

## Fresh Coast Planning

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# MEMORANDUM

To: Laketown Township Planning Commission

From: Gregory L. Ransford, MPA

Date: November 13, 2018

Re: Proposed Master Plan Chapter Four, Chapter Five, and Chapter Six, Revised Master Plan Framework

Pursuant to the Laketown Township Master Plan Framework, attached for your review are drafts of proposed Chapter Four – Blue Star Highway, Chapter Five – Commercial Uses, and Chapter Six – Industrial Uses to update the Laketown Township Master Plan. As you know, the chapters have been designed to streamline the existing content, incorporate public contributions, eliminate unnecessary information, and revamp the format of the Plan into a denser and more useful document that is easy to reference. In addition, the four (4) existing master plan documents (the original 1991 Plan and subsequent amendments) will be combined into one (1) document as a result of this process.

The content for Chapter Four is primarily provided by the 2008 Master Plan amendment for the Blue Star Highway, coupled with results from the related public workshop. Chapters Five and Six contain several existing commercial and industrial provisions, along with our suggested language. As always, we have provided reference in bold parentheses to indicate the location from which existing language was incorporated. Beyond the restructuring of information, we have proposed a conclusion to the introduction of each of the chapters as well as additional Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies, where applicable, that are not found within the current plan documents.

Proposed additions are shown in bold text and proposed deletions are shown in strikethrough text. Additionally, a clean copy of the language is attached for your convenience. Given that a significant amount of the provisions for each chapter exist within the current Master Plan documents, we did not believe our previous memorandum synopsis of chapter content was necessary. Rather, below are our observations and findings regarding each chapter for your consideration.

### General Findings and Observations

#### *Chapter Four – Blue Star Highway*

- Recreational Traveler and Local/Area Resident – In four (4) separate locations throughout the chapter, the language indicates that the Blue Star Highway is meant to cater to the recreational traveler and local resident. It appears that the “recreational traveler” is intended to represent pedestrian recreation along pathways and other similar amenities. Given this and considering the recent brewery that was approved, is the Blue Star Highway also intended as a destination, beyond local residents and recreational travelers? In other words, does this terminology remain accurate?
- The 2008 Master Plan amendment for the Blue Star Highway suggests that a rural roadside image is maintained (i.e. tree preservation), as did workshop participants. As a result, that language is important to continue within the draft document. As noted during your October meeting, a method to achieve that image includes our example of the no-cut area along US-31 for the Wal-Mart in Grand Haven Charter Township.

- Strategies – Are the strategies accurate and/or should they be strengthened based on current zoning ordinance provisions? Rather than investigating the zoning ordinance language at length, we anticipate it is easier to ask this question. However, if needed, we will review the zoning ordinance content.

#### *Chapter Five – Commercial Uses*

- After reviewing the existing Master Plan documents, our impression is that the township seeks to focus commercial uses along the Blue Star Highway. As a result, the proposed Commercial Uses chapter is designed on that premise. In particular, we drafted the introduction to reflect the same.
- The current Master Plan documents reference appendix examples related to commercial uses. We do not believe those examples should apply to this chapter because we presume the vast majority of commercial development is intended to be along the Blue Star Highway and the examples are typical zoning ordinance provisions, which should be relocated to the zoning ordinance. That said, we included relevant provisions from the Blue Star Highway chapter as a “catch-all” for typical commercial attributes. However, we did not provide detailed language regarding commercial façade to maintain as basic as possible of a format so as to not promote the expansion of commercial uses (outside of the Blue Star Highway). In the instance the Planning Commission disagrees, with can add language specific to façade expectations.
- Eldean Property – While the Northern Laketown workshop examined home occupations, discussion regarding traditional commercial uses was limited. We understand that the Planning Commission recently reviewed a commercial land use proposal from Mr. Eldean and concluded that the master plan process might reveal better direction in that regard. We anticipate the Planning Commission will discuss this further in conjunction with this language and/or the Master Plan Map in January/February of 2019.

#### *Chapter Six – Industrial Uses*

- Given that no significant language exists within the current Master Plan documents, the Industrial Uses chapter generally reflects the language provided in the Commercial Uses chapter. While Appendix A from the current Master Plan documents was intended for commercial uses, some of the language was relevant to industrial uses and therefore utilized for content.
- Our comments provided above in the Chapter Five section of our memorandum apply the same to the Industrial Uses chapter (i.e. introduction, “catch-all” language, no promotion of industrial beyond Blue Star Highway)

#### *Master Plan Framework*

Also attached is a modified Master Plan Framework, which includes an updated timeline as well as a proposed Environmental Chapter. As you know, there is significant information throughout the current Master Plan documents regarding the environment. While we contemplated its incorporation within all of the various chapters, it seems more appropriate to create a separate chapter for those provisions. As a result, it is scheduled for your next meeting.

We will be prepared to discuss these items further at your November 26, 2018 meeting. If you have any questions, please let us know.

GLR  
Principal Planner

Attachments

## Chapter Four

### Blue Star Highway

#### Introduction

While the Blue Star Highway is the only area of the township planned for high-intensity commercial uses, the Planning Commission concluded **in 2008 and again during this 2019 Master Plan amendment process** that additional analyses and a detailed planning assessment of the corridor were necessary to address future development requests. ~~The majority of land use policies in the current master plan remain valid and address rural residential and lakefront development; however, the focus of this sub-area plan is to determine appropriate land use intensities along Blue Star Highway and the character and quality of its future development.~~ **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 1).** ~~The study area is bounded by 138<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the north, 60<sup>th</sup> Street on the east, 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the south and I-196 on the west. The corridor currently has over 156 acres of road frontage designated for non-residential use. While planned for future commercial development, little change has occurred at this time and therefore, the corridor can best be characterized as a blend of low intensity uses~~ **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 1).**

Blue Star is an important transportation corridor that provides access for local through-traffic and is served by an I-196 interchange to the popular tourist destinations of Saugatuck and Douglas. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 1).** Several unique business establishments (such as the Belvedere Inn, the Red Barn Playhouse and the Laketown Golf and Conference Center) are located to the east of the expressway in Lake-town Township and help give the corridor a unique character that distinguishes itself from Saugatuck Township **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 2).** The planning process and land use recommendations for **Blue Star Highway** ~~this sub-area plan~~ provide a sound foundation on which to base future decisions, while at the same time providing effective implementation measures that accurately reflect community desires **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 1).**

~~The future land use plan for the~~ Blue Star Corridor provides a progressive mix of commercial, office-professional, light industrial/service commercial, and residential land uses along the highway with service to local residents and recreational travelers. Recommended land use concepts carefully consider relationships to existing development and related densities, the architectural and design character found in many well-known establishments, and existing natural features, such as area wetlands. ~~The plan~~ **Blue Star Corridor** also proposes a number of capital improvements necessary to support, in measure, the proposed intensity of development and land uses, in order to enhance the **Blue Star Corridor** ~~sub-area~~, provide needed services and promote township-wide goals and objectives **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 7).**

#### Vision Statement

Discussions **in 2008** with the Planning Commission ~~during this sub-area update~~ have triggered a “fresh look” that ~~will~~ enhanced Laketown Township’s overall character. Throughout ~~the that~~

process the Planning Commission ~~has~~ discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the Blue Star Highway that must be acknowledged when considering future land uses. Many of the corridor's positive attributes include the low intensity of current land uses ~~as well as and~~ unique business establishments and their architectural character, such as the Belvedere Inn. Development constraints include the lack of utilities, a poorly configured highway interchange, and drainage issues **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 6).**

While existing conditions and development constraints have played a major role in helping to guide future corridor land uses, an important consideration has been the definition of "highway commercial" and what it means for the township. The term "highway commercial" ~~has~~ evolved during ~~this update~~ **the 2008 planning process** to mean those land uses that cater to the recreational traveler and area residents living along the southern boundary of Laketown Township **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 7). As a result, the following Vision Statement for the Blue Star Highway was created.**

### **Vision Statement**

~~The following vision statement expresses the goals established for the future development of the Blue Star Corridor:~~

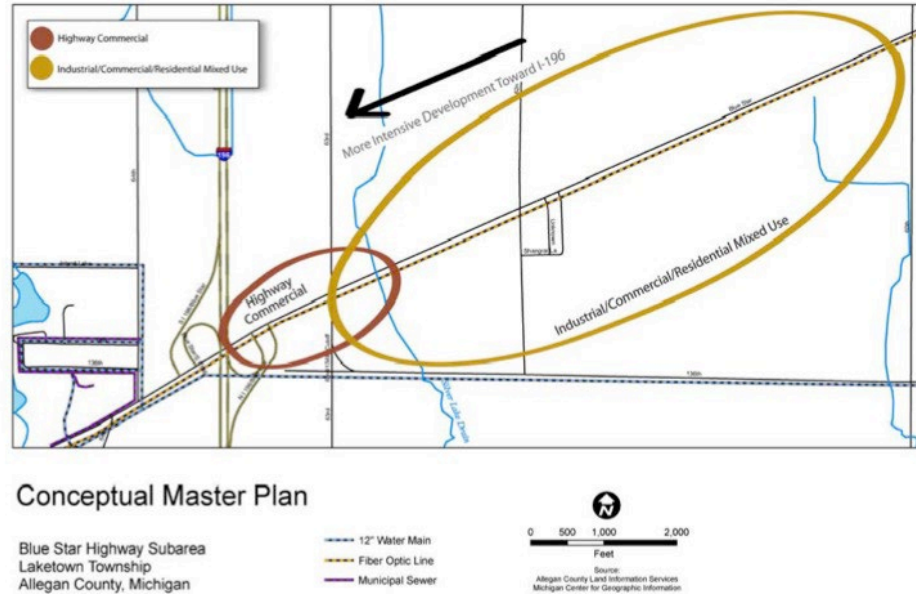
### **Vision Statement**

The Blue Star Highway is characterized by a pattern of high-quality commercial development adjacent to I-196 and mixed-use development along the length of the corridor that is interspersed with woods and open space. New development emphasizes a high-quality design standard that enriches the eclectic mix of architecture that exists along the corridor. Interconnected by shared-use paths with the rest of the community and the lakeshore, it also provides services to recreational travelers seeking a convenient, safe, tree-lined, and walkable temporary escape from the nearby interstate.

As a result of the 2018 Blue Star Highway public workshop, the 2008 findings of the Planning Commission, the Vision Statement, and various planning meetings, we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for Blue Star Highway uses. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies, accompanied by illustration examples, to achieve success are provided below. Further, a number of the goals, recommendations, and strategies are based on the following concepts.

### **Conceptual Basis**

~~Concept Description:~~ Property near the immediate interchange has great commercial potential because of its visibility and access; however area infrastructure and traffic flow must also be considered. In order to guide future growth in this area, three important factors were used to help formulate the concepts:



1. To recognize the importance of the corridor as it relates to Saugatuck and Douglas
2. To establish future land uses that are compatible with the character of the area, its aesthetics and the intensity of existing land uses
3. To evaluate the appropriate scale of development based in part on the type and level of the traffic it generates, the length of stay by business patrons, and the hours of business operation

The land use concept for Blue Star Highway promotes a high quality development pattern that will provide a consistent streetscape through site design and landscaping. The broad 'Olympic ring' areas proposed for the Blue Star Highway Corridor have been planned to capture general territories of use, which are further described below. These areas are designed as "zones of influence" for future land uses based on land capability and area character. While the type of use is important, the overall design and scale of the development has been emphasized. For example, site plan review should carefully consider the "fit" of new development with the surrounding landscape judging whether it meets landscaping and building character requirements described for that planned area. Other considerations should be site design, infrastructure capacity, stormwater management, street design, lighting, public spaces and signs (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 10).



### *Highway Commercial*

The area immediately east of the I-196 interchange along Blue Star Highway to the Silver Lake drain is proposed for Highway Commercial uses. It is critical that this commercial area be well designed since it serves as the gateway for the commercial establishments on Blue Star and provides the first impression of Laketown Township and nearby communities for area travelers. Its development potential is also influenced by the current design and capacity of the highway bridge crossing and access ramps. The development capacity of this corridor is clearly affected by a safe and adequate interface with I-196 **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 11)**.

### *Industrial/Commercial/Residential Mixed Use Area*

Land use intensity should decline moving away from the I-196 interchange into this area. This planning area begins east of 63<sup>rd</sup> and is envisioned as a transition area between relatively high intensity uses on the west to lower intensity uses to the east. Given the current configuration of long and narrow parcels along the highway, commercial and industrial uses should locate nearer the roadway and residential uses should locate towards the rear of any parcel. Actual **property** dimensions should allow sufficient room to accommodate a well-designed setting for development and also provide adequate separation from existing and future residential neighborhoods.

## Goals, Recommendations and Strategies

### *Goals*

- ~~The Township should strive to~~ Protect its environmental resources, such as **wetlands, tree lined streets, sand dunes** and other natural features, from the negative impacts of new development **(Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 4)**
- New commercial and industrial development should be directed to selected areas which have utility services or are planned to receive them **(Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 5)**
- Promote a unified streetscape plan to maintain a consistent ~~edge~~ **aesthetic theme** along the highway **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 8)**.
- Locate more intense commercial land uses **that generate higher traffic volumes** near the I-196 interchange ~~that generate higher traffic volumes~~ and transition to less intense land uses with lower traffic volumes away from the interchange **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 8)**.
- **Land use proposals should** reflect the eclectic character of existing commercial development located adjacent to the corridor, such as the Belvedere Inn and the Laketown Golf Center **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 8)**.
- Commercial uses within this area should ~~reflect a residential character and~~ be well integrated with surrounding development **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 14)**.
- Discourage ~~typical~~ strip commercial development that is **typically** characterized by utilitarian buildings with no architectural character or relationship to surrounding buildings. These frequently have minimally sized windows, large expanses of blank walls,

flat roofs, and their facades have no articulation, such as offsets or shadow lines. ~~Commercial buildings may, however, be freestanding single-use buildings or more traditional mixed-use structures with second floor residences and/or offices, such as lifestyle centers. (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 8).~~

- Residential **mixed** uses, in the form of single family dwellings ~~are planned~~, as well as within mixed-use buildings or as part of a multi-use development; **are encouraged**, however commercial land uses should emphasize low intensity ~~(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 14). Buildings should be constructed with an emphasis on architectural character; for example rooflines, window details, high quality building materials and buildings that orient to the street.~~
- An emphasis on interconnected drives and streets should be promoted so that internal ~~sub-area~~ trips can be made without compelling drivers to ~~go out~~ **exit and enter multiple times** onto the Blue Star Highway **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 16).**
- A system of integrated shared use paths should ~~also~~ be promoted for all new developments to provide safe walking routes to surrounding stores and uses **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 16).**
- ~~While the Highway Commercial areas~~ **Emphasize a more manicured landscape, this area should emphasize and**-onsite tree preservation. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 16).**
- Land use ~~should protect~~ **shall preserve** the rural ~~character~~ **nature** of the township **(Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 5)**
- ~~With so many township residents dependent on well water services, groundwater protection is a concern. Provide adequate~~ protection of the groundwater sources ~~is critical to the long term usefulness of a well system. To this end, consideration of a groundwater protection program for the township would be beneficial. The following steps may be followed to develop such a program. (Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 15)~~
- Preserve woodlands and wetlands which are useful as water retention and ground water discharge areas and which have important aesthetic and scenic value (Reworded and expanded from 1996 Master Plan Amendment, page 5)

### *Recommendations*

- ~~This includes~~ Architectural design ~~that pays particular attention to~~ **shall include varying** roof lines, building materials, ample windows and their placement, limiting large expanses of parking and ~~emphasizing~~ landscaping treatments, ~~reducing~~ the size of signs, especially free standing ~~ones~~ (rather, promoting signs that are attached to buildings), and ~~reducing~~ light levels and mounting heights for light fixtures **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 8).**





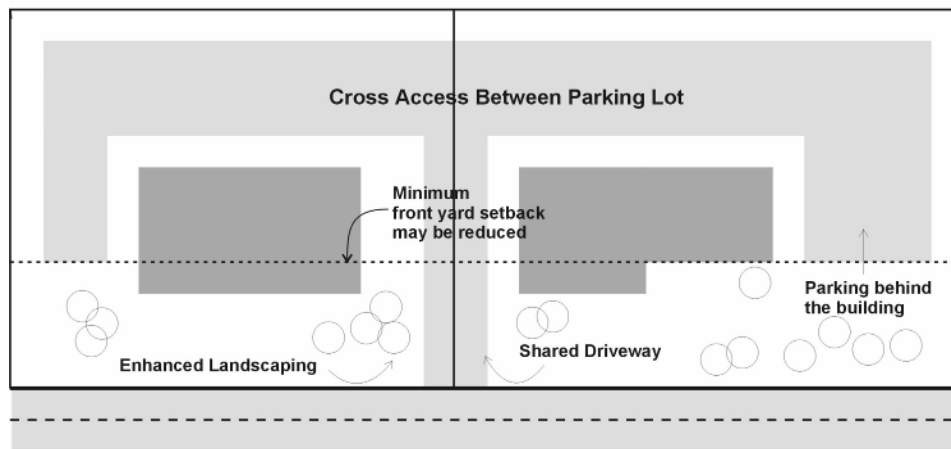
- Parking should be set back from the highway and buffered by landscaping. While uses may change along the highway, the consistent application of parking and landscaping will provide a theme of 'rural roadside' character. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 8).**



- ~~Provide Accommodate and encourage pedestrian access within a site and between sites and shielded lighting that does not overpower or over illuminate.~~ **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).**
- ~~Provide Accommodate and encourage pedestrian access and shielded lighting that does not overpower or over-illuminate.~~ **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).**
- Uses **should include** innovative storm water management techniques (such as green roofs and permeable pavement) **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).**
- Promote and expand ~~the~~ tree planting along Blue Star Highway. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).**
- Interconnect service drives to improve traffic distribution and to promote access management along Blue Star Highway. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).**
  - Interconnected service drives and properly spaced driveways are crucial to safe and efficient development along Blue Star Highway given its status as a county primary highway. Any new access has the potential to create traffic safety problems if not properly planned and ~~sited~~ **sited** given the close proximity of the interchange. Current access management standards for this area recommend very limited primary access on Blue Star Highway with secondary access from side streets. Within the Highway Commercial area, this is especially important. New



internal streets and drives should line up with existing intersections, such as along 63<sup>rd</sup> Street. Traffic calming measures to slow traffic, including a landscaped median, should be explored. When fully developed, a traffic signal may be necessary at major intersections to provide safe access to Blue Star Highway. A shared use path should also be promoted along the entire corridor to provide safe routes to surrounding stores, the broader community and regional destinations (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 12).



- Highway commercial development should cater to the recreational traveler and local residents and provide convenient commercial facilities such as hotels, shopping and service businesses in a safe and walkable environment. In general, Highway Commercial uses should encourage commercial uses that cater to a broad market area and may include retail stores, hotels and motels, restaurants, and personal service establishments (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 11).
- Interconnected service drives and properly spaced driveways are crucial to safe and efficient development along Blue Star Highway given its status as a county primary highway. Any new access has the potential to create traffic safety problems if not properly planned and sighted given the close proximity of the interchange. Current access management standards for this area recommend very limited primary access on Blue Star Highway with secondary access from side streets. Within the Highway Commercial area, this is especially important. New internal streets and drives should line up with existing intersections, such as along 63<sup>rd</sup> Street. Traffic calming measures to slow traffic, including a landscaped median, should be explored. When fully developed, a traffic signal may be necessary at major intersections to provide safe access to Blue Star Highway. A shared use path should also be promoted established along the entire corridor to provide safe routes to surrounding stores, the broader community, and regional destinations (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 12).



- ~~Current Site development and landscape guidelines recommend new development shall be screened from roadway views and the master plan endorses techniques to help hide parking lots, including through a combination of trees, shrubs, and berms or other rural character or open space elements. This will be especially important in the Highway Commercial area, since tree preservation is less likely given the higher intensity of possible land uses. As a result, yards with highway frontage should emphasize landscaped parking lots and allow roadside views to showcase buildings and landscaping. (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 13).~~



- Prior to considering major development an extended public utility system or individual private systems must be evaluated based on their ability to adequately service the existing and future needs along the corridor in a cost efficient and coordinated manner. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 13).**
- Innovative storm water management techniques, such as rain gardens and porous pavement should ~~also be utilized encouraged~~ to mitigate parking lot runoff into area wetlands and drains. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 13).**
- Adjacent residential neighborhoods ~~and uses~~ must be protected from the potential negative impacts of employment areas such as the scale of development and buildings, noise, odors, ~~and~~ air quality, traffic, and objectionable views **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 15).**

- ~~This includes~~ Integrating commercial development with access to adjacent residential neighborhoods, **where conflicts do not exist (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 16).**
- ~~Since the corridor is significantly wooded in this area,~~ **Maintain** a natural screen **along the corridor** for new development **is possible (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 16).**
- Signs, architecture, and site features such as fences, should be compatible with rural character and reflect a rural vernacular. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 16).**
- ~~Residential uses, in the form of single family dwellings are planned, as well as within mixed-use buildings or as part of a multi-use development; however commercial land uses should emphasize low intensity.~~ **Mixed-use** buildings should be constructed with an emphasis on architectural character; for example rooflines, window details, high quality building materials and buildings that orient to the street **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 14).**
- ~~Low intensity commercial includes small scale retail establishments, services and businesses that have a rural character and that typically serve immediate neighborhoods or are seasonal operations. Low to medium density residential (up to 3 units/acre) would also be permitted. Residential development should, however, cluster homes on smaller lots leaving open space to serve as neighborhood parks. These Parks should be clearly visible, front on residential streets and be well integrated with surrounding homes. Small, disjointed and "leftover" open spaces that serve little purpose should be avoided.~~ **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 14-15).**
- ~~The potential impacts of New utility lines should be buried through the township should be determined.~~ **(Moved from 1991, Goals and Objectives, page 5)**

### *Strategies*

- ~~The township should use~~ **Adopt or enhance** appropriate ordinances to ~~implement the goal of preserving~~ **implement** natural features and ~~determine other methods of maintaining and enhancing the unique natural features of the township.~~ **(Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 8)**
- ~~Finally, development~~ **or strengthening** of regulations applicable to groundwater protection are necessary. These include zoning requirements for site plan review, secondary containment of storage areas for potentially hazardous materials, and specific provisions for the storage of hazardous materials. **(Moved from 1991, Natural Features pg. 15)**
- Permit possible development bonuses and allow increases in the amount of commercial land area if significant amounts of residential uses have been accommodated within a development **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).**
- ~~Use~~ **Require** creative architectural design solutions (such as vertically integrated mixed uses and two to three story commercial buildings); and ~~by using~~ **use of** quality building materials, design details and finishes (such as brick, stone and metal). **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).**

- Operations and activities such as loading and unloading should be limited after dark. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 15).**
- Promote the development of mixed land uses, including residential, office, commercial, and possible light industrial by employing a PUD ordinance that permits flexibility. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).**
- Requirements for building and site design should be developed and address such things as: minimum parcel depth; building materials; window openings as a percentage of a building facade; articulation of facades to avoid large expanses of blank walls; location and design of refuse storage areas; location and screening of service and delivery areas; storm water management; parking lot design; lighting; ~~landscape~~ **landscaping**, grading and screening; signs; and site access. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 15).**

## Chapter Four

### Blue Star Highway

#### Introduction

While the Blue Star Highway is the only area of the township planned for high-intensity commercial uses, the Planning Commission concluded in 2008 and again during this 2019 Master Plan amendment process that additional analyses and a detailed planning assessment of the corridor were necessary to address future development requests. While planned for future commercial development, little change has occurred at this time and therefore, the corridor can best be characterized as a blend of low intensity uses.

Blue Star is an important transportation corridor that provides access for local through-traffic and is served by an I-196 interchange to the popular tourist destinations of Saugatuck and Douglas. Several unique business establishments (such as the Belvedere Inn, the Red Barn Playhouse and the Laketown Golf and Conference Center) are located to the east of the expressway in Laketown Township and help give the corridor a unique character that distinguishes itself from Saugatuck Township. The planning process and land use recommendations for Blue Star Highway provide a sound foundation on which to base future decisions, while at the same time providing effective implementation measures that accurately reflect community desires.

The Blue Star Corridor provides a progressive mix of commercial, light industrial/service commercial, and residential land uses along the highway with service to local residents and recreational travelers. Recommended land use concepts carefully consider relationships to existing development and related densities, the architectural and design character found in many well-known establishments, and existing natural features, such as area wetlands. The Blue Star Corridor also proposes a number of capital improvements necessary to support, in measure, the proposed intensity of development and land uses, in order to enhance the Blue Star Corridor, provide needed services and promote township- wide goals.

#### Vision Statement

Discussions in 2008 with the Planning Commission triggered a “fresh look” that enhanced Laketown Township’s overall character. Throughout that process the Planning Commission discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the Blue Star Highway that must be acknowledged when considering future land uses. Many of the corridor’s positive attributes include the low intensity of current land uses, as well as unique business establishments and their architectural character, such as the Belvedere Inn. Development constraints include the lack of utilities, a poorly configured highway interchange, and drainage issues.

While existing conditions and development constraints have played a major role in helping to guide future corridor land uses, an important consideration has been the definition of “highway commercial” and what it means for the township. The term “highway commercial” evolved

during the 2008 planning process to mean those land uses that cater to the recreational traveler and area residents living along the southern boundary of Laketown Township. As a result, the following Vision Statement for the Blue Star Highway was created.

#### Vision Statement

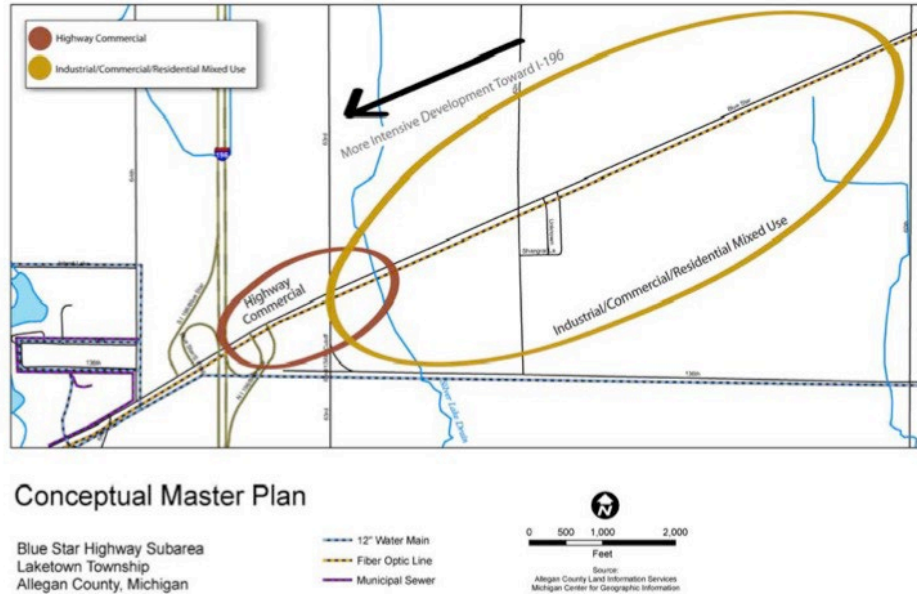
The Blue Star Highway is characterized by a pattern of high-quality commercial development adjacent to I-196 and mixed-use development along the length of the corridor that is interspersed with woods and open space. New development emphasizes a high-quality design standard that enriches the eclectic mix of architecture that exists along the corridor. Interconnected by shared-use paths with the rest of the community and the lakeshore, it also provides services to recreational travelers seeking a convenient, safe, tree-lined, and walkable temporary escape from the nearby interstate.

As a result of the 2018 Blue Star Highway public workshop, the 2008 findings of the Planning Commission, the Vision Statement, and various planning meetings, we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for Blue Star Highway uses. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies, accompanied by illustration examples, to achieve success are provided below. Further, a number of the goals, recommendations, and strategies are based on the following concepts.

#### Conceptual Basis

Property near the immediate interchange has great commercial potential because of its visibility and access; however area infrastructure and traffic flow must also be considered. In order to guide future growth in this area, three important factors were used to help formulate the concepts:

1. To recognize the importance of the corridor as it relates to Saugatuck and Douglas
2. To establish future land uses that are compatible with the character of the area, its aesthetics and the intensity of existing land uses
3. To evaluate the appropriate scale of development based in part on the type and level of the traffic it generates, the length of stay by business patrons, and the hours of business operation



The land use concept for Blue Star Highway promotes a high quality development pattern that will provide a consistent streetscape through site design and landscaping. The broad ‘Olympic ring’ areas proposed for the Blue Star Highway Corridor have been planned to capture general territories of use, which are further described below. These areas are designed as “zones of influence” for future land uses based on land capability and area character. While the type of use is important, the overall design and scale of the development has been emphasized. For example, site plan review should carefully consider the “fit” of new development with the surrounding landscape judging whether it meets landscaping and building character requirements described for that planned area. Other considerations should be site design, infrastructure capacity, stormwater management, street design, lighting, public spaces and signs.



### *Highway Commercial*

The area immediately east of the I-196 interchange along Blue Star Highway to the Silver Lake drain is proposed for Highway Commercial uses. It is critical that this commercial area be well designed since it serves as the gateway for the commercial establishments on Blue Star and provides the first impression of Laketown Township and nearby communities for area travelers.



Its development potential is also influenced by the current design and capacity of the highway bridge crossing and access ramps. The development capacity of this corridor is clearly affected by a safe and adequate interface with I-196.

#### *Industrial/Commercial/Residential Mixed Use Area*

Land use intensity should decline moving away from the I-196 interchange into this area. This planning area begins east of 63<sup>rd</sup> and is envisioned as a transition area between relatively high intensity uses on the west to lower intensity uses to the east. Given the current configuration of long and narrow parcels along the highway, commercial and industrial uses should locate nearer the roadway and residential uses should locate towards the rear of any parcel. Actual property dimensions should allow sufficient room to accommodate a well-designed setting for development and also provide adequate separation from existing and future residential neighborhoods.

### **Goals, Recommendations and Strategies**

#### *Goals*

- Protect environmental resources, such as wetlands, tree lined streets, and other natural features, from the negative impacts of new development
- New commercial and industrial development should be directed to selected areas which have utility services or are planned to receive them
- Promote a unified streetscape plan to maintain a consistent aesthetic theme along the highway
- Locate more intense commercial land uses that generate higher traffic volumes near the I-196 interchange and transition to less intense land uses with lower traffic volumes away from the interchange
- Land use proposals should reflect the eclectic character of existing commercial development located adjacent to the corridor, such as the Belvedere Inn and the Laketown Golf Center
- Commercial uses within this area should be well integrated with surrounding development
- Discourage strip commercial development that is typically characterized by utilitarian buildings with no architectural character or relationship to surrounding buildings. These frequently have minimally sized windows, large expanses of blank walls, flat roofs, and their facades have no articulation, such as offsets or shadow lines.
- Residential mixed uses, in the form of single family dwellings, as well as within mixed-use buildings or as part of a multi-use development are encouraged, however commercial land uses should emphasize low intensity
- An emphasis on interconnected drives and streets should be promoted so that internal trips can be made without compelling drivers to exit and enter multiple times onto the Blue Star Highway
- A system of integrated shared use paths should be promoted for all new developments to provide safe walking routes to surrounding stores and uses

- Emphasize a more manicured landscape and onsite tree preservation
- Land use shall preserve rural character
- Provide adequate protection of groundwater sources
- Preserve woodlands and wetlands which are useful as water retention and ground water discharge areas and which have important aesthetic and scenic value

### *Recommendations*

- Architectural design shall include varying roof lines, building materials, ample windows and their placement, limit large expanses of parking and emphasize landscaping treatments, reduce the size of signs, especially free standing (rather, promoting signs that are attached to buildings), and reduce light levels and mounting heights for light fixtures

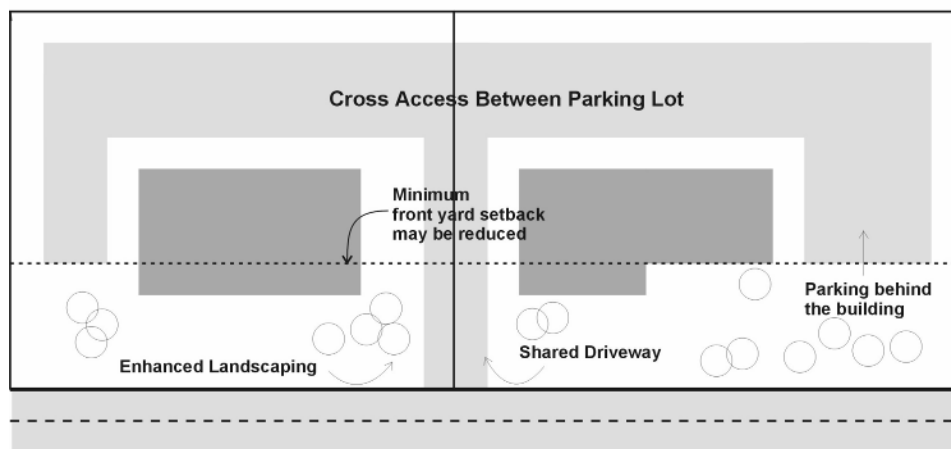


- Parking should be set back from the highway and buffered by landscaping. While uses may change along the highway, the consistent application of parking and landscaping will provide a theme of 'rural roadside' character.



- Provide pedestrian access within a site and between sites
- Provide shielded lighting that does not overpower or over-illuminate
- Uses should include innovative storm water management techniques (such as green roofs and permeable pavement)
- Promote and expand tree planting along Blue Star Highway.

- Interconnect service drives to improve traffic distribution and to promote access management along Blue Star Highway
  - Interconnected service drives and properly spaced driveways are crucial to safe and efficient development along Blue Star Highway given its status as a county primary highway. Any new access has the potential to create traffic safety problems if not properly planned and sited given the close proximity of the interchange. Current access management standards for this area recommend very limited primary access on Blue Star Highway with secondary access from side streets. Within the Highway Commercial area, this is especially important. New internal streets and drives should line up with existing intersections, such as along 63<sup>rd</sup> Street.



- Highway commercial development should cater to the recreational traveler and local residents and provide convenient commercial facilities in a safe and walkable environment
- A shared use path should be established along the entire corridor to provide safe routes to surrounding stores, the broader community, and regional destinations



- Site development shall be screened from roadway views and hide parking lots, through a combination of trees, shrubs, and berms or other rural character or open space elements



- Prior to considering major development an extended public utility system or individual private systems must be evaluated based on their ability to adequately service the existing and future needs along the corridor in a cost efficient and coordinated manner
- Innovative storm water management techniques, such as rain gardens and porous pavement should be utilized to mitigate parking lot runoff into area wetlands and drains
- Adjacent residential neighborhoods and uses must be protected from the potential negative impacts of employment areas such as the scale of development and buildings, noise, odors, air quality, traffic, and objectionable views
- Integrate commercial development with access to adjacent residential neighborhoods, where conflicts do not exist
- Maintain a natural screen along the corridor for new development
- Signs, architecture, and site features such as fences, should be compatible with rural character and reflect a rural vernacular
- Mixed-use buildings should be constructed with an emphasis on architectural character; for example rooflines, window details, high quality building materials and buildings that orient to the street
- Residential development should cluster homes on smaller lots leaving open space to serve as neighborhood parks. Parks should be clearly visible, front on residential streets and be well integrated with surrounding homes.
- New utility lines should be buried

### *Strategies*

- Adopt or enhance appropriate ordinances to preserve natural features
- Development or strengthening of regulations applicable to groundwater protection are necessary. These include zoning requirements for site plan review, secondary containment of storage areas for potentially hazardous materials, and specific provisions for the storage of hazardous materials.

- Permit possible development bonuses and allow increases in the amount of commercial land area if significant amounts of residential uses have been accommodated within a development
- Require creative architectural design solutions (such as vertically integrated mixed uses and two to three story commercial buildings); and use of quality building materials, design details and finishes (such as brick, stone and metal)
- Operations and activities such as loading and unloading should be limited after dark
- Promote the development of mixed land uses, including residential, office, commercial, and possible light industrial by employing a PUD ordinance that permits flexibility
- Requirements for building and site design should be developed and address such things as: minimum parcel depth; building materials; window openings as a percentage of a building facade; articulation of facades to avoid large expanses of blank walls; location and design of refuse storage areas; location and screening of service and delivery areas; storm water management; parking lot design; lighting; landscaping; grading and screening; signs; and site access

## Chapter Five Commercial Uses

### Introduction

While the majority of commercial land use area within the township is located along the Blue Star Highway, minimal commercial area exists within the northern area of the township. These areas are recognized as neighborhood commercial areas and are established for the purpose of allowing small convenience commercial businesses designed for the use of neighborhood residents. Although some areas of neighborhood commercial may be added in future revisions of the Master Plan as population and development increases the demand for such services, the only locations provided for this land use are north of Washington (Blue Star Highway), west of 60th and on 60th south of 146th. The Blue Star Highway location was provided as a buffer of lower intensity commercial uses at the edge of the township. commercial land use in Laketown Township is intended to be limited to the Blue Star Highway. (Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 34)

As a result of various planning meetings we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for commercial uses outside of the Blue Star Highway. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

### Goals, Recommendations and Strategies

#### *Goals*

- ~~The township should~~ Discourage strip commercial development to minimize traffic problems and unsightly development. ~~Commercial development should be concentrated in selected areas~~ (Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 5)
- ~~With so many township residents dependent on well water services, groundwater protection is a concern. Protection of the groundwater sources is critical to the long term usefulness of a well system. To this end, consideration of a groundwater protection program for the township would be beneficial. The following steps may be followed to develop such a program.~~ (Moved from 1991, Natural Features pg. 15)
- ~~The Township should strive to~~ Protect its environmental resources, such as wetlands, tree lined streets, sand dunes and other natural features, from the negative impacts of new development (Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 4)
- New commercial and industrial development should be directed to selected areas which have utility services or are planned to receive them (Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 5)
- Land use ~~should protect~~ shall preserve the rural character nature of the township (Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 5)
- ~~With so many township residents dependent on well water services, groundwater protection is a concern. Provide adequate~~ protection of the groundwater sources is critical to the long term usefulness of a well system. ~~To this end, consideration of a groundwater protection program for the township would be beneficial. The following~~



~~steps may be followed to develop such a program. (Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 15)~~

- Commercial uses should be well integrated with surrounding development through appropriate landscaping, greenbelts, façade design, adequate access, parking, and pedestrian pathways
- Preserve woodlands and wetlands which are useful as water retention and ground water discharge areas and which have important aesthetic and scenic value (Reworded and expanded from 1996 Master Plan Amendment, page 5)

### *Recommendations*

- ~~The~~ Potential environmental and economic impacts of ~~new industrial or commercial~~ development should be carefully considered. ~~These impacts may include such factors~~ **to reduce or eliminate conflict from as noise, traffic, odors, drainage, delivery of services, and prevent groundwater pollution (Moved from 1991, Goals and Objectives, page 5)**
- ~~The potential impacts of New utility lines should be buried through the township should be determined. (Moved from 1991, Goals and Objectives, page 5)~~
- Parking should be set back ~~from the highway~~ and buffered by landscaping. While uses may change ~~along the highway~~, the consistent application of parking and landscaping **standards** will provide a theme of 'rural roadside' character. (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 8).
- ~~Provide Accommodate and encourage pedestrian access within a site and between sites and shielded lighting that does not overpower or over illuminate. (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).~~
- ~~Provide Accommodate and encourage pedestrian access and shielded lighting that does not overpower or over-illuminate. (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).~~
- Interconnect service drives to improve traffic distribution and to promote access management along Blue Star Highway. (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).
- A shared **pedestrian** use path should ~~also be promoted established~~ along the ~~entire corridor development frontage~~ to provide safe routes to surrounding stores, the broader community, and regional destinations (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 12).
- ~~Current Site development and landscape guidelines recommend new development shall be screened from roadway views and the master plan endorses techniques to help hide parking lots, including through a combination of trees, shrubs, and berms or other rural character or open space elements. This will be especially important in the Highway Commercial area, since tree preservation is less likely given the higher intensity of possible land uses. As a result, yards with highway frontage should emphasize landscaped parking lots and allow roadside views to showcase buildings and landscaping. (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 13).~~
- Signs, architecture, and site features such as fences, should be compatible with rural character and reflect a rural vernacular. (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 16).



## *Strategies*

- Requirements for building and site design should be developed and address such things as: minimum parcel depth; building materials; window openings as a percentage of a building facade; articulation of facades to avoid large expanses of blank walls; location and design of refuse storage areas; location and screening of service and delivery areas; storm water management; parking lot design; lighting; landscaping; grading and screening; signs; and site access **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 15).**
- ~~The township should use~~ **Adopt or enhance** appropriate ordinances to ~~implement the goal of preserving~~ natural features and ~~determine other methods of maintaining and enhancing the unique natural features of the township.~~ **(Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 8)**
- ~~Finally, d~~ **Development or strengthening** of regulations applicable to groundwater protection are necessary. These include zoning requirements for site plan review, secondary containment of storage areas for potentially hazardous materials, and specific provisions for the storage of hazardous materials. **(Moved from 1991, Natural Features pg. 15)**
- ~~With so many township residents dependent on well water services, groundwater protection is a concern. Protection of the groundwater sources is critical to the long term usefulness of a well system. To this end, consideration of~~ **Develop** a groundwater protection program for the township would be beneficial. ~~The following steps may be followed to develop such a program.~~ **(Moved from 1991, Natural Features pg. 15)**

## Chapter Five

### Commercial Uses

#### Introduction

While the majority of commercial land use area within the township is located along the Blue Star Highway, minimal commercial area exists within the northern area of the township. These areas are recognized as neighborhood commercial areas and are established for the purpose of allowing small convenience commercial businesses designed for the use of neighborhood residents. Although some areas of neighborhood commercial may be added in future revisions of the Master Plan as population and development increases the demand for such services, commercial land use in Laketown Township is intended to be limited to the Blue Star Highway.

As a result of various planning meetings we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for commercial uses outside of the Blue Star Highway. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

#### Goals, Recommendations and Strategies

##### *Goals*

- Discourage strip commercial development to minimize traffic problems and unsightly development
- Protection of groundwater sources is critical to the long term usefulness of a well system
- Protect environmental resources, such as wetlands, tree lined streets, and other natural features, from the negative impacts of new development
- New commercial development should be directed to selected areas which have utility services or are planned to receive them
- Land use shall preserve rural character
- Provide adequate protection of groundwater sources
- Commercial uses should be well integrated with surrounding development through appropriate landscaping, greenbelts, façade design, adequate access, parking, and pedestrian pathways
- Preserve woodlands and wetlands which are useful as water retention and ground water discharge areas and which have important aesthetic and scenic value

##### *Recommendations*

- Potential environmental and economic impacts of commercial development should be considered to reduce or eliminate conflict from noise, traffic, odors, drainage, delivery of services, and prevent groundwater pollution
- New utility lines should be buried

- Parking should be set back and buffered by landscaping. While uses may change the consistent application of parking and landscaping standards will provide a theme of 'rural roadside' character
- Provide pedestrian access within a site and between sites
- Provide shielded lighting that does not overpower or over-illuminate
- Interconnect service drives to improve traffic distribution and to promote access management along Blue Star Highway
- A shared pedestrian use path should be established along the development frontage to provide safe routes to surrounding stores, the broader community, and regional destinations
- Site development shall be screened from roadway views and hide parking lots, through a combination of trees, shrubs, and berms or other rural character or open space elements
- Signs, architecture, and site features such as fences, should be compatible with rural character and reflect a rural vernacular

### *Strategies*

- Requirements for building and site design should be developed and address such things as: minimum parcel depth; building materials; window openings as a percentage of a building facade; articulation of facades to avoid large expanses of blank walls; location and design of refuse storage areas; location and screening of service and delivery areas; storm water management; parking lot design; lighting; landscaping; grading and screening; signs; and site access
- Adopt or enhance appropriate ordinances to preserve natural features
- Development or strengthening of regulations applicable to groundwater protection are necessary. These include zoning requirements for site plan review, secondary containment of storage areas for potentially hazardous materials, and specific provisions for the storage of hazardous materials.
- Develop a groundwater protection program

## Chapter Six

### Industrial Uses

#### Introduction

The lack of utility services in appropriate locations limited the designation of industrial land uses with the township. ~~The only locations provided in the Plan are to the area~~ between the Michigan Department of Transportation rights-of-way in Section 13 and along the Blue Star Highway ½ mile east of 62<sup>nd</sup> ~~Street~~. The properties designated along the Blue Star Highway are intended for low intensity industrial uses, ~~such as warehousing and light assembly operations~~ which would not require extensive utilities, large volumes of well water services, or create excessive traffic, noise, or other negative effects. **(Moved from 1996 Master Plan, page 7).** Given this, industrial uses outside of the Blue Star Highway are not intended to be extended beyond existing locations shown on the Master Plan map and the zoning map.

As a result of various planning meetings we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for industrial uses outside of the Blue Star Highway. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

#### Goals, Recommendations and Strategies

##### *Goals*

- ~~The township should~~ Discourage strip commercial/**industrial** development to minimize traffic problems and unsightly development. ~~Commercial development should be concentrated in selected areas~~ **(Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 5)**
- ~~With so many township residents dependent on well water services, groundwater protection is a concern.~~ Protection of the groundwater sources is critical to the long term usefulness of a well system. ~~To this end, consideration of a groundwater protection program for the township would be beneficial. The following steps may be followed to develop such a program.~~ **(Moved from 1991, Natural Features pg. 15)**
- ~~The Township should strive to~~ Protect its environmental resources, such as **wetlands, tree lined streets, sand dunes** and other natural features, from the negative impacts of new development **(Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 4)**
- New ~~commercial and~~ industrial development should be directed to selected areas which have utility services or are planned to receive them **(Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 5)**
- Land use ~~should protect~~ shall preserve the rural ~~character~~ nature of the township **(Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 5)**
- ~~With so many township residents dependent on well water services, groundwater protection is a concern.~~ Provide adequate protection of the groundwater sources ~~is critical to the long term usefulness of a well system. To this end, consideration of a groundwater protection program for the township would be beneficial. The following~~

~~steps may be followed to develop such a program. (Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 15)~~

- Industrial uses should be well integrated with surrounding development through appropriate landscaping, greenbelts, façade design, adequate access, and parking
- Preserve woodlands and wetlands which are useful as water retention and ground water discharge areas and which have important aesthetic and scenic value (Reworded and expanded from 1996 Master Plan Amendment, page 5)

### *Recommendations*

- ~~The~~ Potential environmental and economic impacts of ~~new industrial or commercial~~ development should be ~~carefully~~ considered. ~~These impacts may include such factors to reduce or eliminate conflict from as noise, traffic, odors, drainage, delivery of services, and prevent groundwater pollution (Moved from 1991, Goals and Objectives, page 5)~~
- ~~The potential impacts of~~ New utility lines **should be buried through the township** ~~should be determined. (Moved from 1991, Goals and Objectives, page 5)~~
- Parking should be set back from the highway and buffered by landscaping. While uses may change along the highway, the consistent application of parking and landscaping **standards** will provide a theme of ‘rural roadside’ character **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 8).**
- ~~Provide~~ Accommodate and encourage pedestrian access and shielded lighting that does not overpower or over-illuminate. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).**
- Interconnect service drives to improve traffic distribution and to promote access management along Blue Star Highway **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 9).**
- ~~Current~~ Site development and landscape guidelines recommend new development shall be screened from roadway views and ~~the master plan endorses techniques to help hide parking lots, including through a combination of trees, shrubs, and berms or other rural character or open space elements. This will be especially important in the Highway Commercial area, since tree preservation is less likely given the higher intensity of possible land uses. As a result, yards with highway frontage should emphasize landscaped parking lots and allow roadside views to showcase buildings and landscaping. (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 13).~~
- Signs, architecture, and site features such as fences, should be compatible with rural character and reflect a rural vernacular. **(Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 16).**

### *Strategies*

- Requirements for building and site design should be developed and address such things as: minimum parcel depth; building materials; window openings as a percentage of a building facade; articulation of facades to avoid large expanses of blank walls; location and design of refuse storage areas; location and screening of service and delivery areas; storm water management; parking lot design; lighting; landscaping; grading and

screening; signs; and site access. (Moved from 2008 Blue Star Subarea, page 15).

- ~~The township should use~~ **Adopt or enhance** appropriate ordinances to ~~implement the goal of preserving natural features and determine other methods of maintaining and enhancing the unique natural features of the township.~~ (Moved from 1991 Master Plan, page 8)
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## Chapter Six

### Industrial Uses

#### Introduction

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As a result of various planning meetings we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for industrial uses outside of the Blue Star Highway. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

#### Goals, Recommendations and Strategies

##### *Goals*

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- Protection of groundwater sources is critical to the long term usefulness of a well system
- Protect environmental resources, such as wetlands, tree lined streets, and other natural features, from the negative impacts of new development
- New industrial development should be directed to selected areas which have utility services or are planned to receive them
- Land use shall preserve rural character
- Provide adequate protection of groundwater sources
- Industrial uses should be well integrated with surrounding development through appropriate landscaping, greenbelts, façade design, adequate access, and parking
- Preserve woodlands and wetlands which are useful as water retention and ground water discharge areas and which have important aesthetic and scenic value

##### *Recommendations*

- Potential environmental and economic impacts of industrial development should be considered to reduce or eliminate conflict from noise, traffic, odors, drainage, delivery of services, and prevent groundwater pollution
- New utility lines should be buried



- Parking should be set back and buffered by landscaping. While uses may change the consistent application of parking and landscaping standards will provide a theme of 'rural roadside' character
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- Develop a groundwater protection program