

Housing straddles two other areas of investigation in this master plan. Location, dwelling unit characteristics, and number and type of dwelling units are closely related to and even driven by the demographic and economic characteristics of a community.

How much housing will we need in the future and for whom? What is the quality of our housing stock, and is it sufficient to meet emerging expectations?

Equally important, housing is a unique land use category that influences community-wide development patterns and character, infrastructure investments, and even the demographic characteristics of a community. Certain housing types appeal more to different types of households, different age and income groups. These different demographic groups, in turn, may place different demands on a community for various services and public facilities. The challenge for a community and its decision-makers is to accommodate existing demand for housing while anticipating and positively influencing that demand in the future.

Existing Housing Stock

According to the 2000 Census, nearly 3,000 people lived on the Eastside in neighborhoods like Groesbeck, while roughly 5,500 lived in Westside neighborhoods like Edgemont and Waverly Hills. These neighborhoods were developed throughout the 20th century, and their street patterns, urban densities, neighborhood character, and housing types vary accordingly. As a result, the Township offers a variety of housing options that should

appeal to households with different housing preferences and life circumstances.

Housing Types

According to the 2000 Census, there were 4,325 total dwelling units throughout the Township. Of these, the majority (60%) were identified by respondents as single family homes (see Table 10). A little more than half as many households (36.7%) indicated that they resided in buildings containing 2 or more dwelling units. One hundred and sixty-one households resided in mobile homes.



New multi-family developments like this one in Urandale have been commercially successful and may suggest a residential resurgence in previously overlooked neighborhoods.

It is important to understand that the Census measures the number of dwelling units (or households) and not the number of buildings containing individual dwelling units. Because of this, the number of multiple family dwelling units will not necessarily correspond to the number of

buildings categorized as multi-family housing. Township assessor's records are able to provide this information. According to those records, there were 190 buildings that housed 3 or more households. On average, these 190 multi-family buildings contained 7.43 dwelling units. Census data suggests that apartment buildings in the Township most often contained 10 to 19 dwelling units (see Table 11). Relatively few households indicated that they resided in buildings with 50 or more units (1.58%).

Township Dwelling Units by Type

Township Assessor Record Data	Census Bureau Combined Owner/Renter Data			
Building Type	Number of Buildings	%TOTAL	Number Dwelling Units/Households	%TOTAL
Single Family	2773	88.06%	2,577	59.58%
2 Family	186	5.91%	175	4.05%
Multi-family	190	6.03%	1412	32.65%
Mobile Home			161	3.72%
Total	3149	100.00%	4,325	100.00%

Table 10 Data sources: U.S. Census Bureau and Township Assessor's records, analysis by Charter Township of Lansing Department of Planning + Development 2009

Looking at housing based on "building type" reveals that 88% of all residential buildings were built as single family homes. Duplexes and multiple family buildings contribute the remaining 12% (mobile homes were not included in this calculation). Map 7 shows the location of these three residential building types throughout the Township. On the west side of the Township, Ravenswood and Waverly Hills consist almost entirely of single family homes while Westfield

Multi-Family Housing Characteristics

Multi-Family Housing Characteristics (US Census Data)		
Number of Dwelling Units/BuildingTOTAL for Category	Category Total	%TOTAL
2	175	11.03%
3 or 4	148	9.33%
5 to 9	358	22.56%
10 to 19	599	37.74%
20 to 49	282	17.77%
50 or more	25	1.58%
	1587	100.00%

Table 11 source: U.S. Census Bureau and Township Assessor's records, analysis by Charter Township of Lansing Department of Planning + Development 2009

Hills, Bon Air/Windemere/Michigan Heights, and Durant Hills all have significant concentrations of multiple family dwellings. These vary in type from duplex to single multi-unit buildings. The eastern and southern borders of West-





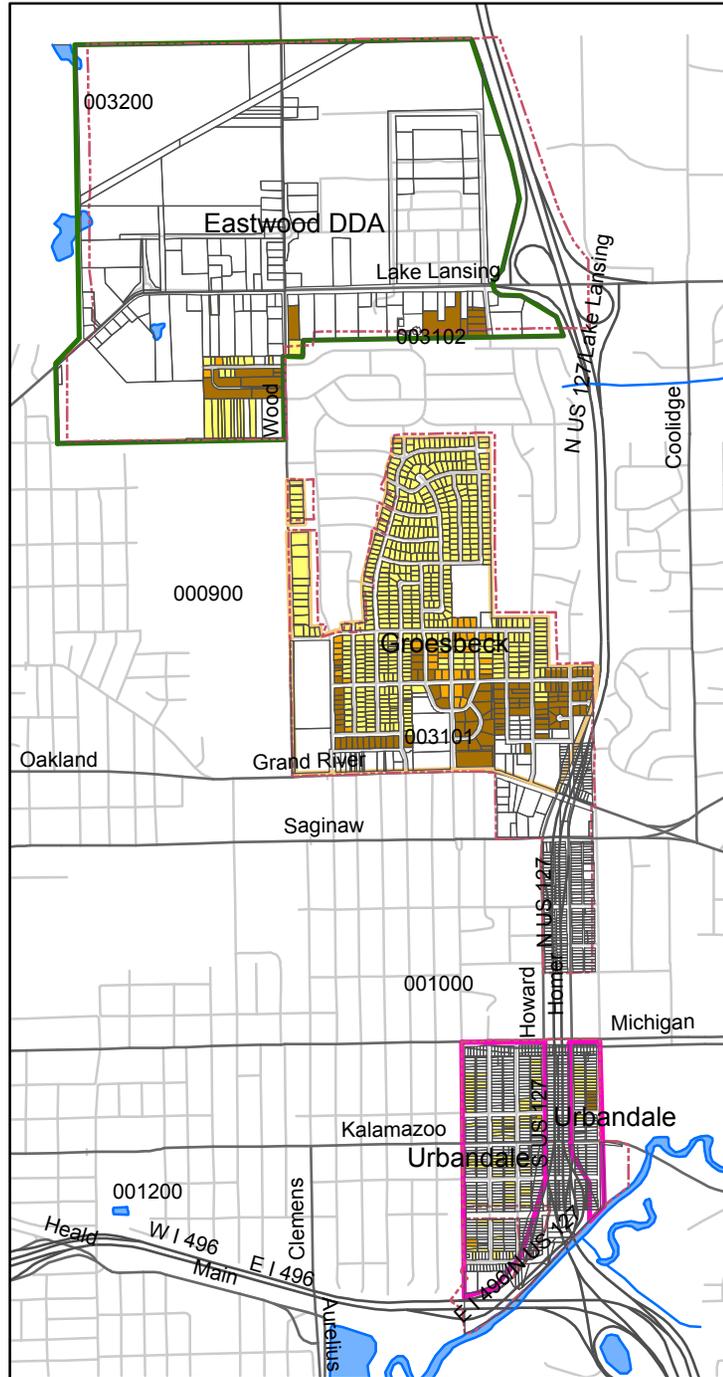
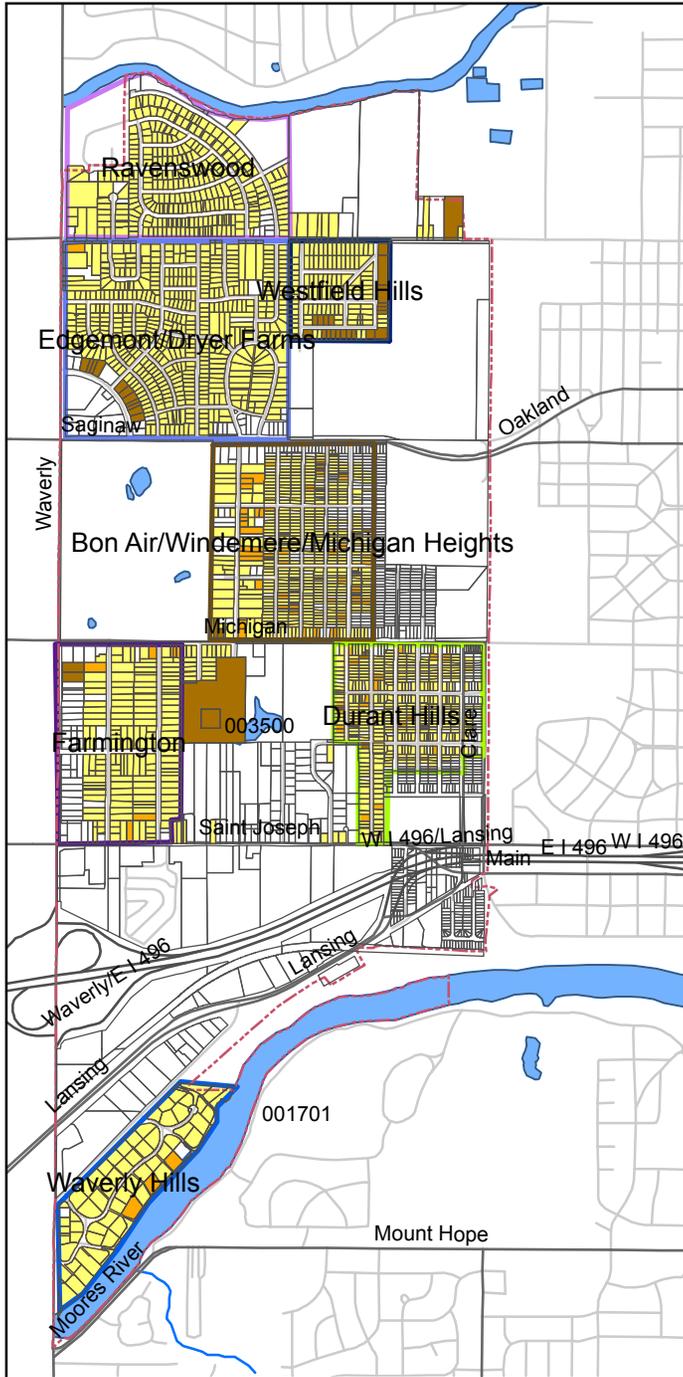
The Groesbeck neighborhood has a large number of multi-family buildings between East Grand River Avenue and Hopkins. Like higher density urban neighborhoods in other communities, multi-family and single family residences exist side-by-side allowing households of many different backgrounds and circumstances the opportunity to enjoy safe, pleasant neighborhoods.

field Hills consist almost entirely of this type of multifamily development.

On the Eastside, the Lansing Township DDA area and the Groesbeck neighborhood both have substantial multiple family housing. This is consistent with population data presented in the Community Profile that shows the Groesbeck neighborhood to be the second most densely populated neighborhood in the Township with 8.21 inhabitants per acre. Almost all of the multifamily housing in the Groesbeck neighborhood is concentrated from its southern border (East Grand River Avenue) to Hopkins Avenue. Building type varies from attached 2 story townhouses to single entry multi-unit buildings. In the DDA area, several duplex and multiple family developments are located off of Wood Street and on the south side of Lake Lansing Road.

Housing Condition

Just as important as the mix of residential options, the quality of a community's housing stock can strongly influence other community characteristics. The condition of housing stock is determined by a variety of factors, but the age of a home is especially significant as it often suggests something about its general condition. Unless they are consistently maintained and updated with newer mechanical systems and amenities, homes and apartment buildings deteriorate and can become a challenge for communities over time. It is presumptuous to assert that all older dwellings are of lower quality, but any community concerned with its residents' quality of life should be aware of potential challenges posed by aging housing stock.



Map 7
2005 Housing Condition Survey Hotspots

- Legend**
- Township Boundary
 - Parcels
 - Single Family
 - Duplex
 - Multi-family



Much of the Township's housing was built shortly after the Second World War. As Figure 12 shows, more than half of all existing dwelling units in the Township were built between 1950 and 1969. Residential construction was particularly prolific between 1950 and 1959 when 32% of the Township's housing stock was constructed. Eighteen percent (18%) was built before this period, and only 24% has been added since 1970. After 1980

residential development fell dramatically--only 8% of existing dwelling units were built between 1980 and 1999.

In 2005, a housing quality survey was conducted by the Department of Planning and Development to ascertain the condition of housing throughout the Township. A similar study had been conducted in 1969 by the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission. Single family homes were observed from the street and individual building and site elements were rated from 1 to 4 depending on the observed level of maintenance and need for repair. Lower scores indicate that a home was not as well maintained as those with higher scores. Assessed elements included foundations, porches and decks, roofs, gutters, chimneys, cladding, windows and doors, perimeter fencing, and driveways.

Township Housing Stock: Year Built

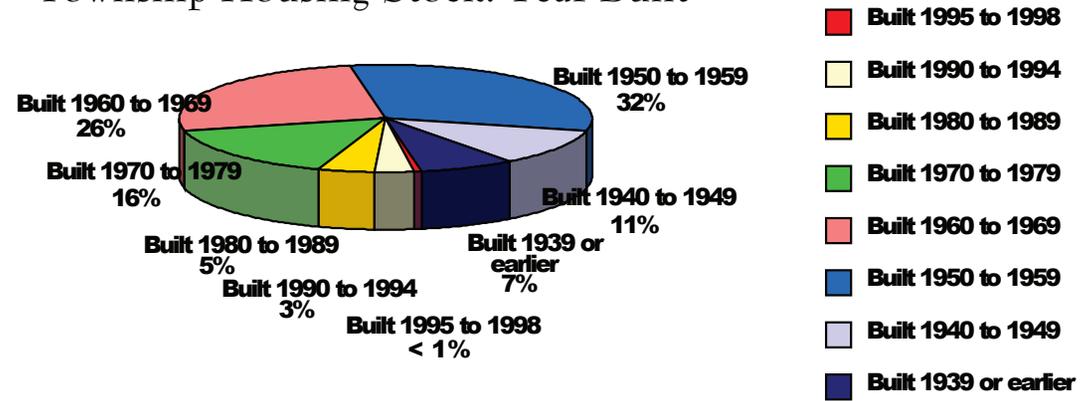
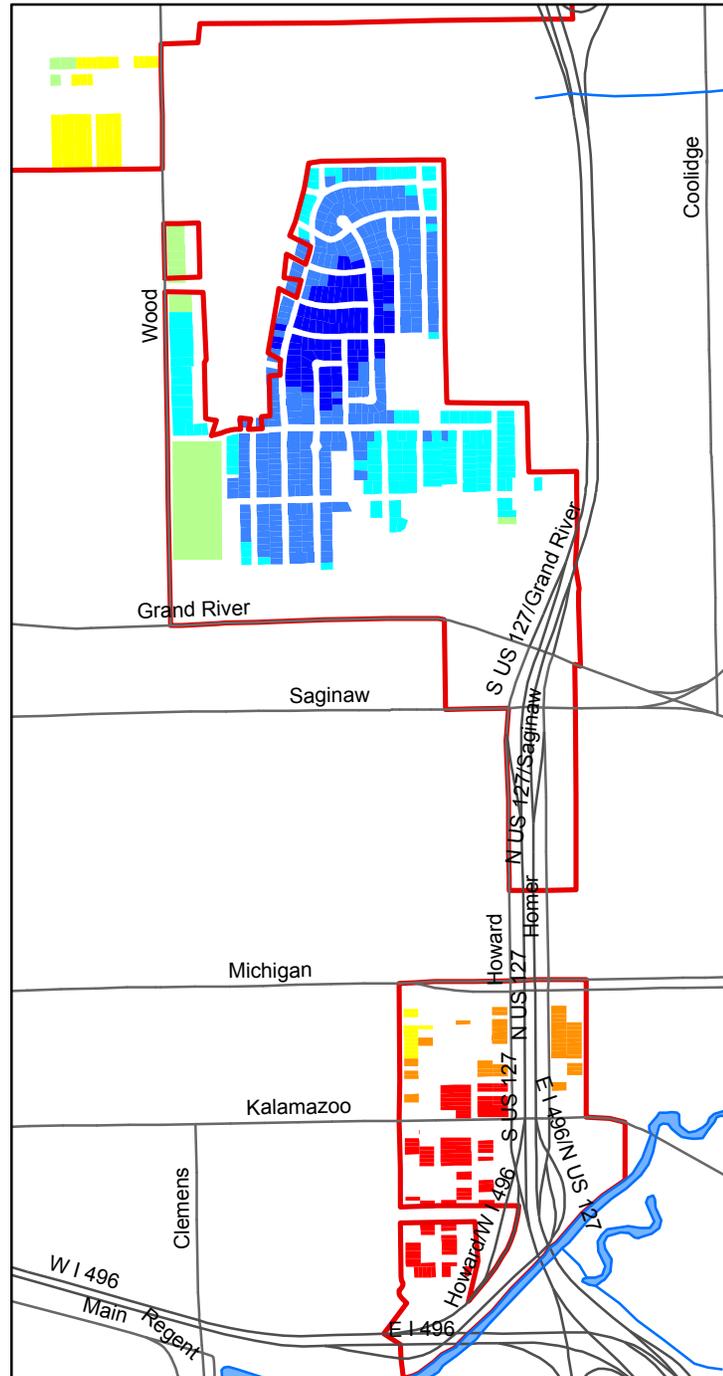
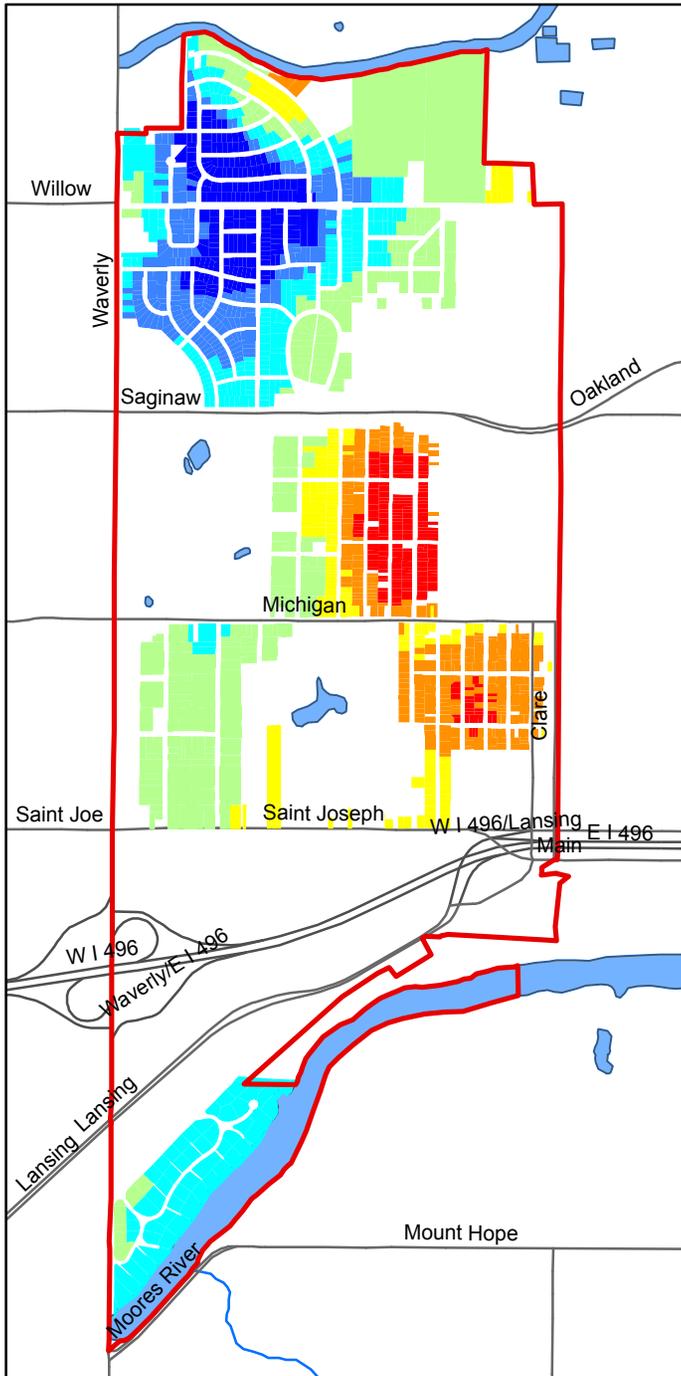


Figure 12 source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 Decennial Census

Using the results of this survey, Map 8 depicts relative concentrations, or hotspots, of degrees of housing conditions. The map, it should be noted, does not depict the condition of each individual property, but rather the likelihood of observing a certain condition. A geographic or spatial center for housing condition, on a continuum of best to worst, is calculated. The map identifies 3 areas of concern where poor housing conditions are relatively more concentrated than in other areas. These 3 areas fall within the Michigan Heights/Windemere subdivision, the Durant Hills subdivision, and the Urbandale subdivision. Within the Michigan Heights/Windemere subdivisions, the likelihood that housing will be in the worst condition is highest on Brynford, Catherine, and Grace streets between West Saginaw and West Michigan. In the Durant Hills subdivision, homes in the worst condition are expected to be found on South Hathaway and



Map 8
2005 Housing
Condition Survey
Hotspots

Legend

-  Township Boundary
-  Worst condition
-  Average condition
-  Average condition
-  Average condition
-  Best condition
-  Best condition



Haze streets between Kalamazoo and Washtenaw. In Urbandale, where residential properties were rezoned to commercial land uses several decades ago, a large number of severely deteriorated homes predominate and residential properties are predicted to be in the worst condition throughout almost the entire neighborhood. In contrast, the condition of housing in the Groesbeck, Ravenswood, and Edgemont Park subdivisions was predicted to be the best.

Home Ownership and Vacancy

Home ownership has long been a goal for many American households. It has been considered a safe investment and a secure method for storing and transferring intergenerational wealth. More than that, home ownership is closely aligned with deeply held American values. For these and other reasons, home ownership rates are



Dilapidated and uninhabitable: with few residences interspersed among so many empty lots and poorly maintained commercial properties, empty single family homes are very noticeable in Urbandale and cast a shadow of decay and blight throughout the entire area.

often thought to be an indicator of economic health and quality of life.

Throughout the entire state of Michigan, home ownership rates reached 73.80% according to the 2000 census. In the tri-county region, 67% of residents owned their own homes. Home ownership rates in the Township, however, have lagged far behind the state average. In 2000, only 53% of Township residents owned the home in which they lived. This was lower than home ownership rates in the city of Lansing (58%) and surrounding townships including Delta (64%), DeWitt (84%), and Meridian (62%). The city of East Lansing, on the other hand, had much lower home ownership with only 32% (this is likely influenced by the large number of college students associated with Michigan State University). Nationally, rates of home ownership have fluctuated around 65% for several decades.

Vacancy rates can also be used to measure the strength or weakness of local housing markets. Higher vacancy can indicate an overabundance of housing stock and lack of demand. According to statistics from the 2000 Decennial Census, homeowner vacancy (homes that are not occupied and are for sale) amounted to 1.30% of total homeowner housing stock. This was slightly lower than the national and regional averages (1.7% and 1.4% respectively). Locally, the Township had lower homeowner vacancy than the city of Lansing (2.0%) and Delhi Town-

ship (2.0%), but higher vacancy than Meridian Township (0.7%), DeWitt Township (1.1%), the city of East Lansing (1.2%), and Delta Township (1.2%). By comparison the city of Flint, which has experienced marked population decline and property abandonment, had 2.7% homeowner vacancy.

Although homeowner vacancy is relatively low overall, levels vary greatly across the Township. Map 9 depicts homeowner vacancy rates throughout the Township by census tract. The northern section of the Groesbeck neighborhood and the DDA area, which are located in census tract 31, had less than 2% vacancy. Ravenswood, Edgemont, and Dryer Farms neighborhoods (located in census tract 34) had less than 3% vacancy. On the Westside, vacancy was much higher in neighborhoods south of Saginaw: the Bon Air/Windemere Heights/ Michigan Heights area, Farmington and Durant Hills neighborhoods had 7% vacancy. Waverly Hills had a vacancy rate of around 4%. The neighborhood that exhibited the most vacancy was Urbandale (south of Kalamazoo Street) where slightly more than 10% of owner occupied dwellings were vacant. That is nearly ten times the Township average.

Rental vacancy in Lansing Township was also lower than national and regional estimates of 6.80% and 6.20% respectively. Only 4.30% of rental units were vacant in Lansing Township, one of the lowest rental vacancy rates in the region. Rental vacancy in the city of Lansing was

1.7 times as high at 7.20%. Delhi, Delta, and DeWitt townships all had higher vacancy rates (6.00%, 5.20%, and 7.80% respectively).

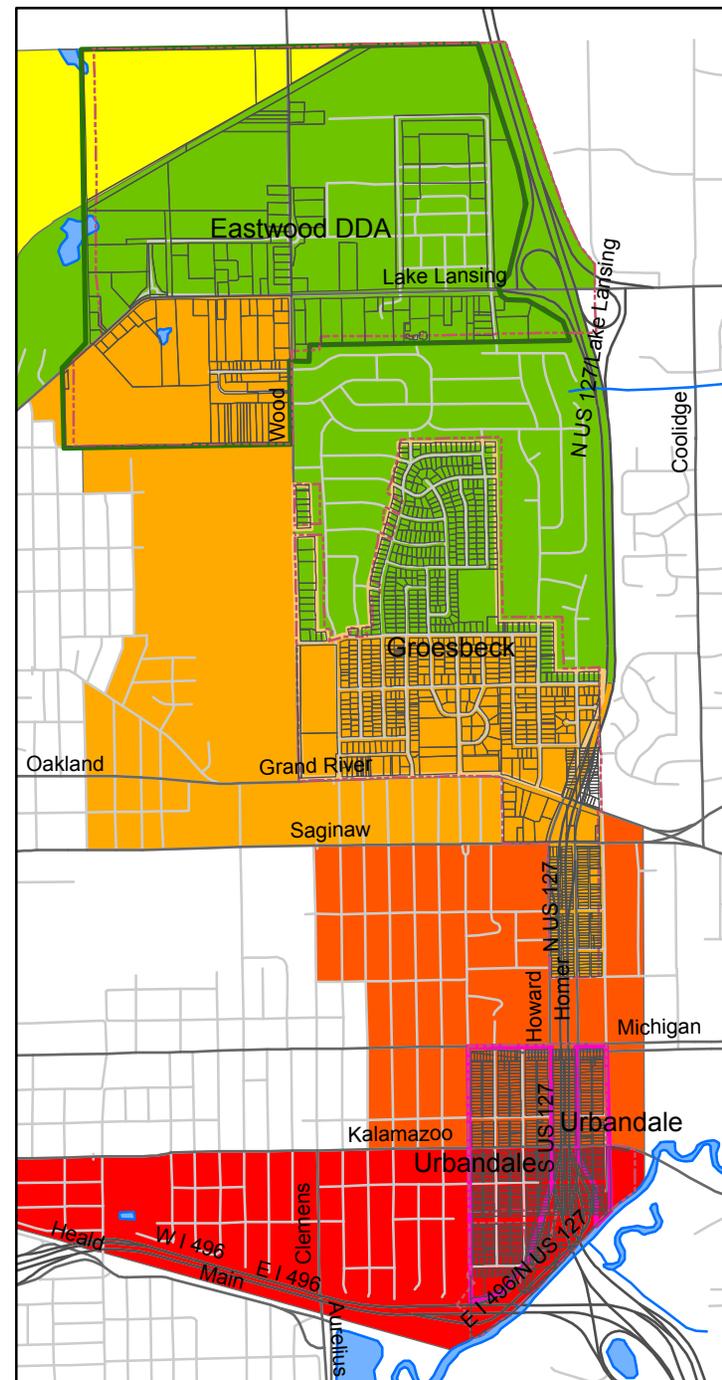
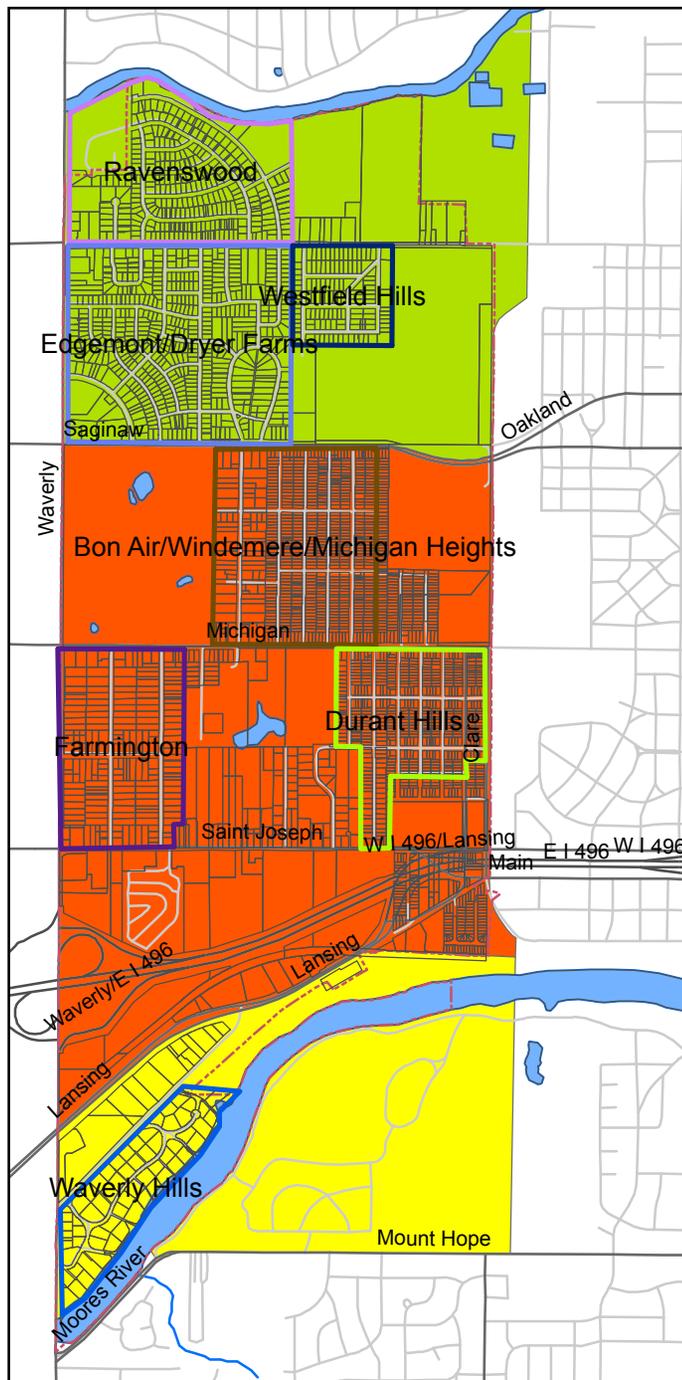
Housing Values

Because a home can be the single most significant investment a household can make, home values strongly influence household wealth and the economic condition of the communities in which they live. As the recent foreclosure crisis has shown, declining property values can severely affect the financial condition of individual households. Declining property values also affect the function of local government. Lower taxable values reduce tax revenues that local governments collect in order to support public safety, maintain and improve public infrastructure, and provide other public services.

In 2000, the national median value of a homeowner-occupied dwelling was \$119,600. The value was lower in the tri-county region (\$106,700). The median value of a home in Lansing Township was \$90,800 or 76% of the national median value. This value was roughly \$17,000 higher than in the city of Lansing (\$73,500), but much lower than in East Lansing (\$144,000), Meridian Township (\$165,000), Delhi Township (124,700), and Delta Township (\$133,800).



Map 9
Homeowner
Vacancy by
Census Tract



Legend

Township Boundary

Percent Vacant

- 0%
- 2%
- 3%
- 4%
- 5%
- 7%
- 10%

Neighborhoods

- Bon Air/Windemere/Michigan Heights
- Durant Hills
- Eastwood DDA
- Edgemont/Dryer Farms
- Farmington
- Groesbeck
- Ravenswood
- Urbandale
- Waverly Hills
- Westfield Hills



Map source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 Decennial Census; produced by the Charter Township of Lansing Department of Planning + Development, 2009.



Conclusions

New residential development

The Township is largely built-out, except for the GM properties on its west side and a large tract of agricultural land located in the southeast corner of the Township. If increased residential population and attendant commercial development is desired within the Township, the GM site represents an excellent opportunity to introduce new housing into an area with stable, existing neighborhoods. Efforts should be made to integrate any new and existing residential development into these neighborhoods in order to ensure ease of travel between them (particularly for pedestrians and cyclists) and surrounding amenities, community facilities, and commercial destinations.

Diversifying housing stock

While there are many different types of housing and neighborhoods to be found within the Township, single family homes are disproportionately represented in every neighborhood. While this fact in itself is neither good nor bad, the Township should consider strategies to create a balanced mix of residential options that would encourage and enable individuals and families to continue to reside within their neighborhoods throughout the course of their entire lives. In addition to integration of different housing types within neighborhoods, the integration of housing and other non-residential land uses should be encouraged when appropriate.

Preserve high quality stock; address problem areas before blight sets in.

On average, housing stock is good quality, but the quality of housing throughout the Township also varies greatly and there are identifiable concentrations of housing stock deterioration which have existed to some extent since at least 1969 (when the last survey of housing condition was conducted). The Township should be proactive when it comes to neighborhood stability. This is particularly important during periods of economic decline when mortgage and tax foreclosure (and abandonment) increase. Although areas of higher vacancy and worse than average housing quality should be high priorities, Township policy should also endeavor to ensure higher quality new construction; routine maintenance of existing homes; and improvements to existing homes that enhance the quality of surrounding properties and the neighborhood in which they are located.

