

Chapter Two



BACKGROUND:

I. History of Ann Arbor

Ann Arbor's original 640 acres were first laid out in 1824 by two land promoters, John Allen from Virginia and Elisha Rumsey from Connecticut. They founded, named and registered the town tract of Ann Arbor in 1824. This early settlement included all the land between Allen Creek on the west to Division Street on the east, and from Jefferson Street on the south to an extension of Felch Street on the north. This area became known as the Upper Village. That same year, the town was designated the County Seat by Governor Cass at Allen and Rumsey's urging. In 1834, the Ann Arbor Land Company offered 40 acres of free land to the trustees of the newly-formed University of Michigan, then located in Detroit, if the University would relocate. By 1837, the University had approved Ann Arbor as the site of the University, and by 1841, the University was actually opened in the City. In 1839, the first railroad was completed along the Huron River. The completion of the railroad and the location of the University encouraged Ann Arbor's steady growth.

Most of the early settlers came from New England or immigrated from Germany and Ireland. The first German family arrived in 1829. German settlers concentrated on the town's west side, and by 1880, nearly half of Ann Arbor's population was of German descent.

The first additions to the City were to the north and west. Industry concentrated along the railroad and the river. The first businesses in Ann Arbor were established in the middle to late 1820's soon after the townsite was established. The central business district began to develop along Main Street and around the county courthouse square at Main and Huron. A pre-Civil War building boom propelled a transformation of the downtown from a collection of insubstantial wood frame structures to two and three-story masonry buildings with richly ornamented facades.

By the 1870's, land was being platted and annexed in every direction. By 1878, when a railroad link with Toledo finally was established, Ann Arbor had become one of the most thriving business centers west of Detroit, boasting several grist mills, two furniture factories, three printing establishments, two sash factories, an organ factory and an iron foundry, in addition to the usual dairies, breweries, groceries and dry goods stores.

The University's influence on the neighborhoods was also evident. By 1865, enrollment had grown to 1,145, the largest University enrollment in the United States. The first students had boarded in dormitories, but these were soon inadequate and the majority of students began to board with townspeople. Dr. Henry Tappan, president of the University from 1852-63, encouraged students to

live off campus, feeling student life with private families was more “normal and orderly” than when students gathered in group quarters.

When women were first admitted to the University in the 1870’s, the resulting increase in housing demand encouraged the growth of rooming and boarding houses. Most students continued to live off campus until the 1920’s when Dean Bursley and Professor Angell became advocates of University housing for all students. The University grew steadily during the late 1800’s and in the decades prior to World War I, and by 1910, the student body totaled 3,441. City population in the same year had grown to 17,000.

The importance of the University to the businesses of Ann Arbor was recognized by an acceleration of business development during the second decade of this century. The building boom of 1910-20 turned the State Street area from residential to commercial as faculty members moved to newly-developing neighborhoods, such as Burns Park, and commercial buildings took the place of houses. Simultaneously, South University Street began a changeover from residential to primarily commercial.

This University growth in part led to the need for planning. Ann Arbor’s first planning study started prior to World War I when the City and University contracted with the New York firm of Frederick L. Olmsted, Jr. and Brothers to recommend patterns for future City growth. This report, completed in 1922, created a park plan and strongly suggested the adoption of a City-wide zoning ordinance. It also described the City’s west side as a location for future industry and residential areas for workingmen, while land east of Washtenaw Avenue was suggested as a place for “suburban and country homes.” Ann Arbor’s first apartment building was built in the same year to house University staff and married students. When a second apartment building was proposed at Washtenaw and Hill, public protest called for a limitation to such construction.

Following the Olmstead Brothers’ suggestion, City Council adopted Ann Arbor’s first zoning ordinance in 1923. Despite the concern over apartments, most of the central area neighborhoods were still zoned to permit multiple-family as well as one and two-family residences. Industrial districts were designated along the railroad and river, while commercial zones were limited to existing business areas.

In the decades following World War I, the University and the City both continued to grow. The University Stadium was finished in 1927. In the 1920’s, the City completed five new schools (Jones, Bach, Angell, Burns Park and Mack), and by 1939, a new junior high and elementary school had also been added. The University began a program of dormitory construction, completing the Law Quad, Martha Cook and West Quad by 1939. In 1918, the Ann Arbor park system totaled 122 acres, and by 1937 it had expanded to 189 acres, not including the golf course.

With the ending of World War II, Ann Arbor’s population began to grow more rapidly. The growth continued into the 1950’s with a population increase of almost 40 percent in that decade. The City almost doubled in area through further annexations. The University of Michigan began its expansion program on the North Campus, and a number of research industries located their plants in Ann Arbor.

In the 1960’s, growth continued to accelerate, reaching the highest rate since the 1890’s. This was due primarily to continued expansion of the University and to the growth of firms engaged in research and the development of new technology. The physical expansion of the City continued as well, and 4,238 acres of surrounding territory were annexed, including land for a new regional mall.

The University of Michigan capped its enrollment in the early 1970’s and growth in Ann Arbor slowed. After increasing 50 percent between 1940 and 1960 and another 50 percent in the 1960’s, the City’s population increased by only 12 percent between 1970 and 1990.

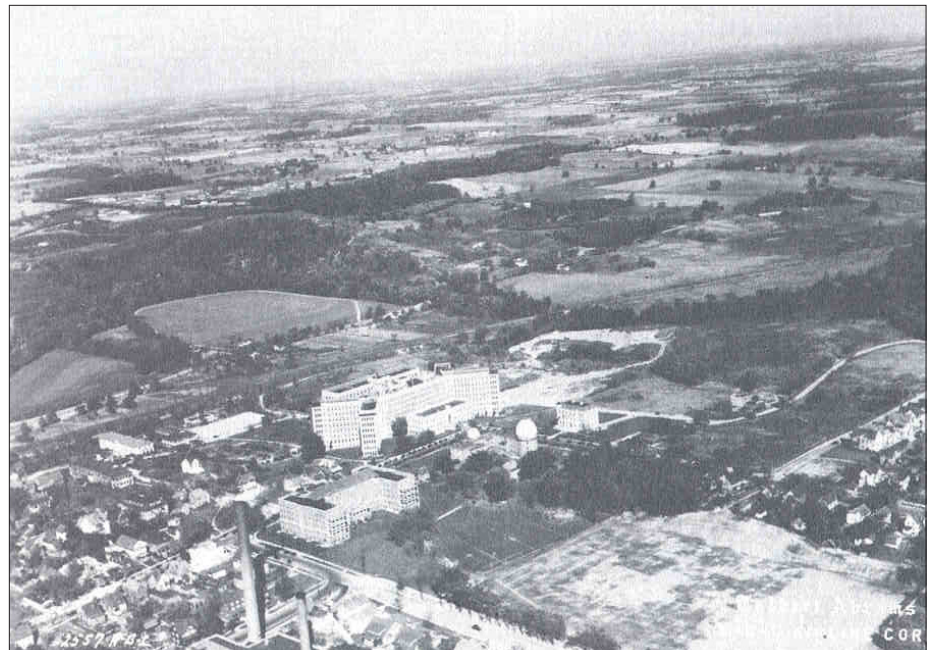
After the recession of the early 1980's, expansion resumed mid-decade. A nationwide building boom occurred and Ann Arbor was carried away in the flurry of new construction: offices, apartments, hotels and strip shopping centers.

As development neared the freeway "ring" that will generally mark the City's foreseeable physical boundary, growth in the 1990's increasingly consisted of redevelopment of existing sites and new construction beyond the City limits in the adjacent townships of Pittsfield, Scio and Ann Arbor.

Two railroad lines currently exist in Ann Arbor. The Norfolk Southern Railroad line, originally constructed in the late 1830's, travels east/west from Detroit to Chicago and runs primarily along the south side of the Huron River. Six Amtrak trains run daily, including three westbound and three eastbound. The westbound trains travel to Chicago and points west. The eastbound trains travel through Detroit to Pontiac, Michigan. The Ann Arbor Railroad line (north/south) was completed in 1878 and is currently used exclusively for freight. Three trains run daily between Flint and Toledo.



Railroad at Dhu Varren



Historic aerial photograph of the University of Michigan Hospital

II. Related Planning Efforts

Over the past twenty years, various City planning efforts have guided land use decisions in the city of Ann Arbor. The following is a summary of some of the significant planning efforts .



The Huron River

Downtown Plan (2009) - Updated as part of the Ann Arbor Discovering Downtown (A²D²) effort; a subarea of the master plan.

Ann Arbor Transportation Plan (2009) – Analyzed the opportunities and constraints for improving major transportation corridors such as Plymouth Road and Washtenaw Avenue in Ann Arbor and provided design guidelines for aesthetic and transportation improvements.

Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (2007) – Provides recommendations for improving non-motorized modes of travel in Ann Arbor.

Northeast Area Plan (2006) – Adopted area plan for the Northeast Area.

2006-2011 Parks & Recreation Open Space Plan (2005) – Analyzed park and recreational needs and provided information and recommendations on parks, recreation and open space issues in Ann Arbor.

Natural Features Master Plan (2004) – Provides a framework to guide the City and its citizens in their policy making and stewardship of natural features protection activities.

2010 to 2015 - Capital Improvement Program (2009) – Compiled and prioritized a list of possible capital improvement projects in the City of Ann Arbor through fiscal year 2010.

West Area Plan (1995) – Adopted area plan for West Area.

Central Area Plan (1992) – Adopted area plan for the Central Area.

South Area Plan (1990) – Adopted area plan for the South Area.

III. Population Profile

Two sets of data have been used to determine the population profile of Ann Arbor. The United States Census Bureau provides actual population counts and other demographic information, including age, race and gender. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) provides population forecasts and information on housing and employment.

According to the Population chart below, the highest number and percentage of City residents were between the ages of 18 and 29 in 2000. This is attributed, in part, to the student and family housing populations that reside in Ann Arbor. The Central Area in particular had large populations of 18-29 year olds due to the proximity of the University of Michigan’s central campus.

The 2000 census showed that the average residential density in the City was 7.24 persons per acre.

City of Ann Arbor 2000 Census and Land Use Data

Population

Race		Percent
White	85,151	74.4
Black	10,070	8.8
American Indian, eskimo or Aleut	332	0.3
Asian or Pacific Islander	13,566	11.9
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Island	41	0.0
Hispanic	3,814	3.3
Other	1,384	1.2
Multiple Race	3,480	3.1
Total	114,024	100.0

Age		Percent
Under 5	5,829	5.0
5-17	13,619	11.8
18-21	21,011	18.2
22-29	21,289	18.4
30-39	17,169	14.8
40-49	14,244	12.3
50-64	13,199	11.4
65 and up	9,312	8.1
Total	114,024	100.0

Median Household Income by Age

Household under 25	\$17,039
Household 25-34	\$41,866
Household 35-44	\$58,700
Household 45-54	\$72,560
Household 55-64	\$74,635
Household 65-74	\$51,140
Household 75 and older	\$35,825
Median Household Income	\$46,299