

Recreation Land Use

In the 1991 survey, Commercial Recreation and Public/Semi-Public categories were combined. To better quantify and evaluate recreation land use, a separate category for recreation was established, consisting of 1,306.4 acres of land or approximately 6.43 percent of the total land area of the Township. Kensington Metropark and Lyon Oaks County Park comprise the majority of recreation land in the Township. The James F. Atchison Memorial Park, which is located on the closed BFI landfill, celebrated its “official” grand opening in July 1996, consists of a total of 110 acres, and provides a number of amenities including ballfields, playground equipment, and walking and biking trails. Approximately 62 acres of land have been set aside for a park at the northeast corner of Milford and Eleven Mile Roads. This park land was made available to the Township as a result of the Elkow Farms Planned Development. The 62 acres consists of approximately 30 acres for active recreational uses with the remainder for natural resource conservation.

Commercial Recreation Land Uses

There is one private campground, Haas Lake Park located at the south end of Haas Lake Road, which is classified as a commercial recreation use. The golf driving range on Ten Mile Road is also classified as a commercial recreation use. The campground surrounds lakes that were created by sand and gravel operations. Together, these uses occupy about 105.7 acres of land (0.52 percent), minus the lakes.

Golf Course Land Uses

Golf courses in Lyon Township are experiencing the same development pressures that have pushed golf courses out of nearby communities to the east. Walnut Creek Country Club, Tanglewood, Cattails, Coyote, and Riverbank golf courses occupy 876.6 acres, or about 4.32 percent of the total land area.

Golf courses provide a means of preserving open space even as the community develops. However, there are immediate and potential negative impacts from golf courses, including elimination of the natural rural features of the land, increase in traffic, and potential impact on groundwater.

Agricultural

Agricultural land continues to be the prime target for development. The Township lost 1,674.8 acres of agricultural land between 1991 and 2009, a decline of 48.7 percent. Small agricultural operations are scattered throughout the Township, while one of the largest commercial farms in the Township, Elkow Farms, is currently being developed in stages as a residential Planned Development.

Even as more and more parcels are removed from the agricultural base, challenging the goal of preservation of the rural character, the Township continues to meet this challenge head-on.

The Planning Commission has completed a landscape design plan for the Ten Mile Road corridor, as a result of increased development along Ten Mile Road, both from outside and within the Township. The plan prescribes a general layout for landscaping along the road and identifies specific types of trees, shrubs, and grasses associated with the more rural landscape.

Vacant Land Use

Vacant land, which is any land not developed and not farmed, occupies 6,087.5 acres or 29.97 percent of the total land area of the Township, and is the second largest land use category behind residential land use. The loss of vacant land is often felt even more strongly than the loss of agricultural land since vacant land is generally found in a natural state.

Rights-of-Way

Road rights-of-way occupy 739.3 acres or 3.64 percent of the total land area of the Township. This figure does not include rights-of-way where the adjacent parcels are measured to the center of the road. The I-96 freeway, with a 300-foot wide right-of-way, comprises the biggest piece of right-of-way acreage in the Township. Railroad right-of-way is also included in the right-of-way. As the Township develops, the amount of land area for rights-of-way will increase.

Other Land Uses

Airport. The Oakland/Southwest Airport occupies 77 acres, or 0.4 percent of the total land area of the Township. Hangars and other support facilities have been upgraded in recent years, and a master plan is being prepared to address future improvements and expansion.

The 1991 Southeast Michigan Regional Aviation System Plan prepared for SEMCOG indicated that the Oakland/Southwest Airport is a general utility airport, with a 3,128-foot runway. Precision instrument approach operations are not available. The majority of aircraft operating at the airport, according to a 2005 study, are of the single engine and small, twin-engine variety.

Landfill. One of the most prominent land uses in the Township in 1991 was the landfill, which occupied about 124 acres of land on the south side of I-96 west of Milford Road. As noted previously, the landfill is now closed and a community park has been developed on its surface.

Water Bodies. Water bodies occupy 675.8 acres or 3.33 percent of the total land area of the Township. Water bodies include Lake Angela, Haas Lake, part of Kent Lake, Huron River, and the lakes created by gravel extraction.

Natural Areas

In 2004, Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services contracted with Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) to update previously collected data regarding