

CHAPTER 7 - Implementation

A. Introduction

This chapter of the plan is intended to serve as a road map to the future of the village. It identifies the activities necessary to begin the implementation of the goals and policies in this plan. However, just as the plan itself is not intended to be a static document, these implementation strategies are the best estimate at this time of how to bring the plan to fruition. Over time, the village may discover new approaches and opportunities that may alter this implementation plan. Changes to the specific strategies are to be expected, however, the village should be careful when making changes that are in direct conflict with the goals and policies of the plan.

B. Implementation Tools

Tools to implement the master plan generally fall into the following categories.

- Land use regulations derived from police powers, including the Zoning Ordinance, land division ordinance, and subdivision control ordinance.
- Capital improvement programs derived from budgetary powers.
- Programs or additional studies implemented or conducted by the Planning Commission, Village Council, DDA or others.

Zoning Ordinance

The village Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1992. Significant changes have occurred to zoning law and practice since then. The Preliminary Zoning Ordinance Technical Analysis included as Appendix E to this report identifies some issues that a Zoning Ordinance update should address. In addition, this plan recommends changes to address issues identified, including the following

- Review existing Zoning Ordinance regulations, such as minimum lot size, maximum lot coverage or minimum setback that would prevent development consistent with the character of the village.
- Establish standards that require visual buffering of open storage, waste containers, and similar uses from adjacent residences and the public roadway.
- Allow the development of apartments on the second floor of businesses.
- Create a new mixed-use zoning district that allows for a mix of commercial and residential uses.
- Establish standards for pedestrian walkways, traffic management, natural feature protection, and soil suitability as part of the site plan review process. These standards should be consistent with standards in any utility, subdivision, or similar ordinances.

Relationship Between Future Land Use Classifications and Zoning Districts	
Future Land Use Plan	Zoning District
Low-Density Single-Family Residential	R-1 – Low-Density Single-Family Residential
Medium-Density Single-Family Residential	R-2 – Single-Family Residential
Mobile Home Park	MH-Mobile Home Park District
Multi-family	M – Multi-Family Residential
	Office (District proposed to be deleted and use allowed in C and MXD districts)
Downtown Commercial	C – Commercial
Mixed-Use	MXD – Mixed Use (proposed district)
Industrial	I – Industrial
Institutional/Recreational	PI – Public/Institutional (district proposed to be deleted and uses allowed in R-1 and R-2 districts)

There are also proposed changes to the zoning map. In most cases, the Future Land Use Plan is consistent with the current Zoning Ordinance. Where a difference occurs because the plan assumes a change in use over time, the intention is normally for that change to be implemented by the property owner when they desire to do so. In a few circumstances, the village may determine it is in the public’s best interest to initiate a change.

Two changes to the future land use map may be more appropriately addressed by the village either through a mass rezoning or as part of a new zoning ordinance/map. The first is the elimination of the Public/Institutional zoning district. Property would be rezoned R-1 Low–Density Single-Family Residential or R-2 Single-Family Residential and district text would be revised to add any public or institutional uses not already authorized.

The second change would be the rezoning of property surrounding the downtown to a new mixed-use district along with a text amendment creating the new zoning district.

A key point to remember is that the future land use plan is a long-range blueprint; implementation is expected, but gradually in response to needs, conditions and availability of infrastructure.

Subdivision, Land Division and Condominium Ordinances

In the State of Michigan there are three primary ways to divide land: through the subdivision process outlined in the Land Division Act; through the land division process outlined in the Land Division Act; or through the Condominium process authorized in the Condominium Act, “site condos.” Each of these provisions requires a community to adopt local regulations to regulate these property division procedures. The Master Plan recommends that the village adopt a Land Division and Subdivision Control Ordinance and continue to regulate “site condos” through the Zoning Ordinance. Infrastructure and design standards should be as uniform as permitted so that one form of division does not have any unnecessary advantage over another. In addition, the plan recommends that these infrastructure and design standards incorporate the following.

- Minimize “dead-end” mains and take opportunities to “loop” existing lines.
- Require all new development to connect to the sewer system, if the sewer is available.
- Require connection of new local streets to existing street networks and minimize cul-de-sacs.
- Require sidewalks and other pedestrian improvements.

Capital Improvement Plan

A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a multi-year program that lists recommended public improvements, their timing, estimated costs and funding. Improvements can include infrastructure (streets, bikeways, sidewalks, sanitary sewers, water lines, storm sewers, and drainage) and community facilities (public buildings, fire, police, and parks) and capital equipment, such as a fire engine or police car. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008) requires communities that adopt a Master Plan to also adopt a six-year CIP and update it annually. It requires the Planning Commission to prepare the plan, unless the Village Council assumes the responsibility.

The plan recommends that the preparation and maintenance of the CIP be a joint responsibility of the Planning Commission and Village Council, with input from staff and others designated by the council, including representatives from the DDA and the area recreation committee. The Planning Commission should have input due to the relationship between infrastructure and future land use; the CIP will have no legitimacy unless approved by the council, due to the fact that all appropriations must be made by the Council.

Additional Studies and Programs

New studies and programs relevant to the village should be reviewed when they become available to determine their impact on the Master Plan. These could include updates to the Township Master Plan or Zoning Ordinance, the DDA Development Plan or the Metamora Community Recreation Plan.

Grant programs providing funds or technical assistance should be evaluated for their ability to assist in implementing the Master Plan.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

The plan recommends that the village and Township continue to build on cooperative efforts such as the community recreation plan. Developments near the municipal boundary requiring Planning Commission review should be referred to the Township Planning Commission for comment, and an effort to be involved in similar developments in the Township should be sought.

C. Plan Maintenance

A plan is not a static document. It must continuously be maintained and updated if it is to remain valid. This plan calls for the Planning Commission to review it regularly, at least a minimum every five years, as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Below are recommendations on key indicators that the Village of Metamora Planning Commission can use to determine the need for a plan update.

Changes in Current and Projected Conditions

This plan is based on certain assumptions concerning the growth of the village. These assumptions are contained primarily in the plan's database and future land use plan. It is important for the village to regularly monitor these assumptions to determine if they are still valid. If they become invalid, the planning commission must determine what the changes in circumstances mean for the plan goals and policies.

A. Household Growth

The plan is based on an assumed growth in households in the community contained in Chapter 2 and the appendices of this plan. Growth occurring faster than projected may mean that expansion of supporting infrastructure may need to be accelerated and rezoning of land assumed to be developed outside the plan's time period may need to be considered for re-evaluation. Growth occurring at a slower rate may call for slowing of infrastructure investment or consideration of

reclassification of land originally proposed for residential development. Household growth can be tracked by looking at building and demolition permits to identify changes in total dwelling units, and looking at utility connections and disconnections to estimate vacancy rates.

B. Housing and Tenure Mix

The plan makes assumptions on the changes in housing and tenure mix. In fact, one of the goals of the plan is to promote an increase in the mix of housing types. If the change in housing mix is not meeting the goals of the plan, a change in policies may be needed to address the issue, depending on the reason for the difference. If housing type varies significantly from what was assumed, it may require changes in the future land use plan to provide an adequate supply of land to meet the difference in demand. Housing mix can be tracked by review of building permit data.

C. Housing Cost

Changes in housing cost in comparison with household income impacts housing affordability. Measuring changes in housing costs is tricky because it is not directly tied to changes in housing values and rents. It is also impacted by turnover rates for owner-occupied dwellings (not every property owner buys a new house every year) and other housing costs, such as energy, utilities, and insurance. The census provides a good consistent measure of the change in housing costs, but because it is only conducted once every ten years, new data may not be available when the five-year review comes around. In those cases, the village can get a rough measure by comparing changes in property values provided by assessing and changes in rents based on a random sample of rental units. An increase in the housing affordability gap may justify consideration in changes to future land use plans or other housing policies to increase the supply of affordable housing, particularly if the gap is increasing at a rate greater than the county or state as a whole.

D. Adjacent Planning and Zoning

Changes in the Master Plan or zoning map of Metamora Township or of the Lapeer County General Development Plan should be reviewed to consider their impact on the village's plan. Particular attention should be given to changes that increase the intensity of land uses adjacent to the village. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires the township and the county to notify the village whenever it is proposing to adopt changes to their plans. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act does not contain similar coordination requirements, but as discussed above, the village could enter into arrangements with Metamora Township to notify it of proposed rezonings within "x" feet of the village boundary in return for the reciprocal notification by the township.

E. Transportation

Changes in the traffic flow on the major streets in the village could have significant impact, due to the limited number of alternatives to get from point "A" to point "B." The village should continue to monitor traffic counts and accident rates at key intersections to identify potential congestion points.

F. Utilities

The plan anticipates expansion of the village's sewer treatment capacity and extension of the village water and sewer mains to serve areas not currently served. Any change in those anticipated improvements could affect the proposed development of those areas. The Planning Commission should be kept abreast of the status of utility improvement plans.

G. Commercial Development

The plan anticipates all future commercial development to concentrate around the existing downtown and work in cooperation with Metamora Township to prevent the creation of

commercial spot zones at the boundaries of the village. If development occurs in a manner different from that projected by the plan, it would be a concern.

Reviewing the Plan Goals and Policies

A plan is based both on the facts that describe the conditions in a community and the municipality's vision of the future. That vision is outlined in the community's goals. For example, the current breakdown of various housing types is a fact. The plan's goals identify whether the community views that current ratio as a positive fact they want to see continue or as a condition they want to change. Community attitudes can change over time, which means that goals may change in time even though the facts have not.

The plan's objectives describe how a community is proposing to reach its identified goals. In some cases a master plans policies may help to reach the proposed goals. That may be due to a lack of application of the policy or the ineffectiveness of the policy in achieving the hoped-for results.

As part of review of a master plan, the Planning Commission should look at their plan's goals and objectives and ask the following:

- 1) Is there a need to modify the goals and/or objectives of the plan based on changes in conditions in the community?
- 2) Have there been changes in community attitude that require the plan goals to be reviewed?
- 3) Have the current plans policies been or not been effective in reaching the stated goals?

Incorporating Plan Review into Rezoning Request Review

Although a comprehensive review of the plan is recommended every few years, many problems with a master plan will become obvious during consideration of a rezoning. It is important to incorporate review and amendment of the master plan as part of the planning commission's consideration of such requests. This is covered in more detail in the subsection on using the master plan for zoning reviews.

Five Year Review

Under the terms of the recently adopted Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the Village Planning Commission must review the plan at least every five years to determine if there is a need to update it. The procedures below can be followed at that time to meet that requirement. The findings and determination should be recorded in the minutes and through a resolution attached to the appendix of the plan.

The review should be a formal process if the village intends it to serve as compliance with the requirements of Section 45 (2) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. This means there should be a record of the factors outlined above (or others the village might use) that were reviewed and the basis upon which the Planning Commission determined an update was or was not necessary. The findings should be set out in a resolution adopted by the Planning Commission.

It is recommended that the Planning Commission conduct a less formal review annually, based on those issues that have risen through use of the plan in making zoning decisions.

D. Using the Master Plan for Zoning Amendment Review

In considering a rezoning request or a proposed text amendment, the primary question to ask is; "Does this zoning amendment conform to our master plan?" Subsidiary questions follow: "Was there an error in the plan that affects the appropriateness of the proposed amendment?;" "Have there been relevant changes in conditions since the plan was approved that affect the appropriateness of the

proposed amendment?,” and “Have there been changes in the community’s attitude that impacts the goals and objectives of the plan and affect the appropriateness of the proposed amendment?.” Answering these questions should answer the question whether or not a zoning amendment is appropriate and that should frame the reason within the context of the plan.

This method of analyzing a request rests on the assumption that a request that complies with a valid plan should be approved and that one that does not comply with a valid plan should not be approved (the principal exception to this rule would be text amendments intended to improve administration of the ordinance). Further, it assumes that the three circumstances that would invalidate a plan are: an oversight in the plan; a change in condition that invalidates the assumptions that the plan was built on; or a change in the goals and objectives that the community set for itself.

Consistency with the Master Plan

The issue of consistency with the Master Plan can vary based on the master plan concerned. For the purposes of this plan, consistency with the Master Plan in the case of a rezoning means it is consistent with most of the relevant goals and polices, as well as the Future Land Use Map. In the case of a proposed text amendment, consistency means it is consistent with most of the relevant goals and polices.

Oversight

An oversight in a plan can be an assumption made based on incorrect data, an area on a future land use map that is incorrectly labeled, or other factors, that if known at the time of the plan adoption, would have been corrected.

Changes in Conditions

A plan is based on the assumption that certain conditions will exist during the planning period. If those conditions change, then goals, objectives, and land use decisions that made sense when the plan was adopted will no longer be valid and a zoning amendment that was not appropriate before may be appropriate now.

Change in Policy

In the end, a plan is based on the planning commission’s vision of what is the best future for their municipality. When that vision changes, the plan should change. When a zoning issue results in a change in vision, a decision can be made that is contrary to the current plan as long as that changed vision is explicitly incorporated into the plan.

Two points should be made. First of all, the factors for consideration (oversight, change in condition, or change in goals or policy) can work in reverse, making a proposal that otherwise seems appropriate, inappropriate. Secondly, these factors should not be used to create excuses for justifying a decision to violate the master plan, or to change it so often that it loses its meaning.

E. Prioritized Actions

Based on the various goals and objectives, a set list of prioritized action statements have been developed to assist in plan implementation. For ease of use it is organized in a table format. Each section of the table is divided into three categories: Top Ten Priorities, On-Going Efforts, and Future Priorities to help focus attention on the most important and most effective strategies. Although successful implementation will involve effort from the entire community, the second column identifies key responsibility.

Top Priorities and Responsibility		
Priority	Responsibility	Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the Zoning Ordinance to more strongly influence the village’s land use pattern and development character in accordance with the recommendations of this plan. Include open-space ratio. 	Planning Commission Village Council	Planning Commission – works with consultant in preparing draft ordinance and holds public hearing, makes recommendations to Village Council; Village Council adopts amendments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update subdivision and land division regulations to reflect neighborhood strategies. 	Planning Commission Village Council	Planning Commission - drafts changes to regulations, holds public hearing, makes recommendations to Village Council; Village Council - adopts revised regulations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek opportunities to acquire land and develop for recreation uses. 	Village Council ??	?? – identifies available land; recommends land acquisition; Village Council – funds acquisition
On-Going Efforts and Responsibility		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference the Master Plan for rezoning reviews and other application procedures. 	Planning Commission Village Council	All parties have a copy of the Master Plan and refer to its recommendations prior to making recommendations and decisions on planning applications.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage a mix of high-quality commercial uses that will provide services and goods for citizens. 	Downtown Development Authority Village Council	DDA – promote downtown to perspective businesses; Village Council – promote and support all commercial areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue a regular street and sidewalk maintenance program. 	Village Council Village Staff	Village Staff – conduct annual survey of street and sidewalk conditions; Village Council – provide funding to carry out repairs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to annually update the CIP to reflect the current and future community facility, as well as infrastructure needs. 	Planning Commission Village Council	Planning Commission – prepare annual updates to CIP in consultation with village staff and other appropriate individuals to reflect necessary improvements to facilities and infrastructure, and recommend update to Village Council; Village Council – adopts and funds identified improvements.
Future Priorities and Responsibility		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to upgrade and maintain gateway signage and streetscape treatment within each entry point into the village, to incorporate a sense of place that reflects the character of that area. 	Downtown Development Authority Village Council	