



6 VISION STATEMENT

Long-range planning must take place in a public forum, with opportunities for public participation, if it is to be representative. The support of the community can also foster improved implementation opportunities. An approach that has been used successfully when planning for the future of a community involves preceding the planning process with an exercise designed to develop "a vision of the future" for the Township. The basic components include the following:

- ✍ Identify the "stakeholders", that is, those groups that have a stake in improving the quality of life in the Township.
- ✍ Involve the stakeholders in a process designed to identify what the future should be like in the Township.
- ✍ Build consensus among the stakeholders in setting forth the important characteristics of any new planning program.
- ✍ Prepare a vision statement from the stakeholders' consensus that will serve as the underlying direction for the Planning Commission's work of preparing a new Master Plan.

On June 25, 2002, the Clyde Township Planning Commission hosted a meeting, at which approximately 33 individuals representing various interests, organizations, and businesses in the community discussed the future of the Township. The participants divided into six groups and were asked to organize their discussion and come to a consensus about five topics: Community Character and Features, Residential Development, Traffic and Circulation, Non-residential Development, and Recreation.

The Community Vision Statement has been formulated based on the consensus presentations by the six vision groups. While the statements of the participants were often specific, the vision statement is intended to present a set of general observations that can serve as a resource to the Planning Commission. Programs, policies, and ordinances are then used as the implementation tools to help achieve the Future Vision.

COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT

The following statements are intended as a guide to provide direction to the Planning Commission as they formulate a new Master Plan for Clyde Township. This chapter does not constitute the official goals and objectives of the Planning Commission. Rather it was intended to be used as a resource to develop the goals and objectives contained in the next chapter.

Community Character and Features

Agricultural activity and open space are major components of Clyde Township's rural and scenic character. Preserving open space, natural features and a rural residential character is a high priority for Clyde residents. Clyde Township's established "rural character" is based upon a development pattern that fosters traditional rural lifestyles consisting of primarily large lot residential development that does not generally require the extension of urban governmental services and amenities. Township residents value their liberty, freedom and private property rights; this was expressed through the community survey and the Future Vision workshop. Township officials must find a balance between the role of local government and the preservation individual rights and freedom. Future residential growth should be planned to minimize impacts on natural features, wildlife habitat and open space. The Township should emphasize rural character by preserving open space and promoting farmland preservation. In addition, special measures should be taken to protect the Township's natural features, such as the Black River Mill Creek, Port Huron Game Area, and Beard's Hills as well as other natural features to maintain the visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities. Planning for future growth and preparing for the impact that it could have on Clyde is the best way to preserve the existing rural character of the Township.

Residential Development

Residential growth is likely to increase, and residents are concerned with how development will impact the Township's established rural character. Conscientious planning of future residential uses and infrastructure must take place if Clyde's open space and country atmosphere are to be maintained. The Township's codes and policies should continue to promote low-density

large lot development on 2.0-2.5 acre lots. Preservation of working farms should be emphasized. The Township should promote a variety of housing, including affordable housing in proper zones. The southeast ¼ of the Township contains areas, which may be appropriate for higher density residential development. Natural features should be preserved while maintaining individual private property rights and limited government intervention.

Traffic and Circulation

Clyde Township's road infrastructure is rural in character with primarily unpaved roads and a lack of sidewalks throughout the Township. Overall residents value the existing mix of paved and gravel roads because they help to maintain the rural atmosphere. Improvements can be made, however, to enhance traffic circulation within and through the Township. Residents did express a desire to pave highly traveled roads and to consider the addition of more north-south access roads including a possible Black River crossing. The need for regular maintenance of existing roads to control dust, improve cleanliness and to prevent and alleviate potholes was emphasized. Posted speeds are needed to slow traffic, along with enforcement of speed and weight limitations. Major intersections need lighting and signalization. Due to the existing road conditions and rural character of the Township, sidewalks should not be located alongside the roads. Existing bike paths are adequate; patrolling and emergency access to the path is necessary for improved safety.

Non-residential Development

There does not appear to be a need for significant additional commercial and industrial uses in Clyde Township. Residents emphasized the need to support existing commercial and industrial businesses in adjacent communities and maintain the Township's residential tax base. Future convenience commercial and industrial uses should be located away from agricultural areas and concentrated in the Lapeer Road corridor. Non-residential development should be small in scale consistent with the rural atmosphere of Clyde Township. The Township should promote natural preservation through coordination with the Michigan Nature Association and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Recreational land uses such as riding stables and canoe liveries that have little impact on the Township's agricultural character are the preferred type of non-residential development. Township services are adequate for such a rural Township. Township policies and programs to eliminate blight should be established.

Recreational Development

Township residents expressed the need for recreation programming for all age groups including seniors and school age children. The promotion of

riding stables, canoe rental facilities and soccer fields was important to Township residents. Many residents expressed a sentiment that current recreation facilities are underutilized and should be better maintained and utilized. Despite this sentiment some residents expressed the need for the creation of a centralized recreation center to benefit the aged. Interest in the creation of an area for off-road recreation such as all terrain vehicles and snowmobiles was expressed. Although it was suggested that the State Game Area might have potential for off-road vehicle trails, there was some opposition to this idea. There is very little Township support for a local recreation millage to fund additional park development, programming and maintenance. However, residents suggested utilizing existing Township facilities and establishing admission based recreation programs as a way to provide for additional recreational activities.