

service businesses would be allowed to the extent that they are a usual and necessary part of the recreational and residential development. They exist for, and are of a scale appropriate to, the primary purpose of serving the resort.

Much of the Township is made up of steep hills, fragile soils and seeps from the hilly terrain in to the valleys, in which many cases contain wetland areas.

Future development near these environmentally sensitive areas is best addressed on a case-by-case basis so that the development can be directed away from the fragile areas. Care needs to be taken to protect the water of the Township from insecticides, pesticides, fertilizers and septic waste pollution. Soil erosion can easily occur from both earth disturbance activities as well as storm water run-off.

The recreational and residential use areas that are expected to experience the highest growth are those having the greatest changes on elevation. These same areas will attract large numbers of people. Therefore, transportation both to the resort area from other areas of the state and township, as well as, movement of people within the resort itself, are of major concern. Both the pedestrian and vehicular traffic must be accommodated while insuring that emergency vehicles have the ability to reach and service the development. Due to elevation changes, number of people attracted and the distance of this type of development from the Village of Bellaire, the potential exists for very high costs to service this type of development. A relatively small portion of the population of the township would benefit from these infrastructure improvements. The necessary utilities and infrastructure shall be installed prior to, or in conjunction with, the proposed development with the cost to be borne by those proposing the development.

SECTION V – IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation of “putting to work” of a future growth plan for the Township can take many forms. The most common form is to use the Zoning Ordinance as a way to regulate and direct growth. In this way, decisions made on rezoning are guided by the Master Plan. The setting of lot sizes, density and permitted uses, all influence the direction that development will take. It is recommended that the Township use the Special Use Permit process and site plan review as a technique to guide development. The soil factor maps available from the Antrim County Soil and Water Conservation District should be used to insure adequate protection of fragile soil conditions when proposed developments are reviewed.

A subdivision control ordinance will also help achieve goals. It is recommended that an ordinance be written to include provision for erosion control that could create “green belts”. This will help retain the valuable natural character of the Township.

A wetland ordinance, following the guidelines of the State Wetlands Act, will help the Township protect water quality by recognizing these special areas and prescribing measure to insure their future.

The Township Board, in its capital improvements planning and budgeting, can influence implementation of the plan by budgeting funds to improve roads in portions of the township where growth is planned to occur.

There are also several state laws that the Township can utilize to help with implementation of the plan.

A. Act 166-Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act

This Act requires a minimum of forty acres in size; a farm of five to forty acres with a gross annual income of two hundred dollars per cleared and tillable acre; or a specialty farm of at least fifteen acres designated as a specialty farm by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and with a gross annual income of two thousand dollars or more.

Beginning in the 2001 tax year, the state of Michigan began offering an enhanced benefit for landowners enrolled in PA-166 agreements which enable land owners to claim a tax credit for the amount by which their property tax exceeds 3.5 percent of their household income. (The previous threshold for eligibility was 7 percent of household income).

Another benefit of enrollment is that land covered by the agreement exempt from special assessments for sanitary sewer, water, lights and non-farm drainage, unless the assessments were imposed prior to the recording of the Farmland Development Rights Agreement. The purpose of the agreement is to insure that land remains in a agriculture use for a minimum of 10 years and is not developed for any non-agriculture use.

Any questions about this Act should be addressed to the Division of Land Resource Program, Department of Natural Resources, Box 30028, Lansing, MI 78909.

B. Commercial Forest Act

This Act requires a minimum of forty acres of established trees to be open to hunting and fishing. The owner pays 30 cents per acre annual tax plus a 10 percent stumpage fee on any timber harvested.

C. Natural Beauty Road

This Act allows citizens or governmental units to request the County Road Commission to designate a road or portion of road for non-development/improvement. This results in preserving the natural character of rural or forest setting.

D. Lot Size and Density

The stated goals of this plan are to guide growth near the Village where services are readily available and to preserve the rural and natural character of the Township so that water quality can be protected. Therefore, the lot size and overall density allowed through the zoning ordinance becomes a critical factor in plan implementation.

It is recommended that the current zoning map may be reviewed and in the forestry, agriculture and low density residential areas, as shown in the future land use plan, have a two acre minimum lot size.