

County Planning Connection

Winter 2010



Inside this issue:	
Local Communities Receive Energy Efficiency Grants	2
Update of County Comprehensive Plan	2
2010 Livingston County Capital Improvement Program	3
Planning Particulars	4
Staff and Planning Commission	4

Low Impact Development Manual for Michigan

The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) recently compiled the **Low Impact Development Manual for Michigan: A Design Guide for Implementors and Reviewers** with the expertise and technical review of approximately 50 individuals including Livingston County's own Mark St. Charles, Supervisor of Green Oak Charter Township.

Low Impact Development (LID) is the cornerstone of stormwater management. The basic principle of LID is to manage rainfall where it lands and to restore a site to its predevelopment hydrology through use of design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source. This manual was created to provide guidance on how to apply LID to new, existing, and redevelopment sites. The manual can be used in two very important ways:

- Technical guidance to design, construct, and maintain a specific LID measure such as how to design a rain garden.
- Incorporate LID standards in a local ordinance or master plan to manage stormwater.

A key component of protecting water resources is keeping the water cycle in balance. The water or hydrologic cycle is the movement of rainfall from the atmosphere to the land and then back to the atmosphere. Altering one aspect of the water cycle invariably changes other elements of the cycle. For instance, impervious surfaces such as roads, buildings, and parking areas prevent rainfall from soaking into the soil and significantly increase the amount of stormwater runoff, and decrease the amount of groundwater recharge. Stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces impacts our communities in the following ways:

- Increased flooding and property damage.
- Degradation of the stream channel – stormwater moving at higher velocities from impervious surfaces, erodes the streambank and stream bed.
- Less groundwater recharge and dry weather – impervious surfaces prevent the infiltration of stormwater into the earth to replenish groundwater supplies for drinking water (wells),

(continued on page 2)

HOT TOPICS:

The Livingston County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee needs new members - Interested? Please contact Kathleen Kline-Hudson or County Commissioner Ron VanHouten.

Census forms will be delivered or mailed to households in March 2010. Census workers will visit households that do not return the forms to take a count in person; check for badge I.D. For answers to more questions, ask your local Township, City or Village Clerk or go to: www.2010.census.gov

Spotlight On... Green Oak Charter Township's Low Impact Development Language

Green Oak Charter Township incorporates Low Impact Development (LID) standards in their local zoning ordinance through their Natural River and Tributary Overlay Zones. Recently the township enhanced this language based on a model Riparian Buffer Ordinance that the Huron River Watershed Council developed.

These zones overlay existing zoning for an area 400 feet (for the Huron River) and 125 feet (for tributaries) from the ordinary high water mark on each side of and parallel to the water course. The overlay zone is illustrated on the township zoning map, and it includes portions of three creeks and the

South Branch of the Huron River. A 100 foot natural vegetation strip is required along the edge of the river and its tributaries. The vegetation strip is required to have three distinct zones of varying widths and planting requirements.

The inclusion of these LID zoning ordinance standards, help minimize stormwater runoff, erosion, stabilize the river and stream banks, and protect water quality. In addition, the Township is revising their storm water ordinance to incorporate LID standards. **For a closer look at this Riparian Buffer Ordinance, follow the link below: www.greenoaktwp.com/index.php?nav=103**

Low Impact Development Manual for Michigan (continued)

and for water recharge to lakes, rivers and streams (especially during dry season to ensure a steady flow).

- Impaired water quality – impervious surfaces collect pollutants such as oil, salt and fertilizers, which are swept away by stormwater runoff and carried to lakes, rivers and streams.
- Increased water temperature – impervious surfaces are warmed by the sun, which in turn warms stormwater runoff that enters water bodies.
- Loss of habitat – erosion and

increased water temperatures in lakes, rivers and streams impacts the diversity and amount of fish and aquatic insects.

- Decreased recreational opportunities – the decreased water quality, increased temperature and decreased habitat that can result from stormwater runoff, diminishes water recreational opportunities.

LID is a very versatile approach to stormwater management, because almost all components of the urban environment have the potential to serve as elements of an integrated stormwater management system.

The set of ten principles that defines the LID process is: Plan first; Prevent, then mitigate; Minimize disturbance; Manage stormwater as a resource, not as a waste; Mimic the natural water cycle; Disconnect, decentralize and distribute; Integrate natural systems; Maximize the multiple benefits of LID; Use LID everywhere, and; Make maintenance a priority. *SEMCOG will assist member communities with stormwater services, LID presentations and incorporating LID into a community project or ordinance.*

This valuable resource is available online at:

www.semcoq.org/LowImpactDevelopment.aspx

Local Communities Receive Energy Efficiency Grants

Congratulations to Genoa and Oceola Townships, and the Village of Pinckney on their successful Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) applications! On January 25, 2010, these three communities were among 125 cities, villages, townships and counties throughout Michigan to receive EECBG funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The Michigan Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth (DELEG) awarded the grants to projects that

will create and retain jobs, save energy, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. State EECBG grant awards generally range from \$50,000 to \$140,000 for townships and villages, and the EECBG grants are administered through two separate programs. Genoa, Oceola and Pinckney received awards through the Multi-purpose competitive grants for smaller communities. Howell Township is awaiting notification for a project they submitted through the Light Emitting Diode/Solid State Lighting competitive grant.

Genoa Charter Township received an award of \$94,919 for five cone-shaped wind turbines to be erected on the Township Hall property to generate electricity and power the building. Oceola Township will use their \$68,912 award for an energy audit on their township facilities and energy retrofits on their parking lot lighting, township hall and fire station. The Village of Pinckney was awarded \$50,000 to distribute 475 Michigan GREEN energy kits to Village residents. Each kit contains includes energy saving items such as low-flow shower heads.

Update of County Comprehensive Plan

The staff of the Livingston County Planning Department has been busy working on an update to the County Comprehensive Plan. The original document was adopted in 2002 and has had several updates since then to keep the plan current with emerging trends and future projections.

Even though Livingston County has seen a lull in development over the last few years due to the economy, there are and continue to be, bright spots in the future growth of our area. For example, the updates to the County Comprehensive Plan will include the addition of three new 'growth nodes', which are areas that have displayed recent development activity and could potentially become centers of new growth for Livingston County. The proposed amendments will also establish a link between the County Comprehensive Plan and the Livingston County Capital Improvement Plan to provide the important tools needed to identify, assess, and formulate the financial basis for implementing short and long term improvements.

Staff plans to have the updates to the comprehensive plan ready for distribution to local communities for comment in February or March with a public hearing scheduled on the proposed updates in the spring. Exact dates will be published in the next issue of **County Planning Connection**.

2010 Livingston County Capital Improvement Program



A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a six-year planning instrument used by governments to identify needed capital projects in an effort to coordinate the financing and timing of improvements in a way that maximizes the value to the public. Capital improvements are projects involving the expenditure of public funds over and above annual operating expenses. The general characteristics of most capital items for County budgeting/programming purposes are: a) large in size; b) proportionally large in cost (in excess of \$50,000); c) fixed in nature; d) lengthy in duration (useful life greater than three years). Each year, all capital projects included within the County CIP are reviewed and a call for new projects is made.



Livingston County is in the seventh year of preparing a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) which inventories all county-wide capital projects. The Livingston County Board of Commissioners has designated the Livingston County Department of Planning as the lead department in compiling the data. The Board has also resolved that projects must be included in the County CIP as a prerequisite for consideration of County participation in financing. Of course while all entities that carefully plan for undertaking capital improvements target specific funding sources such as bonds, grants, assessments, and other special funding resources, the implementation of these projects is largely dependent on the overall economic stability of that particular entity.

It's a requirement by the County Board of Commissioners that all County departments and affiliated agencies participate in the County CIP Inventory. However, while not a requirement, it is also very important that all cities, townships, villages and school districts actively participate in this process as well, so that the widest range of projects within the County boundaries is identified.

County CIP Project request forms are sent out in the early Spring, usually around April. In 2009, the entire reporting and submittal process was automated, in order to better manage the program. Virtually all communication was done via email, and all reporting was handled digitally. Each CIP participant was provided with an Excel spreadsheet workbook which included all forms and information related to their CIP projects. All projects had to "fit" into 1 of 4 categories: 1) Buildings and Land, 2) Infrastructure, 3) Parks, or 4) Capital Equipment. Also introduced was a project prioritization system, which utilized three CIP project priority Levels: 1) Urgent, 2) Important, and 3) Desirable, in order to insure that those projects of greater importance to protecting the health, safety and welfare of residents and the community as a whole, were given a level of initial preference above all others. County Planning Staff also worked closely with all participants to answer questions and help guide them through the process. In this initial attempt, the new system proved to be fairly successful. In all, five local governments participated: the cities of Brighton and Howell, the Village of Fowlerville, and Handy and Howell Townships. A total of 231 CIP projects were reported. In addition, all five school districts participated.

The most exciting and important outcome resulting from this year's CIP process was the decision by the Board of Commissioners to include the annual CIP Inventory as a supplement to the County Comprehensive Plan. For planning purposes, this lends legitimacy and validation to the County Comprehensive Plan and the planning process in general. Shrinking economic capacities continue to plague ALL County governmental and quasi-governmental units. For this reason, it is essential that future capital improvement planning involves collaboration and coordination on a wider scale. At the outset, the Livingston County Planning Department anticipates that the benefits of such an endeavor will result in better community organization, more collaborative and coordinated planning efforts, and increased cost efficient and effective processes and results.

The County CIP as well as the County Comprehensive Plan can be found on the County Planning Department website at: <http://www.co.livingston.mi.us/planning/other.html>

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Our County Planning
website is under
construction.
View our progress at:
www.co.livingston.mi.us

Planning Particulars

Following is a service offered by your County Planning Department:

- **Liaison Relationships**—For many years County Planning has assigned each staff person to serve as the **County Planning Liaison** to several local communities. This means that there is a consistent staff person for each of the 20 local units of government. A County Planning Liaison is your “go-to” person for questions. Additionally, they will review most of your community’s text and rezoning cases so that they gain a good working knowledge of the planning and zoning changes in your community, and they understand community trends over time. Each County Planning Liaison will endeavor to communicate with their assigned communities on a regular basis. Following are current County Planning Liaison Relationships:

<u>Scott Barb</u>	<u>Kathleen Kline-Hudson</u>	<u>Rob Stanford</u>
Deerfield Township	Cohoctah Township	Brighton Township
Handy Township	Genoa Township	Conway Township
Howell Township	Green Oak Township	Iosco Township
Putnam Township	Hamburg Township	Marion Township
Unadilla Township	Hartland Township	Oceola Township
Village of Fowlerville	Pinckney Village	Tyrone Township
City of Howell		City of Brighton

THANK YOU! *For all the nice compliments and support of our first e-newsletter!*

Livingston County Department of Planning

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James Sparks

Sylvia Kennedy-Carrasco

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Brian Prokuda

Bill Anderson

Questions or comments? Or to refer someone for our e-newsletter mailing list—

Contact our Administrative Specialist, Nancy Vorhoff