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## Section 4

### Planning and Development Issues

This portion of the Master Plan identifies the major planning issues facing Lakefield Township. For planning purposes, an *issue* is simply any topic that requires some manner of attention. An issue might be an asset or positive trait that should be preserved, or it might be a problem or liability that should be remedied. The issues that are identified will be used to formulate a set of planning and development policies for the Township. Desired future land use arrangements and plan implementation strategies are a natural outgrowth of these policies.

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#### A. Identification of Major Planning Issues

Several techniques were used to identify major issues during the planning process. First, the Township Planning Commission held a Community Meeting in July 2015 to begin the Master Plan process. This meeting, held as an open community forum, provided all residents and property owners with an opportunity to express their concerns with present conditions in the Township, and to share their views on the direction that Lakefield Township should take in the future.

The Master Planning Committee, other Township officials and property owners were given the opportunity to complete a written survey to use as a means of identifying planning and development issues.

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#### B. Synopsis of Planning Issues

The issues and concerns that were identified at the July 2015 Meeting was reviewed by the Planning Commission to verify that the listing still reflected current conditions. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission that the list was still valid. The listing of issues and concerns is presented here.

1. Commercial development should focus on the corner of Merrill Road and Lakefield Road. Lakefield Township does not have access to major arterial routes such as I-75 or I-675.
2. New residential development should focus on single-family homes in areas with suitable size lots for septic systems.
3. The Township should maintain its current agricultural zoning policies to continue the preservation of farmland.
4. The Township should continue to support the Lakefield/Jonesfield

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Fire Department for its fire protection services.

5. The Township should continue to rely on the County Sheriff Department for police protection.
6. The Township should adopt and follow-up with consistent enforcement of home occupation standards.
7. The Township should make efforts to preserve the open spaces and farmland through the encouragement of agribusiness.
8. The Township should encourage commercial business yet discourage "spot" development to protect the residents of such development that would degrade the environmental quality of the rural character of the Township

### **Issues Survey Guide**

The Planning Commission was also given the opportunity to complete an "Issues Survey." This was a written exercise that asked participants to identify the Township's greatest assets and its most pressing problems. The Planning Commission members also discussed the results of the written exercise to identify additional topics and to establish consensus. The results of this process are listed below.

### ***Positive Aspects***

1. Good schools serve the community with preschool thru 12<sup>th</sup> grade programs. Several sports and extra-curricular activities are also offered.
2. The Jonesfield/Lakefield Fire Department enhances public safety with quick response times to emergencies.
3. The Lakefield township hall can be rented for family events..
4. The pavilion is available at the township hall for the enjoyment of residents.
5. Lakefield Township is focused on growing the community while maintaining the rural characteristics.
6. Hunting opportunities are plentiful with permission on private land.
7. Productive farmlands characterize the area and contribute to the local economy.
8. Low crime rate due to the Saginaw county Sheriff Department patrolling.

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*Negative Aspects*

1. There is a need for better maintenance and upkeep of some Township properties particularly the cemetery.
2. Roads and bridges are an ongoing concern in terms of maintenance and improvement needs.
3. Some areas experience negative impacts from high traffic volumes or traffic that travels too fast.
4. There is a lack of good sites for public recreational purposes
5. There is a lack of zoned sites for light industrial or commercial development.

*Specific Actions*

The issues survey also asked respondents to identify any specific actions they had in mind to address any of the issues that they had identified. This produced the suggestion that there is a need to get more people involved in the community to bring more activities into Lakefield Township.

*Attitudes About Future Development*

The last portion of the issues survey asked participants about their views on future development in the community. The Master Planning

Committee members reached a consensus on the following major concepts:

1. The Master Plan should recognize that the Township is primarily agricultural and rural residential.
2. Residential development should be encouraged in non-agricultural areas when possible.
3. Additional single-family home development might be permitted in transitional areas with proper standards to ensure that the development does not harm the essential character of the area.
4. Light commercial development should be located on the corner of Merrill Road and Lakefield Road.
5. Light commercial development should be limited as the infrastructure in Lakefield Township will not support most industrial uses.
6. Certain types of agricultural related activities that are compatible with the community's character might be permitted with proper standards.