ypsilanti 2

YPSILANTI today

prepared for the
city of ypsilanti by the
urban collaborative
detroit, michigan

ADKNOWLEDGMENTS

Any analysis depends heavily upon the knowledge and insight gathered by others. Even more, it depends upon the willingness of community leaders to share their perspectives of the urban scene, and to act upon newly gained awareness. This analysis was undertaken for, and in close association with:

George D. Goodman, Mayor
John D. Hooker, Mayor Pro-Tem
Nathalie E. Edmunds, Councilwoman
Martin H. Gillentine, Councilman
Norman E. Kennedy, Councilman
Susan Lindsay, Councilwoman
Lawrence Lobart, Councilman
O. Shreve Waldenmyer, Councilman

James Cosgrove, former Councilman
Michael F. Bunting, former Councilman

Three new Councilmen have been elected since this project was begun:

Harold R. Baize, Jr.
William Paul Clay, Jr.
Eric Jackson

We express generous thanks for assistance to Joseph Warren, City Manager; Dawn White, Controller; Harry Todeschini, Assessor; James Ashby, Clerk. Our special thanks go to City Planner Frank Liembach, and Attorney Kenneth Bronson. Substantial information has been provided by the Chamber of Commerce, Merrit Martin, Director; Ypsilanti Township, William Gagnon, Supervisor; Superior Township, Zachary Gerganoff, Supervisor; and the State of Michigan Executive Office, Roy L. Williams, Special Assistant to the Governor.

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This work was funded by the City of Ypsilanti as a special project to establish a basic framework for future planning and development.

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FOREWORD

Our work in Ypsilanti began with an exploration into the possible futures for Ypsilanti. Based upon alternatives presented to the City Council and Administration, the City decided to embark on a multi-faceted plan, which would provide the citizens of Ypsilanti a far better future, both financially and physically, than would be the case through traditional development. Based upon the understanding of that time, we began a preparation of a Framework Plan. The first portion of that Plan, entitled "Ypsilanti Today," is presented in this section.

"Ypsilanti Today" is an analysis of the social, economic, physical and political structures and ingredients of Ypsilanti. The objective of the analysis is to "set the scene" for planning Ypsilanti's future. Unlike most urban analyses, which are a category of more or less factual elements of urban conditions this work is intended to relate the elements and actions of Ypsilanti to the role of local government in America. Specifically, this analysis is intended to identify how well the City satisfies citizens' needs, and meets the demands placed on local government to guide the way toward a better future.

This portion of the Framwork Plan is an analysis of issues affecting growth, change, and development in the Ypsilanti area. The work contained herein is intended to explain the present status of development conditions in and around Ypsilanti, and to identify changes underway. This is done in the presumption that reasonable control of the rate and direction of change is critical to both the short and long-range betterment of Ypsilanti.

This analysis includes a review of recent work carried out within the City, and plans for change in and around the City. Our attempt has been to bring together those crucial ingredients that allow decision-makers to understand more clearly how the City operates, and of what it is composed. The report includes those physical, economic, social and political factors relevant to the development process and its proper planning. In order to do this we must necessarily avoid duplicating many of the mistakes made in previous planning efforts in Ypsilanti, while at the same time taking advantage of the positive statements that have been made in the past.

All the parts must fit into a harmonious whole, fitting them together, and understanding their implications, requires thinking big. But thinking big can mean that instead of just happening, the future can be enjoyed. Indeed it can be golden. Therefore, this report is not simply a forecast, which is never precisely correct, because its equations do not include unknown disasters or innovations. Instead this analysis contains an overview of those ingredients which can be manipulated to alter the future and to provide, hopefully, the greatest amount of control over the destiny of Ypsilanti.

METHOD OF STUDY

In order to proceed in the most expeditious way, utilizing relevant data as opposed to extraneous information, to arrive at real answers, our method included the following steps.

1. Existing literature was reviewed on the Ypsilanti-Ann Arbor area, including previous plans by public and private bodies.

2. Information was gathered from a variety of sources within the City of factors relevant to the development process, but which had not previously been included in planning literature. These include land tax valuations, land use relationship, land sales information, project plan proposals, etc.

3. Interviews were conducted with appropriate persons, including Councilpersons and Administration leaders, local businessmen, and leaders from other sectors, including state and county officials. In addition, a wide range of developer interests were interviewed to determine their awareness of and responsiveness to an Ypsilanti market.

4. Mapping was done of conditions critical to development planning in Ypsilanti and its surrounding area. Our presumption is that graphic illustrations avoid some of the misleading tendencies of data or of the written word presented alone. Heavy dependence is placed upon the a-political nature of graphic illustrations to make sure that all viewers of this information achieve the same understanding.

5. Areas were selected for detailed study, on the basis of both geography and interest issues. These areas are those which are unique to Ypsilanti and therefore require more intensive study than does the City as a whole.

Throughout this analysis serious attention is paid to maintaining a balance of information in the social, political, economic and physical contexts, in order that one category of information not outweigh its counterpart in another category. In this way we hope to avoid over emphasis of one area or another, or one issue or another, to the extent that the answer is incorrect or that the result is imbalanced. To this extent, we utilize the Grain theory of analysis. This requires looking first at the entire problem at one grain or level of analysis before proceeding with a more detailed grain of analysis in any specific area. This avoids over attention to any specific area prior to learning its relationship to surrounding parts. In addition, the grain I analysis identifies those areas which deserve more detailed study at a grain II level. The more detailed grain II analysis still maintains a balanced analysis in the same categories of information as were used in grain I. The grain II analysis reveals those specific problems or issues which require specialized and specific program or project actions.

The result of grain II analysis is the identification of specific projects which require elaborate and thorough preparation before undertaking implementation of the project itself. This final level of analysis is grain III.

The diversity of urban conditions must be kept closely in hand in prescribing specific policies for improving the city and for devising development schemes. This diversity is often obscured by the very methods of gathering and analyzing data, which tend to treat all parts of the city alike. Our emphasis upon the grain and area analysis techniques treat separate neighborhoods differently in second and third level grain studies. Much more intensive research in any specific area is required as a basis for accurate policy decisions. The purpose of grain III analysis is to provide data necessary to project decisions.

It is clear that the social, economic, physical, and political analysis factors are not totally separable from each other. All aspects of an urban scene are cross-related, and are not capable of being nicely boxed or categorized. Nevertheless, one must begin with the clear understanding of the ingredients, as well as of the whole to achieve a balanced understanding of the different factors. We find these four factors the most illustrative of the major urban operating and development activities in urban America. Each of these four factors was analyzed in the immediate metropolitan area, which includes Ypsilanti and Superior Townships as well as Ypsilanti itself. Then issues at the whole City level were examined. Finally, individual sub-areas such as Downtown or specific residential neighborhoods were studied. Each is illustrated in graphic form, and carries with it a descriptive text with appropriate supporting data. This report does not contain every aspect of data that was generated or all information that was gathered on each of these four factors. Only those statements that are relevant to the overall community development process, and maintain balance between those four factors, are presented in this report.

The contents of this analysis section of the Framework Plan are crucial to decision-making for the remainder of the plan. Contents presented in this fashion enable decision makers to better understand the development process, and obtain a clear view of the probable consequences of their development decisions. Such an understanding is essential in matters of joint planning, for example, or in determining the relationships of downtown investments to the needs of the rest of the city, or the probable life span of the various neighborhoods of the city.

In reviewing this work please remember that change is constant, always underway, Any information or data presented at a given point in time, without reference to the process of change, will be wrong in a short period of time. Whenever possible, the aspects of change relevant to the data are provided. The objective of change awareness is to be sure of the difference between probable actions with predictable results, and blind speculation.

THE CITY IN CONTEXT

In this era of "New Federalism" it is far safer to recognize that the national scene is changing very rapidly, and is for all intents and purposes, totally unpredictable. At the same time, every municipality must be on its toes to compete for whatever funds do become available. But it is important to remember that those programs and activities previously oriented towards the Federal government should be transferred to local sources as quickly as possible, in order not to be caught with vast expenditures on programs that are curtailed.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES ON LOCAL DECISIONS

Naturally, there are all manner of changes underway. They must be kept in sight while proposing plans at the local level. Who could have predicted, for example, that gasoline would be such a valuable element only a year ago, and that the whole economy of the State would switch from a recreation industry to an electric generating empire. Student enrollment has gone down in universities across the country. This obviously has an impact upon the housing market in Ypsilanti. The shortage of fuel and subsequent layoffs by factories of employees, and the additional unemployed who would have been in colleges, will have an influence on industrial cities. What would it mean to Ypsilanti to have, for example, its two factories, which are major employers in the City, shut down operations for an indefinite period of time, and increase the rate of unemployment from its present low level to a very high one.

In most cities, municipal facilities and services have been geared for a population which is larger than the resident population. This in turn leads to financing difficulties and increasing tax burdens on local residents, and the enjoyment of the benefits of those burdens by non-residents in adjacent areas. In addition, these services and facilities must often be designed expressly for use by groups other than local residents. There is, for example, more need for traffic control in downtown areas, and more need for property security, which is empty two-thirds of the time. Not only does this affect the cost for providing and maintaining these properties, but at times creates a basis for misunderstandings between those who speak for the resident population, and local business needs, and those who speak for the non-resident or user needs. This is especially true for recreational facilities, special institutions, health services and educational facilities.

In Ypsilanti, a variety of special services are utilized by residents from both Ypsilanti and Superior Townships, as well as the City, in numbers as great as the users in Ypsilanti itself. Put in the most dramatic way, Ypsilanti has a nearly fixed resident population. It is surrounded by geographic areas which provide land for an increasing non-resident population. These two populations are absolutely vital to the

health of the City's economy, but they often have different and competing priorities for housing, social services, commerical facilities and the like. These differences become most visible when policies are proposed that assume either one or the other set of interests should be given priority or supported by the other. Consequently, decisions on how to use limited land resources in the city are likely to become contested and politicized to an extreme degree.

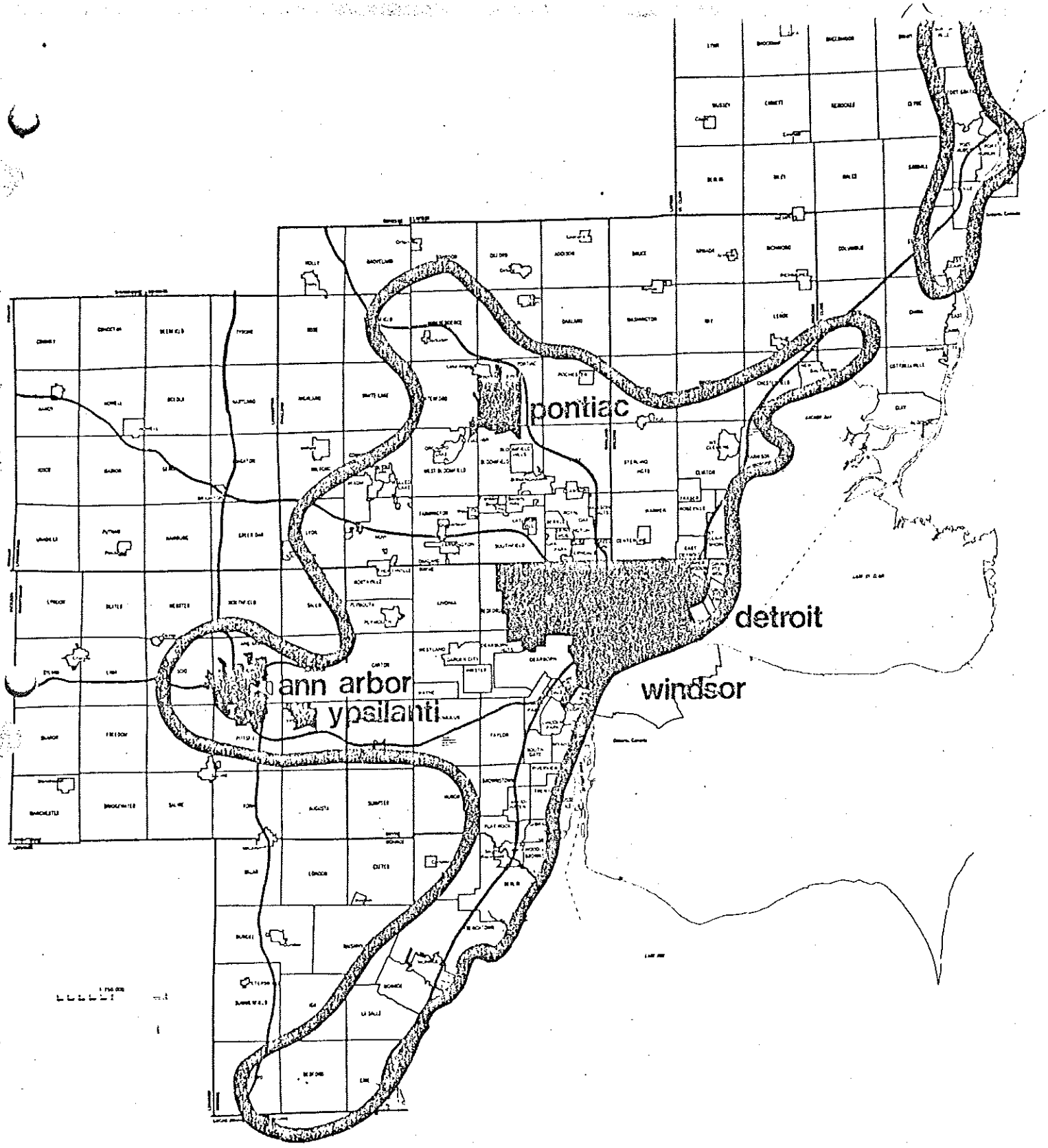
In itself this political contention over land use is not bad. In fact, it can have the good effect of making all parties involved work much harder to make their own case convincing. The non-resident interests, especially, have a new discipline placed upon them to take resident interests into consideration. The resident population, on the other hand, finds that winning their point at the ballot box does not necessarily produce the appropriate results they look for. New partners must be recruited from the non-resident interests who have economic resources, or who own property or have jobs that affect the economic life of the city.

All this is further complicated by changing characteristics in the population. These changes, which go on annually among the younger families, and among the student population in the area, make the development process even more difficult than it would ordinarily be. These are people who can not be counted on to continue and grow as regular members of the working force. When one considers the increasing numbers of elderly making up the City's population, as well as college students, easily one-third of the adult population is non-participatory in economic generation for development purposes. This is not limited to only the very young, the elderly, and the college students. Increasingly, those who intend to retire at earlier ages, and who seek a more leisurely life, as opposed to a traditionally productive one, are non-participants in development. This stratification of the population in age and income groups creates economic conditions and life styles very difficult to translate in development terms, land payments and leasing regulations.

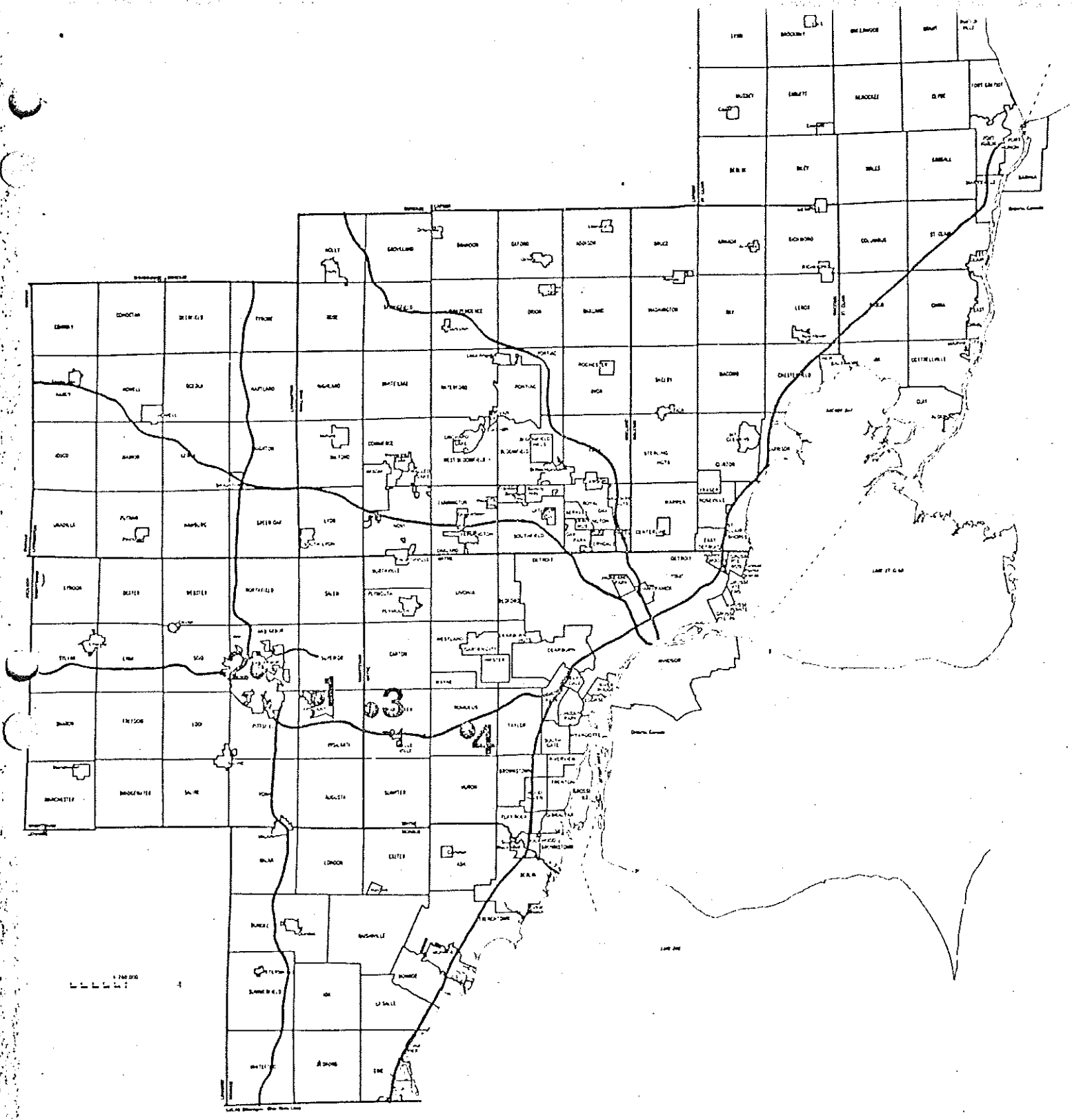
All of these conditions create tensions between landlords, who must often operate on inadequate income and expense margins; tenants with the same problems in their personal budgets; businessmen and consumers; and civic agencies who are responsible for enforcing code standards and occupancy behavior. It is all of these changes in population, economic and social conditions and political style that provide the really tough challenges for meeting economic development problems at the local level. These are all external factors which are visible throughout the nation and impose frustrations because the locality is usually powerless to deal with them on its own terms with any hope of making much impact.

As mentioned earlier there is no way to predict the future. In the remaining portions of this work it simply means that we have

to deal with many aspects of many futures. We can not talk so much in terms of what will be, as choices between alternatives: if not this, then that. As someone once said "The future is not what it used to be."



DETROIT AREA LOCATION



MAJOR REGIONAL FACILITIES

1 eastern michigan university
2 unversity of michigan
3 willow run airport
4 detroit metropolitan airport

THE PEOPLE OF YPSILANTI - - A SUMMARY OF SOCIAL CONDITIONS

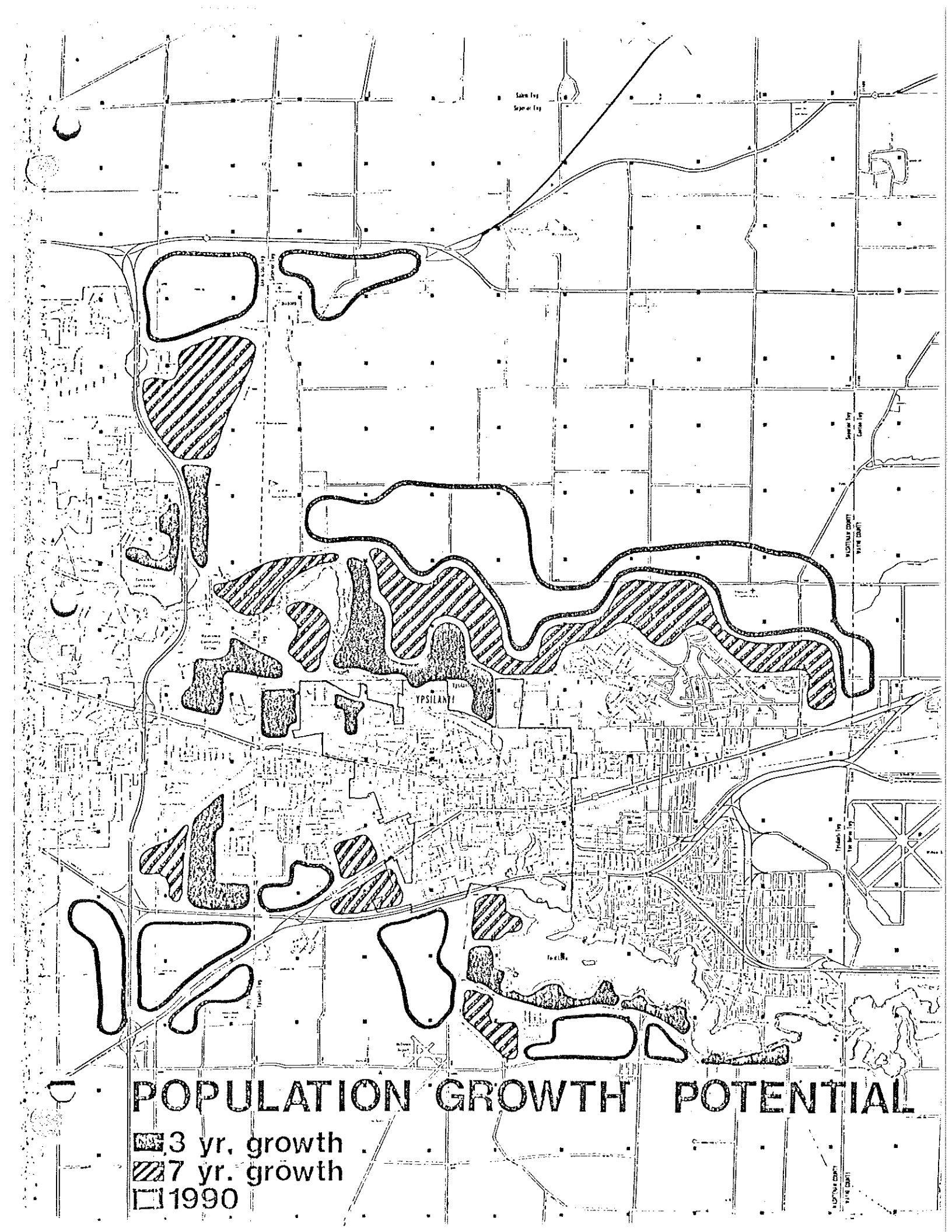
In the first report, Ypsilanti I, a number of population conditions were described, including age, race, income and anticipated growth for both Ypsilanti and the adjacent Townships. This was done in a pure statistical format in order that a rough picture of who lives where could be obtained. This document deals with where people live as well as who they are. It portrays the groupings of population by age, race, family type and income in the belief that the development process will effect everyone somewhat differently, depending upon the nature of their existence in Ypsilanti.

Almost all plans for a future of a city take for granted a given population and a similarity in the distribution of age, race, income, etc., for the various neighborhoods. Seldom does the planning process allow for changes beyond an increase in numbers or the identification of "disadvantaged" population. For example, the County's 1990 population projections for the Ann Arbor area is essentially a straight-line trend projection, based upon past growth models. It does not take into account the natural restraints on growth, or that some aspects of the population will increase while others will decrease.

POPULATION GROWTH

The drawing entitled "Population Growth Potential" illustrates where new population can be reasonably anticipated in the immediate Ypsilanti area by 1990. This estimate is based upon actions presently underway. The areas shown in solid black are estimated to be populated in three years. These areas have already been zoned for residential development, and the needed utilities are already in place. The other areas indicated as suitable in later periods are related to land sales, land prices, and the planned extension of utility lines and road improvements. Naturally, the actual rate of population growth will depend in substantial part upon the availability of funds for new housing development.

It is apparent that the rate of population growth to be generated by projects underway, or in planning, is sufficient to substantially alter the overall population distribution. This will reduce the relative population of Ypsilanti with regard to Ypsilanti and Superior Townships. It is also clear that the Huron River basin will be a significant determinant of new population location, as will be the services provided by Ypsilanti. The population character anticipated is an even mixture of young couples seeking apartments for two to four years, and older families seeking permanent homes. The exact nature of the anticipated new population is not predictable because the present planning process is not capable of supporting a definable population program.


POPULATION GROWTH POTENTIAL
3 yr. growth
7 yr. growth
1990

The development process itself has historically benefited some while bringing harm to others. If unique benefits or unusual pains are to be caused to any section of the population, then the location and nature of that section of the population, vis-a-vis the planning process, is absolutely crucial. Otherwise the avoidance of damage to specific groups or characteristics of the population is impossible. A good example of this has been the traditional urban renewal process in cities throughout the country, which has caused the removal of families who live in "inferior" houses, and the replacement of their homes with stores, new houses, factories and the like. The development process must affect some population group. Consequently, plans must be prepared early to remove as much potential harm as possible from the development process. It is therefore important to know the whereabouts of those most vulnerable to harm.

The development process itself, can not avoid favoring some and disfavoring others. There has not been established anywhere in the world, to our knowledge, a mechanism which allows the process of change, planned or unplanned, to benefit everyone. It is simply not the way the world, the country, or Ypsilanti is constructed socially, politically, or financially. That is not a secret, nor is it a new revelation. But, it is important to understand that the responsibility of the planning process towards those it affects directly is much greater than it is toward those that it affects indirectly, or not at all.

The growth of new neighborhoods, the establishment of new population groups in the surrounding Townships, are elements in the process of change, which causes both costs and benefits to other populations. When a new neighborhood is built, very often it attracts families who are planning to raise their children in that area. Elementary schools are required for the young children. Later, as the children reach junior high school and high school age, new junior high and high schools must be built. Then those elementary schools that were built only a few years ago, will stand under-utilized before they are even paid for. This situation results directly from single source population planning. That is, neighborhoods built to attract only one kind of family, have a limited prime life. American cities have been built this way, particularly most midwestern cities such as Ypsilanti. Consequently, it is relatively simple to identify those portions of the city and the surrounding areas which contain either the majority of older people, or young families, or Black families, or students. Our cities are by and large subdivided into thise kinds of single purpose neighborhoods because of the way they were built. Neighborhoods with a good mixture of population character are usually economically healthier, supporting a better range of services. Therefore, it is important to learn which neighborhoods have mixed populations, which areas have an essentially single type of population, and most important, where one population character-

istic changes into another.

INFORMATION DISTRICTS

The drawing entitled "Information Districts" show the distribution of census tracts for the City and the Townships. It is obvious from this map that no attention is paid to neighborhood lines or populations groupings in the arrangement of census data. Census tracts indiscriminately cross residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional boundaries, collecting them altogether, making it virtually impossible to understand population characteristics within any census tract. Each census tract contains a whole variety of populations; students, old people, young people, etc, as well as a piece of a commercial or an industrial area. However, the information contained in the census was generated on a block-by-block basis. It was necessary to return to the block census for data analysis, and at the same time to devise a method for proper definitions of residential groupings.

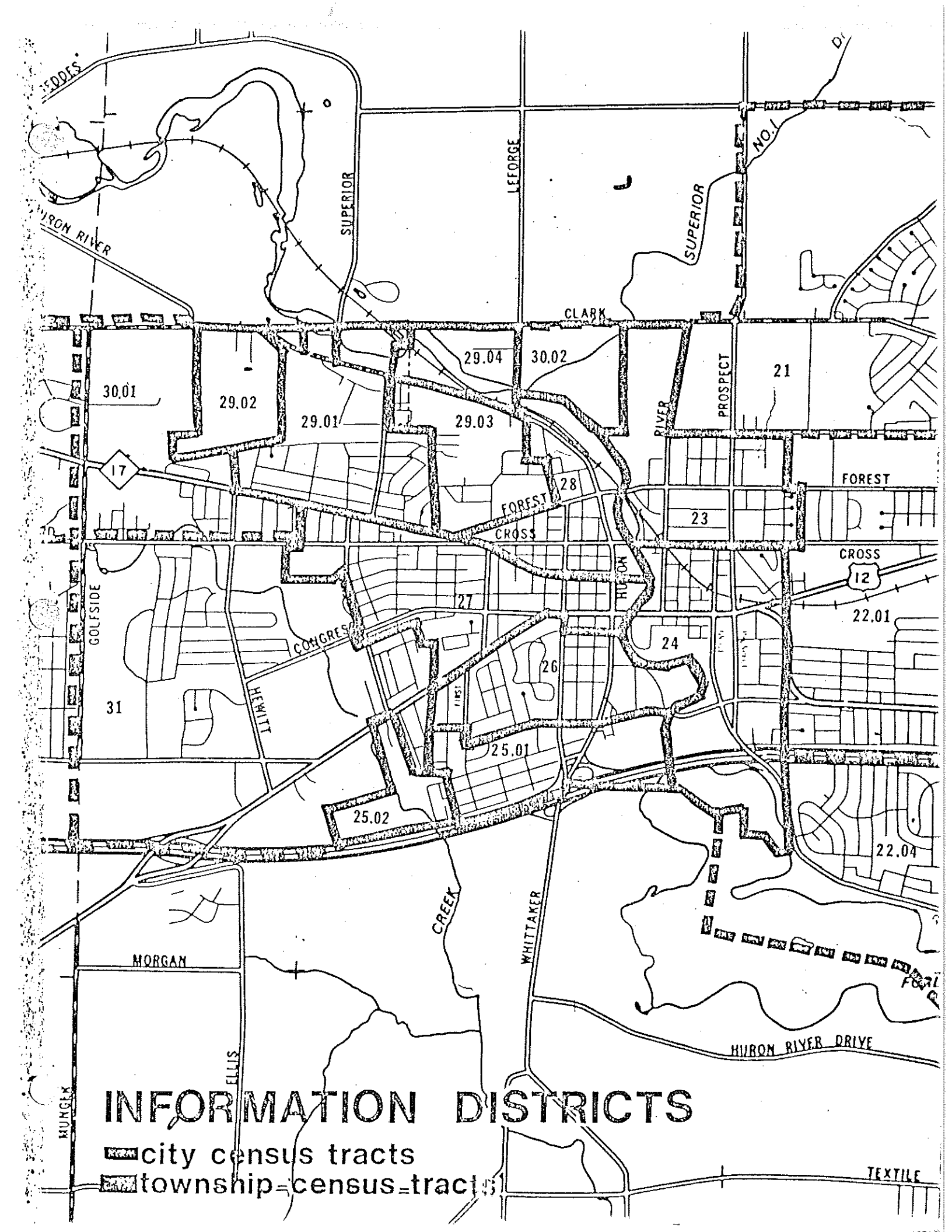
SPATIAL DIVISIONS

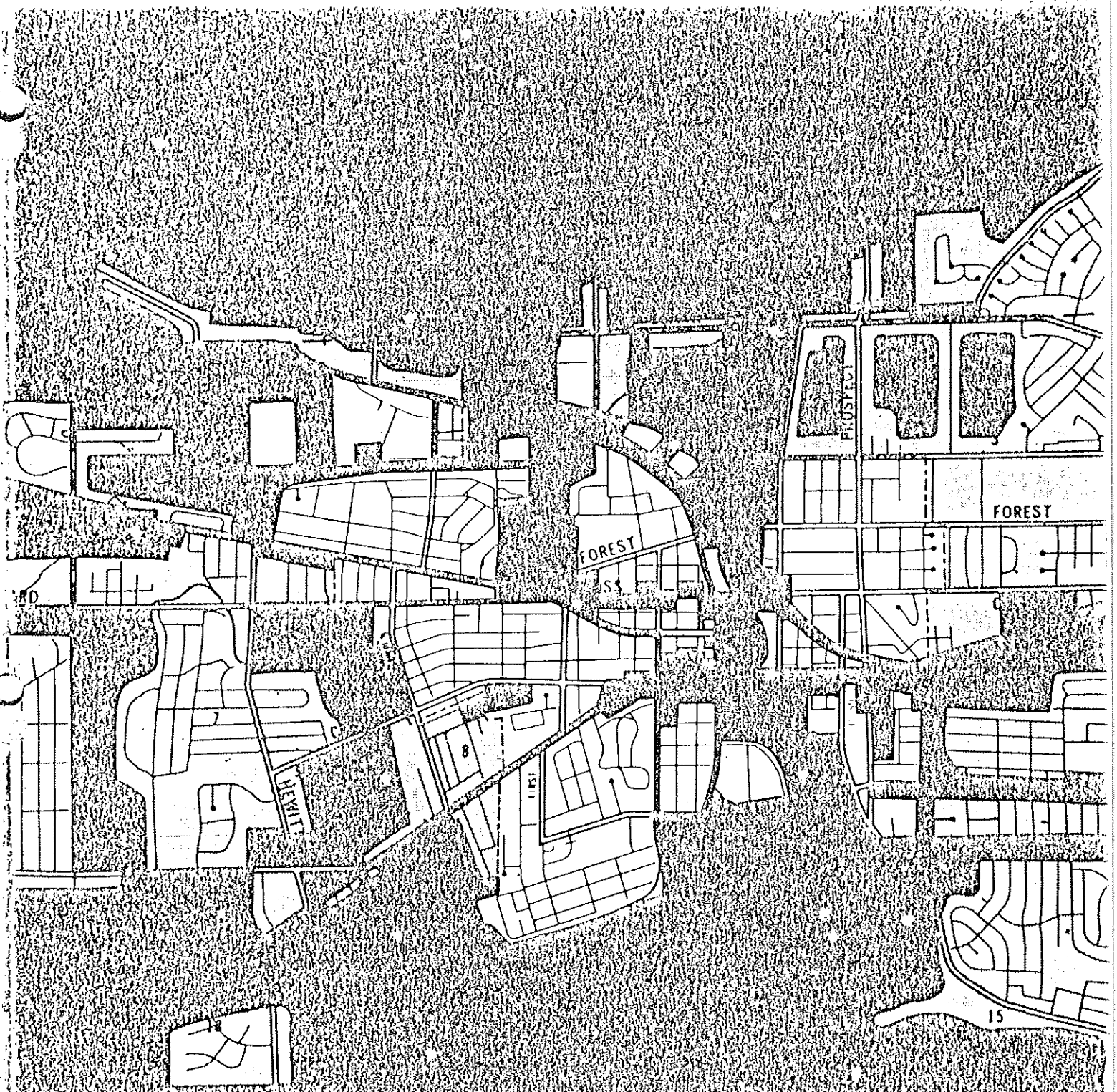
The idea of neighborhoods is a well-established concept among most urban planners. However, the context and limitations of a neighborhood are not as clearly known. The spatial divisions separating residential portions of a city from each other are the clearest definition of neighborhood boundaries.

The drawing entitled "Spatial Divisions" illustrates a technique for identifying where people live by first delineating where they do not live. This drawing shows every piece of land that is used for other than residential purposes. Everything shown in black is a non-residential use, including stores, churches, streets, parking lots, factories, the river, etc. The resulting clear areas are where people do live. This identifies those areas which can be collected together from the block census to identify neighborhood characteristics. The effect is to show graphically the distribution of the population and identify residential establishments in geographic sub-communities. Normally, there is very little communication by people in onr residential area with the people in a neighborhood across a physical barrier.

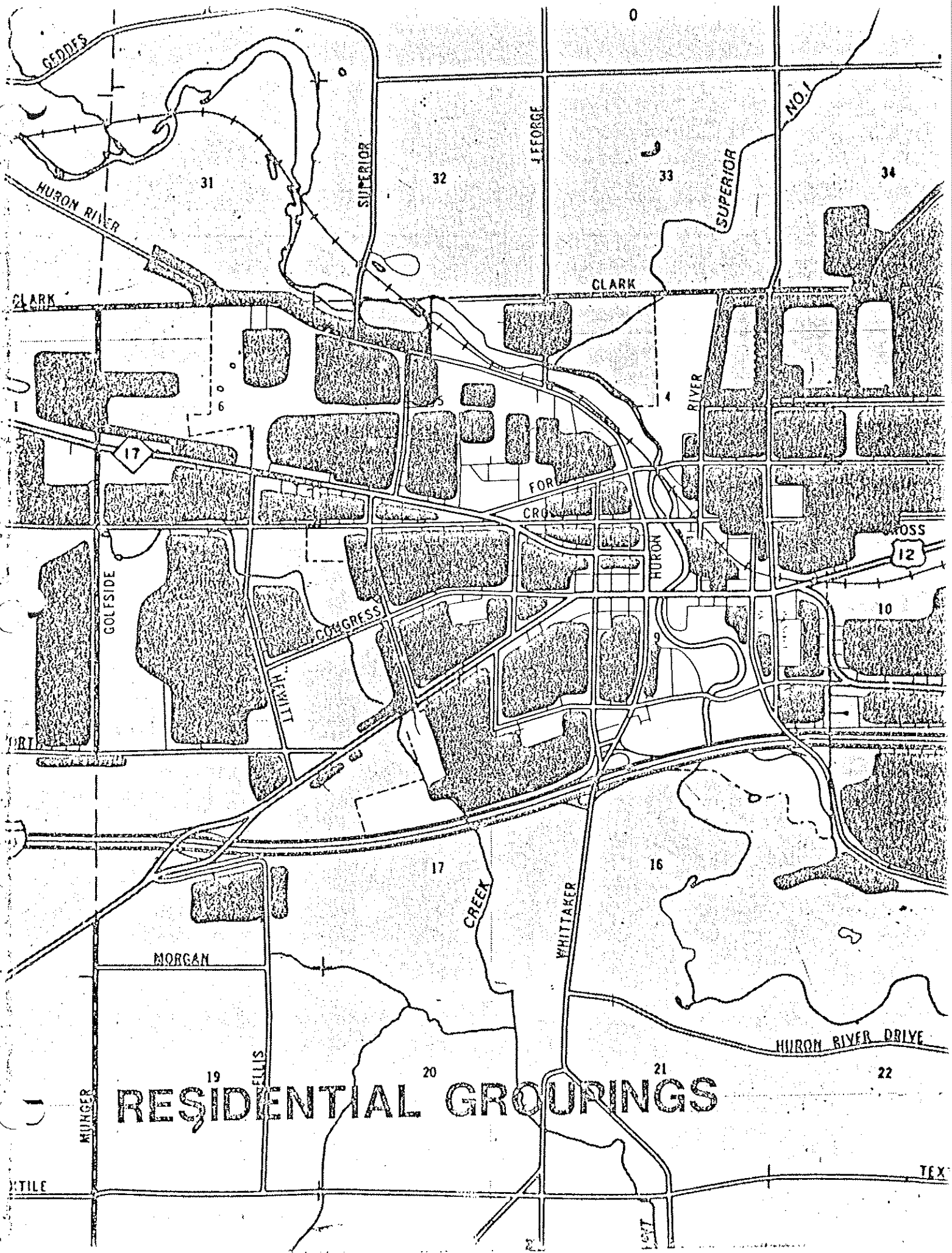
RESIDENTIAL GROUPINGS

The drawing entitled "Residential Groupings" shows, in black, the areas which were identified by the mapping of spatial divisions just described. Each of these contains a population area that is divided from the others in some fashion. Some of the divisions are much more severe than others. For example, the


SUPERIOR
LEFORGE
SUPERIOR
NO. 1
HURON RIVER
CLARK
30.01
29.02
29.01
29.04
30.02
29.03
21
PROSPECT
RIVER
17
FOREST
28
FOREST
23
CROSS
CROSS
12
22.01
GOLFSIDE
27
HURON
CONGRESS
24
26
31
HEWITT
25.01
25.02
22.04
CREEK
WHITTAKER
MORGAN
HURON RIVER DRIVE
ELLIS
HUNGER
TEXTILE
INFORMATION DISTRICTS
city census tracts
township census tracts



SPATIAL DIVISIONS



RESIDENTIAL GROUPINGS

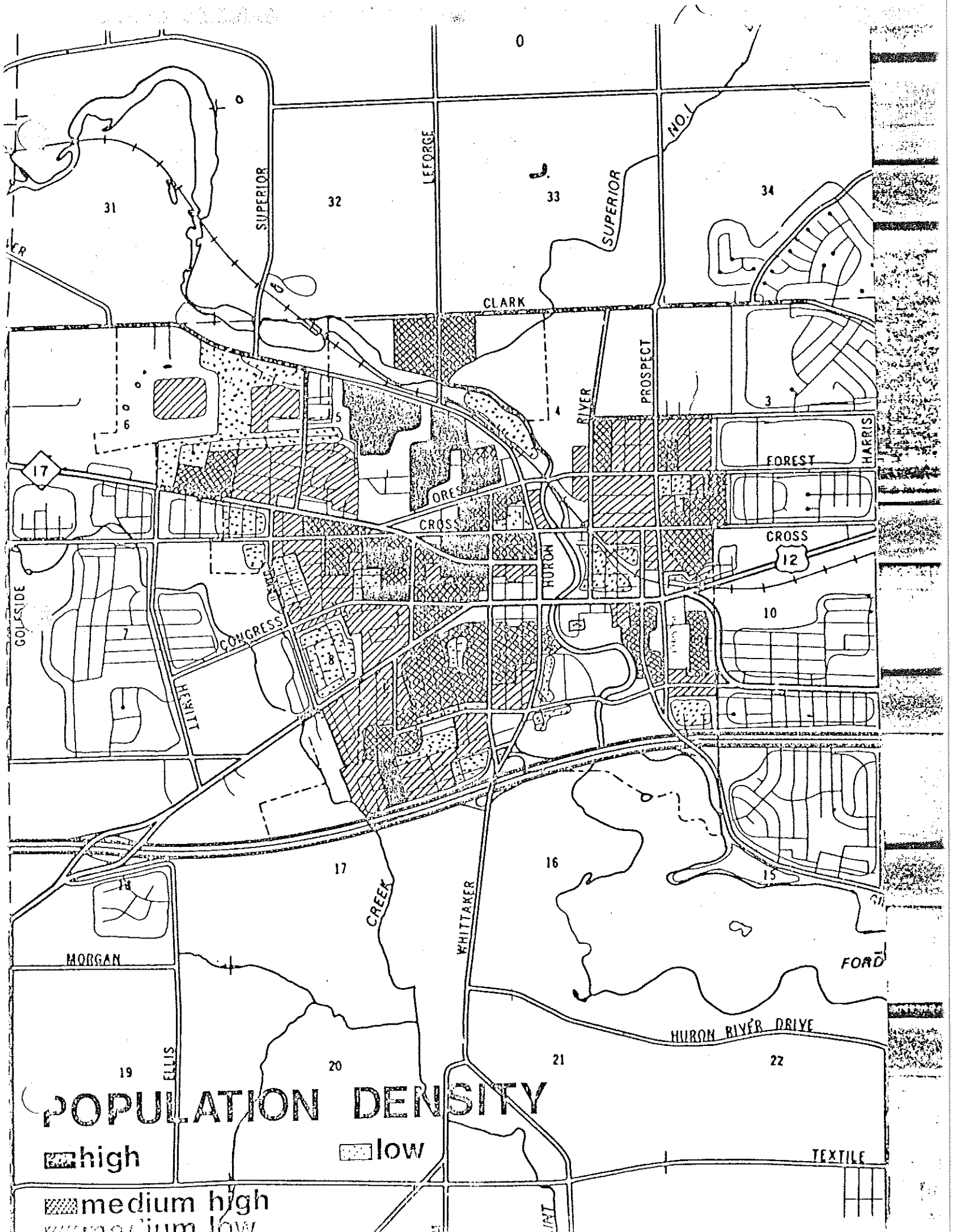
residential groupings on opposite sides of the Huron River are much more clearly divided than are those on opposite sides of South Hamilton Avenue. As a further example, the people of Ypsilanti generally refer to the southern portion of Ypsilanti, near the entrance to I-94, as the "South Side," making no real distinction between what lies to the east of Hamilton and what lies to the west. But, the people living in the South Side may more clearly distinguish between conditions on opposite sides of Hamilton.

These residential groupings, are utilized to reorganize population information from the census, in order to obtain a better picture of population density, age, race and income and the distribution of those factors throughout the city. In addition, these residential groupings identify which population groups are most likely to be directly affected by development planning and thereby increase the sensitivity of planned changes with regard to their effects on the population.

The reader should be aware that this approach to the determination of residential groupings, or neighborhoods, is not common to the traditional planning process. It has been devised here in order to allow the body politic to more accurately determine its strategies for socio-political actions in regards to the development process. These residential groupings will allow a more accurate assessment of changes in population characteristics, so that plans can be made to encourage positive changes and to remove the harmful effects of changes which are not constructive. Indeed an awareness of the changes underway in the general population characteristics of the City can form the basis for many development planning decisions to actually benefit those who otherwise may have been harmed.

POPULATION DENSITY

The drawing entitled "Population Density" is based upon the basic residential groupings. It is obvious that the population distribution is uneven. The drawing illustrates those portions of the city which have a high density, approximating 100 or more persons to the acre, medium high densities, about 50-75 persons to the acre, and those of low density, less than 30 persons per acre. High density areas are made up of dense apartment areas, whereas low density areas are generally characterized as single family houses on large lots. It is apparent from this drawing that the areas around the University have the highest concentration of population. This is because of the student dormitories and apartments normally associated with a university. It may not have been clear before now, however, that over 20% of the population occupies the area adjacent to and within the University which comprises less than 10% of the residential land in the City. The principal concentrations of the City's population lie in a North-South corridor, beginning near I-94 and concluding in the University area.


POPULATION DENSITY
high
medium high
medium low
low
SUPERIOR
LEFORGE
SUPERIOR
NO. 1
CLARK
PROSPECT
RIVER
HARRIS
FOREST
CROSS
CROSS
HURON
COLESIDE
CONGRESS
HEWITT
CREEK
WHITTAKER
MORGAN
ELLIS
FORD
HURON RIVER DRIVE
TEXTILE
17
12
0
31
32
33
34
3
4
5
6
7
8
10
15
16
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19
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22

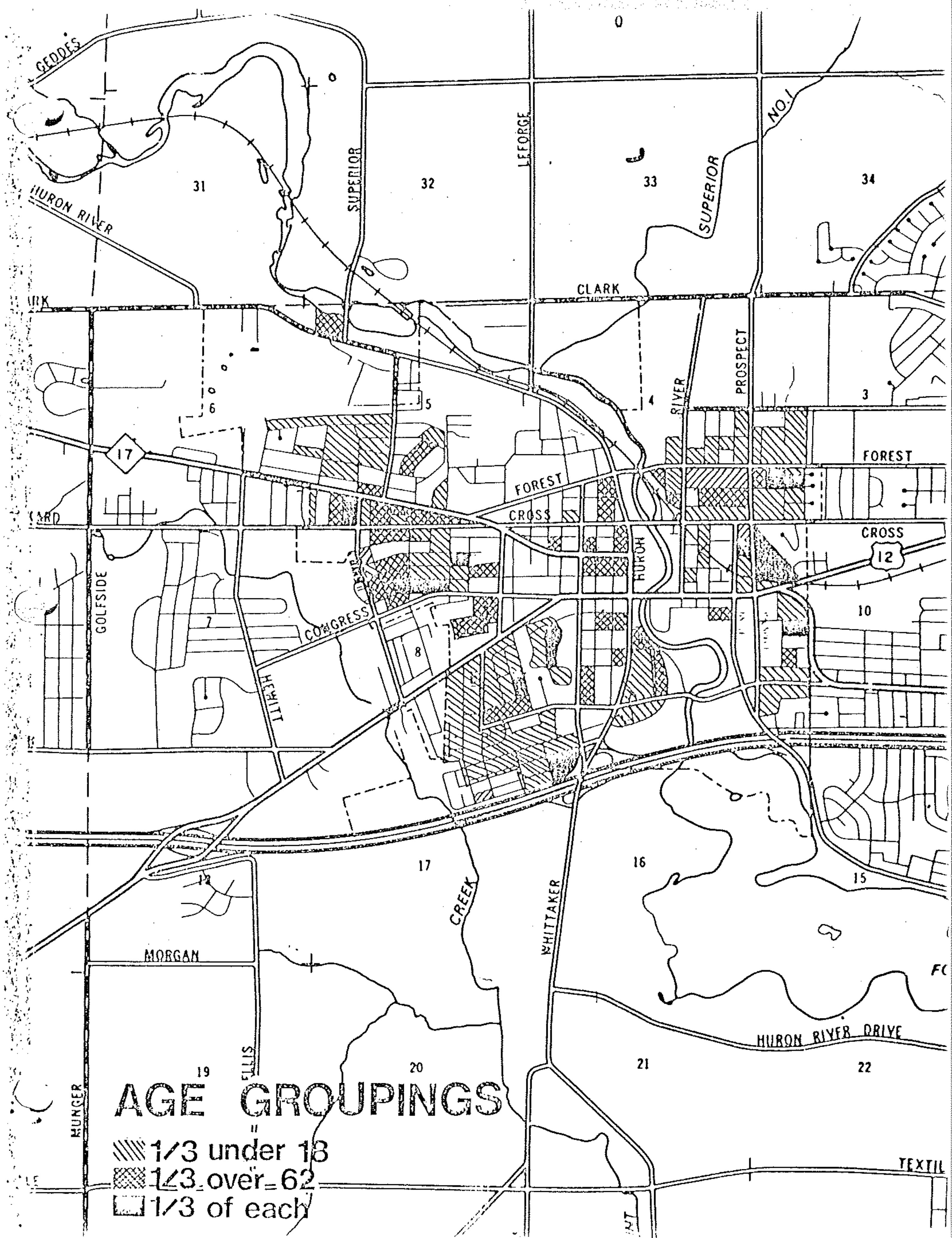
High density areas tend to generate demands for more personal services than do lower density areas. However, those low density neighborhoods which cover a lot of territory, have lots of public streets, and require a heavy investment in environmental maintenance, but have a relatively low demand for personal services. It is traditional that residents of higher density areas pay for more services from the public than do residents of low density areas. It is also traditional that those who live in single family houses in low density areas tend to believe that their share of burden for services is heavier than those who live in apartments. This idea will be discussed more fully in the economic analysis section of this report. For now, it should suffice to point out that there are substantial differences in urban functions generated by wide variations in population densities. These variations are essential to support the full range of urban life styles, but they require much more variety of services than are observable.

AGE GROUPINGS

The drawing entitled "Age Groupings" identifies the location of the three most significant age sectors of the population. First, those who are under eighteen years old, and may generally be considered of school age. Secondly, those who are over sixty-two years of age, and are considered senior citizens. The third category is those areas which have a combination of those under eighteen and those over sixty-two.

These categories were selected because it is upon these age ranges that development plans have the most direct effect. Naturally, for school age children and families with school age children, any plans for schools, parks, new housing, etc., are quite significant. For senior citizens, plans to change the existing housing stock, to build senior citizen housing, or to alter existing service patterns can have a strong effect. Those areas which have both extremes of age, are the areas in which the greatest tendencies for neighborhood vitality exist. These areas combined tend to have the greatest economic strength and social viability.

The most substantial numbers of children are to be found in the south portion of the City and in the northeast and northwest portions of the City. Such concentrations occur, for substantially different family characteristics, in the northeast, northwest and southern sections of the City, but not in the central sections. The senior citizen population is contained mostly in the central and western portions of the City. These age categories are significant in planning facilities unique to special population groups. When age factors are combined with population density, the location of schools, churches, bus routes, etc. can be directly related to the potential users.



AGE GROUPINGS
1/3 under 18
1/3 over 62
1/3 of each
GEDDES
HURON RIVER
SUPERIOR
LEFORGE
SUPERIOR
NO. 1
CLARK
RIVER
PROSPECT
FOREST
FOREST
CROSS
CROSS
HURON
CONGRESS
GOLFSIDE
HEWITT
WHITTAKER
CREEK
MORGAN
ELLIS
HUNGER
HURON RIVER DRIVE
TEXTIL
17
12
0
31
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SELECTED POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

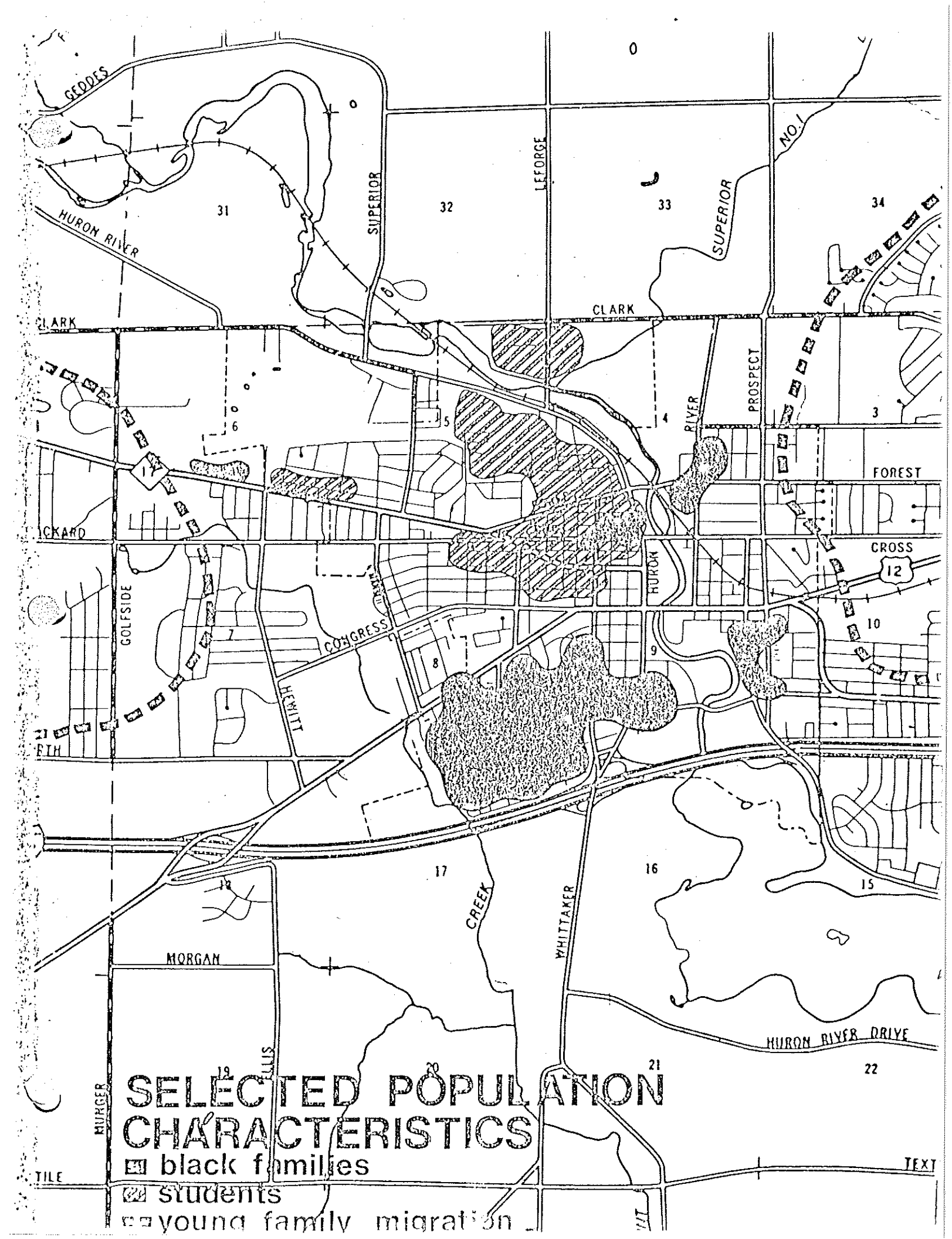
It appears, however, that the City is divided into even more significant population categories. These include university students, black people and highly mobile families. The importance of these separations will be most strongly felt in the distribution of public services and in the response of private market offerings. For example, it can be expected that different kinds of public services will be necessary in areas populated largely by university students as opposed to those areas populated mostly by generally families. Students have "an appetite" for commercial facilities and services which is quite different from almost any other section of the population.

In the drawing entitled "Selected Population Characteristics" each of these special population groupings appears somewhat solid in its' overall formation. However, none of the groups is static, either in size or location. The areas of interaction between the two groups are shown by the wavy lines, indicating a loosely formed front between the groups. Those areas where the graphic representation is more solid, it is felt to be that the population grouping is more firmly defined. These population groupings are unlikely to migrate into the residential neighborhoods across major barriers. For example, university students are not pressing for territory to the west of the university. The barriers to the south and east are less rigid and more easily penetrated by changing student needs. The dotted lines indicate the areas where young family migration is most significant. In these areas, families tend to move in and out every two to three years, on the average, indicating that the high market area for new housing exists temporarily in that area.

These selected population characteristics are identified here because they occupy those areas in which some unique and identifiable characteristic separates them from the City as a whole. Consequently, the planning process should take into account that in these areas there are special factors not normal to the ordinary development process. The process will have to include special marketing conditions for housing, as well as special public services and private facilities. The objective here is to identify not only those areas which contain these unique population characteristics, but also to locate the boundaries or edges where the characteristics change. That boundary is the location where the planning impact is strongest, where the greatest amount of change can be anticipated and the most positive response to change can be generated.

POPULATION STATISTICS

Population statistics for the City and the Townships are summarized in the following pages. These statistics indicate an imbalanced situation in terms of the distribution by density and age. It


SELECTED POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS
black families
students
young family migration

should be remembered that these population distribution characteristics have come about through generally unplanned process of growth. It is unplanned in the sense that it has been on the basis of general land speculation and the loosest form of land use guidance. However, there is not in sight any change in the planning process which would tend to alter the general format of these characteristics except to increase in absolute numbers the overall population of the Townships, and a decrease, relatively speaking, in the City population as compared with that of the townships. The statistics shown here are intended to be a reminder of the present status of the population, an indication of its' past record change and growth, and an approximation of what is anticipated in both the immediate and the long range futures under present growth tendencies. These statistics are not to be taken as a recommendation of future policy, but merely as an estimation of what present policies will lead to given their course.

POPULATION GROWTH: PAST AND FUTURE

	1960	1970	#CHANGE	% CHANGE	EST. 1990
City of Ypsilanti	20,957	29,538	+ 8,581	+ 41	35,000
Ypsilanti Township	20,950	33,194	+12,244	+ 58	60,000
Superior Township	3,600	5,562	+ 1,962	+ 56	15,000
TOTAL	45,507	68,294	22,787		110,000

Source: 1960 and 1970 U.S. Census of Population

The City of Ypsilanti is comprised of a mixture of people and life styles. The single most influential population factor is the students from Eastern Michigan University who comprise 28% of the total population of Ypsilanti. There are more than 9,000 resident students in addition to faculty residing within the City. In general, the City has an extremely varied population structure:

about 20% Black population
about 7% retirees
about 14% with incomes less than $4000/year
about 27% with incomes above $15,000/year

A general picture of the City of Ypsilanti is reflected in the 1970 U.S. Census Report:

Population	29,538
Population Density	Approximately 7,033/sq.mi.
Population Mix	
White	23,505 (79%)
Black	5,746 (20%)
Others	287 (1%)
Housing Units	8,440
Population per Household	2.84
Median Age	20.5 years
Median Educational Level	12.2 years
Median Family Income	$10,710

CONCLUSIONS

This section of the analysis is an attempt to describe in general terms the social conditions of the City for the purposes of the framework plan. The City's ability to "control" its future population is obviously dependent upon population growth in the surrounding areas, as well as upon population changes brought about by the redevelopment process. Little overt change can be instilled in the population structure of the City itself. Real changes in population growth trends will have to be brought about through changes in the present planning and development processes in the adjacent townships as well as in the City. It is clear that the overall social structure of the City is, for the time being, unalterable. The implications of these circumstances for development planning primarily revolve around the issue of population distribution and balance.

The population distribution is relatively even among special factors. There is nearly equal amounts of population in each major population category. Approximately 20% of the population are students, about 20% of the population is black, about 20% of the population is elderly, about 20% of the population is wealthy, about 20% of the population are senior citizens, etc. It is quite an unusual situation to have such a nearly equally balanced distribution of population characteristics. Obviously, that balance cannot sustain itself over a very long period of time. The natural process of age itself will alter that within a decade or less. But for the meantime, this unusual situation can be a major benefit. It means that there is not an unusually heavy demand by any single population group upon the City for development activities or services, and that the democratic process may be usable for development decision making.

This has great significance to the political structure of the City, which will be discussed later. But it has more far-reaching influence on the proposed development patterns of the City. This is true because any development activity will draw almost equal responses for both the positive and the negative elements with very unclear overall direction on the part of the populous. It is our opinion that this is very likely one of the few urban situations in the United States in which both the democratic and the development processes can exist simultaneously. That is highly significant because the development process itself, which purports to make changes for a future resident population, as well as the present one, is by its nature not a democratic process. It appears to us that the social structure of Ypsilanti has the capacity to support through democratic procedures a variety of development activities, thereby removing a great number of the potentially deleterious effects associated with the development process, and achieving instead the greatest possible public benefit. That situation is temporary. We recommend the earliest effort to assure initiation of advantageous development in support of this healthy social structure.

THE GOLDEN RULE - - A SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC FACTORS

THE GENERAL SETTING

A recently popular joke alters the historic meaning of the Golden Rule to advise: "Him that has the gold makes the rules." On the premise that the statement is at least partially true, it is important for those proposing change to function with a clear recognition of who has the "gold". This approach to economic analysis may require a complete reorientation of attitudes toward the rule of government in the development process, and a redefinition of the responsibilities of government for the fiscal soundness of the City.

This portion of the analysis of Ypsilanti deals with its economic assets and liabilities. The objective is to determine what development resources are available, both public and private, to make major improvements in the fabric of the City. Normally, an economic analysis is related only to a specific market projection or the cost of a specific project. We tend to view the analysis of an economic structure as the identification of resources and problems responsive to the marketplace as the techniques to assume benefits to the public. The analysis of social factors dealt with human needs and resources, the economic analysis deals with the financial needs and resources. It is an accident that Ypsilanti is its present size and that it contains the people and businesses that it does. The City's method of growth and its record of development are also accidental. In addition, it is largely circumstancial that the City's budget is in its present state. Every city is in the context of a larger economic framework. American cities are all within the context of a world and national economy. In addition, each locality has its regional economic influences, pressures brought by the State and by growth in the surrounding areas, etc. None of these things are avoidable. All of them are a part of the economic structure of any city.

Normally, a scale of accounting that includes awareness of these external pressures is not done by a city. There is no arithmetic which allows a city to determine what its operational costs really are, from the point of view of homeowners, businessmen, industrialists and city officials. Our objective is to do what any normal business does: to find out what are the costs of operating and rebuilding the city. What are the expenses, in terms of real things? What are the accounts receivable? What are the projections for the future? We are trying to figure out a way in which accurate assessments can be made for each development act in terms of its cost totally, on a project basis, and even on a per capita basis. We want to know what it will cost to rebuild Ypsilanti, in those areas where rebuilding is required, and to maintain the good neighborhoods. To do this, we have to distinguish between community assets and liabilities, and between local and external resources.

A hard look at the City's resources may bring about uncomfortable feelings in those who feel that funds are always available, when in fact they may not be. A realistic assessment is essential in establishing priorities for the distribution and utilization of those resources which do exist, as well as for acquiring additional resources for future works.

Normally, economic assets are viewed in separate categories, which often makes it difficult to compare their similarities. For example, the businessmen in a downtown area, thought to be the commercially strong center of a city, often don't look at other areas such as a university area as being a strong commercial competitor. But when one considers the number of people employed, the dollars transacted over a year, and the "market" for the services being generated, there appear major difference in the understanding of commercial viability. In similar fashion, industrial centers seem to be the stronghold of the municipal tax structure. However, industrial developments are relatively short lived, as compared with central business districts. Those small, commercial developments, usually referred to as strip commercial, have an even shorter lifespan than do the downtown areas, although downtown areas are harder to regenerate than are new strip commercial projects. The probable lifespans of various development forms is hard to predict, but attempts should be made in order to assess the lifespan of municipal resources generated by these developments.

ACTIVITY CONCENTRATIONS

The drawing entitled "Activity Concentrations" describes in general terms the location and "felt" influences of the most significant special activities. The primary activity centers identified by the large dots are downtown Ypsilanti, Eastern Michigan University, the University of Michigan North Campus, various hospitals, colleges, factories, airports and the like.

These are listed as different sizes according to our estimate of the probable influence on development of those facilities, both as major centers throughout the area and upon its immediate environment. The immediate area of influence around these is shown in the solid dark irregular line. The dashed lines along Michigan and Washtenaw Avenues indicate the location of strip development, primarily commercial in nature, but with a mixture of apartments and minor institutions. These strip developments are concentrations in a lineal form of many of the activities that would normally have been in a central area such as the university campus or downtown. Their importance as an economic asset is dubious. However, their importance as a potential liability is not to be underestimated. As these strip facilities reach the maturity of their investment, which is usually between five and ten years, depending upon the nature of the development, those facilities are usually abandoned. Then the investment

they represent moves still further out. Naturally, these life spans can be altered by the infusion of other activities such as mass transit.

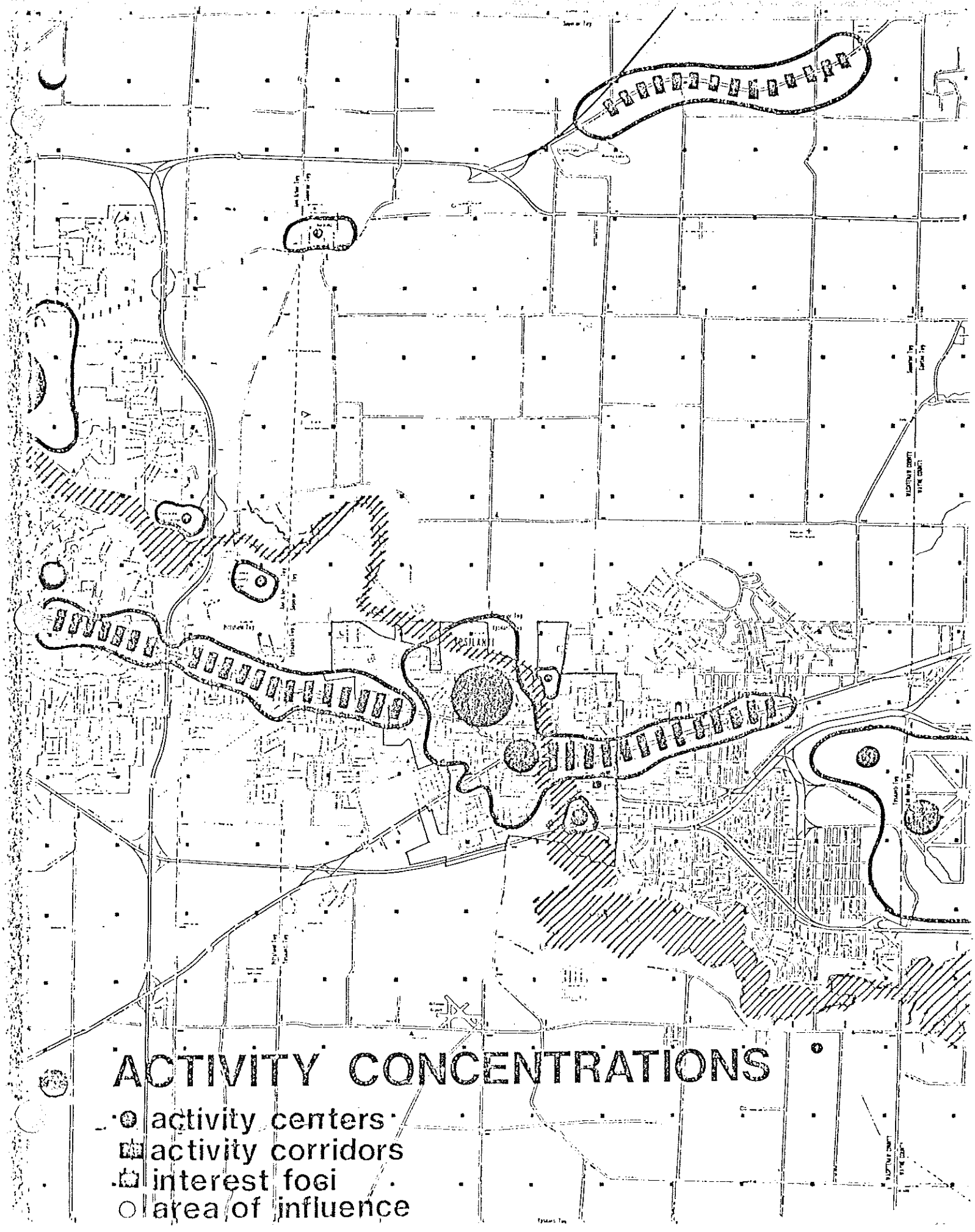
The Huron River Basin is represented by the lined pattern. It appears to be the focus of several development interests. It is not of itself a development or activity concentration. It forms the geographical basis around which activities can be organized, with special emphasis on recreational and residential activities.

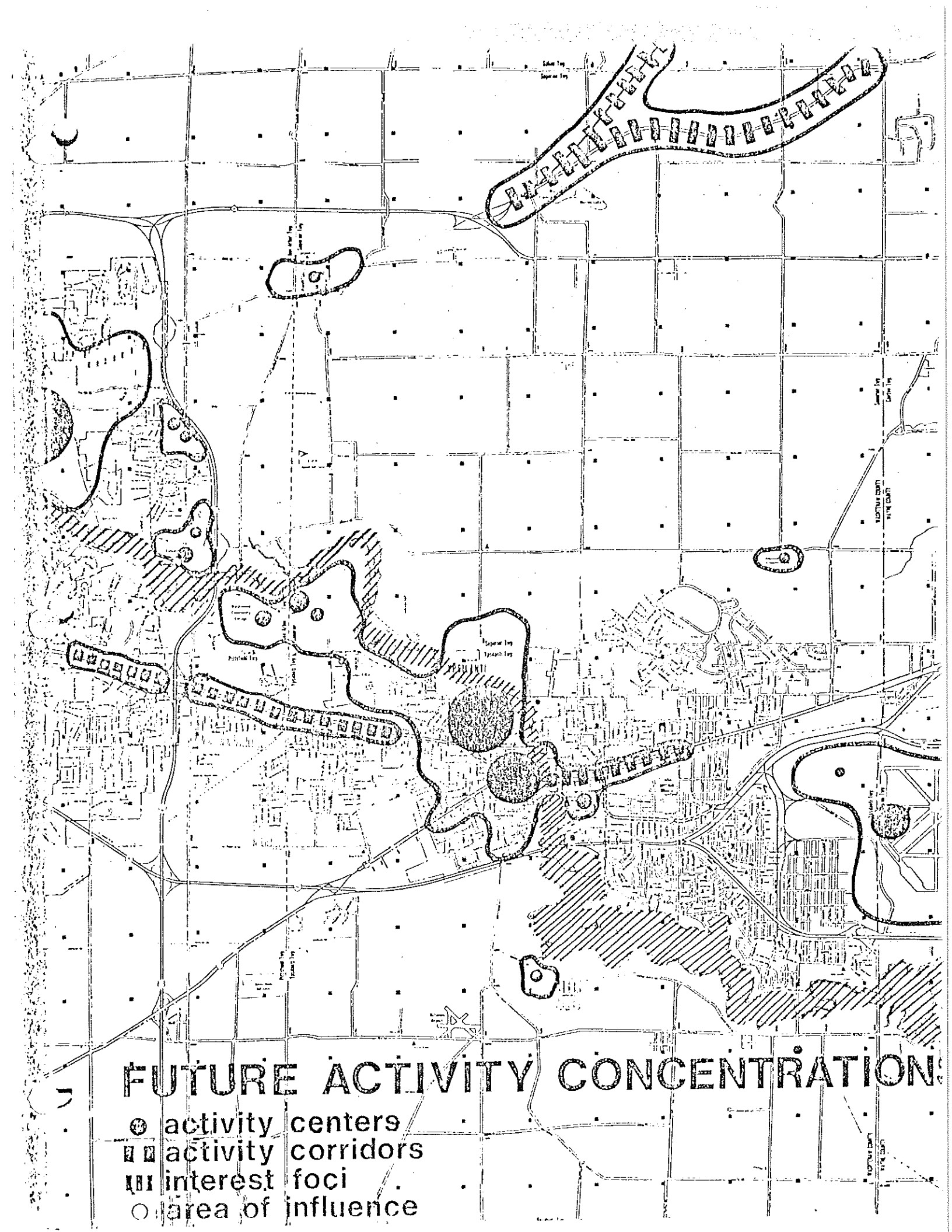
It is apparent from the present distribution of commercial and institutional activities that the two major characteristics emerging in the Ypsilanti area are the connection of Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor along the strip commercial routes, and the connection of the institutional elements of those two cities along the Huron River Basin. Since institutional growth, in both universities and community colleges, is much stronger than the economic "pull" of strip commercial development, it is our presumption that major growth will take place in the future along the Huron River Basin.

FUTURE ACTIVITY CONCENTRATIONS

The drawing entitled "Future Activity Concentrations" illustrates anticipated changes in the distribution of these centers and corridors. It can be seen from this drawing that the relative growth along the Huron River Basin is associated and coupled with the introduction of new institutions and the growth of existing ones. At the same time, strip commercial developments along both Michigan and Washtenaw Avenues are anticipated to diminish in relative strength as well as in absolute character. The effect would be that the Huron River Basin would serve as a focus for development of those institutions which stimulate major commercial development activities.

These observations about the general concentration of activities in the Ypsilanti area are indicative of resource distribution throughout almost any urban area. One must look to the future and anticipate what kinds of activities are likely to be most "valuable" by constrast with those which are considered valuable today. For example, industrial development has historically been considered a prime value use of the land. By and large, such functions as hospitals and universities have had to take a back seat to industrial and commercial development. It is apparent that that role is changing and that institutional and service industries are by and large becoming increasingly predominant in the marketplace, while the manufacturing industries are decreasing in their significance. That implies the need on the part of the local government and of the business community to make decisions about the priorities for support in terms of future industry growth. If the mechanisms are the


ACTIVITY CONCENTRATIONS
activity centers
activity corridors
interest foci
area of influence


FUTURE ACTIVITY CONCENTRATION
activity centers
activity corridors
interest foci
area of influence

same as they have been, then there will be very little supporting relationships between, for example, the University and the City. If, on the other hand, the City and the University both agree that they are part and parcel of the same economic enterprise, then their working relationship can be made stronger and more beneficial to all.

It should be obvious that each resource is at the same time a liability. In the case of downtown Ypsilanti, those areas that contain the resources also contain the major problems, such as vacant stores and poorly maintained buildings. The problem with assets in transition is that they can quickly turn into complete liabilities if not dealt with properly. The responsibility for dealing with the assets is both a public and a private matter. However, seeking out the most advantageous benefits from ones' resources and assets is considerably more difficult than realizing the most harmful aspects of ones' liabilities. If, for example, the downtown area became a strong service center, in addition to its retail functions, it would serve a much larger population and the resources already invested would have greater opportunities to be more fully realized than presently is the case. Certainly, on the basis of needs for retail functions alone, the downtown area has a very limited future and is extremely limited in its assets.

The question of development opportunities will face the City administration and elected officials for some time. The nature of the question is twofold: first, what constitutes a good development opportunity, and secondly, where and how should one invest in order to achieve the benefits of that opportunity. Normally, the procedure is to pick at random a vacant piece of land and attempt to get almost any kind of a new building on it, regardless of its function or of the overall growth patterns of the City. Under this view, if an opportunity comes to put a swimming pool here or a parking garage there, one should do it and "not look the gift horse in the mouth". However, there is a clear and distinct relationship between the municipal finances, the City's ability to generate taxes, the incidence of new development and the cost of public services. Very seldom are the real opportunities for development thoroughly known, nor are the techniques for taking advantage of those opportunities well defined. The most suitable way to determine the value of opportunities is to identify them, regardless of their relative importance, in terms of those resources associated with the land, those associated with people, and those associated with money.

There are numerous miscellaneous and uncataloged resources in and around the City. Among the most obvious are the physical resources, the parks and the Huron River which are under utilized. The very significant entrance into the City from I-94, which has not yet been developed, in effect "hides" the City. In fact, one would hardly even know that Ypsilanti lies immediately adjacent to that entrance. There are numerous historic areas of sound quality in the City, the advantage of which has not been taken.

Even more significant, and probably the most important resource, is the relationship between the University and the adjacent residental areas. The major resource of the University's economic growth has been allowed to continue away from the City, depleting the resources of the City, rather than reinforcing the essential strength the City had to offer. The lack of a shared development program between the City and the University is a major asset lost. The resource of the surrounding vacant land in the adjacent Townships can also not be underestimated. Probably, it will not be until that land is filled with buildings and people that it will be seen as a resource lost.

Finally, the character of the City itself, primarily in its residential areas, is a vital resource. Ypsilanti is a pleasant city with many delightful neighborhoods. It seems that little attention is paid to the value of these neighborhoods in the overall City fabric. It is hard to say which one economic resource is most valuable, because the value of all resources depends upon the timing for their need and utilization. Suffice it to say at this time that the Huron River Basin, and its adjacent park lands, and Eastern Michigan University are the two most obviously employable resources in terms of their long range implications for the growth of Ypsilanti.

A SENSE OF PLACE - - A SUMMARY OF PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

The analysis of physical characteristics in Ypsilanti need not be great in depth. Many of the factors governing future development decisions have to do with the social, economic and political factors already discussed. Naturally, there are real constraints placed by the physical environment. The very size of the City itself is such a constraint. However, size is accidental in nature, and seldom determined by reason of physical means alone. The essential physical character of any city is a combination of factors dealing with the use of the land, the basic structural system of the city, and the condition of the facilities within it. Add to that, the natural physical assets of the city, such as its parks, its rivers, its hills, and one begins to discover a "sense of place". The physical essence of a city is how well defined it is as a place, or a series of places, which are easily identifiable both from within and without.

In Ypsilanti, we have already discussed the basic land uses in terms of their real significance, which is essentially economic. It is not necessary to re-enter the whole spectrum of land uses in the name of physical analysis. It should be recognized that most traditional physical planning encompasses land usage simply because there are patterns of "use" assigned to the land itself. The interpretation of land use used here is as a primarily economic organization of human functions. The physical attributes of land use come later as facilities are erected upon the land. The human use of the facilities, rather than the land, is significant. For that reason, an analysis of the use of the facilities in the City is significant for this work.

In order to have a better understanding of the City's essential structure, the spacial analysis technique previously presented identifies the basic physical urban structure, except for the ingredient of circulation. The structure of the City, the identification of the spacial elements, and the identification of places within the City is best done by the technique of spacial separation. One of the more obvious separations is the division of east Ypsilanti from west Ypsilanti. The barrier between the two is the park system and the river. In similar fashion, a major difference between north and south Ypsilanti, is created by Michigan Avenue and the subsequent commercial development along it. There are other easily identifiable "places" within the City, such as the Campus Town area, the South side, "Ypsi-Tucky", etc. Each of these has its own unique characteristics socially, economically, and physically. These are the physical containers for social and human activities. Normally, these areas are established by activities which require the building of urban facilities. Later, the physical environment itself reenforces continuation of the activity even after the original purpose is gone. Consequently, the reenforcement of different life styles is arbitrarily established by physical urban forms of previous generations. This is how cities wind up with ghettos, with "Nob Hills", etc. This is how we have gotten suburbs versus cities. This brings about the separation of interests that allow downtowns to be distinct and separable

from strip commercial development.

Aerial photographs of the City reveal major differences in land form and character. A view of these photographs or of a general map of the City shows substantial differences in street and land layout from one residential area to another. In one area, there will be relatively small, nearly square blocks about 200 feet on a side. In another area, the blocks will be 200 feet wide and 1000 feet long. In still a third area, the blocks can be of a curved shape, with only one or two entrances into the neighborhood. All of these differences account for differences in lifestyle for present and future generations which were instilled the day they were built by a past generation.

It is these essential physical differences in physical character which provide for variations in lifestyles. For example, one area is made up primarily of elderly homeowners, while another area is composed of young families with lots of children who rent their homes. Such differences account for locations of families by race, by income, and very often, by occupation. Senior citizens often seem to be happier in one area, while students thrive in another. These differences, the spacial separations between neighborhoods of different characters provide the essential ingredient for the variety in population makeup. At the same time, they provide the mechanisms by which people can oppress each other. Virtually, no city has a single life style. Most American cities cannot be supported by a truly homogeneous population. However, within the cities are sub-areas with a homogeneous population. While a city viewed from a distance may appear to be heterogeneous in lifestyle, its components are more nearly similar, with identity of the physical characteristics supporting differences in social and economic class.

Most of these differences were not planned with an idea to the future in mind. The future came, without anticipation in most cases, regardless of how the neighborhoods were built. But the neighborhood structure determined the character and the rate of evolution of future social and economic condition. In Ypsilanti, the relatively small size of each neighborhood makes much easier the accomodation of a variety of social and economic styles. In cities with much larger neighborhoods, built primarily at one time of a similar kind of housing, "integration" of differences is much harder to accomplish. It is very difficult, for example, to have an entire neighborhood of 10,000 people made up of senior citizens. It is not difficult, however, to have two or three blocks whose residents are predominantly senior citizens.

It is the capacity to support the variety of lifestyle that gives a city its potential for future growth and change. If this potential doesn't exist, the city must eventually stagnate because it cannot support a regeneration of its population.

The variation in physical character of an urban environment is essential to a sustained, healthy life. Ypsilanti has sufficient variation to accomodate a population of its size in a series of regenerative actions for several decades to come. Fortunately, the newly emerging areas around Ypsilanti are being developed also in small sections, as opposed to large tracts. That is an advantage in a sense that it will bring about an increasingly varied population with a corresponding varied and healthy lifestyle. This variety in physical character within the City should be encouraged, as long as the environmental quality of each area can also be maintained.

The "sense of place", or identity, of the various sections of Ypsilanti is in danger of being lost. New buildings are being placed without proper recognition of their physical relation to older buildings and to open spaces. In some instances, they are being located without regard to the character of that portion of the community of which they are a part.

Historically, there have always been pressures to build in the City's parks, to close out its open spaces, to get rid of the "differences" in a city that separate one physical area from another. In no instance has this been successfully done. The very nature of differences is part and parcel of the character of the city, the existence of those spaces and the divisions between places is as much an essential part of the character of a city as is the new building itself.

CIRCULATION

The drawings entitled "Major Circulation" are done at two scales. One, showing Ypsilanti and the adjacent Townships, the other showing the City itself. These two drawings refer to traffic generators and to major and secondary circulation routes. It is apparent that the primary generators of traffic in the Ypsilanti area are the downtown area and the Eastern Michigan University. It should be further apparent, that these two are along the potential growth corridor along the Huron River Basin. The University, in particular, has a clear position in and access to proposed new growth. The physical separation between the University and the downtown represents a major problem in terms of shared benefits from future growth since future population can have access to the University without supporting downtown activities.

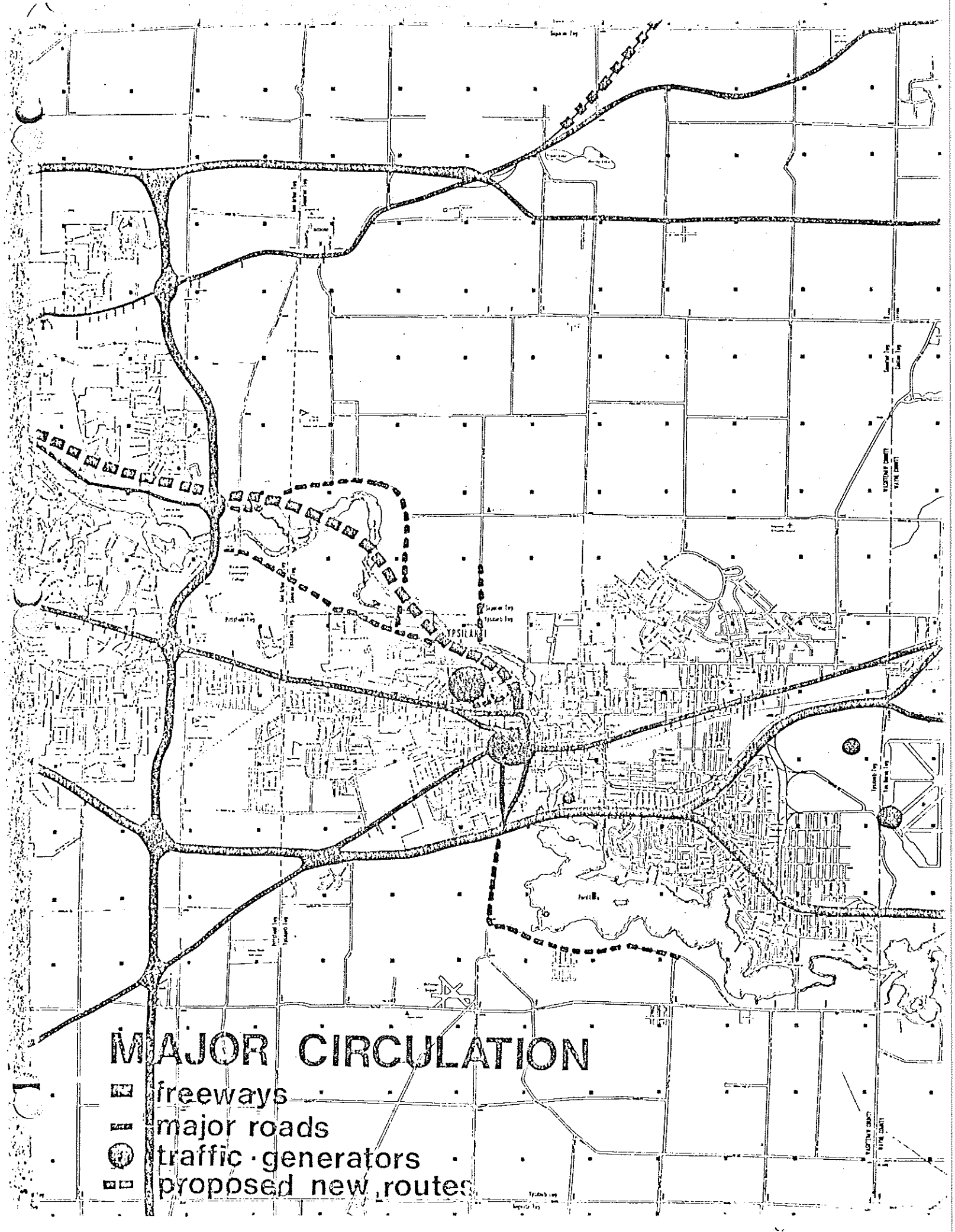
In addition, the proposed circulation routes make it far easier to have access to the University without an increased relationship to other City functions. Improved access by outlying population to the downtown area is possible through these routes. But, at the same time, it must be remembered that the

Ypsilanti citizenry will also have greater access to surrounding areas. Since these areas are largely filled with vacant land, the potential for the development of that land will be increased by this access system, while the redevelopment potential for downtown Ypsilanti is not necessarily increased. That potential could either remain neutral or decrease, depending upon the manner in which downtown redevelopment is handled.

Circulation plans are normally carried out in most cities in a haphazard way. The real significance of route changes is seldom realized until years later. As an example, the widening and improvement of Washtenaw Avenue encouraged intensive strip commercial development. There was apparently little recognition that the route itself was not a supporter of economic growth for Ypsilanti, but was in fact a detractor. The nature of such routes is that they drastically alter property values and sponsor increased intensity of development along their frontage. Land control in key places along the improved route, therefore, becomes highly significant. To improve access along a route without gaining public land control becomes a dangerous activity to those with vested interests in the old urban structure.

It is seldom remembered that while traffic routes connect at their ends and at various foci along lengths of the highway, they also divide sections of the City from each other. Sometimes, the divisive character of a roadway is much stronger than is its unifying character at its termini. The most obvious example is an expressway which clearly divides one portion of an area from another, and connects only remotely distant centers. The same effect occurs, on a smaller scale, when a highway such as Michigan Avenue or Washtenaw Avenue is widened. To be sure, access to various centers along the route is increased, in a linear fashion. But, the separation of areas is intensified.

The tendency for route planning to be done out of context with its effects on the physical environment cannot be over stressed. Access to appropriate functional areas of a city is the primary purpose of circulation systems. It must also be remembered that access to one factor eliminates access to another. The areas of the city are not equally accessible, nor should they be. If one favors the automobile uniquely, for example, one penalizes the pedestrian. If one favors parking lots, one penalizes development density. All of these things have to be dealt with in terms of overall circulation systems. The circulation system, which tends to divide, for example, the downtown area from the campus area, may in the long run have extremely destructive effects. It is apparent that the combination of land availability and circulation access has caused the University to grow away from the City into the outlying Township area, as opposed to reenforcing the essential structure and function of the City.


MAJOR CIRCULATION
freeways
major roads
traffic generators
proposed new routes

FACILITIES

The facilities of the City are, of course, its most visible aspect. Its houses, stores, schools, parks, etc., are the measure by which most of us consider whether or not a city is a good place to live and work. Very seldom do we ask how those facilities got to be the way they are, or how they can be improved. The question about improvement usually comes at a date when the prime life of the facility is long past. The capacity of a city to maintain itself well and to assure its citizenry of constantly improved facilities is a measure of the economic vitality of the city, and of the people's concern for their environment.

Much of Ypsilanti was built at a time when "urban sprawl" was an unknown phrase. Its neighborhoods are relatively small, its downtown area is concise, even its major facilities are disbursed throughout a relatively small geographic area. In years past, it was possible to walk the entire city very comfortably; to walk downtown for shopping, from home to the high school,etc. Naturally, times have changed all that. The City is spread out. Unique facilities are distant from each other. And, the basic urban fabric has stretched. While this has been going on, the old buildings have gotten older, and new buildings have been of a different character. Now, the facilities of the City are a strange mixture of old and new. Some of the "charm" of Ypsilanti is owed to this mixture of new and old.

The City has many pleasant neighborhoods. It also has several nice, new schools. However, it lacks the vibrant quality of renewal in the downtown area, and more importantly, of its specially unique facilities, such as its parks, and its riverfront. The facilities which are truly unique to a city such as Ypsilanti are in sad condition. Those very private homes which are not unique to Ypsilanti, are in generally good condition. The essential facilities of the City, other than the homes, are in a state of significant deterioration caused partly by a misapplied financial structure, and partly by age.

Age in buildings is unlike age in people, which usually represents maturity growing from a variety of experiences. Age in buildings often means an advanced rate of decay, caused by previous years of poor maintenance, and obsolescence imposed by a facility created for purposes no longer in existence.

Naturally, some buildings have a character and charm of the past which for historical reasons, is worthy of maintenance. Often, the primary function of an area of the City,such as the downtown, is in direct conflict with its physical form. That function is service to the citizenry, and not merely continued existence of form derived from past economies, present politics or historical declaration.

Unfortunately, the most recently built facilities in the City, with very few exceptions, have not been an addition to the list of assets of the City. There seems to be a tendency toward mediocrity in the design placement of new facilities. There is a lack of attention to the value of the urban space and the appropriateness of a facility to the use of the people. There is a great tendency to provide large parking lots around buildings without attention to what happens when one leaves one's car and the character of the spaces that remain.

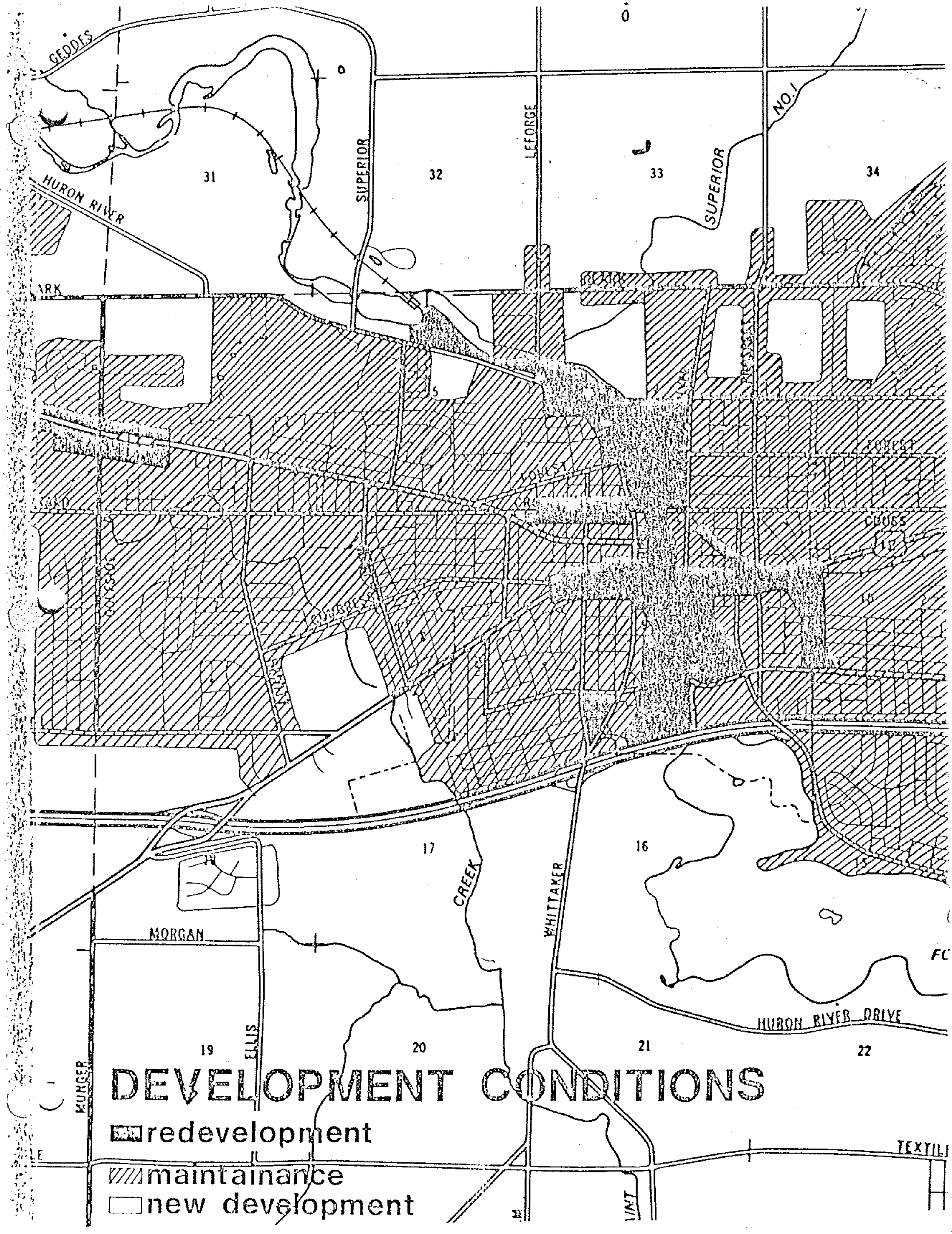
The saddest situation that can occur in any city is when one gives up an important asset and assumes only a liability in the name of progress. This was recently done in Ypsilanti when a much needed new building was placed in the middle of an open space, instead of more appropriately, at the edge of a larger piece of land. It was quite possible to have both the open space and the new building. Now the space is gone, and the new building is demeaned.

The present tendency in Ypsilanti is toward growth and change of its facilities. That is a proper and appropriate attitude. There needs to be, however, a clear understanding that a new building, can in fact, be a liability over, and above its mortgage, if it detracts from the essential quality of the environment, rather than a well done addition to the whole assets of the City. The sensitivity of architects, politicians and businessmen is all that is required, with the clear understanding that every new building may not be an asset. Ypsilanti and other American cities are full of mistakes of the past, the results of expedient decisions made without full awareness of later consequences. Those are ordinary decisions made in ordinary ways without real awareness of the harmful side effects. Every opportunity not fully seized to erect a "great" facility, which is a contribution to the City in all of its aspects, not just its physical functions, is an opportunity lost. Each opportunity lost is a removal of a potential asset from the City, which deducts permanently from the resources of the City.

DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS

The drawing entitled "Development Conditions" identifies those areas where physical facilities have deteriorated to the state where they need redevelopment, and those that are still capable of being maintained. It is obvious that the bulk of the central area, as well as the properties along those portions of Michigan Avenue close to downtown, and some riverfront properties, are in essential need of redevelopment to take full advantage of their potential. The rest of the City needs more carefully defined maintenance operations in order to avoid achieving redevelopment status through either disuse or failure to appropriately manage the properties. The areas shown in clear are

those lands that are essentially suitable for new development. Naturally, there are new developments under way at all times in these areas. This effort has not been to identify every place where properties exist, but instead to identify the essential area in which a difference in facilities conditions will require different approaches in the development process.



DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS

redevelopment
maintainance
new development

DEMOCRACY IN YPSILANTI - - A SUMMARY OF POLITICAL FACTORS

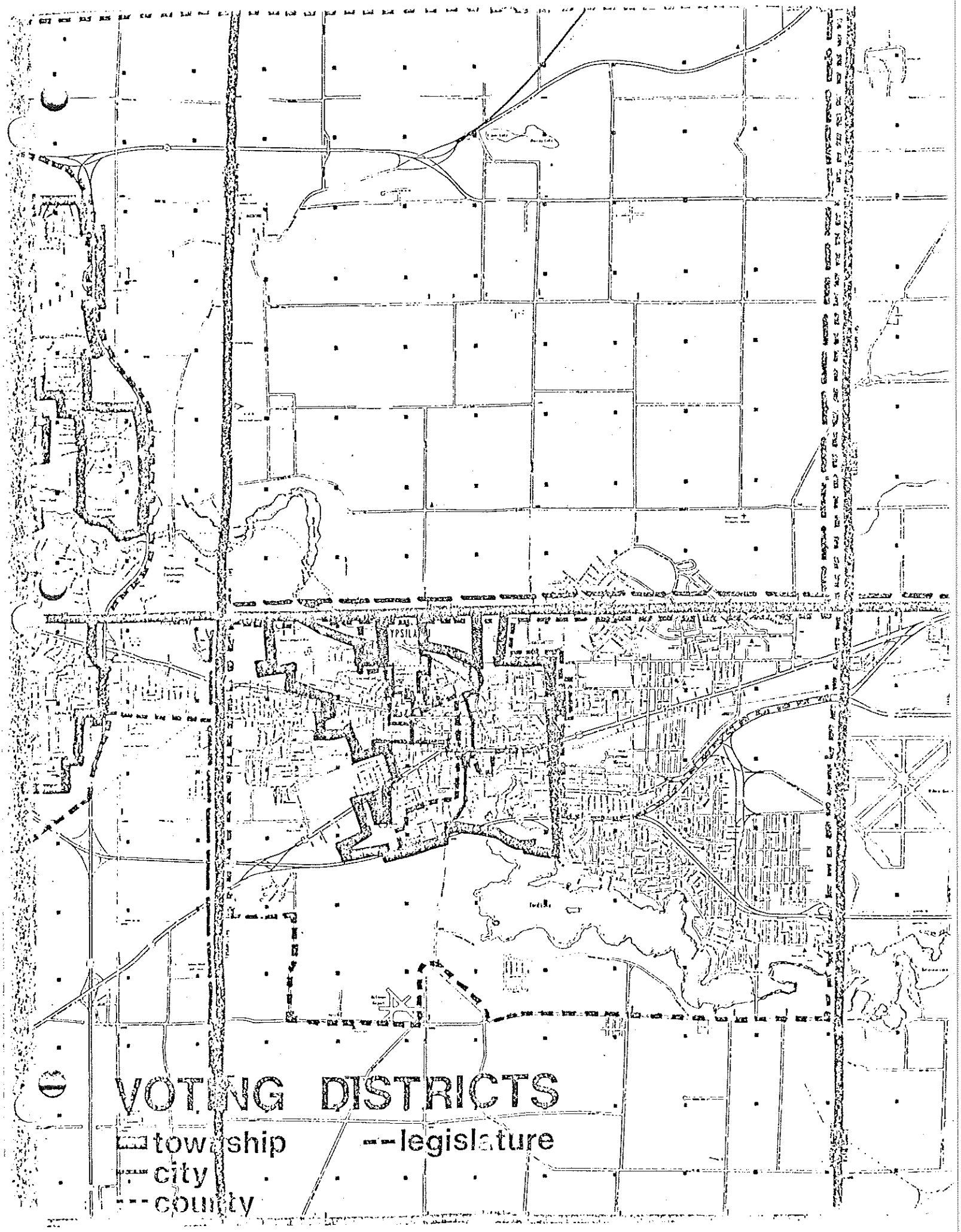
The political structure of any urban environment is of major consequence to the future of development in that environment. The capacity to make decisions and have access to the resources to carry them out, is not simply a matter of economics, it is also a matter of the territory in which political decisions can be reasonably effected. This is not an analysis of Democrat and Republican and Human Rights Party members. This is an overview of political actions as they relate to the development process.

There are many political participants in the development process, from a variety of scenes and a variety of scales. Very seldom does the public have a real understanding of the interplay between these different political actors. They are normally thought to be purely individual; politician A having different points of view from politician B. Quite often, it is not realized that each represents significantly different population characteristics, as well as major differences in issues that arrive out of territorial jurisdictions. In that context, it is not surprising to find out that most people don't realize they are represented simultaneously by City and Township officials, as well as County officials. The territorial differences between these offices make it difficult to understand overlapping issues, either mutually, supportive of each other or in conflict. It is also no surprise to find out that they are often operating at cross purposes, owing to the needs of their largely different constituencies.

VOTING DISTRICTS

There are two drawings entitled "Voting Districts". The first shows the voting districts in Ypsilanti and the adjacent Townships. The second shows those in the City at a larger scale. From the first drawing it can be seen that the City, Township, County and legislative boundaries are a maze of crossing, conflicting and matching lines. Ypsilanti itself is divided by different "wards", each responsible to a different hierarchy of representative politics. Ypsilanti Township and the City of Ypsilanti are in a different legislative district than is Superior Township. They are in different County districts with four County Commissioner election districts within Ypsilanti itself. With these many sub-divisions, agreement is difficult to reach on the same issue from the County, the Township, and the City, if it happens that the representatives of those three do not see eye to eye. At that point, it becomes a question as to whose representation is most significant. All of this usually goes on, however, without any awareness by local citizens.

Normally,most citizens regard themselves as being represented by their City government on all local matters. It is seldom known, for example, that the City must "negotiate" with counties, townships and the State legislature in order to carry out mandates given by local citizens. It is presumed that the City government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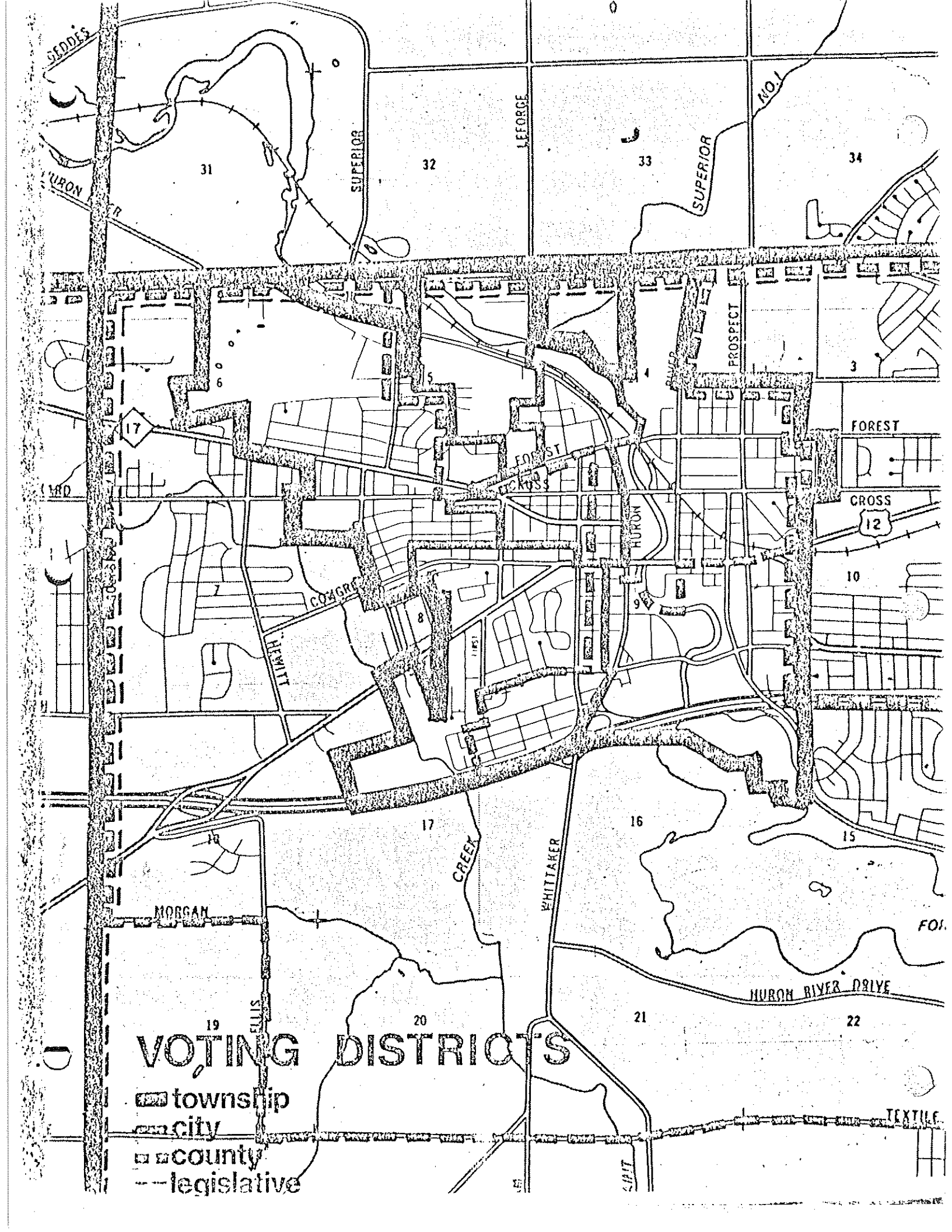
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functions within the limits of the City alone, which is true only for physical, but not in a administrative financial sense.

The second Voting Districts drawing, showing the City itself, identifies more clearly the separation of the City into wards, and County districts. From this it can be seen that the City is divided up into wards along lines which vary sometimes no more than one block from the divisions for County Commissioners. Yet, some of those commissioners affect seriously the services provided within the City. The net result of this kind of a difference is that a difference of one block can separate your vote one way for the City and another way for the County. Perhaps more to the point; the person elected to the council from a particular ward may be very much representative of that wards' interests. Those interests may, however, be opposed by the person representing that district at the County level. There is very seldom a way for the voter to know that those conflicts exist, since neither of these two levels of candidacy are politically related.

SERVICE DISTRICTS

The drawing entitled "Service Districts" illustrates the boundaries of school districts, school service or catchment areas, and police patrol precincts. It is interesting to compare the diagrams of the voting districts with the diagram of the service districts, since very often people presume the person they vote for will help them with problems related to public services. For example, when the schools, recreation, the police, or rubbish collection are unsatisfactory, to whom do the people go for redress? The Councilman, the County Commissioner, the local school board? In most instances, the City Councilperson or the Mayor are the focus of such distress. It is clear that they cannot respond in a comprehensive way to those problems, since both voting and service districts are administratively overlapping and contradictory. In no instance is the same group of people brought together on all subjects. Each subject has a different group of interests. That of itself is not bad. The difficult part is when all of those interests are focused for unified action upon a central government office which must function within non-centralized divisions of service.

This general disarray of City "Districts" is not conducive to the best interests of the citizens of Ypsilanti or to the citizens of the surrounding area. However, Ypsilanti is not a very large city, so that the separation of these interests are not an insurmountable problem. The unification of like interests would greatly reduce the unnecessary burden placed upon the City Administration, and would enhance the responsiveness of government to citizen needs and complaints. There is a responsibility for public aspirations to be realistically raised as to what can be. That is a normal responsibility of government in dealing with its citizens, realizing that every instance carries

with it considerable hidden liabilities for responsible representation. The obvious need for responsible accountability to a given section of the City by those it elected is equally important. To have this authority and responsibility diluted by further divisions of the City into nonrepresentative districts makes the political process extremely cumbersome at best.

Clearly, the problem of the political structure requires local government on the one hand to carry out the business of the City, and on the other, to democratically represent its citizens. The inherent conflict of the operation of the City as a business and the operation of it as a seat of democratic government is obvious to any serious student of politics. It is very seldom in the representative nature of government that brings challenges to the local body politic. It is most often in the operation of the "business" of the City that those problems arise. Timely rubbish collection, proper street maintenance, reasonable police service, etc., are essentially business problems, requiring acceptance of political representation. But, by and large, they are not part and parcel of the political philosophy of democracy.

This conflicting set of conditions raises grave responsibilities for political representation at the local level. Real dangers exist in every decision that affect the political future of individual members of the Council and the Administration. Seldom are these futures as sensitively seen by those unaware of the political process as they are by those involved in the day to day business of government. These are the zoning ordinances, building codes, tax assessments, height limitations, bond issues, municipal budgets, legislative reviews, tax audits and, on and, on, and on. All of these are the vestiges of the most complex business operation in existence. The operation of the people's city.

It appears that Ypsilanti has, by comparison with most cities, a very competent administrative government. There are unique factors in Ypsilanti which make government more unusual and more difficult to administer than some other cities. For example, the population is nearly equally divided among the various interest groups. There are approximately equal numbers of young and old, of homeowners and renters, of wealthy and poor, etc. It is almost as if there is no single faction strong enough to wield its influence over the City as a whole. It is a nearly classic example of a balanced socio-political structure. Naturally, that situation won't maintain itself over a long time period because a population does change and age.

The University is a major State investment in the area. Although the administrators of this organization have all but removed themselves from the politics of the City, they do exist within the context of the urban political scene. People work at the University and live in the City. There are students who

are citizens of the City. That influence is strongly felt, even if it is not always direct. In this area, local government is charged with even a more severe responsibility of providing services and meeting the needs of a portion of the population whose primary allegiance is to an institution which does not participate in the local scene. Local government, is at best, a tenuous relationship, full of precarious issues that require rapid decisions. Without direct accountability for results in University-City affairs, such responsibility yields dubious returns on the invested energies by City government.

The traditional difficulty with local government is its inability to take a bold stand; to realize that the problems of a city are not going to be resolved by small, piecemeal efforts aimed at pacifying the various representative constituents. The boldness and the aggressiveness of actions, and the timeliness of moves, are the mark of strength in the political leadership. Strong actions are usually out of the grasp of local community leadership. That is partly because they are so close to those who elect them, especially in smaller cities where the personality of the electorate is felt daily. That does not remove the responsibility for leadership, however. There is evidence that leadership in Ypsilanti is prepared to take bold moves.

A natural phrase for local political leaders when they are asked to make a change is "show us where it has been done elsewhere". Give us an example, tell us where we may look to see the fruits of someone else's efforts, so we can be sure of our own decisions. That is never a satisfactory basis for decisions about the future. To be sure, one must look elsewhere to determine what forms of success have occurred in other cities, and what actions have led to failure so that those actions can be avoided. But in the final result, the ability of local government to take a bold stand in the realization of a city bears real and substantial risks. The bolder the stand, the greater the risk. But, failure to take a bold stand is still a greater risk, because inaction leads to certain failure, whereas positive, strong actions may lead to success.

CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

In the preceding pages, summaries of various community analysis factors have been presented. Naturally, these few pages do not contain an extensive, detailed analysis. This is, rather, the highlights of a more thorough analysis which is in part factual, and in part perceptual, based upon the experiences of those performing the analysis.

Naturally, a variety of conditions are evident, some conflicting with and some supportive of the development process. To determine the effect on the future of Ypsilanti of the presently operating characteristics and changes is a largely subjective process. While statistical analysis techniques have been used, and observable trends projected, these, in the long run, are not the basis for planning for the future or for predicting what the continuation of present activities would lead to.

Future planning is half scientific and half intuition stemming from the experiences of City growth in general and of individuals involved in the development process. It is our opinion that Ypsilanti is similar to most other medium-sized cities in the Midwestern region, in that it was developed in an economy that was rural oriented, surrounded by an agrarian population. It was self sufficient for several decades, depending for no major portion of its sustenance upon the larger metropolitan area. This freedom from economic restraint has given Ypsilanti the strongest fibers of its present character. It has also provided Ypsilanti with the general lack of experience in dealing with the larger urban problems so common in America today. Consequently, the conditions of Ypsilanti are such that within the next five to seven years, major portions of the City will require almost total renovation. In the process of change, Ypsilanti can become one of the healthiest, most attractive environments in Michigan, if it takes advantage of all of its potential with reasonable actions and strong aspirations. That represents the most positive extreme that can be anticipated.

To this end, Ypsilanti can become a service center for the population immediately surrounding Ypsilanti. It can also become the focus of living environments for a wide variety of life styles. By working hand and hand with the local Townships, Ypsilanti can become a part of an urban structure which is truly unique and advantageous to all citizens.

Unfortunately, actions of the boldness required have not yet been taken, although they are being considered. If consideration of appropriate steps does not lead to significant action within the reasonably near future, particularly within the coming year, we anticipate that the opportunity for effecting such actions will gradually diminish to the point where that potential is all but eliminated.

Naturally, it is much better to undertake changes for future betterment from a position of strength. Ypsilanti still has sufficient strength to embark upon a bold future. But, that strength will continue to wan as time goes by. The principal reason for that is that Ypsilanti is landlocked. If the City depends entirely upon its own internal assets, without regard for its neighbors contributions and needs, the City will become a derelict environment with those families possessing the resources for improvement increasingly abandoning the City in favor of other areas.

On the other hand, the Townships are looking to an immediate future with anticipation of rapid growth, both in population and facilities. Their eyes are temporarily blinded in the belief that new growth, regardless of its form or character, is good in and of itself. Evidence is to the contrary. The evidence throughout the United States, and especially in the Midwest, indicates that new growth in the areas adjacent to older cities penalizes the older cities when it is taken on in the traditional way, and does not yield the benefits anticipated by the Townships themselves. The effect is a decrease in resources to undertake the healthy development process in the Townships and the City, and an increase in physical and social liabilities for both.

The most crucial ingredient required to undertake the development process is the willingness for change on the part of those in leadership positions, and on the part of the citizenry as a whole. Those who are satisfied with the present situation and with the anticipated future, are traditionally not willing to change in hopes of attaining a still brighter future. Those who are at the "bottom of the ladder" are almost always ready to have change at any cost, regardless of what the change really does. Real change of a constructive nature requires the bold commitment of all citizens, and particularly of the leadership. The readiness to change and to make positive commitments for a strong future will be the test of the ability of Ypsilanti to meet its obligations to its citizens. The indications are that the citizens of Ypsilanti are more ready for a change than the leadership believes is the case. This apparent misconception of mutual values comes, we believe, from the lack of a clear policy statement about the goals and purposes of City and its redevelopment objectives. It is our opinion that broad policies and goals with clearly defined strategies laid out and presented to the public will develop in them a positive response. But, we believe that there is in the City of Ypsilanti a willingness to better the City and to benefit future generations.

The major missing elements are a full development team capable of large scale, coordinated public-private community development efforts, and a competent full-community management.

THE PEOPLE - - THE ULTIMATE RESOURCE

We have looked at the land as a resource, we have examined briefly money as a resource. Now it is time to examine the final and most significant of all resources in the urban scene, the people themselves. The people are the builders and the users of a city. It is with them that the development process begins and ends; and it is through the people's efforts that it continues.

As an economic resource, people can be placed into three major categories: one, being productively employed; two, as taxpayers; and three, as users of the city. Each of these carries with it a distinct financial aura and different perspectives from one individual to the next. For example, productive employment may mean being "employed" in a factory, being a retail merchant, being an owner of property or managing a theater group. It also means being a student, a housewife, a patient, etc. Productivity in the traditional sense of that word simply refers to the various "industrial" activities of society aimed at increasing productive benefits. But, in the fullest sense, it means all of those are productive who lead a contributory life, who function in some way to improve the whole of an urban situation, and from whom others receive benefits. In the strictly financial sense, the traditional definition is important. The table below shows the employment characteristics in Ypsilanti and the surrounding area.

CATEGORY	YPSILANTI	TOWNSHIPS
Employed Labor Force	13,640	15,706
Unemployed Labor Force	-1,368	-1,192
University Students	18,227	2,074
Total Productive Force	30,499	16,593

This table can be misleading since it does not deal with the broader view of productivity referred to above. For purely financial purposes, this table may suffice in the short range. In the long range, the resource of the people has to do with how wide the range of productive efforts are beyond the narrow limits identified by most commerical-industrial statistical measures.

Naturally, the people as taxpayers are a major financial resource of any city. Without this resource, there would be only perfunctory municipal government, very limited services, and probably no police, fire engines, or schools. While some looked upon the property as the taxpayer, it is in fact the people who are the taxpayers. The people, their manner of work and their manner of living generate through the characteristics of their environment, a cash flow for public services. The "productivity" of the people is the resource. Their property is the measure of

their productivity. The depersonalization of the tax assessment does not alter the basic structure of the population as a tax resource. Consequently, as the population becomes older and less affluent, its resources from the point of view of public taxes diminish, regardless of the attendant property structure. It is, therefore, wise to understand more clearly the construction of the population and its economic ability. The following table indicates the tax paying ability of the population as it was, as it is today and as it may be in the future, given projected population changes.

TAXABLE HOUSEHOLDS	1960	1970	1980
Number of Households	6077	7669	8435
Tax $/Household	198	258	250

Bear in mind that these changes anticipate an increase in the numbers of elderly population who are beyond their prime tax paying years, and a decrease in the number of young families from whom one normally anticipates future tax advantages. Without a substantial influx of population in this age range, the tax resources of the people will diminish.

The strongest, and sometimes the least obvious, financial resource of the people is their function as a market; as users of the City; as purchasers of its commodities. Looked at in this way, the people are the ultimate resource. If they do not buy the goods at the local stores, there is no local store. If the people do not live in the city, there is no housing market. If the people choose to entertain themselves elsewhere, the market is elsewhere. The people are the final market, they are the final resource. They make a free choice decision in most instances as to where they spend their money. Those whose decisions are not free choice are limited by their small incomes, or their weak political strength. For most of us, however, the marketplace is varied and wide, The citizens of Ypsilanti buy goods easily, for example, in Ann Arbor and Detroit. They are not a captive market. The key then, is to determine what portion of the local population constitutes market for local services and commodities. In short, how much of the people's financial resources are available to purchase goods and services within the City. Based upon national urban indicators, the annual "buying power" of the population the size of Ypsilanti as follows:

Households	Retail Goods	Services	Housing	Total
Ypsilanti	51.0 mi.*	19.1 mi.	21.3 mi.	91.4 mi.
Township	69.2 mi.	20.1 mi.	22.3 mi.	111.6 mi.
Total	120.2 mi.	39.2 mi.	43.6 mi.	203.0 mi.

* mi. = million

It can be seen from this comparison that Ypsilanti sellers of goods and services are receiving less than 20% of the buying power of its citizens in every category except housing. From this, it is reasonable to say that Ypsilanti is incapable of taking advantage of the resources of its own citizen market. That market must look elsewhere for fulfillment. The reasons may be many fold, but the issue is a simple one. The "market" is more attracted elsewhere, more responsive to the citizens of Ypsilanti, than is Ypsilanti itself.

But the most unnoticed financial resource of the people is their general function as citizens and as believers in the future. It is that unique capacity that provides an urban environment with spirit for growth and change and in the long run, provides the financial and other resources with which to carry out the change for a better future. There is no way to add up, on a tally sheet this almost spiritual quality; this essential humanism. However, its absence is easily detectable. In the end, it is the basis for the disappearance of markets and the reduction of productivity in every sense of that word. It is the capacity of the citizens to have confidence in the future of their local setting that provides both the human and financial participation necessary to bring about change. Most cities have this resource. Very seldom is it tapped. The magic of attracting and holding this resource, and making it fertile, is the political process which can generate the people's confidence in the development process and instill a willingness to share in the risks and potential of building for the future.

THE MONEY TREE - - A SUMMARY OF MONETARY RESOURCES

In discussing monetary resources, thoughts turn to cash on hand, the tax base, monetary flows, capital expenses, profits and the like. Usually these are compartmentalized into separate areas. The separation of public dollar from private dollar is paramount; the separation of the commercial dollars from household budgets is normal; the separation of one's individual expenses from corporate returns is unavoidable. All of these divisions have to be maintained in order for reason of organization of personal security. However, these separations reduce understanding of a city's overall monetary picture and render full-range budgeting for development purposes nearly impossible.

The creation of a "balance sheet," a form of community budget, which identifies the cost of working, living and building a city is beyond traditional municipal budgeting. It is imperative to know the life cycle of a dollar spent in Ypsilanti: where does it go; where does it come from; what does it buy? Most cities develop annual budgets, as do most businesses, and even some households.

Within these annual budgets, are usually separate categories, such as capital financing, personnel salaries, and so forth. A balance is simply a matter of matching expenses with income and distributing money between the various departments. Only municipal dollars are reviewed, however, and private dollars being spent for essentially the same purposes have no place in this accounting. That is natural because private funds are not open to public scrutiny. However, this leads to conflict between public and private expenditures from time to time, and even the wasting of funds, usually public funds, in order to benefit the private gain. Quite often, even private funds are wasted in hopes that the public dollar will "do its duty."

This phenomenon is normally evidenced by requests from local citizen, civic, and merchant groups for the City to "do something" about their problems. A new park, a new school, or a new parking garage are all more "suitable" for public than for private investment. Of course, these are private sector "problems." Their existence indicates an inability of the private sector to function by itself without public assistance. Unfortunately, the private sector usually likes to pretend that public assistance is not necessary, and that there should be an "arms length" relationship between the two. This relationship, which calls for the avoidance of mixing public and private dollars is quite obviously a sham. Otherwise the United States could never have built its railways, airlines, and freeways, nor would there be suburbs, public schools, or supermarkets.

In order to arrive at some feeling for the real monetary status of the City, it is necessary to measure cash flow generated by public and private activities alike. It is also necessary to estimate the total capital investment in the City and to relate that to an investment potential for future development purposes.

Naturally, there is no way to know the real cash flow of the private dollars since it will suffice to estimate this dollar volume based upon figures of the Chamber of Commerce, and selected private sources. The table below provides an extremely rough estimate of the monetary "worth" of the City, in terms that are relevant to the community development process.

CAPITAL VALUE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TOTAL
Land	21.7 mi.	16.4 mi.	38.1 mi.*
Buildings	35.2 mi.	148.1 mi.	183.3 mi.
Total	56.9 mi.	164.5 mi.	221.4 mi.

* mi. = million

This value, is directly related to capital value. The capital value of the city changes as times go by. Buildings grow older, tax assessment potential diminishes, and the capacity for value generation alters with age. In fact, it is the process of altering the capital value of the city that generates much of the cash flow inherent to the city's commercial enterprises.

Attention should be drawn to the situation of all cities dependent upon property taxes for their cash flow; namely that property ages and values depreciate. As it does, its taxable value decreases. At the same time the cost of maintaining depreciating properties increase. The obvious conflict of decreasing value and increasing operating costs eventually brings about a condition where the facility known must be rebuilt or abandoned. The following table indicates the approximate cost of operating the city and relates that to the approximate income of the city. Both of these are directly related to the so-called net or capital worth of the city. It is clear that in those areas where the capital value is higher, the cash flow is greater and operating expenses are affordable. The reverse is clear in areas where values have been depreciated. Also, indicated in the table, is an extremely rough projection of what currently observable trends in the operating costs of the city will lead to over the next decade.

COSTS (Public)	1970	1980
Facilities Maintenance	.27 million	.29 million
Utilities	.09 million	.17 million
Services	.45 million	.51 million
Administrative	.79 million	.87 million

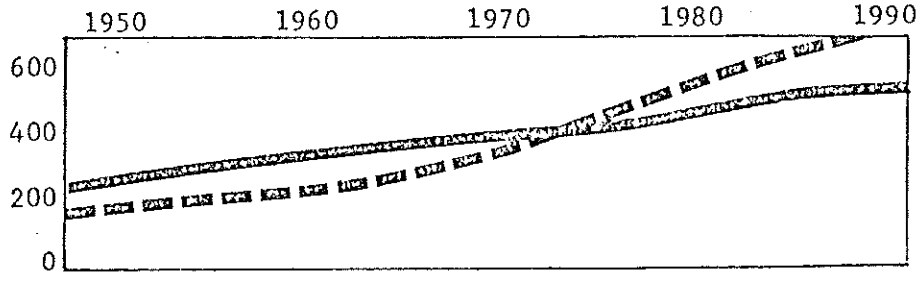
REVENUE (Private)	1970	1980
Property Taxes	1.28 million	1.33 million
Utility Fees	.08 million	.17 million
Maintenance Contracts	.16 million	.29 million
Service Fees	.08 million	.11 million

The City exists in two financial realms. First, is the setting in which a variety of private business and personal activities take place. In this regard, the City must be considered in relation to other cities in the State and to the State as a whole. For that kind of relationship, relative median incomes, property values, etc., become significant. Secondly, the City has to be regarded as a fixed capital asset which is constantly undergoing changes. The tables at the end of this section contain a variety of comparative data information.

Conscious actions must be taken to overcome the normal lessening of the City's basic capital value. The future monetary worth of the City will be determined by its ability to invest in itself, and to maintain high overall economic value while enduring fluctuations in the value of its several components. It is unnecessary to increase City value beyond all useable levels. To do so only causes harmful side affects on one's neighbors. If increases in value can only be done at the expense of decreased value in neighboring communities, those must be considered harmful activities in the long run, whether they occur in the City or in the Townships. Consequently, decisions are to be made as to the rate of investment required to expand the City's capital and monetary value to a reasonable level and to maintain that level in future periods of change.

An economic analysis identifies the most stable elements of the economy, and distinguishes those from elements that are in a constant stage of change. Further, it must be determined as to whether those in change are positive or negative in character and whether the changes are temporary or permanent. At the outset of our work in Ypsilanti, in 1972, the City had a balanced budget with a modest cash surplus in the municipal fund. Our assessment at the time of the rate of change in the City's financial tax structure reveals that there would be a deficit by 1974 and that the deficit would increase at an increasing rate in future years. That would require increased municipal taxes and a reduction in public services. That observation has proved correct. If present financial cost and revenue trends continue, an even greater reduction of public services and further increases in taxes is anticipated. The rate of change is illustrated in the diagram below.

Relationship of Public Service Costs to Taxes Revenues per Household



While this diagram should not be taken as a factual statement of precise dollar volumes, it is an indication of changing relationships in public service costs and private tax dollars under the present situation. These observations assume changes in the population and the subsequent changes in the population and the subsequent changes in both the costs and delivery of services associated with a changing population.

Market decisions in the areas surrounding the City will attract facilities and services to support that growing population. This condition in the Townships will result in increased financial deficits by the City to the extent that the City "services" the Townships' population. Temporarily, the costs to the Townships will be lower, until their population builds up to a level as requires major capital expenditures for schools and roads, etc. At that time, the Townships will also enter into the deficit situation, further burdening the City itself.

"Equalized" tax assessments between the City and the Townships will not equalize incomes. The buying power of the slightly wealthier families in the Township will still override the tax value of their properties, giving them a temporary advantage in the marketplace. Since less of their dollars will have been spent on taxes, more of them will be disposable for the purchase of goods and private services. To the extent that the city provides those services in a marketable fashion, it can benefit. If the City continues to function at a deficit for the provision of those services, the deficit will increase in a direct relationship to the increase in the township population.

The sum of these factors indicate that for every dollar attracted into new development outside the City of Ypsilanti, an increase in the cost of providing services will be created in the City. At present City services operate at a per capita loss of $3.20. Observable trends indicate that this loss will increase by $1.00 for each 2000 population added in the Township. At that rate, the increase of population is, of itself, a liability since it doesn't "pay its own way." Either, a change in population growth mechanisms is required, or a change in the method of paying for public services, or a combination of both.

Decisions involving incomes and expenditures are very personal decisions. Even municipal finances become a focus of personal concern when budget review sessions come along. Normally, the exposure of any financial mechanisms, public or private, is uncomfortable to the general public. The responsibilities for maintaining balanced books, are almost always depersonalized to the citizenry at large. In Ypsilanti, this has taken on nearly monumental proportions. The public dollar is doubly counted in the sense that every one presumes the municipal services and facilities will continue regardless of revenues. At the same time, the public dollars are treated as very much the personal property of the individual taxpayer. This makes efficient budgeting nearly impossible.

To summarize, there is little awareness of the overall costs of running the City or of development. There is no awareness of the public-private cost interrelationship of development projects. There is little awareness by the City administration of private dollar activities and the citizenry at large has no realistic concept of municipal finance. Consequently, it seems likely that the continued involvement by individual citizens in overall municipal issues may cause a constantly increasing rigidness in the financial situation of Ypsilanti. The issue is beyond a simple cash flow problem. It is more a problem of trusting relationships between the citizens and their representatives to make sound financial decisions affecting both public and private development funds. The missing ingredient in accounting for the monetary resources of Ypsilanti is a common understanding that there is one City with many citizens, rather than a separate city for each citizen faction.

There are in Ypsilanti sufficient financial resources to undertake redevelopment at the rate of $8,000,000 to $10,000,000 per year if both public and private are combined. Taken singly the development potential is reduced to $5,000,000 to $6,000,000. The future development in Ypsilanti will be governed less by its monetary resources than its ability to use them.

THE LAND - - A FIXED RESOURCE

The first, and the most obvious resource to deal with is the land itself. It is almost invisible as a resource. People are so used to seeing it in its present form and use, that they have difficulty envisioning land used in a different way. Like any other resource, its proper use yields great returns, while its careless use yields only marginal returns. Since any use at all yields some return, careless utilization is still rewarded. Consequently, the planning of the land for the proper use is often seen as a luxury. Certainly that has been the case in the past in most American cities, and particularly in midwestern cities, such as Ypsilanti. Quite often, only vacant land is seen as a resource. Most land development mechanisms are aimed at providing new growth on virgin land. That is one of the reasons why it is so much easier to build in the adjacent Townships than it is in the City. By and large, it has always been easier in the United States to make a "mess", use it up, and then move on to a "new frontier" to make another mess and start the process all over again. That is the simple history of urban development in the United States.

The normal reference to land use is in regard to such things as housing, stores and factories. Sometimes, this concept of land use is such a common interpretation, and is the basis for most of our legal documents, that its other uses are quite often taken for granted. Land has three primary uses. Probably, the most important single land use is as a provider and sustainer of human life. From the land we draw our food, our natural resources, and on the land we derive protection in the form of shelter. Certainly, the first primary land use is to provide us with those things without which, we will die.

The second primary land use is its service as a container of human functions, such as housing. In the past, land used for farming was never considered suitable for town building. Towns were built on land not needed for food growing. As farming and mining techniques became more efficient, this orientation to the land ceased to be the case until finally, the most fertile land has become also the land most suitable for city building. That is the nature of land development in the general Ypsilanti area wherein the land is considered prime for both agrarian and urban development purposes. The competition leads, therefore, to the third primary land use: economic gain.

The capital generating value of land is seen as the third primary use of the land. This use has become considerably more significant in the United States than elsewhere in the world, and its affect on cities and towns is sometimes catastrophic. Large expanses of land surrounds most cities. Only in very recent years has the land within city limits been used up until it is recognizable for its limitations. Then, its reuse becomes an important ingredient. Through the process of reutilizing land more fully, its value increases. The use of the land to generate cash flows, regardless of any other function, has become in and of itself of primary concern, to both public and

private coffers. Clarity must, therefore be established between the various "uses" of the land, and the competitive nature of these uses.

The city no longer concerns itself with the first of these uses; namely, the sustenance of human life by food growing and mining. Cities are confined to dealing with the functional occupancy of the land and the capital generating value of the land. These two are the primary source of conflict in urban development. They also contain the potential source of harmony in urban development. When the value of the land is derived from and associated directly with the desirability of the lands' use, harmony in urban development can be established. When the value is artifically inflated in anticipation of a change in the land use, this artificial value, created by speculation, deters the evolution of a higher intensity of land use and further widens the gap in the real economies of the city. With these basic views of land use in mind, we consider the land a primary resource, and we attempt to measure the distribution of land uses in the city and associated land values. The object is to determine which of those values can be considered a resource and which a liability.

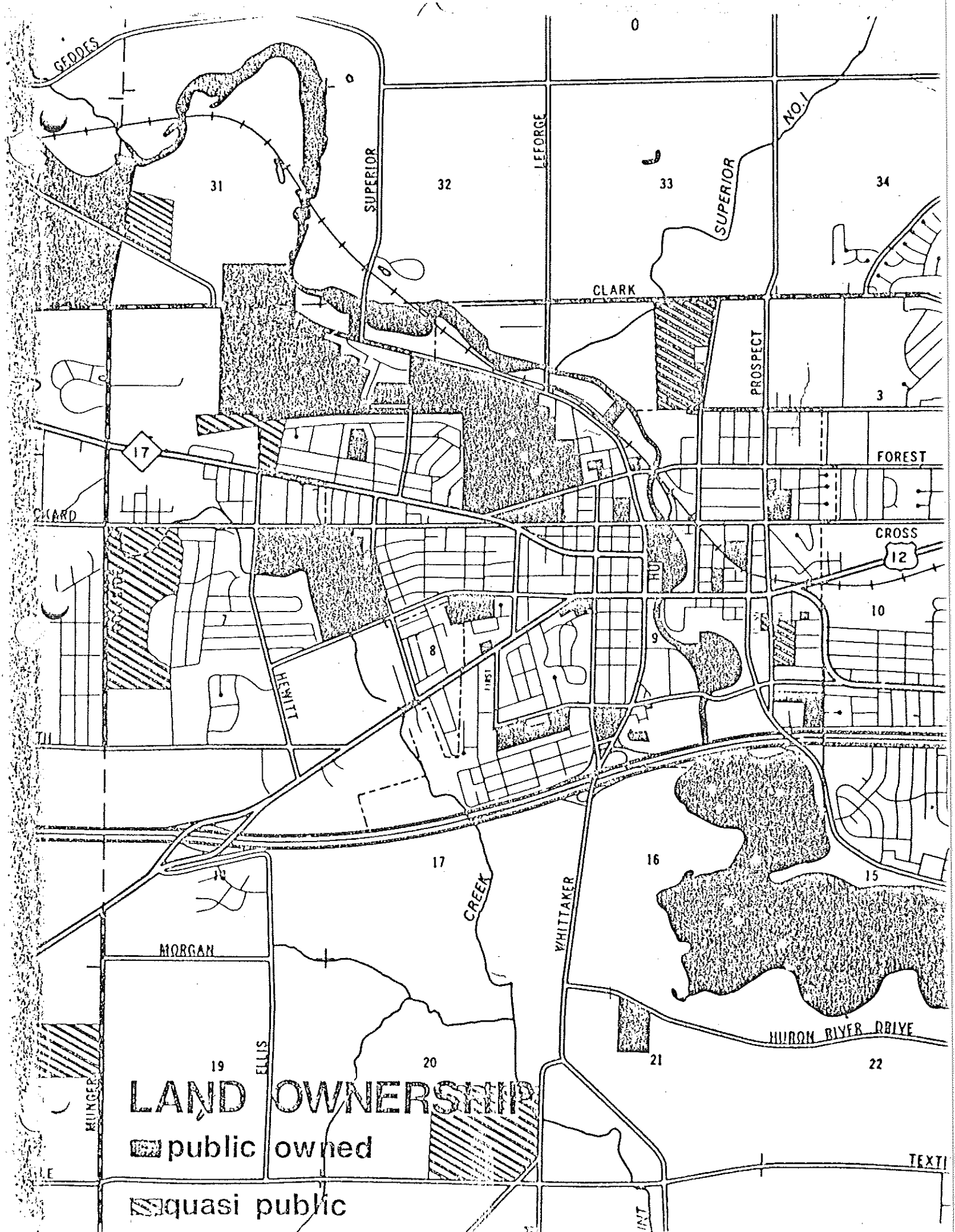
LAND OWNERSHIP

Historically, land ownership has been associated in this country with individual freedom, personal choice and free enterprise. The right to own land was a right only of "freed men" in times past. In more recent times, land ownership carried with it rights to vote upon matters of municipal finance, on the operation of schools, and some of the daily affairs of the city. Today, the benefits of land ownership are less obvious. To be sure, there are tax advantages for businessmen and some property owners whose incomes are above a certain level. But by and large, the natural freedoms historically associated with land ownership are long gone. Land ownership has evolved into a series of business relationships related primarily to property taxes and the ability to perform development functions for speculative benefit. As the characteristics of land ownership become more and more businesslike, and affect more significantly a city's cash flow, the matter of public ownership versus private ownership becomes more and more obscure.

The drawing entitled "Land Ownership" shows the general distribution of public owned land in the Ypsilanti area. Any form of public-owned land, whether it has buildings on it, trees or water should be considered a part of the natural land resources of a municipality. In addition, there are other public-owned lands that are not City-owned; such as the University, the school system and the like. These, too, are public properties, and therefore, must be dealt with in a special way.

Notice the amount of public owned land along the Huron River Basin. This is a fortuitous situation since a great deal of advantage for development purposes can be taken of that land resource. The objective would not be to build upon it, but to take visual advantage of it for adjacent developments. Attention should be paid to the relatively large amount of public land inside the city limits of Ypsilanti.

The second "Land Ownership" drawing shows the same set of conditions for the central portion of Ypsilanti. In this drawing, a greater distinction is made between the individual parcels of land owned. The street rights of way which are owned by the public, are shown in this drawing, and constitute a significant amount of land. Consequently, the amount of private owned land in the central portion of Ypsilanti seems exceptionally small. Even though this is the case in most American cities, private land is an even smaller amount than usual in downtown Ypsilanti, owing partly to the park passing through the central portion of the City. While the general public often believes most land is privately held, the City is the largest single land owner, and the University is the second largest land holder. The public at large owns nearly a third of the City of Ypsilanti.


GEDDES
SUPERIOR
LEEDORGE
SUPERIOR
NO.1
CLARK
PROSPECT
FOREST
CROSS
12
17
HEWITT
WHITTAKER
CREEK
MORGAN
ELLIS
HURON RIVER DRIVE
31
32
33
34
3
10
9
8
16
15
17
19
20
21
22
LAND OWNERSHIP
public owned
quasi public

CITY OWNED PROPERTIES AS OF FEBRUARY, 1974

CITY HALL COMPLEX (Huron Street)

130 N. Huron (Old Library)
206 N. Huron (District Court)
214 N. Huron (Recreation & Urban Renewal Offices)
220 N. Huron (Historical Museum)
222 N. Huron (Rental)
224 N. Huron (Rental)
304 N. Huron (City Hall & building in rear of City Hall)
314 N. Huron (vacant)
316 N. Huron (vacant)
318 N. Huron (vacant)

PARKS

Cross & Washtenaw Park (Spanish-American War Memorial)
Recreation Park (17.36 acres)
Prospect Park (9.54 acres)
Gilbert Park (2.8 acres)
Riverside Park (13.77 acres)
College Heights Park (7 acres)
Waterworks Park (10 acres)
Parkridge Park (8.13 acres)
Elm Street Tot Lot (.9 acre)
Charles Street Tot Lot (.9 acre)
Ainsworth Park (2 land locked tot lots)

PUBLIC HOUSING

951 - 955 Madison
881 - 885 Madison
525 Monroe
610 - 614 First
1004 - 1008 Monroe
1012 - 1016 Monroe
118, 120, 122, 124 S. Grove
711 - 715 & 731 - 741 Towner
719, 723, 727, 729, 733 Maus
502 - 699 Armstrong
101 - 113 Bell
425 - 427 S. Washington
936 - 960 W. Michigan Ave.
314 - 318 S. Adams

SENIOR CITIZEN HI-RISE, COUNTY SUB-CENTER, FIRE STATION, POLICE STATION

505 W. Michigan (Police Station)
511 W. Michigan (Site of new Fire Station)
423 W. Michigan
417 W. Michigan
413 W. Michigan
6 S. Hamilton
16 S. Hamilton
18 S. Hamilton
402 Ferris St.
404 Ferris St.
406 Ferris St.
408 Ferris St.

UTILITIES (Water & Sewage Plants, etc.)

105 Factory (Pump Station)
30 Catherine (Water Plant)
I-94 & S. Grove Rd. (Sewage Plant)
Water Storage Tank (near Estabrook School)
Water Storage Tank (Cross & Washtenaw)
2 Well Houses at Chidester & Spring Streets
50 Dixboro Rd. Pump Station
201 Superior Rd. Pump Station

CITY STRUCTURES

229 W. Michigan (Public Library)
135 Factory Street (Rental)
14 W. Forest (DPW)
791 Harriet (Parkridge Community Center)
1015 Congress (Senior Citizen Community Center)
110 W. Cross (Fire Station)
227 N. Grove (Boys Club)
1110 Huron River Drive

PARKING LOTS

Ferris & S. Washington Parking Lot #1
Adams Street Parking Lot #2
Riverside Parking Lot #3
Depot Parking Lot #4
N. Huron Street Parking Lot #5
310 Ballard Street Parking Lot #6
Goodwill Parking Lot

VACANT LAND

NW Corner Huron River Dr. & Superior Rd. 5.49 acres
NW of Ford Lake & S. of I-94 to City Limits
Vacant Lot Short Street - Lot 118
S. Huron Street (Old City Dump) 14 acres

Now that urban land is used primarily for development functions and for various human activities and services, its capital value has continually increased. This now inflated value retards the development process and makes development proposals endure a higher risk than would otherwise be the case. A clearer understanding of land values can be obtained by examining the land as it is used and as it is taxed by the City. In Ypsilanti, as well as other cities, the zoning of the land is usually done in anticipation of a variety of developments which generate taxes. It is presumed, for example, that to zone a piece of property for industrial use generates a higher level of tax return than would that same piece of land being zoned for housing. Very seldom is there a relationship of development intensity to this zoned use. It is normally anticipated that commercial and industrial uses pay the heaviest tax burden of the City in order to provide the greatest number of services to the residential sector, without unduly burdening residential taxes.

The original function of zoning was to separate obnoxious land uses from "gentle" land uses, to keep factories from being built next to residential neighborhoods and schools. Over the years, the zoning mechanism has been used to prescribe which land may be used for intense commercial and industrial development. That also prescribed which land would be most valuable, since commercial developments can afford a higher land price than residential ones as a rule. It was only one small step further before the land zoning process became the value creation process for most cities and townships. Little thought was given to the real value and the real cost of such zoning mechanisms and the associated tax structures. The values of land have changed, whereas the character of zoning has not. The effect now is that zoning, which was originally aimed at protecting the citizens of the City from hazardous development, is now one of the vehicles by which the citizens can be most easily harmed. The value determinants of land by zoning is destructive to the development process and, generally speaking, rewards land speculation to the detriment of public services.

The question must be raised as to future conditions of public land ownership. It has long been known that an imminent domain is the basic mechanism by which private land can be converted into a public holding. That is a clumsy process, full of potential distress to individual citizens. Thought must be given, however, to the value of maintaining private ownership of land when ownership rights are abused. This is especially important to those who abandon their responsibilities and leave behind vacant properties. Abraham Lincoln once suggested that one of the greatest difficulties our cities would face would be the abuse of the land in the hands of private persons. This has certainly been the case in the older areas of our cities, particularly in the commercial and industrial areas. Once

they have outgrown their prime usefulness they are more often than not simply abandoned. The City must ask itself what responsibility is to be placed upon private ownership of land, and how fulfillment of that responsibility can be encouraged and rewarded when successfully undertaken. In the worst situation, the privileges of private land ownership become liabilities to the public. In the best situation, the responsibilities of public land ownership can be given over to the private sector for operational purposes.

ZONING INTERPRETATION

The drawing entitled "Zoning Interpretation" illustrates the present zoning in Ypsilanti in terms of the four major land uses; namely, industrial, commercial, multiple housing and single family housing. The distinction in the two categories of housing is made because of the significance usually paid to these two categories for tax purposes. A brief note is appropriate. Multiple housing is considered by many as an "inferior" form of housing. Historically in this country, those who live in apartments have been considered "less moral" than those who live in houses. The emphasis has always been on the single family house as the "highest and best" use of the land. Of course, that is not the case for tax purposes, but it has been the case for general land use planning purposes. Since the distinction in zoning is to separate harmful uses from "desirable" uses, people who live in apartments have in the past been considered harmful to those who live in single family houses.

LAND USE

A large portion of the City, approximately 16% of the land, is zoned for industrial purposes. Another 13% is zoned for commercial purposes. This normally would indicate a relatively healthy city, from a financial point of view, with such a portion of its land being used for high tax generating purposes. However, this condition is deceiving. The drawing entitled "Land Use" illustrates land utilized in the same four categories. It reveals a much smaller portion of land actually used for industrial purposes that is zoned for that purpose. But, there is also a larger portion of land utilized for multiple housing that is zoned for that purpose. It is no revelation that land utilization in Ypsilanti, as well as in most other cities of a similar size, is at best, inefficient. The strongest single land use in terms of occupancy and character are the residential areas of the City. The City's commercial operations must be considered marginal overall except in some individual cases. The table be low illustrates the differences in land uses and zoning assign ments.

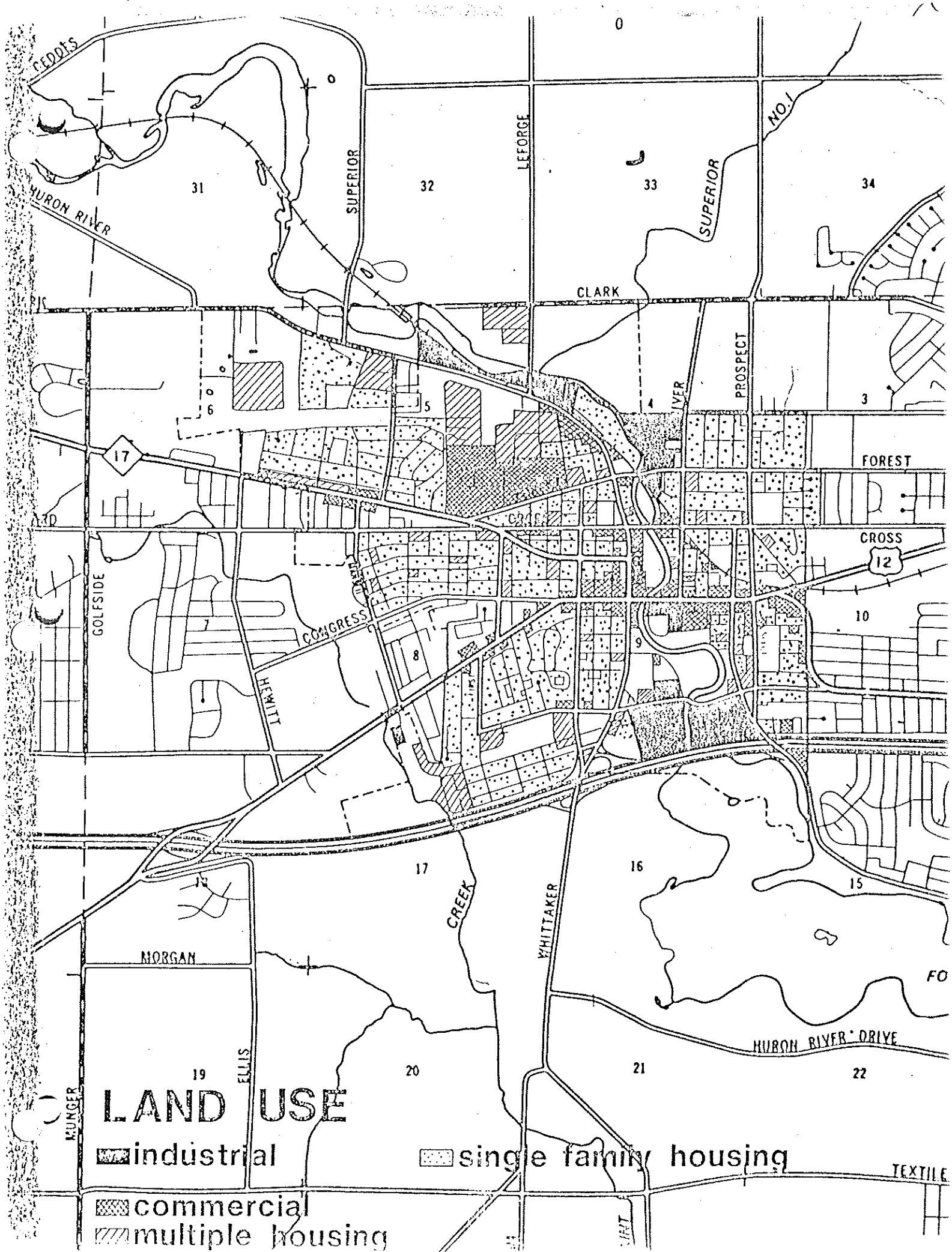
CITY OF YPSILANTI COMPARISON OF ZONING AND LAND USE (BY ACRES)

CATEGORY	ZONING		LAND USE	
Commercial	211	(7.8%)	205	(7.6%)
Industrial	253	(9.4%)	94	(3.5%)
Multiple Housing	383	(14.2%)	437	(16.2%)
Single Housing	766	(28.4%)	870	(32.3%)
Other Uses	1082	(40.2%)	1089	(40.4%)
Total	2695		2695	

Source: Future General Development Guide, City of Ypsilanti
Measurements for Zoning Map, City of Ypsilanti

Another aspect of value associated with land use in the City is not just what shows on the map, but also the intensity of use and the general "quality" of use. There is a low intensity use of the land, for example, in the downtown area, where the majority of buildings have vacant second and third floors. This tends to indicate a false image of land use intensity. Just as in a neighborhood which suffers a high degree of housing vacancy, that land has to be considered under-used. The existence of a house on a vacant lot does not constitute a land use. Principal land use liabilities include the inefficiency of use and the low level of use intensity. Second to that, the artificially high land values in the area have to be considered a major liability to future development. These values are inappropriate to support the redevelopment process and are in fact, destructive of the regenerative efforts presently at work in the City. In addition, the intensity of land use is a major determinant of land value. A commercial property utilized for a neighborhood food store is less significant as a commercial entity than a similar size piece of land used for a bank. The intensity of use varies dramatically with the territory served and the general character of activity.

Further, the level of maintenance of the building is also a characteristic of the use of land. Those buildings which are being poorly maintained or stand largely vacant indicate a capital drain on the City, and a mis-use of the land in the most classic sense. The drain of resources from such areas is observed in a variety of ways, including lack of employment, and the inability to pay appropriate taxes. The most significant aspect of misused land as a lost resource is that it generates a capital flow out of the City, or the neighborhood in which it exists. This occurs primarily through failure to replace depreciated facilities when the owner or the operator of a facility takes more than the normal cash flow out of his business. Typically 70-80% of the income from such an area is withdrawn, whereas in a new business establishment, or one which is being renewed, that figure is reduced to about 60% and sometimes, to as low as 40%.


CEDDES
HURON RIVER
SUPERIOR
LEFORGE
SUPERIOR
NO. 1
CLARK
PROSPECT
FOREST
CROSS
12
GOLFSIDE
CONGRESS
HEWITT
CREEK
WHITTAKER
MORGAN
ELLIS
HURON RIVER DRIVE
TEXTILE
31
32
33
34
17
LAND USE
industrial
single family housing
commercial
multiple housing

Operations which take out substantially more than this must be considered a liability to the City. While it is not possible to know which individual land users operate in this fashion, it is obvious that the majority of commercial functions in Ypsilanti have operated on this exaggerated withdrawal premise for some time. This is especially true in the downtown area.

The net result of this resource drain from the City is the continued growth of a backward, underdeveloped central resource area which exists in the midst of a growing and progressive surrounding area. If the City is drained of all its resources, that might form the base for economic redevelopment. The situation, then, is compounded by an initially weak community structure, inadequate services, and the weakest of commitments for the regeneration of the City.

The City of Ypsilanti is a classic example of an accidental distribution of land uses. In the future, special attention must be given to the real character and intensity of the land use, as well as to the anticipated life span of the proposed uses. It will no longer do to refer to these uses simply by their generic name; commercial, residential, etc. They should be seen in their productive capacity in order for the land to be realized fully as a resource and enhanced in all aspects. The ability of the land to serve as a container of human activities, and to generate a reasonable cash flow in response to those activities, requires a much different approach to "the highest and best use" than has been evident in the past.

TAX ASSESSMENT

The Tax Assessment Interpretation drawing relates land uses to tax value. Notice that the values indicated in the legend show that still smaller portions of the land are taxed in accordance to industrial and commercial value than either zoning or use categories would normally suggest. However, major portions of residential land, especially those which are zoned multiple, account for large increments of the tax structure, and substantial revenues to the City. This indicates that the concept of a substantial tax base, generated primarily from industrial and commercial uses, is largely mythical. That becomes highly significant when one realizes that the University, which consumes 8% of the land, is not a taxpayer at all. The table below lists the land areas by tax assessment values.

CITY OF YPSILANTI TAX ASSESSMENT BY ACRES

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY	TAXABLE ACRES
Under $12,400	522
$12,500 - $24,900	510
$25,000 - $1000,000	323
Over $1000,000	77

Source: City Assessor's Office, Map of Assessed Values, City of Ypsilanti

The condition of tax assessments versus returns is illustrated in further detail by an examination of central Ypsilanti. The drawing entitled "Property Assessment Categories" shows property zoned for commercial, industrial, and residential purposes. It can be seen that there is a preponderance of residential properties and a small, central clustering of properties for commercial or industrial development. The areas shown uncolored are not assessed in any of these categories, which means they may be schools, public parks, nursing homes, churches, and other non-taxable categories.

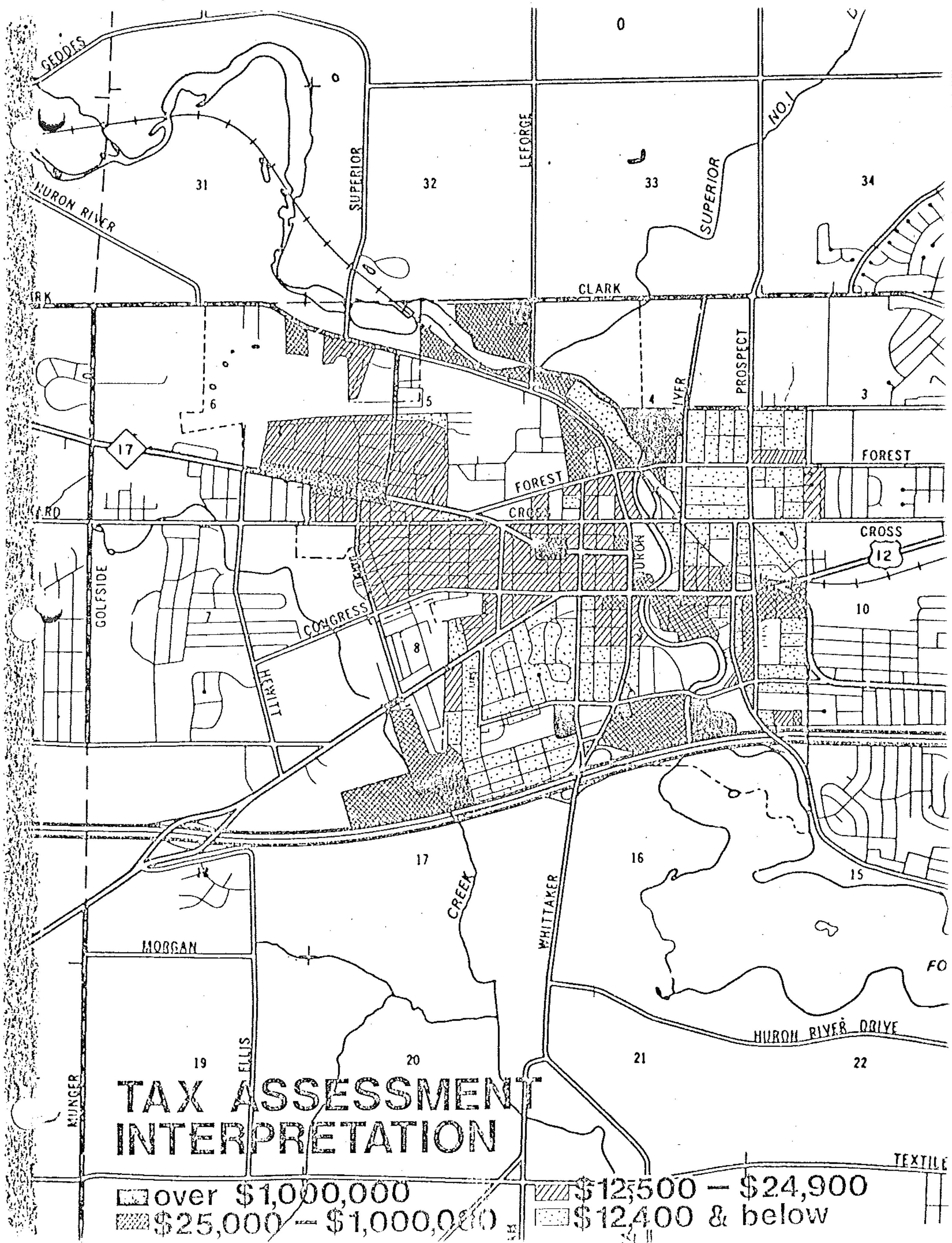
The drawing entitled "Property Assessments" lists the price categories at which properties are assessed. The $12,400 and below figure is most common for single family housing assessments in Ypsilanti. The reason for breaking at that point, is that the other figures include multiple housing, commercial and industrial development. The range is significantly different between large industrial plants and other commercial activities. However, the distribution of these tax assessment properties indicates that multiple housing pays a much greater proportion of property taxes than the assessment categories indicate.

Traditionally, commercial and industrial properties are thought, as was previously discussed, to bear the tax burden. This drawing illustrates that the principal tax burden is also levied upon multiple housing at a rate almost equal to commercial properties. Consequently, the assessment levied on a per block basis is grossly unfair when compared with services rendered.

This is not an indictment of the assessment procedures in Ypsilanti, which are among the best available in medium sized cities. It is instead, an indictment of the general method by which cities are zoned; which in turn, leads to assessment categories that are indefensible. The assessment valuation has been accurately prepared by municipal offices. The assignment of zoning or assessment categories is random and arbitrary.

SURROUNDING AREAS

The land uses proposed for the areas surrounding the City are as significant to the City as the land uses within the City. The drawing entitled "Plan Interpretation" illustrates the combined 1970 planning statements for the City of Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Township and Superior Township. The same four uses are indicated as in the analysis of the City; namely, industrial, commercial, multiple housing and single family housing. Industrial development shown in all black is the major emphasis in the Ypsilanti Township plan by comparison with both the City of Ypsilanti and Superior Township. The amount of industry proposed is several times that which already exists in the whole area. It is presumed, by this author, that the reason for the vast amount of industrial development proposed is its anticipated tax return to the appropriate municipal body.



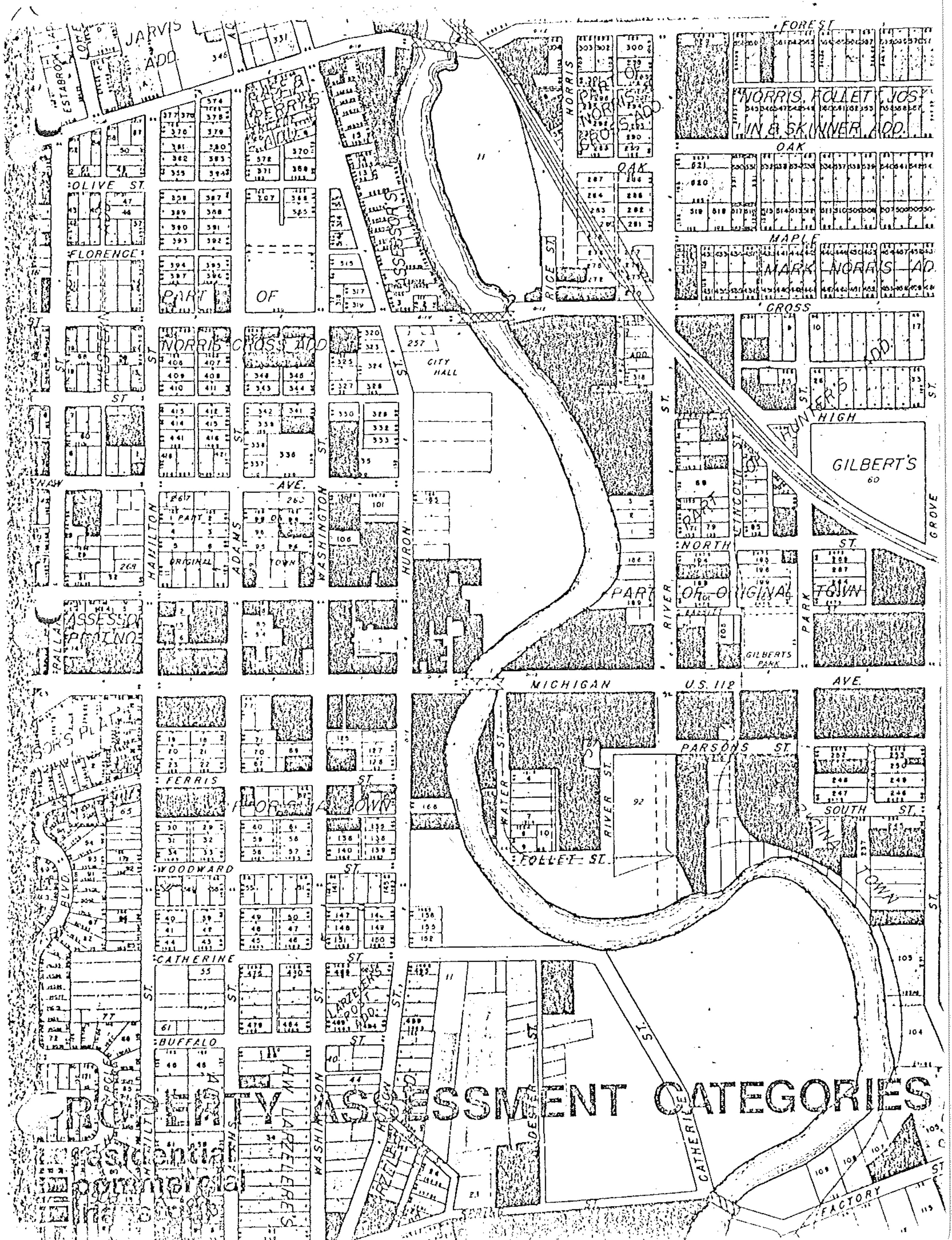
TAX ASSESSMENT INTERPRETATION

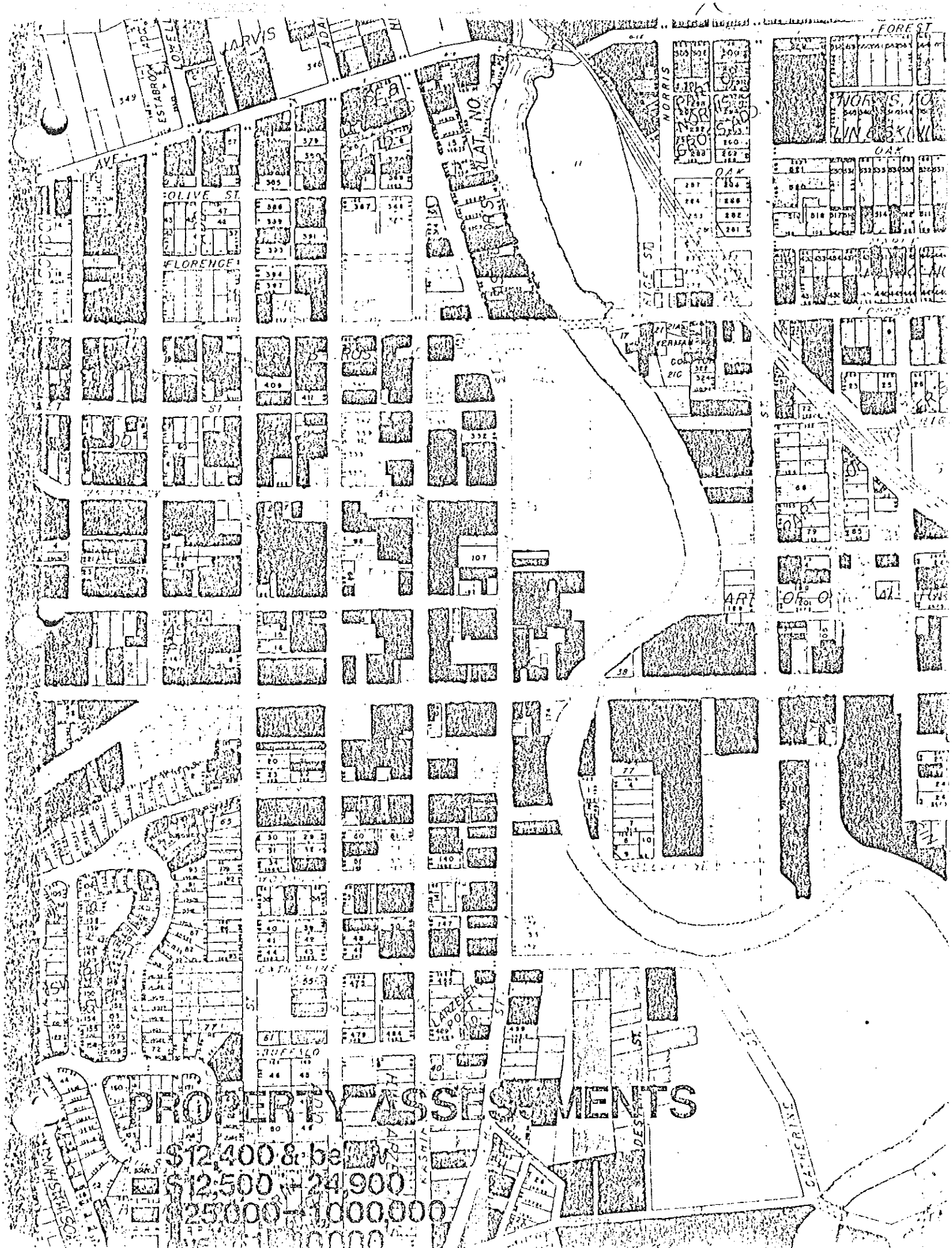
over $1,000,000

$25,000 – $1,000,000

$12,500 – $24,900

$12,400 & below

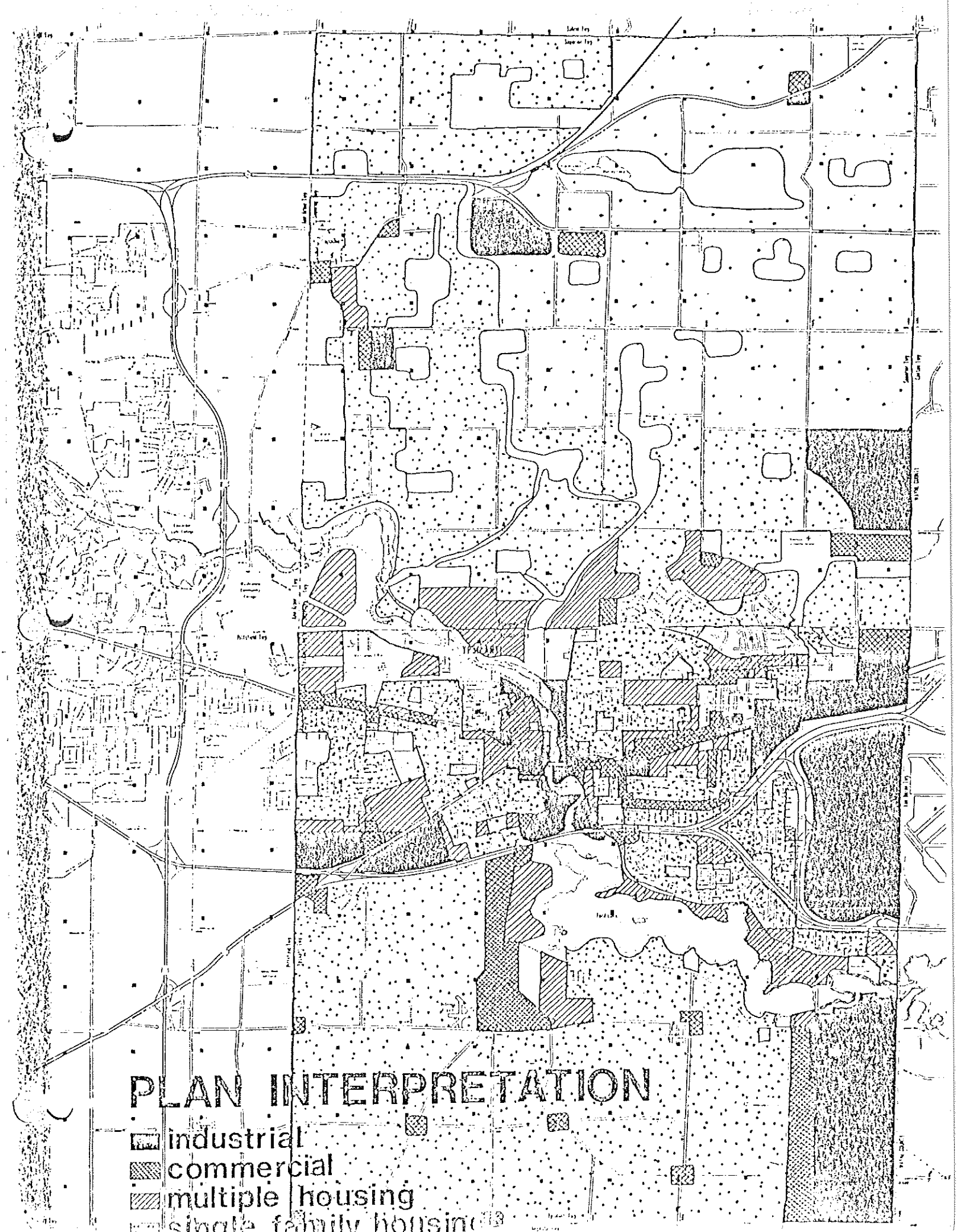

ASSESSMENT CATEGORIES
JARVIS ADD.
NORRIS, HOLLET, JOSLIN & SKINNER ADD.
MARK NORRIS ADD.
NORRIS CROSS ADD.
PART OF ORIGINAL TOWN
CITY HALL
GILBERT'S
GILBERTS PARK
HUNTER'S ADD.
LARZELERE'S POST ADD.
FOREST
OAK
MAPLE
CROSS
HIGH
NORTH ST.
MICHIGAN AVE.
U.S. 112
PARSONS ST.
SOUTH ST.
FOLLET ST.
OLIVE ST.
FLORENCE
FERRIS ST.
WOODWARD ST.
CATHERINE ST.
BUFFALO
HAMILTON ST.
ADAMS ST.
WASHINGTON ST.
HURON ST.
RICE ST.
NORRIS
RIVER ST.
WATER ST.
LINCOLN ST.
PARK
GROVE ST.
FACTORY ST.
ASSESSOR'S PLAT


PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS
$12,400 & below
$12,500 - 24,900
$25,000 - 1,000,000

Unfortunately, those tax returns are largely mythical. The industrial facilities and the magnitude indicated here would generate an attendant population base which in turn requires the building of a vast municipal network of schools, roads, sewers and the like. The history of townships in Michigan, and the rest of the midwest, is that they never fully recover from those capital investments. Consequently, individual homeowner taxes necessarily increase at higher and higher levels until eventually, they exceed the level of the older cities and towns.

Probably the most notable example of this in Michigan is the City of Warren, which has nearly 25% of its land devoted to industrial development. In addition, those industries are among the richest, including the General Motors Technical Center and Mahon Steel. Even so, within three yeàrs after Warren Township's incorporation as a city, its budget was in the red. The tax base was simply not sufficient to pay for the 36 new elementary schools and the several other facilities that were required to support the rapidly growing population. As a result, a plan that was hoped for by the city fathers to create an essentially tax-free municipality, as far as homeowners are concerned, has become instead the basis for increasing service demands and higher taxes.

The model for this kind of industrially supported development in Michigan has always been the City of Dearborn. Dearborn has enjoyed relatively low homeowner taxes over the years, owed primarily to the existence of the Ford Motor Company. However, it should be noted that the Ford holdings in Dearborn are much more than just an industrial plant. They include the world headquarters of Ford, one of the largest industrial plants in the world, and the complete assembly and production capacities of the Ford Motor Company. In addition, the City provides public services at reasonably low cost, since it has a relatively small population. It is patently foolish, however, to presume that zoning land in a township for industrial plants or even the location of a new automobile plant, is synonymous with the location of a world headquarters and a massive industrial complex. It is also important to realize that Dearborn is situated immediately adjacent to the City of Detroit, which provides the major work force for those industrial plants. Dearborn, therefore,has the luxury of maintaining a small resident population and geographic size while enjoying the tax benefits of a sizable industrial operation, but not having to service the working population. That is a classic example of having your cake and eating it, too. The difficulty is somebody else has to bake it. It should be noted that the Ypsilanti Township plan proposes some 1500 acres of commercial development, which is many times over the existing amount of commercial development in both Townships and the City combined. In order to carry out commercial and industrial development of this magnitude in a balanced way, to the full benefit of the future citizens which will be attracted by this kind of develop-


PLAN INTERPRETATION
industrial
commercial
multiple housing
single family housing

ment, a much more comprehensive approach to development must be made. Simply zoning the land for commercial or industry uses will not guarantee the anticipated benefits associated with hoped for tax returns. It should be easily understood that vacant land resources by themselves are insufficient to generate full development benefits. Land zoning controls have been historically unsuccessful as devices for controlling the long range economy of a municipality, or for generating a healthy community which is capable of reinvesting in itself.

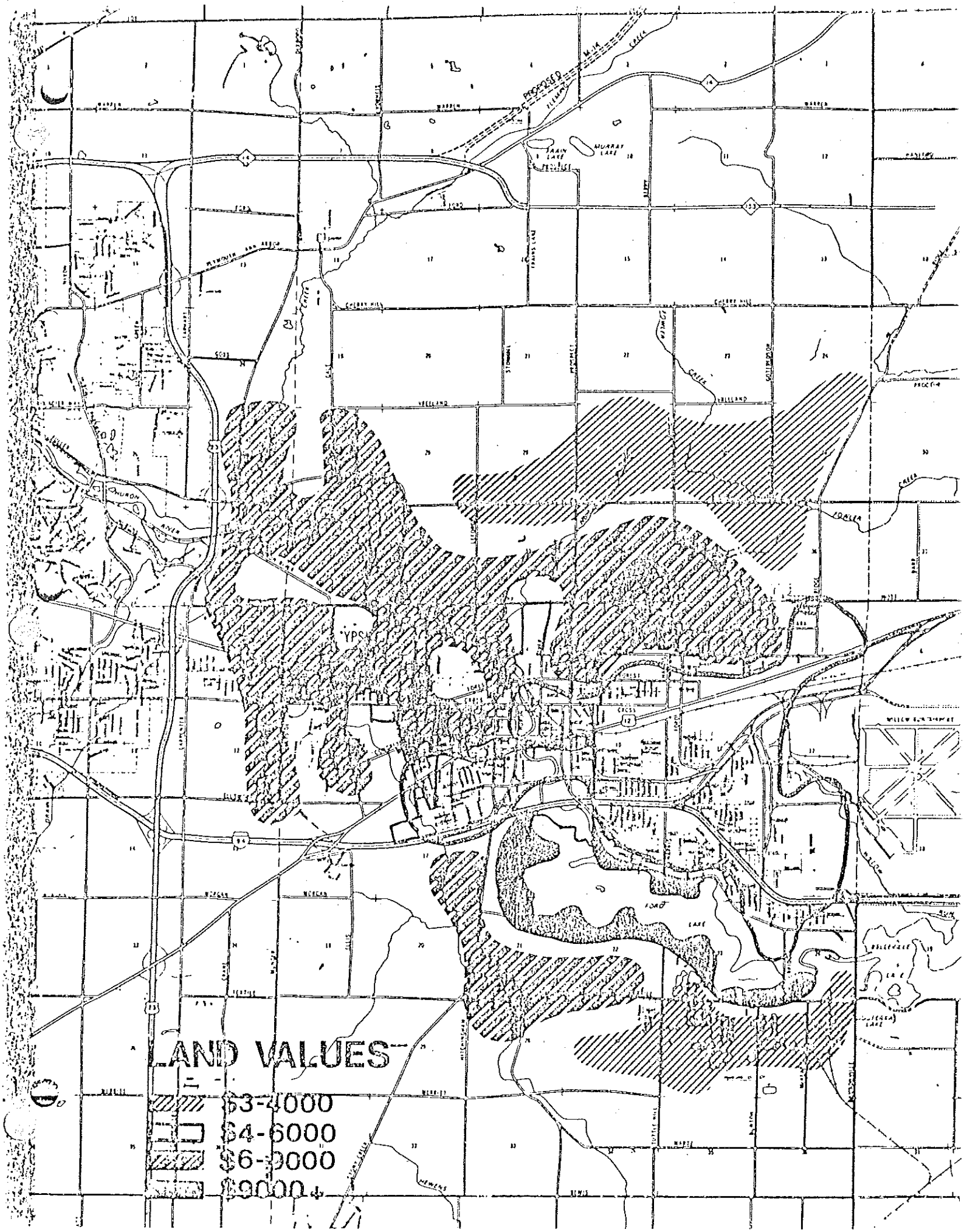
The measurement of development activities around Ypsilanti is an indication of the potential growth rate of both population and urbanized areas. The drawing entitled "Land Values" is an illustration of the land sale price in the areas immediately adjacent to Ypsilanti. These are based upon actual sale prices of land per acre as advertised through realtors and, upon the category level of zoning existing at the time of the test. The drawing entitled "Development Value" indicates the general price range of housing development ongoing in the same areas. It is significant that the land values in Ypsilanti are lower than the land values immediately adjacent to Ypsilanti. These values are for vacant land, however, not developed land. It is also of some significance that development values are not as widely varied as are land values.

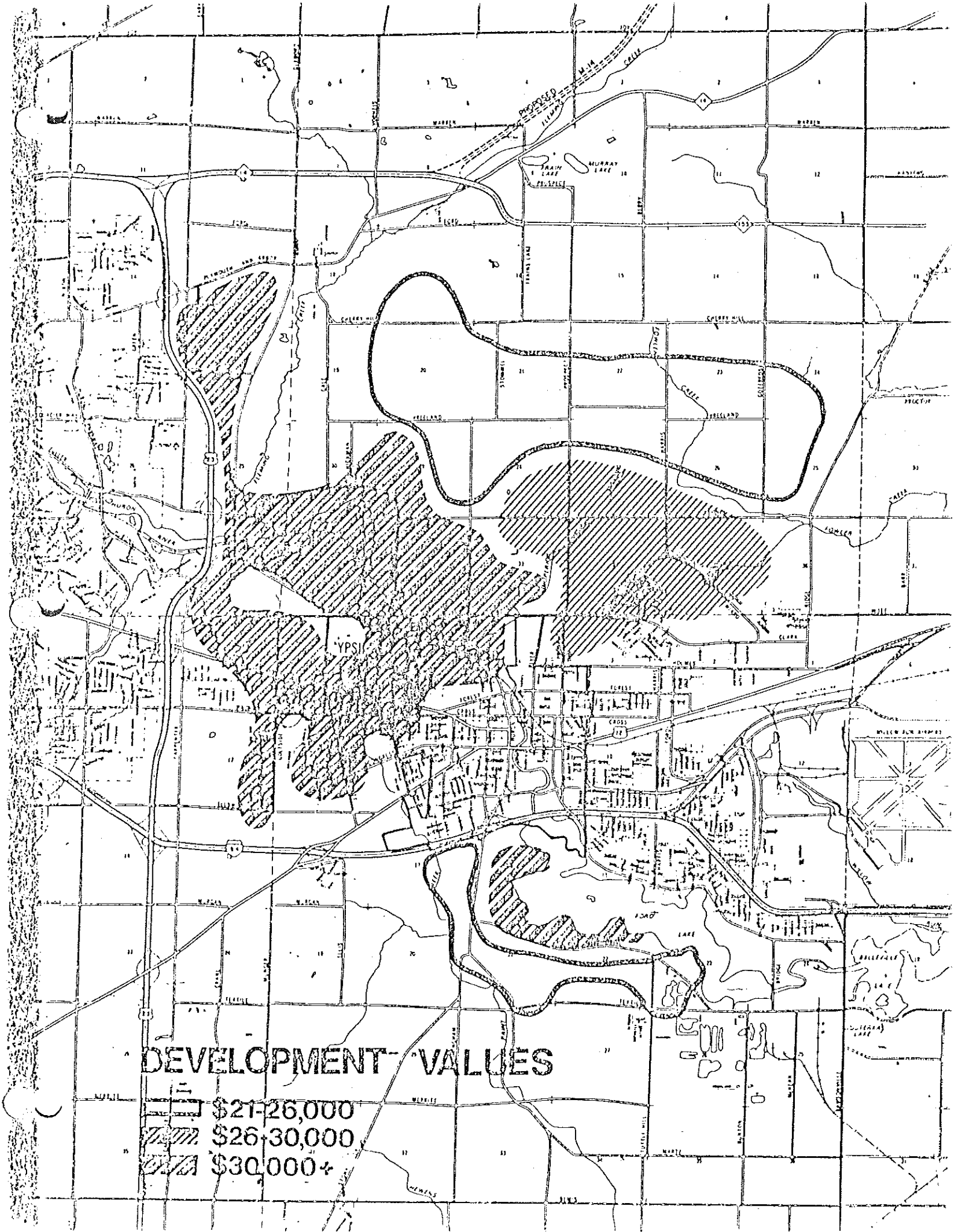
This indicates that land is not the most important ingredient in determining house value in the Ypsilanti area. That is normally the case in what is referred to as a "soft market". If the market were "hard", and growth were more rapid, then land values would be driven up, and the value between different areas would be more dramatic. There are a number of devices which will affect these future land values and development values. Among these, are the timing and cost of service extensions such as sewers, roads and various supporting facilities, such as schools.

It is of note that there is little distinction between the land price for multiple housing from that for single family housing; another indication of the "soft market" for land. Should events take place in the coming two to three years which alter the quality of this market, and increase the rate of speculative growth, land values can be expected to increase at very rapid rates. These increased costs will depend mostly upon the location of access routes, and upon the orientation of development to natural resources, such as the Huron River basin. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the most valuable land at this time is adjacent Ford Lake and the Huron River, and the areas immediately adjacent to expressway interchanges or major institutional developments. It is obvious that public influence upon land development will have to be emphasized in these unique areas, in the immediate future, if subsequent growth in the areas surrounding Ypsilanti are to have a healthy influence.

This potential becomes especially significant if one views the Huron River valley, and its attendant park-like lands, which in fact could be public parks, as a diminishing resource. This scarce resource, if left open to continued private speculation, will soon not be a resource at all, but a lost asset. Once development of the valley becomes oriented purely towards privately owned houses, the opportunity for the enhancement of a major public resource, namely, the open spaces on either side of the river, becomes permanently lost. Fortunately, the multiple housing development along Ford Lake in Ypsilanti Township assures a substantial population density as one method of taking advantage of that resource.

The development actions visable in areas adjacent to Ypsilanti are the normal piecemeal efforts typical in the midwestern United States. There is virtually no coordinated effort, either private or public, to assure both short-range and long-range benefits. The continuation of these actions will lead to the evolution of a typical polyglot of development, rendering effective administration of municipal services increasingly expensive and reducing the potential for a healthy and attractive environment to that of a typical minor suburb.


PROPOSED
YPS
LAND VALUES
$3-4000
$4-6000
$6-9000
$9000+


PROPOSED
YPSI
DEVELOPMENT VALUES
$21-26,000
$26-30,000
$30,000+

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