

3.0 District Analysis

3.1 Existing Conditions

The Corridor Improvement District consists of 327 parcels that total 1,575 acres. The purpose of the Corridor Improvement Authority is to promote economic growth and redevelopment of the corridor. While there is currently a great deal of use variety in the District, the Township is moving toward a change-over in land uses consistent with the Future Land Use plan (page 4). Therefore, to understand the distribution of land uses in the District, existing land uses must be considered in the context of designated future land uses classifications (see Table, right). That over a quarter of corridor land is vacant demonstrates the great amount of development and redevelopment potential within the corridor.

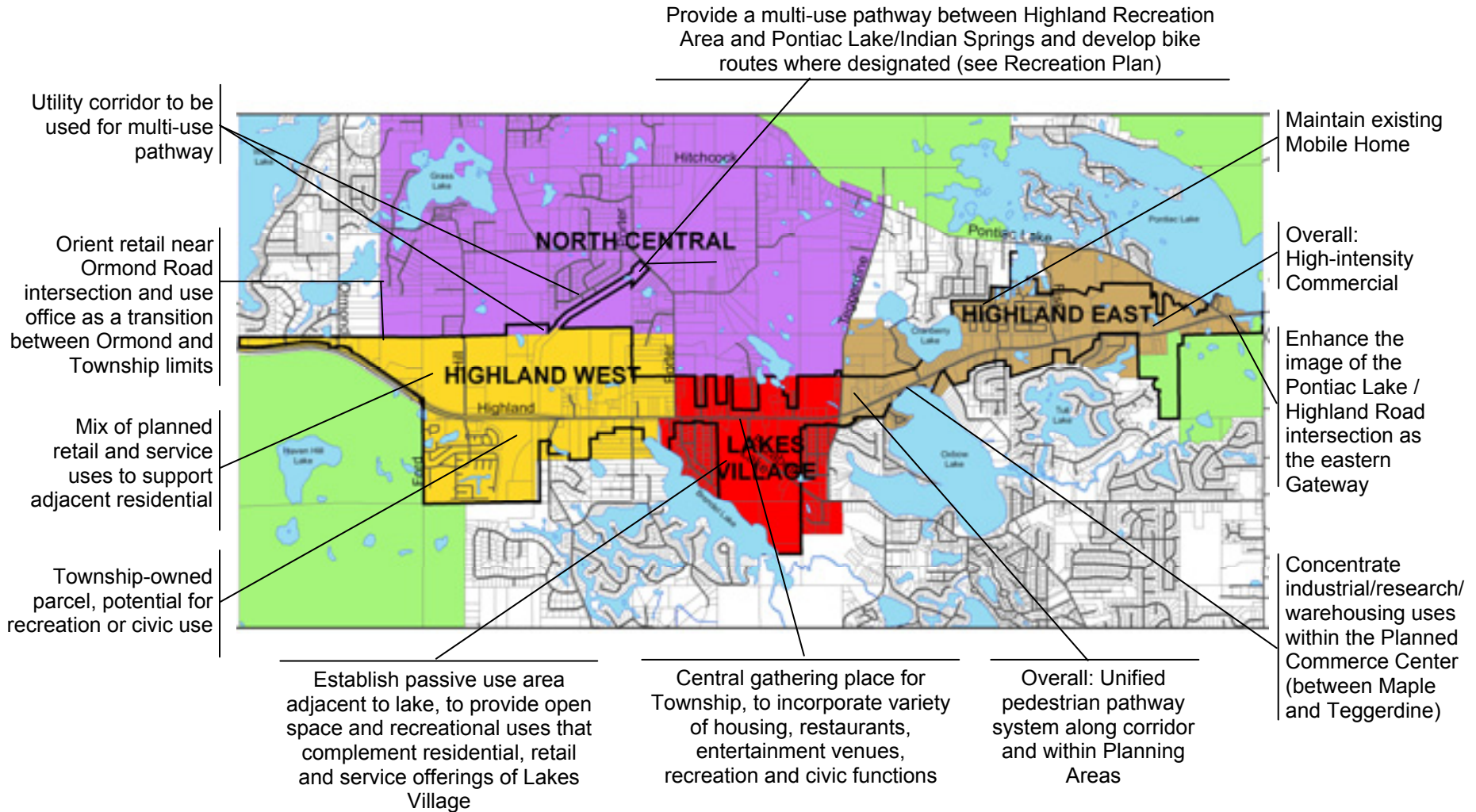
The Township is working toward concentrating higher-density residential and non-residential uses in the Highland Road Corridor. Allowing the mix of uses achieves many community benefits: establishes a built-in customer base for corridor businesses; provides a healthier environment for residents as they can walk or bike to stores; and increases the social well-being of the community as people are likely to run into their neighbors at the store, or during their trip to the store. When evaluating future land uses, remember that the *Planned Neighborhood* and *Planned Community* designations incorporate residential and commercial components (see page 8 for complete definitions).

Commercial uses in the Township are intentionally located on Highland Road. According to 2006 Township Assessor records, more than ½ of the existing ground floor square footage in a Corridor Improvement District is commercial real property:

- Residential ground floor area: 106,634 square feet (5.8%)
- Industrial ground floor area: 179,313 square feet (9.8%)
- Commercial ground floor area: 1,541,836 square feet (84.4%)

Existing Land Uses of District Properties		
Vacant		25.9%
<u>Future Land Uses of Vacant Land</u>		
Planned Business	15.0%	
Planned Commerce	2.5%	
Planned Community	13.0%	
Planned Neighborhood	44.0%	
Satalite Business	2.6%	
Residential		11.4%
<u>Future Land Uses of Residential Land</u>		
Planned Business	8.6%	
Planned Commerce	0.4%	
Planned Community	38.0%	
Planned Neighborhood	35.0%	
Resort / Rural Residential	6.5%	
Recreation		13.2%
<u>Future Land Uses of Recreation Land</u>		
Planned Business	7.5%	
Planned Commerce	0.1%	
Planned Community	21.9%	
Planned Neighborhood	2.4%	
Regional Parks and Rec	68.0%	
Public / Quasi Public		11.6%
<u>Future Land Uses of Public / Quasi Public Land</u>		
Planned Business	4.5%	
Planned Neighborhood	31.6%	
Public / Quasi Public	32.8%	
Regional Parks and Rec	25.6%	
Schools	5.4%	
Mobile Home Park		14.8%
<u>Future Land Uses of MHP Land</u>		
Mobile Home Park	98.5%	
Planning Community	1.5%	
Multiple Family		1.5%
<u>Future Land Uses of Multiple Family Land</u>		
Planned Community	38.0%	
Planned Neighborhood	62.0%	
Industrial		1.8%
<u>Future Land Uses of Industrial Land</u>		
Planned Business	9.6%	
Planned Commerce	89.8%	
Satalite Business	1.1%	
Commercial		15.9%
<u>Future Land Uses of Commercial Land</u>		
Recreation	6.8%	
Planned Business	51.8%	
Planned Commerce	7.4%	
Planned Community	15.8%	
Planned Neighborhood	6.4%	
Resort / Rural Residential	1.6%	
Satalite Business	10.1%	
Agriculture		1.2%
<u>Future Land Uses of Agricultural Land</u>		
Planned Community	100.0%	
Utilities		2.7%
Total		100.0%

Figure 5: Highlights of Planning Areas Identified in the 2006 Master Plan



White Lake Township adopted its current Master Plan in October 2006. The Plan divided the Township into twelve Planning Areas, which are areas that have similar neighborhood characteristics. To ensure that future development forwards the goals of the Plan, specific recommendations were made for each District. Projects within the corridor should support the Plan's recommendations, which are summarized on Figure 5.

3.2 Development of the Corridor

Highland Road is a major thoroughfare, and as such, development will most likely occur without a Corridor Improvement District. It is reasonable to predict that the type of development vary greatly, however. Quality development and businesses are attracted to communities that offer a high-quality of life to their residents. They look for communities that care about themselves, as evidenced by reducing vacant or blighted properties, increasing recreation opportunities, maintaining appropriate civic facilities, providing quality public infrastructure, implementation of marketing and business recruitment programs, and ensuring the aesthetic environment is pedestrian-friendly and welcoming. Each of these are functions of a Corridor Authority.

The goal of the White Lake Township Corridor Authority is to ensure future development generates jobs, attracts similar investment over the long-term, and is of a quality that is desirable from a regional and County perspective. The Authority is not introducing new uses per se; virtually all commercial and industrial uses in the District have been allowed over the last 30 years. The vast majority of all major non-residential development in White Lake has historically occurred in the corridor.

The spin-off effects of quality development in the District must also be recognized. It is more than reasonable to assume property values will increase for land adjacent to the District. There are many examples in Michigan of land value increases attributable to successful Tax Increment Financing Authority (TIFA) or Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Districts: City of Royal Oak, City of Rochester, and Commerce Township to name a few.



Highland Road, looking east. Integrating and coordinating pathway, pedestrian amenities, environmentally-friendly landscaping, boulevards and entry signs are techniques that would announce to visitors that they have entered the White Lake Township community.

3.3 Relationship to Adjoining Neighborhoods

Non-residential uses promoted in the District - retail, office, service and restaurant - are generally compatible with adjoining residential areas. Many of the establishments are typical of corridor commercial, and benefit nearby residents. Visual transitions between uses created by fences, landscaping or topography can be abrupt, and pedestrian connections between are not always continuous or apparent.

There are businesses in the District that, in their current condition, are not compatible with nearby residential neighborhoods, existing and planned. Such incompatible uses tend to be located east of Teggerdine Road, and designated as *Industrial* on the existing land use map (Figure 3). The Master Plan calls for incorporating these businesses into a Planned Commerce center, which would have a campus-like setting with the highest levels of visual and noise buffering. A unified site plan would adhere to strict access management principles to minimize conflicts and maximize safety.

3.3 Residential Displacement

Several residences, and residential developments, are located within the Corridor Improvement District boundaries. According to 2006 White Lake Township Assessor records, 84 parcels are classified as residential. This Plan does not propose to displace residents. Residences are needed in the District, particularly in Lakes Village, to provide the 24-hour population indicative of thriving places. Conversions of residential land to non-residential use, consistent with the 2006 Master Plan, are expected to occur as market demand dictates. Residences in areas with non-residential future land use designations are expected to leave only as willing sellers.

3.4 Property Values

According to White Lake Township Assessor records for the 2005 to 2006 year, the base taxable value was approximately \$92,855,270. Of this amount, County, Township and Huron Clinton Metro Parks Authority (HCMA) millage rates totaling 7.8113 resulted in tax revenues of approximately \$725,320. As property values increase, the incremental rise in tax revenues generated by properties in the District will be allocated to fund projects proposed in this plan.

3.5 Transportation

Highland Road, or M-59, is a Regional Highway (see Thoroughfare Plan, right). While serving as the Township's main east-west corridor, it carries a high volume of traffic to US-23 to the west and Telegraph Road (US-24) to the east. Highland Road is the only roadway in White Lake that is under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation.

The intersecting roads range from major arterials (Ormond, Bogie Lake, Elizabeth Lake, Teggerdine and Pontiac Lake), to minor arterials (Ford, Hill, Porter, Fisk), and to Local Roads. Bogie Lake Road is a safety improvement zone, based on detailed study by the Township. Also, road alignments and/or signal improvements are recommended at the Elizabeth Lake, Sunny Beach/Church Driveway and Pontiac Lake intersections.



Highland Road, looking east. Integrating and coordinating pathway, pedestrian amenities, landscaping, boulevards and entry signs are techniques that will announce to visitors that they have entered the White Lake Township community.

3.6 Alternative Modes of Transportation

Public transportation is not yet available in White Lake Township, although the Township is working towards this goal. The Dublin Community Senior Center offers a local transportation program for area seniors.

The Township is also working towards a continuous multi-use pathway system. The existing the system has gaps, and lacks way-finding signage and safe pedestrian crossings. The vision is to have hard-surface paths run the length of the corridor, and connect to recreation areas and nearby neighborhoods. A major infrastructure element of the pathway system is a safe pedestrian and equestrian crossing.

Figure 7: Thoroughfare Plan



Source: White Lake Township Master Plan, 2006

3.7 Services

White Lake Township has a Water System Master Plan and a Sanitary Sewer System Master Plan. The Township has policies to ensure that development occurs within sewer and water districts, and at an intensity, or at densities, which can be supported by services. The Township is effectively directing growth to serviceable areas, and away from the rural or undeveloped areas that the Township intends to retain in their natural character.

There has been little need, historically, to provide municipal water Township-wide. The existing water mains service higher density residential developments, manufactured housing communities, and large business development zones. The Township anticipates more intense development on Highland Road, as well as other areas of the community, and therefore has a plan for extending water service where needed.

The parcels within the District boundary are within a sanitary sewer service area.

3.8 Competitive Qualities of the District

White Lake's District must compete locally and regionally to recruit, capture, and maintain a viable and diverse mix of businesses. Current uses in the corridor are not too dissimilar from adjacent communities like Waterford, Commerce and Highland Townships. Opportunities for White Lake to become competitive include, but are not limited to:

- ❑ Developing pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods. Lakes Village should become the model for other mixed-use communities that retain a strong residential element that compliments the retail development and provides a resident customer base.
- ❑ Increasing equestrian accessibility. Many residents of White Lake, as well as adjacent communities, are equestrians. Providing a Highland Road crossing would bring riders, followed by specialty businesses, into the District.

- ❑ Integrating lakes, recreation areas, trails with lodging, retail, restaurant and entertainment development with its *Four Seasons*, active community, image, distinguishes White Lake as a truly unique community in Oakland County.
- ❑ Redeveloping blighted or underutilized properties. White Lake Township has a number of important development and redevelopment sites, some of which are already in development stages. Others will require land assembly and possible relocation of incompatible uses before being development ready. These properties lie within the traditional business corridor that has demonstrated its suitability for shopping, personal and business services, entertainment, residential homes and government functions over many years.

In addition to land available for development, the Township has a long-range plan in place that clearly sets forth public policies aimed at encouraging development of these areas. These are included in the 2006 Master Plan: Planning Area and Focus Area descriptions, and the Design Guidelines.

- ❑ Timing of investment opportunities may be attractive to potential investors. Because much attention is to be given to improving the corridor, values in some parts of the District are likely to increase in the future. Therefore, the timing may be right for investment and redevelopment. Many properties may presently be undervalued. This indicates there may be opportunity for investors or business owners looking to capitalize on the District's untapped potential.
- ❑ The market support population is increasing. White Lake Township is a growing community with an estimated population of 33,260 persons living in 12,450 households (2010 estimate, SEMCOG 2030 Regional Development Forecast). By 2020, the Township's population is expected to have grown by 3.4% (34,400 people) and its number of households is expected to increase by 6.4% (13,245).

An increasing population is good news to retailers and service providers who can count on a strong local market for goods and services. With its central location, the Township's District is poised to become the premiere destination for day-to-day shopping, institutional services, entertainment and dining, particularly for that segment of the population that has grown weary of traveling great distances to access these amenities. The simple fact is that *community* is a sought-after commodity. The concept of Lakes Village strives to achieve this "sense of place" that will be critical to giving White Lake a unique identity.

- ❑ Historical resources have the ability to add economic vitality to the District. The Fisk Farm is a historical site in the District located north of Highland Road, east of Fisk Road. The 1855 farm house, 1976 one-room Thompson School, barn, pighouse, windmill, two corn cribs, garage and out-house site on three acres. Owned by the Township and operated by the White Lake Township Historical Society, this facility is an educational and social resource for the community: a festival is held in September, a Christmas program in December, and school field trips throughout the year.



The Historic Fisk Farm is an economic asset.

- The success of the Township's Corridor Improvement Plan will depend in large part on the ability to attract residents and visitors on a daily basis. Government and institutional users can complement the grocery, drug store, dining and entertainment venues as major uses that draw shoppers to the district for repeat visits. The Township Hall, Library, and Fisk Farm are all physically located within the Township's District. Recreation resources at White Lake Oaks Park immediately adjoin the district. Alpine Valley Ski Resort is located in the District, as will be future public recreation resources.

3.9 Job Creation

An expected outcome of tax increment financing (TIF) is job creation. This tool spurs commercial development by financing projects that attract new businesses and investment. As a result, new businesses and investment in the District generate local jobs. So effective is the TIF tool for job creation, that it is a catalyst for job creation as outline in the State of Michigan's *Jobs Today Initiative*.

The White Lake Township Corridor Improvement District is estimated to generate nearly 700 construction jobs and 1,800 full-time retail/service jobs as property reaches a build-out status¹. This translates into 14 construction jobs and 37 retail/service jobs each year corridor improvements occur. This estimate accounts for direct employment only.

In addition to direct jobs, 'indirect' or 'spin-off' jobs are expected. A common, and often referred to as conservative, multiplier of 1.5 can be used to estimate indirect jobs. For every two jobs

generated by development in the corridor, a third permanent, indirect, job is created. Applying this multiplier to the White Lake Township Corridor Improvement District results in approximately 2,700 permanent, full-time jobs (1,800 direct and 900 indirect), and 1,050 part-time jobs (700 direct and 350 indirect).

3.10 Present Value Analysis of the District

Without the public involvement proposed by the Development and TIF Plan, the total taxable value of the District properties in 2032 is anticipated to be significantly lower than projected by the TIF Plan. This results from the cumulative, positive impact of improving property values during the Authority's formative years, then compounding that increase in value over the remaining life of the District.

A present value comparison with and without the Corridor Improvement Authority is presented, by taxing jurisdiction, in Appendix B, at the end of this Development and TIF Plan.

¹ Estimate based on vacant land with non-residential future land use classification, assuming a 70% Buildable Site, and a 20% Lot Coverage (1.2 million gross square feet of commercial space in District). Employment data is averaged from actual projects around the Country (temporary construction), and from studies and Community Impact Statements in southeast Michigan (full-time retail/service).

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