

9.0 Plan Adoption and Implementation

Public Hearing

A public hearing on the proposed Master Plan for Little Traverse Township, as required by the Township Planning Act, Act 168 of 1959 as amended, was held on May 24, 2000 at the Township Hall. Section nine of the Act requires that notice of the hearing be given by two publications in a newspaper of general circulation in the Township. The first notice must be issued not more than 30 days or less than 20 days prior to the hearing. The second must appear not more than eight days before the hearing. Notice of this hearing was placed in the Petoskey News Review on May 1, 2000 and again on May 19, 2000. A copy of this notice along with an affidavit of publication is provided in the Appendix. The purpose of the public hearing was to present the proposed master plan and to accept comments from the public. In addition to the Zoning Board members, the Zoning Administrator, Township Board Members and general public were invited to attend the meeting. The minutes from the meeting are inserted in the appendix for reference.

Plan Adoption

The Zoning Board adopted the Master Plan at its regular meeting held on November 20, 2000. All members of the Zoning Board were in attendance and the motion to adopt the plan was unanimously approved. The minutes from this meeting are also included in the appendix.

Legal Transmittals

Michigan planning law requires that the adopted Master Plan be transmitted to the Township Board. The plan must also be submitted to the Emmet County Planning Department for its review and comment. The County Planning Department has 45 days to review the Master Plan and notify the Township whether the County approves or disapproves of the plan. Copies of these transmittal letters appear in the appendix.

Plan Implementation

A Master Plan is developed to provide a vision of the community's future. It is designed to serve as a tool for decision making on future development proposals. A Master Plan will also act as a guide for future public investment and service decisions, such as the local budget, grant applications, road standards development, community group activities, tax incentive decisions, and administration of utilities and services.

According to the Township Rural Zoning Act, comprehensive planning is the legal basis for the development of a zoning ordinance. Section Three of the Act states: "The zoning ordinance shall be based on a plan designed to promote the public health, safety and general welfare; to encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability, and to limit the improper use of land to conserve natural resources and energy; to meet the needs of the state's residents for food, fiber, and other natural resources, places to reside, recreation, industry, trade, service, and other uses of land; to insure that use of the land shall be situated in adequate light and air; to lessen congestion of the public roads and streets; to reduce hazards to life and property; to facilitate adequate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, education, recreation, and other public requirements; and to conserve the expenditure of funds for public improvements and services to conform with the most advantageous use of land resources, and properties."

Zoning

The zoning ordinance is the most important tool for implementing the Master plan. Zoning is the authority to regulate private use of land by creating land use zones and applying development standards in various zoning districts. The Little Traverse Zoning Board enacted a zoning ordinance regulating land use activities on June 14, 1975. During this time the ordinance has provided guidance in regulating the location, density and standards for local development. The Zoning Ordinance should now be reviewed to ensure the ordinance is consistent with the goals and the future land use plan presented in this Master Plan update. The standards in the zoning ordinance will be based in part on the goals and policies set forth in Chapter 7 and the Future Land Use recommendations of Chapter 8 this comprehensive plan.

Grants and Capital Improvement Plan

A Master plan can also be used as a guide for future public investment and service decisions, such as the local budget, grant applications and administration of utilities and services. Many communities find it beneficial to prioritize and budget for capital improvement projects, (such as infrastructure improvements, park improvements, etc.). A Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is one tool which, is often used to establish a prioritized schedule for all anticipated capital improvement projects in the community. A CIP includes cost estimates and sources for financing for each project. Therefore, it can serve as both a budgetary and policy document to aid in the implementation of a community's goals defined in the master plan.

Recreation Plan

The Township must have a current Michigan Department of Natural Resources approved Community Recreation Plan to be eligible for recreation grant funding. Background information presented in this Master Plan update would serve as part of the recreation plan. Additional work would include developing information on existing recreational facilities within the township and the region, recreation goals and an action program for existing and proposed facilities. The DNR approved Recreation Plan would cover a five year planning period. Grant funds should be pursued for recreation projects identified in this plan.