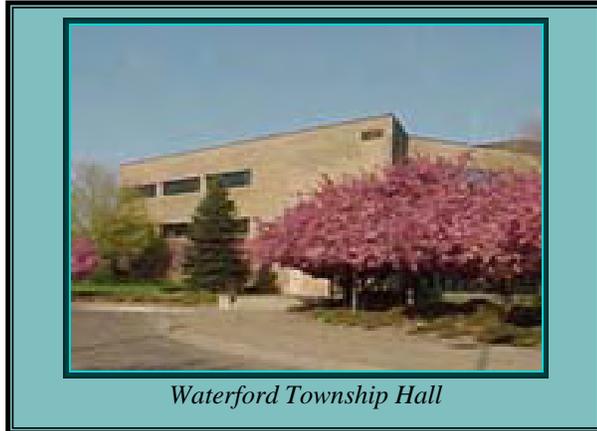




CHAPTER 2 – INTRODUCTION

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) Section 6 of the Act, which 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.