
Section 4

Planning and Development Issues

This portion of the Master Plan identifies the major planning issues facing Jonesfield Township and the Village of Merrill. 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 Merrill-Jonesfield area. Desired future land use arrangements and plan implementation strategies are a natural outgrowth of these policies.

A. Identification of Major Planning Issues

Representatives of both the Township and Village, including Planning Commissioners and elected officials, were given the opportunity to complete a written survey (“discussion guide”) to use as a means of identifying planning and development issues.

The results of the written exercise were then discussed in a roundtable setting involving Township and Village representatives. This provided the participants with an

opportunity to express their concerns with present conditions in the community, and to share their views on the direction that the Village and Township should take in the future. This also provided the opportunity to identify additional issues and to reach consensus. The results of this process are listed below.

B. Synopsis of Planning Issues

Positive Aspects

1. Good school system
 2. Good roads
 3. Good well water
 4. Medical services (local doctor & dentist) are available
 5. Good hardware
 6. Only a half hour away from shopping centers (close proximity to Saginaw, Midland and Bay City).
 7. Nice places to eat.
 8. No congestion.
 9. Good sports programs.
 10. Small, close-knit community.
 11. Farming community.
 12. Friendly community with caring people.
 13. Attractive new streetscape.
 14. Location on Highway M-46 provides good access.
 15. Well-maintained community.
 16. Churches are an asset.
 17. Efficiently run Village.
 18. The Fire & Rescue Department enhances public safety.
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| <p>19. A community library is available.</p> <p>20. A community park is available for enjoyment by residents.</p> <p>21. Joint police protection services are provided to both Village and Township through the County Sheriff Department.</p> | <p>16. Additional off-street parking needed in Village business areas.</p> <p>17. Aging Village storm water system.</p> <p>18. The Village needs a full-time Administrator.</p> |
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Negative Aspects

1. Large-scale irrigation systems in area may impact residential wells.
 2. The community needs a public water system.
 3. There is no residential or business growth in the community.
 4. There is no grocery store.
 5. There is no pharmacy.
 6. The community needs an industrial park
 7. There is a need to keep agricultural land in farming.
 8. The area has nothing to offer for teens.
 9. School enrollments have been declining.
 10. The community needs new businesses.
 11. The community needs new housing development
 12. There is no sewer system in the Township.
 13. There is a lack of available building sites in the Township (mostly farmland).
 14. Older homes in the Village are being converted to rental units.
 15. Off-street parking inadequate in some older residential areas in the Village
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