

EXISTING LAND USE | Section 4.0  
analysis

## INTRODUCTION

The character of our physical environment is influenced by many factors. Chief among these is the use of land, the distribution of uses within a community, and the relationship of these uses to one another. These factors strongly influence the overall character and image of the community. They also influence quality of life and our relative degree of satisfaction with our surroundings.

Land use characteristics and other relevant physical features are among the most important aspects of the land use planning process. These features establish the observable physical setting upon which the future of the community will be based. They also influence the development potential of the community.

The chief feature of this chapter is an examination of the Township's land use characteristics on a classification basis. Each of the Township's individual land use categories are discussed, including the amount of the land devoted to each category and the distribution of the uses throughout the community. Current information will also be compared to previous land use surveys to illustrate trends.

## METHODOLOGY

St. Clair Township's boundaries are a product of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, establishing a uniform system of land divisions into a grid pattern. This system was devised to assist the eventual settlement of the vacant interior portion of the United States. Townships created as a result of this process were subdivided into 36 one-mile square divisions that are known as sections. Generally consistent with this process, St. Clair Township has an area of 23,894 acres, or 37.3 square miles. This extra two square miles is due to the area of land abutting the River.

The Township's boundaries are formed by Yager Road on the north, Fred W Moore Highway (Division) on the south, Mayer Road on the west, and Range Road, the St. Clair River and the City of St. Clair on the east. Approximately 17.3 percent of the Township's total area, or some 4,138 acres, are developed.

Existing land use data for St. Clair Township is based on a survey performed in the spring of 2005. Aerial photographs and St. Clair County existing land use information from the year 2000 were also utilized as a supplement to establish uses. Each land use category was measured to determine the amount of land area occupied by each individual land use class. The results of these tabulations are described in the following pages.

*TABLE 24  
EXISTING LAND USE - 2005*

<u>Land Use Category</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>	<u>Percent Total</u>	<u>Percentage of Developed Land</u>
Single-Family	1,776	7.4	53.0
Multiple-Family	65	0.3	2.0
Manufactured Housing Community	48	0.2	1.4
Commercial/Office	123	0.5	3.7
Industrial	416	1.7	12.4
Public/Semi-Public	922	3.9	27.5
<b>Developed Total</b>	<b>3,350</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Vacant Land or Agricultural	6,754	28.3	
Residence on Acreage or Agricultural	13,790	57.7	
<b>Undeveloped Total</b>	<b>20,544</b>	<b>86.0</b>	
<b>Total Area</b>	<b>23,894</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

*Source: CP&M & St. Clair County Planning Commission*

### **Single-Family Residential**

Single-family homes occupy the largest share of the Township's developed land. For the purposes of this study, all single-family homes located on properties four (4) acres in size or smaller were considered part of the single-family residential classification. Almost 1,800 acres of land are developed for single-family home sites, representing more than one-half of the developed land in St. Clair Township. The majority of single-family home sites are located in platted subdivisions and along the frontages of the major road system. Subdivisions are confined to the easternmost side of the Township proximate to the waterfront.

### **Multiple-Family Residential**

Multiple-family units occupy 65 acres of land, or two (2) percent of the Township's developed land. Existing multiple-family sites are concentrated in the area closest to the St. Clair River. There is also a multiple family use located on the south side of Gratiot Avenue, east of Bartlett Road. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, two hundred and forty-four (244) multiple family units exist within the Township.

### **Manufactured Housing Community**

One Manufactured Housing Community currently exists within the Township. St. Clair Place is located on the west side of Cox Road, north of Rattle Run Road. Approximately ninety (90) units are located within the development.

### **Commercial**

Approximately 123 acres of commercial and office land currently exist within St. Clair Township. The majority of the uses currently existing are stand-alone facilities, with no major strip centers located in the Township. Automobile-oriented activities, including gasoline service stations, and car dealers are examples of this type of use. There are two (2) gas stations located at the corner of Neuman and Wadhams, and a gas station located at the corner of Rattle Run and Gratiot. Other general commercial uses include two (2) party stores, three (3) motels/inns and an auto parts store and a restaurant located on the water.

### **Industrial**

Industrial establishments occupy 416 acres of land. All of the industrial uses within the Township can be found in four (4) areas: The northern Gratiot corridor; the Range Road corridor, south of Davis Road; Rattle Run, west of the City of St. Clair, and the corner of Wadhams Road and Vine.

### **Public/Semi-Public**

Public uses include public facilities operated by the government such as Township offices, lands for public utility stations, schools, cemeteries, etc. Semi-Public uses include parks, golf courses, and other Township sites utilized on a regular basis by the general public for recreation purposes. A substantial quantity of land is being used for this purpose in St. Clair Township. Public/Semi-Public uses account for 922 acres of land. Some of the largest public use sites include St. Clair High School and land owned by the St. Clair County International Airport. The largest semi-public use sites in the Township include the St. Clair River Country Club Golf Course, the Rattle Run Horse Farm, the Pine River Sportsman Club and the Thousand Trail RV Park.

**Residence on Acreage**

Approximately 13,790 acres of land, or 57.7 percent of the Township’s total land area, is designated as Residence on Acreage. This designation represents properties that are larger than four (4) acres in size where a single-family residential home exists. Much of the land identified in this classification is also utilized for agricultural purposes.

**Agricultural/Vacant Land**

Almost 6,800 acres of land in the Township is vacant, being farmed or in a fallow state. Coupled with the Residence on Acreage classification, these two (2) categories make up the total undeveloped land within the Township. This equates to over eighty-six (86) percent of the Township’s total land area.

**ZONING**

Zoning is a form of policy adopted by a municipality that often establishes the existing land use pattern. All of the various zoning districts and regulations should add up to a statement of policy regarding how land is to be used. Sometimes, this does not happen. Land use policy may become the result of the sum of many individual decisions, each arrived separately over time. Elections have the effect of changing the persons who establish policy and such changes may make the charting of a consistent direction quite difficult, unless a Master Plan is followed.

The quantity of land within each of St. Clair Township’s ten (10) zoning designations is shown in the table provided. More than 92 percent of the Township’s land area, or some 22,215 acres, are zoned for residential purposes. The Township’s three (3) single-family districts account for 93.8 percent of all residentially zoned land. Land zoned for mobile home parks and for multiple-family encompasses 94 and 572 acres, respectively. The Township’s zoning map includes three (3) commercial districts. Collectively, these three (3) districts occupy 494 acres. The two (2) industrial districts occupy 1,185 acres.











<u>Category</u>	<b>2000</b>	
	<u>Acres</u>	<u>%</u>
RU Rural Residential	19,411	81.2
RS-1 Suburban Residential	2,057	8.6
RS-2 Suburban Residential	81	0.3
MH Mobile Home	94	0.4
RM Multiple-Family Residential	572	2.4
CR Commercial Recreation	255	1.1
B-1 Neighborhood Business	173	0.7
B-2 General Business	66	0.3
I-L Light Industrial	818	3.4
I-H Heavy Industrial	367	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,894.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

TABLE 25  
ZONING - 2000

Source: St. Clair Township

ILLUSTRATION 18  
EXISTING LAND USE - 2005



- |   |                                   |   |                               |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
|  | VACANT/AGRICULTURAL               |  | COMMERCIAL                    |
|  | RESIDENCE ON ACREAGE/AGRICULTURAL |  | INDUSTRIAL                    |
|  | SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL         |  | PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC            |
|  | MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL       |  | NATURAL GAS TRANSMISSION LINE |
|  | MANUFACTURED HOUSING COMMUNITY    |  | OIL TRANSMISSION LINE         |

**ST. CLAIR**  
**TOWNSHIP**  

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**COMPREHENSIVE**  
**MASTER PLAN**