



Regional Growth

Choices for our Future

Our Vision

Reaching the Vision

- 1 Collect and objectively evaluate regional land use and other growth trend information.
- 2 Actively engage local governments, citizens and stakeholder groups in examining implications of these trends on the Region's future.
- 3 Identify and evaluate alternatives to these trends.
- 4 Formulate consensus on a shared regional vision about a preferred alternative.
- 5 Develop tools, techniques and action strategies to implement the shared vision and preferred alternative.
- 6 Establish a regional process for monitoring and evaluating progress at implementing these strategies.

Our Vision is that policies will be implemented that encourage in-fill in developed urban, suburban and rural centers. The majority of development will occur where public water and sewer services are available. Limited growth at low densities in clustered settings will occur in mature designated corridors that connect centers or along corridors where transit ridership is high. More investment will be made in quality of life livability/factors including sidewalks, landscaping and preservation of the tree canopy.

Regional Themes & Principles

Government:

Intergovernmental Cooperation & Coordination
Every jurisdiction's action affects other communities within the Tri-County region. All 75 cities, villages, townships and three counties should cooperate and coordinate their decisions and plans so the region is internally cooperative and externally competitive.

Implementation Through Local Action
The region includes 75 cities, villages, townships and three counties. It is through development of coordinated local plans, ordinances and policies that the Regional Vision will be implemented

Issues of Greater than Local Concern
Through evaluation and communication, the region should identify issues of greater than local concern and through consensus building among affected local governments and other stakeholders, promote change in state or federal laws, rules, regulations or other policy.

Public Participation
Local jurisdictions should expand and maintain practices, policies, behaviors and procedures that educate and promote continuous and meaningful opportunities for broad citizen and stakeholder participation.

Customer Satisfaction
The region should strive for an efficient, predictable and fair way to provide public services to achieve a consistently high level of customer and community satisfaction.

Regional Role
The region needs an advocate, facilitator and forum that has the support of local governments, stakeholders and citizens to promote, monitor, refine and assist with implementation of the preferred Regional Vision. This role includes education, coordination and collaboration, dispute prevention and resolution, providing technical assistance (including model ordinances and planning processes) and reporting on successes and failures.

Equitable Growth and Redevelopment
Costs and benefits associated with new growth and redevelopment should be proportional for existing residents, the host community and neighboring jurisdictions and shared by developers.

Capital Improvements Strategies
Public improvements should be planned in advance and publicly prioritized to maximize benefits of implementing the preferred vision.

Open Space & Resource Protection:

Farmland, Open Space & Other Natural Resources Protection
Farmland and other natural resources should be protected in an equitable fiscally responsible manner to preserve the heritage, environment, quality of life and long-term sustainability of the region.

Greenways & Walkability
Pathways, sidewalks, trails and on-street bike facilities should be developed and enhanced to provide alternatives to motorized transportation, improve linkages to recreational opportunities for regional residents and provide public health benefits by offering opportunities for physical activity.

Parks & Recreation Expansion and Linkage
Parks & recreation development and expansions should emphasize linkage of facilities through greenways based on the regional vision and the adopted Regional Non-Motorized System Plan.

Historic Preservation & Cultural Facilities
The region's significant built and living heritage, historic sites, cultural facilities and neighborhoods should be protected, preserved and enhanced.

Healthy Economy & Healthy Environment:

Environmental Protection
For long-term regional health and sustainability, the natural environment (land, air and water) should be protected.

Waste Management
Local communities should cooperatively plan for changing regional waste management needs including reuse, reduction, recycling and disposal of solid waste.

Energy Consumption
Resource conservation and an appropriate mix of renewable and nonrenewable resources should guide future utility expansion.

Housing for All Community Residents
Housing needs (type, location, cost, the jobs/housing balance, etc.) of all regional residents should be continuously and fairly addressed balancing the needs of each jurisdiction.

Jobs, Economic Development and Work Force
Jobs, economic expansion and workforce development should be emphasized consistent with the preferred Regional Vision to keep the region competitive in a global economy, but not at the expense of environmental health.

Transportation & Other Infrastructure:

Transportation Network
The regional transportation priority will be to enhance and preserve the existing road network, public transit and non-motorized transportation modes rather than further expansion of the road network in rural areas.

Public Facilities
Public facilities (schools, police, fire stations, museums, etc.) should be planned with an emphasis on partnerships among jurisdiction's service delivery to promote the preferred Regional Vision.

Hazard Mitigation Planning & Emergency Management
Disaster preparedness and emergency management strategies should be developed locally and coordinated by regional hazard mitigation planning, which strives to reduce the impacts and cost of potential hazards of both natural or human origin.

Infrastructure Expansion and Replacement
Infrastructure expansion and replacement should follow the preferred Regional Vision with clear urban and rural service areas.

Growth & Redevelopment:

Strengthening the Urban Core
The long-term economic sustainability of the region depends on strong urban cores. Therefore, our highest priority is for local units of government, stakeholders and citizens to take such measures as necessary to ensure that urban cores are viable and competitive, that urban residential neighborhoods remain quality places to live and that urban school districts remain on par with other area schools.

Focused Growth
Urban fringe areas should have the second priority to be enhanced, developed and redeveloped prior to similar development outside designated urban service areas.

Transitional Edges and Clustered Development Areas
A clear transition when passing from urban, cluster development and agricultural zones should be established to minimize future strip commercial development.

Compact Settlement
All existing cities, villages and townships in the region should establish urban and rural service areas in cooperation with neighboring jurisdictions and consistent with the Preferred Vision. New development in the region should occur in urban service areas or in approved rural clusters at densities consistent with the natural capabilities of soils to absorb septic wastes and the community's ability to adequately meet public service needs.

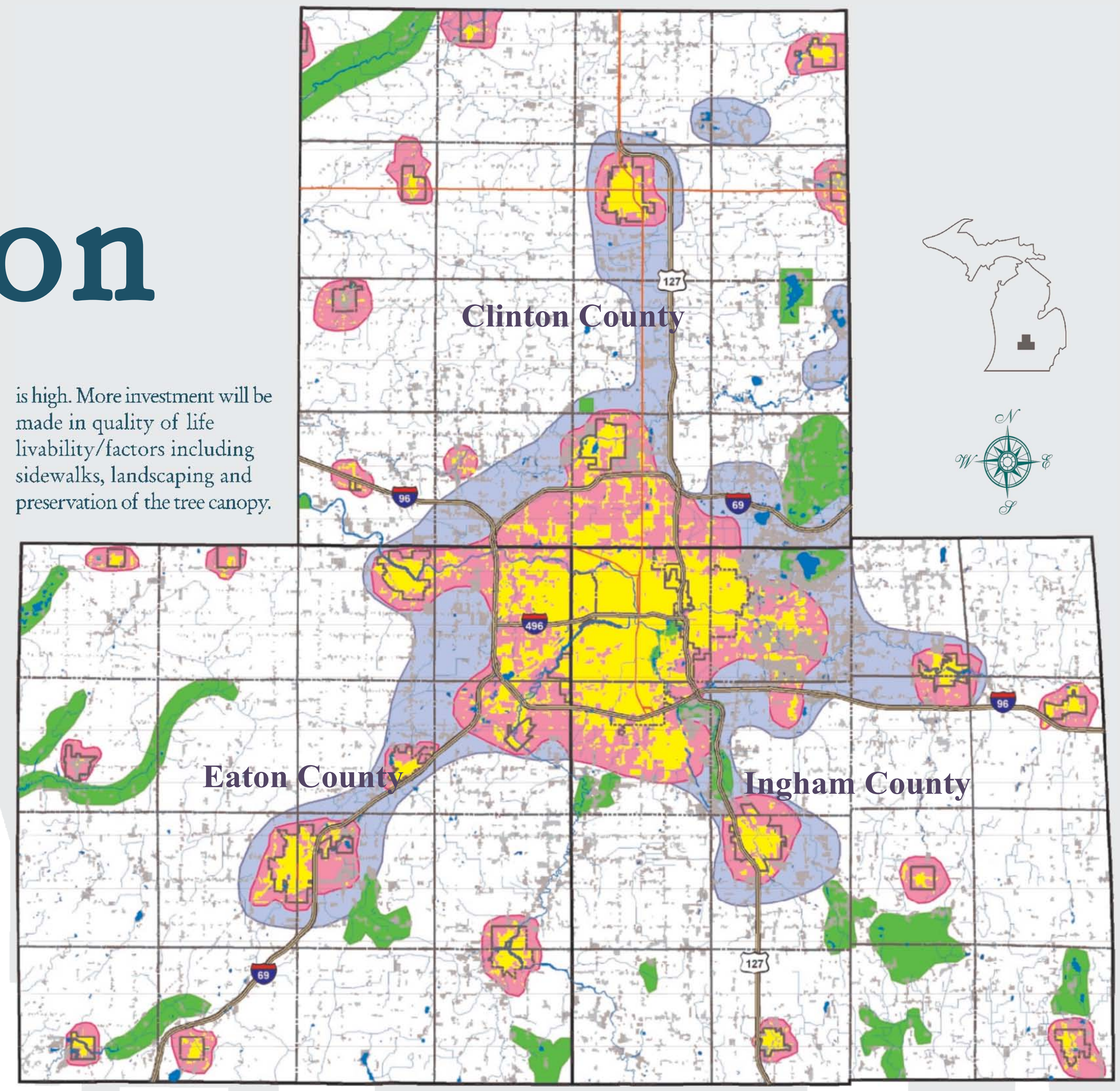
Phased Growth
Each jurisdiction should determine its appropriate rate of growth to preserve and enhance their community and infrastructure. Jurisdictions should phase and manage development at a pace that does not put undue hardship on existing populations, neighboring jurisdictions, municipal services or the actual environment.

Viable Neighborhoods
Implement traditional neighborhood planning and design concepts (walkable elementary schools, mixed use zoning, village/community design, etc.) to:

- maintain or re-establish viable neighborhoods;
- attract new residents; and
- eliminate impetus for existing residents to migrate to new developments.

High Density / Mixed Use
Encourage development of higher density mixed use to take advantage of existing infrastructure and services and enhance urbanized areas as a priority over development in rural areas.

Agricultural Economy
To enhance synergy between the regional economy and agricultural production, the entire region should emphasize regulation of development on rural lands.



Mission Statement
Actively engage the citizens of the region to examine implications of regional land use and other growth trends on the region's future and to formulate consensus on a shared vision of regional growth in order to assure improved future regional quality of life and economic competitiveness for our citizens and businesses.

An Invitation:

We encourage your interest in

Regional Growth: Choices for our Future

If you would like to learn more about this process and the outcomes of the project, please contact the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

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Legend

- Urban and Village Centers:** The top priority for future residential, commercial, industrial, cultural and mixed-use growth through the use of historic preservation, adaptive reuse, infill development and the redevelopment of underutilized properties. Development should primarily be of higher density urban or village character, to revitalize these centers and take advantage of existing urban services and transportation facilities.
 - Urban Fringe (Focused Growth) Areas:** The second priority for future residential, commercial, industrial and mixed-use growth to take advantage of existing community services and infrastructure. Development should be at medium or higher densities with an urban or village character that is compatible with the surrounding area.
 - Transitional (Cluster Development) Area:** An area located between the urban fringe and agricultural and environmental preservation areas. In this area, agricultural land and open space should be preserved. Residential and mixed-use development should be clustered with a village or rural character for the efficient use of public and private infrastructure, rather than in a linear pattern along rural roads.
 - Agricultural Preservation:** Lands that are intended for agricultural production with minimal expansion of residential, office, commercial or industrial uses.
 - Forested and Environmental Preservation Areas:** Natural features, such as rivers, forests, major wood lots and state-owned lands, which warrant specific recognition and protective measures to ensure that their existing character is maintained.
 - Built Out Rural Lands:** Lands which were classified as developed as of the spring of 1999 (based upon State of Michigan MIRIS standards) and are located in rural areas.
- *Note: Developed land as of spring 1999 include the following land classifications: industrial, residential, commercial, institutional, extractive, transportation, communications and utilities.