



Residential Character Plan

SECTION

A Changing Residential Environment

As a part of the overall change to a new economy in Michigan, the overall residential landscape will likely change as much as the commercial and industrial landscape is expected to. Traditionally, Master Plans described overall land use types and densities for residential uses. The Master Plan in the new economy however should address quality of life issues and how these issues can play a role in how the Township as well as the region as a whole can provide a successful, desirable residential environment. This is important even in rural communities to help ensure the existing housing stock is as viable as possible and not disregarding in favor of other housing elsewhere.

Some of the factors that will be important to generate this successful and desirable residential environment while still respecting the Township's rural atmosphere and character will include natural feature preservation, internet and communication accessibility, the ability to work from home, access to an urban core for shopping, entertainment and socializing, among others. Each of these attributes are discussed further below.

While Lapeer Township may not be able to provide all of the assets described within the Land Policy Institutes presentation, viewing Lapeer Township in a larger scope in combination with the City of Lapeer or even the County, a larger number of these amenities become available and should be preserved, enhanced, and promoted.

Natural Feature (Amenity) Preservation

Lapeer Township has a significant amount of natural feature amenities which can be leveraged to increase the success of the residential developments within the Township by attracting traditional families as well as new, educated, talented work force members, which desire the natural amenities which Lapeer Township has to offer.

Through the use of open space or cluster design subdivisions, the preservation of these features is quite feasible. In fact, beyond simple preservation, the use of these subdivisions, in conjunction with developing a trail system within the subdivision, having homes overlook the preservation areas and wildlife habitats, etc, becomes an enhancement, beyond simply preserving the features. A side benefit of utilizing open space subdivision design is with the reduction of lot sizes (to achieve open space preservation) the homes become much closer than is typical in a rural township, providing that more "community friendly, know your neighbor" type of atmosphere, in addition to providing the common open space preserves.

Internet and Communication Accessibility

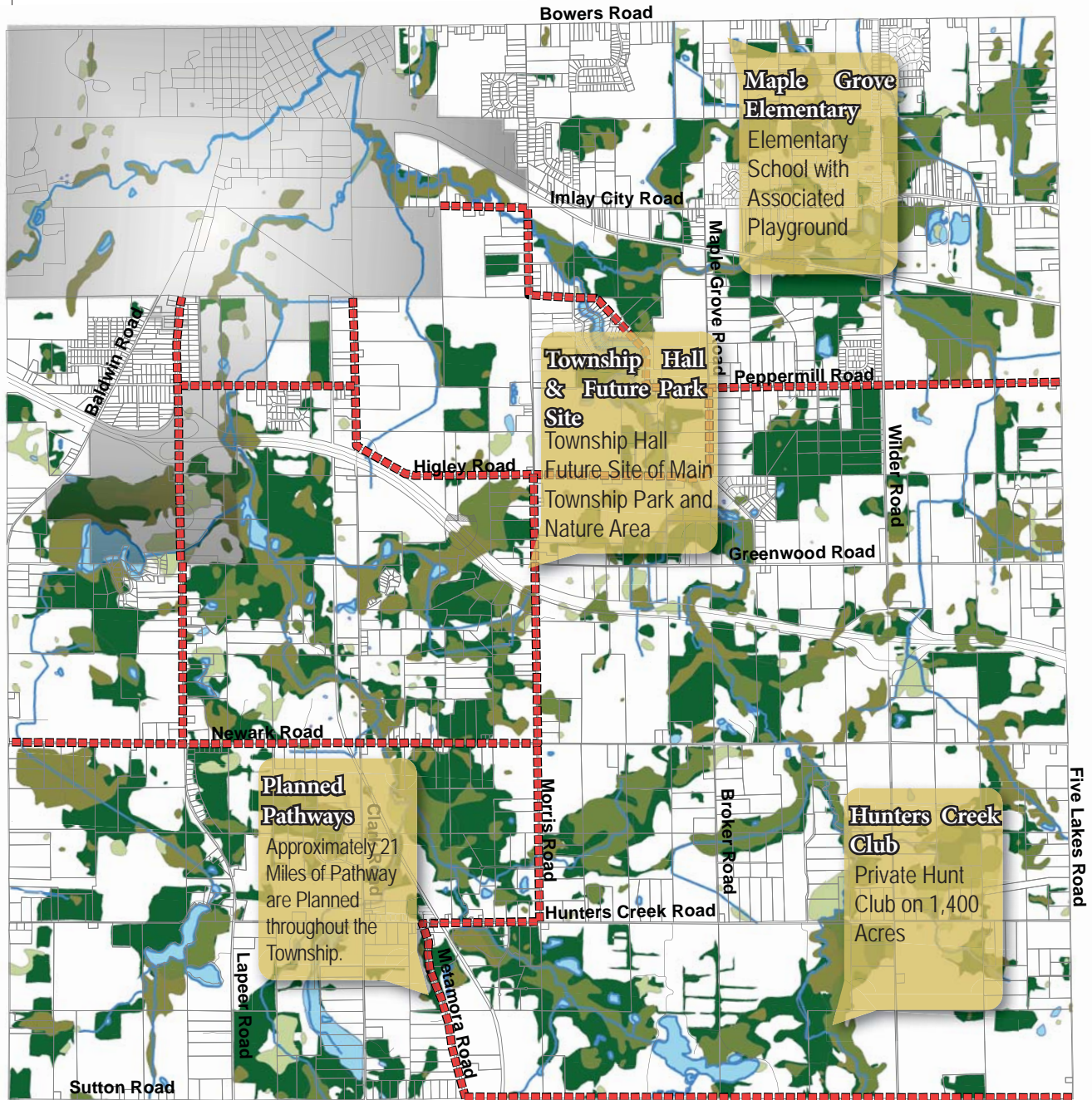
A major trend of the up and coming generations is their desire and need to be "connected" at all times, either through smart phones, laptops, high speed or broadband internet and high definition televisions to name a few. All other things being equal, communities which do not have access to these types of services or have service that is intermittent or only available at high cost will likely lose out to other communities who do when this younger generation is determining where to live and invest for their futures.

Land Policy Institute

According to the Land Policy Institute presentation "Regional Strategies to Attract Prosperity: Competition, Innovation & Prosperity", talented people are looking for the following amenities in determining where to live:

- Active / Dynamic living environment with lots of fun:
 - Recreation, culture, social interaction, diverse choices.
- Amenities driven: parks, outdoors, thriving farms, sports, hunting, fishing, waterways, greenery, etc.
- Diverse lifestyle choices:
 - Multi-modal transportation, housing type and price, density.
- Business and entrepreneurial opportunities:
 - Creativity, risk taking, good market for innovation, high wage jobs.

Natural Feature and Recreational Assets



Lapeer Township

Lapeer County

Map Prepared By:
Lapeer Township Planning Commission

With Assistance From:
Community Planning & Management, P.C.

Base Map: Lapeer County Equalization

Legend

- Emergent
- Forested
- Open Water
- Scrub-Shrub
- Woodlands



Currently, affordable and reliable high speed or broadband internet access within Lapeer Township is extremely limited with the exception of several small areas, such as immediately around the City of Lapeer. The use of air cards or similar technology while providing faster service can be less reliable as well as more expensive due to download or capacity limits.



Over the last number of years, the Township has been working with providers to provide wireless access to a larger percentage of the Township's residents and provide more internet options. As a part of providing this critical amenity to current and future Township residents, the Township should continue to work with different internet and communication providers for a solution to this gap in coverage.

Home Occupations

Home occupations are typically described as low impact businesses operated out of a residence which are in effect small businesses, which if allowed to flourish within the confines of the Ordinance, could represent a tremendous source of economic activity. The viability of home occupations and to some extent the overall health of the local economy will largely depend on access to the Internet and provision of dependable, advanced communication technologies (see Internet and Communication Accessibility above). Given their potential to provide another means of working while not leaving the home, the Township may wish to implement policies that recognize the continued involvement of home occupations. Permitting them by right (which the Township currently does) and establishing standards which are flexible while still protecting the overall residential character of the area, are two methods of allowing home occupations to develop while protecting the neighbors and the Township's land use policies.

Access to the Urban Core

Many potential home buyers like the best of both worlds, the privacy and open space of rural living but also the ability to access shopping and entertainment in close proximity. The amenities of a traditional downtown which provides quaint shops, eateries, places to dine as well as employment opportunities are all desirable to many new home buyers as well as those which may be simply looking for "more".

Lapeer Township residents do have immediate access to downtown Lapeer which provides a number of the day to day needs of the residents of the City as well as the Township. Like many smaller downtowns throughout the midwest however, the downtown is not as vibrant as it once was as a result of a downturn in the economy. However, the infrastructure, including buildings, streetscapes, parking, etc. are all in place to provide the types of amenities desired by many of today's home buyers.

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES

The Master Plan recognizes three (3) major single family residential density designations. This includes the Agricultural Residential, the Single Family Residential Medium density designation, and the Single Family Residential High density designation.

Those areas immediately around the City of Lapeer which have been already developed at a higher density as well as those areas which may be serviced with City infrastructure through the signed 2006 interlocal agreement for shared revenue and annexation are those areas which have been planned for Single Family Residential High designation. These are the areas which can provide lot sizes consistent with ½ acre which corresponds to the City's R-1-B Zoning Designation since conventional septic systems will not be a limiting factor.

Continuing east and south from the City, the Master Plan recognizes those areas which serve as transitions between the higher densities of the City, as well as those areas of the Township previously described and the Township's more rural landscape within the Agricultural Residential designation. These areas are generally planned for densities of approximately one unit per acre which is similar to the Township's current R-1-A Zoning District.

Finally, those areas to the south and southeastern portions of the Township are primarily planned for Agricultural Residential which serves as the Township's managed density areas which is consistent with the AE Zoning District of the Zoning Ordinance which requires minimum lot sizes of five (5) acres or more. This area is also the main farming area of the Township and can serve as the Township's agricultural preservation area should purchase of development rights (PDR) applications be sought.

The Township Plan also recognizes the development of the manufactured housing community located at the southeast corner of Imlay City Road and Wilder Road. No further expansion of this development is anticipated. The densities of this area is not planned to increase beyond the current density of the existing development however much of the density is regulated by the Mobile Home Commission.

RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES

Agricultural Residential

Density consistent with Five (5) acre lots

Single Family Residential - Medium Density

Density consistent with One (1) acre lots.

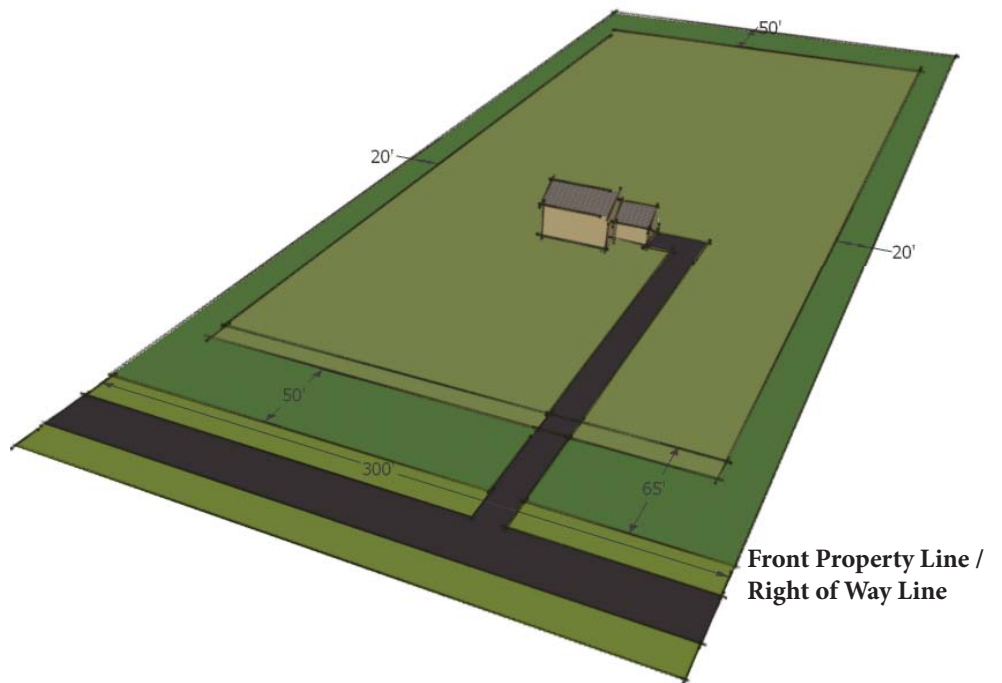
Single Family Residential - High Density

Density Consistent with One-half (0.5) acre lots.

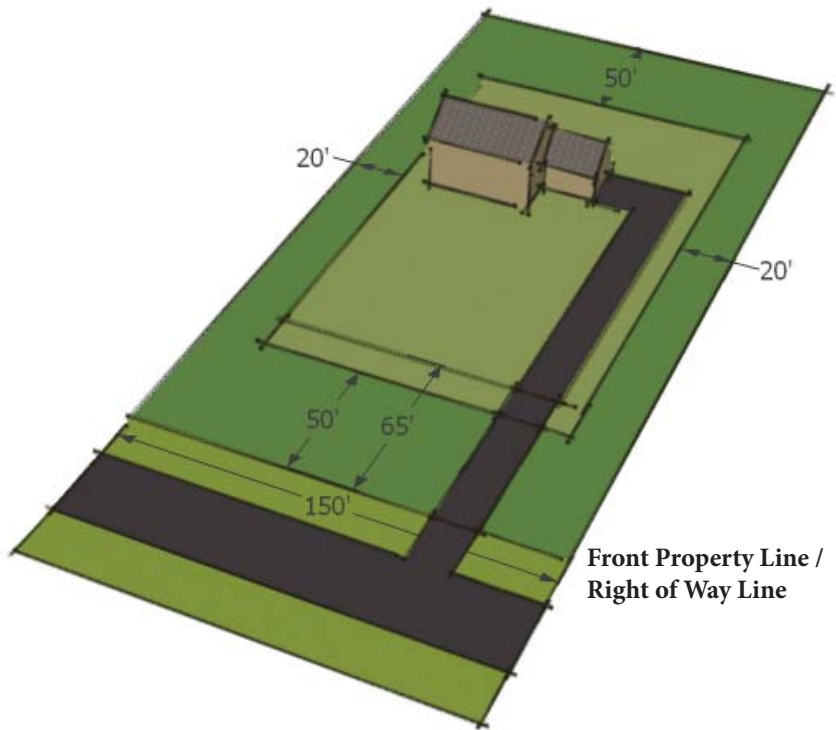
Manufactured Housing Community

Density consistent with current development density and as regulated by the Mobile Home Commission.

DESIGN ELEMENTS		LAND USE CHARACTER			
Agricultural - Residential	Lot Dimensions		<p>Intent</p> <p>The Township Residential Agricultural Master Plan designation is established to preserve the rural agricultural environment by encouraging the continuation of existing agricultural uses, by helping to conserve lands suited for the pursuit of agricultural activities, and by discouraging the development of land uses which will generate demands for urban services at public costs and an increase in imprudent demands on scarce energy resources when other lands more suited for such purposes are designated and available.</p> <p>It is the policy of the Township that public water and sewers will not be encouraged within this district until other lands identified for public water and sewers have been substantially developed and additional lands are identified only to the extent that the need for such land is demonstrated.</p>	Types of Permitted Land Uses	
	Minimum Lot Area:	5 Acres		Farms, Forestry, Nurseries and the like;	
	Minimum Lot Width:	300'		Township Buildings and Uses;	
	Maximum Lot Coverage:	35%		Single Family Residential Dwellings;	
	Maximum Impervious Surface	50%		Home Occupations	
	Building Setbacks			Types of Uses Permitted After Special Use	
	Front Yard Setback:			Airports;	
	<i>Regional</i>	50'*		Gravel Industries;	
	<i>Major</i>	110'/125'		Veterinary Offices	
	<i>Collector</i>	93'		Family Day Care	
<i>Local</i>	80'	Places of Worship			
Side Yard Setback	20'				
Rear Yard Setback	50'				
Building Height					
Maximum Building Height:	50'				
Maximum Number of Stories	2.5				
*Measured from the established right of way line.					

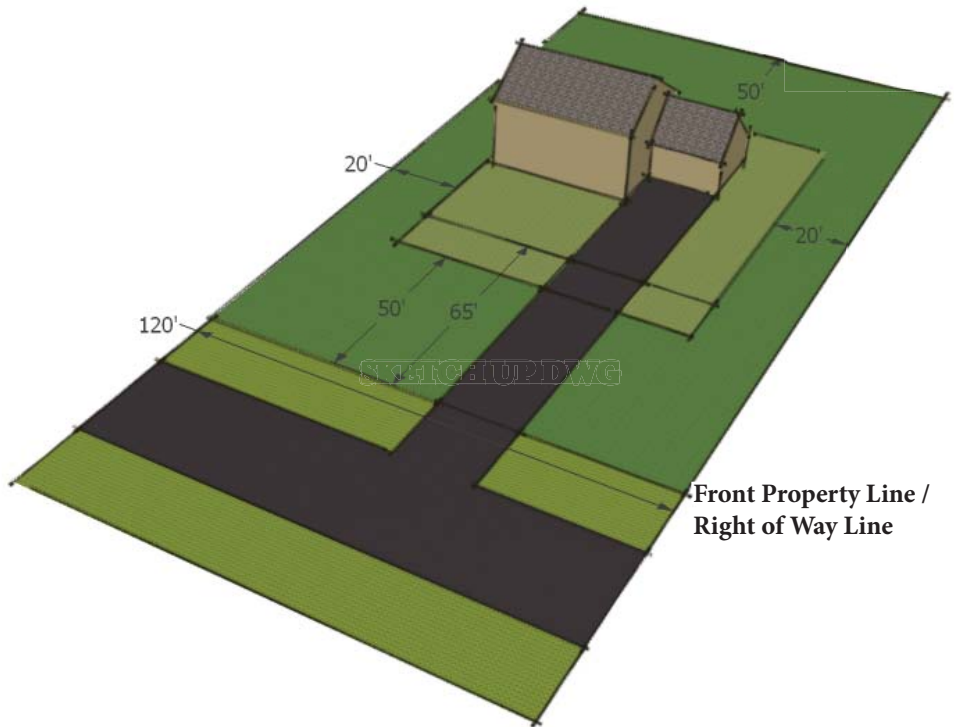


DESIGN ELEMENTS		LAND USE CHARACTER			
Single Family Residential - Medium	Lot Dimensions		Intent The single-family density designations are established to provide principally for one-family dwellings at several varying densities. The specific interest of these districts is to encourage the construction and continued use of single-family dwellings and single-family density developments and to prohibit the use of the land which would substantially interfere with this objective, and to discourage any land use which, because of its character and size, would create requirements and costs for public services substantially in excess of those at the specified densities, and to discourage any land use which would generate excessive traffic on local streets.	Types of Permitted Uses	
	Minimum Lot Area:	43,560		Single Family Residential Dwellings	
	Minimum Lot Width:	150'		Farms	
	Maximum Lot Coverage:	25%		Township Buildings and Uses	
	Maximum Impervious Surface	50%		Home Occupations	
	Building Setbacks			Types of Uses Permitted After Special Use	
	Front Yard Setback:			Airports	
	<i>Regional</i>	50' *		Places of Worship	
	<i>Major</i>	110'/125'		Professional Offices	
	<i>Collector</i>	93'		Family Day Care	
<i>Local</i>	80'	Nursery Schools and Day Care			
Side Yard Setback	20'	Schools			
Rear Yard Setback	50'				
Building Height					
Maximum Building Height:	35'				
Maximum Number of Stories	2.5				
*Measured from the established right of way line.					



SECTION

DESIGN ELEMENTS		LAND USE CHARACTER			
Single Family Residential - High	Lot Dimensions		<p>Intent</p> <p>The single-family density designations are established to provide principally for one-family dwellings at several varying densities. The specific interest of these districts is to encourage the construction and continued use of single-family dwellings and single-family density developments and to prohibit the use of the land which would substantially interfere with this objective, and to discourage any land use which, because of its character and size, would create requirements and costs for public services substantially in excess of those at the specified densities, and to discourage any land use which would generate excessive traffic on local streets.</p>	Types of Permitted Uses	
	Minimum Lot Area:	24,000		Single Family Residential Dwellings	
	Minimum Lot Width:	120'		Farms	
	Maximum Lot Coverage:	30%		Township Buildings and Uses	
	Maximum Impervious Surface	60%		Home Occupations	
	Building Setbacks			Types of Uses Permitted After Special Use	
	Front Yard Setback:			Airports	
	<i>Regional</i>	50' *		Places of Worship	
	<i>Major</i>	110'/125'		Professional Offices	
	<i>Collector</i>	93'		Family Day Care	
<i>Local</i>	80'	Nursery Schools and Day Care			
Side Yard Setback	20'	Schools			
Rear Yard Setback	50'				
Building Height					
Maximum Building Height:	35'				
Maximum Number of Stories	2.5				
*Measured from the established right of way line.					



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