

Chapter 8: FUTURE LAND USE PLAN, POLICIES, GOALS and ACTIONS

For the purposes of this Master Plan, goals, recommended actions, and policies have been identified by the Edwards Township Planning Commission and other participants in the Master Planning process concerning a number of interest areas within the Township.

“Policies” are guidelines to assist local decision-makers in implementing recommendations. “Goals” are defined here as broad-based statements of community policy interest and intent. “Actions” are stated means by which Edwards Township may reach its goals. These policy goals and actions were derived in 2004, updated in 2011-2013, and revised again in 2018-2019.

Future Land Use Map/Plan

The fundamental purpose of this Master Plan (and the process which has created and amended it) is to gather wide ranging data and observed trends related to community economics, employment, demographics, natural resources, physical setting, public and private infrastructure, history, character, land cover/land use, community challenges, etc. to assist in the visioning of what Edwards Township could be in the year 2039, i.e. twenty years from the completion of this updated planning process. An important part of this process is the creation of a future land use map that embodies the vision to guide future land use decision-making within Edwards Township. Based on this Master Plan and the policy recommendations and goals detailed below, a Future Land Use Map is located on page 8.1a.

General Policy Statements

Township planning is based upon and undertaken for the overall protection of the public health, safety, and welfare of residents of Edwards Township.

The Township will enforce the principles of this plan as codified within Edwards Township zoning and other ordinance(s).

The Township will seek to manage and guide growth to maintain and enhance the rural quality of life for Edwards Township residents through the implementation of this Master Plan.

Within Edwards Township the long-term quality and conservation of natural resources, water quality, and the sustainability of the environment shall be considered of significant importance when making land use decisions.

When considering land use decisions, Township decision-makers shall balance the public interest in sound land planning, as expressed by and embodied within in this Master Plan,

with the rights and interests of private property owners.

The Township will work with residents and others to promote and provide continuous opportunity for gathering public opinion and fostering public participation in the community planning process.

General Goals

In order to achieve the above policies, Edwards Township shall:

Retain rural character by promoting the preservation of family farms and buildings, intact forest lots, high quality waters, and views from public roads, as well as minimizing negative impacts from junk yards, improper waste management, and unguided growth.

Plan for and guide future growth consistent with this community-created Master Plan.

Maintain a current Township Master Plan by reviewing this Master Plan every five years and updating when appropriate.

Retain existing development densities, i.e. minimum lot sizes in Edwards Township zoning districts.

Create and maintain a website for the public to obtain copies of the Master Plan, Zoning Ordinance, application forms, post the final decisions, and meeting times and dates, and other community activities. Streamline and simplify the zoning process through the creation of explanatory pamphlets and checklists.

Use past public input and survey results when making land use decisions and/or promulgating Township regulations.

Support the preservation of historical buildings and areas, including but not limited to the Amish cemetery on Rau Road, former schoolhouses, etc.

Post a map of Edwards Township in the Edwards Township Hall office to encourage residents and others to identify historic places and important natural features in the community.

Support the establishment of and/or efforts by existing land and historic preservation conservancies to protect historic family farms and buildings, historical places and important natural areas and

farms in Edwards Township.

Promote the establishment and operation of organic farming operations, community supported agriculture, agriculturally-related businesses and specialty farms in Edwards Township.

Post and promote community events at the Edwards Township Hall and other locations to encourage residents and others to engage in community activities and events.

Adopt and implement the concepts of community “place-making” in future planning and development within Edwards Township.

Recognize the appropriate role of zoning in guiding the future development of Edwards Township in compliance with the requirements of the federal Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000.

ACTIONS

1) Farm and Forest

To promote the maintenance and enhancement of farms and forests within Edwards Township, the Township shall:

- a) Support and promote voluntary efforts to preserve active farm and forestlands, such as conservation easements, the State of Michigan’s purchase and leasing of development rights program (P.A. 116), etc.
- b) Maintain the Township’s rural character by utilizing planning tools and techniques, including but not limited to the following:
 - Working with landowners to voluntarily protect, enhance, and conserve farm, forest, wetlands, shorelines, and other recreation lands.
 - Explore the use of the purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, and explore the provision of providing density bonuses for development that voluntarily preserves natural and/or cultural resources.
 - Use and promote conservation design and low impact development/ planned unit development techniques that allow development to occur while protecting and linking resources.

- c) Encourage farm operations within the Township to utilize Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMPS), as defined by the Michigan Department of Agriculture, to legally protect farm operations from encroaching incompatible land use in accordance with the Michigan Right to Farm Act.
- d) Explore the use of innovative financing tools to facilitate voluntary farmland conservation, which may include, but are not limited to federal, state, and local grants; private and community foundations; and/or a local millage - if supported by resident opinion surveys and ballot measure(s).
- e) Support the exploration and establishment of voluntary farmland preservation tools in Ogemaw County and regionally, such as the purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, agricultural security areas, well-connected conservation/farmland conservation developments, the promotion of specialty/valued-added agriculture, and improved local markets for locally-grown agricultural products.
- f) Support a State constitutional amendment to tax farmland appropriately, i.e., not based on development market value.
- g) Partner with local, regional, and state governmental and nonprofit agencies and landowners to protect farmland.
- h) Recognize the importance of healthy, intact forests in providing wildlife habitat, erosion control, groundwater recharge, recreational uses such as hunting, and other enjoyment.
- i) Encourage forestland owners to enter into sustainable forest management and conservation plans.
- j) Encourage reforestation on steep, sandy, wet, and other fragile soils.

2) Environment

To maintain and enhancement environmental quality within Edwards Township, the Township shall:

- a) Promote the protection of sensitive environmental resources including but not limited to groundwater/drinking water, steep slopes, wetlands, wildlife habitat, springs/seeps, waterways and shorelines.
- b) Encourage mineral rights owners and developers, i.e. oil and gas exploration

and production firms, to comply with state regulation and relevant local ordinances in the production and abandonment of oil and gas wells, production facility maintenance and testing, and site restoration.

- c) Encourage the restoration, re-contouring, replanting and require the establishment of safe conditions at inactive or abandoned sand and gravel extraction sites.
- d) Utilize best management practices, including but not limited to promoting the use of native plants, on-site treatment and disposal of storm water, soil conservation, sustainable forest yields, and the restoration of damaged lands.
- e) Identify and preserve important wildlife habitat, migration corridors and natural buffer areas, and recognize that many animals need relatively large, interconnected tracts of land in order to survive and to sustain overall species diversity within the Township.
- f) Utilize an inventory of the Township's natural resource base for on-going development and land conservation decisions.
- g) Protect groundwater, representing 100% of the Township's drinking water source, and surface waters from contamination, depletion and degradation by ensuring land is used and new buildings are constructed in ways that protect groundwater through:
 - Site Plan Review standards are included in the Zoning Ordinance to protect groundwater from impact by addressing secondary containment, farm drain discharge locations and setbacks from wells.
 - The Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator will coordinate Site Plan Review and coordinated compliance inspections with the Ogemaw County Health Department and Drain Commissioner.
 - The Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator will provide educational materials to citizens and stakeholders on protecting groundwater and the outcome of groundwater monitoring.
- h) Recognize the importance of and promote the protection of wetlands in maintaining and improving water quality within the Township.
- i) Promote the protection of wetlands, springs, and groundwater recharge areas by requiring efficient water use and septic treatment/disposal, and promote water resource protection in any plans.
- j) Recognize and protect quiet and air quality as essential components of the

protection of public health, safety and general welfare, and to minimize the potential for public or private nuisance.

- k) Investigate the enactment of a Township ordinance to prohibit the implementation of open-loop geothermal heating systems in Edwards Township in favor of closed-loop geothermal heating systems.
- l) Investigate the enactment of a Township ordinance to prohibit pond maintenance from the pumping of potable groundwater.
- m) Investigate and develop a program to remove the invasive plant species in the Township, such as Autumn Olive, Russian Olive, Phragmites, Purple Loosestrife, etc.
- n) Take additional actions to protect water quality in ways that sustain the lakes, streams, rivers, shorelines and groundwater for the benefit of current and future generations. These actions will include 1) protecting and where appropriate, expanding natural areas such as woodlands, non-farm vegetated areas, and wetlands to help cleanse rainwater and stormwater runoff before reaching surface and groundwater; and 2) maintaining a built environment that is designed using Low Impact Development best management practices.
- o) Monitor water quality, establish minimum stormwater management standards and incorporate Low Impact Development standards in the Edwards Township Zoning Ordinance. To this end, the Planning Commission will:
 - Include Low Impact Development standards in the zoning plan element of the Master Plan and in the Zoning Ordinance.
 - Initiate and support efforts of others to educate citizens and stakeholders about water quality trends, threats from poorly managed stormwater runoff and other threats to water quality, and actions that can be taken by individuals and businesses to protect water quality.
 - Initiate efforts in cooperation with the Drain Commissioner, Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Officer, and conservation organizations to educate landowners and stakeholders about the potential benefits of various Low Impact Development techniques and other stormwater best management practices including but not limited to:
 - i. Rain gardens
 - ii. Bioretention/bioswales
 - iii. Constructed surface and subsurface filters
 - iv. Wet ponds, retention basins

- v. Dry retention basins
- vi. Two-stage ditches/channels or grassed waterways
- vii. Infiltration basins
- viii. Pervious pavements
- ix. Stormwater planters
- x. Vegetated buffer strips
- xi. Water quality devices (hydrodynamic separators and baffle boxes)
- xii. Wind barriers and shelters
- xiii. Native vegetation covers
- xiv. Steep slope protections
- xv. Natural feature setbacks

- p) Keep the amount of new impervious surfaces low and reduce impervious surface area or impact where the opportunity presents itself. Impervious surfaces include parking lots, roads, building rooftops, and walkways.
- Zoning Ordinance standards will be used over time to keep the amount of impervious surface below 12%. Large lot sizes outside of cities and village, clustering of buildings in PUDs and condominium developments, and prohibiting connections of downspouts to public stormwater systems would all help to keep the amount of impervious surface down.
 - The Planning Commission will encourage that public facilities consider the installation of pervious pavement on walks, drives and parking lots when designing new or replacement facilities. Private parties shall be encouraged to consider those options as well.
 - The Planning Commission will encourage the construction of new public buildings with green roofs.

3) Economic Development Plan

The Township recognizes that agriculture, industry, high quality of its waters, and rural/forested character and natural environment are among its most important economic assets. These assets provide economic opportunities, recreational enjoyment, public water views, wildlife habitat, and together create a desirable place to live, work and play.

To promote and sustain appropriate economic development within Edwards Township, the Township shall:

- a) Balance residential, commercial and industrial development, and promote the voluntary protection of natural resources, including active farmland.

- b) Assist willing farmers in the voluntary conservation of active farms, forest lands, and prime farmland.
- c) Encourage growers' diversification of products, including increasing value-added agriculture, farm stands, agriculture-based tourism, etc.
- d) Encourage improved local markets for agricultural products for growers to sell directly to customers.
- e) Encourage and support the location of a milk production plant within north-central and/or northeast Michigan for Township milk producers.
- f) Support and guide home occupations and cottage industries as increasingly important and viable economic activities within the Township.
- g) Protect and enhance existing natural and cultural resources within the Township.
- h) Cooperate regionally with non-profits, governmental agencies, etc. to establish a "maker space" for shared business startup spaces, conference room(s), meeting spaces, equipment and mentorship within the Township or in the area.

4) **Public Facilities, Infrastructure & Utilities**

To promote and maintain the rural character within Edwards Township, the Township shall:

- a) Consider the establishment of appropriate public infrastructure and municipal services that keep pace with the Township's needs.
- b) Encourage the location of future electric power, communication, and utility infrastructure in a manner that will not negatively impact rural character or fragment farmland, forestlands, open spaces or natural ecosystems.
- c) Encourage the underground installation of all utilities at future housing developments, and strongly encourage underground utility placement at single parcel residential developments.
- d) Encourage appropriate sewage/manure treatment, fertilizer use management, and water protection techniques for planned unit developments, animal feed lots, golf courses, etc.

- e) Encourage the clustering of utilities such as electrical substations, transmitter towers, cell phone or other towers, etc.
- f) Co-location on existing and future communication towers will be required. Co-location of emergency service communications on existing structures shall also be strongly encouraged.
- g) Maintain, appropriately fund and promote existing EMS and fire protection services within the Township.
- h) Maintain adequate public safety through Ogemaw County Sheriff's Department's services to the Township.
- i) Support the West Branch - Rose City Public Schools in future development and implementation school plans and activities.
- j) Enhance the availability and reliability of natural gas, cable television, wireless and high speed internet services throughout the Township.
- k) Require private road development in conformance with Township and County regulations.

5) Residential Development

To promote the maintenance and enhancement of the rural character of Edwards Township, while balancing the need for new residential development, the Township shall:

- a) Evaluate the application of accessory dwelling unit (ADUs) and temporary dwellings and other innovative tools to meet affordable housing needs within the Township.
- b) Seek to protect existing natural resources, especially active farmland.
- c) Consider and provide for the housing needs of all income levels and ages, including first time home buyers, elder housing and/or assisted care facilities.
- d) Encourage and provide incentives for the use of conservation design and low impact development standards for all new housing developments. Promote new housing developments having a minimum of 50% open space after excluding non-buildable areas. Non-buildable areas include but are

not limited to slopes over 25%, wetlands, roadways, streams, and seeps/springs. Explore density bonuses for conservation developments that exceed these requirements and permanently protect natural and/or cultural resources.

- e) Encourage and provide incentives for the construction of conventionally-built single family homes and cottages. Welcome but guide the placement of temporary dwellings and manufactured homes, campers or trailers.
- f) Guide the appropriate development of future special land uses such as mobile home parks and other multi-family housing, if any, within the Township. The Township seeks to ensure that such development adequately provides infrastructure (i.e., water, sewer, utilities, roads, etc.) to residents, and are appropriate in location, scale, density, design, screening, lighting, traffic patterns, etc.
- g) Require the appropriate construction and maintenance of private roads and support the efficient layout of public facilities within housing developments.
- h) Support programs to encourage home renovation and rehabilitation through obtaining grants for old water well abandonment, alternative energy, energy and water conservation, home exterior upgrades, the demolition and removal of abandoned structures, blight control, and home insulation, etc.
- i) Seek to protect existing natural resources, especially productive forest and active farmland, through guiding future residential development.

6) Waterfront Areas

To promote the maintenance and enhancement of high water quality, i.e., the main draw for community investment/economy and property values, within Edwards Township, the Township shall promote the following actions:

- a) Support the distribution of existing brochures and other materials to educate property owners on waterfront properties. Distribute these materials through MSU Extension, county and township agencies and departments, real estate offices, code enforcement officials, lake and property owners associations, etc. Explore and apply for grants from state, federal agencies and other sources to implement this effort.
- b) Protect the water quality and lakes, ponds, streams, creeks, wetlands, etc. from degradation, siltation, pollution, and other human impacts.

- c) Protect existing native vegetation, water resources, fisheries, wildlife habitat, and unbroken forest canopy on shorelines and banks. Promote shoreline stabilization through bioengineering and biotechnical erosion control methods such as native plant buffer strips, planted rock revetments, coconut coir/biolog revetments, shoreline preservation and management, exotic and invasive species control, bank re-contouring filter fabric coverage and native plantings, live stake/rock revetments, brush bundles and mats, etc.
- d) Encourage innovative storm water treatment and disposal such as rain gardens, constructed wetlands, bioswales, reduction of impervious surfaces, pervious pavements, and infiltration to groundwater, etc.
- e) Support the enforcement of existing federal, state, and local laws that protect waterfront resources and the environment.

7) Blighted Areas

To address blighted properties and dilapidated and/or abandoned structures within Edwards Township, the Township shall:

- a) Inventory and maintain an inventory of blighted properties within the Township.
- b) Fairly, consistently and adequately enforce the Township’s existing blight control ordinance.
- c) Work with Ogemaw County and develop ways to eliminate areas or properties with trash and blight to promote the beauty of Edwards Township and for the protection of public health, and ground and surface water consistent with Township ordinances.

8) Rural Town Center/Commercial Development

To guide the future commercial development of Edwards Township, the Township shall:

- a) Foster the development of an attractive, compact rural town center with a distinct identity, at the Greenwood Road and M-30 Highway area.
- b) Encourage mixed land uses, such as residential and commercial developments that are connected by walk ways, use shared parking and accesses, possess well-defined and slowed traffic flow, are safe for

pedestrians including children, utilize signage appropriate with community character, are well-screened, and support and advance park establishment and/or open space in the Greenwood Road and M-30 Highway area. Encourage a variety of residential dwelling types and price ranges, when constructed in that area.

- c) Study the feasibility of sewer and water services for the area.
- d) Consider design concepts and architectural styles that reflect community history, image, vision, and values. Encourage conventionally-built residential dwellings and of diverse price ranges, when constructed in the Township.
- e) Seek future technical assistance, such as Michigan State University's Small Town Design Initiative (STDI), to develop a participatory future land use plan for the rural town center.
- f) Encourage the participation and contribution of landowners, business owners, and residents of Edwards Township and adjacent communities in planning for the rural town center.
- g) Incorporate best management practices and low impact development techniques to reduce amounts of impermeable surfaces, storm water runoff, and require on-site natural treatment of storm water.
- h) Discourage low density and strip development along State and County roads to minimize potential public costs.

9) Recreation

To promote recreational resource development, the Township shall:

- a) Recognize that recreation within the Township completely relies upon private lands (i.e., no State land exists within the Township), and plan for a variety of recreational needs and preferences.
- b) Support and promote the State or County acquisition/development of unique natural and/or cultural resources as public recreation lands (i.e. lake accesses, unique natural features, wildlife and fish habitat, etc.)
- c) Manage land within the Township for the conservation of natural resources, including Township-owned lands.

- d) Increase opportunities for children (i.e., playgrounds) and youth recreation (i.e., parks, pavilions, etc.) within the Township.
- e) Encourage communication and cooperate with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to restock fish in Township lakes, improve/maintain game populations, and guide hunting policy as it affects the Township.
- f) Consider the goals of the *Ogemaw County Recreation Plan*.
- g) Consider the development of an Edwards Township Recreation Plan, to be reviewed and approved by the MDNR to enable the Township to apply for and access State funds, i.e., Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, to acquire, develop and maintain recreational resources within the Township.
- h) Explore the establishment of motorized trails within the Township with adequate access and parking, e.g., at the west end of Rau Road. Work to connect with existing trail systems, and cooperate with adjoining communities, regional and statewide trail initiatives.

10) Transportation

To promote the maintenance and enhancement of transportation infrastructure within Edwards Township, the Township shall:

- a) Adopt and apply the concepts and procedures of “complete streets” in future transportation planning within Edwards Township. Maintain a local road network that follows the principles of complete streets, and is safe (especially with paved roadways, without obstructed vision, with sufficient pedestrian/vehicle separation, and appropriately lighted) for vehicles, pedestrians (including children), and bicyclists.
- b) As supported by resident opinion survey, continue to guide the development and flexible design of private roads within the Township to enhance road safety, visibility, lighting, maintenance, and efficiency in traffic flow, and ensure future development in accordance with this Master Plan.
- c) Work closely with the Ogemaw County Road Commission and MDOT to maintain a local road network and its associated drainage network in good conditions that meets the needs of its users.

- d) Minimize congestion on roads and highways by using well-designed access points and intersections, and by minimizing accesses along county and state thoroughfares.
- e) Retain and enhance the M-30 Highway corridor as the major north-south traffic route within the Township, and inform state and county transportation decision-makers of Township plans for the future rural town center.
- f) Establish and maintain good communication with the Michigan Department of Transportation and Ogemaw County Road Commission to ensure efficient transportation policy, and future transportation improvement projects in accordance with the vision of this Master Plan.
- g) Encourage and cooperate with a County-wide access management plan for State highways and county roads to minimize congestion by implementing access management best practices to:
 - 1. Maintain efficient traffic flow.
 - 2. Reduce traffic congestion.
 - 3. Maintain road shoulders in good condition.
 - 4. Preserve the roadway's capacity.
 - 5. Reduce deaths, injuries, crashes, and property damage; and the frequency and severity of crashes while maintaining reasonable access to land uses.

This can be accomplished through adopting a zoning ordinance or policy reflected in the site plan review process for careful placement (or relocation) of access points to reduce conflicts. Some of the tools include:

- Placing driveways a sufficient distance from intersections to minimize impact to intersection operations.
- Proper spacing of access points along the same side of the street.
- Alignment or spacing from access points on the opposite side of the street.
- Geometric design to restrict certain turning movements (i.e., usually left turns).
- Shared access systems (i.e., connections between land uses, shared driveways, frontage roads or rear service drives).
- Location of traffic signals.

- i) Address parking needs by facilitating shared commercial and institutional parking, when appropriate.
- j) Support and assist in the planning for any future light rail network within the region and the State of Michigan.

11) Regional Planning

To support regional planning, the Township shall:

- a) Recognize that Edwards Township's natural resources are part of a much larger system, and that the natural resource base often crosses other boundaries and can impact other communities.
- b) Be aware that decisions in one community may affect other nearby communities, encourage and promote cooperation among local governments on development decisions that affect more than one community.
- c) Enhance communication and cooperate with adjacent Townships and Counties on planning and other shared issues.
- d) Support regional strategies to better protect and preserve active farmland, forest lands and other open spaces along Township boundaries.
- e) Support and promote consistency between this Master Plan, the *Ogemaw County Comprehensive Plan* and adjacent townships' Master Plans.
- f) Encourage county-wide trails planning, and coordinate with adjacent counties as well as state and federal agencies on recreational resource planning and implementation.
- g) Encourage a county-wide groundwater study to document the quality and quantity of regional aquifers supplying drinking water.
- h) Direct future commercial uses to established, appropriately zoned areas within the Township (i.e., potential rural town center).
- i) Cooperate with regional, state and federal agencies to facilitate a range of housing choices.
- j) Enhance and support regional efforts to develop public and pedestrian-oriented transportation choices and facilities.

12) Zoning Plan

To promote the community vision embodied within this Master Plan, the Township shall (*Refer to Appendix A for a copy of the zoning schedule of regulations*):

- a) Continue to plan and zone at the Township level, in accordance with Township residents' opinions.
- b) Continue to regulate junk yards in accordance with the Township's junk yard/civil infractions ordinance, in accordance with Township residents' opinions.
- c) Implement the new waterfront overlay zoning ordinance to protect water quality and private property values within the Township.
- d) Consider and evaluate the use of density bonus incentives for future planned unit or site condominium housing projects to implement a conservation design and low impact development approach.
- e) Encourage the use of zoning incentives to promote conservation design/low impact development and facilitate resource protection by methods including but not limited to: 1) streamlining the review process for conservation development; and 2) displaying design-based zoning regulations in a pictorial fashion to better illustrate development goals for this purpose.
- f) Encourage and support continual, consistent and fairly applied zoning enforcement.
- g) Retain rural roadside image by encouraging:
 - Maintenance of building setbacks;
 - Increased natural buffers;
 - Increased shared access drives;
 - Increased rear parking; and the
 - Placement of large loading doors and general construction staging areas to the side or rear yards, etc.
- h) Amend the Zoning Ordinance so the Zoning Administrator will not issue

zoning compliance permits until evidence that other permits from other agencies have been received or applied for.

- i) Through the Planning Commission, Zoning Administrator and Tax Assessor, prevent the creation of unbuildable lots on vacant land, as part of a lot split, subdivision, site condominium project, or planned unit development. Include in the Zoning Ordinance and Township lot split ordinance a provision requiring review of proposed lot splits for “buildability” to ensure that all new parcel and lots that are proposed to be created for development purposes, meet the requirements of the Land Division Act, and minimum Zoning Ordinance requirements not only for lot frontage, depth and area, but also have enough buildable area for the erection of a structure outside of a floodplain, wetland and/or sensitive groundwater recharge area.
- j) Through the Zoning Administrator and Planning Commission, encourage landowners with significant natural features to utilize Site Plan Review and Planned Unit Development options so as to minimize negative impacts on identified natural features.
- k) Incorporate adequate Low Impact Development setbacks into the Zoning Ordinance of buildings and impervious surfaces from watercourses, drains and sensitive natural features.
- l) Explore the creation of Township regulations regarding short-term rentals; recreational marijuana; outdoor events; signs/billboards; private road standards; dark night sky; outdoor lighting; point of sale septic inspections; c dwelling units (ADUs); and fences.
- m) Consider the role of Township zoning in enhancing and encouraging economic activity within the new information-based economy.
- n) Encourage the use of zoning incentives to promote conservation design/low impact development and facilitate resource protection by methods including but not limited to: 1) streamlining the review process for conservation development; and 2) displaying design-based zoning regulations in a pictorial fashion to better illustrate development goals for this purpose.
- o) Consider and evaluate the use of density bonus incentives for future planned unit or site condominium housing projects to implement a conservation design and low impact development approach.

- p) Comply with the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act to enhance coordination with Ogemaw County and adjacent communities to advance the vision and goals stated in this Master Plan.
- q) Commit to, promote and maintain the principles of good governance within the Township.

13) Future Land Use

To promote the Township's vision for future land uses, the Township shall:

- a) Direct residential development away from narrow strip lots along roads, and avoid the build-out possibilities from current zoning.
- b) Foster the development of compact rural town center with a distinct identity, at the Greenwood Road and M-30 Highway area.
- c) Implement a new waterfront overlay zoning ordinance to protect water quality and private property values within the Township.
- d) Identify large contiguous parcels currently in active farm and forest use, and work with landowners to encourage conservation, sustainable development, and the retention of rural character if divided or developed.
- e) Direct growth in such a manner as to discourage sprawling land uses.
- f) Preserve the dark night sky by encouraging shielded/downward directed lighting, timed lighting, appropriate pole height, etc.
- g) Encourage landowners to recognize the rural character and natural resource base of Edwards Township, and work with them to fit future development within the Township's existing character.
- h) Work toward the acquisition of land for the expansion of the Edwards Township cemetery.
- i) Evaluate and explore zoning requirements for the minimum number of acres for large animals, such as horses, cows, llamas, etc.
- j) Create overlay zone provisions in the Zoning Ordinance where necessary to protect identified natural features that are valuable in protecting water quality and the local quality of life. The Planning

Commission will:

1. Consider creation of overlay protection districts in the Zoning Ordinance for water bodies, wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes and soils with high permeability where appropriate.
 2. Prepare and support adoption of Site Plan Review regulations for protection of sensitive natural features.
- k) Encourage landowners and businesses to use land donation, conservation easements deed restrictions and targeted land purchases to protect sensitive natural features and other natural resources.

14) Public Education

To protect the public health, safety and general welfare, and to promote the protection of water quality and the quality of life within Edwards Township, the Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator will work with landowners, developers, soil conservation and other stakeholder organizations to provide education to:

- a) Support best management practices for agriculture with the respect to the environment and water quality.
- b) Consider and encourage the preservation of open space on every site. The preservation or provision of open space and native vegetation helps retain the natural character of the County and reduces impacts of development on water quality.
- c) Take advantage of opportunities to educate citizens, property owners and other local governmental officials on the status of water quality and the values and benefits of water quality protection.
- d) Assist in the education of landowners about stormwater runoff and its negative impact on water quality, along with measures that can be taken to minimize runoff and lengthen the time between drain/ditch cleanings.
- e) Inform landowners of the need for oil erosion and sedimentation control permits prior to disturbing any soil with 500 feet of a lake or stream, exposing more than an acre of soil, installing or reconstructing any bridge or culvert, or attempting to clean any drain.

Refer to Appendix A for a copy of the results of 2003 Edwards Township public input sessions.

Refer to Appendix B for a copy of the Edwards Township Zoning Ordinance Schedule of Regulations.