

PORTLAND TOWNSHIP 2022 COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN



**PORTLAND TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION**

Portland Township Comprehensive Master Plan Updated 2022

Planning Commission Members

Cindy Selden	Chairperson
Ross Schneider	Vice Chairperson
Sue Vanlente	Secretary
Tony Dixon	Member
Marcy Lay	Member
Evelyn Walkington-Jensen	Member
Andrew Huhn	Member

Township Board Members

Christian Jensen	Supervisor
Charlene Keilen	Clerk
Michelle Schneider	Treasurer
Mark Simon	Trustee
Sue Vanlente	Trustee

Zoning Administrator

Jeanne Vandersloot

Update Adopted on

**PORTLAND TOWNSHIP
MASTER PLAN UPDATE 2023
RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION**

WHEREAS, Act 33 of 2008, known as the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, provides for a Township Planning Commission to prepare and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the Township; and,

WHEREAS, the Portland Township Planning Commission has prepared a Master Plan Update consisting of statistical, current and future maps, descriptions of the various districts, census, road, utility, emergency and other data relating to the Township growth in compliance with Act 33; and,

WHEREAS, Portland Township has distributed the draft Master Plan Update to the Ionia County Planning Commission and the Planning Commissions of surrounding units of government, the Township Boards of un-zoned Townships and all other relevant agencies for review and comment in compliance with Act 33 of 2008; and,

WHEREAS, the Portland Township Planning Commission held a properly noticed public hearing on the draft Master Plan Update on June 7, 2023, in accordance with the requirements of Act 33 and other applicable State statutes; and,

WHEREAS, at the public hearing held on June 7, 2023, the citizens of Portland Township were afforded the opportunity to provide oral and written comments on the draft Master Plan Update, which the Planning Commission has taken such comments into consideration; and,

WHEREAS, the Portland Township Planning Commission has adopted a motion by a majority vote of its membership, adoption of the Master Plan Update;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Portland Township Planning Commission does hereby adopt the updated Portland Township Master Plan, to be dated as adopted this day of June 7, 2023.

CERTIFICATION OF ADOPTION:

Motion Offered by: Marcella Lay
Motion Supported by: Tony Dixon
Yeas: 7
Nays: 0
Absent: 0

I, Sue Vanlente, Secretary of the Portland Township Planning Commission, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the Portland Township Planning Commission at a regular meeting held on June 7, 2023 in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

Sue Vanlente

Sue Vanlente, Secretary of the Portland Township Planning Commission
Portland Township, Ionia County, Michigan

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Regional Setting	8
Portland Township Demographics Physical Characteristics	10
Portland Township Base Map	11
Portland Township Aerial Map.....	12
Agriculture	13
DNR Prime Farmland Map.....	16
Commercial and Light Industrial	16
Portland Township Demographic population by age 2020 Census.....	16
Residential Housing	17
Residential High Developed Areas	19
Residential High Developed Areas Map	20
Residential Most Suitable Soils Map	21
Residential Septic Limitations Map	22
Residential Basement Limitations Map	23
Wetlands Map.....	24
Education, Medical, Elder Services	25
Flood Hazard Map	27
Recreation.....	28
Transportation	29
Portland Township Culverts and Bridges Map	32
County Drains Map	33
Utilities	34
Existing Land Use Map.....	35
Future Land Use Map.....	36
Zoning Plan.....	38
2022 Portland Township Master Plan Survey Results	42
Current Township Plans	44

Portland Township Population

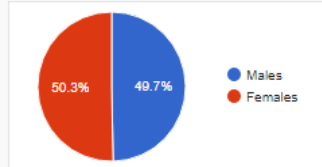
Population	Portland township,
April 1, 2020 (Census 2020)	3,971
April 1, 2010 (Census 2010)	3,404
July 1, 2008 Estimate	2,541
July 1, 2007 Estimate	2,548
July 1, 2006 Estimate	2,544
July 1, 2005 Estimate	2,538
July 1, 2004 Estimate	2,533
July 1, 2003 Estimate	2,503
July 1, 2002 Estimate	2,483
July 1, 2001 Estimate	2,467
July 1, 2000 Estimate	2,444
April 1, 2000 Estimates	2,436
April 1, 2000 (Census 2000)	2,460
April 1, 1990 (Census 1990)	2502
April 1, 1980 (Census 1980)	2245
April 1, 1970 (Census 1970)	1750
April 1, 1960 (Census 1960)	1132

Ionia County Township Populations

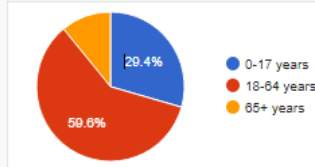
Township	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2022
Otisco	1,479	1,826	1,863	2,243	2,282	2364
Keene	947	1,085	1,376	1,660	1,831	1793
Boston	2,751	3,681	4,313	4,961	5,809	6254
Orleans	1,707	2,230	2,548	2,736	2,743	2777
Easton	3,908	4,501	2,848	2,835	3,082	3176
Berlin	2,213	2,660	1,739	2,787	2,116	2202
Campbell	1,560	1,692	1,814	2,443	2,388	2493
Odessa	3,103	3,531	3,885	4,036	3,778	4068
Sebewa	944	1,105	1,160	1,202	1,171	1172
Orange	866	994	1,047	1,040	987	1051
Ionia	2,444	2,842	3,146	3,669	3,779	4136
Ronald	1,244	1,353	1,715	1,903	1,869	1940
North Plains	1,165	1,345	1,333	1,366	1,279	1232
Danby	1621	2082	2371	2696	2988	3063
Portland	1750	2245	2502	2460	3404	4043
Lyons	2,882	3,126	3,276	3,446	3,465	3653

Portland Township Demographic population by age 2020 Census

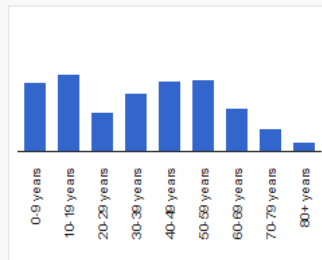
Further information about the population structure:



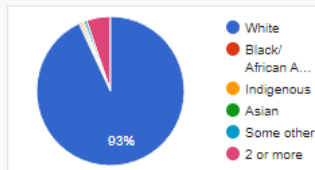
Gender (C 2010)	
Males	1,691
Females	1,713



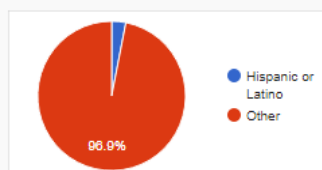
Age Groups (C 2010)	
0-17 years	1,002
18-64 years	2,029
65+ years	373



Age Distribution (C 2010)	
0-9 years	508
10-19 years	572
20-29 years	289
30-39 years	429
40-49 years	517
50-59 years	526
60-69 years	320
70-79 years	168
80+ years	75



»Race« (C 2020)	
White	3,609
Black/African American	15
Indigenous	17
Asian	12
Some other	23
2 or more	205



Ethnicity (C 2020)	
Hispanic or Latino	120
Other	3,761

Introduction

The fundamental purpose of the Master Plan is to allow the Portland Township to set forth, in a comprehensive manner, the goals and objectives for its physical development. This Plan will serve as an advisory guide for maintaining the existing agricultural development of certain areas, and for the development of other areas into a desirable living and working environment for present and future residents of the Township.



Planning is simply a goal-oriented and continuous process which seeks to improve a community and create a better environment. The Master Plan is the means by which this goal can be reached. The Master Plan will be used by both individuals and public officials to make decisions concerning the long-range future of a community.

The Master Land Use Plan:

1. Provides a comprehensive means of looking 10-20 years ahead to meet future needs regarding general and specific aspects of physical development throughout the Township.
2. Provides an official, advisory policy statement for encouraging orderly and efficient use of the land for residences, businesses, industry, parks and recreation areas, and agriculture, and for coordinating these uses of land with each other, with streets and highways, and with other necessary public facilities and services.
3. Provides a logical basis for zoning, subdivision design, public improvement plans, and for facilitating and guiding the work of the Planning Commission and the Township Board as well as other public and private endeavors dealing with the development of the Township.
4. Provides a means for private organizations and individuals to determine how they may relate their building and development projects and policies to official Township planning policies.
5. Provides a means of relating the plans of Portland Township to the plans of the adjacent city and townships for development of the region as a whole.

The final element of the Plan will set forth the recommended goals and needs of the Township with the analysis of existing conditions and trends. The Plan will conclude with an implementation program that will define strategies and will address specific tools for implementation such as new or amended ordinances, regulations, and any other programs.



Most Master Plans are intended to look from 10 to 20 years ahead. The importance of the Master Plan in the planning process is not to establish the precise boundaries or the exact locations of individuals' future land uses, but to establish general areas of existing and future land uses. Its greater function is to serve as a decision making framework. The Master Plan ensures that more detailed future decisions have a clear and rational basis.

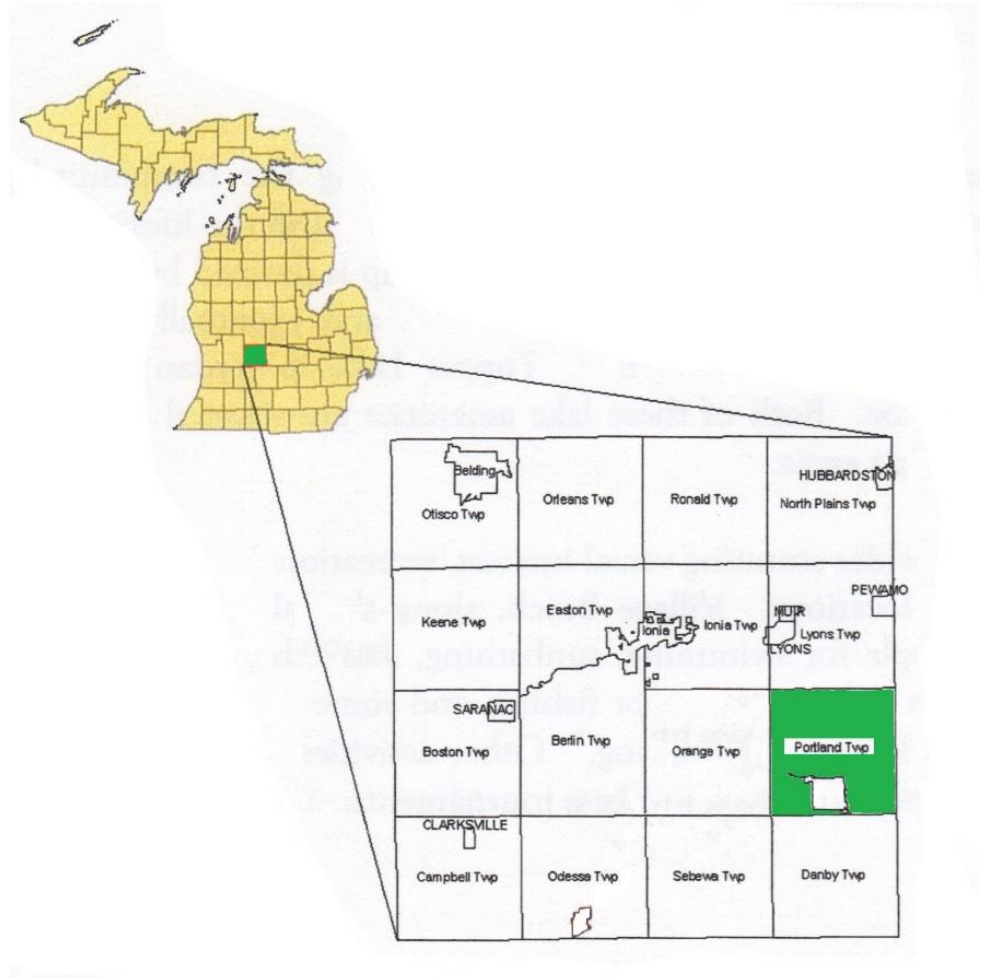
The Michigan Planning Enabling Act 33 of 2008 now requires all Planning Commissions, within every five years, to review the master plan and determine whether to commence the procedure to amend the master plan or adopt a new master plan. The review and its findings shall be recorded in the minutes of the relevant meeting or meetings of the Planning Commission.

Regional Setting

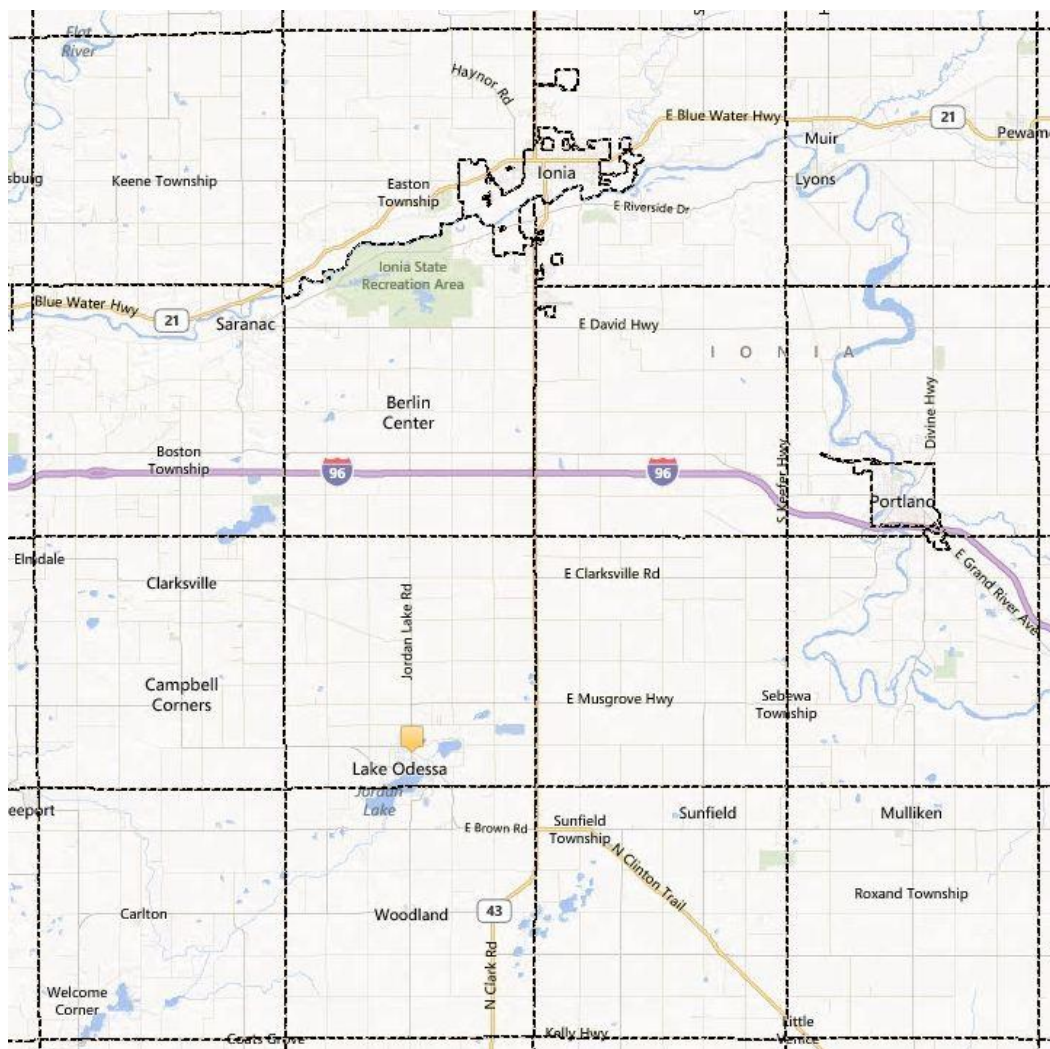
Portland Township is located in the southeastern part of Ionia County near the Lansing metropolitan area. Portland Township is part of Region Eight, West Michigan Regional Planning Commission, which is comprised of Kent Ionia, Allegan, Mecosta, Montcalm, Osceola and Ottawa Counties. The City of Grand Rapids is the largest urban area in Region Eight. Portland Township is closer to the City of Lansing than Grand Rapids. The City of Lansing area is located in the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission.

Portland Township is located between the two metro areas of Grand Rapids and Lansing. These two metro areas are connected by the I-96 expressway. There are three exits from the expressway which serve the Portland Area. The Grand River also runs through the Township. Both of these features have an impact on the Township.

The City of Portland, along with Portland Township, has a rural atmosphere and lifestyle. The outward growth from Lansing has had some effect on the growth of population, and the development of commercial uses within the greater Portland area. Coordinated planning between the Lansing area and that of the Portland area is nonexistent due to the fact that they are both located in different regional planning commission areas.



Portland Township must not lose sight of its individual identity as that of a rural township. Development pressures were strong from 2000 to 2006, then dropped off significantly due to the mortgage crisis and job losses. Housing developments had slow lot sales from 2008-2014 and not many new houses were being built. In 2014 new home permits began to increase. From 2014 to now, the demand for new homes has increased greatly, but the Covid 19 pandemic created many conditions that have made it difficult to build. Material costs have skyrocketed and it's very hard right now to find a builder who has a full crew.



Despite the demand for housing, it is never a good idea for the Township decision makers to make hasty development decisions. It is important to take sufficient time to adequately analyze all development proposals in light of community goals and policies in order to promote orderly and desirable development. The Township, in its Zoning Ordinance, has a detailed site plan review process and also a Subdivision Ordinance to use for developments.

Portland Township Demographics Physical Characteristics

Area

Full Township Including City Has:	23, 040 Acres
City Of Portland Has:	1705 Acres
Portland Township Has Left:	21,335 Acres
Acres in Act 116	6973 Acres

Township in 2000	32.44 Square Miles
Township in 2022	32.18 Square Miles
City in 2000	2.40 Square Miles
City in 2022	2.64 Square Miles

Rivers

Grand River	7.5 Miles
Looking Glass River	2.0 Miles

Roads

Primary Paved	17.26 Miles
Primary Gravel	2.25 Miles
Secondary Paved	4.03 Miles
Secondary Gravel	39.66 Miles
Total Roads	63.20 Miles

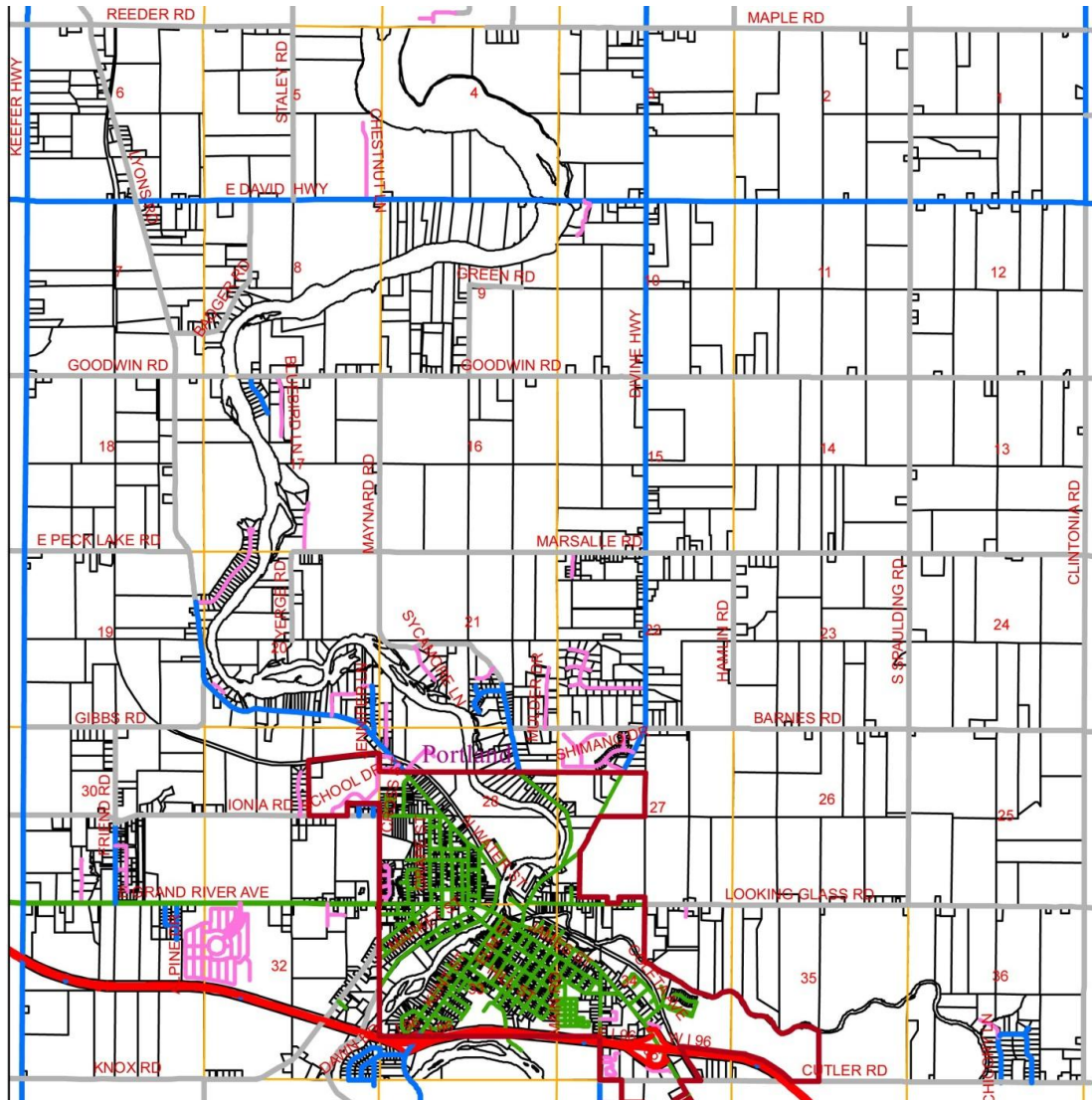
Bridges and Culverts

Which Are 3' or Larger In Width	37 Total
---------------------------------	----------

Utilities

Consumers Electric	22.5 Miles
Tri County Electric	25 Miles
Portland City Electric	10 Miles Overhead
	11 Miles Underground

Portland Township Base Map

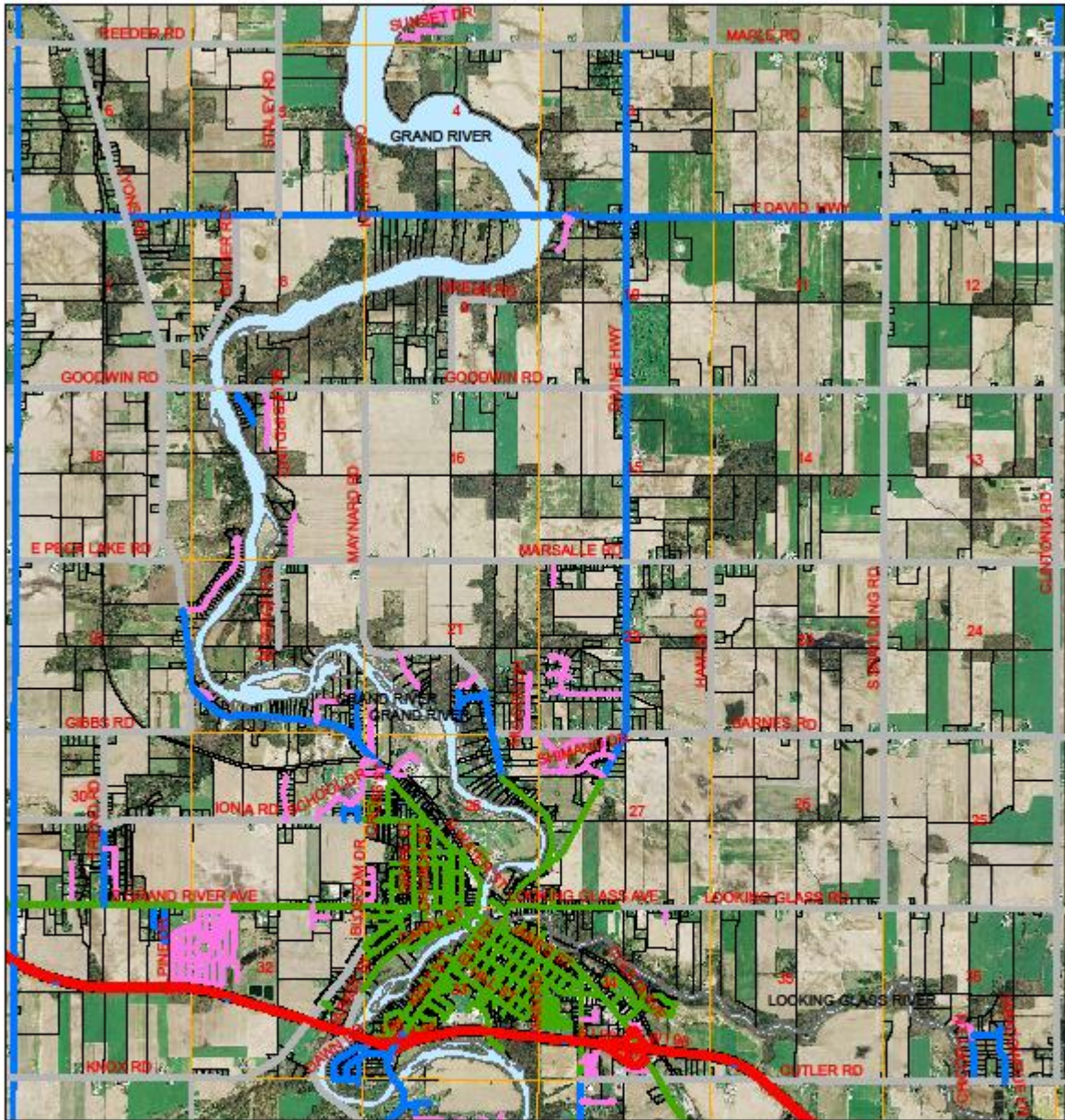


LEGEND

Road Type

- Gravel
- Paved
- Private
- State Hwy
- Street
- Drive Way
- Section Lines

Portland Township Aerial Map



PORTLAND TOWNSHIP



Agriculture

Agriculture is the single most important aspect in Portland Township. A typical square township in Michigan has 36 sections or 23,040 acres. Portland Township has approximately 33 sections after having lost approximately 3 sections to the City of Portland. Most of the acres in Portland Township are high production soils. Each of the remaining 33 sections can be divided into very high productive soils, mixture of very high and low production soils, and low production soils.



Most of the high production soils in Portland Township are one of the following types: Blount, Brookston, Celina, Conover, and Miami. These soils have a productivity rating in the range of 90% to 100%.

High productivity soils consists of 14,480 acres in Portland Township. This amounts to 68% of the total land in the township.

Agricultural land in P.A. 116 in Portland Township consists of 6973 acres, about 1127 acres less than from the 1996 plan. Land in P.A. 116 is 30% of the total Township land. 1127 acres of farm land has been taken out of the P.A. 116 program, which is a 21% reduction. Land being farmed in the Township is 15,245 acres. The larger areas farmed are in the northeast quarter and the middle of the Township and has the most land in the program.

Prime Agricultural Land

Specific factors influencing prime agricultural land include the following: (1) productivity rating of the soil, (2) slope, (3) drainage, (4) parcel size and shape, (5) proximity to developed areas.

Agriculture has top priority in prime agricultural land area. The purpose of the prime agricultural land area in Portland Township are the following:

To encourage agriculture and to discourage non-farm development and the premature removal from agricultural production.

To encourage property owners to enroll prime agricultural land into the P.A. 116 Farmland Preservation Program.

To encourage expansion of existing agricultural-related businesses and development of new agribusinesses.

To work with MSU-Ionia County Cooperative Extension Service and the Ionia County Soil and Water Conservation District on farmland preservation issues.



Secondary Agricultural Land

Secondary Agricultural land may include land classified as high productive rated soil and land in P.A. 116. This land is more suitable for development because it is located close to existing developed areas. Less than 90% productive agricultural land that is currently being used for agricultural purposes is also included in the Secondary Agricultural land class.

Prior to allowing major development to occur, a careful evaluation of site characteristics, impact on adjacent lands and the ability of the land to accommodate the proposed use should be undertaken.



IN CONCLUSION Agriculture is the single most important aspect in Portland Township. The goal of Portland Township Government should be to: encourage and promote appropriate uses and to discourage or prohibit inappropriate uses of Prime Agricultural Land. The Township can do this by giving agricultural business (farms and farmers) top priority over all other types of uses within the Prime Agricultural Areas.

Soil Types

The various soil types are shown in the following pages of maps. The first map shows the prime farmland soils. The color detailed soil maps broken down by quarter section of the Township show color and letter/numbers of the soil types. The first capital letter is the initial of the soil name. A second capital letter shows the slope. Some symbols without a slope letter are those of nearly level soils or land types, but some are for soils or land types that have a considerable range in slope. A final number, 2 or 3 in the symbol shows that the soil is moderately eroded or severely eroded.

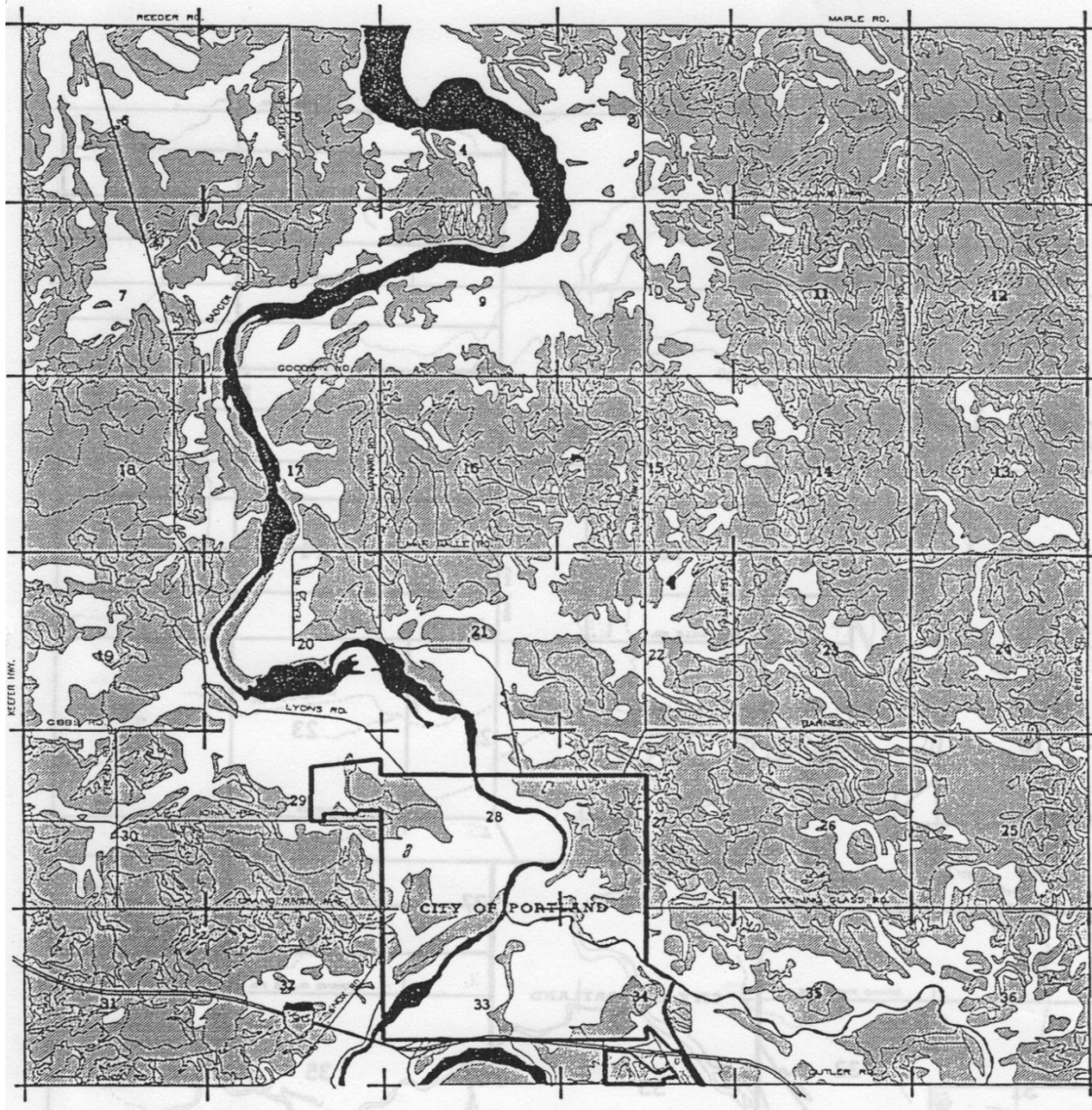


The color maps soil types starting with the “B” types are Boyer sandy loam. The “C” types are Celina loam and Conover loam. The “D” types are Dryden sandy loam; the (F) types are Fox sandy loam and sandy clay loam; the (K) types are Kibble loam; the (M) types are Marlette loamy sand, Miami-Owosso sandy loams and Metamora sandy loam. The (L) types are Lapeer sandy loams; the (S) types are Spinks loamy sand and the (W) types are Wasepi-Brady loamy sands.



Much of the Township soils are Miami-Celine-Boyer-Marlette of gently undulating to rolling, well drained and moderately well drained loamy soils or Mancelona-Fox-Boyer with level to steep well-drained loamy soils underlain by sand and gravel. The southeast part of the Township is Conover-Brookston with level to gently undulating somewhat poorly drained and poorly drained loamy soils. In the upper northwest part of the Township is Matherton-Sebewa-Wasepi that is level, somewhat poorly drained and poorly drained loamy soils underlain by sand and gravel.

DNR Prime Farmland Map



Prime farmland soils



Water

Detailed online maps are available from the USDA at
websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov

Commercial and Light Industrial

There are three commercial areas in Portland Township. All three areas are located close to the City of Portland. The mixture of residential and commercial in these areas reflects a lack of developmental controls, which existed prior to the zoning ordinance being adopted in 2000.



The major commercial area is located along East Grand River Avenue. This corridor begins at the west boundary line of City of Portland and extends west beyond the west township line to the I-96 highway exit 73. The businesses in this area are presently agricultural equipment sales, school bus garage, bowling with restaurant, mini-storage, auto glass and body repair, concrete foundations and Tri-County Electric. Within Portland Township, this area has the best potential for commercial development. The west end of E Grand River Avenue near Keefer Hwy is the most suited for future commercial uses. Several past rezones to Commercial bear this out along with the open land areas near this intersection.

Lyons Road consists of both commercial and manufacturing. This land is located adjacent to the Grand River and the City boundary and is the light industrial area for Portland Township. Part of the THK (formerly TRW) plant property is in the Township and a small light industrial park is next door.

The businesses located on Divine Highway consist of the auto body shop and the golf course.

The survey of residents that was done in 2022 showed little support for expanding either commercial or industrial within the Township.



Residential Housing

The number of residential housing units in Portland Township grew from 1295 in 2010 to 1518 in 2022, a growth of .85%. The vast majority of housing within the Township is single family homes.

HOUSING	
Total HU (Housing Units)	1,518 (100%)
Owner Occupied HU	1,265 (83.3%)
Renter Occupied HU	195 (12.8%)
Vacant Housing Units	58 (3.8%)
Median Home Value	\$203,510
Average Home Value	\$199,289
Housing Affordability Index ³	193



MOBILE HOME PARK Sun Communities began construction in 1999-2000 on a large mobile home community on East Grand River Ave east of Friend Road. The park has been developed in five phases; the fifth and final phase was begun in the summer of 2022. This will bring them to 500 homes, the maximum that they can develop without additional permission from the Township.

The survey that was done in 2022 showed that Portland Township residents absolutely do not want Sunset Ridge to expand any further, nor do they want any additional mobile home parks to be developed within the Township.

MULTI-FAMILY RENTALS Currently the demand for rentals is outpacing the supply, not only in Portland Township, but the entire mid-Michigan area. The 2022 survey indicated a need for more housing, especially housing that is targeted for young families and senior citizens.

The Blue Spruce Apartments located west of the City limits on East Grand River Ave has six buildings that are always filled to capacity. Other rentals include an apartment building on Ionia Road across from Portland High School., and also several duplexes scattered throughout the Township.

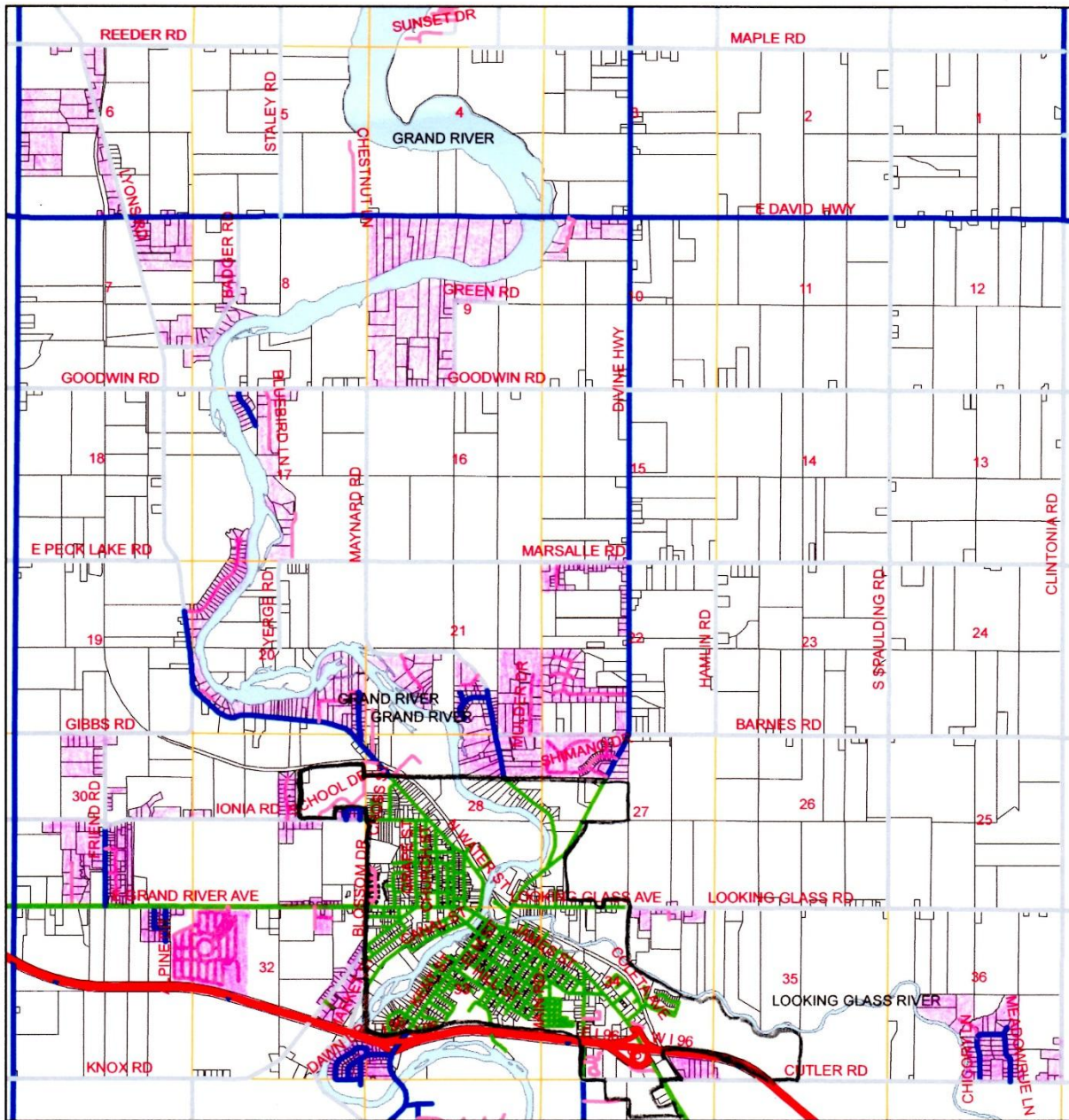
SINGLE FAMILY HOMES There is a great demand for single family homes, but the high cost of building supplies along with the shortage of builders is keeping the growth down in Portland Township. Most of the new homes in the Township are being constructed in the Divine Highlands development, located on Divine Highway, south of Barnes Road.

Residential High Developed Areas

The following list by section number within the Township describes which roads have higher concentrations of houses within those areas:

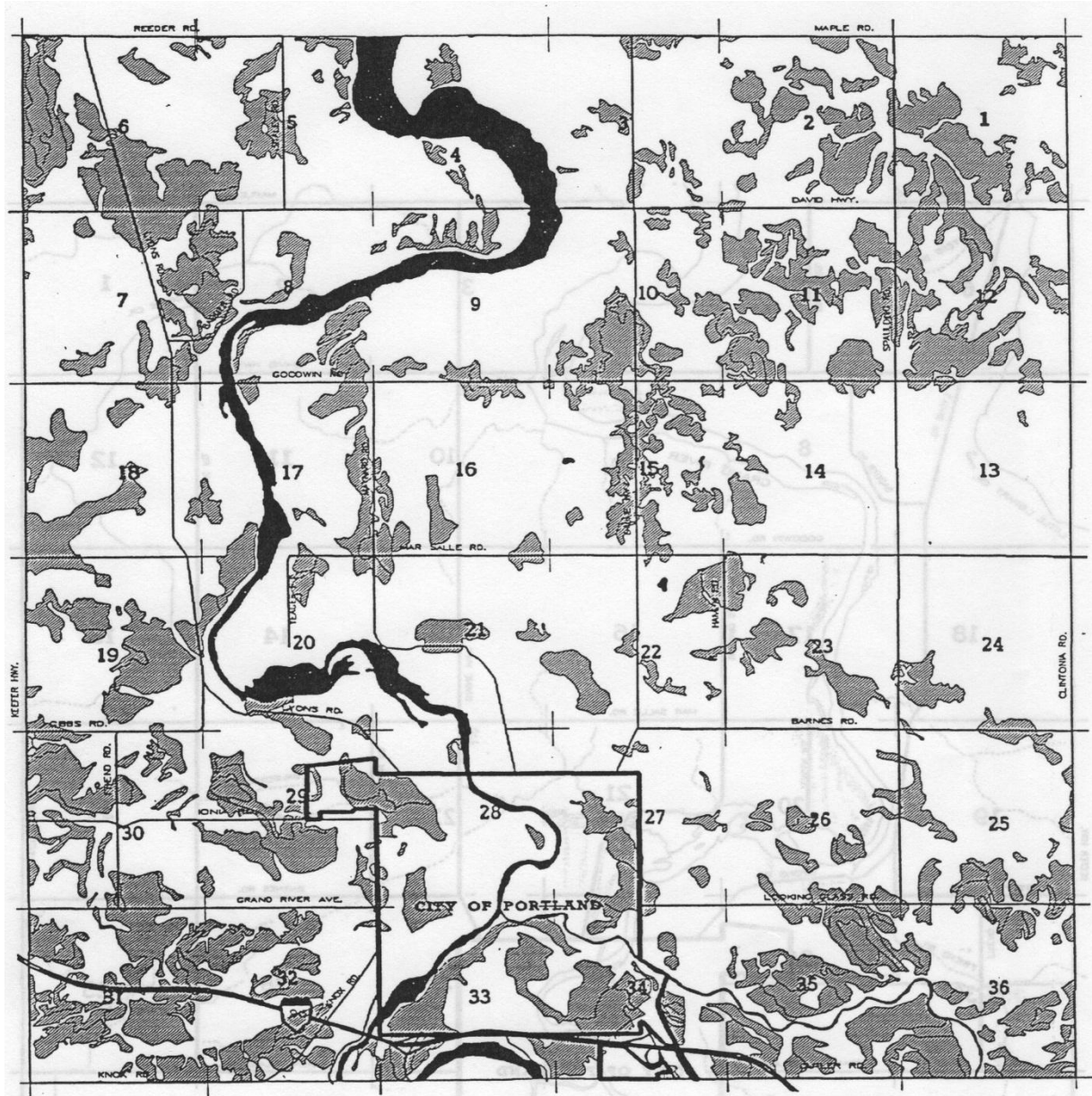
Section Number	Description of Area
6.	Lyons Road from David Hwy north to Reeder Road.
7.	Lyons Road south of David Hwy and along Badger Road
8.	Badger Road along the Grand River.
9.	David Hwy west of Grand River bridge along the south side and north of Goodwin west of Green Road.
17.	North of Marsalle Road on Hendee Lane plus Grand River Estates and Bluebird Lane located at Goodwin Road and the Grand River.
20.	Lyons Road from the city limits to E Peck Lake including the Grand Ridge Estates development, and Olivia Estates.
21.	Maynard Road from city limits to and including Riverest Subdivision. Mulder Drive off Barnes road just east of Maynard Road.
22.	Divine Hwy between Barnes Road and Marsalle Road including Cottonwood Creek development. Plus Marsalle Road west of Divine Hwy on south side for 1/2 mile.
27.	Looking Glass Road 1/2 mile east from city limits and south along Barnes Rd and Divine Hwy with the Divine Highlands development.
28.	North of City limits along Maynard Rd.
29.	Ionia Road 1/2 mile west from city limits including Rock Ridge development.
30.	Friend Road north of Grand River Ave up to and west on Gibbs Rd including Friendbrook Acres and Friendly Acres developments.
31.	Spohn Subdivision on Grand River Ave including a portion of Sunset Ridge Mobile Home Park.
32.	Grand River Ave 1/2 mile west of city limits including a portion of Sunset Ridge Mobile Home Park and the Blue Spruce Apartments. Also Knox Rd between the city limits and the 1-96 freeway plus a portion of the Stillmeadow Subdivision of Kent St.
33.	The east portion of Stillmeadow Subdivision off of Kent Street.
34.	Cutler Road from E Grand River Ave to the Freeway overpass plus Cutler Road from the Looking Glass River to Clintonia Road including the Looking Glass River View subdivision.

Residential High Developed Areas Map



Developed Residential
 City Boundary

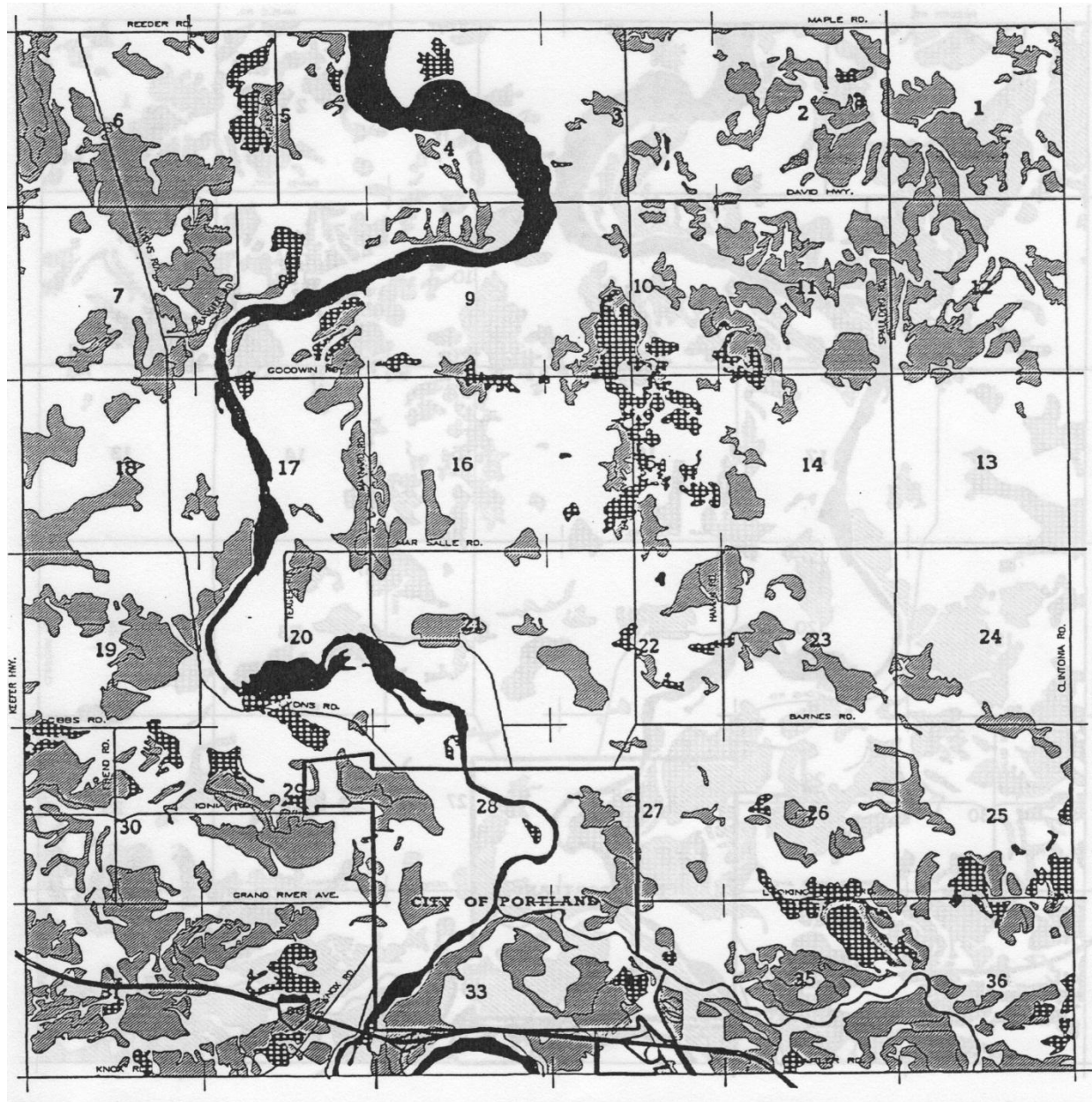
Residential Most Suitable Soils Map



- Soils most suitable for development with slight/moderate limitations for both septic systems and basements.
- Water

Detailed online maps are available from the USDA at: websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov

Residential Septic Limitations Map



Severe limitations



Slight limitations

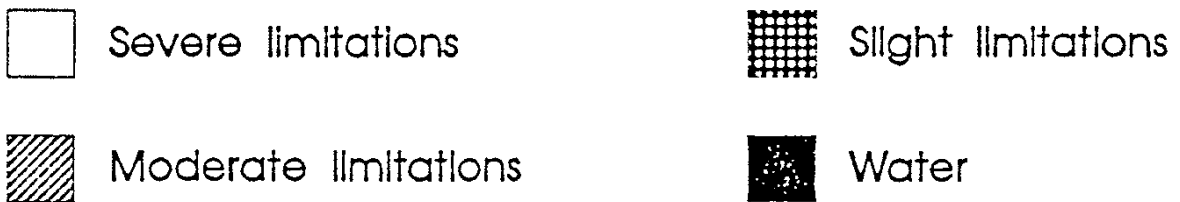
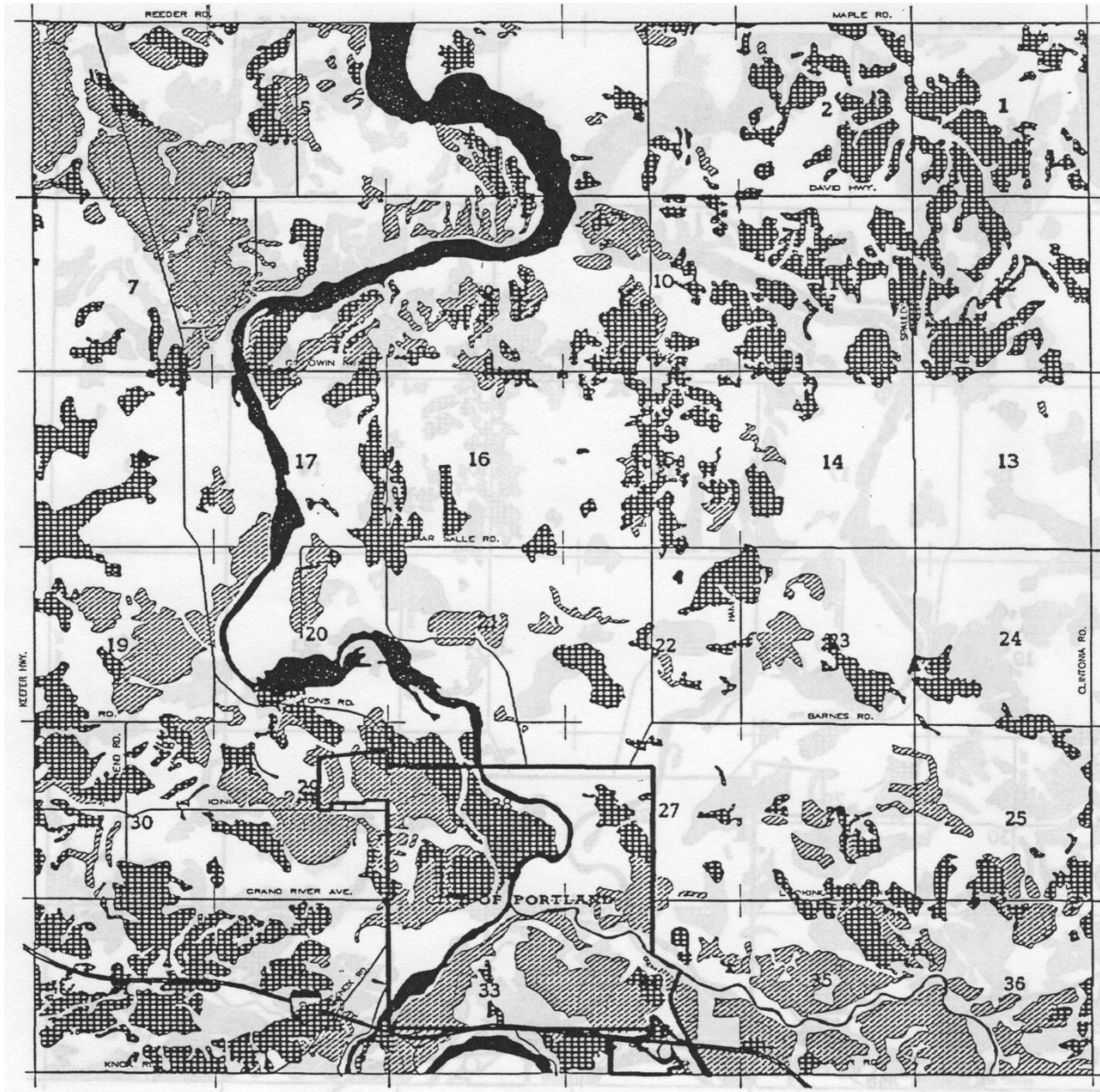


Moderate limitations



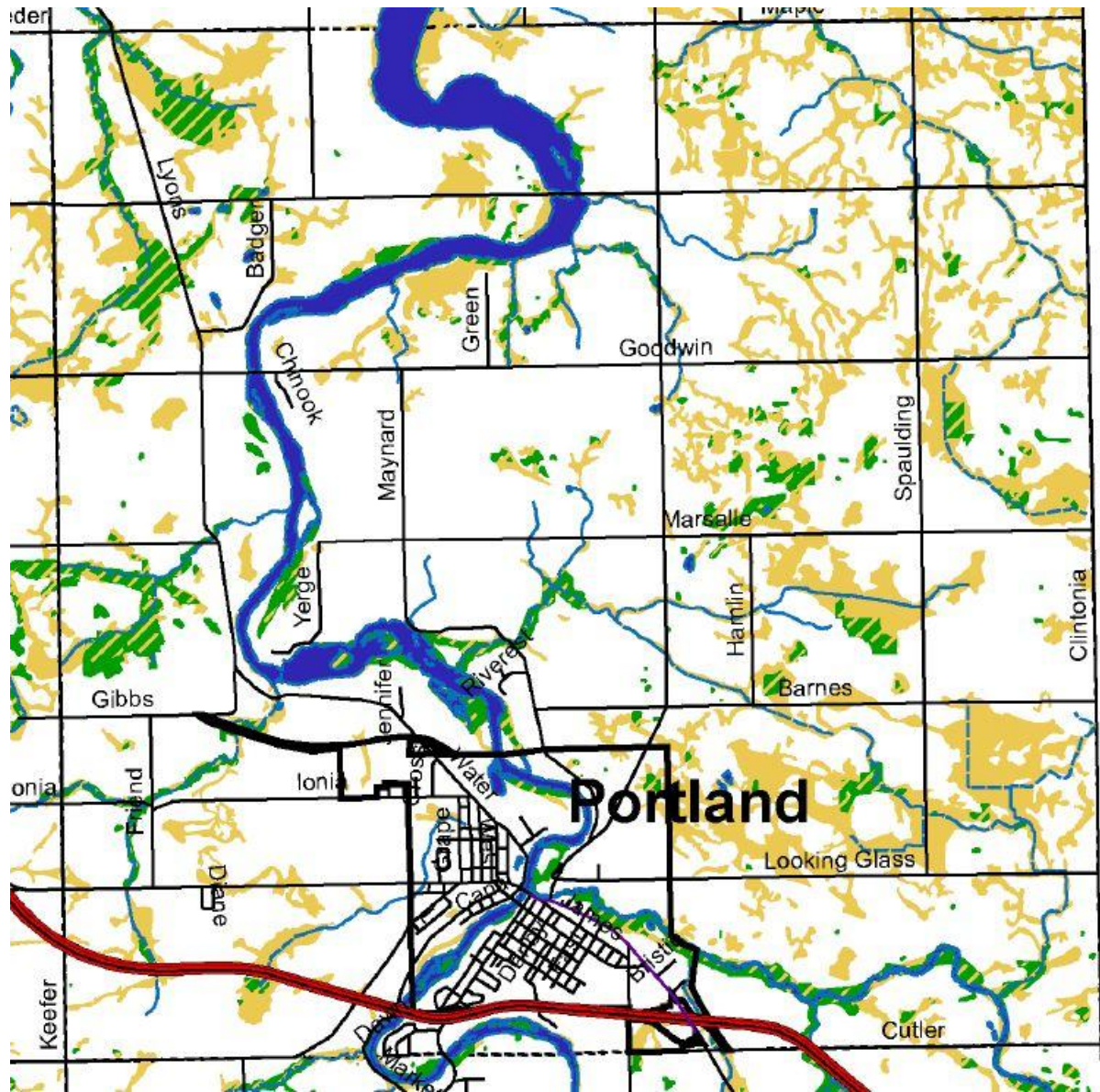
Water

Residential Basement Limitations Map



Detailed online maps are available from the USDA at: websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov

Wetlands Map



- Wetlands as identified on NWI and MIRIS maps
- Soil areas which include wetland soils (Striped areas include both types)
- City Boundary

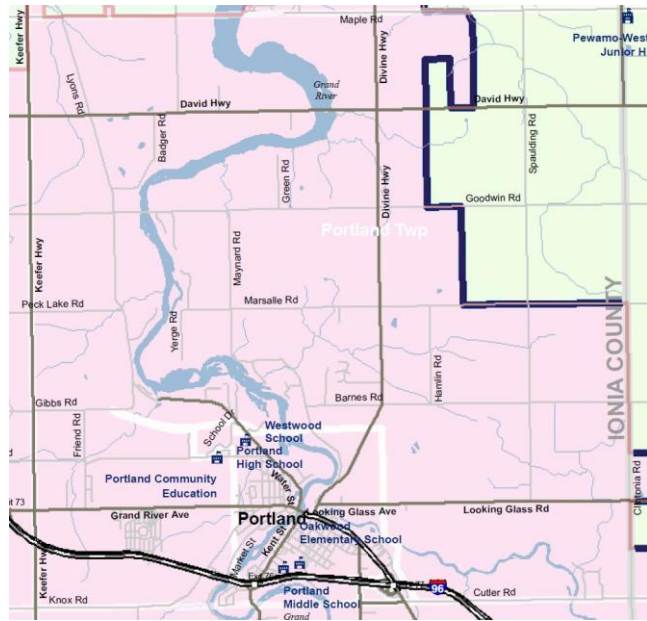
Portland Township online wetlands maps are available at: mcgi.state.mi.us/wetlands/

Michigan's wetland statute, Part 303, Wetlands Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, defines a wetland as "land characterized by the presence of water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, wetland vegetation or aquatic life, and is commonly referred to as a bog, swamp, or marsh."

Education and Medical

Education School Districts

Two Public School Districts serve Portland Township. The main school district is the Portland Public Schools and the northeastern part of the Township is part of Pewamo-Westphalia School District. St. Patrick Catholic School is the only major Private School.



the
its

Higher Education Institutions

The residents of Portland Township have a good choice in the fact that there are at least 14 colleges located within 35 miles. The colleges in the Grand Rapids area are Community College, Western Michigan University satellite campus, Grand Valley University satellite campus, Davenport University, Michigan State University's Medical School, Aquinas College, Cornerstone University, Calvin College, University of Phoenix, Ferris State College satellite campus, and Kendall College of Art. Colleges in the Lansing area, within about 20 miles, are Lansing Community College, Davenport University Northwood University satellite campus, Michigan State University, and Western Michigan University satellite campus. Montcalm Community College is also an option for Township residents.

Medical Hospitals

Three hospitals located in Lansing (which is about 20 miles east of Portland) and a hospital south of the City of Ionia located about 10 miles from Portland serve Portland Township.

Portland Township contributes to the local ambulance services budget along with other units of government including the City of Portland, Danby Township, Westphalia Village and Township, Orange Township, Pewamo Village and Sebewa Township. The Sparrow Ionia Hospital is located south of Ionia on M-66 just south of the Ionia Airport. This new location allows faster access, and close proximity to the freeway. It also has a heliport for helicopter flights of critically injured persons.

Independent Living, Assisted Living, Nursing Homes

The Portland area is home to a new facility for senior independent and assisted living. The Brook, located on the east side of the City of Portland on Rindelhaven Commons, offers seniors a chance to live in their own apartments and still share common areas with others. The Portland Memory Center on Charlotte Hwy, offers nursing home care for elderly who need more care than assisted living offers. It also offers care for patients with memory impairment.

The Portland area also has two adult foster care homes, one of which is located within the Township.

Medical Offices

The Portland area has two physicians' offices. There are also physician offices in nearby Ionia, Lyons, Lake Odessa and Saranac.

Four dentists' offices, two optometrist offices, two chiropractor offices, two physical therapy centers, two counseling centers, and two pharmacies, also serve the residents of the Portland area.

Emergency Services

The emergency services provided directly by Portland Township are ambulance and fire protection. Both of these are paid for from the general fund by Portland Township. The day to day operation of the ambulance department is under the City of Portland's management. Portland Township, Danby Township and the City of Portland have negotiated, created and adopted the Portland Area Fire Authority (PAFA) which owns, runs, and maintains the fire department. The PAFA has been effective and has done a great job of updating equipment. In 2019 they purchased a new fire engine.

The Police protection for Portland Township comes from the Ionia County Sheriff's Department. The Township is not involved in providing a police protection program. The Michigan State Police also give protection to the Township, and with the modern 911 system, which utilizes Smart 911, residents consistently get an immediate response.

Portland Township does participate in the FEMA Flood Hazard Program. The Township has been mapped by the Federal Government. Flood Hazard Insurance is available for any building

within the Township from the government at less cost than private insurance. Residents can go to the FEMA website to look at their own property

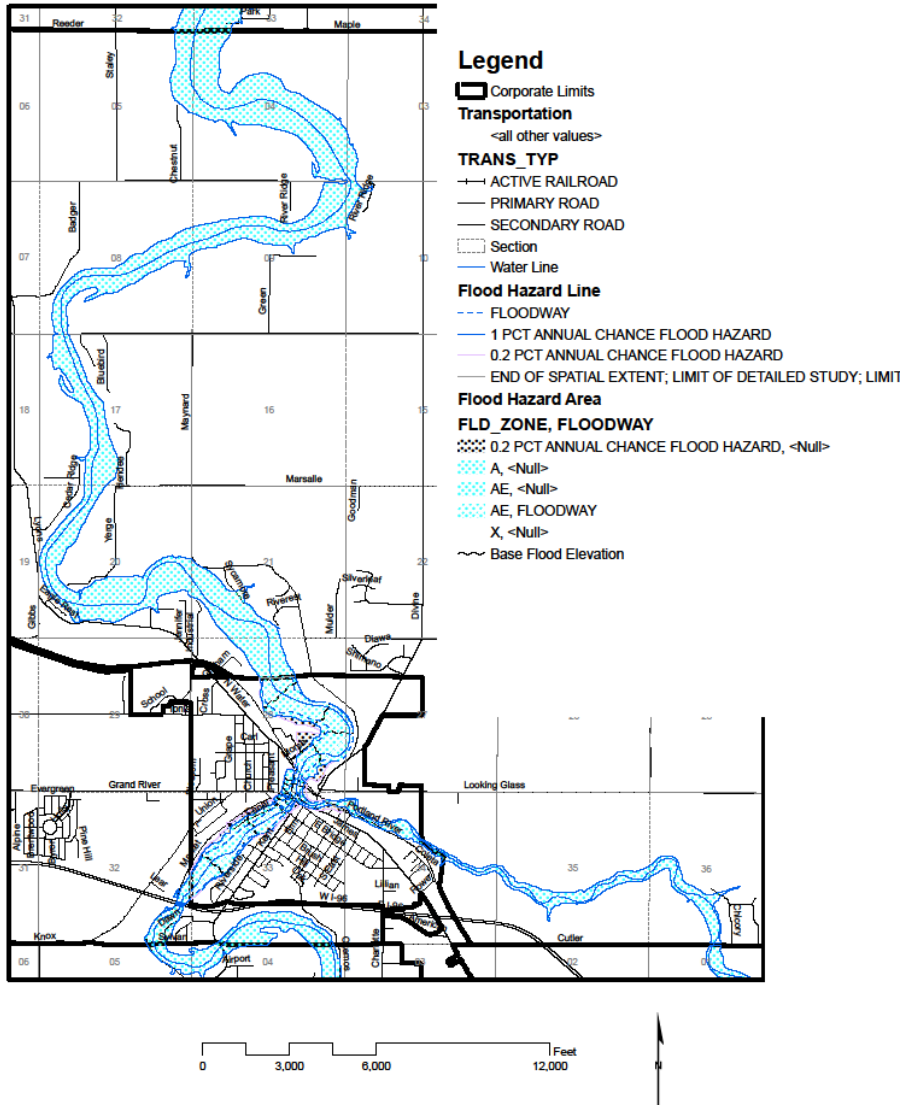


Flood Hazard Map

Portland Township Preliminary FIRM

Not an official FEMA document. Prepared by MDEQ using preliminary data presented at January 10, 2013 CCO Meeting. Official FEMA Preliminary Flood Data are available at the following web site:

<http://www.fema.gov/view-your-communitys-preliminary-flood-hazard-data-0>



Detailed flood plain maps are available at: www.floodsmart.gov

Recreation

Recreation facilities furnished by a community are an important part of the well-being and quality of life in that community. In addition to providing recreational activities, such areas also provide vistas of open spaces.

Within a rural area, such as Portland Township, the provision of public outdoor recreation areas may not be as critical as in urbanized areas because of the abundance of open space. Nevertheless, public recreation sites are important for the provision of certain facilities and amenities such as tennis courts, ball fields, picnic grounds, playgrounds, a new river walk, etc., which would otherwise be unavailable to Township residents. The Township currently does not have any parks or playgrounds. Portland Township does share six-plus acres of community parks and play fields which belong to the City of Portland. Portland Township contributes funding with the City of Portland and supports both the recreation programs and also the care of the community facilities. Portland City has greatly expanded its trail system and residents of the City and Township can ride bicycles, roller skate or walk on these trails. The 8.5 mile trail system circles the City.



The Michigan Department of Natural Resources owns about 70 acres of land abutting the Grand River and fronting on the north side of Goodwin Rd near Green Rd and is open for hunting and hiking uses.

The Grand River course in the Township is 7.5 miles. The Grand River is the most important natural recreational resource in the Township. Although there are three boat access sites in the area, this natural

resource is still being under-utilized. Two are in Danby Township. One is on west Towner Rd and is a hand carry boat access only. The second is adjacent to the bridge on Charlotte Hwy and is a hand carry access with no boat launch but has close parking to the water. The other is on the Webber Dam impoundment near Lyons and has a hard surfaced access ramp. Another public access on a main road would allow for greater usage of the Grand River for boating, fishing, and other related recreational activities.

The Township Planning Commission feels that the recreation program that Portland Township pays for and offers to the Township population is very good in meeting the needs of the Township residents at a reasonable cost to the Township government.

Transportation

The most important transportation mode in Portland Township is the surface road and highway network for the use of private automobiles. There is no transit organization providing general public service, although each school district provides bus transportation to its students.

The roads and highway system, are vital to the residents of Portland Township. Not only does this system provide for personal trips, it is also important to the agriculture industry. From this standpoint the roads and highway system can be considered an economic asset to the community.

As the first step in more completely analyzing the transportation system, a road system inventory and analysis will provide some insight. The network is composed of different types of roads classified by the type of function they serve, and also by their construction and maintenance standards. The types are:

State Trunk Line

The only state trunk line in the Township consists of 4.5 miles of 1-96, linking Lansing with Grand Rapids. Portland Township has 3 exits which serve the residents.

County Primary Roads

There are 19.51 miles of primary roads of which 17.26 are paved and 2.25 are gravel. Two of the primary roads (East Grand River Avenue west of the City of Portland and Divine Highway north of the City of Portland) are connectors that flow traffic not only in and out of the City of Portland, but also do the same for the 1-96 Highway Interchange. Ionia County Road Commission has taken responsibility of maintenance and improvement of primary roads in Portland Township.

Secondary Roads

Portland Township has 43.69 miles of secondary roads of which 4.03 are paved and 39.66 are gravel. The Ionia County Road Commission does patching, minor tree trimming, intersection mowing, snow plowing and routine pothole filling and grading maintenance on secondary roads. The Township contracts with the Road Commission for applying new gravel with grading and bringing road improvements such as culverts, rebuilding a section of roadway or repaving. These costs are paid for by Portland Township through the General Fund and a .5 mill tax which is designated only for road improvements.

Bridges & Culverts

There are 37 total bridges and culverts in the Township that are 3 feet or larger in width. One former major bridge, located on Goodwin Road over the Grand River has been closed. The Township continues to look for a solution for the closed bridge, which can be very dangerous. Fences have been constructed at each end and signs erected, in an attempt to eliminate foot traffic. Another possible solution would be to give the bridge away to an entity that could use it, but so far there has been no interest.

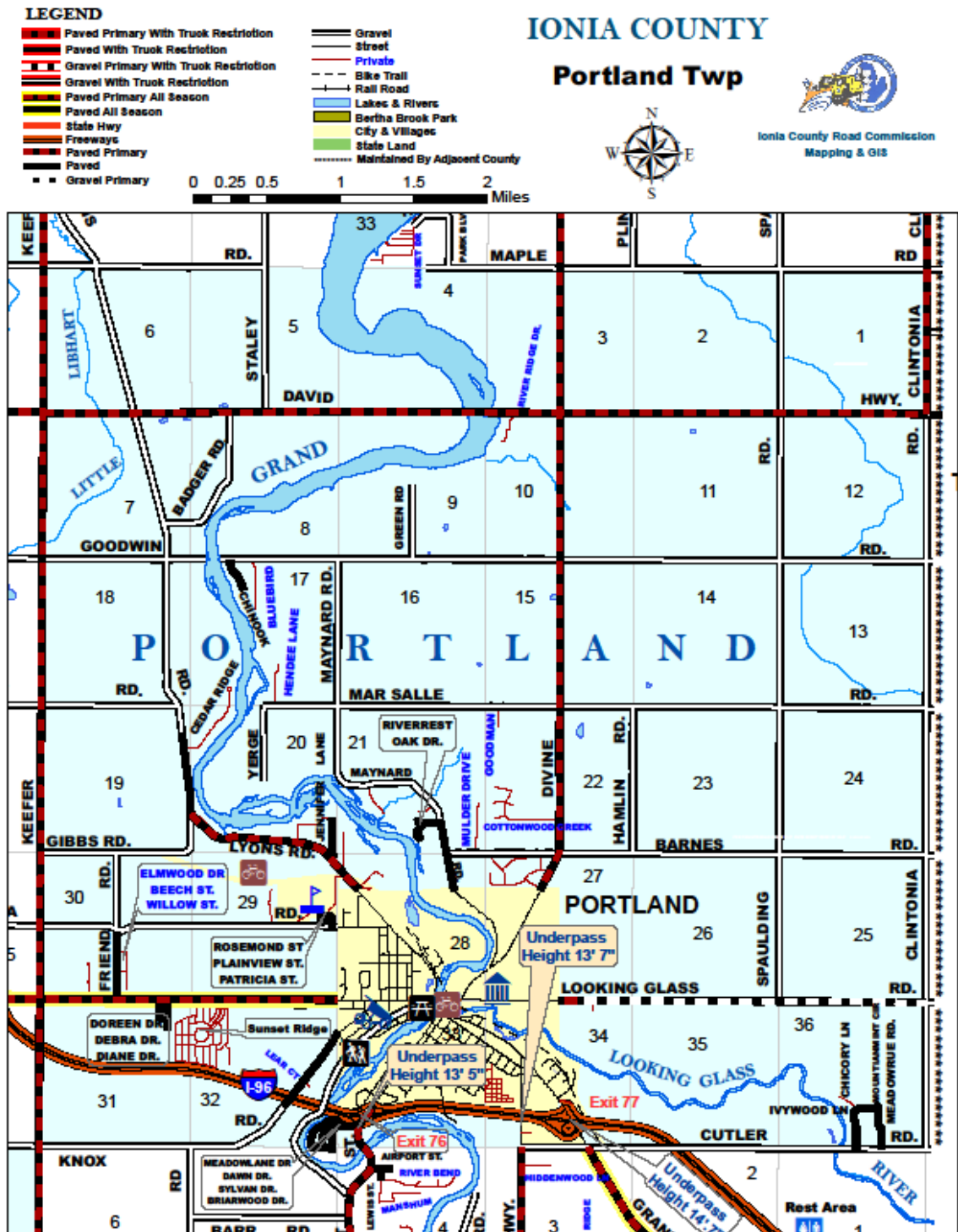
A large project that is currently being done is a new bridge on Cutler Road, over the Looking Glass River. Cutler Road is a county boundary road between Portland and Danby Townships. Because of formulas that were drawn up and agreed upon many years ago, the upkeep of the road is Danby's responsibility. In 2018, Portland Township made a one-time offer to Danby to share the cost of improving the road so that the maintenance would be easier and it would be a better driving experience for our residents. The plans included increased ditching (this was begun in 2018 and has continued), improving the surface, and finishing it off with either limestone or asphalt. All of this was scheduled to be completed in 2021. Unfortunately, the 2020 Covid pandemic threw all of the plans into a tailspin and they are only now beginning to get back on track. The bridge should be completed by the end of 2022. Hopefully, the road surfacing will be completed in 2023.

The Township government levies 1/2 mill for road and bridge work in addition to using money from the Township's general fund. The Township pays for road gravel application and grading on certain chosen roads that need it each year. Brining is done on all gravel roads to control dust and is paid for by the Township.

In 2022 the Ionia County Road Department contacted several large farmers in the NE section of the Township and asked them to contribute to extra brine for the roads they use heavily. At this time, several have agreed. This extra brine should help the Township maintain those gravel roads more easily.

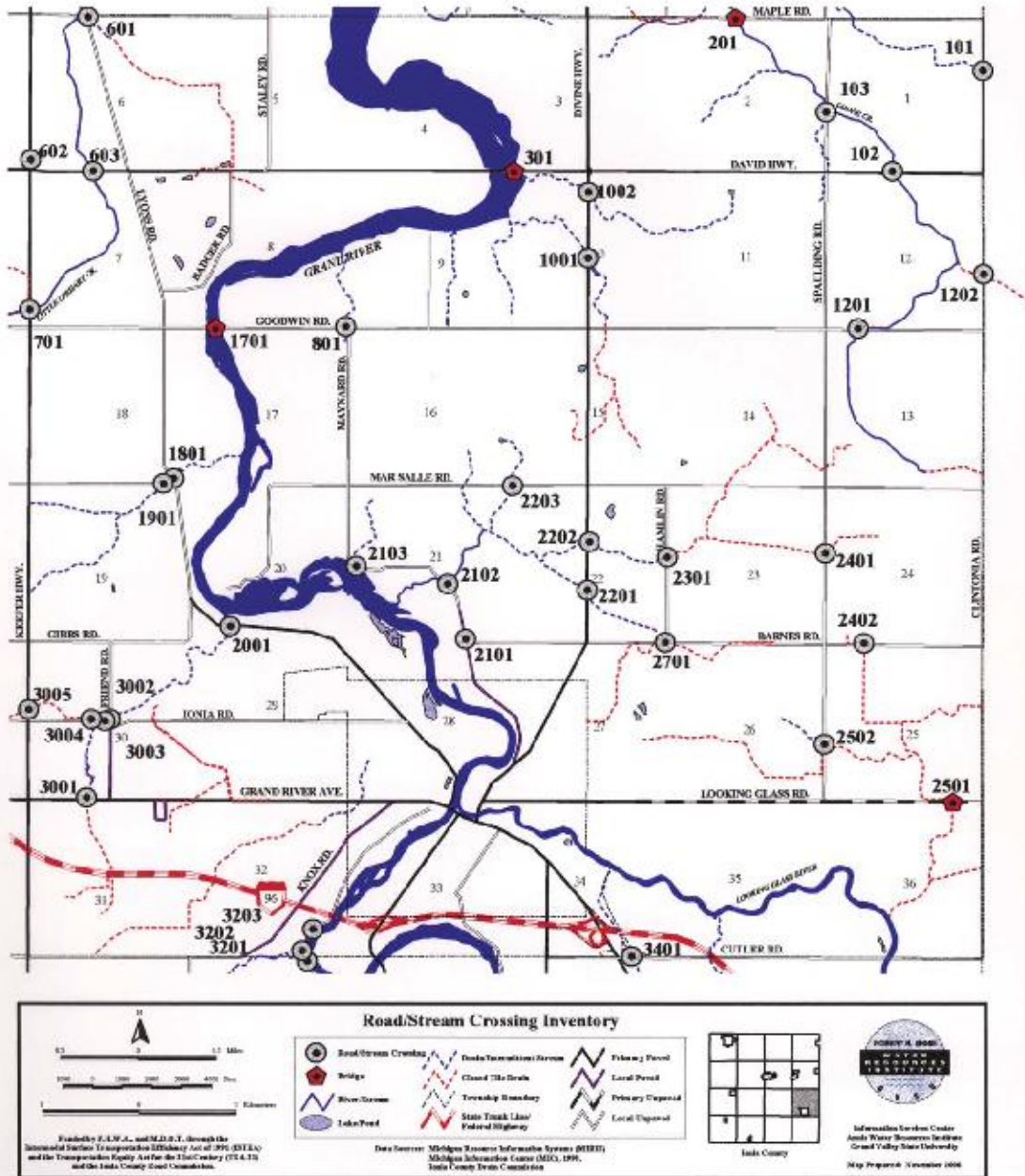
The map on the next page shows the various types of road classifications.

Road Classification Map

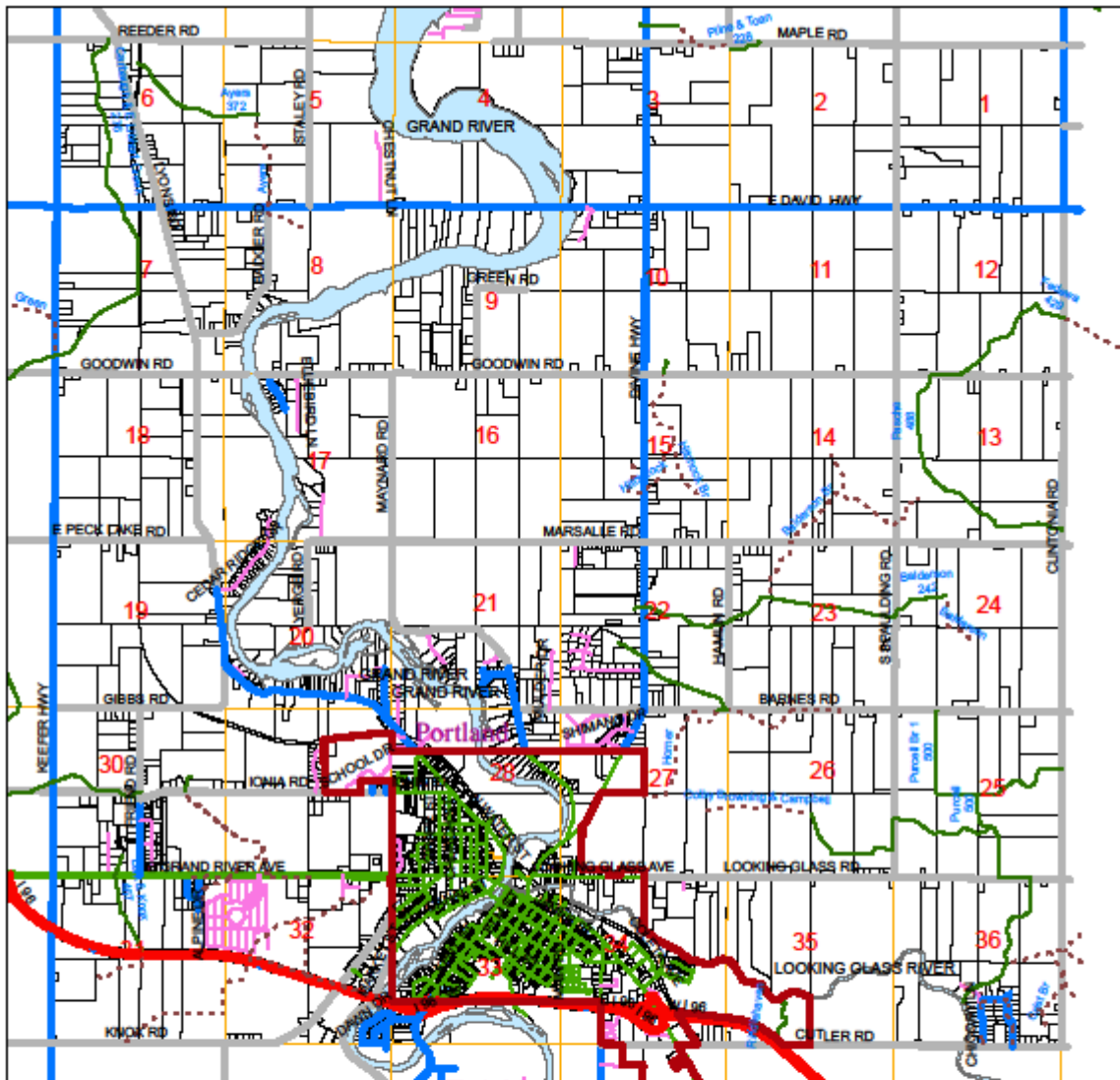


Portland Township Culverts and Bridges

Portland Township - Ionia County



County Drains



- Legend**
- CityBoundary
 - OpenDrain
 - - - TileDrains
- Roads**
- Type**
- AllSeason
 - Gravel
 - Paved
 - Private
 - StateHwy
 - Street
 - Driveway
 - River

Portland Township



Utilities

Electric utilities for Portland Township are provided by Tri-County Electric, City of Portland, and Consumers Energy.



Consumers Energy gas lines have expanded into many areas of the Township. Gas lines serve Knox Rd between the City and the freeway and also the Still Meadows subdivision; along E Grand River Ave from the City to Keefer Hwy, including the Spohn subdivision and Sunset Ridge; serves the subdivision along Friend Rd and slightly past the intersection of Friend Rd and Ionia Rd; serves Lyons Rd up and into Grand Ridge Estates including the Industrial Park; goes up Maynard Rd to

and including the subdivision on Riverest Dr; goes east on Looking Glass Rd to slightly past Spaulding Rd; runs along Cutler Rd up to Grand River Ave and along Divine Hwy up to $\frac{3}{4}$ mile past Barnes Rd. Over the past five years, additional lines have been run.

Water needs of the Township are serviced by private wells which seem to be adequate. Some homes are served by public water lines from the City of Portland along E Grand River Ave west of the Township line and also the THK plant on Lyons Rd. Sunset Ridge has its own water with a private well system.

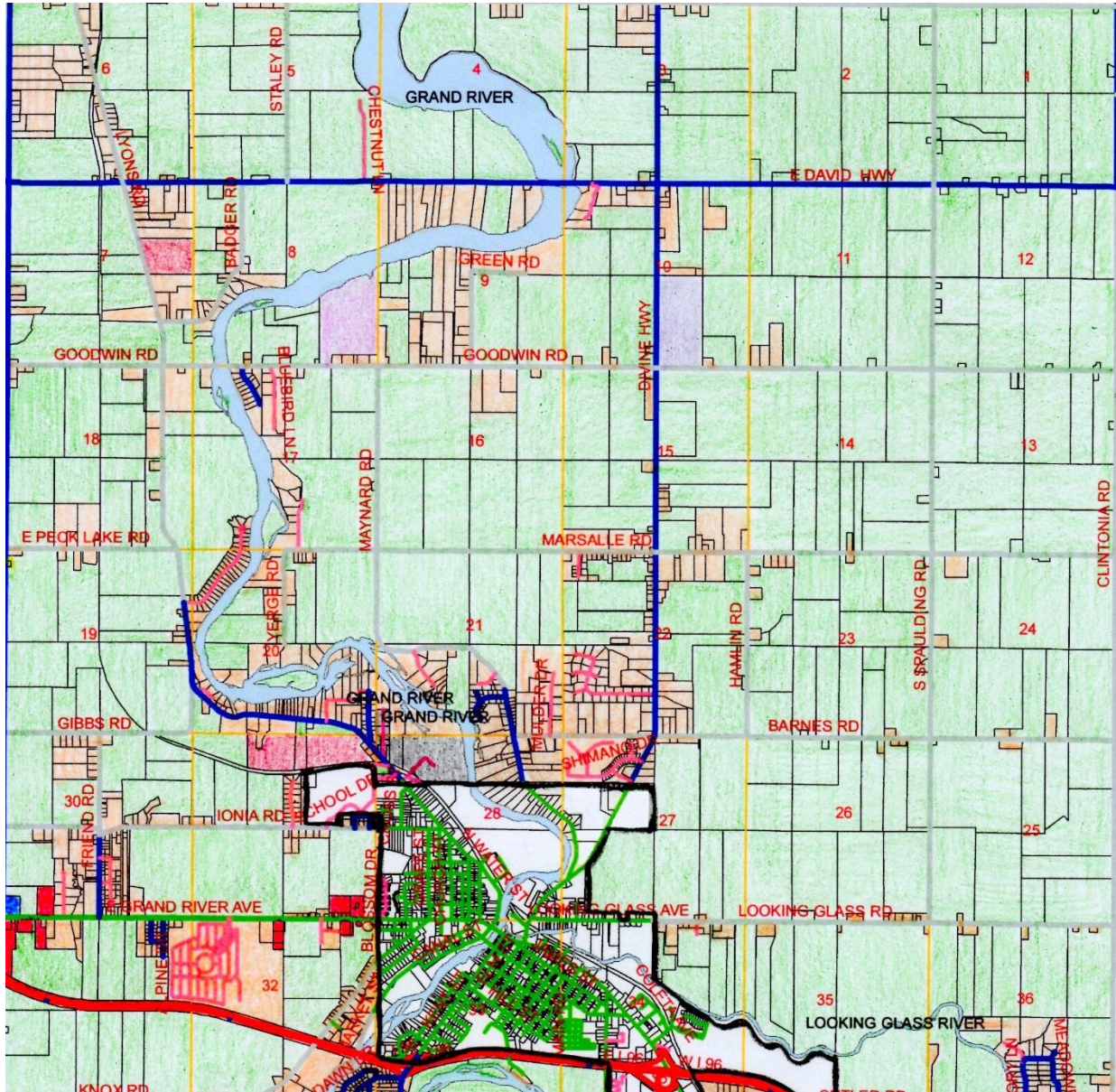
The primary form of waste water treatment utilized in the Township at present are individual septic systems. Several developments currently have private wastewater treatment systems. They include Grand Ridge Estates on Lyons Rd, Divine Highlands on Divine Hwy and Sunset Ridge on E Grand River Ave. In 1990, the THK company replaced its treatment ponds with an inside pre-treatment facility, then the pre-treated waste water goes into the City of Portland's system. Certain areas of the Township cannot use septic systems because of the high water table and soil conditions. This situation can impose limitations on future development patterns if septic tanks continue to be the main form of sanitary sewage disposal. It is especially critical for the Township to be aware of site conditions in terms of wetlands, soil types, etc., when considering land development proposals because of the additional costs to the Township taxpayers.

Solid waste in the Township is handled by two private companies and disposed of at Granger Landfill in Clinton County. The Township is a participant in the Ionia County solid waste plan. The City of Portland, along with Portland and Danby Townships, have a joint effort in April of each year for a free drop off program of junk, excess building materials, tires and scrap items. Ionia County has specific yearly dates for hazardous waste drop off sites such as chemicals and paints.

In addition, Portland Township offers monthly recycling to its residents at no cost to them, through a partnership with Granger Recycling.

Tri County Electric has recently begun installing and servicing fiber optic internet service to areas of the Township that are within their electrical district. The Portland Township Board is currently researching the possibility of expanding fiber optic service to other areas of the Township that are underserved.

Existing Land Use Map



- | | |
|--|--|
| AG/Open Space | Residential |
| Commercial | Industrial |
| Church | Cemetery |
| Mining | Recreation |
| State Land | City Boundary |

Future Land Use Map

See separate PDF map

Zoning Plan

In the Michigan Planning Enabling Act 33 of 2008, section 33 (2) (d), there is a requirement that Master Plans adopted or amended after September 1, 2008 include a Zoning Plan to explain how the future land use categories in the Plan relate to the zoning districts incorporated in the Township Zoning Ordinance. The following table relates the more general future land use categories with the zoning districts and discusses features and factors to be considered in reviewing requests to rezone lands in the Township consistent with this plan.

When the Planning Commission considers a request to rezone property in the Township, they must consider the future land use map and the future land use descriptive narrative of this plan. The table below should be used to evaluate the compatibility degree with this plan together with an evaluation of the specific request. The proposed rezoning decision should also consider whether the proposed site may be reasonably used as it is currently zoned and whether the proposed site is an appropriate

location for any and all of the land uses that might be permitted within the requested zoning district and whether there may be other locations in the community that are better suited to accommodate such uses and any potential detrimental impact on the surrounding property that could result from the proposed rezoning.

In all cases, this Zoning Plan should be applied as a guideline for the Planning Commission subject to the appropriate application of the discretionary authority permitted to the Planning Commission and Township Board by statute, case law and good planning practice. Nothing in this Zoning Plan will preclude the Planning Commission and Township Board from considering amendments to this Master Plan to better serve the public interests of the community.

Future Land Use Categories	Supporting and Compatible Zoning Districts	Additional Potentially Compatible Zoning Districts	Evaluation Factors and Features to Determine Eligibility for Additional Potentially Compatible Zoning Districts
Agriculture	A - Agriculture	PUD – Planned Unit Development	If not prime agricultural land and only residential uses permitted
LDR - Low Density Residential	R-1 – Low Density Residential PUD – Planned Unit Development	None	
MDR - Medium Density Residential	R-2 – Medium Density Residential R-1 – Low Density Residential PUD – Planned Unit Development	None	If located on paved roads
C - Commercial	C - Commercial	I - Industrial	If compatible with surrounding uses
I - Industrial	I - Industrial	C - Commercial	If compatible with surrounding uses

Implementation and Conclusion

In order for the Master Plan to serve as an effective guide to the continued development of Portland Township it must be implemented. Primary responsibility for implementing the Plan rests with the Portland Township Board and the Planning Commission. This is done through a number of methods including new and amended ordinances, programs and administrative procedures.

It is important to note that the Master Plan itself has no legal authority to regulate development in order to implement the recommendations of the Plan. This implementation must come from the decisions of the Board and Planning Commission to provide needed public improvements and to administer and establish regulatory measures relative to the use of the land.

Township zoning represents a legal means for the Township to regulate private property to achieve land use compatibility. It is the process most used to implement community Master Plans. The zoning process consists of an official zoning map and zoning ordinance text. The official zoning map divides the community into different zones or districts within which certain uses are permitted and others are not. The zoning ordinance text notes the uses permitted, and establishes regulations to control densities, height, bulk, setbacks, lot sizes and accessory uses. The zoning ordinance also sets forth procedures for such items as site plan review, special approval regulations and controls over signs. These measures permit the Township to control the quality as well as the type of development.

The present zoning ordinance and map should be reviewed and updated, as necessary, to reflect the proposals and recommendations contained in this Plan. In addition, the Ordinance should be evaluated for flexibility to address innovative development techniques, including Purchase of Development Rights, and for its ability to control inefficient development patterns. This strategy must be executed carefully, and may be a long-term assignment. Evaluating and revising the Zoning ordinance should be achieved with broad community support, and developing consensus on certain matters may be a challenge for the Township. The following paragraphs describe some of the future changes that could be included in the Zoning Ordinance. Since a zoning ordinance is the primary implementation tool for carrying out the Plan, it is mandatory that it be relevant and strictly enforced.

A. Non-Contiguous PUD. The Ordinance should be updated to include provisions for innovative practices such as the noncontiguous PUD, which allows for the preservation of open space on parcels which are not contiguous with the parcel being developed. This allows for a greater intensity of development in areas surrounding the City of Portland, while guaranteeing the preservation of land in other portions of the Township.

B. Interconnectivity. The Zoning Ordinance should be revised to include stipulations for the connectivity of individually developed subdivisions. These regulations would cause new developments to take adjacent property into consideration, and where possible, would require new developments to connect with walking paths and roads to existing developments or provide for future expansion or connection with future development, and would increase the sense of community in the Township. In areas of preserved open space, parcels connected by natural corridors or long borders will provide connections for wildlife and/or recreational trails for township residents.

C. Review New Laws. Make a regular effort to keep track of and be informed of new laws that are added to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Planning Enabling Act, Right to Farm Act and other relevant laws to be proactive in amending the Zoning Ordinance to keep up with current law changes.

Revisions to the Master Plan

The Master Plan should be updated periodically (minor review every two-three years, major review every five years) or as needed, in order to be responsive to new growth trends and current Township attitudes. As growth occurs over the years, the Master Plan goals, land use information, population projections and other pertinent data should be reviewed and revised as necessary so the Plan can continue to serve as a valid guide to the growth of the Township.

Adopting the Master Plan

This Master Plan has been prepared to present the updates to the citizens so that they may review its latest census data, statistics, residential development, commercial development and agricultural areas. The maps included will be references or working tools of the Planning Commission each time advice is requested on a specific problem. The Master Plan must be kept current with changing conditions, new development, laws and trends.

After the citizens, the neighboring municipalities and Township Board have been given an opportunity to read the Master Plan update, the Planning Commission will schedule a public hearing. The purpose of this hearing will be to obtain additional viewpoints, new ideas, points of disagreement, and any important factors which may have been overlooked during the course of the planning update process. Following the hearing, the Planning Commission may hold additional meetings to consider the comments and information presented at the hearing. After their final conclusions, the Planning Commission will make final changes to the Master Plan. Then the Planning Commission will officially adopt the Master Plan for the Township of Portland. The Planning Commission will then send copies of the final Master Plan and the adoption resolution to the neighboring municipalities, utility and railroad companies, Ionia County Road Commission, MDOT and any others as required by law.

Policy Implementation of the Master Plan

After the Master Plan has been adopted, the Planning Commission will work toward the adoption of ordinances, which will carry out the policies of the plan. These laws can only be adopted by the elected officials. After the adoption of the Master Plan, any copies of proposed amended zoning ordinances should be sent to the Township Board for consideration. The Planning Commission should meet with the Township Board to review the policies and the provisions within them. After an agreement has been reached between the Township Board and the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission will introduce the ordinances and schedule a public hearing to obtain additional comments, points of disagreement, or additional ideas. The Planning Commission will then make the final corrections to the ordinances and/or maps, which are part of the ordinances, and vote to recommend their adoption by the Portland Township Board.

The Portland Township Board will place the proposed ordinances on its agenda and consider them at its regular public meeting. The Township Board will hear any further comments or suggestions from the public prior to taking final action. If it desires, the Township Board may refer the ordinances back to the Planning Commission for final advice upon any questions raised by the public at the Township Board meeting prior to final adoption.

Goals

1. Maintain the existing rural character and increase the vitality of our local agricultural community and forestry operations.
2. Preserve agricultural land within Portland Township for farming.
3. Preserve inactive agricultural land to maintain its rural character, wildlife habitat, water and air quality, potential for production, and historic value.
4. Support value-added agriculture, such as farm stands, farmer's markets, community-based agricultural businesses.
5. Promote agriculture-based tourism and community events.
6. Acquire up-to-date information on the status of agriculture in Portland Township to best identify strategies for future agricultural land use.
7. Support additional housing developments in areas that are near or contiguous to the City of Portland.

Administrative Implementation

The Portland Township Zoning Ordinance will be the most important tool in carrying out the concepts of the Master Plan. It will directly control all future land usage of the community.

Conclusion

Many of the newer private streets, homes and buildings, commercial and industrial development in the community will have been developed under the Zoning Ordinance since its adoption in 2000. This points out the importance of having a highly qualified and conscientious Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator, for these individuals will be directly responsible for enforcing these regulations.

Along with its administrative review duties, the Planning Commission should take the initiative to work closely with surrounding communities Planning Commissions and the County. It will take many years of effort to bring these ideas to reality. Experience has shown that the difference between Master Plan ideas being carried out or being lost and forgotten is a direct consequence of the activity and enthusiasm of the Planning Commission.

The initial 1996 Master Plan took years of intensive study by the Planning Commission, Board members and its planning consultant with input from the people. It represents many hours of discussion and investigation of problems, statistics and ideas. The 2022 update has also taken several months of studying the increase in growth of Portland Township, adding new Census data and projections, sending out and analyzing a new citizen survey and updating the future land use map. Because the future well-being of Portland Township depends upon sound, coordinated action, the Planning Commission stands ready at all times to meet with any person or group in the Portland Township area.

Portland Township is and should continue to be a desirable, attractive and convenient community in which to live, play and work.

2022 Portland Township Master Plan Survey Results

The Portland Township Board conducted a survey of the residents and land owners of Portland Township. The survey consisted of a written document that was sent with the newsletter to the owners of all parcels of land within the Township. In addition, the survey was made available at the Sunset Ridge clubhouse. The survey was also available online. Links to the online survey were available on the Township Facebook page and website.

The results of the survey do show a clear and definite opinion by residents of the Township as to what they consider to be the most important issues that were asked of them. Results of the survey can be read below:

2022 Master Plan Survey

The survey was done in the summer of 2022. It was mailed with each tax bill and promoted on the Township website and Facebook page. An online survey was available. Not everyone answered every question.

Total responses: 85. Total paper surveys: 39. Total online surveys: 46.

From the following list, please select the two most important reasons you have chosen to live in Portland Township:

1. Rural setting	61	5. Suburban lifestyle	10
2. Safe area	33	6. Affordable housing	9
3. Good neighborhood	21	6. Farming activity	9
4. Proximity to work	12	7. Quality of housing	5
4. Good schools	12		

In terms of the Township priorities, which of the following do you consider very important? Please choose no more than four:

1. Maintaining rural character	45	7. Improving parks/recreation areas	18
2. Improving roads	43	7. Increasing housing for seniors	18
3. Conserving open/natural areas	39	8. Increasing housing for young families	15
4. Preserving farmlands	29	9. Improving emergency services	11
5. Constructing sidewalks/paths	23	10. Expanding commercial	3
6. Enforcing zoning rules	20	11. Expanding industrial	2
		12. Expanding the mobile home park	0

In terms of the Township concerns, please indicate if you are very concerned about any of the following:

1. Development in open lands/natural areas	21	5. Cost of new housing	13
2. Preservation of rural character	20	6. Too much commercial development	9
3. Enforcement of zoning ordinance	15	6. Lack of recreation facilities	9
4. Crime	14	7. Crowded neighborhoods	7

Thinking about the growth of the township, do you think that Portland Township is growing:

- 1. About right 53
- 2. Too quickly 11
- 3. No opinion 10
- 4. Too slowly 4

Please answer the following questions with Y (Yes) , N (No) or O (No opinion):

Do you feel the junk ordinance is working to clean up the township?	Yes 22	No 19	N/A 45
Do you want the township to continue paying for improvements to the township roads?	Yes 73	No 1	N/A 12
Should the Township continue the monthly recycling program?	Yes 64	No 9	N/A 9
Do you use the township website?	Yes 32	No 35	N/A 6
Do you feel that the Township Board members are easy to contact?	Yes 40	No 7	N/A 26
How long have you lived in the Township?			
1-10 years	25		
11-20 years	14		
21-30 years	11		
31-40 years	11		
41+	17		

Do you own or rent your home? Own 64 Rent 1 Own home/rent lot 2

Would you consider serving on any of the Township boards or committees? 12 residents provided names and contact info.

Residents were given space to list other responses to the following questions:

From the following list, please select the two most important reasons you have chosen to live in Portland Township:

- Riverwalk
- Local shops
- Small town
- Born here
- Near family/grandchildren
- Between Lansing and GR
- No city taxes, grandchildren

In terms of the Township priorities, how important are the following?

- Do not expand Sunset Ridge (5) Township needs to communicate better
- Want curbside recycling (3) Improve senior programs
- Want fiber optic (2) Need a pathway to Sunset Ridge
- Fire barn needs to be replaced (2)
- Why do subdivisions need to pay to maintain their roads?
- Better enforcement of the junk ordinance (2)
- Too much speeding on Friend Road and Grand River Avenue;

In terms of the Township concerns, please indicate if you are very concerned about any of the following:

- Gravel road maintenance (2)
- Lack of high speed internet
- Do not expand the trailer park
- Junky properties
- Transportation
- Need more senior housing
- Need sidewalks along Grand River and Divine.

Do you feel that the Township Board members are easy to contact?

- Need to update webpage and Facebook page more frequently
- Great communication from the Board
- Contacting the Board is easy enough.

Other comments:

Township is paying too much for recycling (2)

Pave Cutler Road

Houses across from Abbey Lane are always junky

Keep the new Township Hall and other buildings close together

If extra land is sold for housing, make small lots---not sprawling like Cottonwood Creek

Need more housing opportunities and new subdivisions

Monthly recycling is not often enough

Please provide transparency with the costs of the new hall.

NOTE: The last time we did a Master Plan survey was 2013. That year we received 144 responses, all of them were paper surveys even though we provided the opportunity to do it online.

September, 2022

CURRENT TOWNSHIP PLANS

1. **TOWNSHIP HALL** Currently the Township has purchased 31 acres of land on Grand River Avenue, adjacent to the Portland city limits and has plans to build a new Township Hall and Recycling Center within the next couple of years. Knowing that the Township hall and recycling area won't require the entire 31 acres, tentative plans are to eventually sell the southern part of the parcel for housing. It is well-known that housing is needed in the Township, and because of the location of the property, adjacent to the City, the proposed usage will be single-family homes on small lots, 55+ condos, or a combination of the two. The property is currently zoned agricultural, so it will need to be rezoned to accommodate this plan.
2. **PAMA** In 1984, Portland Township, Danby Township, and the City of Portland formed the Portland Area Municipal Authority (PAMA). The purpose for the PAMA was to maintain the Emergency Services Building which houses the Portland Area Fire Authority (PAFA), the ambulance department, the police department, and the Portland Township Hall. Because Portland Township will be vacating the hall soon, the PAMA agreement is being edited to reflect the new situation.

INSERT NEW RESOLUTION HERE BEFORE PRINTING