

Chapter 8

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

As important a benchmark as this updated Growth Management Plan represents, the initiatives proposed in this Plan will not implement themselves. It will take continued support and commitment for many years.

The central ingredients to successful Plan implementation will be:

- Commitment by the Planning Commission, the Board of Trustees, and staff of the Township.
- A citizenry better educated on the vision in this Plan. Information about desired residential development patterns, the fiscal and land use constraints of extending urban services, farming methods, property rights, open space preservation, natural resource protection, and new tools to sustain the quality of life in Superior Township needs to reach citizens or they may not understand why and how local decision-making is directed to implementing this Plan.

Focusing on Priorities

As the body principally responsible for preparing and maintaining a land use plan for a community, but one which also has substantial responsibilities in review of proposed developments for zoning compliance, it is easy for a Planning Commission to become distracted with ongoing tasks or ad hoc, controversial issues. Still, the Commission needs to prioritize its tasks relative to implementation of this Plan. Time needs to be set aside for high priority items. These include the preparation of an annual report and work program for the next year, drafting updates to the Zoning Ordinance, assisting with the preparation of a capital improvement program, and the five-year Plan update. These are discussed below.

Annual Tasks

An annual report on all activities undertaken by the Planning Commission with a special focus on actions taken to implement the Plan should continue to be made to the Board of Trustees. A proposed work program that identifies priorities and projected expenses for the next year should also be prepared and submitted in time to be included in the annual budget process. The Planning Commission should also assist the Supervisor and Board with the preparation and annual updating of a Capital Improvement Plan.

Top Priorities

The Planning Commission cannot be expected to implement all of the measures listed Chapter Five (Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Policies), Chapter Six (Growth Management Strategy) and Chapter Seven (Zoning Plan) alone. Many of these can only be accomplished with support from the Township Board and with help from other agencies or groups. It is essential that discussions begin with each of these entities so that they understand the goals, find agreeable common ground where there are differences, and obtain a commitment to a common action.

One approach to establishing priorities is to use the following guidelines:

- Establish as a high priority those actions that are the precursor to other actions or initiatives. One example is the action to develop a Greenspace Plan. This needs to happen before open space connections can be established and greenway trail links implemented.
- Those actions that are assigned to a particular group elsewhere in this Plan are a high priority.
- A lower priority may be those actions that are not assigned to a group or broadly identify the "Township" as the responsible party.
- If an action does not list a responsible party, it remains a lower priority until a group or agency steps forward.

The following activities should be the key priorities of the Planning Commission for the next five years:

- Educate all citizens about the vision, goals, objectives, and policies of the updated Growth Management Plan and provide technical assistance in the integration of these elements into property owner development and redevelopment efforts.
- Update the Township Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with this Plan as outlined in Chapter 7. Adopt private road regulations as part of the zoning ordinance or as a separate ordinance.
- Review other land development regulations in the Township (such as land division and subdivision regulations) and update as necessary to be consistent with this Plan.
- A Township Greenspace Plan should be developed in conjunction with the Township Board and Park and Recreation Commission. This Plan would prioritize lands for open space preservation and greenway trails, identify and implement tools for acquisition of title or development rights from willing sellers, and set up funding mechanisms for implementation.
- Prepare additional sub-area plans to provide greater detail to desired development in each sub-area.

- Use this Plan in the analysis and review of proposed rezonings, zoning text amendments, site plans, and new or amended master plans of adjoining jurisdictions submitted to the Township for statutory review and comment.
- Exercise the inter-jurisdictional review authority of draft plans and plan amendments in ways to improve local decisions by guiding decisions toward integrated and coordinated solutions based on the core policies in this Plan.
- Monitor neighboring jurisdiction and County agency decisions and periodically inform other local governments and the County Board of Commissioners on the status of efforts to implement the Superior Charter Township Growth Management Plan.
- Join efforts with others outside the Township to modernize planning and zoning enabling legislation and to authorize or use new tools to better manage growth and preserve open space.
- Design guidelines should be developed and promoted by the Planning Commission that illustrate how to protect rural and scenic character and open space values on private residential, commercial, public and institutional properties. Examples are the design guidelines for Dixboro or the Grand Traverse Bay Region Development Guidebook that illustrates a preferred development approach that protects scenic quality, open space, water quality, and sensitive environments.
- Residential development standards should be prepared that set aside open space and employ vegetative buffers along roadsides and where there are sensitive environments, greenways, and potential trail and wildlife corridors. These standards should be adopted as part of site plan review, cluster ordinances, conservation subdivision ordinances, site condominium ordinances, and planned community ordinances.
- Assist with preparation of an annual capital improvements program to guide the location of future public facilities consistent with this Plan.
- At least once each five years, the Growth Management Plan should be thoroughly reviewed and updated by the Planning Commission with support from the Township Board.