

Chapter 12

BALANCED GROWTH

INTRODUCTION

Land use change is inevitable in Leelanau County. Just over half (56%) of respondents felt Leelanau County was growing too quickly according to the 2018 Planning Questionnaire. New homes, businesses, public buildings, and agricultural operations (among other land uses) are likely and desirable. The primary issues facing the County are is where, when, and what type of land use change will occur, and whether the necessary public services that will be required are currently in place to meet the needs of new development. These growth management issues are fundamental to achieving the desired balance between economic development and environmental protection proposed by this plan.

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For the last few decades, the primary development activity in the County has been the construction of new single family homes. These are largely for seasonal occupancy and/or occupancy primarily by new County residents who work outside the County. Large areas of land are being converted to residential use. See chapter 6. The new businesses and other land use changes that will occur in response to this trend will have a dramatic impact on the character of the County for decades to come. It will be up to coordinated action by County and local governments to guide this new development so as to minimize detrimental resource, safety, and visual impacts. Part One of this plan describes the basic strategy for achieving these goals. This chapter focuses on specific policies and action statements for addressing change in the County.

ISSUES

Land Use Change

Land use patterns dramatically shape the character in the County and the quality of life it offers. Land use affects the character of the County visually, financially, and environmentally. As land is developed, the appearance of the parcel, the surrounding vista, and the transportation corridor within which it is located, are altered.

This results in a transition from a mostly rural character to a more urban or suburban appearance. As land is developed, natural resources associated with the development area are often lost or reduced in quality and/or quantity. The new use usually increases demands upon existing public services and infrastructure. The cumulative effect is often a rise in

taxes to provide the necessary additional services and/or infrastructure. Once land is developed, it rarely reverts to a less intensive use and, where natural, renewable resources are at stake (such as prime farmland), the conversion is permanent.

Leelanau County is particularly vulnerable to the potential negative impacts of land use changes and development. Poorly located and designed development often stands out as a “sore thumb” in contrast to the County’s rural and scenic character.

The dramatic effects of land use on the character of the County underscore the necessity that future land use and development patterns be purposely planned and guided, rather than left to evolve by chance.

Leelanau County can be generally described as a “water wonderland” with a landscape dominated by rolling terrain, crop and orchard farms, open spaces and woodlands. The western half of the County is dominated by woodland areas, inland lakes and associated wetland environments, and a spattering of farms. The eastern half of the County is dominated by farmland with intermixed woodland and wetlands. Within this patchwork of rural life rests a few settlement areas of more urban character, including the Villages of Suttons Bay, Northport, and Empire, and the small communities of Leland, Glen Arbor, Cedar, Maple City, Greilickville and the Grand Traverse Band Reservation Area.

Leelanau County land use pattern is a reflection of the competing land use demands placed upon its landscape. There is a wide range of population density. See Table 12-1. The County has traditionally been dominated by vast areas of crop and specialty farming with equally vast areas of special natural resources, including woodlands, wetlands, shorelines, dunes, lakes, and hillsides. The growth of the tourism industry and the influx of seasonal residents have affected the agricultural and natural resource base of the County. In addition, the growth in the County’s population has complicated the effective protection of these resources.

**Table 12-1
Population Per Square Mile**



Condominiums in Suttons Bay

	Leelanau	Benzie	Grand
1940	24.2	24.7	50.4
1950	25	26	62
1960	27	25	73
1970	32	27	85
1980	41	34.8	117.8
1990	48	38.9	139
2000	60.6	49.8	167
2010	62.5	54.8	187.3

Source - US Census Bureau

Residential Sprawl/Development Pattern

Possibly the most evident impact result of this population growth has been the evolving pattern of sprawl and associated dispersed population. The one time County-wide pattern of large acreage farmland parcels is being replaced in some areas by five to ten acre parcels used for residential purposes.

Residential development drives nearby farmland property assessments higher, followed by increased property taxes. The farmer is faced with a rising property tax bill without the benefit of increased agricultural income to offset the disparity. Ultimately, the farmer may be pressured into selling off small lot splits from his original acreage to increase his income, to offset the rising taxes. Once started, this sprawl cycle increases in intensity and rate.

The resulting pattern of encroaching residential development fragments farmland and other resource acreage. The smaller the acreage of other natural resources, (such as woodlands) the less valuable they become as habitat for wildlife, as elements of the County's rural character, or as income generators for managed timber operations. The loss of the farmland and other natural County resources seriously effect the County's natural and cultural uniqueness.

The traditional large lot zoning scheme (a minimum lot size of 10 acres or less), often employed to protect agricultural lands, is not producing the desired effect across the nation. Yet it is widely practiced throughout the County. More often than not, five to ten-acre parcels are created for the sole purpose of establishing a residence. The result is that one (or two) acres of the lot are used for a house and yard and the remaining acres are left idle. The net result is a loss of acres of productive farmland (or woodland, or mineral resources). The cumulative impact result on productive resource land is affected, though it does protect a certain amount of wildlife.

The resultant lot pattern dramatically increases the cost of public services and emergency response times, as increased amounts of infrastructure need to be constructed and maintained, and greater distances have to be traveled to address the needs of relatively few.

Also, this lot pattern has greatly contributed to the demise of the County's rural character. When developed, these individual lot splits are often characterized by residences lined up along the county road frontage. Not only does this development pattern conflict with the safe and efficient movement of traffic due to increased driveway access points and turning patterns, but views of the rural landscape are effectively hidden and replaced with homes, front yards, garages, mailboxes, and driveways. The sense of rural character within a community is largely derived from the visual experience one has as he or she moves through the community along its roadway corridors. The experience is dramatically reshaped when the visual foreground is dominated by strip residential development.

Increased environmental degradation has become evident as more and more residential development has occurred along the peripheries of and within the County's natural resource areas. This is particularly evident along shoreline areas and hillsides and in some wetlands, with an increasing trend as well toward extensive developments along ridgelines.

Commercial and Industrial Development

Similarly, commercial development has occurred in locations previously dominated by open spaces and a strong pastoral setting. Though the County's principal commercial development is located within village areas, it has begun to encroach into the more rural settings. This disrupts the resource value of surrounding lands and serves as a magnet drawing other nonresidential uses. This spot commercial development can be seen along principal roadway corridors as well as within some of the more interior areas of the County. In a few cases, development was for industrial land uses. This encroachment has the effect of reducing the sense of rural character, increasing the fragmentation of valuable natural resources, increasing traffic demands and hazards along roadways, and generally disrupting the traditional land use pattern which had previously been supportive of its agricultural, open space, and natural resource foundation. It also is occurring in areas not easily provided with public service.

Inadequate County and Local Planning Programs

The above conditions and trends have largely been a result of historically inadequate land use planning and zoning programs throughout the County. Prior to the adoption of the **Leelanau General Plan** in 1995, local municipalities worked from plans that were later considered to have been ineffective in managing new development and population growth. These plans were characterized by: 1) weak planning processes, whereby the general public had minimal effective input into the preparation of the plan; 2) limited mapping of local conditions, thereby increasing the difficulty of analyzing critical local trends and conditions upon which recommendations were made; 3) counterproductive policies regarding long term agricultural, open space, and natural resource preservation; 4) the absence of policies or regulations regarding the preservation of sensitive natural resources; and 5) the inclusion of policies which generally resulted in the loss of the County's rural and historic character through encouragement of a dispersed development pattern.



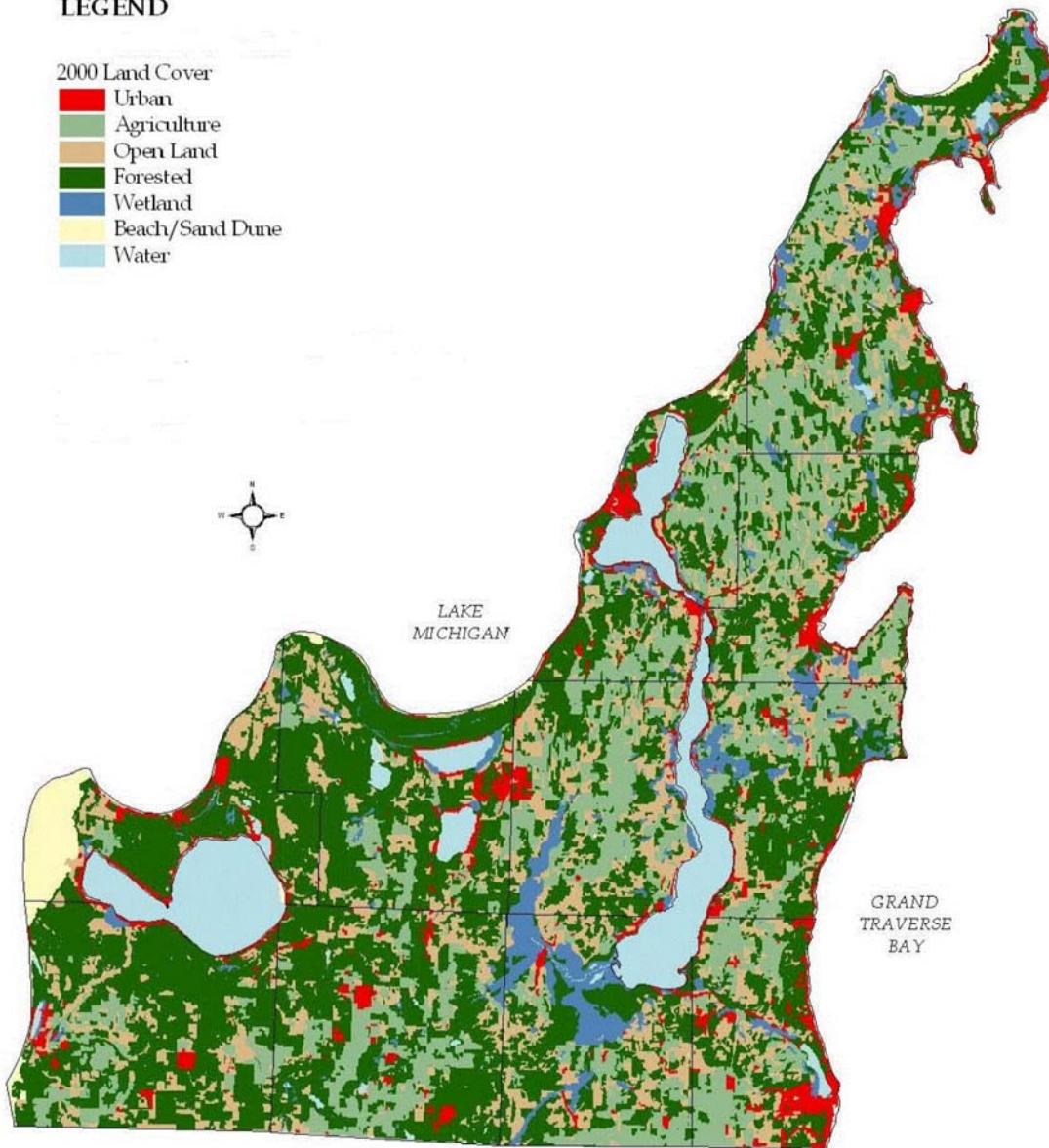
Cherry blossoms, Suttons Bay Township

Map 12-1
Land Cover

LEGEND

2000 Land Cover

- Urban
- Agriculture
- Open Land
- Forested
- Wetland
- Beach/Sand Dune
- Water





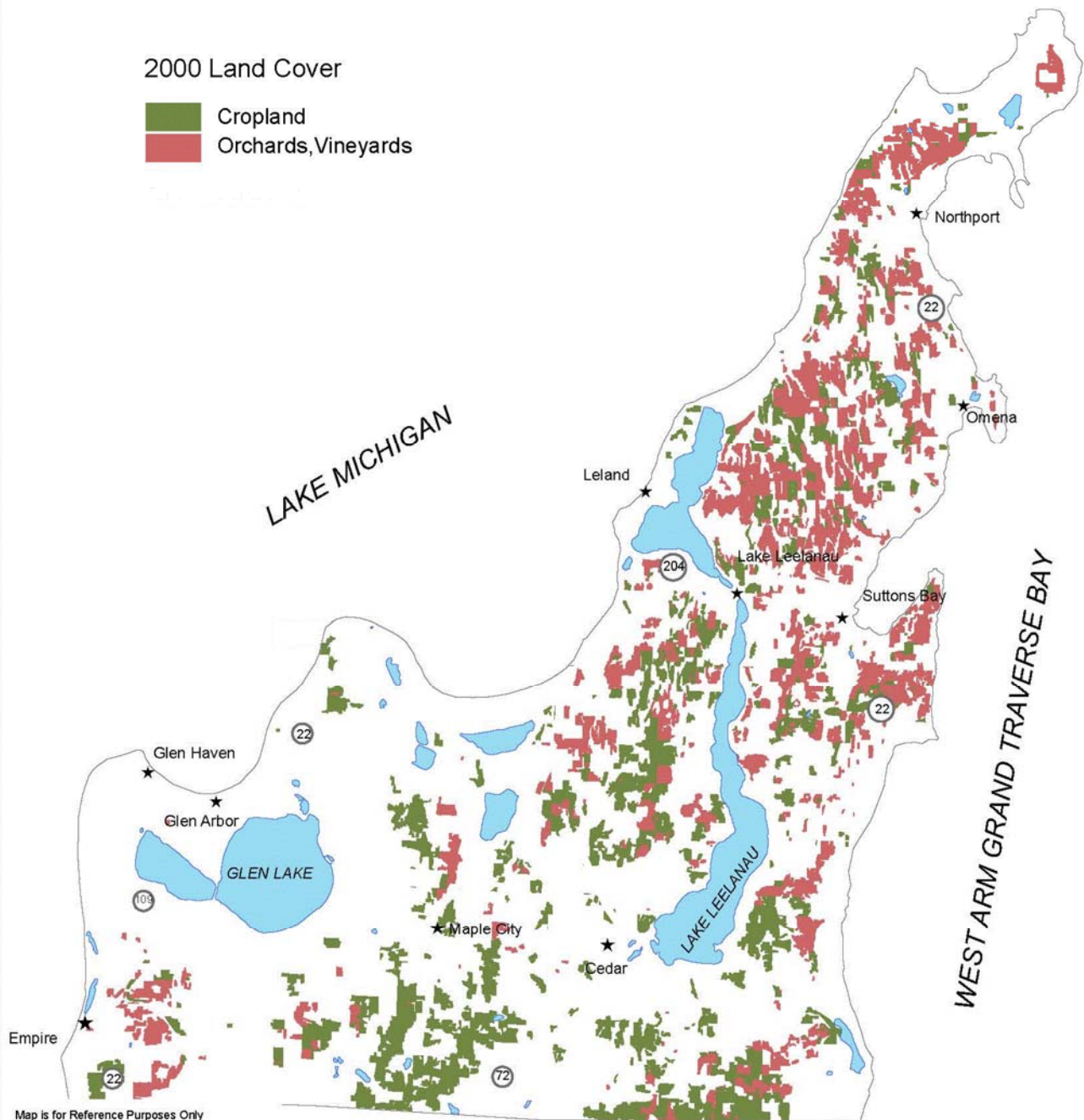
MAP FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY
Land cover data from analysis of 2000 digital orthophotos.
Prepared by Leelanau County Planning & Community
Development Office, July 2019

Map 12-2 Agricultural Lands



2000 Land Cover

-  Cropland
-  Orchards, Vineyards



Map is for Reference Purposes Only
Prepared by Leelanau County
Planning & Community Development July 2019

Accordingly, locally adopted plans (including the prior County plan and zoning ordinance) were considered to have accommodated development while doing little in the way of managing growth in the County. While some of the locally adopted plans provided direction in the type and location of future land uses, none of those plans addressed the appropriate rate and timing of new development, adequacy of public services at the time new development became operational, or the total amount of appropriate new development.

	Acres	Per- cent
Urban/Developed	15,957	7.3%
Agriculture	41,767	19.3%
Open Land	38,117	17.6%
Forested	96,223	44.5%
Wetland	3,064	1.4%
Sand Dune	3,410	1.6%
Water	17,825	8.2%
Total	216,363*	100%

However, after the adoption of the **General Plan** in 1995, all of the County’s local governments developed new master plans. Many initiatives outlined in the **General Plan** were later incorporated into the newly adopted local plans in an attempt to address the County’s myriad land use issues. With assistance from private consultants and the County, most municipalities undertook comprehensive planning activities, including extensive analyses of current conditions through mapping and public surveys. Policies such as clustered housing options, lower overall densities in agricultural districts, environmental protection, and higher densities near lakeshores and villages were included in these plans. And, with the passage of amendments to the planning enabling acts in 2001, local governments are under further obligations to seek input on their plans, update them every 5 years, and link their zoning ordinances directly to their plans. In short, the last ten years have seen a much greater commitment to planning on the part of local governments, with substantial effort being made to balance the County’s natural resources with inevitable residential development.

Cropland	18,528	44.4%
Orchards, Vineyards	20,515	49.1%
Other Ag Land (including pasture)	2,724	6.5%
Total agricultural land	41,767	100%

Note: Table 12-2 DOES NOT include easements/right-of-ways acreages in the total County acreage.

Inadequate County and Local Zoning Programs

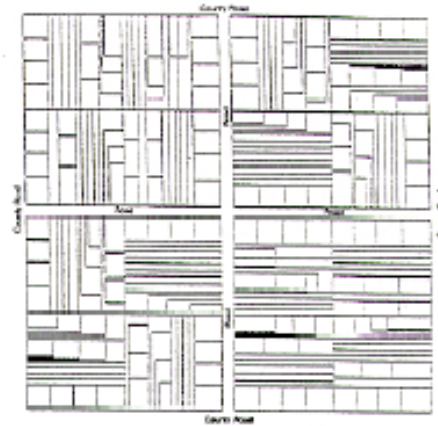
The planning efforts that took place after the adoption of the **General Plan** are visible as well in local zoning ordinances, which have been updated to reflect policies advanced by local plans. Many local governments have taken advantage of special development techniques which are geared toward effective resource protection and that are specifically provided for in the state zoning enabling acts. These techniques include: 1) approval of special land uses within a particular district, provided they undergo a special review procedure and meet special

Figure 12-1



Figure 12-2

1 Section , Second Division



and more stringent standards than otherwise applied to "uses by right"; 2) the submittal of project site plans for review and approval prior to the establishment of the development in question; and 3) "planned unit development" regulations which encourage resource and open space preservation opportunities through more flexible land use and site development than is normally permitted by traditional district standards.

Some zoning issues that created problems in the 80's and 90's are still present today, however. Municipalities in the County still struggle with allowable densities in agricultural districts. Local governments have significant difficulty in designating lot sizes that will be small enough to make building sites both affordable for buyers and profitable for land owners, yet large enough to limit densities in rural areas. And, while the vast majority of the County is zoned into agricultural districts, the predominant minimum lot size in these agricultural districts varies widely between jurisdictions, from 2 acres to 10 acres. Further, a great deal of property that is not in actual agricultural use is nevertheless zoned agricultural. This zoning scheme does little to advance the causes of agriculture or managed growth. "Agricultural zoning" in effect functions as low density residential zoning.

In 1990, the County Planning Department prepared a "build-out" analysis of all zoning then in place in the County. A build-out analysis calculates the total population of a jurisdiction if all undeveloped, but buildable land, is developed at the maximum density permitted "by right" under the zoning ordinance. The County's build-out population, under 1990 zoning, would have been about 285,000 people. Since that time, most townships have revisited residential densities in their zoning ordinances. As a result, the build-out potential under 2004 zoning regulations was reduced to about 153,550 people. This is a significant decrease in development potential; but nevertheless illustrates a continued permissiveness in local zoning regulations.

While a realization of the County’s full buildout potential is unlikely, the fact remains that local zoning is designed in such a manner that it accommodates – and in some cases, encourages – vast population growth.

Efforts are being made to funnel some of this population growth into planned communities, through the use of open space and cluster housing regulations. These zoning tools allow land-owners to design more compact, aesthetically pleasing residential developments on large tracts of land, as an alternative to simply splitting off the maximum number of lots allowed by zoning. These developments have the advantage of permanently preserving larger tracts of open space, and include design elements that help retain rural character and protect sensitive environmental features. While open space/cluster zoning regulations are currently on the books in most townships, some difficulties remain in actually developing these types of communities. They are typically allowed as “special uses” and are thus subject to different application and approval processes than traditional lot splits. And, because they usually involve high densities in rural areas, they generate a great deal of public outcry. Open space/cluster housing proposals often result in lawsuits, particularly when large acreages are involved. Despite the design controls inherent in planned developments, many residents protest that high densities, and their accompanying population increases, are inappropriate in rural areas. This phenomenon is a testament to the fact that many of the same problems that arise with scattered residential development – such as traffic, service issues, and increased taxes – occur in cluster developments as well. In order to address some of these issues, many townships have recently begun examining alternative zoning techniques, such as “conservation zoning” plans, which can permit developers to apply maximum densities while preserving rural character.

Efforts are being made to funnel some of this population growth into planned communities, through the use of open space and cluster housing regulations.

These density and development issues are common to all jurisdictions in the County. They do not, however, translate into consistent regulations across the County. There are 15 municipalities and a sovereign nation found in the 350 square miles in the County, all with their own land use regulations. The extreme variability among local zoning ordinance fragments the County and upsets the geographic and visual wholeness of the County and its local municipalities. Inconsistent standards encourage fragmented and disjointed development patterns, and establish inappropriate or unplanned growth areas.

Subdivision Regulations

Until the Land Division Act of 1997, which amended the Subdivision Control Act of 1967, there was a lack of regulations for lot splits in the County. The Subdivision Control Act allowed four splits every 10 years, plus an unlimited number of land splits if each parcel sold was over 10 acres. These regulations have been blamed for retail and residential development sprawling

into areas of farmland. The Land Division Act changed the rules for splitting land. The Land Division Act, adopted in 1997, regulates the number of splits based on the size of the original parcel (the 'parent parcel'). Prior to the Land Division Act, parcel splits resulted in inappropriately shaped lots, unbuildable lots, lots with inadequate drainage and other public services, lots without adequate access, lots which unnecessarily fragmented important resource areas, and other undesirable conditions. Many examples can be found around the County.

Now, under the Land Division Act, local units of government must approve all land divisions to make sure they meet standards as to shape, and road or utility access. In addition, all deeds for land must contain a specific statement on farmland operations in the vicinity and the protections afforded by Michigan's Right to Farm Law.

Today, all townships have a designated person who reviews and approves all lot splits to make sure they conform to the Land Division Act. Townships have also adopted regulations such as site plan review, private road standards, and site condominium regulations which allow more input and guidance from citizens and township officials regarding the shape and location of new lots.

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Farmland Preservation

The Leelanau Conservancy offers a program which allows for the purchase of development rights (PDR) on eligible farms. The program, which is voluntary, allows a farmer to sell some or all of the development rights on an active farm, in order to capture part of the monetary value of their land while permanently preserving active farmland. The development rights are purchased with a combination of federal, State, and local dollars.

The State of Michigan also utilizes a program to award funding for the purchase of development rights. Criteria for the program includes the eligibility and economic viability of the farmland, as well as the degree of local commitment to the preservation program. When considering "local commitment," the State looks at things such as the amount of land designated for preservation; the percentage of townships that have opted into the program; the presence of matching funds; and planning and zoning policies that are supportive of agriculture.

Cumulative Impacts *Results of Current Trends*

Leelanau County's population increase will result in a far more accelerated rate of sprawl, land and resource fragmentation, extensive residential developments in rural areas, consumption of agricultural lands, disturbance of natural resource areas and sensitive resource areas, and traffic problems. Accompanying this trend will be the continued loss of the County's rural character as rural roadway corridors evolve into linear urban forms with strip residential development that effectively screen those rural qualities previously visible from the road. With the incremental loss of rural character, the area tourism industry may well suffer.

A sprawl development pattern in the County will generate an increasing level of local concern regarding present conditions and what the future may hold. Local planning and zoning programs will have an increasingly difficult time providing guidance in addressing pressing issues. Ultimately, the public will increasingly call for local government to provide adequate direction for the coexistence of competing land use demands.

A FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE POLICY

The local plans of municipalities should include policies regarding the planned future land use pattern and public services delivery program which support comparable policies of the Leelanau General Plan. This plan recognizes that a degree of uniqueness is desirable to be maintained among local municipalities and that there should be a corresponding degree of flexibility between a local plan and the county-wide plan. However, flexibility should not weaken the foundation of mutual concern in the General Plan or otherwise fundamentally diverge from what is considered most appropriate for the county as a whole. In addition, each local plan should specify substantive policies addressing the issues of growth according to type, location, rate and timing, total amount, and the provision of public services to meet project needs prior to new development becoming operational. Local plans should be property specific while the county plan will be area specific.

Agriculture, forest land and open space protection should play a leading role within the planned future land use pattern of each local Township. To this end, farmland and forest land which is considered economically viable on a long term basis and worthy of protection should be identified. Parcel size and soil suitability should be key determinants in this identification.

Consistent ordinances could be created throughout the County, to establish a regulatory program aimed at effective long term protection of agricultural and forest land. The premise of these regulations should be the prevention of land fragmentation where prime renewable resources exist. Local plans and zoning ordinances should provide for adequate buffers between residential and resource areas, based upon uniform county-wide standards, to better ensure the long term viability of these resources.

Equally proactive measures can be taken to preserve the county's other open spaces. A flexible open space zoning ordinances can provide an alternative to the traditional large lot zoning approach. These regulations should provide for residential development, preserve important open spaces and sensitive lands, and minimize the visual impact *outcome* of the new residential development. Permitted development would be directed toward those open spaces not characterized by prime farmland soils. Open space zoning can be applied only to those areas where the preservation of renewable resources is not the principal intent. For renewable resources, preservation programs should be used instead.

At the heart of open space, farmland, and forest land protection programs would be a research and education initiative to identify and protect valuable productive and environmentally sensitive lands. This would include adequate public facilities are in place to meet the immediate needs of such development. Such policies can be clearly stated within local plans and carried forward into local zoning ordinances. Particular attention should be given to new proposed resort developments. Large resorts are commercial in nature and generate impacts *issues* beyond the immediate municipality. Accordingly, such projects should be reviewed on a multi-jurisdiction basis including the municipality in question, adjoining municipalities, and county agencies. Efforts should also be made to create opportunities for value-added agriculture, which will provide year-round jobs while supporting the agricultural economy.

Special consideration should be given to providing affordable housing opportunities in close proximity and/or in association with full service commercial centers including cultural, child care, and employment opportunities.

Strip residential development can be very strongly discouraged through local land use plans and regulations that encourage a more compact and less destructive settlement pattern. Potentials for such developments can be identified early through model project review procedures. The same considerations equally apply to strip commercial development. Where new commercial development cannot be incorporated into the county's existing village centers, new small compact centers should be provided consistent with local zoning regulations.

Public service districts are proposed in Part One as a key element of the plan implementation strategy. They are intended to identify the future limits of public services, and associated urban development, within a specified time period. Thus, a "village" services district, or similarly named district, would identify the bounds within which a local municipality intended to introduce new or expanded public services to support a village development pattern. On the other extreme, a



Farm and Orchard

"rural" services district would identify the bounds within which no substantial introduction or expansion of public services would occur and within which the continuation of the existing rural character is planned.

A "partial" or "limited" services district could provide for a level of public services somewhere between the village and rural services districts. The determination of the service district boundaries would be critically linked to the planned future land use pattern in the municipality and county.

The implementation of service districts better ensures that the county and its local municipalities will have a compact development pattern and managed growth rates. The implementation of the service districts also enables municipalities to more effectively plan and prioritize capital improvements, as well as to minimize unnecessary public service costs.

Implementation of the service districts will ultimately need to be rooted in the master plans adopted by the local municipalities . These plans should identify the boundaries of each service district, the planned future land use pattern within each district, the intended levels of public services planned for each district, the basis for the locations of each district, and conditions whereby changes to the district boundaries would be appropriate

Local plans and regulations should be enhanced to provide for increased protection of the county's special resources. Land use demands placed upon inland lakes would be minimized through adoption of keyhole regulations *and greenbelt regulations*. Extraction of the minerals should be based upon local plans and regulations which provide for the protection of priority sand and gravel resources and the surrounding environments and the reclamation of extraction sites.

To support this proactive approach to future land use across the county, the county should provide technical and other assistance to municipalities working with the Leelanau General Plan. This is especially true where legal challenges are initiated. Similarly, the county should assist local municipalities in the development of consistent local regulations based upon previously prepared county model regulations. And, with the passage of legislation that stresses regional cooperation, local governments should also be encouraged to take advantage of grant programs and other opportunities to create consistent plans and zoning regulations. Continuity in implementation of local plans and regulations would be achieved through the training of new planning commissioners, zoning board of appeals, township board and village council members. The basis of the Leelanau General Plan and the role that each local official can play in its implementation should be included in the training program.

LAND USE POLICIES AND ACTION STATEMENTS

The following Goals, Objectives, and Action statements are intended to establish the blueprint for the General Plan's vision for future land use:

Goal: To preserve Agricultural and Forest land to the greatest extent possible by protecting the economic viability of farming and allowing farmers to capture the development value of farmland without creating scattered suburban developments which cannot be serviced economically.

Objective:

County and local governments should initiate proactive measures to protect farm and forest land.

Action Statement:

Maps and records should be created of those farm areas most likely to remain economically viable for renewable resource management (contiguous land units at least 40 acres in size with prime farm, orchard, and forest soils) and those areas most threatened with conversion to other uses, to be updated every 10 years.

Action Statement:

The County Planning Commission should work together with local governments to create model ordinances (such as open Space Residential and PUDs) to reduce land fragmentation of renewable resource lands and conversion to non-farm or non-forested activities.

Action Statement:

Local governments, with the assistance of the County, should adopt coordinated zoning provisions which provide adequate buffers between agricultural and adjacent land uses to protect the future viability of the farmlands.

Action Statement:

Open space zoning should be adopted by local governments to supplement existing large lot zoning districts as a means of residential development outside of villages. Open space zoning should not be encouraged in areas where more exclusive techniques better designed to protect sensitive environments, prime farm or forest lands could be used. Encourage adoption of open space zoning, such as clustered housing, by local units of government to supplement existing large lot zoning districts as a means of residential development outside of villages.

Action Statement

Non-prime resource lands should be encouraged by local zoning to be used for new development wherever feasible as long as sensitive environments (such as wetlands, dunes and floodplains) are protected. Encourage new development on non-prime land, where feasible, as long as sensitive environments such as wetlands, dunes and floodplains are protected.

Action Statement:

The County Planning Commission and Planning office should initiate a study examining the impacts of open space/cluster housing developments on rural areas. The study should include an evaluation of the benefits and problems associated with these developments, an overview of existing open space development regulations, and recommendations as to the most appropriate situations for such developments.

Objective:

Residential development patterns throughout the county should reflect economical and efficient use of land and be especially mindful of the value of protecting renewable resource lands from premature conversion or land fragmentation. In particular, development patterns should be consistent with the need for a variety of housing types and lot sizes and consistent with existing average densities of development when in villages. It should also minimize conversion of productive farmland and where non-prime land is not available, incorporate new homes as part of an open space zoning development.

Action Statement:

The County Planning Commission, with the assistance of the local governments in the county, should establish model land development standards to achieve the average densities proposed in this plan. In particular, special attention should be given to establishment of zoning standards to continue traditional village development patterns when villages are enlarged or if new village settlements are created.

Action Statement:

Provide for a variety of housing types and lot sizes consistent with existing average densities of development, when in villages.

Action Statement:

Encourage development patterns that minimize conversion of productive farmland. Where non-prime land is not available, incorporate new homes as part of an open space zoning development.

Goal: Encourage commercial development that is reflective of the character of Leelanau County.

Objective:

Discourage strip commercial development and promote compact and cluster development patterns through local land use plans and regulations.

Action Statement:

Local governments throughout the county should adopt plans and regulations which discourage (or better, prohibit) strip commercial development and spot zoning practices. Regulations should encourage the development of mixed-use commercial and residential centers in a way that is pleasing, conforming and reflective of the character of Leelanau County.

Action Statement:

Local governments should implement and adhere to objective site plan review standards for development proposals.

Action Statement:

Encourage local units of government to implement access control regulations throughout the county as a tool to better control access in emerging commercial areas and prevent the spread of a strip commercial pattern.

Action Statement:

Local comprehensive land use plans and zoning regulations should focus new commercial and industrial development in planned locations with a "Class A" road (or equivalent) and other adequate public facilities and in the amount necessary to meet immediate as opposed to speculative needs.

Action Statement:

Local comprehensive land use plans and zoning regulations should focus new commercial and industrial development in existing villages or existing commercial service centers except where careful planning has identified the need for and public benefits of locating new commercial or

industrial facilities elsewhere.

Action Statement:

Existing commercial centers should be supported by flexible zoning practices that encourage flexibility and support zoning practices that encourage retention of existing businesses as well as adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Allow existing buildings and commercial centers to be used for a new use.

Action Statement:

New commercial development that cannot be accommodated in existing village centers should be encouraged by local zoning to locate in multiuse commercial centers: small commercial centers surrounded by residential areas rather than in strip malls or other forms of strip commercial development.

Action Statement:

New large resort development should be considered a commercial use of land that has impacts of greater than local concern. As such, approvals for new resort development should be reviewed and evaluated by adjoining local governments and county agencies prior to a decision by the local government having the development approval authority.

Objective:

Village, partial and rural service districts should be established for sewer, water, and roads to prevent sprawl and to economically provide only the services necessary for the average development densities established by the Leelanau General Plan and implemented *as determined* by local plans and zoning regulations.

Action Statement:

Local comprehensive land use plans, local zoning regulations, and both local and county public facility decisions should reflect conformance with the village, partial, and rural service districts established in this Leelanau General Plan (see action statements which follow).

Action Statement:

Village service districts are established in this plan to identify the future extent of public services for new sewers, water, and roads within the next twenty years in those areas abutting existing villages in the county. An urban service area should be designated in that urban portion of southeast Elmwood Township abutting Traverse City.

Action Statement:

Special areas in the county, such as around an inland lake, that may benefit from some limited public service, such as a sewer system to solve a water quality problem, may be established as a partial services district. Such service areas should not be developed or designed so as to accommodate more intensive future development unless redesignated as a village service district. Where less capital intensive solutions are possible (such as a septic tank maintenance program) they should be used.

Action Statement:

The portion of the county not in an urban service district, a village service district or a partial service district, should be in a rural service district.

Action Statement:

Local governments without existing public sewer and water facilities and services should introduce such services only when and where there is a demonstrated need for such services and no other feasible or preferable alternative is available.

Objective:

Local comprehensive land use plans and development regulations should include buffer standards between residential land uses and agricultural, commercial or industrial land uses to minimize the nuisance impacts of one use upon the other.

Action Statement:

Local governments should establish appropriate buffer standards between land uses and promote common use of these standards throughout the county, and distribute educational materials to promote wide understanding and application of buffer standards.

Action Statement:

Local zoning regulations should require the land developer to provide the buffer, not the adjoining farmer or other landowner.

Objective:

Low density compatible uses should be encouraged by the creation of flexible zoning and incentive programs for private landowners who commit their land to uses which enhance the scenic resources and the public investment in parks.

Action Statement:

Local governments should create incentive programs which have the effect of decreasing residential density on appropriate land adjacent to public parks. Acquisition of conservation easements could be used as the preferred method for preserving scenic land in private ownership near the parks.

Action Statement:

Local plans and zoning ordinances should recognize the importance of preserving scenic open space near parks. Local government units may create ordinances which encourage low density and/or clustered development and quality commercial development in villages adjacent to parks. Such zoning should be compatible with incentive programs to preserve land and should include site plan review provisions for new development near existing parks.

Objective:

Regulations to protect inland lakes from the effects of keyholing and shoreline erosion and fertilization should be established and implemented.

Action Statement:

Keyhole regulations should recognize the importance and legitimacy of public access to inland lakes and not work to thwart efforts to increase public access promoted by other policies in this plan. Different types of public access can be provided for (e.g., for recreation, or for fire trucks to draw water in an emergency).

Action Statement:

Local governments should adopt greenbelt regulations for lakes and streams that require set-back areas with native vegetation and limited tree removal.

Action Statement:

Local governments, with the assistance of the County, should work to develop keyholing and greenbelt regulations that are consistent across jurisdictions.

Objective:

Economically viable sand and gravel resources should be identified and protected from surface conversion to other uses prior to initiation of extraction activities. Extraction should always be based on an approved reclamation plan which focuses on the future land use after extraction activities are complete.

Action Statement:

Local governments should include protection of priority sand and gravel resources in local comprehensive land use plans and zoning regulations.

Objective:

Training programs which, a) outline the purpose and goals of the Leelanau General Plan, b) describe the responsibilities of local Commission and Board members and, c) provide case studies of various zoning issues that demonstrate the need for objectivity and consistency in decision making, should be conducted/coordinated periodically by the county.

Action Statement:

The County Planning Department and Planning Commission should administer the creation and presentation of annual training programs.

Action Statement:

County and local officials should participate in formal training programs such as the Citizen Planner program and Certified Zoning Administrator program offered through MSU Extension.

Objective:

Local governments should adopt zoning regulations that promote energy conservation as a part of new land use and development activity.

Action Statement:

The County Planning Commission should develop a model ordinance that ensures protection of solar and wind access rights for application in local site plan reviews.

Action Statement:

The County and local governments should encourage use of energy saving technology in new construction and site design.

Objective:

In preparing land use plans and zoning regulations, local governments should provide for a variety of housing types.

Action Statement:

The County and Housing Action Committee (HAC) should assist local governments in identifying the overall need for different housing types, with emphasis on requirements of populations such as the elderly, infirm, migrant workers, young families, workforce housing, and low income.

Action Statement:

Local zoning ordinances should provide for a variety of housing types including small lot single family homes, multiple family dwellings, and condominiums.

Action Statement:

The permitting and plan approval review processes for housing developments should be simplified as one means of reducing housing costs.

Action Statement:

Zoning and other land use regulations should have the flexibility to accommodate practical and affordable housing options.

Action Statement:

The county and local governments should support initiatives for congregate housing for elderly and other special needs populations.

Action Statement:

The County should maintain its housing rehabilitation and replacement program through the Planning and Community Development office.

Action Statement

The County, and the HAC should participate with the nonprofit Leelanau REACH (Resources for Economical and Accessible Community Housing), Homestretch, and Habitat for Humanity, in order to continue efforts to add to the County's affordable housing stock. Efforts should include new construction and the facilitation of donations of homes to relocate to new lots.

Action Statement:

The County should utilize programs of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Michigan State Housing Development Authority, and other related programs for technical and financial assistance.

Action Statement:

The County, HAC, local governments, and non-profits should cooperate and coordinate efforts to add affordable housing to the County's housing stock.