



# 5 Vision & Goals

**T**his chapter provides an overview of identified challenges and opportunities, a vision statement that encompasses important community elements and characteristics, and goals and objectives that are designed to address issues and challenges while building on existing opportunities. The following analysis was developed using a number of resources including data collection from the Master Plan process, comments from the Village Planning Commission and Design Review Board, issues identified through a Community Vision Workshop held in the Village, and planning consultant observations.

## CHALLENGES

As the metropolitan region of Detroit continues to change and evolve, professional and lay planners are presented with a host of problems and hurdles to overcome. It is important to view these problems as "challenges" rather than insurmountable obstacles. Challenges can have positive results while obstacles are usually viewed with despair. The principal challenges that the Planning Commission must confront during the Master Plan program will likely include:

- ❑ Bingham Farms is in danger of losing much of its identity that was associated with its woodlands, wetlands, stream corridors, wildlife, and similar natural features that originally drew residents to the community.
- ❑ Unlike older, historical settlements, Bingham Farms lacks an activity center that people remember when they think about the community.
- ❑ The Village needs a common bond that provides a stronger sense of identity and community for its citizens.
- ❑ As Bingham Farms and its neighbors have grown, the Village has experienced its share of problems related to traffic congestion, loss of its natural character, and absorption of most of its available vacant residential homesites.
- ❑ With increasing residential property values, the community may soon find that its young adult children struggle to find affordable home ownership options and its senior citizens have limited choices of housing for a changing lifestyle.
- ❑ Corridors of non-residential office development that were once the state-of-the-art are beginning to experience physical deterioration, changes of use, and higher than desirable vacancy rates.
- ❑ New residential development often adopts the characteristics of new housing on the suburban fringe, rather than echoing those characteristics of the neighborhood that are truly unique to Bingham Farms.
- ❑ Non-residential growth and development must occur in a well-planned manner that provides needed jobs and tax base without adversely impacting the quality of life in Village neighborhoods or adding congestion to its roadways.
- ❑ The Village is in danger of losing its historical settlement identity, and the time is right for preserving the uniquely Bingham Farms characteristics of its neighborhoods.
- ❑ Societal changes in the new "Information Age" take place so rapidly that the community's young people often lack places and activities that are relevant to their needs today.

- ❑ The way the community has grown in the past need not be the blueprint for its future.

## OPPORTUNITIES

The most difficult task of any planning program is identifying ways to capitalize on opportunities that reverse negative development trends. The secret always seems to be related to identifying the positive aspects of the trends associated with local and regional change. Change must be viewed as a natural, evolutionary process. The fact that circumstances in the community change does not automatically mean that all change is bad. There are a number of opportunities available to Bingham Farms that result from ongoing change locally and regionally. Some of the opportunities that will be presented to the Planning Commission in the future are likely to include:

- ❑ Residential re-development must be encouraged to use state-of-the-art techniques for integrating natural features, wildlife corridors, and resource preservation into essential community design.
- ❑ Certain older areas of the Village require special emphasis to retrofit new planning and development techniques intended to improve the quality of life for residents who have made significant financial and emotional commitments to these mature neighborhoods.
- ❑ Special attention must be paid to the existing office and commercial development along the Telegraph Road corridor if its future is to be one of opportunity and continued support to the Village's office, service, and employment needs.
- ❑ The Village already hosts a significant non-residential development. Sensitive site design and aggressive buffer and screening standards must be applied to prevent new non-residential development from negatively impacting neighborhoods while it is positively influencing the tax base.
- ❑ The Village's development history and architectural and cultural reminders of its past must be preserved for their value in retaining the essential character of the Village.

## CONCLUSION TO CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Infill on vacant sites and re-development of assembled land in the Village is inevitable over the next 10 to 20 years. Bingham Farms can choose to stand back and watch it occur, effectively letting the market decide what the community will look like 20 years from now. The alternative to this laissez faire approach involves the Village establishing a positive infill and re-development policy to lead the way to the year 2020. By planning for its growth and regulating the development that occurs, the Village can protect and preserve the characteristics of the community that its citizens value most. At the same time, it will discourage destructive, market-driven development patterns that are out of touch with the community's needs. These can only result in loss of that special community character that was responsible for attracting past and current residents to Bingham Farms in the first place. This Planning Process is intended to introduce a small dose of common sense and a healthy dose of self-determinism into the process of the community's growth and change.

## VISION STATEMENT

Bingham Farms held an "Issues and Solutions" workshop in November 2003 where the Planning Commission sought input from residents and community leaders. Through surveys, conversations, visioning exercises, and active brainstorming sessions, the participants gradually assisted the Planning Commission in identifying the challenges facing the community as it continues to grow and evolve. These exercises also concentrated on positive strategies for change. This concentration on positive contributions led the community to focus on potential solutions designed to take advantage of the opportunities that lie ahead.

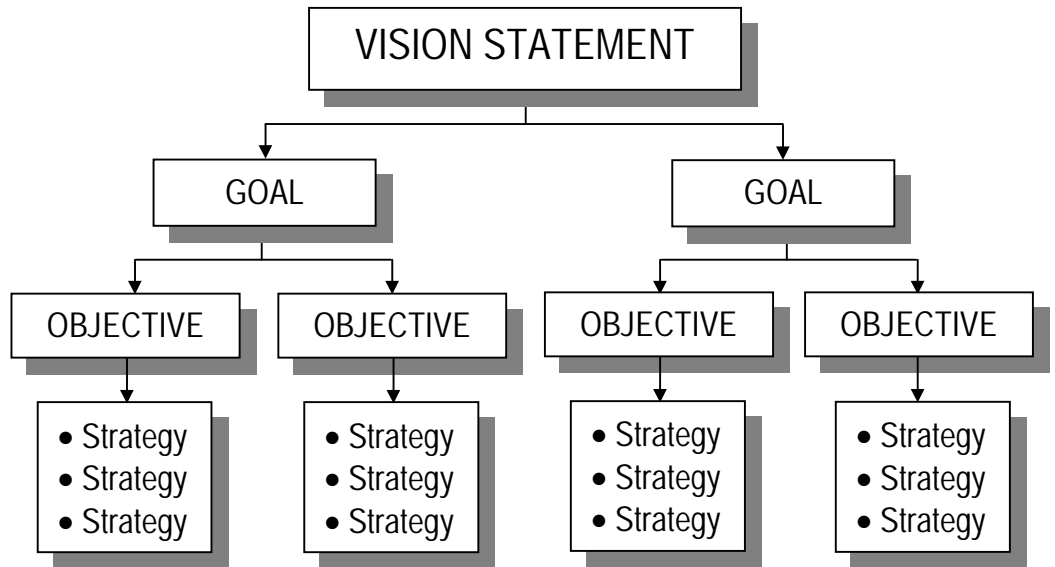
This input, along with the foundation of the Goals and Objectives from the Village's 1996 Master Plan, contributes to the policy basis from which long-range land use decisions can be made. Several of the Goals and Objectives remain constant from the 1996 Master Plan, although many have been modified, or refined based on the 2003 Vision Workshop.

The **Vision Statement** is a guide to provide direction to the Planning Commission in the formulation of the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. **Goals** are typically very general statements about the quality and character of the community that are not very easily quantified or measured. Goals must be translated into measurable **objectives** that can be prioritized and pursued

## FYI

To receive input from residents, property owners, and other stakeholders in the Village, the Planning Commission hosted a future vision workshop. On November 10, 2003 the Community Vision Workshop was held to inform the public of the planning process and to gain input regarding the Village's natural features; community facilities; traffic and circulation; community character and identity; office development corridor; and residential development and redevelopment. Approximately 40 people attended and participated during the workshop's evening session. The workshop resulted in the identification of important issues and potential solutions for future development and redevelopment in the Village.

by instituting specific **strategies** that will be followed. The goals and objectives proposed are intended to result in a specific quality and character for the community. This will be achieved by following strategies designed to permit measurable progress toward achieving the Township's objectives. These strategies will have to balance the public purposes inherent in planning for the long-range future of the community with the rights of private property owners to develop an appropriate use of their land.



## VISION STATEMENT

Bingham Farms intends to promote a vision of its future where:

- the natural beauty of the Village is preserved including woodlands, watercourses, floodplains, steep slopes and the like;
- the quality residential character of the Village is maintained;
- new development is a positive contribution to the community;
- growth and development occurs in a manner that contributes to the community's unique residential character;
- the local transportation network affords proper motorized access without promoting premature development or densities that exceed carrying capacity;
- public services are provided consistent with the community's needs, in a fiscally responsible manner; and

- planning and land use regulatory efforts balance the long-term goals and objectives of the community with the needs and desires of the individual resident.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

*GOAL 1: The Village of Bingham Farms should continue to be a low-density residential community, which provides a sharp contrast to the more intensive urbanization of nearby communities.*

Objective: Maintain zoning districts that provide for large residential lot sizes with generous setback and yard requirements.

Strategy: Review and update zoning district standards to define a maximum lot coverage standard for all buildings.



*GOAL 2: The preservation of greenspace and such natural amenities as steep slopes, woodlands, rivers and streams, wetlands, flora and fauna continues to be a primary Village goal for both residential and non-residential development.*

Objective: Develop standards that discourage and/or prohibit development, which would destroy natural features or that would adversely affect sensitive natural resources.

Strategy: Develop a woodlands protection ordinance that regulates the removal of trees during development.

Strategy: Amend the zoning ordinance to eliminate the use of floodplains and steep slopes when determining permitted residential density.



*GOAL 3: Nonresidential uses permitted in the Village are compatible with the residential character of the community and primarily limited to sites with access to Telegraph Road.*

Objective: Promote the use of residential architectural elements within office and other non-residential developments.

Strategy: Develop architectural standards for non-residential buildings.

Objective: Limit permitted office uses to ones that will not generate excessive traffic volumes or have an adverse impact on adjacent residential neighborhoods.



Strategy: Design office zoning districts that permit only professional and limited medical office uses and accessory uses.

Objective: Limit commercial uses to those that are compatible with and essential to the full-service office facilities in the Telegraph corridor.

Strategy: Commercial zoning districts that limit retail uses to those that serve office employees and residents such as restaurants.

*GOAL 4: Sound planning principles should be applied by the Village Planning Commission during comprehensive and thorough site plan review of proposed development, and by the Village Design Review Board when monitoring site development and structure design, through the Bingham Farms Zoning and Design Review Board Ordinances.*

Objective: Provide the Design Review Board with clear and measurable standards to review applications for development.

Strategy: Develop Architectural Standards that define the unique characteristics of various neighborhoods in the Village.

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