

CHAPTER 7

STRATEGIC GOALS, POLICIES & ACTION PLANS

In developing community goals and policies, it is important to analyze existing community characteristics, such as: social and economic features, environmental resources, available services and facilities, and existing land use. In addition to examining existing characteristics, another important tool in the development of community goals and policies is to identify community assets, problems and other issues to be addressed.

In preparation for writing this Master Plan, Hayes Planning Commission actively sought input from the Township residents through a community input questionnaire, community workshops and master plan work sessions.

Goals, policies and action plans serve as the foundation for a strategy that can be used in an ongoing process of influencing growth and development over the short and long-term. This strategy consists of three elements:

1. Goals

A goal is a statement that describes a desired vision of the township's future. In this case, goals identify the desired results of an on-going land use planning program in general terms. The following statement is an example of a goal:

Retain and enhance the Township's scenic and rural character.

2. Policies

Policies establish a mind-set for decision makers in the never ending process of accomplishing goals. The following statement is an example of a policy:

Township official will work with developers and land owners to implement design standards that preserve scenic viewscapes, topography, wetlands, streams, and natural vegetation.

3. Actions

Actions are the steps that must be taken by township officials to implement policies and accomplish goals. The statement that follows is an example of an action:

Amend the township zoning ordinance to establish flexible open space and cluster residential land development regulations as a means of preserving natural and scenic resources, farmland, forestland, and open space.

If goals and policies are taken to heart, and if a commitment to taking each action is made, then the township will have taken the first strategic step toward influencing the township's future. Participants in the planning process identified goals, policies and actions for a variety of subject areas (note that the following goals have been gleaned from the 1995 draft of the Land Use Plan prepared by the Planning Commission). A complete listing appears on the following pages.

Community Character, Natural Resources & Open Space Goals

Maintain the integrity of open space, ecosystems and wildlife habitats. Preserve wetlands, shorelines, topography, and woodlands diversified by age and species.

Scenic viewsheds are among the most cherished local natural resources. They will be protected.

Shorelines and wetlands will be protected.

For the purpose of this plan, Hayes Township's character comprises a variety of elements that dominate the community's landscape, including tree-lined roadways, scenic vistas that are unbroken by areas of concentrated development, ridges, hillsides, and ravines, undeveloped shoreline areas, wood lots and larger wooded areas, farms, farmsteads, and farm buildings, other undeveloped open space, and the relative absence of commercial and industrial development.

Policies

Township officials will strive to identify and preserve historic and scenic features.

Township officials will strive to preserve open space consisting of farmland, forestland, wetlands, and land not suitable for development on the basis of limitations imposed by severe soil limitations.

Township officials will strive to accommodate development by encouraging clustering of new residential development as a means of maximizing the preservation of open space and natural resources.

Actions

Township officials will take the necessary steps to retain existing state-owned lands along the U.S. 31 corridor in public ownership in perpetuity.

The zoning ordinance will be amended to assure that new development occurs in a manner that protects the natural and aesthetic character of environmentally sensitive areas through the use of site planning techniques that preserve or enhance natural and aesthetic features.

The zoning ordinance will be amended to specifically provide for the establishment of residential subdivisions and condominium projects developed using rural clustering standards within permitted densities. These standards should address, at minimum, density, percentage of open space to be permanently protected from development, the treatment/preservation of natural features (surface water, wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitat), lighting, signage, and stormwater management.

Planning & Land Use Goal

Plan for and guide new development that preserves renewable resources and open space, protects environmentally sensitive areas, and maintains the historically rural character of Hayes Township.

Policies

The Township Board and Planning Commission will actively promote the preservation of farmland, open space, wetlands, shorelines, scenic viewsheds, and wildlife habitats.

The township will strive to enact zoning ordinance standards for residential, commercial and industrial development that require the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and minimize the fragmentation and destruction of open space.

The township will strive to review this plan and the zoning ordinance at five-year intervals.

Avoid locating incompatible land uses within close proximity to one another. Limit the expansion of legal nonconforming uses. Accommodate mixed-use land development projects using the Township Zoning Ordinance Planned Unit Development (PUD) regulations.

Manage access from the township's roadway system to adjacent property by precluding the establishment of excessive numbers of driveways.

Action

Designate areas of the township suitable for agricultural, residential, public, commercial and industrial development.

Water Resources Goals

Protect and Preserve ground and surface water for all township residents.

Limit the impact of waterfront development to maintain the quality of adjoining surface waters.

Policies

The township will strive to protect groundwater from the harmful effects of intensive and incompatible development.

The township will strive to protect the high quality of surface waters by assuring that sediment and nutrient laden runoff from developed areas and construction sites is effectively treated before reaching bodies of water and water courses.

Actions

The township will adopt groundwater protection regulations that can be administered during site plan review or other zoning ordinance review and approval procedures.

Maintain vegetative buffer strips along shorelines and watercourses.

Educate the public regarding the township's reliance on groundwater resources.

Encourage the maintenance septic systems on a regular basis to assure proper and safe functioning over the long-term.

New development along the shorelines of Lake Charlevoix, Lake Michigan, and Susan Lake will not exceed one dwelling per 100 feet of shoreline frontage.

Review the community sewer policy periodically, updating it to be sure it meets the continuing needs of the township.

<i>Farmland related Goals</i>
Encourage farmland preservation.
Protect the economic viability of farming and forestry operations.

Actions

Work with township farmers and farm groups to identify those farm areas (parcels at least 40 acres in size exhibiting prime farmland or forestland soils) most likely to remain economically viable for renewable resources management and those areas most likely to convert to other use.

Adopt zoning regulations that require land uses adjoining existing farming operations to establish adequate buffers to protect the viability of farming operations. Non-prime farm and forest lands within areas of prime farm and forest soils should be considered as appropriate for new development provided that natural resources (wetlands, steep slopes, important wildlife habitats, etc.) are protected to the greatest extent feasible. Adopt flexible open space zoning regulations to accommodate development in such non-prime areas.

Allow for and encourage farmland protection, such as through the transfer of development rights (when available), purchase of development rights, conservation easements and the clustering of non-farm development.

<i>Residential Goal</i>
Retain the Township's rural and scenic character, while providing for suitable housing opportunities for the varied economic and lifestyle needs of the residents.

Policies

Designate areas appropriate for all types of residential development including single family, multi-family, condominium, low to moderate-income rental complexes, and extended care facilities.

Encourage participation with Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) programs along with other local efforts to rehabilitate substandard housing and to provide needed moderately priced housing in the Township.

Preserve the integrity of existing residential areas by protecting them from intrusion of incompatible uses.

Actions

Require a buffer between Residential uses and other more intensive uses.

<i>Community Services, Facilities & Recreation Goal</i>
Maintain and improve the Township facilities, programs and systems consistent with the community needs and the ability to finance the improvements.

Policies

Emergency service vehicles will have unimpeded access to all developed areas of the Township.

The Township will encourage the use of new technology that may be developed which could replace the individual septic system and, consequently, may not require the expansion of municipal sewer services.

Actions

Provide for the development of public, non-motorized recreational trails for hiking, bicycling, cross-country skiing and horseback riding.

Provide for public access on Lake Charlevoix, including a boat launch.

Pursue acquisition of land for a Township Park.

<i>Transportation Goals</i>
Maintain all roads in a safe condition and work cooperatively with the County Road Commission.
New subdivisions and site condominium projects should be served by interior access roads.
Rural and scenic roads through agricultural areas, open areas and forested lands should be maintained as such.
Encourage and support the expansion of non-motorized, multi-use pathways throughout the Township.
Encourage business development and redevelopment to occur in designated development areas along the U.S. 31 corridor.

<i>Corridor Goals - Boyne City Road and U.S. 31</i>
U.S. 31 corridor and Boyne City Road will be preserved as scenic roadways.
Provide practical and functional locations and regulations for commercial and industrial development that minimize their impact on adjacent land uses and maintain high levels of aesthetic character.
Encourage business development and redevelopment to occur in designated development areas along the U.S. 31 corridor.

Policies

Township officials will strive to identify a limited number of appropriate locations for future commercial and industrial development.

Township officials will strive to assure that future commercial and industrial development does not adversely impact the normal use and enjoyment of adjacent land by requiring appropriate setbacks, buffers and landscaping.

Township officials will strive to prevent the establishment of strip commercial development and will avoid spot-zoning practices.

Actions

Limit access along the U.S. 31 Corridor and Boyne City Road to prevent commercial and industrial strip development and encourage clustering.

Existing commercial and industrial areas will be accommodated by zoning regulations and practices that support the retention and/or redevelopment of existing business uses and the establishment of new business uses as designated by this plan.

Adopt zoning regulations and practices that require the incorporation of design features for business development that assure the preservation of the Township's scenic and rural character.

Incorporate driveway standards into Zoning Ordinance to facilitate improved emergency access.