

Chapter 3
STATEMENT OF GOALS
AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

The statement of planning goals and objectives plays a fundamental role in the formulation of the Master Plan for the City of Reading. The goals chart the form and content of the Master Plan and the objectives chart the course to implementation of the Plan.

A **GOAL** is an intended destination or the view of a final condition to be attained. A goal is the most general level of policy and, by itself, is not often helpful to decision-makers. An **OBJECTIVE** is a benchmark that specifies the route by which the goal can be attained. Statement of objectives, taken together with implementation policies stated in Chapter 5 of this Plan, are structured for use by those responsible for implementing the Master Plan. This of course is primarily the City Planning Commission, City Council, the City's administrative staff but also includes the many on-going boards and committees serving the City, other public agencies such as the Reading Public School District, land developers, and citizens of Reading.

Goal and Objectives

***Land Use Goal:** As Reading grows and develops, these physical changes should be managed to assure and maintain optimum quality of life for all residents of the City.*

Land Use Objectives:

- (1) Accept only new development that uses land and infrastructure efficiently.
- (2) New land uses must be compatible with existing adjacent land use.
- (3) Encourage highest residential densities near or within walking distance of the Downtown.
- (4) Create pedestrian links between new development and the Downtown and school sites.
- (5) New development or redevelopment should employ sound urban design standards that assure compatibility with existing historic buildings and adjacent homes.
- (6) Areas of the City experiencing physical decline should be revitalized or redeveloped.
- (7) Provide regular opportunities at well publicized meetings for residents and stakeholders to discuss and have input to land use objectives and the Plan, including period updating of Plan content.

Residential Goal 1: Restore existing housing stock to provide affordable and well kept housing units for residents and pleasing neighborhoods.

Residential Objectives:

- (1) Encourage a variety of housing choice in neighborhoods through a balance of preservation, rehabilitation and new in-fill construction.
- (2) Target areas within the City which exhibit physical decline of housing unit for rehabilitation or demolition and new construction.
- (3) Preserve historic structures when feasible.
- (4) Invest in infrastructure for entire blocks or neighborhoods rather than for individual sites.
- (5) Implement consistent code enforcement for blighted conditions.
- (6) Solicit all available local, county, state and federal resources to assist with rehabilitation of existing dwelling units.

Residential Goal 2: Add new housing to Reading to expand the range of lifestyle choices available to residents.

Residential Objectives:

- (1) Zone land to offer a variety of density and housing type options to optimize housing choice.
- (2) Encourage neo-traditional housing designs which are compatible with existing neighborhoods yet offer a mix of housing types and costs which address the needs of single persons, empty nesters, retirees and families with children.
- (3) Encourage new housing development that capitalizes on proximity to park land or public school property.
- (4) Appropriate infrastructure should be provided when new development occurs.
- (5) The City may offer incentives to encourage new residential development such as participation in the cost of utility improvements or by creating special assessment district to defer capital costs over a period of years.
- (6) A plan review and evaluation process should be established to assure all new residential development is in keeping with existing neighborhoods and is of good, compatible design.

Downtown Goal 1: Attain physical revitalization of public facilities and private buildings

Downtown Objectives:

- (1) Identify and protect structures of historical and architectural value to reinforce the special character of Downtown Reading.
- (2) Improve the viability of Downtown through planned, long term and consistent improvements to public spaces and buildings.
- (3) Adopt a design theme for public facilities and spaces which is compatible with the historic architecture of the Michigan and Main Streets buildings.
- (4) Encourage private rehabilitation of buildings through tax credits available within a local historic district and other public incentives.

Downtown Goal 2: Achieve full occupancy of storefronts in the Downtown.

Downtown Objectives:

- (1) Determine the nature and types of businesses likely to succeed within the Downtown Reading setting (Market study is needed to define this).
- (2) Use public investments (infrastructure) and inducements to encourage private investment in existing buildings for new business occupancy.
- (3) Rehabilitation of store fronts and rear exteriors should incorporate material and designs which preserve the historic architecture of the building.
- (4) Organize a formal regional "marketing program" for the City that emphasizes the Downtown's unique qualities and appeal.
- (5) Organize seasonal events centered on the Downtown, which bring people to Reading from a large geographic area.
- (6) Encourage residential use of upper stories of Downtown buildings.
- (7) Provide ample public parking in appropriate locations within the Downtown.

Economic Development Goal: Maintain a sustainable, growing and diversified economy for Reading

Economic Development Objectives:

- (1) Create jobs first through existing employer retention and expansion.
- (2) Target manufacturing employment as primary focus of new job creation (including research, design, engineering, administration and production functions).
- (3) Market additional private firm investments within the Reading Industrial Park.
- (4) Continue to plan and implement industrial park and community infrastructure improvements to support provide sites for economic development investments..
- (5) Work with existing and new employers to facilitate enhanced employees skills via organized job training programs.
- (6) Encourage service sector business investments within the Downtown, portions of the industrial park and within commercially zoned districts.

Environmental Goal: Protect natural features within the City and environs to achieve a balance between man-made and natural environments.

Environmental Objectives:

- (1) Create ordinances and procedures for development review which are cognizant of the local environment.
- (2) Encourage land developers to set aside open space in which important or unique environments exist.
- (3) Plan and acquire public open spaces throughout the City to complement and serve residential neighborhoods and public spaces.

Parks and Recreation Goal: Offer a variety of active use and passive use park land and open spaces throughout the City.

Parks and Recreation Objectives:

- (1) Enhance walking and cycling opportunities by creating a network of sidewalks and bike path linking all areas of the City.
- (2) Continue to develop active play facilities of types deemed to meet present and future needs.

(3) Maintain on-going recreation facilities and programming partnership with Reading Township and Reading Public Schools.

(4) Use school sites for active recreation uses.

(5) Parklands should also provide well-landscaped passive areas for relaxing and viewing.

Community Infrastructure Goal: Within available resources, make planned and consistent investments into the full array of public facilities.

Infrastructure Objectives:

(1) Initiate a six-year capital improvement program as an integral part of the City's annual budget cycle.

(2) Evaluate needs and deficiencies, then design to meet needs for the several public infrastructure system within the City.

(3) Infrastructure improvements should be carried out based on an organized program and should always be done so that all deficiencies in the underground infrastructure are met before building new surface improvements.

(4) Make public sanitary sewer and water services available to new development only if it occurs within the City limits.

Visual Character Goal: Maintain and enhance a pleasing visual environment throughout the City.

Visual Objectives:

(1) Insist on good design and visual appearance for all new development, new buildings, public spaces, streetscapes and building restorations.

(2) Draft and implement minimum design standards for all public facilities and buildings.

(3) Draft and implement minimum design standards for all types on private investment as related to building construction, site development and land divisions.

(4) Draft and implement a junk ordinance to prevent blighting conditions.

(5) Enhance entryways to the City by creating well professionally designed welcome sign age and landscaping.

(6) Enhance and restore the historic designs and facades present on many buildings in Reading.

(7) Draft and implement a sign ordinance to control proliferation of signs along major streets, in the Downtown and in residential areas.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal: The City of Reading, Reading Township and Reading Public Schools work to achieve mutual benefits for all residents as to provisions of services, inter-jurisdictional planning and management of development.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Objectives:

- (1) Identify and explore specific opportunities for area wide cooperation.
- (2) Develop a shared set of policies as regards decision making between governments.
- (3) Develop ad hoc committees to look at issues of common concern and to recommended mechanism for addressing area wide issues.
- (4) Organize public forums for citizens from the entire Reading area when looking at solutions on an area wide basis.