

Chapter Three GOALS and OBJECTIVES

Introduction

The primary intent of this Plan is to establish a basis for managing growth, with particular focus on land use, public services and community character. An important element of this effort is the establishment of a set of goals and objectives to not only mold the growth management strategies but to also assist in day-to-day and long-term planning efforts. This chapter presents the Master Plan's goals and objectives.

The goals are statements that express the long range desires of Cass County and the Local Participating Municipalities. Each goal has accompanying objectives that are general initiatives aimed at attaining the specified goal. The goals and objectives generally correspond to the planning issues discussed in Chapter Two.

The objectives listed on the following pages should not be interpreted as limitations on efforts to attain the goals. The following objectives do not preclude the pursuit of other objectives that are determined to be beneficial. In addition, the objectives are not time specific -- some objectives may be acted upon within a shorter time frame than others.

The first portion of this chapter presents goal and objective statements specific to Cass County as a whole. The second portion of the chapter presents goal and objective statements specific to the Local Participating Municipalities.

The Importance of Goals and Objectives

- **A Vision:** The goals and objectives provide current and future residents with an overview of the intended future character of the community.
- **Shape Initiatives:** The goals and objectives guide the planning commissions of Cass County and the Local Participating Municipalities in developing initiatives and making recommendations to the county and local legislative bodies on how the Plan can be implemented.
- **Shape Policies:** The goals and objectives identify and outline the basic parameters that should be used in guiding land use and public services policies.
- **Evaluate Master Plans and Zoning Ordinances:** The goals and objectives serve as references upon which the Cass County Planning Commission can evaluate local master plans and zoning ordinances.
- **Evaluate Development Proposals:** The goals and objectives serve as references upon which future rezoning and land development proposals can be evaluated.
- **Encourage Coordination:** The goals and objectives serve as opportunities for local communities and the county to coordinate planning efforts.

CASS COUNTY Goals and Objectives

Cass County Growth Management	
GOAL: <i>Encourage the management of county growth according to the principals of Smart Growth, both regionally and within the context of each local community.</i>	
OBJECTIVES	
1	Encourage the mixing of land uses in more suburbanized and urbanized settings including residential, commercial, office and public/quasi-public uses.
2	Encourage growth in and in close proximity to existing settlement areas where public facilities and services are most capable of accommodating growth and where the enhancement of services is most cost-effective.
3	Encourage compact development in designated growth/settlement areas.
4	Encourage a range of housing opportunities that address the varied housing needs of county residents.
5	Encourage housing that incorporates ease of mobility throughout and between neighborhoods for pedestrians and other non-motorized travelers, and throughout and between business and other activity centers.
6	Encourage the preservation of the extent and integrity of the county's natural resources.
7	Develop a Cass County "identity" that distinguishes it from the regional area and which recognizes and builds on the identities and assets of its local communities.
8	Encourage the inclusion of alternative modes of travel as county road segments are incrementally improved and as financial resources permit.
9	Assist with local and regional efforts to enhance economic stability, consistent with the future land use policies of the county and those of local Master Plans.
10	Work with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians to develop mutually beneficial development policies and the coordination of development aspirations with local and county planning policies.
11	Encourage local planning/zoning programs that treat all applicants in a fair, consistent and predictable manner.
12	Provide substantive opportunities for input by all interested parties on growth and development decisions.
13	Review proposed local ordinance and master plan provisions within the context of smart growth principals and the county's master plan goals, objectives and policies.
14	Serve as a resource for local communities interested in understanding and practicing smart growth principles.

Cass County Community Character	
GOAL: <i>Establish and maintain a county-wide character that is unique to Cass County and which reflects an attractive and inviting environment in which persons and families want to live, where businesses want to locate, and where a comforting sense of place prevails, and which is supported by the unique character of its local communities.</i>	
OBJECTIVES	
1	Design and maintain county grounds and buildings in a manner that reflects positively on both the county and the local community.
2	Encourage the enhancement of visual impacts of development through proper building scale, landscaping and screening, streetscape improvements, opportunities for public gathering, and other development features.
3	Encourage road and access drives in business areas to present an inviting atmosphere through landscaping, orderly and non-intrusive signage, and similar development features.
4	Encourage forms of development that preserve natural open spaces as part of the development plan.
5	Preserve historically significant structures and bring attention to these community assets.
6	Encourage structurally sound buildings and the rehabilitation or removal of blighted structures and areas.
7	Provide guidance to local communities on measures to combat blight and enhance community character.

CASS COUNTY MASTER PLAN

July 1, 2014

Cass County Natural Resources, Open Spaces and the Environment	
GOAL: <i>Preserve and enhance the extent and integrity of natural resources including resource corridors within and across community borders.</i>	
OBJECTIVES	
1	Document and periodically update resource inventory data and refer to the data when making county planning and development decisions.
2	Preserve natural resource areas as part of county-initiated development plans through careful and innovative site planning, low-impact development practices, and green infrastructure.
3	Evaluate local community master plans and rezoning proposals within the context of their impact upon on-site natural resources including water resources, wetlands, woodlands, and other important open spaces.
4	Evaluate local community master plans and rezoning proposals within the context of their impact upon natural resource corridors that cross parcel and community borders.
5	Evaluate development proposals within the context of on-site resource corridors and neighboring parcels.
6	Encourage the preservation of a county-wide open space network, within which development is restricted and recreation opportunities prevail.
7	Encourage public access to resource areas in a manner that ensures continued integrity of the resources.
8	Discourage over-use of natural resource systems that lead to their degradation including sea wall construction and unrestricted “keyholing” around lakes.
9	Assist with communication and cooperative efforts among public and private organizations with special interests in the preservation of sensitive environmental resources including water resource protection.
10	Assist in the education of local residents and business owners regarding critical steps available to protect the environmental and recreational value of local lakes and streams.
11	Provide educational programs about the importance of ensuring a balance between opportunities for lakefront and other waterfront living and the long term protection of the aesthetic, recreational and environmental integrity of such water resources.
12	Provide educational programs about the importance of preserving natural resource systems on the local level and alternative strategies to implement preservation.
13	Assist in the education of local residents and business owners about critical steps available to protect potable ground water resources.

Cass County Farming and Farmland Resources	
GOAL: <i>Encourage the preservation of farmland resources and the long term viability of local farm industries, and the critical role farming plays within the Cass County fabric.</i>	
OBJECTIVES	
1	Evaluate local community master plans and rezoning proposals within the context of their impact upon the farming industry.
2	Identify areas supportive of long-term farming and encourage farmland preservation in these areas.
3	Discourage land division patterns that unnecessarily consume productive farmland or otherwise undermine long term farming viability.
4	Discourage residential encroachment into designated agricultural areas.
5	Encourage the use of “clustering” in rural areas where farmland is to be converted to multiple residential lots such as in the case of subdivisions.
6	Encourage buffer areas as part of residential developments that mitigate impacts of adjacent farm operations.
7	Evaluate public services decisions on their impact on local farming efforts and farmland preservation interests.
8	Support PA 116 farmland and open space preservation agreements.
9	Periodically explore the viability of funding a purchase of development rights program.
10	Discourage the extension of utility services, such as public sewer or water, into designated agricultural areas except where threatening health conditions require otherwise.
11	Encourage and assist with local, county and state programs aimed at supporting the local farming industry and farmland preservation.

CASS COUNTY MASTER PLAN

July 1, 2014

12	Encourage the lessening of local obstacles to farming and “value-added” income sources, such as agritourism, farm markets, corn mazes, and other activities that do not unreasonably impact the surrounding area.
13	Serve as a resource for local communities interested in effectively preserving farmland resources through education and training materials, technical assistance, and other support initiatives.

Cass County Housing	
1	GOAL: <i>Encourage housing opportunities that address the needs of all age, social and economic groups and lifestyle preferences, and which encourage environments in which persons and families can grow and flourish and farmland and natural resource systems are preserved.</i>
OBJECTIVES	
1	Encourage housing options that address all social and economic groups, and a housing stock that that is of appropriate design and scale to fit within the local community fabric.
2	Encourage the phasing of high density development so as not to place sudden and excess demands on local facilities and services or otherwise undermine local community character, including in the case of manufactured housing communities, multiple family developments, and other high-density living arrangements.
3	In the more urbanized areas of the county, encourage attractive compact housing that supports a sense of place, non-motorized mobility, and proximity to services including traditional neighborhood design (TND).
4	In the more outlying areas of the county, encourage housing that preserves the county’s rural assets while not unnecessarily consuming agricultural resources and other open spaces.
5	Direct residential development to existing settlement areas and away from agricultural areas.
6	Encourage housing opportunities that meet the particular needs of elderly residents including assisted living facilities, nursing home, senior apartments and retirement communities.
7	Encourage restrictive development densities that recognize and respect important on-site natural resources and appropriate preservation and buffering measures.
8	Encourage innovative residential development that incorporates in the site planning process the preservation of natural resource systems and compatibility with surrounding land use conditions.
9	Encourage the protection of the character and value of existing established neighborhoods through design measures incorporated into new neighboring development.
10	Encourage local efforts to eradicate blight and residential properties in disrepair.

Cass County Commercial Services, Industry and Economic Stability	
GOAL: <i>Promote economic stability and enhancement through an appropriate mix of land uses and the development of employment opportunities, while balancing growth and development with the preservation of the county’s natural resources, environmental systems, and quality of life.</i>	
OBJECTIVES	
1	Encourage the revitalization, rehabilitation and development of village and city centers, and other urbanized settlement areas, and encourage their role as the county’s primary commerce centers.
2	Encourage commercial and industrial growth in concentrated areas rather than as strip corridors along primary thoroughfares, and in areas where public facilities and services are most supportive or otherwise most cost-effective to improve.
3	Encourage commercial, industrial and other non-residential development in character with surrounding uses and the local community as a whole, through such features as building size, height and architecture; setbacks; signage; and landscaping/screening.
4	Encourage business districts that are of a pleasant and inviting character, where pedestrians are free to move about and gather safely, and where commerce and social activities generate a vibrant atmosphere.
5	Develop marketing programs to encourage business attraction and growth, and which bring attention to the county’s assets including its lakes and other natural resources and Southwestern Michigan College.
6	Coordinate with Southwestern Michigan College regarding marketing efforts that will bring beneficial growth and development to the county.

CASS COUNTY MASTER PLAN

July 1, 2014

7	Support economic development through beneficial county services, and evaluate county services for their impact in fostering economic development.
8	Support public and private training and educational training programs to enhance local employment.
9	Provide assistance to persons seeking guidance in establishing and growing a business.
10	Work with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians to coordinate economic development efforts within the context of the county's regional land use policies.
11	Where legally permissible, ensure that the public and private costs of development are borne by those directly benefitting from the development.
12	Discourage the encroachment of commercial and industrial uses into residentially planned areas except under limited and controlled circumstances such as in the case of home occupations and planned mixed-use areas.
13	Encourage safe and efficient access and circulation in business areas including minimizing parking lot/service drives and conflicting turning patterns and enhancing non-motorized travel.

<h3 style="margin: 0;">Cass County Transportation and Mobility</h3>	
<p>GOAL: <i>Maintain and enhance a transportation and circulation system that responds to the county's predominant rural character the county's regional and local needs, with emphasis on convenient, safe and efficient movement for all modes of travel including vehicular, pedestrian, and other non-motorized travel.</i></p>	
<h4 style="margin: 0;">OBJECTIVES</h4>	
1	Maintain a current inventory of road and traffic data including road conditions, traffic counts, and accident data.
2	Regularly monitor and evaluate traffic movement and safety through the county.
3	Prioritize maintenance and improvement projects according to available funds, traffic volumes, safety, planned growth areas, and immediate threats to public safety.
4	Discourage road improvement projects that increase the number of vehicular lanes except where no other practical options are available to mitigate an identified traffic flow issue.
5	Coordinate road construction and improvement projects with those of the Michigan Department of Transportation and local city/village efforts.
6	Encourage communication and coordination between county and local planning, economic development, and road/transportation agencies, to address transportation improvements in a coordinated and unified manner.
7	Regularly explore and implement transportation improvements aimed at increasing travel efficiency to and from I-94, and to the Elkhart and South Bend employment centers including access to the Indiana Toll Road.
8	Work with passenger rail service providers (Amtrak) to ensure service through the county with stops in Dowagiac and other urban centers.
9	Encourage the further development, expansion, and coordination of public transportation systems and long term support for public transportation options.
10	Encourage the correlation of higher traffic generating uses with enhanced road infrastructure.
11	Encourage local access management measures.
12	Evaluate roadside development according to appropriate access management measures.
13	Develop an official "complete streets" policy that will guide the incorporation of complete streets measures into road improvement projects in a context-sensitive manner.
14	Encourage development plans to incorporate safe and efficient opportunities for non-motorized travel through the development site.
15	Work with the Michigan Department of Transportation to incorporate opportunities for non-motorized travel within state highway right-of-ways.
16	Evaluate development plans according to the manner in which vehicular and non-motorized travel is coordinated with adjacent and nearby facilities, and the fostering of parcel-to-parcel and regional travel.
17	With the consultation of local communities, undertake a non-motorized circulation plan that identifies a long range strategy for providing safe and convenient non-motorized travel through the county and which can be implemented as financial resources permit.
18	Encourage the local regulation of billboards to reduce visual clutter, enhance traffic safety, and preserve the county's rural and agricultural character.

CASS COUNTY MASTER PLAN

July 1, 2014

Cass County Community Facilities and Services	
	GOAL: <i>Provide quality and cost effective community facilities and services in recognition of the county's predominantly rural character and dispersed settlement areas, including recreation, social and other services and programming for all population groups.</i>
OBJECTIVES	
1	Coordinate the location and delivery of public facilities and services in the Dowagiac and Cassopolis areas, and other primary population centers, to increase efficiency and effectiveness of services.
2	Inform residents of additional services and assistance available in the county through other public and private entities including social, transportation and medical services.
3	Work with regional entities in maintaining a current plan for the reduction in and disposal of solid waste.
4	Develop and regularly evaluate county solid waste practices to reduce reliance on landfill disposal.
5	Maintain and enhance the county's recreation facilities for both their recreational value and their potential economic development impact.
6	Develop and maintain a five-year MDNR-approved recreation plan, responsive to the needs of county residents, to ensure eligibility to compete for recreation grant dollars.
7	Develop and regularly update a county capital improvement program (CIP) to prioritize annual projects, coordinate efforts and expenditures between county departments, the state, and local communities.
8	Evaluate public and private sector development projects to ensure appropriate storm water management practices and the application of "green infrastructure."
9	Update and maintain a county-wide plan for improvements to public sewer and water systems, coordinated with planned growth areas.
10	Continually monitor local attitudes about county facilities and services and explore financially feasible options to enhance services where deficiencies may be identified.
11	Maintain communication and coordination between county and local municipal departments to minimize unnecessary duplication of services.

Cass County Regional Coordination	
	GOAL: <i>Encourage regional communication and coordination among local communities, counties, and other entities in addressing shared interests.</i>
OBJECTIVES	
1	Establish meaningful communication programs with neighboring counties and regional planning agencies such as the Southwest Michigan Regional Planning Commission.
2	Encourage communication networks between local communities.
3	Encourage communication networks between local communities and the county.
4	Evaluate local master plans within the context of neighboring land use policies and those of the county.
5	Continue to explore regional initiatives, including with neighboring counties, to explore cost-effective options for the delivery of public services.
6	Coordinate with regional entities in the area of economic development, natural resources protection, and transportation.

LOCAL PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES Goals and Objectives

Local Participating Municipalities Growth Management		Pokagon	Silver Creek	Volinia	Wayne	Edwardsburg	Vandalia
GOAL: <i>Manage growth in a manner that balances development, preservation of natural resources and community character, and cost-effective public services, and fosters an economically and socially sound and attractive community.</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X
OBJECTIVES							
1	Identify an appropriate mix of land uses and their most appropriate locations.	X	X	X	X	X	X
2	Manage growth in a manner that supports the concepts of Smart Growth, recognizing that not all concepts are equally applicable and they must be applied in a context-sensitive manner.	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	Establish a strong correlation between more intensive land uses and enhanced public facilities and services.	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Provide opportunities for the mixing of residential, commercial and public/quasi-public uses in settlement areas.	X	X	X	X	X	X
5	Encourage the use of lands and natural resources according to their character and adaptability.	X	X	X	X	X	X
6	Encourage compact development in designated growth areas, particularly in existing more urbanized settlement areas.	X	X	X	X	X	X
7	Encourage land use and development patterns that facilitate non-motorized travel within and between neighborhoods, commercial centers, and other community activity centers such as parks.	X	X	X	X	X	X
8	Preserve natural resources including woodlands, wetlands, stream corridors, and other important natural resource areas.	X	X	X	X	X	X
9	Encourage economic development consistent with the future land use policies of the Master Plan.	X	X	X	X	X	X
10	Develop and maintain a unique identity and character, and one that encourages a sense of place and a desirable place to be.	X	X	X	X	X	X
11	Ensure adequate buffering, separation differences or other mitigating measures between incompatible land uses.	X	X	X	X	X	X
12	Develop a planning and zoning program that enables all parties to understand how persons' development aspirations compare to adopted policies and regulations, and that encourages consistent, fair and predictable treatment of applicants.	X	X	X	X	X	X
13	Provide substantive opportunities for input by all interested parties on growth and development decisions, and which permits opportunities to examine potential conflict issues and options to mitigate the conflicts.	X	X	X	X	X	X
14	Carefully review development proposals to ensure compatibility with the Master Plan's policies, goals and objectives.	X	X	X	X	X	X
15	Develop and update tools to implement the Master Plan policies, goals and objectives including zoning provisions.	X	X	X	X	X	X

CASS COUNTY MASTER PLAN

July 1, 2014

Local Participating Municipalities Community Character		Pokagon	Silver Creek.	Volinia	Wayne	Edwardsburg	Vandalia
	GOAL: <i>Establish and maintain a community character that creates a unique, attractive and inviting environment in which persons and families want to live, where businesses want to locate, and where a comforting sense of place prevails.</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X
OBJECTIVES							
1	Encourage development in the villages to be designed in scale with surrounding conditions and the desired small-town character.	X	X	X	X	X	X
2	Encourage development in the townships to be designed in scale with surrounding conditions and the prevailing rural character.	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	Enhance the visual impacts of development through proper building scale, landscaping and screening, streetscape improvements, opportunities for public gathering, and other development features.	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Encourage road and access drives in business areas to present an inviting atmosphere through landscaping, orderly and non-intrusive signage, and similar development features.	X	X	X	X	X	X
5	Encourage forms of development that preserve natural open spaces as part of the development plan.	X	X	X	X	X	X
6	Preserve historically significant structures and natural resource areas, and bring attention to these community assets.	X	X	X	X	X	X
7	Encourage a structurally sound building stock and the rehabilitation or removal of blighted structures and yard areas.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Local Participating Municipalities Natural Resources, Open Spaces and the Environment		Pokagon	Silver Creek.	Volinia	Wayne	Edwardsburg	Vandalia
	GOAL: <i>Preserve and enhance the integrity of natural resources such as lakes, streams, wetlands, woodlands, and other open spaces, and including resource corridors within and across community borders.</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X
OBJECTIVES							
1	Document and periodically update resource inventory data and refer to the data when making planning and development decisions.	X	X	X	X	X	X
2	Preserve natural resource areas as part of development plans, including the use of clustering and buffer areas.	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	Evaluate development proposals within the context of their impact upon water resources, land resources, ground water, and the atmosphere.	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Evaluate development proposals within the context of on-site resource corridors and neighboring parcels.	X	X	X	X	X	X
5	Consider the nature and extent of sensitive environmental resources when determining acceptable development densities and intensities.	X	X	X	X	X	X
6	Ensure a balance between opportunities for lakefront and other waterfront living with interests in the long term protection of the aesthetic, recreational and environmental integrity of the water resource.	X	X	X	X	X	X
7	Discourage over-use of natural resource systems that lead to their degradation, including unrestricted "keyholing" around lakes.	X	X	X	X	X	X

CASS COUNTY MASTER PLAN

July 1, 2014

8	Encourage public access to resource areas in a manner that ensures continued integrity of the resources.	X	X	X	X	X	X
9	Encourage an open space network based upon, in part, ecosystems defined by drainage corridors, wetlands and woodlands.	X	X	X	X	X	X
10	Establish wellhead protection areas in association with municipal water systems to protect groundwater resources from contamination.	X	X	X	X	X	X
11	Encourage the inclusion of low impact development principles as part of land development practices including reliance on green infrastructure.	X	X	X	X	X	X
12	Ensure that increased runoff that may occur from development is managed so as not to undermine the environmental integrity of on-site and off-site lakes, streams, wetlands and potable water sources.	X	X	X	X	X	X
13	Require storm water management practices that emphasize "green infrastructure" and compliance with county, state and federal requirements.	X	X	X	X	X	X
14	Discourage the enhancement of public services in areas planned for resource conservation.	X	X	X	X	X	X
15	Maintain communication and cooperative efforts with public and private organizations with special interests in the preservation of sensitive environmental resources including water resource protection.	X	X	X	X	X	X
16	Assist in the education of local residents and business owners regarding critical steps available to protect the environmental and recreational value of local lakes and streams.	X	X	X	X	X	X
17	Assist in the education of local residents and business owners about critical steps available to protect potable ground water resources.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Local Participating Municipalities Farming and Farmland Resources		Pokagon	Silver Creek.	Volinia	Wayne	Edwardsburg	Vandalia
	GOAL: Encourage the preservation of farmland resources and the long term viability of local farm industries.	X	X	X	X	X	X
	OBJECTIVES						
1	Identify areas supportive of long-term farming and make such areas available for agricultural uses.	X	X	X	X		X
2	Discourage land division patterns that result in the wasteful consumption of farmland resources or otherwise undermine long term farming viability.	X	X	X	X		X
3	Discourage residential encroachment into designated agricultural areas, and guide such encroachment to less productive land.	X	X	X	X		
4	Establish significant limitations on the extent of residential encroachment into designated agricultural areas, and guide such encroachment to less productive land.	X		X	X		
5	Encourage buffer areas as part of new residential developments that mitigate impacts of adjacent farm operations.	X	X	X	X		
6	Evaluate land use and public services decisions on, in part, impacts on local farming efforts and farmland preservation interests.	X	X	X	X		
7	Support PA 116 farmland and open space preservation agreements.	X	X	X	X		X
8	Periodically explore the viability of the Transfer of Development Rights.	X	X	X	X		X
9	Support voluntary Purchase of Development Rights administered at the county or state level.	X	X	X	X	X	X
10	Encourage the use of "clustering" in rural areas where farmland is to be converted to multiple residential lots such as in the case of subdivisions.	X	X	X	X		X
11	Discourage the extension of utility services, such as sewer or water, into designated agricultural areas except where threatening health conditions require otherwise.	X	X	X	X		

CASS COUNTY MASTER PLAN

July 1, 2014

12	Minimize obstacles that unnecessarily undermine farm operations and “value-added” income sources, such as agri-tourism, farm markets, corn mazes, and other activities that do not unreasonably impact the surrounding area.	X	X	X	X		X
13	Encourage and assist with local, county and state programs aimed at supporting the local farming industry and farmland preservation.	X	X	X	X		X

Local Participating Municipalities Housing		Pokagon	Silver Creek.	Volinia	Wayne	Edwardsbur	Vandalia
1	GOAL: <i>Facilitate healthy residential environments in which persons and families can grow and flourish, and that address local lifestyle needs within the context of available public services and facilities, natural resource systems, and community aspirations.</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X
OBJECTIVES							
1	Ensure the continued dominance of low-density single family housing as the primary housing option, consistent with the local rural character, while also providing opportunities for variable single family housing densities.	X	X	X	X		
2	While ensuring the continued dominance of single family housing as the primary housing option, provide limited opportunities for higher density lifestyles in designated areas.	X	X	X	X		
3	Ensure the continued dominance of medium density single family housing, and minimize further expansion of alternative housing options except as may be provided above commercial storefronts.					X	
4	Ensure the continued dominance of medium density single family housing, while providing opportunities for apartments, townhouses, and similar alternative housing options as local needs may suggest.						X
5	Identify areas where higher density lifestyles can be most appropriately accommodated, considering such factors as existing land use patterns, public services and facilities, and road infrastructure.	X	X	X	X	X	X
6	Encourage housing options that address all social and economic groups, and a housing stock that that is of appropriate design and scale to fit within the community fabric.	X	X	X	X	X	X
7	Encourage innovative residential development that incorporates in the site planning process the preservation of natural resource systems and compatibility with surrounding land use conditions.	X	X	X	X	X	X
8	Protect the character and value of existing established neighborhoods through design measures incorporated into new neighboring development such as special setbacks, buffering, and density considerations.	X	X	X	X	X	X
9	Provide opportunities for housing that meet the particular needs of elderly residents including assisted living facilities, nursing homes, senior apartments and retirement communities.	X	X	X	X	X	X
10	Encourage the rehabilitation of blighted homes and residential properties.	X	X	X	X	X	X
11	Encourage “traditional neighborhood design” (TND) in association with village and similar higher density areas, including grid street patterns, sidewalks, and street trees.	X	X	X	X	X	X

CASS COUNTY MASTER PLAN

July 1, 2014

Local Participating Municipalities Commercial Services, Industry and Economic Stability		Pokagon	Silver Creek.	Volinia	Wayne	Edwardsburg	Vandalia
	GOAL: <i>Enhance economic stability through a mix of commercial and industrial uses that is appropriate for the character of the community.</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X
OBJECTIVES							
1	Limit industrial growth, in recognition of the more appropriate locations elsewhere in regional urban centers where public facilities and services and existing land use patterns are most supportive.	X	X	X	X	X	X
2	Consider available commercial services in nearby communities and regional urban centers in determining the appropriate extent and character of new local commercial growth.	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	Provide opportunities for a mix of commercial uses that predominantly target local day-to-day consumer needs and the highway traveler, in convenient and clustered locations.	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Guide commercial and industrial development to clustered locations according to such factors as public services/facilities, road infrastructure, access and visibility, and the presence of similar development patterns.	X	X	X	X	X	X
5	Discourage the encroachment of commercial and industrial uses into residentially planned areas except under limited and controlled circumstances such as in the case of home occupations and planned mixed-use areas.	X	X	X	X	X	X
6	Encourage unified and consolidated business centers rather than the creation and incremental expansion of strip commercial corridors.	X	X	X	X	X	X
7	Encourage commercial, industrial and other non-residential development in character with surrounding uses and the community as a whole, through such features as building size, height and architecture; setbacks; signage; and landscaping/screening.	X	X	X	X	X	X
8	Encourage safe and efficient access and circulation including minimizing parking lot/service drives and conflicting turning patterns, and enhancing non-motorized travel to and through business centers.	X	X	X	X	X	X
9	Discourage business districts defined as parking corridors through innovative site planning.	X	X	X	X	X	X
10	Encourage business districts that are visually and spatially inviting as a place to gather, including streetscape improvements, public event spaces, and outdoor eating.	X	X	X	X	X	X
11	Market the assets of the community as a means of attracting desirable development.	X	X	X	X	X	X
12	Support and coordinate economic development efforts with the county and other regional entities.	X	X	X	X	X	X

CASS COUNTY MASTER PLAN

July 1, 2014

Local Participating Municipalities Transportation and Mobility		Pokagon	Silver Creek.	Volinia	Wayne	Edwardsbur	Vandalia
	GOAL: <i>Maintain and enhance a transportation and mobility network that responds to the particular character of the community and its local needs, with emphasis on safe and efficient movement for all modes of travel including vehicular, pedestrian, and other non-motorized options.</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X
	OBJECTIVES						
1	Implement access management measures designed to minimize congestion and hazards along road corridors including intersections.	X	X	X	X	X	X
2	Correlate the location of higher traffic generating uses with enhanced road infrastructure and access management measures.	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	Undertake a non-motorized circulation plan that identifies a long range strategy for providing safe and convenient non-motorized travel, and which can be implemented as financial resources permit.	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Require development plans to incorporate safe and efficient opportunities for non-motorized travel through the development site.	X	X	X	X	X	X
5	Evaluate development plans according to the manner in which vehicular and non-motorized travel is coordinated with adjacent and nearby facilities, and the fostering of parcel-to-parcel and regional travel.	X	X	X	X	X	X
6	Work with the Cass County Road Commission to maximize road improvement and maintenance efforts, targeting road segments of greatest need in coordination with the planned future land use pattern.	X	X	X	X	X	X
7	Adopt context-sensitive complete streets standards.					X	X
8	Work with the Cass County Road Commission and Michigan Department of Transportation to implement context-sensitive "complete streets" measures as financial resources permit.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Local Participating Municipalities Community Facilities and Services		Pokagon	Silver Creek.	Volinia	Wayne	Edwardsbur	Vandalia
	GOAL: <i>Provide community services and facilities in a manner consistent with the character of the community, the current and anticipated needs of residents, and the existing and planned land use pattern.</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X
	OBJECTIVES						
1	Evaluate any consideration of the introduction or expansion of public sewer or water service according to, in part, the planned future land use pattern for the community and an analysis of all available options including cooperative agreements with neighboring communities and regional entities.	X	X	X	X	X	X
2	Ensure adequate storm water management as part of site development efforts to minimize demands on off-site public storm water systems.	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	Evaluate development plans according to, in part, measures to protect public health, safety and welfare in association with flood potential.	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Require fire protection infrastructure for development that is of such size and/or intensity that the infrastructure is deemed critical for public health, safety and welfare.	X	X	X	X	X	X
5	Continually monitor local attitudes about police protection, fire protection, and emergency services, and explore financially feasible options to enhance services where deficiencies may be identified.	X	X	X	X	X	X

CASS COUNTY MASTER PLAN

July 1, 2014

6	Continually monitor local attitudes about the availability and quality of recreation opportunities and services.	X	X	X	X	X	X
7	Should sufficient public sentiment warrant, develop and maintain an MDNR-approved recreation plan that provides eligibility to compete for state and federal recreation grant dollars.	X	X	X	X	X	X
8	Encourage recreation facilities in close proximity to population areas, and as part of residential development projects, to provide close-to-home opportunities.	X	X	X	X	X	X
9	Coordinate efforts with local communities to provide recreation opportunities and programs in a manner that is cost-effective and responsive to local needs.	X	X	X	X	X	X

See also "Natural Resources, Open Spaces and the Environment"
for additional objectives having bearing on recreation.

Local Participating Municipalities Regional Coordination		Pokagon	Silver Creek	Volinia	Wayne	Edwardsbur	Vandalia
	<i>GOAL:</i> Make land use, preservation and public services decisions in a manner that recognizes the community's position within the larger region and strives to encourage compatibility across community borders.	X	X	X	X	X	X
	OBJECTIVES						
1	Maintain a meaningful communication program with neighboring communities to discuss local and area-wide public facilities and services needs, land use conditions and trends, and planning issues.	X	X	X	X	X	X
2	Work with neighboring communities to explore opportunities to address shared concerns and aspirations in a unified and cost-effective manner.	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	Enter into shared service agreements with neighboring communities where determined mutually beneficial.	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Strive to identify a planned future land use pattern that recognizes neighboring land use policies and encourages compatibility.	X	X	X	X	X	X
5	Encourage neighboring communities to comment on local projects of regional impact.	X	X	X	X	X	X