

# Hopkins Township Master Plan

## *Acknowledgements*

### **Township Board**

Mark Evans, Supervisor

Sandy Morris, Treasurer

Lisa Battjes, Clerk

Bob Modreske, Trustee

Chuck Wamhoff, Trustee

### **Planning Commission**

Mike Timmer, Chair

Frederick Morley, Secretary

Tadd Heft

Chuck Wamhoff

Mark Forbes

Steve Wamhoff

Lori Castello

### *Prepared with the assistance of*

Professional Code Inspections

1575 142<sup>nd</sup> Ave.

Dorr, MI 49323

Mapping provided by: Allegan County Land Information Services

**HOPKINS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**RESOLUTION 2016-001**

At a regular meeting of the Hopkins Township Planning Commission held on Tuesday, May 24, 2016, at 7:00 p.m., at the Hopkins Township/Village Hall, 142 E. Main Street, Hopkins, MI, 49328, the following Resolution was offered for adoption by Planning Commission Member Mark Forbes and seconded by Planning Commission Member Lori Castello.

**A RESOLUTION OF APPROVAL OF THE UPDATED HOPKINS TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, MCL 125.3801 *et seq.* ("MPEA") authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare a Master Plan for the use, development, and preservation of all lands within the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has prepared an amended Master Plan and submitted such plan to all surrounding entities for review and comment as required; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2016, notice was provided to the Notice Group entities as provided in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on today's date to consider public comment on the proposed amended Master Plan, and to further review and comment on the proposed amended Master Plan, and to further review and comment on the proposed amended Master Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that the proposed amended Master Plan is desirable, proper, and reasonably furthers the use, preservation, and development strategies of the Township;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HERE BY RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. **Approval of the 2016 Master Plan.** The Planning Commission approves the Proposed Master Plan, including all of its chapters, figures, descriptive matters, maps and tables contained therein.
2. **Findings of Fact.** The Planning Commission has made the foregoing determination based on extensive review of existing land uses within the Township, a review of the existing Master Plan provisions and maps, and input received from adjacent jurisdictions including the Township Board and at Public Hearing as well as the assistance of professional planners and zoning administrators. The Planning Commission also finds that the amended Master Plan will accurately reflect and implement the Township's goals and strategies for the use, preservation and development of land within Hopkins Township.
3. **Effective Date.** The Master Plan will be effective as of this date.

YEAS: 4

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 3 ABSTAINING: 0

RESOLUTION DECLARED:  ADOPTED  DENIED

**CERTIFICATION**

We hereby certify that the above is a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Hopkins Township Planning Commission at the Date, Time and Place specified above pursuant to the required statutory procedures as referred to herein.

DATE: 5-23-16 Michael Timmer  
Mike Timmer, Chairman

Fred Morley  
Fred Morley, Secretary

# Hopkins Township Master Plan

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## Section I-Introduction

The Master Plan is a policy tool used by Township officials to coordinate growth and development decisions and to serve as the legal basis for zoning and land use regulation. The policies presented for future land use have been assessed and discussed at length. The intent is that when implemented, the Plan will foster healthy and efficient development consistent with the goals and visions of the residents and landowners.

The task of planning for the future arrangement of residential areas and logical industrial commercial areas might seem on its face a simple exercise. In reality planning must take into account a multitude of factors such as regional influences, existing land use patterns, transportation and accessibility factors, physical features and environmental limitations, utilities, population and economic trends and importantly, the goals and visions of the residents themselves. One empirical example of how consideration of these factors and influences is important is the separation or transition of residential areas from commercial and industrial districts that commonly occurs. If this were not done, not only would the aesthetic and property value of residential districts be decreased, but public health and safety could be jeopardized. A more direct example of the complex nature of land use planning in Hopkins Township is the strong desire within the community for the preservation of important farmland resources and the maintenance of a predominately rural, agrarian community in the face of strong regional growth pressures.

With the construction of Gun Lake Casino in Wayland Township and the planned sewer line that will serve 12<sup>th</sup> street between 130<sup>th</sup> and 135<sup>th</sup> Avenues, planning along the eastern edge of the Township will need to consider how these developments impact potential uses. Moreover, the primary factors that have drawn these proposals and plans to the area are a freeway system and commutable proximity to a major exploitable market area comprised of the two expanding metropolitan areas of Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo. These factors combined with the areas natural beauty creates an outlook for even more development pressure in the local region.

Given these changes, it is imperative that the Master Land Use Plan in fact builds upon the groundwork laid in the 2007 Future Land Use Plan for properly managing future growth. It is advantageous that this update to the Future Land Use plan allows the Township to once again bolster and refine its development policies at a time when the Township has not yet experienced explosive growth pressures and is therefore still able to implement effective proactive policies rather than reactive ones.

The Master Land Use Plan of Hopkins Township both as originally adopted, reviewed, and now updated is the result of data collection, analyses, field surveys, public meetings, and discussions by the Planning Commission, and of citizen input from workshops and formal public hearings. As part of the planning

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Hopkins Township

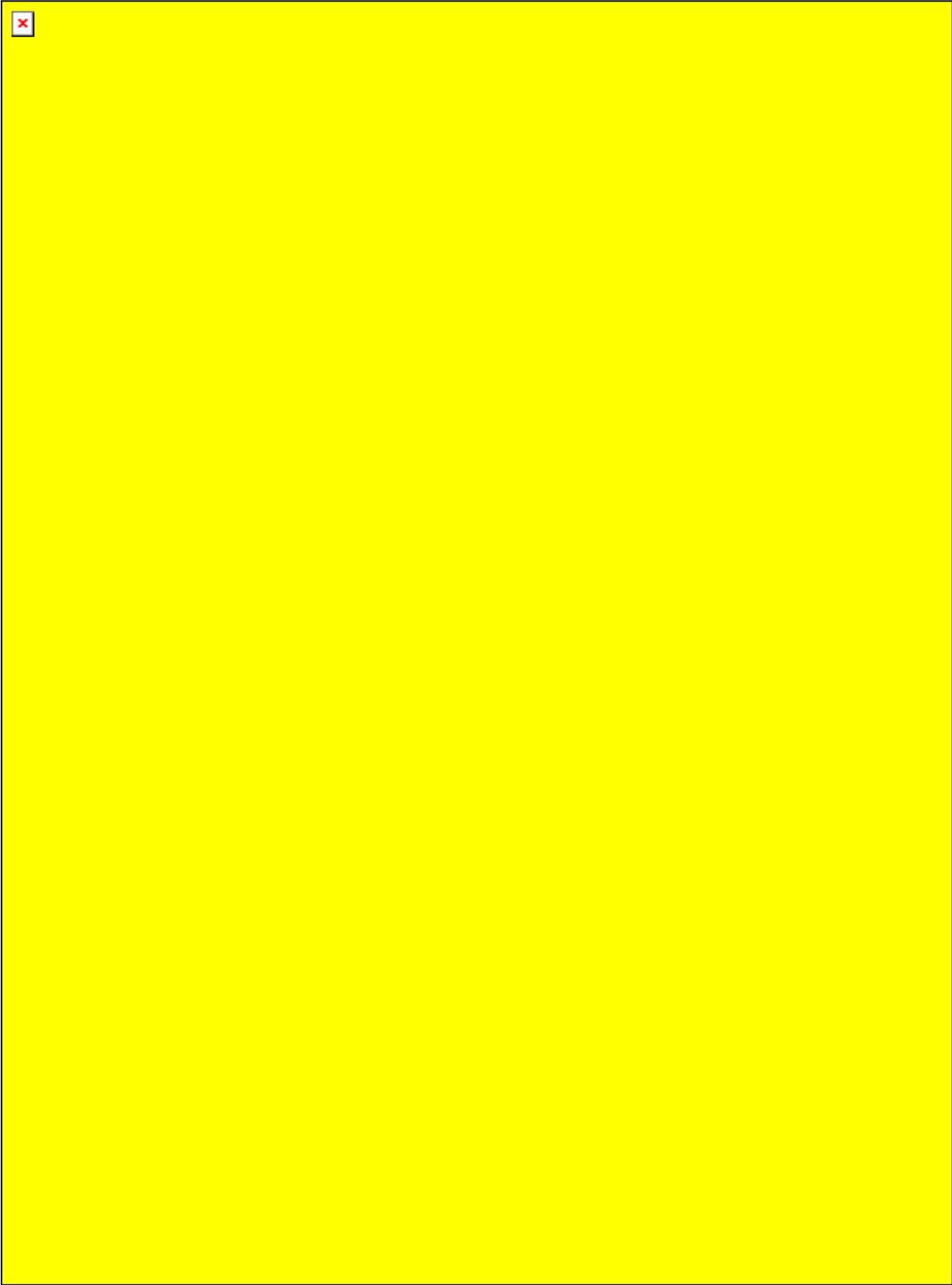
process, a number of issues was explored pertaining to local development and many other local issues. This effort has resulted in a set of goals and objectives, policies and recommendations, and maps, intended to guide future development in the Township through the year 2035.

It important to recognize that the Master Plan is general in scope and that the Future Land Use Map does not establish legally binding boundaries for future land use designations or the exact nature of future uses. Rather, the document and map are an organized approach to analyzing development issues and alternatives and proposing rational strategies to address these issues and achieve desired and justifiable outcomes. Just as the previous plan needed to be updated as a result of change occurring both locally and regionally, more change can be anticipated and with it the need for future revisions to the plan. Keeping the Master Plan up-to-date through periodic, formal reviews and amendments are the best way to keep the plan meaningful and relevant.

## **Section II- Community Profile**

A practical and effective land use plan must be based on the characteristic of the community it is designed for and the plan must respond to the needs of the community through the knowledge of the various elements that make up the community. Fundamental to the development of the Hopkins Township Master Land Use Plan is the collection of local census and demographic data, which has ramifications upon the township's land use needs, and the analysis of the area's natural characteristics such as soils, topography and other natural features. The community profile been divided into two major categories, natural and cultural resources and Population Each category is discussed in the following chapters and collectively the community profile provides a brief "snapshot" of existing conditions within the Township.

Map 1: Hopkins Township Overview



## **Natural and Cultural Resources**

The physical environment provides both opportunities and constraints for toward land use and can have a profound effect upon land development cost and feasibility. While a wetland or heavy soils can hinder construction, the presence of a tree stand or lake can enhance a development project. The natural environment also contains valuable resources such as potable groundwater supplies and prime agricultural lands, which need to be protected. The following discussion highlights significant aspects of the local natural environment.

### **Location and General Character**

Hopkins Township is located in northeastern Allegan County and consists of 36 square miles of land area (Map 1). It is bounded on the north by Dorr Township, on the east by Wayland Township, the west by Monterey, and south by Watson Township. All lie within Allegan County. The Village of Hopkins (pop. 600) lies in the west central portion of the Township. The City of Wayland, a community of approximately 4000 persons abuts the Township along its extreme northeastern limits and the City of Allegan, which is the county seat, is located 15 vehicle miles to the southwest.

Hopkins Township remains a predominately-agricultural community, although the Village of Hopkins (portions of sections 19, 20, 29 and 30) and pockets of small-scale residential development are located Near East Lake, Herlan Lake, and the hamlets of Hilliards (Section 4) and Hopkinsburg (Section 26 & 27).

At the regional level, Hopkins Township is 21 miles due south of downtown Grand Rapids and 14 miles north of Kalamazoo. The shoreline of Lake Michigan is located approximately 22 miles west of the Township. The Township is well served by major freeways in the area including US-131, which runs north and south along the east border of the Township. The Paul Henry Expressway (M-6) intersects with U.S. 131 less than 10 miles north. It allows easy access to I-96, which runs east to west across the state and Interstate 196, which allows access south along the Lake Michigan shoreline to the Chicago area.

### **Climate**

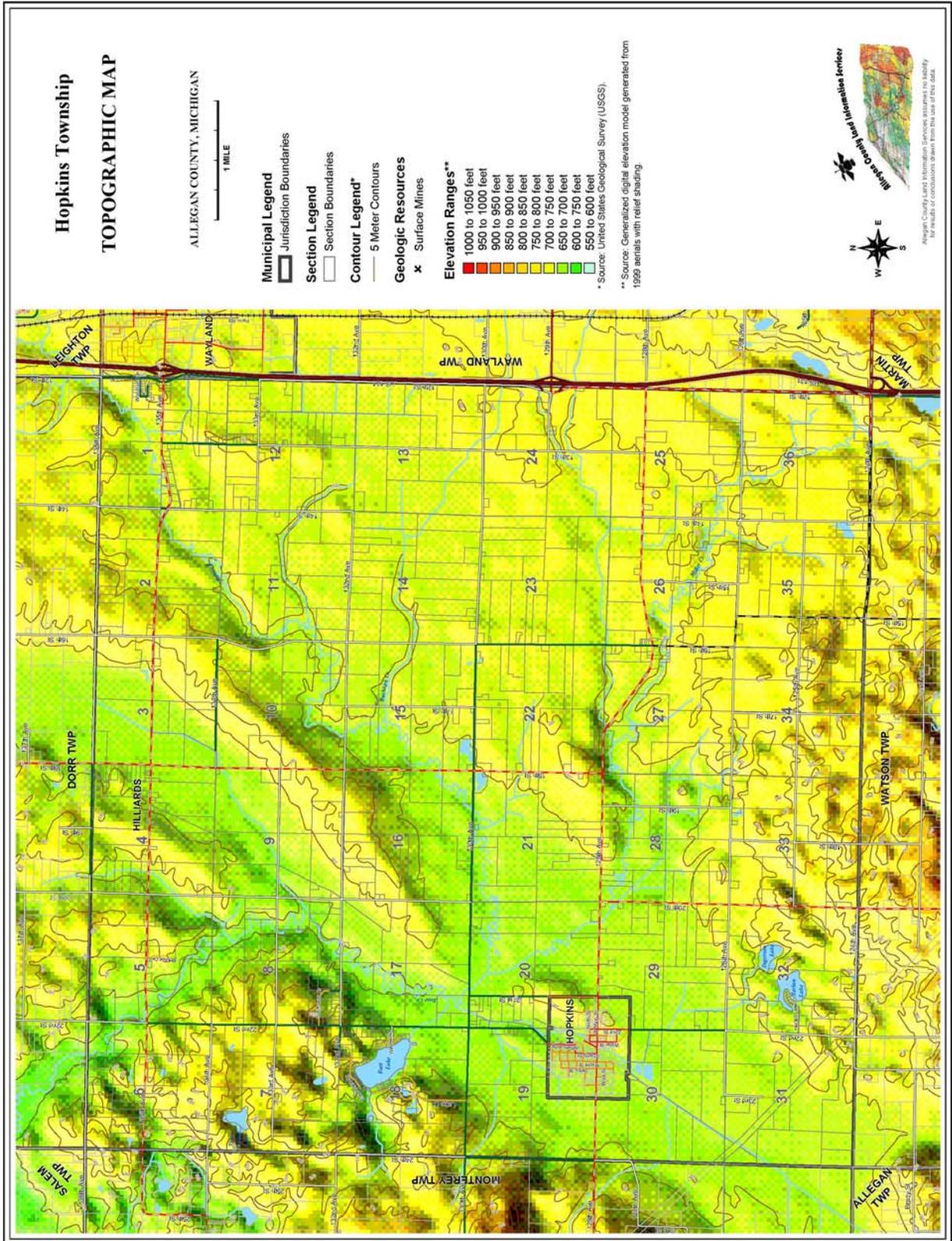
Because of the Township's proximity to Lake Michigan, the climate of Hopkins Township and the surrounding region is relatively cool and humid. Extremes in seasonal temperatures tend to be modified making winters comparatively shorter and warmer and the growing season longer than areas further

inland. The average minimum daily temperature in January is 16°F, and the average maximum daily temperature in July is 84°F. The Township receives an average of 36 inches of rain each year.

### **Topography and Surface Morphology**

The land surface within Hopkins Township varies from nearly level to hilly (Map 2). The greatest variations in terrain exist in the northwest corner and south central portions of the Township. Elevations vary from a low point of 680 feet along the Rabbit River in Section 6 to highs of just over 900 feet above sea level in the extremely rolling south central region. Local landforms can be attributed to the action of various ice sheets over the area during past glacial periods. The nearly level areas in the east and east central are composed of fine textured glacial until formed as ground moraines or as a till plane by the receding glacier. In the south central Hopkins Hills, area is an end moraine of course textured until caused by a still stand of an ice sheet. The hills in the northwest are a similar end moraine but the texture of the till material is finer sand and gravel. The largest glacial feature is a glacial outwash or alluvial plain that runs diagonally from the north, broadening in the southwest. The alluvial plain is now bisected and incised by stream action. It consists of stratified sand and gravel.

Map 2- Topography



## **Soils**

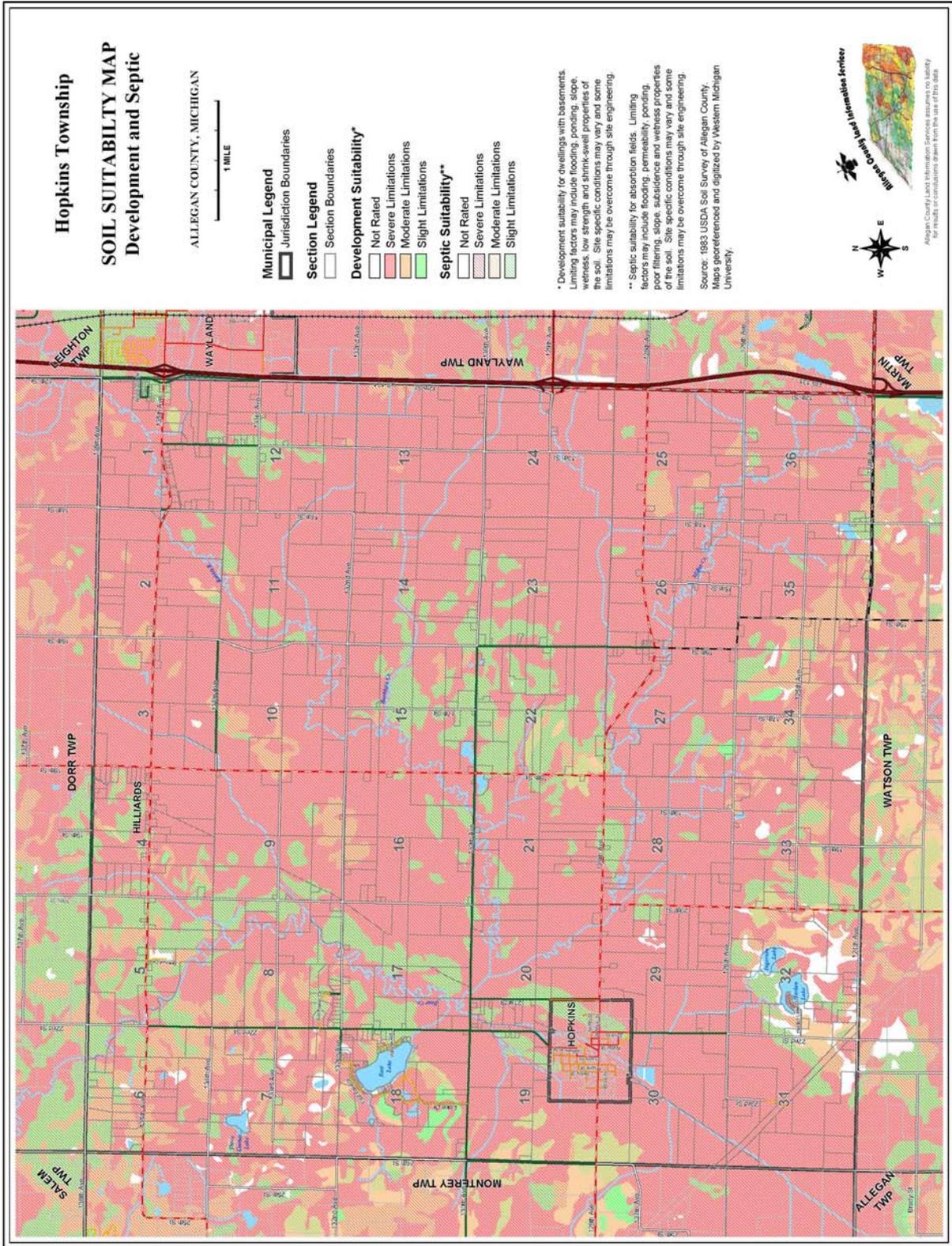
The soils in Hopkins Township range from excessively well drained, sandy and loamy materials in the hilly moraines of the northwest and south to nearly level poorly drained sands, loams and organic soils in the central regions. Because local residents rely on septic fields for the disposal of wastewater, the location of various soil types is an important consideration in future development plans for the Township.

The Soil Suitability Map (Map 3) shows the location of soils within the Township and rates surface soils as to their suitability for supporting buildings (development) and septic systems. The map is based on information contained in the "Soil Survey of Allegan County, Michigan" prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The map takes into consideration soil percolation rates, wetness, filter qualities, shrink-swell properties and slope. As can be seen from the map, the vast majority of the Township has soils that are poorly rated in both categories.

As a general rule, soils, which have unsuitable characteristics for buildings or septic fields, may still be useful with on-site modifications. Map 3 is, therefore, not a substitute for on-site investigation or detailed engineering studies. The map does generally define those areas where intensive development can lead to environmental and health hazards. The implications are that very little intensive development can occur without significant site modification in the building development phase and that significant development activity cannot be supported without improved public or private wastewater treatment systems. The map is therefore useful for defining areas of the Township where, from an environmental sustainability standpoint, intensive residential, commercial and industrial development should be avoided.

Map 4 shows the location of prime agricultural lands within the Township as determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Such lands are naturally endowed with the soil quality, growing season and moisture content necessary to sustain high crop yields under average farming practices. As illustrated by the map, the majority of local prime agriculture lands are located in western 1/2 of the Township,

Map 3- Soil Suitability



particularly the east central region and in the southwest surrounding the Village of Hopkins.

The leading Agricultural products produced in Hopkins Township include grains (principally corn), alfalfa, and both beef and dairy cattle products. Map 4 also identifies the many acres of land in the Township that are enrolled in the P.A. 116 Farmland, P.A. 260 and Open Space Preservation Program. Under this program, property owners agree to relinquish development rights to their land for a minimum enrollment period of ten years in exchange for tax credits. Given the quantity and location of the PA 116 enrollment by area farmers it can be stated that the P.A. 116 program has been a significant economic factor for farmers in their decisions to keep many areas of prime farmland soils devoted to farming or open space.

In Hopkins, the existence of extensive areas of important farmland and the environmental limitations that soils present for development are two very important factors in the development of the Future Land Use Plan for the Township. Further analysis of these two factors in relationship to one another is contained in the appendices.

### **Surface Waters**

A watershed is a region of land that is drained by a particular river or river system. Watershed systems include many smaller tributaries such as creeks and streams that feed into a larger river and are influenced by elevation or the lay of the land. The Kalamazoo River Watershed is the primary watershed within which Hopkins Township is located. The Kalamazoo River watershed is fed by several sub-watersheds including the Rabbit River watershed.

The Rabbit River and its smaller tributary streams and drains (both county and private) are the most prominent surface water feature in Hopkins Township. The Rabbit River flows from the extreme northeast corner of the Township to the west central portions of the Township, then north where it exits the Township in Section 6. Before exiting the Township, several tributaries join with the Rabbit River. They include Miller Creek, which drains the southeastern and south central areas, Buskirk Creek (east central area) and Bear Creek (northwest quadrant). The Rabbit River Watershed is presently listed as one of eight watersheds on the MDEQ's "Michigan Unified Watershed Assessment and Watershed Restoration Priorities" list

The land uses along the banks of streams are almost entirely agricultural with corridors of wetland or rolling woodland. Many of areas immediately adjacent to the streams are subject to periodic flooding.

Water quality and wildlife diversity within a watershed is directly related to the land management practices within that watershed. For example, if a new housing development creates a

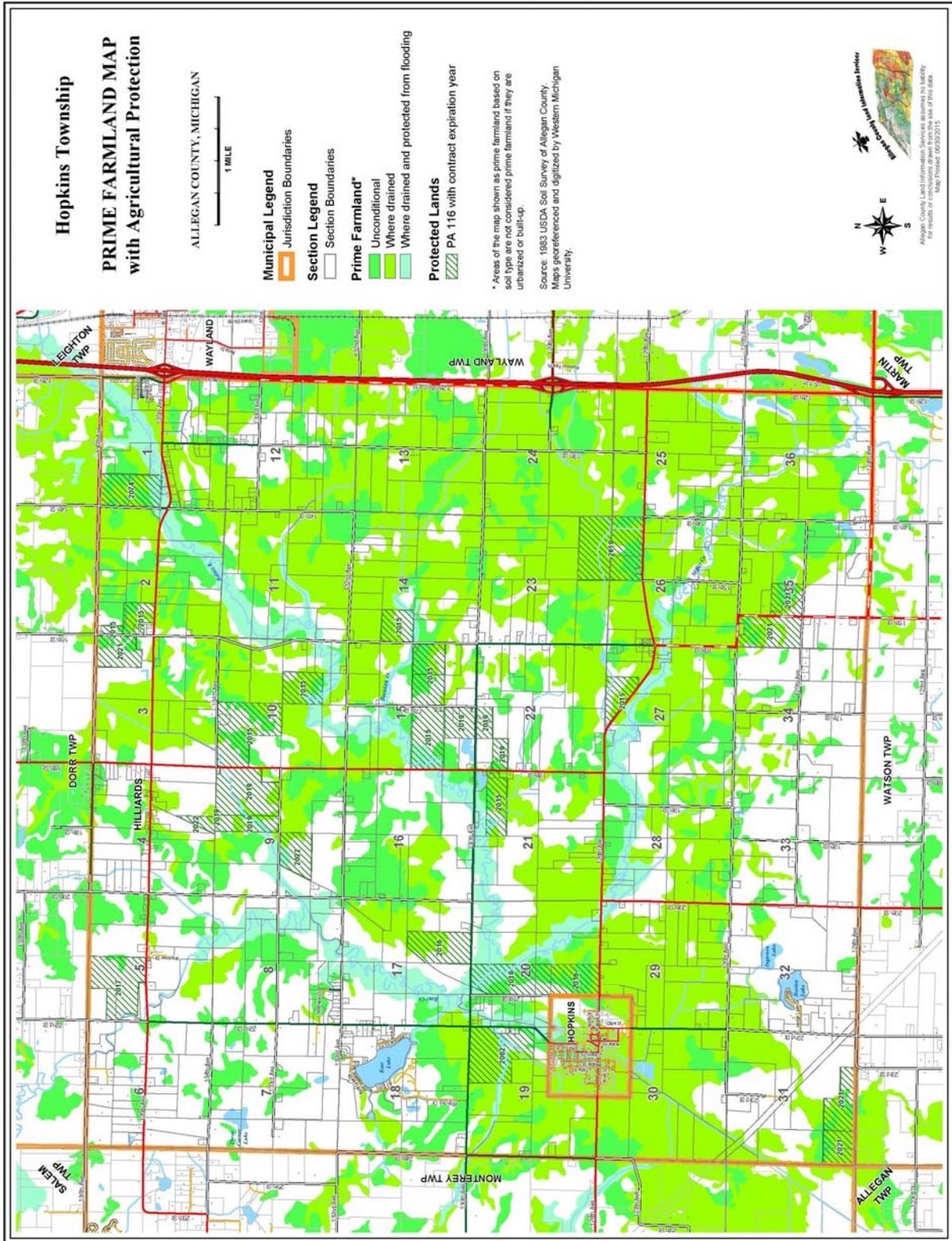
large amount of impervious surface such as rooftops and streets, and storm water is not properly managed, it is possible that the rate and volume of flow into and within the creek, stream or river will increase to a point that stream bank erosion occurs. Stream bank erosion will increase silt material on the streambed, change the chemistry of the water with phosphates, nitrogen and other chemicals and alter the turbidity of the water. Any of these changes could have an adverse effect on the wildlife that is dependent on the stream or river for survival.

The streams and their adjacent wetlands are another important hydrological feature in Hopkins Township. Wetlands are complex ecological systems that provide valuable drainage, flood control as well as water purification functions. Wetlands that overlay groundwater recharge areas improve groundwater quality by filtering the water as it percolates through the soil. Wetlands located along a watercourse protect surface water quality by filtering surface run-off. Finally, wetlands are highly productive ecosystems, which provide an essential habitat to much of Michigan's fish and wildlife. The Hydrology Map (Map 5) illustrates the existence of a significant number of wetlands in the Township. As can be seen, most are directly linked to the rivers, streams and lakes.

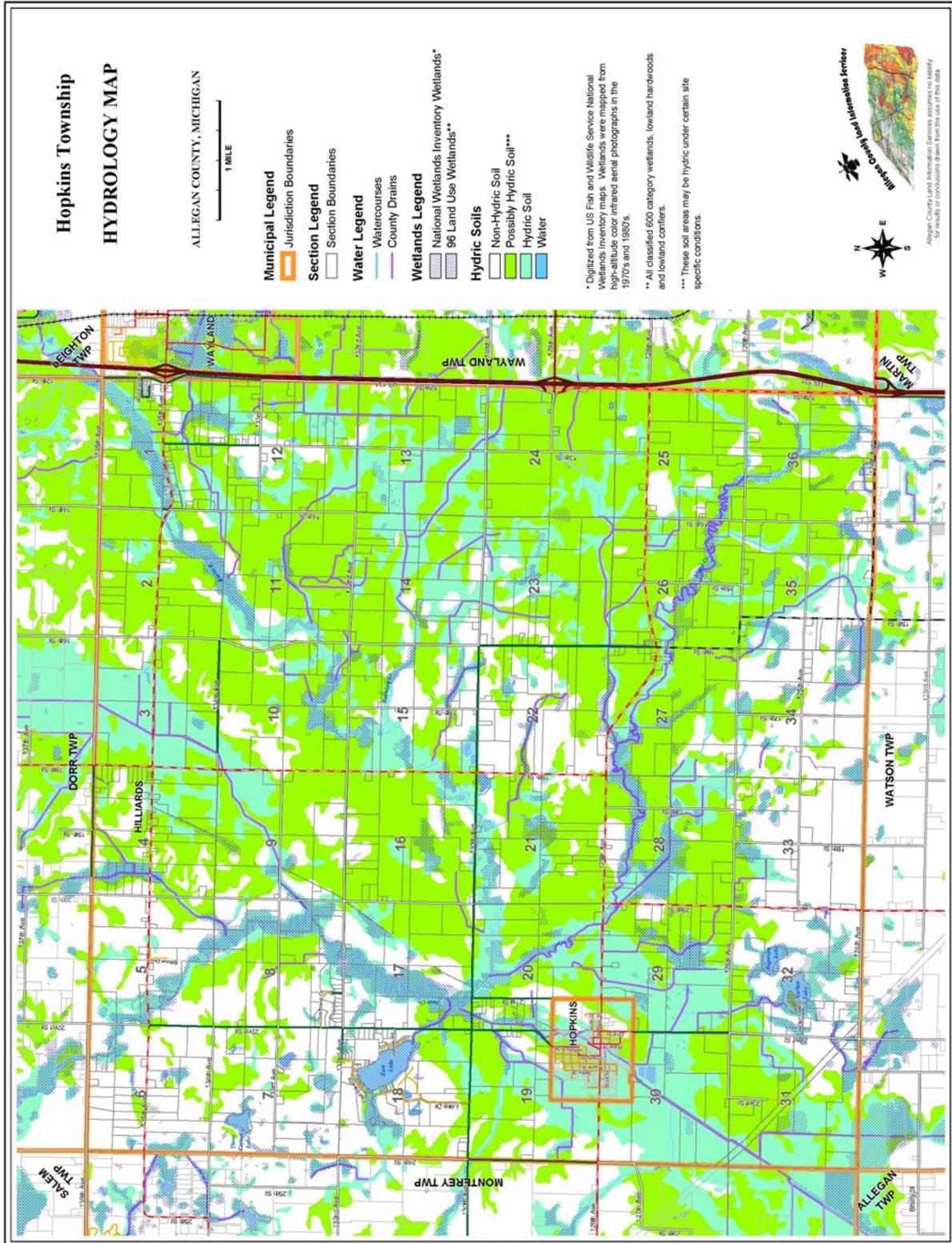
There are also roughly a dozen small freshwater lakes in Hopkins Township. The largest is East Lake located in Section 18, followed by Herlan Lake and Ingerson Lake (both in Section 32). East Lake has a surface area of approximately 70 acres. Residential and campground development is found along most of the lake's shoreline. Herlan Lake is approximately 20 acres in size. It too has seen some residential development but the majority of its shoreline is undeveloped. The remaining bodies of water range in size from approximately 10 acres (Ingerson and Three Corners Lake) down to three and four acres and smaller ponds.

"Eutrophication" is a term used to describe the aging process of lakes and all of the Township's lakes show the early signs of eutrophication. A general observation of these lakes will indicate that all are in late mesotrophic to mid-eutrophic in their "age" or life cycle. This means that in terms of the life cycle of a lake, they are roughly late middle age to slightly old age. The process is a result of increasing levels of nutrients such as phosphates in surface water. Eutrophication occurs naturally but pollution and increased runoff due to deforestation around the lake can drastically accelerate the process. Excess weed growth and algae blooms are the tangible results. While some aquatic weed growth is desirable as fish cover, excessive growth can lead to depleted dissolved oxygen levels and the degradation of the lake habit for invertebrates and fish. Extreme anaerobic conditions can also foul the air and result in "fish kills."

Map 4: Prime Farmland



Map 5: Hydrology



Land use planning and zoning should recognize the need for the long-term protection of surface waters by encouraging the maintenance of green belt corridors along major streams and lake shorelines. Where implemented, development regulation can ensure that land development activities provide protection.

Among the regulatory measures that can be effective are:

- Limiting peak run-off volumes after development to pre-development levels through use of on-site storm water detention and retention facilities and limiting the extent of impermeable surfaces on development sites.
- Requiring prompt re-vegetation of disturbed areas and prohibiting development on excess slopes.
- Requiring ample setbacks from stream banks and shorelines.
- Encouraging and/or requiring open space along stream banks and shorelines in all new residential developments.
- Requiring that all new development provide measures that protect against spills and the release of hazardous materials.

A significant effort to address these issues is a watershed management project-taking place within the area. Through educational and financial assistance, the Upper Rabbit River Watershed Planning Project encourages each local unit of government within the watershed to implement "smart growth" and low impact development policies and provides landowners, farmers and residents an opportunity to establish goals for local water quality. The project has helped to identify and establish critical watershed areas, proposes best management practices and has produced a Watershed Management Plan covering the 187,200-acre watershed. This project is ongoing and is being conducted in association with the Allegan Conservation District.

### **Groundwater**

Groundwater from private wells supply all of the water for residential, commercial and industrial land uses within Hopkins Township. Many of these wells draw from the confined glacial drift aquifer, which is separated from the ground surface by a "*confining*" layer of clay or rock. Some wells draw from the unconfined aquifer, which is more vulnerable to contamination from the ground surface.

Groundwater is an important but unseen resource. Because it is not easily observed, it is particularly vulnerable to mismanagement and contamination. The leading causes of groundwater contamination in Michigan are from small businesses and agriculture. More than 50% of all contamination comes from

small businesses that use organic solvents, such as benzene, toluene and xylene, and heavy metals, such as lead, chromium and zinc. The origin of the problem stems from careless storage and handling of hazardous substances.

There continues to be a general lack of data regarding the local aquifers and the extent to which contamination may already exist.

Map 5 shows the areas in the Township that are most vulnerable to groundwater contamination. These areas are located in a northeast to southwesterly band in the eastern one third of the Township as well as in portions of the extreme southwest, west central and northwest parts of the Township. A large area with relatively impermeable overburden protects areas in the central one third of the Township.

### **Woodlands**

Due to the predominantly agricultural nature of the area, there are relatively few forested areas in the Township. The majority of local woodlands are in scattered concentrations in the hilly northwest and southwest areas and along the Rabbit River in the central part of the Township. Local forested lands include northern, central and lowland hardwoods; aspen and birch associations, and pine stands. These wooded areas provide a variety of habitat settings for wildlife and are an important attribute of the local landscape. In the future, the limited woodland areas are likely to be attractive focal points for housing development. Development designs, which recognize tree stands as an important amenity to be preserved, should be required. Such designs will lead to better projects and will contribute to maintaining the overall rural character of the Township.

### **Wildlife**

With the majority of land in Hopkins Township dedicated to agriculture, it is prime habitat for white tail deer. The brush, woodlands, wetlands, native grasslands and waterways also provide good habitat for squirrels, and raccoon. Other wildlife includes cottontail rabbits, red and gray fox, muskrat, mink, opossum, skunk, various songbirds, ruffed grouse, woodcocks, Great Blue Herons and waterfowl. Sandhill Cranes and Trumpeter Swans may also exist in the Township and the Eastern Massasauga Rattler, a rare snake species, is known to reside here. The miles of Rabbit River and its tributaries and drains, along with the lakes located within the township also provide a variety of game fish.

This variety of wildlife is an impressive resource and provides those who hunt, fish, and enjoy viewing wildlife with invaluable recreational opportunities.

## **Existing Land Use**

Hopkins Township's total land area consists of 36 square miles or roughly 23,040 acres. The majority of its land acreage is used for agricultural uses or remains as open fields. Over the years and increasing at an ever-faster rate, change in land use is occurring. The conversion of agricultural or open space land to rural single-family residential use is most common. As the Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo metropolitan areas continue to grow, Hopkins is likely to become increasingly more attractive to persons who work in urban areas but prefer to live in a rural setting.

Maps 6 and 7 illustrate the existing land use in Hopkins Township as it existed in 1978 and 2014. One can easily identify an increase in the pattern of rural homes being located along the section line roads throughout almost the entire Township.

The economic center and focal point of Hopkins Township is the Village of Hopkins, several commercial and industrial establishments, the Township and Village Hall and Park, the elementary, middle and high schools, and numerous homes are concentrated in this area. Aside from the Village of Hopkins, other land use concentrations are the residences and campground located around East Lake, the residences adjacent to Herlan Lake, and the small housing concentrations in the named places of Hilliards and Hopkinsburg. A mixed-use area of commercial, industrial and residences that is shared with the Township of Wayland is found in Section 1 at the US-131/ 135<sup>th</sup> Ave. interchange. The following is a description of specific land use types in the Township:

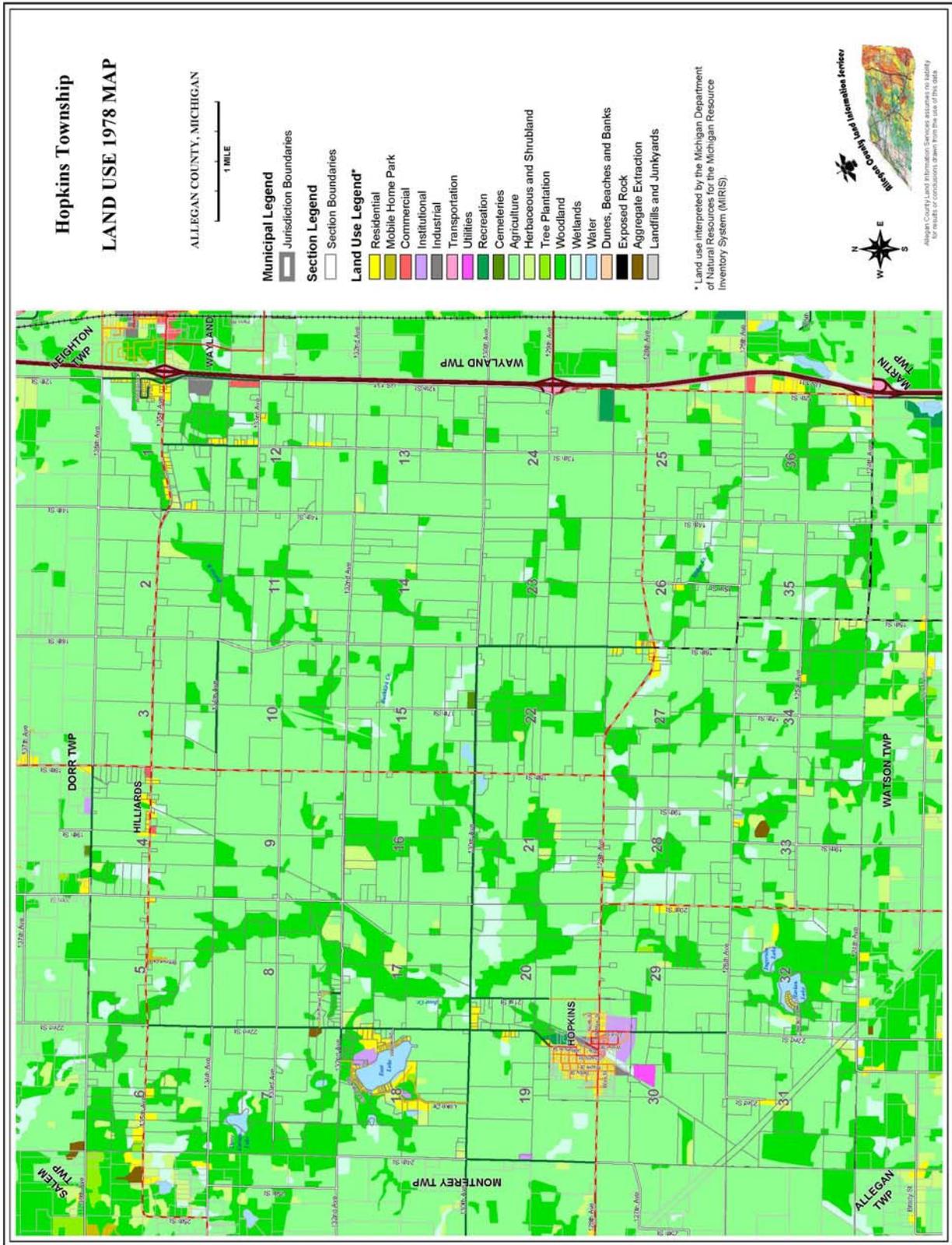
### **Agricultural Land Use/Open Space**

On the 2014 land use map, Agricultural Land Use is represented by cropland, pastures, also woodlands, and low-lying wetlands, which are not under cultivation. Approximately 88 percent of the Township's land area remains devoted to agricultural/open space uses. As has been mentioned, large areas of the Township are classified as prime farmland by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Corn, hay and other grains are crops that thrive locally.

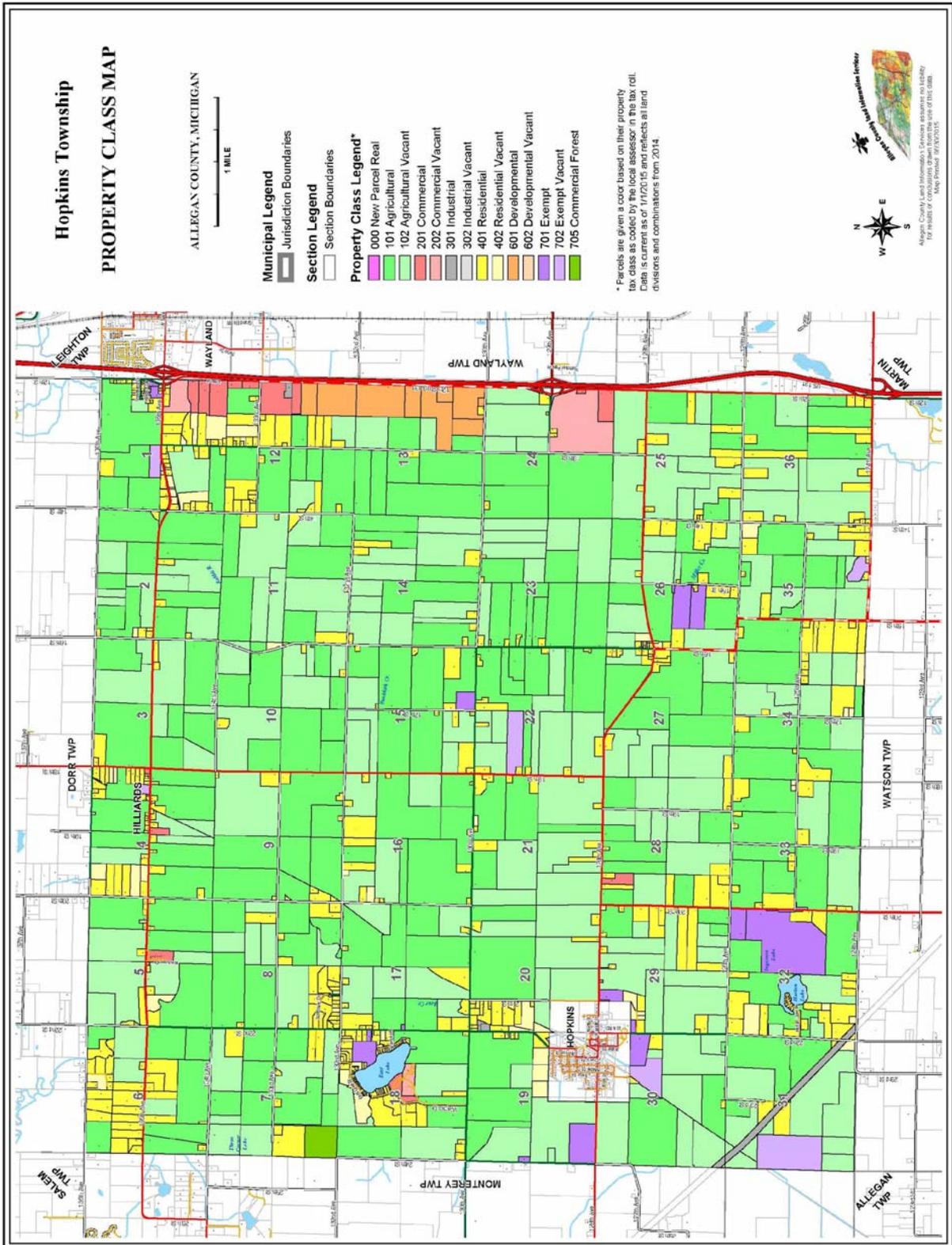
### **Residential Land Use**

Residential land uses include detached single-family houses, multiple family units, mobile homes and seasonal homes. In the future, this category is likely to also include condominium developments that are constructed as either multi-family units or single-family detached homes, both of which would be owner-occupied.

Map 6- Land Use in 1978



Map 7- Land Use in 2014



The predominant housing type in the Township are detached single-family homes. They comprise approximately 88 percent of the roughly 1035 residential units. Mobile homes make up the second largest housing type, comprising approximately 8 percent of the total units. Mobile homes are scattered throughout the Township, with the highest concentration occurring in the manufactured home park west of Hilliards. Most homes in the Township have been constructed by individuals on large lots (2 to 20 acres) which front upon County mile roads. Aside from a concentration of single-family homes in the Hopkins, Hilliards, Hopkinsburg and East Lake area, there remain few subdivided residential plats within the Township.

### **Commercial and Industrial Land Use**

Within the Township, there is only a limited amount of land devoted to industrial and commercial uses. Together, commercial and industrial properties represent 5.0% of the total value of real estate within the Township. Commercial uses are concentrated primarily in the Village and provide the resident population with three apartment/townhouse complexes, dry goods, banking, a convenience store, restaurant, ice cream shop, taverns, and hardware outlets. Also featured are a farm equipment retailer, dentist office, auto repair shop and funeral home.

The business entities outside the Village limits include a cement redi-mix business and two commercial equipment dealers on 12th Street, a light manufacturing business on 22nd Street north of the Village, another on 128<sup>th</sup> Ave. east of the Village, a private campground on East Lake, and a convenience store and restaurant/tavern in Hilliards. One large commercially zoned parcel on 12th Street has been devoted primarily to agricultural uses for several years. The largest single employer is Hopkins Public Schools followed by Sebright Products, and S.P. Industries.

Hopkins Township can expect continuing pressure for residential development over the years, as residents of Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo seek the benefits of our rural setting. However, given the relatively small population base of the Village and Township, the local market demand for commercial development is relatively low and it is only on a regional scale that a demand for industrial and commercial land is greatly manifested. Based on the need for public improvements and a large amount of land area that is programmed for commercial and industrial development in surrounding communities, there appears little justification for planning or facilitating regionally oriented industrial and commercial land development within Hopkins Township in the near future.

**Table 1**  
**Comparison of 2014 Real Property Valuation**

Jurisdiction	Agricultural		Commercial		Industrial		Residential	
	SEV (millions)	% of Total						
Dorr Twp.	41.714	17.6%	17.818	7.5%	2.687	1.1%	174.385	73.7%
Hopkins Twp.	58.211	51%	5.367	4.7%	.954	0.8%	49.527	43%
Wayland Twp.	20.168	16.3%	7.941	6.4%	1.725	1.3%	92.675	75%
Watson Twp	26.789	32%	2.159	2.6%	3.132	3.96%	51.627	61.7%
Leighton Twp	38.620	17.8%	12.417	5.7%	9.521	4.4%	155.449	71.9%

Allegan County Equalization Department, 2014 Equalization Report.

The composition of the tax base for Hopkins Township is substantially different from that of neighboring communities in northeast Allegan County. For example, residential classifications comprise 43% of the tax base in Hopkins Township. Residential comprises 61% to 75% of the tax base in most neighboring Townships. Fifty one percent of Hopkins tax base is in agricultural real property whereas the neighboring townships have considerably greater tax bases in commercial and industrial properties.

**Table 2**  
**Comparison of 1988 & 2014 Real Property Valuation**

Jurisdiction	Agricultural			Residential		
	1988 (millions)	2014 (millions)	% Change	1988 (millions)	2014 (millions)	% Change
<b>Leighton Twp</b>	\$8.685	\$38.620	345%	\$22.873	\$155.449	579%
<b>Dorr Twp</b>	8.899	41.714	368%	30.037	174.385	481%
<b>Hopkins Twp</b>	10.276	58.211	466%	9.195	49.527	439%
<b>Wayland Twp</b>	6.450	20.168	213%	13.568	92.675	583%

Allegan County Equalization Department, 2014 Equalization

Table 2 uses the year 1988 and 2014 to provide a comparative look at the change in agricultural and residential real property valuation in the four northeastern most Allegan County Townships. It shows that in the surrounding communities, the relative value and importance of agricultural land

as compared to residential uses is much less. That fact was not the case in decades past when farming was still the predominant land use and economic activity in those communities.

While the value of the Township's agricultural land continues to rise, the percentage it comprises of the total is decreasing. The equalized value is expected to increase naturally due to the expected and incessant rise in property values. The percentage is decreasing; however, because agricultural land is continually being subdivided and converted to other use. As this pattern continues in the future, the rural character of Hopkins Township, like its neighbors, will face challenges such as more rezoning requests for more densely built developments and associated land use implications such as traffic congestion.

### **Road Systems and Transportation**

As shown on Map 8, the roads within Hopkins Township cross each other in a grid-like pattern. Four of these roads - 18th Street, 20th Street south of 128th, 128th and 135<sup>th</sup> Avenues are designated as county primary roads. The remaining roads are designated as secondary roads. There are a total of roughly 84 miles of public roads within the Township. All are under the jurisdiction of the Allegan County Road Commission. Approximately 30 miles of roadway are un-paved.

The Allegan County Road Commission finances road maintenance and construction with a combination of millage funds, and state and federal funds such as gas tax revenue, and auto registration fees. Some of the funds are redistributed for designated purposes such as bridge repairs, non-motorized trails and shoulder improvements. The Township has historically supplemented the County's road project spending by allocating a significant portion of its annual budget for road projects; including paving of shoulder, resurfacing, culvert replacement, dust control, and roadside mowing. There is currently no form of public transportation available to Hopkins Township residents.

Map 8 also illustrates the historic traffic counts on several of the roadways as supplied by the Allegan County Road Commission. The counts indicate that all of the primary and secondary roads observed have traffic volumes well within their two lane design capacities. With the exception of the counts taken on 15<sup>th</sup> St., which is a rural gravel road, all of the streets have experienced significant traffic increases in recent years.

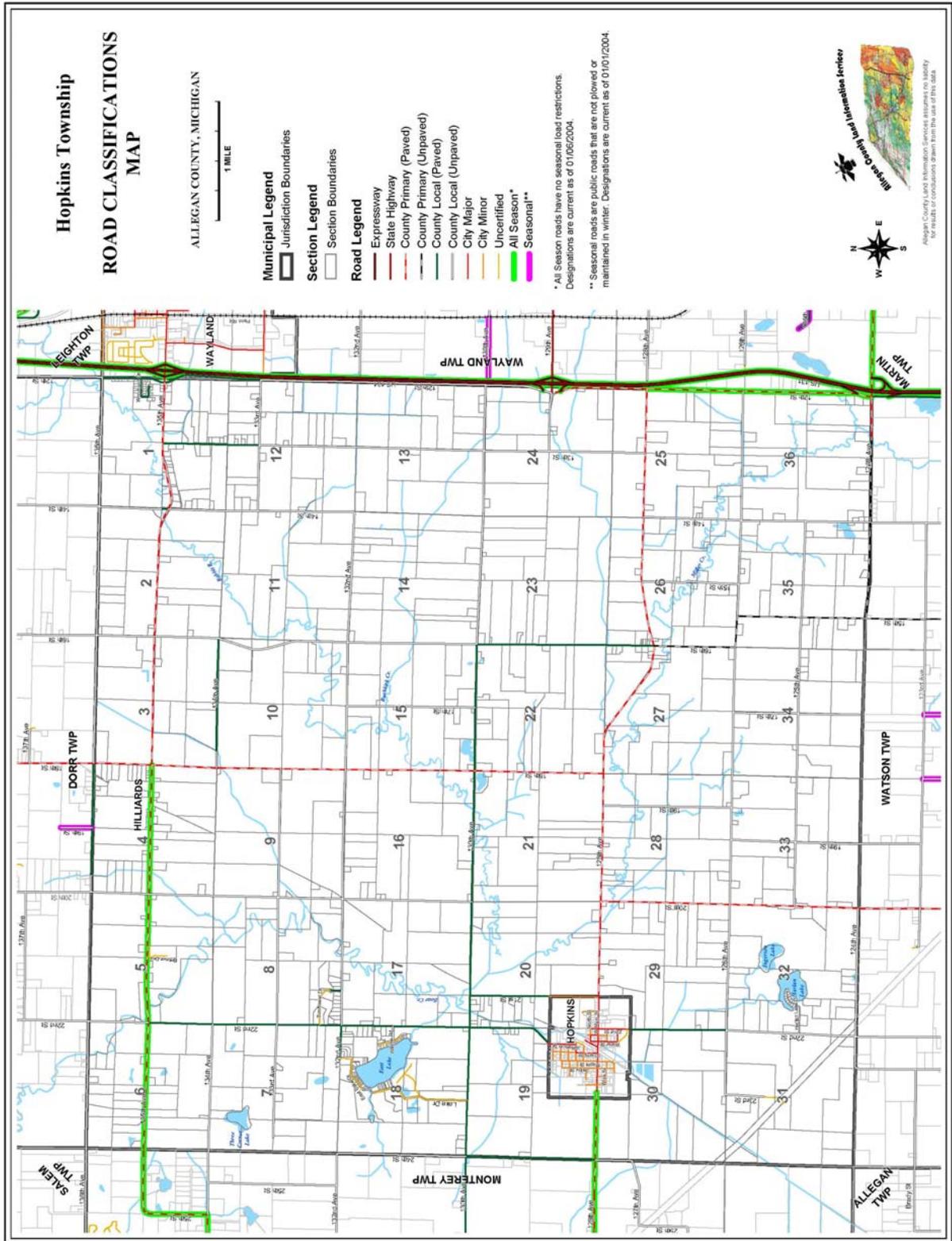
It is very important to manage points of access (driveways, curb cuts) to any highway or primary road to ensure traffic safety and efficiency. As new development and redevelopment occurs within the Township, attention must be given to driveway spacing, design, potential for shared access, number of driveways per site, sight lines, and the need for acceleration and deceleration lanes. These items must be addressed during the site plan review process.

Access management will be of particular concern along 135<sup>th</sup> Ave., 128<sup>th</sup> Ave and 12<sup>th</sup> St. These routes pass through areas of the Township most likely to see commercial growth and expansion. Whether the access management solution is as simple as a shared driveway or demanding as a secondary access road, the focus should be maintaining traffic flows on the major arteries within the Township.

The U.S. 131 Interchange at the Hopkins Bradley (129<sup>th</sup> Avenue) exit has traffic flow issues that should be taken into consideration when evaluating potential development in that area.

As the Township's population continues to grow, an increased demand for non-motorized traffic will be created.

Map 8- Hopkins Road Systems



Demand will be further increased as businesses grow and expand and residents begin to walk and bike to these uses. The Township should start early to encourage the installation of sidewalks, bike paths, pathways, and crosswalks in appropriate areas of the Township. As population centers expand, such as near and around the Village of Hopkins, new residential and non-residential development should be required to provide accommodations for non-motorized traffic along internal and external roadways, or other pedestrian amenities.

There is a possibility that one or more roads in the Township will need to be expanded to accommodate additional traffic demands. When roads need to be expanded, a significant part of the cost is the acquisition of right of way. The right of way is very valuable to property owners when the road expansion will cause them to have to move from their home or relocate their business. However, if the right of way that is being acquired is "unusable" setback area that is considerable from their structure, the value is diminished. As properties and corridors redevelop, requiring generous setbacks as a tool for preserving land for future right of way use can be useful in limiting the costs of future road expansion.

### **Community Facilities**

A primary function of municipal government is the provision of services designed for health, safety and welfare of residents and businesses. Those responsibilities are shared in Hopkins Township by several public entities, including the Township, the Village of Hopkins, Allegan County, the State of Michigan, three different school districts and other agencies. The Township Board has identified the need for additional storage and meeting space to accommodate elections, public hearings, and records storage as well as the need for additional parking.

### **Schools**

The majority of Hopkins Township is served by Hopkins Public Schools. There is an elementary, a middle, and a high school located in the Village of Hopkins. A smaller area on the eastern border of the Township is served by Wayland –Union Schools, and an even smaller segment in the southeast is served by Martin Public Schools. The Allegan Intermediate School District serves the entire Township with programs that focus on special education services, alternate education programs, vocational/technical training and adult education classes.

Due to population growth, the Hopkins School District is presently evaluating alternatives for addressing a near term shortage in elementary school classroom space and projected longer term shortages in secondary space.

### **Fire Protection**

Fire Protection Services are offered throughout the Township by the well-trained volunteer firefighters of the Hopkins Area Fire Department, pursuant to an intergovernmental agreement between the Village of Hopkins and the Townships of Watson and Hopkins. Approximately one third of neighboring Monterey Township is

served by the same Department through a separate agreement with the governing Fire Board. Through a mutual aid agreement, the Fire Board receives and provides "back-up" fire fighting capability to other fire departments throughout Allegan County.

The number of firefighting personnel available appears adequate for the foreseeable future. A fire barn building was constructed in the Village with a Township-wide millage in 1991. The facility is expected to serve the current fire district for decades to come. The Fire Board maintains a reserve fund for the equipment needed to meet long range needs and for replacement of major vehicles.

### **Law Enforcement**

The Township relies upon the Allegan County Sheriff Department, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office and the Michigan State Police Post in Wayland for law enforcement services.

### **Library**

A District Library located in the Village serves residents of the Village and the Township of Hopkins as well as nearby communities. The Township presently levies a Township-wide millage of .06 mill to cover library operations. The library is further subsidized by adjacent "user" communities as well as other supplemental funds including penal fines.

### **Ambulance And Other Health Care Services**

Hopkins Township is a founding member of the Wayland Area Emergency Medical Service Corporation, which serves a territory comprised of ten local units of government in Allegan and Barry Counties. The ambulance service operates on a subsidy from each government, supplemented by "run charges" assessed to recipients of ambulance transport, emergency medical technician and paramedic services. A network of trained community residents offers "first responder" services at the scene of a medical emergency.

Hopkins Township residents are heavily dependent upon health care facilities and medical offices in Allegan, Plainwell, Wayland, Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids. A small medical and dental clinic are located in the Village.

### **Cemeteries**

The Township maintains three public cemeteries. Maplewood, located on 130<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Lakeview, located on 22<sup>nd</sup> St. are actively used for burials. Round-Andrews Cemetery, located on 15<sup>th</sup> Street, south of 128<sup>th</sup> Avenue, is closed. The Maplewood Cemetery has available land reserves and with proper management is expected to provide sufficient burial capacity for township residents for years to come.

**Public Utilities:**

Township residents are served exclusively by septic systems on each property approved by the Allegan County Health Department. All potable water is supplied by private wells. Village residents and businesses are served by a publicly operated sewer collection and treatment system. Natural Gas lines are proposed for the above listed stretch of road as well.

**Recreation**

Hopkins Township owns and maintains the six acre Hilliards Park located in the northwest quarter of section four. Phase One of the Hilliards Park Improvement Plan was completed in April 2016, which improved the existing ball field with new fencing, dugout and spectator seating as well as expanded outfield distances. Further improvements included a new play area, improvement to the existing drive and addition of another drive. Phase Two Improvements will include a new pavilion with updated restrooms, and new electrical service. As of the adoption date of this plan, no project date has been set for Phase Two.

The Village of Hopkins offers two parks; Hopkins Village Park and Hopkins Community Park. Hopkins Village offers a variety of activities including a 4<sup>th</sup> of July Festival. In warm weather the open green space corners on a concert stage. Hopkins Community Park contains basketball and tennis courts, two ball diamonds, play structures, and a covered picnic pavilion. The Village and Hopkins Youth Sports Organization offer athletics at the Community Park.

Hopkins Public Schools maintains several facilities that provide a variety of indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities to the Hopkins Community. At Hopkins Public Schools various athletics camps are held year round. The public may walk during winter in the school hallways in the early morning and evening hours. The elementary school has playground equipment and outdoor exercise equipment. The middle school offers sports fields, a gymnasium, and baseball diamonds. The community built a football field and track facility which is used for scholastic athletic events as well as by the community at large.

Allegan County maintains several parks that are in close proximity for Hopkins residents. The Allegan State Game Area and the Yankee Springs State Park and State Game Areas are also nearby.

## Population

The 2010 U.S. Census provides the most recent population profile of Hopkins Township and is the basis for the information presented below. Though this data is now nearly 5 years old, it is none-the-less reasonably accurate due to the fact that Township has not been experiencing tremendous increases in development and therefore the changes in the population profile over the past ten years are not great.

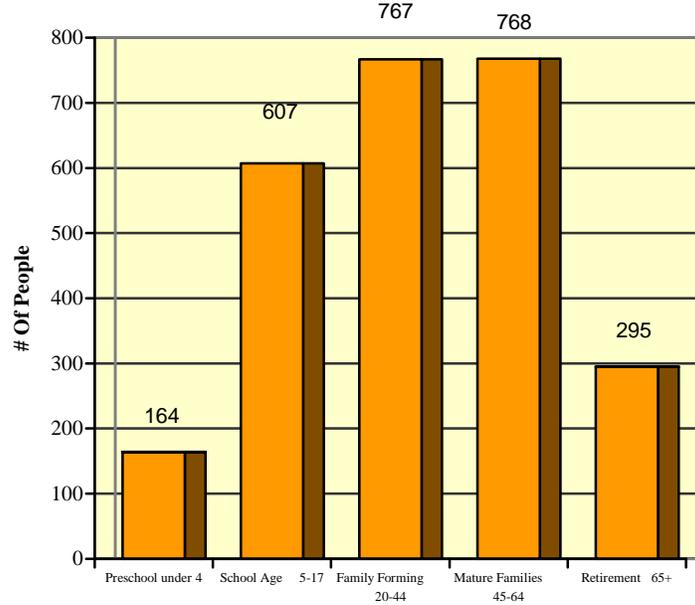
**Table 3**  
**Total Population Growth**  
**Hopkins Township**

<u>Decade</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Increase/Decrease</u>	<u>% In Decade</u>
1970	1,518	-	-
1980	1,573	55	3.6%
1990	1,804	231	15.2%
2000	2,079	275	15.2%
2010	2,020	-88	-4.23%
Estimated 2012	2,020	29	1.46%

There were approximately 938 households in the Township in 2010, 77% of which consisted of families (blood-related). The average household size is approximately 2.77 persons. A significant measure of change within a community involves comparing age distribution over time. This helps to determine the demands for various types of housing and the types of recreational facilities that may be needed. For example if a large number of residents are young, the area will benefit from playground facilities. If there are a small number of retirees living here, it may mean that older persons are being forced to move away due to a lack of senior living opportunities.

**Figure 2**  
**Major Age Group Comparisons**  
**Hopkins Township, 2010**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



The Township's population is distributed very evenly by age with roughly one third of the population falling within each of the age categories of 0-17, 18-44, and 45 and older. This distribution forms the classic pyramidal shape as illustrated in Figure 2. The Township's median age is 38.8 years. This fairly young median age locally can be a function of the fact that in typical rural areas, both congregate care and independent housing tailored to the needs of senior citizens tend to be lacking. There is therefore a slight shift of senior resident populations toward the urban centers in the twilight years of life.

In 1990, the median age in Hopkins Township was 30.9 years or roughly eight years younger than it was in 2010. Consistent with state and national trends this indicates very clearly that the population of the Township is aging and is not escaping the post-World War II baby boom phenomenon and the well documented social, health and fiscal implications that will accompany the aging of the population.

Another important age group that is an indicator for future development is the 20 to 44--age bracket. This group represents the prime wage earning population as well as the main age for forming families. This group represents a demand for single-family housing, schools and recreational facilities and their large numbers foretell future increases in the pre-school and school age group. Thirty eight percent of the population is age 45 to 64. This is the empty--nester group with the generally the highest incomes. Taken together, the age statistics of Hopkins Township and that of the Village of Hopkins are indicators of increased demand for senior living opportunities as well as continued demands for recreational facilities to serve both younger and older populations.

**Table 3**  
**Major Age Group Comparisons**  
**Hopkins Township –1990- 2010**

	<u>2010</u>	%	
		<u>1990 vs. 2010</u>	
Preschool (0-4)	164	9.1	6.3
School Age (5-19)	607	22.8	23.3
Family Forming (20-44)	767	39.3	29.4
Mature Families (45-64)	768	17.7	29.5
Retirement (65 +)	<u>295</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>11.3</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2601</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

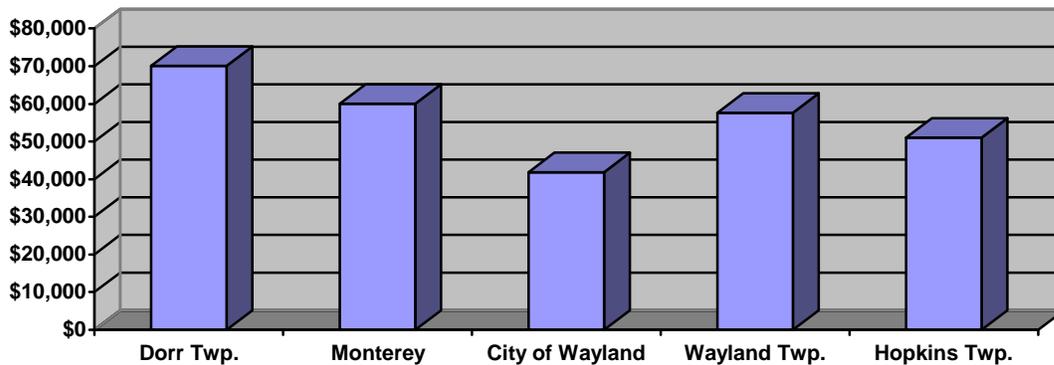
Source: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2010

Includes Village population

**Income**

Median household income is traditionally used to measure the economic strength of an area. It is also a helpful indicator to identify disparities between communities. Income can also have land use implications, since people with high incomes often invest more in their home and therefore expect more from local government. The following figures compare the 2000 median household income in Hopkins Township with some of its neighbors. The median household income in the Township was \$46,296. That figure compares with \$45,815 for the County and \$44,667 in Michigan.

**Figure 3  
Comparison of Household  
Incomes in Neighboring Communities**



Source; 2010 U.S. Census, American Fact Finder

In 1989, the per capita income in the Township was \$9,519.00 and had increased to \$21,955.00 by 2010, an increase of 130%.

The percentage of people in the Township living below the 2010 poverty level was 8.7%. The poverty level in the Township is considerably lower than the County average, which stood at 13.4% in 2010. The poverty figures for both the Township and Allegan County are several percentage points lower than State and National averages, which stood at 17.0% and 14.5%, respectively, in 2010.

### **Housing**

The Township of Hopkins combined with the Village is essentially a bedroom community. As is the case with most such communities, single-family homes comprise the largest single type of dwelling unit. The large majority of these (86.8%) are owner occupied. A high percentage of owner occupied units is generally perceived as a healthy characteristic that is reflected by stability in the community and relatively higher housing standards.

Three hundred sixty two or 35% of the dwellings in Hopkins (Twp. and Village) were built prior to 1939 while 204 (20%) were built between 1940 and 1969, 203 (20%) between 1970 and 1989, 248 (24%) between 1990 and 2005. Since 2006, Township records show that approximately 25 new dwelling units have been built.

One measure of the health of a community is the ratio of renter occupied homes to owner-occupied homes. Many growing communities try to maintain a 3:1 or better ratio of owner-occupied to rental housing within the market. The Hopkins ratio of roughly 4.5 to 1 is above that range but is quite reflective of most rural townships and villages of this size.

In 2010, there were 1320 total housing units in the Township and Village. In the Township itself, there were 1050 units. Of that number, 6.9% or 70 units were vacant.

The following table and figure shows a breakdown of the housing stock within the combined Township-Village area by type of structure. Similar to the desire to maintain a 3:1 ratio of owner-occupied dwellings to rental units or greater, many Townships desire to maintain a 70% or better predominance of single-family homes. The percentage of single-family homes in Hopkins Township is over 78 percent.

**Table 5**

**Housing Units by Type**

**Hopkins Township and Village 2010**

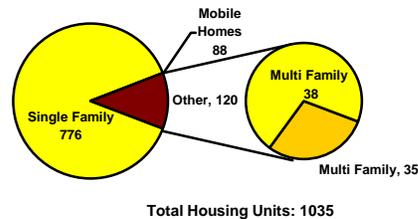
	<b># in 2010</b>	<b>Percent in 2010</b>
Single Family Home	915	88.4
Multi-Family (2 or more units)	35	3.4
Mobile Homes and all others	85	8.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1035</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: 2010 U.S. Census

**Figure 4**

**Housing Units By Type - 2010 - Hopkins Township**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



**Employment**

In 2013, there were 2049 persons aged 16 years and over representing the local labor force. Of these, 1,264 persons or 61.7% were employed. The 2010 census revealed that the most common travel time to

work was 30-34 minutes. This supports the conclusion that Hopkins continues to be a bedroom community with the majority of its residents working in other communities.

The following table illustrates occupations broken down into U.S. Census categories for combined Township/Village population, Allegan County, and the State of Michigan.

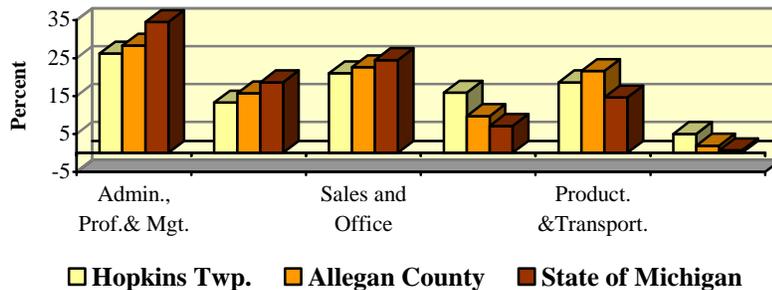
**Table 6**  
**Categorized Occupations-2013**

Occupation Category	Hopkins Township		Allegan County		State of Michigan	
	Employment	% of Total	Employment	% of Total	Employment	% of Total
Admin., Prof. & Mgmt...	291	26.2	14,183	28.3	1,460,410	34.5
Services	148	13.3	7874	15.7	788,907	18.6
Sales and office	234	21	11,342	22.6	1,039,814	24.5
Construction & maintenance	176	15.9	4,880	9.7	302,732	7.1
Production & transportation	206	18.6	10,873	21.6	622,887	14.6
Farming & forestry	53	5	950	1.9	28,198	0.7%

Source: 2013 American Community Survey

**Figure 5**  
**Categorized Occupations**  
**Hopkins Township - 2013**

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2013

Relative to the County and State, employment in the Township tends to fall more heavily in the Sales & Office and Production categories than the other groupings. These occupations can be characterized by lower wage rates than the professional/administrative careers, but higher than some service categories. This is consistent with the income information, which illustrates the Township's per capita and household income to be slightly below some of the neighboring jurisdictions.

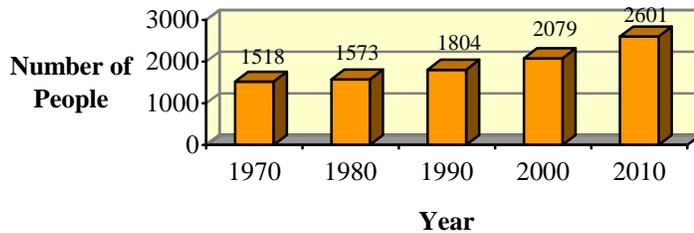
## Section III- Planning Considerations and Plan Formulation

### Population Trends And Projections

Population trends refer to the historical direction a community has followed in respect to its population counts while population projections refer to the direction a community is anticipated to follow in future years.

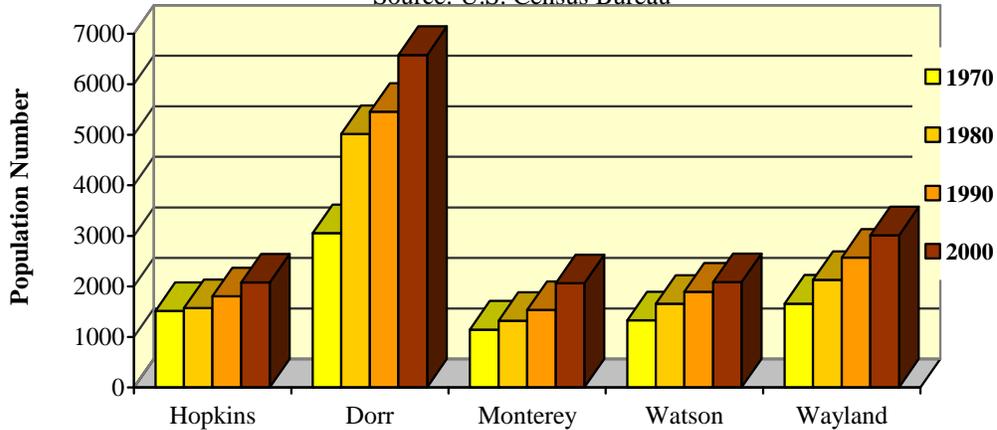
The Township has followed a steady increasing population trend over the past 45 years in reaching its current population, as illustrated in Figure 6. The Township has existed as rural farming community before and during that time, experiencing relatively slight growth over time. From 1970 to 2010, the population increased from 1518 to 2601, or 1083 persons.

**Figure 6**  
**Total Population Growth**  
**Hopkins Township 1970-2010**  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau



**Figure 7**  
**Historical Population Change**  
**Hopkins Township and Nearby Townships**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Statistical averaging techniques have been employed to project the Township's population growth to the year 2030. The projections anticipate that over the next 15 years the Township's population will continue to increase at historical rates. Due in part to more intensive growth pressures elsewhere and also in part to Hopkins Township's restrictive land use policies, the rate of growth in Hopkins is however, predicted to be lower than that experienced in surrounding communities and the county as a whole. The Township's population will therefore represent a smaller proportion of the County's overall population in the future than is presently the case.

**Table 8**

**Population Projections**

**Hopkins Township and Allegan County**

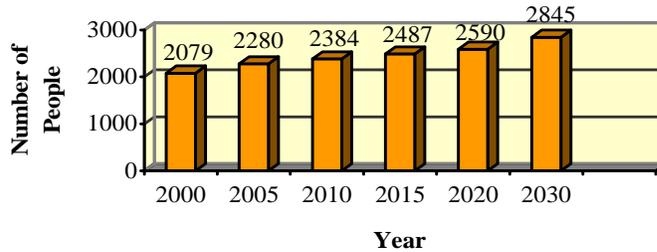
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<b>Projected 2000 to 2030 <u>increase</u></b>
Hopkins Twp.	2,079	2,231	2,384	2,487	2,590	2845	36.8%
Allegan County	105,665	113,918	122,993	133,045	144,266	163,566	54.8%

Source: The Hopkins Twp. and Allegan County 2010, 2015, and 2020 projections are a combination of percentage and arithmetic projection published by WMRPC modified by the annual rates of recent (2000 to 2006) building activity extended to the year 2010. 2030 projections have been further extrapolated from those projections.

The above population projections indicate an additional 565 persons by the year 2030. This projection is considered conservative. Actual growth will be dependent on national, state and regional economic conditions.

**Figure 8**  
**Population Projections**  
**Hopkins Township**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and WMRPC



The number of anticipated future housing units within a community can be determined by utilizing a statistical formula. By dividing the projected population count by the 2000 average number of persons per dwelling unit, the projected number of housing units for various years is obtained. Table 9 presents projected total dwelling units based on the population projections found in Table 6. By subtracting the number of homes in existence in 2000 from the projected number in 2030 it can be seen that essentially 175 new housing units are projected. This represents a 23 percent increase over the 25 year period.

In rural communities, it is important to look at population growth and economic development activity in a regional context and to recognize that development does not begin or end at political boundaries.

**Table 9**  
**Dwelling Unit Projections**  
**Hopkins Township**

<u>2006 est.</u>	<u>Ave. 2000 Persons/Occ. Household</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>Projected Increase By 2030</u>
768	3.02	789	857	943	175

Source: Data extrapolated from 2000 Census, Population Projections and 2000 to 2006, building permit activity

As a tool to help gauge additional land needs as well as the market potential for businesses within the northeast part of Allegan County, Table 10 presents the 2030 population projections for the Township and Village along with the City of Wayland and the three townships to the north and east. The table indicates that the overall population of the area is expected to see significant growth, with the highest amount of growth occurring in the northern units of Dorr Township, the City of Wayland and in Leighton Township. The biggest factor in the projections for the northern communities are their relative close proximity to Grand Rapids and the additional growth that has occurred due to the opening of M-6 just a few miles further north.

**Table 10**  
**Straight Line Increasing Proportion**  
**2030 Population Projections**

<u>Community</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>Numerical increase 2000-2030</u>
Leighton Twp.	3,652	5,040	5734	2082
Dorr Twp.	6,579	9,360	10750	4171
Hopkins Twp.& Village	2,671	3,350	3689	1018
Wayland Twp.	3,013	3,970	4448	1335
City of Wayland	<u>3,939</u>	<u>6200</u>	<u>7330</u>	3391
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,854</b>	<b>27,920</b>	<b>30,179</b>	<b>11,997 (+60.40%)</b>

Table 11 presents housing projections by type of housing based on the mix of housing found in each of the northeast Allegan County communities in 2000. The dwelling unit estimates are based on 2000 U.S. Census percentages for units in structure and persons per household as applied to 2030 population projections. The acres presented are approximations derived from averaging the various housing density standards contained in each local unit's zoning ordinance. A uniform average density of 5 units per acre was used for manufactured homes. In Hopkins Township and Village an average of one dwelling unit per acre was used for single family homes.

**Table 11  
Northeast Allegan County  
2030 Residential Land Needs**

<u>Community</u>	Single family Homes		Attached 2, 3 and 4-Plex Dwelling		Apartments		Manufactured Homes	
	Dwelling Units	Acres	Dwelling Units	Acres	Dwelling Units	Acres	Dwelling Units	Acres
Leighton Twp.	407	150	83	15	132	16	125	40
Dorr Twp.	808	297	165	30	261	33	245	61
Hopkins Twp. & Village	197	197	40	18	64	8	60	15
Wayland Twp.	258	258	53	9.8	83	10.3	78	19
City of Wayland	624	157	157	17.3	232	23	286	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>2294</b>	<b>1059</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>90.1</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>90.3</b>	<b>794</b>	<b>192</b>

Sources: Based on 2000 US Census and Development Impact Assessment Handbook, ULI, 1994.

2030 Projections, Landmark Strategies, 2005

Table 12 takes the projected populations and applies basic planning standards or “rules of thumb” to determine rough projected additional acreage requirements for retail, industrial, and recreational land for 2030. The amount of land in each category that each community will choose to accommodate will be determined as a function of each units land use planning process and policies. In that regard, it is important to note that neighboring communities have allocated significant amounts of land that is more

than capable of supporting the industrial and commercial land needs projected above. As the Township takes on more new residential development the tax burden on residents and farmers will likely increase. In an attempt to reduce the tax burden on residents, some amount of commercial and industrial zoning within the Township may be desired.

**Table 12**  
**Northeast Allegan County**  
**Non-Residential Land Needs Projections**

	<b>Current Standard<sup>1</sup></b>	<b><u>2030 Projected Need</u></b>
<b>Retail and service uses</b> (41 sf. Per capita x 3/43560)		
Hopkins Township	2.1 ac.	8.0
City of Wayland	13.8 ac.	25.25 ac
Total Northeast area	69 ac.	103 ac.
<b>Industrial</b> (.5 to.6 workers per person x 1 ac. Per 10 to 20 workers)		
Hopkins Township	57 to 136	71 to 171
City of Wayland	120 to 240 ac.	220 to 240 ac.
Total Northeast area	600 to 1200 ac.	900 to 1800 ac.
<b>Recreation and Open Space</b> (11 ac./1000 persons)		
Hopkins Township	24.5 ac.	31.2 ac.
City of Wayland	42 ac.	76 ac.
Total Northeast area	210 ac.	315ac.

*Sources: Development Impact Assessment Handbook, ULI, 1994*

*Population Projections, Landmark Strategies, 2005*

<sup>1</sup> *Current standard reflects the estimated land need based the application of ULI ratios to the 2000 population. It does not reflect a current land inventory.*

## Projection Summary

The forecasts presented above assumes that the Township and nearby units of government will continue to direct growth in the same essential patterns exhibited in the past. However, in a community such as Hopkins, which is located in commuting proximity to urban areas, the growth of housing and population will be strongly impacted by trends experienced within the larger geographic region. For Hopkins, this involves consideration of the growth characteristics of Northeast Allegan County, the Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo Metropolitan areas, and West Michigan. Major determinants of future population and housing growth in Hopkins will include the following:

- The availability of public utilities.
- The economic health of the Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo metropolitan areas.
- The effectiveness of growth management attempts in Hopkins and adjacent Townships and the quantity of housing development accommodated.
- Future gasoline/energy prices and their effect on people's willingness to commute to work. The quality of roads, congestion and the travel time to and from the area will also affect people's willingness to commute.
- The quality of life in terms of the availability and quality of local support services required for development. These include police and fire protection, streets and sidewalks, parks, schools and shopping opportunities.
- The availability of jobs locally and within commuting distance.

## Development Implications

The preceding chapters of the Master Plan have described the existing land use, socioeconomic, and demographic conditions in Hopkins Township. This section draws from the data the key issues or concerns that the Plan must address. The following are implications based on the data presented throughout the Community Profile:

1. Current growth patterns in the southern suburbs of Grand Rapids indicate that significant long-range growth in Hopkins could be inevitable. Regional market forces could however, be justification for the Township to partner with neighboring communities (e.g. Dorr and Wayland Townships and the City of Wayland) in an effort to coordinate growth with one another to avoid leap frog development and to minimize speculative over-development along the US-131 corridor.
2. Developing solutions to balance the need and desire to preserve farmland and the rural character of the Township, while not squelching private property rights and desirable economic development is very important in the planning process. Options such as the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), and other farmland preservation techniques must be considered as methods in which to preserve farmland. In cooperation with Allegan County's farmland preservation initiatives, the Township is in a good position to facilitate the implementation of one or both of these methods early, before large-scale growth occurs in the community.
3. The Township must recognize the Village of Hopkins as a community identifier, and develop policies in which to protect and maintain its identity and significance as a community center and economic focal point.
4. The Township's farmland and its rural character are its most identifiable features. That "open space" may be its own worst enemy. As a result of society's desire for elbow room and clean air, farmland is becoming devastated. As farmland is slowly converted to homes and other uses, the features that first attracted families to the community are eliminated. Dorr and Leighton Townships to the north are the next in line to become Grand Rapids suburbs and unless the trend is stalled, Hopkins Township may not be far behind.
5. By requiring higher density residential development to locate in strategic areas around the Township (where residential and commercial development concentrations already exist and where utilities are most likely to be feasibly extended in the future), farmland and open space can be preserved elsewhere in the Township. This helps to meet housing needs of the

region, but still places priority on preserving farmland. This will require inter-governmental planning, cooperation and coordination of utilities expansion.

6. Pressure is likely to increase for the Township to allow more dense residential developments. Dense development scattered haphazardly throughout the Township will fail to enhance or preserve farmland and rural character, and will diminish surface water quality. Cluster development or conservation subdivision and open space preservation regulations are mechanisms that can be used to preserve open space, and even specifically require farmland preservation. These are constructive growth management tools that should be considered for implementation in Hopkins Township. Combined with a designated "Farmland Preservation Zone" in which PDR and TDR options will be encouraged and overlay regulations designed to protect stream corridors, Hopkins Township will be well positioned to manage its rural resources.
7. A review of the Future Land Use Plans of the City of Wayland, Wayland Township, Leighton Township and the preliminary plan of Dorr Township reveals that there are more than 3,000 acres planned for industrial use and over 1,300 acres being planned to support new commercial development in northeast Allegan County. The areas being set aside are all well located and served from a transportation standpoint, and all are either already served by public utility systems or are in the process of having utilities extended to them. Based on these findings, it is difficult to fully justify setting aside of major land areas in Hopkins Township for similar uses in the foreseeable future.

## Goals and Objectives

A community's planning "Goals and Objectives" are statements that express both long and short range desires and serve to provide direction for related activities such as zoning, site plan review, the development of streets and utilities, economic development, and protection of natural resources. They are the backbone of the Master Plan; the framework upon which the Township's day to day and long term development decisions are grounded.

A community's Goals and Objectives are related and co-dependent. They are similar but they differ in specificity.

- *A goal is a broad general statement of a final purpose or ambition; a position or situation a community seeks to achieve.*
- *An objective is a specific action position that is specifically needed to accomplish a goal. Objectives are most often directive in tone and often referred to as "policy statements"*

The Planning Commission developed the following Goals and Objectives subsequent to a process of identification and discussion of a number of current and emerging development issues. That process included analysis of demographic and development trends, discussions with elected officials and very importantly, obtaining the views and concerns of individual citizens during a public Master Plan Workshop, the results of which are included in the appendix.

The statements below are listed by topic areas. Following each goal are objectives that serve to state the specific means of achieving the desired goal.

### ***THE ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACE***

What Hopkins Township "is" physically is defined by its natural features; a unique combination of high quality natural resources. The past and future of Hopkins Township are therefore rooted in these natural resources. Forested hillsides, streams, lakes, wetland areas, and meadows are found in many locations. In addition, open grassed and agricultural areas define another type of open space; one that has been altered from natural conditions but still presents an open and predominately green landscape for people to appreciate. The protection of these environments is critically important to maintaining the Township's quality of life and physical integrity.

#### ***Goal 1***

**The Township will be a responsible steward of the natural environment and integrate the ideal environmental protection into all phases of local planning and policy implementation.**

- ◆ The Township will consider the environmental impacts of its long range plans, programs and regulations in regard to protecting the region’s natural environment.
- ◆ Day to day Zoning and development decisions will consider impacts of proposed developments on the natural environment.

***Goal 2***

**Continue considering clean water quality as a top priority.**

- ◆ A watershed protection approach to water quality and storm water management will be taken to conserve river and stream corridors and other water bodies as natural and managed ecological systems, and as critical wildlife habitat.
- ◆ Standards and policies will continue to be holistic and coordinated with County, State and Federal efforts to ensure the sustainability of high quality surface and ground water resources.

***Goal 3***

**Identify and protect environmentally sensitive and locally important vegetation and wildlife and areas.**

- ◆ Identify and pursue funding sources for implementing a natural features inventory and appropriate regulatory tools aimed at natural features protection.
- ◆ The Township will work with surrounding units of government to identify native vegetative and wildlife resources and to determine the habitat protection needs of these resources. It will coordinate with other agencies to improve the Township’s natural environment.

***Goal 4***

**Maintain and enhance the Township’s rural environment and its aesthetic and recreational qualities by preserving intact open space areas.**

- ◆ Zoning regulations will continue to be adopted to preserve the Township’s rural character. Emphasis will be placed on the preservation of stream corridor and woodlots.

***FARMLAND PRESERVATION***

The agricultural base of the community is comprised of many acres of valuable farmland, large investments in modern day farming equipment and facilities, as well as numerous support businesses.

### *Goal 1*

#### **Encourage and facilitate the preservation of prime farmland as a valuable resource for the community.**

- ◆ Land use decisions will support the desires of individual property owners who wish to keep their land in active agricultural production.
- ◆ The Township will identify areas where poor soils, low productivity, incompatible surrounding uses, land fragmentation, and similar factors make the lands less appropriate for farming and potentially more appropriate for future residential development. Land use policies will give development priority to these areas instead of prime farmland areas.
- ◆ The Township will use appropriate ordinances to protect its valuable farmland areas and will participate in and facilitate County and State level programs for the purchase and transfer of developments rights as such programs become available.
- ◆ The Township will cooperate with other agencies and units of government to establish eligibility for farmers who wish to receive tax credits for participation in farmland preservation programs.

### *Goal 2*

#### **Protect farm operations from conflict with incompatible uses and maintain a strong agricultural economy.**

- ◆ The Township will strictly limit non-agricultural development in areas planned for long-term agricultural use and preservation. In areas designated for agricultural use, land uses and activities that could conflict with farming or adversely affect the long-term investment in farm operations will be discouraged.
- ◆ Prohibit new subdivisions and non-farm related commercial and industrial development in areas planned for agricultural preservation.
- ◆ Encourage farmers within the Township to follow soil conservation plans and to utilize soil conservation practices.
- ◆ Maintain a rural buffer area in which to cluster non-farm residential development in order to preserve prime agricultural lands. A minimal amount of non-farm residential development will be facilitated in such buffer areas. A very low gross density for the districts as a whole, coupled with appropriate minimum and maximum lot size and house placement standards will be used to minimize conflict with ongoing agricultural operations and natural areas.

- ◆ Agencies and bodies responsible for the preparation of utility plans and other public improvements such as schools will be requested to recognize the agricultural land preservation goals of the Township.

### ***RESIDENTIAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT***

Successful communities are places where people want to live. People invest in their homes and businesses. Those investments are in fact investments in the community and in the community's future as much, if not more than, in each person's future. Such investments create a confidence that spurs others to invest and sustain a higher quality of life.

#### ***Goal 1***

**Hopkins Township will limit densities and determine appropriate locations for residential development in order to preserve its agricultural base and rural character.**

- ◆ The Township will determine optimal locations for future low density single family residential development, giving special consideration to agricultural preservation, environmental protection infrastructure availability and the capability of the land to support development.
- ◆ Through zoning, the Township will implement adequate lot width and size requirements which ensure home spacing that is sufficient to satisfy health requirements and to protect rural views in rural areas.
- ◆ Where appropriate, the Township will encourage development patterns that utilize cluster development in conjunction with establishing open space areas and/or conservation easements dedicated to preservation of unique natural features.
- ◆ Concurrency of infrastructure and sustainability should be an overarching principle regarding new residential development. The Township will only promote residential development in appropriate locations, once served by adequate public or private community utilities systems and improved, paved street access.

#### ***Goal 2***

**Hopkins Township will encourage a wide range of housing options to meet different and changing needs of households with children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and moderate and low income households.**

- ◆ The Township will facilitate the development of housing that meets the needs of all household incomes in the community.

- ◆ The Township will limit higher density residential development to locations near the Village of Hopkins where public utilities exist or, as a component of a proposed development, will be extended to serve that development.
- ◆ Intensify code enforcement to maintain decent and safe housing and enhance aesthetics in the community.

***COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT***

Planning for sustainable economic development in Hopkins Township cannot occur solely at the local level. A close interdependence between the Township, the Village of Hopkins, the neighboring City of Wayland and Wayland and Dorr Townships demands a regional perspective on a number of issues related to land use and economic development.

***Goal 1***

**Allow commercial and industrial development to occur in the Township in a limited, controlled and responsible manner.**

- ◆ The Township will limit new commercial development to those types of businesses that serve the needs of the residents and the agricultural community.
- ◆ The Township will encourage commercial development to occur on parcels of appropriate size and scale to maintain consistency with the surrounding character.
- ◆ The Township will recognize the land use and utility policies of neighboring communities in establishing the amount of land to be allocated for future regional oriented commercial and industrial land.

***Goal 2***

**Nurture sustainable development.**

- ◆ Concurrency of infrastructure and protective services and business sustainability should be the overarching principle regarding new commercial development. Only promote development and redevelopment of commercial and industrial areas in appropriate locations, once served by public utilities and improved street access.
- ◆ Limited service uses should be permitted near freeway interchanges to meet the needs of the highway traveler and nearby residents and not "mega uses" that must draw from or exploit a large regional market.
- ◆ Adopt corridor overlay district provisions to superimpose access management, landscaping, sign and other functional and aesthetic standards on corridors where

businesses are likely to locate and where future street right of way and rural character should be preserved.

- ◆ Consider the compatibility of commercial/industrial uses with surrounding non-commercial/industrial uses.

## ***ROADS***

Efficiency, safety and ease of maintenance of the road system will be maximized and provisions will be made for road improvements that are consistent with adopted land use goals and policies. Roads will be systematically improved with priority given to roads in areas intended to support the highest concentrations of development. Where non-farm development is appropriate, development of an integrated network of a public and private local streets will be encouraged to avoid strip development along collector streets and to foster the development of land internal to section lines.

### ***Goal 1***

#### **Upgrade the Zoning Ordinance to:**

- ◆ Limit the number of driveways along major highway arterials by encouraging the shared use of driveways by commercial establishments through site plan review.
- ◆ Require adequate building and use setbacks along major roadways to ensure the preservation of future street width needs.
- ◆ Encourage clustered residential development that can minimize the length of street required to serve developments.

## ***COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES***

### ***Goal 1***

#### **Promote a coordinated approach among local communities for the planning, provision and expansion of public water and sanitary systems.**

- ◆ The Township must pursue partnerships with the Village of Hopkins, City of Wayland and neighboring Townships, non-profit agencies and private businesses in order to share responsibilities and maximize resources and talents.

## **Section IV-Future Land Use Plan**

The Future Land Use Plan will serve as a guide for the community's vision. It is based on an analysis of land use issues facing Hopkins Township, existing land use and conditions, demographic and housing statistics, environmental and physical limitations and resources, regional transportation influences and public input sessions, and the goals and objectives set forth established as part of the process.

Because of the relative "open slate" nature of much of Hopkins Township's current landscape, several localized areas of the Future Land Use Plan are fairly general in scope and are also designed to be flexible. This flexibility is manifested by the depiction of several "transitional planning areas" where a few long standing land uses and zoning districts are recognized but where a range of acceptable future land use alternatives are indicated rather than precise relationships. For example, the concept of a transition from farming and sparse rural development to more intensive development activity such as homes and businesses appears logical in some areas of the Township. Future economic conditions will provide much greater clarity as to the ultimate scope and relationships of the various development types in those areas, however. For that reason and others, the Future Land Use Plan must be maintained and updated through periodic review and revisions. In that way plan will be able maintain long-range goals while more realistically reflecting contemporary trends.

There is no precise schedule to implement the recommendations contained here. For example, the timing of a rezoning to allow for low density residential development or commercial development will be dependent upon a number of factors, the most important of which are the availability of public utilities and provisions for adequate roadways public services. Those, plus other triggering or threshold factors such as the availability of similarly zoned and serviced land in the vicinity will be considered when reviewing any request for rezoning a particular parcel of land.

### **PLANNING PRINCIPLES**

There are four basic land use planning principles that were used as guides in establishing the Future land Use plan for Hopkins Township. They are general principles and were applied to all land use categories:

### **Create a Cohesive Communities Fabric.**

Promote development which builds upon existing community centers of Hopkins, Wayland and Hilliards. Where allowed, rural residential clusters of homes should use natural and man-made boundaries and landmarks to create defined neighborhoods and to create sufficient buffers between home sites and nearby agricultural operations.

### **Utilization and Preservation of Agricultural Resources**

Hopkins Township is blessed with an abundance of productive farmland. Land fragmentation and the proliferation of non-farm residences within the farming areas disrupt the efficiency of farm operations and results in irreconcilable land use conflicts. The vast majority of new development should be directed and encouraged to locate where soils, topography and existing land use patterns are naturally conducive to development.

### **Efficiency and Compactness**

Major development activity, whether as singular projects or as a series of smaller proposals with a collectively large impact, should be directed to locations where the use of the existing and already programmed or planned public improvements can be maximized. Significant development should only be allowed to occur when the infrastructure, (roads and utilities and protective services) are capable of supporting and sustaining it.

### **Protection of Natural Systems**

Special consideration should be given to protect environmentally sensitive areas, particularly around the several valuable lakes and streams of Hopkins Township. Watershed focused land use planning tools should be used to protect riparian wetlands and floodplains. The preservation of key natural, undeveloped areas is vital to aquatic habits and wildlife populations. Natural areas and open space define the area's rural character, provide recharge for groundwater and drinking water, and provide numerous recreation opportunities.

## **FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES**

The following is a description of several key plan elements and land use categories along with supporting recommendations. The Future Land Use Map (Map 9) illustrates the geography of the Future Land Use Plan.

## **AG and R1- Agricultural and Rural Estates**

To prolong the agricultural base of Hopkins Township and to maintain its rural character, the Future Land Use Plan promotes the continuance of an "agricultural preservation district" and a long term "rural planning district"

- ◆ The "AG"- Agricultural Zoning District, is an area in which farming activity is promoted as the primary long-term land use and non-farm development is discouraged. The focus is to enable strong farming influence to continue in the areas where it is well established and least impacted by existing development.
- ◆ The " R-1", Rural Estates, Residential District areas are areas where farming is still permitted but where limited residential development will be permitted at low densities. Appropriately designed rural residential cluster developments with somewhat higher net densities may be accommodated on soils that are less productive for farming but still supportive of structures and sanitary facilities. The desire is to preserve those qualities (rural character) which attract people to the Township. The preservation of meaningful tracts of open space within and surrounding the rural clusters will therefore be paramount in their design and acceptance of developments occurring within the Rural Estates District

By utilizing the above two planning designations, it is envisioned that the Township can continue to protect and preserve areas within the Township that are best suited for agricultural purposes while also accommodating a demand for a rural residential lifestyle in areas where the long term viability of farming has already diminished.

The major components to the Agricultural and Rural Conservation Plan are more fully described as follows:

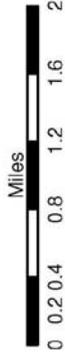
### **Agricultural (AG)**

The Agricultural (AG) District includes some of the most productive soils in Allegan County. The majority of the soils is classified as "prime agricultural" soils by the U.S.D.A. The prime farmland category is based largely on soil conditions with the term applying to those that, in their natural condition, have the highest capacity for crop production. Nine factors are used to evaluate soils classified as prime. They include climate, drainage, alkalinity, water table depth, flooding, slope, soil temperature and permeability/coarseness. Other farmland can also have local significance while not being classified as prime farmland. For example, locally important farmland may include larger dairy operations and soils that have fair to good productivity, especially when assisted by irrigation, tile drainage or other enhanced management methods. Soils that support a limited range of specialty crops such as strawberries, blueberries or orchard crops can also have great significance to a locality.

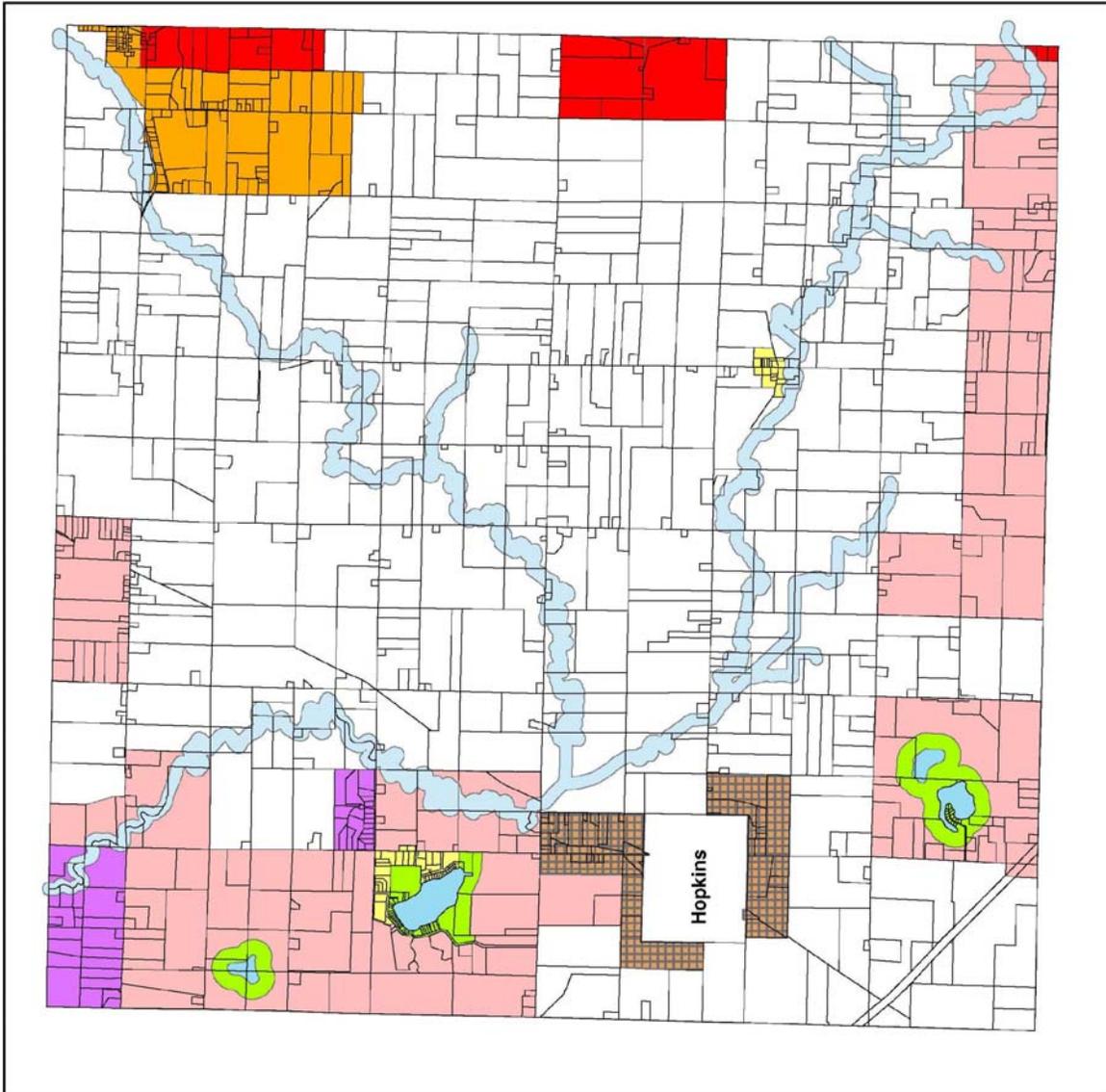
Only relatively small areas of the Township's prime farming areas are also naturally conducive to supporting septic systems and building structures. Most of those areas are concentrated in Sections 15, 16

and 23 in the heart of the Township's most active farming operations. If development were allowed in such areas, it would interfere with farm operations and result in further premature disinvestments in agriculture.

**Hopkins Township**  
**Future Land Use Map**  
**2015**  
**Allegan County, Michigan**



- Agricultural (AG)
- Rural Residential (R1)
- Low Density Residential (R-1A)
- Medium Density Residential (R-2)
- Gateway Mixed Use Transitional (GMUT)  
*A mixture of commercial and industrial uses as infrastructure allows.*
- Gateway Residential Transitional (GRT)  
*Mixed densities of residential uses as infrastructure allows.*
- Village Expansion (VE)  
*A mixed use of medium-high density residential uses with neighborhood commercial as infrastructure allows.*
- Resort Residential (RR)  
*A mix of residential densities dependent upon the location of the resort area to avoid encroaching on lakefront areas.*
- River Protection Overlay
- Water



Allegan County Land Information Services assumes no liability for results or conclusions drawn from the use of this data.  
 Map Printed: 02/11/2016

## **Section V Implementation**

In order for the Master Plan to serve as an effective guide for the controlled development of Hopkins Township it must be implemented. Primary responsibility for implementing the Plan rests with the Hopkins Township Board, the Planning Commission and the Township staff. This is done through a number of methods, including ordinances, programs and administrative procedures that are described in this chapter.

It is important to note that the Master Plan itself has no legal authority to regulate development in order to implement the recommendations of the Plan. This implementation must come from the decisions of the Township Board and Planning Commission to provide needed public improvements and to administer and establish regulatory measures relative to the use of the land.

Private citizens, including individual home and land owners, are also involved in fulfilling the recommendations of the Master Plan by the actual physical development of land uses and through the rezoning of land. The authority for this, however, comes from the Township. Cooperation between the public and private citizens, including developers, is therefore important in successful implementation of the Master Plan.

### **Zoning and Related Land Development Regulations**

Zoning represents a legal means for the Township to regulate private property to achieve orderly land use relationships. It is the process most commonly used to implement community Master Plans. The zoning process consists of an official zoning map and zoning ordinance text. The official zoning map divides the community into different zones or districts within which certain uses are permitted and others are not. The zoning ordinance text notes the uses which are permitted and establishes regulations to control densities, height, bulk, setbacks, lot sizes and accessory uses. The zoning ordinance also sets forth procedures for special approval regulations and sign controls. These measures permit the Township to control the quality as well as the type of development. Other regulations include Subdivision and Site Condominium Control Ordinances; lot split ordinances, private road regulations and blight ordinances.

Subsequent to the adoption of this Plan, the Township Planning Commission and Township Board should review and make any necessary revisions to the zoning regulations to ensure that the recommendations of the Plan as outlined in this section are instituted. Table 14 summarizes the recommended changes to the Zoning Ordinance and map that are directly relevant to implementation of the Master Plan.

### **Prepare and Adopt Capital Improvements Program**

Capital Improvements Programming is the first step in a comprehensive management system designed to regulate priorities and programs to community goals and objectives. It is a means of planning ahead for the funding and implementation of major construction and land acquisition activities. The typical CIP is six years in length and updated yearly. The first year in each CIP contains the capital improvement budget. The program generally includes a survey of the long-range needs of the entire governmental unit covering major planned projects along with their expected cost and priority. The Township Board then analyzes the project's financing options and the interrelationship between projects. Finally, a project schedule is developed. Priority projects are included in the Capital Improvements Program. Low priority projects may be retained in a Capital Improvements Schedule which may cover as long as 20 years.

The CIP is useful to the Township, private utilities, citizens and investors, since it allows coordination in activities and provides the general public with a view of future expectations.

### **Recreation Plan**

The Plan recommends that the Township maintain a Recreation Plan in order to be eligible for State recreation funding programs such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund. Assistance under these programs is available for planning, acquiring land and developing a wide range of outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The programs are administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and are financed by funds appropriated by the Federal Government and State Legislature. Under the LWCF program, grants of up to 50% of the cost of a project are available; under the MNRTF Program, 100% funding may be obtained.

### **Planning Education**

Planning Commissions should attend planning seminars to keep themselves informed of planning issues and learn how to better carry out their duties and responsibilities as Planning Commissioners. These seminars are regularly sponsored by the Michigan Association of Planners (MAP), the Michigan Township Association (MTA), and MSU Cooperative Extension Program, which are valuable resources for Planning Commissions. There are also several planning publications which are a useful information tool for Planning Commissioners.

### **Inter-Governmental Cooperation**

Inter-governmental cooperation on certain land use issues and utility issues can pay dividends to all involved. In an effort to manage growth properly, the Township desires to establish goals and regulations consistent with those of its neighbors so that the immediate area develops in a compatibly efficient manner, without overdevelopment. Consequently, Hopkins Township hopes to minimize incompatible land uses across municipal boundaries and to manage growth in such a way that the strengths of each community are taken advantage of and that competition between communities for tax base and economic development dollars is minimized. The implementation of programs or policies resulting from this strategy will necessitate endorsement and support from all jurisdictions involved. This activity must be on-going and includes the notion of partnering with the Village of Hopkins in areas such as utilities, joint land use planning and re-consolidation, and with neighboring municipalities on watershed plans, joint land use planning and utilities improvement.

### **Public Information**

It is important that the proposals of this Plan be discussed and understood by the citizens of Hopkins Township. Acceptance of this Plan by the public is essential to its successful implementation. Steps should be taken to make Township residents aware of this Plan and the continuing activities of the Planning Commission. This can be accomplished through newspaper reports of Planning Commission activity. Contact with local civic and service organizations is another method which can be used to promote the Township's planning activities and objectives.

### **Revisions to the Master Plan**

Under Michigan statute, the Master Plan must be reviewed annually and updated every five years in order to be responsive to new growth trends and current Township attitudes. As growth occurs over the years, the Master Plan goals, land use information, population projections and other pertinent data will be reviewed and revised as necessary so the Plan can continue to serve as a valid guide to the growth of the Township.

**Table 14**

**Hopkins Township Master Plan**

**Future Land Use Designation Outline and Zoning Comparison/Implementation Measures**

**Future**

**Land Use  
Designation**

**Zoning Designation**

- **Implementation measures**

**AG**

**AG Agricultural District**

- Communicate the intent of the district as for long term agricultural preservation by stating intention within the Zoning Ordinance.
- Continue to Participate in State and Allegan County Purchase of Development Rights programs.
- Continue to allow the clustering of home sites under flexible minimum lot size provisions.
- Carefully evaluate rezoning requests to ensure compliance with master plan recommendations and to minimize unwarranted or premature transition away from the agricultural land use pattern.
- AG zoned areas indicated on the FLU map as -R1 and R-1A would be eligible for rezoning to R-1 or R-1A as applicable. R-1 re-zonings could proceed at property owner request. R-1A rezoning should proceed at the initiative of the Township.
- AG areas within each of the Sub-areas should remain AG until the Township determines that infrastructure and services are adequate to support a demonstrated demand for an appropriate alternative use.

**Rural Estates  
(R-1)**

**R-1 Rural Estates**

- Communicate the intent of the district as being for rural preservation and agricultural conservation by stating intention within the Zoning Ordinance.
- Encourage the clustering of a small number of home sites with the current flexible minimum lot size provisions.
- New zoning standards regulating open space cluster developments having more than five dwelling units should be adopted. Developments larger than that should only be allowed if public or private wastewater treat facilities are created to serve the lots and they are located with direct access to a paved street. Under this scenario, reduction in lot sizes could also be considered.
- The northwest ¼ of Section 34 should be down zoned from R-1 to AG.
- Areas now zoned R-1 that are identified on the FLU map as R-1A should be rezoned to R-1A at the initiative of the Township.
- Rezoning of AG zoned areas indicated on the FLU map as R-1 could proceed to R-1 at property owner request.
- Adopt specific special use provisions for resort and campground types of development.

**Intermediate Estates (R-1A)**

R-1A –Intermediate Estate District

- Communicate the intent of the zoning district within the Zoning Ordinance.
- New Zoning standards facilitating open space cluster developments having more than five dwelling units should be adopted. Developments larger than that should only be allowed if extensive open space is preserved, public or private wastewater treatment facilities are created to serve the lots and they are located with direct access to a paved street. Standards should be considered allowing lot sizes as small as 20,000 square feet within such developments.
- R-1A areas identified on the FLU map as should be rezoned to R-1A at the initiative of the Township.
- The R-2 area in the east half of Section 32 should be rezoned to R-2/R-3 at the initiative of the Township.
- Adopt specific special use provisions for resort and campground types of development.

**Low Density Residential (R-2)**

R-2 –Low Density Residential areas should be developed with single family homes.

- Communicate the intent of the zoning district within the Zoning Ordinance.
- No new R-2 areas should be created as **Low Density Residential** unless they are created in concurrency with public sewer, streets capable of supporting the additional traffic and increased levels of public services such as police and fire protection.

**Medium Density Residential (R-3)**

R-3- Medium Density Residential areas should be developed at the initiative of property owners.

- Communicate the intent of the Zoning District within the zoning ordinance.
- No new multifamily development should take place without the concurrency of public sewer, improved streets, public safety and fire services capable of supporting the development.

**Resort Residential District (RES)**

New District

- State intention of district within zoning ordinance.
- Create a new set of district or overlay provisions that apply to the current Lakefront developments. Existing lots sizes should be recognized but new lot sizes should be increased to prevent overcrowding.
- Require community sewer systems for new development.
- Apply lot coverage maximums to control redevelopment and to limit overcrowding and oversizing of new homes on existing lots.
- Adopt specific Special Use provisions for resort and campground types of development.

**Commercial and Industrial** C-1 and C-2 Commercial and Industrial

- State intentions of each district within sections of the Zoning Ordinance
- Add areas over time only within the designated GMUT and VE Sub-areas based on demonstrated need and concurrency of infrastructure, streets and protective services.
- Update ordinances to incorporate access controls, landscaping standards and other design and performance standards.
- Review and adjust the range and make up of permitted and special uses to ensure an appropriate mix of uses and to minimize land use conflicts and over use of infrastructure.
- Adopt mixed use PUD District Provisions
- Improve buffer standards between districts.
- Adopt access management standards
- Coordinate the amount of planned and zoned commercial and industrial land with neighboring townships and the City of Wayland.

The Agricultural (AG) District encompasses areas of the Township where active farm operations predominate and where large parcel sizes continue to be conducive to large scale agricultural production. In order to achieve the Township's stated farmland preservation goals, a three-fold strategy will be pursued within the Agricultural (AG) District:

1. The implementation of local land use regulations and other public policies that assist farmers and encourage farming and farm related activities as the primary land use. In these areas of the Township, farming is considered the best long-term land use.
2. The implementation of local land use policies and regulations that discourage non-farm related activities and prevent the fragmentation and conversion of large, high quality agricultural parcels into smaller parcels intended to support rural home sites.
3. Participation in State and County Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs which enable farmers to offer the sale of their development rights to the County and State. This voluntary program will enable some landowners to retain their land for continued farming while receiving cash payments for the sale of their non-farm development rights. The Township's participation in this program and its supporting appropriate land use and zoning policies are critical to this programs success. All lands within the AG area will be eligible for participation in the County and State sponsored program.

The Farmland Preservation Map (Map 4) specifically identifies those properties eligible for participation in the County and State sponsored program PDR program. The Farmland Preservation Map excludes areas where existing land use patterns, soil and topographic constraints and other growth factors, such as proximity to utilities and expressway interchanges, diminish the practicality of attempts to preserve the areas for long-term farm use. The boundaries of the Farmland Preservation area shown on Map 4 coincide with the boundaries of the AG District shown on the Future land Use Plan. While all lands within the AG District are intended to be eligible for the protection under these programs, funding limitations are expected to make the programs competitive in nature. Property that is nearest areas designated for future

Non-farm development are, at least in theory, at greater risk for development pressures and might therefore be expected to be given a higher relative priority for PDR funding.

Within the Hopkins Township Zoning Ordinance, the AG Zoning District presently makes provisions for a full range of agricultural activities. The AG Zoning District presently requires that all properties remain at least 38 acres in size and makes only limited provision for single family dwellings. Adequate isolation distances between certain high intensity farming activities and residential uses are an important criteria for farming operations under Michigan's Right to Farm Act. From a practical standpoint adequate isolation distances from residential intrusions in farm areas create numerous opportunities for conflict which range from passenger vehicle and farm implement conflicts on the local roads to issues of trespass and to noise, odor and air quality complaints by homeowners. For these reasons, it has been concluded that for farming to remain viable in Hopkins Township, large areas of intact farming must be protected from unnecessary intrusion by homes and other conflicting land uses.

### **Rural Estates (R-1)**

The Rural Estates is intended to provide for very low density, rural estate residential development either on large lots or on smaller clustered home sites. Agricultural operations and activities are also envisioned to continue in the Rural Estates area, but are not necessarily viewed as the long term or permanent land use. This category will serve as a buffer between the Agricultural (AG) District and some of the developing rural residential areas, especially in the northwest. An area-wide gross density of approximately one unit per ten acres is intended.

The Rural Estates classification recognizes a category of homebuyers that desire a rural environment in relatively close proximity to urban amenities. At the same time, this land category is intended to encourage the preservation of wetlands, woodlands, and other open spaces, which are useful as water retention and ground water recharge, and habitat for wildlife. The topography of most of the R-1 District is considerably more rolling than in the AG District and thus most of the R1 lands or areas are less conducive to general farming activity. This topography offers many impressive vistas and adds tremendously to the area's overall aesthetic and scenic value.

As a basic development option in the R-1 areas, large lot parcel splits will provide adequate area for septic system placement and will create fewer non-farm activities and conflict points next to active farms. Implementation of zoning provisions that offer the possibility of clustering of smaller home sites as an alternative to large lot zoning will also be considered. This technique can be more beneficial to the

environment, and can be helpful in preserving the integrity of neighboring farm operations and for preserving rural character.

The criteria considered in establishing the general boundaries and locations of the various Rural Estates areas include the lack of sewer and water utilities, a close relationship and proximity to active and prime farmland, the existence of soils that are unsuitable to support intensive development due to topography and septic system limitations, an existing and fairly extensive pattern of large lot rural residential land fragmentation, the preponderance of an essentially unimproved road network (unpaved vs. paved roads) and relative long distances from more intensive development patterns and areas. These factors help to define the R-1 area as unsuitable for intensive development as well as less suitable for long term investment in farming than those areas included in the Agricultural (AG) land category.

In summary, the primary objectives of the Rural Estates (R-1) land use classification are:

- ◆ To provide a buffer between some of the more exclusive agricultural preservation areas of the Township and the areas programmed to accommodate more intensive economic development.
- ◆ To conserve woodlands and wetlands which are essential as water retention, water purification and ground water recharge and which have important wildlife habitat, aesthetic and scenic value.
- ◆ To encourage the continuation of farming while accommodating very low density rural estate types of residential development or appropriately designed small residential clusters of development. Such clusters can only be accommodated however when they are designed on a scale that will maintain the overall rural environment and not over-capacitate the soil and roadways.

### **Transitional Sub-Area Planning Districts**

The Future Land Use Plan identifies several transitional sub-areas where land use change may ultimately be facilitated should infrastructure improvements capable of supporting more intensive economic development come about. Three Sub- areas relate directly to the three expressway interchanges. Public utilities are also a major consideration. Several of the sub-areas are therefore situated where (at least proximally) future public utility extensions might be extended from the nearby existing public systems (Village of Hopkins, City of Wayland, the Leighton –Dorr Sewer Authority or the Gun Lake Sewer Authority). There have been various investigations into such extensions and it can be envisioned that future population increases and economic development pressures could justify one or more extensions into Hopkins Township.

As of the publication of this Future Land Use Plan, a sewer extension from a planned Wayland Township Sewer System is expected to serve portions of 12<sup>th</sup> street from 135<sup>th</sup> Ave. to 130<sup>th</sup> Avenue. A natural gas

line is currently proposed for this area; however, it is not expected there will be public funds available to expand police and fire protection or make street improvements necessary to support significant economic development in the interchange areas. Such improvements should nonetheless be anticipated for the purposes of identifying those areas of the Township that would be programmed for intensive development in the intermediate or long range future, assuming the concurrency of support infrastructure.

The primary function of each of the "Transitional Sub-areas" depicted on the Future Land Use Map is to serve as holding areas for lands that might ultimately be considered for development that is more intensive. Unless already zoned to an alternate designation, sub- area zoning will in the short range consist of both AG and R-1 Zoning classifications. Farming and very low intensity residential development are however not necessarily considered to be the ultimate long-term use.

The transitional Sub-area Planning Districts are thus aimed at establishing "land banks" for land uses that may ultimately be allowed to occur when the Township determines that more intensive structural development is appropriate and when the necessary public utilities, street infrastructure and emergency and protective services are in place to support it.

Following are general descriptions and rationale for each of the identified Sub-areas. Included is a listing of the range of potential land uses contemplated within each sub-area.

**Gateways Mixed Use Transitional Area (GMUT)** All three US-131 interchanges have been included within a mixed use GMUT sub-area. These sub-areas encompass most of the existing commercial and industrial zoning within the township and each are sized to accommodate fairly substantial amounts of economic development in the future. Each interchange area has the advantage of easy accessibility to the expressway and excellent highway visibility. Soils are poorly suited for development without utilities, however, and unimproved local roads are limiting factors.

Because of excellent highway visibility the entire corridor is attractive to land speculators. Nonetheless, the area between the interchanges south of 130<sup>th</sup> Ave. has not been included as part of a transitional area. The reasons are threefold:

1. Left unencumbered by the encroachment of conflicting land uses the area would be expected to continue indefinitely as highly productive farmland.
2. Both Wayland Township and the City of Wayland have made ample provision for commercial and industrial expansions along the entire eastern US-131 corridor. Duplication of that land use pattern does not appear justified based on

land use projections and infrastructure limitations.

3. Soils are poorly suited for development without utilities. Twelfth Street is a gravel road that would need improvement to support any measure of additional non-farm development. The upcoming creation of the Wayland Township sewer and natural gas line will offer the possibility for growth along this corridor.

In summary, over-planning of the US-131 corridor area into a linear commercial corridor between 130<sup>th</sup> to 124<sup>th</sup> Ave. will be discouraged. Only the areas in the immediate vicinity of the interchanges are programmed for change and until the necessary infrastructure is in place, additional development in those areas will be discouraged. Once the infrastructure is in place, the following range of use would be considered:

- General, neighborhood and regional oriented businesses
- Light industrial
- Hospitality service business (hotels, restaurants)

It is obvious that the GMUT sub-area holds the potential for accommodating the majority of the future commercial and industrial concentrations in the township. It is desired that this growth be integrated into an overall development scheme and that it create welcoming gateways to the community. The Planned Use Development approach is the desired tool to deliver the appropriate mix of uses and quality of character.

**Gateways Residential Transitional Area (GRT)** The GRT area is located near the US-131/135<sup>th</sup> Avenue interchange. It encompasses existing residential developments as well as nearby vacant land in close proximity to the interchange. The intent is to allocate an appropriately sized area capable of supporting suburban residential expansions in proximity to potential utility extensions. The envisioned mix of uses includes low density residential subdivisions as well as alternative medium density home styles such as attached three-plexes, four-plexes and multi-family residences. This mix of residential use would be consistent with that of the R-3 Zoning District.

**Village Expansion Area (VE)** The Village Expansion area is intended to allocate outlying areas nearest the Village of Hopkins where the pattern of the existing Village should be encouraged to continue. Ideally, such expansions will add to the vitality of the Village core and reinvigorate the Village economy. In order to continue the smaller lot "village pattern" of development, public sanitary sewer and water will be necessary. Close cooperation with the Village of Hopkins will be needed to establish the desired mix of uses, densities and scale of expansion.

A full range of uses are possible but the primary focus in terms of land area allocation will be on residential and light commercial use. Included at the Village outskirts are ample areas for traditional neighborhood expansions as well as multi-family housing, senior housing and manufactured home community development. Such development will be relatively well suited to locate here instead of elsewhere in the Township. These development types could take advantage of potential utility extensions from the Village as well other existing support services such as the library and schools. Such a development could benefit the Village itself by providing affordable housing for new residents while providing new disposable income to be spent at nearby businesses. These uses would be consistent with the R-3 Zoning District.

The remaining individual Future Land Use Classifications are as follows:

**Intermediate Estates (R-1A)**

The Intermediate Estates District (R-1A) is intended to accommodate low density single family residential development in the rural environment. It is applied to areas in Sections 6 and 18 and in the south in Section 32. These areas are characterized by pronounced natural features such as rolling hills, woods and small lakes. The quality of soils and topography make the areas generally not conducive to modern farming.

In these areas, an average housing density of no greater than one unit per acre would be accommodated. This will allow for rural development while still protecting the character of the area and the surrounding natural features.

As previously stated, flexible zoning tools such as Open Space Zoning and Planned Unit Development options will allow for more creative land development and make protection of important natural features easier to accomplish.

It should be considered to allow smaller lots only if in open space cluster developments that meet density, open space and street improvement criteria. Such developments would only be considered if public or private community wastewater treatment systems are created to serve the lots and the roads providing access to the developments are paved.

### **Low Density Residential (R-2)**

The Low Density Residential District is proposed for single or two family dwellings on lot sizes of 15,000 to 20,000 square feet in size. The R-2 Low Density Residential Zoning District currently exists north of East Lake in Section 18 and around Ingerson Lake in Section 32. The R-2 District presently allows 8,500 square foot lots if utilities are available and 15,000 square foot lots without public sewer and water. The proposed R-2 areas as indicated on Future Land Use Map include the existing R-2 properties in Sections 1 and 12 near the Wayland Exit, the R-3 areas in Hilliards, part of the R-2 area northeast of East Lake and a portion of the R-2 area north of the Village of Hopkins in Section 20. The undeveloped R-2 area in Section 32 is not recognized as R-2 on the Future Land Use Map as LDR. It has been designated as Intermediate Estates, due to the lack of utilities. It is recommended that this large R-2 area be down zoned to R-1A.

### **Medium Density Residential District (R-3)**

The R-3 Planning District allows for single and multifamily dwellings, attached 3 and 4-plex units and duplexes at a maximum density of 8 to 9 units per acre.

With the exception of the Gateways Mixed Use Transitional (GMUT) sub-area, each of the proposed transitional sub-areas would be expected to include R-2 and R-3 components as the predominant land use type.

Due to the densities involved, no new R-2 or R-3 Zoning Districts should be created unless and until public sewer is made available and local roads can handle the increased traffic volumes.

### **Resort Residential (RES)**

This land use designation is applied to areas around the most significant lakes within the Township, including East Lake, Herlan Lake, Ingerson Lake and Three Corners Lake. It is recommended that a new zoning district be developed that will better regulate residential density and which will better address the range of uses that are gravitated to such areas. Long range water quality should also be addressed from the perspective of fertilizer runoff and septic and drain field contamination.

It is recommended that new developments be required to maintain waterfront buffer strips and that they be required to include the development and use of public or private community wastewater treatment systems. The RR classification should also entail the creation overlay provisions that recognize existing lot sizes but which control lot coverage of redeveloped or expanded dwellings on the existing lots. The zoning ordinance will need to be amended to incorporate these recommendations.

### **Neighborhood Business (C-1) And General Business (C-2)**

The Future Land Use Map recognizes the existing C-1 zoning near the Wayland US-131/135<sup>th</sup> Ave. interchange as well as the C-2 District located at the US-131/129<sup>th</sup> Ave. interchange. It is expected that over time, residential properties fronting on the north side of 135<sup>th</sup> Ave. will transition to commercial use due to increased commercial value and diminished residential value. Additional commercial areas or uses are not recommended until utilities and road improvements along the US-131 corridor are made.

Within the GMUT sub-area, both general and neighborhood commercial land use components are anticipated. More specific commercial elements that can be envisioned for the long range include regionally oriented services such as truck stops, hotels and restaurants. The zoning ordinance should be updated to better address the range of highway oriented uses likely to be attracted.

No new commercial zoning is recommended until utilities can be extended concurrent with the development.

### **Industrial (I)**

The Industrial designation is provided in the northeast corner of the Township south of 135<sup>th</sup> Ave. A portion of the area is already zoned and developed for light industrial use and heavy commercial activity. Additional land is provided for expansion of the existing industry or development of several new industries. Industrial uses include warehousing, manufacturing, assembly, research and similar uses. In order to limit the potential impact of industrial uses on surrounding neighbors, zoning standards should be

upgraded to require screening, buffering, additional setbacks and other requirements as necessary. No additional industrial zoning should be granted without the provision of sanitary sewers.

The plan does not recognize the existing industrial zoning district located in Section 28. Due to its isolated and non-conforming nature, expansion of that industrial area is discouraged.

**Table 13**  
**Summary Of Proposed**  
**Land Uses by Section**

Section 1:	Currently mostly agricultural north of 135th and will remain so. Areas along 12 <sup>th</sup> St are in the GMUT sub-area. Commercial and industrial zoning or PUD zoning could be extended to support more businesses and industry if utilities are made available. Remaining parcels south of the Rabbit River are in R-3, and with utilities could in time support higher densities of single family home development.
Section 2 and 3	Will remain predominately AG.
Section 4	The small community of Hilliards is isolated by distance from existing public utilities and government services and as a result, it is now considered a poor location for which to establish policies supporting or facilitating additional residential and/or commercial development. These conditions contrast with those found in the areas surrounding Hopkins and west of Wayland where expansion of one or more existing utility systems are feasible. To avoid over-development without utilities and other nearby support services, residential and commercial expansion should therefore be discouraged in the foreseeable future. As indicated on the FLU Map, R-1 is therefore recommended for the-largest parcels north of 135 <sup>th</sup> between 18 <sup>th</sup> and 20 <sup>th</sup> Streets. AG should prevail throughout the remainder of the section.
Section 5	The northeast two-thirds will remain AG. The southwest and west will be allowed to transition to R-1 Rural Estates.
Section 6	Topography is difficult for farming. The northern half of the section is programmed for -R-1A at gross densities of up to 1 unit per acre to bring more of the existing parcels into conformity. The southern half of the section is programmed for R-1 to retain larger parcel tracts conserving open and wooded spaces.
Section 7	This Section is predominantly programmed for R-1 due to topography and soil conditions. The areas around Three Corners lake may see pressure for Resort Residential development, and should be protected by the adoption of special zoning provisions that govern such activity.

Section 8	With the exception of the south 1/2 of the SW1/4, the entire section is programmed for AG. The existing residences in the S1/2 of the SW1/4 are programmed for R-1A.
Sections 9, 10, 11	Will remain predominately AG due to existing farming activity, soils and sparseness of residential activity.
Section 12	Will remain predominately AG and as presently zoned. If utilities are made available the R- and GMUT designations in the north and east would accommodate transitions to designated residential densities and industrial/commercial or R-3 uses where indicated on the FLU map.
Section 13,14,15,16 and W1/2of 17	Will remain predominately AG due to existing farming activity, soils and sparseness of residential activity.
West ½ of Section 17	Programmed for R-1 as a transitional buffer.
Section 18	Existing Residential areas adjacent to East Lake should be included in a newly created Resort Residential district fitted to the area to better regulate existing lot sizes and uses. Existing R-2 areas away from the lake would remain. Areas to the immediate west and southwest of the lake are programmed for RR and reflect existing fragmentation. Intact large parcels to the south of the lake and the west ¼ of the section are programmed as R-1.
Section 19	Portions of section 19 adjacent to the Village are in the Village Expansion Sub-area and could transition to any number of mixed uses with the availability of utilities. Outside of the R-3 , the section will be maintained as AG with the exception of an area north of the Village which could be allowed to go R-1. AG zoned properties within the Sub area designation are excluded from the farmland preservation district.
Section 20	The west ½ of the NW ¼ will remain as is unless future utilities allow alternative residential as part of R-3. The balance will remain AG. AG zoned properties within the Sub area designation are excluded from the farmland preservation district.
Section 21, 22, 23.	Will remain predominately AG due to existing farming activity, soils and sparseness of residential activity.

Section 24	The west ½ will remain predominately AG due to existing farming activity, soils and sparseness of residential activity. The east ½ is in the GMUT. The southern portion of the GMUT will remain as currently zoned but should not be allowed to develop intensively without appropriate infrastructure and protective services. The north may be allowed to support a variety of uses if infrastructure becomes available. AG zoned properties within the Sub area designation are excluded from the farmland preservation district.
Sections 25, 26,27,28 and 29	Will remain predominately AG due to existing farming activity, soils and sparseness of residential activity. Exceptions are the Hopkinsburg area, which will remain as is, and the northwest corner of Section 29 adjacent to Hopkins where school and residential (VE Village Expansion) can be accommodated with infrastructure extensions. AG zoned properties within the VE Sub-area designation are excluded from the farmland preservation district.
Section 30	Same as Section 29
Section 31	Will remain predominately AG due to existing farming activity, soils and sparseness of residential activity.
Section 32	Residential areas adjacent to Herlan Lake should be included in a newly created Resort Residential district fitted to the area to better regulate exiting lot sizes and uses. The balance of the section is programmed for RR as a reflection of topography and land fragmentation. A portion of the section now zoned for R-2 should be down zoned.
Section 33	The west ½ is programmed as AG. The East ½ is programmed for R1 and reflects difficult topography for farming.
Sections 34, 35 and 36	The north ½ of each section is programmed as AG. The south½ of each is programmed for R1 and reflects difficult topography for farming. The extreme SE portion of Section 36 is included in a GMUT sub-area and could ultimately see development associated with the nearby expressway intersection.