

High Density Areas

In order to accomplish the goals of this plan, those places within the community where most people will live and most businesses will carry out their enterprises must provide the best ways and means for these activities to be pursued. During the planning process it became evident that in order to preserve the natural and scenic qualities cherished by township residents (and visitors to the area) housing and businesses had to be limited to the most appropriate areas or eventually no landscape would remain except for suburban development. Through the surveys and focus sessions of this process, it also became clear that most township residents wanted a “downtown” where civic events, commerce, and high density housing might occur.

High density areas will allow mixed uses, from business uses to single and multi-family housing, organized around the principle of sustainable neighborhoods. Public sewer and water may be required within these areas, as well as roads, alleys, sidewalks, and other urban elements and systems. Neighborhoods will by-and-large follow a neo-traditional grid pattern, with roughly a 1500' walking distance radius, centered on commercial uses, or a park or school, and bounded by parks or other natural, unbuilt areas.

A “town center” was designed during the Visual Preference Survey™ workshop using an area one within the existing Acme Village development. This proposed “downtown areas” contained civic facilities, offices, shops, restaurants, multi-family and single-family homes, and typical of small town central areas, township facilities such as town hall and civic activity buildings.

A point continually made throughout the master plan process was that wild places and natural habitats should be maintained as much as possible, even in urbanized areas. These areas should then be connected with rural wildlife areas through corridors to ensure the vitality of the native environment as well as providing the benefits of natural places within built-up areas of the township.

Goals

- To preserve the countryside and its landscape by providing for fit and measured high density development only in appropriate areas.
- To set out a vital Acme Town Center where the community can develop in its own unique manner.
- To provide for residential and commercial development in the township in ways that will enable the accomplishment of all of this plan's goals and will create a healthy and wholesome environment for the full development and enjoyment of all its residents and guests.

Policies and Actions

1. In order to meet the goals of this plan, all high density uses--large lot residential housing without clustering at a greater density than one dwelling unit per ten acres, commercial and light industrial uses; any use other than farming and rural businesses, estate or clustered housing--shall take place within high density areas.
2. New development should occur in and around existing development to utilize infrastructure installation efficiently.
3. The extent of urban services for high density areas shall be determined, a district or districts established, and the design and construction of infrastructure for these districts performed with the understanding that these urban service areas will not increase in size in the future.
4. Within high density areas, regulations should be such that neighborhoods centers can be formed, allowing commercial establishments to supply products and services and employment opportunities within these areas.
5. Pedestrian and bicycle use should be advanced by the provision of sidewalks and pathways.
6. Regulations shall be promulgated that allow for diverse housing types which furnish housing possibilities for residents at all levels of society.

7. Public transit should be available at least to and in the core areas.
8. Roads within high density districts shall follow mainly a grid system within neighborhoods. State trunklines shall be as intended: roads for through traffic; commercial development along them, except within high density commercial areas, will not be permitted. Road regulating profiles should be developed to provide specific standards for development along highways.
9. Civic places should be included within neighborhoods and as part of any new Town or Neighborhood Center.
10. Areas designated as natural resource corridors shall remain undeveloped and should serve as boundaries or parklands within neighborhoods or other development areas. These corridors will connect with wild areas throughout the township.
11. Three of the most important elements of good high density design, as was evident through the Visual Preference Survey™, shall be followed within high density areas:
 - a. Street and parking area trees of appropriate size and spacing shall be required on all new or rehabilitated sites.
 - b. Effective screening of parking areas shall be provided.
 - c. Signage shall be sufficient to its purpose of notification while being appropriate and harmonious with its surroundings.
 - d. Appropriate design for site surroundings shall be required.
12. The shoreline areas of the township should be examined and a set of standards promulgated to ensure the highest lake water quality.
13. Within high density or mixed-use areas, an objective to preserve between 20% to 30% of the land should be provided as open space, permanently preserved unbuilt areas - parks, commons, reserves, etc.