

CHAPTER 5 - COMMUNITY GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Introduction

The issues, and likewise; the goals and objectives that follow are derived from: 1) an analysis of present conditions; 2) a community-wide attitude survey, performed by the Township in 1991; 3) a leadership survey in the summer of 1993; 4) a community survey in the summer of 2001; 5) the US-2/M-134 Corridor Visual Enhancement Plan of September 2003; 6) the Les Cheneaux Watershed Management Plan of 2005; 7) the Les Cheneaux Economic Forum of 1998; and 8) a community input forum held in July of 2007. The issues, goals and objectives, as presented in this draft, are not in any particular order with respect to their importance or relative priority to the Township. Future versions of this material, however, may include a prioritization of objectives.

A Vision of the Les Cheneaux Area

One of the most important things we can do as a Township is discuss, decide and move towards a definable vision of our community. Without knowing where we want to end up, it is difficult to establish goals and objectives that will take us there. With this purpose in mind, the Clark Township Planning Commission has developed the following vision of how the Les Cheneaux Area should appear and feel to residents and visitors alike. The vision is a timeless one, which is to be encouraged and enabled throughout and beyond the life of this Plan.

Vision of the Les Cheneaux Area
By the Clark Township Planning Commission, May 2008

The Les Cheneaux Area is admired for its natural beauty. As a community, we are committed to maintaining the character and progressive small town atmosphere of the Les Cheneaux Area.

Our vision is a community where:

- * Natural resources...are cherished as a vital part of our community and our identity; are considered fundamental to both our present and our future; will be treated sympathetically when future growth and development occurs
- * Downtown centers...are attractive, pleasing, and vibrant, and are comfortable for pedestrians and traffic flow
- * A sense of community...is achieved by involving residents in the planning process to enhance the traditions, goals, and values of the area; a small town feeling is maintained and people feel a sense of security, belonging and responsibility
- * Economic growth...is sustainable, monitored, & guided; tourism continues to strengthen the local economy and provide employment; a diverse business climate promotes mixed use development that attracts and retains commercial and industrial buildings designed proportionately to a small-town scale
- * Local landscape...encourages the development of a natural, attractive community with structures both old and new that have character and diversity

The Purpose of Goals and Objectives

The purpose for developing goals and objectives is to create a set of future oriented statements that can help guide land use and infrastructure decisions. They serve as a set of guidelines against which the validity of land use proposals, plans and policies can be measured. Goals and objectives are critical components within the planning process because they define the collective desires of the community.

Defining Goals

Goals serve as target statements describing the desired future physical, social and political environment of the community. Not all goals are necessarily on the same time line. Some goals can be reached sooner than others, while still others require special preparation and management to be fully achieved. It is the intent of this Plan to establish some goals that the community will achieve over the life of this Plan and also to set some goals that reach beyond.

It is recognized that some of the goals set out within this Plan may not be within the control of Clark Township or its residents. Others may be influenced but not wholly controlled by the Township. Nevertheless, these goals represent the collective desires of the citizens of Clark Township and are put forward in an effort to provide guidance and encouragement to other agencies and jurisdictions having greater control and influence in such areas.

Defining Objectives

Objectives are statements that define how a goal is to be achieved. Often multiple objectives are attached to the attainment of a single goal. Because there are often multiple ways to achieve a goal, objectives often explore every opportunity that would assist in the attainment of the goal both within and outside of a community's resources. Objectives must be real, obtainable and sound. In simple terms objectives must be "do-able".

Economic Development

Goal statement: *Promote diverse, high quality sustainable economic development in the Township that meets the current and future needs of Township residents while maintaining the rural character and quality of life that characterizes the Les Cheneaux Area.*

Objective: Work with economic development agencies and the Chamber of Commerce to attract new jobs with incomes sufficient to support a family.

Objective: Work with the school system and appropriate social, business and service groups to improve skill development, employment opportunities and entrepreneurial development for youth.

Objective: Work with area merchants to tie shops and recreational facilities together with plantings, a boardwalk and other pedestrian-oriented facilities.

Objective: Work more closely with the local Chippewa Indian community to develop new economic opportunities in the Township.

Objective: Support area merchants in the expansion of fall and winter tourism. Also assist in the expansion of summer services (e.g., expanded store hours, coordinated promotional activities, a common business theme, welcome center).

Objective: Work with area merchants to strengthen the historic commercial center roles of Hessel and Cedarville and build upon their identities to become destination commercial core areas that offer a variety of commercial, recreational, and cultural opportunities in a walkable community setting.

Objective: Investigate the establishment of a Downtown Development Authority for the core areas of Hessel and Cedarville to determine the effectiveness of Tax Increment Financing or other funding sources in the betterment of the commercial core areas.

Objective: Investigate and encourage the incubation of businesses that will provide livable wage employment opportunities for Township residents.

Objective: Support the artisan community and ecotourism initiatives as components capable of strengthening the role of the Les Cheneaux area as a destination tourism area.

Land Use

Goal statement: *The Les Cheneaux Area and its attractiveness are dependent upon the natural environment and resources that occupy much of its lands. The careful management and protection of these resources is to be promoted. Lands suitable for development shall be treated in an environmentally, economically and socially sustainable manner for the benefit of present and future generations.*

Objective: Develop and maintain a database and maps identifying the Township's renewable resources and its environmentally sensitive areas.

Objective: Ensure environmentally sensitive areas are protected from unsound and incompatible development.

Objective: Encourage the use of environmental best management practices on lands within or near our renewable resources and environmentally sensitive areas.

Objective: Work with agencies and organizations such as the Chippewa/East Mackinac Conservation District, the Les Cheneaux Watershed Council, and the Les Cheneaux Islands Association to educate Township residents about potential impacts on the natural environment and water quality arising from land use activities.

Objective: Work with area residents to find a reasonable balance between protection of the Township's waterfront areas and the landowner based development expectations for these areas.

Objective: Ensure long term land use compatibility through the careful development of long range planning objectives and permitted land uses.

Objective: Recognize the varying and distinctive characteristics of the Township's land base, including the uniqueness of the Les Cheneaux Island's and the Township's extensive waterfront resources.

Objective: Encourage the provision and long term protection of rural corridor buffers to maintain the rural character and feel of the Les Cheneaux Area.

Objective: Coordinate all land use controls to prevent duplication and unnecessary *"red tape"*.

Objective: Implement and consistently enforce all adopted land use regulations.

Objective: Review and update the master plan and land use regulations at least every five years to keep the planning focus up-to-date. More frequent reviews may be completed, at the discretion of the planning commission, as relevant information becomes available and related background studies are completed.

Community Character

Goal statement: *The Les Cheneaux Area is a collection of small community settlements, integrated into a diversity of land and water based natural resources, that have resulted in an identifiable historic character and true “up north” identity. It is the goal of this Plan that the natural coastal heritage of the Les Cheneaux Area, its sensitive natural features and its woodlands be retained and enhanced as a central feature of the Township while establishing and strengthening the role of Hessel and Cedarville as destinations for residents and visitors alike.*

Objective: Promote new development and redevelopment which is of similar scale and character as the existing cottage-like development found throughout much of the Township.

Objective: Establish appropriate building heights, particularly along waterfront areas.

Objective: Protect and enhance scenic views throughout the Township, particularly at high points and near coastal areas.

Objective: Require underground utilities in all new subdivision development and on multiple lot redevelopment efforts.

Objective: Work with area merchants and other regulatory agencies to establish a strong community identity through improved signage, lighting and infrastructure. Sign regulations should emphasize minimal clutter, confusion and aesthetic degradation while permitting reasonable opportunities for announcement of products and services available in the Township. New development and improvements to existing lands and buildings should maintain and enhance historic elements and design character.

Objective: Increase the amount of formal plantings, including unique arrangements in character with the community, (e.g., wildflower plantings).

Objective: Institute commercial facade guidelines for area businesses with support from the area Chamber of Commerce.

Objective: Work with area merchants to establish the Villages of Hessel and Cedarville as destination commercial core areas that offer a variety of commercial, recreational, and cultural opportunities in a walkable community setting.

Objective: Encourage compact, dense development with upper level residential units in the core areas of Hessel and Cedarville to support the development and identity of these areas as walkable centers.

Objective: Work towards improving the physical and visual relationship between Hessel and Cedarville with the waterfronts of the Les Cheneaux area in order to improve the attractiveness of these core commercial areas and strengthen their role as a destination location for both surrounding residents and visitors alike.

Objective: Require new lighting to comply with dark sky standards that will maintain a rural northern identity and character.

Environmental Protection and Natural Resources

Goal statement: *Preserve and protect the natural resources, the natural habitat, the biologic functions and the environmental quality of lands and waters within the Township, and the sustainable use of renewable resources.*

Objective: Include special measures to preserve the environmental integrity of Township coastal areas and the Les Cheneaux Islands in local development regulations.

Objective: Investigate, enact guidelines for, and encourage the use of creatively designed development which retains open areas, indigenous vegetation and other natural features.

Objective: Investigate and enact regulations that will discourage the clear cutting of waterfront vegetation in order to preserve the natural appearance of the Township's waterways and shorelands.

Objective: Investigate and enact appropriate regulations addressing the location, scale and appearance of waterfront parking areas servicing both island residents and waterfront visitors.

Objective: Review the Les Cheneaux Watershed Management Plan and enact appropriate regulations addressing water quality pollutant sources, development impacts on water quality, and sustainable development practices.

Objective: Offer development incentives (probably in the form of higher density) to persons using creative design concepts permitted by the Township.

Objective: Encourage the use of natural vegetative buffers along waterfronts to minimize environmental impacts on the water bodies and preserve the natural appearance of the shorelines.

Objective: Protect unique and large stands of trees along coastal areas, waterways and urbanizing areas.

Objective: Strive to protect the high quality of surface waters from sediment and nutrient laden runoff.

Objective: Institute measures through site plan review and other land use control techniques that help prevent surface and ground water pollution.

Objective: Limit the density of development relying on on-site sewer systems in areas not served by public sewer.

Objective: Encourage and cooperate in the review and assessment of effluent discharge from the community sewer system to determine advanced nutrient options or a possible alternate location for discharge that will minimize impact on Cedarville Bay and its natural environment.

Objective: Protect groundwater quality via a sewer system maintenance program and through appropriate site plan review standards for those developments that use or sell toxic or hazardous substances.

Objective: Retain indigenous vegetation on developing and developed sites to protect against excessive runoff, soil erosion and sedimentation.

Objective: Engage in a community-wide stormwater management program that minimizes the use of man-made drainage systems by reducing disturbances to natural drainageways and by retaining natural floodplain and wetland areas for their stormwater retention capabilities.

Objective: Investigate the potential of providing a public water system when the demonstrated need is present, adequate financing is available, and the continued financial stability of such a system can be demonstrated.

Objective: Ensure fish cleaning and proper waste disposal areas are provided near docking and landing areas.

Objective: Encourage the protection of lands adjoining shorelines, creeks and their tributaries.

Community Services and Infrastructure

Goal Statement: *Provide economically and geographically efficient public services to Township residents in line with the rural character of the Township.*

Objective: Continue a strict urban services district policy for the provision of public services in the Cedarville/Hessel areas.

Objective: Develop a capital improvements program and budgeting process for new capital facilities at least six years into the future.

Objective: Work with the County Health Department and Department of Public works on designing a better island rubbish pick-up program which may include trash compaction.

Objective: Work with the County Road Commission and Michigan Department of Transportation to investigate the need for a traffic signal at the intersection of M-134 and M-129.

Objective: Develop policies and programs to improve and encourage pedestrian travel in Hessel and Cedarville as these areas move towards becoming more walkable communities.

Objective: Investigate the feasibility of upgrading road shoulders for bicycle, roller blade and pedestrian use, particularly between the Villages of Hessel and Cedarville.

Objective: Investigate the feasibility of public services to the Les Cheneaux Islands and thereafter enable the provision of such services, if required or proposed by the island residents.

Objective: Investigate potential locations and the economic feasibility of providing centralized parking facilities for island residents.

Objective: Investigate potential locations and opportunities to provide centralized parking in the core areas of Hessel and Cedarville in lieu of requiring on-site parking for individual businesses.

Objective: Continue to support the ongoing efforts of the County and area residents towards effective reduction, reuse and recycling of waste materials.

Housing

Goal Statement: *Enable the provision of safe, decent and affordable housing for current and future residents of the Township.*

Objective: Work with the Michigan Department of Commerce to promote the use of their housing rehabilitation programs by citizens in need across the Township.

Objective: Investigate the need for a Township Housing Commission.

Objective: Review and enact appropriate zoning ordinance standards that minimize “red-tape” and encourage the provision of affordable housing in appropriate locations within the Township.

Objective: Work with local, county and state government agencies, churches, charitable and civic organizations towards the provision of increased affordable housing choices for the residents of Clark Township.

Objective: Encourage the provision of housing in close proximity to the core area of Hessel and Cedarville, while discouraging intense residential development of the rural areas throughout Clark Township.

Social Needs

Goal statement: *Help existing human service agencies meet the human service needs of residents of the Township.*

Objective: Assist in the development of a community directory of local, county and state government agencies, churches, charitable and civic organizations to improve communication, service provision and community awareness of area services.

Objective: Support human service programs of government and private agencies designed to enhance the quality of life of Township residents.

Public Safety

Goal Statement: *Improve local development regulations to minimize public safety problems associated with new development and enhance as necessary, local public safety programs.*

Objective: Regulate the development of new private roads to ensure safe access and encourage the improvement of existing substandard roads to ensure emergency service access to existing residents.

Objective: Prevent the proliferation of strip development along the highway with a special emphasis on ensuring adequate driveway spacing.

Objective: Prevent the development of land-locked parcels by monitoring lot splits through locally instituted lot split regulations.

Objective: Enact site plan review standards in the zoning ordinance that address access control and other public safety concerns.

Objective: Improve fire protection and police protection programs as the need is identified and financial resources are available.

Recreational and Cultural Opportunities

Goal statement: *Provide a variety of cultural and recreational opportunities to residents of the Township no matter what their age or physical limitations.*

Objective: Provide expanded outdoor recreational opportunities which focus on and protect the unique natural resources of the Township (i.e., islands, coastal areas, wetlands) while balancing the sometimes competing interests of neighboring property owners.

Objective: Work with interested conservation groups to protect coastal amenities.

Objective: Increase non-boating public access to Lake Huron and the shoreline while balancing the concerns of neighboring property owners relative to such matters as noise, trespass, vehicular parking and pollution.

Objective: Investigate the development of a pedestrian walkway or boardwalk along the shoreline.

Objective: Increase boating facilities in or near Hessel and Cedarville.

Objective: Improve existing boating access points to minimize the overuse of a limited number of such access points.

Objective: Support the continued provision of existing and additional public fishing sites with appropriate fish cleaning and disposal facilities.

Objective: Continue to support the current recreation board as it assists with facilities planning and events programming in the Township.

Objective: Increase picnicking areas on the islands and shoreline.

Objective: Develop a formal bicycle path that ties together Township amenities; e.g., Hessel and Cedarville, state and federal recreational facilities and the islands/coastal areas.

Objective: Develop swimming beaches in the Les Cheneaux Area.

Objective: Investigate the use of road ends for public access to Lake Huron.

Objective: Investigate the need for public restrooms and existing or future recreational facilities.

Objective: Develop expanded game facilities at public facilities (e.g., horseshoes, volleyball courts, rollerblade/skateboarding areas).

Objective: Strengthen and develop facilities to support special community events, such as; all-season festivals, plays, antique boat shows, band concerts and cultural arts.

Objective: Investigate adaptive reuse of appropriate existing structures for recreational and cultural events.

Objective: Concentrate additional attention on the adequacy of youth activities in the Township. Involve a cross-section of interest groups to effectively address the issue.

Objective: Work with various agencies and organizations, including the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and local sportsmen's clubs, to develop a stronger sport fishery in the Township.

Objective: Work with authorities to address water safety and boating issues.

Objective: Work to enhance and protect historic sites in the Township.

Objective: Work with the Historical Association to identify and register historic buildings and sites as appropriate.

Objective: Work with community groups like the Historical Association, Island Association and the Chamber of Commerce to coordinate and expand recreational and cultural activities.

The Waters of Les Cheneaux

Goal statement: *Preserve and protect the quality and quantity of water in the Les Cheneaux area.*

Objective: Actively support and encourage State and Federal governments in all efforts to restore the water levels of Lake Huron and the Les Cheneaux area to levels capable of supporting a thriving fishing and boating industry.

Objective: Investigate and enact appropriate land use regulations that will contribute towards protection of the water quality of Lake Huron and the Les Cheneaux area.

Wind Turbine Generators

Goal Statement: *Provide for the appropriate location of wind turbine generators in limited locations throughout Clark Township.*

Objective: Wind turbines are a type of development which has been gaining interest in Northern Michigan. The premier locations for capturing the most wind are typically exposed areas, on higher elevations and generally visible for long distances.

In considering where wind turbine generators should be allowed, there are a multitude of factors to consider. There are some areas of Clark Township which, by virtue of strong prevailing winds and the absence of extensive development, are ideally suited for large scale development of wind energy conversion systems. There is a collaborative goal to indelibly preserve prime farmland and, at the same time, establish a manageable alternative energy land use policy in Clark Township. This goal is to encourage farmland and open space preservation as well as identify locations appropriate for alternative energy resource facilities.