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Jeffrey M. Polkowski, AICP  
Superintendent of Planning &  
Zoning Division

## **MEMORANDUM**

Date: August 3, 2020

To: Honorable Township Board Members

From: Jeffrey Polkowski, Superintendent of Planning and Zoning

RE: Waterford Township Master Plan Update Amendment

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Attached for your review and consideration, please find a proposed 2020 Master Plan Update Amendment.

The Township's current Master Plan was adopted by the Planning Commission on January 2, 2003, when the Township Planning Act was in effect. That Plan was developed over the course of three (3) years (2000 – 2002) with significant citizen involvement, research, analysis, and subcommittee work on nine (9) areas which were transportation and commercial corridors; environment; recreation and open space; historic district and neighborhood nodes; capital improvements and municipal services; economic development; education and public services; housing and demographics; and zoning ordinance and landscape aesthetics. The result was a Master Plan to guide Waterford's future land use and development patterns during the next 20 years, titled "*Waterford Township Master Plan 2003 – 2023.*"

The Township Planning Act was replaced by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008) that took effect September 1, 2008. Under that Act, a more detailed process was provided for master plan adoptions, extensions, additions, revisions, and amendments. That Act also added a new requirement that planning commissions periodically review their master plan to determine if the procedure for amending it or adopting a new plan should be commenced.

Although the Master Plan had been adopted before the new Planning Enabling Act and runs through 2023, the Planning Commission reviewed and decided to go through the process to update it. In doing that, the Commission focused on Chapter 9, Implementation, which addresses the Master Plan Goals and their associated objectives and strategies for implementation. The Commission determined that some of those objectives had been realized and others were in need of refinement based upon the changes in the community since 2003.

**With us there are no  
boundaries**

For this Master Plan Update, there were no new background studies and no subcommittees were appointed. The Commission's review did confirm that some Appendices listed in the Master Plan should be deleted because they identify items that have not been completed or that are no longer necessary or appropriate for inclusion. Finally, for this Master Plan Update, the Commission did not review the current master plans incorporated by reference in the Master Plan as the following Appendices:

- R. Waterford Recreation Plan
- T. Wellhead Protection Plan [now Article V of Chapter 8 of Township Ordinance Code]
- U. Oakland County International Airport Master Plan
- V. Waterford School District Master Plan
- W. Oakland County Service Center Complex Master Plan

The format of this Master Plan Update does not involve editing or amending language in the 2003 - 2023 Master Plan. Rather, it is to supplement that existing language as appropriate to reflect changed conditions or information by reference to the Chapters and Appendices of the Master Plan.

### **Planning Commission**

At the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting on July 28, 2020 a motion was made by Commissioner Ray, supported by Commissioner Murphy, to:

1. Submit the proposed Update Amendment to the Master Plan as presented at this meeting to the Township Board for review, comment, and to approval of distribution for review and comment by the entities specified in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.
2. Request that the Township Board approve the distribution at one of its August 2020 regular meetings.
3. Schedule a public hearing on the Update Amendment for the Commission's regular meeting on November 24, 2020 and include notice of that hearing to the neighboring municipalities when they are provided with the Update Amendment for review and comment.

Upon roll call the following vote was taken: Ayes: (6) (Commissioners Bartolotta, Kramer, Murphy, Ray, and Sintkowski). Absent: (1) (Commissioner Reno). The motion was adopted.

### **Boat of Trustees**

Township staff recommends a motion in response to the Planning Commission's request of July 27, 2020, to approve the Planning Commission Secretary distributing the proposed Master Plan 2003 – 2023 Update Amendment for review and comment by the entities specified in MCL 125.3841(2) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

Upon your review, if you have any questions or require further information, please contact this office.

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF WATERFORD  
OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN  
MASTER PLAN 2003 – 2023  
UPDATE AMENDMENT**

Planning Commission approval for submission to Township Board: July 28, 2020

Township Board approval of distribution: \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

Commission Secretary distribution: \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

With notice that review comments due by: \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

With notice of public hearing for \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

Newspaper publication of Notice of Public Hearing: \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

Planning Commission Public Hearing held on: \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

Approved by Planning Commission: \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

## **Executive Summary of 2020 Master Plan Update Amendment**

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## **Chapter 2 - Introduction.**

Is updated and amended to delete the reference to and quote from the Township Planning Act, P.A. 168 of 1959, which is no longer in effect, and to include the following in its place.

As of September 1, 2008, the Township Planning Commission's authority and procedures for master plans has been provided by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008.

## **Chapter 3 - Geography and Brief History of Waterford Township.**

Is updated to amend and add to the language at the end of the Chapter so it reads as follows:

The year 2000 saw the population of the Township increase by 9.7 percent, to 73,150 persons. The average household size declined again, this time to 2.42 persons per household.

A slowdown in the American economy began in late 2007 and ended in the summer of 2009. The 2010 Census showed that the Township's population dropped to 71,707 persons. The average household size dropped to 2.40 persons per household. The median value of all owner-occupied homes in the State fell by nearly 20 percent, to \$123,000. The number of people employed in Michigan declined by 440,000.

In 2014, the Waterford Board of Education closed four (4) elementary schools. Adams, Burt, Sandburg and Waterford Village elementary schools will be closed permanently due to out-migration and the aging of Michigan's population. The number of K-12 students has since declined by 8.98 percent. Since 2010, the Waterford School District has seen a decline of 1,000 students.

On November 13, 2017, with the adoption of Ordinance 2017-006, the Historic District Commission Ordinance was repealed and the Historic District that had been created by the Ordinance was repealed for purposes of the need to comply with any restrictions, limitations, or certificate, approval or other requirements under the State Local Historic Districts Act, Public Act No. 169 of 1970.

After years of decline and all businesses eventually closing, the Summit Place Mall fell into serious disrepair to the point where it had to be demolished. That demolition was substantially completed in 2019. In anticipation of that demolition and recognition of the reduced demand for brick and mortar retail stores, in 2019, the Township adopted a Summit Place Overlay District Zoning Ordinance Amendment to provide more flexibility with respect to uses and approval procedures to encourage redevelopment of the site.

On March 23, 2020, Emergency Amendments to the Township Emergency Preparedness Ordinance were adopted, which among other things, provided for the Township to fully and independently exercise its separate powers and authority under the Emergency Management Act and terminated the Township's participation in Oakland County's emergency management plan without limiting or restricting the Township's ability to cooperate with the County and other political subdivisions in emergency situations.

The development phase of the Township is nearing its end, with over 92 percent of the land being developed. As it looks to its future, the Township must now face the challenges of redevelopment, economic development, and quality of life issues. The Planning Commission began the current Master Plan process to guide Waterford to successfully meet these new challenges and continue the progress that has guided Waterford throughout its history.

#### **Chapter 4 - Organization of Waterford Planning and Zoning.**

Is updated and amended to change the number of Planning Commission members from nine (9) to seven (7), change the number of Zoning Board of Appeals members from five (5) to seven (7), delete the CDBG Citizen Advisory Committee, and make the following changes in job titles and descriptions:

##### **Community Planning and Development Director changed to Development Services Director**

Responsible for the implementation and daily administration of all planning, zoning, community development, economic development and code enforcement activities. Acts as the liaison between the Township, citizens, news media, other governmental agencies, developers, and municipal professionals regarding Development Services Department issues. Prepares and presents annual budget requests, administers departmental budget, and ensures that the authorized budgetary procedure is properly used. Responds to development related violation inquiries from residents, contractors and other parties. Keeps abreast of modern engineering practices and changes in regulations through continued education and professional growth. Reviews plans and blueprints for new commercial, residential, and municipal developments. Ensures compliance with Township codes, and professional engineering standards relating to water, sewer, grading, drainage, public safety and other issues. Approves permits as warranted. Administers the Community Development Block Grant Program. Oversees staff processing of site plans, rezoning and plan approval use applications, subdivisions, site condominiums, and special land use applications. Responds to questions from applicants and the public regarding the Township's planning and development processes.

## **Building and Engineering Director changed to Superintendent of Building Division**

Manages and directs the activities of the Building Division to ensure projects are constructed in accordance with applicable laws, codes, ordinances, and accepted practices. Responds to building related violation inquiries from residents, contractors and other parties. Reviews residential and commercial building plans and blueprints. Ensures compliance with Township codes and professional building standards relating to framing, footings, electrical, plumbing, fire protection, accessibility and other related issues. Oversees the building construction and inspection process of new and existing buildings, and other construction projects. Oversees the registration process and license approval for contractors interested in working within the Township. Oversees the Dangerous Building processes and hearings. Keeps abreast of changing regulations and policies through continued education and professional growth.

## **Superintendent of Planning and Zoning Division**

Manages and directs the activities of the Planning and Zoning division to ensure projects within the Township are constructed in accordance with applicable laws, codes, ordinances and accepted practices. Administers the Township's site plan review process, the Township's lot/acreage land division review process and the Township's subdivision and condominium review process. Coordinates development projects with consulting engineers, developers, architects, builders and regulatory agencies. Oversees preparation of agendas and minutes of Planning Commission meetings and Economic Development Corporation (EDC) meetings along with reviewing materials to be included in the public record. Responds to zoning related violation inquiries from residents, contractors, and other parties. Coordinates work activities with other departments and outside agencies when projects require joint efforts. Oversees and directs the Township's code enforcement activities.

The Township also employs engineering, planning, and legal services on a consulting basis to achieve its planning and development goals.

## **Chapter 9 - Implementation.**

The objectives and strategies to achieve them for the seven (7) implementation goals in the Master Plan, and the Fiscal Tools, Legislative Policy Making, Administration and Enforcement, Citizen Education and Promotion, and Evaluation Sections of Chapter 9 are updated and amended to read as indicated on the following pages:

**GOAL ONE**  
**TO MAINTAIN, IMPROVE, AND ENHANCE CAPITAL**  
**INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SAFETY FOR THE HEALTH,**  
**SAFETY, AND WELFARE OF WATERFORD CITIZENS**

**Objective 1-1**  
**Maintain and Enhance Existing Level of Fire Protection**  
**and Emergency Medical Services**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 1-1**

- a. Continue the maintenance, update, and effective fire-fighting coverage of Township fire hydrants.
- b. Ensure sufficient facilities, staffing, equipment, and training levels for effective and prompt fire-fighting and EMS coverage of all areas in and served by the Township.
- c. Investigate and adopt, when economically feasible, new technologies which enhance and expand fire-fighting, prevention, detection, and emergency medical response capabilities.
- d. Maintain and enhance the use of the Township GIS for analysis of fire prevention, fire-fighting, and EMS capabilities.
- e. Provide continuing education and training in fire safety and prevention, first aid, and CPR to all citizens.
- f. Advocate the installation of affordable medical and fire safety technologies in all homes and workplaces.
- g. Implementation of the Township's full and independent exercise of its separate powers and authority under the Emergency Management Act, discontinuing its direct~~Maintain~~ participation in the Oakland eCounty-wide disaster and emergency operations plans but without limiting or restricting cooperation with the County and other political subdivisions as necessary for effective handling of and coordinated responses to potential natural and man-made disasters as provided in Ordinance 2020-004.
- h. Require effective fire safety and prevention systems in all development and redevelopment efforts.

**Objective 1-2**  
**Maintain and Enhance Existing Level of Water and Sewer Services**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 1-2**

- a. Ensure sufficient facilities, staffing, equipment, and training levels for the safe and effective operation and maintenance of the Township's water and sewer systems.
- b. Utilize the Township capital improvement planning process to plan for necessary water and sewer system capacity improvements.
- c. Utilize the Township capital improvement planning process to plan for necessary preventative water and sewer line maintenance and replacement.
- d. Maintain and enhance the use of the Township GIS and other appropriate electronic information systems for the effective operation, analysis, and capital maintenance tracking of the Township water and sewer systems.

- e. Identify and implement economically feasible new technologies which enhance and expand efficient, effective, safe, and healthy water and sewer systems.
- f. Promote and enforce the installation of water line loop systems.
- g. Implement and enforce ordinances and policy measures to protect and enhance the environmental quality of the Township's water supply.

**Objective 1-3**  
**Review the Storm Drainage System**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 1-3**

- a. Develop a master storm water management plan in accordance with State of Michigan and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidelines and the existing facilities and future storm drainage capacity needs of the Township.
- b. Consider, as necessary to compliance with State of Michigan and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requirements, the feasibility of creating and implementing an administrative structure and funding authority which provides an effective unified approach to managing, maintaining, and improving the storm drainage system within the Township.
- c. Maintain and enhance the use of the Township GIS and other appropriate electronic information systems to map and analyze all storm drainage systems within the Township.
- d. Enforce effective policies and best management practices wherever applicable to ensure the maintenance, capacity, and quality of the storm drainage system with the assistance and support of all governmental agencies responsible for stormwater management in the Township.
- e. Ensure that all new development and redevelopment projects are thoroughly evaluated and constructed to accommodate and not overburden the storm drainage system capacity within the Township along with encouraging improvements to the system capacity.
- f. Investigate and adopt the most effective means of enforcing updated engineering storm water discharge standards.
- g. Require the utilization of best management practices, including requirements for detention/retention, for new development and redevelopment projects within Waterford.

**Objective 1-4**  
**Support the Enhancement of the Power and Communication**  
**Utilities Infrastructure within the Township**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 1-4**

- a. Promote the conversion of overhead utility wires to underground lines.
- b. Require that utility and communication companies ~~to~~ demonstrate the capacity to provide modernized, full and uninterrupted service for proposed land uses.
- c. Map in GIS the location and capacity of all utility lines.
- d. Develop a map of prioritized areas where existing overhead utilities should be installed underground.
- e. Develop a map of all communication lines.

**Objective 1-5**  
**Maintain and Enhance Existing Level of Police Protection**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 1-5**

- a. Ensure sufficient facilities, staffing, equipment, and training levels for effective and prompt police protection and safety coverage of all areas of the Township.
- b. Investigate and adopt, when economically feasible, new technologies that enhance and expand crime prevention, detection, and public safety.
- c. Maintain and enhance the use of the Township GIS for analysis of crime prevention, detection, and solution.
- d. Make education and training in public safety available to Township residents.

**Objective 1-6**  
**Improve and Enhance the Township's Capital Facilities and Infrastructure Planning**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 1-6**

- a. Establish an annual capital improvement planning process to implement the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act for a capital improvements program to be prepared, showing the priority of public structures and improvements that will be needed or desirable and can be undertaken in a 6-year period and which is based on lists, plans, and cost estimates obtained from Township Departments for such capital improvements and the time frame within which those improvements should be made.
- b. Develop capital improvement planning strategies to provide guidance to the Township Board on accomplishing Master Plan Goals.
- c. Establish and maintain a database containing information on the available public infrastructure (water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, etc.) capacities within the Township to assist Township staff in making decisions on proposed land uses.

**GOAL TWO**  
**TO IMPROVE AND ENHANCE THE TRANSPORTATION**  
**NETWORK WITHIN WATERFORD**

**Objective 2-1**  
**Maintain and Encourage Road Improvements Within Waterford Township**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 2-1**

- a. Continue to improve and expand the proactive and effective partnership between the Township and the public road agencies to achieve quality public road improvements, maintenance, traffic flow, and safety in Waterford Township.
- b. Develop a Waterford Township Transportation Plan to identify road maintenance and improvement priorities to be considered in Township decisions necessary to achieve the Master Plan Goals.

- c. Develop and maintain a road needs review process as part of the Waterford Township Transportation Plan.
- d. Incorporate priority road maintenance and improvements into the capital improvements program in accordance with Objective 1-6.
- e. Require dedication of road right-of-way in connection as a condition of approval for development and redevelopment projects as necessary to provide a right-of-way width consistent with the Road Commission of Oakland County Master Right-of-Way Plan.

**Objective 2-2**  
**Encourage North-South Mobility in Waterford Township**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 2-2**

- a. Explore, facilitate, and encourage feasible realignment, extensions, widening, and other improvements of existing roads to eliminate or reduce safety hazards and improve traffic flow.
- b. Identify and incorporate in the Transportation Plan, unimproved sections of the primary road network where traffic safety or flow could be improved by paving or other improvements.
- c. Identify and pursue non-Township funding sources for primary road network improvements.

**Objective 2-3**  
**Diversify Transportation Options**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 2-3**

- a. Encourage and facilitate dependable and safe transportation options for prospective users who are housebound, such as senior and disabled citizens.
- b. Assess public transportation needs for Waterford Township.
- c. Develop and implement policies and programs to allow ~~that~~ residents and visitors to travel freely in Waterford without unnecessary delays by both motorized and non-motorized modes of transportation.
- d. Promote an advisory committee consisting of local business owners, transportation officials, and residents, to review and recommend public transportation options for Waterford residents.

**Objective 2-4**  
**Improve Traffic Safety**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 2-4**

- a. Assist road agencies through the use of GIS and other analytical tools to prioritize, develop, and fund plans and programs to eliminate existing traffic hazards and conflicts between different modes of transportation.
- b. Identify key intersections for design improvements to increase transportation efficiency within the Township.
- c. Develop and implement traffic impact and access management standards in ordinance requirements and policies for new development and redevelopment projects.

- d. Promote efforts to partner with traffic safety organizations and utilize all Township communication resources to educate citizens on traffic safety.
- e. Actively enforce traffic safety laws.

**Objective 2-5**  
**Enhance the Safety of the Waterford Village Historic District**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 2-5**

- a. Research, develop, and implement traffic calming and walkability measures in and adjacent to the District (*Please refer to Map 10 on Page 7-47 in Chapter 7 for the location of the District*).
- b. Evaluate, promote, and implement methods that slow down and discourage through traffic while maintaining continuous access for residents and public safety personnel.
- ~~e. Develop and implement an active role for the Township’s Historic District Commission in enhancing and promoting transportation safety within the District.~~

**GOAL THREE**  
**TO ENHANCE THE WALKABILITY OF WATERFORD**

**Objective 3-1**  
**Maintain, Expand and Improve Safety Paths**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 3-1**

- a. Develop, identify and pursue sources of funding and implement a master safety path construction and maintenance plan, incorporating priority projects into the Township’s Capital Improvements Plan.
- b. Construct connections between existing segments of safety paths.
- c. Facilitate and encourage connection of all Waterford parks and schools to the safety path system.
- d. Install and maintain safety path links between neighborhood nodes (*Please refer to Figure 8-10 on Page 8-22 in Chapter 8 for the location of the nodes*).
- e. Maintain existing segments of safety paths.
- f. Inventory existing safety paths to determine Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and provide for required ADA compliance in any upgrades or repairs.
- g. Establish and utilize a GIS database for evaluating the condition of the existing safety path system components in Waterford Township based on an objective scoring criteria.
- h. Promote efforts to utilize all Township communication resources to educate citizens on the benefits of walking using non-motorized paths.

## **Objective 3-2**

### **Develop and Promote a Waterford Riverwalk Pedestrian Pathway**

#### **Strategies to Achieve Objective 3-2**

- a. Complete and promote implementation of a Riverwalk Master Plan for safety paths and other improvements for the area from the Waterford Towne Center area to the Drayton Plains Nature Center, to provide access to and encourage enjoyment of the Clinton River.
- b. Pursue and apply for alternative funding sources, whenever possible, to complete the remaining segments of the Riverwalk Master Plan.
- c. Explore opportunities to link the Waterford Riverwalk system to safety path systems in adjacent communities.
- d. Incorporate Riverwalk project components in the Capital Improvements Plan.

## **GOAL FOUR**

### **TO CREATE AN ECONOMIC CLIMATE CONDUCIVE TO THE ATTRACTION, RETENTION, AND EXPANSION OF BUSINESS WITHIN WATERFORD**

## **Objective 4-1**

### **Develop and Utilize Township Capacity for Proactive Economic Development**

#### **Strategies to Achieve Objective 4-1**

- a. Township staff to undertake and facilitate economic development activities and programs.
- b. Develop and utilize printed and electronic information to guide citizens and businesses through the Township's development processes.
- c. Encourage Township staff to analyze, and revise when necessary, the current procedures and policies involving services to the Waterford business and development community for effectiveness, efficiency, and consistency with the Master Plan goals and objectives.
- d. Develop, promote, and implement conceptual plans for areas within the Township to focus redevelopment efforts.
- e. Explore and aggressively utilize all available economic development, planning, and analysis tools to actively promote business retention and the relocation of new businesses and technology-based companies to Waterford.
- f. Develop cooperative partnerships, use flexible planning and zoning tools, and actively utilize economic development tools to ensure the continued redevelopment and economic viability of the regional destinations located in the Township.
- g. Encourage and promote the provision of safe, high-speed, and cost-effective modern communication and information systems for use by Waterford businesses.
- h. Establish a rational tax abatement incentive policy.

**Objective 4-2**  
**Market Waterford Township as a Destination for Business Activities**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 4-2**

- a. Identify and establish partnerships with other governmental agencies and business organizations to actively promote and market Waterford as a prime business location.
- b. Develop and disseminate marketing materials promoting Waterford Township utilizing all available media.
- c. Promote Waterford as a “One Stop Ready” community, a member of Automation Alley, home of the Oakland County International Airport, and other notable points of interest.

**Objective 4-3**  
**Educate and Inform All Township Boards, Commissions, Committees,  
and Authorities on Economic Development Tools and Efforts**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 4-3**

- a. Research, develop, and implement ongoing processes to keep the Township Board and all appointed committees involved with economic development fully informed on the various economic tools and funding resources available to Waterford Township.
- b. Provide staff training and development to gain knowledge and awareness of current economic development tools, funding sources, best practices, and innovative techniques and programs.

**Objective 4-4**  
**Promote furthering the Physical Appearance and Functional Character  
of the Township’s Commercial Corridors**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 4-4**

- a. Develop and implement ordinances, policies, and planning tools to assist with the aesthetic, social and functional improvement of the Township’s commercial corridors.
- b. Investigate and, if appropriate, create a Downtown Development Authority to assist in the redevelopment and improvement of the commercial corridors.
- c. Develop, implement, and promote traffic calming and access management regulations and policies as a means of enhancing the commercial corridors.
- d. Pursue and maintain cooperative relationships with the public road agencies to investigate, plan, and construct aesthetic and functional improvements of the Township’s commercial corridors.
- e. Promote commercial corridor infrastructure for both motorized and non-motorized transportation.
- f. Develop partnerships with governmental agencies, business organizations, and business owners to improve the aesthetic, social and functional qualities of the Township gateways and commercial corridors.
- g. Establish and support the Corridor Improvement Authority created by Township Ordinance in the exercise of its powers to correct and prevent deterioration, promote economic growth, development and redevelopment, and enhance the commercial corridor development areas described in the Ordinance.

- h. Identify priority corridor and gateway improvements for possible incorporation into the Capital Improvements Plan.

**GOAL FIVE**  
**TO INCREASE AND IMPROVE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**  
**FOR WATERFORD CITIZENS**

**Objective 5-1**  
**Develop, Construct, and Maintain in One Central Location**  
**a Full-Scale Community Center to Serve All Age Groups**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 5-1**

- a. Propose and promote a phased plan of development and funding to create a dynamic recreation center that will be supported by the citizens and serve the community for the foreseeable future.
- b. Provide indoor/outdoor swimming facilities to meet the community's recreation, fitness, therapeutic, and scholastic swim needs.
- c. Provide a playground area for younger children.
- d. Secure public input on all other recreational, fitness, and service facilities that would be supported by Township residents as part of a new community center.
- e. Research and analyze all potential funding sources and options.

**Objective 5-2**  
**Promote Recreational Utilization of the Clinton River**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 5-2**

- a. Educate the community about the presence, importance, and threats to the Clinton River.
- b. Sponsor and promote projects, programs, and annual events to clean up, restore, preserve, and protect the Township's river resources.
- c. Sponsor and promote Clinton River educational and recreational projects, and programs such as canoeing, kayaking, and fishing.
- d. Work with the Clinton River Watershed Council to sponsor an adopt-a-river program by businesses and service organizations for different segments of the river.
- e. Identify and recognize the importance and potential uses of or related to the Clinton River in the Riverwalk Master Plan described in Objective 3-2.
- f. Partner with the local schools in developing curriculum centered on the importance and ecological fragility of the Clinton River.

**Objective 5-3**  
**Promote Increased Access and Use of Existing Parks**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 5-3**

- a. Provide and maintain effective safety path access to all Township parks.
- b. Develop and implement a playground equipment maintenance and improvement schedule to ensure child safety and modernized facilities.
- c. Explore opportunities for creating dog parks, or using a portion of an existing park for the purpose of developing and maintaining pet run areas.
- d. Conduct periodic studies and analyses of existing parks' utilization to assess use patterns and evaluate implementation of other recreational uses.
- e. Create better access to, and promote utilization of, Elizabeth Lake Woods, including trails and interpretive observation areas.
- f. Develop and maintain directional signage to the parks and identification signage for natural features, river and stream crossings, and watershed boundaries.
- g. Ensure that the area currently occupied by the Drayton Plains Nature Center is linked to the Waterford Riverwalk system.
- h. Preserve and protect the area currently occupied by the Drayton Plains Nature Center as a nature center.
- i. Include passive recreation areas and activities in the Recreation Plan.
- j. Develop and disseminate marketing materials promoting Waterford Township Parks utilizing all appropriate media.

**Objective 5-4**  
**Encourage Playground Areas in Neighborhoods**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 5-4**

- a. Investigate opportunities for establishing and maintaining small playground or picnic areas within, or adjacent to, neighborhoods.
- b. As necessary, revise and strengthen Zoning Ordinance requirements for the establishment and maintenance of neighborhood park areas within new developments.
- c. Investigate the development of a neighborhood enhancement grant program that utilizes state and federal funding sources to enable neighborhood associations to create neighborhood parks.

**Objective 5-5**  
**Encourage Diverse Recreation Opportunities for Waterford Citizens**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 5-5**

- a. Provide for staff training and development to gain knowledge and awareness of innovative recreational facilities and programs.
- b. Research and analyze deficiencies in the provision of recreation services within the Township to assess the feasibility of establishing and funding new facilities and programs.
- c. Promote establishment of innovative and diverse recreational facilities and programs.

**GOAL SIX**  
**TO ENSURE AND ENFORCE LAND USE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES**  
**THAT ARE SENSITIVE TO WATERFORD'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

**Objective 6-1**  
**Promote Open Space Developments**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 6-1**

- a. Research and identify possible revisions to the Township ordinances which provide tools for housing developments that preserve substantial areas of open space and reasonable and flexible requirements, such as measured adjustments in zoning bulk regulations.
- b. Encourage and promote the preservation of some uplands for common use as a requirement in open space and cluster developments.
- c. Encourage and promote private preservation of open space through conservation easements, dedications, and stewardship programs.
- d. Encourage and preserve natural resource corridor links between natural areas, recreation areas, parklands, and schools.
- e. Research, evaluate, implement, and enforce revisions to the Zoning Ordinance to require that within new housing developments, a sufficient amount of property be dedicated for quality of life features such as parks, open space, natural areas, and native landscaping.

**Objective 6-2**  
**Ensure All Development Efforts Respect, Preserve,**  
**and Protect Waterford's Natural Characteristics and Constraints**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 6-3**

- a. Continue the enforcement of rational wetland protection to preserve wetlands in their natural state as a high priority, protect water quality, stabilize stormwater runoff, recharge groundwater, and provide fish and wildlife habitat.
- b. Enforce ordinance requirements for practical woodlands conservation to protect water and soil quality, improve air quality, buffer noise, moderate climate hazards, preserve wildlife diversity and habitats, and enhance community aesthetics.
- c. Promote, inform, and encourage citizens on the use of native plant material to minimize the hazardous effects of invasive species.
- d. Encourage preservation of natural contours and minimize mass grading alterations.
- e. Require the preservation and protection of groundwater recharge areas as open space or low density uses to retain as much permeable surface and water holding characteristics as possible.
- f. Promote and enforce the protection of groundwater recharge areas from pollution through the regulation of land uses which may discharge wastes into the hydrological cycle.
- g. Promote the preservation of natural vegetation and topographical features along stream corridors and waterways by restricting these areas to uses offering little danger of topographical disturbance, water quality degradation, stream channel alteration, runoff or sedimentation increase.

- h. Utilize appropriate communication methods to educate the community on the care and use of herbicide and fertilizer sprays to preserve and protect stream corridors, waterways, and the natural drainage and runoff pattern associated with them.
- i. Develop and maintain natural area inventories that include assessments for quality, location, health, and species provided by other governmental agencies.
- j. Preserve, and protect the natural areas essential to maintaining Waterford's unique heritage and character, which provide a diverse high-quality wildlife habitat.
- k. Advocate the establishment of a prohibited planting materials list based upon invasiveness and ecological impacts.
- l. Maintain strict enforcement of requirements for soil and sedimentation control during development.
- m. Actively work with responsible agencies to maintain an accurate list of leaking underground storage sites.
- n. Develop and utilize a Township Open Space and Natural Area Management Plan to assist in evaluating future rezoning and site plan approvals as well as potential open space acquisition.

**GOAL SEVEN**  
**TO RETAIN, ENHANCE, AND PROMOTE WATERFORD'S**  
**UNIQUE CHARACTER, SENSE OF COMMUNITY, AND IDENTITY**

**Objective 7-1**  
**Expand, Enhance, and Improve the Aesthetics and Historic Preservation**  
**of the Waterford Village Historic District**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 7-1**

- a. Research and plan for the installation of decorative lighting, signage, and barrier-free safety paths along District streets (*Please refer to Map 10 on Page 7-47 in Chapter 7 for the location of the District*).
- b. Inventory and evaluate existing vacant land in the District and evaluate and recommend adaptive reuse of existing structures that will enhance the District as a community destination.
- ~~e. Research, evaluate, and improve the regulatory powers and effectiveness of the Township's Historic District Ordinance.~~
- ~~d. Explore the expansion of the original District boundaries by encouraging properties to join the Historic District.~~
- ~~e.c.~~ Explore, develop, and utilize stable funding sources and financing tools for restoration, improvement, and small business development in the District.
- ~~f. Develop and implement ongoing communication with District property owners to inform them of District regulations and expectations.~~
- ~~g.d.~~ Develop, promote, and implement a conceptual Historic District area plan to focus and guide redevelopment efforts.

**Objective 7-2**  
**Plan and Encourage Development of Neighborhood Nodes**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 7-2**

- a. Develop, promote, and implement a conceptual plan for each area identified in the Master Plan as a neighborhood node to focus and guide development and redevelopment efforts.
- b. Develop, promote, and maintain the Township Civic Center area as a community gathering place.

**Objective 7-3**  
**Establish and Enforce a High Standard for the Physical Condition  
of the Township Housing Stock**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 7-3**

- a. Revise and enforce Township ordinances as necessary to require inspections of rental housing, property maintenance code enforcement, and elimination of blighting effects and influences.
- b. Research, evaluate, and revise the Zoning Ordinance to include flexible planning and zoning tools, and requirements which encourage and promote quality redevelopment of the Township's existing housing stock.

**Objective 7-4**  
**Assist Service Organizations to Expand and Market Programs and Services**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 7-4**

- a. Develop and implement an information gathering and dissemination process using appropriate media to inform new and current Waterford residents of area community services.
- b. Advocate the elimination of public service duplications of effort, promote consolidated and partnering public service efforts, and work to eliminate service gaps.
- c. Develop and maintain a current database of community service organizations and the services they offer within Waterford Township.
- d. Publicize and promote volunteer opportunities and efforts using appropriate media.

**Objective 7-5**  
**Strengthen Communication Partnerships between the Township and Governmental  
Agencies, the Waterford School District, Oakland Community College, Private Schools,  
and Service Organizations**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 7-5**

- a. Implement dedication of Township staff, website, and cable resources to the expansion of community communication efforts.

- b. Develop and maintain partnerships between the Township, Waterford School District, Oakland Community College, the business community, and community agencies to promote the Waterford community and the quality of life for citizens and visitors, utilizing appropriate media.
- c. Develop and maintain partnerships between the Township, Waterford School District, Oakland Community College, the business community, and community agencies to implement cooperative cultural planning efforts that will encourage and expand cultural programs and services in Waterford.
- d. Continue and expand proactive communication and information exchange between the Township, Waterford School District, and Oakland Community College to facilitate and achieve common goals.
- e. Continue and expand proactive communication and information exchange between the Township and Oakland County International Airport to facilitate airport land use issues and noise study implementation.
- f. Research, develop, and implement partnership programs between the Township, Waterford School District and/or Oakland Community College to educate students about importance of local government.

## **FISCAL TOOLS**

Waterford Township can increase the effectiveness of its Master Plan implementation efforts by reasonable utilization of available financing tools. The financing of all Township activities is determined through the annual budget process based on available revenues from property taxes, state revenue sharing, fees, the annual federal Community Development Block Grant program, federal, state, county, or foundation grants, and other sources. Providing for a prioritized implementation of the Master Plan goals and objectives as part of the annual budget process will be a key to realizing those goals and objectives over time.

The Township has also established an Economic Development Corporation and Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, has provided for a Corridor Improvement Authority, and has established Commercial Rehabilitation and Industrial Development Districts for parts of the Township, to assist with economic development policy and to finance projects which meet the established criteria. There may be other existing or future legislation that provides the Township with similar tools, all of which should be reviewed and considered as related to furthering the goals and objectives of this Master Plan. The adoption of a rational tax abatement policy, use of the Township's special assessment authority, and the selling of municipal bonds are additional tools that could be used to facilitate or fund activities consistent with Master Plan Goals and objectives in appropriate situations.

The Township can also increase the fiscal effectiveness of the Master Plan implementation through strategic planning and the active participation by the Township Board and Departments in the annual capital improvements planning process the Planning Commission is responsible for under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act as described in Objective 1-6, the results of which could be considered in determining expenditures as part of the annual budget process

## **LEGISLATIVE POLICY-MAKING**

The Township Board will play a critical role in the implementation of the Master Plan. It is recommended that the Township Board actively promote the Master Plan by public communications, working with the Planning Commission, and providing the funding necessary to implement the Master Plan goals, objectives, and strategy items.

## **ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT**

In addition to following all Master Plan implementation policies established by the Township Board, the Development Services Department staff should facilitate Master Plan implementation by educating all Township personnel about the Master Plan as a Township-wide policy document that needs to be actively implemented and promoted. The Development Services staff should also actively involve other departments in Master Plan implementation efforts, including program and project development. Township departments should also focus on reviewing and revising department procedures and actions to ensure Master Plan implementation. The review and development of proposed ordinances necessary to implement the Master Plan is another important task that the Township administrative departments need to pursue. Finally, each department should actively enforce the laws, policies, and procedures established to accomplish Master Plan goals and objectives.

## **CITIZEN EDUCATION AND PROMOTION**

It is essential that ongoing education efforts be undertaken to ensure that citizens are aware of [and](#) support Master Plan implementation, to educate citizens on the Master Plan, and promote Master Plan goals and objectives. An active planning education program should be promoted and established as part of the public school curriculum.

The Development Services Department should take an active role in utilizing appropriate media, such as the Township website, cable, printed brochures, community calendars, and new resident packets.

## **EVALUATION**

Although the Michigan Planning Enabling Act calls for a Planning Commission review at least every five (5) years to determine whether to commence the procedure to amend this Master Plan or adopt a new master plan, on at least an annual basis, the Planning Commission will review the progress toward implementation of the Master Plan and evaluate whether any adjustments to the implementation process or amendments of the Master Plan are or may be appropriate under an evaluation process that may include an ongoing strategic planning process, progress reports, proposed or desired timelines for accomplishing the strategy items, and staff reports on areas of concern identified by the Planning Commission.

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## **APPENDICES**

The following Appendices described in the 2003 - 2023 Master Plan are no longer considered part of the Master Plan because they were not completed as contemplated, or are no longer necessary or appropriate for inclusion:

- J.** Zoning Ordinance and Landscape Aesthetics Subcommittee Minutes
- L.** Traffic Analysis
- M.** Transportation Plan
- O.** Capital Improvements Plan
- P.** Neighborhood Node and Area Concept Plans
- Q.** Zoning Ordinance and Landscape Aesthetics Subcommittee Final Report

**CHAIRPERSON CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

As the Chairperson of the Charter Township of Waterford Planning Commission, I hereby certify that this Master Plan 2003 – 2023 Update Amendment was approved by the Planning Commission on \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sandra Werth, Chairperson

**SECRETARY CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

As the Secretary of the Charter Township of Waterford Planning Commission, I hereby certify that a copy of this approved Master Plan 2003 – 2023 Update Amendment was submitted to the Township Board of Trustees by delivery to the Township Clerk on \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Matt Ray, Secretary



## CHAPTER 2 – INTRODUCTION

### WHAT IS PLANNING?

Municipal planning is a critical component of local government's ability to provide the physical and social infrastructure for the general health, safety, and welfare of its citizens. Successful planning must include a citizen participation process that involves the conscious selection of policy choices to guide the future land use, growth, and development in the community. The primary long-range planning tool of the community, the Master Plan, is the only official Township document that sets forth policies to guide future land use in the community.



*Waterford Township Hall*



The Township derives its authority for the preparation of a master plan from the Township Planning Act, P.A. 168 of 1959 (as amended in 2001) along with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008. Section 6 of Public Act 168 states in part:

*The Township planning commission shall make and approve a basic plan as a guide for the development of unincorporated portions of the township. As a basis for the plan, the township planning commission may do any of the following: (1) Make inquiries,*

*investigations, and surveys of all the resources of the township (2) Assemble and analyze data and formulate plans for the proper conservation and uses of all resources, including a determination of the extent of probable future need for the most advantageous designation of lands having various use potentials and for services, facilities, and utilities required to equip those lands...*

### **HOW IS THE MASTER PLAN TO BE USED?**

When prepared with the support and participation of the stakeholders and community at large, the Master Plan serves many functions and is to be used in a variety of ways.

1. The Master Plan is a general statement of the Township's current and future goals and policies. It provides a single, comprehensive view of the community's vision for its future.
2. The Master Plan serves as an aid in daily decision-making. The goals and policies outlined in the Master Plan guide the Planning Commission and Township Board in their deliberations on zoning, subdivision, capital improvements, economic development, environmental protection, and other matters relating to land use and development. The policy orientation of the Master Plan provides decision-makers and Township departments with a framework and basis for analysis, advice, and decisions. This does not imply that the Master Plan is a static statement; the Master Plan should recognize the dynamic character of the community. The variables upon which this Master Plan is based will likely change over time and shall be updated in the form of Master Plan amendments. However, adherence to the goals and policies will provide a stable, long-term basis for decision-making.
3. The Master Plan provides the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are based. The Township Zoning Act (P.A. 184 of 1943, as amended) requires that the Zoning Ordinance be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare. The Master Plan, both text and maps, do not replace or override Township Ordinances, specifically the Zoning Ordinance and Map. Instead, the Zoning Ordinance is the primary legal and enforcement tool that a community can use to implement the Master Plan.
4. The Master Plan can be a dynamic tool useful in implementing the vision for economic development and infrastructure redevelopment. The Master plan should be utilized so that public and private investments can be combined and guided to those areas and for those goals and objectives identified as creating the greatest positive impact for the citizens of Waterford.
5. The Master Plan can also be a vibrant instrument for achieving the goals and objectives outlined for enhancing and expanding the social and community services of the Township. The Master Plan can be used by various community groups to gain insight into the needs of the community.
6. The Master Plan is an educational tool and gives citizens, property owners, developers and adjacent communities a clear indication of the Township's direction for the future. As such, it is critical that the educational process continues over the life of the Master Plan. Too often, the community is educated on the Master Plan only when it is adopted; a truly dynamic Master Plan is only viable when it is part of the community's consciousness.

In summation, the Township Master Plan is the only officially adopted document that sets forth an agenda for the achievement of goals and policies for the entire Township. It is a long-range statement of general goals and policies aimed at the unified and coordinated development of the Township. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.

Including Chapter 1, the Executive Summary, and Chapter 2, the Introduction, the Waterford Township Master Plan is comprised of the following Chapters:

- **Chapter 3 - Geography and Brief History of Waterford**
- **Chapter 4 - Organization of Waterford Planning and Zoning**
- **Chapter 5 - Background Studies Summary**
- **Chapter 6 - The Waterford Master Planning Process**
- **Chapter 7 - Subcommittee Goals and Objectives**
- **Chapter 8 - Future Land Use Plan**
- **Chapter 9 - Implementation**

In addition, this Plan includes Appendices containing the complete set of minutes for each subcommittee, a full text of the background studies, analysis data gathered during the Master Plan process, a traffic analysis, a communities facilities analysis, and sections reserved for the Capital Improvements Plan, Transportation Plan, and plans developed by other governmental agencies which are interrelated with this Master Plan.



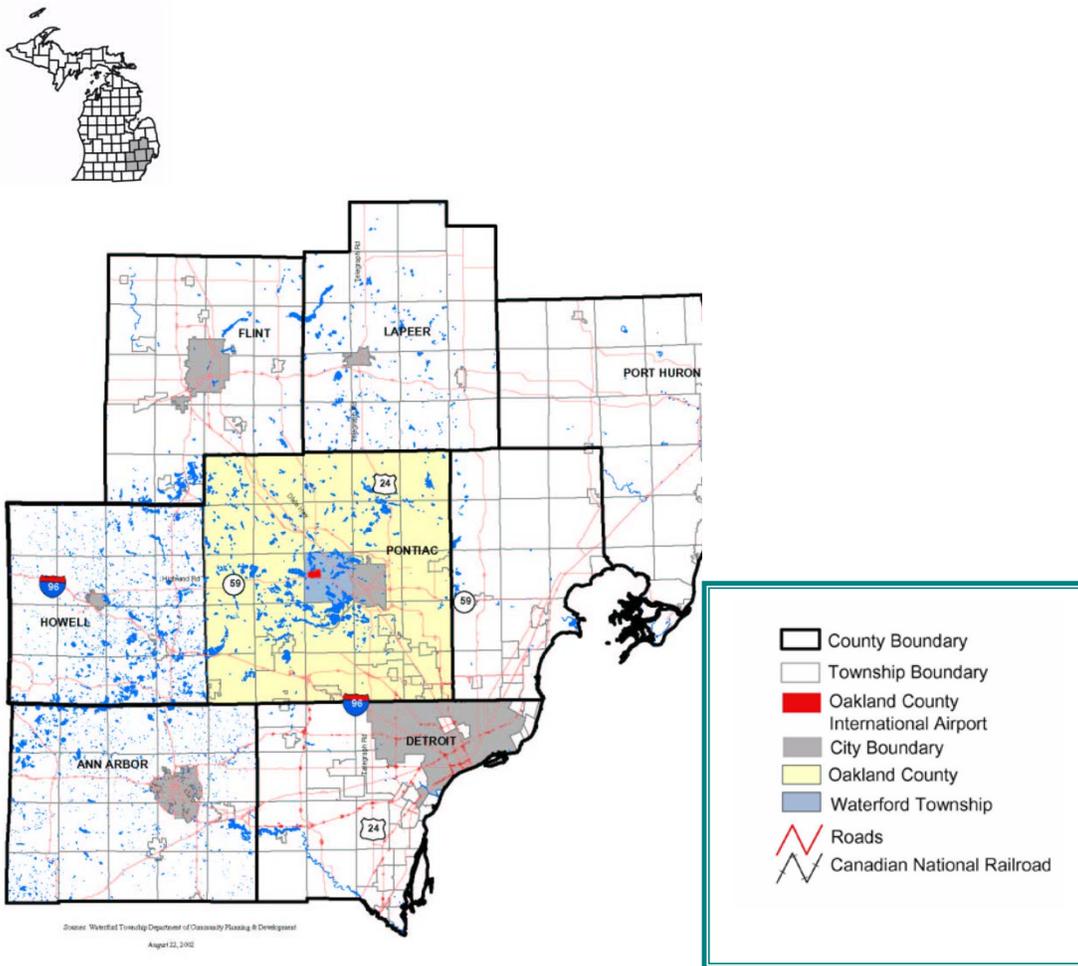
# CHAPTER 3 – GEOGRAPHY AND BRIEF HISTORY OF WATERFORD TOWNSHIP

## GEOGRAPHY

Waterford Township, comprising approximately 35 square miles, is located in the geographic center of Oakland County, Michigan. As shown in Map 1, the general location of the Township is in the northwestern portion of the greater Detroit metropolitan area. Waterford borders the Cities of Lake Angelus, Pontiac, and Auburn Hills on the east; the Townships of Springfield, Independence and Orion on the north; the Township of White Lake on the west; and the cities of Sylvan Lake and Keego Harbor, and the Townships of Commerce and West Bloomfield on the south. Waterford is 30 miles northwest of downtown Detroit, 25 miles southeast of Flint, 55 miles east of Lansing, and 35 miles northeast of Ann Arbor.

**Map 1**

**Location of the Charter Township of Waterford**



## **Geology**

The geology of Waterford Township has been visibly influenced by the glacial history of the United States. Large areas of glacial deposition occurred in the south-central portions of Michigan, including Waterford Township, as evidenced by the existing topography, deposits of glacial drift, and the presence of the many lakes in the Township. The topography of the Township is generally low rolling hills with variations on a minor scale, existing throughout the majority of the area. Land elevations differ between 930 feet and 1,104 feet above sea level.

## **Climate**

The climate of this area is typical of that of the rest of the State of Michigan and other Midwestern states. There are four distinct seasonal changes in the climate, with a moderate growing season from late April to early October. The temperature ranges from an average maximum of 82° Fahrenheit in July to an average minimum of 16° Fahrenheit in January, with an annual mean temperature of 48° Fahrenheit. Annual precipitation averages about 30 inches, with February averaging the lowest monthly precipitation at 1.49 inches and June averaging the highest monthly precipitation at 3.16 inches.

## **Natural Features**

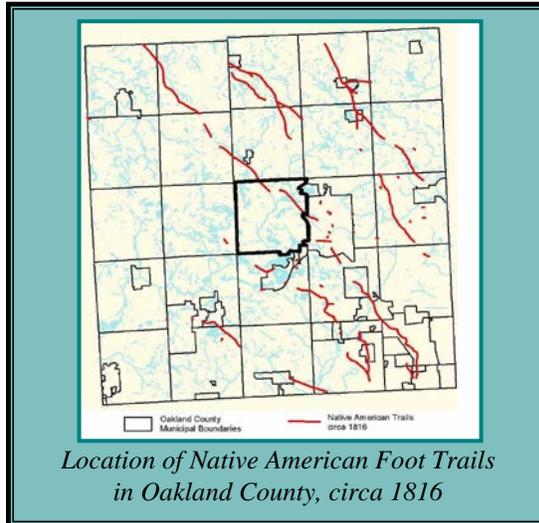
Perhaps the most outstanding natural attraction in Waterford Township is the abundance of water bodies. To a great extent, the opportunity to live near one of these water bodies has been the prime catalyst for Waterford's population growth. Waterford has more than 34 lakes, containing 3,080 acres, which provide ample year round recreational activities. In addition, the main branch of the Clinton River runs through the approximate center of the Township from north to south. Several large wetland areas are also located throughout the Township, particularly in the southwest quadrant of the Township and adjacent to the Clinton River flood plain.

In addition to the lakes and the Clinton River, Waterford Township is fortunate to have two state parks located within its boundaries. Dodge Park No. 4 features an excellent beach on Cass Lake. Pontiac Lake State Park, in addition to a large lake and beach, offers archery and rifle ranges as well as hiking and biking trails that attract outdoor enthusiasts from around southeast Michigan. Combined, the two parks total six square miles of state owned park recreational land. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) also maintains access sites on six of the large lakes located in Waterford. These lakes are Oakland, Loon, Maceday, Pontiac, Crescent, and Cass. A locally recognized nature preserve called the Drayton Plains Nature Center is located on the Clinton River and encompasses 137 acres in the center of the Township. The Nature Center provides a haven for waterfowl and wildlife and is a stopover site during spring and fall bird migrations. The Nature Center has an education facility that provides outdoor science programs for local school children and for the citizens of Waterford to learn about their natural environs. Within this Nature Center, the DNR utilizes several rearing ponds each spring to raise native game fish, such as Pike and Walleye, which it stocks in lakes and rivers throughout the State. There are also over 600 acres of Township-owned recreation land and over 400 acres of School District-owned recreation land. About one-third of the total recreation land owned by the Township is contained in its largest park, Elizabeth Lake Woods, a natural conservation area located in the south central part of the Township. The first parcels of this park were purchased in the early 1990s with funds provided by The Nature Conservancy and a State of Michigan grant. The parcels were then deeded to the Township. These parcels contain a mature oak forest occurs on sandy knolls paralleling the Clinton River. The oak forest is bordered on either side by floodplain forest and southern swamp. This forest type is of local and regional ecological significance, as estimates show that less than one percent of the original oak forests of Michigan remain intact. In 1987, of the remaining forests types surveyed by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory, Elizabeth Lake Woods ranked second in sites of statewide importance. The sandy tree-covered hills also provide protection for the rare and endangered freshwater mussel communities, which occur in this section of the Clinton River, but are rapidly

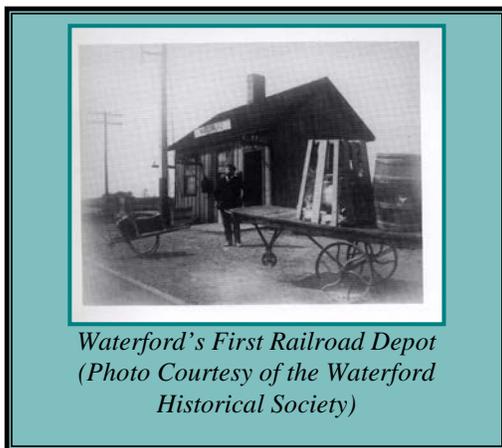
disappearing in other parts of the State. The park provides a tranquil setting for canoers, hikers, and wildlife enthusiasts looking for an escape into nature. *(Please refer to Map 9 on Page 7-35 for general location of parkland and public open space).*

### Transportation Links

The Township's landscape has been affected over the years by efforts to create means of moving to and through the Township. The earliest transportation impact on the natural landscape was relatively minor, and was that of Native Americans moving along the Clinton River and the various lakes by canoe. In addition, native Americans initiated a foot trail that provided a way through Waterford, along a route where Dixie Highway and the railroad currently exist. As European settlers began moving into the area, this foot trail developed into the Saginaw Trail. The Saginaw Trail provided the primary route for horse-powered transportation through Waterford and to the first village areas that developed around this early transportation route.



*Location of Native American Foot Trails  
in Oakland County, circa 1816*



*Waterford's First Railroad Depot  
(Photo Courtesy of the Waterford  
Historical Society)*

After the development of steam-powered rail transportation, a section of the Detroit and Milwaukee Railroad was built parallel to the Saginaw Trail in 1842. The location of the railroad line continued to concentrate human settlement in this area of the Township until the advent of the automobile. This freight rail line, now owned by the Canadian National Railroad, is still active. The railroad's impact on the surrounding environment has been minimized since there is little new development dependent on rail transport.

Waterford's geography has had a major impact on the Township's road system. Because of the numerous lakes, the traditional grid road system was not feasible. Most of the secondary road system meanders, with no existing single road to directly access sections of the Township in a north-south direction. Waterford's landscape does possess three principal regional highways through the Township, all of which serve as the Township's primary commercial corridors. Dixie Highway (U.S. 10) follows the original route of the Saginaw Trail, passing diagonally across the northeastern portion of the Township from the border with the City of Pontiac in a northwesterly direction to the border with Independence Township. Telegraph Road (U.S. 24) forms the principal eastern boundary with Pontiac and serves as the gateway into the Oakland County government complex. Highland Road (M-59) traverses the center of the Township in an east-west direction and is the gateway to the Oakland County International Airport. These three principal regional highways also serve as Waterford's primary access to the region's major interstate highways, I-75, I-96, I-696, US-10 and US-23.

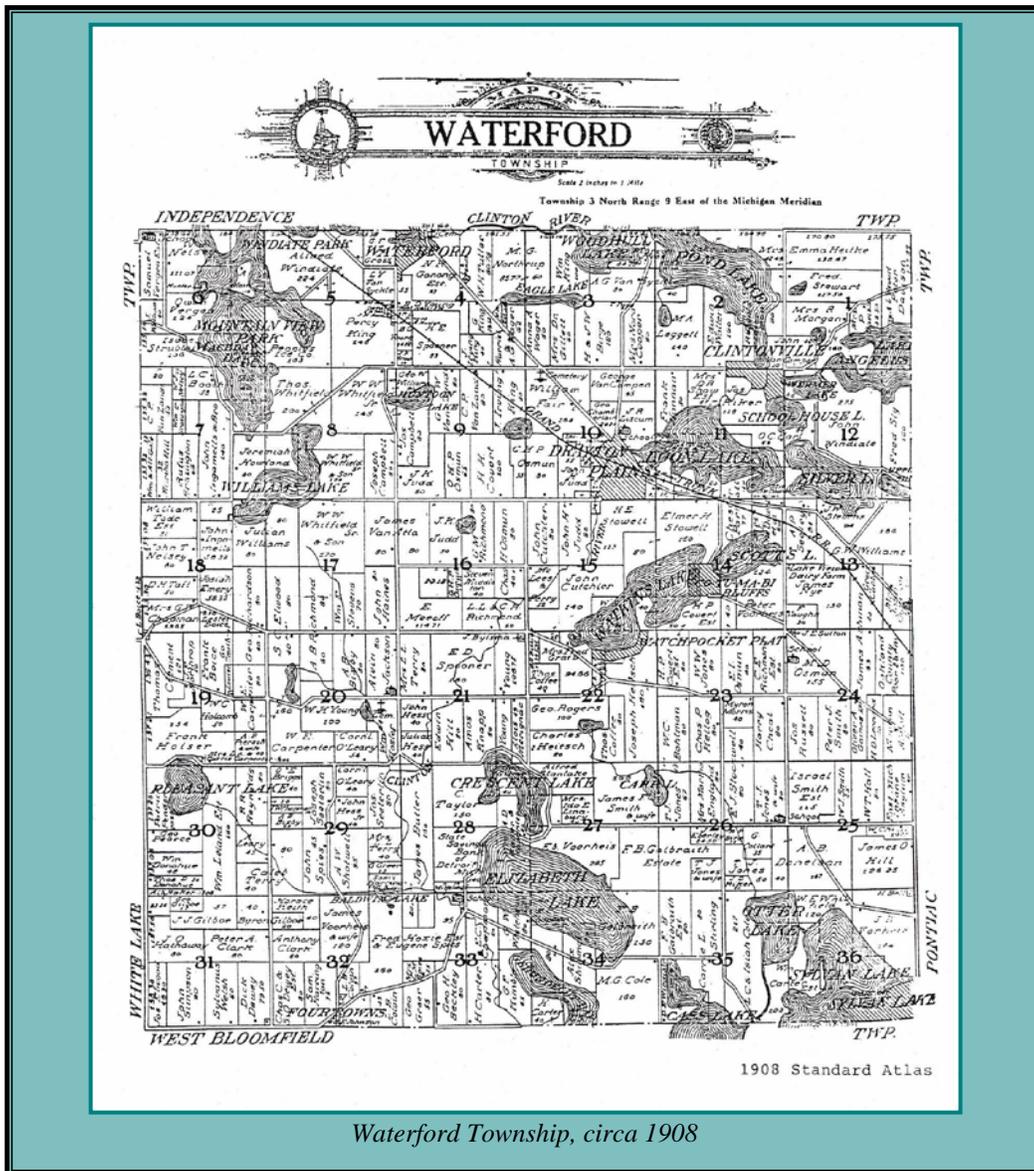
In addition, the region's premier general aviation facility, the Oakland County International Airport, is located on M-59 in the western portion of the Township. This airport opened in 1928 and is Michigan's second busiest airport based on take-offs and landings. The Airport continues to

influence land use and the geographic features of the Township. Land uses affiliated with an airport use, the height of buildings throughout the Township, the location of residential properties, maintenance of clear zones along runway paths, and traffic patterns will continue to be affected by airport operations.

**HISTORY**

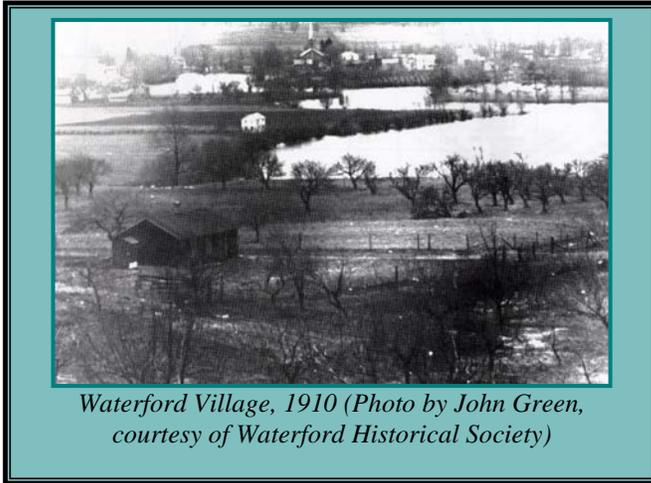
Waterford, organized as a Township in 1835, is nicknamed the “Lakeland Paradise”.<sup>1</sup> It has grown from a wilderness settlement of two families in 1819 to an urban community of 73,150 persons in 2000.

When the first white settlers came to the area, the Shiawassee and Saginaw Indian tribes inhabited the wooded countryside. Chief Pontiac, for whom the City of Pontiac was named, was the area leader of the local Native American tribe. While numerous other tribes hunted in this area, there is no evidence that any tribe made Waterford their year-round residence. Historians suggest this may have been due to the large areas of lowlands and wetlands.



Waterford Township, circa 1908

<sup>1</sup> Samuel W. Durant, *History of Oakland County, 1817-1877* (E. H. Everts and Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1877).

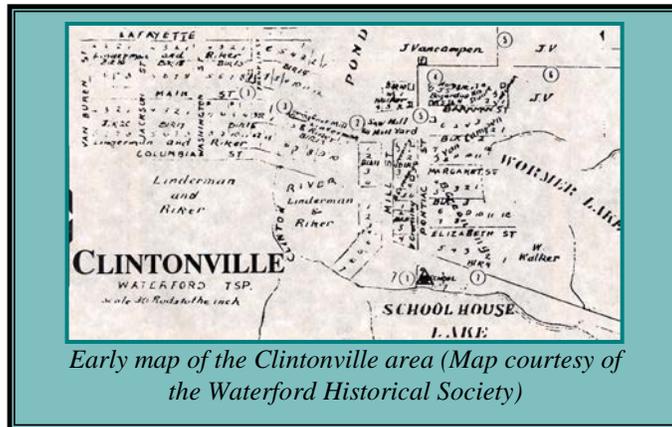


Waterford Village, 1910 (Photo by John Green, courtesy of Waterford Historical Society)

Among the first settlers who came to Waterford were two unrelated families named Williams. Major Oliver Williams, his wife and family of eight children journeyed up the Saginaw Trail from Detroit, taking two days and one night for the trip. In March 1819, they built a log house on the banks of what is now Silver Lake. Also in 1819, Alpheus Williams settled his family in the area where the Saginaw Trail crossed the Clinton River, as did Archibald Phillips. This site developed into Waterford Village, which is now a designated historic district in the Township (please refer to Map 10 on

Page 7-47). Records show that the Williams families each paid \$2.00 an acre for their land. The first school classes in Waterford were held in 1821 in an old sheep shed on the farm of Oliver Williams. In 1822, a schoolhouse was built and 12 pupils attended their first classes. The second school was built in 1828 and was also used for town meetings, church services and recreation programs for the early pioneers.

In 1834, two other village areas developed within the Township. One settlement named “Clintonville” developed around what is now the intersection of Walton Boulevard and Clintonville Road. Another, named “Drayton Plains”, developed around the area of the Dixie Highway and Frembes Road intersection. All three areas became rival pioneer villages as rural community gathering places and shopping nodes, with a mix of general stores, shops, small factories, taverns, mills, hotels, post offices, and railroad stations to serve the local farming community and travelers throughout the area. The last surviving structure from this pioneer village era is the general store that was known as Jacober's Store. This structure was located at the Andersonville Road and Dixie Highway intersection until it was moved to a permanent location at Greenfield Village.



Early map of the Clintonville area (Map courtesy of the Waterford Historical Society)

None of the three village areas ever incorporated, although the residents of the area maintained a strong identification with the old village area names. In fact, Drayton Plains maintained its post office designation into the early 1990s. The village areas remained unincorporated, serving as community activity centers and gathering places into the twentieth century.

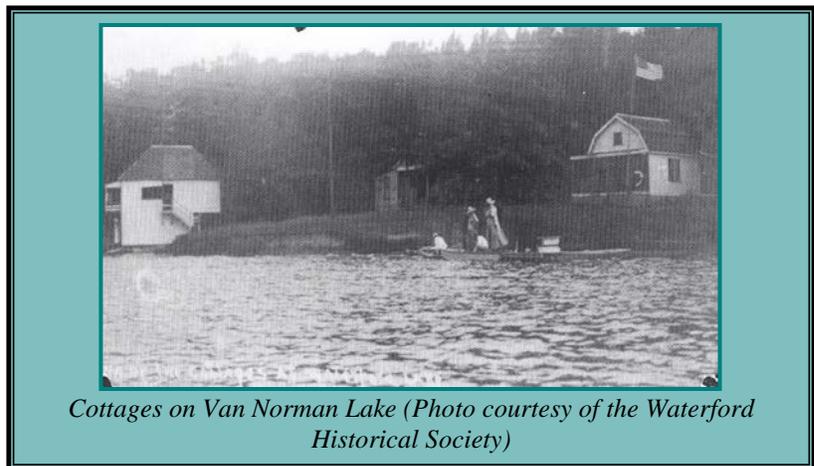
The 1877 History of Oakland County states that “Waterford Township derived its name from the circumstance of its containing so large an area of water surface.”<sup>2</sup> There is still some speculation as to how the Township came to be named Waterford. There was a ford across the Clinton River and some say that it was a result of this crossing that the area was named Waterford. The exact location of the river crossing is not known but it was either in the Drayton Plains area near the old hatchery ponds located at the Drayton Plains Nature Center, or at the point where the Saginaw Trail crossed the river in the Waterford Village area. The area named Drayton Plains was thought to be named after a mill Daniel Windiate owned when he lived in England.



*Alec Seeterlin, father of former Township Supervisor James E. Seeterlin, operating his grain binder on his Lochaven Road Farm (Photo courtesy of the Waterford Historical Society)*

After the initial settlements, people from widely scattered parts of the east and south of Michigan began to migrate to the Waterford area to begin new lives. Many of them traveled the Erie Canal from the eastern states, through Detroit, and into Waterford via the Saginaw Trail and eventually by railroad. After the Civil War, Waterford Township experienced a small growth spurt due to government land grants to war veterans. Large farms predominated throughout the 35 square miles within the Township. The Township's population grew to around 400 people by 1870.

By the 1920s, the population of Detroit and Pontiac had increased dramatically as people migrated to both cities for jobs in the new automobile industry. This migration had a long-term effect on Waterford. Initially, the railroad between Detroit and Pontiac made it possible for the auto workers in Detroit to travel up to the lakes area, use their growing income to purchase land to build summer cottages on the many lakes, and then commute with their families during the summer months. As automobiles became more affordable to workers and reliable road systems were built to handle the growth in traffic, workers found it easier to consider year-round lake living while making a daily commute to their factory jobs. This impact on Waterford can be shown in the doubling of the population every ten years between 1930 and 1960. The population went from 7,942 in 1930; to 12,019 in 1940, to 24,275 in 1950; to 47,008 in 1960.



*Cottages on Van Norman Lake (Photo courtesy of the Waterford Historical Society)*

<sup>2</sup> Durant, *History of Oakland County, 1877*

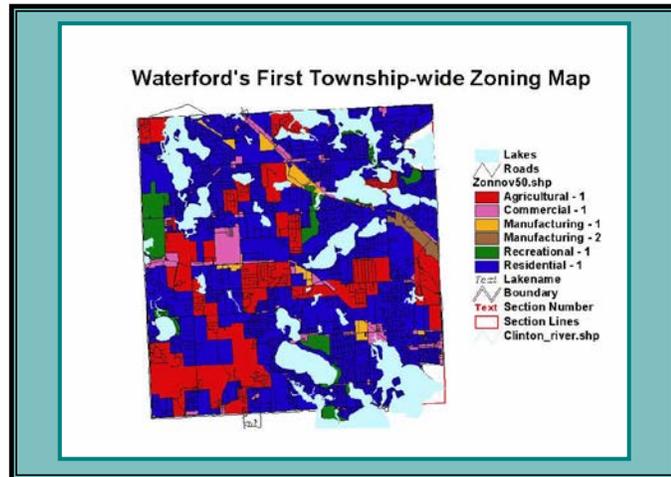
By 1941, the population growth prompted Waterford's elected officials to hold their first zoning effort, which, as with many communities, preceded the adoption of a formal Master Plan. In January 1941, a building zone ordinance was passed for the Elizabeth Lake Estates area. This early zoning effort established four zoning classifications, Residential-1 through-3 and Commercial-1. Each zoning classification set standards for rear, front, and side yard size, height, lot area, building area, and building size. The residential minimum lot sizes ranged from 7,500 square feet to 15,000 square feet. Also in 1941, Waterford opened a new Township Hall at the corner of M-59 and Crescent Lake Road. At the time, this Township complex was large enough to house all of the Township personnel.

It was not until November 1950 that the first Township-wide Zoning Ordinance was passed. Under the 1950 Zoning Ordinance, six zoning district classifications were established, Residential-1, Commercial-1, Manufacturing-1, Manufacturing-2, Agricultural-1, and Recreation-1. In April 1952, Waterford adopted its first Building Code.

In the early 1960s, Waterford continued to strengthen its ability to guide the growth of the community.

The Township decided to take advantage of the additional authority and powers to perform desired governmental duties under the Charter Township Act by becoming a Charter Township in 1961. In 1963, the Township Board established Ordinance Number 45, a new Zoning Ordinance which included eleven (11) zoning districts. There were now provisions for two agricultural districts, two single-family residential districts, two multiple-family residential districts, two industrial districts, two recreational districts, and one parking district. The minimum lot sizes for residential use ranged between 9,100 square feet to 12,000 square feet. There was a one-acre minimum for the dwindling agricultural uses in the Township.

Because of the conversion of Waterford from an agricultural community into a bedroom residential community, by the early 1960s there was commensurate growth in commercial development along the major roads. Between 1958 and 1962, the number of retail establishments nearly doubled, from 256 to 436. Twenty-eight percent of this increase was due to the construction of the Pontiac Mall, which is now known as the Summit Place Mall and soon to be renamed the Festivals of Waterford. In order to attempt to plan for the continuation of this growth, the Township took advantage of the federal Urban Planning Assistance Grant funding to prepare its first Master Plan. Five volumes of background planning studies were published in 1963 and 1964. Waterford's first Comprehensive Development Plan was published in April 1965. The Plan envisioned a community consisting primarily of single-family residential, several areas of low-density multiple housing, four small areas devoted to high-density multiple housing, commercial designations located in the Pontiac Mall area, along Elizabeth Lake Road, and in the Union Lake, Waterford Village, Drayton Plains, and Clintonville areas. Industrial areas were shown in the center of the Township and along Dixie Highway. Research industry and office spaces were clustered around the Airport. This Plan also envisioned road improvements, construction of Township water and sewer systems, a new Township Hall, fire stations, a parks and recreation building, construction of sidewalks, and acquisition of property for cemeteries and parkland. At the time the Plan was approved, there were 805 acres of parkland in the Township with an additional 533 acres proposed for acquisition to meet future recreation needs.



In December 1968, Waterford produced its first and only Capital Improvements Program. The Program identified several capital needs for the growing Township. The existing Township Hall, Police Building, and Fire Stations were deemed inadequate and identified for replacement. There was a need for additional fire stations and library space. A new Water and Sewer building and garage had been built in 1964 on the current Civic Center site, located off of Crescent Lake Road north of M-59, to accommodate the staff and equipment needed to operate and maintain the expansion of the Township's water system. A new library building was also built on the Civic Center site in 1965. A Sanitary Sewer Master Plan was adopted in 1965 to implement a Township-wide sanitary sewer system to protect the hydrological environment from the tremendous growth in septic systems that followed the population and housing expansions.

By 1970, the Township population had grown another 26 percent, to 59,123 persons. The community continued to grow as a bedroom community. Multiple housing did grow to occupy 270 acres of land by the mid 1970s. The commercial corridors continued to develop without the formation of a central business district. Growth appeared to occur in a haphazard fashion. Commercial growth did occur at a slower pace due to the national economic instability occurring throughout the nation and the Detroit metropolitan region during the 1970s. Industrial development remained a minor factor in the Township's economic base, occupying only 205 acres of land compared to 670 acres for commercial. In 1975, an update to the 1965 Master Plan was adopted. This Plan provided an emphasis on several important goals: (1) Preserving the residential character of the community while taking full advantage of Waterford's lakeland geography; (2) Encouraging optimum commercial development along the three major highways; (3) Encouraging more industrial development; (4) Acquiring more parkland; and (5) The development of a thoroughfare plan to allow safe movement of both pedestrians and vehicles. No major changes to the future land use map or to the Zoning Ordinance were made at that time.

Significant funding sources became available for physical developments in Waterford during the 1970s. In 1975, Waterford began receiving annual Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The CDBG funds were used for housing rehabilitation and a variety of public improvement projects such as storm drainage, street paving, and sidewalk installation. CDBG funds were also used to acquire and rehabilitate an historic church in the Waterford Village area, which was established by the Township Board as Waterford's official Historic District in 1977. This facility was then used as office space for the Parks and Recreation Department. Waterford took advantage of new state legislation to establish an Economic Development Corporation, an appointed body able to place full faith and credit behind the issuance of industrial revenue bonds to attract industrial companies to the Township. In the mid-1970s, a Township-wide bikepath plan was developed and a millage passed to fund the implementation of the plan. At the height of the energy crisis in the late 1970s, Waterford received federal energy grant funds that were used to fund the construction of a new three-story Township Hall building in the Civic Center complex. The Township government offices moved to the new building in 1979. The old Township Hall became the main headquarters of the Police and Fire Departments.

Between 1970 and 1980, the Township's population increased an additional 8.7 percent, to 64,250 persons. Multiple housing more than doubled the amount of land it occupied, growing from 270 acres in 1974 to 584 acres in 1989. Besides the tough economic times that began in the 1970s and continued into the mid-1980s, another important factor in the slowing population growth was the reduction in household size that was occurring throughout the country. In Waterford, the average household size declined from 3.50 persons per household in 1970 to 2.86 persons in 1980. In spite of the tough economic times of the early 1980s, commercial land use expanded from 670 acres in the mid 1970s to 1,238 acres at the end of the 1980s. During the same time, industrial land use expanded from 205 acres to 433 acres.

In August 1981, the Township Board adopted Ordinance Number 135, a new Zoning Ordinance to replace the one adopted in 1963. Overall, the format and content of the new Ordinance was nearly identical to the former Ordinance and was meant to consolidate the eighteen years of revisions to the old Ordinance. There were three major changes. First, acknowledging the demise of agricultural Waterford, the two agricultural land use districts were eliminated and replaced by a district named "Suburban Farm", which allowed for large parcel single-family residential with the remnants of agricultural pursuits. Second, an additional residential district for the construction of duplex housing units was established. Finally, an industrial/technical office district was established.

By the late 1980s, vocal groups of citizens expressed concerns for growth and the effects on the natural environment of the Township. These groups called for the Township Board to establish a moratorium on multiple housing and raised concerns about the protection of the Township's wetlands and woodlands. The moratorium failed due to legal issues, but the Township responded by adopting ordinances to regulate wetlands and woodlands.

The efforts for better environmental quality continued into the early 1990s as the Planning Commission developed a new Master Plan. The 1991 Master Plan reflected the environmental awareness of the citizens by including the protection of wetlands and groundwater as priority goals. The Plan, like its predecessor, envisioned a community consisting primarily of single-family residential. There were substantially more areas of multiple housing shown on this Master Plan map. Commercial land use expanded along the length of M-59, Telegraph Road, and Dixie Highway. Industrial remained nearly identical on both maps. Research industry uses nearly disappeared from the map and office land uses were scattered throughout the Township.

The concerns over growth occurred at a time when the Township experienced the lowest rate of population growth in its history. In 1990, there was a 3.8 percent growth in population, to 66,692 persons. During the 1990s, over 38 percent of the developed land was devoted to single family housing. The concerns over growth of multiple housing in the Township appeared to have a negative effect on the continued development in the 1990s since only 97 additional acres were developed as multiple housing. The average household size continued to decline, to 2.59 persons per household. Commercial land use remained relatively static, using approximately 1,200 acres by the end of the 1990s. During the 1990s, industrial land use increased slightly to nearly 500 acres. The Township began the 1990s with the failure to pass a millage necessary to fund the construction of a community recreation center. The decade ended with an expanded central library building and plans for the construction of three new buildings to house the Fire Department, Police Department, and Department of Public Works.

The year 2000 saw the population of the Township increase by 9.7 percent, to 73,150 persons. The average household size declined again, this time to 2.42 persons per household.

A slowdown in the American economy began in late 2007 and ended in the summer of 2009. The 2010 Census showed that the Township's population dropped to 71,707 persons. The average household size dropped to 2.40 persons per household. The median value of all owner-occupied homes in the State fell by nearly 20 percent, to \$123,000. The number of people employed in Michigan declined by 440,000.

In 2014, the Waterford Board of Education closed four (4) elementary schools. Adams, Burt, Sandburg and Waterford Village elementary schools will be closed permanently due to out-migration and the aging of Michigan's population. The number of K-12 students has since declined by 8.98 percent. Since 2010, the Waterford School District has seen a decline of a 1,000 students.

The development phase of the Township is nearing its end, with over 92 percent of the land being developed. As it looks to its future, the Township must now face the challenges of redevelopment, economic development, and quality of life issues. The Planning Commission began the current Master Plan process to guide Waterford to successfully meet these new challenges and continue the progress that has guided Waterford throughout its history.



## CHAPTER 4 - ORGANIZATION OF WATERFORD PLANNING AND ZONING

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### **BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

The Township has a number of official bodies associated with the planning and development of the Township. A brief description of each body and its function in relation to planning is provided.

#### **Township Board**

The Township Board is the legislative body of the Township and consists of the Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer, and four Trustees. All Board members are elected to four-year terms. The Township Supervisor recommends, and the Township Board appoints, individuals to serve on the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Economic Development Corporation, CDBG Citizen Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation Board, and Library Board. By ordinance, the Township Board gives final approval to all plan approval use and hardship planned unit development requests and certain specified special approval uses. By State statute, the Board also approves rezoning requests, Zoning Ordinance amendments, and subdivision plats.

#### **Planning Commission**

In accordance with State zoning and planning enabling statutes, the Township has established a seven (7) member Planning Commission. These members are appointed by the Township Board to serve 3-year staggered terms. One member must be a member of the Township Board. The Planning Commission's primary responsibility is to adopt, oversee, and keep current the Township Master Plan. The Commission reviews and makes recommendations to the Township Board on all subdivision plats, Zoning Ordinance amendments, plan approval use requests, and rezoning requests. The Planning Commission is responsible for considering and granting special approval uses. Final approval of major site plan reviews rests with the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission may be asked by the Township Board to study general ordinances and other issues of concern to the planning and development of the Township.

#### **Zoning Board of Appeals**

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) consists of seven (7) members appointed by the Township Board for 3-year staggered terms. One member must be a member of the Planning Commission and one other member may be a member of the Township Board. The ZBA members serve to interpret provisions of the Zoning Ordinance when requested and determine when variances should be granted due to claims of practical difficulties in complying with non-use property regulations.

#### **Economic Development Corporation**

The Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is a self-governing unit with nine members elected to serve staggered six-year terms. For those companies interested in locating their facilities in Waterford, the EDC is responsible for reviewing applications for low rate financing and other incentives available from the Township. The Waterford Township EDC also acts as the Township's Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. The EDC investigates ways in which to improve the economic climate in Waterford and may provide advice to the Township Board and Planning Commission on economic development matters. Currently, the EDC receives its

funding from fees generated by the sale of industrial revenue bonds. As required by State statute, the annual EDC budget is subject to the approval of the Township Board.

**Parks and Recreation Board**

The Parks and Recreation Board is responsible for assisting the Parks and Recreation Director in establishing long-range planning and goal-setting for the Township's parks and recreation facilities.

**Wetlands Board**

The Planning Commission also serves as the Wetlands Board for the Township. Given the large number of lakes within our community which are connected to the Clinton River corridor, preservation and protection of these natural features is a primary concern. This board reviews applications for projects proposed within protected wetland areas.

**Waterford Township Library Board**

The Waterford Township Library Board is responsible for assisting the Library Director in establishing long-range planning and goal setting for the Township library facilities.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

The Township functions pertaining to zoning, planning, community development, and economic development are spread among a number of the elected and appointed officials, as well as township staff. Administrative and coordination functions are divided as follows.

### **Supervisor**

As the chief administrative official, all departments responsible for Township zoning, planning, community development, and economic development report to the Supervisor. The Supervisor selects board and commission candidates for appointment by the Township Board; responds to general questions and concerns from the public; and represents the Township in various county and regional functions. The Supervisor has historically been a voting member of the Economic Development Corporation.

### **Clerk**

Keeps official records for the Township Board; keeps the official Ordinance Book which contains all of the duly adopted ordinances of the Township; processes approved rezoning requests to Oakland County; and responds to general questions from public. All legal notices for the Township are published in the Clerk's name.

### **Treasurer**

Receives and takes charge of all Community Development Block Grant and Economic Development Corporation funds and responds to general questions from the public.

### **Development Services Director**

Responsible for the implementation and daily administration of all planning, zoning, community development, economic development and code enforcement activities. Acts as the liaison between the Township, citizens, news media, other governmental agencies, developers, and municipal professionals regarding Development Services Department issues. Prepares and presents annual budget requests, administers departmental budget, and ensures that the authorized budgetary procedure is properly used. Responds to development related violation inquiries from residents, contractors and other parties. Keeps abreast of modern engineering practices and changes in regulations through continued education and professional growth. Reviews plans and blueprints for new commercial, residential, and municipal developments. Ensures compliance with Township codes, and professional engineering standards relating to water, sewer, grading, drainage, public safety and other issues. Approves permits as warranted. Administers the Community Development Block Grant Program. Oversees staff processing of site plans, rezoning and plan approval use applications, subdivisions, site condominiums, and special land use applications. Responds to questions from applicants and the public regarding the Township's planning and development processes.

### **Superintendent of Building Division**

Manages and directs the activities of the Building Division to ensure projects are constructed in accordance with applicable laws, codes, ordinances and accepted practices. Responds to building related violation inquiries from residents, contractors and other parties. Reviews residential and commercial building plans and blueprints. Ensures compliance with Township codes and professional building standards relating to framing, footings, electrical, plumbing, fire protection, accessibility and other related issues. Oversees the building construction and inspection process of new and existing buildings, and other construction projects. Oversees the registration process and license approval for contractors interested in working within the Township. Oversees the Dangerous Building processes and hearings. Keeps abreast of changing regulations and policies through continued education and professional growth.

- **Superintendent of Planning and Zoning Division**

Manages and directs the activities of the Planning and Zoning division to ensure projects within the Township are constructed in accordance with applicable laws, codes, ordinances and accepted practices. Administers the Township's site plan review process, the Township's lot/acreage land division review process and the Township's subdivision and condominium review process. Coordinates development projects with consulting engineers, developers, architects, builders and regulatory agencies. Oversees preparation of agendas and minutes of Planning Commission meetings and Economic Development Corporation (EDC) meetings along with reviewing materials to be included in the public record. Responds to zoning related violation inquiries from residents, contractors, and other parties. Coordinates work activities with other departments and outside agencies when projects require joint efforts. Oversees and directs the Township's code enforcement activities.

The Township also employs engineering, planning, and legal services on a consulting basis to achieve its planning and development goals.

**Information Systems Director**

Responsible for developing, maintaining, and enhancing the electronic information infrastructure used to process, disseminate, and store the Township's planning and zoning documents. This infrastructure includes the Township-wide computer network, geographic information system, internet web site, and electronic document management system. Provides guidance and advice on improvements to departmental electronic information processing and storage. Oversees information systems components to ensure consistency, reliability, and effective service to the departments and citizens.

**GIS Manager**

Responsible for creating, managing and implementing a Township-wide Geographic Information System (GIS), a digital database that is linked to real geographic areas within Waterford. Works with various departments to identify GIS needs and potential applications. Oversees the research and collection of information to build GIS information layers. Oversees GIS staff in the compilation and entry of data, and responds to requests for GIS training and output.



## CHAPTER 9 – IMPLEMENTATION

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The Planning Commission initiated the current master planning process with the intent to involve citizens in the development of a dynamic Master Plan. No matter how involved the citizens were, the vitality gained through its development will be lost unless the Master Plan is actively implemented. Therefore, once adopted, implementation must involve citizen commitment and be pursued aggressively in order to achieve the Master Plan goals and objectives.

This chapter establishes the foundation for implementing the Master Plan. In addition to the Planning Commission, the responsibility for ensuring that the Master Plan is implemented will largely rest with the Township Board, other boards and commissions established by the Township Board, and the administrative positions described in Chapter 4 of this document. The success of the Master Plan’s implementation will rest upon the conscious efforts of the various members of the Township government to actively incorporate the implementation of Master Plan goals and objectives into all Township actions. The implementation process consists of the following components: the Future Land Use Plan described in Chapter 8, implementation goals, fiscal tools, legislative policy-making, administration and enforcement, citizen education and promotion, and evaluation. The following provides a description of the essential components of Waterford’s Master Plan implementation process.

### IMPLEMENTATION GOALS

The goals and objectives developed by the Master Plan Subcommittees and described in Chapter 7 were reviewed and analyzed by the Planning Commission to determine the major themes. Seven major themes were found and identified as the Master Plan Goals to be achieved during the next twenty years. Using the Subcommittees’ work, objectives were established for each of the seven goals. Action strategies were then developed for each objective. These Master Plan goals, objectives and strategies provide the analytical structure from general concept to specific action. Each goal statement establishes an outcome for achieving an ideal community. The objectives establish the route to accomplishing the goal, and each set of strategies are action items intended to achieve the objectives. The goals, objectives, and strategies are listed in random order. During the life of this Master Plan, the following is the detailed list of the goals, objectives, and strategies that Waterford intends to implement along with the Future Land Use Plan outlined in Chapter 8.

**GOAL ONE**  
**TO MAINTAIN, IMPROVE, AND ENHANCE CAPITAL**  
**INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SAFETY FOR THE HEALTH,**  
**SAFETY, AND WELFARE OF WATERFORD CITIZENS**

**Objective 1-1**  
**Maintain and Enhance Existing Level of Fire Protection**  
**and Emergency Medical Services**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 1-1**

- a. Continue the maintenance, update, and effective fire-fighting coverage of Township fire hydrants.
- b. Ensure sufficient facilities, staffing, equipment, and training levels for effective and prompt fire-fighting and EMS coverage of all areas in and served by the Township.
- c. Investigate and adopt, when economically feasible, new technologies which enhance and expand fire-fighting, prevention, detection, and emergency medical response capabilities.
- d. Maintain and enhance the use of the Township GIS for analysis of fire prevention, fire-fighting, and EMS capabilities.
- e. Provide continuing education and training in fire safety and prevention, first aid, and CPR to all citizens.
- f. Advocate the installation of affordable medical and fire safety technologies in all homes and workplaces.
- g. Maintain participation in county-wide disaster and emergency operations plans for effective handling of and coordinated responses to potential natural and man-made disasters.
- h. Require effective fire safety and prevention systems in all development and redevelopment efforts.

**Objective 1-2**  
**Maintain and Enhance Existing Level of Water and Sewer Services**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 1-2**

- a. Ensure sufficient facilities, staffing, equipment, and training levels for the safe and effective operation and maintenance of the Township's water and sewer systems.
- b. Utilize the Township capital improvement planning process to plan for necessary water and sewer system capacity improvements.
- c. Utilize the Township capital improvement planning process to plan for necessary preventative water and sewer line maintenance and replacement.
- d. Maintain and enhance the use of the Township GIS and other appropriate electronic information systems for the effective operation, analysis, and capital maintenance tracking of the Township water and sewer systems.
- e. Identify and implement economically feasible new technologies which enhance and expand efficient, effective, safe, and healthy water and sewer systems.
- f. Promote and enforce the installation of water line loop systems.

- g. Implement and enforce ordinances and policy measures to protect and enhance the environmental quality of the Township's water supply.

**Objective 1-3**  
**Review the Storm Drainage System**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 1-3**

- a. Develop a master storm water management plan in accordance with State of Michigan and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidelines and the existing facilities and future storm drainage capacity needs of the Township.
- b. Consider, as necessary to compliance with State of Michigan and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requirements, the feasibility of creating and implementing an administrative structure and funding authority which provides an effective unified approach to managing, maintaining, and improving the storm drainage system within the Township.
- c. Maintain and enhance the use of the Township GIS and other appropriate electronic information systems to map and analyze all storm drainage systems within the Township.
- d. Enforce effective policies and best management practices wherever applicable to ensure the maintenance, capacity, and quality of the storm drainage system with the assistance and support of all governmental agencies responsible for stormwater management in the Township.
- e. Ensure that all new development and redevelopment projects are thoroughly evaluated and constructed to accommodate and not overburden the storm drainage system capacity within the Township along with encouraging improvements to the system capacity.
- f. Investigate and adopt the most effective means of enforcing updated engineering storm water discharge standards.
- g. Require the utilization of best management practices, including requirements for detention/retention, for new development and redevelopment projects within Waterford.

**Objective 1-4**  
**Support the Enhancement of the Power and Communication**  
**Utilities Infrastructure within the Township**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 1-4**

- a. Promote the conversion of overhead utility wires to underground lines.
- b. Require that utility and communication companies to demonstrate the capacity to provide modernized, full and uninterrupted service for proposed land uses.
- c. Map in GIS the location and capacity of all utility lines.
- d. Develop a map of prioritized areas where existing overhead utilities should be installed underground.
- e. Develop a map of all communication lines.

**Objective 1-5**  
**Maintain and Enhance Existing Level of Police Protection**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 1-5**

- a. Ensure sufficient facilities, staffing, equipment, and training levels for effective and prompt police protection and safety coverage of all areas of the Township.
- b. Investigate and adopt, when economically feasible, new technologies that enhance and expand crime prevention, detection, and public safety.
- c. Maintain and enhance the use of the Township GIS for analysis of crime prevention, detection, and solution.
- d. Make education and training in public safety available to Township residents.

**Objective 1-6**  
**Improve and Enhance the Township's Capital Facilities and Infrastructure Planning**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 1-6**

- a. Establish an annual capital improvement planning process to implement the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act for a capital improvements program to be prepared, showing the priority of public structures and improvements that will be needed or desirable and can be undertaken in a 6-year period and which is based on lists, plans, and cost estimates obtained from Township Departments for such capital improvements and the time frame within which those improvements should be made.
- b. Develop capital improvement planning strategies to provide guidance to the Township Board on accomplishing Master Plan Goals.
- c. Establish and maintain a database containing information on the available public infrastructure (water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, etc.) capacities within the Township to assist Township staff in making decisions on proposed land uses.

**GOAL TWO**  
**TO IMPROVE AND ENHANCE THE TRANSPORTATION**  
**NETWORK WITHIN WATERFORD**

**Objective 2-1**  
**Maintain and Encourage Road Improvements Within Waterford Township**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 2-1**

- a. Continue to improve and expand the proactive and effective partnership between the Township and the public road agencies to achieve quality public road improvements, maintenance, traffic flow, and safety in Waterford Township.

- b. Develop a Waterford Township Transportation Plan to identify road maintenance and improvement priorities to be considered in Township decisions necessary to achieve the Master Plan Goals.
- c. Develop and maintain a road needs review process as part of the Waterford Township Transportation Plan.
- d. Incorporate priority road maintenance and improvements into the capital improvements program in accordance with Objective 1-6.
- e. Require dedication of road right-of-way in connection as a condition of approval for development and redevelopment projects as necessary to provide a right-of-way width consistent with the Road Commission of Oakland County Master Right-of-Way Plan.

**Objective 2-2**  
**Encourage North-South Mobility in Waterford Township**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 2-2**

- a. Explore, facilitate, and encourage feasible realignment, extensions, widening, and other improvements of existing roads to eliminate or reduce safety hazards and improve traffic flow.
- b. Identify and incorporate in the Transportation Plan, unimproved sections of the primary road network where traffic safety or flow could be improved by paving or other improvements.
- c. Identify and pursue non-Township funding sources for primary road network improvements.

**Objective 2-3**  
**Diversify Transportation Options**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 2-3**

- a. Encourage and facilitate dependable and safe transportation options for prospective users who are housebound, such as senior and disabled citizens.
- b. Assess public transportation needs for Waterford Township.
- c. Develop and implement policies and programs to allow that residents and visitors to travel freely in Waterford without unnecessary delays by both motorized and non-motorized modes of transportation.
- d. Promote an advisory committee consisting of local business owners, transportation officials, and residents, to review and recommend public transportation options for Waterford residents.

**Objective 2-4**  
**Improve Traffic Safety**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 2-4**

- a. Assist road agencies through the use of GIS and other analytical tools to prioritize, develop, and fund plans and programs to eliminate existing traffic hazards and conflicts between different modes of transportation.

- b. Identify key intersections for design improvements to increase transportation efficiency within the Township.
- c. Develop and implement traffic impact and access management standards in ordinance requirements and policies for new development and redevelopment projects.
- d. Promote efforts to partner with traffic safety organizations and utilize all Township communication resources to educate citizens on traffic safety.
- e. Actively enforce traffic safety laws.

**Objective 2-5**  
**Enhance the Safety of the Waterford Village Historic District**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 2-5**

- a. Research, develop, and implement traffic calming and walkability measures in and adjacent to the District (*Please refer to Map 10 on Page 7-47 in Chapter 7 for the location of the District*).
- b. Evaluate, promote, and implement methods that slow down and discourage through traffic while maintaining continuous access for residents and public safety personnel.
- c. Develop and implement an active role for the Township’s Historic District Commission in enhancing and promoting transportation safety within the District.

**GOAL THREE**  
**TO ENHANCE THE WALKABILITY OF WATERFORD**

**Objective 3-1**  
**Maintain, Expand and Improve Safety Paths**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 3-1**

- a. Develop, identify and pursue sources of funding and implement a master safety path construction and maintenance plan, incorporating priority projects into the Township’s Capital Improvements Plan.
- b. Construct connections between existing segments of safety paths.
- c. Facilitate and encourage connection of all Waterford parks and schools to the safety path system.
- d. Install and maintain safety path links between neighborhood nodes (*Please refer to Figure 8-10 on Page 8-22 in Chapter 8 for the location of the nodes*).
- e. Maintain existing segments of safety paths.
- f. Inventory existing safety paths to determine Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and provide for required ADA compliance in any upgrades or repairs.
- g. Establish and utilize a GIS database for evaluating the condition of the existing safety path system components in Waterford Township based on an objective scoring criteria.
- h. Promote efforts to utilize all Township communication resources to educate citizens on the benefits of walking using non-motorized paths.

## **Objective 3-2**

### **Develop and Promote a Waterford Riverwalk Pedestrian Pathway**

#### **Strategies to Achieve Objective 3-2**

- a. Complete and promote implementation of a Riverwalk Master Plan for safety paths and other improvements for the area from the Waterford Towne Center area to the Drayton Plains Nature Center, to provide access to and encourage enjoyment of the Clinton River.
- b. Pursue and apply for alternative funding sources, whenever possible, to complete the remaining segments of the Riverwalk Master Plan.
- c. Explore opportunities to link the Waterford Riverwalk system to safety path systems in adjacent communities.
- d. Incorporate Riverwalk project components in the Capital Improvements Plan.

## **GOAL FOUR**

### **TO CREATE AN ECONOMIC CLIMATE CONDUCIVE TO THE ATTRACTION, RETENTION, AND EXPANSION OF BUSINESS WITHIN WATERFORD**

## **Objective 4-1**

### **Develop and Utilize Township Capacity for Proactive Economic Development**

#### **Strategies to Achieve Objective 4-1**

- a. Township staff to undertake and facilitate economic development activities and programs.
- b. Develop and utilize printed and electronic information to guide citizens and businesses through the Township's development processes.
- c. Encourage Township staff to analyze, and revise when necessary, the current procedures and policies involving services to the Waterford business and development community for effectiveness, efficiency, and consistency with the Master Plan goals and objectives.
- d. Develop, promote, and implement conceptual plans for areas within the Township to focus redevelopment efforts.
- e. Explore and aggressively utilize all available economic development, planning, and analysis tools to actively promote business retention and the relocation of new businesses and technology-based companies to Waterford.
- f. Develop cooperative partnerships, use flexible planning and zoning tools, and actively utilize economic development tools to ensure the continued redevelopment and economic viability of the regional destinations located in the Township.
- g. Encourage and promote the provision of safe, high-speed, and cost-effective modern communication and information systems for use by Waterford businesses.
- h. Establish a rational tax abatement incentive policy.

**Objective 4-2**  
**Market Waterford Township as a Destination for Business Activities**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 4-2**

- a. Identify and establish partnerships with other governmental agencies and business organizations to actively promote and market Waterford as a prime business location.
- b. Develop and disseminate marketing materials promoting Waterford Township utilizing all available media.
- c. Promote Waterford as a “One Stop Ready” community, a member of Automation Alley, home of the Oakland County International Airport, and other notable points of interest.

**Objective 4-3**  
**Educate and Inform All Township Boards, Commissions, Committees,  
and Authorities on Economic Development Tools and Efforts**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 4-3**

- a. Research, develop, and implement ongoing processes to keep the Township Board and all appointed committees involved with economic development fully informed on the various economic tools and funding resources available to Waterford Township.
- b. Provide staff training and development to gain knowledge and awareness of current economic development tools, funding sources, best practices, and innovative techniques and programs.

**Objective 4-4**  
**Promote furthering the Physical Appearance and Functional Character  
of the Township’s Commercial Corridors**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 4-4**

- a. Develop and implement ordinances, policies, and planning tools to assist with the aesthetic, social and functional improvement of the Township’s commercial corridors.
- b. Investigate and, if appropriate, create a Downtown Development Authority to assist in the redevelopment and improvement of the commercial corridors.
- c. Develop, implement, and promote traffic calming and access management regulations and policies as a means of enhancing the commercial corridors.
- d. Pursue and maintain cooperative relationships with the public road agencies to investigate, plan, and construct aesthetic and functional improvements of the Township’s commercial corridors.
- e. Promote commercial corridor infrastructure for both motorized and non-motorized transportation.
- f. Develop partnerships with governmental agencies, business organizations, and business owners to improve the aesthetic, social and functional qualities of the Township gateways and commercial corridors.
- g. Establish and support the Corridor Improvement Authority created by Township Ordinance in the exercise of its powers to correct and prevent deterioration, promote economic growth, development and redevelopment, and enhance the commercial corridor development areas described in the Ordinance.

- h. Identify priority corridor and gateway improvements for possible incorporation into the Capital Improvements Plan.

**GOAL FIVE**  
**TO INCREASE AND IMPROVE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**  
**FOR WATERFORD CITIZENS**

**Objective 5-1**  
**Develop, Construct, and Maintain in One Central Location**  
**a Full-Scale Community Center to Serve All Age Groups**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 5-1**

- a. Propose and promote a phased plan of development and funding to create a dynamic recreation center that will be supported by the citizens and serve the community for the foreseeable future.
- b. Provide indoor/outdoor swimming facilities to meet the community's recreation, fitness, therapeutic, and scholastic swim needs.
- c. Provide a playground area for younger children.
- d. Secure public input on all other recreational, fitness, and service facilities that would be supported by Township residents as part of a new community center.
- e. Research and analyze all potential funding sources and options.

**Objective 5-2**  
**Promote Recreational Utilization of the Clinton River**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 5-2**

- a. Educate the community about the presence, importance, and threats to the Clinton River.
- b. Sponsor and promote projects, programs, and annual events to clean up, restore, preserve, and protect the Township's river resources.
- c. Sponsor and promote Clinton River educational and recreational projects, and programs such as canoeing, kayaking, and fishing.
- d. Work with the Clinton River Watershed Council to sponsor an adopt-a-river program by businesses and service organizations for different segments of the river.
- e. Identify and recognize the importance and potential uses of or related to the Clinton River in the Riverwalk Master Plan described in Objective 3-2.
- f. Partner with the local schools in developing curriculum centered on the importance and ecological fragility of the Clinton River.

**Objective 5-3**  
**Promote Increased Access and Use of Existing Parks**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 5-3**

- a. Provide and maintain effective safety path access to all Township parks.
- b. Develop and implement a playground equipment maintenance and improvement schedule to ensure child safety and modernized facilities.
- c. Explore opportunities for creating dog parks, or using a portion of an existing park for the purpose of developing and maintaining pet run areas.
- d. Conduct periodic studies and analyses of existing parks' utilization to assess use patterns and evaluate implementation of other recreational uses.
- e. Create better access to, and promote utilization of, Elizabeth Lake Woods, including trails and interpretive observation areas.
- f. Develop and maintain directional signage to the parks and identification signage for natural features, river and stream crossings, and watershed boundaries.
- g. Ensure that the area currently occupied by the Drayton Plains Nature Center is linked to the Waterford Riverwalk system.
- h. Preserve and protect the area currently occupied by the Drayton Plains Nature Center as a nature center.
- i. Include passive recreation areas and activities in the Recreation Plan.
- j. Develop and disseminate marketing materials promoting Waterford Township Parks utilizing all appropriate media.

**Objective 5-4**  
**Encourage Playground Areas in Neighborhoods**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 5-4**

- a. Investigate opportunities for establishing and maintaining small playground or picnic areas within, or adjacent to, neighborhoods.
- b. As necessary, revise and strengthen Zoning Ordinance requirements for the establishment and maintenance of neighborhood park areas within new developments.
- c. Investigate the development of a neighborhood enhancement grant program that utilizes state and federal funding sources to enable neighborhood associations to create neighborhood parks.

**Objective 5-5**  
**Encourage Diverse Recreation Opportunities for Waterford Citizens**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 5-5**

- a. Provide for staff training and development to gain knowledge and awareness of innovative recreational facilities and programs.
- b. Research and analyze deficiencies in the provision of recreation services within the Township to assess the feasibility of establishing and funding new facilities and programs.
- c. Promote establishment of innovative and diverse recreational facilities and programs.

**GOAL SIX**  
**TO ENSURE AND ENFORCE LAND USE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES**  
**THAT ARE SENSITIVE TO WATERFORD'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

**Objective 6-1**  
**Promote Open Space Developments**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 6-1**

- a. Research and identify possible revisions to the Township ordinances which provide tools for housing developments that preserve substantial areas of open space and reasonable and flexible requirements, such as measured adjustments in zoning bulk regulations.
- b. Encourage and promote the preservation of some uplands for common use as a requirement in open space and cluster developments.
- c. Encourage and promote private preservation of open space through conservation easements, dedications, and stewardship programs.
- d. Encourage and preserve natural resource corridor links between natural areas, recreation areas, parklands, and schools.
- e. Research, evaluate, implement, and enforce revisions to the Zoning Ordinance to require that within new housing developments, a sufficient amount of property be dedicated for quality of life features such as parks, open space, natural areas, and native landscaping.

**Objective 6-2**  
**Ensure All Development Efforts Respect, Preserve,**  
**and Protect Waterford's Natural Characteristics and Constraints**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 6-3**

- a. Continue the enforcement of rational wetland protection to, preserve wetlands in their natural state as a high priority, protect water quality, stabilize stormwater runoff, recharge groundwater, and provide fish and wildlife habitat.
- b. Enforce ordinance requirements for practical woodlands conservation to protect water and soil quality, improve air quality, buffer noise, moderate climate hazards, preserve wildlife diversity and habitats, and enhance community aesthetics.
- c. Promote, inform, and encourage citizens on the use of native plant material to minimize the hazardous effects of invasive species.
- d. Encourage preservation of natural contours and minimize mass grading alterations.
- e. Require the preservation and protection of groundwater recharge areas as open space or low density uses to retain as much permeable surface and water holding characteristics as possible.
- f. Promote and enforce the protection of groundwater recharge areas from pollution through the regulation of land uses which may discharge wastes into the hydrological cycle.
- g. Promote the preservation of natural vegetation and topographical features along stream corridors and waterways by restricting these areas to uses offering little danger of topographical disturbance, water quality degradation, stream channel alteration, runoff or sedimentation increase.

- h. Utilize appropriate communication methods to educate the community on the care and use of herbicide and fertilizer sprays to preserve and protect stream corridors, waterways, and the natural drainage and runoff pattern associated with them.
- i. Develop and maintain natural area inventories that include assessments for quality, location, health, and species, provided by other governmental agencies.
- j. Preserve, and protect the natural areas essential to maintaining Waterford's unique heritage and character, which provide a diverse high-quality wildlife habitat.
- k. Advocate the establishment of a prohibited planting materials list based upon invasiveness and ecological impacts.
- l. Maintain strict enforcement of requirements for soil and sedimentation control during development.
- m. Actively work with responsible agencies to maintain an accurate list of leaking underground storage sites.
- n. Develop and utilize a Township Open Space and Natural Area Management Plan to assist in evaluating future rezoning and site plan approvals as well as potential open space acquisition.

**GOAL SEVEN**  
**TO RETAIN, ENHANCE, AND PROMOTE WATERFORD'S**  
**UNIQUE CHARACTER, SENSE OF COMMUNITY, AND IDENTITY**

**Objective 7-1**  
**Expand, Enhance, and Improve the Aesthetics and Historic Preservation**  
**of the Waterford Village Historic District**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 7-1**

- a. Research and plan for the installation of decorative lighting, signage, and barrier-free safety paths along District streets (*Please refer to Map 10 on Page 7-47 in Chapter 7 for the location of the District*).
- b. Inventory and evaluate existing vacant land in the District and evaluate and recommend adaptive reuse of existing structures that will enhance the District as a community destination.
- c. Research, evaluate, and improve the regulatory powers and effectiveness of the Township's Historic District Ordinance.
- d. Explore the expansion of the original District boundaries by encouraging properties to join the Historic District.
- e. Explore, develop, and utilize stable funding sources and financing tools for restoration, improvement, and small business development in the District.
- f. Develop and implement ongoing communication with District property owners to inform them of District regulations and expectations.
- g. Develop, promote, and implement a conceptual Historic District area plan to focus and guide redevelopment efforts.

**Objective 7-2**  
**Plan and Encourage Development of Neighborhood Nodes**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 7-2**

- a. Develop, promote, and implement a conceptual plan for each area identified in the Master Plan as a neighborhood node to focus and guide development and redevelopment efforts.
- b. Develop, promote, and maintain the Township Civic Center area as a community gathering place.

**Objective 7-3**  
**Establish and Enforce a High Standard for the Physical Condition of the Township Housing Stock**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 7-3**

- a. Revise and enforce Township ordinances as necessary to require inspections of rental housing, property maintenance code enforcement, and elimination of blighting effects and influences.
- b. Research, evaluate, and revise the Zoning Ordinance to include flexible planning and zoning tools, and requirements which encourage and promote quality redevelopment of the Township's existing housing stock.

**Objective 7-4**  
**Assist Service Organizations to Expand and Market Programs and Services**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 7-4**

- a. Develop and implement an information gathering and dissemination process using appropriate media to inform new and current Waterford residents of area community services.
- b. Advocate the elimination of public service duplications of effort, promote consolidated and partnering public service efforts, and work to eliminate service gaps.
- c. Develop and maintain a current database of community service organizations and the services they offer within Waterford Township.
- d. Publicize and promote volunteer opportunities and efforts using appropriate media.

**Objective 7-5**  
**Strengthen Communication Partnerships between the Township and Governmental Agencies, the Waterford School District, Oakland Community College, Private Schools, and Service Organizations**

**Strategies to Achieve Objective 7-5**

- a. Implement dedication of Township staff, website, and cable resources to the expansion of community communication efforts.

- b. Develop and maintain partnerships between the Township, Waterford School District, Oakland Community College, the business community, and community agencies to promote the Waterford community and the quality of life for citizens and visitors, utilizing appropriate media.
- c. Develop and maintain partnerships between the Township, Waterford School District, Oakland Community College, the business community, and community agencies to implement cooperative cultural planning efforts that will encourage and expand cultural programs and services in Waterford.
- d. Continue and expand proactive communication and information exchange between the Township, Waterford School District, and Oakland Community College to facilitate and achieve common goals.
- e. Continue and expand proactive communication and information exchange between the Township and Oakland County International Airport to facilitate airport land use issues and noise study implementation.
- f. Research, develop, and implement partnership programs between the Township, Waterford School District and/or Oakland Community College to educate students about importance of local government.

**FISCAL TOOLS** Waterford Township can increase the effectiveness of its Master Plan implementation efforts by reasonable utilization of available financing tools. The financing of all Township activities is determined through the annual budget process based on available revenues from property taxes, state revenue sharing, fees, the annual federal Community Development Block Grant program, federal, state, county, or foundation grants, and other sources. Providing for a prioritized implementation of the Master Plan goals and objectives as part of the annual budget process will be a key to realizing those goals and objectives over time.

The Township has also established an Economic Development Corporation and Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, has provided for a Corridor Improvement Authority, and has established Commercial Rehabilitation and Industrial Development Districts for parts of the Township, to assist with economic development policy and to finance projects which meet the established criteria. There may be other existing or future legislation that provides the Township with similar tools, all of which should be reviewed and considered as related to furthering the goals and objectives of this Master Plan. The adoption of a rational tax abatement policy, use of the Township's special assessment authority, and the selling of municipal bonds are additional tools that could be used to facilitate or fund activities to consistent with Master Plan Goals and objectives in appropriate situations.

**LEGISLATIVE POLICY-MAKING** The Township can also increase the fiscal effectiveness of the Master Plan implementation through strategic planning and the active participation by the Township Board and Departments in the annual capital improvements planning process the Planning Commission is responsible for under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act as described in Objective 1-6, the results of which could be considered in determining expenditures as part of the annual budget process

**ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT** The Township Board will play a critical role in the implementation of the Master Plan. It is recommended that the Township Board actively promote the Master Plan by public communications, working with the Planning Commission, and providing the funding necessary to implement the Master Plan goals, objectives, and strategy items.

In addition to following all Master Plan implementation policies established by the Township Board, the Development Services Department staff should facilitate Master Plan implementation by educating all Township personnel about the Master Plan as a Township-wide policy document that needs to be actively implemented and promoted. The Development Services staff should also actively involve other departments in Master Plan implementation efforts, including program and project development. Township departments should also focus on reviewing and revising department procedures and actions to ensure Master Plan implementation. The review and development of proposed ordinances necessary to implement the Master Plan is another important task that the Township administrative departments need to pursue. Finally, each department should actively enforce the laws, policies, and procedures established to accomplish Master Plan goals and objectives.

It is essential that ongoing education efforts be undertaken to ensure that citizens are aware of support Master Plan implementation, to educate citizens on the Master Plan, and promote Master Plan goals and objectives. An active planning education program should be promoted and established as part of the public school curriculum.

The Development Services Department should take an active role in utilizing appropriate media, such as the Township website, cable, printed brochures, community calendars, and new resident packets.

**EVALUATION** Although the Michigan Planning Enabling Act calls for a Planning Commission review at least every five (5) years to determine whether to commence the procedure to amend this Master Plan or adopt a new master plan, on at least an annual basis, the Planning Commission will review the progress toward implementation of the Master Plan and evaluate whether any adjustments to the implementation process or amendments of the Master Plan are or may be appropriate under an evaluation process that may include an ongoing strategic planning process, progress reports, proposed or desired timelines for accomplishing the strategy items, and staff reports on areas of concern identified by the Planning Commission.