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Beckett & Raeder

*Landscape Architecture
Planning, Engineering &
Environmental Services*



initiative

Understanding of the Issue

Survey development in progress

Purpose of the survey: ... ?

Understanding of the Issue

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Understanding of the Issue

Survey development in progress

Purpose of the survey: ... ?

- Give the Township Board and Planning Commission useful information to guide their decisions.

Well...YEAH.

- Determine if and how demographic status (age, income, education, gender) affect opinions.
- Determine if and how the respondents' location affects their opinions.

To be dealt with in analysis, as long as we ask the right questions.

- To guide planning, by identifying which features of an ideal future township are the most important to residents
- Determine the relative strength of opinions about what is good for the community.
- Test residents' tolerance for the cost of implementing their top priorities.

Master plan survey items.

- Broadly determine whether the residents of Northfield Township want more residential development in the township and measure the strength of their opinions.
- Determine how the possible location of residential development affects opinions.

Determining support for a specific priority.

- Determine the relative strength of opinions regarding how people perceive they might benefit from development and preservation.
- Identify other reasons why people oppose or support more development.

Conflict analysis?

Understanding of the Issue

Two surveys referenced... what do we already know?

1994 Survey of Northfield Township Residents

Contemporary population: 7,340
Number of survey respondents: 242

Participation rate: 3.3%
95% confidence bound

Random sample frame; scientifically
valid sample size

Few demographic questions asked

2010 Northfield Township Comprehensive Community Survey

Contemporary population: 8,245
Number of survey respondents: 368

Participation rate: 4.4%
95% confidence bound

“Self-selected” participants

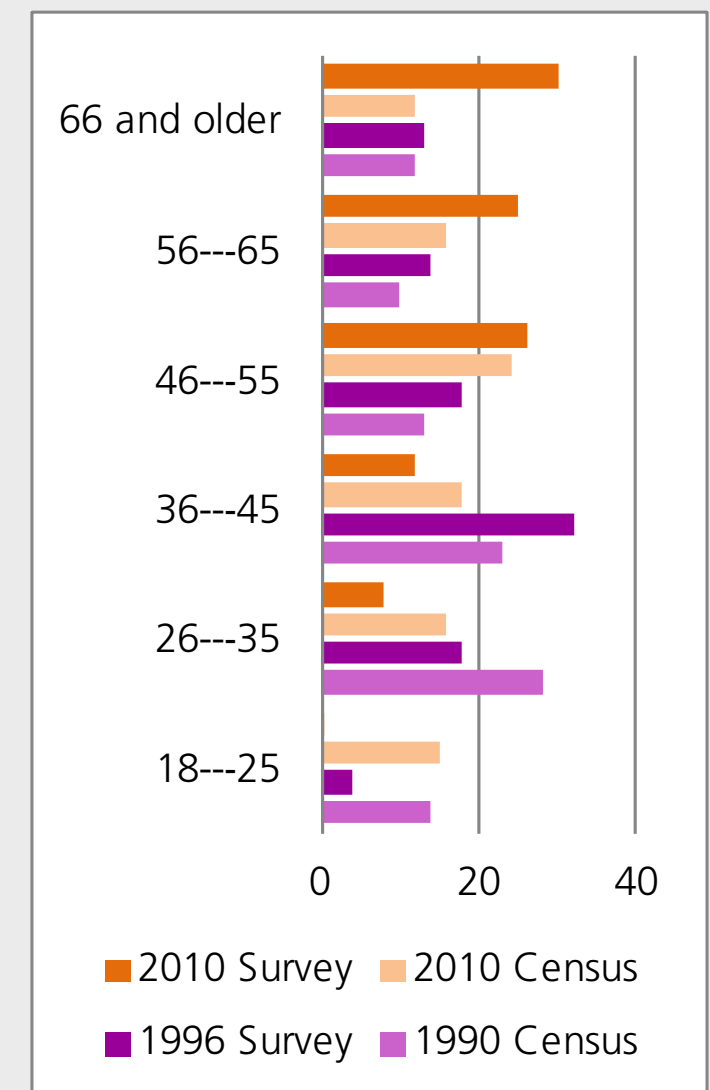
More detailed demographic and
geographic information collected

Understanding of the Issue

Two surveys referenced... what do we already know?

Respondent Profiles

		1996	1990 Census	2010	2010 Census
Gender	Male	49	49	53	50
	Female	51	51	47	50
Age	18-25	4	14	0.3	15
	26-35	18	28	8	16
	36-45	32	23	12	18
	46-55	18	13	26	24
	56-65	14	10	25	16
	66+	13	12	30	12
Homeownership	Owner	84	82	~89	79
	Renter	16	18	~11	21
Kids at home	Yes	42	38	~30	31
	No	58	62	~70	69



Understanding of the Issue

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Respondent Profiles

2010 Survey Demographic Information	Mode Response	Percent	Township
Income	\$25,000-\$49,999	22.5	27.9
Education	Bachelor's	26.5	21.4
Employment status	Employed	51.6	64
Place of work (geographic)	Ann Arbor	34	
Number in household	2	59	2.58
Number of children in household	2	44	
Township residency (Y/N and how long)	Yes	93	
Property ownership (Y/N, type, number)	Yes	93	
School district	Whitmore Lake	81	
Business ownership (Y/N, subarea)	No	97	
Subarea of residence	Lakes	66	60% of parcels
Residential property type	Single family < 1 acre	49	
"When asked where you live, how do you respond?"	Whitmore Lake	66	

Understanding of the Issue

Two surveys referenced... what do we already know?

- Determine if and how demographic status (age, income, education, gender) affect opinions.
- Determine if and how the respondents' location affects their opinions.

To be dealt with in analysis, as long as we ask the right questions.

The questions were asked.

Both surveys make valuable contributions.

Each has some representative weakness.

The area of weakness is different in each survey, which lends reliability to the areas in which they agree.

Where the same questions are asked, the two surveys constitute a time series that tests changes in opinion.

Understanding of the Issue

Two surveys referenced... what do we already know?

Content Analysis: Priorities



Understanding of the Issue

Two surveys referenced... what do we already know?

Content Analysis: 1994 Priorities

Key:

Preservation

Commercial and downtown development

Infrastructure and zoning

Recreation

Vehicular transportation

Housing

Industrial

Improve traffic flow on and off US--23.

Develop regulations permitting residential development while still preserving rural character in areas planned for agricultural use

Expand the sanitary sewer system.

Extend or modify roads east of US--23 to improve traffic flow.

Extend or modify roads west of US--23 to improve traffic flow.

Set aside additional areas for golf course development.

Understanding of the Issue

Two surveys referenced... what do we already know?

Content Analysis: 1994 and 2010 Priorities

Preserve natural features

Preserve agricultural use of land in areas planned for such use.
Improve the appearance of downtown "hamlet" area to make it more attractive and inviting to shoppers and visitors.

Encourage walking and bicycling by providing more, and safer, sidewalks and bike paths

Provide a safe public beach on Whitmore Lake.

Improve vehicle traffic flow in the downtown area.

Provide additional public parks and recreational areas

Encourage new commercial development in the downtown (hamlet) area.

Provide additional space and/or incentives for light industrial and office development

Improve drainage in residential areas.

Key:

Preservation

Commercial and downtown development

Infrastructure and zoning

Recreation

Vehicular transportation

Housing

Industrial

Offer public transportation to and from Ann Arbor.

Reduce minimum lot size requirements in some areas planned for agricultural use to permit additional residential development.

Understanding of the Issue

Two surveys referenced... what do we already know?

Content Analysis: 1994 and 2010 Priorities

Preserve natural features

Improve the appearance of downtown "hamlet" area to make it more attractive and inviting to shoppers and visitors.

Preserve agricultural use of land in areas planned for such use.

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6th to 12th

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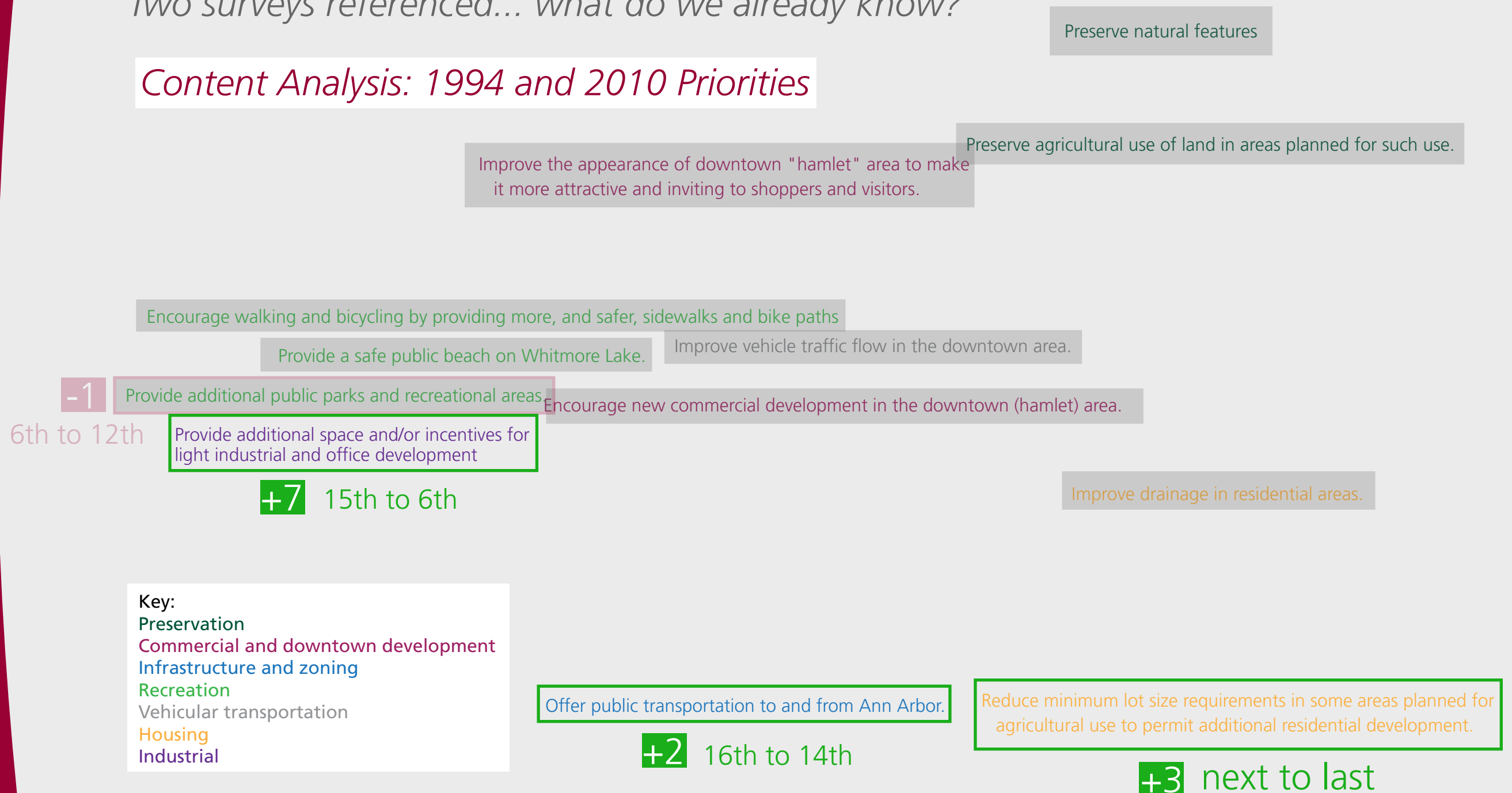
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Understanding of the Issue

Two surveys referenced... what do we already know?

Content Analysis: 1994 and 2010 Priorities



Understanding of the Issue

Two surveys referenced... what do we already know?

Content Analysis: 2010 Priorities

Redevelop vacant commercial

Encourage commercial development

Enforce zoning and building

Municipal water supply

Key:

Preservation

Commercial and downtown development

Infrastructure and zoning

Recreation

Vehicular transportation

Housing

Industrial

Housing for young families

Senior housing

Affordable housing

Encourage Federally assisted housing

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Content Analysis: Priorities



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Master plan survey items.

- Broadly determine whether the residents of Northfield Township want more residential development in the township and measure the strength of their opinions.
- Determine how the possible location of residential development affects opinions.

Determining support for a specific priority.

We do know which features of the Township are most important to residents, and the relative strength of their opinions.

Broadly speaking, residential development has limited support as a priority.

Tolerance for the cost of residents' priorities has not been answered. It should be.

Understanding of the Issue

Two surveys referenced... what do we already know?

Content Analysis: Priorities



Understanding of the Issue

Two surveys referenced... what do we already know?



Understanding of the Issue

Two surveys referenced... what do we already know?

- Determine the relative strength of opinions regarding how people perceive they might benefit from development and preservation.
- Identify other reasons why people oppose or support more development.

Conflict analysis?

One cause of conflict is likely simple frustration over wasted horsepower.

Another source may be the mismatch between the residents' priorities and the Township's recent focus.

Cobalt's questions appear to be identifying specific desirable or undesirable aspects of residential development, presumably to address them directly. This is certainly a reasonable approach, but there may be better methods than a comprehensive survey.

Conclusions: Survey Assessment



The previous surveys were constructed well enough to offer actionable data.

Resident priorities have been broadly determined.

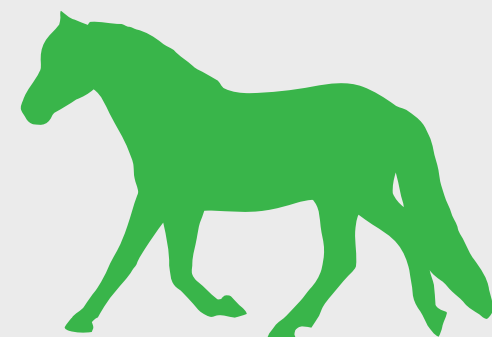
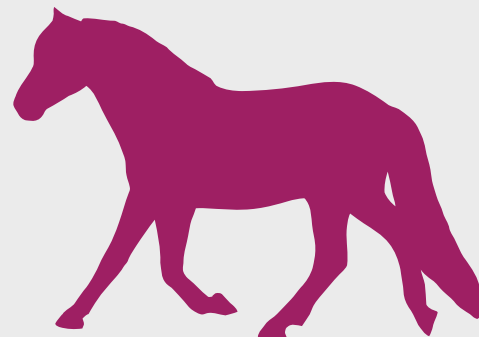
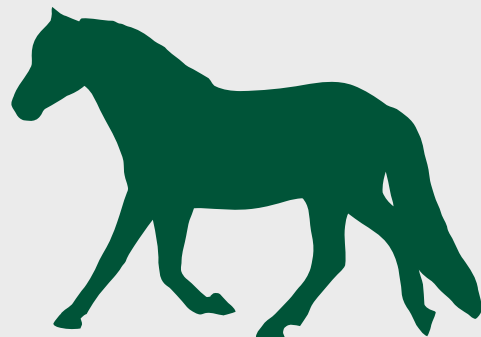
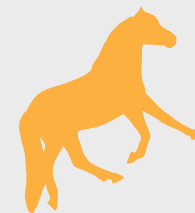
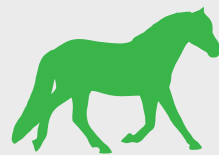
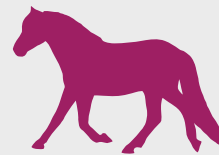
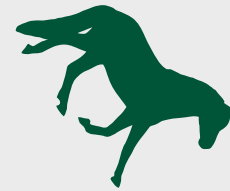
The top three priorities are natural features, downtown development, and recreation.

Residential development does not appear to be a strong enough priority to justify amending the master plan at this time.

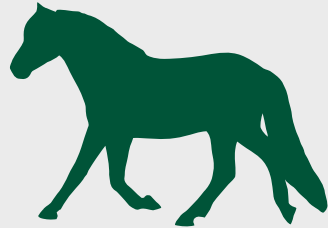
Specific questions remain for which community input would be valuable.

Community engagement tools other than a survey may be more appropriate to gather that particular data.

Next Steps: Now What?



Next Steps: Now What?



Natural Features

Current status:

HRWC coming for green infrastructure workshop results - excellent start.

BRI will use HRWC data to begin an Ecological Asset map, to which we will contribute our resources.

There is no good data on agricultural resources in the Township, though we know they exist.

This priority enjoys the support of advocates.

Community engagement:

An Agricultural Asset Inventory should be conducted to obtain data that is currently lacking. This task can be performed exceptionally well with a small group of volunteers.

Desired outcome:

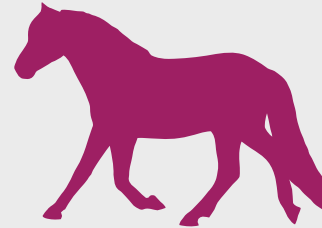
Ecological Asset Map

Agricultural Asset Map

A general understanding of the spatial location of the Township's most valuable natural resources.

Planning Commission's role:

Lead



Downtown Development

Current status:

A Downtown Master Plan process is beginning.

It is not expected to be handled by the PC or its staff for budgetary reasons, though contributions may be welcome.

The purpose of the plan is to develop a unified vision that will enable implementation.

Community engagement:

This has the potential to be the highest-profile project that the community ever undertakes.

The level of community involvement must be commensurate with the plan's ambition.

A community engagement program should be developed that offers distinct opportunities for input to various groups. This may be an opportunity for the PC to contribute.

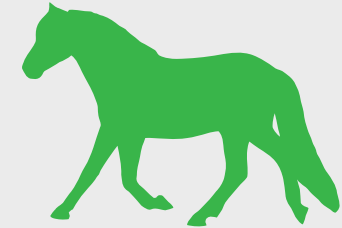
Citizen contributions to the establishment of priorities and to major conceptual designs will be critical to implementation.

Desired outcome:

An agreed-upon vision for a revitalized downtown and a realistic action plan to implement it.

Planning Commission's role:

Collaborate



Recreation

Current status:

The Recreation Commission and Township staff are updating the Five-Year Recreation Plan.

Projects in this plan help determine the availability of State funding resources to the Township.

Consideration of public access to the lake makes recreation planning inseparable from downtown planning.

Community engagement:

Some form of it is necessary, but the requirements are general.

It can be tied in with other efforts, which MDNR values.

Desired outcome:

A synergistic relationship between recreation planning and general planning efforts.

Planning Commission's role:

Contribute

And then hopefully...



And THEN hopefully...



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Thank you!



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