

## Chapter 9.0 Goals, Policies and Objectives

### 9.1 Introduction

Throughout the preceding chapters of this Master Plan, detailed information has been presented defining the historical trends and current situation in Republic Township. This background information has helped the Planning Commission gain an understanding of the forces which have shaped the growth and development of the Township to this point.

In order for a community to have a sound plan for growth and development, it is essential that goals be set. These goals are broad statements which reflect the desired future conditions and are based on the background information, assumptions, alternatives and policy variables presented in earlier chapters. More specific policies and objectives are then developed, defining actions that can be taken to implement the goals.

The final stage of the planning process, implementation, begins once the goals, policies and objectives have been defined. The first step in implementation is the adoption of this plan by the Planning Commission and the Township Board following a public hearing and consideration of any public comments received.

Plan implementation continues through adherence to the goals, policies and objectives set forth in this plan. It should be emphasized, however, that these goals, policies and objectives are only a guide and provide long-term vision; ideas and projects mentioned are adjustable per a community's needs. While the Planning Commission has developed these goals, policies and objectives based on the best information available, and the needs of the community at a point in time, changing needs and desires within the community, or changes in the local population or economy may mean that these goals, policies and objectives will need to be re-evaluated. This plan must remain flexible enough to respond to changing needs and conditions, while still providing a strong guiding mechanism for future development. The Planning Commission and Township Board, together with other groups, organizations and individuals, can use this plan as a dynamic decision making tool, and should assure that the plan is referred to frequently and updated periodically.

To assist in understanding the nature of the goals, policies, and objectives presented on the following pages, the following definitions are presented:

**Goal:** A broad statement of a desired future condition, the generalized end toward which all efforts are directed. Goals are often stated in terms of fulfilling broad public needs, or alleviating major problems. Goals are generally difficult to measure and are idealistic.

**Policy:** A statement of position or course of action which provides a means of obtaining a stated goal. Policies are factual in nature, and can be measured by the impact they have on existing conditions.

**Objective:** A specific attainable end derived from a related goal or policy to be accomplished within a specific time. When attained, they represent significant and measurable progress toward a goal, thus providing a means of evaluating progress.

## 9.2 Population and Housing

### Goals:

- Prevent further population decline and eventually achieve a manageable population growth rate.
- Provide adequate and efficient public and private services for the aging population.
- Encourage the availability of safe and affordable housing units of varying style and size sufficient to meet the needs of the local population.

### Policies:

- Encourage those persons who currently reside in the Township to remain residents of Republic Township.
- Encourage the availability of appropriate housing development sites throughout the Township.
- Maintain consistent and vigilant enforcement of an ordinance designed to insure public health and safety and control blight and structural deterioration.
- Encourage development of subdivisions in areas that can be served by municipal water and sewer services.

- Encourage development of a variety of housing types to meet the needs of the present and future population of the Township.
- Encourage the rehabilitation of existing housing stock to provide safe living conditions and prevent deterioration and blight.

**Objectives:**

- Maintain current infrastructure and make infrastructure improvements whenever possible to continue to provide services to residents, encouraging them to remain in the Township.
- Assist residents in obtaining training in business and entrepreneurship when possible to keep residents in Republic.
- Continue to communicate in a positive manner with residents to foster hope.
- Provide services focused on the aging population, encouraging older residents to remain in Republic Township.
- Utilize the zoning ordinance and other land use regulation tools, to ensure that areas are available for residential development.
- Periodically review the Township infrastructure and services to insure there is sufficient capacity to meet existing and future residential and commercial requirements.
- Neighborhoods, businesses and public entities should be vigilant regarding physical appearances, sanitation and general ownership responsibilities.
- Review the zoning ordinance to assure there is a variety of densities and dwelling types.
- Use the zoning ordinance to guide denser development to areas where utilities and natural features are suitable for such development.

### 9.3 Economic Base

#### Goals:

- Provide reasonable opportunities for the establishment of commercial uses which meet the demonstrated market needs of Township residents.
- Ensure that the architecture, landscaping, and signage associated with commercial establishments is compatible with the Township's rural residential character.

#### Policies:

- Encourage commercial development in locations where compact and coordinated development can occur without impacting residential land uses. Discourage strip commercial development and isolated commercial uses.
- Discourage the establishment of multiple access points for freestanding commercial uses. Encourage the use of shared access and service drives.
- Require new commercial site developments to conform to the applicable recommendations of the Marquette County Master Plan.
- Review commercial architectural and landscape designs to ensure that such uses are carefully integrated into the Township's landscape.
- Require the establishment of transitional uses and/or landscaped screening between commercial and residential agricultural or open space land uses.
- Consider the impact new developments will have on the Township ecosystem, specifically the impact of increasing impervious surface area on Republic watersheds.

### 9.4 Natural Features

#### Goals

- Maintain the Township's scenic and wooded character by minimizing the impact of development on natural and wooded features such as but not limited to, wetlands, steep slopes, shoreline and wildlife habitat.
- Encourage the retention of important forest lands, farmlands, and open space areas.

- Protect the quality of surface and ground water resources in the township from development related impacts.
- Protect Township residents and property from natural hazards associated with development which infringes on natural systems.

**Policies:**

- Encourage the maintenance of undisturbed natural buffers around inland lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, and other sensitive environmental systems.
- Encourage the use of cluster designs to conserve scenic views, agricultural land, wetland areas, inland lakes, groundwater recharge areas, steep slopes and other environmentally sensitive areas.
- Encourage the use of native plant species and naturalized landscape designs where appropriate, to enhance the community's existing character.
- Encourage the retention of productive forest and agricultural lands through available mechanisms such as open space and farmland agreements, forest stewardship programs, and conservation easements as well as local zoning incentives.
- Encourage the stewardship of privately-owned forest lands, wetlands, inland lakes and other environmental systems.
- Encourage the establishment of a continuous open space system that interconnects public and private natural areas and recreational facilities.
- Encourage inclusion of parks, bicycle and pedestrian linkages and open space areas in conjunction with new and established developments.

## **9.5 Industrial Land Use**

**Goals:**

- Provide locations for light industrial uses that are adequately served by public facilities and services.
- Ensure that the architecture, landscaping, and signage associated with industrial establishments is compatible with the Township's rural residential character.

**Policies:**

- Discourage industrial development which will negatively impact environmentally sensitive areas or require substantial changes to the natural systems.
- Utilize the concept of planned industrial areas that emphasize access control, building and site design, and controlled signage and lighting.
- Require new industrial developments to conform to the applicable recommendations of Marquette County's Master Plan.
- Consider the impact new developments will have on the Township ecosystem, specifically the impact of increasing impervious surface area in the Republic Township watershed.

**Objectives:**

- Efforts should be made to attract new industry that will have a relatively low impact on the community and environment.
- Identify areas that are suitable for industrial development but will not adversely impact adjacent land uses.
- Review current zoning district designations to ensure suitable areas are identified for industrial development.

## 9.6 Commercial Land Use

**Goal:**

- Increase employment and investment that will result in economic diversification compatible with the character and long-term interests of the Township.

**Policies:**

- Develop a commercial district along the M-95 corridor while maintaining the small town community spirit in Republic.
- Focus on diversification of business in the typical “downtown” area as well as along the M-95 corridor.
- Ensure that retail, commercial and industrial growth occurs where it does not

endanger or diminish the Township's natural surroundings or quality of life.

- Encourage the establishment of home-based and natural resource-based industry through promotion of area's rural setting and overall quality-of-life.
- Ensure that commercial and industrial development is located where adequate infrastructure is in place or is available and would be compatible with adjacent land uses.
- Efforts to attract new industry to the Township should focus on "light" industry, firms with relatively low impact on the community and with minimal demands for public services such as water and sewer.
- Encourage existing businesses and industries to remain, except in cases where such uses are nonconforming, or where state and federal standards are not being complied with. Where violations of state or federal standards exist, encourage firms to come into compliance to reduce land use conflicts and the potential for negative impacts on the environment.

**Objectives:**

- Review and revise if necessary zoning regulations to allow for home occupations and small rural businesses to the extent such businesses do not adversely impact other residential uses and are compatible with the level of service provided.
- Identify areas that are suitable for commercial development but will not adversely impact adjacent land uses.
- Review current zoning district designations to ensure suitable areas are identified for commercial development.

## **9.7 General Land Use**

**Goal:**

- Achieve a pattern of land use that will allow for manageable and compatible development in areas where adequate facilities exist or can be provided, while preserving open space and the community's rural character.

**Policies:**

- Ensure that land uses are adequately supported by existing infrastructure.

- Where development is not connected to municipal water and/or wastewater systems, adequate land area should exist for private wells and septic fields.
- Driveways and private roadways should be designed with adequate right-of-way and constructed to provide safe ingress and egress.
- Commercial development should utilize shared driveways and parking, frontage roads, and deceleration and turning lanes to reduce turning incidents and improve traffic flow.
- Development in the outlying portions of the Township should preserve open space and the rural character of the Township and provide adequate space for private wells and septic systems.
- The cleanup of environmentally contaminated sites within the Township should be encouraged.
- Incorporate a wind energy overlay zoning district and map into the zoning ordinance to provide for regulations regarding potential small and large-scale wind turbines.

**Objectives:**

- Review recurring incidents of similar variance requests to determine whether zoning provisions should be modified.
- Review and revise the zoning ordinance to discourage intensive development in areas where natural characteristics limit the suitability of sites; examples include areas of high water tables, soils with low permeability, limited groundwater availability or areas of excessively well-drained soils.
- Review the zoning ordinance to provide for adequate lot sizes, setback, etc. to maintain the values of waterfront areas and other areas that are potentially not suitable for intensive development.
- Provide housing and other facilities and programs that meet the needs of young people and young families in order to maintain the desirability of Republic Township.
- Identify areas that are unsuitable for residential or commercial development.

- Review the established minimum lot sizes of the different zoning districts. Revise minimum lot size requirements, as appropriate, to accommodate changing lifestyles, desires of potential residents and to encourage more dense residential development in certain areas of the township.
- Ensure that adequate areas are zoned for new residential, commercial and industrial development in the township where infrastructures are in place or readily available to support development.

## **9.8 Community Facilities and Services**

### **Goal:**

- Provide necessary community facilities and services efficiently and in conformance with all applicable regulatory standards for all Township residents and visitors.

### **Policies:**

- Ensure that Township facilities, infrastructure and equipment are maintained in good repair.
- Work with other local government bodies, agencies and organizations which provide services in the area, in order to maximize the level of service provided to township residents.
- Coordinate with other communities, organizations and agencies that provide services in the area to maximize the level of service offered township residents.
- Ensure adequate fire protection coverage and emergency medical technician service to all areas of the Township.
- Continue to provide existing services in a safe and efficient manner, in compliance with state and federal standards and expand services as needed.
- Examine if the level of services provided to township residents should be expanded.
- Periodically evaluate the level of service provided to Township residents, to determine if expansion is warranted.

**Objectives:**

- The Planning Commission shall develop a multi-year Capital Improvement Plan to be used as a long-range planning and budgeting tool by the Township Board.
- Expansion of facilities and/or services should be predicated on the Township's ability to sustain operational and maintenance expenses.
- Identify areas that could be served by the Township water system to provide for potential industrial, commercial and/or residential expansion.

**9.9 Recreation****Goals:**

- Continue to provide adequate recreational facilities to residents and visitors.
- Promote the Township as a four-season recreation destination.

**Policies:**

- Ensure that recreational facilities are safe, clean and accessible to users of all ages.
- Ensure that recreational facilities are, to the maximum extent possible, developed for multipurpose and/or year-round use to optimize cost and benefits accrued to the public.
- Encourage public participation in the development and provision of township recreational facilities and services.
- Develop marketing tools to promote the Township's recreation opportunities.

**Objectives:**

- Continue to support the Lake Superior Community Partnership with their efforts in establishing the Iron Ore Heritage Trail.
- Maintain a current Republic Township Recreation Plan in accordance with Michigan DNR guidelines.
- Cooperate and coordinate with other communities throughout the county to maintain and improve recreational facilities and historical sites.

- Support other local governments' efforts to obtain grant funds for recreational facilities in the area.
- Pursue grant funds as appropriate to expand and improve community recreational facilities.
- Identify opportunities to make sites and facilities more accessible to people with disabilities.
- Facilitate community involvement in the recreation planning process and in site development in order to insure that facilities are developed in accordance with local needs, and that local residents feel “ownership” of these facilities.

## 9.10 Transportation

### Goal:

- Promote a safe, efficient and well maintained multi-modal transportation system to serve the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

### Policies:

- Private driveway access to state trunklines and other heavily-traveled roadways by commercial uses should be limited, in order to avoid increasing traffic congestion and safety hazards.
- Support the improvement and development of trails for motorized and non-motorized uses.
- Support the Marquette County Road Commission’s efforts to maintain and upgrade the road network in the Township and throughout the entire county.

### Objectives:

- Continue to develop local road improvement priority lists within the Township.
- Participate with the Marquette County Road Commission in setting road improvement priorities on primary roads.
- Participate in trail planning activities with local, state and federal agencies.
- Consider adoption of an access management plan.