

7.0 Community Goals and Vision

The purpose of this chapter is to set forth Little Traverse Township's goals and policies to guide future development. These goals and policies must reflect the type of community desired and the kind of lifestyle its citizens wish to follow, given realistic economic and social constraints. The following information sets forth goals which describe the ultimate purpose or intent of the Little Traverse Township Master Plan, as well as policies to help the Township achieve its goals and provide the guide for review of development proposals.

Several resources were used to prepare and formulate the necessary objectives for establishing the goals for this Plan including:

- A publicized, goal-setting session where members of the community could voice their ideas and concerns for the Township's future
- The existing land use review and discussion during the goal-setting workshop
- Previous background information researched in earlier chapters of this Plan was used for reference and indication of possible issues to address

Little Traverse Township residents and interested community members were invited to participate in a public session on January 19, 2000. The session provided an opportunity to identify community assets and community problems or issues. During the public workshop, participants were asked to develop a vision of Little Traverse Township through the year 2020. They were invited to share their visions as they pertained to these categories:

1. Residential Areas
2. Business and Industry
3. Natural Resources, Recreation and Community Facilities

The following themes were not only reiterated as current assets, but also as concerns in the vision for the future:

- The necessity of planned, managed growth will be required to bring balance between the development anticipated and the natural resources deemed an essential asset to the community.
- The obvious signs of increased growth are evident with rapid residential growth and traffic concerns voiced by Township residents.
- Housing affordability and increasing valuation of real property was a significant concern among homeowners in the Township. They spend a greater percentage of their income on housing compared to the state average. Affordable housing opportunities are needed for the future.
- The quality and abundance of Natural Resources within the Township has been determined by the community to being integral to the Township's livelihood, quality of life, and composition of community character.

The results of the public outreach activities that helped shape community goals are described below in Tables 7-1 and 7-2.

Table 7-1 Community Goal Setting Results	
Community Assets	Community Problems & Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Public Access to Water ➤ Launch Ramp ➤ Gateways to Harbor Springs and Ski Areas ➤ Sand Dunes at the Lake ➤ Scenic Viewsheds ➤ Traffic at Retained At Present Levels ➤ Airport ➤ Waste Water Treatment Plant ➤ Sewer Authority ➤ Transfer Station ➤ Handsome business look especially along M-119 ➤ Ample Industrial Area ➤ Wooded Residential Area ➤ Remaining Farmland ➤ Rural Characteristics ➤ Wildlife/Deer ➤ Noise Ordinance ➤ Quiet Nature ➤ Clean Air ➤ Clean Water ➤ Water Systems ➤ Public and Private Conservancy Areas ➤ Little Traverse Conservancy Properties ➤ Shared Community Service Center ➤ Community Center In Conway ➤ Township Hall ➤ State Forest Lands ➤ Golf Course ➤ Little Traverse Bay ➤ Historic Residential Areas ➤ Proposed Bike Trail ➤ Easy Access Location in Region ➤ People Willing to Plan for Future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Traffic Congestion ➤ Residential Development on Open Areas ➤ Jet Noise ➤ Industrial Noise ➤ Hazardous Waste (Threat) ➤ Lack of Affordable Housing ➤ Deteriorating Road Conditions ➤ Taxes ➤ Zoning Enforcement ➤ Commercial/Industrial Density ➤ Radio Towers ➤ Local People Have No Concerns About Change ➤ Wind Generators in the Future ➤ Erosion: Development on Steep Slopes ➤ Sprawl ➤ Sewer Odor ➤ Loss of Open Space ➤ Losing Quality of Area ➤ Billboards ➤ Blight (Junk cars, Garbage) ➤ Supply of Commercial Property

**Table 7-2
Community Goal Setting Results
Visions for the Future**

Residential Areas	Business and Industry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Low Density Development ➤ No High Rises ➤ Some Clusters ➤ Affordable Housing ➤ Live Close to Work ➤ Open Space ➤ Deer; Wildlife ➤ Coyote, Eagles, Squirrels ➤ Trees; Lots of Green ➤ Green Buffer Between Business Residential ➤ Access to Water ➤ Dark Sky/Stars ➤ Local Labor Pool ➤ Less Traffic ➤ Public Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Available Education Opportunity ➤ Capable Workforce ➤ Lack of Congestion ➤ Pride In Ownership ➤ Certification of Industrial Park Sites ➤ Industrial Parks ➤ Locally Owned Businesses ➤ Clean; Non-Polluting Business ➤ Light Industrial (vs. Heavy) ➤ Ease of Access
	Natural Resources, Recreation and Community Facilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bigger Airport ➤ Adequate Services and Utilities Installed by Developer ➤ Safety/Low Crime ➤ Families & Good Neighbors ➤ Privacy ➤ PUD Options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Balance Between Natural Resources, Green Areas, and Growth Areas ➤ High Quality Lakes ➤ Maintain All Current Assets ➤ State Land Preserved ➤ Non-Motorized Trails Developed; Connect to Harbor ➤ Maintain Commercial Forest Lands ➤ Athletic fields and Facilities ➤ Better Fishing ➤ Parking Improvement at Ramp ➤ Fairness in Establishing "Buffer Zones" ➤ Road Buffers ➤ Proactive Community ➤ Continued Home Occupations ➤ Safety Problems Corrected ➤ PUD Options (Providing Greater Open Space Options)

Goals and Policies

In developing community goals and policies, it is important to analyze existing community conditions as described in the earlier plan sections, including the Socioeconomic Profile, Natural Resources, Existing Land Use and Community Facilities sections. Reviewing the aforementioned in combination with the current assets, concerns, and community visions of the future, provided a means to develop community goals and policies to guide the Township.

These goals and policies serve to guide land use decisions during the 10-20 year planning life of this document. They should be referenced when preparing the future land use plan and serve as the underlying framework justifying future land use decisions. While they are reflective of conditions at present, they may require revisions and/or additional language to ensure these goals could be achieved throughout the plan's life.

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

GOAL #1:

Generate strong community cooperation to effectively manage development concerns while preserving community character.

Policies:

1. Coordinate proposed land uses with public utility, facility, and service improvement programs.
2. Develop buffer zone locations between residential and commercial/industrial uses providing necessary transition areas to retain neighborhood character.
3. Provide flexible development opportunities (open space planning, planned unit development, clustering) in areas where concentrated growth is compatible with surrounding land uses and future land use plans.
4. Apply flexible design tools to specialized housing development providing more affordable housing options.
5. Identify areas where clustering uses, while maintaining the same allowable overall densities, will achieve open space preservation.
6. Encourage new residential developments to incorporate a pedestrian trail/sidewalk system to connect other nearby developments.
7. Support the development of private parks and open spaces for residents offered within many residential subdivisions in the Township.
8. Protect the neighborhood feeling of residential areas.
9. Communicate with intergovernmental planning representatives to achieve common understanding of how each jurisdiction plans to manage future development.
10. Encourage the certification of industrial park sites within the Township.
11. Establish an industrial growth boundary as defined by Industrial/Manufacturing Class on the Future Land Use map utilizing available land present before considering industrial uses elsewhere.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC LANDS, AND RECREATION

GOAL #2:

Preserve, protect, and maintain the natural and cultural features of the Township's unique resources thereby achieving a balance of resource management and development opportunities.

Policies:

1. Encourage a land use pattern that is oriented to and respects the natural features of the area. Promote the protection of sensitive features including shoreline, wildlife habitat, wildlife corridors, wetlands, water quality, steep slopes and wooded areas.
2. Evaluate the environmental impact of all new development.
3. Consider establishing transition/buffer zones from environmentally sensitive areas from more intensive development uses.
4. Provide and maintain public access opportunities to water resource areas and the existing facilities already present at these locations.
5. Protect scenic viewsheds from detracting elements including communication towers, billboards, and multistory structures.
6. Require the blending of existing natural features including native vegetation, topography, and other natural features with new development.
7. Encourage the inclusion of parks and open spaces with non-motorized linkages through new and existing developments for recreation and establish community interconnectedness.
8. Support opportunities for natural resource viewing and access for residents and visitors within the Township.
9. Work cooperatively with DNR Forest Management Division to sustain public forest land availability for area recreation opportunities and build necessary support for establishing a non-motorized trail system on these lands including the North Country Trail.
10. Pursue outside funding sources, such as grants, for land acquisition and/or recreational development.

INFRASTRUCTURE, PUBLIC SERVICES, AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

GOAL #3:

Improve and maintain transportation systems, community facilities, and public services required to accommodate the needs of residents and visitors.

Policies:

1. Plan utility improvements or expansion to coincide with new development in areas designated for the type of development thereby encouraging developers to adhere to the future land use plan. Consider the factors of population density, future land use designations, and natural resource conditions to protect public health.
2. Require developers to provide the necessary infrastructure when proposed development is likely to occur in areas where existing utility connections are currently unavailable.
3. Work regionally to develop a public transportation service for residents in the surrounding area. Consider non-motorized additions (bike lanes, sidewalks) for transportation needs for township residents to encourage safe, alternative options for travel.
4. Encourage and cooperate with the Harbor Springs Sewer Authority and Emmet County Road Commission to maintain efficient use and proactive maintenance of infrastructure and roadways.
5. Coordinate transportation management strategies for traffic control with MDOT and the Emmet County Road Commission to evaluate options for relieving traffic congestion during peak periods.
6. Participate in interjurisdictional planning efforts to assure the representation of Township residents in regional decision-making.