

# EXISTING LAND USE

The focus of this chapter is an examination of current land use patterns, their distinguishing characteristics, and their impact on future land development. One of the most important tasks of the Master Plan is to develop a firm understanding of the types of land use activities that are currently taking place within the community. A thorough knowledge of existing land use patterns and site conditions furnishes planners and community leaders with basic information by which future residential, commercial, industrial and public land use decisions can be made.

The existing land use map and acreage tabulation chart, provided in the following pages, will serve as key reference points for Larkin Township officials to utilize in their consideration of land use and infrastructure improvements in the future.



## METHODOLOGY

A field survey was conducted by Wade-Trim on November 19, 2003, to gather existing land use data for all the parcels within the Larkin Township limits. Each parcel of property was inspected in the field and its use characteristics were recorded on a base map partially derived from Midland County parcel data. The land use field data was then transferred from the field survey notes into a Geographic Information System (GIS). The resulting Existing Land Use Map was prepared using ArcView software. Acreage for each land use classification was calculated utilizing GIS software, and thus there may be slight differences between GIS calculated and platted acreage. However, these differences did not adversely affect the planning process.

## LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

Each existing land use was placed in one of eight general land use categories. The Existing Land Use Map depicts the geographic distribution of the land use classifications.

Larkin Township encompasses approximately 20,139 acres (exclusive of rights-of-way), or about 32.5 square miles in area. Table 2 outlines the existing land uses found within the Township.

# EXISTING LAND USE CATEGORIES

## RESIDENTIAL

This category includes structures used as a permanent dwelling, and accessory structures, such as garages, that are related to these units. Typical dwelling units may include single-family detached homes, townhomes, attached condominiums, duplexes, multiple family structures, and other residences. The residential classification is also given to those agricultural parcels that contain an associated, farming-related single-family residence. It should be noted that in many cases, significant parcels used primarily for agricultural purposes are coded as residential. This category is almost exclusively comprised of single-family dwellings within the Township. Such development occupies 11,586 acres, or 57.5%, of the total Township land area. A second Existing Land Use Map including woodlands information follows the primary Existing Land Use Map. This map is intended to identify those areas coded as residential that are primarily wooded or contain wetlands. With this information, we can reasonably determine the difference between those residentially coded parcels being used for single-family purposes exclusively, and those which are primarily agricultural in nature; generally, the large undivided parcels that are coded residential that do not contain woodlands or other significant natural features are agricultural.

## COMMERCIAL

This land use category includes the land area occupied by uses providing retail and service facilities that accommodate day-to-day convenience shopping needs, as well as comparison shopping for a more regional audience. Smaller commercial land uses include, but are not limited to, groceries, florists, laundries, and restaurants. Larger commercial retail strip developments may include regional supermarkets, branch banks, clothing stores, etc. Commercial land uses occupy 216 acres, or 1.1%, of all land uses within the Township.

## INDUSTRIAL

This category includes land areas occupied by both light and heavy industrial facilities. Uses in this category include manufacturing facilities, warehouses, and storage and leasing facilities. There are 351 acres, or 1.7% of the Township, currently providing industrial services.

## PUBLIC

This category was established to embrace all developed or undeveloped lands owned by various governmental agencies or other fully public entities. Within Larkin Township, public lands include parks, schools, Township buildings, and facilities. There are 6 acres, or 0.03% of the total area within the Township, currently in use as public properties.

## SEMI-PUBLIC

Semi-public parcels are those areas developed for such uses as parochial schools, churches, and fraternal organizations. Semi-public property makes up 110 acres within Larkin Township, approximately 0.5% of the total land area within the Township boundary.

## GOLF COURSE

This land use category describes the planned golf course development along Hurley Road, east of Eastman Road. The golf course category accommodates land used specifically for golf courses and associated single-family residential development. It accounts for 53 acres, or 0.3% of Township land.

## OPEN SPACE

This use category includes all lands which are presently undeveloped, including vacant lots and portions of vacant platted lands. It also includes areas used for productive agricultural purposes, and areas reserved for protected woodlands. This category does not, however, include agriculturally used parcels which also contain a residence; such agricultural parcels supported by an associated residence are included in the residential existing land use category. There are 7,800 acres of land, or 38.7% of the Township's land, classified as open space.

Table 2  
*Existing Land Use Acreage*

Category	Acres	% of Total
Commercial	216	1.1%
Industrial	351	1.7%
Public	6	0.03%
Recreation	17	0.1%
Residential	11,586	57.5%
Semi-Public	110	0.5%
Golf Course	53	0.3%
Open Space	7,800	38.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,139</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Wade-Trim Site Analysis 11/2003. Updated by Larkin Township*