

VILLAGE OF OTTER LAKE
LAND USE
MASTER PLAN



Village of Otter Lake Master Plan

Adopted: ?, ? 2009



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Introduction

Purpose and Planning Process

The Village of Otter Lake Planning Commission has prepared this Master Land Use Plan under the authority of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008. It will provide guidelines for future development that is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical; considers the character of the planning jurisdiction and its suitability for particular uses; and will in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of the community. It shall provide adequate provisions for traffic, the promotion of safety from fire and other dangers, adequate provision for light and air, the promotion of the healthful and convenient distribution of population, the promotion of good civic design and arrangement, wise and efficient expenditure of public funds and the adequate provision of public utilities and other public requirements.

The Village of Otter Lake Planning Commission was established in 2007. Prior to this time, no master plan had been prepared by the Village; however a five year Community Recreation Plan was prepared and adopted in 1995. This plan compiled considerable background study information that was useful in the preparation this Master Land Use Plan.

This plan presents background data and information that provides a physical and demographic profile of the Village and identifies important characteristics, changes and future trends occurring in and around the Village of Otter Lake. Community opinions and concerns were identified through a Village-wide survey/questionnaire mailed to all residents, previous planning efforts by other community groups, and input from attendees of the Master Plan committee meetings. After the collection and analysis of the background information was complete, the Village Planning Commission developed the following broad land use goals with development policies for the future land use within the Village.

- To preserve and maintain the Village's historical land use pattern in consideration of all future land use issues, while considering the existing infrastructure and being sensitive to the natural features of the area.
- To preserve, protect and improve the natural resources within the Village and encourage the neighboring townships to support this goal.
- To develop policies for the most efficient use, maintenance and construction of public utilities, infrastructure and community facilities while meeting the needs of the Village.
- Preserve the Village's traditional lakefront / small town character by considering its historical development, ties to the natural environment and its regional context.

Using these established goals and policies, the Village Planning Commission developed and reviewed several different land use plans, identifying and discussing the pros and cons of each. The draft master land use plan presented to the Village Council was a consensus of these discussions.

The draft Master Land Use Plan was presented to the public for comment on _____, 2009. Following this initial public hearing, a revised plan was presented to the public for comment on ??.

This adopted Master Land Use Plan incorporates the community goals and its vision for the future, and shall provide guidance for future infrastructure and land development, capital improvement projects, and zoning ordinance changes within the Village.

Location and Regional Context

The Village of Otter Lake is located in the northwestern most corner of Lapeer County and the northeastern most corner of Genesee County . Approximately 57% of the Village lies within Marathon Township, Lapeer County and 43% lies in Forest Township, Genesee County. Tuscola County lies approximately 1/4 mile north of the Village's northern boundary line.

The Village of Otter Lake is 16 miles northwest of Lapeer and 25 miles northeast of Flint. The main roadway through the Village is Lake Road to the west and Otter Lake Road to the east. Lake Road connects with M-15 approximately 2-1/2 mile west of the Village and Otter Lake Road connects with M-24 and M-90 approximately 7-1/2 miles to its east. Within the Village limits lies the majority of Otter Lake, a 68 acre spring fed lake.

The Village is within a rural recreational / agricultural area and serves the urban areas of Flint and Lapeer as a bedroom community. The community provides a center for churches, recreational activities, and small local retail businesses. No light industry is currently located within the Village boundaries.

Regional planning documents, studies and resources used in the development of this Master Plan, include the following:

- 2006 Land Use Analysis, Genesee County, Michigan
- Lapeer County General Development Plan
- Genesee County Regional Trail Plan 2007
- Potential Conservation Area Assessment - Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee Counties
- Genesee County Preliminary Wetland Inventory
- Lapeer County Preliminary Wetland Inventory
- Land Policy Institute, Michigan State University

History of Otter Lake

Native Americans hunted, fished and trapped on the lands and waters of present day Otter Lake. Many arrowheads have been found on the hillsides surrounding the lake and several Indian mounds are located within the area. Wildlife still flourishes in abundance and if a person wanders the state lands north of the Village, one can envision the area as the Native Americans lived.

The lake received its name on September 29, 1838, when Andrew McArthur of Columbiaville, visited the lake during a hunting trip. On that day, he saw five otters swimming in the lake, hence the name of Otter Lake. The land upon which the Village is built was originally a tract of 6,000 acres owned by Garritt Smith. The property was forested with pine trees and was later purchased by C.B. Benson of Oswego, New York, for the purpose of logging and manufacturing the pine forest into lumber.

European settlers first arrived in the area in the late 1830's with the logging industry. On December 19, 1883, the Village of Otter Lake was incorporated and consisted of the following land area:

"The South 1/2 of the North East fractional quarter of Section One and the South East quarter of Section One, Town Nine (9) North, *Range Nine* (9) {Eight (8)} East and the South 1/2 of the South East fractional quarter of Section Six and the North East fractional quarter of Section Seven, and the North half of the North half of the South East fractional quarter of Section Seven Town Nine

(9) North, Range Nine (9) East being in the Counties of Lapeer and Genesee....".

In 1872, two railroads were built through to the Village. The Flint and Pere Marquette Railway built the Huckleberry Railroad from Flint to Otter Lake to haul logs and lumber to the Flint area. The Michigan Central Railroad extended their line from Lapeer to Otter Lake, connecting the Village to Detroit and the following year to Bay City. The deep lake was a resource for water for the steam locomotives and both railroads had stations located within the Village. The lake was also used for the production of ice blocks which both rail lines shipped throughout Michigan for home refrigeration. The largest ice houses in the Village were located on the Pere Marquette railroad and over the years, thousands of tons of ice were shipped out of Otter Lake.

During these early years, Otter Lake was a thriving community and center of commerce - businesses, banks, hotels, grain elevators, sawmills and factories. As roads were built and improved cargo that normally would be transported by rail was being transported by trucks, the forests were depleted and electric refrigeration replaced ice. As the automobile became the desired method of travel, the train stations closed. In 1933 the Huckleberry Railroad (Pere Marquette) was abandoned, followed by the Michigan Central Railroad (Penn Central) in 1976.



Depot on the Huckleberry (Pere Marquette) Railroad

Natural and Environmental Features

Topography and Soils

The Village of Otter Lake is located at latitude 43°12'49.7"N, longitude 83°27'27.6"W. The topography of the Village is level to gently rolling to the south and southeast of Otter Lake. Moderate slopes and higher ground is located to the northwest of the lake with the west shoreline of the lake containing some steep slopes. The lake itself was formed by glacial activity and ranges in depth from 45 feet to approximately 118 feet deep. The lake bed typically falls off sharply from the shoreline, however two small islands, typically submerged, are located near the center of the lake.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Survey indicates that the Village of Otter Lake is composed of the Capac-Belding-Brookston soil association. These soils are somewhat poorly drained with a sandy loam to clay loam subsoil.

Water and Recreational Resources

Within the Village's boundaries lies approximately 2/3 of Otter Lake. This lake is approximately 68 acres in size. The clarity of Otter Lake is very good and is used for scuba diving by regional clubs. Fishing opportunities include bluegill, pumpkinseed, black crappie, yellow perch, large mouth bass, northern pike, and longear sunfish. A Village owned public beach, boat launch, and campground, containing 38 campsites, provides recreational, small boating, and swimming activities.

To the north, lie Powder Horn Lake and Mud Lake, both are located outside the Village boundaries. These lakes are 13.5 acres and 8.7 acres in size respectively with a maximum depth of 50 feet each. Both lakes have organic beds and soft edges. Mud Lake tributaries to Power Horn Lake which in turns tributaries to Otter Lake. No other streams or creeks tributary into Otter Lake.

Otter Lake is the head waters for Butternut Creek, which drains southwesterly through Forest and Genesee Townships to join the Flint River in Village of Genesee. Butternut Creek is a subwatershed of the Flint River watershed system that encompasses most of Lapeer and Genesee countries, and small sections of Tuscola, Saginaw, Shiawassee and Oakland counties. The watershed system is monitored regularly by the Flint River Watershed Coalition.

The old railroad bed of the Penn Central Railroad (originally the Michigan Central Railroad) runs diagonally, north/south through the Village and is now the Southern Links Trailway, a hiking, biking and equestrian trail. At its completion in 2010, this 10 mile long linear park will pass through portions of three counties, the Village of Columbiaville, Marathon Township, the Village of Otter Lake, Forest Township, Millington Township, the Village of Millington, Vassar Township and the City of Vassar. The trail's development and promotion is supported by the Friends of the Southern Links Trailway. Long range goals include extending the trailway north to the Village of Reese, south to the Polly Ann Trail in Lapeer County and west to the M-15 Heritage Route.

Located 2-1/2 miles west of the Village, the M-15 Recreational Heritage Route was Michigan's first. It extends from Ortonville in northern Oakland County to the northern terminus of M-15 east of downtown Bay City. The Route offers summer festivals, shopping, restaurants and activities such as camping, fishing, biking, hiking and horseback riding.

Regional recreational facilities include Murphy Lake State Game Area one mile north of the Village; Lapeer State Game Area, four miles southeast; and Holloway Reservoir Regional Park five miles southeast of the Village. These areas offer hunting, boating, camping, fishing, swimming and trail activities.



Background Data and Studies

Population Change

The total population of the Village of Otter Lake was 437 residents based on the 2000 U.S. Census Data. This was a decrease of 27 people from the 1990 census and 5 less people than the 1980 census. Given the current economic conditions of the State of Michigan and the United States as a whole, the population is expected to continue to gradually decrease in the foreseeable future. This parallels a general decline in the State's population.

1980 to 2000 Population Changes					
Place	1980	1990	2000	Change 1990 to 2000	
				No.	Percent
Village of Otter Lake	442	474	437	(37)	(7.8)
Marathon Township	---	4,286	4,701	415	9.7
Forest Township	---	4,409	4,738	329	7.5

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Age Distribution

The only population within the Village to show an increase in its percentage was among the population over 65 years of age. Between 1990 and 2000, this age group increased by 2.5 percent. This trend reflects the overall aging of our population in general.

Although the population decreased, the percent of age distribution remained constant with the 1990 census in the other age groups.

1990 to 2000 Age Distribution						
Age Group	1990		2000		Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5 years	31	6.5	28	6.5	(2)	0
5 to 19 years	138	29.1	109	25	(29)	(6.1)
20 to 44 years	177	37.3	162	37	(15)	(3.1)
45 to 64 years	88	18.6	86	19.7	(2)	(0.4)
65 to 75 years	28	6	31	7	3	0.63
Over 75 years	12	2.5	21	4.8	9	1.9
Total	474	100.0	437	100.0	(37)	(7.8)

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Household By Type

In 1990 the average household size was 3.01 persons. This number decreased to 2.84 in the 2000 census, reflecting the general population trend of declining household size. It is anticipated that the average household size will continue to decline and reflect current trends of changes in family composition. It is also anticipated that more households will be headed by a single parent and that the number of single-person or non-family groups will increase due to death of spouses in an aging population.

1990 to 2000 Household Characteristics						
Household Group	1990		2000		Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Married couple families	92	58.5	87	56.6	(5)	(3.2)
Single male families	11	7	9	5.8	(2)	(1.3)
Single female families	18	11.5	21	13.6	3	1.9
Single person	29	18.5	27	17.5	(2)	(1.3)
Other non-family	7	5.4	10	6.5	3	1.9
Total Households	157	100.0	154	100.0	(3)	(1.9)

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Education Attainment

The following table compares the educational attainment of the Village residents to the neighboring township residents. In general, the educational attainment of the Village residents is similar to that of both townships, although Forest Township residents appear to have completed more schooling.

Comparison of Education Attainment for Persons 25 years and Over						
Level of Education	Village of Otter Lake		Forest Township		Marathon Township	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than High School	54	19.6	418	13.4	597	20.1
High School Graduate	113	40.9	1,385	44.2	1,274	42.8
Associate Degree	79	28.6	1119	35.7	866	29.1
Bachelor's Degree	22	8.0	154	4.9	142	4.8
Professional Degree	8	2.9	59	1.8	96	3.2
Total	276	100.0	3,135	100.0	2,975	100.0

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Employment Status

1990 - 2000 Employment by Selected Occupation					
Occupation	1990		2000		Percent Change
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Managerial and Professional			42	20.0	
Service Occupations			32	15.2	
Sales and Office Occupations			49	23.4	
Farming, Fishing and Forestry			0	0.0	
Construction and Maintenance			36	17.1	
Production and Transportation			51	24.3	
Total			210	100.0	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census (1990 U.S. Census Data was not available)

1990 - 2000 Employment by Selected Industry					
Occupation	1990		2000		Percent Change
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing			0	0.0	
Construction			21	10.0	
Manufacturing			58	27.6	
Wholesale trade			3	1.4	
Retail trade			40	19.0	
Transportation, warehousing			9	4.3	
Information			7	3.3	
Finance, insurance, real estate			5	2.4	
Professional, management, admin			7	3.3	
Educational, health services			25	11.9	
Arts, entertainment, recreation, food			16	7.6	
Other workers			12	5.7	
Public administration			7	3.3	
Total			210	100.0	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census (1990 U.S. Census Data was not available)

Income

The following table compares three measures of income of Village residents to the neighboring township residents. Incomes of the Village resident's rank slightly lower in all categories.

1999 Income Comparison			
Income Category	Village of Otter Lake	Forest Township	Marathon Township
Per Capita	\$17,927	\$20,773	\$19,469
Median Family	\$49,167	\$57,880	\$51,915
Median Household	\$49,000	\$51,235	\$49,255

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

The following table compares different levels of income for the Village residents to the neighboring township residents. The percent of residents reporting middle and upper middle income levels, between \$25,000 to \$75,000, is very consistent between the Village and townships. However, a greater percentage of Village residents reported income levels below \$25,000 than in either township. At the upper income levels, fewer Village residents reported incomes greater than \$100,000 than either township.

1999 Household Income Comparison						
Level of Income	Village of Otter Lake		Forest Township		Marathon Township	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than \$10,000	10	6.8	52	3.0	55	3.5
\$10,000 to \$14,999	6	4.1	58	3.4	106	6.7
\$15,000 to \$24,999	10	6.8	140	8.2	124	7.8
\$25,000 to \$34,999	22	15.1	241	14.1	235	14.8
\$35,000 to \$49,999	27	18.5	324	18.9	287	18.1
\$50,000 to \$74,999	39	26.7	433	25.3	447	28.2
\$75,000 to \$99,999	18	12.3	284	16.6	212	13.4
\$100,000 to \$149,000	10	6.8	166	9.7	110	6.9
\$150,000 to \$199,999	4	2.7	7	0.4	2	0.1
\$200,000 or more	0	0.0	7	0.4	8	0.5
Total	146	100.0	1,712	100.0	1,586	100.0

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

The following table compares poverty statistics for residents of the Village to the neighboring township residents. The percentage of Village residents in poverty is consistent with the percentages of residents in poverty in Marathon Township, however both communities are considerably higher than Forest Township poverty levels.

1999 Poverty Status Comparison						
Population in Poverty	Village of Otter Lake		Forest Township		Marathon Township	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Persons	35	7.8	142	3.0	365	7.8
Total Families	8	6.7	15	1.1	76	5.9

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Housing Characteristics

The majority of housing structures within the Village are single family dwellings. Some multi-unit dwellings are located on the upper floors of the buildings within the "downtown" commercial district. Also, several older large dwellings have been divide into multi-unit dwellings.

1990 to 2000 Housing Unit Comparison						
Units per Structure	1990		2000		Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
One unit	142	82.1	143	79.9	1	0.7
2 units	*		6	3.4		
3 or 4 units	12	6.9	11	6.1	1	0.7
5 to 9 units	5	2.9	7	3.9	2	1.15
Mobile home	14	8.1	12	6.7	2	1.15
Total	173	100.0	179	100.0	6	3.7

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

* The 1990 census lists 2 unit structures in the category 2 to 4 units

The tables on the following page indicates the age of dwelling units within the Village and length of home ownership. The data is current through the beginning of the year 2000. The Village does not keep a record of new housing starts, however several new homes have been built within the last nine years.

Year Structure was Built			Year Homeowner Move into Unit		
Year	Number	Percent	Year	Number	Percent
1999 to March 2000	0	0.0	1999 to March 2000	24	15.0
1995 to 1998	7	3.9	1995 to 1998	44	27.5
1990 to 1995	3	1.7	1990 to 1994	31	19.4
1980 to 1989	14	7.8	1980 to 1989	22	13.8
1970 to 1979	16	8.9	1970 to 1979	18	11.3
1960 to 1969	18	10.1	1960 or earlier	21	13.1
1940 to 1959	51	28.5			
1939 or earlier	70	39.1			
Total	173	100.0	Total	160	100.0

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

The following table compares owner occupied dwelling units within the Village to renter occupied units. A large number of dwellings are renter occupied. Rental units owned by non-Village residents tend to lack maintenance and contribute to blight in the Village.

Housing Occupancy Characteristics			
Category	Number	Percent of Total Units	Percent of Occupied Units
Total Housing Units	174	100.0	--
Total Occupied Housing Units	154	88.5	100.0
Owner Occupied	124	71.3	80.5
Renter Occupied	30	17.2	19.5
Vacant Housing Units	20	11.5	13.0
Seasonal or Recreational Use	6	3.4	3.9
Homeowner Vacancy Rate		0.8	
Rental Vacancy Rate		9.1	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Existing Land Use

General

Historically, the Village was a center of local commerce; shipping agriculture produce, lumber and forest products; and ice to the larger cities throughout southeastern Michigan. A small, fairly well-defined town center developed at the south end of the lake on either side of Detroit Street, between Genesee and Forest Avenues. Many of these commercial structures still exist today.

As commerce waned, the Village became a designation for recreational activities and small summer homes of wealthy residents from the larger cities to the south. These summer homes were built along the east shoreline of the lake and have been converted to year round single family residences.

Development on the southern shoreline, between Genesee Avenue and the lake, has changed over time. Originally, commercial and industrial type enterprises occupied this area. Today these buildings are gone except for the original fire house and this area has been developed into a swimming beach / community park and campground area.

Today, the Village of Otter Lake is a residential / bedroom community. Initially, the residential community developed in the area east and south of the downtown area, encompassing approximately five blocks. These areas and the eastern shoreline of the lake are small platted lots, while the remaining land within the Village is divided into larger sites ranging in size from an acre to more than 20 acres. Most new residential development has occurred in the western (Genesee County) side of the Village.

The Village contains large areas of undeveloped acreage, however potential regulated wetlands may limit future development within these areas.

Inventory of Existing Land Use

Commercial / Organizations

Cindy's Beauty Salon
D&L Auto Detailing
Candy's Café
Ed's Superette
Lakeville Bowl
Otter Lake Banquet Hall
Otter Lake Bar

Otter Lake Service Center
Otter Lake Village Market
Petherbridge & Associates
Woern's Otter Lake

American Legion Post #504
VFW Post #2409

Government / Public

Village of Otter Lake Community Hall
Otter Lake Village Park
Otter Lake Campground
Otter Lake Historical Society/Museum
Southern Links Trailway

United States Post Office
Otter Lake (Lapeer County Branch) Library
Otter Lake Fire Department

Light Industrial

Village of Otter Lake Sewage Treatment Facility

Educational

Otter Lake Elementary School

Churches / Religious

Otter Lake Church of the Nazarene
St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church

Otter Lake Seventh Day Advent Church

Residential

Single Family Homes
Multi-family Homes (converted single family residences)
Apartment Units (upper floors of commercial buildings)
Pre-manufactured Homes
Mobile Homes

Currently, the Village has three zoning classifications, Commercial, Light Industrial and Residential. On the 2007 tax roll, land use within the three classifications included the following acreage:

Commercial - 21 properties totaling 10.5 acres or 2 percent of the land area.

Light Industrial - 2 properties totaling 3.6 acres or 0.7 percent of the land area.

Residential - 207 properties totaling 390.9 acres or 76.6 percent of the land area.

In addition to the above, the following properties are within the Village but are not included within one of the zoning classifications:

Agricultural - 1 parcel, totaling 10 acres or 1.9 percent of the land area.

Government, Churches or Non-profits - 10 parcels, totaling 44.5 acres or 8.7 percent of the land area were listed as exempt. Included in these parcels are approximately 11 acres of recreation lands, (Village park/beach, campground and trailways).

Roadways and/or Right-of-ways - Approximately 50.5 acres or 9.9% of the land area.

NOTE: The above listed acreages are approximate and are based on land area above lake level (does not include the surface area of the lake).

The following categorizes define existing land use within the Village using a derivative of the Michigan Land Cover/Use Classification System developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for statewide land use inventories.

Agricultural

Although the Village does not have an Agricultural zoning classification, one (1) property was listed as agricultural on the 2007 tax roll. Land under cultivation is minimal and is located south of Hemmingway Lake Road.

Commercial

This classification is made up of all types of commercial uses, including professional offices, but excludes home office occupations. Most of these properties are located along the Lake Road / Otter Lake Road corridor, however a few residential properties have been spot zoned for commercial use.

The Village contains a fairly well defined "downtown" area located on Detroit Street between Forest Avenue and Genesee Avenue. Although only one block in length, this area contains many old brick structures, adjacent to each other. Unfortunately, many of these structures are vacant, reflecting the current economic times.

Industrial

This classification generally includes light manufacturing, processing facilities, warehousing, storage facilities, and similar uses. Currently, two (2) properties are listed in this classification; the Village's sanitary sewer treatment plant and a sub-station for Detroit Energy. No other industrial type uses are located within the Village.

Public and Semi-public Uses

This classification includes land available for cultural, public assembly and recreational purposes, educational facilities, governmental / service buildings, and religious uses. These uses are located throughout the Village and consist of four (4) churches, an elementary school, library, Village beach and campground, community hall, fire station, and a portion of the Southern Lakes Trailway.

Single Family Residential

This classification includes detached single family dwellings, pre-manufactured homes and mobile homes. Currently, no attached single family residential properties are located within the Village.

Older single family residential uses developed within small blocks on a grid system southeast of the commercial area. These parcels are small in size and many have plot descriptions that conflict with other properties. For this reason some of these older homes occupy more than a single lot and/or encroach on right-of-ways or other lots. These homes are typically 1-1/2 or 2 stories with basements and have detached garages or no garages.

Newer single family residential uses have developed on the western side of the Village on large parcels of land. These homes are typically larger, single story, ranch style with attached garages.

Multi-Family Residential

This classification includes residential structures that have three or more dwelling units and apartment units. These properties are located within the older residential section of the Village and are converted single family structures. Apartment units are also located on the upper floors of the commercial properties of the downtown.

Future Land Use Considerations

Location and Vehicular Accessibility

The Village is not served by a state highway and has only one Class A roadway servicing the Village from the east. This limits the truck traffic capable of serving the Village and any commercial activities within it. As both Lake Road and Washburn Roads have been recently reconstructed, it is unlikely that either of these roadways will be upgraded to Class A in the near future. This fact and its impact on any future land development should be considered in the future land use plan.

Land Use Conflicts / Incompatible Land Use

When a neighboring land use has a negative impact on the normal operation or enjoyment of one or more of the adjoining properties, conflicts can occur. The following situations can lead to conflicts, safety concerns and lower the overall livability of the Village;

- The nature of the activity creates noise, dust, odors, excessive traffic, etc., or the timing of site activities varies from the surrounding area.
- Scale of the development is too large or out of character with the surrounding development.
- Use and/or activity of the site may cause environmental damage.
- Non-conforming uses permitted within zoning districts.

Spot zoning (the zoning of a single property differently from the surrounding properties) and non-conforming land uses are a concern. The Village is a small community and it is difficult to deny close neighbors and friends variances when they request them.

Public Utilities and Infrastructure

The Village operates a sanitary sewer and treatment system for the properties located within Lapeer county (the eastern half of the Village). This system is new, built in 2005, and has additional capacity available. The properties located in Genesee county (western half of the Village) are not served by a central sewer system, but relies on private septic systems for sewage disposal.

The Village does not operate a central water service. All properties within the Village rely on private wells. This is a very important consideration for any future land development and must be considered in the future land use plan. The lack of a central water system will limit the density of development that can occur within the Village. Building codes are requiring more building types to install automatic fire sprinkler systems, a difficult and costly item when water is supplied by a private well.

The Village has a very limited storm water drainage system, mainly serving the downtown commercial area, that drains directly into the lake.

Electricity is supplied to the Village by DTE Energy (Detroit Energy) and Consumers Energy, Inc. DTE Energy supplies the properties located east of Washburn Road and has a sub-station located in the Village. The properties west of Washburn Road are served by Consumers Energy, Inc. Of the two systems, DTE Energy probably has more potential for expansion and added capacity than Consumers Energy, Inc.

Natural gas is supplied to the Village by Consumers Energy Inc. At this time, natural gas is not supplied to most of the properties located within the Genesee County side of the Village.

Approximately 1/4 of the streets within the Village are unpaved. Most of the paved streets do not have curb and gutters or storm water drainage, however the main thoroughfare (Lake Road, Detroit Street, Otter Lake Road) has been recently reconstructed/repaved with curbs and gutters installed. The remaining paved streets are in good to fair condition, but will need to be repaved in the near future. Most of the private parking lots within the Village are paved, however the Village owned parking lot in the downtown area is unpaved. Street lamp lighting has recently been installed in the downtown business area.

Land Development

Current lake front development is a mix of single family residential and recreational. The east shoreline has the highest density development of single family residential on small lots. The south shoreline is recreational use consisting of the Village swimming beach and campground. The west shoreline is a lower density single family residential on large lots and has some undeveloped properties. The edges of the Village have the lowest density single family residential on large acreage with considerable undeveloped property.

Commercial and Residential Structures

The built environment of the Village of Otter Lake is similar to other Villages throughout the State. Commercial buildings are typically masonry bearing walls with wood framed floors and roofs. Structures downtown are built to the property lines with service areas located to the rear of these structures. Residential structures are one and two story, wood framed construction. Maintenance and upkeep of both commercial and residential properties varies greatly within the Village. Well maintained properties are important in protecting local property values and attracting new residences and businesses to the Village.

Several commercial and residential properties within the Village retain much of their historical details and should be maintained as these structures add to the character of the Village. Notable structures include;

- St. Johns the Baptist Episcopal Church, 5811 Forest Avenue
- Cindy's Beauty Salon, 6398 Detroit Street (former bank)
- Otter Lake Historical Society/Museum, Genesee Street (original Fire Station)
- Otter Lake Seventh Day Advent Church, 6497 Eleventh Avenue
- Private Residence, northwest corner of Detroit Street and Benson Street
- Private Residence, northeast corner of Eleventh Avenue and Otter Lake Road (former church)

The commercial structures in the "downtown" area retain some of their historic details and it should be strongly encouraged to restore these structures to their original appearance.

Public Structures and Facilities

Otter Lake Community Hall - This single story, framed building is located adjacent to the Village campground and serves as the Village office and community meeting space. Toilet/shower facilities for the Village campground are also located within this structure. The structure has reached its useful life span and is underused by both the Village and community. Serious consideration should be given to relocating these functions elsewhere within the Village.

Otter Lake Department of Public Works Building - This structure is a single story building, of pole construction, located west of the Community Hall. It has reached its useful life span and should be relocated to another area of the Village.

Otter Lake Elementary School - The Lakeville School District operates this elementary school located on approximately 17 acres in the southwest section of the Village. The school has a staff of 16 people and an enrollment of approximately 211 students. Long term use of this facility may be a concern as the district deals with shrinking enrollment and operating budgets.

Otter Lake Village Beach - This Village owned swimming beach / park is located on approximately 2 acres of land at the southern tip of the lake. Use of the facility by Village residents is free, however non-residents are charged to use the beach and parking areas. Use of this facility has increased in recent years.

Otter Lake Village Campground - The Village owned campground and boat launch is located west of the swimming beach on approximately 5.5 acres of land. This facility has 34 camping sites with an additional 4 site in the rustic area west of the canal. Use of this facility has increased in recent years and is expected to continue to increase as higher gas prices are keeping campers closer to home.

Otter Lake Village Cemetery - This cemetery located in the northeast corner of the Village is owned and maintained by the Village. Burial sites are available within the cemetery.

Surrounding Land Development

Land development immediately outside the Village boundaries is rural in character and controlled by two different townships located in two different counties.

Forest Township, Genesee County - Properties bordering the north and west boundaries of the Village are zoned Residential Urban 1, which sets a minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet and is intended for single family development. Properties directly south of the Village are zoned Residential Urban 2, which sets a minimum lot size of one acre and is intended for multi-family developments and Residential Urban 1, single family.

Marathon Township, Lapeer County - The parcel located at the end of Sherman Street, occupied by Turning Point, Inc., is zoned RM - Residential, Multi-family. All other properties surrounding the Village are zoned AR - Agricultural / Residential.

Community Opinion Survey

General

The Village of Otter Lake Planning Commission conducted a community opinion survey to involve as many of the Village's residents as possible in the planning process for the Master Land Use Plan. Knowing that personal time is limited and schedules busy, it was felt this was the best way to engage the community.

The mailing list was compiled from the Village tax roll and questionnaires were sent to each taxpayer of record. One Hundred Seventy-nine (179) mailings were sent, each contained two (2) questionnaires. In addition to the mailing, questionnaires were made available at the Village offices for any resident of the Village not on the tax roll. Of the 358 questionnaires mailed, 8 questionnaires (4 envelopes) were returned as undeliverable, and 71 completed questionnaires were received or 20% of the questionnaires delivered.

No demographic information was asked of the respondents, although some responses did include a name or return address.

Village Strengths

Eleven (11) items were identified as being strengths of the Village. Respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with each item and to rank those strengths from most important to less important.

- *Lake and Natural Features*: ranked the highest with 97% of the responds being positive and 100% agreement that this is a strength of the Village. This was the only question asked that everyone agreed on.
- *Quiet Place to Live*: ranked second with 84% of the responds being positive.
- *Rural (up north) Character of the Village* also was ranked high with 83% positive responds.
- *Village Campground and Park/Beach*: received 78% positive responds.
- *Community Supported Events*: received 70% positive responds.
- *Rails-to-Trails Trailway*: also was viewed as a positive with 67% agreement, however some respondents expressed a fear of possible increased crime without proper maintenance and supervision of the trail.
- *Local Businesses*: the majority of respondents viewed it as a strength, however only 58% give it a positive rating.

While the remaining questions were still viewed as strengths of the Village, 50% or more of the respondents ranked them in the lower percentile.

- *Municipal Sewer System*: the vast majority of the respondents viewed it as a strength, however 54% give it a low ranking as a strength.
- *School System*: respondents were about equally split on agreement or being undecided as to whether this item was a strength with 58% of the responds ranking it low.
- *Local Library Branch*: again respondents agreed this is a strength, but 79% ranked it low.
- *Local Historical Museum*: 83% of the respondents ranked this item as the least strength of the Village.

Village Weakness

Twelve (12) items were identified as being weaknesses of the Village. Respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with each item and to rank those weaknesses from greatest concern to a minor concern.

- *Lack of Pride in Ownership and Lack of Retail Businesses and Shops*: each tied with 74% of the respondents agreeing the these two items are the greatest concern facing the Village.
- *Number of Rental Properties, Absentee Landlords*: was also ranked high on the list of concerns with 66% of the respondents viewing this as a major weakness.
- *Lack of Unity Between the Lapeer Side and Genesee Side of the Village and the Village Being Split Between Two Counties*: also was viewed as a concern with 61% and 58% respectively, agreeing that these items are a weakness.
- *Poor or Lack of Police Response Time*: respondents were about equally split between agreeing, disagreeing and being undecided on this item with 56% of the respondents agreeing it is a weakness.
- *Low Community Involvement with the Village*: again respondents were about equally split on agreement, disagreement or being undecided with 53% viewing it as a weakness.

Of the remaining questions, the respondents either strongly disagreed or were nearly equally split about these items being a weaknesses of the Village.

- *Lack of Sidewalks Throughout the Village*: the majority of respondents did not view this as a weakness with 78% ranking it as a minor or of no concern.
- *Lack of a Municipal Water System*: the vast majority of respondents did not view this as a weakness with 74% ranking it as a minor or of no concern.
- *Lack of Financial Resources for the Village*: although a majority of respondents agreed with this being a weakness, 58% ranked it as a minor concern. However, several responders wrote "Taxes too High" under Other in this question.
- *Lack of Self-Promotion of the Village*: on this item the respondents were about equally split with 57% ranking it a minor concern.
- *Lack of Direction/Leadership for the Village*: again respondents were about equally split with a slight majority disagreeing with this being a weakness. Fifty-five (55%) percent of the respondents ranked it as a minor concern.

Residential Land Use

Respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with a series of questions regarding residential land use within the Village. Some questions asked to rank the importance of some of the items.

- Respondents were in 91% agreement that future development should avoid disturbing the natural features of the Village. Of the four natural features respondents were asked to rank, preserving the *lake shoreline* and *scenic views* ranked highest, with preserving *existing open (undeveloped) land* ranking lowest. Respondents were equally split on the preservation of *wetlands*, however most wetlands within the Village may already be federally or state protected.
- Regarding the questions of allowing different housing types or restricting the type of housing within a given residential development, the respondents were nearly equally split with 54% and 52% respectively, disagreeing. In one of the questions the respondents felt there should be restrictions and in the other question they felt there should be no restrictions.

- Respondents agreed that small commercial and office uses should be allowed in residential developments with 56% and 61% respectively, agreeing.
- The vast major, 82% of the respondents, agreed that home businesses should also be allowed within residential developments.
- Again, the majority of respondents agreed that accessory apartments, "granny flats", should be allowed in single family developments.
- Of the six types of housing that respondents were asked to rank as to the type that should be encouraged within the Village, *single family, moderate* and *low density* ranked the highest. Respondents were about equally split on *single family, rural* and *senior citizen housing* ranking each of them near the middle. *Single family, attached units and/or condos* and *multi-family, townhouses and low rise apartments* ranked the lowest. The majority of respondents felt that the development of multi-family, townhouses and low rise apartments within the Village should not be encouraged.

Commercial Land Use

Again, respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with a series of questions regarding commercial land use with the Village. Some questions asked to rank the importance of some of the items.

- Respondents overwhelming agreed (95%) that commercial uses and businesses that meet the needs of local residents should be encouraged.
- Respondents were also in agreement (77%), that commercial uses and businesses that meet the needs of tourists (campers) should be encouraged.
- Two-thirds (67%) of the respondents agreed that commercial uses, such as offices, small retail shops and eateries should be allowed in the residential structures that border the central business district.
- Two-thirds (67%) of the respondents were also in strong agreement that strip developments should not be encouraged.
- When asked where commercial development should occur, 88% of the respondents felt it should be in the current downtown (Detroit and Genesee Streets) area. Development along Lake / Otter Lake road was ranked as the next best area with Lake Road, west of downtown ranking slightly higher. Commercial development along Hemmingway Lake Road was strongly opposed (67%). Respondents were in very strong agreement (82%) that commercial development should be limited to designated areas, its location does matter.

Recreational Land Use

Finally, respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with a series of questions regarding recreational opportunities within the Village.

- Regarding the Village campground and beach/park, 61% of the respondents felt that improvements are needed versus 39% that felt no improvements are necessary. Respondents were equally split, 50% vs 50%, that the campground should be expanded. Those against expanding the campground overwhelmingly expressed a concern of too many motor boats and jet skis on the lake, and the lack of lake rules being enforced.
- Respondents also agreed (71%) that the Village should construct and maintain a playground area for children.
- As noted in the Village's Strengths above, two-thirds of the respondents viewed the Southern Links Trailway as a positive for the Village, although some expressed a concern of possible increase in crime if the trailway is not maintained and monitored.

Future Land Use Plan

General

The following Future Land Use Plan presents recommendations to be considered for all future land use within the Village, so that growth may occur in a way that is consistent with the goals, policies and objectives outline within this plan. This plan shall also serve as the basis for all future reviews and revisions required to meet the Village's development goals, objectives and needs.

In the preparation of the Future Land Use Plan, the following items were considered and used in its development and implementation;

- Background studies and data gathered by the Planning Commission,
- Information, studies and plans of other governmental bodies,
- Community opinion survey conducted by the Planning Commission,
- Planning Commission work sessions, written public input, and comments received during the public hearing on _____, 2009.

In addition to the items listed above, the Planning Commission considered the following "Principles of Smart Growth" developed by the Minnesota Smart Growth Network.

1. *Make efficient and effective use of land resources and existing infrastructure by encouraging development to areas with existing infrastructure and capacity to avoid costly duplication of services and costly use of land.*
2. *Provide a mix of land uses to create a variety of housing choices and opportunities.*
3. *Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective.*
4. *Maintain a unique sense of place by respecting local cultural and natural environmental features.*
5. *Conserve open space and farmland and preserve critical environmental areas.*
6. *Encourage stakeholder collaboration and community participation rather than conflict.*
7. *Enhance access to equitable public and private resources for everyone (lake and beach access).*
8. *Promote the safety, livability and revitalization of our existing community.*

Four general principals of land use were identified as being integral to the future development of the Village and served as the basis for this plan. These land use principals or values are:

- **General Land Use**
- **Natural Resources and Open Space**
- **Community Facilities and Public Utilities**
- **Community Character**

For each of these land use ideas, individual goals and policies were identified. These goals and policies shall serve as the Village's land use principals to guide all future development within the Village.

Based on the above established land use principals, four broad land use categories were identified. Each of these broad land use categories have been further divided into land use designations for future development within the Village. These land use categories and designations are:

- A. Commercial Use
 - a. Village Center
 - b. Commercial (Lake/Otter Lake Road) Corridor
- B. Residential Use
 - a. Village Residential
 - b. Rural Residential
 - c. Multi-Family Residential
- C. Industrial Use
 - a. Business / Research
- D. Open and Public Space Use
 - a. Recreational / Southern Links Trailway
 - b. Public/Semi-public Facilities

On the Future Land Use Map, the Village is divided into the future land use designations. This map shows the *general desired pattern of growth and development* within the Village during the next twenty (20) years. This Map shall serve as a guide and recommendation for development, and does not necessarily relate to current property boundaries or current land uses. All existing land uses that pre-date the adoption of this land use plan may continue without change. However, any future changes to a property or its use shall be guided by the Future Land Use Map. It is important that this plan be periodically reviewed and revised, to meet and reflect the Village's current needs and development goals.

General Land Use Principals, Goals and Policies

This section defines the basic principals / values identified as being essential to the Village's land use plan. These values being rooted in the Village's history, present and future.

General Land Use:

General: The Village of Otter Lake has developed as most rural towns in Michigan, around a central business district which is surrounded by small residential lots with larger lots and undeveloped land at its perimeter. Similar to other lakeside communities, small summer homes on tiny lots have developed on part of its shoreline. Surrounding the Village are farms and woodlands that contribute to the rural character of the Village.

General Land Use Goal: The Village of Otter Lake adopts the following general land use goal:

To preserve and maintain the Village's historical land use pattern in the consideration of all future land use issues, while considering the existing infrastructure and being sensitive to the natural features of the area.

General Land Use Policies: In support of the general land use goal, the Village of Otter Lake adopts the following general land use policies:

- Maintain the rural character of the Village by ensuring that new land uses and developments are compatible and in character with existing and historical land uses.
- Require that future growth and development within the Village be of an appropriate scale and density of development that is consistent with the character of the Village.
- Encourage the preservation of environmentally sensitive land areas.
- Encourage growth and development that preserves and improves water quality, air quality, and promotes conservation of natural resources.
- Prevent land development, uses and activities that are detrimental to the health, safety, and enjoyment of the Village residents and users of adjacent properties.
- Develop and support programs, and provide code and ordinance enforcement necessary to ensure general maintenance and desired appearance of the Village.
- Promote cooperation and coordinate planning recommendations and zoning requirements with neighboring townships to the greatest extent possible.
- Encourage the rational, coordinated planning and development of larger land areas through the use of conservation zoning, wherever possible.

Natural Resources and Open Space:

General: The Village of Otter Lake is sited on a small glacial lake surrounded by gently rolling hills forested with second growth woodlands. To the south, small farm fields intermingle with the woodlots. These natural resources and scenic views have been identified by the residents of the Village as being essential to its character and the make-up of the community. By overwhelming consensus, the residents wish to preserve and protect these resources.

Natural Resources and Open Space Goal: The Village of Otter Lake adopts the following natural resources and open space use goal:

To preserve, protect and improve the natural resources within the Village and encourage the neighboring townships to support this goal.

Natural Resources and Open Space Policies: In support of the natural resources and open space goal, the Village of Otter Lake adopts the following natural resources and open space policies:

- Protect the water quality of Otter Lake, its shoreline, and Butternut Creek by seeking to preserve their shorelines in as natural a state as possible.
- Protect open space essential to maintaining scenic views and/or that which is beneficial to the residents of the Village.
- Encourage only shoreline developments that will not obstruct the views of the waterfront of Otter Lake.
- Encourage developments in areas other than those defined as steep slopes (greater than 18%) and develop policies for construction projects on moderately steep slopes (between 12% and 18%).
- Encourage development on areas other than hilltops, while minimizing the clearing of shorelines and encouraging the use of filtered lake views from building sites.
- Allow only shoreline developments that are sensitive to the fragile nature of the waterfront and that are in keeping with existing shoreline development.

- Develop policies that will protect and improve the water quality of Otter Lake.
- Preserve the wooded appearance of the Village and lake shoreline and encourage the planting of new trees.

Community Facilities and Public Utilities:

General: While the most populous area of the Village is served by a new sanitary sewer system and the main traffic thoroughfare through the Village has been recently reconstructed, maintenance and upgrading of public utilities and facilities remains a financial burden on the Village. The lack of a central potable water supply system, reliable electrical system, and new technology service(s) will limit future growth within the Village. However, it is the desire of the Village to provide its residents and visitors with safe, efficient, cost effective public utilities and facilities.

Community Facilities and Public Utilities Goal: The Village of Otter Lake adopts the following community facilities and public utilities goal:

To develop policies for the most efficient use, maintenance and construction of public utilities, infrastructure and community facilities that are cost effective while meeting the needs of the Village.

Community Facilities and Public Utilities Policies: In support of the community facilities and public utilities goal, the Village of Otter Lake adopts the following community facilities and utilities policies:

- Develop a long term plan and financing strategy for the upgrading or replacement of the Village office and DPW buildings.
- Develop a plan to make the Village campground its own operating entity.
- Develop a long term plan and financing strategy for the re-paving and/or reconstruction of Village streets.
- Develop a long term plan and financing strategy for the paving of the remaining gravel streets within the Village.
- Develop short term and long term plans to reduce or eliminate stormwater runoff from paved surface areas directly into the lake and/or protected wetlands.

Community Character:

General: The majority of the Village's residents have expressed a strong desire to preserve the small town, up north character of the community. Many survey respondents stated "if I wanted to live in a city, I'd move to Flint!" It is important that this small town atmosphere and character be preserved and enhanced by preserving existing structures where possible and encouraging new development that respects and harmonizes with the existing built environment.

Community Character Goal: The Village of Otter Lake adopts the following community character goal:

Preserve the Village's traditional lakefront / small town character by considering its historical development, ties to the natural environment and its regional context.

Community Character Policies: In support of the community character goal, the Village of Otter Lake adopts the following community character policies:

- Encourage the preservation and redevelopment of its current downtown buildings.
- Encourage the upkeep and maintenance of the current residential dwelling units.
- Encourage and promote new development that retains and enhances the character, scale and details of the older structures.
- Develop design guidelines and graphics to help aesthetically integrate infill construction into older neighborhoods.
- Encourage flexible concepts of land use and development through the use of conservation zoning or planned unit developments (PUD's) for larger construction projects.
- Approach all proposed development with realistic and achievable goals, while encouraging the best quality possible.
- Encourage the preservation and long-term maintenance of old growth trees and landscaping.

Future Land Use Categories and Designations

This section shall guide the Village in future growth and development to preserve and strengthen the quality of life for all of the Village's residents while improving the overall character of the Village. During the planning process four broad categories of land use were identified with goals and development policies established for each category. Each of these categories of land use were then divided into individual land use designations, again with goals and development policies established for each designation. It is these goals and policies that shall guide future decisions on all land use within the Village.

Commercial Use:

General: Village residents were overwhelmingly in agreement that commercial uses and businesses that meet the needs of the residents and tourists should be strongly encouraged and promoted.

Residents also felt strongly that the historical pattern of commercial development within the Village should be continued. Businesses should be located along Detroit Street / Genesee Street corridor, with the best location for future development located in the current central downtown area. Residents also favored the conversion of existing residential structures along this corridor into commercial uses, such as offices, small retail shops and eateries.

Existing Commercial Use: The existing Village center or downtown is a one block section on Detroit Street, from Forest Avenue to Genesee Avenue, that still retains most of the original commercial structures. Extending approximately three blocks south, along Detroit Street, is a mix of commercial, governmental (post office, fire hall and library) and residential. Extending east two blocks, along Genesee Avenue, is a mix of commercial and residential uses. A few spot-zoned commercial parcels are located elsewhere within the Village.

Concerns: While Village residents support home businesses being allowed within residential neighborhoods, the vast majority of residents oppose commercial development within these areas. Residents were about equally split on allowing office uses and small retail development within residential neighborhoods.

Also, strongly opposed was the development of "strip center" development within the Village.

Commercial Use Goal: The Village of Otter Lake adopts the following goal for future commercial land uses:

Sustain a viable Village Center by encouraging a diversity of retail uses while maintaining the existing architectural framework, develop compatible new structures, and provide locations for commercial uses that cannot be sited within the Village Center.

Commercial Use Policies: In support of the future commercial land use goal, the Village of Otter Lake adopts the following commercial land use policies:

- Promote the maintenance and strongly encourage the restoration of the existing commercial buildings within the Village Center.
- Continue to expand the streetscape improvements made to the Village Center.
- Continue to encourage the mixed uses within the Village Center, with emphasis on retail and service uses on the main floors, residential and offices on the upper floors.
- Plan for and address the need for business parking as the Village Center redevelops.
- Develop architectural guidelines for renovation and new construction within the Village Center.

Commercial Use Designations:

- A. **Village Center** - This land use is intended to maintain and encourage new development consistent with the existing "downtown" area.

Existing characteristics of the Village Center are;

- Zero lot line setbacks. Buildings front the sidewalks, side by side.
- Multi-story or false fronted building structures.
- Parking is street side or in common lots.
- Mixed uses within buildings. (Commercial / residential mix)
- Smaller, wall mounted signage.
- Current uses serve the Village's retail/service needs. Restaurant, grocery, professional offices, small retail, service organizations, etc.

Future considerations are;

- Maintain and restore existing building structures.
- Maintain small retail/service and mixed uses within the structures. Discourage large scale retail operations.
- New construction should be compatible in use, scale and height of existing structures.

- B. **Commercial Corridor** (Lake/Otter Lake Road) - This land use is intended to provide space for commercial/retail/service needs not compatible with the existing "downtown" development pattern.

Characteristics and considerations are:

- Single use within each structure or parcel. Drive-in establishments, gas/service stations, municipal and governmental buildings.

- Single story buildings with parking contained on site.
- Need to be concerned with adjacent residential areas. Screening and landscaping required.
- Freestanding signage and larger signage.

Residential Use:

General: The housing stock varies greatly within the Village, as does the upkeep and maintenance of these homes and their grounds. Three distinct residential areas exist within the Village - the east shore of the lake, the area south and east of the downtown, and the area west of the lake.

Residents are in agreement that any future development should avoid disturbing the natural features of the Village, with preserving the lake shoreline and scenic views ranked the most important features.

Survey respondents also felt strongly, that low to moderate density single family residential development should be encouraged over other types of residential development.

Existing Residential Use: The Village has a mix of housing types, although most are single family structures. The eastern shoreline of the lake is the most densely developed with homes on very small lots and narrow streets. These structures were originally built as summer homes and vacation cabins, but have been converted to year round dwelling units. The area south and east of the downtown is a mix of older 1-1/2 and two story homes, manufactured and mobile homes. Some of the larger homes within this area have been divided into multi-family, rental units. The area west of the lake are newer homes, typically single story ranch type on large parcels of land. Most of the new residential construction within the last decade has occurred within this area. The upper floors of some of the downtown commercial buildings are apartment rentals.

Concerns: The majority of survey respondents agreed that the lack of pride in ownership and maintenance of properties as the greatest concern facing the Village. They also expressed a concern for the growing number of absentee landlords / rental properties within the Village.

Regarding future residential development within the Village, the majority of respondents felt that the development of multi-family, townhouses and low rise apartments should not be encouraged.

Currently 10.5% of the Village's housing stock consists of manufactured and/or mobile home units scattered throughout Village. Several of the mobile home units have had additions constructed into them and most are in poor maintenance. No new manufactured home parks are planned for the Village.

Residential Use Goal: The Village of Otter Lake adopts the following goal for future residential land uses:

Encourage the maintenance and upgrading of the existing housing stock, and development of new housing tailored to meet the needs of all current and future Village residents.

Residential Use Policies: In support of the future residential land use goal, the Village of Otter Lake adopts the following residential land use policies:

- Continue programs to encourage the maintenance of existing dwellings and parcels (i.e. - annual clean-up day)
- Encourage the preservation and restoration of historically significant structures.
- Encourage new developments that integrate into and preserve the existing landscape and natural features.
- Encourage new higher density development only within locations that have the infrastructure to support the housing capacity.

Residential Use Designations:

- A. **Village Residential** - This land use is intended to maintain and encourage the traditional housing development with the Village's core.

Characteristics of this residential development are;

- Single family dwellings on small lots.
- Wood framed, 1-1/2 to two story homes with steep roof pitches.
- Detached garages or outbuildings.
- Dwellings set close to street. Small front and side yards with larger, fenced back yards.
- Conventional street grid pattern with sidewalks.
- Dwellings connected to a municipal sanitary sewer system.

- B. **Rural Residential** - This land use is intended to maintain and encourage the rural character of the townships surrounding the Village and to provide a suitable environment for residential development and to help protect the Village's natural resources, such as scenic views, steep slopes, forested areas, wetlands, and outdoor recreation.

Characteristics of this residential development are;

- Single family dwellings on medium to large lots or acreage.
- Wood framed of mixed style - ranch, 1-1/2 story, multi-story with various roof pitches.
- Attached garages, two and three vehicle. Multiple outbuildings.
- Dwellings set back farther from road or street frontage.
- Non-traditional street pattern without sidewalks. Private roadways which may serve several parcels.
- Dwellings use private septic systems.
- Many property owners have some livestock.

- C. **Multi-Family Residential** - This land use is intended to be incorporated within the residential use designations outlined above. The lack of a municipal water system for fire sprinkler protection will limit the development of multi-family units within the Village. Also, given the current number of rental units (over 25% of the total housing stock) and the resident's desire to encourage single family home ownership, new multi-family developments should be considered on an individual basis, in accordance with the criteria established below and located within areas noted on the Future Land Use Map.

Multi-Family Residential within the Village Residential Use Designation - Appropriate types and characteristics are;

- Townhouses or Rowhouses:
 - Located adjacent to Village Center and abutting a residential neighborhood.
 - Zero lot line side yard setbacks, small front yard setback.

- Two to 2-1/2 story with pitched or low-slope roofs.
- Exterior finish materials compatible with existing Village Center buildings and abutting residential dwellings. (i.e., brick on elevations facing street(s), sidings on side and rear elevations, etc..)
- Detached garages located on rear alley.
- Development to be served by single well, maintained by the complex owner or in the case of single family home owners, an association of the home owners.
- Apartment Buildings, Low Rise:
 - Located on paved public street with sewer.
 - Not located on lake shore or in area that blocks scenic views.
 - Maximum two story with pitched roofs. Preferably a combination of one or 1-1/2 story and 2 two units to break line of roof.
 - Scale and massing compatible with surrounding neighborhood. Preferably several smaller structures versus single larger structure.
 - Exterior finish materials compatible with surrounding residential dwellings; use of several different materials to divide massing to pedestrian scale.
 - Vehicle parking divided into smaller lots, screened from abutting single family dwellings, landscaped and lighted with cut-off fixtures.
 - Development to be served by single well, maintained by the complex owner.
- Condominiums:
 - Single family or attached two-family dwelling units.
 - Single story or combination single and two story units.
 - Preferably with garage entrances (overhead doors) screened from street view.
 - Development to be served by single well, maintained by the condominium association.

Multi-Family Residential within the Rural Residential Use Designation - Appropriate types and characteristics are;

- Condominiums:
 - Located on paved public street.
 - Connected to sewer system with extension costs borne by developer.
 - Development to be served by single well, maintained by the condominium association.
 - Single family or attached two-family dwelling units.
 - Single story or combination single and two story units.
 - Developed using the principals of Conservation Planning/Design Concept.
- Apartment Buildings, Low Rise:
 - Located on paved public street with sewer.
 - Not located on lake shore or in area that blocks scenic views.
 - Maximum two story with pitched roofs. Preferably a combination of one or 1-1/2 story and 2 two units to break line of roof.
 - Scale and massing compatible with surrounding neighborhood. Preferably several smaller structures versus single larger structure.
 - Exterior finish materials compatible with surrounding residential dwellings; use of several different materials to divide massing to pedestrian scale.
 - Vehicle parking divided into smaller lots, screened from abutting single family dwellings, landscaped and lighted with cut-off fixtures.
 - Development to be served by single well, maintained by the complex owner.

Industrial Use:

General: The Village of Otter Lake has traditional been a residential / retail community and has had limited light industrial activities in its recent history. Given the Village's limited public utilities, state road access, and current state of our economy, its is doubtful that any new light industrial uses will emerge within the Village. However, opportunities for small technology base research and development facilities may exist.

Existing Industrial Use: Currently two parcels within the Village are zoned Industrial, the Village's waste water treatment plant located at the end of Payne Street on the Village's southern boundary and DTE Energy's sub-station located at the intersection of Lake Road and Payne Street. There has been no private light industrial activity located within the Village in many years.

Concerns: The lack of a central potable water system, reliable power grid(s), and limited Class A road access to the Village will discourage light industry from locating within the Village. However, the creation of jobs and economic stability are very important to the long term viability of the Village, therefore the development of clean light industrial and business uses are important.

Industrial Use Goal: The Village of Otter Lake adopts the following goal for future industrial land uses:

Encourage the development of small, clean business and research uses that are compatible with the existing character of the Village and that would have minimal impact on the natural environment and existing Village services.

Industrial Use Policies: In support of the future industrial land use goal, the Village of Otter Lake adopts the following industrial land use policies:

- Only encourage the development of light industries that will have a positive economic impact for the Village.
- As much as possible, encourage new developments to integrate into and preserve the existing landscape and natural features.
- Encourage developments of appropriate size, design, and sighting that are consistent and compatible with the existing character of the Village.

Industrial Use Designations:

- A. **Business / Research** - This land use is intended to encourage the development of small, clean business and research uses that would have minimal impact on the natural environment and Village services.

Possible future uses that could be explored;

- Technology research facilities.
- Final assembly facilities.
- Packaging / shipping facilities.
- Woodworking / cabinet shops.

Open and Public Space Use:

General: Unlike most small towns within the area, the residents of Otter Lake have many recreational opportunities within walking distance of the Village. These opportunities also serve as an important tourist attraction for the Village. The many Village sponsored events, held throughout the year, also promotes these recreational opportunities.

Existing Open and Public Space Use: The lake and Village park offer picnic areas, swimming, boating, scuba diving and fishing during the warmer months and ice fishing and ice skating during winter months. The Southern Links Trailway and state game areas offer opportunities for walking and hiking, biking, jogging, roller blading, horseback riding, bird and wildlife watching, and hunting. Other area recreation include the skateboard park and playscape at the local school.

Concerns: Although the majority of the Village residents view the campground and park as positive and would support making needed upgrades and improvements to them, survey respondents expressed concerns about increased motor boat and jet ski traffic on the lake, if the campground was expanded.

Residents also felt the construction of the Southern Links Trailway is a positive for the Village, but some respondents expressed a concern about the possible increase in crime if the trailway is not maintained and monitored.

Open and Public Space Use Goal: The Village of Otter Lake adopts the following goal for future recreational, open and public space uses:

To continue to provide recreational opportunities and facilities for the residents of the Village and its visitors.

Open and Public Space Use Policies: In support of the future recreational, open and public space use goal, the Village of Otter Lake adopts the following recreational, open and public space use policies:

- Encourage the continued use of the southern waterfront for public recreational purposes.
- Encourage the integration of linked open spaces within new residential developments.
- Cooperate with other local and regional entities for the continued improvement and expansion of recreational facilities and programs.

Open and Public Space Use Designations:

- A. Recreational / Southern Links Trailway - This land use is intended to continue to provide recreational activities, lake access for all Village residents, and new recreational opportunities along the trailway system.

Future considerations are;

- Integration of the trailway with the Village beach. As the trailway extends, encourage residents of other villages to "bike ride to the beach" for a day of swimming and relaxation.
- Development of restroom/shower facilities that would serve the campground, beach and trailway users.

- Development of horse boarding facilities (could be with private landowner) for possible overnight stays at the campground.
 - Land acquisitions to expand recreational opportunities.
- B. Public/Semi-public Facilities - Given the small size of the Village, this has not been designated as a separate land use however, space needs for governmental facilities and public uses other than for recreation and would be disbursed throughout the other land use designations as support infrastructure.

Intended uses are;

- Village offices, maintenance buildings, and utilities.
- Schools and public educational facilities.
- Post office, library, public museums, etc...
- Public parking lots.

Administration of Plan

General

In adopting this Master Land Use Plan the Village of Otter Lake adopts the following policies for the implementation, maintenance and updating of the plan.

Plan Implementation Policies:

- Update and revise zoning ordinance districts and their boundaries based on the future land use map and the stated goals and policies of the adopted plan.
- Consider the Land Use Plan when determining the appropriateness of conditional use applications.

Plan Maintenance and Updating Policies:

- Review the Land Use Plan on a regular basis to determine if the original assumptions used to form the plan, are still valid and if not, to update the plan goals and policies to reflect any changes that may be deemed relevant.
- Consider the Land Use Plan when determining the validity of a rezoning request. When considering a rezoning request, the following questions should be asked:

- **"Does the request conform to the adopted Land Use Plan?"**

If the answer is yes, than the request should be approved. If the answer is no, than three additional questions should be asked.

- **"Is there an error in the plan?"**
- **"Have relevant changes in the original assumptions occurred since the adoption of the plan?"**
- **"Have there been any changes to the goals and policies of the plan?"**

By answering the above questions, the appropriateness of granting or denying a rezoning request should be answered.

The plan reflects the future of the community as envisioned at this time. Should this vision change, the plan should change to incorporate the new vision.

Zoning

Implementation of this plan will require a revision to the Village's zoning ordinance districts and their boundaries. The proposed districts, general description of each district and proposed zoning map are included as an attachment.