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Introduction

Purpose of the Master Plan

Planning is a process which involves the conscious selection of policy choices relating to land use, growth, and physical development of the community. The purpose of the Riga Township Master Plan is to state the goals and identify the policies and strategies regarding land use and development which the Township will pursue to attain those goals.

How Is the Plan to be Used?

The Master Plan is used in a variety of ways:

1. Most important, the Plan is a general statement of the Township's goals and policies and provides a single, comprehensive view of the community's desires for the future.
2. The Plan serves as an aid in daily decision-making. The goals and policies outlined in the Plan guide the Planning Commission, Township Board and other Township bodies in their deliberations on zoning, subdivision, capital improvements and other matters related to land use and development. The Plan provides a stable, long-term basis for decision-making providing for a balance of land uses specific to the character of Riga Township.
3. The Plan provides the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are made. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006 requires that the zoning ordinance be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety and general welfare. It is important to note that the Master Plan and accompanying maps do not replace other Township Ordinances, specifically the Zoning Ordinance and Map.

4. The Plan attempts to coordinate public improvements and private developments. For example, public investments such as road or sewer and water improvements should be located in areas identified in the Plan as resulting in the greatest benefit to the Township and its residents.
5. Finally, the Plan serves as an educational tool and gives citizens, property owners, developers and adjacent communities a clear indication of the Township's direction for the future.

In summation, the Riga Township Master Plan is the only officially adopted document which sets forth an agenda for the achievement of goals and policies. It is a long range statement of general goals and policies aimed at the unified and coordinated development of the Township of Riga which compliments the goals of nearby governmental units, wherever possible. It helps develop a balance of orderly change in a deliberate and controlled manner which permits controlled growth. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.

Historic Context

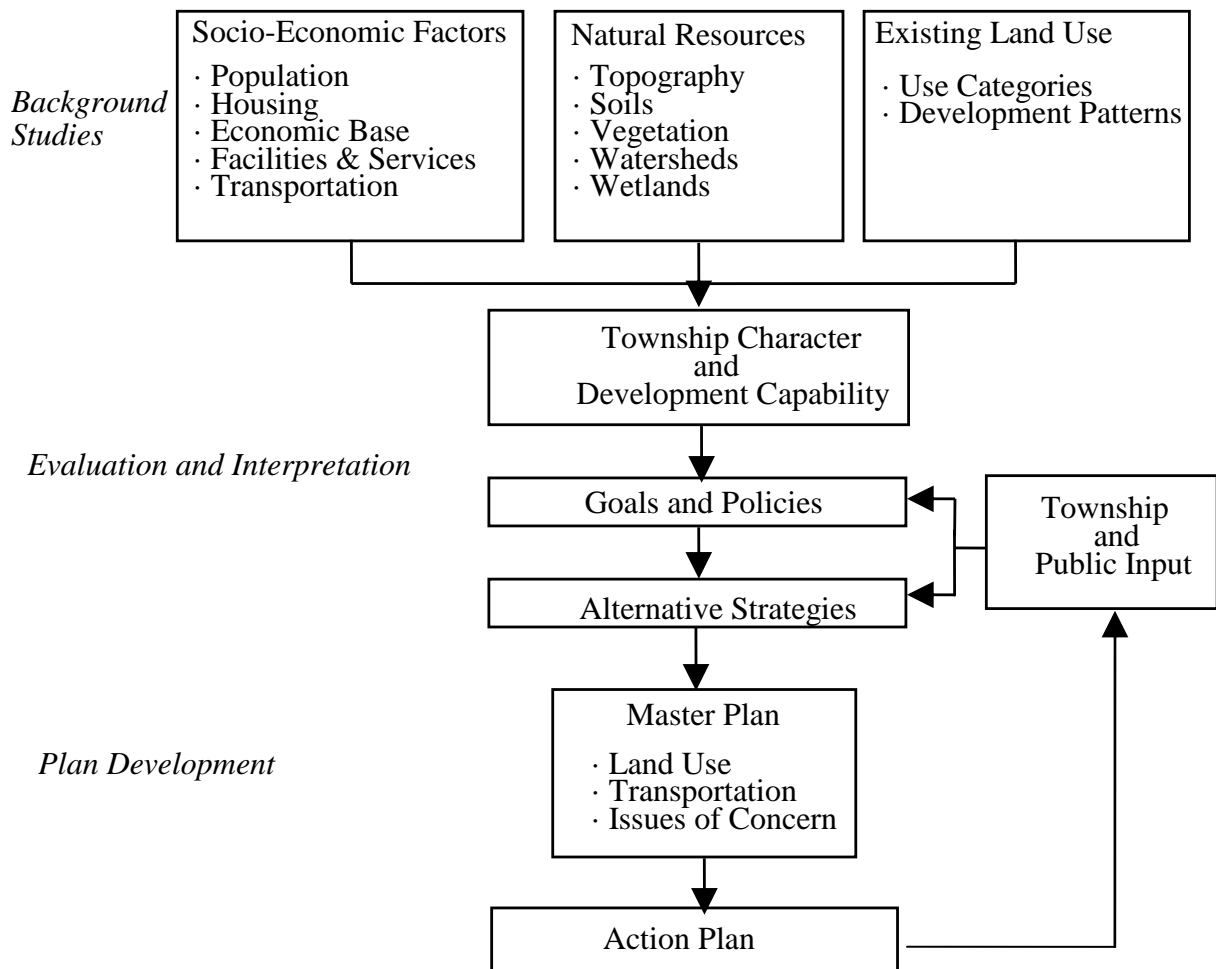
The original version of this document, adopted in August of 2003, represented a complete revision of the Riga Township Land Use Plan. The previous land use plan was prepared by the Lenawee County Planning Commission in February of 1974. Due to the time that had passed since the last plan was developed, it was apparent to Township Officials that a full revision was needed. The original document was amended in May 2004 and readopted without revision in October 2009. The current Master Plan was developed in part to ensure that development policies reflect current conditions in the Township.

Because communities are constantly changing, the information contained in a plan becomes outdated in time. As the conditions change, so do opportunities and expectations for the future. It is therefore essential to periodically update the information contained in the Master Plan as well as reevaluate its basic vision and implementation programs. State Legislation regarding Township Planning requires five (5) year reviews of the Master Plan.

Planning Process

The process used to generate the Plan consisted of four phases: background studies; evaluation of Township character and development capability; identification of goals, and policies; and plan development.

Background studies involving data inventory and analysis from Census data, existing reports, and field survey were gathered. Sound community planning cannot take place in a vacuum. Many factors which exist must be taken into account when formulating plans for the future. This process is illustrated in the following diagram.



Regional Setting

The need to consider the region surrounding the Township is of importance. Riga is surrounded primarily by rural communities with the exception of the Blissfield Village to the north. Appropriate planning across borders will help facilitate compatible land use patterns between communities.

Riga Township is located in southeastern Michigan on the eastern side of Lenawee County bordering the State of Ohio to the south. The unincorporated Riga Village is located in the north central portion of the Township. Blissfield Village, also within Lenawee County, is located just north of the northwest corner of Riga Township. Berkey Village, in Lucas County, Ohio, is located just south of Riga Township. The City of Adrian, also within Lenawee County, is ten (10) miles northwest of Riga Township and the City of Ann Arbor in Washtenaw County is approximately twenty-eight (28) miles northeast of the Township along the U.S. 23 corridor. The City of Toledo is located approximately ten (10) miles southeast of the Township.

U.S. 223 runs through the northeast corner of the Township, this is the main route connecting it to the surrounding region. U.S. 223 connects Riga to U.S. 23 to the east and from there to Toledo and Ann Arbor. This highway also connects the Township with the City of Adrian. The lack of a major transportation route through the Township contributes to the lack of development over the years.

Background Studies

II. BACKGROUND STUDIES

Prior to developing a Master Plan and Land Use Plan for Riga Township, a comprehensive inventory of cultural and natural resources must be conducted. Information gathered through this process is critical to the accurate projection of future development patterns and the establishment of management policies.

Population and Housing Summary

According to the 2010 Census, the population of Riga Township was 1,406. Over the thirty (30) year period between 1980 and 2010 the Township has lost two hundred sixty-five (265) people or 15.9% of the total population. Between 1980 and 1990 the Township lost 12% of the population, from 1990 to 2000 it lost 2.2% and from 2000 to 2010 it lost 2.3% of the total.

Year	Population	# Change	% Change
1980	1671	-	-
1990	1471	-200	-12.0%
2000	1439	-32	-2.2%
2010	1406	-33	-2.3%
Total change 1970-2000		-265	-15.9%

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census)

The loss of population runs opposite county trends, as a whole Lenawee County's population grew 11.1% between 1980 and 2010. However, like Riga Township, the populations of most surrounding Townships have declined. Ogden Township experienced a substantial population loss during the thirty (30) year period, a decline of 20.5%. Deerfield Township has declined 13.2% in population. Blissfield Township has remained steady with a gain of 0.6% of the total population. Of the surrounding communities, only Blissfield Village experienced decent growth, increasing 7.5% in population between 1980 and 2010.

Table 2
Riga Township and Surrounding Communities Population Growth
1980 - 2010

	1980	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1980-2010
Riga Township	1671	1471	1439	1406	-15.9%
Ogden Township	1224	1146	1063	973	-20.5%
Blissfield Village	3107	3172	3233	3340	+7.5%
Blissfield Township	637	645	682	641	+0.6%
Deerfield Township	772	722	765	670	-13.2%
Whiteford Township, Monroe County	4660	4433	4420	4602	-1.2%
Berkey Village, Lucas County, Ohio	NA	264	265	237	NA
Lenawee County	89948	91476	98890	99892	+11.1%

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

Table 3 breaks down population by age group for Riga Township, Lenawee County and the State including median age for each. In general, according to the 2010 Census, Riga Township has slightly less percentages of persons in the younger category, under 18 years, than the County or State. The Township has greater percentages of persons in the older category, 65 years and over, than the County or State.

Of interest, in Table 3, is the comparison of median age. Riga Township, Lenawee County and the State have all experienced an increase in median age between 2000 and 2010. In addition Riga Township had a noticeably older median age than the County or State in 2010.

Table 3
General Population and Age Characteristics
Riga Township, Lenawee County, State of Michigan

	Riga Township			Lenawee County		State of Michigan	
	1990	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Population	1,471	1,439	1,406	98,890	99,892	9,938,444	9,883,640
Median Age	35	39.2	42.5	36.4	40	35.5	38.9
Under 18 years	403	391	321	25,658	23,128	2,595,767	2,344,068
Percent of Total	27.4%	27.2%	22.8%	25.9%	23.2%	26.1%	23.7%
65 years and over	201	202	206	12,523	14,580	1,219,018	1,361,530
Percent of Total	13.7%	14.0%	14.7%	12.7%	14.6%	12.3%	13.8%

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

As indicated in Tables 3 and 4, in general, it is evident that the population is:

- Declining in number. Population decreased 15.9% over the last thirty (30) years.
- Aging. The average age is increasing (35 in 1990, 42.5 in 2010). The 45 - 64 year age group had the highest percentage of total population with 23.2% of the total.
- Decreasing per household. Persons per housing unit has decreased from 2.75 in 2000 to 2.71 in 2010.

In general, the following is true regarding housing and income according to the 2010 Census:

- Single-family detached units is the leading type of housing.
- Married couple households represent the majority of all households.
- The majority of housing is owner occupied at 86.5% of all housing.
- Most homes in the Township have a value of over \$100,000.
- Per capita income is the lowest of the surrounding Townships and is substantially lower than the County as a whole and the State average but the household income is the highest in the area and higher than the County as a whole and the State.
- Persons per household has declined with population approximately 0.23 persons per household since 1980, but has changed little between 2000 and 2010. The

persons per household is similar to most of the surrounding households, but high compared to Blissfield Village and the State as a whole.

Table 4
2000/2010 Riga Township General Housing Characteristics
 (source: U.S. Census)

HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE

	2010
Total Households	518
Family households	398
Married couple HH	340
Percent of total	85.4%
Non-family household	120
Percent of total	23.2%
Householder living alone	100
Living alone and 65+	46
Persons in households	1,406
Persons per household	2.71

UNITS IN STRUCTURE

	2010
1 unit, detached	533
1 unit, attached	0
2 to 4 units	0
5 to 9 units	0
10 or more units	0
Mobile homes	10

VALUE OF OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS

	2010
Specified owner-occupied units	477
Less than \$50,000	7
\$50,000 to 99,999	90
100,000 to 149,999	105
150,000 or more	105
Median value	\$158,100

HOUSING UNITS & OCCUPANCY

	2010
Total Units	555
Occupied Units	518
Owner Occupied Units	448
Percent Owner Occupied	86.5%
Renter Occupied Units	70
Vacant housing units	37
Owner vacancy rate	0.7%
Renter vacancy rate	1.4%
Persons per owned unit	2.69
Persons per rented unit	2.87

CONTRACT RENT

	2010
Specified renter-occupied units	38
Less than \$200	0
\$200 to 299	0
300 to 499	3
500 to 749	18
750 or more	17
No Cash Rent	7
Median rent	680

American Community Survey (ACS)

**Table 5
Riga Township
Population Distribution by Age Group 2010**

	Persons	%
0-4 years	60	4.3%
5-14 years	205	14.6%
15-19 years	102	7.3%
20-34 years	201	14.3%
35-44 years	179	12.7%
45-64 years	326	23.2%
65+ years	206	14.7%

(source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

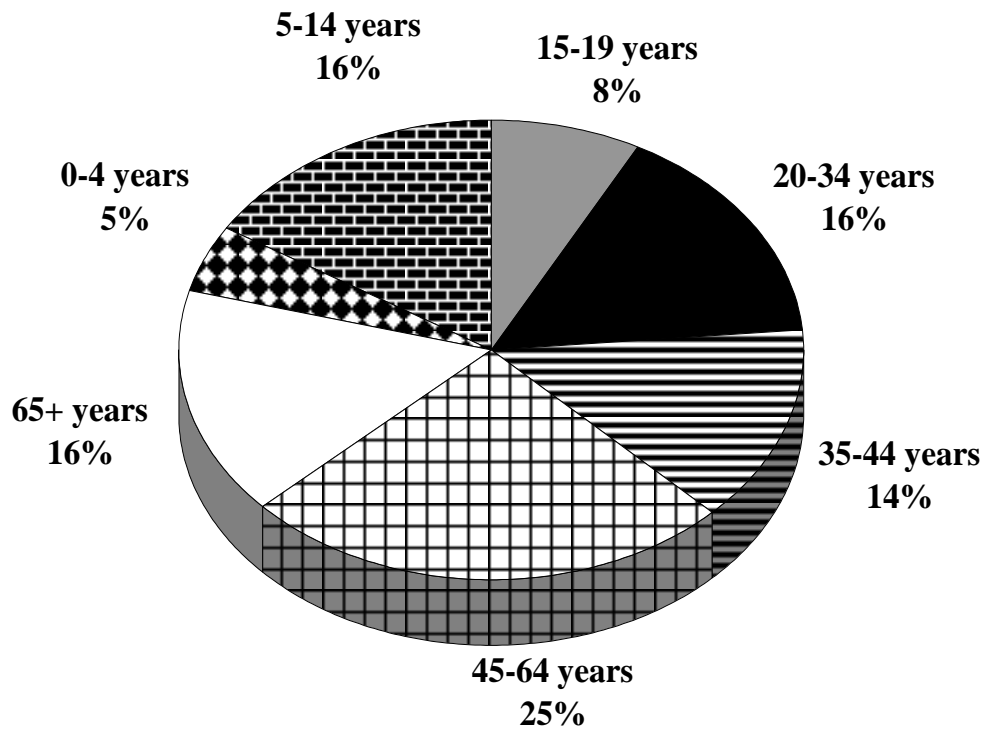


Table 6 provides per capita and household income for Riga Township and other adjacent communities. Household income includes the income of the householder and all other persons fifteen (15) years old and over in the household, whether related to the householder or not. As seen from the table, household income in Riga Township is higher than all surrounding communities, the County as a whole, and the State of Michigan.

Table 6 2010 Per Capita and Household Income - Riga Township and Surrounding Communities		
Community	Per Capita Income	Household Income
Riga Township	\$21,750	\$67,679
Ogden Township	\$43,214	\$56,750
Blissfield Village	\$22,800	\$41,410
Blissfield Township	\$22,471	\$41,121
Deerfield Township	\$36,154	\$53,977
Whiteford Township, Monroe County	\$24,583	\$54,457
Lenawee County	\$29,179	\$48,618
State of Michigan	\$28,344	\$48,432

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

Note: Household income derived by multiplying per capita income by persons per household.

In general, the number of persons per household has decreased over the years throughout the nation. This is reflected in the changes that have occurred in Riga Township as well as each of Riga’s neighboring communities (the Village of Blissfield and Blissfield Township are the only exceptions).

A more dramatic indication of the reduction in household size can be seen when comparing the 1980 figure to the 2010 figure. In 1980, there were 3.36 persons per household as compared to 2.71 in 2010. The decrease in household size has a relationship to the decrease in overall population as it relates to occupied housing. While population has decreased over the years, total housing units have remained relatively consistent. A decline in population does not then necessarily correspond to a decline in total housing units.

**Table 7
Persons Per Household for Riga Township and
Surrounding Communities 2000-2010**

	2000	2010
Riga Township	2.80	2.71
Ogden Township	2.79	2.59
Blissfield Village	2.44	2.48
Blissfield Township	2.49	2.51
Deerfield Township	2.97	2.67
Whiteford Township, Monroe County	2.79	2.62
Lenawee County	2.75	2.52
State of Michigan	2.63	2.49

(Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

Population and Housing Unit Projections

The projections of population, housing units and facility requirements, in spite of the limitations of the projection process, form important elements in the preparation of the Master Plan. Regardless of the method used, projections take past trends and make estimates into the future using those trends. Population projections can not take into account unforeseen events which may have an effect on future population (i.e., technology changes, etc.). Projections indicate the magnitude of change a community can reasonably expect to face as well as those elements in the communities structure likely to require expansion or replacement.

Population and housing projections are shown in Tables 7 and 8. The projections used are average growth rate and number of housing units. Each projection method is illustrated in Table 8.

The average growth rate method indicates a steadily declining population to the year 2030.

Table 8 indicates the housing unit projections occupancy trends.

Table 8
Population and Housing Units Projections
Riga Township, Lenawee County

<u>Year</u>	<u>Average Growth Rate</u>	<u>Housing Units</u>
2000	1439	543
2010	1406	555
2020	1373	567
2030	1340	579

Average Growth Rate is based on average population change in ten (10) year intervals from 1980 to 2010. Since 1980, the Township has lost on average, eighty-eight (88) persons every ten (10) years.

Unless population trends change substantially during the next ten (10) to twenty (20) years, Table 8 indicates that additional or new areas set aside for residential purposes will not be needed, since the total number of housing units is projected to remain somewhat steady or incline over the next twenty years.

Natural Resources Inventory and Capability

The natural environment of Riga Township offers both opportunities and limitations on the type and extent of future development. Certain areas are unsuitable for septic systems, unstable for building foundations, poorly drained and susceptible to flooding. While these factors place restrictions upon development, other natural resource factors present opportunities for development. The rural attractiveness of the Township offers a pleasant residential setting.

It is helpful to examine these natural resource factors in detail to determine both the opportunities and constraints to future development. This examination involves an inventory of resource factors, and a determination of the capability of the natural resource base to support future development.

Soils

Riga Township is served by a very limited amount of sanitary sewer. Sanitary sewer serves a small area within the Township in the unincorporated Village of Riga. The balance of the Township relies on individual septic systems for sewage disposal. Because of the reliance of septic systems in the Township, soils become a determining element in the location of future land uses. Land uses which produce large volumes of sewage are not compatible with septic systems (i.e., large multi-family residential development and heavy industrial uses).

In order to minimize construction costs and risks to the environment, it is desirable for future development to be constructed upon sites with suitable soils. Poor soils present problems such as poor foundation stability and septic field failure. The three (3) major soil characteristics considered in the analysis of soil conditions are drainage, foundation stability, and septic suitability.

The soils of Riga Township are mainly clay loams, silty clays and clays that create severe limitations on the development of septic fields and building foundations. These soils have poor drainage and shrink-swell properties. Only in the northwest corner of the Township (Sections 5 and 6), by the Village of Blissfield, do the soils create only slight to moderate limitations on the construction of foundations. With regard to agriculture, the soils are well suited with only slight to moderate limitations on this use.

Groundwater

Riga Township is located in the glacial lake basin of Lake Erie. Glacial lake deposits are clays and clay mixtures over shale deposits. According to Township officials previous well-boring attempts indicate that the shale underlying the Township is so tight and dense that it is difficult to create a well that provides an adequate water supply for virtually any land use.

Riga Township relies primarily on private wells for drinking water, but there is limited municipal water available. As a result, the difficulty in creating productive wells is a significant constraint on development. The protection of groundwater from sources of contamination is of paramount importance in Riga Township. Groundwater protection can come in the form of a variety of Zoning regulations and also through community education programs. Groundwater protection will be discussed in more detail in the Action Plan section of the Master Plan.

Woodlands

The Township is dominated by large expanses of agricultural lands and scattered forested areas. According to the Land Cover map prepared by the MDNR, the forested areas consist primarily of broadleaved forest (generally deciduous) in scattered wood lots throughout the Township. Map 1: Natural Features, provides the locations of these forested areas.

Wetlands, Floodplains and Waterways

Currently the Township relies on the Wetlands Protection Act for the regulation and preservation of wetlands. The Wetlands Protection Act 203 of 1979 was developed by the State of Michigan to institute stringent rules for any development within wetland areas. The Act regulates; filling, draining, dredging and construction within any wetland area. Wetland soils have a frequent presence of water saturation. They also contain heavy concentration of organic material such as peat, marl and decomposed vegetation. These soils are unsuitable for development but are important for supporting wetland vegetation and fish and wildlife habitat. They are also valuable for filtering sediment out of groundwater run off, and as natural stormwater detention basins.

The Township contains an extensive surface drainage system made up of a few small streams, several intermittent streams and many manmade drainage ditches (Map 1). This system removes water from the surrounding lands that would otherwise remain fairly wet due to shallow grades and heavy soils. The north half of the Township drains generally to the north, to the River Raisin System. The majority of the south half of the Township drains to the Big Ravine Creek which then drains to the south to Ohio.

Map 1: Natural Features

Circulation

The Michigan Department of Transportation identifies four (4) separate classifications of roads in Riga Township: rural principal arterial, rural major collector, rural minor collector, and local streets and roads.

These classifications are taken from the National Functional Classification (NFC) as developed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The FHWA developed this system as a means of classifying all streets, roads and highways according to their function.

“At the top of the NFC hierarchical system are principal arterials, roads whose primary function is to carry relatively long distance, through-travel movements and/or to service important traffic generators (such as major airports or regional shopping centers). Minor arterials are similar in function to principal arterials, with the trips carried being of shorter distance and to lesser traffic generators. Typically, collectors provide more access to property than do arterials. Collectors also funnel traffic from residential or rural areas to arterials. Local roads have the primary function of providing access to property, such as in residential neighborhoods or rural areas.

The NFC designation of a given road determines whether it is a federal-aid road. Federal-aid roads are eligible for federal-aid, either as part of the National Highway System (usually limited to principal arterials) or through the Surface Transportation Program (STP). Federal-aid roads are, collectively: all principal arterials, all minor arterials, all urban collectors and all rural major collectors. If a road has a NFC designation of rural minor collector or urban or rural local, then it is not a federal-aid road and it is not eligible for federal-aid.” (Source: National Functional Classification: How Its Used in Michigan, Susan Danielson.)

The only principal arterial within Riga is the section of US 223 that cuts across the northeast corner of the Township (Map 2). This connects to the City of Adrian and Blissfield Village to the northwest and US 23 to the east. Rodesiler Highway, East Yankee Road east of Berkey Highway, Berkey Highway between East Yankee and Mulberry Roads, and Mulberry Road west of Berkey Highway are classified as rural major collectors. Berkey Highway north of Mulberry Road, Weston Road west of Riga Highway, Riga Highway north of East Yankee Road, Ottawa Lake Road between Riga Highway and Rodesiler Highway, Stadler Road east of Riga Highway, and County Line Highway between Stadler and US 223 are all classified as rural minor collectors. The remainder of the roads in Riga are classified as local roads under the NFC system.

The Lenawee County Road Commission has authority over all roads within the Township and has responsibility over maintenance (including snow plowing) repair and construction. New road construction and maintenance issues must be coordinated through the County Road Commission.

Map 2: NFC system

Existing Land Use

Existing land use for the Township is illustrated in Map 3. This map classifies areas within the Township into the following land use categories:

- Agricultural
- Residences in Agricultural
- Parks
- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public/Semi-Public

The predominant land use within the Township is agriculture followed by residential, industrial, and commercial land uses. The most intensive areas of development are near the unincorporated Village of Riga. Pockets of low density residential development are scattered along many of the township roads.

The Existing Zoning in the Township was established in “The Zoning Ordinance of Riga Township”. The bulk of the Township is zoned agricultural, with a small area of commercial and residential zoning in the area of the Village of Riga. This current zoning is shown in Map 4. The area around the Village of Riga is within the local water and sewer service area (Map 5). This is significant because without municipal sewer and water service the soil limitations to septic fields and wells described in the Natural Resources section would prevent any significant density of development, which is reflected in the current zoning for the Township.

Map 3 :Existing Land Use

Map 4: Existing Zoning

Map 5: Sewer Service Area

Goals and Policies

III. GOALS AND POLICIES

Goals and policies formulated by the community establish the framework for public and private decision-making. Goals reflect the broadest of human needs and establish the desired end results of the planning process for the health, welfare and safety of the Township residents.

While goals tend to be general in nature, policies set forth a particular approach or position to be taken when resolving a planning issue. Clearly defined statements of policy can go far to minimize arbitrary decisions and substantiate intelligent, objective decisions. Policies broaden the scope of the Master Plan beyond just a series of maps. Goals and policies which are directed to improving the quality, comfort and vitality of our lives and our community should remain valid and provide a consistent standard for the continuing planning process. The following goals and policy statements can provide the basis for wise and consistent public decisions for future development proposals in Riga Township. The following general master plan goals were established:

GOALS

The following statements reflect the primary goals of the Township:

- The Township shall strive to maintain the rural residential and agricultural character which contributes to making the Township a desirable place to live, work, and play.
- The Township shall plan future land uses to be compatible with the natural characteristics, and the long-term needs of the community. New development shall be well-planned, complement existing development, and be located only where the land is capable of supporting it.
- The Township shall foster the agricultural opportunities within its boundaries for residents.

- The Township shall promote economic growth opportunities and job creation, which are complementary to existing conditions within the Township.
- The Township is to encourage cooperation with the Village of Blissfield and bordering Townships in an effort to promote complimentary rather than competing land use decisions.
- The Township shall seek to improve governmental services, particularly in the areas of roads and recreational facilities.

Agricultural Goal

The Township shall maintain the rural character and preserve the local characteristics that contribute to a viable, stable, agricultural industry. It shall be the Township's responsibility to encourage the retention of farmland in agricultural production and encourage new economic opportunities within the agricultural community. It is a primary goal of Riga Township to maintain its agricultural heritage, culture, and way of life.

Policies

- 1) The Township shall identify prime agricultural lands and prime agricultural soils for the concentration of farmland preservation efforts.
- 2) The Township shall discourage non-agricultural development of important farm lands through the Master Land Use Plan and Zoning Map.
- 3) The Township shall promote the enrollment of Public Act 116, Farmland Agreements, Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Conservation Easements, or other means to maintain the viability of agriculture and open space in the community.

- 4) In meeting the above policy, the Township will consider adopting a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Ordinance in an effort to enroll properties into this program.
- 5) The Township strongly discourages the extension of municipal sewer and water into prime farmland areas. Expansion of the system outside of the existing municipal sewer and water service area as depicted in Map 5 is not anticipated or recommended.

Residential Goal

To guide the development of the Township in a manner which will create, preserve and enhance the living environment of the existing and future residential areas of the community.

Policies

- 1) Promote the development of a variety of housing types and residential living environments based on a sound balance within the community.
- 2) Promote quality single-family housing at a low density in the area outside the Village which will maintain the rural character of the community.
- 3) Medium and High density residential development should only be planned for areas where it is likely that the Village of Riga sewer system can be extended.
- 4) Encourage a high percentage of home ownership and permanent housing types.
- 5) Restrict multi-family residential districts and mobile home parks to locations which have direct access to principal arterials (as identified) and sewer and water facilities.

- 6) Discourage haphazard lot splits which result in long narrow parcels or parcels with substantial amounts of undeveloped land to the rear unless the low density residential development is consistent with other standards and ordinances of the community. A maximum lot length to lot width ratio of 4:1 is now required by the State of Michigan.
- 7) Propose only low density land uses in areas where natural resource conditions are least capable of supporting development.
- 8) Propose moderate density residential uses in areas where the natural resources or infrastructure are capable of supporting such development.
- 9) Review the Zoning Ordinance to consider providing a range of residential lot sizes and agricultural uses.

Natural Resource Goal

The protection of water resources and woodlands is essential to preserve water quality, to stabilize stormwater runoff, recharge groundwater, and maintenance of the Township's aesthetic qualities.

Policies

- 1) The Township shall promote efforts to preserve and improve natural vegetation buffers around watercourses (streams and drainageways) to reduce erosion, cleanse stormwater and promote groundwater recharge.
- 2) The Township shall review all proposed development in light of potential impact upon waterways, wetlands, woodlands and natural resource areas, and groundwater.

- 3) The Township shall promote preservation of the balance of woodlands, watercourses and open spaces in the Township that creates the rural/agricultural aesthetic which is central to the community's character.

Economic Development Goal

Riga Township shall promote quality, job producing economic development and revitalization within the Township.

Policies

- 1) Provide adequate zoning, and infrastructure for the expansion of agriculturally based industry and needed commercial developments.
- 2) Provide job opportunities for local residents through economic expansion.
- 3) Investigate improvements to the commercial segments of the Village for job creation and improved retail services.
- 4) Discourage the introduction of new commercial development beyond the scope outlined in the Township Master Plan.
- 5) US 223 in Riga Township presents potential for highway-oriented commercial uses. Uses should be ones which serve the traveling public and/or meet the needs of Township residents.

Government Services Goal

Provide for timely and efficient governmental services providing quality service to Township residents.

Policies

- 1) Coordinate road improvements with the County Road Commission. Encourage the County to initiate road improvement projects in key areas.
- 2) Consider improved traffic control measures.
- 3) Consider continued maintenance and upgrades to the Township park. Expand park to include a paved walking trail with exercise stations and improve tennis courts, basket ball court, baseball fields, soccer field, playground, etc.
- 4) Coordinate capital facilities for benefit of residents and public safety including fire, rescue, and EMS facilities. Coordination should occur across governmental lines to encourage cooperation and infrastructure sharing between jurisdictions.
- 5) Coordinate township wide high-speed internet service.

Master Plan

Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan for Riga Township proposes future development patterns in a time frame of the next ten (10) to fifteen (15) years. Specific land use categories are identified and incorporated in graphic form as depicted in the Future Land Use Plan. The following section describes the intent of each category in written form.

The Land Use Plan is based on consideration of a number of factors as outlined in the preceding pages. Such factors include:

- Population Projections
- Roadway Access and Adequacy
- Availability of Utilities
- Compatible Uses
- Community Goals and Objectives
- Citizen Opinions
- Existing Land Use
- Existing Zoning
- Review of Natural Features including soils evaluation

Agriculture

The predominant land use category within Riga Township is the Agricultural category. With the exception of the north central portion of the Township (served by municipal sewer and water) the entire Township is found within this category. These lands incorporate many parcels of large lots containing over forty (40) or eighty (80) acres. These lands are important in order to preserve the rural character of Riga Township as well as to preserve the economic mainstay for the

agricultural economy. The designation of agriculture recognizes the importance of existing farmlands and the maintenance of established rural agricultural activities.

The designation of these agricultural lands is based upon several considerations. These considerations include existence of large agricultural parcels (greater than forty (40) acres), contractual arrangements under Public Act 116, farmlands under active farm production and natural features constraints including poor soils and inadequate potable water for residential purposes.

The primary use of these areas is that of agricultural production and associated uses. For residential purposes the densities for agricultural lands are recommended as a minimum 20 acre lot size for one (1) dwelling unit. The large lot size is recommended in order to discourage haphazard lot splits and is also designed to help protect the rural character of the Township. To this end, rampant lot splits along prime road frontage are discouraged. It is further intended that the areas maintain an agricultural characteristic.

Residential

Residential land use incorporates proposed residential uses at an average density of 1/3 acre to one (1) acre per residential unit. A maximum of three (3) dwelling units per acre would be allowed within this area. The Residential areas are planned only for those areas with access to municipal sewer and water service. Higher residential densities are warranted within these areas and will provide areas of future residential growth and tax base for the Township.

Map 6 Land Use Plan

Map 7 Village Area Land Use Plan

Neighborhood Service Commercial

The mixed use designation is proposed in order to create a dynamic environment in which a variety of activities that may be mutually supportive can be permitted. The type of uses envisioned will include residential, commercial, office, business support services, research, and public facilities.

In certain instances, high density residential use may be permitted as either infill projects or as a part of a larger development scheme. The mixed-use area primarily encompasses unincorporated Village of Riga.

It is anticipated that uses within the Neighborhood Service Commercial area will require municipal sewer and water.

Desirable land uses and elements of the Mixed Use category are:

- A mix of residences, housing types and costs.
- Commercial and office/research uses.
- A Neighborhood Service Commercial as described in the next paragraph.

The intent of the Neighborhood Service Commercial is to provide a focal point for the community. The Neighborhood Service Commercial is an area planned to be the core of the community or the community's focus. This area is centrally located along Riga Highway. The Neighborhood Service Commercial is intended to be the most identifiable aspect of the Township providing an activity center which unifies the community and which would become the image of the community as a whole.

Commercial

Commercial uses are proposed along US 223 from Riga Highway to Tagsold Highway. The commercial is intended to primarily serve residents within the immediate area. The proposed land uses would include a mixture of retail, office and service uses. As the only principal arterial within the Township, it would also be anticipated that commercial uses within this district may also serve those traveling along US 223.

Light Industrial

The Light Industrial district is intended to encourage the location of clean industries which will have a minimal impact upon surrounding properties. Industries which have the potential for groundwater contamination or which create excessive noise or smoke are discouraged.

Industrial

The intent of the Industrial designation is to provide locations within Riga Township for industrial operations that may produce moderate effects or impacts on adjacent properties, i.e. noise, odors, traffic, and storage of materials. Uses are categorized as needing larger tracts of land, and may include outdoor storage of materials if properly screened.

Extensive landscape buffering and setbacks are intended in areas that abut less intensive uses especially residential lands uses in an effort to minimize any negative impacts.

Public/Semi-Public

Public and semi-public land uses include areas containing such uses as churches, cemeteries, public and private schools, fraternal organizations and governmental and public safety buildings. This would include the Township Hall/fire department and park.

Action Plan

V. ACTION PLAN

The Master Plan for Riga Township is only worthwhile if it can be effectively implemented. Implementation is achieved through a variety of ordinances and capital improvements carefully coordinated by the Township Board. This implementation will require a commitment by the Township Board of both financial resources and a commitment towards policy implementation. The following is a summary of implementation practices through ordinance enforcement and capital improvement projects which should be pursued by the Riga Township Board.

Zoning Ordinance

One of the most effective ways of implementing the Master Plan and its recommended land use policies is through the Township's Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance represents day to day tools to enact the adopted policies as represented in the Master Plan. The Zoning Ordinance establishes minimum lot sizes, setbacks and land use classifications. It is the most effective tool to implement adopted land use policies, and therefore must be current and accurately reflect the goals and wishes of the Township.

A preliminary review of the Township's Zoning Ordinance identifies opportunities which should be based on future growth patterns. These amendments to the Zoning Ordinance include the following:

- Create a new mobile home park district. The district should be designated.
- Amend the Residential District RA to have a minimum lot size of one third (1/3) acre.
- Revise the Neighborhood Service district to be a more general local commercial district that includes office as a permitted use.

- The Township's Zoning Ordinance should also be updated to contain the most current land use planning regulations pertaining to mobile home parks, junk yard and storage areas. These provisions should be updated to minimize blighted areas within the Township and improve the residential setting.
- The Township does not currently contain any provisions for the regulation of site condominiums. This type of amendment should be incorporated within the Township's Zoning Ordinance in order to properly regulate the development of site condominiums.

Subdivision Control Regulations

Another means to control and implement the Master Plan is through the Township's Subdivision Ordinance. This Ordinance should be reviewed to determine the adequacy and governing and controlling Township residential growth.

Special Purpose Ordinances

Control of land use activities need not be confined to the Zoning Ordinance. Special purpose ordinances which should be considered by Riga Township, would include the following:

- Environmental Impact Study
- Buffer Zone Ordinances
- Light Ordinance
- Odor Ordinance

Capital Improvements

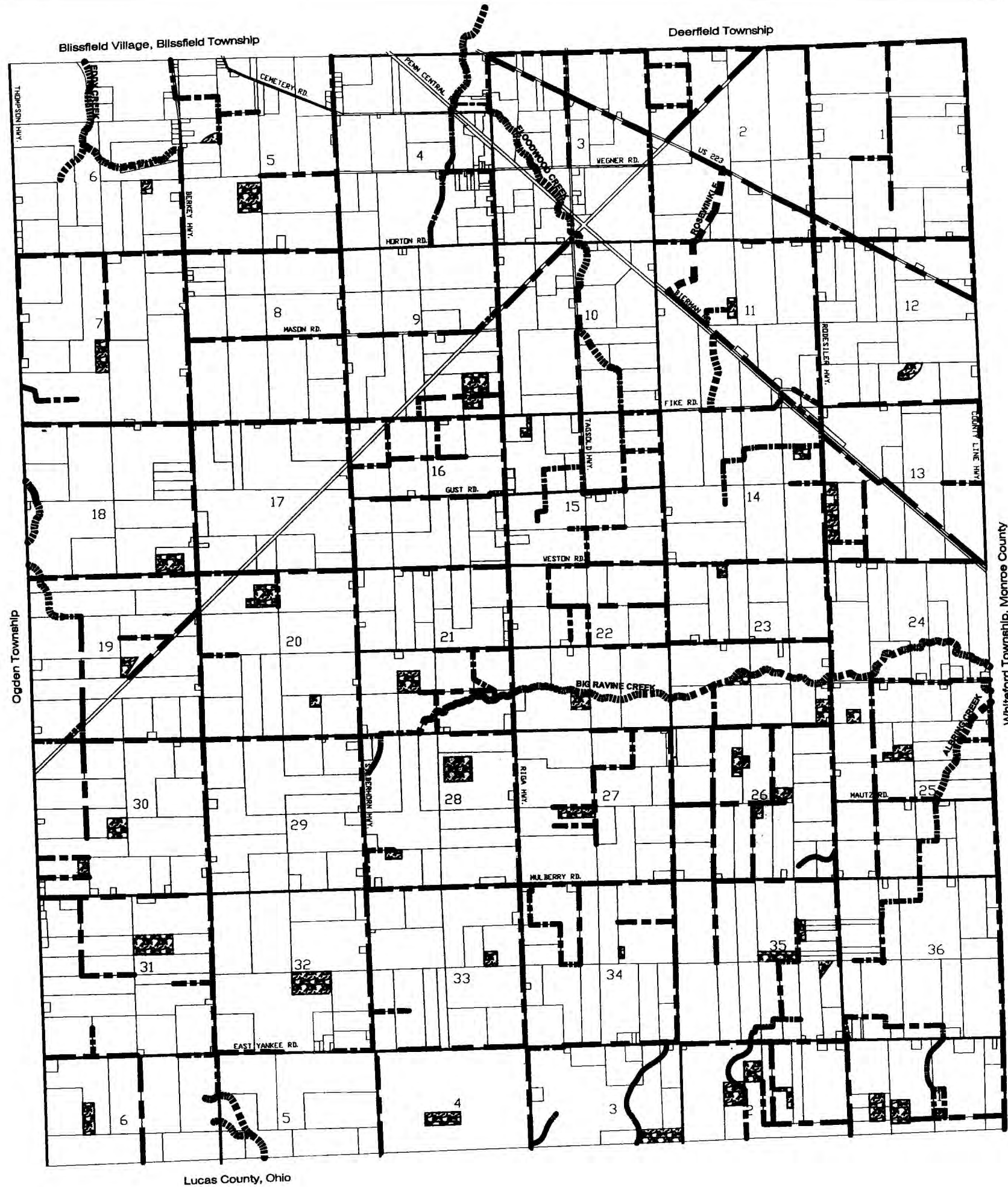
The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (2008 MCL 125.3801, et seq) authorizes municipal master plans and the creation of a municipal planning commission. Once a Planning Commission has made and adopted a Master Plan, in whole or in part, the act requires that all public works occurring within the municipality be submitted to the Planning Commission for approval of the project. This would include such items such as sanitary sewers, water lines, road improvements, bridge improvements, etc. These public works and capital improvement projects must be coordinated and reviewed for consistency with the Master Plan. Obviously, these types of improvements will impact future land use development and therefore must be coordinated with the Planning Commission.

Master Plan Education

Citizen involvement and support will be necessary as the Plan is implemented. Local officials should constantly strive to develop procedures which make citizens more aware of the planning process and the day to day decision making which affects implementation of the Plan. A continuous program of discussion, education and participation will be extremely important as the Township moves towards realization of the goals and objectives contained within the Master Plan.

Plan Updates

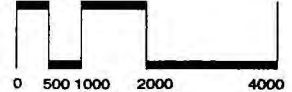
The Plan should not become a static document. The Township Planning Commission should attempt to re-evaluate and update portions of it on an annual basis. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008 requires that within five (5) years of adoption of the Master Plan, the Planning Commission must review the plan and determine whether to commence the procedure to amend the plan, or to adopt a new plan. The Master Plan should also be coordinated with the Township's Recreation Plan in order to provide proper long-range planning for recreation improvements.



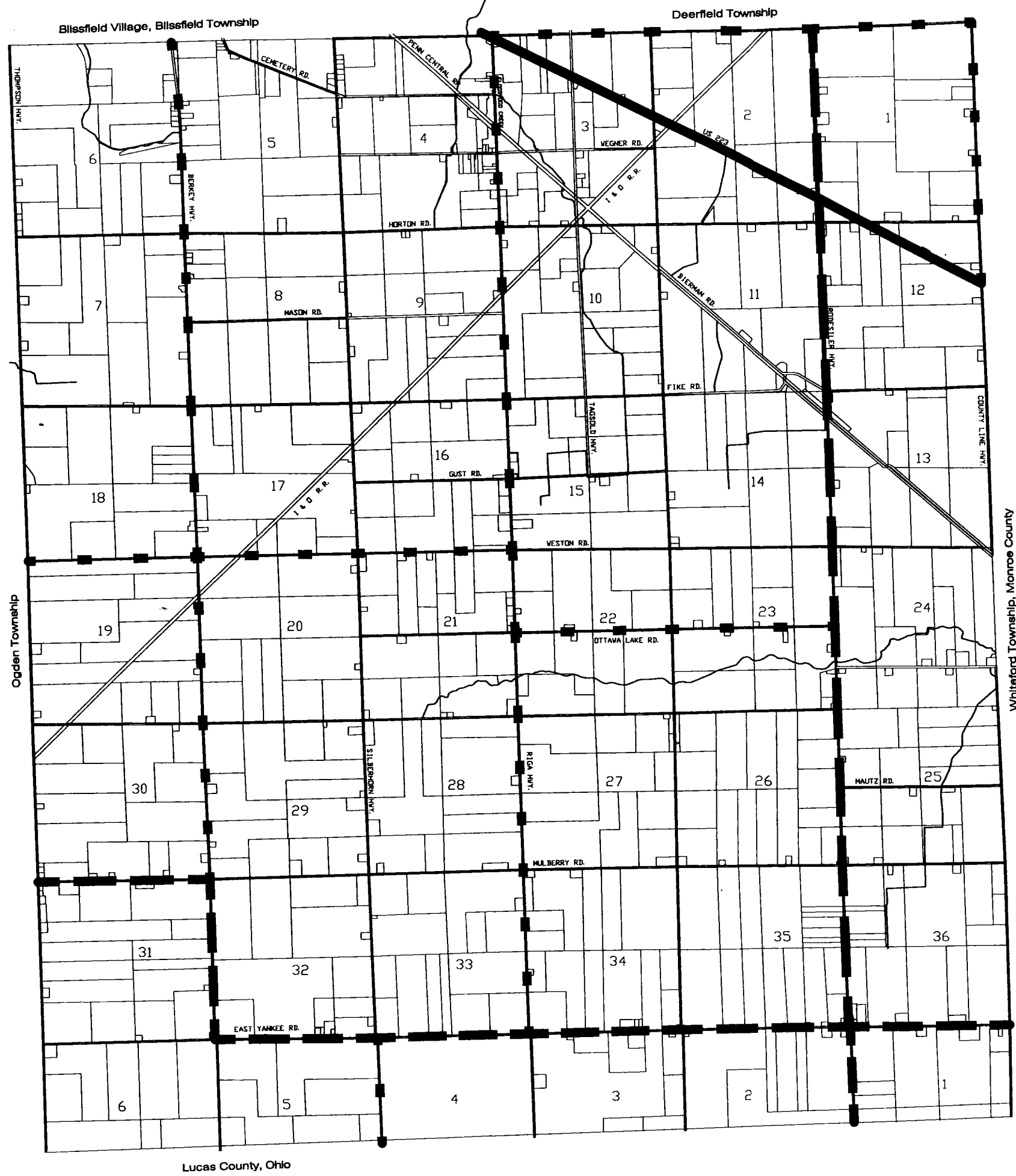
LEGEND

-  Existing Woodlots
-  Creeks
-  Drains

Map 1: Natural Features
Township of Riga
Lenawee County, Michigan



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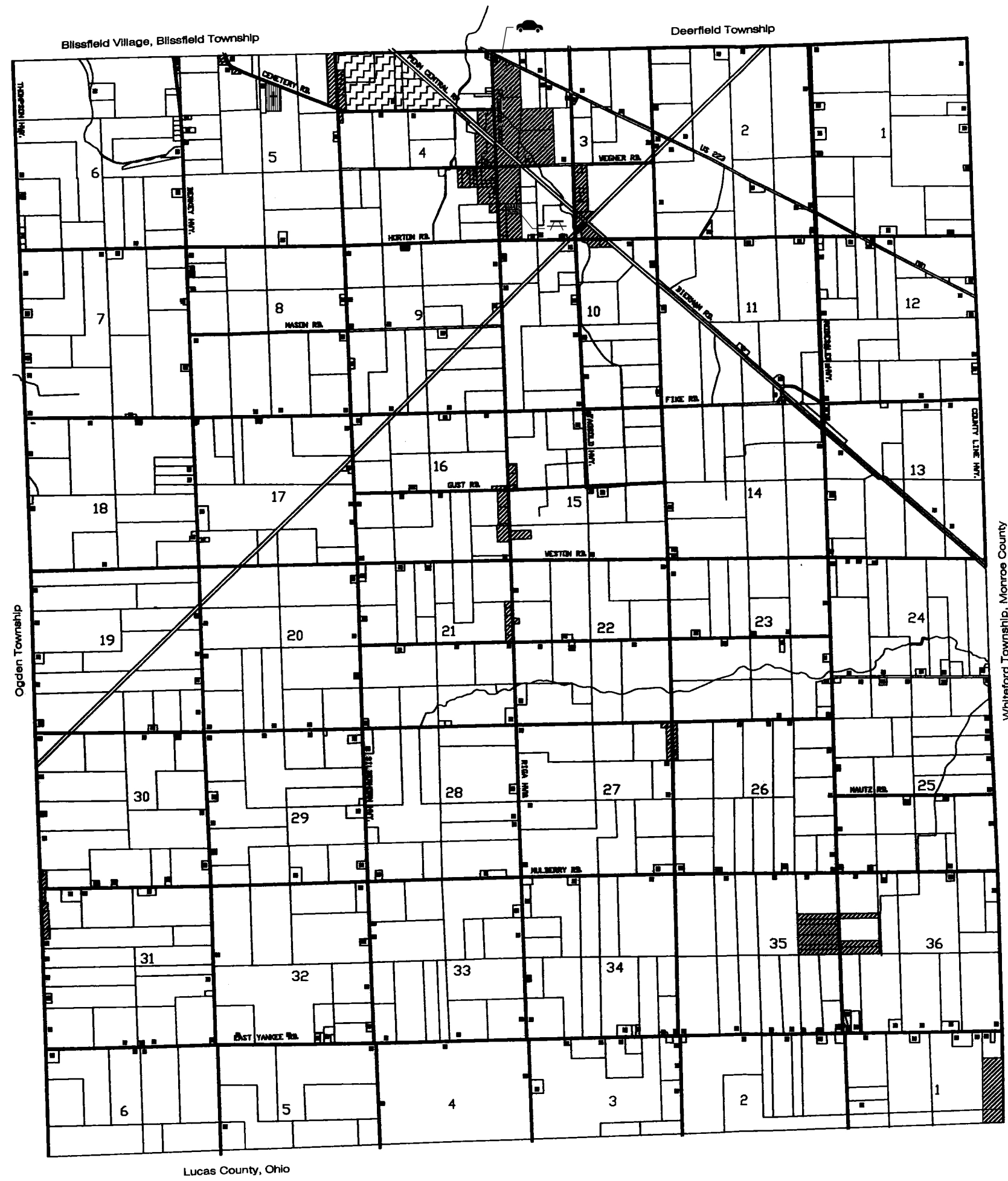
LEGEND

Map Symbol	National Functional Classification
	Rural Principal Arterial
	Rural Major Collector
	Rural Minor Collector
	Local








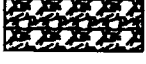



Map 2: National Functional Classification for Roads
 Township of Riga
 Lenawee County, Michigan



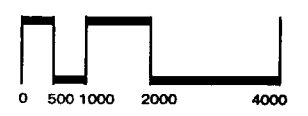
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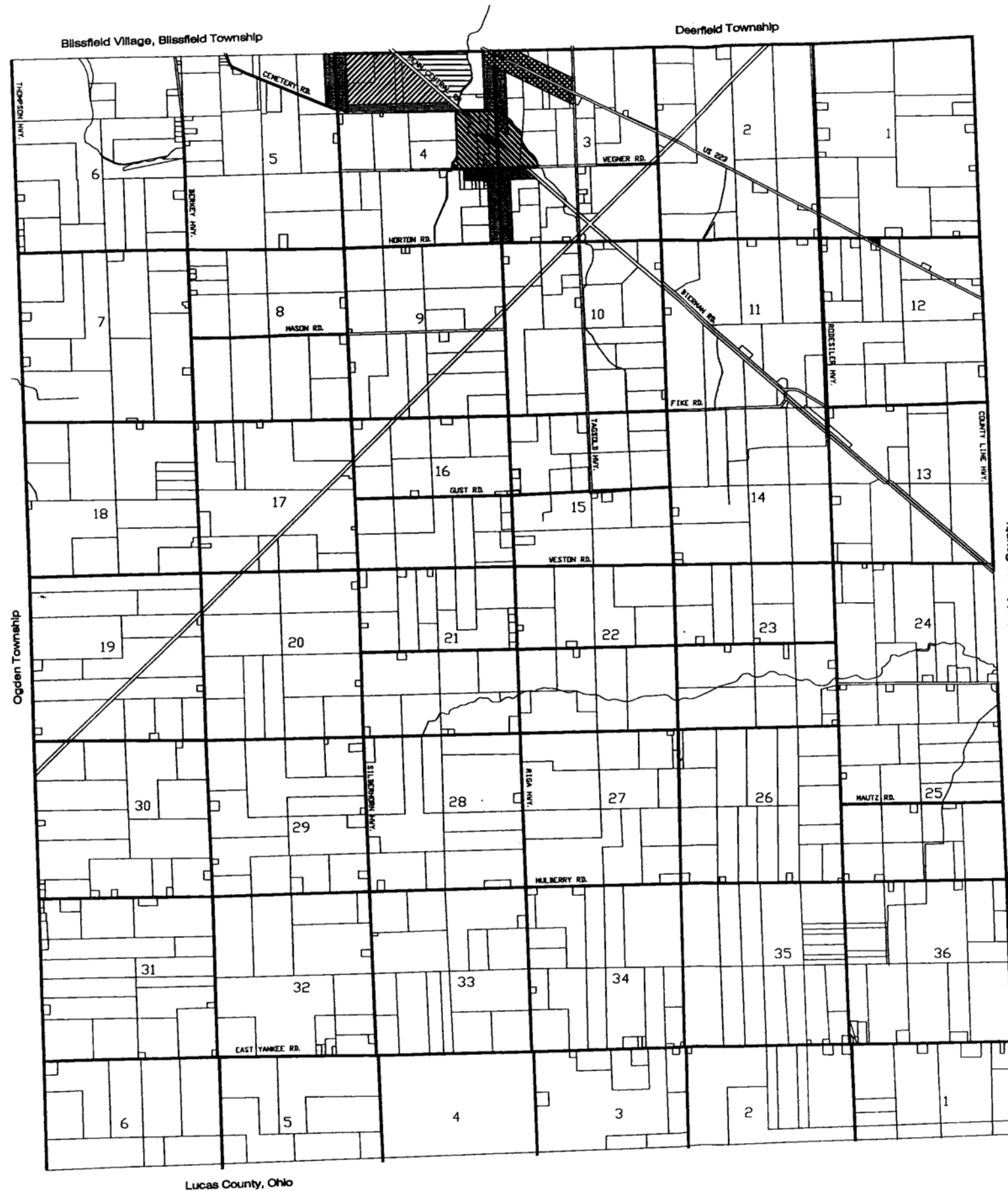


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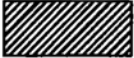


-  Agricultural
-  Residences in Agricultural
-  Single Family Residential
-  Multi-Family Residential
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Public/Semi-Public
-  Parks
-  Cemetery
-  Community Park
-  Park & Ride

Map 3: Existing Land Use
Township of Riga
Lenawee County, Michigan





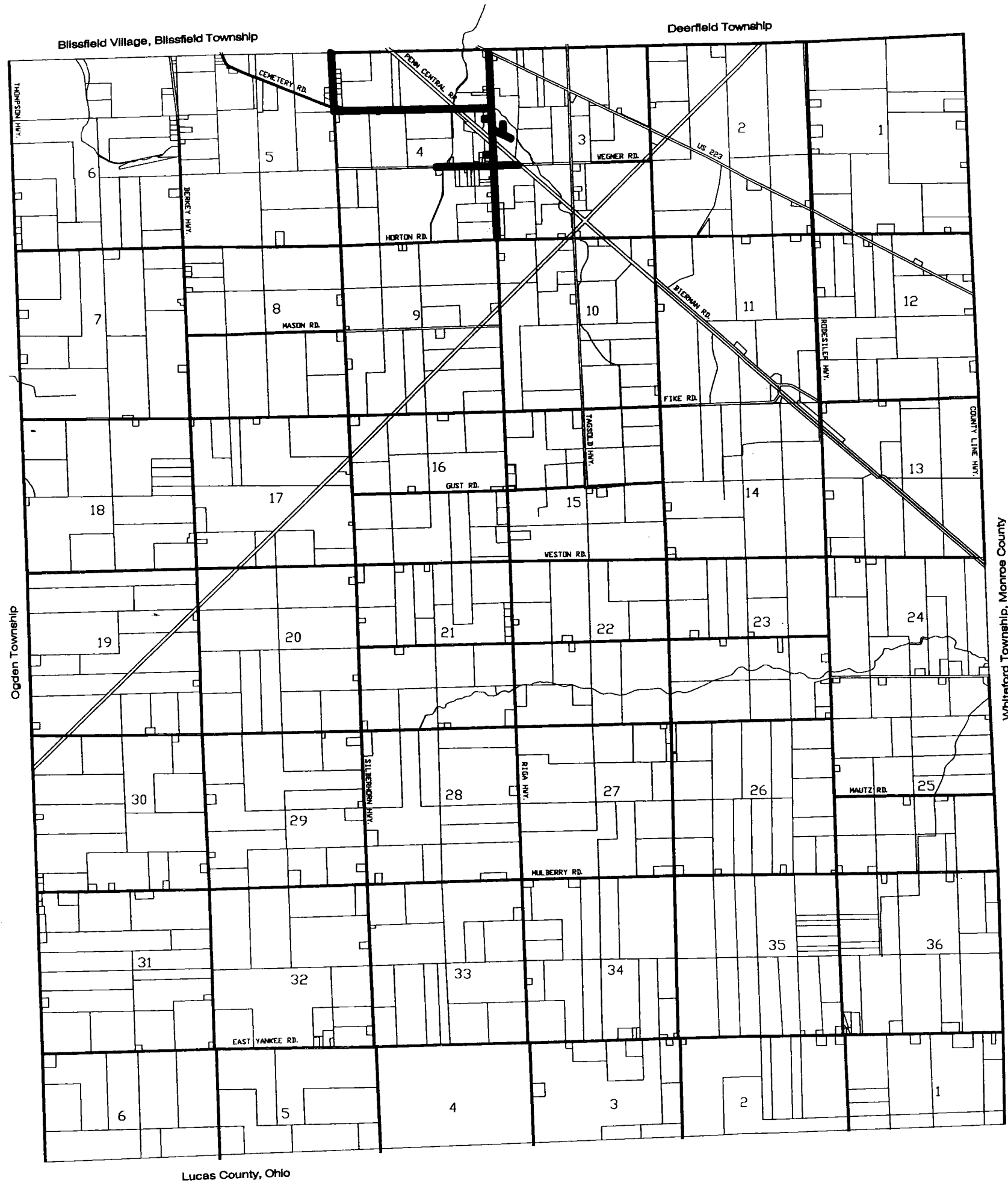
LEGEND

-  Residential District (RA)
-  Neighborhood Service Commercial (NS)
-  Agricultural District (AA)
-  Industrial District (II)
-  Light Industrial District (LI)
-  General Commercial / Business District (GC)

Map 4: Zoning Map
Township of Riga
Lenawee County, Michigan

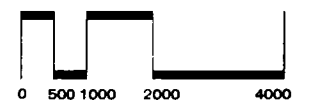


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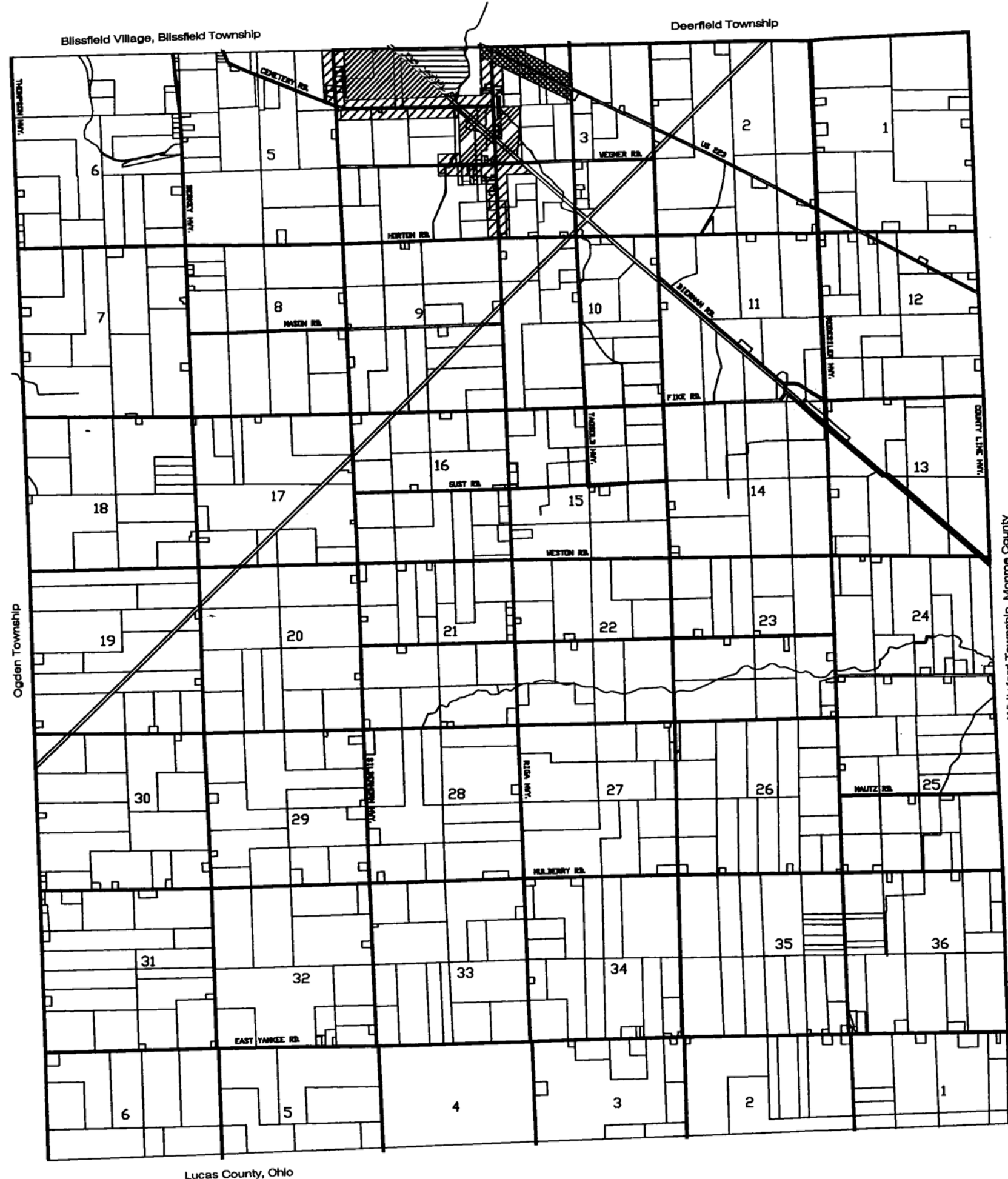


LEGEND
———— Sewer & Water Lines

Map 5: Municipal Sewer & Water Service Area
Township of Riga
Lenawee County, Michigan



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LEGEND

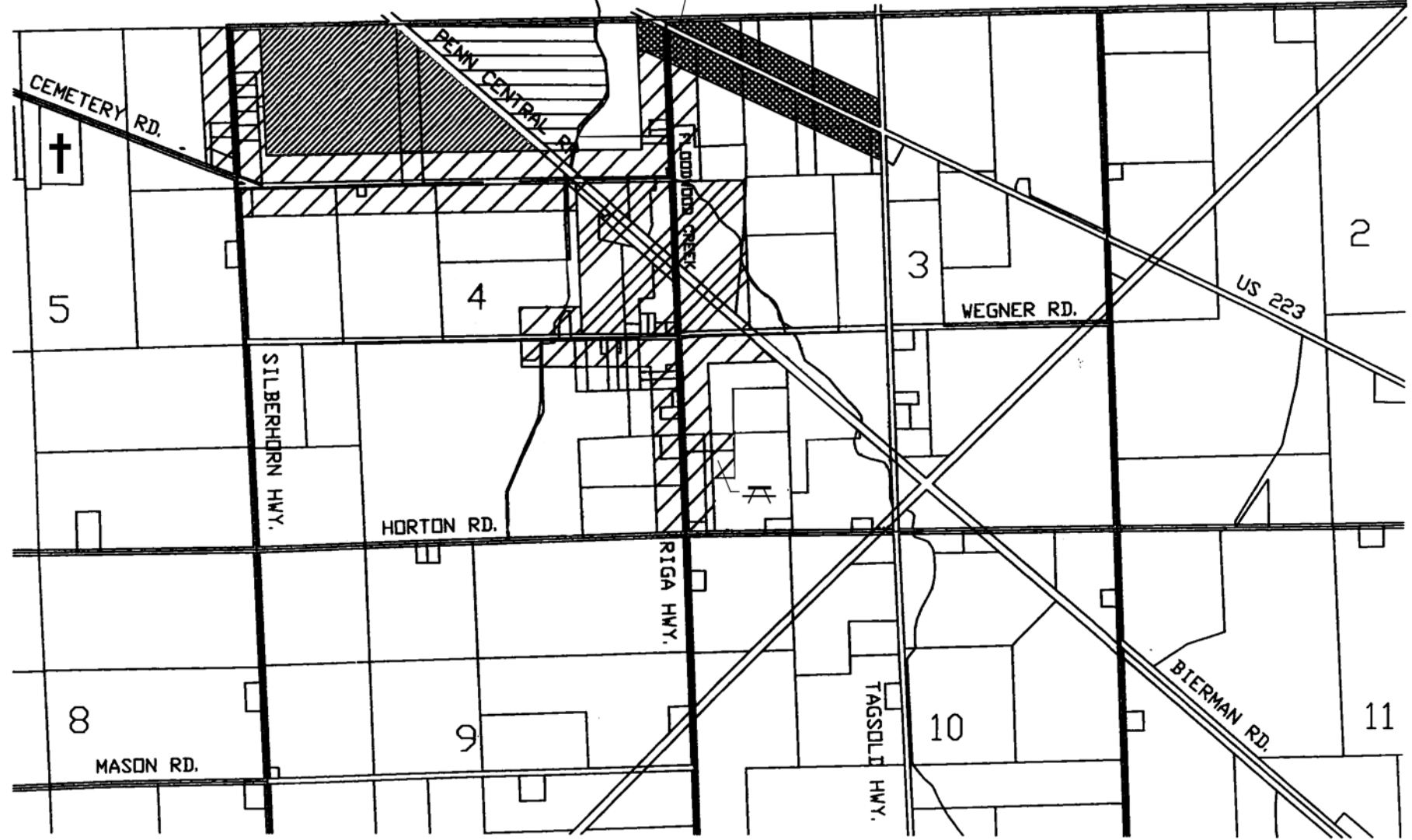
-  Agricultural (20 acre minimum)
-  Residential District (RA) (1/3 acre minimum)
-  Neighborhood Service Commercial (NS) (1/4 acre minimum)
-  General Commercial / Business District (GC)
-  Light Industrial District (LI)
-  Industrial District (II)

MAP 6: FUTURE LAND USE
Township of Riga
Lenawee County, Michigan



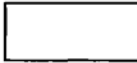








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Deerfield Townsl

LEGEND

-  Agricultural (20 acre minimum)
-  Residential (1/3 acre minimum)
-  Neighborhood Service Commercial (1/4 acre minimum)
-  General Commercial / Business District (GC)
-  Light Industrial District (LI)
-  Industrial District (II)
-  Cemetery
-  Community Park
-  Park & Ride

**MAP 7: VILLAGE AREA
FUTURE LAND USE**
Township of Riga
Lenawee County, Michigan



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