



Carlisle | Wortman
ASSOCIATES, INC.

117 NORTH FIRST STREET SUITE 70 ANN ARBOR, MI 48104 734.662.2200 734.662.1935 FAX

MEMORANDUM

TO: Highland Township Planning Commission

FROM: Douglas J. Lewan, AICP, Planning Consultant
Anna Wysocki, Community Planner

DATE: June 8, 2023

RE: Master Plan Visioning Session

Executive Summary

The Highland Township Planning Commission hosted a Master Plan Visioning Session on Thursday, May 18, 2023, during a regular meeting conducted at Township Hall. As the second phase of the public engagement process, the Visioning Session invited residents to describe their goals for Township development through an in-person forum. Sixty-three people attended and almost all stayed for the duration of the event, from 6-9 PM, marking the event as a success.

Phase 1 – The Survey

Prior to the May 18th Visioning Session, the Township invited residents to complete a multiple-choice survey that was published to highlandtwp.net. Typically, online surveys achieve a broader response compared to other methods of gathering public feedback, as was the case here. The survey received 417 responses, the results of which are available in a separate report compiled by Sogolytics. Those interested in the survey results can contact the Township. By hosting a live event in addition to the survey, the planning commission provided different points of access for residents and stakeholders to voice their opinions. In doing this, the planning commission is working to create an authentic framework for the Master Plan, with buy-in and consensus from Township citizens.

Phase 2 - The Visioning Session

The Visioning Session was designed by Carlisle Wortman & Associates (CWA), the planning consultation firm hired by the Township, and was hosted by the planning commission. Mr. Doug Lewan, the Township Planning Consultant, was supported by Ms. Anna Wysocki, also of CWA. To kick off the session, Mr. Lewan presented on the purpose of a master plan and the importance of public engagement. He then dismissed participants to the event's four "stations," where attendees held lively discussions. To close the evening,

*Benjamin R. Carlisle, President Douglas J. Lewan, Executive Vice President John L. Enos, Vice President
David Scurto, Principal Sally M. Elmiger, Principal R. Donald Wortman, Principal
Paul Montagno, Principal, Megan Masson-Minock, Principal, Laura Kreps, Senior Associate
Richard K. Carlisle, Past President/Senior Principal*

Mr. Lewan thanked everyone for their participation and the planning commission formally adjourned the meeting.

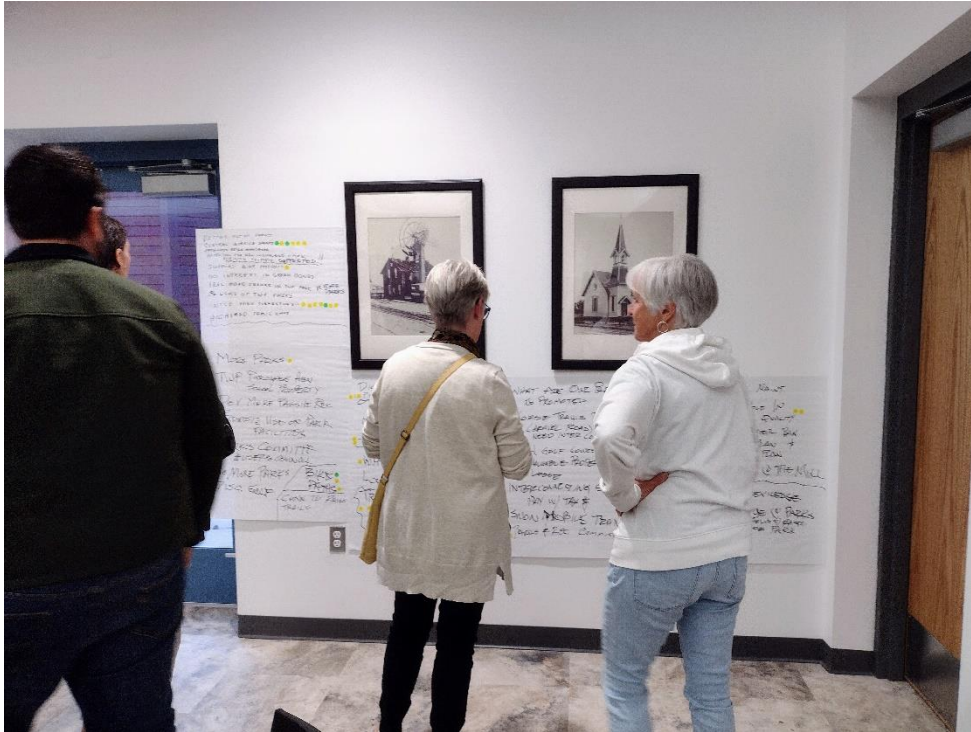
Stations

With assistance from the planning commission, CWA created four stations for the session. Each station used posters to highlight a topic that is applicable to land use and will most likely affect Highland Township during the next five to ten years. These four topics are: Residential Development, Transportation and Infrastructure, Natural Features, and Business. Following introductions, the attendees divided themselves into four groups, which rotated through each station. The goal of this format was to stimulate group conversation, while allowing every attendee an equal opportunity to comment on each topic. Throughout the evening, two planning commissioners remained at each station to facilitate discussion and to transcribe participants' comments onto large sheets of paper. Images of each poster are copied at the end of this report.



Voting

After spending about twenty minutes at each station, participants “voted” for comments that held the most importance to them by placing stickers next to the comments that were handwritten on large sheets of paper. Each participant was given twelve stickers. Each comment is now tallied at the end of this report, under “Stations” and “Results.”

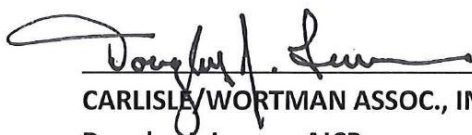


Conclusion

The desire to preserve the rural character of Highland was the prevailing sentiment of the evening. Participants voiced opposition to small residential lots and any multi-family dwellings. Though regional housing shortages and market trends tend toward suburban development, participants wanted to avoid the development of suburban housing and large commercial footprints to remain distinct from neighboring communities and to preserve the Township character.

Some participants contemplated how to grow strategically. For example, participants discussed the aging population and the need for affordable assisted living facilities. Some discussed how business development might be concentrated to major transportation corridors and how the town center should attract smaller businesses. Participants who desired improvements largely focused their comments on transportation and infrastructure. For example, participants suggested the development of non-motorized pathways, while high speed internet and sewer expansion were popular but contested propositions. Comments that were transcribed by each station's facilitators are recorded below.

Sincerely:



CARLISLE/WORTMAN ASSOC., INC.

Douglas J. Lewan, AICP

Executive Vice President



CARLISLE WORTMAN ASSOC., INC.

Anna Wysocki

Community Planner

Station: Residential Development

Highland Township Residential Development

- Recent trends indicate the following:

One-Family Residential currently makes up the largest percentage of housing stock. Less than 1% of housing stock is renter-occupied.
The total number of housing units increased by 360 between 2010 and 2020.
The average Median Housing value between 2016 and 2020 was \$239,500 (a decrease from 2010).
The average Median Gross Rent between 2016 and 2020 steadily decreased, to \$939.
Total number of households increased between 2010 and 2020 by 330.
Households with seniors have increased by 50% between 2010 and 2020.
By 2045, households with children are expected to decrease by 13%.
By 2045, households with seniors are expected to increase by 132%.

Housing Units by Type
American Community Survey 2020

Housing Type	Percentage
Single Unit	~85%
Multi Units	~10%
Mobile Homes and Other	~5%

Master Plan Update 2023

Residential Development and Growth

What are your thoughts about the different types of housing in the Township?

What types of housing does the Township not have?

What is the vision for lot sizes and character of housing?

What should be considered for senior housing?

What should be considered for accessory dwellings?

Are there areas of the Township that are of particular concern regarding new residential development?




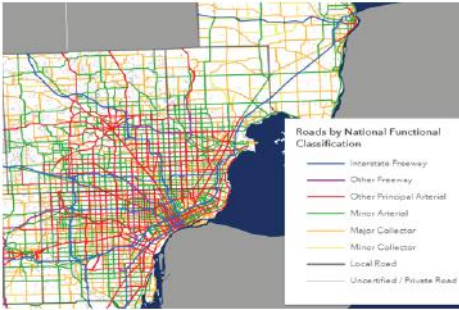
Results: Residential Development

Comment	No. of Stickers- Votes of Support
Why does Highland need to grow—that reduces open space.	3
Tiny homes—privately owned—more affordable	6
Open spaces, green space in subdivisions	4
Condos-younger population	1
Mixed-use—downtown—commercial with residential	1
Developers - “look elsewhere”	4
Cost of housing—seniors—co-ops—lower rent	5
Need info—statistics—percent of different types of housing	0
Keep Highland Rural.	14
No multi-housing development	6
Standard of living—not urbanized	0
Protect wells—water quality	8
Keep Highland the same as it is now.	6
Housing for seniors—cost—affordable	0
Need walkable community	0
Developers: 10 acre minimum	19
Increase lot size—especially around lakes	9
Bike paths—walkways	9
Dog parks	0
Accessory dwelling units	3
Home businesses—taxes?	1
Limit new subdivision development	4
Do not want to look like White Lake or Howell	1
Decrease taxes	1
No short term and/or long-term rentals/ protect against Airbnb’s	4
Lack of commercial (temporary) rentals, hotels, motels	0
Keep current lot size—less dense based on area	11
Gravel pit—what development planned when they leave	0
Cluster developments	0

Station: Transportation & Infrastructure

Highland Township *Transportation & Traffic*

- Highland comprises about 36 square miles located between Dunham Lake (west) and White Lake (east), with M-59 bisecting the Township area.
- Public roads within the Township are maintained by the Oakland County Road Commission and designed and constructed in accordance with a national functional road classification system. This system determines eligibility for federal aid.
- A map provided by SEMCOG is shown below, depicting traffic volume by road:



Master Plan Update 2023

Transportation and Infrastructure

What road improvements should be prioritized?

How do transportation issues impact your daily activities as a driver, bicyclist, or pedestrian?
What could be done to improve these issues?

What roads or issues should be considered when new development is proposed?

Where would you like to see pathways?

Should the Township consider building a sewer system?

Results: Transportation & Infrastructure

Comment:	No. of Stickers - Votes of Support
1. Building design standards	9
2. No round-about	5
3. Dog Parks	0
4. Park Connections/Pathway	11
5. Road legal golf carts	3
6. No 5G Towers	4
7. Water quality testing	3
8. Move powerlines underground.	9
9. Limited sewers for business development	11
10. Better stormwater management	0
11. Longtree Road: Pave	3
12. Duck Lake Road: pave north end	3
13. Davista Drive: Pave	1
14. Bike path near roads	7
15. Traffic congestion	4
16. White Lake Road: Needs speed limit between Havey Lake	2
17. Maintain existing roads	6
18. Sidewalk to Milford High and beyond	25
19. Cell towers: Make better looking (“Trees”)	1
20. Sidewalks at existing developments	3
21. Sewers -No	24
22. Change road to match speed limits	5
23. Senior ride-share	1
24. Alternative way to maintain roads	9*
25. Milford DWP maintain Highland	0*
26. Speed bump, “slow down”	0
27. Sewers- Yes	21
28. Water mains	8
29. Traffic speed	3

Comments (Continued)	No. of Votes (Continued)
30. Public transit expansion	0
31. Township help with subdivision roads	14
32. Pathway trail system	10
33. E.V. charging	14
34. High speed internet	20

*The placement of stickers made it unclear as to whether votes were for “alternative way to maintain roads” or “Milford DWP maintain Highland.”

Station: Natural Features

Highland Township

Parks and Natural Features

In addition to the Highland State Recreation Area, Highland residents have access to many parks and preserves including: Duck Lake Pines Park, Downey Lake Park, Hickory Ridge Pines Park, and Highland Oaks County Park

Land Cover in Highland Township

Category	Percentage
Trees	43.5%
Open Space	37.5%
Water	8.5%
Other	1.2%

■ Trees ■ Open Space ■ Water ■ Other

The Friends of Highland Recreation Area (FOHRA) is a volunteer organization that has been leading local parks development since 2007.

Township Development goals include connecting Highland Station to the Oakland County Trails System.

Master Plan Update 2023

Natural Features

What is your vision for preservation of the natural environment?

What areas or natural features should be preserved?

Are natural resources and the natural environment a Township priority?

Should the mitigation of carbon emissions and the impacts of climate change be considered in the Master Plan?

Highland Township
Warm inside. Great outdoors.

Results: Natural Features

Comment	No. of Stickers
1. More parks	1
2. Township purchase ABN school property	1
3. Interest in Amer (?) Agg property?	0
4. Water recreation public park	2
5. 50% okay with millage to buy rec' land	0
6. Path access to Highland Oaks	3
7. General support for green technology	0
8. Keep population density low	2
9. Better trail & pathway maintenance	2
10. Township take a role in groundwater quality	2
11. Recreation space use Master Plan & Use Plan & Access Plan	1
12. Finish Chill at the Mill	4
13. State land a privilege	0
14. Dog poop issue at parks—solve with bags	1
15. Need township dog park	2
16. What are our parks—not promoted	1
17. Horse trails disappeared (interconnecting gravel road)	3
18. H.H. Golf Course is valuable property—don't loose	5
19. Interconnecting sidewalk—pay with taxes	0
20. Snow mobile trails	0
21. Parks & Rec committee	1
22. Disc/frisbee golf	0
23. Pickleball court & other planned uses	6
24. Milford Road bike path	1
25. Zero mitigation (reference to carbon emissions/climate change slide of introductory slideshow)	9
26. Why no tree ordinance	1

Comment (Continued)	No. of Stickers (Continued)
27. Landowner sold off topsoil	0
28. Trails to connect to session 3 100%	7
29. Develop more passive recreation.	0
30. Promote use of park facilities	0
31. Parks committee & users council	1
32. No more parks	0
33. Support Bike paths	11
34. (C---?) to rails trails	0
35. Better management of parks	0
36. Control invasive species	6
37. No interest in green bonds	0
38. Feel more secure in Township park vs. State parks	0
39. Percent usage of Township parks	0
40. Inter-park connections	11
41. Highland trail maps	1

Station: Business

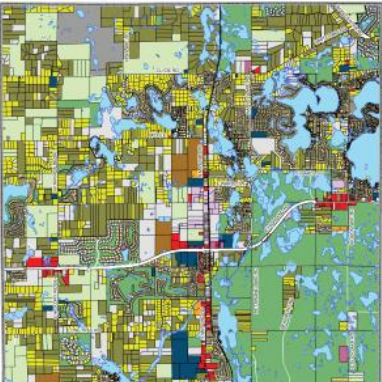
Highland Township **Business**

The majority of businesses are located along M-59 and Milford Rd.

Types of nonresidential development can include:

Retail
Office
Industrial
Hotels, Hospitality
Medical
Residential
Mixed -Use

There was a 17% decrease in commercial land use from 2015 to 2020.



commercial land use

Master Plan Update 2023

Business

What types of development would you like to see more of? Less of?

In what areas would you like to see commercial growth?

Provide examples or ideas of how new development can be compatible with the Township's character.

Provide examples of nonresidential development that you would like to see in the Township over the next 10 to 20 years.



Results: Business

Comment	No. of Stickers-Votes of Support
1. Be appealing to families.	0
2. Keep rural areas.	9
3. Make sure buildings look and have more continuity.	4
4. More trees/street scape	5
5. Soften/more green scape in front of businesses.	2
6. Less commercial growth.	2
7. No hotel.	2
8. Better commercial in Historic District.	4
9. No short-term rental	3
10. Let White Lake and Hartland keep expanding, not Highland.	3
11. New good dining!	0
12. Southeast corner M-59 Milford development	2
13. More farmers markets/ small markets.	3
14. More coffee shops & restaurants, but not a chain	1
15. No big box. We are fine driving to White Lake/ Don't want big box store.	8
16. Keep Agg Zoning areas/ maintain rural areas	8
17. Better medical care area/ more medical and healthcare.	5
18. Increase commercial development on M-59 (brings in outside money)	13
19. Responses to above comment: We don't want to be White Lake. <u>We love the rural corridors.</u>	0
20. Biggest impact from bringing big box stores is water and sewer, which we don't want.	1
21. Expansion of small business along Milford Road corridor.	0
22. Keep things more tight for elderly to do things	1
23. More agricultural business/ keep Highland rural/ promote agriculture.	12
24. I don't want to see our farmland turned into suburbia.	4
25. Pro dispensary	0
26. Anti dispensary	3

Comment (Continued)	No. of Votes (Continued)
27. Define downtown a little better.	6
28. Confine business to downtown and Duck Lake and M-59.	2
29. Food trucks? —Little food truck area.	2
30. No sewers.	12
31. Township buy old middle school property—It would be a good downtown center.	10
32. Pathway to library area.	0
33. Less crowded, keep small town charm.	1
34. Farm based business (agriculture based, more organic).	6
35. Racetrack/ recreation vehicles.	5
36. Maintain township character by minimizing residential and commercial development.	5
37. Home based business	3

Comments Recorded Privately on Notecards

Residential

1. No multiple residential development.
2. 10-acre minimum acre requirement for new developments.
3. More development and more residents does not equate to progress.
4. Keep Highland rural.
6. Don't let crowded housing community or sr. ctr. Housing complexes sprawl out away from community center districts (i.e., Duck Lk/M59).
7. The senior housing community is certainly a need we will be dealing with. However, watch the density and proximity to other businesses and services.

Community Character

1. Unique: It's rural equestrian open space community on the outskirts of Waterford/Novi/Commerce etc.
2. Keep It dark night sky!
3. Keep it rural/residential – Large Ag Lots
4. Keep development to Highland Stn & Duck Lk intersections.
5. Don't give up the equestrian heritage.
6. Vision: Maintain rural/open space feel!!! Large lot with big setbacks!

Infrastructure

1. A community sewer system would be good to preserve the small lake communities—aging septics degrade the water quality.
2. Carbon mitigation is not as important. Electrification can be integrated into planning but not a driving priority. Do not want to see wind/solar development. Does not fit our character.

Natural Features

1. Definitely a priority.
2. Areas/Features(?) Preserve: Equestrian access. Connect Highland Station District to Highland Rec with a natural corridor.
3. Protect night sky.

Business

1. Development: Small independent businesses, community bases, service & institutional.
Less: Large retail, strip storefronts, chain type operations.
2. Areas of Commercial growth: Limit to M59/Duck Lake as it is already populated. Do not expand down M59 west. Not interested in White Lake/Waterford Business Corridor.
3. Compatible Character: Low rise, small parking (heat island). Limit parking lot lighting or put all on motion control sensor. Brick/ wood façade. Limit flashy “metal” or architectural panel. Do not overlight or uplight anything.

Comments Recorded Privately on Notecards

Other

1. Better communication to residents about meetings and/or agendas. Citywide notifications.
2. Not our job to regulate neighbor legal interests(?) regarding PEOPLE. Nuisance ordinance yes, noise, weeds, etc. Not people.
3. Not our job or position to regulate business.
4. How does it (?) now? With the existing ordinance and fire codes (?).
5. Nuisance prevention not our business. Nuisance ordinances.
6. Housing affordability?
6. Not all Ordinances should be equal (?) all of OHIO.

Visioning Session Comments

-Photos-

Residential Development and Growth

1. Development - "Look elsewhere"
2. Cost of housing - Seniors - Co-ops - Lower Rent
3. Need info - Statistics - Percent of different types of housing
4. Keep Highland Rural

No-Multi Housing development

- Standard of Living - Not urbanized -

Protect Wells - Water Quality

- Keep Highland the same as it is now

Housing for Seniors - Cost - Affordable

Need Walkable community

Developers - 10 Acre minimum

Increase Lot SIZE - Especially around lakes

Bike Paths - Walkways

Dog Parks



SUPERSTICKY EASELPAD
TABLEAU À FEUILLES MOBILES SUPERCOLLANTES
SUPERADHESIVAS BLOC DE HOJAS REPOSICIONABLES



30

25 IN/PO x 30 IN/PO
63,5 cm x 76,2 cm
5,2 SQ. FT/PP (0,48 m²)



Why Does Highland Need to grow- that
reduces open space ●●●

Tiny Homes- Privately own- More Affordable ●●●●

Open spaces, Green space IN subdivisions ●●●●

Condo's - younger population ●

Mixed use- downtown - Comm'l with Residential ●

Accessory Dwelling Units ● ● ●

Home Business - Taxes? ●

Res

Limit New subdivision Development ● ● ● ●

Do not want to look like White Lake or Howell ●

Decrease Taxes ●

{ Air B + B - Short Term Rentals + OR Long Term
No ● ● ●

AREN'T THESE THE SAME?

Protection against Air B + B ● ●

Lack of commercial (Temporary) Rentals, Hotels, Motels

Keep current lot size - Less dense based on area ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Gravel Pit - What development planned when they leave ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Cluster Developments





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3M

BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS

NO ROUND-ABOUTS

TI

DOG PARKS

PARK CONNECTIONS / PATHWAY

ROAD LEGAL GOLF CARTS

NO 5G TOWERS

WATER QUALITY TESTING

MOVE POWER LINES UNDERGROUND

LIMITED SEWERS FOR DEVELOPMENT
BUSINESS

~~BETTER~~ SPEED LIMIT CONTROL

BETER STORM WATER MANAGMENT

ALT. WAY TO MAINTAIN RDS
MILFORD DWP MAINTAIN HIGHWAY
SPEED BUMP "SLOW DOWN"

~~SEWERS~~ - YES
WATER MAINS

TRAFFIC SPEED



PUBLIC TRANSIT-EXPANSION
TOWNSHIP HELP W/SUBDIVISION
ROADS

~~TRAIL SY~~

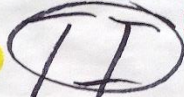
PATHWAY TRAIL SYSTEM

E.V. CHARGING

INTERNET - HI SPEED

PAVE ~~LONG~~ TREE ROAD

DUCK LAKE ROAD - PAVE NORTH
END

DAVISTA DRIVE - PAVE 

• BIKE PATH NEAR ROADS

• TRAFFIC CONGESTION

SPEED LIMIT WHITE LAKE RD ^{BETWEEN}
_{HAVEY LAKE}

MAINTAIN EXISTING ROAD

SIDEWALK TO MILFORD HIGH ^{BEYOND}

• CELL TOWERS - BETTER LOOKING
SIDEWALKS AT EXIST. ^{"TREES"} DEVELOPMENT

SEWERS - NO

CHANGE ROAD TO MATCH SPEED
SENIOR RIDE SHARE LIMITS



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3M

BUSINESS

* BE APPEALING TO FAMILIES

* KEEP RURAL AREA'S

* MAKE SURE BUILDINGS LOOK
AND HAVE MORE CONTINUITY.

- MORE TREES / STREET SCAPE

- SOFTEN / MORE GREEN SCAPE IN FRONT OF BIZ.

* LESS COMMERCIAL GROWTH.

* NO HOTEL.

* BETTER COMMERCIAL
IN HISTORIC DIS.

* NO SHORT TERM RENTAL

BUSINESS

- * MAINTAINING Rural AREA'S
- * LESS commercial growth / LESS RESIDENTIAL
- * LESS Crowded Keep SMALL TOWN CHARM
- * FARM BASED BIZ (Agg BASED)
MORE ORGANIC
- * Home BASED BIZ
- * More Farmers Markets.
- * MORE MEDICAL / HEALTH CARE.
- * RACE track / REC Vehicles
- * MAINTAIN township Character By Minimizing
Development
Both Res / & comm.

BUSINESS

- * DEFINE Downtown A Little Better
- * CONFINE Business to Downtown & Duck 1K and M. 59
- * FOOD trucks? (Little food truck area)
- * No Sewers
- * Township Buy old middle school property
- It would be good downtown center
- * PATHWAY to library AREA.
- * SMALL markets / Farmers Markets

Business

- * LET White Hk & Hartland Keep Expanding Not Highland
- * NEW Good Dining !!
- * S.E corner M59 milford development
- * MORE FARMERS MARKETS
- * MORE COFFEE SHOPS / RESTAURANT
BUT NOT A CHAIN.
- * NO Big Box. / WE are fine.
~~DRAG~~ Driving to White Hk.
- * KEEP Agg Zoing AREAS
- * BETTER MEDICAL CARE AREA



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SUPERADHESIVAS BLOC DE HOJAS REPOSICIONABLES



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3M

INTEREST IN ACRES AGG
PROPERTY?

WATER RECREATION

- PUBLIC PARK

50% OK w/ MILEAGE TO BUY
REC. LAND

• PATH ACCESS TO HIGHLAND
OAKS

GENERAL SUPPORT FOR GREEN TECHNOLOGY

• KEEP POPULATION DENSITY LOW

BETTER MGT OF PARKS

NF

CONTROL INVASIVE SPECIES ●●●●●●

PATHWAYS BETTER MAINTAINED

POTENTIAL FOR NEW W. HIGHLAND PARK
ROBINSON PROPERTY SUPPORTED //

SUPPORT BIKE PATHS ●●●●●●

NO INTEREST IN GREEN BONDS

FEEL MORE SECURE IN TWP PARK VS STATE PARK

% USAGE OF TWP PARKS

INTER PARK CONNECTIONS ●●●●●●

HIGHLAND TRAIL MAPS ●

MORE PARKS ●

NF

TWP PURCHASE ABN
SCHOOL PROPERTY.

DEV. MORE PASSIVE REC.

PROMOTE USE OF PARK
FACILITIES

PARKS COMMITTEE ●
& USERS COUNCIL

NO MORE PARKS
DISC GOLF

BIKE ●
PATHS ●

CONN. TO EXIST
TRAILS

DISC / FRISBEE GOLF
●● PICKUP BALL COURT ●●
OTHER PLANNED USES

MILFORD RD BIKE PATH ●

● ZERO MITIGATION ●●●●●●●●

● WHY NO TREE ORDINANCE

LAND OWNER SOLD OFF

TRAILS TO TOPSOIL
CONNECT TO...
SESSION 3
100%

●
●
●
AS
RAJES



WHAT ARE OUR PARS • (N)
NO PROMOTED

HORSE TRAILS DISAPPEAR
(GRAVEL ROAD) ● ● ●
NEED INTERCONNECTING

● H.H GOLF COURSE IS
● ● ● VALUABLE PROPERTY AND
LOOSE

INTERCONNECTING SIDEWALK
PAY W/ TAX \$

SNOW MOBILE TEAMS
● PARS & REC COMMITTEES

• BETTER TRAIL MAINT. • (NF)

TWO TAKE A ROLE IN
GROUNDWATER QUALITY

REC. SPACE USE MASTER PLAN.
• USE PLAN •
ACCESS PLAN

• FINISH CHILL @ THE MILL

STATE LAND A PREVICEDGE

DOG POOP ISSUE @ PARKS
SOLVE W/ BAGS.

• NEED TWO DOG PARK