

Northwest Region | Public Workshop  
 Washtenaw County Comprehensive Plan  
 Thursday, November 20, 2003  
 Washington Street Education Center

**Regional Public Comments  
 on  
 Issues & Opportunities in Washtenaw County**

<b>LAND USE   OPEN SPACE</b>	
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low/no options for growth in some townships (State is major landowner)</li> <li>• Townships with a lot of public land/open space = no tax base</li> <li>• Too many roadside houses</li> <li>• Need for more controlled development – residential, commercial, industrial</li> <li>• Must agree on best use of land – farming, recreation, housing – manage growth to preserve all resources</li> <li>• Need density for both affordable and other levels of housing</li> <li>• Need for rezoning in order to maintain green spaces – need to know how to increase density &amp; discourage one household on 10 acre parcels</li> <li>• Need for creative approach to developments (open space preserved – houses clustered, each one with access to shared open space), cluster housing minimized need for driving</li> <li>• Smaller lots gives needed density and less waste of land</li> <li>• Find an appropriate ratio of open space to people – parks, golf courses, state lands, etc.</li> <li>• Senior population growth projections – seniors are not able to take care of properties, will need smaller lots or housing alternatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinated county-wide zoning could be effective in land use planning</li> <li>• Restrict number of large stores with large parking lots                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reduce number of strip malls, etc.</li> <li>○ Rezone parking ordinances</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>TRANSPORTATION   TRANSIT</b>	
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commuter townships with no mass transit and highly dependent on roads</li> <li>• Road paving not keeping up with population increases</li> <li>• No gravel roads improved with hard surface in Lyndon or Dexter Townships in 20 years</li> <li>• Additional exit &amp; movement roads at edges of Chelsea to handle current development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road improvements</li> <li>• Need to handle traffic and congestion through focus on transit and road networks</li> <li>• Increase public transportation</li> <li>• Increase bike paths both for recreation and transportation to work</li> <li>• Improve country roads to disperse traffic more efficiently</li> </ul>

<b>TRANSPORTATION   TRANSIT</b>	
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for transportation for low-income residents to get to jobs</li> <li>• Dexter Township has no continuous paved road from north to south</li> <li>• Roads – need to be proactive rather than reactive, plan for future roads and future growth</li> </ul>	

<b>HOUSING</b>	
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 5% increase in manufactured housing does not appear realistic, seems like more is coming</li> <li>• Need coherent housing plan to provide housing for all segments in the community</li> <li>• Need for housing for service sector residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for reasonable cost of housing &amp; taxes</li> <li>• Require home builder to finance demolition of abandoned homes</li> <li>• Use/remodel existing buildings in urban areas to provide low income/senior housing (like Grand Rapids and Monroe)</li> </ul>

<b>NATURAL RESOURCES   AGRICULTURE   HISTORIC PRESERVATION</b>	
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need preservation of natural areas for:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wildlife habitat</li> <li>○ Open space/viewsapes</li> <li>○ Natural Resource Functions – flood control, pollution abatement, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Decreasing watershed quality</li> <li>• Decreasing wildlife diversity</li> <li>• Decreasing air quality</li> <li>• Perceived lack of land / green space preservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain existing natural resources</li> <li>• Preserve green spaces for the enjoyment of future generations                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement cluster housing &amp; best use of resources</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Protection of water resources for recreation access - for low tech recreation – no motor access</li> <li>• Implement sound &amp; light pollution restrictions</li> <li>• Maintain recreational opportunities</li> <li>• Bike/hike connections between public lands – State, Metroparks, and villages – rural access</li> </ul>

<b>PROVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES   INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to organize space for public services                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Special assessments for water, sewer and roads</li> <li>○ Assess private homeowners association for private roads</li> <li>○ Assess privatization of services vs. making services cheaper</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Increase sewer service in developed areas in order to slow ag/open space land losses</li> <li>• Assess impact of manufactured homes on infrastructure</li> <li>• Need for regional sewer system that crosses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a special assessment district to protect land proposed for development and put it to a vote of the people in the district</li> <li>• Tie an automatic building moratorium to a traffic congestion index</li> <li>• Improve police protection</li> <li>• Additional intergovernmental cooperative agreements:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CAFA</li> <li>○ CACA</li> <li>○ Police</li> <li>○ Library</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>PROVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES   INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<p>the boundaries of villages and townships. With a regional sewer system, sprawl can be abated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for better sub county &amp; regional orgs &amp; planning</li> <li>• Need for Planning/Zoning to maintain services at practical levels given costs – restrict high cost development unless ways to pay for it</li> <li>• Need regional services – coordinate services such as:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fire</li> <li>○ Construction</li> <li>○ Police</li> <li>○ Transportation</li> <li>○ School bus pickup</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How does local government pay for infrastructure with 52% open space</li> <li>• Regional planning &amp; regional specialization – township cannot act alone</li> <li>• Need to retain independence of each community while collaborating with entire county</li> <li>• Manage/Communicate about urban vs. rural conflicts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recycling</li> <li>○ Sewer</li> <li>• Regionalize police, fire, recycling, planning, sewer &amp; water departments across districts</li> <li>• Small tax (1% or less) on all land sales for infrastructure improvements, local government sales tax on homes</li> <li>• Maintain low crime, peaceful middle class</li> <li>• Open government – board of supervisors for County Government</li> <li>• County-wide liability insurance</li> <li>• Encourage dialogue across &amp; between communities as to what they think, want, believe is best for their communities</li> </ul>

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Losing manufacturing jobs</li> <li>• Lack of jobs in township</li> <li>• Commuter townships depend on external employment</li> <li>• No tax base – commercial external &amp; regional dependence</li> <li>• Need for planning around bringing in decent jobs with our loss of tax revenues</li> <li>• Need to look at whether Washtenaw County is part of any “corridors” such as technology, automotive supply, information transfer, medical billing, etc. that may contribute to jobs / population / housing / income growth</li> <li>• County needs to pass ordinance for all taxing jurisdictions – tax on current use (not highest &amp; best)</li> <li>• Assess how to finance all issues projected</li> <li>• Headlee Rollback                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Does not give low/no growth areas any funds to operate with</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring in a minor league baseball team</li> <li>• Keep commercial nodes in a group</li> <li>• Diversity of service nodes, commerce, medical</li> <li>• Jobs – tech, medical, information transfer, auto supply</li> <li>• More support for locally-owned small businesses</li> </ul>

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bedroom communities with no jobs</li></ul>	