

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

Washtenaw County

Washtenaw County is situated in Southeast Michigan between the larger urban areas of Detroit, and Lansing, Michigan and Toledo, Ohio.

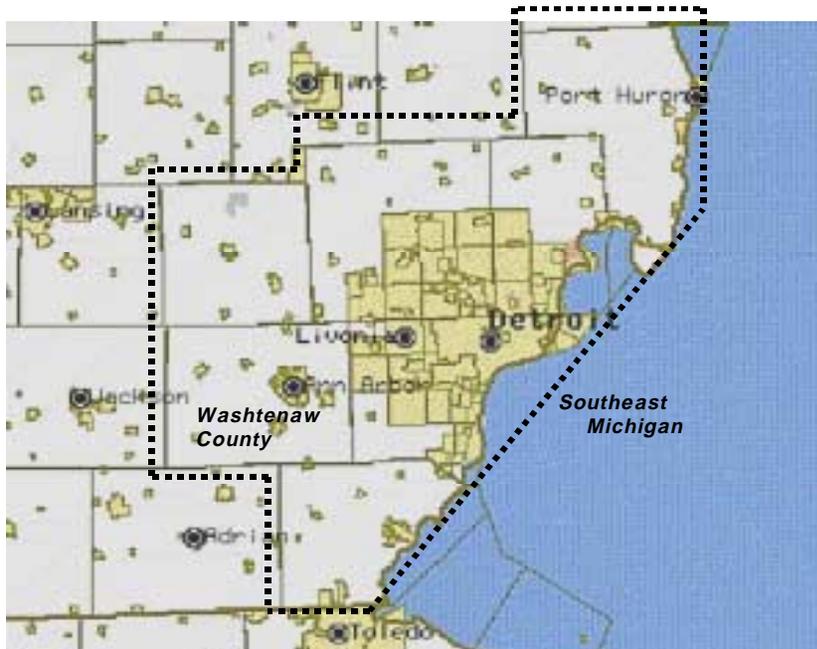


Figure 1. Southeast Michigan

It has a tradition of agrarian living as well as a bustling urban life built around the University of Michigan and various mercantile industries. Many people are drawn to the region not only for its urban centers of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, but also for the relaxed rural feel and scenic beauty of a County which is made-up predominantly of farmland. A shift, however, is occurring.

Until recently, the County was able to maintain a balance between its growth and the quality of its natural surroundings. However, steady growth has led to an accelerating population and rapid expansion of developed areas, making Washtenaw County the sixth largest county in the state of Michigan. Its current population of 312,626 is expected to gain an additional thirty thousand by the year 2010 and reach 373,365 by 2020 according to the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). This is in stark contrast to bordering counties such as Wayne, which is losing on average, 3.9 percent of its population each year. At the other end of the spectrum, bordering Livingston County's population is growing by 27.4 percent on average each year (SEMCOG). It is Washtenaw County's position of balance between these two extremes, which allows it to forge ahead with strategies to encourage economic growth of the region while maintaining its ecological integrity and high quality of life. With current economic trends held constant, Washtenaw County will continue to grow in population, development, and expansion, but without proper planning, parcel after parcel of vacant land and agricultural land will be haphazardly devoured and developed into new commercial and residential centers.

This trend of increased growth and development has spawned an increased awareness of open space and land preservation. The County's quality of life is in large part dependent on the conservation of its natural settings and rural character and that preservation or conservation of appropriate lands is dependent in part on a unified planning vision within existing cities and townships. Without this vision, the County is in jeopardy of losing the very qualities that have drawn residents to the area throughout its history.

Problem

Among the numerous planning issues facing Washtenaw County today, one of the most salient is the pattern of inefficient land use that is threatening to consume the open space and agricultural lands that comprise the rural nature of the county. Correspondingly, the support of natural resources and ecosystems provided by agricultural and open space lands is being eroded at a rapid rate. To combat these current trends of uncoordinated development, the Washtenaw County Metropolitan Planning Commission must collect, create, and reinforce a regional vision for future growth.

Development of Concept Plan

WPMK and Associates, a consulting firm experienced in land preservation strategies, was selected to develop an Open Space Concept Plan for Washtenaw County that acknowledges both continued growth in the County and the protection of the County's natural resources and rural character. Cognizant of the debate between and among various stakeholders, WPMK held focus group meetings, stakeholder interviews, and community participation forums in order to incorporate elements of both philosophies into the

Concept Plan and resolve the ongoing conflict in the best interests of the County as a whole.

Purpose of the Concept Plan

The Open Space Concept Plan provides an approach for preserving Washtenaw County's open space, parks, and farmland as well as creating new opportunities for residents to experience the quality of their surrounding environment on a daily basis. The plan also allows for coordinated development, revitalization of urbanized cores, and Countywide planning.

Format of the Concept Plan

This report will outline the history of open space preservation within Washtenaw County, define the underlying problem and process for resolving that problem, highlight the goals and objectives to preserve open space and lay out five, ten, and twenty-year strategies for best maintaining and enhancing the quality of life within Washtenaw County.

Chapter 2. BACKGROUND

The desire to create a unified proposal for land preservation is not new to Washtenaw County. The area has a rich history of parkland preservation as seen in the extensive Metro Parks system, land conservation through groups such as the Nature Conservancy and the Potawatami Land Trust, and outdoor recreation as seen in the Pinckney and Waterloo Recreation areas. It also has a rich history of farmland preservation through efforts such as Public Act 116, the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act of 1974 . However, the urgency for land preservation has grown in recent years.

With recent trends in development, the ramifications of uncontrolled growth relative to farmland and open space preservation have

generated a great deal of concern among county residents. In an effort to curb the excessive land consumption and save natural resources, Washtenaw county formulated a land preservation plan and placed a measure, Proposal 1, on the November 1998 ballot to fund the program through taxes. The proposal focused on the preservation of farmland through a voluntary Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program, with accessory preservation strategies of purchase of parkland, revitalization of the urban cores, and access to new planning technologies. Proposal 1 was defeated, which has left Washtenaw County without a preservation program. The formation of factions that are diametrically opposed on these issues has led to an ongoing conflict that thus far has defied resolution. A new plan is needed that can bridge the gap between these two parties while keeping the best interests of the County and its natural resources at heart.

Chapter 3. PROBLEM DEFINITION

There are several factors contributing to the rapid consumption of open lands in Washtenaw County and the consequent lack of success in formulating a mutually acceptable plan to preserve some of these lands in order to protect natural resources and retain the culturally and physically diverse "character" of Washtenaw County. Chief among these factors has been an inability to concretely define "open space" and therefore determine which of these open lands should be preserved. Other factors include the role of agriculture in the open space inventory; population growth; development pressures; pro-growth versus anti-growth factions; lack of coordination among the various governmental entities in the County and the absence of a Countywide planning authority; and current zoning practices.

Defining Open Space

Perhaps one of the most difficult aspects in the formulation of an open space preservation plan for Washtenaw County is devising a viable definition of the term "open space".

What is "open space"? The term itself conjures up a variety of images, each of which is largely dependent on the point of view of the individual to whom the question is addressed. To an environmentalist, open space encompasses all ecologically sensitive lands: wetlands, woodlands, waterways and wildlife habitats to name a few.

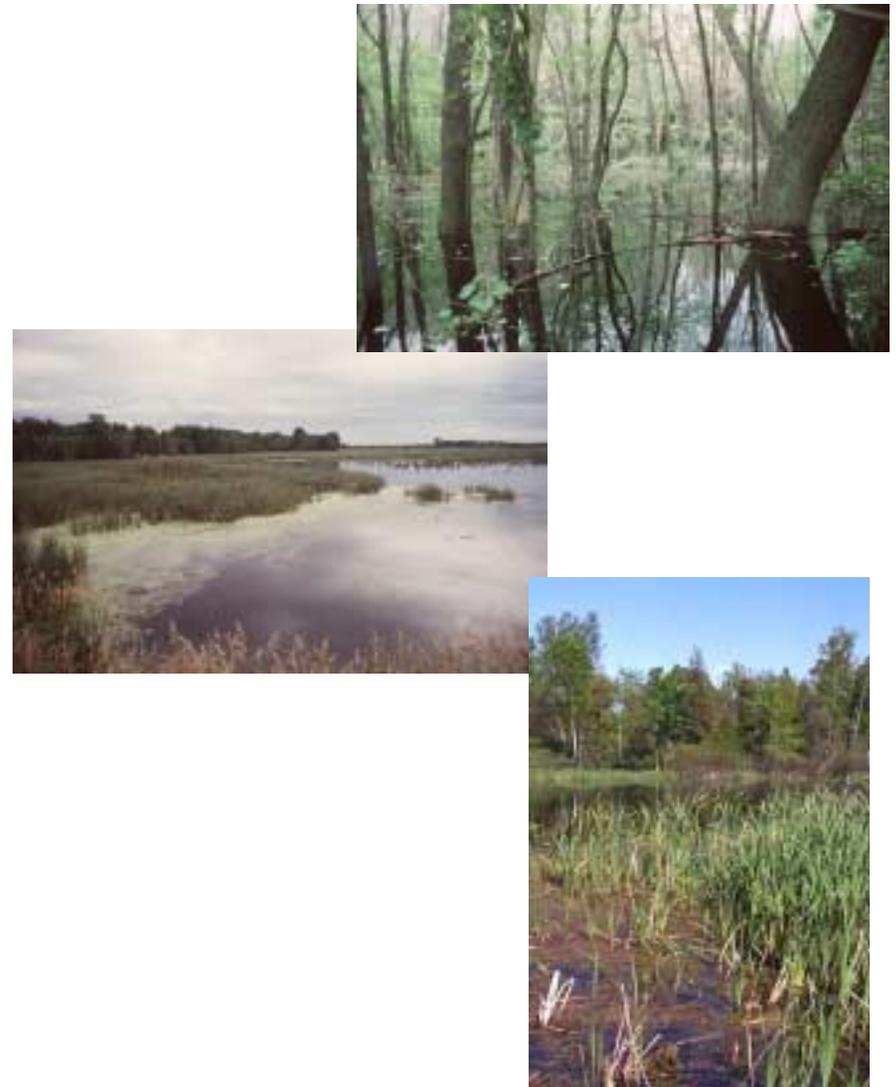


Figure 2. Wetlands

A developer might consider open space to be the golf course, commons area or backyards in his subdivisions, or any vacant parcels of land available for development. County government and/or planning agencies may say recreational facilities, parks, school grounds, bike or pedestrian trails and cemeteries qualify as open space.



Figure 3: Parks

Urban designers might choose a downtown plaza area where citizens gather as open space. Many include farmland in their definition.



Figure 4. Farmland

Most agree that open space does not have to be usable by the public as a whole, and in fact, the visual property of privately held open land is enough to classify it as open space.

Although definitions vary, there is general agreement that the preservation of open lands within a framework of controlled and coordinated development is essential if the County is to retain its quality of life. The disagreement occurs in the discussion of which lands should be preserved and how to achieve this end.

Role of Agriculture

Agriculture has always played a significant, if not major, role in the economy and lifestyle of Washtenaw County. However, that role has diminished in recent years as a result of an increase in commercial and industrial development and the accompanying residential development within the County. The fact remains, however, that the majority of land in Washtenaw County is currently devoted to agriculture and these agricultural lands contribute heavily to what is classified as "visual" open space.

One of the key questions relative to the role of agriculture is whether or not it can and will, of its own volition, continue as a viable industry in the County in years to come. If not, should governmental assistance be provided to farmers in order to compel the continuation of agriculture as an industry or should lands devoted to agricultural production be allowed to succumb to development pressures? Conversely, should efforts be made to preserve at least some of these agricultural lands as open space?

The substantive point in this discussion relates to the ability of farmers to succeed in the business of agriculture. Much of this relies on the theory of "critical mass" which implies that farming as an industry can only succeed if farmland is contiguous, which in turn allows for the success of the farm support industries. The problem

for Washtenaw County is in defining the location of the "critical mass" and why this land should be preserved.

Population Growth

For the period from 1980-1996 the population of Washtenaw County increased from 264,740 to 298,595 a change of 12.8%. By the year 2020, it is expected that the population will increase 32% over the 1990 level of 282,937. In 1996 alone, 5,855 residents were added to the population of Washtenaw County, and that same year, 2,702 building permits were issued (Washtenaw County, 1996).

The statistics outlined in the above paragraph are indicative of the economic trend that has taken place in Washtenaw County in recent years. The increase in commercial and industrial development has led to an increase in population to support employment in the new businesses. Interestingly, the increase in economic development actually exceeds population increases as evidenced by the extremely low unemployment rate of 2% currently being enjoyed by the County (Fulton/Grimes Economic Forecast, 1999). Employers are having difficulty staffing, which leads to the conclusion that population growth may actually exceed SEMCOG estimates. Conversely, many of the residents of Washtenaw County are employed outside of the County and have chosen to live in Washtenaw County because of its "rural character".

In any event, population growth is a substantive factor contributing to the consumption of open space lands and ultimately the destruction of the "rural character" of Washtenaw County. The problem for Washtenaw County is in determining how to handle this population growth.

Development Pressures

The above-described economic development in Washtenaw County and the desirability of the County as a beautiful, rural place to live have a cumulative effect in increasing the pressure for residential development in Washtenaw County. As a result, land values near the "urban" areas of Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Saline, Dexter, Chelsea and Milan have reached a premium. Developers look to outlying areas for their developments where land values are less expensive but can still be advertised as "rural but in close proximity to urban centers". In an environment where farmers are, at best, existing at a sustenance level and surrounding farms are being sold off to developers, the pressure to sell farmland to developers for subdivisions becomes insurmountable.

Hence ... diffused development ... which eats up some of the most desirable open space areas, particularly because of the necessity to build low-density due to water and sewage constraints. The townships are often helpless to prevent or in any way reconfigure these sprawling developments because the developments are generally in accordance with existing zoning ordinances. The problem for Washtenaw County is how to curb the exhaustive land depletion, i.e., what incentives can the County give developers to encourage them to develop within certain urban growth boundaries and engage in meaningful dialogue and negotiation with municipalities to further the causes of open space and environmental protection?

Pro-Growth versus Anti-Growth Forces

Another key issue which is sometimes ignored or glossed over due to its political ramifications is the issue of growth itself. Should Washtenaw County continue to grow, both economically and thus population-wise, or should growth be stopped dead in its tracks at the current level? If economic growth is desirable, then population is

also likely to increase which consequently may diminish the amount of open space that is available for human and non-human residents of the County. Should growth, both economic and residential, be stopped in an effort to preserve the pristine aspects of Washtenaw County's rich environment?

The anti-growth advocates would likely answer "yes" to that question in their efforts to preserve the rich and abundant natural resources and rural lands that are so intrinsic to the character of Washtenaw County. The pro-growth forces would argue that growth is essential to preserve the economic viability of the region.

The salient question for Washtenaw County, therefore, is whether a compromise can be reached which would reclaim and preserve certain ecologically sensitive lands for their environmental value as well as other open lands to be used for the enjoyment of the residents of Washtenaw County and to retain the "character" of Washtenaw County as a beautiful, culturally diverse place to live.

Lack of Coordination Among Governmental Entities and Absence of Countywide Planning Authority

The lack of coordination among governmental entities is perhaps the most pervasive and frustrating problem encountered by Washtenaw County and one of the single most important issues that needs to be addressed. Any effort to view Washtenaw County as an entity is precluded by the fact that the local governing bodies have complete control over the destinies of their respective cities, townships, villages, etc. Individual governmental entities may be either pro-growth or anti-growth. They may or may not be interested in preserving open space. They may want heavy economic development within their jurisdictions or they may not. Their interests might lie in increasing the value of the property in their jurisdictions, which is where they live, without due consideration as to the effects this may have on Washtenaw County as a whole. In

other words, the various governmental entities may have a totally different agenda than that envisioned by Washtenaw County. These varying agendas could have a detrimental effect on any open space plan that Washtenaw County would produce.

The problem for Washtenaw County is to devise ways to encourage the local government entities to "buy into" the County's vision for the preservation of open space within the various jurisdictions.

Zoning Practices and General Development Plans

Another issue that exacerbates the problem of uncoordinated and undirected development, and thus the consumption of open space, is the continued use of current zoning classifications and ordinances and the existence of general development plans that have been created based on those zoning classifications. Because much of the land zoned "agricultural" can be relatively easily rezoned to residential, and since many general development plans project current agricultural as future residential, the ongoing protection of agricultural lands becomes a difficult endeavor. Additionally, zoning classifications tend to encourage low density development which contributes to inefficient land use and overburdens existing infrastructure.

Developers who produce site plans in accordance with existing zoning classifications and general development plans have, in the past, been victorious in litigation against governmental agencies who sought to deter them from constructing a development or attempted to recast the design of the development to include more open space.

Although Washtenaw County reviews all zoning and general development plans prepared by the various local governmental units, they do not have the authority to mandate any changes which precludes them from establishing zoning practices and development plans that benefit the County as a whole.

Conclusion

In order to formulate a viable Open Space Preservation Plan, it was necessary for Washtenaw County to address the following problems:

- Building a consensus on the definition of "open space" within the Washtenaw County community and determining which lands are the most appropriate for preservation.
- Formulating methods for preserving those lands.
- Addressing population growth issues.
- Fostering open communication between "pro-growth" and "anti-growth" groups within Washtenaw County.
- Developing methods for the coordination and direction of development.
- Establishing methods to encourage Countywide planning practices.

Chapter 4. SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained from various sources and researched in the process of preparing this report.

Following is a description of the methodology used in procuring relevant data, sources from which data were acquired, steps taken in the analysis of the data, and how data were utilized in the production of the Washtenaw County Open Space Concept Plan. (See Figure 5. Process Diagram below.)

Process Diagram for the Washtenaw County Open Space Concept Plan

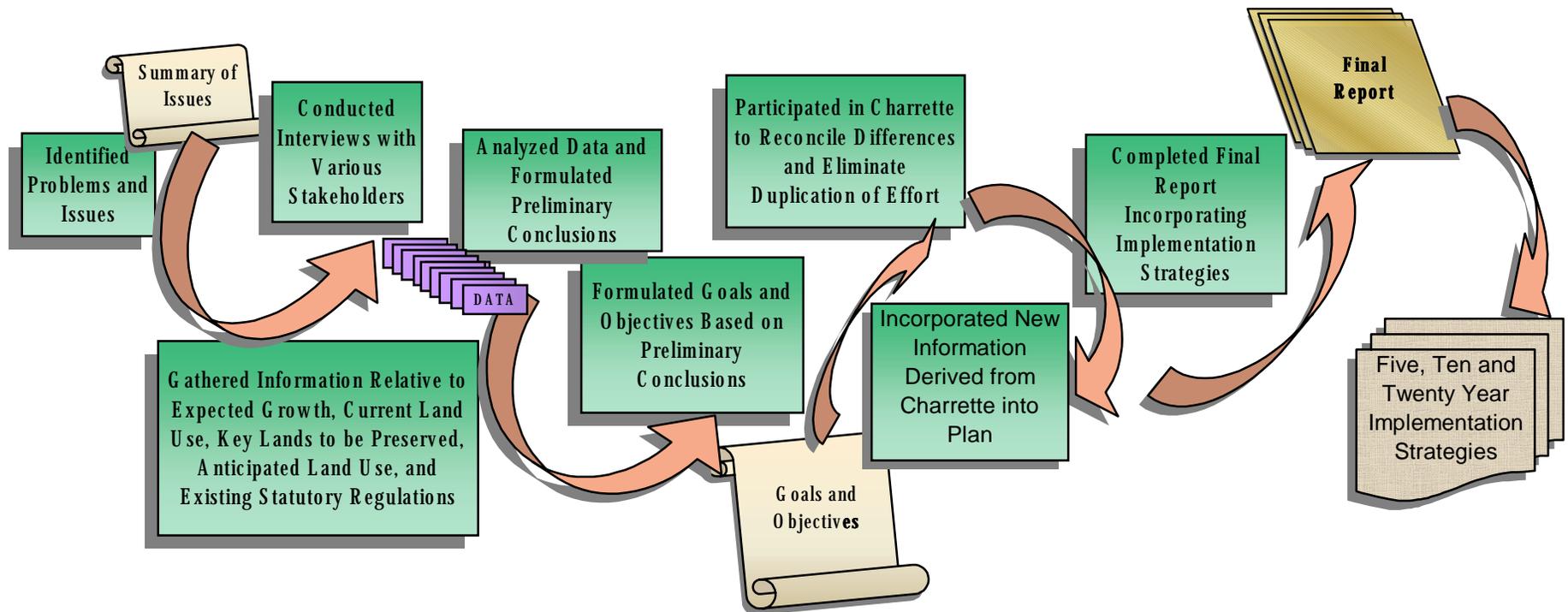


Figure 5. Process Diagram

Methodology, Research & Data Sources

- * Problems and issues relative to open space preservation in Washtenaw County were identified.
- * A number of interviews were conducted with a broad spectrum of Washtenaw County stakeholders in order to construct a viable definition of open space for the residents of Washtenaw County and determine mutually acceptable ways to achieve the preservation of these lands. Interviewees were as follows:
 - Terry Brinkman, Senior Planner, Washtenaw County Planning Department
 - Ed Doll, Planner, York Township Planning Commission
 - Jim Kremidas, President, Calmic, Inc., Real Estate Development
 - Kevin Kwaitkowski, Planning & Development Coordinator, Ypsilanti Township
 - Jo Ann Brinker, Personnel Director and Grant Coordinator, Ypsilanti Township
 - Bob Morningstar, Member, Superior Land Conservancy Board, Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy
 - Dave Pachota, President, Crownover Concrete
 - Mark Smith, Farmer
 - Vivian Armentrout, Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners/Planning Commission
 - Barry Lonik, Potowatomi Land Trust Board
 - Richard Kent, Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation
- * Based on information gathered in the interviews and from Washtenaw County Park System data and land use maps, current areas of open space in Washtenaw County were identified. A base layer map of existing open space was created. Following is an inventory of recreational lands and facilities provided by the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission.

WASHTENAW COUNTY RECREATIONAL LANDS AND FACILITIES

Ownership	No of Areas	Acres	Activities/Facilities
Public Facilities			
State of Michigan	7	15,800	Boating, camping, hiking, skiing, hunting, nature interpretation, picnicking and swimming
HCMA	3	1,800	Canoeing, field games, fishing, cross-country skiing and picnicking
Washtenaw County	11	1,127	Field games, gardening, cross-country skiing, nature interpretation, picnicking and swimming
Local	161	3,800	Canoeing, court games, field games, field sports, fishing, gardening, golf, nature interpretation, picnicking, play lots, swimming, walking and skiing
Public Schools	88	2,100	Court games, field games/sports, nature interpretation, play lots and swimming
College and Universities	27	2,800	Court games, field games/sports, nature interpretation, golf, outdoor education, research, sailing and swimming
Private Facilities for:			
Boating	9	n/a	Boat/canoe livery, marina, water access
Camps	17	1,100	Children's church, day use, family and scout
Golf (incl. semi-public)	11	800	Driving ranges, 9-18 hole courses
Horseback Riding	7	700	Horse boarding, riding instruction and trails
Hunting & Fishing	10	1,200	Dog training, fee fishing, fee hunting, social and target shooting
Private Clubs	4	60	Agricultural fairs, antique sales, carnivals, horse shows and public picnics

Source: Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission, August 1998

Table 1. Washtenaw County Recreational Lands and Facilities

- * By studying maps provided by the County (Washtenaw County Rural Policies, 1981) and Earth Sense (natural system consultants), a determination was made as to important environmentally fragile and ecologically sensitive lands that require protection. (See "Figure 7. Fragile Lands", in the Appendix.)
- * These areas were then added to the base layer as proposed lands to be preserved.
- * Essential agricultural lands maps provided by the County (Washtenaw County Rural Policies, 1981) were examined to determine and map out the location of the agricultural "critical mass". (See "Figure 8. Agricultural Lands", in the Appendix.)

These areas were also added as proposed preservation areas to the base layer map.

- * Added contiguous greenways (Southeast Michigan Greenways, 1996) to the base layer throughout the County to connect existing and proposed open space areas. (See "Figure 9. Greenways", in the Appendix.)
- * Analyzed population growth estimates (SEMCOG) and determined areas where population is likely to increase over the next several years. (See Table 2. Washtenaw County Population Estimates and Forecast 1990 -2005.)

**WASHTENAW COUNTY POPULATION ESTIMATES AND FORECAST
1990-2005**

Jurisdiction	1990	1995	2005	Percentage Increase 1990-2005
Washtenaw County	282,937	300,489	325,599	15.1%
Ann Arbor	109,608	113,735	115,968	5.8%
Ann Arbor Township	3,463	2,562	3,071	-11.3%
Augusta Township	4,415	4,578	4,867	10.2%
Barton Hills	334	337	346	3.6%
Bridgewater Township	1,304	1,389	1,434	10.0%
Chelsea	3,772	4,013	4,189	11.1%
Dexter	1,497	1,726	1,940	29.6%
Dexter Township	4,407	4,914	5,462	23.9%
Freedom Township	1,486	1,519	1,596	7.4%
Lima Township	2,132	2,343	2,531	18.7%
Lodi Township	3,902	4,488	5,289	35.5%
Lyndon Township	2,228	2,366	2,642	18.6%
Manchester	1,753	2,198	2,706	54.4%
Manchester Township	1,739	1,933	2,210	27.1%
Milan (partial)	3,060	3,404	3,663	19.7%
Northfield Township	6,732	7,616	9,082	34.9%
Pittsfield Township	17,650	21,748	30,860	74.8%
Salem Township	3,734	4,151	4,627	23.9%
Saline	6,660	7,384	8,191	23.0%
Saline Township	1,276	1,363	1,459	14.3%
Scio Township	9,578	10,766	13,396	39.9%
Sharon Township	1,366	1,631	1,979	44.9%
Superior Township	8,720	9,232	9,530	9.3%
Sylvan Township	2,508	2,888	3,275	30.6%
Webster Township	3,235	4,141	5,253	62.4%
York Township	6,225	6,754	7,506	20.6%
Ypsilanti	24,846	23,646	22,495	-9.5%
Ypsilanti Township	45,307	47,664	50,032	10.4%

Source: SEMCOG

Table 2. Washtenaw County Population Estimates & Forecast 1990-2005

- * Utilizing the above data and information relative to the locations of existing water and sewage systems (see "Figure 10. Existing Water and Sewage", in Appendix), a development boundary was mapped out within which development should be contained over the next twenty years. An allowance was made for estimated population growth around urban areas that have access to water and sewage systems.
- * The map created above was then overlaid on the map created by ALDS, urban design consultants, to coordinate the proposed development boundary.
- * Information gathered from successful Open Space Preservation and Land Acquisition Plans in other communities (Colorado Springs, Colorado/Cook County, Illinois/Warwick, New Jersey) was analyzed to determine which preservation tools were the most effective and the most widely accepted by all stakeholders in the communities.
- * Current County land use categories were researched and analyzed as well as park system development plans. (See Table 3. Land Use Categories 1995 and Figure 6. Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission Development Locations.)
- * Current township zoning classifications and ordinances as well as general development plans were analyzed to determine how they could be changed or strengthened in order to accomplish agricultural and open space preservation. (See Figures 11, 12 and 13 - Scio Township, in the Appendix.)
- * Based on the above activities, preliminary conclusions relative to the open space issues facing Washtenaw County were formulated.
- * Washtenaw County Concept Plan Goals and Objectives were formulated.
- * A charrette was held on March 23, 1999 with all consulting groups working on the Washtenaw County Concept Plan to reconcile differences and eliminate duplication of effort.
- * New information obtained from the charrette was incorporated into the planning process.
- * Five-year, ten-year and twenty-year plan implementation strategies were developed.

LAND USE CATEGORIES 1995

	Acreage	Percentage of County
<i>Developed</i>		
Residential	50,383	10.90%
Commercial	7,969	1.72%
Industrial	5,307	1.15%
Transportation, Utilities, Communication	5,220	1.13%
Extractive	1,717	0.37%
Recreation	5,954 *	1.29%
<i>Undeveloped**</i>		
Agriculture	214,764	46.46%
Forested/Non-forested	119,496	25.85%
Water	9,807	2.12%
Wetlands	41,677	9.02%
Total		
	462,294	100.00%

* Developed recreation lands only

** Includes additional undeveloped recreation lands and water

Source: SEMCOG

Table 3. Land Use Categories 1995

Figure 6. Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission Development Locations

Conclusions

Open Space

Defining open space was, by far, one of the most difficult questions posed to the stakeholders who were interviewed as a part of the Open Space Concept Plan process. "That is a tough question" (Mark Smith); "This is a very difficult question" (Vivian Armentrout); and "That is the big question" (Barry Lonik) typify the responses received. However, the general consensus was that the following components qualify as open space:

- ⇒ Environmentally sensitive lands (i.e., woodlands, wetlands, wildlife habitats, etc.)
- ⇒ Waterways (rivers, lakes, pond, etc.)
- ⇒ Parks
- ⇒ Golf Courses
- ⇒ School grounds
- ⇒ Farmland
- ⇒ Commons areas within developments
- ⇒ Any undeveloped land

Although there is no hierarchy implied in the above list, *all* agreed that environmentally sensitive lands were high priority open space.

Therefore, open space is defined as follows:

Any undeveloped land, whether available for use by the general public or restricted to individual use by virtue of ownership or for purposes of ecological system preservation, that contains one or more of the above elements. Its value as open space can be derived either tangibly or visually and contributes to both the aesthetic and physical well-being of creatures of all species.

Population

Pittsfield Township, Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Township alone account for 67% (approximately 210,000) of the population of Washtenaw County. This proportion of the population is located on approximately 14% (approximately 64,000) of the available acreage for a density of 3.3 persons per acre. The density for the remainder of Washtenaw County is approximately .26 persons per acre, or 4 acres per person.

Population increases in Scio Township can be attributed chiefly to development along the I-94 corridor and around the village of Dexter while population increases in Webster Township are attributable to development north of the village of Dexter.

Population increases in Lodi Township are attributable to increased development due to its adjacency to Pittsfield Township and its location relative to the city of Saline.

These population and density numbers are meaningful because they point to the fact that although to date the population of Washtenaw County has been growing, most of the population is concentrated in and around existing urban areas. Thus, there is still a significant amount of relatively undeveloped open space land available. Table 3 indicates that, as of 1995, there were 385,744 acres of undeveloped land. Since open space consists of parks, golf courses and school grounds as well, the 5,954 acres of "developed" recreational land may be included for a total of 391,698 acres of existing open space.

See Table 4. Washtenaw County Population Estimates 1999

WASHTENAW COUNTY POPULATION ESTIMATES 1999

GOVERNMENTAL UNIT	1990 CENSUS	1999 ESTIMATED	INCR./ (DECR.)	% CHANGE	% OF COUNTY (1999)
WASHTENAW COUNTY	282,937	312,626	29,689	10.5%	100.0%
Pittsfield Twp.	17,650	28,152	10,502	59.5%	9.0%
Scio Twp.	9,578	13,439	3,861	40.3%	4.3%
Ypsilanti Twp.	45,307	48,669	3,362	7.4%	15.6%
Superior Twp.	8,720	10,604	1,884	21.6%	3.4%
Webster Twp.	3,235	4,879	1,644	50.8%	1.6%
Lodi Twp.	3,902	5,340	1,438	36.9%	1.7%
Northfield Twp.	6,732	8,070	1,338	19.9%	2.6%
Saline	6,660	7,754	1,094	16.4%	2.5%
York Twp.	6,225	7,021	796	12.8%	2.2%
Salem Twp.	3,734	4,393	659	17.6%	1.4%
Ann Arbor Twp.	3,463	4,083	620	17.9%	1.3%
Dexter Twp.	4,407	4,953	546	12.4%	1.6%
Dexter	1,497	1,988	491	32.8%	0.6%
Augusta Twp.	4,415	4,899	484	11.0%	1.6%
Lima Twp	2,132	2,545	413	19.4%	0.8%
Milan (part.)	3,060	3,456	396	12.9%	1.1%
Sylvan Twp.	2,508	2,894	386	15.4%	0.9%
Sharon Twp.	1,366	1,749	383	28.0%	0.6%
Lyndon Twp.	2,228	2,523	295	13.2%	0.8%
Manchester Twp.	1,739	1,997	258	14.8%	0.6%
Bridgewater Twp.	1,304	1,558	254	19.5%	0.5%
Manchester	1,753	1,976	223	12.7%	0.6%
Chelsea	3,772	3,992	220	5.8%	1.3%
Saline Twp.	1,276	1,353	77	6.0%	0.4%
Freedom Twp.	1,486	1,542	56	3.8%	0.5%
Barton Hills	334	326	(8)	-2.4%	0.1%
Ann Arbor	109,608	109,736	128	0.1%	35.1%
Ypsilanti	24,846	22,735	(2,111)	-8.5%	7.3%

SOURCE: SEMCOG Population and Household Estimates, March 1999

Pittsfield Twp., Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Twp. alone account for 67% (approx. 210,000) of the population of Washtenaw County.

67% of the population of Washtenaw County is located on approximately 14% (approximately 64,000) of the available acreage for a density of 3.3 persons per acre.

The density for the remainder of Washtenaw County is approximately .26 persons per acre, or 4 acres per person.

Population increases in Scio Twp. can be attributed chiefly to development along the I-94 corridor and around the village of Dexter.

Population increases in Webster Twp. are attributable to development north of the village of Dexter.

Population increases in Lodi Twp. are attributable to increased development due to its adjacency to Pittsfield Twp. and its location relative to the city of Saline.

Table 4. Washtenaw County Population Estimates 1999

Water/Sewage

Existing water and sewage lines are generally located around existing urban areas (Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Milan, Manchester, Dexter, Chelsea) as well as along the I-94 corridor which are the areas of highest population. By requiring that development locate near these systems, much of the inefficient land use that is currently taking place would be eliminated. Residential lot sizes could be reduced because wells and septic fields would not be required, resulting in higher density development in a smaller area, leaving residual land for open space. Thus, economic development, population growth and open space preservation would all be accommodated.

Zoning

Zoning is considered by many to be a viable tool for the preservation of open space and farmland and the management of growth in general. However, after reviewing current land use, zoning and general development plan maps for all of the townships in Washtenaw County, it was discovered that a very large amount of existing open space is zoned and planned for residential development in the future. (For an example, see Scio Township maps in Appendix.) The realization of these plans will preclude the preservation of ecologically sensitive land, farmland and other open space. If land is zoned residential and designated for residential use in the township master plan, attempts to recover that land for open space or any other purpose often wind up in litigation.

Additionally, zoning classifications as well as ordinances across the county are inconsistent and arbitrary. Townships have complete control, subject to state law, over development in their respective jurisdictions. It appears that zoning regulations are often based on an agenda that does not include open space or farmland preservation. In most cases agricultural zoning can be rezoned to residential with relatively little effort.

Most of the residential zoning across the county is low-density, land consumptive, one-acre-plus lot size, presumably to accommodate wells and septic fields. This prohibits the use of other land preservation tools, such as clustering or P.U.D., without applying for rezoning which can be a relatively time consuming and costly process.

Development Pressures

Certain parts of the County are particularly susceptible to development pressures. These include the townships (Northfield, Salem and Superior) located in the northeast corner of the County because of their location relative to Wayne, Oakland and Livingston Counties. Ann Arbor, Canton and Ypsilanti are all extending their water and sewer in the direction of Superior Township (Morningstar). Conversely, development activity is relatively stagnant in the southwest corner of the County, which includes Manchester, Bridgewater, Sharon and Freedom Townships. These areas are chiefly agricultural or rural residential.

Residential development is occurring at a rapid rate in Scio and southwestern Webster Township because of their location relative to the Village of Dexter. Lodi, York and Saline Townships are attracting development due to their proximity to Both Saline and Ann Arbor as well as Pittsfield Township.

Other

- ◆ There is a general consensus among stakeholders that the preservation of open space is of vital importance to the County, particularly for the purposes of protecting and conserving natural resources
- ◆ The preservation of farmland and visual open space is generally acceptable; however, the preservation of farming as an industry would require further discussion. If farmland

- ◆ is to be preserved, however, protected farmlands should be selected so as to maintain "critical mass", thus furthering the possibility of farming remaining a viable industry (Armentrout, Brinkman). Additionally, lands contiguous to agricultural lands in Monroe and Lenawee Counties should be of the highest priority in order to establish and maintain an agricultural support system.
- ◆ Coordination and collaboration among the local governmental units does not currently exist; however, such a collaboration is desirable. Some areas of planning, particularly open space preservation, *require* a more regional approach in order to be effective. However, it appears to be a difficult proposition to bring the various governing bodies together, particularly under the auspices of the County. According to Ed Doll, most officials are extremely reluctant to "give up their turf" (Doll).
- ◆ Governmental units, environmentalists, farmers, developers, etc. all need to work together to formulate mutually acceptable methods for achieving open space and farmland preservation. Communication among these groups is essential in order for any plan to survive.
- ◆ Members of the general public should be included in the planning process, not only for their input but to educate them as well. Many people want to live in rural areas on large lots but are not willing to accept the unaffordable housing and traffic congestion that are the unavoidable results of low density development. Relative to agricultural preservation and the means to accomplish it, urban residents need to become more cognizant of the farmers' position.

Chapter 5. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Consensus Building

Goal: *To build consensus and foster open communication between "pro-growth" and "anti-growth" groups within Washtenaw County*

Objectives:

- ◆ Encourage dialogue between local stakeholders, such as developers, land conservation groups, farmers, planners, etc., which is open, respectful, and visionary.
- ◆ Establish public awareness and education programs regarding smart growth practices within Washtenaw County.
 - ⇒ With the Homebuilders Association, developers and realtors promote environmental sensitivity and acknowledgment of economic development, transportation and community development trends;
 - ⇒ With the Nature Center, Sierra Club members, Nature Conservancy, land conservation and land trust groups and other environmentally conscious groups or citizens promote an understanding of population growth and the ability of development to be environmentally sensitive;
 - ⇒ With Farm Bureau and individual farmers promote participation in decision processes to aid the community's understanding of the farmers' situation.
 - ⇒ With townships, cities, villages and neighboring government agencies stress open communication.
- ◆ Reach coordination and cooperation between community groups and consulting teams to aid ongoing dialogue and

evaluation concerning long-run implementation of the Open Space Concept Plan.

Preservation of Most Appropriate Open Space Lands

Goal: *To protect the most important open space lands within the County, specifically environmentally sensitive and fragile lands, open space within high growth areas and scenic areas*

Objectives:

- ◆ Identify the most environmentally sensitive and scenic lands in Washtenaw County.
- ◆ Develop criteria in conjunction with environmental organizations, such as Nature Center, Sierra Club, Nature Conservancy, Huron River Watershed Council, land conservation and land trust groups, and County and State Parks Departments for setting up contiguous green systems for animal habitats and human recreation.
- ◆ Investigate and evaluate the various methods that have been used around the country to protect open space. Look for examples that are comparable to Washtenaw County in size, population, and government structure.
- ◆ Encourage public open spaces in the downtown areas of Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, Saline, Dexter, Milan, Chelsea, and Manchester.
- ◆ Work with local developers to preserve open space (wetlands, woodlands, riparian corridors, other fragile lands and usable public space etc.) in new developments, especially in areas of high growth. Ideally, these open

spaces would be connected and contiguous between developments.

Preservation of Appropriate Amounts of Park Land

Goal: *To maximize use and function of existing state, County, city, township and metro parks throughout Washtenaw County and increase or maintain the current ratio of park land (acreage) to residents as the County population increases*

Objectives:

- ◆ Coordinate efforts between all the various park agencies within the County, especially the County Parks, individual City and Township Parks, State Parks, and the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Park Association.
- ◆ Inform Washtenaw County citizens of the location, facilities, amenities, and uses available at each park in the County.
- ◆ Identify all funding sources (federal, state, County, local, private, corporate, etc.) available for the purchase, development and maintenance of State, County, Township, City, and other park systems in Washtenaw County.
- ◆ Utilize funding sources suitable and available for the advancement of all parks and park systems and their facilities in Washtenaw County.
- ◆ Identify locations and approximate sizes for additional park facilities in areas of future development and increased growth.

- ◆ Plan to strategically locate new parks throughout Washtenaw County, based on environmental and public needs, and population distribution.
- ◆ Develop a continuous greenway system that will provide connections, and continuity between existing and future parks, which will facilitate increased access, opportunities and use by Washtenaw County residents.

Preservation of Farm Land

Goal: *To preserve a critical mass of the most essential agricultural lands, thereby maintaining visual open space while preserving the existing rural traits, characteristics, and integrity of Washtenaw County*

Objectives:

- ◆ Examine future farming practices and trends to determine how Washtenaw County farmers and the farming industry may fit into the prospective picture.
- ◆ Analyze the current County and township tax systems to determine positive and negative effects on the farming industry in Washtenaw County.
- ◆ Include Washtenaw County farmers on future open space committees, task forces, councils, and advisory boards.
- ◆ Investigate ways to attract and retain the useful and necessary farm support services to maintain a viable farming industry in Washtenaw County.
- ◆ Identify areas in Washtenaw County where farming will remain viable and maintainable in *ten* and *twenty* years.

- ◆ Educate citizens concerning current and future farming in Washtenaw County, especially the challenges and difficulties facing the local farming community.
- ◆ Research other open space uses for agricultural land that is deemed infeasible or unsuitable for farming in Washtenaw County.

Coordinated and Directed Development

Goal: *To encourage sustainable development practices within Washtenaw County*

Objectives:

- ◆ Define sustainable development through community input from County residents and increase the public awareness of sustainable development practices.
- ◆ Research and assess managed growth and smart growth practices used across the country in counties and communities similar to Washtenaw County.
- ◆ Research opportunities and incentives to promote infill development within urbanized areas, primarily those areas experiencing disinvestment and population losses.
- ◆ Research effectiveness of concurrency within Washtenaw County.
- ◆ Create criteria used to identify and determine locations most suitable for future development in Washtenaw County.
 - ⇒ Identify areas slated for economic development;
 - ⇒ Identify transportation nodes appropriate for concentrated development;

- ⇒ Identify current and projected locations of infrastructure including roads, sewers, schools, and other public utilities and services.

Countywide Planning

Goal: *To develop a long-term, Countywide planning program among the municipal and township governments in Washtenaw County*

Objectives:

- ◆ Implement Countywide planning in Washtenaw County as a method of resolving concerns and developing consistent land use practices, particularly as they relate to the conservation and preservation of open space.
- ◆ Research regional planning agency development efforts and successes in other communities and counties across the nation, particularly those that are similar to Washtenaw County in size, population and government structure.
- ◆ Initiate and conduct meetings with local government officials (mayors, township supervisors, and village officials) to promote and advance the cause of Countywide planning in Washtenaw County.
- ◆ Educate local elected and appointed officials (township boards, city and village councils, and planning commissions) in sustainable, comprehensive land use planning methods and techniques.
- ◆ Provide necessary professional expertise, assistance and other resources to local government agencies (townships, cities, and villages) as necessary to formulate new and improved ordinances, support unpopular decisions and accomplish other planning processes needed in

implementing the Open Space Concept Plan for Washtenaw County.

- ◆ Distribute any available Washtenaw County funds based on local government endorsement and acquiescence with the Countywide planning agenda and programs.
- ◆ Research possibility of state and federal assistance for the establishment of a Countywide planning agency and program for Washtenaw County.
- ◆ Investigate sources of federal and/or state assistance (i.e. legislation or state planning mandates, etc.), to aid Washtenaw County government agencies in the settlement of lawsuits that may arise from planning decisions or the institution of new open space ordinances that have come about as the result of Countywide planning initiatives.

Financing Land Preservation Strategies

Goal: *To procure funding for the planning, purchase, development, maintenance, operation, and utilization of all types of open space throughout Washtenaw County*

Objectives:

- ◆ Determine the overall financial need for maintaining, operating and utilizing existing open space as well as the

planning, purchasing and developing of forecasted open space needs in Washtenaw County.

- ◆ Identify all the groups and organizations that play a role in the preservation of open space within Washtenaw County. (i.e. state, County, township, city, land trusts, conservation groups, watershed authorities, etc.) Investigate their means for procuring open space, learn of their proposals for future open space acquisition and understand the financial options they utilized to accomplish those proposals.
- ◆ Identify all funding sources currently available to the County for the planning, purchase, development, maintenance, operation, and utilization of all types of open space.
- ◆ Educate the different government agencies (townships, cities, villages, local authorities) about available or potential funding sources or methods that they could use in their particular jurisdictions.
- ◆ Research other funding processes, methods, tools, and sources to determine their feasibility and potential in preserving open space in Washtenaw County.
- ◆ Consider and identify government actions available that may reduce the financial burden of obtaining all the necessary open space (i.e. rezoning, subdivision ordinances, urban growth boundary, etc.).

Chapter 6. STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Five Year Plan

Consensus Building

- Follow the visioning guidelines that have been established by EMPOWER, for Washtenaw County.
- Develop interactive displays of the proposed open space concepts to be displayed throughout the County where members of the various stakeholder groups could review them, make suggestions, give comments, state opinions and ask questions. Such locations may include the Farm Bureau, Home Builders' Association Headquarters, Nature Conservancy, local libraries, town halls, farm equipment or feed stores, building supply locations, etc. The Washtenaw County Planning Commission will be responsible for organizing the displays and holding any follow-up meetings. This form of community awareness will foster interest and responsiveness towards the concepts of the open space plan.
- An equally important step in the process described above will be to include notice on the display of the date/time/location of follow-up meetings to present collected comments. This will provide an opportunity to bring together all interested parties to discuss the findings as well as encourage constructive interaction. Several follow-up meetings will be organized by the County Planning staff which will be based on regional geographic areas in order to bring together participants with common concerns. Once findings from these meetings have been gathered, a Countywide meeting will be held to address County-level concerns. (\$15,000)

- Assemble a collection of current and available materials on environmentally friendly and economically beneficial building practices to distribute to developers throughout the County. Information such as insulation, heating and cooling systems, building materials, paved surfaces, wetland and woodland conservation, storm water management and others will be included in the packet. The County Planning staff in conjunction with the Home Builders' Association will be responsible for production and distribution. (\$4,000)

Preservation of Most Appropriate Open Space Lands

- Develop a consistent open space ordinance for all the townships, cities, and villages in Washtenaw County. The County Planning staff will facilitate this process by conducting working meetings and acting in an advisory capacity to the local governmental units. (\$40,000)
- Establish broad and stringent easements along key environmental and fragile features, as identified on the Open Space Concept Plan (for example, the Raisin River, Paint Creek, Saline River, Fleming Creek, Huron River, Ford Lake, and Mill Creek). These environmental easement corridors will protect the land use for wildlife habitat and movement, as well as allow pedestrian use where appropriate. This task will be the responsibility of the County Planning staff in conjunction with the various townships and cities. (Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission, 1998) (\$50,000)
- Formulate an urban open space initiative in coordination with the Urban Design Concept Plan to establish parks, plazas, trails, riverfront areas, and other "people" spaces in the currently urbanized areas of the County, giving high priority to areas like Ypsilanti, Saline, Dexter and Ann Arbor. The County Planning

staff and the various local planning staffs will work together to create this initiative. (\$100,000)

- Inventory Washtenaw County roadways and identify roads for potential implementation into a County or State “scenic byways” program. This inventory will be conducted by the Washtenaw County Road Commission (United States Department of Transportation, 1997) (\$5,000)
- Encourage cluster and P.U.D. development practices that ensure contiguous parcels of open spaces between neighboring developments. This will involve the examination of current zoning ordinances and classifications within townships to determine where zoning needs to be modified in order to support cluster and P.U.D. County Planning staff members will work with the various townships to accomplish this task.

Preservation of Appropriate Amounts of Park Land

- Organize and initiate an informal bi-monthly meeting with all park agencies functioning in the County to discuss and coordinate individual efforts and plans. The Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Department will not only be responsible for ensuring that these meetings take place but will also guide and encourage park development to reflect the Open Space Concept Plan and eliminate concentrations of parkland in particular geographic areas. (\$8,000)
- Develop a detailed Washtenaw County Parks Map that will locate **all** of the parks and identify their uses and facilities. Distribution of this map at cost to County residents will be handled by the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Department. (\$5,000)
- Generate a manuscript that lists all known funding sources available for the development of park lands that can be utilized by the different government agencies to further their park plans.

Include explanations and descriptions on how to acquire and implement the various funding sources. Production of this document will be executed by The County Parks and Recreation Commission. (\$5,000)

- Move forward with the capital improvement schedule established by the County Parks and Recreation Plan in making park improvements and trail developments, especially those trails identified in the Southeastern Michigan Greenways Vision Plan. (Southeast Michigan Greenways, 1996) (\$0)
- Reconsider proposed land acquisitions proposed by the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Plan, specifically the southwest corner proposal. (See Figure 6. Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission Development Locations.) New parkland acquired by the County should be located in conjunction with the greenways proposed in the Open Space Concept Plan and be coordinated with current development trends. (\$3,000 - funds for acquisition of land already available)

Farmland Preservation

- Evaluate the farm preservation boundary to ensure that it corresponds to both legal and topographical boundaries at the local level. The County-drawn boundary should not bisect individual property or jump back and forth across roads. (\$16,000)
- Conduct meetings between Washtenaw County Planning staff and Lenawee County Planning staff to discuss ideas for maintaining a strong farming presence in the two counties. (Farming accounts for \$100 million in revenue for Lenawee County compared with \$55 million in Washtenaw County.) These meetings will focus on keeping a continuous critical mass of farming across both counties. (\$4,000)

- Educate the public regarding the economic impact of farming on Washtenaw County. This campaign can be accomplished through public forums, flyers, newspapers, etc. in coordination with the Farm Bureau, Future Farmers of America and Farmland Trust. Include in this campaign a school curriculum to discuss the importance of farming for the community. (\$3,000)
- Enact a modified Transfer of Development Right (TDR) program administered by the County. Farmers located outside the farmland preservation area would be eligible for this program which would allow them to sell their development rights to developers for new projects located within the development boundary. The TDR program would give developers density bonuses and permit special uses not normally allowed under the current zoning. The only cost to the County will be administrative. (\$25,000)
- Strengthen agricultural zoning within the farmland preservation area. Most of this area is currently zoned agricultural, but in some cases the agricultural zoning classification can easily be rezoned for residential use. Strengthening agricultural zoning will further guarantee that the land will remain agricultural by making it more difficult to obtain zoning changes. This will be the responsibility of the various townships; however, County Planning will act in an advisory and supportive capacity in order to assist in handling any negative community response that may develop. (\$5,000)
- Rezone areas within the farm boundary that are not currently zoned agricultural. The County Planning Department will work in conjunction with local townships on this process. Small sections of land will be maintained for both commercial and residential expansion of the farming community. (\$25,000)

Coordinated and Directed Development

- Evaluate the proposed development boundary to correspond with the physical and legal layout of the land. The initial development boundary was drawn with attention to existing and future sewer lines, current and expected growth patterns, and environmentally sensitive areas. The County Planning Department will be responsible for evaluating and making necessary changes to the development boundary. (\$5,000)
- Offer developers a partial property tax reduction for infill projects located within the City of Ypsilanti. The Ypsilanti Planning Department in conjunction with the County planning staff will administer this program. (\$150,000)
- Actively pursue infill opportunities in other urban areas through contact with local builders' associations and real estate developers. The Planning Departments of the various urban areas in conjunction with the County Planning Department will work to streamline the approval process for these difficult sites, especially when the proposed development fits into the master plan. (\$5,000)
- Direct growth away from greenfields, using tax incentives to encourage brownfield redevelopment. The County Planning Department in cooperation with the local planning officials will manage this program. (\$125,000)

Countywide Planning

- Distribute available County funds (generated by the ballot initiative discussed below under "Financing Land Preservation") based on local township endorsement and acquiescence with a regional planning agenda. (\$4,000)
- Create regional collaborations consisting of townships within the County that share similar concerns. For example:

Urban Section- Ypslanti Township, Ypslanti City, Ann Arbor Township, Ann Arbor City, Pittsfield Township
Northwest Corner- Lyndon Township, Dexter Village, Dexter Township, Chelsea, Sylvan Township, Lima Township

Areas with Development Pressure from Outside the County- Webster Township, Northfield Township, Salem Township, Superior Township

Farm Belt- Sharon Township, Freedom Township, Manchester Township, Bridgewater Township, Saline Township, York Township, Augusta Township, Milan, Manchester

Areas with Development Pressure from Within the County- Scio Township, Lodi Township
(\$20,000)

Financing Land Preservation

- Initiate a Countywide ballot proposal aimed at raising funds allocated for countywide land preservation planning. Townships would be required to buy into the regional planning proposals in order to obtain funding from this ballot initiative. (\$50,000)
- Develop a TDR program in which agricultural land is preserved with minimal amounts of County money. The County would be responsible for administering the program. (\$8,000)
- Investigate the availability of funds to be used to assist townships in the settlement of lawsuits that may arise from planning decisions or the institution of new ordinances relative to regional planning. The County Planning and Law Departments will conduct this investigation. (\$2,000)

Following are two overlays representing proposed open space and proposed agricultural/development boundaries, respectively. The

base map is representative of current open space and existing water and sewer systems.

PROPOSED GREENWAYS, PARKS & SCENIC BYWAYS



Ten Year Plan

All program implementations should be evaluated to determine their effectiveness singly and as part of the overall plan. Evaluation results will be used to devise and implement needed changes in existing programs as well as to formulate additional programs or terminate unsuccessful programs.

Consensus Building

- Teach schoolchildren about the Open Space Concept Plan, and encourage their input, suggestions and ideas. This program will be coordinated among the County Planning staff and various non-profit organizations, such as the Huron River Watershed Council, that currently work in the schools. (\$12,000)
- Establish a VisionKeepers group composed of key representatives from each stakeholder group that would be responsible for providing on-going informal evaluation of the implementation of the Open Space Concept Plan. These representatives should be individuals that hold influential positions within their respective groups and who are capable of making decisions. They should be able to bring their group's views to the table. For governments this should be a member of the city or township council, planning department or the like. There may need to be multiple VisionKeeper committees organized by geographic location (quadrants or school districts) and similar interests and issues. The County Planning Director will manage this organization. (\$15,000)

Preservation of Most Appropriate Open Space

- The Parks Department will acquire contiguous open space lands that will add to and benefit the open space greenway system. A

primary focus will be to extend, connect or improve the greenways established during the first five years (i.e. Raisin River, Paint Creek, Saline River, Fleming Creek, Huron River, Ford Lake, and Mill Creek). These parcels may be acquired through fee-simple acquisition, environmental and development easements, gifts, long-term leases, purchase of development rights and/or transfer of development rights methods. A connected, interdependent open space system will establish context for the County at the same time preserving and conserving environmentally sensitive lands and significant resources. (Southeast Michigan Greenways, 1996) (\$3,000-funds for acquisition of land already available)

- Develop a Washtenaw County Scenic Byway System. Implement and manage such a system using tax incentives, design guidelines and regulations, fee-simple acquisition, zoning, land use regulation, sign ordinances, temporary agreements, purchase of development rights (PDR) and/or transfer of development rights (TDR). Once established, incorporate the scenic byways into the Washtenaw County Parks Map (United States Department of Transportation, 1997). (\$80,000)

Preservation of Appropriate Amounts of Park Land

- In 2008 renew and possibly upgrade the two park millages currently maintained in Washtenaw County. (\$15,000)

Farmland Preservation

- Reduce property taxes for farmers located within the farm preservation boundary. This can be accomplished by taxing farmers at the current use of their land rather than the standard practice of highest and best use. The strengthened agricultural

zoning will reinforce the idea of taxing the property at the current agricultural use. (\$250,000)

- Reduce property taxes for farm-related businesses located within the farm boundary. (\$50,000)
- Investigate what commodities will be produced on farms in the future (i.e., fuels and other commodities). The County Planning staff will work with the farming community (Farm Bureau, 4-H, and the Future Farmers of America) to explore this type of agriculture. (\$20,000)
- Encourage the Farm Bureau, 4-H, and Future Farmers of America to open a historic hands-on farm museum on a working farm. This farm will be used to educate the public about the farming industry as well as serve as a petting farm for children. The museum should be located along one of the scenic byways inside the farm preservation area. (\$0)

Coordinated and Directed Development

- Require new development located within the development boundary to proceed concurrently with the sewer system. It is not anticipated that the sewer system will reach the entire development boundary in the next twenty years. To facilitate development closest to the core urban areas, concurrency will be required. (\$15,000)

Countywide Planning

- Lobby Lansing to change state laws giving townships more coverage from lawsuits. The County lobbyists and Law Departments would be responsible for working with the state legislature on this issue. (\$75,000)

Financing Land Preservation

- Partner with wealthy individuals and large landowners living within the County to help purchase and preserve large tracts of land. Any local, city or county planning official who has connections with wealthy individuals or large landowners will help carry out this strategy. (\$2,000)

Twenty Year Plan

Perform ongoing evaluations of strategies in place to determine their effectiveness over the past ten years. Make changes, additions and deletions as required and begin work on the next Open Space Concept Plan.

General Strategies

- Provide long range management of the Washtenaw County Scenic Byway System.
- Provide long range management of the Washtenaw County Greenway System in conjunction with the Southeastern Michigan Greenways Vision Plan.
- Conduct an evaluation of this Open Space Concept Plan to determine its success at establishing and maintaining the proposed greenways, essential agricultural lands boundary, development boundary, County scenic byways, and new parks.
- Revisit state and local legislation to ensure that established greenways, fragile environmental features, agricultural lands, natural resources, and other established open space will continue to be in place properly managed for future generations of Washtenaw County residents.
- Monitor the critical mass of farming within the preservation boundary. Evaluate programs to determine which have proven

successful at maintaining farming in Washtenaw County.
(\$20,000)

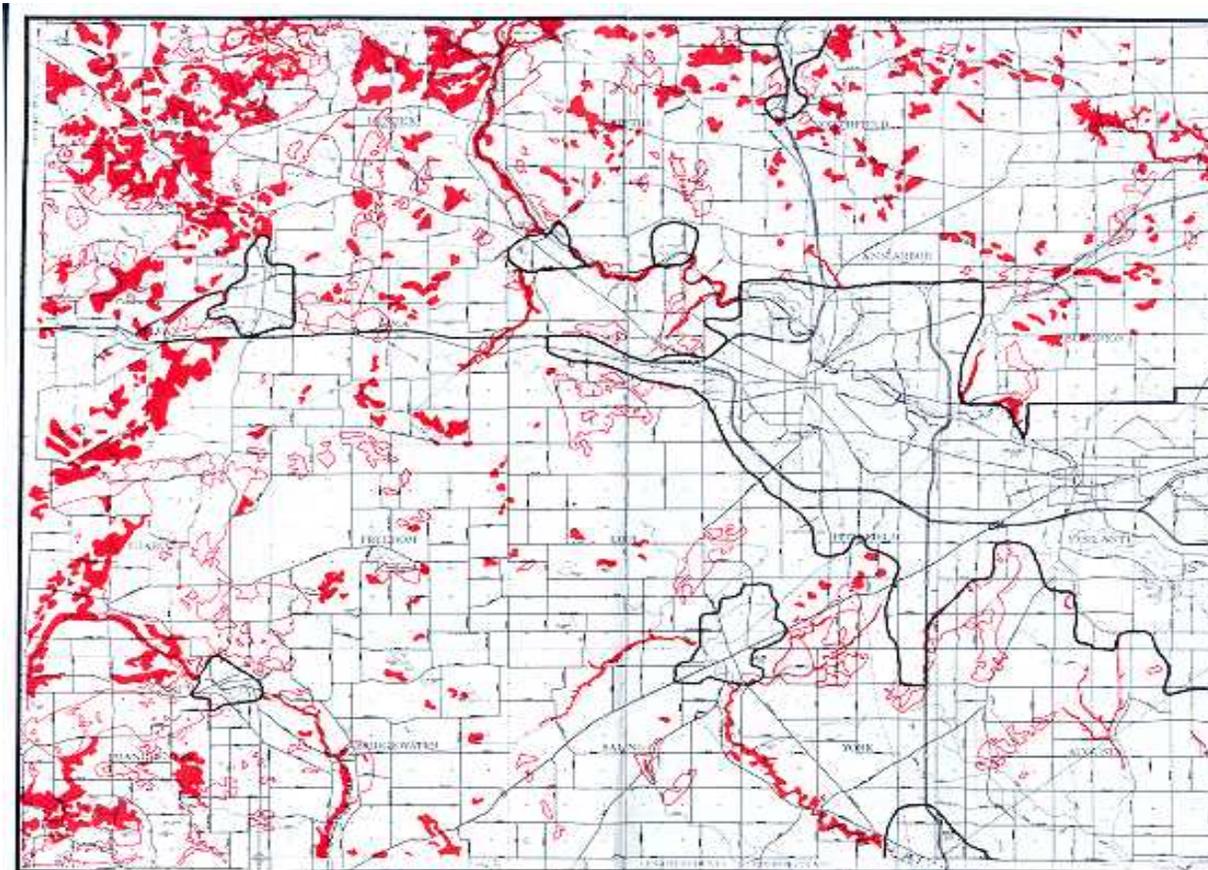
- Investigate the TDR program to determine if it should continue or be modified. (\$8,000)
 - Reassess the breakdown for regional planning to determine if the areas continue to share common concerns. (\$5,000)
- Continue to look for resources including grants, federal and state money, and donations to be used for purchase of property. The various park departments and the County Planning Department will be responsible for the continued search for resources. (\$5,000)

Chapter 7. UNRESOLVED ISSUES

- Population projections from SEMCOG have not been altered to coincide with the proposals in this report. Proposals such as the development boundary and the concurrency issues are going to affect population projections.
- One important issue is how to encourage townships to relinquish some of their planning control to a regional governing body. A potential solution is to use money from the proposed ballot initiative as a carrot. Support from the townships and cities would be needed for approval from Lansing for regional plans.
- The bitter fight over Proposal 1 and the ramifications have not been addressed. The proposal and the ensuing debates polarized some of the groups involved. Getting the groups back to the table has not been specifically addressed.
- The difficulty of purchasing or obtaining easements over key private property was not addressed. Drawing boundaries and trails on a map is easy. The difficult step is trying to purchase or obtain these easements.
- The proposed map does not specifically have a plan for every area in the County.
- Impervious surface issues were not addressed in the proposed boundaries.
- An issue that has not been fully addressed is whether the development boundary coincides with the proposed transportation additions.
- The report does not address the significance of having farm produce supplied locally both for the environmental reasons of transportation and the ability of the area to be self-sufficient.
- An in-depth study of the future of farming will need to be completed. Farming as an industry is going through radical changes, which will need to be addressed in Washtenaw County.
- Negotiation with environmental groups for the protection of water bodies within Washtenaw County was not addressed in this plan.
- The need for a comprehensive countywide GIS that is available to all parties.
- Historical and cultural preservation efforts (i.e., historical districts and the impact they have on open space issues).
- Rural tourism can have both a positive and negative impact on open space.
- Disagreement with the transportation concept plan to develop public transportation lines to Saline.

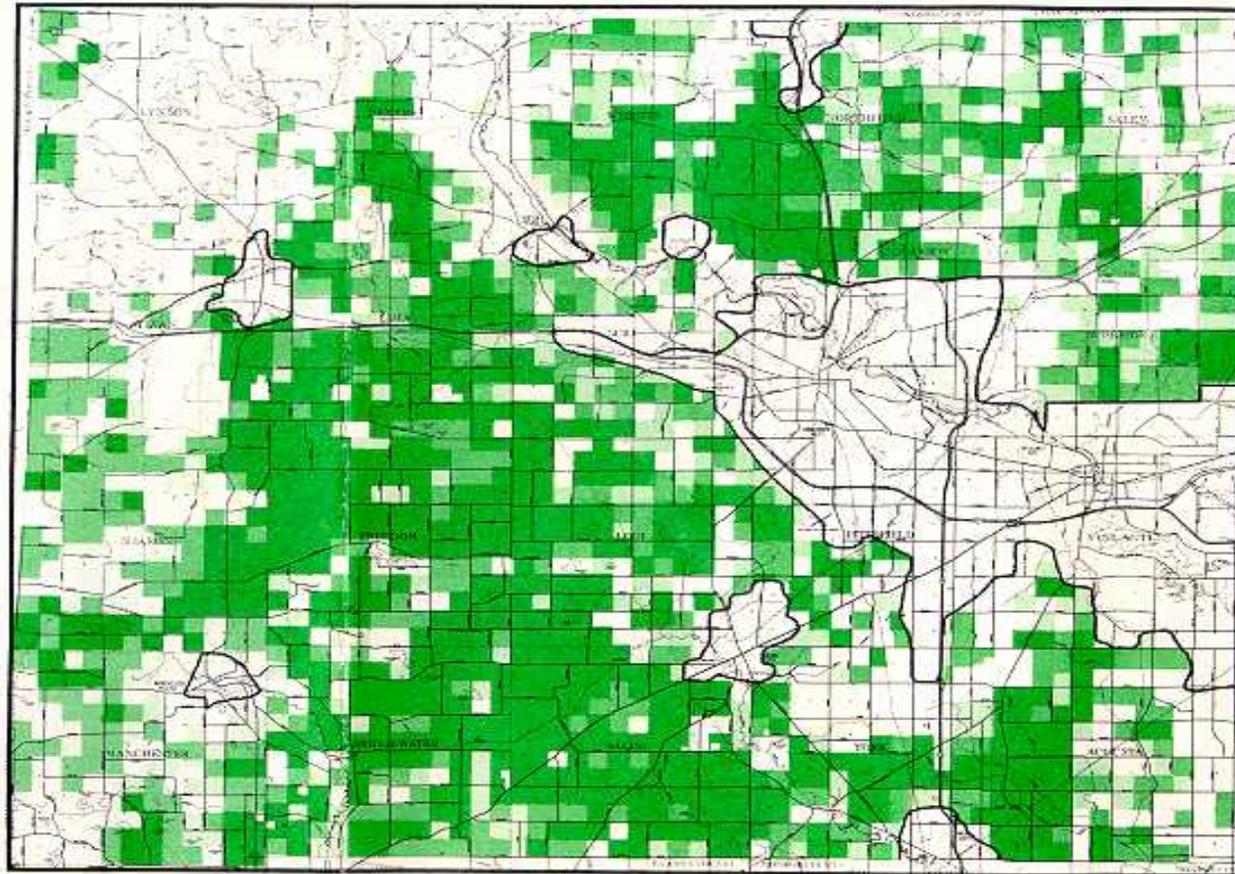
Chapter 8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Washtenaw County Agricultural Lands & Open Space Task Force, "Washtenaw County Agricultural Lands and Open Space Preservation Plan Final Report", December 1997.
- Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission, "Parks and Recreation Plan", August 1998.
- Washtenaw County, "1996 Growth Monitoring Report".
- City of Colorado Springs, "Colorado Springs Open Space Preservation Plan", <http://www.colorado-springs.com/PublicPlan/OPENSACE/WhatOpSp.html>., 1997.
- Warwick, New Jersey, "A Comprehensive Open Space Plan for Warwick", Videotape distributed by The Video Project.
- Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois, "Land Acquisition Plan", 1994.
- U-M Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, "Fulton-Grimes Economic Report", as reported in the Ann Arbor News, March 7, 1999.
- SEMCOG, "Population and Household Estimates", <http://www.SEMCOG.org>, March 1999.
- Southeast Michigan Greenways, "A Vision for a Regional Greenway Network - Washtenaw County Portion", 1996.
- Washtenaw County Metropolitan Planning Commission, "Washtenaw County Rural Policies", 1981.
- U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, "Community Guide to Planning and Managing a Scenic Byway", 1997.



-  Highly Fragile Lands
-  Sensitive Ground Water Recharge Areas
-  Year 2000 Sewer Service Area Boundary

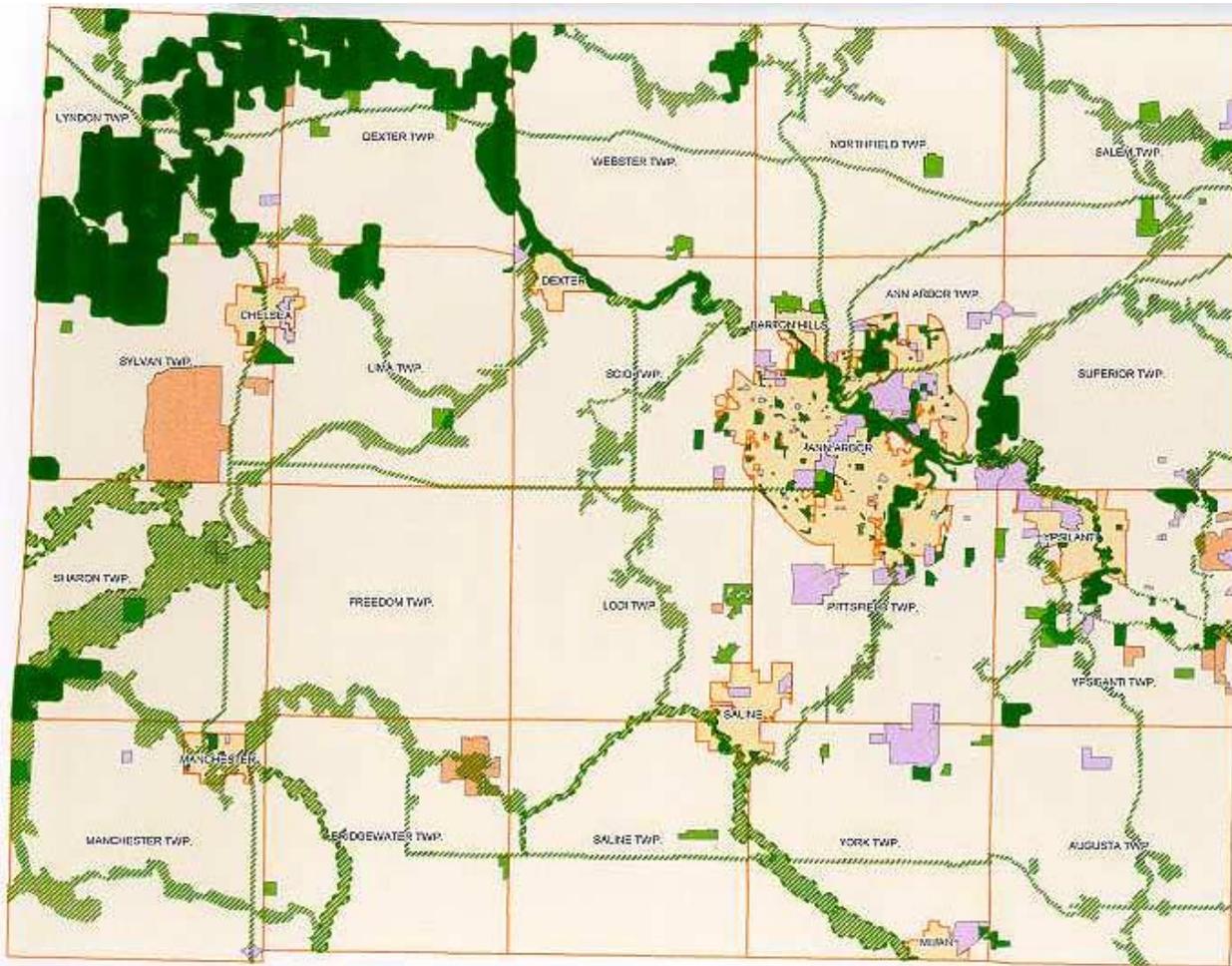
Figure 7. Fragile Lands
Source: Washtenaw County Planning Commission, 1981



- Essential Agricultural
- Secondary Agriculture
- Reserve Agriculture
- Year 2000 Sewer Service Area Boundary

1.37

Figure 8. Agricultural Lands
 Source: Washtenaw County Planning Commission, 1981



LEGEND:

Existing Open Space:

- Existing Green Space
- Existing Greenway

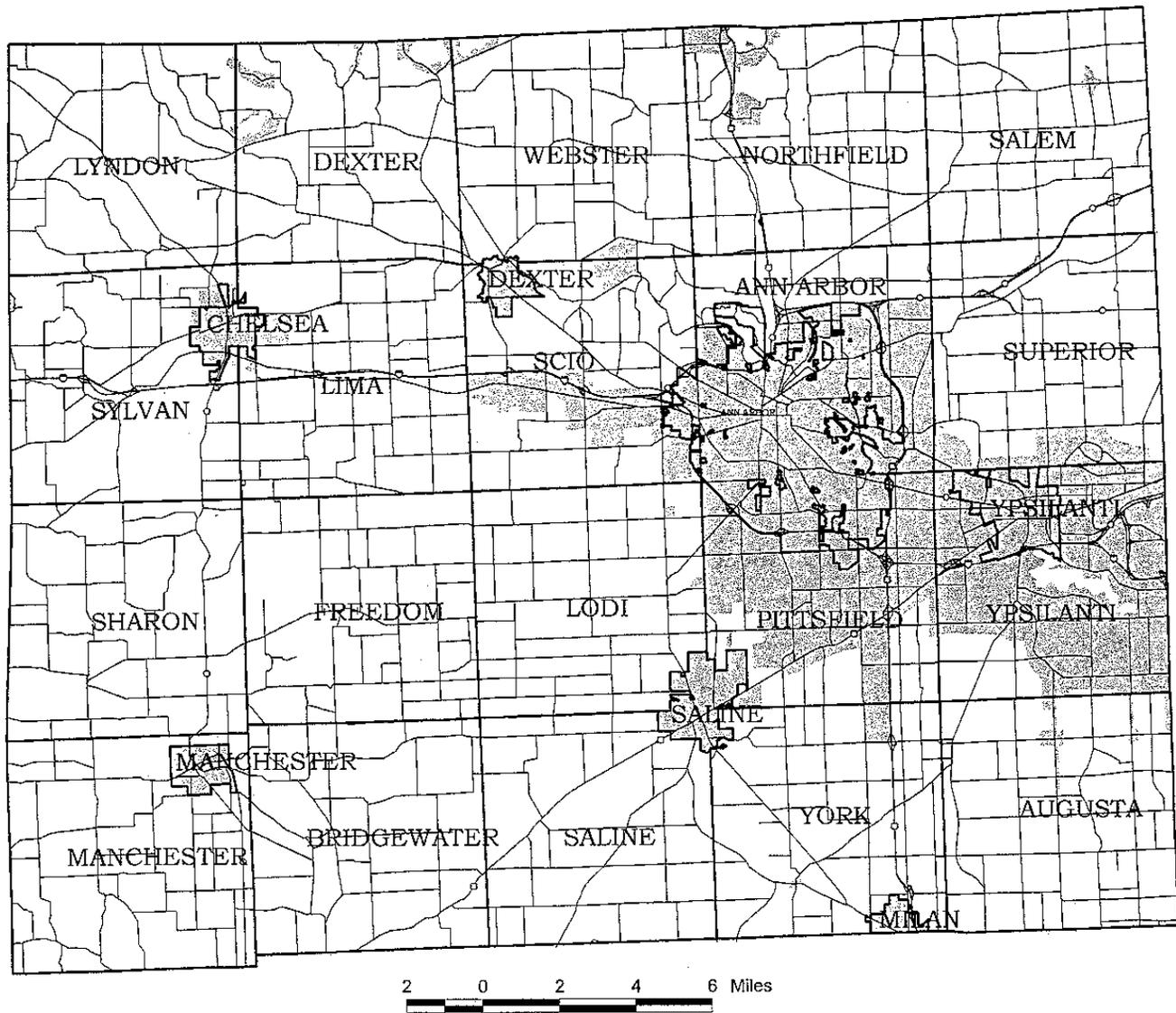
Greenway Network Vision:

- Planned Corridor
- Schematic Corridor

Selected Properties:

- Public Green Space
- Private Green Space
- Other Public Lands
- Other Private Lands

Figure 9. Greenways
Source: Southeast Michigan Greenways, 1996



**Washtenaw County
Sewer Service Areas**

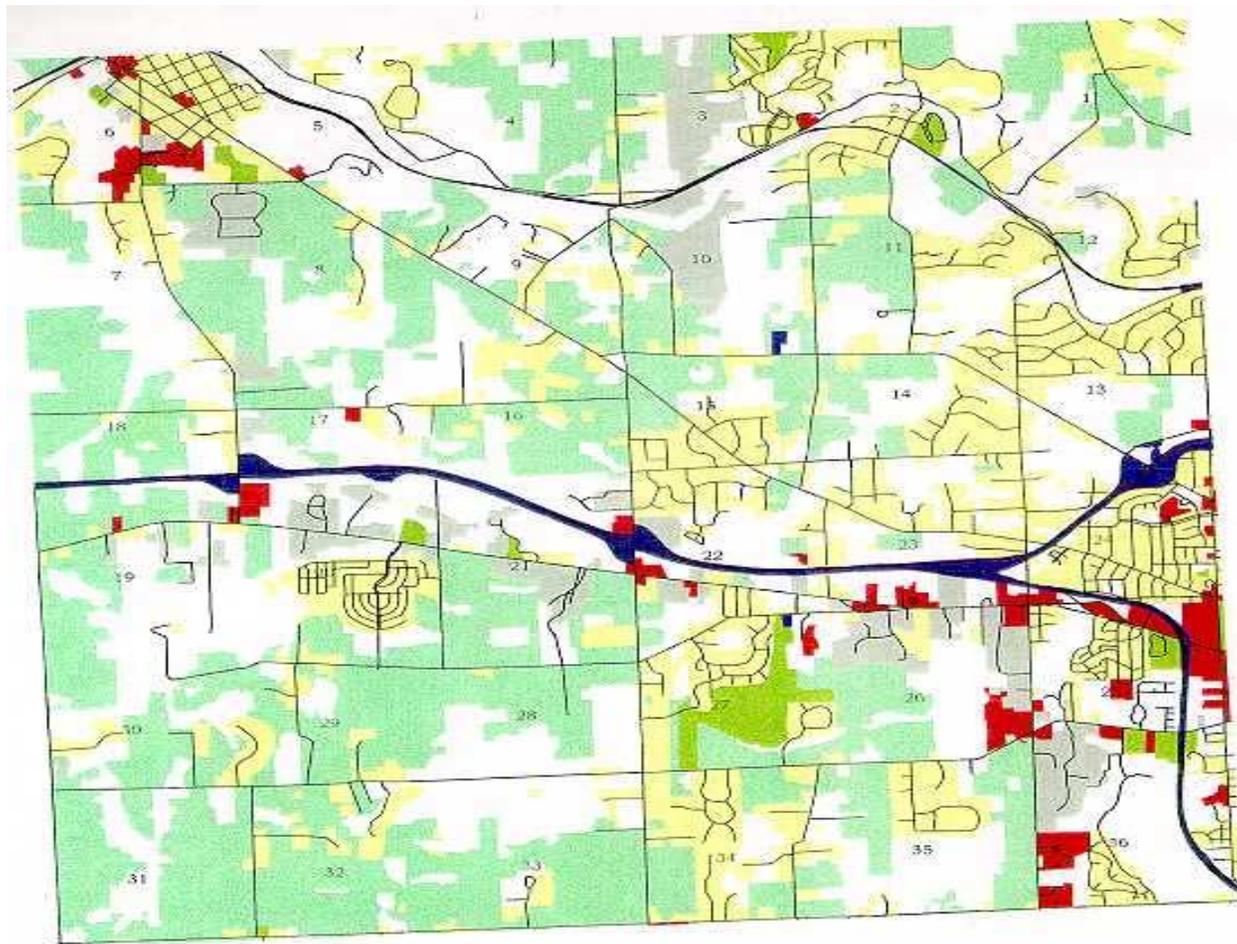
Legend

 Areas served by sewer / water

Created by:
Washtenaw County Metropolitan
Planning Commission GIS 1997



Figure 10. Existing Water and Sewage

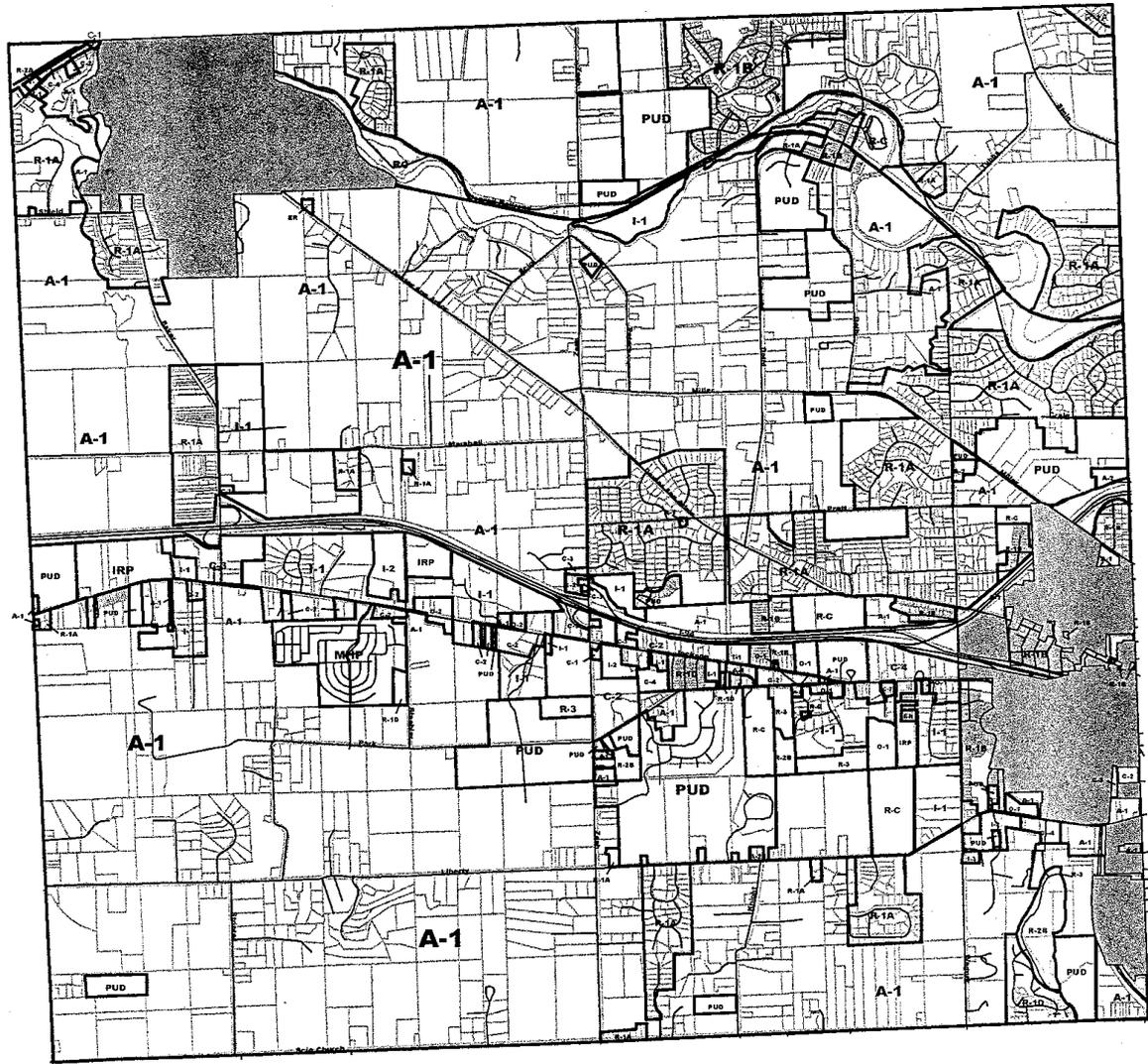


1995 Land Use - Scio Township



Data Source: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Figure 11. Land Use 1995 - Scio Township



Scio Township Zoning

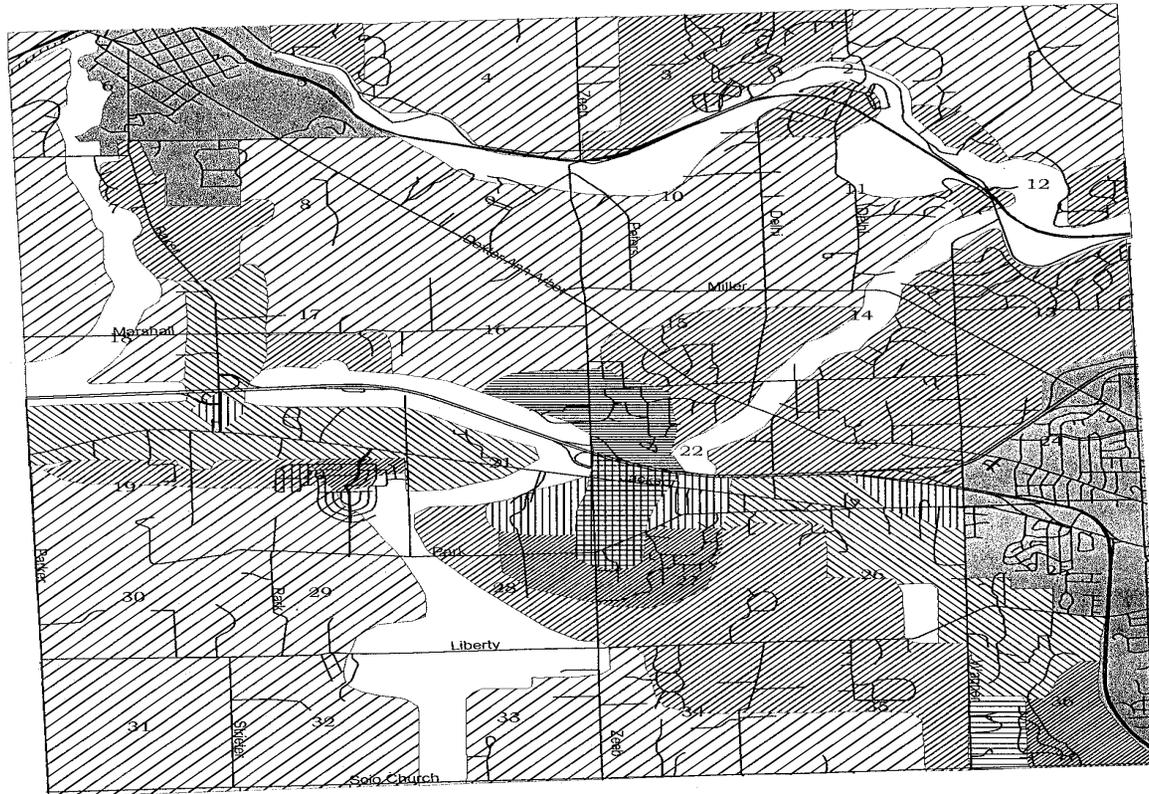
- ER Estate Residential
- IRP Industrial & Reserch Office Park
- RC Recreation-Conservation
- A-1 General Agriculture
- A-2 Reserve Agriculture
- R-1A Rural Non-farm Residential
- R-1B Suburban Residential
- R-1C Urban Residential
- R-1D Urban Residential
- R-2A Two-family Residential
- R-2B Low Density Multiple Family Residential
- R-3 Moderate Density Multiple Family Residential
- MHP Mobile Home Park
- C-1 Neighborhood Commercial
- C-2 General Commercial
- C-3 Highway Commercial
- C-4 Composite Commercial
- O-1 Office
- O-2 Office - Professional
- I-1 Limited Industrial
- I-2 General Industrial
- I-3 Heavy Industrial
- PUD Planned Unit Development

3000 0 3000 6000 Feet



Prepared by: Washtenaw County
Metropolitan Planning Commission
GIS

Figure 12. Zoning - Scio Township



Scio Township General Development Plan



Figure 13. General Development Plan - Scio Township

