

MEMORANDUM

To: Washington Township Planning Commission

From: Joe Tangari, AICP, Jill Bahm, AICP

Date: 3/1/2023

Re: Objectives

Introduction

At the last Planning Commission study session, we established our vision statement and goals for the Master Plan. This memo elaborates on the goals with a set of objectives. A companion memo outlines a roadmap for completing the draft plan.

Vision Statement

As a reminder, this is the vision statement for the plan.

As Washington Township continues to grow, new development will occur in a planned manner that respects the history, natural environment, and rural character of the community even as it acknowledges the need for progress. Washington Township's future will be built on a strong, diverse economy, housing opportunities that serve an array of needs, a high quality of life, and well-managed growth.

Goals and Objectives

Draft objectives have been established under each goal. Note that the "quality of life" goal has been removed from the list of goals and incorporated into the vision statement.

1. Economic Development. The Township will work to make itself attractive to businesses with the potential to provide professional employment opportunities, and plan to provide land for their facilities.
 - a. Track the supply of available land for industrial and commercial development, and ensure that an adequate supply exists.
 - b. Develop a comprehensive capital improvement plan that accounts for the provision and maintenance of critical infrastructure to support commerce.
 - c. Work with the County to target industrial investment in the Township.
 - d. Pursue the expansion of broadband service to underserved areas of the Township.
2. Access to Services. The Township will ensure that land is available for commercial development that provides services to residents in appropriate locations.
 - a. Concentrate commercial and industrial development in the primary non-residential corridors around Van Dyke and M-53, and along 26 Mile Road.

- b. Facilitate the redevelopment, modernization, or revitalization of older commercial properties to prevent gaps in service from arising.
 - c. Work with businesses via zoning and other methods to permit outdoor uses, such as dining terraces, in a way that balances commercial demands with aesthetic concerns and the needs of nearby residents for a peaceful environment.
- 3. Housing. The Township will provide and permit housing that serves a variety of needs, facilitates aging in place, and offers a high level of quality and aesthetic appeal.
 - a. The Township will ensure that its zoning ordinance facilitates the construction of senior housing.
 - b. The Township will permit state-licensed residential care facilities and make reasonable accommodations for housing the disabled.
 - c. Where possible, the Township will seek opportunities to provide housing that is attainable for a variety of income levels.
- 4. Environmental Quality. New development and redevelopment, when it occurs, will respect the natural environment and preserve its important features to the maximum extent possible.
 - a. Evaluate environmental regulations regularly to ensure they are accomplishing their stated goals.
 - b. Work to preserve a dark night sky by evaluating lighting regulations.
 - c. Protect the Clinton River watershed from pollution.
 - d. Evaluate the effectiveness and enforceability of the Township's performance standards for industrial and commercial development.
 - e. Use open space preservation options in the Zoning Ordinance to preserve wetlands and important woodlands and topography. Consider an ordinance to protect wetlands not regulated by EGLE.
 - f. Consider an ordinance to address repair and maintenance of septic fields.
 - g. Consider implementing more green infrastructure on development sites that will pre-filter runoff and reduce the burden on the storm sewer system.
 - h. Develop standards for the appearance and landscaping of detention ponds to make these feel more integrated into the natural topography of the site; strive for a more natural look to these site features.
 - i. Develop regulations for large solar energy installations.
- 5. Transportation. The Township's road and pathway system will provide safe and efficient circulation for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. Road design will respect the context of the area surrounding the road.
 - a. Prioritize public safety in all transportation planning.
 - b. Use traffic studies and development impact statements to manage the growth of traffic in high-development areas.
 - c. Consider ways to provide paths for vehicular travel that are not concentrated on principal thoroughfares.
 - d. Continue to require and built out the Township's multi-use pathway system.
 - e. Manage site access to improve traffic safety. Consider the role that cross-access and frontage or backage roads might play in reducing turning movements onto and off of major thoroughfares.
 - f. Encourage or require pedestrian connections between neighboring subdivisions, and pedestrian circulation within subdivisions.
 - g. Incentivize the provision of bicycle parking facilities in commercial and mixed-use developments.

- h. Engage with state and county authorities for improvements in access to and across M-53, with an emphasis on safety and mobility within the Township.
 - i. Continue to provide more access points and trailheads for the Macomb-Orchard Trail.
- 6. Community Facilities and Services. The Township will provide high-quality facilities and services that meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses.
 - a. Plan to accommodate coming growth by acquiring land for future facilities, understanding areas of future demand, and engaging in capital improvement planning for those future facilities.
 - b. Maintain an up-to-date Parks and Recreation Plan and monitor opportunities for grants to improve or acquire new facilities. Consider small area parks as well as larger facilities that serve the whole Township, and continue to work with Bruce Township and Village of Romeo on collaborative efforts to provide recreation facilities.
 - c. Continue to provide information to residents in an open, transparent manner through the Township website.
- 7. Unique Places. The Township will recognize its unique areas and sites, including its historical, agricultural, natural, and principal commercial or mixed use areas and support their future development in accordance with each of their needs and characters.
 - a. Support the survival of existing agricultural uses by enabling reasonable agribusiness and agritourism uses and supporting farm-to-table uses.
 - b. Encourage the development of relationships between the local agricultural community and business community, to support local food production.
 - c. Protect the Township's historical assets, including historic buildings, districts, and scenic areas.
 - d. Invest in improvements to the Village Center area that will help create a cohesive district. Consider establishing a DDA and TIF district to finance and direct these improvements.
- 8. Harmonious Development. Where more intense uses are developed close to less intense uses, screening, setbacks, and other measures will be used to ensure that potential negative impacts are minimized.
 - a. Review landscaping and screening standards, including wall and fence requirements, to ensure that they truly provide an effective buffer between disparate uses, and that landscaping treatments are consistent throughout the Township.
 - b. Ensure that screening landscaping is maintained in good health, and replaced when necessary.
 - c. Where natural vegetation can be preserved to provide a buffer between uses, regulations should encourage and facilitate that preservation.
 - d. Analyze the physical relationships between zoning districts and provide for transitional zoning where possible.
 - e. Review lighting, noise, and nuisance regulations to reduce the impact of more intensive uses on less intensive uses.