

Future Land Use

The future land use plan establishes land use categories, illustrates the location of planned land uses and provides strategies for implementation. This section also provides a rationale for the placement of preferred land uses and the intensity of those uses. The plan serves as the primary policy guide for future land use decisions, investment in public improvements and coordination of public improvements and private development.

The plan presents an idealized future indicated by the growth patterns in the township. The plan, however, also provides the practical guidance local decision-makers need regarding today's issues. It is the intent of the plan to assist in the orderly development of the township, assist the community in maintaining and enhancing its pleasant natural environment and spark a vision for the future.

Factors Considered

Grosse Ile Township has a number of opportunities and limitations which will influence the future development of the township. A positive influence on growth is the existing natural character of the township. The pleasant atmosphere of the waterfront, along with the abundance of open space and woodlands, portray a quality residential ambiance that will continue to lure new residents seeking refuge from other areas of metro Detroit. A limitation on growth in the township is the limited amount of developable vacant land and the fragile natural features of the island.

It is important to consider a number of factors when locating future land uses. The future land use plan should guide the future development pattern of the community into a logical arrangement which maintains the character of the community, protects the environment and ensures adequate services and land for all types of land uses. These factors include:

- Consistency with existing land use patterns.
- Diminishing incompatible land use relationships.
- Preservation of natural features and consideration of the effects of development on the environment.
- Maintenance of aesthetic qualities that contribute to the community character and quality of life.
- Positive incorporation of natural amenities.
- Existing planning policies and zoning regulations.
- Availability of infrastructure including utilities, roads and community facilities.
- Market conditions for various land uses.
- The goals and objectives of the plan that express the community character desired by residents.

Future Land Use Categories

The land use plan can generally be described as having a few distinctive components that when viewed together form an overall vision for the township over the next 20 years. The residents of the township desire a mix of land uses to meet their daily needs, with a clear emphasis on open space, residential uses, and the protection of natural features. The future land use plan has been developed to accommodate the range of housing and



commercial services needed to serve residents, and to preserve the values held closely by township residents. Below is a description of each of the future land use categories found on Map 4:

Single Family Residential: The predominant land use within the township is single family residential. Due to the variable development patterns within the township, wide spectrum of history, variable character of different established neighborhoods and the many unique natural features, single family residential is divided into several different categories. Specific recommendations are provided for each distinct area in the Residential Neighborhoods Chapter that follows.

Multiple Family Residential: Areas designated in the future land use plan for multiple family residential development are found throughout the township. These include attached condominiums and apartments. Those areas currently developed as multiple family residential retain their designation. Future multiple family development will be focused in the area surrounding the Macomb Street mixed-use district and along the south side of Greys Drive. The Macomb Street mixed-use district is the center of the community. Consequently, there has been considerable public funding allocated towards improving the public infrastructure in this area, including roads, sidewalks, stormdrainage and utilities. Focusing future higher density residential development to this area will help support the business district as a vital and active community center.

Manufactured Housing Park: Manufactured home communities are considered to be a transitional land use between residential and industrial uses. While a specific location has not been indicated on the future land use map, any proposed manufactured home community would need to be located immediately adjacent to the Airport Commerce Park.

Macomb Street: The Macomb Street area is intended to create a distinct community center and focal point in the township. Macomb Street will include a complimentary and integrated mixture of residences, employment, shopping, and community uses which create a walkable "small town" environment with less reliance on automobile travel. Development and redevelopment consistent with the historic architecture of the township, mixture of uses and layout of a traditional small town is encouraged. Detailed design standards are provided for sites within the Macomb Street area.

Commercial uses include retail, office and service establishments whose primary market area covers the overall township. Commercial uses that are more industrial in nature should be located in the Commerce Park. These retail businesses, offices and services are intended to serve as the central business district for the township. Typical uses would include smaller general merchandising/retail establishments, professional offices banks, churches, bed and breakfast inns and other service uses. Larger retail establishments, gasoline service stations and other similar uses may also be allowed, but only with special land use approval. Larger non-residential development will require special land use review because of the close mixture of residential and commercial development within the Macomb Street area. Larger commercial operations will have greater effect due to traffic, infrastructure and noise, thereby having the potential for a much greater impact on the character of the area.

- Future Land Use Categories:***
- *Single Family Residential*
 - *Multiple Family Residential*
 - *Macomb Street*
 - *Public/Semi Public*
 - *Recreation*
 - *Public Open Space*
 - *Special Environmental*
 - *Commerce Park*
 - *Airport*
 - *Outer Islands*



Along and surrounding Macomb Street will be a mixture of single family and multiple family residential including apartments, townhouses and senior housing. There will be a land use transition between the business district and the single family residential areas of the township to minimize impacts on residential neighborhoods.

The area considered as the Macomb Street business district needs to be limited. In order to develop the critical mass of activity and be pedestrian oriented, development should be within a walkable area. Based upon walkable distances, there are two distinct nodes along Macomb Street. The area to the west near Meridian Road tends to be more oriented towards general commercial uses. The area to the east near East River Road tends to be more oriented towards specialty shopping uses. The unique characteristics of these two distinct areas should be recognized and built-upon to strengthen the synergy between uses.

Residential development needs to be within walkable distance to shopping and recreation opportunities. Future commercial development should be contained to the Macomb Street frontage. This will encourage redevelopment of this commercial center and support existing commercial establishments with new commercial development.

The physical form of buildings, roadways, parking lots, lighting, sidewalks, site design elements, signs and landscaping help define the Macomb Street's and Grosse Ile's sense of place. These elements distinguish Grosse Ile Township from surrounding communities. A strong community center provides the citizens of Grosse Ile with an identity for their township. A well-designed commercial center also provides a quality shopping environment and strengthens the business district.

A separate chapter is provided for the Macomb Street Area which discusses specific design standards. These standards are intended to update the recommendations offered in the Macomb Street Subarea Plan developed in 1996. The Subarea Plan includes design standards that are intended to promote quality site design and building architecture consistent with the predominant residential character of the township and the strong historic heritage of Grosse Ile. These standards are also intended to facilitate development and redevelopment that has quality site design and relates to the surrounding Macomb Street area.

Public/Semi Public: Areas designated for public and semi-public include a variety of institutional uses, including schools, churches and government facilities. These areas are generally established and the institutional facilities are integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods. Any redevelopment or expansion for institutional uses within these areas will need to maintain the proper relationship with the surrounding residential areas. This will include landscape buffering, limitations on parking lot lighting, and preservation of site natural features.

Recreation: Locations are designated for active recreation facilities. These locations include the township-owned Centennial Farm, township golf course and marinas and other public recreational facilities. In addition to public facilities, there are several private recreational uses including boat clubs and golf course country clubs. The private recreational areas are planned to remain as recreational. If future development of private recreational lands is proposed, these areas should be developed at the lowest density single family residential designation to ensure that the natural features and open space are retained to the maximum extent practical.



Public Open Space: Areas that have been purchased by the township through the Open Space Millage, or other means, for the expressed purpose of preservation, are designated as open space. In addition, lands that have been acquired by the township and Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy are included. Preservation of these public lands will enhance the quality of life in the community by preserving certain lands characterized by distinctive natural features as passive recreation areas for the enjoyment and benefit of all residents of the township. Distinctive natural features include woodlands, wildlife habitat, wetlands, or other ecologically significant lands. Uses in these areas will be limited to natural resources conservation, forest preservation, wildlife habitat and passive recreation activities which do not cause excessive noise or impact on the environment, including nature study, hiking, boating, fishing and cross-country skiing. Limited improvements such as nature trails would be allowed in this area based upon the Greenways Plan.

Special Environmental: Areas designated for special environmental include Hennepin Island and a portion of Stony Island. Both of these areas are currently undergoing environmental remediation. Because of previous industrial activities and current remediation, future reuse of these areas is highly unlikely within the time-frame of this plan. Any future use of these areas due to changes in conditions must be subject to further planning commission study to change the land use designation of the plan. Any uses considered should be low intensity uses such as residential or recreation uses. Industrial uses will not be permitted.

Commerce Park-Light Industrial & Recreational Mixed-Use: Industrial development is limited to the Commerce Park north of the airport. Development of this area would include a complementary mixture of light industrial, office, high-tech research and development and other uses that are consistent with the developmental goals of this area. A specific plan has been prepared for this area by the Airport Commission, which includes a wide range of uses. Light manufacturing, research and development and office uses are proposed for the southern half of the Commerce Park. The northern portion of the property is proposed for multi-purpose recreation and community facilities. There is a significant woodland area that bounds the northern portion of the Commerce Park, which will be preserved as a natural buffer. The area south of Groh Road and north of the airport will include other uses compatible to the primary aviation use of the airport, including the Township Hall, Township DPW, office, lodging/bed & breakfast, dining and indoor recreation.

There is a privately owned commercial lot on the northeast corner of Meridian and Groh Road. This small lot is zoned C-2 neighborhood business and is occupied by the Airport Inn. The plan contemplates continuation of this use. If the site were to be reused for another commercial use it would be limited by the relative small size of the site. Any additional use on this site needs to be compatible with the surrounding residential, should complement the Airport/Commerce Park and will need to be approved by the Township Board.

Airport: The airport will continue to function for a mixture of uses with aviation related uses being the predominant use. The Airport Commission has a specific plan for operation and maintenance of the Airport. The Airport is bounded on the southwest and southeast by water, with a significant area of



natural wetlands along the southeast edge of the Airport. This area is intended to remain in a natural state.

Outer Islands: Grosse Ile Township is made up of a series of several islands, some of which have been connected through construction of bridges to the main islands and ultimately the mainland. There are a number of smaller, privately owned islands that currently do not have roadway access and are in a natural, undeveloped state. Future use of these undeveloped islands is very limited due to their isolation, inaccessibility by roads and the lack of any utility service. Because of this, their intended future use would be limited to private recreation and conservation.

If single family residential use of these islands were contemplated, several obstacles would need to be overcome. The township has the responsibility of providing police and fire and emergency medical services to residents. In order to provide these services, all residences and businesses must be accessible by public roadways. In addition, all development within the township must be served by public water and sewer. Due to the nature of the subsurface hydrology of the islands, private septic systems would contribute contamination to the Detroit River and may not function properly during high water levels. Development of any outer islands would therefore require the construction of a bridge and extension of utilities.

