

## Chapter Four

# PUBLIC SERVICES STRATEGY

### Introduction

The Future Land Use Strategy discussed in Chapter 3 describes the planned pattern of land use throughout the Township. The Public Services Strategy discusses the manner and degree in which public infrastructure and services are to be provided. Public services and related infrastructure include sewage disposal and potable water, roads and highways, police and fire protection, recreation, and general government services. As the character and feasibility of land development is directly influenced by the extent to which public services are available, the Public Services Strategy works hand-in-hand with the Future Land Use Strategy and is a critical element of the Township's efforts to manage and guide future growth and development.

An important principle of the Public Services Strategy is that no new development should occur in the Township unless public services are adequate to meet the needs of that new development. The Public Services Strategy consists of policies regarding improvements to the Township's delivery of individual public services. These policies determine the manner by which, and conditions upon which, future public service improvements should be made.

The Public Services Strategy calls for a future public services pattern not very different from the current Township pattern. It is proposed that most of the Township receive limited expansion of public services. Most expansion is proposed to take place in those areas where more intensive future growth and development is to be focused.

### Individual Public Service Components

#### Roadway Network

**Issues:** As new residential and non-residential land uses are introduced in the Township, demands upon the roadway network will increase. The additional residential development anticipated in this Plan, despite its overall low density, will result in higher traffic levels. This increased traffic may lessen the level of service along some of the Township's roads. This is particularly true of the Township's unpaved road segments such as Neu, Riethmiller, and Tophith Roads. Conversely, it must be recognized that road improvements may well attract new development which, in turn, will place additional demands on the roadway network. The Roadway Network component of the Public Services Strategy seeks to assure that the Township's roads are adequately maintained, and improvements are coordinated with the planned future land use pattern and the designated growth and development areas.

Even with the unpaved portions of roadway network that greatly reduce traffic flow capacity, the Township's roadway infrastructure fulfills its function fairly well. This is due, in large part, to the existing very low development density throughout most of the Township. However, the level of service of the Township's unpaved roads can be expected to decline as greater demands are placed upon these roads by a growing population.

### **Policies:**

1. Greatest priority for road improvements will be assigned to those road segments whose current conditions present imminent danger to the public health and safety. Such dangerous conditions include fallen trees and flooding.
2. Functional classification of roads will dictate the priority of improvements when all other conditions are generally equal. The functional importance of the roads in the Township, from highest to lowest, is as follows: 1) county primary roads, particularly those segments servicing the Future Land Use Strategy's Suburban Residential Areas; 2) county local roads, particularly those segments servicing the Future Land Use Strategy's Suburban Residential Areas but excluding public roads in a platted subdivision or similar neighborhood developments; and 3) minor roads, such as local neighborhood roads in platted subdivisions.
3. The paving of existing gravel roads is generally discouraged except where such road segments serve areas designated as a Suburban Residential Area. However, such paving should occur only after considering the following minimum factors: 1) the extent of consensus among residents living along the road segment for such paving; 2) the comparative long term costs to maintain the gravel road versus paving the road and the willingness of residents to bear such costs; 3) the location of the road in relation to the Waterloo State Recreation Area and the impact of the improvement upon the Recreation Area; and 4) the relation between the road segment and the Future Land Use Strategy.
- 4) Subdivisions platted according to PA 591 of 1996 must be built to County Road Commission standards. Development of private roads, whether lot-by-lot or via the Condominium Act, PA 59 of 1978, must be built to meet minimum design standards to assure adequate means of access, including emergency vehicle access. All roads shall be provided with adequate right-of-way or easement widths to facilitate ease of maintenance, improvements, and installation of utilities.

### **Sewage Disposal and Potable Water**

**Issues:** Except for some of the mobile home parks, there is no public water or sewer service in Waterloo Township. Waterloo Township residents rely upon septic systems for sewage disposal. Improperly operating septic systems can contaminate potable groundwater resources, lakes and streams. This poses a public health threat. As land development densities increase, so does the need for public sewer and water. Industrial, commercial, and higher density residential land uses generally have greater sewage disposal and potable water needs than can often be met by traditional on-site facilities. Failure to provide adequate sewer and water facilities to these land uses can lead to severe health and environmental problems, while the premature provision of these services can lead to accelerated and unmanaged growth and development. Many of the Township soils present severe limitations to on-site sewage disposal. This condition highlights the critical relationship between land use, development intensities, and on-site sewage disposal and potable water. The Public Services Strategy does not suggest public water or sewer is necessary in the near future

### **Policies:**

- 1) All on-site sewage disposal and potable water facilities will be constructed and maintained in accordance with the requirements and standards of the Jackson County Public Health Department, Michigan Public Health Department, and other applicable local, county, state or federal agencies.
- 2) If public sewer and water services are not available, no new land uses or land development projects will be permitted unless regulations regarding on-site sewage disposal and potable water facilities are fully complied with.
- 3) Any future decision by the Township to provide or expand public sewer and/or water services is to be based on an in-depth analysis of all available options, including services provided through cooperative agreements with neighboring municipalities.

- 4) Any public sewer and water services introduced or expanded in the Township will be in response to a public health threat, or where this Plan specifically identifies portions of the Township intended to accommodate residential development typically requiring such services – the Suburban Residential Area – and/or designated commercial and industrial areas.
- 5) Any future introduction or expansion of a public sewer and/or water service area, and associated infrastructure, should occur in a phased and incremental manner. The Township must be able to effectively manage the rate of growth and development.
- 6) All land uses and development projects should be served by public sewer and water infrastructure if the infrastructure abuts the property in question.

### **Emergency Services and Administrative Facilities**

**Issues:** As community growth and land development increases, so does the demand for emergency services and facilities for housing local governmental administrative activities and operations. Specific standards to evaluate the level of police and fire protection in Waterloo Township do not exist because of the many variables that affect these needs. The comparatively limited commercial, industrial, and high density residential development in the Township reduces the need for the higher level of police and fire protection typically associated with a geographically smaller and more urbanized community of similar population size.

It is important that the Township assure that adequate fire and police protection services are available to existing and future residents and property. The general lack of strong support by survey respondents for an additional tax millage to improve police protection services may be an indication of the current level of satisfaction with police services.

This may also be true in case of fire protection services. Commonly referenced standards regarding fire protection suggest a maximum service radius from a fire station in agricultural and low density residential areas of 2 1/2 to 4 miles, and approximately 3/4 to 2 mile service radius in commercial, industrial, and high density residential areas. There are portions of the Township that are not within these recommended ranges including,

but not limited to, the Township's central regions and much of the Township's southeast quarter including the planned Waterloo Suburban Residential Area.

Administrative facilities maintained by the Township must be adequate for carrying out administrative activities. While the Township Hall provides ample room for public meeting purposes, office space within the Hall is somewhat limited and hampers the day-to-day administrative activities of Township officials. This condition will most likely be exacerbated as future officials find the need to establish daily business hours due to the increased volume of work brought on by a growing population. It will become more inconvenient for officials to their homes for Township administration activities.

### **Policies:**

- 1) The Township will require the provision of fire protection infrastructure (wells, water lines, etc.) for all new developments which are of such size and density that on-site infrastructure is considered critical. On-site fire protection infrastructure will generally be considered necessary for planned subdivisions and condominium subdivisions which concentrate building sites in close proximity.
- 2) To prevent fire protection services deficiencies in the face of growth and development, the Township will continually monitor fire protection needs and services, document indicators suggesting deficiencies (or projected deficiencies), and explore improving service levels where deficiencies (or projected deficiencies) arise. Considerations for expansion of services should include the growth of joint services with neighboring municipalities, the introduction of one or more fire stations in the Township as part of a joint services program, and the establishment of an independent Township operated fire department with an appropriately sited station(s). Options, including cost implications, should be presented to the public for review and comment.
- 3) To prevent police protection services deficiencies in the face of growth and development, the Township will continually monitor police protection needs and services and document indicators suggesting deficiencies (or projected deficiencies), and explore improving service levels where deficiencies (or projected deficiencies) arise. Considerations for expansion of services should include the expansion of the Township's police department, establishment of

a public police station in the Township, and development of support services with neighboring municipalities in times of need.

- 4) The Township will continue to meet the basic governance needs of its citizens in the Township Hall facility on Washington Street until a demonstrated need for improved service and/or facilities is identified and adequate financial resources are available. Priority shall be given to the expansion of the existing Hall, where feasible, in light of its central location within a Suburban Residential Area and the comparative ease of access.

## Recreation

**Issues:** Waterloo Township recognizes that the well being of its residents is affected by the availability of recreation opportunities. The Township further recognizes that the type and availability of nearby recreational facilities are important. Demands for recreational opportunities increase with population growth. Available land for recreational purposes decreases as housing and other land uses consume more of what was open space and potential outdoor recreation land. Recreational lands must be purposefully set aside and appropriately located within the community.

Waterloo Township is unique in that approximately one half of its total acreage is contained within the Waterloo State Recreation Area. Ironically, the recreation standards adopted by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (Table 4-1) suggest that the Township, with a population of approximately 3,000 persons, is lacking in many recreational opportunities. These include local (under local control) park land acreage, playgrounds, ballfields, and more.

The standards identify the minimum number of suggested recreation facilities, by facility type, based on a community's population. These standards are presented as guidelines and not as absolute "*hard and fast rules.*" The standards suggest numerous inadequacies at present. Future Township growth may aggravate these deficiencies. However, the extent to which residents are satisfied with the current recreational opportunities is not clearly understood at this time. A survey of resident attitudes specifically addressing recreation issues in the Township has not been undertaken.

### Policies:

- 1) The Township will determine, approximately every five years, the extent to which area residents are satisfied with recreation opportunities in the Township by the use of surveys, public meetings, and/or interviews.
- 2) Should sufficient public sentiment warrant, the Township will pursue the development of a MDNR-approved five year action plan which will provide a specific action plan aimed at providing needed Township facilities and enable the Township to compete for state and federal recreation grant funds.
- 3) The Township will strive to provide recreation facilities in a manner that recognizes the particular recreation needs expressed by its residents.
- 4) The Township will adopt incentives to encourage the provision of open space and recreation areas within future development projects.

**Table 4-1  
MICHIGAN RECREATION OPPORTUNITY STANDARDS**

<b>TYPE of RECREATION OPPORTUNITY</b>	<b>MDNR STANDARD<sup>(a)</sup></b>
Local Park Land (acres)	10/1,000
Archery Ranges (b)	1/50,000
Ballfields (c)	1/3,000
Outdoor Basketball Courts (c)	1/5,000
Bicycle Trails (miles)	1/40,000
Golf Courses (b)	1/25,000
Indoor Ice Rinks	1/50,000
Outdoor Ice Rinks-Art.	1/20,000
Picnic Areas (tables)	1/200
Playgrounds (c)	1/3,000
Rifle Ranges (b)	1/50,000
Shotgun Ranges (b)	1/50,000
Sledding Hills (c)	1/40,000
Soccer Fields (c)	1/20,000
Outdoor Swimming Pools	1/40,000
Outdoor Tennis Courts (c)	1/4,000
Boat Launches (parking)	1/400
Campgrounds (campsites) (d)	1/150
Cross-Country Ski Trails (miles)	1/5,000
Fishing Access (feet)	1,000/1,000
Fishing Piers	1/100,000
Hiking Trails (miles)	1/5,000
Horseback Riding Trails (miles)	1/20,000
Nature Areas (areas)	1/50,000
Nature Trails (miles)	1/20,000
ORV Areas (acres)	1/7,500
ORV Trails (miles)	1/10,000
Land Open to Snowmobiling (acres)	10/1,000
Snowmobile Trails (miles)	1/3,000
Swimming Beaches	1/25,000

- (a) Units/population.
- (b) Includes private clubs and commercial establishments.
- (c) Does not include facilities on school grounds.
- (d) Includes commercial facilities.

Source: Michigan Department of Natural Resources, 1986,  
Building Michigan Recreation Future, Appendix B, pages 100-101