



# ***Saline Township***

## **General Development Plan**

**Public Copy for Public Hearing  
October 10, 2007**

*Draft Document*

*(Copy for Review and Discussion  
Purposes Only)*

Braun Rd © 2007 E-Map  
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**Recommended for Adoption by the  
Saline Township Planning Commission  
\_\_\_\_\_, 2007**

**Adopted by the Saline Township Board  
\_\_\_\_\_, 2007**

**Saline Township Planning Commission**

**Richard Zahn, Chair**

**Trudy Feldkamp, Secretary**

Neil E. Bohnett, Township Board Representative

Laurie Leinbach

Gary Luckhardt

Robert Prehn

Charles Rankin

**Township of Saline Board**

**Jim Marion, Supervisor**

**Lois A. Baldus, Clerk**

**Judy M. Gordon, Treasurer**

Robert Marion

Neil E. Bohnett

**Former Board and Commission Members**

Wm. Dennis Zink

Keith Girbach

**Planning Consultants**

Donald N. Pennington

Rodney C. Nanney AICP

# Township Of Saline

**Washtenaw County,  
Michigan**

**General Development Plan**

\_\_\_\_\_, 2007

**TOWNSHIP OF SALINE**  
**WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE**  
**GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR SALINE TOWNSHIP**

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Saline Township Planning Commission held at the Saline Township Hall 4725 Willow Road, in said Township on the \_\_\_\_<sup>th</sup> day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2007, at 7:30 p.m.

The following resolution was offered by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_, and supported by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_

**WHEREAS**, the Saline Township Planning Commission has undertaken a study and prepared a revised General Development Plan for the future development of the Township, in accordance with the provisions of the Township Planning Act (Act), Public Act 168 of 1959, as amended; and

**WHEREAS**, the purpose of said Plan is to promote public health, safety and general welfare; to encourage the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability; to avoid the overcrowding of land by buildings or people; to lessen congestion on public roads and streets; and to facilitate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, recreation and other public improvements; and

**WHEREAS**, the Saline Township Planning Commission has solicited public comment throughout the plan preparation process and has held a public hearing on the proposed Plan on \_\_\_\_\_, 2007 as required by the said Act, notice of which hearing was published in the \_\_\_\_\_, newspaper of general circulation in the Township, and the Commission has duly considered comments made by residents, property owners of the Township, and others at and following that hearing; and

**WHEREAS**, the Saline Township Planning Commission worked with the Saline Township Board to discuss elements of the plan;

**WHEREAS**, the Saline Township Planning Commission recommends adoption in the whole the General Development Plan for Saline Township.

**WHEREAS**, The Saline Township Board received comment and recommendation from the Saline Township Planning Commission regarding adoption of the General Development Plan.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, on this \_\_\_\_<sup>th</sup> day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2007 that the Saline Township Board adopts in the whole the General Development Plan for Saline Township, to be dated \_\_\_\_\_<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**AYES;** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAYES:** None

**ABSENT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ABSTAIN:** None.

**RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_,  
Saline Township Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_, 2007

Dear Citizens and Land Owners:

On behalf of the Saline Township Board and recommendation of the Saline Township Planning Commission, I am pleased to present this General Development Plan (GMP) for our Township. This document will replace our present General Development Plan, which was completed in 2000. The present Planning Commission members and Township Board members gratefully acknowledge the hard work and foresight our predecessors put into that document, which was the third for the Township. That Plan has served the Township well in the intervening years and is a credit to all that worked on it. Since that Plan was completed, however, there have been substantial changes in the Township, which need to be reviewed in the Plan if it is to remain a useful document.

The Saline Township Planning Commission has spent considerable time in updating the Plan in a process that has included extensive review of existing land uses, growth patterns, natural features, and infrastructure constraints. We also used a variety of means to solicit public input to the Plan; including holding several public forums and a public hearing, encouraging attendance at meetings when the draft plan was discussed, and reviewing our progress with the Township Board of Trustees. Always at the foreground was the goal of drafting a GMP that would recognize the Township's unique character, its precious environmental resources and natural features, and, most importantly, the needs of its citizens.

The Planning Commission and Board members wish to thank all the citizens who have provided input for the GMP. Also we acknowledge with great appreciation the efforts and counsel of the Township's Planning Consultants, Donald N. Pennington and Rodney Nanney.

Sincerely,

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Jim Marion  
Saline Township Supervisor

# **General Development Plan Saline Township Washtenaw County, Michigan**

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## **DEFINITIONS**

**Common Open Space:** An area generally within a subdivision, site condominium, or PUD development held out of development by the proprietor and designed for the common use or enjoyment of residents or users of the development. Common open space may contain such complementary structures as are necessary and appropriate for the use or enjoyment of the development. Common open space may include areas for recreational use, wildlife or plant preserves, and nature study areas.

**Flood Plain:** An area adjoining a lake, stream, river or pond that receives excess water from flooding. A well defined flood plain is produced when flooding recurs on the same area, which then becomes a natural reservoir. For the purposes of this GDP, flood plains were delineated for the probability of flooding once in 100 years, which would indicate the area that water would cover for this type of flood.

**Ground Water Recharge Areas:** A land surface which permits water to move downward to depths where the water can serve as a source of supply for wells. These areas have limited filtering and purification capabilities.

**General Development Plan (GDP):** Plan showing the existing and proposed location, extent and intensity of development of land to be used in the future for varying types of residential commercial, industrial agricultural, recreation, resource preservation and other public and private purposes or combination of purposes.

**Improvements:** Any structure or material change incident to servicing or furnishing facilities for a subdivision such as, but not limited to grading, road surfacing, curb and gutter, driveway approaches, sidewalks, pedestrian ways, water mains and lines, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, culverts, bridges, utilities, lagoons, slips, waterways, lakes, bays, canals, and other appropriate items, with appurtenant construction; demolition of structures; planting; or removal of trees and other vegetation cover.

**Lands Designated for Agricultural Preservation:** Lands that are suitable for long term agricultural uses, including agricultural service activities and establishments, such as farm equipment sales and services, grain storage, and feed and fertilizer sales. The principle use of Lands Designated for Agricultural Preservation should be agricultural production (crops, livestock, and dairy products). These lands shall not be considered land banks for future rural or urban development or as low density residential areas.

**Major Open Space:** Lands which are part of an interconnected Township wide natural resource system consisting of woodlands, wetlands, and stream corridors.

**Open Space:** Land dedicated or reserved for use by the general public or for use by residents of a designated development, or land held out of development and retained in its natural condition, with or without public access. Open space includes but is not limited to parks, parkways, playgrounds, school sites, wildlife preserves, and nature study areas.

**Pedestrian Way:** A separate right of way dedicated to or reserved for public use by pedestrian and bicyclists, which crosses blocks or other tracts or land for the purpose of providing pedestrian access to adjacent streets and properties.

**Planned Unit Development (PUD):** An area which is to be developed in an integrated and coordinated manner with residential buildings and/or certain nonresidential uses, according to approved area and site plans and subdivision plats, as provided in the zoning ordinance.

**Public Open Space:** An area within a development held out of development by the proprietor and conveyed or otherwise dedicated to, or reserved for purchase by, a municipality, municipal agency, board of education, state or county agency, or other public body, for recreation or conservation uses.

**Urban Service District (USD):** Specifically defined areas within the Township designated for urban land uses serviced by urban infrastructures including public sewer and water.

**Research/Technological Centers:** Centers focusing on research oriented uses.

**Wetlands:** Transitional zones between terrestrial and aquatic systems with the water table usually near or covering the surface normally referred to as marshes, swamps and bogs.

# **Saline Township**

## **General Development Plan Amendment Draft for Public Hearing – October 10, 2007**

*(For Review and Discussion Purposes Only)*

### **PART 1**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

##### **1.01 Purpose of the Plan**

The purpose of this document is to revise and update the existing Saline Township General Development Plan which was adopted in April, 2000. In the last ten years many changes have occurred within the Township and neighboring communities that have had an impact on Saline Township. To effectively tailor planning policies and development guidelines to these changes, it is necessary to establish a written and graphic statement concerning development goals and objectives for the Township on a periodic basis. The planning process that was followed in the preparation of this plan accomplishes that task.

##### **1.02 Why Plan?**

The primary objective of planning is to guide future events to achieve a better environment in which to live, work and play. In other words, the purpose of planning is to aid citizens and public officials in making decisions about the future. The comprehensive plan document and map are the products of the planning process (discussed below) which attempt to balance community goals in order to guide the growth of the Township. The plan is not a panacea or “cure all” for potential conflicting desires of citizens and Township officials. Rather, it is a long range statement of general goals and objectives aimed at the unified and coordinated development of the Township. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.

### 1.03 Use of the Plan

The plan serves many functions. First, as a general statement of the Township's goals, it provides a single, comprehensive view of what the Township desires for the future. Secondly, the plan serves as an aid in day-to-day decision-making. The goals, objectives and strategies outlined in the plan guide the Planning Commission and Township Board in their deliberations on zoning, subdivisions, capital improvements and so on. This provides a stable, long-term basis for decision making. In effect, it forms an agenda for the achievement of goals and objectives.

A third function the plan serves is providing the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are based. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (ZEA), Public Act 110 of 2006 requires that the zoning ordinance be based upon a plan designed to promote public health, safety and general welfare. Finally, the plan functions as an educational tool. Background studies and analysis form the basis for various plan elements (along with the "goals and objectives"). In addition, the plan provides a statistical view of the economic, demographic, cultural and natural make up of the Township. This analysis, coupled with a statement of development goals and objectives, gives citizens, landowners, prospective developers and adjacent communities a clear indication of the Township's vision of the future.

### 1.04 The Planning Process

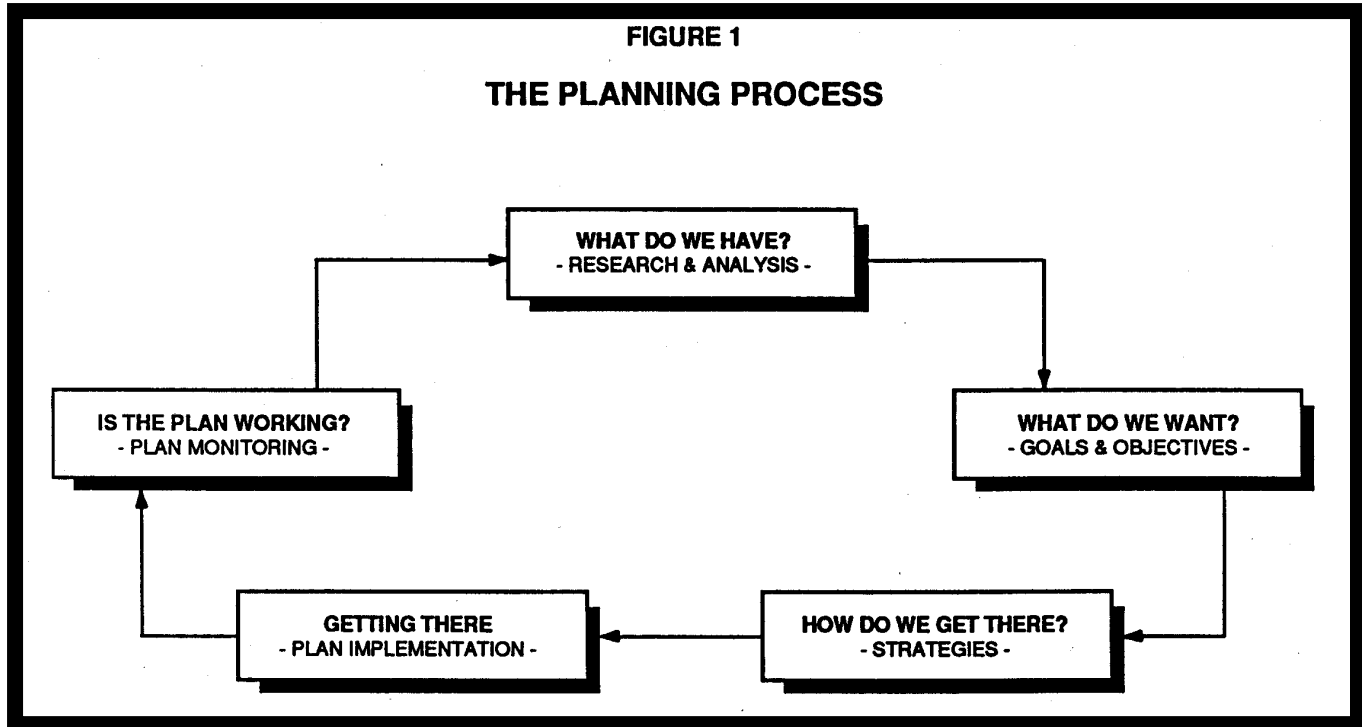
Planning is an ongoing, cyclical process. (*Figure 1*) It is inherently dynamic, fluid, and changing. In general, the planning process is an attempt to answer a series of questions:

- ***What do we have?***
  - Research and analysis of existing conditions (population, housing, transportation, environmental, etc.) and identification of problems and opportunities.
- ***What do we want?***
  - Determination of the Township's development goals and objectives, the Township's vision of the future.
- ***How do we get there?***
  - The general strategies that can be utilized to create the conditions the Township desires.
- ***Getting there.***
  - Adoption/initiation of recommended strategies to implement the plan.
- ***Is the plan working?***
  - Analysis of implementation results to determine if the plan is accomplishing what was originally desired.

In viewing planning as a cyclical, ongoing process it becomes possible to make the plan a "living" document, one which is flexible enough to meet changing conditions and yet firm

enough to provide stable, long term guidance to decision makers. In so doing, the planning process can become an integral part of the decision making process.

**FIGURE 1**  
**THE PLANNING PROCESS**



### 1.05 Background Information

Saline Township adopted a General Development Plan in 1990. Between then and the late 1990's even though conditions remained somewhat unchanged within the Township, a complete re-evaluation of strategies and policies as they affected growth, development, environmental concerns, and land use relationships had become warranted. This re-evaluation centered on analyzing Saline Township's unique physical conditions, land use needs, and growth pressures, including development trends from surrounding communities and in particular the City of Saline, that would impact the Township and continue to do so in the future. Analysis was directed toward understanding of the Township's character and putting forth reasonable policies to enhance this character while providing for reasonable growth at selected locations within the Township. This re-analysis led to the adoption of the Saline Township General Development Plan in April 2000.

Policies contained within the 2000 General Development Plan continued to strengthen the importance of maintaining the rural character of Saline Township, and specific comprehensive goals, objectives and policies served to protect that character. After adoption of the 2000 General Development Plan, development pressures began to be recognized that were approaching from outside the Township, mainly south west of the City of Saline and along transportation corridors within this area. Concern over the adequacy of some of the policies in the 2000 General Development Plan resulted in a decision to update and revise the 2000 General Development Plan.

Anticipated growth south west of the City of Saline, within Saline Township that lead to concern over the adequacy of some policies in the Plan resulted in a complete review and updating of the General Development Plan in late 2006 and early 2007. Review of the plan identified and strengthened policies relating to a specific urban area and the importance of maintaining the rural character of Saline Township. This was emphasized in the goals, objectives and policies used to protect that character related to future infrastructure improvements in the Township.

Policies within the 2000 General Development Plan accurately depicted general Township policies, however it became evident that additional study was needed for the area adjacent to the City of Saline and extending to the south centering on Macon and Mooreville Roads. The revised 2007 General Development Plan sets aside a specific development area (USD) regarding lands to receive urban type development. Within this area explicit policies incorporated with design guidelines have been set forth.

With the completion of the 2007 General Development Plan, Saline Township has had approximately 20 years of experience with preparing and using comprehensive plans in making decisions on recognition and preservation of natural resources and agriculture, providing a variety of land uses, and addressing the need for transportation within the Township. These planning efforts were used extensively in guiding Township Planning Commission and Township Board decisions.

The current effort to review the General Development Plan is to bring the entire document up to date regarding recent development trends, population and socioeconomic data, and a regular review as required by State statute.

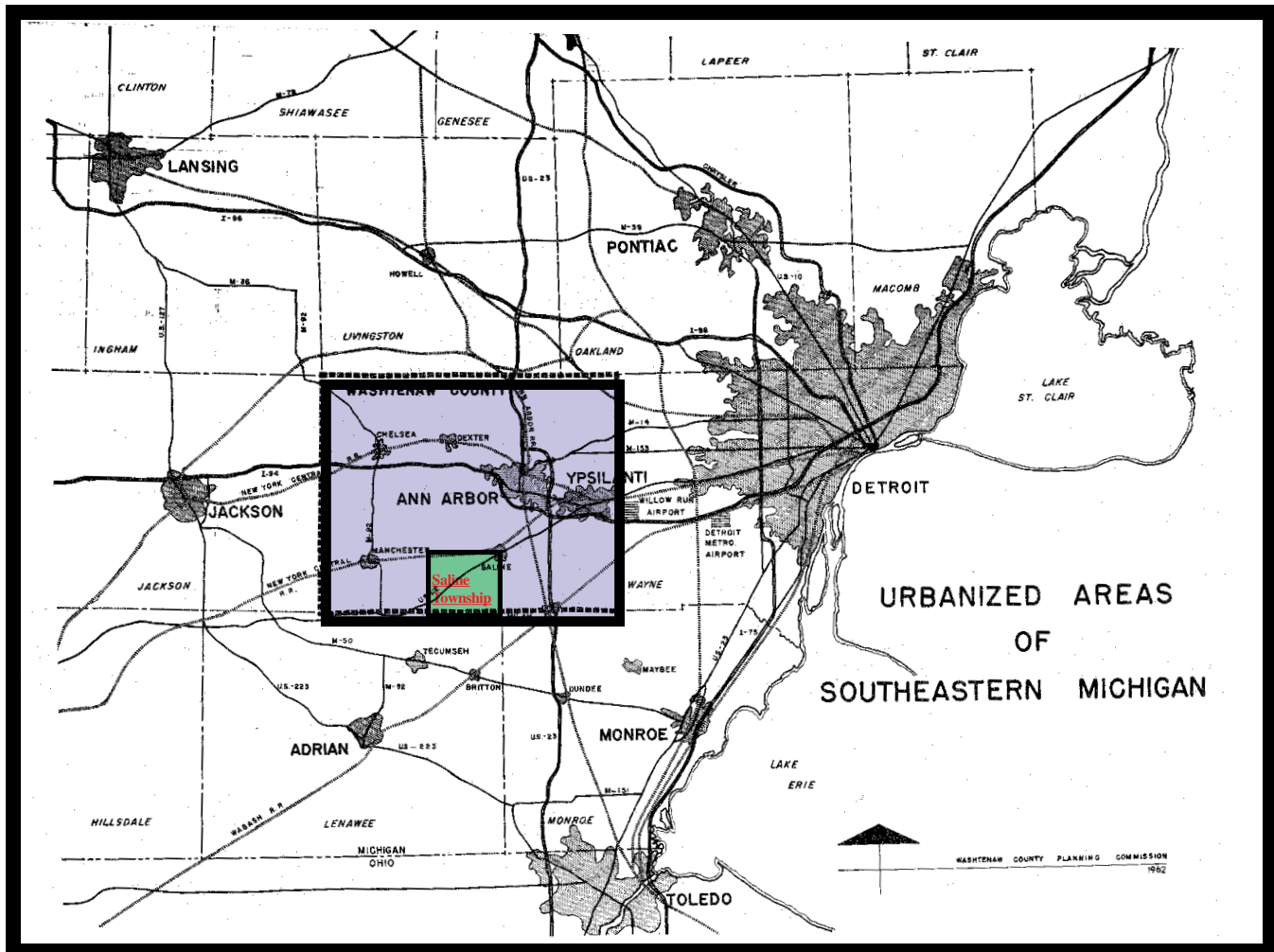
## **1.06 Regional Setting**

The State of Michigan is currently divided into 13 planning regions. Saline Township located within Washtenaw County is part of Region I commonly known as the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). This region consists of Wayne, Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair, Monroe, Livingston and Washtenaw Counties (see Map 1). Historically, the center of this Region in terms of population and economy, has been the City of Detroit. As the urbanized areas surrounding Detroit expand and as urbanization increases in other parts of the Region, Detroit's influence as a dominant center will decrease. As commercial and industrial activities become decentralized, aided by improved transportation routes and availability and utilities, separate centers of activity emerge in other parts of the Region. Thus an increasing level of interaction among economic centers within the Region links Washtenaw County functionally to the rest of the Region.

As suburbanization continues in the Detroit Metropolitan area, Washtenaw County has become an increasingly desirable place to live. Washtenaw County offers many amenities such as a variety of natural resources and open space, good school systems, including two major universities, convenient shopping, and good public services as well as a variety of cultural activities.

The south of Saline Township is Lenawee County which includes the nearby cities of Tecumseh and Adrian and the Village of Clinton. This County is also experiencing significant growth. The growth of Lenawee County is influenced by the growth in the Southeast Michigan region as well as the City of Toledo to the south. Lenawee County contains many important agricultural lands as well as the Irish Hills region – a region with a variety of natural resources. Lenawee County is a part of Region 2 which also includes Jackson and Hillsdale Counties. Saline Township is at the crossroads of the regional

influences of Southeast Michigan as well as the Irish Hills region to the west and the influences of Toledo to the south.



## 1.07 County Setting

Within southeast Michigan, Saline Township is located in the southern most center of Washtenaw County, south/southwest of the City of Ann Arbor. A portion of the City of Saline is adjacent to the northeast most corner of the Township, with U.S. 12 dividing both the City of Saline and Saline Township (see Map 1). U.S. 12 is particularly significant given its high volume of traffic and northwest orientation into the Detroit Metropolitan area. Historically, U.S. 12 was an old Indian trail which connected the original settlements of what are now the Cities of Detroit and Chicago. It was the major link between these two Cities until the opening of I-94 and it is still considered a major thoroughfare for truck and commuter traffic. The Township itself is considered rural with a heavy emphasis on agricultural activities. Current growth and development activity within the immediate vicinity lies north and east of the Township, while land use activity to the northwest, west and south is predominantly rural/agricultural.

To date, land use within Saline Township has not been heavily affected by surrounding growth and development. However, it is expected that development pressures will increase in the future. The



primary factor influencing the growth of Saline Township will be the City of Saline. As the City grows so does the pressure to develop in Saline Township. The General Development Plan seeks to direct development pressures in a way that reflects its goals and objectives.

### **1.08 History of Saline Township**

U.S. 12 played an essential part in the settlement and growth of Saline. The highway was a transportation corridor well before white men arrived in this part of the Northwest Territory, or what is now known as southeast Michigan. Changes to U.S. 12 over time reflect the changes in Saline from before its settlement and through its growth to a city with suburban neighborhoods.

Several Indian tribes frequented southeast Michigan; among them were the Potawatomi, the Ojibwa or Chippewa, Ottawa (Odawa), Miami, Fox, and Mascouten.

The Indian natives and French traders used the Sauk Trail, which ran from Detroit to the Chicago River. Natives frequented the Saline area because of the legendary salt springs to the south of where the trail crossed the river. The name given to the river, the township, the village, and later, the city was selected because of these salt springs, which originated from a vein of salt reputed to run from Battle Creek to Detroit.

After the War of 1812 the trail became a tactical route from Detroit to Fort Dearborn for moving troops and equipment to locations threatened by Natives, British, or French. In 1824, legislation for the laying out of this Military Road for \$3,000 was proposed by Fr. Gabriel Richard, Michigan's delegate in Congress. When it passed, the commissioners named to conduct the survey hired Orange Risdon to do the work.

Orange Risdon surveyed the Military Road from 1824-1827 and was impressed with what he saw in the Saline area. In August of 1824, Risdon bought 120 acres in the NE quarter of Section 1 of what is now Saline Township, and continued his surveying. In 1829, he came back to settle, platted the village on part of his land, and named it Saline after the river and newly formed Saline Township.

As folks settled in the region, businesses sprang up along the Old Chicago Road, or the Chicago Turnpike. Among them were several hotels in Saline: the American House built in 1833, the Saline Exchange Hotel built in 1834 and the Halfway Inn, located about five miles west of Saline, and which



Historical Photographic

had facilities to provide for travelers and horses. Other businesses began, such as gristmills, sawmills, hardware and general stores, harness shops, blacksmith shops, and liveryes, among many.

Maintenance of U.S. 12 did not take place with asphalt patching crews because the roads were unpaved. The dirt roads were smoothed with a large horse-drawn grader that had a blade like that of a small snow plow. In warmer weather, a horse-drawn wagon with a water tank aboard was used to wet down the road in order to minimize dust. The water tank was filled at the Saline River.

With the introduction of the railroad into Saline in 1870, a new way of life began which drastically altered travel habits. Stagecoach routes were abandoned, causing inns along the Chicago Road to shut down; both the Saline Exchange and the American House closed their doors and became residences. A newer hotel called the Harmon House was built in the 1860s and remained Saline's only inn. In 1927, Henry Leutheuser bought the renamed Saline Hotel and built his restaurant in front of it; his business and buildings remained until the 1960s.

A convenient and exciting change occurred when a branch of the interurban was extended into Saline from the east in 1899. The trolley, known as "Old Maude," gave travelers the opportunity to go to nearby cities every two hours from morning until midnight. Tracks were built along U.S. 12 as far west as the cemetery. A waiting room was available at the Unterkircher building, which still stands at the east half of 112 E. Michigan Ave. where the barber shop is located. The power substation for Old Maude was located on the site of the present-day fire station, at 201 E. Michigan Avenue. It was similar to a station that still stands on the northwest corner of Jackson and Lima Center Roads in Lima Township.

Gradually, a new form of transportation became ordinary: the automobile. Autos began to appear with more and more regularity along U.S. 12 and when the interurban was still operating, car drivers were known to race with Old Maude, just for fun. It became a bit of a game, and the trolley drivers would jot down the car license plate numbers on Old Maude's motor block.

George Cook was a deputy sheriff and a figure in the automobile world of Saline as well. He became involved in the transportation business around 1912, when he operated a livery and transport service. Later, he transferred into auto sales, becoming a Chevrolet agent around 1918, and opened the Saline Garage. Archival photos reveal that his garage was located on the site of the Saline Exchange Hotel. It

Historical Photographic

is significant that two business buildings on this site served the traveler; one in the 19th and the other in the 20th century.

Other car dealerships and new gas stations began to appear in the 1910s and 20s. George Uphaus began selling gasoline for 50 cents for five gallons around 1915. Weidman's Ford dealership featured a small gas station west of the showroom, in what is now an alley between 118 and 112 E. Michigan Ave. Weidman's dealership was in the portion of the R&B building with three pilasters, or brick vertical protrusions. Steeb Dodge began at the location of the Heininger and Heininger Farm Implements business at 121 W. Michigan Avenue, and though the address has changed, the dealership has expanded at the same location since that time. According to Jack Steeb, gas stations were plentiful along U.S. 12 by the 1920s and 30s.

Another business that opened because of automobile travel through Saline was Chris and Lydia Volz's Five Point Place at the northeast corner of Maple and U.S. 12. They bought the business with a gas station on the site in 1930, and later built a lunchroom and seven overnight tourist cabins. An overnight stay in a cabin cost \$5; their delicious Chicken Barbeque was 50 cents.

Kenny Volz said that his mother worked from 7:00 a.m. until 10:00 at night, after which time she began making pies for the next day's sales. After they sold the business in the 1950s, the cabins were moved off the property. The lunchroom met its sad and ironic demise in the 1960s when a tractor-trailer jackknifed and smashed into it.

Among the numerous names given to Michigan Avenue was U.S. Hwy. 112. From approximately the 1920s until 1960, U.S. 12 began in Detroit at Plymouth Road, went into Ann Arbor, and then west on Jackson Road, following the present-day interstate I-94 route very closely across the state.

During those early years, the U.S. 12 of today was known as U.S. 112. According to Gladys Saborio, member of the Heritage Trail Council, the Old U.S. 12 lost its U.S. highway designation when I-94 opened in 1960. It was at that same time that U.S. 112 became U.S. 12, and the "112" figure became obsolete.

Physical changes occurred to U.S. 12 in Saline in the 1960s. It remained a two-lane highway in the early 1960s, but by the late 1960s was a five lane road from the Rentschler Farm heading west through town. In 2002, the road was widened on the west side of town. Similarly, the U.S. 12 bridge over the Saline River has undergone several physical changes. In the early 20th century, it was composed of steel trusses, in the 1940s it was a concrete camel-back structure, and by 1968, it had a lower metal bar railing. Today it is three lanes wide, with combination concrete and metal rails.

Henry Ford took an interest in Saline during the episode of Village Industries, which he developed to connect agriculture with industry. He bought the Schuyler Mill in 1937, moved it back from U.S. 12 by about 30 feet, and built his soybean extraction plant behind it to the south. Oil from the soybeans was used in paints and automobile parts. Ford also took an interest in education late in his life. He bought the Hoyt School on Macon Road in 1943 and had it reconstructed at its present location across from the former Schuyler Mill (now Weller's), at 600 W. Michigan Ave. It was then used for the education of the children of Ford's Village Industry employees. Both the soybean operation and the school closed in 1947.

Changes in the landscape around Saline occurred with the infiltration of manufacturing, as illustrated in the 1960s when the Ford Plant was built along U.S. 12 on former farmland between the Rentschler and Morton Farms. A flagpole at the Busch's Shopping Center presently marks the location of the Morton farmhouse and a realtor's office occupies the building that was once a large chicken house on the farm. Rentschler Farm buildings, though now surrounded by development, serve as a farm museum for the Saline Area Historical Society.

The rumbling of trucks and the roar of traffic is heard 24 hours a day on U.S. 12 in Saline as this vital transportation route continues to serve the Great Lakes region. U.S. 12 is part of the Motor Cities National Heritage Area, an arm of the National Park Service, as well as a Heritage Trail. Though it may look like an ordinary highway, it is a road with a varied past. Awareness of the history of Michigan Avenue helps give us a sense of who we are and what we've come from (and what the road itself has come from); it connects us with the larger historical picture and gives us a sense of place and identity. Undeniably, U.S. 12 is fundamental to Saline history.

*(The above is an excerpt is from "Trail To Highway: The Development of U.S. 12 in Saline, Michigan by Kathy Holtz)*

## **1.09 Citizen Input**

In initiating all of the General Development Plan programs the Planning Commission has involved residents. This involvement has given direction and insight in setting forth issues that the General Development Plan should address.

As part of preparation of the 2000 General Development Plan, the Saline Township Planning Commission conducted a general development plan survey of all residential address locations within the Township. A total of 475 questionnaires were mailed of which 452 were valid addresses. A total of 274 surveys were returned – a 60.6 return rate, which was considered good for that type of survey. The intent of the survey was to solicit responses from Township citizens regarding issues relevant to updating the General Development Plan. The results of that survey were utilized during the plan update process as Township problems and opportunities were identified leading to the formation of goals and objectives for the

Saline Township Citizen Photographic

2000 Plan. The entire survey is contained within the 2000 General Development Plan. Following are the general highlights of that survey.

- 68.4% of respondents preferred that Saline Township's population be 1,500 by the year 2010.
- A combined percentage of 93.7%, preferred either 1,500 or 2,500 persons for Saline Township's 2010 population.
- 83.3% of respondents stated that a "*best image*" for Saline Township's future was a community devoted to agriculture.
- 8.9% viewed Saline Township's image as a "*worst image*" regarding agriculture.
- 88.7% of respondents indicated that the best uses of agricultural land is to keep it agricultural.
- 64.9% of respondents stated that they either "slightly oppose" or strongly oppose" changing agricultural land to single-family residential.
- 21% of respondents stated that they would either "slightly favor" or strongly favor" changing land from agriculture to single-family residence.
- 45.6% of respondents stated that a "best image" for Saline Township's future would be a rural community for commuters who like a small town atmosphere.
- 27.1% of respondents stated that a "worst image" for Saline Township's future would be a rural community for commuters who like small town atmosphere.
- 88.6% of respondents stated a "worst image" for Saline Township's future as a rapidly developing Township.
- 8.7% of respondents stated a "best image" for Saline Township's future as a rapidly developing Township.
- 58.4% of respondents stated that they "slightly oppose" or strongly oppose" more commercial business development along U.S. 12.
- 23.4% of respondents stated that they "slightly favor" or strongly favor" the development of more commercial business development along U.S. 12.
- 39.6% of respondents stated that they favor commercial development along U.S. 12.
- 73.5% of respondents stated that they would prefer that commercial development be contained within a business zone.

A futuring session, with the Township Planning Commission, Board and Township residents, began the update process of the 2000 General Development Plan. At that time a list of Township assets and

liabilities were compiled. This list, compiled with the 2000 General Development Plan survey will serve as the basis to direct evaluation of the existing General Development Plan and toward future goals, policies, objectives, and strategies of an updated Township Plan.

Items discussed at that futuring meeting was the initiation of a process that gave the Planning Commission increased awareness concerning the preservation and enhancement of the Township's natural resources including environmentally sensitive areas and agricultural lands, the unique location of Saline Township regarding access to nearby cultural activities, and the desire to preserve the unique character of the Township. Issues discussed at that meeting include the following:

Saline Township contains a character consisting of:

- A community with families that have lived within the Township for an extended period of time
- A rural community containing viable farming and agricultural activities.
- A community that is close to urban areas but with a low density of population and traffic volumes.
- A community that is scenic with substantial open space consisting of rolling farm land, wildlife, woodlands, waterways, and other significant natural resources.
- A community with quality schools

Saline Township recognizes that:

- Due to the availability of land, increased development has been proposed for areas south of the City of Saline.
- Additional development may be too fast resulting in loss of quiet rural character and atmosphere, increased taxes and traffic, increased need for public services, possible annexation by the City of Saline, loss of quality of schools, and loss of natural resources including the Saline River and wetlands.
- Development in adjacent communities may also result in increased traffic within the Township.

Review of the citizen survey and futuring session with the evaluation of documented and inherent Township characteristics has continued to be the foundation upon which the Township's land use planning programs are based. Recognizing the significant unique physical features which exist within Saline Township and the role they play in the environment was a major step in preservation of these resources and formulating policies by which they can and continue to be protected and enhanced. When these resources are unprotected, misuse or total destruction can take place. Once destroyed, many of these resources can never be replaced.

Therefore continued refinements and clarifications of the General Development Plan continue to clarify the importance that Saline Township places on preservation of existing rural character when new development occurs, and on policies that should guide future infrastructure and zoning decisions.

## 1.10 Existing Community Character & Environment

A community's character, or image, is shaped by both physical and intangible elements. It is the essence of a place and what one remembers long after leaving. The image of a community is not static – It can and will change as a community grows and matures. Saline Township has a positive image, but an important part of its character – the “green” and pastoral landscape – that is valued highly by residents is also threatened by development pressures. This section identifies ways to preserve and enhance Saline Townships character as the community continues to grow.

Saline Township's character is defined by a number of key physical elements such as the lay of the land, the built environment and roadways. There are also less tangible attributes that shape perceptions of Saline Township. For example, Township residents enjoy a high standard of living, have excellent schools and adjacent community facilities, and are close to surrounding thriving metropolitan areas among other things. Together, these elements shape the image of Saline Township as a unique community. The following summarizes some of the more prominent characteristics of Saline Township's image:

- Natural Features: Saline Township is flat to gently rolling and open, and its key natural highlights include the Saline River and its watershed, wetlands, and several stands of mature trees.
- The Rural Landscape: A significant portion of Saline Township continues to be cultivated or used as pasture for livestock. Saline Township's agricultural roots evoke very powerful images: the open feeling of the fields, stone and historic farm houses, barns and outbuildings, hedge rows and trees that define property boundaries and even certain sounds and smells. Saline Township's agricultural character still dominates within the Township.
- Adjacent Urban Area: The City of Saline provides a focal point and metropolitan center for the community. The Township's urban residential land use is adjacent to the City. Even with the Township being adjacent to the

Character Photographic

Character Photographic

City of Saline the Township remains predominately rural with some large lot residential farther south from the City. The community has placed high priority on maintaining its relationship with the city as well as the character and viability of the rural portions of the Township.

- Gateways: Gateways are points of identification and entry into a community where one feels a sense of arrival. U.S. 12 is Saline Township's major gateway providing the primary means of access for most residents, employees and visitors. Other gateways are located where other roadways enter the Township such as Austin Road, Macon, Mooreville, etc. The gateways give immediate impressions of the Township. New developments must be considered carefully in that they create gateway "statements" at the entrances to Saline Township.
- Scenic Roads: Certain roads in Saline Township possess particularly picturesque views to the countryside and other scenic features. Among them are Braun, Willow, Hack, Arkona, Klager, Feldkamp, and Hartman Roads. These and other scenic roads are shown on Map 3.
- Public Infrastructure: The design and maintenance of the public environment plays a major role in defining Saline Township's character. Streets, public buildings, public places, sidewalks, lights, signage and landscaping are very visible features. Even though Saline Township's public environment currently centers along U.S. 12 it must be kept attractive and well-maintained. Streets must be designed with high quality, and generally, emphasis is placed on creating an attractive public environment.
- Sense of Place: Saline Township's built and natural environment helps the residents to form a sense of attachment. The total environment provides a comfortable feeling. The Township has special characteristics that set it apart and make it a memorable place.
- High Quality Development: In general, Saline Township's new development contributes positively to the community's image. The built environment is characterized by high quality residential with well-landscaped areas. It is imperative that these characteristics are incorporated into new development and conscientiously designed into commercial areas.



Urban Photographic

Therefore an estimated 2,024 persons living in Saline Township in 2007 enjoy a unique rural oasis adjacent to suburban and commercial development within the City of Saline. With the exception of homes on small lots adjacent to the City of Saline most residents live either on large lots having general access to Macon and Mooreville Roads or scattered along the rural county roads with agricultural orientation. Some roads are paved however most remain rural and gravel weaving through woodlands, wetlands, farms and fields which fill most of Saline Township. Large connected natural areas follow



the Saline River and numerous tributaries. Scattered woodlands and wetlands are found in every section of the Township. These are described in more detail in the Physiographic Features section of this Plan. Scattered farms and farm buildings dot the landscape, which reminds the traveler that most of the Township, continues to be agricultural. Existing farms and fields are cherished by residents for the rural features, open space, and crops they contribute to the character of the Township.

### **1.11 Future Community Character**

As stated previously, community opinions regarding the future character of Saline Township were reviewed in preparing the 2007 update to the General Development Plan. These documented opinions consist of the citizen opinion survey and Township Board/Planning Commission meetings throughout the planning process, and in public comment at a hearing for input on the Plan update held on October 10, 2007. In all of these venues, most citizens consistently portrayed a common vision for the Township's future which was founded upon the preservation of the Township's natural features and retention of current rural character.

Secenic Roadway Photographic

The following vision statement attempts to put into words the prevailing aspirations of Township Officials and residents. It should be read as describing the character of the Township in the foreseeable future. It is a word "picture" to describe what the Township expects to be like if the policies in this Plan are consistently implemented.

By the year 2015, even though some development has occurred along the US-12 transportation corridor, directly west of Saline, most of Saline Township will appear much the same way as it looked in 2007. The Township's landscape remains dominated by large open spaces made up of scattered farm fields and pasture land within a mosaic of woodlands and wetlands. The wildlife, which abounded in 2007, continues to be plentiful. The natural resources of the Township, including its air and water resources, remain pristine and there is an overall atmosphere of health and vigor among the residents and families of the Township.

Architecture Photographic

Growth and development within the Township continues to be slow and deliberate; however the population of the Township has steadily increased. Single family homes on individual lots remain the predominate form of development in the Township. Residential development has been of an intensity and form that the Township's rural character and natural resources were not sacrificed. New

residential development recognizes the sensitive nature of the Township's resources and their intrinsic values. This is emphasized most in the context of protecting the quality and volume of the water in the Saline River and headwater streams and drains in the Township. Preservation of natural features has been assured through site plan review and environmentally sound construction practices. The preservation of open spaces has been a key design feature of all residential development since 2007.

The amount, location and timing of future nonresidential development in the north east portion of the Township, adjacent to the City of Saline will continue to be largely based upon the existing or planned availability of infrastructure and of the public services necessary to support new land uses in a manner which assures the public's health, safety, and welfare. The extent to which sewer and water, and other public services are expanded within this area is based upon: available financial resources, the planned long range land use pattern of this area, the degree of necessity to accommodate new urban land uses (higher density residential and commercial development) contiguous to other such development within this area of the Township. Public utility extensions are paid for by new development. Such extensions are permitted only according to standards established by the Township Board, and only if extensions occur in a planned incremental manner, so as not to over-accelerate Township growth and development.

As one of the principal entryways into the Township, U.S 12 has experienced additional development. Special attention has been paid to its character and appearance so that it presents a pleasing entryway.

New residential development will continue to rely largely upon individual private on-site septic systems for waste disposal and private wells for potable water, and the Township has no intention of introducing Township-operated public sewer or water infrastructure outside the service boundaries adjacent to the City of Saline. Private sewer or water systems serving more than a single dwelling will be considered on an individual basis structured upon the Township's adopted standards. New roads and more paved roads have only occurred within approved residential developments according to policies contained within the General Development Plan.

#### **1.12 Principal Characteristics of the General Development Plan**

Experience in using the previous General Development Plan over the past 6 years has proven the utility and wisdom of that plan and that many of the principal characteristics and policies of the 2000 General Development Plan should be retained. To preserve the unique character of Saline Township and meet the Township's future needs, a General Development Plan must address the major issues confronting the Township. Solutions must be understandable, workable, and provide the structure upon which the plan is based. The following are the principal characteristics of the 2007 General Development Plan.

- A. The Saline Township General Development Plan is a comprehensive statement of community policy for preservation and enhancement of natural resources, the unique character of the Township, and future development within the Township. The General Development Plan is an attempt to reflect the aspirations and goals of the total community which promotes the health, safety, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the public, Township residents and property owners as well as those who conduct business in the Township. The plan's aim is to achieve optimum compatibility and efficiency between these elements.
- B. The Plan is a strategy/policy type plan, that is, it describes the Planning Commission's strategies regarding future growth, development, and preservation of the character and

resources of the Township and the policies which are intended to implement them. The strategies are aimed at the fundamental (strategic) issues which the Planning Commission expects the Township to face during the foreseeable future. These basic issues are those which will have enduring effects on the Township, and which will establish the physical character of the Township in the years ahead. The plan is focused upon a limited number of issues so as to concentrate the Township's attention and efforts on those issues which can truly make a difference in the Township's future.

- C. Since the Plan concentrates on strategies and policies it follows that the plan is general in nature. That is, the plan shows how the Planning Commission will respond to various issues and the approaches that will be followed. The Plan establishes the existing and desired future character of lands in the Township. The Plan establishes general land use and desired densities

**FIGURE 2**  
**PLANNING FRAMEWORK**



in particular areas. It outlines a strategy for provision of new public services and facilities in parts of the Township, as certain circumstances take place. It sets forth the policy basis for revisions to the Zoning Ordinance and for making future public service expenditure decisions.

- D. The Plan provides the policy framework for Planning Commission recommendations on rezoning petitions, site condominiums and subdivision plats to the Township Board and for Planning Commission decisions on site plans. However, only regulations adopted by the Township Board, such as the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, provide specific restrictions on individual parcels. It is not the intent of the Plan that the designation of any area for a class of use entitles a property owner within that area to an immediate zoning change consistent with the use designation. Neither does it mean that certain supporting uses are not to be permitted in any particular area. In both cases the decision will be made on a case by case basis at the time the question arises and within the context of the Plan and applicable zoning (or other)

regulations. The Plan will be amended if the analysis involved in the decision indicates that a change is appropriate.

- E.** The Plan is based on the fact that the future is uncertain and cannot be predicted; that current perceptions of future conditions will change. The major issues will change over time, and strategies and policies appropriate to respond to them will have to be modified or replaced with new ones. The Planning Commission intends to periodically refine, add to, or otherwise modify the Plan as events unfold. Refinement may be in the form of restating, deleting, or adding to the issues, strategies, goals, or policies set forth in the Plan. It may also be in the form of detailed policies for specific areas of the Township. These changes might result from analysis of a specific development proposal (such as a rezoning petition), a capital improvement proposal by the Township or other government, a periodic review of the plan by the Planning Commission, or from a detailed study of a part of the Township by the Planning Commission. This approach can be viewed as a series of successive attempts to adapt the Plan as well as the planning process to changing conditions.
- F.** The primary purpose of this General Development Plan is to establish public policy to guide governmental and private decision-making concerning the preservation, growth, and development of Saline Township. The General Development Plan is intended to direct development in a coordinated and harmonious manner to meet the current and long-range needs and aspirations of the Township, to effectively and efficiently maintain, enhance and utilize the resources of the area, and to create a more satisfying environment for its citizens. Therefore, the General Development Plan is comprehensive and long-range in scope, rigid in basic principles, yet adaptive to changing conditions. The General Development Plan, as adopted, serves as an overall long-range guide which enables evaluation of individual proposals and rational decision-making on such proposals as they arise.
- G.** The Plan is an overall guide for decisions, but the continual use of the planning process and not the Plan itself will assure that decisions regarding land use facilities will be better than they would be in the absence of the process. It is the Planning Commission's intent to continually improve the planning process as well as the Plan. That will mean periodic changes to the Plan as new information is available and circumstances change.
- H.** The General Development Plan, as specified in the State of Michigan Township Planning Commission Act, is a prerequisite to adoption of regulations for land development including zoning, site condominium, and subdivision regulations. Furthermore, the General Development Plan is increasingly becoming a prerequisite for State and Federal grants to local governments for capital improvements. The General Development Plan is based on the conclusions of various technical studies and working papers, significant community involvement, established Township goals, policies, and strategies, and the synthesis of these with commonly accepted planning principles.
- I.** Wide individual and group review as well as a public hearing of this General Development Plan provided the opportunity for citizen participation, which improved and refined the proposed plan before its adoption. It is advisable that the plan be reviewed annually to determine whether additions or amendments are necessary based on established goals and sound planning principles. Periodic revision, as well as total evaluation of the plan every five years, is essential

if the General Development Plan is to be a continually reliable guide for community development and preservation of resources.

The recently adopted revised Saline Township Zoning Ordinance will complement and enforce this General Development Plan.

### **1.13 General Preservation and Development Goals**

The following goals will serve as a basis to address the specific issues facing Saline Township mentioned above. These goals are by nature general; however, they serve as the foundation upon which more detailed policies can be drawn.

- A.** To retain the social, economic and environmental qualities and character of land that are unique to Saline Township that have attracted people to settle there.
- B.** To protect and enhance the environment which is and continues to be conducive to the development of a more meaningful and purposeful life for every citizen as an individual and as a member of the community;
- C.** To program the orderly growth of a sound physical environment for those living and working in the Township, recognizing the character of the Township, the needs and desires of its citizens, the capabilities of its natural resources, and the anticipated pressures of its population growth and land development;
- D.** To encourage (a) the efficient and sustained use of land and water resources in accordance with their character and adaptability; (b) the preservation and enhancement of scenic and aesthetic features of the Township, and (c) the prohibition of any developments that seriously contaminate, pollute or erode the natural resources of the Township;
- E.** To define a land use pattern which (a) preserves existing character of the Township except where this Plan advocates a change in that character ; (b) recognizes the public interest in ensuring the compatibility between and a reasonable balance among land use activities; (c) anticipates the future demand and amount of land needed for each land use activity relative to the level of public services available at the time new development occurs; (d) identifies the most desirable location for each type of land use activity which permits efficient sustained operations and future expansion; and (e) protects and enhances the environmental quality of the community; (f) protects and enhances the tax base of the Township in a manner which permits new development without creating a need for new public services in excess of available revenues.
- F.** To protect the public health, safety and welfare of people living in, working in or visiting the Township.

The Planning Commission, in the formulation of the General Development Plan, recognizes that:

- A.** The planning process is a continuous one which requires a close and continuous working relationship between the Saline Township Board, Saline Township Planning Commission, and most importantly, the citizens of Saline Township;

- B.** The formulation and updating of the Growth Management Plan has been accomplished with broad citizen representation and participation insuring that all interests have had an opportunity to be heard in determining the future development and preservation of the unique character of the Township;
- C.** The formulation of amendments to the Zoning Ordinance text or map and related ordinances and plans will be based upon the Growth Management Plan;
- D.** Future decision making concerned with proposed developments in the Township will be based on the General Development Plan.

#### **1.14 Planning Commission and Township Board Roles in the Planning Process**

Previously the Township Planning Act gave the Township Planning Commission sole authority to prepare and adopt the General Development Plan. Amendments to this Act now allow the Township Board, by resolution, to have final authority for approval of the General Development Plan. The Board continues to make all land use and development decisions via the rezoning and the subdivision review processes; approves expenditures for public improvements; provides funds for Planning Commission activities, and appoints Planning Commission members. Most importantly, however, the Board is elected by the citizens of Saline Township and is therefore directly responsible to the public for planning decisions and represents the public's interest in planning matters. It therefore follows that the Township Board should play a key role in preparing the General Development Plan and in keeping it up to date. This General Development Plan was prepared with this in mind and it reflects Township Board policies as well as those of the Planning Commission.

#### **1.15 The Planning Area**

The planning area for the General Development Plan is delineated on Map \_\_\_\_\_. This area includes all portions of Saline Township. The total acreage of the planning area is 22,259 acres or 34.7 square miles.

## **Part II**

# **MAJOR ISSUES TO BE DEALT WITH IN THE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE**

### **2.01 Introduction**

Recent conditions in and around Saline Township raise major issues affecting the future of the community. These issues must be addressed if the General Development Plan is to be an effective means of achieving the Township's desired goals. These issues affect the entire Township, but the greatest effect will perhaps occur generally south and west of the City of Saline along the transportation routes of US-12, Macon and Mooreville Roads and to a lesser extent the roads interconnecting these routes of transportation primarily being Johnson and Marion Roads. These are the areas where large tracts of land face pressures for conversion and development.

Following is a general listing of issues considered to be the most important for the foreseeable future. Issues have a tendency to change over time and new issues will arise. These present issues however will serve as the basis for the plan.

### **2.02. Regional Setting**

The future of Saline Township is to a great extent a function of its setting in surrounding economic regions - the Southeast Michigan region, the Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti urban area, the City of Saline directly to the north east, and to a lesser extent York Township, adjacent and to the east of the Township. The Southeast Michigan region has been growing primarily to the north and northwest, especially in the I-75 and I-96 corridors, along with fill-in between the two corridors. In recent years regional growth has moved in a more westerly direction, in the M-14 corridor, to Plymouth and toward Ann Arbor. During this time, growth along the I-94 corridor has been relatively less pronounced. The US-23 corridor, connecting with M-14 and I-96, has increased in importance and will continue to increase in importance in the near future. The connection of these transportation corridors to secondary roadway systems within the Township serves to connect Saline Township to adjacent urban and growth potential areas. The potential for by-pass roadways, around the City of Saline will also tend to impact the Township in a significant manner. Whether these growth trends will continue is speculation at this time. But in either case Saline Township will be influenced to a considerable extent by the regional growth pattern that is already established.

These interrelationships between Saline Township and the communities in the larger region are expected to grow in intensity and complexity in the coming years. The result will be a tendency to blur community identities and to increase the growth pressures on Saline Township. Forces that determine demand for housing, jobs, retail sales, and other economic conditions will be increasingly difficult for the Township citizens and officials to control.

### 2.03 Protection and Preservation of Natural Features

Saline Township has a variety of natural features - wooded areas, streams, wetlands and varied topography. It is important that these features be protected and set aside into natural systems throughout the Township as well as integrated into the development pattern so that they will be preserved and properly respected. Due to the location of certain natural features, encroachment from development may be inevitable. Integration of natural resources into development patterns will be directed toward preservation and properly respecting the resource. However, protection and preservation may be challenging because encroachment or loss occurs slowly, and the impact at any one time may seem minimal. Wooded areas might be removed to make way for development. Streams will be subject to pollutants and sediments from surface runoff and by flooding caused by increased runoff. Wetlands can be adversely altered or destroyed by changing drainage patterns and by disruption of the ecosystem. Topographic features may be subject to modification to provide building sites and roadways, thereby upsetting natural drainage ways, increasing erosion potential, and destroying visual character. Means will be sought to minimize these negative impacts on the natural features of the Township which so greatly define its current character.

Natural Features Photographic

Agricultural Photographic

### 2.04 Loss of Agricultural Land

Loss of agricultural land to development has not occurred to any extent in Saline Township. The principal threats to local agricultural land are



rural housing, in subdivisions, but more pervasively on scattered lots, resulting in part from increased property tax burdens on farmland. Agriculture, at least long term operations, cannot compete successfully with housing for the same land, or even for the same general area. The presence of only a few rural residences can adversely affect the stability of an agricultural area.

It should be noted that the current Agricultural Sliding Scale district of the Zoning Ordinance has to a certain extent limited the amount of development within the Township. This district sets forth a maximum lot size for a lot split within the agricultural district and also limits the number of lot splits that can take place based upon the sliding scale requirement. This district in effect is a restrictor to subdivisions, site condominiums, and caps the number of single lot splits that can take place for certain size parcels. Therefore the present Agricultural district with the sliding scale component will tend to protect agricultural activities without encouraging piecemeal residential development. Protecting agricultural land and associated open space while still permitting reasonable residential development are important to preservation of the rural character of the Township.

## **2.05 Population and Housing Growth**

Saline Township will be an increasingly attractive area for new residents. This attractiveness could lead to pressure for a relatively rapid growth in housing and population. In 1970 the Township had a population of 922 and in 1980 had increased to 1,221 or a 32.4 percent increase. In 1990 the Township's population was 1,276 or a 4.5 percent increase from 1980. Growth for all of Washtenaw County was only 6.87 percent for this same time period. In 2000 the Township's population was 1,302 which was a 2.0 percent increase while all of Washtenaw County increased 14.07 percent during this same time period. Recent figures indicate the Township's population in July 2007 as 1,986 residents. This would account for an increase of 52.5 percent since the year 2000. The Township could continue to experience an accelerated rate of growth due to additional pressure from surrounding communities centered upon access from US-12 and other regional transportation networks giving access to the Township.

Rural Housing Photographic

## **2.06 Control of Rural Housing**

Rural housing is becoming increasingly popular. Communities around Saline Township, particularly to the east, have seen this trend take place along main routes of transportation. Pressure for such housing

will likely occur in areas with natural amenities such as wooded areas, waterway corridors and lands with rolling topography. Also pressure may be seen in agricultural areas where this type of housing can be a major cause of sprawl.

The principal issue is to locate rural housing in suitable areas and prevent its scattering into agricultural areas. The total land area needed for rural housing will be small if the rate of population growth is moderate, as expected. Therefore, the issue is not the amount of land needed for rural housing, but the location of that land.

## **2.07 US-12 Corridor**

The US-12 regional transportation corridor, which passes through Saline Township's designated Urban Service District, will increase pressure for development. Historically collector roadways (Austin, Macon, Mooreville, etc) that intersect with US-12, west of the City of Saline has seen limited commercial activities and residential development. The existing land use plan recognized the importance of this general area by proposing commercial, multiple and single family residential land uses if public services are available.

Within and adjacent to this region are areas containing significant natural resources including woodlands, wetlands, river and stream corridors. Any future development within this region would therefore be restricted and required to preserve the natural resources within any potential development. Pressure to develop more intensely in this region has already begun and will likely increase.

US-12 Photographic

## **2.08 Intergovernmental Cooperation**

Events and decisions in adjacent municipalities will affect Land use and development policies of Saline Township. Township plans regarding current residential development in adjoining Townships and the City of Saline are current examples. It will be increasingly essential for all concerned that the planning policies of Saline Township and neighboring municipalities be coordinated.

## **2.09 Public Facilities and Services**

The type of land uses being planned adjacent to the City of Saline will result in expected population growth for the Township and require public facilities and services. The Township is served by three

school districts. Saline Area Schools comprise the majority of the Township with Milan Area Schools located within the southeastern portion of the Township and Clinton Community Schools in the southwestern portions of the Township. Depending upon the amount of residential growth, additional elementary school facilities may be needed.

Fire and Police protection and general government services will increase with population growth; but if the growth rate is moderate, the requirements should be manageable. However, development of urban residential land would need additional fire protection if the intensity of development in those areas increase.

## **2.10 Sanitary Sewer and Water Services**

The Township presently does not have public water or public sewer service. The designated Urban Service District would be the only area planned to have public sewer and water service. The method by which these services could be provided would need to be part of a capital improvement study.

## **2.11 Transportation**

The principal north/south surface roads are Dell, Marion, Mooreville, and Jordan. Principal east/west roads are Austin, US-12, Johnson, Braun, Willow, and Arkona. Even though these roads are currently rural and gravel, they are the principal roads and will become increasingly important, either when they are within the designated development area or function as regional roadways connecting through Saline Township to adjoining townships.

## **2.12 Need For Additional Commercial Development**

The unique location of Saline Township in relation to the City of Saline and other urban centers to the north and east, in adjacent communities, has resulted in a situation where the primary commercial needs of Saline Township residents are being adequately met elsewhere. It is not likely that additional commercial centers will be needed nor is it likely that they could challenge the market dominance of adjacent commercial developments where adequate infrastructure exists. The primary exception to this are commercial developments that have historically existed at certain intersections with US-12. These developments are recognized; however they are not recognized to serve as nuclei for additional commercial development.

## **2.13 Response to and Role in Large Regional Development Proposals**

Saline Township could be susceptible to large-scale or multi-use development proposals on various parcels in the future. Each proposal should be analyzed on an individual basis considering specific site criteria. This General Development Plan contains land use relationship policies that should be incorporated in the Zoning Ordinance to guide such decisions.

## **2.14 Precedents Affecting Land Use Policy**

This General Development Plan is based upon significant analysis by the Planning Commission and Township Board and sound planning policies and principles. The Commission will as appropriate, incorporate these policies in the Zoning Ordinance and enforce them when evaluating requests for

specific zoning changes and other land use proposals. The established character of specific areas of the Township will be reviewed in relation to development proposals brought before the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will view negatively proposals leading toward any unwarranted alteration of this character or likely to establish unwanted precedents. The refinement of these policies will continue to be an important issue facing the Township.

## **2.15 Tax Base**

The General Development Plan will strive to direct potential growth into appropriate areas based upon the future needs and physical resources of Saline Township. This will permit the Township to utilize its resources more effectively in serving the needs of residents. Distinct efforts will be made to restrict the density and intensity of growth in the designated development areas as depicted on the Plan Map. The creation of a balanced Township economy is a vital goal of the General Development Plan, but the process, rate, timing, location and mix of land uses associated with achieving this goal will long remain an important public policy issue.

## **2.16 Growing Demand for Urban Services**

In the next ten or twenty years a considerable amount of development is expected to occur within designated planning areas of Saline Township. The influx of new residents, new businesses and new industries will bring with it the inevitable pressure for increased provision of urban services, better roads, schools, parks and playgrounds, adequate fire and police protection, trash collection, sewer and water services, and many other services. If this growth is allowed to happen in a dispersed, unplanned manner, the cost of providing services to residents will be high while the available fiscal resources will be limited. The challenging problems of growth must be anticipated and planned for in advance rather than after-the-fact when the only choice may be how to alleviate a problem rather than avoid it. Understanding this, the Urban Service District and adjoining planned development area has been established to provide a specific region for urban growth and development that is contained and based upon established need and locational criteria.

## **PART III**

### **GENERAL TOWNSHIP OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.01 Introduction**

Objectives are the heart of the General Development Plan. They provide the framework for establishing policies and the measurements against which policies are evaluated. Objectives are derived from an assessment of existing and future conditions that the Township faces, and from citizens' desires for their community in the future.

The order of listing of the following objectives does not imply relative importance.

#### **3.02 Strengthen the Identity of Saline Township**

A community's identity can be established and maintained in a number of ways. Comprehensive plan elements such as land use patterns, streets and public transportation systems, natural resource preservation, parks and other public areas and facilities, individually and in combination, strengthen a community's identity. They help to define a sense of place that is unique among neighboring communities. The General Development Plan will strive to maintain these relationships thereby continuing the unique character of the community.

#### **3.03 Preserve the Natural Resources in the Planning Area**

The natural resources in the Township consist of its topography, wetlands, stream corridors and drainage basins, fence rows, meadows, and wooded areas. Numerous woodlands are scattered throughout the Township and are a reminder of the woodlands that once covered the area before agricultural settlement occurred in the 1800's. Wetlands, river and stream corridors are interrelated; they are frequently found together. Stream corridors, and to some extent fence rows, provide an opportunity to tie the various natural features together, to preserve and in some cases establish continuity among natural areas. Continuity is important to the objective of preserving natural features.

Natural features are important as visual amenities and are critical elements in establishing and maintaining the Township's identity and character. Most communities have these features to varying degrees, but the patterns that they collectively create are somewhat unique to each community. Protection and preservation of these features have an even more important purpose: they are vital elements in the natural system. They perform many interconnected functions and disruption of one can have adverse effects on the others and subtract something from the quality of life in both the Township and its neighboring areas.

#### **3.04 Preserve a Portion of Saline Township for Rural Uses**

With the exception of the designed intent of the Urban Service District to the west and south of the City of Saline, Saline Township continues to maintain the character of a rural agricultural community.

Areas away from the major transportation networks have been able to maintain an open and rural character in spite of urbanizing forces primarily emerging from the northeast, east, and along transportation arterials. Areas away from these influences represent an opportunity to preserve the rural, agricultural heritage, to preserve a more rural lifestyle and environment for both current and future residents, as a counterpoint to the eventual urban and suburban character in neighboring areas. These areas also provide a location for agricultural activities for people who wish to continue or establish them.

### **3.05 Streets Should be Consistent with and Subservient to the Character of the Community**

The street pattern has historical significance and continues to be basically rural and well established in Saline Township. To some extent, the character of the community as it evolved within these rural roadway networks and adapted to the framework established by US-12, a regional arterial. Some of the Township's roadways will require improvements in the future, especially within the Northeast portion of the Township. The overall roadway system should be managed and improved in such a way as to serve, not dominate, the people of Saline Township and neighboring communities.

### **3.06 The Stability of Residential Areas Should be Preserved**

Agricultural and rural lifestyles dominate the character of the Township; however residential neighborhoods have developed in the northeastern portion of the Township. It is likely that additional residential development will occur of an urban nature adjacent to the City of Saline and more rural as transportation systems lead to the south, away from this area. Caution must be exercised as this general area grows to ensure that increased residential density will not dominate the existing lower density housing existing within this area. The Township intends to establish policies that will protect existing residential areas from the adverse impacts of changing conditions and thereby secure the stability of residential areas.

### **3.07 Open Space Areas Must be Conveniently Located for all Residents of the Township**

Some of the open space will be in recreation areas, either public or private, and thus accessible for use. However, not all open space need be accessible to be of benefit to residents. Its presence by itself provides visual and environmental benefits encouraging preservation of existing natural features.

### **3.08 Residential Areas Should be Interconnected with Streets, Sidewalks, and Pedestrian/Bicycle Paths**

Interconnection of streets, sidewalks, and paths provides convenience for residents and helps establish a sense of community that is elusive if individual residential areas are physically isolated from each other. This is a very important objective when a community begins to have residential growth such as Saline Township, because it requires long-range planning for extensions of such facilities in new developments. It is of course essential that interconnection of streets be planned so that through or non-residential traffic is not attracted into residential areas.

### **3.09 Streetscapes of Existing Major Streets Should be Improved**

Streetscapes, especially those of major streets, convey an image of a community to visitors and even impart a self-image to the residents of the community. Such images might not be wholly accurate, but

accurate or not, they have their effect. In Saline Township streetscapes will be addressed in light of visual prospectives, incorporating landscape buffering of a rural and natural nature. Much of a streetscape's appearance and character can be established through the development review process and by careful planning and implementation of street improvement projects.

Entrance zones are an important part of the overall streetscape. Such zones as the US-12 transportation corridor and where major streets intersect with US-12 or on the Township's boundaries, such as Austin and Macon offer special opportunities to express the image or character that the community wishes to convey.

### **3.10 New Development Must be of High Quality**

Quality development helps prevent physical and economic deterioration. The Township has pursued quality of development in the past and intends to pursue it even more aggressively in the future.

### **3.11 Growth Must be Managed**

Saline Township is beginning to experience escalating growth. It is not difficult to envision a time when the Township will add new types of urban and rural development. Furthermore, the possibility to extend public sewer and water service will be promoted in the Urban Service District of the Township. The Urban Service District has distinct boundaries for urban type development. General Development involves policies that will make growth orderly, that will adapt growth to existing development patterns and character. The challenge is to minimize the adverse effects of growth on neighboring properties and the community at large.

### **3.12 The Public Costs of Growth Must be Minimized**

Developers must pay for the initial costs of growth. The Township has pursued this objective in the past for infrastructure elements. This will continue to be an objective in the future.

### **3.13 The Policies of Saline Township Should be Closely Coordinated with those of Neighboring Communities**

The increasing integration of the social and economic life of Saline Township with the neighboring communities, together with the growing proximity of new development, requires coordination of land use, transportation, and other policies. Saline Township will continue to coordinate its policies with those of neighboring communities and to recognize the interests of those communities while promoting and protecting its own interests in the formulation and implementation of its policies.

## **PART IV**

### **BASIC CONCEPTS OF THE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

#### **4.01 The foundation of the plan has two elements.**

##### **A. Establishment of Policies**

The plan structure starts with an overall view of the basic policies for the entire Township, continues with a comprehensive set of policies for major policy areas, and concludes with detailed policies for specific parts of the Township.

##### **B. Description of Uses**

Future uses are assigned to all parts of the Township without regard to a target year or a projected population. The plan relies upon SEMCOG projections of 2,202 people and 897 households by the year 2030. These figures are guidelines for monitoring purposes. They are not targets for allocation of land use acreage or facilities.

#### **4.02 The plan establishes urban, rural/suburban, rural, and natural resource boundaries.**

The planning area consists of urban, rural/suburban, rural areas, and natural resource areas with a projected urban area coinciding with the public sanitary sewer service area as delineated within the Urban Service District adjacent to the City of Saline. All urban residential, office, commercial, and industrial/technology uses will be located in the designated Urban Service District. Rural residential/agricultural and suburban residential uses will be dispersed in the remainder of the Township.

#### **4.03 The plan establishes an Urban Service District boundary.**

Acknowledging the need to provide for additional urban services and urban land uses an Urban Service District has been established for public sanitary sewer and water services. The limits of public sanitary sewer and water services have been established and planned to take place within a delineated area adjacent to the City of Saline. No sewer or water services will be allowed to extend beyond this established Urban Service District. It is expected that all lands within the Urban Service District will eventually be connected to public sanitary sewers with agreements worked out with the City of Saline. No services will be provided outside of this designated boundary in order to reduce sprawling development patterns into the Township's designated rural areas

#### **4.04 Four categories of residential uses are proposed.**

- A. Estate** - This residential area is characterized as a low density residential area in which limited agricultural operations will be permitted. The area is intended to protect existing residences on large lots and existing natural resources from intrusion of higher density uses. The maximum density for this area is one dwelling unit per two acres. Clustering concepts shall be encouraged to maximize open space.



- B. Rural** - This region is characterized as a rural residential area that continues to protect existing residences however the presence of natural resources are not as great. The maximum density for this area is one dwelling unit per one acre. Clustering concepts shall be encouraged to maximize open space.
- C. Suburban** - This category of residential use is intended to support a lot size that is within an urban setting; however offers a size where natural resources can be incorporated. This type of residential use is located within the designated Urban Service District of the Township that would allow sewer and water service. The maximum density for this type of housing is 1 dwelling unit per ½ acre. Agricultural activities are not considered to be compatible with this density of housing.
- D. Urban** – This designation allows urban residences ranging in density from 2 to 4 dwelling units per acre and in types of housing from single family detached units to apartment type units. All urban residential units will be located within the Urban Service District where sewer and water service will be available.

**4.05 Residential areas will be protected from destabilizing forces.**

Outside traffic and intrusion of uses that are not compatible with residences will be prevented. Special treatment will be required along boundaries between residential and non residential uses. Infrastructure in suburban and urban residential areas, such as streets, sidewalks, and street lighting, will be maintained to encourage neighborhood stability. Establishing and maintaining neighborhood identity will be encouraged. Specific design criteria will be implemented to adequately buffer and screen the designated Urban Service District from adjoining lands.

**4.06 Commercial uses will be concentrated only in the Urban Service District.**

Commercial uses will be defined and concentrated in two areas along US-12 with specific characteristics. These areas are intended to supplement and not duplicate or replace the commercial activities within the City of Saline but are designed to serve the commercial needs of the Township’s residents and the motoring public. These defined areas include:

**1. Historical Locations**

Areas that have historically existed and are allowed to continue with limited expansion as depicted on the General Development Plan. These areas are designated as “*Small Commercial Centers*” which include:

- North side of US-12 and west of Marion Road.
- Intersection of Dell Road and US-12.

**2. Urban Service District**

This area is specifically defined however as it pertains to commercial development is along the US-12 corridor.

Any commercial uses within this district will have definite boundaries. Creeping strip commercial development will not be permitted along the US-12 corridor. Commercial uses will be permitted only in these designated areas.

#### **4.07 Industrial/Technology uses will be concentrated in the Urban Service District.**

The primary center for these anticipated land uses will have access from US-12 and compatible with designated commercial areas.

#### **4.08 Streets will follow the established pattern.**

The major street pattern has already been established in the Township. Additional improvements and/or lanes will be provided based on need. Streets should not become barriers to neighborhood and community identity and interaction. Additional improvements will be needed for anticipated collector and regional roadways (Marion, Dell, Johnson,, etc) within and adjacent to the Urban Service District when anticipated projects are developed. Internal and secondary connector roadways will also be required as development proceeds; all such construction will be at the expense of developers. Streets in residential areas will be interconnected for efficiency in delivering public services and to help promote an integrated community.

The need for additional transportation infrastructure within the designated Urban Service District will require traffic impact analysis. These studies will take place as development is proposed and include design and funding options for capacity and safety improvements needed as a result of individual developments projects.

Also the Washtenaw County Road Commission (WCRC) has initiated studies to locate a bypass around the City of Saline to the south and within Saline Township. Even though some study regarding realignments has taken place, coordination will be necessary with the WCRC. Necessary alteration of the transportation portion of this General Development Plan will be considered as this process continues.

#### **4.09 Sanitary sewer and water services will be extended throughout the delineated Urban Service District.**

Public sanitary sewer and water will be allowed only within the designated Urban Service District designated within the General Development Plan. Specific sizing of infrastructure will be undertaken and development criteria established to ensure that these services only take place within the Urban Service District. This ensures that lands outside the Urban Service District will not be impacted and be well screened to retain their current character. Necessary public infrastructures will be financed by property owners within the USD.

#### **4.10 Public Facilities.**

The Township Hall is located at 5731 Braun Road; however it does not currently contain administrative offices. The need to expand Township facilities and administrative offices is being considered and will be addressed when the Township population needs these facilities. At present there are no plans for additional facilities including fire and police facilities.

The Township does not presently have a recreation department or utilities department. As the Township continues to grow, the need to establish recreation and utilities departments will be considered. A relationship with the City of Saline will be established regarding utilities within the Urban Service District

#### **4.11 Public Schools.**

The General Development Plan has not addressed the need for expansion of school facilities. A close working relationship will be established with all school districts serving Saline Township to address this issue.

#### **4.12 Public Recreation.**

Even though Saline Township does not have a Parks and Recreation department, the density and location of residential development within the Township has not necessitated this public expenditure. The vast majority of the Township is also agriculturally orientated.

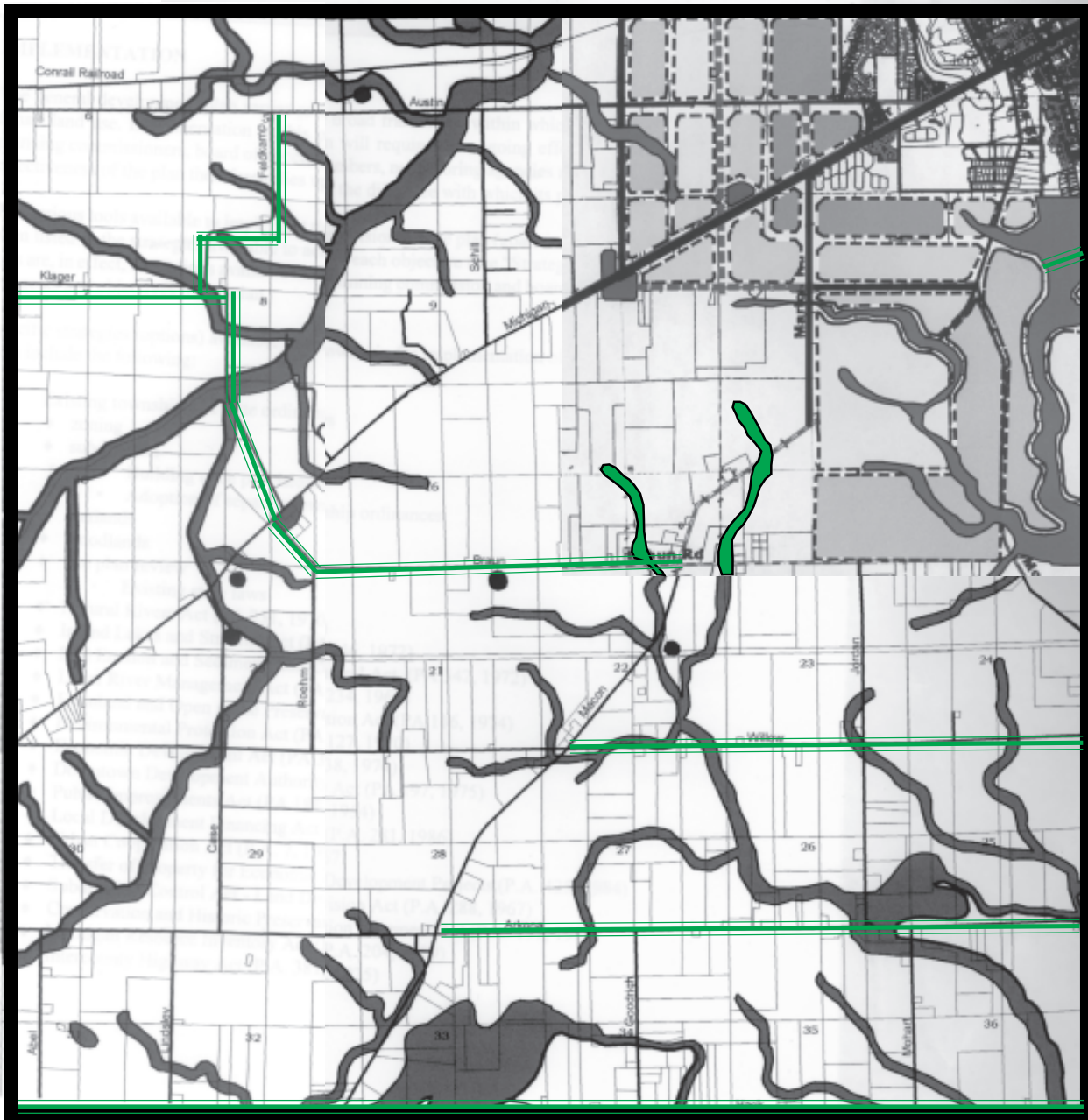
Other portions of this General Development Plan have designated and established policies for natural resources within the Township. This is to maintain their integrity and environmental sensitivity. The Township has discussed the need for an expanded public program, which will grow, as the Township accepts additional residential development. As developments are proposed, provisions for public parkland, open space and recreational opportunities will be required. A public recreation system should be considered which could consist of designated open space areas and parks within the Township and connections to regional and countywide waterways, parks and other open space systems. Acquiring additional land for small, neighborhood parks should also be part of a Township wide system. Additional recreational and open space facilities can be provided as private parks in residential developments. Natural areas to be preserved will provide open space for passive recreation. Pedestrian path linkages among open space areas, public and private recreation areas, and road sidewalks will be provided within the Township and to adjacent urban areas resulting in an extensive pedestrian/bicycle system.

#### **4.13 Natural Features.**

Natural features within the Township will be preserved to the maximum feasible extent. This means preservation, not only of the specific natural feature, but also of the surrounding eco-system, which supports it. Woodlands, stream corridors and wetlands will be preserved in their present extent and condition. Stream corridors and fence rows, where feasible, will be used as connecting links among wetlands, woodlands, and other open space areas. New connection corridors will be created where needed and possible. Stream corridors and wetlands will be used as parts of the natural drainage system and to help recharge groundwater aquifers. The system will be augmented where possible with open drainage courses and storm water retention facilities. Open drainage courses and retention areas will be developed as part of the natural landscape. Groundwater recharge areas will be protected to the extent consistent with sound land development policies.

# Saline Township

## General Development Plan



- Open Space System
- Agriculture
- Estate Residential- 1DU/2 AC
- Rural Residential - 1DU/1AC
- Suburban Residential - 1 DU/ 1/2 AC
- Urban Residential - 2 - 4 DU/AC

- Commercial/Employment Center
- Local Roadway
- Collector Roadway
- Primary Roadway
- Special Corridors
- New Roadways

## **PART V**

### **SUPPORTING DATA AND ANALYSIS**

#### **5.01 Introduction**

Any discussion of a township's future plans must begin with an examination of that township's demographic and economic profile and its existing land use and characteristics. An examination of the desires of the township's residents is also a necessary component.

Close scrutiny of this data will allow a township to update its future development plan in an educated and informed manner. With this information, future plans will not be arbitrary. Rather, they will be based on both existing conditions and the future needs of the township.

What follows is an inventory and analysis of the social, economic and physical characteristics of Saline Township. It is our intent to use this information as a useful guide in the process of updating the Saline Township General Development Plan.

#### **5.02 Population**

Prior to 1980 Saline Township maintained a consistent rate of growth that represented a slow growth rate. The Township's population over a fifty year prior, from in 1920 to 1970 only increased 59 residents according to the U.S. Census Bureau. After 1970 the rate of growth increased from 1,221 in 1980 to 1,302 as reported in the year 2000 census. This was an average increase of approximately 29 residents per year. Saline Township's estimated 2007 population is approximately 2,024 residents.

#### **5.03 Population Projections**

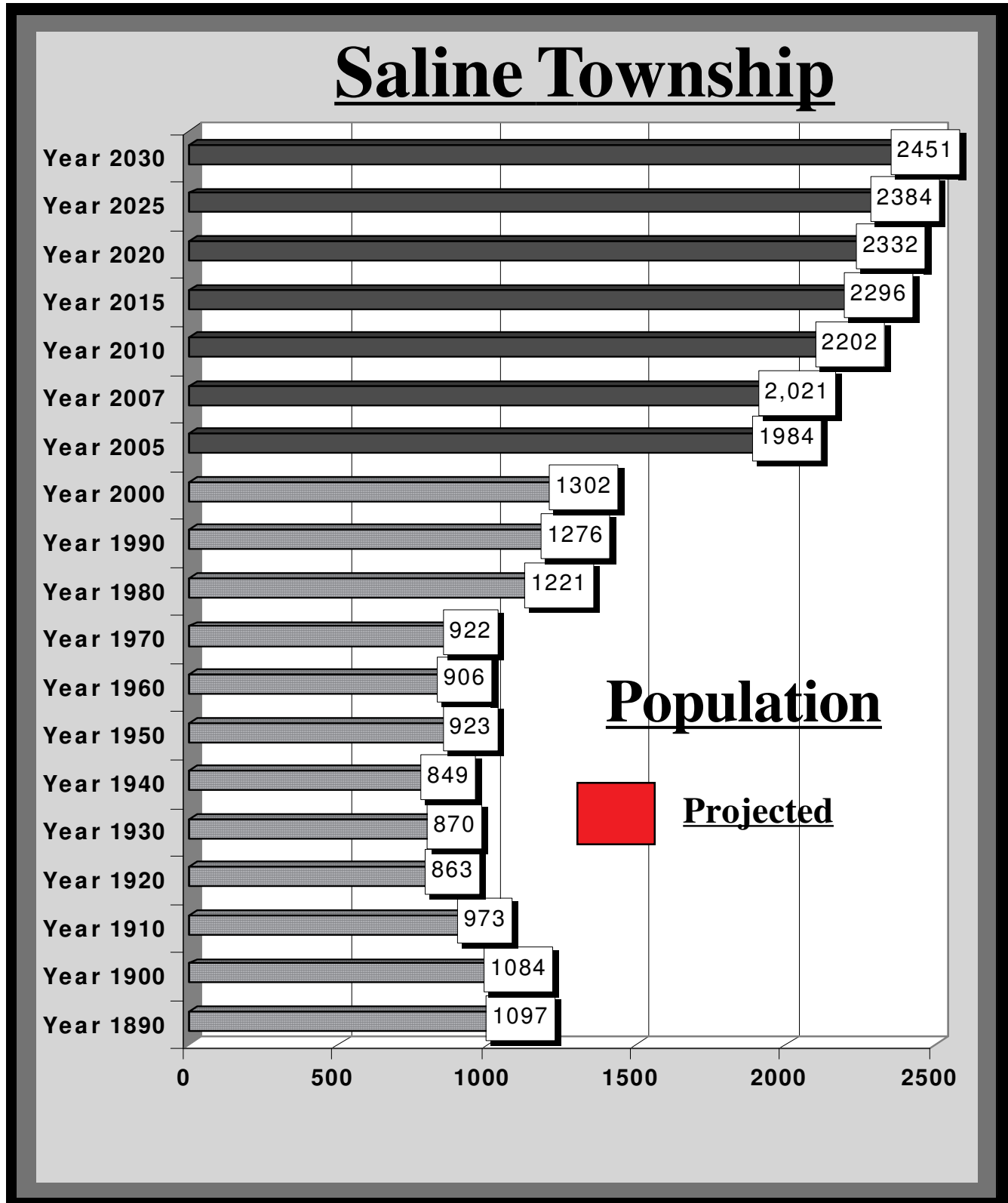
Projections are never exact, but they do provide a clearer indication of potential changes in an area's population and act as a guide in estimating future needs of the Township.

SEMCOG population projections for Saline Township are shown in Table \_\_\_\_\_, which were prepared after 2000 Census figures were released.

Population projections were taken into consideration in the assimilation of the Township's current General Development Plan. Saline Township's 1990 population was 1,276 residents. The year 2000 population for Saline Township was 1,302 which represented an increase of 26 residents from 1990 or a 1.9 percent increase.

SEMCOG also provides population estimates for the years 2007, 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025, and 2030. Saline Township's population is estimated to be 2,021 in the year 2007, 2,202 in 2010, 2,296

in 2015, 2,332 in 2020, 2,384 in 2025, and 2,451 in the year 2030. This represents population increases of 8.2 percent between 2007 and 2010, 4.1 percent between 2010 and 2015, 1.5 percent between 2015 and 2020, 2.1 percent between 2020 and 2025, and 2.7 percent between 2025 and 2030. As seen from these SEMCOG estimates, population estimates are slow for Saline Township beginning with the year 2007 through the year 2030. The accompanying chart depicts these figures.



#### **5.04 Household Size/Households**

Between 1990 and 2000, Saline Township's household size decreased from 3.10 persons per household to 2.82 persons per household. While household size declined, the actual number of households increased from 412 to 460 during the same time period. This represents a numerical change of 48 or 10.1%. It mirrors a national trend of more and smaller households. The 2007 estimate by SEMCOG stated that household size was 2.60 continuing the decline in household size. It is significant however that SEMCOG figures for the year 2030 project an increase in family size to 2.73.

As stated above, between 1990 and 2000, the household size for Saline Township residents had decreased from 3.10 in 1990 to 2.82 in 2000. Also the overall Township population appears to be aging. In 1990 there were 22% of the population between the age of 18 to 34 and in 2000 this number had decreased to 17%. This is further born out by recognizing that the majority of Township residents are between the age of 35 to 64 which accounted for 39% of the population in 1990. This figure had increased to 46% in 2000.

#### **5.05 Housing**

The majority of Saline Township's residential stock is on large lots (two acres or more), with the exception of several one acre subdivisions in Sections 11, 12, 13, and 14. All residential units in the Township rely on individual septic systems.

As can be seen by the accompanying chart, there has been a steady decline in the number of single family residential dwellings constructed within Saline Township since 1999. Within the last 10 years, (1996-2006) Saline Township had 91 single family dwellings constructed within the Township. This averaged 9.1 new single family residential dwellings being constructed each year. For the past 37 years Saline Township has averaged 13.4 new single family residential units being constructed each year. The highest year was 1972 with 18 new single family residential units being constructed and the years 1981, 1983, 1984 and 1991 were the lowest during this time period with 1 single family residential units being constructed within those years.

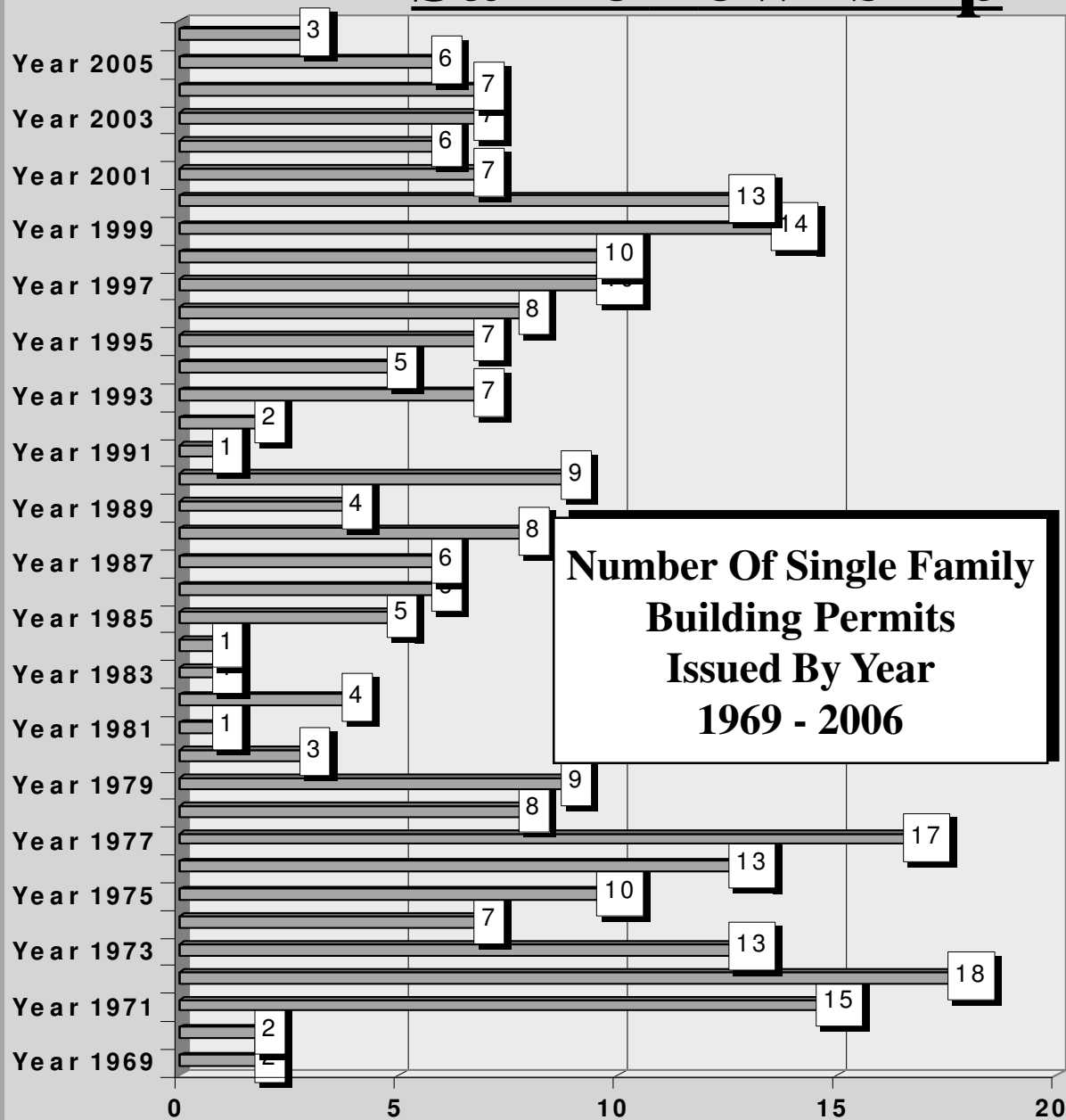
#### **5.06 Income Characteristics**

Household income levels have increased steadily in Saline Township, the surrounding communities and Washtenaw County. Saline Township's household income rose from \$61,827 in 1990 to \$77,024 in 2000 according to census data. Compared to the County's per capita income figures, Saline Township's per capita income is higher than Washtenaw County's, but the rate of increase has been similar.

#### **5.07 Employment**

The 1900 Census indicates that the Township's work force was concentrated in four different occupational categories: Agriculture, Mining and Natural Resources, Retail Trade, and Services. The 2000 census depicted 50.0 percent in Agriculture, Mining, and Natural Resources, 16.0 percent in Retail Trade, and 19.0 percent in Service occupations.

# Saline Township



## 5.08 Existing Land Use

The majority of land in Saline Township is agricultural. Moderate residential development has occurred in the last two decades. Most of the higher density development (one acre lot subdivisions) is concentrated in the vicinity of Macon and Jordan Roads. This area is generally composed of lots with a minimum lot size of one acre. Other single family dwellings are found along Mooreville Road east of Macon Road.

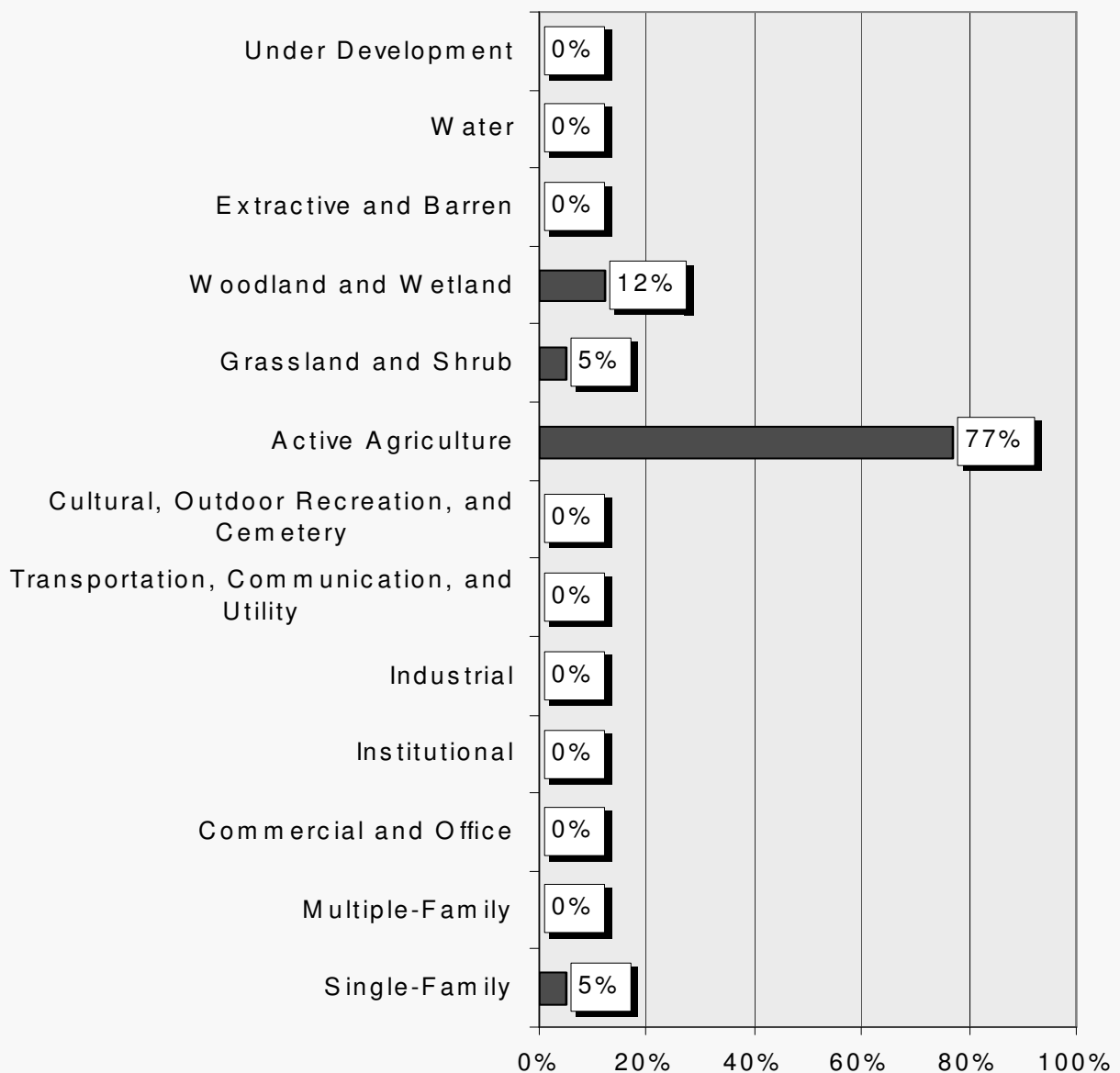


A significant number of farmsteads are still active. They tend to be located throughout the remainder of the Township.

The majority of Saline Township's commercial uses are located along US-12, the major thoroughfare transversing the Township and through the City of Saline. No other commercial developments are found within the Township.

There is significant development pressure on the Township - growth outward from the City of Saline. This is a critical time for the Township in deciding how development will occur into the next century.

### Saline Township - Percent of Land Use/Land Cover - Year 2000



## PART VI

### PHYSIOGRAPHIC FEATURES

#### 6.01 Introduction

Saline Township is distinguished by varied natural features throughout the Township. From its woodlands, streams, wetlands, and topographic features, it offers diversity that can be appreciated within potential urban and existing rural settings. Following is the location, extent, and characteristics of these and other natural features.

#### 6.02 Woodlands

Approximately 10.50% of Saline Township is presently woodland. There are a total of 59 separate woodlots within the Township. Seven of these woodlands are 5-10 acres in size, thirty-nine are 11-40 acres in size and thirteen have 40 or more acres. Areas defined as woodlands refer to lands that are at least 10% stocked by trees capable of producing timber or other wood products. Twenty-two percent of Saline Township's woodlots are over 40 acres in size. Woodlots of this size can support various types of wildlife and can act as a community within themselves.

Woodlands are important for a number of reasons:

- A. They create and maintain a varied and rich habitat for plant and animal life. When connected with other woodlands or fence rows, they provide migration paths for animals and birds.
- B. They could be a source of timber.
- C. They are a source of aesthetic enjoyment and provide areas for recreation.
- D. They moderate climatic extremes by providing shade and transpiring water.

Woodland Photographic

- E.** They protect watersheds from erosion by reducing the impact of rain on soil and by holding soil in place.
- F.** They help recharge groundwater by holding precipitation, giving it time to percolate into the ground. The woodland floor also helps to filter the percolating water.
- G.** They filter the air by absorbing pollutants.
- H.** They absorb sound and act as buffers between land uses.

Therefore woodlands are a valuable natural resource from environmental and aesthetic point of view. They play an important role by stabilizing soil and slowing runoff and erosion resulting from flooding and high winds. Careful management of woodlands must be of prime concern. Needless destruction of trees and the conversion of woodlands to other uses should be discouraged. Uses and development patterns, which permit the land to remain forested, are encouraged. Woodlands are dispersed throughout Saline Township and are depicted on Map 4.

### **6.03 Flood Plains**

A flood plain is an area adjoining a lake, stream, river, or pond that receives excess water from flooding. Floods are a natural occurrence in the hydrologic cycle. A well-defined flood plain is produced when flooding recurs on the same area, which then becomes important in flood situations where excess water requires a natural reservoir. Water exceeding the normal average level is stored as a temporary lake across a flood plain. As long as the overflow remains on the flood plain, this volume is not added to the floodwater moving downstream. When flood plain storage is prevented by restricting the water flow to a channel, the volume and size of the flood may be increased downstream, causing higher water levels and more damage.

Flood plain areas are measured or “*delineated*” to indicate the chance of a flood occurring at a given location. This measuring or delineating is done regarding the probability of flooding, usually once in 50, 100, or 500 years. Flood plain delineation is required for home and business construction loans and the Federal Flood Insurance

program. The National Flood Insurance Program accepts the 100 year flood plain as the minimum



Stream Photographic

standard for protection. A 100-year flood is a flood, which has a probability of reaching a given elevation once in 100 years, or a 1% chance of occurring in any given year.

The Saline River drainage system within Saline Township is the most prominent water course to have a designated 100 year flood plain. The Saline River's unique character is quite extensive, extending within the northeastern portions of the Township. Other small waterways and tributaries exist within the Township and even though floodplains have not been delineated, contribute to flood control and provide natural habitats.

#### **6.04 Groundwater Recharge Areas**

Water which is stored in and slowly filtered through geologic formations is referred to as ground water. An aquifer is a geological formation that contains sufficient ground water to supply wells, lakes, springs, streams and/or wetlands. Precipitation reaches an aquifer by downward percolation from the surface. A land surface which readily permits water to move downward into an aquifer is referred to as a ground water recharge area. Groundwater recharge areas are highly generalized and it must be emphasized that the boundaries are not precise.

Underground aquifers serve three major functions:

- A. They are natural reservoirs of groundwater for human consumption and for irrigation.
- B. They are natural filters for groundwater, but they can be easily polluted by unsound land use practices in the recharge area.
- C. They interconnect with surface water systems and help stabilize surface water levels. They help reduce high water levels during wet periods and add water to surface water bodies during dry periods.

Several groundwater recharge areas were delineated within Saline Township, some of which are classified as highly sensitive to pollution. The most extensive areas that are highly sensitive to pollution are in the east central and south western portions of the Township.

Groundwater recharge areas that are moderately sensitive to pollution are located adjacent to the most sensitive areas in the central and southwestern portions of the Township. The largest areas are adjacent to Macon and Willow Roads in Sections 22, 23, and 26. Other areas are within Sections 19, 30 and 32. On-site evaluation and analysis should be undertaken to determine the extent and susceptibility of the areas designated on Map \_\_\_\_.

#### **6.05 Wetlands**

Wetlands are transitional zones between dry land and aquatic systems. The water table is usually near or covering the surface. They are characterized by very low topographic change, poor drainage, specific types of vegetation, and standing water. Marshes, swamps, and bogs are well known terms,

which have historically referred to wetlands. Since wetlands are among the most environmentally sensitive lands, it is important to have reliable information that defines and classifies these sensitive areas. Wetlands perform the following basic functions:

- A. Wetland habitats are essential to the breeding, feeding, and survival of many species of fish and wildlife. In their natural condition, wetlands are among the most productive of land areas when the total quantity of animal and plant matter produced is considered. They also provide valuable predator escape cover, and a wide range of vegetative communities.
- B. They influence the quantity of water stored in a watershed and act to retain water during floods, and to reduce fluctuations in the water table level. Wetlands retain water during wet periods and release it slowly during dry periods. During dry periods, wetlands help keep the water table relatively stable. Wetlands also recharge the ground water supply by allowing surface water to percolate into the aquifers.
- C. Wetlands protect water quality by trapping and storing nutrients from upland runoff, and by serving as settling basins for silt from upland erosion. This function can only be performed if the nutrients and silt are not excessive in amounts. Excess runoff and nutrients due to development and agricultural activities can overload wetlands and result in the eventual destruction of their filtering function. The principal threats to the long term health and stability of wetlands includes:
  - 1. Dredging and filling of wetlands for development, agricultural, or mining purposes.
  - 2. High volumes and rates of surface water runoff, usually caused by upstream development.
  - 3. Surface runoff from fertilizers and other pollutants.
  - 4. Siltation caused by upstream erosion.

Wetland Photographic

Wetlands were mapped using U.S. Geological Survey Quadrangles and Washtenaw County data, and then compared with aerial photographs. The most important wetlands within the

Township are those that are contiguous to lakes, rivers, and streams, and that are important for stormwater storage. These wetlands, designated as “*first priority*” are shown on Map \_\_\_\_\_. These wetlands cover various areas of Saline Township, however are most extensive along the Saline River system and in the south western portion of the Township.

## **6.06 Topography**

The term topography is used to refer to slope. The natural stability of a slope is dependent on the interaction of vegetation, climate, soil, and underlying geology. In general, the greater the slope, the greater the sensitivity to disturbance. Natural slopes that have not been disturbed by human activity are generally stable, at least in the short run. Improper development practices on sensitive slopes can incur great economic and environmental consequences. Soil type, particle size, permeability, vegetative cover, organic matter, and moisture content will vary the rate of erosion on a particular slope. Slope of land is an integral part of the natural drainage system. Slope adds visual contrast to the landscape.

Within Saline Township, topography ranges from relatively flat areas to gently rolling areas. As can be seen from Map \_\_\_\_\_, basically the southeastern portion of the Township is generally flat and predominated by agricultural activities. Slopes ranging from 6 to 12 percent are located primarily in an area running diagonally through the Township between the northeastern corner to the southwestern corner of the Township. Within this area, the northeastern portion of the Township contains numerous residential developments. The northwestern portion of the Township is gently rolling with some slopes up to 12 percent. Slopes greater than 18 percent are also generally located within the diagonal portion of the Township as described above.

## **6.07 Drainage**

The major drainage system within Saline Township is the Saline River system. This system with its tributaries drains most of the Township. The eastern 1/3 of Saline Township is dramatically characterized by the Saline River and adjacent wetlands which flows southerly and out of the Township.

## **6.08 Soils**

One aspect of soil analysis regarding natural resources is to identify soils that must not be disturbed from an environmental standpoint. Soils of this nature are usually organic by nature, classified as muck, and contain high water tables. These soils are often found in wetlands and floodplains. Due to the sensitive nature of these soils and the environmental function they perform, they should not be subject to development or alteration. These soils do not predominate the Township. They are generally located adjacent to small tributaries and isolated pockets within Township and are shown on Map \_\_\_\_\_. Wetlands and flood plains most often characterize these soils.

Soils that have slight limitations for on site septic facilities, generally for residential development, are scattered within an area generally to the northwest of US-12 and south east of Macon Road. This analysis, based upon soil characteristics, taken generally at a four foot soil depth, is to be used only as guidelines regarding possible development. It is recognized that the unsuitability of a soil could relate to a slope factor as opposed to an organic or high water table condition.

## **6.09 NATURAL RESOURCE CONCLUSIONS**

- A.** Significant natural features, including woodlands, wetlands, topographic features, and waterways, exist within Saline Township and contribute to the Township's unique character and wildlife habitat. These features should be protected.
- B.** There are large, mature forested areas within Saline Township that should remain undeveloped. These areas enhance the rural nature of the Township, contribute to a unique environmental character, and provide significant areas for wildlife habitats and timber production.
- C.** Limited areas of organic soils are found within the Township. These soils should remain untouched and in their natural state to allow positive interaction with the water table.
- D.** Wetlands are scattered throughout the Township. Even though most are small, they should be protected due to their influence on water quality and the habitats they create for wildlife. Special attention should be given to the Saline River drainage system regarding the continual presence of wetlands adjacent to and in close proximity to its drainage course.
- E.** Ground water recharge areas should be maintained in their natural state. They are natural reservoirs for groundwater. Anything that could potentially pollute these areas should be avoided.
- F.** Drainage ways are common in the Township. They often link various types of natural resources such as wetlands, wooded areas, and organic soils. This encourages an overall, continuous open space system throughout the Township.

To accomplish the preservation of natural features within Saline Township, the following goals, objectives, and policies are set forth.

## **6.10 GOAL, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES**

**GOAL** - The preservation and management of natural features and creation of new natural features.

**To accomplish this goal the following objectives are set forth:**

### **A. SURFACE WATER PROTECTION**

**Protection of the quality of surface water.**

#### **1. POLICIES**

##### **a. Flood Plain**

Development shall be prohibited within the 100-year flood plain of existing water courses or wetlands.

**b. Surface Water and Wetlands**

- 1) Surface water, stream corridors, and wetlands shall be preserved in their natural condition.
- 2) Disruption of the hydrology, alignment, topography or vegetation shall be prohibited
- 3) Discourage mitigation of wetlands.

## **Saline Township - Wetlands**





**c. Storm Water Run-off**

- 1) Storm water run-off shall be managed to retain the quantity and quality of water in surface water features.

**d. Private Waste Water Treatment Facilities**

- 1) Privately constructed community sanitary sewage treatment systems shall be prohibited except in Planned Unit Developments.

**e. Land Use**

- 1) Land use patterns shall be established that limit potential adverse impact on water features, including:
  - a) topographical disturbance, including grading and/or filling;
  - b) bio-chemical pollution;
  - c) thermal pollution;
  - d) stream channel alteration; and
  - e) loss of vegetative buffers.

**f. Erosion**

- 1) Erosion shall be controlled during construction and after construction by:
  - a) limiting stripping of vegetation and soil removal;
  - b) minimizing the duration of exposure of disturbed areas;
  - c) requiring the use of temporary vegetation, mulching, or other techniques to protect exposed areas;
  - d) requiring establishment of permanent vegetation or other techniques to prevent erosion; and
  - e) installation of temporary erosion control barriers.

**B. GROUND WATER PROTECTION**

Ensure the quality of ground water through protection of the hydrological qualities of ground water recharge areas.

## **1. POLICIES**

### **a. Ground Water Recharge Areas**

- 1) A description of ground water recharge areas and rough delineation of their borders shall be required as part of the site plan review process.
- 2) Control site coverage by impervious materials over ground water recharge areas.
- 3) Storm water retention facilities shall be required to maintain water supply to ground water recharge areas in quantity and quality to match existing conditions.
- 4) Surface vegetation shall be protected where needed to purify or retain storm water run-off.

### **b. Land Use**

- 1) Land uses that limit the potential for ground water contamination or harmful impact on the operation of the underground water system shall be encouraged. Certain land uses may be permitted on ground water recharge areas, taking into consideration:
  - a) on-site septic systems;
  - b) percent of site coverage by impervious surfaces;
  - c) potential for water contamination from surface use of fertilizers and pesticides;
  - d) potential for water contamination from spills of hazardous substances; and
  - e) potential for contamination from road de-icing materials.

## **C. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

*Require the establishment and protection of an interconnected system of natural environmental areas, including wetlands, woodlands, and open fields (in either prairie or agricultural use), which provide a diverse, viable habitat for wildlife and rare native plants.*

## **1. POLICIES**

### **a. Land Use**

- 1) Land uses shall be established that minimize the potential for adverse impact from development in designated environmental conservation areas.

- 2) Low density residential land uses may be permitted within environmental conservation zones
- 3) Cluster development that protects designated natural features within environmental conservation zones shall be encouraged.
- 4) Establishment of easements and deed restrictions to permanently protect designated natural features shall be encouraged.

**b. Wildlife Habitat**

- 1) Environmental features, including wetlands, woodlands, hedgerows, prairies, and meadows, that support a viable wildlife habitat within designated environmental conservation areas shall be protected.
- 2) Natural links between protected areas within environmental conservation areas shall be retained to facilitate movement of wildlife between areas.
- 3) Identification of fragile natural features within environmental conservation zones shall be required as part of the site plan review process for any development within designated conservation zones, including:
  - a) wetlands;
  - b) woodlands;
  - c) hedgerows;
  - d) prairies or meadows; and
  - e) other fragile features, such as breeding grounds.

**c. Recreational Uses**

- 1) Development of public and private open space and recreational uses shall be coordinated with environmental conservation areas where the requirements for the recreational use are compatible with the requirements for environmental conservation.
- 2) Development of pedestrian and bicycle trails shall be coordinated with environmental conservation areas.
- 3) Encourage the establishment of a Township wide parks and recreation plan.

## **D. WOODLANDS PROTECTION**

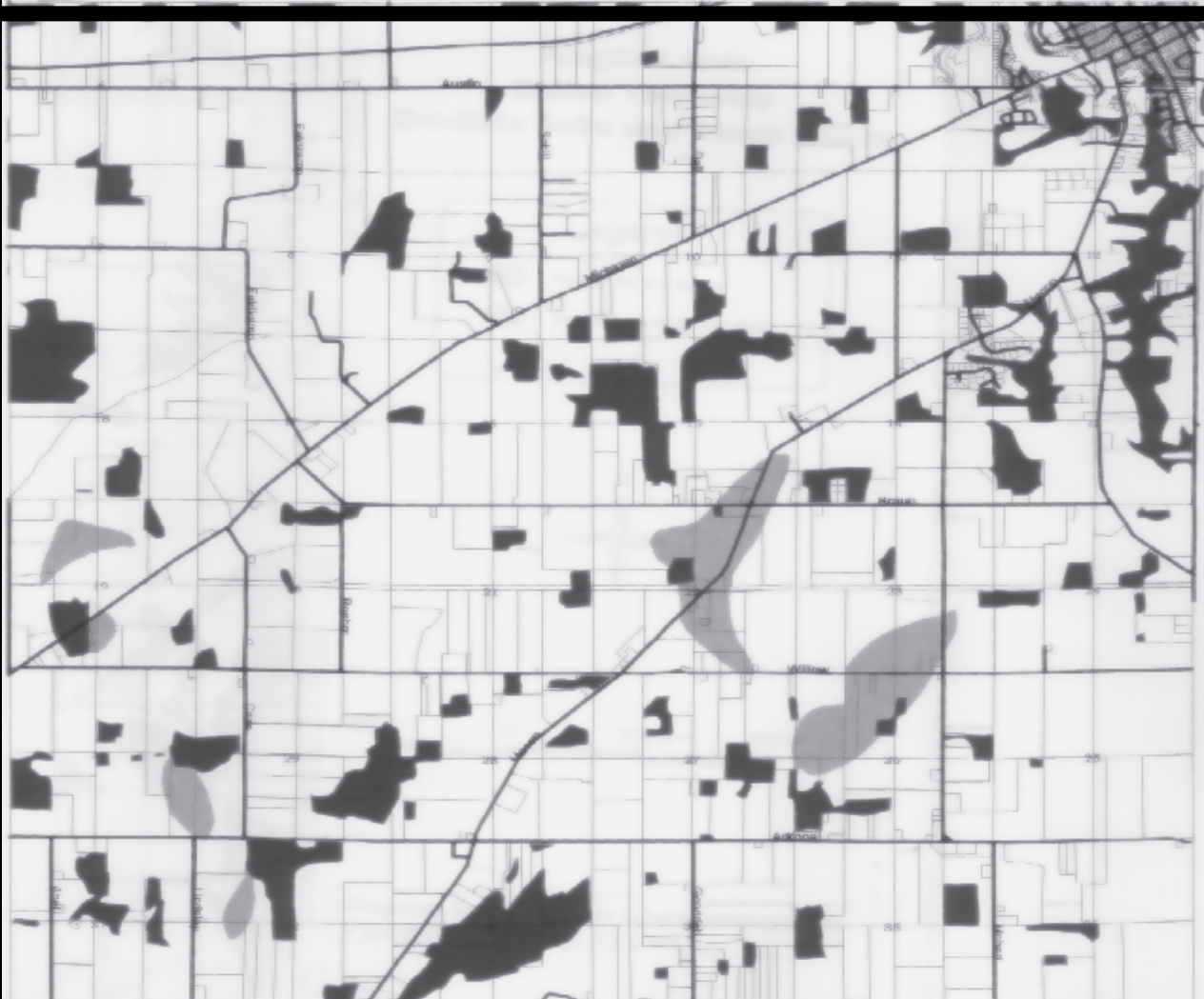
**The protection of woodlands, upland brush, and landmark trees.**

### **1. POLICIES**

#### **a. Land Use**

- 1)** The impact of development on woodlands shall be minimized by means of the following methods.
  - a)** Low density residential development may be permitted in designated woodlands.
  - b)** Clustering of developments may be allowed to minimize the impact of development on woodlands.

## **Saline Township - Woodlands**



- c) Permanent protection and expansion of woodlands and areas of upland brush through the establishment of deed restrictions and easements shall be encouraged.

**b. Wildlife Habitat**

- 1) The diversity and quality of wildlife habitats and their associated flora and fauna shall be protected, including:
  - a) Landmark trees - trees over a specified diameter of specified species located outside of woodlands;
  - b) Woodlands - concentrations of trees with a minimum concentration of “*stump coverage*,” and
  - c) Upland brush - areas of miscellaneous trees and shrubs located at the edge of woodlands and in environmentally sensitive areas.

**E. OPEN SPACE FOR CONSERVATION AND/OR RECREATIONAL USE**

**Protection of strategic open space for nature conservation and/or recreational use.**

**1. POLICIES**

**a. Public Open Space**

Strategic properties should be identified and dedicated for open space or recreational use. Properties may include:

- 1) Parks in urban, suburban, and rural residential areas;
- 2) Environmentally sensitive sites that are potentially endangered; and
- 3) Sites to buffer land uses.

**b. Private Open Space**

- 1) The provision of private open space in new developments shall be encouraged and/or required, with such open space to be a significant feature, especially in planned unit developments.

- c. **Recreation Space** - See Recreational Land Use Section of General Development Plan.

## **F. STREETScape CREATION AND PROTECTION**

**Attractive natural streetscapes along all Township roads and streets.**

### **1. POLICIES**

#### **a. Existing Vegetation**

- 1)** Existing landmark trees and hedgerows located adjacent to Township roads shall be protected. See Circulation Section of this General Development Plan.
- 2)** Landscaping shall be required along Township roads for all new development where applicable.
- 3)** Streetscapes along special corridors (i.e., roadways with a recognized scenic or historic character) shall be protected and/or enhanced. See Transportation Section of this General Development Plan.
- 4)** The location of overhead and underground utilities shall be coordinated to minimize their impact on existing vegetation and wetlands. See Utilities section of this General Development Plan.

## **G. URBAN BUFFER**

**A buffer with significant areas of nature conservation and low intensity land uses to separate the Saline City and urban area from Saline Township.**

### **1. POLICIES**

#### **a. US-12 Corridor**

- 1)** Except for lands adjacent to the City of Saline, as identified and confined within the Urban Service Area, low density, open space, and agricultural uses shall be retained along US-12 between the designated urban areas depicted for the City of Saline and the western border of the Township.
- 2)** Areas for development shall be clustered to maintain existing natural features and scenic vistas.
- 3)** Lands designated for development shall incorporate landscaped corridors adjacent to US-12.

**b. Township Agricultural Lands**

- 1) Agriculture will remain the predominant land use in areas so designated as defined in the Agricultural Land Use section of this General Development Plan.

## H. PROTECTION OF STEEP SLOPES

Protection of slopes of 12 percent or greater from adverse impact from development.

## 1. POLICIES

### a. Slope Protection

- 1) Slopes of 12 percent or greater shall be protected from erosion to:

## Saline Township - Steep Slopes



- a) maintain slope stability;
  - b) control amount and velocity of run-off; and
  - c) maintain existing positive aesthetic qualities.
- 2) Development shall be limited to low densities in areas of steep slopes and other sloping areas where soil conditions create serious erosion potential.
- 3) The natural contours, vegetation, and drainage patterns shall be maintained or enhanced when development occurs in areas of steep slopes.
- 4) Development on slopes of 18 percent or greater shall be discouraged.

## **I. PROTECTION OF OPEN SPACE AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS**

### **Protection of strategic open space and designated agricultural lands from development.**

#### **1. POLICIES**

##### **a. Land Trust**

- 1) Public, non-profit land trust with the power to buy property and establish deed restrictions shall be encouraged.

##### **b. Parks Commissions**

- 1) Donation of land to Saline Township or to public or private land trusts for open space, recreational, or agricultural use shall be encouraged.

##### **c. Deed Restrictions and Easements**

- 1) Donation or sale of deed restrictions, view easements, and development easements to a public or private entity empowered to hold them (e.g., P.A. 116 Local Open Space and Development Rights Easements) shall be encouraged.

##### **d. Planned Unit Developments and Cluster Development**

- 1) The use of planned unit developments and cluster developments to establish permanent easements for open space use on common lands shall be encouraged or required.



**e. Enabling Legislation**

- 1) The Township should work with the State legislature or appropriate agencies to establish enabling legislation for tools to restrict development potential within designated agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands.

**J. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

1. Require the following information for site plan review for all proposed development:
  - a. 100-year flood plain;
  - b. Lakes, ponds, stream courses, and wetlands;
  - c. On-site watershed for on-site water features;
  - d. Slopes over 12% and slopes over 18%;
  - e. Organic soils;
  - f. Vegetation in buffer zone fifty (50) feet adjacent to on-site and off-site surface water features, wetlands, and woodlands;
  - g. Woodlands;
  - h. Free-standing landmark trees;
  - i. Areas of upland brush;
  - j. Hedgerows;
  - k. Ground water recharge areas; and
  - l. Storm water management.
2. Adopt ordinances to protect surface water features, wetlands, and woodlands. Place special emphasis on those features that provide viable wildlife habitat. Ordinances should include provisions for:
  - a. Wetlands protection, including discouraging of mitigation;
  - b. Features that are part of designated nature conservation areas;
  - c. 50-foot buffer at edge of water feature or wetland;
  - d. Protection of vegetation within the buffer zone;

- e. Clustering provision to compensate for the loss of developable land for wetlands less than 5 acres in size;
  - f. Connections between protected natural features on the same property and those on adjacent properties; and
  - g. Zoning standards to control density in woodland areas.
3. Work to identify strategic sites for recreation and environmental conservation. Delineate the sites on an **Official Public Facilities Map**.
  4. Work with existing, or create, non-profit land trusts to encourage donations and/or purchases or lands for open space, recreational, or agricultural use.
  5. Adopt standards for setbacks and landscaping along Township roads in appropriate ordinances.
  6. Establish review standards for site design in areas of 12 percent or greater slopes.
  7. Establish landscaping ordinance requirements in order to maintain the stability of slopes over 12 percent and to prevent erosion.
  8. Encourage and review applications for P.A. 116 Local Open Space and Development Rights Easements.
  9. Work with the State legislature or appropriate bodies to establish enabling legislation for tools to remove development potential from agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands.

## **PART VII**

### **AGRICULTURAL LAND USE**

#### **7.01 Introduction**

Preservation of good agricultural land has become a major land use issue in the United States. Various departments of the national, state, and local governments, research groups and professional organizations have studied this issue. Agricultural land is relatively fixed in supply and once used for development purposes, cannot be reclaimed for agricultural use.

Every community, county, and state is somewhat different in regards to the factors affecting agriculture. In many instances, the factors can be positive and the changes taking place can merely be a response of changing market demands, shifts in population distribution, and various economic conditions. On the other hand, certain factors can have such a drastic effect that agriculture can all but disappear resulting in idle lands or rural lot splits used for non-agricultural purposes.

In many ways these situations can be documented within Saline Township with specific economic, physical, cultural, and market data. Other cause and effect relationships may not be as easy to document due to specific characteristics of the farming population or forces directly influencing the farmer's decision-making process.

This section of the General Development Plan will attempt to analyze the factors, which affect agriculture within Saline Township.

#### **A. Historical Prospective**

It is evident that by and large agriculture in Washtenaw County has been subjected to numerous physical and economic changes since settlement began in the County. Over the past several decades, Washtenaw County has experienced considerable loss in both farm acreage and the total number of farms. This has generally not been the case in Saline Township. According to Year 2000 statistical figures, Saline Township has more land in active agriculture than any other Township in Washtenaw County – approximately 17,104 acres or 77 percent of the Township's land acreage. This percentage has only reduced 2 percent since 1990 when 79 percent of the Township's acreage was in active agriculture.

#### **B. Agricultural Stability**

Early settlers coming into Saline Township brought with them a specific expertise in farming, including type of crops, livestock and farming practices. Grain crops and livestock, most common with early residents, still are the predominant agricultural commodities within this area. Respectable acreage yields continue to be obtained from productive farmland within the Township and are competitive with other areas of the county and State.

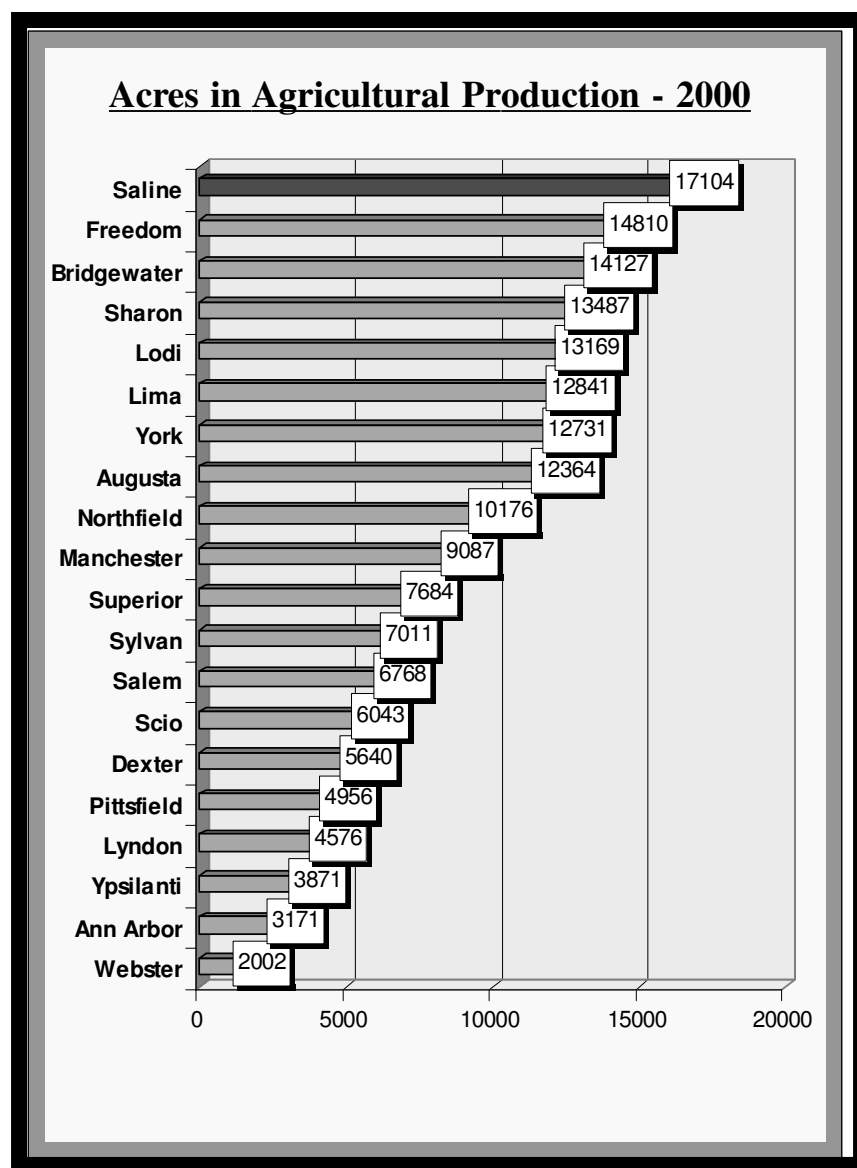
The majority of the Township has Class II soils that indicate a high productivity level for many types of crops. Large parcels remain throughout the Township that signify stability and

continue to be used for agricultural production. Also adding to the stable agricultural environment are zoning regulations unique to only two townships within the State of Michigan. In the late 1980's Saline Township adopted the Sliding Scale Zoning concept for all lands zoned A-1 – Agriculture. This concept required a maximum parcel size, when splits took place and a limited number of parcel divisions that are based upon the size of the parent parcel. This concept has resulted in a reduction of parcels being split from larger parcels for non-agricultural use.

### C. Non-Agricultural Land Use Infringement

Even though the Township has remained predominately rural and agriculturally orientated, some non-agricultural impact can be seen from single family residential housing on large lots in the northeastern portion of the Township. Residential dwellings have taken place in the vicinity of Macon and Mooreville Roads where soils allow individual septic fields. Even though some single family residential has taken place within this general area, which is designated for long term residential use, agricultural activities are still prevalent and have a substantial presence.

As discussed in other parts of this General Development Plan, successful agricultural enterprises need stability in order to continue, make economic and physical investments, and adequately plan for the future. One of the first indicators of a non-agricultural infringement is a reduction of lot size. Lot splits tend to reduce the stability of an agricultural area, especially when the split results in a single-family dwelling being

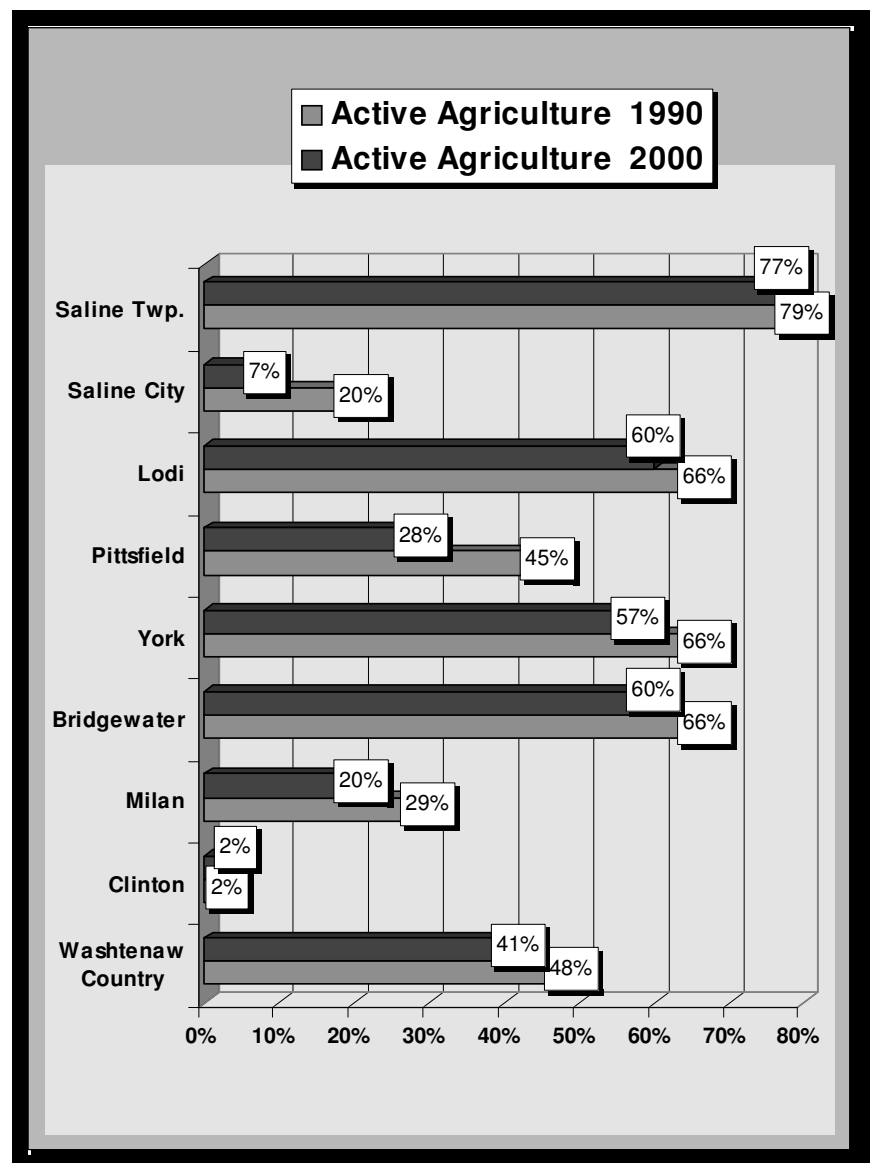


constructed which has no correlation with the farm operation. Also large agricultural properties that are split into smaller segments affect taxation practices due to the lots acquiring developmental rather than agricultural potential. As well, the lot splits often result in the lots being too small to be utilized for viable agricultural operations. As discussed in other parts of this General Development Plan, non-agricultural land uses, including urban and rural single family residential, are planned within the northeastern portion of the Township. Therefore non-agricultural land use infringement will be limited from spreading into other areas of the Township.

#### D. Psychological Factors

In order to ensure the viability of agricultural areas, the factors that support agricultural uses should be maintained. When dealing with agricultural impacts, one must consider those things that go beyond physical and economic factors. Psychological impacts can be just as significant as other types of criteria. Township farmers may see change taking place in regards to new single-family development or other non-agricultural land use taking place. They may see possible conflicts with their own farming operations and the residential use. A change of land use such as a new road or public sewer may alter a farmer's thinking concerning the future of the land. Tax assessment policies and procedures generally result in an increase in property valuation around the borders of the new dwelling.

These influences negatively impact farm operations both physically and economically. Farmers may come to believe that, "*it is just a matter of time*" until the land will go into another use



as a result of these non-agricultural infringements. Such beliefs have resulted in farmers selling additional parcels of land. By designating specific areas for non-agricultural use, the integrity of agricultural areas is maintained.

#### **E. Obstacles To Agricultural Preservation**

The desire to preserve the remaining agricultural lands within the Township must be evaluated in light of certain obstacles that could have a bearing on the continuation of agriculture within the Township, some of which are beyond the Township's control. They include:

1. Urban services and/or infrastructures being extended into existing agricultural areas.
2. Attitudes and characteristics of farmers; desire to remain in agriculture or sell off parcels of land.
2. The appeal of residential development in rural areas with notable natural resources that have good regional access.
3. Close proximity and quick access to urban land uses and new jobs created in the Saline, Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Milan areas.

### **7.02 Saline Township**

#### **A. From Agriculture to an Suburban Culture**

The existing General Development Plan, adopted in April 2000 designated a region generally defined as an area extending south from the City of Saline to Braun and Mooreville Roads. This area comprised a landscape of gently rolling vistas and did not possess the physical composition of soils for highly productive agricultural use. Due to these factors, this area has continued to remain rural but has scattered development with a residential character. It is anticipated that a continuation of rural residential will take place within this specifically defined area. As non-agricultural development takes place within this designated area, appropriate buffers will be required to limit the impact to adjacent agricultural lands.

#### **B. Agricultural Conclusions**

Historically and currently, the Township continues to consist of large, stable and cohesive agricultural areas on highly productive soils that have continued to remain solid agricultural. It is anticipated that a continuation of these agricultural activities will continue to take place within those areas of the Township. This is based upon the following findings:

1. High quality soils for agricultural production are found throughout major portions of the Township.
2. These lands continue to support a large number of existing agricultural activities.

3. The agricultural area has remained reasonably stable for agricultural activities with parcel splits being limited or rarely taking place.
4. Parcel sizes continue to remain large in the overall Township which tend to indicate the continuation of long term agricultural operations.
5. Few non-agricultural land use infringements have taken place within these areas.
6. Some non-agricultural land use infringements have taken place within the northeastern portion of the Township and along US-12. Non-agricultural uses along US-12 are generally historic and are not intended or planned to expand. The previous General Development Plan has designated the northeastern area as residential and has been successful in containing residential uses within this area.
7. The level of assessed valuation for parcels throughout the Township should not impact long term agricultural production.
8. A continuation of agricultural crop production should remain viable in the Township. Over time and due to market demands, a change of the type of agriculture from cropland and/or livestock to more intensive agricultural activities may be seen. Intensive agriculture, such as truck gardening and nursery operations, can be achieved on smaller parcels, and could withstand, to a greater extent, varying economic conditions.

Through goals and policies contained within this General Development Plan, preservation of designated productive agricultural lands within the Township, for long term use, can be achieved. Since agriculture places few demands on Township services it is of economic benefit to the Township and should be encouraged. Future development will continue to be directed to areas of the Township designated for non-agricultural use and away from areas of the Township designated for agricultural and rural use.

### **7.03 GOAL, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES**

#### **GOAL - The preservation of agricultural and open space land use**

**To accomplish this goal the following analysis and objectives are set forth:**

##### **A. Agricultural Land Use**

It is the goal of this General Development Plan to maintain existing agricultural activities in designated areas of the Township and to retain the agricultural use of prime agricultural soils in recognition of the importance of the sustenance and economic benefits provided by the agricultural industry to the residents of Saline Township.

By definition of agriculture, there are various types of agricultural uses being pursued within the Township, that can be further characterized as Lands Designated for Agricultural Preservation.

## **1. Lands Designated for Agricultural Preservation**

Within Saline Township are lands that continue to be suitable for long-term agricultural uses. The principal use characterized within these areas is primary crop and/or livestock production. These lands should not be considered land banks for future rural or urban development or as low density residential areas.

The lands Designated for Agricultural Preservation correspond to the A-1 (General Agriculture) zoning district. Even though this general area is primarily comprised of active agricultural lands, there are also natural resources consisting of woodlands, wetlands, stream corridors, and scattered residential dwellings within this area. The overall rural, agricultural character and intent of this area remains agricultural and is supported by the following reasons:

- This area is primarily comprised of prime agricultural soils according to the USDA-NRCS Washtenaw County Soil Survey.
- There are several 80+ acre parcels in this area.
- The area is comprised mostly of active agriculture according to the 2000 Southeast Michigan Council of Governments land use inventory.
- The area is comprised mostly of agricultural lands according to the Agricultural Lands Map, Figure 4-1 of the Washtenaw County adopted *A Comprehensive Plan for Washtenaw County*.
- Several P.A. 116 contracts exist in the area.

For these reasons, this area of Saline Township is designated as Lands Designated for Agricultural Preservation and serves as an Overlay to Map \_\_\_\_ – *Saline Township Land Use Strategy*.

In further recognition of these objectives, the “*agriculture preservation*” area was selected in a manner:

- a. To be non-exclusionary for potential interest by landowners in a PDR or other agricultural preservation option;
- b. Where the township demographics indicate the lands contained inside the agricultural preservation overlay district provide the most potential for on-going or new agriculture activities;
- c. To recognize that lands contained within the agricultural preservation overlay district are highly sought-after tracts for development; and
- d. To underscore continuity with adjoining communities which have also designated “agriculture preservation” goals.



To further protect Lands Designated for Agricultural Preservation, a specific Urban Service District has been identified within the General Development Plan. This area is designed to provide an urban infrastructure to accommodate urban residential, commercial, and office type land uses while not creating hazards for the Township's environment nor creating adverse impacts on existing or proposed residential or agricultural uses nearby. By providing a place for urban land uses, surrounding rural and agricultural land uses will be protected and shielded from impacts.

Related to the General Development Plan and Map \_\_\_\_\_ - Land Use Strategy Agricultural map, designating lands for Agricultural Preservation, is the Township's A-1 Essential Agriculture Zoning District. The purpose of this district is to preserve, for agricultural activity to the greatest extent possible, those areas in the Township which have been designated as Agricultural Preservation in the Township's General Development Plan.

This A-1 district is intended to insure that land areas within Saline Township which are well suited for production of food and fiber are retained for such production, unimpeded by the establishment of incompatible uses which would hinder agricultural practices and irretrievably deplete agricultural lands.

The Essential Agricultural District has the following specific purposes and objectives.

- a.** Protect prime farmland from speculative increases in land values.
- b.** Prevent fragmentation of farmlands by division into small parcels.
- c.** Prevent loss of prime farmland.
- d.** Prevent conflicts between agricultural activities and residences.
- e.** Prevent encroachment of urban and suburban services into agricultural areas.
- f.** Minimize cost of providing services to rural areas.
- g.** Encourage long-term investment in improvements needed to maintain and expand agricultural production by creating a stable environment for such production.
- h.** Reduce the amount of land consumed in rural areas for non-agricultural use.
- i.** Prevent intrusion of uses into farm areas, which are incompatible with general farming activities.
- j.** Permit services, which are necessary to support farming activities.

The Essential Agricultural District is intended to be used in those parts of Saline Township which are designated for permanent agricultural use in the Townships adopted General Development Plan. Residential developments in the form of plats

or site condominiums are considered in conflict with the intent and purpose of this district and shall not be approved within this district. All required zoning changes shall be made prior to submittal of any plat or site condominium.

Lands Designated for Agricultural Preservation are best suited for intensive agricultural activities.

**B. Residential Land Uses in Agricultural Lands**

1. Efforts shall be made to direct non-agricultural use away from areas of the Township characterized as Lands Designated for Agricultural Preservation.
2. Residential land uses, however, may be permitted on agricultural lands with the stipulation that, in order to preserve agricultural activities, residential lots are:
  - a. In accordance with the procedures contained within the A-1 Agricultural district regarding sliding scale densities.
  - b. Taken from land unsuited for farming where available.
  - c. Allowed through rezoning to PUD as specified within the Zoning Ordinance
  - d. Clustered to allow continued agricultural use of the remainder of the acreage. Clustered housing shall:
    - 1) Establish a lot size in accordance with Washtenaw County Environmental Health Department standards while maintaining a minimum density of one acre per dwelling unit for lands designated for agricultural preservation and secondary agricultural areas.
    - 2) Require that the housing sites be positioned to allow continued agricultural use of the remainder of the acreage.
    - 3) Require that a buffer of existing or new natural features be created between housing sites and agricultural acreage so that residential use will not interfere with agricultural activities. Under certain circumstances fencing may also be required.
    - 4) Require that a buffer of existing or new natural features be created between housing sites and highways to preserve and enhance the visual character of rural areas.
    - 5) Permit only agricultural or open space use of the acreage outside of the residential cluster through zoning, deed restrictions, purchase of development rights, and conservancy standards.

- 6) Provide density incentives for establishment of permanent deed restrictions on agricultural and open space acreage.
- 7) Provide procedures for Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) from designated agricultural areas to planned areas for residential development as depicted within the General Development Plan.

**C. Recreational Land Uses in Secondary Agricultural Zones**

Ecologically sound recreational land uses may be permitted when these uses provide a buffer between agricultural uses on Secondary Agricultural Lands and urban or suburban residential areas.

**D. Land Ownership**

1. Ownership of land by farmers or entities committed to long-term agricultural use of the land shall be encouraged.
2. Applications for P.A. 116 should be encouraged and approved.
3. The establishment of agricultural/open space deed restrictions or easements to create permanent agricultural or open space reserves shall be encouraged.
4. Support Township properties to be considered for Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs.

**E. Utilities**

1. Extension of public sewer or water service into Lands Designated for Agricultural Preservation shall be prohibited.
2. Privately constructed wastewater treatment facilities are only allowed as part of a PUD.

**F. Roads**

1. A system of slow-moving, low-traffic roads should be retained to permit movement of farm equipment between noncontiguous farm parcels.
2. Access to new development shall be from existing paved roads wherever feasible.

**7.04 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

1. Adopt zoning that designates farming and farming-related activities as the primary land use for areas of the Township specified as Lands Designated for Agricultural Preservation.
2. Encourage and approve applications for P.A. 116.

3. Adopt assessment policies that reflect the agricultural value of land in agricultural use by designating farmed parcels in the agricultural land classification.
4. Encourage and support Township properties for inclusion in Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs.
5. Consider the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) for selected portions of the Township.
6. Recognize and encourage the 5 county Food System Economic Partnership effort between Washtenaw, Monroe, Lenawee, Wayne and Jackson counties.

## **PART VIII**

### **RESIDENTIAL LAND USE**

#### **8.01 Introduction**

The attractiveness of Saline Township for single family development is quite apparent based on the number of single family dwellings found within the Township that has taken advantage of the presence of natural features (woodlands, topographic features, stream and river corridors, etc.). Concentrations of rural single family dwellings exist primarily along Jordan, Macon, and Mooreville Roads passing through the northeastern portion of the Township or in close proximity to these roads via collector streets from rural subdivisions. These concentrations of residential dwellings have taken place in areas where on site septic systems are possible due to the physical characteristics of soils. Also they are within areas comprising natural resources and rolling topographical features. Little infringement has taken place into agricultural areas.

It is anticipated that the current popularity of a rural lifestyle will continue to contribute to additional dwellings being constructed within the Township. The Township's physical amenities (woodlands, wetlands, rolling topography, agricultural character, etc.) will continue to attract additional residential development. Further the Township's access to regional transportation networks and accessibility to nearby urban centers makes the Township a highly attractive place to live.

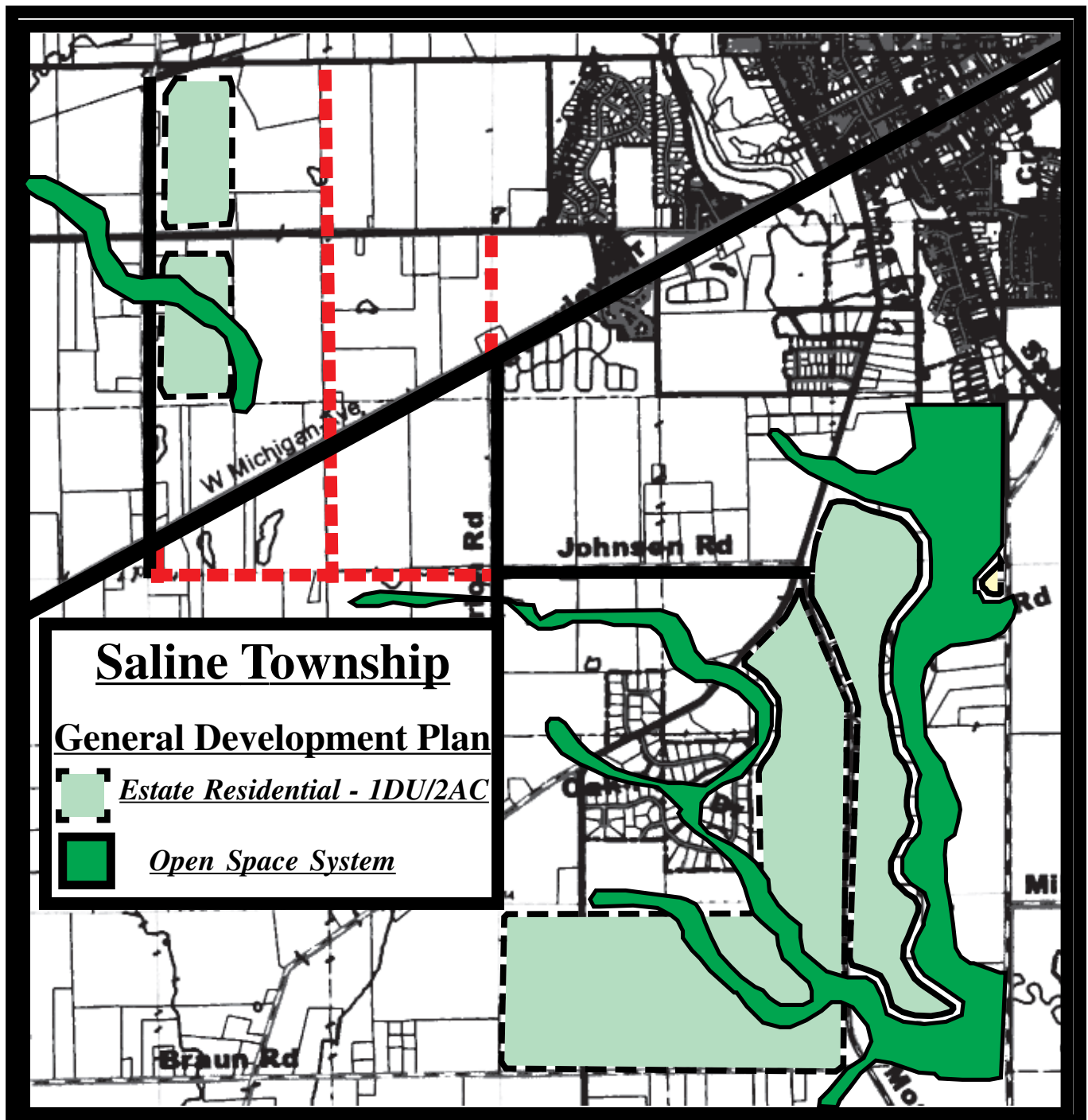
Residential objectives, policies, and strategies are directed toward concentrating rural residential into certain rural and urban areas of the Township. This policy would contribute to the preservation of remaining agricultural activities by reducing potential conflicts between agricultural and residential uses. The General Development Plan will strive to provide a variety of housing types, located within desirable residential settings, to ensure a maximum choice of dwelling units and a diverse population within the Township.

#### **8.02 Estate Residential Area - General Guidelines**

The designated rural residential area is a primarily large lot residential area with certain agricultural activities permitted. The area that is designated for rural residential use comprises approximately 556 acres. Portions of this area are currently developed as single family residential generally at a density from greater than two acres per dwelling unit. Assuming that this general area will continue to develop at similar densities, the Township can expect approximately 278 dwelling units within this area. This would account for a projected population of approximately 784 residents within this area when fully developed. The following general guidelines apply to this area.

1. Single family detached dwelling are expected to be the predominant use. Agricultural activities will also be permitted in this area, either as principal uses of undeveloped land or on residential parcels.

2. A minimum of two acres for a residential dwelling would be designated within these areas.
3. Land designated for this residential density comprises to a large extent natural features including woodlands, wetlands, and stream corridors. The intent of these residential areas is to incorporate dwellings into these resources while maintaining the integrity of the natural environment. Even though due to the required two acre lot size, individual site development is anticipated however platted or site condominium development could take place with clustering options encouraged.



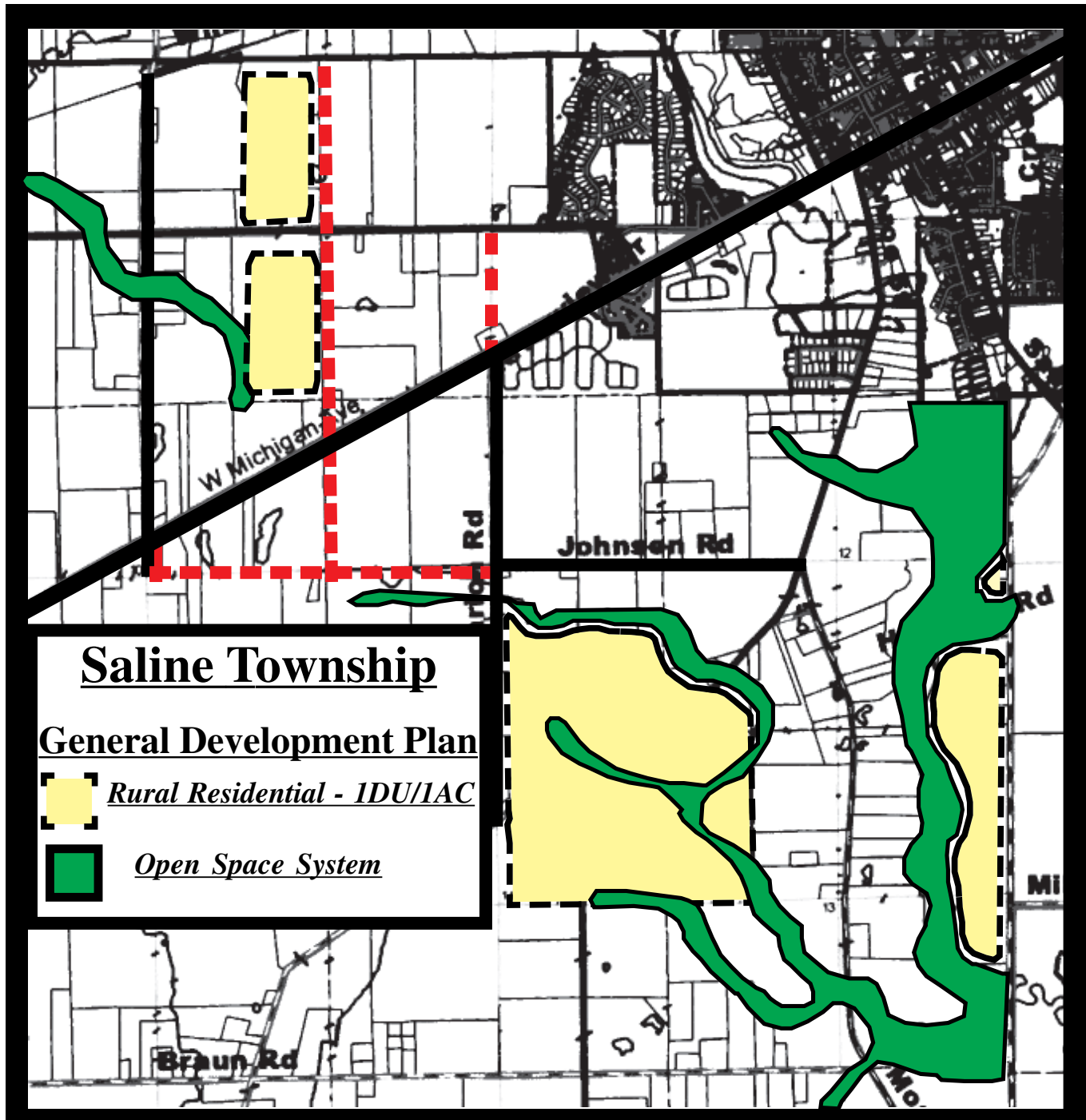
4. Clustering would be permitted in accordance with the following:
  - a. The overall residential development would be submitted as a site condominium.
  - b. Each residence would be a single-family detached dwelling unit.
  - b. The minimum lot area may be reduced to no less than 1/2 acre or the minimum necessary to obtain County Health Department approval of a water supply well and drain field. Even though the lot size may be reduced, the overall net density for the overall residential development would not be lower than one dwelling unit per two acres.
  - c. Each lot for each dwelling unit should have at least one lot line that abuts the commonly owned open space or agricultural land.
  - d. PUD zoning will be required.
5. Areas intended for this density of single family residential use are located primarily along Mooreville Road and north of Willow Road as depicted on the accompanying map.

### **8.03 Rural Residential Area - General Guidelines**

This category of rural residential use is designated within General Development Plan with a minimum lot area requirement of one acre, typically subdivided and platted or developed through site condominium procedures. This residential use comprises approximately 645 acres. As with the estate residential, portions of this area are currently developed with single family residential dwellings. Assuming that this designated area will continue to develop at the designated density, the Township can expect approximately 645 dwelling units within this area. This would account for a projected population of approximately 1,800 residents within this area when fully developed. The following general guidelines apply to this area:

1. Housing at this specified density is intended to include various types of single-family, including manufactured housing in platted subdivisions, planned unit developments, planned manufactured housing communities, site condominiums, or traditional neighborhood developments that have individual on site septic facilities.
2. A minimum of one acre would be required for a residential dwelling within this designated area. Clustering will be encouraged within this area to either preserve existing natural features and/or allow for the creation of open space. Clustering would be permitted in accordance with the following:
  - a. Each residence would be a single-family detached dwelling unit.
  - b. The minimum lot area may be reduced to no less than 1/2 acre or the minimum necessary to obtain County Health Department approval of a water supply well and drain field. Even though the lot size may be reduced, the overall net density for the overall residential development would not be lower than one dwelling unit per one acre.

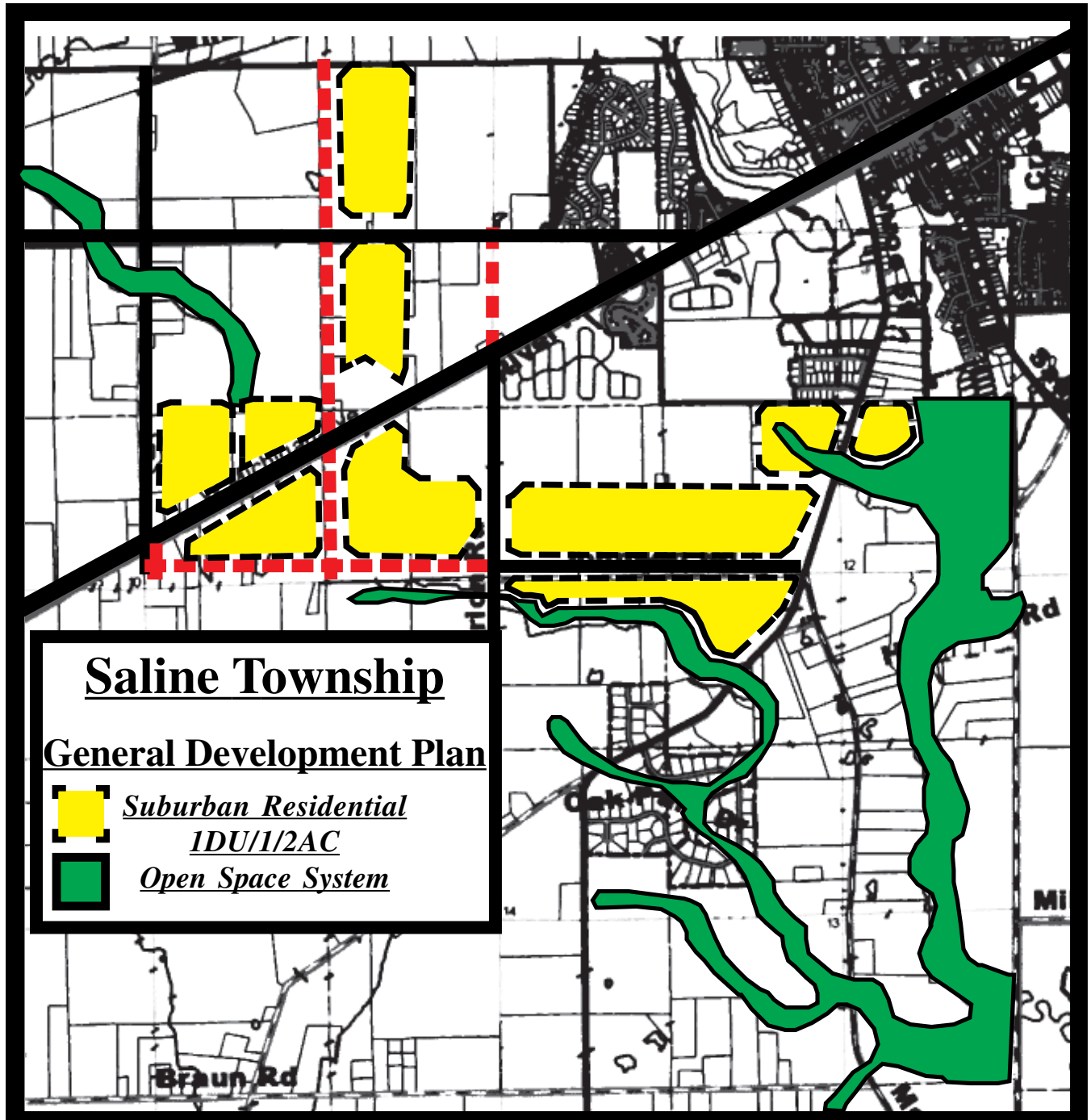
- c. Each lot for each dwelling unit should have at least one lot line that abuts the commonly owned open space or agricultural land.
  - d. PUD zoning will be required.
- 3. Areas intended for this density of single family residential use are located west of Maple Road, within the vicinity of Macon and Jordan Roads, and within north and south of Austin Road within Section 2 as depicted on the accompanying map.





#### 8.04 Suburban Residential Area - General Guidelines

This category of residential is characterized as suburban with a minimum lot area requirement of  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre. This residential density would generally include subdivided and platted or developed through site condominium procedures. This residential use comprises approximately 880 acres. Assuming that this designated area will continue to develop at the designated density, the Township can expect approximately 1,760 dwelling units within this area. This would account for a projected population of approximately 5,000 residents within this area when fully developed. The following general guidelines apply to this area:

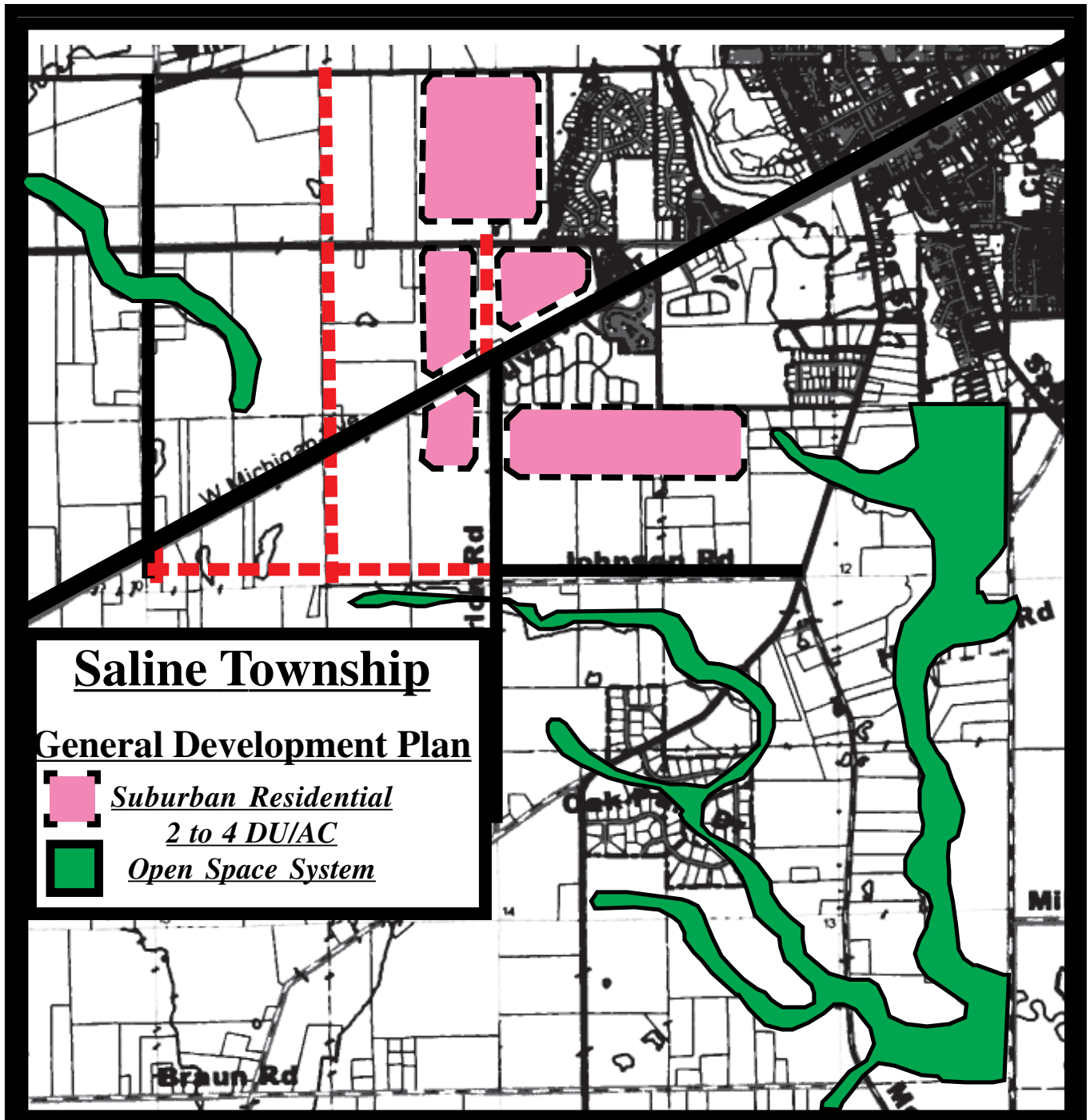


1. The suburban residential area is intended to be served by public sanitary sewer service. The Township intends to extend water and sanitary sewer services into these areas by development agreements with the City of Saline. Due to public sewer and water being provided, private wastewater treatment plants or common water supply wells will not be permitted in this area. Housing at this specified density could include various types of single-family, including manufactured housing in platted subdivisions, planned unit developments, planned manufactured housing communities (mobile home parks), site condominiums, or traditional neighborhood developments would have public sewer and water service, paved roads with curbs and gutters, and street lights).
2. A minimum of ½ acre would be required for a residential dwelling within this designated area. With public sewer and water being required, clustering would be encouraged generally to provide additional creation of open space within the development and according to the following:
  - a. Each residence could be a single-family detached or attached dwelling unit.
  - b. The minimum lot area would be based upon the minimum necessary to meet yard and setback requirements within the appropriate zoning district.
  - c. Each lot for each dwelling unit should have at least one lot line that abuts the commonly owned open space or agricultural land.
  - d. PUD zoning will be required.
3. Areas intended for this density of single family residential use are located north and south of the existing Johnson Road frontage as well as farther west along the north side of an anticipated continuation of Johnson Road to US-12, adjacent to US-12 where new collector roads are being proposed, and east of a proposed collector roadway north of US-12 as depicted on the accompanying map.
4. Because of the relatively small size of suburban residential lots, agricultural activities are incompatible with residences on the same lots. Therefore such activities, including the raising of animals other than common domestic pets, should not be permitted in the suburban residential area. However, raising of crops and continuation of existing agricultural operations should be permitted as interim uses pending development of those properties for residential use.

## **8.05 Urban Residential Area - General Guidelines**

This category of residential constitutes an urban setting adjacent to the City of Saline. Developments would contain a minimum lot area of between 2 to 4 dwelling units per acre. This residential density would include subdivided and platted or developed through site condominium procedures. This residential use comprises approximately 420 acres. Assuming that this designated area will continue to develop at the designated density, the Township can expect approximately 1,680 dwelling units within this area. This would account for a projected population of approximately 4,750 residents within this area when fully developed. The following general guidelines apply to this area:

1. Public sewer and water service, paved roads with curbs and gutters, and street lights would be required. It is designated primarily as a continuation of similar density development within the western portions of the City of Saline.
2. Areas intended for this density of residential use are located west of the City of Saline adjacent to US-12 where new collector roads are being proposed, as depicted on the accompanying map.
3. Residential types would be according to the appropriate zoning district as depicted within the Zoning Ordinance however the high density urban residential area is intended for single-family



attached dwelling units, townhouse dwelling units, dwelling units in apartment type buildings, and dwelling units in mobile home parks.

## **8.06 GOAL, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES**

**GOAL - A variety of housing types, located within desirable residential settings, to ensure a maximum choice of dwelling units and a diverse population within the Township.**

To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth:

### **A. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

**Natural features, including wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, woodlands, streams, hedgerows, slopes, and agricultural lands, shall be protected from adverse developmental impact, and shall be enhanced.**

#### **1. POLICIES**

##### **a. Agricultural Land Use**

- 1) Residential development shall be directed away from the Township's agricultural lands. See Agricultural Land Use Section of this General Development Plan.

##### **b. Land Capacity**

- 1) Land capacity shall be considered when determining the appropriate density of development. The density shall be established at a level that will neither damage environmental features nor intrude upon agricultural lands. See Natural Features and Agricultural land Use Sections of this General Development Plan.

##### **c. *Natural Feature Preservation***

- 1) Dwelling units shall be placed on portions of the site most suited to development in order to preserve natural features. See Natural Features Land use Section of this General Development Plan.
- 2) Measures that protect the environment during and after development shall be instituted and implemented.

### **B. NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY IDENTITY**

**Strong, cohesive neighborhoods that contributes to a positive community identity.**

## **1. POLICIES**

### **a. Community Stability**

- 1) New residential development shall be compatible in density and character with existing residences and neighborhoods in the immediate area.

### **b. Neighborhood Design**

- 1) Residential development shall be organized around natural features or recreational amenities, and site and architectural design that will create neighborhoods of lasting value and stability shall be encouraged.
- 2) All residential development that occurs at a density of 1 dwelling unit or more per acre is encouraged to be developed under a planned unit development or similar zone, thereby providing its own open space and recreational facilities.

### **c. Vehicular Circulation**

- 1) See Transportation Section of this General Development Plan.

### **d. Pedestrian Circulation**

- 2) See Transportation Section of this General Development Plan.

## **C. GENERAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Land uses best suited to the land and existing conditions, at a rate of growth that can be financially sustained by the Township Government and related infrastructures.**

## **1. POLICIES**

### **a. Density Calculations and Exclusions**

- 1) The following shall be excluded from the total acreage used in calculating the density of dwelling units:
  - a) Existing rights-of-way and easements;
  - b) Rights-of-way and easements of proposed public and private roadways, and rights-of-way of local and collector streets;
  - c) Flood plains, swamps, and other wetlands, and stream corridors; and
  - d) Lands to be purchased for public use.

**b. Rural/Estate Housing**

1) **Definition:** One category of rural residential use is designated:

- a) Rural housing with a minimum lot area requirement of one acre for rural and two acres for estate, typically subdivided and platted or developed through site condominium procedures. Clustering will be encouraged within this area to preserve natural features and open space.

2. **Policies:**

- a) Establishment of rural housing shall be encouraged in transition zones between agricultural, open space/conservation areas, and areas designated for more intensive residential development.
- b) Additional development of rural housing may be permitted to complete pockets of existing rural housing to logical boundaries.
- c) Development of rural housing in designated agricultural land use areas shall be discouraged.

**c. Suburban Housing**

1) **Definition:** Housing at a density of 1/2 dwelling units per acre in platted subdivisions, planned unit developments, cluster housing, or site condominiums, with paved roads that have surface storm water drainage, and within public sewer and water service areas.

2) **Policy:** New suburban housing shall be located near existing areas of suburban development and between areas of rural housing and urban residential areas.

**d. Urban Housing**

1) **Definition:** Housing at a density ranging from two to four dwelling units per acre, including single-family, multi-family, modular housing, and manufactured housing in platted subdivisions, planned unit developments, planned manufactured housing communities (mobile home parks), site condominiums, or traditional neighborhood developments, and having public water and sewer, paved roads with curbs and gutters, and street lights, as required.

**2) Policies:**

- a)** A variety of urban housing types shall be encouraged within the sewer service boundary areas.
- b)** A pattern of strong, cohesive single-family neighborhoods and multi-family housing developments should be established.
- c)** Development of traditional neighborhoods that include a mix of housing types and densities, and planned unit developments, which may include pedestrian-scaled institutional, office, or commercial uses, and open space. The zoning should:
  - i.** Permit clustering that maintains overall site density in order to provide permanent open space for recreational or environmental conservation use;
  - ii.** Require comprehensive pedestrian circulation systems;
  - iii.** Require organization of residential development around focal points such as open spaces or village greens; and
  - iv.** Require open space buffers from adjacent suburban, rural, or agricultural land uses.

**e. Sewer Service Areas**

- 1)** See Utilities Section of this General Development Plan.

**8.07 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

- A.** See Natural Features Section of this General Development Plan for environmental protection policies and implementation strategies.
- B.** Adopt zoning provisions that:
  - 1.** Reflect the ability of the land to support residential development without damaging natural features;
  - 2.** Reflect the definitions and policies presented in the Residential Land Use Section of this General Development Plan;
  - 3.** Encourage and/or require the use of planned unit development zoning, where appropriate to the character of the area, to protect natural features and provide neighborhood recreational facilities; and

4. Consider innovative housing designs and zoning techniques such as clustering, single-family attached, zero lot line, and semi-detached housing units, where appropriate to the character of the area, to protect natural features and provide neighborhood recreational facilities.
- C. Encourage cooperation with affordable income housing providers.



## **PART IX**

### **COMMERCIAL LAND USE**

#### **9.01 Introduction**

Historically, Saline Township has relied on two types of commercial activities to provide services to Township residents and the motoring public. The first form has been the important role played by the City of Saline at the northeastern corner of the Township. The commercial composition of this community has provided the focal point for the day to day needs of Township residents.

The second type of commercial activity that developed within the Township was oriented towards regional transportation networks, primarily along the US-12 (the Sauk Fox Indian Trail) corridor. These small areas will continue to contribute to specific commercial needs of the motoring public and Township residents.

Future commercial needs will continue to be concentrated within and adjacent to these commercial centers. There does not appear to be a need for Saline Township to duplicate the commercial infrastructure currently provided by the City of Saline. Centers along US-12 will continue to provide specific commercial functions. The following concepts will be encouraged with any new commercial development within the Township:

- A.** Commercial uses will be confined to designated areas; strip commercial development, without controlled vehicular and pedestrian access points, and consolidated parking, emphasizing controlled access and parking configurations, will not be permitted.
- B.** Even though the planning area will continue to have individual commercial parcels that have been developed independently of adjacent parcels any expansions should be in shopping center configurations. Vehicular and pedestrian interconnections will be required in new developments to permit travel between adjacent parcels, where such movement is considered appropriate. Driveways should be combined and existing extra driveways eliminated, where feasible, to reduce the number of turning locations on access streets.
- C.** The largest part of any commercial development, whether individual lots or a shopping center, is the parking lot. While adequate parking is essential to the viability of a commercial business and convenience of its customers, large pavement areas have adverse impacts, such as heat and glare, high rates and volumes of surface water runoff, transmission of pollutants from the surface of the parking lot directly to surface waters, and general unsightliness. Parking areas should be reduced to the minimum necessary to serve commercial establishments. Excess spaces should be held in landscape reserves, to be constructed only if experience on the site shows they are needed. Parking spaces in parking lots of larger commercial centers that are intended to be used for employee parking, or overflow parking during the one or two peak business periods of the year, should be reduced in size to reduce pavement area and to increase

landscape area. These reductions in the size and number of spaces should not be used as an opportunity for increasing building area on a site; the purpose of these reductions is strictly to reduce pavement area and to increase landscape area.

- D.** Commercial sites should be landscaped. Parking lots especially should be landscaped, both along the perimeter and in the interior to reduce the adverse effects of paved areas. Loading areas and the rear parts of commercial sites should be screened from view from streets and neighboring residential properties.
- E.** Designated commercial areas may abut future residential areas in certain situations in Saline Township. In these situations the commercial areas should provide landscaped transition zones that will create visual and sound barriers for protection of the residential areas.
- F.** Commercial developments should be accessible by sidewalk and pedestrian/bicycle paths. This will be particularly true if residential development is proposed adjacent or near these centers. The interior of commercial sites should be attractive and convenient for pedestrian movement, both between the parking lots and stores, and between stores, sidewalks along abutting streets, and adjacent properties, where appropriate.
- G.** Outside lighting of commercial developments should be designed to create a balance between efficiency and safety for commercial properties and customers on the one hand, and to reduce light pollution in the general neighborhood on the other.
- H.** Expansion of existing commercial uses should connect to public sanitary sewer and water service areas. The effluent from commercial operations should be discharged only into a public waste water treatment system where proper treatment is certain; it should not be discharged into septic tanks and drain fields where no monitoring or control is possible. No commercial areas are designated outside the service area in the General Development Plan.

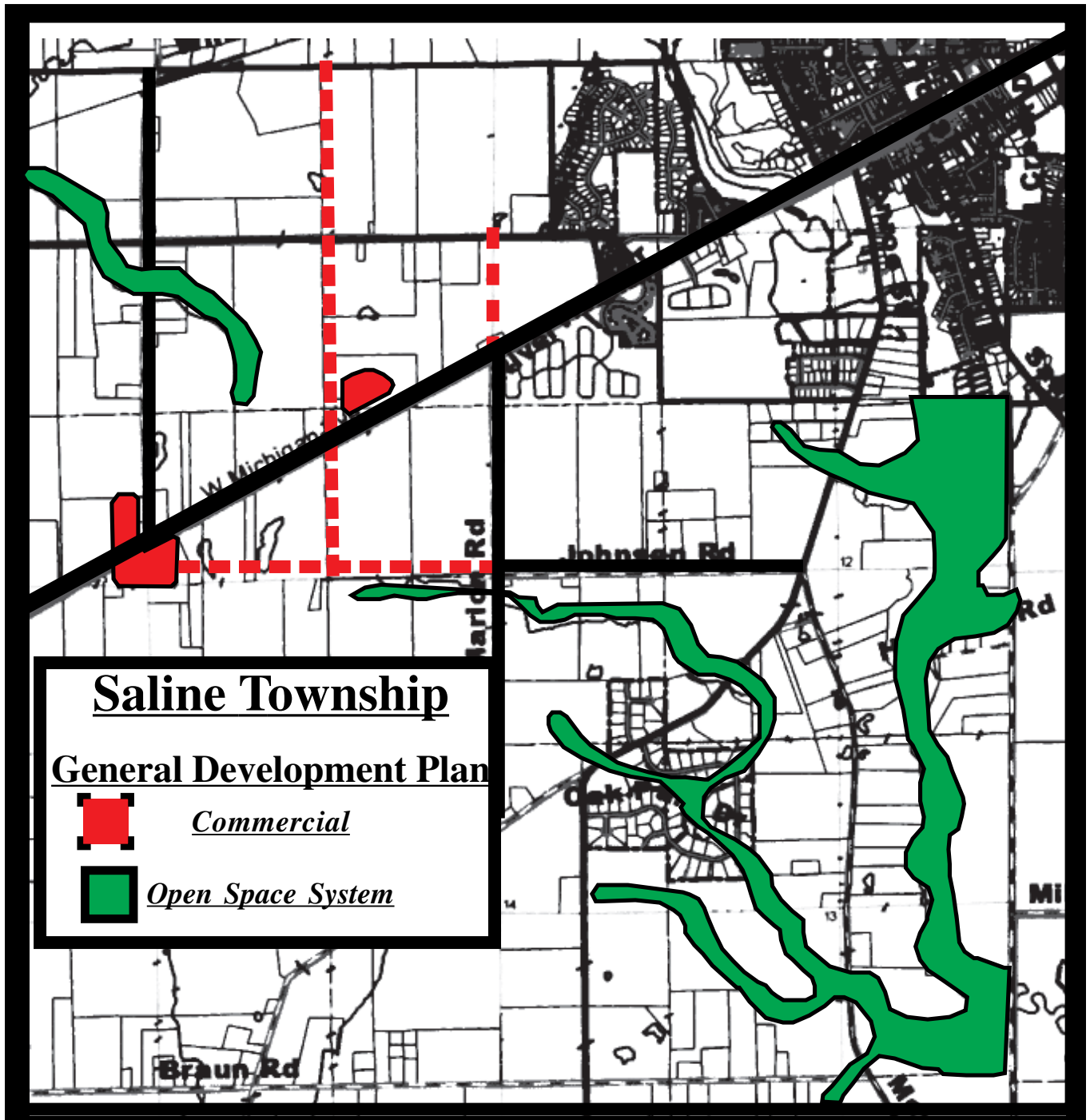
New neighborhood or local commercial areas, beyond those discussed herein, should not take place within the Township. It is anticipated that existing major commercial centers in adjacent communities will provide the primary commercial services to Township residents. It is not likely that large scale commercial development within the Township could challenge the market dominance of existing adjacent commercial developments, nor is it sound regional planning policy to encourage duplication of services which can result in vacant commercial space as well as unnecessary expansion of expensive infrastructure. Any new commercial development, however, will be encouraged to locate in shopping centers. New commercial development on individual lots will be limited to existing lots of record that are located in designated commercial areas either as new development, fill-in, or redevelopment of existing sites.

Commercial uses can also be located in mixed use areas that have industrial and office uses, such as business parks. Commercial uses will be considered as secondary to designated permitted uses, both in terms of number of establishments and percentages of total floor area. Therefore mixed use areas are considered to be more industrial/technology or office in character than commercial. Commercial uses may be allowed in such areas, especially business/technology parks, to serve employees, customers, and visitors.

## 9.02 Commercial Areas - General Guidelines

The commercial land use category is designed to include the following:

- A. Individual commercial land uses as allowed within the Zoning Ordinance that are mutually supportive of each other in one or more buildings, of a unified architectural character, and managed as one operating unit.



- B.** Business and professional offices, such as legal, engineering, financial, insurance, accounting, and stenographic services; executive and administrative offices; medical and dental offices and related laboratories; government offices; non-profit organization offices; and financial institutions but not including drive-up windows.
- C.** Research/technology activities that produce an insignificant amount of heat, noise, glare, offensive odors, and similar environmental disturbances.

Two areas are designated within the General Development Plan. The first area consists of approximately 35 acres and is north of US-12, west of the intersection with Marion Road. The second location comprising approximately 25 acres is adjacent to the intersection of US-12 and Dell Road.

The General Development Plan thus designates approximately 60 acres of land within the areas depicted for commercial development.

### **9.03 GOAL, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES**

Commercial land uses integrated with surrounding land uses to serve the needs of Township residents.

**To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth:**

#### **A. Concept**

The intent of allowing some expansion of existing commercial areas is to permit commercial diversification, while meeting the needs of travelers, once the demand exists for such uses and public sewer is available to accommodate a more intensive use. Saline Township's policy is to direct specific types of commercial growth to these defined areas where there has been precedent for commercial land use to take place. The regional transportation networks will be the central focal point for these areas and serve as an attractor for additional development. Physical limits of potential development can be defined by the transportation system and physical buffers, present within and around these areas.

By planning a logical area in which to concentrate potential intensive, largely non-residential development, Saline Township seeks to restrict unwanted non-residential development from other areas of the Township in order to preserve the established character of the Township. By permitting more intensive use in a concentrated area, if public sewer were available, it also significantly enhances the economic feasibility of providing public sewer and possibly, public water service to the area.

The land uses proposed within these two areas will be designed to create some diversification of commercial uses, but not to the extent of challenging the integrity of the City of Saline for comprehensive commercial uses.

Existing land uses would be allowed to remain and would be buffered from potential new developments using existing woodlands and other natural features. New development that

did not depend on public sewers would be permitted if the use met zoning standards and County Health Department approval for an on-site septic system was granted. If public sewers were available to the area, all uses would be required to tap in, as provided by law.

## **B. Purpose**

Land uses within the designated areas will be designed to accommodate a diversification of land uses including commercial, office, and research/technology land use while not creating hazards for the Township's environment nor creating adverse impacts on existing or proposed residential or agricultural uses nearby.

## **C. Proposed Uses - Definitions and Policies**

### **1. Office**

**Definition:** Business and professional offices, such as legal, engineering, financial, insurance, accounting, and stenographic services; executive and administrative offices; medical and dental offices and related laboratories; government offices; non-profit organization offices; and financial institutions but not including drive-up windows.

Office development shall be permitted within these areas and encouraged as a buffer between adjacent residential and agricultural areas.

### **2. High Technology/Research**

**Definition:** Research activities that produce an insignificant amount of heat, noise, glare, offensive odors, and similar environmental disturbances and that do not present a pollution hazard for the Township's environment, including office and prototype manufacturing operations in support of and incidental to the research activity.

High technology research facilities shall be permitted in these areas. They shall be located, designed, and operated in such a way as not to create hazards for the Township's environment nor create adverse impacts on existing or proposed residential or agricultural uses.

### **3. Commercial Support Services**

**Definition:** Support services, including retail, food, and convenience services, to meet the needs of businesses and employees of designated special use areas.

Self-sufficiency of uses within the defined special use area shall be encouraged by permitting the provision of commercial support services, including retail, food, and convenience services, within individual employment centers to meet the needs of businesses and employees. These support services shall not be intended or designed to serve the general public. Large uses within employment centers should be largely self-contained, so as to reduce development pressures on the surrounding lands and the roads leading to the centers.

#### **4. Commercial**

It is understood that limited commercial land uses presently exist within the Township. The General Development Plan is based upon the policy that large scale commercial activities are not warranted within the Township. This is based on the presence of adequate commercial centers in adjoining communities. Any future needs of Township residents for commercial uses should be located within the defined areas. Provision will also be made to meet limited highway service needs resulting from the US-12 corridor and anticipated adjoining collector roadways.

**Definition:** Individual commercial land uses other than highway service uses are discouraged within this area. Commercial development within the defined areas are considered suitable and should not be expanded outside the designated areas. New commercial activities should be consolidated as may be found in a small shopping center development. This would include commercial uses that are compatible with and mutually supportive of each other in one or more buildings, of a unified architectural character, and managed as one operating unit.

#### **5. Mixed Uses**

**Definition:** A combination of compatible office, high technology research, and/or commercial services uses.

The development of mixed-uses within the designated areas may be permitted as a cohesive unit under Planned Unit Development zoning.

#### **6. Implementation Strategy**

- a.** Additional development within the designated areas will be according to planned development regulations as required within the Saline Township Zoning Ordinance. Additional zoning districts may need to be incorporated into the Township's Zoning Ordinance to implement the planned use of this area.
- b.** Lands designated will be dependent upon a coordinated interior road system with controlled access points onto US-12 and adjoining collector roadways. Future development will only be permitted where the road system is adequate to serve the anticipated traffic.
- c.** Development will only be permitted where adverse impact to natural features will be avoided. Natural features located within these areas will be preserved and integrated into the site design.
- d.** To the extent that development according to the goal and concept as outlined may require the availability of a public sanitary sewer system, construction of any future sewer system shall be with developer financing, through user fees, or through a special assessment district, to the maximum feasible extent.

- e. Extensive landscaping and preservation of natural features shall be incorporated into development site plans. This type of buffering would also be used between land uses within these areas and surrounding agricultural or residential land uses.

Extensive landscaping would be required along US-12 as well as existing and future collector roadways within these areas.

- f. It is understood that the intent of development as outlined is not established to seek uncontrolled development of these areas. It is a response to the possibility that the US-12 regional transportation corridor may attract future development due to its location and function within Saline Township and the region. If development is proposed within these areas, the strategies outlined within this Section should be incorporated as a way to ensure it is appropriately developed at the same time adequate public services are available.

## 7. Highway Access

- a. US-12 would serve as the central regional roadway corridor. Future road right-of-way should be sufficient as determined by the Washtenaw County Road Commission. This would allow for expansion of the roadway if needed and more desirable setbacks of land uses adjacent to the roadway.

Additional curb cuts should not take place along US-12. This would severely limit the function of the roadway. Access from interior parcels should be from collector roadways either existing or planned for these areas of the Township.

## 8. Public Services

- a. Based upon environmental factors and the density of potential land uses within this area, public sewer service would be necessary concurrent with development at an intensity or density sufficient to require such service. The question of whether, when, and in what manner such service would be provided will be addressed in the Utility Feasibility Study and Capital Improvement Program referred to in the Public Facilities section of this Plan.

## 9. *Agricultural Commercial*

- a. **Definition:** Commercial establishments that serve as agricultural outlets, including markets, orchards, nurseries, greenhouses, self-harvest, and agricultural co-ops.

- b. **Policies:**

### 1) In Agricultural Zones

Agricultural commercial land uses, such as small-scale roadside stands or small-scale open-air farmers markets, that primarily market products

grown in the Township may be permitted in all agricultural zones. Such uses shall not involve extensive trucking activities nor shall they intrude upon adjacent agricultural or rural residential uses.

## 2) Nurseries and Landscaping

a) **Definition: Nurseries** shall be defined as the use of land or greenhouses to grow plants intended to be transplanted for use in agriculture, forestry, or landscaping. Nursery operations may include retail and wholesale sales of plant material grown within the Township or imported into the Township, as well as small items incidental to the sale of plant materials.

b) **Definition: Landscaping** businesses shall be defined as nursery operations which include operations necessary to install and maintain plant materials off-site, including storage of trucks for transportation of plants, soils, and other landscaping materials; grading equipment; and tree moving equipment.

Commercial snow-removal equipment, construction equipment, or road-maintenance equipment is not considered to be a part of nursery and/or landscaping operations.

c) **Definition: Landscaping/Maintenance** operations shall be defined as operations which include the use of commercial vehicles and/or equipment not permitted in nursery or landscaping operations. Landscaping/Maintenance operations may include the use and storage of large vehicles and equipment, significant noise levels, and emissions that are incompatible with surrounding land uses.

## 3) Policies:

a) Nursery operations and landscaping businesses may be permitted in agricultural zones where the business has direct access to paved roads, where the nature of the business will not negatively impact adjacent uses, and provided the business does not pose an environmental hazard.

b) Landscaping/Maintenance operations may be permitted in agricultural zones where the business has direct access to adequate paved roads, where the nature of the business will not negatively impact surrounding land uses, where equipment and/or materials storage can be adequately screened or housed, and provided the business does not pose an environmental hazard.



## **10. Special Use Centers**

**a. Definition:** Support services, including retail food and convenience services, to meet the needs of businesses and employees of planned office, industrial, and commercial centers.

**b. Policy:**

### **1) Integration of Commercial Uses**

Self-sufficiency of employment centers shall be encouraged by permitting the provision of commercial support services, including retail food and convenience services, in employment centers to meet the needs of employment center businesses and employees. These support services shall not be intended or designed to serve the general public.

## **D. CHARACTER OF DEVELOPMENT**

Commercial land uses that reflect the character of and are integrated with adjoining residential areas.

### **1. Policies**

#### **a. Scale and Character**

**1)** Commercial development shall be organized into compact, unified commercial centers that complement the scale and character of existing development or that promote the desired character for areas where new development is planned.

**2)** Piecemeal or scattered development shall be avoided and uncoordinated commercial strip development shall be prohibited. Where individual parcels of land are to be developed for commercial uses, coordination with adjacent properties, including common parking and driveways, shall be encouraged in order to reduce the number of access points to public roads.

#### **b. Circulation and Site Patterns**

**1)** New commercial development shall be organized in compact, unified centers designed to create a pleasant and safe pedestrian environment.

**2)** Circulation patterns shall be integrated with the circulation systems (vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian) of adjacent properties.

**c. Mixed Land Use**

- 1) Where appropriate, commercial, office, and residential components should be coordinated within Planned Unit Development zoning so as to create a diverse, pedestrian-oriented environment.

**d. Parking**

- 1) Parking areas for new commercial development shall meet normal expected parking requirements. Alternative arrangements to meet peak demands shall be encouraged.
- 2) Parking areas shall be located, designed, and landscaped to minimize the visual impact.

**e. Other Environmental Characteristics**

- 1) Commercial centers shall be landscaped and screened by landscaping from adjacent residential areas to reduce heat and glare from pavement areas, to partially screen parking areas from view, to control noise, and to increase the attractiveness of such centers. It is the intent of Saline Township that commercial centers not be wastelands of buildings and pavement. The overall design of each commercial center should be in keeping with the existing and planned future visual character of the surrounding areas.

## PART X

### TRANSPORTATION

#### 10.01 Introduction

An integral part of the General Development Plan is the Township's internal transportation network. The degree to which land uses interact effectively is dependent upon this concept. The primary objective is to develop a roadway network, which provides safe, convenient and efficient vehicular circulation. The implementation of a functional transportation network depends upon a close cooperation between private developers, Township, County and State officials, and a strict adherence to sound planning principles and standards. Realignment, improvements, and new roadways must be of adequate right-of-way. Right-of-way easements must be obtained as soon as possible before new development makes them too costly or impossible.

US-12 has historically and continues to function as a regional arterial connecting regions of the State of Michigan. It has been instrumental and central to the overall transportation system within Saline Township. The importance of this roadway will increase as regional population continues to increase and use this roadway corridor as it has been designed.

Of primary importance in this General Development Plan are streets designated as collectors, which by definition have limited direct access and minimal curb cuts, and are necessary to:

- A. Give greater traffic safety by reducing "*start and stop*" traffic on roads which are designed to have unobstructed flow.
- B. Increase speed and efficiency of arterials.
- C. Discourage the use of residential streets by through traffic, thereby increasing pedestrian safety.

Several roadways serve as collectors within Saline Township and connect to the US-12 corridor. These roads include Austin and Jordan Roads which comprise Saline Township's principal east west and north south roadways. These roads will continue to be the principal roads continuing to gain increased importance. It is understood that as development takes place, as depicted on the General Development Plan Policy map that certain existing roads will be upgraded to collector status as well as extensions being required. Also new collector roads will be necessary to collect vehicular traffic from areas anticipated for future development.

#### 10.02 Transportation Guidelines

- A. All new streets in the designated Urban Service District must be paved. Existing unpaved streets in the Township should be paved as development occurs in areas other than agriculture, to provide safe and convenient access to adjoining properties.

- B.** Streets located in areas subject to sanitary sewer service should be constructed to urban standards, based on Washtenaw County Road Commission requirements for urban streets, including curbs and gutters. Exceptions will be considered for paving of existing gravel roads for interim periods, in order to obtain pavement on these roads at the earliest possible time. They should eventually be upgraded to urban street standards as well. New streets in the designated urban parts of the Township may have rural road section streets, based on Washtenaw County Road Commission standards, which include ditches instead of curbs and gutters.
- C.** Plans for new development should provide for extension of streets to connect with existing or future streets at common boundaries where such extension is determined to be necessary for continuity in the public street system or to provide vehicular access to interior lands. Interconnection of streets is intended to be a means of creating physical integration of all parts of the community.
- D.** New streets should be designed and constructed to Washtenaw County Road Commission standards and dedicated or otherwise conveyed to the Washtenaw County Road Commission.
- E.** Through traffic should be routed around rather than through neighborhoods and other use areas. Local and through traffic should be separated to the extent possible by the design of the street system. In existing residential areas with grid street patterns, the street system should be revised where possible to discourage arterial traffic from cutting through neighborhoods.
- F.** Each new development will be required to provide its share of street improvements.
- G.** The number of driveway openings on arterial streets should be minimized in order to reduce the need for additional lanes and to improve traffic safety. The number of driveway openings on collector streets might also be limited in certain areas where necessary to obtain the same objectives. However, in residential areas on certain sections of collector streets, frontage of residential lots is not considered incompatible with the traffic carrying function of those streets.
- I.** The design and character of streets should be consistent with and subservient to the desired character of Saline Township. US-12, by its nature, creates barriers between different parts of the community. The right-of-way and number of lanes and pavement width of other streets should not be so large or dominant as to create barriers between areas on opposite sides of these streets.

### **10.03 GOAL, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES**

**A safe, efficient transportation system that facilitates movement within the Township while minimizing adverse impacts of traffic, especially of regional traffic, flowing through the Township.**

**To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth:**

#### **A. HIERARCHY OF ROADWAYS**

**A hierarchy of roadways to provide convenient vehicular circulation, to minimize congestion, and to minimize traffic on gravel roads.**

## 1. POLICIES

- a. Roadways should be designed and constructed according to the following functional classification system:

### 1) Primary Roadway

- a) **Definition:** Primary roadways carry the highest traffic volumes in the Township and serve both regional and local traffic. Primary roadways connect local roadways with the interstate system and major roadways in adjoining communities. Some primary roadways also serve as special corridors. (See Special Corridors below.)

### b) Policies:

- (1) The following design standards should be established for primary roadways:

- (a) 120- to 150-foot right-of-way (R.O.W.), with exceptions as noted below;
- (b) 2 paved lanes minimum; and
- (c) use of shared driveways and access roads, where feasible, to minimize access points to primary roadways.

- (2) Primary roadways should be designated as follows:

This General Development Plan recognizes that US-12 is the only primary roadway within Saline Township that currently functions as a regional arterial roadway. It is anticipated that this roadway will be improved with additional lanes and intersection improvements.

### 2) Collector Roadways

- a) **Definition:** Collector roadways primarily serve local traffic and distribute traffic from local roadways to primary roadways. Some collector roadways also serve as special corridors. (See Special Corridors below.)

**b) Policies:**

- (1)** The following design standards should be established for collector roadways:
  - (a)** 66- to 120-foot R.O.W.;
  - (b)** 2 paved lanes minimum; and
  - (c)** Minimal access to individual lots.
- (2)** The following streets should be designated as collector roadways in Saline Township:
  - (a)** Austin Road from the western boundary of the City of Saline to the western border of the Township.
  - (b)** Macon Road.
  - (c)** Maple Road.
  - (d)** Jordan Road.

**3) Local Roadways**

- a) Definition:** The primary function of local roadways is to provide access to abutting properties. Local roadways are intended to primarily serve local traffic, rather than regional or through traffic. However, some local roadways also serve as and should be treated as special corridors. (See Special Corridors below.)

**b. Policies:**

- (1)** The following standards should be established for local roadways:
  - (a)** 66-foot R.O.W.
  - (b)** 2 lanes paved in new urban developments.
  - (c)** 2 lanes gravel in rural areas; and
- (2)** The remainder of the roads within the Township are designated as local.
- (3)** A system of slow-moving, low-traffic roads should be retained to permit movement of farm equipment between noncontiguous farm parcels.

#### **4) Special Corridors**

**a) Definition:** Special corridors are roadways that have a recognized scenic or historic character that should be protected, and other roadways, such as Township entrances, that require special treatment.

**b) Policies:**

**(1)** The character of special corridors shall be protected during maintenance. Special corridors shall not be improved, unless necessary and any such improvements shall not alter the character of the special corridor.

**(2)** The natural landscape shall be preserved along Natural Beauty Roads that may be designated by the Washtenaw County Road Commission (WCRC). Preservation of the natural landscape shall also be encouraged along roadways characterized by significant natural resources or vistas. These roadways shall be designated as scenic roads. Natural beauty and/or Scenic roads in Saline Township include:

- (a)** Braun Road east of Macon Road.
- (b)** Willow Road east of Macon Road.
- (c)** Hack Road.
- (d)** Arkona Road east of Macon Road.
- (e)** Klager Road.
- (f)** Feldkamp Road.
- (g)** Hartman Road.

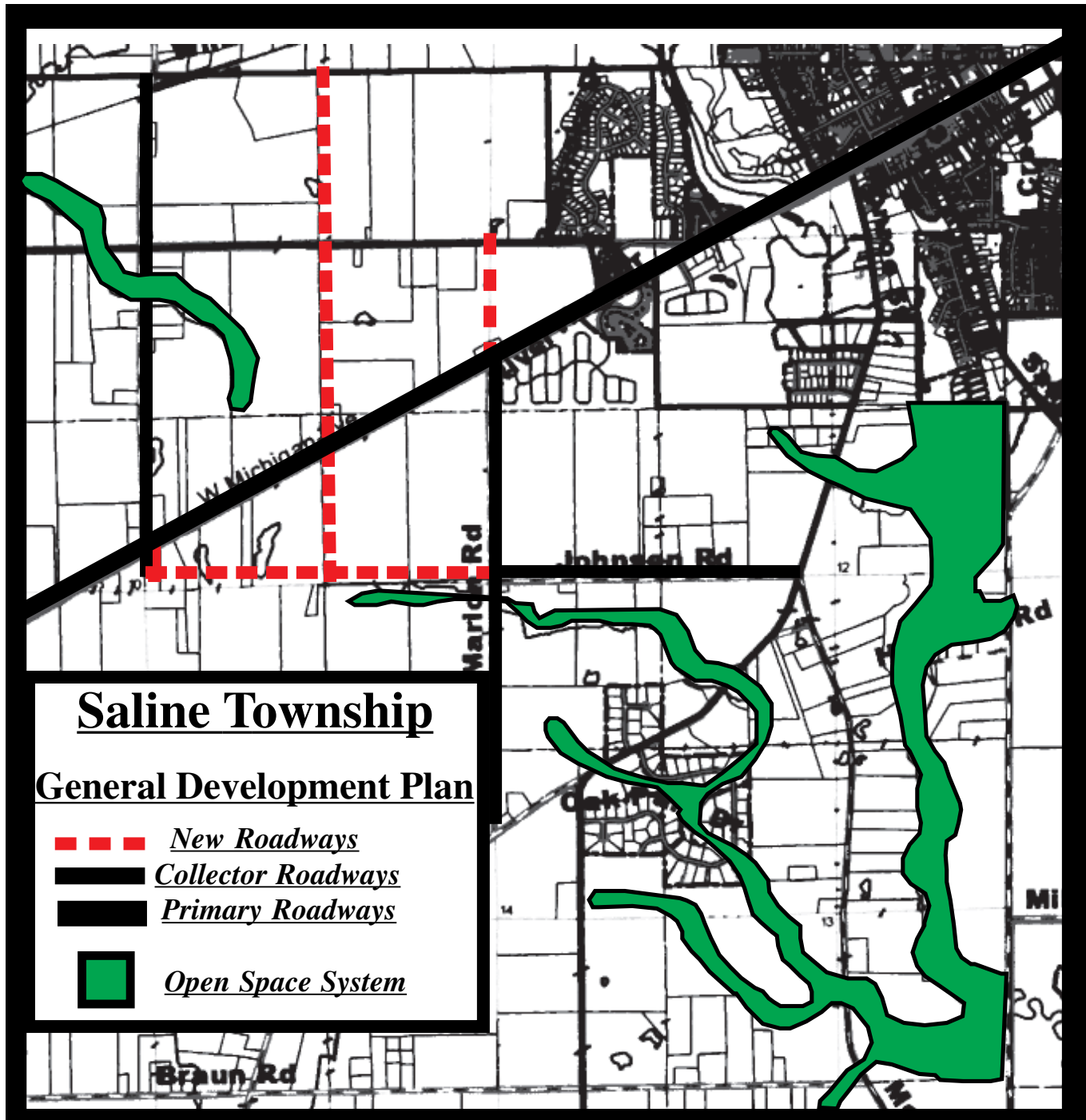
**(3)** Landscaping is required inside and outside of the right-of-way to retain a scenic quality along Special Landscape Corridors. These roadways may be subject to increased development in the future and/or are considered entranceways into and through the Township where scattered development has taken place. Special Landscape Corridors in Saline Township include:

- (a)** Macon Road.
- (b)** Mooreville Road.
- (c)** Maple Road.

**(4)** Historic sites and structures should be protected from adverse impact from traffic and road improvements.

- (5) The character of the major entrances to the Township shall be protected and enhanced. Entrances of particular concern are:

- (a) US-12.
- (b) Dell Road.
- (c) Macon Road.
- (d) Austin Road.





## **B. NEW ROADWAYS**

### **1. New Internal Roadways**

The General Development Plan is proposing substantial areas for residential development within the Township. For this development to take place some existing roadways that are currently of local status would be upgraded to collector status. Some of these roadways would also need to be extended to connect to other similar roadways to provide a cohesive and comprehensive roadway network. It is also anticipated new roads would need to be constructed to provide necessary access to areas that presently do not have roadways to serve increased development. These roads are conceptually shown on the Transportation and Policy maps. It is anticipated that when these areas are subject to development, specific studies will be undertaken with the Township, developer, and Washtenaw County Road commission to determine type of roadway, necessary right-of-way and acceptable location for the roadway.

### **2. City of Saline Bypass**

The Washtenaw County Road Commission has initiated discussion regarding the necessity for a bypass roadway around the southern region of the City of Saline. It is acknowledged that need for such a roadway may exist. To try and anticipate a potential location for such a roadway is not credible at this time. Policies within this General Development Plan would be brought forth if options for such a bypass are proposed within the future.

## **C. ROAD SYSTEMS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT**

### **1. Impact on Existing Road System**

- a.** Because of the limited availability of State and Federal funding for road improvements, the Township is unable to ensure that proposed new development will have adequate and convenient vehicular access. Budgetary limitations should be taken into consideration during the planning process, and new developments should be appropriately scaled to road conditions.
- b.** New developments shall be required to provide legally permissible street improvements if necessary to ensure safe and convenient traffic flow.

### **2. Access**

- a.** The number of curb cuts to primary streets shall be minimized.
- b.** Joint drives or frontage roads shall be required, where feasible, to reduce the number of curb cuts.
- c.** Access patterns should be designed to encourage placement of buildings to face primary and collector streets.

### **3. Residential Road System**

- a.** Plans for new development should provide for extension of roadways into new development areas where such extension is determined by the Township to be necessary for the continuity of the public street system or to provide adequate vehicular access to interior lands.
- b.** Residential areas should be interconnected by public streets. Residential developments that are intended to be isolated from the rest of the community by a system of private streets and absence of street connections with adjacent parcels should be discouraged.
- c.** Residential areas should be interconnected with local commercial areas in planned developments unless such connection disrupts the pedestrian environment or encourages through traffic in the residential area.
- d.** Access to new development shall be from existing paved roads wherever feasible.

### **4. Through Traffic**

- a.** Through traffic should be routed around and not through agricultural land use areas. Through and local traffic should be separated by the design of the street system.

### **5. Private Roadways**

- a.** Private roadways should be discouraged except in special districts such as planned unit developments.

### **6. Road Standards**

- a.** Roadways in new urban and suburban developments shall meet appropriate Washtenaw County Road Commission standards and specifications.

### **7. Financing Road Improvements**

- a.** Roads within new developments shall be funded through developer financing with subsequent dedication to the public.
- b.** Road improvements needed to serve more than one property shall be funded through developer financing or through special assessment districts for all adjacent properties that substantially benefit from the road improvements. Provisions shall be included in such special assessment districts to exclude single-family dwellings and to exclude farmlands that are retained in farming for a predetermined period of time after the improvements are made, or to

minimize the costs to such single-family dwellings and farmlands to the extent allowed by law.

#### **D. PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE CIRCULATION**

**Bicycle and pedestrian circulation systems to connect adjacent residential areas, residential areas with local commercial areas, residential areas with recreation facilities, and employment centers with supporting commercial areas.**

##### **1. POLICIES**

###### **a. Urban Developments**

- 1) Sidewalks should be required as an integral component of the circulation system in Urban Service District and residential developments consisting of site condominiums and subdivisions. They should:
  - a) Be provided along all urban streets.
  - b) Be separated from streets by landscaping or other amenities to provide for safety and pedestrian comfort.
  - a) Be barrier-free; and
  - d) Be coordinated with a bicycle system where feasible.

###### **b. Suburban and Rural Developments**

- 1) A cohesive pedestrian and/or bicycle circulation system should be required within residential developments.

###### **c. Bicycle Paths**

- 1) The development of a safe, comprehensive bicycle circulation system to link areas of the Township with each other and with bicycle systems in adjacent communities should be investigated. Bicycle trails should be constructed, where feasible, to connect parks and open space areas.

#### **10.04 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

- A. Adopt zoning requirements to establish setbacks from proposed rights-of-way as designated on the Public Facilities Map.
- B. Coordinate with the Washtenaw County Road Commission to:
  1. Provide designated rights-of-way for all public roadways;

2. Minimize the number of curb cuts requiring access from primary roadways;
  3. Support designation of and cooperate in protection of natural beauty roads; and
  4. Develop bicycle paths or lanes along Township roadways.
- C.** Adopt criteria for landscape treatment along Special Corridors.
- D.** Require construction of public sidewalks or bicycle paths along public rights-of-way for all new development in Urban Service Districts, and, where applicable, along collector and primary roads.

## **PART XI**

### **PUBLIC UTILITIES**

#### **11.01 Introduction**

Currently, there is no municipal sanitary sewer system within the Township. This General Development Plan has established an Urban Service District that will necessitate infrastructure for a municipal water and sanitary sewer system. It is the intent of Saline Township to work out appropriate agreements with the City of Saline to provide these types of services. It is also the intent of this General Development Plan to recommend a capital improvement plan to determine the components of a comprehensive plan to service the designated Urban Service District. Necessary studies and infrastructures would be at the cost of the developer when such development is initiated.

The Township's involvement and/or management of any future public sanitary sewer system will be to serve the public health, safety, and welfare of the Township and residents and to protect the Township's environment. Municipal sanitary sewer and water will only be allowed within the designated Urban Service District.

#### **11.02 GOAL, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES**

**GOAL - Utilities that serve the public health, safety, and welfare and that serve to protect the Township's environment.**

**To accomplish this goal the following objectives are set forth.**

##### **A. PUBLIC SANITARY SEWER**

**Management of any public sanitary sewer system will direct development away from areas designated for agricultural and rural residential land uses.**

##### **1. POLICIES**

###### **a. Sanitary Sewer Service Area**

- 1)** Sanitary sewer service shall be limited to only designated areas of Saline Township. Service to any other area shall require prior amendment to the General Development Plan.
- 2)** Extension of public sewer services into designated agricultural zones shall be prohibited.

**b. Phasing of Sanitary Sewer Expansion**

- 1) A cost-efficient strategy should be adopted to expand sanitary sewer service (within the service boundary) only in predetermined phases.

**c. Financing System Extensions**

- 1) Extensions of the sewer system should be constructed with developer financing, user fees, or through a special assessment district, but shall not be constructed with ad valorem taxes.

**d. Financial Impact**

- 1) Extension of any sewer system shall be permitted only if such extension will not adversely affect the financial and functional integrity of the Township and any established sewer service district.

**e. Lift Stations**

- 1) Prohibiting construction of lift stations when gravity alternatives are available shall minimize long-term maintenance costs.

**f. Private Sanitary Sewer Systems**

- 1) Small-scale, common wastewater treatment systems may be acceptable in areas of the Township where central sanitary sewer services are not available, if the following conditions are met:
  - a) The MDEQ, Township Board, and Washtenaw County Health Department approve the system.
  - b) An adequate outlet for effluent discharge is available.
  - c) The development(s) to be served by the system will be consistent with the adopted General Development Plan in terms of use and density.
  - d) The system will be installed by the developer and, upon completion, may be dedicated to Saline Township for ownership and maintenance.
  - e) Lateral sewers and appurtenances to be installed in the future will be at developer's expense.
  - f) Development shall be in accordance with Planned Unit Development procedures.

**g. Temporary Private Septic Systems in Urban Areas**

- 1) All new development in urban areas shall be required to connect to public sanitary sewer systems if available. However, private septic systems may be permitted as interim facilities for individual parcels when public sanitary sewer lines will not be available for a significant period of time.
- 2) Any property permitted to develop with a private septic system in the designated service areas shall be required to connect with public sanitary sewer lines when these become available.

**B. PUBLIC WATER**

**Management of a public water system to direct development away from areas designated for agricultural, rural, and suburban residential land uses.**

**1. Water Service Area**

- a. Any water service area should coincide with the sanitary service area. Thus, public water service shall be limited to the designated areas of Saline Township. Service to any other area shall require prior amendment to the General Development Plan.
- b. Extension of water service into other areas of the Township should only be considered to address health, safety, and environmental issues for existing development.
- c. Extension of public water services into designated agricultural zones shall be prohibited.

**2. Phasing of Public Water Service Expansion**

- a. A cost-efficient strategy should be adopted to create a public water service (within the service boundary) only in predetermined phases.

**3. Financing System Extensions**

- a. A public water service system should be constructed with developer financing, user fees, or through a special assessment district, but shall not be constructed with ad valorem taxes.

**4. Financial Impact**

- a. A public water system shall be permitted only if such extension will not adversely affect the financial and functional integrity of any Township and sewer service districts.

**5. Looping**

- a.** Transmission and distribution lines should be looped to ensure adequate pressure and continuity of service.

**6. Private Wells in Urban Areas**

- a.** All new development in urban areas shall be required to connect to public water systems if available. However, private wells may be permitted as interim facilities for individual parcels where public water systems will not be available for a significant period of time.
- b.** Any property permitted to develop with a private well in the designated water service areas shall be required to connect with public water when it becomes available.

**7. Private Community Wells**

- a.** Private community wells shall be allowed in areas designated for public water service, however, they shall be designed to connect to a public water system and such wells shall be required to meet applicable standards of Washtenaw County Department of Environmental Services.
- b.** Community wells shall be prohibited in other areas unless it can be determined that the water quality and quantity is sufficient to serve the proposed development and that the environment will not be adversely impacted by the well.

**C. STORM DRAINAGE**

**A storm drainage system that manages storm water run-off in a safe, sanitary, and environmentally sound manner. The drainage system shall limit storm water run-off from any development area to that which existed under undeveloped, natural conditions in terms of volume, velocity, and water quality.**

**1. POLICIES**

**a. Site Evaluation**

- 1)** Storm drainage shall be included when evaluating the suitability of a site for development and when determining the appropriate density of development.

**b. Drainage System Design**

- 1)** Drainage systems shall meet at least the following criteria:



- a) All drainage systems shall be designed to meet, at a minimum, the standards of the Washtenaw County Drain Commission.
- b) All drainage systems within residential developments shall be dedicated and deeded to the Washtenaw County Drain Commission, subject to the approval and conditions of the Drain Commissioner.
- c) In the event a drainage system is not dedicated and deeded to the Washtenaw County Drain Commission, the developer or his agents shall provide to Saline Township a maintenance plan for the drainage system outlining necessary procedures to maintain the system in proper working order, and a description of the entity which shall be responsible for such maintenance.
- d) On-site drainage systems shall be adequate to deliver surface run-off to established drainage courses.
- e) Drainage systems shall be located and designed to prevent sediments and pollutants in surface run-off from entering watercourses and groundwater aquifers.
- f) Generally, impervious surfaces should not be connected to drainage systems. Run-off should be routed over grassy swales or similar areas, which help to filter run-off.
- g) Open and natural drainage courses should be utilized as part of the drainage system where possible, and where the natural drainage course will not be adversely affected.
- h) Open courses should be landscaped to enhance the open space or landscape scheme of the site or area, or be designed to function as natural wetlands.
- i) Existing wetlands should not be incorporated into site drainage systems, unless it can be adequately proven that the wetlands shall be protected from any adverse impacts. Extensive clearing of vegetation which buffers the wetlands from erosion and filters sediments and pollution from run-off shall be prohibited.

**c. Storm Water Management System**

- 1) Storm water management systems shall meet at least the following criteria:

- a) A storm water management system shall be incorporated into the development plan for each project on private property, or as part of an area-wide drainage system, or as a combination of the two.
- b) A storm water management system shall be designed to control the volume, quality, and rate of storm water run-off and, where appropriate, to recharge the groundwater supply.
- c) Storm water management systems shall meet the requirements of the Washtenaw County Drain Commission.
- d) Natural water storage areas (wetlands) shall be preserved in their natural form and condition. Each storage area, including its fringe vegetation, shall be protected from encroachment from development and adverse impact from excessive storm water flow, including quantity, quality, and rate of flow.
- e) Storm water discharge to adjoining properties shall be adequately controlled to prevent any negative impacts to adjoining properties.

#### **D. CABLE UTILITIES**

**A system of electricity, telephone, and cable television lines serving the Township should be placed underground.**

##### **1. Policies**

###### **a. Urban and Suburban Service**

- 1) Distribution lines servicing urban and suburban development should be placed underground.

###### **b. Rural Service**

- 1) Overhead lines servicing low-density (1 dwelling unit or less per acre) rural residential development may be permitted provided that their alignment and visual and physical impact does not adversely affect the Township's natural or aesthetic environment.

###### **c. Transmission Lines**

- 1) Overhead lines for transmission and major distribution may be permitted provided that their alignment and visual and physical impact does not adversely affect the Township's natural or aesthetic environment.

**d. Design Standards**

- 1) All distribution systems, including overhead lines and all easements or rights-of-way for overhead or underground cables shall meet the following criteria:
  - a) They shall be located to avoid disruption of tree stands, specimen trees, significant fence rows, wetlands, or other natural features.
  - b) They shall be located to avoid unwise or inappropriate division of land use or ownership parcels.
  - c) Surface-mounted equipment shall be judiciously placed as part of a landscape design in order to be attractively and effectively screened.
  - d) Substations shall be located, designed, and landscaped to fit the character of the surrounding areas.

**e. Shared Distribution Systems**

- 1) Joint use of trenches for all underground cable utilities shall be encouraged to minimize construction costs, and joint use of poles for all overhead utilities shall be required to minimize visual clutter.

**11.03 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

- A. Adopt a Capital Improvement Plan that adequately addresses any sanitary sewer needs of the Township.
- B. Adopt a Capital Improvement Plan that adequately addresses any public water needs of the Township.
- C. Work with the Washtenaw County Drain Commission to periodically update standards and requirements and to incorporate appropriate standards within the zoning and site plan review ordinances.
- D. Incorporate the criteria and standards listed in this Section into the zoning and site plan review ordinances.

## **PART XII**

### **IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES**

#### **12.01 Introduction**

An additional stage in the planning process is the implementation of the General Development Plan. The studies, no matter how thorough, and recommendations, no matter how sound, are totally reliant on the vigor of local governmental officials and citizens in pursuing the goals of the Plan. Although a governmental agency may be given the responsibility to perform the function of area-wide planning, it is impossible for one unit to implement all elements of a plan alone. Plan implementation necessitates coordination by the various governmental bodies who control specific activities in a township. The County has direct control over local roads, public health, and general law enforcement. The school systems being semi-autonomous are responsible for public education, and the State exercises control over navigable waters. Several federal agencies play critical roles especially in the area of transportation.

Policies in the General Development Plan are implemented, for the most part, by day-to-day decisions by the Township's administration, Planning Commission, and Board of Trustees. A government agency might undertake a major project called for in the plan, such as, construction of a road or acquisition of a tract of land for a public school, park or other facility, but these are infrequent events and are not the primary means of policy implementation. To be effective the plan must be used in daily decisions. Used in this manner, the Saline Township General Development Plan will provide advance notice to prospective users of land and assurance of stability to property owners and residents. The General Development Plan can be a forum for modifying certain policies, with all affected parties involved, when conditions underlying the General Development Plan change or new opportunities arise. Thus, in terms of policy implementation, the plan is both a communication and a reference document. Its continuous daily use will help assure that it will be kept current and viable. Saline Township has used its General Development Plan in this fashion in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

Townships have several means at its disposal to implement a General Development Plan. The Township's power includes control of land use enforced by zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations and other ordinances, and building construction enforced by a building code. A township has authority to establish and administer public utilities and to provide various service activities.

#### **12.02 Zoning Regulations**

The principal means of implementing comprehensive plan policies is the Zoning Ordinance. Zoning will be used in any one or combination of the following.

- A. Zoning Districts:** The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (ZEA) Public Act 110 of 2006 as amended) authorizes organized townships to create, within the unincorporated portions of the township, zoning districts within which land uses, including the construction of buildings, and

structures, may be regulated. A zoning ordinance is that body of regulations, standards and procedures adopted by a township as authorized by state law. The zoning ordinance, when properly adopted, has the force and effect of law. It can be differentiated from the General Development Plan by the degree of specificity and the legal effect. They have common ultimate objectives, treat the same general subject matter, and ideally should present no wide divergences. The Township Zoning Ordinance should be based on this Plan and be consistent with it.

Land should be zoned in a manner that is consistent with uses and densities designated in the General Development Plan. In many cases, land that is designated in the General Development Plan for various densities of residential use or nonresidential uses in the future is currently zoned for agricultural use. Since most land owners in these situations do not want their land zoned for other uses until they are ready to sell it or develop it, rezoning to a use district that is consistent with the designation in the General Development Plan should await petition by property owners.

It is suggested that this Plan should be periodically reviewed because of unpredictable, technological advancements, trends in development, and community needs. Review should be based on established goals and sound planning principles, and should be undertaken preferably once a year with a total re-evaluation at every five years. Periodic revision is essential if the Plan is to be a continuous, reliable guide for community development and preservation.

**B. Density Transfer:** This concept involves moving (transferring) proposed development (density) from one part of a site to another part that is considered to be more suitable for development. The process results in a portion of the site remaining undeveloped and the developed part having a higher net density, although the overall density of the site will not be increased. Density transfer may be used to preserve natural features such as wetlands, woodlands, open space, or stream corridors, while permitting a reasonable use of the entire property. This method is applicable to larger parcels and should be used only in conjunction with a special zoning district, such as the PUD district. Density transfer should meet the following standards:

1. All lands involved in the transfer are located in Saline Township and the owner has fee simple title to the lands.
2. All lands involved are contiguous.
3. The total number of dwelling units allocated to the total land area by the General Development Plan will not be exceeded.
4. The transfer is made as part of a single PUD or similar special zoning district that includes all lands involved in the transfer at the same time.
5. The land that receives that transfer of density will, with the additional dwelling units, be compatible with the existing and planned use of the neighboring area.
6. The transfer will not affect the Township's contractual obligations for sanitary sewer services.

**B. Special Districts** The Township's current Zoning Ordinance has seven special districts that are designed to be used within the Planned Unit Development (PUD) structure and procedure:

- R-2 - Single-Family Suburban Residential
- R-3 - Urban Residential
- MHP – Manufactured Housing Park
- C-1 - Convenience Commercial
- C-2 - Special Commercial
- O – Office
- I-1 –Industrial-Research

Additional special districts might be created in the future.

The principal characteristic of a special zoning district is its area plan. An area plan is a form of a site plan that is sufficient to describe the essential features of a proposed development. The features include land use densities, a list of specific uses, and the aesthetic characteristics that will be incorporated on the site. Future use of the property, once the special district is approved, must be in accordance with the approved district. Major changes to any of these features will require a zoning amendment, which will create a new version of the special district. A request for a district modification must be presented to the Planning Commission and approved by the Township Board.

Special zoning districts should be used for one or more of the following purposes:

1. To create a compatible mixture of uses on a site, where a mixture is desirable and consistent with adopted policies.
2. To fit a proposed use into an existing developed area in a compatible manner.
3. To condition zoning on an understanding between the petitioner and Township on uses, densities and layout.

**D. Overlay Zones:** Overlay zones can be used to regulate the use of a specific part of a parcel of land. The regulations of the overlay district are in addition to and supersede the regulations of the underlying basic district. Overlay districts could be used to protect wetlands, woodlands, stream corridors, flood hazard areas, and ground water recharge areas. An overlay zone might not be clearly identifiable at the time the zone is adopted and shown on the official zoning map. The boundaries of such areas, especially wetlands and stream corridors, seldom follow property lines or other features commonly shown on maps. In addition the boundaries of such areas might be somewhat indeterminate until detailed surveys are made. Therefore overlay district regulations should be designed to recognize this fact and to provide a mechanism for the property owner and Township officials to agree on a reasonable delineation of such features at the time of development or use review.

**E. Site Plan Review:** Site plan review is a means of ensuring that proposed developments will meet certain established standards of the Township, including applicable policies in the General Development Plan. The review process should be a mechanism whereby the property owner

or developer and Township officials coordinate a proposed development to the specific site while remaining harmonious to immediate neighborhoods and to the policies in the General Development Plan. All new developments will be processed through site plan review except single-family detached residences or two family attached residences on individual lots and new farm buildings. Completion of all site improvements shown on an approved site plan will be assured by appropriate financial guarantees.

### **12.03 Regulation of Land Division**

Land may be divided into smaller parcels by one of three methods: by metes and bounds descriptions, by platting under the Land Division Act, and as a condominium under the Condominium Act.

In the first method, review at the Township level is made by the administration to ensure compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and other Township regulations. This is usually a simple process; major issues regarding General Development policies are usually not involved. However, overlay-zoning districts might add some complexity to this part of the review process. Nevertheless, Planning Commission or Township Board review is not a part of this method of land division.

Subdividing, or platting, is a more complex method of land division and is regulated by the Land Division Act and the Township's subdivision ordinance. This method of subdividing involves technical review by the Township Engineer and Planner, Planning Commission recommendations, and Township Board action on the various stages of the plat. This process is aimed primarily at zoning compliance, compliance with the General Development Plan, proper vehicular and pedestrian circulation, future street extensions, buildable lots, proper relationship with neighboring properties, and provision of all public facilities and utilities. The Township's review should be coordinated with those of County and State agencies. Subdivision review should be used as a means for the Township to ensure that proper infrastructure planning and construction occur without public expense and that natural features are protected.

The site condominium is the third method of land division. In this method, land ownership is divided through the Condominium Act. Purchasers acquire fee simple rights to described physical spaces in which dwelling units may be constructed. (Site condominiums may also be used for non-residential developments.) The site condominium is a variation on the principals of land division involved in subdividing. However, the Condominium Act does not provide a specific review process, as does the Subdivision Control Act. Since the issues and interests are the same from the Township's point of view in either approach to land division, the Township's review process for site condominiums should be as similar as possible to that exercised in subdivision review. The site plan review process should be used to review proposed site condominium developments. Completion of all improvements shown on an approved site plan will be assured by appropriate financial guarantees.

### **12.04 Infrastructure**

- A. Roads:** All public roads in Saline Township except US-12 are under the jurisdiction of the Washtenaw County Road Commission. Costs of road construction and maintenance are the responsibility of the Road Commission or MDOT. New developments must provide internal roads at the developer's expense. The developer should also be required to pay a reasonable share of any improvements to existing roads, or future roads proposed in this General

Development Plan, which may be required to adequately and safely serve a new development. An example of this policy would be paving of unpaved roads. The reasonable shares should be negotiated by the developer and the agency with jurisdiction, and all agreements should be in place before the Township grants final development approval.

- B. Public Utilities:** System maintenance is financed by user fees. Developers must be required to construct, at their expense, lines and appurtenances from the existing or future trunk sewers needed to serve their properties. The Township's policy is that general fund money will not be used to support the water and sanitary sewer systems.
- C. Stormwater Drainage:** On-site retention of stormwater is a requirement of all developments. Large-scale retention areas serving several properties will be encouraged, in place of retention areas on each property. Drainage courses, retention areas, and outlets should be constructed at the developer's expense, and should be maintained at the expense of the property served by the facilities. Long-term maintenance of all segments of a drainage system should be established in an acceptable manner before the Township gives final development approval. Open drainage facilities, such as drainage courses and retention areas, should be designed as landscape features, maintained in a manner appropriate for the character and setting of the features, and should remain accessible for use by the property owners.

## **12.05 The Building Code**

A building code is a compilation of rules, regulations, and standards designed for the construction, alteration, and removal of buildings and structures to better promote the health, safety, and welfare of the community. Building permits should not be issued until zoning conformance has been ascertained.

## **12.06 Other Regulations**

Legal regulations are sometimes only the beginning in real Plan implementation. A most significant share of the responsibility of implementing the Plan rests on private efforts. A township resident has substantial influence in determining the appearance of the township and influencing public opinion. The influence of an alert and informed citizenry may well compensate in a large part for the limited authority vested in the Township. A Plan cannot be successfully implemented in the absence of government coordination and educated public support.

## **12.07 Capital Improvement Program**

One of the most important non-regulatory tools a township has available to implement a Plan is the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This listing of proposed public facility and infrastructure improvements over the next six to ten years includes a description of each project, its location, cost, means of financing and timing. The first year of the CIP is the capital budget and as each year is completed a new year is added at the end. This tool alerts citizens and developers of the intention of township authorities to make certain improvements in particular places at particular times. This helps coordinate private investment, prevents scattered development and prevents development occurring at a too rapid rate.



## **PART XIII**

### **PLAN MONITORING PROGRAM**

#### **13.01 Introduction**

The planning process, in order to be effective, must be continuous and must be part of the day-to-day decisions that affect the physical character of the Township. Thus, the General Development Plan must be in a form that encourages its regular use in the planning process. The General Development Plan is, in effect, the continuously changing representation of the Township's policies for the future. If the General Development Plan is to perform its proper function in the continuous planning process, it must be updated on a regular basis. The General Development Plan will be evaluated yearly to ensure that policies are consistent with the objectives of the General Development Plan. A major review of the comprehensive plan should be made at intervals no longer than 5 years to enable the Planning Commission and Township Board to see the implications of accumulated annual revisions and to apply new perspectives to adopted policies. Annual reviews might indicate the need for a major review in less than 5 years.

#### **13.02 Benefits of a Monitoring Program**

There are several benefits to the Township from a regular monitoring program.

1. The General Development Plan will be kept up to date.
2. The maintenance program broadens the area of community agreement on basic development policies over time. The process invites reconsideration of alternatives to major decisions and encourages exploration of new issues and secondary questions.
3. Annual review of the General Development Plan will keep current the Planning Commission and Township Boards' knowledge of the plan's elements. Along with the General Development Plans use in day-to-day decision making, the annual review process will assure that the General Development Plan will be a living document, that its policies will not be frozen in time.
4. Annual review will avoid delays that might otherwise be caused by calls for more study on certain issues before the basic plan is adopted. An annual review program assures that issues that require further examination will be studied at proper levels of detail at later times, and the policy changes resulting from such studies will be made in the plan.

#### **13.03 Description of the Program**

The maintenance program will have two objectives:

1. To determine the extent to which the Township is actually implementing the policies of the General Development Plan; and

- 2.** To determine that the General Development Plans policies are still desirable and appropriate in light of changing circumstances.

The basis of the maintenance program will consist of an annual review by the Planning Commission. Such review might result in a change to a portion of the plan reflecting either a policy area or a geographic area. The results of the review will be forwarded to the Township Board in a report.

The actual components of an annual review will be determined by the Planning Commission at the start of work. The following should be among the elements studied by the Commission; others might be added as events suggest.

- A.** Development proposals approved or denied, rezoning petitions, site plans, and subdivision plats.
- B.** Land use regulations, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance amendments made in the past year or expected to be needed in the future.
- C.** Building permits issued, by land use categories; estimate of the number of dwelling units, by type, added to the housing stock; estimates of the current population of the planning area.
- D.** State equalized evaluation by assessor's categories; track changes in agricultural and development classifications.
- E.** Traffic counts; relation to road capacities.
- F.** Programmed road improvements.
- G.** Changes in public transportation service during the past year and proposed in the future that affect the planning area.
- H.** Land divisions, other than in approved subdivision plats and condominium site plans.
- I.** Major zoning and land use changes on the perimeter of the planning area in the past year and those that are likely to occur in the coming year.
- J.** Policy changes by adjacent municipalities that affect Saline Township, in the past year and that are likely to occur in the coming year.