

## CHAPTER 4

### EXISTING LAND USE

#### Pattern of Land Divisions

As development occurs, larger tracts of land are generally broken down into smaller parcels. Therefore, studying the existing pattern of land divisions is one way to analyze the status of land use and development. Land division patterns for Cross Village Township are discussed below.

The largest land owner in the Township is the State of Michigan with approximately 1,460 acres of State Forest Land. This contiguous undeveloped land surrounds the western portion of Wycamp Lake and is currently being maintained for recreation and conservation purposes. Additionally, the Little Traverse conservancy owns some parcels ranging from approximately one-half acre to 50 acres in size, these areas are designated as preserves, which are open to the public and protected from future development. There are a total of 131 acres protected in these preserves in Cross Village Township. Also a number of privately held tracts ranging in size up to approximately 30 acres are protected through conservation easements, such protected property total an additional 47.6 acres.

#### Existing Land Use Statistics and Characteristics

According to the 1990 Census, Cross Village Township's land area is 10.0 square miles. Cross Village Township is bounded on the north and west by the Lake Michigan. On the east the Township borders Bliss and Center Townships, and Readmond Township to the south.

Figure 4-1, illustrates the distribution of land uses within the Township. Michigan Resource Information Systems (MIRIS) statistics, which were compiled by MDNR using 1978 color infrared aerial photographs were used as a base in developing existing land use information. The 1978 maps were updated by using MDNR 1998 color infrared aerial photographs, using 1994 color aerial slides and field checking. The updated information was then computerized to produce the existing land use statistics. Table 4-1 presents the land use in current rank order. Each of the land use categories is discussed in detail later in this chapter.

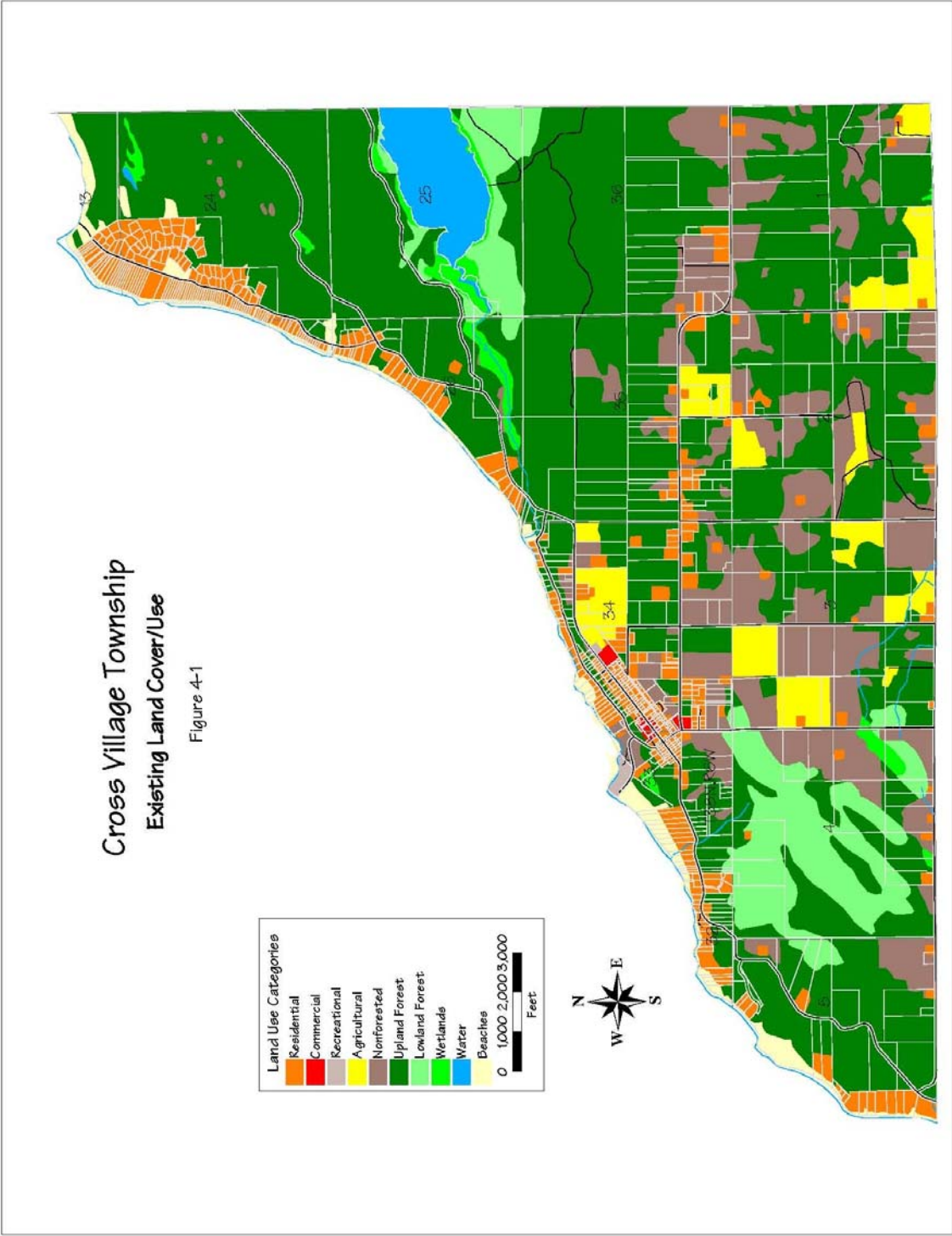


Table 4-1: Existing Land Use Cross Village Township		
Land Use Category	2004	
	Acreage	Percent of Township
Upland Forested	4,150.8	68.7%
Wetlands/Lowland Forest	578.3	9.6%
Residential	565.9	9.4%
Agricultural	320.9	5.3%
Beaches	159.0	2.6%
Water	145.9	2.4%
Nonforest	107.1	1.8%
Commercial	9.5	0.2%
Recreation	7.8	0.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,045.2</b>	<b>100.4%</b>
<p>Note: Due to rounding, the total percentages of land uses do not equal 100 percent.</p> <p>Source: Michigan Resource Information System and MCP&amp;D Field Verification and Map Updating.</p>		

## **Agricultural**

As shown in Table 4-1, agricultural lands occupied more than 5 percent of Township land area in 2004. As is illustrated in Figure 4-1, the active agricultural lands are dispersed across the Township primarily in the southern portion of the Township. The main agricultural land use currently occurring in the Township is pasture land, which is cut for hay.

## **Residential**

As can be seen from Table 4-1, the amount of land being used for residential purposes is 9.4 percent of the total Township in 2004. Due to change in mapping criteria, the increase since 1978 appears larger than the actual residential growth due to the more detailed level of mapping done for the update.

The pattern of residential development within the Township is shown in Figure 4-1. Residential use has been the predominant land use along the Lake Michigan lakefront. Many new residences have been constructed since 1978 in this area reflecting the primary growth area in the Township. Residential growth has also occurred in scattered locations primarily clustered in the vicinity of Levering Road. Additionally, small tract land divisions continue to occur along most of the Township roads.

## **Commercial**

Table 4-1 shows that the amount of land in commercial use in Cross Village Township is very limited and is less than 1 percent of the land in the Township. As is apparent in Figure 4-1, the commercially used properties are concentrated along North Lake Shore, which allows for easy access to transportation and visibility for traffic.

## **Forests and Wetlands**

Forests, which include upland hardwoods and conifers, account for 68.7 percent of Township land area in 2004. Heavily wooded areas are found in the throughout the Township, as can be seen in Figure 4-1.

Wetlands include land that has sufficient water at, or near, the surface to support wetland or aquatic vegetation. These areas are commonly referred to as swamps, marshes or bogs. Wetland areas may also include land which supports lowland hardwoods and conifers. Wetland information was not verified by field inspection when these maps were compiled. Thus, the areas shown as wetlands by MIRIS may not actually meet State and Federal criteria for legally regulated wetlands.

Wetland areas comprise more than nine percent of the Township in 2004. As illustrated in Figure 4-1, a significant portion of the wetlands in the Township are in proximity to Wycamp Lake and also in the south western portion of the Township. Wetlands also occur in a few other locations throughout the Township which have not been developed.

## **Nonforested**

The nonforested land category consists of herbaceous open and shrub land. As shown in Table 4-1, the percent of nonforested land in the Township is less than two percent of the total land area. This category typically has increased in many northern Michigan Townships due to the retirement of land from active agricultural use, however, since Cross Village Township has not historically had a large percentage of agricultural land, this has had limited impact. Nonforested lands are scattered throughout the Township, as shown in Figure 4-1.

## **Recreation**

Recreation lands in the Township comprise approximately less than one-tenth of one percent of the Township, as shown in Table 4-1. Detailed information regarding the individual recreation sites is presented in Chapter 5 - Community Facilities and in the Cross Village Recreation Plan. The public recreation lands in Cross Village Township is primarily waterfront property on Lake Michigan including swimming and boating access. The state-owned property in the vicinity of Wycamp Lake is classified as forested, although it is available for recreational use.

## **Water**

In 2004, approximately 2.4 percent of the Township is categorized as Water. Figure 4-1 illustrates the locations of the lakes.

## **Beaches and Sand Dunes**

The beaches and sand dunes areas comprise approximately 2.6 percent of the Township and are shown in Figure 4-1.

## **Downtown Cross Village Study**

The 2003 Citizen Survey identified the area shown below in Figure 4-2 as the area the majority of the survey respondents identified as the downtown area.

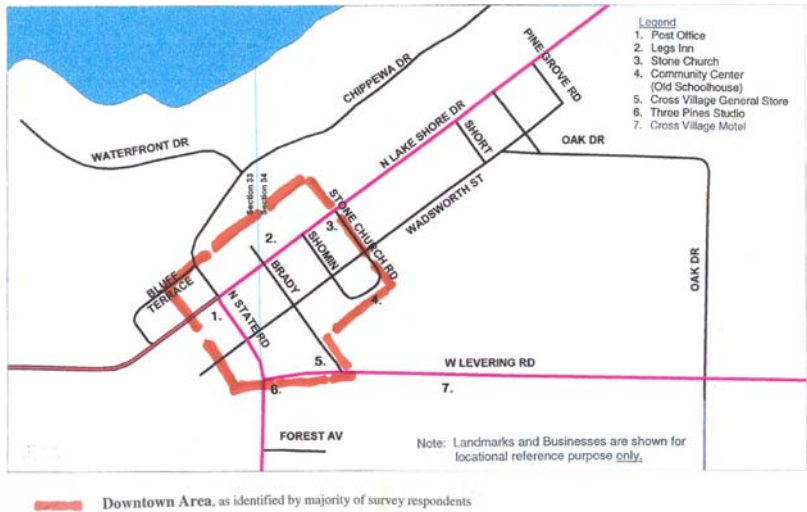


Figure 4-2

As a component of this Master Plan a façade study was conducted, and the downtown area examined in order to explore the possibilities for directing commercial development into that portion of the Township, in an effort to prevent commercial sprawl throughout the Township. (See Appendix B).