



Village Of  
Lake Orion

# Master Plan 2002 - 2022



Village of Lake Orion, Michigan



# Master Plan 2002-2022

Village of Lake Orion, Michigan

Prepared for:  
Village of Lake Orion Planning Commission

Adopted January 6, 2003

With assistance from:



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**Resolution of Adoption**

**2002 - 2022 Master Plan**

**Village Planning Commission  
Village of Lake Orion  
Oakland County, Michigan**

By Commission Member Brunckhorst

**Whereas**, Michigan Public Act 285 of 1931, as amended, the Municipal Planning Act, permits a Village Planning Commission to adopt a Master Plan for the physical development and/or redevelopment of the community, and

**Whereas**, the Village of Lake Orion Planning Commission has caused such a Master Plan to be produced including text, statistics, maps, charts and a future land use map, and

**Whereas**, in the preparation of the Master Plan, the Planning Commission has made detailed, comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and future needs and has solicited comments from Village residents and property owners, and

**Whereas**, on January 6, 2003, the Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on the Master Plan in accordance with the provisions of Section 8 of Public Act 285 of 1931, as amended, and

**Whereas**, public notice of said Public Hearing was posted in the Lake Orion Village Hall, 37 E. Flint Street, Lake Orion, Michigan 48362, on December 13, 2002, and published in the Lake Orion Review, a newspaper of general circulation in the Village of Lake Orion, on December 18, 2002, and

**Whereas**, the Planning Commission has recorded and duly considered all of the comments made at said Public Hearing,

**Now Therefore Be It Resolved,**

**That** the Village Planning Commission for the Village of Lake Orion, Oakland County, Michigan, at its regular meeting held on January 6, 2003, does hereby adopt the 2002-2022 Master Plan dated December 11, 2002, as amended at the January 6, 2003 meeting, and

**That** the Chairman and the Secretary of the Planning Commission shall record this action in said Master Plan by their identifying signatures, and

**That** one attested copy of said Master Plan shall be certified to the Village Council, and

**That** one attested copy of said Master Plan shall be certified to the Oakland County Register of Deeds.

Seconded by Commission Member Albert and Adopted.

  
Jeffrey Butler, Chairman

 1-7-03  
Collin Brunckhorst, Secretary

I, Arlene M. Nichols, Clerk of the Village of Lake Orion, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution duly adopted by the Village Planning Commission of the Village of Lake Orion at a Regular Meeting held on January 6, 2003.

  
Arlene M. Nichols, Clerk

## **Acknowledgments**

The participation and cooperation of community leaders and residents in the preparation of the Master Plan 2002-2022 is greatly appreciated. In particular, we acknowledge the efforts of the following individuals:

### **Village Council**

Tom Albert, President  
Harry K. Stephen, President Pro-Tem  
Mark Brancheau  
James F. Cummins  
Douglas L. Dendel  
Robert Hollenbeck  
William (Bill) E. Siver

### **Planning Commission**

Jeffrey Butler, Chairperson  
Tom Albert, Village President  
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### **Village Manager**

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### **Village Clerk**

Arlene M. Nichols

### **Planning and Zoning Coordinator**

Nancy Patterson

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## **SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION**

### *Planning Process*

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In mid 2001, the Village of Lake Orion Planning Commission initiated an update of the Village's Master Plan to guide decisions affecting development and redevelopment in the community. The last Master Plan for the Village of Lake Orion was adopted in 1990, over a decade ago. Since that time, the Village has experienced economic and demographic changes, encountered pressures from development in the surrounding areas and expressed its desire for the improvement and redevelopment of areas of the Village.

This plan seeks to address the potential and limitations of the Village of Lake Orion, while reflecting the unique characteristics of the Village and its residents. The Village is an older, established community with limited areas for new growth and development. As a result, this plan must address the redevelopment opportunities that are likely to occur and the strategies for preservation and rehabilitation of existing built areas. Since the last plan was adopted, several principles of community planning have gained renewed popularity, such as community walkability and accessibility for pedestrians, protection of natural features such as Lake Orion and Paint Creek, and traditional downtown development as a key to community economic growth. This plan addresses these, along with other important planning principles and provides guidance in the form of goals and objectives, policies and guidelines, and the maps included in this plan.

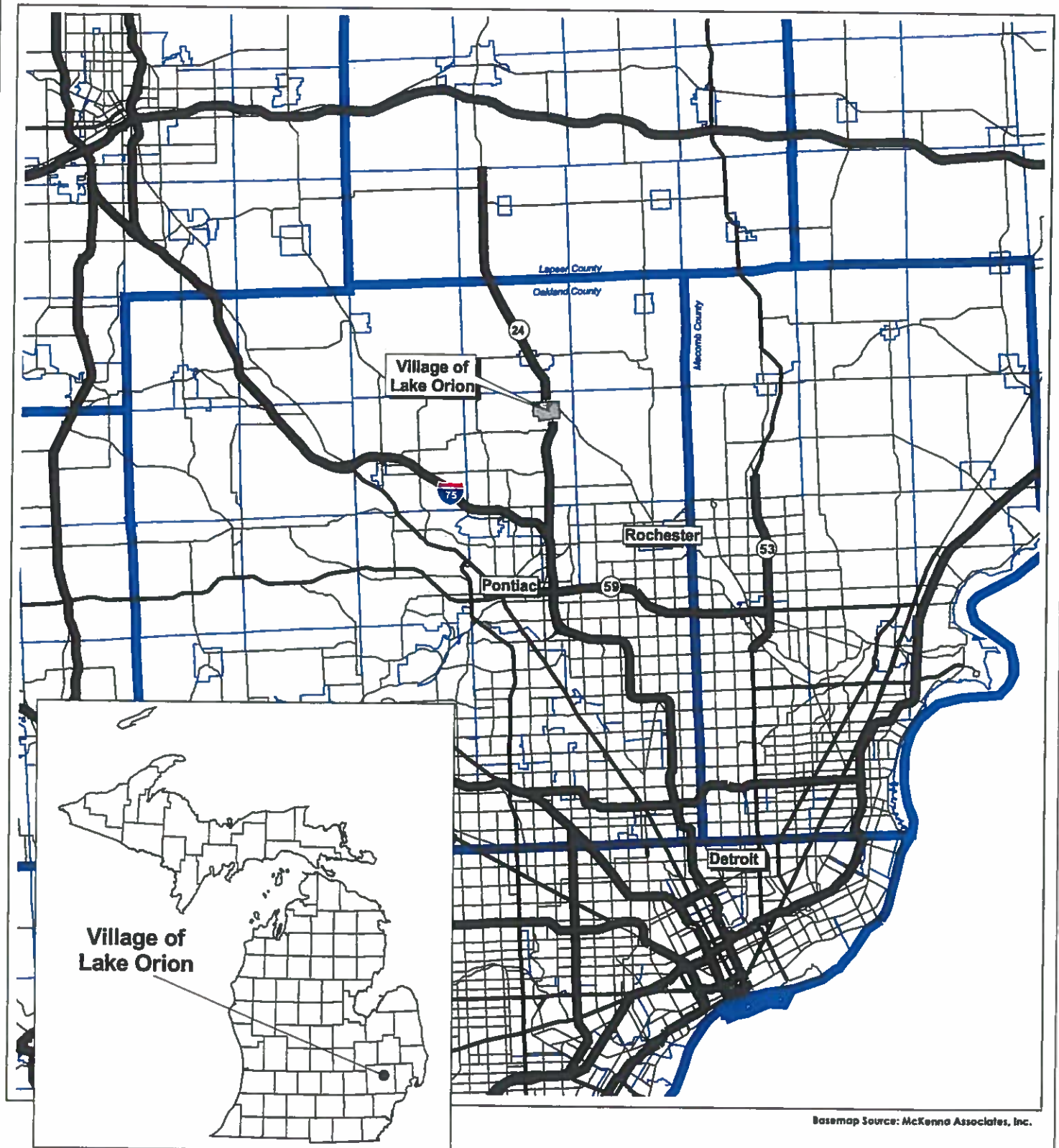
The Master Plan is the result of data collection and analysis, meetings and discussions by the Planning Commission, and input from Village residents. It consists of text, charts, maps and analysis regarding development within the community. The Future Land Use Plan Map provides the basis for the Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance.

### *Regional Location*

---

The Village of Lake Orion is located in Southeast Michigan, in Orion Township in the northeast quadrant of Oakland County. Named for the Lake within its borders, the Village is approximately 1.26 square miles in area and located approximately seven miles north of the City of Pontiac on M-24. Oxford Village is the nearest incorporated municipality, three miles north of Lake Orion. Other nearby villages include Leonard and Ortonville. The employment centers of Rochester Hills and Auburn Hills are located to the south of the Village.

## Village of Lake Orion, Michigan



Basemap Source: McKenna Associates, Inc.

### Map 1 - Regional Location

## **SECTION 2**

# **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### *Introduction*

---

This section sets forth goals and objectives which provide overall direction for the Village of Lake Orion Master Plan 2022. The goals and objectives address many land use related issues in the Village, including: single family residential, multiple family residential, commercial areas, parks and recreation, the lake and environment, circulation, and community facilities. Planning and administrative issues related to the implementation of the Master Plan are also addressed.

On April 29, 2002, a "storyboarding" session was held in Lake Orion to elicit ideas and form consensus about the goals for the Master Plan for 2022. Over 30 Village officials participated in the session, including members of the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Village Council, Downtown Development Authority, and Parks & Recreation Commission. The comments, priorities and information collected at the storyboarding session were used as a basis for developing the Master Plan. The participants' answers are reflected in the following goals and objectives.

A complete report of the storyboarding session results is contained in Appendix A of this plan.

### *Single Family Residential*

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#### **Goal**

Reinforce the single family residential character and integrity of neighborhoods in the Village, so as to assure their continued long term viability.

#### **Objectives**

1. Promote and encourage small town village character by protecting and preserving historic homes and encouraging historic preservation, encouraging village-character landscaping, changing the zoning ordinance to require uniform village-style setbacks, and adding historic street lighting throughout neighborhoods.

## Goals and Objectives

2. Encourage and promote owner-occupied single family residential dwellings in all neighborhoods.
3. Improve living amenities in all residential neighborhoods through high standards of housing design and construction, and access to usable, convenient open space.
4. Strengthen and protect the viability of neighborhoods by controlling the expansion of existing and proposed nonresidential uses which are adjacent to residential areas, and separating necessary commercial expansion from residential areas by open space, greenbelts, and other buffers.
5. Maintain and improve the environmental quality of all residential areas and encourage and carefully monitor reinvestment in single family housing areas, especially in blighted and low owner-occupied areas.
6. Develop and maintain residential density patterns which relate to the Lake's natural and manmade environmental features.
7. Create opportunities for single family redevelopment, providing alternative housing choices such as cluster housing and condominium options, while maintaining current single family residential densities.
8. Discourage the conversion of single family dwellings to multiple family housing.
9. Address neighborhood blight, such as parking on lawns, litter control, and run-down houses, by enforcing existing ordinances.

## Multiple Family Residential

### **Goal**

Recognize that multiple family housing serves as an important housing choice for the community, satisfying the needs of people with different income levels and lifestyles.

### **Objectives**

1. Limit multiple family residential development to areas where they act as buffers between lower density single family residential and higher intensity land uses, such as commercial, office, and major roadways, and only where it can be adequately served by public and private services without unreasonable disruption to the level of services enjoyed by other residents.



## Goals and Objectives

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2. Avoid encroaching on existing single family neighborhoods with new multiple family residential uses.
3. In areas where multiple family is allowed, require appropriate investment in site improvements, provision of off-street parking and adequate infrastructure with sensitivity to natural features and the need to create a stable and secure living environment.
4. Maintain the quality of existing multiple-family developments through strict enforcement of Village ordinances, security, housing inspections, and beautification promotion.

## General and Downtown Commercial

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### **Goal**

Promote and maintain a well-planned system of commercial areas to efficiently serve the needs and desires of Village residents, while strengthening the Village's tax and employment base.

### **Objectives**

#### Downtown

1. Promote and encourage downtown as the preferred location for future retail, office, restaurant, and entertainment development and as a key element to the community's small town character.
2. Provide adequate off-street parking for commercial uses, including joint-use parking and additional off-street parking lots in the downtown.
3. Support and encourage mixed use development in the downtown and near downtown area.

#### M-24 Corridor

1. Concentrate general commercial areas on the M-24 thoroughfare for maximum access to the trade area population.
2. Discourage commercial development along the lakefront, particularly commercial uses that do not permit the public to view and enjoy the Lakefront.

## Goals and Objectives

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3. Enforce sound land use and zoning policies, which control the expansion of strip commercial and the unplanned location of isolated commercial activities.
4. Enhance the appearance of the M-24 commercial corridor through development of unified streetscape improvements, including the evaluation of a boulevard concept for M-24 between Broadway and Flint Street.

### General

1. Continue to maintain and improve enforcement of building codes and ordinances for existing and future commercial development, with particular attention to the strict enforcement of the sign ordinance.
2. Encourage the redevelopment of abandoned or neglected commercial lots and consolidate commercial development in areas that currently exist as commercial areas.
3. Promote commercial development and redevelopment on sites with adequate depth and area for expansion, off-street parking and landscaping.
4. Review and revise off street parking requirements with the purpose of generally decreasing parking requirements, as appropriate.
5. Maintain high standards of site design and encourage controlled access, frontage beautification, buffering devices such as walks and landscaping, and attractive, controlled signage to promote long-term commercial stability.
6. Ensure quality design is an essential component of future development by creating and employing comprehensive urban design criteria to guide future commercial development which respects the realities of small town sites, including setbacks, building height, massing, scale and detail. Additionally, provide incentives and mechanisms for commercial tenants and owners to facilitate site and building improvements coordinated with the Master Plan, Mainstreet Program Facade Improvement Guidelines, Downtown Charrette Plan and other Village plans.

## Parks and Recreation

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### **Goal**

Provide adequate park and open space opportunities for all residents of the Village.

## Goals and Objectives

### **Objectives**

1. Maintain and improve the quality of existing parks by providing adequate funding to support the current system, including the upkeep and maintenance of park facilities to promote long term beautification and litter control.
2. Improve the quality of existing parks with equipment updates and continued maintenance while continually considering new parks and open spaces as opportunities arise.
3. Develop linkages between Lake Orion's inland and waterfront parks to assure a cohesive and linear open space and recreation system accessible to residential neighborhoods. In particular, develop a safe pedestrian and non-motorized linkage across M-24 between the Lake and downtown.
4. Encourage the development of the Polly Ann - Paint Creek Link connecting the Village to the Township and regional trail systems.
5. Update the Village's Recreation Master Plan as required by the Michigan DNR to maintain eligibility for grant funds. Implement the recommendations of the Village's Recreation Master Plan.
6. Coordinate recreation program development and encourage cooperative use, development and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities between the Village, Township and Lake Orion schools.

## Lake and Environment

### **Goal**

Provide for the protection, maintenance, and balanced use of the Village's natural resources and environment for the economic support of local property values, natural beauty and character, ecological needs and historic significance.

### **Objectives**

#### General

1. Encourage the preservation and enhancement of vegetation and trees and promote street tree planting to help preserve the residential character of the Village. Require Village character landscaping for all developments.

## Goals and Objectives

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2. Maintain and enhance the historical character of the Village's older structures, and encourage the official designation of historic buildings and sites.
3. Coordinate planning efforts with the Township to minimize environmental impacts of development on the Lake and other sites which may negatively influence environmental quality in the Village.
4. Encourage the development of environmentally safe and cost-effective solid waste management systems, which include recycling, composting and other techniques which could reduce the waste stream generated by the Village.

### Lake

1. Maintain and enhance the scenic value of the Village's Lakefront by preserving viewsheds and limiting nonresidential development along the Lake.
2. Maintain and enhance the scenic value of Paint Creek by preserving viewsheds.
3. Promote the protection of Lake water quality by continuing to work with local community groups, and through review of site development for control of runoff and minimization of erosion. Maintain and improve open space along the Lakefront
4. Consider techniques including keyhole regulations, to reasonably limit the impact and number of boats on Lake Orion to protect its value as a recreational resource and an ecological system.
5. Educate Village residents about the ecology of inland lakes and streams and how various lake uses may affect water environmental quality.
6. Work with Orion Township and other municipalities to address stormwater drainage, runoff, and Lake issues.

## Circulation

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### **Goal**

Provide and maintain a safe, efficient transportation system which promotes accessibility throughout the community, and accommodates the vehicular and pedestrian circulation needs of Village residents.



## Goals and Objectives

### **Objectives**

1. Improve the function and appearance of local streets by encouraging Village character landscaping with street trees, lighting, and sidewalks and limit residential streets to local traffic.
2. Develop and improve pedestrian walks, where possible, to link uses such as shopping, offices, and residential areas to parks, open spaces and activity centers.
3. Encourage the development of a pedestrian crossing across M-24 near the intersection of M-24 and Broadway to facilitate access.
4. Recognize the need for alternative forms of circulation, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities and encourage non-motorized trail development, including development of the Polly Ann - Paint Creek Link.
5. Encourage access to transit service for the citizens of Lake Orion.
6. Encourage the use of common entrances and shared parking facilities along M-24.
7. Consider enhancing the integrity of the Village grid system with the completion of platted, incomplete streets and linkages with the existing circulation system.

## Community Facilities

### **Goal**

Provide all segments of the population with high quality and affordable community services and facilities.

### **Objectives**

1. Prepare and annually update a comprehensive capital improvements plan for Village facilities and major equipment expenditures.
2. Monitor the storm drainage system for problem areas, and encourage maintenance of existing systems.

### Goals and Objectives

3. Maximize the efficient use of existing community facilities and encourage the addition to or reuse of community facilities in the downtown which are consistent with the Village's plan and appropriate.
4. Encourage the development of underground electric, phone, cable, and other utilities with new construction in the Village.

### Planning and Administration

#### **Goal**

Ensure ongoing community planning and the implementation of Master Plan recommendations.

#### **Objectives**

1. Review, update, and amend the zoning and subdivision regulations to address the goals and objectives of the Master Plan.
2. Revisit and update, if necessary, the Master Plan at least every five years to address changing conditions, redevelopment proposals, and the development of new needs by residents.
3. Use the Master Plan to assist in recommending priorities for long-range capital improvement programming.
4. Cooperate with nearby communities through the exchange of information on development and redevelopment issues, and other shared interest, such as community facilities and services, and development along shared boundaries.

## SECTION 3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Existing Land Use Analysis

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#### GENERAL OVERVIEW

In its nearly century and a half of existence, land use and development patterns in the Village of Lake Orion have reflected the continuing, and unchanging, presence of the Village's primary natural resource and namesake - Lake Orion. At the same time, however, the impact of the Lake on the evolution and character of land uses has also reflected the changing world and the Village's place within it.

The Village began in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century as a land promotion endeavor that featured a beautiful Lake. After the Civil War and through the 1920's, it saw life as a popular Victorian summer resort and Chautauqua-like destination for the growing city of Detroit. For much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it remained a tranquil lakeside village insulated from the major effects of urban development. Today Lake Orion remains a unique lakeside residential community, yet finds itself a part of a dynamic and burgeoning suburban county in the sprawling Detroit metropolitan area.

Elements of these separate historic identities can still be seen in the Village's land use patterns and structure today. Their interesting, and sometimes awkward, juxtapositions continue to influence and enrich development decisions and community character. Lake Orion's origin and long history as a rural village can be seen in its gridded plat, wide mix of lot and home sizes, simple frame architecture, and rural street standards found in the oldest residential neighborhoods surrounding the downtown. This early development model has also continued to influence the expectations and standards for newer development.

The resort era brought the Lake islands into development for the first time, and helped make the Lake an early, well-known and popular destination within the Detroit metropolitan region. The later redevelopment of these resort developments then provided the opportunity to create the recreation and Lake-oriented residential neighborhoods that still exist.

Throughout this period the Village of Lake Orion continued its life as a typical Midwestern small town. The community's commercial and civic land uses grew and clustered together at the major intersections of key roads and entryways, creating what today is the downtown with its collection of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial and civic buildings.

## Existing Conditions

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The most recent identity of the Village is as a small town bedroom community closely linked to the larger metropolitan region around it. State Route M-24 is the most visible evidence of this and provides a major north-south transportation route through the region. The development and growth of this major transportation route and its related highway-oriented commercial development has had a direct and continuing impact on both commercial and residential land uses in the Village.

### **EXISTING LAND USE SURVEY**

The survey and examination of existing land uses is an essential first step in the preparation of a community Master Plan. The existing land use survey provides a snapshot of land use and development activity at a given moment in time, and becomes part of the community's historical record helping to tell its continuing story written in the pattern of its activities and land uses. When compared against previous land use surveys it reveals which land uses are growing in area and which are not, and where existing and/or potential land use conflicts may exist. As a community shapes its master plan and resolves and balances its land use and development issues, the land use survey remains a valuable resource and reference point.

McKenna Associates, Inc. conducted a windshield survey of the Village during May, 2002. Uses were categorized on a parcel-by-parcel basis and then mapped for analysis. The following is a brief description of each of the land use categories identified in this survey delineated on the Existing Land Use map (Map 2, page 15).

**Single Family Residential:** Improved land parcels having one family detached dwelling units in predominantly residential uses.

**Multiple Family Residential:** Improved land parcels occupied by structures containing dwelling units for two or more households in predominantly residential uses, including duplexes, flats, apartments, row houses, terrace dwellings (excluding commercial dwellings such as hotels, motels and campgrounds), and nursing homes.

**Office:** Improved land parcels used for professional services, such as medical and dental centers, financial institutions, and professional and business offices.

**Corridor Commercial:** Improved land parcels used for commercial activities primarily oriented toward highway visibility and automobile access. Structures are generally single-story, but uses may range from small local retail uses and gas stations to large national retail uses requiring large contiguous sites with large areas for parking.



## Existing Conditions

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**Downtown Commercial:** Downtown commercial land parcels primarily used for pedestrian-oriented ground floor office or commercial uses. Uses may range from small convenience stores to unique specialty outlets. Structures are generally built to the public right-of-way and may contain multiple stories with offices and/or residential uses, or storage on upper floors. Parking may be provided along the public street or in the rear of the structures.

**Industrial:** Improved land parcels used for manufacturing, assembling and general fabricating facilities, warehouses and other non-manufacturing uses primarily industrial in nature.

**Public:** Land parcels and facilities that are publicly operated and available to be used by the public. Public uses include public schools, government buildings, cemeteries, public recreation facilities and parks.

**Semi-Public:** Land areas and facilities which are privately owned and operated and available to be used by a limited number of people with particular interests, such as churches, private schools, sports clubs, fraternal organizations and other uses.

**Water:** All areas covered by water, including such features as lakes, channels, canals, creeks and streams.

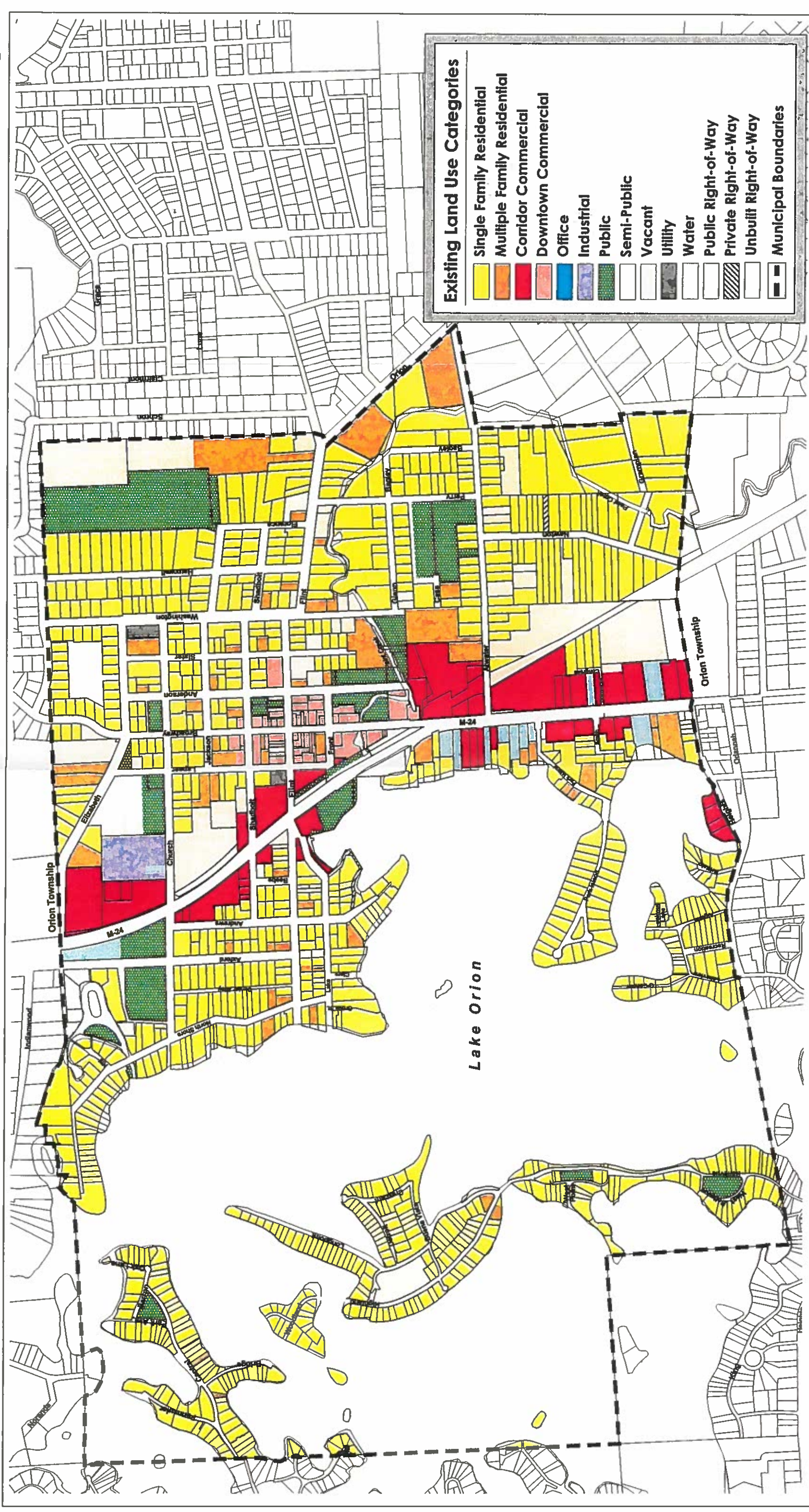
**Rights-of-Way:** All rights-of-way which are intended and/or used predominantly for transportation, including public roadways, thoroughfares, local streets and alleys, and those drainage, utility walkways, or communication uses which are contiguous to the transportation use.

**Utilities:** Improved land parcels containing above-ground utility or communication facilities including electric and gas generating plants, booster and transformer stations and related storage or service yards.

**Vacant:** Land not used for any of the above-defined uses.



# Village of Lake Orion, Michigan



**Map 2 - Existing Land Use**

Base Map Source: Oakland County GIS 1999  
Data Source: McKenna Associates, Inc. March 2002



Existing Conditions

**Table 1**  
**EXISTING LAND USE ACREAGE**  
Village of Lake Orion

	1990		2002		Change 1990 - 2002	
	<u>Acres</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>%</u>
Single Family Residential	244.9	30.2%	238.6	28.9%	- 6.3	-2.6%
Multiple Family Residential	29.0	3.6%	27.8	3.4%	-1.2	-4.1%
Office	5.3	0.7%	6.1	0.7%	0.8	15.1%
Downtown Commercial	--	--	7.8	0.9%	--	--
Corridor Commercial	--	--	31.8	3.9%	--	--
<b>Total Commercial<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>30.2</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>31.1%</b>
Industrial	2.3	0.3%	3.4	0.4%	1.1	47.8%
Public	30.8	3.8%	33.6	4.1%	2.8	9.1%
Semi-Public	9.5	1.2%	10.1	1.2%	0.6	6.3%
Private Recreation <sup>2</sup>	8.1	1.0%	0.0	0.0%	-8.1	-100.0%
Rights-of-Way	17.7	2.2%	70.0	8.5%	52.3	295.5%
Utilities	1.0	0.1%	0.9	0.1%	-0.1	-10.0%
Vacant	76.5	9.5%	37.3	4.5%	-39.2	-51.2%
Water	354.0	43.7%	357.0	43.3%	3.0	0.8%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>809.3</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>824.4</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15.1</b>	<b>1.9%</b>

Sources: 1990 Village of Lake Orion Master Plan and Land Use Survey conducted May 2002 by McKenna Associates, Inc.

<sup>1</sup>Commercial land uses were recorded as General Commercial and Convenience Commercial in 1990.  
<sup>2</sup>Private recreation land (Franklin Settlement) recorded in 1990 has been redeveloped as The Village by The Shores subdivision.

## Existing Conditions

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### ***Single Family Residential***

With the exception of water, single family residential land use accounts for the overwhelming percentage of land use in Lake Orion. In the 1990 Master Plan, single-family land use accounted for 244.9 acres or 30.2% of the total village area, including the Lake. Today, single family residential land use stands at 238.6 acres.

The dominance of single family land use might easily suggest a uniform community if based on the contemporary single family subdivision. However, Lake Orion's single family land uses create just the opposite: a highly varied and distinctive series of neighborhoods both surrounding and contiguous with Lake Orion and those inland or east of M-24 (Lapeer Road).

### **West & South of M-24 and Downtown**

Lakeside single family neighborhoods include areas taking access from M-24 directly west and south of the downtown. West of downtown and M-24 is the neighborhood bordered by Beebe on the east, Lake Street on the south, North Shore on the west, and the Evergreen Cemetery on Axford Street. Single family use combines both irregularly shaped and sized lots along Lake Street and North Shore, with a more regular lot and block pattern along Axford, Andrews and Beebe.

Single family uses in this area range from modest, traditional homes to large Lakeside custom houses. The largest single family Lakefront lots in Lake Orion are found west and south of Evergreen Cemetery. This area is also experiencing the tear-down phenomenon where small homes are torn down and replaced by significantly larger ones ("Bigfoot Homes"). While this process poses challenges for the existing character of single-family neighborhoods, it also indicates rising land values and desirable single family locations.

To the south and west of downtown, and taking access from M-24 and Park Island Street is the second lakeside single family area. Single family uses in this area are highly varied and include many small structures that were originally built as summer or vacation cabins. The area still retains much of that character, although functioning as year-round homes today. These are joined by more recent and larger homes, especially on Park Island Drive.

Of all the Lake islands and Lakeside single family areas, Park Island contains the most regular lot sizes, reflecting its more recent development as a planned subdivision. At the same time, homes on Park Island are also highly varied in design and architecture, offsetting this more uniform subdivision.



**Lake Areas**

Four additional Lake areas reinforce the distinctive single-family character of Lake Orion. These are: the Lakeview Street and O'Connor Street area and Bellevue Island extending from the south edge of the Lake; Swiss Village area accessed from the west; and Victoria Island between Bellevue Island and Swiss Village that is accessible only by boat. Highly varied lot sizes and homes, and distinctive neighborhood identities characterize all four of these single-family areas.

While all the Lakeside and Lake oriented single-family neighborhoods provide a strong sense of physical separation from the surrounding community context, their narrow lots and streets create a residential environment that is also extremely dense compared to typical single family standards today. This successful, and uncommon, combination of isolation and proximity heightens the distinctive character of these single family uses and adds to their continuing appeal and value.

The Lake Island single family residential areas have one additional characteristic that further distinguishes them within the Village of Lake Orion. With one exception, those that are accessible by auto are entered not from within the boundaries of the Village but from Oakland County roads, through Orion Township.

**East of M-24**

Neighborhoods east of M-24 add additional variety to Lake Orion's single family character. The oldest single family dwellings are found in the Village area east of Lapeer Street and north of Flint Street. This area includes 16 blocks of the original town plat between Flint Street on the south; Lapeer Street on the west; Elizabeth Street on the north; and Washington Street on the east. These regular blocks contain a wide range of lot sizes and house types. Homes include unique historic houses, modest traditional homes, and small cottages. New single family development has occurred north of Elizabeth Street, between Broadway on the west and Washington on east.

Single family dwellings east of Washington Street include post World War II era homes along Hauxwell north of Shadbolt and many historic homes east along Flint Street, reflecting its original high street function as a primary entryway into the Village.

Single family land uses south of Flint Street are located in areas north of Atwater and abutting Paint Creek; at the eastern edge of the Village along Orion Road and Norland Street; and along Newton Street south of Atwater.

## Existing Conditions

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### ***Multiple Family Residential***

Multiple family residential land use accounts for 27.8 acres, or 3.4% of the total land use in the Village of Lake Orion, a decrease of 1.2 acres since the 1990 Master Plan. The pattern of multiple family land use has remained essentially unchanged over this period, although based on our survey, there has been a decrease in multiple family units in predominantly single family neighborhoods.

The largest concentration of multiple family housing occurs east of M-24 and south of Flint Street along Orion Road. Multiple family uses north of Flint in the Village center consist primarily of units created from single family housing conversions. For the most part, these units are able to blend into the surrounding single family environment since their scale and architecture reflect their single family origin. However, property maintenance remains an important planning concern.

Multiple family uses west of M-24 include small-scale two-family dwellings within single family neighborhoods. The majority of these are located in the North Shore neighborhood south of Evergreen Cemetery. Multiple family uses have declined in the rest of the Lake neighborhoods and have been transitioned to single family on Park Island and the southern portion of Bellevue as well. Multiple family use has also declined on the northern end of Bellevue Island.

The decrease in multiple family acreage also reflects the change of one parcel in the Village from multiple family to single family. This parcel is at the west end of Glen Street south of Paint Creek.

### ***Commercial***

Commercial land use categories have been changed from those used in the 1990 Master Plan to better reflect land use and location requirements of commercial activities and the Village's planning objectives for the downtown (Lake Orion Downtown Charrette Plan, 2000). Previous commercial land uses were categorized between general commercial and convenience commercial designations. General commercial uses included both comparison shopping uses such as apparel stores and thoroughfare related uses such as gas stations and auto repair shops. Convenience commercial uses included uses frequently identified as neighborhood retail, such as grocery stores, drug stores, bakeries and cleaners.

Using the new corridor commercial and downtown commercial designations recognizes the significantly different land use and environmental relationships that exist between commercial uses located along M-24 and those located within the downtown. The new corridor commercial and downtown commercial designations highlight the differences between a primarily auto and pedestrian orientation; building size and scale; mixed-use buildings and characteristics; and land use intensity.

### Existing Conditions

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Downtown commercial land use in the Village includes a range of retail goods and personal services, most often found on ground floors, and office, storage and residential uses located in upper stories.

Corridor commercial uses account for 31.8 acres or 3.9% of the total land use in the Village. Downtown commercial uses account for 7.8 acres or 0.9% of total land use. Combined, these two types of commercial land use represent an increase of 9.4 acres of total commercial usage in the Village since 1990. The development of a formerly vacant parcel on the east side of M-24 at the northern edge of the Village accounts for most of this increase.

#### **Office**

Office land use accounts for 6.1 acres or 0.7% of total Village land. While this is a slight increase over 1990, it does not include office uses within the downtown area that are now classified as part of downtown commercial uses and so understates somewhat the overall increase in office use between 1990 and 2002.

With a single exception, however, all other office use designations are located along M-24. Office types range from standard highway oriented suburban professional offices, both at the north and south ends of M-24, to a distinctive cluster of renovated 19<sup>th</sup> century homes on the west side of M-24 at Atwater Street that now house medical and professional offices. These office locations are particularly desirable since they offer both highway visibility and waterfront views.

#### **Industrial**

Industrial land use is limited to one parcel located on Church Street, approximately 200 feet east of M-24, and accounts for only 3.4 acres or 0.4% of total Village land use, an increase of 1.1 acres from 1990. This parcel is operated as a self-storage facility.

#### **Public**

Public land uses include publicly owned facilities, parks and other open spaces and account for 33.6 acres or 4.1% of total Village area. This is an increase of 2.8 acres of public land uses since 1990. Public land uses are located throughout the Village, except south of Atwater Street. Public parks within the central area of the Village include: Atwater Park, north of Atwater Street; Meek's Park, located south of Paint Creek; Children's Park, located on Broadway south of Front; and Green's Park, the Village's waterfront park located on M-24 just south of Flint. Additional parks include Unger Park on Bellevue Island and Swiss Village Park, off Central Drive.

### Existing Conditions

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Public uses also include Blanche Sims elementary school, in the northeast corner of the Village; the Township Fire Department on Anderson across from Children's Park; the Village Hall on Flint Street in the downtown; the Department of Public Works facility contiguous with Atwater Park; the Senior Center; and school administrative offices on Church Street. Public uses also include the historic Evergreen Cemetery on Axford Street west of M-24.

#### **Semi-Public**

Semi-Public land uses make up 10.1 acres or 1.2% of total Village land use. This is an increase in 0.6 acres from 1990, although this increase is explained primarily by changes in land use between the 1990 plan and the present. Major semi-public uses include the northern part of the Fred Ehman Center (formerly a public school); and private open spaces on Bellevue Island and in the new single family subdivision north of Elizabeth Street between Broadway and Washington.

#### **Rights-of-Way**

Rights-of-way account for 70 acres or 8.5% of total Village land use. This includes public rights-of-way, private rights-of-way and unbuilt public rights-of-way. There are two unbuilt rights-of-way in the Village; one is located between Newton and Grampian Streets in the southeastern part of the Village. Steep slopes, woodlands and wetlands would require significant bridging in order to complete this connection. The second is on Washington Street, between Paint Creek and Glenn Street. In addition to this, there is one private right of way in the Village that provides property access from Newton Street. All remaining rights-of-way in the Village are public.

Significant differences exist between these calculations and rights-of-way shown in the 1990 Master Plan. The 1990 Master Plan identifies only 17.7 acres, or 2.2% of total land use, as right of way. This analysis increases this to 70 acres or 8.5% of total land use. This difference is most likely explained by significant improvements in technical capabilities that now allow for much finer calculations and more accurate aggregations of complex shapes over large areas. Even though rights-of-way acreage has increased, it still remains well below typical land use right of way standards that can account for 20% - 25% of land area in new development. This low number is partially a reflection of the Village's many narrow roads.

#### **Vacant**

Vacant land accounts for 37.3 acres or 4.5% of total Village land use. This represents a decrease of 39.2 acres since the 1990 Master Plan and reflects the ongoing process of build-out in the Village. Three areas of contiguous property provide most of this remaining vacant land. The first area is made up of one parcel located at the northeast corner of the Village, east of the Blanche Sims elementary school. Access to this parcel will be provided by a stub street off of Schorn.

### Existing Conditions

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The second area is located on the southeast corner of Church Street and M-24 and contains three separate parcels. Development is also limited on this parcel due to difficult topography and environmental considerations. The third area is between Atwater Street and the Village boundary, behind M-24 frontage. This area includes four parcels and a portion of a vacated railroad right-of-way on which two new developments are currently planned; one a residential site condominium, the other a mixed use commercial/multiple family project.

#### **Water**

By dominant land use, the Village of Lake Orion can be described as a water-oriented residential community. Water is the largest land use category in the Village covering 357 acres, or 43.3% of the total Village area. The two components of this are Lake Orion, which occupies nearly the entire western half of the Village, and Paint Creek, which flows through the central and southeastern portions of the Village. Both of these water elements are almost entirely bordered by residential, primarily single family, land uses.

### Environment and Natural Features

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Federal environmental legislation, enacted in the 1970's, raised public awareness of the importance of environmental protection. Many states, including Michigan, strengthened federal environmental laws with their own state laws and programs designed to correct environmental problems and prevent future contamination of air, land, and water. Environmental quality significantly affects the quality of life in a community. Visual aesthetics, clean air, and clean water and soil all enhance the public health/safety and economy. Therefore, a thorough community plan requires that the condition of the environment be considered in decisions regarding future land uses and to promote good stewardship of the land.

A concern for the environment applies to fully developed Villages such as Lake Orion as well as to rural areas with an ample inventory of undeveloped land. While the specific environmental issues may be different, their importance is equally as great. Environmental concerns can affect almost any development; therefore, they require consideration during the Master Plan process.

#### **ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT FEATURES**

The following features are environmentally significant, meaning they contribute to the community's character and serve as a resource for the Village.

#### **Lake Orion**

The foremost natural feature and single greatest resource in the Village of Lake Orion is Lake Orion. Of the approximately 824 acres that comprise the Village, over 350 acres are

### Existing Conditions

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the surface waters of Lake Orion, accounting for over 40 percent of the Village's total area. The Lake offers a number of amenities, including scenic views, waterfront residential settings, fish and wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. Nearly half the population of the Village of Lake Orion lives on the Lake and all residents have access to the Lake through Green's Park.

Lake Orion is an "all-sports" lake, meaning it is used primarily as a recreation resource. The Lake is also a significant contributor to the value of land and residential dwellings within the Village. There is high demand for Lake-based residential housing because Lake-front property is highly desirable, but somewhat limited in quantity.

#### ***Paint Creek***

Paint Creek, a tributary of the Clinton River, begins at the dam at the east end of Lake Orion and flows through the middle of the Village. Tributaries of Paint Creek are located just north of the Village in Oxford Township. Paint Creek is a high-quality cold water stream with a significant trout population.

In the mid 1990s, the Village and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources joined forces to improve the trout habitat within Paint Creek by helping to regulate the temperature of the water. A bottom-draw tube was installed near the dam of Lake Orion to draw cold water off the bottom of the Lake, directing the cold water to Paint Creek. The cooler water lowers the temperature of the Creek and provides a better habitat for trout.

The Clinton River Watershed Council coordinates the Paint Creek Habitat Improvement Project. This is an on-going volunteer project with Trout Unlimited to improve habitat on Paint Creek by adding gravel, cobble, and natural wood structures to create a safer habitat for trout.

#### ***Clinton River Watershed***

Both Lake Orion and Paint Creek are parts of the Clinton River watershed. The Clinton River watershed is made up of 760 square miles of land in four counties, which drains rain and snowmelt into the Clinton River and eventually into Lake St. Clair. The watershed includes more than 1.6 million people in 60 municipalities.

The Clinton River Watershed Council was established in 1972 as a communication forum to coordinate local governments' efforts to protect and improve the river basin. Today, the Council is a broad-based organization with representatives from the business community, academia, and local governments that work together to support the Watershed. The Council organizes volunteer efforts, such as River Day, Adopt-A-Stream and the Student Monitoring Program, and provides education and outreach services for local governments, organizations, and individuals.



### ***Village Trees***

The Village of Lake Orion has mature tree canopies within its residential neighborhoods. Shaded, tree-lined streets are a major feature of the community's appearance, charm, and character. Residential neighborhoods on either side of M-24 are uniquely characterized by the large number of trees, reminiscent of Lake Orion's past as a summer lake resort.

Tree-lined streets distinguish the Village from new, suburban-type developments that often lack trees or have trees of smaller diameter, many years away from full development. The trees provide a vaulted canopy over sidewalks, filtering sunlight for pedestrians, providing needed shade for houses, and reinforcing residential setbacks and human-oriented patterns of development. Additionally, the mature trees make life outside the house more enjoyable in the summer, provide energy and savings to residents by reducing air-conditioning costs, and create windbreaks that reduce heating costs in the winter.

### ***Significant Views***

The beautiful and interesting views within the Village of Lake Orion are predominately scenes of Lake Orion from the Village and perspectives of the Village from across Lake Orion. Views are difficult to describe and quantify, but they are a feature that contribute to quality of life. Often, views are an afterthought in the planning of places and new developments by Village residents, but they should be seriously considered as a resource deserving protection. For passers-by and travelers through the Village, a glimpse of the Lake from M-24 is an unusual pleasure that reinforces the Village's history and patterns of development as a Lakeside community.

### ***Floodplain***

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) publishes Flood Insurance Rate maps that identify flood-prone lands, defined as those containing a hundred-year floodplain with a flooding probability of at least one (1) percent a year.

As a community with substantial Lake front development, the potential of Lake Orion to flood is an important concern to property owners. The 100-year floodplain follows the perimeter of the Lake at lower elevations. Based upon local experience, the Lake edge does not flood. Lake level is controlled by a dam at the M-24 bridge which is capable of releasing excess waters in time of flood to Paint Creek. Paint Creek has a greater potential to flood because of its function as the collector of excess water from the Lake and as a collector of runoff from nearby State and County drains and adjacent land.

Floodplains are typically environmentally sensitive areas with limited development potential because of their function for stormwater drainage. Floodplains are periodically inundated with water and can sometimes also be characterized as wetlands. Because of the potential to flood, development is often restricted or heavily regulated in floodplain areas. Development within the floodplain is possible, subject to flood proofing and elevation above base flood level.

## Existing Conditions

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### **Wetlands**

In the simplest terms, a wetland is a land where water is found, either on the surface or near the surface. However, this simple definition minimizes the challenge of wetland delineation. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, In order to determine if a wetland is present, land must have one or more of the following three attributes: (1) at least periodically, the land supports predominantly hydrophytes (plants specifically adapted to live in wetlands); (2) the substrate is predominantly undrained hydric (wetland) soil; and (3) the substrate is nonsoil and is saturated with water or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season of each year.

In the past, wetlands were considered useless land. However, it is now known that they have an important role in the hydrological and ecological systems. In addition to providing habitat for fish and wildlife, wetlands also maintain and stabilize groundwater supplies, reduce dangers of flooding, control erosion, and improve water quality.

The Village of Lake Orion is rich with surface water, but has only a few remaining wetlands. Some wetlands are located along the floodplain of Paint Creek, others are on undeveloped parcels of land with areas of steep slopes and woodlands, and some are connected to the Lake. There are four regulated wetlands in the Village and six "emerging" wetlands according to the Michigan Resource Information System (MIRIS). Emerging wetlands are wetlands that are somewhat unstable, with irregular water, and are typically dependent on climatic conditions.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) regulates wetlands that are contiguous to lakes, streams, drains, and ponds, as well as those greater than five acres in size. Land containing regulated wetlands has limited development potential because of the State's wetland protection measures.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

Developed, urban areas often have environmental concerns because of the intensity of land use. Common environmental issues in mature Villages, such as Lake Orion, are soil contamination from previous development, water quality regarding stormwater management, noise pollution, and air quality. These are challenges for municipalities that must have these issues resolved to protect the health and safety of residents. A general review of environmental issues in the Village of Lake Orion follows.

### **Lake Water Quality**

A primary environmental issue in the Village of Lake Orion is the quality of the water within Lake Orion. The continued use of Lake Orion for recreation and residential living is dependent upon ensuring good water quality.

## Existing Conditions

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Every water body has a carrying capacity, defined as the capacity of a lake for recreational uses and residential occupation of the shore and shore border land without creating overcrowding on the lake, pollution and consequent danger to health and safety. Carrying capacity may be greatly limited if a single use is given priority; but it may also be expanded if the uses of the lake are carefully managed. Carrying capacity is extremely difficult to quantify without intense study, but the notion that the lake has natural limits should be a consideration when planning for the future use of Lake Orion.

An unintentional result of recreational activity affecting Lake Orion's carrying capacity has been the establishment of Zebra mussels, a non-native predator. Now present in almost every inland lake in Michigan, Zebra mussels have the potential to change the ecological structure of the lake environment in a way that endangers many native lake species. The effects of Zebra mussels on Lake Orion are not known at this time.

The Lake Orion Lake Association (LOLA) commissioned water studies in 1983 and 1985 to study Lake water clarity and chemical composition. These studies were largely benchmark analyses to establish a comparison point for future studies. According to LOLA, more follow-up studies are needed. In 2002, the Michigan Lake and Streams Association plans to conduct a phosphorus and chlorophyll study on behalf of LOLA.

### ***Stormwater Management***

Stormwater management is growing in importance for the Village as non-point source pollution education efforts and run-off management legislation has come to the forefront. Storm drains throughout the Village collect stormwater and direct it toward Paint Creek and Lake Orion. Nearby County drains also flow toward Paint Creek and Lake Orion. The rest of the Village, not served by storm sewer or County drains, uses on-site percolation and runoff to handle stormwater.

In larger urban areas, stormwater is often collected and treated before it is discharged to lakes and streams through elaborate stormwater treatment infrastructure. However, in smaller, less urban communities stormwater is rarely transported and treated before it is discharged into local lakes and streams. Stormwater runoff pollution can significantly effect the quality of local bodies of water when stormwater is allowed to runoff. Common pollutants in stormwater runoff include: oil and grease from roadways, pesticides from lawns, and carelessly discarded trash. When deposited into nearby waterways, these pollutants can impair the waterways and discourage the recreational use of the resource, contaminate surface waters, and interfere with the habitat for fish and wildlife.

The Village is subject to the requirements of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Storm Water Program. The program is designed to educate the public about non point source pollution issues, ensure that storm water runoff in the Village is minimized. Development plans and zoning regulations should be reviewed to reflect these required control measures.

## Existing Conditions

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### **Lake Use Management**

The high demand for inland water-based recreational opportunities and residential living along the Lake create heavy pressures on Lake Orion. While the MDNR regulates the waters of the Lake, the Village controls land uses around it.

Several Lake issues were identified by participants in the Master Plan storyboarding session of Lake Orion as particularly problematic, including: algae blooms in the early summer, lowering the Lake for cleaning of the docks and seawalls, and managing the access of recreational vehicles to the Lake.

One of the most implementable Lake management techniques available to the Village is regulating the access of recreational vehicles (boats, jet skis) to the Lake. An overabundance of recreation vehicles on the Lake can cause water pollution, noise pollution, and can ruin the enjoyment of the Lake for everyone. An important tool for restricting Lake access is controlling the type of development around the Lake. In particular preventing keyhole development, or development around a lake that provides lake access at one point (or keyhole) for many users, instead of providing Lake access from individual parcels fronting the Lake, should be an priority of the Village, and addressed in its ordinances.

### **Soil Contamination/Brownfields**

According to the MDEQ records and an August, 1997 report issued by the Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services Division called Sites of Environmental Contamination, Part 201 Sites, there are nine (9) sites within the Village that contain leaking underground storage tanks. Redevelopment and clean-up efforts since 1997 have reduced the number of sites with leaking underground storage tanks to five (5).

Underground storage tanks have been widely used in commercial, industrial, and residential areas. These steel tanks can store a variety of fluids. Petroleum is the most commonly stored product, however, acids and chemical wastes are also stored. Underground storage tank leaks result from corrosion in the steel comprising the tank. If the fluid inside the tank leaks, it can contaminate both the soil and groundwater. Prevention of this problem is important because it is costly, financially and otherwise, to clean up contamination once it has impacted ground water supplies.

The Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act (Public Act 381 of 1996) can provide assistance for clean up of contaminated sites. Although funding is limited, the legislation reduces the remediation required for redevelopment to a level consistent with the intended reuse. Thus, contaminated sites are not required to be cleaned up to the extent required of residential sites unless the reuse is residential. In some cases the contaminants must only be contained rather than totally removed. This reduces the high costs associated with redeveloping these sites which has prevented reuse of most brownfield sites.

## Existing Conditions

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Act 381 authorizes municipalities to establish Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities to oversee the cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated properties within their jurisdiction. Businesses which locate in a designated Brownfield Redevelopment Zone receive a single business tax credit allowing up to \$1 million in savings. The increased property taxes generated from formerly unusable property that has been cleaned up for a new business can be reinvested into the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. As a result, revenue can be available to clean up additional sites for redevelopment.

### ***Air Quality***

The quality of the air in the Village of Lake Orion is more of a regional, rather than a local concern. Southeast Michigan, which includes Oakland County, has often rated as a "non-attainment area" meaning that it does not meet federal air quality standards. The single greatest contributor to air pollution in southeastern Michigan is automobile use.

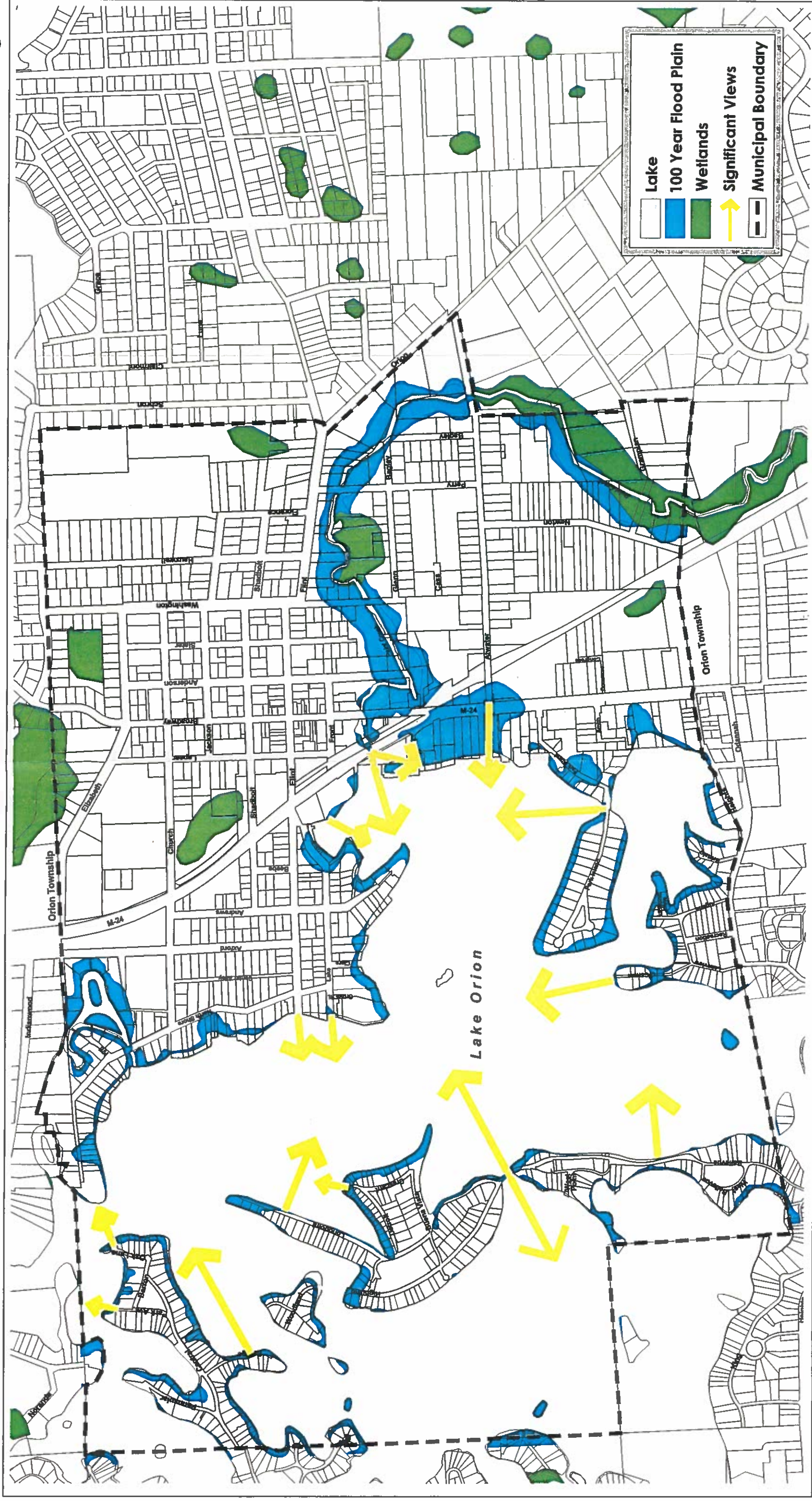
There is little the Village can do to improve regional air quality, other than maintain its predominant residential uses, compact and walkable commercial downtown, and increase its vegetation. The trees and plants of the Village provide additional oxygen to the atmosphere through the photosynthesis process and reduce the localized effects of the "urban heat island." In hot summer months, the intense heat generated by pavement and rooftops in large metropolitan areas, or urban "islands" in the landscape, contribute to what is called the "greenhouse effect."

### ***Noise***

Commercial uses, M-24 and the truck traffic it generates, snowmobiles, and motor boats on the Lake create noise. Buffer zones (e.g., transitional zoning districts) and/or screening between these noise producing land uses and residential neighborhoods are methods to reduce the impacts of excessive noise. The Master Plan should maintain the Village's use transitions and buffers to protect the quality of life.



# Village of Lake Orion, Michigan



**Map 3 - Natural Features**

Base Map Source: Oakland County 1999  
Data Source: FEMA, MIRS 1978 and  
McKenna Associates Inc. 2002



## ***Community Facilities Inventory***

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A primary purpose of municipal government is delivery of services designed for the health, safety, and welfare of the local population. The responsibility for providing public services to the residents of the Village of Lake Orion is shared by several public entities, including the Village itself, the Charter Township of Orion, various Oakland County departments, and other agencies. In response to a healthy economy, the demand for public services has expanded in response to demographic changes and the desire for additional services. Lake Orion residents' desire for improved quality of life is likely to create additional future public facility needs.

This inventory groups community facilities into the following categories:

- Government Facilities
- Social and Cultural Facilities
- Public Utilities
- Parks and Recreation Facilities
- Public School Facilities

### **GOVERNMENT FACILITIES**

#### ***Village Hall and Police Department***

The Village Hall is the center for administrative and legislative functions. The Police Department shares the facility. Village Hall is a renovated, historic, downtown building located on the north side of Flint Street, west of Anderson Avenue. The building currently used by Village Hall was built in the 1870's as a fire hall. The old fire hall was renovated in the early 1980's to hold the Village Administration and Police Department. The site is centrally located to serve the Village's population and is in the downtown commercial area. Parking is available at the back of the facility on a parcel owned by the Village, located south of Shadbolt Street, west of Anderson Street.

Village administrative services utilize an estimated 1,000 square feet, plus second floor storage, within the Village Hall. Within this space, there are six (6) full time and two (2) part time employees providing general Village services, including the Manager, Clerk, Finance Director, and Planning Coordinator. The Village Council chambers are located in Village Hall and occupy an estimated 500 square feet of space.

According to the Police Chief, the Police Department utilizes approximately 500 square feet, plus second floor storage space, in Village Hall for dispatch operations and administrative functions. The department maintains a 24 hour coverage of the Village with at least one officer on patrol. Village Police Department staffing includes a police chief and three (3) sworn full-time officers, eight (8) part-time officers, sixteen (16) reserve auxiliary officers, four (4) full time dispatchers and eight (8) part time dispatchers. The

### Existing Conditions

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Police Department has mutual aid agreements with Oxford Village and the Oakland County Sheriff's Department. The Police Department has expressed a desire for more space to meet the increased service demands made upon local police departments.

#### **Fire Station**

Fire protection services within the Village of Lake Orion are provided by the Charter Township of Orion Fire Department at Station No. 1, located at 93 S. Anderson Street. Station No. 1 is one of three stations from which paid-on-call firefighters respond to fire, accident, and medical emergencies. According to the Fire Chief, between 20 and 25 on-call firefighters are assigned to the station. The station contains over 5,000 square feet and holds several fire protection vehicles, such as pumper trucks and rescue vehicles. The Township Fire Department maintains a mutual aid agreement with adjacent communities similar to that which exists for the police department.

#### **Department of Public Works**

The physical infrastructure of the Village is often the most apparent gauge of the quality and effectiveness of local government. Responsibility for maintenance of Village property, facilities, and equipment is charged to the Department of Public Works (DPW).

The Department of Public Works currently includes a full time director, five (5) full time and one (1) part time maintenance staff. The department is located in two buildings of approximately 2,500 square feet each near Atwater Park. One DPW building is heated and contains department offices, workbenches, storage for small parts and materials, and several vehicles. The other building is not heated and is primarily used for the storage of vehicles and maintenance supplies. According to Public Works staff, the facilities are crowded with vehicles and in need of expansion.

The DPW currently maintains all Village parks, ballfields, streetlights, storm drains and Village properties, including Village Hall. The department also maintains the Village cemeteries and services all Village vehicles and equipment. All road and sidewalk maintenance, repair and construction, and snow removal for Village-owned streets are provided by the DPW.

#### **Post Office**

The United States Post Office serving the Village of Lake Orion is located just off of M-24 (Lapeer Road) at 611 North Axford Street, north of the Village within Orion Township. The current facility is approximately 25 years old and was built to replace a post office located within the Village limits. According to Post Office officials, the Lake Orion Post Office serves five (5) different postal codes: Oakland (48363), Orion (48359), Village of Lake Orion (48362), Lake Orion (48360), and PO Box customers (48361). There are twelve (12) Village postal routes and nineteen (19) rural routes traversed six (6) days a week. Two years ago, the Lake Orion Post Office was targeted for replacement, however, the United State Postal Service experienced significant budget cuts and put all Post Office expansions on hold until further notice.

## **SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACILITIES**

Social and cultural facilities enrich the quality of life for residents. The types of social and cultural facilities found in each community often differ, because they typically reflect local interests and values.

### ***Library***

The Village of Lake Orion receives library services from the Orion Township Public Library, located in the Township at 825 Joslyn Rd. The Township library is heavily used by Township and Village residents and described as "cramped" by the Head Librarian in 2,900 square feet of space. The library shelves over 140,000 books and periodicals in addition to the Lake Orion Community Information Network – a computerized network of community information. Library circulation for 2001 is estimated at over 284,000 items with 160,000 visits from over 18,000 registered borrowers from Orion Township and the Village.

To serve the senior residents of the Village of Lake Orion, the library operates a small satellite branch at the Lake Orion Senior Center. The Senior Center library is open weekdays, 10-2 PM and is staffed by a part-time librarian. The Senior Center library provides large print periodicals, large print paperback books, and e-mail and Internet training classes in a 500 square foot space within the Senior Center. The library estimates that this small branch circulates over 8,400 items per year.

### ***Orion Arts Center***

The Orion Art Center (OAC), located at 115 South Anderson in a former United Methodist parsonage, offers day and evening classes, art exhibitions, community involvement, and the Joan Brace Scholarship fund. The purpose of the OAC is to promote, encourage, and support the development of the arts in the community; to lend enrichment to the life of its citizens; and to provide a forum for the dissemination of knowledge and the sharing of ideas pertinent to our common purpose. After more than 20 years of existence, the OAC was awarded its first grant from the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) in 2002. This organizational development grant will help the Art Center to grow and better serve the needs of the North Oakland County area.

### ***Lake Orion United Methodist Church***

The Methodist Church is technically not a public facility. However, the church often offers its facilities as a public meeting hall when meeting room capacity is exceeded at Village Hall. The Downtown Charette and many other important community meetings have taken place in the United Methodist Church's Fellowship Hall.

### ***Senior Center/Union Church***

The Senior Center is located in the Village of Lake Orion, but is owned and operated by Orion Township. The Senior Center serves lunch daily and also has a home delivery service for meals. The Township offers a free transportation service for seniors to medical facilities in the area and once a week the service takes seniors shopping in Lake Orion.

### Existing Conditions

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The Center also has a variety of scheduled activities that range from card games to field trips.

The Senior Center is housed in the newer part of Union Church, the oldest church in the Village and Orion Township. The church was originally built in 1854 as a joint effort of the Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Methodist congregations. The Building was home to Episcopalian, Baptists and Apostolic churches in the twentieth century. In 1988, the building was purchased from the Village by the Township for \$1 and the meeting room and kitchen of the church were converted into the Senior Center. The Orion Historical Society is dedicated to the preservation and renovation of the Historic Union Church. This organization of over 100 members has organized a Heritage Tour and raffles to raise money for the restoration of the church. Currently, the Society is undertaking a major fund raising drive since Orion Township has committed to matching up to \$50,000 for restoration of the Union Church.

### **PUBLIC UTILITIES**

#### ***Water System***

In 1994, the Village of Lake Orion connected to the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department's (DWSD) water system and disconnected from the Village's own water well system. The Village is now part of the DWSD, which receives its water from the Detroit Water Treatment Plant north of Port Huron. The plant draws water from Lake Huron into the plant for treatment and is then pumped through the systems to both Orion Township and the Village.

In the mid-1990's, major water lines were replaced with larger diameter lines along M-24 to coincide with a widening of the road to five (5) lanes. At the same time, the lines down Atwater Street were upgraded. Between 1998 and 1999, waterlines throughout the Village were upgraded. Three local bonds were sold to pay for the project: a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Bond (\$905,000), a Water Bond (\$1.9 million), and a Road Bond (\$1.7 million).

No capacity, pressure, or service problems currently exist and all areas of the Village are currently adequately served. According to Village officials, the capacity of the system is adequate to meet the current needs of the Village with one caveat; the Village is near the very north end of the DWSD system where there is no redundancy in the provision of water lines. In times of drought or water main breaks, the Village may be under served for short periods of time.

#### ***Sanitary Sewer System***

The Village is served by sanitary sewers provided by the Clinton Oakland Sewer District, which is a service of the Oakland County Drain Commission. There are currently few septic systems operating within the Village limits. The Oakland County Drain Commission maintains the sewers.

## Existing Conditions

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### **Stormwater Sewers**

Stormwater sewers are located throughout the Village to facilitate the flow of stormwater toward Paint Creek and Lake Orion. The Village is currently developing plans to map and "TV" the stormwater sewers within its boundaries. This information will be of use for future planning and the on-going provision of stormwater drain maintenance.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

### **Village Parks**

Lake Orion offers its citizens a variety of open space and recreational opportunities. Parks and open spaces are essential in developing physically and socially balanced children, while providing adults a place to constructively use their leisure time. Open spaces maintained and served by a carefully conceived recreation plan are components in maintaining a desirable place to live.

One neighborhood park, three community parks, and two mini parks are located within the Village of Lake Orion for a total of six (6) public park and recreation facilities. All of these facilities are owned and operated by the Village. The parks are actively used by people living in the Village and in the neighboring Townships.

The Village park system offers a combination of active and passive recreational areas. For example, Atwater Park contains ballfields for baseball and softball, as well as playground equipment. Green's Park has a wider variety of passive recreation areas with a pavilion and a swimming area on the shores of Lake Orion.

The Recreation Master Plan 2002-2005, adopted in February 2001, indicates that Lake Orion Village has a variety of play equipment and facilities, but limited facilities for active, organized sports. Also, the Village current relies on Orion Township and the public schools to provide recreation programming. Table 2 on page 35, summarizes the parks and recreation facilities in the Village.

**TABLE 2**  
**PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES**  
Village of Lake Orion

Site	Area (in acres)	General Facilities
<b><u>Village Owned</u></b>		
Atwater Park	3.04	Ballfields, basketball courts, play structure, picnic area
Green's Park	1.81	Play equipment, picnic area, pavilion, beach, concessions/restrooms
Unger Park	0.91	Play equipment
Swiss Village Park	0.70	Basketball court, play equipment, picnic area
Children's Park	0.55	Play equipment, picnic area, gazebo
Meek's Park	1.68	Fitness trail, picnic area
<b><u>Owned by Others</u></b>		
Fred Ehman Center	0.50	Ballfield, play equipment, gymnasium
Blanche Sims Elementary School	0.30	Basketball courts, play equipment, gymnasium
Senior Center	0.52	Library, classrooms

Source: 2001-2005 Recreation Master Plan, Village of Lake Orion, February 2001

### ***School Recreation Facilities***

Although designed and maintained primarily to meet the recreational needs of students, school facilities in most communities offer a broader range of recreational resources than those found in neighborhood parks. For instance, schools often have indoor gymnasiums which the public can use on a restricted basis. However, school recreation sites are not good substitutes for well-designed parks. They do not offer the full range of facilities normally provided in a park, such as picnic facilities for example. Also, school recreation sites are designed to meet the needs of school children and are generally not adequate for the recreational pursuits of the general public, ranging from organized sports for adults to passive recreational activities like hiking.

The Blanche Sims elementary school has a wide variety of active recreation and play areas. A soccer field, an asphalt play area and an outdoor basketball court are on school grounds as well as playground equipment and play structures of all types. The school also has an indoor gymnasium.

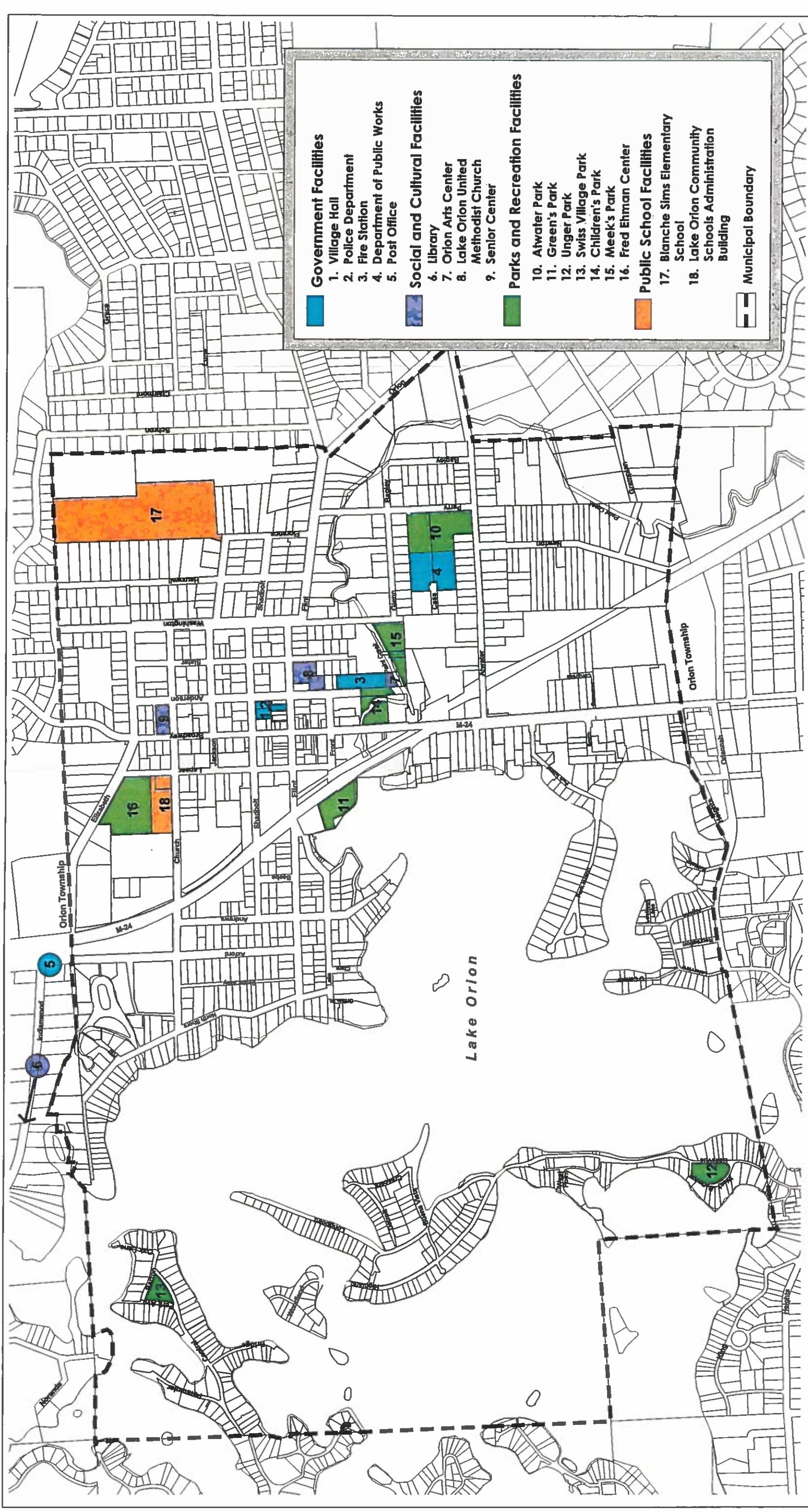


### Existing Conditions

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The Fred Ehman Center, the former high school for the school district was recently sold to a private individual. The school district retains ownership of the administration building which is immediately south of, and includes some of the outdoor recreation land which was formerly part of the Ehman Center. A portion of the Ehman Center is leased to the Boys and Girls Club of Orion-Oxford. The combined site has a softball field, walking trail/footpath and an indoor gymnasium.

# Village of Lake Orion, Michigan



**Map 4 - Community Facilities**

Base Map Source: Oakland County GIS 1999  
Data Source: McKenna Associates, Inc.

## **SECTION 4 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

### ***Population Characteristics and Projections***

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A key element to planning a village's future land use and community facility needs is an analysis of its demographic characteristics. This section includes discussions of population characteristics, age structure and composition, household composition, and the changes and their impacts on the Village's demographics. The data and trends identified in the analysis of each factor provide a base from which to develop strategies to address the needs of Lake Orion's residents.

#### **POPULATION**

The Village of Lake Orion is one of several small villages located in the rapidly suburbanizing townships in the northern metropolitan area of Detroit. Older, mature cities in this region, such as Pontiac, experienced slow-downs in population growth or decreases in population during the 1990s. However, many Townships in the region experienced a dramatic upswing in population, confirming that population growth in the region was not slowing, but spreading out among formerly rural and rapidly urbanizing townships. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Orion Township, which surrounds the Village, is now the thirteenth most populous community in Oakland County.

Between 1990 and 2000, the population of Orion Charter Township and Oakland County increased by 9,701 (+46.1%) and 110,564(+10.2%), respectively (see Table 4, Page 39). The 2000 Census estimates the Village's 2000 population to be 2,715, down from 3,057 persons in 1990, a decrease of 11%.

As would be expected in a region that has experienced a very robust economy for several years, there has been real growth in population in Oakland County. Despite the tremendous growth surrounding the Village of Lake Orion, the population of the Village has remained between approximately 2,900 to 3,200 people for the past thirty years (see Table 3, page 38). The Village's rate of growth declined from 1940 to 1980. Population increased by 5.2% or 150 people between 1980 and 1990, but according to the U.S. Census, declined by 11% or 342 people between 1990 and 2000. The Village has challenged the U.S. Census 2000 population count as inaccurate because it did not count 88 dwelling units located in the Village. McKenna Associates, Inc. (McKA) estimates the Village's population for 2000 to be 3,204. This estimate of population was calculated by multiplying



### Demographic Analysis

the number of building permits issued by the Village between 1990 and 2000 by the average household size in 2000 and adding that increment to the U.S. Census estimate for 1990. This McKA estimate will be used in all analyses, as appropriate.

The Village of Lake Orion experienced slight population growth between 1990 and 2000. Small population growth in the Village is related to the limited space for new housing within the Village. A limited supply of land available for redevelopment, combined with a national trend of declining birth rates, an aging population, and smaller household sizes mean the Village will continue to experience diminishing increases in population over the foreseeable future.

**Table 3**  
**TOTAL POPULATION**  
Village of Lake Orion

Year	Population	Numerical Change	Percent Change
1900	756	--	--
1920	929	173	22.9%
1940	1,933	1,004	108.1%
1950	2,385	452	23.4%
1960	2,698	313	13.1%
1970	2,921	223	8.3%
1980	2,907	-14	-0.5%
1990	3,057	150	5.2%
2000	2,715 <sup>(1)</sup>	-342	-11.0%
	3,204 <sup>(2)</sup>	+147	4.8%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce;

(1) 2,715 (2000 Census Count) Village has challenged

(2) 3,057 (1990 Census Count) + [68 building permits issued by Village between 1990 and 2000 (SEMOG) x 2.17(ave. household size)] = 3,204.



## Demographic Analysis

Table 4 below compares the number of people within the Village of Lake Orion to the population in nearby communities over time, illustrating the dynamics of population growth and change within Southeast Michigan. Older cities, such as Pontiac, have experienced large population decline, while townships, such as Orion Charter Township and Oxford Township have experienced population growth at rates over 45% between 1990 and 2000.

**Table 4**  
**POPULATION TRENDS, 1990-2000**  
**Village of Lake Orion and Nearby Communities**

Community	1980 Population	1990 Population	% Change 1980-1990	2000 Population	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 1980-2000
Village of Lake Orion	2,907	3,057	5.2%	2,715 3,204 <sup>(1)</sup>	-10.4% 4.8%	-6.6% 10.2%
Orion Township	19,566	21,047	7.6%	30,748	46.1%	57.1%
Oxford Village	2,746	2,929	6.7%	3,540	20.9%	28.9%
Oxford Township	10,569	9,004	-14.8%	16,025	78.0%	51.6%
City of Pontiac	76,715	71,166	-7.2%	66,337	-6.8%	-13.5%
City of Auburn Hills (formerly Pontiac Township)	15,388	17,076	11.0%	19,837	16.2%	28.9%
Oakland County	1,011,793	1,083,592	7.1%	1,194,156	10.2%	18.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990 and 2000; Village population not a part of Township population estimates;

<sup>(1)</sup> McKenna Associates, Inc., 2000 estimate: 3057 (1990 Census Count) + [68 building permits issued by Village between 1990 and 2000 (SEMOG) x 2.17(ave. household size)] = 3,204.

## Household Size and Composition

According to the U.S. Census, the Village of Lake Orion decreased by 42 households (3.4%) between 1990 and 2000. However, because of the population undercount by the U.S. Census, the Village estimates households to have actually increased by 45 (see Table 5, below). The increase in the number of households in the Village is expected given the population increase estimated for the Village in 2000. Households in both Orion Township and Oakland County grew at a rate similar to population growth.

**Table 5**  
**NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS BY COMMUNITY, 1990-2000**  
Village of Lake Orion

Community	1990	2000	% Change
Village of Lake Orion	1,240	1,198 <sup>(1)</sup> 1,286 <sup>(2)</sup>	-3.4% 3.7%
Orion Township	7,331	11,049	50.7%
Oakland County	420,488	471,115	12.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990 and 2000, Oakland County Community Profiles 2000-2001; Village of Lake Orion households are not counted as part of Orion Township households.

(1) 2000 Census

(2) 2000 Census + 88 dwellings undercounted (assuming all 88 dwelling units are occupied).

The decrease in average household size is related to the national trend for aging population (see Table 6, below), and the trend among younger married couples to delay or avoid having children, or to have smaller families.

**Table 6**  
**AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE, 1970-2000**  
Village of Lake Orion, Orion Township, and Oakland County

Community	1970 persons per household	1980 persons per household	1990 persons per household	% Change 80-90	2000 persons per household	% Change 90-2000
Village of Lake Orion	3.20	2.64	2.37	-10.0%	2.17	-8.4%
Orion Township	3.74	3.07	2.84	-7.5%	2.71	-4.5%
Oakland County	3.29	2.71	2.61	-3.7%	2.51	-3.8%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

## Demographic Analysis

As Table 7 below illustrates, the make up of families and households in the Village of Lake Orion changed between 1990 and 2000. The number of family households in the Village has decreased by almost 15% while the number of non-family households has grown by over 13%. This increase in non-family households is part of a national trend of couples choosing to remain unmarried and without children for longer periods of time. According to the U.S. Census, Village householders living alone increased by 14.5% between 1990 and 2000.

Another significant change is the number of households containing individuals 65 years and older, which has grown by 56% between 1990 and 2000. As the baby-boom generation begins to age, the number of households containing senior citizens will continue to increase. With nearly 20% of Village households containing individuals 65 and older, providing services and care to elderly residents is likely to become a continued concern.

**Table 7**  
**HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS, 1990-2000**  
Village of Lake Orion and Oakland County

Household Characteristics	1990 Village	% of Total	2000 Village	% of Total	1990-2000 Change	% of Total 2000 Oakland Co.
Total households	1,240		1,198		-3.3%	-
Family households (families)	742	59.8%	634	52.9%	-14.5%	66.9%
Married-couple family	579	78.0%	502	79.0%	-13.9%	54.2%
Female householder, no husband present	122	16.4%	80	6.7%	-34.4%	9.5%
Nonfamily households	498	40.2%	564	47.1%	13.2%	33.1%
Householder living alone	407	32.8%	465	38.8%	14.5%	27.3%
Householder 65 yrs. and over	148	11.9%	133	11.1%	-10.1%	8.5%
Households with individuals under 18 yrs.	337	27.2%	311	26.0%	-7.7%	34.5%
Households with individuals 65 yrs. and over	148	11.9%	231	19.3%	56.0%	20.5%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000 Census Profile of General Demographic Characteristics.

**AGE STRUCTURE**

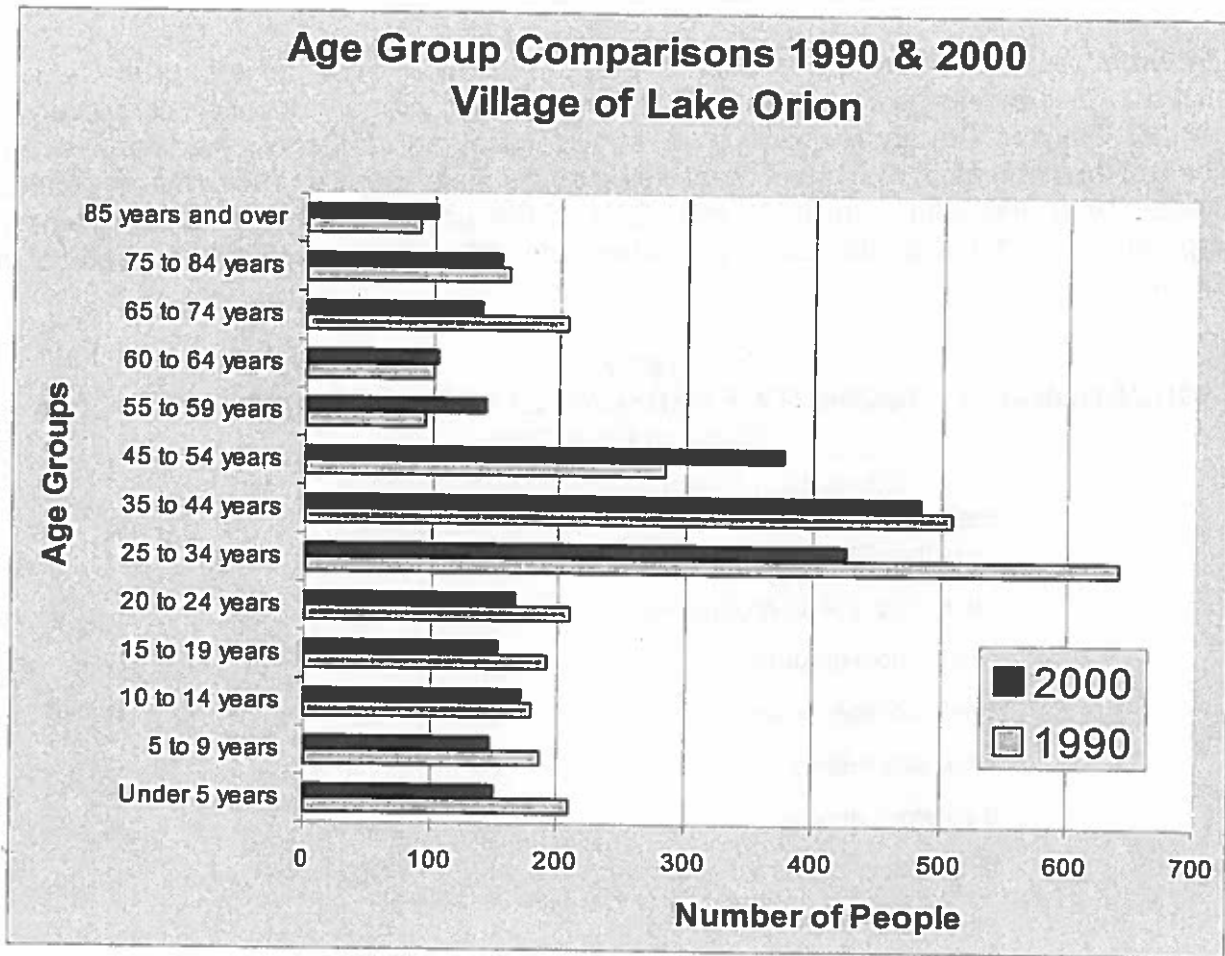
The age composition of the Village of Lake Orion population reflects larger trends in population and birth rates over the past few decades. As Table 8 below illustrates, compared to Oakland County as a whole, Lake Orion's population tends to be relatively older. In particular, the Village has a smaller percentage of children under 19 years of age and a larger percentage of 25 to 44 year olds than does Oakland County as a whole. Lake Orion also has a larger percentage of residents that are 75 years and older than does Oakland County.

**Table 8**  
**AGE GROUP COMPARISONS**  
Village of Lake Orion and Oakland County

Age	1990 Lake Orion	2000 Lake Orion	Lake Orion %	2000 Oakland Co.	Oakland Co. %
Under 5 years	209	150	5.5%	80,367	6.7%
5 to 9 years	186	147	5.4%	86,326	7.2%
10 to 14 years	180	171	6.3%	85,498	7.2%
15 to 19 years	191	153	5.6%	74,272	6.2%
20 to 24 years	209	167	6.2%	60,591	5.1%
25 to 34 years	640	427	15.7%	176,187	14.8%
35 to 44 years	509	485	17.9%	211,055	17.7%
45 to 54 years	284	377	13.9%	179,816	15.1%
55 to 59 years	94	141	5.2%	62,410	5.2%
60 to 64 years	101	103	3.8%	42,675	3.6%
65 to 74 years	206	138	5.1%	70,271	5.9%
75 to 84 years	159	154	5.7%	48,479	4.1%
85 years and over	89	102	3.8%	16,209	1.4%
Median age (years)	33.6	38.1		36.7	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census Profile of General Demographic Characteristics.

Chart 1



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Chart 1 above illustrates the differences in age groups between 1990 and 2000. Lake Orion experienced a decrease in the number of 25 to 34 year-olds between 1990 and 2000, but experienced an increase in the number of 45 to 54 year-olds during the same period.

### *Racial Composition*

The population of Lake Orion is homogenous with respect to racial composition. In 1990, 98.5% of the population was white. The 2000 Census indicated that 97.8% of the population was white. Oakland County is slightly more diverse with 82.8% of the population identified as white.



Education

Lake Orion residents have higher than average education levels according to Census statistics. 88% of Village residents have attained a high school education compared to 50.6% of Oakland County residents and 44% of Michigan residents. Additionally, the percent of the population with high school diplomas, bachelor degrees and higher increased between 1990 and 2000. In 2000, over 29% of the population had a college degree compared with 18% of Oakland County residents and 10% of Michigan residents (see Table 9, below).

**Table 9**  
**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF PERSONS 25 YEARS & OLDER, 1990 & 2000**  
Village of Lake Orion

Education Level	1990	2000
Less than 9th grade	112	56
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	329	159
High school graduate	531	343
Some college, no degree	627	655
Associate degree	102	140
Bachelor's degree	267	355
Graduate or professional degree	114	202
Percent high school graduate or higher	78.8%	88.7%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	18.3%	29.2%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000.

## **Employment**

The occupations of Lake Orion's residents reflect their relatively high educational attainment. Generally, Lake Orion has a white collar employment profile, with over 40 percent of the population employed in occupations involving management and professional work. More than 20 percent of the Village's population is employed in sales and office occupations, and more than 15 percent are involved in service occupations. These numbers are consistent with the average percentages in Oakland County for the year 2000 (see Table 10, below).

**Table 10**  
**EMPLOYMENT OF RESIDENTS BY OCCUPATION**  
Village of Lake Orion and Oakland County

OCCUPATION	Lake Orion Residents Employed		Oakland County Residents Employed	
	2000	Percent	2000	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	661	40.7%	272,019	44.50%
Service occupation	246	15.1%	67,947	11.10%
Sales and Office occupations	328	20.2%	170,183	27.90%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	-	-	196	0.03%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	128	7.9%	45,529	7.40%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	261	16.1%	58,154	9.50%
Total Employed	1,624	100%	616,028	100%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000.

*Income*

The annual household income of Village residents is consistent with the incomes of surrounding Oakland County residents. As one of the wealthiest counties in the United States, Oakland County's income estimates for 1999 are significantly higher than that of the rest of Michigan and the United States. As a result, the annual household incomes of Village residents are high compared to the state and national averages. Fewer than 30% of Village households earn less than \$40,000 a year while almost 35% of households earn more than \$100,000 a year. The median household income for the Village of Lake Orion is \$51,311 per year, which is less than Oakland County's median income of \$59,865. For comparison, Michigan's median household income is \$43,647 and U.S. median household income is \$41,433 (see Table 11, below).

**Table 11**  
**ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 1999**  
Village of Lake Orion and Oakland County

Household Income	Lake Orion Households	Percent	Oakland County Households	Percent
Less than \$10,000	85	7.3%	25,308	5.3%
\$10,000-\$14,999	41	3.5%	17,863	3.7%
\$15,000-24,999	163	14.0%	41,520	8.1%
\$25,000-\$34,999	64	5.5%	51,545	10.8%
\$40,000-\$49,999	197	16.9%	65,561	13.8%
\$50,000-\$74,999	231	19.8%	93,146	19.5%
\$75,000-\$99,999	168	14.4%	59,708	12.5%
\$100,000-149,999	113	9.7%	71,619	15.0%
\$150,000-199,999	73	6.3%	20,690	4.3%
\$200,000 or more	29	2.5%	29,618	15.5%
Median Household Income	\$51,311		\$59,865	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000.

## Population Projections

Population in the Village of Lake Orion grew very slowly between 1990 and 2000 and will continue to grow at a slow rate. According to the 2000 Census, the population decreased by 342 people during the 1990's. The McKA estimate is an increase of 147 people for the same period.

The information on the previous pages reveals a number of parameters that could affect Village population growth in future years. The most important parameters are likely to be local land use policies and regulations, the availability of land for redevelopment and the average household size. These parameters will determine how much of the regional demand for housing will be accommodated within the Village.

Projections of population growth can be prepared on the assumption that previous trends and land use policies will continue. Linear regression analysis is one method which uses historical population data to project future growth. Using the linear regression model, the average past rate of growth is used to predict the Village's future rate of growth. Table 12, below, presents a projection of future population based on a regression analysis of population data from 1960 to 2000 taken from the U.S. Census. This projection indicates that the Village's population will be 2,875 by the year 2030, which is roughly 160 more people than the population counted by the U.S. Census in 2000, but 200 people less than the Village's actual population in 1990.

**Table 12**  
**POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR USING REGRESSION ANALYSIS**  
Village of Lake Orion

Year	Projected Population
2000	2,715*
2005	2,835
2010	2,843
2015	2,851
2020	2,859
2025	2,867
2030	2,875

Source: \*U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000; McKenna Associates, Inc.

### Demographic Analysis

Using 3,204 as the Village's 2000 population (the McKA estimate), the 2030 population projected through a regression analysis will be 3,071.

SEMCOG, Southeast Michigan's regional planning agency, also makes population projections for communities based upon expected future growth. Based upon the Village of Lake Orion's actual 2000 population of 3,204, SEMCOG projects that the Village's population will decrease by 304 people over the next twenty years to 2,900 by the year 2020 (see Table 13, below).

**Table 13**  
**SEMCOG REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT,**  
**POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2000-2020**  
Village of Lake Orion

Year	Projected Population
2000	3,044
2010	3,004
2020	2,900

*Source: SEMCOG 2020 Regional Development Forecast, 1996.*



## **SECTION 5 ECONOMIC ANALYSIS**

### **Introduction**

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The purpose of an economic analysis within a community land use plan is to provide an assessment of economic and competitive market forces which bear on the future demand for commercial and office land uses. All land uses are affected by market factors, to one degree or another, however, commercial land uses, particularly retail uses, are the most dependent, especially when compared to residential land uses.

### **SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY**

This economic analysis focuses on assessment of the Village's trade area market potential. A trade area study differs in scope from a full market analysis in that it does not quantify competitive supply within the market area or reconcile supply and demand. However, this analysis is a useful tool for understanding the community's general trade area environment and drawing conclusions about Village market potential.

### **ASSESSING COMPETITIVE POTENTIAL**

Many factors influence whether a particular site or area will be a desirable and competitive location for commercial and/or office uses. The most important of these are the general demographic and economic conditions of the trade area. A growing population with high per capita and household income provides a more attractive environment for commercial uses than one where population growth is stagnant or declining, and where income levels are below average. Unless a community is well located within a growing market area, and geographically extensive with a large supply of land, it can usually do little to influence the demand side.

The competitive opportunities that communities can influence are most often on the supply side. The supply side is defined by land use and development characteristics that are shaped by community planning and land use policies. These characteristics can be analyzed through an assessment of the Village's market Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT), which are discussed as part of this economic analysis.

### **Trade Area**

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Four geographic areas were defined to assess market potential. These include a baseline area consisting of the Village, and three trade areas described by one (1), three (3), and six (6) mile radii from the intersection of M-24 and Flint Street. Map 5 on page 54 shows the trade areas analyzed.

### **VILLAGE**

Although the Village is not a trade area proper, it does provide a useful basis against which to compare trade area demographic, income and sales potentials.

### **ONE MILE TRADE AREA**

The primary trade area for convenience or neighborhood type uses is defined as the area lying within a one (1) mile radius from the intersection of M-24 and Flint Street. This area extends south to Buckhorn Lake and north to Indian Lake Road. In general, a primary trade area accounts for approximately 75% of neighborhood or convenience type retail sales. Secondary trade areas account for 15-20%. The remaining 5-10% of sales will be made up from a variety of sources including visitors.

### **THREE MILE TRADE AREA**

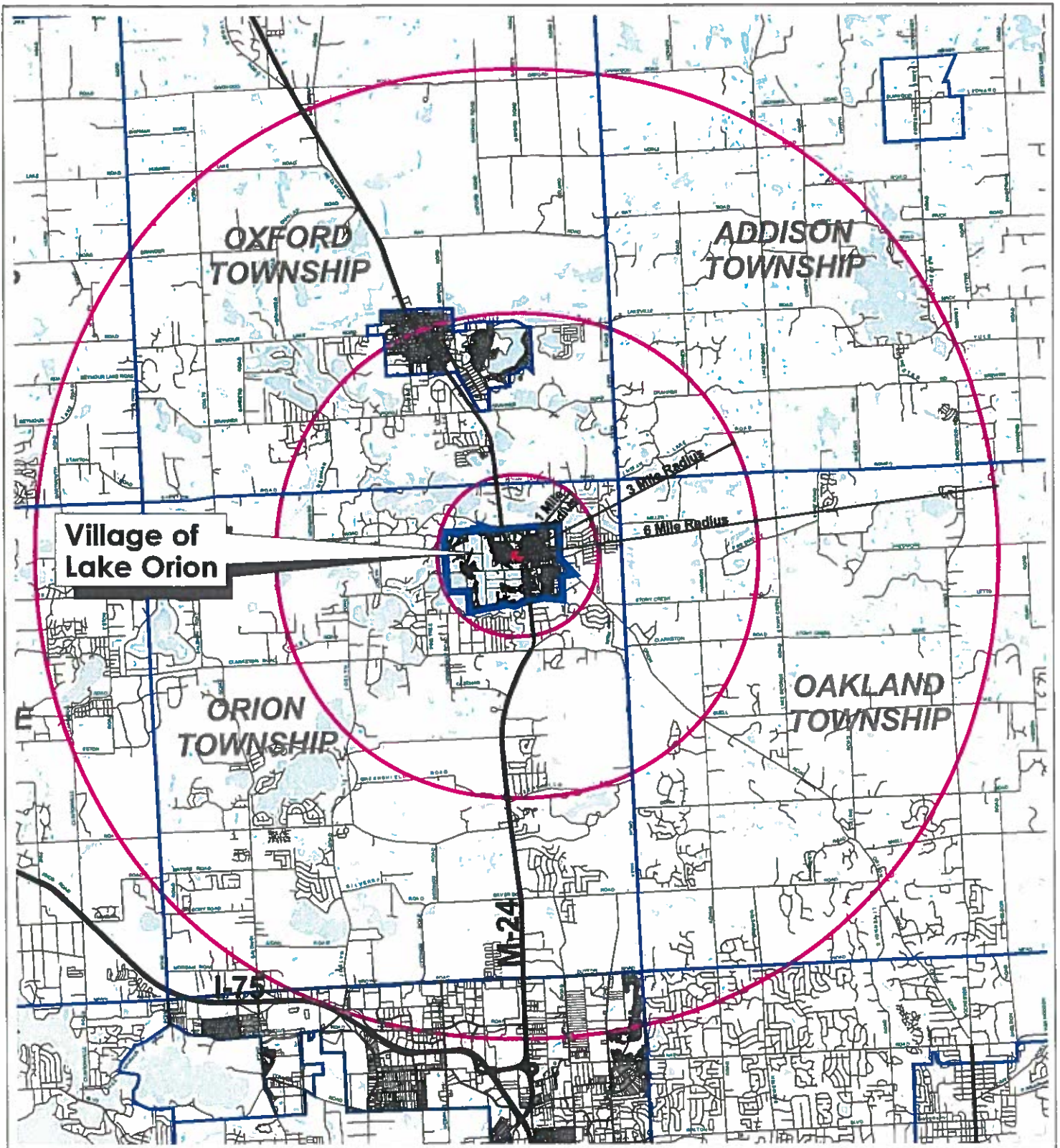
The secondary neighborhood trade area is defined as the area lying within a three (3) mile radius of the M-24 and Flint Street intersection. This trade area reaches almost to Lake George Road on the east, the north side of the Village of Oxford on the north, and south to Greenshield Road and Paint Creek Elementary School on the west. It extends a little over 2 miles into Oxford Township, 1.5 miles into Oakland Township and into the middle of Orion Township. This trade area will also provide primary support for community or comparison shopping type uses. These retail functions are now typically being provided for in large format stores such as Kohl's, K-Mart, or Target.

### **SIX MILE TRADE AREA**

A larger market area was analyzed to provide an overall market context. This area will provide little support for neighborhood or convenience type uses, some support for community and comparison uses, and potentially strong support for competitive specialty or entertainment type uses

This area is defined as lying within a six (6) mile radius of M-24 and Flint Street. It includes all of Orion Township and extends west to Clintonville Road, south to the Palace of Auburn Hills, east to Lakeville Lake and north to Oakwood Road. The Six Mile Trade Area extends 5 miles into Oxford Township, includes the southwest quadrant of Addison Township, extends 4.5 miles into Oakland Township, 1 mile into Auburn Hills, 1 mile into Independence Township, and catches the southeast corner of Brandon Township. Its boundary extends to Interstate-75 and includes the two primary interchanges of Lapeer Road and Joslyn Road that provide regional access to this market area.

## Village of Lake Orion, Michigan



Basemap Source: Oakland County 1999

### Map 5 - Trade Area

**TRADE AREA EXPENDITURE POTENTIAL**

Table 14, below, summarizes trade area demographic and income characteristics.

**Table 14**  
**TRADE AREA POPULATION AND INCOMES, 2001**  
**Lake Orion and Environs**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Village</b>	<b>1 mile</b>	<b>3 miles</b>	<b>6 miles</b>
Population	3,204 <sup>(1)</sup>	6,842	25,063	67,869
Number of Households	1,143	2,618	9,439	24,622
Avg. Household Size (number of persons)	2.26	2.57	2.63	2.74
Per Capita Income	\$30,057	\$28,672	\$30,918	\$38,063
Median Household Income	\$64,910	\$67,562	\$70,799	\$84,109

Source: Claritas, 2001 estimates.

<sup>(1)</sup> 2002 estimate, McKenna Associates, Inc.

As Table 14 above shows, although the population of the Village is small, it is part of a larger, fast growing and affluent market area. Within the three mile trade area there are 25,000 people in 9,400 households with median incomes of over \$70,000. Within a trade area of six (6) miles, the population increases by 170% to 67,869, and the number of households increases by 160% to 24,622 with a median income of over \$84,109.

These population and income characteristics translate into retail expenditures that are above national averages, in many cases by significant margins. As Table 15, Retail Expenditures, on page 53 shows, in most retail categories all the trade areas rank above the United States Index of 100. The United States Index is a ratio of the average household expenditures in a particular study area compared to the average household expenditure in the entire country *by a particular product category or store type*. A value of 100 means that the average expenditure in the study area is the same as the average expenditure in the country as a whole. Index numbers above or below 100 mean that expenditures are respectively above or below the average national expenditure in the particular category.

In the Furniture category, for example, all trade areas show expenditure levels above the national average. For the Village, the index is 118, which means that the residents of the Village spend, on average, 18 percent more on furniture than does the average American. Within the one (1) mile trade area the index rises to 134; within the three (3) mile trade



area it reaches 154; at six (6) miles it increases to still farther to 205, representing an average expenditure that is double the national average. These index numbers are clear indications of the affluence of the larger trade area and the potential opportunities available with effective retail strategies.

**Table 15**  
**RETAIL EXPENDITURES (in thousands of dollars), 2001**  
**Lake Orion and Environs**

Category	Village	U.S Index	1 mile	U.S Index	3 Mile	U.S Index	6 Miles	U.S Index
Food at Home	\$5,113	98	\$12,823	107	\$47,737	111	\$132,344	118
Food Away from Home	\$5,725	122	\$13,993	130	\$53,058	137	\$157,631	156
Alcoholic Bev at Home	\$992	120	\$2,336	123	\$8,824	129	\$26,501	149
Alcoholic Bev Away	\$1,036	127	\$2,467	132	\$9,482	141	\$29,221	167
Personal Care Products	\$632	107	\$1,518	112	\$5,629	115	\$16,007	126
Personal Care Services	\$397	118	\$1,007	131	\$4,021	145	\$13,186	183
Nonprescription Drugs	\$185	95	\$450	101	\$1,694	105	\$4,637	110
Women's Apparel	\$1,677	116	\$4,352	132	\$17,590	148	\$59,403	191
Men's Apparel	\$1,004	119	\$2,608	135	\$10,474	150	\$35,112	193
Girl's Apparel	\$345	108	\$930	127	\$3,789	143	\$13,023	189
Boy's Apparel	\$263	106	\$717	126	\$2,924	143	\$9,885	185
Infants Apparel	\$152	103	\$404	120	\$1,629	134	\$5,338	169
Footwear	\$557	111	\$1,453	126	\$5,815	140	\$19,294	178
Housekeeping Supplies	\$371	111	\$920	120	\$3,432	124	\$9,563	132
Lawn / Garden Supplies	\$200	113	\$477	117	\$1,859	127	\$5,644	148
Domestic Services	\$181	99	\$497	119	\$2,129	141	\$7,752	196
Household textiles	\$749	118	\$1,939	134	\$7,925	151	\$26,760	196
Furniture	\$917	118	\$2,380	134	\$9,855	154	\$34,176	205
Floor Coverings	\$448	113	\$1,166	128	\$4,835	147	\$16,572	194
Major Appliances	\$873	124	\$2,190	135	\$8,762	150	\$28,620	188
Small Appliances	\$1,120	115	\$2,909	131	\$11,994	150	\$40,875	196
TV, Radio, Sound	\$2,085	116	\$5,281	128	\$21,326	144	\$71,624	185
Transportation	\$7,692	123	\$19,801	139	\$79,635	155	\$262,459	195

Source: Claritas

## Supportable Square Footage

### RETAIL SECTOR

Table 16 below summarizes supportable retail square footage for each of the three trade areas. As with population and income levels, market strength accelerates quickly as one travels out from the Village. Within the one (1) mile trade area, expenditure potential exists to support approximately 165% more retail space than do expenditures within the Village alone. Similarly, retail expenditures within the three (3) mile trade area can support 274% more retail space than can be supported within the one (1) mile trade area.

**Table 16**  
**SUPPORTABLE RETAIL SQUARE FEET BY SALES CATEGORY**  
Village of Lake Orion and Environs

Category	Village (Sq. Ft.)	1 Mile (Sq. Ft)	3 Mile (Sq. Ft.)
Convenience Goods	107,483	264,076	995,762
Comparison Goods	33,042	116,480	348,935
General Goods	105,288	271,200	1,095,412
<b>Total</b>	<b>245,813</b>	<b>651,756</b>	<b>2,440,109</b>

Source: Claritas

The amount of supportable retail square footage, as listed in Table 16 above, does not account for existing retail square footage within the trade areas and so represents total potential space rather than net additional space. These average expenditures per square foot are based on industry surveys published by the Urban Land Institute. Per square foot averages for neighborhood/ convenience goods are: \$131.00; for comparison goods \$121.00; and for general goods \$139.00.

For the purposes of this analysis, convenience goods are low-order goods like milk, bread, and occasional groceries which are frequently bought locally, with little consideration of the price charged since purchases are usually on a small scale and convenience is rated more highly than economy. More simply, convenience goods are the type bought at the corner shop which is 'open all hours'. Comparison goods are products for which consumers will shop around before making a decision. The location of the store is less important than the actual product itself, therefore, people will go out of their way to make a purchase. General goods are goods purchased based on an individual's tastes and needs, rather than for convenience or comparison. Personal items such as art, music, furniture, home decor, and appliances are goods and services categorized as general goods.

McKenna Associates has estimated the amount of commercial space, by square foot, currently within the Village. This estimate was made by adjusting land use area in acres to account for typical lot coverage. Lot coverages were estimated at 80% for downtown land uses which typically have no on-site parking, and 20% for office and highway commercial uses, to reflect their greater auto orientation and land not utilized for buildings. Office space was estimated for downtown commercial and corridor commercial areas and subtracted from the total acres to give a realistic estimate of retail-oriented commercial space available in the Village. When comparing the Lake Orion market area expenditure potential to estimates of existing retail space in the Village, summarized in Table 17 below, it is apparent that retail land uses draw considerable support from outside the Village itself, and that retail uses in the Village provide only a small part of potential supportable retail space within the three (3) mile trade area. Although this analysis does not quantify competitive supply, it is reasonable to conclude that one competitive market opportunity for Village retail uses would be to expand their share of the available market support available within this three (3) mile trade area. Many of the factors that will influence the future competitive position of the Village's commercial uses are qualitative in nature and will be addressed in the narrative analysis below.

**Table 17**  
**ESTIMATED COMMERCIAL FLOOR AREA, 2002**  
Village of Lake Orion

Land Use	Acres	Estimated Coverage %	Estimated Office Space %	Potential Sq. Ft.
Downtown Commercial	7.8	80%	25% <sup>(1)</sup>	203,861
Corridor Commercial	31.7	20%		276,170
<b>Total</b>	<b>45.6</b>			<b>480,031</b>

Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., Claritas

<sup>(1)</sup> Estimated percentage of office space is subtracted from total commercial acreage to calculate commercial floor area.

### **OFFICE SECTOR**

Professional office uses comprise an important segment of the Village of Lake Orion. The presence of professional offices brings employees to the downtown and corridor retail businesses for shopping and dining. Professional offices also help attract potential customers for retail businesses from those who come to the Village to conduct personal business. As a result, a strong presence of offices helps to enhance the level of activity creating a perception of liveliness and vitality in the Village. This section will provide an analysis of current and future opportunities for office growth.

The Existing Land Use summary Table 1 on page 16 of this Master Plan indicates the amount of office use along the M-24 corridor increased from 5.3 acres in 1990 to 6.1 acres in 2002. This represents an increase of 15.1 percent in the last 12 years.

Table 18 below provides an estimate of office acreage needs to the year 2020, based on regional employment projections. The financial, insurance, real estate (F.I.R.E), and half the service figures provided by SEMCOG were combined to project office employment.

**Table 18**  
**PROJECTED OFFICE POTENTIAL AND NEEDS**  
Village of Lake Orion

Year	F.I.R.E.	Business Services	Total Office Employment	Building Sq. Ft. Needed (a)	Site Area Needed (b)
2000	113	499	612	137,700	12.6 acres
2010	112	571	683	153,675	14.1 acres
2020	75	618	693	15,592	14.3 acres

Source: SEMCOG, 2002.

(a) 225 sq. ft. per employee

(b) Site area is four (4) times building area

Based upon the currently developed 6.1 office acres along the M-24 corridor, an estimated 1.56 acres of downtown office space (see Table 17, page 55), and the 2000 demand of 12.6 acres, it would seem there is demand for new office space. Office demand by the year 2010 is expected to be 14.1 acres and office demand in 2020 is expected to be 14.3 acres.

Recognizing that the Village's master plan goals call for new commercial development to be directed to the downtown area, the actual land area needed for new office development demand could be accommodated on smaller lots with smaller setbacks and two stories of floor area. The Village could consider developing incentives to direct new office development to the downtown area rather than the M-24 corridor to accommodate demand for office space while meeting the development needs of the Village's downtown.

## ***Competitive Market Position***

The competitive market position of the Village's commercial land uses is analyzed through a "Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats" format, often referred to as a "SWOT" analysis. This narrative analysis provides a framework for identifying general trends and conditions in a trade area based on a careful examination of existing and proposed land use and circulation patterns and trends, the character and condition of existing and proposed development, and judgments regarding future development trends.



This analysis includes an assessment of the Village's relative position within the trade area and by the land use categories described in this Master Plan including: corridor commercial, downtown commercial and professional office. These provide general assessments of commercial uses including convenience retail uses, typically found in neighborhood-level shopping centers; specialty and entertainment uses such as restaurants; and comparison type retail uses, commonly found in community-level and regional type shopping centers.

**VILLAGE LOCATION**

**Table 19a**  
**SWOT ANALYSIS - Village Location**  
Village of Lake Orion

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Central location in fast growing suburban market. At intersection of regional transportation network. Historic character, lake environment & unique identity.	Heavy regional traffic on M-24 produces congestion through Village and decreases function of commercial sites along M-24.	Create distinctive market profile within strong suburban market. Potential for specialty retail and restaurants.	The potential for other development along M-24 and in larger trade area to capture market share.

*Source: McKenna Associates, Inc.*

As previously discussed, the Village of Lake Orion lies within a fast growing and affluent market area. Moreover, the primary north-south arterial in the region, M-24, runs directly through the Village.

In addition to its location, a key strength of the Village is its historic character and Lakeside ambience. While the Lake has always played a key role in the Village's growth, the historic "town" character and "sense of place" of the Village also provides an additional competitive asset in the market. This is not simply because it provides a different environmental product in the market when compared to those found in typical suburban communities with their many look-a-like subdivisions and strip malls. Instead, the Village incorporates community features that most Americans say they find desirable. When surveyed about the kind of community in which they would most like to live, the largest percentage of Americans answer the American small town.

Despite its central location, the primary weaknesses of the Village as a commercial location are, ironically, also related to its place in the regional circulation system. While M-24 provides regional access, its heavy, fast traffic and congestion, create a significant environmental impact that is contrary to Lake Orion's small town quality.

## Economic Analysis

The location of the downtown one block east of M-24 provides an opportunity for the Village to build upon its true pedestrian-oriented and scaled "main street" environment as envisioned during the downtown charrette. This is a competitive opportunity for the Village compared to either the Village of Oxford, just to the north, or Rochester, to the southeast. Each of these has a main street whose pedestrian orientation has been compromised somewhat by the street's function as a regional trunk line.

At the same time, however, Lake Orion's downtown commercial uses lack the visibility and exposure available on M-24. The character and condition of uses along M-24 within the Village also provide a mixed impression of the Village, and do not capitalize on the regional market "window" provided by M-24 to establish or reinforce the Village's profile in the market.

A key locational opportunity for the Village over the term of this Master Plan will be to strengthen its competitive position in its trade area by managing and clearly defining its market profile. This can be done by means such as improving the downtown's commercial tenant mix, creating enhancements to the downtown's entrances, and adopting development guidelines for new construction and rehabilitation.

The most significant threat to the Village's commercial land uses in the future will be the failure to create a distinctive profile in the market. This could make the Village less competitive than surrounding locations both in downtown commercial and corridor commercial uses. Higher quality commercial environments, that mimic the look and feel of a main street, will increasingly provide a competitive and appealing retail platform. A shopping center called the "Village of Rochester Hills," which features an open central main street, is a 375,000 square foot up-scale "lifestyle" center currently under construction at the northeast corner of Walton and Adams Roads, straddling the edge of the Village of Lake Orion's six (6)-mile trade area. It is due to open in the fall of 2002.

### CORRIDOR COMMERCIAL

**Table 19b**  
**SWOT ANALYSIS - Corridor Commercial**  
Village of Lake Orion

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Visibility on M-24, high traffic volume	Difficult ingress and egress from M-24. Small parcel sizes; somewhat limited parking.	Redevelopment for quality mixed-use projects that combine commercial visibility with a sense of place.	Availability of larger size redevelopment properties north and south on M-24 that could provide easier access, and more parking for highway-oriented retail.

Source: McKenna Associates, Inc.

Corridor commercial land uses benefit from the regional circulation role of M-24 which has the highest traffic counts and regional visibility of any major arterial in the trade area. At the same time, the relatively small parcel size of corridor commercial uses within the boundaries of the Village makes these uses especially vulnerable to change. Some parcels to the south of the Village are not zoned for commercial uses which enhances the Village's position as a regional retail center.

Retail land uses are very volatile, in that formerly desirable locations can become undesirable due to changes in the retail business environment unrelated to a particular location or site. The phenomenon of large "big-box" retailers simply moving from one site to another in order to build a bigger building is well known. Relocating to a larger site to accommodate a bigger store with more parking and easier loading is a frequent reason that retailers look for new sites. Retailers may also move in order to be in closer proximity to other retailers considered to be large "anchor-type" draws.

The relatively small size of the Village's corridor commercial parcels along the M-24 corridor will remain a principal weakness for future corridor commercial use. Increasing traffic congestion and difficulty turning onto M-24, particularly for left turns, could further impact the competitive position of the Village's corridor commercial uses.

The potential threat to the Village's corridor commercial uses is that these weaknesses would give the Village location a "second-tier" status in the eyes of retailers and become less attractive for desirable uses. This trend could then build upon itself, and also have negative impacts on surrounding land uses, since M-24 would continue to be the community's "front-door" to the region.

Despite this possible future scenario, the M-24 corridor through the Village still remains an important resource and potential opportunity for the community. Unlike many commercial arterials that seem to extend endlessly without any center or focus, the M-24 corridor through the Village can be organized into three identifiable sections and focus areas. These sections are: the south Village boundary to Atwater Street; Atwater Street to Flint Street; and Flint Street to Elizabeth Street. As redevelopment occurs along the corridor, an opportunity exists in each of these sections to reinforce a distinctive visual image that can help to differentiate and highlight retail uses.

**DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL**

**Table 19c**  
**SWOT ANALYSIS - Downtown Commercial**  
**Village of Lake Orion**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Downtown Commercial	Pedestrian-oriented "main street" commercial district provides distinctive market setting. Mixture of uses.	Location one block east of M-24 reduces commercial visibility. Lack of coordinated tenant mix strategy reduces marketing synergy.	Link downtown (visually and physically) with M-24 through redevelopment along M-24. Specialty retail and restaurants and professional offices	Quality new "main street" retail centers that provide competitive platform for specialty retail and restaurants in market area. Other downtowns (e.g., Oxford)

*Source: McKenna Associates, Inc.*

Downtown commercial uses benefit from a distinctive, historic setting that offers an appealing environment increasingly attractive to consumers. The Village's downtown, unlike those of either Oxford or Rochester, is not bisected by a major arterial and so maintains a true pedestrian-oriented character and feeling. Continuing renovation of downtown structures, as well as surrounding residential neighborhoods, will only strengthen its appeal.

Traditional, mixed-use commercial buildings like those in the Village's downtown provide a flexible and functional format for retail and other commercial uses that adapts well to changes. Good sidewalk visibility, simple and direct access from the street, and well proportioned retail spaces that can accommodate a broad range of retail uses are three factors that have allowed many "main street" commercial districts to thrive and grow.

The primary weakness of the Village's downtown is its lack of a clear identity both in terms of tenant mix and market profile. Is downtown thought of as a specialty retail area, and if so, for what category or categories of use? How does a concentration of personal care services and restaurants add to or enhance these uses? The lack of a clear identity produces mixed messages in the minds of consumers and retailers alike, and limits the ability of the downtown to create a "critical mass" as a commercial environment. This is reinforced by a somewhat confusing entry and arrival sequence which does not sign or identify the downtown as clearly or effectively as it could.

The opportunity for downtown land uses is to capitalize on the unique setting of the Village to create a distinctive specialty and mixed-use commercial environment, clearly positioned in the consumer's mind.

## Economic Analysis

Another opportunity for improvement exists for sites along M-24 between Broadway and Flint Street. These sites are part of the entryway into the downtown and are visible from M-24, although they have no access to it. They also have the potential both for pedestrian connections to the downtown *and* views of the Lake. Enhancing these sites provide an opportunity to increase the overall visibility of downtown from M-24 and increase the attractiveness of a primary vehicular entrance to the downtown.

### OFFICE

**Table 19d**  
**SWOT ANALYSIS - Office (Downtown & M-24)**  
Village of Lake Orion

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Demand for additional space is present. Opportunity for distinctive professional offices in center of strong trade area. Opportunity to provide regional visibility with lake views.	Ingress and egress from M-24. Limited number of sites; some poor quality development that hurts image of location in the market. Accessibility to second floor downtown offices.	Mixed-use redevelopment that provide "class A" professional office space in pedestrian-oriented environment. Second floor offices in downtown.	High quality mixed-use development that provides quality space, good access and parking in specialty setting may be developed elsewhere.

Source: McKenna Associates, Inc.

Office uses, other than those occupying downtown buildings, account for only six (6) acres of land in the Village and are limited to sites along M-24. However, distinctive, pedestrian-oriented, main street environments have proven to be popular locations for small professional and business offices that do not need large floorplates or parking areas, and which benefit from being associated with the generally positive image of historic or traditional locations.

This is a strength for the Village and provides a potentially valuable component for mixed use redevelopment projects along M-24. The limited number of relatively large sites where significant projects can occur means that each project will have a significant impact on the Village's future. The design and architecture of mixed use redevelopment projects along M-24 should be considered a priority for the Village. One way for the Village to play a greater role in the look and feel of new projects is to consider design guidelines for the M-24 corridor, using design and architecture objectives agreed upon during the downtown charrette. Design guidelines can be enforced with overlay zones or during site plan review.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR DOWNTOWN LAKE ORION

Lake Orion's downtown is undergoing study and improvement through the Oakland County Main Street program. As the Main Street program considers the economic restructuring of the downtown, the findings of this economic analysis are important to consider.



Downtown Lake Orion has the potential to become a regional entertainment district consisting of restaurants and niche shopping. The high household incomes within the three (3) and six (6) mile trade areas and the relative demand for "Food Away from Home and Beverage Away from Home" (shown in Table 15 on page 53) make Lake Orion a potential destination spot for area residents living between the Village limits and six (6) miles from the Village's downtown. Additionally, the three (3) and six (6) mile trade area expenditure on home improvement type products should be considered as a potential niche market for downtown. Home improvement type stores, such as interior design studios, small furniture stores, gardening stores, and textile shops would be advantageous additions to downtown Lake Orion.

Lake Orion residents have expressed a desire for non-franchise downtown merchants and less first floor office and service businesses. Residents would like to see a bakery, wine store, vegetable market, bookstore, and more coffee shops in the downtown. A different mix of businesses would increase pedestrian traffic on downtown streets and contribute to a more lively atmosphere downtown. A full market analysis should be completed to study the feasibility of upscale, gourmet type stores in the downtown.

Residents living within the Village of Lake Orion cannot support a thriving downtown by themselves. As the trade area demographics show, residents living nearby, but outside of Lake Orion, have the income and demographic characteristics to help support the downtown with their expenditures. Attracting these shoppers will require a different business mix, attention to downtown design and architecture, as well as marketing and promotion efforts.

## **SECTION 6 CIRCULATION ANALYSIS**

### *Introduction*

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Circulation, or how people maneuver through the community, is an important consideration when developing a plan for the future. Roads and other circulation routes are a means of controlling and organizing land use development within the community. Further, the circulation system must be integrated with all other aspects of the Plan. This section of the Master Plan will analyze the circulation patterns of the Village of Lake Orion and will help determine problem areas that should be addressed.

Like many communities within the Detroit Metropolitan area, the Village of Lake Orion experiences significant traffic. Every weekday morning and afternoon, the main artery serving the Village – M-24 – is crowded with automobiles. Most of the traffic is caused by commuters from communities north of the Village making their way to and from jobs south of the Village. A major circulation challenge for the Village is to relieve traffic pressure and improve traffic safety in ways that do not harm the tranquil residential qualities of the Village, while supporting the commercial and office base.

On a regional level, there are several agencies involved in the formulation of plans and policies for the larger transportation network. While the plans of these agencies can have a strong impact upon the circulation system of a community, the Village can also influence, and in many cases control, its own future transportation network. This is especially true for the Village of Lake Orion which has jurisdiction over all the Village roads except M-24.

### *Regional Context*

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The Village of Lake Orion's transportation network is part of the Metropolitan Detroit region. Located in the northernmost part of Oakland County, the Village is not directly served by major interstate highways.

The development of the Village of Lake Orion is inextricably linked to its location along M-24, a state trunkline serving the northeast quadrant of Oakland County. M-24 is the major arterial route north and south through the Village. The grid pattern of streets in the Village downtown area is tied to M-24 and a significant number of commercial businesses are located along M-24. According to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), in the year 2001, the average daily traffic on M-24 was 38,400 vehicles. Commercial traffic counts in 2000 were 1,500 commercial vehicles per day.

Lake Orion is well served with regional roads that connect the Village to nearby communities. Orion Road, which becomes Flint Street within the Village, connects the Village and the Rochester/Rochester Hills area to the south. Heights Road, located at the Village's southern boundary, connects to Clarkston Road, which leads to Clarkston to the west. M-24 connects the Village to communities both north and south of the Village, such as the Village of Oxford, Oxford Township, Lapeer and Auburn Hills/Pontiac.

## Classification of Roads

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Road classifications help in understanding the volume and type of traffic intended for the road. Road classifications are also an indicator of the jurisdiction responsible for the maintenance and improvement of roads. Additionally, classifications give important information about the purpose and character of the roads. For this analysis, roads will be classified according to both function and the jurisdiction responsible for the road.

### **FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION**

The National Functional Classification (NFC) is a planning tool which federal, state, and local transportation agencies have used since the 1960's. The Federal Highway Administration developed this system of classifying all streets, roads, and highways according to their relative traffic-carrying function.

The NFC designation of a given road has a direct relationship to its eligibility for federal funds, either as part of the National Highway System (NHS) or through the Surface Transportation Program (STP). The Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – TEA-21, for short, is the current federal legislation which governs the eligibility of roads for federal aid and related matters. All principal arterials, minor arterials, urban collectors, and rural major collectors are eligible for federal funds for improvement. Interstate and principal arterials have a higher funding priority and thus, a greater amount of funding. If a road has an NFC designation of rural minor collector, it is not included in the definition of federal aid road, but it does have some limited eligibility for federal funds. Roads classified as urban or rural local roads are not eligible for federal aid.

#### ***Principal Arterials***

Principal arterials carry vehicles over long distances and connect population centers. They provide access to places that create major traffic, such as airports and regional shopping centers. Examples of principal arterials are interstate highways and other freeways, as well as state routes between large cities and significant surface streets in large cities.

M-24 is a principal arterial and serves as the major north-south connection between Lake Orion and the greater Detroit Metropolitan area. The highway runs from Pontiac on the south to Caro, Michigan in the Thumb. Within the Village of Lake Orion, M-24 is an undivided five lane highway, separating the downtown area and residential area on the east side of the Village from the Lake and residential areas to the west.

#### ***Minor Arterials***

Minor arterials are similar in function to principal arterials, except they function to carry trips of shorter distances. State routes between smaller cities, surface streets of moderate importance in large cities, and important surface streets in smaller cities are examples of minor arterials. Minor arterials place more emphasis on land access than do principal arterials, because one of their key functions is to carry traffic to the next junction of a principal arterial.

Flint Street/Orion Road is a minor arterial in the Village. Flint Street runs through the downtown area of the Village and becomes Orion Road at the far eastern edge of the Village. Orion Road connects the Village with the cities of Rochester and Rochester Hills to the southeast.

#### ***Collector Streets***

Collector streets connect neighborhood areas of concentrated land use development to minor and principal arterials. They provide access to parcels of property and funnel traffic from residential areas to arterials.

Broadway Street, north of M-24, connects the downtown and residential areas north of it to M-24. Atwater Street connects residents south of downtown to M-24. Outside the Village, in Orion Township, Heights Road is a collector street connecting the lakeside residential neighborhoods of the Village to M-24 and the Village downtown. Indianwood Road, in Orion Township, runs parallel to the northern border of the Village and serves as a connection between the Village's lakeside residential neighborhoods and M-24 and downtown.

#### ***Local Streets***

Local streets provide access from individual properties to collector streets. They serve as routes of access through residential development. Local streets are the main interior streets of the Village, depending on the density of residential development. Movement of through traffic is deliberately discouraged on local streets. All Village Streets, except Atwater, Broadway, Flint Street/Orion Road, and M-24 are local streets.

## **JURISDICTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS**

Another method of classifying roads is based on the governmental jurisdiction responsible for the road's maintenance and upkeep. The Village includes roads under the jurisdiction of the State of Michigan and the Village. Michigan's Public Act 51 of 1951, as amended, establishes the method for distribution of gasoline tax revenues to the State among its municipalities. The State of Michigan retains a portion of these revenues which are allocated to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) for maintenance and upgrading of the interstate highways and state trunklines within its jurisdiction. The amount of revenue that remains is allocated to local units of government throughout the state. The funding level to each municipality is determined by a set formula and, ultimately, depends on the length of roadway in each classification.

The classifications used by MDOT are State Trunkline, County Primary, Major Street and Local Street. Major streets are designed and constructed to carry greater volumes of traffic at higher rates of speed and receive a larger dollar-per-mile amount than local streets. Local streets typical serve residential areas, therefore, volumes and rates of speed are lower than on major streets. Due to the less intense use of local streets, the dollar-per-mile funding level is less than major streets under local jurisdiction. Map 6 on page 67 illustrates the existing road network of the Village by jurisdictional classification. The Village of Lake Orion currently contains 2.74 miles of major street and 8.70 miles of local street. Following below are the road types present within and around the Village.

### **State Trunklines**

State trunklines are roads that are under the jurisdiction of the State of Michigan and serve as major arteries connecting different cities and villages to each other. M-24 is a state trunkline that connects the Village of Lake Orion to surrounding townships, villages, and cities.

### **County Primary Road**

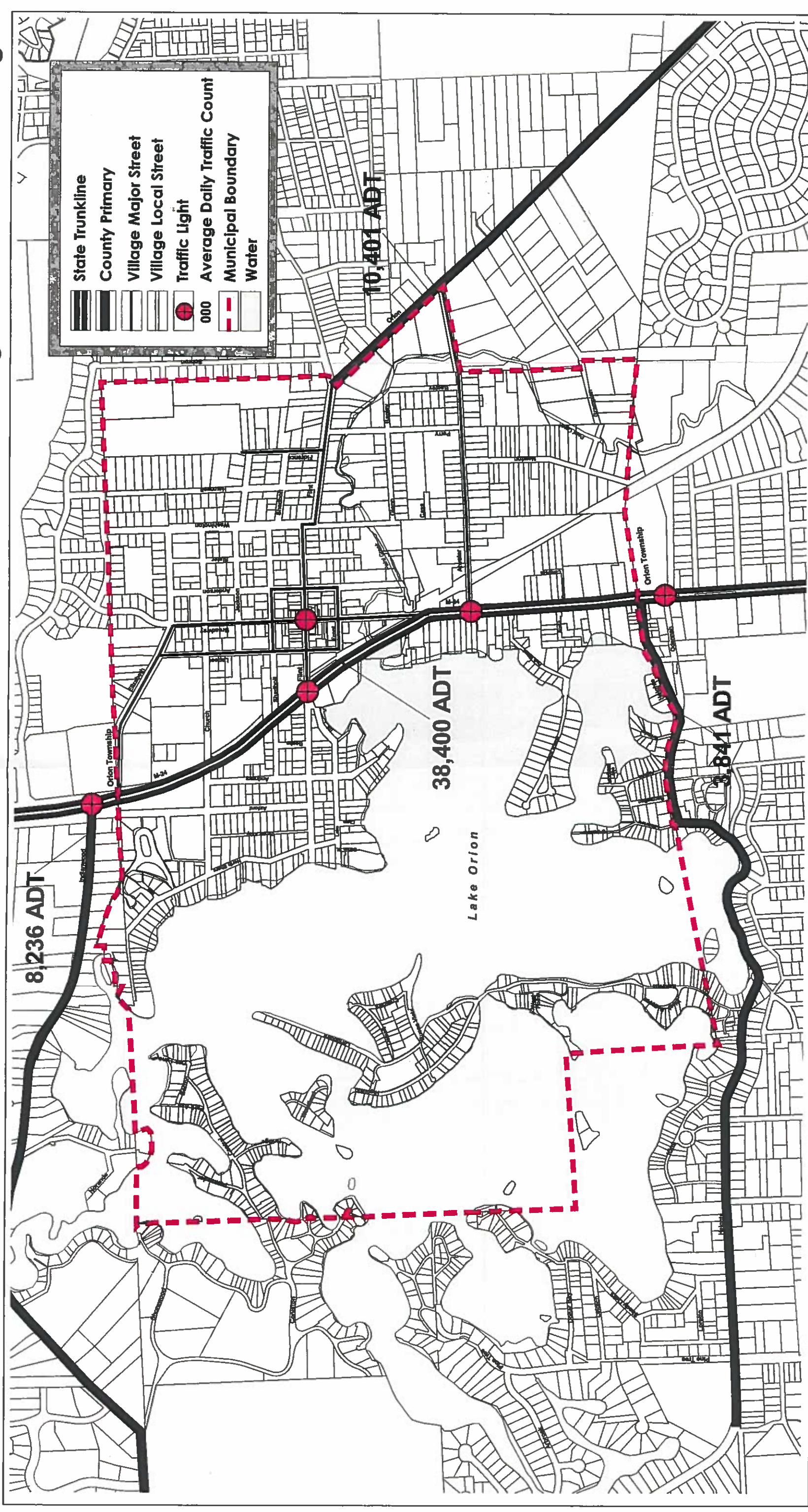
County primary roads are under the jurisdiction of the Road Commission for Oakland County and serve as connectors between areas within the County. Although not within the Village limits, Orion Road and Heights Roads are county primary roads.

### **Local Major and Local Minor Roads**

Local streets are under the jurisdiction of the local municipal government and are classified as either local major or local minor roads. All local roads, in the Village, whether major or minor, are under the jurisdiction of the Village. The local major roads within Lake Orion serve as collector streets linking the local minor roads with the major thoroughfares. The Village local major street system includes parts of Flint, Shadbolt, Anderson, and Elizabeth Streets, and all of North Broadway, Lapeer, Florence, Atwater, and Front Streets.



# Village of Lake Orion, Michigan



**Map 6 - Existing Road System**

Source: Oakland County, 1999  
Data Source: Village of Lake Orion  
Traffic Count: Average Daily Traffic  
Road Commission for Oakland County 2-Way, 24-Hour

**Local Minor Roads**

The lowest order roads are local roads, which provide access to individual properties. They mainly carry traffic generated on the street itself. All roads not identified as M-24 or a local major road, are considered local minor roads.

**Private Roads**

There are several private roads in the Village. These roads developed as a result of old land divisions, and are the responsibility of the abutting property owners to maintain. Cinnamon Ridge is one such private road.

**Existing Conditions**

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**LEVEL OF SERVICE**

Another way a road system can be analyzed is by level of service (LOS), a measure of performance that calculates the time of delay at intersections on a road, which cause driver discomfort and frustration, as well as fuel consumption and lost travel time. According to the M-24 Corridor Report prepared by Hubbel, Roth and Clark in 1998, three (3) intersections have unacceptable levels of service (delays): Flint Street and M-24, Atwater Street (westbound left) and M-24 (southbound left), and just outside the Village, at Indianwood and M-24. Typically, the delays and congestion can be alleviated by the timing of lights along a road, but unusually heavy traffic on M-24 makes it difficult to alleviate delays.

The Village of Lake Orion will participate in a new program of the Road Commission for Oakland County called SCATS, which is designed to reduce delays at signals and improve the level of service for M-24 through the Village. SCATS stands for Sydney Coordinated Adaptive Traffic System. SCATS uses telephone lines to communicate between a regional computer and the traffic signal control at each SCATS intersection. Traffic signals along M-24 between Silver Bell Road in Orion Township north to Ray Road in Oxford will be equipped with video imaging equipment to let SCATS know when vehicles are present. The equipment allows SCATS to count vehicles and then decide how much green time each approach to a signalized intersection should have. This data is re-computed every cycle to determine what timing changes need to be made to move traffic most efficiently. SCATS also coordinates timings at adjacent intersections to provide for the best possible flow of traffic.



### ***Traffic Accidents***

Traffic accidents are another measurement of performance for roads. Large numbers of crashes at an intersection indicate unsafe conditions and a need for intersection improvements. Table 20 below lists the number of reported crashes for the Village of Lake Orion as according to the Michigan State Police.

**Table 20**  
**TOTAL REPORTED CRASHES, 1997-2002\***  
Village of Lake Orion

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002*	Total
M-24	29	49	41	36	35	19	209
Broadway	12	9	18	17	19	5	80
Flint	13	20	20	19	27	12	111
Atwater	29	24	27	16	9	6	111
Total	83	102	106	88	90	42*	511

Source: Lake Orion Police Department

\*To date, July 2002

## ***Village Road Characteristics***

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### **GRID PATTERN OF STREETS**

Throughout the parts of the Village located east of the Lake and north of Atwater Street, a grid network of streets (blocks) has been established. This is the street pattern most often used in older communities developed before the 1940's. The grid pattern has many advantages; paramount is its capacity to disperse traffic by offering several alternate routes to get to any destination. The grid pattern also provides for simplicity in wayfinding and efficient use of the land.

### **DOWNTOWN STREETS**

The road network is an important part of the urban design context for downtown Lake Orion. The width of road and sidewalk, and the accompanying landscaping along the road are key to creating the look and feel of the historic Village.

Over the years, different developments have disrupted the grid patterns of streets within the downtown area. The Downtown Design Charette Plan for the Village makes several recommendations for improvements to street design in the downtown area which would improve downtown access, including:

### Circulation Analysis

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- Convert Front Street to two-way traffic between Broadway & Lapeer
- Develop a boulevard design on sections of M-24
- Improve the M-24/Flint Street intersection

The Village Downtown Development Authority (DDA) adopted a plan in 2001 which includes several circulation-related improvements. A better pedestrian connection is desirable between the downtown section of the Village east of M-24 and the Lakeshore to the west. A priority project identified by the DDA is to design and fund a pedestrian tunnel connection between the downtown and waterfront. Other circulation-related projects scheduled between 2001 and 2010 for the DDA include:

- Construction of the Atwater Pedestrian Bridge
- Improvements to the M-24/Flint Street intersection
- Extension of Front Street sidewalk to M-24
- Improvements to crosswalks, gateway signage, and streetscape in the downtown

### Other Transportation Modes

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#### **NON-MOTORIZED PATHS**

Not all areas of the Village have sidewalks, particularly the Lakeside residential areas and islands. The Lake areas of the Village typically have twisting, narrow road rights-of-way ranging from 25 feet to 30 feet in width since these areas were originally subdivided as seasonal recreation property. The road widths are typically not sufficient to allow for sidewalks. The portion of the Village east of the Lake contains streets which have wider rights-of-way and often has sidewalks.

Residents of the Village of Lake Orion have access to two non-motorized paths and trail systems, the Paint Creek Trail and the Orion Township Safety Path System. In the future, residents will have a connection to the Polly Ann Trail along Indianwood Road.

The Village Recreation Plan includes development of a path system that connects the Village to the Paint Creek Trail and eventually links the Polly Ann Trail to the Paint Creek Trail. Created from the abandoned Penn Central Railroad Line, the Paint Creek Trail stretches ten miles from the Village's border with Orion Township to Rochester Hills, terminating at Dequindre Road, at the Oakland and Macomb County line. Hikers, joggers, horseback riders, and cross-county skiers use the trail. The trail is barrier-free and has a crushed limestone surface. It is managed by the Paint Creek Trailways Commission, an intergovernmental consortium.

## Circulation Analysis

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The Polly Ann Trail begins in Orion Township, 3.5 miles northwest of the Village. The Trail originated from the Pontiac Oxford and Northern (nicknamed the "Polly Ann") Railroad, which once ran from Pontiac to Caseville, Michigan, a total of 99 miles. The Grand Trunk Western abandoned the line, and 32 miles of the right-of-way was purchased by the Michigan DNR to develop into a trailway for non-motorized recreation. The portion of the Polly Ann Trail between Orion Township and Oxford Village is considered the most accessible part of the trail at present. The Polly Ann Trail Council serves as administrator for the trail and is part of the State of Michigan Rails to Trails Initiative.

The Orion Township Safety Path System is a 23-mile network of paths ranging in width from five to eight feet adjacent to many roads throughout Orion Township. The paths accommodate pedestrians runners, and bicyclists. The Orion Township Safety Path Advisory Committee administers the system, which is funded through a millage assessed on all Township residents, including Village residents.

### **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

The Village is not served by the Regional Suburban Transit Authority, SMART. However, the North Oakland Transportation Authority (NOTA) offers limited public transportation for senior citizens, the physically and developmentally disabled, and participants in the Michigan Works program. In December 2001, NOTA began an on-call, dispatch (dial-a-ride) transportation service to eligible residents of Oxford, Addison and Orion Township, including the Villages of Lake Orion, Oxford and Leonard. The NOTA system is available Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday for transportation to local churches. NOTA provides transportation from front doors to anywhere in the Northern Oakland County region, as well as to regional hospitals and shopping centers. According to NOTA's Director, ridership on the NOTA system is continually increasing. There were 1,581 trips in five (5) NOTA vans counted for June 2002. NOTA plans to extend service to Saturday and Sunday non-church transportation and expand its fleet of vans.

### **Additional Transportation Issues**

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As Lake Orion and the region continue to grow, transportation will continue to be a significant community issue. There are several issues related to the current transportation and circulation network of the Village that demand further understanding.

### **M-24 CORRIDOR PLAN**

The Master Plan provides a general overview of the road system. A corridor design plan for M-24 would examine the road conditions in detail and provide a basis for future ordinance standards that apply to access, aesthetic/streetscape, and other road related issues. Another benefit of a corridor plan is its usefulness in communicating the Village's transportation objectives to government agencies that have jurisdiction over roads, e.g., MDOT and the Road Commission for Oakland County, for future road improvement



projects and obtaining grants particularly for streetscape improvements. Funds for aesthetic, historic and non-motorized improvements have been available under TEA-21 for such projects supported by a plan. A corridor design plan demonstrates to transportation agencies a municipality's preparedness to implement a viable project.

In April, 1998, a community-sponsored study of M-24 was conducted on behalf of five municipalities that are in the M-24 Corridor: Orion Township, the Village of Lake Orion, Oxford Township, Oxford Village, and the City of Auburn Hills. The M-24 Corridor Report recommended improvements to several intersections. An on-going M-24 Corridor Study group continues to meet with representatives from MDOT, the Traffic Improvement Association, SEMCOG, and the municipalities. This group is particularly concerned with improving roadway conditions, ensuring traffic safety, and urban design needs.

### **TRAFFIC CALMING**

A potential public safety issue is speeding on M-24 and some residential streets within the Village. In addition to enforcement of the speed limit by the Police Department, the implementation of traffic calming improvements should be considered where appropriate. Traffic calming is the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. Traffic calming measures can be separated into two groups based on the main impact intended: volume control and speed control.

Volume control measures are primarily used to address cut-through traffic problems by blocking certain movements. Examples of volume control measures include:

**Median barriers:** Median barriers are islands located along the centerline of a street and continuing through an intersection to block through movement at a cross street. Plantings with shrubs and trees break down sight lines, slowing motorists.

**Forced turn islands:** Forced turn islands are barriers on approaches to an intersection that block certain turning movements.

Speed control measures are primarily used to address speeding problems by changing the vertical or horizontal alignment, or narrowing the roadway. The distinction between the two types of measures is not as clear as their names suggest, since speed control measures frequently divert traffic to alternate routes, and volume control measures usually slow traffic. Speed control measures include:

**Traffic Islands:** Raised Islands, placed in intersections, around which traffic circulates, and therefore, slows. Traffic islands require drivers to slow down to maneuver around the island.

## Circulation Analysis

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**Raised pavement:** Elevated crosswalks and speed humps make a driver slow or risk discomfort. Raised crosswalks also make pedestrians more visible, a safety bonus.

**Narrowers:** Bumped-out curb areas, on-street parking, tree-lined roads and painted bike lanes appear to tighten roadways, making drivers decelerate.

**Textured pavement:** Brick or cobblestone-like concrete make for a rough ride, which discourages speeding.

The location of stop signs throughout the Village's downtown area has the effect of calming traffic. While the close proximity of houses and garages to the narrow roads around the Lake does slow traffic somewhat, visibility limitations may warrant additional calming there. However, further study should be done before specific recommendations are made.

## **SECTION 7 COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN**

### ***Introduction***

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The Village of Lake Orion is a mature community with substantial existing community infrastructure in the form of public works facilities, and social, cultural, and recreational facilities. Maintenance of the existing community facilities and infrastructure, selective replacement, upgrades, and modifications to those facilities, enhancement of aesthetic quality, and provision of high quality services within the Village are primary concerns of the Village government.

As part of the Village Master Plan, an important consideration is the location of community facilities. Facility location affects the efficiency and quality of the essential services provided by the government. Such facilities should be easily accessible to residents and businesses, while accommodating the particular needs of the service provided, such as good road access for police protection, or screening of equipment and materials used by the Department of Public Works.

In addition, where practical, community facility buildings and spaces should reinforce the importance of government through a central and prominent location. Community facilities can become focal points or landmarks which reinforce the cultural and historic features of the Village and provide a backdrop for ceremonial and public events.

The architectural character of community facilities is also important. Beyond merely meeting functional needs, the facility should be enhanced by appropriate height, mass, and materials. The architecture of public buildings should convey a sense of permanence and importance to residents of the community. Prominent placement, use of high quality materials and design, and strengthening the Village downtown are important criteria to apply to all community facilities within the Village.

An analysis of the community facilities of the Village of Lake Orion and recommendations for each facility are described below.

### ***Government Facilities***

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#### **VILLAGE HALL AND POLICE DEPARTMENT**

As described in the Community Facilities Inventory, Section 3, Village Hall is well located in downtown Lake Orion. The staff of both the Village administration and the Police

Department are crowded in their existing space. The building contains approximately 166 square feet for every full time Village administrative employee and approximately 63 square feet for every full time Police Department employee. Both of these areas are below commonly accepted standards of at least 200 square feet per employee. There is also a need for one or more small conference rooms and a larger public meeting room that can serve the Village Council and other Village boards.

The population of the Village of Lake Orion is not expected to increase substantially in the next twenty years. Unless revenues and/or required services increase, it is unlikely that the Village will need a dramatic increase in employees. However, because the Village administration and the Police Department are currently short of space, alternatives to the existing facilities should be considered. The Village Hall should remain in its current location, in the middle of downtown. Alternatives to create more space should be examined, including renovating the existing facility to create additional space for employees and meeting space or Council chambers on a second floor to be built above the existing Council chamber room.

#### **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

The Department of Public Works facility is in a satisfactory location with good access to Atwater Street, a Village major street. The facility is on the west side of Atwater Park, which is a somewhat compatible land use.

The manager of the Department has indicated a need of space for additional DPW vehicles and office facilities. The Village should begin to investigate the feasibility of either a new DPW building or the expansion of the existing facility. There are several issues to consider when expanding or renovating the current DPW building, including: minimizing off-site impacts of the facility on the surrounding neighborhood; ensuring adequate landscaping and screening around the site to protect the neighborhood; and investigating new methods of storing salt and other materials used by the DPW to reduce the potential for environmental impacts. The Village is working on implementing the recommendations of the Recreation Master Plan for Atwater Park with the planting of evergreen trees along the edges of the DPW site.

#### **FIRE DEPARTMENT (ORION TOWNSHIP)**

Fire Station No. 1 is located in the middle of the Village of Lake Orion at 93 S. Anderson Street and serves the entire Village. Accessibility from the fire station is generally good because of its proximity to M-24 and to the Village street network. The grid pattern of streets in the neighborhoods to the east of M-24 provides efficient access from the station to those neighborhoods.

The distances between Fire Station No. 1 and the homes on the islands and peninsulas are greater than within the areas of the Village east of M-24, thus response times tend to be longer. Barriers to service, such as traffic along winding streets and parked automobiles blocking access along narrow peninsula streets, may cause additional delays. Residents of Village islands and peninsulas are encouraged to install residential sprinkler systems that will reduce the damage from home fires.

#### **POST OFFICE (LOCATED IN ORION TOWNSHIP)**

The facilities of the United State Post Office serving the Village of Lake Orion are funded by the U.S. Postal Service, and as such, the decisions regarding the continued location, size, and function of the facility are rarely made with Village input. Throughout the United States, Post Office facilities have moved from their downtown locations to larger facilities in greenfields or larger lots. This phenomenon occurred in the Village of Lake Orion over 25 years ago, when the Post Office moved from its downtown Village location to Orion Township, north of the Village.

The location of the current Post Office facility is not within walking distance for residents of the Village, however, it is a short automobile drive to the facility. While it is unlikely that the Post Office would relocate its current facility back to the Village because of site size requirements, the Village should work with the Post Office administration to ensure that its residents are well served within the Village with a postage and mailing materials supply facility.

### **Social and Cultural Facilities**

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#### **LIBRARY**

A successful library must be easily accessible, offer a wide selection of books and services, and have adequate seating accommodations and shelf space. The Orion Township Public Library is accessible to most Village residents with its location on Joslyn Road in Orion Township and its satellite location at the Lake Orion Senior Center. The library has a very high circulation rate and a large number of books and periodicals for a library of its size.

According to the Head Librarian, the Main Library is severely short of shelf space and space for seating. An expansion of the library space is needed to serve both the Village and the growing number of Township residents. The Library should also look at ways to expand its programming to address the needs of a growing number of senior citizens in both the Village and Township. Library vans that make home deliveries or additional satellite branches may offer some relief to the central facility. To encourage patronage, the Library should look at new models of library service, such as the Lansing Public Library, which has opened a coffee shop in its foyer area to increase the number of patrons during early mornings and lunch hours.



## Community Facilities Plan

The Library has conducted a spatial need analysis and has made a report to the community regarding its needs for expansion. The Village of Lake Orion should continue to support the Orion Township Public Library and encourage the continuation and expansion of a satellite library within the Village to serve the needs of library patrons who cannot drive or may have limited mobility, such as children and senior citizens.

### **SENIOR CENTER / UNION CHURCH**

As the baby boom generation in the Village reaches senior citizen age, the need for senior center services and facilities will increase. Planning now for the potential growth in need for services will help the Senior Center adequately serve the needs of the community in the future at a lower cost. Located next door to the Union Church, the Township's Senior Center is in an ideal location.



The Union Church and the on-going historic preservation and maintenance of this important landmark should be a priority for the Village and Township. It is an historical and cultural symbol for the community, as well as a Michigan historic landmark.

The Union Church benefits from the work of its Governing Board which oversees its on-going maintenance and operation. A study committee that was established before the existence of the Governing Board recommended that the Union Church be used as a community cultural center with space for weddings, a small theater, concerts and meetings.

The lower level of the Church was planned for use by the Orion Historical Society. These are appropriate uses for Union Church and should be implemented as the adaptive renovation of the building continues, following state and national historic preservation guidelines.

## Public Infrastructure

### **WATER SYSTEM**

The Village is served by the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) water system. Given the modest growth in both population and housing units expected over the next twenty years, expansions of the water system within the Village are not anticipated. The water line expansions in the 1990's along M-24 and Atwater Streets were well planned to serve the needs of the Village. The water system should be monitored regularly for maintenance needs. New developments should be reviewed to ensure that such projects only improve the existing water system.

### **SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM**

The Village is also well served by the Clinton Oakland Sewer District. Operation and maintenance of this system is handled by the Oakland County Drain Commission under contract with the Village. Ongoing maintenance of the system should be performed to avoid back-ups and flooding.

### **STORMWATER SYSTEM**

Because of Federal mandates, stormwater management is growing in importance for community planning. The Village is now under the requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for participation in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System program (commonly called Phase II). This program is designed to encourage communities to implement storm water management programs to control non-point source pollution into lakes and stream. Typical Phase II projects include activities that reduce pollutant run-off from municipal operations, such as: regular street sweeping, regular cleaning of catch basins, reduced use of pesticides and street salt, and public information and education. The Village is currently working with the Clinton River Watershed Council to establish public information and education programs while investigating the "housekeeping" components of Phase II, such as chemical storage and catch basin maintenance. A Phase II implementation plan for the Village is expected to be completed in 2004.

### **Parks and Recreation Facilities**

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The Village of Lake Orion is responsible for the provision and maintenance of recreation facilities and equipment within the Village. To ensure facilities are maintained and well-funded, the Village of Lake Orion has had a Recreation Master Plan since 1978. The Recreation Master Plan was updated in February 2001, and serves as the Village's planning document for parks and recreation improvements. Village residents also have the use of Orion Township parks and recreation facilities.

The Village should implement the recommendations of the Recreation Plan, as feasible. It is recommended that the Village create the Polly Ann - Paint Creek Link as a pathway linkage between the Orion Township Safety Path system and the Polly Ann Trail. Additionally, the Village should consider obtaining additional land with Lake frontage, such as Pelton's Point, for docking of boats to encourage the connection between the Lake and downtown and study the potential of boat docks at Green's Park. It is also recommended that the Village continue to improve Children's Park and Green's Park for use during downtown and community events. Other park and recreation improvements should be pursued as recommended in the Village's Recreation Plan.

The Village should update its existing recreation plan every five (5) years to ensure eligibility for state recreation grants and to ensure that it is well served by recreation facilities.

*School Facilities*

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Village residents use the play equipment and recreational facilities located at Blanche Sims Elementary school and a more limited facility containing a softball field and a track located at Church and Lapeer Streets. While these facilities are owned by the Lake Orion Community School District, they are intended to meet the needs of school-aged children during school hours and neighborhood residents of all ages after school hours. The Village should continue to work with the School District to identify ways to improve recreational opportunities on school sites and to ensure that recreational needs continue to be met.

There are many opportunities for the Village and the School District to work together to improve land use within the Village. For example, the bus garage for the School District, formerly located at Blanche Sims Elementary School, has been relocated to a more appropriate location near Giddings Road and Waldon Road in southwest Orion Township.

## SECTION 8 NEIGHBORHOODS PLAN

One of the most identifiable features of the Village of Lake Orion is its individually distinctive and memorable neighborhoods. These residential neighborhoods, with their varied housing types, ages and sizes, streets, and natural settings, stand in sharp contrast to many of the newer residential subdivisions that have been developed in the fast growing suburban areas around the Village. Despite their large and comfortable new homes, new subdivisions also display a uniformity of house type, size (and price), design and street setting that make it unlikely that they will ever evolve the kind of distinct character or sense of place now found in the Village.

Table 21 below illustrates the range of Village housing by type (single family or multiple family) and tenure (owner occupied, renter occupied, or vacant).

**Table 21**  
**HOUSING UNITS, 1990 & 2002**  
Village of Lake Orion

Category	1990(a)		2002(b)	
	Number	% of Total	Number (b)	% of Total (a)
Single Family	860	63.5%	1,043	72.7%
Multiple-Family	495	36.5%	392	27.2%
Owner Occupied	732	54.0%	755	52.6%
Renter Occupied	508	37.5%	546	38.1%
Vacant	115	8.5%	134	9.3%
Total Housing Units	1,355		1,435	

Source: (a) U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 & 2000

(b) McKenna Associates Estimate. 1,355 (1990 housing units) + 80 building permits (total minus demolitions) issued by Village as reported by SEMCOG, 1990 - 2002. Ratios for type and tenure derived from 2000 Census and applied to McKenna Estimate.

Over the past decade, the housing stock of Lake Orion has remained relatively consistent with few changes in housing type (single family vs. multiple family) and tenure. Lake Orion's housing is largely comprised of owner-occupied, single family homes indicating strong and healthy village neighborhoods.

**Table 22**  
**YEAR RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE BUILT**  
**Village of Lake Orion**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Number of Housing Units</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
1990 to 2002	80 <sup>(a)</sup>	5.6%
1980 to 1989	154	10.7%
1970 to 1979	212	14.8%
1960 to 1969	66	4.6%
1950 to 1959	143	9.9%
1940 to 1949	125	8.7%
Pre-1939	655	45.6%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990.*

*(a) 80 building permits (total minus demolitions) issued by Village as reported by SEMCOG, 1990 - 2002*

As shown in Table 22 above, the Village's housing stock is largely comprised of pre-1939 wood frame houses, that reflect Lake Orion's origin as a turn of the century summer recreation community. Older houses, built before WWII, give the Village the historic character and charm not present in newer subdivisions.

The number of older structures in a community is an important consideration for future planning. As housing ages, the cost of maintenance and the need for improvements increases. Entire neighborhoods can lose value and deteriorate if houses are not kept in good repair and necessary reinvestment is postponed or ignored. These concerns are magnified in lakeside neighborhoods that contain houses built for seasonal use. Seasonal use houses are generally smaller and were built to lesser construction standards than housing intended for year-round use.

### *Neighborhood Planning Principles*

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While neighborhoods have always been a part of towns and cities, evolving organically out of their particular physical and cultural setting, the idea of the neighborhood as the basic building block of communities was only formalized in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in the widely accepted "neighborhood unit" concept.

Although this traditional town planning idea lost influence after World War II when the merchant builder subdivision became the dominant influence on community design, it has recently enjoyed a new popularity as individuals and communities have sought additional ways to enhance their quality of life. Concepts like that of "closely-knit communities" are emerging in popular media.



Good neighborhood design, by definition, is not a formula, however, several basic principles provide useful guidance and standards for planning a "closely-knit community." These principles are briefly described below.

**The neighborhood has a defined edge and a clear center.** Distinctive neighborhoods are bounded by clear edges that give physical presence to their character and identity. Natural elements, such as water, woodlands and fields, or, man-made elements such as streets, parks, and large defining land uses can create strong neighborhood edges.

Neighborhood edges often play a large part in shaping, positively or negatively, the impressions of the neighborhood not only for the surrounding community, but for the residents themselves. These edges may be highly visible and may also contain key entries and gateways or provide important access and circulation routes for the surrounding community.

Good neighborhoods also have a clear center that serves as a focal point for the community and is equally accessible from all points in the neighborhood. Ideally, this center will have a civic dimension through the presence of a neighborhood park or square, a school or other neighborhood-oriented civic use. The center of a neighborhood may also be expressed by the intersection of key neighborhood streets that can provide a well-known and equally accessible neighborhood meeting place, a landmark or point of orientation for directions.

**The optimal size of a neighborhood is approximately a quarter mile from center to edge.** A quarter of a mile translates into an approximately 5-10 minute walking distance that easily allows the neighborhood to be crossed on foot, or bicycle. These distances and times provide a scale that make many non-auto journeys within and throughout the neighborhood possible for most age groups and for many purposes. Too great a distance or time can easily become a disincentive for pedestrians and can limit opportunities for those without access to cars or unable to drive.

**The neighborhood contains a balanced mix of land uses with a range of housing types and sizes.** Just as interesting and vital towns contain a variety of activities, places and people, neighborhoods also benefit from having a rich and varied mix of land uses, architectural and building types and sizes, and residential opportunities.

**The neighborhood is linked together with a network of interconnecting streets.** Closely knit neighborhoods provide opportunities for people of all ages and are easily accessed by pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as cars. The neighborhood street is a mixed-use street that comfortably accommodates people,

## Neighborhoods Plan

as well as autos, and creates pedestrian-scaled blocks that provide attractive residential settings and addresses.

**The neighborhood gives priority to public spaces and civic uses.** Neighborhoods are more than individual homes attached to roads. Public spaces, such as the neighborhood sidewalk and park or green, and uses such as schools, libraries or other uses, give visible form and support to the neighborhood life and identity.

## Village Neighborhoods

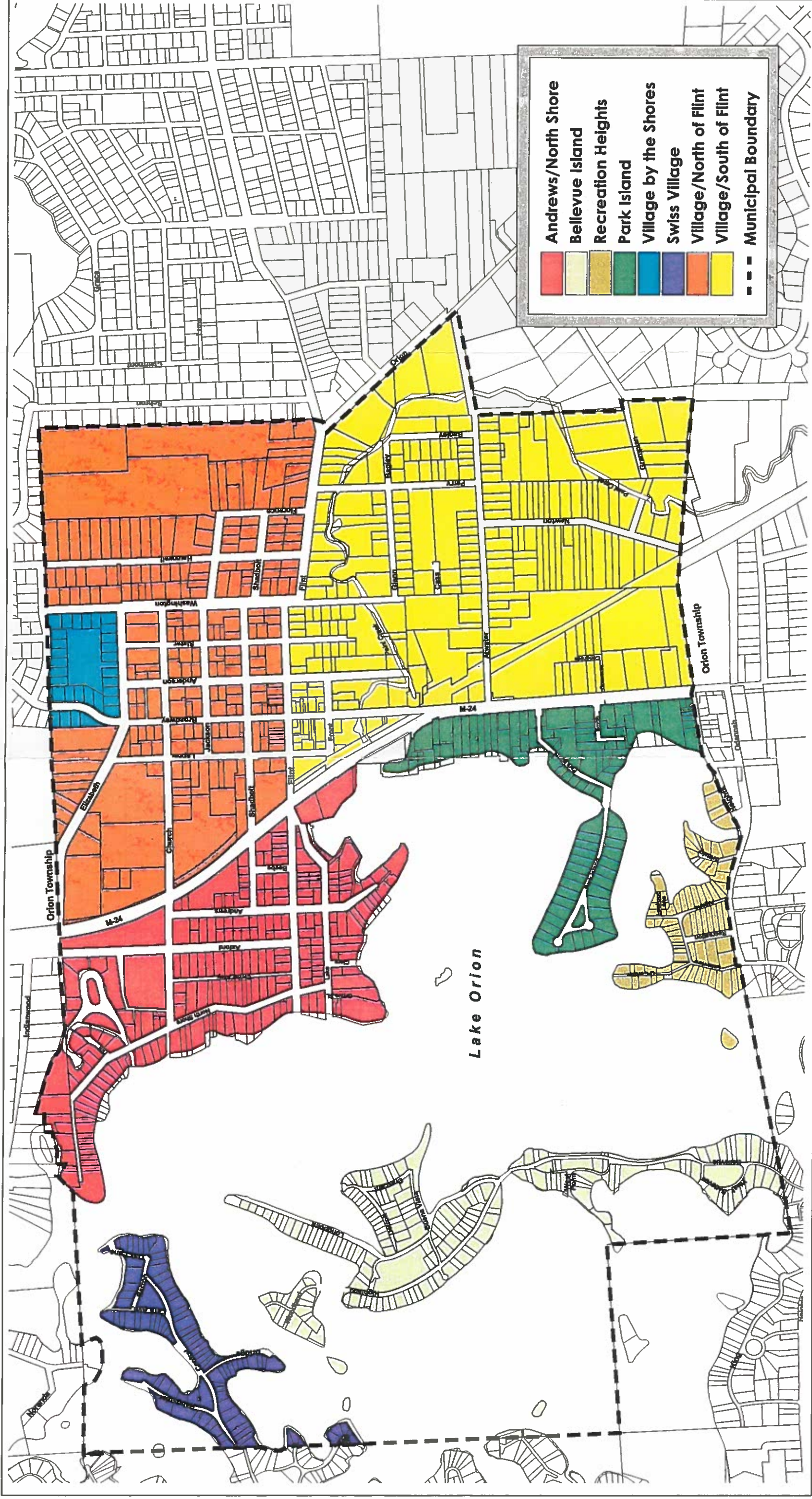
Eight neighborhoods have been delineated in the Village based on the design principles described above, physical surveys to understand the effects of the Village's unique geographic setting, and knowledge gained from discussions with the community. The relatively direct and uncomplicated nature of this process simply underscores the strength of these neighborhood identities.

The Village neighborhoods, identified on Map 7 (page 84) are:

1. Village/North of Flint
2. Village by the Shores (Robertson Brothers)
3. Village/South of Flint
4. Andrews/North Shore
5. Park Island
6. Recreation Heights
7. Bellevue Island
8. Swiss Village



# Village of Lake Orion, Michigan



**Map 7 - Village Neighborhoods**

Base map Source: Oakland County 1999  
Data Source: McKenna Associates, Inc. 8/2002



12/11/2002



**Table 23**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES**  
 Village of Lake Orion

Neighborhood	Total Acres	Total Single Family Residential Acres	Total Single Family Parcels	Average Single Family Parcel Size (Square Feet)	Single Family Residential Density (Units / Acre)
Village/North of Flint	105.5	45.5	169	11,740	3.7
Village by the Shores	9.1	6.1	30	8,841	4.9
Village/South of Flint	138.0	70.9	164	18,839 <sup>(a)</sup>	2.3 <sup>(a)</sup>
Andrews/North Shore	60.3	42.6	194	9,565	4.5
Park Island	29.5	17.9	76	10,234	4.2
Recreation Heights	12.7	11.5	78	6,448	6.8
Bellevue	33.7	29.5	199	6,466	6.7
Swiss Village	15.1	13.9	92	6,612	6.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>403.9</b>	<b>237.9</b>	<b>1,002</b>	<b>9,843</b>	<b>4.9</b>

Source: McKenna Associates, Inc.; Oakland County GIS Maps

(a) The Village South of Flint neighborhood contains a number of parcels in the Wm. Winters Subdivision and John Winters Addition that average over a half acre in area. These large parcels affect the average parcel size and density calculations for the neighborhood.

As Table 23 shows, residential land uses (single family and multiple family) make up, on average, 57% of the land uses in the Village neighborhoods. There are a total of 1,002 parcels with an average residential density of 4.9 parcels per acre. Densities range from a low of 2.3 parcels per acre in the Village/South of Flint neighborhood to a high of 6.8 parcels per acre in the Recreation Heights neighborhood. Average parcel sizes range from a low of 6,448 square feet to a high of 18,839 also in the Recreation Heights and Village/South of Flint neighborhoods, respectively.

### **VILLAGE / NORTH OF FLINT**

The Village/North of Flint is the oldest residential neighborhood in the Village of Lake Orion and contains a wide range of housing types, architectural styles and sizes from a variety of periods. This neighborhood occupies the northeastern quadrant of the Village, east of M-24 and north of Flint Street, and benefits from a seamless, and close-knit connection between commercial uses in the downtown commercial district and residential uses to its north and east.

Primary gateways into the neighborhood exist at the north from Elizabeth Street at Lapeer and Broadway; at the west from Church, Shadbolt and Flint Streets at Lapeer Street and from the south at Washington and Broadway along Flint Street.

As Table 24 below illustrates, the Village/North of Flint neighborhood is the third largest in the Village with 169 residential parcels. Its residential density is also the third lowest of all Village neighborhoods at 3.7 parcels per acre and an average residential parcel size of 11,740 square feet.

**Table 24**  
**VILLAGE / NORTH OF FLINT RESIDENTIAL DENSITY**  
Village of Lake Orion

<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Total Residential Acres</b>	<b>Total Parcels</b>	<b>Average Parcel Size (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Residential Density (Units/Acre)</b>
105.5	45.5	169	11,740	3.7

*Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., Oakland County GIS Maps*

***Village / North of Flint Neighborhood Character***

The neighborhood is characterized by a central, uniform, 20 block grid. The residential areas east of Washington Street include a mix of block sizes, parcels and homes dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and before and after World War II. The juxtaposition of these two street grids at Washington Street provides for terminating views for east-west neighborhood streets. Commercial uses are limited primarily to areas west of Lapeer and south of Shadbolt Streets.



While accessibility and permeability, a wide mix of land uses, architectural styles and building types are this neighborhood's greatest strengths, they make it difficult to develop a widely shared or understandable neighborhood identity and character. In the past, large single family parcels have become multi-family uses, and single family homes have been changed into commercial or multi-tenant residential uses. This is changing, and multi-family uses in single family homes are returning to their original use as single family residences. While the neighborhood is improving, past changes in housing type and ownership have produced wide variations in maintenance, block-to-block or house-to-house, and interrupted the perception of a continuous, and well-maintained, neighborhood.

The historic neighborhood setting, new single family residential growth to the north (Village by the Shores), and other development immediately adjacent to the downtown suggest that the downtown residential neighborhoods will continue to increase in desirability.



***Village / North of Flint Neighborhood Planning Opportunities***

- **Continue preservation and conservation of historic homes and structures.** The historic ambience and value of this neighborhood are already widely recognized, but should continue to be a priority since the neighborhood's growing market appeal will no doubt attract increasing development interest and pressure. Additionally, the historic Union Church/Senior Center should continue to be preserved and maintained to serve as a central neighborhood feature and amenity. The Village should consider preparing and adopting design policies and guidelines for all neighborhoods. In the case of the Village/North of Flint neighborhood, the design guidelines would address the historic look and feel of the neighborhood with recommendations on the scale, mass and architecture of development. Detailed residential design guidelines are beyond the scope of this Master Plan; however, it is the recommendation of this plan that they be addressed in the future. The implementation section of this Master Plan discusses the possible scope and some preliminary recommendations for such design guidelines.

- **Maintain the rural village streets found in most of the neighborhood, but develop ways to enhance and upgrade their appearance.** The current Village street section is a combination of both town and country elements. This combination includes a curbless street, gravel shoulders, drainage swales and sidewalks.

One of the problems with this combination, however, is that the gravel shoulders can rarely be maintained in a uniform way or to a standard level which then creates an interrupted border and leaves the impression of an unkempt or even ragged edge to the street and neighborhood. At the same time, paving these shoulders as an alternative would eliminate the natural percolation of gravel, and create an expanse of asphalt that would destroy the scale and charm of the neighborhood. The Village should explore alternative design options for treating these shoulders that would maintain the charm and function of this street type, but also mitigate some of its unsightly visual consequences.

- **Emphasize Flint Street as a historic "high street".** Flint Street forms the southern edge of the neighborhood from Orion Road to M-24. Orion Road, as its name implies, is one of the primary routes connecting the Village to the region while Flint Street is the primary entryway into and commercial or "high street" of the Village. This position can be seen in the many fine historic homes and structures along Flint Street. Today, however, the quality and condition of land uses along Flint Street varies widely. An opportunity exists to enhance both of these and strengthen both the community and the neighborhood image through right-of-way maintenance and encouraging more consistent property maintenance. A community award program could be an incentive for such improvements. A street tree plan should also be considered to ensure that trees near or within the right-of-way are pruned and

healthy. Streetscape maintenance in conjunction with design guidelines for new development or redevelopment would support Flint Street as a historic street as well as enhance surrounding residential and commercial values.

**VILLAGE BY THE SHORES**

This is a new residential addition to the Village of Lake Orion built during the late 1990's and located at the northern edge of the Village, north of Elizabeth Street and bounded by Elizabeth Street on the south, Broadway on the west, Washington Street on the east, and Cedar Bend on the north. This residential project includes 30 homes in the Village of Lake Orion. A companion subdivision called the Shores of Long Lake, is in the Township, immediately to the north.

As Table 25 below illustrates, both the residential density and the average parcel size reflect typical current suburban residential patterns, but are not much larger than the average size parcels in the neighborhood around it. The residential density of 4.9 parcels per acre is exactly the average for the Village as a whole.

**Table 25**  
**VILLAGE BY THE SHORES (ROBERTSON BROTHERS) RESIDENTIAL DENSITY**  
Village of Lake Orion

<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Total Residential Acres</b>	<b>Total Parcels</b>	<b>Average Parcel Size (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Residential Density (Units/Acre)</b>
9.1	6.1	30	8,841	4.9

*Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., Oakland County GIS Maps*

***Village by the Shores Character***

The Village by the Shores neighborhood was planned and designed according to conventional subdivision standards rather than the historic town planning precedents around it. However, it has also brought new life and energy to the downtown area and served to focus new attention and interest on the Village as a residential location. The neighborhood is characterized by new single family homes with large two car garages prominently located at the front of the houses. Landscaping is immature, consistent with a new development.

The Village by the Shores neighborhood provides a desirable, up-to-date housing type for families in an environment that is familiar and attractive. The houses within the development provide updated living space, modern architectural style, and amenities that fit the lifestyles of today's working families.

***Village by the Shores Neighborhood Planning Opportunities***

- **Enhance Elizabeth Street as a neighborhood & community gateway.** Elizabeth Street is an image gateway for the Village of Lake Orion and also the boundary between the historic Village and Village by the Shores neighborhood. An opportunity exists to strengthen this gateway and mitigate some of the differences between the Village neighborhoods and Village by the Shores neighborhood through an extended and coordinated streetscape design involving the planting of more village-character street trees, a coordinated planting palette, and architectural guidelines that ensures new development reflects the character of the Village neighborhoods.

**VILLAGE / SOUTH OF FLINT**

This neighborhood occupies the southeastern quadrant of the Village and is bounded by M-24 on the west, Flint Street on the north and the Village boundaries on the east and south. In addition to Flint Street, Atwater Street provides the principal east-west connection through the neighborhood from Orion Road to M-24. The Paint Creek is the primary natural feature of this area and provides an open space and recreational asset for the entire Village. The primary gateways for this neighborhood are from Atwater Street, at both M-24 and Orion Road, and from Flint Street at Perry Street.

While this is the largest neighborhood in total land area, it also ranks in the middle in total parcels. Table 26 shows that residential density in the Village/South of Flint neighborhood is the lowest in the Village of Lake Orion and average parcel size, at 18,839 square feet, is the largest. It is important to note that there are a number of large parcels of more than half an acre in this neighborhood, particularly in the Wm. Winter Subdivision and John Winter Addition, that inflate the average single family parcel size and reduce single family residential density calculation.

**Table 26**  
**VILLAGE / SOUTH OF FLINT RESIDENTIAL DENSITY**  
Village of Lake Orion

<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Total Residential Acres</b>	<b>Total Parcels</b>	<b>Average Parcel Size (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Residential Density (Units/Acre)</b>
138	70.9	164	18,839	2.3

*Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., Oakland County GIS Maps*

***Village / South of Flint Character***

The Village/South of Flint neighborhood is the largest Village neighborhood. There are three distinct residential settings within this neighborhood, all of which are characterized by a highly varied mix of residential settings and natural features. The first neighborhood

setting is between Flint Street and Paint Creek. This area contains a wide mix of house types and sizes at all levels of quality. This is the most urban of this neighborhood's residential settings.

The second residential setting is the area between Paint Creek and Atwater Street. This is the physical center of the neighborhood and includes a mix of older and newer homes, with easy access to the downtown on Perry Street. This area is accentuated by multiple family apartment buildings and senior citizen housing. This is a well-defined and maintained area with the look and feel of a small-town neighborhood.

The third setting is south of Atwater, on Newton Street and Grampian Street. This area is the most secluded of the three areas and provides a heavily wooded residential setting that, in character and feeling could be easily mistaken for a rural neighborhood, miles from the nearest town.

### ***Village / South of Flint Neighborhood Planning Opportunities***

- **Enhancements to Atwater Street.** Atwater Street is an important connector street and circulation corridor for the Village, but also functions as a gateway street for the neighborhood. Its current condition includes a mix of residential types and conditions and a discontinuous and undeveloped streetscape image. Yet Atwater Street, at either end, also contains two of the neighborhood's gateway intersections and plays an important role in generating the neighborhood's image as one of its "front doors" for both visitors and residents.

Atwater Street, traveling west from Orion Road is also a "water axis" with Lake Orion, providing long water views directly between two Victorian houses now used as offices on the west side of M-24. This is an important view corridor that should remain open and be enhanced where possible.

- **Atwater Park.** Atwater Park, at Atwater and Perry Streets, is already recognized as an important community asset and the primary neighborhood open space, centrally located to all surrounding residential areas. This is an ideally located neighborhood park. The potential exists, however, to improve its value to the community and neighborhood by softening and enhancing its edges along the north, west and south with landscaping. The Village Parks and Recreation Plan proposes additional buffer plantings and improvements to the edges of the site. The Village is currently taking steps to plant evergreens around the edges of the Public Works facility, which operates a storage yard along the western edge of the park.
- **Paint Creek.** Paint Creek is a valuable natural feature and resource for the Village which offers future opportunities for enhancement. One of these is to increase its visibility and presence for the community by ensuring pedestrian access to the

Creek through Meek's Park. The Village Park and Recreation Master Plan addresses several improvements for Meek's Park including pedestrian bridges and enhanced landscaping, such as a wildflower/ butterfly garden. While the historic development pattern did not create streets that allowed neighborhoods to face onto Paint Creek, the street crossings and intersections that do exist still provide opportunities to provide visibility and access to the Creek.

- **Redevelopment Along M-24.** The redevelopment of commercial land uses and vacant property abutting M-24 is an opportunity for the Village of Lake Orion to strengthen its regional image and market profile. In particular, there are opportunities to create mixed use developments where only commercial or vacant uses once stood, such as the recently approved Atwater Commons. At the same time, such development and redevelopments should improve the neighborhood's gateway entries and add convenient and walkable neighborhood retail opportunities for residents. While it is unlikely that any neighborhood street connections will be added, creating direct pedestrian and/or bicycle paths would also allow for non-auto local trips between neighborhood areas both north and south of Atwater Street.

### **ANDREWS / NORTH SHORE**

The Andrews/North Shore neighborhood lies at the northern boundary of the Village between M-24 and Lake Orion. Church Street on the north and Flint Street on the south serve as the two primary gateways into this neighborhood. Shadbolt Street also provides access from M-24, but extends only two blocks before ending at Andrews Street.

The Andrews/North Shore neighborhood benefits from a Lake-front setting, close proximity to the downtown, a walkable retail cluster along M-24, a wide range of housing types, styles and sizes, and the presence of the historic Evergreen Cemetery, which gives the neighborhood a green park-like edge on the north and along M-24.





Table 27 below describes neighborhood residential land use and density. Residential land use accounts for 67% of the total land use in the Andrews/North Shore neighborhood with 194 parcels, the second highest number of parcels for Village Neighborhoods. The average parcel size of 9,565 square feet and density of 4.5 parcels per acre is similar to averages found on Park Island and rank in the middle of Village Neighborhoods.

**Table 27**  
**ANDREWS / NORTH SHORE RESIDENTIAL DENSITY**  
Village of Lake Orion

Total Acres	Total Residential Acres	Total Parcels	Average Parcel Size (Square Feet)	Residential Density (Units/Acre)
60.3	42.6	194	9,565	4.5

Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., Oakland County GIS Maps

#### **Andrews / North Shore Character**

The Andrews/North Shore neighborhood was an early Village neighborhood and closely linked to the downtown by Church, Shadbolt and Flint Streets prior to the development and expansion of M-24, which severed this close association. The street network clearly displays the neighborhood's two primary historical influences: the historic town grid and the Lake. The Village's basic grid pattern is carried west across M-24, and bracketed on the north and south, by Church and Flint Streets. Shadbolt and Lake Streets provide additional east-west additions to this pattern. Intersecting with these and completing the grid are: Beebe, Andrews and Axford Streets running north and south. This regular grid produces a simple and ordered pattern of parcel sizes and house types.

This basic grid relaxes as it meets the Lake shore along North Shore Street. This street provides a continuous connection along the west side of the neighborhood and a complementary and interesting addition to the grid pattern as it shifts its alignment in response to the changing shoreline. These shifts and accommodations create a variety of parcel sizes (both in width and depth) which have also allowed for a variety of house sizes and styles, and values.

Most neighborhood streets adhere to the rural village street standard found throughout the Village of Lake Orion. This rural village street is relatively narrow and drains naturally with grass swales without curb and gutters. Unlike a strictly rural road, however, the street section also includes a narrow sidewalk at the grade of the street, but separated from the road by both a gravel shoulder and/or grass lawn, which can also vary in its width.

**Andrews/North Shore Neighborhood Planning Opportunities**

Four specific planning opportunities for the Andrews/North Shore neighborhood are described below:

- **Make Evergreen Cemetery a “park-like” gateway into both the neighborhood and the Village.** In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, cemeteries often were planned as romantic parks for strolling, meditation and communion with nature. Although this is not necessarily envisioned for Evergreen Cemetery, the Cemetery does have great potential to provide a park-like gateway into the Village and the neighborhood from the north. Replacing the chain link fence with a simple wrought iron design, particularly fronting M-24, and maintaining an ongoing arboreal program for its large beautiful trees would be two immediate ways to affect a significant change in appearance and impression.

The potential also exists to create gateways across Axford Street, both at the north and south sides of the cemetery, that would reinforce a sense of connection between the two parts of the cemetery. This portion of Axford Street could also be transformed into a sort of “linear garden” with an enhanced streetscape planting design.

- **Improve the streetside appearance of Green’s Park.** Green’s Park is a valued Village amenity, providing residents a swimming area and floating dock, play equipment, a gazebo, restrooms and a changing facility. Green’s Park is a landmark for the community, providing views of the Lake to motorists along M-24 as they travel through the Village. The Village should work to improve the streetside (M-24 and Lake Street) views of Green’s Park by improving the landscaping along the perimeter of the park and adding landscape features that buffer and provide interest.
- **Reorient commercial uses along M-24 to establish better connections with the neighborhood and benefit from its distinctive quality and identity.** Retail and commercial land uses along M-24 are now designed to relate primarily to through traffic passing by rather than the neighborhood. Longer term, both the neighborhood and the retail uses would benefit from commercial planning which relates both functionally and aesthetically to the neighborhood. Rather than only functioning and looking like “strip commercial” centers, retail uses would gain distinction and become attractive locations for higher quality retail and restaurant uses. Improved sidewalk connections and business entrances facing the residential area are some of the ways to accomplish this recommendation.
- **Enhance the streetscape of Flint Street.** Flint Street is a primary neighborhood street and has potential to become a “great” residential street and entryway into the

neighborhood. Two improvements that would support this would be creating wider planting strips along the street and capitalizing on Flint Street's terminating vista of the Lake.

Flint Street functions as a local neighborhood street and like other neighborhood streets benefits from not having to carry any through traffic. Its current roadway width could be narrowed without any adverse traffic or circulation impacts. Narrowing the roadway only slightly would create wider planting strips between the road and sidewalk, de-emphasize the visual dominance of asphalt and improve the spatial relationships between the houses, lawns and street.

A second opportunity exists to capitalize on Flint Street's "water axis" with Lake Orion and the view of the Lake as a terminating vista. The concrete barricade at North Shores could be removed to open up the view, and replaced with unobtrusive bollards if required for safety or to prevent use for boat access. This view might be framed by a decorative structure that could open onto a small garden overlooking the Lake.

- **Improve the northern edge of the neighborhood at Axford Street and M-24.** The northern edge of the Village, just south of the intersection of Indianwood and M-24 is a gateway into the community and currently projects a mixed impression created by a combination of older strip commercial uses, an assortment of newer unrelated residential and commercial developments, and steep topography that complicates street design and access. Improvements here, focusing on streetscape improvement such as sidewalks and landscaping along Axford Street would positively impact the character of the neighborhood as well as property values. Buffering the rear side of commercial buildings that front M-24 with natural landscaping would also improve the look and feel of the neighborhood.

### **LAKE ISLAND NEIGHBORHOODS**

The Park Island, Recreation Heights, Bellevue and Swiss Village neighborhoods are clearly defined and identified by their Lake settings. These neighborhoods are made up almost entirely of single family residential land uses, but also contain a wide variety of architectural styles and home sizes, from old seasonal cottages to luxurious Lake front custom homes. Since the land use pattern is well defined in all of these neighborhoods, most of the future planning issues will be primarily concerned with the trend to redevelop small parcels and cottages into significantly larger and more luxurious custom homes.

Residential densities for the four Lake island neighborhoods are shown in Table 28 below. The total area of these neighborhoods is 91 acres, of which 72.8 acres, or 80%, is residential. There are 445 residential parcels in the four Lake neighborhoods at an average residential density of 6.1 parcels per acre. Average parcel sizes are similar in the Bellevue, Recreation/Heights, and Swiss Village neighborhoods, reflecting their similar physical conditions and development history.

**Table 28**  
**LAKE ISLAND RESIDENTIAL DENSITY**  
Village of Lake Orion

Neighborhood	Total Acres	Total Residential Acres	Total Parcels	Average Parcel Size (Square Feet)	Residential Density (Units/Acre)
Park Island	29.5	17.9	76	10,234	4.2
Recreation Heights	12.7	11.5	78	6,448	6.8
Bellevue	33.7	29.5	199	6,466	6.7
Swiss Village	15.1	13.9	92	6,612	6.6
Total	91.0	72.8	445	7,440	6.1

Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., Oakland County GIS maps

#### ***Park Island***

The Park Island neighborhood includes both Park Island itself, the land uses west of M-24, and along Smith Court. Neighborhood access is provided from Park Island Drive and Smith Court. Along M-24, land uses are a combination of commercial and small professional office buildings. Residential uses make up the rest of the neighborhood.

Residential areas include older cottages just west of M-24 and homes on Park Island. Park Island was developed in the 1960s as a custom home subdivision without the narrow streets of the other Lake Island neighborhoods. It is likely that most of the planning issues

and opportunities for this neighborhood will occur on the M-24 section and arise from both commercial and residential redevelopment pressures.

### ***Recreation Heights***

The Recreation/Heights neighborhood is located on Heights Road between M-24 and Bellevue Island. This highly varied and distinctive neighborhood is made up of six short streets: Brittain, Algene, Lookout Lane, Recreation, Lakeview and O'Conner Streets.

The Recreation/Heights neighborhood, like Bellevue Island, is accessed from Heights Road. Heights Road is a major east-west link within Orion Township and carries substantial traffic volumes despite its narrow width. Heights Road is also a major regional window onto Lake Orion and the relaxed lake cottage recreational lifestyle. At the same time, the neighborhoods north of Heights Road would benefit from an improved streetscape along Heights Road, especially where it provides vistas of the Lake.

### ***Bellevue Island***

Bellevue Island is the largest Lake island neighborhood in the Village of Lake Orion and extends from Heights Road north into the middle of Lake Orion. The Bellevue Island neighborhood is composed of a southern and northern portion connected by a bridge. Both of these sections are threaded with narrow roads and contain a varied mix of parcel sizes and home styles and sizes. The Island also contains a large common area, popularly called the "Lagoon" which is deed restricted for vehicle parking. Unger Park provides recreation opportunities for residents.

### ***Swiss Village***

Swiss Village is a picturesque Lake neighborhood located in the northwestern corner of the Village and accessed off of Indianwood Road in Orion Township. The hilly topography of this peninsula, often sloping dramatically down to the Lake, and creating relatively steep road grades, originally gave this neighborhood its name and now helps to maintain the remote and rural Lake cottage atmosphere. Although Swiss Village is entered from Orion Township, it remains closely tied to the rest of the Lake neighborhoods through both a shared use and a common viewshed of the Lake. Swiss Village will continue to enjoy its secluded and distinctive setting, but will also experience growing redevelopment pressures as long as Lake front property remains an attractive option in the market.

### ***Lake Island Neighborhood Planning Opportunities***

The Lake Island neighborhoods will continue to share a number of development and redevelopment problems related to their unique physical contexts and development histories. Narrow parcels, garages and homes close to the road, double frontages, and very narrow streets are major planning issues for the Island neighborhoods. Most prominently, will be issues arising from the redevelopment of existing small homes on small parcels into larger square foot structures, called "big foot" homes. Currently, the Islands consist of narrow streets and cottage-style homes that are small in scale. The trend on the



### Neighborhoods Plan

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islands is to expand existing small homes into larger homes, with very shallow setbacks, most of the lot area covered with decks, buildings and other structures, and construction at the limits of, or exceeding current zoning restrictions. The result is a more crowded environment, and a dominance of garages and homes viewed from the narrow Lake Island streets.

The demand for larger homes should be balanced with regulations to reasonably preserve the character of the Lake Island neighborhoods. The Planning Commission and Village Council should review and consider revisions to the Lakefront Residential zoning standards to ensure that the scale, mass, and architectural character of Lake Island neighborhoods are protected. Architectural features should be included.

## SECTION 9

# FUTURE LAND USE & CIRCULATION PLAN

The Future Land Use and Circulation Plan for the Village of Lake Orion is based upon the foregoing analysis and goals and objectives. The scope of the Plan is comprehensive, as it addresses each element of a feasible development pattern for the Village. At the same time, the Plan should be viewed as a general framework for development, in which a suggested arrangement of land uses and circulation is identified, leaving flexibility to accommodate changing needs and conditions. It must be recognized that the Plan represents an overall policy document and that all elements and concepts cannot be achieved in the near term, but will be realized only through continued effort and follow-through.

The Plan should serve as a primary guide in evaluating proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance and/or zoning map. The Plan should also be updated periodically to reflect changes in the community. Future amendments to the Plan should be considered with care and deliberation by the Village's Planning Commission.

The Future Land Use Plan Map (Map 8, page 112), the Circulation Plan Map (Map 9, page 116) and supporting text are based on the fundamental planning principles summarized below:

**Long Range:** The Plan identifies and responds to existing and anticipated issues affecting land development over the next eighteen years (2020).

**Comprehensive:** In the Plan, all major types of land use appropriate to the Village are considered.

**Generalized:** To avoid detailed or site-specific issues of minor consequence in the context of the Plan, broad principles of land use inter-relationships are incorporated. The Plan is not a zoning ordinance.

**Regional:** Conditions beyond Village boundaries which may have impact on the Village are considered in preparation of the Plan.

## ***Future Land Use Plan***

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Generalized land use areas are identified on the future Land Use Plan and reflect the patterns of existing land use, analysis of existing conditions, population projections, community goals and objectives, and other aspects discussed in previous sections. Following is a description of each of the land use categories contained on the Future Land Use Map (Map 9, page 112).

### **SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL**

The Village of Lake Orion's single family residential character is an important and positive attribute. Single family uses encompass by far the greatest land area of any use classification. As described in the Neighborhood Plan (Section 8), the Village has a variety of neighborhoods ranging from Lakeside cottages along narrow, winding roads to new subdivisions of single family homes. The Village wishes to retain a predominately residential character and should continue to work to maintain and improve neighborhood and housing conditions.

While Village neighborhoods differ, the single feature which most distinguishes one lot from another in the Village is the presence of Lake frontage. Two major types of single family residential settings are present within the Village: Lake Residential and Village Residential. Each of these has variations in lot size, lot coverage, setbacks, housing style and other existing conditions that have developed over the years. Because of the basic differences between the two residential environments and separate issues unique to each, the Land Use Plan addresses them separately.

#### **A. *Lake Single Family Residential***

This category encompasses parcels intended for single family residential use that have one or more property lines adjacent to Lake Orion. Historically, the housing stock was characterized by small homes and small accessory structures, oriented for views of the Lake and access to the Lake for recreation. Recently, the trend is the construction of additions or larger new homes on Lake lots. The following standards are intended to maintain the character and value of Lake lots, recognizing that property owners wish to maximize their development.

1. **Use** - Lake Single Family Residential areas are limited to single family residential uses and customary accessory uses.
2. **Lot Size** - Lot sizes in the Lake Single Family Residential areas vary. The platted lot areas are generally smaller than lot areas in other parts of the Village. The average lot on the islands, with the exception of Park Island, is approximately 6,500 square feet. Based upon development trends along the Lake, even the smallest, thirty foot wide, lot has significant development

value. Consideration should be given to slightly reducing or providing flexibility in the required lot area for parcels within this land use category to be more consistent with the existing conditions and to reduce the degree of nonconformity.

3. **Lot Coverage & Building Mass** - The overall size and massing of residential buildings are regulated by lot coverage, setbacks, and building height limits in the zoning ordinance. Houses in the Lake Residential category should be built or modified with respect for the mass, scale, and Lake views of surrounding properties. While there is value in the smallest lots along the Lake, the development of these lots should not negatively impact the value of the surrounding properties and neighborhood. Adequate open space in the form of front, rear, and side yard setbacks, reasonable lot coverages and building height limits should be required to protect the character of the neighborhood and the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

The Village currently permits a maximum building coverage of approximately 40%, including accessory structures. It is recommended that the Village study the impacts of allowing increased building coverage. Greatly increasing the current standards could have a detrimental impact on storm water management, runoff and Lake water quality. However, smaller increases may allow smaller lots to be more effectively used while helping Lakeside property owners improve their homes.

4. **Building Setbacks & Placement** - Building placement is where the buildings are located on a lot relative to property lines, typically regulated through setbacks. Building placement is critical for maintaining the character of the Village, providing adequate light and air, and ensuring public safety.

Lake Residential areas have the unique distinction of having a Lake frontage and a street frontage, both of which have aesthetic value to the community. To improve streetside views in Lake Residential areas, the side of the building facing the street should maintain a facade that is not dominated by garage doors.

Waterfront (front yard) setbacks are critical for maintaining views to the water which gives these lots their value. The Village currently requires a natural features setback of 25 feet from the water's edge. Parcels along the Lake rarely have even shorelines relative to each other and conflicts with Lake views are likely to occur if a relative standard is not applied. The Village should consider adopting an established residential building setback that uses the setbacks of adjacent properties to determine the necessary front yard (lakeside) setbacks of Lakeside parcels.

One particular problem of Lakeside parcels is the limited space for making home improvements. Side yard setbacks on Lakeside lots are often non-conforming to the Zoning Ordinance Schedule of Regulations and any home addition tends to increase the extent of the non-conformity. It is recommended that the Village consider sliding scale side yard setbacks that are based upon lot width. For example, the required side yard setback on each side could be 10% of the total lot width rather than a set standard, but with a minimum of five (5) feet so that smaller lots can be developed, as appropriate. This would provide a proportional accommodation for narrow lots, while acknowledging the larger space available on wide lots.

5. **Character** - The character of Lake Residential homes is changing from simple cottages to larger homes. This is largely a result of the increasing value of the land adjacent to Lake Orion. While the home sizes will continue to change, it is important that the look and feel of Lake homes remain consistent with the traditional architectural elements of the historic Lakeside dwellings. These elements include: peaked roofs, front porches, one to two stories, traditional building materials, and a vertical orientation.

**B. *Village Single Family Residential***

This category encompasses parcels intended for single family residential living that are not adjacent to the Lake. Parcels within this category typically have only one frontage, which is the street frontage. Village Single Family Residential areas are typically walkable, with important neighborhood amenities such as sidewalks, street trees, and connections to neighborhood parks.

1. **Use** - Village Single Family Residential areas are limited to single family residential uses and customary accessory uses.
2. **Lot Size** - The lot sizes in this area are generally larger than lot sizes within the Lake Single Family Residential setting. The Village should encourage existing platted lots to be used for single family residential purpose by standardizing the required lot size in the area. In many locations the platted lot size is slightly smaller than the minimum lot area or width required in the Zoning Ordinance. The Village should consider zoning ordinance amendments to bring more of the platted lots into conformance.
3. **Building Size** - The housing stock is characterized by relatively larger single family residences and accessory structures. The homes are typically one to two stories.

New development should respect the traditional architectural character of the Village. A front porch is a typical feature on the older, Victorian homes in the Village Residential area. Front porches are important because they provide



a semi-public separation between the public areas of the front yard and street and the private areas of the house. Front porches should be encouraged in all Village Single Family Residential areas; consideration should be given to allowing them to encroach a limited amount into the required front yard.

4. **Building Placement** - Front building setbacks should relate to the existing patterns in the immediate neighborhood. Like the Lake Residential areas, the building facing the street should maintain a public facade that is not dominated by garage doors. Consequently, all attached garages should be recessed at least five feet behind the facade with the front door and the garage door occupying not more than 50% of the building width at the property line. In the case of small lots, this may require a one car garage, or a tandem two car garage. Garages located on lots within the Village Residential areas should be setback a minimum of twenty (20) feet from the road, and side loaded if possible.
5. **Character** - The small town character of the Village Single Family neighborhood areas is important to maintain. Many of the homes in these areas are historic with Victorian architectural finishes. The Village should ensure that infill development is respectfully and sensitively folded into the existing neighborhood. Other Village-character recommendations include: a.) maintaining the open area between the street and the yard area of houses, b.) ensuring the continuity of sidewalks, c.) maintaining large diameter street trees, and d.) encouraging front porches when building additions or new construction is undertaken.

The Village North of Flint neighborhood should be studied for eligibility as a local historic district in accordance with Public Act 169 of 1970, as amended. A local historic district would help preserve the character and fabric of older, unique areas within the Village.

### **MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL**

The location of multiple family residential development in a community is determined by many factors, including the availability of necessary utility service, community facilities, access, and surrounding uses. The Future Land Use Map proposes several locations for new multiple family residential development: the northeast corner of the Village north of Flint Street, along Orion Road, north of Atwater Street, north of Paint Creek between Washington and Slater Street, at the southeast corner of Jackson and Lapeer Street, and between Elizabeth Street and Church Street west of the Ehman Center. Multiple family residential uses are also planned within the mixed use categories. The planned areas for the Multiple Family Residential use category have been mapped as shown for several reasons, including:

### Future Land Use and Circulation Plan

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- The existing areas of multiple family housing are well established within the neighborhoods in which they are located.
  - The areas planned for multiple family dwellings are located on or close to major roads within the Village.
  - The multiple family development serves as a transitional use between adjacent single family uses and commercial or other more intensive uses.
1. **Use** - The Multiple Family Residential use category includes dwellings of two (2) or more units and townhouse, apartment, and duplex-style residential uses and customary accessory uses. The preferred housing style is high quality townhouses or attached condominiums.
  2. **Density** - In large part, the density of Multiple Family Residential areas will be determined by the site plan and the specific conditions contained in the Zoning Ordinance. Generally, the density will be between eight (8) and fifteen (15) units per acre. Additional density may be warranted for projects that exhibit exceptional site layout and building design.
  3. **Building Size** - Because multiple family developments are more dense than single family developments, the provision of open space within the development is critical. Multiple family developments should include common open spaces for the residents of the development.

Building height for multiple family developments should be limited to three (3) stories so as not to dwarf nearby single family uses. A high standard of development is desired within the multiple family residential category. Architectural detail should be provided to ensure that the development is compatible in appearance with the single family character of the community. Well-designed townhouse units are generally preferred over conventional apartment buildings.

4. **Building Placement** - Developments within the Multiple Family Residential category should face the street with parking located behind the buildings or in garages to maintain the pedestrian orientation of the Village. Adequate spacing should be provided between buildings for open space and to allow window openings. Access drives in new developments should be connected with abutting local streets. Multiple family developments should generally have more than one point of access to enter and leave the development.

**OFFICE**

The plan designates two areas along M-24 exclusively for office uses: south of Smith Court (from Smith Court south to include the Lighthouse office building) and south of Converse Court (south of McDonalds to the Village limit). These areas are suitable for office uses because of the existing concentration of offices and because of their M-24 frontage. Office uses are also anticipated in the Mixed Use areas to the north and south and within the Mixed Use Downtown area.

1. **Use** - Planned office uses include: medical offices, accountants, lawyers, real estate agencies, business and professional offices, and similar establishments. Office uses should be small in scale and not generate high traffic volumes associated with larger office complexes. Adverse impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods should be minimized.
2. **Lot Coverage & Building Mass** - This Plan designates smaller office buildings (one or two stories) for this area. Lot coverage of buildings should not exceed 40% of the total area of the lot. Adequate on-site parking should be provided with careful consideration to creating landscaped open space and minimizing impervious surfaces.
3. **Building Setbacks and Placement** - The front of buildings should face M-24 and should appeal to both automobile and pedestrian traffic with inviting facades, pedestrian entrances on the front, sidewalk connections, landscaping, and lighting. The building should be placed close to the road, while meeting setback requirements, and provide parking in the rear.

When office uses abut single-family neighborhoods, the treatment of the interface must ensure effective visual and noise separation to protect the quality of life in single family neighborhoods. Smaller-scale office uses, when combined with effective buffers and aesthetic site improvements may be designed to have minimal impact on surrounding land uses if the uses, hours of operation and vehicle volumes are compatible with single-family uses.

4. **Character** - New office developments and improvements made to existing office buildings should reflect the character and design elements of the Village's downtown architecture. Desired features include: peaked roofs, vertical windows, pedestrian entrances at the front, and high quality building materials, such as brick. The design of landscape along the M-24 frontage is important for this area. The Village should revise the landscape standards in the Zoning Ordinance for M-24 frontage to include provisions for high quality landscape buffering, standards for street lighting, and the planting of canopy street trees.

**CORRIDOR COMMERCIAL**

The Plan designates Corridor Commercial uses for all parcels along M-24 north of Front Street, except Evergreen Cemetery and Green's Park; on the west side of M-24 between Smith Court and Park Island Street; and on the east side of M-24 north and south of Converse Court (from the Kentucky Fried Chicken south to include McDonalds). Several parcels without M-24 frontage but adjacent to frontage parcels are included in this classification to accommodate future site needs. This district recognizes the existing commercial development in the area.

1. **Use** - Corridor Commercial uses are characterized by automobile-oriented establishments that serve both a local and regional market, such as restaurants (fast food and standard), automobile fueling and services, and strip centers with neighborhood commercial uses. "Big Box" retail uses are not appropriate in this district. The uses in this category are intended to be accessed by automobile, although pedestrian access should also be encouraged through site design.
2. **Lot Coverage & Building Mass** - Corridor Commercial uses occupy smaller buildings with significant impervious surface on the site. The Village should consider reducing parking requirements for Corridor Commercial uses to reduce the amount of pavement on these lots, which would reduce surface runoff and help protect the water quality of nearby Lake Orion. Building mass should be appropriate to the proposed use with consideration toward the future use of the building.
3. **Building Placement & Setbacks** - Corridor Commercial uses should have buildings set close to the road. It is preferable for these uses to provide parking to the sides and rear, where appropriate.

Sites for Corridor Commercial establishments are typically dependent on high traffic, accessibility and visibility. These uses have the potential to generate high vehicular traffic volumes, bright lights, noise, and often undesirable visual clutter. Therefore, the interface between Corridor Commercial uses and Single Family Residential uses must be carefully treated.

To minimize the negative effects of Corridor Commercial uses on Village neighborhoods, such businesses are planned to be restricted to a concentrated district and not to be permitted to spread and encroach into neighborhoods. Potential negative impacts on residential districts are further planned to be minimized by providing transitional Mixed and Multiple Family land uses that serve as a buffer between Single Family Residential and Corridor Commercial land uses. In areas where there is no land use transition, special attention should be paid to ensuring that the off-site impacts of commercial uses are minimized with visual screening and landscaping.

4. **Character** - The sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting requirements for the Village should be emphasized in these areas. It is important that Corridor Commercial uses are not developed with typical franchise architecture and details, but instead with high quality building materials and architectural elements of the Village's downtown commercial architecture.

### **MIXED USE DISTRICTS**

The Plan identifies three (3) mixed use districts within the Village to permit flexibility in future land use and development. The Plan proposes the long-range development of these districts in a way that will provide a compatible relationship between the surrounding land uses and circulation patterns. Parcel by parcel specific land uses are not identified on the map; however, the plan provides a framework for future development flexibility by offering guidelines which should be used to evaluate future development projects.

#### **A. Mixed Use A District**

The Mixed Use A District is planned for two (2) areas west of M-24: north of Park Island Street and north of Heights Road. It is envisioned that office and single family residential uses would be included in the Mixed Use A District. This district places an emphasis on the development of office uses, which should be small in scale. The residential development within this district will take advantage of views of the Lake.

1. **Use** - A mixture of office and single family residential uses is envisioned for this area. Any new development should fit into the fabric of existing uses in the area.
2. **Lot Coverage & Building Mass** - The area is envisioned for Lake residential uses (single family) along the Lakefront and small offices along M-24. New development should not overwhelm existing development in scale and mass.
3. **Setbacks and Building Placement** - Many of the lots within the Mixed Use A District front on both M-24 and the Lake. Therefore, new development must have two equally prominent frontages. The scale and placement of the new structure should be carefully designed so as not to overwhelm existing development. Single family Lakefront residential development should be buffered from office development and preserve views of the Lake. Development in the area should incorporate shared access drives between uses and onto M-24 and minimize traffic impacts on existing uses. Parking lots should be located where they are not intrusive along M-24 or the Lake. Landscaping and other screening should be provided to help accomplish this objective.



Office buildings along M-24 should be built as close to the road as allowed in the Zoning Ordinance to reinforce the area's connection to historic downtown buildings, which are built to the lot line. Pedestrian connections should be reinforced through inviting facades that are pedestrian in scale. For example, windows should be rectangular with a vertical proportion of 1:2 (width-to-height) and there should be entrances at the front (road facing) of the building.

4. **Character** - New development should be integrated into the Mixed Use A district. Lake views should be preserved from M-24 and for residential development within the area. Open space for the residents of the area and for the semi-public enjoyment of the Lake is also important. Pedestrian connections between this area and the downtown area should be reinforced with sidewalks and the pedestrian-oriented design of office buildings on both the roadside and Lakeside. High quality building materials (i.e., brick) and the incorporation of architectural elements of historic downtown buildings should be required.

**B. Mixed Use B District**

The Mixed Use B District is located along the east side of M-24 both north and south of Atwater Street. This District is intended for a mixture of commercial and residential uses, with an emphasis on developing commercial uses with linkages to the downtown area. Residential development within this district would buffer the commercial development from existing single family neighborhoods to the east of the district.

1. **Use** - The area is planned for a mix of neighborhood-serving commercial and residential development. Restaurants and convenience uses are appropriate for this area only when related through design to residential uses.
2. **Lot Coverage & Building Mass** - This area is a transition from Corridor Commercial uses to downtown commercial uses and should reflect this transition with lot coverage and building mass. Taking design cues from Lake Orion's historic downtown, a higher level of lot coverage and building mass is desirable. Building mass should reflect the character of nearby downtown buildings.
3. **Setbacks and Building Placement** - The area is planned to have commercial uses fronting M-24 and Atwater Street with residential uses screening the commercial uses from existing single family neighborhoods. The existing historic downtown Lake Orion should be a guide to the desired setbacks and building placement. Shared access to both M-24 and Atwater Street (internal circulation network) is important to minimize traffic impacts.

Streetscape improvements are required along M-24 to provide high quality pedestrian access between the area and the downtown and landscape screening to buffer single family residential uses to the east of the district. The Polly Ann - Paint Creek Link will extend through the area and is an important design feature to incorporate into any site plan.

4. **Character** - The area is characterized by its close proximity to Lake Orion's downtown and the necessary connections that must be made to tie the area to the downtown. Architecture and design elements of the historic downtown should be incorporated into building design, particularly: rectangular windows (width-to-height ratio of 1:2), building materials, roof lines, and building mass.

C. **Mixed Use C - Downtown District**

The Mixed Use C - Downtown category encompasses areas of the downtown from north of Shadbolt Street south to the intersection of Broadway and M-24. The category is intended to provide opportunities for the continued development of the Village's downtown by permitting flexibility in allowed uses and encouraging high quality design that follows basic tenets of downtown development.

1. **Use** - A mix of uses is desirable for a vibrant downtown and pedestrian orientation is paramount. Uses and site features that are automobile-oriented, such as automobile service businesses and drive-through facilities, should be prohibited in the downtown.

Uses that provide retail shopping, restaurant, or entertainment activities should be encouraged, especially on the ground floors. Office, residential, and service uses should be encouraged to locate above the first floor. Public uses, such as the Village Hall, are also encouraged to continue or expand in this district. The Village should consider the development of shared parking in the form of parking lots and decks.

2. **Lot Coverage and Building Mass** - Buildings within this district cover as much as 100% of the lot. On-site parking should not be required for new development and any parking lots should be located to the rear of the buildings. Buildings should be contiguous along the street frontage without large gaps or breaks for parking.

Single story buildings should be prohibited. New development should respect the continuity of building form in the downtown, by creating infill development which complements downtown's historic buildings.

3. **Setbacks and Building Placement** - Buildings in this area should be built to the lot line, with no setbacks (front or sideyard). Buildings located at key

intersections, such as Flint & Broadway and M-24 and Broadway should have a higher vertical elevation to reinforce the downtown as the center of the Village. A landmark building, not to exceed three (3) stories at M-24 and Broadway should be considered.

4. **Character** - Maintaining and enhancing existing historic architecture is the primary plan for this area. The façades facing the street should reflect the established façade model of Village downtown commercial buildings, with individual storefront bays and large windows or showcases. Buildings should front, and have the primary entrance, along the street. Secondary entrances should be provided on side streets and parking areas. New development should incorporate existing traditional building elements, such as architectural features, windows, building materials and color, signs, and awnings. Façade materials and components should be compatible with existing buildings, particularly immediately adjacent buildings.

These basic elements should be formalized in a set of illustrated design standards for the downtown to ensure that the downtown retains its pedestrian-friendly, historical character. Additionally, the Village should consider creating an overlay district for the downtown commercial district that would enforce design standards and preserve historic buildings.

### **PARK / OPEN SPACE**

This category includes a variety of public parks and open space. These lands are located to provide needed community recreation areas and facilities, Village aesthetics, and environmental protection. The retention and enhancement of these properties and facilities are expected to satisfy the local recreational needs and services required by Village residents.

The plan includes the preservation and maintenance of all six (6) municipal parks currently operated by the Village. Four (4) new park/open space areas are planned for the Village: Pelton's Point, Paint Creek Natural Area, Ehman Village Park, and the Polly Ann - Paint Creek Link through the Village.

**Pelton's Point** - While currently privately owned, Pelton's Point has great potential as a passive recreation park that links downtown Lake Orion and the Lake. The land can be obtained through easement or purchased for public use. The Point is an important landmark for Lake Orion. The view of this area from M-24 is dramatic and emphasizes Lake Orion's history as a haven for summer recreation.

**Paint Creek Natural Area** - The floodplain of Paint Creek should be preserved as a natural greenway for wildlife and environmental protection. This can be accomplished through the expansion of the zoning ordinance's natural features, setback requirement, or a special designation.

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**Polly Ann - Paint Creek Link** - A trail is planned to be extended through the Village to facilitate non-motorized travel, to link the downtown to neighborhoods, and to provide a connection between the Paint Creek Trail terminus at the south of the Village and the Orion Township safety path to the north of the Village. The route of the Polly Ann - Paint Creek Link has been determined by Village Council but is subject to change.

**Ehman Village Park** - A pocket park is planned at the southeast corner of Elizabeth and Lapeer Street. This park would be a passive, neighborhood park with benches and landscaping and is intended to serve residents of the Village North of Flint and Village by the Shores neighborhoods. It would also be an attractive entry feature for the north end of the Village.

### **SEMI-PUBLIC**

This category includes uses which are open to a limited public, such as churches and private land that is used for open space. As most of these uses are located in or adjacent to Single Family Residential uses, the potential reuse of these sites is therefore limited to a similar public or semi-public use, or single family residential use of compatible density with surrounding neighborhoods.

Semi-public buildings located close to single family neighborhoods should be designed to enhance residential neighborhoods and their individual identity and character. Additionally, semi-public buildings located close to commercial neighborhoods should be compatible with the architectural design of existing structures. Because semi-public buildings are important to the community life of Village residents, they are held to a higher standard of development. High quality design, high quality building products, and landscaping are required.

Semi-public buildings should also be located to incorporate accessibility to residents and visitors of all ages and incomes by car, transit, bicycle or on foot. Parking lots should be placed so that they do not dominate the building or site. Green spaces planned for semi-public use should be maintained and landscaped to ensure that they do not become nuisances.

### **PUBLIC**

Included in this land use category are the Village Hall, Orion Township fire station, Department of Public Works facility, Evergreen Cemetery and public school facilities.

Public buildings are civic landmarks that have particular standards of development. As Lake Orion looks toward improving Village Hall and other public uses, there are several design-related issues to consider. Public buildings should be located to define the Village's public spaces, which in turn, can provide a memorable and significant frame for civic events. Public buildings, especially schools, should be located to provide or enhance

## Future Land Use and Circulation Plan

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residential neighborhoods and their individual identity and character. Civic presence should be enhanced by height, mass, and high quality materials. Architectural features should be designed to take advantage of vistas along streets to visually connect the public buildings with surrounding neighborhoods. Public buildings should be located to be accessible to residents and visitors of all ages and incomes, by car, transit, bicycle or on foot. Parking lots should be placed strategically so that they do not dominate the building or site.

## **UTILITIES**

The existing Detroit Edison electric substation is designated as Utility on the Future Land Use Plan. Since any expansion of these facilities may have negative impacts on surrounding land uses, the Village should ensure that any changes to these facilities further reduce off-site impacts.

## **WATER & ENVIRONMENT**

A significant portion of the Village of Lake Orion is classified as "water" in this plan. Lake Orion's location along the waterfront is worth protecting and preserving with specific recommendations to reduce pollution and increase the quality of the water in Lake Orion:

**Village Street Trees** - Begin a program to inventory, protect, maintain, and plant Village street trees. The Village should consider a tree ordinance to protect existing trees and improvements to the landscape requirements of the Zoning Ordinance to require the planting of canopy street trees along M-24.

**Paint Creek Natural Area** - Preserve the floodplain along Paint Creek as a natural features corridor for wildlife and to protect the Creek from non-point source pollution.

**Water Quality Testing** - Test the Lake to establish a water quality baseline, then conduct periodic testings to identify possible degradation and remedial steps to be taken. Testing should be included in the NPDES Phase II plan the Village is required to adopt.

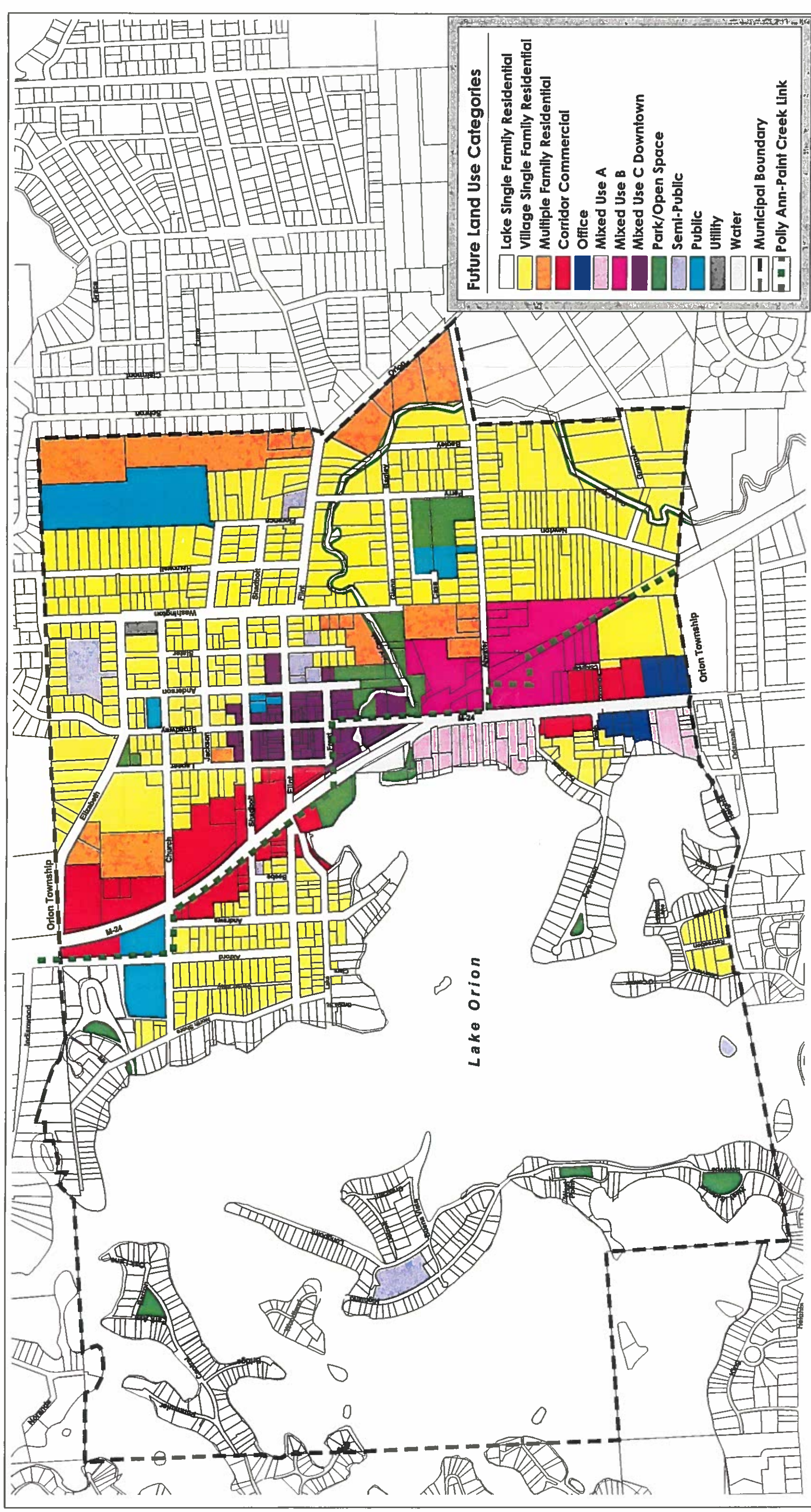
**Reduce Impervious Surfaces** - The Village should examine Zoning Ordinance requirements for parking and lot coverage to find ways to reduce the amount of impervious surface required or allowed on lots.

## **INDUSTRIAL**

No industrial land uses are identified on the Future Land Use Plan map. Because of the relatively small size of the Village, these uses are considered incompatible with the overall land use plan and objectives.



# Village of Lake Orion, Michigan



**Map 8 - Future Land Use**

Base map Source: Oakland County 1999  
Data Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., 9/2002



## Circulation Plan

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The purpose of the Circulation Plan is to provide for the circulation needs of the Village, the surrounding communities and the region while protecting the Village from the negative impacts of vehicular traffic. Since the Village of Lake Orion is largely developed and the majority of the circulation system is established, the emphasis of this plan is placed on developing solutions for existing traffic problems.

### **FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS**

The Circulation Plan for Lake Orion functionally classifies roadways as major thoroughfare, intermediate thoroughfare, collector street or local street. The following functional classifications are proposed for existing streets and thoroughfares within the Village of Lake Orion and are illustrated on Road System Plan (Map 9, Page 116). Some of these roads are not under the jurisdiction of the Village, however, maintaining their function is important to satisfy the Village's circulation needs.

#### **Major Thoroughfare**

M-24 is proposed as a major thoroughfare road in the Village. The primary function of this thoroughfare is to provide intra-county continuity and to feed regional arterials and freeways, such as I-69 and I-75.

#### **Intermediate Thoroughfares**

Intermediate thoroughfares convey traffic between municipalities and activity centers. Typically, significant community retail and commercial facilities are located on intermediate thoroughfares. Single family residential uses may be appropriate in certain areas. The following streets are planned as intermediate thoroughfares:

- Flint Street (from M-24 east to Orion Road)
- Elizabeth Street (from M-24 east to Broadway Street)
- Broadway Street (from M-24 north to Elizabeth Street)
- Atwater Street (from M-24 east to Orion Road)
- Heights Road (from M-24 to the west)
- Orion Road (outside Village)
- Indianwood Road (outside Village)

#### **Collector Streets**

Collector streets provide for traffic movement between major thoroughfares and intermediate thoroughfares, activity centers (e.g., schools, shopping districts) and local streets. Collector street is planned as the functional classification for:

- Axford Street (from Flint Street to the north Village boundary)
- Flint Street (from M-24 west to Axford Street)

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- Lapeer Street (from Flint Street north to Elizabeth Street)
- Shadbolt Street (from Lapeer Street east to Anderson Street)
- Front Street (from Lapeer Street east to Anderson Street)
- Anderson Street (from Front Street north to Shadbolt Street)
- Washington Street (from Flint Street north to Cedar Bend)
- Florence Street (from Flint Street north to Jackson Street)
- Perry Street (from Flint Street south to Atwater Street)

#### **Local Streets**

All remaining streets within the Village of Lake Orion are local streets. These streets provide access from abutting properties to collector streets and thoroughfares.

### **CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS**

To improve local traffic circulation, the plan proposes the following improvements. Prior to implementation, each of these general improvements should be studied in more detail so that the specific alignments and design alternatives may be examined.

1. **M-24 Boulevard.** Review the feasibility of a limited boulevard and walkway along M-24 between Broadway and Front Street.
2. **Create a New Local Street.** Complete the process to officially relocate Cass Street along its current route and make it a local Village street.
3. **Encourage Downtown Circulation.** This can be accomplished by developing a comprehensive wayfinding program that incorporates signage, maps, and kiosks to give pedestrians and automobiles direction to the downtown. Also gateway features, such as ground level signs, arches, or similar features that announce an entrance to downtown Lake Orion are recommended. Gateway features should be positioned at Broadway and M-24, as well as Flint and M-24.
4. **Sidewalks & Non-motorized Path System.** Sidewalks and trails are key features in creating a livable community. They invite pedestrian activity by making it safer for residents to travel by foot. The presence of people walking or jogging around town gives the impression and sense of a vibrant community. The Village of Lake Orion has the good fortune of having an extensive sidewalk system and available connections to regional trail systems.

The plan recommends several pedestrian oriented, non-motorized improvements, which include:

- a. Develop the Polly Ann - Paint Creek Link through the Village. The trail would link Orion Township's safety path system and the Polly Ann Trail.

### *Future Land Use and Circulation Plan*

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- b. Create a tunnel under or bridge over M-24 linking downtown and the Lakefront. It is recommended that the tunnel or bridge cross M-24 between Front and Flint Streets.
- c. Continue requiring sidewalks, streetscape, and landscaping along M-24.
- d. Develop a pedestrian access from Front Street to M-24.

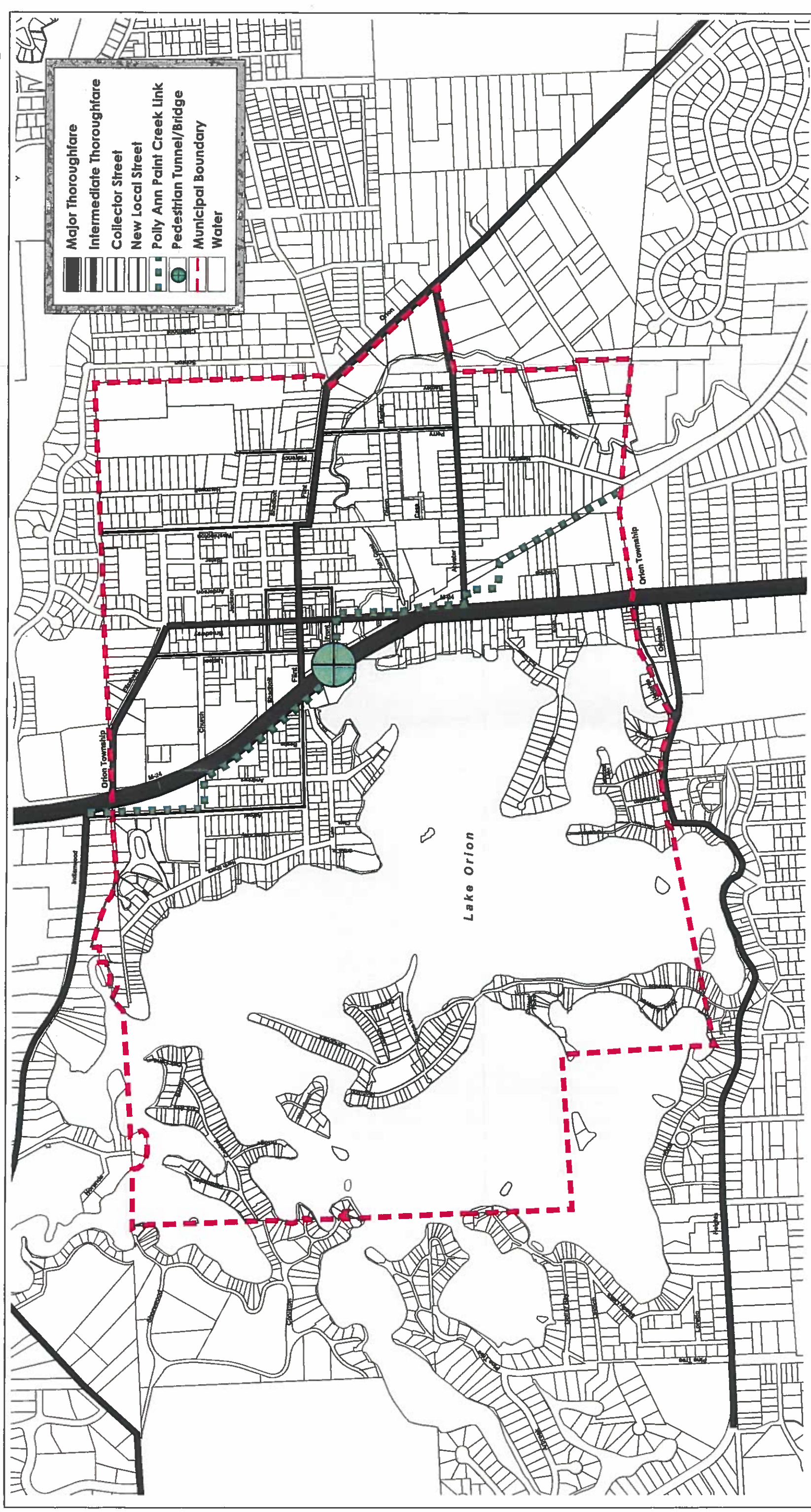
### **DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Site plan review and general road design should consider the following elements of traffic flow:

- Access between parking areas should be considered to improve circulation with neighboring sites and reduce trips;
- Spacing of ingress/egress points should be sufficient to avoid potential interference with traffic flows on adjoining streets;
- Sight distances should be adequate and unobstructed for motorists;
- Acceleration, deceleration, and turning lanes should be installed wherever possible to remove turning vehicles from the main traffic flow;
- The location, design, and number of curb cuts should be carefully considered to balance access needs with traffic safety.



# Village of Lake Orion, Michigan



**Map 9 - Circulation Plan**

Base Map Source: Oakland County, 1999  
Data Source: Village of Lake Orion ACT 51 Map  
McKenna Associates, Inc 9/2002



## SECTION 10 IMPLEMENTATION

This section of the Plan presents tools and techniques that citizens, community leaders, and Village officials can use to implement the Master Plan. The tools and techniques identified are available for use by Michigan communities under current enabling legislation.

### *Public Policy and Administrative Action*

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**Cooperation Between Units of Government.** The health and vitality of the Village greatly impacts the surrounding communities, particularly Orion Township. The Village has a tradition of cooperation with adjacent municipalities, particularly Orion Township, to foster quality services and development in a managed and controlled manner. The support of this Master Plan by Orion Township will further enable the Village to implement the objectives set forth in the previous section.

Continued cooperative efforts with other municipalities, county and state agencies are critical to successful planning efforts. For example, road improvements affect the quality of life for Village residents and workers, but some decisions regarding roads in or immediately adjacent to the Village are made by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and less directly by the Road Commission for Oakland County. Clearly, these other agencies must be aware of the Village's land use planning objectives in order to develop compatible transportation plans. The development of corridor plans can facilitate intergovernmental cooperation by communicating in detail the transportation objectives of the Village to MDOT and the Road Commission for Oakland County.

**Continuous Planning.** Community planning is a dynamic process that does not end with the completion of the Master Plan. Urban areas experience constant change and planning involves identifying and responding to change. In order to sustain the planning process and generate positive results, maintain momentum, and respond to change, the Master Plan should be reviewed on a regular basis. The Michigan Municipal Planning Act (PA 285 of 1931, amended by PA 265 of 2001) requires planning commissions to conduct a plan review at least five (5) years after adoption of the plan and decide whether to initiate a plan amendment or a new plan.

In addition to the Master Plan, more detailed plans for specific areas and issues such as the M-24 corridor, the downtown, redevelopment of older commercial sites, and architectural design standards have been identified as useful tools in achieving the community's goals.

## Implementation

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**Establishing Priorities.** The Master Plan contains a multitude of recommendations. There is insufficient staff to implement all of the recommendations. Consequently, a process for establishing priorities must be established as soon as the Master Plan is adopted. Participants involved in setting priorities should include Village staff, the Planning Commission, the Village Council, and others who would be involved in implementation of the Plan.

**Information and Education.** The success of the Master Plan depends to a great extent on efforts to inform and educate citizens about the Plan and the need for regulatory measures to implement the Plan. Successful implementation requires the support and participation of residents, property owners, and business owners.

**Design Standards.** It is recommended that the Village prepare an architectural design standards manual for the downtown and M-24 corridor areas. The benefit of a design standards manual is that it can be used to communicate concepts and ideas to supplement the Zoning Ordinance. The manual should be made available to developers and property owners to guide them in the preparation of site and architectural plans.

## Land Use Controls

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**Zoning Regulations.** Zoning is the primary regulatory tool used by the Village to implement the Master Plan. According to Section 1(3) of the City and Village Zoning Act (Michigan Public Act 207 of 1921), "the land development regulations and districts authorized by this act shall be made in accordance with a plan designed to promote and accomplish the objectives of this act."

### ***Zoning Tools:***

- ***Rezoning to Implement the Master Plan.*** The land use classifications on the Future Land Use Map provide the basis for evaluating future rezoning requests. Zoning actions that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map usually receive deferential and favorable judicial review if challenged. The Master Plan should be the principal source of information in the evaluation of all rezoning requests.
- ***Performance Standards.*** Rather than simply regulate development on the basis of dimensional standards, many communities are establishing performance standards to regulate development based on the permissible effects or impacts of a proposed use. Performance standards should be used to supplement conventional zoning standards for the purposes of regulating noise, dust, vibration, odor, glare and heat, safety hazards, and environmental impacts such as water pollution.

## Implementation

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The Village of Lake Orion should implement performance standards within the Zoning Ordinance. Performance standards can be particularly useful in achieving environmental and resource protection goals. If based on a strong body of research, standards can be developed that relate to critical natural resource and environmental areas such as Lake Orion, Paint Creek and floodplains.

- *Incentive Zoning.* Incentive zoning allows a developer to exceed the density or dimensional limitations in the Zoning Ordinance if the developer agrees to fulfill conditions in the Ordinance. Incentive zoning should be considered to promote innovative land planning techniques identified in the Master Plan. For example, a possible increase in density can be used as an incentive for residential development that includes usable open space or for high quality design which promotes the goals of the Plan.
- *Planned Unit Development.* Planned Unit Development (PUD) involves the use of special zoning requirements and review procedures that provide design and regulatory flexibility, so as to encourage innovation in land use planning and design. PUDs are also an effective means to implement the Mixed Use areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan. Planned developments should achieve a higher quality of development than might otherwise be possible, and applied judiciously are a useful zoning technique to achieve development in accordance with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan.
- *Setbacks and Other Standards.* It is important to review required setbacks and other dimensional standards to be certain that they promote the desired type of development. Some inconsistencies in Zoning Ordinance standards have been identified in this Plan. For example, ordinance-required lot widths should generally be consistent with the widths of the lots as platted.
- *Overlay Zoning.* Overlay zoning allows the Village to impose a new set of regulations on a special area within an existing zoning district. In an area where an overlay zoning is established, the property is placed simultaneously in the two zones, and the property may be developed only under the applicable conditions and requirements of both zones. Thus, the overlay zoning has been used in other communities to address special conditions and features, such as historic areas and environmentally sensitive areas, without disrupting the underlying zoning plan. In the Village of Lake Orion, overlay zoning would be an effective tool for achieving the following objectives:
  - ▶ Protecting the Lake.
  - ▶ Establishing site development and architectural standards for the downtown and major gateways into the Village.
  - ▶ Preserving historic neighborhoods through a local historic district.

**Condominium Regulations.** During the past two decades, condominium developments have become a popular alternative to subdivisions as a way of developing land, in part due to changes in the State's condominium laws. The Condominium Act (Michigan Public Act 59 of 1978) was significantly modified in 1982 to permit condominium ownership of land. Developers often prefer site condominium development for single family dwellings because the approval process can be much shorter than the platting process required for land subdivision. The Condominium Act can also be used to facilitate redevelopment of old plats, since condominiums can "overlay" a subdivision and thereby avoid time-consuming and cumbersome re-platting.

The Condominium Act requires condominiums to comply with local ordinances. The Village Zoning Ordinance does not contain condominium regulations or approval processes and these should be added.

**Subdivision Regulations.** The Village's Subdivision Ordinance outlines the procedures and standards used in exercising the Village's authority to review and approve proposed subdivisions, pursuant to the Subdivision Control Act of 1967/Land Division Act (Michigan Public Act 288 of 1967, as amended). Subdivision control ordinances typically specify the design of lots and blocks, access, and such necessary internal improvements as streets, drainage, water, and sewer facilities.

The Subdivision Control Act places restrictions on the power of a municipality to approve or reject plats, indicating that a rejection may not be based on any requirement other than those included in Section 105 of the Act. Nevertheless, many legal experts believe that the Act gives municipalities much greater authority than they have typically exercised. The Village's Subdivision Ordinance should be thoroughly reviewed and revised to allow the Village to exercise its full scope of authority over subdivision design. For example, the Village should examine the possibility of including requirements for open space, street trees, and similar amenities.

**Keyhole (Funneling) Regulations.** Keyhole (or funneling) regulations limit the use of waterfront lots to provide lake access for larger developments located away from the waterfront. Typically, keyholes occur when a small waterfront lot is purchased by a "backlot" owner who then grants access (by license or easement) or a share in ownership of the waterfront lot to backlot owners or residents. When keyholes are allowed in lots along the lake, there is greater lake use than would normally occur if the lot were used as a single family residential use.

The Village should examine the possibility of amending the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance to control access to the lake and developing a Lake management plan. Local regulatory approaches to limiting keyhole development include severely limiting keyholes through special use approval and regulating the number of docks along the water frontage.

## ***Building Code Enforcement***

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**Rental Inspection Program.** The Master Plan calls for the development of second story rental units in the Downtown area of the Village. In addition to creating incentives for the development of second story units, the Village should examine the feasibility of a rental inspection program to ensure that all Village rental properties are maintained and safe. The Village is not required by state or national law to adopt a rental inspection program, however, rental inspection programs are required in Michigan cities with populations over 10,000 residents.

A rental inspection program typically includes the establishment of a rental code which complies with the National Property Maintenance Code, yearly or biennial inspections of rental properties, a fee schedule for inspections, a process for handling complaints about rental units, and penalties for rental code violations. Many communities require rental inspections when a change of tenant occurs.

## ***Public Facility Improvements***

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**Capital Improvements Program.** Capital projects influence land development decisions and should be viewed as more than just an administrative task. The need for several important capital improvements has been identified in this Master Plan. For example, the acquisition of Lakefront park land and the construction of a tunnel or bridge across M-24 are two important Village projects that would require planning and implementation under a capital improvement program.

### **Land Acquisition**

Land acquisition is an important supplement to land use regulations as means to protecting natural resources, creating recreation opportunities, and achieving other goals. Land acquisition can be used to control the use of a specific acquired parcel, or it can be used to enhance the general character of the Village. Local land acquisition programs are generally funded either by local property taxes (such as a dedicated millage or general fund revenues) or by grant programs. For example, the Village could use grant programs sponsored by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to acquire land for recreation purposes on the Lakefront.

There are several approaches to acquiring interest in land to advance the goals of the Master Plan. Generally, the Village can take direct action to acquire property interest or it can rely on private voluntary land protection efforts.

1. ***Direct Action by the Village.*** If the Village takes direct action, it can acquire property in fee simple or it can acquire a partial interest through acquisition of easements. Fee simple acquisition provides the greatest level of control



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over the use of the parcel, but it is also the most expensive method of acquisition. In addition to acquisition costs, fee simple acquisition removes property from the tax rolls, resulting in a decrease in property tax revenue.

2. *Easements* are distinct property rights that may be sold separately from other rights. Easements are effective for preserving sensitive lands, providing public access along lakeside rivers or greenways, preserving historic facades, and allowing property owners to obtain income, estate, and property tax benefits while they continue to live on their land.
3. *Private Voluntary Land Protection Efforts.* Instead of taking direct action, the Village can encourage and rely on private voluntary land protection efforts. Private tools available to preserve land include:

Donation of land or bargain sale (acquisition at below market value).

- ✓ Options to buy (often used to secure a parcel of land while funding is being obtained).
- ✓ Rights-of-first refusal (used to tie up a parcel without having to purchase it immediately).
- ✓ Leases (temporary control without the expense of acquisition).
- ✓ Pre-acquisition by a land trust (the land trust serves as the intermediary for the public agency, such as the Village).
- ✓ Conservation investment (essentially a real estate syndication for the purpose of resource protection).

## Special Purpose Districts

Certain recommendations in the Master Plan can be accomplished using a targeted approach through creation of special districts. Special purpose districts that may be applicable in the Village include the following:

**Neighborhood Area Improvements Act.** Michigan Public Act 208 of 1949 authorizes municipalities to designate neighborhood areas for the purpose of planning and carrying out local public improvements for the prevention of blight in such areas. The Act calls for preparation of neighborhood betterment plans by the Planning Commission. The Act also provides methods of financing improvements within the neighborhood, including special assessment districts and issuance of neighborhood improvement bonds. This act might prove useful in continuing the improvement of some of the older neighborhoods within the Village.

**Historic Districts.** The Village should consider adopting local and national historic districts in the downtown and in Village neighborhoods. Historic districts have proven to enhance neighborhood property values and encourage good design with infill and

## Implementation

redevelopment projects. Historic districts are another way that the Village of Lake Orion can influence the character of new development within the Village and preserve the character of the old development.

Within the State of Michigan, historic tax credits are available to historic properties located within local historic districts. These tax credits can offset some of the development costs of historic preservation, and can be used as an incentive to encourage new development within the Village. The State historic tax credits can be used in combination with the National historic tax credit offered by the Federal government.

**Brownfield Act.** The Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act, Public Act 381 of 1996, (Act 381, as amended) establishes a method to finance environmental response activities at contaminated properties. It allows municipalities, such as the Village of Lake Orion, to develop and implement brownfield redevelopment financing plans to capture local property taxes from a contaminated property and /or to offer Single Business tax credits to cover the costs associated with conducting environmental response activities on that property. Properties eligible for Brownfield Act financing include blighted or functionally obsolete lots. Eligible activities include infrastructure improvements, demolition, lead or asbestos abatement, and site preparation. The Village may establish its own Brownfield Authority or may participate in Oakland County's Brownfield Authority program.

## Financing Tools

Successful implementation of the Master Plan will depend on the ability of the Village to secure necessary financing. Besides the general fund, the following sources of revenue are available to the Village:

- **Dedicated Millage.** Special millages can be used to generate revenue for a specific purpose.
- **Special Assessments.** Special assessments are compulsory contributions collected from the owners of property benefitted by specific public improvements, such as paving and drainage improvements, to defray the costs of such improvements. Special assessments are apportioned according to the benefits afforded to the property affected. Downtown parking lots may be financed through special assessments.
- **Bond Programs.** Bonds are one of the principal sources of financing used by communities to pay for capital improvements. General obligation bonds are issued for specific community projects and are paid off by the general public with property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for construction of projects that generate revenue. The bonds are then retired using income generated by the project.

## Implementation

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- *Tax Increment Financing.* Tax increment financing is authorized by the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Act and the Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA) Act. When a tax increment finance district is established, the state equalized value of all properties in the district is recorded. Every year thereafter, the property tax revenue generated by any increase in the taxable value is "captured" by the DDA to finance improvements set forth in the development plan. Often bonds are issued to finance the improvements, and the tax increment revenues are used to repay the bonds. The Village has an established DDA program, but may wish to establish other tax increment financing districts, as necessary.
- *HUD Section 202* - This is a federally sponsored program which provides mortgage financing and rent subsidies for the construction and maintenance of elderly housing. Only non-profit, private organizations (such as churches, unions, fraternal and other non-profit organizations) are eligible sponsors, but local governments usually cooperate in the assembly of land, applications, public improvements and supportive actions. Such projects are tax exempt, but the State rebates an equivalent amount to local tax jurisdictions. This is the program that was used to develop the Heritage Place senior citizens complex.
- *Home Improvement Program* - This is a program of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) that provides low interest loans for home improvements through local lending institutions. The Home Improvement Program (HIP) is not targeted to any specific area, but can be utilized Village-wide. Interest rates on loans are related to income. The structure must be twenty years or older or in need of repair to correct items that are hazardous to health and safety or for items related to energy conservation.
- *Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)* - CDBG is an annual allocation of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to local governments for a wide range of community development activities, including: housing rehabilitation, public and neighborhood improvements, and economic development activities that primarily benefit low and moderate income persons. The Village receives funds through Oakland County.
- *Grants.* Public grants from various agencies are available for specific municipal projects. For example, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grants are available for park development and land acquisition. Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA-21) grants are available for improvements to the Village's transportation system, particularly M-24 and non-motorized transportation improvements. Private sources for grants also exist. Utility companies are a common source for private grants for municipal projects.

## *Other Implementation and Recommendations*

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*Maintaining Water Quality.* Lake Orion and Paint Creek are important features of the Village. It would be difficult to overstate how important water quality is to the quality of life and image of the Village. This Plan has documented some of the known threats to water quality: non-native plants and animals; storm water runoff from the roads; land cover, which causes higher rates of storm water runoff and diminishes the natural filtering capacity of land; pesticides and herbicides; and certain types of motor sports activity on the Lake.

Preservation and enhancement of the natural environment mandates serious efforts to protect water quality. Such efforts must be coordinated with other communities and agencies that share the regulatory authority over the Lake. Lake activity and water quality must be measured and monitored on a regular schedule (e.g., annually or semi-annually) to track changes in water quality from year-to-year and to assure quick response to detected degradation.

*Support the Main Street Program.* The Village of Lake Orion is fortunate to be affiliated with the Oakland County Main Street program which provides technical assistance and guidance on the development of Lake Orion's downtown. The four-point Main Street program (Design, Organization, Promotion, Economic Restructuring) is a comprehensive approach with proven results throughout Michigan and the United States. The Main Street program should be a high priority for the Village, both in funding and in program support. The Village should plan to continue a local Main Street program after the pilot project is complete.

The Main Street program and the Village may consider the following implementation strategies:

1. Work with the Village to create mandatory design guidelines for downtown commercial buildings. The Oakland County Main Street program and the National Main Street program have resources available to help recommend particular guidelines that are helpful in Main Street communities. Use the guideline creation process to educate property owners and tenants about the care and maintenance of historic buildings and recommend appropriate improvements to their properties.
2. Develop incentives to encourage mixed-use development in the downtown. Incentives might include a low-interest loan fund for facade improvements, building upgrades, and mixed-use development.
3. Complete a market analysis for the downtown, including a complete void analysis, which can be used to support a business recruitment and retention program.

### Implementation

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4. Develop a comprehensive promotion strategy to encourage shopping and dining in Lake Orion's downtown district.
5. Develop a way-finding (signage) program to encourage travelers to visit downtown.
6. Although the Main Street program is primarily focused on commercial development, the local Main Street program can pay close attention to supporting and encouraging residential development in the downtown. Incentives for downtown residential development should be developed in coordination with the Village's Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

### Action Plan

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The Master Plan for the Village of Lake Orion is a vision that points the way to the future. It only becomes reality when it is implemented. There are steps discussed throughout the Plan that can be taken by the Village to make that vision come alive.

In summary, those steps are:

- A. Adopt a new Zoning Ordinance.
- B. Work with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board to:
  - Put into place design guidelines;
  - Establish a Historic District for the downtown first, and then one for the historic neighborhoods; and
  - Create a capital improvement plan.
- C. Establish a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to assist in reclamation and re-use of environmentally contaminated sites.
- D. Adopt and implement a Stormwater Management Plan in accordance with Phase II requirements to help ensure water quality in Lake Orion and Paint Creek.
- E. Re-visit this Master Plan and the Recreation Master Plan on an annual basis and update them every five years.
- F. Communicate and coordinate the Village's plans and actions with neighboring municipalities.



## APPENDIX A

### *Storyboarding Session Results*

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On April 29, 2002, The Village of Lake Orion conducted a "storyboarding" session to elicit ideas and form consensus about the goals of the Master Plan for 2002-2022. Over 30 Village Officials participated in the session, from the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Downtown Development Authority Board, Village Council, and Parks & Recreation Commission. The following results are the actual answers to questions asked to the storyboarding participants. The participants were asked, "Over the next 20 years, the life of the new Master Plan, what should be done regarding the Village's residential areas." The same question was asked for commercial areas, lake and environment, and recreation and community facilities.

The information collected at the Storyboarding session was used as a basis for developing master Plan goals. The participants' answers are reflected in the Master Plan goals as key elements and interpretations.

#### **RESIDENTIAL**

##### **Revitalize Village Historic Character**

- Promote Restoration / Renovation
- Preserve existing housing stock
- Uniformity of street corners and signs ie: same landscaping, same signs, possibly curbs
- Residential - enhance street lighting
- Establish a historic district that has an ordinance
- Look at drainage
- Pinpoint lot lines (survey issues) plat vs. existing
- Expedite and make permits less complicated
- Revise ordinance to complement whatever objectives were established

##### **Discourage Development of High Density in Single Family Areas**

- Continue to improve (clean up) continuity of single family housing including lake front.

## Appendix

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- Increase frontage of Lake front properties (uncrowded/less crowding)
- Maintain and/or align growth with traffic
- Maintain low density
- Keep the small town character of neighborhoods

### **Enforce Existing Ordinances and Update when Needed**

- Enforce no parking on front lawns except Lakefront property
- Modify zoning set back so as to give uniformity in building set back
- Make an effort to re-survey the areas that have lot line problems
- Address the use and enforce the Master Plan as described for residential housing
- Ordinance revisions to remove outdated codes, incorporate new policy, develop user friendly ordinance policy.
- Find a way to combine properties that are considered combined by ordinance but not really combined in reality.
- Ordinances - parking of boat, trailers, and RVs.
- Wherever possible combine lots that do not meet current ordinance requirements (7' lots, etc.)
- Eliminate "grandfathered in" properties that do not conform
- Retain current requirements EXCEPT the DDA District M-24

### **Promote Owner-occupied Single Family in Single Family Areas and Discourage Multi-family Occupancy in Single Family Areas**

- Keep as much residential as possible - single family
- Enforce single family where it's zoned - SF
- Multiple family should have annual inspections
- Put pressure on school board to move bus depot out away from the Village (traffic, noise, fumes from buses are a problem.
- Prevent single family homes from becoming rental units
- Address the use of single family homes as multiples

### **Eliminate Blight**

- Too many rentals and run down buildings
- Yards are not well maintained, weeds, etc.
- Enforce property maintenance
- Promote underground utilities - eliminate overhead wires
- Too many single homes need to be remodeled and more nicely landscaped - makes the Village look bad.
- Try to control blight: If a residence has gone out of control, or burned, etc., send someone to alert homeowner.
- Address blight issues in a more expeditious manner
- Enforce clean up of certain areas (homes with junk) for the sake of image
- Encourage updates of run down homes and use of "historic" colors etc., in enhance the quaint village look
- Maintain and enforce rules of the Village
- Try to control litter in residential areas; paper, branches, etc. Village should be active in keeping Village clean.
- Too many houses run down, need paint

### **Encourage Appropriate Redevelopment and Development**

- Implement new Master Plan to incorporate multi-use zones. Set a realistic ordinance enforcing policy and utilize M-24 Corridor for commercial and office uses with residential uses above and/or behind on the waterfront. Maintain historic flavor of the old downtown and incorporate new mixed use within district utilizing historic architectural theme.
- Provide for more multi-units - "condos and apartments"
- Incorporate residential into all home zoning classifications ie. Lake side businesses
- Incorporate residential into the CBD ie. (Mixed use)
- Expand "residential" areas to include condos and/or apartment properties above commercial buildings and along M-24 lake front.

## Appendix

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- Need more residences in walking distance to downtown to support revitalization
- Promote infill projects to enhance existing housing stock
- Encourage redevelopment - if a property is a total mess, Village should try to help find a way to rebuild, or somehow transform the ruined residential property into an attractive one.

### **COMMERCIAL**

#### **Quality Design Standards**

- Promote a land-mark building downtown
- Better / improved landscaping requirements or updates
- Maintain design theme
- Maintain quality standards for site design
- Beautify, update downtown to lure businesses and people
- Fix / repair existing business buildings visual enhancement especially along M-24
- Maintain historical district facade
- Address poor building stock in downtown area
- M-24 Corridor needs a streetscape plan
- Historic downtown needs aggressively funded facade improvement aid.
- Encourage architecture that is consistent with the area - downtown US M-24

#### **Promote Appropriate Retail**

- Discourage new businesses that have a history of failure, recruit businesses that have a history of success (ie., consult records to see what has failed here)
- Define type of business that we want
- What does it take to lure the businesses?
- Encourage good variety retail
- Traditional downtown needs stronger retail base

- Promote variety of retail for variety of ages.

#### **Plan for the Downtown**

- Learn from other communities
- Develop a plan that is supported by all stakeholders and then implemented.
- Allow comprehensive yet complementary development plan to allow harmonious integration of the office/commercial use within the existing community - encourage redevelopment within downtown and low density type commercial along the M-24 Corridor.
- Work together to put maximum effort and energy into the efforts of the Downtown Lake Orion Main Street Program.

#### **Eliminate Blight**

- Discourage blight in downtown business district as well as in residential areas.
- Control litter
- Discourage and keep out absent landlords
- Clean up downtown area.

#### **Keep Commercial Away from Lakefront**

- Keeping a small town commercial base - historical downtown - M-24
- Do not extend commercial district into residential areas (lack of successful business ventures does not warrant extending business district)
- Promote retail commercial downtown
- Change commercial zoning on lake to residential
- Keep commercial in downtown areas
- No commercial on lakefront
- Expand commercial between Lapeer St. and M-24 north of Flint to Elizabeth
- Promote use of Orion Lumber area to mixed use (business and multiple housing)
- Develop M-24 south of Flint - Commercial on M-24 and housing on water



### **Update Ordinances**

- Easier to renovate existing buildings re: permits
- A better sign ordinance
- Do not allow any more than two story buildings
- Redo ordinances which are outdated and do not support the plan
- Have ordinances that are realistic and competitive with other communities
- Eliminate things designed to "kill" the downtown

### **User Friendly Government**

- Work with and help local businesses to prosper instead of putting regulatory roadblocks in the way (friendly government)
- Allow commercial growth to take place naturally within the zoning laws that prevail at the time.
- Do not make obstacles where they don't exist.

### **Promote Mixed Use in Commercial Areas**

- Promote, support, and encourage mixed use development - commercial, retail, residential
- Develop commercial "enterprise" zones such as LS redevelopment
- Encourage 2-3 story buildings with residential and/or office above commercial - expand the "downtown" look.
- Retail first floor, Office/Residential second floor, residential third floor
- Combine: only retail offices in downtown area

### **Improve Pedestrian and Vehicle Circulation**

- Encourage connection of parking lots by internal "ring roads" to facilitate traffic flow on M-24
- Provide easy access to downtown area through pedestrian pathways to encourage pedestrian traffic

### **Parking**

- Determine and provide plan to support parking structure "central"

- More parking in the downtown area
- Encourage businesses that do not have a lot of employees to reduce parking problems

### **LAKE AND ENVIRONMENT**

#### **Correct and Control Drainage to Minimize Environmental Harm/Pollution**

- Plan for improvements to infrastructure to protect quality of lake as facilities become old or overburdened.
- Control weed kill going in lake
- Work with the boat club on locating drains going into the lake
- Control drainage into lake
- No more storm drains into the lake
- Restrict / stop road drainage into lake
- Keep lawn treatments from getting into lake water

#### **Regulate / Prevent Keyhole Development to Limit Boats on Lake**

- Control of lake access
- Limit and enforce limit at public access
- Locally enforce DEQ laws
- Restrict boats per resident
- Support the ordinance that only allows residents to have a boat docked on the lake.
- Discourage and enforce new state law "key hole" access
- Enact and pass key hole ordinance

#### **Shoreline and Lake Maintenance**

- Paint Creek and waterfront (Greens/Childrens) shoreline improvements (sea walls or natural plantings)
- More use of seawalls to prevent erosion of shoreline

## ***Appendix***

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- Continue lowering the lake every 5 years to repair seawalls
- Get the DNR to let us put lake level down every three years to work on beaches and breakwalls
- Weed control

### **Education re. Lake Use**

- Form a coalition with upstream neighbors to promote sound water integrity practices.
- Find a way to keep the water quality high
- Promote proper lake usage through education programs.
- Make public aware of how to keep lake clean
- More aggressive action taken to protect healthy lake environment
- Protect our most important asset - the lake

### **Lakefront Uses**

- Do not overextend the Lake;s use in development
- No "big" developments on water frontage
- Remove or force repair of deteriorated Lakefront homes - encourage redevelopment
- Lake should be kept residential except for lakeside special district which should be commercial
- Do not allow commercial development on Lake front.
- Improve visibility of Lake from M-24 to encourage visitors to slow down and stop in downtown area.

### **Update Ordinances to Address Lake Issues / Uses**

- Write ordinance to restrict or eliminate dry stack storage marine
- Restrict marina and bait shop development on lake.
- Establish ordinances on waterfront "big foot" houses keeping with the theme of smaller cottage style.
- Maintain the current goals.

### **Reduce Noise, Air and Water Pollution**

- Reduce noise by purchasing new leaf-sucking truck in the Autumn
- Attempt to reduce environmental noise by calming traffic, finding ways to open flow patterns.
- Limit number of boats reducing boat traffic
- Govern size of boats on the Lake
- Promote the use of inboard motors on the Lake - ordinance?
- Attempt to improve air quality by creating less congested traffic flow patterns
- Do something to limit duck and geese population
- Limit hours for high speed running on the Lake
- Reduce air pollution through controlling traffic flow

### **RECREATION AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

#### **Implement Park Improvements (big ticket)**

- Encourage Lake usage by developing greens park (splash park)
- Add bike/skate and skateboard park
- Promote water programs for kids
- Public restrooms by Children's and Atwater parks
- Expand Green's park to include Pelton's point
- Some public boat docks on Lake for residents use to use downtown retail
- Create a bark park
- Improve existing parks to meet changing needs of an active adult population
- Provide lake access for all Village residents

#### **Strategic Placement of Buildings and Facilities**

- Expand Village Hall and police office space - maybe include post office space
- Provide library space in Village area

- Create and/or update sanitary services
- Sell Village Hall for downtown business use.
- Build new Village Hall on Lake that meets current and future needs
- What is the best location for community facilities - CBD?
- Pursue cultural development
- Think twice before letting community facilities go private

#### **Provide Funding to Support Parks and Community Facilities**

- Improve on the current goals with adequate funds in the budget
- Utilize grants to expand the recreation facilities
- Maintain and/or increase the budget to provide for the current goals
- Work to get Township to support our parks since we don't have bike paths (we are paying for them in our taxes.

#### **Provide / Expand Parks and Open Space**

- Preserve open space where possible - example: Along Paint Creek
- Expand parks if possible
- Pursue a proportional amount of land for P/R to reflect expected growth.
- Meet the needs of teens / all ages through creative programs / parks
- Ordinance Update: Maintain existing parks and open areas
- Protect and preserve natural areas

#### **Maintain the Parks and Facilities**

- Maintain and beautify existing parks
- Improve existing parks - equipment, landscaping, litter control
- Control litter in parks
- Improve maintenance of grounds and equipment
- Make what already exists user friendly
- Continue to improve parks, equipment, land acquisition (Pelton's Point)



**Enhance Pedestrian Circulation**

- Lighted walkway from Children's Park parking lot to downtown
- Improve sidewalks
- Possible tunnel / bridge so downtown can safely access Green's Park
- Access to parks - upkeep - waterfront
- Promote thru design pedestrian circulation between recreation amenities/facilities
- Encourage use of parks thru removal of barriers (fences)
- Make it safer to cross M-24 at Flint Street
- Pedestrian walk under M-24
- Improve existing walking paths throughout village
- Ease of access to bike or walk in town
- Put docks in for residents to use when they come into the downtown
- Connect Indian Wood with Bike trail system.

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