



Existing Land Use

Master Land Use Plan



This portion of the plan presents an overview of existing land use that is based on a land use field inventory. Comparisons of land use are also made to the previous Master Plan completed in 1983. Data from this analysis were used in a number of different steps and evaluations in the development of the Master Plan. The existing land use data was also developed into a layer of the City's geographic information system so that the data could be presented and analyzed in a variety of ways, including the attached existing land use map. The mapping effort relied on the tax maps maintained by the City's Equalization Department to delineate the land parcels.

In addition to this section, additional land use detail may be found under the section discussing the City's thirteen sub-area districts. Also, the Downtown and Lakeshore Redevelopment Plan, a separate component of the Master Plan, contains extensive land use information on the City's Core Downtown.

Descriptions of each category illustrated on the existing land use map are provided below.

Single and Two-Family Residential

Single-family detached dwellings, and two-family dwellings (flats, duplexes, and similar units).

Multi-Family Dwellings

Structures containing three or more dwelling units. All multi-family residential zoning districts were field checked to make a best estimate of actual multi-family use.

Commercial

This category includes land occupied by any type of business, retail and service facilities, and accessory off-street parking areas.

Office

This category includes land occupied by all types of individual office facilities and related off-street parking. Office facilities which are ancillary to commercial or industrial uses are not included in this category.

Industrial

This category includes the land area devoted to all types of light and heavy industrial uses, including warehousing, bump and paint shops, tool and die shops, technological industries, assembly operations, and facilities that manufacture finished or semifinished products from raw materials.

Marinas

Land devoted to publicly and privately owned marinas, including on-site parking areas, loading ramps, and boat storage areas.

Government, Schools, and Museums

This category includes facilities of the City, County, and State, public and private schools, and public museums.

Hospitals and Medical Centers

This category includes medical facilities





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primarily associated with the campuses of Mercy, General, and Hackley Hospitals.

Churches, Cemeteries, and Funeral Homes

This category includes local churches and synagogues, cemeteries, and funeral homes.

Public Parks and Recreation

The category includes public parks, playgrounds, waterfront facilities, state land, and associated uses.

Recreational Facilities and Clubs

This category includes major recreational facilities and clubs of a quasi-public character. Unlike public park facilities, land uses in this classification require membership fees or other forms of compensation as a prerequisite to use.

Road Right-of-Way

This category is not depicted in the legend box of the Existing Land Use Map.

However, it indicates all road right-of-way (ROW) in the City and is detailed within the land use tables.

Vacant

All land that was undeveloped at the time of the land use field survey.

Table 3.1 lists the number of acres within each of the above land use categories. (Note: the following tables utilize land use categories consistent with the 1983 land use inventory in order to offer comparisons of change).

Table 3.2 presents a comparison of the land area in each category in 1983 and 1996.

The land use inventory indicates:

- ◆ the predominate land use is 1-family residential;
- ◆ significant percentage increase in multi-family versus single-family residential units;

Use	Acres	% Total
1-Family Residential	2,091	17.5
Multi-Family Residential	323	2.7
Commercial	382	3.2
Office	143	1.2
Industrial	789	6.6
Public	1,784	14.9
Marina	94	0.8
Road ROW	2,050	17.2
Vacant	1,824	15.3
Surface Water	2,453	20.6
Total	11,933 Acres	

Sources: City of Muskegon 1983 Land Use Inventory City of Muskegon Tax Maps and 1996/1997 field surveys. Percentage figures have been rounded.

Table 3.1 Existing Land Use





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Use	1983	1997	Change (%)
1-Family Residential	1,768	2,091	+ 18.3
Multi-Family Residential	199	323	+ 62.3
Commercial	300	382	+ 27.3
Office	43.5	143	+ 229
Industrial	721	789	+ 9.4
Public	1,504	1,786	+ 18.8
Marina	37	94	+ 154
Vacant	3,243	1,824	-44
Water	2,453	2,453	NA
Road Right-of-Way	1,931	2,050	NA

Sources: City of Muskegon 1983 Land Use Inventory City of Muskegon Tax Maps and 1996/1997 field surveys. Percentage figures have been rounded.

Table 3.2

Comparisons 1983 - 1997

- ◆ significant percentage increase in office space versus general commercial areas;
- ◆ small increase in development of industrial and public land use in the past 14 years;
- ◆ significant percentage increase in marina development(though overall acreage is still small);
- ◆ significant decrease in areas designated as vacant;
- ◆ Muskegon is a mature urban community with a limited amount of developable land;
- ◆ much of the vacant land is subject to constraints posed by location in wetland or floodplain areas;
- ◆ commercial development outside of the core Downtown, Sherman/U.S. 31, and Sherman/Henry areas is decentralized;
- ◆ pedestrian scale neighborhood commercial areas are virtually non-existent;
- ◆ long-established residential and corridor commercial land use patterns have remained generally unchanged since adoption of the City's 1984 Master Land Use Plan;
- ◆ commercial development has encroached upon residential neighborhoods since the 1984 Master Land Use Plan was adopted;
- ◆ the City exhibits a general lack of transition areas and buffers between corridor commercial areas and adjoining residential development. The same is true between industrial areas and adjoining residential development;
- ◆ strip commercial development along the Apple, Getty, Lakeshore, Laketon, and Henry Street corridors generally contain older and underutilized retail and service uses;





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- ◆ industrial development and redevelopment has concentrated in the Port City Industrial Park, and in that area of the City generally east of US 31 and north of Sherman Boulevard; and
- ◆ the Muskegon Lake shoreline presents opportunities for high-quality development and redevelopment that can benefit the City and region. The Muskegon Lake shoreline possesses valuable aesthetic and natural resources not found in many urban centers.

Land Absorption

Based on land use counts between the 1983 and 1997 period, the annual rate of land use change was determined (Table 3.3). Although some caution must be used when applying the data due to potential variations between historic and current information, the counts offer insight into the type and degree of ongoing change. The table reveals that all categories, except for vacant land, experienced growth. Of particular note are the combined rates of

change for single and multiple family residential development. Collectively, these uses absorb approximately 35 acres annually. The other land use showing a significant change is the annual increase in public lands. This reflects the City's aggressive policy of acquiring lands suitable for recreational and other public needs.

Industrial land experiences an absorption rate of approximately 5 acres per year. While this rate appears somewhat low given the growth of such facilities as the Port City Industrial Park, it is also indicative of a need to create new space for industrial use. Based on the Existing Land Use Map, industrial space is relatively limited..

The commercial and office categories expand by approximately 14 acres per year. Historically, this growth has occurred in a decentralized fashion.

Marina development has grown at the rate of approximately 4 acres per year. Additional growth is anticipated as lakeshore areas become available for

Use	Annual Rate (Acres)
1-Family Residential	25
Multi-Family Residential	10
Commercial	6
Office	8
Industrial	5
Public	22
Marina	4
Vacant	89
Water	NA
Road Right-of-Way	9

Note: Reflects 1983 to 1997 Period

Table 3.3

**Annual Land Absorption Rate
1983 - 1997**





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redevelopment opportunities.

Build-out

Based on the absorption trends of the 1983 to 1997 period, the City will utilize all developable vacant lands over an approximate 19 to 20 year period. Since a high percentage of vacant properties are unbuildable due to natural/environmental limitations or are poorly located for desired uses, the City will face increasing demands to redevelop properties in order to accommodate continuing growth.