

# CHAPTER 3

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

*To serve Township citizens while protecting the environment and our way of life.*

*Brooks Township Mission*

Brooks Township recognizes the importance of its unique environment, including the lakes, river, streams, open prairies, and forests to the residents of the township and the region. Environmental quality is the backbone of the community, affecting the health and welfare of all.

The goals and objectives in this section attempt to maintain and protect the environment, and thus the environmental quality and rural character of Brooks Township through sound planning principles.

### **Natural Features and Rural Character**

***Goal: To protect the quality of life of Brooks Township residents by protecting its natural resources and rural character.***

#### **River, Tributary & Lake Objectives:**

Based on the initiative of local residents, support measures to bring sewer infrastructure to Sylvan, Emerald, Brooks and Hess Lakes to protect the bodies of water from nutrient over-

loading with regard to individual septic systems.

Work to limit the amount of impervious surface in the township by regulating the density/intensity of development.

Protect all water bodies from nutrient overloading and erosion by encouraging the retention and protection of natural vegetative buffers.

Work to develop regulations and incentives for stormwater filtering for all types of land use beyond the Newaygo County Soil Erosion & Sedimentation Ordinance such as grass swales and perennial beds.

Maintain the natural character of the surface water bodies through the preservation of natural vegetative buffers, stringent building setbacks, and the implementation of other environmentally friendly development (zoning) regulations.

Develop and implement an education strategy, as outlined in the "Summary of Recommendations to the Citizens of Brooks Township" section of the *Brooks Township Land Use Vision*, that involves informing property owners and recreationists of the threats to water bodies and the practices which can potentially maintain and improve water quality.

Wetland Objective:

Enforce the protection of the existing wetlands in the township by ensuring that proposed development projects of properties with wetlands have been evaluated by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality to ensure that the impacts of the development will not significantly alter the current function of the wetland.

Forests, Prairies, and Open Space Objectives:

Promote the acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands by established land conservancy organizations, such as The Nature Conservancy, the Land Conservancy of West Michigan, Brooks Township and others.

Promote the preservation of existing public lands.

Educate citizens on the need to manage private sites for purposes of wildlife habitat, maintenance of rural character, and like factors.

Implement the recommendations outlined in the Brooks Township Land Use Vision and other planning documents, where deemed applicable and valid, as an integral part of protecting the environment.

Maintain greenbelt buffers along the township's major highways (e.g. M-37, M-82 and Croton Road) in order to maintain or

create visual impressions of rural character.

**Residential**

***Goal: To provide for orderly residential growth within the township that maintains environmental quality and protects the property rights of individual citizens.***

Objectives:

Maintain township and citizen involvement in the planning process to continue to protect the interests of property owners.

Utilize PUD, cluster zoning, and other open space techniques to protect natural features, keeping in mind not just site development but working to retain an integrated greenway network throughout the township.

Maintain a majority of the township's residential land area in low density development consistent with current development patterns, as well as the public's stated desire to retain Brooks Township as an environmentally sensitive, rural, community.

Create less dense second and third tier development along the lakes and waterways to protect water quality while still allowing people to enjoy waterfront living.

Restrict housing of a moderate to high density level to areas conducive to such use. Such areas should possess all-season roads and nearby proximity to public facilities and services.

### **Commercial and Industrial**

Goal: ***To recognize and promote the City of Newaygo as the area's primary commercial and industrial center, while avoiding unnecessary sprawl into rural township locations.***

#### **Objectives:**

Except as noted by the Future Land Use Map, discourage additional commercial re-zoning of properties within the Township.

Orient future industrial development to the city's planned industrial park, as opposed to the creation of industrial districts within the township.

In the event new commercial or industrial development is proposed for the township, encourage the use of inter-governmental tax sharing agreements with the City of Newaygo to meet the infrastructure needs (e.g. sanitary sewer and public water) of said development, as opposed to the use of on-site septic systems and wells.

### **Public Service and Infrastructure**

Goal: ***To provide appropriate services and infrastructure to existing and planned development without unnecessary and costly extensions.***

#### **Objective:**

Retain the integrity of the transportation network in Brooks Township by utilizing Michigan Department of Transportation and Newaygo County Road Commission access management principles and techniques.

Working in conjunction with the Newaygo County Road Commission, MDOT, the West Michigan Regional Planning Agency, and surrounding units of government, continue the township's participation in the analysis of future improvements to M-37. Said improvements, regardless of type, should not compromise the environmental integrity or rural quality of Brooks Township.

Coordinate future utility system's needs with the City of Newaygo, as opposed to the construction of township utility systems.

Implement the recommendations  
of the Brooks Township  
Recreation Plan.

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