



City of Bronson Master Plan

prepared by
City of Bronson Planning Commission

assisted by
Spicer Group, Inc.
Saginaw, Michigan
www.spicergroup.com

City of Bronson

Master Plan

City Council

Thomas Rissman – Mayor

Leo Lehman

Larry McConn

Dave Post

Tony Rzepka

David O'Rourke – City Manager

Planning Commission

David Post – Chair

Joy Clawson

Mike Duke

Bill Earl

Bob Grigg

Betty Rissman

Ed Weigt

Debra Yee

Date of Adoption: November 27, 2007

City of Bronson

141 South Matteson Street – Bronson, MI 49028 – (517) 369-7334

assisted by

Spicer Group, Inc.

www.spicergroup.com

Table of Contents

The Need for a Master Plan in the City of Bronson

Introduction..... 1
The Planning Process 2
Relationship Between the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance 2

All About Bronson

Location..... 3
History 4
General Description of the Population 5
Housing Characteristics 10
Transportation Network..... 14
Utilities & Public Services..... 15
Community Facilities 16
Natural Features 17
Environmental Conditions 20

An Overview of How Land is Used in Bronson

Introduction..... 23
Land Use Classifications and Analysis 23
Existing Land Use Map 26

Community Input

Basis for Community Input 27
Mailed Survey..... 27
Residential Questions 28
Commercial and Industrial Questions 30
Quality of Life Questions 32

Goals and Objectives for Bronson

Introduction.....	34
General Community Character	35
Residential.....	36
Commercial	37
Industrial.....	38
Public Services and Facilities.....	39

Vision for Growth and Development in Bronson

Introduction.....	40
Future Land Use Map	41
Low-Density Residential.....	42
Medium-Density Residential	42
Multi-Family Residential	43
Manufactured Housing Residential	43
Public Property	43
Neighborhood Commercial	43
Central Business	44
Highway Commercial	44
Office	44
Industrial.....	45
Possible Growth/Annexation Area	45

Implementation of the Bronson Master Plan

Introduction.....	46
Zoning Changes and Ordinance Updates.....	46
Annual and Capital Budgeting.....	47
Regional Cooperation	47
Local Planning Capacity.....	48
Additional Implementation Tasks	48
Conclusion.....	48

Appendix

Results from the Community Planning Survey	50
--	----

The Need for a Master Plan in the City of Bronson

Introduction

The *City of Bronson Master Plan* is the outcome of a year-long effort by the City of Bronson Planning Commission to update its 1966 Master Plan. This document reflects the community's concern for the future development of their City and conveys a strong commitment to retain and strengthen the local quality of life. The preferred future, or vision, for Bronson is outlined within this Master Plan. Specifically, the vision is expressed in the way this Master Plan:

- Documents recent citizen input on community needs and services,
- Forms general goal statements for the City's future,
- Provides an overall view of future physical development of Bronson, and
- Presents a map that shows locations of how land is proposed to be used in the future.

Public Act 285 of 1931, as amended, commonly known as the Municipal Planning Act, is the legal basis for Cities and Villages in the State of Michigan to develop a Master Plan. The main purpose of a Master Plan is to enable a community to establish a future direction for its physical development. The Municipal Planning Act specifically gives Cities and Villages the authority to prepare and officially adopt a Master Plan, which serves as the primary policy guide for local officials when considering matters



City office on South Matteson Street

related to land development. It will serve to:

- Guide the use of limited resources in an efficient manner,
- Promote public health, safety, and general welfare,
- Preserve the quality of the environment in the City, and
- Guide future zoning decisions.

Because of constant change in our social and economic structure and activities, this Master Plan must be maintained through periodic review so that it reflects contemporary trends while maintaining long-range goals. Public Act 265 of 2001, which amended the Municipal Planning Act, accounts for this fact and requires the Master Plan be reviewed by the Planning Commission at least once every five years.

The Planning Process

The City of Bronson began the process to update its Master Plan in the summer of 2006. It contracted with Spicer Group of Saginaw to assist the Planning Commission in the preparation of this Master Plan.

The Planning Commission met with the Spicer Group planning consultants six times between September 2006 and June 2007 to work on the plan. As required by Public Act 265 of 2001, the City followed the required procedures for notifying neighboring communities and registered entities so that each interested party was made aware of the planning effort and was provided an opportunity to comment on the Master Plan.

The planning process began with a review and analysis of existing conditions and land uses in the City of Bronson. Then, a community input survey was developed and mailed to all households of the City in

January of 2007. Feedback from this survey along with the pertinent background data was used as the basis for the goals, objectives, and future land use outlined within this Master Plan. A draft of this document was prepared in May of 2007 and delivered to the Planning Commission and City Council for review. It was also mailed to neighboring communities, registered entities, and ultimately, to the Branch County Planning Commission which issued its consistency report.

The final step in the planning process was a public hearing that is required by the Municipal Planning Act. This provided an additional opportunity for public information and input. Final Master Plan copies were prepared and the City of Bronson Planning Commission adopted the Master Plan on November 27, 2007.

Relationship Between the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance

Zoning is regulation of the use of land. A zoning ordinance controls how land is used today. It is the law. A Master Plan is a set of policies, not a law. The Master Plan represents a community's future vision, while the zoning ordinance contains the rules that govern the path to that vision. The long-range goals of the Master Plan are the basis for a zoning ordinance and zoning decisions. State law requires that a zoning ordinance be based

on an adopted Master Plan. Zoning decisions that are consistent with the Master Plan are more likely presumed to be valid if ever challenged in the courts.

<p>Master Plan = Guide</p> <p>Zoning Ordinance = Law</p>
--

All About Bronson

Location

The City of Bronson is located in the southwestern area of Branch County, which is mostly rural, located near the southern border of the mitt of lower Michigan (Figure 1). Bronson is about 1.4 square miles in size, about 8 miles north from the Indiana border, at 41°52'20"N (latitude), 85°11'41"W (longitude). The City is also 12 miles southwest of Coldwater, 12 miles northeast of Sturgis, 40 miles south of Battle Creek, and 56 miles southeast of Kalamazoo. The Branch County

Memorial Airport is located off US-12 to the northeast in Coldwater Township. Bronson is one of two cities in Branch County, other than Coldwater. Bronson is bounded by Bronson Township to the north, west, south, and bounded on the east by Bethel Township. A State highway, US-12 also known as Chicago Street, bisects the city. The main uses of land in Bronson are residential, commercial, industrial, public, and agriculture. The city is in the Bronson Community School District.

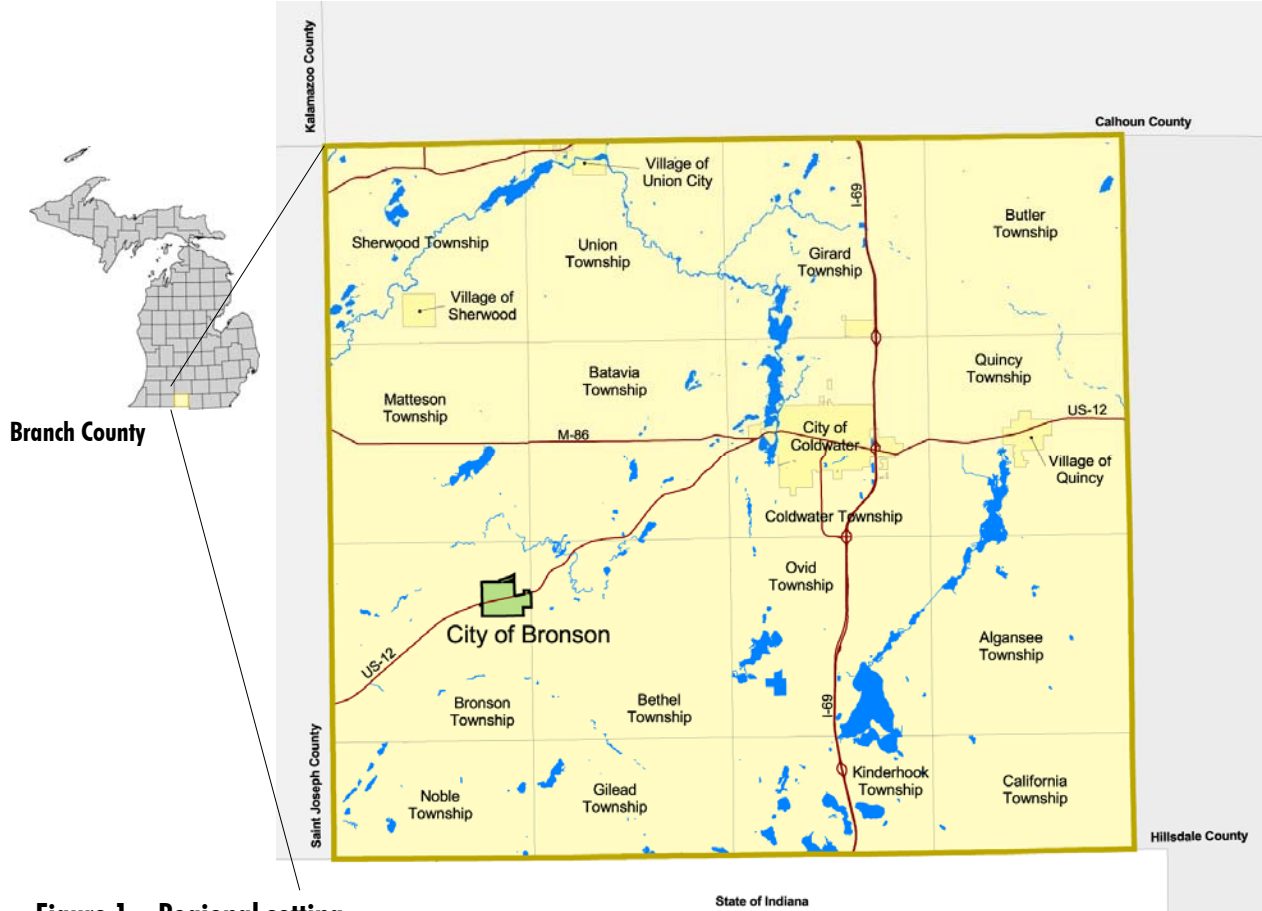


Figure 1 – Regional setting.

History

Bronson was the first settlement in Branch County, named after Jabez “Jabe” Bronson, a man who opened a tavern and became the owner of the first general store in the county. He was also the first Justice of the Peace in the area, and his tavern served as a hall of justice and a post office. He made his home in this area in 1828. At the time, Branch County was wilderness, inhabited by the Potawatomi Tribe. The county was sold to the U.S. government in 1821 by the tribe. Many pioneers passed through on an old Native American Indian trail between Detroit and Chicago, now known as US-12, or Chicago Street. This trail, known as the Old Sauk Trail, was used by many pioneers bound for Illinois and other parts to the west.

In October of 1866, Bronson was incorporated as a village. At that time, the primary industries were a steam gristmill and an iron foundry. During the 1890s, Bronson became a booming cement-making town. During the early development of US-12, a settlement pattern emerged that included a number of small towns surrounded by fields and open land, including Bronson, as well as nearby Quincy, Sturgis, and Niles. These towns grew as service areas to the surrounding agricultural fields and were usually located at the junction of the travel route or along a river where water power was plentiful for operating the saw and grist mills needed by the settlers.

In 1897, the Ideal Fixture Company set up its shop in Bronson. Today, it is part of the L.A.

Darling Company, stationed in Arkansas. The Bronson Reel Company started in 1922. When the factory opened, there were 15 people working in a small building on North Matteson Street. In 1928, the company built a new 15,000-square foot factory on North Douglas Street. And by 1948, the factory had been expanded until it was three times the original size. By 1950, the Bronson Reel Company had grown to 300 employees on its peak shift. In the 1940s and 1950s, the company produced up to 9,000 fishing reels in a single day, and throughout the early 1950s they were building in excess of 1,000,000 reels per year. The company went out of business in 1966 and came back a year later as Bronson Precision Products.



A historic view of the L.A. Darling Company

Today, Bronson is an integral component of the economy in Branch County. This economy depends on the region, which is diverse, unique rural area with a large agricultural and manufacturing base. As a political entity, Bronson has a City Manager/Council form of government. Council members are elected to two or four year terms, and choose a Mayor and Vice-Mayor from their membership.

General Description of the Population

According to the 2000 Census, the population in the City of Bronson was 2,421. This is an increase of 3.4% from 1990 when the population was 2,342, as shown in Figure 2. By comparison, Branch County grew at a faster rate, at 10.3%, and the State of Michigan grew at a rate of almost 7% during the same period. In the adjacent communities of Bronson Township and Bethel Township, during the same ten year period, their populations grew by 10.6% (up from 1,228 to 1,358) and 11.2% (up from 1,279 to 1,421),

respectively. Since 2000, the Census developed population estimates for the year 2005, and for the City of Bronson, it was estimated there was a loss of about 75 people, a 3.1% decline. For Bronson Township and Bethel Township, their populations were estimated to have grown slightly, by 0.7% and 1.2%, respectively, during the same five year period. Since 1960, Bronson's population has remained relatively stable, with some slight growth. This trend is depicted in Figure 3.

	1990	2000	Change	Percent
City of Bronson	2,342	2,421	79	3.4%
Branch County	41,502	45,787	4,285	10.3%
State of Michigan	9,295,297	9,938,444	643,147	6.9%

Data: U.S. Census

Figure 2 – Recent changes in population sizes.

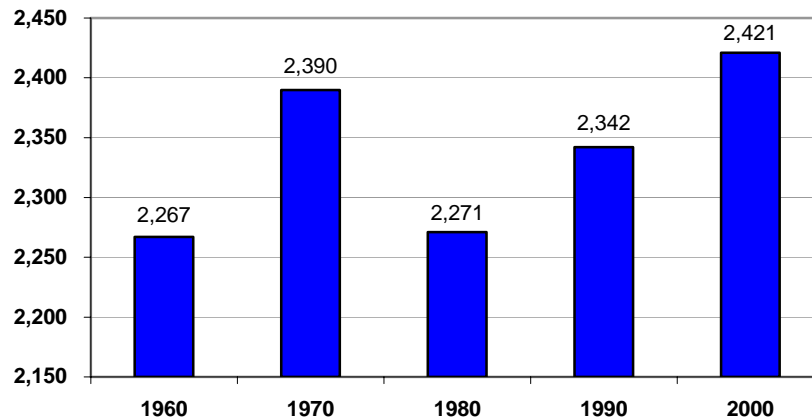


Figure 3 – Growth trend in Bronson since 1960.

The median age of Bronson residents in 2000 was 31.8 years. This is younger than Michigan and Branch County, which were 35.5 years and 36.7 years, respectively. The age distribution of Bronson residents as compared to Branch County and the State of Michigan is shown in Figure 4. The largest age group in Bronson was that of 20 to 44 year olds, which accounted for 35% of the population. The second largest age group is that of 0 to 19 year olds, which comprised 33% of the population.

The age group in Bronson that is most different from Branch County and the State is that of 45 to 64 year olds. Bronson has 17% of its population in the 45 to 64 year old age bracket whereas Branch County has 23% in that bracket and the State also has 23%. This 45

to 64 year old group can be classified as aging baby-boomers and empty-nesters that are moving into the senior citizen category. This group may have different housing needs, looking to downsize from the larger homes used for child-rearing and they may have increased needs for recreational facilities, because of increased free time, and medical services that accompany aging.

While the City of Bronson has a smaller proportion of its population in the 45 to 64 year old age bracket than Branch County and the State, it is worthwhile to note this age group actually grew in Bronson between 1990 and 2000. In fact, as Figure 5 shows, this group grew by 12%. While at the same time, the 65 and over age bracket declined, but only at a rate of about 4%.

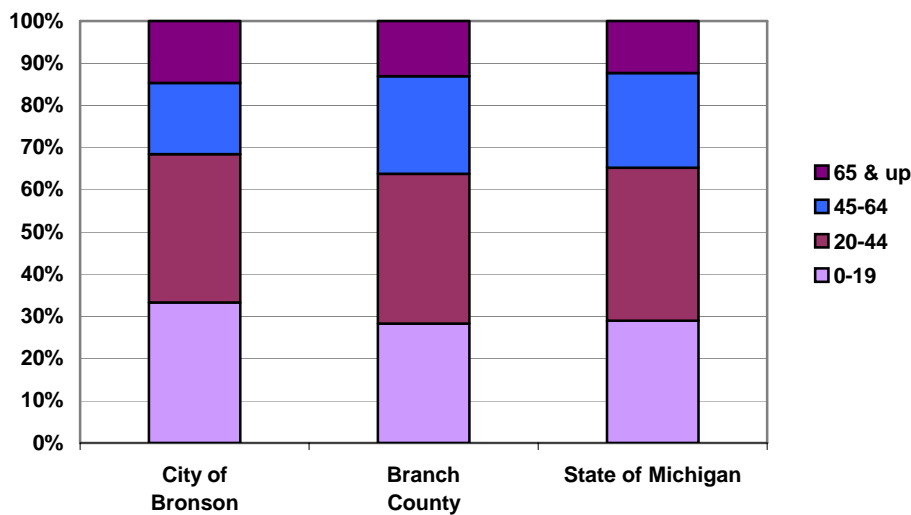


Figure 4 – Age distribution in 2000.

	1990		2000		10-Year Difference	
	Population	Proportion	Population	Proportion	Change	Rate
0 to 19 years	794	34%	806	33%	12	1.5%
20 to 44 years	814	35%	853	35%	39	4.8%
45 to 64 years	362	15%	406	17%	44	12.2%
65 and over	372	16%	356	15%	-16	-4.3%
Total	2,342	100%	2,421	100%	79	3.4%

Data: U.S. Census

Figure 5 – Comparison of age distribution in Bronson.

The average household size in Bronson in 2000 was 2.71 (Figure 6). This is slightly more when compared to Branch County and Michigan, which have household sizes of 2.61 and 2.56, respectively. In 1990, the average household size for Bronson was 2.60, a reversal of the national trend of decreasing household sizes. For both Branch County (2.67) and Michigan (2.66), average household sizes dropped between 1990 and 2000.

In general, an increase in the average household size is not expected. However, it is probably a reflection of an increase in immigration to the area and a possible decrease in single-parent households. Compared to the whole of Branch County, Bronson has a relatively large Hispanic and Latino population, comprising 8.5% of the city population, while at the county level, it was only 3.0%. While the average household size in Bronson increased between 1990 and 2000, the number of households decreased slightly, from 902 to 891. This change is attributed to an increase in vacant housing units, as shown in Figure 11.

Median household income in 1999 in Bronson was \$32,035. This is less than the county median of \$38,760 and less than the state median of \$44,667. In 1989, Bronson's median household income was also less than both Branch County and Michigan. The median household income in Bronson was \$19,867, whereas Branch County's was \$25,332 and Michigan's was \$31,020. Household income is a sum of all income received by persons in a household. Median household income is that which half the households are above and half are below. While Bronson lagged behind in 1990 and 2000, its median household income grew at a faster rate. Between 1990 and 2000, the median household income in Bronson grew by 61%. For Branch County, it grew at a rate of 53%, and for the State of Michigan, it grew by 44%.

Per capita income is a measure of the amount of income each person, regardless of age or employment, would receive if all income in the entire city was equally divided among all residents. This measure is useful in that it

provides one statistic to compare the overall wealth of an area on an equalized basis. According to the 2000 Census, Bronson's per capita income was \$17,023. Branch County's per capita income was \$17,552 and Michigan's was \$22,168.

It is important to remember, however, that no accurate generalized statements can be made regarding the standard of living based on income alone, no matter how it is measured.

	1990	2000	Change
Households	902	891	-1.2%
Average Household Size	2.60	2.71	4.2%
Median Household Income	\$19,867	\$32,035	61%
Median Income Adjusted to 2004 Dollars (CPI)	\$30,257	\$36,328	20%
Median Age	n.a.	31.8	

Data: U.S. Census

Figure 6 – General household data for Bronson.

Bronson residents are becoming more educated. Figure 7 details the education levels for Bronson residents aged 25 and over, comparing attainment levels between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, 5% of the city's residents had a Bachelor's degree. In 2000, that grew to 7%. Overall, while this ten year difference appears to be slight, it does represent a 48% rate of increase, by far the fastest growing level of educational attainment in Bronson. Overall, in 2000, Bronson's population aged 25 and over was 1,419, and as Figure 7 shows, 984 people had attained a high school diploma or higher, representing 69.3% of this population. By contrast, in 1990, that level was only 67.3%.

Figure 8 shows the types of industries that employed Bronson residents in 1990 and 2000. In 2000, about 38% worked in Manufacturing, 12% worked in Retail, and 11% worked in the Educational, Health, and Social Services industries. Together, these three industries comprised over 60% of Bronson's workforce in 2000. In 1990, it was over 76%. It is obvious that Bronson's workforce is in transition. The top four emerging industries for Bronson's workers in 2000 included: 1) Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, Food Services; 2) Wholesale Trade; 3) Public Administration; and 4) Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental & Leasing.

	1990		2000		Change	
High School Diploma	570	60%	595	60%	25	4%
Some College	225	24%	226	23%	1	0%
Associate Degree	63	7%	60	6%	-3	-5%
Bachelor's Degree	44	5%	65	7%	21	48%
Graduate/Professional Degree	43	5%	38	4%	-5	-12%
Total	945	100%	984	100%		

Data: U.S. Census

Figure 7 – Education for population 25 and over.

	1990		2000		Change	
Manufacturing	376	42.8%	372	38.4%	-4	-1.1%
Retail Trade	139	15.8%	116	12.0%	-23	-16.5%
Educational, Health, Social Services	155	17.6%	108	11.1%	-47	-30.3%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accomodation, Food Services	7	0.8%	69	7.1%	62	885.7%
Construction	32	3.6%	55	5.7%	23	71.9%
Public Administration	16	1.8%	52	5.4%	36	225.0%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	20	2.3%	51	5.3%	31	155.0%
Wholesale Trade	12	1.4%	43	4.4%	31	258.3%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, Waste Management Services	13	1.5%	28	2.9%	15	115.4%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	35	4.0%	28	2.9%	-7	-20.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Mining	33	3.8%	23	2.4%	-10	-30.3%
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	41	4.7%	18	1.9%	-23	-56.1%
Information			6	0.6%		
Total	879	100%	969	100%		

Data: U.S. Census

Figure 8 – Employment by industry.

Housing Characteristics

Figure 9 shows that owner-occupancy increased slightly by 1% between 1990 and 2000. The number of rental units decreased by 6%. Of the occupied units, 31% were rentals, a drop of 17 total rental units since 1990. This means more people are becoming homeowners.

Most of the housing in Bronson is comprised of one-unit structures (Figure 10), which occupy 74.9% of all area homes. This level is not that different from the 74.9% of one-unit structures occupying Michigan.

The number of vacant housing units did change in Bronson, increasing by 33% between 1990 and 2000, as seen below in Figure 9. Figure 11 shows the high vacancy

level is attributed to a doubling in the number of rentals and an increase in the number of units for sale. Overall, the total number of housing units in Bronson did grow by 11 units between 1990 and 2000, a growth rate of about 1%.

About 36.2% of the existing housing stock in Bronson was built before 1940 (Figure 12). Another 31.4% was built between 1940 and 1959. Between 1960 and 2000, the number of new housing units built each decade in the City remained steady. During the 1960s, a total of 115 units were built (11.9%). During the 1970s and 1980s, only 84 (8.7%) and 34 (3.5%) were built, respectively. In the 1990s, the number of new units picked-up somewhat, with 79 units (8.2%) built.

	1990		2000		Change	
Occupied Housing Units	902	93%	891	91%	-11	-1%
Vacant Housing Units	66	7%	88	9%	22	33%
Total Housing Units	968	100%	979	100%	11	1.1%
Owner-Occupied Units	608	67%	614	69%	6	1%
Renter-Occupied Units	294	33%	277	31%	-17	-6%
Occupied Housing Units	902		891		-11	-1.2%

Figure 9 – Housing occupancy and tenure.

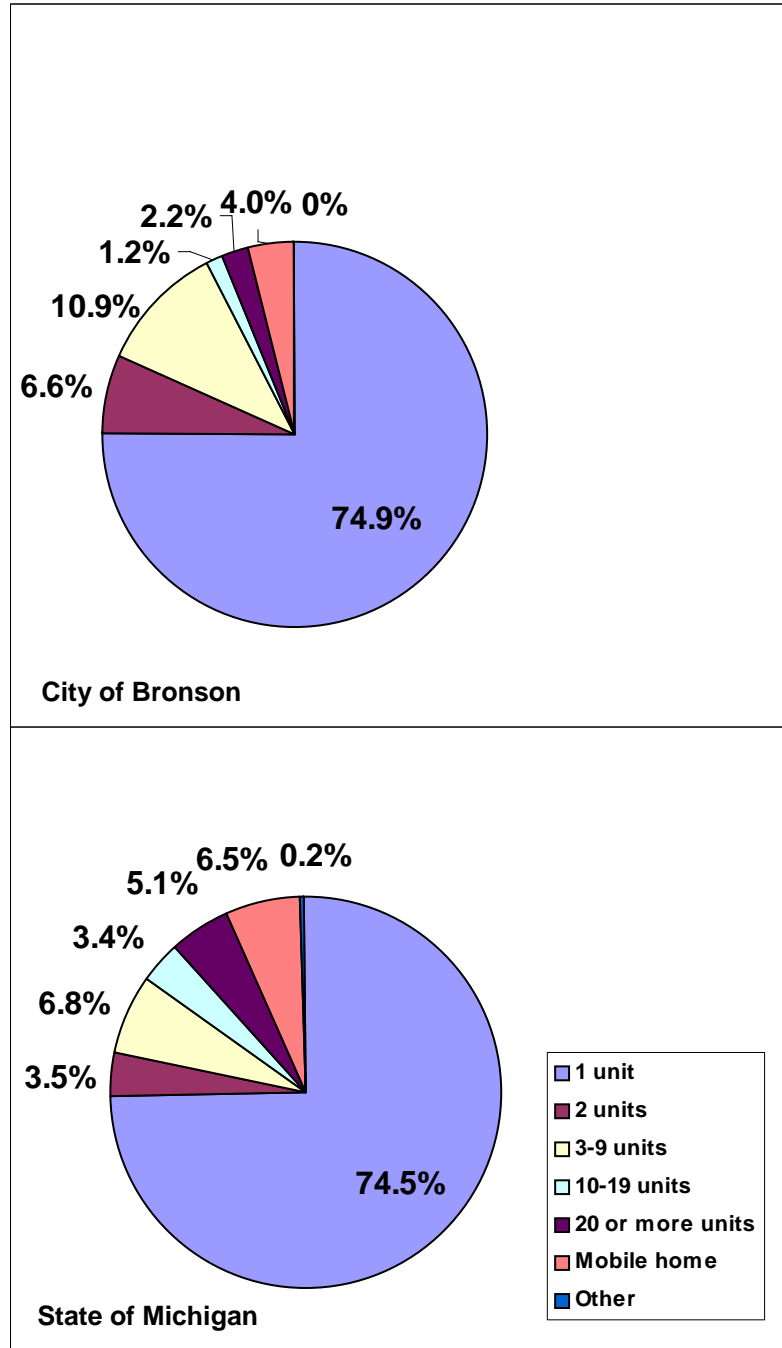


Figure 10 – Dwelling unit by type.

	1990		2000		Change	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
For Rent	21	32%	43	49%	22	104.8%
For Sale Only	10	15%	18	20%	8	80.0%
Rented or sold, not occupied	23	35%	5	6%	-18	-78.3%
Seasonal, recreational, occasional use	5	8%	2	2%	-3	-60.0%
Other	7	11%	20	23%	13	185.7%
Total	66	100%	88	100%		

Data: U.S. Census

Figure 11 – Vacancy status.

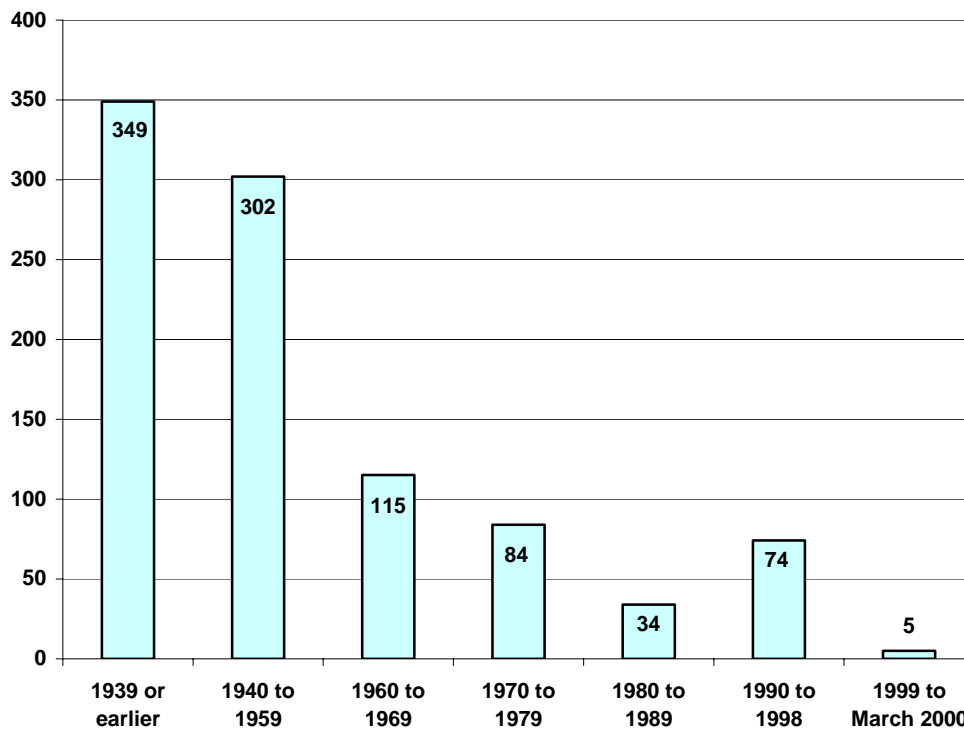


Figure 12 – Year structure built.

The median value of owner-occupied housing units in Bronson, according to 2000 Census data, was \$64,400 (Figure 13). This is an apparent growth of 104% in value from the \$31,500 statistic reported by the 1990 Census. But when the reported median housing values are adjusted for inflation, converting both the individual 1990 and 2000 dollar values to 2004 dollars, the real change in value was only 52%.

When compared to the growth in median housing values for Michigan, which was 46%, it appears that the City is gaining ground, relatively speaking. Further, the national growth in median housing values was 16%, a much lower rate than Bronson's. Together, these data indicate housing values have been growing in the City of Bronson.

	1990	2000	Change
Median Housing Value	\$31,500	\$64,400	104%
Median Value Adjusted to 2004 Dollars (CPI)	\$47,975	\$73,030	52%

Data: U.S. Census

Figure 13 – Median housing value.



Median housing values in Bronson have been growing at a faster pace than the statewide and national medians

Transportation Network

Chicago Street, also known as US-12, forms the backbone of Bronson’s transportation network. This *unlimited access state highway* travels in a northeast-southwest direction across the city. It serves as the major business corridor for the city. In 2004, US-12 was designated a Michigan Historic Heritage Route, being named the “US-12 Heritage Route Trail” pursuant to the Heritage Route

Act (PA 69 of 1993). About 12 miles to the west on US-12 is the City of Sturgis, and 11 miles to the east is Coldwater. On the eastern fringe of Coldwater, US-12 connects to I-69, which is a north-south interstate highway, and it provides quick access to I-94, an east-west interstate highway. Bronson’s transportation network is shown in Figure 14. In total, the city

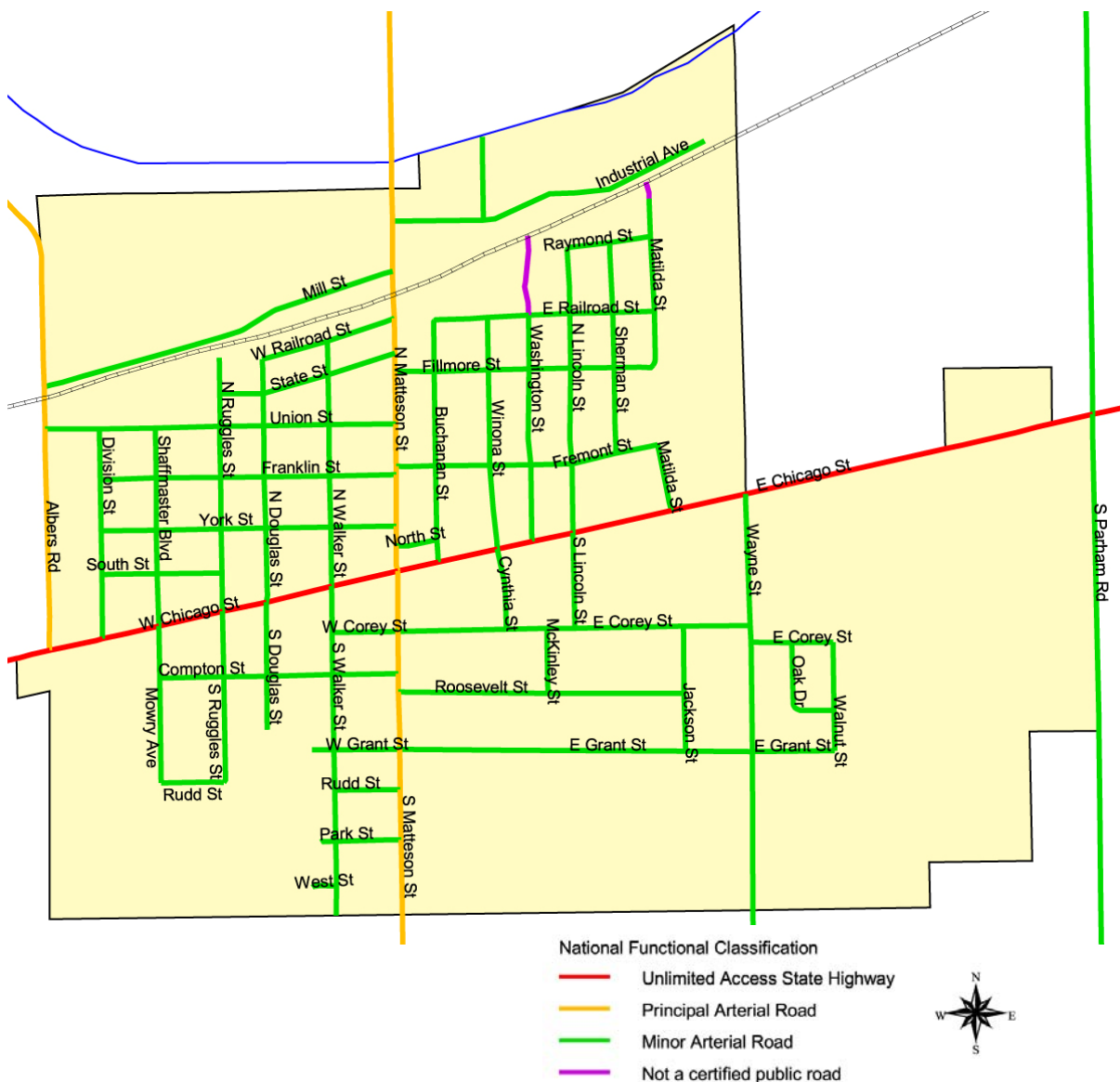


Figure 14 – Transportation network.

Base Map Data for Branch County: Michigan Geographic Data Library

has over 14 miles of surfaced roads. Most of the roads are comprised of various arterial roads. According to the National Functional Classification (NFC) system developed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), *principal arterials* carry long distance, through-travel movements. They provide access to important traffic generators such as airports or

regional shopping centers. Matteson Street and Albers Road serve as principal arterials in Bronson. The remaining city roads are *minor arterials*. The FHWA describes minor arterials as being similar to principal arterials, except they carry trips of shorter distance and to lesser traffic generators.

Utilities & Public Services

Bronson operates its own wastewater treatment plant. The sewer system provides wastewater transportation and treatment for the entire city, delivering service to approximately 90% of all structures in Bronson. The plant's capacity is 500,000 gallons per day, and current average daily flows are 250,000 to 300,000 gallons per day, indicating that the facility is capable of handling additional flows from potential growth. It was rebuilt in 1994. The wastewater network is comprised of approximately 12 miles of collection sewer and two pump stations.

The city's residents, business, and industry receive water from two wells, both east of the City on South Parham Road. As of 2007, a third well is in the planning stage.

Bronson also has a storm water sewer system. It provides drainage of surface water throughout the city.

The city operates its own police department. Public safety is provided by a staff of five police officers. The police department

provides fully staffed 24-hour, 7-day-a-week coverage. The police department cooperates with other area law enforcement and safety agencies, including participation with 911 emergency dispatch. Ambulance service is contracted through a private company, providing service throughout Branch County. The fire department has seven fire trucks and related equipment, with a staff of 25 volunteer firefighters. They work with six nearby townships, forming the Bronson Rural Fire Association. Several of the volunteers have their EMT certification. The City of Bronson owns an aerial fire truck, the Jaws of Life, a thermal imaging camera, and ice rescue equipment.

The city office is located on South Matteson Street, just north of East Corey Street. The police and fire departments are housed together in a separate building, just across the street on South Matteson.

Community Facilities

The major community facilities in Bronson are shown on the map below, Figure 15. All city-owned parks and buildings, buildings owned by the Bronson Community School District, and other public facilities are depicted.

The city has five parks for residents and visitors. In the central business district, at the intersection of Chicago and Matteson is Memorial Park. It has a pavilion, benches, and

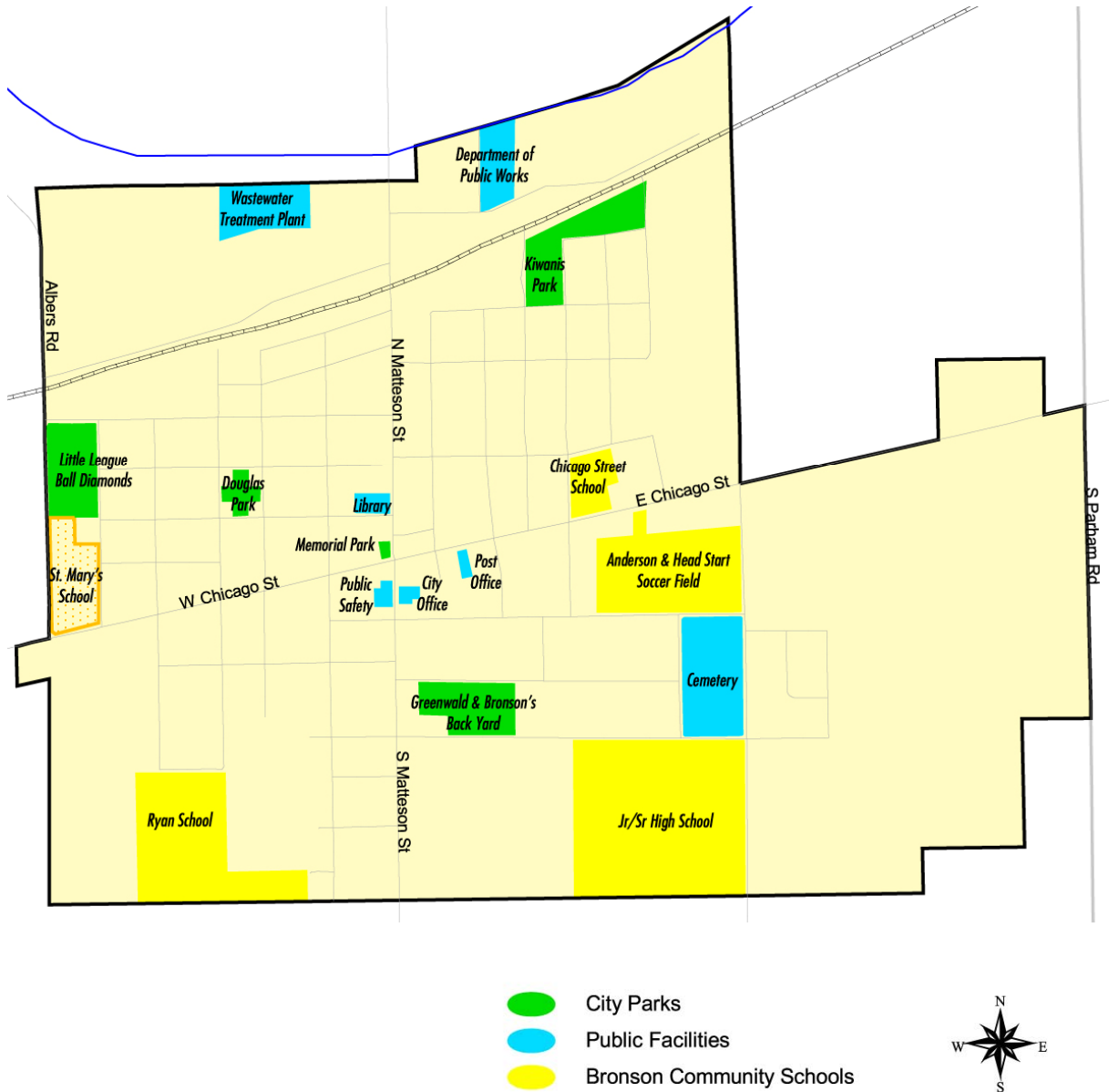


Figure 15 – Community facilities.

Base Map Data for Branch County: Michigan Geographic Data Library

murals depicting the history of Bronson. Over by Division and Union is a park with Little League baseball diamonds. A neighborhood park suitable for children, called Douglas Park, can be accessed from one of four streets, Douglas, York, Ruggles, or Franklin. At Kiwanis Park, on the northeast side of town, off Raymond and Lincoln, there is a pavilion, a slide, children's playground equipment, and picnic tables for visitors to enjoy. Between Roosevelt and Grant is Greenwald Park, with an extensive "adventure" playground for children called Bronson's Backyard. Throughout the park system are many facilities for a variety of activities, including, tennis courts, softball and baseball diamonds, and a service building.

The Bronson Community School District has four facilities in the city. Three are elementary schools. First, on the north side of East Chicago Street sits the Chicago Street School. Next, just south of there on the other side of Chicago off East Corey Street is Anderson Elementary School. And finally, on the

southwest side of town, off Rudd Street, is Ryan School. The junior and senior high school is located in the southeast side of town, off East Grant Street. Overall, the physical area of the school district is large, encompassing the entirety of the City and branching out into the surrounding townships, occupying a total of 149 square miles. Enrollment in the district is about 1,400 students. On the corner of US-12 and Albers, is St. Mary's School, a k-8 Catholic school.

The Bronson Public Library is located on North Matteson Street. It is a Carnegie Library and is a registered Michigan Historical Landmark. It is part of the Branch County District Library system. Other city-owned facilities are also shown on Figure 15, including the city office, the public safety building housing the police and fire departments, the waste water treatment plant, the Department of Public Works facility, and the cemetery. The local United States Post Office on the south side of East Chicago Street is also shown.

Natural Features

Topography Bronson is characterized by flat topography. The City and most of the outlying areas in the surrounding townships have an elevation of about 918 feet above sea level, ranging from 885 to 935 feet. Figure 16 shows the extent of the elevation changes in Bronson.

Soils Soils in Bronson consist of very deep, well drained solids. The predominant series

are the Ormas, Branch, and Matherton. The potential for surface runoff is negligible to medium. Generally, permeability of water is rapid in the sandy material, moderately rapid in the loamy material, and very rapid in the underlying gravelly sand. These soils are mostly cultivated. Corn and soybeans are the principal row crops. A few areas are used for pasture or wooded. Native vegetation is

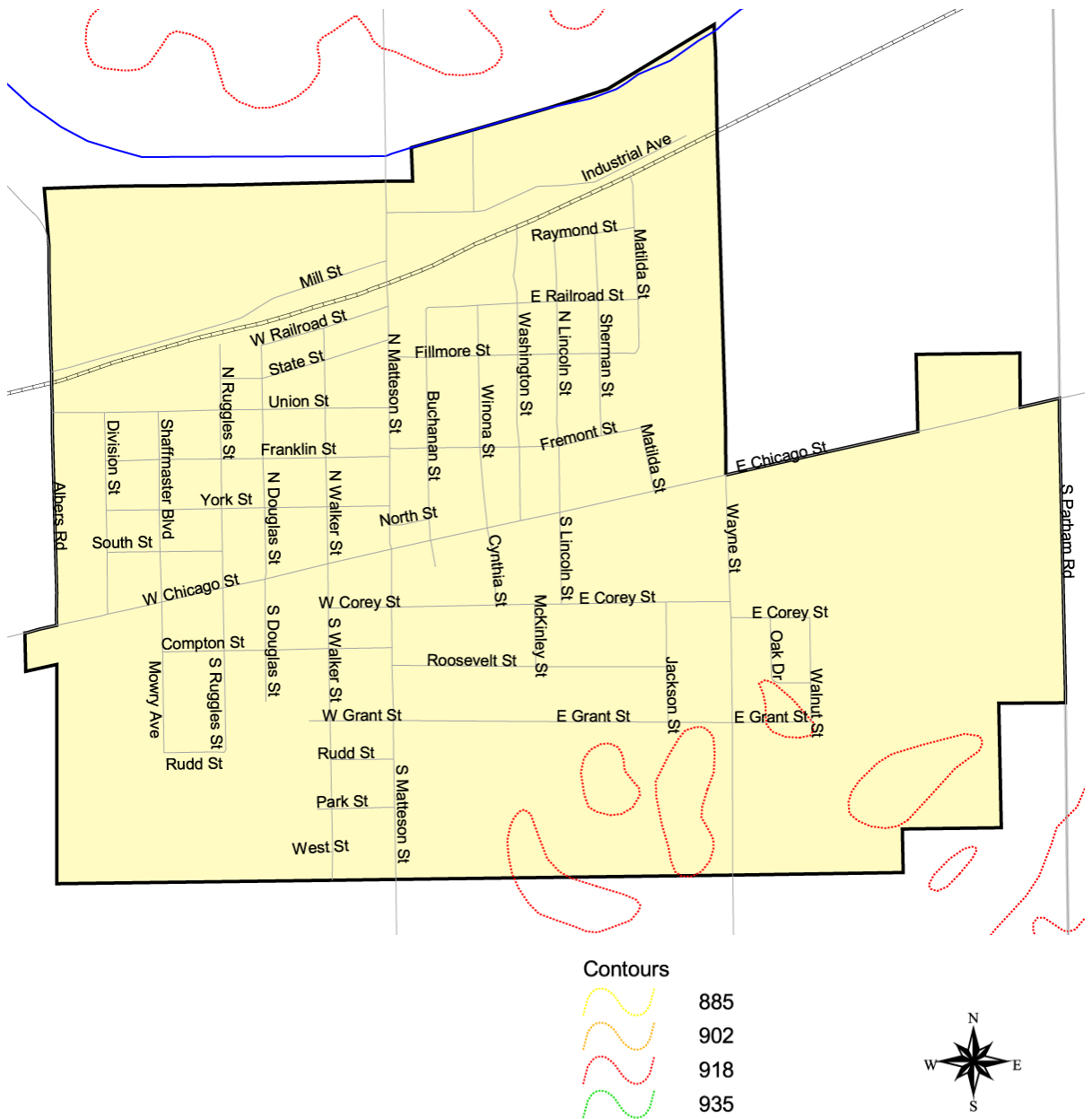


Figure 16 – Topography.

Base Map Data for Branch County: Michigan Geographic Data Library

deciduous forest. Slopes range from 0 to 6 percent. Each soil series is unique and may pose challenges for development. Sites for new development should be thoroughly researched by a soils expert.

Climate Weather and temperature data is good for understanding how comfortable a place is for human habitation. In the Bronson area, the July average temperature is a low of 59° F and a high of 82° F. The January average minimum temperature is 15° F, with

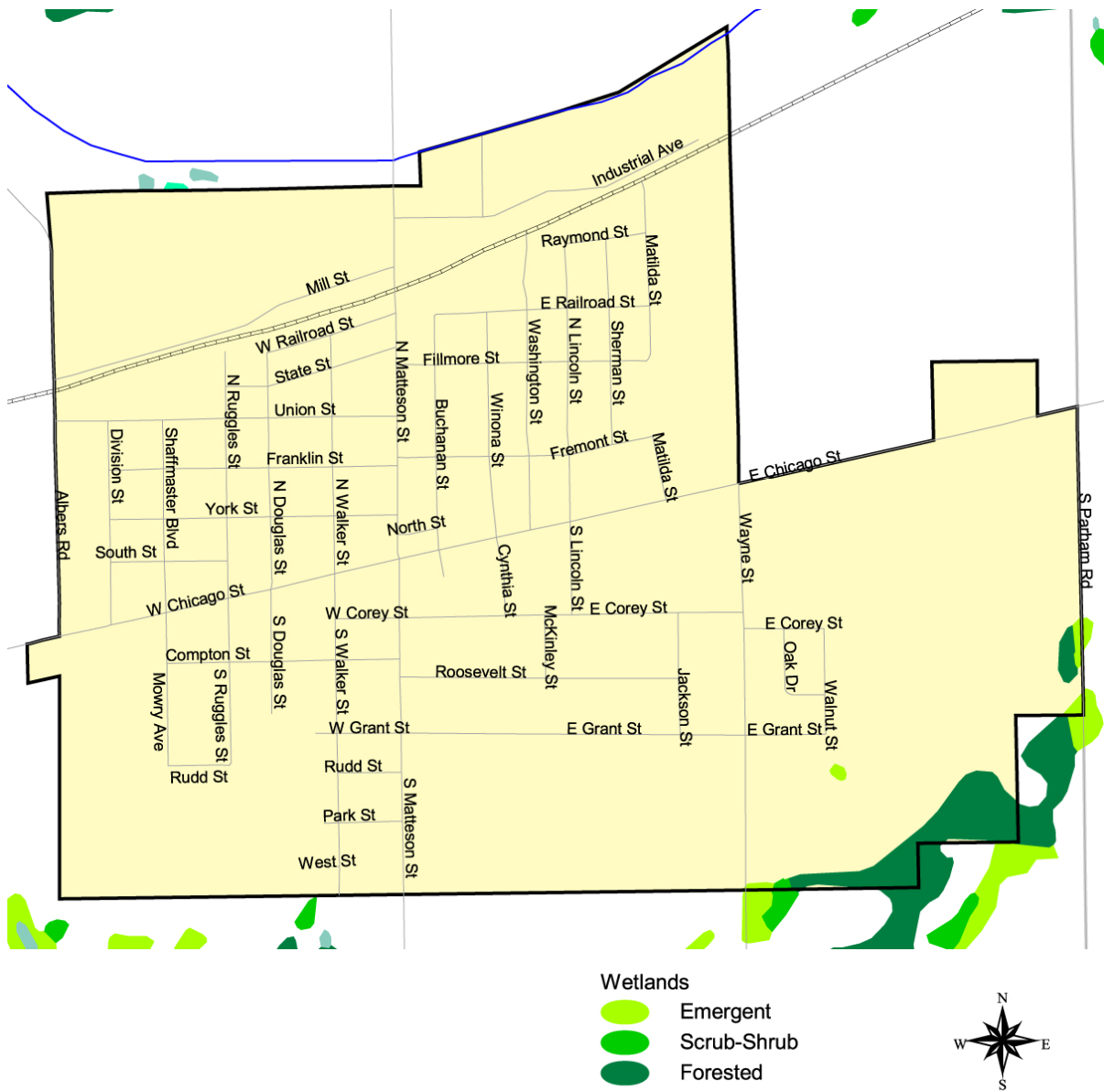


Figure 17 – Wetlands.

Base Map Data for Branch County: Michigan Geographic Data Library

average highs near 30° F. In the winter, frozen water surfaces are limited to between mid-December and mid-March. There are usually ten days per year in which temperatures fall below zero. The average date of the last

freezing temperature in the spring is May 6, while the average date of the first freezing temperature in the fall is October 3. The freeze-free period, or growing season, averaged 150 days annually. Precipitation is

well distributed throughout the year. The crop season, which runs from April through September, receives an average of 20.67 inches of precipitation.

Wetlands According to the National Wetlands Inventory, Bronson has very few wetland areas, mostly limited to the wooded area of the southeast corner of the city. Wetlands can limit development in a specific area and each type and extent must be carefully examined before proceeding with any type of development. The wetlands of Bronson are shown in Figure 17.

At the heart of Michigan's wetland regulatory program is Part 303, Wetland Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (PA 451 of 1994), formerly referred to as the Goemaere-Anderson Wetlands Protection Act, PA 203 of 1979. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Land and Water Management Division administers the permit program. This legislation was passed to protect wetlands by restricting their use to certain activities (fishing, boating, farming, among others) while permitting other activities only after permit

approval by the State of Michigan. Permits are approved only upon a review of an environmental assessment filed by the petitioner that shows the avoidance of wetland resources to the greatest extent possible and minimization of unavoidable wetland impacts.

Under the Act, the following wetlands are protected:

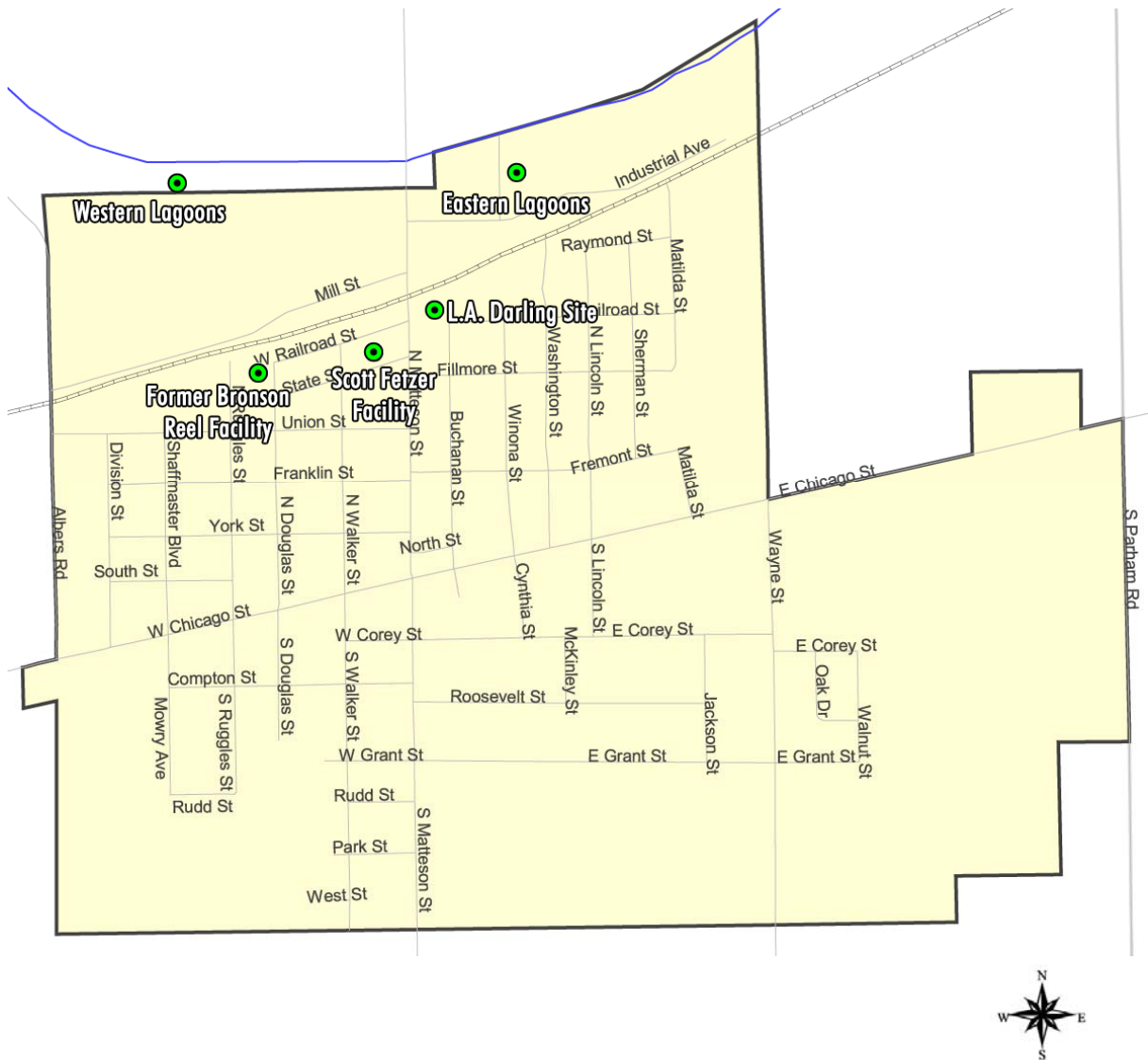
- Wetlands contiguous to an inland lake, pond, river, stream, or similar natural water course. Wetlands adjacent to any drains, creeks, and rivers in Bronson would fall in this category.
- Wetlands five acres in size, or larger, in counties that contain a population of at least 100,000 people. Since Branch County has less than 100,000 people, this category would not apply to the City of Bronson.

A local unit of government has the authority to create wetland regulations that address wetlands not protected by the state. Bronson might wish to investigate this option if it is concerned about loss of wetlands due to development.

Environmental Conditions

In early 2007, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) for cleanup activities at four Superfund sites in the City of Bronson. These sites are shown in Figure 18. The CIP document is a plan to promote

communication about the sites between Bronson residents and the EPA. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) completed an initial Community Relations Plan (CRP) in 1992 and it summarized the site histories, concerns of local officials and



Base Map Data for Branch County: Michigan Geographic Data Library

Figure 18 – Sites of environmental concern.

residents, and community involvement activities to be done at that time.

In 1980, the United States Congress enacted the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), also called Superfund. CERCLA authorizes the EPA to investigate and respond to hazardous

substance releases. This law established a fund to pay for the investigation and cleanup of sites where parties responsible for the releases are unable or unwilling to address contamination problems.

The Superfund sites in Bronson include the Western Lagoons, the Eastern Lagoons, the

Scott Fetzer Facility, the L.A. Darling site, and the Former Bronson Reel Facility.

The Western Lagoons (considered wet) is located behind the wastewater treatment plant off Mill Street, County Drain #30, and an industrial sewer. The Eastern Lagoons (considered dry) is located off Industrial Avenue.

The Scott Fetzer Facility is located on an empty three-acre lot on Railroad Street and a smaller empty lot south of State Street.

The L.A. Darling Site is currently an empty two-acre lot (except for a water tower) located east of North Matteson Street and north of Fillmore Street.

The former Bronson Reel Facility is located at 505 North Douglas Street. Site clean-up at this facility is complete.

The CIP lists tasks to encourage public participation during all activities at these four sites. An EPA employee responds directly to media and public inquiries regarding these four sites. Information related to the CIP is located at the Bronson Public Library. Additional information about these sites is online at the EPA Superfund Site Progress Profile for the *North Bronson Industrial Area* at <http://cfpub.epa.gov/supercpad/> (EPA ID: MID005480900).



A historic view, looking toward North Matteson Street, of the intersection of Matteson and US-12

An Overview of How Land is Used in Bronson

Introduction

The existing land use in a community is probably the most important piece of data to analyze among the characteristics in a community. In many cases, the existing land uses have set a pattern that is unlikely to change. In other areas there, may be vacant or underutilized land that can be evaluated for its development or conservation value.

Existing land use is designed to provide a snapshot in time of how land in the City is actually being used. It is useful in developing a master plan since it provides a benchmark as to how property is being used, regardless of, or sometimes in contradiction to, zoning. It often

lets residents, City officials, and other stakeholders see patterns in growth and development.

In order to provide a detailed account of the existing land uses, aerial photography from the Michigan Geographic Data Library (last flown in 1998) was used to develop a draft of the land use map. Then, in order to account for changes over the intervening years, every road was driven in September 2006, correcting the map as needed to identify land that was used for commercial, residential, industrial, public, and agricultural uses, including identification of vacant or underutilized areas.

Land Use Classifications and Analysis

The land uses in the City of Bronson are divided into 11 classifications for the purposes of mapping. General definitions of the uses follow. An existing land use map is shown at the end of this section. Bronson occupies an area of 896 acres (1.4 square miles) and a recent annexation in the southeastern area of the City brings the new total to 910.5 acres. Figure 14 shows how land uses are currently allocated in the City. At 44% low-density residential is by far the largest single land use present in Bronson, followed by agricultural at 25%.

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Low-Density Residential	398.0	44%
Agricultural	224.0	25%
Public	77.0	8%
Industrial	48.0	5%
Commercial	40.0	4%
Vacant/Open	36.5	4%
Semi-Public	32.0	4%
Parks	22.0	2.4%
High-Density Residential	19.5	2.1%
Mobile Residential	8.0	0.9%
Wooded	5.5	0.6%
Total	910.5	100%

Figure 19 – Analysis of existing land uses.

Low-Density Residential This classification is for areas with single-family dwellings and accessory structures such as garages and sheds. These areas occupy 44% of the total land area in the City.



High-Density Residential Land used in this category includes apartments and senior housing. This use occupies 2% of the land in Bronson. High-density residential uses are located primarily on the south side of town, inclusive of the 50 units of housing commission property off Ruggles Street and Rudd Street and the apartments off Wayne Street. Apartments and other rentals are scattered throughout the north side of town.

Mobile Home Residential This category includes mobile homes, manufactured housing structures, and other property with multiple manufactured home structures that are in the nature of a community or “manufactured home park” including any streets, service drives, and community area such as clubhouses and pools. Bronson has one manufactured home community, located off South Walker Street and occupies approximately 1% of the City’s land area.

Commercial The land included in the category is predominately occupied by retail sales or service establishments and includes offices such as financial institutions, professional offices, and clinics. This use occupies 4% of the land in Bronson and is concentrated at the intersection of Matteson & Chicago and scattered throughout the Chicago Street corridor.



Industrial This category includes all land used for processing, manufacturing, fabricating, assembling materials, or for the outside storage of equipment and materials. This use occupies 5% of the land in Bronson and is located on the north side of town along the railroad tracks.



Public Land used in the category includes government facilities, public safety, schools, libraries, public safety institutions, public works facilities, the post office, and cemeteries. These uses comprise 9% of the total land area in the City.



Semi-Public This classification includes areas with churches, religious institutions, and private institutions. Generally speaking, this use includes property held in the public interest and is usually exempt from real property taxation. This use accounts for 4% of the land in the City.

Parks This category includes parks and recreation facilities under City ownership. The City owns five parks. In total, parks occupy 2% of the land in Bronson.

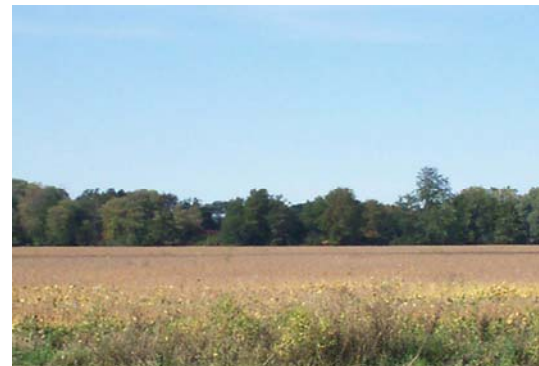


Agricultural Includes land that is being used for crop production, grazing, and other related activities and accessory buildings such as barns and elevators. Agricultural areas occupy 25% of the land in Bronson.



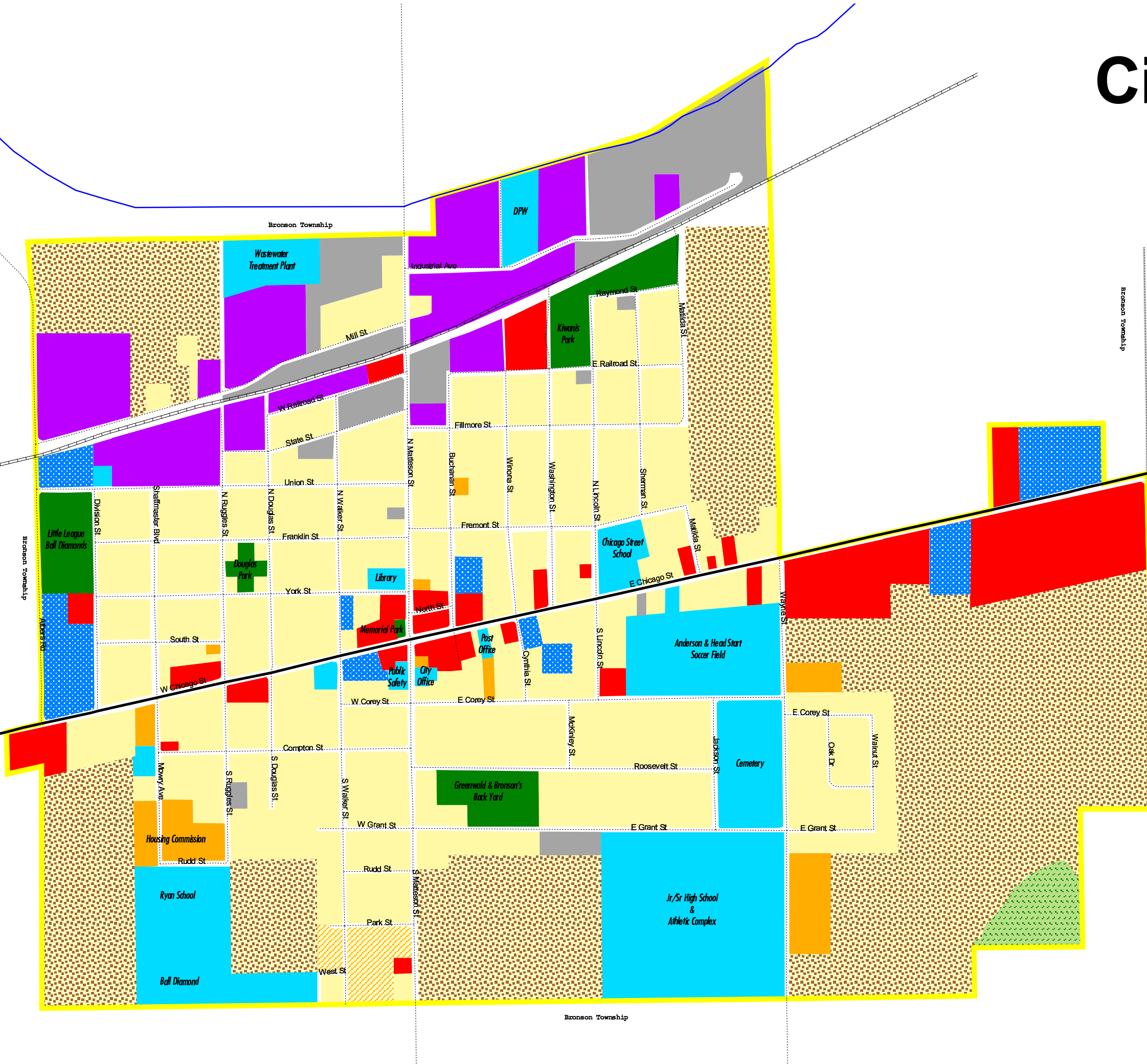
Vacant/Open Land with structures that are empty and lack tenants is considered vacant, and includes open areas that are undeveloped and dominated by natural vegetation, yet the property is generally clear of most trees and is not used for agricultural purposes. This use accounts for 3% of the total land area in Bronson.












Wooded This category includes property that is covered with trees, primarily located in the southeastern section of town. This existing land use accounts for just under 1% of the City's total land area.

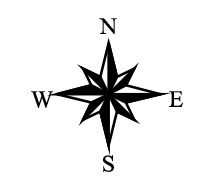


City of Bronson

Existing Land Use



-  Low-Density Residential
-  High-Density Residential
-  Mobile Home Residential
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Public
-  Semi-Public
-  Parks
-  Agricultural
-  Vacant/Open
-  Wooded



Spicer Group, Inc.
November 27, 2007

Base Map Data for Branch County: Michigan Geographic Data Library

Community Input

Basis for Community Input

To establish its effectiveness, a Master Plan should incorporate the input and ideas of the local population. By basing the Master Plan on the goals and objectives of its residents, land use management decisions become politically feasible and represent the intents and vision of the community. In Bronson, citizens were given the opportunity to participate through a community input survey mailed to all households in the City.



Ruggles street, looking north

Mailed Survey

The community input survey was mailed in January of 2007 to all 979 housing units in the City of Bronson. There were 265 completed surveys returned, representing an initial response rate of 27%. However, a total of 127 surveys were returned from the post office, indicating homes that were vacant. Therefore, an adjusted response rate was determined by using the 852 available housing units, indicating that 31% of the surveys were returned to the City. A typical mailed survey receives a response rate of 12%. A response rate that exceeds the 12% industry standard should be considered a reliable snapshot of community sentiment regarding the questions asked on the survey. Furthermore, a statistically significant set of responses from a survey can strengthen the reliability of the input

received. Using the adjusted number of housing units in Bronson, in order to achieve a statistically significant survey dataset with a 5% sampling error level, 262 surveys would have to be returned. Since 265 surveys were returned, the results of the Bronson community input survey are statistically significant. It should be noted that since all the surveys were sent to housing units, the survey responses would tend to represent the opinions of homeowners. A summary of the survey responses is attached in Appendix A.

The survey had a total of 24 questions, mostly focusing on land use and future development. Five questions addressed residential land uses and how the City should plan for it. For commercial and

industrial development, there were a total of five questions. There were two questions about local schools. Three questions about parks and recreation were also posed to respondents. There was one ranking question about factors contributing to quality of life. At the end of the survey, there were three open-ended questions in which the respondents could write individual thoughts and opinions. The beginning of the survey asked about basic demographic characteristics of the respondents.

The survey was also translated into Spanish in order to capture input from the Latino

population, which is becoming an important demographic in the City. By comparison, Latinos comprised 8.5% of the population in Bronson, while in the greater Branch County area it was 3.0%, according to U. S. Census data from 2000. The Spanish-language survey was not mailed out. However, the header on the English survey had a prominently-placed note in Spanish that stated copies of the Spanish-language survey were available at the City office. No Spanish-language surveys were returned. A copy of the Spanish-language survey is attached in Appendix A.

Residential Questions

Respondents were asked five questions about residential development in the City of Bronson. The responses are summarized in Figure 20. First, in question #6, they were asked to what extent they support more residential growth. About 79% either agreed or strongly agreed that residential growth should be encouraged. Only 8% either disagreed or strongly disagreed that it should be encouraged. Approximately 13% had no opinion. This question demonstrates, in general, that there is strong support for residential development in Bronson. The following four questions get more specific, highlighting the various ways in the future how new homes and neighborhoods might be developed in Bronson.

In question #7, respondents were asked if the City should plan for more single-family homes.

A single-family home is one dwelling structure where members of one family live. This contrasts to apartment complexes or duplexes where several families live in the same structure. Overall, 64% either agreed or strongly agreed that the City should plan for more-single family homes. About 11% either disagreed or strongly disagreed that this type of development should be encouraged. Approximately 23% had no opinion. Overall, there is broad support for development of new single-family homes in Bronson.

Question #8 asked about manufactured homes. These types of dwelling structures are typically assembled in factories and then transported to sites for occupancy. The term "manufactured home" refers to a home built according to the specifications of the U.S.

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The responses to this question were mixed. About one-third of the respondents (31%) agreed or strongly agreed that the City should plan for more manufactured homes. Just over a third (36%) had no opinion, and another third (31%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the City should plan for more manufactured homes.

In question #9, respondents were asked their opinions about rental housing, like apartments. Rental housing takes on many forms and

styles, which typically includes apartments and other multi-family structures, but can be any dwelling structure that is occupied under a lease agreement between the property owner and a tenant. About 44% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that Bronson should plan for more rental housing. About 26% either disagreed or strongly disagreed that this type of residential development should be encouraged. Approximately 28% had no opinion. From these results, it looks like there is a fair amount of support in the City for future development of new rental structures.

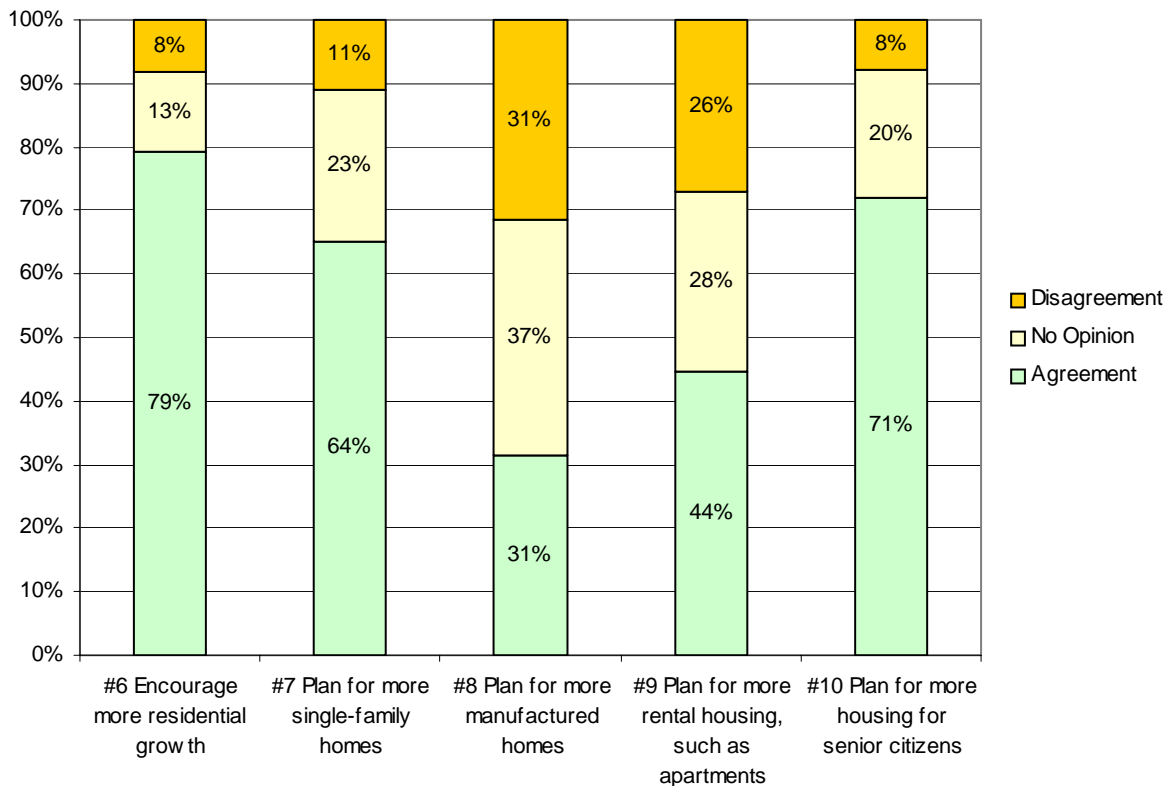


Figure 20 – Summary of responses from the survey about residential land uses.

Question #10 asked about housing for senior citizens. As noted earlier in this plan, under the section titled “All About Bronson,” between 1990 and 2000, the population between the ages of 45 to 64 years grew by 12%, which represents an emerging retirement population. The responses to this question showed strong support for future senior housing development. Over two-thirds of the respondents (71%) agreed or strongly agreed that the City should plan for more senior housing. A few of the respondents (8%) had no opinion, and just about a fifth (20%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the City should plan for more senior housing

In terms of establishing priorities for future

residential development, based on community sentiment from questions #7 through #10, the following preference emerges, with #1 representing the highest rank:

- #1 – Housing for senior citizens
- #2 – Single-family homes
- #3 – Rental housing/apartments
- #4 – Manufactured homes

The strength and stability of a community and its neighborhoods is dependent upon how it balances housing diversity with the demands of the market. The data in Figure 20 demonstrate the community’s willingness to accept a broad range of residential development choices for the future of Bronson.

Commercial and Industrial Questions

Responses to questions #11 and #14 of the mailed survey demonstrate unequivocal broad-based community support for future commercial and industrial development. Figure 21 summarizes these responses.

In question #11, respondents were asked if Bronson needs more commercial development. Already, commercial services are concentrated in the center of the City, at the intersection of Matteson Street and Chicago Street (U.S. 12), and somewhat dispersed throughout the Chicago Street corridor. The responses from this question are clear. Approximately nine out of every ten responses (89.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that Bronson needs more commercial

development. Only 3% either disagreed or strongly disagreed that Bronson needs more commercial development. Only 6% had no opinion. Responses to questions #12 and #13 provide more insight into how new commercial development should occur. Overall, respondents preferred it to be located near existing commercial areas and along Chicago Street and that it should be close to existing neighborhoods.

In terms of future industrial development, question #14 asked if the City needs more industry to provide jobs and tax base. The responses to this question were undeniably straight-forward. Over 93% agreed or strongly agreed the City needs more industry. Less



Industry is located on the north side of Bronson

than 5% had no opinion, and a tiny fraction of the respondents (2%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the City needs more industrial development. The responses to question #15 show that new industry should be sited in the industrial park and near existing industry.

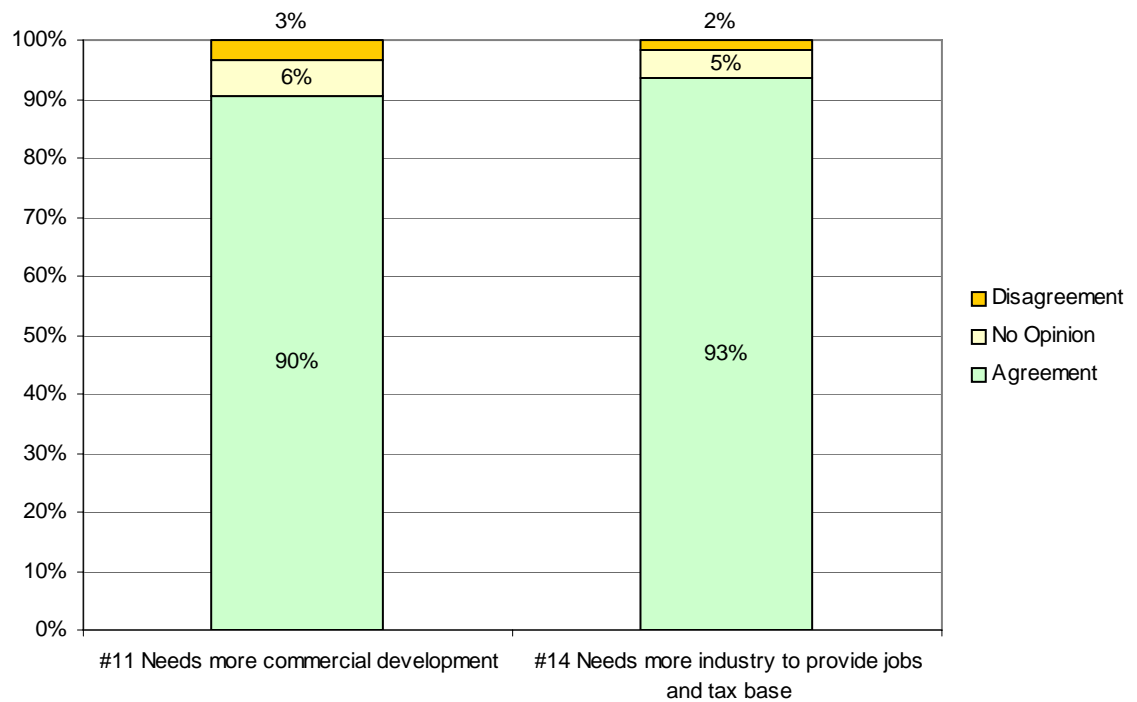


Figure 21 – Summary of responses from the survey about commercial and industrial land uses.

Quality of Life Questions

The questions about the quality of life in the City of Bronson focused on schools, parks, and other community facilities. The survey had two questions about the Bronson Community School District and three questions about City parks. The remaining four questions sought people's perceptions about the overall quality of life in Bronson.

Questions #16 and #17 were specifically about the Bronson Community School District. Geographically speaking, the district itself is quite large, encompassing the entirety of the City and branching out into the surrounding townships, occupying a total of 149 square miles. The district operates three elementary schools and a junior/senior high school, with all four facilities in the City. Enrollment in the district is about 1,400 students. Question #16 showed that over 47% of the respondents believed the quality of the schools in Bronson

was either excellent or better than average. About 36% thought them to be average. Less than 10% believed they were either below average or terrible. To improve the schools, question #17 provided respondents the opportunity to share their thoughts. Many thoughts were provided, mostly focusing on providing separate facilities for the junior and senior high schools, administrative staff reductions, increased parent involvement, and teacher improvement.

For parks and recreation in the City, questions #18 through #20 sought to gain better insight on how residents use the five City-owned parks. First, in question #18, 36% of the respondents use the parks more than six times a year. About 44% use the parks at least once but no more than six times a year. Together, these results show that over 80% of the respondents use the parks at least once a year.



Bronson has five public parks

Questions #19 sought to determine why residents use the parks. The responses were varied, but 63% said they used the parks because of the equipment that was available, like playgrounds and open fields. Events such as festivals or concerts drew 46% of the respondents to the parks, and recreation programs like baseball and soccer brought out 45% of the respondents. Regarding if Bronson should have a recreation department, question #20 showed that 59% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with such an idea. Only 27% had no opinion and just over 11% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Question #21 was the only ranking question on the survey and it focused on factors that contribute to the quality of life in Bronson. The three highest ranked items were industrial development, schools, and commercial

development, respectively. The ranking of all ten factors are shown below in Figure 22.

To address respondents' concerns about quality of life more directly, question #22 asked what people liked about Bronson, and question #23 asked what they disliked. The most common likes included the small town atmosphere, the people, that Bronson is quiet, that it is safe, and the events that take place in the City. Of the dislikes, people thought there was limited development, a lack of job opportunities, concerns about governmental decisions, and blight. And finally, question #24 asked respondents how they would improve the quality of life for all residents in Bronson. The most common answers were to encourage development, provide more jobs, and embrace the changing cultural and ethnic demographics of the City.

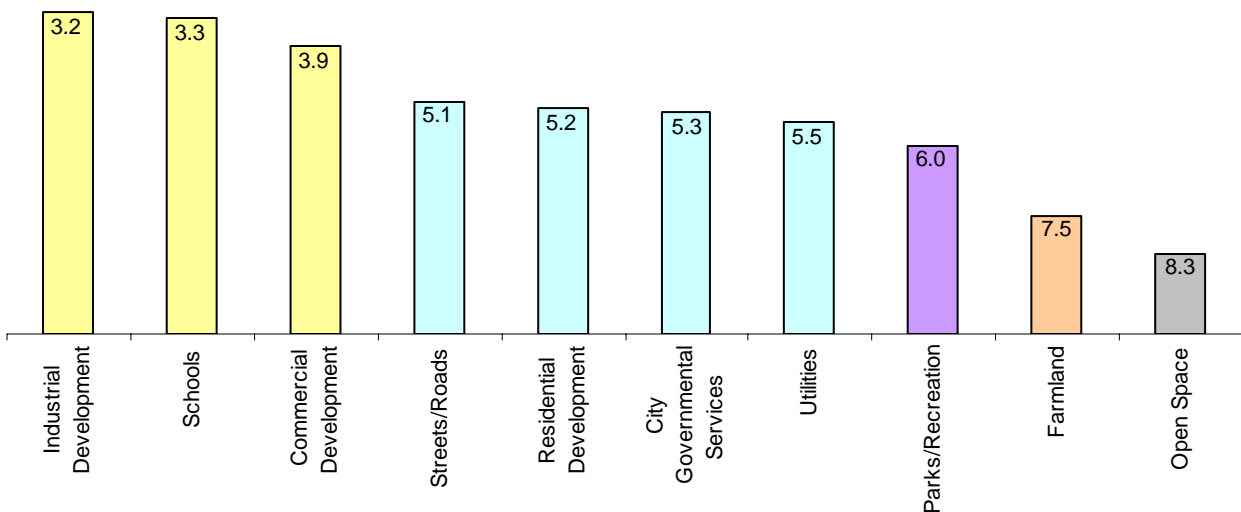


Figure 22 – Ranking of responses from survey question #21 about the importance of factors contributing to the quality of life in Bronson, with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least important.

Goals and Objectives for Bronson

Introduction

Determining the direction and desires for a community for the next five to twenty years can be a challenge. Being able to articulate what needs to be improved, what should be preserved, and what should be substantially changed is successful only when based on sound public participation and detailed analyses. In the City of Bronson, this goal-setting process was accomplished by a thorough review of existing characteristics in the City and the results of the mailed public input survey. Based upon this information, a number of goals were established. These goals are a major component of this master plan, which is intended to be the primary policy document for City officials when considering matters related to land development.

The goals are divided into broad categories and relate directly to the issues identified as priorities by the residents and the Planning Commission. These categories include general community character goals, residential, commercial, industrial, and public services & facilities. After each goal, a number of objectives are listed as well.

A **goal** is a destination, a final purpose which a community seeks to attain. It is a broad, general statement expressing the intent of the

community. It is often written in a general way to be inclusive of many ideas that support a principle that is valued by the local community.

An **objective** is the means for attaining a goal. One goal can have many supporting objectives. Each objective can be thought of as either a general policy statement or an action item detailing a future task that should be undertaken.

Goal: A goal is a destination, a final purpose which a community seeks to attain. It is a broad, general statement expressing the intent of the community.

Objective: An objective is the means for attaining a goal. Each objective can be thought of as either a general policy statement or an action item detailing a future task that should be undertaken.

The purpose of this section of the plan is to provide the long-term vision for Bronson, with enough detail to highlight likely outcomes for Bronson, yet be flexible in order to adapt to the changing wants and needs of its current and future residents, landowners, and other stakeholders.

General Community Character

The City of Bronson is described as a small town that is quiet, safe, and a good place to raise a family. Residents value their schools, parks, and community events. They aspire to see their community as a robust place that will grow and prosper. As a small town that anticipates change, the people of Bronson have embraced this fact and envision a City

with dynamic neighborhoods with growing diversity, responsive elected officials, a healthy economy, and a local job market with opportunities. While new development will certainly strengthen the community, residents are supportive of existing local businesses and recognize Bronson as an affordable place with an excellent quality of life.

Goal: Foster an economically vibrant, small town atmosphere.

- **Objective:** In order to solidify the City's identity, the use of branding can help develop a stronger identity for Bronson that is unique and special. Efforts should be directed toward forming a partnership with the City, Bronson Chamber of Commerce, local schools, and service clubs.
- **Objective:** Secure available scenic by-ways funds in order to implement the US-12 Heritage Trail on Chicago Street. A partnership with the Branch County Tourism Bureau to write grants can be directed toward improvements such as marquee sign repair, interpretive signage, and landscaping along US-12.
- **Objective:** Work with both the Bronson and Branch County Chamber of Commerce to develop a streetscape along Chicago Street in the central business district with the aim to enhance the pedestrian atmosphere through such amenities as planters, sidewalk furniture, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and signage.
- **Objective:** Encourage the redevelopment of underutilized structures in the central business district.

Goal: Promote Bronson as a city with a high quality of life for existing and future residents.

- **Objective:** Continue to maintain and improve the City's parks.
- **Objective:** Develop a five-year community parks and recreation plan so Bronson can be eligible to apply for grants, including grants from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, in order to improve the City's parks.
- **Objective:** Enhance recreational opportunities in the City by partnering with the Bronson School District.
- **Objective:** Support the Friends of Bronson Library in order to improve the existing library building on Matteson Street.
- **Objective:** Develop a Farmer's Market in a centrally-located place or convenient location in order to encourage farmers in the Branch County area to sell their goods to Bronson residents and visitors. The Michigan Farmers' Market Association can assist the City during this process.

Residential

The strength and stability of Bronson and its neighborhoods will depend on how housing diversity is balanced with the demands of the market. In general, residents believe that residential growth should be encouraged. Specifically, there is broad-based community support for developments that provide senior

housing. There is also broad support for new single-family homes in Bronson. Regarding rental housing, there is some support for this type of residential development. There is even less support for new manufactured homes, however, this type of development can be an affordable option for many people.

Goal: Promote and retain a high-quality housing stock.

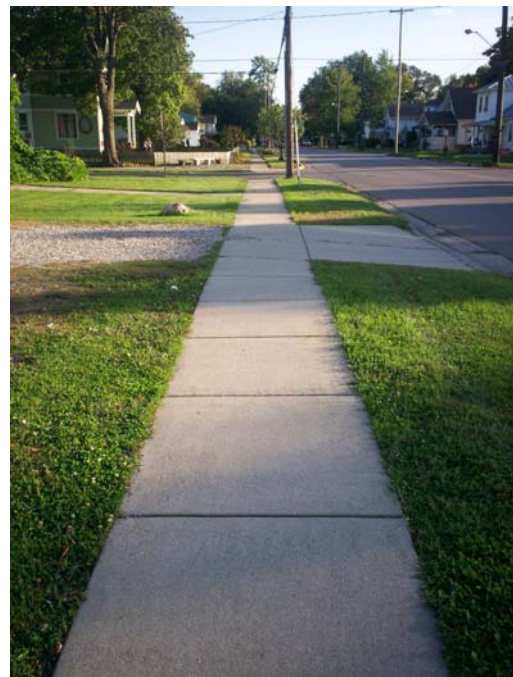
- **Objective:** Permit intensive residential development only when road construction and maintenance, public safety services, water and sewer, and other utilities are available to serve the proposed development.
- **Objective:** When reviewing developments (or expansions), consider the total cost of utility and public service expansions, which includes maintenance costs, not just construction costs.

Goal: Encourage residential development that responds to and meets the needs of a changing, dynamic population.

- **Objective:** Target new development to the property in the southeast area of town between Wayne and Parham that the City owns.
- **Objective:** Ensure a range of residential options for people of varying incomes.

Goal: Improve existing neighborhoods.

- **Objective:** Assist the Bronson Housing Commission in its effort to secure HUD grants.
- **Objective:** Work to eliminate blight and substandard housing conditions by continuing to enforce existing ordinances.
- **Objective:** Encourage stability in existing neighborhoods and residentially developed areas by monitoring nonconforming uses and encouraging their elimination.
- **Objective:** Provide for screening between commercial and solely residential uses.



Over a third of the homes in Bronson were built before 1940

Commercial

An overwhelming majority of Bronson residents want commercial growth to be encouraged in the City. They would like to see it concentrated with existing businesses located in the central business district and to be developed along US-12. There is a strong demand for new commercial investment in the

City. The primary commercial services that residents demand are elsewhere, requiring either a 12 mile drive to the east to Coldwater, or another 12 mile drive to the west to Sturgis. However, there is a good chance residents will continue to shop in Bronson as long as there are convenient nearby options in town.

Goal: Promote the central business district as a major economic development asset of the City.

- **Objective:** Create a walkable shopping district with its own identity along Chicago Street/US-12.
- **Objective:** Enhance pedestrian connections within and to the central business district. Commercial development and redevelopment in this area should incorporate the needs of pedestrians into their design.
- **Objective:** Refer to the 2007 Branch County economic development and restructuring program developed by the Economic Growth Alliance for strategies and opportunities.
- **Objective:** Promote the area in and around the central business district as a prime location for start up businesses.
- **Objective:** Develop simple marketing information for Realtors to use to dispel common concerns with commercial investment. This information should include tax information, traffic volumes and a list of available parcels.

Goal: Promote new commercial development throughout the US-12 corridor.

- **Objective:** Encourage quality construction and use of materials and/or design.
- **Objective:** Direct office uses to the north side of Chicago Street/US-12, between Division and Walker.
- **Objective:** Modify sections of the zoning ordinance to implement performance standards for office uses in the B-4 district.

Goal: Continue support of existing commercial business growth.

- **Objective:** Promote each storefront as a unique business.
- **Objective:** Encourage the redevelopment of vacant sites.



The survey that was mailed in January of 2007 showed that 90% of respondents support new commercial growth

Industrial

Industrial development is desired as a secure tax base. Existing industrial land uses in Bronson are located in the upper northern half of the City, along the railroad tracks, and off Albers Road, Mill Street, and in the industrial

park off Industrial Avenue. Residents strongly support new industrial development and they would like it to be located near existing industrial areas.

Goal: Direct new industrial investment to locate in the industrial park.

- Objective: Bring gas and electric utilities fully into the industrial park.
- Objective: Promote the redevelopment of vacant sites.
- Objective: Work with the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth in order to access any incentive programs that can strengthen local industrial operations and help retain local jobs.
- Objective: Pursue alternative energy, biotech, and research & development firms to locate in Bronson.
- Objective: Landscape the right-of-ways in industrial areas.

Goal: Continue the retention and expansion of existing industries.

- Objective: Participate in the 21st Century Jobs Fund.
- Objective: Promote redevelopment of industrial areas through the use of Brownfield incentives and other items, such as lower development costs for infrastructure.



The industrial park off Industrial Avenue has many available sites

Public Services and Facilities

It's useful to think of the services and infrastructure provided by the City of Bronson as the skeleton for development. Without needed services and infrastructure, new development, whether residential, commercial, or industrial, will not happen. Furthermore, in consideration of the strong desire by residents for new investment in the City as revealed by the results of the mailed community planning

survey, annexation of land from adjacent townships is a viable option to accommodate such growth. Therefore, the City must provide adequate services, facilities, and infrastructure in order to accommodate any new growth. The City must also provide consistent and constant improvements to existing and growing areas while planning for sufficient capital outlays.

Goal: Provide a range of public facilities and services consistent with the character of the City, which meets present and future needs and supports the public health, safety, and welfare of residents.

- **Objective:** Meet the infrastructure needs of residents and businesses in a cost-effective manner.
- **Objective:** Expand the fire station in order to accommodate new equipment.
- **Objective:** Work with Bronson Township on addressing any infrastructure needs for future growth adjacent to the northeast area of the City, bounded by Parham Road on the east, the railroad tracks to the north, and US-12 to the south.

Goal: Develop and maintain a network of roads and sidewalks that provide safe and convenient access to residents and businesses.

- **Objective:** Work to maintain the road network in the City and ensure safe and efficient movement of traffic through and throughout the City.



The Bronson Fire Department has 7 fire trucks and 25 volunteer fire fighters

Vision for Growth and Development in Bronson

Introduction

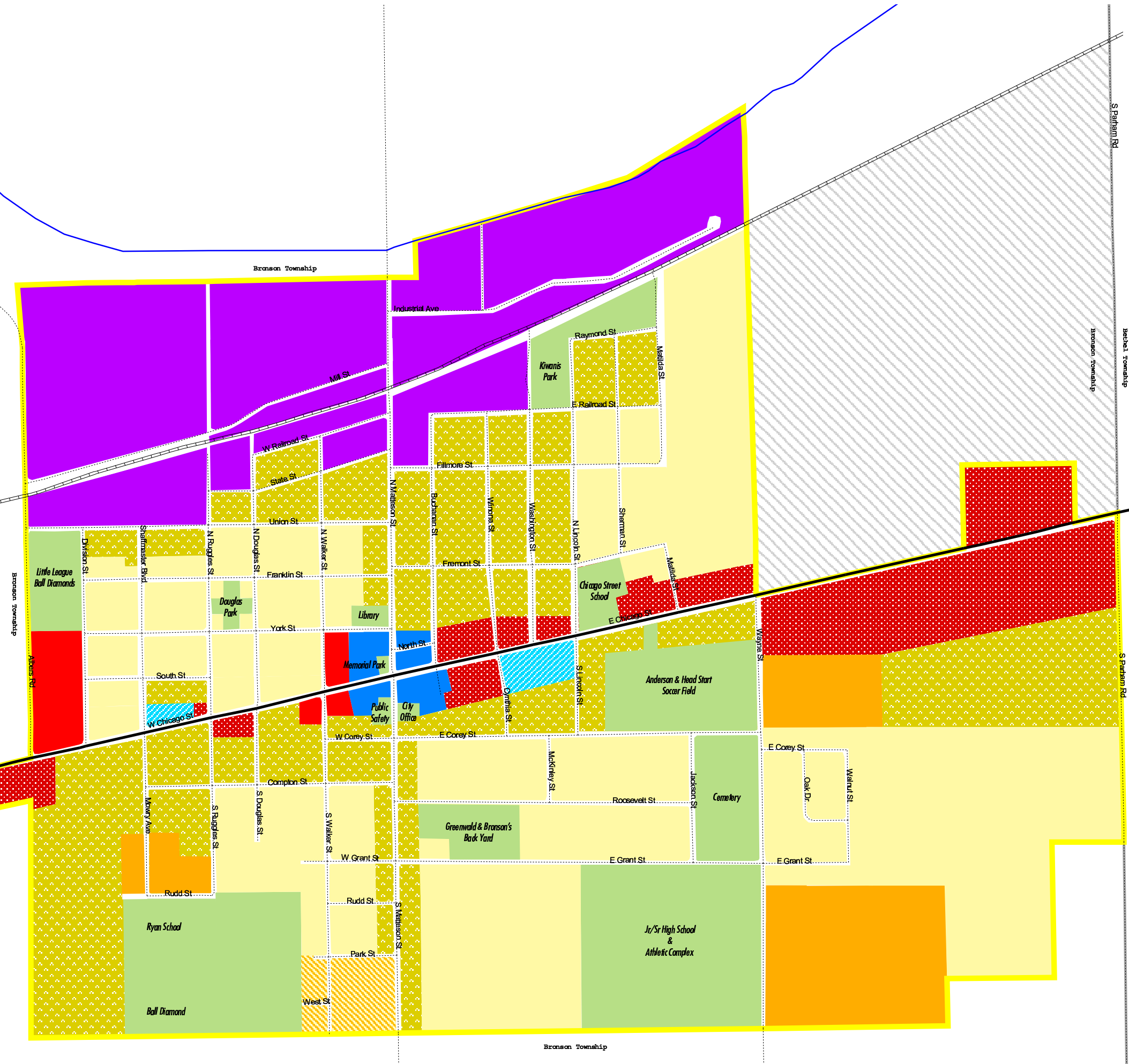
Building on the goals and objectives described in the previous section, the future land use map will depict the desired form and character the City of Bronson should take over the next ten to twenty years. The map depicting the future land uses for Bronson is shown on page 41. This map transforms the goals and objectives into a graphic guide for land development and management in Bronson. The future land use map serves as a guide to decision making – it does not specify how every lot, parcel, or site should be used or zoned. While the future land use map can provide a framework for site-specific land use or zoning decisions, it does not translate directly to specific zoning districts. For example, the future land use map may indicate a commercial area, and yet it may not be *zoned* commercial until a property owner requests that zoning change and the City approves the change.

On the future land use map, it should be noted future land use categories are slightly different from the existing land use categories. This difference is attributed to the fact that future

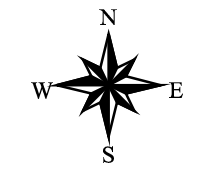
land use is developed with an eye toward the zoning classification that will be needed to actually move toward the implementation of this plan. For example, while the existing land use map described *wooded* and *vacant* existing land uses, these uses are not described on the future land use map. These existing land uses are combined into various other future land use categories because the future land use categories reflect how these *wooded* and *vacant* land uses will be zoned. Ultimately, the recommendations shown on the future land use map are intended to help Bronson officials, property owners, and residents make zoning and development decisions that are in the best interest of the Bronson community. The future land use map seeks to guide residential, commercial, and industrial development into appropriate locations while maintaining the overall character and appearance of the City of Bronson. Descriptions of the new future land use categories begin on page 42.

City of Bronson

Future Land Use



	Low-Density Residential
	Medium-Density Residential
	Multi-Family Residential
	Manufactured Housing Residential
	Public Property
	Neighborhood Commercial
	Central Business
	Highway Commercial
	Office
	Industrial
	Possible Growth/Annexation Area
	City of Bronson
	Streets
	Chicago Street / US-12
	Railroad



Spicer Group, Inc.
November 27, 2007

Base Map Data for Branch County: Michigan Geographic Data Library

Low-Density Residential

This category includes single-family dwellings and related accessory structures. The purpose and intent of this future land use is to provide space for traditional neighborhood single-family growth, free from most other uses, except those that are compatible with the residents living in these neighborhoods. This is the least dense of the four residential future land use categories shown on the future land use map. Approximately half of the neighborhoods shown on the future land use map are planned to be in the low-density residential category. In general, this category corresponds to the R-1 One-Family Residential zoning district. The only location on the future

land use map that is not currently zoned R-1 but is planned for the low-density residential future land use category is the recent annexation in the southeastern area of the City adjacent to the undeveloped Schmid Farm property. The Schmid Farm area is currently zoned R-1, but some portions are proposed to be other future land uses other than low-density residential. This is discussed in more detail under the other residential future land use categories. In addition, it should be noted that a small area on the north side of US-12 between Division and Shaffmaster is proposed to be converted the office future land use category.

Medium-Density Residential

This category is comprised of low- and medium-density neighborhoods, and includes single-family dwellings, apartment buildings, bed and breakfast, philanthropic institutions, off-street parking, and two-family dwellings. Of the four residential categories shown on the future land use map, this use comprises just less than half of the planned neighborhoods in Bronson. Generally, this future land use corresponds to the R-2 Residential zoning district. The only location on the future land use map that is not currently

zoned R-2 but is planned for medium-density residential is a portion of the Schmid Farm property that fronts South Parham Road. Areas that are to be converted to another future land use include a portion on the south side of US-12 between Cynthia and South Lincoln to be highway commercial, an area on the north side of US-12 between Washington and North Lincoln to be highway commercial, and additional frontage on the north of US-12 between North Ruggles and North Walker.

Multi-Family Residential

The multi-family residential future land use designation is intended to provide opportunities for housing that is affordable and alternatives to traditional single-family homes. Included are apartments, conversions of single-family dwellings up to four dwelling units, offices, public buildings, and planned unit developments. Multi-family residential is

shown in two locations, both located on the east side of Wayne Street. In general, this future land use corresponds to the R-3 Residential zoning district. The one location on the future land use map that is not currently zoned R-3 but is planned for multi-family residential is a portion of the Schmid Farm property.

Manufactured Housing Residential

This category supports manufactured homes and other property with multiple manufactured home structures that are part of manufactured home parks, including related accessory uses such as community and recreation centers. All developments under this future land use category should be serviced by adequate

services, facilities, and infrastructure. An existing manufactured home development is located off South Walker Street. In general, this future land use corresponds to the MH Manufactured Housing Community zoning district.

Public Property

This category includes public uses such as government facilities, public safety, schools, libraries, public safety institutions, public works

facilities, post office buildings, and cemeteries. Only existing facilities are shown on the future land use map.

Neighborhood Commercial

The intent of this category is to provide areas for commercial facilities that are especially useful when located close to existing neighborhoods. The neighborhood commercial future land use designation includes convenience stores, retail sales, professional services, schools, churches and

religious institutions, offices, and banks. This category corresponds to the B-1 Business Residential zoning district. The future land use map shows no expansion of the neighborhood commercial future land use category when compared to the areas designated as B-1 on the zoning map.

Central Business

This future land use designation is shown centrally in the City of Bronson, at the intersection of Matteson and US-12. This area is considered Bronson's central business district. The intent of this category is to establish the central business district and promote it as a convenient and attractive place for a broad range of retail uses, businesses, governmental facilities, professional offices, and limited residential uses. This category includes a broad range of services, including retail sales, professional services, office buildings, banks, restaurants, government

facilities, hotels, some apartments, and certain uses of private recreation. Unlike the other commercial future land use categories, the central business category does not have front or rear yard setbacks, meaning structures can be built to the lot lines. This future land use corresponds to the B-2 Central Business zoning district. The future land use map shows no expansion of the central business future land use category when compared to the areas designated as B-2 on the zoning map.

Highway Commercial

The highway commercial future land use category extends along US-12. The intent of this future land use designation is to provide for commercial uses away from residential uses while accommodating the needs of a larger consumer population. Businesses tend to cater to the greater region and are typically dependent upon major thoroughfare traffic. Many of the same uses in the other commercial future land categories are permitted under highway commercial. The major difference is that highway commercial

allows produce stands, building supply yards, and warehousing facilities. This future land use corresponds to the B-3 Community Commercial zoning district. The future land use map shows expansion of the highway future land use category (when compared to the areas designated as B-3 on the zoning map) on the south side of US-12 between Cynthia and South Lincoln, and an area on the north side of US-12 between Washington and North Lincoln.

Office

The purpose and intent of this future land use is to encourage the use of land for office uses which generate very little automobile traffic, when appropriately buffered from residential

uses. In general, it corresponds to the B-4 Office District zoning district. The zoning map does not show any property in Bronson having a B-4 zoning designation. This proposed area

for this future land use is limited to the north side of US-12, bounded by Division on the

west and North Walker on the east, not to go further north than North Street.

Industrial

This future land use designation is intended to provide for traditional industrial and other high-intensity or land intensive uses. It corresponds to the I Industrial zoning district. Industrial uses typically generate high amounts of truck or rail traffic and as such, should be located in

proximity to these services. The zoning map shows industrial land located in the upper half of the north side of town along the railroad tracks. This future land use is limited to property that is currently zoned for industrial.

Possible Growth/Annexation Area

City officials have indicated a willingness to work with surrounding communities when it comes to issues of mutually-beneficially growth. To accommodate any possible future growth, the future land use map shows an annexation area that is part Bronson Township. Essentially, this means the boundaries of two municipalities will be changed by reducing the land base of one and increasing the land base of the other. The City of Bronson already has two wells located on city-owned property in Bronson Township, about four acres on two separate parcels on the west side of South Parham Road. The City of Bronson has plans for a third well.

city). In these cases, the city provides the services, most likely water and sewer that a township cannot. Cities annex property because the revenue from the resulting tax base is more than the cost of providing these services. The Michigan Home Rule City Act (PA 279 of 1909) describes the process in more detail. In terms of future land use, PA 279 of 1909 states, “the zoning ordinance provisions applicable to the territory within the newly incorporated city or the annexed territory shall remain in effect for two years after the incorporation or annexation unless the legislative body of the city lawfully adopts other zoning ordinance provisions.”

In Michigan, annexation is the process by which land is brought from an unincorporated area (a township) to an incorporated area (a

Implementation of the Bronson Master Plan

Introduction

The key to a well-planned community is the actual day-to-day use of planning documents, like this master plan. Because this plan is to be the basis for future zoning and planning decisions, it is imperative that the plan be available to City staff, elected and appointed officials, as well as business owners, developers, stakeholders from Branch County and the region, and the general public.

The implementation of this master plan depends on its continual use by the Planning Commission and the City Council. In its best form, implementation of this plan will result in the achievement of the goals and objectives.

Implementation is often the most difficult portion of the planning process because while the intentions of the City and its residents and stakeholders are clear, the legal ways and available planning tools are often not. The following sections provide a review of the tools available to the City of Bronson and the ways in which they can be used to ensure that the goals and objectives of this plan are met. The sections that follow are: Zoning Changes and Ordinance Updates, Annual and Capital Budgeting, and Local Planning Capacity. These tools will help ensure the continued progress toward the implementation of this plan.

Zoning Changes and Ordinance Updates

With a new plan in place, the City has an opportunity to update its current zoning ordinance to reflect the goals adopted in this plan. Many of the changes may be minor but provide a substantial benefit. For example, one change may be to revise the kinds of permitted uses in a residential district in order to provide a broader range of housing options. Another change may be broader in scope,

enabling developers with certain kinds of bonus provisions if they incorporate specified design requirements, especially important when considering ways to brand the City of Bronson or enhance its unique qualities. Another step may be to review the cases that have come before the Planning Commission to determine if there are trends that may need to be addressed in the zoning ordinance itself.

Annual and Capital Budgeting

This plan should be consulted annually as the City Council develops its budget. Capital improvement requests should be compared against the future land use map and consideration should be given to how infrastructure improvements or expansions may impact growth. The plan could also be used to identify potential funding sources, based on the priorities of the City residents. For example, there are grant and loan programs to help fund these priorities. At the Federal level, there is the Community Facilities Program, the Public Works and Economic Development Program, and the Water and Wastewater Disposal and Grant Program. At

the State level, a potential funding source may be the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, which offers grants from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Michigan Natural resources Trust Fund. The Michigan Department of Transportation also administers Federal funds appropriated under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act of 2005 (SAFETEA), the reauthorization of the TEA-21 program. Additionally, local funding programs, as initiated by the City of Bronson, such as a special assessment or issuing bonds, can also be used for specific capital improvement projects.

Regional Cooperation

Without a doubt, development, growth, and changes within Branch County and the communities adjacent to the City of Bronson, including the outlying Kalamazoo-Battle Creek Metropolitan Statistical Area, will affect its quality of life and growth within the City itself. Communities surrounding Bronson have experienced a variety of changes – some experiencing growth and others experiencing a loss of population and declining housing value. Bronson is rightly concerned with the effect that these changes can have on the City. The City has the opportunity to pursue cooperative and mutually beneficial relationships with all the surrounding communities and Branch

County. Cooperative relationships between and among Bronson and neighboring communities can provide an opportunity for the full impact of new or expanding developments to be considered as well as provide an opportunity for communities to pool resources and skills to tackle similar challenges. At the least, the City should actively participate in the review and updating of neighboring communities master plans. Further, the City should invite comment and suggestions from neighboring communities on major developments within Bronson, especially any projects that would border a neighboring community.

Local Planning Capacity

Good planning practice, and now State law, requires the City to review its plan every five years and update it if necessary. A cursory review of the plan should take place annually by both the Planning Commission and the City Council. This provides an opportunity to consider the goals and intent of the plan against pending capital improvements, budget requests, and other developments that may impact the community. The City of Bronson

provides important planning and development services with limited staff. When change confronts the community, it will be necessary to review the time and effort expended by the staff to address development proposals. Adjustments in fees and changes in the application processes may be necessary in order to cover the costs associated with new or expanding development.

Additional Implementation Tasks

Many of the steps necessary to ensure the successful implementation of this master plan might not be obvious or are not part of an established City fund. The implementation efforts that have been described in this section focus on the residents, landowners, and other stakeholders of the City. To date, the City of Bronson has taken steps to keep residents and others involved and informed regarding City issues. The successful implementation of this plan depends greatly on City officials using the

plan and residents being aware of the plan, knowing its purpose, and understanding how they might be able to use it. This can be accomplished by consistently referring to the document when making zoning decisions and even referencing the plan, when appropriate, during site plan reviews and variance decisions. Further, the City should make every effort to provide a copy of the plan for review at the City office at all times.

Conclusion

The City of Bronson has spent nearly a year addressing important issues impacting the community. They received valuable input from residents by a mailed community survey. As a result, the Planning Commission has compiled a thoughtfully prepared master plan that represents the data, efforts, and community spirit of City residents. This plan is only the

beginning of an action program for the next ten to twenty years. Because the future welfare of the City depends upon rational, coordinated action, the Planning Commission stands ready to meet any person or group interested in the future development of the area. The Planning Commission will be available to help and guide those needing advice or wish to be part of the

plan implementation process. While this task is to be led by City officials, implementation also depends on every responsible citizen in the City of Bronson. By working together,

Bronson will continue to be a desirable, attractive, and convenient community in which to live, work, and play.

Appendix

Contents

- “City of Bronson Community Planning Survey” – Mailed survey in English
- “Ciudad de la Encuesta Sobre el Planeamiento de la Comunidad de Bronson” – Survey in Spanish
- Results from the Community Planning Survey

City of Bronson Community Planning Survey

The City of Bronson has begun to update its Community Master Plan for the first time in over 30 years. A major aspect of this effort is to seek the opinions of Bronson citizens about the growth, development, and future vision for the City. Please answer the questions below that best reflect your opinion and return the form in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope by **January 18, 2007**. If you have any questions, please call David O'Rourke, City Manager, 369-7334. Your responses will be kept confidential. Thank you!

➤ *Una versión española de la lengua de este examen está disponible en la oficina de ciudad de Bronson, calle del sur de 141 Matteson.*

1. **Your Age:** ___ Under 18 ___ 18-24 ___ 25-44 ___ 45-64 ___ 65 and over
 2. **Sex:** ___ Male ___ Female
 3. **Do you:** ___ Own your own home ___ Rent ___ Other: _____
 4. **How long have you lived in the City of Bronson?**
___ 0-5 Years ___ 6-10 Years ___ 11-20 Years ___ 21 Years or more
 5. **What is the number of school-age children residing with you?**
___ None ___ One ___ Two ___ Three ___ Four or more
-

6. **The City should encourage more residential growth**
___ Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ No Opinion ___ Disagree ___ Strongly Disagree
 7. **The City should plan for more single-family homes**
___ Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ No Opinion ___ Disagree ___ Strongly Disagree
 8. **The City should plan for more manufactured homes**
___ Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ No Opinion ___ Disagree ___ Strongly Disagree
 9. **The City should plan for more rental housing, such as apartments**
___ Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ No Opinion ___ Disagree ___ Strongly Disagree
 10. **The City should plan for more housing for the senior citizens**
___ Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ No Opinion ___ Disagree ___ Strongly Disagree
-

11. **The City needs more commercial development**
___ Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ No Opinion ___ Disagree ___ Strongly Disagree

12. **New commercial development should be located near:** _____

13. **Neighborhood businesses (convenience store, video store, drug store, etc.) should be located closer to residential neighborhoods**
 ___ Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ No Opinion ___ Disagree ___ Strongly Disagree
14. **The City needs more industry to provide jobs and tax base**
 ___ Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ No Opinion ___ Disagree ___ Strongly Disagree
15. **New industry should be located near:** _____
16. **How would you rate the overall quality of the Bronson Community School District**
 ___ Excellent ___ Better Than Average ___ Average ___ Below Average ___ Terrible
17. **How would you improve the quality of the Bronson Community School District**

18. **On average, how many times per year do you or your family use the parks in Bronson**
 ___ Not at All ___ 1-6 Times ___ More Than 6 Times
19. **I (or your family) visit parks because of (check all that apply)**
 ___ Community events (festivals, concerts, etc.)
 ___ Park equipment or facilities (playgrounds, open fields, buildings, etc.)
 ___ Recreation programs offered (baseball, soccer, etc.)
20. **The City of Bronson should have a recreation department**
 ___ Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ No Opinion ___ Disagree ___ Strongly Disagree
21. **Please rank (1 through 10) the following items in order of importance to the quality of life in the City of Bronson, with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least important:**
 ___ Residential Development ___ Farmland ___ City Governmental Services
 ___ Commercial Development ___ Utilities ___ Streets/Roads
 ___ Industrial Development ___ Open Space ___ Parks/Recreation ___ Schools
22. **What do you like about Bronson:** _____

23. **What do you dislike about Bronson:** _____

24. **How would you improve the quality of life for all residents in Bronson?** _____

Ciudad de la Encuesta Sobre el Planeamiento de la Comunidad de Bronson

La ciudad de Bronson ha comenzado a poner al día su plan maestro de la comunidad por primera vez adentro sobre 30 años. Un aspecto importante de este esfuerzo es buscar las opiniones de los ciudadanos de Bronson sobre el crecimiento, el desarrollo, y la visión futura para la ciudad. Contestar por favor a las preguntas debajo de ésta reflejan lo más mejor posible tu opinión y vuelven la forma en el sobre estampado uno mismo-tratado incluido antes del **18 de Enero de 2007**. Si tienes cualesquiera preguntas, llamar por favor David O' Rourke, encargado de la ciudad, 369-7334. Tus respuestas serán mantenidas confidenciales. ¡Gracias!

1. **Tu Edad:** Debajo de 18 18-24 25-44 45-64 65 y excedente
 2. **Sexo:** Varón Hembra
 3. **Hacerte:** Poseer tu propio hogar Alquiler Otro: _____
 4. **¿Cuanto tiempo has vivido en la ciudad de Bronson?**
 0-5 años 6-10 años 11-20 años 21 años o más
 5. **¿Qué el número de los niños school-age está residiendo con ti?**
 Ninguno Uno Dos Tres Cuatro o más
-
6. **La ciudad debe animar un crecimiento más residencial**
 Convenir fuertemente Convenir Ninguna opinion Discrepar Discrepar fuertemente
 7. **La ciudad debe planear para hogares más unifamiliares**
 Convenir fuertemente Convenir Ninguna opinion Discrepar Discrepar fuertemente
 8. **La ciudad debe planear para hogares más manufacturados**
 Convenir fuertemente Convenir Ninguna opinion Discrepar Discrepar fuertemente
 9. **La ciudad debe planear para más hogares de alquiler, tal como apartamentos**
 Convenir fuertemente Convenir Ninguna opinion Discrepar Discrepar fuertemente
 10. **La ciudad debe planear para más hogares para los jubilados**
 Convenir fuertemente Convenir Ninguna opinion Discrepar Discrepar fuertemente
-
11. **La ciudad necesita un desarrollo más comercial**
 Convenir fuertemente Convenir Ninguna opinion Discrepar Discrepar fuertemente
 12. **El nuevo desarrollo comercial se debe localizar cerca:** _____

13. **Los negocios de la vecindad (almacén de conveniencia, almacén video, almacén de la droga, etcetera) se deben situar más cercano a vecindades residenciales**
 Convenir fuertemente Convenir Ninguna opinion Discrepar Discrepar fuertemente
14. **La ciudad necesita más industria proporcionar trabajos y la base de impuesto**
 Convenir fuertemente Convenir Ninguna opinion Discrepar Discrepar fuertemente
15. **La nueva industria se debe localizar cerca:** _____

16. **Cómo clasificarías la calidad total del distrito de la escuela de la comunidad de Bronson**
 Excelente Mejorar que promedio Promedio Debajo de promedio Terrible
17. **Cómo mejorarías la calidad del distrito de la escuela de la comunidad de Bronson**

18. **En promedio, cuántas veces por año haces uso tu o la familia los parques en Bronson**
 En absoluto 1-6 épocas Más de 6 veces
19. **I (o tu familia) parques de la visita debido a (comprobar todo el que aplicarte)**
 Acontecimientos de la comunidad (festivales, conciertos, etc.)
 Equipo o instalaciones del parque (patios, campos abiertos, edificios, etc.)
 Los programas de la reconstrucción ofrecieron (béisbol, fútbol, etc.)
20. **La ciudad de Bronson debe tener un departamento de la recreacion**
 Convenir fuertemente Convenir Ninguna opinion Discrepar Discrepar fuertemente
21. **Alinear por favor (1 a 10) los puntos siguientes en la orden de la importancia a la calidad de la vida en la ciudad de Bronson, con 1 que es el más importante y 10 siendo el lo más menos posible importante:**
 Desarrollo Residencial Espacio abierto Servicios gubernamentales de la ciudad
 Desarrollo Comercial Utilidades Calles/Caminos Escuelas
 Desarrollo Industrial Tierras de labrantío Parques/Reconstrucción
22. **Qué hacen tienes gusto sobre Bronson:** _____

23. **Qué tú tienen aversión sobre Bronson:** _____

24. **¿Cómo mejorarías la calidad de la vida para todos los residentes en Bronson?** _____

City of Bronson Community Planning Survey – Results

900 surveys distributed January 2007

265 surveys were returned

31% return rate, based on number of households (adjusted)

-
1. **Your Age:** 0.8% Under 18 1.9% 18-24 28.3% 25-44 39.6% 45-64 29.1% 65 and over
 2. **Sex:** 40.4% Male 57.0% Female
 3. **Do you:** 80.8% Own your own home 15.1% Rent 4.2% Other: 7 responded, summary of most popular responses: **business, live with parents, life lease, inheritance, land contract**
 4. **How long have you lived in the City of Bronson?**
16.6% 0-5 Years 12.1% 6-10 Years 16.2% 11-20 Years 54.7% 21 Years or more
 5. **What is the number of school-age children residing with you?**
66.0% None 11.7% One 12.8% Two 4.9% Three 3.4% Four or more
-
6. **The City should encourage more residential growth**
32.1% Strongly Agree 46.8% Agree 12.5% No Opinion 6.4% Disagree 1.9% Strongly Disagree
 7. **The City should plan for more single-family homes**
20.0% Strongly Agree 44.2% Agree 23.4% No Opinion 8.3% Disagree 2.6% Strongly Disagree
 8. **The City should plan for more manufactured homes**
5.7% Strongly Agree 25.3% Agree 36.6% No Opinion 21.1% Disagree 9.8% Strongly Disagree
 9. **The City should plan for more rental housing, such as apartments**
9.8% Strongly Agree 34.0% Agree 27.9% No Opinion 20.0% Disagree 6.4% Strongly Disagree
 10. **The City should plan for more housing for the senior citizens**
20.0% Strongly Agree 51.3% Agree 19.6% No Opinion 6.8% Disagree 1.1% Strongly Disagree
-
11. **The City needs more commercial development**
58.9% Strongly Agree 30.9% Agree 6.0% No Opinion 2.3% Disagree 1.1% Strongly Disagree
 12. **New commercial development should be located near:** 178 responded with one or more answers, summary of most popular responses: **present commercial development, along US-12, industrial park, downtown, McDonald's/Dollar General, city limits, center of town, anywhere**
 13. **Neighborhood businesses (convenience store, video store, drug store, etc.) should be located closer to residential neighborhoods**
18.5% Strongly Agree 37.0% Agree 23.0% No Opinion 16.6% Disagree 2.3% Strongly Disagree
 14. **The City needs more industry to provide jobs and tax base**
66.4% Strongly Agree 26.8% Agree 4.9% No Opinion 0.8% Disagree 0.8% Strongly Disagree
 15. **New industry should be located near:** 189 responded with one or more answers, summary of most popular responses: **present industry, industrial park, city limits, Matteson, east/west of town, north of town, anywhere**
 16. **How would you rate the overall quality of the Bronson Community School District**
10.2% Excellent 37.4% Better Than Average 36.2% Average 7.2% Below Average 2.3% Terrible
 17. **How would you improve the quality of the Bronson Community School District** 138 responded with one or more answers, summary of most popular responses: **split school (need high and junior high), cut back number of principals/assistant principals, more parent/community involvement, better teachers, college prep, more one-on-one attention, better communication between citizens, taxpayers, teachers, parents and school board**

18. **On average, how many times per year do you or your family use the parks in Bronson**
18.1% Not at All **44.2%** 1-6 Times **36.2%** More Than 6 Times
19. **I (or your family) visit parks because of (check all that apply)**
46.0% Community events (festivals, concerts, etc.)
63.4% Park equipment or facilities (playgrounds, open fields, buildings, etc.)
45.3% Recreation programs offered (baseball, soccer, etc.)
20. **The City of Bronson should have a recreation department**
21.1% Strongly Agree **38.5%** Agree **27.2%** No Opinion **9.1%** Disagree **2.6%** Strongly Disagree
21. **Please rank (1 through 10) the following items in order of importance to the quality of life in the City of Bronson, with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least important:**
Ranked by median, with the average ranking noted in parentheses. (The mode, the ranking value with the most observations (frequency), is noted in blue.)
- 2** Industrial Development (3.2) **1**
 - 3** Schools (3.3) **1**
 - 3** Commercial Development (3.9) **2**
 - 5** Streets/Roads (5.1) **5**
 - 5** Residential Development (5.2) **3**
 - 5** City Governmental Services (5.3) **5**
 - 6** Utilities (5.5) **8**
 - 6** Parks/Recreation (6.0) **8**
 - 9** Farmland (7.5) **10**
 - 9** Open Space (8.3) **10**
22. **What do you like about Bronson:** 232 surveys with responses. Common answers:
38.9% - Small town atmosphere **3.8%** - Low crime rate / safe
13.2% - The people **3.4%** - Programs / Activities / Events
9.4% - Quiet
7.9% - Everything (good place to live / raise family)
3.8% - Other (sample responses: affordability / cost of living, local business owners)
23. **What do you dislike about Bronson:** 222 surveys with responses. Common answers:
29.1% - Lack of / limited development **6.0%** - High taxes / utilities
8.3% - Limited job opportunities **4.9%** - Nothing (everything's good as is)
8.3% - Actions/decisions of city officials
7.2% - Lack of law enforcement (blighted areas, dwelling codes)
14.3% - Other (sample responses: low paying jobs, lack of community involvement, too many bars, no public transportation)
24. **How would you improve the quality of life for all residents in Bronson?** 197 surveys with responses.
Common answers:
26.4% - Encourage development **3.4%** - Recreational activities / programs
7.9% - More jobs **1.9%** - Housing
6.8% - Solve cultural differences / community teamwork (Spanish/English classes, broader community events)
5.7% - City Officials / Employees / Depts.
12.1% - Other (sample responses: more assistance for elderly, less bars, recycling program)