

The Matthaei Farm subdivision in Ann Arbor, Michigan, has a rich history tied closely to the Matthaei family and their contributions to the area:

The Matthaei family purchased the property, which was originally an old gravel pit with a railroad spur, in the 1930s. They transformed the land by planting clover and pines, and moved in during the 1940s. Frederick Jr. and his wife Betty added some property in the 1960s and raised their family there. The family also built the pond house in 1965.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Frederick C. Matthaei Sr. donated 800 acres to the University of Michigan, which became the Radrick golf course and the Botanical Gardens.

In 1978, preliminary plans were made for a 100-acre subdivision in Superior Township, which promised architecturally controlled estates in a natural setting. The subdivision was planned to preserve the woods and natural setting as much as possible. The official groundbreaking for Matthaei Farm, a planned 100-acre development of 72 luxury homes northeast of Ann Arbor in Superior Township, took place in 1985. The family was the sole developer, and the vision was to have homes with condominium conveniences, sharing amenities like a spring-fed pond, pond house, tennis court, and nature trails.

The Matthaei family's involvement in the development and transformation of these areas in Ann Arbor highlights their significant contributions to the region, not only in terms of philanthropy but also in urban development and preserving natural spaces. Their efforts have shaped significant parts of Ann Arbor's landscape and community spaces.

Getting to the Matthaei Farm subdivision Ann Arbor Road one has to pass through the charming village of Dixboro. Dixboro still manages to give off a charming, sleepy hamlet vibe, despite being home to one of the state's busiest general stores, an acclaimed restaurant and multi-million-dollar communities just outside of the Ann Arbor city limits. Throw in a few natural areas and University of Michigan-maintained botanical gardens to see why Dixboro and the surrounding Superior Charter Township is rated by Niche as one of the best places to live in the county.

A leisurely drive down Ann Arbor Road takes you past what passes as a downtown area in Dixboro, with Victorian-era homes and ranch-style houses right alongside the area café and a few local businesses.

Most visitors recognize Dixboro General Store, a charmingly eclectic outpost full of home furnishings and great gift ideas. The Dixboro Project blends local icon and a modern restaurant scene, offering fine dining, private event spaces and airy outdoor seating. The 1800s barn has long been a local restaurant but was recently renovated into a dining destination for wood-fired pizzas, enticing entrees and a creative cocktail list to compete with downtown Ann Arbor eateries. Order a scoop of ice cream or coffee made your way at MoonWinks Café, a straightforward café serving breakfast, lunch and plenty of treats in between.

Generous nature preserves, like Marshall Nature Area, help retain a rural charm and offer the community hiking trails to explore in all four seasons. Brandon Park may be small, but the playground has enough swings, slides and climbing options to fill an afternoon. Over 160 acres of wetlands, meadows and Creekside views have been set aside and lovingly maintained as Cherry Hill Nature Preserve. The Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum greet visitors with almost three miles of walking trails and a global collection of plants lovingly maintained both on the grounds and in the conservatory. Explore the Pure Michigan waterways of Washtenaw County at Gallup Park's Huron River boat launch.

Despite its rural feel, Dixboro is well connected to Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti and the surrounding area thanks to Michigan Highway 14 and U.S. Route 23. It's hard to believe that the secluded estates and one-stoplight-town feel of Dixboro are only about 5 miles from downtown Ann Arbor.