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## Livonia leads with 19

# Cities love industrial park concept

By PATRICK TOUHEY

Not all neighborhoods have homes in them.

Some are neighborhoods of plants, factories and office buildings, grouped together and developed as a unit, much like a residential subdivision.

These groupings of commerce and industry—more commonly called industrial parks—dot the suburban landscape. Inside their borders the wheels of business turn.

Like a residential "sub," the industrial park is divided up and designed as a complete concept. At the start, a developer may not know exactly what kinds of business will make their home in the park, but he knows how many acres will be involved and in some cases, the size of the buildings which will be erected.

As a general rule, the park will be developed with paved streets, sewer and water facilities, streetlights and any other amenities that a prospective tenant might need to make him feel at home.

"SOME BUSINESS owners in these parks are just as proud of the way their plant looks as they are of their homes," said Dan Gilmarin, Livonia's industrial development coordinator.

"And the industrial park concept is a way to develop land that would not usually be developed. A parcel of land of 40 acres, for example, might be too

big for one development. But as a park, it could be broken up into smaller, more usable sections."

Livonia leads western Wayne County in numbers of industrial parks—19 of them, with two more on the drawing board.

Although other municipalities in the area have far fewer parks—on the average of one per community—it's not because they don't like or want them.

The main stumbling block is shortage of land.

"We only have one industrial park per se in the city," commented Ken Way, assessor for the City of Plymouth. "But if you asked me if we'd like more, the answer would be a very definite 'yes.'"

Similar feelings are expressed by officials throughout the area. Industrial parks are efficient and orderly ways to integrate industry into a community, they say, and would welcome more if the land was available.

IN PLANNING CIRCLES it is difficult to find someone with a bad word to say about the industrial park and its impact on residential neighborhoods.

Jim Anulewicz, planning consultant to Plymouth Township, maintains it's the best possible way for a municipal government to exercise control over the appearance of local industry.

"If you take a planned park, you can give it maximum separation from resi-

dential areas. You can examine the environmental aspects. You can set it back from the road, require shrubs, trees, flowers, greenbelts and whatever else might be visually pleasing."

Such stipulations aren't always possible, he said, when commercial or industrial developments are scattered.

Richard Saele, a member of the Wayne County Planning Commission, has a special interest in industrial parks and also speaks highly of them.

"It's a good way for a government to insure a quality commercial development instead of just taking what it gets in the hodgepodge type of development," he said.

But the aesthetic quality of industrial parks is not the only reason for their popularity. They are also a decided advantage in attracting businesses that are looking for a good location.

WITH THE INTENSE competition among communities to increase their industrial and commercial tax-base, businesses can shop around, comparing what one community can offer against another.

The community that can guarantee a neatly developed industrial park in a good location, complete with the right size building is a step ahead.

"There's no question about it being a two-way street," said Bob Stevens, Westland's development coordinator. "The government gets the tax base,

and the business gets a desirable setting.

"The businessman knows the site has been designated as an industrial park. The roads and utilities will be in, and he won't have to worry about them. He'll have the same kind of neighbors and will feel at home."

And area industrial parks are "home" to plastics plants, tool and die shops, warehouses, moving companies, electronics firms and a wide range of manufacturing and engineering plants, to list just a few.

WHILE THE COMPETITION among communities to lure desirable businesses is heavy, businesses wishing to locate in choice industrial parks have to compete for a limited amount of space.

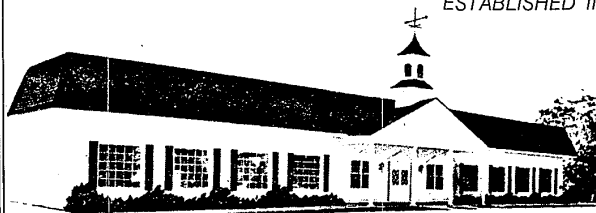
In many instances, a park is "full" before it is actually developed. And it is rare to find a park that is below 90 per cent full.

"There's an old joke about the things a business is looking for in a prospective site," commented planner Anulewicz. "They usually want six things—and all of them are location."

"With the new expressways opening up the suburbs to quicker shipping and receiving, with the railroads and small airports close at hand, businesses which once would have located in or very near a city now find it more economical to set up shop in the outlying areas."

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