

CHAPTER 3: VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Clinton County is faced with a number of critical land use issues, perhaps the most critical is the protection of agricultural land and the rural quality of the County while allowing for growth and development. The guiding principles and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, directed by the Countywide Vision statement, establish the desired character, quality, and pattern of development for the physical development of the County. The guiding principles, goals, and objectives contained in this chapter direct future decisions on land use regulations, actions, procedures, and programs that will further implement the intent and purpose of the overall plan.

The vision, goals, and objectives, presented, are organized by ten (10) major themes including:

- Government
- Quality of Life
- Agricultural Land Preservation
- Land Use
- Parks and Recreation
- Community Services and Infrastructure
- Natural Resources
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Public Involvement

Vision Statement

The vision of the Clinton County Comprehensive plan is to promote a high quality of life a continued commitment to preserve and enhance the unique and diverse character of the County through policies and programs to promote intergovernmental cooperation, preserve open space, agricultural and natural resources, provide recreational opportunities, ensure efficient and safe transportation network, desirable economic development, and active public participation.

The vision of the Clinton County Comprehensive Plan is to promote a high quality of life and continued commitment to preserve and enhance the unique and diverse character of the County through policies and programs to promote intergovernmental cooperation, preserve open space, agricultural and natural resources, provide recreational opportunities, ensure efficient and safe transportation network, desirable economic development, and active public participation.

Goal 1: Government

Communicate openly and efficiently coordinate all governmental efforts to ensure efficient and non-duplicative services to all residents of the County.

Objective 1

Improve the communication and coordination of the planning and development permit process between County officials, the public, and local governments.

Objective 2

Investigate areas where shared services and/or costs between two or more communities are appropriate, and encourage joint efforts in these areas.

Objective 3

Coordinate economic development efforts in the County.

Objective 4

Provide a coordinated approach toward recreational opportunities and open space preservation in the County and the Region.

Objective 5

Encourage greater collaboration and coordination of efforts among the municipalities and the school districts in the Region.

Objective 6

Encourage physical linkages, such as bike, pedestrian and equestrian pathways between communities to connect important regional assets such as parks and community services.

Goal 2: Quality of Life

Promote and maintain a high quality of life for current and future residents of the County.

Objective 1

Manage growth in the County to ensure development is compatible with township development plans and promote the phasing of high impact development to minimize its effects.

Objective 2

Require the provision of a variety of housing styles and types to accommodate a wider range of housing preferences, income levels and household types (singles, seniors, empty-nesters) in mixed-use and cluster developments.

Objective 3

Ensure new development is compatible with existing development.

Objective 4

Preserve, protect, and educate on valued cultural and historical resources.

Objective 5

Enhance the visual appearance of the County through zoning regulations and site plan review standards for setbacks, signs, landscaping, lighting, etc.

Objective 6

Create and sustain the diverse sense of place and community throughout the County.

Goal 3: Agricultural Land Preservation

Emphasize on the preservation of agricultural and open space land through zoning, regulatory controls and other mechanisms such as PDR, TDR and PA-116.

Objective 1

Establish an appropriate financing mechanism to fund a farmland preservation program.

Objective 2

Enhance and develop programs through existing organizations, such as Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) and Conservation District to support the agricultural industry in the County.

Objective 3

Recognize and consider protection of prime, unique and important agricultural lands in the County in development decisions.

Objective 4

Continue working with local jurisdictions, farmers, and agricultural industry to enhance and protect farmland.

Goal 3: Agricultural Land Preservation (cont.)

Emphasize on the preservation of agricultural and open space land through zoning, regulatory controls and other mechanisms such as PDR, TDR and PA-116.

Objective 5

Develop appropriate zoning regulations and other tools, such as purchase of development rights (PDR), and transfer of development rights (TDR) to protect farmland.

Objective 6

Develop (with existing organizations and schools) public information and education programs about the impact of agricultural land reductions and the value of agricultural land preservation.

Objective 7

Develop agricultural security zones or districts with appropriate financial incentives.

Objective 8

Develop zoning regulations which allow flexibility in commercial farm growth but restrictive enough to maintain sound environmental practices and location.

Goal 4: Land Use

To provide for the orderly use of Clinton County land, to protect and maintain the present rural, residential, agricultural atmosphere, respect the natural environment and processes, recognize the agricultural and rural orientation of the County, and to regulate development in a manner which will protect both the rights of private landowners and the interests of the public.

Objective 1

Encourage compatible land use plans between adjacent jurisdictions.

Objective 2

Encourage development that is contiguous to existing development and infrastructure.

Objective 3

Encourage the redevelopment of existing structures.

Objective 4

Establish urban revitalization policies that encourage growth, development, and preservation of existing cities and villages.

Objective 5

Work with school districts to improve existing schools and facilities.

Objective 6

Site regional facilities near population centers and near existing infrastructure.

Objective 7

Promote the clustering of new houses in subdivisions near existing towns to protect agricultural lands and open space.

Goal 4: Land Use (cont.)

To provide for the orderly use of Clinton County land, to protect and maintain the present rural, residential, agricultural atmosphere, respect the natural environment and processes, recognize the agricultural and rural orientation of the County, and to regulate development in a manner which will protect both the rights of private landowners and the interests of the public.

Objective 8

Encourage a mix of uses within new developments.

Objective 9

Establish standards to promote buffering and transition areas between differing land uses.

Objective 10

Establish character standards for new development regarding landscaping, scale, form and architectural elements.

Objective 11

Promote general solid waste management practices in the consideration of new and existing residential, commercial and industrial development, including, but not limited to, planning for comprehensive solid waste, site design to accommodate recycling, waste disposal and composting facilities; and management of construction and demolition waste materials.

Objective 12

Promote the use of surety and performance bonds in the permitting process for non-occupied structures (e.g. cell towers, billboard signs, etc.) for eventual dismantling and disposal in an economic and environmentally sound manner.

Objective 13

Promote the development of depleted extraction/mining areas for residential and/or recreational uses.

Goal 5: Parks & Recreation

Identify, acquire, develop and maintain a vibrant county park system that improves the quality of life in Clinton County. The system will include non-motorized trails and natural resource based parks of countywide significance that complement existing public and private park, recreation and open space opportunities, anticipate future growth and development and help maintain the county's rural character.

Objective 1

Identify, acquire, and when possible develop and maintain a system of water access sites on surface waters appropriate for public recreational use.

Objective 2

Identify, acquire, and when possible develop and maintain a system of non-motorized trails in the county providing recreation, non-motorized transportation, health and economic benefits. This may include links between communities, residential developments and existing or planned recreational facilities.

Objective 3

Identify, acquire, and when possible develop and maintain a natural resource based park (preferably of 160 or more acres) to meet current and future county natural resource based recreation needs.

Objective 4

Encourage cooperation, coordination and funding of selected park, recreation and open space resources, facilities and programs among local jurisdictions and governmental units.

Objective 5

Encourage cooperation, coordination and funding of selected park, recreation and open space resources, facilities and programs with non-profit organizations.

Goal 5: Parks & Recreation (cont.)

Identify, acquire, develop and maintain a vibrant county park system that improves the quality of life in Clinton County and which includes non-motorized trails and natural resource based parks of countywide significance that complement existing public and private park, recreation and open space opportunities, anticipate future growth and development in the County and help maintain the rural character.

Objective 6

Establish countywide funding mechanisms for Clinton County Parks or various aspects of them, which may include one or more sources such as county general fund support, foundation grants, maintenance endowment, a millage, user fees, etc.

Objective 7

Establish a Clinton County Green Space Foundation to support Clinton County Green Space efforts.

Objective 8

Cooperate in the development and promotion of conservation, cultural, educational and recreational programs across the county.

Objective 9

Assist in the establishment of an agricultural land conservation program in Clinton County.

Goal 6: Community Services & Infrastructure

Provide adequate, desirable, and quality services to residents in an efficient, equitable, and cost-effective manner.

Objective 1

Conveniently locate services and facilities to serve Clinton County residents.

Objective 2

Establish a multi-jurisdictional master plan for growth of community services and infrastructure that coincides with the anticipated growth of the County.

Objective 3

Promote the goals, objectives and provisions of the Clinton County Solid Waste Management Plan.

Objective 4

Coordinate and develop programs with local jurisdictions to assure adequate emergency services to serve all areas of the County.

Objective 5

Support initiatives between the County and local jurisdictions to estimate costs and set priorities for capital improvements.

Objective 6

Establish appropriate urban service boundaries to limit the development of infrastructure and utilities around existing developed areas of the County.

Objective 7

Develop regulations and incentives for the use of shared septic and potable water systems in cluster developments.

Objective 8

Encourage convenient public access to new or expanded disposal or recycling facilities located within the County.

Goal 7: Natural Resources

Promote, educate and protect natural and non-renewable resources, agricultural lands and open space found in the County.

Objective 1

Protect groundwater aquifers and natural recharge areas including wetlands and significant areas of upland open space on a watershed basis.

Objective 2

Adopt a wetlands and groundwater protection ordinance, maintain data, and monitor health and quality of drinking water aquifers.

Objective 3

Protect and enhance groundwater and surface water resources from contamination from failing septic systems, fertilizer runoff, and other point sources of pollution.

Objective 4

Develop, educate, and enforce storm water management techniques to minimize the impacts of non-point source pollution on surface water resources.

Objective 5

Preserve natural habitats and establish key wildlife corridors to sustain and enhance the quality of the natural environment.

Objective 6

Promote Clinton County Solid Waste Management Plan to protect the environment and human health.

Goal 7: Natural Resources (cont.)

Promote, educate and protect natural and non-renewable resources, agricultural lands and open space found in the County.

Objective 7

Develop and consider the use of energy and air quality and environmental impacts on the region when planning for future development.

Objective 8

Protect important scenic areas, wetlands, mature vegetation and other natural resources contributing to the community character.

Objective 9

Preserve and protect prime agriculture land and open space.

Objective 10

Protect natural resources through education and conservation practices.

Objective 11

Develop gravel mine extraction regulations and land use remediation programs.

Objective 12

Enhance educational programs and educate on the benefits of County waste management and recycling programs.

Goal 8: Economic Development

Work with organizations to foster a County that has vibrant, diverse, strong, and healthy environment for providing sustained service to, and employment of, current and future citizens.

Objective 1

Designate areas of the County suitable for commercial and industrial uses.

Objective 2

Develop and establish a County Brownfield Redevelopment Program.

Objective 3

Develop an environment conducive to business enterprises.

Objective 4

Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing structures in-fill and redevelopment.

Objective 5

Promote the establishment of new businesses compatible with local jurisdictions.

Goal 8: Economic Development (cont.)

Work with organizations to foster a County that has vibrant, diverse, strong, and healthy environment for providing sustained service to, and employment of, current and future citizens.

Objective 6

Support efforts to provide appropriate land and infrastructure to support projected economic development needs.

Objective 7

Sustain economic development activities to ensure an adequate tax base and employment base.

Objective 8

Support business retention and attraction within the County with existing organizations.

Objective 9

Support a County economic plan and provide leadership in grants applications and other funding sources.

Goal 9: Transportation

Ensure an efficient, safe, and multi-modal transportation network throughout the County in cooperation and coordination with the County Transportation Authority, Clinton County Road Commission, Michigan Department of Transportation, Capital Area Transportation Authority, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, and local jurisdictions.

Objective 1

Promote connection of subdivisions, planned unit developments, and other mixed used developments.

Objective 2

Maintain the existing rural character (two lane, tree canopy, limited lighting etc.) of rural County roads, including major and minor collectors, local streets and roads.

Objective 3

Ensure that new commercial and large-scale residential development has appropriate access to major and minor collectors as shown on the official MDOT Clinton County Functional Road Classification Systems Map.

Objective 4

Promote cooperation, coordination, and public participation of transportation planning throughout the County and Region.

Objective 5

Develop regulations to protect the rural viewsheds along County roads designated as rural on the MDOT Functional Road Classification Systems Map, including, US 127, BR-127, I-96, and other high-intensity transportation routes.

Goal 9: Transportation

Ensure an efficient, safe, and multi-modal transportation network throughout the County in cooperation and coordination with the County Transportation Authority, Clinton County Road Commission, Michigan Department of Transportation, Capital Area Transportation Authority, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, and local jurisdictions.

Objective 6

Encourage physical non-motorized linkages, such as bike and pedestrian paths between communities that connect important regional assets such as parks and community services.

Objective 7

Promote access management on other principle arterials, minor arterials, urban collectors and major collectors.

Objective 8

Consider non-motorized transportation in land use planning.

Goal 10: Public Involvement

Encourage planning programs that include formalized, facilitated and broad-based public involvement processes.

Objective 1

Increase emphasis on public participation in decision making for land use and transportation issues.

Objective 2

Promote planning programs that include broad-based public involvement processes to achieve consensus on the implementation of the vision for the County, Region and each local community.

Objective 3

Improve communication through early and continuous involvement to help develop a clear vision and to lead to expedited implementation of better projects.

Objective 4

Promote township and local processes for reviewing site-specific land development applications that is reasonable, predictable and fair for applicants, contiguous neighbors, and community.

Objective 5

Utilize programs such as the Michigan State University Extension's "Leaders for Tomorrow Program" to inform and educate on County land use and development issues; also to recruit future members to various County boards.

Objective 6

Establish a newsletter for County residents.