

## **Chapter 9**

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

This chapter briefly describes tools and techniques community leaders, boards and commissions, Township Administration, and the general public can use to implement the Master Plan. The techniques can be used individually or in tandem to achieve the objectives and eventually the overall goals of the Master Plan. While the direct impact of some techniques cannot be immediately assessed, over time these procedures can effectively guide land use and development in Heath Township.

#### **Zoning Ordinance**

The Zoning Ordinance is the primary regulatory tool used by the Township to implement the Land Use Plan. Districts are established through zoning for the purpose of regulating the use of land and buildings, their height and bulk, the proportion of the lot that may be covered by them, and the density of development. This classification through regulation assists in the orderly development and growth of the community. In addition, zoning is used to protect property values and investments. Because of the real and/or perceived impact zoning has on the use of land and related services, a direct relationship must exist between the Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.

Land use classifications on the Future Land Use Map and the corresponding future land use category descriptions in the text of the Master Plan provide the basis for evaluating future zoning amendments, decisions initiated by the Planning Commission or rezoning requests presented by petitioners.

Based on the recommendations in the Master Plan for the various agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial areas and based on the ever-evolving zoning tools that are available, the Township should periodically undergo a technical review of the Zoning Ordinance. Beyond this initial review and the recommended changes, there should also be continuous review of the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that it continues to satisfy the goals and objectives of this Plan and meet the Community's vision. In particular, site plan review and special land use approval standards should be maintained to ensure they stay current with the Community's objectives. Similarly, the Township Zoning Map should also be consistently reviewed and updated as

necessary to reflect changes in the Community consistent with the future land use plan. This is typically done on an annual basis.

### **Rezoning**

A review of the Zoning Map should be conducted to determine consistency with the Future Land Use Map. While the two should not be the same, it should be evident that the Zoning Map will move the Township closer to the vision presented in the Future Land Use Map. Therefore, property at a higher intensity or density than designated on the Future Land Use Map, are of particular concern. Rezoning these properties prevents a vacant lot from being developed or a property being redeveloped in a manner that is no longer consistent with the Townships' vision.

### **Subdivision and Planned Unit Development Regulations**

Land division regulations are an important tool for the implementation of this Plan. The Township has regulations to cover minor forms of land divisions, but it lacks a modern day subdivision control ordinance for regulating "platted subdivisions". This type of ordinance can be modeled after the Township's site condominium provisions. These regulations should be considered to ensure that the Township has all of the best tools available for handling all types of development and land ownership.

### **Prepare and Adopt Capital Improvements Program**

Capital Improvements Programming is basic first step in a comprehensive management system designed to match priorities and programs to community goals and objectives. It is a means of planning ahead for the funding and implementation of major construction and land acquisition activities. The typical CIP is six years in length and updated yearly. The first year in each CIP contains the capital improvement budget. The program generally includes a survey of the long-range needs of the entire governmental unit covering major planned projects along with their expected cost and priority. The Township Board then analyzes the project's financing options and the interrelationship between projects. Finally, a project schedule is developed. Priority projects are included in the Capital Improvements Program. Low priority projects may be retained in a "Capital Improvements Schedule" which may cover as long as 20 years.

The CIP is useful to the Township, private utilities, citizens and investors, since it allows coordination in activities and provides the general public with a view of future expectations.

## **Transportation Plan**

To further the “complete streets” objectives of the Master Plan, the Township should work with the Road Commission to develop policies that achieve connectivity of roads in subdivisions and to generally improve pedestrian accessibility and walkability in the areas that will be most intensively developed. Amenities such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes and non-motorized trails can directly improve pedestrian safety, add recreational value and help to improve the overall health of residents by encouraging physical activity. The Township should revise existing sidewalk policies and standards to require non-motorized connections within and between developments in the denser residential zoning districts.

The Township must work with adjacent Townships and the Allegan County Road Commission on some of these matters.

## **Recreation Plan**

The Plan recommends that the Township maintain an up to date Recreation Plan in order to remain eligible for State recreation funding programs such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund and Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund. Assistance under these programs is available for planning, acquiring land and developing a wide range of outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The programs are administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and are financed by funds appropriated by the Federal Government and State Legislature. Under the LWCF program, grants of up to 50% of the cost of a project are available.

## **Inter-Governmental Cooperation**

Inter-governmental cooperation on certain land use issues and utility issues can pay dividends to all involved. In an effort to manage growth properly, the Township desires to establish goals and regulations consistent with those of its neighbors so that the immediate area develops in a compatibly efficient manner, without over development. Consequently, Salem Township hopes to minimize incompatible land uses across municipal boundaries and to manage growth in such a way that the strengths of each community are taken advantage of and that competition between communities for tax base and economic development dollars is minimized. The implementation of programs or policies resulting

from this strategy will necessitate endorsement and support from all jurisdictions involved. This activity must be on-going.

### **Public Information**

It is important that the proposals of this Plan be discussed and understood by the citizens of Heath Township. Acceptance of this Plan by the public is essential to its successful implementation. Steps should be taken to make Township residents aware of this Plan and the continuing activities of the Planning Commission. This can be accomplished through newspaper reports of Planning Commission activity. Contact with local civic and service organizations is another method which can be used to promote the Township's planning activities and objectives.