A black and white photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a field of tall grass. A stone wall runs across the middle ground, with a barn visible behind it. The background shows rolling hills and a line of trees under a cloudy sky.

# *Freedom Township*

*Washtenaw County,  
Michigan*

**Master Plan**

**FREEDOM TOWNSHIP PLANNING**

**COMMISSION**

**SEPTEMBER 1, 2009**

LARRY LINDEMANN, CHAIR  
PETER DELOOF, VICE CHAIR  
CAROL HUEHL, SECRETARY  
DAN SCHAIBLE, BOARD LIASON  
SUSAN OCHS

**ADOPTED BY THE**

**FREEDOM TOWNSHIP BOARD**

**OCTOBER 13, 2009**

DALE WEIDMAYER, SUPERVISOR  
JENNIFER ALEXA, CLERK  
SHIRLEY HAEUSSLER, TREASURER  
DENNIS HUEHL, TRUSTEE  
DAN SCHAIBLE, TRUSTEE

**PREVIOUS BOARD MEMBERS**

**CONTRIBUTING TO THE MASTER PLAN**

JEFF HORNING, TRUSTEE

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**RESOLUTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE FREEDOM TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the Freedom Township Planning Commission did, in accordance with the purpose and procedures specified in Act 110 of 2006, as amended, prepare a Master Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, a public hearing was held on November 6, 2008 to consider local community input regarding future development;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Freedom Township Planning Commission, on September 1, 2009, officially adopted the Freedom Township Master Plan.

Chairman   
Larry Lindemann

Secretary   
Carol Huehl

# **Introduction**

## INTRODUCTION

The character of the rural township is changing rapidly throughout southeast Michigan. Greater mobility has created developmental pressures in areas which previously were primarily held in agricultural or vacant land uses. Places long enjoyed by only a few have now taken on new dimensions. Physical amenities such as water bodies, rolling countryside, and major wooded areas have recreational potential never before realized, and are also becoming prime centers for residential development where recreation and home life may be combined.

With these and other trends in mind, Freedom Township has undertaken a planning process to prepare for these developmental pressures and, in turn, plan for that development in a manner which would most equitably benefit their community.

The process for updating the January 15, 2002 plan for Freedom Township was initiated in April 2007 by the Freedom Township Planning Commission. The process began with a review of the 2002 Plan text and background information of the Township. This included review of goals, policies, land use strategy, population forecasts, and natural features of the Township. The base information within the 2002 Plan and previously adopted amendments were reviewed to reflect the current character within the Township, and comply with current changes in planning law. Therefore, this planning process is centered upon an update of the 2002 Master Plan, adopted January 15, 2002. The review and updating this Plan has resulted in the document entitled "The Freedom Township Master Plan".

The Master Plan is a comprehensive long-range statement of policy for future growth and preservation of natural resources. It considers those elements necessary to promote public health, safety, and general welfare, and encourages the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability. The Master Plan includes policies designed to:

- < Preserve the agricultural character of Freedom Township.
- < Preserve the natural resources and sensitive lands of Freedom Township.
- < Limit unwarranted use of Freedom Township's natural resources.
- < Avoid overcrowding of land.
- < Lessen congestion on public roads.
- < Provide for recreation and other public improvement; and
- < Consider the character of Freedom Township; and its suitability for particular uses in light of past and current trends and activities.

The Master Plan is intended to direct development in a coordinated and harmonious manner and related to current and future needs and desires of the Township. The Master Plan is long-range and comprehensive in scope, firm in concept, yet flexible and adaptive to changing conditions. Further, it is the basis for decision-making on developmental proposals and the preservation of natural resources.

After adoption of the Master Plan, a major revision of the Township Zoning Ordinance and Map will be prepared to complement and reflect the conclusions of the Master Plan.



Freedom Township is uniquely situated within the productive agricultural belt of Washtenaw County, and it is this agricultural character that has been identified by the Washtenaw County Comprehensive Plan, and the Southwest Washtenaw Council of Governments Regional Plan. These regional plans generated “Agricultural Areas” maps during the visioning process, in which at least two thirds of Freedom Township lands were identified as being agriculturally active. These areas were seen as vital to the open space rural character long established in this area of the County.

The SWWCOG Regional Plan established goals to protect this character of life in May 2003. To protect these areas the SWWCOG Plan recommended land use strategies such as land conservation by sliding scale zoning, Michigan Public Act 116 Farmland Preservation Program, Transfer of Development Rights, and Purchase of Development Right programs. All of these programs are designed as long-term viable options to protect the rural agricultural way of living that dominates this part of the County.

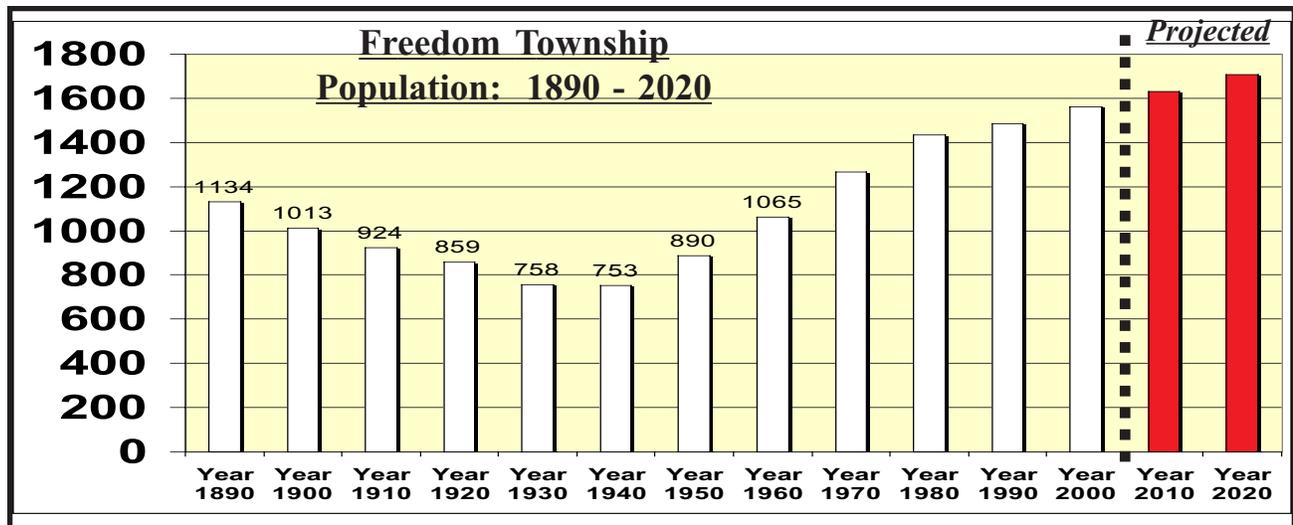
The Washtenaw County Comprehensive Plan identifies agricultural areas as an invaluable natural, economic, and aesthetic resource that should be protected. Agriculture in Washtenaw County produces a vast diversity of crops, and live-stock including, but not limited to corn, soybeans, hay, straw, fruits, and other vegetables; as well as hogs, dairy and beef cattle, sheep, equestrian activities. Within the County’s approximately 460,000 acres, some 180,000 acres are being utilized as agricultural production providing an annual income of about \$50 million dollars.

The Township’s relative location to the regional transportation network, giving arterial access to the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti urban area, and rural character, are significant locational attributes of the Township, which will make it increasingly attractive for residential development. Also the Township’s pertinent location to the City of Chelsea and Manchester Village is advantageous for residents living within the Township. This attraction must not be at the expense of the agricultural, rural character established within the community.

**Township Character**

A unique rural character is seen throughout Freedom Township. This character is made up by stable agricultural enterprises, significant natural resource areas consisting of woodlands and wetlands, and rolling topography with notable topographic features. This uniqueness has predominated over the years with little adjacent urban influence from urban areas within the region. Some of the Township’s attributes, however, may begin to serve as catalysts for accelerated growth. The close proximity to urban centers, quick access to regional transportation systems, the desirability of the rural lifestyle, and unique physical characteristics found within Freedom Township are becoming increasingly desired by homeowners.

Through meetings and discussions with Township residents, in the compilation of this GMP, numerous comments con-



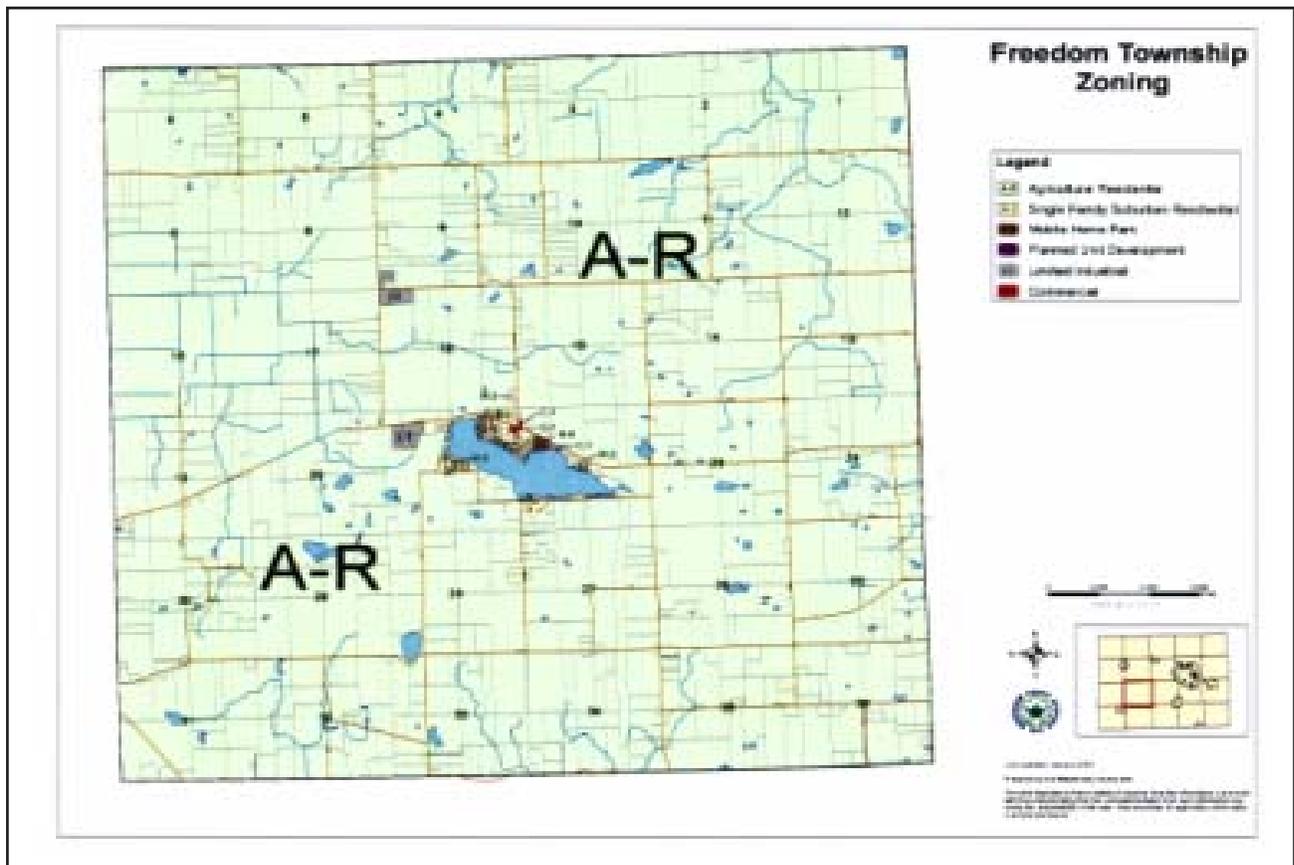
stantly focused on desirable Township attributes such as:

- < High quality farms throughout the Township.
- < Rural atmosphere, peace and quiet.
- < Presence of natural resources including forests, marsh lands, and wildlife.
- < Roads not stripped with houses.
- < Availability of various types of sports including hunting, fishing, bike riding, skiing, and hiking.

The evaluation of a communities physical characteristics, including natural resources and agricultural lands, is the foundation upon which this land use planning program is based. Recognizing the unique physical features and the role they play in the environment is the first step in preservation of these resources and formulating policies by which they can be protected and enhanced. When these resources are unprotected, misuse or total destruction can take place. Once destroyed, many of these resources can never be replaced.

This Plan recognizes specific natural resources within Freedom Township. The analysis of these resources will serve as the basis to direct land use policies to preserve natural resources for economic, quality of life, and for environmental reasons.

## Existing Land Use: 2008



# FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

## Characteristics of the Population

<u>Population</u>	<u>Freedom Township</u>			
	<u>1970</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>
Total Population	1,267	1,486	1,562	1,644
Total Households		536	561	647
Housing Units		413	612	599
Household Size	3.3	2.7	2.96	2.54
Population Increase	1990 - 1995		2.2%	
	1990 - 2000		5.1%	
	2001- 2007		5.1%	
<u>Age</u>		<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	
Under 5 years		117	95	
5 to 17 years		267	317	
18 to 20 years		56	31	
21 to 24 years		46	53	
25 to 44 years		499	547	
45 to 54 years		193	258	
55 to 59 years		53	86	
60 to 64 years		65	61	
65 to 74 years		104	81	
75 to 84 years		66	54	
85 years and over		20	11	
<u>Median age</u>		36.6	40.2	
<u>Under 18 years</u>		384		
Percent of total population	<b>1970 - 16.0%</b>			
	<b>1990 - 34.0%</b>			
	<b>2000 - 26.0%</b>			
<u>Persons Per household</u>	<b>1970 - 3.3</b>			
	<b>1990 - 2.77</b>			
	<b>2000 - 2.96</b>			
<u>65 years and over:</u> 149 Residents				
Percent of total population	<b>1970 - 16.0%</b>	<b>1990 - 12.8%</b>	<b>2000 - 9.3%</b>	

## Historical Population Growth

For over a hundred years, Freedom township has displayed little growth in terms of actual numbers of population. During this period Freedom's population increased by only 428 persons. The Township's rural location explains much of this slow increase in population and is exemplified by the increase in other units of government which adjoin Freedom. During this same period of time, Manchester Township's population increased by only 965 persons followed by Bridgewater Township with a 562 person increase and Sharon Township which experienced a decrease in actual numbers between 1890 and 1970 from 1,014 residents to 831, a loss of 183 persons. Between 1970 and 2000 Sharon Township increased 847 persons. Although Manchester Village lost population during the early 1900's, its population increased to 1,650 in 1970, 1,686 in 1980, 1,753 in 1990, and 2,160 in 2000 an increase of only 969 persons over the 100 year period.

From the turn of this century, Freedom Township's population declined steadily until 1940 when the trend was reversed. Since 1940 and through 1995, the Township's population has increased by 766 persons, from 753 to 1,519. The Township is primarily rural with the exception of the area around Pleasant Lake which has attracted a concentration of urban land uses as seen from the 1995 existing land use of Freedom Township.

The SEMCOG Regional Development Forecast indicates that Freedom Township's population will increase to 1,626 by 2010, 1,785 by 2015, and 1,785 by 2020. This would result in a population increase of 9.4 percent between 2000 and 2020. The median age for the Township in 2000 was 40.2 years old as compared to 28.5 years old in 1970. In 2000, 26.3% of the Township's population was under 18 years old compared with 34% in 1970. Also the Township's population indicated that 9.3% of the total population was 65 years old and over in 2000 compared to 16% in 1970. (See Table 2) The average number of persons per household was listed at 3.3 in 1970 and is 2.96 in 2000.

# FREEDOM TOWNSHIP

## Characteristics of the Population

### Housing - 2000

<u>Housing - 2000</u>	<u>Freedom Township</u>	<u>Washtenaw County</u>
Total Housing Units 2000	612	130,974
Owner Occupied	474	74,830
% Owner Occupied	77.0%	57.0%
Median Housing Value-2000	\$203,600	\$174,300

### Housing - 1990

<u>Housing - 1990</u>	<u>Freedom Township</u>	<u>Washtenaw County</u>
Total Housing Units 1990	536	111,256
Owner Occupied	458	57,787
% Owner Occupied	85.4%	55.28%
Median Housing Value - 1990	\$93,400	\$96,000

# Housing Unit Age

## Year Structure Built

## Number of Units

2000 to 2007	8
1991 to 1999	10
1989 to 1990	8
1985 to 1988	24
1980 to 1984	24
1970 to 1979	104
1960 to 1969	57
1950 to 1959	65
1940 to 1949	59
1939 or earlier	220

**MASTER PLAN**

# MASTER PLAN

## Principle Features

- A. The Master Plan is a strategy/policy type plan which describes the Planning Commission's strategies, and policy statements regarding future growth, development, and the preservation of natural resources within the Township. The strategies are aimed at the fundamental (strategic) issues, which the Planning Commission expects the Township to face during the foreseeable future. These basic issues are those which will have enduring effects on the Township, and which will influence the physical, social, or economic character of the Township in the years ahead. The plan is focused upon a limited number of issues so as to concentrate the Township's attention and efforts on those issues, which can truly make a difference in the Township's future
- B. Since the plan concentrates on strategies and policies it is general in nature. That is, the plan shows how the Planning Commission will respond to various issues and the approaches that will be followed. On the other hand, the plan does not prescribe or predict uses of specific parcels of land; it describes the intended use of general areas. The plan does not provide a picture or a blueprint of the Township 20 years hence and should not be interpreted in this fashion. Similarly, the plan does not state that a certain action will be taken at a future time. To give the plan either of these two characteristics would require that the Planning Commission make decisions today concerning future events, something which is impossible to do successfully and, if attempted, gives a plan an unworkable rigidity.
- C. The plan provides guidelines for the Planning Commission and Township Board to make decisions or recommendations for individual parcels of land, specific public improvements, and similar questions that might arise at various times in the future. For example, the plan will provide the framework for Planning Commission recommendations on rezoning petitions and subdivision plats to the Township Board and for Planning Commission decisions on site plans. It is not the intent of the plan that the designation of any area for a specific use entitles a property owner within that area to an immediate zoning change consistent with the use designation. Neither does it mean that certain supporting uses are not to be permitted in any particular area. In both cases, the decision will be made on a case by case basis at the time the question arises and within the context of the plan. The plan will be amended if the analysis involved in the decision indicates that a change is appropriate.
- D. The plan presents major issues, strategies, and policies regarding future land use and facilities. The data and analysis on which the plan is based has been presented in a series of working papers which were discussed prior to preparation and adoption of the plan.
- E. The plan is an overall guide for decisions, and is based on the fact that the future is uncertain and cannot be predicted; that current perceptions of future conditions will change. The major issues will change over time, and strategies and policies appropriate to respond to them will have to be modified or replaced with new ones. As such, the Planning Commission intends to periodically refine, add to, or otherwise modify the plan as events unfold. Refinement may be in the form of restating, deleting, or adding to the issues, strategies, goals, or policies set forth in the Plan. It may also be in the form of detailed policies for specific areas of the Township. These changes might result from analysis of a specific development proposal (such as a rezoning petition), a capital improvement proposal by the Township or other government, a periodic review of the plan by the Planning Commission, or from a detailed study of a part of the township by the Planning Commission. This approach can be viewed as a series of successive attempts to adapt the plan as well as the planning process to changing conditions.

## Concept

Even though Freedom Township is primarily rural, it has a community focus point around Pleasant Lake. In addition to considerable residential development, this area also has local commercial uses and public uses such as the Township Hall. The concept behind the preparation of the Freedom Township Master Plan is to emphasize this area and center controlled growth within this area. The basic policy throughout the Master Plan is to discourage scattered growth from occurring elsewhere within the Township. In essence the Plan creates a single neighborhood for the non-farm residents which also provides for local commercial and public uses required by other Township residents.

## **Plan Elements**

The Master Plan for Freedom Township contains five (5) land use classifications: Low-Density Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Lake District, and Agricultural. Each element within the Master Plan is based upon a series of goals and policies for the physical development of the Township that relates to sound planning principles and strives towards the creation of a balanced and stable living environment.

Using the Plan as a statement of Township policy, development can take place in an organized and constructive fashion even though no rigid timetable has been established within which staging of such development should take place. Therefore, the Master Plan establishes where and how such developmental activity should occur and the way in which they relate to one another.

The Master Plan should be distinguished from a zoning map. The Plan represents the Township's long-range policy (15 to 20 years) regarding future growth, whereas a zoning map is a legal document which utilizes property lines to depict short-range (1 to 5 years) legal designations of land use. The Plan should serve as a foundation upon which zoning decisions are made and provide major input to the decision-making process regarding future development proposals.

## **General Master Plan Goals**

The intent of a Master Plan is to insure that the community develops in a manner consistent with the desires of its residents, thus it is necessary to prepare a list of goals and policies which define the Township requisites. In addition to the general goals, specific policies are expressed in the Master Plan which are also discussed herein.

The following goals were used as a guide in the preparation of the Freedom Township Growth Management Plan.

- Protect and promote the health, safety, comfort, convenience and general welfare of the general public.
- Create an environment, which maintains a more meaningful life, protects the interests of the individual and the total community.
- Maintain the rural, natural, and scenic qualities of the Township of Freedom by preserving farmland and significant open lands, promoting healthful surroundings for family life, while also providing for the needs of recreation, residence, commerce, and industry in future growth.
- Establish guidelines for realistic and orderly development for those living and working in the Township, recognizing the character of the Township, the needs and desires of its citizens, the capabilities of its natural resources, and the anticipated pressures of its population growth and land development.
- Provide a sound basis for public and private decision making regarding the Township's development.
- Plan for a transportation network, which provides safe, efficient and convenient movement of private and commercial traffic throughout the Township.
- Encourage the efficient use of land and water resources in accordance with their character and ability, the preservation and enhancement of scenic and aesthetic features of the Township, and the prohibition of any developments that seriously contaminate, pollute or erode the natural resources of the Township.
- Define a land use pattern which recognizes the compatibility between and balance among land use activities, anticipates the future demand and amount of land needed for each land use activity, identifies the most desirable location for each type of land use activity which permits efficient operations and future expansion, and enhances the environmental quality as well as the tax base of the community.

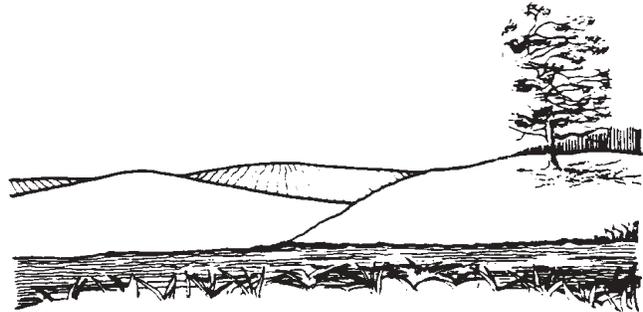
- Identify an implementation plan that allows the day-to-day attainment of goals, through milestones or policy statements, that address the long-range strategies set forth by this plan.
- Define a Plan Monitoring Program, which insures the continual maintenance needed to ensure compliance with the long-range vision for the Township.

**ELEMENTS  
OF THE  
MASTER PLAN**

## **Natural Features**

### **Goal:**

**The preservation of existing natural features including wetlands, flood plains, woodlands, topographic features and the protection of the quality of surface and ground water for the enhancement of the quality of the natural environment.**



### **Background**

Freedom Township is distinguished by varied natural features throughout the Township. From its woodlands, wetlands, and topographic features, it offers diversity that can be appreciated within the rural setting. Natural features such as lakes, wooded area, marshland and significant topographical features play an important role in determining the character of Freedom Township. As one of the major elements of the Master Plan, the recreation and open space system identifies and establishes the proper use of these areas and strengthens the total Plan concept.

The natural resources described in the Plan as open space areas are intended only to illustrate the concept of the open space or natural resource systems in the Township. These areas are not intended to be specific for any one site. The actual extent, location, and relationship to existing and proposed development will be determined at the time of development review when detailed information will be available.

The Plan relates to a natural resource system that has been developed around significant natural features, major wooded areas, soils with severe limitations for residential development and a network of existing County drains. Natural resource areas, therefore, are of extreme importance to a growing community and serve as a reminder of man's relationship to his natural environment. Following is the location, extent, and characteristics of these and other natural features.

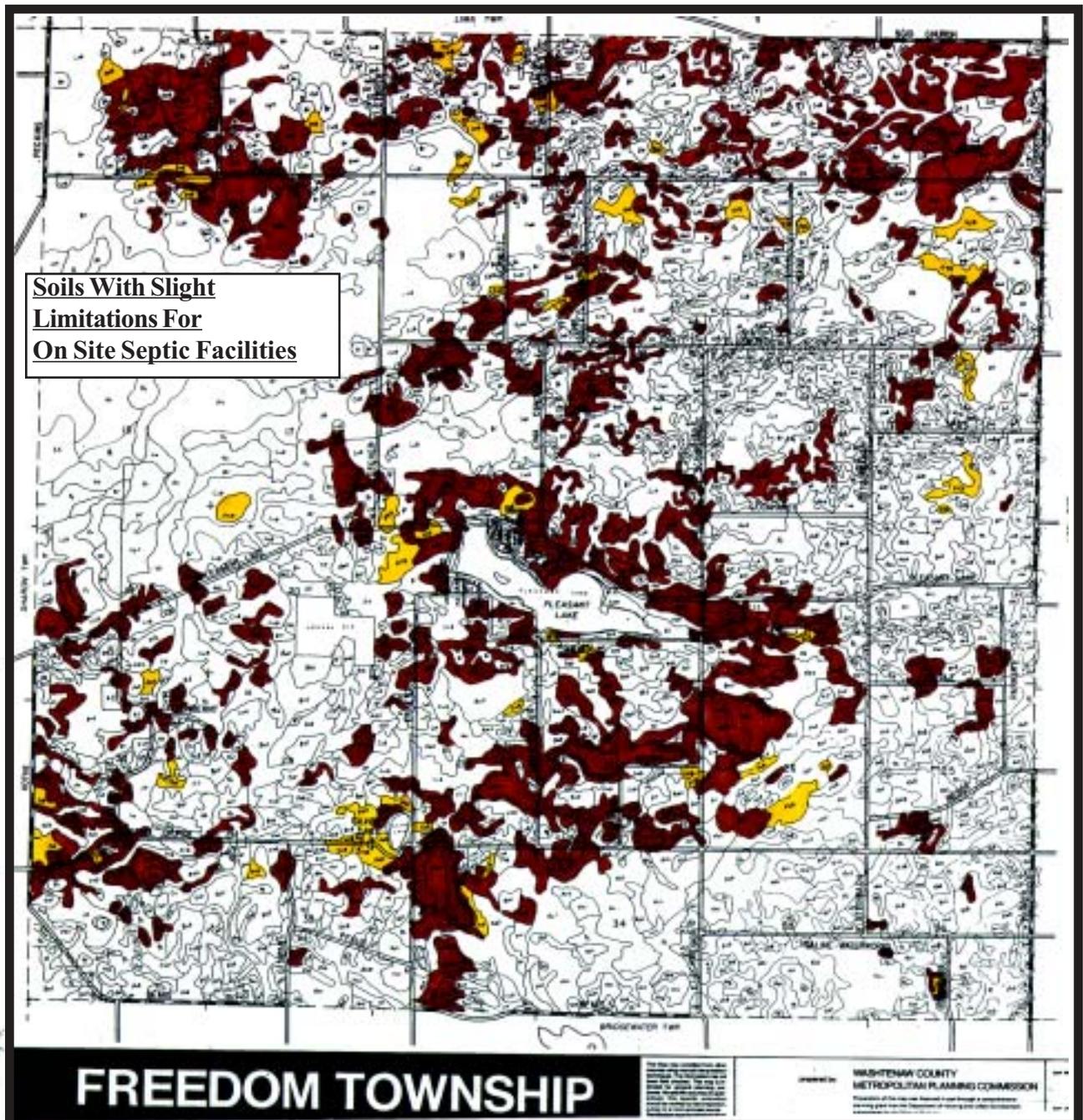
### **Natural Features and Soil Patterns**

Freedom Township is fortunate to have considerable rolling countryside much of which is wooded. Pleasant Lake, with its 210 acres of water surface, is the central focus for the Township. The eastern portion of Pleasant Lake is a marshy lowland which derives its character through drainage to Pleasant Lake from the surrounding area.

Freedom Township is located in an area without accessibility to existing public sewer and water facilities; therefore, it was critical in the formulation of the Township's Master Plan to thoroughly investigate existing soil conditions. Using the most current soil survey of the Township, conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service (SCS), as a base, an analysis of agricultural and residential capability was conducted. It should be noted that the SCS survey is based on a sample taken to a depth of approximately five feet, and thus does not reflect the soil conditions below this depth. However, it may be used with confidence in determining agriculture capability and as a general indication of soils capable of supporting on-site sewerage systems. An outcome of that analysis indicates that a substantial portion of the soil in the township depicts severe or very severe limitations for residential development. The soil pattern is scattered with the major areas of soils with few or moderate limitations for residential development being located in three general areas.

These areas are located in the northern portion of the Township, the area surrounding Pleasant Lake and extending south toward Bridgewater Township, and an area in the southwest quadrant of the Township. A generalized map of residential capability is found on the accompanying map.

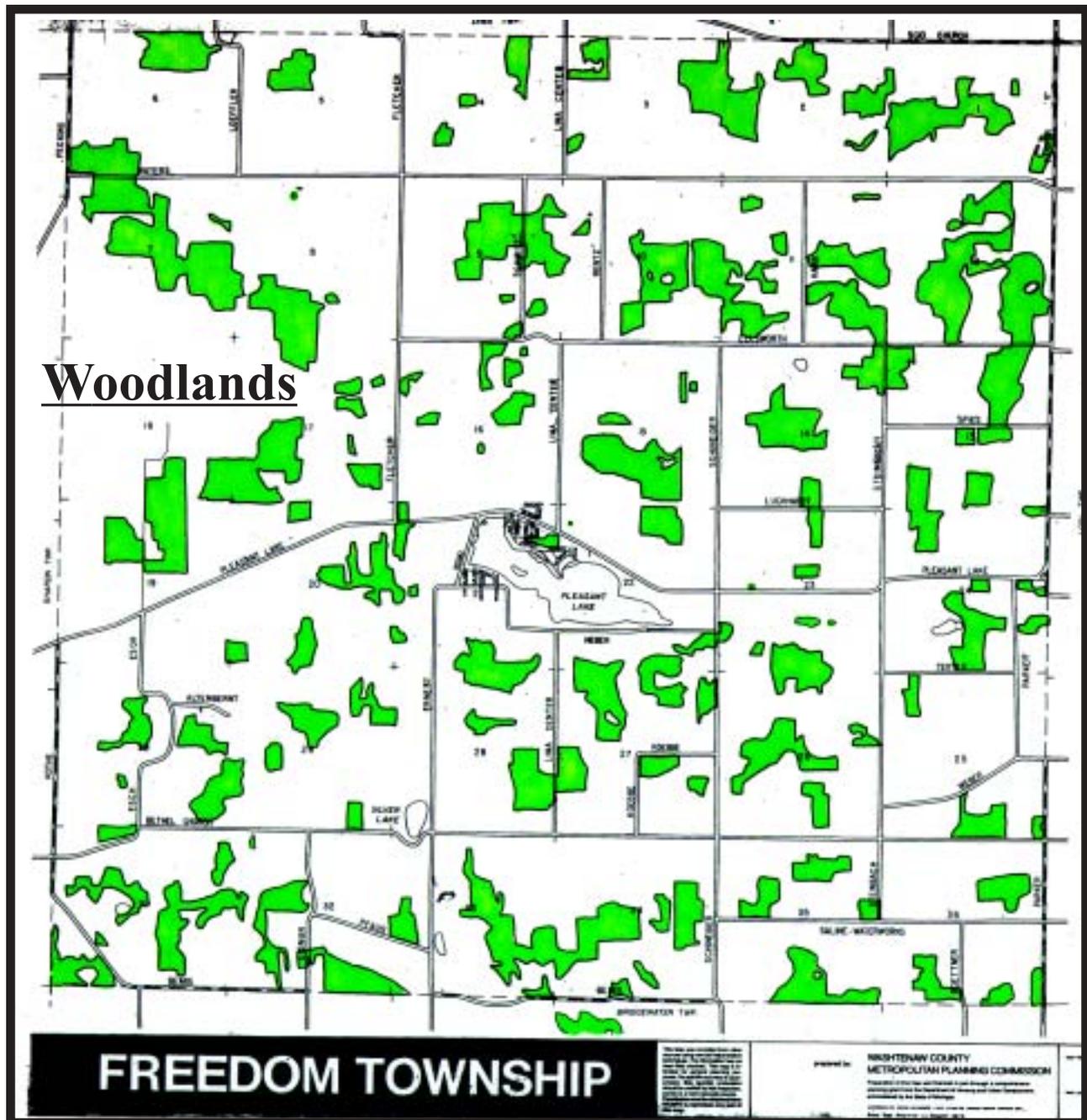
## Freedom Township Soil Suitability for On-Site Septic



## Woodlands

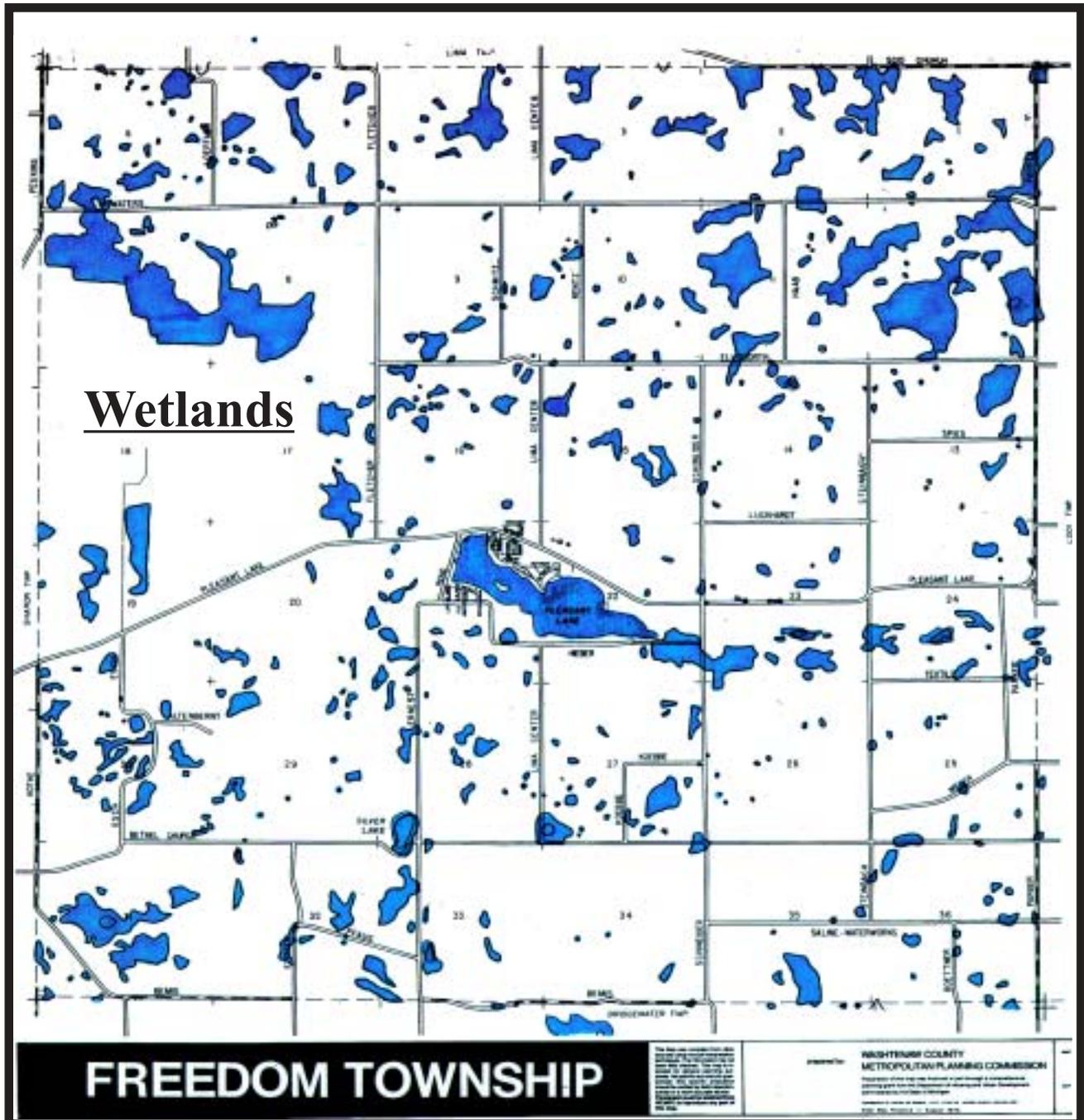
Approximately 14% (22,659 acres) of Freedom Township's total land area is presently woodland. There are a total of 78 separate woodlots within the Township. Nine of these woodlands are 5-10 acres in size, two are 11-40 acres in size and 27 have 40 or more acres. Areas defined as woodlands refer to lands that are at least 10% stocked by trees capable of producing timber or other wood products. The majority of the woodlots are 40 acres or more in size. Woodlots of this size can support various types of wildlife and can act as a community within themselves.

Significant woodlands are dispersed throughout Freedom Township. Woodlands are depicted on the following Map.



## Wetlands

Wetlands were mapped using U.S. Geological Survey Quadrangles and then compared with aerial photographs. The Washtenaw County Metropolitan Planning Commission then developed a generalized classification system. The most important wetlands were those that are contiguous to lakes, rivers, and streams, and that are important for stormwater storage. These wetlands, designated as “first priority” by Washtenaw County are shown on the accompanying map, and shown in various locations throughout Freedom Township. Significant concentrations, of “first priority” wetlands are located in the northeast and southwestern portions of the Township.



## Topography

Within Freedom Township, slopes range from relatively flat to gently rolling hills and to areas that exceed 18% slope. As can be seen from the accompanying map, slopes ranging from 6 to 12 percent predominate the south eastern portion of the Township and are also scattered throughout the north eastern portion of the Township. Land in the north west and central areas of the Township are relatively flat and have significant ongoing agricultural activities. Slopes ranging from 12 to 18 percent are in the south west and north east parts of the Township and are also shown on accompanying Map. Steeper slopes of over 18% are generally found in the south west portions of the Township.

To maintain the rural, natural and scenic qualities of the Township of Freedom, potential development should be regulated

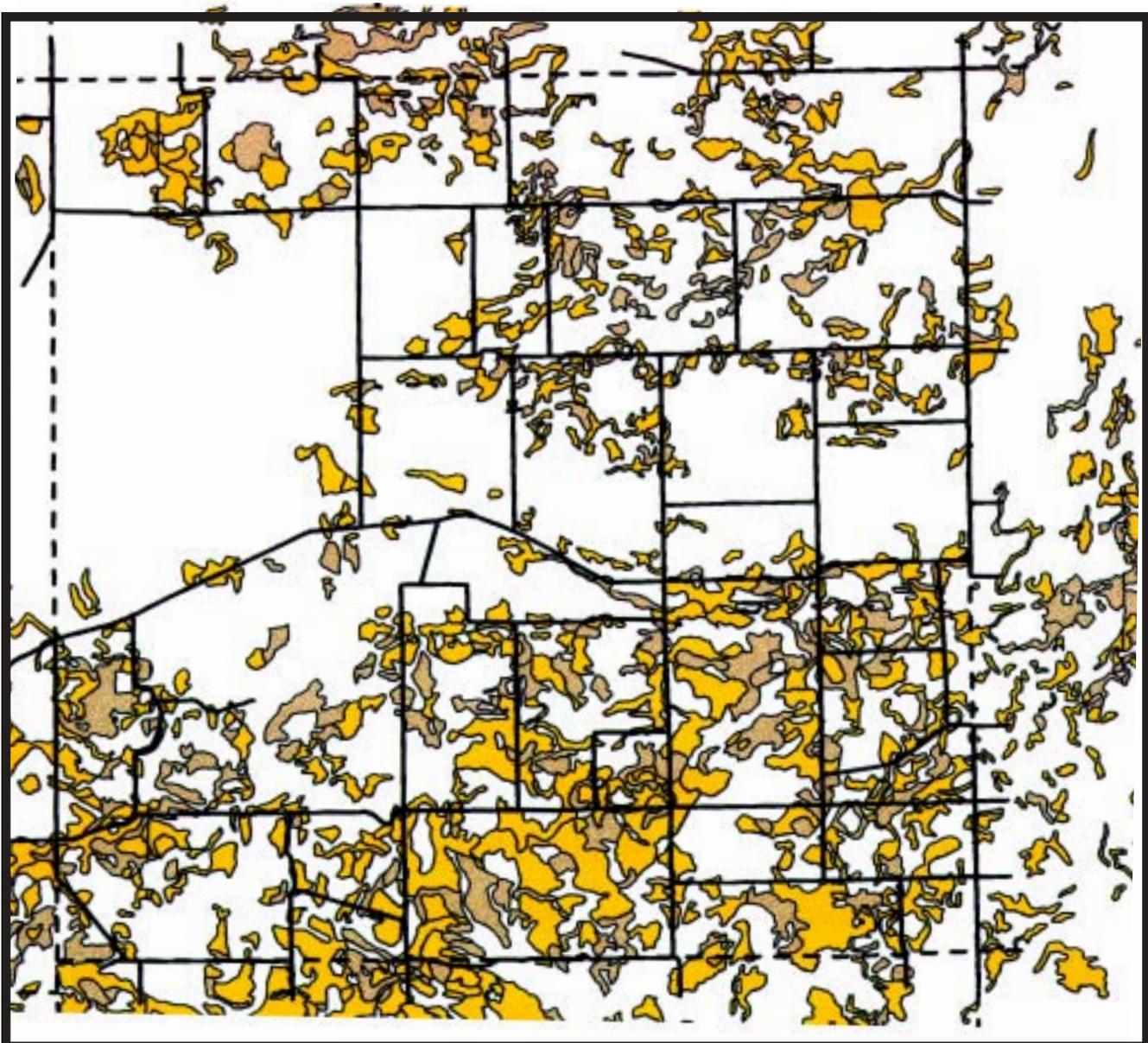
## Percent Slope



6% To 12% Slope



12% To 18% Slope



to promote the preservation of natural features. Significant wildlife habitats, sensitive environmental lands and scenic vistas are to be protected. The significant natural resources within Freedom Township including stream corridors, wetlands (including wet and organic soils), ground water recharge areas, flood plains, watersheds, woodlands, and slopes (primarily steep slope areas, in the range of 12-18% and over), are to be reviewed according to the following policies:

**To accomplish the preservation of natural features within Freedom Township, the following policies are set forth for future development.**

- A. The natural features described in the document as open space areas are intended only to illustrate the concept of the open space or natural feature systems and to indicate the general location of such features in the Township. These areas are not intended to be specific for any one site. The actual extent, location, and relationship to existing and proposed development will be determined at the time of development review when detailed information will be available.
- B. It is the intent of this Plan to achieve continuity of the natural features to create systems of open space. This will be accomplished by utilizing proximity as well as contiguity of natural features, as in a stream corridor, in order to achieve a true system. Such an open space system may be any combination of natural features.
- C. Streams, water bodies, and wetlands should be used as part of the storm drainage systems of the Township. These features should be protected from disturbance by construction and from pollutants and sediments which might be carried by runoff from developing or developed areas. It is the intent of this Plan to protect surface water, stream corridors, and wetlands in their natural condition.
- D. Natural features should be used to create boundaries of use areas or to separate development areas from agricultural areas.
- E. To provide for the protection of the Township of Freedom's potable fresh water supplies from the dangers of drought, overdraft, contamination or mismanagement.
- F. Attractive natural streetscapes along all Township roads and streets shall be maintained to continue to promote the rural visual character of Freedom Township.
- G. The use of planned unit development and cluster developments shall be encouraged to establish permanent easements for open space or agricultural use on common lands and to protect designated natural features within environmentally sensitive areas.
- H. Use new data and community input to prioritize these resources and designate areas of special concern, which are subject to more stringent development regulations.
- I. Partner with local land trusts and other organizations to acquire conservation easements to protect sensitive natural features.
- J. A Natural Feature Setback shall be established for new developments to minimize the encroachment danger to sensitive natural resources identified by Freedom Township, Washtenaw County, or the State of Michigan.

# Agriculture

## Goal:

**The retention, stability, and conservation of agricultural activities in Freedom Township for the support of long term agricultural use and preservation of prime agricultural soils.**



A major concern in the formulation of a Master Plan for Freedom Township is the preservation of the Township's agricultural character. Freedom Township is an active and productive agricultural community and all efforts should be made to encourage its continuance. Conflicts between urban and rural uses should be avoided wherever possible.

Prime agricultural land is a vital natural resource that has to be accurately identified and protected from non-agricultural land uses. It has to be recognized that good agricultural land is irreplaceable and that once this land is developed into housing, commercial, or industrial uses, it is lost to farm use forever.

Virtually all sections within the Township are orientated toward agricultural activities. The following characteristics are common:

1. The quality of soils support the existing agricultural activities.
2. Few non- agricultural land use infringements have taken place.
3. The area has remained stable with few parcel splits taking place.
4. Parcel sizes are generally large enough to support long term agricultural operations.

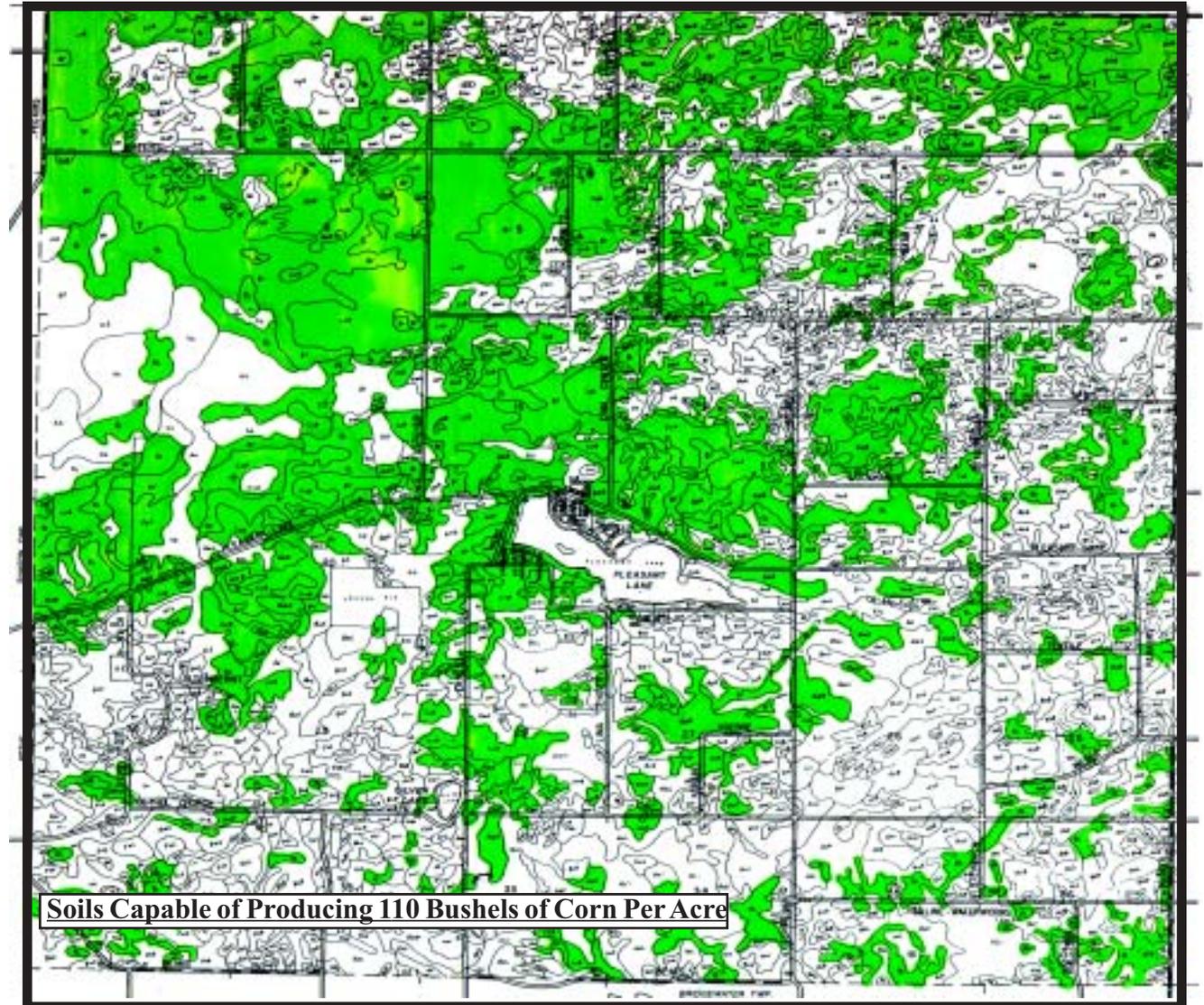
As seen in the accompanying chart, agriculture comprised over 60% of the land use within Freedom Township. This is followed by the category of woodlands, shrub, grassland, and wetlands which amounts to 33% of the Township land area. Together these categories comprise almost 95% of the Township's land area.

### LAND USE 2000

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Single Family Residential	1,122	5%
Commercial and Office	2	0%
Institutional	14	0%
Industrial	23	0%
Transportation, Communications, Utilities	26	0%
Cultivated Land	14, 810	65%
Woodlands, shrub, grassland, wetlands	5,769	25%
Water	392	2%
Barren, Extractive	442	2%
Cultural, outdoor recreation and cemetery	142	1%
<u>Total Acres</u>	<u>22,742</u>	<u>100%</u>

Stable and cohesive agricultural areas exist throughout Freedom Township. The Township's agricultural lands have been relatively free from intrusion by incompatible land uses. The following map depicts agricultural lands that are capable of producing over 110 bushels of corn per acre. These lands are considered the best agricultural lands within Freedom Township for agricultural production.

The number of farms that participate in PA 116 is also high for the Township. Ninety-one applications have been submitted for this State program amounting to 13,410.03 acres.



**Agricultural Lands** - Freedom Township contains land which is suitable for long-term agricultural uses. Agricultural service activities and establishments, such as farm equipment sales and services, grain storage, and feed and fertilizer sales as well as the production of various crops, livestock, and dairy products are anticipated agricultural uses.

It is understood, however, that a limited number of rural dwellings could be permitted in the agricultural areas under the following criteria:

- A. As farmsteads, one dwelling per farm for occupancy by the family of the owner or the manager.

- B. As tenant dwellings for families of tenant workers on the farm.
- C. According to the “Sliding Scale” zoning concept.
- D. Subject to rezoning to a rural residential district and the following criteria:
  - 1. The land should be located on an existing public road.
  - 2. The land should not have been farmed in recent years.
  - 3. The land, if developed with rural residences, should not interfere with the continuity of agricultural operations in the area.

Residential use should not be considered a principal land use within agricultural area because it will undermine the stability of long-term agricultural production.

**To accomplish the preservation of agricultural activities within Freedom Township, the following policies are set forth.**

- A. Potential development within Freedom Township will be directed away from areas designated for agricultural use.
- B. Zoning changes in the areas designated as Agricultural lands should not be approved except in the case of requests to cover existing concentrations of rural dwellings, to fill in vacant parcels within such concentrations, or to permit expansion of such areas necessary to reach reasonable, natural boundaries so long as such expansion does not interfere with agricultural production. The criteria set forth above could be applied. A specific zoning district (cluster concept) designed for rural dwelling units in such situations should be encouraged.
- C. Agricultural land should be preserved primarily by means of zoning controls, (sliding scale, cluster concepts) supplemented by the Township’s capital improvement decisions and Act 116 approvals. While there are serious limitations to the effectiveness of this approach, these are the only reasonable available means until the State or Federal governments develop additional policies and programs for preserving agricultural land.
- D. Encourage the use of assessment policies which reflect the agricultural value of land in agricultural use by designating farmed parcels in the agricultural land classification.
- E. Act 116 applications for lands within the designated Agricultural areas should be approved.
- F. Allow agri-business activities (such as agricultural processing, hobby farms, u-pick business) in agricultural zoning districts to add value to the products generated within the Township.
- G. In new development areas adjacent to agricultural lands, a buffer of land and landscaping should be provided on the non-agricultural lands, along the common boundary. Existing natural features, such as fence rows on development land could be used to provide the needed buffering. Also buffering along highways should be stressed to enhance the visual character of rural areas.

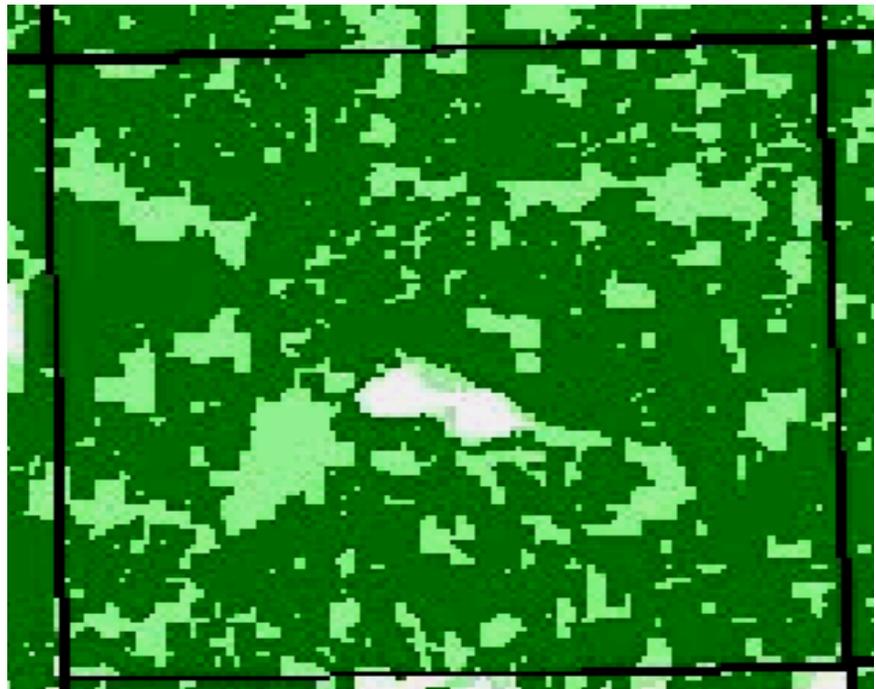
In recognition of the Freedom Township’s agricultural heritage, the “agriculture preservation” area was selected in a manner: (PDR Compliance Section)

- 1. To be non-exclusionary for potential interest by landowners in a PDR option;
- 2. Where the township demographics indicate the lands contained inside the preservation overlay district provide the most potential for on-going or new agriculture activities;
- 3. To recognize that lands contained within the preservation overlay district are highly sought-after tracts for development; and

4. To underscore continuity with adjoining communities which have also designated “agriculture preservation” goals.

### Agricultural Preservation Map

-  Agricultural Lands
-  Pleasant Lake
-  Natural Features



**To accomplish the preservation of agricultural activities within Freedom Township, the following Purchase of Development Rights policies are set forth.**

- A. Potential development within Freedom Township will be directed away from areas designated for agricultural use.
- B. Zoning changes in the areas designated as Agricultural lands should not be approved except in the case of requests to cover existing concentrations of rural dwellings, to fill in vacant parcels within such concentrations, or to permit expansion of such areas necessary to reach reasonable, natural boundaries so long as such expansion does not interfere with agricultural production. The criteria set forth above could be applied. A specific zoning district (cluster concept) designed for rural dwelling units in such situations should be encouraged.
- C. Agricultural land should be preserved primarily by means of zoning controls, (sliding scale, cluster concepts) supplemented by the Township’s capital improvement decisions and Act 116 approvals. While there are serious limitations to the effectiveness of this approach, these are the only reasonable available means until the State or Federal governments develop additional policies and programs for preserving agricultural land. Also in consideration of the desire to preserve, continue or establish agricultural activities within the township, an agriculture preservation overlay district has been identified.
- D. Encourage the use of assessment policies, which reflect the agricultural value of land in agricultural use by designating farmed parcels in the agricultural land classification.

- E.** Act 116 applications for lands within the designated Primary Agricultural areas should be approved with PDR (Purchase Development Rights), PUD (Planned Unit Development), and other open space preservation options. Such applications for lands within the Secondary Agricultural areas should also be approved if the land in question will not be needed for development, or if water and sanitary sewer services will not be extended into the area, within the contract period.
- F.** Allow agri-business activities (such as agricultural processing, hobby farms, u-pick business) in agricultural zoning districts to add value to the products generated within the Township.
- G.** In new development areas adjacent to agricultural lands, a buffer of land and landscaping should be provided on the non-agricultural lands, along the common boundary. Existing natural features, on development land could be used to provide the needed buffering. Also buffering along highways should be stressed to enhance the visual character of rural areas.

## **RESIDENTIAL**

### **GOAL:**

**Residential development will be provided and located within desirable residential settings, that are sensitive to the environment, to ensure a maximum choice of dwelling units within the Township.**



The GMP depicts one category of residential development. The areas shown for this use have adequate soil percolation capability to support required on-site sewage treatment facilities. This classification comprises approximately 420 acres of land and is clustered around Pleasant Lake and on Schneider road south of Pleasant Lake Road. Two additional areas are also designated for long term single family residential use. These areas comprise:

1. The Barrett Land holdings, located south of Pleasant Lake Road and west of Pleasant Lake, that is currently being used as an extraction operation.
2. The Stone Co, American Aggregates, and Burmeister lands, currently being used as an extraction operation, located east of Kothe Road and south of Pleasant Lake Road.

The reasons for the location of Low-Density Residential development in these areas are:

1. The soils are of sufficient capability to support year round on-site sewage systems.
2. The location of existing development in the Pleasant Lake area.
3. The long range development plans for the Barrett and Stone Co lands which are designated for single family residential.

Density within the above identified areas shall not be greater than a net density of one dwelling unit per acre. Freedom Township hall and local commercial activity warrants increased concentration of residential development to further strengthen the neighborhood community concept.

Newly developed low-density residential areas in this document should, where possible, take the form of subdivision cluster development with internal road networks. This will increase the economical use of land and minimize hazardous curb-cuts along major thoroughfares. Adequate rights-of-way should be provided for such roads to insure sufficient space for public utilities and road maintenance.

**To accomplish the Residential Goal as presented within this Plan, the following policies are set forth. These policies refer to all residential growth, including concentrated developments, such as subdivisions and site condominiums. The policy does not include scattered, rural non-farm or farm housing.**

- A. A variety of housing types are located within desirable residential settings, to ensure a maximum choice of dwelling units and a mix of population within the Township.

- B.** Residential development shall be directed away from the Township agricultural lands. The Township's Sliding Scale Zoning Concept should be maintained to ensure long term agricultural use without residential infiltration.
- C.** Land capacity shall be considered when determining the appropriate density of development. The density shall be established at a level that will neither damage environmental features nor intrude upon agricultural lands. Residential development shall be organized around natural features or recreational amenities, and site and architectural design that will create neighborhoods of lasting value and stability shall be encouraged.
- D.** Dwelling units shall be placed on portions of the site most suited to development in order to preserve natural features. Measures that protect the environment during and after development shall be instituted and implemented.
- E.** New residential development shall be compatible in density and character with existing residences and neighborhoods in the immediate area.
- F.** In order to emphasize the rural character of Freedom Township and to permit property owners to utilize the allotted residential density, clustering of dwelling units on small parcels will be encouraged. The remaining land in the total parcel would be held in common ownership; it could remain as open space or be used for agricultural purposes. Clustering of rural residences will be permitted in accordance with the following:
  - 1. All residential development that occurs at a density of 1 dwelling unit or more per acre, and that consists of 20 net acres or greater, shall be developed under a planned unit development, cluster residential, or similar zone, thereby providing its own open space and recreational facilities. The minimum lot area should be the minimum necessary to obtain County Health Department approval of a water supply well and drain field. This type of development should be allowed as an overlay zone for Medium Density Agriculture/ Residential.
  - 2. Clustering shall maintain an overall site density in order to provide permanent open space for recreational or environmental conservation use. Each lot for each dwelling unit should have at least one lot line that abuts the commonly owned open space or agricultural land.
  - 3. Comprehensive pedestrian circulation systems shall be included;
  - 4. Residential development shall be organized around focal points such as open spaces, lakes, or village greens; and
  - 5. Open space buffers shall be required from adjacent suburban, rural, or agricultural land uses.
- G.** Residential development should be organized away from major streets, with no direct dwelling unit access to such streets.
- H.** A high quality of site and architectural design should be encouraged in every residential development to create residential areas of lasting value and stability.
- I.** Residential areas are designated in terms of density. In terms of calculating density for specific parcels, the following shall be excluded from the total acreage used in calculating the density of dwelling units:
  - 1. Existing rights-of-way and easements.
  - 2. Rights-of-way or easements of proposed local and collector streets.
  - 3. Flood plains, swamps, and other wetlands, and stream corridors.
  - 4. Lands to be purchased for public use.

## Lake District



### History

The Fredonia Pleasant Lake Area is established in recognition of its historic development as well as the symbolic and geographic center of Freedom Township. This district serves residents and non-residents with a township hall, a small general store, veterinary clinic and the Pleasant Lake Inn. The schools, hardware store, gas station, bank, post office and saw mill remain only as historical footnotes. Connected to the Pleasant Lake Inn is an apartment building and a manufactured home park offer along with residential dwellings, once used as seasonal cabins or weekend destinations, but now serve as year-around homes give this area a variety of living options. Agricultural activities can still be found in the district.

### Character

The Pleasant Lake Area remains the focal point of Freedom Township and contains the highest density of residential land uses within the township. This plan recognizes the importance of the 210 acre lake as it serves the residential community with its scenic beauty, its recreational opportunities and its source of water. The high residential density not only benefits from the lake but is also a major threat as septic field leaching, storm water degradation, sediment discharge, and shoreline erosion result from the resident's actions. Beyond the Lake District boundaries lie the lake watershed with its complex, interacting and ecologically diverse marshes and lands with flora and fauna important to the area. In addition the water flowing slowly to the lake is important for farmland and extremely important to the water quality of the lake which is fed by rain fall and natural springs.

### Sustainability

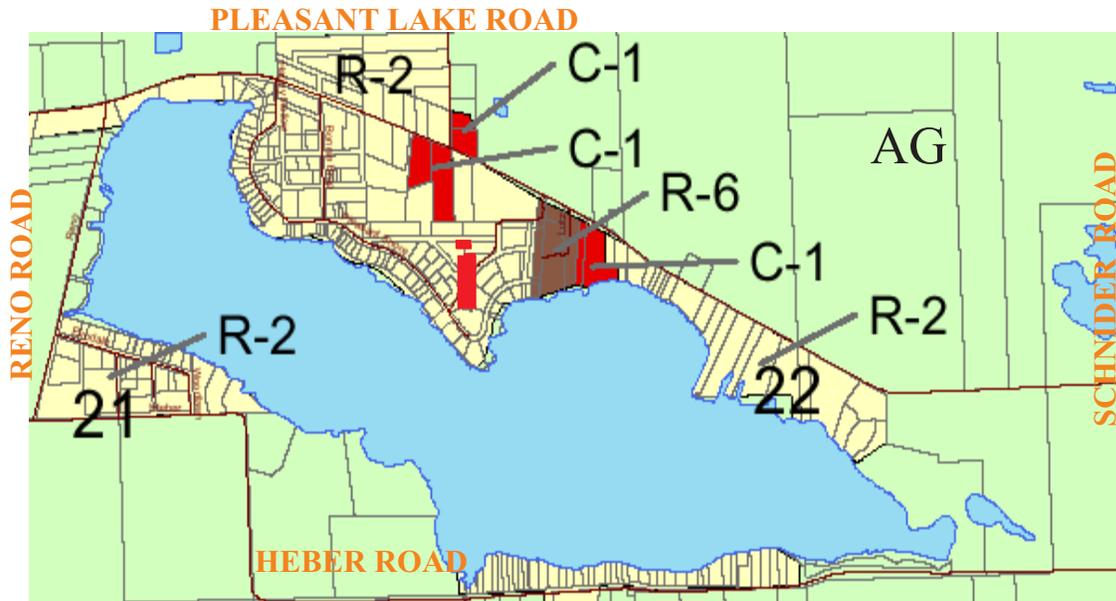
The combination of sustainable land uses in the Lake District is key to the long-term protection of the lake community. A balance will have to be achieved by allowing densities and land uses that do not put additional environmental pressure on the lake community. The basic residential density for the lake community shall be limited to Low Density Residential. Residential development should be contained to lake frontage and compliant with regulations controlling septic, well, and storm water.

### Development

Commercial Development within the Lake Area shall be focused along Pleasant Lake Road and not be on lands with lake access. The development of commercial within the district should be limited to match the character and scale of the existing land uses within the Lake Area.

Zoning Considerations

The defined Lake District may require continued refinements for yard setbacks, outdoor lighting, fencing, accessory buildings, parking, and aesthetic requirements to ensure the continued enjoyment for the Lake Residents. Future Development of multi-lot residential or non-residential development within the Lake District will be presented as part of a Planned Unit Development. Such regulations will ensure that the environmental concerns of a lake community, scale, and land use densities are protected and serve the long-term benefits of the Pleasant Lake Community.



Lake District Boundaries

The boundaries of the Lake District shall be defined by the inner area created by the four roads that surround Pleasant Lake. This area is West of Schnider Road, South of Pleasant Lake Road, East of Reno Road, and North of Heber Road.

## **COMMERCIAL**

### **GOAL:**

**Commercial land uses within the Township consist of local uses and shall be established to serve the needs of Township residents and integrated with surrounding land uses. Only limited amounts of commercial development will be needed for Freedom Township within the scope of this Master Plan.**



As shown in the Plan, a single concentration of local commercial activity is proposed in the general proximity of Pleasant Lake Road and Lima Center Road. The primary function of this classification is to serve residential development in the general area as well as nearby rural residents.

Existing major commercial centers in adjacent communities provide the primary commercial services to Township residents. It is not likely that significant commercial development within the Township could challenge the market dominance of existing adjacent commercial developments. It is for these reasons that large scale commercial development should be placed in adjacent communities.

The location of local commercial activity provides an important element in strengthening the neighborhood community center concepts in Freedom Township. Residents of existing and planned residential units in the area have ease of access to stores which meet their daily needs. Further, a high degree of interaction is attained between schools, commercial services, public services, public facilities and residents of the area. The Plan indicates that commercial activities are to be discouraged from locating elsewhere in the Township.

**To accomplish the Commercial Goal as presented within this Plan, the following policies are set forth.**

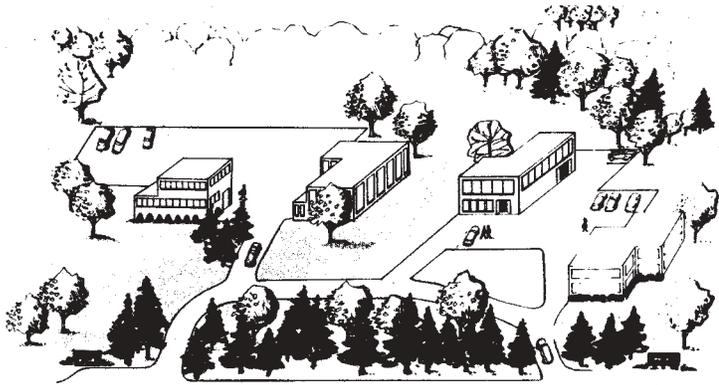
- A. Commercial shall be organized into compact, unified centers that complement the scale and character of existing development or that promote the desired character for areas where new development is planned. The intensity of commercial growth shall remain local in scale, because of the regional dominance of large-scale commercial development.
- B. Piecemeal or scattered development shall be avoided and uncoordinated commercial strip development shall be prohibited. Where individual parcels of land are to be developed for commercial uses, coordination with adjacent properties, including common parking and driveways, shall be encouraged in order to reduce the number of access points onto Pleasant Lake Road.
- C. Commercial uses shall be landscaped and, where necessary, should be screened by landscaping from adjacent residential areas to reduce heat and glare from pavement areas, to partially screen parking areas from view, to control noise, and to increase the attractiveness of such centers.
- D. Exterior lighting shall be located and maintained to prevent the reflection and glare of light in a manner which creates a nuisance or safety hazard to operators of motor vehicles, pedestrians, and neighboring land uses. This provision is not intended to apply to public street lighting.

- E.** Commercial land uses are intended to reflect the character of and are integrated with adjoining residential areas.
- F.** Where appropriate, commercial, office, and residential components should be coordinated within Planned Unit Development zoning so as to create a diverse, pedestrian oriented environment.
- G.** Large-scale big box stores shall be discouraged because of the regional influence of the Village of Manchester and Ann Arbor. High scale density commercial development or General Commercial Development shall be permitted only in those locations that have the public infrastructure to accommodate the intensity of this use. The Township identifies these areas within the region but not within the Township. This strategy is supported by the Southwest Washtenaw Council of Governments Comprehensive Growth Plan (2003).

## **INDUSTRIAL**

### **GOAL:**

**Specific areas within Freedom Township should be utilized as industrial centers which can be integrated with surrounding land uses and not create hazards for the Township's environment nor create adverse impacts on existing or proposed residential or agricultural uses.**



The Plan shows industrial areas within the Township, both of which presently exist. One is located immediately west of Pleasant Lake, while the other is located at the intersection of Ellsworth and Fletcher Roads. Both are locations of utility complexes. By indicating these in the Plan, the Township has expressed the desire to allow these two uses to exist and expand moderately, while discouraging other industrial activities from locating elsewhere in the Township.

Industrial needs of Township residents area currently adequately served by the existing industrial centers within the Township and by centers in surrounding communities. No basic or large scale manufacturing or processing operations should be permitted in the Township.

**To accomplish the Industrial Goal as presented within this Plan, the following policies are set forth.**

- A.** Natural features located on Industrial lands shall be preserved and shall be integrated into the site design.
- B.** Industrial areas shall be located only in areas of the Township where adverse impacts on existing or proposed residential or agricultural areas will be avoided.
- C.** Exterior lighting shall be located and maintained to prevent the reflection and glare of light in a manner which creates a nuisance or safety hazard to operators of motor vehicles, pedestrians, and neighboring land uses. This provision is not intended to apply to public street lighting.
- D.** Expansion of industrial centers should have a campus-type setting, a low density of development with large open spaces and extensive landscaping. Existing natural features should be preserved and incorporated into development plans.

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## GOAL:

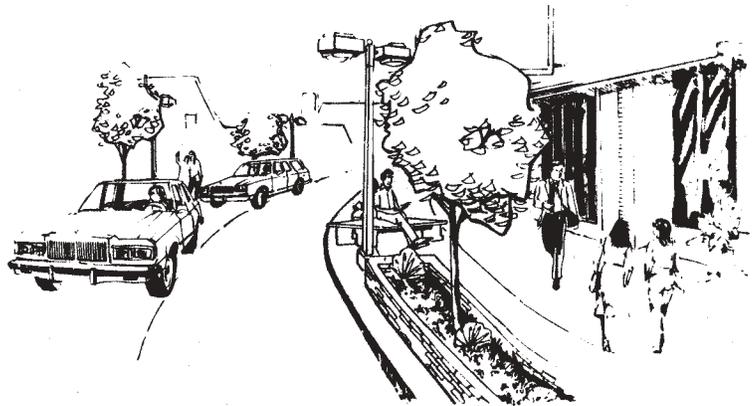
**Allow various types of community facilities that are necessary for various types of development within Freedom Township. To accomplish this goal the following policies are set forth regarding drainage facilities:**

- A.** Private community sanitary sewage treatment systems shall not be permitted within the Township. Any properties permitted to develop with on-site services in any designated sewer service areas should be required to connect with public sewer lines when they become available.
- B.** Storm drainage shall be included when evaluating the suitability of a site for development and when determining the appropriate density of development.
- C.** On-site drainage facilities shall be adequate to deliver surface water runoff to established drainage courses.
- D.** Drainage systems shall be located and designed to prevent sediments and pollutants in surface runoff from entering water courses and groundwater aquifers.
- E.** Drainage districts should be established as part of each development to ensure proper long-range maintenance of drainage facilities.
- F.** Generally, impervious surfaces should not be connected to drainage systems. Run-off should be routed over grassy swales or similar areas which help to filter run-off.
- G.** Open and natural drainage courses should be utilized as part of the drainage system where possible, and where the natural drainage course will not be adversely affected.
- H.** Open courses should be landscaped to enhance the open space or landscape scheme of the site or area, or be designed to function as natural wetlands.
- I.** Existing wetlands should not be incorporated into site drainage systems, unless it can be adequately proven that the wetlands shall be protected from any adverse impacts. Extensive clearing of vegetation which buffers the wetlands from erosion and filters sediments and pollution from run-off shall be prohibited.
- J.** Storm water run-off from any development area should not exceed that which existed under undeveloped, natural conditions, in terms of volume and velocity. Run-off under existing undeveloped conditions which causes problems should be altered to acceptable rates and amounts by drainage improvements as part of individual developments or drainage districts.
- K.** Storm water retention should be provided on private property as part of a site development plan, or as part of area-wide drainage systems, or as a combination of on-site and area-wide facilities. Retention basins should be used to control the volume, quality, and rate of storm water run-off and to recharge the groundwater supply. Retention basins should be designed to hold at least a 100 year storm of a 12 hour duration.
- L.** Wireless Communication facilities are quazi-public structures governed by the Federal Communications Commission. The Placement, height, design, and zoning of these structures are legislated by the Local Units of Government. Freedom Township has made an effort to control these strucutres to ensure the health, safety, and visual astetic impact to township residents.
- M.** The Township, at its, descretion, may ask for a wireless coverage plan showing a complete structural build out for the Township. This request will ensure the Township residents the opportunity to understand the visual and safety (fall zone) impacts needed for future structure, plus supply better technology for all of the Township residents.

# TRANSPORTATION

## GOAL:

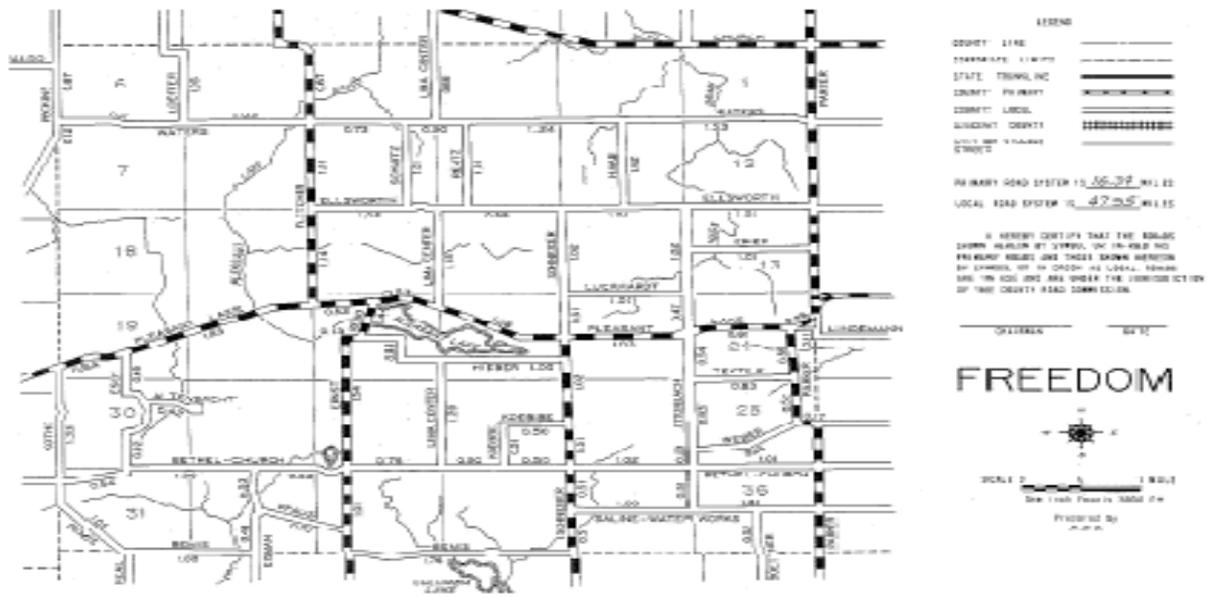
**To promote the rural and scenic character of roadways within the Township while providing a safe, efficient transportation system that facilitates movement through the Township on designated roadways.**



The primary object of the Transportation Section, is to establish a system of roads which provides safe, convenient and efficient vehicular movement while maintaining the rural character of the Township. Provisions should be made to minimize hazardous curb-cuts and other points of access to collector roads by establishing internal local street networks. Local roads also serve as easements for public utilities as do other roads and thoroughfares; therefore, adequate rights-of-way should be provided to allow for such services. Freedom Township considers its unpaved roads as the hallmark of the rural way of life. They contribute to a sense of place of being closer to the natural environment and to a slower pace of life. Improvements to unpaved and gravel roads should generally be for safety and maintenance reasons, not to increase the speed limit or to accommodate or attract inappropriate development.

This Plan for Freedom Township provides four levels of road types; Primary Roadways, Collector Roadways, Local Roads and Local Streets. Also consideration is given to roadways that are classified as Special Corridors.

Every effort shall be made to maintain the established character of existing roadways within Freedom Township. New roadways should be designed in accordance with designated functions considering the integrity of the area in which it serves. The following functional classification system shall be used as appropriate guidelines:



## Primary Roadways

Primary roadways carry the highest traffic volumes in the Township and serve both regional and local traffic. Primary roadways connect local roadways with the interstate system and major roadways in adjoining communities. The following design standards should be established for primary roadways:

1. 2 lanes minimum; and
2. use of shared driveways and access roads, where feasible, to minimize access points to primary roadways.

Primary roadways should be designated as follows:

### 1. East/West:

- a. Scio Church Road.
- b. Pleasant Lake Road.

### 2. North/South:

- a. Fletcher Road.
- b. Schneider Road from Bemis to Pleasant Lake Road.
- c. Parker Road south to Pleasant Lake Road.

## Collector Roadways

Collector roadways primarily serve local traffic and distribute traffic from local roadways to primary roadways. The following design standards should be established for collector roadways:

1. 2 lanes minimum.
2. minimal access to individual lots.

The following streets should be designated as collector roadways in Freedom Township:

1. Waters Road.
2. Bethel Church Road.
3. Lima Center Road.
4. Ernst Road.

## Local Roadways

The primary function of local roadways is to provide access to abutting properties. Local roadways are intended to primarily serve local traffic, rather than regional or through traffic. Such streets may be private; however, rights-of-way should be adequate to conform to Washtenaw County Road Commission standards. The following standards should be established for local roadways:

1. 2 lanes in new developments;
2. 2 lanes gravel in rural areas; and
3. 2 lanes gravel in very low density residential developments with private roads.

### **Special Corridors**

Special corridors are roadways that have a recognized scenic or historic character that should be protected, and other roadways, such as Township entrances, that require special treatment.

#### **1. Policies**

- a. The character of special corridors shall be protected during maintenance. Special corridors shall not be improved, unless necessary, and any such improvements shall not alter the character of the special corridor.
- b. Preservation of the natural landscape shall be encouraged along these roadways.

### **Road Systems For New Development**

#### **1. Access**

- a. The number of curb cuts to primary streets shall be minimized.
- b. Joint drives or frontage roads shall be required, where feasible, to reduce the number of curb cuts.
- c. Access patterns should be designed to encourage placement of buildings to face primary and collector streets.

### **Residential Road System**

1. Plans for new development should provide for extension of roadways into new development areas where such extension is determined by the Township to be necessary for the continuity of the public streets system or to provide adequate vehicular access to interior lands.
2. Residential areas should be interconnected by public streets. Residential developments that are intended to be isolated from the rest of the community by a system of private streets and absence of street connections with adjacent parcels should be discouraged.
3. Access to new development shall be from existing roads wherever feasible.
4. Private roadways should be discouraged. Roadways within new developments shall meet appropriate Freedom Township Private Road Standard.

### **The following are emphasized regarding circulation within Freedom Township:**

- A. Streets in new urban developments should be paved in order to reduce long-term maintenance costs.

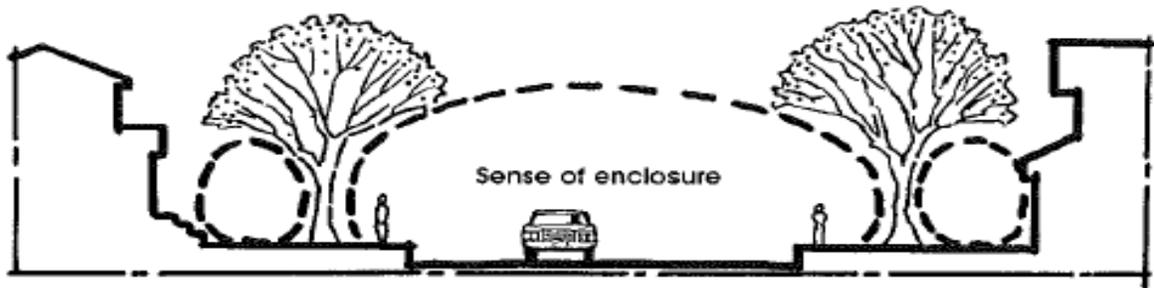
- B. Residential areas should be interconnected by public streets. Such streets should meet the standards and specifications of the Washtenaw County Road Commission, except when part of a large development, such as a Planned Community Development, in which case other standards and specifications might be considered.

### **Transportation Objectives**

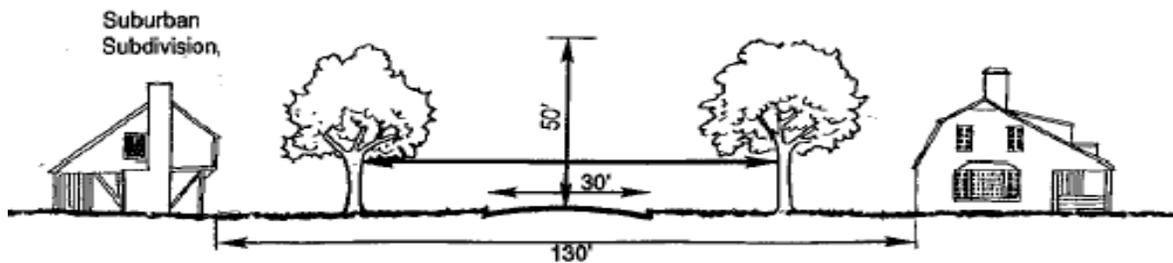
- A. Circulation within Freedom Township will be designed to:
1. Facilitate safe and efficient internal movement within the Township.
  2. Integrate itself into a larger regional network.
  3. Differentiate vehicular traffic facilities according to their function.
  4. Maintain a separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
  5. Keep gravel roads in good condition.
- B. Since the rural character of Freedom Township is largely experienced by persons traveling down the roads in the Township, changes to the roadway or right-of-ways should be made consistent with the rural character of the area and other pertinent policies in this plan.
- C. Road Improvements should be made according to a planned schedule and design standards which ensure sufficient public right-of-way, minimum curb cuts, and proper material improvements, are completed for a continued safe road system through the Township.
- D. Existing unpaved County roads should remain unpaved at least until 2020 except if specifically indicated otherwise in this Plan.
- E. Easements should be provided for pedestrian/ bicycle path systems.
- F. The pedestrian/ bicycle path system should be physically separated from street, where possible, but should connect with street sidewalks where feasible.
- G. Special corridors may be designed that contain scenic or historic character that should be protected, or other roadways, such as Township entrances, that require special treatment.
- “Scenic roads are public roads in the Township which have one or more of the following characteristics:
1. Pass through an area of outstanding natural environmental features providing views of scenic elements such as forests, steep slopes, wetlands, streams, lakes, or river valleys;
  2. Provides outstanding views of agricultural landscapes including panoramic views of crop lands, pastures, fields, ponds, hedgerows, and wooden or stone fence lines;
  3. Follow historic road alignments and provide views of historical resources; or
  4. A large portion of the road frontage for properties that are in a historic district or subject to perpetual or long term agriculture, environmental or historical easements.
- H. Potential Natural Beauty Roads or Scenic Roads shall be inventoried where preservation of the natural landscape will be encouraged.
- I. The Natural Beauty Roads Program shall be in compliance with Part 357 of Pa 451 of 1994, the Natural Resources and Environmental Protections Act., and is administered by the Washtenaw County Road Commission.

- J. Adopt standards for all other Transportation Policies in the Plan as part of the Township Zoning Ordinance, Road Ordinance, or other pertinent regulation.
- K. Include planned road improvements in the annual Township Capital Improvement Program.
- L. Undertake a citizen initiative to plant salt tolerant native trees parallel to the proposed future right-of-way width of the County roads to create a future tree line.

## Freedom Township Rights - of - Way

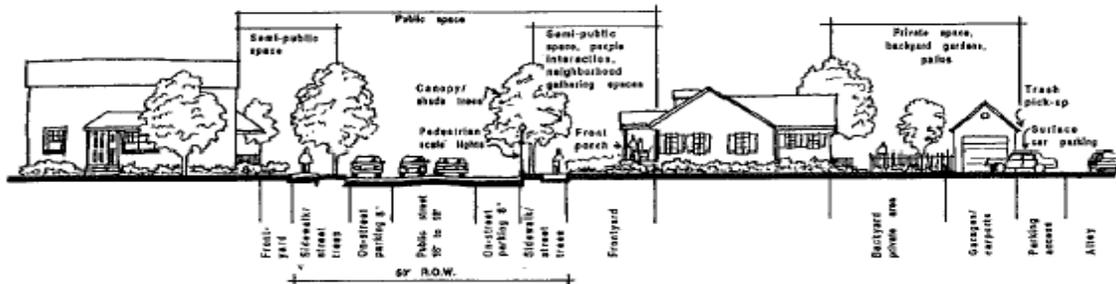


The Design of the Road Rights-of-Way should respect human scale.

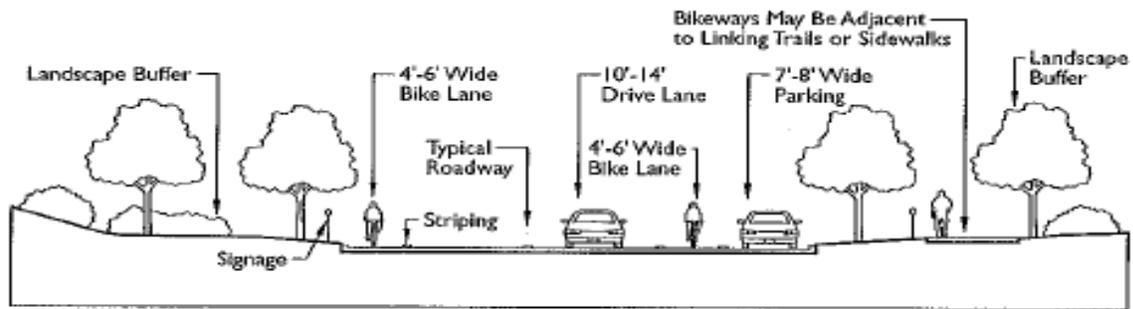


These designs should be used as a guide to understand human scale development within Freedom Township.

## Street Access Design Standard



The above design illustrates the complete view of a right-of-way with proper allowances for pedestrians, drives, automobiles, homes, and landscaping. This type of development should be incorporated into all future plans.



Bike lanes are often found along urban road sections, where maneuvering space is limited and a defined lane is needed for rider safety.

### **BIKE LANE**

This design represents the possible incorporation of a pedestrian or bicycle lane within the right-of-way.



It is recognized that sand, gravel and other earthen deposits within the Township's land area are nonrenewable natural resources necessary and beneficial to the welfare of its inhabitants and the surrounding regional area. The Master Plan attempts to provide for the utilization of these resources in a manner compatible with nearby residential areas, to protect human health and the environment, and to insure complete reclamation for another land use at the conclusion of the extraction. The Mater Plan addresses these resources because mining operations and the related activities can cause unique and substantial impacts upon the environment and the welfare of adjacent properties and the community. Environmental goals and policies contained within the Master Plan are directed toward preserving the natural environment and ensuring proper use of surface and ground water supplies. Secondary impacts of extraction operations including noise nuisances, dust nuisances, damage to roads, increased truck traffic, and other conditions that are hazardous to Township residents are also of concern and are addressed by the Freedom Township Mining Ordinance.

**To ensure that mining activities and associated off-site impacts are not out of proportion and within prospective as they relate to existing residents, natural resources, and other land uses taking place within Freedom Township, the following policies are set forth:**

- A. Only Class "A", or "Bonded", or Township "Designated Haul Routes", roadways will be utilized by gravel trucks to haul mined materials out of Freedom Township.
- B. Only the paved portions of Pleasant Lake Road, Fletcher Road, Steinbach Road, and Parker Road may be used for commercial hauling of extraction materials within Freedom Township.
- C. All land to be utilized for extraction purposes shall have a permit as required within the Township's Extraction Ordinance. Due to the various impacts of trucks that haul commercial extraction materials on the Township's roadways, removal of extraction materials from approved extraction operations may be allowed at the rate of one truck per two acres per day of land which has been approved for such extraction purposes. At no time shall any approved extraction operation exceed 350 trucks per day for hauling extraction materials on the Township's roadways.
- D. The cumulative acreage of active extractions shall be allowed to operate only by compliance with Freedom Township Extraction Permit Process.
- E. No more than 3,000,000 tons of cumulative extraction materials shall be mined within any given year within Freedom Township.
- F. At no time shall more that 700 acres of total Township acreage be designated or used for extraction purposes.
- G. All Extraction Operations Permitted by the Township shall submit an annual reclamation plan. This plan will ensure that the future sustainable land uses can be developed without detrimental impact to the resources of Freedom Township.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The Master Plan serves as a framework for future decision-making and a regulatory process through which governmental agencies guide land use. The Plan should be re-evaluated every five (5) years or as development pressures require. As time goes on, Township objectives may change which could result in an amendment to the adopted GMP. Any amendment should only be made after sound evaluation of the overall implications have been considered. Further, re-evaluation of the Plan allows future participation of the general public in framing Township policy. An informed public can greatly assist in the direction of Township Officials towards an improved and meaningful future environmental quality.

Implementation of the Plan requires continuous coordination between the Township Board, the Planning Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals whose principal tools are the Zoning Ordinance and Map and Subdivision and Site Condominium Regulations. In addition, the Township must also remain abreast of on-going planning activities of adjoining units of government which may affect Plan recommendations for future implementation.

### **Zoning Ordinance**

A zoning ordinance is a legal statement of regulations which governs private land use and development. As established under Act 184 of the Public Acts of 1943, as amended, this document is designed to promote the public health, safety and general welfare and to encourage the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability. The zoning ordinance should follow the long-range land use policy established in the Master Plan.

### **Subdivision Regulation Ordinance**

A subdivision ordinance sets forth specific regulations which apply to all proposed private land development. This ordinance has a legal basis pursuant to the statutory authority granted under the Township Planning Commission Act, Act 168 of 1959, as amended, and the, Land Division Act, MCL 560.101, et seq., as amended. Under this ordinance the Township regulates the preparation and presentation of preliminary and final plats and establishes minimum subdivision standards. Through such an ordinance, the Township can better control the design and character of future development.

### **Density Transfer Program**

This concept involves moving (transferring) proposed development (density) from one part of a site to another part that is considered to be more suitable for development. This process results in a portion of the site remaining undeveloped and the developed part having a higher net density, although the overall density of the site will not be increased. Density transfer may and should be used to protect or preserve natural features such as woodland, wetlands, stream corridors, open spaces, sensitive soils, while permitting a reasonable use of the entire parcel. This method is applicable to larger parcels and should be used only in conjunction with a special zoning district, such as the PUD district. Density Transfer should meet the following standards:

1. All lands involved in the transfer are located in Freedom Township and the owner has fee simple title to the lands.
2. All lands involved are contiguous.
3. The transfer number of dwelling units allocated to the total land area by the Plan will not be exceeded.
4. The transfer is made as part of a single PUD or similar special zoning district that includes all lands in the transfer at the same time.

5. The land that receives that transfer of density will, with the additional dwelling units; be compatible with the existing and planned use of the neighboring area.
6. The transfer will not affect the Township's contractual obligations for sanitary sewer services

## **Plan Monitoring Program**

### **Introduction**

The planning process, in order to be effective, must be continuous, and must be part of the day-to-day decisions that affect the physical character of the Township. Thus, the Master Plan must be in a form that encourages its regular use in the planning process. The Plan is, in effect, the continuously changing representation of the Township's policies for the future. If the Master Plan is to perform its proper function in the continuous planning process, it must be updated on a regular basis. The Master Plan will be evaluated yearly to ensure that policies are consistent with the objectives of the Master Plan. A major review of the comprehensive plan should be made at intervals no longer than 5 years to enable the Planning Commission and Township Board to see the implications of accumulated annual revisions and to apply new perspectives to adopted policies. Annual reviews might indicate the need for a major review in less than 5 years.

### **Benefits of a Monitoring Program**

There are several benefits to the Township from a regular monitoring program.

1. The Master Plan will be kept up to date.
2. The maintenance program broadens the area of community agreement on basic development policies over time. The process invites reconsideration of alternatives to major decisions and encourages exploration of new issues and secondary questions.
3. Annual review of the Master Plan will keep current the Planning Commission and Township Boards' knowledge of the plan's elements. Along with the Master Plans use in day-to-day decision-making, the annual review process will assure that the Master Plan will be a living document, that its policies will not be frozen in time.
4. Annual review will avoid delays that might otherwise be caused by calls for more study on certain issues before the basic plan is adopted. An annual review program assures that issues that require further examination will be studied at proper levels of detail at later times, and the policy changes resulting from such studies will be made in the plan.

### **Description of the Program**

The maintenance program will have two objectives:

1. To determine the extent to which the Township is actually implementing the policies of the Master Plan; and
2. To determine that the Master Plans policies are still desirable and appropriate in light of changing circumstances.

The basis of the maintenance program will consist of an annual review by the Planning Commission. Such review might result in a change to a portion of the plan reflecting either a policy area or a geographic area. The results of the review will be forwarded to the Township Board in a report.

The Planning Commission, at the start of the review process, will determine the actual components of an annual review. The following should be among the elements studied by the Commission; others might be added as events suggest.

- A. Development proposals approved or denied - rezoning petitions, site plans, and subdivision plats.
- B. Land use regulations - Zoning Ordinance and subdivision ordinance amendments made in the past year or expected to be needed in the future.
- C. Building permits issued, by land use categories; estimate of the number of dwelling units, by type, added to the housing stock; estimates of the current population of the planning area.
- D. State equalized evaluation by assessor's categories; track changes in agricultural and development classifications.
- E. Traffic counts; relation to road capacities.
- F. Programmed road improvements.
- G. Changes in public transportation service during the past year and proposed in the future that affect the planning area.
- H. Land divisions, other than in approved subdivision plats and condominium site plans.
- I. Major zoning and land use changes on the perimeter of the planning area in the past year and those that are likely to occur in the coming year.
- J. Policy changes by adjacent municipalities that affect Freedom Township, in the past year and that are likely to occur in the coming year.

# Freedom Township Population Growth

1890 - 2010

