PARK TOWNSHIP

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

LAND USE
AND
CIRCULATION PLAN

DRAFT UPDATE

2/20/04

ADOPTED DECEMBER 22, 1998

WILLIAMS & WORKS

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PREFACE

This 2004 Comprehensive Plan update is the most recent of master planning implementation accomplished by the Township since 1998, when the new Comprehensive Plan was adopted. It represents demographic, school, and growth pattern changes that have occurred in the Township since 1998. Since 1998, a new Census has been published, and therefore new population projections are included in the updated Plan. The bulk of this document, however, remains as it was when adopted in 1998.

The 1998 Comprehensive Plan update was the latest of three planning exercises that had taken place by Park Township officials to manage the growth pressures being witnessed in the Township. To expand: back in the fall of 1996, the Township initiated the process to update the Township's 1988 General Land Use and Circulation Plan for the future development of the Township. Much like the 1988 Plan, this newly updated General Land Use and Circulation Plan involved less in-depth research and study than a complete Comprehensive Plan. However, it does reflect goals and strategies that pertain to the current and expected demands facing the Township. Specifically, this updated document contains data and a summary of the research conducted on the following: regional influences upon Park Township, existing land uses, environmental factors, township goals and objectives, future land use and circulation, and a discussion on the methods for implementing the Plan.

As a logical and necessary extension of this Plan, the existing zoning ordinance may require revision in order for it to implement the recommendations contained in this plan. Zoning and subdivision regulations have typically been the major tools for implementing a land use plan. In this respect, Park Township will not be an exception.

Finally, land use plans are not static or unchangeable documents. Neither are they precise definitions of the ultimate use for every parcel of property. They are intended to guide public officials in a direction deemed most logical, aesthetically pleasing, and economical. However, land values and trends and social attitudes are dynamic forces which require constant monitoring. For this reason, it will be necessary to continually refine, update and review this Plan in order to accommodate these forces throughout the next 15 to 20 years.

The Planning Process

Planning, in simple terms, is a goal-oriented and continuous process which seeks to improve a community and create a better environment. As such, a General Land Use and Circulation Plan is a "tool" by which this goal can be reached. It is used by both individuals and public officials to make decisions concerning the long-range future of a community.

Basically, the planning process consists of five steps:

1. Desire to Plan - Park Township has already expressed this desire as evidenced by this and the two preceding plans.

2. Analysis of the Existing Situation - An analysis of the problems, assets, and potential of the community. These "Basic Studies", in this case, include an evaluation of the regional setting, existing land use, transportation network, population, potential land use conflicts, and environmental factors.

3. Plan Design - A graphic representation of the form and allocation of land uses in the design year of 2020. The Plan suggests how future growth should be directed into the most economical, healthful, aesthetically pleasing, and ecologically sound pattern of development.

4. Plan Implementation - The first step in the implementation phase is the adoption of this Plan by the Planning Commission. Then, through a joint program of public education and comprehensive development controls (such as the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, a policy of street improvements, and utility extensions), the Township can implement the provisions of the Plan.

5. Continued Planning - In order for the Plan to have a lasting effect, it is necessary to follow through with a program of continuous planning. This involves periodic review and amendment of the Plan (such as this effort), the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, the Capital Improvements Program, and other official policies of the Township.

An initial starting point in the planning process is to determine, as clearly and concisely as possible, the characteristics of the existing situation and the trends or forces within the community that will be affecting change. The Basic Studies, which immediately follow, will examine these existing characteristics.

REGIONAL SETTING

LOCATION

Park Township is located in the extreme southwestern corner of Ottawa County, immediately west and northwest of the City of Holland. Within a larger context, Ottawa County is situated in an area that is generally referred to as "West Central Michigan". This area contains the principal cities of Muskegon, Grand Rapids, and Holland.

The Township itself is bordered on the north by Port Sheldon Township (at New Holland Road), on the east by Holland Township and the City of Holland (at 144th Avenue and Old Orchard Road), on the south by the Allegan County line and the City of Holland (with Ottogon Street serving as the demarcation line), and on the west by Lake Michigan. The southern portion of the Township is separated by Lake Macatawa. This body of water effectively segregates a small portion of the Township from the rest, since access to it from the north can only be gained by traveling around Lake Macatawa and through the City of Holland.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Although Park Township is not traversed by any state highways, it is relatively close to several major thoroughfares (refer to the map, entitled "Regional Influences"). Approximately three miles east of the Township is US-31 which runs in a north-south direction and connects Muskegon and points north with Holland and Interstate 196. This expressway, in turn, links with I-94 and, eventually Chicago and the Midwest. Important to note is that County and State officials are considering relocating US-31 as well as limiting access in an effort to improve traffic flow between the cities of Holland and Grand Haven. At this point in time, impact studies and design alternatives are being evaluated.

The other major highway in the area is I-196 which parallels M-21 and is the most direct, limited access route from Holland and Zeeland to Grand Rapids.

In addition to the highway network throughout the region, there are two airports which provide facilities for air travel. Tulip City Airport, located on the extreme south side of Holland, has 5,000 feet of paved runway and serves as a general aviation facility in the area. The Park Township Airport, located directly across from the Ottawa County

Fairgrounds on Ottawa Beach Road, has a 3,000 foot paved runway (along with a shorter turf landing strip) which functions as a home base for pleasure aircraft. It should be noted that the operations at the Park Township Airport, unlike the Tulip City Airport, are used for pleasure or recreational flights rather than business trips or commercial flights. Kent County International Airport and Muskegon Airport are both within 35 miles of the Township and provide full service air transportation.

REGIONAL POPULATION GROWTH

Economically and socially, Park Township is part of the Greater Holland Region that also includes the cities of Holland and Zeeland and the townships of Port Sheldon, Holland, and Zeeland in Ottawa County and Fillmore and Laketown Townships in Allegan County. This point is emphasized by the fact that there are no major employers, commercial or industrial corridors in the Township. A new addition to the Township will be a high school slated to open for the 2005-2006 school year. Given these characteristics, Park Township is considered a "bedroom community" in the Holland metro area. Consequently, the Township's fortunes are closely tied to the economic stability of Holland and the region.

During the years between 1940 and 1980, the region experienced steady and substantial growth in population. In 1940, there were approximately 30,000 people located in the eight governmental units that comprise the region. By 1980, this figure had increased to 63,180, or over 111 percent during those 40 years. Ten years later, in 1990, the region grew another 13,386 persons to 76,566. This represents a growth of 21 percent over the past decade for these eight communities combined. By 2000, the region had expanded to 102,508 persons representing a 17% increase since 1990.

Much of the growth in the township has been due to urban and suburban migration. For example, while Park and Holland Townships experienced respective growth of 73 and 56 percent from 1940 to 1950, the City of Holland increased by only 8.5 percent. The following decade saw this trend continue although the statistics are concealed because of extensive annexation by the City of Holland. Each decade between 1970 and 1990 clearly revealed the same trend as shown in the growth percentages compared in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Population Growth Percentages (by decade)
City of Holland, Park and Holland Townships
1970-2000

Community	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000
Holland, City of	-1%	17%	14%
Park Twp	**56%**	**31%**	**30%**
Holland Twp	27%	28%	65%

Source: U.S. Census Data

REGIONAL INFLUENCES

Future growth in Park Township will be dependent upon two major factors: regional influences and the inherent natural features and qualities of the Township itself. As mentioned previously, the regional transportation system has significantly increased accessibility within the region.

The map, entitled "Regional Influences," indicates those factors or forces in the region which may have a significant influence upon Park Township. Comments on deficiencies and assets of the area have also been included on this map. By referring to the map, it can be seen that the major industrial employers (over 100 employees) in the immediate Holland area are scattered throughout the northeast, east central, and southeastern portions of the area. Such a distribution pattern serves to disperse housing concentrations with the result that growth can be expected in those same general areas rather than concentrated in a few prime locations. Because many of the region's major employers are located relatively close to Park Township, the Township can expect to receive at least a proportionate share of the regional growth in the future.

Additional regional influences that will affect Park Township in the future include:

- Holland Central Business District - A major shopping area that will draw traffic onto Ottawa Beach Road, Lakewood Boulevard, James Street and Butternut Drive, as well as other local streets.
- West Shore Mall, located at US-31 and James Street, and other retail uses along Riley Street and Butternut Drive.
- Commercial and industrial development taking place in Holland Township and the City of Holland.

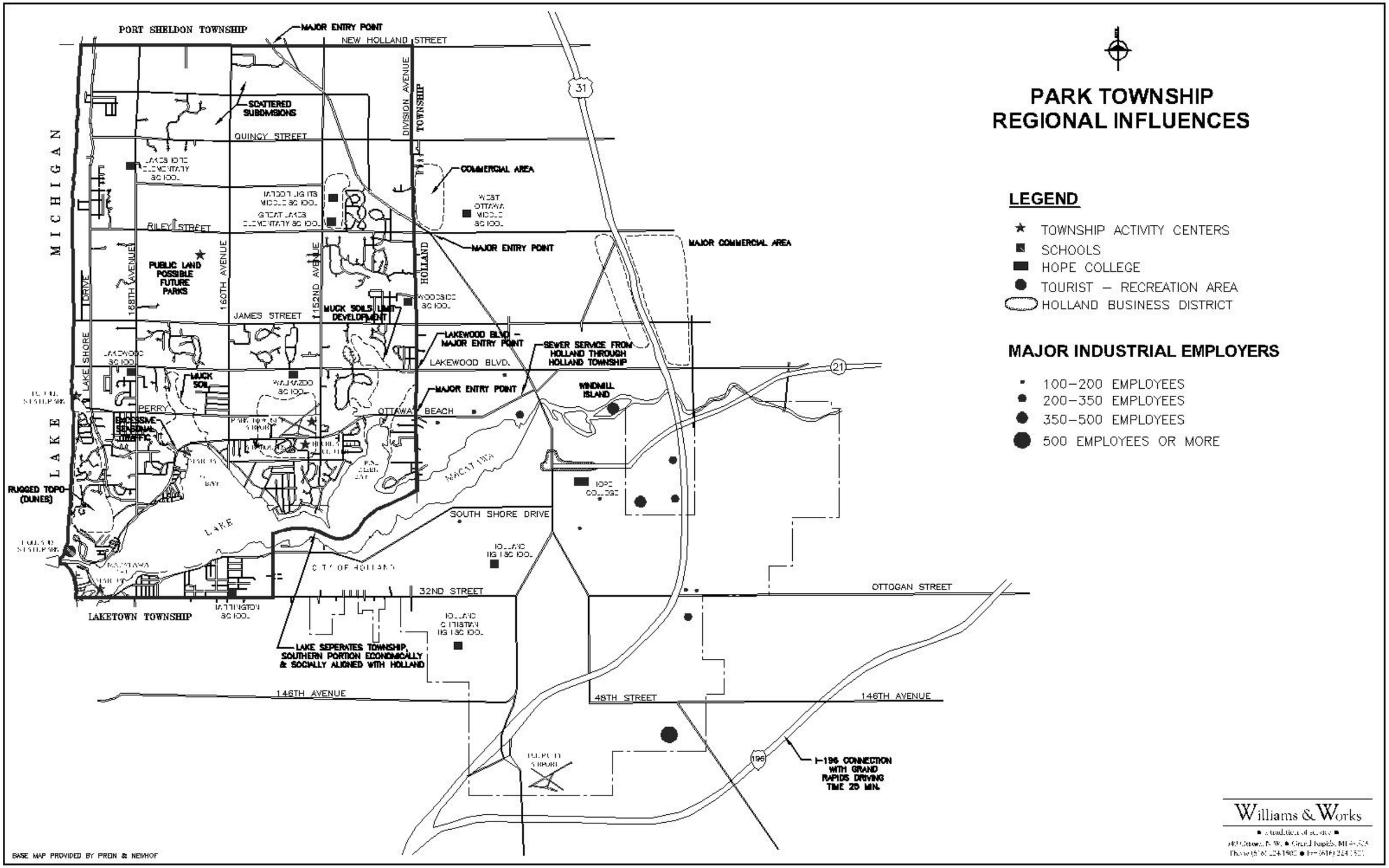
- Area High Schools - Especially West Ottawa, which could draw development towards it.
- Hope College - Families with college age children as well as the alumni of the college may want to settle in Park Township.
- Major Tourist Attractions - The distinctive Dutch flavor of the area will continue to draw people with similar backgrounds.
- Holland State Park
- Lake Michigan
- Lake Macatawa
- City of Holland
- Quality of Life

LOCAL GROWTH FACTORS

Complementing the regional influences are local growth generators; primary among them are the large tracts of undeveloped land. These large, wooded areas, combined with the recreational and resort atmosphere provided by Lakes Michigan and Macatawa, make Park Township a highly desirable area for homesites. Evidence of this is provided by the steady rise in building permits issued for single family homes, from 37 in 1981 to 138 in 1986. Ten years later, in 1996, the Township approved 161 building permits. Between 1980 and 1996, the Township averaged 145 residential building permits annually. As well, between 1997 and 2003, the Township averaged 145 residential building permits annually. On average, 110 of these 145 residential building permits are for single-family homes.

This growth, in turn, has increased the valuation of property in the Township substantially. During the period between 1980 and 1987, the state equalized valuation (SEV) of all property in Park Township rose from $98 million to $194 million. This represents an increase of nearly 98 percent, of which residential properties made up 90 percent of the total in the latter year. In 1997, ten years later, the taxable SEV rose to $467 million or an increase of 139 percent.

Another local growth generator will be expanded public utility systems as township officials continue to work towards providing sewer and water service to the more densely developed areas of the Township. It is important to note that Township officials, with few exceptions, require new development projects to connect to public sewer and water service. By constructing such systems, public sewer and water service would continue to play a major role in attracting new development and infill projects because of its advantages over private septic and water systems


PARK TOWNSHIP
REGIONAL INFLUENCES
LEGEND
TOWNSHIP ACTIVITY CENTERS
SCHOOLS
HOPE COLLEGE
TOURIST – RECREATION AREA
HOLLAND BUSINESS DISTRICT
MAJOR INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYERS
100–200 EMPLOYEES
200–350 EMPLOYEES
350–500 EMPLOYEES
500 EMPLOYEES OR MORE
PORT SHELDON TOWNSHIP
MAJOR ENTRY POINT
NEW HOLLAND STREET
SCATTERED SUBDIVISIONS
QUINCY STREET
DIVISION AVENUE
TOWNSHIP
COMMERCIAL AREA
MAJOR COMMERCIAL AREA
RILEY STREET
PUBLIC LAND POSSIBLE FUTURE PARKS
168TH AVENUE
160TH AVENUE
152ND AVENUE
HOLLAND
JAMES STREET
MUCK SOILS LIMIT DEVELOPMENT
LAKEWOOD BLVD. – MAJOR ENTRY POINT
SEWER SERVICE FROM HOLLAND THROUGH HOLLAND TOWNSHIP
LAKEWOOD BLVD.
LAKE SHORE DRIVE
MUCK SOIL
WINDMILL ISLAND
PERRY
OTTAWA BEACH
EXCESSIVE SEASONAL TRAFFIC
MICHIGAN
LAKE
RUGGED TOPO (DUNES)
MACATAWA
SOUTH SHORE DRIVE
CITY OF HOLLAND
32ND STREET
OTTOGAN STREET
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
LAKE SEPERATES TOWNSHIP, SOUTHERN PORTION ECONOMICALLY & SOCIALLY ALIGNED WITH HOLLAND
146TH AVENUE
48TH STREET
I-196 CONNECTION WITH GRAND RAPIDS DRIVING TIME 25 MIN.
BASE MAP PROVIDED BY PREIN & NEWHOF
Williams & Works

LOCAL ACTIVITY CENTERS

Activity centers are those areas or facilities that generate activity in the form of new development or traffic. There are several activity centers in the Township which operate in this manner - most of them being either seasonal or non-residential in nature:

- Ottawa County Fairgrounds - this generates activity during tulip time, car shows, and the county fair
- The several large marinas with approximately 1500 slips in total
- Several notable restaurants
- Holland State Park and Tunnel Park
- DNR Boat Launch Facility
- Public and private camping facilities
- Bike Paths
- Township Parks
- Local Schools

The marinas, fairgrounds, and parks are seasonal traffic generators in that they draw traffic to them during the summer months. However, none of these activity centers will stimulate residential development in and of themselves. Therefore, it can be concluded that future growth and development in Park Township will depend upon four factors:

- Continued economic prosperity in the Holland region;
- Preservation of the natural features of the Township which make it an attractive place to live;
- The region's easy accessibility to major transportation networks; and
- Quality of life

EXISTING LAND USE

The map on the following page, entitled "Existing Land Use," portrays graphically the settlement patterns as they currently exist in Park Township. It is readily noted that the predominant land use category is residential, with large tracts of land occupied by public or semi-public uses (such as camps, churches, parks, etc.). Commercial establishments number approximately 50 or 60, many of which are seasonal and are in operation only during peak summer months. There is no established commercial core area in Park Township which means residents must do most of their shopping elsewhere. In Park Township, it is difficult to expand existing commercial uses as many of the establishments are "land locked." Also, the Township is noticeably absent of industrial firms.

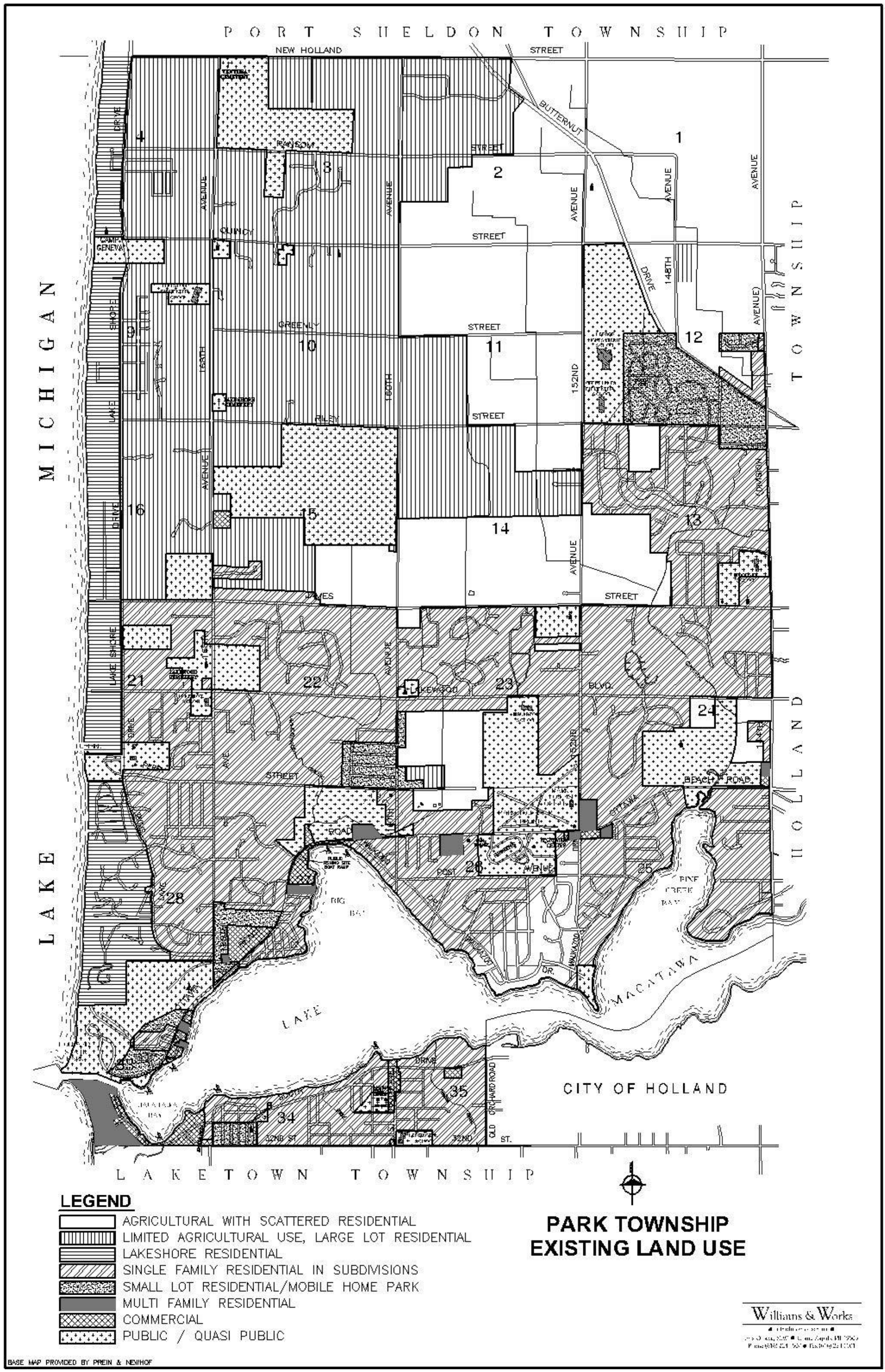
Again, this fact characterizes the Township as a bedroom community in that residents must commute out of the township for employment.

Because of the large amount of lakefront area in the Township, many residential units on the lakefront are single family homes located on small tracts of land. Many of these seasonal homes are being converted to year-round residences. This pattern occurs along the length of Lake Michigan and on both sides of Lake Macatawa. Additionally, and for the same reason, there are many water-oriented uses of a non-residential nature, especially marinas. Although the seven marinas account for less than 1% of total township lake frontage, these land uses have given the Township a distinctive recreational and residential character. Because of this attractiveness and the market pressure for lakefront development, there is limited public access to the lakes.

Throughout the central and northern portions of the Township away from the lakes there are random subdivisions, scattered rural housing (especially along major streets), and undeveloped acres of woodlands, nursery crops, blueberry fields and vacant land. There are also large tracts of public and semi-public land owned by organizations, such as the State, County, Township, charitable, and religious organizations. Expanding development is gradually converting this part of the Township into fingers of residential subdivisions.

With few exceptions, commercial establishments are located close to Lake Macatawa. The bulk of these uses are adjacent to Ottawa Beach Road. Although this road is designated as a "primary road" by the county, neither its present width nor its alignment are sufficient to handle the summer traffic that is generated by the seasonal and year

round retail businesses located along it. Adding to this problem is the fact that Ottawa Beach Road is the primary route for reaching Holland State Park. This popular park, one of the most visited state parks in Michigan, significantly increases the traffic load on this road because it draws campers and day visitors from throughout the Midwest. South Shore Drive is also becoming congested with traffic due primarily to popular seasonal commercial uses and expanding residential areas


PORT SHELDON TOWNSHIP
NEW HOLLAND
STREET
BUTTERNUT
DRIVE
AVENUE
QUINCY
GREENLY
RILEY
JAMES
LAKEWOOD
BLVD.
BEACH ROAD
OTTAWA
POST
LAKE SHORE
LAKE MICHIGAN
MACATAWA
CITY OF HOLLAND
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
32ND ST.
OLD ORCHARD ROAD
LEGEND
AGRICULTURAL WITH SCATTERED RESIDENTIAL
LIMITED AGRICULTURAL USE, LARGE LOT RESIDENTIAL
LAKESHORE RESIDENTIAL
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL IN SUBDIVISIONS
SMALL LOT RESIDENTIAL/MOBILE HOME PARK
MULTI FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
COMMERCIAL
PUBLIC / QUASI PUBLIC
PARK TOWNSHIP
EXISTING LAND USE
Williams & Works
BASE MAP PROVIDED BY PREIN & NEWHOF

MAJOR STREETS

The Ottawa County Road Commission has designated the following hard surfaced roads which collect traffic and channel it into or out of the Township as primary roads:

- Lake Shore Drive
- Butternut Drive
- Lakewood Boulevard
- Ottawa Beach Road
- South Shore Drive
- Riley Street
- Ottagon Road (32nd)

Traffic volume figures obtained from the County Road Commission substantiate the conclusion that Ottawa Beach Road is the primary thoroughfare in the Township. During a 24-hour period in 1986, 7,668 vehicles traveled this road according to counters located near the intersection of Ottawa Beach Road and 168th Avenue. In 1985, counters located a half-mile west of 144th Avenue recorded 13,132 vehicles during a 24-hour period. This volume has increased over the past twelve years as traffic volumes reached 23,899 vehicles over a 24-hour period west of 152 Avenue. These figures indicate two things:

1. Ottawa Beach Road is the major thoroughfare in the Township (traffic volumes on other roads are substantially lower).
2. Residents in the area south of Ottawa Beach Road (generally between 152nd and 160th) use this road as their route into Holland and points beyond.

According to the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council (MACC) 1995 Transportation Capacity Deficiency Ranking study, Ottawa Beach Road, between 152nd Street and 168th Street, was at or near its capacity to adequately serve the volume of traffic. According to the Ottawa County Road Commission, traffic volume typically increases at a rate of 3 to 4 percent annually in the County. Thus, it can be assumed that currently, Ottawa Beach Road is probably at capacity or more in handling the traffic volume.

Although Ottawa Beach Road was the only road in Park Township ranked with a deficiency ratio, two thoroughfares immediately east of Park Township are ranked high in capacity deficiency ranking. Specifically, Riley Street and James Street in Holland Township are at

120 to 150 percent of their traffic volume capacity. Both of these streets carry traffic to and from Park Township.

The following indicates proposed road projects affecting Park Township. Should these projects take place, some of the capacity deficiency issues listed above would be addressed.

- Lakewood Boulevard, River to 160th - widen from 2 lanes to 4 or 5 lanes
- Ottawa Beach Road, 152nd to 168th - widen from 2 to 5 lanes
- Riley Street, 96th to 152nd - widen from 2 to 5 lanes

In summarizing the traffic pattern on other township roads, it can be stated that volumes increase as traffic moves toward the east and the south. This system of major streets (which could be described as perimeter routes since none traverse the central portion of the Township) has had a significant influence upon the residential settlement patterns in the area. Most of the large subdivisions are located on or close to major streets with the result that the interior portion of the Township is not as densely developed as the rest.

POTENTIAL LAND USE CONFLICTS

Since 1972 when the first Comprehensive Plan was initiated, many of the potential land use conflicts identified, then, have been effectively resolved through good planning efforts. For example, pressure to develop certain residential properties along Ottawa Beach Road to more intensive multi-family and commercial uses was appropriately managed. Other potential land use conflicts along Butternut Drive and the lakefront were similarly handled. This latest plan must continue to address the conflicts of the past but also anticipate the challenges of a growing community. These include preservation of clean and safe neighborhoods for existing and future residents. This helps to maintain private investment plus provide a solid tax base for the Township. Provision of adequate and accessible play areas/recreation facilities are also important to the healthy future of this bedroom community. Use of cluster development techniques which do not increase density but permit compact living areas with the preservation of open areas for use as active and passive recreation areas should also be encouraged to achieve the objectives of the Township. This technique also reduces investment in infrastructure improvements. In total, township officials must continuously monitor the quantity and quality of development projects proposed in the community as compared to the overall objectives of the community.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

SOILS

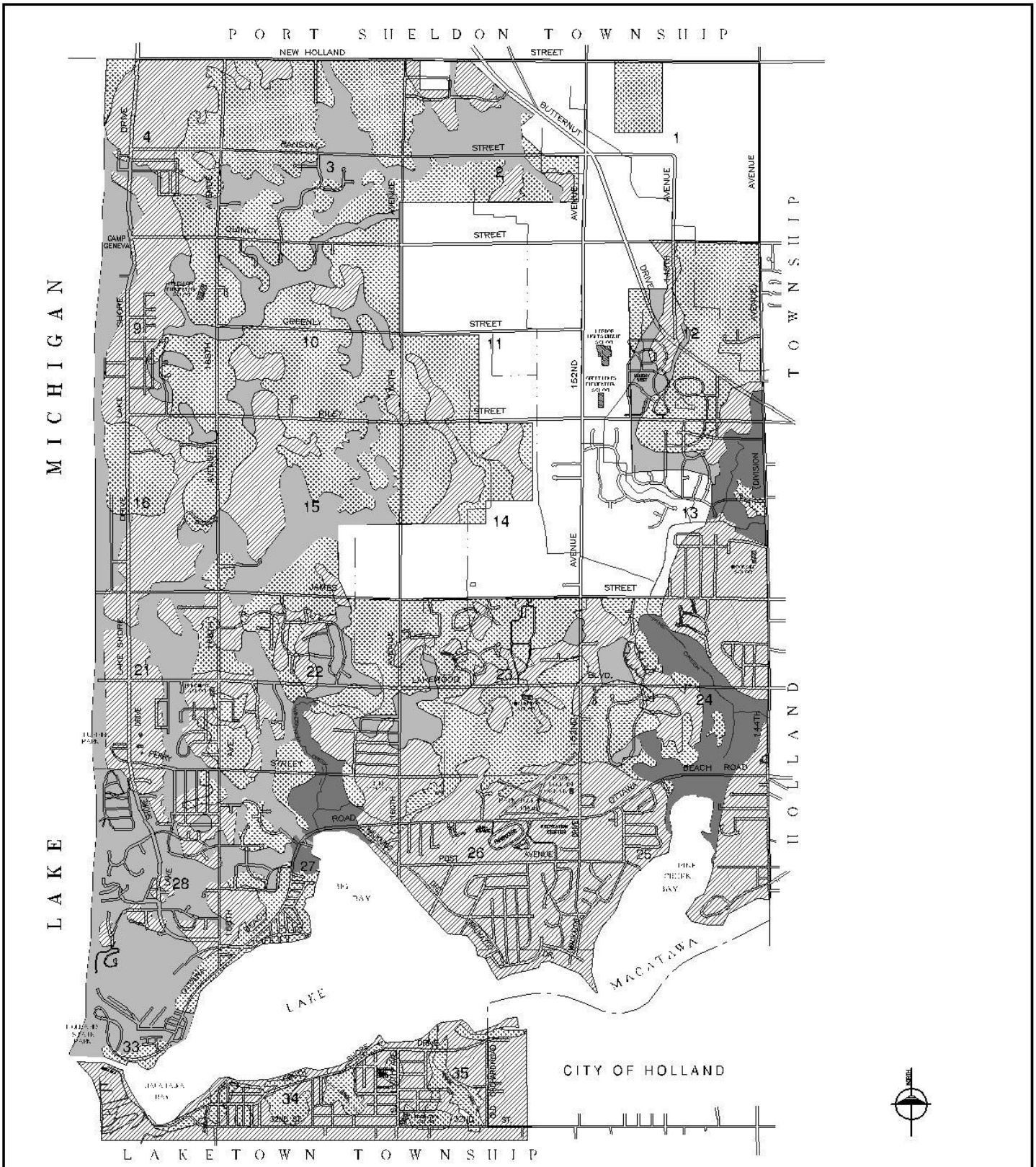
Information on the soil characteristics in Park Township was obtained from the Soil Conservation Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, and is portrayed graphically on the map which follows, entitled "Generalized Soils." Here soils have been classed according to several categories:

Good - Fair for Urban Development	Well to moderately well drained, slopes of less than 10%, slight to moderate erosion; generally free of limitations to development.
Percolation or surface drainage limitations	Poor to very poorly drained areas of marsh and high water tables may hinder effective utilization of septic tanks.
Surface drainage and bearing capacity limitations	Muck, severe limitations to development.
Slope limitations	Slopes above 10%, severe to very severe erosion, generally present severe limitations to development.

An additional category has been included on this map, that being "Active Agriculture". These areas are presently in productive agricultural use. In most cases this use is blueberry farming, but there are areas where field crops such as corn, wheat, and soybeans, and poultry are being produced. This is considered a valuable and necessary asset and, as such, should be protected from urban encroachment.

For the most part, areas of intensive development are generally located in those soils which are classified as being good to fair for urban development. This generally applies to those residential areas located south of Ottawa Beach Road between 160th and 152nd Avenues, the subdivision in the northwest quadrant of 144th Avenue and James Street, the northern portion of Lake Shore Drive, the area immediately north of Perry Street on 160th Avenue, and many of the dwelling units on the south side of Lake Macatawa. However, there are pockets of

dense development which lie in poor drainage areas. These settlements are potential sources of groundwater pollution due to the continued use of septic tanks. Soils that have percolation or surface drainage limitations will, in most cases, present problems for the efficient operation of private septic tanks. Because of high water levels or rapid lateral movement of subsurface waters in these areas, the use of these systems can result in the pollution of neighboring wells and adjacent surface waters. Where these limitations are present, development should be allowed only if there is public sewer service available.



LEGEND

- GOOD–FAIR FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT
- PERCOLATION OR SURFACE DRAINAGE LIMITATIONS
- SURFACE DRAINAGE AND BEARING CAPACITY LIMITATIONS (MUCK)
- SLOPE LIMITATIONS (+10%)
- PRIME AGRICULTURE

PARK TOWNSHIP GENERALIZED SOILS

Williams & Works
a tradition of service
549 Ottawa, N.W. • Grand Rapids, MI 49503
Phone (616) 224-1500 • Fax (616) 224-1501

BASE MAP PROVIDED BY PREIN & NEWHOF

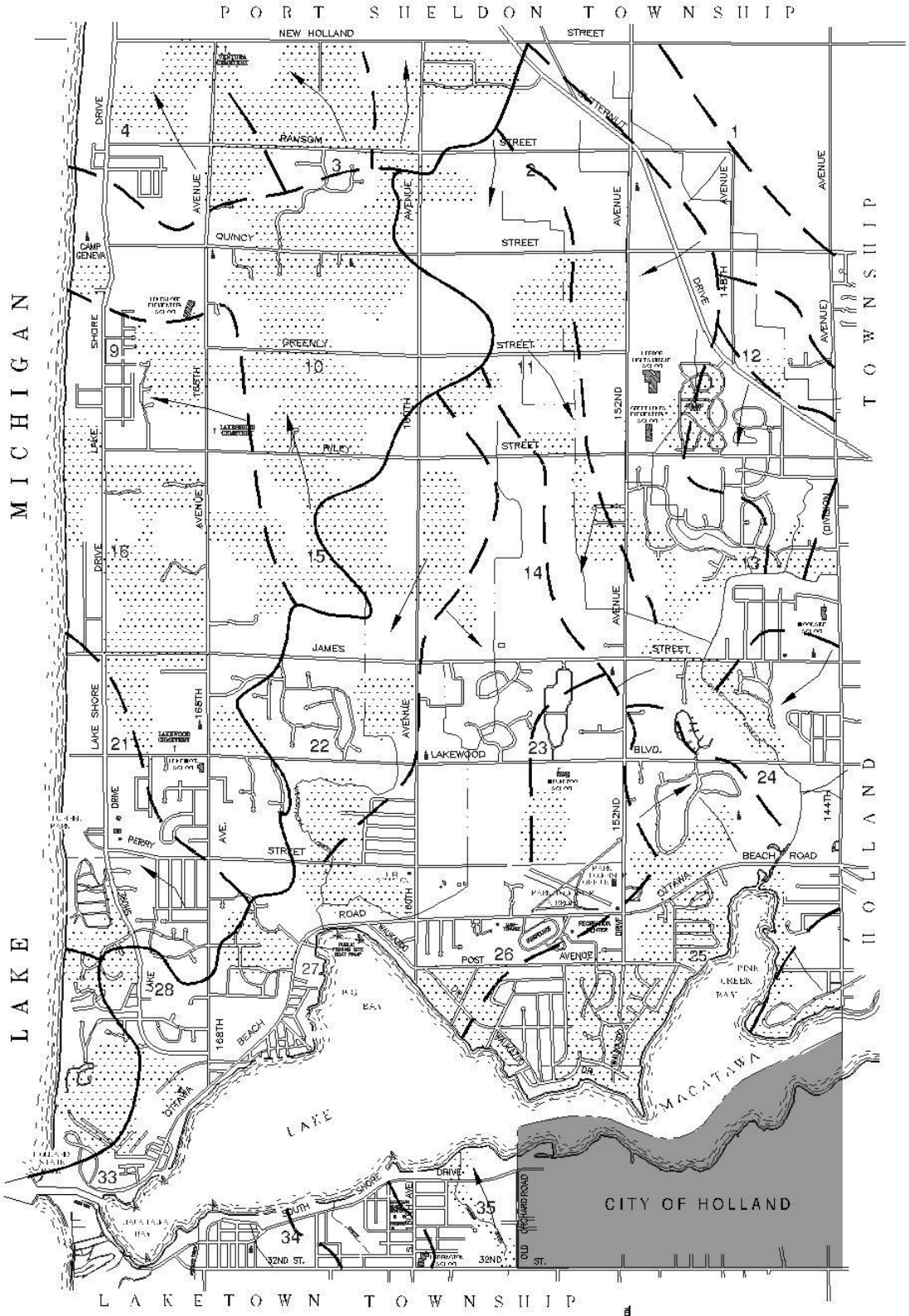
The map on the following page shows the layout of soils that are of local importance in Park Township. The map represents soils that have the characteristics to support farming. This does not mean that the soils always represent "active farmland," rather they display areas that are of local importance because they can support agriculture.

NATURAL FEATURES

The map entitled "Physical Features," shows the locations of water, wetlands, and woodlands in Park Township. The map also illustrates the rivers/creeks in the Township which drain the major and minor drainage districts.

Woodlands and Wetlands - The Township has an abundance of woodlands spread throughout. However, the highest concentration or areas with the largest portion(s) of woodlands are located in the northwest quarter of the Township. The Township has a few large pockets of wetlands which are located just north of Lake Macatawa as illustrated on the Natural Features map. Most of these wetlands lie adjacent to the main streams that feed into the Lake Macatawa. The significance of the woodlands involves the aesthetic value that attracts the rural residential growth. Whereas, wetlands limit development as they are too environmentally sensitive to sustain development.

Water and Drains - The numerous creeks and streams which meander through the eastern two thirds of the Township terminate in Lake Macatawa. Conversely, that portion of the Township west of this line gently slopes toward Lake Michigan where surface water will flow towards the lake. The significance of these drainage patterns lies in their relationship to current and future public utility systems. Whether these systems be designed for public water, sewer, or storm water drainage, it is always less expensive to design with nature and move the particular liquid by gravity. At present, there are public utility systems in the area that have used these principles and held costs as low as possible.



LEGEND

- MAJOR DISTRICT DIVIDE
- MINOR DISTRICT DIVIDE
- DIRECTION OF FLOW
- WOODS

PARK TOWNSHIP PHYSICAL FEATURES

BASE MAP PROVIDED BY PREIN & NEWHOF

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ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Many residents of Park Township have expressed the view that the overall attractiveness of the area is due, in large part, to its environmental characteristics; specifically, the topography, dunes, woods, lakes and streams, and natural areas. In order to preserve and perpetuate these assets for future generations, all future developments should be evaluated in light of the following environmental considerations.

The Planning Commission in its review function should consider whether development projects will:

1. Preserve ecological values and maintain natural open areas;
2. Limit structures in critical areas, such as floodplains, dunes and wetlands, in order to minimize property damage, control water runoff and soil erosion, and improve recreational opportunities;
3. Protect areas of significant views through land development and building height controls;
4. Provide gradations of land uses in order to minimize conflicts; and
5. Protect and preserve productive agricultural areas.
6. Protect the rural scene of the roadway views.
7. Encourage "gifting" of critical or environmentally sensitive areas to the Township or other appropriate agencies.

These environmental considerations will receive additional emphasis as the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) continues to implement the Shorelands Protection and Management Act and the Wetlands Protection Act. Under these and other statutes, the MDNR has the authority to designate certain environmental areas and, in some cases, review site plans for developments that will be affecting such environmental areas.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

In order to determine the special needs for various types of land uses over the course of the planning period, it is necessary to project, as accurately as possible, the size and character of the future population. By their very nature, population projections are only refined estimates of what the future will hold since nobody knows what will be the end result of thousands of individual and public decisions. Assumptions must be made based upon background information and good judgment. Projections are then utilized as a "yardstick" by which land needs are determined and public decisions are made.

While recognizing the uncertainties involved in forecasting future population growth, it is reasonable to assume that the forces at work in the past will continue into the future. Table 2 shows the historic population growth of the Holland Region and Park Township from 1940 through 2000.

Table 2
1940-2000 Population Growth
Park Township and Holland Region

Year	Greater Park Township	Holland Region*	Park Township's Percent of Region
1940	1,962	30,189	6.5%
1950	3,412	37,267	9.2%
1960	4,207	48,439	8.7%
1970	6,639	57,014	11.6%
1980	10,354	67,679	15.8%
1990	13,541	76,566	17.7%
1996	15,937**	n/a	n/a
2000	17,579	102,508	17.1%

* Includes Park Township, cities of Holland and Zeeland and the townships of Port Sheldon, Holland, and Zeeland in Ottawa County and Fillmore and Laketown Townships in Allegan County.

** Based on mid-decade census and building permits.
Source - U.S. Census data

Since 1940, Park Township has steadily increased its population as a percent of the regional total to the point where, in 2000, it represented 17.1 percent of the whole. Table 2 also provides the 1996 population for Park Township. This reflects a special mid-decade census conducted by the Township.

Considering the attractiveness of the area and the large amount of undeveloped land, it is reasonable to predict that the Township will continue this trend throughout the planning period. It should also be noted that Park Township has maintained a high percentage decade growth since 1960. During this period of time, there have been many fluctuations in the economy affecting residential growth and development. Even with these changes, however, residential growth in Park Township has exceeded that of the Holland region.

Interestingly, the following is a statement included in the 1988 Comprehensive Plan: *"Based on this historic trend, a conservative population projection during the 20 year planning period would be 35 percent per decade. Thus, it is felt that a "target" population, or the amount of people to be planned for in Park Township, will be in the neighborhood of 16,200 in 1997 and 21,870 in 2010. This represents an increase of 9,870 people from 1987 to 2010."* Given the latest of population count of 17,579 persons in 2000, this illustrates the effectiveness of analyzing past growth trends to "plan" for changes in population.

The following provides three methods used to project future population. Several techniques have traditionally been used to project future population growth. Any of these methods can be used depending on the availability of the background information required. No single method is superior to others, since all population projections are only refined estimates based on assumptions of what the future may bring.

HOUSING TREND METHOD

The housing trend method projects population based on the historic trend of building permits. By multiplying the average number of persons per household (pph) with the average number of dwelling units (du) constructed each year in the Township, it is possible to extrapolate the increase in persons over a period of time. The following includes Park's estimated population growth based an average of 2.7 pph and 143 du per year.

	1970	1980	1990	2000
Population (pop.)	6,639	10,354	13,541	17,579
Dwelling Units (du)	2,467	3,919	4,643	6,820
Persons per Household (pph)	2.69	2.64	2.91	2.57
Average persons per household				**2.7**

2000 total population: 17,579 (end of the year)

- 140 bldg permits x 2.5 pph = 350 persons in 2003

Between 1980 and 2000, 3,011 building permits/21 years = an average of 143 du/yr

2000 population – 17,579:

Year 2000	Year 2010	Year 2020
17,579	21,440	25,301

(143du/yr x 10yr x 2.7= 3,861 additional persons in each 10 year period)

CONSTANT PROPORTION METHOD

The constant proportion method of projecting population assumes that the Township of Park will maintain the same percentage of Ottawa County's projected population in 2010 and 2020 as it has in 2000. The Michigan Department of Management and Budget (MDMB) has prepared future population projections for all counties throughout the state through 2010. It should be noted that the MDMB projections are preliminary at this point in time and are subject to change. Utilizing the State's projections for Ottawa County, the following illustrates the results of the constant proportion method for Park Township.

	2000	2010	2020
Ottawa County	238,314	303,674	393,643
Park Township	17,579	22,168	28,736

- County projections were provided by the State Demographer, Depart. of Management and Budget.
- Percent of 1990 County's population residing in Park Township was 7.2%.
- Percent of 2000 County's population residing in Park Township was 7.37%.

GROWTH RATE METHOD

The growth rate method projects future population growth (or decline) based on the rate of growth in the Township in the past. The following utilizes the growth rate method, assuming that growth in the future will occur at the same average rate as that which occurred between 1990 and 2000.

Percent Change 1990-2000 (10yrs)	2000	2010	2020
29.8%	17,579	22,818	29,617

Projection Summary

Method:	2000	2010	2020
Housing Trend	17,579	21,440	25,301
Constant Prop.	17,579	22,168	28,736
Growth Rate	17,579	22,818	29,617
Average	**17,579**	**22,142**	**27,885**

BUILD-OUT ANALYSIS

Based on the existing housing density characteristics, assume the following densities for future housing stock:

- About 80% will have a density of 2.5 du/ac.
- About 20% will have a density of 1.0 du/ac.

Following is an "acreage needed" breakdown for dwellings based on these densities.

Year 2000: Actual Population 17,579

Year 2010:

By the year 2010, there will be 4,563 additional persons or 1,690 dwellings in the Township.

1,352 du/2.5 (du/ac.) =	540 acres
338 du/1.0 du/ac. =	338 acres
1,690 du	878 acres for residential development (2000-2010)

This represents 7.2% of the land area in the Township.

Year 2020:

By the year 2020, there will be 5,743 additional persons or 2,127 additional dwellings in the Township.

1,701 du/2.5 (du/ac.) =	680 acres
426 du/1.0 (du/ac.) =	426 acres
2,127	1,106 acres for residential development (2010-2020)

This represents 9.1% of the land area in the Township.

LAND REQUIREMENT SUMMARY

Between 2000 and 2010…	878 acres needed
Between 2010 and 2020…	1106 acres needed

To summarize, approximately 878 acres are needed for residential development by the year 2010 if the Township grows at the same rate as current and past trends and approximately 1,984 acres of land are needed by the year 2020.

Parks and Recreation Areas:

Acres Needed per 1000 Population	Type
1.25	Neighborhood Playground (tot-lot, swings, field & court game area, etc.)
2.00	Neighborhood Park (shelter & toilet facilities, tables & benches, wading pool, areas for ball field and all-weather court, etc.)
10.0	Community Park-Playfield (athletic field, area for court games, swimming pool, etc.)
10.0 +	Green (open) space, beaches, marshland/wetland corridors, wildlife preserves, linkages, snowmobile/ hiking/bicycle trails, marinas, etc.
Total	23.25 acres/1,000 population

Total park and recreation needs equate to 514 acres for 2010 (based on 22,142 residents) assuming an aggregate view. The Township recreation plan projects a need only in the tot lot category.

OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITY LAND NEEDS

In addition to school and park needs, it is estimated the Township will need approximately 30 - 40 acres for other community facilities. This would include such facilities as churches, and medical services.

In total, it is estimated that Park Township will need approximately 918 acres of land to meet the requirements of 22,142 residents in 2010. The following table summarizes the 2010 special needs land use category.

Total 2010 Land Needs

Residential	878	Acres
Parks & Recreation (Refer to Recreation Plan)	0	Acres
Other Community Facilities including Schools	40	Acres
Total (approximately)	918	Acres

PUBLIC INPUT

This Plan will be effective to the degree that it continues to reflect the needs and desires of the people. An essential component of the decision-making process for Township officials is the understanding or a feel for the "public pulse" regarding the resident's desires of the Township's growth.

To capture this public pulse, the Park Township Master Plan Committee mailed a Community Survey to the property owners in January, 1997. This survey asked several questions soliciting the opinions of residents regarding the orderly use and development of land in the Township. The response to the survey was successful as 1,859 of the 6,162 property provided input. This represents a return rate of 30.2 percent.

The following provides a brief summary of the survey results.

- Over half of the respondents have lived in the Township more than 10 years.

- About 95% of the respondents live in single family dwellings while only 2% live in a farm residence.

- Most of the residents live on smaller lots as a majority (86%) are located on lots less than 2 acres in size.

- Almost 70% of those responding feel that the Township is growing too fast, whereas, 26% think it **is** growing at an acceptable rate.

- Two-thirds of the respondents indicated that the Township should not encourage new residential development.

- Those desiring new residential development, prefer single-family dwellings and/or condos.

- Over half of all respondents feel that agricultural and residential uses are in conflict in the Township while almost three quarters feel the Township should restrict residential growth in agricultural areas.

- Almost 70% of the respondents feel that the Township should not encourage commercial development and two-thirds feel the Township needs more open space.

- Eighty-six percent indicated that controlling growth is important to very important.

- Traffic is a factor. Rural scene along roadways is considered in jeopardy.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The residents of Park Township place a high value on the natural features of the community and the access to nature afforded by the Township's rural residential character. While the Planning Commission and the Township Board recognize that some growth of the Township's population may be expected, that growth should be managed to minimize its impact on the essential character of the community. Furthermore, to the extent feasible, the Township is committed to managed growth that actually enhances the community's natural features. Therefore, the essential purpose of this Comprehensive Plan is:

To protect, encourage and retain the integrity of the rural residential character of the community.

Planning goals and objectives must be founded on the fundamental values of the citizens of Park Township. They advance those values and shape the General Land Use and Circulation Plan. An effective goal statement must describe a desired condition or end state the community seeks to achieve and it must enjoy broad-based support within the community. Generally, a goal statement should look twenty to twenty-five years into the future and be stated in positive terms. An objective statement is often described as a milestone or sub-element of the goal. Objectives are more specific than goals and should have some measurable aspect so that progress toward the objective may be noted.

The following goals and objectives have been adopted by the Planning Commission to form the policy foundations for this Plan.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Goal: Park Township will preserve its diversified residential character, managing growth to assure that new residential developments are adequately and economically served by public utilities and roads and that they enhance the quality of life.

Objectives:

(a) Manage the development of single family homes on a rational and sequential basis.

(b) Provide for a range of housing types to accommodate varying needs in terms of household size, location and style.

(c) Manage the bulk and scale of new housing development to assure an appropriate balance between building size and development site in keeping with the rural residential character of the Township.

(d) Promote the development of innovative housing developments. Such housing should be compatible with adjacent land uses and transition or buffer zones should be provided as necessary.

(e) Promote the preservation of the existing housing quality and neighborhoods through effective code enforcement.

(f) Locate medium and high density residential uses near adequate support services such as public water and sewer while ensuring their compatibility with lower density living areas.

(g) Preserve the rural residential character of agricultural areas by restricting uses to those compatible with existing agricultural operations.

(h) Encourage and promote the preservation of open space and greenway connections in new developments.

(i) Promote the use of effectively landscaped entry points in new developments to provide a sense of entry to the neighborhood and to further the Township's rural character.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Goal: The residents of Park Township will enjoy a broad range of open space and recreation areas and facilities throughout the community.

Objectives:

(a) Pursue a timely and economical open space acquisition and development program to meet the future needs of the Township.

(b) Develop, maintain and enhance a system of recreational facilities for use by area residents including lake access points, non-motorized trails, neighborhood and community parks and athletic fields, and a community recreation facility.

(c) Manage development to preserve important scenic views limiting the intrusion of buildings and development impacts on natural viewsheds.

(d) Encourage the use of landscaped and natural corridors along section roads with sufficient depth and vegetation to preserve rural character.

(e) Use conservation easements where appropriate as a method to preserve open space.

(f) Encourage developers to provide open space, green space, and recreational areas as part of their design plans and to permit the connection of those areas to others in the community, furthering a network of connected greenways.

(g) Develop neighborhood recreational facilities in conjunction with school facilities to provide economical and convenient recreational opportunities.

(h) Preserve access to Lake Macatawa and Lake Michigan as regional and local recreational resources.

(i) Incorporate the Greenways Plan within new developments where appropriate.

COMMERCIAL

Goal: To serve local residents, Park Township will provide commercial land uses that compliment and incorporate the

natural features of the area and which conform to the planned character of local neighborhoods.

Objectives:

(a) Encourage the upgrading of existing commercial areas.and prohibit the expansion of nonconforming commercial uses and eliminate such uses whenever possible.

(b) Limit commercial uses to planned areas that effectively meet the commercial needs of area residents and which are served with transportation and utility infrastructure.

(c) Review and update existing sign regulations with the objective of reducing the size of signs permitted in the Township.

(d) Encourage the use of site design techniques that include attractive landscaping which incorporates the Township's natural character within the development.

(e) Promote pedestrian and bikeway connections to commercial areas to permit non-motorized access to commercial services for community residents.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL FEATURES

Goal: The environmental quality of Park Township will be preserved and enhanced through the thoughtful and sustainable utilization of the Township's natural resources.

Objectives:

(a) Preserve and protect such environmentally sensitive areas as critical dunes, wetlands, woodlands and floodplains through effective regulatory oversight and enforcement.

(b) Preserve the viewsheds of such important natural features as Lake Michigan and Lake Macatawa by managing the scale and placement of buildings that adjoin these areas. Expand community access to important viewshed areas by encouraging scenic turnouts and similar amenities on public rights-of-way and greenway corridors.

(c) Encourage site planning techniques that incorporate permitted development into the natural topography of the Township, preserving natural vegetation and landforms wherever possible.

(d) Limit the siting and operation of extractive processes to the extent possible to those areas that are best able to sustain such practices and regulate the ancillary impacts of such processes to minimize the effect on neighboring properties.

(e) Consider stormwater and runoff management regulations to control localized flooding conditions and to promote surface water quality in streams and wetlands.

TRANSPORTATION, ROADS, AND TRAFFIC

Goal: The roadway and transportation system of Park Township will provide safe and efficient access to all parts of the community while enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the community.

Objectives:

(a) Promote the efficient flow of traffic through the use of appropriate access management techniques and such traffic control measures as signals, by-pass lanes, deceleration lanes and shared driveways wherever necessary along major arterials.

(b) Minimize conflict between land uses and roadways through such techniques as building setback, access roads and proper driveway and curbcut design and placement to manage ingress and egress.

(c) Promote the installation of trees, berms and other similar types of landscaping along Township roads as development occurs and roadways are improved.

(d) Develop, maintain and enhance a system of pedestrian and bicycle routes which is separated as much as possible from motor vehicles.

(e) Separate major arterials from residential neighborhoods so that these arterials bound rather than divide neighborhoods.

(f) Develop measures to require the design and construction of all public and private roadways in accord with the standards of the Ottawa County Road Commission.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goal: The residents of Park Township will enjoy a high level of public services and community facilities thoughtfully planned and economically delivered.

Objective:

(a) Provide those fire protection and police services necessary to maintain the safety, security and well being of Township residents.

(b) Provide water, sanitary sewer and storm drainage facilities adequate to meet development needs. Extend water and sewer facilities in accord with the growth management objectives of this Plan.

(c) Support an atmosphere of cooperation among units of government, school districts, MACC, and other public agencies to maximize the impact of public investments.

(d) Participate in community wide initiatives.

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION

Goal: Preserve active agricultural lands for farming activities.

Objectives:

(a) Minimize the fragmentation of farmlands by limiting isolated residential developments in agricultural areas.

(b) Use local land division regulations to balance the objective of preserving farmlands with individual property rights.

(c) Support the right to farm and encourage effective buffers between new residential development and farmlands.

(d) Identify and reserve highly productive soils and promote soil erosion management and conservation techniques.

(e) Encourage ecological and environmentally advanced farming practices.

(f) Protect active agricultural areas from encroachment of non-farm developments.

GENERAL LAND USE AND CIRCULATION PLAN

The Future Land Use Plan is a compilation of descriptions, recommendations and justification for future land use in Park Township. It serves as an overall framework for the management and regulation of future development and also serves as the basis for evaluating rezoning requests.

The Township Planning Act (Act 168 of 1959, as amended), specifically gives a Township Planning Commission the authority to prepare and adopt a Plan. When prepared, officially adopted and maintained, this Plan should provide an advisory guide for the physical conservation of certain areas and for the development of other areas into the best possible living environment for present and future Township residents.

Because of the constant change in our social and economic structure and activities, the Plan must be maintained through periodic review and revision so that it reflects contemporary trends while maintaining long-range goals.

The Land Use Plan is general in scope. It is not in most cases intended to establish precise boundaries of land use or exact locations of future uses. It is also important to note that there is no schedule to implement the recommendations contained here. The timing of a particular land use is dependent upon a number of factors such as availability of public utilities, provisions for adequate roadways and pedestrian ways, effect on public services and the demand for a particular land use versus the lands available and zoned for this use. Those, plus other factors, must be considered when reviewing a request for rezoning a particular parcel of land.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF PLANNING TO ZONING

The relationship between land use planning and zoning is an important one. Planning is the act of arranging the uses of land within a community for the future from a policy standpoint, while zoning is the act of regulating the use of these lands by law or ordinance. The laws of the State of Michigan require that a community engage in land use planning activities, including the preparation of a Comprehensive Plan or Master Plan, prior to the adoption of a zoning ordinance.

The following narrative provides a better understanding of the terms "planning" and "zoning."

LAND USE PLANNING

Land use planning is the process of guiding the future growth and development of a community. Generally, a document is prepared known as the Comprehensive Plan which addresses the various factors relating to the growth of a community. Through the processes of land use planning, it is intended that a community can preserve, promote, protect and improve public health, safety and general welfare while preserving and protecting personal property rights. Additional considerations include comfort, good order, appearance, convenience, law enforcement and fire protection, preventing the overcrowding of land to avoid undue concentration of population, facilitating the adequate and efficient provision of transportation, water, sewage requirements and services, and conservation, development, utilization and protection of natural resources within the community.

ZONING

Zoning is one of the instruments, along with capital improvements programming and the administration of local subdivision regulations, which implements the goals and policies of a Master Plan. The enactment and administration of the Zoning Ordinance are legislative and administrative processes conducted by local units of government relating to the implementation of the goals and policies of the Master Plan.

PLAN ASSUMPTIONS

The goals and policies previously outlined and analysis of the Township's physical, social and economic makeup have allowed the formulation of seven broad assumptions that were used in the development of a long-range development plan. These include:

1. The majority of Township residents prefer living in a rural or a rural residential setting.

2. The population is expected to increase over the next two decades at a fairly significant rate.

3. Development in the Township will focus on high quality residential development arranged to preserve natural features and access to viewsheds and shorelines.

4. Non-farm development should be discouraged from infringing on those portions of the Township characterized by productive farmlands.

5. In all but the least dense residential development, public water and wastewater services should be provided.

6. As the Township continues to grow, a network of greenway corridors will be encouraged to provide pedestrian and non-motorized pathways to connect important open lands and nodes of green areas.

7. Flexible and innovative development techniques will be encouraged to promote the preservation of natural resources and open lands and to provide appropriate transitions between uses of varying intensity.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

This section outlines a general land use plan intended to achieve the general goals and objectives of Park Township relative to growth and development. The Future Land Use Plan is illustrated on the Map 5 and the descriptions of each future land use designation are presented below. From these descriptions, a range of strategies and policies will be developed to implement the Plan and give substance to the goals.

The future land use descriptions serve as an advisory guide for the physical conservation of certain areas of the Township and for the development of others all in accord with the essential purpose of the Plan: To protect, encourage and retain the integrity of the rural residential character of the community.

In addition to the essential purpose of this plan, it is important to understand its limitations. The process of planning and the resulting Comprehensive Plan is not unlike the planning and design of a home. The result is a set of plans, or blueprints. The actual construction of that home requires building materials, tools and resources. In land use planning, the tools that implement the plan include the zoning ordinance, the subdivision control ordinance, the building code and

similar regulations. Equally important is the continued public support for the overall goals of the plan.

Therefore, while the following land use designations are provided here, the mechanisms to carry out the plan will be found in other Township regulations.

AGRICULTURAL

The primary purpose of this land use classification is to preserve agricultural lands. The majority of citizens, as indicated in the citizen survey, felt it was important to protect and preserve active agricultural lands. This is also a goal expressed in the Ottawa County Development Plan. Within the County Plan, active farmlands are a preservation goal and are identified as being threatened by continued development throughout the County.

A problem or challenge related to preserving farmland is the demand for rural homesites in areas which are currently being farmed. Residents have moved from urban areas and are often unprepared for the normal effects of farming operations. These include odors, equipment noise, dust, pesticide spray, crop dusting and other activities which may conflict with their expectations and desires for a rural living environment.

To accommodate this increasing demand within the Township, the Planning Commission will need to develop regulations which preserve active farmland but also permit on a limited basis non-farm dwellings to occur without hampering agricultural operations. A method that can be used to accomplish this objective is to permit only single-family, planned or clustered non-farm dwellings on unproductive parcels of land such as wood lots or sand hills as a special land use. The use of this technique will reduce the number of curb cuts on county roads and maximize their efficiency to move traffic. This technique must also include effective buffer areas between these non-farm residences and an active farming operation to minimize the ordinary impacts of a farm operation on a non-farm dwelling. Other techniques may include clustering some housing development in the non-productive areas, but simultaneously limiting the impact of that housing on the natural features and wildlife in the area.

RURAL ESTATE RESIDENTIAL

This classification is intended to provide for residential development on large lots with a density of one unit per two developed acres. Some limited agricultural activities which do not adversely affect single family uses such as raising horses or nurseries would be permitted as well as certain institutional uses such as private campgrounds. The large lots recommended for this land use classification permit residential development to occur in areas where public water and sanitary sewer are not planned and also help to maintain the rural residential character of the Township. Development within this land use designation will be subject to landscaping and setback requirements to preserve natural and unspoiled corridors. In the Rural Estate Residential designation, scenic and conservation easements will be encouraged to permit greenway connections and to preserve the rural character of the Township. Public water and sewer services are not anticipated within this designation during the planning horizon of this Plan. However, it is possible that during future planning periods, such services will be provided.

Within the Rural Estate Residential designation, extractive processes may be sited and operated only in those areas that are best able to sustain such practices. Furthermore, the Township will regulate the ancillary impacts of such processes to minimize the effect on neighboring properties.

LAKE SHORE RESIDENTIAL

This land classification is intended to be developed at a density of one dwelling unit per acre primarily along the Lake Michigan shoreline and east to Lake Shore Drive. The primary purpose of this designation is to prevent over crowding of the lake frontage. Other compatible uses such as parks, schools and churches, are also permitted within this classification. The viewsheds of such important natural features as Lake Michigan and Lake Macatawa in this designation will be preserved by managing the scale and placement of buildings that adjoin these areas. Further, community access to important viewshed areas will be enhanced within this land use by encouraging scenic turnouts and similar amenities on public rights-of-way and greenway corridors. Public water and sewer services are not anticipated within this designation during the planning horizon of this Plan. However, it is possible that during future planning periods, such services will be provided.

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (LDR)

This land use classification is intended to be developed at a density of approximately three dwelling units per developed acre and is typified by conventional single family homes. A major objective of the Plan is to promote the development of such single family homes on a rational and sequential neighborhood basis. This is expected to be the predominant type of residential use in Park Township.

Future LDR areas are expected to develop as public water and sanitary sewer service are extended into this part of the Township. Within existing LDR areas, in-fill housing development will be encouraged to maximize the community's investment in infrastructure.

Certain non-residential uses compatible with single family residences (i.e., parks, churches and schools) are also permitted within the Low Density Residential classification. Innovative and non-traditional forms of housing may be incorporated in the LDR area within the density limits of up to three units per acre. These may include clustered housing with open lands, greenways and water features in conservation easements. New developments will be encouraged to utilize extensive landscaping and vegetation to create an aesthetic sense of entry and to further the rural character of the community. However, the bulk scale and positioning of buildings must be carefully managed to preserve the aesthetics of a neighborhood and any viewsheds within the area. Furthermore, public bikeway and pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and natural features will be encouraged.

OPEN SPACE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT (OSDD)

The Township Planners and leaders recognize that the exclusive use of large lot single-family developments will result in excessive sprawl and a loss of beauty in the community. In response, an OSDD land designation has been established in that portion of the Township that is likely to experience increasing growth pressure.

This land use is intended to encourage the flexible and innovative arrangement of residences within a development to preserve and enhance natural features and open lands without a sacrifice in residential quality or giving away excessive density. The OSDD designation also makes an appropriate transition between agricultural and rural estate residential land uses and areas of more intense development.

The purpose of this designation is to encourage open space preservation. Developments within this land use preserving less than 50% of open space receive no density bonus. Developments preserving at least 50% of open space may qualify for Cluster Open Space Development (COSD) designation. The overall base density standard would be one unit per two useable acres. When an applicant applies for COSD, a density bonus of up to 20% of the base density may be received, so that the maximum density for a COSD could be 1.2 times the base density. For the purposes of this Plan, "useable acreage" would exclude wetlands, steep slopes and areas that cannot be used due to soil conditions. Flexible arrangements would be permitted to site buildings to take advantage of natural views and to reduce development costs. Public water and wastewater services are mandatory in this classification.

The open space preserved through this designation may be made available for either passive or active recreational use or farmland. In addition, the OSDD land use classification and implementation techniques may be used to preserve some limited agricultural activities.

PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Township Planners and leaders recognize that the exclusive use of large lot single-family developments will result in excessive sprawl and a loss of beauty in the community. In response, a PRD land designation has been established in that portion of the Township that is likely to experience increasing growth pressures.

This land use is intended to encourage the flexible and innovative arrangement of residences within a development to preserve and enhance natural features and open lands without a sacrifice in residential quality or giving way to excessive density. The PRD designation also makes an appropriate transition between agricultural and rural estate residential land uses and areas of more intense development.

The purpose of this designation is to encourage open space preservation. Developments within this land use preserving less than 50% of open space receive no density bonus. Developments preserving at least 50% of open space may qualify for Cluster Plan Residential Development (CPRD) designation. The overall base density standard would be one unit per useable acre. When an applicant applies for CPRD, a density bonus of up to 20% of the base density may be received, so that the maximum density for a CPRD could be 1.2 times

the base density. For the purposes of this Plan, "useable acreage" would exclude wetlands, steep slopes and areas that cannot be used due to soil conditions. Flexible arrangements would be permitted to site buildings to take advantage of natural views and to reduce development costs. Public water and wastewater services are mandatory in this classification.

The open space preserved through this designation may be made available for either passive or active recreational use or farmland. In addition, the PRD land use classification and implementation techniques may be used to preserve some limited agricultural activities.

MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (MDR)

This type of land use can accommodate both single family and two family owner occupied dwelling units. Dwellings can be developed at approximately four units per developed acre.

Existing Medium Density uses are located in several areas of the Township. These areas were platted and developed before current zoning ordinance regulations were adopted. These existing MDR areas do not reflect current Township objectives regarding residential land use of this density. Any new developments must comply with applicable Township regulations. Within existing MDR areas, in-fill housing development will be encouraged to maximize the community's investment in infrastructure.

Medium Density Residential land uses which are adjacent to Low Density Residential areas should provide for a transition zone to insure compatibility in housing style, ownership and appearance between these two different residential densities. Medium Density Residential uses may be located along or near major arterial streets and may also serve as a buffer or transition zone between non-residential uses and low density residential uses. Public water and sanitary sewer are necessary to serve this type of land use.

Certain innovative and non-traditional forms of housing may be incorporated in the MDR area within the density limits of up to four units per acre. These may include owner occupied clustered housing or condominiums with open lands, greenways and water features in conservation easements. However, the bulk scale and positioning of buildings must be carefully managed to preserve the aesthetics of a neighborhood and any viewsheds within the area. New developments will be encouraged to utilize extensive landscaping and vegetation to

create an aesthetic sense of entry and to further the rural character of the community. Furthermore, public bikeway and pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and natural features will be encouraged.

HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (HDR)

This land use classification can accommodate up to eight units per developable acre for multi-family uses. Single and two family owner occupied dwelling units would also be included within this classification but at lower densities. Existing high density residential areas were developed before the current zoning ordinance regulations were adopted for such uses. Within existing HDR areas, in-fill housing development will be encouraged to maximize the community's investment in infrastructure.

Future HDR developments should be sensitive to the natural features of the land and preserve woods, slopes and wetlands perhaps by clustering buildings. Such uses should also be designed for compatibility with nearby residential land uses. Setbacks, landscaping and buffer strips should be used to help reduce the affects of HDR uses on areas of lower density. In addition, bulk scale and positioning of buildings must be carefully managed to preserve the aesthetics of a neighborhood and any viewsheds within the area

Multiple family developments should be located near such amenities as shopping and recreational facilities, along major streets and must be served by public water and sanitary sewer.

PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD)

A PUD is a zoning technique and discussion of such a tool is typically confined to a Zoning Ordinance rather than a land use Plan. However, because Park Township seeks to establish a strong land use regulatory framework, this technique is highlighted in this Plan. A PUD permits desirable development in a manner that is more flexible than could normally be accomplished under traditional zoning regulations. In a PUD, a development is planned and built as a single unit and variations could be permitted from such normal zoning regulations as land use, setbacks and other site design standards. Through proper design, certain land uses in a PUD can be made to be compatible with adjacent land uses.

In order to insure good design approval or denial, a PUD should be based on a careful evaluation of the following criteria, or performance standards, as applied to the site proposed for the PUD, properties abutting this site and the general surrounding area.

PUD Plan Design Review Criteria

(a)	Traffic	amount and type
(b)	Access	safety and convenience
(c)	Parking	location, screening, amount, lighting
(d)	Signs	size, location, lighting, character
(e)	Landscaping	location, buffers, amount, types, age, size
(f)	Noise	amount, frequency
(g)	Natural Environment	soils, trees, vegetation, wetlands
(h)	Circulation	on-site, vehicle, pedestrian, public transportation
(i)	Architectural Character	height, size, siting of structure
(j)	Utilities (water, sewer)	availability, capacity
(k)	Schools	location, needs, impact
(l)	Public Safety Facilities	access, availability, need
(m)	Land Use Transition	on-site, off-site
(n)	Air Pollution	type, amount, odor
(o)	Energy Consumption	type, amount, availability
(p)	Drainage	location, capacity, type
(q)	Density	net, adjacent development
(r)	Open Space, Green Space	amount, type, and connections

NON-RESIDENTIAL USES IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

It is recognized that it is necessary to provide for the establishment of certain non-residential land uses within residential areas subject to the implementation of measures which are designed to insure compatibility. Such non-residential uses commonly include religious and educational institutions, recreational uses such as parks, golf

courses and playfields, and public utility facilities. Regulations should be adopted addressing such items as traffic generation, noise, lighting and trespass in order to mitigate the possibility of negative impacts on residential neighborhoods.

COMMERCIAL

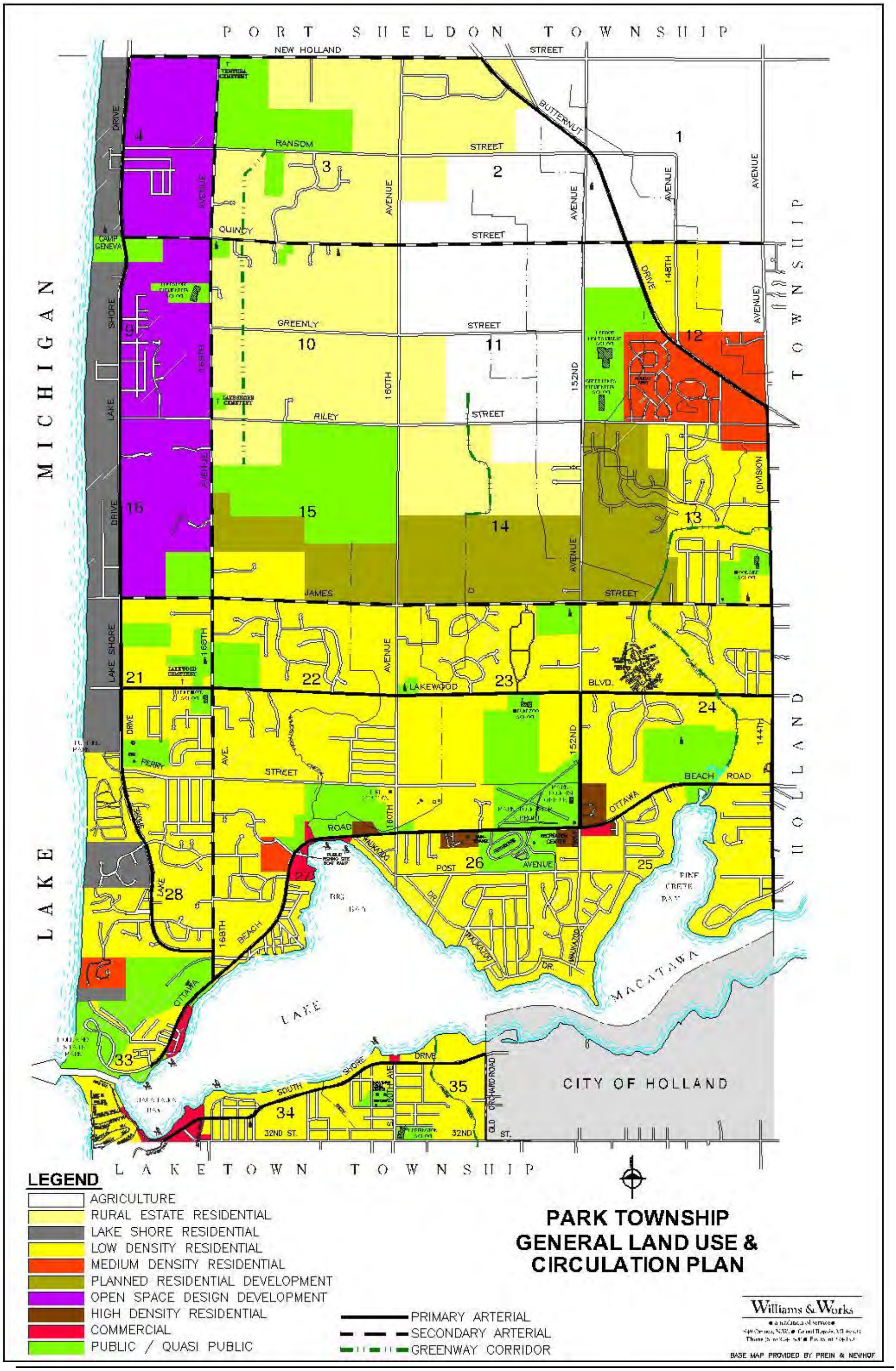
There are two different types of commercial land uses within the Township, those which serve the day to day commercial service and retail needs of nearby residents and uses which operate primarily on a seasonal basis. The latter are located near Holland State Park and along Ottawa Beach Road as well as at the west end of South Shore Drive. Neighborhood shopping uses are primarily located along Ottawa Beach Road closer to the established and more populated residential areas, as well as along South Shore Drive. To maximize the community's investment in existing infrastructure, in-fill commercial development will be encouraged and significant expansions of commercial areas will be discouraged. In new commercial development, efforts to integrate the natural features of the area into the development will be encouraged through site design and landscaping requirements.

PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC

This classification refers primarily to lands devoted to governmental, institutional or similar activities generally deemed to be in the public interest--public buildings, schools, parks, utility right-of-way, churches, etc. These areas vary in size and are scattered throughout the Township.

The Park Township Airport is the largest single parcel owned by Park Township. There have been many discussions regarding the potential reuse of this property and the community has indicated a preference to maintain it as a general aviation facility serving the western Ottawa County area.

Also included in this designation are public access points to Lake Michigan and Lake Macatawa. These are generally public rights-of-way that terminate at the water's edge. These areas should be preserved and enhanced to broaden the ability of the public to access these important features. Such access point planning and development could be coordinated among the Township Recreation Commission, Township Park Development Committee, and the Ottawa County Parks Commission.


PORT SHELDON TOWNSHIP
NEW HOLLAND
STREET
BUTTERNUT
RANSOM
STREET
QUINCY
STREET
GREENLY
STREET
RILEY
STREET
JAMES
STREET
LAKEWOOD
BLVD.
PERRY
STREET
BEACH
ROAD
OTTAWA
POST
AVENUE
BIG
BAY
PINE
CREEK
BAY
MACATAWA
LAKE
CITY OF HOLLAND
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DRIVE
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LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
MICHIGAN
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LEGEND
AGRICULTURE
RURAL ESTATE RESIDENTIAL
LAKE SHORE RESIDENTIAL
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
OPEN SPACE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT
HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
COMMERCIAL
PUBLIC / QUASI PUBLIC
PRIMARY ARTERIAL
SECONDARY ARTERIAL
GREENWAY CORRIDOR
PARK TOWNSHIP
GENERAL LAND USE &
CIRCULATION PLAN
Williams & Works
BASE MAP PROVIDED BY PREIN & NEWHOF

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

In order for the Comprehensive Plan to serve as an effective guide to the continued development of Park Township it must be implemented. Primary responsibility for implementing the Plan rests with the Park Township Board of Trustees, the Planning Commission and the Township staff. This is done through a number of methods. These include ordinances, programs and administrative procedures which are described in this chapter.

It is important to note that the Comprehensive Plan itself has no legal authority to regulate development in order to implement the recommendations of the Plan. This implementation must come from the decisions of the Board of Trustees and Planning Commission to provide needed public improvements and to administer and establish regulatory measures relative to the use of the land.

The private sector is also involved in fulfilling the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan by the actual physical development of land uses. The authority for this, however, comes from the Township. Cooperation between the public and private sectors is therefore important in successful implementation of the Master Plan.

ZONING

Zoning represents a legal means for the Township to regulate private property to achieve orderly land use relationships. It is the process most commonly used to implement community Master Plans. The zoning process consists of an official zoning map and zoning ordinance text.

The official zoning map divides the community into different zones or districts within which certain uses are permitted and others are not. The zoning ordinance text notes the uses which are permitted and establishes regulations to control densities, height, bulk, setbacks, lot sizes and accessory uses.

The zoning ordinance also sets forth procedures for site plan review, special approval regulations and controls over signs. These measures permit the Township to control the quality as well as the type of development.

The present zoning ordinance and map should be reviewed and updated, if necessary, to reflect the proposals and recommendations contained in this Plan. Since a zoning ordinance is the primary implementation tool for carrying out the Plan, it is mandatory that it be relevant and strictly enforced.

SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

This Ordinance was adopted by the Park Township Board of Trustees under authority of Michigan Act 288 of 1967, the Subdivision Control Act. This Ordinance sets forth requirements and procedures to control the subdivision of vacant land for development.

Both the Township Board and Planning Commission are involved in reviewing requests for land development under this Ordinance.

REVISIONS TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan should be updated periodically (minor review every three to four years, major review every ten years) in order to be responsive to new growth trends and current Township attitudes. As growth occurs over the years the Comprehensive Plan goals, land use information, population projections and other pertinent data should be reviewed and revised as necessary so the Plan can continue to serve as a valid guide to the growth of the Township.

ADOPTING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This Comprehensive Plan report has been prepared to present the background information of the planning study to the citizens so that they may review its proposals and the reasons behind these proposals. The maps included will be references or working tools of the Planning Commission each time advice is requested on a specific problem.

After the citizens have been given an opportunity to read the Comprehensive Plan report, the Planning Commission will schedule a public hearing. The purpose of this hearing will be to obtain additional viewpoints, new ideas, points of disagreement, and any important factors which may have been overlooked during the course of the planning study. Following the hearing, the Planning Commission will hold additional meetings to consider the comments and information presented at the hearing. After arriving at final conclusions, the Planning Commission will make final changes to the Comprehensive Plan. Then, the Planning Commission will officially

adopt the Comprehensive Plan for the Township of Park. The Planning Commission will then send copies of the Comprehensive Plan and the adoption resolution to the Ottawa County Planning Commission and the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission for their information

EFFECT OF ADOPTION

State law provides that the Township Board must refer matters dealing with the construction, location or character of public streets, public structures, public utilities or public land to the Planing Commission for advice and recommendation before taking final action. If the Township Board does not concur with the recommendation of the Planning Commission, it must obtain a vote of not less than a majority of its membership in order to override that recommendation.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

After the Comprehensive Plan has been adopted, the Planning Commission must use its persuasion to bring about the adoption of ordinances which will carry out the policies of the plan. These laws can only be adopted by the elected officials. After the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, copies of zoning ordinance and land subdivision ordinance amendments should be sent to the Township Board for consideration. The Planning Commission should meet with the Township Board to review the policies and the provisions within them. After agreement has been reached between the Township Board and the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission will introduce the ordinances and schedule a public hearing to obtain additional comments, points of disagreement, or additional ideas. The Planning Commission will then make the final corrections to the ordinances, or the maps which are part of the ordinances, and vote to recommend their adoption by the Township Board.

The Township Board will place the ordinances on its agenda and consider them at its regular public meeting. The Township Board will hear any further comments or suggestions from the public prior to taking final action. If it desires, the Township Board may refer the ordinances back to the Planning Commission for final advice upon any questions raised by the public at the Township Board meeting prior to final adoption.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLEMENTATION

The Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Ordinance will be the most important tools in carrying out the concepts of the Comprehensive Plan. They will directly control all future land usage and the development of the future street and utility systems of the community. It is important to realize that only a small portion of the streets and buildings of the future community exists today. Forty years from now most of the streets and buildings in the community will have been developed under these proposed regulations. This points out the importance of having a highly qualified and conscientious Planning Commission and Building Inspector, for these individuals will be directly responsible for enforcing these regulations.

Along with its administrative review duties, the Planning Commission should take the initiative to work closely with the School Boards, the Chamber of Commerce, the Township Recreation Commission, the Planning Commissions of surrounding communities and the County. The Commission should urge these groups to adopt proposals of the Comprehensive Plan which cannot be carried out by the Township Board. It will often take many years of constant persuasion to bring these ideas to reality. Experience has shown that the difference between Comprehensive Plan ideas being carried out or being lost and forgotten is a direct consequence of the activity and enthusiasm of the Planning Commission.

CONCLUSION

This updated Comprehensive Plan climaxes 5 months of review and discussion by the Comprehensive Plan Review Committee and Planning Commission and its planning consultant. It represents minor changes in the background information to reflect the availability of 2000 US Census data and revision to the Open Space Design Development and Planned Residential Development segments of the plan to reflect actual practice. The Goals and Objectives remain as adopted in 1998 along with the General Land Use and Circulation Plan map. This update is also in response to the new State legislation requiring a review and update every five years. This Comprehensive Plan update has been completed under this new regulation. Yet this report is only the beginning of a program of action for the next twenty years. Because the future well being of Park Township depends upon sound, coordinated action, the Planning Commission stands ready at all times to meet with any person or group in the Park Township area.

The Planning Commission will always be available to help and guide any person or group who needs advice or who wishes to have a part of the Comprehensive Plan acted upon.

Carrying out a continuing planning program will not be an easy task. There will be times when community action is not forthcoming. However, if a proposal of the plan is sound and presents a solution to a problem which must eventually be solved, it will be realized some day. Carrying out this Comprehensive Plan is not a task which depends upon any one group for its success or failure. It depends upon every responsible citizen of Park Township, for even the most devoted Planning Commission will be rendered ineffectual by citizen apathy. The Township of Park can be, and of necessity must be, a desirable, attractive and convenient community in which to live, play and work. Achieving this will depend upon you.