
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The growth and development of a community and its resultant land use pattern depends, in large part, on its position within the region in which it is located. This regional location is important to the understanding of its historical growth pattern and current condition. Further, an understanding of regional influences provides a basis for anticipating future growth patterns and trends.

While control over most land use decisions remains a matter of local choice, development patterns are often strongly influenced by decisions made on a State and regional scale. Frequently, such decisions are not subject to direct local input or control. For this reason, land use policies need to take regional influences into account.

The purpose of this initial chapter of the Washington Township Master Plan is to identify those factors that influence growth in the southeast Michigan region and how they may impact future development patterns. This presentation will provide the background necessary to understand the dynamics of growth and change and provide a practical regional perspective for formulating future land use policies.

The following analysis will consider Washington Township's location relative to southeast Michigan's principal growth corridors and how these corridors have influenced, and will likely continue to influence, future growth patterns. The report will also examine relevant State, County and regional plans or policies that may have some impact on future planning activities in Washington Township.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Township system of government was a product of the Northwest Ordinance. Perhaps the most significant consequence of the Northwest Ordinance was the establishment of the Township boundaries and the one-square mile section line and grid land system.

Washington Township was originally surveyed in 1816, and was subsequently organized as a Township in 1827, only five years after Macomb County was formed. At the time of its formation, Bruce and Washington Townships were combined.

The Township's first inhabitants were from New York, who settled near the Village of Romeo. The community's remaining residents were widely dispersed throughout the combined two-township area. A total of 40 families inhabited this 72-square mile area.

Washington Township's history is closely tied to the Village of Romeo, which was officially settled in 1833. The Township has historically been a productive farming community, with a strong emphasis on orchards.

Regional Location

Washington Township is located in the northwest portion of Macomb County, along the County's common boundary with Oakland County to the west. The Township lies approximately 25 miles from Downtown Detroit. The M-53 Freeway provides the Township's principal transportation linkage to the larger southeast Michigan region.

Regional Analysis

ILLUSTRATION 1
SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN
REGIONAL LOCATION MAP

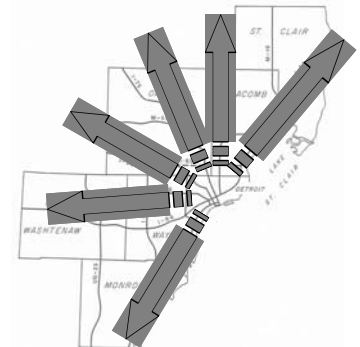


Southeast Michigan Development Corridors

Within the southeast Michigan region, there are several principal corridors along which growth has traditionally occurred. Each of these corridors begins in Downtown Detroit, the historic center of the region, and radiates outward into the surrounding communities along established transportation routes. These corridors originally followed major surface streets, like the spokes of a wheel, from Downtown Detroit. Today, they largely parallel the interstate freeway system. These historic corridors are identified as follows and shown on Illustration 2.

1. Detroit to Mt. Clemens and Port Huron along, I-94 east and Gratiot Avenue.
2. Detroit to Utica and Romeo, along M-53 north (Van Dyke Avenue) and Mound Road.
3. Detroit to Pontiac and Flint, along I-75 north and Woodward Avenue.
4. Detroit to Brighton and Lansing, along I-96 west, the Lodge Freeway and Grand River Avenue.
5. Detroit to Ann Arbor and Jackson, along I-94 west and U.S. 12 (Michigan Avenue).
6. Detroit to Monroe and Toledo, along I-75 south and Fort Street.

ILLUSTRATION 2
SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN
REGIONAL GROWTH
CORRIDORS



Macomb County Development Corridors

Population Growth Trends - Within Macomb County, growth traditionally occurred along the Lake St. Clair shoreline communities, which is consistent with historical urban settlement patterns. The establishment of Mt. Clemens as the County Seat also contributed to the predominant early development pattern along the eastern portion of the County.

Following the Second World War, most metropolitan areas experienced a sweeping wave of population migration from traditional central cities into emerging suburban communities. In Macomb County, this migration first occurred within those suburban communities located along the perimeter of Detroit. The second wave of suburban growth in the County accelerated north along the Van Dyke/Mound Road corridor in the western tier of communities.

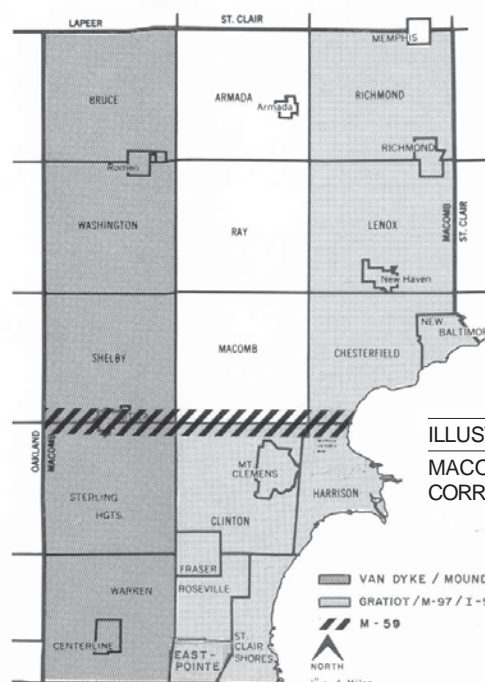


ILLUSTRATION 3
MACOMB COUNTY GROWTH
CORRIDOR COMMUNITIES

SECTION 1.0

By 1970, population levels in the western corridor communities (295,851 persons) nearly equaled the population along the eastern or shoreline communities (317,693). During the 1970's, population growth in the western corridor surpassed increases in the eastern communities. The 1980 Census revealed that the Van Dyke/Mound Road communities had a slightly greater population (339,616 persons) than the eastern corridor (332,819 persons).

The dramatic growth experienced by the City of Warren during the 1960's, and Sterling Heights in the 1970's, accounts for this shift in population. For example, in the ten-year period between 1970 and 1980, Sterling Heights grew by more than 47,000 persons. This gain more than offset the population loss experienced by the City of Warren during the decade of the 1970's.

North of M-59, Shelby Township and Utica combined to report a population increase of 11,250 persons. Small increases were noted in those communities located north of 26 Mile Road. The increases do, however, provide evidence of a trend of population accelerating in a northerly direction within this corridor.

To the east, the greatest population increases also occurred in those communities located between 14 Mile Road and 26 Mile Road. Clinton Township (23,535 persons) and Chesterfield Township (8,898 persons) made the greatest contribution to the overall growth of this corridor during the decade. North of 26 Mile Road, the amount of growth was less than that of parallel communities to the west.

TABLE 1
POPULATION CHANGE BY
GROWTH CORRIDORS -
MACOMB COUNTY 1970-1980

VAN DYKE/MOUND

I-94/GRATIOT/M-3

COMMUNITY	POPULATION		CHANGE		COMMUNITY	POPULATION		CHANGE	
	1970	1980	Number	%		1970	1980	Number	%
Bruce Twp.	2,213	3,823	1,610	72.8	Richmond City	3,234	3,536	302	9.3
Romeo	4,012	3,509	-503	-12.5	Richmond Twp.	1,719	2,453	734	42.9
32 Mile to 38 Mile	6,225	7,332	1,107	17.8	32 Mile to 38 Mile	4,953	5,989	1,036	20.9
Washington Twp.	5,651	8,637	2,986	52.8	Lenox Twp.	2,869	3,028	159	5.5
					New Haven	1,855	1,871	16	0.9
26 Mile to 32 Mile	5,651	8,637	2,986	52.8	26 Mile to 32 Mile	4,724	4,899	175	3.7
Shelby Twp.	29,467	38,939	9,472	32.1	Chesterfield Twp.	9,378	18,276	8,898	94.9
Utica	3,504	5,282	1,778	50.7	New Baltimore	4,132	5,439	1,307	31.6
M-59 to 26 Mile	32,971	44,221	11,250	34.1	M-59 to 26 Mile	13,510	23,715	10,205	75.5
Sterling Heights	61,365	108,999	47,634	77.6	Fraser	11,868	14,560	2,692	22.7
					Clinton Twp.	48,865	72,400	23,535	48.2
					Mt. Clemens	20,476	18,806	-1,670	-8.2
					Harrison	18,755	23,649	4,894	26.1
14 Mile to M-59	61,365	108,999	47,634	77.6	14 Mile to M-59	99,964	129,415	29,451	29.5
Center Line	10,379	9,293	-1,086	-10.5	Eastpointe	45,920	38,280	-7,640	-16.6
Warren	179,260	161,134	-18,126	-10.1	Roseville	60,529	54,311	-6,218	-10.3
					St. Clair Shores	88,093	76,210	-11,883	-13.5
8 Mile to 14 Mile	189,639	170,427	-19,212	-10.1	8 Mile to 14 Mile	194,542	168,801	-25,741	-13.2
TOTALS	295,851	339,616	43,765	14.8	TOTALS	317,693	332,819	15,125	4.8

Source: U.S. Census (1970, 80)

Results from the 1990 census indicate a leveling off of the explosive growth that occurred within the western corridor. Eastern corridor communities out-gained their counterparts in the west over the past decade. By 1990, these two portions of the County shared nearly equal population levels. See Table 2 below.

Between 1980 and 1990, lesser population increases were observed in both corridors. For example, Sterling Heights reported a population increase of 8,811 persons, down from 47,634 the previous decade. Shelby Township, on the other hand, matched the increase that occurred during the 1970's, providing additional evidence of the continued movement of population northward.

Chesterfield and Clinton Townships continued to be the major contributors to growth in the eastern corridor. These two communities experienced population increases of 7,629 and 13,466 persons, respectively, over the ten years leading up to 1990.

TABLE 2
POPULATION CHANGE BY
GROWTH CORRIDORS -
MACOMB COUNTY 1980-1990

VAN DYKE/MOUND

I-94/GRATIOT/M-3

COMMUNITY	POPULATION		CHANGE		COMMUNITY	POPULATION		CHANGE	
	1980	1990	Number	%		1980	1990	Number	%
Bruce Twp.	3,823	4,193	370	9.7	Richmond City	3,536	4,141	605	17.1
Romeo	3,509	3,520	11	0.3	Richmond Twp.	2,453	2,528	75	3.1
32 Mile to 38 Mile	7,332	7,713	381	5.2	32 Mile to 38 Mile	5,989	6,669	680	11.4
Washington Twp.	8,637	11,386	2,749	31.8	Lenox Twp.	3,028	3,069	41	1.4
					New Haven	1,871	2,331	460	24.6
26 Mile to 32 Mile	8,637	11,386	2,749	31.8	26 Mile to 32 Mile	4,899	5,400	501	10.2
Shelby Twp.	38,939	48,655	9,716	25.0	Chesterfield Twp.	18,276	25,905	7,629	41.7
Utica	5,282	5,081	-201	-3.8	New Baltimore	5,439	5,798	359	6.6
M-59 to 26 Mile	44,221	53,736	9,515	21.5	M-59 to 26 Mile	23,715	31,703	7,988	33.7
Sterling Heights	108,999	117,810	8,811	8.1	Fraser	14,560	13,899	-661	-4.5
					Clinton Twp.	72,400	85,866	13,466	18.6
					Mt. Clemens	18,806	18,405	-401	-2.1
					Harrison	23,649	24,685	1,036	4.4
14 Mile to M-59	108,999	117,810	8,811	8.1	14 Mile to M-59	129,415	142,855	13,440	10.4
Center Line	9,293	9,026	-267	-2.9	Eastpointe	38,280	35,283	-2,997	-7.8
Warren	161,134	144,864	-16,270	-10.1	Roseville	54,311	51,412	-2,899	-5.3
					St. Clair Shores	76,210	68,107	-8,103	-10.6
8 Mile to 14 Mile	170,427	153,890	-16,537	-9.7	8 Mile to 14 Mile	168,801	154,802	-13,999	-8.3
TOTALS	339,616	344,535	4,919	1.4	TOTALS	332,819	341,429	8,610	2.6

Source: U.S. Census (1980, 90)

SECTION 1.0

Results from the 2000 Census reveal that the western corridor communities have surpassed the growth experienced in the eastern corridor, similar to that seen between 1970 and 1980.

The data further emphasizes the continued population growth in the northern portion of both the eastern and western corridors between 1990 and 2000. Shelby Township and Chesterfield Township increased by 16,504 and 11,500 persons, respectively, during this ten-year span. Population decreases can be seen in many of the southern communities, such as Warren, St. Clair Shores, and Roseville.

Further examination of the overall population data reveals that all communities located between 8 Mile Road and 14 Mile Road have experienced continued declines in population over the 30 year time span between 1970 and 2000. The City of Mount Clemens is the only other community in the county that has experienced a decline each decade since 1970.

TABLE 3
POPULATION CHANGE BY
GROWTH CORRIDORS -
MACOMB COUNTY 1990-2000

VAN DYKE/MOUND

I-94/GRATIOT/M-3

COMMUNITY	POPULATION		CHANGE		COMMUNITY	POPULATION		CHANGE	
	1990	2000	Number	%		1990	2000	Number	%
Bruce Twp.	4,193	6,395	2,202	52.5	Richmond City	4,141	4,896	755	18.2
Romeo	3,520	3,721	201	5.7	Richmond Twp.	2,528	3,416	888	35.1
32 Mile to 38 Mile	7,713	10,116	2,403	31.2	32 Mile to 38 Mile	6,669	8,312	1,643	24.6
Washington Twp.	11,386	17,122	5,736	50.4	Lenox Twp.	3,069	5,362	2,293	74.7
					New Haven	2,331	3,071	740	31.7
26 Mile to 32 Mile	11,386	17,122	5,736	50.4	26 Mile to 32 Mile	5,400	8,433	3,033	56.2
Shelby Twp.	48,655	65,159	16,504	33.9	Chesterfield Twp.	25,905	37,405	11,500	44.4
Utica	5,081	4,577	-504	-9.9	New Baltimore	5,798	7,405	1,607	27.7
M-59 to 26 Mile	53,736	69,736	16,000	29.8	M-59 to 26 Mile	31,703	44,810	13,107	41.3
Sterling Heights	117,810	124,471	6,661	5.7	Fraser	13,899	15,297	1,398	10.1
					Clinton Twp.	85,866	95,648	9,960	11.6
					Mt. Clemens	18,405	17,312	-1,093	-5.9
					Harrison	24,685	24,461	-224	-0.9
14 Mile to M-59	117,810	124,471	124,471	5.7	14 Mile to M-59	142,855	152,718	9,863	6.9
Center Line	9,026	8,531	-495	-5.5	Eastpointe	35,283	34,077	-1,206	-3.4
Warren	144,864	138,247	-6,617	-4.6	Roseville	51,412	48,129	-3,283	-6.4
					St. Clair Shores	68,107	63,096	-5,011	-7.4
8 Mile to 14 Mile	153,890	146,778	-7,112	-4.6	8 Mile to 14 Mile	154,802	145,302	-9,500	-6.1
TOTALS	344,535	368,223	23,688	6.9	TOTALS	341,429	359,575	18,146	5.3

Source: U.S. Census (1990, 2000)

Housing Unit Trends - In recent decades, population change alone has proven not to be the most accurate barometer of community growth and vitality. Much of the population decline experienced by the ring of maturing suburban communities surrounding Detroit is the result of declines in household size, rather than an exodus of residents from the community. Population decline should, therefore, not necessarily be interpreted as an indicator of community decline. Frequently, a community will experience an increase in the number of households concurrently with a decline in population. For this reason, housing unit growth trends are considered to be a more valid measure of growth.

Applying this measure of growth to the two identified Macomb County growth corridors reveals an overall balance between these two areas. Between 1970 and 1980, western corridor communities held a slight edge in the number of new housing units constructed. In spite of this increase, the eastern communities had some 5,000 more housing units.

TABLE 4
HOUSING CHANGE BY
GROWTH CORRIDORS -
MACOMB COUNTY 1970-1980

VAN DYKE/MOUND

I-94/GRATIOT/M-3

COMMUNITY	HOUSING UNITS		CHANGE		COMMUNITY	HOUSING UNITS		CHANGE	
	1970	1980	Number	%		1970	1980	Number	%
Bruce Twp.	582	1,142	560	96.2	Richmond City	982	1,282	300	30.5
Romeo	1,195	1,370	175	14.6	Richmond Twp.	434	676	242	55.8
32 Mile to 38 Mile	1,777	2,512	735	41.4	32 Mile to 38 Mile	1,416	1,958	542	38.3
Washington Twp.	1,573	2,635	1,062	67.5	Lenox Twp.	770	919	149	19.4
					New Haven	508	613	105	20.7
26 Mile to 32 Mile	1,573	2,635	1,062	67.5	26 Mile to 32 Mile	1,278	1,532	254	19.9
Shelby Twp.	7,571	12,319	4,748	62.7	Chesterfield Twp.	2,789	6,075	3,286	117.8
Utica	1,265	1,952	687	54.3	New Baltimore	1,353	2,118	765	56.5
M-59 to 26 Mile	8,836	14,271	5,435	61.5	M-59 to 26 Mile	4,142	8,193	4,051	97.8
Sterling Heights	17,571	34,517	16,946	96.4	Fraser	3,067	4,832	1,765	57.5
					Clinton Twp.	13,436	24,752	11,316	84.2
					Mt. Clemens	6,823	7,363	540	7.9
					Harrison	5,797	9,332	3,535	61.0
14 Mile to M-59	17,571	34,517	16,946	96.4	14 Mile to M-59	29,123	46,279	17,156	58.9
Center Line	3,129	3,642	513	16.4	Eastpointe	13,214	13,458	244	1.8
Warren	49,609	54,532	4,923	9.9	Roseville	16,751	18,491	1,740	10.4
					St. Clair Shores	24,882	27,154	2,272	9.1
8 Mile to 14 Mile	52,738	58,174	5,436	10.3	8 Mile to 14 Mile	54,847	59,103	4,256	7.8
TOTALS	82,495	112,109	29,614	35.9	TOTALS	90,806	117,065	26,259	28.9

Source: U.S. Census (1970, 80)

SECTION 1.0

During the 1980's, over 18,000 new units were added in the eastern communities, giving them an edge in the total number of dwelling units. Sterling Heights, Warren and Shelby Township made the greatest contribution to the housing unit increases that occurred in the western corridor during the 1970's. Nearly 90 percent of the total increase took place in those three communities. The greatest contributors to the housing unit growth in the eastern corridor were Chesterfield, Clinton and Harrison Townships. Collectively, these three communities accounted for nearly 70 percent of the corridor's total housing unit increase for the decade.

Following the pattern of the previous decade, Sterling Heights and Shelby Township again made the greatest contribution to total housing unit gain. To the east, Clinton Township, Chesterfield Township and the City of Roseville had the greatest housing unit increases during the 1980's.

TABLE 5
HOUSING CHANGE BY
GROWTH CORRIDORS -
MACOMB COUNTY 1980-1990

VAN DYKE/MOUND

I-94/GRATIOT/M-3

COMMUNITY	HOUSING UNITS		CHANGE		COMMUNITY	HOUSING UNITS		CHANGE	
	1980	1990	Number	%		1980	1990	Number	%
Bruce Twp.	1,142	1,379	236	20.8	Richmond City	1,282	1,662	380	29.6
Romeo	1,370	1,382	12	0.9	Richmond Twp.	676	783	107	15.8
32 Mile to 38 Mile	2,512	2,761	249	9.9	32 Mile to 38 Mile	1,958	2,445	487	24.9
Washington Twp.	2,635	3,969	1,334	50.6	Lenox Twp.	919	1,018	99	10.8
					New Haven	613	824	211	34.4
26 Mile to 32 Mile	2,635	3,969	1,334	50.6	26 Mile to 32 Mile	1,532	1,842	310	20.2
Shelby Twp.	12,319	17,630	5,311	43.1	Chesterfield Twp.	6,075	9,594	3,519	57.9
Utica	1,952	1,962	10	0.5	New Baltimore	2,118	2,459	341	16.1
M-59 to 26 Mile	14,271	19,592	5,321	37.3	M-59 to 26 Mile	8,193	12,053	3,860	47.1
Sterling Heights	34,517	42,317	7,800	22.6	Fraser	4,832	5,342	510	10.6
					Clinton Twp.	24,752	33,938	9,186	37.1
					Mt. Clemens	7,363	7,727	364	4.9
					Harrison	9,332	10,616	1,284	13.8
14 Mile to M-59	34,517	42,317	7,800	22.6	14 Mile to M-59	46,279	57,623	11,344	24.5
Center Line	3,642	3,986	3,44	9.4	Eastpointe	13,458	13,684	226	1.7
Warren	54,532	56,189	1,657	3.0	Roseville	18,491	20,025	1,534	8.3
					St. Clair Shores	27,154	27,929	775	2.9
8 Mile to 14 Mile	58,174	60,175	2,001	3.4	8 Mile to 14 Mile	59,103	61,638	2,535	4.3
TOTALS	112,109	128,814	16,705	14.9	TOTALS	117,065	135,601	18,536	15.8

Source: U.S. Census (1980, 90)

Results from the 2000 Census indicate that during the ten-year span between 1990 and 2000, the western corridor communities equaled the growth in housing units experienced in the eastern corridor. Shelby Township and Sterling Heights make the greatest contribution to the housing unit increases in the western corridor with approximately 74 percent of the corridor's total housing unit increase. In the eastern corridor, Clinton Township and Chesterfield Township provide the greatest housing unit increases.

TABLE 6
HOUSING CHANGE BY
GROWTH CORRIDORS -
MACOMB COUNTY 1990-2000

VAN DYKE/MOUND

I-94/GRATIOT/M-3

COMMUNITY	HOUSING UNITS		CHANGE		COMMUNITY	HOUSING UNITS		CHANGE	
	1990	2000	Number	%		1990	2000	Number	%
Bruce Twp.	1,379	2,188	809	58.7	Richmond City	1,662	2,062	400	24.1
Romeo	1,382	1,605	223	16.1	Richmond Twp.	783	1,060	277	35.4
32 Mile to 38 Mile	2,761	3,793	1,032	37.4	32 Mile to 38 Mile	2,445	3,122	677	27.7
Washington Twp.	3,969	6,443	2,474	62.3	Lenox Twp.	1,018	1,508	490	48.1
					New Haven	824	1,138	314	38.1
26 Mile to 32 Mile	3,969	6,443	2,474	62.3	26 Mile to 32 Mile	1,842	2,646	804	43.6
Shelby Twp.	17,630	25,265	7,635	43.3	Chesterfield Twp.	9,594	13,967	4,373	45.6
Utica	1,962	2,005	43	2.2	New Baltimore	2,459	3,218	759	30.9
M-59 to 26 Mile	19,592	27,270	7,678	39.2	M-59 to 26 Mile	12,053	17,185	5,132	42.6
Sterling Heights	42,317	47,547	5,230	12.4	Fraser	5,342	6,178	836	15.6
					Clinton Twp.	33,938	41,803	7,865	23.2
					Mt. Clemens	7,727	7,546	-181	-2.3
					Harrison	10,616	11,486	870	8.2
14 Mile to M-59	42,317	47,547	5,230	12.4	14 Mile to M-59	57,623	67,013	9,390	16.3
Center Line	3,986	3,916	-70	-1.8	Eastpointe	13,684	13,965	281	2.1
Warren	56,189	57,249	1,060	1.9	Roseville	20,025	20,519	494	2.5
					St. Clair Shores	27,929	28,208	279	1.0
8 Mile to 14 Mile	60,175	61,165	990	1.6	8 Mile to 14 Mile	61,638	62,692	1,054	1.7
TOTALS	128,814	146,218	17,404	13.5	TOTALS	135,601	152,658	17,057	12.6

Source: U.S. Census (1990, 2000)

M-59 Growth Corridor

As reflected in the preceding analysis, the rapid rate of population and housing growth experienced by communities in western Macomb County over the past forty years has brought both corridors into relative balance in the number of residents and total housing units. The pace of population and housing unit change experienced by these two corridors does not, however, fully explain overall County growth patterns due to the existence of an east-west corridor along M-59.

The communities most impacted by this corridor include Sterling Heights, Shelby Township, Utica, Macomb Township, Clinton Township and Chesterfield Township. Collectively, these communities experienced a population gain of 72,683 persons during the past decade. More than 35,441 new housing units were constructed in these communities since 1990, accounting for approximately 65 percent of the total housing unit increase in Macomb County. Communities located proximate to M-59 are positioned to be further impacted by future County development.

Conclusion

Washington Township is located directly in the path of the housing and population growth trends occurring along the Van Dyke/Mound Road growth corridor. Each of the communities to the south of Washington have been impacted by this growth as it accelerates in a northerly direction along this corridor. The population and household growth trends reported by the Township over the past 30 years offer evidence indicating that the influence of this corridor is penetrating the Township.

Between 1980 and 1990, Washington's population increased by 2,749 persons, an increase of over thirty percent. The 2000 Census figures indicate that over the past ten years, the Township experienced a more significant increase of 5,736 persons, roughly fifty percent. The population increase over the ten year period between 1990 and 2000 equaled the increase in population between 1970 and 1990, which was 5,735. Consistent with this trend, the number of new dwelling units built in Washington Township increased by 1,334 units, an increase of over fifty percent, during the 1980's. The 2000 Census figures indicate an additional increase of 2,474 units over the past ten years.

Washington has emerged as one of the County's leading growth communities. The Township's geographic setting, relative to the Van Dyke/Mound Road growth corridor, helps explain the significant growth experienced by the community over the past 20 years. It is likely that the Township will continue to be further impacted by growth trends within each corridor in the near future.

REGIONAL PLANNING INFLUENCES

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) - SEMCOG is the principal regional planning agency serving the seven-county southeast Michigan region. Its main role is to foster inter-governmental cooperation and to coordinate planning activities that are regional in scope. SEMCOG's principal planning activities involve the following areas: transportation, community/economic development, water/air quality, solid waste disposal, sewage treatment, storm drainage, public safety and land use. SEMCOG also maintains the region's most extensive data base used for planning and economic development purposes. Several of SEMCOG's activities have some influence on Washington Township, either directly or indirectly. Relevant regional plans and policies influencing the community are identified below.

Transportation Planning - Southeast Michigan's road system provides the physical linkage that ties the region together. SEMCOG plays an important role in coordinating the regional planning process for expanding and improving this system. The primary purpose of SEMCOG's transportation planning system is to identify the region's major transportation system deficiencies and to recommend solutions for addressing these problems. SEMCOG's present Regional Transportation Plan considers long-range transportation planning needs to the year 2025. These needs are based on projected population, household, and employment forecasts for each of the region's 223 units of government. The Plan also identifies improvement corridors, or regional arterials which demonstrate the greatest need for additional traffic capacity.

Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) SMART is the agency responsible for providing mass transportation services to the three-County Metropolitan Detroit area. The main component of SMART's service to the region consists of a network of bus routes. Other specialized services provided by SMART include a connector or small bus service. This is particularly useful for meeting the transportation needs of senior citizens and the handicapped. SMART also operates a Municipal Credit Program, which provides funding to communities to be used for meeting the transportation needs of its residents. Local communities are responsible for determining how this money will be spent. It can be used to subsidize the cost of providing SMART's connector service, providing vans for local service, or underwriting the cost of bus tickets for local residents. Washington Township is located beyond the service area of SMART's main-line bus routes.

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Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA) - The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority operates three regional park facilities in Macomb County: Stony Creek Metropark in Washington and Shelby Townships, Wolcott Mill Metropark in Ray Township and Metropolitan Beach Metropark in Harrison Township. These parks offer a wide range of recreational opportunities for residents throughout the County and region. Stony Creek occupies a large portion of western Washington Township. The location of this facility in the community has a significant influence on the Township's long-term development patterns. HCMA is also participating in the implementation of a regional hike-bike path through central Macomb County. The main purpose of this system is to provide a non-motorized pedestrian and bicycle path connection between existing and planned major recreation facilities in this portion of the County. It will accomplish this by developing new paths that will connect with those that currently exist in the area.

This system will provide a loop beginning at Metro Beach Metropark in Harrison Township and extend along Metropolitan Beach Parkway, where an existing path is currently, to Macomb County Park in Sterling Heights. From there, it will proceed north to the Clinton River Valley, where it will connect into the City of Sterling Height's path system in Dodge Park and Clinton River Park. It will continue in a northwesterly direction along the river, through the Rochester Utica Recreation area, to the entrance of Stony Creek Park.

The next leg of this path will extend along 26 Mile Road as far east as Wetzel State Park, with a secondary branch providing access to Wolcott Mill Metropark. The loop system will be completed with a path along Romeo Plank Road, Cass Avenue and Harrington Road through Mt. Clemens, and eventually back to Metropolitan Beach Parkway.

Michigan Department of Transportation and Road Commission of Macomb County - Future land use patterns are impacted and influenced by improvement to the regional highway system. Within Macomb County, the Michigan Department of Transportation and County Road Commission exercise the greatest amount of control over future transportation routes.

The M-53 bypass has had a significant impact on Washington Township by providing a limited access bypass around Romeo for through-traffic. The bypass has reduced the amount of traffic using the M-53 alignment along Van Dyke Avenue. Also, the widening of M-59 through central Macomb County has had a major impact on the growth and development of the communities located along, and within close proximity, to this road.

Macomb County Planning Commission - The Macomb County Planning Commission plays an important role in the County planning and development process. Rather than developing County-wide plans or growth policies, the Macomb County Planning Commission has sought to assist local units of government establish their own land use goals and plans. This is accomplished by providing local planning commissions with a range of resources to help facilitate better planning. Among the many services provided by the County are economic development assistance, coordination of the subdivision review process, aerial photography, and other mapping resources.

LOCAL PLANNING INFLUENCES

In addition to the broader regional planning concerns identified in this report, Washington Township is also influenced by land use activities occurring in neighboring communities. Frequently, the planning policies of neighboring communities can have a significant influence on the future development of property on the opposite side of the municipal boundary. The master plans of those communities sharing a common boundary with Washington Township were examined to identify their potential impact on the community.

Five communities share a common boundary with Washington Township. These communities include: Shelby Township, Ray Township, Oakland Township, Bruce Township, and the Village of Romeo. Relevant planning policies of these communities are noted below.

Shelby Township - Washington's most intensive common boundary is located to the south, along 26 Mile Road in Shelby Township. A range of different land uses are planned for this area, which reflect the importance of this road as a County transportation route.

Single-family homes at varying densities are planned for large stretches of this common boundary, with greater intensity proposed near the Mound Road and Van Dyke Avenue intersections. A Target, Home Depot and Kohl's store was constructed in 2002 at Van Dyke and 26 Mile Road. The Master Plan suggests medium density residential between the Stony Creek Park entrance and the railroad tracks, with industrial shown at the southeast corner of 26 Mile Road and Mound Road.

Ray Township - Most of the common boundary between Washington and Ray Townships is designated for open space residential purposes. This planning designation contemplates low density single-family development on large lots without public utilities. The major exception to this is the half section at 26 Mile Road and Hayes, which is planned as a mobile home park.

The far northwest corner of Ray Township, at the intersection of 32 Mile Road and Powell Road, is planned for continued use as an airport, reflecting the existing development pattern. The Ray Township Master Plan concludes that the location of the airport, the industrial zoning pattern, and compatible surrounding uses encourages the expansion of the airport for corporate and charter services.

The Romeo Airport currently functions as Macomb County's only public use airport. The airport is in the process of extending one runway to approximately 6,500 feet, and has recently upgraded navigation technology. This expansion includes shutting down a portion of 31 Mile Road between Powell and the Washington border. The expansion of Romeo Airport will have an impact on the adjoining portions of Washington Township, since a portion of the runway will now be in the Township.

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Oakland Township - To the west, the development policies of Oakland Township are most clearly reflected in the Township Zoning Ordinance and map. Nearly all of this common boundary is zoned for very low density residential purposes. South of Snell Road to 26 Mile Road, the common boundary is zoned Regional Park. This designation reflects the extension of Stony Creek Metro Park into the community.

Bruce Township - Bruce and Washington Townships share a common boundary along 32 Mile Road. West of the Village of Romeo, the 32 Mile Road frontage in Bruce Township is designated for very low density residential purposes. This designation, known as "Rural Estate", anticipates the development of single-family homes at a density of one dwelling unit for every two acres of land.

Village of Romeo - The most significant planning influence from Romeo is evident along 32 Mile Road, east of Van Dyke. The location of the Ford Motor Company engine assembly plant and ancillary industrial uses in this portion of the Village influences the development of the adjacent acreage in Washington Township. Also, the commercial uses along Van Dyke and higher density residential development within the Village have had an influence on development in the northern portion of the Township.

CONCLUSION

Land use decisions transcend political boundaries. The policies developed by one community can have a major impact on land use in a neighboring community. If there is not a coordination of land use policy, neighboring uses between municipal borders may evoke a transitional or buffer response.

Development in Macomb County continues to advance northward. While the greatest development influences in Washington Township occur along its southern boundary with Shelby, Washington can expect the influence of development to be great on all sides of the Township. Regional development influences provide opportunities for each local unit of government to plan for compatible land uses across boundary lines, while accommodating transitional uses in an appropriate manner. Coordination allows planning to be imaginative and foster a quality response to each identifiable regional initiative.