



The community's Master Plan presents, in words and graphic illustrations, a picture of what the Township intends to achieve in the next 10 to 20 years. Long-range land use planning requires a policy basis to help guide future growth and development, and assist local officials to make difficult development decisions in a consistent and thoughtful manner. The analysis of existing conditions, evaluation of historical trends, and involvement of the community's citizens in the Visioning process allows the Township to identify changes that it hopes to promote for the betterment of Lenox's future. These sought after changes take the form of goals and objectives statements. These statements become the foundation of the planning process and provide the basis for more detailed policies or strategies intended to allow the Township to implement its long-range plan.

Goals are typically very general statements about the quality and character of the community that are not very easily quantified or measured. Goals must be translated into measurable **objectives** that can be prioritized and pursued by instituting specific **strategies** that will be followed. The goals and objectives proposed are intended to result in a specific quality and character for the community. This will be achieved by following strategies designed to permit measurable progress toward achieving the Township's objectives. These strategies will have to balance the public purposes inherent in planning

for the long-range future of the community with the rights of private property owners to develop an appropriate use of their land.

The following illustration provides a graphic depiction of the relationship between the vision program, goals, objectives, and strategies. The goals, objectives, and strategies that follow were developed from a synthesis of the public involvement during the Vision Sessions and the input collected through citizen surveys.



COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Lenox Township must protect its agricultural character, while encouraging growth and development that will establish a new identity that is uniquely its own.

GOAL: The Township would benefit from efforts to preserve and protect its remaining natural features and resources particularly in the northwest sections of the Township.

Objective: Retain the natural character of Lenox Township that was largely responsible for its attraction as a residential destination.

Strategies:

- Promote the incorporation of important natural systems into the Township’s future network of parks and residential developments.
- Encourage all new development to include open space features.
- Encourage developers to protect wildlife corridors through their projects by incorporating them into open spaces and clustering homesites outside of natural areas.

- Encourage the preservation of agricultural buildings, such as barns, silos, original farmsteads and the like.
- Identify and protect important “viewsheds” during the development review and approval process.
- Maintain natural features within Township parks, in addition to providing active recreation facilities, and plan for their interconnection with other open spaces.
- Support the Macomb Agricultural Purchase of Development Rights Committee in its efforts to promote purchase of development rights within the County.
- Encourage visual screening of home sites along major roadway corridors.

Objective: Re-evaluate zoning districts to ensure that commercial, industrial and higher density residential development can occur in areas of the Township where appropriate road access and utilities are available.

Strategies:

- Promote a pattern of development that is based upon the natural capacity of the land to support homes and other uses.
- Provide for adequate transitions between land uses using buffering and screening and other site design techniques to promote compatibility between uses.

GOAL: The Township would benefit from having its own center of civic functions, cultural facilities, shopping opportunities, and entertainment activities.

Objective: Pursue a consolidation of civic, cultural, shopping and entertainment facilities in a Town Center for Lenox.

Strategies:

- Promote the establishment of a Town Center Plan to identify the preferred location and characteristics of the Township’s Downtown or Activity Center.
- Encourage an effective mix of business and entertainment uses through the establishment of a Downtown Development Authority, Principal Shopping District, or similar program.
- Ensure the availability of adequate utility services to support the creation of a vibrant township activity center.
- Pursue the continued enhancement of the existing Civic Center and Township Offices incorporating historical and recreational elements.
- Work with the Road Commission of Macomb County and individual developments to provide a transportation network appropriate to the needs of a vibrant township activity center.

AGRICULTURE

Despite pressure for development, agriculture remains the primary surface use of land in Lenox Township with roughly 9,440 acres under cultivation.

GOAL: Maintain agricultural land as a key component of the Township's long-range plan for future land use.

Objective: Encourage slow, controlled growth that does not cause premature conversion of agricultural land.

Strategies:

- More intensive development should be permitted only in areas where sewer, water, adequate road access or other infrastructure is presently available or planned.
- Reevaluate uses permitted in the Zoning Ordinance to insure that only those compatible with agriculture are allowed in Agricultural Zones.
- Ensure that commercial, industrial and higher density residential uses are located in areas where they will not preempt prime agricultural uses.
- Reevaluate agricultural zoning requirements to accommodate farm diversification and support entrepreneurial agriculture.

Objective: Institute development options that are compatible with farming and other agricultural activities.

Strategies:

- Maintain low development densities and allow clustering of home sites in agricultural districts in order to keep farming a viable option in these areas.
- Encourage cluster development and establish maximum depths along the existing road frontage, so that farming activities can be continued on the interior acreage.

NATURAL FEATURES & NATURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION

Lenox Township's natural features are valuable assets and demand preservation both for their inherent value and for the enjoyment of future generations of Township Residents.

GOAL: Preserve the Township's remaining natural areas, including woodlands, wetlands, flood plains, stream corridors and wildlife habitat.

Objective: Incorporate natural features and resources within development plans for new residential neighborhoods, parks and recreation facilities, as well as non-residential land uses.

Strategies:

- Encourage resource preservation by allowing transfer of residential densities.
- Provide open space, nature reserves, and wildlife corridors as features of Township parks development.
- Promote the maintenance of wildlife habitat corridors through adjoining residential and non-residential developments.
- Protect the Township's remaining wooded areas by encouraging new developments to combine natural features with developed areas.

Objective: Preserve and protect existing natural areas such as the Salt River, East Branch Coon Creek, Highbank Creek, Deer Creek and similar waterways.

Strategies:

- Establish setbacks or buffer zones around wetlands and creek edges.
- Prevent development within floodways by establishing wetlands and floodplain protection through long-range planning and zoning controls.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Lenox Township is feeling the pressures of the demands of the regional housing market and the potential impacts of proposed residential projects on the community's established neighborhoods, schools, parks and shopping services.

GOAL: Provide for the housing needs of the Township's existing and future residents in a manner that promotes the long-term stability and quality of the community's neighborhoods and housing stock.

Objective: Provide affordable, ownership opportunities that include detached single-family homes, attached condominiums and rental apartments as alternatives to leased land communities.

Strategies:

- Evaluate whether the Zoning Ordinance embraces unique, state-of-the-art forms of ownership housing types.

- Promote residential projects that assist young, first-time homebuyers and mature, retired residents to stay in Lenox Township when their housing needs change.

Objective: Plan for “city” housing types in areas where municipal sewer and water services are either existing or planned.

Strategies:

- Evaluate the Township’s Zoning Ordinance and Map to determine whether residential zoning categories and locations are consistent with the availability of services and infrastructure.
- Require large minimum lot sizes or low average densities in the “country” areas of the Township where utility services are not planned.

Objective: Encourage all residential areas to reflect the rural character of the Township.

Strategies:

- Enforce land division regulations that provide design standards, local review, and approval requirements for all property splits.
- Require residential developments to preserve the natural features of each site, such as woodlands, wetlands, and natural drainage facilities.
- Identify historical homes within the Township so that efforts can be made to preserve them.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Township lacks a single, identifiable center of retail or commercial activity.

GOAL: Promote the development of the Gratiot Corridor so that it avoids an unplanned mix of business uses in favor of a planned corridor of low intensity businesses and services complimented by residential uses.

Objective: Capitalize on recent development momentum to attract an appropriate concentration of retail, office and residential uses to the corridor.

Strategies:

- Create a new zoning district that permits a mix of office, retail and residential uses with design standards and criteria that will achieve the desired character for this corridor.

- ❑ Evaluate the Zoning Ordinance to review the characteristics and amount of retail development permitted throughout the corridor.

GOAL: Limit new retail development nodes to those emerging new residential areas that lack neighborhood-based shops and services.

Objective: Identify emerging neighborhood areas that are not well served by existing concentrations of shops and services.

Strategies:

- ❑ Promote a grouping of satellite centers as the corridor's inherent form, rather than a continuous strip of disconnected individual sites and mixed businesses.
- ❑ Review applications for rezoning based on demonstrated need for new shops and services in neighborhoods that are under-served.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Lenox Township relies upon its industrial base as an important source of revenue for municipal services. Industrial growth must be sensitive to its impact on the community's neighborhoods and thoroughfares.

GOAL: Encourage the continued development of high value industrial and technology uses that provide well-paid jobs and positive revenue for municipal services.

Objective: Allow future commercial and industrial development only in areas where utility services are available.

Strategy:

- ❑ Evaluate commercial and industrial rezoning applications based on timing, the Township's need for services and jobs, and the need for a properly balanced tax base.

Objective: Allow industrial development only in fully improved and platted light industrial parks.

Strategy:

- ❑ Plan for utility extensions that open the door to Class A, industrial park development in place of haphazard development of scattered sites.

Objective: Improve the appearance of existing industrial and commercial areas, especially along the Gratiot Corridor.

Strategies:

- Discourage the construction of “pole barns” as principal industrial and commercial buildings.
- Encourage increased use of landscaping and sensitive site design.

Objective: Prevent the traffic impact of industrial development from reducing the level of service on Township thoroughfares below that which is acceptable and desirable.

Strategies:

- Plan for industrial development in corridors designed to handle employee and shipping/receiving traffic.
- Ensure proper connection between industrial service roads and the regional highway network, avoiding routes adjoining residential neighborhoods.

Objective: Promote industrial development design that is sensitive to potential impacts on adjoining or nearby residential areas.

Strategies:

- Discourage residential development adjacent to industrial zones and uses to support industrial uses while minimizing conflicts between such incompatible uses.
- Require appropriate screening of industrial activities to protect residential character.
- Introduce transitional uses or open space between industrial parks and residential neighborhoods.

TRAFFIC & CIRCULATION

As Lenox Township continues to grow and develop, its network of County Roads must be maintained and improved as necessary to meet the community’s needs in terms of safety and capacity.

GOAL: Achieve a network of major thoroughfares that are capable of accommodating anticipated traffic at an acceptable level of service, and in a safe and efficient manner.

Objective: Work with the Road Commission for Macomb County and individual developers to implement safety and capacity improvements consistent with the anticipated impact of all major new developments.

Strategies:

- Identify those roads which have projected volumes or functional classification that justifies paving, as well as those that should remain gravel.
- Establish traffic impact analysis thresholds, and requirements for traffic study content, as site plan standards in the Zoning Ordinance.
- When development impacts are shown to reduce safety or level of service beyond acceptable standards, implement capacity and safety improvements as a condition of new development approval.

PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICES

Public utility service policy provides the Township with its most powerful tool for directing the community's future growth and development.

GOAL: Provide an appropriate level of public facilities and services in a manner that supports the long-range Land Use Plan of the Township and that is within a fiscally responsible framework.

Objective: Properly time utility extensions so that development pays its fair share of the cost.

Strategies:

- Concentrate utility services in areas where growth is most likely in order to reduce their cost.
- Time development approvals to coincide with the logical extension of the Township's utility systems.
- Require developments to bear their fair share of system costs, such as providing adequate on-site storage for storm water, or extending sewer and water mains to the next abutting property line.

Objective: Provide police, fire protection, and emergency medical services that adequately meet the Township's current and future needs.

Strategies:

- The Township will provide facilities and services consistent with the needs of its planned population.

- The Township will follow the most cost-effective path when providing facilities and services.

Objective: Do not allow public facilities to intrude upon or preempt the natural environment.

Strategy:

- Encourage public utilities to locate their major transmission lines within existing utility and transportation corridors.

PARKS & RECREATION

Lenox Township continues to pursue plans for state-of-the-art parks and recreation facilities and programs to serve all segments of its population in a manner that is physically convenient to its neighborhoods.

GOAL: Provide appropriate access to local parks, open space, and other recreation activities identified by Township residents as lacking at the local level.

Objective: Pursue the continued development and implementation of a regular cycle of 5-year Recreation Plans.

Strategies:

- Consider results from the recreation survey when deciding to develop new recreation facilities and programs.
- Develop programs and services geared toward all segments of the Township's population.

Objective: Evaluate the service areas of the Township's existing parks and orient new park development toward under-served areas and neighborhoods.

Strategies:

- Target new park site acquisition to under-served areas.
- Seek out sites for new parks that can incorporate a natural feature or protect an important natural resource.

Objective: Use general fund monies and State/Federal grants to provide recreation facilities that will benefit present and future Township residents.

Strategy:

- Make cost-effective decisions, keeping in mind the initial cost of recreation facilities, as well as the yearly maintenance expense.

TAX & EMPLOYMENT BASE

The Township's current tax base is strong and should be maintained. A well-balanced tax base provides the Township with the financial resources necessary to deliver a comprehensive range of municipal services.

GOAL: Continue to balance the Township's tax base by providing opportunities for high value and high technology industrial uses, office, and research facilities that offer new employment opportunities and produce more revenue and demand less in municipal services than retail and residential uses.

Objective: Promote the development of high value, non-residential development that generates additional professional and technical job opportunities.

Strategies:

- Evaluate the Township's Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance and utility plans to identify areas suitable for high value industrial and research type uses in addition to providing for new non-residential development that meets the service needs of Township residents.
- Ensure that high technology and research oriented industries will find a corporate campus setting in which to locate near symbiotic neighbors.

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