

Chapter 5

Future Land Use

Future Land Use Classifications

The Future Land Use Map is a visual depiction of the overall land use arrangement proposed for Paw Paw Township. The following classification scheme is used to illustrate the desired future land use pattern:

Farmland Preservation

The Future Land Use Map identifies those areas that have the greatest long-term potential for active agricultural production. The Farmland Preservation classification has been applied largely in consideration of parcel size, designated prime farmland soils, lands that are actively farmed, and continuity of agricultural lands.

The presence of agricultural activity can be found in much of Paw Paw Township and has been the primary factor in shaping its rural character. In order for profitable agricultural production to continue and agri-business and agri-tourism opportunities to take root, new residential and non-farm development will be directed outside of the Farmland Preservation classification to targeted areas within the Township.

Open Space

These areas consist of lands identified as environmentally significant due to acreage, soils, elevation, or vital characteristics; are

or could be enrolled in a conservation program; and/or contribute to an aggregate of meaningful open space.

Consistent with the Township's open space preservation policies, these lands have been identified on the Future Land Use Map to assist in the effective application of open space zoning techniques and/or land acquisition.

Agricultural - Rural Residential

Lands within the Agricultural - Rural Residential classification may be similar to those within the Farmland Preservation classification, such as large parcels, but are either surrounded by urbanizing residential development or have significant natural features that enhance the rural atmosphere of the community. Generally, these lands exhibit traits considered most important to the rural character of the community - lakes, wetlands, open spaces, woods, fields, hills, and wildlife.

The purpose of this classification is to define those areas of the Township where controlled, low density residential development respects the character of the land and surrounding area.

To that end, open space residential development should be encouraged as a means to provide buffers from neighboring agricultural lands and preserving natural features while allowing development.

Residential densities are envisioned to range from one unit per two acres to one unit per five acres, depending upon the design of the residential development. This density will promote community design that protects natural resources and the country

lifestyle which is respectful of rural amenities and the history of this agriculturally-based Township.

Low Density Single Family Residential

Although the majority of lands within Paw Paw Township are rural in character, residential development has occurred at a higher density in the eastern portion of the Township, apart from lakefront areas, evoking a suburban atmosphere.

A density of one dwelling unit per acre is envisioned in these areas to provide a smooth transition from the rural development pattern in the Township to the denser land use arrangements present in areas adjacent to the Village of Paw Paw and along Red Arrow Highway.

The Future Land Use Map reflects the transitional nature of the Low Density Single Family Residential classification through its placement in the eastern quarter of the Township, adjacent to the medium- and high- density residential and commercial land use targeted to the Village Fringe area.

Single Family Lake Area Residential

This classification generally includes existing residential development found near the Township's lakes. Housing within these areas has developed as a ring around the lakes, with back lots created to obtain lake views. Many of these lots are platted, and are small without access to public utilities. Properties within these areas (within 500 feet of a waterfront) also have been

identified for natural resource protection through application of the Waterfront Overlay classification.

Due to the fragile nature of the lakes and their environs, further intensive shoreline development should be discouraged. While infill development can occur on existing lots, new small-lot subdivisions should not be allowed.

The Plan puts a high priority on preventing overcrowding and intensive development near lakes to further the goals of water quality protection, preservation of natural features, and managed growth.

Densities should range between one and four units per each two acres, depending on the availability of utilities. Existing development at higher densities should be allowed to continue, provided that efforts are made to avoid additional impacts on water resources. Land divisions resulting in densities higher than the recommended density are strongly discouraged.

Mobile Home Park

It is estimated that the existing and planned manufactured housing development areas within adjacent communities will meet the demand for manufactured housing during the life of this Plan.

Commercial

(Includes Convenience Commercial; Highway Service Commercial; Heavy Commercial)

The commercial classifications are directed to the commercial areas along the Red

Arrow Highway corridor and 43rd Street as it extends between Red Arrow Highway and I-94.

These classifications are characterized by auto-oriented commercial activity and are intended to recognize 1) the ‘gateway’ potential of Red Arrow Highway to the downtown area of Paw Paw; 2) 43rd Street as a local commercial corridor for the lake community, and 3) the attributes of the I-94/43rd Street interchange.

Red Arrow Highway: As a ‘gateway corridor’, streetscape improvements and appropriate site development standards should be considered to present an attractive entrance to the ‘downtown’ of the community and announce to travelers that they have entered a special place.

Adding gateway elements such as wayfinding signs and common streetscape treatments will also help provide continuity and connection between the Red Arrow Highway corridor and the downtown area.

Given its importance in Paw Paw Township, the Red Arrow Highway corridor has been identified as a ‘highlighted plan element’ and is discussed in more detail later in the Chapter.

43rd Street: As a local commercial corridor serving the lake community, site development standards that serve to recognize the ‘neighborhood-convenience’ nature of this commercial hub in the Township should be developed. A separate approach to this commercial area can strengthen its ability to function as a neighborhood-based economy and protect the surrounding rural landscape.

I-94 Interchange: Located in the rural part of the Township and in close proximity to

area lakes, the commercial potential of the I-94 interchange is guided by the vision for the 43rd Street commercial corridor.

Highway commercial land use should be responsive in intensity and design to the plans for 43rd Street to serve as a local commercial corridor for the lake community.

Industrial

(Includes Heavy Commercial – Light Industrial; Industrial Park)

An industrial land use pattern exists between Red Arrow Highway and I-94 on the western side of the Village of Paw Paw. Support of this industrial land use pattern is proposed through a mixed approach that allows light industrial and industrial park activity to coexist with the heavy commercial activity planned for segments of the Red Arrow Highway corridor and I-94.

Waterfront Overlay

Waterfront Overlay exists as a ‘classification layer’ that recognizes shorelines and wetland areas within the Township. These areas play a crucial role in preserving the water quality of the Township’s lakes and tributaries. They also are key in the area’s natural storm water management systems, as well as providing important natural habitat and wildlife corridors.

The Waterfront Overlay functions as a ‘classification layer’ placed ‘over’ (and therefore, in addition to) the land use classification. It is envisioned to offer design/use alternatives in these important

areas in recognition of their value to the environmental health and safety of the region.

Implementation in conjunction with the 'waterfront overlay' approach envisioned within the Village of Paw Paw will maximize the effect of this preservation technique on the water quality and shorelines of shared water features.

Sewage Treatment Plant

This classification encompasses lands devoted to the area's sewage treatment plant. Their public use is not expected to change over time and should be recognized.

Highlighted Plan Elements _____

The Highlighted Plan Elements are detailed on the following pages.

Village Fringe

(Includes: Medium Density Single Family Residential; High Density Single Family Residential; Multiple Family Residential)

Areas close to the Village of Paw Paw are designated Village Fringe. The Plan recognizes the ability of the area within the



Township that surrounds the Village to serve as a transition from the rural landscape of the Township to the 'small-town'

atmosphere of the Village.

This area of 'transition' is ideal for providing a mixture of housing options in locations that are close to areas of employment and commerce (downtown) and avoiding random residential development in the Township that results in sprawl and the loss of valuable agricultural land.



Consistent with the land use strategies of the adjacent areas within the Village of Paw Paw, these 'fringe areas' are ideal receiving zones for a mixture of medium- and high-



density residential development. Such development is envisioned to include lofts, mansion apartment buildings, townhouses, mixed-use buildings, and senior housing (independent/assisted living and continual

care), ranging in density from 4 to 8 dwelling units per acre.

Site and building design within these transitional areas is very important and should project an image that compliments the surrounding built environment. For this reason, development standards for the area should be developed in conjunction with the Village of Paw Paw.

Red Arrow Highway Corridor

While the Red Arrow Highway Corridor may be an established economic benefit for the community of Paw Paw, its suburban ‘strip’ character (parking lots, buildings set back from the street, poorly defined pedestrian amenities, lack of an attractive streetscape) creates an impression that Paw Paw is just like any other highway, auto-oriented community.

The Red Arrow Highway Corridor should be re-visioned as a **gateway** into the core of



the community and made to serve as a catalyst in attracting shoppers, diners, and travelers.

The Plan envisions a **streetscape scheme**, that would be common to Red Arrow Highway as it extends through the larger community - - with a unified look and feel to the corridor, including lighting, signs, sidewalks, and bike lanes.

A system of **wayfinding signs** should also be incorporated to guide visitors to local points of interest, including water features and

parks and existing/planned greenways that connect to area-wide recreational assets.



Bike lanes should be designed to provide functional and visual connectivity between the gateway corridors in the Township and the downtown area of Paw Paw.



Crosswalks make crossing a street feel safer and should be established in appropriate locations along Red Arrow Highway to make the gateways feel pedestrian-friendly and encourage migration along the corridor.



Non-Motorized Trail Connections

The adopted Master Plan for the Village of Paw Paw proposes connection with the existing/proposed non-motorized trail within the railroad right-of-way recognizing the environmental and aesthetic value of the lands surrounding that area.



The non-motorized trail will have the added ability to connect to the area's proposed bike lane routes. These connections can be further planned for enhancement with parking facilities and retail/recreational opportunities that would identify and encourage their use as 'trailheads'.

Extensions of the non-motorized pathway in ways that will serve to connect recreational facilities and activity centers community-



wide is a priority. A completed trail system would provide easy access to residents and

visitors of the region and encourage the exploration of the community of Paw Paw.

Paw Paw Township's recognition of its agri-tourism opportunities provides rich incentives to move forward in creating these desired green ways.



Zoning Plan

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008) requires that a Master Plan include a Zoning Plan, which 'include(s) an explanation of how the land use classifications set forth on the Future Land Use Map relate to the districts on the zoning map'.

The Zoning Plan sets forth the future land use classifications and identifies the corresponding zoning district from the Paw Paw Township Zoning Ordinance.

The Zoning Plan also provides recommendations regarding the implementation of the Master Plan through the regulations of the Zoning Ordinance.