

## Chapter 9

# NON-MUNICIPAL PUBLIC SERVICES

### INTRODUCTION

County and local governments do not provide all of the important public services in the County. Residents and visitors also rely on natural gas, telephone, cable and satellite, internet, electric, and medical services provided by private sector businesses. The availability of these services impacts the quality of life in the County. The availability of utilities can greatly affect economic development potentials, communications, and available day to day conveniences. Availability of medical services can have a profound impact upon quality of life conditions.

Because of the importance of these non-municipal services, the continuation and expansion of them must be incorporated into the planning process for the County. These services operate hand-in-hand with many municipally provided services and with other services provided by the private sector.

### ISSUES

#### Electric Service

Currently, electrical service is provided to the entire County through Cherryland Rural Electric Cooperative and Consumers Energy. See Map 9-1. Wolverine Power Supply provides electricity to numerous substations in the County. Cherryland Electric Cooperative distributes this electricity throughout Leelanau County. Consumers Energy is also responsible for transmitting electricity to numerous substations located in the County. There is one Wind Energy Conversion System (WECS) in Elmwood Township which is operated by Heritage Sustainable Energy and provides electricity to a few hundred homes.

#### Gas Service

Currently, natural gas service is far more limited in the County than is electrical service. According to the Michigan Public Service Commission, Natural Gas in Leelanau county is distributed by DTE Gas Company. The lack of gas service limits (especially on the west side of the County) the options available for heating and other gas burning residential and nonresidential activities.



### **Telephone & Internet Service**

Telephone service is provided throughout the entire County by AT&T, Verizon, and CenturyLink. Cellular telephone service is available throughout the County. A network of towers providing cell phone service, emergency services communication, TV, radio and other communication services has been erected. See Map 9-2. Leelanau Internet Futures Team (LIFT), created by the Leelanau Peninsula Economic Foundation, launched an action plan in 2018 for provision of high-speed Internet services throughout Leelanau County. A significant majority (81%) of respondents strongly agree or agree that Leelanau County needs more access to high-speed internet. The use of county-owned towers to expand high speed Internet services was determined the best course of action. LIFT is also working with townships to discuss common zoning requirements, and working with the Road Commission on work within right-of-ways by Internet Service Providers (ISPs).

### **Radio Service**

There are numerous radio stations servicing the County. Some have towers in the County or rent tower space.

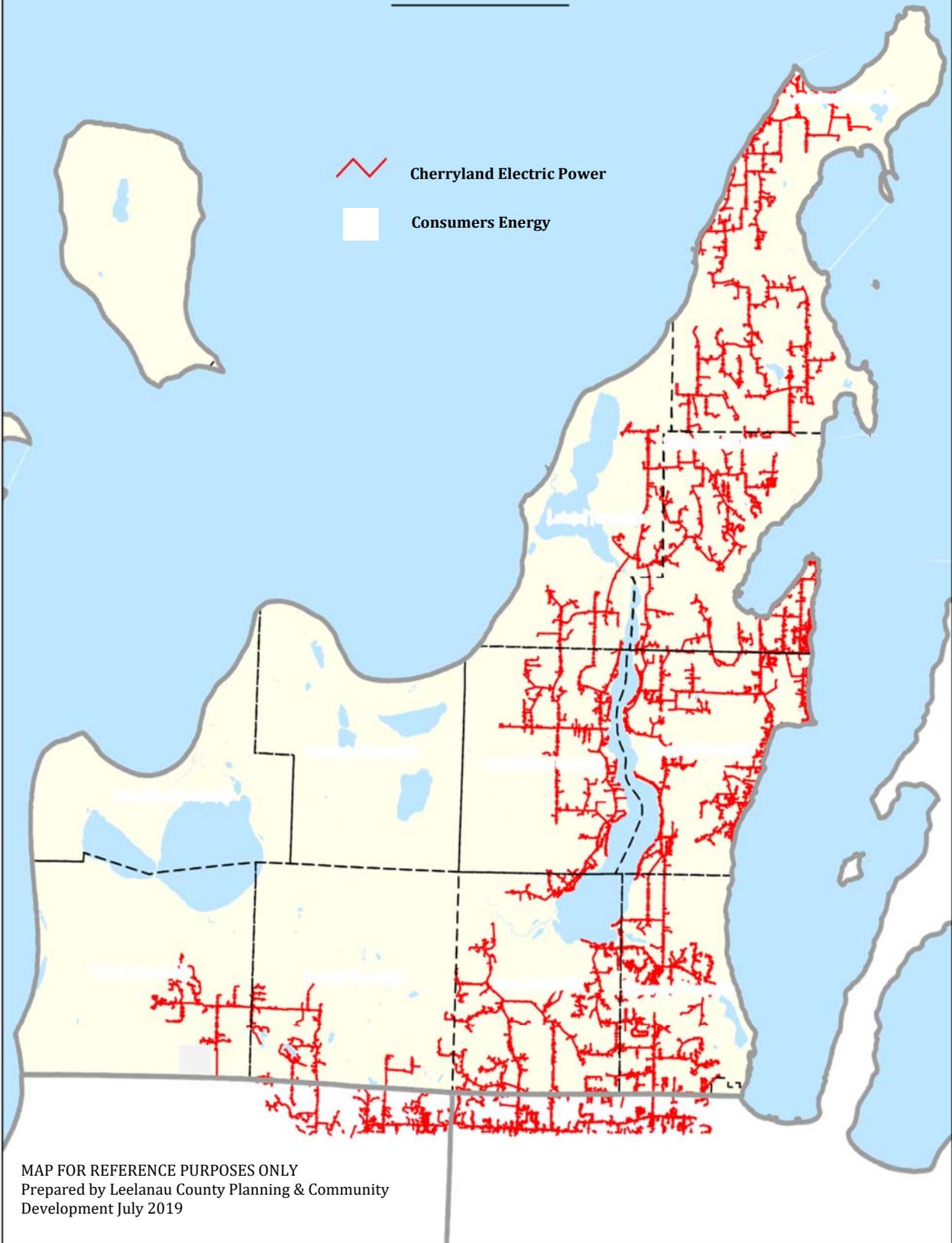
### **Medical Facilities**

Residents and visitors to the County also have access to several dental clinics and several private clinics and doctors offering psychiatric, optometric, chiropractic and general medicine. The Grand Traverse/Leelanau Community Mental Health Services facility is located in Traverse City. The Maple Valley Nursing Home in Maple City is a private company which provides care to senior citizens. Medi-Lodge is a similar facility operating in Suttons Bay, and there are other adult care facilities located throughout the County. In addition, there is a health clinic located in Peshawbestown. Munson Medical Center in Traverse City is now the primary health care facility for the County.

The average age of the population in Leelanau County is rising. In part, this parallels national trends dominated by aging baby boomers, and in part is due to a rise in the number of retirees moving into the County. This trend will be accompanied by an increase in demands placed upon area health care facilities. This increase will undoubtedly show itself in both a heightened need for additional health care facilities and greater accessibility, and herein lies the fundamental challenge. The high and continually rising costs of health care today generally necessitates the need for larger hospitals to assure long term economic viability. Thus, whereas the County is approaching a need for increased health care facilities and greater ease of access, it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide the necessary services.

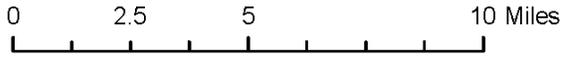
While the County is experiencing these health care needs and, to a lesser extent, natural gas and other utility expansion needs, it must be recognized that improvements in these areas will act to attract development. Improvements in health care and utility infrastructure inevitably improve local quality of life conditions. As quality of life conditions improve, the area becomes more at-

# Map 9-1 Electric Service Areas

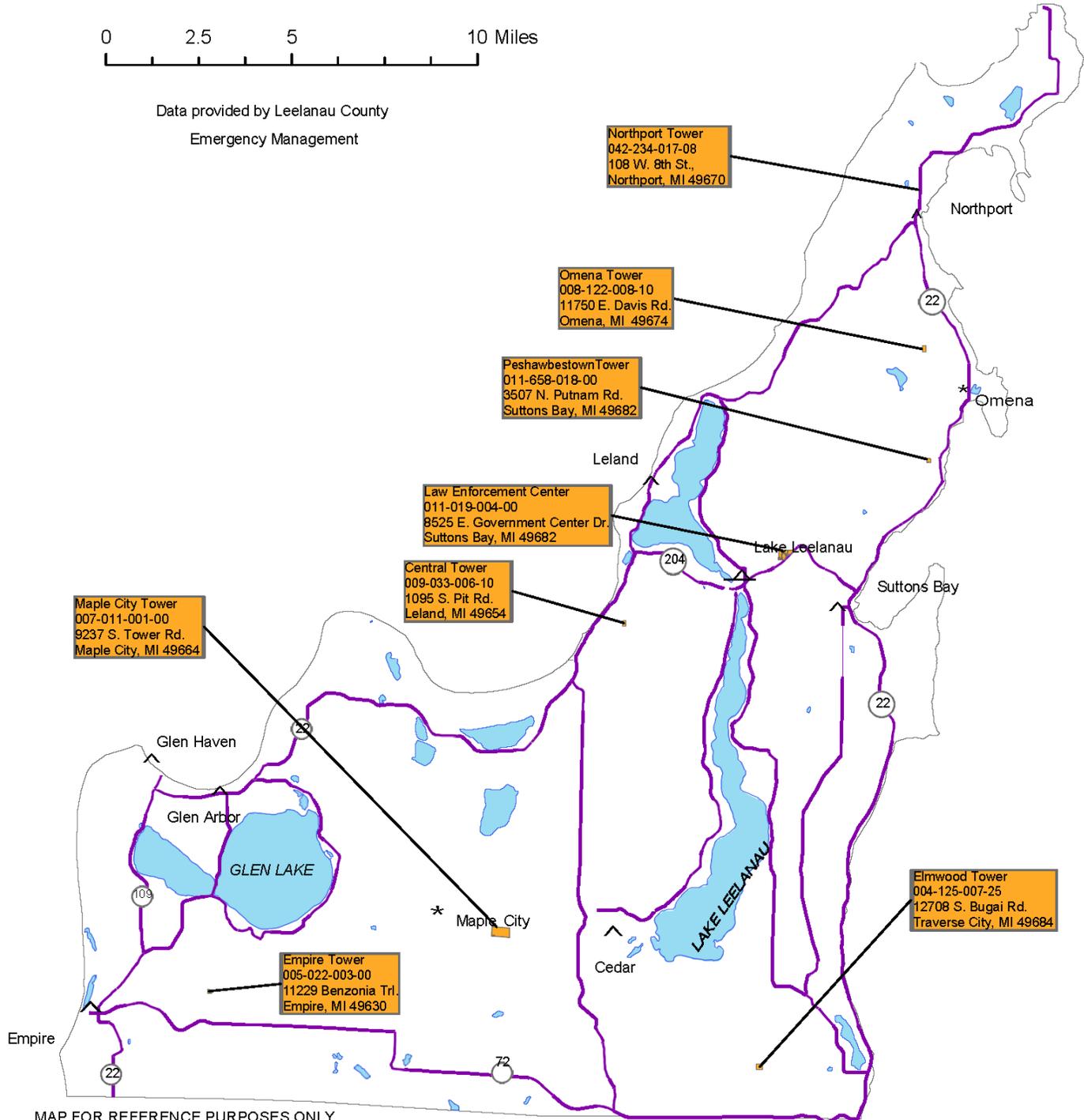


# Map 9-2 Leelanau County Tower Sites

Leelanau County Tower Sites



Data provided by Leelanau County  
Emergency Management



MAP FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY  
Prepared by Leelanau County Planning &  
Community Development July 2019

## A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

The **Leelanau General Plan** recognizes the critical link between non-municipal public services and the future welfare of the County's municipalities and its residents. In this regard, it becomes vital that the planning of future utility expansions occurs in a coordinated manner with the future growth and development programs of the individual local municipalities as well as the County as a whole. This is particularly applicable for natural gas distribution and cable service, both of which are provided in limited fashion.

Joint initiatives by the public and private sectors could be established and aimed at improving health care services in the County. Consideration should be given to an array of options to reach this end. Special health care transportation systems could be examined which might better improve access to public and private health care facilities. Other programs which might provide for a greater County-wide distribution of health care facilities while still meeting the intent of local community plans, zoning ordinances, and this plan could also be pursued.



## **NON-MUNICIPAL PUBLIC SERVICES POLICIES AND ACTION STATEMENTS**

The following policies, objectives and action statements are intended to establish the blueprint for implementing the **General Plan** recommendations for the future of the County's non-municipal public services and facilities.

**Goal:** The **General Plan** envisions goals, objectives and actions that will result, to the greatest extent possible, in the availability and adequate capacity of Non Municipal Public Services that will provide for the protection of health, welfare and safety of citizens and visitors of the County while protecting the County's natural resources, air and water quality. It is further the vision of this **General Plan** that Non-Municipal Public Services will be available and of adequate capacity to support a sustainable 21st century economy.

**Goal:** To have telephone, cell phone, broadband, electric, gas, and alternative energy in adequate capacity.

### **Objective:**

Ensure environmental protection, while providing adequate utility services.

### **Action Statement:**

County and local government should coordinate, to the greatest degree practical, all planning of and construction of capital improvement projects with the planning and construction activities of public and private utilities. Expansion of service areas should support the planned future land use pattern and timing of development as identified in local master plans.

### **Action Statement:**

Local governments should develop policies regarding planned future land use patterns and the timing of development in coordination with existing and projected utility service areas and the Village Service districts of the **General Plan**.

### **Action Statement:**

Local governments should adopt zoning and subdivision regulations which require the placement of utilities below ground in all cases where practically feasible, and deal with placement, construction, collocation, modification and abandonment of wireless service facilities.

### **Action Statement:**

County and local government should take necessary steps to ensure universal access to high speed internet/broadband services for all residences in the County.