

CHAPTER III VISION, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

TOWNSHIP DEVELOPMENT VALUES

As part of the planning process Crystal Falls Township conducted a survey of seasonal and year-round residents by retaining White Water Associates to sort and summarize the data based on data requirements from the Township. The survey questions were derived by examining other survey instruments in various communities. After the survey, the results for year-round and seasonal residents were collated separately.

The questions asked in the survey are summarized in the adjacent box. In most cases six or seven specific development alternatives were provided for each question. In addition, responses in an open section on «Additional Comments" were also reviewed and tabulated. Actual responses are in the appendix.

Although the survey to formulate a draft vision, goals and detailed objectives of the planning study was compiled in 2002 and the original Master Plan developed in 2003, the goals and objectives of the Township are essentially the same. Early in 2009, the Crystal Falls Township Planning Commission began reviewing the Master Plan; holding meetings, inviting the public comments and revising the original plan. Very few changes needed to be incorporated into this document.

VISION

The township specifically asked for the five and ten year visions that both seasonal and year-round residents held for the township. In general, the visions were very similar with the importance being only a slightly stronger desire of seasonal residents for more shopping, jobs and development. The survey showed that general growth was favored over the next ten years by 50.5% of the surveyed residents. Economic growth, however, was favored by 60% of the residents over ten years. Although less significant as a vision, about 20% of the respondents specifically wanted to maintain wilderness environment. The participation leads to a consolidated vision statement as follows:

Over the next five to ten years Crystal Falls Township should enjoy moderate growth in commercial and industrial development on US-2 and US-141 near the City of Crystal Falls. The added jobs that would be developed from this growth should be supplemented by controlled growth in resorts and tourist activities. Residential development should primarily include expansion in existing residential areas. With limited growth the township needs to protect the wilderness tranquility and attractive environment in lakes, rivers, hills and forests.

Crystal Falls Township

TYPE OF SURVEY QUESTIONS

The Township asked a variety of questions of the citizens with most of them related to a master planning process. The key questions asked about the following attitudes:

1. The kind of development favored adjacent to lakes, rivers and streams.
2. The kind of development in the remainder of the township.
3. The type of housing that Crystal Falls Township should emphasize.
4. The character of additional recreation facilities in the township.
5. The most important existing conditions for living in the township.
6. The least attractive conditions about living in the township.
7. The vision for Crystal Falls Township in five years.
8. The vision for Crystal Falls Township in ten years.
9. The possible need for developers to incorporate natural features of the site in their plans.
10. Possible allowance of commercial development along US-141 and US-2.
11. Degree of township control of home occupation businesses.
12. Township control of exotic pet farms.
13. Allowance of high enclosures to restrict free movement of wildlife.
14. Establishing minimum acreage for keeping large animals.
15. Having lot greater than 150 foot width around lakes to protect water quality and fish habitat.
16. Requiring a greenbelt set-back for new construction on township roads and highways.
17. Development of an industrial park to encourage new industry.

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This vision was further broken down into discrete goals and, where appropriate, to detailed objectives based on the input of year-round and seasonal residents. The citizen survey was again used as the principal element in developing Goals and Objectives, with modification and expansion by the Township Planning Commission. The public meetings of the planning commission also provided for citizen input. The terms "Goals" and "Objectives" are defined in the box below. The Goals and Objectives developed from the citizen survey, meetings and perspectives of the Planning Commission are shown below.

LAND USE GOALS

Goal - A goal is a destination, a final purpose which a community seeks to attain. A goal should be a broad general statement.

Objective - An objective is a means to accomplish the Goal. It may be very specific or detail a future action that should be undertaken.

The Goals and Objectives discussed here focus only on long-range development of land in Crystal Falls Township. These Goals and Objectives are not intended to deal with operating aspects of routine township responsibilities. The Goals are general perspectives that lead to more detailed community desires for land development as expressed by the Objectives.

Land Development Limitations

The large land area and smaller area of development in the township provides some unique constraints on long-range development of the land. The limits for development focus on the extensive natural features of the area and the historical development of the Township.

To preserve these unique conditions, over 80% of year-round and seasonal residents felt the most positive attributes of Crystal Falls Township were the solitude, lakes, rivers and forests that surround the Northwood's atmosphere of the Township. In addition to sharing that perspective, the Township Planning Commission is also very conscious of the safety from underground pipelines and former iron mine "stopes" (large mined-out caverns below the usually intact surface), so they included an objective to allow for those conditions. That objective intends to limit development near those higher risk factors.

L: Limitations for development should be recognized.

OBJECTIVE: In order to preserve the unique wilderness areas and Commercial Forest lands, significant new development should be focused on existing service areas with available or easily extended infrastructure and located on or near major roads.

OBJECTIVE: Land use development should not be in close proximity of existing natural gas, oil pipelines or where underground mining may leave dangerous surface conditions that could pose a threat to public health safety and welfare of residents.

Residential Development

While development is not encouraged by half of the residents, approximately 80% of both seasonal and year-round residents favored growth of seasonal cottages and single family residences in the existing developed area of the township. The year-round residents slightly favored single family homes while seasonal residents favored seasonal homes by a small margin.

Apartments, condominiums and subdivisions were favored by a strong majority of residents. Over 75% of both seasonal and year-round residents favored those developments. Senior citizen assisted living apartments were the most favored non-single family housing at 86%.

Although not directly addressed by the survey, most intensive development such as apartments and condominiums would require sanitary sewer service.

The responding residents and the planning commission felt the residential development should be discouraged north of East Townline Road and should not extend into areas north and east of Deer Lake based on the survey and conditions. The only year-round public road north is Deer Lake Road that extends to the lake. It is a public road for another two and half mile and is known as Bone Lake Road. Bone Lake itself is the northern terminus of any public road and is primarily owned by the State of Michigan and several major property owners.

GOAL:

Residential development should be modestly encouraged in Crystal Falls Township.

OBJECTIVE:

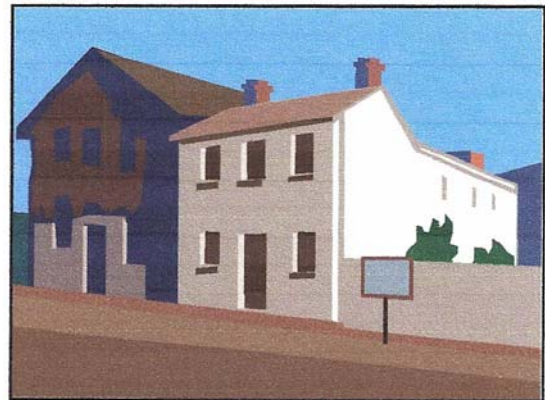
Lakes, rivers and streams 'with good access should be looked at as a resource where appropriate and developed primarily for residential and seasonal homes.

OBJECTIVE:

Multiple-family and higher density condominium housing should be permitted only in areas where sanitary sewer service is available.

OBJECTIVE:

Future housing development should emphasize single family housing, senior citizen housing and assisted living units.



Commercial and Industrial Development

Year-round and seasonal residents of the township both want the jobs of commercial and industrial development equally, but rank it lower than residential development. Heavy industry is wanted by less than half of the residents. About 75% of the residents favored some growth, and 75% of respondents favored commercial growth along highways US-2 and US-141.

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- GOAL: Commercial development should be encouraged in the US-2 and US-141 corridors.
- : The Township has developed an industrial park and thereby confines new industrial growth to the park and encourages existing industry to locate to that site.
- GOAL:
- :

As a result of three-plus years of work, an eighty acre parcel adjacent to the Industrial park (S15 T44N R33W) was purchased by the Township for use of light industrial development. The parcel borders a railroad line; has access to township water and three-phase power.

Parks & Recreation Goals

PARKS & RECREATION GOALS

The township owns and operates Gibson Lake Park with assistance from Hematite Township.

- GOAL: The Township should discuss and assess possible Township involvement in developing parks and multiple-use trails for tourism and local residents.

The Objectives focus on strong resident support (about 60%) for a township park with the Planning Commission's corresponding interest.

- GOAL: Strengthen the base of parks and recreation for the community, tourism and seasonal activities.

The planners also recognized parks and recreation as part of the attraction for tourism and seasonal activities. The Planning Commission anticipates such facilities would be self supporting once established.

- OBJECTIVE: Encourage programs with the Michigan Department of Natural Resource and Environment (MDNRE) for restocking of fish to the lakes, rivers and streams of the township and help reduce pollutants.

Quality of Life

The quality of life Goals are shown on the adjacent chart. The four highest rankings by both year-round and seasonal residents for quality of life had to do with protecting the natural features of the Township. More than 75% of the people generally favored preserving those natural features. Accordingly, a Goal strongly reflects that quality of life value.

In addition, the Planning Commission picked up on survey comments favoring intergovernmental cooperation and current issues to formulate another Goal. Most of the intergovernmental cooperation is anticipated to be with the City of Crystal Falls.

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The Planning Commission also felt one of their Goals should be keeping the residents informed about planning issues. To meet that Goal, a newsletter is anticipated as a way to inform residents and solicit concerns and comments regarding planning issues.

Roadway Goals

Transportation is a relatively minor issue in Crystal Falls Township and was not a specific part of the survey. There were, however, a number of resident comments added to the form regarding roads. Thus the Township Planning Commission developed a specific Goal and Objectives dealing with the road network.

The Township coordinates with the Iron County Road Commission regarding the publically-owned and operated road network. Consistent with the residential Goals and Objectives, the road commission does not anticipate expanding any roads further north or east of Deer Lake Road.

Generally there were no other transportation issues that affected long-range development of Crystal Falls Township. However, it was agreed that the private industrial park east of Gilbert Lake is located near the Escanaba & Lake Superior Railroad and service track could be extended to the railroad if the industrial park grows as proposed in this master plan.

QUALITY OF LIFE GOALS

GOAL : Development should maintain the intrinsic values imparted by abundant lakes, rivers, forest and abundant north woods atmosphere to strengthen the quietness, solitude, sound environmental concerns and sufficient recreational opportunities.

GOAL : Encourage cooperation and coordination with intergovernmental activities to provide mutual community services such as sanitary sewers, electrical distribution services, fire-fighting and ambulance service.

GOAL : Provide a newsletter to all residents and taxpayers updating them annually on the status of current planning issues and encouraging their input into the process.

ROADWAY GOALS

GOAL: Future roadway improvements need to be based on improving the existing road system, protecting road investments and judiciously exploring new road corridors to serve proposed development projects.

OBJECTIVE: Work with the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Iron County Road Commission to assist with improvements to turning lanes, road capacity and traffic signals in planned areas for higher volume traffic related to more intensive residential development and commercial growth.

OBJECTIVE: Examine policies for unpaved roads and improvements and for roads to be developed as part of planned economic growth.

Regulatory Issues

Residents also responded to questions about Township regulations on the survey form. The responses generally showed a particular preference for the regulations discussed. The percent of residents supporting each of the Objectives is shown in parentheses. Three Objectives are just under 50% support but each had a plurality of the responses when No Opinions are tallied. The last two additional Objectives were not specifically on the resident participation form but were deemed appropriate by the Township Planning Commission. Most of the regulations already exist in the Township Zoning Ordinance or are appropriate for inclusion in that Ordinance.

REGULATORY GOAL

GOAL: The Township should provide necessary regulation for proper land development practices.

OBJECTIVE: Developers of commercial and residential projects should carefully incorporate natural features in their final site plans. (80%)

OBJECTIVE: Residential dwellings should be used for business only with careful restrictions. (49%)

OBJECTIVE: The Township should consider establishing minimum acreage for large animals and controlling development of exotic pet and/ or game farms. (48%)

OBJECTIVE: The Township should not allow high fence game enclosures that restrict free movement of wildlife. (66%)

OBJECTIVE: The Township should review a minimum lot width wider than the current 150 feet to protect water and fish habitat. (49%)

OBJECTIVE: A green-belt set-back should be required for all new construction along township roads and highways. (65%)

OBJECTIVE: The Township's current zoning ordinance should be analyzed to ensure it conforms to changes in state law and court decisions and with current life styles and this plan.

OBJECTIVE: Factory farms for hogs, turkeys, chickens and larger feedlots should be regulated in the township.