

# THE LEELANAU GENERAL PLAN



## Policy Guidelines for Managing Growth In Leelanau County

*Adopted 1995  
With Amendments through 2019*

# LEELANAU GENERAL PLAN:

## Policy Guidelines for Managing Growth in Leelanau County

### Principal Goal

It is the principal goal of the **Leelanau General Plan** to establish a strategy for guiding growth that protects and, where possible, enhances the unique character of life in the county. To that end, the **General Plan** focuses on balancing environmental protection, resource management, and economic development so as to provide a foundation for a suitable economy that permits long term prosperity for all present and future Leelanau County residents. The balance so achieved should not sacrifice environmental quality when reasonable and prudent development alternatives exist. This plan recognizes that a healthy economy depends on a healthy environment. Achievement of this goal means protecting the integrity of the land base for use by present generations without unnecessarily compromising the options of future generations.

**LEELANAU COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

*William Bunek, Chairman  
Melinda Lautner, Vice-Chair  
Anthony Ansorge  
Patricia Soutas-Little  
Carolyn Rentenbach  
Deb Rushton  
Ty Wessell*

**LEELANAU COUNTY  
ADMINISTRATION**

Chet Janik  
*County Administrator*

Laurel Evens  
*Executive Assistant*

**LEELANAU COUNTY  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

Victor Goldschmidt *Chairman*  
Casey Noonan, *Vice-Chair*  
Steve Yoder, *Chair Pro-Tem*  
Dan Hubbell  
Melinda Lautner  
Jessica Lukomski

David McCulloch  
Robert Miller  
Tom Nixon  
Eric Winkelman  
Matt Walter

**LEELANAU COUNTY  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

Trudy J. Galla  
*AICP Planning Director*

Gail Myer  
*Senior Planner*

Molly Steck  
*Secretary*

Diane Kiessel  
*Housing Manager*

**THE LEELANAU GENERAL PLAN**  
**Policy Guidelines for Managing Growth**

**Dedication**

**Background and Summary**

**Preface**

***Part One: County View***

<b>Chapter 1: Intergovernmental Cooperation and Regional Context</b>	1-1
<b>Chapter 2: Preservation of Character</b>	2-1
<b>Chapter 3: Working With Nature</b>	3-1
<b>Chapter 4: Balanced Growth</b>	4-1
<b>Chapter 5: Growth Guidelines and Decision Maps</b>	5-1

**Part Two: Functional View**

<b>Chapter 6: Natural Resources and the Environment</b>	6-1
<b>Chapter 7: Transportation</b>	7-1
<b>Chapter 8: Public Facilities and Physical Services</b>	8-1
<b>Chapter 9: Non-Municipal Public Services</b>	9-1
<b>Chapter 10: Economic Development</b>	10-1
<b>Chapter 11: Health and Human Services</b>	11-1
<b>Chapter 12: Land Use</b>	12-1

**Part Three: Implementation**

<b>Chapter 13: Local and County Land Use Issues</b>	13-1
<b>Chapter 14: Structure for Land Use Decision Making</b>	14-1
<b>Chapter 15: General Plan Implementation</b>	15-1

**LIST OF FIGURES**

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1-1: Issues of Greater than Local Concern.....	1-4
Figure 2-1: Leelanau County Land Use/Land Cover.....	2-1
Figure 2-2: Population Trend.....	2-10
Figure 2-3: Protect Visual Character.....	2-11
Figure 3-1: Environmental Strategy.....	3-6
Figure 4-1: Balanced Growth Strategy.....	4-5
Figure 10-2: Percent Change in Housing Units.....	10-6
Figure 10-3: 2018 Total Millage for Homestead & Non-Homestead Properties	10-7
Figure 10-4: Residential SEV as Percentage of Total SEV from 1996,2011 & 2018.....	10-7
Figure 11-1: Leading Causes of Death .....	11-3
Figure 12-1: 1 Section, First Division into 10-Acre Parcels.....	12-8
Figure 12-2: 1 Section, Second Division, 4 Parcels from Each 10-Acre Parcel.....	12-8

**LIST OF CHARTS AND TABLES**

Chart 5-3b Policies Chart Sensitive Environments.....	5-14
Table 10-1: 2000—2010 Census.....	10-2
Table 10-2: Projected Population and Housing Units.....	10-2
Table 12-1: Population Per Square Mile.....	12-2
Table 12-2: Land Cover in Acres, 2000.....	12-7
Table 12-3: Agricultural Land in Acres, 2000.....	12-7

## LIST OF MAPS

Map 2-1: Landforms and Open Space.....	2-5
Map 2-2: Landscape Districts.....	2-6
Map 3-1: Inland Lakes and Streams.....	3-2
Map 3-2: Wetlands.....	3-3
Map 5-1: Community Types.....	5-3
Map 5-2a: Future Land Use Map—Agricultural Land.....	5-8
Map 5-2b: Future Land Use Map—Natural Features.....	5-9
Map 5-2c: Future Land Use Map—Incorporated Villages & Areas of Residential Population...	5-10
Map 5-2d: Future Land Use Map—Natural Terrain.....	5-11
Map 5-3a: Policies Map—Community Types.....	5-13
Map 5-3c: Policies Map—Public/Quasi-Public & Institutional Facilities.....	5-15
Map 5-3d: Policies Map—Recreation Facilities.....	5-16
Map 5-4: Transportation Map.....	5-18
Map 6-1: Soil Permeability.....	6-5
Map 6-2: Prime Forestlands.....	6-6
Map 6-3: Steep Slopes.....	6-7
Map 6-4: Critical Dunes.....	6-8
Map 6-5: High Risk Erosion Areas.....	6-10
Map 6-6: Cropland Suitability.....	6-11
Map 6-7: Orchard Suitability.....	6-13
Map 7-1: Road Class.....	7-4
Map 8-1: County Facilities.....	8-2
Map 8-2: Public Water and Sewer Systems.....	8-5
Map 8-3: Municipal Facilities.....	8-5
Map 8-4: Fire/Emergency Service Areas.....	8-6
Map 8-5: Public Recreational Facilities.....	8-6
Map 9-1: Electric Service Areas.....	9-3
Map 9-2: Tower Sites.....	9-3
Map 10-1: Leelanau County Work Force Reporting Outside the County.....	10-3
Map 11-2: Percent of Population Age 65 and Over.....	11-4
Map 12-1: Land Cover, 2000.....	12-5
Map 12-2: Agricultural Lands.....	12-6

## **DEDICATION**

This General Plan is dedicated to the present and future generations of Leelanau County. The Plan is dedicated to the belief that the current residents of the County hold the County in trust, with a responsibility to pass it on to future generations in at least as good a condition as we received it from those who came before us. It is further dedicated with thanks for the generous labor, creative thoughts, and commitment of the hundreds of citizens who contributed to this effort.

## **LEELANAU GENERAL PLAN**

### ***Background and Summary***

The **Leelanau General Plan**, created through a public process involving many hours of citizen involvement, sets forth the needs and priorities for maintaining and improving the quality of life in Leelanau County. This **Plan**, which was first approved on July 11, 1994 by the Leelanau County Planning Commission and on May 1, 1995 by the Leelanau County Board of Commissioners, has been reviewed every 5 years and undergone several updates. Timely reviews, updates, and major revisions are all necessary in order for this **Plan** to remain a relevant and useful document, that will assist in the preservation of the best and most desirable elements of Leelanau County.

The background and findings of the **Leelanau General Plan** identify development, environmental protection, and economic development as the most pressing issues facing the County.

- Uncontrolled development may erode some of the most prized elements of the County – its scenic beauty, rural character, and high environmental quality.
- Monitoring the quality of the County's water, land, and other natural resources is crucial to maintaining the high quality of life that the County currently enjoys.
- The geographic location of the County has created an economy that has difficulty sustaining year-round employment, particularly for younger residents. Coordination of economic development and adequate housing opportunities will be necessary to address this issue as the County grows.

The **Plan** recognizes that to successfully address any of these issues, a balance must be achieved between all of them. The **Plan** further acknowledges that this balance can only be achieved with coordination between multiple units of government and their citizens.

The **Leelanau General Plan** is a complex document, intended to serve as a foundation for planning. A great deal of background information, policy guidelines, and recommendations are provided to assist citizens and governments in research and decision-making in land use issues. To assist with the use of the document, the Leelanau County Planning Commission suggests that readers first familiarize themselves with the Principal Goal of the **Plan**, found at the beginning of the document and in the Preface. The Principal Goal serves as the foundation and rationale behind the policy recommendations found throughout the **Plan**.

The **Leelanau General Plan**, and its several revisions, are the result of many hours of hard work by many citizens of Leelanau County. The County Planning Commission would like to thank all those involved in the creation of this document, as well as the readers of the Plan, for their involvement in and commitment to Leelanau County.