



Fresh Coast Planning

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MEMORANDUM

To: Robinson Township Planning Commission
From: Gregory L. Ransford, MPA
Date: April 26, 2022
Re: Revisions to Chapter Five and Chapter Six, Newly Drafted Chapter Seven, Eight, and Nine

Pursuant to your direction at your April 12, 2022 meeting, attached is a revise draft of Chapter Five – Commercial Uses and M-231 Commercial Uses, a revised draft of Chapter Six – Industrial Uses and M-231 Industrial Uses, newly drafted Chapter Seven – Recreational and Public Facilities, newly drafted Chapter Eight – Public Utilities, and newly drafted Chapter Nine – Transportation.

As you will recall, you directed us to perform the following:

Chapter Five – Commercial Uses and M-231 Commercial Uses

- Introduction
 - Insert language regarding marinas
 - Paragraph One Statistics – Add the “no change” data
 - Paragraph Four Statistics – Add “no change” data
- First Primary Growth Recommendation – Change the “s” in “right-f-was” to a “y”
- M-231 Goals
 - Revise start of each bullet point to blend with entire chapter

Chapter Six – Industrial Uses and M-231 industrial Uses

- Introduction
 - Combine “agree” and “strongly” agree as well as “disagree” and “strongly disagree” for question 26 data
 - Add light and heavy manufacturing data from question 29
 - Strike “a” before “rezoning”
 - Fix punctuation and missing language, clean-up second sentence of the second paragraph
 - Revise mining conclusion language to indicate a rezoning is necessary to a district consistent with the Plan and is compatible with the area
- General Industrial Goal and Recommendation
 - Modify to match Dark Sky language in Chapter 5 (also tweaked in Chapter 5)
- M-231
 - Goals – Revise start of each bullet point to blend with entire chapter
 - Recommendations – Change “staking” to “stacking”

We have performed these revisions accordingly and believe the changes to the chapters achieve your direction. As always, additions are shown in bold text and deletions are shown in strikethrough text from the previous versions of the Chapters. Also attached are clean versions of the chapters.

A-2 Agricultural Service Zoning District

As you know, we recently discussed the inclusion of language to connect to the A-2 Agricultural Service Zoning District within the Agricultural Chapter of the Master Plan. After

reviewing the Agricultural Chapter, we believe the Goals and Recommendations language as it is currently drafted serves both the Agricultural Zoning District and the Agricultural Service Zoning District. Ultimately, we will provide the connection between the Agricultural chapter and both zoning districts when we draft the Zoning Plan portion of the Master Plan. For your reference, a copy of the “approved” Agricultural Chapter is attached.

Chapters Seven Through Nine

We believe the proposed drafts of Chapters Seven through Nine are self-explanatory. However, it is important to note that we drafted Chapter Eight – Public Utilities to be limited based on the utility plans of the Township, the survey results, and our general discussions. We will be prepared to revise, as necessary, if we were too restrictive in our conclusions.

As always, proposed additions are shown in bold text and deletions are shown in strikethrough text. We also reference language in parentheses that was maintained from the current Master Plan. Also attached is a clean version of the chapter.

Planning Commission Considerations

As the Planning Commission deliberates regarding the proposed revisions to Chapter Five and Chapter Six, and the newly created Chapters Seven, Eight, and Nine, we believe the following warrant your review and consideration. They are listed in no particular order:

- Whether the public utility language is too restrictive
- The use of “shall” versus “should”

We will be prepared to discuss these items further at your May 10, 2022 meeting. If you have any questions, please let us know.

GLR
Principal Planner

Attachments

cc: Frank Johnson, Supervisor

Chapter Five

Commercial Uses & M-231 Commercial Uses

Introduction

While the majority of commercial land use area within the Township is located along Lake Michigan Drive, limited commercial area exists within the northern area of the Township. These areas are recognized as neighborhood commercial or general business areas, **including marinas**, and generally are established for the purpose of allowing small convenience commercial businesses designed for the use of neighborhood residents. In that regard, respondents to the Master Plan Update Community Survey are almost equally split on whether additional neighborhood commercial development should occur, ~~or less~~, with approximately thirty-four percent (34%) supporting some additional development, ~~and~~ approximately thirty-three percent (33%) supporting less development, **and approximately twenty-eight percent (28%) indicating no change.**

Although some areas of neighborhood commercial may be added in future revisions of the Master Plan as population and development increases the demand for such services, future commercial land use in Robinson Township is primarily intended to be limited to the Lake Michigan Drive and 120th Avenue area as well as the Lincoln Street and M-231 highway area.

M-231 Highway

Construction of the M-231 highway through the heart of Robinson Township has given rise to concerns over development pressure and appropriate land use at access points along the route. Given this, the related language herein addresses planning, growth, and development issues for land in the vicinity of the M-231 intersections with Lake Michigan Drive and Lincoln Street in an effort to balance preservation of prized community assets with economic growth opportunities, as well as consolidate and focus future development to planned and prioritized target areas. These provisions were first adopted by the Township in the year 2015 for the same purpose.

As a result of the Master Plan Update Community Survey, the Township found that approximately thirty-five percent (35%) of respondents desire some additional commercial development on Lake Michigan Drive, whereas approximately twenty-six percent (26%) desire less development. **Approximately twenty-nine percent (29%) support no change in development.**

As a result of public workshops, the Master Plan Update Community Survey, and various planning meetings we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for general commercial uses and commercial uses along the M-231 highway area within Robinson Township. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

General Commercial Uses

Goals

- Preserve and protect the natural resources of the area that provide rural character
- Maintain the rural character of the community
- Commercial facilities should provide citizens with accessibility and diversification
- Commercial uses should be well integrated with surrounding development through appropriate landscaping, greenbelts, adequate access, parking, and pedestrian pathways
- Outdoor lighting shall be unobtrusive
- Provide protection of groundwater sources, particularly within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

Recommendations

- Commercial uses shall provide sufficient off street parking and loading facilities, and minimize traffic congestion
- Commercial uses shall provide sufficient pedestrian access
- Commercial "strip" development should be discouraged to minimize traffic and land use problems
- Interconnect service drives to improve traffic distribution and to promote proper access management
- The negative effects of glare on neighboring properties and abutting streets shall be controlled by regulating the height, location, and intensity of lights and dimming lighting levels after business hours
- Encourage groundwater preservation practices for new developments in accordance with Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

Strategies

- Strengthen requirements for site design, which address but are not necessarily limited to, building materials, location and design of refuse storage areas, location and screening of service and delivery areas, parking lot design, lighting, landscaping, pedestrian safety, and site access
- Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which would negatively impact the Recharge Area

M-231 Commercial Uses

The basis for the following Goals and Recommendations is available within the Appendix.

Goals

- ~~To~~ Establish a pattern of land use which will promote the highest degree of health, safety, and general welfare for all segments of the community
- ~~To~~ Preserve and protect the natural resources of the area, while maintaining the necessary balance between the social and economic needs of the Township
- Preserve the rural landscape and protect the existing rural community character and atmosphere
- Prioritize agricultural, environmental, and natural resource protection
- Ensure a safe multi-user transportation network, through sidewalks, pathways, crossings, and access management
- Capitalize on the opportunities for future parks, recreational facilities, and trails
- **Ensure Outdoor lighting shall be is unobtrusive and “Dark Sky” compliant**
- Promote harmonious and organized development consistent with adjacent land uses and ensure high quality site and building design that contributes to the character of the community
- Restrict consideration of sewer infrastructure to planned primary development areas
- Provide protection of groundwater sources, particularly within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

Primary Growth Area Recommendations

- Highway Commercial properties should provide for:
 - Buildings that are designed in clusters rather than in-line
 - Buildings that do not exceed two stories in height
 - Building design that achieves rural character
 - Multi-tenant buildings designed to appear to be divided into smaller elements by indentations, different building materials, architectural treatments, etcetera
 - Street corner buildings shall:
 - Be located as close to the right-of-ways as practicable
 - Provide a civic space adjacent to the corner
 - Contain distinctive architectural features that promote pedestrians
 - Landscaping that softens the visual impact of buildings and creates a defined sense of arrival along the street edge
 - Few driveways with the interconnection of service drives to improve traffic distribution and to promote proper access management (Concept from Map 2)
 - Shared parking facilities located in the side or rear yards
 - Safe pedestrian circulation internally and along right-of-ways
 - Decorative lighting that is “Dark Sky” compliant
 - Loading docks and overhead doors in non-street facing facades
- Community Commercial properties should provide for:

- Multi-tenant buildings designed to appear to be divided into smaller elements with building articulation, architectural elements, change of color and materials, etcetera
- Buildings that do not exceed two stories in height
- Building fronts facing the right-of-way
- No more than two wall materials (not including foundation or trim)
- Separation between materials as primarily horizontal
- Heavier façade materials below lighter façade materials
- Stone material, if any, as the secondary or accent material
- Landscape parking areas
- Exterior site buffering to soften visual impacts
- Safe pedestrian circulation internally and along right-of-ways
- Public spaces and open spaces
- External lighting that is “Dark Sky” compliant
- Internal driveway connection to shared drives or interior roadways
- Loading docks and overhead doors in non-street facing facades
- Encourage groundwater preservation practices for new developments in accordance with Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

Primary Growth Area Strategies

- Maintain or strengthen design standards provided in Chapter 18 of the Zoning Ordinance
- Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which would negatively impact the Recharge Area

Secondary Growth Area Recommendations

- Properties should provide for:
 - Safe pedestrian and bicycle circulation internally and along right-of-ways
 - Storefronts that are oriented to address and enhance public areas and pedestrian pathways
 - Shared parking and interconnect service drives to improve traffic distribution and to promote proper access management
 - Building facades parallel to the street with major roof ridges either parallel or perpendicular to the street to be consistent with established patterns, and street level porches to emphasize entrances and create a public realm
 - Barn like structures that do not exceed one to one and a half stories
 - Civic buildings and public gathering places that reinforce community identity
 - Buildings placed between Lincoln Street and associated parking areas, with parking in the rear or sides of buildings
 - Reduced or zero front yard setback to bring uses closer to the street, to create neighborhood scale
 - External lighting that is “Dark Sky” compliant

- Encourage groundwater preservation practices for new developments in accordance with Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

Secondary Growth Area Strategies

- Maintain or strengthen design standards provided in Chapter 17 of the Zoning Ordinance
 - Consider standards to promote pedestrian safety
- Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which would negatively impact the Recharge Area

Chapter Five

Commercial Uses & M-231 Commercial Uses

Introduction

While the majority of commercial land use area within the Township is located along Lake Michigan Drive, limited commercial area exists within the northern area of the Township. These areas are recognized as neighborhood commercial or general business areas, including marinas, and generally are established for the purpose of allowing small convenience commercial businesses designed for the use of neighborhood residents. In that regard, respondents to the Master Plan Update Community Survey are almost equally split on whether additional neighborhood commercial development should occur, with approximately thirty-four percent (34%) supporting some additional development, approximately thirty-three percent (33%) supporting less development, and approximately twenty-eight percent (28%) indicating no change.

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M-231 Highway

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Recommendations

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M-231 Commercial Uses

The basis for the following Goals and Recommendations is available within the Appendix.

Goals

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- Prioritize agricultural, environmental, and natural resource protection
- Ensure a safe multi-user transportation network, through sidewalks, pathways, crossings, and access management
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Primary Growth Area Strategies

- Maintain or strengthen design standards provided in Chapter 18 of the Zoning Ordinance
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Secondary Growth Area Recommendations

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Secondary Growth Area Strategies

- Maintain or strengthen design standards provided in Chapter 17 of the Zoning Ordinance
 - Consider standards to promote pedestrian safety
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Chapter Six Industrial Uses & M-231 Industrial Uses

Introduction

Limited industrial development exists within the Township. Previously, areas to be mined commercially were recognized as an industrial zoning use for this purpose. Given that mining rights within the State of Michigan can potentially allow mineral extraction anywhere within the Township, the Mining District within the Robinson Township Zoning Ordinance is an interim district that permits and regulates mining activities. ~~and~~ **When the mineral extraction is complete, the property requires a rezoning to a zoning district that is consistent with this Master Plan, that is compatible with the surrounding zoning districts and uses, and supports the capability of the subject property to accommodate the available uses of the zoning district when the mineral extraction is complete.** Therefore, areas of mining and any post-excitation use is not necessarily appropriate for industrial activity. **Ultimately,** industrial uses should be located on large tracts of land suitable for such development, and in close proximity to major highways and railroads.

When respondents to the Master Plan Update Community Survey were asked whether more industries are desired within the Township, approximately thirteen percent (13%) agreed or strongly agreed, whereas approximately sixty-six percent (66%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Moreover, when asked what type of industrial development, if any, survey respondents wanted to see over the next ten years, approximately twenty-two percent (22%) indicated more, approximately forty-one percent (41%) indicated less, and approximately thirty-four percent (34%) indicated no change related to light manufacturing and warehouse. When survey respondents were asked the same question regarding heavy manufacturing, approximately six percent (6%) indicated more, approximately fifty-eight percent (58%) indicated less, and approximately thirty-three percent (33%) indicated no change

~~[INSERT SURVEY STATISTICS]~~

M-231 Highway

Construction of the M-231 highway through the heart of Robinson Township has given rise to concerns over development pressure and appropriate land use at access points along the route. Given this, the related language herein addresses planning, growth, and development issues for land in the vicinity of the M-231 intersection with Lake Michigan Drive. In an effort to balance preservation of prized community assets with economic growth opportunities, as well as consolidate and focus future development to planned and prioritized target areas, ~~these~~ **these** provisions were first adopted by the Township in the year 2015 for the same purpose **and have been strengthened by the current Master Plan.**

~~[INSERT SURVEY STATISTICS]~~

As a result of public workshops, the Master Plan Update Community Survey, and various planning meetings we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for general industrial uses and industrial uses along the M-231 highway area within Robinson Township. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

General Industrial Uses

Goals

- Preserve and protect the natural resources of the area that provide rural character
- Maintain the rural character of the community
- Encourage industrial uses to locate on large, environmentally suitable tracts of land within close proximity to major transportation corridors and protected from conflicting land uses
- Industrial uses should be oriented in a fashion that encourages a “park” design and discourages “strip” development
- Outdoor lighting shall be unobtrusive **and “Dark Sky” compliant**
- Industrial uses should be well integrated with surrounding development through appropriate structures, landscaping, greenbelts, adequate access, parking, and pedestrian pathways
- Provide protection of groundwater sources, particularly within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

Recommendations

- Parking and outdoor storage should be set back and buffered by landscaping or other rural character mechanisms
- Interconnect service drives to improve traffic distribution
- Signs, architecture, and site features such as fences, should reflect a rural character
- **Lighting shall be “Dark Sky” compliant.** The negative effects of glare on neighboring properties and abutting streets shall be controlled by regulating the height, location, and intensity of lights and dimming lighting levels after business hours.
- Encourage groundwater preservation practices for new developments in accordance with Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

Strategies

- Strengthen requirements for site design, which address but are not necessarily limited to, building materials, location and design of refuse storage areas, location and screening of service and delivery areas, parking lot design, lighting, landscaping, pedestrian safety, and site access

- Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which would negatively impact the Recharge Area

M-231 Industrial Uses

The basis for the following Goals and Recommendations is available within the Appendix.

Goals

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- Capitalize on the opportunities for future parks, recreational facilities, and trails
- **Ensure** Outdoor lighting shall be unobtrusive and "Dark Sky" compliant
- Promote harmonious and organized development consistent with adjacent land uses and ensure high quality site and building design that contributes to the character of the community
- Restrict consideration of sewer infrastructure to planned primary development areas
- Encourage septic systems and wells transitioning to package wastewater systems and regional water and sewer service
- **Promote** Activities shall that do not create noise, vibration, odor, fumes, or electrical or communications interference off the premises
- Provide protection of groundwater sources, particularly within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

Recommendations

- Industrial facilities should adhere to architectural standards that ensure their compatibility with the commercial uses and reflect the standards of quality desired for the Township
- Limit outdoor activities to reduce noise, odor, and secondary effects of industrial use outside
- **Lighting shall be "Dark Sky" compliant. The negative effects of glare on neighboring properties and abutting streets shall be controlled by regulating the height, location, and intensity of lights and dimming lighting levels after business hours.**
- Mitigate the impact of outdoor activities to conflicting uses through site design
- All manufacturing, processing, and packaging operations shall occur within an enclosed building

- Access should be from a main interior road directly to 120th Avenue rather than individual driveways or connectivity to Lake Michigan Drive
- The site shall be designed to ensure proper vehicle stacking, circulation, and turning movements
- Buildings should be limited to one and a half stories within the height limits defined in the Zoning Ordinance
- Access points should be sufficiently separated from retail traffic
- The perimeter of industrial developments should be adequately buffered when abutting non-commercial/industrial land
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Strategies

- Maintain or strengthen design standards provided in Chapter 18 of the Zoning Ordinance
 - Landscaping and buffering requirements should be adopted
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Chapter Six

Industrial Uses & M-231 Industrial Uses

Introduction

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- The site shall be designed to ensure proper vehicle stacking, circulation, and turning movements
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Chapter Two Agricultural Uses

Introduction

The amount of land which is vacant or used for agriculture has played a significant role in the development of the character of the Township. The large, open areas create a feeling of spaciousness and provide a tranquil surrounding. Agriculture is one of the major reasons that many of the current residents moved to the Township and continues to be a factor in attracting new residents.

Agriculture continues to be the dominant use of land within the Township and is widely appreciated by residents. Sixty-three percent (63%) of current residents within the Township who responded to the Master Plan Update Community Survey indicated that they agree that it is extremely important to preserve agricultural lands within the township. In addition, sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents indicated that the Township should promote agricultural growth. Further, sixty-nine percent (69%) of respondents indicated that the Township should support and promote agricultural land conservation programs. While public support is strong to prevent the development of agricultural properties, Agricultural Stakeholder meetings indicated that some farmers recognize that they may want to convert their properties to other uses in the future. It must be recognized that farming can be as much of an industry as manufacturing. Farming provides jobs and a product for sale in the marketplace and creates a significant portion of income for Michigan residents. Acknowledging farming as an essential industry can have a profound effect on the programs developed for its preservation and continuation. The agricultural resources of Ottawa County and Robinson Township are particularly significant in Michigan.

As a result of the Agricultural Lands public workshop, the Master Plan Update Community Survey, and various planning meetings we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for agricultural uses in Robinson Township. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Preserve agricultural lands
- Protect agricultural lands from urban and suburban encroachment
- Use of prime and/or uniquely suited agricultural lands as farms should be encouraged
- Promote agricultural services and uses as a means of preserving agriculture
- Preserve rural character
- Support agricultural operations

- Recognize the interest of some farmers to transition their land to other uses in the future

Recommendations

- Urban encroachment on agricultural lands should be prevented, especially on those prime and/or uniquely suited agricultural lands
- Farms of the Township are considered an asset and efforts should be made to protect them from unnecessary destruction
- Encourage crop production and livestock use to minimally impact existing natural resources
- Encourage proper soil management, to ensure soil conservation and to prevent erosion and sedimentation
- Encourage all farm building construction to be designed in a central or same location within an agricultural property to preserve the most farmland as possible and minimally impact existing open spaces
- Encourage the design of a “no-cut” zone along right-of-ways to protect the natural landscape, maintain open space and rural character, as well as preserve the natural drainage system to provide soil erosion and sedimentation control and reduce flooding
- Encourage groundwater preservation practices for new development that are in accordance with Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

Strategies

- Adopt or enhance appropriate ordinances to preserve natural features
- Investigate ordinance language to support wedding venues or similar ancillary uses of existing agricultural operations
- Reduce or investigate the minimum setback for all farm buildings, so as to protect the greatest amount of open space and or farmland as possible, while avoiding conflict with adjacent uses
- Encourage the preservation of any trees within the right-of-way and within 30 feet of the right of way, so as to protect the natural vegetation (any naturally deceased trees may be removed) and drainage system
- Strengthen ordinance language to prohibit private roads in the Agricultural Zoning District or on prime farmland
- Investigate a millage or alternative Township program for land acquisition to provide for the preservation of rural character and or open space in perpetuity
- [TBD] Create a development boundary that protects prime and unique farmland soil by generally restricting residential neighborhood development, commercial development, and industrial development within that area
- Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which would negatively impact the Recharge Area

Chapter Seven Recreational and Public Facilities

Introduction

Robinson Township ~~is home to a~~ ~~has one~~ State Park as well as a 45 acre Township ~~owned parcel that is viewed as a developing Park site.~~ Publicly owned recreation areas comprise about 735 acres of the Township. ~~These facilities are listed below.~~ **(Moved from Chapter 3, page 23), which include the Bass River State Park, the Riverside County Park, the Township Park, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources boat launch, the Grand Haven Public Schools Nature Preserve, playgrounds Robinson Elementary, and privately owned facilities such as marinas and a golf course (Moved and reworded from Chapter 3, pages 23 and 24).**

In addition, the Ottawa County 2011 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan presents a conceptual plan for the Grand River Greenway. This concept plan presents a vision that links greenway lands with ~~a~~ hard-surface multi-use trails. **(Moved from Sub-Area Plan, page 41)** The greenway system goal is to provide a full greenway connection between Ottawa and Kent Counties ~~in three "character" segments, two of which are shown on the inset map above.~~ **(Moved from Sub-Area Plan, page 41)**

When respondents to the Master Plan Update Community Survey were asked if they would like to see recreational lands change over the next ten years, approximately fifty percent (50%) indicated additional recreational land is desired and approximately forty-four percent (44%) indicated that the current recreational land is adequate. Related, when respondents were asked if they were willing to pay for the acquisition of lands for recreational purpose through a property tax millage, approximately sixty-three percent (63%) indicated support whereas approximately twenty-eight percent (28%) did not provide support. Further, when asked the same question regarding multi-use pathways, approximately sixty-one percent (61%) supported a millage whereas approximately thirty-one percent (31%) were opposed. Lastly, over eighty-two percent (82%) of respondents indicated that access to recreational opportunities in the township is excellent or good.

As a result of public workshops, the Master Plan Update Community Survey, and various planning meetings we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for recreation and public facilities within Robinson Township. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Park and recreational sites should be readily available to the people of Robinson Township, and be aligned with established regional need **(Moved from Chapter 4, page 31)**

- Consideration to protect ~~should be given to~~ those lands exhibiting the greatest need for environmental preservation and management **should be paramount (Moved from Chapter 4, page 31)**
- ~~To insure~~ **Ensure** that public facilities and services can be sufficiently upgraded and expanded before new demands are placed upon those facilities and services **(Moved from Chapter 4, page 32)**
- **Create and preserve public access to and viewsheds of the Grand River**
- **Improve water quality of the Grand River**
- Preserve and protect the natural resources of the area that provide rural character **(Maintained from previous draft chapters)**
- Maintain the rural character of the community **(Maintained from previous draft chapters)**
- Provide protection of groundwater sources, particularly within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative **(Maintained from previous draft chapters)**

Recommendations

- Consideration should be given to recreational opportunities for all age groups during all seasons of the year **(Moved from Chapter 4, page 31)**
- Lighting shall be "Dark Sky" compliant. The negative effects of glare on neighboring properties and abutting streets shall be controlled by regulating the height, location, and intensity of lights and dimming lighting levels after business **or open** hours. **(Maintained from previous draft chapters)**
- **Maximize the utilization of public buildings and grounds for multi-functional services**
- Encourage groundwater preservation practices for new developments in accordance with Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative **(Maintained from previous draft chapters)**

Strategies

- Strengthen requirements for site design, which address but are not necessarily limited to, building materials, location and design of refuse storage areas, parking lot design, lighting, landscaping, pedestrian safety, and site access **(Maintained from previous draft chapters)**
- Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which would negatively impact the Recharge Area **(Maintained from previous draft chapters)**
- **Create a Township Recreation Plan to be eligible for state and federal recreation funding programs (Currently exists?)**
- Encourage citizen participation to determine needed and desired improvements and expansions to public facilities and recreation
- Strengthen ordinance provisions to reduce flooding, control runoff, and improve water quality of the Grand River and its tributaries

- Strengthen ordinance provisions to require developers to provide road easements for and construction of pedestrian/bicycle paths

Chapter Seven

Recreational and Public Facilities

Introduction

Robinson Township is home to a State Park as well as a 45 acre Township Park. Publicly owned recreation areas comprise about 735 acres of the Township, which include the Bass River State Park, the Riverside County Park, the Township Park, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources boat launch, the Grand Haven Public Schools Nature Preserve, playgrounds at Robinson Elementary, and privately owned facilities such as marinas and a golf course.

In addition, the Ottawa County 2011 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan presents a conceptual plan for the Grand River Greenway. This concept plan presents a vision that links greenway lands with hard-surface multi-use trails. The greenway system goal is to provide a full greenway connection between Ottawa and Kent Counties.

When respondents to the Master Plan Update Community Survey were asked if they would like to see recreational lands change over the next ten years, approximately fifty percent (50%) indicated additional recreational land is desired and approximately forty-four percent (44%) indicated that the current recreational land is adequate. Related, when respondents were asked if they were willing to pay for the acquisition of lands for recreational purpose through a property tax millage, approximately sixty-three percent (63%) indicated support whereas approximately twenty-eight percent (28%) did not provide support. Further, when asked the same question regarding multi-use pathways, approximately sixty-one percent (61%) supported a millage whereas approximately thirty-one percent (31%) were opposed. Lastly, over eighty-two percent (82%) of respondents indicated that access to recreational opportunities in the township is excellent or good.

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Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Park and recreational sites should be readily available to the people of Robinson Township, and be aligned with established regional need
- Consideration to protect those lands exhibiting the greatest need for environmental preservation and management should be paramount
- Ensure that public facilities and services can be sufficiently upgraded and expanded before new demands are placed upon those facilities and services
- Create and preserve public access to and viewsheds of the Grand River

- Improve water quality of the Grand River
- Preserve and protect the natural resources of the area that provide rural character
- Maintain the rural character of the community
- Provide protection of groundwater sources, particularly within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

Recommendations

- Consideration should be given to recreational opportunities for all age groups during all seasons of the year
- Lighting shall be "Dark Sky" compliant. The negative effects of glare on neighboring properties and abutting streets shall be controlled by regulating the height, location, and intensity of lights and dimming lighting levels after business or open hours.
- Maximize the utilization of public buildings and grounds for multi-functional services
- Encourage groundwater preservation practices for new developments in accordance with Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

Strategies

- Strengthen requirements for site design, which address but are not necessarily limited to, building materials, location and design of refuse storage areas, parking lot design, lighting, landscaping, pedestrian safety, and site access
- Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which would negatively impact the Recharge Area
- Create a Township Recreation Plan to be eligible for state and federal recreation funding programs (**Currently exists?**)
- Encourage citizen participation to determine needed and desired improvements and expansions to public facilities and recreation
- Strengthen ordinance provisions to reduce flooding, control runoff, and improve water quality of the Grand River and its tributaries
- Strengthen ordinance provisions to require developers to provide road easements for and construction of pedestrian/bicycle paths

Chapter Eight Public Utilities

Introduction

While several public water and sanitary sewer systems are available to serve the Township, the locations of these systems do not necessarily align with intended land use development. Currently, limited service to property owners exists on systems that are not owned by the Township. During the planning period, the Township does not seek to own and operate any system. The current Water Supply System Master Plan identifies a need to expand water service in Section 6 and Section 7 of the Township due to groundwater issues. This Plan does not intend to promote public water service outside of those Sections.

M-231 Highway (Moved from Sub-Area Plan, pages 19-20)

The ability to provide utilities affects the development potential of land. Development sites within the primary growth area are not suited for larger scale on-site treatment of sewer wastewater because of poorly drained soils, a high groundwater table and the higher potential for environmental contamination. While sewer system extensions are recommended for primary growth areas, Township officials recognize the potential conflict between sewer service in the primary growth area and pressure to further extend sewer lines into valued agricultural and rural areas. Only utility extensions to locations best suited for development and consistent with the managed growth intent of the growth boundary should be supported. Therefore, the primary growth area, which is also the utility service area, shall mark the separation between rural and commercial/industrial areas.

Sewer extensions from adjacent townships should only be sized to accommodate the primary growth area in addition to a reasonable amount of extra capacity, should boundaries be re-evaluated in the future. Additionally, decisions concerning sewer options should consider cost, distance, capacity and land use. There are three potential options to provide sewer to the primary growth area, each with various capacities to serve future development:

- West Central Ottawa County Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Grand Haven-Spring Lake
- Allendale Township

Acknowledging that on-site treatment is not the desired long-term solution to sewer water treatment, when approving Special Land Uses (SLUs) within the Primary Growth Area under the future overlay district requirements, landowners shall agree to a Special Assessment Agreement. This agreement will be a precursor to a future special assessment district that will fund construction of the sewer system, as sewer infrastructure may not be feasible or cost-effective prior to a critical mass of development. As properties develop and construct on-site treatment facilities, systems shall be built to be expandable and ultimately convertible to connect to a public system.

Related, when respondents to the Master Plan Update Community Survey were asked if the Township should require developers to provide public water in order to support development, approximately sixty percent (60%) indicated “yes,” whereas approximately twenty-one percent (21%) indicated “no.” In addition, when respondents were asked if they were willing to pay for the extension of public water to facilitate commercial development, approximately seventy percent (70%) indicate “no,” whereas approximately seventeen percent (17%) indicated “yes;” to facilitate industrial development, approximately eighty-one percent (81%) indicated “no,” whereas approximately nine percent (9%) indicated “yes” and; to facilitate residential development, approximately sixty percent (60%) indicated “no” to water and sixty-four percent (64%) indicated “no” to sewer, whereas approximately twenty-seven percent (27%) indicated “yes” to water and twenty-two percent (22%) indicated “no” to sewer. Moreover, when respondents were asked if they would be willing to incur an increase in taxes to pay for public water if it meant better quality water for existing residences, approximately fifty-seven percent (57%) indicated “no” and approximately twenty-eight percent (28%) indicated “yes.”

As a result of public workshops, the Master Plan Update Community Survey, and various planning meetings we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for public utilities within Robinson Township. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Concentrate public utility extensions to avoid sprawl and to protect farmland

Recommendations

- Prohibit the extension of public water utilities outside of Section 6 and Section 7 for the purpose of plats, condominiums, Planned Unit Developments, Open Space Developments, and similar developments
- Limit the extension of public sanitary sewer utilities to the Primary Growth Area only

Strategies

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Strategies

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Chapter Nine Transportation

Introduction

Roadway function, efficiency and safety in Robinson Township can be furthered by defining a roadway classification system and planning and designing these facilities for their specific purpose. A functional system or hierarchy of roads provides for movement of traffic as well as access to specific sites. This hierarchy will range from principal arterials such as Lake Michigan Drive, which primarily serves cross-county movement, to local subdivision streets that provide access to individual homes. This system defines the roles of each street, in terms of operational requirements; which is translated into planning, management and physical design features. **(Moved from Sub-area Plan, page 49)**

Principal Arterial

The Lake Michigan Drive corridor is a major roadway through the heart of Ottawa County and serves a vital function toward connecting Robinson Township with developed areas in Grand Haven **Charter** Township, Allendale **Charter** Township and further east to **the City of** Grand Rapids and Kent County in general. ~~Scattered commercial development has occurred over the years, mainly resulting from the higher traffic counts and easy access.~~ **(Moved from Sub-area Plan, page 49)**

Collectors

The collectors serve to funnel traffic from local subdivision streets in residential neighborhoods to the arterials. Collectors also afford access to abutting properties. Many individual subdivisions contain one or more collector streets that carry traffic from the local streets and connect with adjacent neighborhoods. **(Moved from Sub-area Plan, page 49)**

Local and Private Streets

These interior streets provide access to abutting property and homes. These roadways are generally short and discontinuous and only provide connection to one or two collector streets. **(Moved from Sub-area Plan, page 49)**

(Note to Planning Commission – there is a Transportation map reflecting these types of roads that will be carried over into the Appendix)

Over eighty-six percent (86%) of respondents to the Master Plan Update Community Survey indicated that the ease of travel between destinations within the Township was “excellent” or “good.” Approximately seventy percent (70%) of respondents indicated that planning for future road congestion was “important” or “very important.”

Coupled with vehicle transportation, providing for pedestrian friendly means of travel are important to achieve complete streets within the Township.

Approximately seventy percent (70%) of respondents to the Master Plan Update Community Survey indicated that multi-use pathways for pedestrians, bicycles, and or equestrians are appropriate when adjacent to agriculture within the Township. Slightly over fifty percent (50%) of respondents indicated that adding bike lanes and paved shoulders along roads were “important” or “very important,” coupled with approximately twenty-four percent (24%) indicating that those were “somewhat important.”

As a result of public workshops, the Master Plan Update Community Survey, and various planning meetings we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for transportation within Robinson Township. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- ~~The Access points for traffic flow on Lake Michigan Drive M-45, as a State Highway, should not be restricted by excessive ingress/egress driveway aprons for commercial enterprises (Moved from Chapter 4, page 36)~~
- An emphasis on interconnected drives and streets should be promoted so that internal trips can be made without compelling drivers to enter and exit the main road multiple times
- A system of integrated shared use paths should be promoted for all new developments to provide safe walking routes to surrounding uses

Recommendations

- Interconnect service drives to improve traffic distribution and to promote access management
- Minimize traffic disruptions on arterials, while keeping through traffic off of the local residential streets
- Promote a multi-model transportation system, encompassing bicycles, pedestrian, and automobile traffic

Strategies

- Require the layout of new residential developments to be extensions of existing neighborhoods, where possible. This should apply to roadway extensions and pedestrian pathways, to ensure interconnected neighborhoods.
- Consider adopting access management regulations, shared driveway regulations, and pedestrian pathway requirements within the Zoning Ordinance for all commercial and industrial uses

Complete Streets Plan

In 2010, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act was amended to require that Master Plans account for “all legal users” of the transportation system within the municipality. The amended Act, in part, states that the Master Plan must include, “among other things, promotion of or adequate provision for 1 or more of the following: (i) A system of transportation to lessen congestion on streets and provide for safe and efficient movement of people and goods by motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal users.” MCL 125.3807(2)(d).

This Chapter of the Robinson Township Master Plan, Chapter Nine – Transportation, as well as other provisions throughout the plan regarding pathways, roadway improvements, and lessening roadway congestion, identify key means to implement complete streets. As a result, the Township is compliant with this amendment.

Chapter Nine Transportation

Introduction

Roadway function, efficiency and safety in Robinson Township can be furthered by defining a roadway classification system and planning and designing these facilities for their specific purpose. A functional system or hierarchy of roads provides for movement of traffic as well as access to specific sites. This hierarchy will range from principal arterials such as Lake Michigan Drive, which primarily serves cross-county movement, to local subdivision streets that provide access to individual homes. This system defines the roles of each street, in terms of operational requirements; which is translated into planning, management and physical design features.

Principal Arterial

The Lake Michigan Drive corridor is a major roadway through the heart of Ottawa County and serves a vital function toward connecting Robinson Township with developed areas in Grand Haven Charter Township, Allendale Charter Township and further east to the City of Grand Rapids and Kent County in general.

Collectors

The collectors serve to funnel traffic from local subdivision streets in residential neighborhoods to the arterials. Collectors also afford access to abutting properties. Many individual subdivisions contain one or more collector streets that carry traffic from the local streets and connect with adjacent neighborhoods.

Local and Private Streets

These interior streets provide access to abutting property and homes. These roadways are generally short and discontinuous and only provide connection to one or two collector streets.

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respondents indicated that adding bike lanes and paved shoulders along roads were “important” or “very important,” coupled with approximately twenty-four percent (24%) indicating that those were “somewhat important.”

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Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Access points for traffic on Lake Michigan Drive should not be restricted by excessive driveway aprons
- An emphasis on interconnected drives and streets should be promoted so that internal trips can be made without compelling drivers to enter and exit the main road multiple times
- A system of integrated shared use paths should be promoted for all new developments to provide safe walking routes to surrounding uses

Recommendations

- Interconnect service drives to improve traffic distribution and to promote access management
- Minimize traffic disruptions on arterials, while keeping through traffic off of the local residential streets
- Promote a multi-model transportation system, encompassing bicycles, pedestrian, and automobile traffic

Strategies

- Require the layout of new residential developments to be extensions of existing neighborhoods, where possible. This should apply to roadway extensions and pedestrian pathways, to ensure interconnected neighborhoods.
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