



# MASTER PLAN

CITY OF ORCHARD LAKE VILLAGE, MICHIGAN

DECEMBER  
2012

# Master Plan

## City of Orchard Lake Village

City of Orchard Lake Village Planning Commission

Orchard Lake Village, Michigan

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## Chapter One

# INTRODUCTION

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The City of Orchard Lake Village nestles among sparkling lakes in Oakland County, Michigan, about 25 miles northwest of Detroit. The City is a special place, made unique by its lakes, great natural beauty, colorful history, prosperous citizenry and high-quality residential living.

About 43 percent of the area within the City of Orchard Lake Village rests underwater. The City surrounds its namesake, Orchard Lake, but also includes a portion of Upper Straits Lake and borders, along its northern limits, the waters of Cass Lake. A number of smaller lakes, ponds, and wetlands reside within the community as well. These water features and their associated woodlands and wildlife have long attracted settlers to the area – from the Native Americans, who hunted and fished among the lakes, to the residents of today – who enjoy the beauty, recreational opportunities, and comfortable living that the community provides.

The natural setting marked by these water features has always commanded respect and admiration. Throughout the many years of settlement and development, residents of the area have recognized the importance of the natural environment and taken strong steps to protect it.

Early settlers such as the Ward family preserved and protected large areas of forested land for future generations to enjoy.

Over the years, Orchard Lake residents have demonstrated their continuing commitment to preserving their unique community by conserving natural areas; crafting regulations that protect trees, lake shores, and open spaces; and

authorizing infrastructure improvements that protect water quality and quality of life. These continuing efforts have succeeded in preserving and maintaining the natural character of the community and the lakes, despite the residential development that has taken place along the lake shores.



Residential development is another remarkable feature of Orchard Lake Village. While many communities rely on commercial and industrial development to bolster local economies and tax bases, Orchard Lake depends upon its high-quality, upscale residential development for its economic base. Only two small commercial areas exist in Orchard Lake, and they comprise only 1 percent of the land area in the City. The key to the future of Orchard Lake Village is vigilance in maintaining and preserving the beauty, quality, and economic stability of the residential environment, as reflected in this Master Plan's vision statement.

## The Vision Statement

A vision statement clearly and concisely states what citizens envision for their community. The vision statement keeps planning efforts in focus and directs the creation of goals, objectives, and planning strategies for the community. The following vision statement is the foundation of this Master Plan:

**The City of Orchard Lake Village is a community of incomparable natural beauty, accentuated by pristine lakes, woodlands, wetlands and other natural features. Within this setting, a unique, upscale, predominantly residential community has been created, fostering among residents a profound sensitivity to the City's natural features and rich history, and supported chiefly by its residential economic base. The City strives to sustain this thriving community in the interest of maintaining an outstanding quality of life for all residents far into the future.**

## The History of the City of Orchard Lake Village

As the vision statement reveals, residents of Orchard Lake Village cherish their history and long-standing commitment to the community's environment. Also, an important part of the planning process is an appreciation of historical antecedents of the City. The history of the Orchard Lake community begins with the Native Americans, who were lured by the area's beauty and natural resources.

Before the arrival of the white settlers, the Ottawa Indians enjoyed hunting and fishing throughout the area. Indian lore abounds in Orchard Lake, including stories regarding the Ottawa Chief Pontiac, who may have plotted his unsuccessful siege of Fort Detroit in 1764 on "Me-nah-sa-gor-ning," the 38-acre island in the center of Orchard Lake. The name, "Me-nah-sa-gor-ning," means "apple place." In 1825, the island, now known as "Apple Island," became an Indian reservation.

White settlers began to arrive in the 1820s, including Jerome Galloway, who bought Apple Island in 1827 after it was ceded to the U.S. Government by the Indians; Peter Dow and his relatives; Peter Coates; Colin Campbell; David Ward; General Joseph T. Copeland; and others.

During the 1850s, the then-remote Orchard Lake area was established as a Scottish community with numerous summer visitors. The Scottish settlers, in 1832, formed the first curling club in America. Orchard Lake, being large and round, attracted sailing races and regattas.

Maps 1, 2, and 3 depict West Bloomfield Township and the Orchard Lake community in the years 1896, 1917, and 1930. Evident from these maps is the impact certain property owners and their families had on development patterns during the early part of the century, largely deterring small lot, cottage-type development that occurred around other lakes.

The Ward family played a prominent role in the development of Orchard Lake Village. David Ward, a doctor, surveyor, lumberman, and farmer, accumulated 300 acres of land in the area of what is now known as Harbor Hills and Wards Pointe. His two sons became very important figures in the history of Oakland County, as well as Orchard Lake Village.

The first son, Henry Clay Ward, born in 1851, occupied a large white-frame home at the intersection of Commerce Road and Old Indian Trail. The old mansion, demolished in the late 1960s, became the home of C.E. Summers, who developed the Harbor Hills subdivision.

The second son, Willis C. Ward, born in 1862, remained a lifelong resident of Orchard Lake until his death in the 1940s. He was a central figure in preserving the natural beauty of the area. Many of the beautiful sights bordering Orchard, Cass, and Upper Straits Lakes were purchased by Ward and platted by his son-in-law, General F.S. Strong.

Willis Ward believed the residents of the City should feel grateful to those who have gone before them to preserve the native forest growth around the community's lakes, and the charm and tranquility of the residential community.

Travel from Detroit to Orchard Lake became easy with the arrival of the Grand Trunk railroad and, in 1895, the Interurban. In the mid-19th century, a large summer resort hotel was built on the east end of the lake. The Orchard Lake Hotel was patronized by the elite of Detroit.

After the economic panic of 1873, the hotel was sold to Colonel J. Sumner Rogers, who established the Orchard Lake Military Academy – the first military academy in Michigan. The academy, in the early 1900s, became a Polish seminary, now St. Mary's Preparatory, St. Mary's College, and S.S. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, known commonly as The Orchard Lake Schools.

Another area landmark is the Orchard Lake Community Church – Presbyterian, located on the north shore of Orchard Lake, which was started by Colin Campbell in 1871 and completed on July 18, 1872. It was the only church in the area at the time.

Campbell's youngest son, Forest Campbell, and his wife Caroline owned and lived on Apple Island, selling it with the life estate to Willis Ward in 1916. Ward's son-in-law, General Strong, donated the island to the West Bloomfield School District in 1970, and it became the Marjorie Ward Strong Woodland Sanctuary.

The Ward family was instrumental in preserving another prominent parcel in its natural state when, in 1969, Harold Ward donated 35 acres of wooded property at the northwest corner of Old Orchard Trail and Pontiac Trail to the Cranbrook Institute of Science. The Institute acquired another 15 acres from Ward in 1978. In 1992, the Cranbrook Nature Center was acquired by the City and renamed the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary. Residents of the City agreed to impose taxation on themselves to purchase the property for about \$5 million. The residents desired to perpetuate the property as a

nature preserve, as it was intended years before by the Ward family. As a natural preserve and important green space in Orchard Lake, the Sanctuary provides a continuing habitat for animals and plants, as well as a visual and recreational amenity for the community.

### Government History

Prior to 1928, the community now known as the City of Orchard Lake Village was part of West Bloomfield Township. The residents of the community voted (92 in favor, 5 against) on March 19, 1928, to incorporate as Orchard Lake Village. On December 8, 1964, residents of the Village voted to become a city, and S.F. Leahy served as the first mayor. The City Charter places legislative and governing powers in the hands of a seven-member elected City Council. The Council annually elects one Council person to serve as Mayor.

### Residential Development Phases

The residential development history of Orchard Lake Village falls into distinct phases. The initial development phase was as a resort community, with many properties used as cabins, cottages or second homes for Detroit-area residents. The second phase was marked by growth of the Detroit metropolitan area to the north and west, which caused Orchard Lake Village to become more suburban in character. Property owners began converting second homes or building new homes for year-round use and began commuting to jobs in Detroit and other area communities.

In the third development phase, property owners sought larger, higher quality homes. Older homes were demolished or remodeled, and in some areas (particularly in Zoning District 1) lots were combined to achieve more spacious development parcels. That trend seems to be reversing somewhat today – in a fourth phase, perhaps – as some residents begin to split their large lots into smaller lots for the development of additional home sites.

The City of Orchard Lake Village has grown to 869 households according to SEMCOG – near capacity

for the City. It is the legacy of the current residents to carry forward the rich history of the small community and to preserve the natural endowment enjoyed by the Indian tribes and early settlers.

### **Planning for the City of Orchard Lake Village**

Prior to 1956, municipal planning and zoning activity was limited; development was essentially entrusted to a relatively few property owners. The community forayed into land use regulation in 1956, upon adoption of its first zoning ordinance.

Residents of the then-Village voted to become a city in 1964. The initial city government passed ordinances to maintain large home sites, upgrade zoning restrictions, address pollution and littering, and limit dredging and filling.

The City of Orchard Lake Village formed a Planning Commission in 1980, which was permanently constituted by the City Charter revision approval on November 3, 1981. The Planning Commission and the City Council, recognizing the need to guide local zoning, land subdivision, land usage and street access, as well as meet the state’s mandate, quickly moved to provide Orchard Lake Village with a Master Plan.

The City Council authorized the preparation of a City Master Plan by the Planning Commission in March 1981. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008 requires the Planning Commission to make

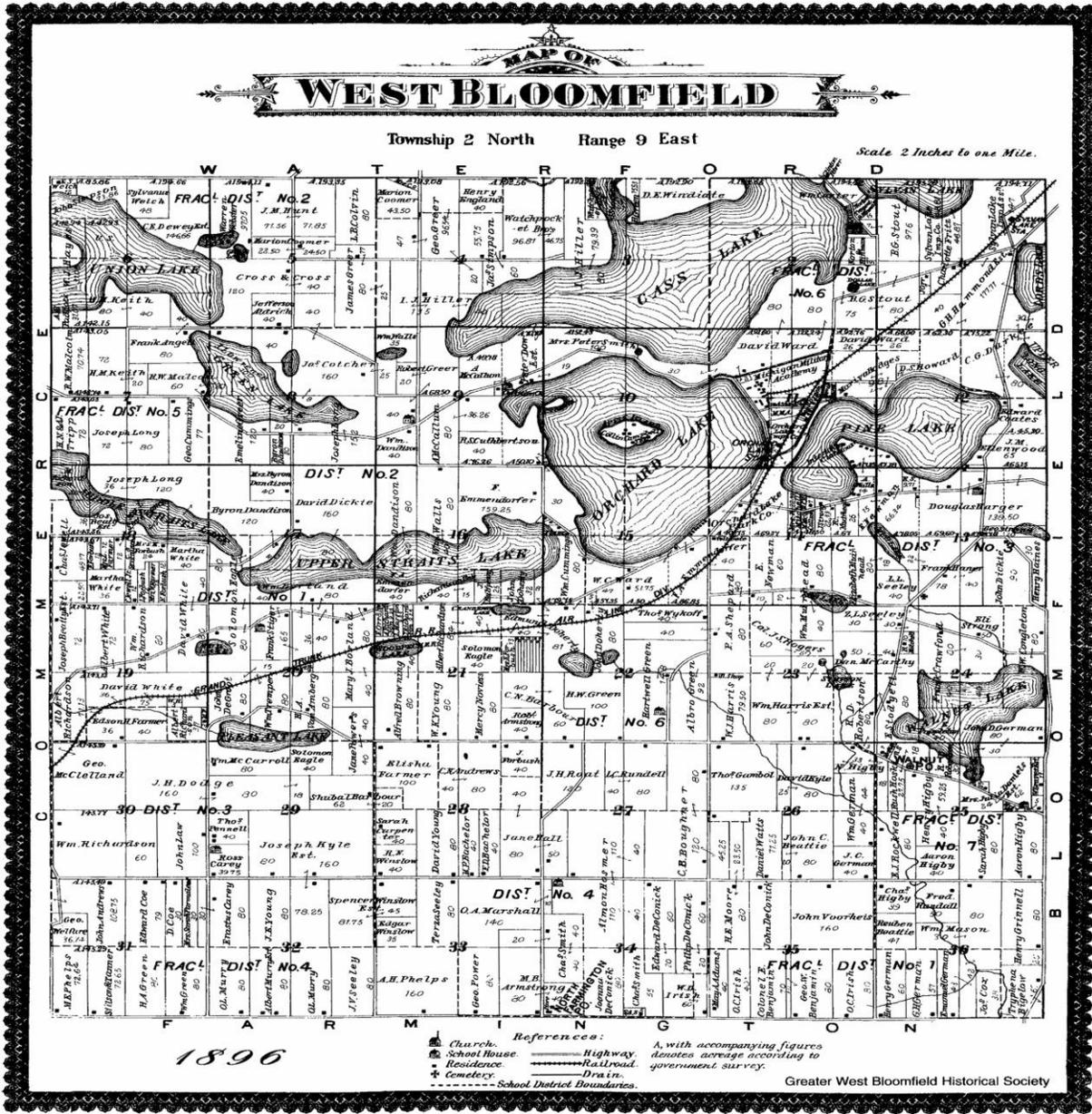
and adopt a master plan as a guide for development of the City. Section 45 of the Act requires the Planning Commission to review the master plan every five years to determine whether to amend the existing plan or adopt a new master plan.

The 1982 Master Plan for the City of Orchard Lake Village set forth existing characteristics, land use problems and potentials, development goals and objectives, and future land use recommendations for the City. The 1982 plan, like this document, reflects residents’ desires as well as sound municipal planning principles.

Following adoption of the 1982 Master Plan, Orchard Lake Village experienced continued development of vacant residential areas and redevelopment of existing residential properties, particularly lakefront homes. The community instituted a more formal development review process, recognizing that appealing characteristics of the City were being altered by new development.

In the 1990s, the installation of water and sanitary sewer systems -- done as a means of protecting the water quality of the lakes -- accelerated the pace of development and redevelopment, and made the need for an updated Master Plan more apparent. Paving of roads, by improving the appearance of certain neighborhoods, may also have contributed to the accelerated growth.

Map 1: West Bloomfield Township in 1896







## The Master Plan

The City of Orchard Lake Village initiated an update of the community's Master Plan in 1997, beginning with a thorough review of the 1982 Plan by the Planning Commission. The residential-oriented community, feeling development pressure and a need to protect its high quality of life and natural environment, determined its 1982 Master Plan required updating to better respond to future growth, development, and redevelopment. The Master Plan, contained in this document, represents the commitment of the City and its residents to preserve the unique quality of the residential environment, which is the Master Plan's primary and overriding goal.

The Master Plan is the result of data collection and analysis, meetings, and discussions by the Planning Commission and City Council, and input from Orchard Lake Village residents. It consists of text, charts, maps, and analysis regarding development of the community. The Future Land Use Map

provides the basis for the Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance.

This Master Plan update does not propose huge changes in the community. However, the Master Plan examines issues and seeks solutions to problems that face the City, such as excessive traffic, possible future development of large acreage parcels, the scale of residential development, and the fiscal impacts of various development patterns.

The 2006 plan was updated in 2011 to reflect significant changes over the past five years. The 2011 update includes consideration of the Orchard Lake Road Corridor Study, the change in fire and emergency medical services, Federal stormwater regulations, the City Capital Plan, the impact of the emerald ash borer on the trees in the City, and the impact of increased traffic from development north of the City and from completion of M-5 west of the City.

## Chapter Two

# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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A statement of general goals and objectives will help guide the City through the planning and implementation process. It is important to set goals and objectives because they: 1) help achieve consensus on the purpose of the Master Plan and the desired outcome; 2) provide a guide for zoning and capital improvement decisions; 3) provide a framework for evaluating current and future planning and development issues.

Goals are general in nature and are statements of ideals toward which the City wishes to strive. They represent the ultimate purpose of the planning effort, stated in a way that is broad in scope.

Objectives are more specific and present a means of attaining the stated goals. Objectives take the form of more measurable standards, or they specify the way in which the goals can be achieved. Objectives are often specific statements which can be readily translated into detailed design proposals or action recommendations.

Together, the following vision, goals and objectives provide the foundation of the Master Plan and a framework for future implementation strategies.

### Goals and Objectives

#### Goal 1 – Maintain residential quality and character.

##### Objectives:

- Maintain an appropriate scale and density of residential land use.
- Maintain high standards of site and building design.
- Encourage new construction that is compatible in scale and design with existing housing and that minimizes alteration to natural site characteristics.
- Encourage the development of housing to satisfy all segments of the population.



**Goal 2 – Preserve and enhance the natural environment and water quality.**

**Objectives:**

- Encourage the preservation of existing woodlands, wetlands and trees, and promote street tree planting to help preserve the natural setting for residential areas.
- Maintain the trees and vegetation around the City’s lakes, and prevent encroachment of housing and other development closer to the lake edge.
- Provide for the protection of the lakes in the City from the dangers of pollution, untreated and uncontrolled stormwater run-off, overuse and misuse.
- Protect the vistas and overlooks provided to the residents and the public from vantage points along the lakes.
- Coordinate water quality efforts with other communities and government agencies that share the shoreline of the lakes or have regulatory authority over the lakes, such as Keego Harbor, Waterford Township, West Bloomfield Township, the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner, the Road Commission for Oakland County, and the MDEQ.

**Goal 3 – Encourage a vibrant and attractive business and office district.**

**Objectives:**

- Seek a mix of commercial and office uses that address the needs of Orchard Lake residents.
- Encourage high quality of commercial and office site design, development and redevelopment, including landscaping, that is consistent with the

City’s character.

- Encourage continual maintenance and aesthetic improvements by commercial property owners.
- Promote coordination of design, traffic and parking between adjoining sites.
- Prevent proliferation of signs and other graphics that clutter and degrade the appearance of the commercial corridor.
- Encourage formation of a business organization to coordinate and fund commercial improvements and activities, and to prepare a business revitalization plan.

**Goal 4 – Maintain the high quality of public and utility services.**

**Objectives:**

- Permit development only if it is within the capacity of the City’s sanitary sewer and water systems.
- Encourage regular maintenance and development of adequate utility systems (water and sewer systems; electric, land-line telephone, and gas services; internet service; cellular telephone service; and cable television) throughout the City, consistent with the goal of enhancing the residential environment.
- Annually update the Financial Plan and Model (the Capital Plan) for the City, and seek ways to implement the plan.
- Seek the cooperation of utility companies, the Fire Authority, the West Bloomfield School District, and other companies or organizations that provide public services to Orchard Lake, to maintain the visual appeal of their facilities in accordance with high

standards of site design and maintenance.

- Maintain an informative and interesting City web site.

**Goal 5 – Maintain a functional road system that is sized to meet the needs of a small residential community.**

**Objectives:**

- Resist efforts to widen roads to increase their capacity and speeds because of the deleterious impact such roads have on the residential neighborhoods.
- Continue to work with the Road Commission for Oakland County to improve intersection design, signage, and signalization throughout the City.
- Work with the Road Commission for Oakland County and adjacent communities on transportation improvements that would minimize the impacts of through-traffic.
- Accommodate non-motorized transportation through construction of sidewalks and bike paths where feasible.

**Goal 6 – Ensure ongoing community planning and the implementation of Master Plan recommendations.**

**Objectives:**

- Review, update, and amend the zoning and subdivision regulations to address the goals and objectives of the Master Plan.
- Recommend priorities for long-range capital improvements programming.

- Update the Master Plan on a regular basis to address changing conditions, redevelopment proposals, and the development of new needs by residents.

- Cooperate with nearby communities through the exchange of information on development and redevelopment issues, and other shared interests, including implementation of the Orchard Lake Corridor Plan.

**Goal 7 – Protect the character, history and integrity of the City.**

- Continually educate the public on the value to the community of the lakes and other natural and historical features, and promote wise and responsible use of these resources and features.
- Promote the interests of the City and residents on issues involving state or federal authority, or the authority of other jurisdictional agencies.

## Chapter Three

# LAND USE ANALYSIS

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A fundamental procedure to the formulation of a community Master Plan is an analysis of existing land uses. This analysis not only identifies what and where particular uses are, but also highlights where future development might occur and where land use conflicts may exist or develop.

The City of Orchard Lake Village is unique in relation to land use. The City's small size, large lakes, limited roads, and existing residential development severely limit its ability to grow and develop. The City, due to its almost "built out" nature, is unable to accommodate a full and typical range of land uses while maintaining its residential charm and quality of life.

The City has felt development pressure although it has subsided in recent years. The installation of water and sewer systems made some sites, previously unusable for septic systems, available for development. Also, a number of residential properties were combined and redeveloped, creating concerns about scale and building heights within the community's natural surroundings.

These are among the concerns that are identified in the inventory and analysis of existing land uses, which form a basis from which municipal land use policies can be developed. Map 4, Existing Land Use, delineates land use classifications, including:

Single Family, Commercial, Public, Quasi-Public, Water/Wetlands (not including Cass, Orchard and Upper Straits Lakes) and Vacant.

The following is a brief definition of each of the land use categories:

**Single Family** – This classification includes parcels or portions of parcels having one-family detached dwellings.

**Commercial** – This classification includes a cross-section of retail, service, and office establishments satisfying the day-to-day needs of residents of the City and surrounding area.

**Public** – Land parcels that are owned by or serve the public at large are classified as Public land use, such as City offices, public schools, and fire stations. Land parcels used as open space and outdoor recreation also are included in this classification, such as the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary.

**Quasi-Public** – This classification includes land parcels that are of a public nature in types of use, but serve only a portion of the public or are privately owned. Examples of Quasi-Public uses are private country clubs, private schools, churches, and subdivision outlots.

**Water/Wetlands** – This classification includes small lakes, ponds, and wetland areas located throughout the City; Orchard Lake, Upper Straits Lake, and Cass Lake are not included in this classification.

Water/wetlands areas typically are not suitable for development, and often are worthy of preservation or protection.

**Vacant** – Land not used for any of the above defined purposes is considered vacant. This classification includes undeveloped property.

Table 2 shows the existing land use classifications used in this study and the acreage falling within each category. The following is a discussion of the notable issues in the community regarding land use.

**Land Use Issues and Analysis**

**Single Family Residential**

About 64 percent of the land area in the City (37 percent of total acreage), or 949 acres, is currently developed as Single Family Residential land use. Single family residential areas in Orchard Lake are characterized by the overall quality of housing and residential areas, the variety of lot sizes and architectural styles, and the willingness of home owners to make substantial investments in their properties.



The value of residential property is reflected in the State Equalized Value (SEV), which is reported

annually by Oakland County Equalization. The 2005 Equalization Report, which was available when the previous Master Plan was prepared, reported on SEV for real property of \$419,027,950. Due to new housing construction and investments made by residents in their homes, the SEV increased, reaching a high of \$460,817,220, as reported in the 2007 Oakland County Equalization Report. Since 2007, property values have slid, largely due to the depressed economy, and the related lack of housing construction and renovations. The 2011 Oakland County Equalization Report found that the SEV of the City had declined to \$337,369,190, a 26.6% decrease. (See Table 1)

The City of Orchard Lake offers the four following single family zoning classifications:

<u>District</u>	<u>Minimum Lot Size</u>
Zone 1	15,000 sq. ft.
Zone 2	20,000 sq. ft.
Zone 3	40,000 sq. ft.
Zone 4	60,000 sq. ft.

Within the community, lots range from very large lakefront properties to the narrow and irregular lots of Shady Beach Heights, Shady Beach, and R.C. Bankers subdivisions, which provide residential diversity and variety to the single family housing mix. The variety of home types offers housing opportunities for households of different sizes and requirements.

In recent years, new single-family development in the Orchard Lake community has been concentrated in Zone 3, which provides large, spacious lots of 40,000 square feet or larger. Since 1983, Zone 3 has by far been the preference of residents for new housing construction, as noted in Table 3.

During the 1980s, residential development and redevelopment was concentrated in the Orchard Lake Woodlands, Hickory Pointe and Deer Run subdivisions on the southern edge of the City. The 1990s was marked by scattered infill development and redevelopment, based on building permit

information provided by the City. The most recent residential development, Windstream subdivision, offered 25 lots ranging in size from 13,733 to 21,580 sq. ft.

The 1982 Master Plan observed that single family residential development is the most appropriate use to achieve preservation and wise use of natural environmental assets throughout the community. Also, within the relatively small land area available for residential development, it would be extremely difficult to provide for a greater range in density, yet still achieve compatibility between adjoining density classifications, and accomplish the goal of maintaining natural assets and the open character of the community. Even with the limitations resulting from the small size of the community, Orchard Lake Village has provided for a greater range in density than many other communities that have a much larger land area.

**Table 1  
State Equalized Valuation (2010)**

Land Use	State Equalized Value (SEV)	SEV as a Percent of Total
Commercial	\$13,443,140	3.77%
Utility	215,210	0.06
MDNR Boat Launch Site	716,800	0.20
Residential – Lakefront	246,829,690	69.31
Residential – Non-Lakefront	90,927,860	25.53
Personal Property	3,984,400	1.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$356,117,100</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: City Assessor (2010)

Only a few, scattered parcels remain for single family development, and most of these contain small lakes, wetlands or other features which make them difficult to develop. New development continues, however, as property owners tear down existing houses and rebuild.

The large, wooded lots with attractive homes characterize the residential atmosphere of Orchard Lake Village, but even in more dense neighborhoods, there is a secluded, lake-oriented atmosphere. The current zoning classifications have adequately preserved the residential character while, based on the building permit data, offering ample development options for what little available land remains.

A major challenge facing the City is to permit residential development, but in a way that protects existing residents’ views of the lakes; protects the natural beauty of the lakefront; and discourages development that is out-of-scale with the surroundings. The City is determined to maintain high standards of development, even on lots that face constraints because of shape, size, topography, or environmental characteristics.

**Table 2  
Existing Land Use Classifications and Acreage**

Land Use Classification	Total Acreage	Percent of Total Acreage	Total Land Area*
Single Family	949 acres	37%	66%
Commercial	26 acres	1%	2%
Public	130 acres	5%	9%
Quasi-Public	286 acres	11%	20%
Vacant	37 acres	1%	3%
Orchard & Upper Straits Lakes	1,116 acres	43%	--
Other Lakes, Ponds & Wetlands	52 acres	2%	--
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,596 acres</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* Total Land Area does not include lakes, ponds and wetlands.

Source: McKenna Associates, Inc.

**Commercial**

Only about 1 percent, or 26 acres, of the City’s current land use is commercial (which includes retail, service and office uses). Because of the City’s limited land area and residential orientation, little commercial development has taken place since the 1982 Master Plan.

In the City of Orchard Lake Village, there are two concentrations of commercial uses. The first is adjacent to an extensive commercial area in West Bloomfield Township on Orchard Lake Road, between the West Bloomfield pedestrian trail and Pontiac Trail. The second area is found further north at the city limits where Orchard Lake Road enters the City of Keego Harbor.

Commercial buildings on the east side of Orchard Lake Road, south of Pontiac Trail, have experienced a high rate of turnover and failure. This is believed to be the result, primarily, of parking and access problems, but visibility, aesthetics, landscaping, and a lack of cooperation between business owners may have contributed.

Because of the traffic on Orchard Lake Road, left turns, both in and out of commercial properties, are often difficult. More stable, established businesses are located on the west side of Orchard Lake Road, south of Pontiac Trail.

Commercial development at the north end of Orchard Lake Road in the City is mostly contained within the Orchard Commons shopping center. Renovations in 2008 included a complete exterior façade change and creation of new tenant spaces.

Commercial revitalization efforts in recent years have focused on the following needs of the City’s commercial districts:

- To promote greater cooperation among business owners to solve problems they have in common, such as parking and access.
- To achieve common, shared parking areas and reduce access points, particularly on

the west side of Orchard Lake Road south of Pontiac Trail.

- To promote aesthetics for all Orchard Lake Village commercial areas. New design guidelines were established to upgrade the appearance of commercial centers. These guidelines are intended to achieve the following objectives:



1. Implement standards that encourage the best and consistent quality of design in a traditional manner.
2. Achieve a harmonious character among building façades.
3. Allow individual expression of a retail business while achieving compatibility.
4. Encourage property owners and proprietors to understand and appreciate the spirit and intent of the architectural enhancements that the guidelines are intended to promote.
5. Encourage harmonious signing and illumination.
6. Provide guidance to applicants so they understand the City’s design vision and objectives when considering expansion or renovation of their establishments.

This effort has been greatly furthered by the City’s participation in the Orchard Lake Road Corridor Study Group. Six communities extending from I-696 north to Telegraph Road, including Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield Township, Orchard Lake

Village, Keego Harbor, Sylvan Lake, and Bloomfield Township, along with the County Planning Division and the Road Commission for Oakland County, began meeting in 2000 to develop a plan to enhance the corridor. All six communities and the County Board of Commissioners accepted the award-winning study. The implementation phase is now being considered.

- To emphasize the need for smaller, less intense, service-oriented businesses that primarily focus on serving Orchard Lake residents.

**Public**

The City of Orchard Lake Village has 130 acres of Public land, many which provide great beauty, recreation, history, or services to residents and visitors alike. Public land uses comprise about 9 percent of the land area (5 percent of total acreage).

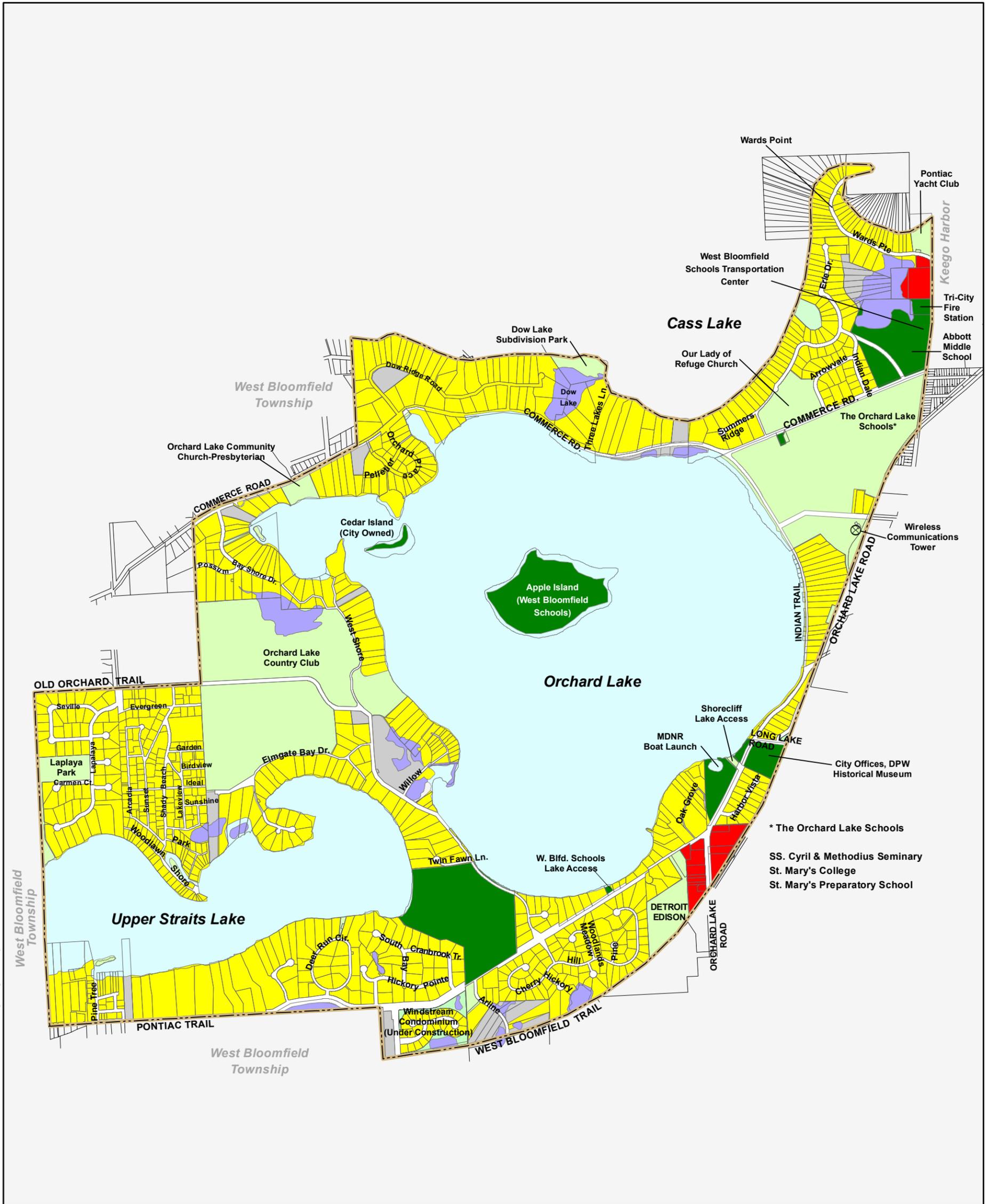
Public lands in the City include the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary, a wooded site adjacent to Orchard Lake and Upper Straits Lake that includes walking trails; Apple Island, owned by the West Bloomfield School District and a site of historical and natural significance; the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Boat Launch, a property providing attractive open space and public access to Orchard Lake; the City Hall site, providing views of Orchard Lake and Apple Island; and Abbott Middle School, a part of the West Bloomfield School District, which provides quality education and recreation to area residents. The environmental analysis of Chapter Four examines the Nature Sanctuary, Apple Island, and the lake in greater detail.

The City Hall site was extensively examined by a Development Committee through 1997 and 1998. The committee recommended development of the site as an attractive focal point for Orchard Lake and its community services. No action was taken on the Committee’s recommendations, primarily for financial and traffic reasons.

**Table 3**  
Residential Building Permits Issued for New Structures (2001-2010)

Year	Residential Zone 1		Residential Zone 2		Residential Zone 3		Residential Zone 4	
	New Homes	Additions						
	2001	3	3	1	2	4	6	4
2002	7	0	2	3	8	5	0	1
2003	0	5	2	4	3	6	1	2
2004	3	1	3	3	3	2	3	4
2005	3	1	3	4	3	10	3	5
2006	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	2
2007	0	2	0	2	3	3	2	2
2008	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	0
2009	0	0	1	3	1	1	1	2
2010	0	2	1	1	1	2	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>

Source: City of Orchard Lake Village



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February 28, 2013

# Map 4 - Existing Land Use

City of Orchard Lake Village, Michigan

- EXISTING LAND USE CATEGORIES**
- Single Family
  - Commercial and Office
  - Public
  - Quasi-Public
  - Water and Wetlands (not including Cass Lake, Orchard Lake, Upper Straits Lake)
  - Vacant
  - Municipal Boundary

Basemap Source: City of Orchard Lake Village  
Data Source: McKenna Associates, 12/05

**Quasi-Public**

The Quasi-Public land uses of the City of Orchard Lake Village, in combination with Public and Single Family land uses, tend to enhance the spacious, natural qualities of the community. About 286 acres, or 11 percent of the land area in the City, is classified as Quasi-Public land use.

The Quasi-Public sites include the Orchard Lake Country Club, the Orchard Lake Schools, Pontiac Yacht Club, Laplaya Park, Dow Lake Subdivision Park, Orchard Lake Community Church – Presbyterian, and Our Lady of Refuge Church.

Portions of one Quasi-Public site -- the Orchard Lake Schools -- could be developed for other uses. Although the desire of the residents might be to limit further development of this site, one of the objectives of the Master Plan is to anticipate and plan for possible development, identify compatible uses, and identify minimum design criteria.

In 2004 the Orchard Lake Schools considered development of their frontage along Orchard Lake Road with mixed uses, including alternative residential housing and office and commercial establishments. The initial proposal called for 86 units of attached housing and 40,600 sq. ft. of retail. The proposal, particularly the residential component, was not found acceptable by the City. Thus, the Orchard Lake Schools is considering other development options.

**Lakes, Ponds and Wetlands**

The lakes, ponds and wetlands are among the most valued assets of the Orchard Lake community. The City has found that constant vigilance is required to protect the natural beauty, peacefulness and water quality that these water features provide. Chapter Four examines the environmental issues in greater detail.

Orchard Lake and the portion of Upper Straits Lake within the city limits total about 1,116 acres, or about 43 percent of the City’s area. Orchard Lake, Upper Straits Lake, and Cass Lake provide the City with approximately 8.5 miles of shoreline. Scattered throughout the City are smaller lakes,

ponds, and wetlands – about 2 percent of the City’s area. Many of the wetlands and water features have been incorporated into residential areas as visual features or common areas, or are located near the backs of large parcels with homes built on the front, buildable portions of the lots.

Experience has shown that the City must remain vigilant in protecting all its water and wetlands features, both large and small. Many of the remaining vacant properties in the city include small lakes, ponds or wetlands, which need to be protected from the impact of development.

As the very name of the City implies, the community is closely tied to its lakes and water features, and should continue to protect them from pollution, run-off, overuse, and misuse.

**Vacant**

Only 1.5 percent of the land area, or 37 acres, is vacant. Even fewer acres remain for development, as the total includes the currently vacant Detroit Edison site on West Bloomfield Trail. As long as water features and wetlands are adequately protected, the remaining vacant sites can be incorporated into the City’s existing residential districts, which provide for a variety of housing types.

**Additional Land Use Issues**

Historical Features

Historical buildings and sites add to the City’s character and interest, and require long-term efforts for preservation and maintenance.

Among the historical assets of Orchard Lake Village are:

- Apple Island (Marjorie Ward Strong Woodland Sanctuary). The history of the island dates back to the days of Native American settlement in the area. Legend has it that Pontiac, Chief of the Ottawa, visited the island. Indian relics were found on the island, and an early U.S. survey tells of Indian orchards there. Given to the West Bloomfield School District in 1970,

the island currently is used for ecological and historical education. According to property and deed documents, ownership of Apple Island will transfer to the City of Orchard Lake Village if the school district wants to give up its property rights to the island.

- The Orchard Lake Schools. The site contains the S.S. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, St. Mary’s College and St. Mary’s Preparatory School. The Castle – the oldest structure on the site – was built in 1858 as the private mansion of Joseph Tarr Copeland, of the Michigan Supreme Court. The building became a resort hotel and a military academy headquarters before becoming the residence of the Rector in 1909. The institution has maintained its distinctive old buildings.



- Orchard Lake Community Church – Presbyterian. The initial structure was completed in 1874 and was the only church in the area at the time; it still stands proudly on the site today.
- Orchard Lake Country Club. Construction of the golf course began in 1926 on 175 acres of land previously owned by the Ward family. The course opened on August 3, 1927, with a tournament. Throughout the years, the country club has provided a variety of recreational opportunities and a peaceful gathering spot for social and

family functions. Substantial renovations to the clubhouse were completed in 2005.

Boundary Adjustments

Logically, the City should examine an adjustment to its boundaries at two locations, which could ease confusion over services and taxing for the City and the property owners involved. One area is located north of Old Orchard Trail, between Hiller Road and the west city limits. Most of the area is a part of the Orchard Lake Country Club, which already calls the City its home.

Another boundary issue exists for five lots at the far southwest corner of the City. These lots, for the most part, abut Upper Straits Lake and extend southerly to Pontiac Trail, with the frontage in West Bloomfield Township. The inconvenience of split tax bills and governmental services could be resolved if the City boundary was adjusted to incorporate these areas.

## *Chapter Four*

# ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

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The natural environment, which lured Native Americans and European settlers to the area long ago, remains a key ingredient in the image, attraction and beauty of the City of Orchard Lake Village.

First and foremost are the major lakes: Orchard Lake, now ringed by roadways and spacious residences; Upper Straits Lake, also providing residential lakefront property before extending to the west beyond the city limits; and Cass Lake, with its shoreline bordering City residences to the north.

Dotting the landscape of Orchard Lake Village are a number of smaller lakes, ponds and wetlands, such as Dow Lake on the north side of the City; a large wetlands behind Abbott Middle School; and a small lagoon on the south end of Orchard Lake. The wetlands are critical to the water quality of the surrounding lakes as they provide a recharge area and filtration system for runoff.

The Orchard Lake area represents a complex watershed consisting of wetlands, rivers, streams and pristine lakes. The City, over many years, has dedicated a great deal of effort to preserving the delicate ecological balance that exists in this watershed system. For example, zoning regulations have been adopted to maintain an ample setback from the lakes, and fertilizing regulations have been adopted to minimize lawn fertilizer runoff into the lakes.

The City's topography is the result of ancient glaciers and varies from rolling hills to gently undulating plains. The loamy and clay soils of the area generally are well-drained. Coldwater shale of the Mississippian geologic period underlies the City.

The lakes bestow the community with a number of significant resources and amenities, including scenic views, tranquil residential settings, cooling summer breezes, fish and wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. It is imperative that the City continually protect these beautiful natural features.

An impressive tree canopy adorns the land around the lakes, giving the residential community a naturalistic, "woody" flavor. The wooded lake shores and neighborhoods require preservation by the City and residents.

### **Environmentally Significant Sites**

Several sites in Orchard Lake Village rate as environmentally significant. Apple Island (Marjorie Ward Strong Woodland Sanctuary) has been established to bring the students of the West Bloomfield School District an appreciation of their natural environment, the need to conserve natural resources and an understanding of basic ecological programs. The island, though only 38 acres in size, possesses a large number of plant species.



The vegetation of the island includes oak-hickory forest, typified by black, white and red oaks, and shagbark hickory; hardwood forest, typified by sugar maple, basswood, white elm and ironwood; and swamp forest, typified by white birch, willow, sugar maple and a variety of shrub species.

Equally important is the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary, a 50-acre wooded tract of land that was acquired from the Cranbrook Schools in 1991. According to a study by environmental consultant and naturalist Jonathan S. Schechter, the Sanctuary includes many different plant species, several different biotic communities and an abundance of wildlife. Some of the oak trees on the site are more than 250 years old. The terrain, which was shaped by glaciers, is composed of rolling hills. A small parking area and walking trail system allow public access to the Nature Sanctuary. (See Map 5)

Also significant to the environmental quality of the City are Orchard Lake Country Club and the Orchard Lake Schools. These large Quasi-Public areas provide open space and additional tree canopies that add to the City's natural character.

Although they are not located in the City, the West Bloomfield Trail and West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve are natural amenities for residents. The trail runs 4.5 miles from Arrowhead Road and the Nature Preserve, south of Orchard Lake, to Sylvan Manor Park, north of Orchard Lake. Extension of the trail to the west is planned as a result of acquisition of the Coe Railroad right-of-way. Residents of the City of Orchard Lake Village have convenient access to the trail, which serves as the City's boundary for more than a mile at the southeast edge, for walking, biking and cross-country skiing.

The West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve is located near the City on Arrowhead Road and includes 162 acres and two miles of trails.

Because of the City's reliance on its natural features, it must monitor environmental quality, educate the public and adapt to changing conditions. The following environmental issues will require constant attention by the City.



### Water Quality

Studies were completed in 2004 by West Bloomfield Township on the water quality of Orchard and Upper Straits lakes. Table 4 summarizes lake characteristics and some of the studies' results.

Orchard Lake was found to have slightly better than average water quality for a lake of its size and

use, and the water of Upper Straits Lake was described as better than average. Cass Lake was described as having average to slightly better than average water quality. All three lakes have abundant residential development along their shores and recreational usage of their waters. The studies revealed several water quality concerns.

The introduction of non-native plant or animal species, such as zebra mussels, milfoil and purple loose-strife, into the lake is a serious concern. The zebra mussel, in all three lakes, has the potential to eventually disrupt the lake's ecosystem, as well as damage boats and docks around the lake. The mussels also represent a hazard to swimmers. Stepping on a mussel on the beach or lake bottom can cause foot lacerations.

Orchard and Upper Straits and Cass lakes were found to have Eurasian water milfoil present. The non-native underwater plant is invasive and a nuisance to lake users.

Roadway runoff is a problem at areas around Orchard Lake's shore. Road salt and fluids leaking from automobiles are highly toxic and damaging to aquatic life. Property owners who have lawns to the lake's edge are urged to establish "greenbelts" of vegetation to filter fertilizers and pollutants, as well as provide additional wildlife habitat.

To address the destruction of natural lakeshore vegetation in home renovations, demolitions, and new construction, in 2000 the City adopted the Woodland, Tree, and Vegetation Preservation Ordinance. These regulations restrict tree removal to dead and diseased trees and protect all

vegetation close to environmentally sensitive areas. In addition, special procedures are required by ordinance and have been implemented to protect trees and environmentally sensitive areas during construction.

Natural lakeshore vegetation often is destroyed or damaged as a result of home renovations, demolitions or construction. Methods for protecting lakeshore vegetation must be implemented during the construction process.

Orchard Lake and Cass Lake are under general mercury advisories. The average concentration of mercury in at least one fish species exceeds the acceptable concentration of 0.35 ppm, a concentration which is not expected to pose a health concern to people consuming 15 grams of fish per day.

Mercury is a dangerous substance that "bioaccumulates" in fish. The primary sources of mercury contamination are emissions from power plants, boats and cars (air deposition), as well as stormwater runoff. Certain types of boat engines that do not cleanly burn fuel can leak oil and other contaminants directly into the lake.

The source for Orchard Lake's high levels of mercury is unknown, but environmental consultants have noted that the lake has a long water retention time (water that flows in stays there for a very long time), and that mercury levels may decline over time. Continued research is needed to monitor water quality, identify sources of contamination, and identify methods to stem the contamination.

**Table 4  
Lake Characteristics**

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Orchard Lake</u>	<u>Upper Straits Lake</u>	<u>Cass Lake</u>
Surface Area	788 acres	323 acres	1,280 acres
Perimeter	5.74 miles	6.24 miles	26.1 miles
Deepest Point	111 feet	101 feet	120 feet
General Water Quality	Slightly better than average	Better than average	Average to slightly better than average
Environmental Concerns	Zebra mussel, Eurasian water milfoil, roadway runoff, mercury contamination	Zebra mussel, Eurasian water milfoil	Zebra mussel, Eurasian water milfoil
Legal Lake Levels			
Summer	930.50	930.80	929.22
Winter	930.20	n/a	927.87

Sources: Studies by Anne M. Vaara, Environmental Analyst, West Bloomfield Township  
 Legal Lake Level: Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner

In 2003 the City received its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Certificate of Coverage from the MDEQ. The requirements and responsibilities of the permit are designed to manage stormwater discharge and are extensive. The City is working with the Clinton River Watershed Council to carry out its responsibilities and comply with the requirements. The City is also in the Huron Watershed and Rouge River Watershed with the majority being in the Clinton River Watershed.

In the interest of protecting water quality, a key management tool is minimizing the amount of stormwater runoff, which is a key source of pollutants in the lakes. Stormwater runoff substantially increases when development creates impermeable surfaces, such as roads, buildings and driveways. Also, any widening or expansion of the City’s road system could substantially increase runoff into the lakes. There is a need to maintain a greenbelt between roads and the lakes so that stormwater runoff is properly filtered before entering the lakes.

Development tends to eliminate wetlands and open lands where the water can filter into the ground. Where wetlands are used to intercept pollutants, the wetlands environment will be

altered over time because of increased water levels and the introduction of new chemicals and nutrients.

In relation to stormwater management, the type of development around Orchard and Upper Straits lakes has been beneficial. The lower intensity of use and reduction of impermeable surfaces offered by the large-lot single family residential developments have provided the lakes with a strong, natural filtration system. The City must maintain its lake shore setbacks, fertilizing regulations and lot coverage requirements for single family residences, which provide ample permeable surfaces and vegetative areas around the lakes, and examine methods for stronger enforcement of these regulations.

The West Bloomfield Township studies urge residents and lake associations to pool resources and become active in water quality and plant management for both Upper Straits and Orchard lakes. The City has three shore owners’ associations that work to protect the quality of the lakes through aquatic weed harvesting and educational programs. Long-range management plans need to be developed for the lakes, the studies state.

**Table 5  
Stormwater Management Principles**

<u>Principle</u>	<u>Methods</u>
<p>Encourage the filtering of stormwater that carry sediments before they reach the water body.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shape ground to carry runoff through vegetation</li> <li>• Create greenbelts of vegetation</li> <li>• Divert stormwater into sedimentation basins.</li> </ul>
<p>Limit impervious surfaces. Maintain wetlands to help with sediment filtration and the storage of stormwater.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build narrower roads</li> <li>• Build roads serving multiple parcels</li> <li>• Build smaller parking lots</li> <li>• Keep wetlands intact.</li> </ul>

Source: "Protecting Inland Lakes: A Watershed Management Guide," 1990, Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Remaining wetlands must be protected as an integral part of the watershed system. Development should avoid the wetland areas and not affect the quantity or quality of water flowing into the system. Wetland plant and animal communities are balanced and adapted to a certain, although fluctuating, water supply. More or less water coming into a wetland ecosystem can severely damage plants and animals, and ultimately affect the quality of water in the entire watershed. (Table 5 shows three main stormwater management principles.)

The Water Resource Commissioner (WRC) for Oakland County is charged with maintaining mandated lake levels in all of the area lakes.

The quality of the groundwater also is a concern, although the construction of the sanitary sewer system in the mid-1990s has lessened the threat of groundwater contamination by eliminating septic systems within the City.

**Trees and Vegetation**

The City of Orchard Lake Village needs to conserve its impressive tree canopy and open spaces, and encourage the planting of native vegetation around its lake shores and residences. Besides affecting water quality, the trees and plants of Orchard Lake are major features in the community’s appearance, charm and character.

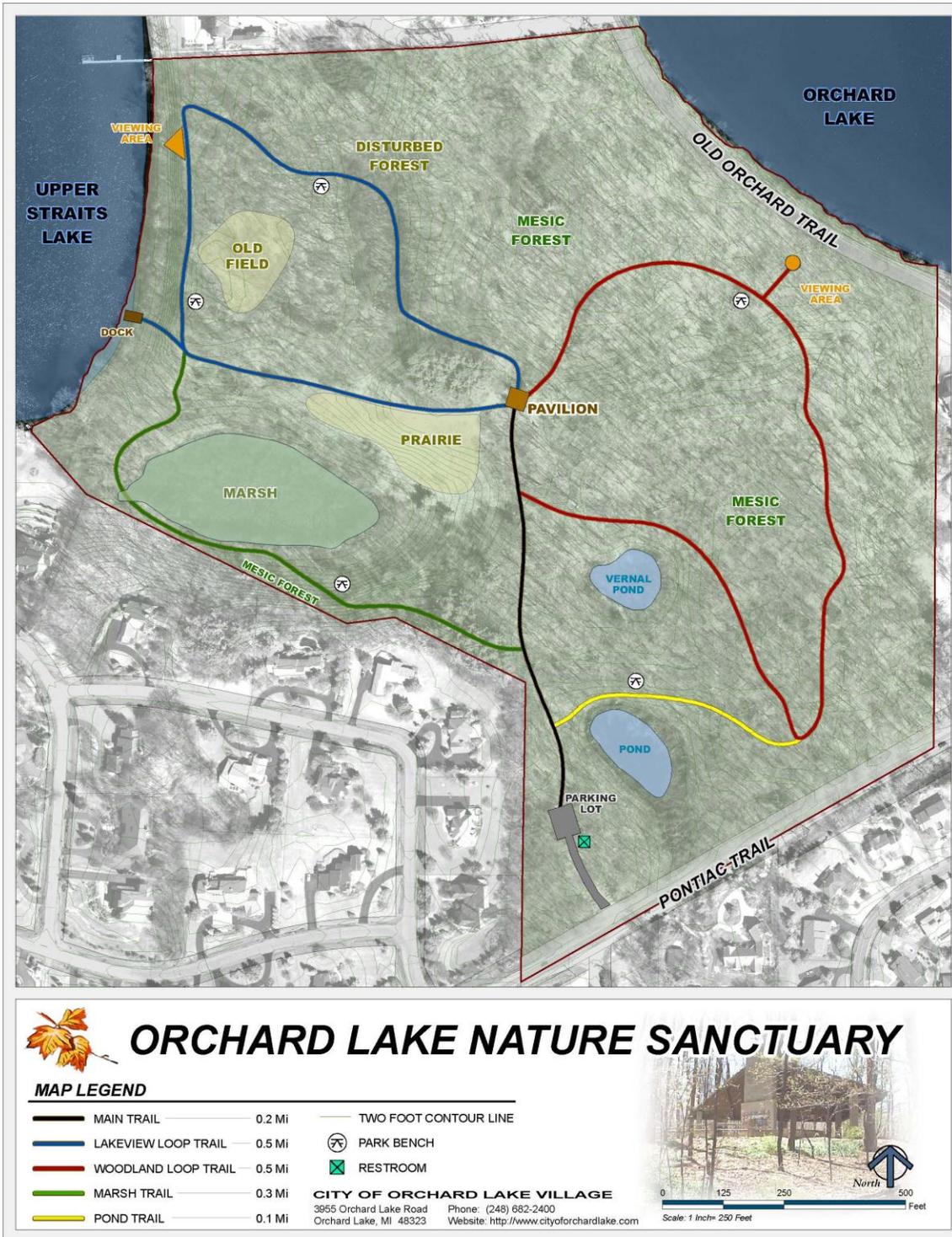
The tree canopy can be furthered protected through the maintenance of strict height regulations on both residential and commercial properties. If buildings are allowed to extend above the tree canopy, the community will begin to take on a more urban look, which will erode its unique character.

A tree canopy adorns many of the public roadways throughout the City of Orchard Lake Village – a canopy that would be damaged if streets were widened or straightened. The State of Michigan, in conjunction with the Road Commission of Oakland County, provides a “Natural Beauty Roads” program that provides protection to significant right-of-way vegetation or natural beauty along designated roadway segments.

The Natural Beauty Roads designation should be investigated for Pontiac Trail, Commerce Road, Old Orchard Trail and Indian Trail near the Orchard Lake Schools. The criteria specifies that Natural Beauty Roads function as local access and low speed roads for the purpose of enjoyment.

The City currently has a tree ordinance in place. The intent of the City is to retain and protect the trees that play such an important role in the City’s charm and character. Property owners need to be continually educated by the City on the value of trees and plants to both the watershed and local aesthetics. Trees and plants also provide energy savings to residents: Tree shade reduces air-conditioning costs, and windbreaks created by vegetation and shrubbery reduce heating costs.

Map 5: Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary





## Air Quality

The quality of the air in Orchard Lake Village is more of a regional, rather than a local concern. Southeastern Michigan, which includes Oakland County, has often been rated as a “non-attainment area,” meaning that it does not meet federal air quality standards. The single greatest contributor to air pollution in southeastern Michigan is automobile use.

There is little the City can do to improve regional air quality, other than maintain its low density residential uses and its vegetation. The residential-oriented community is not an employment center. It is estimated that Orchard Lake businesses employ only 562 people. An accepted rule of thumb is that a self-contained, self-reliant community within which people live, work, shop and play must have a ratio of jobs to housing units of about 1.5. The City of Orchard Lake Village has a jobs to housing ratio of about 0.74, meaning that most residents commute outside the City to work.

The implication of this analysis is that a higher density of residential use in Orchard Lake Village will cause more people to travel farther to work and shop.

Higher densities of residential development can generate as many as 7.5 times more vehicle trips involving longer distances. Concentrating higher densities of residential land use in an area that is not an employment center will cause an

unnecessary contribution to the air quality problems of the region.

The trees and plants of Orchard Lake Village provide additional oxygen to the atmosphere through the photosynthesis process, and also reduce the localized effects of the “urban heat island.” In hot summer months, the intense heat generated by pavement and rooftops in large metropolitan areas, or urban “islands” in the landscape, contribute to what is called the “greenhouse effect.” The City of Orchard Lake Village remains a good global citizen by its preservation of the natural environment and low density residential development.

## Overuse and Abuse

Apple Island (Marjorie Ward Strong Woodland Sanctuary), Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary and the lakes are valuable natural and recreational assets to the community. An important element of preservation of these facilities is protecting them from inappropriate use and overuse.

The community must monitor these natural resources and, if necessary, put additional limits on the type and quantity of usage. For example, means are needed to keep snowmobiles off of Apple Island. The machines destroy the vegetation, and the “noise pollution” may be detrimental to wildlife. “No trespassing” signs do not stop abuse of the island by summertime boaters, and wintertime hikers and snowmobilers.

Cass Lake, bordering the City to the north, has become especially active with public recreational use, such as skiing, jet-skiing and pleasure boating. These motor-boating activities can lead to environmental problems, such as shoreline erosion and noise and water pollution, and are a public safety concern. Public access to Cass Lake and Orchard Lake needs to be continually monitored to prevent overuse and misuse that would degrade the quality of these natural resources.

The City of Orchard Lake Village shares the shorelines of Upper Straits Lake and Cass Lake with

residents of West Bloomfield Township, Waterford Township and Keego Harbor. All communities bordering the lakes must cooperate and work together in solving the lake issues and developing fair and consistent regulations.

Again, public education and support on these issues are critical. For the City to preserve its high

quality of life, its residents and visitors must be aware of the importance of the natural environment and methods to protect it.

The City must take a pro-active stance on all environmental issues as they serve to preserve the quality of life.

## Chapter Five

# POPULATION AND HOUSING

### General Demographic Trends

In 1940, the City of Orchard Lake Village had 72 housing units and a population of 295. After World War II, the pace of growth was steady, with an increase of 100 to 150 housing units each decade up to the 1980s (see Table 6). The 1980s was the decade of highest growth, when 216 units were added to the housing stock. By 1990, most of the vacant developable land was occupied, so the pace of growth slowed, resulting in 45 additional housing units between 1990 and 2000.

According to the Census, there were 869 housing units in the city in 2010. Building permit data for the decade indicate that the net increase in housing units for the decade was 52 units, which results in a total unit count of 857.

As the number of housing units increased over the decades, household size decreased, as noted in Table 7. There were 4.1 persons per household in 1940; by 2000 there were only 2.95 persons per household. Because of the decrease in household size, the population has increased at a slower rate than the housing unit count. Housing size continued to decrease in the past decade, reaching 2.92 in 2010.

Table 8 and Figure 1 reveal that there was a steady increase of between 300 and 500 residents in each of the decades since 1940, but the pace of population growth leveled off considerably after 1990. There was a small 3.1 percent decrease between 1990 and 2000. According to SEMCOG, there was a 1.8 percent increase in population between 2005 and 2010 (see Table 8).

The 2040 forecast for Orchard Lake Village prepared by SEMCOG calls for continuous growth over 30 years, reaching a population of 2,499 (+5.2%) in 2040. The increase could be attributed to a turnover of housing and influx of families with children over the next 25 years.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Numeric Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
1940	72	--	--
1950	171	+99	+137.5
1960	286	+115	+67.3%
1970	410	+124	+43.3
1980	544	+134	+32.7
1990	760	+216	+39.7
2000	805	+45	+5.9
2010	869	+64	+7.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and SEMCOG

### Household Composition

In 1990, 81.8 percent of the households in the City were “family households.” According to the Census, a family household “consists of a householder and one or more other persons living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.” By 2000, the proportion of family households had increased to 86.5 percent. According to the American Community Survey, 87 percent of the households are now family households.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The American Community Survey (ACS) is an ongoing statistical survey by the U.S. Census Bureau, sent to approximately 250,000 addresses monthly (or 3 million per year). It regularly gathers information previously contained only in the long form of the decennial census. The Bureau switched to the ACS because the long form of the census became increasingly unpopular, resulting in a declining response rate.

**Table 7  
Household Size**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Average Household Size</u>
1940	4.10 persons
1950	4.00 persons
1960	3.94 persons
1970	3.63 persons
1980	3.24 persons
1990	2.98 persons
2000	2.95 persons
2010	2.92 persons

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

According to the 2005-2009 American Community Survey, (ACS), 283 families – about 41.9 percent of all families – contained children. By comparison, about 46.8 percent of all families in the County as a whole contained children. Seventy-seven percent of the households in Orchard Lake were classified as a “married-couple family” according to the 2005-2009 ACS. Only 52.4 percent of all households in the County as a whole were classified as a married-couple family.

The statistics reveal that Orchard Lake is composed of stable, family-oriented households.

### Age Structure

The age statistics reveal subtle changes in the population, with an increase in the median age. In 1980, the median age of the City’s population was 33.7 years. The median age increased to 36.1 in 1990, and it was 42.6 years in 2000. The 2005-2009 ACS revealed that median age had increased to 44 years. By comparison, the median age of Oakland County’s population as a whole was 40.2 years according to the 2010 Census. The median age in the fastest growing communities in the County, where young residents live, is as low as about 30 years. At the other extreme, the median age in Bloomfield Hills is 56.2 years.

The increase in the median age is further reflected in the age structure statistics in Table 9. Comparing 1990 data to 2005-2009 ACS data

reveals that the older population intervals showed an increase in population. The number of residents 35 to 64 years increased by 63, and the number of residents 65 years and older increased by 150. On the other hand, the lower age categories displayed a decrease in residents. The number of residents under 5 years decreased by 80, and the number of residents 5 to 34 years decreased by 153.

**Table 8  
Total Population**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Numeric Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
1940	295	–	–
1950	696	+401	+135.9%
1960	1,126	+430	+61.8%
1970	1,487	+361	+32.1%
1980	1,798	+311	+20.9%
1990	2,286	+488	+27.1%
2000	2,215	-71	-3.1%
2005	2,255	+40	+1.8% <sup>1</sup>
2010	2,375	+160	+7.2% <sup>2</sup>
2020	2,480	+105	+4.4%
2030	2,623	+143	+5.8%
2035	2,684	+61	+2.3%

Sources: U. S. Census Bureau

2020 -2035 Data – SEMCOG Forecast

<sup>1</sup> Range covered: 2000-2005

<sup>2</sup> Range covered: 2000-2010

In summary, although the age statistics reveal general aging of the population, there has not been a dramatic transition that dictates a huge or immediate need for senior services or senior housing. Rather, the age data demonstrate a need to continue providing services for a full range of age groups and families.

### Education, Employment and Income

The population of Orchard Lake Village is well-educated. The 2005-2009 ACS revealed that 65.5 percent of the population 25 years of age or older has a college degree, and 28.8 percent of the population has a graduate degree (see Table 10). Overall, 94 percent of the City’s population has completed high school.

Table 9 Age Structure					
Age Intervals	1990		2005-2009		Numerical
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Change
Under 5 years	147	6%	67	3.0%	-80
5 to 17 years	417	18%	579 <sup>1</sup>	25.5%	+162
18 to 34 years	537	23%	222 <sup>1</sup>	9.8%	-315
35 to 64 years	1,029	45%	1,092	48.3%	+63
65 years & older	156	7%	306	13.5%	+150
Median Age	36.1 years				

<sup>1</sup> Because of the manner in which data is reported on the ACS, the footnoted age intervals are 5 to 19 years and 20 to 34 years. Unfortunately, this difference in categorization of data does not permit a direct comparison in the two age intervals in question.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1990); American Community Survey (2005-2009)

By comparison, about 48.9 percent of the County’s population as a whole has a college degree, and only 17.4 percent has a graduate degree. Overall, 70 percent of the County’s population has completed high school.

Over 56 percent of the City’s civilian labor force 16 years and over is employed in a managerial, professional, or technical occupation (see Table 11). By comparison, 45.2 percent of the County’s population is employed in these occupations. As expected, based on the education data, a small proportion (12.0%) of the City’s labor force is engaged in service, production, machine operator, and similar positions.

As would be expected based on other population and housing statistics, households in Orchard Lake Village enjoy a high standard of living. According to the 2005-2009 ACS, the median household income is \$160,714. By comparison, the median household income for Oakland County as a whole is \$67,292.

**Housing**

The taxable value of residential property in the City totaled \$317,822,430 in 2011 – approximately 95.1 percent of the community’s total taxable value.

Demonstrating the value of the lakes to the City, in 2010 73.1 percent (\$246,829,690) of the residential SEV was lakefront property. In contrast, 26.9 percent (\$90,927,860) of the residential SEV was non-lakefront property.

As noted previously in Table 6, since 1940 the pace of residential construction was steady, with an increase of 100 to 150 housing units each decade up to 1990. According to the 2000 Census, there were 805 housing units in the City. After 1990, the pace of residential construction slowed, as buildable lots become less available.

The existing land use data presented earlier revealed that only about 69 percent of the City’s land area (38 percent of the total area), or about 986 acres, is available for residential development. The City has provided for a range in residential density within these 986 acres, with four residential zoning classifications of varying density.



Within the relatively small land area available for residential development, the four residential districts achieve a diversity of housing types, sizes, densities, and costs (i.e., housing choice) while also achieving compatibility between adjoining zones and maintaining the natural assets and the open character of the community. Even with the limitations resulting from the small size of the community, Orchard Lake Village has provided for a greater range in density than many other communities that have a much larger land area.

Development experience over the past 10 to 15 years has demonstrated that current zoning classifications provide for reasonable use of property, resulting in development in all single family residential zoning districts (see Table 3, Residential Building Permits Issued for New Structures).

In recent years, much of the new residential construction has taken place in Zone 3 and Zone 4 subdivisions, including Hickory Pointe (Zone 3), Orchard Lake Woodlands (Zone 3), Deer Run (Zone 3), West Shore (Zone 4), Laplaya (Zone 3), The Vistas (Zone 3) and Windstream (Zone 3). There also has been substantial residential development in recent years on non-platted lots, such as along Pontiac Trail (Zone 4) and Commerce Road (Zone 4). The construction of sanitary sewers has also generated new development in Shady Beach, Shady Beach Heights, and R. C. Bankers subdivisions, all of which are in Zone 1. The City of Orchard Lake Village is located in an urbanized area with a variety of additional housing types and opportunities in nearby communities.

### Meeting Housing Demand

A key Master Plan consideration is: “How well do the City’s land use policies and regulations accommodate the housing needs of the community?” To answer this question, it is necessary to first define the primary market area, which for any one housing development generally extends five to ten miles from the development. Based on a ten-mile market radius, the following demographic profile existed for the City of Orchard Lake Village target market in 2005 (based on

estimates by Claritas, Inc.): total population: 620,632 people; average household size: 2.45 persons; median age: 38.9 years; owner occupancy: 73 percent; and, white collar employment: 73 percent.



Further analysis of market demand reveals four key factors that affect the demand for various types of housing within the target market area: population, households, income, and employment. These factors are discussed in the following paragraphs.

**Population and Households.** Age is the key population characteristic that affects demand for types of housing. A high percentage of households where the head is 20 to 30 years of age suggests a need for first time buyers or first time move-ups. A high proportion of residents above the age of 60 indicates the need for move-down housing, although statistics show that 75 percent of those over the age of 65 are likely to remain homeowners. Where a large proportion of residents are in their 40's and 50's – the peak earning period – there is typically a strong demand for high-end, single family detached housing.

The target market area for the City contains a high proportion of residents in the 35 to 64 age bracket (48.3%), indicative of strong demand for single family detached housing. Forty-three percent of the residents in the target market are in this age bracket, consistent with Oakland County as a whole (based on 2005-2009 ACS data).

Table 10 Educational Attainment Population Ages 25 and Older	
High School Graduate	28%
College – Bachelor’s or Associate’s Degree	36%
College – Graduate School	30%
<b>Total, High School Graduates and Above</b>	<b>94%</b>

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey

Population projections indicate that the population level will remain steady or decline slightly in the age brackets that typically demand single family housing, with a decrease in the number of residents in the younger age brackets that typically have a need for multiple family housing.

The projections also reveal growth in the older age brackets, suggesting a need for some move-down housing.

However, the increase in demand for multiple family or other special housing to serve the needs of the older population will be offset by a decrease in demand in the younger age brackets, particularly since experience indicates that only about 25 percent of the older population will be in the market for multiple family or other type of senior housing.

In summary, the profile of the typical resident that would live in a multiple family development does not match the profile of the typical resident in the target market area.

The data suggest that housing demand in the target market area will mirror conditions elsewhere in the country where the maturing baby boom will be the most significant factor affecting demand.

**Income and Employment.** As incomes rise, those interested in living in Orchard Lake or the vicinity generally demand and can pay for larger, customized houses in neighborhoods with more amenities. Occupational composition is closely related to income, in that middle and upper income employees in managerial, professional, executive, and technical positions typically seek quality single family detached housing.

According to the Claritas estimates, over 73 percent of the labor force in the target market are employed in white collar positions. Forty-six (46) percent are employed in management, business, or professional occupations. Only 2.5 percent of the work force was unemployed according to 2005 estimates. As noted previously, the City’s population is even more heavily represented by white collar managerial, professional, and technical employment.

As can be expected based on the employment profile, incomes in the target market area are high, with a median household income of \$69,813, based on 2005 Claritas estimates. Based on income and occupational status, the typical household in the target market fits the profile of a household that would own their home.

**Table 11**  
**Composition of Labor Force**  
**Percent of Labor Force Ages 16 and Older**

	<b>City of Orchard Lake Village</b>	<b>Oakland County</b>
<b>Professions</b>		
Managerial, professional, and related occupations	657 (56.3%)	268,006 (45.2%)
Sales and office occupations	330 (28.3%)	152,682 (25.7%)
Service occupations	98 (8.4%)	82,341 (13.9%)
Production, transportation, and material moving	42 (3.6%)	55,191 (9.3%)
Construction, extraction, maintenance, and repair	39 (3.3%)	34,578 (5.8%)
<b>Total Labor Force</b>	<b>1,166</b>	<b>593,251</b>

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey

Experience has shown that most buyers, when confronted with two houses of similar price or rent, choose the product that most resembles a single-family house. According to the Residential Development Handbook, "given the economic choice, buyers still overwhelmingly prefer to purchase a single-family house – one with private green space all around it – even if it means a longer commute and a smaller lot. Most buyers are willing to squeeze themselves financially for a detached house."



**Table 12**  
**Annual Household Income**

<b>Income</b>	<b>City of Orchard Lake Village</b>	<b>Oakland County</b>
Less than \$25,000	3.6%	16.5%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	7.2%	20.8%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	8.0%	17.6%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	8.2%	13.8%
\$100,000 - \$149,000	21.2%	16.9%
\$150,000 or more	51.8%	14.3%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>\$160,714</b>	<b>\$67,292</b>

Sources: 2005-2009 American Community Survey. Income data are in 2009 inflation-adjusted dollars.

Experienced housing developers note that if people have the financial ability they will generally choose to live in single family detached housing. The income data reveal that households in the target market area definitely have the financial ability to choose the type of housing in which they live.

Residents of Orchard Lake Village have been exercising that choice in the past twenty years strongly in favor of single family detached housing on lots that approximately 40,000 square feet in size (i.e., Zone 3). Of the permits issued for new structures since 1995, 69 (36.7%) have been for new homes in Zone 3. Zone 1 accounted for 52 permits (27.7%), and Zones 2 and 4 accounted for 37 permits (19.7%) and 30 permits (16.0%), respectively.

In summary, the demographic profile of the primary market area, building permit data, and other housing data presented above indicate that the City has been addressing the primary housing needs of the community with its four residential zoning classifications. The City of Orchard Lake Village has established the zoning framework to address other needs in the form of Planned Development zoning, which is described in Chapter Nine.



## Chapter Six

# COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Two commercial areas are located in the City of Orchard Lake Village. Two small shopping centers (Village Centre and Essco Square) on the east side of Orchard Lake Road, as well as several independent stores and businesses on the west side of Orchard Lake Road, greet visitors and residents at the major south entry point into the community. At the northeast corner of the City on Orchard Lake Road, adjacent to Keego Harbor, is the Orchard Commons shopping center.

As previously mentioned, the City does not rely heavily on commercial properties for its tax base or financial support. Only 26 acres of the community's 2,596 acres – just 1 percent – are commercially zoned, and little land remains for commercial expansion. The total SEV of commercial properties in 2010 was \$13,443,140, or 3.77% of the total SEV of the City.

Even though the commercial areas occupy a small land area, the impact of these areas is significant because Orchard Lake Road is the City's most heavily-traveled thoroughfare. Although Orchard Lake Village is an upscale residential community, its commercial districts stand in contrast to the quality and image of its neighborhoods. In the period since the 1999 Master Plan was completed, some significant improvements have been made, including upgrades of the Essco Square facade, improvements to the Starbucks and Orchard's Salon buildings, and various landscaping improvements.

The purpose of this chapter of the plan is to examine the attributes and deficiencies of the commercial areas. This examination focuses principally on two aspects of the commercial areas:

retail/service characteristics and urban design features. This chapter concludes with recommendations to improve the business districts and the Orchard Lake Road corridor.

### Existing Businesses

The City's shopping centers contain mostly small, independently operated businesses, with few national franchises or chains. Orchard Commons, at the northeast corner of the community on Orchard Lake Road, contains approximately 54,000 square feet of commercial space and is anchored by the Salvation Army Thrift Store. In 2010, the shopping center also included Target Sports, a pizzeria, and a deli. There also was some vacant space. A podiatry office is located just north of the shopping center.

Although Orchard Commons is better maintained today than in 2005, when the previous Master Plan was completed, landscaping is minimal for the shopping center and parking lot.

More businesses – about 25 – reside in Orchard Lake Village's southern commercial area. On the east side of Orchard Lake Road, south of the BP gas station, there are two strip shopping centers that have experienced a higher rate of turnover than others. Village Centre is a shopping center of about 13,600 square feet and contains a large restaurant facility at the intersection of Orchard Lake Road and Pontiac Trail.

A number of restaurants have tried and failed at this location. The facility was vacant in July 2010 but was being renovated for use by another restaurant. The shopping center, which extends to the east perpendicular to Orchard Lake Road, housed Chopstix restaurant, Puff Hookah Lounge, a personal trainer, DMC physical therapy, and custom sewing. There were vacant storefronts in the Village Centre.



Essco Square, which is located to the south of Village Centre on the east side of Orchard Lake Road, contains approximately 27,500 square feet of commercial space. In July 2010, the shopping center was anchored by the Mezza Mediterranean Grille restaurant and Sushi Samuari. Other tenants included a sewing establishment, cleaners, vacuum store, hair cutting establishment, nail salon, and pizza carry-out. Additional businesses attached to Essco Square included the Vintage Wine Shoppe and Nectars.

Across from the shopping centers on the west side of Orchard Lake Road, a strip of eight independent businesses line the roadway, each maintaining separate entrances. In July 2010, the businesses included a gas station, bank, family restaurant, nail/hair salon, Starbucks coffee, cleaners, oil change service station, and a mini-storage warehouse facility adjacent to the West Bloomfield Trail at the City limits.

## Addressing the Needs of the Marketplace

The businesses in Orchard Lake Village are not specifically targeted to meet the needs of City residents, although residents do patronize some of the businesses. Even if the businesses were more focused on the specific needs of local residents, due to the small size of the City's commercial districts the businesses can only address a minute portion of residents' retail and service needs.

In general, Orchard Lake Village businesses are more geared to serve traffic passing by with convenience goods and services. The most successful of these businesses seem to have focused on the necessary needs of residents and passersby – banking, auto service, dry cleaning, restaurants, etc.

The convenience goods and services market is intensely competitive. Nearby competition includes the Crosswinds shopping center, located immediately south of the City. This shopping center contains a Kroger grocery, CVS drugstore, and several smaller businesses and restaurants in an attractive, accessible setting. Larger scale business districts are located farther south in West Bloomfield Township and Farmington Hills. A broad variety of businesses extend along Orchard Lake Road to the north through Keego Harbor and Sylvan Lake.



In this competitive environment, businesses that have not “carved out a niche” based on quality service, outstanding selection, unique goods or services, convenience of access or hours of operation, appealing store environment, or other criteria will not remain successful. Many businesses have come and gone in the City, indicating that they failed to carve out their niche. Faced with a choice between two competing, more-or-less equal businesses, consumers are likely to be drawn to the business located in the more attractive, up-to-date, and accessible shopping center. Businesses located in less well-maintained, dated, or unattractive shopping centers face a severe competitive disadvantage. Evidence of the impact of competitive disadvantage is provided by existing shopping centers in the City, which have gone through periods of decline, resulting in high rates of business turnover.

Beyond identifying a serious concern about the viability of the City’s commercial areas, it is beyond the scope of a community’s Master Plan to draft operational plans to sharpen the competitive edge of businesses and commercial properties. However, one facet of commercial viability – urban design – is within the purview of the Master Plan.

### Urban Design Considerations

The Orchard Lake Road corridor has some positive urban design features, especially if one looks beyond the commercial segments. There are striking natural features, including the lake itself, the woods at the intersection of Pontiac Trail and Orchard Lake Road, and the stately oak trees that border the Orchard Lake Schools south of Commerce Road. In terms of the built environment, City Hall and the Tri-City Fire Station cast a positive image on the corridor.

Also, in recent years, some of the commercial properties have been renovated or redeveloped, such as Starbucks and Village Palace, improving the appearance of the corridor.

As a whole, however, the differing elements along the corridor do not fit together to create a strong positive image. With respect to building design,

consistent quality is lacking. Although some of the buildings have been modernized, others appear dated. Quality exterior materials, such as brick, have been used on some of the buildings, but others have been renovated with cheaper quality materials, such as plastic and imitation stucco.

Landscaping is another facet of urban design that is in need of more attention along the corridor. An improvement effort by the City in the mid-1990s resulted in planting of Crimson maple trees along the corridor, but, in general, landscaping is deficient and inadequately maintained.



Access and parking are related urban design elements that deserve serious attention along the corridor. Business owners attest to the impact of traffic congestion on business activity. Anticipated delays, insufficient breaks in the traffic stream, and the perception of unsafe access hinder southbound drivers from patronizing businesses on the east side and northbound drivers from patronizing businesses on the west side.

The access problems are exacerbated by lack of coordination between parking areas and driveways between adjoining sites. Lack of coordination is particularly troublesome on the west side of Orchard Lake Road, south of Pontiac Trail. A 1993 study revealed that the amount of parking spaces could actually be increased by consolidating driveways and allowing vehicle movement from one site to the next.

Lack of coordination and cooperation is a problem that transcends the parking and access issue. Fragmented ownership, small site size, and lack of cooperation among businesses exist in the corridor.

The size and configuration of buildings and sites does not generally accommodate modern retailing very effectively.

The most successful businesses along Orchard Lake Road diligently care for their buildings and sites. The poorly maintained buildings and sites detract from the better maintained businesses.

## Recommendations

### Formation of a Business Organization

Revitalization of the Orchard Lake Road corridor requires involvement of the business and property owners in a concerted effort. Consideration must be given to organizing the owners under the Downtown Development Authority Act (Public Act 197 of 1979) Redevelopment of Shopping Centers Act (Public Act 120 of 1961), or Corridor Improvement Authority Act (Public Act 280 or 2005). These acts provide for the establishment of an administrative board composed of business and property owners and City representatives, for the purposes of improving, maintaining, and promoting a commercial district. Creating an organization under Act 197, Act 120 or Act 280 would make the business people members of the team and give them direct responsibility for implementing improvement projects. A program that is developed with the participation of the business community is likely to generate good ideas, including ideas for implementation, thereby assuring success.

### Revitalization Plan

Once the business organization is formed, a revitalization plan must be prepared. The first step in the planning process is to decide what image is desired for the corridor. One approach would be to transform the district so that it stands apart from the commercial development along Orchard Lake Road to the north and south. Considering the size and relative importance of the district, an equally

valid approach would be to de-emphasize the district's uniqueness and instead try to make it blend in with surrounding development. A committee of City officials that met in 1994 concluded that a "softer, more residential" image should be sought for the corridor. Of greatest importance, consensus must be sought among business and property owners and City officials so that business improvements, building renovations, and regulatory efforts are all focused on the same goals. The Orchard Lake Road Corridor Study, a collaborative effort involving several communities, provides guidance toward revitalizing the corridor.



Essential elements of the revitalization plan include:

- **Access and Parking.** On the west side of Orchard Lake Road, south of Pontiac Trail, the plan must incorporate plans developed by the City in 1993 to consolidate and reduce the number of driveways, provide access between sites, and redesign parking so that collectively the layout functions as a single, well-organized parking lot.

Easements would be needed to allow access from one site to the next, and it may be necessary for some businesses to lease spaces on their sites for use by adjacent businesses. A 1993 study demonstrated that redesign of the parking on the west side of Orchard Lake Road

could be achieved with an overall increase in parking, improved organization of parking, improved access, and an overall upgrade in the appearance of the parking areas. Similar improvements in organization and access can be achieved through redesign and coordination of parking patterns on the east side of Orchard Lake Road.

The 1993 study also found that parking coordination could be extended to the rear of the businesses on the west side of Orchard Lake Road, where there is sufficient space to create a single large parking lot. A large lot could accommodate more intensive commercial development of the area.

The solution to the larger access problem requires the input of a traffic engineer to coordinate vehicular movement to and from commercial properties with traffic on Orchard Lake Road and Pontiac Trail. Ideally, the solution would funnel traffic from the commercial areas on both sides of Orchard Lake Road to a signalized intersection. Alternatively, driveways onto Orchard Lake Road could be reduced, but signals could be timed better to provide breaks in the traffic to allow turns in and out. In short, a fresh look at traffic patterns at the south end of the corridor is needed; it must be made easier for customers to access the businesses in this part of the City.

The benefits of a business organization come into focus on the issue of parking and access. Act 197, Act 120, and Act 280 provide the legal means to achieve such coordination as well as the financial tools to pay for the construction and maintenance of improvements.



- **Streetscape Plan.** The revitalization plan must include recommendations to improve the public realm - the road right-of-way - as prominently noted in the Orchard Lake Road Corridor Study. A landscape plan is needed to supplement the street tree plantings initiated by the City a few years ago and give the landscaping a more robust image. On the west side of Orchard Lake Road, for example, there is sufficient room for a double row of street trees and a hedge of shrubs to screen the parking lots. Bold landscaping gateway plans should be considered to welcome people at the north and south entrances to the City.

Landscape plans are also needed for the west side of Orchard Lake Road, north of Pontiac Trail (in the vicinity of the MDNR boat launch), and for the City Hall site. The Orchard Lake Schools frontage on Orchard Lake Road could also benefit from landscape improvements to maximize the visual impact of the existing street trees.

In addition to landscaping, the streetscape plan must address other urban design elements, such as lighting and sidewalks. Decorative lighting fixtures installed at regular intervals can have a tremendous impact, producing a sense of cohesiveness day and night.

In the interest of public safety, sidewalks are needed along Orchard Lake Road. The design plan must consider whether sidewalks for public uses should be adjacent to the businesses, or in their usual

location one foot inside the road right-of-way. The 1993 study found that sidewalks would get more use and be safer located adjacent to or near the businesses, provided that the sidewalks are raised six inches above the parking lot grade to provide a clear demarcation between the pedestrian and vehicular areas. Brick pavers should be installed to demarcate cross walks and to signal drivers when to stop when approaching a driveway onto Orchard Lake Road.

Federal Transportation Enhancement Program funding for streetscape improvements in the public right-of-way is available through a competitive grant program sponsored by the Michigan Department of Transportation. The program will fund up to 80 percent of the cost of streetscape improvements, such as street trees and lighting. The City is eligible to apply for these funds.

- **The Private Realm.** A comprehensive revitalization plan must also address the private realm - the buildings and sites occupied by the businesses. Foremost, the plan must address building design and signs. Consensus must be sought on general design goals (e.g., should a "more residential" theme be pursued), quality and durability of exterior building materials, orientation of building entrances toward the street, design of the front facade to provide a welcoming appearance, and avoiding loud or garish building colors. Following the 2005 Master Plan, the City adopted architectural design standards to achieve these building design goals.

With respect to signage, the plan must seek consensus so as to achieve consistency in type, size, color, and lighting of signs. Sign design standards should contribute to the cohesiveness of the corridor design. For example, a nearby

community achieves cohesive sign design by limiting colors to black and gold.

Lighting is as important in the private realm as it is along the street right-of-way. The revitalization plan can identify specific types of lighting fixtures for use in parking lots and pedestrian areas so as to provide continuity throughout the City and adequate light while minimizing glare. Lighting is often overlooked as a powerful urban design tool that can create a certain ambience in an area.

Maintenance is an important element of the revitalization plan. Agreement on minimum maintenance standards or a maintenance code must be one of the primary objectives of the plan. The powers granted under Act 197, Act 120 and Act 280 may be of benefit because these acts provide for "ongoing maintenance." Under these acts, property owners could vote to impose a two mill tax on themselves, or they could agree to a special assessment to pay for maintenance (and for security, promotion, and continued operations) along the corridor.



- **Coordination with Keego Harbor and West Bloomfield Township.** An effective revitalization plan for the Orchard Lake Road corridor cannot be done without considering and involving businesses and planners in Keego Harbor and West Bloomfield Township. Coordination is especially important at the north end of

the corridor. A plan to revitalize the west side of Orchard Lake Road will have little impact unless comparable efforts are made across the street in Keego Harbor.

**Redevelopment**

Redevelopment should not be overlooked as a possible commercial revitalization solution. The advantages of redevelopment are very evident on the east side of Orchard Lake Road, immediately south of the City, where the Crosswinds shopping center was redeveloped a few years ago. The commercial land in the City of Orchard Lake Village is not being used as effectively as it could, in part because of the configuration of lots and fragmented ownership patterns. This is particularly evident on the west side of the road, south of Pontiac Trail.



Under these circumstances, the benefits from building and site renovations will be limited. Redevelopment is the most effective tool to address the underlying site and ownership problems and to maximize use of the land. Redevelopment is encouraged through the use of the City's Planned Development regulations (Article XIII-A of the City of Orchard Lake Village Zoning Ordinance). Within designated areas of the City, including the commercial areas, Planned Development provides regulatory feasibility to facilitate innovative development and to provide the opportunity to develop new uses for which there is a need in the community.

The Planned Development regulations were created due to the very limited areas available for development or redevelopment in the City and to allow for a greater variety of land uses if the need exists for such uses.

Planned Development could be effectively used in commercial areas to achieve redevelopment that would enhance the appearance of the community, generate more efficient parking and traffic patterns, and lead to a more vibrant mix of land uses in the City of Orchard Lake Village.

## *Chapter Seven*

# TRANSPORTATION

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Like nearly every community within the Detroit metropolitan area, the City of Orchard Lake Village feels traffic pressures. Every weekday morning and afternoon, the three main arteries serving the City – Orchard Lake Road, Pontiac Trail and Commerce Road – become congested with typical “rush-hour” traffic.

Most of the traffic is caused by commuters – working people from nearby communities making their way, primarily, to jobs south and east of the City. And as a residential community, most of the working people of the City of Orchard Lake Village must take to the roads to commute to their own places of employment in other areas.

The automobile traffic using the mostly two-lane road system threatens the residential and natural character of the community. The major transportation challenge for the City of Orchard Lake Village is to relieve the traffic pressures and improve traffic safety in ways that do not harm the wooded and tranquil residential qualities of the City.

### **The Road System**

The road network for the City is properly sized for a small residential community nestled among three lakes. With the exception of the short segments of Orchard Lake Road, all of the streets in the City are two lanes. Orchard Lake Road south of Pontiac Trail is five lanes wide; Orchard Lake Road between Long Lake Road and Pontiac Trail is three lanes wide, with two lanes north bound and one lane south bound.

Most Midwestern communities are served by a grid road network that gives drivers numerous

options for travel off of the major arterial roadways. Grids tend to disperse traffic and relieve congestion. The lakes, however, prevent a grid system from being established for the City. The main roads serve as passages between and among the lakes, and are generally curvilinear in nature because they are dictated by shorelines. The lakes severely limit the expansion of the road network.

Four roads – Pontiac Trail, Commerce Road, Orchard Lake Road, and Old Orchard Trail – carry most of the traffic through the City. All of these roads, with the exception of portions of Orchard Lake Road, are entirely residential in character. These four roads account for approximately 8.6 miles of the City’s road system (which consists of approximately 24 total miles), of which only approximately 0.6 miles is non-residential in character. With respect to land use, the City has a predominantly residential road system, but due to the lack of a regional grid system, these roads are forced to carry more traffic than typical residential roads.

Orchard Lake Road, which generally follows the eastern edge of the community and separates Orchard Lake from Pine Lake, carries primarily through traffic in a northeast-south direction. Pontiac Trail carries through traffic in an east-west direction and connects the City of Orchard Lake Village to Haggerty Road and M-5 on the west. The completion of M-5, which occurred after the 1999 Master Plan was completed, has added traffic to City streets. A roundabout was completed on November 1, 2011, at the intersection of M-5 and Pontiac Trail, providing a connection to Martin Parkway north to Richardson Road.

Commerce Road, an east-west route, weaves between the north shore of Orchard Lake and the south shore of Cass Lake, terminating at Orchard Lake Road on the east. Old Orchard Trail weaves between Orchard Lake and Upper Straits Lake, serving as a collector road for residential developments on the western side of the City and providing access to the Orchard Lake Country Club.

A traffic volume count reported by SEMCOG in September of 2010 found that Orchard Lake Road, between Pontiac Trail and Long Lake Road, carries the highest daily volume of traffic. This three-lane segment of road carried 31,223 trips in a 24-hour period. The majority of traffic during the morning rush hour is headed south out of the City. In the afternoon peak hour, the northbound lanes become more heavily traveled as people return home from work.

The following daily traffic totals were reported by SEMCOG (trips/day):

- Orchard Lake Road, north of Commerce Road: 23,794 (2006)
- Orchard Lake Road, south of Pontiac Trail: 15,550 trips (northbound only, 2010)
- Pontiac Trail, between Old Orchard Trail and Orchard Lake Road: 21,693 trips
- Pontiac Trail, west of Old Orchard Trail: 7,143 trips (eastbound only, 2010)
- Commerce Road, west of Orchard Lake Road: 6,001 trips (eastbound only, 2010)
- Commerce Road, Indian Trail to Orchard Lake Road: 12,232 (2010)

These numbers show a considerable amount of traffic moving through the City of Orchard Lake Village, considering that the community has a population of only 2,375 people.

Another important street within the City is Old Orchard Trail, which runs northwest from Pontiac Trail and through the Orchard Lake Country Club. More local, residential traffic uses this street. The 2010 traffic count revealed an average daily volume of 13,243 trips along Old Orchard Trail, between LaPlaya Lane and Cherry Hill.

The rest of the City's streets are primarily residential subdivision streets. Many of the subdivisions have only one access point onto a major roadway, so they serve only local residential traffic.

### Traffic Accidents

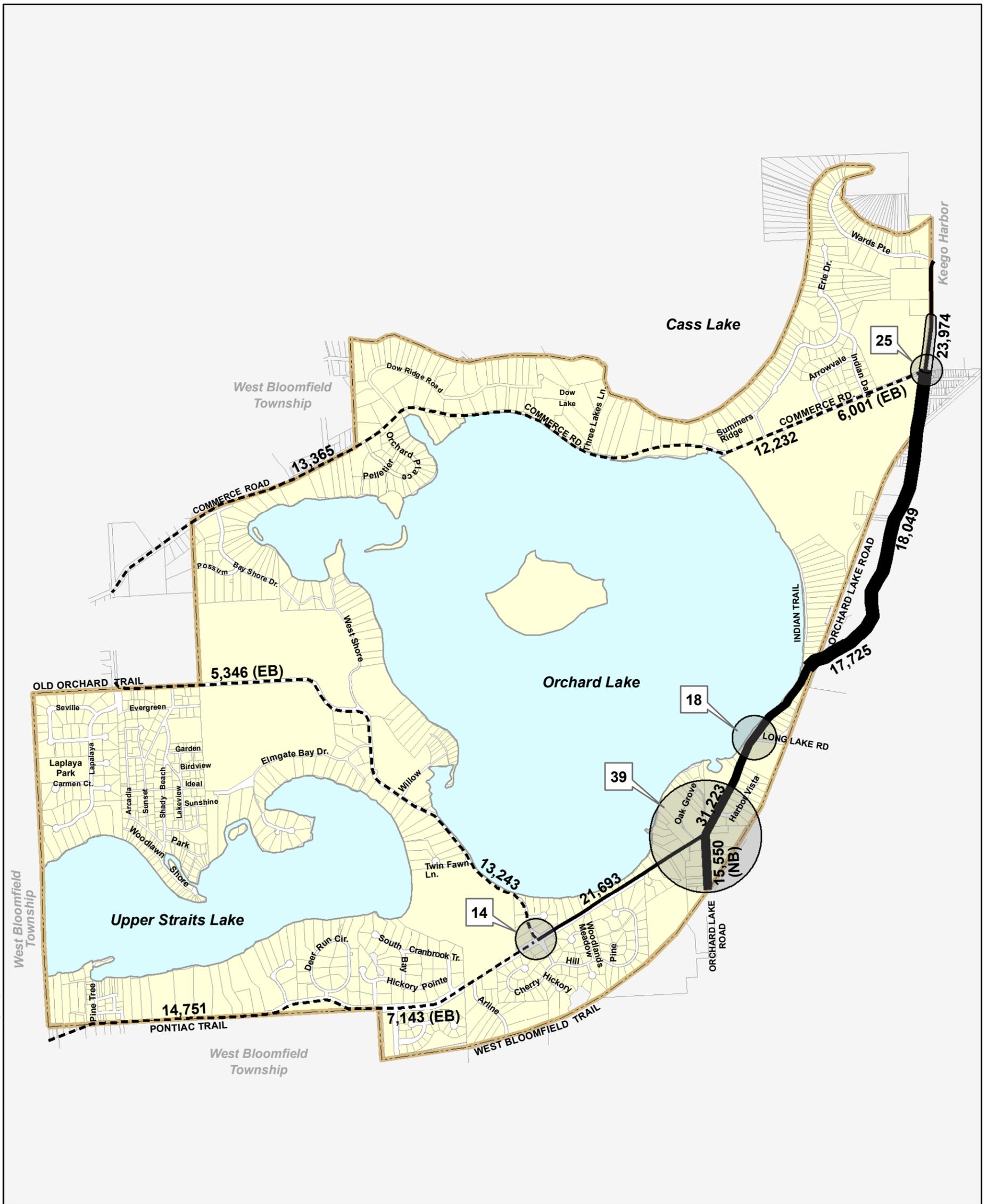
The heavy volume of traffic passing through the City of Orchard Lake Village leads to concerns about traffic safety, especially at the unusually configured and heavily traveled junction of Pontiac Trail and Orchard Lake Road. According to statistics provided by the Orchard Lake Police Department, 173 accidents occurred in the City during 2010. Thirty-nine of those accidents or 23 percent, occurred at a single intersection area – Orchard Lake Road and Pontiac Trail. This number includes accidents at the nearby intersections of Pontiac Trail and Oak Grove to the west, Orchard Lake Road and Oak Grove to the northeast, and Orchard Lake Road and Harbor Vista to the northeast.

Map 6 displays the intersections and road segments where accidents occurred in 2010, based on data from Orchard Lake Police Department. The accident-prone areas include Orchard Lake Road intersections at Pontiac Trail (mentioned above), Long Lake Road, and Commerce Road; the segment of Orchard Lake Road between Commerce Road and Long Lake Road; the segment of Pontiac Trail between Orchard Lake Road and Old Orchard Trail; and Old Orchard Trail north of Pontiac Trail.

### Road Character

The City's most heavily traveled roads have a residential, wooded and scenic character, which is further enhanced by the curves and narrow quality of the two-lane streets. Standard engineering solutions, such as widening the roadways to add additional traffic lanes or straightening out curves, are not necessarily acceptable solutions for the City, because of the impact these actions would have on the City's unique residential character.

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February 28, 2013

## Map 6 - Traffic Volumes & Accidents

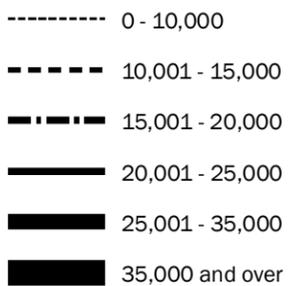
City of Orchard Lake Village, Michigan



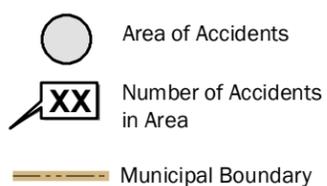
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Base Map Source: City of Orchard Lake Village  
Data Source: Transportation Improvement Association, 2004

### 24-Hour, Two-Way Traffic Counts\*



### 2010 Traffic Accidents



\*2010-2011 data unless otherwise indicated

The widening of the major streets would create additional impervious surfaces and increase roadway runoff entering the area lakes, which is a source of water pollution, as discussed in Chapter Four. Widening or straightening of Pontiac Trail, in particular, would require the elimination of some large trees that provide the road with a beautiful, green canopy.

A great part of the City of Orchard Lake Village’s residential charm is intangible: the sense that one gets when driving through parts of the community, of being in a wooded countryside filled with country estates and cottages. The narrow and winding roads – reminiscent of older, rural roads – are an important ingredient in creating this “sense of place” for Orchard Lake.

Road widening in the City of Orchard Lake Village would severely damage this sense of place by creating a more urbanized environment. Additional traffic lanes would cut a wider swath through the community, eliminating trees and adding more distance between vehicular passengers and the surrounding landscape. Wider roads would increase speeds and traffic flow through the City, but they would also have an urban homogenizing effect. Key elements of the City’s unique character would be destroyed.

### Road Projects

While the City has no plans for major road improvement projects in the next five years, various committees have studied the effectiveness of roundabouts at the following two intersections: Orchard Lake Road and Pontiac Trail and Orchard Lake Road and Long Lake Road. Several Tri-Party projects were completed to include a right turn land extension on north bound Orchard Lake Road at Long Lake Road and traffic signal improvements at the intersection of Pontiac Trail and Old Orchard Trail/Cherry Hill.

On a regional scale, long-range plans of the RCOC and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) include no planned road improvement projects for the next twenty-five years that would directly affect the City.

### Road Widening: The Conventional Solution to Traffic Congestion

A common approach to relieving traffic congestion is to add additional lanes and widen the roadways. This approach is not considered a viable alternative for the City of Orchard Lake Village, for the following reasons:

- There is no certainty that traffic congestion would be reduced by adding lanes. Roads in surrounding communities are as congested as those in the City of Orchard Lake Village. Adding lanes and capacity on City roads would simply siphon off traffic from surrounding roads, resulting in the same traffic congestion problems but with higher traffic volumes.
- Road widening segments the City and isolates sections of the community. Widening Pontiac Trail would have a strong negative impact by isolating the southernmost part of the City. The segment of the City of Orchard Lake Village south of Pontiac Trail is evidence that four and five-lane roads are divisive.
- The widening of roads would have a detrimental environmental impact on the City and its lakes. The increased runoff from the additional impervious surfaces and wider roads would affect lake quality. Also, road widening and faster traffic would result in more of the area’s abundant wildlife getting killed on the roadways.
- Wider roads would greatly impact the natural features and residential quality of the roads and the entire community. As mentioned previously in this chapter, all of the City’s major roads are residential, both in character and in the type of land use they serve. Road widening would result in destruction to the impressive tree canopy that covers portions of these roads, and would increase traffic and speeds beyond the residential scale of the community.

For these reasons, and with the community’s unique character at stake, the City of Orchard Lake Village must resist any efforts at widening the City’s streets, especially Pontiac Trail. The City should employ other strategies to relieve traffic congestion.

**Recommended Strategies**

- **Upgrade existing roads.** A small increase in road capacity and improvement in traffic safety can result from upgrading existing roads. Appropriate upgrading includes re-surfacing, paving shoulders, providing turn lanes and correcting geometric deficiencies (such as slope adjustments, but not the straightening of roads, which would harm roadway character). Upgrades to existing roads should be undertaken to improve efficiency and traffic flow, not to create high-speed roads through the City.
- **Improve intersections.** Improving intersections is the single most effective action to relieve congestion and improve traffic safety without wide scale disruption to the City’s natural features and residential character. Intersection improvements are effective because road capacity is largely related to intersection capacity. Intersection improvements can dramatically improve traffic safety, since most accidents occur at the intersections. Improvements that are typically made at intersections include adding extra lanes to accommodate turning movements or to add stacking capacity and new signalization. A roundabout is an option that has been considered for moving traffic at the Orchard Lake Road/Pontiac Trail intersection.
- **Improve traffic management and technology.** Beyond intersection improvements, the City should continue to work with the Road Commission to pursue methods for managing traffic and

improving traffic flow, including signal synchronization, speed controls, traffic calming techniques, and intelligent transportation system alternatives, such as “smart” traffic signals, to solve road capacity and safety concerns.

- **Seek regional solutions.** The City of Orchard Lake Village cannot solve the traffic problems on its roads by itself. A majority of the traffic on Orchard Lake Road, Pontiac Trail, and Commerce Road is generated by non-residents. Consequently, solutions to the City’s traffic congestion problems require improvements to roads outside of the City. The City must work with the Road Commission and SEMCOG to improve the surrounding network of roads, so as to alleviate traffic congestion on City roads.
- **Pursue Natural Beauty Road designations.** By obtaining Natural Beauty Road designations, the City can ensure that the special character and quality of its roads will not be destroyed, and that the roads will not be threatened by widening or severe alterations.
- **Promote bicycling and walking.** The need for bicycle and pedestrian paths was noted in the 1984 Six-Year Public Works and Capital Improvements Program. The Program included guidelines for construction, and called for 8-foot wide paved paths. A 1988 memorandum from Roger Gillette, a Planning Commissioner at the time, succinctly described the need:

“Development in and around the City has created heavy traffic on the main thoroughfares at all hours, making them undesirable for walking, biking, and jogging . . . As a consequence of heavy, unrelenting traffic, many of the City’s residents are locked into their own subdivisions for these

activities. Families with children find the idea of bicycle or pedestrian access to local athletic fields and schools appealing and most walkers, bikers and joggers would enjoy a link to the many miles of bike paths running through nearby West Bloomfield Township.”

- **The 2010 Parks & Recreation Master Plan** called for bicycle paths on four roads: Indian Trail, Old Orchard Trail, Pontiac Trail, and Commerce Road. The City also should pursue pedestrian and bicycle linkages between subdivisions. Although bicycle and pedestrian paths are not likely to have a noticeable impact on traffic volumes, construction of paths will provide residents with a safe alternate means of travel for short trips, for recreation, and for travel between subdivisions. Federal Transportation Enhancement Funds are available for construction of bicycle paths. Construction of bicycle and pedestrian paths should be coordinated with adjoining communities to achieve linkages with other trail networks.
- **Coordinate land use with road capacity.** Although large vacant parcels are not readily available in the City for new residential development, the possibility of lot consolidation and redevelopment exists. Such redevelopment proposals must be carefully analyzed to determine their impact on the already congested road system. According to the 1997 Institute of Transportation Engineers **Trip Generation** handbook, single family detached housing generates an average of 9.57 trips/day. Residential condominiums and townhouses (ownership units) generate an average of 5.86 trips/day. Such information should be used to analyze and select alternatives that minimize impact on traffic.

- **Continue a City-wide Roads Committee.** To better monitor conditions and change, to identify improvements, and to lobby for transportation improvements at the county, region, and state level, it is recommended that the City continue the “Roads Committee.” This Committee should remain actively involved with SEMCOG and the Road Commission for Oakland County to pursue the City’s objectives.

## Chapter Eight

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

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City of Orchard Lake Village residents rely on several public and private entities, including the City government, for the provision of their community, educational, and recreational facilities, and public services. The community facilities, considered public and quasi-public land uses, comprise approximately 416 acres within the City - approximately 16 percent of the City of Orchard Lake Village's total area. The purpose of this chapter is to identify public service needs that have an impact on land use. This analysis is not intended to address the full scope or delivery of such services.

### Public Services

#### City Administration and Services

The City government provides a number of essential services including administration and maintenance of City-owned property, roads, and the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary. The City, including the Department of Public Works (DPW), employs 13 full-time employees. The City contracts with private companies for trash pick-up and disposal. City Hall and the DPW building are located on the southeast corner of the Orchard Lake Road/Long Lake Road intersection, at the east end of the City.

#### Police Services

The City operates its own Police Department, which provides police protection and services within the City boundaries. The department is located in City Hall, and includes seven full-time police officers, including the Police Chief.

### Fire Protection

In 1968, Orchard Lake joined with Keego Harbor and Sylvan Lake to create the volunteer Tri-City Department. In 2003, the Tri-City Fire Board contracted the West Bloomfield Fire Department to operate the Tri-City station and provide full-time fire and emergency medical services to the three cities.

The Tri-City Fire Department, funded by the City of Orchard Lake Village, the City of Keego Harbor, and the City of Sylvan Lake, provides services for fire protection within those communities. The Tri-City Fire Department is managed by the Tri-City Fire Board, which consists of two appointed representatives from each community.

The West Bloomfield Fire Department is staffed with professional, full-time paramedics and fire personnel. The Tri-City station, along with the other West Bloomfield fire stations, is part of an expanded immediate response group, the Oak-Way mutual aid organization.



**Library**

The City of Orchard Lake Village does not have its own library, but contracts with and contributes to the West Bloomfield Township library system so that residents can use the nearby West Bloomfield facilities. City residents contribute 0.3 mill in tax revenues to the West Bloomfield library system.

Two branches are located near the City of Orchard Lake Village: on Walnut Lake Road, south of the City and on Commerce Road, west of the City. These branches provide convenient library access for the City of Orchard Lake Village residents.

The Orchard Lake Schools allow residents of the community to use the campus library, located on Seminary Road.

**Utilities**

Consumers Power Company supplies natural gas for home heating and cooking. Detroit Edison is the sole electricity provider, and Ameritech provides basic telephone service. Cable television service is available in the City.

The Oakland County Water Resource Commissioner’s office operates, maintains, and administers the City’s sanitary sewer and public water system. The water, which is purchased from West Bloomfield Township, is obtained from the Detroit water system.

**Education**

Most of the City of Orchard Lake Village is within the West Bloomfield School District. The southwest corner of the City extends into the Walled Lake Consolidated School District. The residential areas of the City near West Long Lake Road are in the Bloomfield Hills School District.

The only public school building located in the City is Abbott Middle School, which is a West Bloomfield school located at the northwest corner of the Orchard Lake Road/Commerce Road intersection. The West Bloomfield Schools Transportation Center, where school busses are stored and maintained, is located north of Abbott Middle School. The school system also owns Apple Island (Marjorie Ward Strong Nature Sanctuary).

Private schools located in the City are S.S. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, St. Mary’s College, St. Mary’s Preparatory School, Our Lady of Refuge School, and Whitney Bloomfield Nursery School.

**Recreation**

The major public recreational facility is the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary, which is owned by the City and provides passive recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. The City does not have a parks and recreation department, but the sanctuary is managed by the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary Advisory Board, and is maintained by the Department of Public Works. The Advisory Board includes approximately 10 members who are appointed by the City Council. Membership often includes individuals who are not City residents, but who have made significant contributions or have significant interest in the sanctuary and the preservation of natural areas.

The Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary includes trails and a pavilion, and is ideal for hiking, nature walks and cross-country skiing.



The lakes provide abundant recreational opportunities for water enthusiasts. Many City of Orchard Lake Village residents live on the shores of Orchard, Upper Straits, or Cass Lake, or have access to the lakes, and maintain boats. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) provides a public boat launch facility at the southeast shore of Orchard Lake, on Orchard Lake Road.

Contributing to the recreational opportunities and open space of the community are two private facilities: the Orchard Lake Country Club and the Orchard Lake Schools. The Country Club, a

private facility, provides golfing, swimming, and tennis facilities for members. The Orchard Lake Schools grounds are used by residents for casual play and walking.

### Level of Services

The level and quality of public services in the City of Orchard Lake Village are considered high, and there are no major issues relating to the delivery of services to residents. The City and other service providers, however, must stay abreast of changing technologies and methods that can improve public service delivery or quality and possibly reduce costs.

In the coming years, American cities will likely see the provision of electricity, local telephone, and cable television opening up to competition among several providers. Local communities may not have significant regulatory authority in this emerging marketplace, but should cautiously exercise all governing authority that is provided to maintain service quality, avoid facility conflicts, and obtain franchising fees.

Concerning community facilities and services in the City of Orchard Lake Village, the major issues relate to the physical facility sites within the community. With minimal land available in the City of Orchard Lake Village, the public and quasi-public sites are under redevelopment pressure as potential locations for residential and commercial development. The West Bloomfield School District has even had proposals for the purchase and development of Apple Island. The remainder of this chapter examines future use and development of the major community facilities located in the City.



### The City Hall Site

The City Hall site currently contains City Hall, the Department of Public Works building, and the Orchard Lake Historical Museum. The site slopes down to Orchard Lake Road, and continues down to the lakeshore of Orchard Lake, offering a view of the lake from City Hall. The West Bloomfield Trail - a popular pedestrian recreational trail - bounds the site on the east. The trail runs 4.5 miles from Arrowhead Road and the Nature Preserve, south of the City, to Sylvan Manor Park, north of the City.

The trail serves as the City's boundary for more than a mile at the southeast edge.

In 1997, a City Hall Site Development Committee was established to examine development alternatives and uses for the City Hall site. The Committee discovered that some residents are of the opinion that portions of the site should be sold, but the Committee decided the site should be retained for municipal use.

In 1998, the City Hall Site Development Committee released a report concerning the City Hall site. The Planning Commission supports the following recommendations contained in the report:

- The Department of Public Works function should be relocated.
- A new community facility should be considered.
- A historical museum function should remain on the site.
- The site should provide residents with convenient access to the West Bloomfield Trail.

These are important long-range goals for the City that recognize the significance of a prominent and attractive "city center." There currently is no consensus or decision on specific development of the site, but the following are general development criteria:

- The City should retain ownership of the entire site for community facilities.
- The City Hall site should be developed as a focal point for the community.
- The City Hall site should maintain and enhance its connection with the City’s namesake, Orchard Lake.
- The facilities and landscaping on the site should be attractive and well-maintained, and DPW activities and equipment should be screened from public view.

The City of Orchard Lake Village does not require additional land to be set aside or identified for municipal functions, but the entire City Hall site should be retained for the long term as “public” land use.

### **Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary**

The City of Orchard Lake Village has no plans for alterations to the nature sanctuary. Use and development of the sanctuary are guided by the Nature Sanctuary Development Plan. The facility is well-maintained by the Department of Public Works and does not require any significant improvements or changes. As mentioned previously in this Master Plan, it is a beautiful and extremely valuable amenity for the residents of the City of Orchard Lake Village and the surrounding area. The City and its residents recognize the significance of the property, so long-term preservation as a nature sanctuary is the City’s goal.

### **Abbott Middle School and School District Transportation Center Site**

There are no plans for changes to Abbott Middle School, and no need to identify land for additional school facilities within the City of Orchard Lake Village. The City, however, should pursue aesthetic improvements to the bus garage site as its appearance affects efforts to revitalize the commercial corridor.

### **Apple Island**

West Bloomfield Schools officials have no plans for changes to Apple Island (Marjorie Ward Strong Woodland Sanctuary). It will be preserved in its current habitat according to the Assistant Superintendent for Business for West Bloomfield Schools. Deed restrictions prohibit development of the island and restrict its use to a “woodland nature sanctuary.”

The island was deeded to the school system by the Ward family, and will revert to City ownership for continued preservation should the school system decide to give up ownership.

The school system has pontoon boats that are used to transport students to the island in the spring and fall for nature field trips. The island has a dock, which is maintained by West Bloomfield Schools, and community and charitable organizations, such as the Boy Scouts, periodically clean up the island. A school district Assistant Superintendent said Apple Island “is there, and will always be there” as a nature sanctuary -- as the Ward family intended.

### **The Orchard Lake Schools**

The Orchard Lake Schools, a Catholic-affiliated facility located between Orchard Lake Road and Commerce Road at the northeast corner of the City, includes S.S. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, St. Mary’s College, and St. Mary’s Preparatory School. The campus was expanded in the spring of 1999 with the construction of a new science building on the south end of the campus on Seminary Road, near Indian Trail. Other recent expansions on the campus include an ice arena and an addition to the library building.

The Orchard Lake Schools’ grounds are an important open space for the City. With the exception of the football fields and varsity baseball field, the grounds are open and accessible to residents for walking and casual play.

In the interest of securing the School's financial future, Orchard Lake Schools has explored with various developers the possibility of developing the easterly portion of the site, adjacent to Orchard Lake Road and the West Bloomfield Trail Network.



### The MDNR Boat Launch

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) owns and maintains a public boat launch facility on the southeastern shore of Orchard Lake, on Orchard Lake Road. The MDNR classifies the boat launch as “a hard-surfaced ramp with sufficient water depth and lake size to accommodate most trailerable boats.” The facility includes a “courtesy pier” for loading and unloading passengers, a toilet facility and 63 paved parking spaces. The site is operated by the Parks and Recreation Division of MDNR, and is open from 4 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily. Swimming, wading, and bathing is prohibited at the site, and a fee is charged for launching boats. MDNR currently has no plans for alterations or changes at the Orchard Lake site.

In general, the site is well-maintained and a pleasant open space on the lake. For travelers moving north on Orchard Lake Road through the community, the boat launch provides the first glimpse of Orchard Lake. The City should work with MDNR to improve the appearance of the fence and landscaping along the front of the site. The site should be included in corridor landscaping plans, as recommended in the Commercial Development chapter.

### Orchard Lake Country Club

Even the privately owned and prestigious Orchard Lake Country Club feels development pressure. The northern portion of the country club property, along golf holes number 13, 14, and 15, has been considered as one of the few areas in the City of Orchard Lake Village remaining for development. The country club, however, intends to retain the property for the “long term,” according to the Club's former general manager, who called the area an aesthetic buffer for the golf course.

The City's goal should be to protect the entire Country Club facility as a recreational, natural, and open space amenity for the City. If portions of the Country Club ever become available for development, large-lot single family residential land use, consistent with adjacent areas, should be the City's land use goal.

### DTE Energy Site

DTE Energy, the electric company serving the City of Orchard Lake Village and the Detroit metropolitan area, owns a 12-acre wooded tract of land between Pontiac Trail and the West Bloomfield Trail, just west of Orchard Lake Road. The vacant parcel has been eyed as a potential site for residential and commercial development.

DTE Energy, however, intends to retain at least five acres of the site for an electric station or substation. A company representative said DTE Energy foresees significant growth in the City of Orchard Lake Village area for a number of years and will require the site for future power facilities.

The site is not likely to become available for development, but if all or a portion of the site becomes available, the preferred use is single-family residential. The site does include some wetland areas, and any future development must be sensitive to the existing natural conditions.

## Community Facility Strategies

The City of Orchard Lake Village is well-served by its community facilities, both public and private. These facilities provide high quality services and amenities for the community, including recreational and cultural activities, large areas of open space, and preservation of the natural environment. Every effort must be made to retain these facilities since they advance the quality of life and contribute to the character and appeal of the community. Fortunately, all of the agencies operating community facilities in the City of Orchard Lake Village currently intend to preserve and maintain, and in some cases expand upon, their current facilities.

The City should consider the following strategies in relation to community facilities:

- **Foster and maintain strong working relationships with public service providers and operators of community facilities.** The City can better achieve its long-range goals and objectives through cooperation with the public and quasi-public entities. By maintaining good relationships with the organizations, the City will be better able to monitor and direct any future development on community facilities sites.
- **Involve community facilities in overall aesthetic or design plans.** Aesthetics are an issue at several of the sites within the City of Orchard Lake Village. As the City prepares corridor or landscaping plans, community facilities and the operators of these facilities should be involved. If the community decides upon a motif or central design theme, the community facilities should be a part of the motif. In the short term, the City should work with the MDNR to bring about aesthetic improvements at the boat launch.
- **Develop a consensus plan and implementation approach for the City Hall site.** The City should develop the site as a

strong and attractive focal point for the community and its namesake, Orchard Lake, and provide a variety of community activities and services on the site.

- **Continually monitor and evaluate the quality of public services to residents.** The City must continually evaluate the quality of its services to residents, and provide the budgetary and organizational flexibility to make improvements or changes as required.



## Chapter Nine

# PLANNED LAND USE

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“The City of Orchard Lake Village is a small community of incomparable natural beauty, accentuated by pristine lakes, woodlands, wetlands and other natural features. Within this setting, a unique, upscale, small, predominantly residential community has been created, fostering among residents a profound sensitivity to the City’s natural features and rich history, and supported chiefly by its residential economic base. The City strives to sustain this thriving community and outstanding quality of life for all residents far into the future.”

The above vision statement captures the essence of the City of Orchard Lake Village. The City is defined by its lakes, woodlands, and other natural features, and by its appealing residential neighborhoods nestled within this rich natural environment.

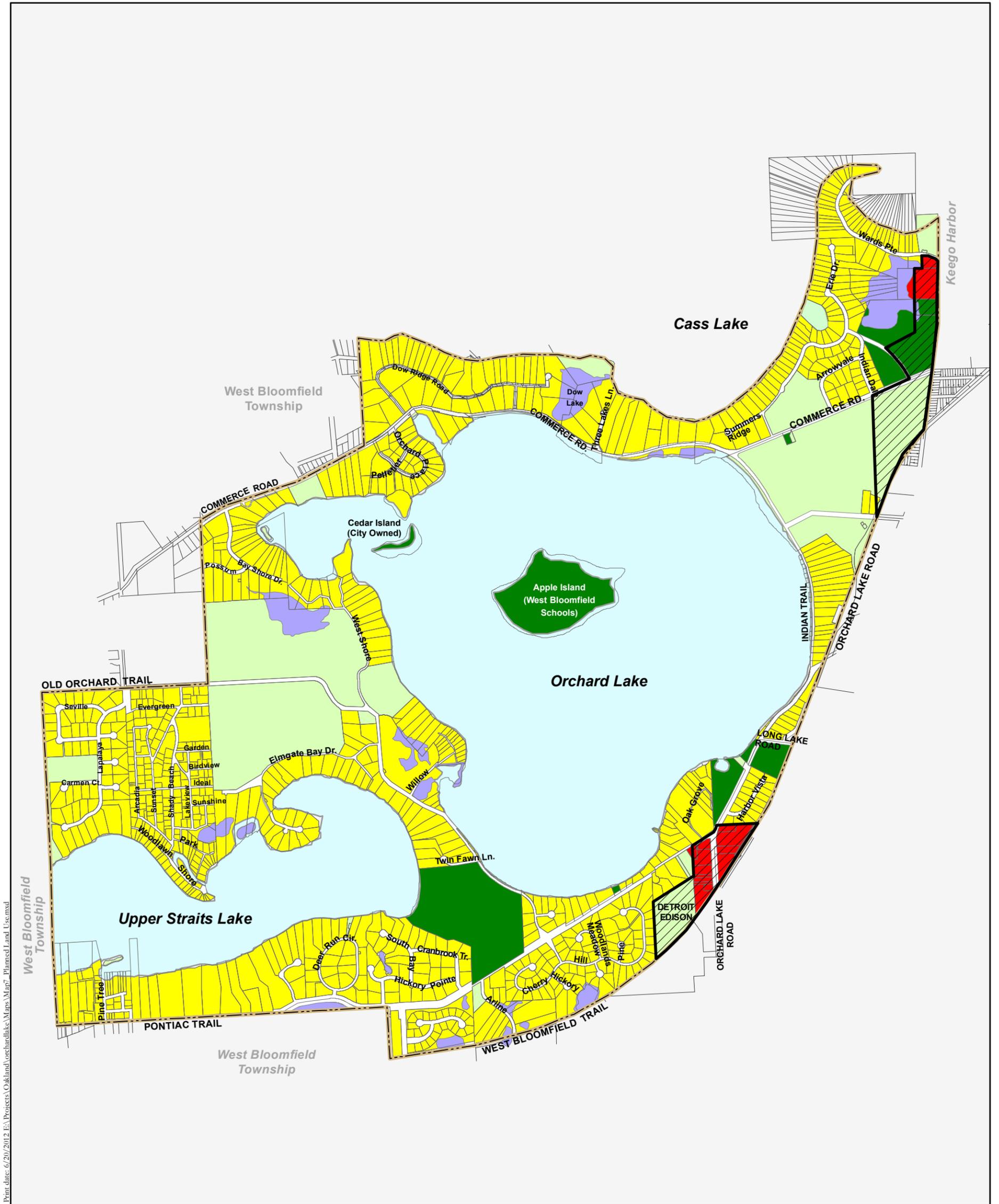
Throughout the many years of settlement and development, residents of the area have recognized the importance of the natural environment and have taken steps to protect it. These steps include, for example, zoning regulations to prevent overcrowding and encroachment onto the lake front, acquisition of the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary, and installation of water and sanitary sewer utilities.

This Land Use Plan reinforces the City’s traditional emphasis on maintaining the quality of its natural environment and residential neighborhoods. Previous chapters have documented the fragility of the natural environment and the risks of surface water contamination, woodland and wildlife loss, and other dangers to the natural environment and resources. The Plan has further documented the

ongoing residential construction, which has resulted in larger, higher quality, upscale housing, while raising concerns about the proper scale of housing and compatibility between adjoining homes.



Out of this analysis have come goals, objectives, and strategies “to sustain this thriving community and outstanding quality of life for all residents far into the future.”



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February 28, 2013

## Map 7 - Planned Land Use

City of Orchard Lake Village, Michigan



**McKenna**  
ASSOCIATES

FEET 0 1,000 2,000

### PLANNED LAND USE CATEGORIES

- Single Family
- Commercial and Office
- Public
- Quasi-Public
- Water and Wetlands (not including Cass Lake, Orchard Lake, Upper Straits Lake)
- Areas Eligible for Planned Development Zoning
- Municipal Boundary

Base Map Source: City of Orchard Lake Village  
Data Source: McKenna Associates, 12/05

## Land Use Map

The designation of appropriate land uses is one of the most important planning strategies to result from the master planning effort. Map 7 illustrates Planned Land Use, which builds on the existing pattern of development. Accordingly, the predominant land uses are single family residential (986 acres, 69% of the land area), which includes most of the land previously shown as vacant on the existing land use map, and Orchard and Upper Straits Lakes (1,116 acres, 43% of the total area of the City).

### Single Family Residential

The Single Family Residential classification provides residents with a wide variety of housing and neighborhoods, as noted in the Land Use Analysis chapter. Single Family Residential encompasses four zoning classifications, corresponding to minimum lot sizes ranging from 15,000 sq. ft. to 60,000 sq. ft. Within the relatively small land area available for residential development in the City of Orchard Lake Village, it would be difficult to provide for a greater range of housing, yet still achieve compatibility between adjoining density classifications. The findings presented earlier in this Plan indicate that current housing needs of residents are best addressed with the current range of housing types and densities.

Although most remaining vacant land is designated Single Family Residential on the Planned Land Use Map, such a designation does not condone or imply development of wetlands or other natural habitat. The features of each remaining vacant parcel must first be thoroughly inventoried by appropriate experts to determine that residential development can actually occur. Also, small parcels of land south of Commerce Road, adjacent to Orchard Lake, are designated Single Family Residential to signify their potential use for lake access in conjunction with larger developable single family parcels. The small parcels south of Commerce Road cannot be developed with structures in a manner that is consistent with the City's planning and environmental protection goals.

Large lot single family residential development is consistent with the City's goals to protect the lakes, wetlands, woodlands, and other natural features. In the interest of protecting water quality, a key management tool is minimizing the amount of storm water runoff, which is a primary source of pollutants in the lakes. Runoff occurs when development creates impermeable surfaces, such as buildings and driveways. Because of the density of single family use permitted in the City, impermeable surfaces have been kept to a minimum. In fact, the lower intensity of use and reduction of impermeable surfaces offered by the large-lot residential areas have provided the lakes with a natural filtration system.



Surface water quality is affected by contaminants in road run-off. Although most traffic on the City's main thoroughfares is generated by commuters traveling through the City, the existing and planned single family development pattern minimizes trips generated within the City. Although the net effect may be small, all efforts to reduce travel on roads that edge the lakes help to reduce harmful storm water run-off into the lakes.

A major challenge facing the City is to permit continued residential development and redevelopment, but in a manner that protects existing residents' views of the lake; protects the natural beauty of the lakefront; discourages development that is out-of-scale with the surroundings; and minimizes impermeable surfaces.

To achieve these objectives, it will be necessary for the Planning Commission and City Council to continue to monitor the impacts of lot consolidation and division, and residential construction, and to make necessary adjustments to the zoning ordinance, land division and consolidation regulations, and other development codes.

**Commercial and Office**

The Planned Land Use Map retains the two existing Commercial and Office districts along Orchard Lake

Road, but proposes no increase in the amount of land dedicated to commercial and office uses. As noted in the Commercial Development chapter of this plan, a commercial revitalization plan is needed for the corridor. To be effective, such a plan must be drafted with the participation of the business and property owners in the commercial districts. Revitalization strategies are explored in further detail later in this chapter (See Business District Improvements, page 9-5).

**Table 13  
Planned Land Use**

<u>Land Use Classification</u>	<u>Total Acreage</u>	<u>Percent of Total Acreage</u>	<u>Total Land Area*</u>
Single Family	986 acres	38%	69%
Commercial	26 acres	1%	2%
Public	130 acres	5%	9%
Quasi-Public	286 acres	11%	20%
Orchard & Upper Straits Lakes	1,116 acres	43%	--
Other Lakes, Ponds & Wetlands	52 acres	2%	--
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,596 acres</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* Total Land Area does not include lakes, ponds, and wetlands.  
Source: McKenna Associates, Inc.

**Public use**

Public land uses include the City Hall Site, the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary, the MDNR Boat Launch, Abbott Middle School and the West Bloomfield Schools Transportation Center, the Tri-City Fire Department, and Apple and Cedar Islands. Most of these uses are expected to continue in existence for the next several decades, but the Planning Commission has considered appropriate uses for various parcels, in the event that the current use ceases:

- **West Bloomfield Schools Property.** In the event that Abbott Middle School ever closes or that the School Transportation Center moves, a non-residential use of the easterly 300 feet (approximately) of the property, fronting on Orchard Lake Road, would be appropriate. Either commercial or office

development would be compatible with adjoining uses along Orchard Lake Road. Market conditions do not favor retail land uses, however, based on the high vacancy rate and business turnover for nearby commercial properties. Office use would be more appropriate from a land use perspective, providing a transition between the traffic and more intensive uses along the corridor, and the residential and quasi-public uses to the south and west. Residential development would be most appropriate on the westerly side of the school property, if it ever becomes available for redevelopment.

- **Apple Island.** The West Bloomfield Schools plan to continue using Apple Island as a nature sanctuary as intended by the

Ward family, who deeded it to the School District. Deed restrictions prohibit development of the island. If the School District ever decides to give up ownership, it will revert to the City. Every effort must be made to continue to preserve the island in its natural state, as intended by the Ward family.

- **City Hall Site.** As noted in the Community Facilities chapter, the Planning Commission supports continued ownership of the entire site by the City for municipal and civic uses. The Planning Commission acknowledged the study of the relocation of the Department of Public Works function, consideration of a new community facility, and retaining the historical museum function on the site. In the “short-term,” the facilities and landscaping on the site should be attractive and well-maintained, and DPW activities and equipment should be screened from view.

### Quasi-Public Use

Quasi-public uses include the Orchard Lake Country Club, the Orchard Lake Schools, Our Lady of Refuge Church and School, Orchard Lake Community Church-Presbyterian, Pontiac Yacht Club, the Detroit Edison site west of Orchard Lake Road and south of Pontiac Trail, and subdivision parks and open spaces.

Although there are no known plans to change ownership or use of any of these facilities within the 5- to 10-year time period covered by this plan, proposals to develop underutilized land always are a possibility. Generally, single family development would be the most appropriate land use, in consideration of the environment and predominantly single family land use on surrounding properties.

However, certain of these properties, such as the east side of the Orchard Lake Schools site, may be able to accommodate new uses for which there may eventually be a demonstrated need. The

Planned Development option in the Zoning Ordinance is the most appropriate regulatory tool to permit such development.

### Implementation of the Plan

#### Zoning and Other Regulations

Zoning is the most useful tool for implementing the Master Plan. The City has used zoning quite effectively in the past to protect woods and open spaces, maintain residents’ views of the lakes, and allow new development at a scale that is compatible with existing housing.

A City is an entity in constant change, however, so continued vigilance will be required to achieve planning goals in the future. It will be important to continue and perhaps strengthen the thorough review process for all types of development. The review process delays the start of construction in some cases, but such delays are justified in a community like the City of Orchard Lake Village where every parcel is an integral part of the puzzle, and where structures are designed and built to last for several decades.

It is important to recognize the changes in residents’ needs and aspirations. Different types of homes are being built today than were built ten years ago. Zoning and development codes have been revised and fine-tuned in response. Revisions and fine tuning of the zoning ordinance and other ordinances will be necessary to respond to changing needs and circumstances.

#### Planned Development

Planned Development (PD) is a special optional regulatory tool that can be effectively used to achieve some of the land use objectives set forth in this Plan. For example, Planned Development provides the regulatory flexibility that would be needed to undertake comprehensive redevelopment of the City’s commercial districts.

Planned Development also provides the regulatory means by which future needs of residents can be met. There is a small amount of developable land

remaining in the City to accommodate new uses for which there may eventually be a demonstrated need. It is not practicable to create separate zoning districts and/or regulations for every possible use or to prematurely identify possible locations for various uses. Planned Development provides a feasible regulatory approach to accommodate such uses, provided that all of the conditions and standards in the zoning ordinance are met so that adjoining existing and new uses relate to each other in a compatible manner, without adverse impact of one use on another. Examples of uses that might be permitted in a Planned Development include attached townhouses, attached and detached single family cluster developments, apartments, and housing for elderly residents. Planned Development requires simultaneous approval of a site plan and rezoning of land to PD. Tying rezoning to a site plan is particularly useful in a community like the City of Orchard Lake Village that is largely built out. The site plan assures that the rezoning will result in development that is compatible with existing land use.

Planned Development should be selectively used to facilitate exceptional development. It should not be misused to permit ordinary development that should be reviewed under conventional zoning, nor should it be used to permit development that does not satisfy the goals and objectives of this Plan.

### **Maintaining Water Quality**

The lakes and other surface waters are the backdrop on the canvas upon which the picture of the City of Orchard Lake Village is painted. It would be difficult to overstate how important water quality is to the quality of life and image of the City. This Plan has documented some of the known threats to water quality: non-native plants and animals; contaminated storm water runoff from the roads; excessive land cover, which causes higher rates of storm water runoff and diminishes the natural filtering capacity of wetlands and waterfront lands; excessive use of pesticides and herbicides; and certain types of motor sports activity on the lakes.

Preservation and enhancement of the natural environment mandates serious efforts to protect water quality. Such efforts must be coordinated with other communities and agencies that share the shorelines of the lakes or that have regulatory authority over the lakes. Lake activity and water quality must be measured and monitored on a regular schedule (e.g., annually or semi-annually) to track changes in water quality from year-to-year and to assure quick response to detected degradation.

Such efforts may reveal the need for regulatory control of activity on or near the lakes. The Planning Commission noted the need to “form regulatory consensus” among the several communities and governmental agencies involved with the lakes.

### **Business District Improvements**

A goal of this Plan is to “encourage a vibrant and attractive business and office district.” This will not happen unless the business and property owners in the City’s two business districts share the City’s goal and agree to cooperate with each other on a revitalization plan. Consequently, an effort should be made to organize the owners under the Downtown Development Authority Act (Public Act 197 of 1979), the Redevelopment of Shopping Centers Act (Public Act 120 of 1961), or the Corridor Improvement Authority Act (Public Act 280 of 2003). Cooperation of the City of Keego Harbor and the West Bloomfield School District will also be necessary to achieve proper coordination at the north end of the City.

The consensus of the business and property owners and City officials must be sought on a revitalization plan. Such a plan should establish minimum standard of design for buildings and signs, seek consolidation of driveways and coordination of parking between sites, and include recommendations to improve the right-of-way with street trees, streetlights, and sidewalks. Article 17 of the Zoning Ordinance contains design guidelines which have been enacted to achieve consistent

appearances of commercial properties along the Orchard Lake Corridor within the City of Orchard Lake.

### **Transportation Improvements**

Transportation is one of many issues that cannot be effectively dealt with by the City acting alone. Moving traffic in, through and around the City is a matter of regional concern that requires working with decision-makers at the Road Commission and SEMCOG. Cooperation with these agencies is necessary to plan and fund road improvements, and to extinguish proposals that would make unwanted “improvements” to roads in the City.

In terms of actual road improvements, this Plan emphasizes upgrading of existing roads by resurfacing, paving shoulders, and providing passing and turn lanes; improving intersections; and improving traffic management using new technology. Pursuit of the Natural Beauty Road designation is recommended to avoid future road construction that would threaten loss of the tree canopy and other natural features. Of secondary importance, this Plan notes benefits to be had by safely accommodating bicycling and walking.

Equally important, this Plan emphatically denounces adding extra lanes to the City’s thoroughfares. Widening roads will increase traffic through the City, thereby increasing contaminated storm water runoff. Increased laneage will add impervious surfaces, reducing the natural filtering capacity of open land and woodlands. Furthermore, widened roads will result in the loss of tree canopy, which would dramatically change the character and appeal of the community.

### **Community Facilities Strategies**

The City of Orchard Lake Village residents benefit from high quality community facilities and services. Many such facilities and services, such as the library, post office and schools, are provided by agencies other than City government. Consequently, to be certain that the quality of

facilities and services is sustained, it is necessary for the City to foster and maintain strong working relationships with public service providers and operators of community facilities.

The City must work diligently to establish and apply high standards of design for community facilities. Aesthetic improvements should be sought by the West Bloomfield School District and the MDNR to upgrade the appearance of the school bus facility and the public boat launch.

The City Hall site would benefit from continued efforts to upgrade its appearance. More berms and landscaping are needed to screen the view of the DPW facilities from Long Lake Road. In the long term, this Master Plan recommends that efforts continue to achieve a consensus plan and implementation approach for the City Hall site.

The City has effectively used surveys to gauge residents’ opinions on various matters. Such surveys are recommended to monitor and evaluate the quality of public services offered to residents. In a community that is defined by its appealing residential neighborhoods, maintaining a high level of public services is of paramount importance.

### **Seek Quality Professional Services**

Often a community’s ability to achieve its planning goals and objectives depends on having the right people in place to help implement the plans. Accordingly, the City should seek the best professional planning, engineering and legal services.

# STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**CITY OF ORCHARD LAKE VILLAGE PLANNING COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION**

**RESOLUTION APPROVING THE MASTER PLAN**

Moved by Commissioner Sutscheck, seconded by Commissioner Krause the following:

**WHEREAS**, The Planning Commission of the City of Orchard Lake Village, under the Michigan Planning enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008, is required to review the master plan every 5 years to either amend the Master Plan or adopt a new Master Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Orchard Lake Village, has amended the Master Plan in accordance with Section 125.3831 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Orchard Lake Village, has held a public hearing on the revised Master Plan at their Regular Meeting held on December 4, 2012 at the City of Orchard Lake Village Offices, 3955 Orchard Lake Road, Orchard Lake, MI; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Orchard Lake Village, heard no objections to the Master Plan at the Public Hearing; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that this Planning Commission of the City of Orchard Lake Village hereby approves the Master Plan as written.

Ayes: Chairman Valvona, Commissioners Sutschek, Krause, Holman, Pedell, Bradbury, Dziuba and Magnell

Nays: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Commissioner Wade

Planning Commission Chairman Vince Valvona declared the resolution adopted.

I, Rhonda McClellan, City Clerk of the City of Orchard Lake Village, Oakland County, Michigan, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted by the Planning Commission of the City of Orchard Lake Village at their Regular Meeting, December 4, 2012.



Rhonda McClellan  
City Clerk

**CITY OF ORCHARD LAKE VILLAGE  
OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPTING THE MASTER PLAN**

Moved by **Councilmember Hoffman**, seconded by **Councilmember Finkelstein** the following:

**WHEREAS**, The City of Orchard Lake Village Planning Commission has completed a five year review of the master plan, in accordance with the State of Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Orchard Lake Village, has amended the Master Plan in accordance with Section 125.3831 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Orchard Lake Village, held a public hearing on the revised Master Plan at their Regular Meeting held on December 4, 2012 at the City of Orchard Lake Village Offices, 3955 Orchard Lake Road, Orchard Lake, MI, and adopted the Master Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council at their Regular Meeting held on November 19, 2012 asserted its right to approve the City Master Plan, including periodic updates via a resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council reviewed the City Master Plan and concurs with the Planning Commission on the revised Master Plan.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that this City Council of the City of Orchard Lake Village hereby adopts the City Master Plan as written.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

Mayor Majcher declared the resolution adopted.

I, Rhonda McClellan, City Clerk of the City of Orchard Lake Village, Oakland County, Michigan, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted by the City Council of the City of Orchard Lake Village at their Regular Meeting, December 17, 2012.



Rhonda McClellan  
City Clerk

**NOTES:**

**NOTES:**