

**Wilcox Associates, Inc.**



**FREMONT TOWNSHIP  
TUSCOLA COUNTY, MICHIGAN  
MASTER PLAN**

**OCTOBER 1993**

*Engineering  
Surveying and  
Environmental  
Sciences*

**FREMONT TOWNSHIP**  
TUSCOLA COUNTY, MICHIGAN  
MASTER PLAN

OCTOBER 1993

*ADOPTED BY THE*  
*FREMONT TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION*  
*OCTOBER 11, 1993*

PREPARED BY THE  
FREMONT TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF  
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# FREMONT TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Change is an inevitable fact of life. Communities change over time, regardless of whether we plan for change or not. Fremont Township is no exception - the community has changed and will continue to do so. Consider, for a moment, the following:

- \* The Township has steadily grown in population (by over 43 % since 1970).
- \* It has experienced changes in land use patterns. For example, the number of homes has increased over time, while the number of farms has declined.
- \* From 1980 to 1990, housing in the Township increased by 133 units.
- \* Historically, most homes in the Township were of on-site, "stick-built" construction. Today, mobile and modular homes comprise the majority of new housing units.

This document, the **Fremont Township Master Plan**, is an attempt to quantify, assess, and respond to change. In addition, the plan is both a statement and a vision concerning the Township's desires for its future growth and development.

This plan has been prepared by the Fremont Township Planning Commission. The Commission is made up of Township residents and was formed under the authority of the Township Planning Act (P A. 168 of 1959). Section 6 of that Act charges the Planning Commission with the responsibility to *"make and adopt a basic plan as a guide for the development of unincorporated areas of the Township."* The Fremont Township Master Plan is meant to do just that.

The rest of this report is presented in the following order:

1. Physical Profile of the Township
2. Social and Economic Profile
3. Planning Issues
4. Planning and Development Goals
5. Township Land Use Plan
6. Plan Implementation

## II. PHYSICAL PROFILE

This portion of the plan provides an overview of the physical features and natural resources that shape Fremont Township.

### A. Regional Location

Fremont Township (Figure 1) is located on southern Tuscola County, near the Lapeer County Line. State Highway M-46 runs east and west along the northern boundary of the Township, while M-24, a fairly short stretch of state highway, runs north and south through the Township.

Fremont Township is bounded on the north by Indianfields Township, on the south by Watertown Township, on the west by Vassar Township, and on the east by Dayton Township. The Village of Mayville is located in the southeast corner of the Township.

Distances from the Township to local commercial centers are about 10 miles to Vassar, 12 miles to Caro, and 20 miles to Lapeer. In terms of larger metropolitan areas, it is about 30 miles to Saginaw, 40 miles to Flint, and 50 miles to the northern portions of the Detroit metro area.

### B. Land Use and Development Patterns

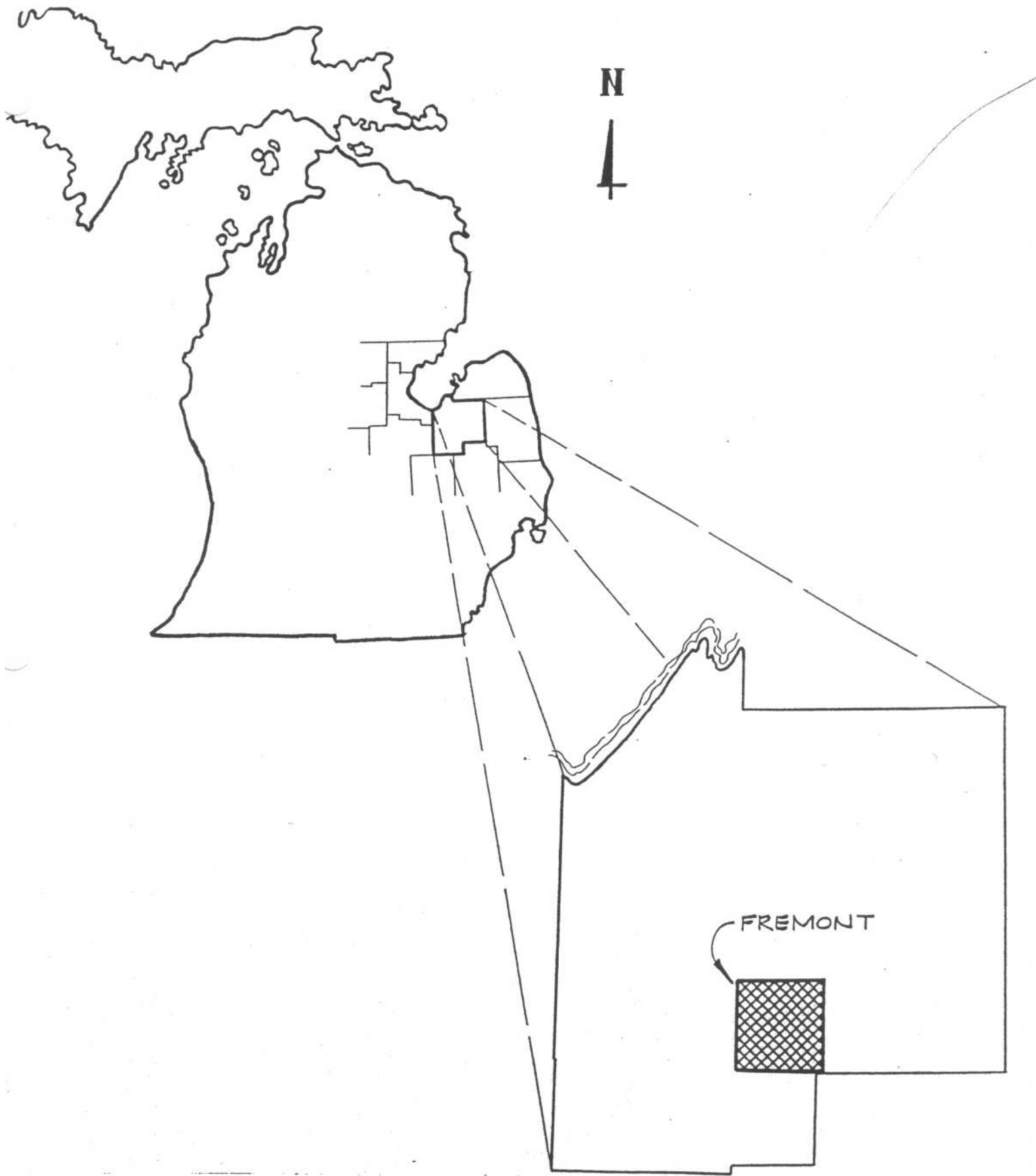
Fremont Township covers a land\_ area of a little over 23,000 acres. The most current land cover data for the Township are shown in Table 1. The major land uses found in the Township today are agriculture (about 47 % of the total), forested land (28 %), open land (15 %), extractive industry (i.e., sand and gravel operations - 2.4%), wetlands (1.4%), and residential development (1.4%). Taken together, these uses make up almost 96% of the Township.

The Township's major land use categories are also displayed on a series of maps. This information is presented as follows:

- Figure 2 - Urban (including residential and commercial uses)
- Figure 3 - Agriculture and Open (including cropland and pasture)
- Figure 4 - Woodlands (including hardwoods, conifers, and Christmas tree plantations)
- Figure 5 - Wetlands (including several types of wetlands and open water)

From the standpoint of "urban" development, Figure 2 clearly shows that residential and commercial land uses are mostly concentrated in the Village of Mayville. The Village functions as a minor commercial center for Township residents.

Outside the Village, concentrations of residential development mainly occur along Saginaw and Snover roads near their intersection at the western edge of the Township, and to a lesser extent along portions of Chambers, Leix, North Lake, and Conrad Roads.



FREMONT TOWNSHIP

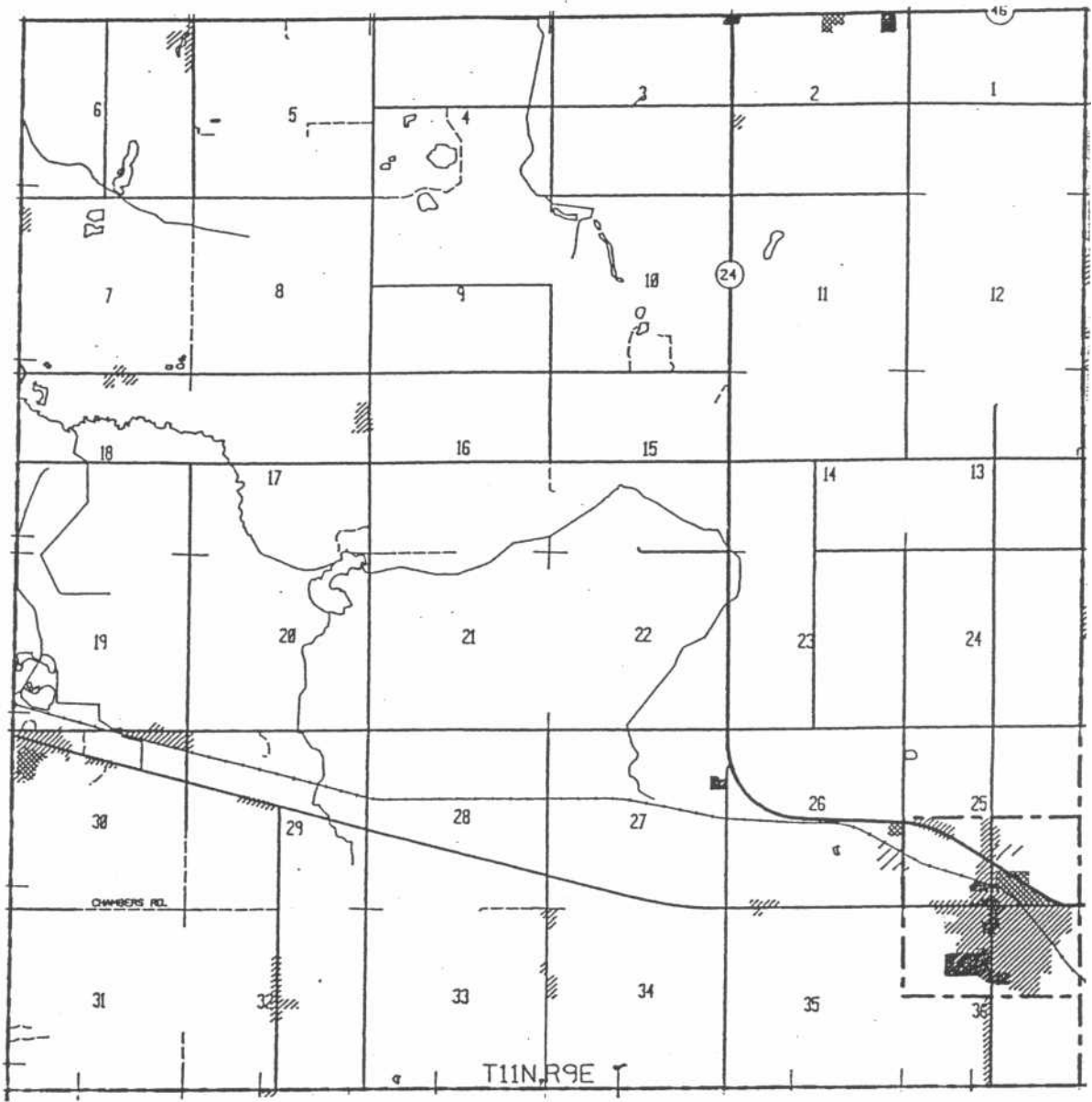
FIGURE 1: REGIONAL LOCATION

TUSCOLA COUNTY





**TABLE 1**  
**FREMONT TOWNSHIP LAND COVER**  
**(Figures Include Village of Mayville)**

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
Residential	323.13	1.40
Commercial	27.49	0.12
Industrial	41.19	0.18
Transportation & Utilities	5.97	0.03
Extractive	550.50	2.38
Outdoor Recreation & Cemeteries	19.12	0.09
Agriculture	10,905.90	47.21
Open	3546.05	15.35
Forest	6500.13	28.15
Water	122.07	0.53
Wetlands	336.71	1.44
Institutional	28.66	0.12
<b>TOTAL AREA</b>	<b>23,097.69 ACRES</b>	

**SOURCE: Michigan Resource Information System, Land and Water Management Division, Department of Natural Resources, 1990.**



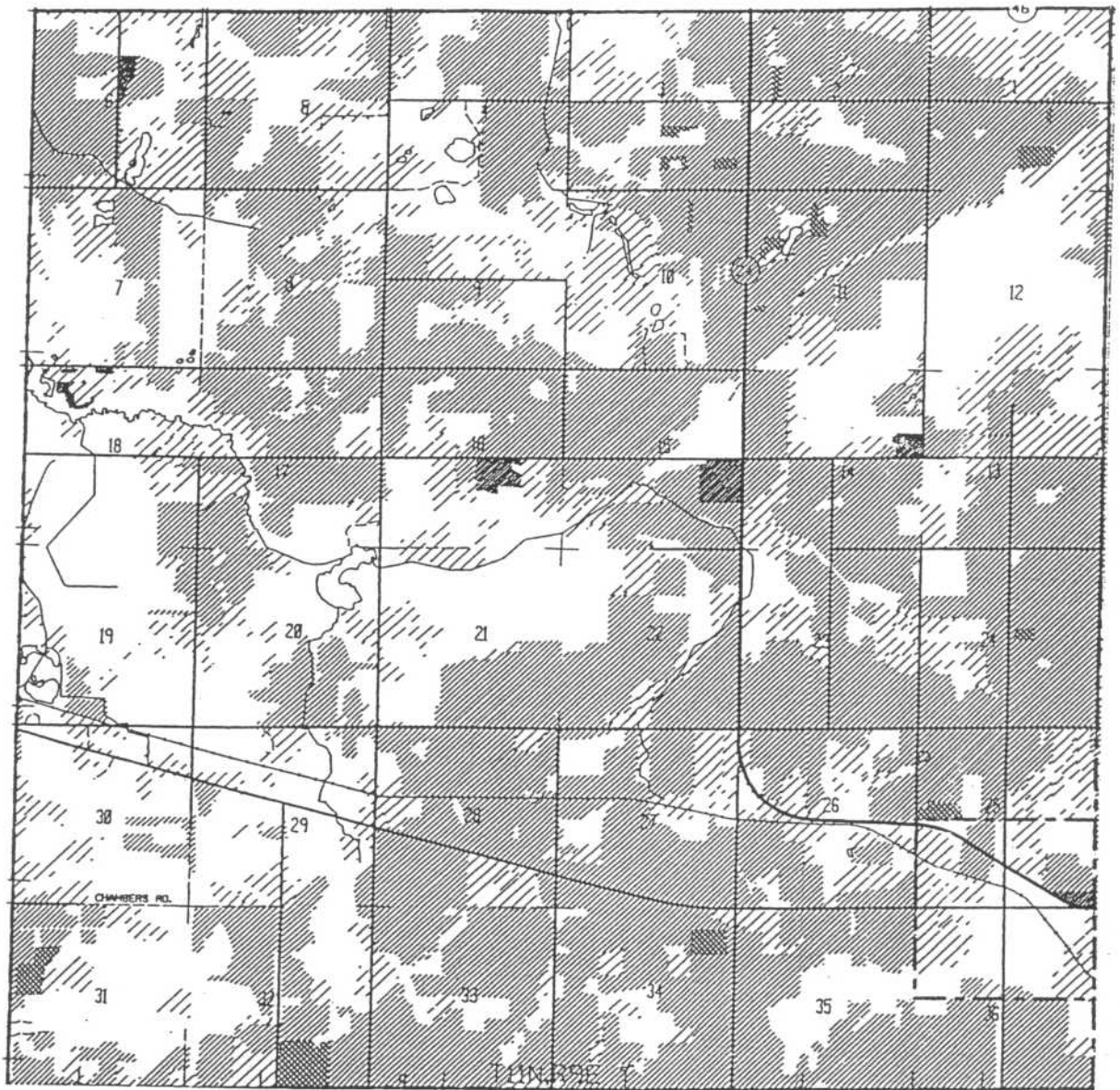
**LEGEND**

-  RESIDENTIAL
-  COMMERCIAL, INSTITUTIONAL
-  INDUSTRIAL, TRANSPORTATION
-  OUTDOOR CULTURAL, RECREATION





**FREMONT TOWNSHIP LAND COVER**

**FIGURE 2: URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

SOURCE: MIRIS/MDNR, 1990

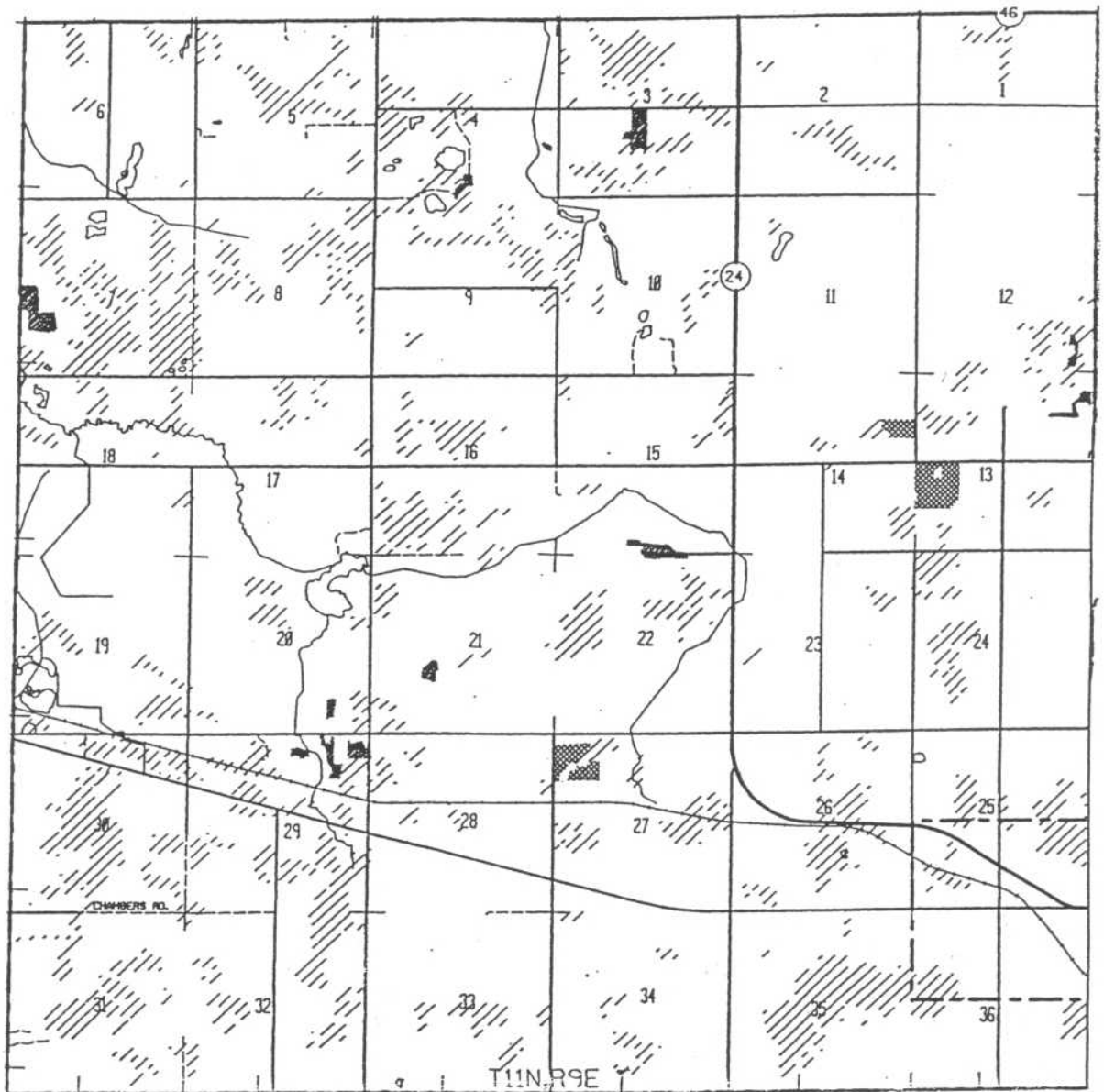


**LEGEND**





-  CROPLAND, OTHER AGRICULTURE
-  ORCHARD, HORTICULTURE
-  PASTURE
-  OPEN

**FREMONT TOWNSHIP LAND COVER**  
**FIGURE 3: AGRICULTURE AND OPEN**

SOURCE: MIRIS/MDNR, 1990



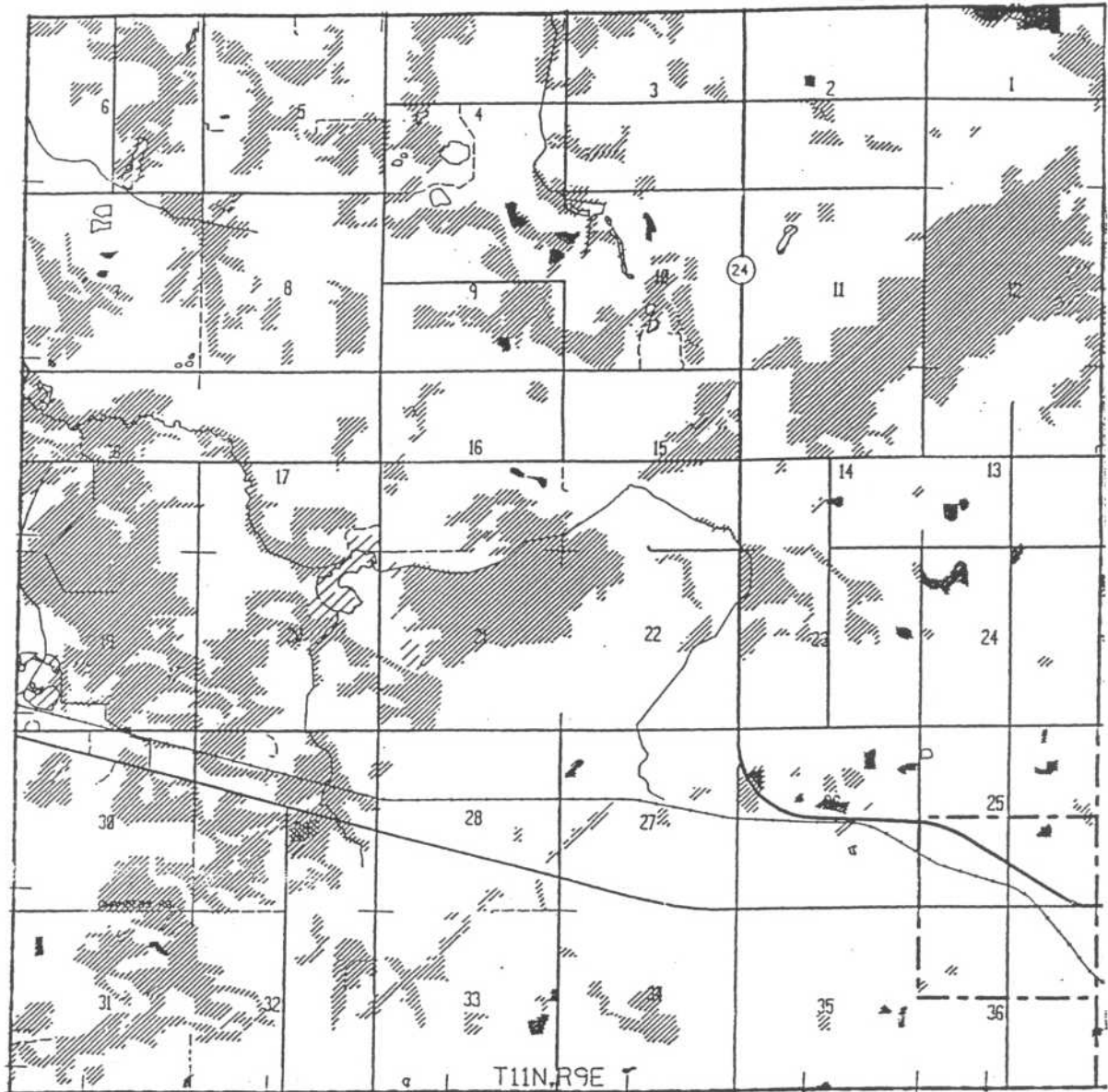
LEGEND

-  UPLAND HARDWOODS
-  ASPEN, BIRCH
-  UPLAND CONIFER
-  CHRISTMAS TREE





FREMONT TOWNSHIP LAND COVER

FIGURE 4: WOODLANDS

SOURCE: MIRIS/MDNR, 1990



LEGEND

-  OPEN WATER
-  SHRUB, EMERGENT, AQUATIC BED
-  LOWLAND HARDWOOD
-  LOWLAND CONIFER

FREMONT TOWNSHIP LAND COVER

FIGURE 5: WETLANDS

SOURCE: MIRIS/MDNR, 1990

## C. General Soils and Surface Features

Fremont Township's topography ranges from fairly level areas in the northwest portion to moderately hilly terrain in the southeast part of the Township, sometimes called the "Mayville Hills" area. Elevations range from about 700 feet above sea level in the flat, Cass River plain areas in the northwest corner to about 900 feet in the Mayville area.

A modern Soil Survey was published for Tuscola County by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1986. The survey identifies four major soil associations in Fremont Township, as shown in Figure 6. These soil associations may be further described as follows:

**Pipestone-Granby-Chelsea Association.** This soil association occurs mainly along the western portion of the Township and in a narrow band near the central portion. The soil survey describes this association as consisting of nearly level to gently rolling, sandy soils. Drainage ranges from somewhat poor to poor. The survey further states that most areas of this association are used for crops, pasture, or woodland. The suitability for cultivated crops is considered fair. The Granby and Pipestone soils are considered poorly suited to building development due to wetness. However, the Chelsea soils are considered well-suited for building, with the only major limitation being slope.

**Perrin-Wasepi-Gilford Association.** The survey describes this association as nearly level and gently undulating loamy and sandy soils. Drainage ranges from moderately well-drained to very poorly drained. Most areas are used for cropland or woodland, with some areas used for sand and gravel mining. The suitability for cultivated crops is considered fair, with wetness cited as a limitation. The suitability of the Gilford and Wasepi soils is poor for building development, and that of the Perrin soils is fair to poor.

**Marlette-Capac-Spinks Association.** This association consists of nearly level to steep loamy and sandy soils, ranging from well-drained to somewhat poorly drained. This association is found in the northeast, south-central, and southeast portions of the Township. The survey states that most areas of this association are used for cultivated crops, pasture, or woodland. Wetness, slope, and erosion (both wind and water) are considered to be major limitations for agricultural purposes. The suitability for building sites ranges from good to poor. Slope and depth to the water table are the major limitations.

**Houghton-Adrian Association.** This association consists of nearly level organic (muck) soils. These soils occur in a narrow band running diagonally from the northeast to the central portions of the Township. The wetness of these soils generally makes them unsuitable for agriculture or building sites. Major uses are limited to woodlands and wildlife habitat.

LEGEND\*

NEARLY LEVEL SOILS THAT ARE POORLY DRAINED AND VERY POORLY DRAINED

1 Esseville-Aquerets-Tappan association: Nearly level, poorly drained and very poorly drained, sandy and loamy soils on lake margins, beaches, till plains, and lake plains

2 Tappan association: Nearly level, poorly drained, loamy soils on lake plains and till plains

NEARLY LEVEL TO UNDULATING SOILS THAT ARE SOMEWHAT POORLY DRAINED TO VERY POORLY DRAINED

3 Tappan-Londo-Avooca association: Nearly level, poorly drained and somewhat poorly drained, loamy and sandy soils on lake plains, till plains, and moraines

4 Metamora-Capac-Corunna association: Nearly level to undulating, somewhat poorly drained and poorly drained, loamy soils on till plains and moraines

5 Wixom-Wolcott-Pipestone association: Nearly level and gently undulating, somewhat poorly drained and very poorly drained, sandy and loamy soils on outwash plains, moraines, and till plains

NEARLY LEVEL TO ROLLING, LOAMY SOILS

6 Guelph-Londo-Tappan association: Nearly level to rolling, well drained to poorly drained, loamy soils on moraines and till plains

NEARLY LEVEL AND GENTLY UNDULATING, LOAMY AND SANDY SOILS

7 Perrin-Wasepi-Gilford association: Nearly level and gently undulating, moderately well drained, somewhat poorly drained, and very poorly drained, loamy and sandy soils on outwash plains, lake plains, and beaches

NEARLY LEVEL TO GENTLY ROLLING, SANDY SOILS

8 Pipestone-Granby-Chelsea association: Nearly level to gently rolling, somewhat poorly drained, poorly drained, and somewhat excessively drained, sandy soils on outwash plains, moraines, lake plains, and beaches

NEARLY LEVEL TO STEEP, LOAMY AND SANDY SOILS

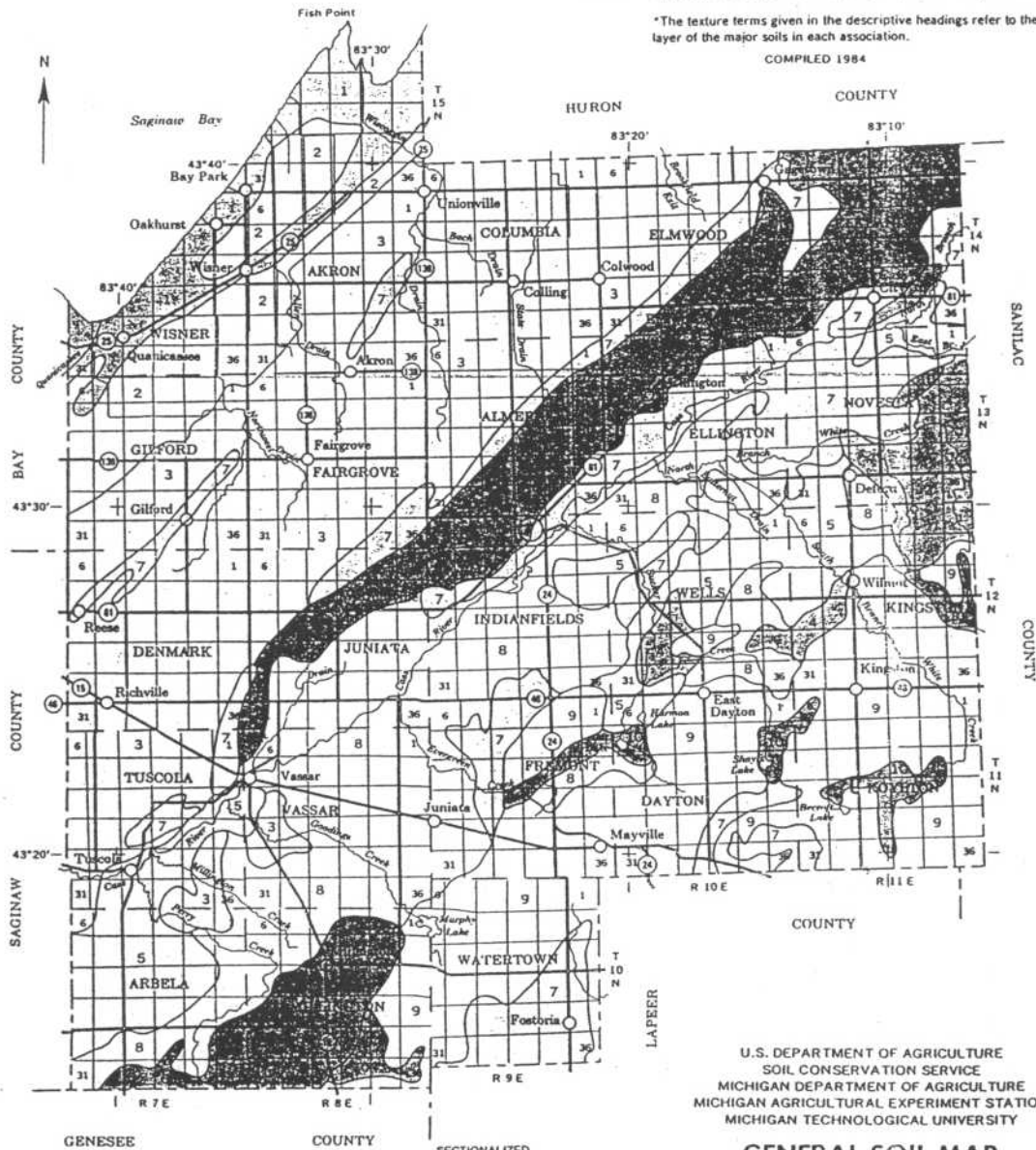
9 Mariette-Capac-Spinks association: Nearly level to steep, well drained and somewhat poorly drained, loamy and sandy soils on moraines, outwash plains, and beaches

NEARLY LEVEL, ORGANIC SOILS

10 Houghton-Adrian association: Nearly level, very poorly drained, organic soils in bogs on moraines, till plains, and outwash plains

\*The texture terms given in the descriptive headings refer to the surface layer of the major soils in each association.

COMPILED 1984



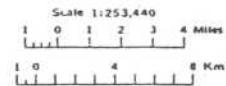
Each area outlined on this map consists of more than one kind of soil. The map is thus meant for general planning rather than a basis for decisions on the use of specific tracts.

SECTIONALIZED TOWNSHIP

6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION  
MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

GENERAL SOIL MAP  
TUSCOLA COUNTY, MICHIGAN



## **D. Water Resources**

Fremont Township is within the Cass River Basin, and drainage is generally in a northwesterly direction, toward the Cass. The Township contains a number of streams and drains, including Bader Drain, O'Brien Drain, Evergreen Creek, and Fremont Drain. The Township also contains a number of unnamed ponds and small lakes, some of which are associated with past and present sand and gravel mining operations.

Like most rural communities in Michigan, Township residents and businesses rely on groundwater for their water supply needs.

## **E. Transportation**

Fremont Township is served by two state highways. M-46 is a major trunkline which traverses the state from Port Sanilac to Muskegon. Recent (1990) traffic counts for this road estimate average daily traffic at 5949 slightly west of the M-24 intersection.

M-24 provides north-south access through the Township, running from Caro at M-81, through Lapeer, and down into Oakland County. Recent counts place average daily traffic at 3033 near Mayville.

In addition to the state highways, there are several local roads which are important for circulation both within and through Fremont Township. North-south routes include North Lake Road (south of Saginaw), Leix, Conrad, Mertz, Schott, and Cat Lake Roads. Local east-west roads include Blackmore, Snover, Saginaw, and Brown Roads.

The Township is also served by a railroad line, running through the community from Mayville and roughly due west to Vassar and Saginaw.

The closest airports with general passenger service are located in Saginaw County and in Flint.

### III. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROFILE

This section of Fremont Township's Master Plan contains an overview of the social and economic factors that shape the community. The topics that are covered here include population growth, age, income levels, housing, and other relevant factors.

#### A. Population Growth

For at least the last 50 years, Fremont Township's population has grown steadily. The current population of 3153 is over 86 % greater than the number of people living in the community in 1940, according to the Census figures. More recently, the Township experienced its most rapid growth from 1970 to 1980, when it grew by over 30%. Population changes from 1960 to the present are summarized in Table 2.

The latest Census figures for the Township (1990) show an increase of almost 10% since 1980. For comparison, Tuscola County experienced a slight loss (-2.6 %) during this same period, and the state's population as a whole has remained essentially the same.

Additional population characteristics are shown in Table 3. These data show that the Township had a slightly greater proportion of pre-school age children in comparison to the county. Also, the Township population had somewhat smaller proportions of adults (those 18 and over) and seniors (65 and over) when compared to the county and state averages. Also, the median age of Township residents (31) is a bit younger than the state and county figures.

Per capita income data (Table 3) are useful in examining local economic conditions. For the period reported (1979 - 1989), per capita income (PCI) in the Township grew significantly (by over 70%). However, this growth was still less than that shown at the county or state levels. Although these increases may appear large, the gap between Township and Tuscola County PCI has widened over the years. In 1979, Fremont Township's PCI was equal to 94 % of the county level. In 1989, this proportion had declined to 91 %. This same type of relationship in PCI levels may also be seen in comparing Tuscola County figures with the state.

TABLE 2  
POPULATION CHANGES, 1960 to 1990  
FREMONT TOWNSHIP

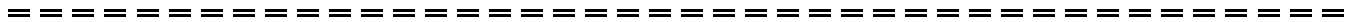
Population, 1960 - 1990

<u>Unit</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>
Fremont Twp.	1930	2200	2871	3153
Mayville	896	872	958	1010
Tuscola Co.	43,305	48,603	56,961	55,498

Percent Change, 1960 - 1990

<u>Unit</u>	<u>1960 - 70</u>	<u>1970-80</u>	<u>1980 - 90</u>
Fremont Twp.	+ 14.0%	+ 30.5%	+ 9.8%
Mayville	- 2.7%	+ 9.9%	+ 5.4%
Tuscola Co.	+ 12.2%	+ 17.2%	- 2.6%

Source: U.S. Census



**TABLE 3**  
**SELECTED SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DATA (1990 CENSUS)**

<u>AGE GROUPS (%)</u>	<u>MICHIGAN</u>	<u>TUSCOLA CO.</u>	<u>FREMONT TWP</u>
Under 5	7.6	7.1	7.4
18 and Older	73.5	71.5	67.5
65 and Older	11.9	12.1	10.6
Median Age (Years)	32.6	33.0	31.0

**CHANGE IN PER CAPITA INCOME, 1979 - 1989**

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>% CHANGE</u>
Michigan	\$7688	\$14,154	+ 84.1
Tuscola Co.	\$6500	\$ 11,543	+ 77.6%
Fremont Twp.	\$ 6123	\$ 10,511	+ 71.7%

## B. Housing

An adequate supply of sound housing is vital to every community. Housing data for Fremont Township are shown in Tables 4 - 6. Table 4 shows that the number of housing units in the Township has risen significantly, especially in comparison to the rest of the county and the state. During 1980 - 1990, the number of housing units in the Township grew by 144, an increase of 15 %. In contrast, average housing growth in the county was less than 6 %, and statewide growth was lower still.

Home ownership (Table 5) is a strong trend in the Township, with over 87% of all housing units occupied by the owners. This figure is high in relation to Tuscola County and the state. Median housing values in the Township are a bit lower than the county average, but not drastically so.

In examining the age of the housing stock (Table 6), a higher percentage was built in the Township recently (1980 -1990) than what has occurred in the Village of Mayville or Tuscola County as a whole. This is not surprising, given the much greater overall housing growth that has taken place in Fremont Township. The percentages of housing built in 1939 or before is fairly typical of rural areas with a significant number of older homesteads and farmsteads.

Another apparent trend is the increasing popularity of mobile homes as affordable housing and as an alternative to traditional "stick-built" housing. The most recent housing data (1990 Census) shows that mobile homes now comprise a bit over 16% (184 units, 16.6%) of all the Township's housing. Single, detached dwellings still make up the bulk of the housing, however (829 units, 75 %). A smaller proportion of the housing stock is made up of various attached housing units (93 units, 8.4%).

An examination of the number of building permits issued in recent years helps to illustrate this trend. For 1990 - 1992, 59 permits were issued for residential dwellings in Fremont Township (Tuscola Co. Building Dept.). Of these permits, 41 (69.5 %) were for mobile homes, 4 (6.8 %) were for modular homes, and 14 (23.7 %) were for conventional site-built units.

**TABLE 4  
CHANGE IN NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS, 1980 - 1990**

	<b>TOTAL UNITS, 1980</b>	<b>TOTAL UNITS, 1990</b>	<b>% CHANGE</b>
Michigan*	3.6MM	3.8	+5.6%
Tuscola Co.	20,052	21,231	+ 5.9%
<b>Fremont Twp.</b>	962	1106	+15.0%

\* State figures in millions of housing units.

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**SELECTED OCCUPANCY AND FINANCIAL CHARACTERISTICS (1990)**

	<b>TOTAL OWNER-OCCUPIED UNITS</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL UNITS</b>	
		63.2%	\$60,600
Tuscola Co.	15,817	74.5%	46,000
<b>Fremont Twp.</b>	842	87.5%	44,100

\* State figures in millions of housing units

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**TABLE 6  
AGE OF HOUSING (1990)**

	<b>% BUILT 1980 - 1990</b>	<b>% BUILT 1939 OR BEFORE</b>
Tuscola County	12.1%	28.0%
	17.4%	
	9.3%	56.0%

Note: Percentages are based on the total number of Housing units.

### C. Community Facilities

In this report, "community facilities" are things such as schools, colleges, hospitals, and municipal facilities and services. Municipal facilities and services include police and fire protection, public parks, community libraries, and public utilities, such as water and sewer.

In Fremont Township, **public K - 12 schools** (Mayville School District) are located in the Village of Mayville. **Junior** college offerings are available close by in Caro (Great Lakes Junior College) and at Delta College in the Saginaw - Bay City area. The closest four-year colleges are Saginaw Valley State University and the University of Michigan Flint Campus.

The nearest large, **regional medical** facilities with major surgery and acute care capabilities are located in Saginaw, Lapeer, and Flint. **Community** hospitals are available to local residents in Caro, Cass City, and Marlette.

Several other community services and facilities are provided through the Village of Mayville. These include the local fire department, a public library, and a community park.

Public water and sewer are not available in Fremont Township. These public utilities are available in Mayville, and water and sewer lines have been largely extended to the Village's corporate limits.

Police services in the Township is provided through the Tuscola County Sheriff Department.

## IV PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

This portion of the Master Plan identifies the major planning issues facing Fremont Township. For planning purposes, an "issue" is simply any topic that requires some manner of attention. An issue might be an asset or positive trait that should be preserved, or it might be a problem or liability that should be remedied. The issues which are identified will be used to formulate a set of planning and development **policies** for the Township. Desired future land use arrangements and plan implementation strategies are a natural outgrowth of these policies.

### A. Community Survey Results

To assist the Planning Commission in identifying the interests and concerns of Township residents, a community survey was conducted. Questionnaires were mailed to all Township property owners with their property tax notices in November 1991. By January 1992, 150 questionnaires had been returned, and the responses were tabulated. A copy of the survey form and the distribution of responses is provided in an appendix to this report. A brief profile of the responses shows the following community opinions on several topics:

1. **Commercial Development.** Most respondents (95) indicated that they would like to see more commercial development in the Township. Preferred locations were along M-24 (90 responses), close to Mayville (69), along Saginaw Road (40), and "on property not bordered by residences" (33).
2. **Industrial Development.** Most respondents (108) also indicated that they would like to see more industrial development in the Township. Preferred locations were M-24 (66), close to Mayville (54), Saginaw Road (37), and "on property not bordered by residences" (24).
3. **Farmland Preservation.** Most respondents (111) favored the preservation of farmland in the Township.
4. **Mobile Home Park.** This question asked residents if they would like to see the availability of a mobile home park in the Township. The responses were inconclusive: 73 yes; 73 no; 10 undecided.
5. **Mobile Home Inspection Program.** Most respondents (105) were in favor of having an inspection requirement for mobile homes being moved into the Township.
6. **Separation of Commercial and Residential Properties.** This question asked whether residents felt that commercial and residential properties should be mixed. Most (94) were NOT in favor of this.
7. **Special Incentives for Commercial and Industrial Growth.** This question asked residents if they were in favor of using techniques such as tax abatements, special zoning, and/or promotional efforts should be used to attract commercial and industrial growth. The responses were inconclusive: 66 yes; 76 no.

8. Zoning District Classifications. This question asked residents if the zoning districts provided by the current Township Zoning Ordinance should be expanded. For example, should there be more than one residential district to permit different lot sizes and floor areas? Should there be more than one commercial zoning district? The majority of respondents (85) felt that the ordinance should be expanded to provided more categories.

## **B. Identification of Major Planning Issues**

The preceding discussion of the Township survey results provides some valuable information regarding community attitudes, concerns, and priorities. This input is useful to the Planning Commission in their deliberations as they attempt to establish policies for the Township's future development.

The planning issues presented in the remainder of this section are based on the community survey, Planning Commission discussions, and observations made by the Township's planning consultant.

### **Synopsis of Fremont Township Planning Issues**

1. Fremont Township is an attractive community with a rural character and lifestyle that is typical of this part of the state.
2. The Township's location makes it attractive as a bedroom community for people who commute to Saginaw, Lapeer, Flint, and even portions of the Greater Detroit metropolitan area. However, this also raises concerns about future development pressures. For example, the Township population managed to grow by almost 10 % during 1980 - 1990, when Tuscola County as a whole was losing population.
3. Farmland is an important part of the Township's rural character, as it is throughout Michigan's "thumb." However, the economic importance of farming in the Township has declined, and only a few full-time farming operations remain.
4. Mobile homes are recognized as an affordable alternative to conventional "stick built" housing. In recent years, the majority of the new residential dwellings established in the Township have been mobile homes. At the same time, however, there is concern about the condition of some of the mobile homes which have been located in the Township. There is also concern that the Township's current regulations (i.e., zoning) may not be adequate to ensure the proper siting of mobile homes in the Township.
5. There are concerns with blight and the quality of development in the Township.
6. There are concerns regarding the overdevelopment of road frontage at the expense of the interior portions of parcels. As the frontage on public roads becomes more heavily developed, access to the interior portions of parcels becomes more difficult or even impossible. As these development patterns continue, the interior portions become, in effect, wasted land.
7. Access management issues need to be addressed. This topic includes the consideration of appropriate regulations for driveways and private roads.
8. The need for improvement of roads within the Township is an important consideration.

9. Proper solid waste management is another important issue. The Township and the Village of Mayville are presently working on the joint establishment of a recycling program.
10. Relations between the Township and Mayville are generally good. This provides a solid foundation for future cooperation on issues of mutual interest.
11. The Township Zoning Ordinance is now nearly six years old. Although the ordinance has been amended a number of times over the past few years, there is a need to evaluate the ordinance and identify desirable improvements. Preliminary discussions indicate a need for expansion of the zoning districts to include more residential and commercial classifications, addition of planned unit development (PUD) provisions, and improved site plan review standards.

## V TOWNSHIP DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This section of the Master Plan presents the goals and objectives which have been developed to provide a strong, coherent direction for the future development of Fremont Township. The formulation of these statements evolves from the desire to remedy existing problems, to maintain positive features, and to provide an attractive and functional community environment in the future. These goals and objectives form a key element of the Township Master Plan. Desired land use arrangements and proposed implementation strategies are a natural outgrowth of established goals.

Some additional benefits of establishing these goals and objectives (policies) for the Township are:

1. **Consistency** - A comprehensive list of statements concerning a variety of planning issues can help avoid arbitrary decision-making in the future.
2. **Efficiency** - Clearly stated policies help to reduce the time spent on individual topics while providing sound planning principles to assist in the process.
3. **Coordination** - Established policies provide a single framework to guide actions by the Township Board, Planning Commission, and the public.
4. **Stability** - Policies tend to be general and long-range in nature. As such, they remain stable under a variety of changing community conditions.
5. **Basis for Decisions** - Established policies are necessary to provide a reasonable basis for adopting local land use controls such as zoning. Furthermore, clearly stated policies are helpful to the courts when called upon to judge the fairness of specific land use regulations.

The proposed goals and objectives for Fremont Township are presented in the remainder of this section.

### General Land Use and Development

#### **GOAL:**

**ARRANGE FUTURE LAND USES IN A MANNER WHICH WILL PRESERVE 'THE NATURAL FEATURES, SCENIC QUALITIES, AND RURAL CHARACTER WHICH MAKE FREMONT TOWNSHIP AN ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO LIVE.**

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Make provisions to accommodate future residential, commercial, and industrial development in appropriate locations.
2. Encourage the *managed* growth of the Township through good planning and appropriate development controls.
3. Maintain Fremont Township as a rural residential community.

4. Encourage the preservation of agricultural lands and existing farming operations.
5. Encourage the preservation of natural features and open space.
6. Discourage the placement of land uses that are incompatible with existing natural features.
7. Discourage the placement of land uses that are incompatible with surrounding development.
8. Encourage Planned Unit Development (PUD) approaches to future residential, commercial, and industrial development whenever feasible.

### Residential Land Use and Housing

**GOAL:**

**PROVIDE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN A MANNER THAT RESULTS IN BOTH HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS THAT ARE SAFE, HEALTHY, AND ATTRACTIVE, WHILE ALSO PROVIDING A WIDE CHOICE AND ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF DWELLING UNITS.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Reserve sufficient land for both dispersed and more intensive residential development in convenient, economical, and environmentally sound locations.
2. Encourage innovative development techniques (such as PUD) which will permit development at higher densities, while also using the available land more efficiently and preserving natural features.
3. Encourage the development of housing opportunities for all economic levels.
4. Adopt regulatory measures that are necessary to ensure that new housing meets appropriate health and safety standards.
5. Adopt basic housing standards to ensure the compatibility of future housing with the existing housing stock.

### Commercial and Industrial Land Uses

**GOAL:**

**ENCOURAGE SOUND COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN CONVENIENT, ACCESSIBLE, AND LOGICAL LOCATIONS.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Encourage the development of commercial centers, as opposed to strip development.
2. Encourage the development of some local light industry.
3. Discourage "spot" commercial and industrial development.

Public Facilities and Services

**GOAL:  
PROVIDE PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES IN THE MOST EFFICIENT,  
EFFECTIVE, AND ECONOMICAL MANNER POSSIBLE.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Direct future development into designated areas where public facilities and services can be efficiently and economically provided in the future, should the need arise.
2. Prepare a long-range program, including funding strategies, to address road improvement needs.
3. Investigate the preparation and adoption of appropriate standards for all future township roads, including private roads.
4. **In** cooperation with the Village of Mayville, establish a community recycling program.
5. Encourage cooperative efforts between Fremont Township, Mayville, and possibly other local government units in planning for future public facilities and services.

## **VI. FUTURE LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The future direction for Fremont Township's land use and development pattern is partly shaped by the community's natural features, and by the Township's desire to retain an attractive rural character. Beyond this, it is necessary to define the major land use categories and to identify appropriate locations for the recommended land uses. The major land uses anticipated by this plan are described in this section. Recommended locations for these uses are shown on the accompanying Land Use Plan Map.

### **A. Agriculture and Rural Residential**

This area is expected to comprise most of the Township's land area, and it is intended to provide for a controlled mixture of rural land uses interspersed among open, undeveloped lands. Appropriate uses will include farming operations (including tree farms), single-family homes on fairly large lots, and outdoor recreation facilities, such as campgrounds and golf courses. Other uses might include schools, churches, and child care facilities.

This plan district will accommodate additional single-family residential development on relatively large lots of one acre or more. Additional residential development should preferably occur on soils that are not being farmed, or that are not well-suited to farming. Residents within this area will need to co-exist with farming and other land uses that are typical of rural areas.

In general, appropriate types of development within this district will be limited to those that do not create major demands for public services and facilities. Utilities, particularly water and sewer, will not be required within this planning area.

### **B. Low-Density Residential**

This planning category recognizes those portions of the Township which include existing subdivisions and other concentrations of residential development. Future development is expected to mainly consist of additional residential development on lots less than one acre (i.e., roughly one-half acre). These areas might include interior roads (with proper standards) which serve groups of homes. Residential planned unit developments (PUD's) could be encouraged within this district.

Other uses would be limited to those closely related to residential activities, such as schools, churches, and child care facilities. These areas would generally lack commercial types of development, with the possible exception of home occupations. The Low-Density Residential areas are not expected to be served by public utilities in the short term (i.e., five to six years).

### C. Medium-Density Residential

This planning district is intended to provide some areas in the Township which could be developed at higher densities for residential uses. Some potential uses include multi-family housing (apartments), mobile home parks, and residential subdivisions. Planned unit development approaches would be encouraged within these areas.

The Medium-Density Residential areas would require interior roads for sufficient access. Development at the higher densities envisioned for these areas may require the provision of public water and sewer. Accordingly, the areas designated for this classification should be limited to those where future utility extensions might be feasible. As an alternative, suitable project-wide services could be provided by the private sector.

### D. Highway Commercial

This district is intended to provide locations for a mixture of businesses which rely on (and cater to) large volumes of passing motorists, and those that desire quick, convenient access to the state highways which traverse the Township. The areas designated for this purpose are along M-46 and M-24, and near their intersection.

Appropriate uses for this area might include restaurants, convenience stores, motor vehicle sales and service establishments, and motels. Other uses might include some "heavy" commercial type businesses, such as truck terminals, wholesale businesses and distribution centers, and contractor's establishments.

The future development of this area should include controls for proper access management to prevent congestion and traffic hazards. Design concepts might include acceleration and deceleration lanes, parallel access drives and shared parking areas, and limitations on the number of separate driveways.

The Highway Commercial area is not expected to be served by public utilities at any time in the foreseeable future.

### E. Local Business

This planning district is intended to provide for businesses that are geared toward the needs of local residents, and which might complement the mix of businesses that are currently available in the Village of Mayville. Typical uses might include retail food, hardware, drug and stores, personal services, office and financial businesses, and health care facilities.

The plan recommends the development of an attractive and convenient commercial cluster, as opposed to scattered or isolated business establishments. As previously noted for the "Highway Commercial" area, design standards for proper access management should also be an important consideration in the future development of this area.

## VII. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Fremont Township Master Plan has been prepared to serve as a guide on both short-term and long-range issues which the Township will face as it develops in the future. Community planning issues were identified and discussed in Section IV of this report. These issues were then used to formulate a set of general goals and more specific objectives which have been presented in Section V. These goals and objectives should serve as the basis for the tasks which the Township will undertake to translate the Master Plan into action.

In addition, implementation of Fremont Township's Master Plan should involve the following major elements:

### A. Public Involvement and Education

Public involvement and education is critical to the success of any plan. The community must be aware of the plan's existence and it must also accept the plan's findings and recommendations. The Planning Commission has the main responsibility for working to achieve community involvement in the planning process and support for planning in general. This is a never-ending task.

### B. Acceptance and Use of the Plan by the Township Board

The current statutes do not require adoption of the plan by the Township Board. However, as the elected legislative body of the Township, it is imperative that the Board of Trustees accept the plan and use it in the governing process. As a first step in this direction, the Township Board should be asked to accept and endorse the plan, following its adoption by the Planning Commission.

### C. Plan Updates

Community planning is a dynamic process. In order for the Master Plan to remain a viable document, it must be periodically updated. It is recommended that the Planning Commission conduct a basic review of the document on an annual basis. Modifications should be made as necessary. The result is a plan that is always current and based on the best available information. These periodic plan updates do not need to be lengthy or elaborate. Depending on the subject matter, an update might be presented in a memo of a few pages. However, the Planning Commission should note that plan amendments must be handled in the same manner as the adoption of the original plan with respect to public notice and hearing requirements.

### D. Annual Implementation Program

As an extension of the annual plan review process mentioned previously, the Planning Commission should also evaluate the implementation progress that has been made in the previous year. Following this review, the Planning Commission should prepare a list of specific objectives to be accomplished in the coming year and over the next five years. This list should then be ranked to identify the Planning Commissions's priorities, and it should include both capital and non-capital projects.

The draft implementation program should then be submitted to the Township Board for review. The Board and the Planning Commission should then meet jointly to discuss the program and to reach a consensus on the Township's priorities for plan implementation in the coming year. Like the plan updates, the annual implementation program can be a simple report in a memo format.

### **E. Update the Township Zoning Ordinance**

The Township Zoning Ordinance is expected to remain the single most important tool for plan implementation. As such, it is extremely important to update and revise the ordinance to reflect this Master Plan's land use recommendations.

The current Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1987 and has been amended several times. However, following adoption of the Master Plan, it will be appropriate to pursue an in-depth review and thorough revision of the ordinance. This is especially important because the plan recommends several land use districts which are not presently included in the Zoning Ordinance.

Also, based on Planning Commission discussions during the preparation of the Master Plan, several topics for consideration in the Zoning Ordinance can be identified:

1. Addition of planned unit development (PUD) provisions to permit innovation and some flexibility in development.
2. Preparation of standards for private roads and other access management considerations.
3. Preparation of updated regulations for all residential dwellings to provide better standards for the siting of manufactured housing and other housing options.
4. Possible updating and expansion of site plan review provisions.

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, and the identification of other desirable changes can be expected during the ordinance updating process.

### **F Use of the Master Plan When Making Zoning Decisions**

The Master Plan should be consulted prior to making zoning decisions. Experience indicates that the lack of such consultation often results in decisions that are contrary to plan recommendations. Zoning actions that are contrary to the plan also diminish the public significance of the document and limit its potential benefit should the Township become involved in zoning litigation.

### **G. Consistency Between the Plan and Zoning Ordinance Must Be Maintained**

Once the Zoning Ordinance is revised to be consistent with the plan, this consistency must be maintained. If zoning decisions are made that are contrary to plan recommendations, it is important that the Planning Commission review the documents and consider a possible plan revision to reflect the zoning action. Plan amendment will also be necessary if issues arise in which the plan does not offer sufficient guidance. In such a case, new or expanded material should be added to the plan to address the new issues.

## H. Miscellaneous Recommendations

In addition to the previous elements, there are several other items that Fremont Township may wish to consider in carrying out its Master Plan:

**1. Preparation and Adoption of a Housing Code.** The Master Plan recommends that Fremont Township adopt improved standards for the siting of all types of single-family dwellings as part of its Zoning Ordinance. The Township has also recently established an inspection program for mobile homes that are moved into the Township from other locations.

In addition to these actions, the Township may wish to consider the adoption of a minimum housing code. A housing code would establish minimum standards for the use-and maintenance of all permanent dwellings, including mobile homes. A housing code is a legal document like a building code or a zoning ordinance. However, it primarily focuses on the required facilities and designs of residential dwellings and does not attempt to provide such standards for other types of buildings. Housing and building codes can be administered together as long as the distinction between them is clear -- housing codes are typically associated with maintenance, while building codes are associated with construction.

**2. Joint Planning with the Village of Mayville.** Unfortunately, relations between Townships and nearby cities or villages are often poor and characterized by fierce disputes over territory, economic development projects, and many other items. Fremont Township is fortunate in that relations with the Village of Mayville are generally good, and the opportunity for cooperation exists.

The two government units are presently cooperating in the establishment of a community recycling program. In the future, it may be helpful to encourage further cooperative planning efforts between the township and Village on issues of mutual interest. Some examples of potential topics include roads, water, sewer, police and fire protection, and economic development. Other areas might include land use planning, zoning, and code enforcement.

**3. Organize for Economic Development.** The Township may wish to actively pursue the attraction of more business and industry. As a step in this direction, the Township should attempt to become better informed and/or involved in economic development activities that are underway through Tuscola County and the Regional Planning Agency. Once Township officials determine what resources and programs are already in place, they can better decide what local actions they should take. For example, the Township may wish to develop a local economic development strategy that focuses on the community's particular strengths and that seeks to attract business and industry that is best suited to Fremont Township.