

CHAPTER 6: GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to establish the goals, objectives and strategies that will guide future growth and development in a manner that will reflect the community's unique character. In developing community goals and objectives, it is important to analyze demographics, housing, economic conditions, services and facilities, cultural and natural resources and existing land use. Preceding chapters of this master plan have documented the above characteristics.

An equally important step in developing goals is community input. The Planning Commission sponsored a community-wide workshop held at the Harrisville Harbor that was attended by 30 people. Participants were first asked to identify assets in the City of Harrisville. Each participant was given multiple opportunities to state assets that the City of Harrisville should strive to protect or expand. Next, participants were asked to identify negative issues about the City. Each asset or issue was recorded on flip charts, and then participants were given three stickers to vote on their top three assets and top three issues. Lastly, participants were asked to state their vision of the City of Harrisville in 20 years. With guidance from the community input effort, the Planning Commission established the goals and objectives identified in this chapter.



Assets

The following four assets received the most votes by participants in the community input session:

- 1. Harrisville's quiet, safe, and friendly small town atmosphere**
- 2. Community events**
- 3. Harrisville Harbor**
- 4. Areas for walking and biking**

The people in the City of Harrisville value living in a small town that is quiet, safe, and friendly. The feeling of a sense of family and that the residents are part of a team that become involved in the community are part of the intangible assets that makes Harrisville a great place to live. Residents also highly value their Harbor and the feeling of being a "harbortown". Water resources play an important role in the history and present character of Harrisville. The recreational amenities in and around Harrisville are important assets to the residents. The availability of parks, a golf course, the walking/bike path, quilt trail, open spaces, and the lighthouse is important. In addition, community events are listed as one of the top assets of the City. Residents also value their historic buildings including the craftmaker's cabin and train depot. Community facilities, green spaces, family-owned businesses, and compact growth round out the reasons people live in Harrisville.

The following list includes all assets listed at the community input session. The number in parentheses indicates the number of votes the item received.

- Small town character: quiet, safe, friendly (16)
- Events (12)
- Harbor – great reputation (10)
- Walking/biking (8)
- Residents – teamwork (4)
- Library (4)
- Train Depot (4)
- History of ponds – protect (3)
- Mill pond (3)
- Opportunity to become involved (3)
- Newspaper (2)
- Lake (2)
- Local entrepreneurship (2)
- Family atmosphere/small town (1)
- Green strip on Main St. (1)
- Older citizens – expertise (1)
- Trees (1)
- Fireworks – July 4th (1)
- Train (1)
- Bike Path (1)
- Airport (1)
- Quaintness (1)
- 23/72 intersection – location (1)
- Water tower (1)
- Beautiful town
- Parks
- Compact growth
- Traffic Light
- Craftmaker’s cabin
- Open spaces
- Proximity to lighthouse
- Quilt Trail
- Sense of family
- Family owned businesses
- Low taxes
- Incubator
- Green space between buildings
- Churches
- County seat/sheriff
- Look of “Harbortown”
- No subdivision – “character”
- Historical buildings
- Open space around Court House
- Golf course proximity

Issues

Concerns about community infrastructure (such as sidewalks and water and sewer services) and intergovernmental planning are foremost in residents’ minds when asked what issues they feel need to be addressed in Harrisville. In fact, other community issues raised include the need of beautification on Main Street, improved fire protection, lack of public beach access in the City, harbor maintenance, playground improvement, lack of police presence, side street maintenance, lack of curb and gutter, lack of zoning standards, and the lack of public parking. The local economy is also foremost in the minds of residents. The lack of youth activities and the need for a community center are also issues in Harrisville.

The following four issues received the most votes by participants in the community input session:

- 1. Sidewalks in need of repair; nonexistent sidewalks**
- 2. Lack of County Planning/Intergovernmental Planning**
- 3. Water & sewer repairs needed**
- 4. Lack of youth activities**

The following list includes all issues listed at the community input session. The number in parentheses indicates the number of votes the item received.

- Sidewalks – repair and addition (15)
- Lack of county planning – need intergovernmental planning (9)
- Water lines – need repair/sewer repairs (7)
- Lack of youth activities (teens) (7)
- Lack of public beach access (free access) (6)
- Need to improve fire protection (4)
- No place for older citizens/youth to meet (need community center) (4)
- Drainage concerns (4)
- Need active DDA/recruit businesses/promotion (4)
- Ponds/fish hatchery (4)
- No jobs for younger people (3)
- Empty Buildings – Main St. (3)
- Poor industrial base (3)
- Lakefront owners – need to band together (neighborhood group) (2)
- Side Street maintenance (2)
- Money to pay (2)
- Harbor maintenance – DNR/Boat launch (trim growth) (1)
- Curb & gutter – lack of – throughout city (1)
- Zoning Standards – commercial (1)
- 24 hour medical clinic (1)
- Lack of public parking lots (1)
- Signage – wayfinding (1)
- Main St. – needs beautification
- Fear of change
- Economy based on tourism – need economic base
- Need to make hard decisions/compromises
- Geese in harbor
- Vandalism
- Lack of police presence
- Communication – Council/workers
- Cell Service
- Playground improvement
- Mosquitoes
- Building design (“look”) facade improvement
- Signage - standards

The City of Harrisville in the Year 2029

Visioning is a process to help community members imagine, describe and attain a preferred future for their community. Participants were asked respond to the following visioning exercise. To encourage a free flow of ideas, answers were not constrained by present situations. Participants had opportunities to present their ideas in an open, informal setting.

“Imagine you have friends or relatives visiting in the year 2029. You decide to take them for a tour to show off the wonderful community in which you live. You take a drive through the City; admire the beauty of the landscape and marvel at the development; you stop at a park for a picnic. Much of what you see and hear pleases you, and some activities surprise you. Describe the 2029 future that you envision. Consider the physical environment (residential, commercial and industrial development); the natural resources (forests, water, open space and farmlands); and community facilities and services.”

Descriptive Summary of Participants Comments

“Harrisville has retained the same quaintness, uniqueness, and caring nature that it has had for many years. The town itself has become a year-round tourism destination. The upgraded parks system attracts family gatherings and picnickers and the harbor building has been expanded to accommodate the need due to the comeback of the fishing industry in the area. A Great Lakes cruise ship makes regular stops in Harrisville. Tour buses also regularly bring visitors to town. A new recreation center houses year-round activities for all ages. A new pavilion at the harbor and a new community center have allowed an expanded variety of community events and the establishment of a vibrant arts community. A public beach attracts summer tourist while the snowmobile trail through town attracts winter tourists which keep local businesses thriving all year long. The hotels

in town are always booked. In fact, there are no empty commercial buildings in the city. Main Street is vibrant and bustling with diverse shops and other businesses. The look itself has been revamped to be visually appealing due to new design standards that have been put in place. Historic buildings have been preserved including the Train Depot. The local economy has been diversified to include not only tourism-related businesses but small, clean industrial operations as well. The availability of high speed internet and Wi-Fi has allowed entrepreneurs to expand the knowledge economy base in Harrisville allowing more people to work at home. This diversification has all been obtained while being able to preserve the natural resources and environmental quality within the community. The City itself has invested in its community facilities. The streets, sidewalks, curbs are maintained making it a pedestrian-friendly community. Utilities have been relocated underground to make the town more visually appealing. Other community improvements include a public transportation system, better educational facilities, increased use of the updated airport, and an expanded and upgraded fire department. All of the changes have resulted in a town that has adjusted to modern development and the new economy to better the lives of its citizens, but has retained the same quality of life and core values that makes people want to live in Harrisville.”

The following list includes all vision items listed at the community input session:

- Empty buildings filled with year-round business
- Fishing industry comeback
- Capital improvements schedule
- Youth activities
- Better shops on Main St.
- People stay – work at home – new opportunities
- Community center (train depot example)
- Lots of tourists – year round tourism
- Quaintness, uniqueness, community that takes care of residents
- Streets, curbs, nice, maintained, clean
- Town is destination
- Vibrant downtown
- Hotel
- Snowmobile trail in town
- Winter tourism
- Age & Social diversity
- Better, newer fire department
- Recreation Center, swimming pool
- 3rd dock at harbor – filled
- Depot preserved – community building – next door to rec. center, fitness center, martial arts, walking
- Harbor – pavilion (sides & roof can be removed) (eliminate need for tent)
- Same town, but adjust to modern dev.
- Nat. resources, wildlife protection
- More educational experiences/better schools
- Public beach
- Upgrade parks system – picnic tables, family gatherings
- New harbor bldg. revamped and expansion due to need
- Vibrant arts community in community center
- High speed internet at reasonable cost
- Diversified economy
- Wi-fi
- Stay the way it is – keep character of town
- Radio tower
- Occupied buildings – uniform look
- Diverse business
- Underground utilities
- Great Lakes Cruise Ship
- Passenger Service
- Harbor view – not blocked by vegetation
- Public Transportation System
- Trees
- Sidewalks – good
- Good air quality
- Involved community – steer vision of county – more people involved in government, civic groups collaborating
- Use for factory – jobs (community center ex)
- Use of wood products – small industry
- Small industry on factory site
- Wetlands – land conservancy (protected)
- Tax incentive program
- Paved runway at airport; hangers; full time employee

Goals & Objectives

GENERAL CITY GOALS
PRESERVE THE UNIQUENESS OF HARRISVILLE-- by protecting the waterfront setting, small town character, and maintaining an overall clean, healthy and well maintained living environment.
PROTECT THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE of City residents by coordinating land use, applying zoning standards, and providing efficient public services.
PROMOTE A DIVERSE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT and provide opportunities for new commercial and light industrial businesses.
PROTECT AND PRESERVE HISTORIC areas, sites, buildings, structures, and features.
ENCOURAGE CULTURAL FACILITIES AND EVENTS that meet the diverse needs of the entire community.
ENCOURAGE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES that meet the needs of a diverse age group.
UPGRADE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE to meet the needs of City residents.

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: *Guide future development in a manner that will protect existing development; preserve community character; and conserve natural resources and environment, yet will meet the long-term needs of the community.*

- Encourage creative design and planning techniques which produce visual harmony while preserving special features and protecting vital natural resources.
- Encourage planned land uses in coordination with public utility, facility, and service improvement programs.
- Require planning review of the following types of public projects similar to:
 - a. The opening, closing, vacating, widening, or extension of roads.
 - b. The acquisition or enlargement of any park, playground or public open space.
 - c. The construction, acquisition, or authorization of public buildings or structures.
- Site Plan Review:
 - a. Revise site plan review process which takes into account the character of the City.
 - b. Incorporate standards in the site plan review process to encourage development with minimal negative environmental impact to protect land, air, and water resources.
 - c. Amend the site plan review process to assure consistent application of the zoning ordinance.
- Require roadside and open space buffer strips of vegetation, both to enhance the visual image of the City and to protect the land uses adjacent to the roadway from traffic noise, dirt and glare.
- Require buffers like the construction of berms or vegetative screening to shield residential properties from adjacent non-residential development.
- Research innovative development options to increase the tax base while maintaining the essential character of the community.
- Revise Zoning Ordinance to be easily understandable, innovative, up-to-date and fit the City vision.
- Encourage general public, civic organizations and all commissions to provide input for City decisions.
- Control the location of new development by designating appropriate areas for new residential, commercial, light industrial and resort/recreational land uses.

OBJECTIVES CONTINUED:

- Establish landscape requirements for new development, such as appropriate setbacks, retention of green space, buffer zones between differing land uses, screened parking areas, and roadside landscaping.
- Improve regulations and standards to protect the community against high noise levels and exterior lighting glare.
- Develop waterfront regulations in the zoning ordinance that will set forth special requirements and standards for development in these sensitive areas.
- Enforce all City ordinances in a consistent and fair manner.
- Through the zoning ordinance, encourage new commercial development to have a consistent appearance, use landscaping and buffers, and share parking with adjacent businesses, and limit access points onto state highways.
- Develop signage standards in the Zoning Ordinance. Increase safety and reduce the visual impact of signs by controlling their size, number, illumination, and configuration.
- Develop innovative zoning techniques that allow for a mix of residential and commercial uses as well as an expansion of home-based business and cottage industry.
- Continue to work in coordination with Chamber of Commerce to achieve desirable growth and development in Harrisville.
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COMMUNITY CHARACTER

GOAL: Maintain the quality of life and small town character of Harrisville while adapting to the modern needs of residents.

OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage social, governmental, and economic practices which maintain the tranquil community character of Harrisville.
- Diversify employment opportunities for all age groups.
- Utilize the existing resources of Harrisville in a productive manner to maintain the community character and address problems.
- Protect and preserve the historic character of Harrisville.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

GOAL: *Protect and preserve natural resources.*

OBJECTIVES

- Encourage a land use pattern that is oriented to and respects the natural features and water resources of the area. Evaluate type and density of proposed developments based on soil suitability; slope of land; potential for ground water and surface water degradation and contamination; compatibility with adjacent land uses; and impacts to sensitive natural areas like wetlands, greenways and wildlife corridors.
- Evaluate the environmental impact of all new development.
- Protect land resources and water quality related to our lakes, streams and wetlands.
- Encourage the continued natural use of wetlands as groundwater recharge and stormwater holding areas.
- Protect shoreline areas from urban development impacts through conservation techniques like lakescaping, conservation easements and resource education programs.
- Maintain greenbelt areas adjacent to the lake, pond, streams, and wetlands to protect water quality and critical wildlife habitat.
- Establish regulations and standards necessary to protect and preserve the quality of the air from degradation due to fumes, odors, smoke, dust and other pollutants.
- Establish regulations and standards to protect the community against high noise levels and exterior lighting glare.
- Encourage the use of native plant species and naturalized landscape designs, where appropriate, to enhance the city's existing character.

WATERFRONT

GOAL: Emphasize the City's waterfront assets by coordinating and complementing private development while improving recreational opportunities, tourism, and the overall economy.

OBJECTIVES:

- Investigate the opportunities to develop a public beach access in the City limits.
- Encourage the creation of a lakefront/lakeview property owners association.
- Encourage and explore opportunities for recreational use of the waterfront such as kayaking, bird watching and walking.
- Retain and improve public water access sites for residents, seasonal residents and visitors.

GOAL: Maintain the high quality of the Harrisville Harbor for public use.

OBJECTIVES:

- Provide for public boat access, dockage, moorage, and parking.
- Continue to recognize that the harbor is under the jurisdiction of both DNR and City rules and regulations.
- Harbor development projects should consider the overall needs of the harbor vicinity and protection of the surrounding natural features.
- Maintain the harbor building and expand as need increases.
- Encourage appropriate vegetation maintenance to preserve scenic views.

RECREATION, PUBLIC LANDS, OPEN SPACE, & BEAUTIFICATION

GOAL: Preserve open space, preserve and improve access to public lands and water, expand and improve recreational trails and public parks for the enjoyment of residents, visitors and future generations, and engage in community beautification.

OBJECTIVES:

- Maintain an updated City Recreation Plan that identifies and prioritizes needed community recreational facilities.
- Support cooperative recreational planning and development with Harrisville Township, Alcona County, and the Michigan DNR.
- Preserve and maintain public recreation areas and access sites.
- Update and maintain playground equipment.
- Maintain a relationship with Harrisville State Park.
- Encourage the preservation of open spaces at strategic locations within the City.
- Identify and protect key scenic vistas.
- Pursue outside funding sources, such as grants, for land acquisition and recreational development.
- Work with local snowmobile groups and neighboring communities to establish designated route to enhance the winter recreational base in and around Harrisville.
- Work cooperatively with agencies, organizations and neighboring communities to expand non-motorized facilities, which link attractions and communities to trail segments within and outside of the City.
- Develop ordinance to address issues of ATVs, golf carts, and similar motorized vehicles.
- Designate Harrisville as a walkable/bikeable community.
- Coordinate with local service clubs to implement a community beautification program.
- Preserve and protect all healthy trees growing on public property or public rights-of-way and replace or add to the stock when needed.
- Support the continuance of the Alcona County Quilt Trail.
- Market the recreational amenities in and around Harrisville to residents and visitors
- Develop a signage/wayfinding program for recreational facilities.

GOVERNMENT

GOAL: *Provide services in an efficient and caring manner to meet the needs of the residents, property owners, business people and visitors.*

OBJECTIVES:

- Promote intergovernmental and regional cooperation on issues of mutual concern.
- Work cooperatively with Harrisville Township in providing guidance and input on zoning decisions that impact the City.
- Ensure a responsible fiscal policy and budget process to finance the City government.
- Promote the involvement of volunteers in the government process.
- Engage in public input regularly to ensure government is responsible to the people.
- Utilize the proactive master planning process as a check and balance on decision making.
- Maintain communication with the Department of Natural Resources to provide input into the usage and management of the public lands in the City.
- Research the feasibility of a City government website.
- Work cooperatively with all community organizations within and around Harrisville to meet the goals and objectives defined in this Master Plan.

INFRASTRUCTURE, COMMUNITY FACILITIES, & COMMUNITY SERVICES

GOAL: Improve and maintain the City's vehicular and pedestrian circulation routes, community facilities, programs and public utilities to accommodate the needs of residents and visitors.

OBJECTIVES:

- Improvements to the water and sewer system will be completed, as necessary, to provide adequate water and sewer services to users at a reasonable rate. These improvements shall include, but are not limited to, improving the placement and operability of water, sewer, and drainage systems with health, safety, efficiency and economy in mind.
- Encourage the efficient use of existing roadways and infrastructure.
- Maintain existing roadways and monitor traffic counts, parking and use patterns on a continuing basis for transportation planning.
- Plan for safe access and circulation of vehicles as well as pedestrians.
- Support the development of bicycle paths and pedestrian walkways.
- Engage in Main Street beautification.
- Develop a sidewalk improvement/maintenance plan.
- Develop a Capital Improvements Plan to address the long term needs of the City.
- Expand the location of curb and gutter throughout the City.
- Encourage the placement of utilities underground.
- Plan utility improvements to coincide with development, where possible.
- Support the expansion of public transportation.
- Encourage development of corridor plans for all primary transportation routes.
- Investigate possible locations for public parking areas.
- Implement a wayfinding signage program.
- Increase police presence when possible. Address issues of vandalism in the City.
- Improve fire protection in the City.
- Control nuisance animals around public buildings.

OBJECTIVES CONTINUED:

- Investigate the feasibility of a Community Center.
- Encourage the continuance of community events year round.
- Protect important community facilities such the library, craftmaker's cabin, and train depot.
- Encourage the development of youth and senior citizen activities.
- Encourage and work toward the development of affordable telecommunications options and wireless internet for City residents.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: Develop and promote the growth of a diverse economic base to serve the employment needs of the City and Region.

OBJECTIVES:

- Seek out and encourage the establishment of businesses that serve to fill gaps in the services needed in the City.
- Continue to improve recreational facilities within the City and make Harrisville a tourism destination.
- Promote year-round sustained tourism, i.e. spring, summer, fall and winter festivals and other activities that will draw people to the Harrisville area.
- Continue to be an active partner on the US-23 Heritage Route county committee and management council.
- Form public-private partnerships to improve the local economy.
- Strive to attract young people and young families to the Harrisville area and develop the goods, services, recreation and employment opportunities needed to retain them.
- Encourage home-based businesses in Harrisville.
- Encourage the expansion of the infrastructure (i.e. high speed internet) required to make Harrisville attractive to commercial, industrial, and home-based business.
- Encourage increased use and expansion of the airport.
- Investigate tax incentive programs.
- Seek out programs (such as brownfield redevelopment programs) to encourage efficient and responsible land use in Harrisville.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES/HOUSING

GOAL: Provide for suitable housing opportunities for all income levels and age groups and preserve and enhance existing neighborhood character.

OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage the development of housing to meet the needs of all household types and income groups.
- Encourage the maintenance of the existing housing stock and residential neighborhoods in good repair, appearance, usefulness and safety.
- Protect the residential neighborhoods from intrusion of incompatible uses.
- Plan medium- and high-density residential development only in those areas that are suitable for such use.
- Assist homeowners in preserving and maintaining older homes as owner-occupied, single family dwellings.

COMMERCIAL AREAS & ACTIVITIES

GOAL: Promote a varied business environment and foster growth and cooperation among area businesses to meet the needs of residents and tourists while preserving the natural environment and small town appeal.

OBJECTIVES:

- Promote a varied business environment, which meets both seasonal and year round needs.
- Concentrate commercial development in commercial areas.
- Maintain an identifiable central business district.
- Develop innovative planning and zoning techniques, such as design standards, to maintain the character of the City.
- Through the Zoning Ordinance, establish and enforce standards to require businesses to maintain an aesthetically desirable appearance.
- Establish greenbelt buffer and landscape regulations.
- Establish dimensional and construction standards for commercial development.
- Make parking (either private or public) needs a consideration for all expansions and new developments.
- Investigate a façade improvement program.
- Implement streetscape projects to increase the attractiveness of the commercial areas.
- Encourage entrepreneurial training programs to assist residents in starting and maintaining their own small businesses.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USES

GOAL: Encourage the retention of existing industries and establishment of new light industries to diversify the local economy.

OBJECTIVES:

- Ensure that industrial developments take place in an environmentally sensitive manner and are harmonious with the existing community.
- Encourage light factory industries and high tech industries that do not pollute the air, soil or water nor offend because of noise, odor, or visual impact, to locate in the designated industrial areas.
- Require adequate buffering and screening through appropriate landscaping and site design to minimize land use conflicts.