

RESILIENT GRAND HAVEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP

Grand Haven Charter Township 2016 Master Plan



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan was prepared by the Land Information Access Association (LIAA) as part of the Resilient Grand Haven project. Support for the project came from the Michigan Municipal League (MML), Michigan Association of Planning (MAP), and the University of Michigan's Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning. A special thank you is owed to the many organizations and individuals that contributed to the planning process.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

A Master Plan creates a blueprint for the preservation of a community. It is the essential foundation upon which communities are built and guides not only the physical and economic development, but also accommodates social, environmental, and regional concerns. The planning process offers an opportunity to look broadly at local programs such as economic development, public infrastructure and services, environmental protection, and how they relate to one another by presenting a “big picture” look at the community today and articulating goals for the future. The land use plan resembles a series of goals and policies that are then used to guide future land use regulations and decisions, including zoning. A good plan clearly articulates the desires and aspirations of a community.

The Master Plan is intended to take a long-range view of the Township, guiding growth and development for the next twenty years and beyond, while also providing flexibility to respond to changing conditions, innovations, new concepts and available resources.

USES OF A MASTER PLAN

- Gives guidance to property owners, developers, neighboring jurisdictions, and county and state entities about expectations and standards for public investment and future development.
- Establishes the basis for the zoning ordinance, capital improvements, land use policies, and other implementation tools and programs.
- Provides the framework for day-to-day planning decisions by staff and land use policy decisions by the Planning Commission and Township Board.
- Identifies and evaluates existing conditions and characteristics, community values, trends, issues and opportunities.

WHAT IS THE RESILIENT GRAND HAVEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN?

The Master Plan was developed with a specific focus on resiliency. By their very nature, communities are continually complex and dynamic. People move and populations shift, industries go out of business and new industries emerge, natural areas are converted to neighborhoods, housing values fluctuate, and shorelines shift and change. Sometimes these changes emerge over a long period of time whereas some changes can be quite sudden. Community resilience, then, is a measure of the sustained ability of a community to utilize available resources to withstand and/or recover from adverse situations.^{1,2}

Build Community Resilience

According to the Resilient Framework established by the Rockefeller Foundation, a resilient community is:

1. Reflective
2. Robust
3. Redundant
4. Flexible
5. Resourceful
6. Inclusive
7. Integrated

¹ Rand Corporation, 2015. Community Resiliency Featured. <http://www.rand.org/topics/community-resilience.html>

² Rockefeller Foundation, 2014. Resilience Framework. <https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/our-work/topics/resilience/>

A Resilient Community Often Has:

1. Minimal human vulnerability
2. Diverse livelihoods and employment
3. Adequate safeguards to human life and health
4. Collective identity and mutual support
5. Social stability and security
6. Availability of financial resources and contingency funds
7. Reduced physical exposure and vulnerability
8. Continuity of critical services
9. Effective leadership and management
10. Empowered stakeholders
11. Integrated development planning

Source: Rockefeller Foundation

The Master Plan Process

A Joint Planning Committee, consisting of the full planning commissions of the Township and the City helped to plan, participate in and oversee the master planning process.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OVERVIEW**

Over 200 members of the public directly contributed to the Master Plan by participating in the Leadership Summit, Community Action Team Meetings, and a Public Open House. In addition the planning process was documented through the Project Website at www.resilientmichigan.org/grand_haven.asp and the Township Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/GHTownship. Lastly, the Township engaged the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation's Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) through an exercise to illustrate their vision for the community. Subsequently the YAC drafted A Youth Perspective chapter that has been included in the Master Plan.

HOW IS A MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTED INTO THE ZONING ORDINANCE?

A Zoning Ordinance cannot exist without an adopted Master Plan. The Master Plan forms the legal basis for the existence of the Zoning Ordinance. After each document has been adopted by the Township Board the Master Plan then functions as a guide for zoning ordinance amendments.

As amendments are made to the zoning ordinance the Township must ensure they align with the vision, goals, and objectives found in the Master Plan. In essence, the two must have a symbiotic relationship and be able to support amendments and revisions to each document.

For example, if the Master Plan encourages taller buildings the Township can amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow taller buildings. Conversely, if the Master Plan discourages taller buildings the Township should not attempt to amend the Zoning Ordinance. Rather, the Master Plan must be amended first, and the Zoning Ordinance could be revised afterwards.

Master Plans and Zoning Ordinances are “living documents.” Meaning, they each respond to changing conditions. As social norms shift over time each document should be updated to reflect the new changes. That is why the Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires municipalities to review their Master Plan every 5 years. If this review finds the Plan does not align with current trends then it should be updated. This allows the Zoning Ordinance to effectively respond to the needs of Township residents.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND HOUSING TRENDS**PEOPLE**

- The Township's population continues to grow, and is projected to reach more than 22,000 residents by 2030, which equates to a 46% growth rate over a 20 year period.
- The number and proportion of people aged 50+ increased more than any other group.
- The median household income is \$69,850, which is a 12% increase between 2000 and 2014.
- Residents with at least a Bachelor's degree is increasing.
- The number of two-parent households with children continues to decrease, whereas the proportion of married couples without children, single-parent households, and householders living alone has increased.

HOUSING

- The Township gained an additional 1,200 housing units between 2000 and 2014.
- More residents live in multi-family buildings, especially structures with 3+ units.
- The average household size has decreased from 2.9 to 2.7 people per home.
- The median value of a home is \$176,900 which is a 15% increase between 2000 and 2014.
- Median rents were higher in 2014 than in Michigan or Ottawa County overall.
- Taxable value increased by nearly 3.5% between 2014 and 2015.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Plan is the general framework upon which land use and policy decisions for Grand Haven Charter Township will be guided for the next 20 to 25 years. The Future Land Use Plan was developed after careful consideration of several dynamic factors, including: existing land use, future development plans, community services, environmental features and a build-out analysis.

FUTURE LAND USE DESCRIPTIONS

The Township, in conjunction with guidelines established by Ottawa County, has established 11 future land use classifications. The classifications listed below include a brief description on the land uses and identifies the corresponding zoning district(s) that equate to the current districts found in the Zoning Ordinance.

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION (AP)

- Agricultural and agri-business uses.
- Corresponding Zoning District: Agricultural (AG)

RURAL RESIDENTIAL (RR)

- Single family homes on lots that range from 1 – 10 acres.
- Corresponding Zoning Districts: Rural Preserve (RP) and Rural Residential (RR)

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (LDR)

- Single family homes on lots approximately ½ acre in size, and may or may not be located in a platted subdivision.
- Corresponding Zoning District: Low Density Residential (LDR)

MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (MDR)

- Single family, and limited two-family, homes on lot sizes ranging from 13,000 – 15,000 square feet and are typically located in a platted subdivision.
- Corresponding Zoning Districts: R-1 and R-2 Single Family Residential

The Master Plan

It is important to understand the Master Plan is a guide for growth and development within the Township. Local officials and planning staff will continually need to develop and adapt new land use policies that respond to changing conditions, innovations and new concepts.



Agricultural Land Uses

Agricultural land currently makes up 23% of the Township's total land area.



Commercial/Horticultural Ag. Land Uses

Commercial/Horticultural Ag. land makes up 2.9% of the Township's total land area.



Parks, Recreation, and Natural Area Land Uses

Land devoted to parks and recreation (including natural areas) make up 7.6% of the Township's total land area.



MEDIUM-HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

- Includes a variety of housing types that act as a transition between a traditional single-family neighborhood to higher densities and more intense land uses. Examples include senior housing and assisted living facilities.
- Corresponding Zoning Districts: Residential PUD

HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (HDR)

- Multi-family homes including duplexes, apartments, senior housing, townhomes, etc.
- Corresponding Zoning Districts: R-3 Two Family Residential, R-3.5 Restricted Multiple Family Residential, and R-4 Multiple Family Residential

MANUFACTURED HOME PARK (MHP)

- Manufactured homes located in a designated park on 144th Avenue.
- Corresponding Zoning District: R-5 Manufactured Home Park

OFFICE/SERVICE (OS)

- Low-intensity commercial uses such as office buildings
- Corresponding Zoning District: Service Professional (SP)

COMMERCIAL (C)

- Traditional commercial uses such as retail, restaurants, shopping centers, office buildings, etc.
- Corresponding Zoning Districts: Commercial (C-1) and Service Professional (SP)

GENERAL INDUSTRIAL (GI)

- Majority of industrial-related operations such as manufacturing, assembly, and warehousing.
- Corresponding Zoning Districts: Industrial (I-1) and Corridor Industrial (I-1A)

EXTRACTION (E)

- Solely related to a sand mining operation that is currently in existence.
- Corresponding Zoning Districts: includes any district that permits the Removal and Processing of Natural Resources as a special land use.

PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC (PQP)

- Schools, government facilities, parks, natural areas, recognized churches, etc.
- Corresponding Zoning Districts: includes any district that permits Public/Quasi-Public land uses.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map can be found in the Chapter 9 of the Master Plan, and on the Township website at: www.ghet.org/about/map.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Master Plan identifies a vision for the future of the Township and sets a series of goals and objectives to guide the decision-making process. Below are the 8 goals that have been established, and the objectives can be found in Chapter 7 of the Master Plan.

GOAL 1

The Township will preserve valuable natural resources, and the shorelines along Lake Michigan and the Grand River. These natural assets provide a cultural identity and add economic value to the community.

GOAL 2

The preservation and enhancement of natural features of the community will be a central consideration in all civic decisions in Grand Haven Township. Buildings and infrastructure will be planned, constructed and maintained to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment while serving the needs of the population and allowing residents and visitors appropriate access to enjoy natural features.

GOAL 3

Discourage the inappropriate and unplanned use of land through sporadic and isolated land divisions. Encourage carefully planned developments that are responsive to market demands.

GOAL 4

Support multiple housing options and mixed-use developments for all segments of the population that place users near daily services.

GOAL 5

Grand Haven's public facilities, including its roads, utilities, parks, and public buildings will be carefully planned, constructed and maintained to efficiently serve the needs of current and future generations.

GOAL 6

Residents and visitors to the greater Grand Haven community will have safe and convenient access by way of non-motorized pathway system, private automobiles, and public transportation.

GOAL 7

Grand Haven Township will continue to be a vital economic center that includes a balance of clean manufacturing, professional and personal service, the arts, hospitality, retail, commercial, and institutional employment.

Coastal Processes

Chapter 12 summarizes a coastal study conducted by the University of Michigan as part of the Resilient Grand Haven Charter Township planning process.



Manufacturing in Grand Haven Township

The Township is home to a number of manufacturing business, that provide vital jobs to residents throughout the Township and region.



GOAL 8

Grand Haven Township will be a leader in working with other units of government, state agencies, schools, and special authorities to manage growth and service delivery to the residents and businesses of the area in the most efficient and transparent manner possible.