

CHAPTER 7

FUTURE LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

Future Land Use Recommendations Development

Future land use recommendations for Corwith Township were developed by the Township Planning Commission with input from the Township Supervisor and with assistance from the planning consultant. Recommendations are based on an analysis of several factors including existing land use patterns, social and economic characteristics, environmental conditions, available services and utilities, existing land division patterns, existing zoning, land use patterns of adjacent townships and Corwith Township's community goals. The recommended future land use plan identifies locations for seven different land use classifications. They are residential, commercial, planned development, industrial, light manufacturing, agricultural and forest/recreation. Figure 6, the future land use map at the end of this chapter, illustrates the distribution of future land use recommendations by category. Activities anticipated within each of these land use categories are discussed below.

Residential Development

Residential development is primarily designed to accommodate concentrations of single-family and two-family dwellings on a range of lot sizes, as small ½ to 1 acre, and as large as 10 to 20 acres. Community uses such as parks, cemeteries, schools and churches, care homes, golf courses, multiple family housing and similar uses may also be allowed in these areas if designed to be compatible with the residential setting. Home operated businesses are also recommended provided the residential character is preserved.

The residential designation is intended to preserve existing residential development where land has already been subdivided into smaller parcels and to expand specific areas for future residential growth. In addition to areas identified for residential development on the future land use map, this master plan recognizes that rural residential development has occurred and will continue to occur in scattered locations under the agricultural and forest/recreation designations on the future land use map. Areas recommended for concentrated residential development are shown as yellow on the future land use map.

Commercial Development

While limited commercial services for Corwith Township residents are met by facilities located in the Village of Vanderbilt, the Township wishes to set aside certain small areas for local commercial uses. Local residents generally obtain commercial services from Gaylord.

Recommended uses for commercial areas, designated in red on the future land use map, include small-scale retail stores, business and personal services, professional offices, food service and lodging facilities. These future land use recommendations recognize that limited commercial businesses currently exist at outlying areas. This plan further recognizes that these businesses provide important goods or services to nearby residents; and this plan further supports the continuation of such businesses, regardless of future land use category or zoning.

Figure 6 shows four general areas for commercial uses. They are: (1) small area at the southwest intersection of Old 27/Thumb Lake Road, where a few small businesses already exist; (2) a small area at the intersection of Old 27/Airport Road, where a gas station currently operates; (3) a small area on the east side of Old 27 one mile south of Vanderbilt, which is an active business and is currently zoned commercial; and (4) a larger area on the west side of Old 27 just south of the Vanderbilt boundary. A few businesses are currently located there, but this area is generally the location the Township wants to set aside for future commercial development.

Planned Development

Three planned development areas are shown as dark blue on the future land use map. They are Black Bear Golf Resort, Mount Vernon Hills off Cherwinski Road and Song of the Morning Ranch at Lansing Club Pond. Mixed uses occur at these locations, but the major uses are residential and recreation.

Industrial

The industrial category is shown as purple on the future land use and consists of an existing large industrial operation on the east side of I-75 at Alexander Road. Another large area (1 ½ square mile) is proposed for future industrial uses just north of the Village of Vanderbilt. Several

industrial operations currently exist adjacent to the Township in the Village. The Township feels that this would be compatible with the Village's future land use recommendations and zoning. The Township's transfer station is also located in this area, where residents may drop off refuse, recyclable items and compost materials. Recommended industrial uses for these areas are heavy manufacturing, extractive activities and similar uses. Operations of these uses should be subject to performance standards to limit the environmental impact on the community.

Light Manufacturing

An 80-acre area on the west side of Old 27, south of McGregor Road for ½ mile, is set aside for light manufacturing activities. Similar activities had occurred at this site in the past, and the Township believes the area is ideal for re-development of similar uses. It is situated adjacent to access to I-75. Another small area at the southeast corner of Old 27/Thumb Lake Road is also recommended for this category. Light manufacturing is shown as grey on the future land use map. Recommended uses for this category include small non-polluting manufacturing operations, wholesale and storage facilities, auto repair garages, petroleum storage and distribution facilities, commercial laundries, car washes, communications towers and similar uses. These areas are not compatible with residential neighborhoods without a buffer.

Agricultural

Areas recommended for the agricultural classification include areas where active farming currently exists and soil conditions are suitable for farming. They are shown on the future land use map as light brown/tan. Farm dwellings and agricultural accessory buildings such as barns and stables would be encouraged, as well as crop production and the raising of livestock normally associated with farming. Single-family non-farm residences are expected to continue. Plant nurseries, riding stables, commercial kennels, communications towers and gas/oil production facilities may be allowed where compatible with surrounding uses.

Forest/Recreation

Forest land is the most predominant land use currently existing in the Township, and the future land use plan recommends the preservation of these areas as much as possible. The State of Michigan owns approximately ½ of the Township as Pigeon River Country State Forest, the boundaries of which are delineated on Figure 6. In addition, there are many large parcels of

private forested land. These areas are recommended for the forest/recreation category. They are shown as light green on the future land use map. Uses recommended for these areas include those allowed in the agricultural areas along with hunting and fishing camps, forest products harvesting, wood processing facilities, seasonal homes and vacation homes, and other outdoor recreational facilities.

The protection of woodlands, wetlands, non-forested open spaces and active farm land is critical to preserving the rural character of Corwith Township.

Hold Page for Figure 6, Future Land Use Map