

CHAPTER 5:

COMMUNITY VISION & PLANNING GOALS



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- ▶ COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT FOR 2035
- ▶ PLANNING GOALS & OBJECTIVES - Placemaking, Economic, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Recreation, Transportation and Public Facilities and Services

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the planning process, the community must identify, understand, and work toward a long-term vision that is agreed upon by the township as a whole. The vision statement is intended to inspire and encourage community members, township organizations and stakeholders, private developers, and public officials to invest in Port Huron Township and to make it a vibrant place to live, work and play for current residents and future generations.

The vision for Port Huron Township was developed through a public involvement process that included a series of community visioning exercises that served to identify what residents and leaders would like the community to become - how it may look, how it may function, how it may improve. The vision and associated planning goals and objectives are also based on a survey of local leadership. They were then refined throughout the planning process following input from the Township Board, the Planning Commission, and township residents. The community visioning meeting was held on November 30, 2011.

PORT HURON TOWNSHIP VISION FOR 2035

The vision statement is an attempt to capture in words, what Port Huron Township will be like in 2035 if the goals of this Master Plan are achieved and various strategies or recommendations are implemented. When reading this vision, it is necessary to imagine that you are living in the future and describing what the community is like at that point in time, in 2035. This approach is intended to present a better sense of the desired future.

COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT

In 2035, Port Huron Township is a community that provides an exceptional quality of life for its residents; an active community with an interconnected system of beautiful parks, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and unparalleled access to both urbanized commerce and the more tranquil settings of nature.

Commercial facilities along the Lapeer Road, 24th Street and 32nd Street corridors are well-designed and have a very clean appearance. Signage fits the character of the community and buildings are exceptionally maintained. The township is a business-friendly community that supports entrepreneurs and attracts talented individuals who want to live in one of the high-quality, affordable housing options available to residents.

It is a common sight to see people enjoying each other's company while jogging along a trail, riding bicycles across a long stretch of bike path, or strolling with the kids up to the park. In the summer months, Bakers Field Park is full of people young and old - launching kayaks into the water, tossing a ball around, or relaxing along the shoreline reading a book.

Township officials commonly collaborate with neighboring communities on a variety of issues. Smart, thoughtful land use and transportation planning over the past 20 years has enhanced the quality of life and brought in an influx of innovative and talented people, which has resulted in new employment centers for the region.

Port Huron Township is an exciting and beautiful place to live, work, and play. Residents enjoy spending time with loved ones and raising their families each and every day.



The Port Huron Township Planning Commission, along with planners from the St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission facilitated a community visioning meeting on November 30, 2011 to discuss key issues and trends in the community and brainstorm ideas for the future of the township.

PLANNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

In order for the long-term community vision to become a reality, Port Huron Township must utilize the guidance of this Master Plan and continually work to successfully achieve the township's planning goals. Relying on input from township residents and local officials during the community visioning process, combined with a thorough analysis of demographic, economic and land use trends, a distinct set of planning goals and objectives was developed.

These goals should guide decision making relative to land use, transportation, growth management, and economic development. Township officials should be mindful of the community's long-term vision and should rely on these planning goals and objectives when examining development proposals, administering or amending the zoning ordinance, and considering public input. Each of those key terms is defined below to ensure clarity and understanding.

- ▶ **Goal:** Goals are broad-based statements of intent and establish the direction for the Port Huron Township Master Plan. Goals could generally be thought of as the desired "results" of successful implementation of this Master Plan.
- ▶ **Objective:** Objectives are the stated "means" of achieving each goal, or the tasks to be carried out in the process of successfully achieving goals.

PORT HURON TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

PLACEMAKING GOAL AND PLANNING OBJECTIVES

| GOAL | OBJECTIVES |
|---|---|
| <p>1. The township is a community with a unique synergy of built and green spaces that create a sense of place for residents and visitors.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Encourage developments that promote community and make the township a more vibrant and interesting place to live, work and recreate. ▶ Identify the township's existing assets and promote those assets as unique quality of life drivers that differentiate Port Huron Township from other communities in the region. ▶ Identify and participate in targeted neighborhood reinvestment and residential stabilization programs that improve the quality of the housing stock and overall neighborhood character. ▶ Identify and pursue new opportunities for public transit, bicycling and other modes of transportation alternatives to automobiles. Integrate these multi-modal amenities into industrial and commercial areas and residential neighborhoods. ▶ Support and promote sustainable development practices in residential development, public facilities and operations, and transportation improvements. ▶ Ensure that Port Huron Township has a wide variety of amenities including recreation, shopping, cultural resources, entertainment options, and "third places," all of which will help in attracting and retaining talented workers. |

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL AND PLANNING OBJECTIVES

| GOAL | OBJECTIVES |
|---|--|
| <p>1. The township has a diverse local economy that contributes to the tax base and provides local and regional job opportunities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Promote policies that lead to the sustained economic health of Port Huron Township's assets and to the natural revitalization of vacant, low density, obsolescent and deteriorated property. When possible use existing amenities as the focus for the development. ▶ Collaborate with and coordinate economic development activities with the Economic Development Alliance (EDA) of St. Clair County, county government, the township Downtown Development Authority, and other entities to create and capitalize on economic opportunities that lead to job retention and job creation. ▶ Embrace the Green Economy and its focus on alternative energy. ▶ Use place-making strategies in attracting talent and economic development. ▶ Promote and support entrepreneurship in Port Huron Township by creating and implementing policies that are entrepreneur-friendly and work to connect entrepreneurs looking to start or expand a business to the organizations or resources that are required for success. ▶ Promote post-secondary education and skills-development to all residents to help the community adapt to and compete in a globalized, knowledge-based economy. ▶ Communicate and collaborate with other local units of government across the region and leverage new and existing public-private partnerships to promote and implement regional strategic growth initiatives. ▶ Encourage attraction of new businesses to Port Huron Township to provide the proper variety and mix that will attract shoppers. |

COMMUNITY VISION & PLANNING GOALS

RESIDENTIAL GOALS AND PLANNING OBJECTIVES

| GOALS | OBJECTIVES |
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| <p>1. Port Huron Township is characterized as having sound, decent, and adequate housing for a broad cross section of society.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide a variety of residential densities. ▶ Protect residential neighborhoods from the intrusion of incompatible areas. ▶ Provide sufficient flexibility in development regulations to permit a variety of housing types serving a broad range of income levels and age groups. ▶ Continue to administer a strong code enforcement program. ▶ Utilize housing rehabilitation programs offered by St. Clair County, nonprofit agencies, or other providers. ▶ Provide public services and transportation for all types of housing. ▶ Encourage senior housing options to be located near service centers and transportation corridors. ▶ Continue to encourage senior and special needs housing to be dispersed throughout the township and not concentrated in one area. |
| <p>2. The township has stable neighborhoods that are well-maintained and have a character that is attractive to both existing and potential residents.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Encourage residential development in appropriate locations so as to provide an opportunity for those employed in the township and surrounding areas to become residents. ▶ Maintain the separation of incompatible land uses. ▶ Require buildings and open spaces that are aesthetically pleasing. ▶ Diligently implement and enforce the township zoning ordinance. ▶ Continue to administer a strong code enforcement program. ▶ Insure that the density of housing development is related to the carrying capacity of the land, roads and utility infrastructure. ▶ Ensure future housing is of high quality design to give lasting value to the community. |

COMMERCIAL GOAL AND PLANNING OBJECTIVES

| GOAL | OBJECTIVES |
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| <p>1. The township has a diverse mix of thriving commercial land uses in appropriate locations to serve both residents and customers from outside the township.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Allocate land for commercial purposes based on spatial relationships and market forecasts. ▶ Provide for large-scale sales, service and other commercial uses near comparison-shopping centers and in planned linear commercial areas. ▶ Implement land use regulations that accommodate commercial growth along key transportation corridors, such as Lapeer Road, 24th Street, 32nd Street, Michigan Road, and Range Road. ▶ Provide opportunities for larger-scale and regional commercial draws that can take advantage of the township's transportation amenities, such as I-69/I-94 and the Lapeer Connector. ▶ Provide for less intense neighborhood convenience facilities and services. ▶ Ensure commercial facilities have adequate parking. ▶ Enforce building codes and encourage renovation, repair, and maintenance of commercial buildings, signs, parking areas, and landscaping on a regular basis. ▶ Encourage use and/or redevelopment of existing, underutilized, vacant and dilapidated buildings whenever possible. ▶ Maintain and improve the public infrastructure on commercial corridors such as sidewalks, lighting, and other amenities. ▶ Encourage long-term growth of the commercial tax base in the township |

PORT HURON TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

INDUSTRIAL GOAL AND PLANNING OBJECTIVES

| GOAL | OBJECTIVES |
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| <p>1. The township has a diverse mix of industrial development that provides local and regional employment opportunities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop a diversified industrial base to offset economic fluctuation and provide a broad base of employment. ▶ Promote commercial uses that can intermix with compatible or complimentary industrial uses. ▶ Provide manufacturing and services capable of serving the needs of the residents and businesses in the area. ▶ Provide adequate roads, utilities and transportation facilities to service existing and planned industrial areas. ▶ Provide adequate buffering of industrial uses from adjacent residential uses and from less intensive land uses through the use of appropriate setback standards, landscaping, and buffering. ▶ Ensure that future industrial development does not emit excessive amounts of noise, fumes, smoke, vibrations, or other pollutants. ▶ Encourage the establishment of planned industrial parks. |

RECREATION GOALS AND PLANNING OBJECTIVES

| GOALS | OBJECTIVES |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Port Huron Township has a sufficient amount of parks and open space that contribute to the high quality of life for residents and attract visitors.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop a comprehensive Township Recreation Plan in accordance with Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) guidelines. ▶ Review and update the Township Recreation Plan every five years. ▶ Provide adequate park and recreation space as an integral part of each residential development. ▶ Utilize natural topographical features for recreational sites where possible. ▶ Provide spaces large enough for multiple use recreational activities. ▶ Preserve land along the Black River to assure perpetual public access to the water. ▶ Provide neighborhood parks for those areas that are significantly developed in the township. ▶ Use passive and active recreation areas as a means to achieving suburban aesthetic ends. ▶ Use recreation areas for conserving natural features of the township. ▶ Work in concert with the St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC), the St. Clair County Road Commission (SCCRC), and other partners to expand the township's system of nonmotorized trails. |
| <p>2. Residents have a wide range of recreational community events and programming available to them for enrichment, entertainment, and a healthy lifestyle.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Continue to partner with the City of Port Huron Recreation Department to allow township residents to participate in city recreation programs at the same rate as city residents. ▶ Continue to sponsor community programs such as the Easter Egg Hunt, the Michigamme Summer Recreation program, the Family Fall Festival, and the Holiday Decoration Contest. ▶ Explore opportunities to partner with other local units of government, schools, or recreation stakeholders to provide recreation opportunities for citizens. ▶ Promote activities and events that provide social opportunities for members of the community to connect with one another |

COMMUNITY VISION & PLANNING GOALS

TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND PLANNING OBJECTIVES

| GOALS | OBJECTIVES |
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| <p>1. Port Huron Township has a network of safe roads to assure proper access and movement within and throughout the community.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Plan for a network of roads by type and function that will provide a complete road system, including major, collector, and local roads. ▶ Cooperate with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the St. Clair County Road Commission (SCCRC) to ensure that a proper relationship exists between planned road improvements and the township's desired future land use plan. ▶ Limit the points of ingress/egress on major roads to improve safety and retain the traffic carrying capacity of the roadway through the implementation of access management practices. ▶ Provide for a transportation system that recognizes the need for both auto and truck traffic and eliminates as many points of conflict between the two as possible. ▶ Coordinate with the SCCRC on planned road improvements to better serve residential and commercial areas through a regular program of scheduled pavement maintenance. ▶ Provide major traffic generators with proper and adequate feeder service, as well as ingress/egress. ▶ Require traffic impact studies for large-scale, high-intensity developments that will affect the surrounding community. ▶ Work with the SCCRC, MDOT, and other stakeholders to ensure the proper placement of signs and traffic signals. ▶ Collaborate with neighboring municipalities, the SCCRC, and other stakeholders on the development of corridor plans for key corridors as needed. |
| <p>2. The township is considered to be bicycle and pedestrian friendly and residents have a variety of transportation options available to them.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide sidewalks and pedestrian ways where needed. ▶ Work in concert with the St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC), the St. Clair County Road Commission (SCCRC), and other partners to expand the township's system of nonmotorized trails. ▶ Work with the St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC), the St. Clair County Transportation Study (SCCOTS), the SCCRC, and other entities to support Complete Streets policies and integrate Complete Streets elements into future road improvement projects. ▶ Work with community partners and the SCCRC to develop nonmotorized amenities along the Lapeer Road corridor, Michigan Road, and West Water Street. ▶ Work with PARC to establish connections of the Bridge to Bay Trail and the Wadhams to Avoca Trail along Griswold Rd. ▶ Work with PARC to implement planned and conceptual greenways detailed in the St. Clair County Trails and Routes Action Plan. ▶ Work with the Blue Water Area Transportation Commission to ensure adequate public transit services are available to residents throughout the township. ▶ Provide opportunities for linear forms of outdoor recreation, such as hiking, jogging, bicycling, equestrian, and walking trails. ▶ Provide safe pedestrian access to the primary community centers in Port Huron Township, including township facilities, school buildings, and community parks. |

PORT HURON TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES GOALS AND PLANNING OBJECTIVES

| GOALS | OBJECTIVES |
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| <p>1. The township provides adequate and cost-efficient sewer, water, and storm drainage to all geographic areas of the community, consistent with the development of the area</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop and maintain sewer, water, and storm drainage systems to accommodate the development of the township. ▶ Where appropriate, cooperate and partner with other agencies and governmental units to gain common benefits. ▶ Phase sewer and water installations to provide efficient growth and revenues to pay for the system. ▶ Extend future sewer and water service in an orderly manner, leaving no gaps or spaces in coverage. ▶ Implement the township's storm drainage plan to solve existing problems, in anticipation of future surface drainage needs. ▶ Install sewer and water facilities only where planning, zoning, and municipal boundary policies will not be compromised by their use. ▶ Encourage efficiencies in the design of new residential development that will minimize public service costs. |
| <p>2. The township provides a range of public facilities and services consistent with the urban character of the community, which meets present and future needs, and supports the public health, safety, and welfare of residents.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ensure police, fire and emergency services are consistent with public need and finance improvements in the most cost-efficient manner. ▶ Ensure police, fire and emergency services respond as quickly and effectively as possible. ▶ Solid waste, recyclable and hazardous materials are disposed of safely, effectively and efficiently. ▶ Enhance intercommunity cooperation and improve shared services. ▶ Work with other units of government to obtain grants and other project funding from state and federal government sources, as well as nonprofit and philanthropic organizations. ▶ Strategically plan for and acquire land that can be use used for public facilities and services. ▶ Develop and update a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) on an annual basis. ▶ Plan public facilities and services to direct growth toward areas suitable for high-density development. ▶ Base the township zoning ordinance modifications on the Township Master Plan updates every five years. |
| <p>3. The township promotes sustainability in the delivery of public services in order to protect the environment, preserve natural resources, and reduce energy and water consumption.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Promote recycling and reuse programs in the township. ▶ Encourage responsible water use and conservation. ▶ Adopt zoning regulations that will accommodate innovations in alternative energy, as long as they are appropriately sited. ▶ Promote sustainability and efficiency practices at township-owned facilities to the extent that it is feasible, cost-effective, and practical. ▶ Identify and eliminate sources of existing sewage contamination. ▶ Prevent contamination from new pollution sources in residential, commercial, and industrial developments. ▶ Establish leadership among township officials and residents to get environmental messages to the general public. ▶ Encourage and educate citizens and businesses on the importance of waste reduction and reuse. ▶ Develop land in a manner consistent with local, county, and state water protection objectives. ▶ Support responsible recreational uses of Port Huron Township's natural resources. |