

5.11 FUTURE LAND USE MAP (FLUM)

The FLUM shows a Township's preference for how it wants to use its public and private lands within a given timeframe, commonly 25 or more years. The map shows the community's shared vision regarding where houses and businesses should be built, where farmland and other open spaces should persist, and where recreational opportunities should expand, among others

The FLUM **is not** an exact prediction of future land use patterns, although planners do use forecasting and analysis tools to allocate land uses in probable locations. FLUM instead estimates what the Township may look like if population, housing, and employment forecasts prove true, and if land policies, implemented to reach the desired future, are successful. Human behaviors are difficult to predict because they are not dictated by biophysical factors alone (i.e., food, water, shelter). The ways humans make decisions, hold values, develop culture, and use technology influence how land is allocated and make accurate forecasting difficult. For example, it is unlikely that planners could, with any accuracy, predict the closing of a large corporate plant over a 20-year time span.

The FLUM **is not** a policy, but rather a guide for land use policy making. The Townships Zoning Commission should aim to develop land policies that work to achieve the desired future land use pattern delineated on the FLUM. Since the FLUM is the Township's collective vision of their preferred future, it becomes the Township's responsibility to implement policies that help to make the community's vision a reality.

The future land use map **should not** be confused with an official zoning map. Whereas a FLUM is used as a guide for policy making, zoning maps are actual policy documents designed to achieve a preferred future. A zoning map displays where zoning district boundaries are located and also accompanies text that describes what uses are permitted or conditionally permitted within each zone.

The adopted FLUM can be used as a measurable indicator of land policy performance. As land uses change subsequent to planning, changes can be monitored in comparison to the adopted FLUM. The Township Zoning Commission uses the comparison to identify if land uses are changing in the locations and in the amounts desired, according to the plan. If land uses are not changing as planned, the Township must reconsider land policies or reassess planning goals and objectives.