

Section 2

Physical Profile of Lakefield Township

This portion of the Master Plan provides an overview of the physical features and natural resources that shape Lakefield Township.

A. History

This section of the county may be said to be still in its primitive state. South of Beaver Creek it is occupied with but a few settlers; while the road leading into the settled sections is so strangely rude that one who ventured to travel over it once, and succeeded in reaching a dwelling-house, is surprised at the courage and perseverance which enabled him to battle with and conquer the difficulties of travel in that western township.

The head-waters of the north branch of Bad River pertain properly to this township. This tributary of the river waters its southern sections; while the more important stream known as Beaver Creek courses through sections 4, 9, 16, 15, 22, 23 and 24. The only manufacturing industry in Lakefield is the saw-mill on section 3.

In the summer of 1875 the settlers of Northern Lakefield met to consider the advisability of seeking local government. The result of that meeting was an application to the Supervisors' Board, signed by 21 freeholders of the township of Fremont, asking the board to order the organization of fractional township 11 north, of range 3 east, into

the township of Lakefield. The board ordered, under date Oct. 16, 1875, "that all that part of the township of Fremont, as now heretofore last organized, to-wit: fractional township 11 north, of range 1 east, be, and the same is, hereby set off from the township of Fremont, and organized into a separate township by the name of Lakefield, and the first township meeting in the said township of Lakefield shall be held at the dwelling house of H. C. Fessenden; that the first township meeting of the said township of Lakefield shall be held on the first Monday of April next, and that H. C. Fessenden, Thomas M. Gould and William C. Dickinson be, and they are, hereby appointed Inspectors of said township meeting, whose duty it shall be to preside at such meeting, appoint a clerk, open and keep the polls, and exercise the same power as the inspectors of elections at any township meeting; that Thomas Gould be and is hereby appointed to post up notices, according to law, of the time and place of holding the first township meeting in the said new township of Lakefield." This resolution to organize was opposed by one member of the board against forty supporters.

Up to the present time very little has been done toward the development of this section of the county. That it is capable of high cultivation cannot be doubted. It only awaits the labor of the husbandman to yield up its store of wealth. Within a few years this primeval land will be dotted with the homesteads of a prosperous people, and all the obstacles which the wild state of the township were removed.

Sacred Heart Cemetery, now known as St. John XXIII Cemetery, was

established in 1904 on 5 acres at the corner of South Fenmore Road and Roosevelt Road in Section 9. The cemetery, which underwent a name change in 2014, is owned by St. John XXIII Catholic Church. Records are held at St. John XXIII Catholic Church, 419 S. Midland Street, Merrill, Michigan 48637-0099, Phone: (989) 643-5366, Parish Center (989) 643-5940.

Lakefield Township Cemetery was Established in 1891 on 8 acres located on S. Fenmore Road between Roosevelt and Lakefield Roads. The cemetery is owned by the township and the burial records are held at the township clerk's office.

B. Regional Setting

Lakefield Township is on the western edge of Saginaw County. The region enjoys a relatively mild continental climate, which is moderated by the Great Lakes. The average daily maximum temperature in July, the warmest month, is 82 degrees F, while the average daily minimum in January, the coldest month, is about 12 degrees F.

The average precipitation in Saginaw County is 31.1 inches per year, with most of this occurring as rainfall between April 1 and September 30. Snowfall averages 41.6 inches per year, but is subject to wide annual variations. The prevailing winds are from the southwest and are generally strongest in March.

Lakefield Township is bounded on the north by Jonesfield Township. Freemont Township shares an eastern boundary, and Marion Township is on the southern boundary.

Merrill Road provides the main highway access route to the Township, running north and south through the central portion of the community. County roads provide the other main access routes through and within the Township.

The City of Saginaw provides the nearest commercial and industrial centers.

C. Land Use and Development Patterns

Information on existing land use in the Township has been derived from the Geological Information Service-Saginaw County through aerial photography that is maintained by Saginaw County.

The major land uses found in the Township are discussed below.

Agricultural/Open Land (Figure 2-1) mostly cropland) makes up the largest single category, comprising about 69.5% of the Township.

Wooded land (Figure 2-2) makes up just over 25.7%. *Water areas* which are mostly ponds, creeks and rivers comprise of 0.4% of the Township

Taken together, the agricultural, Rural Residential, and woodlot categories make up 95.6% percent of the Township. The balance of land 4.4% is distributed over roads. This further emphasizes the rural character of the area. The distribution of major land uses is displayed as a pie chart in *Figure 2-3*.

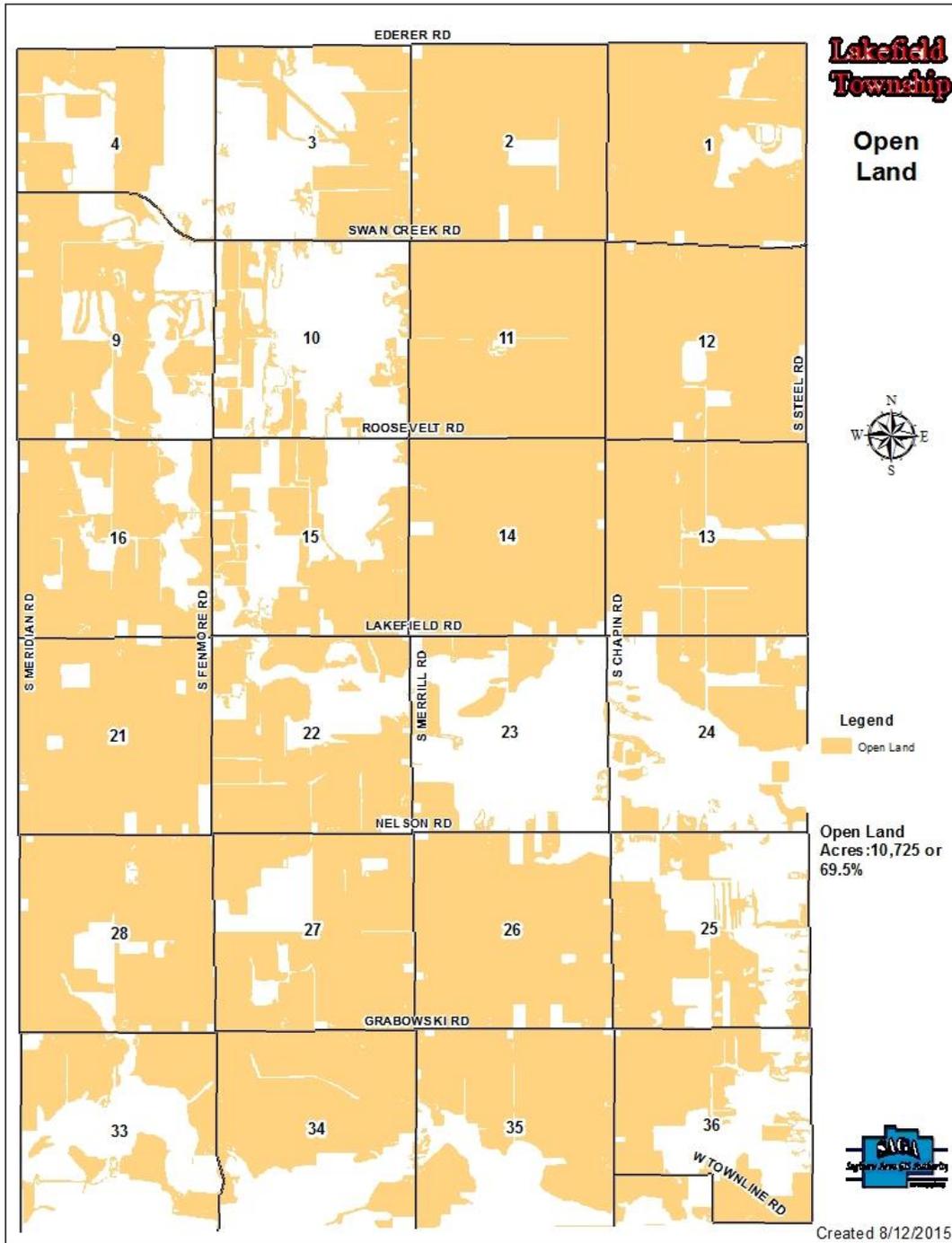
The Township is four miles wide and six miles long. It is bounded on the north by Ederer Road, the south by Townline Road, the east by Steel road and the west by Meridian Road. The township's land area is 15,417 acres. A typical township would be 23,040 acres.

The Township is divided into three zoning districts:

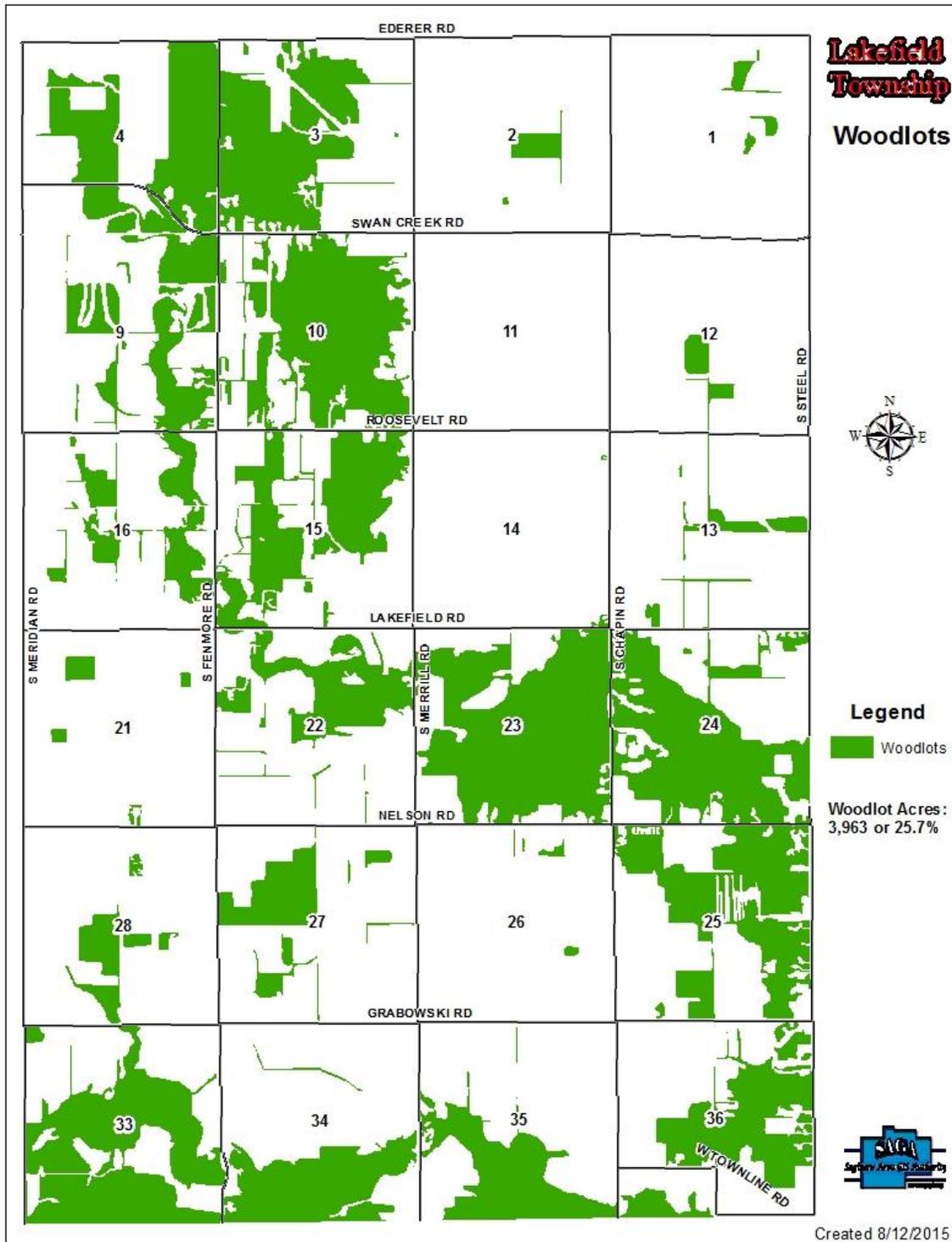
| | |
|----------------------|-------|
| Agricultural/Woodlot | 74.6% |
| Rural Residential | 24.8% |
| Commercial | 0.6% |

The category of land use is shown in *Figure 2-4*

A general land use map is shown in *Figure 2-5*.



Map of Open Land
Source: Saginaw Area GIS Authority



Map of Wooded Lots

Figure 2-2

Source: Saginaw Area GIS Authority

Lakefield Township Land Use

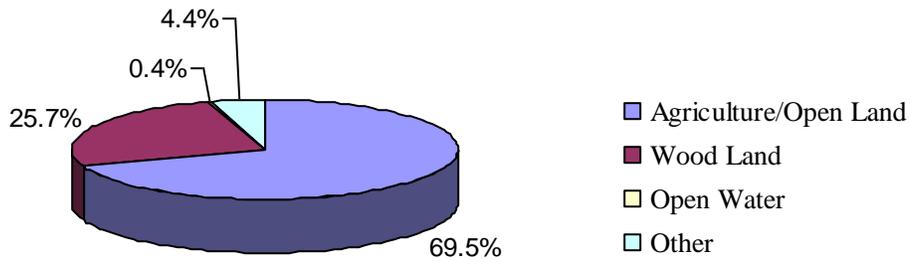


Figure 2-3

Source: Saginaw Area GIS Authority

Zoning Districts

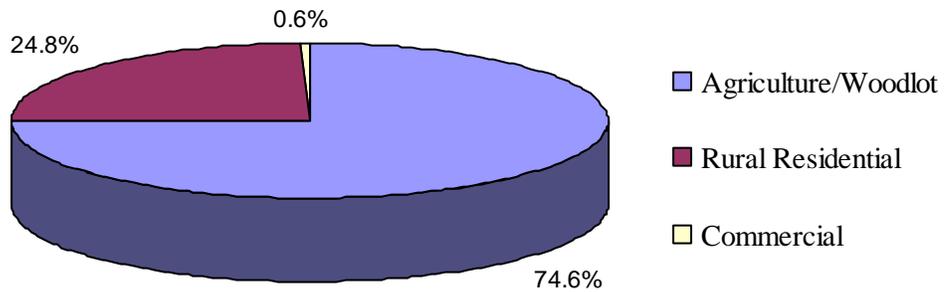
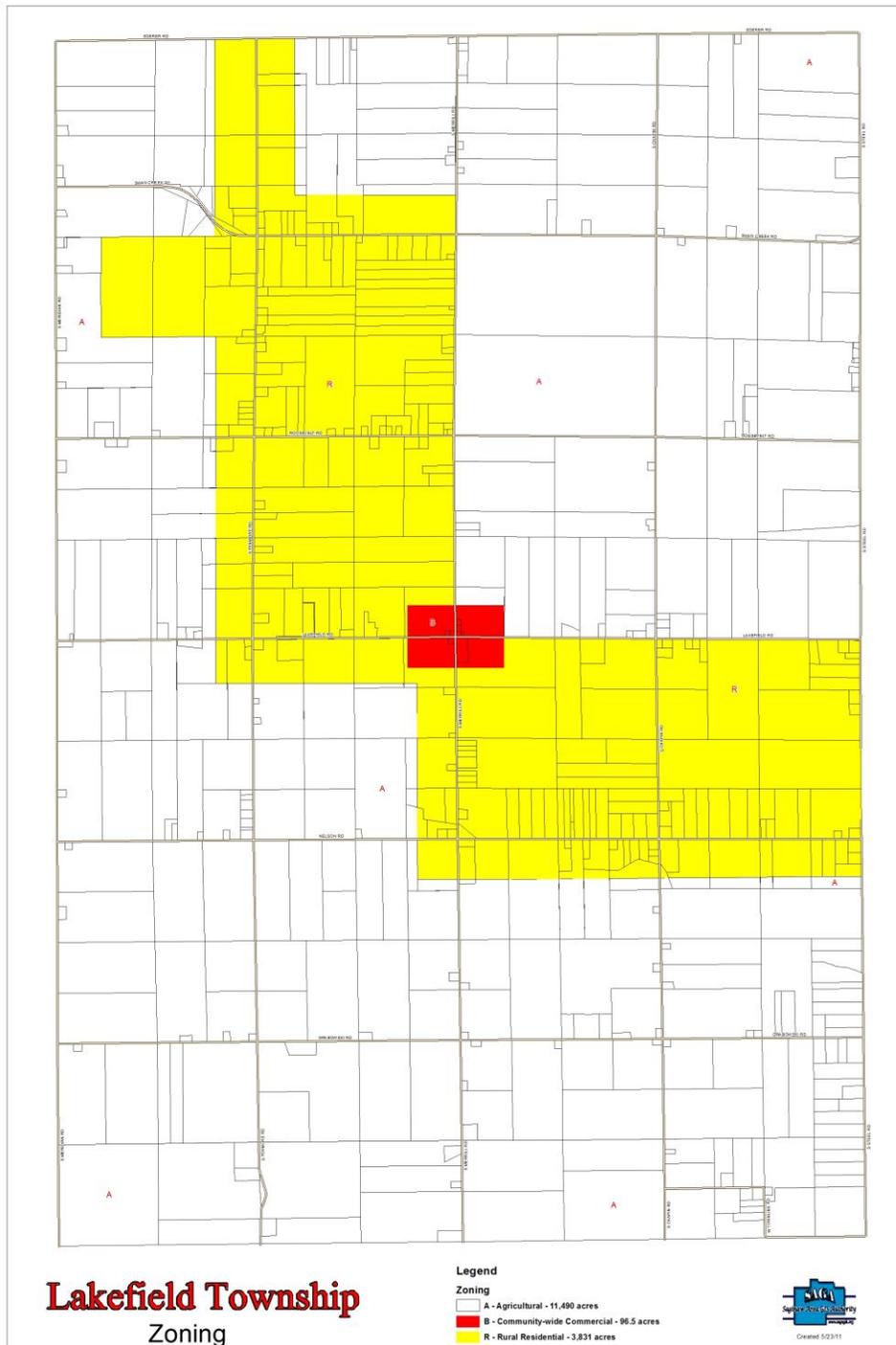
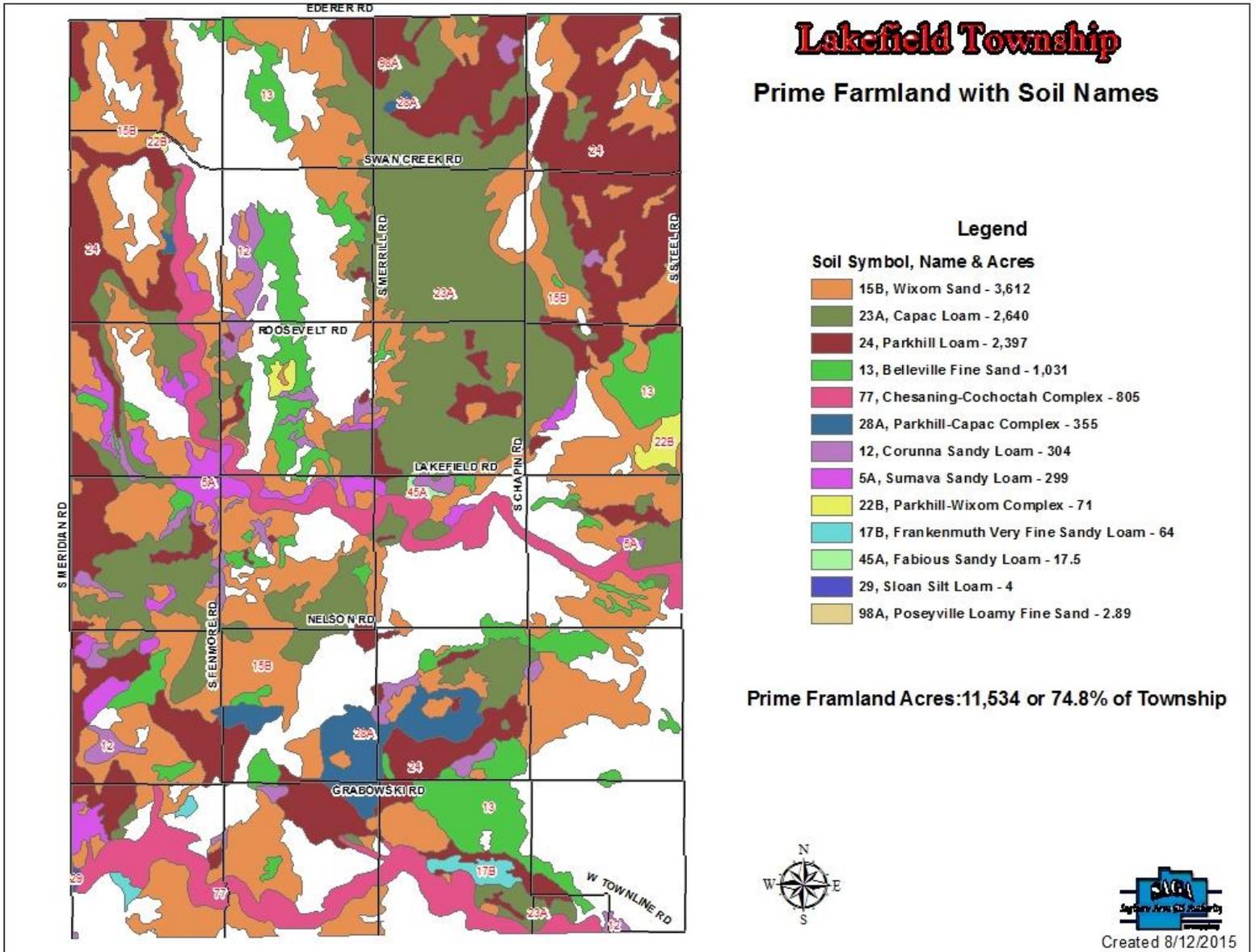


Figure 2-4

Source: Saginaw Area GIS authority



Current Zoning Map
Source: Saginaw Area GIS Authority



Map of Soils
 Figure 2.6

Source: Saginaw Area GIS Authority and U.S. Department Agriculture

D. Soils

Lakefield Township, like many rural communities, has no municipal sewer system. Accordingly, the intensity of development that may take place is largely dependent on the capability of soils to accommodate septic systems. The ability of the local soils to support construction of building foundations and roadways is also an important factor in development.

According to the *Soil Survey of Saginaw County* issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, 75% of the soils (*Figure 2-6*) in Lakefield Township have been classified as three major types:

➤ ***Wixom Sand***

This soil type is described as lake plains and water-worked till plains, which consists of nearly level or very gently sloping area on low knolls, low ridges and broad plains. Although it is the largest soil type, the land masses are scattered throughout the Township. The dominant use is for cropland along with woodlands and building site development. The major concerns with this soil type are wetness and soil blowing. Since the township depends solely on septic systems, it is important that the absorption fields be adequately raised

above the water table. Likewise field drainage systems must be installed to reduce the wetness of the subsurface. Because of the filtering capacity in the upper part of the soil, measures that prevent pollution of the ground water are needed.

➤ ***Capac Loam***

This loamy soil is classified as water-worked till plains which is comprised of nearly level of very gently sloping areas on broad plains and low knolls. This soil type is concentrated in Sections 2, 11, 14 and 21. Its dominant use is croplands and building site development. The major concern with this soil is wetness. Therefore, drainage systems for cultivated farmland must be installed. Due to the moderately slow permeability of the soil, suitable fill material must be added to raise the absorption field above the water table. The inherent wetness of the soil makes it necessary to also add fill material to raise the building structure above the water table.

➤ ***Parkhill Loam***

This soil type is described as water-worked till plains, along with other till plains which consists of nearly level

areas in drainageways, in depressions, and on broad plains. This soil type is concentrated in Sections 1, 2 and 12 on the east side of the Township and along the very west side of the Township. Croplands and building site development are its primary uses. Like the other soil types previously described, wetness is the primary concern, Excess water can be removed by open ditches, surface drains, pumps or a combination of these. From the building site perspective, ponding is the major issue. Additional fill material must be added to raise the structure above the water table. Also drainage systems around the foundations should be installed. Measures that overcome the ponding issue make it generally unsuitable for septic absorption fields.

E. Water Resources

Lakefield Township is drained by Beaver Creek and the North Branch of the Bad River. These are the major water feature in the Township along with other smaller creeks and drains.

In general, Township residents rely on wells for their drinking water and other water supply needs.

F. Transportation System

Access to and from Lakefield Township is provided via a system of County secondary and primary roads. Meridian Road, Fenmore Road, Merrill Road, Chapin Road and Steel Road are local north/south roads in the Township. Merrill Road links both M-57 to the south and M-46 to the north. Swan Creek Road provides good west travel to US-127 and east travel to M-52. Merrill Road and Swan Creek Roads are classified as a major arterial road by the Michigan Department of Transportation MDOT.

The latest traffic counts (May 2010) were obtained from the Saginaw County Road Commission-Department of Engineering. The counts were obtained along S. Merrill Road from the south edge to the north edge of the Township. The survey measures the amount of vehicular traffic volume for a continuous 24 hour period. The results of the survey are:

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| Ederer to Swan Creek | 2507 |
| Grabowski to Colvin | 1561 |
| Lakefield to Nelson | 1886 |
| Nelson to Grabowski | 1726 |
| Roosevelt to Lakefield | 2158 |
| Swan Creek to Roosevelt | 2423 |

There are no commercial aviation facilities in the Township. The

closest general aviation facility is the Chesaning Airport to the southeast 24 miles and the Alma Airport to the west 22 miles. The closest commercial passenger airport is MBS International Airport in Freeland located in the northern part of Saginaw County.

There is no rail service in the Township.