

Master Plan

Township of Pentwater,
Oceana County, Michigan

Update 2016

PENTWATER TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN 2016 UPDATE

- It should be noted that within the body of the Pentwater Township Master Plan the word “Community” includes the Township and the Village.

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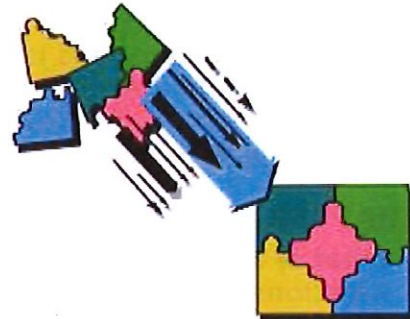
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CHAPTER 1

THE MASTER PLAN

What is a Master Plan?

- It should be noted that within the body of the Pentwater Township Master Plan the word “Community” includes the Township and the Village.



Building a community is a little like putting a jigsaw puzzle together; each land use decision fits another piece of the puzzle. Just as we use the top of the jigsaw puzzle box to guide our progress, the Master Plan provides us with a guide for fulfilling our vision of the future.

Master Plans are authorized by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008). This Act describes the basic purposes and requirements of Master Plans, including the need to:

- promote the public health, safety, and general welfare;
- encourage the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability;
- avoid the overcrowding of land by buildings or people;
- lessen congestion on public roads and streets;
- facilitate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, recreation and other public improvements; and
- consider the character of each township and its suitability for particular uses judged in terms of such factors as the trend in land and population development.

The reasons Master Plans are adopted vary widely. Pentwater Village and Township officials have recognized the need to preserve the character of the community that first drew them, and others, here. **Although the Master Plan has little legal authority, it is a powerful expression of a community's intentions**

(The Master Plan) is a powerful expression of Pentwater Township's intentions for the future.

for the future. Once adopted, it is used to guide the Pentwater Township Planning Commission and Township Board decisions regarding issues which affect the use of land.

The dedication of community leaders and the desire of the Pentwater Township Planning Commission and the Township Board members to preserve the qualities that they felt made Pentwater Township unique brought forth this planning process.

The "Pentwater Community" Master Plan

The Pentwater Community Master Plan was initially adopted in 1997. Shortly after beginning work on Pentwater Township's Master Plan, the Village of Pentwater requested to join in the planning process to develop a single, unified Plan which could be adopted and followed by each community. Both communities recognized that the concept of "community" went beyond the unseen municipal boundaries which separate Township and Village. The people of the "Pentwater Community" work, shop, relax, and go to school every day without regard to the artificial lines that separate one political jurisdiction from another. The Community Master Plan was adopted on July 23, 1997.

It was especially encouraging to have two neighboring communities recognize their interdependency and wish to build on their common strengths, while preserving their individual identities. The Village and Township of Pentwater are linked physically, economically, and geographically. Their shared interests in maintaining a high standard of living, protecting those assets that make each community what it is, and charting a future course to preserve their distinct character led to the formulation of a joint planning effort.

This effort demanded a process that recognized and respected the individual needs, interests, and priorities of each community; but created an atmosphere for joint decision-making on matters of mutual interest and concern.

In 2003, the Community Master Plan was reviewed, and several amendments to the Future Land Use maps were adopted. This effort was in response to changes to the Municipal and Township Planning Acts (in effect at that time) that required the Planning Commission to review the Master Plan every five years and determine if an update or new plan is needed. The five year review requirement remains in the new Michigan Planning Enabling Act. In 2008, the Village and Township Planning Commissions began reviewing the Master Plan and determined that several updates were necessary. A new community-wide survey was distributed to determine current opinions on land use within the Village and Township. Both the text and the Future Land Use maps were updated. The draft update was distributed to the surrounding municipalities and the Oceana County Planning Commission, in accordance with the Planning Act.

In 2014 the Village of Pentwater made the decision to update the joint Master Plan to reflect only the Village's intentions for the future. Therefore the Township needed to create their own Master Plan to reflect the Township's vision for the future.

The Public Planning Process

For the adoption of the original plan, the Pentwater Township and Village Planning Commissions wanted the Master Plan to reflect the desires of the people of the community concerning future development. This input was first obtained through a mailed survey sent in the summer of 1996 to randomly selected households in the Township and Village, including seasonal residents. The survey asked a number of questions about growth attitudes, needed improvements, and concerns about the future.

In all, the survey was initially sent to a random sample of seasonal and permanent residents. Other copies were picked up by a number of residents and returned. The results of the survey helped the Planning Commission formulate the Vision and Values (as described in Chapter 2) that will be used to guide land use decisions. A joint public hearing was also held to receive input on the draft of the Plan.

For this Update, a new survey was created. The Kercher Center for Social Research at Western Michigan University created a random sample of 604 potential respondents. Out of this sample, 334 responses were received, for a response rate of 55.3 percent. As a result of this new survey, the Vision and Values have been revised. The results of the survey can be found in the Appendix. Full results are compiled in a separate document, "Village of Pentwater and Pentwater Township Master Plan Update Community Survey," available for inspection at the Township and Village Hall.

Community Vision and Goals

Determining the overall direction of the Plan, and that of the community, took place during a goal setting process in preparation of the original Land Use Plan in 1997. The goals for the Plan were structured around the major issues and desires as expressed by both Planning Commissions, the Township Board and Village Council, as well as the Community Survey. A Town Meeting was held to begin development of the initial set of goals and a Vision Statement. These statements and ideas were later formed into a Community Vision, a description of Core Values, and a set of Goals. These are contained in Chapter 3 and have been re-approved and re-stated for this Master Plan Update.

The Master Plan Update Process

Township Issues

To create this Update, the Pentwater Township Planning Commission formed a committee to create draft reflecting on the Township's issues that formed the basis of the 2009 Plan. This draft was then reviewed and enhanced to reflect the views of the entire Township Planning Commission. The text of

this Update reflects the changes in issues that have occurred since 2009, as well as the results of the 2008 Community Survey.



The Planning Commission

Planning Commission members are selected to be representatives of major interests in their community. But Planning Commissioners are not legal representatives of area residents; the Township Board members fulfill that role. The Planning Commission, through the Planning Acts, is delegated the responsibility of completing and adopting the Master Plan; in fact, the Plan need not be adopted by the Township Board. However, for the Plan to be effective, the ongoing participation of elected Pentwater Township representatives was critical, making them important players in the formulation of the Master Plan. After all, these officials would later be asked to implement the Plan through the adoption of various ordinances.

Attitude Survey

The next step was the development, mailing, and tabulation of a new Attitude Survey. As was done in 1997, the survey was used to gather concerns regarding the future development of the area. A summary of the results may be found in the Appendix.

Data Collection

The purpose of data collection is to form a picture of the community as it is now, compared to how it used to be. The data collected and included in the Plan relate directly to the character of the area. Updated Census data about the population, economic, and social status of residents was collected. Chapter 2 reflects 2010 Census data, replacing the 2000 data.

Existing land use can speak volumes about past development policies and how effectively they were implemented. Even a cursory look at mapped land uses will present an interesting picture of how the community has

developed. For example, incompatible uses scattered throughout the community, with some close to residential uses, may be a reflection on the wisdom of past zoning and land use decisions, and could complicate planning of those mixed areas.

Another important part of the character of Pentwater Township embodied in its natural features (lakes, streams, shoreline, wetlands, topography, woodlands, floodplain, soils, etc.). Information regarding the natural resources of the community was collected and analyzed to highlight those areas which should be treated sensitively. Much of the information collected as part of this analysis is contained in Chapter 2, "The Pentwater Community".

Future Land Use

The land use information collected earlier was then reviewed to determine broad land use patterns; where residential uses were concentrated, where commercial uses had developed; and how public use of land had influenced development.

Environmental conditions were also considered in future land use planning. The Commissions determined earlier those areas which were environmentally sensitive, appropriate limitations on the intensity of development that should be allowed to occur, and the need for the creation of additional development regulations.

The establishment of goals and objectives played an important part in determining future land use patterns. The Future Land Use map reflects these goals. In addition, future land use considers:

- environmental constraints;
- uses needed in the community;
- watershed management;
- capacities of community services; and
- effects on existing land uses.

A description of existing and future land uses is contained in Chapter 4.

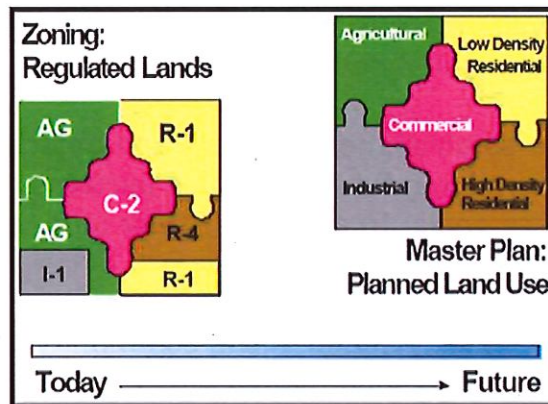
Master Plan and Zoning

The relationship between the Master Plan, and the zoning map of the Zoning Ordinance is a critical one. The primary difference between the two is a matter of timing. The Master Plan shows the intended use of land at the end of the planning period, which could be as long as 20 years in the future; the Zoning Ordinance shows land as it is intended to be used today. Accordingly, the two maps will normally not be identical.

Another point of confusion with property owners is the effect that a Master Plan has on the current use of their land. **The Master Plan is a policy document; its adoption does not regulate or change the use of land.** Only a change to the Zoning Ordinance, through a rezoning, can change the uses to which the land may be put, or change the regulations affecting that land.

However, the Master Plan should be taken as a strong indication of the intent of the community to coordinate the Plan’s land use and the Zoning Ordinance’s designation of land into various zoning districts. Rezoning requests will normally be required to be consistent with the land use designation of the Master Plan.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires that a Master Plan include a “zoning plan” that explains “how the land use categories on the future land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map.” Chapter 5 of this Update is the Zoning Plan, which identifies each zoning district on the Pentwater Community Zoning Map and correlates them with the Future Land Use maps found in the Appendix of this Update.



Conclusion

The leaders of Pentwater Township have a responsibility to look beyond the day-to-day zoning issues and provide guidance for land use and development through the Master Plan. A properly developed, well thought-out Master Plan can be of great value by providing tangible benefits in improved quality of life, more efficient use of financial and other resources, a cleaner environment, and an economically healthy community.

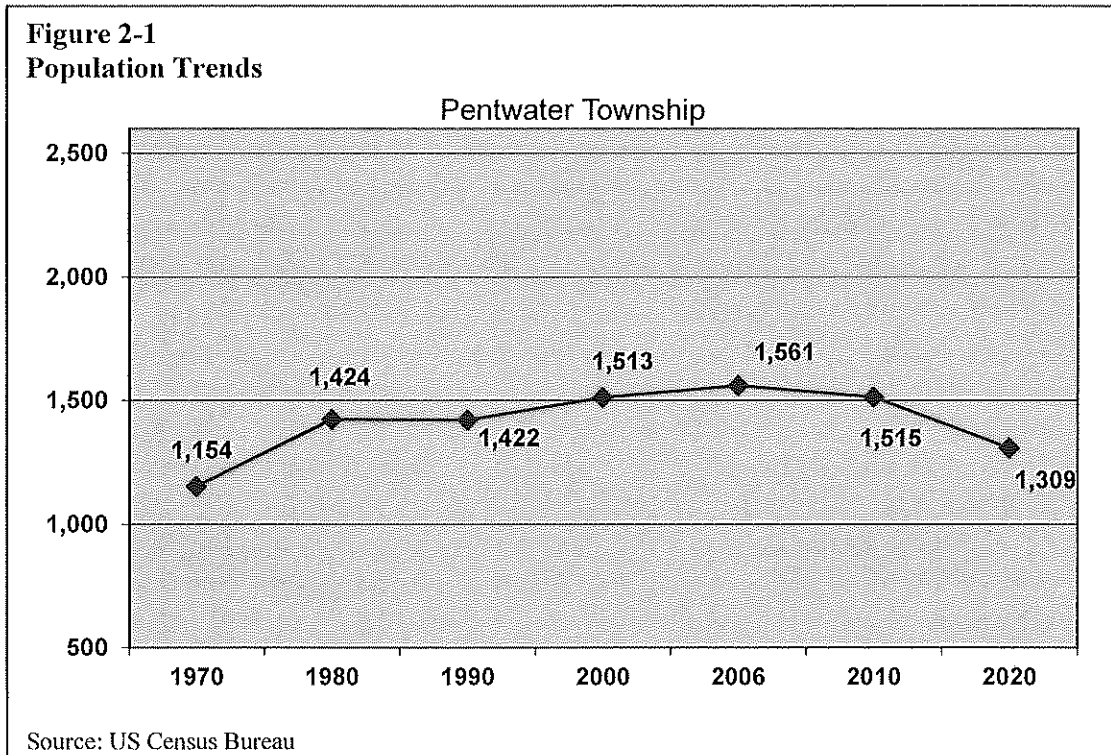
However, the value of the Master Plan is directly related to a willingness to follow its course, and diligence in keeping the plan current and relevant to today's conditions. It is hard work; but the rewards make the effort worthwhile. Just as they did in 2009, the Planning Commission and citizens involved in this Update have exercised their responsibilities to provide a clear, useful and forward-thinking Master Plan that meets the needs of the community at the beginning of the 21st Century.

CHAPTER 2 PENTWATER TOWNSHIP

Population Trends

The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission estimated that Pentwater Township had a population of nearly 1,550 in 2010. The population has remained relatively stable since the 2000 census which reported 1,513 residents. It is important to note that these population figures reflect year round residents only and do not account for the effects seasonal residents have on Pentwater’s population.

It is expected this trend of very slow or minimal growth or even a slight decline will continue in the future. The extent of this pattern will depend on a number of factors, many of which may only be marginally influenced by the



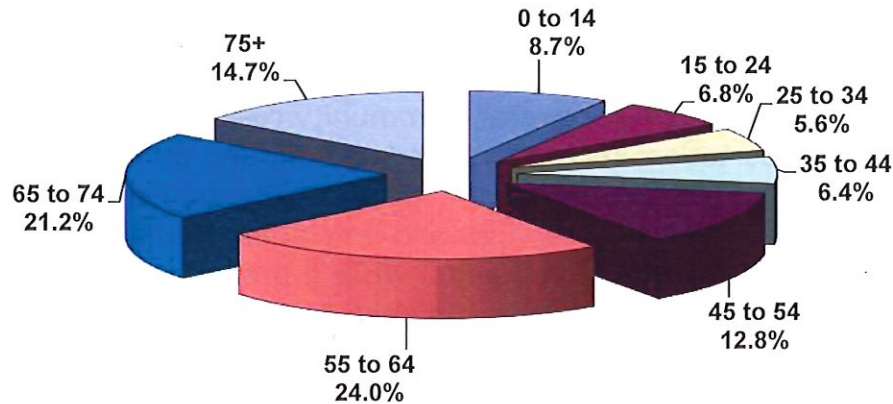
Township, such as lifestyles, commuting habits, economic influences, housing availability and cost and the lack of employment for younger people.

Age Characteristics

Age characteristics of the Pentwater Community residents assist in indicating economic, transportation, recreational, education, and other community needs. By examining the demographic mix of residents, Pentwater Township can better plan for Township services and amenities. Median age can provide a general gauge of the age of residents, while a breakdown of ages is useful to gain a better sense of the needs and desires of the population.

The median age of roughly 56.3 years old for the Pentwater Community was considerably higher than Oceana County, which itself increased from 37 in 2000 to almost 42 in 2010, and the state at 38.8 in 2010. The median age for the Pentwater Community has been steadily increasing from just over 53 in 2000 to 60.2 in 2010. While the age shift at the county and state levels is reflective of the national trend of a generally aging population as the baby boom generation matures and improvements in medical technology help people live longer, the greater increase in median age for Pentwater indicates other influences as well. The median age for the Pentwater Community reflects both population stability and the community's desirability as a retirement destination.

**Figure 2-2
Pentwater Community Age Distribution**



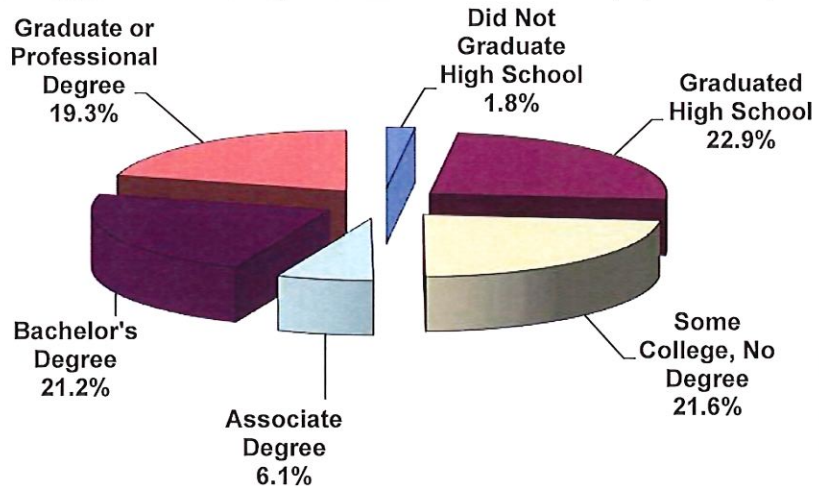
Source: US Census Bureau, 2010

As shown in Figure 2-2, the four largest population segments are 45 to 54, 55 to 64, and 65 to 74 and 75+, accounting for 72.2% of the population. The number of residents in the family forming years of 25 to 44 is relatively low and as a result Pentwater has a lower percentage of residents under 19 than the County and State, which average roughly a third of the population each.

Educational Attainment

Combined, over 93% of the Pentwater Community residents have a high school diploma and over a third of residents have a college degree, as illustrated in Figure

**Figure 2-3
Pentwater Community Educational Attainment (25 years and older)**



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2008-2012)

2-3. These numbers have increased since 1990 when only 85% of residents had a high school diploma and less than a quarter had a college degree.

Residents in the Pentwater Community have a higher level of educational attainment than residents of Oceana County. Roughly 80% of County residents have a high school diploma, while just under 20% have a college degree. The higher percentage of education in Pentwater is reflected in the types of employment Pentwater residents have and also in their incomes, which is also higher than other communities within Oceana County.

Household Characteristics

The Pentwater Community had 771 households as of 2010. The average number of persons per household has steadily decreased from 2.06 and 2.12 persons in 2000 for the Township and Village, respectively, to 1.95 and 1.89 in 2010. These figures are significantly lower than the 2.58 persons per household for the county and 2.53 for the state. The lower number of persons per household for Pentwater reflects the higher median age, the fewer numbers of families in the lower age ranges, and the presence of retirement couples/singles.

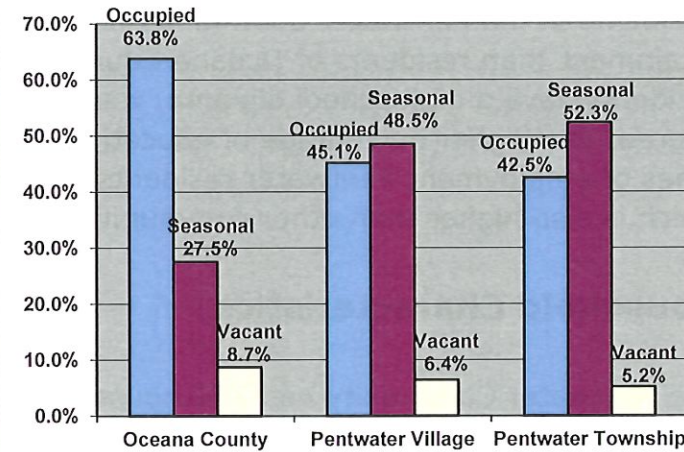
Households in Pentwater are predominantly single family detached homes, accounting for nearly 90% of all households. Multiple family units, including attached dwellings, duplexes, townhomes, and apartment complexes account for another 8% and mobile homes accounting for 2%.

Housing Tenure and Occupancy

Of the 1709 housing units within the Pentwater Community, roughly half are occupied year round, half are seasonal homes, and less than 5% are vacant as illustrated in Figure 2-4. Seasonal housing in Pentwater housing is significantly higher than the county average of 27%. This is in part due to the accessibility of the Lake Michigan and Pentwater Lake shorelines as well as the related recreational opportunities which attract seasonal residents.

The Pentwater Community has seen an increase in the percentage of seasonal housing (Figure 2.4). This increase represents a shift in the housing choices of people in the area. Contributing to the increase could be the result of improving economic conditions. Providing more dollars for spending on discretionary purchases, such as vacation homes. Also, a contributing factor to the increase in seasonal

**Figure 2-4
Pentwater Community Housing Occupancy**



Source: US Census Bureau, 2010

housing is the aging population in the Community. Full time residents, as they grow older, are selling their homes and downsizing to condominiums, apartments and/or assisted living housing in areas which offer more services and conveniences.

Housing tenure is whether the housing units are owner-occupied or renter-occupied. This information has implications on the quality of housing, maintenance of housing, and the level of transient residents. The Pentwater Community has approximately 80% of its housing units being owner occupied either full time or seasonal which is slightly lower than the County average but is still well above the state average of 72.1%.

Age of Housing

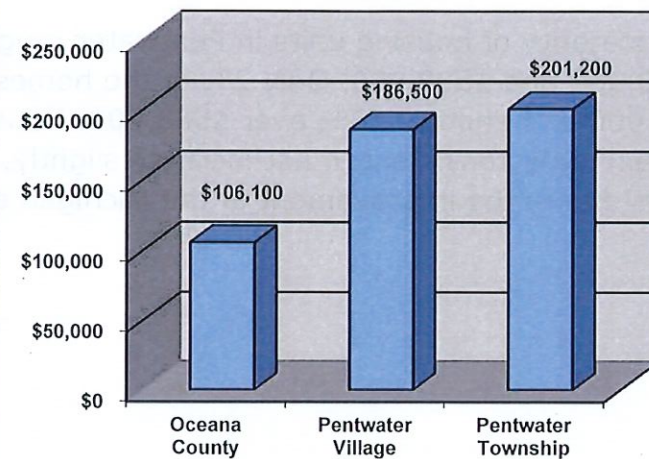
The age of housing provides an indicator of the quality, character, and maintenance needs of the Pentwater Communities' housing stock. About half of the homes in the Pentwater Community are over 50 years old, having been built before 1959. This older housing stock lends itself to higher maintenance costs and often times provide limitations in terms of expansion and modernization to keep up with modern preferences and lifestyles.

Re-investment in the housing stock is important to the future success of Pentwater, however improvements must be constructed to be compatible with the existing neighborhoods.

Housing Value

In 2010, housing values for the Pentwater Community, Oceana County, and the state are significantly higher than they were in 2000. Values for the Pentwater Community were significantly higher than the County as illustrated in Figure 2-6. The value of housing reflects the strength of the market; the types of homes based on factors such as size and quality, and the overall appeal of Pentwater. High value homes are also commonly

**Figure 2-6
Pentwater Community Median Housing Value**



Source: American Community Survey, 2009-2013

**Figure 2-5
Pentwater Community Age of Housing**

Year Built	Percent of Housing Stock
2000 to 2009	18.7%
1990 to 1999	13.5%
1980 to 1989	7.1%
1970 to 1979	17.3%
1960 to 1969	6.8%
1950 to 1959	4.4%
1940 to 1949	3.6%
1939 to earlier	27.4%

Source: American Community Survey, 2008-2012

associated with desirable lakeshore property. Pentwater is unique in that it had a higher than average housing value when compared to its neighboring communities, regardless of lake frontage, reaffirming Pentwater's desirability as a place to live.

The majority of housing units in Pentwater range in value from between \$150,000 and \$500,000. Only 2% of the homes can be found for less than \$50,000 and another 15% over \$500,000. Housing values are likely to remain fairly consistent, if not increase slightly, during the next couple of years due to the improvement of the Michigan economy.

Employment

There are two important factors to consider when evaluating the employment characteristics of the Pentwater Community. First, it is important to review the employment by industry that identifies the types of jobs Pentwater Community residents have. Second, it is useful to know the occupation breakdown of the population in order to establish the experience and employment specialization of residents.

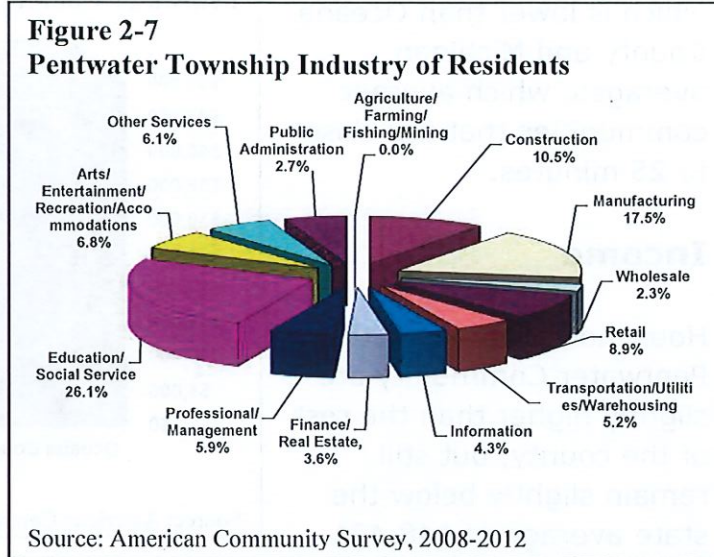


Figure 2-7 provides information relative to the types of industry that employ residents of the Pentwater community. Education, Social Service and Retail jobs have historically been the predominant employers' accounting for nearly 35% of residents. Nearly 28% of the population is involved in construction or manufacturing industries, while another third of the population are involved in professional, real estate, finance, information, or public administration industries.

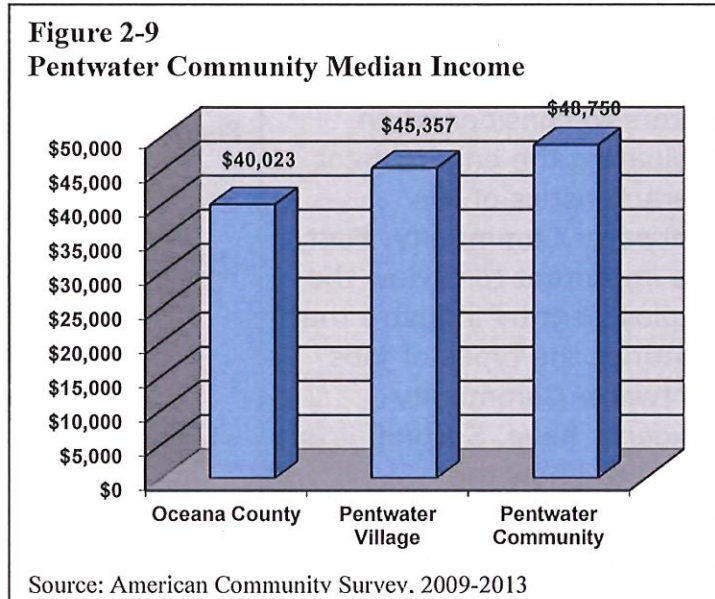
The highest-ranking categories are managerial and professional jobs, accounting for nearly half of residents and sales and office jobs covering over a quarter of the population. This reaffirms Pentwater's high proportion of residents with advanced education and suggests that many of residents are "white collar" workers who likely work standard Monday through Friday 9 to 5 jobs.

Pentwater includes a mix of workers that live close to work and those that commute to outside locations. The average drive time to work for a

Pentwater resident is between 16 to 20 minutes which is lower than Oceana County and Michigan averages, which average communities that are closer to 25 minutes.

Income

Household incomes in the Pentwater Community are slightly higher than the rest of the county, but still remain slightly below the state average of \$48,471.



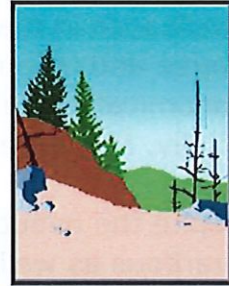
The median household income in years 2009 to 2013, as depicted in Figure 2-9, for Pentwater Township and Village was \$48,750 and \$45,357 respectively, while Oceana County’s median household income was just over \$40,000.

The largest percentage of households, nearly 38%, earned between \$35,000 and \$74,999 in 2010. Over 25% earned less than \$25,000 per year, which is low when compared to the county, but is generally consistent with the rest of the state. Conversely, approximately 16% of Pentwater Community households earned a six digit income, which is higher than Oceana County’s 9.4% but lower than the state’s 18.3%.

Natural Resources

Much of the character as well as the economy of the Pentwater community is based on the area’s natural features. Over ninety percent of the respondents to the Community Survey identified preserving water quality and the area’s natural features as the top two issues facing the community.

In the 1997 Survey, some of the highest rated factors for living in or moving to the Pentwater Community directly related to natural and environmental quality, including natural features, rural surroundings, good air and water quality, quality of lakes and beaches, and nearness to Lake Michigan. There was also a strong desire to protect these elements and others, such as surface and groundwater quality, protecting the dunes, and preserving the natural and lakeshore character of the Pentwater Community. The 2008 Survey also shows a strong desire toward preserving this character.



Recognizing the importance of natural features to Pentwater residents and visitors, as well as the irreversible nature of the destruction of most of these resources, efforts to either limit or prevent harmful development will be necessary. Two approaches may be used: preservation or integration. Preservation measures should be applied to those features which are so sensitive or so valued that any alteration would have a negative impact on the community in terms of aesthetics, environmental quality, and safety. In these areas, development should be either prohibited or restricted to those projects which would have a negligible effect on the environment.

Regulated wetlands is an example of lands which require preservation techniques. These lands generally do not require the implementation of local land use regulations to ensure their protection since state and federal laws have already been enacted. In some instances, communities have the option of implementing environmental regulations at the local level that are as strong or stronger than state laws to insure the protection of a particular resource.

Natural features may also be integrated into the development of a site, allowing them to remain as pristine as possible. The use of small wetlands as aesthetic features, or maintaining vegetated areas for screening or visual interest is becoming more common.

Shoreline Resources

Michigan's shoreline along the Great Lakes is a resource of statewide significance in many different ways: environmentally, there are a number of diverse and unique ecosystems that are present nowhere else in the world; economically, the tourism industry is one Michigan's largest industries; and socially, the recreational opportunities are countless.

Despite the beauty and benefits found along the shoreline, it can be hazardous as well. Flooding of low lying areas and exposure to extremes of winds and water leading to erosion can cause property loss and great expense to the state and local communities. Pentwater has significant areas of concern along the shoreline with areas of high erosion risk and large expanses of critical dunes.

High Risk Erosion Areas

Erosion is the result of natural forces; wind, water, and gravity either individually or collectively, wearing away at the earth's surface. Despite the beauty and benefits found along the Lake Michigan shoreline, exposure to extremes of temperature, wind and water can lead to severe erosion which has often times resulted in the loss of private property, recreational facilities, roads and other public facilities.

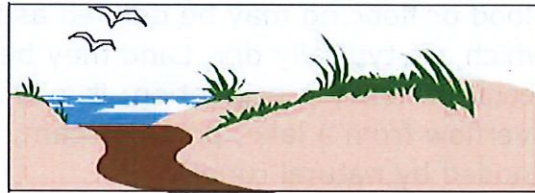
Pentwater has sizeable stretches of high risk erosion areas extending through parts of Sections 27 and 33 south of the Village, just north of the State Park, and further north in Sections 2 and 11. These areas are indicated on the Environmental Features map.

Part 323 of Act 451 of 1994, as amended, discusses High Risk Erosion Areas (HREA) as part of the Great Lakes Shore lands Management Program. Part 323 provides public and private protection from the natural hazards of coastal erosion in addition to providing for the protection of fragile coastal areas.

High risk erosion areas are defined as areas along the Great Lakes and connecting waters where erosion has been occurring at a long-term average

of one foot or more per year. Required setbacks are used to regulate and protect high risk erosion areas from development, and conversely, the destruction of private property as a result of erosion.

Pentwater Township may establish regulations for high risk erosion areas, with ordinance approval and oversight from Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). Local regulations would replace state permitting duties and allow more stringent regulations above the minimums set by the State, if that is a desired community goal.



Critical Dunes

Sand dune protection and management is detailed in Part 353 of Public Act 451 of 1994, as amended, to ensure the preservation of critical dune areas from damage and destruction. Critical dunes are those areas which have been designated in the "Designated and Critical Sand Dune Areas" dated January 2002, prepared by the Geological Survey Division of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). Critical dunes may be found along virtually the entire shoreline of Pentwater. Their depth varies significantly.

Critical dune areas are regulated by MDEQ, unless a local community has opted for regulatory authority. Protected dune areas slow the rate of shoreline erosion and provide habitat to rare plant species. Preservation of this important resource may be achieved through the enforcement of limitations on developable slopes, setbacks, vegetation, and development locations.

A permit is required prior to the removal of vegetation, land alteration, structural development, or cultural or recreational activities that can significantly alter the characteristics of a critical dune area. Each permit must also be accompanied by a soil erosion permit, sewage treatment permit (from the local health department), an approved tree cutting plan,

and a site plan. All special use projects must also complete an environmental impact statement.

Water Resources

Floodplain

Flood or flooding may be defined as the overflow of surface water onto lands which are typically dry. Land may be inundated with water temporarily as a result of heavy precipitation; it may be covered with water as a result of overflow from a lake, pond, stream, and/or wetland; or the land may be flooded by natural runoff.

Those lands which hold a 1% chance of being flooded as a result of overflow from an adjacent body of water within any given year during a 100-year period are considered to be in a floodplain. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issues a floodplain map which includes the 100-year floodplain and that of the 500-year floodplain.

Floodplain protection provides safe areas for overflow in times of heavy precipitation, limits property loss, reduces soil erosion, and maintains open space. As floodplains slow flood waters, nutrients and sediments sink and remain within the floodplain; creating a rich top soil. In addition, these areas also provide productive wildlife habitat including wetlands and travel corridors for animals.

Coordination of local regulations with those of the state are an important first step towards achieving appropriate and effective floodplain regulations. Part 3108 of Act 451 of 1994, as amended, defines the unlawful occupation, filling, or grading of floodplains, as regulated by MDEQ. Local governments can regulate floodplains through the use of building codes, zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, health regulations, and/or use of police powers. Implementation of protective measures should be used in conjunction with soil and sedimentation, storm water, and wetland regulations.



Wetlands

Part 303 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act defines a wetland as: "*land characterized by the presence of water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, wetland vegetation or aquatic life and is commonly referred to as a bog, swamp, or marsh..*"

Wetlands contribute to the quality of other natural resources, such as inland lakes, ground water, fisheries, wildlife and Lake Michigan. Wetlands serve as storage areas for excess water and nutrients; controlling floods and the aging of rivers, lakes and streams. In addition, acre for acre, wetlands produce more wildlife and plants than any other Michigan land cover type.

Part 303 seeks to protect wetland resources through regulating land which meets the statutory definition of a wetland, based on vegetation, water table, and soil type. Certain activities will require a permit from the MDEQ on a site which satisfies the wetland definition, including:

- filling or placing of material in a wetland;
- draining of water from a wetland;
- removal of vegetation, including trees, if such removal would adversely affect the wetland;
- constructing or maintaining a use or development in a wetland; and/or
- dredging or removing soil from a wetland.

Certain activities are exempt from permit requirements. In general, exempt activities include: fishing , trapping or hunting, hiking and similar activities; existing, established farm activities; and harvesting of forest products.

Wetland areas subject to regulation by the MDEQ include wetlands, regardless of size, which are contiguous to, or are within 500 feet of the ordinary high water mark of, any lake, stream, or pond; wetlands which are larger than five acres and not contiguous to any lake, stream, or pond;



and those wetlands which are not contiguous to any lake, stream or pond, but are essential to the preservation of natural resources.

Generally, wetlands must be identified through individual site determinations. Accordingly, the low lying areas or wetlands shown on the Environmental Features map are for planning purposes and represent only indications of where some of these areas may be located.

Water Quality

Surface water features which are affected by land use include Lake Michigan, Pentwater Lake and their associated tributaries and streams. Soil erosion, impermeable surfaces (such as parking lots and roofs), soil contamination, and additional recreational pressures can impact surface water quality. The preservation of water quality is important for plant and animal life, tourism, and drinking water supplies.

Water resources are part of a fragile system which is potentially at risk. A combination of poor soils unsuitable for septic systems, a high water table, and an increasing amount of rural development, may begin to threaten the quality of the area's water supplies. Specific regulations pertaining to soil erosion and sedimentation control practices, protection of wetland areas, increased water body setbacks, the use of greenbelts or buffers, and density reductions can assist in protecting water quality.

One of the most significant threats for surface water is soil erosion which deposits sediment into streams. One identified problem is the Pentwater River. The Initial Water Quality Statement completed as part of a grant application proposal (prior to the original 1997 Plan) contained the following statement:

"The south branch of the Pentwater River is a designated cold water trout stream (Director's Order titled 'Designated Trout Streams for the State of Michigan' DF- 101.91). According to the Fisheries Habitat Biologist for the area, 1991 charter boat data shows that the Pentwater fishery is 'excellent when compared to

other Lake Michigan ports.' The MDNR Fisheries Division attributes this to the substantial amount of natural reproduction occurring on the north branch of the Pentwater River, but not the south branch. According to the 1990 MDNR biological survey, 'soil erosion and sedimentation within the watersheds of both the North Branch Pentwater River and South Branch Pentwater River have severely impacted stream quality by reducing available habitat for fish and macroinvertebrates.' Also, MDNR records show that the access locations in the watershed experience heavy public use."

The proposal continues by suggesting a watershed management approach to improving this situation. Watershed management involves a combination of land use and environmental analysis to determine actions to identify and address those areas which contribute to sedimentation of the stream system. A watershed approach is used to ensure that problems that are regional in nature are addressed, rather than attempting to find solutions on a site by site basis.

Another element to surface water protection, including proper retention of rainwater runoff, is the need to moderate the effects that recreational activities have on surface waters.

Overuse of inland and lakeshore areas can, over time, degrade water quality through small gasoline and oil spills, stirring of lake bottom sediments, and other effects. These activities also have an effect on shoreline erosion, which further contributes to a decline in water quality.

Groundwater quality is also a concern since domestic water for nearly all of the township is supplied through individual wells. Any substance that is placed or injected in the ground has the potential to affect groundwater quality. A report by the Geophysics Study Committee of the Commission on Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Resources (National Research Council) stated:

“Groundwater contamination may be localized or spread over a large area, depending on the nature and source of the pollutant and on the nature of the groundwater system. A problem of growing concern is the cumulative impact of contamination of a regional aquifer from nonpoint sources (i.e., those that lack a well defined single point of origin), such as those created by intensive use of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides. Also with the increased interest in drilling for gas and oil within the Township pollution of groundwater from this source is a growing concern. In addition, small point sources, such as numerous domestic septic tanks or small accidental spills from both agricultural and industrial sources, threaten the quality of regional aquifers.”

The *State of Michigan Comprehensive Groundwater Protection Program*, published by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality reports that:

“(A)bout half of all Michigan residents depend on groundwater as their primary source of fresh drinking water - either through public water supply systems or private drinking water wells. For many communities, groundwater is the only possible source of fresh water for drinking. Cleanup of groundwater contamination sites is expensive and slow, and often creates hardships for the persons affected.

Land use regulations, land acquisition, and education programs can play a key role in protecting groundwater. Examples of land use control activities include the following:

- Land use plans which take into account groundwater vulnerability;
- Zoning ordinance and site plan review standards related to aboveground secondary containment, interior floor drains, and other topics;

- Purchase of land and/or conservation easements to provide a wellhead protection buffer around municipal wellfields;
- Public education through public meetings, school-based classroom programs, library displays, cable television videos, public information flyers, and municipal newsletters.”

The Village of Pentwater has recently approved an update to its Wellhead Protection Plan. Groundwater protection will become increasingly important as population densities in areas not served by public utilities continues to increase. In rural areas like Pentwater, contaminated groundwater has a potentially devastating effect. As a result, maintaining appropriate densities of development and proper disposal of sanitary sewer wastes are critical factors in ensuring the adequacy and quality of domestic water sources.

CHAPTER 3

VISION AND VALUES

VISION STATEMENT

Pentwater Township will be one with strong core values based on the natural features which are treasured by our residents and visitors. These values will be supported and nourished by a balanced pattern of land use and a stable economy which provides opportunities for our residents but does not detract from our core values.

Our Core Values are:

- Close communication between those who make decisions about our future and those affected by these decisions.
- A Township which values its surroundings and pledges to protect those natural features which make up the fabric of our area.
- Maintaining our values of local responsibility, involvement of people, and cooperation with our neighbors.

GOALS

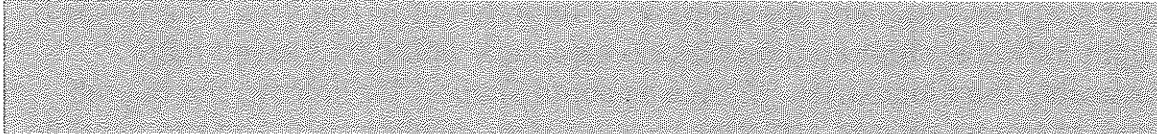
Land use decisions will support our core values through planned development which is low density and designed to create a livable community. These decisions will include the need to provide neighborhoods that are consistent with this character, yet offer a variety of housing that appeals to a wide range of individual and family circumstances.

Supporting Statement

Land use decisions will take into account our desire to maintain our core values. The character of our Township is based on its people, who have common interests in preserving our natural features and historic values. The 1997 Community Survey indicated that a large percentage of those

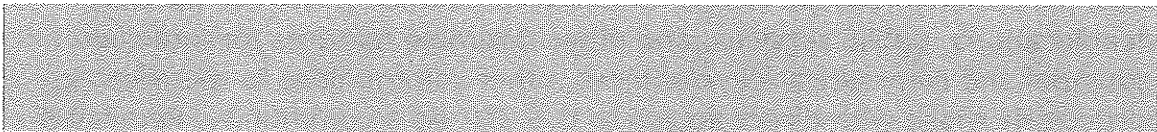
responding agreed that the Pentwater community has a small town/lakeshore character. Similarly, the natural features of the area were noted by 90% of the '97 respondents as a factor in their decision to move to or live in the area.

Achieving this goal will require Pentwater Township to carefully consider the proper design and location for new development to ensure that natural features are not unnecessarily disturbed and that neighborhoods are created rather than housing developments. Our neighborhoods will encourage interaction between residents and continue the closeness of our citizens. At the same time, we recognize that homes need to be available for families covering a broad spectrum of individual situations.



Supporting Statement

Pentwater Township lies in an area with limited available public services. Before new development is considered it will be important to identify the services that will be needed and the capability of the community to provide those services. With limited services available, development in the Township in particular will need to be of limited size and intensity. Large industrial or commercial developments can neither be economically supported nor provided with the infrastructure necessary to accommodate them. Moreover, large, intensive land uses will tend to detract from the natural character of our community.



Supporting Statement

New commercial, tourism related, or industrial development will be planned in locations where they fit the fabric of the community; where existing and potential new homes will not be affected; and where services are adequate. New development will be of limited size, scale, and intensity, in keeping with the lakeshore character of Pentwater Township.

Supporting Statement

While the Community Survey showed little support for actively attracting new commercial or industrial development, there was not a strong indication that such development should be kept entirely out of the area. There was a slight indication that commercial development would be viewed more favorably than industrial. There was some support for limiting the overall level of tourist related activities to avoid over development and the possible introduction of larger scale commercial services. This was also reflected in the responses that showed a desire to maintain enough control over the rate and location of growth to preserve natural areas and the character of the area.

Pentwater Township will work with the County and other communities to promote economic opportunities for the area.

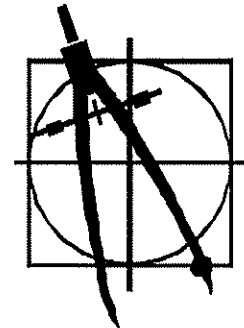
Supporting Statement

We recognize that economic opportunities will have to be provided in order to make jobs available to those who wish to live and work in the Pentwater area, particularly younger people and families. Although we do not have ideal locations, public services, and other desirable features for intensive industrial and commercial development, other communities in the area do, particularly those with direct access to U.S. 31. As a community, Pentwater can offer a desirable quality of life for those who wish to live and work in the area.

CHAPTER 4

CHARTING THE FUTURE

LAND USE AND QUALITY OF LIFE



The form and vitality of any community is defined largely by how its citizens see the way land is used and how that use relates to their daily life. As a result, the way we use the land is linked directly to the quality of life in Pentwater Township.

As a guide, the Plan is not meant to be rigidly administered; changing conditions may affect the assumptions used when the Plan was originally conceived. But changing conditions do not necessarily mean that the Plan must change. Rather, the Township Commission must examine those changes and decide if the principles on which the Master Plan was based are still valid. If so, the Plan should be followed.

The relationship between the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance is often misunderstood. **The Master Plan is a guide** for land use for the future; the **Zoning Ordinance regulates** the use of land in the present. The **Master Plan is not a binding, legal document**; the Zoning Ordinance is a law that must be followed by the community's residents.

If the population within the Township continues to remain relatively constant or declines slightly the Township may have to address certain zoning issues in the future. The latest census data suggests the seasonal occupancy is increasing. This growth of population during the summer months due to both residents and non-residents returning to their cottages, and the continuing desire of non-residents to vacation in the Pentwater area will result in additional commercial businesses (convenience stores/gas stations, gift shops, recreational facilities) to serve this increase. In addition, the desire of people vacationing in the Pentwater area will increase creating the need for additional rental housing (one week or more) and overnight (bed and breakfasts and motels) housing will present challenges to the Township.

Infrastructure

Utility and transportation planning provides many benefits. To achieve these benefits at lower cost, land use policies should encourage infill, and discourage extensions of infrastructure that may compromise other land use goals, such as preserving sensitive lands from development pressures. Such extensions should meet specific criteria consistent with this Plan.

Residential use can increase local traffic significantly, along with costs for road maintenance. These increases may be tempered by focusing the highest densities of development around ready access to improved roadways. Pedestrian recreational use of rural roads is common, and should be part of transportation planning; roadside trees and associated character should receive similar attention.

Community planning for infrastructure can have positive effects on land use. Failure to plan may be expensive and frustrating for all involved; a good plan can provide many economic and financial advantages; help retain community character; and reduce public safety concerns related to transportation and environmental contamination.

In order to understand how economic growth occurs, it is helpful to know if the characteristics of that growth can be directly or indirectly influenced by the Pentwater Community. There are two main infrastructure elements over which the Community has some degree of control or influence: sewer and water services, and road systems.

Sewer and Water Services

The principal utilities needed for more intensive development are water service and sanitary sewer disposal. These services may be provided in a number of ways, ranging from on-site wells and septic tanks to public water and sanitary sewer utility systems. For the most part, industrial development is the heaviest user of both water and sewer.

In the Township, residential development density is influenced by the presence or lack of public utilities. The cost of extending public sewer and water means that development density will have to reach a certain level to be cost effective. In other words, the costs of providing utilities are spread by the developer through the cost of the lot; the more lots, the lower the individual cost to the buyer.

Where public water or sewer cannot be provided, careful attention is needed to the soil structure to ensure that groundwater supplies are protected from contamination by an excessive number of individual septic systems. This does not suggest that public water and sewer should be planned for rural areas. Instead, areas that can and will be served should be made more attractive to residential development.

The public sewer system serves 80 to 85% of Village residents as well as some areas within the Township. The Village has an agreement with the Township regarding the maintenance of the sewer system.

Road Systems

As development intensifies, new industry, homes, offices, and commercial services create traffic demands on the road system. This is particularly true where new development occurs in areas previously planned for low intensity uses, such as single-family homes.

The Pentwater Community has direct, convenient, access to U.S. 31. In addition to the attraction for commercial uses, convenient highway access also allows commuters to live further from their jobs, using the highway system to extend the distance, but keep commuting time the same. With relatively cheap operating costs for individual vehicles, residential development can easily extend well beyond the job site.

As the growth in the seasonal population continues, new demands will be created on the road system. This is particularly true where new development occurs in rural areas. Residents in these areas are particularly sensitive to traffic increases; even small jumps in traffic volumes become noticeable.

Residents will voice concerns about the "heavy traffic" on their road, even though the roadway is easily capable of handling the traffic.

As new subdivisions, site condominium, or other residential projects are considered it is important to implement a street network to ensure that adequate circulation is provided between abutting development projects. Rather than having each development provide singular access to the major public street, project approvals should include provisions for stub streets to vacant properties that may be available for future development.

These street networks improve overall traffic flow by allowing residents to access nearby residential areas without traveling on the main streets of the township. In addition, circulation between projects improves access for emergency vehicles. Finally, maintenance and snow removal costs are reduced and efficiency improved.

EXISTING LAND USE

The reasons that land has developed to this point in time vary widely. Some uses of land predate zoning; others were approved by previous planning commissions and legislative bodies with or without the benefit of a master plan. Many of these existing areas have stable, active uses that are thriving economically and socially. Present land use patterns can tell us *what* the Pentwater Community is, *how* it has developed, and *where* new growth will occur.

The lakeshore residential areas of Pentwater Township present a very desirable character, for the most part, for those wanting larger building lots and a sense of isolation or separation from others.

Pentwater Township has successfully maintained an atmosphere that has been lost in many other lakeside communities in Michigan.

Commercial

The Pentwater Community has successfully maintained an atmosphere that has been lost in many other lakeside communities in Michigan. Pentwater

lacks the restaurant and hotel chains which often provide the feeling that a person could be in any tourist or urban area in the state.

Instead, Pentwater Township’s businesses range from small, family-owned establishments and convenience shopping.

Links to Charles Mears State Park could benefit from directional and information signs, while surrounding development crowds park boundaries. The designated bike lane on Lowell Street, however, does assist in providing a formal entrance to the park, and encourages walking and bicycling use.

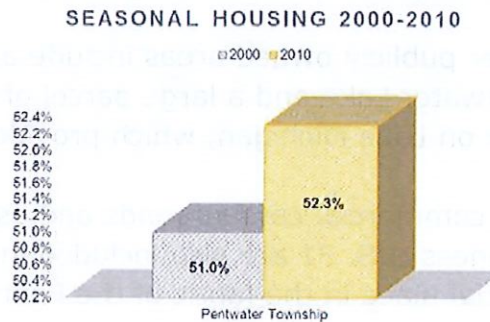
Commercial uses in the Township tend to be isolated and normally fit well in their surroundings. Many of these uses have been in existence for years and have “grown up” with homes in the area. Buildings are often placed close to the road and parking areas are unpaved.

Residential

Much of the older, non-lakefront residential development within the Township is concentrated along major streets or on unimproved roadways. As noted earlier, much of this housing is seasonal. Seasonal housing makes up slightly over 52% (2010 Census data) of all available housing. This represents a slight increase from 51% (2000) Census data).

A large number of homes around Pentwater Lake and along Lake Michigan serve as second-home, summer residences. Many of the homes built along Lake Michigan are two and three story buildings. Some of those along the roadway from U.S. 31 north to the Village, are older, more established homes, generally of a single story, ranch style design. Many homes constructed near the water’s edge block views of the water.

Since 2004 two residential planned unit developments (PUD’S) have been



Source: US Census, 2000 & 2010

developed in the Pentwater community. The Cottages at Lites Woods is characterized by single and two-family residences and is located in the southeastern area of the Village. While the Madison Ridge PUD is located in the Township on Madison Road and boasts single family residences only.

Semi-Public and Public Facilities

Four of Pentwater's community churches are placed within the neighborhood section below Park Street, and are located in areas where it is possible for members to walk from home to church. Very little parking is provided for these congregations. The different denominations served include Baptist, United Methodist, Episcopal, and Catholic. A fifth church, of Lutheran denomination is located north of the Village, in the Township, along Business U.S. 31.

The school and the Pentwater Township public library are located nearby as well, benefitting children and families due to their proximity to neighborhoods. The Pentwater Public School (K-12) is located at 600 Park Street. The Pentwater Township public library is located on the corner of Park and Rush streets.

The Pentwater Artisan Learning Center (PALC) was established in 2004. It is a private non-profit organization which facilitates artisans working primarily with wood, metal, pottery, painting, stained glass and jewelry education via membership to individuals as well as to high school students in the area. The facility is located on property adjacent to the Pentwater Public School on Park Street.

Other publicly owned areas include a public boat launch and marina on Pentwater Lake and a large parcel of state-owned land, Charles Mears State Park on Lake Michigan, which provides camping opportunities for visitors.

The commercial campgrounds and associated uses north of the Village on Business U.S. 31 are also included in this classification in recognition of their special place in the fabric of the Pentwater Community.

Light Industry

There are no industrial parks or concentrations of industrial development within the Township.

FUTURE LAND USE

Future land use decisions for Pentwater Township will be guided by the Vision, Core Values, and Goals noted in Chapter 3. The principles governing land use rest with the desire of residents and officials to preserve the values that make Pentwater Township a desirable place to live. Those values are centered on the preservation of the natural features of the area, while recognizing that new development will occur and must be planned. It is also based on the recognition that these values are fragile and that steps will be necessary to protect them.

Future land use decisions for Pentwater Township will be guided by the Vision, Core, Values, Values, and Goals

Land Use Goals

A number of Goals were established dealing directly with land use. The following Goals form the basis for determining appropriate land use types, their location, and each use's ability to blend with existing land use patterns.

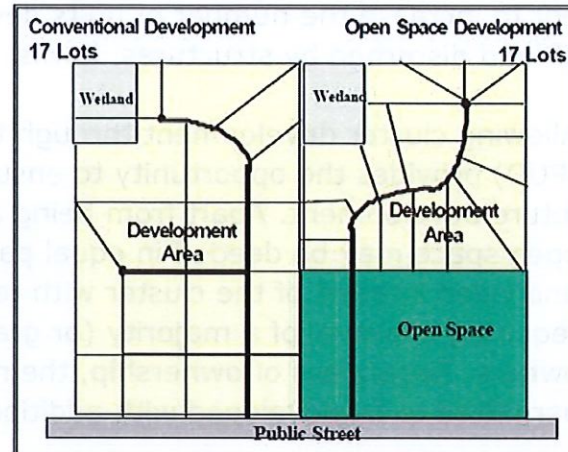
Land use decisions will support our core values through planned development which is low density and designed to create a community consistent with the natural character. These decisions will include the need to provide neighborhoods that are consistent with this character, yet offer a variety of housing that appeals to a wide range of individual and family circumstances.

New commercial, tourism related, or light industrial development will be planned in locations where they fit the fabric of the community; where existing and potential new homes will not be affected; and where services are adequate. New development will be of limited size, scale, and intensity, in keeping with the character of the Pentwater Community.

Decisions regarding locations for new development will consider the capability of the Pentwater Community to provide a suitable level of public services, be of limited size and intensity, and preserve the natural character of the landscape.

Residential Land Use Principles

New areas of residential development will have the same neighborhood characteristics as those already found in the Pentwater community. These characteristics include paved roads, adequate lighting, well placed open spaces for recreation, and a sensitivity towards natural features (woods, dunes, shoreline, etc.).



Residential Future Land Use Classifications

Rural Residential

Lands placed in this classification shall be primarily identified for large lot, low density, residential development with a minimum of 10 acres. Much of the area in the southern part of the township is in the Pere Marquette State Forest. Areas in the northern part of the township contain larger parcels. The intent of this classification is to recognize the lack of public services and roads, and to protect the qualities of rural living enjoyed by Pentwater residents.

Where development of land is requested, the densities and design of such proposals should be of a nature that will continue the character of the area or permit use of a portion of the land for preserving open space or natural features. This may be accomplished through the use of cluster, or open space development.

Clustering provides for a dense concentration of development in a limited area, with the overall, or "gross density" of the site remaining the same. Although clustering may increase the net density for a smaller area of a larger parcel, the gross density should still fall into the requirements of the

Master Plan and subsequent zoning regulations. The object of clustering is not to increase the number of units developed, but to regulate the amount of land disturbed by structures, lawns, and drives.

Allowing cluster development through the use of a planned unit development (PUD) provides the opportunity to ensure that land will be kept free from future development. Apart from being a requirement of the PUD, preserved open space may be deeded in equal parts to the property owners as an undivided interest of the cluster with restrictions on individual sales, requiring approval of a majority (or greater number) of the remaining owners. Regardless of ownership, the remaining acreage would not be permitted to be developed with additional housing units.

Other land use techniques may become available for use in these areas, such as the purchase or transfer of development rights, private property restrictions through land donations or conservation easements, as well as other available methods.

Lakeshore Residential

This classification serves a number of purposes, but is intended primarily to protect development along the shoreline and ensure that it is compatible with other, inland development. Locations for this land use are concentrated around Pentwater Lake and along the shoreline of Lake Michigan north and south of the Village.

Development within Lakeshore Residential areas will be sensitive to the need to preserve the qualities that make lakeshore living desirable, while at the same time protecting the benefits of the shoreline for the general public. One of the most important aspects of this is the ability to maintain views to the water.

Low Density Residential

Density in this category is limited to a minimum of 2 acres per lot. Most of this development is concentrated along the major roadways which radiate

from the Village, paralleling the shoreline, east to U.S. 31, and south into Weare and Golden townships. It is likely that much of the residential development in this classification will occur along existing roadways. Although development of this nature is not unusual in rural areas, it does present some practical problems.

First, the number of driveways along these roadways can become a traffic issue, particularly in areas where zoning allows relatively narrow lot widths. Although individually these driveways do not generate excessive amounts of traffic, over time an increase in their number on a busy roadway can present problems with additional turn movements, especially where vehicle speeds are high.

As development along roadways increases, property owners are also more likely to demand better maintenance. Over 73% of the Community Survey respondents thought that improving existing roadways was an important issue for the area provided that no additional property tax revenue is sought for this purpose. This issue will likely continue to appear as more development occurs along these roadways.

Finally, homes spaced out along roadways, particularly when near the street, tend to detract from the lakeshore character of the area when the view is more of buildings than of open space. A byproduct of strip residential development, the inefficient use of land, also occurs when homes are placed near the front property line. A number of properties in the Township are divided into relatively large lots, with the frontage taken up by individual homes. This type of development tends to create relatively deep lots which leaves sizeable portions of properties cut off from road access and essentially unusable.

While this may not be a problem for the original and some subsequent owners, others may look for opportunities to use the back portions of these lots for further development and seek variances or other approvals from the township to do so. The Land Division Act provides opportunities to limit the depth of lots created without the filing of a plat, but access to interior

properties will continue to be an important consideration in reviewing future development proposals.

In addition, the Community Survey revealed considerable concern about the quality of groundwater that will be available in the future. Without access to public utilities, protecting the source of well water will be very important for the long term welfare of Pentwater Township's residents.

Medium Density Residential

New locations for Medium (and High) Density Residential land is concentrated to the east of the Village. Part of the intent for placing homes at a moderate density in this area is to decrease the infrastructure costs that would be necessary to serve such higher intensity uses elsewhere within the Township. Directing growth to the east is also intended to preserve the natural character of those areas closest to the Lake Michigan and Pentwater Lake shorelines. Maximum density in the Medium Density Residential designation should not exceed 5 units per acre, or approximately 8,000 square feet per residential lot.

Office Future Land Use Classification

While most offices and related uses are typically located in the central business district, office uses such as medical and dental are not conducive to downtown locations due to a lack of adjacent on-site parking. The Plan recognizes that areas for these types of offices should be situated convenient to residential areas and along major thoroughfares. Further, due to the proximity to residential areas, the office buildings should resemble a residential structure.

Commercial Land Use Principles

Commercial development within the Township will meet the following criteria:

- The site is located where residential development will not be impaired or negatively affected.
- Provides goods and services that are principally for area residents. (Note: This is to discourage large scale, regional shopping areas, which are not appropriate to the land use character desired by the Pentwater Community.)
- Not be developed in a strip commercial fashion.
- Be located on and direct traffic to streets other than those strictly serving neighborhoods.
- Provide adequate building and parking setbacks, buffering for adjacent residential uses, have limited access points to the main street, be sensitive to natural features (woods, dunes, shoreline, etc.), have moderate sized signs, and connected to public utilities.

Commercial Future Land Use Classifications

Neighborhood Services

The intent of the Neighborhood Services classification is to limit the overall size and intensity of commercial development and to provide goods and services to that extent. Businesses and services will be those that cater to residents of nearby areas. Generally, total square footage should be limited to 5,000 to 10,000 square-foot areas or less. Sites should be located on lots of at least two acres with at least 200 feet of lot width along a public street.

This classification will also be used to indicate the potential for highway related services near the north interchange with U.S. 31. However, these services will be in keeping with the overall intended character of the Pentwater Community and the previously stated Goals and Principles. In particular, the location and design of specific uses must be especially sensitive to the homes on or near Bass Lake.

Lands designated for Neighborhood Services should be planned with specific consideration of such factors as compatibility with surrounding existing and planned land use; traffic safety and convenience; shared driveways and parking areas; consistent site elements, such as signs, landscaping and lighting; roadway improvements, including such elements as turning and deceleration lanes; and other factors that are consistent with the neighborhood and lakeshore character.

Driveways will be located as far as possible from any public street intersections to minimize traffic conflicts, but generally not less than 150 feet from the intersection. In most situations only a single driveway will be permitted unless a professional traffic study determines that a second drive is needed to accommodate higher volumes of traffic.

Industrial Land Use Principles

- A. Industrial sites will be located where residential development will not be impaired or negatively affected.
- B. Sites shall be located on and direct traffic to streets other than those strictly serving neighborhoods.
- C. Industrial site development shall provide adequate building and parking setbacks, buffering for adjacent residential uses, demonstrate sensitivity towards natural features (woods, dunes, shoreline, etc.), have limited access points to the main street, and have access to public utilities and services.

Industrial Future Land Use Classification

Industrial

Industrial uses will generally be limited to those areas which are or may be served by public utilities. Certain Industrial uses may be permitted without utilities, but will usually be restricted to those operations which do not require large scale waste disposal or water use, such as auto repair

businesses and small machine and fabricating shops. Sites that generally meet the following qualifications may receive consideration for rezoning.

- Access to an appropriate roadway capable of accommodating the weights and/or volumes of trucks.
- Availability of public utilities.
- Sufficient property to accommodate generous setbacks for parking, loading, and other activity areas.
- Designed to limit any negative effects on existing homes or other uses.

One area planned for industrial growth is east of the Village on Madison Road, just west of U.S. 31 and a narrow band paralleling U.S. 31 at the north interchange. However, most other industrial development will be deferred to the interchange with U.S. 31 in Weare Township.

Public/Semi-Public

Unlike traditional master plans, the Pentwater Community Master Plan uses the Public/Semi-Public future land use classification for a wide variety of situations. The common use of this classification is for churches, schools, government lands, parks, and other similar lands. While these uses are included in the classification, a broader range of uses is also used.

For example, the campgrounds north of Pentwater on either side of Business U.S. 31 are noted as Public/Semi-Public. Ordinarily these areas might be noted as Neighborhood Services. However, one of the unique aspects of Pentwater, like many similar communities, is the presence of resort oriented land uses, most of which are seasonal, some of which take up large land areas.

The intent of using this classification is not to attempt to deny the commercial nature of these uses, but rather to limit them to resort oriented land uses. This is, in part, an attempt to recognize their existence and vitality in the community, but not permit these uses to transition to a more general business or commercial nature.

While the results of the Community Attitude Survey indicate that residents/property owners are not willing to increase taxes to pay for new parks, every effort should be pursued to maintain and enhance existing public recreational facilities. Further, when and where appropriate, new recreational opportunities, such as bike/pedestrian paths along major Township roadways (i.e. Longbridge, Ridge, BR 31), improvements to boat launch facilities, etc., should be examined whenever funding is available.

Environmentally Sensitive Development Area

The Plan also calls for a special area, labeled *Environmentally Sensitive Development Area*. This area overlays a number of different Future Land Use classifications. The intent of this overlay is to recognize the unique features of Lake Michigan's critical dunes and high risk erosion areas. Treatment for these sensitive areas is outlined in Chapter 2. Treatment of these features will be considered as part of any development within this area, regardless of the land use or zoning classification in place.

Other Land Use Elements

Arrival

When people take long trips away from their home, after a time they begin to picture various parts of their community with which they are familiar. This is the "sense of place" that we all have; that place where we are most comfortable. Upon returning, those same people will quickly identify landmarks that announce that they have arrived at their "place." This sense of arrival may take many forms, but whatever form it takes, it provides a distinct feeling of comfort and identity. By placing a physical landmark at the entrances of the community, the arriving resident, or visitor, can gain a sense of arrival.

This is especially important for the Pentwater area, since it has some dependence on visitors. The entry to the Pentwater area actually begins at the south end of Pentwater Lake and is highlighted at the entry to the Village as the road transitions to Sixth Street.

Views

Most of the landscape that provides pleasant scenery and visual quality is privately owned. Nevertheless, the public "uses" the landscape visually, and, for Pentwater, views are a key element of the community. Therefore, protecting these recognized resources provides a significant and tangible benefit. Normally the most direct way of achieving view protection objectives is through the control of building location, spacing, bulk, and height.

When protecting eye level or ground level views such as a lake view, or on the downhill side from a viewpoint, such as an overlook, it is important to control building bulk and spacing, as well as the placement of fences, shrubs, and trees. In this setting, even one story buildings erected within the view area or in a long solid mass can block a line of sight.

In such settings, buildings should be placed in such a manner that they do not obstruct the view to be preserved. Buildings along a shoreline, placed so as to create a solid wall effect, not only obstruct views of the lake but also adversely affect the shoreline's visual quality from the lake. To assure that this will not happen, designers, developers or builders should be required to stake out the outline of all proposed buildings and landscaping for on-site inspection, so that the amount of the view blocked will be made clear before the plan is approved or a building permit issued.

Buildings might be limited to a height of no more than 30 feet (measured from the average ground elevation at the building walls) where they would obstruct views or project above the tree cover. Heights exceeding this limit might be permitted where it can be shown that such construction will not interfere with the scenic attractiveness of the view to be protected. While maximum building height might be restricted in absolute terms, buildings may be restricted to a height determined relative to the object or view to be protected.

CHAPTER 5

ZONING PLAN

What is a Zoning Plan?

A “zoning plan” is required to be part of any master plan, land use plan, or growth management plan pursuant to Section 33 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) (PA 33 of 2008) and is also referred to in Section 305 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA) (PA 110 of 2006, as amended). Therefore, every master plan in communities with zoning must have a **zoning plan** that meets the requirements of Section 33 of the MPEA

As defined by Section 33 (2) (d) of the MPEA, a zoning plan consists of the following elements:

- An explanation of how the land use categories on the future land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map.
- A description of each of the zoning districts (including proposed new districts) and including the purpose of each district, a description of the uses to be permitted (by right and by special permit) in each district, and the general locations for those types of districts.
- A proposed schedule of regulations by district that includes at least: building height, lot area, bulk and setbacks.
- A proposed zoning map showing the location of proposed zoning districts.
- The standards or criteria to be used to consider rezoning consistent with the master plan.

Relationship to the Land Use Plan

The Pentwater Community Land Use Plan sets forth the vision, goals and policies for growth and development in the Village and Township of Pentwater for approximately the next twenty years. It includes a specific strategy for managing growth and change in land uses and infrastructure in the overall communities over this period, and will be periodically reviewed and updated at least once every five years. The Zoning Plan, along with the rest of the relevant parts of this Land Use Plan, is intended to guide future

changes to the Pentwater Township Zoning Ordinance in order to ultimately implement the Land Use Plan itself.

Zoning Districts and Dimensional Standards

The Pentwater Community Land Use Plan, as outlined in Chapter 4, proposes ten (10) land use categories while the Pentwater Community Zoning Ordinance currently has twelve (12) zoning districts. The following provides a summary of how each zoning district relates to the respective applicable land use categories. The specific purposes of each individual zoning district and primary permitted and special land uses are listed, while Table 5-1 presents a summary of the key dimensional standards in each zoning district.

Land Use Plan Category: Rural Residential

The following zoning district is considered a "Rural Residential" district:

Chapter 4: R-R Rural Residential

Intent of District: Land use decisions within this District will support the continued use of land for large lot residential and agricultural purposes. Design standards will promote preservation through low density development and the use of cluster, or open space development. This District is exclusively applied in the Township.

Primary Permitted Uses: Farms, Single family detached dwellings

Primary Special Land Uses: Farming operations, recreational activities

Land Use Plan Category: Lakeshore Residential

The following zoning district is considered a "Lakeshore Residential" district:

Chapter 8: WD Waterfront

Intent of District: The Waterfront District is a supplementary District which applies to designated lands solely located along the waterfront and shoreline areas of the community. As such, the District is a "floating" district simultaneously with any other zoning districts. Where the specific requirements of the Waterfront District vary or conflict with the regulations contained in the underlying zoning district, the stricter requirements apply.

Primary Permitted Uses: Any use permitted in the underlying zoning district, boat docks

Primary Special Land Uses: Any special land use permitted in the underlying zoning district, public or private boat launches, and marinas

Land Use Plan Category: Low Density Residential

The following zoning district is considered a "Low Density Residential" district:

Chapter 5: R-1 Single Family Residential

Intent of District: This District is intended to provide a low-density, single family residential living environment and to foster stable, high quality neighborhoods.

Primary Permitted Uses: Single family detached dwellings

Primary Special Land Uses: Recreational uses

Land Use Plan Category: Medium Density Residential

The following zoning district is considered a "Medium Density Residential" district:

Chapter 6: R-2 Single Family Residential

Intent of District: This District is intended to provide a low-density, single and two-family residential living environment and to foster stable, high-quality neighborhoods while providing for additional variety of housing opportunities and choices. The regulations for this district also recognize the need to provide existing housing stock and allow the redevelopment of older subdivisions.

Primary Permitted Uses: Single family detached dwellings

Primary Special Land Uses: Two-family dwellings, including conversions of existing single family detached dwellings to two-family dwellings

Land Use Plan Category: High Density Residential

The following zoning districts are considered "High Density Residential" districts:

Chapter 7: R-3 Single Family, Two Family & Multiple Family Residential

Chapter 9: MHP Manufactured Home Park

Intent of Districts: The R-3 District is intended to provide additional variety in housing opportunities and choices. The MHP District provides

solely for the location of mobile and manufactured housing in separate manufactured home park developments. These Districts are exclusively applied in the Village due to the availability of municipal water and sanitary sewer services.

Primary Permitted Uses: Single and Two-family dwellings (R-3);
Manufactured homes (MHP)

Primary Special Land Uses: Multiple family dwellings (R-3)

Land Use Plan Category: Office

The following zoning district is considered an "Office" district.

Chapter 10: R-O Residential-Office District

Intent of District: This District is intended to accommodate existing low intensity professional offices in residential areas through the conversion and adaptive reuse of existing structures in appropriate and conducive areas along Business Route 31.

Land Use Plan Category: Commercial Services

The following zoning district is considered a "Commercial Service" district"

Chapter 11: C-1 General Commercial

Intent of District: This District is intended to provide a wide range of goods and services to residents of the community as well as the surrounding area. These commercial uses are generally more intensive and less compatible with residential uses. These uses require direct vehicular access, off-street parking and separate points of ingress and egress. These districts are generally limited to areas within the Township.

Primary Permitted Uses: Offices, retail businesses less than ten thousand (10,000) square feet

Primary Special Land Uses: Open air businesses, indoor theaters/commercial recreation centers, restaurants with drive-through facilities

Land Use Plan Category: Industrial

The following zoning district is considered an "industrial" district:

Chapter 13: LI Light Industrial

Intent of District: This District is intended to provide exclusive areas for light industrial uses. Uses in this District provide for various types of light industrial and manufacturing uses, wholesale businesses, warehouses, and other uses compatible with one another and which are sensitive to environmental effects.

Primary Permitted Uses: Industrial plants manufacturing, compounding, processing, packaging, treating, or assembling of certain uses, wholesale businesses, warehousing

Primary Special Land Uses: Truck and freight terminals, warehousing, bulk storage of fuels, salvage yards

**Table 5-1
Pentwater Village and Township Zoning District Regulations**

Zoning District	Minimum Lot Area	Minimum Lot Width	Maximum Lot Coverage	Front Yard Setback		Side Yard Setback		Rear Yard Setback		Maximum Height
				Village	Township	Village	Township	Village	Township	
R-R Residential	10 acres	330 ft.	N.A.	N.A.	75 ft.	N.A.	25 ft.	N.A.	25 ft.	35 ft.
R-1 Residential	2 acres	165 ft.	30%	N.A.	30 ft.	N.A.	10 ft.	N.A.	30 ft.	35 ft.
R-2 Residential	One Family		50%	17 ft.	30 ft.	6 ft.	10 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.	35 ft.
	8,000 sq. ft.	66 ft.								
	Two Family									
	15,000 sq. ft.	120 ft.								
R-3 Residential	One & Two Family		50%	17 ft.	25 ft.	6 ft.	6 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.	35 ft.
	6,000 sq. ft./unit	60 ft.								
	Multi-Family		50%	30 ft.	30 ft.	15 ft.	15 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.	
WD Waterfront	Same as Underlying	66 ft.	50 %	30 ft.	30 ft.	Same as underlying district				30 ft.
R-O Residential-Office	None	66 ft.	50 %	17 ft.	17 ft.	6 ft.	6 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.	35 ft.
C-1 Neighborhood Commercial	None	100 ft.	40%	25 ft.	25 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	25 ft.	25 ft.	25 ft.
C-2 General Commercial	20,000 sq. ft.	100 ft.	40%	25 ft.	25 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	25 ft.	25 ft.	35 ft.
C-3 Central Business	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	35 ft.
I1 Light Industrial	One acre	100 ft.	60 %	25 ft.	25 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	40 ft.	40 feet	35 feet

Proposed Changes to the Pentwater Community Zoning Ordinance

Since this Plan incorporates new policies, land uses and other measures related to further improving the quality of life in the Pentwater community, there are changes to the Zoning Ordinance that should be made to make it fully consistent with this Future Land Use Plan. As the principal tool for implementing this Plan, each regulatory policy of the Plan should be reflected in one or more zoning requirements. Needed changes are listed below. These changes should be pursued as the need or opportunity presents itself. In some cases, public discussion of proposed zoning amendments on any of the below listed may result in the need to refine or alter some of the language in this Plan. If that occurs, this Plan should be amended before the zoning amendments are adopted.

Text Changes

- Revise the R-3 Residential District to permit multiple family dwellings only and modify the maximum density in the District to eight (8) units per acre.
- Consider eliminating the Planned Unit Development-PUD District and instead converting the District and all of its provisions into a Special Land Use and adding PUD as a Special Land Use in all Residential zoning districts

Map Changes

- Rezone all properties currently zoned C-1 Neighborhood Commercial to C-2 General Commercial District (if the C-1 Commercial District is eliminated)
- Rezone all properties that are **not** currently in use or zoned as multiple family residential to a more appropriate residential zoning classification

Standards/Criteria for Rezoning

The following represent generally accepted planning standards/criteria that will be utilized by the respective Planning Commissions in considering future amendment requests to the zoning map of the Village or Township:

1. Is the requested change compatible with the existing development pattern and the zoning of the adjacent and nearby properties?
2. Has there been a change in the conditions upon which the original zoning designation was based? Have land uses and/or conditions changed since the zoning was established?
3. Does the proposed zoning better conform to the Master Plan?
4. Will the proposed change conflict with existing or planned public improvements?
5. Will the proposed change adversely affect traffic patterns or congestion?
6. Is the proposed amendment consistent with existing development patterns in the area and appropriate for orderly development of the community? The cost of land and/or other economic considerations pertaining to the applicant shall **not** be a consideration in reviewing the request.
7. Is the proposed amendment the logical expansion of adjacent zoning districts?
8. Is the timing of the request appropriate given the development trends in the area?
9. Will the proposed change adversely impact the environmental conditions of the site and/or area or the historic resources of the community?
10. Will the proposed change adversely affect the health, safety and welfare of the community and the surrounding area?

11. Other matters which may be appropriate.

APPENDICES

2008 Community Survey Results

Maps

Environmental Features; Pentwater Community
Existing Land Use; Pentwater Township
Future Land Use; Pentwater Community

2008 Pentwater Community Survey Executive Summary

The Community Survey for the Village of Pentwater and Pentwater Township was carried out in April and May of 2008 by the Kercher Center for Social Research at Western Michigan University. The survey was designed to measure citizens' viewpoints on a range of community services and issues related to updating the Master Plan.

The survey instrument was drafted by personnel from Pentwater, reviewed by the KCSR, and subsequently approved. The survey packet, which was mailed to 604 households identified as property owners within the Village of Pentwater or Pentwater Township, contained: 1) the survey instrument itself, 2) a cover letter on Village of Pentwater stationery over the signatures of the chairs of the Planning Commissions for both the Village and the Township, and 3) a postage paid, pre-addressed return envelope. The packets were mailed from the Village of Pentwater on April 23 and responses were to be received until May 16.

By May 16, a total of 313 responses had been received. After one additional week, another 21 responses were received, producing a total of 334 instruments. This represents a response rate of 55.3 percent, which is substantially higher than often occurs in surveys. This indicates a high level of respondent interest, and lends additional credibility to the results. Moreover, with 2000 Census counts of 958 people for the Village of Pentwater and 1,513 for Pentwater Township, a sample of 334 households is clearly sufficient to represent the property owners of the Pentwater Community at a 95% level of confidence with a sampling error of approximately plus or minus 5 percent.

The report that was produced by the KCSR includes presentations of the results for each of the items in the survey instrument, most of them organized into ten tables, and two appendices (one with the actual frequency distributions for each item in the survey instrument and one with the responses to the open-ended items).

The demographic characteristics of the sample are first described (Tables 1 and 2), and it is noted that the sample undoubtedly represents the population of property owners better than the general population of the Pentwater Community. Tables 3, 4, and 5 and the accompanying text deal with several sets of items related to the respondents attitudes regarding growth and development. They suggest that the respondents are clearly mixed in their attitudes toward growth and development. However, most do want to see restrictions placed on some kinds of growth in the Community. Moreover, while there is not clear agreement as to the specific emphasis, most also believe that some mixture of land use development would be most appropriate for the Community.

Table 6 focuses on a small set of items related to the environment, open space, and recreation. In this case, there is almost complete consensus in the perceptions of the respondents.

Virtually all of them attributed the highest importance to ground and surface water quality, and nearly as much importance to preserving open space, natural amenities, and the character of the Community.

Tables 7 and 8 turn to the level of support for Community projects and services. It is here that property owners (and thus taxpayers) frequently balk at offering their support. The current respondents are no exception to this rule. The bulk of the respondents indicate that they simply will not support additional (i.e., new) taxes for any Community services. This suggests that the Community of Pentwater would have a difficult time raising taxes for any expansion of services without a significant campaign. It is also clear, however, that infrastructure services (i.e., fire, emergency, police, parks, sewer, roads, water) have the most support. All of those services did receive substantial support in the form of using existing revenue.

Finally, since housing issues are often at the core of community planning efforts, Tables 9 and 10 present the results of items dealing with two sets of items that were included to identify the respondents' perceptions of housing needs in the Community. It is quite clear that relatively few of the respondents see a need for more housing of any kind. Most respondents reported that the Pentwater Community should maintain about the same amount of single family homes, second homes, and short term rentals, and fewer manufactured homes, condominiums, and apartments.

To conclude, it is apparent from all the results of the survey that the property owners of the Pentwater Community have mixed feelings about growth and development. There is a relatively small group who clearly do not want to see any growth or development. Indeed, they want the Community to return to the way it was a decade or more ago. At the other end of the spectrum, there is another relatively small group that sees growth and development as desirable, and would like to see it encouraged. As is often the case, however, the bulk of the property owners fall in a middle ground, where some mixture of growth and development could have advantages for the Community – but only with restrictions on the type and amount. The challenge for the planners and officials in the Community will be to determine just what the mixture will be and which restrictions are most critical.

Introduction

The Community Survey for the Village of Pentwater and Pentwater Township was carried out in the late spring of 2008 by the Kercher Center for Social Research at Western Michigan University. This survey attempted to measure citizens' viewpoints on a range of community services and issues related to updating the Master Plan. The survey was administered through the mail to a total of 604 households identified as property owners within the Village of Pentwater or Pentwater Township.

The survey instrument was drafted by personnel from Pentwater, reviewed by the KCSR, and subsequently approved. The survey packet included the survey instrument itself, a cover

letter on Village of Pentwater stationery over the signatures of the chairs of the Planning Commissions for both the Village and the Township, and a postage paid, pre-addressed return envelope. The packets were mailed from the Village of Pentwater on April 23 and responses were to be received until May 16.

By May 16, a total of 313 responses had been received. After one additional week, another 21 responses were received, producing a total of 334 instruments. Since a total of 604 surveys were mailed out (after eliminating duplicates and inaccurate addresses), this represents a response rate of 55.3 percent. This rate is substantially higher than often occurs in surveys, lending additional credibility to the results that will follow below. Moreover, with 2000 Census counts of 958 for the Village of Pentwater and 1,513 for Pentwater Township, a sample of 334 respondents is clearly sufficient to represent the population of the Pentwater Community at a 95% level of confidence with a sampling error of approximately plus or minus 5 percent.

Frequency distributions have been run for each item on the survey. In addition, the responses to the open-ended items were first sorted by question, then alphabetized and edited for readability. All of these results are presented in the two appendices attached to this report. **Appendix A** contains a copy of the survey instrument with the frequency and percentage distributions for each item. **Appendix B** contains the responses to the open-ended items.

Results

Characteristics of the Sample

It is essential in survey research that demographic information be collected on the sample of respondents in order to determine if the sample is indeed representative of the larger population of interest. A number of items were included to this end. Although minor variations in the distribution of demographic characteristics typically exist from sample to sample, these variations are generally within the confidence bands associated with samples of this size.

Table 1 presents the results concerning the number of years the respondents have owned property in the Pentwater Community, the type and location of their residence, and the type of housing they occupy. Nearly 40 percent of the respondents indicate that they are property owners but do not live in the community. The rest of the respondents are almost evenly divided as residents of either the Village or the Township (with slightly more in the Township, as one would expect). Only a few respondents (3.9%) indicated that they were business owners. The bulk of the respondents live in their own single family homes; only a small proportion (less than 10.0%) indicate that they live in condominiums, apartments, or other housing. Nearly a third (32.9%) report that they have owned their property from four to fifteen years. Most of them, however (62.0%), have owned property in the community for more than fifteen years. Indeed, a majority (53.4%) have owned their property for more than two decades. In addition, most live on paved roads and in non-waterfront property (74.0% and 67.1%, respectively).

Table 1. Residential Characteristics of the Sample

	%
<u>Years in Pentwater</u>	
Less than 9 years	22.1
9-15 years	16.0
16-20 years	8.6
Over 20 years	53.4
<u>Type of Residence</u>	
Resident of Pentwater Township	33.8
Resident of Pentwater Village	29.6
Property owner, not resident	37.7
Business owner	3.9
<u>Type of Housing</u>	
Apartment/Mobile Home	2.9
Condominium	4.8
Single Family – 1+ acres	31.4
Single Family - <1 acre	59.0
Other	1.9
<u>Location of Residence</u>	
Paved Road	74.0
Waterfront	32.9

In a parallel fashion, Table 2 below shows the age, education, occupation, marital status, and gender distributions for the survey responses. The proportion of respondents over the age of 60 is quite large (57.9%), with a very small proportion (2.8%) under 36. In addition, with nearly 40 percent reporting their ages as 65 or over, this is clearly different from the age distribution of the 2000 Census. A large majority report that they are married (78.4%), and again this proportion is higher than the 55-60 percent expected from the 2000 Census. The gender makeup of this sample, with 56.8 percent male and only 43.2 percent female, also contains a larger proportion of males (fewer than 50 percent are reported in the 2000 Census). This latter result is possibly a result of internal decisions within the respondent households as to who would respond to a survey about land use planning. A large proportion of the respondents also report having completed at least college educations (70.0%), more than a third with advanced degrees. Just over half are retired (50.6%), and another 38.7 percent are employed in relatively high status occupations. Again, these are numbers that exceed the 2000 Census figures.

Overall then, the sample of survey participants tends to be made up largely of male, senior citizens who are married and highly educated, with commensurate occupations. The sample is clearly not representative of the general population of the Pentwater Community, based on the 2000 Census. However, the demographic distributions are likely to be much more representative of that portion of the population that owns property in the Pentwater Community.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics

	%
<u>Age</u>	
Less than 36 years	2.8
36 - 59 years	39.3
60 – 65 years	21.1
Over 65 years	36.8
<u>Education</u>	
High School or Less	6.0
Some College/Technical	24.1
College Degree	32.3
Advanced Degree	37.7
<u>Occupation</u>	
Education/Professional	22.4
Mgr/Proprietor/Sales/Office	16.3
Farm/Skilled/Semi-skilled	4.8
Student/Homemaker	3.2
Retired	50.6
Other	2.6
<u>Marital Status</u>	
Single	5.6
Married/Permanent Relationship	78.4
Separated/Divorced	5.3
Widowed	10.7
<u>Gender</u>	
Male	56.8
Female	43.2

Attitudes Regarding Growth and Development

As one would expect in a survey related to updating a Master Plan, a number of the items in the survey instrument addressed issues of growth and development in the Community. One of those items provided the respondents with several statements, and asked them to choose the one that best describes their feelings about growth in the Pentwater Community. Another used a similar approach, asking them to select the one statement that best describes the kind of development the Pentwater Community should attract.

With respect to the first of these items, the results are quite clear. A total of 44.6 percent of the respondents chose the response, “Growth should be tightly restricted throughout the Community.” The next most popular response only garnered 16.0 percent, and that was the

statement, “I would like to see growth encouraged in the Community.” With respect to the second item, there was much less apparent agreement among the respondents. A total of 29.0 percent indicated that “Pentwater should encourage a mixture of all kinds of uses, with an emphasis on tourism, with some commercial uses,” but that was closely followed with 27.1 percent choosing the statement, “Pentwater should encourage a mixture or balance of land uses.” Plus another 22.9 percent chose the statement “Pentwater should encourage a mixture of all kinds of uses, with an emphasis on residential uses.”

In combination, these two items suggest that the respondents do want to see certain kinds of growth restricted in the Community. Moreover, while there is not clear agreement as to the specific emphasis, they also believe that some mixture of land use development would be most appropriate for the Community.

This same theme tends to recur in Table 3 below which reports the results from a set of items dealing with issues related to the importance of development and growth in the Community during the next ten years. As can be seen, there is a clear break between the first three items and the other three items in the table. The top three issues clearly speak to the desire to control certain kinds of development and growth (especially industrial, but also commercial) while providing for development that is consistent with the respondents’ images of the Community. There is still some ambiguity, however, regarding commercial activity, given the relative importance of improvements to the village shopping area and encouraging other commercial development.

Table 3. Importance of Development/Growth Issues

Issue	Rank	%
Concentrate development to preserve space/character	1 (1.93)	73.6
Control growth in the Community	2 (2.12)	65.3
Village shopping area improvements	3 (2.21)	66.1
Promote growth in the Community	4 (2.97)	41.1
Encouraging commercial development	5 (3.07)	39.6
Encouraging industrial development	6 (3.86)	16.1

¹ Issues are organized from the most important at the top, to the least important at the bottom. The ranking is based on the mean of the responses, which are displayed in parentheses -- the higher the mean score (i.e., closest to 1.0), the more important the respondents regarded the issue. Also, the percentages provided include only those responses in the top two categories – “very important” and the adjacent category.

Another approach to examining an issue is to identify the extent to which it is perceived as a problem by the respondents. On the following page, Table 4 contains the responses to three items which were presented as conditions that could be considered a problem in the Pentwater Community. Here, as before, the same theme emerges. More than two thirds of the respondents (68.4%) perceive new development as not in character with the Community, and half (50.6%)

offer the opinion that current land use regulations are not restrictive enough. Only one fifth (20.4%) indicate that current land use regulations are too restrictive.

Table 4. Perception of Development/Growth Problems¹

Issue	Rank	%
New development not in character with community	1 (2.01)	68.4
Land use regulations not restrictive enough	2 (2.47)	50.6
Land use regulations too restrictive	3 (3.50)	20.4

¹ Issues are organized from most problematic at the top, to least problematic at the bottom. The percentages reported are the responses to the category “Significant Problem” plus the adjacent category.

Table 5 below presents the results from a set of items that ask the respondents’ opinions about a series of statements dealing with development and growth in the Community. As before when means were calculated, for each item, point values were assigned to each of the response categories (in this instance, 1 for “strongly agree,” 2 for the next category, 3 for “neutral,” 4 for the next category, and 5 for “strongly disagree”). The number of respondents who selected the category was then multiplied by the appropriate point value, and the products were totaled and divided by the number of respondents to produce the mean for that item.

The results in Table 5 closely parallel and thus reinforce the results from Tables 3 and 4. The statements that are most strongly held call for restrictions to certain kinds of development and growth (particularly industrial - 76.3%, commercial to a somewhat lesser extent – 54.7%), and either more aggressive enforcement of existing regulations (68.1%) or stricter regulations (61.6%). Similarly, where the statements do allow for growth and development, it is linked to preservation of natural areas or the existence of adequate Community services. The rate and location of growth (77.0%) also appears to be linked to open space preservation (64.7%). Only about a third of the respondents (37.7%) support an unfettered call for commercial development.

Table 5. Attitudes Toward Development and Growth

Issue	Rank	%
Control rate and location of growth	1 (1.82)	77.0
Like limited industrial activity	2 (1.86)	76.3
Need aggressive approach to enforcing regulations	3 (2.01)	68.1
Support strict sign regulations	4 (2.18)	61.6
Open space preservation should be a priority	5 (2.20)	64.7
Like limited business/commercial activity	6 (2.49)	54.7
Development allowed only with adequate services	7 (2.53)	57.8
Growth okay but with natural area preservation	8 (2.63)	53.4
Encourage more commercial uses	9 (3.10)	37.7

¹ Issues are organized from the most supportive at the top, to the least supportive at the bottom. The ranking is based on the mean responses, which are displayed in parentheses -- the higher the mean score (i.e., the closer to 1.0), the more supportive the respondents were of the issue. Also, the percentages provided include only those responses in the top two categories -- "strongly agree" and the adjacent category.

Additional Policy Priorities

Related to issues of growth and development are issues relating to the environment, open space and recreation. Some of the above items have also dealt with these or related issues. However, Table 6 below presents the results from a set of items that specifically asked the respondents to indicate their perceptions of the relative importance of these issues. In this case, there is almost complete consensus in their perceptions. Virtually all of them attributed the highest importance to ground and surface water quality (tied with 99.9% each), and nearly as much importance to preserving open space, natural amenities (tied with 91.1% each), and the rural character of the Community (83.8%). Some of the respondents, however, do appear to resist requiring open space as part of any new development in the Community (only 63.0% chose the two highest categories).

Table 6. Importance of Open Space/Environment/Recreation Issues

Issue	Rank	%
Protect ground water quality	1/2 (1.08)	99.9
Protect surface water quality	1/2 (1.10)	99.9
Preserve open space and natural amenities	3/4 (1.41)	91.1
Preserve open space on public land	3/4 (1.42)	91.1
Preserve rural character of the Community	5 (1.61)	83.8
Require open space for new development	6 (2.20)	63.0

¹ Issues are organized from the most important at the top, to the least important at the bottom. The ranking is based on the mean responses, which are displayed in parentheses -- the higher the mean score (i.e., the closer to 1.0), the more importance the respondents attached to the issue. Again, the percentages provided include only those responses in the top two categories -- "very important" and the adjacent category.

Support for Community Projects and Services

One set of items in the survey instrument presented a set of Community services and asked the respondents to attach a rating of importance to each of them (ranging from 1 – “very important” to 5 “not important.”) As before, the mean score for each item was calculated and the items were ranked based on those means. They are presented in Table 7 on the following page, along with the appropriate percentages.

As can be seen, the respondents appear to feel rather strongly that new residential developments should be required to hook up to the public sewer system (70.2%). This is consistent with earlier results calling for more restrictive regulations. Although expansion of sewer (both sanitary and storm) and water services are all perceived as important (ranging from 52.5% to 58.4%), the level of importance falls well below that of requiring hook ups. Given earlier findings, it may be that expansion of Community infrastructure services like sewer and water are being perceived by the respondents as precursors to growth and development, and they are lukewarm to it unless it is in some way restricted.

Table 7. Importance of Community Services

Issue	Rank	%
Require hook ups for new residential developments	1 (1.92)	70.2
Expand sanitary sewer service	2 (2.30)	58.4
Expand public water service	3 (2.45)	54.0
Expand storm sewer service	4 (2.50)	52.5

¹ Issues are organized from the most important at the top, to the least important at the bottom. The ranking is based on the mean responses, which are displayed in parentheses. Again, the percentages of respondents include only those responses in the top two categories – in this case, “very important” and the adjacent category.

One of the perennial difficulties in any community is managing the demand for services against the revenues that are required to sustain it. One set of items addressed this directly by presenting a list of Community services and asking the respondents to indicate their level of support for those services. In particular, they were asked if they would: 1 - vote for additional taxes, 2 - support use of existing taxes but no new taxes, or 3 - not support either using existing taxes or new taxes. The results from this set of items are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Support for Projects and Services¹

Service/Program	Rank	%
Fire services	1 (1.68)	35.0
Emergency services	2 (1.71)	33.7
Police services	3/4 (1.79)	28.3
Existing parks	3/4 (1.79)	24.3
Public sewer services	5 (1.91)	23.7
Road improvements	6 (1.92)	17.6
Public water services	7 (1.94)	20.8
Public bike trails	8/9 (2.08)	21.0
Curbside recycling	8/9 (2.08)	15.9
Purchase open space for public use	10 (2.10)	17.4
More recreational facilities	11 (2.26)	10.9
Purchase land to slow development	12 (2.43)	9.8
All-purpose community building	13 (2.49)	6.3
Purchase of development rights	14 (2.53)	5.8

¹ As before, issues are organized from the most support at the top, to the least support at the bottom. The ranking is based on the mean response for each issue, which is displayed in parentheses (as before, scores closer to 1.0 indicate greater support). The percentages of respondents who responded “would vote for additional taxes to support” are also provided.

The first result that is immediately obvious from the Table is the bulk of the respondents will not support additional taxes for any of the Community services. Fire and emergency services managed over one third support, but only police services made it up to the level of one quarter support. This suggests that the Community of Pentwater would have a difficult time raising taxes for any expansion of services without a significant campaign. It is also clear that basic infrastructure services (i.e., fire, emergency, police, parks, sewer, roads, water) have the most support. Although the data are not shown in the table, all of those services did receive substantial support in the form of using existing revenue ranging from 62.0 percent to 73.0 percent. In addition, several other services received similar levels of support for the use of existing revenue: recycling (60.1%), the purchase of open space (55.5%), recreational facilities (52.4%), and bike trails (50.2%). However, in each of the latter instances, there are substantial proportions of respondents who indicated that they would not support the use of either existing revenues or new taxes for those services. Also, it should be noted that the three services at the bottom of the ranking all had majorities of respondents who were unwilling for either existing or new revenues to be used (purchase of development rights – 59.2%, community building – 54.9%, and purchase of land to slow development – 59.2%).

Housing in the Pentwater Community

In a community like Pentwater, which is highly regarded for its location and natural amenities, a major issue for planning is housing. What kinds and how many are likely to be built

(or should be built), and can the necessary support services be put in place at the appropriate time? In an attempt to determine the property owners’ attitudes toward such issues, two sets of items were included in the survey instrument. The first asked the respondents about conditions related to housing that might be problematic in the Pentwater Community. Table 9 presents the results for those items.

Table 9. Perception of Housing Problems¹

Issue	Rank	%
High price of single family homes	1	37.2
Lack of affordable low/moderate income housing	2	32.3
Lack of available alternative housing types	3	20.2

¹ Issues are organized from most problematic at the top, to least problematic at the bottom. The percentages provided are the responses to the category “Significant Problem” plus the adjacent category.

The most striking result from Table 9 is the fact that the percentages are all relatively low. The majority of the respondents apparently do not see any of the issues as particularly problematic for the Pentwater Community. This is in direct contrast to the earlier set of items dealing with problems related to development and growth. Only about a third of the respondents (37.2%) are concerned about the high price of single family homes, and about another third (32.3%) are concerned about the lack of low/moderate income housing. There is relatively little concern for the availability of alternative housing types (20.2%). Indeed, almost half of the respondents (41.1%) saw a lack of alternative housing types as “no problem” at all. (It may be that this is related to the substantial proportion of the respondents who reported living in single family homes – in excess of 90%.)

A second set of items in the survey instrument also dealt with housing. It presented a variety of housing types and asked the respondents if they felt the Pentwater Community should have more, less, or about same amount of each type of housing, or if they simply have no opinion on the subject. These results are provided in Table 10.

Table 10. Perceptions of Housing Needs

	More %	Same %	Fewer %
Single Family – Large Lots	20.3	56.6	10.0
Single Family – Smaller Lots	18.0	48.6	20.3
Manufactured Homes	5.9	19.5	62.5
Lower Income Housing	15.4	27.9	39.7
Apartment Units	6.5	21.9	56.9
Condominiums	4.9	20.8	61.0
Senior Housing	30.6	37.8	17.6
Short Term Rentals	7.4	44.5	33.9
Second Homes	12.8	60.4	12.5

Before turning to the results in the table, it should be noted that the proportions selecting the “no opinion” category was relatively constant across the nine housing types. The range was from 12.1 percent (37 people) to 17.0 percent (53 people). While these proportions are a bit higher than is generally desirable in a survey, they indicate only that there may be a lack of knowledge (or interest) in the issue among some of the respondents.

Turning to the results in Table 10, it is first apparent that relatively few of the respondents see a need for more of any of the nine housing types. Senior housing received the most choices (30.6%), followed by single family houses on large lots (20.3%), but in neither instance was “More” the dominant choice among the respondents. In both of those instances, the largest proportions of respondents selected the “Same” category (37.8% and 56.6%, respectively). By the same token, more respondents also selected the “Same” category for single family houses on small lots (48.6%), rental housing (44.5%), and second homes (60.4%). The types of housing that the most respondents would like to see in smaller numbers (or, presumably, slower growth) were manufactured homes (62.5%), condominiums (61.0%), short term rentals (56.9%), and lower income housing (39.7%).

It would appear therefore, from Tables 9 and 10, there is certainly no clarion call for more residential development of any type. Those respondents who are interested are primarily interested in single family homes, but even they feel that the amount of single family housing in place at the present time is largely sufficient. This, of course, is again consistent with the theme of restricted growth that the respondents would prefer for the Pentwater Community that emerged from the earlier results.

Perceptions of Economic Growth and Development

Two open-ended questions were included in the survey instrument. The first asked the respondents to identify their top three concerns about the Pentwater Community. The second offered the respondents the opportunity to make any final comments they wished.

Many of the comments refer to specific issues that the respondents feel are important (e.g., parking, various infrastructure services, the need for certain kinds of businesses, the school, various natural features of the Community). It is clear, however, from a review of the comments that the same several themes identified above consistently appear. First, it is evident that a large number of property owners perceive the Pentwater Community as more or less rural in character – “quaint,” and they want to keep it that way. They are interested in preserving the natural amenities of the area and controlling the nature of growth and development. Their primary focus appears to be on condominiums (although they do not appear to be fond of most types that are not single family dwellings). They do not appear to be opposed to growth per se (although some clearly would like to see it minimized), but want whatever growth there is to be consistent with the character of the Community.

A second, smaller group of property owners clearly see growth and development as largely desirable. This applies particularly to commercial/retail establishments, since the comments frequently focus on empty storefronts in the Community. It may even apply to certain forms of light industrial development. They appear to see growth as a way to keep their taxes down, or possibly reduce them (since they and others see the tax rates as relatively high), while allowing for the expansion of critical infrastructure services.

In contrast, a third, small group of respondents make it clear that not only do they want growth to be controlled, they would prefer that it be stopped completely. For a few, that even includes certain infrastructure services. Indeed, several of them indicated that they would like to see the Community return to the way that it was at some point in the past (usually a decade or more ago). Indeed, this is a group that appears to resist any change at all.





Finally, there is still another group of property owners (apparently somewhat smaller than the first, but larger than the second and third) who perceive growth and development in the Community as more or less inevitable. While they too express concerns about the nature of that growth, and offer a variety of opinions about how that growth can be managed, they appear to occupy a middle-of-the-road position that could be the basis of a compromise with the first group.

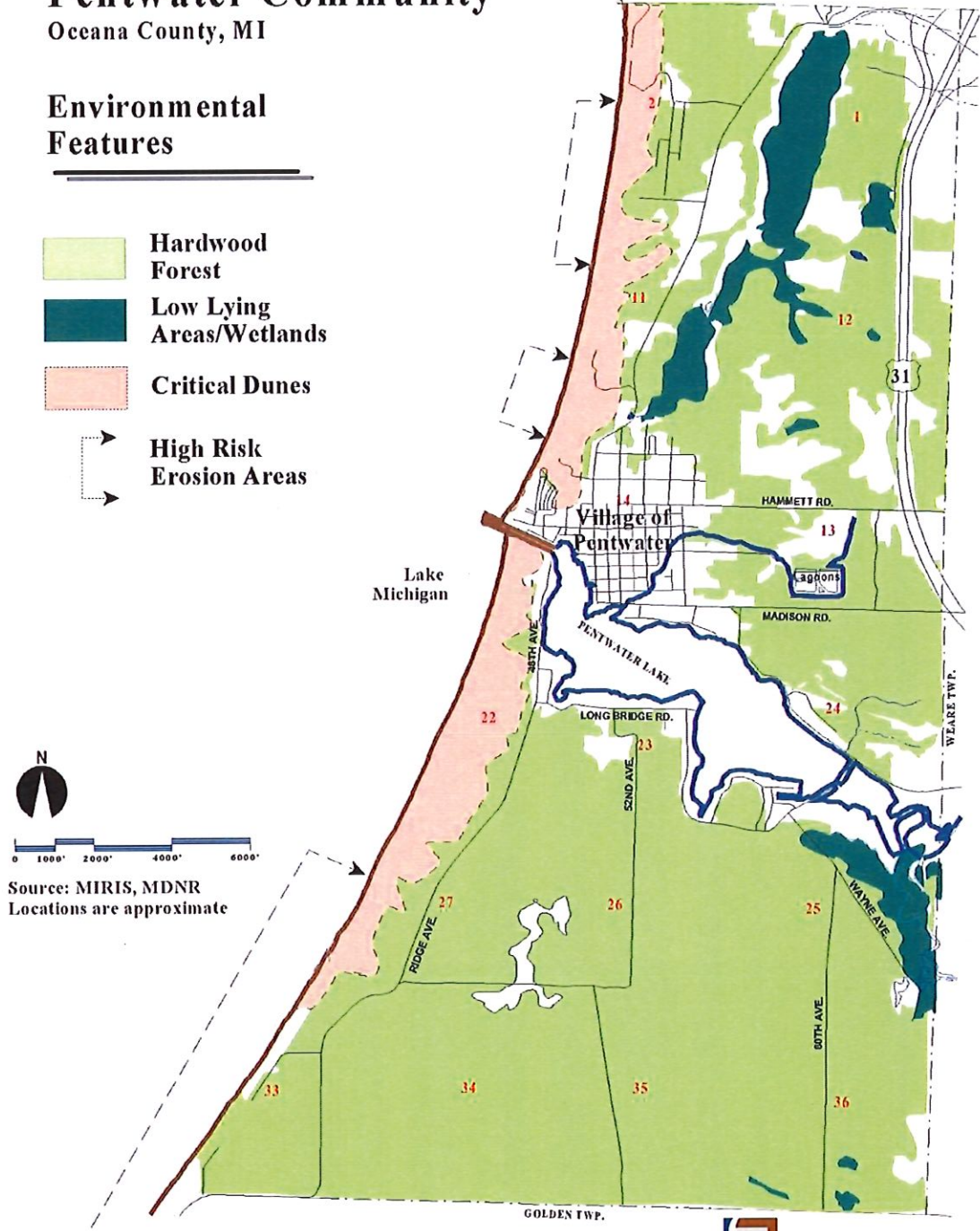
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Pentwater Community

Oceana County, MI

Environmental Features

-  Hardwood Forest
-  Low Lying Areas/Wetlands
-  Critical Dunes
-  High Risk Erosion Areas



Source: MIRIS, MDNR
Locations are approximate

August, 1996







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Pentwater Township

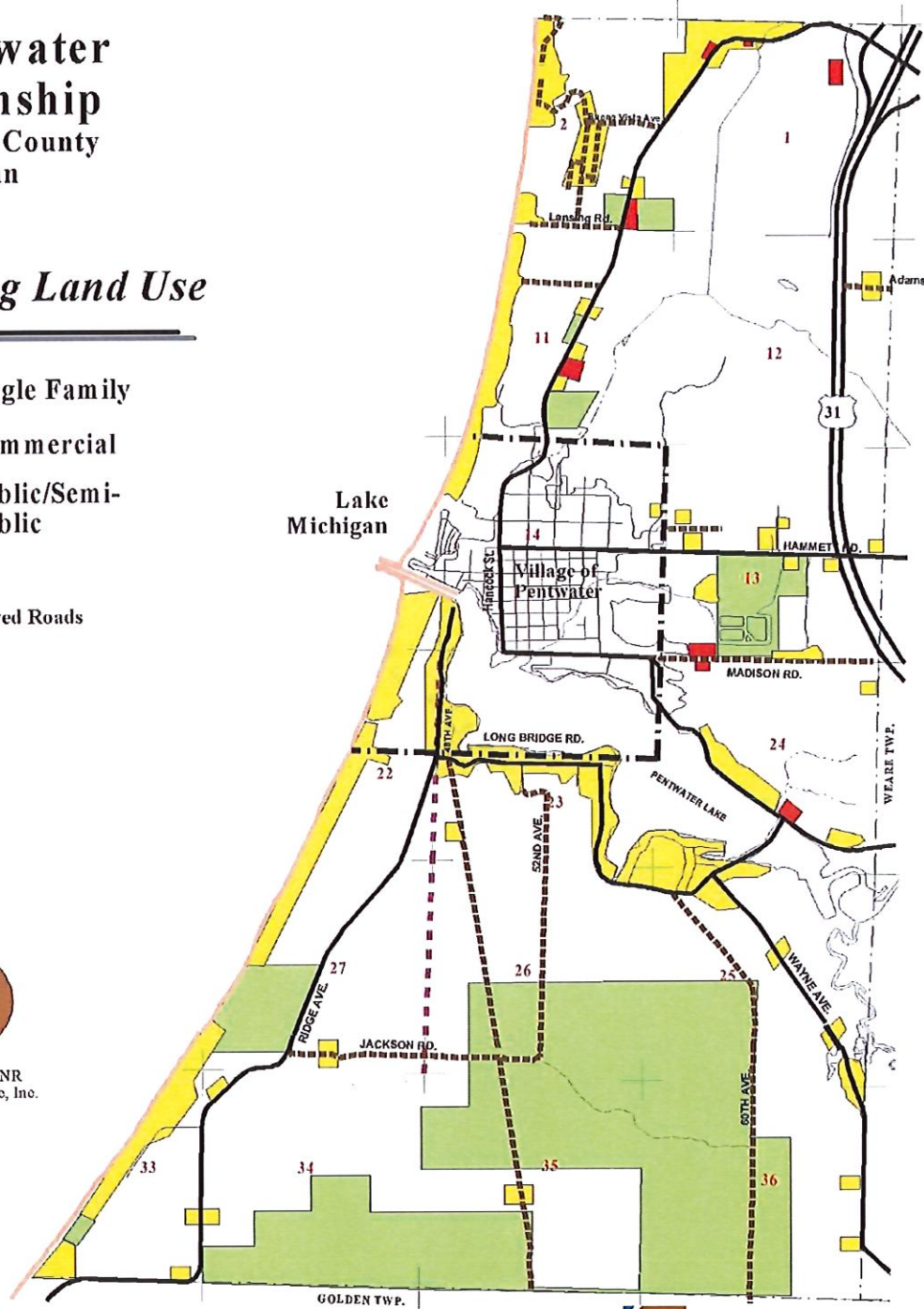
Oceana County
Michigan

Existing Land Use

-  Single Family
 -  Commercial
 -  Public/Semi-Public
-  Unpaved Roads

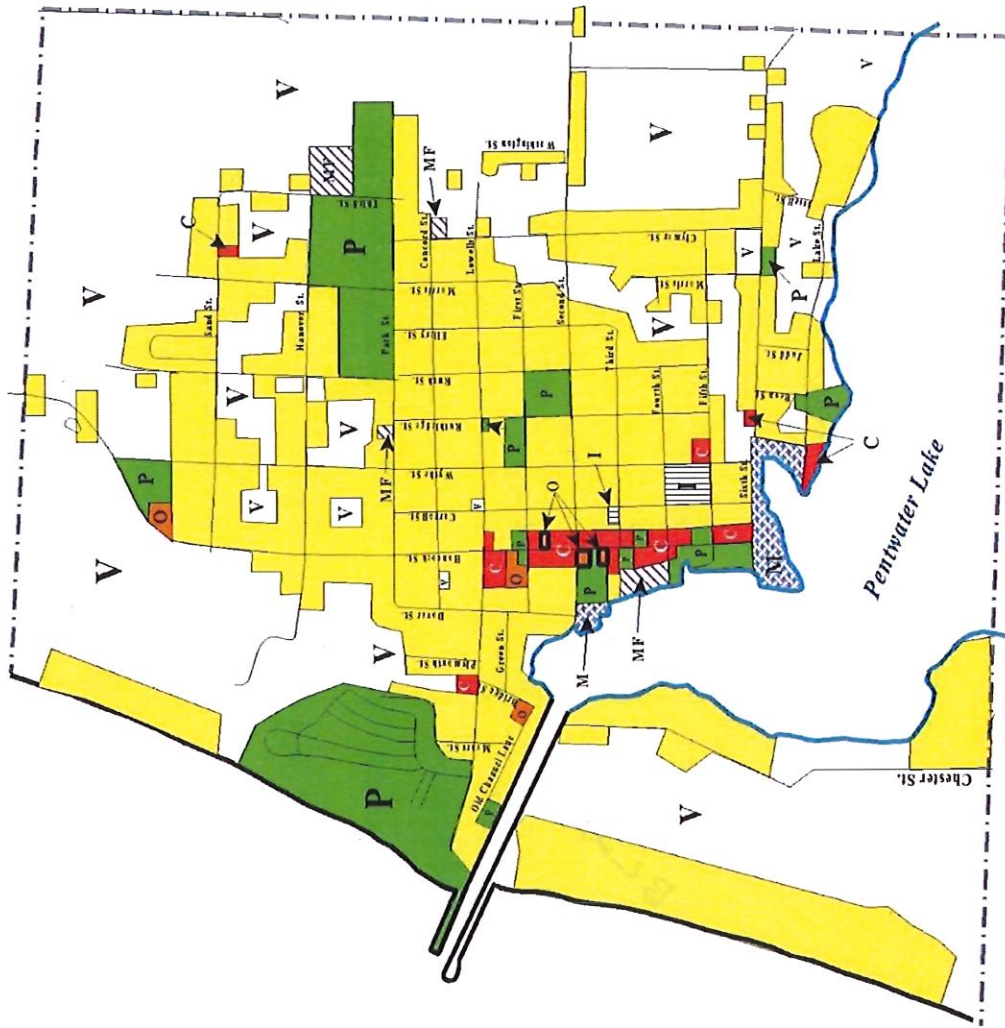


Source: MIRIS, MDNR
Langworthy LeBlanc, Inc.



August, 1996

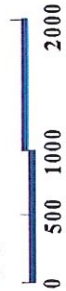
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Village of Pentwater
Oceana County, Michigan

Existing Land Use

- Single Family
- Multi-Family
- Commercial
- Office
- Public/Semi-Public
- Industrial
- Commercial Marina
- Vacant



December, 1996



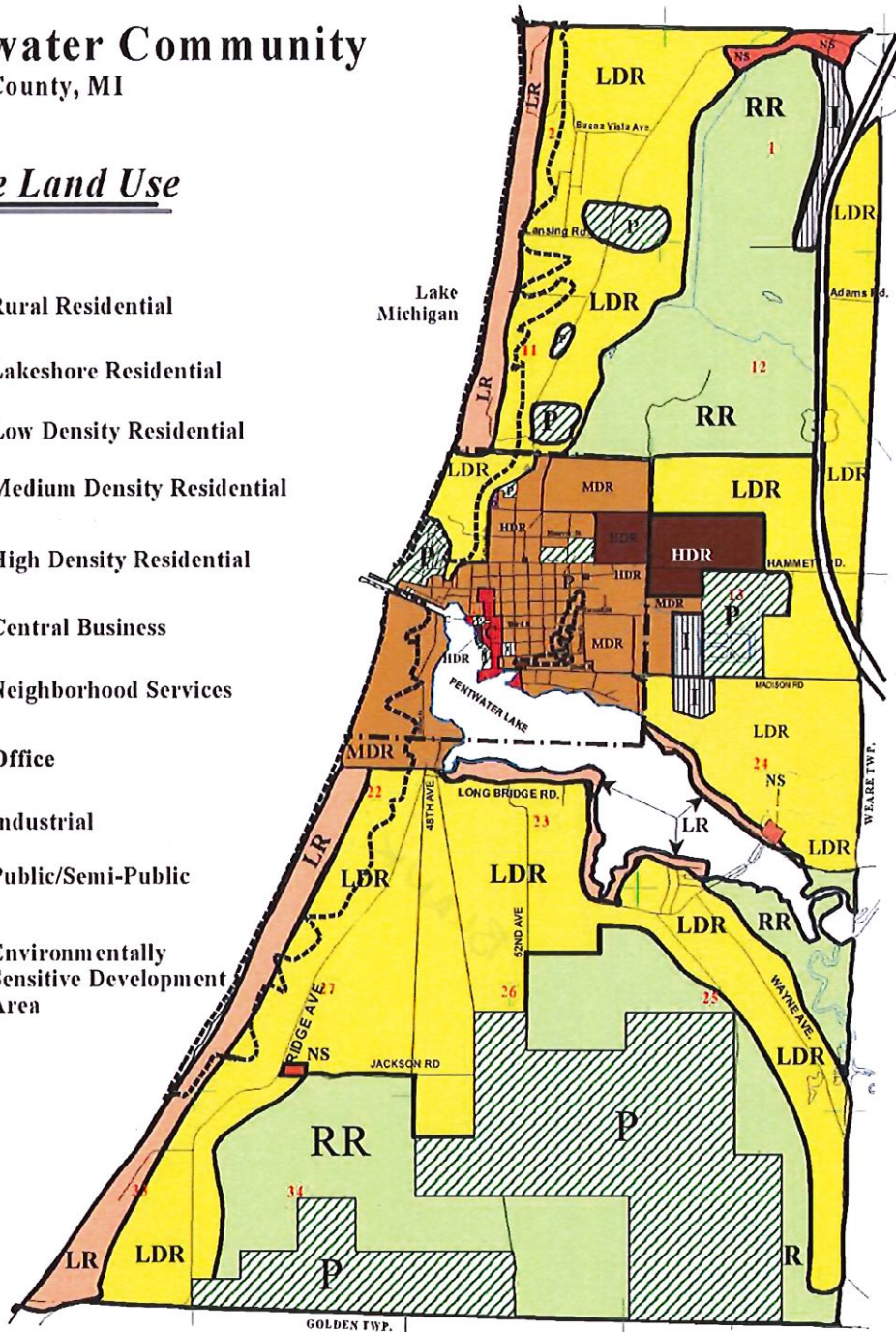
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Pentwater Community

Oceana County, MI

Future Land Use

- RR Rural Residential
- LR Lakeshore Residential
- LDR Low Density Residential
- MDR Medium Density Residential
- HDR High Density Residential
- C Central Business
- NS Neighborhood Services
- O Office
- I Industrial
- P Public/Semi-Public
- E Environmentally Sensitive Development Area



December, 2008
Base Map: MIRIS, MDNR



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Pentwater Community
Oceana County, MI

**Future Land Use
Village of Pentwater**

- RR Rural Residential
- LR Lakeshore Residential
- LDR Low Density Residential
- MDR Medium Density Residential
- HDR High Density Residential
- C Central Business
- NS Neighborhood Services
- O Office
- Industrial
- Public/Semi-Public
- Environmentally Sensitive Development Area

