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Windsor Twp. visioning workshop plans growth

By **CHUCK WILLIAMS**
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DIMONDALE — With 30 percent growth possible in the next 15 years, concerned Windsor Township residents met April 16 to brainstorm futures for the township and village.

Whether the population grows to 8,000 by 2020 — as Tri-County Regional Planning Commission officials have projected — or not, growth is on the township's horizon. The six-square-mile township is minutes southwest of Lansing and on the border of the General Motors plant planned for 2006.

In opening the day-long workshop, titled "Creating a Vision for our Community," Windsor Charter Township Planning Commission Chair Arnoldo Martinez said the event has been in the planning stages for over a year.

Organizers sought a cross-section of township and village residents to

create a balanced snapshot of community wants and needs. The 65 attendees at the Capitol Center Complex workshop included township and village officials, citizens, farm and business owners. Their task was two-fold: craft a vision statement strong enough to lead the combined communities into the next 15 years and develop a series of strategic plans covering core needs.

Mike Chappell, Village of Dimondale president, said he was there because he was concerned about the future of Dimondale. And Art St. Clair, township supervisor, seated at a table with Chappell in the crowded room, said he was intent on listening to what the community wants.

By mid-day the group sent its first task, the vision statement, to the wordsmiths for fine-tuning and turned their attention to strategic planning for both communities. A vision statement expresses the purpose, work and values of

a group.

Under ground rules laid out by facilitator Mona Ellard, both the township and village were to be treated as a combined community during the workshop.

Strategic planning in the afternoon session resulted in sets of suggestions, extending out five, 10 and 15 years, for recreation, safety, open space, housing, health, environment, green space, infrastructure, business, education and library needs. Ellard emphasized people were there to plan for the future. "You have to plan beyond your tenure," she said.

In the wrap-up, Martinez recognized the group's hard efforts and said the workshop's combined results will next be compiled into a report for a June planning commission meeting with copies going to township and village officials. A summary will be posted to the Web and available at village and township offices.



Photo by Chuck Williams

VISIONING — Mona Ellard, Cy Abdo, Mike Chappell, Arnoldo Martinez, Art St. Clair and Denise Parisian confer at the April 16 workshop.