

## CHAPTER 9. IMPLICATIONS

**Between 1970 and 2000, the Township's population increased from 7,493 to 17,553, or by a total of 10,060, representing a 134% increase.**

The preceding discussions have portrayed a broad synopsis of data pertaining to current conditions and trends that are apparent and emerging in Byron Township. It is important to ask and answer the question: What does it all mean? This chapter begins to summarize that discussion. Later phases of the master planning process will help to further focus and refine the Township's response to its growth management challenges and to suggest alternative responses to these challenges.

The following paragraphs outline some of the initial impressions that have emerged as this Community Profile has developed:

1. The population of Byron Township may grow to approximately 23,000 persons by the year 2010; 29,500 persons by the year 2020; and over 37,000 persons by the year 2030. These estimates are based on past trends and do not reflect the 1,430 residential building permits approved by the Township since the 2000 Census was taken. The approved units may account for 3,875 new residents that have moved – or who are moving – to the Township since the last Census.
2. The prevailing development pattern in the Township is low to moderate density, and characteristic of “the suburbs.” A continuation of this development pattern will necessitate use of an automobile to travel about the community, thereby increasing vehicular traffic. For the Byron Center neighborhood, which was originally designed to function principally on pedestrian activity, an increasing number of motorists could be unfavorable and may be injurious to the goals of the community.
3. The private automobile is the most used form of transportation in the Township, in part because of disposable incomes. Low and moderate density development and the segregation of land uses may also preclude the feasibility of walking due to the “spreading out” of different developments. In other words, dwellings are separated from places of employment and services by distances which make walking to these places undesirable. About 1% of Township residents walked to work in the year 2000.
4. The rural atmosphere and small-town lifestyle that has defined Byron Township and Byron Center has served as a magnet for residential development, resulting in increasing growth pressures. While the pace and scale of growth is manageable, there is a risk that without

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5. Big box stores, fast food restaurants and strip centers are conventional and have a monotonous appearance and function. While conventional commercial development is imperative to the service and convenience needs of the community, such facilities add nothing “special” to the downtown Byron Center area and may even detract from it. In the future, it may be critical to analyze locations where conventional commercial development is and is not desired.

6. Under current zoning, Byron Township may reach a population of 55,113 at build-out, which is an increase of 314% over the current population. Based on the rates of growth described in Chapter 2, and given current zoning, the Township may reach build-out in about 35 to 40 years.

7. The Goose Creek sewer may be anywhere from 70% to 110% capacity. About 2,500 dwelling units are served by the sewer system, and an additional 850 units - which have been approved by the Township but are not yet constructed - would increase this flow about 25%. These additional 850 units may overburden the sewer system. This problem is expressive of the growth pressures in the Township, and it is likely not the end of such concerns. A short-term solution has been identified. Other long-term solutions may involve a joint sanitary sewer authority with Jamestown Township and/or cooperation with adjacent communities.

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8. M-6 will impact future growth in the community. The M-6 interchanges will likely become magnets for development in the near future. Any future development along Wilson Avenue and Byron Center Avenue has potential to alter the character of adjacent land. These interchanges have also observably altered traffic patterns in the Township: M-6 has fostered more north-south traffic on Wilson Avenue and Byron Center Avenue, while east-west traffic has decreased, most notably on 84<sup>th</sup> Street.