall meet the street design of the Township.

RR-1

The RR-1 land use classification is found in areas in the southwestern and north central portion of the Township. These areas were developed at higher densities (one unit per one acre) than the majority of the Township. The RR-1 land use classification recognizes the existing conditions of these areas of the Township and protects them as conforming subdivisions. The Township does not intend to expand this land use classification elsewhere in the Township.

The RR-1 land use area is nearly fully developed. The development potential of the remaining vacant land is limited to scattered smaller parcels throughout the RR-1 area. The limited size and configuration of these parcels may prevent some of the land from being developed. A number of homes exist as non-conforming buildings due to non-compliance with current zoning or shoreland regulations related to lot size or building setbacks. The Township will promote the continued use of these properties by encouraging their ongoing maintenance and improvement in a manner that reflects the development standards of Sylvan Township.

Property owners within the RR-1 area pursuing development must provide information that demonstrates that their parcel is buildable and can accommodate an ISTS prior to the Township's and County's approval of a building permit. New development expansion of existing structures must conform to all Township and County regulations regarding number of accessory buildings, height, bulk, and infrastructure requirements prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Resource Protection

The Township's goal in allowing rural residential development is to integrate these land uses with the Township's rural character and environmental features. The resource protection land use classification is intended to accommodate rural residential land use, however, a specific development density has not been prescribed at this time. The resource protection land use is located in highly environmentally sensitive areas of the Township that could be negatively impacted through the introduction of new development. In consideration of future land uses, the following criteria will be used to evaluate development proposals:

1. Until a rural residential land use is established, the base density in the resource protection areas shall be one unit per 40 acres. Existing lots of record will be recognized as buildable provided they can meet County standards for ISTS.
2. Property owner and/or developer may pursue a land use change to RR-10, RR-5, or RR-2.5 through a Comprehensive Plan amendment and rezoning. The land use change shall be evaluated by the Township through the following criteria:
 - a. Resource Inventory. Any development application must provide a detailed resource inventory of the site. The purpose of this inventory will be to identify on a survey all areas that will require environmental protection. These include, but are not limited to, all shoreland, blufflands, wetlands, areas of poor soils, steep slopes, archeological areas, and other physical constraints that would be negatively impacted through the encroachment of development.
 - b. Subdivision Concept Plan. A concept plan illustrating lot layout, street layout, open spaces, and environmental protection for the site must be provided to demonstrate that the proposed density can be supported.
3. Transportation Plan. Any future development shall conform to the Township's transportation plan. New roads must be constructed in compliance with applicable Township, County, or State standards for construction. The Township will evaluate the function of each proposed road in relation to the long term transportation system.
4. Implementation Strategies. Prior to development, implementation strategies must be developed and shall include a tree preservation plan, erosion control plan, wetland permits, stormwater permits, permits from all related agencies including watershed districts and DNR review, and other necessary plans and permits that will protect the natural resources identified on the resource inventory.

Housing Types and Quality

Housing type and quality is also a concern for the Township. In this respect, the Township may consider establishing minimum performance standards for housing construction as a means of establishing a base line for quality and protect property values within the Township. The performance standards may include, but not be limited to, required foundation, minimum building width requirements, roof pitch, and garages.

The Township has experienced issues with accessory buildings and home occupations that evolve into larger businesses within the rural residential areas. These uses have presented compatibility problems for surrounding residential neighborhoods. Future consideration of accessory and home occupations shall require the following:

- Accessory buildings shall not be allowed prior to construction of the house.
- Home occupations shall be limited in the range of uses to those uses that may compatibly coexist with adjoining homes. Home occupations that emit high levels of dust, odors, or noise shall not be allowed.

SHORELAND RESIDENTIAL USES

This land use classification historically describes those land use areas that fall within the Cass County Shoreland Zoning District. This district is described as lying within 1,000 feet of the ordinary high water level of lakes and 300 feet of the ordinary high water level of the tributaries and rivers. This unusual boundary description and Sylvan's many lakes and rivers result in a unique pattern on the Land Use Map. The Township Comprehensive Plan has reduced the shoreland land use district with the introduction of the Resource Protection land use category. The following descriptions shall only apply to the shoreland areas designated on the Land Use Map.

The shoreland residential category differs from the rural residential land use in terms of density and range of land uses. Development densities are significantly greater than the rural residential area. Shoreland residential lot sizes vary depending on the lake and river classifications (General Development, Recreational Development, and Natural Environment) and whether the lot is riparian or non-riparian. Typically, the lot size in the shoreland land use categories may range from 40,000 square feet to 200,000 square feet. This land use arrangement places the Township's highest development in close proximity to its most valuable natural resource. While this philosophy allows for more residents to share shoreland ownership, it also raises concern for the long term maintenance of the lake and river resources.

Land use in the shoreland residential land use category including single family, multiple family, resorts, and water-oriented commercial uses which may include restaurants or other recreation businesses. The water amenities and allowed densities make these land uses more practical in these areas.

The Cass County Zoning Ordinance includes shoreland regulations aimed at directing development and protecting the lake and river resources. In examination of all future shoreland residential area developments, the Township will emphasize designs that protect the water resources, and integrate development into the balance of the Township. The following standards and efforts will be processed with any new shoreland development:

- Development density will be calculated on buildable land area exclusive of lakes, wetlands, and tributaries.
- Developments in floodplains will be discouraged.
- Buffers consisting of undisturbed native vegetation shall be required along shorelands and wetlands to filter stormwater and screen development from the lake surface.

- Stormwater management plans will be required with all new shoreland area site plans and subdivision impervious surface within the shoreland area shall be limited to a maximum of 25 percent of the lot area.
- Residential development shall meet new performance standards related to single family and multiple family homes.
- ISTS shall comply with all County shoreland locational requirements and design standards. Community sewage systems may be allowed providing the system is engineered. The developer shall be required to furnish to the County and Township an operations and maintenance plan for any proposed community sewage system. This plan must outline the long term operation, maintenance, repair, and replacement responsibilities for the system. The plan must also address the long term financing of all operations and maintenance. The Township will have oversight on monitoring compliance.
- Shoreland subdivisions shall encourage through roads as opposed to dead-end cul-de-sacs to avoid isolating neighborhoods. Subdivisions shall dedicate needed right-of-way for higher functional classification roads in the Township. All roads shall be designed to Township standards.

Limited commercial development shall be allowed within the shoreland residential areas. These uses shall include resorts and water-oriented recreational and entertainment uses. The Sylvan Township Commercial Ordinance addresses these activities as conditional use permits. As such, any future development shall be evaluated against the Sylvan Township Commercial Ordinance zoning regulations and the policies and recommendations of the Sylvan Township Comprehensive Plan.

COMMERCIAL USES

Sylvan Township has a commercial ordinance which addresses all commercial operations anywhere within the Township by conditional use permit. This ordinance has minimal performance standards governing site improvements. The broad geographic distribution and limited performance standards have raised Township concern related to land use compatibility, development quality, and long range durability of current commercial development.

The Township recognizes that current land use decisions will have a long lasting impact on the area. The Township wishes to promote quality commercial growth within Sylvan. In this regard, the Sylvan Land Use Plan identifies defined specific locations for future growth. These locations reflect the existing land uses in the area, have excellent visibility from the Highway 210 intersections, and excellent access from the County highway system.

The Sylvan Commercial Ordinance in defining the commercial land use areas, the following items were considered:

- **Location and Size.** The Sylvan commercial areas were sited to take advantage of their excellent visibility and accessibility to State and County highways. The location and size of the commercial areas offer opportunities for future expansion as the Township continues to grow and the demand for commercial services continues to increase.
- **Access.** The site's proximity to major State and County highways will require site access to be controlled. All access points must conform to the County and State access guidelines. As recommended as part of the Highway 210 Corridor Study, Highway 210 frontage road locations must be identified and rights-of-way secured through new subdivisions. Where frontage roads are not practical, access drives will be shared between sites.
- **Business Interchange.** The Sylvan commercial areas discourage strip highway commercial design in favor of a more compact and cohesive design. The Township will promote commercial subdivisions and site developments that promotes convenient business interchange through shared access drives, shared parking areas, and building sites that accommodate convenient pedestrian movement between businesses. This design philosophy is intended to promote a more customer friendly business environment, while reducing traffic on local roads and automobile travel between commercial sites.

- **Performance Standards.** Building and site performance standards have been developed and applied to the Township's commercial development in an effort to establish aesthetically pleasing, high quality buildings and site design.
- **Environment.** Commercial development shall be required to be responsive to environmental concerns with regard to site planning, landscaping, impervious surface, and stormwater management.

The Township, through the incorporation of performance standards (limits on building size, impervious surface coverage, drainfield design, etc.) seeks to avoid big box retail due to its proximity to larger municipalities which are capable of serving larger local and regional markets. These areas provide better access and location for larger, big box type retail. Sylvan continues to support small commercial operations in designated areas located on the Land Use Plan. The Land Use Plan identifies proposed commercial areas along the Highway 210 corridor. These commercial areas will depend on the development of a local service road system that will control direct lot access to Highway 210 and channel traffic to controlled intersections for safe traffic movement.

INDUSTRIAL USES

A tiered system has been established to identify proper location of industrial uses.

Industrial land uses can present traffic, service, and environmental issues that go beyond the service capacity of the Township. Sylvan Township recognizes its limited infrastructure and service capacity and believes that heavy industrial uses are better suited in the adjoining municipalities that can offer a broader range of utilities and services.

Small industrial uses such as office, warehousing, some limited production and assembly will be allowed within the Township commercial areas provided it can meet the following criteria:

1. Compliance with performance standards of Sylvan Commercial Business Zoning District related to site and building design.
2. Local and regional streets have the capacity to accommodate projected traffic from the industrial uses.
3. The use does not use hazardous materials in the processing or production of products that may present disposal issues.

Mining is another industrial activity that will be allowed in the Township as governed by County regulations. The Township will require reclamation and end use plans for any expanded or new mining operations.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

In addition to the many lakes and rivers within the Township, the Pillsbury State Park, Crow Wing State Park, Carlyon Sylvan Lake Park and Pillager Lake Park are located within Sylvan. Additionally, there are many public boat accesses, beaches, and other recreational activities within the community. In order to preserve these areas and address future open space and public facilities needs, the following are recommended:

- Identify future needs for Township facilities. Sylvan Township will continue to determine adequate space needs for Township operations including: official Township government office needs, public works, and community-wide functions.
- Promote volunteer opportunities for residents to assist in clean-up activities within the public facilities system.

PARK AND REC MAP LOCATED IN THE APPENDIX

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and related supportive ordinances are equally as important as the development of the plan itself. Unless the plan and related development tools are constantly referred to and utilized in combination, the efforts spent in their development will be wasted. The implementation section identifies specific strategies for plan implementation. They include the following:

PLANNING

1. Work with Cass County to incorporate the Township's Comprehensive Plan into an amendment of the County's Comprehensive Plan. The Township should actively participate in issues regarding land use management, zoning updates, text revisions, and overall planning activities on a County level.
2. Create performance standards for residential, commercial, and industrial uses within the Township. Performance standards should include lot layout, design, building materials, lighting, and setback requirements, among others. Work with Cass County with regard to Zoning Ordinance amendments and continue County zoning administration.
3. Work with Cass County to develop a code enforcement strategy to ensure that approvals and day-to-day operations are dealt with in a timely manner. The code enforcement policy should clearly define the responsibilities of Township and County staff regarding issues of nuisance requests and non-conforming uses within specific areas.
4. Create a periodic review of all conditional use permits. This will ensure that conditions have been met as part of the review process.
5. In association with Cass County, work with adjoining communities to develop a trail system plan.

ENVIRONMENT

1. Outline development performance standards for stormwater management emphasizing infiltration.
2. Develop regulations for site lighting to avoid glare or light spillage to adjoining properties, rights-of-way, or skyward.

3. Insist on compliance with shoreland regulations regarding vegetative buffers along lakes, wetlands, creeks, and drainageways.

LAND USE / SUBDIVISION

1. Develop a Township policy to ensure that new development pays for its infrastructure costs.
2. Pursue available County, State, and Federal grants and aids as appropriate to facilitate community improvements and programs.
3. Require development agreements with financial securities for all new subdivisions that ensure that all conditions of approval are met.
4. Utilize new subdivisions to implement the Township and County Transportation Plan objectives (e.g. right-of-way dedication, creation of minor collector road system, interconnected neighborhoods, paved Township roads).

ORDINANCES

In association with Cass County and as a means of implementing the stated land use goals for Sylvan, the Township will pursue and implement, as deemed necessary, the following:

1. Work with Cass County to ensure that zoning text and maps are consistent with the Townships goals and objectives.
2. Attempt a greater segregation of land uses by zoning district. Discourage conditional use approval for residential, commercial, or industrial land uses in areas that are not consistent with the Township Comprehensive Plan.
3. Examine the County PUD regulations to ensure that it serves to implement the conservation cluster subdivision preferred in Sylvan Township. Consider a density incentive as a means of encouraging conservation cluster subdivision.
4. Examine the regulations governing residential outdoor storage and home occupations to establish standards that may reduce nuisance issues within the Township.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

The following implementation strategies will be used regarding community services:

1. Require that all development occurs in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.
2. Allocate administrative and improvement costs to those generating the demand or utilizing the service.
3. Maintain high standards for proactive communication with Township residents and businesses on Town issues and services through direct contact, open meetings, television, newsletters, news releases, and the internet.
4. Utilize periodic community-wide surveys to obtain citizen feedback on community development issues.

ANNEXATION

Growth and future expansion within the Township must include a long-term annexation plan with the Cities of Pillager, Baxter, and East Gull Lake. The Township should periodically meet with representatives of these communities as well as Cass County to ensure that annexation issues are discussed.

AGE

The following table compares the populations (according to age) of Sylvan Township (S.T.) to the larger county (Cass County - C.C.). Sylvan's population appears younger than the rest of the county; slightly in school age children (26% S.T. vs 23.9% C.C.) but more prominently in the labor force (61.4% S.T. vs 55% C.C.). Percentages of retirement-age folks underscores this point. Only 12.7% of Sylvan Township's population is at or above the retirement age of 65, whereas the county average is nearly double at 21.1%.

| 2010 Population According to Age Group | | | | |
|---|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| | Sylvan Township | | Cass County | |
| AGE | Estimate | Percent | Estimate | Percent |
| School Age: | | | | |
| 0 - 4 | 185 | 6.8% | 1,740 | 6.1% |
| 5 - 9 | 171 | 6.3% | 1,695 | 5.9% |
| 10 - 14 | 164 | 6.1% | 1,677 | 5.9% |
| 15 - 19 | 182 | 6.7% | 1,723 | 6.0% |
| Sub-Total | 702 | 26.0% | 6,835 | 23.9% |
| Labor-Force: | | | | |
| 20 - 24 | 130 | 4.8% | 1,166 | 4.1% |
| 25 - 34 | 312 | 11.5% | 2653 | 9.3% |
| 35 - 44 | 368 | 13.6% | 2933 | 10.3% |
| 45 - 54 | 474 | 17.5% | 4360 | 15.3% |
| 55 - 64 | 374 | 13.8% | 4591 | 16.1% |
| Sub-Total | 1658 | 61.4% | 15,703 | 55.0% |
| Retired: | | | | |
| 65+ | 342 | 12.7% | 6029 | 21.1% |
| TOTAL | 2,702 | 100% | 28,567 | 100% |
| Source: U.S. Census 2010 | | | | |

EDUCATION

The following table compares levels of educational attainment of people aged 25 or older of Sylvan Township (S.T.) and Cass County (C.C.). Sylvan appears to graduate on average 3.7% more of its high school students than the county, resulting in lower percentages of students attaining "Less than 9th grade" and "9th-12th grade (no diploma)". Though Sylvan and the county see similar levels of students attending some college (26.8% and 26.2% respectively) and those attaining Graduate or Professional Degrees (5.4% S.T. and 5.5% C.C.), Sylvan squeaks out 1% more Associate degree graduates, whereas the county sees almost 4% more Bachelor degree graduates.

| 2010 Education Levels Age 25+ | | | | |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| LEVEL ATTAINED | Sylvan Township | | Cass County | |
| | Estimate | Percent | Estimate | Percent |
| <i>Population 25+</i> | 1,945 | 100.0% | 20,701 | 100% |
| Less than 9th Grade | 74 | 3.8% | 733 | 3.5% |
| 9th-12th grade (no diploma) | 105 | 5.4% | 1,466 | 7.1% |
| High School Graduate | 745 | 38.3% | 7,156 | 34.6% |
| Some College (no degree) | 521 | 26.8% | 5,427 | 26.2% |
| Associate Degree | 191 | 9.8% | 1,825 | 8.8% |
| Bachelors Degree | 202 | 10.4% | 2,951 | 14.3% |
| Graduate/Professional Degree | 105 | 5.4% | 1,143 | 5.5% |
| Total | 1,943 | 99.9% | 20,701 | 100.0% |
| Source: U.S. Census 2008-2010 ACS 3-year Estimates & 2007-2011 ACS 5-year | | | | |

LAND USE

The table on the following page analyzes Sylvan Township's Land Use patterns using 2013 County Tax data. Residential Land Use leads the pack according to parcel number (44.1%) followed by Seasonal Land Use (24.2% - as expected for the tourist-laden tri-county area) and Rural Vacant Land (14.1%). Agricultural Productive, Agricultural - Non Productive, and Tax Exempt parcels rank 4, 5, & 6 respectively, accounting for 5.3%-3.8% of Sylvan's parcels count.

A brief analysis of Sylvan's land use according to acreage, however, paints a different picture. Rural Vacant Land ranks first here with 35.3% and the second through fourth rankings nearly resulting in a three-way tie by Agricultural-Productive (15.9%), Residential (15.7%), and Agricultural Non-Productive (14.6%) - percentages that differ by only 1.3%. Tax exempt land covers 8.3% of Sylvan, Seasonal covers 4.3%, and Managed Forest, 4%. All other property classifications cover ~2% or less of the Township. (Please see qualifying notes in farthest right column and last row of data table on the following page for each category.)

| Sylvan Township | | | | | <i>data compiled: 9/30/2013</i> |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|------------------|--|
| PROPERTY CLASS | # Parcels Containing This Class | Percent by Parcel | Acres | Percent by Acres | Notes on Property Classification Shifts Since 1998 |
| Agricultural - Productive | 127 | 5.3% | 2,976 | 15.9% | * Now divided into productive vs. nonproductive |
| Agricultural - Non Productive | 118 | 4.9% | 2,741 | 14.6% | |
| Rural Vacant Land | 338 | 14.1% | 6,618 | 35.3% | *Previously classified as "Timber" |
| Seasonal | 580 | 24.2% | 813 | 4.3% | ** |
| Residential | 1,059 | 44.1% | 2,943 | 15.7% | ** |
| Apart/Asst Lvg | 4 | 0.17% | 2 | 0.01% | |
| Resorts | 2 | 0.08% | 15 | 0.08% | |
| Golf Course | - | | | | |
| Commercial | 52 | 2.2% | 316 | 1.7% | |
| Industrial | 2 | 0.1% | n/a | | |
| Public Utility | | | | | |
| Rail Road | 1 | 0.04% | n/a | | |
| Mineral | - | 0.00% | n/a | | |
| Personal Property | 3 | 0.13% | | | |
| Managed Forest | 23 | 1.0% | 759 | 4.0% | Previously classified as "Vacant non forested lands" with Stewardship plan |
| Exempt | 91 | 3.8% | 1,551 | 8.3% | |
| TOTAL | 2,400 | | 18,743 | | See notes below re: */** for figures' qualifiers |

Source: Cass County Assessor's Office compiled 9/30/13 from 2013 Tax Year

*A parcel may have both productive and non-productive Agriculture and therefore will show up twice above, but the acreage calculated is only on that class.

**Seasonal and Residential parcels will be split class if over 20 acres, and will have two records, the second being Rural Vacant Land, so the parcel count may be high (duplicate counts) but the acreage should be correct. Also Note: Platted lots do not usually contain acreage amount, so in Commercial, Residential and Seasonal the acreage total may be much less than reality.

OCCUPATIONS

The following table contains the occupational breakdowns for employees sixteen years or older for Sylvan Township (S.T.) and Cass County (C.C.). Most occupational categories see negligible differences between the Township and the larger county average. In order of prominence, "Sales and office" work rank no. 1 (21.6% S.T. and 20.9% C.C.), "Management, business, and financial" professions rank no. 2 (17.5% S.T. and 14.7% C.C.), and "Production, transportation, and material moving" rank third (14.7% S.T. and 13.5% C.C.). No other categories for either Sylvan or Cass County employ more than 1 in 10 people.

| 2010 Occupations Age 16+ | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| OCCUPATION | Sylvan Township | | Cass County | |
| | Estimate | Percent | Estimate | Percent |
| Civilian employed population 16 years and over | 1,275 | 100% | 12,358 | 100% |
| Management, business, and financial | 223 | 17.5% | 1,821 | 14.7% |
| Computer, engineering, and science | 72 | 5.6% | 307 | 2.5% |
| Education, legal, community service, arts, and media | 90 | 7.1% | 1,128 | 9.1% |
| Healthcare practitioner and technical | 48 | 3.8% | 609 | 4.9% |
| Healthcare support | 37 | 2.9% | 350 | 2.8% |
| Protective service | 19 | 1.5% | 205 | 1.7% |
| Food preparation and serving related | 52 | 4.1% | 853 | 6.9% |
| Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance | 78 | 6.1% | 765 | 6.2% |
| Personal care and service | 49 | 3.8% | 526 | 4.3% |
| Sales and office | 276 | 21.6% | 2,589 | 20.9% |
| Farming, fishing, and forestry | 0 | 0.0% | 138 | 1.1% |
| Construction and extraction | 47 | 3.7% | 939 | 7.6% |
| Installation, maintenance, and repair | 97 | 7.6% | 465 | 3.8% |
| Production, transportation, and material moving | 187 | 14.7% | 1,663 | 13.5% |
| TOTAL | 1,275 | 100% | 12,358 | 100% |

Source: US Census 2007-2011 ACS 5-year Estimate

1

¹ The US Census does not accurately reflect the number of residents engaged in farming, fishing and forestry.

POPULATION

The following tables compare the population of Cass County to those of its neighboring counties; historically since 1960 and as projected by the Minnesota State Demographic Center through 2040. Crow Wing County has historically seen the largest population increase having nearly doubled (194% increase) since 1960. This pace of increase is predicted to slow by 2040 to 134%. Cass County's population increase is projected to sit second, having seen an increase of 153% since 1960 and due to see an increase of 117% by 2040. Morrison County sits third for population increase, having seen a 125% increase since 1960 and due to see an increase of 113% by 2040. Todd and Wadena counties trade the 4th and 5th rankings of this dataset analysis by seeing 108% and 113% population increases respectively since 1960 and predicted to plateau by 2040 (102% and 99% respectively).

Recent Total Population

| Cass County and Surrounding Counties | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 |
|--------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Cass | 18,720 | 17,323 | 21,050 | 21,791 | 27,150 | 28,567 |
| Crow Wing | 32,134 | 34,826 | 41,722 | 44,249 | 55,099 | 62,500 |
| Morrison | 26,641 | 26,949 | 29,311 | 29,604 | 31,712 | 33,198 |
| Todd | 23,119 | 22,114 | 24,991 | 23,363 | 24,426 | 24,895 |
| Wadena | 12,199 | 12,412 | 14,192 | 13,154 | 13,713 | 13,843 |

Source: U.S. Census

Projected Total Population

| Cass County and Surrounding Counties | Projected 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 | 2035 | 2040 |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Cass | 29,766 | 30,864 | 31,764 | 32,462 | 32,994 | 33,406 |
| Crow Wing | 66,067 | 69,995 | 73,687 | 77,114 | 80,350 | 83,487 |
| Morrison | 34,084 | 35,006 | 35,798 | 36,457 | 37,029 | 37,558 |
| Todd | 24,953 | 25,180 | 25,314 | 25,358 | 25,345 | 25,310 |
| Wadena | 13,786 | 13,855 | 13,872 | 13,839 | 13,776 | 13,701 |

Minnesota State Demographic Center (2012)

POPULATION

The top table illustrates area Municipalities' population increases since 1960 and as projected in 2020. Although no municipality is due to see an increase of over 112% by 2020 since 2010, notable historic increases have been experienced by Baxter (who will probably see an increase of over 820% by 2020 since 1960) and East Gull Lake (~345% increase by 2020 since 1960).

The bottom table illustrates area Townships' Recent and Projected populations. Like with the area's Municipalities, no Township is due to see an increase of over 108% by 2020 since 2010. Since 1960, however, Sylvan might see a total increase in population by over 900%, Fairview by nearly 700%, and both Motley and Rosing by over 200% (May Township by 185%).

Recent and Projected Total Population

| Municipalities | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | Projected 2020 |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|
| Brainerd | 12,898 | 11,667 | 11,489 | 12,353 | 13,178 | 13,590 | 15,220 |
| Baxter | 1,037 | 1,556 | 2,625 | 3,695 | 5,555 | 7,610 | 8,523 |
| East Gull Lake | 311 | 440 | 586 | 687 | 978 | 1,004 | 1,085 |
| Motley | 430 | 351 | 444 | 441 | 585 | 671 | 708 |
| Pillager | 338 | 374 | 341 | 306 | 420 | 469 | 507 |

Source: US Census & MN State Demographic Center (2012)

Recent and Projected Total Population

| Townships | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | Projected 2020 |
|-----------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|----------------|
| Sylvan | 321 | 465 | 846 | 1,268 | 1,965 | 2,702 | 2,919 |
| May | 498 | 512 | 520 | 599 | 730 | 852 | 921 |
| Fairview | 127 | 135 | 311 | 354 | 567 | 821 | 887 |
| Motley | 98 | 134 | 159 | 179 | 205 | 202 | 213 |
| Rosing | 59 | 64 | 103 | 105 | 135 | 146 | 154 |

Source: U.S. Census & MN State Demographic Center (2012)

Values for the columns farthest right ("Projected 2020") were estimated using a municipality or Township's 2010 composition of its larger county population and extrapolating this variable with county projections as estimated by the State Demography Center (2012).

HOUSING

The following table compares the Housing Stock - in both age and value - of Sylvan Township (S.T.) to its parent, Cass County (C.C.). Cass County housing is more historic than that of just Sylvan, having maintained 23.5% of its pre-1970 houses, versus Sylvan whose composition of pre-1970 homes is half that at 12%. Accordingly, Sylvan's housing is less aged, with 63.3% of its housing built since 1980 in comparison to the County's post-1980 housing composition of 47.6%. With respect to value, Cass County's median home value of \$185,400 is about 90% that of Sylvan homes (\$205,200), though the larger county boasts a greater composition of homes valued at over \$500,000. (11.4% C.C. vs 2.7% S.T.)

| Housing Stock Age and Value | | | | |
|--|------------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|
| | Sylvan Township | | Cass County | |
| | Estimate | Percent | Estimate | Percent |
| YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT | | | | |
| <i>Total Housing Units</i> | 1,513 | - | 24,652 | - |
| 2005 or later | 70 | 4.6% | 937 | 3.8% |
| 2000 to 2004 | 267 | 17.6% | 2,782 | 11.3% |
| 1993 to 1999 | 374 | 24.7% | 4,512 | 18.3% |
| 1980 to 1989 | 247 | 16.3% | 3,503 | 14.2% |
| 1970 to 1979 | 271 | 17.9% | 4,669 | 18.9% |
| 1960 to 1969 | 83 | 5.5% | 2,629 | 10.7% |
| 1950 to 1959 | 45 | 3.0% | 1,732 | 7.0% |
| 1949 or earlier | 54 | 3.6% | 1,427 | 5.8% |
| VALUE | | | | |
| <i>Owner-Occupied Units</i> | 1,027 | - | 10,650 | - |
| Less than \$50,000 | 84 | 8.2% | 1,042 | 9.8% |
| \$50,000 to \$99,999 | 87 | 8.5% | 1,486 | 14.0% |
| \$100,000 to 149,999 | 195 | 19.0% | 1,651 | 15.5% |
| \$150,000 to 199,999 | 122 | 11.9% | 1,462 | 13.7% |
| \$200,000 to 299,999 | 280 | 27.3% | 1,959 | 18.4% |
| \$300,000 to 499,999 | 231 | 22.5% | 1,835 | 17.2% |
| \$500,000 to \$999,999 | 28 | 2.7% | 977 | 9.2% |
| \$1,000,000 or more | - | 0.0% | 238 | 2.2% |
| Median (dollars) | 205,200 | | 185,400 | |
| Source: US Census 2007-2011 ACS 5-year Estimates | | | | |



Sylvan Township

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RESOLUTION NO. 2014-07

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RELATED TO LAND USES WITHIN SYLVAN TOWNSHIP, CASS COUNTY, MINNESOTA

WHEREAS, the Sylvan Township Board of Supervisors, Cass County, Minnesota has the authority and responsibility under Minnesota Statutes §462 to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans for the purpose of guiding and directing future growth and development within the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Township determined that new planning, development, and growth management activities emerged within the Township that require review and establishment of new policies; and

WHEREAS, the Township's staff, Planning Commission and Town Supervisors have formulated a Comprehensive Plan Update, dated August 2014 consisting of the following chapters:

- Community Perspectives
- Policy Plan
- Transportation Plan
- Land Use Plan
- Implementation Plan

and,

WHEREAS, on April 10th, 2014 a Public Hearing took place to consider a Comprehensive Plan within Sylvan Township. Public comment was received and considered accordingly; and

WHEREAS, the Sylvan Township Planning Commission, following the close of the formal Public Hearing, recommended by a unanimous vote that the Town Board of Supervisors approve the Sylvan Township Comprehensive Plan Update; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board of Supervisors considered the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment, consultant reports and presentations, public and written comments, and minutes from the Planning Commission at the Board meeting on August 21, 2014; and

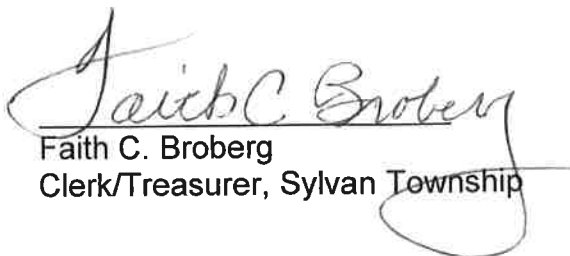
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Sylvan Township Board of Supervisors, Cass County, Minnesota do hereby accept that the Sylvan Township Comprehensive Plan, as amended by the Planning Commission and Town Board is approved and adopted.


ADOPTED BY THE SYLVAN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS THIS 21ST
DAY OF AUGUST, 2014

TOWN OF SYLVAN

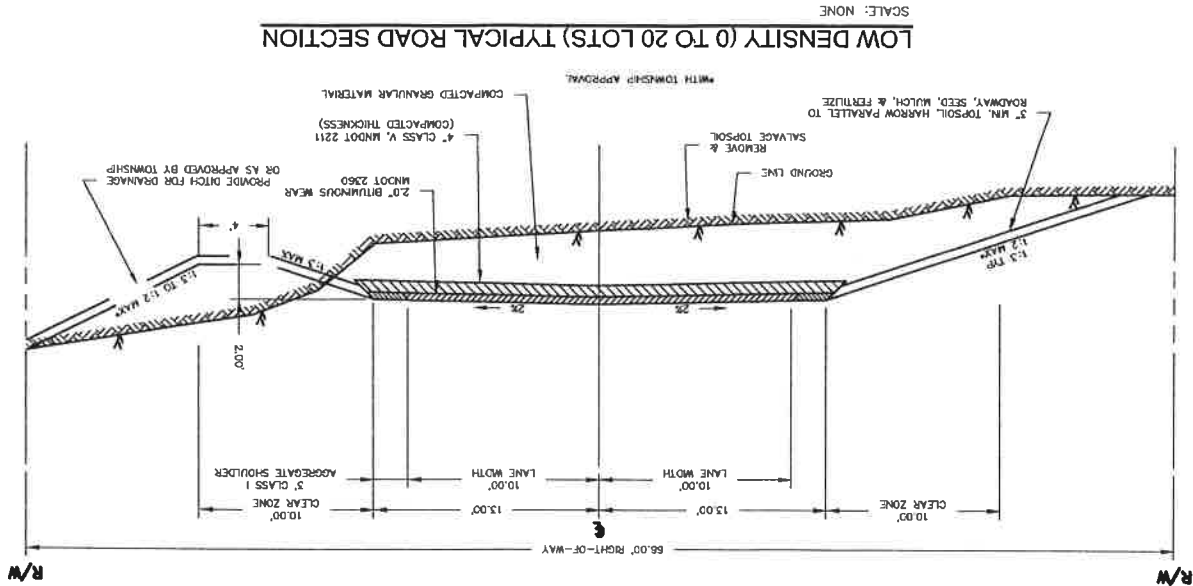
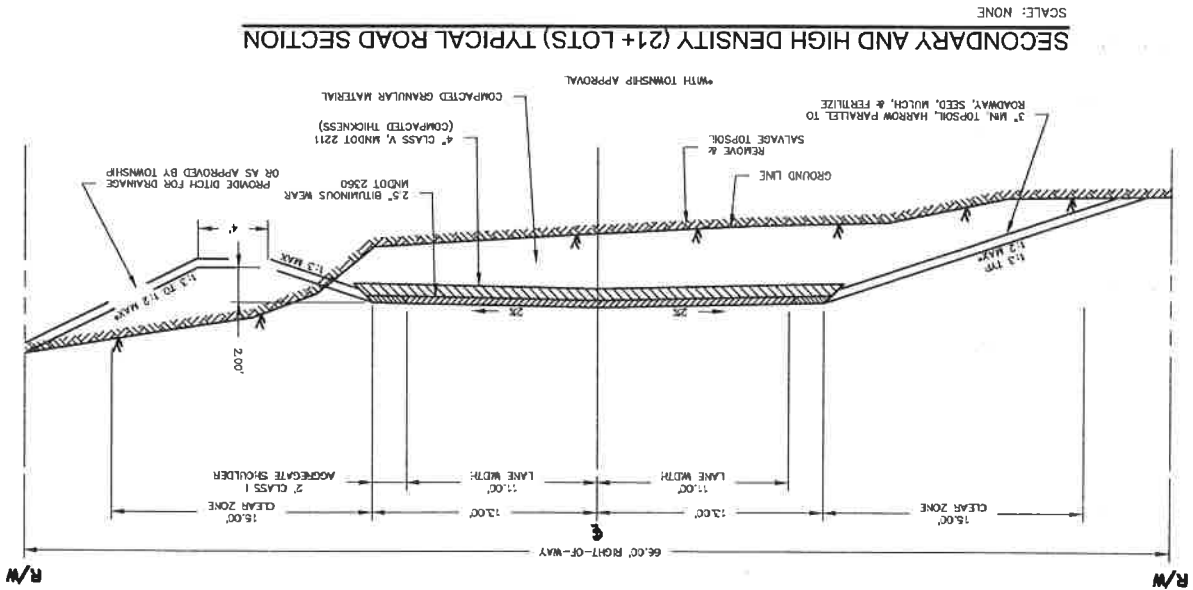
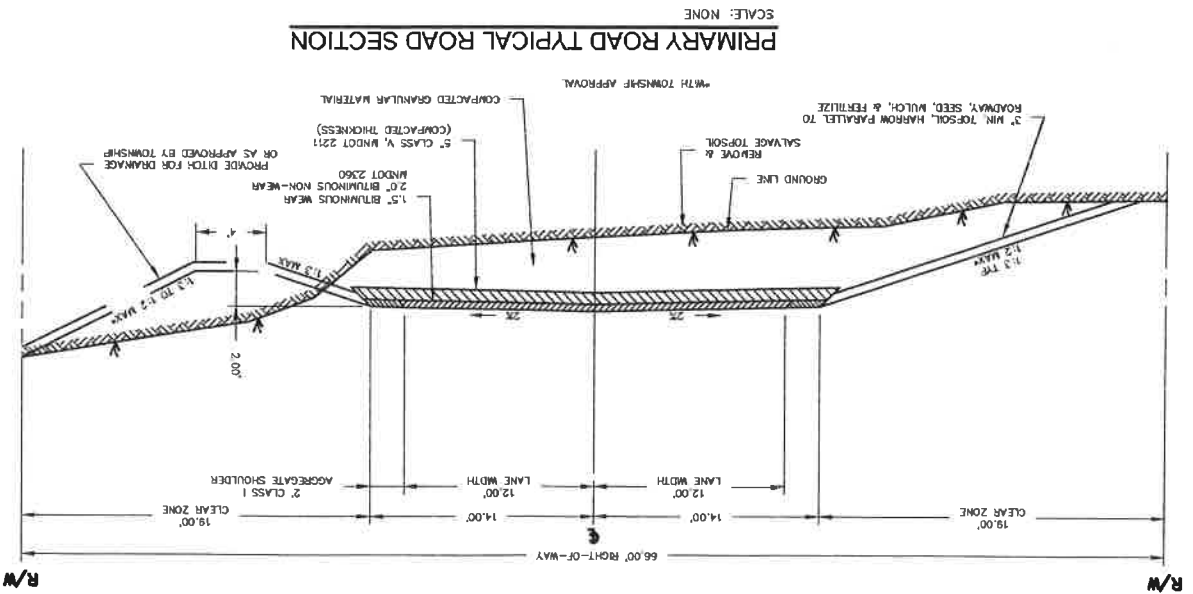
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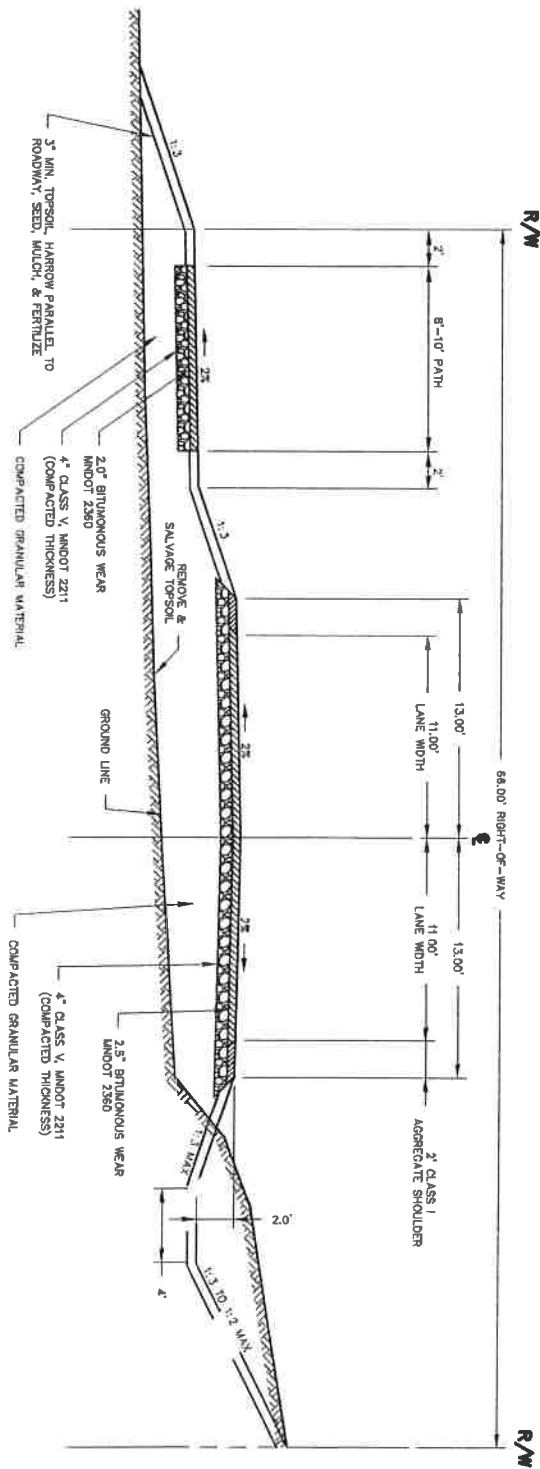



Faith C. Broberg
Clerk/Treasurer, Sylvan Township


Greg Booth
Chair, Sylvan Township

SYLVAN TOWNSHIP
RECOMMENDED MINIMUM SECTIONS
FOR TOWNSHIP MAINTAINED ROADWAYS





TYPICAL ROAD SECTION WITH SEPARATED PEDESTRIAN PATH
 SCALE: NONE