

Strategic Plan



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF FILER

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Report prepared by

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Overview

A Strategic Plan has been defined in simple terms as follows: *This plan documents who an organization is, where they are going, and how they are going to get there* (MG Rush, facilitator's glossary of terms). Two goals of the Strategic Plan are to express a common vision and to expand the capacity of the existing organization.

In this case, the existing organization is the Charter Township of Filer, hereinafter "Filer Township." The organization and capacity of Filer Township are defined by its:

- People (citizens, elected officials, appointed officials, and paid staff);
- Physical Resources (land, buildings, water system, fire station, fire equipment); and
- Financial Resources (general fund dollars, DDA dollars and the ability to raise additional funds).

Filer Township has expressed a community and organizational identity through a Mission and Vision Statement. Filer Township can be described as a community with three distinct development patterns including the Oak Hill/ Filer City and Lakefront Industrial area along Manistee Lake, the commercial US-31 corridor and the rural residential development through most of the township.

The Oak Hill/ Filer City neighborhoods were established in the late 1800s to provide housing for people working in the lakefront industrial area nearby. The neighborhoods are rich in history, compact, walkable and hold the community centers with the township hall, fire station, recreation center and elementary school.

The commercial US-31 corridor runs south from the City of Manistee and contains a mix of commercial businesses including retail, hotel and restaurants. The community is pleased with the business activity and aware of the need to preserve the capacity and safety of the state highway while growing in an attractive, managed pattern.

The balance of the community can be described as "rural residential." Lot sizes range from half-acre lots to parcels with over 100 acres but most range from five to twenty acres in size. Home sites are located on open-space land with small farming activity interspersed, in heavily forested areas and along the Lake Michigan lakeshore. It's not unusual to see deer and wild turkey in an open field.

The question of where the community is going is expressed through the Goals, Policies and Action statements in the Filer Township Master Plan. Filer Township is willing to grow, especially in its commercial corridor. Ongoing efforts to provide sewer service attests to the interest in promoting that growth. Along with the growth is a desire to maintain the quality of life that residents currently enjoy. Discussions of an attractive appearance, rural character, civic space, open space preservation and cultural character are listed next to transportation, economic development, housing, urban services and growth in the Master Plan's goal statements. Filer Township recognizes that while it is possible to achieve a guided, attractive growth pattern, that pattern doesn't happen by accident. Rather, it requires a pro-active planning process. The Strategic Plan is the next step forward in creating the community's desired future.

Vision

Vision Statement: (A statement of ideal conditions)

Residents of the Charter Township of Filer are proud of the community's rich history. The community celebrates the co-location of the waterfront industrial district and the adjacent Filer City and Oak Hill neighborhoods as a reminder of the original lumber mill and platted village established in 1867 and a statement of the success of industry. The neighborhoods are a desirable place to live: compact, walkable and well maintained in a traditional neighborhood design pattern. The neighborhood includes a civic center resource for local services and recreation.

The lakefront industrial activity is dynamic! The community supports the lakefront industrial area which has been able to adapt to the changing economy, improve its environmental footprint, communicate effectively with the local community and employ hundreds of people in secure and well-paid positions. Aesthetic improvements in the public right of way have improved the appearance of the area.

The commercial corridor along US-31 is full of businesses which offer a variety of retail, service and entertainment opportunities to the region. Buildings are attractive and well-landscaped, reflecting the rural, wooded character of the area. Businesses are served with a full complement of public services including sewer. Highway traffic moves efficiently and safely along the corridor. Regional recreational attractions and resources strengthen the local economy. A well-marked route brings snowmobilers safely to the commercial corridor from the nearby trail system. Pedestrian and bicycle connections are completed to both Filer City and into the City of Manistee.

Most of the township remains rural with low density residential development served by connecting, public roads. Residential development is carefully designed and located to preserve the natural environment and rural atmosphere on individual sites and in larger, planned developments.

The Charter Township of Filer is a healthy, active community with sidewalks and trail connections between population centers, employment centers and recreation resources. There are several attractive and well-maintained township parks in the Charter Township of Filer. In addition, the Charter Township of Filer partners effectively with other recreation providers including the school district, the City of Manistee, Manistee County and the state and national parks to support regional recreation efforts.

The Charter Township of Filer operates efficiently and fairly. Staff and volunteers are well-trained and supported. When possible, technology is used to help the staff operate efficiently without the loss of personal service. There is a high level of community involvement in regional and local boards, commissions and committees with lists of people waiting to serve.

Mission

Mission Statement: (What you do and why)

We embrace our community history in order to:

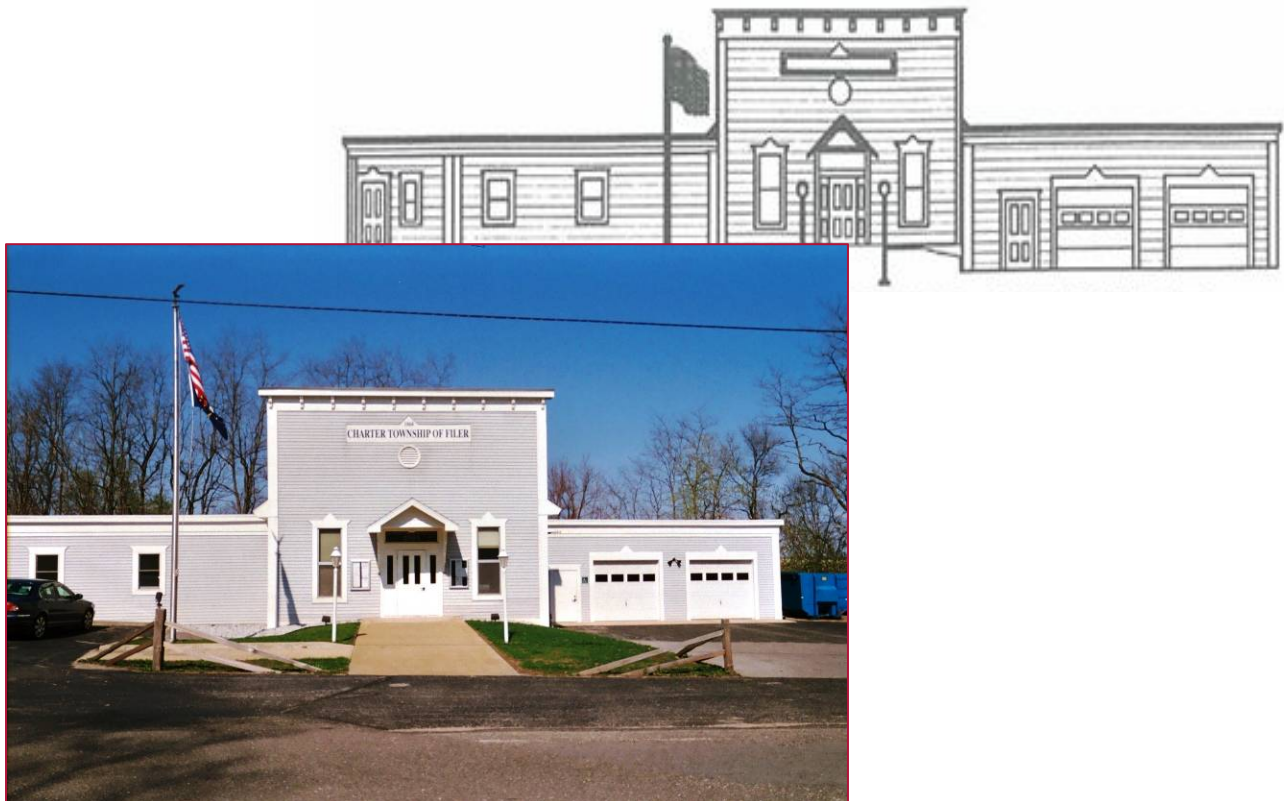
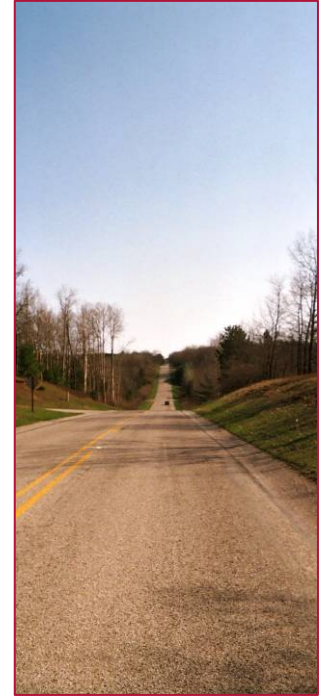
- 1) Preserve our heritage / remember our past
- 2) Celebrate those things that make us special
- 3) Strengthen our sense of community

We plan proactively in order to:

- 1) Make informed, objective and thoughtful decisions
- 2) Use planning tools to guide the township toward a chosen future
- 3) Be an effective, cooperative partner in joint / regional activities

We make smart and sustainable choices in land use planning in order to:

- 1) Protect limited and irreplaceable natural resources
- 2) Create a community where people can live, work and play
- 3) Make wise use of human resources and public tax dollars
- 4) Balance the variety of needs in the community



Building Capacity for the Charter Township of Filer

Expanding Capacity

One of the goals of the Strategic Plan is to build or expand the capacity of Filer Township's existing resources. This means looking for ways to do more with existing resources—human resources, financial resources and physical resources. Simply assigning additional tasks to staff, or elected officials who do not have the time to perform, them will not move the township toward its goal. Similarly, proposing the expenditure of money outside of the township's budget will not accomplish the desired outcome. Strategic planning, then, is both an exercise in defining priorities and defining a strategy to expand capacity. There are several basic strategies to consider in expanding capacity. They are defined below.

Temporary Project Champion: A temporary project champion is the staff person or board/ commission member who is willing to take a project from the initial discussion phase through the project launch phase. A temporary project champion is intended to be just that—temporary. During the project launch phase, a project champion will be identified to carry out the project itself.

Project Champion: A project champion is the person who accepts the leadership role in the project. As a leader, the champion is responsible for making sure that the project moves forward. This could include recruiting committee members, organizing meetings and assigning activity tasks. The project champion is also responsible for making sure that the appropriate boards and committees are kept informed and involved. The project champion is not responsible for doing all of the work but is responsible for making sure that the work gets done. In some cases, the project champion may be a paid consultant.

Project Resources: Project resources are defined in terms of people and financial resources. Project resources are those people who are available to provide professional guidance to the project and who are able to support the project through the provision of time, information or other resources. An example of this is the staff at the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) who would be able to provide information and attend meetings regarding a pedestrian crossing of US-31. In some cases, a project resource may be a paid consultant. Project resources are also those funds which can be used for a project. Funds may come from a variety of sources including the Township's general fund as part of the annual budget, from the DDA, from permit fees or user fees, from donations or from grant funds.

Project Partners: Project partners are defined as other groups (other local units of government, municipal or public administrative offices, civic organizations, local businesses) who are willing to commit resources to the project, who would benefit from the outcome of the project and who have an interest in the success of the project. In some cases, Filer Township may join another project as a partner.

As Filer Township considers implementation of an action item, each of the project items listed above should be considered. An item may be of top priority but without both a champion and adequate resources, it will not be implemented efficiently. The identification of project partners is not necessary in every case but it is another tool to expand the capacity of the Township and multiply its resources.

General Approach to Project Initiation

Project Launch Procedure

Success might be described as a combination of knowing where you want to go and knowing how to get there. The Strategic Plan document includes a list of projects which have been identified as a priority or as desirable by the Planning Commission and by members of the community. In a sense, this is part of knowing where you want to go. In addition to the project list, this project launch procedure is created as a step-by-step instruction guide or checklist procedure to perform before undertaking a specific project. It is recommended that the Planning Commission, DDA and the Township Board of Trustees adopt the following operating procedure:

Step 1: Create a Project Description

A project description can be created initially by a staff member, by a board or commission member or by a resident who wants to encourage township action. It should include a specific description of the desired outcome of the project, while leaving many of the project specifics undefined so that they may be developed later in the project. It should also include an initial list of potential project partners and resources. The written project description should be presented to the appropriate board or commission for approval.

Step 2: Identify Goals

Project goals can be created initially by a staff member, by a board or commission member or by a resident who wants to encourage township action. Project goals should include measurable increments related to the project such as a completion date, a number of people involved, a budget, etc. Project goals can also include statements of projected benefits which may be used to communicate with project partners and with the public. The written project goals should be presented to the appropriate board or commission for approval.

Step 3: Identify a Temporary Project Champion

A temporary project champion is the staff person or board/ commission member who is willing to take the project from the initial discussion phase through the project launch phase (Steps 4-7). A temporary project champion should be appointed by the appropriate board or commission through an established appointment process.

Step 4: Identify Project Partners

The identification of project partners will be both an outreach and a research exercise. It is expected that a representative from Filer Township will make inquiries with a range of possible partners. These calls should always include the City of Manistee Community Development

Department, the Manistee County Planning Office and the Alliance for Economic Success Office. Possible partners are listed on a separate page and the list can be expanded over time.

Sometimes, other organizations will be leading the project. In that case, Filer Township should still go through this launch process to formally support the activity, to determine who will be the project champion for Filer Township and to identify (commit) the financial resources that may be required.

Step 5: Identify Project Resources (people and financial)

The identification of project resources as they relate to people is similar to the process of identifying project partners. To begin, some consideration should be given to what type of resources will be needed (i.e. engineering, transportation, land use, natural resources, financial, technical, public outreach, etc.). From there, consider who in the region may have the desired skills or information. Phone calls and visits will be needed to explain the project needs and may result in a commitment or in a referral. If needed resources are not available on a voluntary basis, it may be necessary to hire an expert. In this case, financial resources are impacted.

The identification of financial resources for the project is a combination of planning the township's annual budget and seeking other sources of funding. Project partners may be a source of financial support even when they are not able to contribute time or staff. Grant funding may be available. Explore grant funding options with the assistance of the Alliance for Economic Success office.

Step 6: Designate a Project Champion for Filer Township

A project champion will replace the temporary project champion after the launch and continuing through to the end of the project. For joint or regional scale activities, the champion does not have to be the leader of the overall group but serves on behalf of Filer Township in the project. When selecting a project champion, there are several basic things to consider. Does the champion have adequate time to commit to the task? Does the champion have some technical knowledge related to the task? Is the champion willing to serve?

Step 7: Take Action to Approve the Project Launch

Once each step has been successfully completed, the item should be placed on the agenda of the appropriate board or commission for action. In considering the action item, the board or commission should review the project launch activity and be satisfied that each item has been appropriately addressed. A formal motion should be made for the record including the project description, project goals and project champion.

A checklist for the project launch process is included on the next page.

Project Launch Checklist

Project Launch Steps		Complete
Step 1: Create a Project Description		
Step 2: Identify Goals		
Step 3: Identify a Temporary Project Champion		
Name:		
Step 4: Identify Project Partners		
Step 5: Identify Project Resources (people and financial)		
People	Financial	
Step 6: Designate a Project Champion for Filer Township		
Name:		
Step 7: Take Action to Approve the Project Launch		
Action Taken by:		Date:

Possible Partners

- Residents (individuals or group organizations)
- Others Filer Township boards, commissions or sub-committees
- City of Manistee
- Alliance for Economic Success
- Manistee County Road Commission
- Manistee Area Schools
- Michigan Department of Transportation, Cadillac Service Center
- Northwest Michigan Council of Governments
- Neighboring communities
- Manistee County Drain Commissioner
- Manistee County Health Department
- Mason County
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Michigan Trails and Greenway Alliance
- Manistee Manufacturer's Council
- Rotary Club, Lion's Clubs or other private service organizations
- Railroad
- LRBOI
- MSU Extension Office
- West Shore Community College

First Step: Finding Resources

Filer Township's resources include human resources, financial resources and physical resources. Each of these resources is limited. There is a limited number of staff, elected officials and appointed members of boards and commissions. The amount of money available to Filer Township is also limited. The number of public buildings and the amount of space in the public buildings is limited, as is the amount of space available for parks.

When the list of action items is reviewed, however, many of the actions do not require funding or building space but they do all require a commitment of time and energy—human resources. Human resources—time and energy from people—becomes the most limiting factor. Expanding the pool of human resources will build the capacity of Filer Township to move towards their desired future in many cases without an immediate need for additional financial or physical resources.

There are several different ways to expand the amount of human resources available to Filer Township in the next several years. One option is to look for opportunities for current staff to be more effective. Another option is to hire additional help for specific tasks (consultant, temporary employee). Yet another option is to get more community members involved and recruit more volunteers.

Technology offers the opportunity for the current staff to accomplish more in the time available. The recent addition of an automated answering service at the township hall is an example of using technology to improve efficiency. A township website is proposed as another tool to use technology for better efficiency. Other services which are currently performed by township staff may be expedited by additional technological tools. Tools such as e-billing and automated payment options may reduce the time spent by staff on monthly water billing services. Additional office equipment, such as a scanner, may reduce the time required to perform routine duties or communication tasks. A new mower may significantly reduce the time required to maintain township property. This type of equipment should be identified by staff to the Township Board where it can be considered for purchase or incorporated into future budgets.

In some cases, it will be prudent to hire a consultant on a temporary basis or to perform a specific task. Filer Township currently maintains its water system through a contracted service arrangement. This Strategic Plan was created with the assistance of a consultant hired to perform the specific task. The township has an arrangement with legal counsel to provide legal services as needed. When there are specific tasks to be completed that require a specialized skill, Filer Township can complete the task with assistance from a trained professional through a contract arrangement. This option also requires financial resources and so it is limited by budgetary constraints.

The third option is to reach out to more people in the community and actively recruit more volunteers. Filer Township has an active group of elected and appointed officials serving on the Township Board, the Planning Commission, the DDA and other committees and subcommittees. This group does a tremendous job of serving the community in addition to all of the other things they do. Attending regular meetings on top of work and family commitments and other volunteer activities is admirable. This

resource is limited not by their ability or interest but by the number of hours in a day. The current group of volunteers could be expanded, however.

Finding volunteers may seem like a challenging task but let's put the numbers in perspective. There were 2,208 residents counted in the 2000 US Census and 1,653 of them were 20 years of age or older. There are additional seasonal residents who were not counted in that number. This is a large pool of people. If only 1 in 100 is willing to volunteer for a task, the result will be 160 new people working on projects. The real task is getting the word out and managing information about people's interest in volunteering.

There are many ways to let the public know about the township's need for community leaders. A township website would be an ideal tool for gathering information about willing volunteers, interests and availability. A future township newsletter could include information about project tasks along with a response form. A survey sheet



could be placed in other mailings from the township. Community groups, employers, neighborhood associations and other networks could be approached to help spread the word. An informational poster could be made for public bulletin boards and for display in township parks. Word of mouth in the community is also an effective means of communication. A short, high-intensity volunteer identification campaign with media coverage and a community event should be considered.

The completion of the Strategic Plan can serve as the springboard for activity. The following list of action statements includes a suggested timeframe or order of execution for the projects. There is a short list of



top priority activities. After this, the priority will largely be determined by the identification of a project champion and project resources. Some projects depend on collaboration with countywide activities and will have timing determined by others. Some items are assigned to staff and can be carried out using existing resources. A regular progress review by the Planning Commission, Board of Trustees and DDA will be essential to the effective use of the Strategic Plan document.

Along the Way: Measuring Success

How do you know when a project has been successful? Every project has measureable components. A measure of success for the project as a whole is included for each project in the project list. Additional measureable milestones can be added as the project is being launched so that incremental success can be measured during the project. All of the following can be measured or used as an identifier of success:

- meeting activity
- event activity
- number of participants
- funding or cost
- product creation
- project completion

The events and activities can also be measured in terms of a date or schedule. For instance, the township's website will be successful when it is operational. A goal can be set to have the website operational by December 2008. Incremental goals may include signing a contract for services in August 2008 and approving the page layout and design in October 2008. Future goals may be added in terms of measuring activity (hits per month) or addition of specific content once the site is running.

Success is to be shared. Make sure to inform the local media as milestones are reached or projects are complete. These messages will create a positive message to the public that things are happening in Filer Township. They are also a good way to recognize the efficiency of staff, the effectiveness of elected officials and the contributions of volunteers.



Actions

Action statements were developed based on input received at the four public focus group activities. Action statements were grouped into the following seven categories: Public Participation, Intergovernmental Cooperation, Transportation, US-31 Corridor; Filer City/ Oak Hill, Economic Development and Recreation. At the Open House on April 29, 2008, participants were asked to note their top five priority action items across all categories. Participants were also asked to indicate an objection to any action statement. There were no objections to the actions listed.

The list of top priorities in this section reflects the action items with the most support at the Open House in each category. Other items are listed by category in order of support expressed at the Open house. Several action items which received low votes were more technical in nature and likely to be carried out by staff. These items have been listed in a new “Technical” category. The creation of affordable housing was strongly supported in the future land use activity and an action item has been added to reflect that support. Several items receiving no votes have been removed from the action list.

Disagree **Actions** **My Top 5 Picks**

Public Participation

- Establish a Town-to-estate.
- Recruit new community volunteers to serve on standing boards and commissions or to participate in special task forces designed to accomplish specific tasks.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

- Institute a regular means of communication and cooperation with the activities of the City of Meridian (Planning Commission, CCA, and Board/Council).
- Look for opportunities to partner with the City of Meridian in order to improve services to residents and avoid a duplication of services between governments.
- Recruit a new volunteer to apply to serve on the County Planning Commission. (Currently there is not a representative from Filer Township on the County Planning Commission.)
- Communicate with County Commissioners: Evan Kowalek on county matters which affect Filer Township.
- Assign a representative to attend all meetings of the Railroad Revitalization Study and report back to the Planning Commission and Township Board.
- Participate in the upcoming County Branding Initiative program.
- Reevaluate the practice of a site plan review technical committee meeting (previously done by the County Planning Commission).

Transportation

- Develop a non-motorized transportation committee and plan in cooperation or coordination with the existing Non-Motorized Subcommittee of the City of Meridian.
- Consider opportunities to make private roads connect to other roads or preserve the option for future connections rather than allowing out-of-area design (similar to current County Road Commission policy).

US-31 Corridor

- Adjust the complete model zoning ordinance language for access management included in the Access Management Plan for the US-31 Corridor.
- Develop appropriate standards/technical regulations for the US-31 Corridor area to provide a more unified, attractive appearance to the area.
- Develop dedicated mechanisms for the US-31 Corridor area to promote a more attractive appearance to the area.
- Coordinate with the non-motorized committee and MDCOT to plan a pedestrian crossing at the light of First Apple Road.
- Coordinate with the non-motorized committee and MDCOT to plan for pedestrian access to the US-31 commercial corridor.
- Create an access road / lateral road plan to proactively plan for future road connections and extensions along the US-31 commercial corridor.
- Place identification signs at the entrances to Filer Township.

Filer City/Oak Hill

- Establish a line of communication with the school district to follow the discussion about changes to the elementary school.
- Improve the Filer City Park and "Her" Center.
- Coordinate in regional efforts to find a new use of the Drop Forge site.
- Install a sidewalk/bike lane on 1st St and north to the city limits.
- Create a "Clean Up, Fix Up" community activity to encourage property maintenance.
- Encourage neighborhood commercial development in the Filer City/Oak Hill neighborhoods (Main Street, Nelson Street).
- Create a historical society group to pursue historic information and preservation activities.

Economic Development

- Actively pursue a master service agreement with the City of Meridian. Consider funding options and requirements as a result of discontinuing the agreement.
- Develop a connection from the accessible trail to the US-31 corridor to bring businesses to the commercial corridor.
- Coordinate with the activities and initiatives of the Alliance for Economic Success (AES) as they relate to the region.

Recreation

- Create a township park around the township hall.
- Improve existing neighborhood park.
- Improve Recreation Center building.
- Create a new picnic area on Meridian Lake.

Work with the County Parks and Recreation efforts to consider a regional trail around Meridian Lake that serves to connect watershed areas without crossing established industrial properties. (The trail itself need not be located on the watershed.)

Did we forget something? Please add your comments to the comment page.

Top Priorities

Public Participation: Establish a Township website

Contacts/Partners/Tools: Joe Showalter (joeshowalter@chartermi.net) or other website designer

Cost: \$1,500 plus monthly service arrangement

Responsible Party: Lynn Kooyers and Township Board

Measure of Success:

- Website functional by December, 2008
- Future measures of success can be established based on activity level (hits per month) or content level (active pages for township board, planning commission, downtown development authority, etc.) after the site is active.

Intergovernmental Cooperation: Institute a regular means of communication and cooperation with the activities of the City of Manistee (Planning Commission, DDA, and Board/Council)

Contacts/ Partners/ Tools: Jon Rose, Mitch Deisch, Denise Blakeslee and members of City Boards and Commissions

Cost: None

Responsible Party: Champion from each of the associated boards/commissions

Measure of Success:

- Identify champion (September, 2008)
- Champion recommends communication system (October)
- Preferred Communication begins (November)
- Communication continues monthly
- Future measures of success can be based on notation of projects where coordination or cooperation is achieved.

Transportation: Develop a non-motorized transportation committee and plan in cooperation or coordination with the existing Non-Motorized Subcommittee of the City of Manistee

Contacts/Partners/Tools: Jon Rose (City of Manistee), Christa Johnson (committee chair), Jeff Mikula (committee member), trail and bicycle organizations

Cost: None

Responsible Party: Project Champion

Measure of Success:

- Creation of a non-motorized transportation plan for Filer Township
- Future measures of success can be based on implementation of phases of the plan.

US-31 Corridor: Coordinate with the non-motorized committee and MDOT to plan a pedestrian crossing at the light at Merkey Road

Contacts/Partners/Tools: Non-motorized committee, MDOT, County Road Commission, DDA

Cost: None

Responsible Party: Project Champion

Measure of Success:

- Pedestrian crossing established

Filer City/ Oak Hill: Cooperate in regional efforts to find a new user of the Drop Forge site

Contacts/Partners/Tools: Alliance for Economic Success Office (AES)

Cost: None

Responsible Party: Project Champion

Measure of Success:

- New business operational at site

Economic Development: Actively pursue a sewer service agreement with the City of Manistee. Consider funding options and requirements as a necessary part of developing the agreement

Contacts/ Partners/ Tools: technical advisor, legal advisor

Cost: \$5,000

Responsible Party: Jim Espvik, Township Board and DDA

Measure of Success:

- Sewer agreement reached (December 2008—milestone)
- Ultimately, success will be achieved when the sewer system is constructed and functioning. As the sewer agreement is reached, additional milestones along with a target completion date can be added.

Recreation: Create a new picnic area on Manistee Lake

Contacts/Partners/Tools: Township recreation committee, County Recreation Commission, MDNR

Cost: \$20,000

Responsible Party: Project Champion

Measure of Success:

- Park created
- NOTE: In order to secure outside funding for this project, it may be necessary to first update the township's Parks and Recreation Plan which has expired.

Public Participation

Recruit new community volunteers to serve on standing boards and commission or to participate in special task forces developed to accomplish specific tasks.

Contacts/ Partners/ Tools: Website, newsletter, TV2 announcement, newspaper, AES email blast, direct calls, posters, civic organizations

Cost: none

Responsible Party: 1-2 representatives each from PC, Board and DDA and staff

Measure of Success:

- Appoint members to a temporary task force effort from Planning Commission, Township Board and DDA (July, 2008).
- Hold task force meetings to design outreach efforts (July-December, 2008).
- Hold publicity campaign (January & February, 2009)
- Track two new volunteers per month through December 2009.



Intergovernmental Cooperation

Appoint a representative to attend all meetings of the Railroad Relocation Study and report back to the Planning Commission and Township Board.

Contacts: Renee Ihlenfeldt, AES

Cost: None

Responsible Party: Identify Champion

Measure of Success:

- Representative appointed
- Monthly reports delivered

Look for opportunities to partner with the City of Manistee in order to improve services to residents and avoid a duplication of services between governments.

Contacts: Manistee City Manager and City Council; additional city service providers

Cost: none

Responsible Party: Project Champion (possibly a member of the Township Board of Trustees)

Measure of Success:

- Meetings held with City of Manistee
- Report presented to Township Board on partnership opportunities

Communicate with County Commissioner Ervin Kowalski on county matters which affect Filer Township.

Contacts: Commissioner Kowalski

Cost: None

Responsible Party: Project Champion

Measure of Success:

- Regular monthly meeting set with Commissioner Kowalski
- Monthly reports to Township Board, Planning Commission and DDA regarding monthly meetings

Recruit a new volunteer to apply to serve on the County Planning Commission. (Currently there is not a representative from Filer Township on the County Planning Commission.)

Contacts: Township newsletter, Township website, personal invitations.

Cost: None

Responsible Party: Project Champion and task force for finding new volunteers

Measure of Success:

- Zoning Administrator gathers information about application process and position responsibilities (October, 2008);
- Seek volunteers through volunteer search effort (January/February 2008)
- Application filed (March 2009).

Participate in the upcoming County Branding Initiative program/group.

Contacts: Renee Ihlenfeldt, AES

Cost: Participation fee TBD

Responsible Party: Identify Champion

Measure of Success:

- Filer Township Board approves participation and associated fee
- A Filer Township resident is seated on the committee
- Committee member provides monthly input to Township Board and DDA



US-31 Corridor

Place identification signs at the entrances to Filer Township.

Contacts: DDA, AES (for branding initiative), MDOT (if signs in ROW), advertising agency, sign company

Cost: \$4,000

Responsible Party: Project champion

Measure of Success:

- Signs in place

Develop and adopt appearance standards/architectural regulations/ landscaping requirements for the US-31 Corridor area to promote a more unified, attractive appearance to the area.

Contacts: Professional planning consultant

Cost: \$25,000 (consider cost sharing with other municipalities through a corridor approach)

Responsible Party: Lynn Kooyers, Planning Commission and DDA

Measure of Success:

- Standards adopted



Create an access road / arterial road plan to proactively plan for future road connections and extensions along the US-31 commercial corridor.

Contacts: MDOT, County Road Commission, DDA, professional consultant

Cost: \$75,000

Responsible Party: Township Board, Planning Commission and DDA

Measure of Success:

- Access road plan written and adopted

Filer City/Oak Hill Neighborhoods

Cooperate in regional efforts to find a new user of the Drop Forge site.

Contacts: Renee Ihlenfeldt (AES)

Cost: none

Responsible Party: Project Champion

Measure of Success:

- New business activity at the site

Improve the Filer City Park and “Rec” Center

Contacts: consulting architect, construction contractor

Cost: \$100,000

Responsible Party: Project Champion (in cooperation with the Township Board)

Measure of Success:

- Physical improvements made to building

Create a “Clean Up, Fix Up” community activity to encourage property maintenance.

Contacts: local media, local home improvement suppliers,

Cost: \$250 (printed flyers, banners, prizes, etc.)

Responsible Party: Project champion

Measure of Success:

- Hold first annual event
- Hold second annual event with increased participation

Install a sidewalk/pathway on Filer City (Tabor) Hill and north to the city limits.

Contacts: County Road Commission, consulting engineer, contractor

Cost: \$27,000

Responsible Party: Non-motorized committee

Measure of Success:

- Sidewalk installed

Encourage neighborhood commercial development in the Filer City/Oak Hill neighborhoods (Mee Street, Nelson Street)

Contacts: AES, City of Manistee DDA, MSU Extension, area realtors

Cost: None for exploration phase / project cost TBD based on scope

Responsible Party: Project champion

Measure of Success:

- Explore options with small group (sub-area plan, economic consultant, etc.)

- Consider opportunities through *Regional Solutions for Entrepreneurs and Small Business Success* grant program administered through AES office.
- Report to Planning Commission and Township Board

Create an historical society group to pursue historic information and preservation activities.

Contacts: Manistee Historical Museum, County Library, City of Manistee DDA, Manistee News Advocate, MSHPO, long time residents

Cost: None for group creation / project costs TBD

Responsible Party: Project Champion

Measure of Success:

- Historical society group created
- Group develops a five-year plan
- Group completes first project



Economic Development

Coordinate with the activities and initiatives of the Alliance for Economic Success (AES) as they relate to the regional economy.

Contacts: AES

Cost: none

Responsible Party: Project champion

Measure of Success:

- Monthly report to Planning Commission, Township Board and DDA
- Participation in regional programs (recreation plan, branding initiative, lakefront industrial study, railroad relocation study, STDI project, etc.)
- Participate in the *Regional Solutions for Entrepreneurs and Small Business Success* grand program.

Develop a connection from the snowmobile trail to the US-31 corridor to bring snowmobilers to the commercial corridor.

Contacts: MDNR, MDOT, DDA, County Road Commission, County Parks and Recreation

Cost: TBD based on design and use of right of way

Responsible Party: Project Champion / DDA

Measure of Success:

- Committee created
- Trail route identified
- Cost determined
- Funding secured
- Trail constructed

Consider opportunities to encourage and support local businesses in the community including along the US-31 corridor through projects such as artisan shops within larger mixed-use developments or business incubators.

Contacts: AES, DDA, City of Manistee DDA, MSU Extension, area developers

Cost: None for exploration phase / project cost TBD based on scope

Responsible Party: Project champion

Measure of Success:

- Explore options with small group (sub-area plan, economic consultant, etc.)
- Consider opportunities through *Regional Solutions for Entrepreneurs and Small Business Success* grant program.
- Report to Planning Commission and Township Board.

Recreation

Create a township park around the township hall.

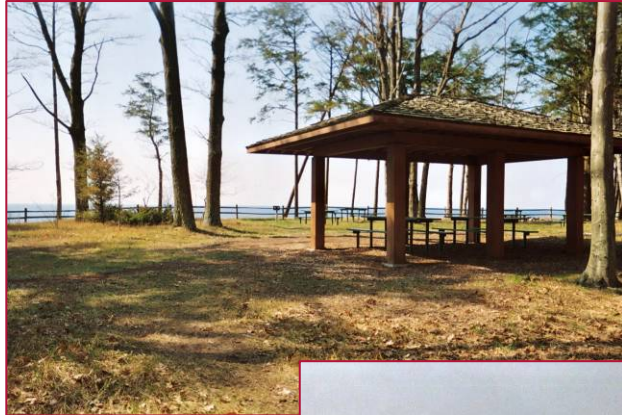
Contacts: Township Parks and Recreation Committee, City and County Parks and Recreation Committees, landscape architect

Cost: \$20,000

Responsible Party: Project champion

Measure of Success:

- Committee established
- Park designed
- Park built



Improve existing neighborhood park.

Contacts: Township Parks and Recreation Committee, City and County Parks and Recreation Committees, landscape architect

Cost: \$40,000 (including new equipment)

Responsible Party: Project Champion

Measure of Success:

- Committee established
- Park designed
- Park built



Work with the County Parks and Recreation efforts to consider a regional trail around Manistee Lake that serves to connect waterfront areas without crossing established industrial properties. (The trail itself need not be located on the waterfront.)

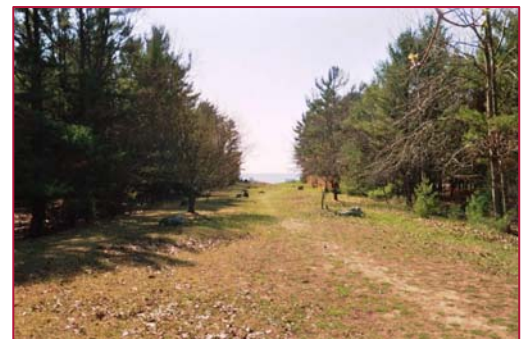
Contacts: County Planning Office, County Parks and Recreation Committee, township non-motorized committee, City non-motorized committee,

Cost: none for initial planning efforts / grant funding possible for project

Responsible Party: Project champion

Measure of Success:

- Regional trail group committee established
- Trail location/ concept plan developed
- Trail constructed



Technical

Reestablish locally the practice of a site plan review technical committee meeting (previously done by the County Planning Office, now discontinued).

Contacts: County planning staff, Jerry Peterson (Road Commission)

Cost: None

Responsible Party: Zoning Administrator

Measure of Success:

- Hold Site Plan Review Technical Committee meeting (next site plan)

Adopt the complete model zoning ordinance language for access management included in the Access Management Plan for the US-31 Corridor.

Contacts: Rick Liptak (MDOT Cadillac TSC), participating communities in corridor study

Cost: Printing, publishing and notice costs

Responsible Party: Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission and Township Board

Measure of Success:

- Model language adopted

Consider opportunities to make private roads connect to other roads or preserve the option for future connections rather than allowing cul-de-sac design (similar to current County Road Commission policy).

Contacts: Jerry Peterson (Road Commission), MML, City Attorney

Cost: \$300 (legal consulting fees)

Responsible Party: Zoning Administrator

Measure of Success:

- Report to Planning Commission by Lynn Kooyers
- Action by Planning Commission

Establish a line of communication with the school district to follow the discussion about changes to the elementary school.

Contacts: School Board, School Administration

Cost: none

Responsible Party: Filer Township resident on School Board or willing volunteer

Measure of Success:

- Monthly report to Township Board and Planning Commission

Adopt land use planning policies and zoning regulations which allow for the creation of a range of affordable housing options including small lot residential, townhomes, apartments, senior housing and assisted living facilities. Encourage efforts to provide public sewer to areas intended for higher density residential development.

Contacts: County planner, City of Manistee Community Development office, City of Manistee Housing Commission, MSHDA, MML, City Attorney

Cost: Ordinance amendment costs (public notice, printing, codification)

Responsible Party: Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission, Township Board

Measure of Success:

- Master Plan amended
- Zoning Ordinance amended
- Sewer service available to serve high density area



Summary of Public Input Activities

The Strategic Plan is a plan to prioritize and guide the actions taken or supported by Filer Township in order to best meet the needs and interests of the whole community in an effective and responsible manner. It is intended to represent the interests of both residents and the business community. It takes into consideration the many public needs of the community including safety, housing, quality of life, employment and protection of natural resources. To assess the opinions of the community during the process, a series of four focus groups were held in January, February and March, 2008.

The focus groups and the project as a whole were promoted through a series of traditional and grass-roots networks. A project website was created and maintained to allow people to see focus group documents and results during the project and to make their own comments via email. The local newspaper, the *Manistee News Advocate*, carried stories on both the focus group activity and the open house activity. The e-mail blast service provided by the Alliance for Economic Success and the local access cable channel were both used to announce the open house activity.

A focus group to consider the US-31 Corridor was held on Tuesday, January 22, 2008. The members of the DDA were invited along with business owners along the US-31 Corridor. The second focus group addressed the topic of transportation in general and was held on February 12, 2008. It was attended by a large group of technical transportation staff from around the region. A third focus group to consider the Filer City/ Oak Hill neighborhoods and the waterfront industrial area took place on February 19, 2008. Individual letters of invitation were mailed to each household in the Filer City and Oak Hill neighborhoods. The fourth focus group was a joint meeting with the City of Manistee which occurred on March 25, 2008. A summary of the input received at each of the focus groups is included here.

US-31 Corridor Focus Group

Focus Group Activity #1: What word would you use to describe Filer Township's Commercial Corridor and DDA District?

Growing	Sprawling	Organized
Character	Points-of-Interest	Destination
Services	Congestion	Variety
Infrastructure	Unregulated Traffic	Aesthetics
Unappealing	Garish	Non-Eventful
Not Enough Shopping	Average	Unplanned
Lacking Theme	Vehicles Only	Pedestrians at Risk
No Green	Vacant Areas	No Identity
Inconsistency	No Service Roads	Growing
Deteriorated	Compact	Long
Congested	Cluttered	Un-Unified
Un-Managed Access	Growing	Plain
Undefined	Clean	Hazardous
Rural	Illuminated	Open
Spacious	Stable	Recent
Organized	Active	Maintained
Pride	Under Developed	Potential
Diverse	Greens Field	Dangerous
Tidy	No Personality	Incompatibility
Opportunity	Future Area of Growth	Southern Gateway
Trees	Typical	

What are words that do not currently describe Filer Township's commercial corridor but would be desirable?

Service Roads	Bike path	Walkways
Less Ingress/Egress	Designation	Sidewalks
Traffic Light	Access Management	Unified Appearance
Curb Appeal	Attractive	Beautiful
Eventful	Safe	Traffic Signals
Sewer	Sidewalks/paths	Good Signage
Ground Mounted signs		

US-31 Corridor Focus Group

Focus Group Activity #2: As you look back over the past five (5) years, what is the **best** thing that has happened along the US-31 corridor? Why? (*These were listed more than once on responses but only once per idea here*).

- ▶ Reaching agreement with Member's Credit Union for an access road...
- ▶ Right-in, Right-out at Walgreens
- ▶ New businesses coming to the area and interest from others (Walgreens)
- ▶ Access Management (driveway closings, corridor study)
- ▶ Improvements for better/safer traffic flow (addition of right turn lane at Red Apple Road, center turn lane)
- ▶ Water service & water tower
- ▶ Appearance of Member's Credit Union is very attractive, nice gateway
- ▶ Improvement of the Bungalow
- ▶ Driveway improvement at Walgreens
- ▶ Light Poles

As you look back over the past five (5) years, what is the **worst** thing that has happened along the US-31 corridor? Why?

- ▶ Traffic at Red Apple and US-31
- ▶ Hotel/motel burned down and has not been replaced
- ▶ The #1 best-ever Big Boy closed its doors
- ▶ Traffic safety study not completed or planned
- ▶ Curve re-work
- ▶ 28th Street corner
- ▶ Traffic speed limit
- ▶ Traffic accidents
- ▶ Not having utilized access roads
- ▶ Nothing happened that has a unified plan, look, etc.
- ▶ empty businesses/ loss of businesses
- ▶ lack of coordinating groups for progress
- ▶ no turn signals at major intersections
- ▶ lack of sewer / failure to complete sewer expansion discussion
- ▶ not getting Wal-Mart

US-31 Corridor Focus Group

Focus Group Activity #3: If you could look forward into the future five (5) years from now and take a drive along US-31, what would you be **most excited** to see?

- ▶ mall vs. strip development
- ▶ service drive from Red Apple to Stronach Road
- ▶ sidewalks, multi-use paths (friendly to alternative modes of transportation)
- ▶ more service drives to eliminate curb cuts on US-31
- ▶ large employers
- ▶ trees with a park-like appearance
- ▶ planned development as a result of adequate utilities (sewer/water)
- ▶ clusters by design of like-minded businesses
- ▶ appears the gateway to the Manistee metro-area
- ▶ no vacant shops
- ▶ unobtrusive signage
- ▶ develop areas for small businesses, family or independent owned retail and service shops
- ▶ community-driven design
- ▶ infrastructure provided by grants
- ▶ access roads
- ▶ bus transit stops
- ▶ traffic light at US-31 and Red Apple Road with crosswalk
- ▶ Red Lobster at the corner of Red Apple and US-31
- ▶ Lawn and Garden Service Center at the Stronach Road area
- ▶ theater/ Cinema
- ▶ more traffic control between Merkey and County Line Roads
- ▶ community identifier at township boundaries
- ▶ more businesses/ restaurants/ services / offices
- ▶ Meijers
- ▶ Boulevard/ Trees
- ▶ setbacks/ open space

If you could look forward into the future five (5) years from now and take a drive along US-31, what would you be **afraid you might see**?

- ▶ no design standards (unattractive buildings)
- ▶ strip malls
- ▶ no change
- ▶ empty buildings
- ▶ higher taxes
- ▶ visual clutter (uncontrolled signs, utility poles, etc.)
- ▶ adult bookstores
- ▶ big box stores
- ▶ unplanned development

- ▶ wide 5-lane road with no service road
- ▶ vacant area behind VFW
- ▶ sand hill south of MCC

US-31 Corridor Focus Group

Focus Group Activity #4: What are your thoughts on each of the following transportation options along the US-31 corridor? What ideas do you have to improve them? (*Ideas that appeared more than once were reported only one time.*)

Walking

Sidewalks all the way through
Plan for good service roads
Walking paths/ sidewalks are needed
Walking is not safe
Barrier free pedestrian connections
Connect points of interest

Bicycling

Multi-use path along US-31
Include park-like, exclusive non-motorized paths
Connect to existing area trails
Provide bike racks

Driving

Option of using golf carts from residential to commercial areas
Well served/ no problem
Improve safety
Slower speed
Keep US-31 a two-lane road

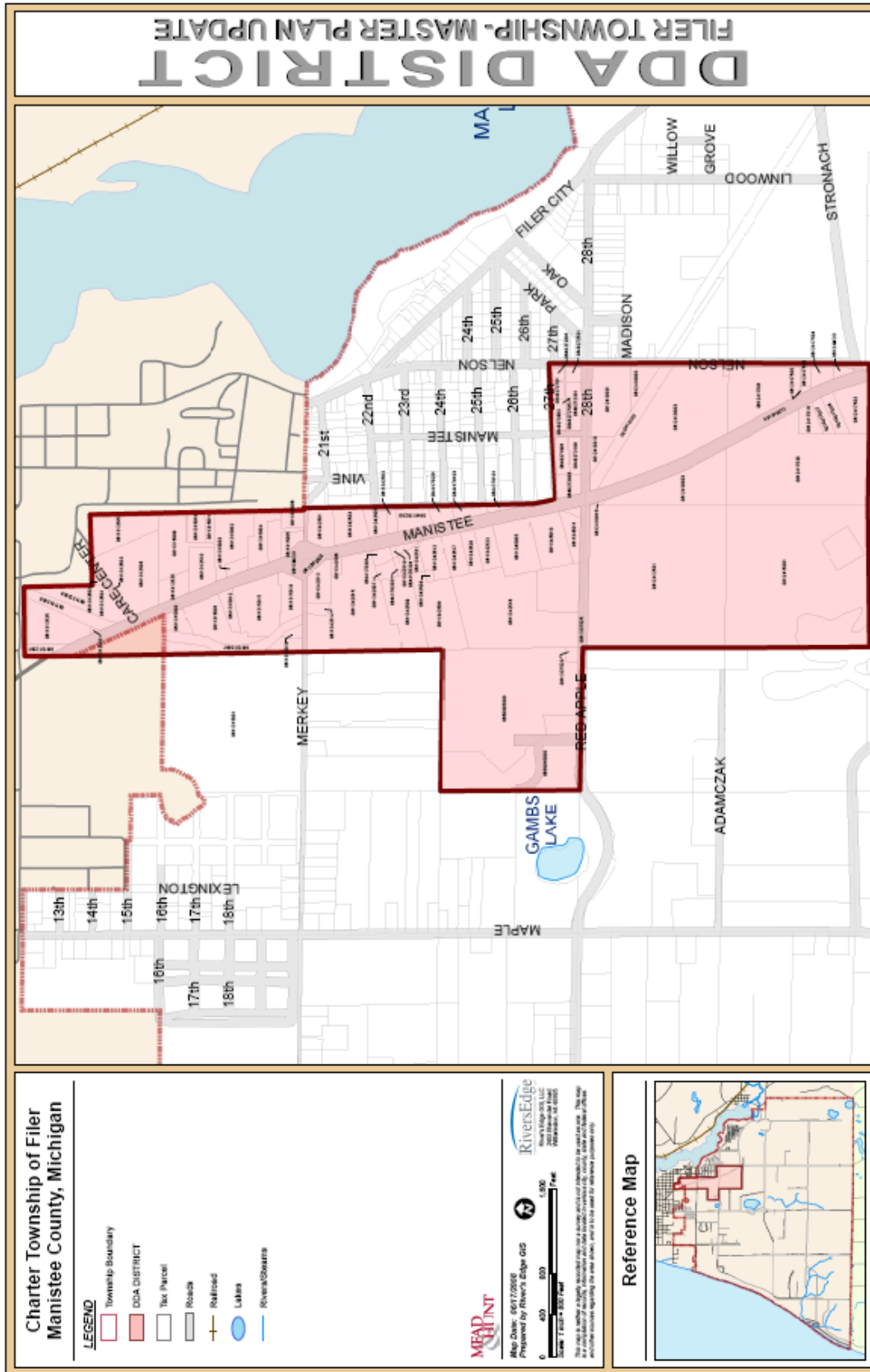
Public Transit

Bus routes or trolley to connect Filer Township corridor with downtown Manistee
Offer protected pick-up locations
Extend Dial-A-Ride service
Dial-a-ride is good

US-31 Corridor Focus Group

Focus Group Activity #5: Are there other comments you would like to make?

- ▶ Green Design/ Energy Efficiency
- ▶ Recapture rainwater to be used for other purposes
- ▶ Encourage energy saving building materials
- ▶ Less parking spaces for businesses
- ▶ Indoor recreation facility / YMCA
- ▶ Distinctive Identification features at township borders
- ▶ We would like to know how to be more proactive in making it happen...taking our ideas from the design phase to the implementation phase and then to the reality phase.
- ▶ There are a number of commercial areas whose appearance does not enhance the area. If we are going to attract additional investment, we will have to offer something that will encourage these areas to improve.
- ▶ Build the sewers and the green (treasury green) will come.
- ▶ Large DDA without sufficient infrastructure
- ▶ DDA district may be too large to be supported by residents.
- ▶ Most retailers want exposure to US-31 which encourages sprawl
- ▶ Should have a shopping “center” first before the rest of the highway corridor is developed.



Sign-In Sheet Focus Group Jan 22nd 2008 #1

Laura Horvat	Filer Twp DDA
Shirley Ball	Clerk/Planning Comm. member
Dan Shepard	LRBOI-
Renee Ihlenfeldt	Alliance for Economic Success
DAVE OHMAN	FILER CREDIT Union
Jennifer Williams	Filer Twp Planning Comm.
Ryan Mack	Filer Twp Planning Commission
Corrie Brown	" " DDA
JERRY LINDEMAN	Filer Twp Planning Com.
Jane Walker	Private Citizen/Resident Filer.
Phil Bualta	Filer Twp DDA
David Rhodes	FILER Twp PLANNING
Jon Rose	City of Manistee
RICK LIPTAK	MDOT, CADILLAC TSC
Ed Williams	FILER TWP
Joe Kimball	Filer TWP
Myra Koopman	Filer Zoning Administrator
Denise Blakeslee	City of Manistee
Sue Wagner	Manistee Co.
Jerry Peterson	Filer Planning / Road Comm.
John Hanson	Filer Planning

Transportation Focus Group

The members of the Planning Commission (which also serves as the strategic plan steering committee) would like to thank the people who attended the meeting to present information about their office, program or service. Presenters are listed below along with a brief summary of the information presented:

Speaker #1: Rick Liptak, MDOT

Mr. Liptak provided an overview of the MDOT services and programs from the Cadillac Transportation and Service Center (TSC). He explained the process for making changes to the speed limit and for adding traffic signals to state highway intersections. He provided written information on both programs that are available to view at the township hall. He also reviewed the US-31 Access Management Plan / Corridor Study and the associated improvements made to the corridor including the closing of driveways. New identification signs will be placed along the US-31 corridor this year as part of a regular maintenance program.

Speaker #2: Jerry Peterson, Co. Road Commission

Mr. Peterson is also a Planning Commission member for the Charter Township of Filer. He reviewed the roles and responsibilities of his office with regard to road maintenance and improvement and budgeting. The road commission issues driveway permits for access onto all county roads and should be contacted early in the planning review process where county roads are affected.

Speaker #3: Troy Rife, MDNR

Mr. Rife is the District Planner for State Parks (including Orchard Beach State Park) and linear parks and works out of the Cadillac District office. He is the contact person for making state park connections. His co-worker Mr. Todd Neiss would be the contact person for connections to snowmobile trails. The MDNR welcomes connections to their trail systems.

Speaker #4: Jon Rose/Jeff Mikula, City of Manistee

Mr. Rose is the Community Development Director for the City of Manistee and Mr. Mikula is the City's engineer of record from the office of Abonmarche. Information was presented about a future road project—the connection of the existing 12th Street which would affect the Charter Township of Filer. Interest was expressed in working cooperatively on this connection. Information was also presented on the City's Non-Motorized Transportation Commission. It was first formed to meet one of the objectives of the "Promoting Active Communities" program through the State of Michigan. This group is chaired by a resident of the Charter Township of Filer and has created a non-motorized plan. The plan includes routes of priority for bicycles and locations for bike racks. The City Council has adopted the plan. The City would like to coordinate efforts with the Charter Township of Filer to extend pedestrian and bicycle connections.

Speaker #5: Kevin Schmutzler, Principal, Jefferson Elementary

Mr. Schmutzler is the coordinator for the Safe Routes 2 School effort. This activity will put the Manistee Schools in a position to seek funding through federal transportation dollars for safer pedestrian connections for a two mile radius around Jefferson School. The two year study process is underway. A need has been identified to make connections between the elementary, the middle school and the high school. New committee members are welcome. There may be opportunities for improvements in the Charter Township of Filer as part of the program with the two mile impact area. Mr. Schmutzler also noted that there are changes in use being considered for Madison Elementary School and that the school district will be seeking a reinstatement of the millage that was in place previously.

Speaker #6: Renee Ihlenfeldt, Alliance for Economic Success

Ms. Ihlenfeldt spoke about the Railroad Relocation Feasibility Study that is currently underway. The effort is being led through the AES office and it is a study to understand whether it is physically feasible to relocate the railroad so that it forms a “Y” from the south end of Manistee Lake serving the industrial uses on both the east and west side of the lake from the south. This would eliminate the additional miles to loop around the north end of the lake and would eliminate the bridge crossing. The plan is currently underway and the results will be made available to the affected communities in the near future. Participation and input will be welcome.

Speaker #7: Sue Wagner, Manistee County Planner

Ms. Wagner spoke about the County Parks and Recreation Plan that is currently being developed through the County Planning office with the County Planning Commission. Public input is being requested through open house opportunities and comments are welcome via phone or email to the county planning office. It is important for the residents of the Charter Township of Filer to note their interests in trail and bike paths for the county plan.

The County Planning Commission is also in the process of developing a new Master Land Use Plan for Manistee County. Information on both projects is available through the county’s website.

Richard Strevey, Manistee County Transportation

Mr. Strevey provided information to Lynn Wilson who presented it on his behalf. Manistee County Transportation offers the Dial-A-Ride service. There is currently a flex-fixed route bus that runs around the City of Manistee and through the commercial corridor of the Charter Township of Filer. This means that there are no bus stops and fixed times but the service area exists and service is hourly. Mr. Strevey is also willing to talk about any other needs that the Dial-A-Ride service could help to address. Please feel free to contact him.

Questions

Questions were then asked using written notes on note cards. They were related to connection of snowmobile trails to the business district along US-31, safety improvement options along the US-31 corridor and plans and activities of the City of Manistee's non-motorized committee.

Connections

The group then spent time making connections between transportation activities and identifying opportunities to coordinate transportation efforts or to connect planning and transportation efforts. The following opportunities were noted:

- ▶ A formal connection could be made between the snowmobile trail and the US-31 corridor. An action group to consider this should include the MDNR, the County Road Commission and MDOT.
- ▶ The Charter Township of Filer could create its own non-motorized group and coordinate with the activities of the City's non-motorized group.
- ▶ The Charter Township of Filer could participate in the school's Safe Routes 2 Schools activities and consider opportunities for pedestrian improvements within the township.
- ▶ Residents of the Charter Township of Filer can provide input into the school districts discussion of future uses of Madison Elementary School.
- ▶ Residents of the Charter Township of Filer can provide input into the County Parks and Recreation Plan development process.
- ▶ A connection could be explored between the State Park and the City of Manistee and then on into the Charter Township of Filer. An action group to consider this should include the MDNR, the City's non-motorized committee and a non-motorized group from the township.
- ▶ If the current railroad corridor is abandoned in the future as part of a railroad relocation project, that corridor could be used for trail development. The trails could be multi-use and include bicycle, pedestrian and snowmobile.
- ▶ The Lake Michigan recreation areas could be connected to the south into Mason County and maybe as far as Ludington State Park.
- ▶ Coordination with bicycle groups that come through the area could result in a bike route that shows off the many area attractions to encourage tourism from the group passing through and to encourage repeat visits.

► A snowmobile path could be constructed adjacent to US-31 in the right of way to allow snowmobiles to travel safely along the US-31 corridor to commercial businesses.

The overall theme of the discussion was that there are many people and offices who perform similar or inter-related activities. The Charter Township of Filer has many opportunities to participate in a larger group activity and look for partners in projects. This can assist with funding and with staffing and expertise.

SIGN-IN SHEET

Charter Twp. of Filer

2/12/08

Lynn Wilson	Mead & Hunt
Kevin Schmitz	Manistee Area Public Schools
Michaela Peterson	(Young Citizen)
Shirley Ball	Filer Twp
Lynn Koyers	Filer Twp.
David Rhodes	Filer Twp.
TERRY LINDEMAN	Filer Twp.
JEFF MIKULA	ABONNACHES CITY OF MANISTEE
Jim Espvik	Filer Twp
Rick Mark	Filer Twp.
Connie Brenn	Filer DDA
PAM LORENZ	Store Director Grand Market
Ed Williams	FILER TWP
PHIL PERALTA	FILER Twp
Jennifer Williams	Filer TWP. Plann. Comm.
DEAN KRUSE	Filer TWP Trustee
Gerald Peters	Road Comm. / Planning Comm.
Troy A. Rife	MDNR / Parks & Recreation
RICK LIFTAK	MDOT CADILLAC TSC

Filer City / Oak Hill / Waterfront Industrial Focus Group

Focus Group Activity #1

Question A: In terms of physical appearance, what are the MOST attractive places/things in the neighborhood? Make a numbered list. Mark them on the map with the number.

- Zane Niesen's House
- Township Hall***
- Business District getting better
- Commercial corridor
- Ample lighting on highway and on Stronach Road all the way to PCA
- Pine Ridge (K-mart acres)
- Kowalski Home***
- Premier Heating & Cooling*
- Marshland and Wildlife
- Filer City Park
- Filer Fire Station*
- Bungalow (landscaping and restaurant updates)**
- Filer City Road to US-31—well manicured lawns
- Peaceful neighborhoods
- PCA recent landscaping*
- Open view by water tower next to township hall

Question B: In terms of physical appearance, what are the LEAST attractive places/things in the neighborhood? Make a numbered list. Mark them on the map with the number.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop Forge** • Seal coating needs to be fixed • Filer City Bar* • Motorcycle Club • Signage (truck route) • Former Filer Pool** • Van's Towing** • House beside premier heating • Adamski House (abandoned) • Dump smell* • Noise from industry • Gas leak / sour gas • Southeast entrance to area • Coal dust • Tondu • Unkept house | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ugly commercial building |
|--|--|

* Indicates number of duplicate responses

Filer City / Oak Hill / Waterfront Industrial Focus Group

Focus Group Activity #2

Question A: If there was a promotional flyer made by a real-estate guidebook about your area, what information would it include? (What are the BEST things about living in your neighborhood?)

Quiet*	Sidewalks
Public water	Nearby grocery /restaurants***
Parks (but need updating)*	Health care providers (need urologist)
Close to elementary school*	Safe, family neighborhood*
Low Crime	Close to fishing & boating
Neighborhood post office	Class A Volunteer Fire Department
Low taxes	Sense of community*
Low water rates	Historical
Lake views	Good environment to raise children*
Friendly people*	Recreation within walking distance

Question B: What do you like LEAST about living in your neighborhood?

More street lighting
 Some buildings are eyesores
 Need more retail / grocery stores
 Some stores are not open long enough
 Landfill odor*
 No sewers*
 Need sidewalks*
 Clean up area on north side of 28th street between Bungalow and Fire Dept.
 Coal dust*
 Heavy truck traffic
 Industrial noise
 Not enough public access to the lake
 Convenience stores not located conveniently
 No covered outdoor picnic pavilion in park
 Needs walking/ bike path
 Condition of parks
 Highway crosswalk needed

Is there something that could fix or improve the situation? What would you suggest? (Please make notes on the back of this page.)

Get more streetlights

Fix up or tear down

Work with proper agency to secure more retail

Build picnic pavilion in the park by the recreation center and another one by the township hall in the open space

* Indicates number of duplicate responses

Filer City / Oak Hill / Waterfront Industrial Focus Group

Focus Group Activity #3

Question: If you travelled in a time machine fifteen years into the future, what would you like to see in your neighborhood? See categories below (and even add your own). Please add location notes on map.

Physical appearance (streetscapes, signage, lighting, etc.):

- Yes to all
- Neat and tidy
- Not so nice buildings fixed up*
- Make the month of May as “clean up/ fix up month”. Offer prizes.
- Better identification signs at entrance to Township
- Improve and encourage landscaping and plantings
- Small stores / mixed use
- Berm like it is supposed to be
- Coal piles gone / more industries
- A more appealing entrance on the southeast
- Greenspace/ landscaping
- Conversion of Drop Forge site to something more appealing and useful
- Streetscapes
- Community open space or property for future use

Transportation (roads, paths, sidewalks, bus, etc.):

- Proper roads to sustain today's traffic
- Affordable public transportation for the entire county
- Keep the railroad / Relocate railroad*
- More sidewalks
- Road improvement
- Keep dial-a-ride
- Sidewalks / bike path on Tabor Hill (Filer City Hill)
- Bike paths / walking paths from north side of Drop Forge site north to city limit

Recreation (parks, green space, equipment, leagues, etc.)

- Community Pool
- Magoon Creek maintained
- More green space
- Lakeshore walking / bike path along Manistee Lake
- Picnic area on Manistee Lake
- Park beach and picnic area at 21st and Vine Triangle
- Develop open space by township hall water to a park with benches, picnic table/pavilion
- Playground / Rec Center update

- Lake access in the residentially zoned areas

Commercial / Retail services

- More stores! Any kind (Target, Meijer, Wal-Mart, Younkers, Kohl's, Macey's
- Encourage neighborhood stores on Mee Street and Nelson Street
- Coffee shop, market, bakery, hardware
- More competition for retail food
- 2 or more convenient stores
- church
- family restaurant
- stores within walking distance on Nelson/ 28th / Filer (small business district)
- donut shop
- Filer City food service downtown: sandwich or coffee shop, community hub

Other Ideas

- Need more good paying jobs. Everything else will fall in place.
- Need another Big Boy
- Reith – Riley Truck traffic not going thru Filer City (either go to US-31 or 21st Street or go down Nelson Street to Stronach Road)
- Fishing pier along with the park area
- Community pride
- Embracing our community's industrial history

* Indicates number of duplicate responses

Filer City / Oak Hill / Waterfront Industrial Focus Group

Focus Group Activity #4

Question: If there was a safe way to walk or bicycle to other areas in the community, where would you like to be able to go? (Where should the connections be?)

- Connection to commercial corridor
- All around Oak Hill
- First Street and 5th Avenue beach
- Campgrounds (State Park)
- Benzie County/ Mason County
- Big M Ski Area
- Ludington to Manistee
- Manistee to Onekama and Frankfort
- Manistee east to Udell Hills
- Utilizing old railroad beds
- Have a bike and walk path along primary roads from Stronach to Oak Hill and along Filer City Road
- Be able to go to church
- Complete bike path around Manistee Lake*
- Bike path from Filer to 1st and 5th Street Beaches and State Park
- Bike path from Filer City to Magoon Park and Sundling Park.
- Walking path around the lake
- A path from Oak Hill / Filer City on the east to Magoon Creek on the west. From that path, another path going north along Cherry road into Manistee Beaches and park and along Merkey Road to form a loop.
- Safe routes to schools, parks and shopping for pedestrians.

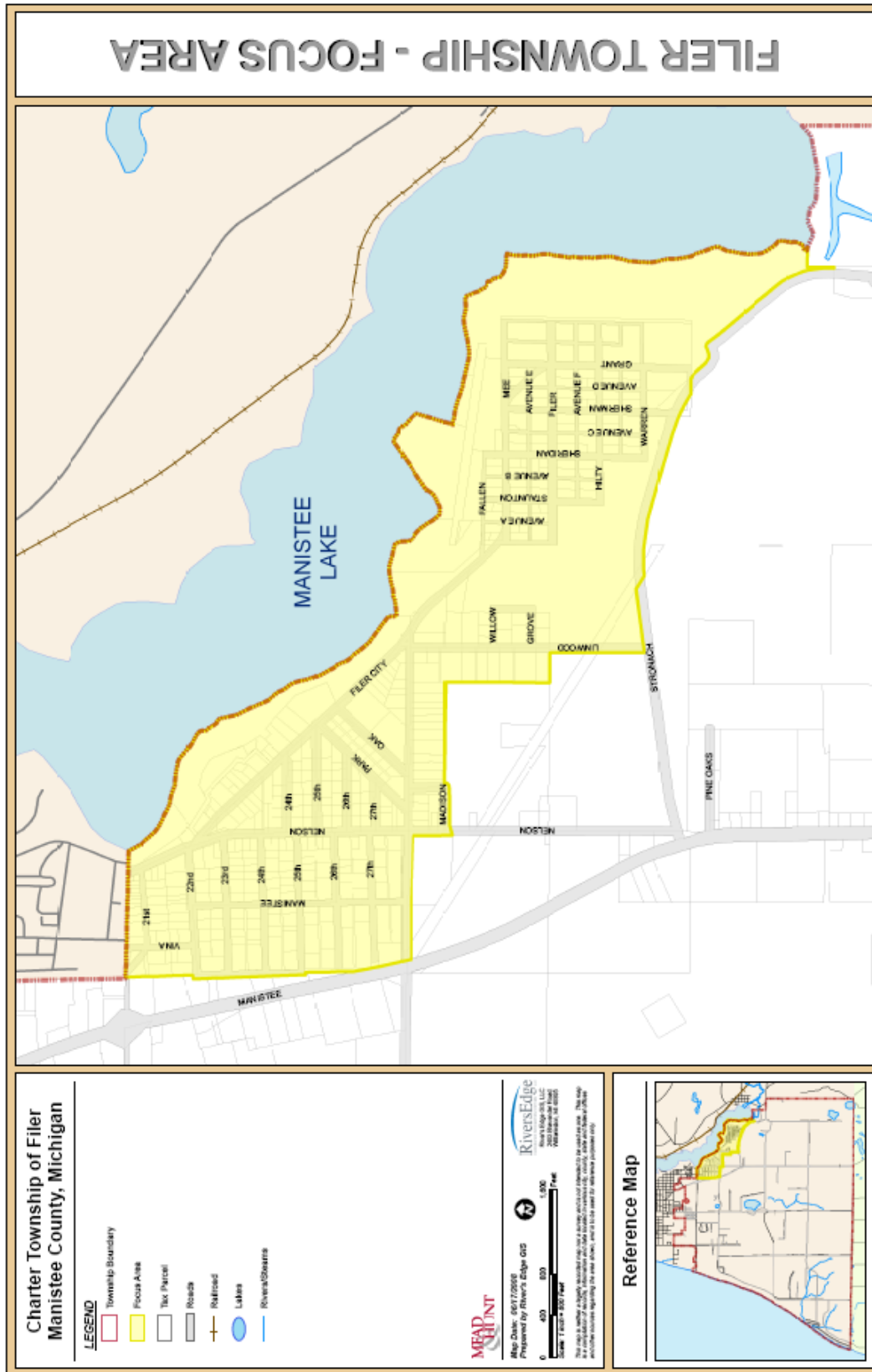
* Indicates number of duplicate responses

Filer City / Oak Hill / Waterfront Industrial Focus Group

Focus Group Activity #5

Question: Are there other comments you would like to make?

- It is necessary to maintain businesses that pay good wages and seek more like these that pay well.
- Need to work together to make good things happen
- Trails/ multi-use paths for low speed motorized vehicles (golf carts, mo-peds, etc.)
- More employment with higher paying jobs
- We would love to see improvement soon! Action...Action...Action!
- Township improvement funds...are there any?
- Improve landscaping
- Home improvements
- How can we increase tax base? How can we increase the township's potential?
- How can we assist with growth by taking advantage of area opportunities (i.e. drop forge, old city dump)?
- Welcome to Filer Township signs



Sign-In Sheet

February 19, 2008
 Filer City / Oak Hill
 Waterfront Industrial
 Focus Group # 3

Lynn Wilson	Mead & Hunt
Joe Kimball	Filer Twp
Frank Modreski	Filer Twp
JILL SCHLUTER	FILER TWP
Maureen Barry	Filer Twp
PETER CAIRD	FILER TWP.
Ed Williams	FILER TWP
ERVIN KOWALSKI	Co. Commissioner
Bonnie Hyman	Filer Twp.
Gene Walker	Filer City Resident
Jim Espelt	Filer Twp.
Amy Fischer	FILER TWP.
Maryann Schuelke	Filer Twp.
Donald Johnson	Filer Twp.
+ PC members less Jerry	

Joint Meeting with the City of Manistee

This focus group was an opportunity for residents, elected officials, appointed officials and staff from Filer Township and the City of Manistee to meet together in person. The value of making a personal connection cannot be overstated. The City of Manistee has recently completed a Strategic Plan and this meeting was an opportunity for the two communities to exchange information about action priorities, look for areas of common interest and opportunities to cooperate.

City Manager Mitch Deisch presented an overview of the City of Manistee's Strategic Plan. Township Supervisor Jim Espvik summarized the focus group activities and presented an overview of the strategic planning process undertaken by Filer Township. He included information about the themes that were emerging from the focus group activities.

Each person in attendance was given the opportunity to speak and comments were generally made in support of inter-governmental cooperation and more specifically regarding exploring the option of extending sewer service and regarding connecting non-motorized pathways. Comments were made regarding the railroad relocation study and the shared business environment along the US-31 corridor. Participants recognized that local units of government are facing economic challenges and that the township and city should look for ways to eliminate a duplication of services to residents where agreeable and effective. Participants noted that most people do not make a distinction between Filer Township and the City of Manistee—especially visitors—and that the future of the two communities is linked or connected in many ways.

There were no specific actions taken as a result of the evening but the opportunity to have a group conversation was a positive one and set the stage for future joint meetings and exploration of topics of common interest including sewer and non-motorized transportation.

Checked by _____

Date _____

Focus Group #4 March 25th 2008 Sign-In Sheet

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. Lynn Wilson | Mead & Hunt |
| 2. Rick Mark | Filer Planning Commission |
| 3. TERRY LINDEMAN | Filer Planning Commission |
| 4. Shelly Ball | Filer Twp Clerk & P.C. member |
| 5. Jennifer Williams | Filer Planning Comm. |
| 6. Gerald Peterson | Filer Planning Comm. |
| 7. Lynn Kooyers | Filer Twp Zoning Administrator |
| 8. Denise Blakeslee | City of Manistee Planning & Zoning |
| 9. Jon Rose | City of Manistee Comm. Dev. |
| 10. IONA HAYDON | City of Manistee City Council |
| 11. Alan W. Marshall | City of Manistee 7th Dist. City Council |
| 12. Robert C. Horzworth | " " Mayor Pro Tem - 3rd Dist |
| 13. Ed Williams | FILER TRUSTEE |
| 14. DEAN KROSE | FILER TRUSTEE |
| 15. Jim Espvik | Filer Twp Supervisor |
| 16. Mitch Deisch | CITY OF Manistee |
| 17. Phil Peralta | FILER DDA |
| 18. David Rhoden | FILER PLANNING Comm. |
| 19. Del Miller-Pagano | Filer twsp Res. |
| 20. Tim Ervin | Alliance for Economic Success &
Manistee Co Community Foundation |
| 21. Bruce Hawkinson | mead & Hunt, Inc. |

Open House Event—April 29, 2008

An Open House event was held on April 29, 2008 to review different components of the proposed changes to the Master Plan and action statements for the Strategic Plan. Four activity stations were set up and participants rotated through each area. The four stations were: Mission, Vision and Slogan; Goals and Policies; Future Land Use; and Action Statements. The original posters along with photos of the completed posters are included here. The results of the Open House event were used to:

- Confirm the use of the Mission and Vision statement in both the revised Master Plan and the Strategic Plan;
- Finalize the language to be used in the Goals and Policy sections of the revised Master Plan;
- Finalize recommendations for the Future Land Use Map; and
- Create the prioritized list of Action statements for the Strategic Plan.



	Agree	Disagree
Mission Statement <i>What you do and why</i>		
We embrace our community history in order to: 1) Preserve our heritage / remember our past 2) Celebrate those things that make us special 3) Strengthen our sense of community		
We plan proactively in order to: 1) Make informed, objective and thoughtful decisions 2) Use planning tools to guide the township toward a chosen future 3) Be an effective, cooperative partner in joint / regional activities		
We make smart and sustainable choices in land use planning in order to: 1) Protect limited and irreplaceable natural resources 2) Create a community where people can live, work and play 3) Make wise use of human resources and public tax dollars 4) Balance the variety of needs in the community		
Slogan		
"Community of Choice...For Generations"		
Please tell us more! Add your comments to the comment page.		

Vision Statement

A statement of ideal conditions

Residents of the Charter Township of Filer, hereinafter Filer Township, are proud of the community's rich history. The community celebrates the co-location of the Lakefront Industrial Area and the adjacent Filer City and Oak Hill neighborhoods as a reminder of the original lumber mill and platted village established in 1867 and a statement of the success of industry. The neighborhoods are a desirable place to live: compact, walkable and well maintained in a traditional neighborhood design pattern. The neighborhood includes a civic center resource for local services and recreation.

The Lakefront Industrial Area activity is dynamic! The community supports the Lakefront Industrial Area which has been able to adapt to the changing economy, improve its environmental footprint, communicate effectively with the local community and employ hundreds of people in secure and well-paid positions. Aesthetic improvements in the public right of way have improved the appearance of the area.

The commercial corridor along US-31 is full of businesses which offer a variety of retail, service and entertainment opportunities to the region. Buildings are attractive and well-landscaped, reflecting the rural, wooded character of the area. Businesses are served with a full complement of public services including sewer. Highway traffic moves efficiently and safely along the corridor. Regional recreational attractions and resources strengthen the local economy. A well-marked route brings snowmobilers safely to the commercial corridor from the nearby trail system. Pedestrian and bicycle connections are completed to both Filer City and into the City of Manistee.

Most of the township remains rural with low density residential development served by connecting, public roads. Residential development is carefully designed and located to preserve the natural environment and rural atmosphere on individual sites and in larger, planned developments.

Filer Township is a healthy, active community with sidewalks and trail connections between population centers, employment centers and recreation resources. There are several attractive and well-maintained township parks in Filer Township. In addition, Filer Township partners effectively with other recreation providers including the school district, the City of Manistee, Manistee County and the state and national parks to support regional recreation efforts.

Filer Township operates efficiently and fairly. Staff and volunteers are well-trained and supported. When possible, technology is used to help the staff operate efficiently without the loss of personal service. There is a high level of community involvement in regional and local boards, commissions and committees with lists of people waiting to serve.

Agree

Disagree

Please tell us more! Add your comments to the comment page.

Guiding Principles and Policies for Community Planning and Design

Like most of the Goal statements in the Master Plan, most of the Principles and Policies are harmonious with the community data, land use trends and public input received during this update process. Overall, the recommendation is to leave this section "as is." There are a few recommended changes indicated by strikethroughs on the plan document. This section is created to explain the suggested modifications or deletions and to provide the reader with the opportunity to comment on each.

Type with a strikethrough format is proposed for removal. Type in blue is proposed for addition. Notes in italic are added for additional explanation.

At the bottom of each column, you'll find two boxes that give you the opportunity to indicate your opinion on the proposed change.

8. Provide the full complement of housing.

Certainly, not everyone will want to live in the same house for as long as they live in Filer Township and then elect to move away from familiar surroundings when their housing needs change. Likewise, business and industry need employees who in turn need to live somewhere nearby. ~~When housing stock is limited to higher-value single-family units, there will be no place for any but the highest paid employees to live.~~ A range of land-use densities will allow for a range of housing options. Aging in place, workforce housing, limiting land consumption, and choices in housing prices and styles are all reasons to provide a full complement of housing. Filer Township can provide the foundation for housing options by providing a range of housing densities and by providing the infrastructure that is necessary for small lot and multi-family residential housing options.

- Provide opportunities for a wide range of housing types to satisfy the lifecycle needs of Township residents of all income levels.
- Consider a range of quality affordable housing types that cater to the needs of employees the regional workforce.

- ~~Encourage affordable housing throughout the community rather than concentrate it in designated developments.~~
- ~~Require a minimum of 40%, but not more than 50% of housing units within projects consisting of 10 or more units be comprised of affordable housing.~~

- When municipal water and sewer services are provided for the US-31 commercial corridor, consider design and capacity issues for future residential service as well.

- Review the Future Land Use map annually to assure that there is land designated for future small lot residential and multiple family residential developments in areas near commercial and employment centers with access to transportation options.

Note: While affordable housing is an important part of providing a range of housing options, the Master Plan does not typically address affordable housing in such specific terms. In order to create the opportunity for affordable housing through planning, the issues of density, urban services, access to employment and services and access to pedestrian and public transportation options are part of the equation. The Master Plan typically provides for a future environment where affordable housing can be successfully created and maintained.

Yes,
I like the Proposed Goal Statement

No,
I don't like the Proposed Goal Statement

9. Think regionally, act locally.

Some decisions are just too big to be made exclusively by local governments. Virtually every decision will have at least some effect on the larger region but some such decisions must be made by local units. All decisions should be made to serve the best interests of the larger region as well as the Township.

Always consider the regional implications of local decisions, no matter how small that decisions may seem, and act responsibly in the Region's and Township's best interests.

Cooperate with municipal neighbors, the County, and State in the coordination of a US-31 ~~corridor~~ discussions regarding the US-31 corridor including the implementation of recommendations of the US-31 Corridor Management Plan dated February, 2004.

Note: This language will be more generally applicable to regional cooperation around US-31 corridor issues and will incorporate the US-31 Corridor Management Plan by name.

Yes,
I like the Proposed Goal Statement

No,
I don't like the Proposed Goal Statement

43. Reclaim the Lakeshore.

Industry as we know it will not always occupy the shoreline of Lakeshore Lake. ~~Gravelly dependent on the lake for transportation and water, heavy industry will have less need to occupy the lakeshore as highway transportation needs contribute to weaken.~~

- Formulate plans for future reuse of the Lakeshore.

- Protect the waters edge for future public use and access.

13. Recognize the Lakeshore Industrial area as an integral part of the history and economy of Filer Township and balance the needs of industry with the needs of the adjacent community residents for health, safety and quality of life.

- Work cooperatively with industrial businesses. Maintain an open line of communication between local government and industry leaders.
- Maximize public safety and the compatibility of land uses.
- Improve the physical appearance of the area through improvements in the public right of way.

Note: These changes reflect a revised expectation that the Lakeshore Industrial Area will continue to be a part of the community over the next fifty years and that it is important to work from a realistic position and work cooperatively. This change in expectation is based on economic data, recent expansion activities of the PCA operation and public input at the Filer City/ Oak Hill focus group.

Yes,
I like the Proposed Goal Statement

No,
I don't like the Proposed Goal Statement

Please tell us more! Add your comments to the comment page.

Goal Statements

Most of the Goal statements in the Master Plan are harmonious with the community data, land use trends and public input received during this update process. Overall, the recommendation is to leave this section "as is." There are a few Goals which are being recommended for a revision to be more comprehensive or clear. There are two Goals which currently do not exist but are being proposed for addition.

Each column lists the current language and the proposed language under separate headings. Notes in italics are added for additional explanation.

At the bottom of each column, you'll find two boxes that give you the opportunity to indicate your opinion on the proposed change.

Current Goal Statement:	Current Goal Statement:	Current Goal Statement:	Current Goal Statement:	Current Goal Statement:
<p>Quality of Life To protect and enhance the quality of life in Filer Township (quiet, natural, beauty, lakeshore, small town atmosphere, historic, safe).</p>	<p>Economic Development To maintain the Township role as a strong partner in the regional economy as a provider of shopping opportunities for the regional population.</p>	<p>Transportation To maintain the roadway capacity of US-31, maintain safety and minimize the need for major capital improvements and expenditures for capacity enhancement.</p>	<p>Agricultural Land Preservation To maintain opportunities for farming while preserving the rural character and appearance of the Township.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Proposed Goal Statement: Quality of Life To protect and enhance the quality of life in Filer Township which is defined by a variety of attributes including historic architecture, scenic views, lakeshore, and in general both in its natural beauty and in its built environment. A rural atmosphere, a range of housing options, an efficient transportation system, a healthy community and a healthy economy and a healthy community.</p>	<p>Proposed Goal Statement: Economic Development To encourage and support a healthy and sustainable local economy through the efficient provision of urban services (including police, fire, and emergency services) and coordination with local businesses and coordination and participation in regional economic initiatives.</p>	<p>Proposed Goal Statement: Transportation To preserve and enhance a complete transportation system which includes the safe and efficient movement of motorized vehicles and non-motorized recreation, transportation, and the maintenance of rail service, and connections to regional recreation networks.</p>	<p>Proposed Goal Statement: Industrial Activity To recognize and support the existing industrial activity in the Township as part of the area's economy. Work cooperatively with industrial businesses to maximize public safety and the compatibility of land uses and maintain an open line of communication between local government and industry leaders.</p>	<p>Proposed Goal Statement: Intergovernmental Cooperation To emphatically endorse and encourage the practice of working cooperatively with other units of government including the City of Manitowish, the communities around Manitowish Lake, Manitowish County and other service agencies including the Manitowish County Road Commission, the Manitowish County Sheriff's Office, the Manitowish County Board of Education, the Manitowish Area Schools.</p>
<p>Note: This statement has been expanded to be more clear and comprehensive. In the description of the factors that contribute to the quality of life in Filer Township, Housing, transportation, economic health and physical health have been added as part of the description.</p>	<p>Note: The goal language has been expanded to include the provision of urban services, support of all local businesses (not just shopping) and a reference to the region where many economic initiatives are initiated.</p>	<p>Note: This goal has been expanded to include a broader range of road goals as well as non-motorized transportation, all service and the regional trail recreation connection which were all very prevalent in the focus group input sessions.</p>	<p>Note: A goal statement regarding industrial activity is proposed. There is currently no goal statement related to intergovernmental cooperation yet it was an extremely important component of the focus group.</p>	<p>Note: A goal statement regarding intergovernmental cooperation is proposed. There is currently no goal statement related to intergovernmental cooperation yet it was an extremely important component of the focus group.</p>
<p>Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement</p>	<p>Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement</p>	<p>Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement</p>	<p>Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement</p>	<p>Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement</p>
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Please tell us more! Add your comments to the comment page.

Future Land Use Map

Future Commercial Land Use

The Township's Approach: Confine pure commercial uses to areas already zoned commercial or to infill commercial sites and accommodate new commercial development in areas requiring rezoning to be part of mixed use developments. (Master Plan, Policy #4 on pages 11-12)

Advantages: Commercial uses are permitted as part of planned unit developments which may occur in any residential district. If they are provided this way, they will be planned developments and the planning commission will consider connections and aesthetics in the site plan review and special use process. The system is in place to create great designs and provide neighborhood services closer to neighborhoods.

The Issue: There are concentrated areas of residential development occurring at a significant distance from any commercial services. Some residents on the west side of the township and in the southwest part of the township may find themselves driving 6-10 miles one-way to reach basic commercial services. There are currently no pedestrian or other non-motorized connections as an alternative. There is the option to provide neighborhood commercial services in all residential zones as part of a PUD.

Please apply a sticker to the statement(s) that best represent(s) your view about commercial development in residential areas:

I would like to walk or ride my bike to get to the current commercial corridor—it's not too far.

I would like to be able to walk or ride my bike to a neighborhood store close to my house for a gallon of milk or a newspaper or walk to a neighborhood coffee shop. That's a good idea.

I would like to have neighborhood stores closer to me (1-2 miles) but not right in my neighborhood.

I would strongly object to any commercial development near my residential area. That's why I moved here in the first place.

I like the idea of a neighborhood shop or restaurant but I'm afraid it would be unattractive.

I like the idea of a neighborhood shop or restaurant but I'm afraid it would disrupt the peace and quiet of my neighborhood.

Please tell us more! Use the yellow highlighter to show us where you would like to see future neighborhood commercial development.

Future Land Use Map

Additional High Density Residential Areas

The Township's Approach:

6. Housing. To encourage a variety of housing, including affordable housing, to satisfy the lifecycle needs of Township residents. (Master Plan, Goal Statements, page 7)
 - Create development patterns that tightly mix uses for the sake of convenience and reductions in travel demand. (Master Plan, Policies section, page 11)
 - Establish increasingly compact districts rather than allowing development to strip along roadways. (Master Plan, Policies section, page 12)
 - Provide opportunities for a wide range of housing types to satisfy the lifecycle needs of Township residents of all income levels. (Master Plan, Policies section, page 13)

Advantages: On the Future Land Use Map, the area currently designated for Urban Residential is already developed or not available for development (i.e. school property). Other development densities are one house per 10 acres (forest residential), one house per 5 acres (agricultural), or two homes per acre without sewer/ three homes per acre with sewer (medium density residential zone).

If the Township wants to support and achieve its goal and policy statements regarding having a range of housing choices and prices, additional areas for future high density residential development in the Township will need to be added to the Future Land Use Map.

What does this mean? This means making a place for smaller starter homes, apartments, senior housing, townhomes for moderate-income, working families and other types of development that cannot occur at a density of two homes per acre.

Location: There are several location issues to consider when locating high-density residential development. It should be near the commercial corridor area already planned for sewer service, near commercial and service areas so pedestrian connections can be made and near the public transit route along US-31.

Please apply a sticker to the statement(s) that best represent(s) your view about planning on future areas for high density residential development:

I would like to see a few more areas like the Filer City and Oak Hill neighborhoods that are compact and walkable neighborhoods.

I would NOT like to see any more areas like the Filer City and Oak Hill neighborhoods because it is doesn't have the rural character that is so important to our community.

I would like to have more housing options in Filer Township where regular people and families can afford to live.

I would like to see more housing choices in Filer Township besides single-family homes.

I would like to see senior housing or an assisted living facility in Filer Township.

Please tell us more! Use the orange highlighter to show us where you would like to see future high density residential development.

Disagree	Actions	My Top 5 Picks
	Public Participation	
	Establish a Township website.	
	Recruit new community volunteers to serve on standing boards and commission or to participate in special task forces developed to accomplish specific tasks.	
	Intergovernmental Cooperation	
	Institute a regular means of communication and cooperation with the activities of the City of Manistee (Planning Commission, DDA, and Board/Council).	
	Look for opportunities to partner with the City of Manistee in order to improve services to residents and avoid a duplication of services between governments.	
	Recruit a new volunteer to apply to serve on the County Planning Commission. (Currently there is not a representative from Filer Township on the County Planning Commission.)	
	Communicate with County Commissioner Ervin Kowalski on county matters which affect Filer Township.	
	Appoint a representative to attend all meetings of the Railroad Relocation Study and report back to the Planning Commission and Township Board.	
	Participate in the upcoming County Branding Initiative program/group.	
	Reestablish locally the practice of a site plan review technical committee meeting (previously done by the County Planning Office, now discontinued).	
	Transportation	
	Develop a non-motorized transportation committee and plan in cooperation or coordination with the existing Non-Motorized Subcommittee of the City of Manistee.	
	Consider opportunities to make private roads connect to other roads or preserve the option for future connections rather than allowing cul-de-sac design (similar to current County Road Commission policy).	
	US-31 Corridor	
	Adopt the complete model zoning ordinance language for access management included in the Access Management Plan for the US-31 Corridor.	
	Develop appearance standards/architectural regulations for the US-31 Corridor area to promote a more unified, attractive appearance to the area.	
	Develop landscaping requirements for the US-31 Corridor area to promote a more attractive appearance to the area.	
	Coordinate with the non-motorized committee and MDOT to plan a pedestrian crossing at the light at Red Apple Road.	
	Coordinate with the non-motorized committee and MDOT to plan for pedestrian access to the US-31 commercial corridor area.	
	Create an access road / arterial road plan to proactively plan for future road connections and extensions along the US-31 commercial corridor.	
	Place identification signs at the entrances to Filer Township.	
	Filer City/Oak Hill	
	Establish a line of communication with the school district to follow the discussion about changes to the elementary school.	
	Improve the Filer City Park and "Rec" Center	
	Cooperate in regional efforts to find a new user of the Drop Forge site.	
	Install a sidewalk/pathway on Tabor Hill and north to the city limits.	
	Create a "Clean Up, Fix Up" community activity to encourage property maintenance.	
	Encourage neighborhood commercial development in the Filer City/Oak Hill neighborhoods (Mee Street, Nelson Street)	
	Create a historical society group to pursue historic information and preservation activities.	
	Economic Development	
	Actively pursue a sewer service agreement with the City of Manistee. Consider funding options and requirements as a necessary part of developing the agreement.	
	Develop a connection from the snowmobile trail to the US-31 corridor to bring snowmobilers to the commercial corridor.	
	Coordinate with the activities and initiatives of the Alliance for Economic Success (AES) as they relate to the regional economy.	
	Recreation	
	Create a township park around the township hall.	
	Improve existing neighborhood park.	
	Improve Recreation Center building.	
	Create a new picnic area on Manistee Lake.	
	Work with the County Parks and Recreation efforts to consider a regional trail around Manistee Lake that serves to connect waterfront areas without crossing established industrial properties. (The trail itself need not be located on the waterfront.)	

Did we forget something? Please add your comments to the comment page.

Mission Statement <i>What you do and why</i>		Agree	Disagree
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Disagree

Agree

Please tell us more! Add your comments to the comment page.

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Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement

No, I don't like the Proposed Goal Statement

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No, I don't like the Proposed Goal Statement

43. Reclaim the Lakeshore.

Industry as we know it will not always occupy the shoreline of Mendota Lake. Originally dependent on the Lake for transportation and later real heavy industry, there is less need to occupy the Lakeshore as historical transportation needs continue to wane.

- Formulate plans for future reuse of the Lakeshore.

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Goal Statements

Most of the Goal statements in the Master Plan are harmonious with the community data, land use trends and public input received during this update process. Overall, the recommendation is to leave this section "as is." There are a few Goals which are being recommended for a revision to be more comprehensive or clear. There are two Goals which currently do not exist but are being proposed for addition.

Each column lists the current language and the proposed language under separate headings. Notes in italics are added for additional explanation.

At the bottom of each column, you'll find two boxes that give you the opportunity to indicate your opinion on the proposed change.

Current Goal Statement:	Current Goal Statement:	Current Goal Statement:	Current Goal Statement:	Current Goal Statement:	Current Goal Statement:
Quality of Life To protect and enhance the quality of life in Flier Township (quiet, natural, beauty, lakeshore, small town atmosphere, historic safety)	Economic Development To maintain the Township's role as a strong partner in the regional economy as a provider of shopping opportunities for the regional population.	Transportation To protect the roadway capacity of US-31, maintain safety, and minimize the need for major capital improvements and expenditures for capacity enhancement.	Agricultural Land Preservation To maintain opportunities for farming while preserving the rural character and appearance of the Township.	Industrial Activity To recognize and support the existing industry in the Township as part of the area's history and contributor to the area's economic well-being. Work with industrial businesses to maximize public safety and the compatibility of land uses and maintain an open line of communication between local government and industry leaders.	Intergovernmental Cooperation To emphatically endorse and encourage the practice of working cooperatively with other units of government including the City of Manistee, the communities of Flier, Manistee Lake, Manistee County and other surrounding communities including the Manistee County Road Commission, Michigan Department of Transportation, the Alliance for Economic Success and the Manistee Area Schools.
Proposed Goal Statement: To protect and enhance the quality of life in Flier Township which is defined by a variety of attributes including historic preservation, natural resource protection, attractiveness both in its natural beauty and in its built environment, a rural atmosphere, a range of housing options, an efficient transportation system, a healthy commercial and industrial economy and a healthy community.	Proposed Goal Statement: To encourage and support a healthy and sustainable local economy through efficient provision of urban services (including joint service arrangements), co-operation and communication with local businesses, and coordination and participation in regional economic initiatives.	Proposed Goal Statement: To preserve and enhance a complete transportation system which includes the safe and efficient movement of motorized vehicles, the provision of non-motorized transportation options, the maintenance of rail service, and connections to regional recreation networks.	Proposed Goal Statement: To promote development patterns that preserve the Township's rural landscape and appearance and minimize the visibility of rural area development from roads.	Proposed Goal Statement: To recognize and support the existing industry in the Township as part of the area's history and contributor to the area's economic well-being. Work with industrial businesses to maximize public safety and the compatibility of land uses and maintain an open line of communication between local government and industry leaders.	Proposed Goal Statement: To recognize and support the existing industry in the Township as part of the area's history and contributor to the area's economic well-being. Work with industrial businesses to maximize public safety and the compatibility of land uses and maintain an open line of communication between local government and industry leaders.
Note: The goal language has been expanded to include the provision of urban services, support of all local businesses (not just shopping) and a reference to the region where many economic initiatives are initiated.	Note: This goal has been expanded to include a broader range of road goals as well as non-motorized transportation, rail service and the regional trail recreation connection which were all very prevalent in the focus group input sessions.	Note: A goal statement regarding Industrial Activity is proposed. There is currently no Goal statement related to Inter-governmental Cooperation yet it was an extremely important component of the focus groups.	Note: A goal statement regarding Industrial Activity is proposed. There is currently no Goal statement related to Inter-governmental Cooperation yet it was an extremely important component of the focus groups.	Note: A goal statement regarding Industrial Activity is proposed. There is currently no Goal statement related to Inter-governmental Cooperation yet it was an extremely important component of the focus groups.	Note: A goal statement regarding Industrial Activity is proposed. There is currently no Goal statement related to Inter-governmental Cooperation yet it was an extremely important component of the focus groups.

Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement

No, I don't like the Proposed Goal Statement

Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement

No, I don't like the Proposed Goal Statement

Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement

No, I don't like the Proposed Goal Statement

Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement

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Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement

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Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement

No, I don't like the Proposed Goal Statement

Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement

No, I don't like the Proposed Goal Statement

Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement

No, I don't like the Proposed Goal Statement

Yes, I like the Proposed Goal Statement

No, I don't like the Proposed Goal Statement

Please tell us more! Add your comments to the comment page.

Future Land Use Map

Future Commercial Land Use

The Township's Approach: Confine pure commercial uses to areas already zoned commercial or to infill commercial sites and accommodate new commercial development in areas requiring rezoning to be part of mixed use developments. (Master Plan, Policy #4 on pages 11-12)

Advantages: Commercial uses are permitted as part of planned unit developments which may occur in any residential district. If they are provided this way, they will be planned developments and the planning commission will consider connections and aesthetics in the site plan review and special use process. The system is in place to create great designs and provide neighborhood services closer to neighborhoods.

The Issue: There are concentrated areas of residential development occurring at a significant distance from any commercial services. Some residents on the west side of the township and in the southwest part of the township may find themselves driving 6-10 miles one-way to reach basic commercial services. There are currently no pedestrian or other non-motorized connections as an alternative. There is the option to provide neighborhood commercial services in all residential zones as part of a PUD.

Please apply a sticker to the statement(s) that best represent(s) your view about commercial development in residential areas:

I would like to walk or ride my bike to get to the current commercial corridor—it's not too far.



I would like to be able to walk or ride my bike to a neighborhood store close to my house for a gallon of milk or a newspaper or walk to a neighborhood coffee shop. That's a good idea.



I would like to have neighborhood stores closer to me (1-2 miles) but not right in my neighborhood.



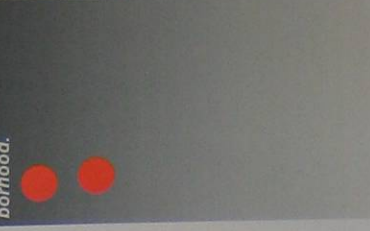
I would strongly object to any commercial development near my residential area. That's why I moved here in the first place.



I like the idea of a neighborhood shop or restaurant but I'm afraid it would be unattractive.



I like the idea of a neighborhood shop or restaurant but I'm afraid it would disrupt the peace and quiet of my neighborhood.



Please tell us more! Use the yellow highlighter to show us where you would like to see future neighborhood commercial development.

Future Land Use Map

Additional High Density Residential Areas

The Township's Approach:

6. Housing. To encourage a variety of housing, including affordable housing, to satisfy the lifecycle needs of Township residents. (Master Plan, Goal Statements, page 7)
 - Create development patterns that tightly mix uses for the sake of convenience and reductions in travel demand. (Master Plan, Policies section, page 11)
 - Establish increasingly compact districts rather than allowing development to strip along roadways. (Master Plan, Policies section, page 12)
 - Provide opportunities for a wide range of housing types to satisfy the lifecycle needs of Township residents of all income levels. (Master Plan, Policies section, page 13)

Advantages: On the Future Land Use Map, the area currently designated for Urban Residential is already developed or not available for development (i.e. school property). Other development densities are one house per 10 acres (forest residential), one house per 5 acres (agricultural), or two homes per acre without sewer/ three homes per acre with sewer (medium density residential zone).

If the Township wants to support and achieve its goal and policy statements regarding having a range of housing choices and prices, additional areas for future high density residential development in the Township will need to be added to the Future Land Use Map.

What does this mean? This means making a place for smaller starter homes, apartments, senior housing, townhomes for moderate-income, working families and other types of development that cannot occur at a density of two homes per acre.

Location: There are several location issues to consider when locating high-density residential development. It should be near the commercial corridor area already planned for sewer service, near commercial and service areas so pedestrian connections can be made and near the public transit route along US-31.

Please apply a sticker to the statement(s) that best represent(s) your view about planning on future areas for high density residential development:

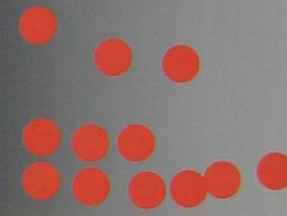
I would like to see a few more areas like the Filer City and Oak Hill neighborhoods that are compact and walkable neighborhoods.



I would NOT like to see any more areas like the Filer City and Oak Hill neighborhoods because it is doesn't have the rural character that is so important to our community.



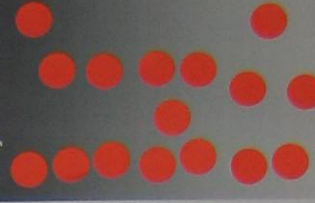
I would like to have more housing options in Filer Township where regular people and families can afford to live.



I would like to see more housing choices in Filer Township besides single-family homes.



I would like to see senior housing or an assisted living facility in Filer Township.



Please tell us more! Use the orange highlighter to show us where you would like to see future high density residential development.

Disagree	Actions	My Top 5 Picks
	Public Participation	
	Establish a Township website.	1 1 4 1 1
	Recruit new community volunteers to serve on standing boards and commission or to participate in special task forces developed to accomplish specific tasks.	4 1 1
	Intergovernmental Cooperation	
	Institute a regular means of communication and cooperation with the activities of the City of Manistee (Planning Commission, DDA, and Board/Council).	2 2 2 5 1
	Look for opportunities to partner with the City of Manistee in order to improve services to residents and avoid a duplication of services between governments.	2 3 4 4 4 1 5
	Recruit a new volunteer to apply to serve on the County Planning Commission. (Currently there is not a representative from Filer Township on the County Planning Commission.)	4 3 5 2
	Communicate with County Commissioner Ervin Kowalski on county matters which affect Filer Township.	3 3 4 3 5
	Appoint a representative to attend all meetings of the Railroad Relocation Study and report back to the Planning Commission and Township Board.	2 3 2 1 6 4
	Participate in the upcoming County Branding Initiative program/group.	
	Reestablish locally the practice of a site plan review technical committee meeting (previously done by the County Planning Office, now discontinued).	4 2
	Transportation	
	Develop a non-motorized transportation committee and plan in cooperation or coordination with the existing Non-Motorized Subcommittee of the City of Manistee.	3 3 3 3 3
	Consider opportunities to make private roads connect to other roads or preserve the option for future connections rather than allowing cul-de-sac design (similar to current County Road Commission policy).	5
	US-31 Corridor	
	Adopt the complete model zoning ordinance language for access management included in the Access Management Plan for the US-31 Corridor.	3
	Develop appearance standards/architectural regulations for the US-31 Corridor area to promote a more unified, attractive appearance to the area.	5 2 5
	Develop landscaping requirements for the US-31 Corridor area to promote a more attractive appearance to the area.	1
	Coordinate with the non-motorized committee and MDOT to plan a pedestrian crossing at the light at Red Apple Rd. (Mee Valley)	1 1 1 2 2 3 1 1 1 1
	Coordinate with the non-motorized committee and MDOT to plan for pedestrian access to the US-31 commercial corridor area.	5
	Create an access road / arterial road plan to proactively plan for future road connections and extensions along the US-31 commercial corridor.	6 2
	Place identification signs at the entrances to Filer Township.	3 3 4 3
	Filer City/Oak Hill	
	Establish a line of communication with the school district to follow the discussion about changes to the elementary school.	5
	Improve the Filer City Park and "Rec" Center.	2
	Cooperate in regional efforts to find a new user of the Drop Forge site.	5 1 5 5 4 2
	Install a sidewalk/pathway on Tabor Hill and north to the city limits.	4 5 4 5 4 5
	Create a "Clean Up, Fix Up" community activity to encourage property maintenance.	5 2
	Encourage neighborhood commercial development in the Filer City/Oak Hill neighborhoods (Mee Street, Nelson Street).	5
	Create a historical society group to pursue historic information and preservation activities.	
	Economic Development	
	Actively pursue a sewer service agreement with the City of Manistee. Consider funding options and requirements as a necessary part of developing the agreement.	1 1 3 4 4 4 2
	Develop a connection from the snowmobile trail to the US-31 corridor to bring snowmobilers to the commercial corridor.	3 3 3 3 4
	Coordinate with the activities and initiatives of the Alliance for Economic Success (AES) as they relate to the regional economy.	2 3 4 4 4
	Recreation	
	Create a township park around the township hall.	
	Improve existing neighborhood park.	
	Improve Recreation Center building.	4 5 5 4 5 5
	Create a new picnic area on Manistee Lake.	4 5 3
	Work with the County Parks and Recreation efforts to consider a regional trail around Manistee Lake that serves to connect waterfront areas without crossing established industrial properties. (The trail itself need not be located on the waterfront.)	

Did we forget something? Please add your comments to the comment page.

Disagree	Actions	My Top 5 Picks
	Public Participation	
	Establish a Township website.	7
	Recruit new community volunteers to serve on standing boards and commission or to participate in special task forces developed to accomplish specific tasks.	3
	Intergovernmental Cooperation	
	Institute a regular means of communication and cooperation with the activities of the City of Manistee (Planning Commission, DDA, and Board/Council).	8
	Look for opportunities to partner with the City of Manistee in order to improve services to residents and avoid a duplication of services between governments.	7
	Recruit a new volunteer to apply to serve on the County Planning Commission. (Currently there is not a representative from Filer Township on the County Planning Commission.)	4
	Communicate with County Commissioner Ervin Kowalski on county matters which affect Filer Township.	5
	Appoint a representative to attend all meetings of the Railroad Relocation Study and report back to the Planning Commission and Township Board.	7
	Participate in the upcoming County Branding Initiative program/group.	-
	Reestablish locally the practice of a site plan review technical committee meeting (previously done by the County Planning Office, now discontinued).	2
	Transportation	
	Develop a non-motorized transportation committee and plan in cooperation or coordination with the existing Non-Motorized Subcommittee of the City of Manistee.	5
	Consider opportunities to make private roads connect to other roads or preserve the option for future connections rather than allowing cul-de-sac design (similar to current County Road Commission policy).	1
	US-31 Corridor	
	Adopt the complete model zoning ordinance language for access management included in the Access Management Plan for the US-31 Corridor.	1
	Develop appearance standards/architectural regulations for the US-31 Corridor area to promote a more unified, attractive appearance to the area.	3
	Develop landscaping requirements for the US-31 Corridor area to promote a more attractive appearance to the area.	1
	Coordinate with the non-motorized committee and MDOT to plan a pedestrian crossing at the light at Red Apple Road.	11
	Coordinate with the non-motorized committee and MDOT to plan for pedestrian access to the US-31 commercial corridor area.	1
	Create an access road / arterial road plan to proactively plan for future road connections and extensions along the US-31 commercial corridor.	2
	Place identification signs at the entrances to Filer Township.	4
	Filer City/Oak Hill	
	Establish a line of communication with the school district to follow the discussion about changes to the elementary school.	-
	Improve the Filer City Park and "Rec" Center	5
	Cooperate in regional efforts to find a new user of the Drop Forge site.	8
	Install a sidewalk/pathway on Tabor Hill and north to the city limits.	-
	Create a "Clean Up, Fix Up" community activity to encourage property maintenance.	6
	Encourage neighborhood commercial development in the Filer City/Oak Hill neighborhoods (Mee Street, Nelson Street)	2
	Create a historical society group to pursue historic information and preservation activities.	1
	Economic Development	
	Actively pursue a sewer service agreement with the City of Manistee. Consider funding options and requirements as a necessary part of developing the agreement.	9
	Develop a connection from the snowmobile trail to the US-31 corridor to bring snowmobilers to the commercial corridor.	1
	Coordinate with the activities and initiatives of the Alliance for Economic Success (AES) as they relate to the regional economy.	6
	Recreation	
	Create a township park around the township hall.	-
	Improve existing neighborhood park.	-
	Improve Recreation Center building.	-
	Create a new picnic area on Manistee Lake.	6
	Work with the County Parks and Recreation efforts to consider a regional trail around Manistee Lake that serves to connect waterfront areas without crossing established industrial properties. (The trail itself need not be located on the waterfront.)	3

Did we forget something? Please add your comments to the comment page.

SIGN-IN SHEET 4/29/08

TERRY LINDEMAN

David Rhoden

Kurt Mark

Del Mikolajczyk

Dean Lyne

Ed Williams

Betty Allen

Ali Mahmoudi

Jim TONDH

Jim Espvik

Alan W. Marshall

Jon Rose

Eun A Kowalski Co Commissioner

Ray FORTER MANISTEE CITY PLANNING

Joseph D. D. D.

Peter Caird

Ball

Mike D. D. D.

Gary L. L.

Nikki Rodgers

STAN ROBERTSON

Nancy K. K.

TOM JOSS

Nita Leslie

George Kratky

Darryl (MVA.)

LOCAL CELEBRITY: Onkama resident Roz Jaffe (right and above, with her husband) was celebrated at a "Jeopardy Party" at T.J.'s Pub in downtown Manistee. About three dozen people came out to support Jaffe as they watched her compete against two other contestants on the widely popular game show. The game was close as Jaffe came in second, winning \$11,000.

Don Witzginski/News Advocate

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Charter Township of Filer to hold open house on planning activities

FILER CITY — The Planning Commission of the Charter Township of Filer invites the public to attend an open house event on Tuesday, April 29 at the Filer Township Hall at 7 p.m.

The Planning Commission has been working since Dec. 2007, on an evaluation of the current master land use plan; the creation of a strategic plan and identification of related changes to the zoning ordinance.

After hosting a series of four focus groups from January

where they will vote on options and offer comments and suggestions.

People who are interested but unable to attend may view project information and offer comments on the project website which is linked to area webpages including the Alliance for Economic Success, Manistee County and the City of Manistee.

Filer Township is currently experiencing a period of rapid growth in our Commercial district as well as expansion and

growth in our existing lakefront industrial district," says Lynn Kooyers, Filer Township Zoning Administrator.

"By meeting with residents, business owners and industry as we develop our Strategic Plan, we hope to encourage community wide participation in the long-term vision for our future."

"There are a variety of interests and needs in our community. We are striving to create a plan that supports the future growth of the township in a positive way."

WSCC names campus areas for service to college

By CHRISTINE BATZER
Staff Writer

SCOTTVILLE — Beginning with a work session, the West Shore Community College Board of Trustees met to discuss strategic planning for the college before moving into their regular meeting Monday afternoon in the in the board room of the Administrative and Conference Building.

Also at the meeting two new employees were introduced to the board, Heidi Anderson, human resources assistant manager and Stephen von Pfla, manager of administrative computing systems.

Introduced at the meeting for the board's approval was the spring graduation list by Kevin Pollock, vice president of student services. He told the board there may be added.

are currently 117 students on the list. The youngest graduate for the spring is 18, and the oldest is 67-years-old. The average age for the graduates is about 30-years-old, he told the board. The earliest year that one of the graduates first enrolled in West Shore in was 1976. The board approved the graduation list with the assumption that some additional students may be added.

The college's new Recreation Center Plan proposal was also revisited at this month's meeting. The plan was first introduced at last month's meeting by college president, Charles Dillon. He recommended that the board wait a month before acting on the plan to gather public input. Based on meetings that have taken place with students and Recreation

See WSCC, Page 6A

Deaths

Diane R. Pearson
Irene G. Zielinski
Howard W. Mitchell
Clarence E. Sam Olson
Kathryn Leforn McGraw
Sarah Jane Craig

See Page 7A

Lottery

Mega Millions jackpot:
\$60M

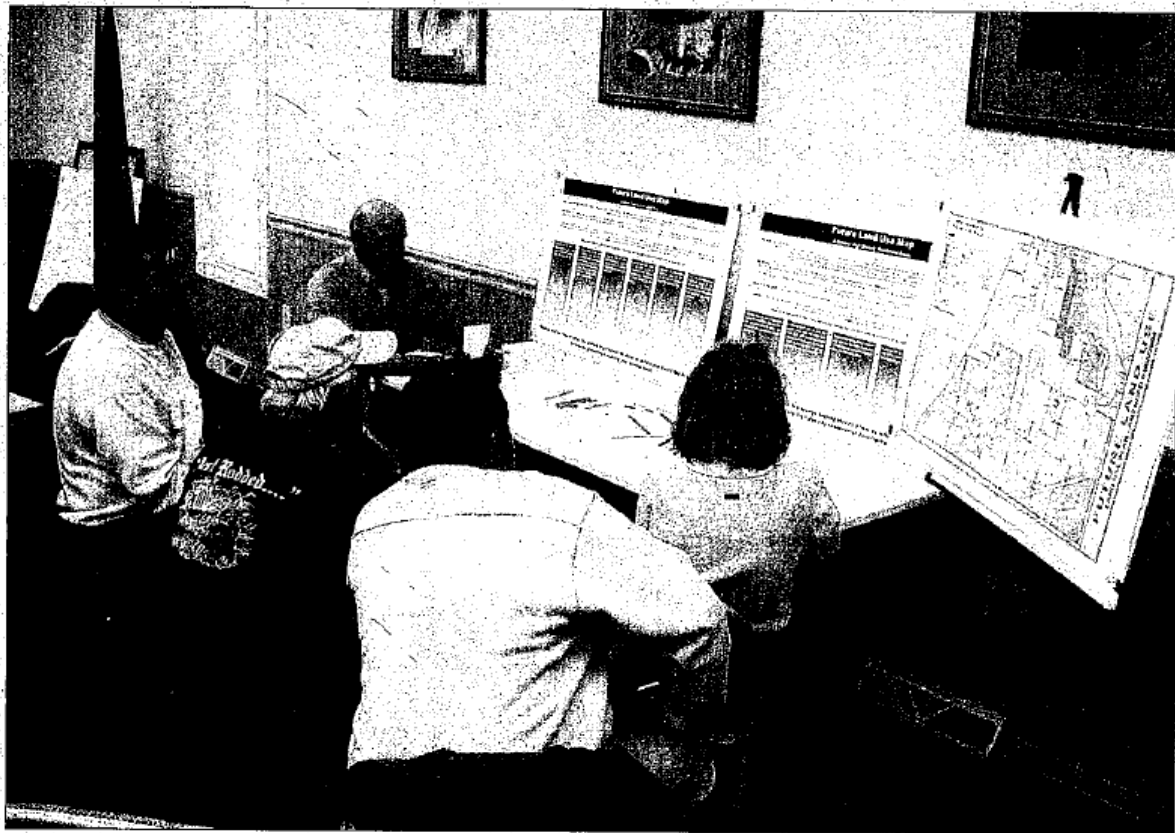
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Circle Break	4B
MarketPlace	5B

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Manistee News Advocate • Saturday, May 3, 2008 +



MANY IDEAS: Township officials sit side-by-side with residents to go over their opinions on the future of Filer Township. Dan Wrzesinski/News Advocate

POOLING IDEAS

Filer residents convene at open house to discuss strategic plans

**SATURDAY
SCRAPBOOK**

with
Dan Wrzesinski



Filer Township residents got to partake in a unique democratic process when the Charter Township of Filer planning commission invited the public to attend an open house event this past Tuesday at the Filer Township Hall.

Since December of last year, the planning commission — along with the services of Mead & Hunt; a design and construction management service



has been working on an evaluation of the current master land use plan, the creation of a strategic plan and the identification of related changes to the township's zoning ordinance.

From January through March, four focus groups were held where residents could pool together ideas about potential modifications to current planning policies.

"This is really a plan to determine what we are going to do over the next three to five years, how we're going to do it, and who's going to pay for it," said Lynn Wilson, a consultant from Mead & Hunt, who presented the strategic plan ideas developed in the four focus groups. "It's a to-do list."

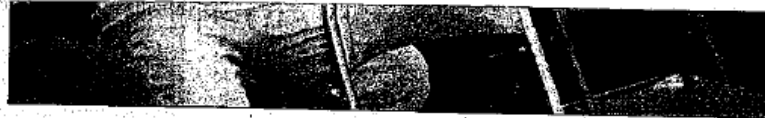
Tuesday's open house was the culmination of those focus groups, where the public was officially presented the planning ideas that were developed by township residents and officials.

"We ask you to consider these different ideas, and give us some feedback," said Wilson.

The planning commission has served as the steering committee for the project. The focus has been township-wide and inclusive of all interests (residential, industrial, commercial, recreational, US-31 corridor, Manistee Lake).

The strategic plan will identify opportunities and challenges for land use. In addition, the current master plan will be revised to reflect visions and goals that are identified through the strategic planning process.

"Filer Township is currently experiencing a period of rapid growth in our commercial district as well as expansion and growth in our existing lakefront industrial district," says Lynn Kooyers, Filer Township zoning administrator.



FIRST STEPS: Township supervisor, Jim Espvik, addresses those in attendance Tuesday to say he is pleased with the steps being taken to better the township, and with the involvement of community members.

"By meeting with residents, business owners and industry as we develop our strategic plan, we hope to encourage community-wide participation in the long-term vision for our future. There are a variety of interests and needs in our community. We are striving to create a plan that supports the future growth of the township in a positive way."

Close to 30 people filled the Filer Township Hall, where they were presented with an unveiling of the proposed ideas which included: revision and development of a "Vision Statement" of ideal conditions for the township; a lengthy list of action items that ranged from intergovernmental cooperation, development of a township Website, improving and creating parks, and ways to strengthen and regulate the US-31 corridor; deciding on township "goal statements," and even developing a community slogan.

The people present were then divided into groups to tour various "information stations." Planning commissioners and guests were rotated through the stations where they voted on the various ideas and questionnaires, using orange stickers, and were also invited to offer comments and suggestions.

"I think we're on the right track," said Filer resident and county commissioner, Erv Kowalski. "And, I think we've got to do something to develop our future. I've

been a resident here for about thirty-three years and I love it here."

Kowalski says that one of the most important assets in Filer is industry, and he feels that the township needs to maintain a conducive plan so that industry can remain and thrive.

"We need industry here to make the community thrive," he said. "But we need to keep it in the industrial section. We don't want to get to a point where we've got industry moving into residential sections."

Joe Kimball moved to Manistee County years ago to work at Packaging Corporation of America (PCA) located in Filer Township, and he says he likes living in the area, and feels there is potential for industry to have longevity in Filer.

"Industry is doing well here, and from what I see the future looks good," said Kimball, who added that he came to the open house both as a resident and an industry employee. "I am concerned about the area, and as a PCA employee I want to do what I can to support the mill and support the industry here."

Filer board trustee, Dale Kolanowski says he has faith in the process taking place, but also thinks it will take time.

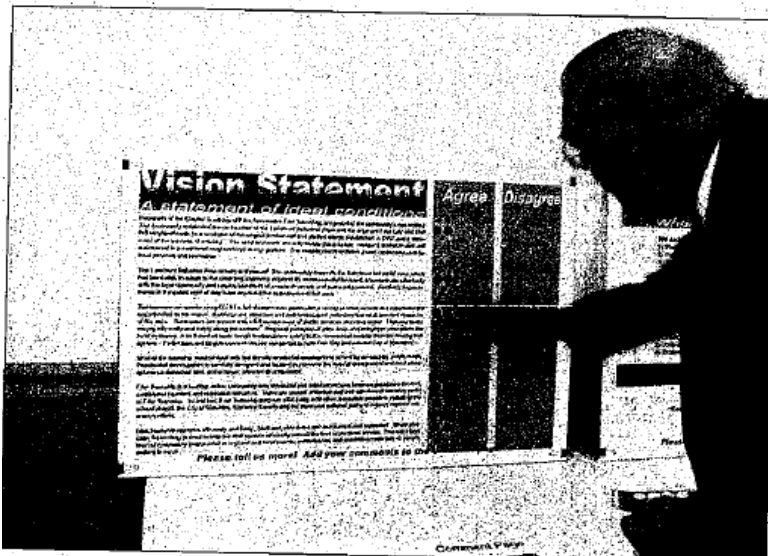
"Things don't happen that fast," he said. "And, a lot of people don't like change."

Kolanowski says he sees a lot of ideas he likes.

"I like that it gets us more recognition, and puts us on the map a little more. A lot of people like to live in Filer Township."

"I think it's all really interesting, and I'm interested in helping the community reach its goal," said Filer resident, Del Mikolajczak, who said she'd like to see improvement in sidewalks and streets. "There's need for improvement, but the big thing now is money. You can only improve what you can afford. It's about prioritizing. Do what is needed most first. It all depends on the economy and where the country is going. There's a lot of good ideas that have come out of this. It would be great if we could get them going."

Anyone who is interested but was unable to attend last Tuesday's open house may view project information and offer comments on the project Website which is linked to the Alliance for Economic Success, Manistee County and City of Manistee Websites.



FILER CITY VOTES: Filer residents and officials look at the ideas proposed by the focus groups and cast their vote.