

Chapter Four

FUTURE LAND USE STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

The Future Land Use Strategy identifies the desired pattern of land use and development throughout the Township. The Public Services Strategy specifies policies regarding future infrastructure and other public services improvements to better assure future public services are coordinated with the planned future land use pattern, and the achievement of the Plan's goals and objectives.

The Future Land Use Strategy consists of policies regarding future land use and development in the Township. Implementation of these policies rests with the regulatory tools of the Township – most importantly the Hillsdale Township Zoning Ordinance. The Hillsdale Township Zoning Ordinance will be the primary implementation tool of the Hillsdale Township Master Plan through appropriate changes in the provisions of the Ordinance. The Township's Zoning Ordinance generally regulates the type, location, bulk, and intensity of land development throughout the Township.

The Township may also adopt other supporting regulatory tools to further the implementation of the policies of the Master Plan. Land division and private road regulations are very important as a means to further implement the Master Plan and the Future Land Use Strategy presented within. Land division regulations are intended to assure efficient land division patterns, the avoidance of non-buildable lots, and adequate public access to public roads, while at the same time assuring

such roads are built to minimum public health, safety, and welfare standards and so maintained. Related ordinances and a capital improvement program may, from time to time, be adopted or amended to further carry out this Plan.

OVERVIEW of the FUTURE LAND USE STRATEGY

Basis

The Future Land Use Strategy establishes the planned future land use pattern throughout the Township for the next 10 to 20 years. The goals and objectives presented in Chapter Three are the foundation on which the Future Land Use Strategy is based.

INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS of the FUTURE LAND USE STRATEGY

The principal components of the Future Land Use Strategy collectively formulate the planned future land use pattern in the Township.

Conservation Area

Hillsdale Township remains committed to the preservation of the rural, agricultural, and undeveloped areas we administer. Future development will be permitted, but the Township will evaluate development requests

through a conservation lens; namely effects on wildlife, flood control, ground water recharge and discharge, aesthetics, air quality, wetlands, lakes, and ponds. Development projects that break up the continuity of the Township's rural and agricultural character will be discouraged.

Suburban Residential Area

The Suburban Residential Area includes both existing residential development of a more suburban character as well as vacant land where new residential development of similar character is considered appropriate. A development density of one or more dwellings per acre is considered appropriate in this Area. The Future Land Use Strategy identifies four locations in the Township as a Suburban Residential Area. These locations have been designated as such because each reflects two or more of the following conditions: 1) existing suburban development; 2) adjacency to the City of Hillsdale and its suburban and urban land use pattern; 3) proximity to the urban services of the City of Hillsdale; 4) proximity to M-99 or ease of access to M-99; and 5) general absence of farming operations. Three of the Suburban Residential Areas are directly adjacent to the City of Hillsdale. The one exception is located to the west of Bunn Road in the area of Middle and South Sand Lakes.

Special Land Use Area

The Township recognizes that some land uses may be considered generally compatible with the intent of a particular zoning district. They should be permitted only after a special review has determined that the land use and associated site development proposal meet special standards to assure its compatibility with surrounding land uses.

Special land uses should be permitted in appropriate locations pursuant to specific standards and review procedures established in the Township's zoning ordinance. Approval should not be indiscriminate and conditions should be imposed (as applicable) to minimize impacts on surrounding lands. Review and approval of such uses should strive to:

- 1) Assure that the design, construction, operation and maintenance of land uses are in a manner harmonious with the character of adjacent property and the surrounding area.
- 2) Avoid inappropriate changes to the essential character of the surrounding area.
- 3) Avoid interference with the general enjoyment of adjacent property.

- 4) Improve the use or character of the property under consideration and the surrounding area in general, yet also be in keeping with the natural environment of the site.
- 5) Avoid negative impacts upon adjacent property or conditions which will be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of persons or property through the excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, odor, fumes or glare.
- 6) Assure availability of adequate essential public facilities and services, or evidence that the person responsible for the proposed special land use will be able to continually provide for the services and facilities deemed essential to the special land use under consideration.
- 7) Avoid demands on public services and facilities in excess of current capacity.

This Plan strongly discourages the approval of special land uses for disruptive commercial or industrial activities in residential areas. These uses undermine the character of residential neighborhoods and quality of life for current and future residents.

Agricultural Area

Agricultural area is a significant portion of the Township. Hillsdale Township supports continued farming operations within its borders. Potential new residents should be aware that agricultural activities, noises, smells, and pesticide application associated with farming will continue in the Township; and the Township does not consider such activities, carried out according to Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices (GAAMPs), to be nuisances.

Urban farming is increasingly popular as homeowners wish to raise a portion of their food, be it animal or produce, on their own property. Urban farming will be encouraged as long as such activities are managed in a safe, controlled, clean, reasonable, and aesthetic manner.

Industrial Area

In general, Hillsdale Township is not suited at this time for large- or medium- scale industrial operations, and it is not a priority of the township to move in this direction. However, should an opportunity be presented, there are areas of the Township that could be considered for such an activity, given that the proper infrastructure be put in place, and that the Township could manage the development properly. Any industrial

development will be carefully evaluated for adverse effects on the conservation of the rural and agricultural character of the Township and with consideration of the impacts on the current Township residents.

Commercial Area

The Future Land Use Strategy identifies five Commercial Areas to accommodate future commercial development. These Commercial Areas are summarized below:

South M-99: M-99, south of the City of Hillsdale, is characterized by two clusters of small commercial uses.

Mechanic Road: Mechanic Road to the intersection of Lake Wilson is directly south of the City's Industrial Park.

Bunn/Hallett Roads: The intersection of Bunn and Hallett Roads is identified as a Commercial Area. This Commercial Area is to be a small node catering primarily to the day-to-day consumer needs of existing area residents and the anticipated increase in the number of local residents associated with the nearby lakes Suburban Residential Area.

State Road: The area west of the Airport entrance road was previously changed to Neighborhood Service; this area has a landscaping business and is adjacent to the Hillsdale City Airport and is joined on the east side by Adams Township, which has a large area zoned Commercial.

South Hillsdale Road: South of the City to Cambria Township.