

Sanilac Township, Michigan

# Master Plan



2011



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This project was funded in part by the Coastal Management Program, Department of Environmental Quality and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

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**Chapter One:**

# **Introduction**

## **What is Planning?**

Planning is a process which involves the conscious selection of policy choices relating to land use, growth and development in the community. The Master Plan is the primary official Township document which sets forth growth and development policies for the future of the community. Sanilac Township derives its authority for the preparation of a Master Plan from the Michigan Township Planning Act, P.A. 168 of 1959. Section 6 of the Act states:

*The Planning Commission shall make and adopt a basic plan as a guide for the development of unincorporated portions of the Township. As a basis for the plan, the Planning Commission is hereby empowered to (1) make inquiries, investigations and surveys of all the resources of the Township and (2) assemble and analyze data and formulate plans for the proper conservation and uses of all resources, including a determination of the extent of probable future need for the most advantageous designation of lands having various use potentials and for services, facilities and utilities required to equip such lands.*

## **How is the Plan to be Used?**

The plan serves many functions and is to be used in a variety of ways:

- 1) The Plan is a general statement of the Township's goals and policies and provides a single, comprehensive view of the community's desire for the future. It sets forth local goals, objectives, and policies for community growth and/or redevelopment over the next 20-30 years.
- 2) The Plan serves as an aid in daily decision-making. The goals and policies outlined in the Plan guide the Planning Commission and Township Board in their deliberations on zoning, subdivision, capital improvements and other matters relating to land use and development. This provides a stable, long-term basis for decision-making.
- 3) A third function the Plan serves is providing the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are based. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006 requires that the Zoning Ordinance be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety and general welfare.



However, it is important to note that the Master Plan and accompanying maps do not replace other Township Ordinances, specifically the Zoning Ordinance and Map. Zoning is only one of many legal devices used to implement the Master Plan.

- 4) The Plan attempts to coordinate public improvements and private developments. For example, public investments such as road or sewer and water improvements should be located in areas identified in the Plan as resulting in the greatest benefit to the Township and its residents.
- 5) Finally, the Plan serves as an educational tool and gives citizens, property owners, developers, and adjacent communities a clear indication of the Township's direction for the future.

In summary, the Sanilac Township Master Plan is the only officially-adopted document which sets forth an agenda for the achievement of land use goals and policies. It is a long range statement of general goals and policies aimed at unified and coordinated development of the Township. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.

### **How is the Plan Organized?**

The Sanilac Township Master Plan is comprised of five (5) basic sections. The BACKGROUND SUMMARY section discusses current demographics, land uses, historical trends and projections, illustrating the point from which planning must begin. The GOALS AND STRATEGIES section outlines policies that provide a framework for a final plan. It should be noted that future implementation action plans will be based on the adopted township goals and policies. The FUTURE LAND USE PLAN is the end result, in which the community's vision for the future is imposed upon the present scenario. While the starting point is unalterable, the end result can be changed according to the policies applied. The intent of the IMPLEMENTATION & ZONING PLAN is to prevent a separation between the vision of the Future Land Use Plan and the Township's primary implementation tool, the Zoning Ordinance. This also, briefly summarizes tools to be employed to carry out the goals and strategies recommendations.

## Regional Context

### General Location

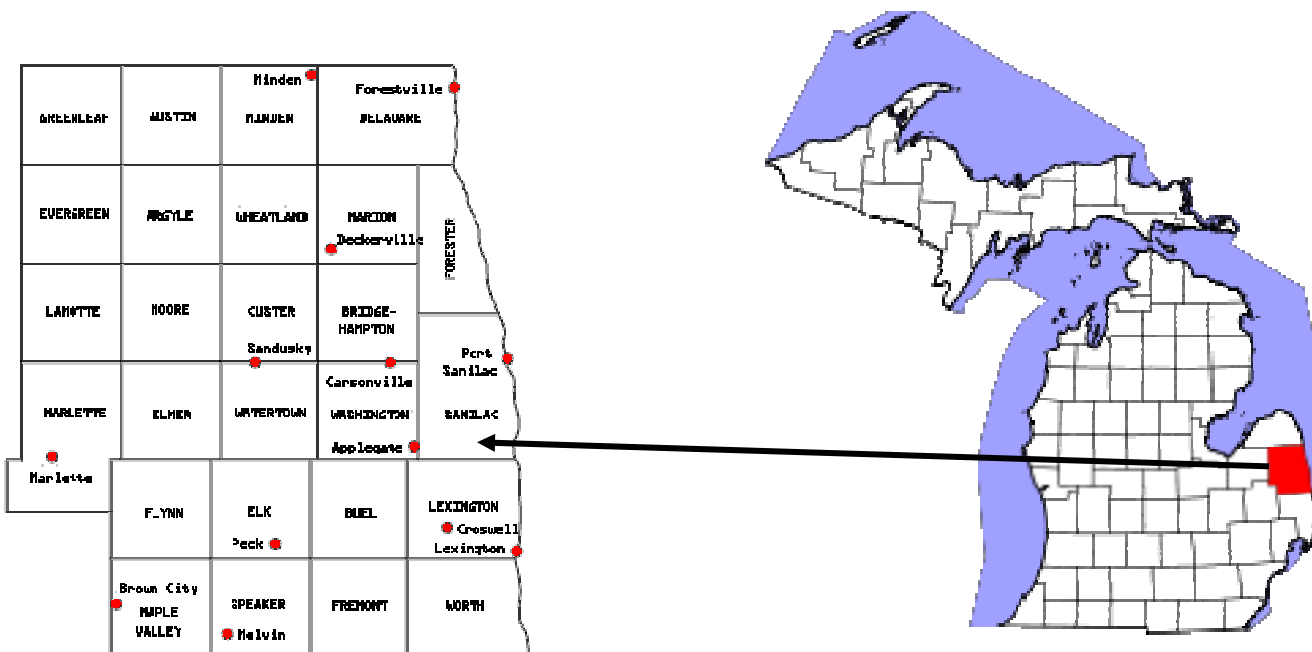
Sanilac Township is a 40.9 square mile area located in the east central portion of Sanilac County. Situated on the western shore of Lake Huron, Sanilac Township is surrounded by the following Townships: Forester to the north, Bridgehampton to the northwest, Washington to the southwest, and Lexington to the south.

Located thirty (30) miles south, Port Huron is the nearest highly urbanized area. The City of Detroit, approximately ninety (90) miles to the southwest, is the nearest metropolitan area. Local settlements of importance include the City of Sandusky, fifteen (15) miles west, which is the county seat, and Port Sanilac, located nearly centrally on the eastern, or shoreline boundary of the Township.

**MAP 1  
REGIONAL CONTEXT**

**Township Area Map**

**Sanilac County**



Chapter Two:

# Background Summary

This section of the Master Plan: 1) provides an inventory of past growth and development trends; 2) assesses current community conditions; and 3) makes projections. These factors collectively establish those necessary benchmarks from which the community planning program may realistically proceed.

### Population and Housing

As reported by the U.S. Bureau of Census between 2000 and 2010, Sanilac Township lost population at a rate of 7.3% percent, resulting in a 2010 population of 2,431 persons. As reflected in Table 1, the surrounding communities experienced similar loss with an average decrease of 4.8%. Forester Township reported the greatest loss of 8.8% compared to Sanilac’s 7.3%. Washington Township reported a slight increase of 1.4%. Overall, the rate of growth and decline over the past two decades is similar to surrounding communities. Previous census reported a growth rate of 10.5% in Sanilac Township between 1990 and 2000. As a result, the overall loss in Sanilac Township between 1990 and 2010 is 3.2%.

**TABLE 1: POPULATION TRENDS (1990-2010)  
FOR SELECTED COMMUNITIES**

	1990	2000	2010
<b>SANILAC TOWNSHIP</b>	2,362	2,609	2,431
% CHANGE	-	10.5%	-7.3%
<b>VILLAGE OF PORT SANILAC</b>	656	658	623
% CHANGE	-	0.1%	-0.9%
<b>FORESTER TOWNSHIP</b>	919	1,108	1,011
% CHANGE	-	20.6%	-8.8%
<b>BRIDGEHAMPTON TOWNSHIP</b>	845	911	854
% CHANGE	-	7.8%	-6.3%
<b>LEXINGTON TOWNSHIP</b>	3,028	3,688	3,658
% CHANGE	-	21.8%	-0.8%
<b>WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP</b>	1,557	1,636	1,659
% CHANGE	-	5.1%	1.4%
<b>STATE OF MICHIGAN</b>	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640
% CHANGE	*0.4%	6.9%	-0.6%
<b>SANILAC COUNTY</b>	39,928	44,547	43,114
% CHANGE	*-1.7%	11.6%	-3.2%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 1990, 2000, 2010 CENSUS.

## Population Projections

Table 2 below presents population projections through the year 2035 as compiled for Eastern Michigan Council of Governments (EMCOG). These population estimates are based on a combination of average growth trends over the last three Decennial Censuses (1980, 1990 and 2000) and population estimates provided by the Michigan Department of Transportation. Projections of Sanilac Township’s population have been made through 2035. Table 2 contains actual decennial census counts from the United States Bureau of the Census for 2000 and 2005 for the Township and Sanilac County and the EMCOG region which includes 14 counties. Sanilac Township is projected to have the lowest population in 2020 with a slight increase beginning in 2030. The average annual growth rate of -0.69% between 2000 and 2020 reports the greatest decrease compared to the county, and EMCOG region. A growth of 0.11% is projected between 2020 and 2035 for Sanilac Township.

**TABLE 2: POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2000-2035**

	SANILAC TOWNSHIP	SANILAC COUNTY	EMCOG REGION
CENSUS 2000*	2.608	44.5	796.1
CENSUS 2005*	2.563	44.0	83,885.5
MDOT 2010*	2.391	41.4	769.4
MDOT 2015*	2.296	39.7	766.1
MDOT 2020*	2.272	39.7	773.4
MDOT 2025*	2.285	39.5	784.1
MDOT 2030*	2.301	39.7	794.3
MDOT 2035*	2.310	39.9	802.1
ANNUAL GROWTH RATE 2000-2020	-0.69%	-0.57%	-0.14%
ANNUAL GROWTH RATE 2020-2035	0.11%	0.02%	0.24%

**\*Number in 1,000s**

Source: Compiled by EMCOG from Michigan Department of Transportation Planning

EMCOG Region includes 14 counties: Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Iosco, Ogemaw, Roscommon, Huron, Sanilac, Tuscola, Bay, Gratiot, Isabella, Midland, and Saginaw

Table 3 reveals that approximately 60% of the Township population is over the age of 45. The 2010 census indicates that the age groups of 45-54 and 65-74 has the greatest share of population, at 17.0% and 14.6%. The median age for the Township in the year 2010 was 51.8 years, while compared to the county average age of 42.8 years. The national median age for the year 2010 was 36.8 years.

### **Gender**

The 2010 Census reported that Sanilac Township's population was 48.8% male and 51.2% female. Percentage of females is slightly higher than males. The County's gender composition for the year 2010 was similar with 50.6% female and 49.4 % male residents. Comparison of age groups and gender are illustrated in Table 3 for the Township, the Village of Port Sanilac, and Sanilac County.

**TABLE 3: AGE AND GENDER OF POPULATION  
SANILAC TOWNSHIP, PORT SANILAC AND SANILAC COUNTY  
2010**

SEX AND AGE	Sanilac Township		Port Sanilac		Sanilac County	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Male</b>	1,186	48.8	283	45.4	21,315	49.4
<b>Female</b>	1,245	51.2	340	54.6	21,799	50.6
<b>0 to 4 years</b>	112	4.6	39	6.3	2,513	5.8
<b>5 to 9 years</b>	95	4.0	31	5.0	2,749	6.4
<b>10 to 14 years</b>	119	5.0	30	4.8	2,944	6.8
<b>15 to 19 years</b>	129	5.3	27	4.3	3,008	7.0
<b>20 to 24 years</b>	95	4.0	17	2.7	2,169	5.0
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	205	8.5	68	10.9	4,290	10.0
<b>35 to 44 years</b>	220	9.0	48	7.7	5,121	11.9
<b>45 to 54 years</b>	410	17.0	106	17.0	6,827	15.8
<b>55 to 59 years</b>	215	9.0	48	7.7	3,179	7.4
<b>60 to 64 years</b>	218	9.0	51	8.2	2,735	6.3
<b>65 to 74 years</b>	353	14.6	73	11.7	4,133	9.6
<b>75 to 84 years</b>	182	7.6	53	8.6	2,478	5.7
<b>85 years and over</b>	59	2.4	32	5.1	968	2.3
<b>Median age (years)</b>	51.8	(X)	51.1	(X)	42.8	(X)

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2010 CENSUS.

### Race

Racial composition, Table 4, reflected in the 2010 Census indicates that the County-wide population is 96.6% white, while the proportion of white residents in the Township's population is 98.9%. Roughly 3.4% of the County population is non-white, with 0.3% African-American. Approximately 1.1% of the County's population was Hispanic (of any race). In Sanilac Township, 0.2% was reported as African American, while 0.3% of the population classified themselves as Hispanic (of any race).

**TABLE 4: RACIAL AND ETHNIC COMPOSITION  
SANILAC TOWNSHIP AND SELECTED COMMUNITIES 2010**

RACE	SANILAC TOWNSHIP		PORT SANILAC		SANILAC COUNTY	
	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%
<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>	<b>2,431</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>43,114</b>	<b>100.0</b>
ONE RACE	2,405	98.9	612	98.2	42,600	98.8
WHITE	2,371	97.5	606	97.3	41,469	96.6
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	5	0.2	1	0.2	150	0.3
AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE	8	0.3	2	0.3	195	0.5
ASIAN	13	0.5	2	0.3	144	0.3
NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	0.0
SOME OTHER RACE	8	0.3	1	0.2	455	1.1
TWO (2) OR MORE RACES	26	1.1	11	1.8	514	1.2

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2010 CENSUS.

## Housing Characteristics

As illustrated in Table 5, the 2010 Census tallied 1,790 total housing units in the Township, an increase of only 1.2% over the 1,769 reported by the 2000 Census. The number of vacancies also increased slightly by 10.4% between the 2000 and 2010 Census.



**TABLE 5: HOUSING UNITS BY OCCUPANCY STATUS, 2000 – 2010  
SANILAC TOWNSHIP AND SELECTED COMMUNITIES**

	2000			2010			% CHANGE 2000-2010		
	TOTAL	OCCUPIED/ VACANT	SEASONAL	TOTAL	OCCUPIED/ VACANT	Seasonal/Recreational Or Occasional Use	TOTAL	OCCUPIED/ VACANT	SEASONAL
<b>SANILAC TOWNSHIP</b>	1,769	1,144/625	510	1,790	1,100/690	514	1.2%	-3.8%/10.4%	0.8%
<b>PORT SANILAC</b>	437	319/118	83	441	290/151	102	0.9%	-9.1%/28%	22.9%
<b>SANILAC COUNTY</b>	21,314	16,871/4,443	3,244	22,725	17,132/5,593	3,568	6.6%	1.5%/25.9%	10.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2010

### **Educational Attainment**

Table 6 documents educational attainment as revealed in the 2000 Census, and compares the Township’s demographics with Sanilac County and Port Sanilac. Of the Township residents over the age of 25 in 2000, 84.7% have a high school diploma or higher. The Township also compares favorably to the County, where 79.7% of the residents have a high school diploma or higher.

**TABLE 6: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, POPULATION 25 YEARS AND OVER  
SANILAC TOWNSHIP AND SELECTED COMMUNITIES  
2000**

	Sanilac Township		Port Sanilac		Sanilac County	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Population 25 years and over	1,858	100.0	470	100.0	29,197	100.0
Less than 5th grade	9	0.5	9	1.9	327	1.1
5th to 8th grade	37	2.0	18	3.8	1,514	5.2
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	237	13.0	67	14.3	4,085	14.0
High school graduate (incl. equivalency)	848	45.6	161	34.3	12,814	43.9
Some college credit, less than 1 year	138	7.4	48	10.2	2,367	8.1
1 or more years of college, no degree	231	12.4	64	13.6	3,454	11.8
Associate degree	94	5.1	21	4.5	1,721	5.9
Bachelor's degree	141	7.6	52	11.1	1,796	6.2
Master's degree	84	4.5	22	4.7	779	2.7
Professional degree	39	2.1	8	1.7	283	1.0
Doctorate degree	1	0.1	0	0	57	0.2
% h.s grad or higher	(x)	84.7	(x)	80.1	(x)	79.7
% bach or higher	(x)	14.2	(x)	17.5	(x)	10.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

## Employment

Table 7, Employment by Occupation reveals the occupations of Sanilac Township, Port Sanilac and Sanilac County. The highest employment in the Township is in managerial/professional (26% average) followed by production/transportation/matter moving (24% average) and sale/office (23% average). This is comparable with the top occupations in Sanilac County. The top occupation for Sanilac County is production/transportation and matter moving with approximately 5,260 or (26.9%) of the county employed in this industry followed by managerial/professional (24.8%) and service (20.5 %).

**TABLE 7: EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION  
SANILAC TOWNSHIP AND SELECTED COMMUNITIES  
2000**

Occupation  *Employed civilian population 16 years and over	Sanilac Township		Port Sanilac		Sanilac County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Managerial/Professional/ Related	303	26.1%	75	31.0%	4,835	24.8%
Service Occupations	136	11.7%	27	11.1%	2,678	13.7%
Sales/Office	270	23.3%	67	27.6%	4,004	20.5%
Farming/Forestry/Fishing	32	2.8%	3	1.2%	425	2.2%
Production/Transportation/ Matter Moving	279	24.1%	46	18.9%	5,260	26.9%
Construction/Extraction/ Maintenance	140	12.0%	25	10.3%	2,327	11.9%
<b>Total Employed Persons*</b>	1,160	100.0%	243	100.0%	19,529	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

## Income

Table 8 provides figures for median household income for Sanilac Township, for the years 1990 (1989) and 2000 (1999). As observed in Table 8 the median household income for the Township has increased by \$14,073, or 61% between 1989 and 1999, from \$23,107 to \$37,180 respectively.

**TABLE 8: TOWNSHIP OF SANILAC, <sup>1</sup>HOUSEHOLD INCOME  
1990 – 2000**

INCOME	1990		2000	
	991	100.0%	1,141	100.0%
Less than \$10,000	169	17.1	104	9.1
\$10,000 to \$14,999	117	11.8	90	7.9
\$15,000 to \$24,999	275	27.7	206	18.0
\$25,000 to \$34,999	186	18.8	133	11.7
\$35,000 to \$49,999	133	13.4	259	22.7
\$50,000 to \$74,999	97	9.78	235	20.6
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14	1.4	81	7.1
\$100,000 to \$149,999	0	0	24	2.1
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0	0	4	0.4
\$200,000 or more	0	0	5	0.4
<b>Median income (dollars)</b>	23,107	(X)	37,180	(X)

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

<sup>1</sup>Data collected in 1989 and 1999

## Natural Features

### Soils and Topography

Sanilac Township's land surface, like most of Michigan, was formed by the actions of glaciers. Most of Sanilac County's present land area was covered by a large post-glacial lake which has resulted in surface soils that are derived primarily from clays, silts and sands deposited on the old lake bed. Sanilac Township is characterized by lake bed geology in the eastern two-thirds and moraines expanding from a point in the northwest corner of the Township to approximately half the width of the south Township boundary. The depth of glacial drift varies between 100 to 400 feet in depth, with the depth frequently being 100 to 200 feet.

Sanilac Township has over 30 different soil types. According to the Soil Survey of Sanilac County (USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service), the soil types that are most prominent include:

- Guelph loam and silt, covering about 19% of the total Township area;
- Guelph loam, covering 15%;
- Saverine and Iosco fine sandy loam, covering 14%;
- London loam and fine sandy loam, covering 13%;
- Iosco and Winegars sandy loams, covering 5%; and
- Melita and Arenac loamy sands, covering 5%.

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), over 97% of the Township soils have very limited suitability for septic tank absorption fields. This indicates that the soils have one or more properties that are unfavorable for this use. Septic tank absorption fields are areas in which effluent from a septic tank is distributed into the soil through subsurface tiles or perforated pipe. Only that part of the soil between depths of 24 and 60 inches is evaluated. The rating is based on the soil properties that affect absorption of the effluent, construction and maintenance of the system. The properties considered include saturated hydraulic conductivity, depth to a water table, ponding, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, and flooding. The remaining 3% include soils that are somewhat limited and soils that were not rated.

The Farmland Classification Map, (Map 2) identifies units as prime farmland, prime farmland if drained, or farmland of local importance. Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and that is available for



these uses. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, an acceptable level of acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable content of salt or sodium, and few or no rocks. Its soils are permeable to water and air. Prime farmland is not excessively eroded or saturated with water for long periods of time, and it either does not flood frequently during the growing season or is protected from flooding. Sanilac Township includes 35% of prime farmland, located along a north-south band on the western side of the Township. These conditions pose limitations to the type of development which can be supported. Septic facilities will require specific techniques to overcome these physical limitations.

The Township slopes from the southwest to the north and east; the highest elevation is approximately 830 feet, and the lowest being along the lakeshore line at approximately 580 feet. The topography varies from relatively level along the lake shore and in the northeast corner to rolling in the southwest. Sections 17, 19, 20 and 29 show the greatest amounts of relief with slopes typically in the 6-12% range while the more level areas have slopes in the 0-4% range.

The shoreline is currently regulated under The Shorelands Protection and Management Act. The Township has approximately nine miles of shoreline with some beaches, but primarily it is bluffs which are subject to erosion. There has been considerable change in the character of the shoreline over the years. Some beach areas no longer have sand but, due to outside influences, have become gravelly. There is a need to direct the Township's existing ordinances to protection of this resource. It is also necessary to

identify the types of development which will have the least effect and be least effected by shoreline erosion.

Sanilac Township has an abundance of water resources. Natural Features are depicted in Map 3. Much of the Township topography is shaped by creeks and drainage ways to Lake Huron. There are also some wetland areas and floodplains. Groundwater is a critical resource because of the Township's reliance on well water.

Sanilac Township's primary water resource is Lake Huron. There are a number of drainage ways which flow into this resource. Most are small, intermittent streams, but several are creeks with a continuous flow.

Groundwater represents a significant resource which requires attention. As mentioned previously, the protection of groundwater aquifers is important because the Township relies on wells for water service. In a study done as part of the County Solid Waste Management Plan, one-half of the Township's groundwater aquifers are described as "unprotected". Typically groundwater is found at approximately four feet below the surface. This suggests that conditions are favorable for groundwater contamination.

Wetlands are scattered throughout the Township. The heaviest concentration is located in the southwest portion of the Township; particularly in sections 17 and 18. There are a significant number of wetlands found in conjunction with floodplains of the various drainage ways. Typically these wetlands are palustrine (marshy) systems with shrub-scrub and wooded vegetation.

Water regimes have not been able to be clearly identified, but fall into one of three categories: saturated, semi-permanent or seasonal. Most of the wetland areas are greater than five acres and there is high probability that the smaller areas are contiguous to other water resources, thus indicating that these resources are regulated under the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. As a final note it must be stressed that the wetlands depicted on the Natural Features map are for planning purposes and have not been field delineated nor has a detailed parcel by parcel study been conducted to locate all wetlands.

## Resource Capability Analysis

There are a significant number of constraints to development posed by existing natural resource conditions. The most predominant limitation is soil conditions. Eliminating all soils that have restrictions for septic facilities results in only small (less than five acres) land areas being available for development. This indicates that any intense development will require either extensive soil modification or an on-site sanitary disposal facility. Depending on the size of the facility this may require a permit from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Aquifers are another critical resource which will place constraints on the potential for intense development. The eastern half of the Township relies on water from unprotected aquifers. This classification refers to those aquifers vulnerable to surface contamination from movement through a highly permeable overlaying material. The land use implications of this information are that any type of development which involves materials that could contaminate groundwater supplies should be located west of Ridge Road.

Wetlands, floodplains and streams will impose constraints on the types of development which can be supported. These resources are scattered throughout the Township and typically affect portions of a parcel or section. Most development on parcels containing wetlands will be regulated by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources through restrictions which will limit the area available for construction. The sections which contain the least amount of wetlands and floodplains are 30N, 33N and 3 through 8.

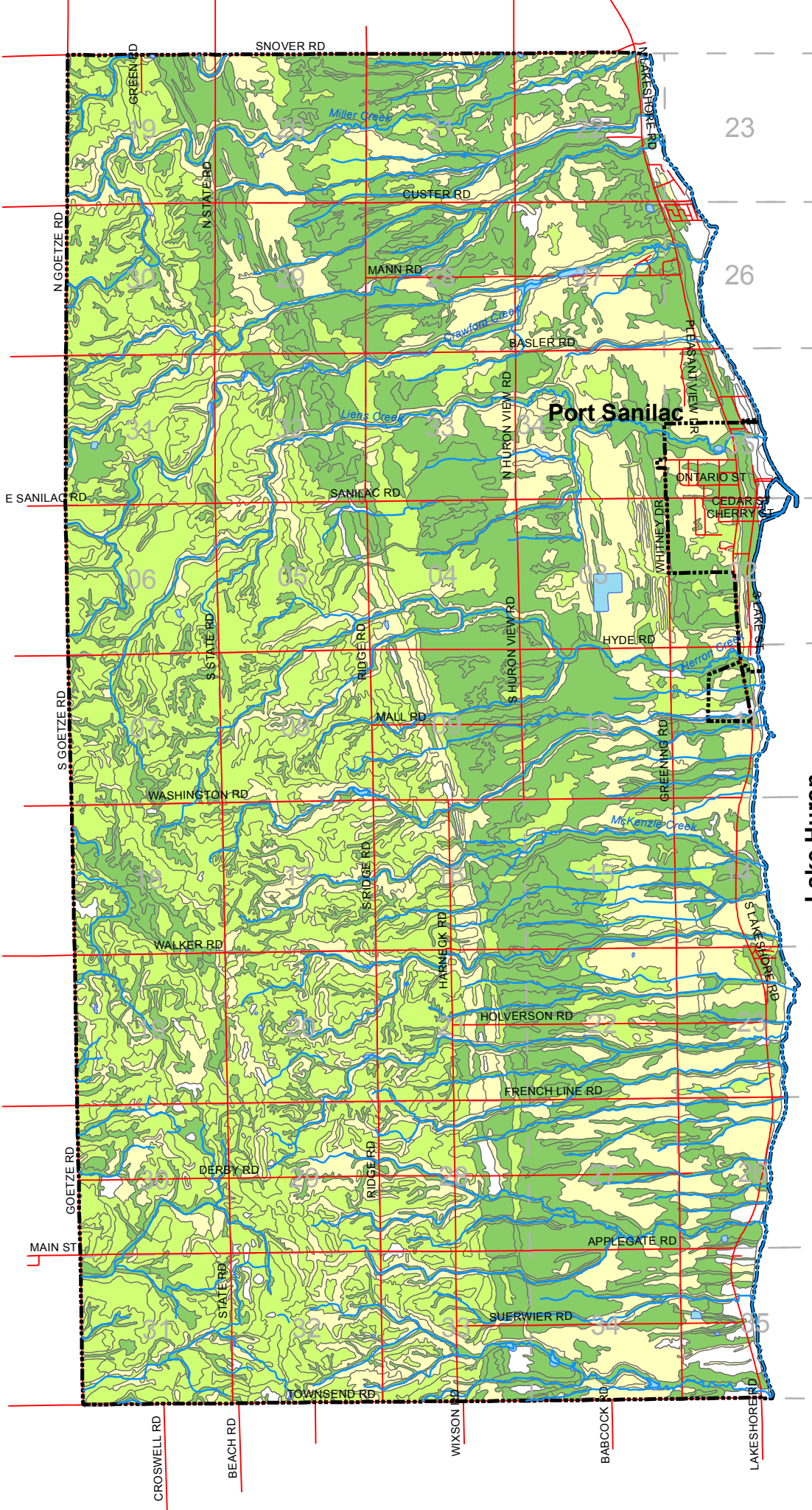
The most visible natural system within Sanilac Township is the shoreline. This resource is primarily bluffs which are subject to erosion. The Township's existing ordinances protect high risk erosion areas. High Risk Erosion areas are defined and mapped by the State of Michigan. The lot depths available in conjunction with the Shorelands Protection Act severely restrict the types of uses that could be developed.

The Township has several areas which may be suitable for high intensity development other than those indicated on the land use maps. However, these areas are primarily in



agricultural use and the Township does not feel a need for identifying additional areas for development at this time or in the foreseeable future.

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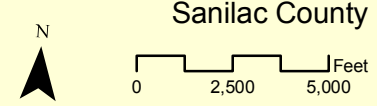


- Prime Farmland
- Prime Farmland if Drained
- Farmland of Local Importance
- Not Prime Farmland
- Open Water
- River, Streams & Drains

Lake Huron

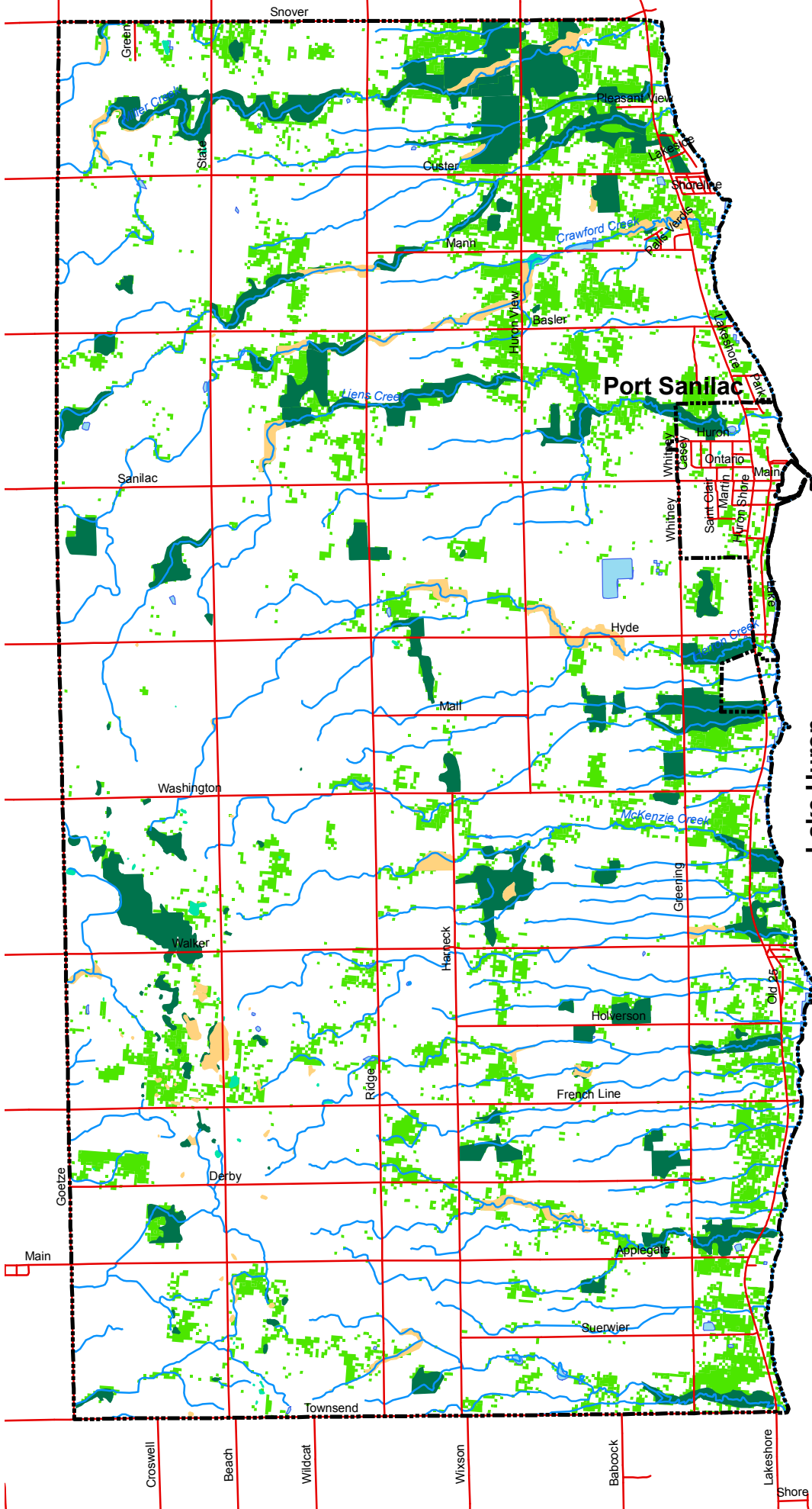
**Map 2**  
**FARMLAND**  
**CLASSIFICATION**

Sanilac Township  
 Sanilac County



Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information & USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service

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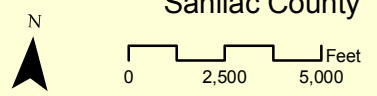
- Herbaceous & Shrubs
- Upland Forest
- Scrub-Shrub Wetlands
- Forested Wetlands
- Emergent Wetlands
- Open Water
- River, Streams & Drains

Lake Huron

**Map 3**

**NATURAL FEATURES**

Sanilac Township  
Sanilac County



Source: Sanilac National Wetlands Inventory & 1978 MDNR Land/Use/Land Cover, Michigan Center for Geographic Information

## **Community Facilities and Services**

### **Township Hall and Library**

The Sanilac Township Hall, built in 1884, is also located in Port Sanilac at 20 North Ridge Street. A District Library located at 7130 Main Street, Port Sanilac serves the residents of the Village and Township.

### **Fire and Police Protection**

Fire protection is provided by three (3) local volunteer Fire Departments located in the villages of Applegate, Port Sanilac, and Carsonville. Police protection is provided by the Sanilac County Sheriff and Michigan State Police Departments.

### **Public Utilities and Services**

Electric power is provided by the Detroit Edison Company and the Thumb Electrical Company (TEC). The Southeast Michigan Gas Company pipes in natural gas.

There is no municipal provision of sewer or water treatment facilities with the exception of a water line servicing property owners along both sides of the M-25 corridor, which lies along the Township's eastern lakeside border. This water is purchased from the Village of Lexington. The majority of the Township area depends on individual wells and septic fields. Solid waste disposal is contracted on an individual basis throughout most of the Township. Some on-site waste disposal takes place on the larger farms.



### **Port and Marina Facilities**

The Port Huron International Port is located approximately thirty (30) miles south of Sanilac Township. Three (3) complete marine facilities are located in Port Sanilac. One is the original Harbor of Refuge which offers a full array of services to boaters.

The other two are privately owned and managed marinas.

### **Railroads and Airports**

There are no rail station facilities in the Township. A rail right-of-way, maintained by Cheaspeake and Ohio, which traverses through the southwestern corner of Sanilac County passes just outside of the southwest corner of the Township.

Arnold Airport and Sandusky City Airport are the nearest providers of general aviation services. At a greater

distance are the St. Clair County Airport, Saginaw Tri-City Airport, also provides general aviation services. The Detroit Metropolitan Airport is the closest full-service domestic and international airport.



### **Schools**

Township students attend Carsonville-Port Sanilac (CPS) School District which is part of the Sanilac County Intermediate School District. Elementary students are bused to a school facility in Carsonville. High School students attend a school facility located at the intersection of M-46 and Goetze Road. Some Township children attend school in the Croswell-Lexington School District.

### **Recreational Facilities**

The Township benefits from recreational facilities located within the Village of Port Sanilac. These include several small parks, a Bark Shanty Citizens Community Center, the Sanilac County Historical Museum, a collection of historic buildings, and a summer theatre. The Village also provides access to two (2) private marinas and the State Harbor of Refuge.

Recreational opportunities, located in close proximity to the Township are: the Lexington and Forester, Sanilac County Parks; the Minden City, Sanilac, and Cass City State Game Area; and the Sanilac Petroglyphs and historic park located in Greenleaf

Township. Holiday Beach and Huron Shores Campgrounds are privately owned camps north of Port Sanilac.

### **Medical Facilities**

The nearest medical center is the Mackenzie Hospital located in Sandusky. A clinic associated with Mackenzie Hospital has been established in Port Sanilac to serve the daily needs of local residents. Additionally, Deckerville Hospital has established a weekend emergency clinic in the Village of Lexington, about five miles south of the Township border. Ambulance service is provided through Mackenzie Hospital, with EMR units stationed either in Carsonville, located two miles west of the Township boundary, or in the Village of Port Sanilac.

A number of studies have been completed to determine the existing and projected future conditions in Sanilac Township. The following text summarizes that information. The full text of the background studies is included in an appendix to this document.

### **Circulation and Traffic**



The primary means of transportation used to reach Sanilac Township are automobiles and water craft.

#### **Roadways**

The road network within Sanilac Township is maintained by Sanilac County Road Commission, though the Township may take the lead in suggesting the location of improvements. Road improvements are paid for on a cost sharing basis with the County; the majority of the cost is borne by the Township. Road maintenance activities are handled on a contractual basis with the Sanilac County Road

Commission.



There is no direct local access to a federal interstate highway within Sanilac Township. Interstate 69 passes approximately forty (40) miles south of the Township. Interchanges which access 1-69 are available in Port Huron and Imlay City.

The major interregional routes passing through the Township are Michigan State Highways 25 and 46. M-25 runs north-south along the lake shore. M-46 follows an east-west course which nearly bisects the Township. The two highways intersect in the center of Port Sanilac. Outside the Township M-53 provides the route to Imlay City and 1-69.

Applegate and Washington Roads, both which move traffic in east-west directions, are basically the only two paved roads, other than M-25 and M-46. With the exception of one (1) mile of Custer Road, the remaining road system is comprised of gravel, county primary and local roads whose primary users are local residents.

### **National Functional Classification (NFC)**

The National Functional Classification (NFC) indicates how roads are classified by the State of Michigan in conformance with the funding requirements of the Federal Highway Administration. Road classifications are defined by Michigan Department of Transportation. The NFC categories appear below.

1. **Rural or Urban Interstates (Principal Arterials):** These generally carry long distance, through-travel movements. They provide access to important traffic generators, such as major airports and regional shopping centers.
2. **Rural or Urban Minor Arterials:** Similar to the above category, except that they carry trips of shorter distance and to lesser traffic generators.
3. **Rural Major or Urban Collectors:** These provide more access to property than do arterials. They also funnel traffic from residential or rural areas to arterials.
4. **Rural or Urban Local:** These roads primarily provide access to property.

Only interstates, arterials, and collectors are considered federal-aid roads and are eligible for federal funds under the National Highway System (NHS) or Surface Transportation Program (STP). Table 9 summarizes the NFC classifications for selected roads in Sanilac Township that are eligible for federal aid.

**TABLE 9  
NATIONAL ROAD CLASSIFICATION**

<u>Road Name</u>	<u>NFC Road Classification</u>
Sanilac Road	Rural or Urban Other Principal Arterial
M-25, North of Port Sanilac	Rural or Urban Minor Arterial
M-25, South of Port Sanilac	Rural or Urban Other Principal Arterial
Washington Road	Rural Minor Collector
Applegate Road	Rural Major or Urban Collector

Source: MDOT, 2009

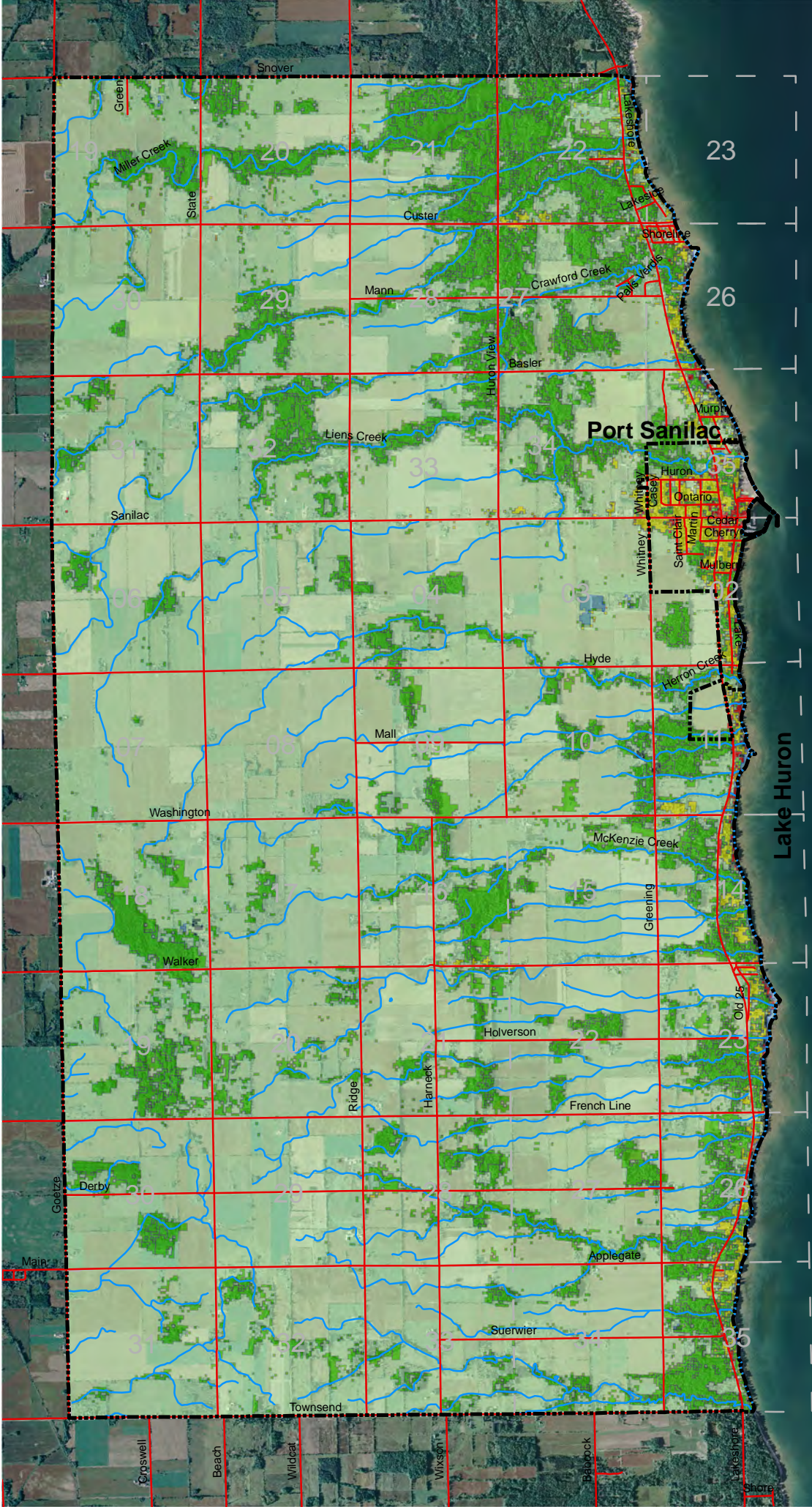
## Existing Land Use

Map 4 illustrates existing land use within Sanilac Township. It contains six (6) basic existing land use categories which include:

- ❖ **Agricultural:** The majority of the Township’s land area falls within this category. This includes unfarmed uses, open space and low density residential.
- ❖ **Low Density Residential:** This land use category contains primarily single-family detached residential properties with little or no agriculture present. They are primarily limited to the Lake Huron Shoreline. Several residential areas have been newly established inland.
- ❖ **High Density Residential:** This land use category contains properties located along M-25 at Lake Huron, in between single family. This includes a large mobile home development located near the intersection of Custer Road and M-25 and another located at Applegate Road and M-25.

- ❖ **Commercial/Industrial:** This land use category contains small commercial properties located along M-25 and M-46. One existing industrial parcel is located just outside the Port Sanilac village limits on Whitney Drive.
- ❖ **Woodland/Recreation:** Huron Shores Golf Course is located on M-25 just south of the Snover Road. Additionally, pedestrian access to the lake exists via the Horatio Earl Scenic turnout. There are also several roads which provide public access to Lake Huron. This area also includes existing woodlands.
- ❖ **Rivers, Streams and Drains:** Indicates these water features throughout the Township.

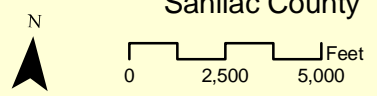
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- Agricultural
- Low Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial/Industrial
- Woodland/Recreation
- River, Streams & Drains

**Map 4**  
**EXISTING**  
**LAND COVER/LAND USE**

Sanilac Township  
Sanilac County



Source: National Land Cover Data, 1992,  
Michigan Center for Geographic Information

**Chapter Three:**

# **Goals & Strategies**

A key element in the preparation of the Plan is the identification of community goals which reflect the community's vision regarding the future development of the Township. Community goals combined with the Background Studies are the foundation of the Plan. In turn, policies are formulated to provide guidance and direction to the achievement of the Township's goals.

## **Community Character**

### Goal

The Township shall strive to maintain the rural residential and agricultural character which contributes to making the Township a desirable place to live, work, and play.



### Strategies

- ❖ The guidelines governing the intensity of planned land uses shall be dependent on the natural capability of the land and ability of local infrastructure to support various degrees of development.
  
- ❖ Update the Zoning Ordinance to include provisions that will maximize the preservation and protection of woodlands, wetlands, agricultural land and open space in the Township as development occurs.

## **Agricultural**

### Goal

To maintain the Township's rural character, it is essential to preserve the local characteristics that contribute to a viable, stable agricultural industry.

### Strategies

- ❖ It is the Township's policy to encourage the retention of the best soils and farmsteads in agricultural production, and encourage new economic opportunities within the agricultural community.

- ❖ It is also the Township's policy to encourage agricultural practices that reduce or eliminate contamination of surface waters and their run-off.
- ❖ It is the Township's policy to limit rezoning of agricultural lands to uses not compatible with the existing land uses and protection of ground water resources.
- ❖ It is the Township's policy to allow for and encourage farmland protection through the transfer of development rights, purchase or lease of development rights, conservation easements and the clustering of non-farm development.

## **Residential**

### **Goal**

Guide the development of the Township in a manner, which will create, preserve, and enhance the living environment of the existing and future residential areas of the community.



### **Strategies**

- ❖ Development should be dependent on the capability of the natural resource base and availability of public services, the opportunity for a range of residential densities and styles should be provided.
- ❖ Require adequate transitional areas, uses, or buffers between residential and non-residential uses to lessen potential conflicts, maintain property values, and appearance.
- ❖ Encourage new residential developments to be located near existing residential areas and services including sewer, water and streets.



- ❖ Promote the development of a variety of housing types and residential living environments to accommodate and reflect the various income levels and age groups within the Township.
- ❖ Propose only low density/agricultural land uses in areas where natural resource conditions are least capable of supporting development. Natural resource considerations should include soils, woodlands, wetlands, rivers and bodies of water.
- ❖ Propose higher density residential growth adjacent to the Village of Port Sanilac.
- ❖ Provide a range of development options such as clustering, and planned unit developments in the zoning ordinance, which encourage innovative development patterns that result in preservation of natural features and maintenance of open spaces.

## **Commercial**

### **Goal**

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

- ❖ Discourage strip commercial development, thoroughfare frontage developments.
- ❖ Encourage future commercial development near the existing Village of Port Sanilac center.
- ❖ Limit intensive commercial development to areas adequately served by sewer and water facilities.
- ❖ Future commercial development should be of a smaller scale to help preserve the rural character of the Township and the “small town” appearance.

- ❖ Provide adequate screening and buffering between commercial and non commercial land uses.
- ❖ Review and enhance Zoning Ordinance landscape standards for commercial uses to ensure developments are visually appealing and appropriately screened from residential areas.
- ❖ Review Zoning Ordinance sign standards to ensure appropriate scale, lighting, landscaping, and design of commercial signage that is compatible with the character of Sanilac Township.
- ❖ Review Zoning Ordinance standards to ensure that development criteria encourage commercial uses to occur within appropriately planned areas where they will not negatively impact community character and the natural environment.

## **Industrial**

### **Goal**

Existing and future industrial development should not detract from the community's rural character, and should help to balance the local tax base while providing job opportunities to local residents.

### **Strategies**

- ❖ A limited amount of industrial land use shall be planned to enhance the local tax base and provide employment opportunities for Township residents.
- ❖ The location of new industrial areas will be based upon the capability of the land to support such development.
- ❖ Primarily clean, light industry will be encouraged.
- ❖ The use of paved thoroughfares will be emphasized.
- ❖ Accessibility and suitability of natural features, such as topography and

soil characteristics are as important as the availability of land in order to protect other uses.

- ❖ Develop Zoning Ordinance standards for landscaping and screening to buffer industrial and research uses from adjacent land uses and to improve views from the roadway.
- ❖ Review and enhance the performance standards of the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that the health and safety of Township residents is maintained while encouraging new light industrial and research development.

## **Natural Resources**

### **Goal**

Preserve and protect the natural resources of Sanilac Township.

### **Strategies**

- ❖ Natural vegetation and topographical features along stream corridors and waterways shall be preserved.
- ❖ Uses shall be restricted to those which offer no danger of topographical disturbance to the corridor, degradation of water quality, increased run-off, sedimentation, or stream channel alteration.
- ❖ Surface water run-off shall not exceed the rate which occurs under existing, undeveloped conditions.
- ❖ Utilize progressive storm water management and erosion control techniques to ensure that development will not adversely impact natural resources and surrounding property.
- ❖ Due to the local reliance on individual wells, the retention and protection of groundwater resources is important to both Sanilac Township and the surrounding areas. Since recharge areas extend beyond Sanilac Township boundaries, County and regional cooperation will be needed to effectively manage this concern.

- ❖ Recharge areas shall be protected from pollution by controlling all uses which discharge wastes into the hydrological cycle. It shall be equally critical to monitor the small, or non-point producers spread across a large area as well as uses which handle or produce concentrated hazardous materials (a point source of pollution).
- ❖ Natural contours shall be preserved rather than alteration through mass grading. Existing land form shall be considered as part of land use planning and design.
- ❖ Careful planning of slopes in order to reduce erosion, maintain stability, and control amounts and velocities of run-off.
- ❖ Three aspects of wetland protection should be recognized in reviewing proposed developments within and in the vicinity of wetland areas: the wetland area itself; the adjacent fringe or buffer area; and the remainder of the watershed which drains into and out of the wetland area beyond the fringe or buffer.
- ❖ Development which is permitted in and around wooded areas shall be planned, constructed, and maintained so that existing healthy trees and native vegetation are preserved.
- ❖ When possible, preserve native trees rather than to rely on removal and subsequent replanting. The diversity of woodland areas shall be protected to ensure long-term stability, and the variety of species preserved.
- ❖ Encourage preservation of existing woodlands in future development.

## Shoreline

### Goal

The Lake Huron shoreline is a significant Township resource and shall be protected from sources of degradation.



### Strategies

- ❖ Erosion control measures should be encouraged to protect the walls and banks of rivers, streams and lakes. A minimum distance between the floodplain and the top of the bank should be established.
- ❖ To protect the shoreline beaches and bluffs from further damage, the Township shall limit the types of development allowed within the shoreline zone, and shall encourage property owners to take measures to conserve their portion of the shoreline area, as allowed by the Shore-lands Protection and Management Act.
- ❖ Join forces with the surrounding jurisdictions to work with the Corp of Engineers and the MDEQ to establish a mutually recognized high water mark for Lake Huron.
- ❖ Educate lake shore residents about accreted land.
- ❖ Discuss the need for the development of a Shoreline Protection Overlay District for the Zoning Ordinance: mapping out of sensitive coastal resources; allowable uses must take protection precautions.
- ❖ Design and adopt lakescape (landscape) standards in order to develop vegetative buffer zones between allowable uses and Lake Huron.
- ❖ Agricultural practices shall respect stream corridors and waterways and the natural drainage and run-off patterns associated with them.

- ❖ Actively pursue grants and representation in State and Federal programs that are currently studying both the problems and solutions to clean-up and pollution in the Great Lakes and Lake Huron in particular.

## **Community Facilities**

### **Goal**

Provide adequate public services and community facilities to meet the needs of the existing and future population of the Township.

### **Strategies**

- ❖ Sanitary Sewers and Water Plans for the installation of sanitary sewer and water facilities shall be limited to areas where existing population densities and natural resource conditions warrant it necessary for public health, safety and welfare.
- ❖ Encourage alternatives to the use of sewage lagoons in Sanilac Township, in cooperation and coordination with other townships and villages.
- ❖ Encourage and regulate those developer conditions and practices that least impact surface and ground water, that we may improve the water quality of Lake Huron and protect our aquifers.
- ❖ Seek grants through Federal, State and other funding sources for infrastructure improvements, community facility and service improvements and economic development
- ❖ Direct development to areas with existing infrastructure and where infrastructure is not adequate; pursue grants with contributions from developers to fund the upgrading of infrastructure to support proposed new development.



- ❖ Educate landowners on the proper maintenance of septic systems.
- ❖ Review the Zoning Ordinance to determine if the Township has regulations that cover private community waste water systems.
- ❖ Recognize the importance of new technologies such as high speed internet/broadband.

## **Parks and Recreation/Open Space**



### **Goal**

The Township shall foster scenic and recreational opportunities within its boundaries which provide an attractive recreational setting both for tourists and part-time residents as well as year round citizens.

### **Strategies**

- ❖ Work with adjoining townships as well as the Village of Port Sanilac to provide bicycle trails, snowmobile trails, cross country skiing, hiking and related recreational activities including lake access opportunities.
- ❖ Pursue grants from State and Federal sources for the development of said recreational activities including the purchase of additional Lake Huron properties within the Township for Parks or Recreational Resort opportunities.
- ❖ Resort/Recreational opportunities shall be promoted as a valuable economic resource. This policy will be pursued, as stated in the goals, by working with adjoining townships and the Village of Port Sanilac, as well as pursuing grants from State and Federal sources to obtain land, easements, or infrastructure.

- ❖ Open space areas should be maintained and recognized for their natural potential as undeveloped areas.
- ❖ Encourage open space in conjunction with new governmental, institutional, commercial and residential development.
- ❖ Consider the development of a Park and Recreation Master Plan to identify and inventory the recreational needs of the Township.

## **Traffic and Circulation**

### **Goal**

Provide and/or maintain a safe and efficient road network while respecting the Township's rural character.

### **Strategies**

- ❖ The road network capacity will be emphasized as primary consideration in land use planning decisions.
- ❖ Road improvement priorities are based upon a hierarchy established by the function each road serves. The allocation of improvement dollars shall give priority towards roads which function to benefit the greatest number of Township residents or provide the greatest economic benefit to the Township
- ❖ Work with the Sanilac County Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation to plan for vehicular and pedestrian safety at intersections and on roadways.
- ❖ Link transportation planning efforts with future land use planning.
- ❖ Regulate land use along the major roadways in the township to avoid hazardous situations and to maintain the road's primary function of serving through traffic.



- ❖ Promote access management techniques that will protect the function of arterial streets (e.g., reverse frontage access roads, marginal access roads, or shared access driveways) should be considered for properties fronting on arterial roads
- ❖ List reasonable conditions that can be applied to special use permits that will increase the accessibility and safety of commercial and industrial uses such as the future construction of sidewalks, installation of dry hydrants when feasible, share drives and parking, etc.
- ❖ Develop a long range plan for improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle network to serve resident's needs.
- ❖ Encourage sound buffers along major transportation corridors to reduce traffic noise.

## **Economic Development**

### **Goal**

Improve the economic environment of the Township.

### **Strategies**

- ❖ Encourage economic growth opportunities which are complementary to existing conditions in the Township which can be promoted in cooperation with the Village of Port Sanilac.
- ❖ Encourage the marketing of local agricultural products within the region.
- ❖ Develop year around employment opportunities appropriate for local industry, tourism and agricultural environment.
- ❖ Retain and expand the tourism base.
- ❖ Market the region as a desirable area for retirees.
- ❖ Encourage the maintenance of low tax rates to aid in business attraction

and growth.

- ❖ Enhance retail and tourism development in local markets.
- ❖ Build opportunities for regional exports.

**Chapter Four:**

# **Future Land Use Plan**

The Land Use Plan is more than a series of maps. Goals establish a direction. Policies, represented in both graphic and narrative form, identify the more specific manner in which the goals are to be implemented.

Map 5, the Future Land Use map, serves as a graphic representation of the Township's goals and policies. The Future Land Use map is not a zoning map, but rather a generalized guide to the desired future land use patterns within the Township. It is not necessarily intended to follow existing lot lines. Generally, the future land use categories follow established boundaries such as roads and rivers, etc.

In the course of preparing the plan, several factors were considered: existing development patterns, demographic trends, regional influences, sewer and water service areas, natural resource conditions, existing land use and zoning, and road patterns. To this extent, it reflects general policy toward development and redevelopment.

In general, the following considerations shall be given to all development based on the level of proposed intensity:

Low intensity land uses shall be located where natural resource conditions are least capable of supporting development, existing roads are inadequate to support additional traffic demands, and low density land use patterns currently exist. Compatible land uses generally consist of low density residential, open and agricultural land, and recreational land.

Medium intensity land uses shall be located where natural resource conditions are moderately capable of supporting development, roads are adequate to handle additional traffic demands, and medium density land use patterns exist. Suitable land uses consist of medium density residential with complementary commercial, office, public, and quasi-public uses.

High intensity land uses shall be located where natural resource conditions are capable of supporting development. Access to major thoroughfares and highways should be available, and medium to high density land use patterns currently exist. Suitable land uses consist of high density residential, office, industrial and general commercial land uses.

## Future Land Use Categories

The section below provides a description of each of the future land use categories used in the future land use map. Each category below provides a general description and intent, and a listing of appropriate uses.

### Agricultural/Rural Residential

***Intent*** This land use is the largest in the Township. The goal of this land use category is to encourage agriculture by maintaining land and property values that can be supported by agricultural enterprises. This can be accomplished by minimizing the establishment of non-agricultural uses.



***Description*** The recommended density shall be a maximum of one (1) dwelling unit per acre or greater. The majority of the Township land area has been reserved for agriculture and rural residential land uses. This designation responds to a lack of adequate roads, distances from community facilities, and a lack of public services experienced

throughout this area. Most important though, are the natural resource constraints in these sections which make them unsuitable for intense residential development. Throughout these areas are soils which are unsuitable for intense

residential development, and many wetland and groundwater recharge areas which would be adversely affected by more intense development.

**Appropriate Uses** – The main desirable land uses and elements of the Agriculture/Rural Residential Land Use Category are:

- Single-family residences outside platted subdivisions and site condominiums.
- Agricultural activities.
- Public access conservation areas.
- Public and semi public institutional uses and structures.
- Parks, open space and recreational facilities.

### **Lake Front Residential**

**Intent** Residential land use is planned for the entire stretch of land adjacent to the Lake Huron shoreline immediately east of M-25.

**Description** The recommended density for this land use category is a maximum of one (1) dwelling unit per 20,000 square feet.

**Appropriate Uses** Desirable uses and elements of Lake Front Residential category include:

- Single residences.
- Residential cluster developments.
- Planned Unit Developments.
- Parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities.
- Public and semi public institutional uses and structures.
- Seasonal cottages and cabins.
- Conservation areas.
- Motels, resorts, spas.

## **High Density/Multiple Family Residential**

**Intent** High Density Residential use should be planned for areas most capable of supporting additional development because of the, availability of utilities, natural resource conditions, and the adequacy of roads.

**Description** Areas intended for single and/or multiple family residential land use with a recommended density of one (1) or two (2) dwelling units per acre. This number may be increased if municipal services are available. Currently, there are no areas planned for this use within the Township or in the foreseeable future.

**Appropriate Uses** - Desirable uses and elements of the High Density Residential category include:

- Single and Two family residences.
- Residential cluster developments.
- Multiple family dwellings.
- Parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities.
- Public and semi public institutional uses and structures.
- Planned Unit Developments.
- Mobile Home Parks.

## **Local Commercial/Office**

**Intent** The goal of the Commercial/Office land use category is to provide areas for commercial, office and associated office uses. In addition, this land use category also allows the mixing of commercial, office and high density residential uses under controlled conditions that encourage a unique quality design.

Designated commercial areas are intended to serve the Township resident's demands for convenience goods, personal and business services, and retail sales. Additional considerations shall apply to the development of commercial land uses. Commercial use shall be located with direct accessibility to a paved thoroughfare in areas where a minimal impact to neighboring residential areas will occur. Strip commercial development will be discouraged. Planned

shopping centers which provide clustered commercial environments will be encouraged when possible. Designs incorporating low impact development standards are desirable.

***Description*** A large area planned for commercial/office has been located along the western edge of the Township, on the north and south sides of M-46. Commercial uses intended near Port Sanilac should take advantage of the existing concentration of commercial activity and adequate existing infrastructure.

Additionally, a strip of commercial/office is planned along the entire coast of the Township immediately west of M-25. This stretch will serve residents throughout the Township.

***Appropriate Uses*** - Desirable uses and elements of the Commercial/Office land use category include:

- General retail uses.
- Personal service establishments.
- Medical clinics and hospitals.
- Restaurants with or without drive throughs.
- Public utility buildings.
- Planned Unit Developments combining residential and non-residential uses.
- Multi-family development.
- Senior housing.
- Planned shopping centers.

## **Industrial**

***Intent*** This category is intended to accommodate manufacturing, warehousing/distribution and other similar industrial uses, which produce an insignificant amount of heat, noise, glare, offensive odors, and similar environmental disturbances. One area has been planned to allow continued industrial development opportunities within the Township, located immediately west of the Village. It encompasses the existing industrial land use, provides a



location near other concentrated activity centers and provides direct access to M-46, a major thoroughfare.

**Description** The suggested minimum lot size for Light Industrial uses is five (5) acres. Light Industrial uses are preferably served by municipal sewer and water systems.

**Appropriate Uses** – Desirable uses and elements of the Light Industrial category are as follows:

- Light manufacturing: food products, textiles, lumber and wood products, medical devices, toys, musical instruments.
- Whole sale establishments.
- Research and development.
- Warehousing and storage.

## **Public/Quasi-Public and Park/Recreation**



**Intent** The Public/Quasi-Public and Park/Recreation land uses designated on the land use plan reflect existing conditions. Areas in the future may be designated for public recreational use as identified in the Community Goals and Policies. These may include the possibility of easement development i.e., bike and snowmobile trails and the potential of additional public resort/recreation areas, through

government grant assistance and/or other venues. One area designated for Park and Recreation is located north of Walker Road to the east of M-25.

*Appropriate Uses* Desirable uses and elements of the Public/Quasi public and Parks and Recreation category are as follows:

- Agricultural activities.
- Conservation easements.
- Passive or active recreation.
- Municipal, Federal buildings.
- Resorts.

## **Special Land Uses**

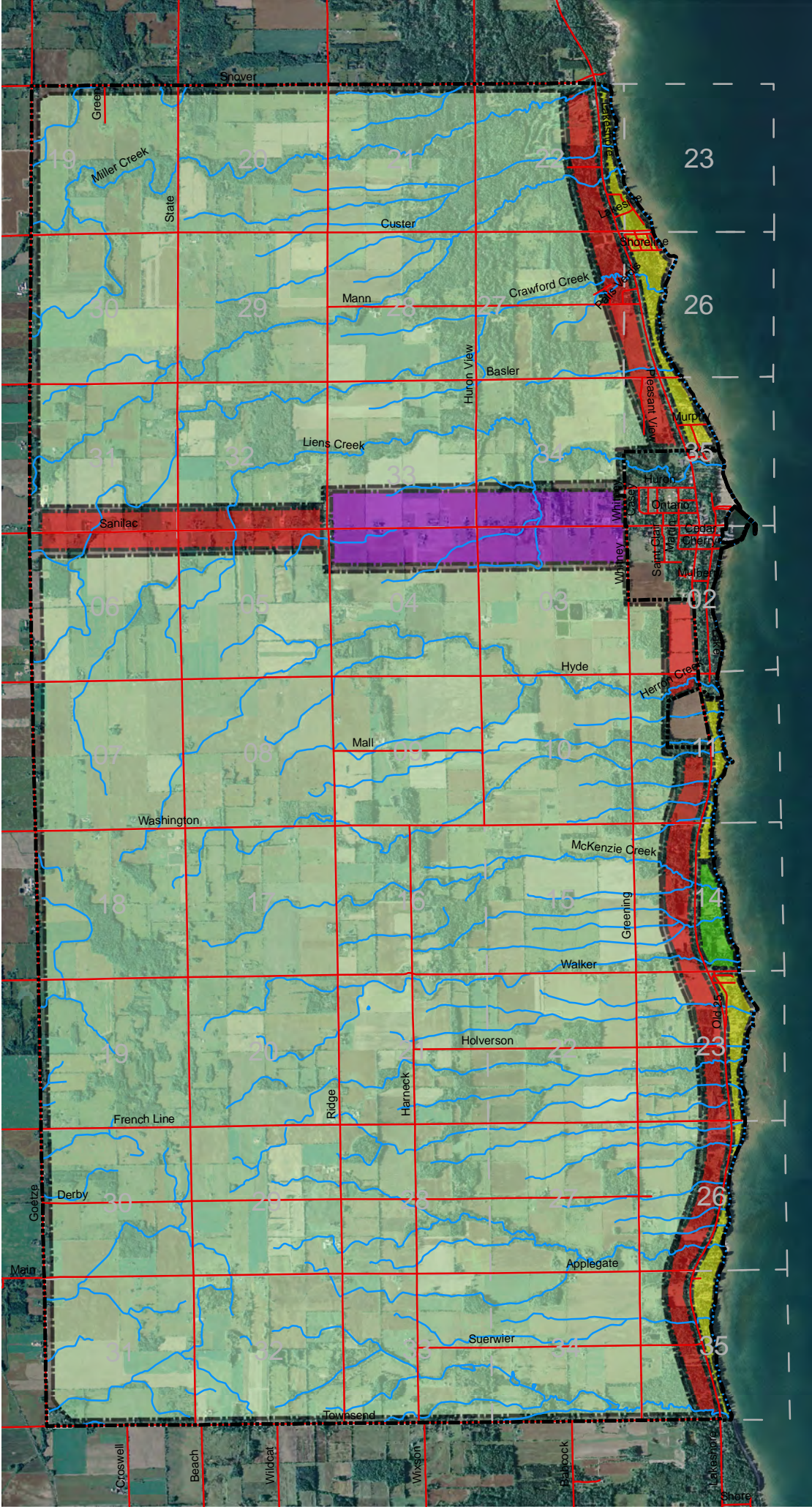
There are a growing number of land uses which present unique or special circumstances in regard to land use management. These are typically regulated as special land uses in community zoning ordinances. A special land use is a use, which is permitted only after a special review has determined that the land use and associated site development proposal meets special standards to assure its compatibility with both surrounding land uses and the other permitted uses in the district. Though such uses may be considered generally compatible with the intent of the zoning district within which they are permitted, such uses may not necessarily be appropriate on a particular parcel in the subject zoning district. These unique or special circumstances may be a result of traffic, noise, or visual or operational characteristics, which if unmitigated could result in significant public or private nuisances.

Special land uses should be permitted in appropriate locations pursuant to specific standards and review procedures established in the Township's zoning ordinance. Approval should not be indiscriminate and conditions may be imposed to minimize impacts on surrounding lands. These standards shall accomplish the following:

- Assure that the design, construction, operation and maintenance of land uses are in a manner harmonious with the character of adjacent property and the surrounding area;
- Avoid inappropriate changes to the essential character of the surrounding area;

- Avoid interference with the general enjoyment of adjacent property;
- Improve the use or character of the property under consideration and the surrounding area in general, yet also be in keeping with the natural environment of the site;
- Avoid negative impacts upon adjacent property or conditions, which will be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of persons, or property through the excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, odor, fumes, or glare;
- Assure availability of adequate essential public facilities and services, or evidence that the person responsible for the proposed special facilities and services, or evidence that the person responsible for the proposed special land use shall be able to continually provide adequately for the services and facilities deemed essential to the special land use under consideration; and
- Avoid demands on public services and facilities in excess of current capacity.

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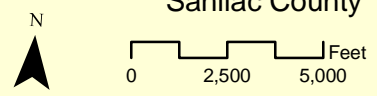


- Agricultural/Rural Residential
- Lakefront Residential
- Commercial/Office
- Recreation/Parks
- Industrial

**Map 5**

**FUTURE LAND USE**

Sanilac Township  
Sanilac County



**Chapter Five:**

# **Implementation and Zoning Plan**

The Master Plan is a statement designed to accommodate future growth and redevelopment. It forms the philosophical basis for the more technical and specific implementation measures. It must be recognized that development and change will occur either with or without planning and the Master Plan will have little effect upon future development unless adequate implementation programs are established. This section identifies actions and programs, which will be useful if the plan is to be followed.



Varieties of programs or administrative “tools” are available to help the plan succeed and are listed below.

## **Ordinance Enforcement**

The most essential tool for implementing the Master Plan is the enforcement of existing ordinances. While the Master Plan embodies the desires of the community for an improved living environment, the Zoning Ordinance and other general ordinances establish minimum standards designed to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

## **Subdivision Control and Site Condominium Regulations**

Another means to control and implement the Master Plan is through a Subdivision Control Ordinance and the Site Condominium Ordinance. Zoning Ordinance and regulations should be reviewed to determine their adequacy to control growth

## Continuation of Prime Agricultural Uses

Through proper land regulations, provide and maintain agricultural zoning districts, which discourage the development of nonfarm, single-family residential units, in prime agricultural areas. Discourage the rezoning, development, or expansion of infrastructure into prime agricultural areas and nonfarm related areas. Consider the use of Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Ordinances to apply for state funding and permanently preserve open space.



## Employ a Variety of Development Approaches

Alternative zoning and development techniques such as planned unit developments (PUD), cluster development and mixed-use zones can be more responsive to economic, social, environmental, cultural and real estate market changes. Therefore, these techniques may be more effective in accomplishing the goals of the Township's Master Plan.

1. ***Planned Unit Development (PUD)***. Authorized by the State of Michigan, the PUD gives Sanilac Township flexibility to work with a developer to ensure a high-quality project that provides a variety of uses beneficial to residents, business, and employees such as a mixture of uses or a compact, pedestrian friendly design.
2. ***Cluster Development***. Use of clustering consolidates development in one or more areas of a site in order to preserve and protect natural features or other features of the site, or adjacent property. While most cluster developments are for residential use in suburban and rural areas where there is generally more land available to develop, this approach can also be used in Sanilac Township but to a lesser extent. Larger tracts of land still available for development could be developed in such a way.



Properly developed sites could be connected through a trail and greenway system to housing, shopping, and dining opportunities.

- 3. **Mixed Use Zoning.** Before modern zoning, a mixture of uses was common in downtown areas and at intersections. Current zoning practices permit mixed-use environments. However, regulatory controls that offer greater flexibility near the Port Sanilac center and to developers should be performance-based and focused on consistency and compatibility of land uses rather than the type of uses.

## **Special Purpose Ordinances**

Control of land use activities need not be confined to the Zoning Ordinance or Subdivision Control Ordinance. Special purpose ordinances that should be considered by Sanilac Township, if not already, include the following:

- ✓ Private Road Ordinance
- ✓ Engineering Design Standards
- ✓ Sanitary Sewer Ordinance (in coordination with Port Sanilac engineering standards)
- ✓ Purchase of Development Rights Ordinance
- ✓ Community Waste Treatment Ordinance
- ✓ Planned Unit Development Ordinance
- ✓ Home Occupations/Home Based Business Ordinance
- ✓ Stormwater Management
- ✓ Wind Energy Conversion Systems Ordinance

## **Capital Improvements Program**

Capital improvement programs (CIP) consider the funding and timing of all municipally related capital needs, including such items as roadways, utilities, parks and recreation, Township Hall expansions and sub stations for fire service. The CIP is a schedule of projects that contains estimated costs and sources of funding. The Master Plan should be used as a key reference document in the preparation of the CIP to ensure that public dollars are spent efficiently.

## **Plan Education**

Citizen involvement and support will be necessary as the Master Plan is implemented. Local officials should constantly strive to develop procedures that increase citizen's awareness of the planning process and the day-to-day decision making, which affects the implementation of the Master Plan. A continuous program of discussion, education and participation will be important as the Township moves toward realization of the goals and objectives contained within the Master Plan.

## **Plan Updates**

The Master Plan should not become a static document. State law regarding Township Planning requires that the Master Plan be reviewed every five (5) years. Therefore, within five (5) years of adoption, the Planning Commission must review the plan and determine whether to commence the procedure to amend the plan or to adopt a new plan. Based on this legislation, the Township must re-review this Master Plan in the year 2016.

Once adopted, the Master Plan is the official policy guide to be used by the Township Planning Commission and Board to solve existing and anticipated community development issues. Through the written goals and the Future Land Use map, the Master Plan illustrates the attitude and desire of the community toward future growth and development. Further, the Master Plan promotes continuity in development policy as the Planning Commission and Board membership changes over the years

## **Zoning Plan**

The purpose of a Zoning Plan is to prevent a separation between the vision of the Future Land Use Plan and the Township's primary implementation tool, the Zoning Ordinance. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008) ensures that this separation is removed, by requiring that a Zoning Plan be included as part of the Master Plan.

Zoning is the development control that has been most closely associated with planning. Originally, "zoning" was intended to inhibit nuisances and protect property values. However, zoning should also serve the following additional purposes:

- To protect the public's health, safety and general welfare.
- To promote orderly growth in a manner consistent with land use policies and the Future Land Use Map
- To promote attractiveness in the Township's physical environment by providing variation in lot sizes, bulk, density and appropriate land uses.
- To accommodate special, complex or unique uses through such mechanisms as planned unit developments, overlay districts, clustering or special use permits.
- To guide development to prevent future conflicting land uses (i.e. industrial uses adjacent to residential areas or high density residential adjacent to agricultural operations).
- To preserve and protect existing land uses until such time as they may change in accordance with the Master Plan.
- To promote the positive redevelopment of underutilized areas of the Township.

The zoning ordinance and official zoning map, in themselves, should not be considered as the major long range planning policy of the Township. Rather, the Master Plan should be regarded as a statement of planning policy. Zoning should be used to assist in implementing that policy. Future rezoning requests should be evaluated against the goals and objectives and arrangement of land uses specified in the Master Plan and on the Future Land Use Map.

Descriptions of Future Land Use categories are provided in Chapter 4, Future Land Use Plan.

Zoning Districts	Future Land Use Categories
Residential	
R, Residential AR, Agricultural Residential	RR, Rural Residential/Agricultural LFR, Lakefront Residential HDR, High Density Residential
Non-Residential	
C, Commercial I, Industrial	C, Commercial/Office I, Industrial PR, Parks and Recreation

### Recommended Zoning Actions:

- ❖ Review current zoning district standards to ensure compatibility with the intent of the Future Land Use plan.
- ❖ Potentially create a new Lakefront Residential overlay district after more in-depth study of the M-25 corridor. Due to the environmentally sensitive nature of the shoreline, special regulations should be considered.
- ❖ Develop language for the Industrial District which focuses on research and development activity and less on heavier industry.
- ❖ Examine the uses for each district - the more intensive uses could become special uses. However, the Township should always be mindful of the Right to Farm Act, which supersedes local zoning. Anything that interferes with agricultural production should be avoided.
- ❖ Update Zoning Ordinance to ensure compliance with Michigan Planning Zoning Enabling Act 110 of 2006.