

Adopted by Mantrap Township
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MANTRAP TOWNSHIP LAND USE PLAN

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Mantrap Township is a rural community that recognizes its greatest assets are its natural areas, rural lifestyle, and recreational opportunities. These assets are to be preserved and protected.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mantrap Township is located in the mid-central southerly section of Hubbard County. The boundaries extend from an east west line north of the city of Nevis, continuing north into the Paul Bunyan State Forest. The township is comprised of thirty-six sections and is six square miles, or about 23,392 acres. There are about 5,742 acres in residential and ag/residential, 3,790 in farmland, 3,869 in water, 2,150 in timber, 5,203 in tax-exempt and 2,306 acres in vacant land. The township has a connective network of about twenty-seven miles of gravel roads, providing collector services for the county roads, and the small section of State Highway 34 that cuts through the far southeastern corner of the township. The southeastern edge of the township is less than five minutes from the city of Nevis, and the southwestern edge is about ten minutes from the city of Park Rapids.

Recreation and resorting activities have been prominent here since before the 1950's. Many of the townships lakes have been subdivided and developed into private residences and small to medium-sized family-style resorts.

Forestry and the sandy-based soils covered with second, and third growth pine forests with mixed stands of oak, poplar, and birch with many scattered marsh and swamp areas are very important to the townships identity. These areas of forest and wetlands along with rich timber resources provide an economic base as well as hunting, fishing, and recreational opportunities.

Active farming and ranching operations reflect the rural lifestyle, which has become increasing more valuable and vulnerable to the perils of unmanaged growth. These activities add greatly to the diversity and richness of lifestyles in the township.

Mantrap Township, the fastest growing township in Hubbard County, consists of farmers, ranchers, resort operators, summer home dwellers, and year-round residents that derive some livelihood from the surrounding communities. The largest concentration of population exists in the southern half of the township, around Spider Lake, East Crooked Lake, West Crooked Lake, and parts of Mantrap Lake, on smaller lakes as well as general distribution over the non-lakes area.

The children of the township families attend the Nevis School District and wage earners in the township have access to the cities of Nevis, Park Rapids, Akeley and Walker for job opportunities. Health care and social services are also located in these city-centers. Fire protection is provided by Nevis Fire District and the maintenance and plowing of township roads is privately contracted by the town board.

The township has no large commercial enterprises, however, several small and medium-sized commercial operations have found success here. Additionally, there are no industrial plants within the township, but there is a gravel and sand pit. Land is our most valuable resource, however land is not a renewable resource.

II. OVERALL VALUE, GOALS, and INVENTORY STATEMENTS

OVERALL VALUES

The following values are important to the residents of Mantrap Township. The identification of these values has aided the Mantrap Township Planning Commission in determining what goals will provide protection for and implementation of these values. In March 2001, a total of 566 surveys were sent out to the property owners of the township, and a total of 292 (56.6%) were returned. See Appendix A for more on the results of the survey.

WHAT WE VALUE:

BALANCE: We value a balance between future development needs and conservation needs. We believe that these two land-use needs can live in harmony thus protecting a non-renewable resource.

CONSERVATION: We value our natural resources, wild life habitat, wetlands and surface water resources. We believe that over-development and unmanaged growth will have deleterious effects on the township if we do not support the conservation of these valuable and non-renewable resources in a managed and thoughtful manner.

RURAL LIFE STYLE: We value the areas in our township that are in agricultural production because these operations symbolize a rural lifestyle that has evolved over the last 50 to 80 years. We believe that rural agricultural areas must be supported and encouraged as an important resource.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES: We value our past tradition of recreation as an economic and leisure-oriented resource. We believe that recreation that does not destroy the environment in which it occurs, allows the land to be used again and again, supporting a truly renewable resource.

COOPERATION: We value a cooperative effort between the county and the township for sharing the planning and administrative responsibilities for the township resources. We believe that we must continue to identify and manage the resource protection needs that are unique to our township and keep the lines of communication open with the county.

The statements of our values reflect our views on becoming proactive. We either do this for ourselves or it may be done for us at some distant higher level of government farther removed from us and the township needs. But even worse is the fact that no higher level of government will do this for us, thereby leaving us with no control on growth, no options better choices, and at the mercy of an over zealous developer or a greedy neighbor.

We can be in control of Mantrap Township through our proactive land use planning and land use ordinances. About three-fourths of all Minnesota counties and hundreds of townships have done this work and are protecting what they value.

OVERALL GOALS:

The following goals are an assessment of our values, derived from a combination of "SMART" planning precepts and hard work by the Planning Commission. The overall goals reflect simplicity of direction based on specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-based objectives, which can be found in the land use ordinance.

WHAT ARE OUR GOALS:

- Create and maintain a township community that protects its natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable, and embraces growth that is orderly, efficient, and conservation friendly.
- Maintain and protect our strong rural character and lifestyle, while encouraging a diversity of life styles.

OVERALL INVENTORY:

The following general list gives an overview, in summary form, of the township's resources.

WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE:

- Many clear lakes where fishing abounds.
- Paul Bunyan State Forest.
- Potlatch and other private timberlands.
- Residential areas, including many subdivisions.
- Many small and medium-sized resorts operating for many years.
- Diverse small and medium-sized farm operations.
- Bison Ranch.
- Shooting Preserve.
- Twenty-seven miles of township roads.
- Paved collector, and arterial county and state roads.
- Close proximity to Nevis, Minnesota.
- Ready access to health care, shopping, and an all-weather airport.
- Extensive underground utilities infrastructure.

III. VISION STATEMENT

Mantrap Township is a rural community that recognizes its greatest assets are its natural areas, rural lifestyle, and recreational opportunities. These assets are to be preserved and protected.

IV. MISSION STATEMENT

Mantrap Township's vision for the future growth of the township recognizes that conservation-friendly development must be encouraged, while protecting the very desirable rural character. The manner of growth should therefore be environmentally sound and efficiently use the existing infrastructure. These statements envision a township that retains its largely rural, residential character while allowing for change, as it continues to play a key role in the continued growth and development of the southern section of Hubbard County.

The township will strive to keep the northern half of the township an attractive useful environment for recreation and low-density development. We will accommodate more residential development in the southern half of the township, which will benefit from the well-maintained roads and access to services available in the city centers identified by HRDC as in the Hubbard County high-amenity growth area.

V. POLICY STATEMENTS

Fulfillment of this vision is only possible through the pursuit of the following policies:

- Protection from over development of areas that are environmentally sensitive, such as wildlife habitats, and ground water recharge.
- Designation of selected areas for commercial development that will protect, not distract from, other uses, have acceptable soil conditions and are adjacent to collector or arterial roadways.
- Protection of public lands and their uses, without encroachment from incompatible extensive uses.
- Designation of specific areas for mixed density residential development, including multi-family development, with acceptable soil conditions, good road access, and convenient location to services.
- Preservation of large areas with adequate road access and suitable soils conditions for agricultural uses, single family residences, and other compatible uses.
- Designation of an area that allows for the continuation of county enforcement of shore land regulations, which are in compliance with all state legislation as amended from time to time.

VI. INVENTORY STATEMENTS

POPULATION GROWTH IN TOWNSHIP

Population trends for Mantrap Township through the most recent United States Census for year-end 2000 are shown in Figure 1. According to the figures the population grew from 292 in the 1990 Census, to 454 in the 2000 Census. The population growth of 65% made Mantrap Township the fastest growing township in Hubbard County. The Township and the County both expect this growth to continue at a strong pace over the next twenty years.

FIGURE 1

POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD TRENDS

CENSUS	POPULATION	HOUSEHOLDS
Census 1970	193	67
Census 1980	213	79
Census 1990	275	98
Census 2000	454	196
Projected Census 2020	1,022	432

Over the next twenty years the Township will change drastically, in look and in resources. In order to project possible census figures we have taken the Census 2000 figures and applied an increase of 50% over the next two decades. From this assumption of growth we can clearly see that the population and households figures have more than doubled. Every resident of the township will feel this increased demand for space and resources.

See Appendix B for Minnesota State Demographer's Report Summary.

EXISTING LAND USE

Generally, Mantrap Township has been considered a rural agricultural community with pockets of recreational resort development as shown in Figure 2a. The township enjoys a number of quality small lakes with small resorts. The residential areas are predominately located around the larger of our lakes in an orderly subdivision-type manner. The agricultural and residential nature is apparent along the major transportation corridors – County Highways 2, 40, 7 and a small section of State Highway 34. Commercial development, and recreational development is more widely scattered throughout the township.

The township contains significant areas of forested land, both in public and private ownership representing approximately forty (40) percent of the total acreage. The largest area of publicly-owned, tax-exempt forestland is the Paul Bunyan State Forest, as shown in Figure 2b.

FIGURE 2a Existing Land Use Inventory Map

FIGURE 2b Existing Land Use/Acreage Graph

SOILS

A recent soils survey conducted by the USDA/NRCS for Hubbard County (1998-1999) shows that the largest areas of highly permeable or excessively drained soils stretch mostly north into the Paul Bunyan State Forest. The area in the south of the township shows a mix of outwash plain with sandy-based soils type, and end-moraine soils type with rocks mixed in. There are smaller areas of similar soils through out the township; however, the majority of the remaining land area is covered by moderately drained soils with the exception of the modest acres in wetlands.

The areas of wetlands or poorly drained soils are important to the township for the continuation of wild life habitat as well as for groundwater recharge.

The excessively drained soils pose problems of their own. High concentrations of individual septic systems on these types of soils can contribute to groundwater contamination.

Based on the recent soils survey, the extent of potential gravel-bearing soils within the township is significant. Of the 22,968 acres within the township, 32.2% or 7,396 acres contain a high potential for gravel. Figure 3 shows the location of the potential gravel.

FIGURE 3 Gravel-based Soils Map

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

The functional classifications of the roads in Mantrap Township are identified in Appendix C. The roads are generally classified based on the function of the road, whether a primary collector road, collector road, secondary road, or minimum maintenance road.

The primary county collector roads in the township are Hubbard County Highways 2, 40 and 7. The only arterial road is a small section of Minnesota State Highway 34 in the far southeastern tip of the township.

The remaining roads are considered local roads whose principle function is to provide access to adjacent land and property. The town board has a strong road program with three to five year plans that continually upgrade and maintain the predominately gravel roads. It is recognized by the town board that some of the local roads do function as major collector roads for moderate to heavy traffic traveling to commercial and city centers. The township maintains and plows about 27 miles of gravel roads, one mile of paved roadway, under private contract with local contractor.

All of the townships roads have been updated with addresses and street names, as required under the Emergency 911 regulations, effective with 2001. There are no public water or sanitation systems operating within the township or contemplated by the township.

FUTURE LAND USE

With much study and consideration, the town board has determined that the following areas are to be preserved. Whatever policies and goals will be needed to bring about the future land use will be established. As shown in Figure 4, the future land use map shows the town board's vision for Mantrap Township.

Residential Areas:

--Specific residential areas established to encourage the preservation of residential neighborhoods characterized primarily by one and two family single dwellings and to preserve undeveloped lands for similar types of residential development.

Rural Residential Areas:

--Designated rural residential areas established to provide a buffer area for the preservation of agricultural activities, and to provide a low-density residential area where neighborhoods are characterized by single-family dwellings.

Agricultural Areas:

--Selected areas established to protect the townships primary farming and agricultural uses. No transition to more urban or high-density use is projected. While contingent on private, and public plans, this area will continue to encourage active farm use.

Commercial Areas:

--Specific areas established to encourage the growth of viable small to medium size, non-polluting types of businesses such as retail sales, service centers, office space, and entertainment facilities.

Shore land Areas:

--Designated areas established that continue to share the townships commitment to allow Hubbard County enforcement of its shore land regulations, which are in compliance with all Minnesota state legislation, as amended from time to time. The actual area is to be defined by reference to the county regulations.

FIGURE 4 Future Land Use Map

VII. FUTURE REVIEW AND REVISION

Vision statements, policies, and goals should be general in nature if they are to be valid and useful over an extended period of time. While our policies and goals attempt to be specific, they can only serve as a guide in the future development of other specific programs and policies that will be needed to adapt to changing conditions in the county as well as the township.

New technology, legislation, and economic patterns will emerge that will require revisions of our plan. It is the hope of this town board that the future land uses will continue to value the rural lifestyle and its natural resources. The demand for resources is increasing at a very dramatic, high rate. Because of this continued demand, the resources of the township will come under even greater pressure, therefore a need to provide for future revisions as well as future strengthening of our policies may be required.

Further, with rapid growth the town board must have a commitment to review its own plan on a 5 to 10 year basis. This review period and the revisions have been provided for in the Land Use Plan and its accompanying Ordinance and are reflected in the township's stewardship and protection of these valuable resources, both renewable and non-renewable.