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## Chapter 2 Existing Land Use

As a mature and diverse urban community, Manistee presents a host of land uses ranging from open space shoreline areas to seasonal resort residential to heavy industry. The City is laid out in traditional grid formation and is subdivided into quadrants by the Manistee River and US-31 which bisect the City north to south, and east to west respectively. The downtown area is linear in dimension and is oriented east to west along the south bank of the Manistee River. The downtown proper is approximately four blocks long and is bisected by River Street - the City's historically accented 'main street'. Other commercial pockets are scattered among the City's traditional urban neighborhoods, while most auto-oriented 'strip' development can be found along both sides of US-31 north and south of the central city area. Development along US-31 more-or-less blends into the similar strip pattern of commercial development occurring in Manistee Township to the north and Filer Township to the south. Collectively, the three communities maintain a strip commercial corridor along US-31 in excess of six miles in length, with additional land available for commercial use.

The Existing Land Use Map, following page, provides a graphic representation of the City's spatial land use arrangement. A breakdown of the acreage devoted to the various uses also follows (Table 2-1). The identified uses reflect the land use categories traditionally employed by the City for planning purposes.

### Residential

In terms of residential land uses, Manistee is made of predominantly single-family neighborhoods laid out in a rectilinear urban lot and block pattern. Neighborhoods such as 'Maxwell Town' and 'President's Village' contain a rich vocabulary of cottage and bungalow vernacular architecture, and perhaps best exemplify a classic pre 20<sup>th</sup> Century pattern of land division. Some of these neighborhoods were platted with lots as narrow as 30' across. Most newer, mixed-density residential development, on the other hand, can be found on Manistee's northwest side along the Lake Michigan Shore, while the City's greatest concentration of multiple family housing is located directly along the north bank of the Manistee River west of Washington Street.



Much of Manistee's residential development posture is shifting from that of a community heavily oriented to providing homes for industrial employees to being one of West Michigan's premier resort, retirement, and second home communities. This change has resulted in the development of

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Existing Land Use Map

**Table 2-1  
Existing Land Use  
Manistee Master Plan - 2002**

Land Use Category	Acreeage (Percent of Total [2])
Low/Medium Density Residential	578 (27%)
High Density Residential	22 (1%)
Commercial	90 (4%)
Industrial	134 (6%)
Parks/Public Lands/Quasi-Public	402 (19%)
Transportation	496 (23%)
Vacant/Undeveloped	209 (10%)
Wetland/Water	181 (9%)
TOTAL ACRES [1]	2,112 acres
Notes: [1] Reflects land area. The U.S. Census (1990) reports a City land area of approximately 3.3 square miles (2,112 acres) and combined land/water area of approximately 4.4 square miles (2,816 acres). [2] Percent has been rounded.	
Source: City of Manistee and LSL Planning, Inc.	

and mixed-use residential neighborhoods incorporating attached and detached housing in planned settings. Small enclaves of large lot, suburban type, residential parcels are also being developed in the southwest portion of the City, near the new high school, and along the Lake Michigan shoreline to the north.

In addition to new residential development a review of building permits, combined with field research, demonstrates the presence of significant reinvestment by homeowners in the improvement and modernization of existing housing units. In each of the City’s neighborhoods, there is visible evidence of ongoing housing rehabilitation and general upgrading. Unlike many urban communities, Manistee does not experience visible pockets of neighborhood deterioration and blight.



Based on the field survey of land use, the City has approximately 600 acres devoted to residential use. This includes single and multiple family development and manufactured housing sites, representing roughly 28 percent of Manistee's total land area. A majority of the City's street network, which is not included in the residential land area calculation, is associated with residential neighborhoods. With the combination of the two, it is roughly estimated residential areas (homes and associated streets combined) represent 35 to 40 percent of the City's total land area.

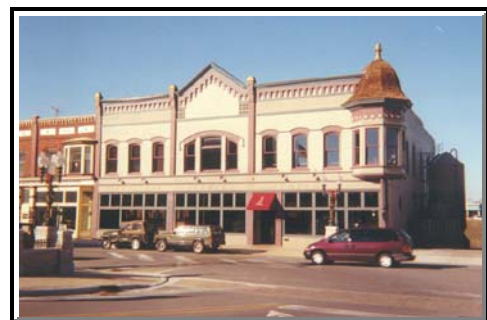
Over the past decade, approximately 11 acres per year have been developed for residential use. In recent years, a majority of this development has occurred near/along Lake Michigan, north and south of the Manistee River Channel. Based on recent development trends, it appears the City can sustain additional residential development over the ensuing years. In fact, the City appears to be in the position to accommodate continued residential development, particularly associated with the second home/tourism market.

*Over the past decade, approximately 11 acres per year have been developed for residential purposes.*

### **Commercial**

As stated earlier, the City's commercial base is principally located in Manistee's core downtown and along US-31. It is also noted the Existing Land Use Map also identifies the golf course lying between Cherry Street and Lake Michigan as commercial, accounting for a significant portion of the commercial acreage base. A limited number of small commercial nodes are found scattered throughout the City, though predominately located east of US-31. In most cases, these reflect activities which have been in existence for long periods of time such as the neighborhood eateries and pubs of Maxwell Town.

The core downtown offers a variety of specialty retail, office, personal services, restaurants, and related business activity. The downtown is nestled along the Manistee River Channel, surrounded by well-maintained residential neighborhoods. The close proximity of residential development to the downtown, combined with easy access via sidewalks, fosters significant pedestrian travel between the two land uses.



The relationship of well-maintained residential neighborhoods adjacent to the downtown is extremely important. State and national development trends reveal that core downtowns surrounded by deteriorating neighborhoods often exhibit similar patterns of decline.

The other primary commercial area is the US-31 corridor. Commercial development along the highway includes a wide range of businesses including professional offices, general and speciality

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retail, tourist services, and related commercial activities. At present, the heaviest concentrations of business development are located near the US-31/Manistee River Channel and north of the channel to the limits of the City. Many of the uses are highly dependent on transient traffic, both local and through traffic. They include such uses as gasoline service stations, convenience stores, fast food restaurants, and motels. To the south, the commercial character of the corridor is periodically broken by segments of mature residential development, such as the area between approximately 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets. Within the City, US-31 is generally void of “big box” developments (e.g. K-Mart, etc.). Such developments are located to the south in adjoining Filer Township.

Over the years, there has been considerable discussion regarding the construction of a US-31 by-pass around the City of Manistee, east of Manistee Lake, as a means of reducing or eliminating traffic congestion experienced along the highway. At present, average daily traffic counts indicate that US-31, through the City, handles approximately 16,900 vehicles per day. *[Note: year 2000 counts provided by the Michigan Department of Transportation indicate 16,100 vehicles per day. The 2000 count was increased by 2.5 percent per year to reflect current estimates. Counts are based on 24 hour, two-way, traffic.]* While it is difficult to gauge the impact of a by-pass until a specific route has been selected, it is roughly estimated average daily traffic on US-31, through the City, would initially experience reductions ranging from approximately 20 to 30 percent. These percentages would likely increase during peak travel times. The reduction in traffic could impact the economic viability of existing commercial businesses such as gasoline service stations, convenience stores, fast food restaurants, and other such operations dependent on through movement.

As previously indicated, strip commercial development along US-31 in the City is accentuated by strip commercial development in Manistee and Filer Townships. Basically, US-31 from entry into Filer Township and north to M-22 in Manistee Township has largely been identified as strip commercial based on existing land use and zoning, as well as the master plans of each township.

### **Industrial**

Industrial development comprises approximately 134 acres of the City’s land area and is concentrated along the shores of Manistee Lake. Past planning efforts have by-and-large treated this end of the City as a redevelopment area, and most recently, much of the lake frontage has been designated as a state Renaissance Zone. Lighter industrial development, on the other hand, is located in planned industrial park settings on the City’s far north and northeast sides.

Industrial uses along Manistee Lake are generally classified as “heavy industrial” due to their orientation towards manufacturing, mining, and processing. Historically, the industries along the lake provided significant “blue-and-white collar” job opportunities, with attendant wages and benefits, thereby making Manistee an attractive and well-known employment center. In recent years, the area has experienced a decline in heavy manufacturing. None-the-less, existing industries continue to play an important role in the City’s economic health and the Master Plan recognizes that

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function.

The emergence of industrial development to the north is rooted in a decision made by the City during the mid 1970's to develop a modern industrial park to accommodate anticipated industrial growth. Capitalizing on available grant funds via the United States Economic Development Administration, the City obtained financial assistance to construct the “light industrial” park in an area formally used for the mining of sand. For a variety of reasons, including location and market factors, full occupancy of the park has yet to materialize. The industrial area overlooks many of the newer home sites developed in the past several years and offers panoramic vistas of nearby Lake Michigan.

In recent years, the City refocused it’s industrial location efforts towards a new Renaissance park lying northeast of the City, near Eastlake Village. The new park, oriented to light and certain forms of general industrial uses, offers close proximity to both US-31 and M-55, as well as special development incentives. The park contains 200 acres and is fully served by municipal water and sanitary sewer, natural gas, electricity, and fiber optic communication lines. The site is approximately four miles from Manistee Blacker Airport, a commercial airport with daily flights to Chicago.

### **Transportation**

Transportation refers to the area used for streets, rail road lines, and rail yards. Approximately 496 acres (23% of the total land area) is currently devoted to the transportation network. This percentage is consistent with that of other mature urban cities. A majority of the system is comprised of local streets associated with residential neighborhoods.

As previously detailed, the City is traversed in a north/south fashion by US-31. US-31 is a state trunkline designated and designed for the movement of local and transient traffic through the regional area. Near Ludington, US-31 changes to a limited access highway (freeway), ultimately linking with Interstate 96 and other state and national roadway systems.

Formally known as the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, rail service is provided by the CSX Railway Corporation. Rail lines traverse the western and eastern shores of Manistee Lake, linking with the industries located thereon.

Several of the heavy industries along Manistee Lake also possess port (docking) facilities historically used by Great Lake’s freighters to transport coal and other products for industrial use.

Refer also to Chapter 4 for additional detail on Transportation.

### **Parks/Public Lands/Quasi-Public**

Given Manistee’s rich endowment of natural landscape features, most major recreation land uses are oriented to Lake Michigan and the Manistee River on the City’s west side. Other activity-

intensive recreational uses are associated with City schools; whereas very few recreational facilities exist in Manistee’s densely developed east side neighborhoods.

Quasi-Public uses such as religious facilities, governmental buildings, civic and social uses, and the like are found throughout the City.

**Vacant/Undeveloped**

Vacant and undeveloped lands comprise a relatively small percentage of total land area, and it is sparsely distributed. It is estimated that approximately 209 acres (10% of the total area) consist of vacant, undeveloped, lands. A recurrent theme in several of the planning work sessions was that the City was already ‘built-out’, and presented few additional opportunities for development on anything other than an *infill* or *redevelopment* scale.

**Water/Wetlands**

Within the City there are approximately 181 acres (9% of the total area) of area devoted to open water and wetlands. These include the Manistee River Channel, man made lake to the north of the channel, and several pockets of wetland areas.

**The Alignment of Zoning and Land Use**

As part of the existing land use documentation effort, a basic comparative review was completed in which the City Zoning Map was compared against existing land uses as a means of identifying larger areas of conflict or non-alignment. Table 2-2 provides a summary of findings. The table (and overall review process) is not meant to be all-inclusive of non-alignments with the zoning map and existing land use map but a general representation.

**Table 2-2  
Zoning and Land Use Comparison  
Potential Alignment Issues  
Manistee Master Plan - 2002**

	Location	Current Zoning	Current Land Use
1	Cypress St. from the South to 4 <sup>th</sup> St.	R4 / Residential <i>Allows dwellings as a permitted use and apartments, hotels and offices as a special use.</i>	Various commercial uses along Cypress St. intermixed with residential uses. [1]
2	US 31 north of the bridge to Monroe St.	C3 / Commercial District <i>Allows such uses as marinas, boat dealers, restaurants, hotels, amusements, and museums.</i> C4 / Commercial District <i>Printing and publishing, transportation services, wholesale trade, etc.</i>	Transportation uses to the east of US 31. Mixed residential and commercial uses along the west side of the road. [1]
3	River St. from US 31 to the east.	MUD / Multiple Use District <i>Allows dwellings, transportation and utilities, retail trade, finance office and services.</i>	A mix of uses including residential, commercial and heavy industrial. [2]

4	1 <sup>st</sup> St from the intersection of S. Lakeshore St.	<p align="center"><b>CCD / Civic Center District</b>  <i>Allows parks, dwellings, and parking. special uses include ferries, water transportation, amusement services, museums.</i></p>	The area is mostly open space with an area of commercial land use in the center portion of the district.
5	Maxwell Town Neighborhood	<p align="center"><b>R5 / Residential District</b>  <i>Allows dwellings, duplex, apartments. Special uses allow several office type uses.</i></p> <p align="center"><b>TR / Transitional District</b>  <i>Allows dwellings, duplex, parking. Special use includes apartment bldg, communications, contractors, retail trade, etc.</i></p> <p align="center"><b>I2 / Industrial District</b>  <i>Allows oil and gas extraction, chemical and fertilizers, mineral services, construction, transportation, wholesale.</i></p>	<p>Various commercial uses intermixed with residential uses within the neighborhood.</p> <p>Heavy industrial uses along the waterfront cuts off residential/neighborhood access to waterfront.</p>
6	5 <sup>th</sup> St. in-between Pine St. and Maple St.	<p align="center"><b>R4 / Residential</b>  <i>Allows dwellings as a permitted use and apartments, hotels and offices as a special use.</i></p>	This area is primarily residential in nature with scattered commercial uses.
7	North side of Manistee River Channel from Hastings St. to Washington St.	<p align="center"><b>R5 / Residential</b>  <i>Allows dwellings, duplex, apartments. Special uses allow several office type uses.</i></p> <p align="center"><b>C4 / Commercial</b>  <i>Printing and publishing, transportation services, wholesale trade, etc.</i></p>	This area includes mix of residential, commercial and open spaces which boarded the river channel.
8	Between 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> and Maple St. and Fairview St.	<p align="center"><b>R4 / Residential</b>  <i>Allows dwellings as a permitted use and apartments, hotels and offices as a special use.</i></p>	This area contains a pocket of commercial uses at the intersection of 5 <sup>th</sup> and Michael St. Overall area includes commercial and residential uses.
9	8 <sup>th</sup> St. location	<p align="center"><b>R4 / Residential</b>  <i>Allows dwellings as a permitted use and apartments, hotels and offices as a special use.</i></p>	This area has a large area of commercial use and open land area with residential to the north, east and west.
<p>Notes: [1] In certain cases neighborhood commercial is preferred. (The “corner store”) But a commercial residential mix along a major road usually is not desired.</p> <p>[2] A mixed use district is a good approach. The location of this MUD district is favorable due to its location but the current heavy industrial uses most likely will not allow this district to be realized to its full potential. Strong Site Plan Review standards are needed for this kind of land use relationships.</p>			