

CHAPTER 4

EXISTING LAND USE

An analysis of existing land use is primary when preparing a recommendation for future land use. The comprehensive plan should not be absolutely limited by existing land use; however, since a finite twenty (20) year window is used, the rate of change must be realistic or the plan will be ignored.

Eight (8) different categories were used to classify current land use: single family residential, multi-family residential, recreational or park, institutional including schools, religious, office, commercial, and industrial. The use determination was achieved using a combination of field inspections and aerial photography interpretation. The categories were not necessarily intended to coincide with existing property lines, but rather the boundaries of property uses. In some cases these boundaries were arbitrarily determined.

Based on the information obtained, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Single Family predominates as the principal land use. Much of the single family has been developed on extremely narrow lots. Also, in some areas along county arterials and secondaries, excessively deep lots have developed, thereby sealing off a large amount of otherwise developable property by denying further access.
2. Prior to 1993, sufficient low-end and moderate housing stock was available; however, upper moderate and upper stock was very limited. As a result, upwardly mobile families had a tendency to move out instead of moving up. This trend has reversed with the development of several major subdivisions affording a wide variety of housing choices. Also apparent is the lack of adequate buffers and transitional land uses.
3. For a community the size of Hobart, land use information would indicate that the community is no longer under-retailed. However, much of the retail business is located along U.S. 30, and in unattractive "strip" developments, which aggravate traffic capacity of the arterials they front. Conveniently located service uses mainly in the downtown area could increase.
4. Park and recreational land is limited, which leads to facilities that tend to be over-utilized. In addition, until recently, their location appears to be dictated more in terms of the undesirability of the property for other uses than accessibility and size demands. Pseudo-public recreational facilities have attempted to fill the void since they are abundant and varied.

5. Until Barrington Ridge in 1992, multi-family land use was extremely limited, apparently by design. The bias towards single-family which had resulted in limited housing choices, has given way to a balance between the two.
6. Office development has been lacking, however, the tremendous potential of St. Mary's Hospital in attracting and sustaining a mixed use office/service "campus" is beginning to be realized.
7. The current vacant industrial property is constrained due to the lack of available infrastructure.
8. The recently annexed Ross Township area is comprised of sparsely developed single-family, and extensive commercial development along the Rt. 30 corridor.
9. The development which has occurred in the Ross Township area is essentially along the county arterials, virtually sealing off developable property behind.
10. There are few park or multi-family uses in the Ross Township area comprising 9.75 square miles.
11. It is apparent that historically, the community has suffered from a lack of pre-development planning. As a result, from the standpoint of amount and placement of property, the hierarchy of land uses as the community has developed has been:
 - Deep River and tributaries
 - Lake George
 - Railroads
 - Downtown Retail
 - Single Family
 - Institutional
 - Office
 - Industrial
 - Multi Family
 - Recreational

TABLE 5

EXISTING LAND USE ACREAGE

USE	HOBART TOWNSHIP		ROSS TOWNSHIP	
	ACREAGE	% OF ALL	ACREAGE	% OF ALL
Single Family	2,076	20.7	906	14.5
Multifamily	192	1.9	109	1.7
Commercial	168	1.7	448	7.2
Office	24	0.2	23	0.4
Recreational	267	2.7	53	0.8
Institutional	283	2.8	16	0.3
Religious	17	0.2	17	0.3
Industrial	67	0.7	94	1.5
Roads	1,078	10.8	282	4.5
Railways	128	1.3	45	0.7
Developed	4,300	42.8	1,993	31.9
Undeveloped	5,361	53.4	4,243	68.0
Water	384	3.8	4	0.1
Total	10,045	100%	6,240	100%

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