

# Mapping Out the Future of the Manchester Community

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Manchester Community  
Joint Planning Commission  
(MCJPC)

- How many new homes will we see in the future and where will they be?
- Do we want a big box store?
- Can we get a developer to utilize cluster development?
- What can we do to keep our farms and natural resources?

For more information visit the MCJPC website at [www.swwcog.org](http://www.swwcog.org), then click on "Manchester JPC."

**Manchester Community  
Joint Planning Commission**

Village of Manchester  
Manchester Township  
Bridgewater Township  
Freedom Township

# Mapping Out the Future of the Manchester Community

Three townships and a village can:

- promote economic vitality and employment opportunities
- protect vital natural resources and agricultural activities
- preserve our shared cultural heritage

Introducing the Manchester Community Joint Planning Commission (MCJPC). For more information visit: [www.swwcog.org](http://www.swwcog.org).



Look inside for more news!

## Neighbors Working Together

The Village of Manchester, Manchester Township, Bridgewater Township, and Freedom Township recently created the Manchester Community Joint Planning Commission (MCJPC) under the Joint Municipal Planning Act (Public Act 226 of 2003). This act authorizes cities, villages, and townships to create a joint planning commission for the first time in Michigan history. To date, the MCJPC includes more jurisdictions than any other joint planning commission in the state.

By joining forces, the local governments that compose the MCJPC will be able to guide growth and development to those areas where it is most wanted. For instance, working with the village, the townships can protect agricultural and natural areas by directing commercial development and residential subdivisions to those areas best suited for such growth. In addition, by forming the MCJPC, the participating local governments can minimize the duplication of services and costs to area residents and develop a more defensible community-wide master plan. This fall, the MCJPC will begin developing this document.

## What Is A Master Plan, and Why Is It Important?

A little like a "blueprint," a master plan is the public's guide for how a community will develop and manage its land-use resources.

The master plan provides the framework under which a community can preserve its natural features, build strong neighborhoods, increase commerce, plan for public services, and strategically guide new development. In fact, a master plan is the legal basis for the development and application of local land-use regulations. Most master plans also identify a number of capital-improvement projects; identifying these projects can help build support for local funding or leverage funding from state and federal granting agencies.

## The Planning Process

The MCJPC will develop the Manchester Community Joint Master Plan. The MCJPC consists of eight representatives and eight alternates appointed by the four participating jurisdictions. The newly formed MCJPC is facilitating a public planning process that encourages citizen participation and open dialogue. The MCJPC will hold a series of public meetings that will give citizens the opportunity to shape a plan that is unique to the Manchester Community. In addition, citizens are encouraged to attend the regular monthly meetings of the MCJPC. The MCJPC currently meets on the second Wednesday of every month, and all meetings are open to the public. For more information on how to participate in this exciting planning process, please contact your local officials, or visit the MCJPC website at [www.swwcog.org](http://www.swwcog.org), then click on "Manchester JPC."

## History of the MCJPC

In 1997, five units of government--the Village of Manchester, Manchester, Bridgewater, Freedom, and Sharon Townships--plus the Manchester Community Schools formed the Southwest Washtenaw Council of Governments (SWWCOG). SWWCOG serves as a regional-planning advisory group to the local units of government. Nine years later, SWWCOG applied for and received a Partnerships for Change grant for professional planning services. These services allowed the group to explore the most recent legal and planning tools to help ensure the long-term health of the community. Forming the MCJPC is now the result of this exploration. While Sharon Township and the Manchester School District did not join in the MCJPC, all jurisdictions still continue to meet as SWWCOG to help maintain open communication among the five local units of government and the school district.

