

CHAPTER 7 - GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

At this point in the planning process, analysis has been made of the important features of the Township which give the community its identity. However, because of the close proximity of the Township to the City of Gaylord, its capacity to be recognized as an independent entity with its own particular characteristics has never been fully realized. Yet, this proximity of Livingston Township to the City of Gaylord and neighboring townships offers opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation and coordination. The full realization of community identity and intergovernmental cooperation are the primary concepts that will guide future development goals for Livingston Township.

Both shortcomings as well as positive community features have already been identified. The following sections will utilize these characteristics in setting goals, objectives, and policies.

Goals are very broad descriptions of the overall desirable characteristics the people of Livingston Township wish to attain within the planned period. Goals indicate the general direction the Township wishes to take in its development.

Objectives are definitive statements that reflect and delineate the adopted goals. They point out programs that will assist in making the more generalized goals a reality. **Policies** are guidelines for action. While all policies may not always be consistently applied, the decision-makers and residents of Livingston Township should promote active use of as many of these policy statements as possible. This can best be accomplished if knowledge, creativity, and most importantly, community involvement and interest are applied to promoting the optimum future for the Township.

The following is the overriding concept upon which Livingston Township intends to base its future: **Livingston Township desires to preserve its rural character, enhance its identity, and work with its neighboring communities to provide a satisfying quality of life for all its residents.** This has implications for physical, economic, and social development, all of which will be detailed in the following Goals, Objectives, and Policies statement. (Note: the numbers below **are** intended to reflect relative priorities.)

Goals

1. Maintain the general rural character of the Township.
2. Protect, as much as possible, the existing natural environment, existing farmlands, forests, and scenic beauty.
3. Promote a desirable distribution and an orderly growth in population.
4. Promote programs and policies designed to develop and strengthen a sense or "community" within the Township.
5. Attain efficiency, strength, and autonomy in local government, while retaining constructive liaison with other units of government.
6. Allocate land uses in a manner which will insure an independent identity for Livingston Township.
7. Maintain a viable local economy.
8. Improve the income-earning capacity of local residents.

Local Government

Objectives:

Livingston Township should attempt to provide local government services that will maximize the opportunities of its residents while minimizing, as far as possible, the cost of these services.

Policies:

1. Recommend revisions of the *Otsego County Zoning Ordinance* when and where needed to conform to the land-use element of this plan for Livingston Township.
2. Promote communication between the Township and its residents which will increase citizen interest and involvement in local public affairs.
3. Promote water and sewer systems to be provided by developers, in specifically designated and limited locations within the Township where the District Health Department deems those systems necessary and where such infrastructure contributes to Township goals.
4. Provide levels of service in specifically designated and limited locations that will serve the residents and insure the viability and autonomy of the Township.
5. Implement and enforce standards for residential and commercial development which will result in economical provision of public services.
6. Create local, health, welfare, and service programs, either independently, or in conjunction with other units of local government that will fulfill those needs not satisfied by County, State, or Federal Government, or by the private sector.

Transportation

Objective:

The primary goal of an adequate transportation system is to provide accessibility. Therefore, it is an objective of the Township to provide streets and major thoroughfares that will serve the needs of local as well as through traffic.

Policies:

1. Provide road systems able to accommodate existing and future traffic needs.
2. Efficiently limit the amount of street area required by residential developments to optimize the quantity of land available for residential, forestry, agricultural, and recreational uses.
3. Coordinate the timing and location of commercial land use with existing and proposed streets to minimize construction cost, traffic congestion, and land use conflicts.
4. Design adequate and efficient off-street parking and circulation systems in commercial areas.
5. Incorporate the goals and objectives of the *M-32 & Old-27/I-75 Business Loop Corridor Study* that pertain to Livingston Township into the planning goals of this master plan. Chapter 7 of the study is attached as Appendix B.
6. Incorporate the goals and objectives of the *I-75 Scenic Corridor Plan* that pertain to Livingston Township into the planning goals of this master plan. Chapter 4 of the plan is attached as Appendix C.

Objective:

A complete transportation system includes trails for recreational uses as well as standard automobile oriented circulation systems. However, no Township owned properties are available at present for this purpose.

Policies:

1. Cooperate with State and local efforts to designate recreational vehicle trails in nearby areas accessible to Township residents.
2. Within the Township, encourage private entities to provide hiking and cross-country ski trails.
3. Consider the use of funds from the Livingston Township Improvement Fund for the development of non-motorized recreational trails in the Township.

Public Facilities

Objective:

The ability to achieve an identity is determined not only by commercial and industrial activities, but also by the placement of public facilities within the community. Livingston Township's objective is to provide public facilities required to meet the needs of its residents.

Policies:

1. Determine the type and quantity of local facilities desired by the Township's residents. This policy has been largely carried out by the Planning Commission's Citizen Survey, (See Appendices.)
2. Develop public facilities and utilities within limited geographic areas to keep costs down.
3. Work in conjunction with other units of government to ensure the placement of facilities which are beyond the capacity of the Township alone to provide.

Health and Welfare

Objective:

A community is composed of individuals with a variety of backgrounds and needs. It is, therefore, an objective of Livingston Township to provide those services which will fulfill, as far as possible, the needs of the individual.

Policies:

1. Work in close association with Otsego County Sheriff, fire, and health agencies to ensure the best possible health and welfare programs for the Township.
2. Utilize the Township's public facilities to administer citizen education programs dealing with public health and safety.

Utilities

Objective:

The placement of water, sewer, electric, and gas utilities not only affects the quality and quantity of services available to the Township, but also defines the pattern of commercial and residential development in the area. It is an objective of the Township to minimize reliance on public sewer and water infrastructure in the Township and move to require developers to provide and

maintain those facilities. The Township will continue to provide oversight and franchises to electric and gas utilities.

Policies:

1. Analyze the social, economic, and physical effects of the placement of proposed facilities.
2. Require residential developers to provide utilities that adequately serve the future needs of the residents of the development without promoting over development or leapfrog development.
3. Require commercial activities to fund utilities that adequately meet on-site needs without promoting uncontrolled growth.
4. Support innovative land use control techniques to promote sequential and timed development according to the capacity and desire of the Township to provide required public utilities.

Population–Income

Objectives:

The viability and general welfare of Livingston Township depends upon the characteristics of its future population. It is critical, therefore, that the Township attempt to achieve a population balance which will maintain or improve the area's general economic well-being, as well as create a positive economic and social environment for all age groups.

Policies:

1. Attract full time residents by promoting economic and educational programs for the Township's youth, as well as to attract working age people into the community.
2. Maintain the rural character of the Township that will attract retired residents and senior citizens.

Residential

Objectives:

High quality should be maintained and promoted in the future to contribute to the attractiveness of the community. At the same time, however, as more families begin to reside in the area, a greater variety of dwelling units should be provided commensurate with the needs of all income groups.

Policies:

1. Residential development should be designed in accordance with the capacities and limitations of the natural environment.
2. Base residential development on the physical and environmental constraints identified in the plan, while maintaining the overall rural character of the Township.
3. To maintain housing options, an adequate number of rental units should be allowed.
4. Leapfrog residential development wholly detached from the Gaylord urban core should be discouraged.

Commercial

Objectives:

Limit future commercial growth to areas currently identified in the *Comprehensive Plan* for commercial development in conformance with the wishes of the residents of Livingston Township. Resist any efforts to further convert existing agricultural, forestry, and residentially zoned properties to commercial zoning.

Policies:

1. Severely limit the conversion of agricultural, forests, and residentially zoned properties to commercial property to those areas identified in this plan.
2. Concentrate large scale commercial activities in areas of the Township adjacent to the Gaylord urban core.
3. Carefully develop commercial activities that will reinforce Livingston Township's high quality rural atmosphere.

Industrial

Objectives:

Industrial activities are one element of a diverse and viable community. However, it is important to retain the Township's character and environment through limiting potential pollution problems. Therefore, it is an objective of Livingston Township to promote the establishment of clean, non-polluting industries in Otsego County by supporting the use of the available properties in the Gaylord Air Industrial Park.

Policies:

1. Direct any potential industrial development wishing to locate in Livingston Township to the existing industrial park.
2. Work with the County to develop reasonable procedures and standards for mineral extraction within the Township.
3. Support the wind turbine generating industry in Livingston Township with appropriate siting criteria and restrictions through the special use process at the County level.

Recreation-Open Space

Objective:

Recreation and tourism are important to the economy of Northern Michigan. The abundance of vegetation, wildlife, lakes, streams, and availability of recreation facilities such as golf and skiing are the primary attractions for visitors from Southern Michigan and other states. Those who migrate to this portion of the State and those currently living in Otsego County value the rural atmosphere. It is an objective of Livingston Township to maintain, as much as possible, the rural nature of the community.

Policies:

1. Determine through analysis of environmental factors, the optimum distribution of open space areas.
2. Support State and County land use control mechanisms to insure open space preservation.

3. Promote the incorporation of open space and recreational uses for residential developments within the Township.
4. Discourage any residential developments which do not incorporate open space and recreation areas.
5. Support State and County land use control mechanisms to insure open space preservation.

Objective:

The "quality of life" of a community can be measured by a variety of standards. One of the most important is the adequate distribution of recreation facilities. One of Livingston Township's objectives, therefore, is to provide an adequate quantity and quality of recreation facilities.

Policies:

1. Participate in State programs designed to fund recreation oriented projects, by preparing a local community recreation plan.
2. Allocate areas throughout the Township for community parks and recreation facilities.
3. Promote recreation areas and facilities in planned residential development.
4. Initiate community oriented activities such as arts and crafts programs for residents of all ages.

Agriculture

Objective:

Agricultural land has become an increasingly scarce and consequently a valuable commodity in our society. Although some soils in the Township are of lower quality than in other areas of Northern Michigan, they are capable of producing a variety of crops. In several cases, full-time farming activities occur in the Township. Agriculture helps maintain the general rural nature of the Township as it promotes ample distribution of open space lands. In Livingston Township, the agricultural landscape is an important part of the area's scenic beauty. An objective of the Township is to maintain those sections of the community currently utilized for agriculture production.

Policies:

1. Conserve those areas currently used for agriculture as well as those with potential for agricultural use.
2. Promote the preservation of farmland through application of State legislation such as P.A. 116 and appropriate local land use controls.
3. Support local education programs that stress the importance of agriculture.

Environmental Preservation / Forestlands

Objective:

The attractiveness of the Township is dependent primarily upon the natural amenities available to the residents and visitors to the area. Consequently, it is an objective of the Township to coordinate physical development in a way that preserves as much of the existing natural environment as possible.

Policies:

1. Provide input to the County through modifications to the *Otsego County Zoning Ordinance* and *Otsego County Comprehensive Plan* to provide for the preservation of scenic areas and corridors, agricultural lands, and forests.
2. Direct development with the intent to preserve the natural amenities of the Township.
3. Promote the preservation of open space and forest land through application of State legislation such as the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (Public Act 116).
4. Promote the preservation of open space and forest land through application of State legislation such as the Commercial Forest Act (Public Act 451).
5. Pursue the use of purchase of development rights by the Township or County or encourage agencies, such as land conservancies, to purchase development rights in important Agricultural, Forestlands, and Environmental Preservation areas.