



Sub Area M-24

SECTION

Planning Area

M-24 Sub Area

Existing Conditions

1994 Master Plan

The 1994 Master Plan for the Township, called for the M-24 Corridor to be planned largely for Agricultural / Rural Preservation as well as Single Family - Low Density. One small area was planned for Single Family - Moderate Density in the Briar Hill Road area.

Those areas on the west side of M-24, between Hunters Creek Road and Briar Hill were planned for Agricultural / Rural Preservation, while south of Hunters Creek was planned for Single Family - Low Density.

Along the east side of M-24, the predominate planned land use was Single Family - Low Density, with the exception of that area just north and just south of Hunters Creek Road.

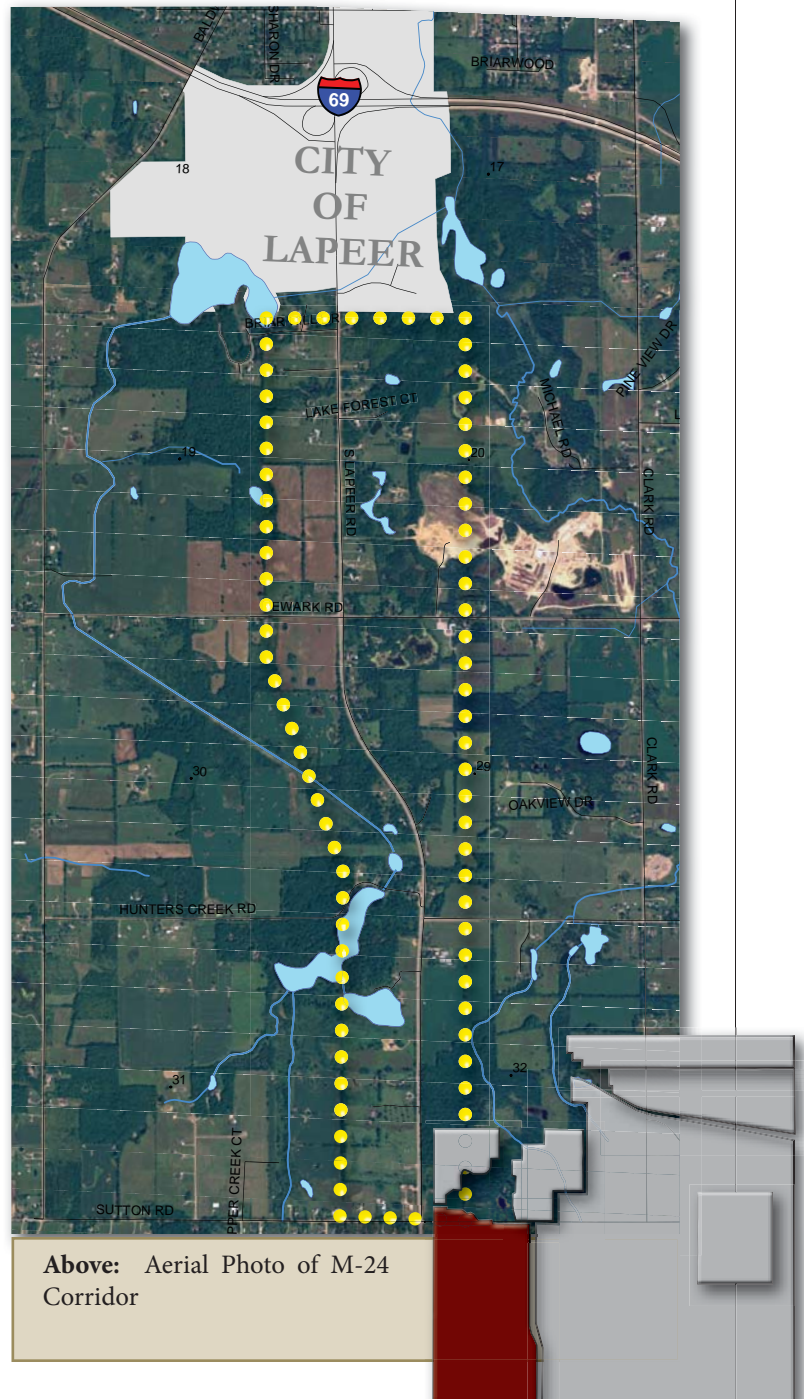
The planned densities for the Agricultural / Rural Preservation designation was approximately 0.2 dwelling units per acre. While the planned densities within the Single Family - Low Density designation was approximately one unit per acre.

Existing Zoning

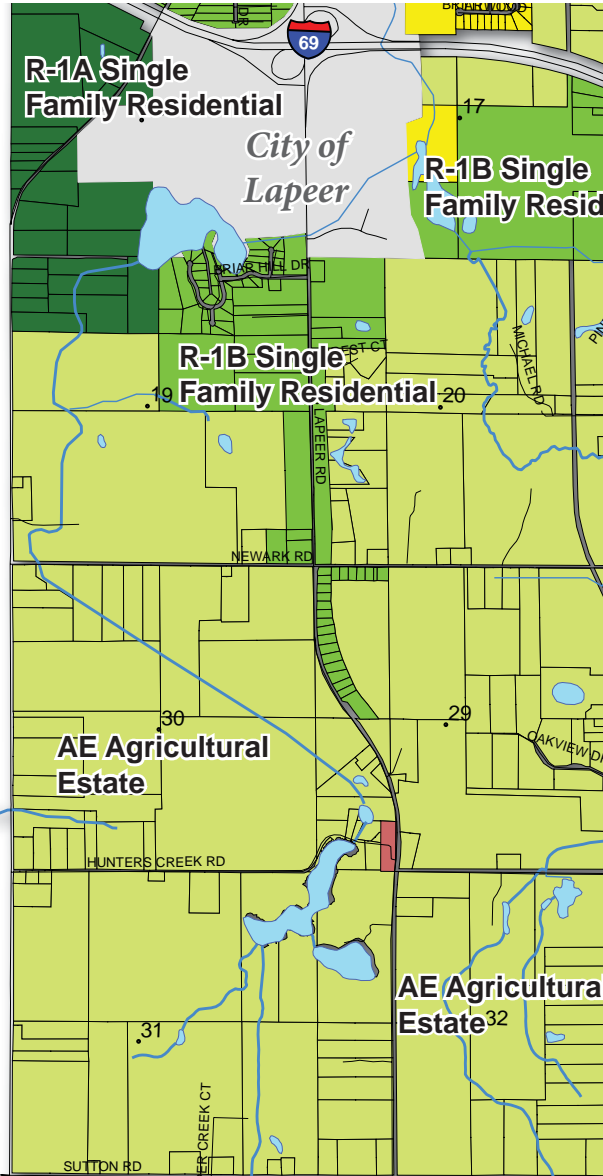
North of Newark Road the zoning of both sides of M-24 is R-1B, Single Family Residential which allows for single family lot sizes of 24,000 square feet. Those properties not immediately along M-24 are zoned AE Agricultural Estate which require lots to be a minimum of five (5) acres.

South of Newark Road, along the west side of M-24, the properties are zoned AE Agricultural Estate. This is also predominately the case for those properties along the east side of the road as well. The exception being those existing smaller properties immediately along the M-24 road frontage.

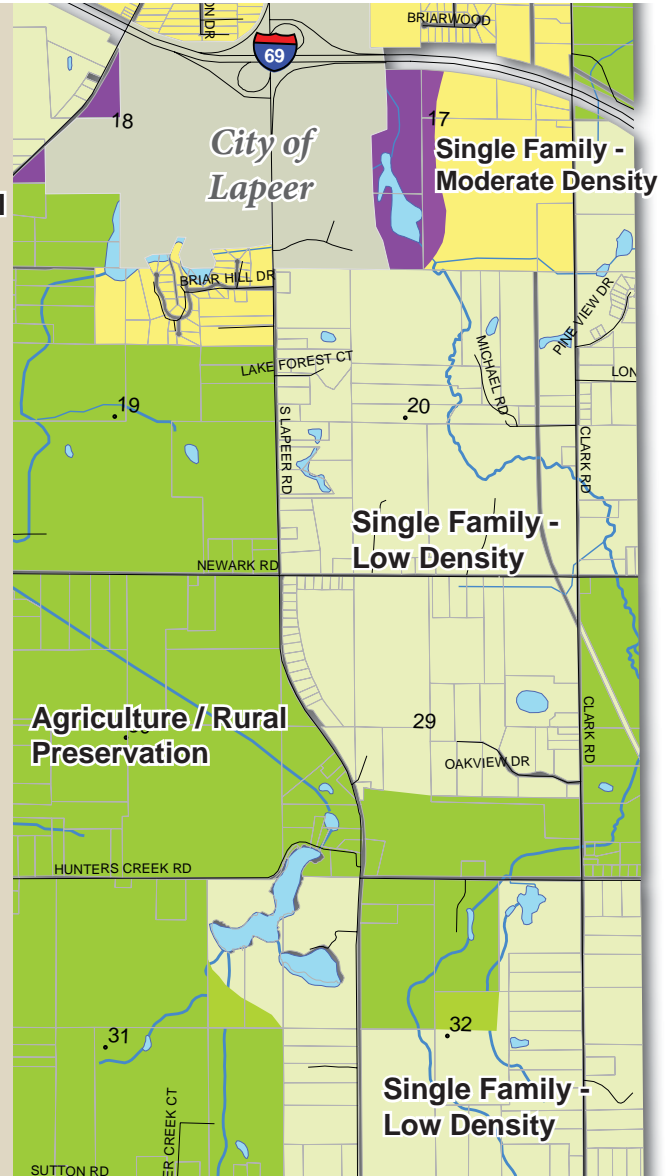
A small area, north of Hunters Creek Road, on the west side of M-24 is zoned for C-1 Local Commercial, however, the majority of this property was taken as a part of the M-24 expansion/improvement project.



Above: Aerial Photo of M-24 Corridor



Zoning Map



Master Plan Map

Corridor Plan

The Township's Corridor Plan adopted in 1998 for those areas along M-24 further solidified the stance that the M-24 Corridor should remain rural residential in nature with commercial land uses only be provided right at the intersection of M-24 and I-69. From just south of Briar Hill all the way to the Township's southern boundary, the Corridor Plan designated the properties for Agricultural / Rural Residential.

Existing Land Use Pattern

The existing land use pattern for the area is predominately vacant and/or open farm land with large lot residential. Some smaller lot residential is located in the Newark Road area, similar to the zoning pattern shown on the Township's Zoning Map. The Newark sand and gravel mine is located on the east side of M-24 on the north side of Newark Road.

SECTION

Planning Issues

Growth from the South - The communities to the south including Oxford, Orion and Metamora Townships have planned for large amounts of nonresidential and higher density residential land uses along their extents of M-24.

Existing and Future Traffic - Currently M-24 carries approximately 18,000 vehicles on a daily basis (LCRC) and as development occurs in the future in Lapeer Township, the City of Lapeer as well as other surrounding communities, the argument that nonresidential land use is the only use that can occur along the road will continue to grow.

Expectations of Commercial - Due to the presence of so much nonresidential development on other segments of M-24 in other communities to the south and the north, the common expectation for M-24 in Lapeer Township is for nonresidential and commercial land use.

Need for Commercial Land Use - The Township had previously planned the intersection of I-69 and M-24 for commercial purposes, along with that area between the interchange and the southern boundary of the City. However, a large portion of that area, including all of the interchange has been annexed into the City. If additional land area is necessary for commercial land use, the M-24 corridor could be one area where such use would be properly suited.

Road Improvements - Since the adoption of the last Township wide master plan, the State of Michigan has invested substantial monies into the improvement of M-24. M-24 now is a four lane boulevard from the Township's southern boundary to the I-69 interchange. Plans for the expansion of the road in the Township's south of Lapeer are also foreseen as monies become available.

Future Land Use

Commercial Nodes at the Intersections

The Township had traditionally planned for the majority of its commercial land uses at the intersection of M-24 and I-69. This was largely based on the amount of local and regional traffic volume on these two roadways. However, since the adoption of the last Master Plan, this area has now been annexed into the City and is no longer a part of the Township. Therefore, the Township has been left with substantially less land area for commercial land use. In response to this, the Township has considered other areas along M-24 for future commercial land use should the need arise.

There are three main intersections of M-24 within the Township. These include Newark, Hunters Creek and Sutton Roads. Based on County totals, Newark Road carries approximately 2,100 vehicles on a daily basis, while Hunters Creek carries approximately 1,500 and finally Sutton Road which only carries between 200-400. The Master Plan notes these areas as being the most appropriate location for additional commercial land uses along M-24, again should the need arise. These locations will allow the commercial land use to serve both the north/south traffic of M-24 but also the cross traffic of each roadway.

If developed, these commercial intersections should be limited to the immediate intersection, and should also be limited in size (generally no larger than 5 acres in size). The extension of commercial land use along the entire corridor in a "strip" type fashion is undesirable.

The limiting of commercial to the intersections will also help in terms of access management. The commercial sites can be afforded access to the cross road they are located on, rather than onto M-24 and causing potential conflict points and lower road efficiency for the main trunk line. This will help implement the Township's M-24 Corridor Access Management Plan.

Available Commercial Acreage in Adjacent Communities

With the annexation of the I-69 / M-24 intersection the City has a substantial amount of vacant commercial acreage available for development and most of this acreage has much better visual exposure as well as traffic exposure than property along M-24 in the Township. This vacant commercial acreage is in addition to the already existing redevelopable acreage within the City further north of the intersection, but still along M-24.

In addition, areas within Metamora Township, also has significant commercial acreage available along M-24. The majority of the newer commercial development is located along M-24 in the Dryden and Pratt Road areas. The Metamora Master Plan calls for larger areas of commercial to be developed than what is currently developed in these areas.

Need for Commercial Rezoning

In addition to the Master Plan recognizing the potential long term need for some commercial land use along the M-24 corridor, it is envisioned that these rezonings would not occur until such time that the need for such a rezoning is warranted by need, traffic flow, or other similar reason for commercial land use. The Master Plan strongly supports only those rezonings which are timely and justified, thereby reducing the impact of a spot zoning of commercial zoning caused by a premature rezoning.

Residential Land Use

For those interior stretches of M-24 between cross roads, the Master Plan still suggests that residential land use is appropriate. This matches the existing land use pattern along much of the corridor as well as the traditional master plan and corridor plan designations as well as zoning patterns.

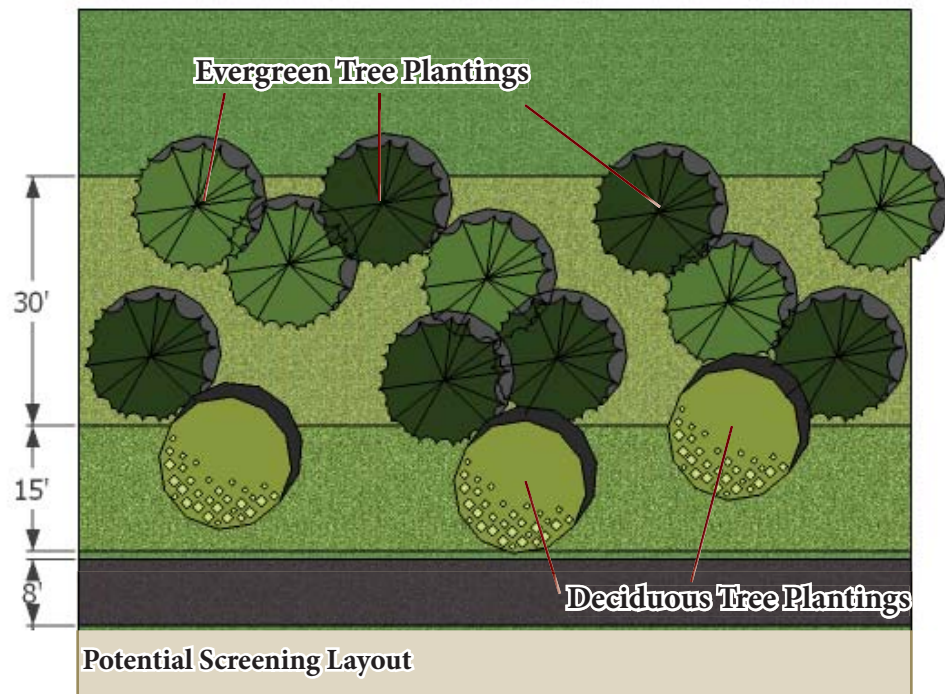
Densities consistent with the Township's AE Agricultural Estates District as well as the Townships R-1B Residential Districts is appropriate. In those areas planned for five acre lot densities, open space subdivisions are expected to pull the residences away from the M-24 right of way. In those areas planned for the higher densities consistent with the R-1B zoning district, open space planning will likely not be an option with conventional wells and septics. Therefore, in these areas substantial screening will be necessary.

Residential Land Use Screening

One of the issues facing the development of residential along M-24 is the noise and general impact of a large number of vehicles traveling along the roadway. Several planning techniques can be utilized to help mitigate out those potential impacts. The first is to utilize open space planning which will allow the residential lots to be pulled away from the right of way of M-24 and buffer the area between the residences and the right of way with planned open space.

The other tool would be to develop extensive planting requirements within a greenbelt within the Zoning Ordinance for the Township. These standards would be triggered anytime a development occurred which required Planning Commission approval. The greenbelt would be planted in the open space area if the Township's Open Space ordinance was utilized or simply within a landscape easement if a traditional residential subdivision, site condominium, or simple split development was being sought.

It is envisioned that while screening and buffering the impact from M-24 is the main objective of the plantings, the trees being planted will be done so in a natural manner, creating a natural image along the entire roadway and enhancing the M-24 corridor which is one of the Township's most prominent gateways.



Optional Office Overlay

Traditionally, the Township has allowed for professional offices in the higher density single family residential districts as a special land use. This option is not available in the AE District with the exception of home occupations or the office of a veterinarian. Other professional offices are not permitted. The Master Plan suggests that professional offices be considered within the AE District along the M-24 corridor. Much like the higher density single family districts, it should be included as a special land use approval, allowing the Township the discretion to either approve or deny the request as appropriate.

In either district, the concept would be to review the potential for small, low impact office type uses that either utilizes the existing residential structure or construct a small office building for such use. A large nonresidential office building, with expansive parking, etc. are not envisioned as a part of the special land use option as such would be contrary to the underlying residential zoning district and would not provide a smooth transition between parcels.

Home Internet Business

As high speed internet becomes more available in the Lapeer area and more specifically the Township, the potential for home based internet businesses become more viable and therefore much more likely. The Township recognizes this trend and provided that such business is conducted much like a traditional home occupation, has no issue with the introduction of these types of businesses to the Township.

With these types of businesses being located in the everyday homes of the Township's residential neighborhoods, it is not anticipated that surrounding residences will be impacted by changes such as; building additions specifically for the operation of such business, increased traffic from appointments or customers to the site, and that no employees will be utilized in the operation of such a business.

Impact on the Environment

Throughout Lapeer Township, numerous wetlands, changes in topography, among other environmental constraints, impact the viability of land for future development. The areas along M-24 are no different. Particularly, the intersections chosen for commercial land use may be impacted by such environmental constraints. The Master Plan recognizes this potential.

However, the general underlying principals for the location of commercial development remain unchanged. If a particular environmentally impacted property falls within a designated potential commercial area, the area that may be undevelopable due to wetlands shall remain undeveloped, and the remainder of the designated five (5) acres which is not impacted may be developed.

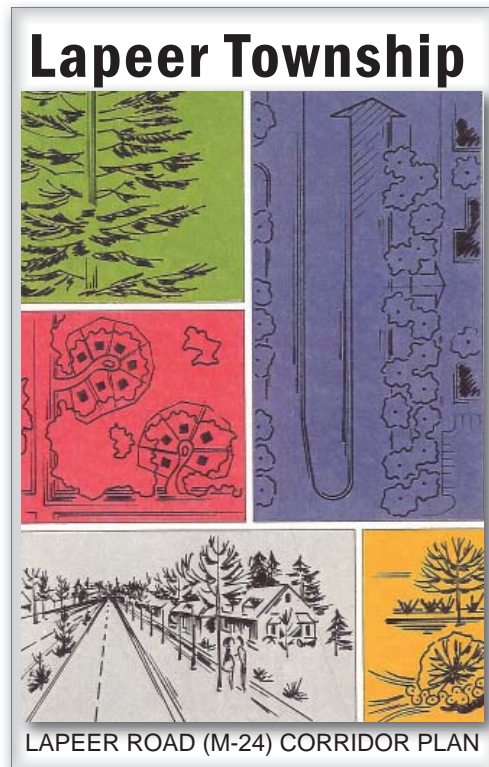
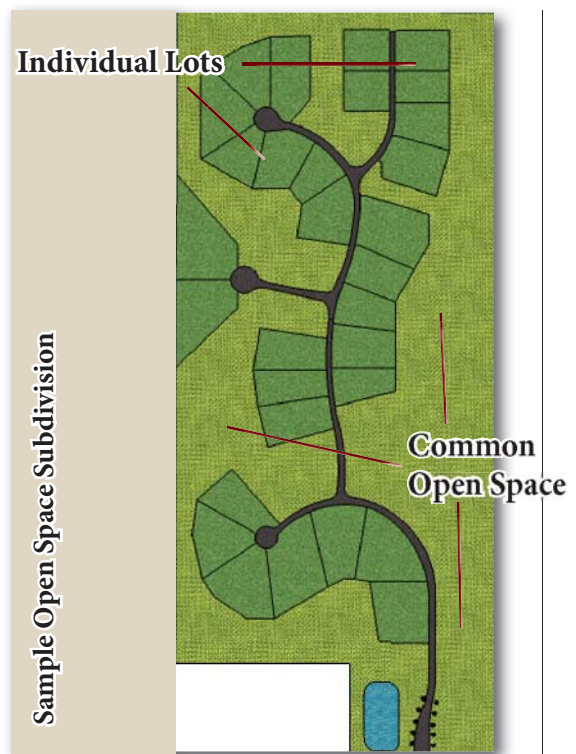
The use of the previously described open space concepts for residential development is an ideal tool for preserving wetland areas within residential developments. For nonresidential development, the preservation of wetland areas is not always as easy without the use of a wetlands ordinance. The Township does not currently have a wetlands ordinance and therefore relies on the State for wetland protection. Once areas have been defined and regulated, the design of nonresidential centers should reflect preservation of such areas through appropriate greenbelt/buffer areas, minimal grade or elevation changes proximate to the wetland and the like. These areas should be preserved to the greatest extent possible to not only protect ground and surface water quality and wildlife habitat but to also preserve the natural character of the Township.

Maintaining the Design Guidelines of the Corridor

In 1998, the Township completed the Lapeer Township Lapeer Road (M-24) Corridor Plan. This plan while addressing land use within the corridor, also addressed design issues which should be applied along the corridor. This included, landscaping, building design, lighting, and the like. This Master Plan promotes the general concepts of that plan and the Ordinances and regulations which have been adopted in the implementation of that plan.

Maintaining Access Management for the Corridor

In 2004, Lapeer Township, along with Metamora Township adopted the M-24 Corridor Access Management Plan. This plan is designed to provide appropriate locations for the future access drives along M-24 as well as suggestions for the removal or realignment of certain existing access drives. The concepts of access management have been adopted both in policy and regulation by the Township for a number of years even before this plan. However, the details of the M-24 Corridor Access Management Plan are hereby adopted within this Master Plan.



SECTION