

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## FIRE AND POLICE SERVICES

Fire protection service for Larkin Township is provided by the Larkin Township Volunteer Fire Department. The Larkin Township Fire Department is based out of the Fire Station located at 3022 North Jefferson, in the center of the Township.

Police service is provided by Midland County Sheriff Department, located within the City of Midland (2727 Rodd). Both fire and police emergency services can be reached via 911 emergency service.

## EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Student-age residents of Larkin Township are served by the Midland School District. With the exception of a very small minority of residents located in the northwest corner of the Township, which is served by Meridian Schools. Currently the enrollment in the Midland district is 9,688 with 717 certificated staff and 600 support staff. The District encompasses 137 square miles of Midland County. Based on the test scores of students within the District, Midland Public Schools ranked 27 out of 561 districts in Michigan, putting it in the top 5%.<sup>1</sup>

The Midland School District consists of 12 elementary, three middle, and two high schools. All facilities are located in the City of Midland. Three alternative education programs are also provided by the District.

Within the City of Midland, a great deal of cultural and educational amenities are easily accessible to Larkin Township residents. The Midland Center for the Arts, the Midland Library System, and the Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art are regionally significant venues.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

There are two parks, operated by the County, available to residents within a short drive southwest and north of the Township. Sanford Lake Park, located along 1,100 feet of beach, provides fishing, playground, boat launching, and picnic facilities. Two sheltered pavilions accommodate the picnic facilities. Veterans Park boasts walking trails among a stand of White and Red Pine, playground, picnic pavilion facilities, and access to the Big Salt River.

A number of other prominent recreation facilities are also available to Township residents. Dow Gardens, the Chippewa Nature Center, the Midland City Forest, Emerson Park, and the Pere Marquette Rail Trail are excellent resources unique to Midland County. In addition, the Midland Community Center provides a series of athletic and recreational amenities, such as gymnasiums, pools, racquetball courts, a wellness center, and a wide variety of other popular facilities.

One community park facility is located in the Township. It is located in the south central area of the Township at 2952 North Jefferson, just south of the Township hall. Park facilities include play equipment and green open spaces.

## UTILITIES AND GROWTH BOUNDARIES<sup>2</sup>

The discussion of Township utilities is not complete without mention of the City of Midland's growth policy. The City of Midland adopted the Midland Urban Growth Area (MUGA) as a means to regulate the continued growth and development of communities directly adjacent to the City. The MUGA is defined by a territorial band outside the City limits, varying in width from one to two miles. Within this band, a policy known as "*No Annexation, No Water*" is in place. This policy states that City of Midland water will not be made available to any development that chooses not to be annexed into the City itself, while those areas outside the MUGA line are able to purchase City water unconditionally. The intent of this approach is to limit the proliferation of sprawl in those areas surrounding the City of Midland. Because a property

<sup>1</sup>"About Us." Midland Public Schools. <http://www.mps.k12.mi.us/about.php>. 17 December 2003.

<sup>2</sup>"Evolution of an Urban Growth Policy." City of Midland. <http://www.midland-mi.org/government/departments/planning/Planning/muga.htm>. 18 December 2003.

that seeks annexation into the City must be contiguous to it, the policy helps curb urban sprawl, and limits new development occurring unchecked as far as two miles from the City boundary. The MUGA approach, however, permits the City of Midland to sell water service to outlying areas of the County, where alternative clean water sources are not otherwise available.

Following the adoption of the MUGA policy, development continued directly adjacent to the City's borders. However, development opportunities also occurred in Larkin Township in outlying areas. Some of the proposed developments, most notably the Meijer Store, petitioned for annexation into the City of Midland. It was at this point the Township and the City negotiated the Urban Cooperation Act Agreement, to find a mutually beneficial outcome. The results of this agreement include:

- The MUGA line in Larkin Township was modified and defined by both municipalities;
- Larkin Township agreed to support annexation within the MUGA through the joint resolution process or the State Boundary

Commission process;

- The City agreed to share revenue generated from the annexed properties; and,
- The City agreed to enter into water negotiations with Larkin Township for an area outside the revised MUGA boundary.

Due to this agreement, some Township residents within the water district may purchase water through the auspices of the Township at the City resident rate, directly from the City as a retail customer. The following map shows the existing water main network of the Township.

