

Chapter 2: Our Vision

Planning Goals, Objectives and Policy Statements

One of the most important parts in a master plan is the Goals and Objectives chapter. This chapter will be referred to over the next several years to guide the Charter Township of Flint in decisions concerning the future development of the community. Understanding Goals and Objectives are important in utilizing a master plan. It should also be noted that although the approach toward attaining a goal may change over time, the goal should be more permanent, although goals may change when the community's vision of its preferred future changes. The association between goals and objectives is defined as follows;

A goal is a destination. It is the vision established by the community of where we see the township over the next several years. Goals are only general statements that do not define how to specifically obtain the desired goal. Policies guide the community in its effort to reach a desired goal.

An objective statement is a guide that lays out the way in which a goal may be obtained. Objective statements serve the governing body as a guide that will direct their decision making to obtain the goals selected by the community.

General Goals

Following are general township goals and objectives followed up with land-use specific goals and objectives

Goal No. 1 The Charter Township of Flint will serve as a model community for other townships to emulate.

Objectives

- a) Strengthen a positive community image by ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance residential quality of life.
- b) Maintain the diverse population by providing housing and employment opportunities for all socio-economic groups in the Township.
- c) Promote public involvement and continued access to local government through the use of public forums.
- d) Require consistently high quality as regards all forms of new development or redevelopment.

Goal No. 2 Use the Master Plan as a framework through which the Township changes and prospers, promoting the general public health, safety and welfare above specific interests.

Objectives

- a) Encourage public knowledge of the Plan by involving citizens in review and periodic revisions to the Plan at a minimum of every five (5) years.
- b) Ensure use of the plan as the principal public policy document as regards community change by incorporating planning policies and plans into regulatory ordinances such as zoning, subdivision control, condominium control, land divisions and utility ordinances.

Goal No. 3 Manage community development and redevelopment to assure compatibility among land use and protection of existing neighborhoods.

Objectives

- a) Review land development plans to assure neighborhood needs are addressed
- b) Coordinate infrastructure improvement with new land development or redevelopment.
- c) Promote efficient use of infrastructure.
- d) Develop an established list of improvement projects and project locations that are targeted priorities for the township.
- e) Use the township's resources for incentives and a source of funding to stimulate development and redevelopment of priority areas.
- f) Utilize the resources of the Genesee County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to encourage development and redevelopment of contaminated sites.
- g) Look at re-establishing Tax Increment Financing Districts within the township

Residential Land Use

Goal No. 1 Create a diversified and balanced mixture of land uses that will support the economic vitality, tax base, and livability of the township.

Objectives

- a) Accommodate an acceptable amount of commercial and office development in various forms to balance the needs of immediate neighborhoods, the community as a whole, and the region.
- b) Encourage the gradual elimination of non-conforming uses in accordance with the plan.
- c) Promote a wide variety of housing types and styles to assure affordability for families of all income levels.
- d) Encourage development of innovative site designs, such as cluster housing with integrated open spaces, as a means of assuring lasting neighborhood identity and stability.
- e) Implement rental housing code and regular inspection program.

Goal No. 2 Provide a solid residential base that will accommodate expansion of existing neighborhoods, protect residential areas from incompatible land uses, offer a variety of housing opportunities, and support the needs of township residents.

Objectives

- a) Identify locations for additional residential development to expand the boundaries of existing residential neighborhoods and promote in-fill redevelopment.
- b) Offer nodes of neighborhood commercial uses in the township to service the residents that will live there.
- c) Distinguish opportunities for high density residential that could include attached single family and more innovative housing options in areas of concentrated development.
- d) Encourage a mix of dwelling types and densities, where they can be supported by the available infrastructure and services.
- e) Consider incentives such as Planned Development Districts and flexible zoning to offer developers opportunities to provide an affordable mix of housing (including the creation of additional senior housing), through a mixture of densities, housing unit types, and size of housing units.
- f) Stabilize residential areas by preventing the encroachment of incompatible land uses into residential neighborhoods and eliminating non-conforming uses.
- g) Buffer single-family residential areas from other uses, including medium and high density residential uses.

Goal No. 3 Ensure that new residential development is of the highest possible quality, protects the character of established neighborhoods and provides an appropriate balance of housing types based upon demographic trends and projections.

Objectives

- a) Examine the established area and bulk requirements for residential zoning districts and determine whether districts with similar regulations and uses could be combined.
- b) Provide for continued residential growth within the ability of the community to economically provide the necessary infrastructure and services.
- c) Encourage new developments that set aside open space/recreational areas.
- d) Require that new development be compatible with the character of existing, nearby neighborhoods. New housing should consist of a mix of housing sizes and designs so that a more interesting and integrated built-form is created.
- e) Identify locations for specialized senior housing.
- f) Encourage and maintain the level of safety of all residential neighborhoods. Street lighting, landscaping of public spaces, sidewalks and paths, orientation of dwelling “front rooms”, and other residential design features can be effective in discouraging crime.
- g) Maintain an environment that encourages pride of ownership and contributes to an affordable and easily marketable housing stock that helps in making Flint Township an attractive place to live. Consider implementing an awards program that recognizes landscaping and upkeep of individual residential properties or blocks. Encourage the retention of existing housing stock since this contributes to the attractiveness of residential neighborhoods. Promote the development of infill housing and dwellings of various sizes and design to provide a housing mixture for a range of costs.

Office Land Use

Goal No. 1: Provide office uses in appropriately located areas for convenience and safety, and maximize design potential to create aesthetic business areas in the township that reflect the intended character of the area.

Objectives

- a) Create an office development pattern that is grouped together with commercial uses in strategic locations on main roads that creates limited concentrations of activity, rather than uncontrolled non-residential growth along the corridors.
- b) Allow mixed use within nodes that integrate high density residential development into neighborhood office areas.
- c) Ensure office developments reflect the quality and character of the township through site standards that ensure proper circulation, access management, landscaping and other elements.

Commercial Land Use

Goal No. 1 Encourage and facilitate an appropriate mixture of high quality commercial uses that will provide services and goods for citizens.

Objectives

- a) Provide suitable sites for the growth of business.
- b) Actively recruit potential specialty-type commercial uses.
- c) Utilize office districts as a means of transition between more intense uses and residential neighborhoods.
- d) Enhance the image of heavily traveled business corridors (Corunna Rd., Miller Rd., Linden Rd. and Bristol Rd.).
- e) Develop stronger landscaping guidelines/requirements

Industrial Land Use

Goal No. 1 Provide an organized pattern of various industrial land uses that is flexible for business development, properly minimizes negative impacts such as noise and truck traffic, is located away from residential areas, and reflects a quality design image of the township.

Objectives

- a) Maintain industrial development to areas in the township separated from residential to minimize impacts and improve the quality of life for residents.
- b) Orient industrial development on major roadways to ensure direct routing for truck traffic to main routes that can handle high volumes and heavy cargo.
- c) Target and recruit specific industrial development to capitalize on accessibility to the transportation network. Create a special land use and/or zoning district to be located near Bishop Airport to provide expansion opportunities for the transportation oriented business as well as high-tech research and development businesses.
- d) Designate areas for strictly light industrial to serve as a transition or land use buffer between more intense industrial and other areas of the township.
- e) Expand the diversity of industrial-type uses through offering planned areas for office research uses that serve as high intensity office areas that likely require trucking, indoor storage, and light assembly or testing.
- f) Apply design standards to new industrial developments to ensure land use compatibility and quality design. Examples of standards to address include outdoor storage screening, orientation of overhead doors, landscape enhancements, setbacks, and long-lasting building materials.
- g) Develop enforceable performance standards that regulate the levels of noise, fumes, and other impacts of industrial development. Include these standards in the zoning ordinance and ensure that proposed industrial developments demonstrate conformity with them.
- h) Planned industrial centers are favored over scattered site industrial locations.
- i) Participate in regional economic development programs aimed at reducing unemployment and attracting new industries.

Natural Features

Goal No. 1: Encourage integration of natural features into site development as aesthetic and functional features, while protecting their quality as well as residents' quality of life.

Objectives

- a) Encourage open space areas in new developments proportionate to the scale, character and type of project.

- b) Encourage developers to integrate existing natural features into new developments
- c) Site plan requirements should incorporate standards for preservation of on-site natural features.
- d) "Best management practices" for storm water control should be incorporated into site plan standards, including bio-retention and other techniques to protect surface and groundwater resources.
- e) Intensive land development should be located away from sensitive natural areas or provide significant separation and buffers.

Community Facilities and Services

Goal

Provide facilities and services adequate to serve the needs of all Township residents.

Objective

- a) Place new community facilities in locations convenient to the citizens they are intended to serve.
- b) Provide police and fire protection service levels that reflect reasonable needs of residents and businesses of the Township.
- c) Continue to support a diversity of cultural resources to serve the residents of the township
- d) Encourage the use of Low Impact Development principles to reduce the burden on storm sewer capacities.
- e) Pursue funding sources to assist with the cost of facility improvements as needed.
- f) Expand police and fire protection as needed as the township continues to grow.
- g) Link future development to expansion of township services adequate to meet the demand for these services (police, fire, sewer and water).
- h) Identify opportunities for cooperation with adjacent jurisdictions and local agencies to provide services cost-effectively and establish development partnerships or shared resource partnership opportunities.
- i) Create incentives for developments to provide recreation, trails and other neighborhood-based amenities.

Transportation

Goal No. 1 Create a safe and coordinated transportation system adequate to support existing and future land uses, and economic vitality that balances traffic needs with actions to ensure the township remains an attractive place to live.

Objectives

- a) Direct more intense land uses, especially those that generate significant truck traffic, to locations where capacity is available and negative impacts on residential areas are minimized.
- b) Coordinate transportation issues of regional significance with area communities, the Genesee County Road Commission, and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

Goal No. 2 Improve the visual appearance of the township through street and related improvements.

Objectives

- a) Work with MDOT, local business/tourism organizations and other communities along the I-69/I-75 corridors to improve views and add aesthetic design features along I-69 and I-75.
- b) Consider the character of the surrounding areas as part of the design of new streets or major improvements.
- c) Upgrade the appearance of key corridors through streetscape improvements, and upgraded site design standards

Goal No. 3 Provide alternatives to the automobile through multi-modal transportation options which connect neighborhoods, schools, the senior library, businesses and other activity areas.

Objectives

- a) Pursue development of a continuous system of pathways and sidewalks as an alternative travel mode and to improve the township's quality of life.
- b) Require pedestrian and transit oriented site design including links between the public and on-site pedestrian systems.

Recreation and Open Spaces

Goal No. 1 Incorporate open space elements into the land use pattern in a manner that creates an interconnected, unified system and provides green space, recreation, and/or protects sensitive natural features as applicable.

Objectives

Afford residents of all ages ample opportunities to experience passive open spaces and participate in recreation programs

- a) Activity support efforts of the Township's Parks and Recreation Commission to provide parkland and open spaces within the Township.
- b) Coordinate with the Parks and Recreation Commission in all development reviews in which future parkland may be available and/or needed.
- c) Require open space in new development proposals.
- d) Participate in implementation of regional greenway systems (especially along the Flint River and Swartz Creek).
- e) Develop guidelines for open space to ensure it meets key goals.
- f) Link through a comprehensive pathway system.

Quality of Life

Goal No. 1 Improve the quality of life for residents of the township, including both visual appearance and level of services.

Objectives

- a) The Planning Commission will insist on high quality of design attendant to all public and private investments in the Township.
- b) The Planning Commission will actively promote and support quality of life initiatives, such as neighborhood preservation measures or redevelopment, street enhancements,

parkland acquisition, integrated open spaces within new residential developments, a township wide pedestrian system with neighborhood emphasis, quality urban design and other physical improvements designed to improve visual and functional aesthetics of the Township.