

# BARAGA TOWNSHIP LAND USE PLAN

2007

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NOTE: A map of the proposed plan will be available August 15, 2007.

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**INTRODUCTION**

**PURPOSE**

Every individual or group plans, to some extent, for the future--for budgets, insurance programs, education, retirement, vacations, business investments, or daily activities. Governments too, must plan in order to determine the wisest use of their physical and human resources to reach established goals. Comprehensive planning is a process which considers a broad range of community characteristics to establish a strategy for future development.

This document has been designed to give direction and scope to the formation of the Baraga Township Zoning Ordinance. The adoption of a Zoning Ordinance affords a means of ensuring local control over land use; it's purpose is to enhance and protect the value of property and preserve quality of life.

With this in mind, a number of issues must be addressed. Controlled economic development is highly desirable, but must not be allowed to violate the integrity of the environment: indeed, the quality of environment in Baraga Township is the key factor supporting the quality of life for township residents, the tourist industry, and the future attraction of businesses and residents to the community.

In the furtherance of tourism and recreation, U.S. 41, from it's entrance to the Township at the south to it's exit at the Houghton County line, has spectacular views of Keweenaw Bay, the Huron Mountains, and Lake Superior. This scenic corridor is a resource that should not be diluted. Furthermore, provision should be made for the preservation and development of scenic and wildlife areas. All efforts must be made to preserve the present quality of air, water, shoreline, forest and soils.

Good neighbor industries should be vigorously encouraged, and their placement should not conflict with scenic, residential, or agricultural uses.

Residential development, with an emphasis on single family dwellings, balanced densities, and cluster housing, should be encouraged, always keeping in mind that residential development alone cannot provide a tax base adequate to support the services that Township residents require.

The Baraga Township Land Use Plan is designed to enhance these ideals and ensure the present and future health, safety, and general welfare of Township residents and patrons.

It is also intended to:

- encourage the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability;
- avoid the overcrowding of land by buildings or people;
- lessen congestion on the public roads and streets;
- facilitate adequate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, education, recreation, and other public improvements;
- conserve the expenditure of funds for public improvements and services to conform with the most advantageous uses of land, resources, and properties; and
- consider the suitability for particular uses in consideration of such factors as the trend in land and population development.

### **THE PLANNING PROCESS**

Planning is a continuous process which involves four essential parts:

1. A survey of relevant *Background* information;
2. Identification of problems, trends, and potentials, resulting in the establishment of *Goals and Objectives*;
3. A *Plan*, which is a written and graphic presentation of proposed land use, designed to achieve stated goals; and
4. *Implementation* of Plan proposals, including periodic updating and reevaluation.

Constant review and, when necessary, modification of the Plan is needed to reflect changing community desires and needs. The value of the Plan is directly related to the Township's willingness to follow it, and its diligence in keeping the Plan current by anticipating changing conditions. It is hard work; but the rewards make the effort worthwhile.

### **TOWNSHIP PLAN**

Baraga Township needs a Land Use Plan to serve as a guide for development. If the Plan is to be effective, it must reflect the desires of the people of the Township and be acceptable to the majority. The following illustrates the principles under which the Plan was developed.

*The Plan is flexible*; it is not meant as a monument cast in stone, never to be adjusted or changed. The Land Use Plan is a general guide to be used by Township government to give

direction for the future of Baraga Township. It should be reviewed periodically and altered as general conditions in the community change.

*The Plan is not a zoning regulation;* it reflects future land use arrangements in light of the development that exists, but does not depict a "new" zoning district map. Since the Plan and zoning map are intended to be in reasonable harmony, it is likely that future zoning districts will take the shape of the Plan as rezoning requests are received and reviewed by the Township.

*The Plan allows for orderly development;* the land use allocations reflected on the Plan Map are based upon the Township's judgment for the future of Baraga Township, in conjunction with presently accepted planning standards. The Plan Map realistically contains sufficient land area to meet anticipated needs and demands for every residential and non-residential use.

*The Plan requires cooperation;* Baraga Township is not an island. It exists in concert with other units of government and jurisdictions. Adjoining Townships, Baraga County, and the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community affect, and are affected by, the Land Use Plan for Baraga Township. Only by working together can the entire region reap the benefits of coordinated planning.

## **TIME FRAME**

The Baraga Township Land Use Plan depicts land use and community development strategies over a long period of time. The land use schemes of the Future Land Use map are not meant to be accomplished overnight, but rather serve as the guide to growth, providing direction for the day-to-day zoning and development decisions that will confront Baraga 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 must examine those changes and decide if the principles on which the Land Use Plan was based are still valid. If so, the Plan should be followed. It is anticipated that the Plan will be monitored continuously to determine progress toward objectives and in light of actual and anticipated changes in the community.

## **WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LAND USE PLAN AND THE ZONING ORDINANCE?**

The relationship between the Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance is often misunderstood. The Plan is a *guide* for land use for the future; the Zoning Ordinance *regulates* the use of land in the present. The Land Use Plan is not a binding, legal regulation; the Zoning Ordinance is a law that must be followed by the Township and its residents.

Implementation of the Land Use Plan is realized through the Zoning Ordinance. As growth continues, the Township will have to address complex zoning issues brought on by the pace and increasing sophistication of development projects. The need to provide flexibility, coupled with the Township's desire to maintain some degree of control, will create the need for innovative solutions.

Local control of land use (with some exceptions, such as uses located on state and federal lands) is an accepted legal principle. Land use regulation is controlled through the separation of land into various use areas, called zoning districts. The rules governing these districts are contained in the Zoning Ordinance.

**HOW DOES THE LAND USE PLAN AFFECT YOU AS A RESIDENT OR LANDOWNER?**

It is important that you, as a resident and/or property owner in the Township, understand how the Plan works and how it may affect you. For most, the Land Use Plan will not have an immediate impact. However, as someone who is concerned about the future of the Township, the Plan should be of great interest.

- If you are a *property owner* of either vacant or developed land, you may have several interests, including not only your property but properties in the general area. The Plan's view of future development of these lands may affect the intensity and type of development which may be expected on your property and adjacent properties.
- As a *homeowner*, you will be interested in the properties in your immediate neighborhood. You will want to know what uses are proposed for vacant land in your area.
- As a *Township resident* you will be interested in the overall concepts of the Plan, as expressed in the Goals and Objectives. These statements will give you an indication of the Plan's intent for the Township now, and in the future.

**HOW SHOULD YOU USE THIS PLAN?**

How you use the Plan will depend on your interest in the future of Baraga Township, but generally, here is the procedure you should follow.

- Step #1      What land use is proposed for your property, or the area surrounding your property?**

You will find this information on the Future Land Use map. This map is divided into separate land use categories. Find the category of land use in which your property is located.

**Step #2 Determine the meaning of the land use designation for your property.**

In Step #1 you were asked to determine the land use category into which your property falls. In the Land Use chapter there is a discussion covering each of these categories. Find the one that applies to you (the category in which your property lies) and read the discussion on the meaning of each land use designation.

Depending on the nature of your interest in the Land Use Plan, this may be as far as you go with your investigation. If you have a specific proposal which does not fit the Plan, you may want to research the Plan in more detail, beginning with the *Needs and Directions*.

**Step #3 Determine how the Plan views development in your area.**

The text of the Land Use Plan will describe the general direction of development within your area; it may be either fairly specific, or it may be somewhat general.

**Step #4 Determine how the Plan and Zoning Ordinance affect your property.**

The Future Land Use designation will indicate to you how your property is planned for use in the future. These designations will relate to specific Zoning Ordinance districts. Once you are familiar with the Plan and how it affects your land, you will need to consult the Township Zoning Ordinance to determine the specific uses and regulations that apply to your land. Generally, you must meet certain minimum lot sizes, building setbacks, parking requirements, etc.

The primary difference between the Land Use Plan and the Zoning Ordinance is one of timing. The Future Land Use map shows the intended use of land *at the end of the planning period*, which could be as long as 20 years in the future, or at any time during the period. The Zoning Map shows land *as it is intended to be used today*. Accordingly, the two maps will normally not be identical in nature.

*This does not mean that you cannot continue to use your property as you do currently (provided that the use is legal).* The Zoning Ordinance allows an existing use to continue, even if it does not meet the requirements of the Ordinance, as long as it met the requirements when the use was begun.

**CONCLUSION**

The Baraga Township Land Use Plan may impact the future use of your property, regardless of whether you are a vacant land owner, business owner, or a homeowner. As a resident of the Township you will want to become familiar with the Plan, not simply because it may affect your property, but because the Plan will be used to determine how the Township will develop. Since the Plan affects the entire Township, your interests extend beyond your own property; your property affects others, and how other property development affects yours. As a resident or landowner of Baraga Township, you have a stake in its future, as expressed through the Land Use Plan.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CHAPTER 1</b> <b>TOWNSHIP CHARACTER</b></p>
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## **HISTORY OF BARAGA TOWNSHIP**

About seven thousand five hundred years ago early peoples hunted and fished in the Upper Peninsula. These people had evolved a trading network with the tribes of what is now Wisconsin. 1610 saw the arrival of the first white man known to reach the northern lakes, a Frenchman from Canada named Etienne Brule. He was followed by other French voyagers and explorers.

Little history is known until the year 1660, when Father Mesnard, S.F., arrived from Canada and wintered in Pequaming. The early missionaries, like Menard, had little success in their attempt to evangelize the existing populace and they either perished in the wilderness or left the area.

The Upper Peninsula of Michigan was a vast wilderness covered with pine, birch and maple trees of enormous size, so close together in the forest that the tree canopies made the forest very dark. The trees were lined to the water's edge. Wildlife and fish were so abundant that the first white European called it a paradise. The Upper Peninsula of Michigan was known only to a few French voyagers and the Chippewa/Ojibwa Great Lakes people (forebears of the Chippewa nation as we know it today) as they traversed the shores of Lake Superior.

In 1842 Peter Crebessa, a white European who owned a trading post on the east side of Keweenaw Bay, petitioned Father Frederic Baraga, the only priest in this portion of the country, to come to the area. Coming from La Pointe, Wisconsin, Father Baraga, seeing the situation of the Chippewa, bought 496.70 acres of land on the west side of Keweenaw Bay (now called Assinins).

During the following ten years he established a mission, church and school. Father Baraga preserved the Chippewa, compiling a Chippewa-English dictionary, and had books printed in the Chippewa language. The Chippewa were taught their written language, and learning other languages, such as English, became easier.

The period from 1840 to 1860 proved to be difficult times for the Chippewa people. The fur trading industry had all but disappeared. The competition among traders had been fierce and competitive. The once abundant fur bearing animal population was exhausted, and thousands of barrels of fish had been exported. Natural resources had been stripped from the area with little revenue being seen locally.

The history of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, published in 1883, written by the Chicago Western Historical Society stated, "Now that the savage has succumbed, the mountains and valleys which once echoed with his war-whoop, has been driven to more distant fields. This portion of Michigan is rapidly becoming the most promising mineral region in all of North America." It has not been established that the Native American tribes of the region were either savage or war-like, much less ever prone to emitting "war-whoops".

Industrially, the Great Lakes were a highway linking the materials that fostered the age of steel. Three quarters of the iron ore in the United States was in the hills around Lake Superior, a thousand miles from the coal beds of the Alleghenies; only water transport could bring them together. L'Anse Bay, now called Keweenaw Bay, its natural port open to trade, began to accept fleets streaming up from the lower lakes.

American pioneers came to the area to build villages and to draw forth all the resources from the land. The beginning promised success but as a result of miscalculations or ignorance of the means to carry on the mines and quarries, and a total neglect of agriculture, many of those great beginnings never bloomed.

In the fall of 1850 Captain James Bendry entered his tract of land which extended around Keweenaw Bay at United States Land Office in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. In 1851 Bendry established a sawmill on the Falls River, a lumber company and docks in Houghton, Michigan, and built the first steam operated sawmill in Baraga Township. He owned two ships and a tug that hauled lumber to the mines in the Keweenaw and carried supplies to and from Houghton to L'Anse and Baraga and to Isle Royale. Bendry built a home and trading post in Baraga. The general development of the Baraga Township area can now be filled in around the life of Captain James Bendry.

During the 1840's, Lake Superior's south shore was the setting of our country's first "Mineral Rush," with transportation to industrial districts of the East limited to shipping via the Great Lakes, a seasonal proposition. The goal of the railroads was to get track to the iron, copper, and timber lands of Lake Superior; thus a railroad was completed from Marquette, Michigan to L'Anse with a rail line extending nine miles up the west side of Keweenaw Bay. Around 1883, the Duluth South Shore and Atlantic Railroad extended the rail line making the connection of the Marquette and Ontonagon Railroad at L'Anse to Houghton.

Although agriculture was neglected there was a small farming community five miles west of Baraga, named after its first settler, Carlson. Its farm products were sold in Baraga, which served Carlson with other merchandise and services.

In 1860 a census revealed that there were one hundred sixty persons residing in Baraga Township. In 1880 the total jumped to four hundred. This may appear to be a small number of people, however, the area was still a vast wilderness.

The whole Keweenaw Bay area was in a rapid state of growth. On the east side of Keweenaw Bay, buyers were eager to acquire land platted as L'Anse. Stores and homes were beginning to appear with incredible speed. In less than seventy days, sixty buildings were erected. Some individuals would not wait and had entire buildings transported by tug or barge to the new town of L'Anse.

The ore dock in L'Anse was under construction. When the railroad was completed, the ore dock in L'Anse was ready to supply the waiting vessels with iron ore. Plans were made to build blast furnaces. Before this could happen, the National Panic of 1873 brought everything to a roaring halt. Many business entrepreneurs began leaving the area. The ore docks which had forty vessels and three steamboat pockets were used a few years and then lay idle, but later served the timber industry.

### **Baraga Township**

In 1875, Baraga County was organized by an Act of Legislature with the county seat established in L'Anse. James Bendry became Supervisor of Baraga Township as it then existed and served from 1875-1882.

Following Bendry's steam operated sawmill in 1864 in Baraga, the next company to establish a mill was the Sturgeon River Company which was set up in 1883. This mill was later purchased by the Nester brothers of Saginaw, Michigan who continued to operate it for a number of years. The Nester mill was in competition with John Fink's mill. The Nester's' influence on Baraga continued in later years because of the shipyards which they established for building barges which were designed to carry one million board feet per trip.

In the 1860's, the Northern Peninsula of Michigan was rapidly coming to the front as the most promising mineral region in all North America. An army of prospectors swarmed through the hills, valleys and mountains; new discoveries were constantly being made; mills and furnaces were constantly going up; the yield of bullion was steadily on the increase; capital was seeking investment; railroads penetrated in every direction and the career of Baraga County was onward and upward.

In 1891, the village of Baraga was incorporated. The combined population of the village and township was 2,097. The formation of Covington Township in 1893 changed the geographical

boundaries of Baraga Township. The first Supervisor of Baraga Township as we know it today was L. J. Callagher.

There were as many as seventeen one room schools in Baraga Township in the early 1900's. These schools were rural one room schools, first heated by a fireplace, later by a pot bellied stove.

### **Pelkie**

With the Mineral Range rail connection to the King's Landing area, a small community about nine miles west of Baraga, a post office already operating out of the home of William Pelkie was now called Pelkie, thus causing the area's name of King's Landing to fall into disuse.

At the turn of the century, the pace of Finnish settlements jumped dramatically. Pelkie attracted early Finnish settlers, though there were no roads, only wagon ruts or logging trails which could only be used in the summer.

While agriculture was developing in the Pelkie area, logging was a huge industry. Hardwoods were of no value (they would not float) until 1916. All the bridges in Pelkie were completed by 1913, which made possible the shipping of hardwood by rail.

Before the end of World War I in 1918, the Pelkie farmers formed the Farmer's Cooperative Trading Company for the purpose of purchasing livestock feed and farm machinery at a cost that the early pioneers could more easily afford. This was once known as the Pelkie Cooperative Society.

The Pelkie Coop, from its inception in 1919, was the stabilizing hub of the Pelkie economy. In 1934, the membership began to think about expanding the coop principle to other ventures. A cheese factory began operating. Two hundred sixty-nine farmers were selling milk to the factory by the summer of 1939, and another vat was added. Milk, cream and cheese became a growing, successful business.

Increasing state and federal regulations, coupled with labor factors and the aging of the plant, sealed the fate of this operation. In 1956 the manufacture of cheese was discontinued, and milk was shipped to other areas. A milk bottling plant that began operating in the 1940's saw its demise along with the Pelkie Cheese Factory. Farmers needing a plant to process their dairy products so they formed a new cooperative called the Copper Country (Keweenaw) Cheese Cooperative in Dollar Bay.

The new Agriculture School in Pelkie opened in August of 1932. The voters decided to consolidate the many small schools in the area and to transport the children to a central school. The new agricultural school building had over two hundred students in grade K-10 with six teachers.

Through the early years in the Pelkie area, floods from the rivers were a constant problem, so in 1974, the Dept. of Natural Resources diverted the course of the Sturgeon River so that it no longer ran into Otter Lake but flows again into Portage Lake. New bridges were built to replace the old ones.

In 1980, a generation of farmers was retiring. Since most children received a good education and were in varying professional fields, land was beginning to lie idle as the farmers retired. An influx of Mennonite families in the late 1980's began a reversal of this trend.

### **Keweenaw Bay**

Martin Kelsey came to the area now known as Keweenaw Bay with his family in 1877, building a home on a hillside, using the basement for a half-way house that provided rooms for the passengers and drivers of the stagecoach. Mr. Kelsey was a businessman who bought land north of Keweenaw Bay and established a sawmill in the area. The McCawley school was built near the Kelsey farm.

At the turn of the century, Keweenaw Bay came to life. In May of 1901 Frank La Frenier and Joseph Chosa sold their land to the Mass Mining Company. A stamp mill, which began operating in 1901, was erected on the property. Over a long trestle, ore was hauled in ore cars and dumped into huge crushers. A laundry sluice carried the sand and waste material, dumping it on the shoreline of the Bay. The crushed green rock and quartz was called stamp sand, and is the source of the exotic looking black sand beaches seen today.

In 1902, Keweenaw Bay (once called La Frenierville) became a boom town. Family dwellings began to appear and businessmen built stores and saloons. A hotel was built, four saloons, a boarding house, a grocery store and one small general store. In 1904, the population of this settlement reached its peak of two hundred persons.

About a mile north of Keweenaw Bay there was a little hamlet known as Michigan Location, now evidenced only by traces of foundations of mill buildings. A group of officials from the Minnesota Mining Co. built a mill and twelve company houses on the Michigan Location site. A crushing plant was erected. Construction of the plant was suspended in 1907. When the construction was stopped, it was indicated that no more than \$10,000 was lacking to complete

the array of structures in this \$185,000 project. Although the production of the Minnesota Mine continued with the year 1908, making for a total output of over three million pounds of refined copper, the mill at Michigan Location was never finished.

A short time after the end of World War I (1918), the cost of production exceeded the price of copper, as the copper market fell, signaling the end of prosperity in Keweenaw Bay. The last day of work was on December 2, 1919, as the Mass Mining Mill Co. closed the Stamp Mill in Keweenaw Bay. The saloons closed, grocery stores closed, and the people began to move away. The only business left was the Post Office, which remained open until 1987.

In 1936, the State of Michigan began construction of a scenic highway (US 41) which followed the bay shore. The Grover C. Dillman Roadside Park was placed near Keweenaw Bay. During the 1930's, all the railroad track on the Branch Line of the Mineral Range Railroad was taken up and banked.

The start of World War II saw many of the people in the township leave for the cities to find work. Many of the young people went off to war. From the early 1940's to the 1970's, Keweenaw Bay was a strictly rural area with only a few reminders of the early industrial boom. The only reminder of the Mass Mining Company Stamp Mill is the tons of stamp sand that were deposited on the lake shore in Keweenaw Bay that have been washed down to the shores of Fewsville and Baraga. Not much is known about Fewsville; the local legend is it had a whiskey distillery that involved an industrial plant in the very early years,.

In 1905, the population of Arnheim was one hundred and five. It is located on the DSS&A Railroad, twelve miles north of Baraga. Arnheim was named after Jerry Arn, who came from Toledo, Ohio to supervise the Red Sandstone Quarry. Most of the quarrying was done by hand, although some steam machinery was also used.

The sandstone blocks were transported to Lake Superior where a dock was established at the north end of Arnheim on Lake Superior. Some of the blocks were sent to the mines in the Keweenaw where it was used in foundations and home building. The sandstone was shipped to cities all over the United States for building purposes. The last sandstone sold was in 1977, by the Superior Natural Red Sandstone Quarry owned by the DesRocher Brothers in Arnheim.

In the early 1900's, logging was an active industry in the Arnheim area. The Hancock Farms, later called the Robindale Farms and eventually operated as a corporate farm owned by the Cleveland Land and Trust Company.(located on the present Myllyla property) was busy making barrel staves from tamarack trees and shipping them out via rail. There were two early lumber companies in full operation, the Keys Mill and the Cleaver Mill.

Two boarding houses were built and there were many logging camps in the woods, mostly owned by the Worchester Lumber Company of Chassell, Michigan. Groceries were hauled in via rail, as there was no grocery store in Arnheim in the early years. A new road built from tamarack poles, known as the "corduroy road", was built from the railroad track to the Sturgeon River. In 1918, a log jam further up the Sturgeon River burst the river's banks, tearing a channel into Otter Lake, exacerbating flooding problems. The Cleveland Land and Trust Company attempted a solution to the flooding problems, as well as to enhance irrigation, by creating canals but the project was never finished. As a result, no further progress on the drainage project was attempted for many years.

In October of 1974, the Sturgeon River was directed into the diversion ditch which carries its waters away from Otter Lake. Benefits from this project were three-fold: restoration of Otter Lake as a fishing attraction, mitigation of flooding in the Sturgeon River Valley, and creation of a wildlife refuge for migrating geese and ducks.

A major change occurred in the lives of the Arnheim farmers when electricity became available through the Ontonagon Rural Electrification Association (REA). The farmers in Arnheim made improvements and expanded their farms in the 1940's; however, bad drainage and flooding continued.

1965 saw the return of Dr. Carl Moyer, a native of Baraga Township. Shortly after Moyer's return, a group of county business people formed a corporation to establish a medical clinic. The group purchased seven acres on US. 41 in Arnheim overlooking Lake Superior. Their intent was the establishment of a state of the art medical clinic

The untimely death of Dr. Moyer and some of his associates saw an end to the project. The Moyer Diagnostic Clinic was bought by the Western Upper Peninsula Forest Improvement District, which, in the late 1980's, diverted most of it's resources into propagating the establishment of a major bleach-craft pulp and paper mill on the shores of Keweenaw Bay at Arnheim. This effort caused a political furor, which culminated in the adoption, by the Baraga Township Board of Trustees, of a Township Zoning Ordinance. Today, the building is owned by the BHK Head Start Program.

## **NATURAL FEATURES**

The character of Baraga Township is reflected in its natural features; the Keweenaw Bay, rolling hillsides, farmlands, lakes, streams, woodlands, and open spaces help define those traits that draw people to the area. In the past major alteration and destruction of these natural features

produced far reaching impacts, some of which can still be seen today. The Township's residents are aware of the quality of their environment, and support strong policies in favor of protecting the Township's natural features.

### **The Value of Natural Features**

Natural features provide an essential element of the quality of life in Baraga Township. In addition to their recreational value, other benefits of natural features include:

- Clean water supplies for homes served by wells
- Wildlife habitats
- Ground water recharge and purification, flood control, pollution protection and the support of unique plant and animal life
- Productive agricultural land
- Aesthetics (views, serenity, rural nature, etc.)

### **How Development Affects Natural Resources**

The landscape is a complex and fragile resource. The land, water, and vegetation are all linked to the ecology of the Township. Once destroyed they usually cannot be replaced. In addition, the damage visible on one site may actually affect other distant areas. Ground water pollution, for example, may be caused by an activity at one location, but affect ground water sources miles away.

There are two development approaches to natural features: preservation and integration. Preservation measures should be used when natural features are so sensitive or valued that any change would be unacceptable, both aesthetically and environmentally. In these areas, development should be either prohibited or restricted to those projects which do not greatly affect the environment. Wetlands and flood prone areas are examples where preservation techniques should be used.

Natural features may be included in development where they are an essential part of the Township's character, but where minor changes would have only a slight impact. Integration would allow for development as long as it fit in with the surrounding area by allowing natural features to remain as undisturbed as possible.

## **Environmental Constraints**

Natural features can either improve or restrict development, depending on the type and extent of the feature. For example, the shoreline hills overlooking Keweenaw Bay may provide an attractive view but may create additional costs, both financial and environmental. Erosion control measures and tree clearing can increase development costs dramatically.

Several areas of the Township have environmental features that could impact the intensity of development. These lands include wetlands, poor soils, and areas of steep topography. The following description of the treatment of natural features will help establish protection measures for the preservation of the character of the natural environment.

## **Woodlands**

As buffers and moderators of flooding, erosion, and noise and air pollution, woodlands are important to the region's quality of life. Apart from the economic value of the timber industry, some of the environmental values of woodlands include:

- Providing a varied and rich environment for plants and animals. Forest layers, including canopy, branches, trunks, shrubs, and plants on the forest floor provide breeding, feeding, and refuge areas for many species of insects, birds, and mammals.
- Protecting watersheds and soils. Forest vegetation moderates the effects of winds and storms, stabilizes and enriches the soil, and slows runoff, allowing the forest floor to filter ground water.
- Serving as buffers to the sights, sounds, and odors of civilization. Forests mute noise from freeways and factories, and absorb air pollutants. Along major highways woodlands can provide visual relief from a monotonous landscape.
- Moderating climate, when present in large areas. The micro climate of a forest, created in part by the shade of the trees and the transpiration of water from the leaves, keeps surrounding air at an even temperature. Forest temperatures are generally cooler in the day and warmer at night than the more widely varying temperatures of unforested areas, creating natural air conditioners.

Baraga Township is heavily forested with much of the Township's 118,000 acres covered with some type of forest land. The largest portion of the forest is considered northern hardwoods,

consisting primarily of sugar maple, red maple, yellow birch, oak and basswood. The 40,000 acres of hardwoods in the Township provides the vital resource for the area's major industry-forestry and logging. A good portion of this land is on highly productive sites that can provide high quality products for the forest industry.

The second largest woodland type is aspen/white birch. This area also is vital to the forest industry and plays a major role in the wildlife habitat of the Township. This cover type is most valuable for good population of the more popular game species-deer and grouse.

The third major component is pine. The majority of pine is found in the area known as "Baraga Plains" in the southern portion of the Township. This area is a level, sandy plain with a homogenous stand of jack pine. Though it is a vital part of the forest industry, this area is probably just as important, or more so, for it's recreational use.

These lands also provide a very large land base for all types of outdoor recreational activities, including hunting, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road trails, camping, and many other uses. This recreational activity is a vital factor to the local economy as well as the quality of life in the Township.

A major factor that makes these lands available for such use is the public access provided by state lands and the thousands of acres of Commercial Forest Act lands within the Township.

To maintain the forest base, to sustain the current forest activities for now and the future, planning needs to keep at a minimum the conversion of forest land to other uses. With the reduction of the forest base, the logging and recreational activities will become more concentrated on fewer acres, which could lead to more conflict.

How these particular lands are managed is dependent on the ownership. Each owner has the freedom to manage his or her woodland as desired. However, to insure a continued and growing economic base for forestry and recreation, the practices that take place on these lands will have a very definite effect on the future use and opportunities. Proper long-term management should be encouraged and emphasized at all opportunities. Personal use and treatment of the land does influence the Township dynamics of business and lifestyles.

### **Soils**

The foundation for these forest types, which influences more than anything else what is growing where and how it is growing, is the soil types. The southern third of the Township is primarily well drained and excessively sandy soils associated with out wash plains and moraines.

The central portion of the Township consists mostly of either well drained sandy soils on hilly to steep terrain or well drained silty soils associated with more rolling, level terrain.

The northern third of the Township is more of a mosaic with a diversity of soil types within the area. These types range from moderately well drained sandy soils to poorly drained silty soils and loams. There is a remarkable variety within this portion of the Township soil types.

### **Wetlands**

The Michigan Resource Information System (MIRIS), Division of Land Resource Programs, Department of Natural Resources designated wetlands within the Township from data compiled from 1978 aerial photography. Approximately 4% of Township acreage is typed as wetlands. The largest areas of wetlands lie along the Sturgeon River flood plain and in the areas east of Big Lake. An intensive wetland inventory would likely reveal a greater amount of wetland acreage.

"Wetland" is the collective term for marshes, swamps, bogs, and similar areas often found between open water and upland areas. In the past, people viewed wetlands as wastelands -- sources of mosquitoes, flies, and unpleasant odors. They believed wetlands should be avoided, or better yet, eliminated.

This negative view, combined with the demand for more developable land, resulted in the destruction of large areas of the Township's wetlands. Owners and developers drained their wetlands, and converted them to farmland, or filled them for housing developments or industrial facilities. Of the estimated 11 million acres of wetlands that stood in Michigan 150 years ago, only 3 million acres remain. Only one-fourth of the original 400,000 acres of coastal wetlands now line Michigan shores.

Attitudes towards wetlands have changed. Scientists have discovered that wetlands are valuable natural resources that provide many important benefits to people and their natural environment. Wetlands help improve water quality and reduce flood and storm damage. They provide important fish and wildlife habitat and support hunting and fishing activities. Finally, they add interest to a landscape.

Because they occur where the dry land meets the water, wetlands play a critical role in managing the Township's water-based resources. Acre for acre, wetlands produce more wildlife and plants than any other Michigan resource. Michigan boasts about 2,300 native plant species. Of that amount, 50 percent are wetland species; more than 25 percent of the wetland species are threatened or endangered.

More than 40 percent of the 575 vertebrate wildlife species in Michigan live in or use wetlands. This includes 10 to 15 of the 66 mammals, 180 of the 370 birds, 22 of the 28 reptiles, and all 23 amphibians.

Other benefits of wetlands include:

- Reducing flooding by absorbing runoff from rain and melting snow and slowly releasing excess water into rivers and lakes. (One-acre, flooded to a depth of one foot, contains 325,851 gallons of water.)
- Filtering pollutants from surface runoff, trapping fertilizers, pesticides, sediments, and other potential contaminants and breaking them down into less harmful substances, improving water clarity and quality.
- Recharging ground water supplies when connected to underground aquifers.
- Contributing to natural nutrient and water cycles, and producing vital atmospheric gases, including oxygen.
- Providing commercial and recreational values to the economy, by producing plants, game birds (ducks, geese) and fur-bearing mammals. Survival of certain varieties of fish directly depend on wetlands, requiring shallow water areas for breeding, feeding and escape from predators.
- Serving as nutrient traps, when wetlands occur next to the Great Lakes, inland lakes or streams.

Before any development or rezoning approval, a qualified individual should determine if a regulated wetland exists on the site. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) retains a list of consultants qualified to make wetland determinations.

In Michigan, the Goemaere-Anderson Wetland Protection Act (Public Act 203 of 1979) provides for the statewide regulation of certain wetlands. The Act specifies that activities such as filling, dredging and draining require a permit from the Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). The Act also provides for a plan for the preservation, management, protection, and use of wetlands; and provides for remedies and penalties.

The state wetland laws provide the basis of a wetland protection program. To be more effective, however, these regulations should be coordinated with preservation techniques.

## Surface Waters

Water features abound in Baraga Township. Keweenaw Bay of Lake Superior forms its eastern boundary and the Township hosts a number of inland lakes, rivers and streams, the most of important of which are Big Lake, Prickett Lake, and the Sturgeon River. Many of the Township's waters are popular fishing resources, supporting several varieties of game fish.

Interesting views and the tranquility of flowing water are all part of the natural ambiance created by the rivers and lakes of the Township. Surface waters also contribute to the recreational economy, including fishing, boating, and swimming. Land fronting on water is in great demand. Previously, the emphasis was on the construction of seasonal homes and cabins. Today, in addition to seasonal homes, buyers look for year-round residential living with easy access to recreational opportunities made available by the water.

In addition to aesthetic values, clean, protected surface waters are critical to human health and safety. Additional benefits provided by lakes and streams include:

- Potential municipal water supply source
- Irrigation supply
- Drainage and flood control
- Water purifying and ground water recharge
- Plant and wildlife habitat

Protection measures for surface waters must extend beyond the development site to include the entire watershed. A watershed consists of the large area of land that drains snow melt and rainwater to a low point, such as a lake or large river.

Non-point source pollution poses one of the greatest threats to surface water. Rather than occurring from one major source, like a sewage treatment plant or industrial use, non-point source pollution results from rainfall or snow melt moving over and through the ground. As this runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants. These are deposited into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters and ground water. In Michigan, agricultural practices, lawn chemicals, and soil erosion are the greatest causes of non-point source contamination.

Big Lake is located in the southern part of the Township. A portion of the lake is developed with year-round and seasonal camps but a remainder of the shore is still in a natural condition. A

popular State Forest Campground is located on the lake and receives moderate to heavy use for camping, fishing, and swimming.

On the west boundary of the Township is Prickett Dam and Reservoir. A good portion of this man made lake lies within the Township and is quite popular for it's fishing. The lake is well known beyond the local area and attracts fishermen from throughout the midwest area.

The Sturgeon River meanders through the northerly third of the county providing a popular canoe river as well as fishing. Its waters have been diverted by the Department of Natural Resources near the northern county line for the Arnheim sloughs area. This has created a large waterfowl rearing and resting area that attracts hunters from across the state.

The east boundary of the Township consists of over 13 miles of Lake Superior frontage. This frontage consists of sandy beaches and high sandstone cliffs. It provides a significant scenic corridor and places for abundant recreational activities in summer and winter.

### **Flood plains**

A 100-year flood plain area holds a one percent chance of a flood occurring within any year. The Township has a map showing the approximate location of the 100-year flood plains. However, qualified individuals must make on-site determinations to identify areas prone to flooding. Most of the flood plain area in the Township is adjacent the Sturgeon River and its tributaries.

Flood plains should be identified to protect life and property within those areas prone to flooding. In the past, floods have devastated developments within flood plains, wiping out homes and other structures. Keeping development out of these areas prevents the future loss of lives and valuable property.

Flood plain areas also warrant protection because they serve as water recharge areas. Their use as natural water storage basins during periods of heavy rains or snow thaws also favor protection. Without this water collection and storage, the likelihood of damage to homes and businesses downstream increases. Finally, lands near stream beds in or near the flood plain are often wetlands, with the resource values and impacts associated with them.

Most local ordinances allow limited uses within the 100-year flood plain. Often, flood plains will be considered as lawn area, so setbacks and lot areas can include flood plain affected property. Those ordinances normally require all floor elevations to be at least one foot above the 100-year flood elevation.

## Ground water

Michigan has long been known as the Great Lake State, and enjoys an abundance of surface water. Efforts to protect this resource have taken place at all levels of government. Including all available surface water, ground water makes up 97% of the world's freshwater supply. Lakes, rivers and streams provide only 1½% of fresh water resources. (The remaining 1½% takes the form of water vapor in the atmosphere and as soil moisture.)

Almost one-half of the state's population, and much of Baraga Township outside the Village of Baraga, uses ground water as the sole source of drinking water. Despite this dependence, little public understanding exists of the nature and importance of ground water. Like most other natural resources, ground water is more vulnerable in some areas than others, depending largely on quantity and quality.

Three main factors determine ground water vulnerability: soils, depth to the aquifer and general aquifer condition and type. Sandy soils offer considerably less protection than heavier clay soils. Confined aquifers are safer than unconfined ones. Once understood, more effective protection measures for ground water are possible.

Special consideration to the types and densities of permitted land uses should apply in areas that offer little natural protection to ground water. This should also apply where the protection level is unknown.

Businesses such as dry cleaners, photographers and hair salons serve as examples of potentially hazardous land uses due to the types of chemicals they routinely use. If these businesses operate on individual well and septic service, the chance of ground water contamination, through an accidental spill or mishandling, is especially high.

Some businesses considered environmentally sound, like golf courses (including miniature golf) and country clubs, actually threaten ground water. These businesses routinely use large amounts of lawn chemicals. Directly applying these chemicals to the ground presents an uninterrupted opportunity for ground water contamination. Surface waters may become contaminated as well.

Low-cost contamination prevention measures can help protect against a spill or leak. Such ground water contamination could cost a community millions of dollars to remedy or destroy a primary water source.

## Topography

Topography varies widely within the Township. Steep banks exist along the Keweenaw Bay shoreline and in the hillsides outside the Sturgeon River valley. Steep slopes and rolling hillsides, if disturbed, are difficult to restore.

Topography exists in a balance with vegetation, precipitation and wind. Maintaining stable slopes helps prevent non-point source pollution of water resources while preserving a distinctive feature of the local landscape. Development on steep slopes can have far-reaching impacts on the Township's land, water, economic, and aesthetic resources. Yet hillsides can be developed in a manner compatible with their ecology. Topographic relief can provide visual interest to an otherwise ordinary development project. Small hills and ravines can separate incompatible land uses and provide appealing views.

Both cropland and land use development generally favor level or gently sloping sites. Hilly sites work better for very low density residential and recreational land uses. Slopes more than 18% usually prohibit development due to the potential for erosion and the safety hazards presented. Elevation changes within the Township will only occasionally restrict development.

Where elevation changes are dramatic, they can restrict development since they often cannot accommodate drainage, traffic circulation, erosion control, and building design.

**POPULATION**

**Population Growth**

In relative numbers, Baraga Township has seen the greatest increase in population of any community in the county between 1990 and 2000. During this decade, the population grew by an additional 710 persons, an increase of over 25%. The Village of Baraga is included within this population, and increased by 54 persons. During this same period, the entire county increased its population by just 792 persons or a 10% population growth.

<b>TABLE 1</b>				
<b>POPULATION TRENDS - 1980-2000</b>				
<b>LOCALITY</b>	1980	1990	2000	<b>% CHANGE 1990-2000</b>
Arvon Township	439	422	482	14.2
<b>BARAGA TOWNSHIP</b>	<b>2,717</b>	<b>2,832</b>	<b>3,542</b>	<b>25.1</b>
Baraga Village	1,055	1,231	1,285	4.4
Covington Township	734	651	569	-12.6
L'Anse Township	4,316	3,818	3,926	2.8
L'Anse Village	2,500	2,151	2,107	-2.0
Spurr Township	278	231	227	-1.7
Baraga County	8,484	7,954	8,746	10.0

Source: U.S. Census. Note: Village populations are included in Township figures.

L'Anse Township, during the same period, also gained population. Spurr and Covington Townships and the Village of L'Anse lost population between the 1990 and 2000 Census. In general, this is reflective of many isolated and rural communities.

The increase of population is mostly due to the addition of the State of Michigan Correctional Facility; as inmates are counted as residents in the jurisdiction in which they are confined.

**Age**

The age of residents throughout the county generally follow a national trend of a decline in the 0-17, or school-aged population, and an increase in the 65 and over age group (Table 2). The increasing average age of the population will have consequences for future services, especially in the area of health care. The nature of recreation will also change as the demand for activities geared toward the older population increases. Meanwhile, the declining scholl age population is already affecting school districts.

LOCALITY	0-5 years		18 and over		65 and over	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Arvon Township	4.7	3.3	80.5	80.4	29.6	24.2
<b>BARAGA TOWNSHIP</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>71.8</b>	<b>76.3</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>11.9</b>
Baraga Village	8.8	6.5	69.6	72.8	16.0	16.7
Covington Township	4.7	4.9	78.3	83.4	27.6	25.3
L'Anse Township	6.6	6.0	73.7	76.0	19.1	17.5
L'Anse Village	6.3	5.0	75.5	78.6	23.6	21.8
Spurr Township	9.0	2.6	64.5	82.8	14.2	22.0
Baraga County	6.6	5.5	73.5	77.0	19.5	16.2

Source: U.S. Census

**Race/National Origin**

The population of the Township, including the Village of Baraga, is predominately white, with a significant American Indian segment. The Keweenaw Bay Indian Community is an important part of the social and cultural makeup of the population of the Township.

<b>TABLE 3 RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN BARAGA TOWNSHIP - 2000</b>		
<b>RACE/ORIGIN</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
White	2393	67.5
Black	429	12.1
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	496	14.0
Other race	224	6.3

**Households**

Baraga Township had a 18% increase in households during the 1990-2000 period. The Village of Baraga has decreased the number of households by 6.47% since 1990.

<b>TABLE 5 HOUSEHOLD TRENDS</b>					
<b>LOCALITY</b>	<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>		<b>% CHANGE</b>
	<b>Population</b>	<b>Persons per Household</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Persons per Household</b>	
Arvon Township	422	2.27	482	2.1	-7.5
<b>BARAGA TOWNSHIP</b>	2832	2.53	3542	3.0	+18.5
Baraga Village	1231	2.43	1285	2.3	-6.4
Covington Township	651	2.64	569	2.3	-8.7
L'Anse Township	3818	2.47	3926	2.4	-2.3
L'Anse Village	2151	2.33	2107	2.3	-1.3
Spurr Township	231	3.04	227	2.1	-31.0
Baraga County	7954	2.51	8746	2.6	+3.5

Source: U.S. Census. Note: Village populations are included in Township figures.

Households are denoted as "owner occupied" or "renter occupied".

Baraga Township has seen an increase in owner-occupied households

In 1980, 78.4% of all households in Baraga County were owner occupied; 21.6% were renter occupied. Rental housing increased dramatically from 1980 to 1990 and has experienced a decline as a percentage of the county's housing stock in the last decade, down to 22.4%

<b>TABLE 6 OCCUPANCY AND TENURE BARAGA TOWNSHIP - 2000</b>		
<b>CHARACTERISTIC</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Total housing units	1,455	100.00
Occupied housing units	1,178	81
Owner occupied	850	72.2 (occupied)
Renter occupied	328	27.8 (occupied)
Vacant housing units	277	19.0
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	184	12.6

<b>TABLE 7 HOUSEHOLD OWNERSHIP TRENDS</b>						
<b>LOCALITY</b>	<b>1980</b>		<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>	
	<b>% Owner</b>	<b>% Renter</b>	<b>% Owner</b>	<b>% Renter</b>	<b>% Owner</b>	<b>% Renter</b>
Arvon Township	90.7	9.3	91.9	8.1	92.3	7.7
<b>BARAGA TOWNSHIP</b>	78.5	21.5	69.6	30.4	72.1	27.9
Baraga Village	71.8	28.2	50.7	49.3	52.2	47.8
Covington Township	90.5	9.5	91.3	8.7	90.7	9.3
L'Anse Township	74.0	26.0	71.3	28.7	76.8	23.2
L'Anse Village	66.6	33.4	66.0	34.0	71.4	28.6
Spurr Township	91.5	8.5	88.2	11.8	91.4	8.6
Baraga County	78.4	21.6	73.9	26.1	77.6	22.4

Source: U.S. Census. Note: Village populations are included in Township figures.

Baraga and L'Anse Townships show the highest percentages of renter occupied housing, reflecting the higher renter occupied percentages found in the villages.

These statistics strongly suggest that the outlying Township has maintained a relatively stable owner-occupied "residential" characteristic for over twenty years despite significant shifts in occupancy patterns throughout much of the county, and Baraga Village. In some respects, this is to be expected since renter occupied dwellings would be more likely to locate in the Village, or other developed areas, than in the rural areas of the Township.

**HOUSING**

In 2000, there were 4,631 units of housing in Baraga County (Table 8), a decline of 53 units. Baraga Township has 1,455 units of housing, approximately 31% of the county.

<b>TABLE 8 HOUSING TYPE</b>						
<b>LOCALITY</b>	<b>Single Family</b>		<b>Multi-Family</b>		<b>Mobile Home</b>	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
<b>BARAGA TOWNSHIP</b>	77.2	73.9	11.8	12.5	11.0	12.9

Source: U.S. Census.

While data from previous decades showed the housing stock growing older, the 1990's saw significant housing construction. Baraga Township had 196 new housing units constructed during the last decade. The value of homes in the Township has seen substantial increases from previous decades and reflects the new housing construction. The median value is now estimated at over \$68,000.

<b>TABLE 9 HOUSING - YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT BARAGA TOWNSHIP - 2000</b>		
<b>YEAR BUILT</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
1999 to March 2000	27	1.9
1995 to 1998	92	6.4
1990 to 1994	77	5.3
1980 to 1989	244	16.9
1970 to 1979	257	17.8
1960 to 1969	171	11.8
1940 to 1959	200	13.8
1939 or earlier	377	26.1

Source: U.S. Census, 1990

<b>TABLE 10 OWNER SPECIFIED HOUSING VALUE BARAGA TOWNSHIP - 2000</b>		
<b>VALUE</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Specified owner-occupied units	483	100.00
Less than \$50,000	135	28
\$50,000 to \$99,000	244	50
\$100,000 to \$149,000	75	15.5
\$150,000 to \$199,999	11	2.33
\$200,000 to \$299,999	17	3.5
\$300,000 or more	0	0.00
Median	\$68,100	-

The growth of new housing may reflect the growth of year round homes on Lake Superior and inland lakes in the County, as well as the rural areas away from the lakeshore. It also

demonstrates the stability of the County economy resulting from growth of the manufacturing sector and the good jobs available at the Baraga prison facility.

<p><b>CHAPTER 2</b> <b>GOALS AND OBJECTIVES</b></p>
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**FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

As a community matures, a direction for future development is needed to ensure that its desires regarding growth are translated into action. The intent of this Land Use Plan is to provide the means by which Baraga Township may look forward to the next century. In order to set a direction for this period, the Township established a series of goals and objectives covering major elements of the Land Use Plan. The Township has determined that the following goals and objectives will guide their decisions for this Land Use Plan.

**QUALITY OF LIFE**

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>BARAGA TOWNSHIP WILL ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT THAT SEEKS TO PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND PERPETUATE THE TOWNSHIP'S SENSITIVE AND FRAGILE NATURAL RESOURCES.</b>
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**Objectives**

- The Township will work to protect those natural features and resources which are considered sensitive and fragile, such as flood plains, wetlands, and scenic vistas and corridors.
- The Township will introduce appropriate regulations and guidelines for development in sensitive and fragile environmental areas.

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>THE TOWNSHIP WILL STRIVE TO IMPROVE AND ENHANCE ITS PHYSICAL APPEARANCE.</b>
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**Objectives**

- The Township will institute and actively enforce reasonable regulations which concern the appearance of property.
- The Township will work with appropriate agencies and groups to enhance the gateways into the community; i.e., M-38 and U.S. 41.

GOAL	<b>THE TOWNSHIP WILL UNDERTAKE ACTIONS WHICH WILL PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND PERPETUATE ITS RURAL CHARACTER.</b>
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Objectives

- The Township will promote actions which improve individual privacy, promote the preservation of open space, and enhance the tranquillity of life in Baraga Township.
- The natural assets of the Township, such as the quality of its surface waters, will be preserved, protected, and perpetuated through the development of appropriate regulations and guidelines.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

GOAL	<b>THE TOWNSHIP WILL ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THAT IS ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND, DIVERSE, SMALL-SCALE, LOW IMPACT, AND PLACED IN SUITABLE LOCATIONS.</b>
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GOAL	<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WILL STRIVE TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT WHICH ARE STABLE, PERMANENT, AND YEAR-ROUND, AND WHICH MAY CONTRIBUTE TO THE MODEST EXPANSION OF THE AREA'S POPULATION.</b>
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Objectives

- The Township will establish an Economic Development Strategy that aggressively seeks new businesses and works toward keeping existing development viable.
- The Economic Development Strategy will identify the area's economic resources, and its physical, social and human assets.
- The Strategy will identify those uses which are most appropriate for Baraga Township, such as those based on renewable resources, e.g. tourism, forestry, agriculture, etc. The Strategy will encourage industries that have demonstrated responsibility toward the environment.
- The Township will work with other existing agencies and groups to jointly encourage new development.

**TRANSPORTATION**

GOAL	<b>THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK OF THE TOWNSHIP WILL BE SAFE, EFFICIENT, AND WELL MAINTAINED.</b>
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Objectives

- The State trunkline highways, M-38 and U.S. 41, will be monitored to ensure that adjacent land use and driveways are controlled to maintain the capacity of the roadway and maintain safety.
- The local street system will be maintained to ensure an adequate transportation network.
- The Township will work with the Baraga County Road Commission to consider paving of all major and minor roadways, as funds permit, to improve safety and accessibility for public safety vehicles.
- Public transportation opportunities will be enhanced for special needs groups, such as senior citizens.

**RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

GOAL	<b>RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS WILL BE ENHANCED BY IMPROVING THE VARIETY AND AMOUNT OF RECREATIONAL RESOURCES, WITHOUT DEGRADING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.</b>
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Objectives

- Access to natural features for recreational purposes will be improved.
- The level of recreational activity will be appropriate for the resource, i.e., the capacity of recreational resources to accommodate a given level of activity will not be exceeded.
- New recreational activities will be sought which are year-round and family oriented.
- Federal and state funding will be made accessible with the completion of a Township Recreation Plan.
- Recreational resources and activities will contribute to the economic development of the area by creating attractions for visitors.

**COMMUNITY SERVICES**

GOAL	<b>THE TOWNSHIP WILL PROVIDE THE SERVICES AND FACILITIES THAT ARE APPROPRIATE AND NECESSARY TO SERVE THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE NEEDS OF ITS RESIDENTS.</b>
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Objectives

- As the needs of its residents change, the Township will be prepared to respond with appropriate services and facilities, as the Township's financial and administrative resources permit.
- New community facilities will be placed in locations convenient to the populations for which they are planned, e.g., access for public safety services should be improved for the north central portion of the Township by paving appropriate streets.
- The Township will work with the County to investigate the possibility of providing a solid waste transfer station for Township residents.
- The Township will work with public utilities to improve services, e.g., expansion of natural gas service areas.

**LAND USE AND HOUSING**

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>THE TOWNSHIP WILL ENCOURAGE A LAND USE PATTERN THAT WILL PRESERVE ITS RURAL CHARACTER AND PROVIDE ADEQUATE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES.</b>
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Objectives

- The Township will encourage new residential development that is modern and well-maintained.
- Preservation of open space will be encouraged by allowing cluster development and the creation of neighborhoods with higher density housing, in appropriate locations.
- A variety of housing types and densities will be encouraged, including an appropriate location for a medium sized mobile home park.
- The potential environmental impacts of new development should be carefully considered. These impacts may include such factors as noise, traffic, odors, drainage, and effects on water and air quality.

**COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION**

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GOAL	<b>THE TOWNSHIP WILL WORK WITH AREA AGENCIES, GROUPS, AND OTHER UNITS OF GOVERNMENT TO FOSTER A SPIRIT OF COOPERATION AND COMMUNICATION.</b>
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Objectives

- The Township will actively seek the input of area agencies, groups, and other units of government on subjects of common interests.
- The Township will seek to expand opportunities to work with other area agencies, groups, and units of government on joint projects of common interest.

<b>CHAPTER 3 TRANSPORTATION</b>
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**BACKGROUND**

Compared to many communities Baraga Township's traffic conditions are very manageable. Traffic volumes are low, with few accident problems. However, in the rural environment of Baraga Township minor traffic volumes can be noticeable to the residents; even slight increases in volumes can be perceived as major.

Despite perceptions of high volumes, available traffic counts in the Township reflect its low density development and lack of major traffic generators, such as shopping centers or industrial parks. The heaviest volumes occur during the morning and afternoon peak hours, since the trips taken by these vehicles are primarily work oriented. Other peak times occur during the summer months when tourism and recreational activities increase.

With no concentrated attractors within the Township there are few locations that draw traffic in large volumes. There are two major roadways that attract through traffic or distribute traffic to points within the township. These major bisecting roads are U.S. 41 and M-38.

**ROAD NETWORK**

Two main thoroughfares serve Baraga Township: U.S. 41, a two-lane road, skirts the eastern edge of the Township along the western shore of Keweenaw Bay. It provides access to the City of Houghton, thirty miles to the north, where a significant number of Township residents work or attend Michigan Technological University. To the east, U.S. 41 provides a route to Marquette, seventy miles to the south and east, the location of Northern Michigan University and a major medical center.

Most of the region's new commercial development is located along this highway, since it is the main tourist and commercial route through the area. In 2006, the Michigan Department of Transportation recorded average daily traffic volumes of 7,200 vehicles per day (ADT) on U.S. 41 between L'Anse and Baraga. North of Baraga these volumes drop to 3,900 ADT; east of L'Anse 3,300 ADT was recorded. From this information, it is apparent that there is a considerable amount of travel between L'Anse and Baraga.

For the most part, U.S. 41 is in good condition. However, a part of the roadway between the junction with Menge Creek Road and the Baraga State Park seems beset with problems

stemming from insufficient buttressing from lake erosion and slowly failing bridge structures. The present course of the roadway is often scenic and can be considered an enhancement to tourism.

M-38, a two-lane road, runs west from its junction with U.S. 41 at the Village of Baraga, providing a link with the communities of Pelkie, Alston, Nisula and, ultimately, Ontonogan, which has, in the past, been a source of employment for Township residents. Some commercial development has begun to expand west from the Village of Baraga along M-38. With the success of the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community's Casino/Motel Complex, this trend may be expected to continue.

M-38 shares much of the attributes of U.S. 41; it is broad and, for the most part, easily traversed, making for comfortable and swift travel from point to point.

The northwestern quadrant of the Township is generally less well served by its roads than the remainder of the Township. The roads accessing Pelkie and the Arnheim areas, particularly, are, though paved, narrow, shoulderless, and rough. Likewise, the southern third of the Township has almost no paved roads.

### **Corridors/Gateways**

Many of these corridors also represent "gateways" into the Township, where the character and values of the Township are first encountered by visitors. The development of these corridors and gateways will be monitored in order to maintain their vitality, protect the function of the facilities that service them, and to ensure that the character of the township is accurately reflected.

The two most important gateways are U.S. 41 and M-38. Of these, U.S. 41 is the most significant. The gateway to the region is located east of L'Anse, where the first impression of the area is realized. Presently, this gateway is a mix of land uses, with little or no consideration to aesthetics or land use control. In total, the strip does not present a favorable impression of the area.

The gateway to Baraga Township and the Village is found at the "Head of the Bay," or the south end of Keweenaw Bay, between L'Anse and Baraga. The dominant view of this area is to the Keweenaw Bay and the wetlands south of the Bay. This area does present a favorable impression of the region, with its natural beauty and vistas.

Further north, U.S. 41 passes Baraga State Park and enters the Village of Baraga. Development with the Village, along U.S. 41, has increased over the past few years. But like the area east of L'Anse, there is little land use coordination or effort to present a favorable impression. There is a clear difference between the beauty of the view to the Keweenaw Bay and the view of the roadway development and the backs of the buildings within the Village.

Strong efforts should be encourage to protect the view to the Bay and improve the aesthetics along the roadway. Adopting landscaping standards for businesses would highlight the natural elements of the community and maintain an attractive setting for motorists. "Capturing" retail traffic is largely dependent on the degree of comfort felt by the traveler; the more attractive the setting, the more comfortable the traveler becomes, and the more willing to stop and experience the area. Protecting the view to the Bay would enhance the attractiveness of the area and preserve the strong economic advantages that the natural resources of the "Head of the Bay" present.

Much of the development in the Village (and east of L'Anse) may be classified as strip commercial. Strip commercial development poses many problems to the community and its retail customers and businesses. Strip development and the lack of access management often results in dispersed retail/service development inconveniently located to customers, incompatible mixed land uses, unsightly development, numerous curb cuts, traffic congestion, a reduction of road capacity, and a loss of economic vitality.

Access management, or control of curb cuts, is intended to minimize conflicts between land access and traffic movement, similar to those existing along this corridor. Access management provisions identify improvement needs in existing or potential traffic problem areas, propose general policies in response to those needs, and suggests access management guidelines to implement the policies.

### **Road Improvements**

Given the residential character of the Township, major improvements to existing roadways are not likely to be needed, other than routine maintenance, including resurfacing of roadways, shoulder, and drainage improvements. If the low intensity land uses planned along most major roadways are maintained, even U.S 41 and M-38 are not likely to need major improvements. Some intersections, such as the junction of U.S 41 and M-38, in the Village, may require upgrading as traffic increases, but these improvements should be somewhat minor.

Because U.S. 41 and M-38 are state trunklines, land use along the routes must consider Michigan Department of Transportation policies regarding right-of-way, clear vision,

maintenance, and access to and from the highways. Conversely, the MDOT has to be informed of planned land use so that any of the Department's planned improvements to the highway will affect land use in the least adverse way and incorporate Township goals.

Given the concerns about road maintenance, it may be desirable to eventually improve some of the unpaved streets in the Township. However, the advantages of paving will have to be weighed by the residents in the area and a policy decision made as to whether or not paving will occur. Unpaved roads, while expensive to maintain, does tend to slow traffic, which many residents may see as promoting their overall quality of life. Others may view unpaved streets as a nuisance, with the problems of dust control, rutting, poor driving conditions in bad weather, and other difficulties.

The Township should work with the Baraga County Road Commission to develop and maintain a priority system for determining which streets should be paved, and when. Eventually, however, the goal should be to pave most major streets that carry traffic other than that of the residents in the area. Some of the factors that should be used to determine paving priorities include:

- Resident desires
- Roadway condition
- Drainage
- Adjacent land uses
- Traffic volumes
- Maintenance expenditures
- Roadway use type
- Function of roadway in the Township's street network

The Township should also work with the Road Commission to determine where future roadways may be needed to improve access for safety vehicles, such as the north central area of the Township, generally between Froberg Road and Keweenaw Bay.

**Bicycle Trails**

Formal bicycle trails in the Township are limited to the facility provided by the paved shoulder of U.S. 41 and separated from the traffic lane by a white line. It follows the highway throughout its length within the Township.

**Rail Lines**

The Township's sole access to rail transportation is via the Canadian National Railway's trackage which extends no further than one mile north of the U.S. 41/M-38 junction. The line from that point north to Houghton and Lake Linden has been officially abandoned.

**Airports/Landing Facilities**

A single runway grass strip is located approximately four miles west of Baraga on M-38 at Carlson. Baraga County is presently working on an airport master plan intended to result in improvements to the landing strip facility to accommodate air traffic.

The nearest commuter air link is at Houghton County Memorial Airport between Hancock and Calumet, forty miles to the north.

<b>CHAPTER 4 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b>
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**INTRODUCTION**

Baraga Township and the neighboring Villages of Baraga and L'Anse, as well as the entire county of Baraga provide many community facilities for public use. With the advent of new businesses and service industries Baraga Township is faced with growing pains; with a community that is small in population and economic privation often knocking at the door. What is lacking in economic base and population is compensated by human and natural resources. However, this creates a fragile balance.

The Township depends, in part, on the surrounding area for facilities and services, both those necessary and those that enhance quality of life in the Township. Houghton, thirty miles to the north, and Marquette, seventy miles to the south and east, are resources for Township residents.

The following pages summarize existing facilities and services provided to Baraga Township residents.

**FACILITIES****Township Offices**

Administrative functions of Baraga Township government are conducted at the Township Hall located in the Village of Baraga at the corner of Lyons Street and M-38. The offices occupy about 1000 square feet. The building has been kept in good repair and is adequate for the Township's needs.

**Library**

The Baraga County Public Library is located at the L'Anse Area Schools, located 5 miles east of Baraga Township.

**Parks and Recreation Areas**

The State of Michigan operates a full service state park for all types of campers within the Township limits. This park is located on U.S. 41 overlooking Keweenaw Bay. Because of the Township's location in Baraga County, with its abundant forests, rivers, lakes, and wildlife, people can enjoy recreational activities throughout the year.

The proximity of Lake Superior allows area residents and tourists to enjoy boating, fishing, swimming, and scenic beauty the entire year. Some of the many area functions include a Lake Trout Festival, Lumberjack Days and an Indian Pow-Wow for which the Keweenaw Bay serves as a backdrop.

Within the Township, a well-groomed snowmobile trail links all of Baraga County, as well as neighboring Ontonagon, Marquette, and Houghton Counties, providing miles of trails for tourists and residents alike.

Several groups enrich the Township's recreational scene, among them the Ottawa Sportsmen Club, the Relatively North Sky Diving Club, Baraga County Car Club, Baraga County 4-H Program, Baraga-Pelkie Hockey Association, the Snodrifters Snowmobile Club, 326 Art Gallery, and Baraga County Fair Board, organizers of the Baraga County Fair held annually in Pelkie.

**Schools**

The Township's educational needs are served by the Baraga Area Schools. The school is classified as a class "D" school with an enrollment of approximately 534 students (as of February 2007), grades K-12. The system encompasses an area of 181 square miles and consists of two Townships; Baraga and neighboring southern Portage Township of Houghton County. Because of the rural nature of the Township, roughly 70 percent of the students are bussed.

There are three school buildings which comprise the Baraga Area Schools. The Philip LaTendresse Elementary School, which houses students 3-6, was built in 1968 and is located on Lyons Street in Baraga. The Pelkie school, which serves K-2, is located in Pelkie and was built in 1932. The Baraga High School was built in 1982, and is adjacent the LaTendresse Elementary school on Lyons Street. Many improvements and updates have been made to both facilities in recent years.

Grades 7-12 have a curriculum offering that meets both University of Michigan Accreditation Standards and the North Central Association of Secondary School Guidelines.

**Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Facilities**

The Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Center is housed in a new Administration Complex constructed adjacent to the Ojibwa Casino/Motel Complex. This facility houses most of the Tribal Services. Also, the Ojibwa Community College has been established along with the Donald LaPointe Health Center in recent years. Other KBIC services are located throughout the County.

**SERVICES****Police**

Although the Township is without its own police force, police protection is provided its residents by the Baraga County Sheriff Department, Baraga Village Police, Keweenaw Bay Tribal Police, Michigan State Police-L'Anse Post, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Due to state budget cuts, after hours police dispatch is provided by the State Police Regional Barracks at Negaunee with an enhanced 911 system.

**Fire**

Fire protection for the Township is provided by volunteer departments at Baraga, where costs are shared equally with the Village of Baraga; and at the communities of Keweenaw Bay and Pelkie, where the Township provides support.

Because of the large geographic area served and its rural nature, some problems exist; notably, the long distances involved and limited hydrant facilities. In addition, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and United States Forest Service provide manpower and equipment to assist in fire protection for the Township. This cooperation between the departments and Township residents, however, help mitigate these problems.

**Ambulance**

The Bay Ambulance serves the Township's emergency medical needs. An attractive structure, built in 1991 by the Township, is centrally located in Baraga at the corner of Lyons Street and M-38. Bay Ambulance has four full-time, certified Paramedics and a 24-hour on-call staff. Operating expenditures are shared by residents of the Villages of Baraga and L'Anse, and the Townships of Baraga, Laird, L'Anse, Arvon, and the Keweenaw Bay Indian Tribal Community.

## **Hospitals**

Hospital facilities are provided by:

- Baraga County Memorial Hospital, in L'Anse;
- Portage Health Systems in Hancock;
- Bell Memorial Hospital, in Ishpeming; and
- Marquette General Hospital, in Marquette.

Bell Memorial Hospital and Marquette General Hospital are regional health care facilities.

## **Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Services**

For qualified residents, the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community provides drug and alcohol rehabilitation counseling, health care services, food commodities, housing, and child protective services. Programs within the Community are the Commodity Food Program, Ojibwa Senior Citizens, Ojibwa Housing Authority, Ojibwa Crisis Nursery, Bedabin Group Home, Ojibwa Campground, Children's Protective Services, Juvenile Justice, Families First, and Keweenaw Bay Youth Group.

<b>CHAPTER 5</b> <b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>
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**FUTURE OF BUSINESS: THE CHALLENGE**

Existing businesses in Baraga Township continue to offer an improving quality of goods and services. However, the ever present specter of limited job opportunities and the relatively high number of low to average income households limit the amount of growth. Throughout the remainder of the Township, much of which is federal or state owned, areas have been spot zoned to accommodate occasional small industry or business.

The ability of new, small businesses to survive in an economically depressed area, especially when competition in the form of the Mall and discount stores such as Shopko and Wal-Mart are only 30 miles to the north, is limited; smaller businesses cannot compete either in price or variety.

A number of problems and concerns affect the economy of Baraga Township, including:

- A lack of employment opportunities; Baraga County currently is above the national average for unemployment.
- A lack of coordinated, long-range economic planning .
- A lack of coordinated planning between the various governmental entities of neighboring townships, Baraga County, the Reservation, and Village of Baraga.
- A lack of complete, one-stop shopping facilities, with adequate selection and product quality.
- A lack of public transportation for both employees and potential customers.
- A lack of suitable available housing for new residents; e.g., housing for prison workers and their families.
- Traffic congestion along U.S. 41 through the Village business corridor.
- A lack of aesthetic consistency for businesses along U.S. 41, creating a poor overall impression of the area.
- Inappropriate development and commercialization along the shoreline, which affects the overall beauty of the Bay area.
- Lack of consistency in commercial/industrial zoning practices (commonly referred to as spot zoning).
- Changing consumer trends with less shopping on the local level.

**BUSINESS ASSETS**

Baraga Township has a number of assets available to address these challenges.

- Highway access: U.S. 41 and M-38 meet within the Village of Baraga. U.S. 41, in particular is the gateway to the Houghton-Hancock area, which is the area's major employment and shopping hub.
- Rail access: The Canadian National Railroad runs just beyond the Village of Baraga into the Industrial Park.
- Air access: A small grass airstrip lies along M-38, 4 miles west of Baraga. Plans have been discussed regarding the improvement of the strip for small commercial and recreational use. The airstrip serves the needs of a large number of parachute jumping enthusiasts in addition to private aircraft users.
- Recreational and scenic assets, including:
  - Camping facilities at the Baraga State Park and the State Forest Campground located at Big Lake;
  - Prickett Dam;
  - Baraga Plains;
  - Sturgeon Gorge;
  - Lake Superior shoreline of Keweenaw Bay on U.S. 41; and
  - scenic roads throughout the Township.
- Existing major employers include:
  - The Baraga Area School system, which has a newer high school and gym, a relatively new elementary school, Pelkie Elementary, and "Head Start" program.
  - Pettibone Corporation;
  - Terex, Inc.;
  - State Maximum Security Correctional Facility Prison;
  - a number of industrial shops for fabricating, welding, plastics, precision machining
  - the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (KBIC)
  - Logging Industry

- Shopping Districts:

Two central business districts lie within Baraga Township. The major business area is located within the Village of Baraga, and is made up of a mix of businesses, ranging from Auto parts to a food store, and including a range of shopping and professional business.

The district lies, for the most part, along U.S. 41 and a Village street running parallel to Highway 41. New business growth has flourished on the highway over the past 5 years. Following along M-38 westward within the village are several small retail shops. The relocation of some housing in the Village in order to provide a unified retail business area would greatly enhance the immediate community image.

Beyond the village limits is a retail shop and a sports equipment dealer. Of noteworthy mention is the Ojibwa Resort and Casino. This complex attracts visitors from Illinois, Wisconsin, other parts of Michigan, and other states throughout the midwest. Improvements to this complex made in 1993 will enhance its attractiveness.

The second zoned "business district" is located on a County Road in the un-incorporated village of Pelkie, which lies in the Northwest corner of Baraga Township. The county road serves as an alternate route to the Copper Country; i.e. Houghton/Hancock. Pelkie has been, historically, a farming community, with its business district primarily reflecting and serving the needs of that community.

Farming, as in other parts of the country, has been in decline. Many of the farms have fallen into disuse, with considerable land lying fallow. With a recent influx of Mennonite families, several farms have been put back into production, thus reversing the trend.

Other businesses within the Township include Christmas tree farms, foster care facilities, and a restaurant overlooking Keweenaw Bay. A number of other businesses may be found in scattered locations throughout the Township.

- Tourist Attractions:

- Baraga State Park
- Ojibwa Casino complex
- Hunting and fishing opportunities -- Lake Superior, Prickett Dam, Sturgeon River
- "Lumberjack Days"

- Baraga County Fair
- Horse shows
- Ojibwa Pow Wow
- Outdoor winter sports events
- Snowmobile Trails
- POR Rally
- Baraga County Historical Museum
- Sand Point Lighthouse (KBIC)
- Ojibwa Campground

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

### Growth Determinants

In order to understand the growth needs of the Baraga Township area it is helpful to know the physical needs of that growth. Apart from economic conditions, there are three principle aspects which determine the patterns of growth that occur: utility services, road systems, and zoning/land use planning. If all of these are present, along with the economic conditions necessary to sustain development, land will be generally be able to be used to it fullest potential, in accordance with the constraints imposed by the community and the environment. In addition, there is a need for regional cooperation to succeed with economic development efforts. These issues are discussed below.

#### *Utility Services*

The principle utilities needed for development are electric, gas, water service and sanitary sewer disposal. Electric and gas services are provided by utility companies. Demand for these services drives their expansion. Water and sewer services may be provided in a number of ways, ranging from on-site wells and septic tanks, to public water and sewer disposal systems. If public systems are used, concerns about cost of installation, system capacity, and maintenance need to be addressed.

With the improvement of package treatment systems, it is likely that the necessity of public utilities will lessen into the next century. These smaller systems will enable the development of more intensive uses in rural areas, where appropriate, and may, for example, help to resolve some sewer problems which occur with development around lake shores.

#### *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 development of road systems must, therefore, take into account the location of various centers of activities, such as industrial parks, shopping areas, and other locations where more intensive activity may be expected.

Traffic access and visibility are important locational factors for most types of non-residential development. Investors generally seek locations which provide convenient access between employment centers, residential, retail and service areas. Retail, offices and industrial development typically desire locations with visibility to high volumes of traffic, such as along U.S. 41.

By the standards of many communities, the traffic problems in Baraga Township are mild, and generally seasonal. However, while in larger communities, traffic congestion is an accepted experience, this is not the case in the Township; the relative sense of congestion is of great concern. This is particularly true when it is realized that many of the residents and visitors value the sense of open space and the rural atmosphere present in the county. Traffic congestion detracts from this feeling.

#### *Zoning/Land Use Planning*

Policies regarding land use are generally expressed through the Land Use Plan. As growth occurs the Plan must be reviewed to make sure that the new growth conforms to what was planned. As events unfold the Plan may have to be changed to take unexpected events into account.

Local control of the use of land (with some exceptions, such as state and federal land uses) is an accepted legal principle. Land use is controlled through the separation of land into various use areas, called zoning districts. The rules governing these districts are contained in a zoning ordinance which contain provisions controlling the type and intensity of development allowed.

Baraga Township is beginning to wrestle with complex zoning issues brought on by new development proposals. The need to provide flexibility for large projects, coupled with the community's desire to maintain some degree of control, has created the need for innovative land use planning and zoning solutions.

*Environmental Features*

Environmental features will influence the development potential in many undeveloped areas, especially where development is strictly regulated, such as within flood plains and designated wetlands. In other areas, the intensity and cost of development may be influenced by water bodies, natural drainage patterns, need for on-site storm water detention, steep slopes, poor soils, vegetation and the desire to preserve natural features.

As consciousness is raised about the impact of growth on the environment, individual projects may be held accountable to even stricter protection regulations. Evidence of this trend is already prevalent within the Township.

Conservation of significant environmental resources will also influence future development. Where public or private ownership of land for conservation purposes exists that land will be controlled by the particular restrictions placed on the property. These restrictions will include development limitations, including use of land solely for public purposes, such as recreation and education, or may include a total prohibition on use to conserve wildlife habitats or unique resources.

*Cooperation*

Building a successful economic development effort can be a formidable task. There are a number of potential obstacles to overcome, most of which have been built into the system of government. These obstacles include (but may not be limited to):

- Revenue competition
- Governmental independence
- Lack of consensus

Revenue Competition

The tax structure of the State of Michigan, as with most states, has been developed around taxing jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction is tasked with the responsibility of providing certain services, ranging from road maintenance to building inspections. Taxes collected go toward the provision of these services. Since the tax burden is spread between all property owners, homeowners are rightfully expected to pay their fair share, along with the other non-residential entities within that jurisdiction.

As costs for the services provided continues to rise, the tax revenues which are meant to offset these services do not often rise at the same rate, which causes a shortfall, which, in turn, necessitates the raising of tax rates. Unlike schools, which often find support for tax increases, local governments seldom are able to convince tax payers of the need for additional revenue, except for specific favored services, such as police and fire protection, though even these do not always find favor with voters.

As a result of this dilemma individual communities often find themselves in competition with their neighbors for those uses which bring the greatest revenue. Most often the highest revenues gained for services provided are obtained from non-residential uses. To land these tax "plums" some communities have gone to extraordinary lengths, including providing land, extending utilities, granting tax concessions, and other advantages.

As the attractiveness of the area is advertised and promoted and financial support from the state and federal government dwindles, further competition between communities may develop unless there is general agreement on goals and directions.

#### Independence

Another potential obstacle to a coordinated economic development program is the independence of local governments, particularly with respect to land use regulation. Since each community in the area has its own regulatory and planning functions, each of which is influenced by the residents of the community, gaining agreement on and consistent application of an economic development program throughout the area would be difficult.

#### Lack of Consensus

The most common obstacle to implementing successful regional economic development is a lack of consensus within the area as to what should be accomplished, and how implementation should take place. There probably is one area for which a general consensus is present: protection of the area's natural resources.

This message is strongly featured in the attitudes of Township residents. The value placed on natural features within the area cannot be overestimated. Environmental factors of the area are often the most desirable qualities for residents, such as clean air and water, scenic views, and protection of wildlife. The image of the community and the rural lifestyle residents enjoy are considered very desirable qualities of the "Head of the Bay."

Communication between area communities is disorganized and lacks focus, tending to concentrate on problems and not taking adequate advantage of the opportunities available. Discussion of issues of common concern, combining available resources and efforts, and working toward positive economic development goals can help the area work toward the development of a consensus of opinion on many of the issues related to growth and development in the region.

**SETTING THE STAGE**

Few communities can claim success in overcoming all of the economic development obstacles placed in front of them. But the obstacles to creating a coordinated development program for the "Head of the Bay" are not insurmountable. Continued communication, concrete actions on issues of clear consensus, and general agreement on planning goals will all contribute to the development and implementation of a pattern of development which will meet the needs of all local communities.

Aggressive actions to coordinate development and jointly promote the area can set the stage for future economic growth which can be enjoyed by all area residents.

<b>CHAPTER 6 FUTURE LAND USE</b>
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**BACKGROUND**

Baraga Township is divided into four large land use segments, for the purposes of this Plan, each of which is described below. One of the complicating factors related to land use in the Township is the lack of land use and zoning jurisdiction in the Keweenaw Bay Indian Reservation and the Village of Baraga.

**Keweenaw Bay Indian Reservation**

The Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (KBIC) encompasses a 6 mile wide band stretching across the entire Township, beginning at the south edge of the Village of Baraga extending north. The Community is home to the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community. The KBIC is a strong economic force in the Township, operating a casino gambling operation, as well as a 40-unit motel/restaurant, bingo hall, and bowling alley.

The Reservation was established in 1854 by treaty with the United States, which gave 54,664 acres of land to the tribe, of which approximately 13,700 acres remains in tribal ownership. Much of the Township and all of the Village of Baraga, are included within the Reservation.

While the Future Land Use Plan addresses land within the confines of the KBIC, it is recognized that the Plan is advisory to the KBIC. The Township, through its Goals and Objectives, has emphasized its desire to work with other communities, including the KBIC, to coordinate land use in the area.

**Village of Baraga**

The Village of Baraga is located at the southwestern end of Keweenaw Bay. The 2000 population of the Village was 1,285, or about 36 percent of the Township's total population. The Village has its own governing body and Manager.

A wide variety of land uses are present in the Village and is the major business area for the Township. The business district is located, for the most part, along U.S. 41 and a Village street running parallel to U.S. 41. The district contains a wide assortment of businesses, ranging from retail sale of auto parts to a feed store.

The Village is also home to the main office of the Baraga Telephone Company, the Superior National Bank, a print shop, a medical prosthesis center, U.S. Post office and a general/hardware store.

## **EXISTING LAND USE**

### **North Sections**

The North Sections (so-called for the purposes of this Plan) of the Township begin at the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community and end at the north Township line. Two dominant natural features influence land use in this area. The Sturgeon River and its wide flood plain and marsh lands effectively limit the use of land for other than farming.

Much of this farmland is located within the River's flood plain, lying within the approximate center of the North Sections. Few residential homes, other than farmsteads, are present. A significant acreage is also included in the Copper Country State Forest.

The small, unincorporated community of Keweenaw Bay is also located in this area. A few small industrial shops are located along the "main road" in the community, located directly off U.S. 41, although the highway itself bypasses the heart of Keweenaw Bay.

A small amount of property along the Lake Superior shoreline on U.S. 41 in the Keweenaw Bay area remains available for development. This property is prized for its natural setting and beauty.

Residential development is present along much of the Lake Superior shoreline. These homes are located on small, platted lots, accessed by narrow paved and unpaved streets and drives. A number of the homes are located on multiple lots.

Some homes have available beaches, made possible by stamp sand dumping from earlier in the century. Others are located along sandstone outcroppings with no available beach. Elevations of homes along the shoreline above Lake Superior range from approximately 6 feet to over 60 feet. Erosion along the shoreline threatens parts of U.S. 41 and danger signs are posted along the cliff edge to warn of the sharp drop to the Lake.

### **West Central**

Farming dominates land use in the West Central area of the Township, much of which is included in the KBIC. Residential development consists primarily of individual farmsteads, with the exception of a series of homes along a three-mile stretch of Bellaire Road, north of M-38.

This area also contains the community of Pelkie, which has been, historically, a farming community. Pelkie is eight miles west of the Village of Baraga along M-38 and then north two miles on a county road known as the Pelkie Tapiola Road.

Pelkie is also the home of the Baraga County Fairgrounds, Pelkie Fire Department, and the Pelkie Agricultural School, a unique part of the Baraga Area school system, as well as a nationally recognized Historic School House, recently restored and open part time as a museum.

Small commercial developments are located at the corner of Bellaire Road and M-38. A few individual businesses are scattered in this portion of the Township.

### **East Central**

The East Central area is included in the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community. This area also contains the Village of Baraga and the properties owned by the KBIC. This area has the most diverse development, including the Village business district, industrial parks on the north edge of the Village and west on M-38 belonging to the KBIC, and several small commercial and industrial enterprises in scattered locations.

Industries include a branch of Pettibone, Inc. which manufactures the world famous "CARRYLIFT". An industrial park houses a cement mix plant, several small industrial manufacturing shops, the Terex, Inc. manufacturing facilities, and the Village offices and quarters for the Baraga Fire Department.

Other land use elements of note:

- The East Central area contains a significant amount of Lake Superior shoreline, with its scenic views and recreation areas.
- The Baraga Landing Field, a privately owned, grass-strip airport is located on M-38 at Moyer Road.
- The Sturgeon River passes through this portion of the Township, and has a considerable amount of associated flood plain and wetland.

**South Sections**

The majority of land in this area, south of the KBIC to the south Township line, is either part of the Copper Country State Forest or is owned by various forest industry interests. Exception to this are included along the Township's eastern border, which has land in private ownership, although considerable property is also owned by forest industry interests.

Much of this land is known as the Baraga Plains. A second growth planting of jack pine in the Plains has been important to the forest industry.

Other land use elements of note:

- The Baraga State Park, located south of the Village of Baraga, includes camping and beach/swimming facilities.
- The Prickett Dam Backwater has recreational area land, including a boat landing on the west side, and fishing. Much of the property around the Backwater is owned by U.P. Power Company.
- Big Lake is located near the southern Township line. Portions of the Lake contain seasonal camp development. Much of the shoreline is in a natural state, affected by wetlands and marsh, and not developable. A state forest campground is also located on Big Lake.

**FUTURE LAND USE****Future Land Use Classifications***Agricultural/Residential*

This category is also intended for agricultural lands, but allows residential development on lots with sufficient size to allow for on-site water and sewer facilities. The method of development for residential lots should require that a minimum lot width-to-depth of 1:4 be maintained. This will allow development of individual homes along the streets, yet preserve land to the rear for additional agricultural production.

**FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

*Residential/Recreational*

The Residential/Recreational classification applies to those properties located along Lake Superior shoreline, and around Big Lake and the Prickett Dam area, including seasonal homes, campgrounds, and permanent homes located along the waterfront. Other areas include the residential development north of the Village of Baraga, which also involves land in the KBIC.

*Residential/Single Family*

Lands located within this classification are reserved for single family residential uses, along with compatible non-residential uses, such as churches, schools, home occupations.

*Residential/Multiple Family*

This category is similar to the Residential/Single Family classification, except that it also includes multiple family development at densities of four units per acre or less.

No property is formally designated in this category; however, certain criteria should be met in order for property to be developed in this classification. Higher density development should have access to public utilities and at least one major roadway. Development of this type should be located nearer the Village of Baraga.

*Forest/Timber/Resource***Commercial Forest Reserve**

This classification includes Commercial Forest Reserve (CFR) lands, located primarily in the southern part of the Township. These are lands which are reserved for commercial forestry operations, including harvesting and reforestation. Laws governing the CFR require that public access be maintained for recreational purposes.

**Other Lands**

Other uses for lands not within the CFR will permit single family residential development on lots of 10 acres or more, with a 330 foot lot width. This classification also includes property on which forestry, mining and other extraction activities of natural resources takes place.

*Commercial*

This classification includes all types of commercial development, such as shopping, professional offices, and services. Only general locations for Commercial uses are shown. Specific locations will be determined by the Township on a case-by-case basis. If asked to consider land use changes for additional commercial uses, the Township will consider the following:

- Adjacent street traffic volumes. The Commercial areas have access to paved, county roadways. Commercial services should have safe and convenient access.
- Impact on adjacent land uses and whether the proposed location expands an existing commercial area, or creates a new one. To the extent possible, any new commercial areas should be adjacent those already in existence. They should also be separated from existing homes, with adequate landscape or other screening provided. If new commercial areas are suggested they should be carefully reviewed to make sure that they will not unduly affect the ability of adjacent land to be developed as planned.
- Size of lot. The lot should be large enough to handle all of uses that could occur, and allow for future expansion. The width of the lot, in particular, is important; it should be adequate to allow enough distance between curb cuts to prevent traffic problems. Where possible, two or more uses should share curb cuts.
- Safety of possible access points. Commercial uses attract more traffic than most other uses. Such safety factors as separation from other driveways, the relationship to driveways across the street, sight distance along the roadway, the amount of room for vehicles waiting to leave the site, and the ease of making left turns (in and out) should all be considered.

There are also a number of existing, small areas that are not shown as locations for future commercial land uses. It is not the intent of the Land Use Plan to eliminate these uses. Rather, it is recognized that many of these areas are well established, thriving businesses that should be allowed to continue to prosper. However, these areas should not be permitted to generate additional businesses. If additional commercial development is warranted, it should be placed in the locations designated on the Future Land Use map.

*Light Industrial*

This classification includes industrial development, primarily for light manufacturing, assembly, and fabrication. No locations have been set aside for this classification. Specific locations will be determined by the Township on a case-by-case basis.

Future requests for industrial land use will be evaluated on the following:

- Convenient access to transportation systems, especially highways.
- Adequate land, free from foundation or drainage problems, with sufficient reserve for future expansion.
- Adequate and reliable utilities--water, electric, gas, waste disposal, or ability to adequately address septic and water needs.
- Protection from encroachment of residential or other land uses.
- Located so as to minimize adverse effects of the industrial use on adjacent non-industrial uses.
- Potential impact on surrounding water tables (based on the volume of water needed).

As with the commercial uses, there are also a number of small, existing industrial uses that are not shown as locations for future Light Industrial. Again, it is not the intent of the Land Use Plan to eliminate these uses. These areas should also be permitted to prosper, but not be allowed to generate additional industrial uses. Those uses should be located in the appropriately zoned areas.

*Public/Semi-Public*

The Public/Semi-Public classification includes public lands (not otherwise included in another category), such as State, Township, and federal owned lands. State Forest lands and the Baraga State Park are examples of areas included in this category.

*Scenic Resource*

The Scenic Resource classification is intended to emphasize the vistas present throughout the Township. The views to Lake Superior and Keweenaw Bay, the Sturgeon River valley, and other locations deserve special consideration (see Chapter 1 for discussion regarding scenic resources).

The Scenic Resource classification is presented as an "overlay" land use district. The land use regulation method allows the underlying classification of land use to remain in place, but establishes additional considerations regarding scenic views and regulations applicable to the preservation of those views.

**PRESERVING FARMLAND AND RURAL CHARACTER****Farmland**

The future of farmland in Baraga Township is an important issue to many Township residents. Preserving farmland, however, involves many individuals and agencies, beginning with the property owner or farmer, and ending with the developer (or property owner) who wishes to make the farmland "productive" for the community. In between is the local, county, and state government with their programs and technical assistance to communities and property owners.

The most important link in a program to preserve agricultural resources is the property owner. The pressures on small, local farm enterprises come from many sources:

- Land speculation, which drives up land values and taxes;
- Urban sprawl, bringing new residents who want to live in a "rural" environment;
- Economic conditions, which manipulate market conditions for the crop being produced;
- Complaints about noise, dust, and odors from nearby non-farm residents, who, in many cases, moved to the area well after the farm operations were established;

Too, older farmers, reaching the age of retirement, may see their farmland as retirement income, and cease farming operations and seek development for their property.

Therefore, the key to farmland preservation is the cooperation of the property owner, either through participation in preservation programs, or through the commitment to continue to use the land for agricultural production. Accordingly, any farmland preservation program must provide the proper incentives and motivation for the property owner to continue to use the land for farming.

One of the most important considerations regarding agricultural preservation is the need for a change in attitude regarding farmland. In many communities, farm operations are viewed as an interim use until new residential, commercial, or industrial development can be constructed. In some cases, this may be appropriate, where public utilities, land prices, and growth pressures have made continued farming difficult; concentrating development where adequate services can be provided can help to preserve farmland elsewhere.

But, in Baraga Township it is important that agriculture be viewed as part of the local economy; not for what may be built on it in the future, but for what is produced by farming. Farming is as much an industry as manufacturing. Certainly, the tax benefits and employment base are not the same, but farming does provide jobs and a product for sale in the marketplace. Therefore, viewing agriculture as an industry can have a profound effect on the programs developed for its preservation and continuation.

The discussion regarding farmland preservation techniques will be divided by those policies which require a legal or formal instrument, and those which can be accomplished through land development techniques.

#### *Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act, P.A. 116 of 1974*

The Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act, P.A. 116 of 1974, offers tax reductions for landowners who agree not to develop agricultural land. This Act enables a landowner to enter into an agreement with the state that are designed to ensure that the land remains in farmland, or a particular open space related use or uses, for an agreed upon period; the minimum enrollment period is 10 years. In return for maintaining the land in a particular use, the land owner is entitled to certain income or property tax benefits.

In order to qualify as farmland, the Act requires that one of the following conditions be met:

- The farm must be 40 or more acres in size, in single ownership, devoted primarily to an agricultural use.
- The farm may be greater than 5, but less than 40 acres, in single ownership, if it meets certain minimum per acre gross annual income requirements.

- The farm may be considered a specialty farm, in single ownership, of any size.

Interested landowners file an application with the local governing body. The application is then required to be reviewed and commented on by the Regional Planning Commission and Soil Conservation Service.

Property may be released by the state, upon the request of the property owner, provided that the credits forwarded to the owner as a result of the agreement are reimbursed (through the payment of a lien), with interest, for the period beginning at the time of the approval of the application.

#### *Conservation Easements*

Conservation easements can be used to transfer certain rights and privileges concerning the use of land to a non-profit organization, governmental body, or other legal entity without transferring title to the land. In Michigan, Public Act No. 197 of 1980, the Conservation and Historic Preservation Easement Act, (M.C.L.A. 339.251 et. seq.) authorizes the creation of voluntary conservation easements.

A conservation easement under Act 197 can provide limitations on the use of, or prohibit certain acts on, a parcel of land or body of water. The interest can be in the form of a restriction, easement, covenant, or a condition contained in either a deed, will or other instrument. The easement should require that the land or body of water be retained or maintained in its natural, scenic, or open condition, or in a specific, non-intensive use such as agriculture, open space, or forest land.

The easement is enforceable against the property owner even if the party seeking enforcement was not a party to the original conveyance or contract. The easement is considered a conveyance of real property and must be recorded with the register of deeds in the county to be effective against a subsequent purchaser of the property who had no notice of the easement.

The granting of a conservation easement may have tax implications so persons considering granting a conservation easement should contact an attorney or accountant for an analysis of possible tax benefits, as well as their local government for information about zoning, etc.

#### *Master Plans*

One of the obvious starting points for the community to plan for agricultural uses is through the Master Plan. The Plan can be an effective means of support for community policies to preserve agricultural land. The first step to establishing this support is to clearly state the importance of

agriculture as an industry. This is accomplished by the establishment of a separate land use category dealing with agriculture.

It is also useful to examine the threat to the community posed by current land use practices, which may encourage land to be taken out of production, or allow unlimited use of farm land by non-farm uses. In Baraga Township, new residents are purchasing larger parcels of land for a single family home; sometimes that land was once part of an active farm. The temptation to take advantage of the higher prices and split off parcels of land for other uses is often too great to resist.

The Land Use element of the Plan must take these factors into consideration and use the appropriate classifications for agriculture, not as a holding zone for other uses, but as a viable use itself. Other classifications will have to take into account the trend toward large parcel development. Since Baraga Township continues to be attractive to those who look toward rural areas for an improved quality of life, a balance will have to be established between those families and the desire to preserve farmland, where possible.

### *Zoning*

#### Planned Unit Developments

The Township Rural Zoning Act authorizes the consideration of planned unit developments in zoning ordinances. The Zoning Act describes PUDs as permitting,

"flexibility in the regulation of land development; encouraging innovation in land use and variety in design, layout, and type of structures constructed; achieve economy and efficiency in the use of land, natural resources, energy and the provision of public services and utilities; encourage useful open space; and provide better housing, employment, and shopping opportunities particularly suited to the needs of the residents of this state."

PUD provisions take a number of forms. The zoning ordinance may elect to have the PUD as a separate mapped zone district, or it can be applied to existing zone districts through special land use approvals or separate development regulations, known as "floating" or "overlay" districts. An overlay district does not appear on the zoning map and can be applied in any existing zone.

The flexibility of PUD provisions can also take several forms. The zoning ordinance may be very specific, to the level of detail where specific uses are allowed with appropriate development restrictions. On the other hand, the ordinance may allow a considerable degree of flexibility by

allowing virtually all uses, the development of which are tied to an approved plan submitted to the local government.

### Cluster Development

PUDs may be useful, to some degree, in preserving farmland, by permitting a great degree of flexibility in the layout of the proposed uses. One example of the use of PUDs in preserving land from development is the use of clustering. Cluster development provides for a concentration of density in a limited area of a site. Generally, development will be concentrated in the area closest to the road by which the proposed uses will derive access.

Allowing cluster development through the use of PUDs provides the opportunity for the community to ensure that the land kept free from development will be permanently restricted from future construction. Apart from being a requirement of the PUD, the open space can be deeded in equal parts to the property owners of the cluster with restrictions on individual sales, requiring approval of a majority (or greater number) of the remaining owners.

Except for large parcels, the use of cluster provisions will have a fairly limited impact on the preservation of farmland, since a portion of the property will be developed for other uses. On large parcels, the remaining acreage may be useful for farming, provided that the ownership or control of the area to be used is established.

### Agricultural Zoning

Zoning, by itself, cannot guarantee the continuation of farming activities. The desires of the property owner will determine whether or not farming is a viable use for the property. However, the community may take some actions designed to prevent the breaking up of larger parcels for non-agricultural uses.

Large-lot zoning, usually of 80 acres or larger, can ensure that small parcels are not created along the roadway, or in the interior of the parcel, which will limit or prohibit efficient use of the land for farming. However, large-lot zoning, without controls on non-farming uses, is generally ineffective; land may still be purchased, taken out of production, and used for a single-family residence. There still is a demand for rural living by non-farm families which should be recognized through zoning.

Rather than forcing the purchase of the entire parcel, which may take it out of production, zoning regulations could allow for one-time splits of parcels for single-family residential use. The size of the parcel may vary, but should account for no more than 10% of the entire parcel's size. A

similar technique would create a density cap for a defined area, often by section of land, which would call for no more than 1 to 4 dwelling units per section. This is most effective in areas which still have relatively few parcels per section.

Finally, an agricultural zoning district may be established which requires non-farming uses to obtain special land use approval. This allows zoning to determine where non-farm uses should be concentrated (or spread out, according to the desires of the community).

Again, there should be clear guidelines available for the body approving the special land use which would allow some consistency in their decision-making. One of the guidelines should be a determination of the value of the parcel for the non-farming use which is proposed for the special land use. The value could be established through a history of farm production, whether the parcel is considered an important farmland, and other criteria.

### *Conclusion*

Ultimately, the decision to preserve agricultural land rests with the land owner. Baraga Township can have considerable influence on the preservation of farmland, through the use of the land use techniques described above, but in the final analysis, the property owner will have the most to say about whether or not farming will be continued.

### **Rural Character**

A minimum lot size will not, in and of itself, preserve the rural character of Baraga Township. In fact, no lot size requirement can make that guarantee. But this category will play a pivotal role in preserving that character. Intended for homes with large lots, generous setbacks, and careful placement on the lot to preserve natural features, these lands will help maintain the feeling of openness and tranquillity prized by Township residents.

The goal of maintaining a rural atmosphere and preserving open space in areas of residential development can be attained through standards that are not over burdensome, do not unreasonably restrict the use of land, and do not require excessive enforcement or administration. Their objective is to preserve as much of the building site as possible in a natural state. Reducing the man-made elements of the landscape is the secret to maintaining a feeling of openness and nature. The following are strategies designed to achieve this important community objective.

*Front Setbacks*

Ordinances may establish a "no clearance zone" in the front setback. This zone may be of any width, but should be at least 50% of the depth of the required front setback. Within this area urban vegetation (manicured lawns, flower gardens, etc.) should be minimized or prohibited in locations visible from the roadway. Instead native plantings and vegetation should be maintained in these areas. A companion standard would increase the required setback for homes. Rather than viewing a strip of homes along the street, increasing setbacks would maintain a view of natural areas near the street.

*Lot Width*

Another effective standard, particularly in areas of undivided acreage is to increase zoning requirements for road frontage, or lot width. This would further separate the distance between homes and allow for a more "open" feeling. This standard may create some problems for owners of larger properties in rural areas who wish to sell off portions of their frontage for residential development. Wider frontage requirements reduce the number of lots which can be produced.

*Tree Preservation*

Tree preservation ordinances are sometimes difficult to enforce, if drawn too strictly. But there are reasonable standards that would not necessarily regulate individual trees, but rather look at the building site as a whole and attempt to restrict buildings to those areas which are most suited for development, and which preserve the most natural features, particularly with respect to maintaining views. In fact, tree regulations should be part of an overall program to preserve natural features on the site.

This standard would nearly require a site plan review for individual residential lots; something which is generally avoided. However, if the regulations are specific enough, the review can be more of an administrative one, conducted by the building official or zoning administrator. It would require individual lot owners to provide additional information as to the tree resources available on their property.

*Lots on Arterial Streets*

Lots which face major section line streets often have no other access but through those streets, particularly if the interior lands are not part of the development. As such, a large number of individual driveways along major streets, often carrying high speed traffic, can create a hazard.

Two solutions are possible. If the interior of the property is also being developed, as many lots as possible should be required to gain access from the interior streets. Rather than stripping lots along the roadway, the interior street should be placed one lot depth into the property and the homes should back up to the major street. Additional landscaping or fencing may be provided for the back yard areas of these homes. Ideally, the "no clearance zone" established for front yards could apply to this situation as well.

The second solution can be used if interior development is not taking place. Rather than each lot having its own driveway, two or more lots can share a common driveway for the first several feet of the lot, then split into individual driveways to reach the building sites of each lot.

If neither of these solutions prove useful, each lot fronting on a major street should be required to construct a turn-around area to allow vehicles to enter the street facing forward.

### *Clustering*

Clustering provides for a concentration of density 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 Land Use Plan. 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. Cluster provisions can allow for the preservation of many site features, such as wooded areas, steep slopes, wetlands, and other natural amenities.

Allowing cluster development through the use of planned unit developments will provide the opportunity for Baraga Township to ensure that the land kept free from development will be kept that way. Apart from being a requirement of the PUD, the open space can be deeded in equal parts to the property owners 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.

**CHAPTER 7  
IMPLEMENTATION**

This Plan will be a successful guide for the future development of Baraga Township only if it is continually used to support the decision-making process of citizens, developers, and the Township. The Township Planning Commission has the responsibility to make decisions that are consistent with the Land Use Plan and to keep the Plan current. The Township Board has the power to implement the Plan through the passage of ordinances and the expenditure of public funds.

**IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENTS**

There are five elements necessary to implement the Plan:

- Land Use Controls
- Financial Aids
- General Government Programs
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Citizen Participation

In addition, a series of specific needs were identified through the planning process. These specific needs relate directly to various elements of the Plan including:

- Environmental
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Public Facilities/Services

**Land Use Controls**

The Plan should be implemented through the use of zoning and subdivision regulation. The adoption and continual updating of the Zoning Ordinance is essential. Without effective zoning there is little protection for Township property owners from new development or little guidance to developers desiring to build within the Township.

**Financial Aids**

The Township, through its participation in federal grant programs and its expenditure of funds for public improvements, can encourage certain types of development in the desired areas of the community. For example, federal grant programs provide for development of park land in the Township. The Township can implement the Plan through its local programs, such as a Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

**General Government Programs**

One local government program is the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). The CIP is a capital budget extending for usually 6 years ahead. Based upon the Plan, the Township Board can foresee the need for improvements in certain areas or can encourage development through the expenditure of public funds. Another important aspect of local government programs is the ongoing planning program. The Plan must be constantly used in making decisions, it must be re-evaluated often, and kept up-to-date from the most current information.

**Intergovernmental Cooperation**

The Township must recognize its role in the region and the County and with surrounding units of government, and continue to cooperate with them in conducting programs affecting Township residents. To this end, these governments and agencies should be provided with copies of the Plan and consulted during its implementation.

**Citizen Participation**

Finally, the Plan will only be successful if Township residents support its goals and policies. Involving residents in community decision-making requires a commitment by the Zoning Board and the Township Board to disseminate information on a regular basis through the news media and various public forums, so that the public will have the necessary background information to communicate their desires about how they want their community to develop.

**IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS**

The Baraga Township Land Use Plan has established the direction for the future of the community. In order to begin the task of implementation, specific actions, as distinguished from broad planning objectives, must be undertaken. These actions are noted below. Implementation of these tasks will require such actions as changes to the Zoning Ordinance, the adoption of additional regulations, the completion of other planning documents, and other similar actions. Some actions may occur over a long period of time, others may be implemented within a relatively short period of time. Still others will depend on the cooperation of other units of government.

**Environmental**

- Sensitive environmental areas of the Township should remain undeveloped - such as wetlands and marshes. The Township will investigate incentives for residents and property owners to maintain such land in its natural state.
- Continuous efforts will be made to educate developers and citizens in the costly effects of ground water contamination and the preventative techniques.
- Township practices will restrict identified developments to areas of services and provide adequate zoned acreage near existing or potential utility extensions to accommodate the growth of these uses.
- In areas where the natural features are an integral part of the community's character but, where minor alteration should have minimal impact on the quality of life, integration methods will be encouraged to ensure that natural features be allowed to remain on the site as undisturbed as possible. Woodlands, open spaces, vistas, and unique agricultural lands will be evaluated to ensure that the integrity of natural systems is maintained.

**Land Use**

- Areas in which intensive land use activities exist or are developing will be encouraged to develop further. These areas are specifically identified and an appropriate zoning pattern will be established that allows development to gradually diminish in scale and intensity as the distance from the centers increase.
- Zoning patterns will establish smooth transitions from intensively to less intensively developed areas through appropriate transitional land uses or physical buffering with open space or vegetation.
- Portions of the Township have limitations to development due to the lack of public utilities, adequate roadways, poor soils, or steep topography. Zoning in the these areas of the Township will be generally limited to very low-density residential uses.

**Transportation**

- The Township shall implement access management techniques as a means to protect the functional capabilities of existing streets and to avoid traffic congestion.

- The Township will undertake efforts to educate residents, developers, and other units of government and agencies as to the value of access management and inform them of implementation techniques.
- The Township will work with the Baraga County Road Commission to develop a Street Improvement Plan. The Plan will coordinate the projected growth in the Township with the existing street system and planned expansion routes.
- The Township will adopt regulations that promote service roads and internal traffic circulation in areas of new development or redevelopment.
- The Township will investigate the need for a Non-Motorized Trail Plan to increase the convenience and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists along roadways.
- The Township will continue its working and cooperative relationship with the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Baraga County Road Commission, and other units of government and agencies to ensure that road improvements and access management efforts are coordinated.

**Public Facilities/Services**

- Continuous efforts will be made to educate the citizens in fire and crime prevention and fire safety techniques. Schools, churches, and public organizations will be enlisted in this educational effort.
- Township procedures will include the coordination of project reviews to ensure that adequate law enforcement and fire protection is available to service new development.
- The Township will establish a close liaison with the schools systems to inform them of new development proposals and participate in planning for future school locations.
- A Capital Improvement Program will be developed and used to assist the Township in planning its financial future.
- A community building will be made available for use by Township residents for youth groups, senior citizens, summer recreation programs, receptions, or other activities.

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