
Implementation

Chapter Nine

Implementation

Implementation is not only the most important part of a Master Plan, it is the most difficult. Once adopted, the Marion Township Master Plan is the official policy guide to be used by the Township Board and the Planning Commission for making future zoning and land use decisions. The text and the maps within the Master Plan provide a base level of understanding about current planning conditions and about the community's desire for future growth and development. As the composition of Township officials, trustees and planning commissioners change over the years; this plan will provide continuity regarding planning policy.

Implementation Strategies

To effectively implement the Master Plan the following strategies are recommended:

Use the Plan for Making Zoning and Land Use Decisions

- Future rezoning requests and land use decisions should be reviewed for agreement with the policies and Future Land Use Map of this Master Plan. Relying on the Plan as a basis for zoning and land use decisions gives the Planning Commission, Township Board, Zoning Board, and the Master Plan greater credibility. *The Land Use Decision Matrix on the following page will assist the commission and boards with this process.*
- Use the Plan in a consistent manner so the integrity of the Plan is not compromised.
- Use the Plan as a component of the decision making process when proposing public services. To be fiscally responsible and give the township a measure of control over future growth, new infrastructure must correspond with the Master Plan.

Periodically Update the Plan and Associated Ordinances

- Update sections of the Master Plan as needed to reflect changing conditions and resident perspectives in the township. This includes reviewing the goals and objectives section of the Plan periodically.
- Revise the Township Zoning Ordinance where necessary to reflect the Master Plan. Zoning is the major tool used to put the Plan into action and shape future growth and development. It is used to support the goals and policies of the Master Plan.
- Review the Township General Ordinances to make sure they are aligned with the goals and policies of this Plan.
- Update the entire Master Plan at least every five years or as often as the township deems it necessary. It is important to revisit the Plan as things change and the population grows in the township.

Continue Public Education Efforts

- Educate residents on the intent of the Master Plan, and involve them in carrying out its mission whenever possible. Public understanding and support is critical to the effectiveness of the planning process.

LOCATION / LAND USE DECISION MATRIX

LOCATION FACTORS	LOT SIZES / LAND USE						
	<1/2 Acre	1/2 Acre	3/4 Acre	1 Acre	2 Acres	Commercial	Industrial
INFRASTRUCTURE:							
Sewer service (not septic)							
Water service (not well)							
Close proximity to emergency services (police, fire, ambulance)							
ROADS:							
Proximity (<1 mile) to I-96							
Proximity to major roads							
Direct access to paved roads							
Direct access to gravel roads							
NATURAL FEATURES:							
Lakes/Rivers							
Wetlands							
Hydric (wet) soils							
Drinking water protection areas							
Woodlands							
Steep slopes >12%							
ADJACENT ZONING / LAND USE:							
Agriculture/very low density residential (greater than 2 acres)							
low-density residential (2 acres)							
Medium-density residential (1 acre)							
Suburban density residential (1/2 - 1 acre)							
Urban density residential (<1/2 acre)							
Commercial or industrial							
Public Lands							

LEGEND	High Priority For Location =	 Medium Priority For Location =	 Low Priority For Location =	
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Interface between the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance

Each of the future land use designations recommended in this plan can be achieved through current Marion Township zoning district categories as illustrated below. In addition, there are flexible development options that can achieve the recommended density for each area of the township while

Future Land Use Designations and Corresponding Zoning Districts

Future Land Use Designation	Corresponding Zoning District
LR Lakes Residential	ERS-1 Existing Residential Subdivision*
SHDR Sewered High Density Residential	UR Urban Residential
SSR Sewered Suburban Residential	SR Suburban Residential
MDR Medium Density Residential	RR Rural Residential
LDR Low Density Residential	RR Rural Residential
C Commercial	HS Highway Service District
I Industrial	LI Light Industrial
CF Community Facilities	PL Public Lands

*Note: Establishment of new ERS-1and ERS-2 Existing Residential Subdivision zoning districts is no longer allowed under the Marion Township Zoning Ordinance.

preserving more open space, a characteristic that is highly desired by Marion Township residents (as revealed in the Marion Township Master Plan survey). Development with flexible standards can be achieved through the following methods:

- **Planned Unit Development Overlay District (PUD)** - The Marion Township Zoning Ordinance provides the option of a PUD overlay district which allows flexibility in the design of residential developments so that natural features are preserved, variety in housing styles is allowed, residential and non-residential uses can be mixed, and utilities, lot sizes and circulation can be economized.

Planned Unit Developments can be developed on a parcel of land twenty (20) acres or greater in all Marion Township residential zoning districts except the RR Rural Residential District. The Planning Commission will make exceptions to the twenty acre minimum parcel size if certain conditions exist. In order to qualify for a PUD, the applicant must demonstrate that the parcel meets at least three out of eight qualifying items of criteria. Most of the qualifying items of criteria involve parcel configuration, frontage on major thoroughfares, natural features and topography of the parcel.

The required minimum lot size, lot frontage and yard setbacks of the SR and UR zoning districts have been modified in the Marion Township PUD language to create modified

underlying zoning districts from which PUD density can be calculated. The density is calculated on a gross parcel area minus the area occupied by rights-of-way, easements, and one hundred (100) percent of the area occupied by any state regulated wetlands and floodplain areas. The resulting land area is divided by the minimum lot size of the modified underlying zoning district to establish the maximum number of permitted dwelling units. All Planned Unit Developments must provide a minimum thirty (30) percent of the parcel as common open space which is readily accessible and available to the residents of the PUD. Not more than twenty-five (25) percent of the designated common open space can be wetland, floodplain or open water. Additional percentage requirements have been established for developed recreational uses and golf courses.

- Open Space Preservation Option - The Marion Township Zoning Ordinance provides the option of clustering new homes on smaller lots in order to provide home sites with permanently preserved open space. This option is enabled by Michigan P.A. 177 of 2001 and it can be accomplished on undeveloped land that is zoned for residential development at 2 units or less per acre without sewer (21,780 square foot or larger lots), or 3 units or less per acre with sewer (14, 520 square foot or larger lots).

Through this development option, the density for the residential development remains the same as the number of units allowed by the underlying zoning (excluding unbuildable areas), however, the homes may be clustered on lots that are smaller in size than the minimum lot size of the underlying zoning. Lots must be clustered in a manner that results in fifty percent (50%) of the land being set aside as permanent open space. The open space must remain perpetually in an undeveloped state, protected by a legal covenant that runs with the land (e.g. conservation easement, plat dedication, etc...)