

# INTRODUCTION

The land use decisions that Lyon Township makes over the next several years will have a fundamental impact on the character and quality of life in the Township. The Township is located at the leading edge of development in southeast Michigan. Several properties have changed ownership in recent years as developers position themselves to address the needs generated by expanding urbanization.

Residents of the Township have long been concerned about maintaining the quality of residential life. A survey in 1990 revealed that many residents believe “quality of life” is closely related to quality of the natural environment and preservation of rural features. This plan is intended to protect and preserve those qualities on which residents place such great value, while recognizing that growth will create needs that must be addressed.

## Legal Basis for the Master Plan

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P. A. 33 of 2008) expressly authorizes cities, villages, and townships to engage in planning and zoning. The Act states that the general purpose of a master plan is to guide and accomplish development that satisfies all of the following criteria:

- (a) Is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical.
- (b) Considers the character of the planning jurisdiction and its suitability for particular uses, judged in terms of such factors as trends in land and population development.
- (c) Will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare.
- (d) Includes, among other things, promotion of or adequate provision for 1 or more of the following:
  - (i) A system of transportation to lessen congestion on streets.
  - (ii) Safety from fire and other dangers.
  - (iii) Light and air.
  - (iv) Healthful and convenient distribution of population.
  - (v) Good civic design and arrangement and wise and efficient expenditure of public funds.

- (vi) Public utilities such as sewage disposal and water supply and other public improvements.
- (vii) Recreation.
- (viii) The use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability.

The Act also requires the Planning Commission to “make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and future growth of the municipality.”

### Public Input

A key goal of this plan is to protect and preserve those qualities on which residents place great value. In 1990 a Community Planning survey was conducted, which solicited residents’ views and preferences on a wide range of community growth and development issues, including housing, the environment, utilities, transportation, and recreation. Through the years, the results of the 1990 Community Planning Survey have been verified in public hearings and elections where residents have consistently spoken and voted in favor of maintaining the country or rural environment and other values expressed in the survey.

The survey revealed that the most liked features of Lyon Township relate to its country or rural environment. Other features which residents appreciate include proximity to the freeway, access to work, shopping, and parks, the large lots and open space, friendly people, low population density, and low crime.

The survey also found that there are some features of the Township that residents dislike. Respondents most frequently cited "growth and development" issues as the most disliked features. Also topping the list of disliked features were poor condition of roads and excessive traffic. Additional features of the Township that were particularly displeasing to respondents included high taxes, the school system and administration, the landfill, lack of certain public services, increased crime, and the appearance of the Township.<sup>1</sup>

The challenge to community leaders over the next several years will be to preserve and enhance the rural environment and other desired features of the Township, and to resolve existing and potential concerns cited by respondents. The response to a question concerning potential problems found that roads and traffic are chief among the concerns which must be resolved. Residents are also concerned about potential increases in breaking and entering, crime, and groundwater pollution.

The survey obtained respondents' opinions about the quality and scope of various public services. Public safety services were generally rated favorably, although a majority of

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<sup>1</sup>Since 1990, many of the displeasing features of the Township have been addressed, if not completely resolved. The school system is on solid footing and has been proactive in addressing the need for new and renovated schools. The landfill is closed and converted into a park. Public water and sewer services have been developed and blighted structures throughout the Township have been removed using CDBG funds.