

Appendix A

CULTURAL FEATURES

Geography & Early History

Locke Township is located in the northeast corner of Ingham County in the south-central region of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Principal surrounding townships are Perry to the north, Conway to the east, Leroy to the south, and Williamstown to the west. The nearest urban center to the Township is the City of Williamston, a community of approximately 3,500 persons that abuts the southwest corner of the Township. The outer fringes of the larger urban centers of Lansing East Lansing, and Meridian Township, with a total population of approximately 205,000, are located 10 – 15 miles to the west. The balance of the regional landscape is dominated by agriculture and scattered residential development and small villages including Webberville (population of approximately 1,500), one mile south of the Township's southeast corner, and Perry, (population of approximately 2,100), three miles to the north.

Approximate distances between Locke Township and major regional urban centers are: 1) Detroit, 60 miles east; 2) Ann Arbor, 40 miles southeast; 3) Jackson, 30 miles south; and 4) Grand Rapids, 75 miles west.

Access and Circulation

Regional Access

Regional access to Locke Township is excellent. Interstate 96 (I-96) travels east-west across Michigan and approaches within two miles of the Township's southern border. M-52 travels north-south through the central region of the Township, with an I-96 interchange (Exit 122) just south of the community. Lansing's Capital City Airport is located 25 miles northwest of the Township

Local Roadway Network

Locke Township's local roadway network generally exhibits a grid-like pattern, characteristic of the majority of townships in Lower Michigan. All roads in the Township are under the jurisdiction of the Ingham County Road Commission except for M-52 which is under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation.

In compliance with the requirements of Michigan Act 51 of 1951, the Ingham County Road Commission (ICRC) classifies all roads under its jurisdiction as either "primary" or "local" roads. Primary roads are considered the most critical in providing regional circulation throughout the County. The classification of roads by the ICRC has important financial implications with regard to maintenance and improvements. Under Michigan law, townships have no responsibility for funding road improvements and maintenance. The ICRC is responsible for local road maintenance. On the other hand, while the ICRC must maintain and improve primary roads at their own expense, state law limits the participation of Road Commissions to no more than 50% of the cost for improvements to local roads. Requests by local townships for local road maintenance levels beyond those considered adequate by the ICRC frequently require local funding. In reality, there are very few counties in Michigan where local townships are not actively involved in funding road improvements. The ICRC has no major road improvements planned at this time in Locke Township.

Roads in the Township which the ICRC classifies as "primary" include:

- Allen Rd., east of Morrice Rd..
- Bell Oak Rd., east of Morrice Rd.
- Dietz Rd., south of Rowley Rd.
- Haslett Rd.
- Herrington Rd., south of Chase Lake Rd.
- Morrice Rd.
- Sherwood Rd., west of Dietz Rd.
- Rowley Rd.
- Webberville Rd., south of Rowley Rd.

All other roads in the Township are classified as “local.” The vast majority of the Township roads are paved. The majority of the roads that are not paved are located in the Township’s northeast corner including Colby, Corey, Jacobs, and Lovejoy Roads.

Also of importance is the functional classification of township roads as established by the Federal Highway Administration (FHA). The FHA classifies road segments according to their function – the extent to which the road is intended to facilitate traffic movement over long distances versus access to abutting property. The relative hierarchy of the classification and its applicability to Locke Township follows.

Interstates, Freeways and Principal Arterials are thoroughfares intended to move large volumes of traffic over long distances. Facilitating circulation on a regional level, including between cities and states, is the primary role of these thoroughfares. None of these classifications apply to roads in Locke Township.

Minor Arterial/Major Collector roads serve to both accommodate through traffic while also providing access to abutting properties and minor intersecting streets.

Minor Arterials: M-52

Major Collectors: Haslett Rd., west of M-52.

Minor Collector roads serve to collect traffic from local streets and to provide a means of access to local destinations and minor arterial/major collector roads.

Minor Collectors: Allen Rd. east of Morrice Rd.; Bell Oak Rd., east of Morrice Rd.; Haslett Rd., east of M-52; Herrington Rd., south of Chase Lake Rd.; Morrice Rd.; and Sherwood Road, west of M-52; .

Local Streets serve primarily to provide access to adjacent properties and minor collectors.

Local Streets: The roads in the Township not otherwise identified above.

Federal aid for road projects is limited to roads classified as major collectors or higher. Roads classified as minor collectors have limited eligibility. Roads classified as local streets are not eligible for federal funding.

Land Use & Development

Most of the Locke Township landscape is dominated by farming operations, woodlands, wetlands and other open spaces, and scattered residences. A review of some of the more significant characteristics of land use and development in the Township follows.

Agriculture

Farming operations occupy approximately 70% (16,000 acres) of the Township acreage and are present in nearly all areas of the community. Nearly all the farm acreage is used for crop production. Some of the more commonly harvested crops are corn, soybeans and hay. There are a number of livestock operations scattered throughout the Township including dairy, sheep and horse farming. The eight principal livestock operations are generally limited to the southeast half of the Township and are most prominent along Morrice Road, south of Royce Road. Dairy farming accounts for approximately one-half of the livestock operations.

In an effort to better protect Michigan’s farming interests, Public Act 116 of 1974 was adopted by the state, and has since been amended. The Act establishes a program whereby farmers can enroll their properties to gain property tax relief, provided the farmland is maintained in agricultural/open space use. There were approximately 4,600 acres enrolled in the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program in 2003, nearly 20% of the Township’s area. The most concentrated area of PA 116 enrolled land is the northern periphery of the Township, consisting of Sections 3 – 6. These Sections comprise approximately one-third of all PA 116 enrolled land. Section 26 alone, in the southern third of the Township, accounted for approximately 10% of the PA 116 enrolled land in 2003.

Residential Development and Land Division

Residential development comprises approximately 5% (1,200 acres) of the acreage in Locke Township. If the vacant acreage associated with dwellings on five and ten-acre lots (and larger) is taken into account, this percentage increases to approximately 13%. The 2000 Census recorded 586 dwelling units, 77 more than the 509 dwellings recorded in 1990. Of the 586 dwellings in 2000, 578 were single family dwellings (98.6%), 10 of which were mobile homes. The remaining 10 dwellings were in two-family dwelling structures. 2.7% of the dwellings in 2000 were vacant. Vacancy rates among the immediately abutting townships ranged from 1.6% (Williamstown Township) to 6.1% (Leroy and Perry Townships). Of the 570 occupied dwellings in Locke Township, 89.1% were owner occupied and the balance were occupied by renters.

The 2000 Census reported that 38.4% of the dwelling units were constructed between 1940 and 1979, and 35.3% were constructed prior to 1940 (see Table A-1). Thus 26.2% of the dwelling units in 2000 were constructed since 1980. The median construction year for housing units in 2000 was 1961, falling between that of the County (1962) and State (1960). The median construction years among the immediately abutting townships ranged from 1972 (Leroy Township) and 1979 (Conway Township). The 2000 median value of the owner-occupied housing stock in the

Township was \$135,400. This value is significantly higher than that of the County (\$98,400) and State (\$115,600).

Residential construction between 2001 – 2003 suggests that Locke Township will have a heightened level of residential development in this decade as compared to the 1990s. The approximately 40 building permits issued for new-home construction in 2001 through August of 2003 is more than half the number of new homes constructed in the previous ten years.

**TABLE A-1
Selected Housing Characteristics, 2000**

DWELLINGS	LOCKE TOWNSHIP	INGHAM COUNTY	STATE OF MICHIGAN
Year Built (%)			
Since 1980	26.2%	21.7%	25.2%
1940 to 1979	38.4%	60.2%	57.8%
Before 1940	35.3%	18.0%	16.9%
Median Year	1961	1962	1960
Vacant	2.7%	5.6%	10.6%
Median Value	\$135,400	\$98,400	\$115,600
Median Rent	\$638	\$542	\$546

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

During the early half of the 1900s, primarily large parcels of 80 to 160 acres or more characterized the dominant land division pattern in Locke Township. While this land division pattern continued to dominate into the late 1960s, smaller parcels of 5 – 20 acres had started to appear. Still, less than 1% of the Township’s acreage in 1970 was contained in parcels of 20 acres or less. In addition, the Township had its first two platted subdivisions – the Glen Dor Subdivision in the Township’s southwest corner and the Al Mar Riverside Estates Subdivision in the southeast corner. The following 30 years saw this trend continue but with a greater occurrence of new divisions of 5 – 10 acres in area. While the Township’s acreage continues to be contained predominantly in parcels approaching 80 acres or more, approximately 10% – 15% of the community’s acreage is now contained in parcels of 20 acres or less. This changing land division trend is exemplified in Section 35 at the southern edge of the Township, between Webberville and Morrice Roads. Containing only three parcels less than 20 acres in 1970, this Section is now comprised of approximately 21 parcels of such size.

This trend of parcel splitting along the Township’s section-line roads accounts for the primary manner in which residential development has been accommodated in the Township to date. Commonly referred to as *strip development*, this pattern is evident throughout the Township. This form of development has been the source of increasing concern in the transportation and land use

planning arena due to its negative impacts upon traffic safety, congestion, farmland preservation, and rural character preservation.

The original residential settlement pattern – dwellings on farm parcels approaching 40 acres or more in size – is still very evident but accounts for a small portion of the total households.

Commercial / Industrial Development

The most visible signs of commercial development in Locke Township are along M-52 between Haslett and Bell Oak Roads. The northwest corner of the M-52/Haslett Road intersection includes a small convenience store. The northeast corner of the M-52/Bell Oak Road intersection includes a vehicle repair and truck rental service. The balance of the Township’s commercial uses, excluding its farm operations, consist of businesses operation in conjunction with a residence, and include such uses as vehicle repair shops and a home decorating service. Industrial uses in the Township are also limited to businesses operated in conjunction with a residence, including a sawmill, machine shop, and concrete forms construction.

Community Facilities & Services

Government Administration

A five member Township Board governs Locke Township. The Township Hall is on the north side of Bell Oak Road, a short distance east of M-52. The Hall was built in the 1950s. The Hall includes a large meeting room and stage on the first floor and a smaller meeting room with kitchen facilities in the basement. The Hall includes some storage room but no office facilities. The primary offices for local officials are in their homes. The Township Hall is used as a polling place and for public meetings, and is available to community residents to rent for certain occasions.

Cemeteries

Locke Township operates and maintains three cemeteries:

- Rowley Cemetery; Rowley Road and M-52.
- Shaftsbury Cemetery; Shaftsbury and Haslett Roads.
- Bell Oak Cemetery; Bell Oak and Morrice Roads.

Education

Locke Township is served by five public school districts. Webberville Community Schools serves the largest portion of the Township, including the southwestern and central areas of the community. Williamston Community Schools serves the majority of the southeast region of the Township. The northern one-third of the Township is served by Perry Public Schools, Morrice Area Schools, and Fowlerville Community Schools. There are no public school facilities located within the Township's boundaries, the closest being Williamston High School just east of the Township in Williamstown Township.

Public Sewer and Water

There is no public sewer or water in Locke Township. The nearest sources of such services are the City of Williamston and the Village of Webberville.

Emergency Services

Locke Township receives fire protection and ambulance service from the Northeast Ingham Emergency Service Authority (NIESA). NIESA provides service to a four township area including the Village of Webberville and the City of Williamston. Fire stations are located in Williamston (Williamston Fire Department) and Webberville (Leroy Township Fire Department). To improve the level of fire protection services, NIESA contracts with the Perry Fire Department for service to the northern third of the Township. NIESA provides ambulance service from the Williamston Fire Station.

Police protection services are provided by the Ingham County Sheriff's Department. The Sheriff's Department

provides emergency service to all area townships on an as-needed basis. The Michigan State Police also patrol M-52.

Recreation

Locke Township does not own or operate any public recreation facilities. There are numerous recreational sites and programs available to Township residents if they have access to nearby communities. Some of these site and faculties include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Williamstown Township Hall at the Sherwood/Zimmer Roads intersection, includes a ball field, picnic pavilion, and more than five acres of open space area. The Township recently purchased a 100-acre parcel north of Berkley Road which is to be developed as a community park.
- 2) Williamston High School, at the Mitchell/Vanneter Roads intersection, includes traditional high school sports facilities including tennis courts, basketball courts, ball fields, soccer fields, pool and a nature trail.
- 3) The City of Williamston owns and maintains both active and passive recreational facilities including McCormick and Memorial Parks. These facilities include tennis courts, basketball courts, ball fields, and picnic areas. The City recently completed, with the assistance of the Department of Natural Resources, the construction of engineered rapids along 100 yards of the Red Cedar River in the Williamston downtown area, with a public launch site at McCormick Park. The Red Cedar Recreation Association is a non-profit organization that provides recreation activities in association with local park facilities, with input from officials of local municipalities.
- 4) The Community Education Center in Williamston includes a football field, ¼-mile track, basketball courts, and an obstacle course.
- 5) A YMCA seasonal day camp in Leroy Township, covering approximately 52 acres and including Red Cedar River frontage.
- 6) More regional-based recreation facilities are available to area residents as well, including those of the City of Lansing, Ingham County and surrounding county parks programs, Michigan State University, and state-operated recreation areas and game areas.

Most of the recreation services in the immediate Williamston area are provided by the partnership of the Red Cedar Recreation Association and the Williamston Community School District's Community Education office.

Neighboring Conditions

Just as cultural features within Locke Township have bearing upon the Township's efforts to identify appropriate planning and future land use policies, so does the land use pattern along the Township's borders in neighboring communities. Existing land use patterns are important considerations, as are the planning policies and zoning that affects these abutting areas. Following is a review of land use conditions along Locke Township's borders.

Perry Township

Perry Township abuts the entire northern border of Locke Township. Its existing land use pattern in this area is one of agriculture and low density residential development. The planning policies of Shiawassee County provide for the same. The entire southern periphery of Perry Township is zoned primarily for agriculture and residential development, the vast majority of which is limited to development densities of one dwelling per 40 acres.

Leroy Township

Leroy Township abuts the entire southern border of Locke Township. Its existing land use pattern in this area is nearly entirely vacant and agricultural land. The exceptions include rural residential development along Allen Road, and some limited commercial and residential subdivision development in the township's northwest corner along Grand River Avenue. The planning policies of the township provide for its northern edge to be devoted to residential and outdoor recreation except for M-52, outside of the Grand River corridor, which is planned for commercial/industrial uses. The present zoning of the northern edge of the Township includes agricultural and residential districts, except for the northwest corner which is zoned for highway commercial in recognition of the existing use of the property.

Conway Township

Conway Township abuts the entire eastern border of Locke Township. Scattered residences along with farm operations and other open space characterizes this area of Conway Township. Planning policies for this portion of the Township support farming and low density residential development (approximately one dwelling per two acres). Current zoning parallels these planning policies.

Williamstown Township

Williamstown Township abuts the entire western border of Locke Township except along segments of Locke Township's southwest corner where the City of Williamston is present. Its existing land use pattern in this area is a mix of farmland and other open spaces, and scattered rural residential development. The planning policies of the township provide for its eastern edge to be devoted to agriculture and single family residential use except in the area of Grand River Avenue, which is planned for a mix of industry and high-density residential development. The present zoning of the east edge of the township reflects the planned land use pattern described above.

City of Williamston

The City of Williamston abuts approximately one-half mile of Locke Township along its southwest corner, just south of Rowley Road. This area is presently characterized by scattered residences and open space. The planning policies of the City provide for this area to be devoted to residential use and the present zoning reflects this planned land use pattern.

