

# *Master Plan*



London Township  
Monroe County, Michigan

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Monroe County, Michigan

December 6, 2004

**MCKenna**  
ASSOCIATES  
I N C O R P O R A T E D

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## ***Acknowledgments***

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### **London Township Board of Trustees**

Kristopher Neuvirth, Supervisor  
Larry Lee, Clerk  
Lynn Davidson, Treasurer  
Anthony Eaddy, Trustee  
LeRoy Zieske, Trustee

### **London Township Planning Commission**

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# *Table of Contents*

Title Page	i
Acknowledgments .....	ii
Table of Contents .....	iv
List of Tables.....	iv
List of Maps .....	iv
<b>I. Master Plan Strategic Issues</b>	
Introduction .....	1
Regional Analysis .....	2
Land Use Issues .....	2
<b>II. Socio-Economic and Housing Analysis</b>	
Population Analysis .....	5
Economic Analysis .....	9
Housing Analysis .....	13
Socio-Economic and Housing Analysis Findings .....	17
<b>III. Existing Land Use Analysis</b>	
General Overview .....	18
Land Use Classifications .....	18
Land Use Analysis .....	22
Land Use Findings .....	23
<b>IV. Environmental Features Analysis</b>	
Environmental Features Analysis .....	24
Environmental Analysis Findings.....	28
<b>V. Physical Constraints and Resources Analysis</b>	
Development Patterns.....	29
Utility Service Areas.....	30
Community Facilities .....	31
Floodplains/Nature Preserve .....	32
Physical Constraints and Resources Findings .....	32

## *Table of Contents (cont.)*

<b>VI. Vehicular Transportation Analysis</b>	
Road Classifications.....	33
Vehicular Traffic and Road issues.....	36
Vehicular Transportation Analysis Findings.....	37
<b>VII. Master Plan Goals and Objectives</b>	
Visioning.....	38
Comprehensive Goals and Objectives.....	39
Agriculture.....	40
Residential Areas.....	40
Commercial Development.....	41
Industrial Development.....	42
Public Facilities and Services.....	43
Open Spaces.....	44
Traffic Management and Circulation.....	44
Floodplains/Nature Preserve.....	45
Implementation.....	45
<b>VIII. Future Land Use Analysis</b>	
The Basic Concept.....	47
Future Land Use Plan.....	48
Circulation Plan.....	54
<b>IX. Implementation Techniques</b>	
Public Information and Education.....	57
Township Zoning Ordinance.....	58
Subdivision Control Ordinance.....	58
Site Design Standards.....	59
Transfer of Development Rights.....	59
Purchase of Development Rights.....	60
Conventional Zoning Techniques.....	60
Innovative Zoning Techniques.....	61
Public Facilities Improvement.....	62
Land Acquisition.....	63
Land Conservancy Activities Involving the Government.....	64
Land Conservancy Activities Involving a Private Conservancy Organization.....	66
Financing Tools.....	67

# *Table of Contents (cont.)*

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table No. 1	Population-Surrounding Municipalities and County.....	6
Table No. 2	Households-Surrounding Municipalities and County.....	7
Table No. 3	Persons Per Household-Surrounding Municipalities and County .....	7
Table No. 4	Population by Age, 1990 & 2000.....	8
Table No. 5	Composition of Labor Force by Occupation, 2000.....	9
Table No. 6	Composition of Labor Force by Industry, 2000 .....	10
Table No. 7	Median Household Income, 2000.....	11
Table No. 8	Education Attainment .....	12
Table No. 9	Housing Units Built by Year .....	13
Table No. 10	Housing Units by Structure Type.....	13
Table No. 11	Housing Units by Tenure .....	14
Table No. 12	Age of Housing, 2000 .....	14
Table No. 13	Median Contract Rent .....	15
Table No. 14	Housing Values, 2000 .....	15
Table No. 15	Existing Land Use Acreage.....	16
Table No. 16	Future Land Use Acreage.....	19
Table No. 17	Road Designation.....	34
Table No. 18	Future Land Use Cleanings.....	52

## **LIST OF MAPS**

Map No. 1 - Regional Location.....	3
Map No. 2 - Existing Land Use.....	21
Map No. 3 - General Soil Associations.....	25
Map No. 4 - Natural Features .....	27
Map No. 5 - Road Classification.....	35
Map No. 6 - Future Land Use.....	53

## **APPENDIX A**

London Township Comprehensive Plan Focus Group Small Group Session Detailed Responses

## **APPENDIX B**

Why Manage Access?

# I. MASTER PLAN

## STRATEGIC ISSUES

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### *Introduction*

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The London Township Master Plan is intended to guide the future growth and development for London Township over the next 20 years. The basis for the development of this plan is the Township's desire to ensure that its community continues to be a place which exemplifies all the positive characteristics associated with a rural lifestyle. London Township's remaining natural features, such as woodlands, wetlands and agricultural sceneries are some of the attributes which must be preserved and protected in such a way that continues to maintain the community character. In addition, this plan will provide ways in which the community can direct and enhance both residential and non-residential development that will complement rather than destroy the lifestyle which has historically grown and developed in this location.

The Master Plan will first identify those planning issues most important to the community. An analysis of the existing features of the community illustrates some of the defining characteristics within the Township. The analysis includes a survey of the existing land uses in London Township, population, economic and housing statistics, and a description of the physical constraints and resources and circulation patterns of the community. Based on all gathered information and with input from citizens, goals and objectives will be created which outline the growth and development patterns for the community over the next 20 years. These goals and objectives will guide the creation of the future land use plan and circulation plan for London Township. Finally, the implementation section will present some key strategies the Township can use to meet its master plan goals and objectives.

By providing an outline for the development of their township, the citizens will attempt to preserve, protect, and enhance the positive characteristics of their community for the future citizens of London Township.



## *Regional Analysis*

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London Township is located in the northwest portion of Monroe County, Michigan, approximately one (1) mile southeast of Milan, Michigan. The area of London Township is roughly 36 square miles (See Map 1).

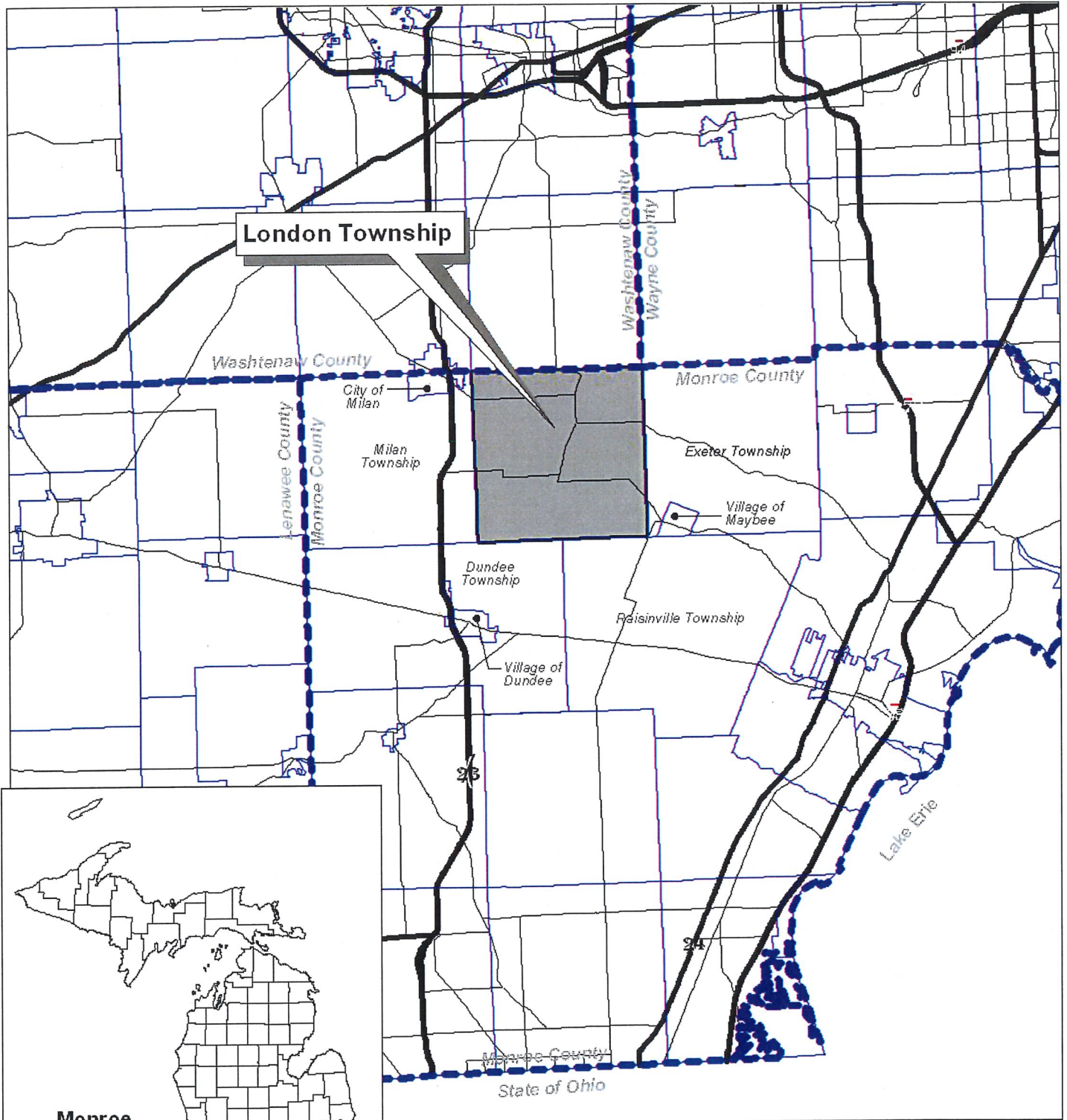
The Township is primarily rural and agricultural in character. The main North/South connector is U.S. 23, a major highway that lies wholly outside the Township on its west boundary line. A connection is made with the Township with the interchange at Plank Road in the City of Milan and Cone Road in the Township of Milan. U.S. 23 connects Michigan with Ohio to the south and to the north, the City Ann Arbor, a major university community. U.S. 23 intersects with I-75 in the Flint area, which opens up the vast recreational opportunities of Michigan's northern areas.

## *Land Use Issues*

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The regional setting of London Township highlights the important land use issues affecting the community today. Since it was founded, London Township has existed as a rural agricultural community and, while land use characteristics have intensified over time, the vast majority of the Township has maintained its rural character. Achieving a balance between the existing characteristics and potential future growth is a delicate issue that is an important future land use issue affecting London Township.

The distance of London Township from Ann Arbor and Toledo and the access to US 23 has the potential to dramatically influence the rate of development within London Township. An increased rate of development which goes unchecked will have an adverse impact on the existing agricultural characteristics of the Township. In addition, if land uses for the Township were altered to meet a perceived immediate demand without planning for their impact on the entire Township, large scale high intensity land uses could be placed in areas unprepared or incapable of adjusting to the dramatic increase in land use. A comprehensive planning approach that factors in the characteristics of a land use category and their impacts on neighboring uses can help to minimize the loss of rural character typically associated with the development of non-residential uses. It is important to prepare now for the land uses whose very development can result in London Township losing those sensitive attributes which are attracting increased development.



Base Map Source: Michigan Department of Natural Resources, 2000

- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Secondary Roads

**Map 1**  
**Regional Location**



12/06/2004

The following three statements summarize the policies of the London Township Master Plan:

### **Preservation of Rural Character**

*With a long history of a rural/agricultural lifestyle in London Township, the community intends to preserve certain defining characteristics. Agricultural land uses, large farmsteads, gravel roads, existing natural features, such as creeks, wetlands and woodlands, rolling agricultural sceneries and two-lane roads are some of the elements that exemplify the rural character of London Township.*

### **Improved Infrastructure**

*Improving roadway conditions and water quality for residents of London Township is a major concern. It will be important to work cooperatively with the Monroe County Road Commission in order to establish an effective mechanism to prioritize road improvements based on anticipated growth and need. Consideration for public water service may be necessary for continued development in those areas of the township where severe sulphur problems impact the quality of the drinking water.*

### **Balanced Incremental Growth**

*Based on the proximity of the Township to existing urban centers and the interstate highway, the community intends to prepare for the potential development of more intensive uses that may not be compatible with the rural/agricultural attributes the community wishes to preserve. Development standards and procedural enhancements will ensure that adverse impacts from increased development are minimized as much as possible. The community will designate areas which are appropriate for land uses which will eventually be needed to serve the needs of the Township's residents while insuring that the rate of growth does not place a sharp increase in the services required by those land uses which the community cannot provide. Providing appropriate locations for potential growth and identifying the locations of important characteristics are some aspects that will help ensure balanced growth over an appropriate period of time.*

## II. SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND HOUSING ANALYSIS

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As part of the master plan process, population characteristics are analyzed to determine any recent trends. London Township's population and housing characteristics are compared with those of neighboring communities and the County to gain insight and perspective concerning the Township's past, present and future.

In this section, a number of different aspects of London Township's population and housing characteristics are compared with those of neighboring communities and the County to gain insight and perspective concerning the Township's past, present, and future.

In this section, a number of different aspects of London Township's population is analyzed, including population, occupational characteristics, income, and educational attainment. Persons per household and total housing units are reviewed to find any unique characteristics and trends in London's housing. The following paragraphs and tables will give the reader some insight to what the future may hold for London Township.

### *Population Analysis*

---

As illustrated in Table 1, London Township grew in population 3.7% between 1990 and 2000, or an increase of 109 persons. This is in contrast to the larger percentage increases in population for the townships of Augusta and York to the north. Only Milan Township to the west had a lower growth rate in the past decade. Overall, Monroe County increased by 12,147 residents which represents a 9.2% increase to 145,945 residents.

Within the geographic area of London Township, we can see the population shift that has characteristically happened in Michigan in the past ten to fifteen years. Older, more established cities and villages are losing population to the more rural, outlying areas. Prior to the 1980s, the majority of residents in rural areas were in jobs associated with agriculture or recreation. Since the 1980s, people have been willing to drive more miles and spend more time commuting to employment centers from rural areas. Desire for rural character, larger lots, and newer homes have typically been the driving force for the shift in population from urban to rural areas. A further analysis of the household types in the community will provide additional insight to this population trend.

**Table 1:**  
**1990 - 2000 Population -Surrounding Municipalities and County**

<b>Community</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
London Township	2,915	3,024	109	3.7 %
Dundee Township	2,712	2,819	107	3.9 %
Milan Township	1,659	1,670	11	0.6 %
York Township	6,225	7,392	1,167	18.7 %
Augusta Township	4,415	4,813	398	9.0 %
Pittsfield Township	17,650	30,167	12,517	70.9 %
Ypsilanti Township	45,307	49,182	3,875	8.5 %
Monroe County	133,600	145,945	12,142	9.2 %

*Source: 1990 & 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, SEMCOG*

As seen in Table 2, there was an increase in the total households in London Township. In fact, 90 more households were in the Township in 2000 than in 1990, an increase of 10%. Overall, Monroe County has seen a 16.0% increase in the number of households. In the past ten years, London Township has experienced an increase in the number of households but a decrease in the number of persons per household.

As seen in Table 3, an average of 3.17 residents (1990 Census) were in each household in London Township. By 2000, that figure has dropped to 3.00 persons in each household. This decrease in persons per household is characteristic of both regional and national trends of decreasing household size. All of the comparison communities except Pittsfield Township have seen a decrease in household size. Lower birth rates, single-parent households, and longer life expectancy can partially explain the gradual decline in the number of persons per household.

Townships like London that contain a rural atmosphere will continue to attract families from cities and suburbs. The result will be an increase in population and a gradual change in expectation for higher levels of service. London Township's estimated growth is higher than the projections for Monroe County in 2004 but about half of the projection for 2030 as shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2:**  
**Household Population Change, 2000-2004-2030**

Community	Population Census 2000	Estimate 10/1/04	Change	% of Change	Estimate 2030	Change from 2000	% of Change
London Twp.	3,024	3,233	209	6.9	3,557	533	17.8
Dundee Twp.	978	1,013	35	3.5	1,343	365	37.3
Milan Twp.	610	632	22	3.6	735	125	20.5
York Twp.	1,901	2,236	335	17.6	3,238	1,337	70.3
Augusta Twp.	1,728	2,417	689	37.6	2,936	1,208	69.9
Pittsfield Twp.	11,817	13,264	1,447	12.2	25,313	13,496	114.2
Ypsilanti Twp.	20,194	22,075	1,881	9.3	31,179	10,985	54.4
Monroe County	145,945	152,651	6,706	4.6	194,296	48,351	33.1

Source: SEMCOG, October 2004

**Table 3:**  
**1990 - 2000 Households -Surrounding Municipalities and County**

Community	1990	2000	Change	% Change
London Township	919	1,009	90	10 %
Dundee Township	875	978	103	12 %
Milan Township	569	610	41	7 %
York Township	1,416	1,901	485	34 %
Augusta Township	1,471	1,728	257	17 %
Pittsfield Township	7,013	11,817	4,804	69 %
Ypsilanti Township	17,637	20,194	2,557	14 %
Monroe County	46,508	53,772	7,264	16 %

Source: 1990 & 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, SEMCOG

**Table 4:**  
**1990 - 2000 Persons per Household**  
**Surrounding Municipalities and County**

Community	1990	2000
London Township	3.17	3.00
Dundee Township	3.10	2.87
Milan Township	2.92	2.74
York Township	2.99	2.97
Augusta Township	3.00	2.77
Pittsfield Township	2.33	2.42
Ypsilanti Township	2.56	2.43
Monroe County	2.84	2.69

Source: 1990 & 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, SEMCOG

As London Township has grown, the composition of the population has changed. To illustrate changing demographics, the age distribution data from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census is compared in Table 5. Adults, ages thirty-five to sixty-four, was the largest age bracket of the population in 1990 and 2000. However, this group as a percentage of the population increased between 1990 and 2000 from 37% of the total population to 41% of the population. A similar increase can be seen in the five to seventeen age bracket, from 23% in 1990 to 24% of the total population in 2000.

Meanwhile, the youngest age bracket under 5, ages 18 to 34, and the over 65 age group, have all decreased in population. The shift in age groups is also in keeping with the general national trend. The Baby Boomer generation continues to grow older, the nation, and London Township, have a large percentage of mature adults and senior citizens, 49% of their population. The decrease in young adults, age 18-34, reflects the trend of post-high schoolers leaving London Township for colleges, universities and other job opportunities than those offered within the Township.

**Table 5:  
1990 - 2000 Population by Age**

Age Groups	1990		2000		Change	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0-4	194	7 %	184	6%	- 10	- 5%
5-17	685	23 %	711	24%	26	3.7%
18-34	691	24 %	625	21%	- 66	- 9%
35-64	1,077	37 %	1,251	41%	174	16%
65+	268	9 %	253	8%	- 15	- 5.5%
Total Population	2,915	100 %	3,024	100%	109	3.7%

Source: 1990 & 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, SEMCOG

## ***Economic Analysis***

One purpose of the Master Plan is to review opportunities for employment, shopping and income producing ventures for residents. A secondary purpose is to accommodate desired economic growth that will serve the needs of the residents of the community in appropriate locations. To achieve the above purposes, it is first necessary to become knowledgeable about the income levels and employment characteristics of the residents and the business patterns that exist in and around the Township.

London Township has primarily been an agricultural land use community, but employment centers like Ann Arbor, Milan, and Dundee provide the majority of employment opportunities to Township residents.

Table 6 compares the occupational characteristics of the London Township labor force with Monroe County's labor force for the year 2000. The Township and county have a similar workforce composition except in the management, professional and related occupations where the County has 10.4% more people in that category and in the production, transportation, and material moving category where the Township has approximately 8% more people in that category.



**Table 6:**  
**Composition of Labor Force by Occupation, 2000**  
**London Township and Monroe County**

Occupation	London Township	% of Total	Monroe County	% of Total
Management, professional & related occupations	212	14.4 %	17,467	24.8 %
Service	249	16.9 %	9,793	13.9 %
Sales and Office	309	20.9 %	16,620	23.6 %
Farming, fishing, & Forestry	12	0.8 %	426	0.6 %
Construction, extraction, & maintenance	219	14.8 %	9,060	12.9 %
Production, transportation, & material moving	476	32.2 %	16,978	24.1 %

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Surprisingly, Table 7 shows that the Township has less than 4% of its population involved in farming as their primary occupation considering the large area of land zoned agricultural (AG-1, AG-2) within the Township. However, this low percentage may reflect the current state of agricultural in which a multitude of factors affect markets. Farming may be a secondary means of income. The Township's percentages are fairly consistent with the County's employment percentages except in the manufacturing sector where the Township employs 30.1% to the County's 25.8%. The highest percentage of employment in the Townships occurs in the manufacturing category. It should be noted that the data in Tables 6 and 7 are from a sample-data set and not a 100% data set.

**Table 7:**  
**Composition of Labor Force by Industry, 2000**  
**London Township and Monroe County**

Industry	London Township	% of Total	Monroe County	% of Total
Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting, mining	48	3.2%	894	1.3%
Construction	92	6.2%	5,370	7.6%
Manufacturing	445	30.1%	18,210	25.8%
Wholesale Trade	36	2.4%	2,307	3.3%
Retail Trade	191	12.9%	8,430	12.0%
Transportation & warehousing & utilities	111	7.5%	5,112	7.3%
Information	18	1.2%	973	1.4%
Finance, insurance, real estate, & rental and leasing	29	2.0%	2,669	3.8%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	114	7.7%	4,012	5.7%
Educational, health, and social services	185	12.5%	12,891	18.3%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	98	6.6%	4,894	7.0%
Other services (except Public Administration)	72	4.9%	3,054	4.3%
Public Administration	38	2.6%	1,618	2.3%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 8 shows the distribution of median household income levels for London Township and Monroe County residents in 2000. London Township has over 57% of its residents with incomes at or above \$50,000 while the County's has only 52% of its residents with an annual income at or above \$50,000. Inversely, fewer Township than County residents have incomes less than \$50,000. The trend would indicate that people with high incomes choose to live in the Township. The reasons for such choices can vary from access to a higher salary job market or the lack of housing for lower income households.

**Table 8:**  
**Median Household Income, 2000**  
**London Township and Monroe County**

Income	London Township	Percentage	Monroe County	Percentage
Less than \$10,000	53	5.2%	3,461	6.4%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	35	3.4%	2,529	4.7%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	94	9.2%	5,636	10.5%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	82	8.0%	5,608	10.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	169	16.5%	8,508	15.8%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	268	26.1%	12,490	23.3%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	194	18.9%	8,247	15.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	115	11.2%	5,608	10.4%
\$150,000 or more	15	1.5%	1,763	3.3%
Total	1,025	100%	53,850	100%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

As shown in Table 9, London Township has a high percentage of residents who have no high school degree than either the County or State, but a higher percentage of residents that have graduated from high school than either the County or the State. The Township has a much lower percentage of residents with a Bachelor's Degree or higher than either the County or the State.

**Table 9:**  
**Educational Attainment, 2000**  
**London Township, Monroe County and State of Michigan**

Education Level	London Township	% of Population	Monroe County	% of Population	State of Michigan	% of Population
No High School Degree	420	22%	15,918	17%	1,064,133	17%
Graduated High School	771	40%	35,166	37%	2,010,861	31%
Some College, No degree	440	23%	22,743	24%	1,496,576	23%
Associate Degree	95	5%	6,931	7%	448,112	7%
Bachelor's Degree	144	8%	9,060	10%	878,680	14%
Graduate Degree	40	2%	4,463	5%	517,579	8%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, SEMCOG

## ***Housing Analysis***

Other than the change in population, the change in the number of housing units is one of the most popular ways to gauge the growth rate of a community. Table 10 shows the housing units in London Township and Monroe County from 1993 to 2003. Growth rate is important to the Township Future Land Use plan so that the Township can prepare itself for directing the growth to the appropriate areas of the community and preparing the Township to provide the services new residents and businesses would require. A more detailed analysis of the increase in housing units is necessary.

**Table 10:**  
**Number of Housing Units Built by Year**  
**London Township and Monroe County**

Residential Building Permits	London Township No. of Units	Monroe County No. of Units
1993-1997	17	723
1998 - 2002	23	805
2003	25	1,902
Total New Units	65	3,430

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, SEMCOG

Table 11 also compares the number of housing units in London Township in 1990 and 2000, but has detailed information regarding the types of housing units within the Township. The Township has experienced a 19.4% increase in housing units. The largest growth occurred in One-family detached homes with 104 units or 11.7 % increase from 1990.

**Table 11:**  
**Housing Units by Structure Type**  
**London Township**

Structure Type	1990	2000	% of Change
One-family Detached	898	1,003	11.7%
One-family Attached	6	18	2.0%
Two family/Duplex	18	28	5.5%
Multi-unit Apartments	4	5	0.2%
Mobile Homes	7	7	0%
Other Units	11	0	0%
Total Housing Units	944	1,061	19.4%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, SEMCOG

Table 12 compares the number of housing units and occupancy status within the Township to Monroe County in 2000. Of the 1,061 housing units within London Township, 87% are owner occupied which compares to 77% for Monroe County. Of the remaining London Township housing units, 8% were renter occupied and 5% were vacant. This compares to the 18% renter occupied and 5% vacant in Monroe County overall. High owner occupancy and low vacancy rates are generally signs that a housing market is stable and that there is a demand for housing at current prices and rents.

**Table 12:**  
**Housing Units by Tenure, 2000**  
**London Township and Monroe County**

	London Township	% of Total	Monroe County	% of Total
Total Housing Units	1,061		56,471	
Owner Occupied Units	920	87%	43,536	77%
Renter Occupied Units	89	8%	10,236	18%
Vacant Housing Units	52	5%	2,699	5%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, SEMCOG

**Table 13:**  
**2000 Age of Housing**  
**London Township, Monroe County and State of Michigan**

Year Structure Built	London Township	Monroe County	State of Michigan
1999 to March 2000	3.7%	3.1%	2.2%
1995 to 1998	9.6%	9.5%	6.4%
1990 to 1994	3.5%	8.4%	6.1%
1980 to 1989	4.6%	8.6%	10.5%
1970 to 1979	26.6%	15.7%	17.1%
1960 to 1969	14.8%	12.3%	14.2%
1940 to 1959	17.9%	23.5%	26.5%
1939 or earlier	19.4%	18.3%	16.9%
Median Year Built	1969	1966	1960

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Housing age statistics reveal that since 1995, London Township has out-paced Monroe County and the State of Michigan in housing construction. Table 13 shows that 26.6% of the housing units were built in the 1970s. The Township has 48.0% of its housing units constructed after 1970 while the county has 45.3%. Generally, the Township has a larger distribution of housing construction built prior to 1970, with the lowest number of units built in the 1980s.

**Table 14:**  
**2000 Median Contract Rent**  
**London Township, Monroe County, and State of Michigan**

Jurisdiction	Median Rent
London Township	\$597
Monroe County	\$549
State of Michigan	\$546

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Housing values and contract rent are good indicators of housing demand and affordability. According to Table 14, contract rents in the State and Monroe County were virtually the same in 2000 with London Township rents at \$51 higher than the median statewide.

These numbers, generated from the US Census, show that rental housing values in the Township are higher than other rental dwelling in both the county and the state. Housing value depends on several factors: land values, construction costs, demand for housing region-wide, availability of utilities, school district, and proximity to major employers and transportation.

**Table 15:**  
**2000 Housing Values of Specified Owner-Occupied Units**  
**London Township, Monroe County, and State of Michigan**

Value	London Township		Monroe County		State of Michigan	
	# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	% of Total
Under \$50,000	21	3.4%	994	2.9%	224,603	9.9%
\$50,000 to \$149,999	147	24.0%	7,995	23.5%	711,648	31.4%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	251	40.9%	12,477	36.7%	603,454	26.6%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	46	7.5%	4,431	13.0%	252,044	11.1%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	0	0.0%	861	2.5%	104,079	4.6%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0.0%	85	0.3%	27,642	1.2%
\$1,000,000 or more	4	0.7%	13	0.1%	5,989	0.3%
Total	613	100.0%	33,992	100.0%	2,269,175	100.0%
Median Value	\$124,600		\$132,000		\$115,600	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

The median value of owner-occupied housing unit varied slightly between London Township, Monroe County, and the State of Michigan. The median values of London Township was lower than Monroe County but higher than the State of Michigan median value of approximately \$115,600. These statistics indicate that the majority of the housing stock in London Township is of a slightly lower value than the County average.

It should be noted that the data in Tables 13, 14, and 15 are from a sample-data set and not a 100% data set.

## ***Socio-Economic and Housing Analysis Finding***

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Although a large quantity of numbers have been presented, each table helps to clarify a trend that can be seen in the daily life of London Township. By summarizing certain characteristics of the population, economic issues and housing stock, important trends can be identified which will help guide future land use and development. It is important to identify these demographic findings so that land use goals can be developed which would alter the demographic characteristics of the Township to address the land use issues. The following outlines the important trends found in the demographic analysis:

*The Township has experienced a population increase of 3.7% from 1990 to 2000.*

*London Township residents under the age of five, between the ages of eighteen to thirty-four, and over the age of sixty-five as a percentage of the population is decreasing. Younger families are not moving or staying in the Township. The Township may wish to examine the housing and services available to its senior residents as well as the amenities available to younger households.*

*The average number of persons per household in London Township has decreased to 3.00 persons in each household. The decrease in persons per household follows local, state and national trends. The occupations of Township residents and the industries in which they work is very similar to Monroe County. While manufacturing is still a major part of the labor force, workers in the production, transportation, and material moving, and sales and office occupations occupy the majority of the job classification in London Township.*

*London Township has seen a 19.4% increase in the number of housing units between 1990 and 2000. The increase is greatest in single family detached structures with an increase of one hundred five (105) units in the past decade.*

*London Township generally has more residents with incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999 than the County. Inversely, fewer Township than County residents have incomes less than \$10,000 or more than \$150,000. With the increase in household income, London Township can anticipate new demands for housing and services.*



### III. EXISTING LAND USE ANALYSIS

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#### *General Overview*

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Located in the northwestern portion of Monroe County, London Township is located between the townships of Milan and Exeter. The City of Milan and Village of Maybee are located at the northwest and southeast corners of the township respectively. The topography of the area is generally flat with slopes of less than 2 percent change in elevation. There are scattered woodlands within the area varying in sizes from small pockets to significant tree stands. These characteristics are reflected in the fact that the vast majority of land in London has been and is still used for farming. Section V: Physical Constraints and Resources Analysis describes the natural features of the Township in further detail. Existing areas of vegetation, wetlands, open spaces, large amounts of agricultural land uses and lack of intensive uses all add to a distinct rural character for the community.

#### *Land Use Classifications*

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The following section outlines in more detail the location of particular land uses and their characteristics within London Township. Existing land uses were divided into eight (8) different categories in order to analyze the existing pattern of development. This analysis will help to define which characteristics the Township would like to preserve and enhance. Table 15 indicates the acreage covered by each land use category and the corresponding percentage of the land uses within London Township.

##### **Agricultural/Undeveloped Land.**

For the purposes of this land use analysis, agricultural land is defined as any land that is predominately or wholly used for the raising of field crops or utilized as a resource in animal husbandry. Undeveloped land is defined as any land with no visible structures or uses, including woodland, wetland areas, and recreation land. This may include the land behind single family residences that are not being used for any type of use. While there is a difference between the land use types, these classifications provide the same rural character to the community. This category represents the vast majority of land in the Township. Approximately 88% of the Township is agricultural/undeveloped land, representing the predominant land use in the Township. The majority of the farming structures and associated land are generally well maintained, which accounts for the rural appeal of the Township.

**Single Family Residential.**

Single family residential includes lots or parcels of land containing one-family detached dwelling units and includes dwellings on agricultural land. Occupying approximately 9% of the Township's land area, single family residential is the second largest land use in London Township. Unlike more suburban communities, the vast majority of the single family homes are located along the major roads of the community. There is only one (1) traditional subdivision development in London Township of the type typically found in suburban communities. This subdivision is located at the southeast corner of the Township and is commonly referred to as Collingwood Estates. Other single family dwelling units are usually surrounded by agricultural land created by lot splits. The majority of residents enjoy a fairly new home while maintaining the rural agricultural feel.

**Table 16:**  
**2002 Existing Land Use - London Township**

Land Use Category	Acreage	Percentage of Total Acreage
Agricultural, Active	14,042	61%
Single Family Residential	2,032	9%
Multiple Family Residential	4	< 1%
Public, Institutional, Recreation, Transportation & Utility	231	1%
Commercial/Office	42	< 1%
Industrial	3	< 1%
Extractive	524	2%
Water, Woodland, Wetland, Grassland, and Under Development	6,085	27%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,961</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: SEMCOG, 2000

**Multiple Family Residential.**

For the survey, multiple-family residential uses are defined as land containing any building with living quarters for two (2) or more families or individuals. No attempt was made to survey each structure to determine the exact number or condition of individual dwelling units. Multiple family residential uses occupy only 4 acres. One multiple family site is located on the south side of Ostrander Road between Plank and Townsend Roads.

**Extractive Uses.**

Extractive uses are those lands used for mining and processing of raw materials involving the removal of earth, sand, gravel, clay, stone or other non-metallic minerals. There are approximately 524 acres of land currently being occupied by extractive use operations.

**Commercial.**

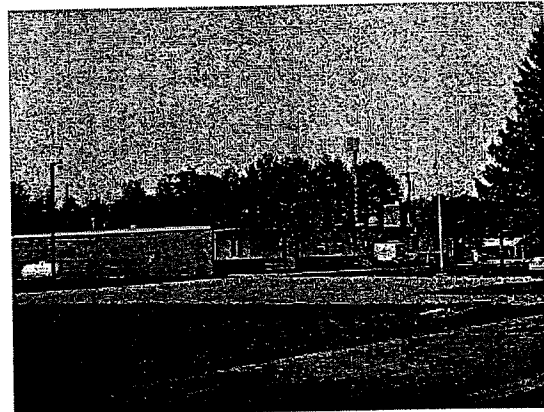
Improved land used predominantly for wholesale, retail, office, commercial services or recreational purposes is classified as Commercial. There are very few sites which are commercial in nature. The majority of commercial uses in the area are located within the Cities of Milan and Dundee. The minimal sites located in London Township that provide commercial services total approximately 42 acres. Other than the Milan Dragway, which is located near the center of the Township on the north side of Snell Road, other commercial uses are scattered throughout the remaining portions of the Township.

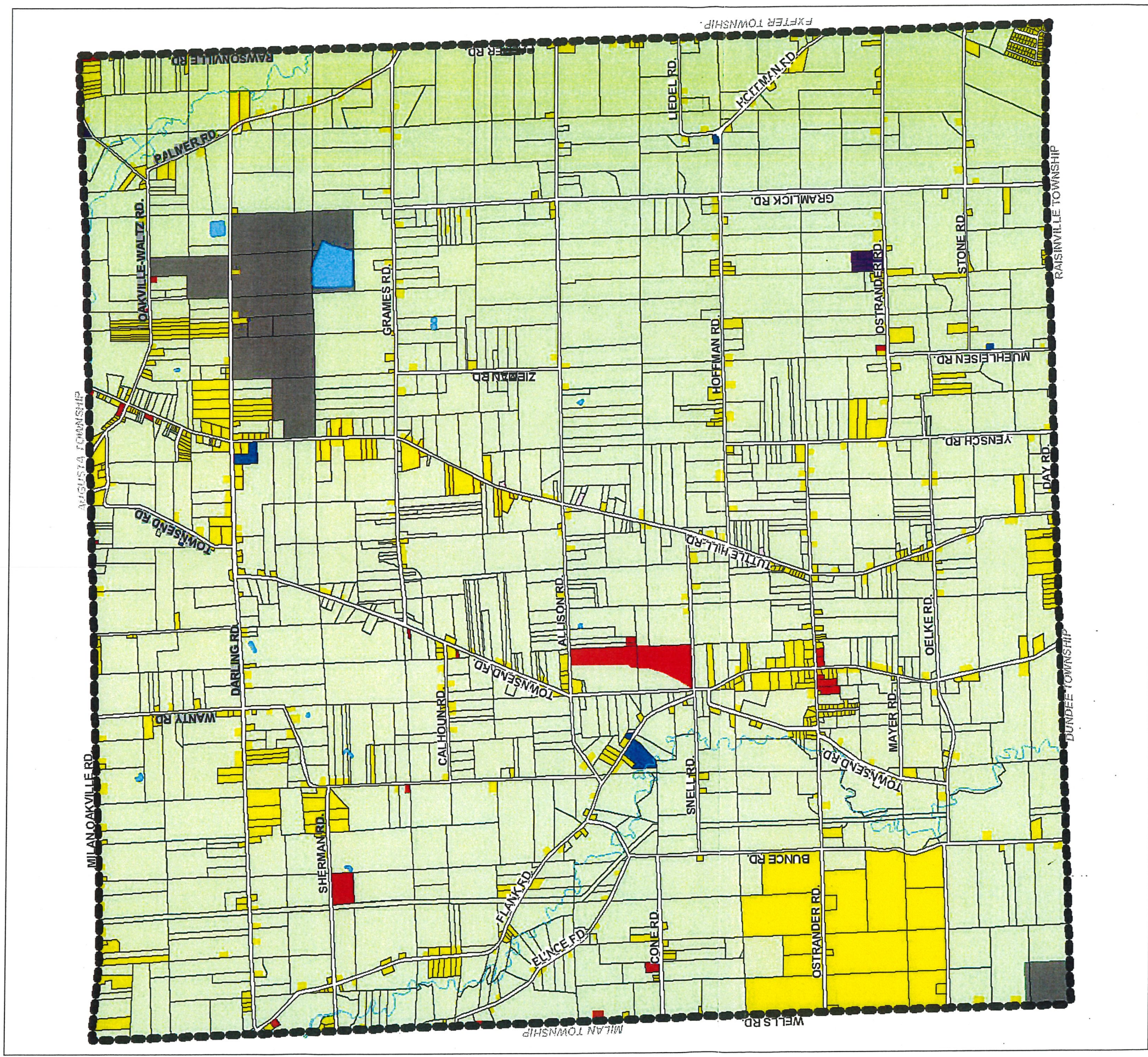
**Industrial.**

Industrial uses include those business which are used predominantly for industry, including warehousing, storage, salvage, light assembly, vehicle equipment servicing, and manufacturing. Parcels used for mining and processing of gravel, stone and inert materials are not included in this category. Industrial land uses total seven (7) acres of Township land. While manufacturing industries can add to the tax base of a community, industrial uses have characteristics which can have an adverse impact on adjacent land uses that are not industrial.

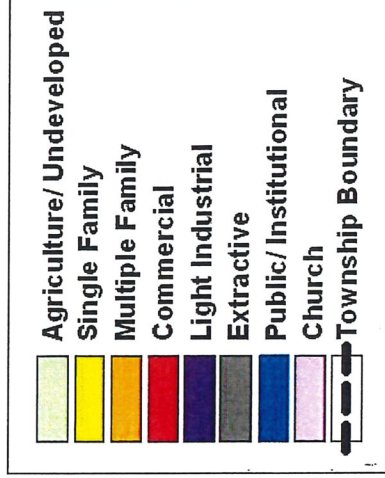
**Public/Institutional.**

Parcels, either improved or unimproved, which are held in the public interest and exempt for real taxation are included within this category. Government offices, cemeteries, utilities, and other facilities for the use enjoyment of the general public are included in this category. These public uses include the London Township Hall and numerous cemeteries totaling 30 acres. Add in lands occupied by roads, utility corridors, and recreational uses, and the total under this category reaches 231 acres, or 1% of the Township's land area.





Base Map and Data Source: London Township, Mckenna Associates, Inc. 7/2003



PAGE 21

**Map 2  
Existing Land Use**

## ***Land Use Analysis***

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### **Agricultural Land Uses/Undeveloped.**

Agricultural land use is the dominant type of use in the Township. Characteristics of the current economy place a large number of expenses on smaller independent farms while at the same time, the average dollar amount of return per acre is on a downward decline. As regional development in Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Toledo (Ohio) continue to encroach towards Monroe County, developers will eventually be seeking land to develop subdivision or condominium housing, commercial uses, and other higher intensity land uses. If the current economy continues without proper planning, it will be difficult for farmers to resist the temptation to sell land to developers. Care in planning must be taken to preserve agricultural land uses and the rural character of the Township.

### **Residential Uses.**

Housing types within the Township are limited primarily to the single family detached dwelling along major roads. There are limited traditional multiple family residential apartment complexes or townhomes. Starter families, young professionals, and empty nesters do not need or want large yards which require extensive maintenance. They do not need dwellings with a large amount of square footage, or they simply cannot afford them. In order to stay close by, these segments of the community can only choose between older existing homes or the other types of housing units within the Cities of Milan and Dundee and the Village of Maybee. The limited Township housing stock results in young adults and mature adults moving out of London Township.

### **Commercial Uses.**

The Milan Dragway is the predominant commercial use in the community. The K.C. Campground, located on Sherman Road, is also classified as a commercial land use. The majority of other commercial uses within the Township are geared toward providing basic community services and needs. There are no gas stations, restaurants and other high intensity commercial uses within the Township. The few commercial uses that are located in other parts of the Township are small neighborhood commercial stores and a small machine sales/repair shop. Residents who wish to shop for day-to-day goods and services must travel outside the Township.

### **Industrial.**

Existing industrial uses are limited to salvage and storage uses. The industrial uses identified within the Township are located at the northeast corner of the Township and on Ostrander Road between Yensch and Gramlick Roads. The limited amount of industrial uses leaves the tax base undiversified. The tax base is primarily dependent upon agricultural and residential land. On average, residential land uses provide \$0.70 in tax base for every \$1 of public service required. Commercial and industrial land uses provide \$1.30 in tax base for every \$1 of public service they require.

### **Extractive.**

There are two (2) significant extractive use operations located in London Township. London Aggregate, located near the northeast corner of the Township has been in existence for many years

and has considerable resources available for continued operation. It is anticipated that land around the remnant ponds will be developed with residences as operations move from active sites. The Holnam site located primarily in the Township of Dundee with only a small portion located in London Township is currently extracting and processing limestone. This facility is expected to continue operation for many years to come. The Township benefits financially from both these operations. As these operations subside and new development is considered for these areas, the use of the remnant ponds could make a significant enhancement to the sites.

## ***Land Use Findings***

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The classification of land uses in London Township has provided an opportunity to look at similar uses found not only in one area but throughout the community. This analysis provides an occasion to find any issues that are common throughout the Township. While some issues might be of concern in one area in particular, this analysis outlines issues which are found throughout the Township. The following section outlines the major characteristics and land use issues found within the Township:

- *Agricultural land use is the predominate land use in the Township.*
- *Single family residential land uses are generally located along the major roads, not in a platted subdivision-type development.*
- *The small percentage of land classified as multiple family residential indicates that the only housing opportunity in the Township is single family homes. Individuals seeking a different housing type must go to other communities. The lack in variation of housing types may be the reason for the continued reduction in the population of young and mature adults.*
- *The majority of commercial uses are the Milan Dragway and campground located on Sherman Road near the utility corridor. Few commercial uses exist elsewhere in the Township.*
- *Industrial development is not prevalent, which preserves the Township's rural character, but limits expansion of the Township tax base.*
- *Recreational activities within the Township are limited to the campground, limited access to the Saline River and those provided by school district playgrounds and parks located outside the Township. As the population increases, the desire for various activities may increase.*
- *Public/Institutional lands and facilities are adequate and currently provide the necessary services for the community.*

## IV. ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES ANALYSIS

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Natural Resources can be a fundamental component of the rural character found in Townships. Residents of the Township enjoy the rural lifestyle and serenity of living away from the hustle and bustle of the urban areas. It is imperative that every effort be taken to preserve and plan around the delicate natural features and rural character of London Township

### *Environmental Features Analysis*

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#### **Soils.**

According to the Soil Survey of Monroe County provided by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Soil Conservation Service, London Township contains 2 different general soil associations.

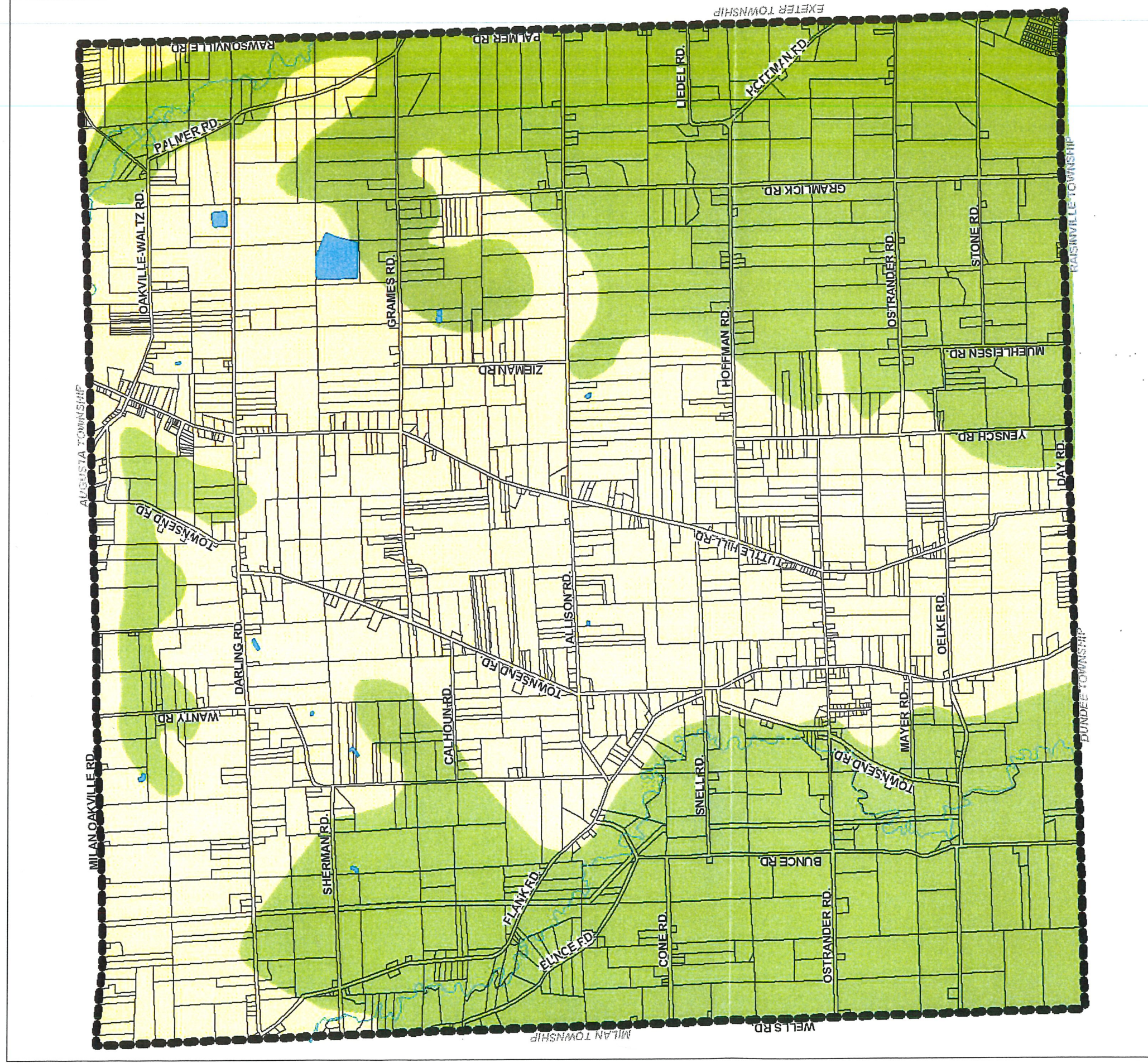
*Oakville-Tedrow-Granby:* The soils in this association are nearly level and gently sloping, well drained to poorly drained, sandy soils; on glacial outwash plains and lake plains. This soil association is found throughout the north and central portions of the Township.

*Pewamo-Selfridge-Blount:* Soils of this association are nearly level, poorly drained and somewhat poorly drained, loamy and sandy soils; on till plains, ground moraines, and lake plains. This soil association is found along the east and west boundaries of the Township.

Soil characteristics are important to London Township in that most of the residents rely on well and septic systems as well as extensive farming. The general soil associations of the Township range from poorly drained to well drained. The poorly drained soil characteristics of each of these soil associations may cause limitation for domestic sewage-disposal systems and limited farming success. Map 3 illustrates the soil types found in London Township.

#### **Forested Wetland.**

The majority of trees and vegetation that existed in London prior to European settlement were cut and cleared to make way for farming. Scattered throughout the Township are stands of trees both along the roadways and along property lines. These stands range in size from a few acres to more than 40 acres in area. These forested areas add to the rural character of the community and provide some recreational opportunities for Township residents. Forest areas add to the rural character of London Township and their preservation would protect the unique character of the Township.



Base Map: London Township, Mckenna Associates, Inc. 7/2003  
Data Source: Monroe County Soil Survey, 1980

	Oakville-Tedrow-Granby association
	Pewamo-Selfridge-Blount association
	Township Boundary



**Wetlands.**

Located within the floodplain of the Saline River and along drains and small creeks of the Township are wetlands which also add to the natural character of London. In addition to being a natural habitat for some fish and wildlife, wetlands control flood and storm water, remove pollutants from water, control erosion and can act as ground water recharge areas. While wetlands greater than five acres in area or which are contiguous with a water body are protected by state law, wetland less than five acres in area are a fundamental part of the ecological system within London Township. The protection of wetlands can insure that rural character of London is not lost.

**Floodplains/Nature Preserve.**

The Saline River is located along the western third of the Township and is bounded by Plank Road to the east and Bunce Road to the west. Stoney Creek is located in the northeast corner of the Township and generally runs along the east side of Palmer Road. The area located within these floodplains do not contain soils suitable for high density or high impact development. Therefore, extra planning and engineering attention must be given to any project proposed in these sections of the Township to ensure that all legal and environmental compliance issues are satisfied. Map 4 illustrates the general boundaries of the Saline River and Stoney Creek floodplains.

**Contaminated Sites.**

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality monitors contaminated sites throughout Michigan. The MDEQ has divided the state into regions of which London Township is included in Region 5, headquartered in Jackson, Michigan. The review of the EPA files that provides information about environmental activities that may affect air and land indicates that there are no underground storage tanks leaking within the Township. Further investigation shows only one (1) facility that produces or releases air pollutants. In addition, the Township has no Brownfields or USTfield properties. Further, there are two (2) other facilities within the township that produce or handle hazardous waste from large quantity generators or companies that have been issued permits.

**Public Act 116.**

The Township's commitment to preserving agriculture is vital as an influx of residential development is a continual threat. One particular program that residents have used is the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program, Public Act 451 of 1994 as amended. This program, commonly referred as PA 116, preserves farmland and open spaces through restrictive covenants and provides tax incentives for those who participate.

Currently there is a significant number of residents participating in the program and a considerable amount of land preserved. According to the Township Clerk and as registered by Michigan Department of Agriculture there are 97 properties registered under PA 116 with over 7,500 acres of preserved farmland within London Township.

### **Purchase of Development Rights Ordinance.**

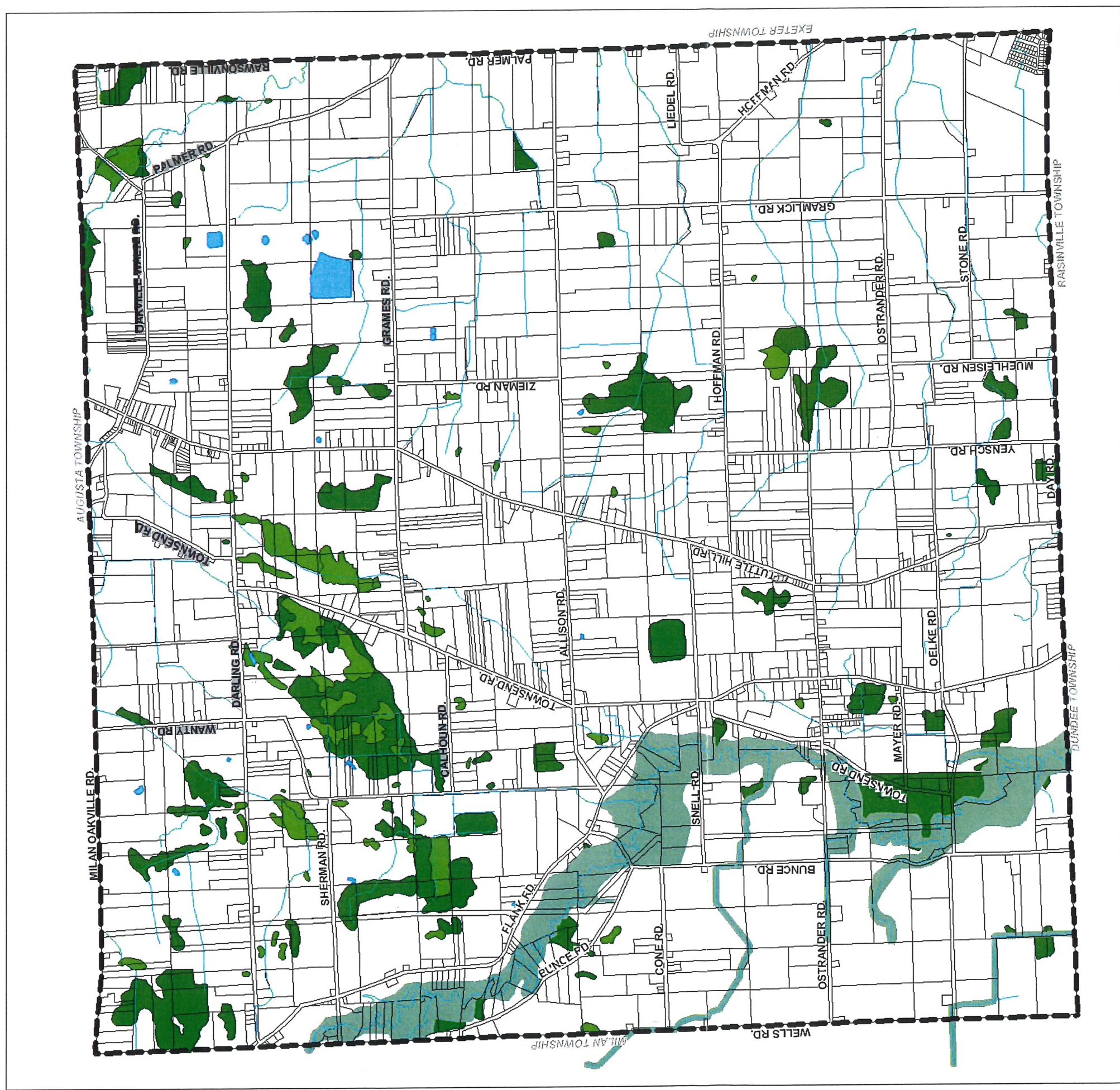
Many Michigan communities and counties have developed farm land preservation ordinances in an effort to protect their rural character and history. A Purchase of Development Rights Ordinance may be utilized by London Township as a mechanism to preserve agricultural farm land.

## ***Environmental Analysis Findings***

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The environmental features of London Township will affect the future development of the community. The following points should be taken into account when development options are considered:

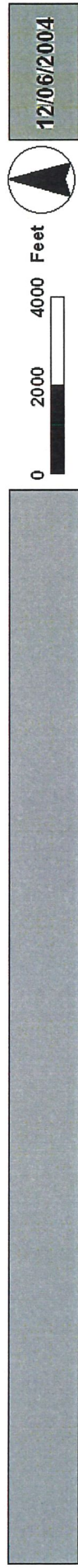
- *Soil characteristics should be considered when development opportunities and zoning changes are proposed to preserve quality farmland.*
- *Residential developments utilizing domestic sewage disposal are recommended to closely examine soil characteristics of the proposed property to insure adequate drainage and septic suitability.*
- *Remaining woodland areas should be preserved through high quality environmental sensitive development. Residential and commercial developments should be required to preserve quality tree stands to the greatest extent possible.*
- *Standards should be implemented to protect the limited sensitive wetlands. At a minimum, developers should be recommended to stay 50 feet from any wetland boundary.*
- *Farmers and property owners should be educated and encouraged to participate in the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program to ensure preservation of quality farmland and rural character of the Township.*
- *The Township should actively work to participate in the purchase of developments program.*
- *The Township/county should implement transfer of development rights program to encourage land owners to preserve precious farm land.*
- *Extra planning and engineering attention should be given to any project proposed in the floodplains and nature preserve areas of the Saline River and Stoney Creek to ensure that all legal and environmental compliance issues are satisfied*



Base Map: Michigan Department of Natural Resources, 2004  
Data Source: Michigan Department of Natural Resources, 2004  
FEMA, 1975



The floodplain boundaries on this map are approximate, consult the FEMA official floodplain maps for exact boundaries



## V. PHYSICAL CONSTRAINTS AND RESOURCES ANALYSIS

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### *Development Patterns*

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The way in which land has developed in the past has a lasting impact upon the future development pattern of a community. While a community may continue the development pattern of the past, the changing character and needs of a community's residents is the primary influence when the development patterns change.

Development does not refer to only large scale residential projects or commercial and industrial land uses. Any change in the way land is used, from a less intense to more intense form of use is development. This includes the splitting of a parcel for single family residential use.

London Township has developed like many agricultural communities. The City of Milan and the Village of Maybee have been the location for the vast majority of small lot, less than ½ acre, residential development and non-residential development in the area. Meanwhile, London Township has seen the majority of its development in the form of residential lot splits along the primary roads.

These residential lot splits from large acreage parcels, in some cases, can be 5 to 10 acres in size or larger. While some residents who conduct these splits feel the larger size protects the rural character of the community, these larger lot splits undermine the rural character of the Township faster than smaller lot splits. An 80 acre parcel of land which splits off four (4), ten-acre residential lots has reduced the agricultural land in the Township by 40 acres, leaving only one (1) contiguous 40 acre parcel for agricultural land use. If an 80 acre parcel of land split off four (4), two-acre residential lots, then the Township would have lost only eight (8) acres of agricultural land, leaving a 72 acre parcel for agricultural land use.

Obviously, it is more profitable for the person owning the 80 acre parcel to sell four (4), ten-acre residential lots, rather than four (4), two-acre residential lots. In the end, property owners have the right to make their own personal choice on how to best utilize their land. Currently, property owners who wish to develop their land incrementally can only choose the residential strip development pattern.

The current residential strip development pattern will continue only until no road frontage along roads exists which meets the minimum requirements of the land development code. As a result, roadways which once offered views of pristine agricultural fields, woodlands and wetlands, will only serve as driveways to homes. The residential strip development pattern reduces the amount of good farmland available for cultivation, requiring farmers to find other crops to harvest. Residential strip development also impacts the woodlands and wetlands along the mile roads of the Township. In order to preserve the viewsheds, viable agricultural land, wetlands and woodlands, a new form of residential development must be created which reduces the stripping of residential lot splits along the mile roads while at the same time balancing the rights of individual land owners.

## ***Utility Service Areas***

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### **Electrical Service Area.**

All areas of the Township are serviced by DTE company for electricity.

### **Public Water Service.**

The majority of residences in London Township use private wells as their water supply. Milan and Maybee provide their residents with water and sewer. There has been some analysis and survey work performed recently to illustrate a practical approach to providing water service to the Township. However, at this time, there are no plans to develop public water service in London Township in the near future. In the event water service does become available, the development characteristics in the township could change dramatically. The Township is prepared to address these changes if they occur.

### **Sanitary Sewer Service.**

Most London Township residents use on-site septic systems to treat waste water. While adequate to service residents, septic fields have an average life-span of fifteen years. Thus, as the community ages, more fields will fail, requiring residents to reinvest in new fields or begin to ask for sanitary sewer service. The City of Milan and the Village of Maybee provide sewer service to its residents and some limited London Township residents. The Collingwood Estate development located in the southeast corner of the township is developed with both sanitary sewer and water service. There are currently no plans to provide other London Township residents with sanitary sewer service.

It may become necessary for future medium and high density residential developments to be served by public sewer and water services.

### **Natural Gas Service.**

Mich-Con and Michigan Gas provides natural gas service to a portion of the Township residents. Service is mainly provided to residents. The current utility service areas appear to adequately provide residents with the necessary services. As the Township continues to grow, greater demand will be placed on maintaining and expanding the existing utility infrastructure if more residents are allowed to reside outside the service areas.

**Telecommunications.**

Verizon and Ameritech provides telephone service to all of London Township. Comcast provides cable access to portions of the Township.

## ***Community Facilities***

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**Public Schools.**

London Township is serviced by the Milan and Dundee Area School Districts. The elementary schools serve grades K-4, middle schools, grades 5-8 and high schools, grades 9-12. The Dundee elementary and middle schools are located on the same property at 420 Ypsilanti Street in the City of Dundee. Dundee High School is located on Viking Drive in the City of Dundee. Paddock Elementary School is located at 707 Marvin Street in Milan. Symons Elementary School is located at 432 Platt Road in Milan. Milan Jr. High School is located at 707 Marvin Street. Milan High School is located at 100 Big Red Drive.

**Parks.**

London Township does not own or operate any park or recreational facilities. Recreational opportunities are provided by other governmental jurisdictions, such as Monroe County, City of Milan, or Village of Maybee, or by the public school districts.

**Public Facilities.**

Within the Township, the major facility is the Township Hall located at 13613 Tuttlehill Road. The Township Hall houses the meeting hall and township offices. The Planning Commission, Township Board and other boards meet at the Township Hall. A portion of the Municipal Building is used by the Sullivan Senior Center. The Center provided daily lunches and recreational uses. In addition to the Township Hall, the Township owns several cemeteries and is responsible for the maintenance of these facilities.

**Public Services.**

London Township utilizes the Monroe County Sheriff for law enforcement services and to respond to all resident complaints and emergencies. The Monroe County Sheriff, in conjunction with the Michigan State Police, serves the needs of the community and there are no plans currently to expand service.

Fire safety services are provided to London Township by the London, Maybee Raisinville (LMR) Volunteer Fire Department and the Milan Fire Department. The Milan Fire Department provides service to the area generally west of Tuttlehill Road while the LMR Fire Department provides fire protection and rescue service for the remainder of the Township. A total of 23 volunteer firefighters operate out of the LMR Fire Department. Acquisition and maintenance of equipment is performed on an as needed basis by each department.

## ***Floodplains/Nature Preserve***

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The Saline River and Stoney Creek, along with their associated floodplains present significant physical constraints for future development. Most of the land in these areas is still used for agricultural purposes, but a number of lots have been developed for residential purposes. Future development in these areas will depend on the developer's ability to comply with all state, county and local ordinances. Otherwise, the land is best suited for agricultural and other less intense uses such as passive recreation.

## ***Physical Constraints and Resources Findings***

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The physical characteristics of London Township act as a framework for any future development that will occur. Past development patterns can either be duplicated or ignored based on their successfulness. Utility infrastructure and community facilities must be identified in order to determine the need to expand or augment existing services. Natural resources must be identified to determine their importance to the community and the need to protect any important assets. The following points identify important findings of this analysis.

- *Corridor residential development detracts from the rural character of the community by blocking views to open spaces, reducing the amount of viable agricultural land and reducing the amount of wetlands and woodlands along the mile roads.*
- *Land owners can only rely on the residential strip development pattern for the incremental development of their property.*
- *Utility service areas are adequate for now. As current and potential growth increases, the demand for expanded services may increase. The growth of public water and sanitary sewer service into rural areas will increase the growth rate substantially.*
- *Public facilities adequately serve residents currently. As current and potential growth increases, residents will begin to demand expanded services from the school district, Township government, and increased police and fire protection.*
- *Future development in the floodplains of the Saline River and Stoney Creek will depend on the developer's ability to comply with all state, county and local ordinances. Otherwise, the land is best suited for agricultural and other less intense uses such as passive recreation.*

## **VI. VEHICULAR TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS**

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### ***Road Classifications***

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The traffic along the roadway system in London Township has developed a circulation pattern based on the capacity of the roads, traffic control systems, amount of trips and the location of destinations both within and outside of the Township. To help plan for future land use, it is necessary to categorize and analyze the roads within London.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has developed the National Functional Classification System (NFCS) to classify all highways, streets, and roads according to their function. This system is recognized as the unofficial road classification system by transportation engineers and planners around the country. The NFCS designation is also responsible for determining those roads which are eligible for federal-aid. Map 5 illustrates the NFCS designations of the roads in London.

#### **Interstates.**

The primary function of an interstate is to move vehicles and commerce over long distances between states at high rates of speed with very limited and controlled access. Typically, interstates have posted speed limits between 55 and 70 mph in rural and 55 to 65 mph in urban areas. US 23 located west of the Township is the nearest interstate to London Township.

#### **Principal Arterials.**

Principal arterials primary functions are to accommodate longer distance travel between communities to expressway interchanges and within cities. Access to land uses is secondary. Major arterials are usually state trunklines and the "mile" roads, typically with posted speed limits of 35-45 mph in urban areas and 45-55 in rural areas. There are no principal arterials in London Township.

#### **Minor Arterials.**

The primary function of a minor arterial is to move traffic within the community, rather than connections to other communities or expressway interchanges. Minor arterials are similar in function to principal arterials but they generally carry less traffic and connect to smaller urban centers. Accessibility is greater, but stops are more frequent due to signalized intersections. Access to adjacent land uses is as important as function, so speeds are usually slower than with a principal arterial. There are no minor arterials in London Township.



**Major Collectors.**

The main function of collectors is to collect traffic from nearby local streets and link it with the surrounding arterial street system. Generally, collectors are not intended for through traffic, but may be forced into this role if arterials become congested. Speed limits are usually 25-35 mph in urban areas and on-street parking may even be permitted as well. In rural areas speed limits tend to be higher as the collectors function more as arterial roads connecting residents to the interstates. Rights-of-way are typically less than arterials but greater than local streets.

Several of London's roads are classified as major collectors. Oakville-Waltz, Milan-Oakville, Palmer, Stone, Plank, Ostrander and that portion of Yensch joining Ostrander at the split are the major collector roads of London.

**Minor Collectors.**

Minor collectors function similarly to major collectors. Their primary function is to collect traffic from nearby local streets and link them to major collectors and ultimately with the surrounding arterial street system. Speed limits are usually 25-35 mph in urban areas and on-street parking may be permitted. In rural communities such as London Township, the speeds tend to be higher as the roads are required to perform dual functions. Rights-of-way are typically less than arterials but greater than local streets. Minor collectors provide service to the smaller communities and link the rural areas with locally important traffic generators such as major collectors and arterials. There are no minor collectors in London Township.

**Local Roads.**

Local roads provide access for residents between uses in the neighboring areas in addition to connection to collectors and ultimately with arterials and interstates. All roads not previously mentioned or not designated with one of the NFCS classes on Map 5 are classified as local roads.

**Table 17:**  
**Road Designation**

NFCS	MCRC
Interstates	
Principal Arterials	
Minor Arterials	
Major Collectors	Primary Paved
Minor Collectors	Local Paved
Local Roads	Local Unpaved

Source: McKenna Associates



## ***Vehicular Traffic and Road Issues***

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### **Circulation Pattern Issues.**

The pattern of traffic circulation is a direct result of where residents originate from and the destinations those people wish to travel to. Since residential land uses are spread throughout the community, the origination of vehicular traffic is not highly concentrated in one area of the community. The destinations within the Township which people wish to travel to are very limited.

Besides the commercial and industrial land uses along Oakville-Waltz and Ostrander Roads, most commercial centers and employment generators for residents exist outside the Township. Therefore, most residents destinations are the interstate, US 23, and the other major collector network roads which lead to other destinations. The grid pattern established along the section lines within the Township provides an efficient and familiar circulation network.

The grid pattern circulation network can fail if one or more of the roads is blocked by either an accident or a passing train in a nearby community. Although there are no railroad crossings within London Township, railroad crossings in Milan Township and the Village of Maybee occasionally impact traffic in London Township. As a result, when a train is traveling through Milan or Maybee, only limited options are available for through traffic. While an inconvenience for the average vehicle trip, this condition can pose a health and safety risk with regards to police and fire emergencies. Areas which could be quickly accessible to emergency vehicles, are inaccessible while a train is blocking traffic. An in-depth study analyzing the location of fire and police stations, at-grade rail crossings, number of residents in the portions of the Township which are separated from public safety services, traffic volume and road classification can be a useful tool in determining the most appropriate location for future police and fire facilities.

### **Road Construction and Maintenance Funding.**

Roads classified as interstates, principal arterials, minor arterials and major collectors are eligible for aid through any of the federal-aid programs. An example of these programs is the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21). Minor collectors and local roads are not eligible for federal aid.

The Monroe County Road Commission is responsible for the maintenance and improvements of all public roads in London Township. The Road Commission receives federal and State of Michigan and County funding for the maintenance, expansion and reconstruction of all county roads and bridges. Funding is typically obtained through P. A. 51 of 1951. Based on an optimistic road life expectancy, cost to rebuild roads per mile, and amount of roads which the Road Commission is responsible for, there is a very substantial deficit between needed funds per year and the funds available. The Road Commission currently inventories the capacity and classification schedules of all roads and conducts maintenance and reconstruction based on these characteristics.

### **Regional Road Circulation Plans.**

MDOT and the Monroe County Road Commission were consulted concerning potential future improvements to the road system. The Michigan Department of Transportation has indicated that no improvements are planned for the near future. Monroe County Road Commission creates three year plans based on the funds available from the federal and state governments. Currently the Road Commission has no short term or long term improvements or reconstruction plans for roads in the Township.

## ***Vehicular Transportation Analysis Findings***

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The designation of road classification on Map 5 illustrates the existing circulation pattern. The existing pattern is generally intended to transport goods and people through the Township. The ability of people and goods to efficiently flow without unexpected stops or unprecedented congestion is an important part of the quality of life in a community as well as a vital part to a community's growth. The Township should prepare to identify roads that need improving, widening and other traffic management techniques such as signalization of intersections, left and right hand turning movements, and turning restrictions. For example, roads planned without left hand turn lanes create unwanted stacking in an otherwise flowing lane. The following points identify other important findings of this analysis.

- *The main function of the local roads and collectors are to move the residents of the Township to the arterials and interstate US 23. The arterials and interstate carry residents from the collector roads to destinations outside of London.*
- *The Township roads have been constructed for rural uses. If the current rate of development increases, the traffic generated may exceed the current local roads' designed capacity to handle increased traffic.*
- *Future land uses must reflect the capacity which roads can handle in addition to their designated functions.*
- *The grid pattern established along the section lines within the Township provides an efficient and familiar circulation network.*
- *Impediments to efficient traffic flow can affect public health, safety and welfare.*
- *The lack of funding for road improvements may require the Township to find other alternative funding sources in the future.*
- *Local gravel based roads are part of the rural character of the Township. Paving of these roads can result in higher speeds through rural areas and a loss of character.*

## VII. MASTER PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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The input of Township residents is fundamental in crafting land use goals, objectives and policies which reflect their desires for their community. The following chapter outlines the processes and community input from the Township focus group session held in London Township. The community input was then utilized to formulate goals and objectives for the Township Master Plan.

### *Visioning*

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#### **Focus Group Visioning: The Concept.**

To ensure the success of the Master Plan, the participation of residents, elected and appointed officials and community business leaders is essential. A Master Plan which has the support of as wide a community base as possible will more likely be utilized and referenced in day-to-day planning activities. An effective way of building a comprehensive community base is by building consensus through the community focus group visioning process.

A focus group can include a number of activities during which community residents and stakeholders discuss planning related issues and determine which issues are of the highest priority. Community stakeholders consist of residents, elected and appointed officials, business owners, land owners and all other interested parties. Residents and stakeholders conclude the workshop with a better understanding of their fellow residents and with a mutual interest in the community Master Plan. Now that the residents have brought the issues to the forefront, they have a vested interest in seeing the issues addressed. They have a greater understanding of the planning process in general, and a genuine concern in seeing their community Master Plan succeed.

#### **London Township Focus Group Visioning Sessions.**

To build a large community base of support and interest in the Township Master Plan update, focus group visioning workshops with Township residents and officials, community stakeholders and other interested parties from the public at large, were held on September 15, 2003 and October 6, 2003.

The workshops were held at the London Township Community Hall. The sessions started with a presentation on some community demographics and its relation with surrounding communities and

an over view of the previous workshop. The participants then discussed the positive and negative characteristics of London Township and provided direction on future land use opportunities. Such input from the public helps the participants focus on the unique attributes of the community which they would like to see maintained or enhanced and to identify those attributes they would like to see discontinued. The participants then discussed their vision for London Township and identified those land use characteristics they would like to see enhanced or developed within the community in the future.

Each topic or issue discussed during the visioning sessions is included in Appendix A. The issues ranged from improving the quality of the drinking water to upgrading the roadway system. The following issues were identified as the top future visions for London Township:

1. Maintain existing rural and agricultural character.
2. Provide for smaller lot sizes.
3. Upgrade the roads.
4. Improve the quality of the water.
5. Ensure quality growth.

## ***Comprehensive Goals and Objectives***

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Based on an analysis of the information gathered regarding existing conditions and the comments from citizens that attended the community visioning workshop, goals and objectives for the Comprehensive Plan Update have been established.

Goals are general in nature and are statements of ideals toward which the Township wishes to strive. They represent the ultimate purpose of a land use issue in a way that is broad. Goals also express a consensus of community direction from public and private agencies, groups and individuals.

Objectives are more specific and are intended to present a means to attain the stated goals. Objectives take the form of more measurable standards, or the general way in which the goals can be attained. In some instances, they are specific statements which can be readily translated into detailed design proposals or action recommendations.

Together, the following goals and objectives provide the foundation of the London Township Comprehensive Plan Update and a framework for future implementation strategies.

### ***TOWNSHIP GOAL:***

*London Township will maintain its rural character by providing an appropriate balance and variety of land uses in a manner and location that is consistent with the existing rural character of the Township and through the application of traditional town planning principles.*

## *Agriculture*

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GOAL: Retain prime agricultural lands in the Township by ensuring the economic viability of farming and directing future development to areas with appropriate infrastructure

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Encourage continued agricultural activity by identifying prime agricultural land and promoting enrollment in the Public Act 116 program.
3. Allow farmers to realize the value of their real estate assets without selling lot splits by adopting and promote the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs.
3. Promote residential development alternatives which do not place residential uses along the frontage of major roads.
4. Limit the extension of public water and sanitary sewer into areas planned for agricultural activities.
5. Work with farmers to ensure they comply with the provisions of the Right to Farm Act, specifically, GAAMPs.
6. Preserve agricultural areas through planning and zoning. (Use soils map to identify most productive farmland)

## *Residential Areas*

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GOAL: Create, preserve and enhance a satisfying living environment that is consistent with small town, rural life styles in existing and future residential areas in London Township

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Establish development standards and procedural enhancements for land divisions, site condominiums, and subdivisions, that will minimize the adverse impacts on the agricultural/rural character of the Township from increased residential development.
2. Discourage residential development at lower densities (1-5 dwelling units/acre) that consume large areas of farmland, contribute to suburban sprawl and do not contribute to the agricultural character, or small town character of the community. Encourage use of Open Space ordinance.
3. Permit residential development only in accordance with the availability of necessary public utilities: road construction and maintenance, police and fire services, governmental administrative services and educational services. The construction and maintenance of capital improvements needed for proposed residential areas should be considered.

4. Base density and location of residential developments on adequacy of water supply and wastewater system, including capacity of soils for septic.
5. Review new residential developments to ensure their compatibility with the underlying natural features of the site. Preserve significant topographic features, tree stands, wetlands and other natural features wherever possible. Encourage rural open space planning where it would retain the rural character of the land.
6. Promote residential development alternatives to the conventional strip development along mile road frontage.
7. Discourage the need for large scale, isolated, single-type housing developments, such as manufactured home communities, by providing a range of housing types for all age and income groups including: apartments, townhouses, accessory dwelling units, senior/assisted living, small lot single family homes. All housing types to be located in close proximity to community services and infrastructure.
8. Due to the negative physical and fiscal impacts of large scale manufactured home parks, London Township is encouraging alternative forms of housing options that promote quality, affordable, and sustainable housing for its current and future residents. Manufactured home parks should be limited to the maximum extend permitted.
9. The subdivision control ordinance regulating development within London Township must apply the same development standards to land divisions, subdivisions, and site condominiums to avoid preferential treatment of any one method. Ensure that residential development occurs in a logical and orderly manner as prescribed by the Township's Master Plan.

### ***Commercial Development***

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GOAL: Encourage and make provisions for appropriately sized, convenient, attractive and well located business centers and service areas to provide services to area residents.

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. Encourage practical distribution of commercial development to serve London Township residents. Evaluate future allocation of commercial land in the Township on the needs of residents for shopping and office facilities taking into account existing uses offered by other nearby communities.
2. Discourage strip commercial, thoroughfare frontage developments.



3. Provide a mix of uses along the corridors in a manner that is consistent with the rural character of the community.
4. Encourage concentrations of intensive development at appropriate intersections where access can be adequately managed.
5. Discourage commercial developments in the Township which negatively impact the Milan or Maybee commercial districts. The community's retail and service needs can be best served by coordinated growth and development of commercial areas in appropriate regional locations.
6. Recognize and preserve the value of commercially zoned land by not over zoning land from residential to commercial unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the existing commercially zoned land in the Township cannot be used or reused for the intended commercial use.
7. Encourage the location of heavy commercial uses such as lumber yards, equipment and vehicle sales and similar uses along primary thoroughfares and away from existing residential areas with appropriate access management and screening.
8. Develop strict development standards for commercial properties including signage, building design, parking, and landscaping.
9. Review the design and layout of commercial development proposals to encourage high quality design.
10. Encourage construction of service drives or access easements and pedestrian linkages between adjoining commercial developments for the purposes of traffic safety and a reduction in conflict between vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
11. Promote enforcement of building codes and encourage commercial buildings, signs, parking areas and landscaping to be renovated and/or repaired on a regular basis.

### ***Industrial Development***

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**GOAL:** Encourage the development of industrial uses where appropriate which will strengthen the tax base and provide employment and economic opportunities for area residents.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Define the range of industrial land uses that will provide the most positive economic benefits to the community in terms of skilled jobs, value added agricultural related uses, etc.

2. Work toward developing an economic development program to attract targeted industries to the appropriate locations within the Township.
3. Minimize adverse impacts of new industrial development by locating new industrial uses in areas with reasonable boundaries and which are not subject to encroachment by incompatible uses.
4. Develop strict development standards for industrial properties including signage, building design, parking, and landscaping.
5. Promote strict enforcement of codes and regulations applicable to industrial areas, particularly for industries suspected or using or storing hazardous or toxic chemicals.
6. Review the design and layout of industrial development proposals to encourage high quality design.

### ***Public Facilities and Services***

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GOAL: Continue to develop and maintain a cost effective system of quality municipal facilities that is responsive to the needs of the Township's residential, business and industrial populations.

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. Maintain participation in programs which provide facilities needed for high quality police and fire protection. Re-evaluate public safety service periodically to determine if modifications or additions to facilities are needed to service new developments in the Township.
2. Promote identification and preservation of buildings and sites that have historic or cultural significance.
3. Foster a cooperative spirit between London Township, The Village of Maybee, City and Township of Milan, and Monroe County to continue to share in the cost of providing joint community services to Township, Village and City residents.
4. Strengthen relationships with schools to offer quality services and strengthen the Township as a residential area.
5. Develop recreation areas on Township-owned land and as the Township develops, acquire property for recreation areas to provide a uniform geographic distribution of recreation facilities which compliments the recreation opportunities already provided by private land.
6. Provide alternative forms of connections between residential areas, recreational areas, and commercial/service areas by using non-motorized paths for pedestrians, bikes, horses, etc.

## ***Open Spaces***

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GOAL: Maintain, and preserve, sufficient open space and recreation facilities to satisfy a variety of the needs of Township residents.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Encourage new development of any kind to be compatible with underlying natural features of the site. Preserve significant topographic features, tree stands, wetlands, and other natural features where possible.
2. Encourage the identification of existing natural features and promote the creation of a cohesive preservation program.
3. Encourage use of the Open Space Ordinance. Encourage cluster development that groups residential units together on one portion of the site to retain open spaces and natural features (i.e. views, wetlands, woodlands) elsewhere.
4. Promote participation in the Preservation and Transfer of Development Rights (PDR and TDR) programs.

## ***Traffic Management and Circulation***

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GOAL: Maintain, and preserve, safe and efficient circulation between uses throughout the Township.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop access management standards for all major collector roads to prevent potential land use/transportation conflicts.
2. Preserve the future right-of-way for all major collector roads by requiring appropriate building setbacks.
3. Require all new developments to provide stub roads for connections to existing and future developments.
4. Require pedestrian paths or sidewalks in all new residential developments within the areas around the Township and the Tuttlehill/Townsend corridor.
5. Limit the use of private roads, and require them to be constructed to the same standard as public roads.

6. Create natural beauty roads where the disruption of existing vegetation and views is minimized.
7. Create image roads with rural/small town character as entrances into the community.
8. Develop a complete network of roads from major arterials to local roads to provide residents with multiple options for circulation.

### ***Floodplains/Nature Preserves***

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GOAL: Since these areas are environmentally sensitive they should, to the extent possible, remain as open space and for recreation purposes.

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. Continue to allow agricultural activities within these areas in accordance with National, State, County and local regulations.
2. Ensure extra planning and engineering attention is given to any project proposed in these sections of the Township to ensure that all legal and environmental compliance issues are satisfied.
3. Use overlay mapping to identify boundaries of floodplain areas on official zoning map of the Township.
4. Adopt a floodplain management ordinance.

### ***Implementation***

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GOAL: Work closely with the County and nearby City, Village and Townships in developing creative and effective means for realizing the goals and objectives expressed in this plan and preserving and maintaining the rural quality of life in the community.

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. Establish a site plan review process that involves all entities impacted by proposed development.
2. Clearly delineate the zoning enforcement process so that inspectors are aware of the communities desires and can make appropriate and informed decisions.
3. Pursue the use of Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs to ensure equality of land values, efficiency of development, and maximum preservation of agricultural land and open spaces.

4. Develop a zoning ordinance that accurately reflects the desires of the community and utilizes the most current legally defensible zoning practices.
5. Pursue grants for streetscape improvements and the development of greenways throughout the community.
6. Establish a communication effort with Township residents on development proposals, policy changes, physical improvements and government programs.

## VIII. FUTURE LAND USE ANALYSIS

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The Future Land Use Map (see Map 6) is the result of the comprehensive planning process. This map is based on the land use issues facing London Township, analysis of the existing uses, socio-economic and housing statistics, physical constraints and resources, circulation patterns, community visioning session and the goals and objectives established by the community.

The Future Land Use Map represents the various land uses and their arrangements identified in the community's vision for London Township. In order to protect the rural character of the Township it is necessary to define the extent of the "urban" area and minimize the suburban growth which could have a detrimental affect on the rural character of the community. While it will take an extended amount of time for the Township to reach ultimate build out, by identifying now the extent of development, tools and techniques can be developed which will insure any area developed will be utilized to its best overall land use.

The Master Plan will act as a guide in evaluating all future development within the Township. The evaluation will determine if any proposed development is in keeping with the plan the Township has established for itself. Changes to the zoning ordinance text and map should also be evaluated to ensure compliance with the goals, objectives and future land uses of the Master Plan.

### *The Basic Concept*

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The Future Land Use Plan for London is based upon the preservation and protection of rural character consisting of agriculture as a viable economic activity and the preservation of open space and natural features within the community. The Plan is further based on the solid foundation provided by the Cities of Milan and Dundee and the Village of Maybee as the commercial and service providers for the community. These three areas each have necessary land use characteristics that contribute to the continued overall rural character of the community. Small towns are as much a part of rural character as wide open farm fields.

The basic concept of the Future Land Use Plan consists of a few key elements. The elements included limited commercial development, residential and agricultural areas.

Agricultural areas are those areas in which agricultural uses and those uses related to agriculture such as processing facilities, farm stands, machine sales and repair exist. The agricultural areas are intended to encourage active agricultural uses and only under very controlled circumstances allow low density, open space residential developments.

## ***Future Land Use Plan***

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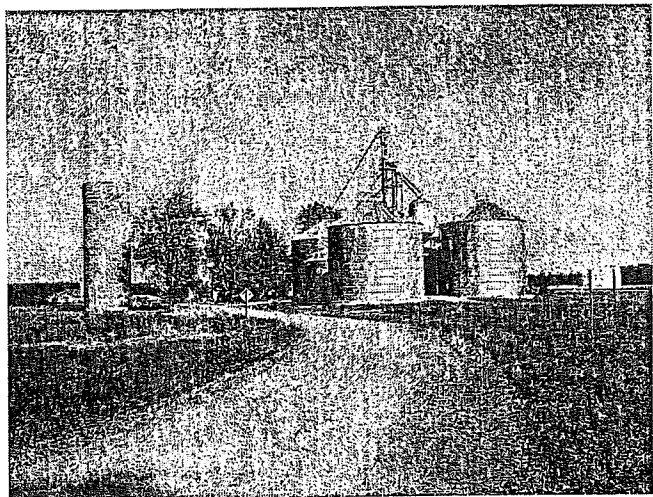
The Future Land Use Plan is comprised of eight land use categories which delineate areas of the Township for particular types of land uses. The following section describes the characteristics and examples of development expected within the future land use categories of London Township.

### **Agricultural.**

The major future land use for the Township is agriculture, comprising over 65% of the total area (See Table 18). Agricultural land uses include farming (the production of crops, livestock and related goods), orchards, nurseries, farmsteads and other activities directly associated with agriculture. Agricultural land uses are fundamental to the Township's effort to preserve the rural character established within London Township. Agricultural enterprises provide numerous benefits to the people residing in London Township and it is the intent of the Township to promote the use and preservation of agricultural land uses.



Agricultural land uses are planned for all but those areas designated otherwise. The desired density within the agricultural land uses is planned for one dwelling unit (du) per every 20 acres, or 0.050 du/acre. This density is necessary to ensure that parcels are large enough to contain an agricultural use which can be self-sustaining and economically viable. Based on the types of crops grown presently in the community, it is very difficult to operate an economically viable agricultural use on parcels less than 20 acres in size. A fundamental component in the preservation of agricultural land is to limit the impact of residential strip development along the mile roads. Alternatives must



be created which allow land owners the opportunity to obtain the best use of the land without jeopardizing the agricultural land.

Another characteristic within the agricultural land use is the lack of urban infrastructure. Paved roads can lead to higher speeds and increased traffic volume, detracting from the rural character. Gravel roads reduce speeds and the number of trips taken by non-residents of the area. Road improvements should not be made in agricultural areas unless the existing road system ceases to provide adequate access for emergency vehicles and existing farm and farmstead operations.

The extension of utilities, particularly water and sewer lines, increases the development of higher density lots within agricultural areas. By eliminating the large areas typically needed for septic fields, and with a desire to obtain the highest yield of developable lots on a site, developers attempt to obtain the highest possible density in areas that have characteristically been of a lower density. The availability of water and sanitary sewer lines thus facilitates the creation of a suburban development within a rural area and results in a loss of agricultural land. Water and sewer lines should not be extended into planned agricultural areas unless they are absolutely necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of existing Township residents due to contaminated water.

#### **Low Density Single Family Residential.**

Low density residential uses are typically single family homes and their accessory structures which are generally found in rural areas on 2-1/2 to five (5) acres of land. Characteristics include larger homes, several accessory structures and generous setbacks from the road. Low density residential lots have been characterized as being "too small to plow and too big to mow" and are generally incompatible with traditional agricultural activities.

The only areas in the Township currently identified as appropriate for low density residential are located around the commercial areas located at the intersections of Oakville-Waltz and Tuttlehill Road and Ostrander and Plank Roads. These areas have already experienced some of this type of residential development. Expansion of this type of housing is encouraged with special measures being taken to preserve existing valuable farmland.



The corridor area bounded by Townsend, Tuttlehill, Darling and Ostrander Roads has limited value as farmland due to the percolation capacity and otherwise poor soil conditions that exist. These areas are generally sandy and provide opportunity for low density residential development. This area has been identified for low density residential development on the Future Land Use Map.



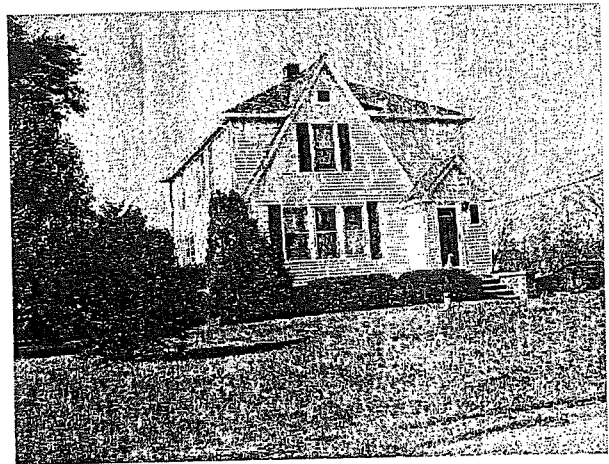
Future low density single family residential development should follow strict development standards including generous setbacks from the road to preserve views and existing landscaping. Future access to major roads should be limited. No non-farm homes should have direct access onto a section line road.

### **Medium Density Residential.**

Medium density residential development consists primarily of single family residential uses on lots ranging in size from one to 1/2 acre, however, townhouses and apartments are also found in these areas. These areas are characterized by residential developments that are organized in blocks defined by a network of local roads.

Because homes in medium density residential areas are typically located on smaller lots, the provision of common open space for recreational activities is very important. Each lot created within the Medium Density Residential area will be required to contribute to the collective open space according to national park and recreation standards. The playgrounds and neighborhood parks established through this process will serve as the core of these neighborhoods.

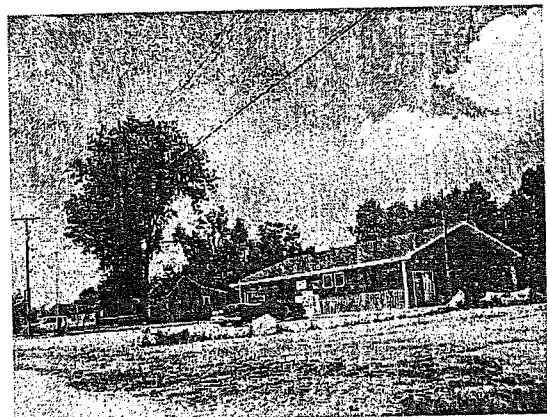
Most of the development within these residential areas will consist of single family homes, although there may be an opportunity for duplexes. Based on the smaller lot sizes in these areas, the location of accessory buildings and garages is critical to the character of the area. Attached garages should be recessed or side loaded, and detached garages should be located to the rear of the primary structure.



Setbacks in these residential neighborhoods should be consistent and porches are encouraged to create a pedestrian oriented environment. Sidewalks in these areas should also be required to allow pedestrian connections between home, shop, and school or park.

### **Commercial.**

The primary concentration of commercial is and should continue to be located at primary intersections within the Township. However, concentration of residents within the immediate areas generates a need for convenience commercial services. These small scale uses serve the neighborhood residential areas.



Because these commercial uses serve the adjacent residences, the building types and designs must reflect the architectural character of the adjacent neighborhoods. Quality building materials such as brick, stone, and natural siding materials should be used on all neighborhood commercial buildings.

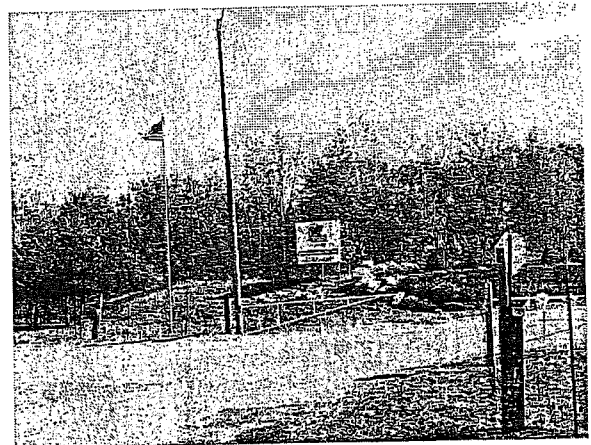
Commercial uses are anticipated to be located within the designated areas. Commercial land area has been expanded, primarily around existing commercial operations, to provide enhanced services to the community. It is anticipated that the commercial areas and the Cities of Milan and Dundee and the Village of Maybee will continue to provide most of the day-to-day commercial shopping and service needs of the residents of the Township for many years to come.

Most of the comparison shopping that is currently done by residents of London Township is done outside the Township. Using facilities beyond the boundaries of the township as the primary source of essential supplies, such as groceries, results in unnecessary travel time, increased road congestion, and a loss of valuable retail tax base.

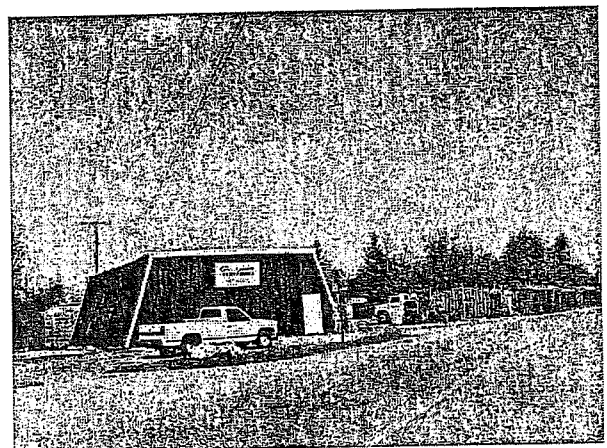
Increased commercial development is not anticipated at this time. However, the inclusion of heavy landscaping that is consistent with the rural environment of London Township is encouraged when it does occur. Naturalized landscaping should be used to screen parking and service areas from adjacent road ways and to provide improved stormwater management opportunities.

### **Industrial.**

Only small areas of the Township are planned for industrial land use. Traditional industrial land uses involve the manufacture of products from parts or raw materials. However, today, and in the future, industrial uses will include more offices and research/development companies. Storage may be needed on the outside of the building for materials or finished products. Extractive uses are included in the Industrial land use category on the Future Land Use Map. Warehousing and storage of materials is also a typical use found in this district.



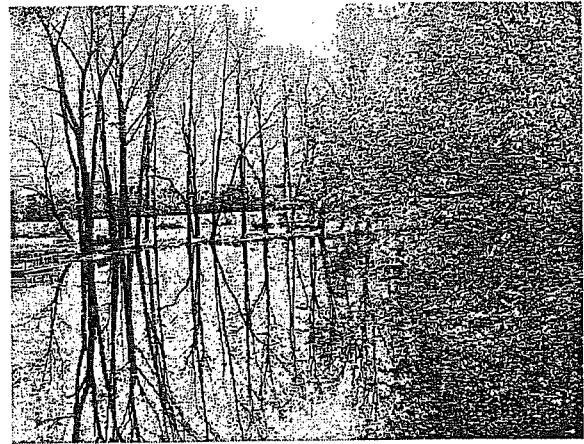
While typically intensive, industrial uses can be adequately screened, buffered and designed to minimize negative impacts on adjacent land uses. The use of buffering will be needed on the north side of the planned industrial area in order to minimize the adverse impacts industrial uses could have on the adjacent neighborhood residential land uses. Any proposed development should provide adequate site design elements so that both land uses can co-exist in close proximity to each other.



**Floodplain/Nature Preserve Areas.**

A fundamental component in the preservation of the rural character of a community is the preservation of the existing natural features. Woodlands and wetlands add to the unique physical characteristics of the community. In addition to the Saline River and Stoney Creek floodplains, several small creeks and drains run through the Township. The preservation of water quality and the adjacent natural features can help to insure that the Township's most valuable natural amenities are preserved.

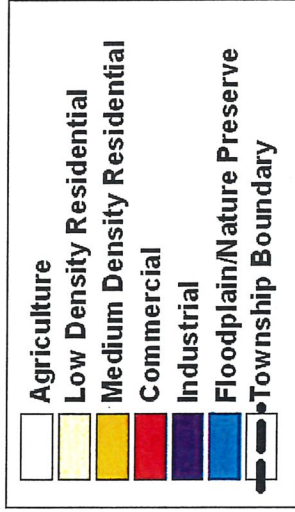
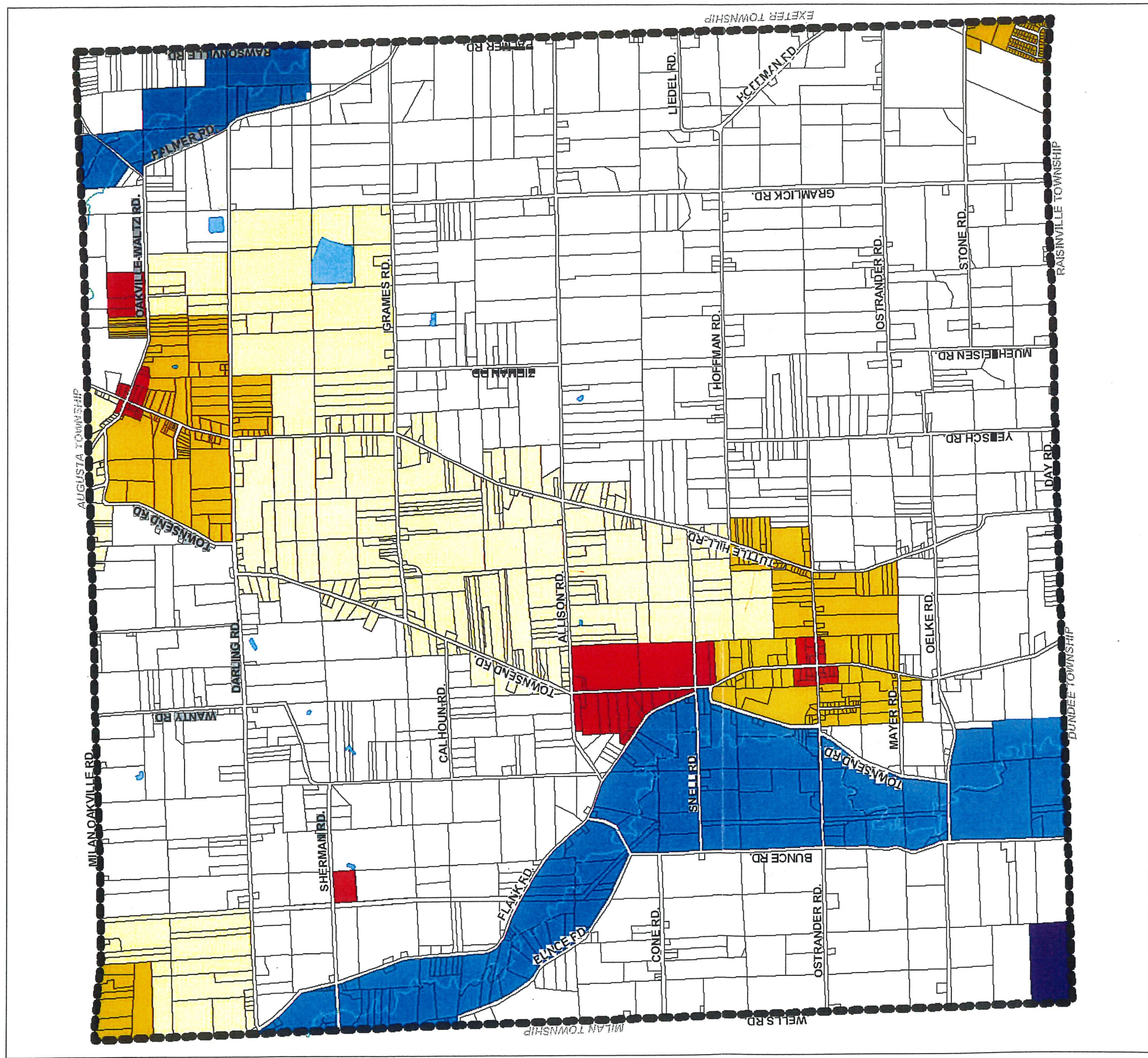
Map 4 illustrates the floodplain area of the Saline River and Stoney Creek. Within this area, development should only occur in a manner which does not adversely impact the natural features adjacent to these water courses. Any improvements should be setback so as to not encroach within the 100 year flood zone. This includes all buildings, roads, septic fields and septic tanks. Within the flood zone area, the removal of any trees, shrubs and brush should be discouraged. For agricultural land uses within the resource conservation area, filter strips should be utilized to minimize the impact that the agricultural activities have on water features. Residential development within the resource conservation should have slightly larger minimum lot sizes to allow for more flexibility in the placement of building footprints and septic systems away from the river.



**Table 18:**  
*Future Land Use Categories*

Land Use Category	Acreage	Percentage of Total
Agricultural	16,113	65.57%
Low Density Residential	4,096	16.67%
Medium Density Residential	1,496	6.09%
Commercial	395	1.60%
Industrial	82	0.34%
Floodplain/Nature Preserve	2,391	9.73%
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>24,573</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Source: McKenna Associates, Inc. 4/04



Base Map: London Township,  
McKenna Associates, Inc. 7/2003  
Data Source: McKenna Associates, Inc. 10/2003

## ***Circulation Plan***

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The primary objective of the transportation section is to establish policies that will insure 1) the maintenance of safe and efficient transportation throughout London Township and 2) that the roads and adjacent land uses will be consistent with the desired rural character of the residents of London Township. The following policies establish the necessary elements (road classifications) and the design standards for these elements.

To ensure safe and efficient circulation, it is necessary to establish a hierarchy of roads that are designed to carry the volume and speed of traffic based on the function they serve. It is also essential to identify any gaps in the network and provide for the closing of those gaps. A gap in the system will result in traffic being diverted to roads that are not properly designed with land uses that are not resistant to excessive traffic volumes.

The County's transportation component includes a highway functional classification system that addresses ideal right-of-way width by functional class. However, this has not yet been adopted for implementation. Some roads within the Township may ultimately need to increase in right-of-way width up to a maximum of 120 feet to accommodate future traffic volumes. Long-term county planning for this should be done now in cooperation with the Township to avoid excessive disruption to the residents of London Township. Ordinances regulating setbacks should refer to the County's future planned right-of-way widths rather than existing dimensions.

The road network within London Township has been divided into four functional classifications based on the volume of traffic, speed of traffic, and purpose of traffic (through traffic versus destination traffic).

**Highways (Interstates)** - None exist at this time.

**Regional Arterials (Principal Arterials)**- None exist at this time.

**Arterials** - None exist at this time.

**Collectors (Major and Minor)** - Currently include Oakville-Waltz, Milan-Oakville, Palmer, Stone, Plank, Ostrander and a portion of Yensch.

**Local Roads** - All of the section-line and other roads.

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**Capacity** is the number of vehicles that can move safely through a segment of a thoroughfare within a given time period. It is physically manifested by the number of lanes and their width, by the centerline radius, the curb radius, and the superelevation of the pavement.

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**Character** is the suitability of a thoroughfare as a setting for pedestrian activities and as a location for a variety of building types. Character is physically manifested by the associated frontage types as determined by the rural or urban character of the location.

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Map 5 identifies the classification of these roads. Although they are classified by their transportation function, it is important to identify the appropriate character for these roads. Major collectors that run through the rural areas of the Township will be more naturalistic with ditches and naturalized landscaping on either side. A collector that runs through the area surrounding a City will have a more formal appearance with curbs and gutters, sidewalks, and on-street parking.

There is a well developed network of road right-of-ways throughout the Township. The capacity of these roads may be threatened if land uses with unlimited access continue to develop along the section line roads. For instance, the section-line roads are currently classified as collectors intended to provide access to individual uses. Because they provide uninterrupted travel through the township, it is most likely that they will evolve into arterials as the traffic levels increase. As traffic levels increase it may be necessary to widen and limit direct access onto these roads.

These improvements may adversely impact single family homeowners who suddenly finds themselves unable to back out of their driveways because of increased traffic. To avoid this disruption, access to new uses along these roads should be from newly developed collector roads as part of any development proposal. In addition, all setbacks from the section-line roads should be from the planned future right-of-way to ensure the protection of the rural character of these roads.

### **The Local Road Network**

While Map 5 illustrates the overall circulation network within the Township, there is another level of the network that has to be addressed. Most of the roads illustrated on Map 5 are the responsibility of the County. However, for the arterial network of roads to operate safely and efficiently, there has to be a series of collector and local roads that provide direct access to uses.

This finer network of roads is more difficult to develop and maintain in the Township because townships do not own and maintain roads. Roads in the Township that are not owned by the County (old subdivision roads) are also usually maintained by an association of home owners or through special assessment.

The challenge is to require new developments to connect their roads with existing and future development. These connections or, continuity of local roads, takes a significant burden off of the arterial road network by reducing intersections, direct access, and to a lesser degree, actual capacity.

Local roads and streets are essential for providing access to land without direct frontage on arterials and for providing connections between neighborhoods. Conventional residential development without connections results in isolated residential areas where children have to be driven to see their friends from school unless they happen to live in the same development. Connections of local road networks designed with sidewalks and proper streetscape allow for people to ride their bikes or walk between neighborhoods. Connection to local road networks is critical in the neighborhood residential areas to allow residents to walk to the amenities and stores within their neighborhoods.

## **Access Management**

Access management is critical to preserving the capacity of every road in the Township. The benefits of access management are most visibly seen in the commercial areas such as Ostrander and Oakville-Waltz Roads. Access to uses in these areas needs to be controlled. Shared access drives and common parking areas serving multiple uses are the most common and effective methods of access management. (See Appendix B, Why Manage Access)

## **IX. IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES**

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The following section presents tools and techniques that community leaders, boards and Township staff can use to implement the future land use plan. The techniques can be used individually or in tandem to achieve the objectives and eventually the overall goals of the future land use plan. While the direct impact of some techniques cannot be immediately assessed, over time these procedures can effectively guide the land use and development in London Township.

### ***Public Information and Education***

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A successful future land use plan must educate the citizens of the community on both the overall goals desired for the Township and the individual regulatory measures which are needed to implement the desired goals. An informed public can then offer its support to establishing regulations designed to retain the agricultural character of the Township. Residents, property owners and business owners will develop a sense of ownership in the future land use plan through a well prepared and executed public education program.

For example, by informing the public of the importance of agricultural land preservation to maintain the rural character of the Township, the public can then offer its support to establish transfer of development rights and purchase of developments rights policies. Offering information to the public concerning the benefits of agricultural land preservation, and ways they can efficiently utilize their property gives citizens the opportunity to make an informed decision concerning new regulations. Education programs can also be included in the community schools to promote the benefits of a rural community to children at a young age.

The following list outlines the programs which can be undertaken to inform the public about important land use goals and regulatory implementation techniques:

- A condensed future land use plan highlighting the goals of the plan
- Informational brochures on various topics important to rural communities, such as agricultural land protection
- Informational sessions held by the Township Board



## ***Township Zoning Ordinance***

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London Township's Zoning Ordinance is outdated. A zoning ordinance is the primary tool a community can use to implement the goals and objectives of its comprehensive plan. The following is a list of ordinance issues identified during review of the document:

- The ordinance is poorly organized with limited graphics and tables for easy reference.
- Limited use of modern development innovations.
- The document uses small typeface which makes research difficult.
- Restrict the use of private roads. Require any new roads to be part of a interconnected local road network.
- Need to expand definitions and limit use of definitions section for listing regulatory standards.
- Require design guidelines for any commercial uses in the Township.
- Require industrial and commercial land uses to create buffers and greenbelts between their land use and any adjacent residential land uses.
- Require land owners to provide a comprehensive plan for the ultimate use of their property when they apply for a lot split.

The Township should modify the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the above referenced zoning tools. These policies will benefit London Township and will assist in implementing the Master Plan. Some measures may involve an increase in the Township administration. However, these tools can substantially improve the preservation of agricultural land in London Township and should be seriously considered for implementation.

## ***Subdivision Control Ordinance***

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Ordinances regulating the division of land should provide equal standards for road layout, block configuration, minimum open space, and lot orientation for the development of any property under the Land Division Act whether it's a lot split, platted subdivision, or site condominium. Although the procedures for each of these methods differ, for a lot to be "buildable" it must conform to minimum standards regarding: access, lot size, density, and others that should be included in the subdivision ordinance or referred to in a common area of the ordinances.

## ***Site Design Standards***

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Beyond the standard regulations to implement the future land use plan, the ordinances can be revised to allow for more flexibility and creativity in design. Innovative site design involves the use of special zoning standards and review procedures that provide design and regulatory flexibility, so as to encourage innovation in land use planning and design. High quality developments which help to preserve and maintain the existing rural character in London Township can be implemented only if the regulations and standards are adopted which promote the most innovative and creative design techniques.

## ***Transfer of Development Rights***

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A popular planning tool for the preservation of natural features in the states of Maryland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania is the transfer of development rights. Transfer of development rights involves a two step process. The community must first identify the agricultural or natural features areas it wishes to preserve and identify areas in the community which are appropriate for a higher density of residential development. The preservation areas are called sending zones and the areas appropriate for development are called receiving areas. Within the sending zones, a plan or ordinance would determine how many dwelling units per acre could be developed. The right to develop a certain number of units then becomes a commodity of each land owner in the sending zone which can be bought and sold. The sale of these units from the sending zone to the receiving zone is called the transfer of development rights.

The second step begins when a land owner in the receiving zone wishes to develop their land. The land owner may develop at a higher density than zoned if they purchased the development rights from a land owner in the sending zone. An appropriate plan would set a cap on the density allowed in the receiving zone, thus insuring a land owner does not purchase a large amount of development rights and attempt to create a development not appropriate for the community. A land owner in the sending zone could also initiate the sale of their development rights to a land owner in the receiving zone. When the sending zone land owner sells their development rights, they are selling them in perpetuity, protecting their land from being developed.

There are many benefits related to the transfer of development rights. The sending zone land owner obtains the highest and best use of their land. The receiving zone land owner obtains the benefits of developing more residential units. The community preserves the agricultural and natural features of the Township and future residential development in the community occurs in the areas which are prepared for higher density development.

Within London Township, it is envisioned that the most appropriate sending zones should include those areas with the most productive agricultural soils and farthest away from development pressure. These areas are also where the largest number of active farms currently exist.

As of the adoption date of this Master Plan, enabling legislation which allows for the transfer of development rights between cities, villages and townships does not exist. However, through the creative use of off-site open space preservation and the planned unit development option, the voluntary use of transfer of development rights within the Township can be achieved. Public Act 228 of 2003 authorizes townships to include an intra-Township open space preservation and density transfer option within their Planned Unit Development regulations.

### ***Purchase of Development Rights***

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A purchase of development rights ordinance preserves farm land by the public purchase of a landowners development rights and in exchange for an agricultural conservation easement or deed restriction would be placed on the property that restricts development. In this exchange of development rights the landowner is compensated for the value of lost development potential in exchange for maintaining the property as farmland.

London Township should adopt an ordinance establishing a purchase of development rights program. In addition a local funding mechanism must be established to provide necessary local matching funds.

### ***Conventional Zoning Techniques***

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#### **Rezoning to Implement the Master Plan**

The land use classifications on the Future Land Use Map provide the basis for evaluating future rezoning requests. Zoning actions that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map usually receive deferential and favorable judicial review if challenged. The Master Plan should be the principal source of information in the investigation of all rezoning requests.

#### **Planned Development**

Planned development involves the use of special zoning requirements and review procedures that provide design and regulatory flexibility, so as to encourage innovation in land use planning and design. Planned developments should achieve a higher quality of development than might otherwise be possible. Continued use of planned development is recommended to achieve development in accordance with the goals and objectives of this Plan.

Planned development can be used as the regulatory tool to permit rural open space zoning or cluster development and to facilitate redevelopment in the Township.

## **Performance Standards**

Rather than simply regulate development on the basis of dimensional standards, many communities are establishing performance standards to regulate development based on the permissible effects or impacts of a proposed use. Performance standards should be used to supplement conventional zoning standards for the purposes of regulating noise, dust, vibration, odor, glare and heat, safety hazards, and environmental impacts, such as air and water pollution. The complexity of the performance standards should be based in part on the capacity of Township staff to administer and enforce the standards.

Performance standards can be particularly useful in achieving environmental and resource protection goals. If based on a strong body of research, standards can be developed that relate to critical environmental areas (such as floodplains, wetlands, lakes, woodlands, groundwater recharge areas, and unique wildlife habitats), and natural resource areas (such as prime farmland and forest lands).

## **Incentive Zoning**

Incentive zoning allows a developer to exceed the dimensional limitations in the Zoning Ordinance if the developer agrees to fulfill conditions specified in the Ordinance. Incentive zoning should be considered to promote innovative land planning techniques identified in the Plan. For example, a possible increase in density can be used as an incentive for developments that implement rural open space zoning standards.

## **Setback and Other Standards**

It is important to review the required setbacks and other dimensional standards to be certain that they promote the desired type of development. For example, if side or rear parking is preferred, in commercial centers, then it may be necessary to adjust the setback standards to allow placement of the building closer to the front lot line.

## **Innovative Zoning Techniques**

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### **Overlay Zoning**

Overlay zoning allows the Township to impose a new set of regulations on a special area within an existing zoning district. In an area where an overlay zoning is established, the property is placed simultaneously in the two zones, and the property may be developed only under the applicable conditions and requirements of both zones. Thus, the overlay district regulations supplement the regulations of the underlying zoning district. Overlay zoning has been used in other communities to address special conditions and features, such as historic areas, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas, without disrupting the underlying zoning plan.

## **Rural Open Space Zoning**

Rural open zoning is an alternative to conventional zoning that is intended to promote preservation of rural character. The search for an alternative to conventional zoning came with the realization that conventional zoning often results in residential sprawl, that consumes large amounts of land and divides open spaces into fragments that are not conducive to agriculture, wildlife habitat, or other rural open space uses.

Rural open space zoning (also known as rural cluster zoning) provides for grouping dwellings onto part of the parcel so that the remainder can be preserved as open space. The goal is to devise better use of undeveloped property than results from proceeding on a lot-to-lot basis.

Zoning Ordinance review procedures must be revised to be no more difficult for rural open space developments than for conventional subdivisions. In fact, the Township should consider making rural open space development mandatory where it is necessary to contribute to an existing open space network.

## **Site Design Standards**

Beyond the standard regulations to implement the future land use plan, the ordinances can be revised to allow for more flexibility and creativity in design. Innovative site design involves the use of special zoning standards and review procedures that provide design and regulatory flexibility, so as to encourage innovation in land use planning and design. High quality developments which help to preserve and maintain the existing agricultural character in London Township can be implemented only if the regulations and standards are adopted which promote the most innovative and creative design techniques.

## **Development Agreement**

Although there is no explicit legislative authority for such agreements, many Michigan communities have used development agreements to achieve a mutual understanding between the developer and Township concerning the conditions under which development can occur. Development agreements are often negotiated as part of a planned development approval, allowing the community and developer to address complex issues that cannot be adequately addressed on a typical site plan. Development agreements might prove useful to achieve desired developments in the Township, especially if or when a mixed use development is proposed.

## **Public Facilities Improvement**

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### **Capital Improvements Program**

Capital programming influences land development decisions. By properly coordinating utility extensions and other capital improvements with its planning and growth management program, the Township can control the direction and pace of development. Capital programming should be viewed as more than just a ministerial act. Using the Master Plan to delineate the location and type

of development desired and the Capital Improvements Program to schedule the provision of services, the Township can inform developers when development of a particular parcel will be encouraged and the type of development that will be allowed.

### **Township Identity**

It is recommended that the Township, in cooperation with property owners, work toward developing a distinct image and identity for the Township. A task force consisting of design professionals (architects and planners), residents, Township officials, should be formed for the purpose of defining the appropriate Township image and identifying site and building standards that convey the image.

One step in the process of developing a Township identity involves defining the Township boundaries with appropriate entrance way treatment. Entranceway treatment consisting of signage, landscaping, and lighting would be appropriate on arterials entering the Township.

"Open space", "neighborly", "small community", and "agricultural community" were all identified as "prouds" during the community visioning session. Growth management, preservation of farm land, open space, woodlands, and wetlands were among the top five visions of the community.

### ***Land Acquisition***

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Land acquisition is an important supplement to land use regulations as a means of managing growth and protecting natural resources. Land acquisition can be used to control the use of a specific acquired parcel, or it can be used to influence the general growth of the Township. Local land acquisition programs are generally funded either by local property taxes (such as a dedicated millage or general fund revenues) or by grant programs. For example, the Township could use grant programs sponsored by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to acquire park land and open space throughout the Township.

There are several approaches to acquiring interest in land to advance the goals of the Master Plan. Generally, the Township can take direct action to acquire property interest or it can rely on private voluntary land protection efforts.

#### **Direct Action by the Township**

If the Township takes direct action, it can acquire property in fee simple or it can acquire a partial interest through acquisition of easements. Fee simple acquisition provides the greatest level of control over the use of a parcel, but it also is the most expensive method of acquisition. In addition to the acquisition costs, fee simple acquisition removes property from the tax rolls, resulting in a decrease in property tax revenue.

Easements are distinct property rights that may be sold separately from other rights to the Township. Easements are effective for preserving sensitive lands, providing public access along rivers or greenways, and allowing property owners to obtain income, estate, and property tax benefits for land stewardship while they continue to live on their land.

There are two Michigan statutes that address the issue of conservation easements. The Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (Public Act 116 of 1974) provides for dedication of an easement to a public entity, such as the Township or State. The Conservation and Historic Preservation Easement Act (Public Act 197 of 1980) gives a third party, such as a land trust, the right to enforce an easement. This act assumes that the easement will be perpetual.

### **Private Voluntary Land Protection Efforts**

Instead of taking direct action, the Township can encourage and rely on private voluntary land protection efforts. The term "voluntary" has two meanings in this context:

- Property owners can voluntarily donate land or easements in the interest of conserving natural resources or natural features.
- To facilitate the natural resource protection program, private land trusts can be voluntarily established to make use of a variety of land acquisition and conservation techniques. Like local government, land trusts typically rely on fee simple acquisition and acquisition of easements.

Other than acquisition at full market value, private tools available to preserve land include:

- Donation of land or bargain sale (*acquisition at below full market value*),
- Options to buy (*often used to secure a parcel of land while funding is being obtained*),
- Rights-of-first-refusal (*used to tie up a parcel without having to purchase it immediately*),
- Leases (*temporary control without the expense of acquisition*),
- Pre-acquisition by a land trust (*the land trust serves as the intermediary for the public agency, such as the Township*), and
- Conservation investment (*in essence, a real estate syndication for the purpose of resource protection*).

Following are several variations on the land preservation techniques described above.

## **Land Conservancy Activities involving the Government**

### **Private donations of land to the government**

Landowners are sometimes willing simply to donate land to the Township for open space or natural area preservation purposes. The landowner has the satisfaction of seeing the parcel of land preserved,

and also may obtain some benefits on income taxes, estate taxes, and property taxes. The Township obtains the benefit of preserving the land.

### **Private donations of conservation easements to the government**

Landowners are sometimes willing to donate a conservation easement on a parcel of land, which involves the transfer to the government of a partial interest in a parcel of land for the purpose of preserving its natural amenities. The landowner might retain the right to continue to occupy the land, for example, but the right to use it for particular uses (e.g., to build houses on it or change its scenic character) has been donated to the government. The landowner would have the satisfaction of seeing the parcel of land preserved, and may also obtain some benefits on income taxes, estate taxes, and property taxes. The Township obtains the benefit of preserving the land, and avoids some of the costs of maintaining the property.

### **Private donation of land to the government, with the right to use the land until the donor's death**

A landowner sometimes wants to retain full title to a parcel of land and be able to continue to use it, until his or her death, but wishes to have the land transferred to the government at that time (or some other specified time). The landowner can thereby gain some tax benefits, but continue to use the land until his or her death.

### **Governmental purchase of conservation easements**

A landowner may not be willing to donate a conservation easement, but may be willing to sell such an easement to the government. The landowner might retain the right to continue to occupy the land, for example, but the right to use it for particular uses (e.g., to build houses on it or change its scenic character) has been sold to the government. The landowner would receive some payment for the easement, and may obtain some benefits on estate taxes and property taxes. This alternative would cost the Township some revenue, but the cost would be less than the purchase of all the rights to the land.

### **Governmental leasing of land**

A landowner may not wish to lose permanent title to a parcel of land, but may be willing to lease it to the government for public use for a specified period of time.

### **Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (PA 116 of 1974) or Conservation and Historic Preservation Easement Act (PA 197 of 1980).**

These two state laws can be used by private citizens and local government to protect land for specified periods of time. The landowner can thereby reduce the property taxes on the land, and the government gains the benefit of maintaining the land as open space.



## ***Land Conservancy Activities involving a Private Conservancy Organization***

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Most of the transactions between a landowner and the government can also occur between the landowner and a private land conservancy organization such as The Nature Conservancy, the American Farmland Trust, and the Trust for Public Land. The conservancy organization would then either manage the land itself or convey it, at some future date, to a governmental agency when public funds become available.

### **Private donations of land to a conservancy organization**

Landowners are sometimes willing to donate land to a conservancy organization for open space or natural area preservation purposes. The landowner has the satisfaction of seeing the parcel of land preserved, and also may obtain some benefits on income taxes, estate taxes, and property taxes. The conservancy organization obtains the benefit of preserving the land.

### **Private donations of conservation easements to a conservancy organization**

Landowners are sometimes willing to donate a conservation easement on a parcel of land, which involves the transfer to a conservancy organization of a partial interest in a parcel of land for the purpose of preserving its natural amenities. The landowner might retain the right to continue to occupy the land, for example, but the right to use it for particular uses (e.g., to build houses on it or change its scenic character) has been donated to the conservancy organization. The landowner would have the satisfaction of seeing the parcel of land preserved, and may also obtain some benefits on income taxes, estate taxes, and property taxes. The conservancy organization obtains the benefit of preserving the land, and avoids some of the costs of maintaining the property.

### **Private donation of land to a conservancy organization, with the right to use the land until the donor's death**

A landowner sometimes wants to retain full title to a parcel of land and be able to continue to use it until his or her death, but wishes to have the land transferred to a conservancy organization at that time (or some other specified time). The landowner can thereby gain some tax benefits, but continue to use the land until his or her death.

### **Conservancy organization purchase of conservation easements**

A landowner may not be willing to donate a conservation easement but may be willing to sell such an easement to a conservancy organization. The landowner might retain the right to continue to occupy the land, for example, but the right to use it for particular uses (e.g., to build houses on it or change its scenic character) has been sold. The landowner would receive payment for the easement, and may obtain some benefits on estate taxes and property taxes.

## **Conservancy organization leasing of land**

A landowner may not wish to lose permanent title to a parcel of land, but may be willing to lease it to a conservancy organization for public use during a specified period of time.

## ***Financing Tools***

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Successful implementation of the Master Plan will depend on the ability of the Township to secure necessary financing. Besides the general fund, the following sources of revenue are available to the Township:

### **Dedicated Millage**

Special millages can be used to generate revenues for a specific purpose. For example, one Michigan community has a special land acquisition fund that is supported by a one-quarter mill property tax. A land acquisition fund would be a useful tool to promote open space preservation in London Township.

### **Special Assessments**

Special assessments are compulsory contributions collected from the owners of property benefitted by specific public improvements (paving, drainage improvements, etc.) to defray the costs of such improvements. Special assessments are apportioned according to the assumed benefits to the property affected. Special assessment funding might prove useful to implement utility and road improvements.

### **Bond Programs**

Bonds are one of the principal sources of financing used by communities to pay for capital improvements. General obligation bonds are issued for a specific community project and are paid off by the general public with property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for construction of projects that generate revenues. The bonds are then retired using income generated by the project (for example, water and sewer service charges).

### **MDNR Recreation Grant Programs**

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) and the Clean Michigan Institute (CMI) grants are available for park development and land acquisition. Development grant funds range between a minimum of \$15,000 to a maximum of \$500,000 (MNRTF) or \$750,000 (CMI).

The Township could use the MNRTF program in to finance park land acquisition and development. In the future, the Township may wish to seek MNRTF funding for acquisition of land principally for open space and natural resource preservation purposes and CMI funds for development projects.

