



**City of Rochester Hills
AGENDA SUMMARY
NON-FINANCIAL ITEMS**

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Legislative File No: 2005-0107 V8

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Ed Anzek, Director of Planning and Development, ext. 2572

DATE: July 24, 2006

SUBJECT: Request for Approval of the Master Land Use Plan Distribution Draft

REQUEST:

The request is for approval of the draft Master Land Use Plan for a 95-day distribution period to gather comments from the County and adjacent communities; and schools, required State agencies, and utility companies registered with the City of Rochester Hills. This is the first step in the Adoption process, which considers the regional impact of policies and actions made by our community, and ensures that we are in accord with the intentions of our neighboring communities and the region.

BACKGROUND:

In the fall of 2004, a Technical Committee was formed to begin the process of updating the City's Master Land Use Plan, an evaluation required every five years by State Law. The Committee included City Council and Planning Commission members, consultants from McKenna Associates, Inc., and Planning and Development Department staff members. They met on a continual basis, held public meetings and stakeholder forums, provided an on line survey, and put the drafts on the City's web site; all the while welcoming citizen input to help refine the plan and to incorporate identified policies, goals and objectives.

As the current developable land in the City is almost built out, the land use emphasis has shifted to those areas susceptible to change over the next five years. The components of natural features, economic base analysis and analysis of the residual parcels was done, and most importantly, the Plan reinforces the stability of neighborhoods. The Plan also prohibits expansion of commercial land – it does not permit commercial uses to expand beyond where they are currently located or zoned. However, the City needs to maintain a non-residential tax base and to keep nonresidential properties from becoming obsolete, and new tools are needed to deal effectively with new challenges.

The plan allows flexibility in permitted land uses for nonresidential use areas, and allows a mixture of compatible uses on existing nonresidential sites. These flexible business areas correspond to existing non-residential commercial areas. A goal of the City is to always require quality redevelopment to improve appearances of buildings with quality street presence, improved architecture and pedestrian accessibility. New in the updated Plan is a Regional Employment Center, which encompasses the SmartZone area. This area supports a range of light industrial, corporate offices and high tech development. Also new is a Landfill Planning area, which is intended to preserve parks and open space, and support uses that can improve the environmental situation. New overlay districts are proposed for properties in the business/flexible use and mixed residential areas. Mixed residential provides flexibility for infill parcels without a density increase, and would allow attached, cluster housing or single-family housing.

An implementation chapter is included which contains recommendations and a process for establishing priorities. Specific implementation tasks include zoning amendments, natural features updates, updating the floodplain map, adopting a steep slope ordinance, Clinton River riverbank restoration, establishing protected woodland areas, developing a comprehensive stormwater management program and encouraging LEED (green) building. Economic development has been identified as a area in the Implementation plan and includes establishing an Economic Development Committee, investigating relevance of the Olde Towne Corridor Study, promoting redevelopment of key corridors and commercial areas, developing the M-59 corridor as a premier office location, and establishing a business attraction program. Additionally, it was identified that historic districts and cultural resources should be designated, and the effort should begin to raise public awareness of historic districts.

The success of the Master Land Use Plan depends a great deal on the efforts to inform and educate the citizens about the Plan and the need for measures to implement the Plan. Every attempt has been made to include all interested parties and incorporate comments from residents, property owners and business owners. During the distribution period, an open house will be held on August 29, 2006 to gather further input, and a Public Hearing will be held regarding adoption of the Plan in late fall.

RECOMMENDATION:

The City’s consultant, McKenna Associates, Inc., presented the Distribution Draft at a joint Planning Commission and City Council meeting on June 27, 2006, at which the Planning Commission recommended approval to distribute the draft. It is further recommended by Staff and the Technical Committee that City Council approve the Distribution Draft of the 2005/2006 Master Land Use Plan.

RESOLUTION

NEXT AGENDA ITEM

RETURN TO AGENDA

APPROVALS:	SIGNATURE	DATE
Department Review		
Department Director		
Mayor		
City Council Liaison		