

Ypsilanti General Development Plan
Ypsilanti City Planning Commission
20 Year Plan, Published in 1970

The 1970 Development Plan was published as 20 year plan for 1990 with recommendations in land use, transportation, community facilities, and visual character. The plan included the city of Ypsilanti, and Ypsilanti and Superior Townships, understanding the need for coordinated development of the region as a whole. Assumptions were made that tax revenue and population trends would continue, and though automobile industry manufacturing would play a decreasing role it would still be an important source of employment and development.

New categories of zoning in housing, industrial, and commercial land uses were recommended to facilitate orderly development of Ypsilanti and its surrounding suburban areas with a healthy dense downtown core at the center of the region. These would further regulate housing according to density in order to zone for a compact core with large lot suburban areas far from the city. Industry was to be separated into three types, ranging from non-manufacturing to heavy manufacturing industrial in order to protect residential and urban core areas from industrial pollution. Commercial areas would be concentrated towards Michigan Avenue, with plans for a department store and other suburban style commercial nodes extending outwards from the city. These policies were recommended in order to facilitate incubator development towards Depot Town, industrial growth to the North and East of Ypsilanti, with a healthy commercial use at the core of extending residential districts to reinforce centrally dense growth patterns.

The Development Plan recommended that the Ypsilanti transportation infrastructure be updated in order to facilitate easy access to the city and highways. Roads and streets were to be in a hierarchical structure. Packard, Cross Street, Leforge, and Huron River Drive were to be widened and become arterial streets. These would facilitate large volumes of traffic for access to downtown and the surrounding townships with limited commercial development along them. Washtenaw and Michigan Avenue were to be deemphasized as main thoroughfares as commercial development would prevent traffic from moving efficiently. Huron Street was to be widened to become the main corridor to I94 preventing congestion on Michigan Avenue. Other neighborhood collector streets would be widened to facilitate neighborhood access to arterial roads.

Community facilities development was to focus on educational facilities in order to strengthen ties to Ann Arbor, and create neighborhood based recreational facilities. The plan prepared for additional university and medical expansion to the northwest, completing the educational and health corridor from Ann Arbor along Geddes. Additional public school expansion was recommended in the townships to allot for future residential growth, with new elementary, middle, and high schools in both townships acting as the core of residential

developments. Finally recommendations were made that the city create a Civic Center, consisting of a new City Hall, Courthouse, and Historical Complex along Huron Street.

The Development plan also encouraged the preservation of the residential character of the area. Historic homes would have been converted back to single family residences with tree plantings to soften the roadscape. Less desirable residential areas were to be cleared for newer suburban style homes with larger lots for families. Student housing was to be contained near campus, preserving the integrity of older neighborhoods. The city was recommended to increase enforcement of standards that regulated the appearance and character of neighborhoods.