

## EXISTING LAND USE

### GROWTH TRENDS

#### Historical Perspective

Historically Genoa Township was characterized by rural agricultural land uses, with resort-type development around Lake Chemung and the other 15 lakes in the region. In the early 1970's the rural character began to change. Suburbanites from the Detroit and Ann Arbor areas began looking at Livingston County as a convenient commute between this quiet lifestyle and metro area employment. Following the residential growth have been supportive commercial and public facilities. The small town atmosphere associated with the cities of Brighton and Howell attracted residents, businesses and small industries to this area. Gradually the area began to establish its own healthy employment base. Providing sanitary sewer service in parts of Genoa Township has contributed to the rapid pace and intensity of its growth. According to Livingston County and Genoa Township figures, most of the recent development in Genoa Township has been residential.

#### Regional Context

Genoa Township lies within Livingston County, Michigan. The urbanization of Livingston County is part of the trend of outward migration from the Detroit Metropolitan area. Situated between Brighton and Howell, with easy access to Detroit, Ann Arbor, Lansing and Flint via freeways, Genoa Township falls in a crossroads of growth.

Genoa has experienced a large amount of residential development and has developed a stable, self-sustaining employment base comprised of a variety of industries. The element that sets Genoa apart from many communities in the County is the opportunity to appreciate a rural lifestyle without the long commute.

The outward growth of Brighton and Howell has directly affected the development of Genoa Township, which is apparent along the Grand River Avenue corridor, accentuated by interchange facilities with I-96. Grand River Avenue is the major roadway that links the cities of Howell and Brighton and generally parallels I-96. This corridor gradually has been developed with a variety of uses, particularly during the past decade. Some regional scale commercial establishments began to develop in part due to sanitary sewer service becoming available in 1991. The installation of public utilities has resulted in the substantial growth of industrial uses in the Grand River corridor area.

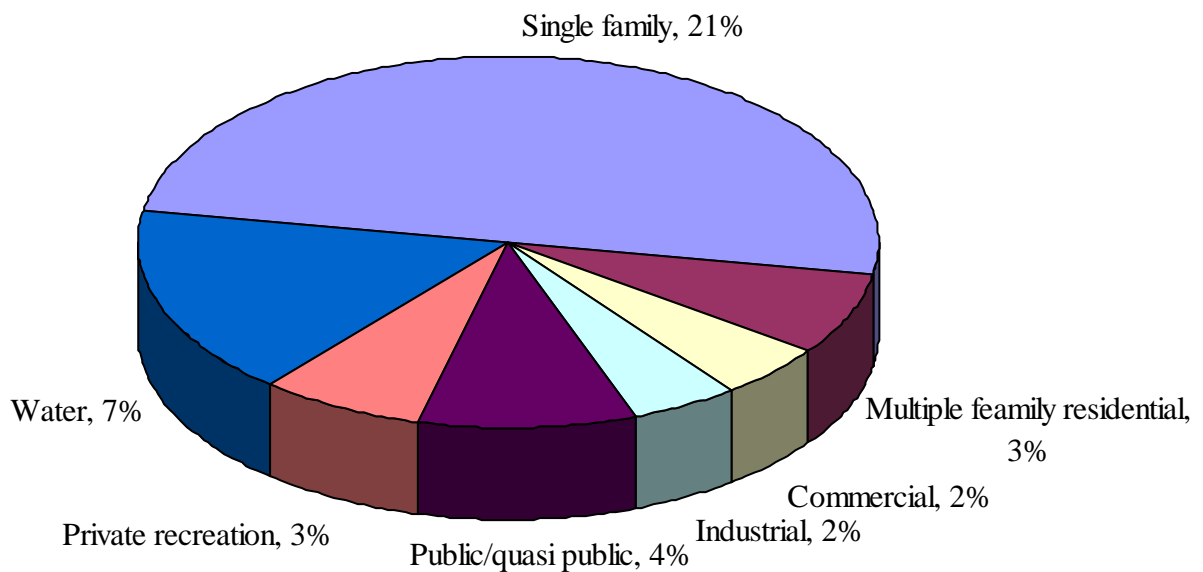
*A number of factors can be cited for growth in the southeastern Livingston County area:*

- *Interstate 96 and U.S. 23 increasing accessibility from Genoa Township to the major places of employment in the metropolitan region.*
- *The availability of relatively inexpensive large tracts of land suitable for subdivision development.*
- *People's desire to live in a community with a rural atmosphere.*
- *The attractiveness of lake front or rural estate home sites.*
- *Public sanitary sewer becoming available.*

## EXISTING LAND USE

An inventory of existing land use was conducted using current aerial photographs and verified by field observation. Existing land uses were classified and the extent of their acreage determined as depicted below. The following pages describe the existing land use characteristics of the Township when the land use update for the plan was done in 2004.

**Percent Distribution of Land Use**



## Agricultural and Vacant

Over the past decade, large areas of local farmland in Livingston County have been converted to residential uses. According to the 1992 Census of Agriculture, there was a 14% reduction in the acreage of farmland in Livingston County between the years 1982 and 1992.

Agricultural/vacant includes lands actively used for agricultural purposes twenty acres and over and lands not currently put to any active use total 13,535 acres.

### Low Intensity Residential

Low intensity residential is the most prevalent land use in the Township. This category includes residential properties with a lot size of greater than 1/4 acre, up to 19 acres in size. This type of residential development is dispersed throughout the area. Some of this lower intensity development has resulted from gradual divisions of agricultural land. This land use can also be concentrated around lakes and in areas where public sewer and water are available, but the lots are not smaller than 1/4 acre. This land use is comprised of 4,836 acres in 2004.

### High Intensity Residential

Although high intensity uses, including multiple family housing, historically has been limited to the cities of Howell and Brighton, there has been significant multiple family development in Genoa Township since public water and sanitary sewer were introduced. This category includes single family residential developments with densities of 4 units an acre or greater. This includes attached town homes, multiple family condominiums and apartments, and manufactured housing parks. This land use can also include a high density detached single family residential units. There are 704 acres of high intensity residential development in the Township in 2002, up from just over 530 acres in 1997.

**Table 11**  
**Existing Land Uses,**  
**Genoa Township, 2002**

Land Use	Area	Percent of Township	Percent of Developed Area
Low Intensity Residential	4,836	21 %	59 %
High Intensity Residential	740	3 %	9 %
Commercial/ Office	521	2 %	6 %
Industrial	357	2 %	4 %
Public/Quasi Public	814	4 %	10 %
Private Recreation	936	4 %	11 %
Developed Land Subtotal	8,204	35 %	100 %
Agricultural/ Vacant	13,535	58 %	- -
Water	1,551	7 %	- -
Total	23,290	100 %	- -

Source: 2002 Land Use Update



### **Commercial/Office**

Commercial uses in the Township are located primarily along the Grand River Avenue frontage. Grand River Avenue is the most heavily traveled roadway other than I-96 in Genoa Township. As a result, small regional shopping centers, individual business establishments and small offices have developed along this segment. Commercial/office use comprises 521 acres.



### **Industrial**

Existing industrial uses are located on the south side of Grand River Avenue between Chilson and Latson. There are a number of small to medium sized industrial uses dispersed along the Grand River Avenue corridor. The largest industrial area is the partially developed 200 acre Grand Oaks Industrial Park just west of Latson Road between I-96 and Grand River Avenue. In total, 357 developed acres of industrial land exist in the Township.

### **Public/Quasi-Public**

Areas designated as Public/Quasi-Public include public uses such as Township Hall, governmental buildings, churches and schools. These are dispersed throughout the Township with a high concentration of government facilities in the northwest corner towards the City of Howell. There is a total of 814 acres of public land in the Township.



### **Recreation**

This classification includes areas such as golf courses, miniature golf centers, recreational vehicle campgrounds, parks, ski areas, MDNR lake access sites and the Brighton Recreation Area which total 936 acres.

## LAND USE PATTERNS

The pattern of development reflects the urban influences of the cities of Brighton and Howell, combined with easy access to Detroit, Ann Arbor, Lansing and Flint via freeways. As illustrated in Map 6, the more intensive urban development is along the Grand River Avenue corridor, which is contrasted by residential development and agricultural activities away from this axis of development.

Grand River Avenue is the major roadway linking the cities of Howell and Brighton and generally parallels I-96. The installation of public utilities and accessibility has resulted in substantial growth of commercial and industrial uses southeast of the City of Howell. This area has been developing toward serving as a principal regional commercial center for Genoa Township and surrounding communities.

Residential areas north and south of the corridor historically were large lot development. In the last 15 years these lands have evolved to large planned residential communities. Some of these developments have utilized innovative design techniques to capitalize on precious environmental resources in the Township while preserving their natural condition. As a result smaller, more clustered subdivisions have emerged.

Much of the land along Grand River Avenue is less rolling and contains more buildable soils. It is the area most readily accessible and, therefore, feasible to sewer. Away from this corridor lands are characterized by more rolling topography, some areas with steep slopes, wetlands, problem soils, wooded areas and less intensive suburban rural-agricultural development.

## UTILITY SERVICE AREAS

Availability of utilities has had a significant impact on the development pattern. Most of the older developments used individual septic systems. A high density of septic systems in areas with unsuitable soils, high groundwater or near bodies of water can have significant impact on the quality of the Township's water resources. The septic tank leakage from older systems has affected the quality of the Township's wells, lakes, wetlands, and groundwater and limits development potential. In response to these problems, Genoa Township developed in conjunction with surrounding communities or developers several public sanitary sewer systems for certain areas. The provision of sanitary sewer has helped to overcome some of the problems associated with septic tank systems.

### **Northwest portion of Township**

Genoa and Oceola Townships jointly developed a sanitary sewer system with the assistance of the engineering firm of Tetra-Tech MPS back in the early 1990's. This system, the Genoa-Oceola sanitary sewer system, serves much of the Township from the area around Lake Chemung to the City of Howell, north of I-96. The treatment plant is located on Chilson Road, just north of the railroad.

The plant was designed to accommodate future development of vacant land within the presently defined service district. The system is designed to accommodate the land uses indicated in the Master Plan. Only sanitary wastewater is accepted at the waste water treatment plant. No industrial process flows are permitted.

The Township also has a public water supply system for the northwestern portion of the Township. The system serves areas north of I-96 between Lake Edgewood and the western Township border. The water system was developed as part of MHOG Water Authority, a four Township system that includes Marion, Howell, Oceola and Genoa Township. Genoa Township has a 500,000 gallon water tower by Cleary College.

### **Oak Pointe/Tri-Lakes**

Sanitary sewer service was provided in the central portion of the Township around the Tri-Lakes area as a part of the Oak Pointe PUD. The treatment plant was constructed by the developer and dedicated to the Township. This system is being combined with the Genoa-Oceola system with the Oak Pointe treatment plant being taken off-line and wastewater routed to the treatment plant on Chilson Road. The system serves the ultimate build-out of Oak



Pointe, Northshore and the existing residential areas surrounding the Tri-Lakes. This system provided a benefit by not only serving the future development within the Oak Pointe PUD, but by also providing sanitary sewer service to the older lakefront subdivisions in the area. This has had a significant benefit for the water quality within the Tri-Lakes.

As part of the Oak Pointe PUD, a public water system was also developed. The system serves the Oak Pointe development and has been extended around to the north end of Crooked Lake to serve the Northshore PUD. The system has an Iron removal facility and a 150,000 gallon elevated storage tank in the Oak Pointe Golf Course.

### **Brighton**

The Pine Creek PUD, adjacent to the City of Brighton, has public water and sanitary sewer service through a P.A. 425 agreement with the City. Water has also been extended to serve existing homes on Dillon Street that had contamination problems with individual wells. There are currently no plans to extend Brighton water and sanitary sewer service to other areas of the Township.

There is also a public water supply system at the eastern edge of the Township. This system was originally developed to serve the Lake Edgewood condominium development and the Brighton Village Mobile home park. This system has been extended southward along Grand River Avenue to the City of Brighton. This extension serves commercial development along Grand River Avenue near the I-96 interchange. There is a 500,000 gallon water tower on Conference Center Drive, adjacent to I-96. This water system is owned and operated by the City of Brighton.

### **Lake Edgewood**

Sanitary sewers are provided in the eastern section of the Township, through a system known as the Lake Edgewood sanitary sewer system. The system serves the greater area along the eastern portion of the Grand River Avenue corridor, west to Sylvan Glen. The Sylvan Glen manufactured housing park is served by a private on-site package treatment plant, which ultimately will be connected to the Lake Edgewood system.

