

2010 Livingston County Comprehensive Plan Updates

TRANSPORTATION

Corridor Planning

M-59 Corridor

Planning for a wider corridor for improved traffic flow between I-96 in Howell Township and US 23 in Hartland Township has been a goal of the Michigan Department of Transportation for several years. In the Spring of 2007, improvements were initiated that include widening M-59 to a four lane boulevard with landscaped medians, road resurfacing, drainage improvements, traffic signal upgrades, curb and gutter repairs, bike trails, and ramp improvements at the M-59/I-96 interchange. The project also involves total replacement of three bridges on M-59 that cross over the CSX Railroad, the Shiawassee River, and the Great Lakes Central (GLC) Railroad. The Michigan Department of Transportation anticipates the conclusion of the M-59 Corridor improvements to be completed in 2012.

US 23 Corridor

The Michigan Department of Transportation has been studying the expansion of the US 23 Corridor since 1999. At that time, the Washtenaw County Freeway Study designated the 17 mile stretch of freeway from Ann Arbor to Brighton in Livingston County as the corridor study area. In February 2007, a feasibility study was launched with the goal of identifying immediate needs to the Corridor. MDOT has implemented a master plan approach to the Corridor and has established short, mid range, and long term objectives to be met in enhancing the US 23 Corridor. Among the goals areas identified were to increase mobility, enhance access connectivity, upgrade corridor facilities, increase economic development along the corridor, improve infrastructure conditions, and enhance the safety of public users.

The Washtenaw and Livingston Line (WALLY)

Southeast Michigan has been active in the planning of a commuter rail service for more than ten years. In June of 2006, the Washtenaw and Livingston Line (WALLY) effort was initiated to address the increasing congestion of the U.S. 23 corridor. A coalition of local governments, regional transportation agencies, and community organizations was formed in an effort to fund the project and to increase safety and mobility along U.S. 23.

It is proposed that the 27 mile north south commuter line will operate between Ann Arbor, Michigan and Howell, Michigan with Livingston County stations in Whitmore Lake, Hamburg Township, and Genoa Township. Other potential stopping points are currently under consideration and review. The service will be operated by the Ann Arbor Transit Authority (AATA) under a purchase of service agreement with the Michigan Department of Transportation.

The WALLY is anticipated to ease congestion along the U.S. 23 corridor, promote economic development in Washtenaw and Livingston Counties, and increase environmental sustainability by using less energy than typical automobiles. The line is projected to serve 1,200 riders daily with connecting bus service in Ann Arbor, Michigan provided by the Ann Arbor Transit Authority.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Livingston County Parks

Lutz County Park

In 2004, Mr. Owen Lutz bequeathed over three hundred acres of farmland in Deerfield Township to Livingston County to become the Lutz County Park. Mr. Lutz's intent was to preserve his land for the education and enjoyment of the county's residents and visitors. His vision for the park, which the county needs to fulfill as close as possible, includes a working farm center, space for public gatherings in the house, Christmas tree nursery, forest preserve, restored meadow with native plant species, and passive use trails for walking throughout the property. In August of 2008, Mr. Lutz's vision was initiated with the grand opening of a trail way system through a portion of the Lutz County Park.

Fillmore County Park Property

The Raymond Fillmore County Park Contains 198 acres in Genoa Township. In 2005, Raymond Fillmore willed this land for use as a county park for the enjoyment of the citizenry of Livingston County. He wished for the entire 198 acres be retained as open space for active recreation. He wanted the park to be a pleasant setting for the residents of the county to enjoy, whether it is used for baseball diamonds, picnic grounds, hiking paths, or general recreation. The Livingston County Parks and Open Space Committee is currently exploring possible park opportunities for this land.

Watersheds

Huron Chain of Lakes Watershed

The Huron Chain of Lakes Watershed covers 253 square miles of the 908 square mile Huron River Basin. The majority of the watershed lies within Livingston County, of which the largest portions are within the townships of Brighton, Genoa, Green Oak, Hamburg, and Putnam, as well as the Village of Pinckney, and the City of Brighton. The Huron Chain of Lakes Watershed is experiencing intense development pressures from a growing area and urban sprawl. Livingston County has been the fastest growing county in Michigan over the past decade, and most of the County's growth over the next 30 years is expected to take place within the Huron Chain of Lakes Watershed.

Upper 2 Shiawassee River Watershed

The Upper 2 Shiawassee River Watershed is a headwaters area of the Saginaw River system which discharges to the Saginaw Bay of Lake Huron. This watershed is roughly 220 square miles and covers much of north central and northeastern portions of Livingston County and very small portions of Shiawassee, Genesee, and Oakland Counties. In Livingston County, the watershed encompasses all of Deerfield Township and the City of Howell, and portions of Cohoctah, Tyrone, Howell, Oceola, Hartland, Marion, and Genoa Townships. The overall goal of the Upper 2 Shiawassee Watershed Plan is to develop a watershed wide action plan to protect or restore the area's natural resources from the anticipated impacts of storm water runoff. With the expanding growth throughout Livingston County and many parts of this watershed, it will be important to utilize careful land use planning and preservation techniques to maintain this important natural resource and to ensure the vitality of the natural and water resources throughout the county.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goals and Objectives

Goal D: Coordinate the Capital Improvements Plan with all other County plans and those of other governmental units (county, municipalities, school districts, hospital districts, airport, colleges and universities, etc.)

Strategies:

- Make all capital improvements projects information available in a central clearing house.
- Develop and distribute a unified and indexed Master Plan and Capital Improvement Plan to all City departments, commissions and committees to be used so that capital improvement projects comply with the intent of the Master Plan and County Codes.
- Coordinate capital improvements, public works projects, and all utility projects to ensure simultaneous construction and completion of all proposed work.

HAZARD MITIGATION

Livingston County Hazard Mitigation Plan

On October 2, 2006, the Livingston County Board of Commissioners adopted the 2007 *Livingston County Hazard Mitigation Plan*. The plan was prepared by Livingston County Department of Planning staff in collaboration with Livingston County Emergency Management and was developed to address the vulnerabilities to multiple hazards within Livingston County that are caused by the natural environment, technology, and humans. Mitigation is the ability to reduce the potential risk of life or property from a hazardous

event and effective hazard mitigation planning depends on the actions or mitigation efforts taken before a disaster occurs.

A key function of the Livingston County Department of Planning is the state mandated review of any new or amended master plans produced by the 16 townships within Livingston County. When a new master plan is reviewed, planning staff analyzes whether or not the township's plan is consistent with the Livingston County Comprehensive Plan. Should a township master plan not include a hazard mitigation element, county planning staff recommends that the local community include this element and refers them to sample language or provides them with the necessary guidance to remedy this inconsistency by drafting the appropriate language and references to the Livingston County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP CLASSIFICATIONS

New Growth Areas

New growth areas represent locations where development has occurred or is planned to occur in the future. Even with the recent economic downturn, Livingston County has seen some new growth areas emerge that will become bright spots in the county's future.

Genoa Town Center

The intersection of Grand River Avenue, Dorr and Hughes Roads has been designated by Genoa Township as the Genoa Town Center. This area is planned to become a mixed use town center with local neighborhood service establishments, businesses, and traditional residential neighborhoods that will provide a wide range of housing types including apartments above commercial areas, traditional townhouses and single family homes on smaller lots. The plan is intended to create a pedestrian friendly area that connects community parks and other activity centers and provides a defined sense of place for Genoa Township.

The Township has created a Town Center Overlay Zone with specific design standards to create a highly successful mixed use development, which includes utilizing traditional architecture, sidewalks and streets in an interconnected pattern, a vertical mixture of uses, and creating a system of neighborhood parks to serve as focal points and to provide recreational amenities. Streetscape and open space guidelines also serve as a component to the plan by creating an identity for the Township. Preservation of natural features and the use of materials, textures, and colors that are in context with the area's surrounding character are included in the plan to ensure the area becomes a focal point for Genoa Township.

Oceola Village Centre

Oceola Township has designated 204 acres of land at the corner of M-59 and Latson Road as the Oceola Village Centre. The plan is intended to provide a mixture of uses such as convenience goods, retail, restaurants, government offices, institutional uses,

personal and business services, and live work units along with medium and high density residential lots. A walkable, downtown village-type environment is intended utilizing traditional architectural features, decorative lighting, and extensive landscaping to convey a sense of permanence and importance for the Village Centre.

The Village Centre will also serve as the primary location for future commercial uses. With commercial zoning in place, the Township has approved a Commercial Planned Unit Development (CPUD) for the south portion of the site with a mix of residential, commercial, and service related uses. Future lands added to the Village Centre plan are intended to be similarly regulated with a CPUD to allow a flexible and innovative interrelationship of buildings and uses. The commercial component of the Village Centre will address the needs of Ocoala Township residents and compliment existing commercial facilities in the adjacent Howell area.

Cohoctah Township

While Cohoctah Township remains a largely rural area, the intersection of Oak Grove Road (at the bend) and Faussett Road is a potential future growth area within the Township. Preliminary plans have been discussed with the Township to construct a convenience store, deli, and gas station on a 6 (six) acre parcel at the corner of Oak Grove Road. With Oak Grove Road being one of the most highly visible and traveled roads in Cohoctah Township, the location is ideal for providing the local population with some neighborhood service related needs.