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# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

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EXISTING LAND USE

## SECTION 3.0

### INTRODUCTION

The character of our physical environment is influenced by many factors. Chief among these is the use of land, the distribution of uses within a community, and the relationship of these uses to one another. These factors strongly influence the overall character and image of the community. They also influence quality of life and our relative degree of satisfaction with our surroundings.

Land use characteristics and other relevant physical features are among the most important aspects of the land use planning process. These features establish the observable physical setting upon which the future of the community will be based. They also influence the development potential of the community.

The chief feature of this chapter is an examination of the Township's land use characteristics on a classification basis. Each of the Township's individual land use categories are discussed, including the amount of the land devoted to each category and the distribution of the uses throughout the community. Current information will also be compared to previous land use surveys to illustrate trends.

### METHODOLOGY

Washington Township's boundaries are a product of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, establishing a uniform system of land divisions into a grid pattern. This system was devised to assist the eventual settlement of the vacant interior portion of the United States. Townships created as a result of this process were subdivided into 36 one-mile square divisions that are known as sections. Consistent with this process, Washington Township has an area of 23,416 acres, or 36 square miles.

The Township's boundaries are formed by 32 Mile Road on the north, 26 Mile Road on the south, Dequindre Road on the west, and Hayes Road extended on the east. Approximately 61 percent of the Township's total area, or some 14,298 acres are developed.

Existing land use data for Washington Township was gathered during a field survey of the community conducted in the year 2000. Land use features were recorded on a parcel-by-parcel basis on an updated Township base map. Aerial photographs and site plans were used as a secondary source of information and to verify the extent of land use patterns observed in the field. Information from both sources was subsequently transferred to a base map according to the individual categories shown in Table 7. Each category was measured to determine the amount of land area occupied by each individual land use class. The results of these tabulations are shown on Table 7 and described in the following pages.

### Single-Family Residential

Single-family homes occupy the largest share of the Township's developed land. More than 4,734 acres of land are developed for single-family home sites, representing more than one-third of the developed land in Washington Township. Single-family home sites are found in platted subdivisions and along the frontages of the major road system. Subdivisions are largely confined to the western half of the Township, west of Van Dyke.

The greatest concentration is located south of 29 Mile Road. Frontage residential development is evident along most of the section line roads. In several instances, this development is concentrated together so as to occupy the road frontage for a solid one-half mile segment of the road. One consequence of this particular form of development is the isolation of interior acreage which may limit the future use of this adjoining property.

### Multiple-Family Residential

Multiple-family units occupy 293.8 acres of land, or 2.3 percent of the Township's developed land. Existing multiple-family sites are concentrated in the southern portion of the Township in the vicinity of the Washington Village area and along Van Dyke interspersed among commercial uses.

A total of 17 separate multiple-family sites were identified during the land use field surveys. These range in size from three units located in a converted single-family dwelling to the Timbermill North site, which contains approximately 288 units. Developments offering between 10 and 72 units are common.

<u>Land Use Category</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>	<u>Percent Total</u>	<u>Percentage of Developed Land</u>
Single-Family	4,734.5	20.2	33.1
Multiple-Family	293.8	1.2	2.1
Mobile Home Park	161.0	0.7	1.1
Commercial/Office	318.0	1.4	2.2
Industrial	144.0	0.6	1.0
Extractive	907.0	3.9	6.3
Public/Semi-Public	5,515.0	23.6	38.6
Road R.O.W.	1,525.8	6.5	10.7
Railroad R.O.W.	73.3	0.3	0.5
Water	625.8	2.7	4.4
<b>Developed Total</b>	<b>14298.2</b>	<b>61.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Agricultural/Vacant Land	9,117.8	38.9	
<b>Total Area</b>	<b>23,416.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

TABLE 7  
EXISTING LAND USE  
SUMMARY - 2000

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Collectively, these 17 sites contain 1,402 dwelling units, or approximately 19 percent of the Township's total supply of housing units. The average density of multiple-family development in the Township is 5.4 units per acre.

### **Mobile Home Parks**

Two mobile home parks are located in the Township. Together, they contain 808 developed sites and cover 161 acres of land. Rudgate East is the largest of these two sites. It occupies a prominent location at the intersection of 26 Mile Road and the M-53 Freeway at the Township's southern gateway entrance. A smaller mobile home park site, containing 104 sites, is located immediately north of the M-53 Freeway-Van Dyke merge near 28 Mile Road. The two mobile home parks have an overall density of 5.0 units per acre.

### **Commercial/Office**

A limited amount of office development was identified in Washington Township. Only 50 acres of land are occupied for this purpose. Existing offices in the Township consist largely of freestanding buildings for professional services, real estate, or insurance agents. Office buildings are concentrated in the Washington Village area and along Van Dyke between 29 and 30 Mile Roads.

Collectively, commercial acreage covers 268 acres of land. General commercial uses occupy the largest share, followed by convenience commercial, and center commercial. Local commercial uses are intended to meet the convenience retail and service needs of nearby residential neighborhoods. They may occur as freestanding establishments or be grouped together in a linear fashion within a single building and commonly referred to as a strip center. The Park Plaza center at 26 Mile Road and Van Dyke is a recent example of this type of commercial use. Most of the Township's convenience commercial establishments are located along Van Dyke, particularly in the vicinity of the 31 Mile Road intersection.

Commercial centers refer to consolidated commercial locations where several establishments occupy a single site. Typically, commercial centers are planned, developed, owned and managed as a unit. They also share common site features, such as a unified architectural theme that unites the businesses together in a single building, consolidated parking, access, signage and landscaping. Another identifiable characteristic is the presence of an anchor tenant, often a supermarket.

Three major commercial centers are located in Washington Township. The Alward Shopping Center is located in the Washington Village area, at the intersection of Van Dyke and 27 Mile Road. The Meijer's Shopping Center is located at the southern most end of the Washington Village area, at the intersection of Van Dyke and 26 Mile Road. Although Meijer's is not part of a center, the amount of square footage and variety of goods offered at the store qualifies it as a major commercial center. The Farmer Jack Shopping Center is located at the intersection of Van Dyke and 30 Mile Road.

General commercial uses are uses that require freestanding locations along major thoroughfares and which rely heavily on easy visibility and convenient access. Automobile-oriented activities, including gasoline service stations, repair garages and car dealerships, are examples of this type of use. The largest share of commercial land in Washington Township is used for this purpose. Most of the Township's general commercial uses are found along Van Dyke, between 29 Mile Road and the Romeo Village limits.

### **Industrial**

Industrial establishments occupy 144 acres of land. The most prominent industrial site is the TRW site, located on 26 Mile Road near the entrance to Stony Creek Metropark. TRW has a more dominant office character, with no production. The site has generous open spaces and architecturally attractive buildings.

The Township's remaining industrial sites are located at scattered sites along Van Dyke. A small industrial park is located on the east side of Van Dyke, directly to the south of the Romeo Village limits. Several freestanding industrial sites are also clustered together on the north side of 31 Mile Road, between Van Dyke and the railroad tracks.

### **Extractive**

Sand and gravel mining sites are included within this category. These uses are primarily confined to the western portion of the Township, along Mound Road north of 29 Mile Road. Approximately 907 acres of land are being used for this purpose, or nearly ten percent of the community's developed land. This total includes abandoned mining sites located in the general vicinity of existing operations.

### **Public/Semi-Public**

Public/Semi-Public uses include schools, parks, lands for public utilities, golf courses, churches, and other Township sites. A substantial quantity of land is being used for this purpose in Washington Township. Public/Semi-Public uses account for 5,515 acres of land, or nearly 38.6 percent of the Township's developed acreage. The largest semi-public use sites in the Township include the Romeo Golf Club in northeast Washington Township and the Capuchin Retreat House on Mt. Vernon Road. A collection of public and semi-public uses are also evident in the Washington Village area.

Some of the largest public use sites include lands managed by the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA) as part of Stony Creek Metropark. The park boundaries extend from 26 Mile Road as far north as 31 Mile Road.

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Most of the remaining public land in the Township is occupied by schools. The largest school site is Powell Junior High School and Hevel Elementary, which occupies an 83-acre site on Jewell Road, south of 29 Mile Road.

### **Water**

More than 600 acres of Washington Township's total area is permanently covered by surface water. This represents nearly three percent of the Township. The single largest body of water is Stony Creek Lake, around which the HCMA Metropark is centered. Several other smaller lakes are located to the north, lying within the Stony Creek Valley.

The quantity of land used for road right-of-way purposes is one indicator of a community's development. Right-of-way includes the path or corridor of land within which the actual road bed and paved or gravel surface are located. Section line roads were assumed to have a right-of-way of 120 feet; local subdivision streets generally have 60 feet of land reserved for right-of-way purposes. The recently extended M-53 Freeway has a right-of-way of between 300 and 400 feet, which crosses the Township along an alignment generally parallel to Old Van Dyke and the railroad tracks. Land used for road purposes accounts for some 1,525.8 acres, or 12.1 percent of the Township's developed area, and 6.5 percent of its total area. The sole railroad corridor crossing the Township is approximately 100 feet wide and covers 73.3 acres.

### **Utilities**

Several major public utility transmission corridors cross Washington Township. Overhead electrical transmission lines owned by Detroit Edison cross the southeast corner of the Township parallel to 26 and 28 Mile Roads. Other east-west corridors run the full width of the Township north of 29 Mile Road and north of 30 Mile Road between Van Dyke and the Township's western boundary. North-south transmission lines parallel the Grand Trunk and Western Railroad/Van Dyke and Jewell Roads. An electrical substation is located in the southern portion of the Township near the intersection of 26 Mile Road and Jewell Roads.

### **Agricultural/Vacant Land**

Approximately 10,792.8 acres of land, or 46.1 percent of the Township's total land area is vacant. While vacant undeveloped land is distributed throughout the community, the greatest quantity of undeveloped land is located in the eastern half of the Township and north of 29 Mile Road.

## **MAJOR LAND USE RANKING**

Tables 8 and 9 and the accompanying figures illustrate the Township's land use characteristics on a more generalized basis. Table 7 offers a summary of Washington's land use features by major categories. The subsequent table describes developed land by major category.

**Left Blank to Accomodate Existing Land Use 11x17 Map**

**Existing**  
Land Use

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**Left Blank to Accomodate Existing Land Use 11x17 Map**

Almost 40% of the Township’s total area is undeveloped. Residential development and public/semi-public uses account for most of the Township’s developed land. These two categories occupy 71.1 percent of Washington Township’s developed acreage. The location of Stony Creek Metropark in the community explains the significant amount of land devoted to this land use category.

**COMPARATIVE LAND USE**

Land use surveys were conducted in Washington Township in 1974, 1990, and 2000. The results of the current land use inventory can be compared to these previous surveys for the purpose of measuring change in the Township’s land use features over time. The scope of these changes can be observed by comparing the results of these three surveys, as reflected in Table 10 on the following page.

TABLE 8  
GENERALIZED LAND USE  
RANKING

Category	Acres	Percent
Agricultural/Vacant	9,117.8	38.9
Residential	5,189.3	22.1
Public/Semi-Public	5,515.0	23.6
Transportation	1,599.1	6.8
Extractive	907.0	3.9
Water	625.8	2.7
Office/Commercial	318.0	1.4
Industrial	144.0	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,416.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: CP&M Survey

Figure 1  
GENERALIZED LAND USE  
RANKING

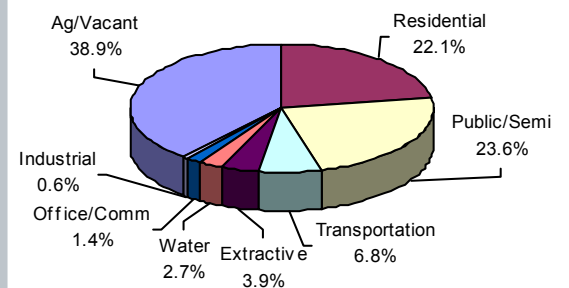
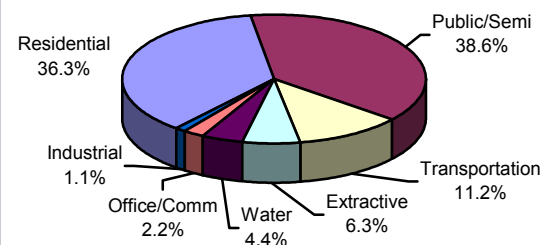


TABLE 9  
DEVELOPED LAND  
SUMMARY

Category	Acres	Percent
Residential	5,189.3	36.3
Public/Semi-Public	5,515.0	38.6
Transportation	1,599.1	11.2
Extractive	907.0	6.3
Water	625.8	4.4
Commercial/Office	318.0	2.2
Industrial	144.0	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,298.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: CP&M Survey

Figure 2  
DEVELOPED LAND  
SUMMARY



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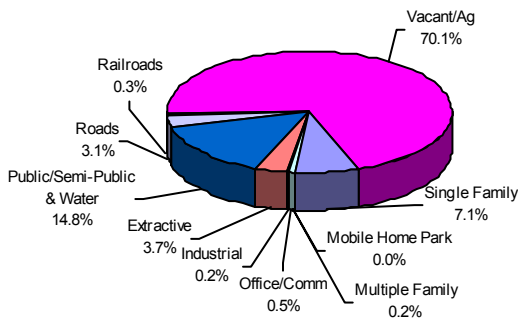
Substantial changes occurred in the Township's development land use characteristics between 1974 and 1990. The single greatest change involved the amount of land developed in the Township. Over the 16 year period, more than 2,100 acres of land were developed. New single-family home sites alone accounted for more than one-half of the increase. New roads serving these homes were responsible for another substantial increase.

**TABLE 10**  
COMPARATIVE LAND USE  
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP  
1974-1990-2000

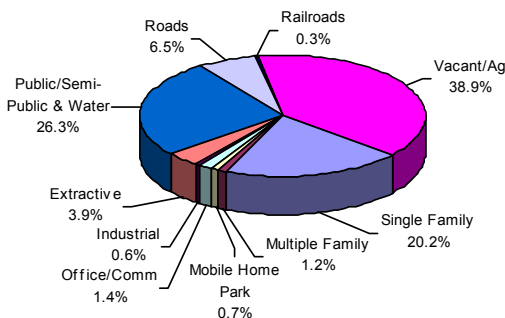
Category	1974		1990		2000		1974-90	1990-00
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	Change	Change
Single-Family	1,667.5	7.1	2,705.5	11.6	4,734.5	20.2	1,038.0	2,029.0
Multiple-Family	39.0	0.2	64.9	0.3	293.8	1.2	25.9	228.9
Mobile Home Park	13.5	--	77.5	0.3	161.0	0.7	64.0	83.5
Office/Commercial	116.0	0.5	145.3	0.6	318.0	1.4	29.3	172.7
Industrial	44.5	0.2	73.5	0.3	144.0	0.6	29.0	70.5
Extractive	856.0	3.7	887.9	3.8	907.0	3.9	31.9	14.1
Public/Semi-Public & Water	3,458.9	14.8	3,603.7	15.4	6,140.8	26.3	144.8	2,536.3
Roads	727.2	3.1	1,525.8	6.5	1,525.8	6.5	798.6	--
Railroads	76.5	0.3	73.3	0.3	73.3	0.3	-3.2	--
Agricultural/Vacant	16,416.9	70.1	14,258.6	60.9	9,117.8	38.9	-2,158.3	-5,140.8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>23,416.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>23,416.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>23,416.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>

Source: CP&M survey

**Figure 3**  
EXISTING LAND USE - 1974



**Figure 4**  
EXISTING LAND USE - 2000



This rate of growth remained consistent between 1990 and 2000, with the exception of a leveling off of new road construction. The single-family and multiple-family categories showed large increases. Collectively, these categories grew by nearly 2,257.9 acres during this nine year period. The quantity of land occupied by the public and semi-public/water uses increased by 2,536 acres during this span.

As a direct consequence of increased development activity in Washington, The quantity of vacant land declined by over 5,100 acres between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, vacant land accounted for 60.9 percent of the Township's total land area. By the year 2000, the proportion had declined to 38.9 percent.

## ZONING

Zoning is a form of policy adopted by a municipality that often establishes the existing land use pattern. All of the various zoning districts and regulations should add up to a statement of policy regarding how land is to be used. Sometimes, this does not happen. Land use policy may become the result of the sum of many individual decisions, each arrived separately over time. Elections have the effect of changing the persons who establish policy and such changes may make the charting of a consistent direction quite difficult, unless a Master Plan is followed.

Category	1990		2000		1990-00 Change	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
A-1 Agricultural-Residential	12,821.3	58.0	12,011.7	54.3	-809.6	-6.3
R-1 Rural Residential	4,216.9	19.1	4,216.9	19.1	0.0	0.0
R-1-A Single-Family Residential	1,033.9	4.7	1,199.5	5.4	165.6	16.0
R-1-B Single-Family Residential	1,921.2	8.7	2,051.6	9.3	130.4	6.8
R-1-C Single-Family Residential	119.5	0.5	249.5	1.1	130.0	108.8
R-1-D Single-Family Residential	105.0	0.5	316.3	1.4	211.3	201.2
MHP Mobile Home Park	82.9	0.4	82.9	0.4	0.0	0.0
RM-1 Multiple-Family Residential	47.5	0.2	124	0.6	76.5	161.1
RM-2 Multiple-Family Residential	72.8	0.3	118.1	0.5	45.3	62.2
RM-3 Multiple-Family Residential	230.6	1.0	239.7	1.1	9.1	39.
O-1 Professional Office	1.2	0.0	8.9	0.0	7.7	641.7
O-2 General Office	1.2	0.0	3.3	0.0	2.1	175.0
C-1 Local Commercial	55.2	0.2	55.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
C-2 Planned Shopping Center	87.6	0.4	81.7	0.4	-5.9	-6.7
C-3 General Commercial	171.0	0.8	163.1	0.9	22.1	12.9
S-1 Special Industrial	30.0	0.1	30	0.1	0.0	0.0
M-1 Light Manufacturing	113.0	0.5	137.1	0.6	24.1	21.3
M-2 Heavy Manufacturing	586.6	2.7	577.9	2.6	-8.7	-1.5
Consent Judgement	410.7	1.9	410.7	1.9	0.0	0.0
Sub-Total	22,108.1	100.0	22,108.1	100.0	0.0	0.0
Right-of-Way	1,307.9	--	1,307.9	--	--	--
Total	23,416.0	--	23,416.0	--	--	--

TABLE 11  
ZONINGACREAGE -2000

Source: CP&M Survey

Figure 5  
GENERALIZED ZONING  
SUMMARY

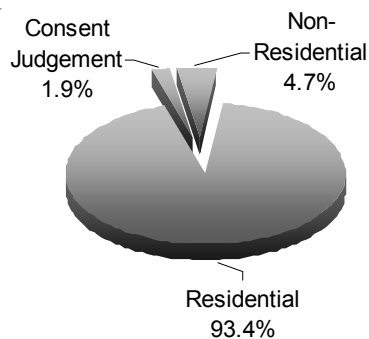
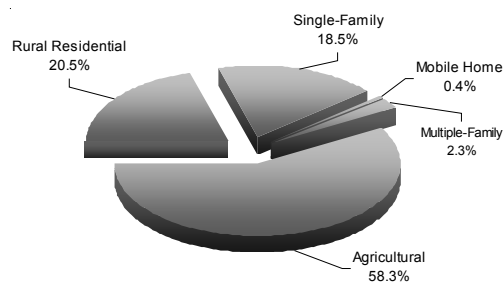


Figure 6  
RESIDENTIAL ZONING  
SUMMARY



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The quantity of land within each of Washington Township's 18 zoning designations is shown in Table 11. More than 90 percent of the Township's land area (minus right-of-way acreage), or some 20,651.6 acres, are zoned for residential purposes. The Township's six single-family districts account for 97.9 percent of all residentially zoned land. Land zoned for mobile home parks and for all three multiple-family categories encompasses 82.9 and 350.9 acres, respectively. The Township's zoning map includes two office districts and three commercial districts. Collectively, these five districts occupy 316.2 acres. The three industrial districts occupy 729.6 acres. More than 400 acres of land are governed by consent judgements.

The Township's land use policy, as articulated by its zoning distribution, can be viewed in terms of proportions in Figures 5 and 6. Both charts emphasize the dominance of residentially zoned land in the Township.

### *Consent Judgements*

Lawsuits can have an impact on the long term development of Washington Township. Since the 2000 existing land use survey, the Township has settled several land use disputes in court with consent judgements. These developments should be taken into consideration when determining the appropriate location and density of future land uses in their respective areas. There are as follows:

Anthem Village - 2000	523 units/80 acres	26 Mile and Hayes
Seven Lakes - 2000	201units/459 acres	Mound Rd., S. of 32 Mile
Timbermill - 2000	288 units/51 acres	Jewell Rd., N. of 27 Mile
Curtis Street - 2002	35 units/6.5 acres	26 Mile, W. of Van Dyke
Villas of Crystal Ck. - 2002	60 units/18 acres	Mound Rd., S. of 29 Mile
Kirkway -2002	240 units/29 acres	27 Mile, E. of Van Dyke
East Ridge - 2003	57 units/16 acres	29 Mile and Van Dyke
Trailside - 2003	48 units/13 acres	Mound Rd, N. of 26 Mile
Willow Ridge North - 2004	170 units/117 acres	27 Mile, E. of Schoenherr