DELTA COUNTY
2019 MASTER PLAN

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the many stakeholders who invested their time and expertise in the creation of this Master Plan. Listed below are the members of the Delta County community and leadership who advised the direction and content of this plan.

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PLAN FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

OVERVIEW

In 2019, Delta County initiated the process to update its master plan. The Delta County Master Plan update aims to build upon the County's previous planning documents to design a guide for future development by evaluating existing conditions, public input, and regional and national trends. The Plan provides a guide for development and land-use patterns, identifies important and potentially transformative projects, and aligns resources to address growth and improve the Delta County community's quality of life. The comprehensive plan is a document by which all future policy and budgetary decisions should be evaluated.

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

Comprised of goals, strategies, actions, maps, and tables, the Master Plan guides the physical, social, and economic development of the County, as well as guides city officials, residents, and public and private entities as they make land use and development decisions. This plan is not intended to overrule local planning initiatives, but to support and provide greater context for those jurisdictions' plans. The Plan will be implemented over time, through many decisions including annual budgeting, departmental work programs, re-zonings, and subdivision of land.

In addition to local Master Plan's, this Master Plan will help guide and inform County staff and officials during:

- The administration and revision of zoning and subdivision regulations;
- The location and classification of streets and thoroughfares;
- The location and construction of public and semi-public buildings and related community facilities including water, storm and sanitary sewer, and gas, among others;
- The acquisition and development of public and semi-public properties such as parks, trails, and open spaces;
- The preparation of annual work programs, budgets, capital improvement plans, and economic incentives; and
- Discussions with residents and private developers.

The Master Plan will also guide and inform private entities:

- As they make land use and investment decisions;
- On the long-term goals of the community as they relate to land use and development; and
- On the desired character of development including businesses and neighborhoods.

PLAN ELEMENTS

Many elements come together within the Plan to create a holistic and informed blueprint for future growth and development. These plan inputs were established from quantitative and qualitative analyses, alongside public engagement, and include the following:

Existing Conditions

Area conditions considered include current trends, demographics, housing, economics, community health, parks and open space, zoning, and land use. Additionally, recent planning efforts including the existing Master Plan, were evaluated and incorporated into the Plan Update recommendations. With an understanding of the existing conditions, the planning team and County leadership were equipped with the knowledge to make informed decisions and goals during the planning process.

Best Practices and Trends

The existing condition of Delta's land use, demographics, and other characteristics were viewed through the lens of relevant local, regional, and national trends. These trends were used to paint a broader picture of the future of Delta County, anticipating market demand for particular uses, changing population demographics, and shifts in housing preferences.

Public Engagement

Throughout the planning process, the planning team facilitated discussions amongst community members to delineate common direction and goals. Community issues and opportunities made apparent during discussions were used to formulate both general Plan objectives and targeted action steps.

FIGURE 1-1: PLAN INPUTS

ASSESSING...
Existing conditions throughout Delta County.

APPLYING...
Best practices and regional and national trends to Delta County.

ENGAGING...
With the Delta County community to create a vision for the future.

02

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Existing Conditions

OVERVIEW

This section is intended to lay a foundation for the Plan framework by providing insight on the current physical and social conditions within the County. This includes an examination of existing demographics, housing, economy, parks, trails, recreational space, mobility, zoning, land use, education, community health, and regional and national trends. An examination of these existing conditions helped to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement within the County. Building upon these conditions and trends helped to identify not only the wants and needs of current Delta County residents, but can also shine a light on the needs and preferences of future residents that the County may strive to attract.

PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

The Delta County Master Plan aims to build upon existing and previous planning efforts of both the County and municipalities within, including the current County Master Plan. The current Plan was originally adopted in 1996. In addition to updating the Plan in fulfillment of new state guidelines, this document aims to consider current plans for all municipalities to create one updated, comprehensive vision for the future of Delta. Understanding prior planning efforts, successes, and challenges helps create a feasible Plan and ensures cohesion across implementation strategies.

PLANS OVERVIEW

- Bark River Township Master Plan
- City of Escanaba Master Plan
- City of Gladstone Master Plan
- Delta County Master Plan (1996)
- Escanaba Township Master Plan
- Ford River Township Master Plan
- Masonville Township Master Plan
- Village of Garden Master Plan
- Wells Township Master Plan

CURRENT TRENDS

Overview

The Master Plan Update aims to align Delta County's vision and strategies for the future with recent local planning efforts as well as national and regional trends in demographics and housing. While the trends do not provide absolute projections for the future of Delta County, they may serve as a guide to better understand local data and to highlight external forces that may impact development and land use outcomes in the County.

Shifting Demographics

Particularly relevant to Delta County, are the types and ages of households projected to populate communities across the country in the coming decades. According to national trends, baby boomers and millennials will represent the majority of growth and currently account for roughly 45% of the nation's population.

Additionally, households without children, which may or may not include the aforementioned population groups, have proportionately grown over the last 50 years (see Table 2-1). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey estimates, between 2010 and 2017, the number of households with children under the age of 18 has decreased 12% (from 29% in 2010 to 25% in 2017).

Households without children, including retired seniors, require different public services, community amenities, and housing and transportation accommodations compared to families with children. Access to employment, restaurants, and health and human services may be prioritized by these populations over proximity to education or childcare facilities. These shifting demographics will have a tremendous impact on traditional single-family neighborhoods, with homes arranged around central schools.

TABLE 2-1: National Household Types

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	1970	2000	2015	2030
With Children	45%	33%	28%	27%
Without Children	55%	67%	72%	73%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2016)

The "Missing Middle" serves to accommodate shifting household structures and changing housing preferences.

TRENDS KEY FINDING

From 2010 to 2017, there has been a 12% increase in households in Delta County *without* children.

Housing Preference

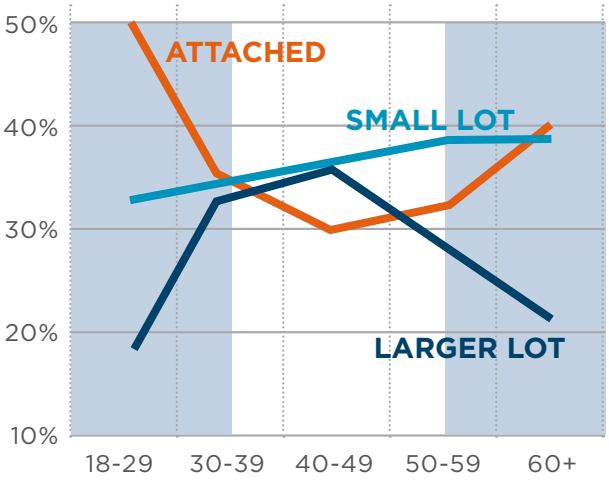
The population groups projected to grow — millennials, baby boomers, and households without children — show a preference for attached housing and smaller lot sizes which provide less maintenance and more walkability than traditional single-family housing (Figure 2-1). As a community with ample space for new residential construction, it is imperative that Delta County considers these changes in housing preference when reviewing future residential development.

To better accommodate millennials, baby boomers, and households without children, some cities are focusing on construction of missing middle housing such as townhomes, duplexes, and condos. Development of the "missing middle" housing aims to address changing household structures and shifting housing preferences by providing medium to high density options which strike a balance between detached single-family homes and high-rise buildings. The "missing middle" can help create walkable neighborhoods and serve as an entry-point for new residents to move into communities. These residents may eventually invest in the purchase of a Delta County home.

Walkability

Many of the housing trends identified in this section are closely associated with a desire for walkability. The majority of Americans would prefer to live in communities with small yards in which they can walk to amenities, as opposed to living in auto-oriented communities, with large yards (National Association of Realtors, 2015). Walkability encompasses a safe environment to walk in, as well as providing amenities to walk to such as parks, restaurants, employment, or entertainment. Therefore, walkability as a trend has implications on both infrastructure and land use.

FIGURE 2-1: Housing Preference by Age



Source: National Association of Realtors (2015)

PEOPLE

Delta County had a 2017 estimated population of 36, 395 people. This is a 3% decrease since the year 2010. This Plan considers the current demographic makeup of Delta County residents and the potential impact of regional and national trends on the future population, as well as opportunities for redevelopment which may better accommodate projected population growth.

Age

At 46.9, the median age of Delta County residents is lower than that of Alger County (49.3) and Menominee (48.0). In the short-term, the comparatively younger population presents an enhanced workforce opportunity. In the long-term, a large portion of Delta County's residents (37.6%) are between 30 and 59 years old, which will have fiscal and service implications as this cohort retires and ages.

Race & Ethnicity

Delta County, when analyzed for its cultural and racial diversity, is comparable to surrounding counties. Its population is 93.9% white, 1.9% American Indian, 0.3% black or African American, 0.4% Asian, 0.2% other, and 3.4% two or more races. Diversity generally was identified in the community survey as a component to both the existing and desired identity of Delta County, demonstrating its importance as a community asset.

Education

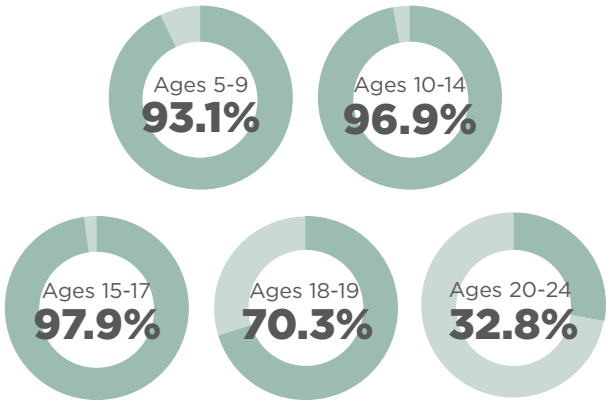
33.7% of Delta's population 25 years and older hold a high school degree, 13% hold an associates degree, and 14% hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Approximately 7,124 students enrolled in 8 public school districts, 358 students enrolled in 2 private schools, and 2, 230 enrolled in Bay De Noc College (*CUPPAD's County Economic Profile, 2010*). These enrollment counts reflect 2017 estimates showing an average of enrollment rate of 90% for ages 5-19. See (Figure 2-2) for enrollment rates.

Household Characteristics

Understanding the relationship of household members within the community helps to paint a more complete picture of the size and types of housing necessary to meet the needs of Delta County residents, as well as public services.

At 2.25, the average household size in Delta County is similar to other counties of the region. Approximately 31.4% of households are occupied by a single person and 16.6% of households are seniors living alone. The percentage of households which identify as families (two or more individuals related by blood or marriage) is 58.7%. The percentage of households in Delta County that have children, 25.3%, is slightly higher than comparable counties (18.3% in Alger County, and 23.1% in Menominee County).

FIGURE 2-2: School Enrollment



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2017 Estimates)

PEOPLE KEY FINDING

Diversity was identified by the community as a desirable and important asset to support now and in the future.

HOUSING

Tenure

The percentage of Delta County's housing units which are owner-occupied have not declined over the past decade, differing from national trends from the Great Recession. As referenced previously in this chapter, national trends indicate that aging baby boomers and changing preferences in housing type and community amenities is likely to continue to promote a mix in housing tenure.

Housing Type

As shown in Figure 2-3, Delta County's diversity of housing stock is comparable to nearby counties. Approximately 81% of housing units in the County are single-family detached homes. Providing a range in housing types can help support diversity in a community's households and businesses. Single-family detached homes generally support the functions of families with children and are available to those with the financial resources to purchase a home. Providing a range of housing sizes and styles can capture the needs of population groups lacking subsequent housing supply including: multi-generational households, non-families, seniors living alone, immigrants, single-parent households, or young professionals. Additionally, a diverse economy requires diverse housing for the range of employee incomes, preferences, and lifestyles which different companies provide or attract.

Housing Age

The median year built of housing structures in Delta County is 1966, is the same as Alger County and 1973 in Menominee County. The majority of the County's housing (54%) was built before 1969. The aging housing stock is characterized by a lack of modern amenities, which can make it less desirable to modern home buyers and renters. However, the lack of recent construction provides a market opportunity for new residential development and historic home renovation.

Housing Value

Likely in part due to its age, the median home value in Delta County is comparable to Alger County and Menominee County's home values. More than half of the County's owner-occupied housing is valued over $149,999. New residential development should aim to accommodate a range a price points in addition to a variety of types and styles.

Market Implications

The existing condition of housing in Delta County and the projected demographic and population changes for the region have important implications for the future of housing in the County. Median rents in Delta County are presently on par with similar counties in the area.

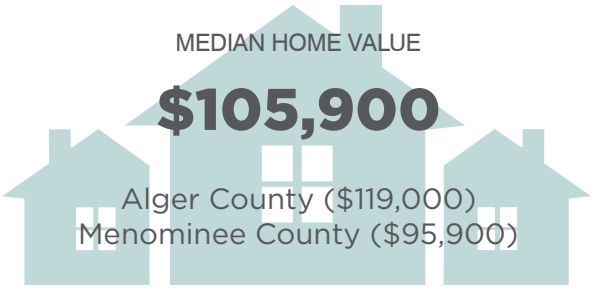
HOUSING KEY FINDING

A lack of diversity in housing type and aging structures present an opportunity for reinvestment to cater to the changing population.

FIGURE 2-3: Housing Type

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2016)

FIGURE 2-4: Median Home Value



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2017 Estimates)

ECONOMICS

Current Workforce

With a strong manufacturing base, averaging nearly 14%, the largest employer in the County is Verso, maker of coated publishing paper. Other top industries include educational services, health care, and social assistance at 24% and retail trade at 14% of the total industry in Delta County.

Out of a total labor force of 16,967 Delta County residents (56.7% of the population 16 years and over), 52.9% are employed. The 2017 unemployment rate for the civilian labor force is 6.5%.

The largest occupation in the County is management, business, science, and arts occupations at 28% of the civilian employed population 16 years and over. The second largest occupation at 23%, is sales and office occupations, followed by production, transportation, material moving occupations, and service occupations.

Innovation for the Future Workforce

Future jobs and talent the County may hope to attract, will likely require advanced technology and infrastructure. Much like businesses need to continuously adapt their practices to remain competitive, municipalities must work to ensure they can accommodate the evolving needs of industry. A planned approach to preparing for high-tech industrial and world-class office space includes responding to technology demands on public utilities, infrastructure, and services.

Fiber optic networks are increasingly being used as an economic development strategy by municipalities. A well-connected network provides high-quality access to fast and reliable communications. It also ensures all residents have reliable Internet access, improving the overall standard of living and decreasing barriers to economic mobility.

Different strategies are being used around the country to install fiber optic networks county and citywide. Some are municipally owned and operated while others are privately funded and operated under contracts with the locality.

ECONOMICS KEY FINDING

Smart technology, such as a fiber optic network, can strengthen the County's ability to support new and changing businesses and attract businesses that retain a highly educated workforce, including existing residents in the County.

NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & OPEN SPACE

Access to parks, open space, and trails contributes to the quality of life of a community and affects its marketability to potential employers and residents. The Trust for Public Land, the National Recreation and Park Association, and the Urban Land Institute recommend park space within a 10-minute walk for all residents.

The County has 211 miles of Great Lakes shoreline, 514 miles of rivers/streams, nearly 6,000 acres of inland lakes and ponds, and nearly 310,000 acres of public recreation land. There are 3 major marinas, 4,855 registered watercraft, and two annual world-class sanctioned fishing tournaments. There are four championship golf courses and three nine-hole courses in the county. It is the outdoor enthusiast's paradise.

Delta County's current park system includes Pioneer Trail Park and Campground, Fuller Park and Campground, Sac Bay Park, Rapid River Falls Park, and the UP State Fair Grounds.

Abundant timber growth, lakes and streams, flat to gentle rolling topography, and a variety of wildlife have made Delta County rich in forestry and recreation. The land area in Delta County is 1,171.10 square miles. There are approximately 615,000 acres of forest land in Delta County consisting of the following ownership: 51% private, 37% federal and 12% state. Delta County contains more Lake Michigan shoreline than any other Michigan county. Within the county boundaries, there are 241 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline.

2019 RECREATION MASTER PLAN GOALS:

MISSION STATEMENT:
"It is the mission of the Delta County Parks and Campgrounds to provide safe, enjoyable, educational, cost effective and environmentally friendly public recreational opportunities for the residents of, and visitors to, Delta County."

1. **Build long-term financial stable base.**
2. **Timberland acquisition**
3. **Provide interpretive programs in the parks.**
4. **Improve and expand recreational opportunities.**
5. **Improve and expand camping facilities.**
6. **Create marketing program**

NATURAL RESOURCES KEY FINDING

Delta County's abundant natural resources and green spaces should be preserved and protected.

COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS

Healthy communities are measured through the standard quality of life that is driven by the municipal services available to residents. Strong municipal leadership that prioritizes citizen involvement helps to provide a basis for transparent, equitable access to quality spaces and programs that enrich the lives of all community members.

Delta County has one hospital, OSF St. Francis Hospital and clinic, Bellin Health. St. Francis Hospital includes a medical center, dialysis center, rehab center, ICU, home health, hospice, and several rural centers, cardiac with ER, and MRI center. While this is a strong health foundation for Delta County residents, gaps in healthcare services remain.

EDUCATION

Delta County has one community college, Bay de Noc Community College. Bay College offers many 2 year degrees, transfer, and 4 year degrees from Franklin University, Lake Superior State University, Northern Michigan University, and Phoenix University. The college also offers workforce development and training which provides customized business training across the Upper Peninsula.

Delta houses 8 public school districts and 2 private schools, with roughly 90% of the school-age population enrolled. According to the 2017 American Community Survey estimates, roughly 93% of ages 5-9 are enrolled, 97% ages 10-14, 98% ages 15-17, 70% ages 18-19, and 28% ages 20-24 are enrolled in school.

WELLNESS KEY FINDING

Delta has a strong foundation for community wellness through medical and educational resources. As the county grows, these resources must grow as well, offering services for the changing population

MOBILITY KEY FINDINGS

Transportation options should be expanded to fully accommodate all of Delta County's residents.

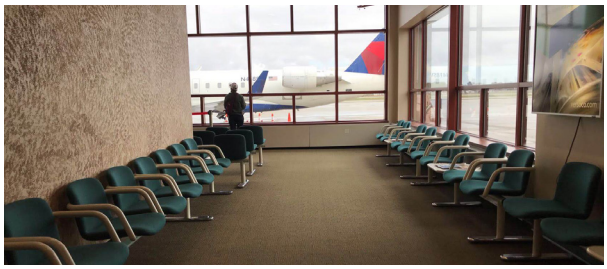
MOBILITY

Delta County is conveniently situated in Central U.P., with five major highways running through it. M - 35, M - 69, and M - 183 provide direct access to US interstates, while US - 41 and US - 2 serve important regional commercial and employment needs. In the future, changes in demographics, transportation preferences, and technology are likely to drastically impact how people and products move throughout the County.

Multi-modal Options

For a community to be truly accessible, people should have access to all modes of travel including walking, flying, marine, biking, rail, transit, and automobiles. Having multi-modal options is especially important to those who cannot drive, including those who are older, younger, or disabled.

The Delta County Airport (ESC) services both passengers and shipping transport. According to 2010 CUPPAD estimates, Delta County has 2 bus lines, 11 trucking companies, 6 delivery services, 2 taxi services, and 8 car and truck rentals. The county also is home to three deep water ports in Escanaba, Gladstone, and Wells. These are utilized for shipping of iron ore, coal, limestone, and bulk chemicals There is only on-demand transit options for residents in Delta County.



The Delta County Airport currently serves two flights in and out per day, seven days a week.

LAND USE & ZONING

Understanding the current land use pattern provides geographic context to the demographics in Delta County and visually tells a story about the character of the community, financial implications for the County and individual jurisdictions, transportation and infrastructure needs, and more. Analyzing the land use data will also help to build the framework for envisioning the future of growth and development in the County. In 1996, the existing Land Use Map was developed. While this countrywide land use distribution represents the 1996 Land Use Map, it has not been used in planning.

The following communities are not under Delta County's zoning jurisdiction, but are included in the map below: Bark River Township,Escanaba Township, Ford River Township, Masonville Township, City of Escanaba, City of Gladstone, and Garden Village.

LAND USE KEY FINDING

The majority of the land consisting of green space, it is designated by natural or conservation land. The majority of land is zoned for timber production, resource production, agricultural production, and open space.

FIGURE 2-5: COUNTY-WIDE LAND USE

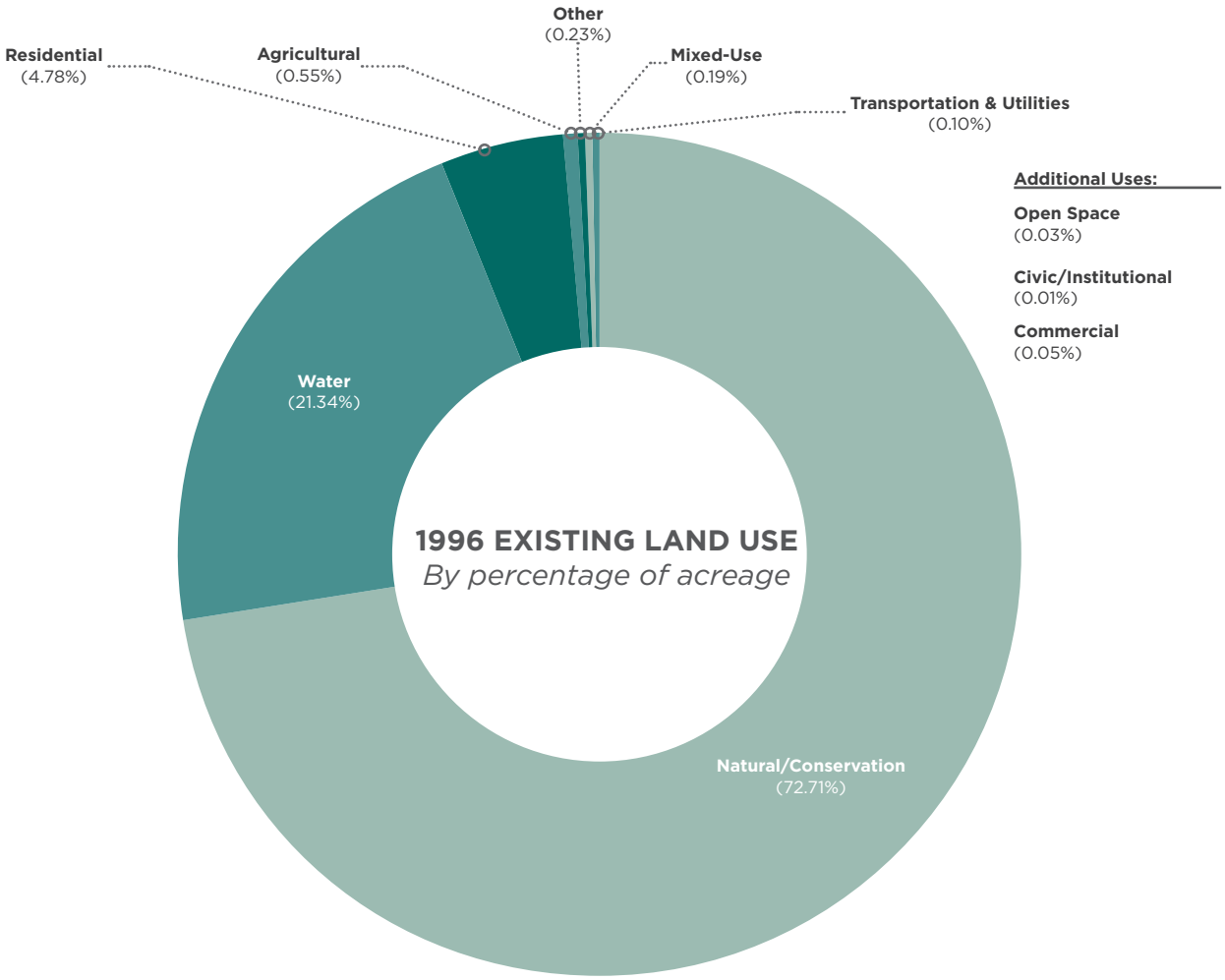
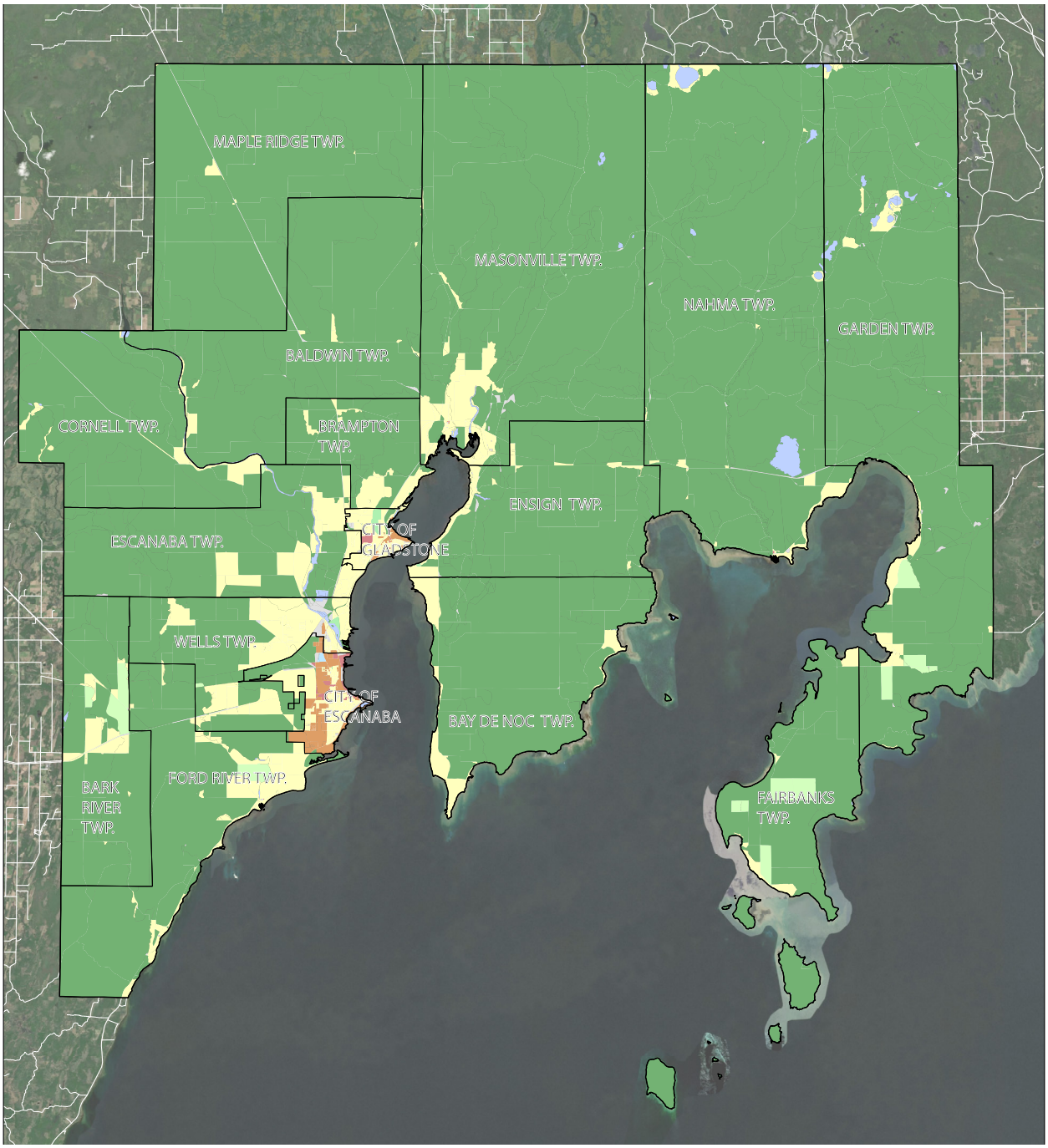
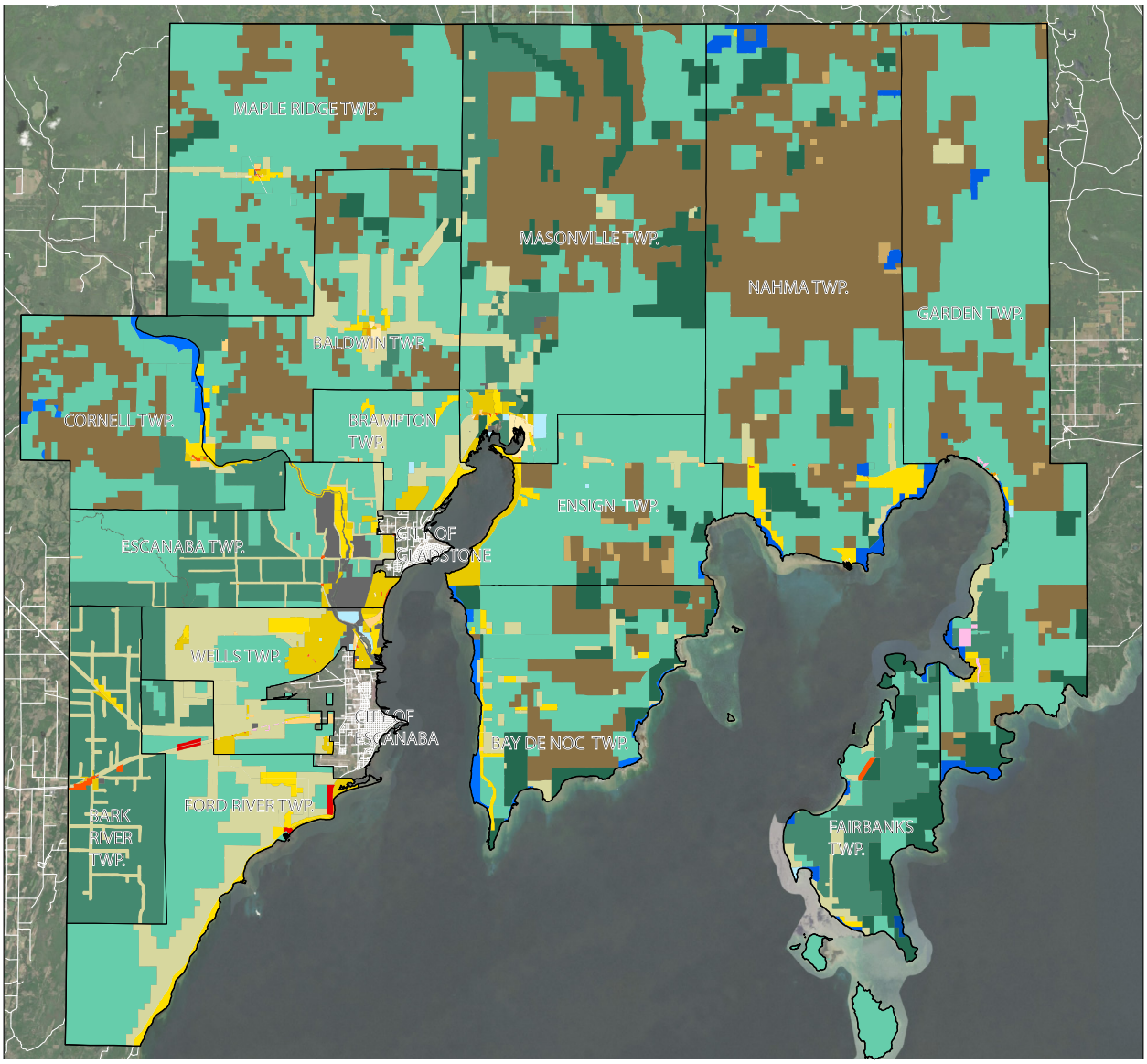


FIGURE 2-6: 1996 Existing Land Use



LEGEND					
	Agriculture		Natural/Conservation		Transportation/Utilities
	Civic/Institutional		Open Space		Water
	Commercial		Other		
	Mixed Use		Residential		

FIGURE 2-7: Zoning Map



LEGEND									
	Agricultural Production		Commercial 3		Lakefront Residential 2		Residential 2		Rural Residential
	Commercial		Cemetery		Open Space		Residential 3		Town Development
	Commercial 1		Industrial		Public/ Governmental		Residential 4		Timber Production
	Commercial 2		Lakefront Residential		Residential 1		Resource Production		Timber Production 2

ENERGY

Decisions regarding land use, transportation, and infrastructure all directly impact energy usage. There is a growing recognition of these impacts by municipalities across the United States, resulting in more and more communities choosing to plan for energy efficiency. Through efforts to mitigate negative environmental impacts and plan for a resilient economy, local governments are acknowledging the role energy plays in future development. By incorporating energy planning into the master planning effort, Delta County is taking a comprehensive approach to ensure a resilient future for all. The County's forward-thinking efforts should be applauded and viewed as positive example for communities across Michigan.

Planning for energy efficiency provides environmental, economic benefits, as well as preparedness for infrastructure issues and risk management. The EPA provides context on these strategic advantages, by providing the following description of benefits:

- Environmental Benefits: Increased efficiency can lower greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other pollutants, as well as decrease water use.
- Economic Benefits: Improving energy efficiency can lower individual utility bills, create jobs, and help stabilize electricity prices and volatility.
- Utility System Benefits: Energy efficiency can provide long-term benefits by lowering overall electricity demand, thus reducing the need to invest in new electricity generation and transmission infrastructure.
- Risk Management: Energy efficiency also helps diversify utility resource portfolios and can be a hedge against uncertainty associated with fluctuating fuel prices.

This is the first step in planning for resiliency and energy in Delta County. The consideration of energy in the Master Plan allows the leaders and community members to recognize the potential of the benefits and understanding of Delta County's energy baseline. After adoption of the Plan, the County is encouraged to pursue further energy planning efforts outlined in the Plan's goals, objectives, and actions.

Total Energy Use in Delta County

The total annual electricity and gas energy use in Delta County is 2.91 trillion British thermal units (BTU). 2.02 trillion BTUs can be attributed to residential usage, while only 0.89 trillion BTUs can be attributed to commercial usage. The following figures show the total annual energy use and break this consumption down by annual electricity use and annual gas use by commercial and residential.

Electricity and natural gas use are calculated on the basis of energy use rates: per dwelling unit by residential type, and per square foot for commercial floor area. This data was collected through the EIA Residential Energy Consumption Survey (RECS)1 and Commercial Building Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS) datasets and analyzed through UrbanFootprint software. This analysis is run on the census block scale.

FIGURE 2-8: Total Annual Energy Use

Electricity and gas consumed in BTUs (trillions)

FIGURE 2-9: Annual Electricity Use

Kilowatt-hours (millions)

FIGURE 2-10: Annual Gas Use

Therms (millions)

Community Input

FOCUS GROUPS

OVERVIEW

As a part of the project kick-off, a series of focus group interviews were held to gather information on key topics relevant to the Master Plan. The first focus group interview session was held on the morning of May 7, 2019, and the last session ending the next day. The following groups were assembled:

1. Economic Development
2. Education
3. Healthcare
4. Parks, Trails & Recreation
5. Forestry & Agriculture
6. Elected & Appointed Officials

MEETING FORMAT

Each meeting began with an icebreaker, which asked focus group members their favorite spot within Delta County. The following were the top answers amongst all of the groups:

- Gladstone Park
- Fayette Park
- Ludington Park
- Escanaba Marina
- Hiawatha National Forest
- Fishing on the lake
- Pier in Gladstone
- Penninsula Point
- Lakefront/On the water
- Stonington Peninsula
- Days River Trail
- Portage Point
- Nahma Area
- Ford River
- Fuller Park

Each focus group then discussed what they felt were the top challenges and opportunities within Delta County, which were captured on a flip chart. Challenges included pressing issues that the County is currently facing, and opportunities included things that are going well on a county-wide level and areas for improvement. The following section recaptures the discussion at focus group session.

WHAT WE HEARD

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The economic development focus group was the first session held on May 7, 2020. The following items were determined to be the top challenges in Delta County from an economic development perspective:

- Skilled employee attraction and retention
- Coordination of mental healthcare services and facilities
- Coordination of infrastructure improvements, specifically on:

  - » Rail
  - » Airport
  - » Roads
  - » Public transportation
  - » Deep water ports
  - » High-speed internet
- Aging population
- Coordination between local leadership
  - » Need to share vision
  - » Need to support each other
  - » Opportunity to collectively develop solutions
- Resistance to change
- Diversity in leadership
- Industry diversification
  - » Need to plan for a gap in generational management
- Cost of government mandates (ie. Lead and Copper Rule, redevelopment of brownfields, etc.)
- Maintaining a commitment to energy efficiency in new construction
- Lack of missing-middle housing

The following items were determined to be the top opportunities within Delta County:

- Promote and build on Early Middle College program
- Promote Bay College and workforce training and development as an asset
- Development lakefront to include the following:
  - » Housing
  - » Retail
  - » Public/gathering spaces
- Market area through the following platforms:
  - » Social media
  - » Outward messaging to both residents and potential residents
  - » High quality physical healthcare
- Recreational tourism efforts must have synergy with talent attraction - ideas include:
  - » Fishing tournaments
  - » Concerts
- Embrace immigrants, visitors, and new residents
- Build on momentum of growth in downtowns
- Build on strong base of social resources
- Use this Master Plan as a tool for grants and future investments

With over 2,000 students enrolled, Bay College is located in the northern portion of the City of Escanaba

- Expand high-speed Internet infrastructure

EDUCATION

The education focus group was the second session held on May 7, 2020. The following items were determined to be the top challenges in Delta County from an education perspective:

- Transportation challenges, including:
  - » Roads in poor condition
  - » Busing shortages
- Decreasing overall enrollment numbers and skilled trades enrollment
- Need for talent
- Socioeconomic challenges, related to:
  - » Family instability
  - » Substance abuse
  - » Mental health
- Declining population and employment rate
- Funding (specifically, a millage)
- Diversity of learning styles and needs in Delta County
- Lack of social and political support for public education
- Internet availability for online classes in rural areas
- Adult literacy

The following items were determined to be the top opportunities within Delta County:

- Build upon staff willing to step outside of their dedicated roles to further community togetherness
- Improve communication with parents and the community at large
- Hold open meetings to showcase opportunities (aimed at businesses and community)
- Promote academic opportunities, specifically:
  - » Trade or college
  - » Connection to local businesses
- Increase and promote incentives for teachers, specifically:
  - » Provide housing, such as missing-middle and rental housing
- Support teacher loan forgiveness opportunities
- Increase access to higher education through partnerships with K-12, ISD, and businesses

HEALTHCARE

The healthcare focus group was the third session held on May 7, 2020. The following items were determined to be the top challenges in Delta County from a healthcare perspective:

- Lack of mental health services available
- Transportation issues, specifically:
  - » Public transportation to access services
  - » Access to critical care outside of the County
  - » Diversity and time limitations of transit services to mental health providers
  - » Access to specialty healthcare services
  - » Weather Impacts
- Substance abuse and impact on children
- Talent needed, specifically:
  - » Substance abuse providers
  - » Mental health providers
  - » Oral health providers
- Culture (overall approach to health and wellness in the community)
- Aging population (growing 65+ population)
- Residents that cannot afford medication or healthy food options
- Compromised access to community wellness and health facilities due to size and rural nature of the County
- Lack of broadband for tele-medicine
- Funding for behavioral health

The following items were determined to be the top opportunities within Delta County:

- Improve the strong primary care base by leveraging resources
- Build on the existing strength of communication and participation among medical competitors
- Build on the demand for healthcare, due to an aging population
- Promote the following recreational opportunities to attract talent:
  - » Cycling
  - » Fishing
  - » Sailing
  - » Diversity in food choices
  - » Retail
  - » Art/culture/music
  - » Golf courses
- Strengthen accessibility through the following assets:
  - » Airport
  - » Highway
  - » Emergency transportation
- Promote the excellent quality of life and low cost of living conditions in the County to attract talent
- Develop higher-end apartments to attract talent
- Highly trained emergency responders
- Utilize Delta County's strong education base
  - » Accelerated programs
  - » Bay College

PARKS, TRAILS & RECREATION

The parks, trails, and recreation focus group was the fourth session held on May 7, 2020. The following items were determined to be the top challenges in Delta County, from a parks, trails, and recreation perspective:

- Funding for new recreational facilities
- Access to current recreational facilities, specifically:
  - » Lack of non-motorized access to current amenities
  - » Lack of motorized access due to condition of infrastructure, particularly rural roads

- Need for additional parks and campsites
- Lack of biking and walking paths connecting to public parks and YMCA facilities
- Competing visions and differencing opinions on the creation of new facilities, including:
    - » Forest development opportunities and ownership of adjacent property
    - » Competing recreational uses (ie. Water sports and fishing)
- Shortage of available labor during the Summer months
- Lack of education on availability of public land and parks in terms of marketing and signage
- DNR management of "game" for fishing and hunting
- The lakeshore was historically used for industrial purposes, so its difficult to redevelop for new uses
- Seasonal activation (especially during the winter months)
- Diversity in food, culture, and arts
- Underutilized recreational usage of parks, including hiking, biking, and snowshoeing, waterfront, and cross country activities

The following items were determined to be the top opportunities within Delta County:

- Hold a Pure Michigan Campaign for middle Upper Peninsula (U.P.)
- Market Delta County's experience of the U.P. and the Dark Sky
- Improve the following water access point with sustainability and preservation of natural resources in mind:
    - » Escanaba River – between Rock and the mouth of the Escanaba River
- Promote responsible tourism and sustainable growth (Attract tourism only to where it is wanted and needed)
- Isolated location
- Develop hotels in downtown locations to attract a different generation of travelers
- Increase proximity of recreational opportunities near residential areas
- Create or build on CUPPAD's non-motorized plan, with a focus on the following:
    - » Enhance connections from Gladstone to Escanaba
- Expand the use of the fairgrounds to better utilize the property
    - » Bring in a class-A rodeo
    - » Improve building conditions

ELECTED & APPOINTED OFFICIALS

The elected and appointed officials focus group was held on the evening of May 7, 2020. The following items were determined to be the top challenges in Delta County from the perspective of local leadership:

- Employee attraction and retention
- Availability of mid-range priced housing
- Geographic isolation
- Infrastructure, specifically Internet and cellular service
- Mental health and substance abuse
- Aging infrastructure
- Housing and transportation for aging population
- Quality of drinking water
- Protection of historic or scenic assets
- Economic impacts of infrastructure and development
- Lack of development along lakefront

The following items were determined to be the top opportunities within Delta County:

- Make Delta County a destination rather than a "pass-through" community
- Create a stop in the County along current cruise ship routes
- Expand and upgrade non-motorized trails and water trails
- Create places to "disconnect"
- Utilize Bay College for vocational opportunities
- Better utilize the U.P. State Fair Grounds
- Develop methods to retain youth in an effort to spur economic development
- Promote the creation of a passenger rail that travels through other public entities
- Diversify leadership throughout the County
- Rebuild Delta's fishing and hunting identity and opportunities

- Utilize Delta County's Airport for both tourism and commercial uses
    - » Expand flight services
    - » Promote Delta County's favorable weather to build upon the number of flights serviced
- Attract residents during Winter months by increasing year-round walkability

FORESTRY & AGRICULTURE

The forestry and agriculture focus group was the last session held on May 8, 2020. The following items were determined to be the top challenges in Delta County, from a forestry and agriculture perspective:

- Fragmentation of spaces and the need for productive forest land and farms
- Underutilized community college for vocational opportunities
- Climate change
- Attraction and retention of young persons
- Education on importance of forestry and agriculture
- Promotion of trails and waterfront as a destination
- Industry that uses locally-sourced resources and processes locally
- Conditions of roads and bridges due to high weight loads
- Local financial and educational support of agriculture and the promotion of locally-grown foods (especially geared toward the younger generation, who values understanding where their food is sourced)
- Aging population
- Student financial literacy
- Education on proper forest management to eliminate common misconceptions on clear-cutting (i.e. Mead Plant)
- Undervalued farm land
- Antiquated zoning
- Bio-diversity in long term planning as opposed to production only
- Invasive species

The following items were determined to be the top opportunities within Delta County:

Elected and appointed officials reviewed and provided edits to the draft community survey

- Expand current broadband services
- Convert land zoned TP (Timber production) into RP (Resource Production) which allows for a greater range of uses
- Incorporate agriculture in the schools through creative partnerships
- Convert expired farm land to forestry
- Strategically improve road condition in areas to support new forestry or agriculture development
- Develop a deep-water port to support a new mill
- Industry diversification to ensure sustainability in the health of the economy
- Pursue agro-tourism
- Increase tourism through promotion of diversity of natural resources
- Increase renewable energy developments (specifically solar and wind)
- Capitalize on the low cost of living for promotion of agricultural opportunities
- Develop a mill dedicated to softwood harvesting and selling

FOCUS GROUP KEY FINDINGS:

Throughout all of the focus group, a number of key topics emerged. The following statements reflect the majority's thoughts on these topics:

MENTAL HEALTH & COMMUNITY WELLNESS:
Delta County has a strong healthcare base that is viewed as a primary asset. While the system is strong, there is an opportunity to increase and strengthen specialized care and mental health care services and facilities.

TALENT RETENTION & ATTRACTION:
With an understood outward migration of Delta's youth, there is a concern for a loss in talent. There is a need to both retain youth and attract new talent through a variety of avenues, including tourism, new housing, and marketing of the County's assets.

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM:
There is an understanding that increasing tourism efforts to attract visitors, will have positive economic impacts and help to attract talent. On the other hand, the rural nature and "quietness" is what makes Delta special. Tourism efforts must enhance the well-being of Delta's current residents, while mitigating any negative social and environmental impacts.

DIVERSITY:
In this context, diversity is a broad concept ranging from diversity in population and leadership, to diversity in industry. There is an understanding that Delta County is rich in natural resources, and must diversify its economy in order to stay economically competitive. For this same reason, the County's population must diversify.

INFRASTRUCTURE:
With a reliance on roads, technology, and water infrastructure for advancement, the County must work to maintain and expand it's current infrastructure system. Expansion and improvements should occur in areas that are geographically isolated and exist as gaps in the infrastructure network.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

OVERVIEW

Two community meetings were held in November and December of 2019 at Bay College and the Garden Township Community Center. Two locations and times provided the residents and stakeholders of Delta County the opportunity to attend and provide feedback. A presentation was given explaining the project's purpose and process, followed by an open house format. The participants provided feedback on the draft goals, objectives, and strategies, as well as the Future Land Use Map. The meetings also provided the opportunity to ask questions and engage with the project team.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

OVERVIEW

The Delta County Community Survey was developed to gauge current perceptions on identity and issues and opportunities in the County as well as begin to understand what services and characteristics might be priorities for the County. Just under 1,000 people took the Community Survey. The following is a summary of survey results.

WHO DID WE HEAR FROM?

The majority of respondents resided in the City of Escanaba or Escanaba Township and are home owners. There was considerable diversity in gender and age. The following figure provides a breakdown, representing the respondent pool.

65% Female

22% Ages 25 - 34 and 21% Ages 35 - 44

75% Own a home

42% Have children under the age of 18 living in their household

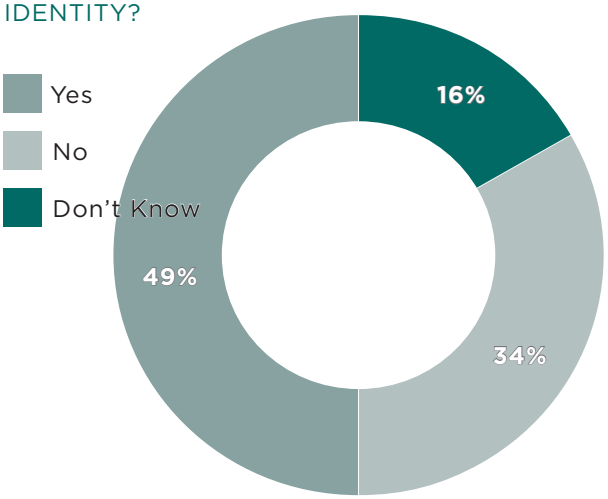
35% from City of Escanaba, 25% from Escanaba Township, and 14% from Wells Township

47% have lived in Delta County for over 30 years

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

The majority of respondents felt that Delta County has a distinct identity and felt that the water and natural resources helped to define it. When asked what they would like it to be, there were many responses related to a family-friendly atmosphere, recreation opportunities, and tourism.

Q: DO YOU BELIEVE THE COUNTY HAS A DISTINCT IDENTITY?



Q: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE IDENTITY OF DELTA COUNTY?

"Waterfront. But it's not utilized enough!!!"

"Smaller towns with great access to lakes and many outdoor activities."

Q: WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE THE IDENTITY OF DELTA COUNTY TO BE?

"I would like it to be more family orientated. Not many places to do things with children."

"A great place to visit for vacation and outdoor activities"

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

When asked what they felt the greatest challenges and opportunities were in the County, many felt that economic conditions, healthcare, and affordability were an issue. On the other hand, many felt that the natural resources and recreational opportunities could be built upon.

Q: WHAT IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE FACING DELTA COUNTY?

"Jobs (well paying) industry growth"

"Drugs and mental health help"

"Activities for families, affordable housing"

Q: WHAT IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY FOR DELTA COUNTY?

"The land and water."

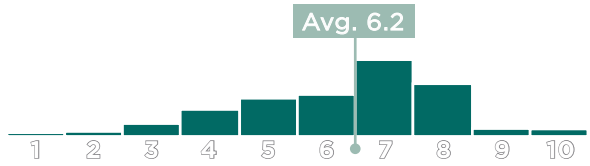
"great place to raise kids"

"Tourism"

COUNTY DIRECTION

Respondents felt that the quality of life in Delta County was a 6.2 out of 10, on average. They are most satisfied with the overall beauty of the county and emergency services. Respondents also said that protecting and conserving natural resources was most important to focus on over the next 20 years.

Q: ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 10, WHERE 1 IS EXTREMELY LOW AND 10 IS EXTREMELY HIGH, HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN DELTA COUNTY?



Q: ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 10, WHERE 1 IS NOT AT ALL SATISFIED AND 10 IS EXTREMELY SATISFIED, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE FOLLOWING SERVICES AND CHARACTERISTICS?

Service/Characteristic	Avg. Rating
Overall beauty of the County	7.6
Emergency services	7.3
Public parks	6.9
Education	6.4
Quality of life	6.2
Multipurpose trails	5.8
Property maintenance within the County	5.5
Tourism	5.3
Health and wellness	5.1
County-wide communication efforts	5.0
Mental health services	3.9
Road conditions	3.5

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Q: USING A SCALE OF 0 TO 5, WITH 0 BEING EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT AND 5 BEING EXTREMELY IMPORTANT, PLEASE RATE HOW IMPORTANT EACH OF THE FOLLOWING FACTORS IS FOR DELTA COUNTY TO FOCUS ON OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS.

Factor	Avg. Rating
Protect and conserve natural resources	4.4
Maintain and improve infrastructure	4.3
Redevelopment of existing properties	4.2
Expand new industrial and manufacturing	4.0
Improve access to schools, parks, and public spaces	3.9
Develop the lakefront	3.8
Increase density of development downtown	3.7
Add new commercial, retail, and office	3.5
Increase diversity	3.5
Add new housing	3.2

Q: USING A SCALE OF 0 TO 5, WITH 0 BEING EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT AND 5 BEING EXTREMELY IMPORTANT, PLEASE RATE HOW IMPORTANT EACH OF THE FOLLOWING HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS ARE WHEN THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE RESIDENTIAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

Factor	Avg. Rating
Affordability to owner/renter	4.7
Energy efficiency	4.0
A range of housing options for all residents in different stages of life	3.9
Proximity to schools	3.5
Proximity to parks	3.4
Proximity to commercial amenities	3.3
Proximity to agricultural or forest land	3.1
Large lots	2.9
Opportunity for development on agricultural or forest land	2.7

03

FUTURE LAND USE

Future Land Use

OVERVIEW

The future land use plan applies public input, existing conditions research, and trends in planning and development to provide both broad and specific recommendations to guide future development. The land use map helps define where and how growth or redevelopment should occur, including the location, distribution, and character of different land uses within Delta County. Feedback in all of these areas was gathered from the Focus Groups, County staff, and the community and incorporated into the land use recommendations. Therefore, the future land use plan is rooted in the vision and aspirations of the community and strives to meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses as well as contribute to the fiscal health of the County.

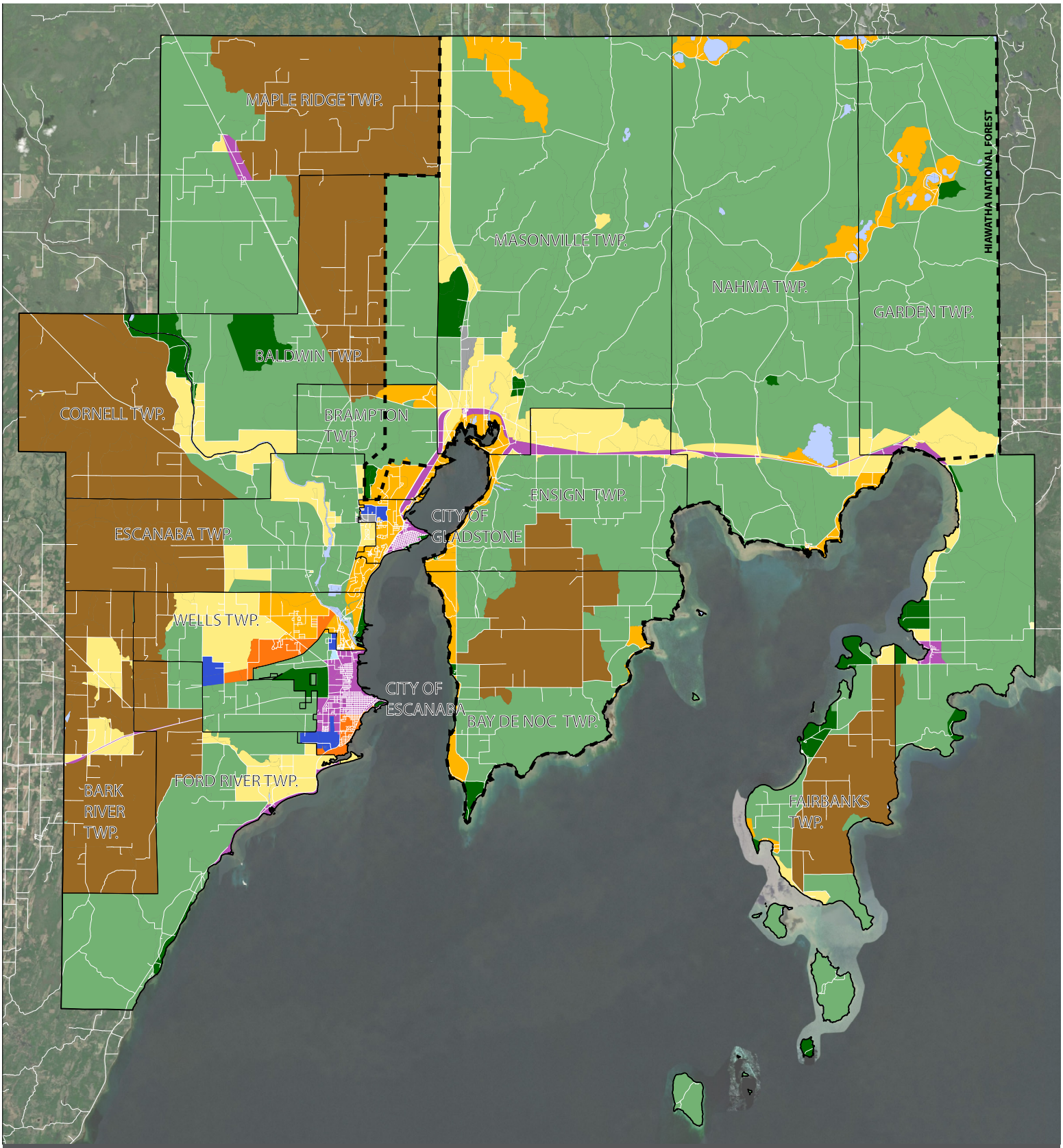
As part of this Plan, a Future Land Use Map and related Land Use Type descriptions have been created. As future land use changes are made, both the map and descriptions should be referenced to ensure land use decisions are in alignment with the intent of this Plan. When proposed land use changes are not in alignment, careful consideration should be given to whether that change should be granted.

LAND USE TYPES

The Future Land Use Map depicts nine Land Use Types. The Land Use Types offer enough detail to adequately provide guidance for future land use decisions, while remaining simple enough to create the needed flexibility for the built environment.

While the Future Land Use Map provides recommendations for the location of each Land Use Type, detailed descriptions of each are included on the following pages with key features and character images. These descriptions help one visualize how an area might look when recommendations from the Land Use Plan are applied.

FIGURE 3-1: Future Land Use Map



FUTURE LAND USE

	Industrial		Civic/Institutional		Mixed Use
	Resource Management		Urban Residential		Water
	Recreation		Semi-Rural Residential		
	Open Space/Preservation		Rural Residential		

RURAL RESIDENTIAL

Description

Rural Residential allows for single family homes that are clustered within a larger site to reduce land consumption and preserve natural features.

- **Development Intensity** in this area should be one dwelling unit per 10 acres. Higher net densities may be achieved, but overall density should not exceed one unit per 10 acres. Density bonuses may be considered for development that exceeds 50% open space dedication.
- **Open Space** should consist of 50-90% of the site and primarily include preservation areas where land has been restored to its natural state and sensitive features are protected. Recreational paths can be included within open space. Landscaping consisting of native plants that require little care and support a variety of habitats is encouraged.
- **Roadways** should have a rural character with narrow street widths and streetscapes that include trees and green stormwater infrastructure. Multimodal options including recreational paths may be included.

Development Character

Height	1-2.5 stories
Building Coverage	less than 50%
Front Setback	30 - 50+ ft
Parking	--
Intensity	1 dwelling / 10 acres (density bonuses may be considered, but shall not exceed 1 unit / 6 acres)
Principle Uses	• Detached Single Family Homes • Mobile Homes

SEMI RURAL RESIDENTIAL

Description

Semi-Rural Residential is characterized by a clustering of single family homes at a higher density compared to Rural Residential. These homes may also be located closer to mixed-use, along the waterfront, or near commercial development. Dwellings may also include seasonal or vacation homes.

- **Development Intensity** in this area should be one dwelling unit per 2 acres. Higher net densities may be achieved through open space dedication, as long as the overall density does not exceed one unit per 2 acres.
- **Open Space** should make-up at least 60% of the site and primarily include preservation areas where land has been restored to its natural state and sensitive features are protected. Recreational paths can be included within open space. Open spaces should be landscaped with native plants that require little care and support a variety of habitats.
- **Roadways** should have a neighborhood character, with narrow street widths and streetscapes that include trees, lighting, green stormwater infrastructure, etc. Recreational paths should be included and connect to nearby neighborhoods, schools, and parks.

Development Character

Height	40 ft
Building Coverage	less than 50%
Front Setback	10 -50 ft
Parking	--
Intensity	1 dwelling / 2 acres
Principle Uses	• Detached Single Family Homes • Vacation or Seasonal Homes

URBAN RESIDENTIAL

Description

Urban Residential is characterized by communities with a range of single family housing and multifamily options with on-site, shared amenities that are located near mixed-use or higher density development.

- **Development Intensity** in this area may vary from 2-10 units per acre. Walkable areas near major commercial centers may be better suited for higher densities while undeveloped, rural areas may be better suited for lower densities.
- **Open Space** should be incorporated within the site with each resident having access to a park or natural area within a quarter-mile. Preservation of natural features is highly encouraged as well as recreational paths that link to the larger network.
- **Architecture** should be distinct, with high quality, natural materials that create visual interest, especially if visible from the street. Traditional design elements including buildings that face the street, front porches, and windows on each elevation, along with well-planned and maintained landscaping is encouraged. Parking should be to the side or rear and screened from view.
- **Roadways** should promote walkability with short blocks and a lush streetscape, including street trees, green stormwater infrastructure, and lighting with narrow roadways and wide sidewalks. Multimodal options including recreational paths should be included and connect to nearby neighborhoods, schools, and parks.

Development Character

Height	1 - 3 Stories
Building Coverage	20-50%
Front Setback	0-30 ft
Parking	--
Intensity	2-10 units/acre
Recommended Uses	• Multi-Family and Single Residential

MIXED USE

Description

Mixed Use is characterized by a vertical and/or horizontal mix of uses that has high public and private realm features and materials, and is designed at a neighborhood and human scale to promote walkability and social interaction.

- **Development Intensity** in this area may range from 10 to 15 units per acre for residential and 20,000 to 40,000 square feet per acre for non-residential.
- **Open Space** should be highly connected and create both small and large places for people to gather including plazas, green lawns, and natural areas.
- **Architecture** should be eclectic and consist of high quality, natural materials. Buildings should be oriented to the street and facades should have character and ample windows to look onto the street and into public spaces. Signage that supports motorized and non-motorized users is important.
- **Roadways** should be narrow and incorporate "complete streets" that promote all modes of travel.

Development Character

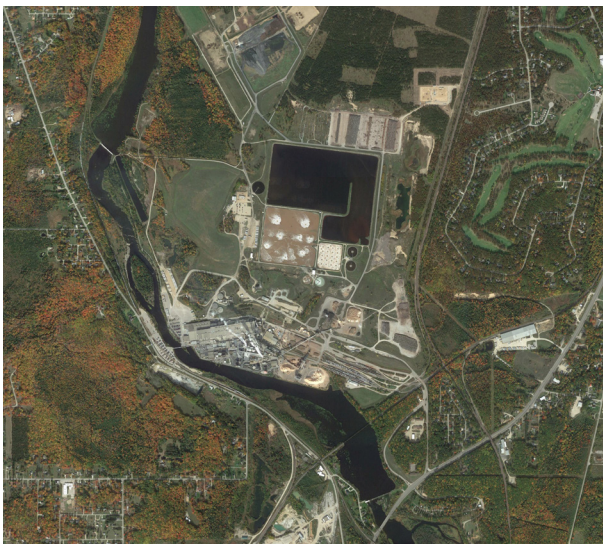
Height	1 - 3 Stories
Building Coverage	30-50%
Front Setback	0-20 ft
Parking	Rear/side of building; screen from view
Intensity	0-15 units/acre 20,000-40,000 sf/acre
Recommended Uses	• Retail • Office • Residential

INDUSTRIAL

Description

Industrial is intended for all industrial developments that require space for wholesale, warehousing, and clean manufacturing, packaging, repair and related office functions. These uses require buffering from incompatible uses such as residential homes.

- **Development Intensity** in this area may range from 10,000 to 30,000 square feet per acre.
- **Open Space** should be used to define and buffer operations from nearby residential, retail, and office uses and from the street. This could include small greens, lush vegetation, water features, etc. Recreational paths could also be incorporated into open space.
- **Architectural** elements should be distinct to the district. Buildings should face the street and windows and architectural details should be incorporated into all four sides. Parking should preferably placed to the side or rear and screened from view. Parking lots should include large landscaped islands that allow room for plant growth. The use of green stormwater infrastructure is encouraged.
- **Roadways** should allow safe travel for cars, trucks, and freight with consideration for roundabouts where appropriate. Branding signage may also be considered in this area.



Development Character

Height	1 - 3 Stories
Building Coverage	30-40%
Front Setback	0-50ft
Parking	Varies by use type
Intensity	10,000-30,000 sf/acre
Recommended Uses	• Industrial • Office

CIVIC/INSTITUTIONAL

Description

These areas are intended to accommodate public and semi-public uses. Buildings and land owned by the government, libraries, County emergency and service departments, religious uses, privately owned schools and universities, and the public school system share this development character. Such facilities should be well designed and integrated into their surroundings.

Pedestrian access is key on these sites and must be ADA accessible. Structures should be connected to pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the area, and enhanced crossings should be provided to ensure pedestrian safety. In larger institutional settings, parking that serves a greater area may be located at a further distance to preserve the pedestrian experience within the site, such as on a campus. Attractive landscaping, streetscape elements, and signage should be used to integrate larger sites into the existing street network.

Development Character

Height	1 -3 Stories
Building Coverage	30-40%
Front Setback	0-50 ft
Parking	Varies by use type
Intensity	50,000-100,000 sf/acre
Recommended Uses	• Institutional • Government Offices and Services • Parks & Open Spaces

RECREATION

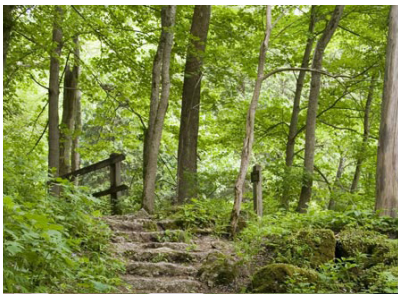
Description

Parks, trails, and open spaces are critically important for health and quality of life of local residents. The recreation district can include a variety of active and passive uses or activities including neighborhood parks, natural/conservation areas, golf courses, ball fields, campgrounds, and playgrounds. These facilities should be designed to reduce maintenance expenses to help ensure long term upkeep.

The existing park network should continue to be maintained and enhanced to meet the evolving needs of residents. Recreation spaces should be easily accessed by a variety of mobility options, include multi-generational activities, and provide environmental education opportunities. In more downtown settings such as mixed use areas, shared parking agreements with office and institutional uses may be appropriate to reduce the need for additional parking.

Development Character

Parking	Shared parking encouraged
Recommended Uses	• Parks • Recreation • Natural/ Conservation Areas



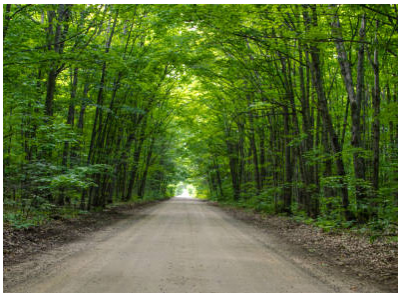
OPEN SPACE / PRESERVATION

Description

Open space allows for development while preserving lakes, streams, wetlands, nature features, and biodiversity. Historic landmarks and scening views are protected and considered important to the community. A significant portion of the area is protected as permanent open space. Building envelopes are sited to respect special natural features and preserve the quality and quantity of pen space. view sheds are protected by siting development to maintain a low visual impact.

Development Character

Parking	Shared parking encouraged
Recommended Uses	• Parks • Recreation • Natural/ Conservation Areas

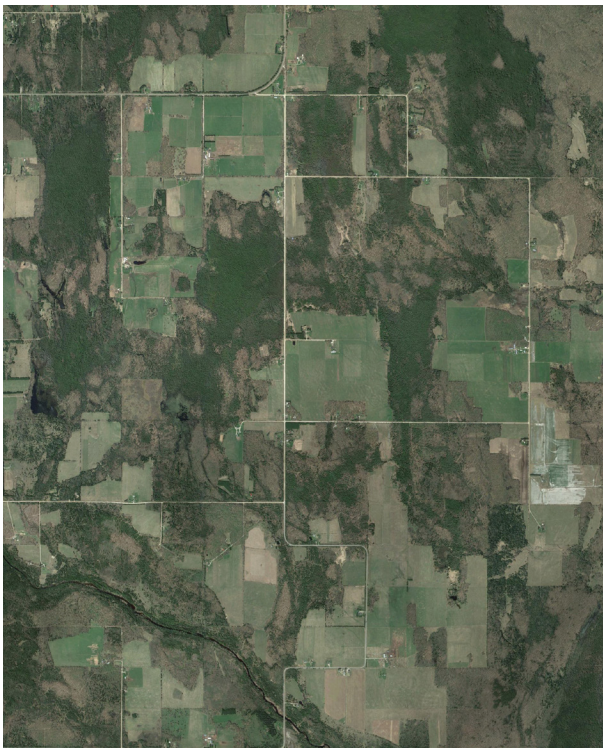


RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Description

Resource management includes all resource production uses, including Agriculture and Timber Production uses. As needs and economy shifts, the flexibility in uses allow for changes to made in land use. Zoning should define specific forest and agriculture zones to avoid conflict of uses. Residential and light industrial uses may also be allowed within these areas to support operations.

Roadways should be built in strategic areas to support new development, and the quality improved in existing resource production areas.



Development Character

Principal Uses	• Agricultural Production • Timber Production • Resource Production

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04 IMPLEMENTATION

Policy Framework

OVERVIEW

The policy framework is an essential component of the Master Plan update. The development of the draft framework is a result of the public engagement process, existing conditions analysis, and understanding of best practices. The draft goals on the next page will structure the implementation of the Plan.

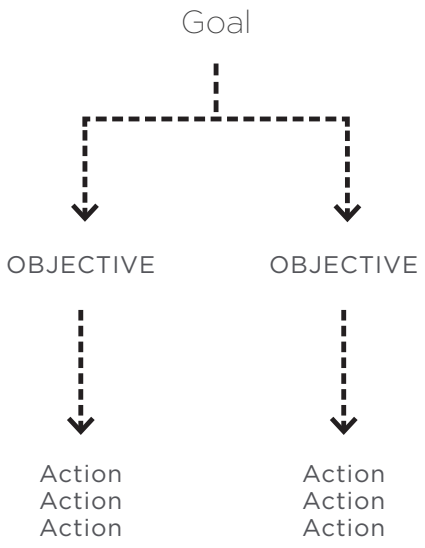
RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	
C	Board of Commissioners
PC	Planning Commission
BZ	Building and Zoning
P	Parks
A	Administration
	Road Commission
	Community Organizations

TIMEFRAME		
Short	S	0-1 years
Medium	M	1-3 years
Long	L	3+ years
Ongoing	O	Continuous

POLICY HIERARCHY

Goals, Objectives , and Actions

Each plan principle has one or more objectives. Each objective has at least one action that, when implemented, will help advance the objectives and principles of the plan.



The **desired outcome** expressed in simple terms.

Statements of purpose that serve as the framework for future decision making.

Program, policy, or plan intended to achieve the objectives.

1. ECONOMY

Encourage a diversified and stable economy in Delta County.

2. NATURAL FEATURES

Preserve and enhance the natural environment in Delta County, while allowing development to occur in suitable areas.

3. LAND USE

Grow the County through a balance of development and preservation of natural resources.

4. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Increase access to community facilities and services in a cost-effective manner.

5. HOUSING

Provide for an adequate, affordable, and a diverse supply of housing throughout the County.

6. RECREATION

Promote and strengthen Delta County's recreational opportunities.

7. MOBILITY

Strengthen and increase access to Delta County's transportation network.

8. COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS

Build off of Delta County's existing foundation of health care, and work to increase services as community care needs evolve.

PRINCIPLE 1
ECONOMY

	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS											
		BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS	PLANNING COMMISSION	BUILDING AND ZONING	PARKS	ADMINISTRATION	ROAD COMMISSION	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS	MICHIGAN WORKS	BAY COLLEGE	MEDC	CONSERVATION DISTRIC	CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OBJECTIVE 1.1: Work to attract new talent and retain youth through a variety of social and development efforts													
Action 1.1.1: *Develop social media presence for the County utilizing Instagram, SnapChat, YouTube, as well as Facebook and Twitter (or current social media platforms)*	S					●		●	●				
Action 1.1.2: *Utilize the Chamber of Commerce Facebook presence to promote new employment opportunities*	S								●				●
Action 1.1.3: *Undergo a study to understand what type of talent or positions are desired and create a marketing plan tailored to that population*	S					●		●	●	●	●		●
OBJECTIVE 1.2: Diversify the economy in Delta County through careful consideration of its natural resources and opportunities													
Action 1.2.1: *Ensure sustainable forestry and ecological management practices of current and future industry through zoning*	L		●	●	●	●						●	
Action 1.2.2: *Update zoning from timber production to resource production*	M		●										

● = *Responsible Party*

● = *Potential Partner*

PRINCIPLE 2
NATURAL FEATURES

	TIMEFRAME	BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS	PLANNING COMMISSION	BUILDING AND ZONING	PARKS	ADMINISTRATION	ROAD COMMISSION	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS	DNR	UP LAND CONSERVANCY	CONSERVATION DISTRICT	TOWNSHIPS/CITIES	
		POTENTIAL PARTNERS											
OBJECTIVE 2.1: Define natural areas that may constrain land use, and are more suitable for conservation uses													
Action 2.1.1: *Create an inventory of all conservation lands, undeveloped land, and recreation land. Inventory will include maps.*	L+O	●			●				●	●	●	●	
Action 2.1.2: *Review current ownership, sale, donation, or productivity/profitability of current conservation land*	L	●			●				●	●	●	●	
Action 2.1.3: *Pursue conservation easements when and where appropriate*	L+O		●							●	●	●	
Action 2.1.4: *Inventory County shoreline susceptible to erosion and develop erosion mitigation plan*	L+O								●		●	●	

PRINCIPLE 3
LAND USE

	TIMEFRAME	BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS	PLANNING COMMISSION	BUILDING AND ZONING	PARKS	ADMINISTRATION	ROAD COMMISSION	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS	DELTA COUNTY NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL NETWORK	CUPPAD	DNR	TOWNSHIPS/CITIES	MDOT
		POTENTIAL PARTNERS											
OBJECTIVE 3.1: Encourage development along waterfront areas that is respectful of surrounding uses													
Action 3.1.1: *Acquire strategic land to further develop public spaces and allow for private development along the water*	O	●	●	●	●							●	
Action 3.1.2: *Clearly define what constitutes appropriate usage of acquired land*	L+O		●										
OBJECTIVE 3.2: Provide continued public access to the County's lakes, rivers, and streams													
Action 3.2.1: *Identify potential access points along public waterfront, rivers, and streams*	M				●				●	●	●	●	●
Action 3.2.2: *Explore the development of a water trail throughout the County*	M				●				●	●	●	●	●

● = *Responsible Party*

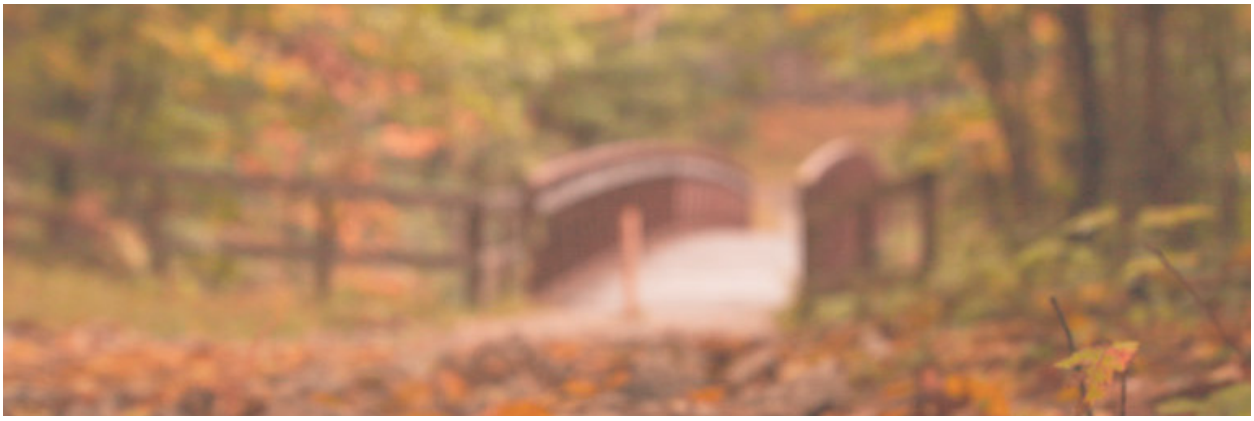
● = *Potential Partner*

PRINCIPLE 4
PUBLIC & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

	TIMEFRAME	BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS	PLANNING COMMISSION	BUILDING AND ZONING	PARKS	ADMINISTRATION	ROAD COMMISSION	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS	NMU - EASY ACCESS NETWORK	MERIT	OTHER BROADBAND COMPANIES	TOWNSHIPS/CITIES	EGLE	UTILITIES
		POTENTIAL PARTNERS												
OBJECTIVE 4.1: Expand and improve the current broadband network to improve internet access in geographically isolated areas of the County														
Action 4.1.1: *Ensure and maintain free internet access at strategic public locations*	M	●				●			●	●	●	●		
Action 4.1.2: *Identify current broadband infrastructure and system gaps*	M+O					●			●	●	●	●		
Action 4.1.3: *Identify current assets and opportunities for the further development of the broadband network*	O					●			●	●	●	●		
OBJECTIVE 4.2: Identify existing gaps in the current infrastructure network														
Action 4.2.1: *Support asset management of local water and wastewater systems*	O		●	●								●	●	
Action 4.2.2: *Facilitate shared resources and collaboration of municipal systems as appropriate*	O		●	●								●	●	
Action 4.2.3: *Identify gaps in transportation services*	O					●	●	●						
OBJECTIVE 4.3: Minimize environmental impacts of energy usage through improvement of County-wide energy efficiency and opportunities for renewable energies														
Action 4.3.1: *Identify areas suitable for the potential development of biomass, wind, solar, and other renewable energies*	S+O		●									●		
Action 4.3.2: *Develop incentives to support efficient energy practices*	M+O					●						●		●

PRINCIPLE 4
PUBLIC & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

	TIMEFRAME	BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS	PLANNING COMMISSION	BUILDING AND ZONING	PARKS	ADMINISTRATION	ROAD COMMISSION	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS	NMU – EASY ACCESS NETWORK	MERIT	OTHER BROADBAND COMPANIES	TOWNSHIPS/CITIES	EGLE	UTILITIES
		POTENTIAL PARTNERS												
OBJECTIVE 4.1: Expand and improve the current broadband network to improve internet access in geographically isolated areas of the County														
Action 4.3.3: *Lead by example through improved overall energy efficiency in County buildings*	○	●				●						●		●
Action 4.3.4: *Form an energy committee to further the County's energy goals and to develop a strategic energy plan*	○	●				●					●	●	●	●
Action 4.3.5: *Encourage residential net metering*	○	●	●	●		●						●		●
Action 4.3.6: *Develop ordinances for renewable energy development*	○		●	●								●		



● = *Responsible Party*

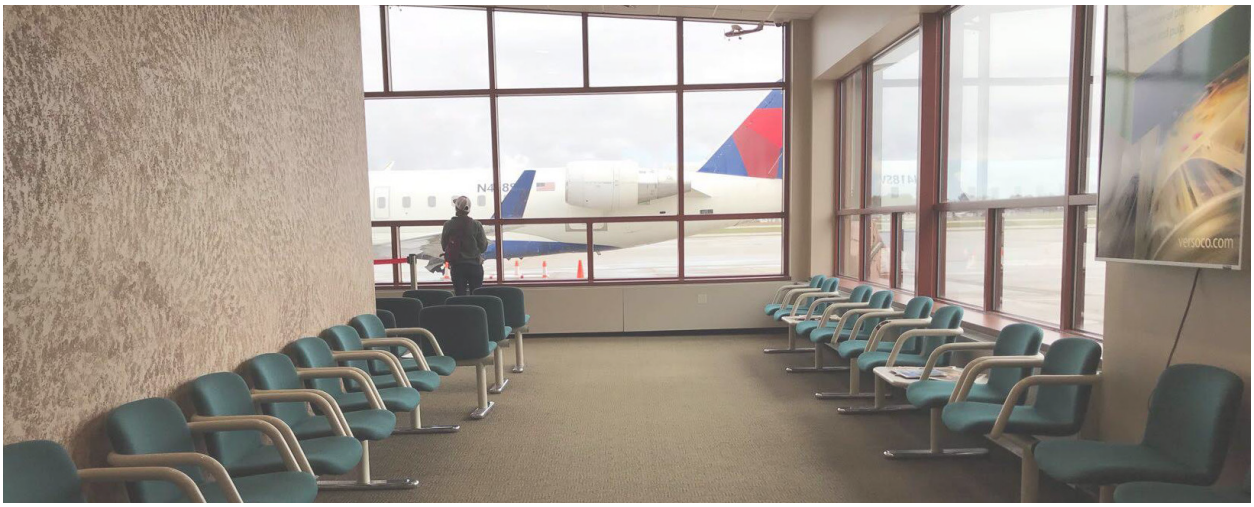
● = *Potential Partner*

PRINCIPLE 5
RECREATION

	TIMEFRAME	BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS	PLANNING COMMISSION	BUILDING AND ZONING	PARKS	ADMINISTRATION	ROAD COMMISSION	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS	TOWNSHIPS/CITIES	MDOT	CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	WILDLIFE UNLIMITED	UP WHITETAILS	DELTA COUNTY NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL NETWORK
		POTENTIAL PARTNERS												
OBJECTIVE 5.1: Drive tourism efforts that enhance the well-being of Delta County's current residents, and mitigate any negative social and environmental impacts														
Action 5.1.1: *Improve access to key recreational areas throughout the County by identifying priority areas and expanding connecting pedestrian infrastructure*	M+O				●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Action 5.1.2: *Pursue a Pure Michigan Campaign that promotes year-round opportunities for recreation*	M								●		●			
Action 5.1.3: *Form a Tourism Committee to oversee tourism efforts in the County*	S+O							●	●		●			●
Action 5.1.4: *Promote the County's hunting and fishing identity and opportunities*	S+O						●		●		●	●	●	
OBJECTIVE 5.2: Improve access to key recreational areas throughout the County														
Action 5.2.1: *Maintain and enhance existing relationships that build recreational programming and services*	O				●	●					●			
Action 5.2.2: *Identify priority areas of opportunity near residential areas*	O				●									

PRINCIPLE 6
HOUSING

	TIMEFRAME	BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS	PLANNING COMMISSION	BUILDING AND ZONING	PARKS	ADMINISTRATION	ROAD COMMISSION	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS	DEVELOPERS	TOWNSHIPS/CITIES	CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
		POTENTIAL PARTNERS									
OBJECTIVE 6.1: Encourage a diversity of housing types to holistically serve the Delta County Community											
Action 6.1.1: *Encourage a range of housing options that supports the County's aging population*	M+O	●	●					●	●		
Action 6.1.2: *Promote the creation of high-quality multi-family housing options in downtown areas that are well connected to nearby amenities to attract a younger generation of residents and top talent*	S+O							●	●	●	
Action 6.1.3: *Expand and enhance single-family housing through zoning regulations*	O	●	●								



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PRINCIPLE 7
MOBILITY

	TIMEFRAME	BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS	PLANNING COMMISSION	BUILDING AND ZONING	PARKS	ADMINISTRATION	ROAD COMMISSION	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS	MDOT	AIRPORT AUTHORITY	PORT OWNERS	DATA	CUPPAD	DELTA COUN-TY
		POTENTIAL PARTNERS												
OBJECTIVE 7.1: Discourage development in areas where current or known future transportation facilities are inadequate														
Action 7.1.1: *Explore less disruptive truck routing alternatives*	M						●		●					
Action 7.1.2: *Prioritize resources to support transportation asset management plans*	M													
Action 7.1.3: *Encourage development in areas that can be supported by the current or planned transportation network*	O		●	●		●								
OBJECTIVE 7.2: Promote the existence and availability of Delta County's existing public transportation options														
Action 7.2.1: *Utilize the County's website and social media to strengthen the community's understanding of the available transportation options, including ride sharing*	M					●		●				●		●
OBJECTIVE 7.3: Identify gaps in the transportation network, specifically as it relates to school needs														
Action 7.3.1: *Work with public schools (K-12 & HE) to identify areas of deficiency*	M					●	●	●	●					
Action 7.3.2: *Promote and coordinate transportation services among communities and healthcare providers*	O					●		●	●			●	●	
Action 7.3.3: *Utilize CUPPAD's non-motorized transportation plan to enhance connections between Gladstone and Escanaba*	S					●			●				●	●

PRINCIPLE 8 COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS

	TIMEFRAME	BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS	PLANNING COMMISSION	BUILDING AND ZONING	PARKS	ADMINISTRATION	CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS	COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUPS	PUBLIC HEALTH	MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE	UPCAP/DCSPTF	BAY COLLEGE	MSU EXTENSION
		POTENTIAL PARTNERS												
OBJECTIVE 8.1: Partner with local medical providers to create innovative health and wellness initiatives that increase active living and citizen well-being														
Action 8.1.1: *Expand the use and opportunity for tele-medicine*	M							●		●	●	●		
Action 8.1.2: *Build and enhance relationships and communication among County healthcare providers*	M								●	●	●			
OBJECTIVE 8.2: Increase and strengthen specialized care and mental health care services and facilities														
Action 8.2.1: *Create a marketing campaign to attract talent to the County*	M						●							
Action 8.2.2: *Determine possible benefits to offer future talent (housing, education, recreation, etc)*	M						●	●	●					
Action 8.2.3: *Utilize County's higher education institutions by exploring partnerships and programs*	O							●	●	●	●	●	●	●

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● = *Potential Partner*

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Zoning

OVERVIEW

The zoning ordinance is a regulatory tool to manage land use that is enabled by the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA), PA 110 of 2006. Section 203 (1) of the act requires that zoning be based on a plan, given that a plan describes the vision and policies for the future and the zoning ordinance provides the regulatory tool to achieve these policies. For instance, the zoning ordinance will help direct land uses to appropriate areas through zoning districts and promote community attractiveness through the dimensional standards designated for each land use.

Proposed Changes to the Zoning Ordinance

Upon the adoption of this Plan, the County intends to ensure that the zoning ordinance reflects the policies in this Plan. In general, all changes to the zoning ordinance will:

- Ensure that new developments uphold the desired character of the community
- Direct commercial development to lands that have the capacity to support such development and away from sensitive and significant natural features
- Establish adequate blight, lighting, natural feature protection, and noise regulations to minimize the negative impact on the community
- Allow for mixed land uses in designated areas to promote vibrancy and connection
- Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions and jurisdictions within the County that provide individual zoning
- Ordinances promoting the smart use or energy will help to further implement the county's land use and energy policy goals. Beyond this, including relevant language in the ordinance will increase local regulatory options and local influence on development opportunities related to energy. Ordinance may be specific in nature, citing particular production or harvesting uses such as biofuel production facilities or specifications for Wind generation, or may be broad, referring to all projects related to energy and allowing for greater flexibility.

Furthermore, to link the zoning ordinance to the Plan, the zoning districts will need to connect to the future land use districts described in this Plan and displayed on the Future Land Use Map. The zoning districts, as they stand currently, and future land use districts are paired in the table on the next page. Ultimately, the locations of the zoning districts listed in this table, will need to reflect the locations of consequent future land use categories.

FIGURE 1-3: Zoning Strategy Matrix

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY	APPROXIMATE EXISTING ZONING DISTRICT
Industrial	C-3 and I
Resource Management	RP, AP, TP, OS, and TP-2
Recreation	PL, OS, and LS/R
Open Space/Preservation	OS
Civic/Institutional	PL
Urban Residential	R-3 and PL
Semi-Urban Residential	LS/R, R-3, R-2, PL, and OS
Rural Residential	R-1, RR, R-4, PL, RP, and LS/R-2
Mixed-Use	C-1, C-2, PL, and TD

Capital Improvements

OVERVIEW

A CIP (Capital Improvements Plan) is a tool to identify and prioritize the long-term capital project requirements of a local unit of government. The CIP is a schedule of proposed improvements to a community's public facilities that includes a prioritization of projects over a 6 year period. The first year of the CIP is the capital budget and the CIP is annually updated. The CIP's relationship to the master plan, as stated in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008), is "to further the desirable future development of the local unit of government under the master plan." To accomplish this, the planning commission, legislative body, or chief administrative official (depending on language in the charter), shall annually prepare the CIP to assist the planning commission and board of commissioners in reviewing and approving public infrastructure projects, such as streets, parks, and utility infrastructure.

NEXT STEPS

In accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act,jurisdictions within Delta County should use recommendations (Goals, Objectives, Actions, and focus area recommendations) from this Master Plan and their individual Master Plan (if existing) to help evaluate and update their current CIP.

Te following outlines a successful process in creating a CIP:

DEFINE CIP PROCESS AND ROLES

- Appoint a CIP coordinator to lead the project
- Identify participants and roles for CIP preparation
- Establish a CIP Review Team
- Review and update capital improvement polices
- Collect data to assist with review, including
    - » budget projections, master plan amendments
    - » policy changes and new regulations
- Define cost threshold, lifespan and types of projects to qualify for CIP
- Establish agreement on priority system to evaluate projects. Key considerations should include:
    - » Is the project supported by the Master Plan or other plan
    - » Is it legally required
    - » Is it fiscally responsible
    - » Is it a high priority for the community
- Other considerations include:
    - » Relationship to or coordination with other projects
    - » Estimate of annual income from projects
    - » Estimate of annual operating expenses
    - » Duration of project
    - » Sequencing
    - » Project mandated by the state and/or

federal law
  - » Projects essential to public health or safety
  - » Projects that save in operating costs

HOLD LAUNCH MEETING

- The CIP Review Team hosts launch meeting to explain purpose of CIP and roles in the process
- Members of the public are encouraged to share information about infrastructure needs and priorities
- Project lead summarized feedback from the public and provides to staff for consideration in identifying projects

IDENTIFY PROJECTS

- Complete asset inventory of existing capital investments, which includes
  - » Age, condition and replacement dates
  - » Status of projects currently underway
- Develop a schedule for replacement and improvement needs based on asset inventory
- Complete project application forms of projects to be considered for CIP

EVALUATE & SCORE PROJECTS

- The CIP Review Team uses criteria established in the first step to evaluate and score project requests (scoring can be done individually or as a team)

RANK PROJECTS AND DRAFT THE CIP

- The CIP Review Team ranks projects based on:
  - » Criteria established in the first step
  - » Available funding
  - » Capacity to complete projects
- The project lead organizes the projects into a table, with funding shown over 6 years (unfunded projects should also be included and scheduled for later years or compiled in a separate section)

REVIEW & APPROVE THE CIP

- The CIP Review Team provides draft to the Planning Commission
- Planning Commission reviews and conducts public hearing
- Planning Commission adopts the CIP and forwards to Board of Commissioners
- Board of Commissioners adopts CIP and uses for annual budget
- For communities with two year budgets, the second year is a simple update
- Update costs, funding sources, and timing for a six-year system