

Chapter 7:

Community Goals and Objectives

This chapter sets forth the Township's goals and objectives to guide future development. In analyzing the data compiled in the earlier chapters it is very clear that Leland Township faces a number of development pressures. The population is growing and development is occurring at an accelerated rate. It is unlikely that all of the new development will be occupied with year-round residences. However, if these residential properties were to be occupied year-round at the same average number of persons per household as the year round population for the Township, the overall Township population would increase significantly, and thus could dramatically alter the character of Leland Township. However, by encouraging new development to conform to community-based standards and guidelines, both the rural character and the natural resources of the Township can be protected to the fullest extent.

7.1 Physical Opportunities and Constraints

As discussed in Chapter 3, Natural Resources, land in Leland Township is not uniformly suitable for development. The physical characteristics of Leland Township, including steep slopes, high risk erosion areas, critical dune areas, shoreline areas, wetlands, as well as active farmland, and open space are many of the features that contribute to the unique character of Leland Township and need to be considered as land use regulations are reviewed or revised to provide for development options.

7.2 Community Survey Results

A Township citizen survey was conducted in 2005. A summary of the 2005 survey results are presented below. The survey and findings are provided in Appendix A.

Leland Township mailed out 1,470 survey questionnaires to Township property owners. A total of 614 surveys were completed and returned, for a return rate of 41.8 percent. This is considered an excellent response rate for mailed surveys.

Response Demographics: Forty-eight percent of the survey respondents are year-round Leland Township residents. The majority of the respondents, 54.9% indicated they have lived in the Township for more than 20 years.

The vast majority of the survey respondents (72.1%) indicated preference for "planned and limited growth". Regarding services, over 87% of the respondents consider the road maintenance to be adequate and over 65% consider the park facilities to adequate. The survey respondents were divided regarding the need for an expanded sewer district (41.2% in support, 32.1 % neutral, and 26.7% disagree). Additionally, the respondents were divided on the issue regarding how to finance a sewer expansion, if pursued.

The survey respondents answered some open-ended questions and identified likes, dislikes and concerns. Respondents generally agree the township should work to preserve undeveloped shoreline, slow the conversion of farmland to residential or other developed uses and limit ridgeline development.

When asked which best describes open space, the following terms were selected in order of importance, (1) scenic view, (2) Forest, (3) Pastures/Meadows, (4) Farmland, (5) Wetland, (6) Parks/Sports fields. One of the main areas of concern identified in the survey was the protection of open space to prevent overdevelopment.

The survey also collected responses to questions covering a number of different topic areas. The general topics included natural resources, recreation, transportation, housing and economics. The response information is summarized by topic area and included as Appendix B to this Plan.

7.3 Land Use Goals and Objectives

The 2005 survey discussed above identified some general concerns of the Township residents. A steering committee comprised of Township residents was appointed to work with the planning consultant and assist the Planning Commission in the preparation of the Township land use goals and participate in the application of these goals in the preparation of the Future Land Use plan included in this Township Master Plan. These identified issues are expressed here as general land use goals, objectives and action steps. More specific goals and objectives follow and are grouped by topic.

7.3.1 Land Use Goal

Retain the Township's rural and scenic character, by preserving farmlands, forestland, open space and through encouraging growth/development in and around the villages of Leland and Lake Leelanau.

Objectives and Action Steps

- A. Encourage retention of farmland, forestland and open space through coordinated land use plans and related regulations.
- B. Promote the health, safety and welfare of Township residents by coordinating the uses of land with the provision of efficient public services.
- C. Facilitate communication with adjacent Townships.
- D. Control density and location of new development, to discourage sprawl, by encouraging protection of open space and scenic views in the Township, including but not limited to the use of appropriate conservation easements, conservation development techniques, cluster development, purchase or transfer of development rights and special use permit zoning ordinance provisions.
- E. Provide multiple options for land development, while allowing continued agricultural use, protection of significant natural features and important views.
- F. Provide options that encourage new construction to be sited below the ridgeline and encourage the preservation of existing wooded areas or planting of trees to provide filtered views.
- G. Explore and pursue methods to preserve the rural character of road corridors, scenic heritage routes, and scenic vistas within view of these corridors.
- H. Work with the Heritage Route Committee to enhance the corridors through Leland Township.
- I. Identify and promote the preservation and enhancement of significant historic, archaeological, and scenic features.
- J. Continue to pursue junk or blight elimination regulations.
- K. Reduce light and noise pollution through ordinances.
- L. Provide sign regulations to protect the Township's rural character and scenic beauty.
- M. Identify active agricultural areas for pursuit for Purchase Development Rights (PDR) program.
- N. Update zoning ordinance to encourage development consistent with the relevant guidelines of the New Designs for Growth Guidebook, potentially through the form based zoning.

7.3.2 Agricultural Support Goal

Encourage opportunity for innovative programs to support continued agricultural activities.

Objectives and Action Steps

- A. Recognize that the presence of agricultural lands adds to the scenic and rural character of the Township, as well as its economic health.
- B. Allow for the pursuit of economically feasible options for continued agricultural use of active farmland, such as value-added agriculture, local agri-tourism, and agricultural support services.
- C. Allow for and encourage farmland protection, such as through the transfer of development rights, purchase or lease of development rights, conservation easements and the clustering of non-farm development.
- D. Encourage establishment of public and private local facilities through which local resource-based products can be sold.

7.3.3 Natural Resource Goal

Utilize guidelines that encourage the protection and preservation of water quality and environmentally sensitive areas.

Objectives and Action Steps

- A. Identify and protect sensitive environmental areas to be preserved such as critical sand dunes areas, high risk erosion acres, woodlands, wetlands, steep slopes, and other environmentally sensitive areas; and identify land that may not be suitable for development because of natural limitations for the erection of structures or septic systems (such as hydric soils, flood plains, steep slopes, or areas at high risk of shoreline erosion).
- B. Encourage the acquisition of sensitive environmental areas by public agencies or non-profit organizations for the purpose of permanent preservation.
- C. Establish regulations for land development in sensitive environments, which permit development in a manner which balances natural resource protection and the use of the property. Require new developments to mitigate negative impacts on the natural environment where appropriate.
- D. Encourage the continuation, coordination and areas of cooperation with watershed management programs for Leland Township and adjacent areas.
- E. Encourage Leland Township sewer system upgrades, and explore system expansions. Promote alternative systems and septic system inspections to protect water quality of lakes. Coordinate future sewer planning with the Sewer Commission, Planning Commission and the Land Use Plan.
- F. Explore and pursue the possible establishment of a Lake Leelanau sewer district jointly with other jurisdictions, to protect the water quality of the lake.
- G. Protect water quality through waterfront usage and development standards in the zoning ordinance.
- H. Preserve the natural vegetation of shoreline areas and encourage planting of native trees and shrubs through greenbelt regulations.
- I. Identify and protect the Lake Leelanau Narrows as a sensitive environment.
- J. Work cooperatively with the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore for the protection of North Manitou Island and continued designation and management as a "Wilderness" area.

7.3.4 Residential Goal

Provide for a broad range of housing opportunities, which respond to the varying economic, family, and lifestyle needs of area residents and tourists.

Objective and Action Steps

- A. Discourage development in areas identified on the Agricultural Considerations Areas map (Figure 6-2) and direct higher density residential development to be located in and around the villages, through zoning regulations and incentives.
- B. Provide a range of development options in the zoning regulations, such as Conservation Design Subdivisions and Planned Unit Developments, to encourage a mix of housing types in a single development.
- C. Develop residential development options, to allow for clustering of new development within land parcels so as to encourage preservation of open space.
- D. Protect the residential neighborhoods from intrusion of incompatible uses.
- E. Due to aging population in Leland Township, provide zoning options to meet the needs of senior citizens, such as a senior citizen center, group facilities and accessory dwellings.
- F. Explore the possibility of an expedited zoning review process for Affordable Housing projects.
- G. Encourage exploration of affordable housing options.

7.3.5 Economic Goals

Strengthen the local economy through the development and retention of enterprises, which provide employment opportunities.

Preserve Leland Township as a tourist-friendly community.

Objectives and Action Steps

- A. Work cooperatively with local economic development groups to retain and attract business.
- B. Allow for a diversity of commercial and light industrial development, with year-around employment opportunities, including non-tourism based ventures.
- C. Direct intensive commercial development to the villages and encourage mixed-use land use patterns and character.
- D. Review both positive and negative impacts of the local tourism industry and work to resolve any identified issues, such as traffic, parking and the need for restroom facilities.
- E. Work with the Heritage Route Committee to enhance the corridors through Leland Township.
- F. Establish zoning provisions to allow for knowledge-based businesses in close proximity to the Villages where support services are more available.
- G. Revise the zoning to provide opportunities for the continuation of the current land uses and activities in Fishtown.

7.3.6 Infrastructure & Public Service Goal

Plan Township facilities and services consistent with the community needs.

Objectives and Action Steps

- A. Encourage the pursuit of a Capital Improvements Planning process, (CIP) to aid implementation of this Master Plan.
- B. Compare and coordinate proposed plans for the expansion and improvement of public services and facilities with county and adjacent township plans.
- C. Promote safe pedestrian and bicycle travel by developing and designating non-motorized pathways and routes.
- D. Encourage pedestrian oriented design and amenities in Villages, including review of service drives, curb cuts, and crosswalk location; additional sidewalks; public restroom facilities, way-finding signs, and site furniture such as benches and trash receptacles.
- E. Maintain zoning regulations to ensure adequate equipment access by emergency services (police, fire and EMS).
- F. Continue to support countywide recycling and solid waste management programs, and encourage commercial recycling.
- G. Explore the possibilities for coordinated planning, establishment and development of a multi-jurisdictional sewer district surrounding Lake Leelanau, (the lake, not just the Village).

7.3.7 Recreational Goal

Provide and maintain recreational lands and facilities for residents and visitors.

Objectives and Action Steps

- A. Support the development of community recreation and sports facilities for all age groups.
- B. Maintain, improve or expand Township parks to accommodate growing residential and tourist use.
- C. Continue to maintain public lake access and boat launch facilities.
- D. Promote the development or designation of non-motorized pathways and bike routes, to connect villages and recreational areas in the Township.
- E. Encourage designation/development of trails to direct snowmobile traffic off county road right-of-ways.
- F. Maintain an up-to-date Michigan DNR approvable Community Recreation Plan to specify current needs and be eligible for grant funding for recreation projects.

7.3.8 Community Institutions (Public facilities, churches)

Maintain vital community centers by supporting the needs of existing and new community institutions in the Villages.

Objectives and Action Steps

- A. Encourage shared parking for facilities that are primarily used during “off peak” business hours.