

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

1.01 Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this document is to revise and update the existing Lodi Township General Development Plan (GDP) which was adopted in December, 2002. Since that Plan was adopted, many changes have occurred within Lodi Township and neighboring communities, as well as the adoption of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) PA 33 of 2008, which replaced the Township Planning Act (PA 168 of 1959), that have had an impact on Lodi Township. To effectively tailor planning policies and development guidelines to these changes, it is necessary to review the existing GDP and revise, where necessary, the written and graphic statements within the document, concerning development goals, objectives, and strategies for the Township.

The Master Plan is the official document adopted by Lodi Township to establish long range, general policies for the physical development and preservation of resources of the Township. This Master Plan provides information and guidance to Township residents, decision-makers, developers, and property owners about land use planning issues that face Lodi Township.

To keep the Master Plan current, the Planning Commission is required to periodically refine, add to, or otherwise modify the Master Plan as events unfold. Refinement may be in the form of restating, deleting, or adding to the issues, goals, objectives, or strategies set forth in the Master Plan. It may also be in the form of detailed policies for specific areas of the Township. These changes might result from analysis of a specific development proposal (such as a rezoning petition), a capital improvement proposal by the Township or other government agency, a periodic review of the Master Plan by the Planning Commission, or from a detailed study of a part of the Township by the Planning Commission. This approach can be viewed as a series of successive attempts to adapt the Master Plan as well as the planning process to changing conditions as they are warranted.

1.02 Why Plan

The primary objective of planning is to guide future events to achieve a better environment in which to live, work and play. In other words, the purpose of planning is to aid citizens and public officials in making decisions about the future. The Master Plan document and map are the products of the planning process (discussed below) which attempt to balance community goals in order to guide potential growth, preserve natural resources, and maintain the unique character of Lodi Township. The plan is not a panacea or “cure all” for potential conflicting desires of citizens and Township officials. Rather, it is a long range statement of general goals, objectives and strategies aimed at the unified and coordinated development and preservation of natural resources of the Township. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.

This Master Plan strives to direct potential growth into appropriate areas based upon the future needs and physical resources of Lodi Township. This will permit the Township to utilize its resources more effectively in serving the needs of residents. Distinct efforts will be made to restrict the density and intensity of growth in the existing agricultural areas. The creation of a balanced Township economy is a vital goal of the Master Plan, but the process, rate, timing, location and mix of land uses associated with achieving this goal will long remain the central public policy issue.

Lodi Township will offer diverse land uses arranged in distinct and logical patterns, taking into consideration the established character of Lodi Township as it pertains to existing uses, public needs and services, environmental conditions and the capacity of transportation, utilities and community facilities. At no time will sound planning principals or Lodi Township character be sacrificed in the implementation of this Master Plan.

Proposed development that detracts from this comprehensive statement of community policy will not be allowed. Unplanned spot, linear, or other types of haphazard development that can degrade, reduce property values, and detract from the established character of Lodi Township, will not be tolerated. This Master Plan is founded upon relationships of land use, sound planning principals and policies, that are designated in appropriate locations and relationships that can be accommodated by appropriate services and infrastructures.

1.03 Use of the Plan

The plan serves many functions. First, as a general statement of the Township’s goals, it provides a single, comprehensive view of what the Township desires for the future. Secondly, the plan serves as an aid in day-to-day decision-making. The Master Plan illustrates how the Planning Commission will respond to various issues and the approaches that will be followed. It provides the policy framework for Planning Commission recommendations on rezoning petitions and subdivision plats to the Township Board and for Planning Commission decisions on site plans. It is not the intent of the Master Plan that the designation of any area for a class of use entitles a property owner within that area to an immediate zoning change consistent with the use designation. Neither does it mean that certain supporting uses are not to be permitted in any particular area. In both cases the decision will be made on a case by case basis at the time the question arises and within the context of the Master Plan and applicable zoning (or other) regulations. The Master Plan may be amended if the analysis involved in the decision indicates that a change is appropriate. This approach provides a stable, long-term basis for decision making. In effect, it forms an agenda for the achievement of goals, objectives, and strategies.

1.04 Master Plan Authority

Lodi Township’s ability to develop a Master Plan is according to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) PA 33 of 2008 which replaced the Township Planning Act (PA 168 of 1959). PA 33, as well as the previous PA 168 stresses the importance of basing the Master Plan on a Township’s character. As stated within PA 33 “*The general purpose of a master plan is to guide and accomplish, in the planning jurisdiction and its environs, development that satisfies all of the following criteria:*

- *Is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical.*
- *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.*
- *Will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare.*
- *Includes, among other things, promotion of or adequate provision for 1 or more of the following:*
 - *A system of transportation to lessen congestion on streets.*
 - *Safety from fire and other dangers.*
 - *Light and air.*

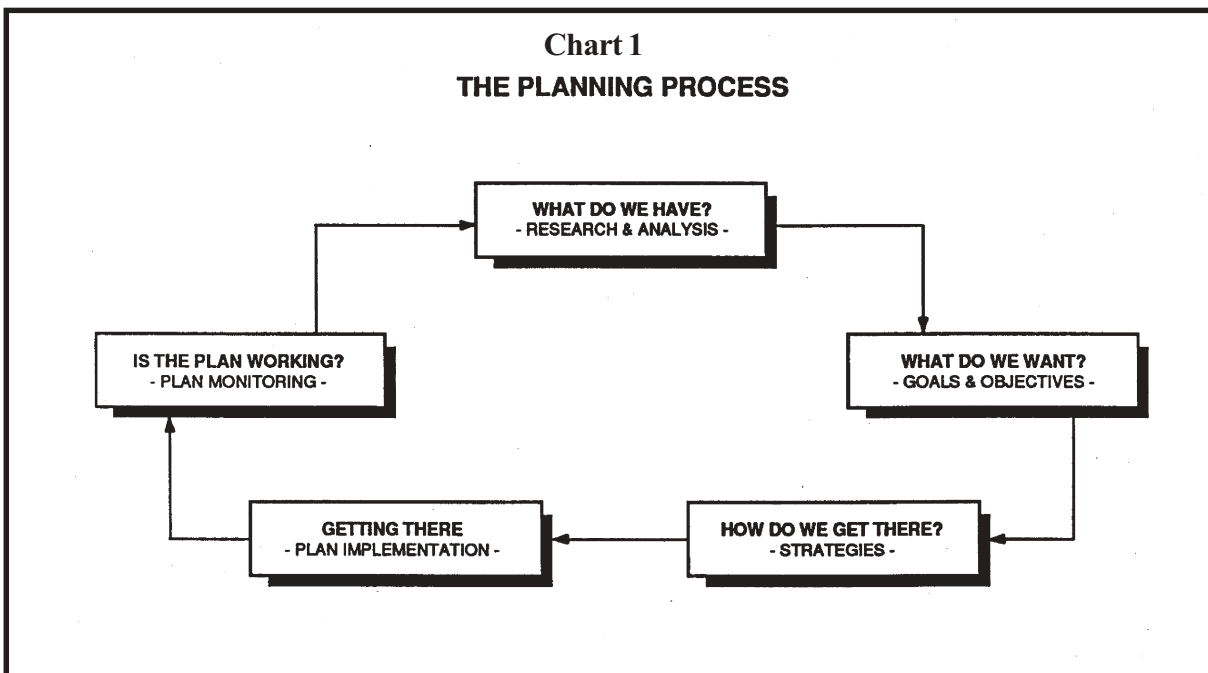
- *Healthful and convenient distribution of population.*
- *Good civic design and arrangement and wise and efficient expenditure of public funds.*
- *Public utilities such as sewage disposal and water supply and other public improvements.*
- *Recreation.*
- *The use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability.*

This Master Plan follows PA 33, as outlined above, stressing the unique character of Lodi Township as well as specific areas within the Township where detailed policies are set forth.

1.05 The Planning Process

Planning is an ongoing, cyclical process. It is inherently dynamic, fluid, and changing. In general, the planning process is an attempt to answer a series of questions:

- *What do we have?*
 - Research and analysis of existing conditions (population, housing, transportation, environmental, etc.) and identification of problems and opportunities.



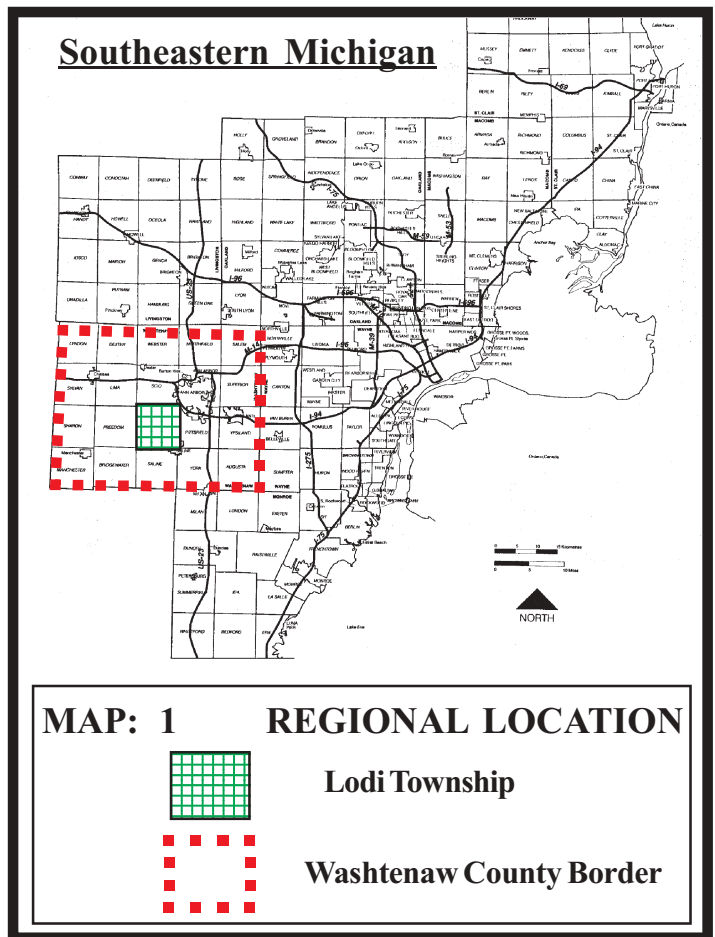
- *What do we want?*
 - Determination of the Township's development goals, objectives, and strategies of the Township's vision of the future.

- ***How do we get there?***
 - The general strategies that can be utilized to create the conditions the Township desires.
- ***Getting there.***
 - Adoption/initiation of recommended strategies to implement the plan.
- ***Is the plan working?***
 - Analysis of implementation results to determine if the plan is accomplishing what was originally desired.

In viewing planning as a cyclical, ongoing process it becomes possible to make the plan a “living” document, one which is flexible enough to meet changing conditions and yet firm enough to provide stable, long term guidance to decision makers. In so doing, the planning process can become an integral part of the decision making process.

1.06 Regional Setting

The State of Michigan is currently divided into 13 planning regions. Lodi Township located within Washtenaw County is part of Region 1 commonly known as the South-East Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). This region consists of Wayne, Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair, Monroe, Livingston and Washtenaw Counties. Historically, the center of this region has been the City of Detroit. As the urbanized area surrounding Detroit expands and as urbanization increases in other parts of the region, Detroit’s influence as a dominant center will decrease. As commercial and industrial activities become decentralized, aided by improved transportation routes and availability of utilities, separate centers of activity emerge in other parts of the region. Thus, an increasing level of interaction among economic centers within the region links Washtenaw County functionally to the rest of the region.

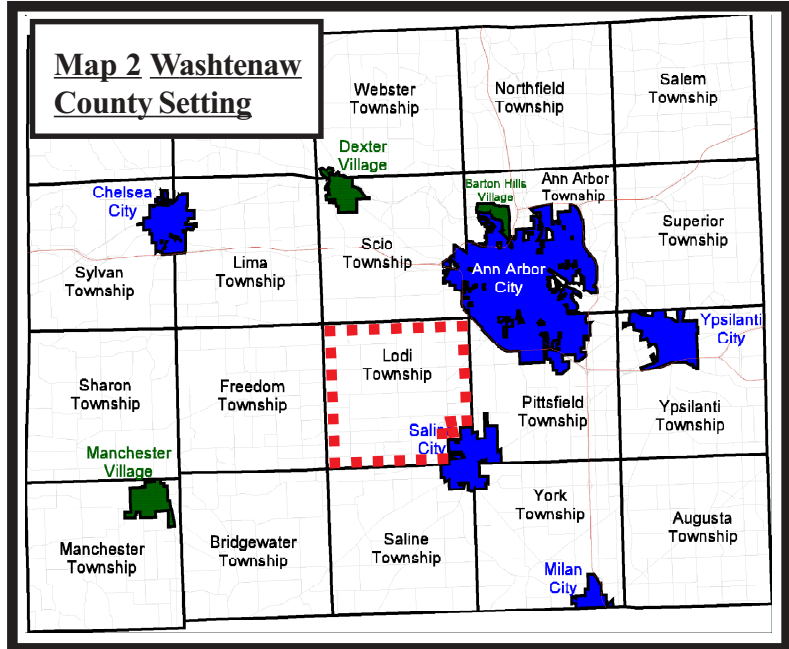


1.07 County Setting

Within southeast Michigan, Lodi Township is located approximately in the center of Washtenaw County, with the City of Ann Arbor in the northeast corner. The City of Saline comprises a portion of the

southeast corner of the Township. The Township itself is strategically located between the City of Ann Arbor and the City of Saline with Ann Arbor/Saline Road providing the major connection. Much of the traffic is considered commuter to or from these municipal areas or other communities farther south or east.

The Township has remained primarily rural with an emphasis on agricultural activities. Past growth and development (mostly residential) has occurred on the eastern side of the Township, with current development pressures coming from the Townships of Pittsfield and Scio and the City of Saline. As these areas grow, so does the pressure to develop in Lodi Township. The Master Plan seeks to direct growth and development in a way that reflects Lodi Township's character as represented in its goals, objectives, and strategies.



1.08 The Planning Area

The planning area for the Master Plan includes all portions of Lodi Township. The total acreage of the planning area is 21,632 acres or 33.8 square miles of which 0.1 square miles (0.24%) is water.