

### PART III. GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Hampton Township General Development Plan is designed to guide future growth and development into an orderly pattern that is economic, environmentally sound, and consistent with Township goals. The proposals and recommendations included in the plan are the result of many months of study, deliberation and debate by the Township Planning Commission, elected officials and residents of the Township.

The General Development Plan is intended to be long-range and dynamic. It attempts to look 20 years ahead. Present trends such as those indicating lower birth rates, higher energy costs, more leisure time and higher standards of living have been considered in making plans that anticipate these long-range needs. Because of the constant change in our social and economic structure and activities, the Plan must be maintained through periodic review and revision. Only through this process will it always reflect 15 to 20 year goals, conditions, and trends.

The major purpose of the General Development Plan is to provide:

1. A comprehensive means of integrating many various proposals that look 15 to 20 years ahead to meet future needs regarding major aspects of physical conservation and development throughout the Township.
2. An official, advisory policy statement for encouraging orderly and efficient use of the land for residences, business, industry, parks and recreation areas, and for coordinating these uses of land with each other and with streets and highways and other necessary public facilities and services.
3. A logical basis for zoning, subdivision design, public improvement plans, and for facilitating and guiding other work of the Township Planning Commission and the Township Board as well as other public and private endeavors dealing with the physical development of the Township.
4. A means for private organizations and individuals to determine how they may relate their building projects and policies to official Township planning policies.
5. A means of relating plans of Hampton Township to plans of adjacent townships and cities and to the development of the metropolitan area as a whole.

## RESIDENTIAL LAND USE PLAN

Many communities attempt to limit multi-family uses by requiring approval of planned unit developments or conditional use permits. These procedures often result in fewer units being developed and the community usually has less control over locational aspects of the projects. Because the proposed locations are usually not revealed until the time of application, neighborhood controversies are often created because residents fear the intrusion of higher density residential uses.

Hampton Township has used a more straight forward approach by planning for higher density uses and allowing them as a use by right within these pre-planned areas. As a result, few residents expressed concern in a community attitude survey, over the future development of higher density uses.

### Rural Residential

The survey of local residents indicated that a number of families prefer to live in a very low-density environment on a larger (1 to 5 acre) parcel of land. These larger parcels provide greater privacy, opportunities for gardens and sufficient area for storage of boats, motor homes and so forth. Because these are very low intensity uses, they require fewer services and facilities than most urban types of development. For example, enclosed storm drainage and public sanitary sewers are normally not required because of the low population density in these areas. This minimizes service cost for the residents of these areas as well as Township residents in general.

In some communities, land use conflicts are created by these low density, non-farm uses and agricultural. These conflicts have been minimal in Hampton Township because the homes are located on large parcels, which provide privacy, adequate separation of uses and because most agriculture is limited to truck farming and cropland. There is little, if any, pasture land or raising of livestock, which is usually the cause of conflicts.

A far greater cause of conflict is the encroachment of urban types of development into established agricultural areas. These developments often cause premature extension or provision of urban types of services and facilities which are most expensive, and often the continued agricultural use of adjacent lands is no longer possible from an economic standpoint.

To prevent this from happening in Hampton Township, the plan proposes that urban types of development be prohibited from locating in the agricultural areas unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the necessary services and facilities can be economically provided and that the proposed use will not be detrimental to adjacent lands. Uses permitted within agricultural areas should be primarily limited to farming and related uses along with very low density, residential uses. These use limitations are most important so that the Township can grow in an orderly manner and so that services and facilities can be economically provided.

### Low Density Residential

The development of low-density, single-family homes has been the most dominant urban type of land use within the Township for the past 30 years. These are homes situated on lots that, for the most part, range from 15,000 to 20,000 square feet in size with an overall average density of about two homes per acre. The homes built in the Township have generally been larger and more valuable than the average for either the state or metropolitan area. The owners of these homes have great pride of ownership and maintain the homes in excellent condition.

One of the primary objectives of the Plan is to protect or preserve these existing areas and to encourage similar future developments by preventing the encroachment of conflicting land use types or the creation of other detrimental influences. For this reason, a rather large area within the Township has been proposed solely for low-density, single-family use. Most single-family homes have been built in this area which is well served with public utilities and which has excellent access to the existing major street system. This area is also conveniently served by schools, churches and shopping facilities.

### Medium Density Residential

While most past residential developments in Hampton Township have been of the low density variety, there is a growing trend for homes that are located on somewhat smaller lots. This trend is primarily the result of two basic factors. The first, and perhaps most significant, is the increasing cost of homesites resulting from increased raw land cost as well as increased development cost - both of which can be reduced with smaller lots. The second reason is that more and more families desire a smaller lot that requires less maintenance so that they have more time for leisure activities such as boating, camping, golf and so forth.

To satisfy this portion of the Township's housing needs, two basic areas have been proposed for medium density residential development as shown on the Comprehensive Plan and Map. While it is anticipated that the majority of these lands will be developed for single-family homes, it must also be recognized that there is a greatly increasing demand for duplexes. These are two family homes that usually have an exterior appearance of a single-family home. Often, the owner occupies one of the units and the other is rented to a family that desires an apartment along with a private lawn and other features normally associated with a single-family residential area. The plan, therefore, proposes that duplexes or two family dwellings be permitted in the medium density, residential areas of the Township.

## High Density Residential

High density residential uses have been planned for and permitted in Hampton Township since 1970. These uses include apartments, condominiums, mobile home parks and nursing homes. As previously stated, the development of these types of uses accounted for much of the population increase between 1970 and 1980.

To date most development has been apartment complexes with a density of 8 to 10 units per acre and mobile home parks with a density of 4 to 5 units per acre. It is anticipated that a strong demand for these types of uses will continue throughout the planning period. In addition, however, it is also anticipated that there will be an increased demand for condominium units at a density of 6 to 10 units per acre and also at 3 to 4 units per acre. The retirement age group is the fastest growing sector of the population and there has been strong demand for higher density condos with elevators and all services. There is also increased demand for single-story structures, with 2 to 4 units, designed to appear like single-family homes, placed in a subdivision type of setting. As condos, however, lawns, landscaping and the exteriors of the buildings are maintained by the condominium association rather than individual owners. These developments have become popular because they provide pride of ownership, equity build-up and a quiet setting without the maintenance burden.

High density residential uses were originally planned primarily as transition uses separating lower density residential uses from more intense commercial areas. The areas, as shown on the Comprehensive Plan map reflect several changes in the original plan.

The first major area proposed for high density residential use is located adjacent to and south of the Center Avenue Business District. This has been an excellent location because of easy access and offers the convenience of being adjacent to the business area. As a result the area has been expanded south to Youngs Ditch Road.

The second major area is adjacent to the business area along Center Avenue between Wagner & Burns roads. This area has been slightly reduced to allow a somewhat larger area for business development.

The third and final major area is generally located on the north side of Hampton Road. This area was originally selected because of its proximity to the Saginaw Bay, the County owned and operated golf course and the proximity to other compatible uses such as the Elks Lodge and the Bay County Juvenile Home.

The area shown on the plan has been somewhat reduced by eliminating an area west from Finn Road to the Consumers Power Company transmission line right-of-way. This reduction is proposed because of an expected somewhat slower rate of growth and to somewhat balance the area that was added south of Center Avenue.

The various areas proposed for high-density, residential use provide a wide variety of sites offering a multitude of site characteristics and amenities. All of the sites are also presently served by the necessary public utilities and urban services and therefore can be used for immediate development.

## COMMERCIAL LAND USE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan proposes to **limit** commercial development to three major areas and two minor areas. All three major areas have been established for many years and no new major areas are proposed. These areas include the frontage along Tuseola Road (M-15) and two areas along Center Avenue (M-25). The minor areas are very specialized and limited. These include the area south of the Bay Medical Center in the southwest portion of the Township and a portion of the frontage along the Saginaw Bay which is proposed for limited, private, recreational development.

Together, these lands can satisfy all of the business needs of the Township and surrounding rural areas throughout the planning period. Also, because all of these areas are already established, they can be developed with minimal conflicts with other land use types.

### Tuscola Road

The Tuscola Road Business Area includes about 1/2 mile of road frontage within Hampton Township. The existing uses range from older and in some cases obsolete structures to new, modern convenience types of businesses. The area originally started to develop as a strip commercial area, however, traffic flows were not sufficient to allow the area to become highly successful and as other areas, such as Center Avenue, developed the area could not successfully compete.

Traffic flows have continued to increase, however, and recently there has been considerable interest in further developing the area. This should be encouraged but **it** should also be strictly controlled to prevent conflicts with the adjacent single-family, residential uses.

### Center Avenue (West)

The primary Center Avenue Business Area extends approximately one mile east from the west Township boundary. **It** is one of the most **successful** business areas within the Bay County Metropolitan Area.

From a Township standpoint **it** is extremely important because **it** helps satisfy the shopping needs of Township residents, provides numerous employment opportunities and makes a major contribution to the local tax base. For these reasons **it** is important that the Township make the improvements necessary to assure the long-range success of the area.

The plan for the area includes the following major recommendations:

#### Traffic And Circulation

Modern businesses require high volumes of passing motorists to be successful. At the same time, increased traffic often creates congestion and traffic conflicts which then start to choke off business. For an area to be successful **it** therefore must be able to handle high traffic volumes safely and efficiently. The following types of improvements are recommended.

## 1. Curb-Cuts

Generally, new curb-cuts should not be spaced closer than 250 feet to allow for the smooth flow of traffic at 35 MPH. In some cases this may require the sharing of curb-cuts by two or more businesses. Historically, every business has wanted to control its own drive openings, however, as congestion increases and business decreases, owners start to see the value and benefit of restricting curb-cuts. The best way to control new curb-cuts is in the review of site plans for zoning compliance.

Removal of existing curb-cuts is also important and necessary to improve traffic flow. Sometimes this can be accomplished through persuasion. It is also possible to eliminate existing curb-cuts when the owners are seeking site plan approval to expand their business. Finally, the removal of curb-cuts may be possible by implementing an overall traffic improvement project.

## 2. Service Roads

The construction of service roads can be an effective way of improving traffic flow. Service roads as shown on the plan provide an alternative means of access to a particular business and they also permit movement between businesses without having to use Center Avenue.

The construction of service roads can be relatively expensive, particularly if the right-of-way must be acquired. In some cases, various business owners may be willing to share the cost of a service road. In other cases the Township may have to assess a portion of the cost to various properties and contribute the remainder from Township funds.

As can be noted on the plan, the construction of some of the service roads will open-up land for future development of offices. These offices will provide an excellent transition from more intense businesses to adjacent single-family homes. By being able to further develop the property, the owners may have a financial incentive to install a particular service road at their own expense.

## 3. Reduction of Parking Requirements

Most businesses that have been constructed during the past 10 to 15 years have been required to provide three square feet of paved parking area for each square foot of gross floor area. This ratio was based on parking studies conducted in the late 1960's and early 1970's and included area to meet the peak parking requirement and sufficient area for access and internal circulation. It also recognized that during the winter months part of the lot would be used for snow storage.

More recent studies indicate a substantial reduction in the amount of parking area required for most businesses. It is generally estimated that 5 to 7 parking spaces are required for each 1000 square feet of gross leasable floor area. This equates to two square feet of parking area for each square foot of gross floor area. These calculations do not, however, con-

sider snow storage requirements.

Based on this data, it is likely that the parking requirements can be reduced for many types of businesses without creating a shortage of parking space. This could be particularly important for land adjacent to the proposed service roads where it may be possible to construct smaller office buildings or similar uses on land now used as parking lots. This may provide additional incentive for land owners to participate in the expense of building service roads.

For all of these reasons the plan proposes that the Zoning Ordinance be revised to reduce the amount of required parking area. A mechanism should also be provided for owners of existing businesses to request a reduction in their parking requirements. Each request should be considered individually and would consider such factors as the amount of existing parking, internal circulation, building placement, provisions for snow storage and the particular type of business. This last factor is particularly important because certain businesses, such as restaurants, have much greater parking requirements than offices, furniture stores and others.

#### 4. Intersections

The intersection of Center Avenue and Scheurman Road has the second highest number of accidents of all intersections in Bay County. The intersection of Center Avenue and Pine Street is ranked ninth. Both of these intersections should be further studied by both the Bay County Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Highways to determine improvements that can be made to improve traffic safety.

#### 5. Limitation on Left Turns

A final means of improving traffic safety is to limit or prohibit left turns out of certain businesses. This prevents cars from cutting across five lanes of traffic which, during peak traffic periods, can be extremely dangerous.

### **Pedestrian Access**

Most business avenues similar to Center Avenue were developed with the motorist in mind with little thought given to pedestrian access. This applies both along the major route as well as on the various business sites.

The Township has been quite successful in recent years in requiring sidewalks along Center Avenue as part of the site plan approval process. These efforts should be continued and the zoning ordinance should be revised to provide a clearer mandate for the requirement of sidewalks.

Additionally, many businesses have large blacktopped parking lots with no provisions having been made to get shoppers safely from the parking space to the business. Here again, ordinance revisions are needed to make this a requirement of site plan approval.

## Land Use

Earlier sections of this Plan discussed existing land use in detail. The major land use problem is the fact that there is practically no street frontage and very little land anyplace that is available for future development. Additional development, however, is important to increasing the drawing power of Center Avenue which in turn is necessary to assure the long-term economic stability of the area.

Recently, Hampton Square Mall announced plans to add about 50,000 square feet of retail floor space to the shopping center. This type of growth is important to the entire business district. The only other available land for expansion is limited to a few smaller parcels along Center Avenue and some land south of Center Avenue along Pine Street.

The Plan suggests several alternatives for expansion of the business area. First, and as previously discussed, is to build service roads which will open up additional land for business development. The second proposal is to expand the present business area south along Pine Street to Youngs Ditch Road. This land is not well-suited for businesses that require high traffic visibility but it is desirable for various service types of businesses. If properly planned, these businesses could fit in well with the existing high-density, residential uses along Pine Street.

Finally, some additional land can be made available through the re-use or redevelopment of obsolete, non-conforming buildings along Center Avenue. Several of these are blighted, vacant buildings in dire need of removal. Instead of issuing special permits or variances to allow the continued use of these buildings the Township should encourage their removal so that the valuable property on which they are located can be used for higher and better uses.

## Streetscape Plan

Most of the businesses that have been developed during the last 15 years are well-planned and attractive. They generally, however, are mixed in with older buildings which have little appeal. The entire area would be much more attractive and would have a much greater sense of identity if a detailed streetscape plan is prepared and implemented. The proposed plan should consider the following:

1. Development of sidewalks along with limited landscaping and benches.
2. Removal or burying of numerous power poles and service lines.
3. Provisions for landscaping requirements on private property along the street frontage.
4. Limited landscaping within large parking lots to break-up the large areas of blacktopping.
5. Requirements for refuse containers to be screened and out of site.



6. Creation of incentives to encourage better maintenance of buildings.
7. Revisions to the sign ordinance to require more attractive signs and to assure the removal of obsolete or non-conforming signs.
8. Consideration of different lighting techniques to make the overall area more attractive and to create a sense of identity throughout the business district.

## Zoning

During the last 10 to 15 years Hampton Township has been successful in rigorously enforcing strict zoning provisions in accordance with state statutes. Recently, however, these statutes were amended to give the Township much greater flexibility and control with respect to zoning if it is done in accordance with a detailed plan for the area. Many of the proposals made in the preceding sections can be incorporated into this type of plan. The Township would then have one detailed development plan from which specific improvement projects could be implemented and it could also be used as the plan requisite for a much more detailed zoning map.

### Center Avenue (East)

The second business area along Center Avenue is located between Wagner and Burns roads. The western portion of this area, between Wagner and Knight roads, has been developed for many years with a number of freestanding buildings situated on small parcels. Many of the structures are located very close to the road right-of-way and have inadequate area for traffic circulation and parking.

In 1970, the Township Plan proposed that this area be reserved for long-range commercial development. It was envisioned that, as land became scarce in the area west of Pine Street, new businesses would start to locate in this area.

Generally, most new development has taken place in the area west of Pine Street where present traffic volumes average about 20,000 cars per day as compared with 11,000 for the area between Wagner and Burns roads. Land is becoming scarce west of Pine Street, and considerable interest is starting to be generated in the new area. It is anticipated that, as new business locates in this area and demonstrates that it can draw customers the additional two miles, it will start to develop very quickly.

Recognizing this, the Township has the opportunity to establish strict land use controls before most development occurs. Regulations for traffic controls, internal circulation, building setbacks, landscaping, underground utilities, signs, pedestrian access, public utilities and off-street parking should all be in place before extensive development takes place.

### Bay Medical Center Area

In the late 1960's and 1970's the Township approved the location and construc-

tion of a number of professional offices in the southwest portion of the Township south of the hospital. These were all approved by the issuance of special use permits which required that the offices be designed to blend in with the existing single-family homes in the area.

Professional offices are now the predominant use in this area. Criteria should be established so that the existing facilities can be expanded and new offices constructed without the necessity of having to receive a special use permit.

#### RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

One of the goals of the Plan is to encourage greater recreational use of the Saginaw Bay and Saginaw River waterfront area. At the present time, Finn Road Park is being further developed with overnight camping facilities, new restrooms and expanded parking areas. These facilities are most important for Township residents and they also have an economic benefit by providing a terminal point for non-resident fishermen who spend considerable sums of money at local businesses while visiting the area. The Township was also allocated grant funds for the acquisition of additional bay frontage along the west side of Knight Road as shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map. In 1988, the Township Board took action to not proceed with this project; however, the funds are still reserved and the project could be reconsidered in the near future. Private recreational projects being contemplated include a marina along the Saginaw River and further development at the end of Jones and Knight roads. Other facilities for such things as camping, fishing or golf courses should also be encouraged.

While additional development is proposed, it is also recognized that much of the waterfront area is extremely fragile from an environmental standpoint. Therefore it is proposed that environmental controls regulating building placement, tree removal and preservation of the sand ridges be established so that development can occur without destroying the natural amenities of the area.

## INDUSTRIAL LAND USE PLAN

Hampton Township has enjoyed an extremely high industrial tax base as a result of several power generating plants, owned by Consumers Power company, being located within the Township. Aside from these plants there is little other industrial development. Other lands reserved for industrial use have been located adjacent to Consumers Power Company and generally have not been provided with the full level of services available in other areas of the Township.

Considerable study has been given in past planning projects to the possible development of a fully improved industrial park, however, these plans have not been implemented for several reasons. First, and most importantly, there has been relatively little new industrial development anywhere within Bay County during the past 20 years. In the past, more emphasis was placed on retaining existing industry than on attracting new industry. In more recent years, particularly since the recession of the early 1980's, greater effort has been placed on attracting new industry and these efforts have been quite successful. A second major reason has been the fact that regional accessibility is not as good in Hampton Township as it is on the west side of Bay City which is served by both the US-11 and I-75 freeways. A final reason is that generally people think of industrial parks being used exclusively for manufacturing firms and there have not been enough new firms to justify the development of a park.

Several recent changes in development trends and attitudes make the development of an industrial park more viable than it has ever been. Most importantly is a change in attitudes of local residents. In past planning projects local residents, more or less, took the local economy for granted and industrial development was relatively unimportant and considered undesirable by many residents. The recent recession has caused dramatic changes in public attitudes regarding industrial development. Job retention and creation and strengthening of the local tax base have become major issues. As a result, economic development has become a major goal of this planning program.

While accessibility is still a somewhat limiting factor in Hampton Township it is only one of many factors that are important to prospective industries. Hampton excels in other areas such as low taxes, available public utilities, police protection, fire protection, a growing population, progressive attitudes of Township Officials, available land at reasonable prices, excellent schools and a reputation as a desirable community in which to live and work.

Historically, industrial parks have been primarily developed with manufacturing and warehousing types of uses. While these potential uses are still somewhat limited there is a broad range of other commercial/industrial uses that can also benefit from a location in a well-planned industrial park. By way of example, these include distributorships with warehousing and showrooms, industrial sales or manufactures representatives with offices, showrooms and warehousing, printing and publishing companies, data processing firms, building products sales, service and showrooms such as for plumbers, electricians, cabinetry or floor coverings and business equipment and furniture offices, sales and showroom facilities. While none of these are manufacturing firms they all have site and building requirements which can be satisfied in an industrial park setting.

Although these non-manufacturing uses do not generally require a high degree of site visibility and high traffic flows, like many businesses, they do require greater accessibility than more traditional industrial parks. Manufacturing firms must be easily accessible by workers and freight haulers who go there daily whereas the general public or persons referred by retailers may visit showrooms and other more commercial uses on a very infrequent basis. Therefore these uses require some degree of site visibility or must be located directly off from a major, well-known thoroughfare.

One possible area is shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map and is located south of Center Road and east of Jones Road. There are also other areas within the Township that would be equally acceptable. A more detailed industrial park feasibility study should be completed prior to the selection of final alternative sites.