

Village of Ontonagon  
MICHIGAN

A scenic view of a large body of water, likely a bay or harbor, with a bridge in the foreground. In the background, there are several buildings, including a large green industrial-style building. The sky is clear and blue. The text "MASTER PLAN" is overlaid in large, bold, green letters across the middle of the image.

# MASTER PLAN

**2023**



This plan was made possible in part by funding from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Redevelopment Ready Communities program. As of this plan's adoption, the village was actively pursuing an RRC Essentials designation

**We would like to thank the many citizens of the Village of Ontonagon who participated in the development of this Master Plan!**

**Cover Photo and many other images  
in the master plan are courtesy of  
Mike Rebholz.**

# Acknowledgments

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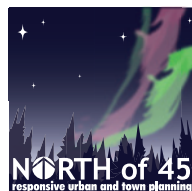
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# Table Of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	
Authority and Purpose .....	6
Regional Context .....	6
Historical Background .....	6-8
The Planning Process.....	9
Community Demographics Summary .....	10
<b>2. Vision &amp; Guiding Principles</b>	
Vision Statement .....	12
Guiding Principles.....	12
<b>3. Housing</b>	
Housing.....	14
Housing Characteristics Summary .....	15
Goals and Strategies .....	16
<b>4. Natural Features/Parks &amp; Recreation Facilities/ Public Lands</b>	
Village Owned Recreational Facilities .....	18-23
Regional Facilities .....	23-25
Administrative Structure .....	TBD
Goals and Strategies .....	25
<b>5. Village Infrastructure, Public Facilities, Safety &amp; Emergency Services</b>	
Village Facilities & Services .....	26-27
Educational Facilities .....	28
Safety & Emergency Facilities .....	30
Goals and Strategies .....	31
<b>6. Transportation, Including Vehicular, Pedestrian &amp; Bicycle</b>	
State Trunkline Highways .....	32-33
Transportation Planning .....	33
Snowmobile/ATV Trails.....	33
Non Motorized Transportation Facilities .....	33-35
Air Service .....	35
Rail Service .....	36
Public Transportation .....	36
Goals and Strategies .....	36

**7. Future Land Use & Zoning Plan**

Existing Land Use ..... 38

Future Land Use ..... 38-42

Zoning Plan ..... 42

Goals and Strategies ..... 44-45

**8. Downtown Development/Economic Development/Redevelopment Priorities**

Downtown Development ..... 46-48

Economic Development ..... 48-49

Tourism ..... 49-50

The Housing Connection ..... 50

Redevelopment Tools ..... 50-52

Goals and Strategies ..... 52-53

**9. Environmental Sustainability**

Sustainability Guide ..... 54-56

Low Impact Development ..... 56-57

Sustainable Design Rating Systems ..... 57-59

Goals and Strategies ..... 59-61

**10. Winter City Strategies**

Winter City Best Practices ..... 62-66

Goals and Strategies ..... 67-69

**11. Implementation**

Strategies ..... 70-81

**Appendix**

1. Open House Public Comments ..... 82

2. Planning Commission Resolution of Adoption ..... 83

3. Village Council Resolution of Adoption ..... 84-85

# 1. Introduction

## Authority and Purpose

The purpose of the Master Plan is to guide the future of the Village of Ontonagon and help the community develop sustainably through a realistic and well thought out approach. The Master Plan has been prepared under authority of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended. The Master Plan is an important tool for a number of reasons:

- The Master Plan provides the legal basis for zoning, subdivision of land, and other local land use regulations.
- The gathering and analysis of comprehensive community information and data enables community leaders to holistically understand unique challenges and opportunities.
- By involving citizens and stakeholders in the

planning process, the Plan serves as the supported community vision, including goals and strategies for achieving the shared vision.

- The Master Plan can serve as a catalyst for desired changes by engaging community action.
- The Plan can help to generate regional collaboration with neighboring communities.

The purpose of the master plan is to guide future development towards the economic and efficient use of land; promote the public health, safety, and general welfare; help guide the preservation of historic resources and character of the Village of Ontonagon; provide for adequate transportation systems, public utilities, and recreation; and ensure efficient expenditure of public funds.

The Plan adoption is subject to a public hearing and approval by resolution of the Village of Ontonagon

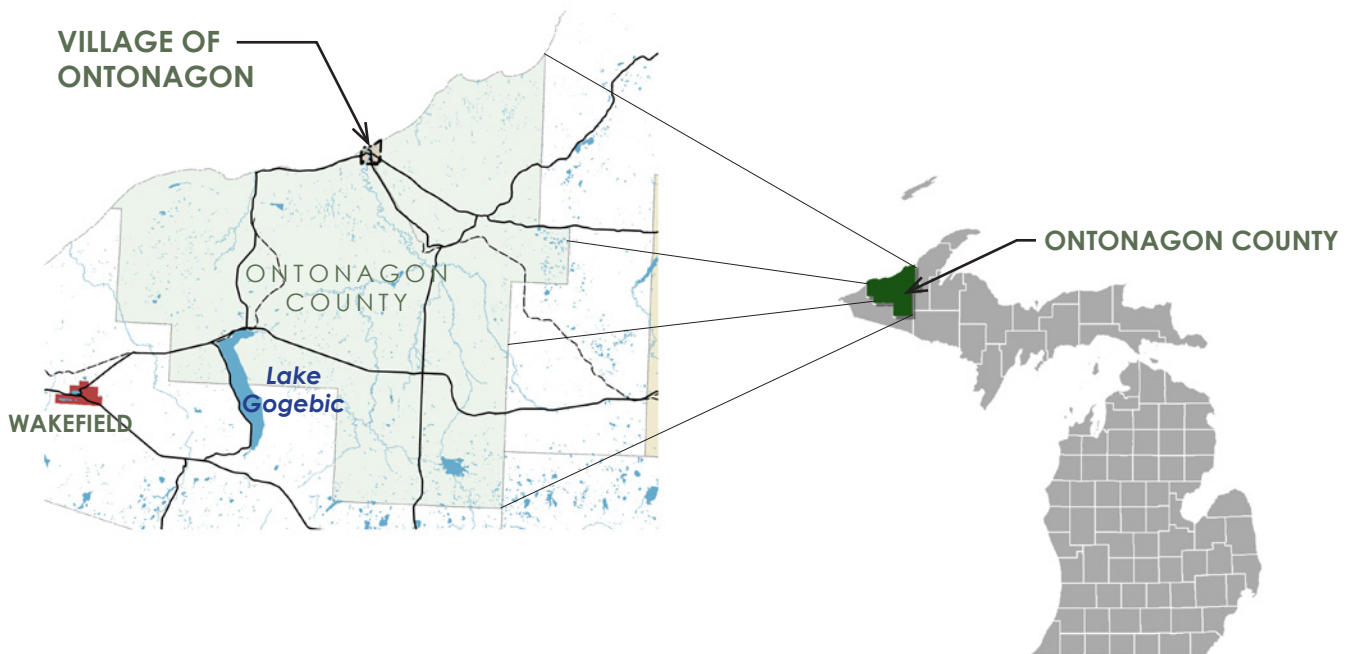


FIGURE 1.0 VILLAGE OF ONTONAGON VICINITY MAP

Planning Commission and Village Council. (Village Council approval is optional but highly recommended.)

Implementation of the plan is an on-going process, requiring the monitoring of changes in the community as well as the progress towards achieving the plan's goals. The Master Plan should be reviewed every five years and a determination made whether it needs updating or a new plan adopted.

## Regional Context

The Village of Ontonagon is located in Michigan's western Upper Peninsula and is the county seat for Ontonagon County. Ontonagon is located approximately sixty (60) miles southwest of Houghton

and approximately one hundred fourteen (114) miles west of Marquette.

Located near the Village's downtown is an intersection of three major trunk-line roads in the Upper Peninsula: M-64, U.S. 45, and M-38.

The Village of Ontonagon is situated on Lake Superior at the mouth of the Ontonagon River, which provides opportunities for recreation, boating and shipping.



Photo Source: <http://genealogytrails.com/mich/ontonagon/cityontonagon.html>, provided by Paul Petosky.

**FIGURE 1.1 – ONTONAGON, 1907**

# 1. Introduction

## Historical Background

The Village of Ontonagon has a rich and colorful history based upon iron mining and logging. Ontonagon was founded in 1843 and incorporated as a village in 1885. The Village is the county seat and the only incorporated municipality within Ontonagon County. The name Ontonagon originates from the Chippewa Indian word Nan ton-a-gen, meaning bowl, because of the shape of the Ontonagon River's mouth.

The discovery of copper in the early 1800's brought exploration to the area. James K. Paul is credited for the removal of the famous "Copper Boulder", discovered in the Ontonagon River. He was paid for his discovery and efforts. The "Copper Boulder",

which weighed over 3,700 pounds, now lies in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. Paul, with his reward for the "Copper Boulder", opened a saloon and settled in the Village, as a result founding the Village of Ontonagon. Paul built a log cabin in the Village and began to plat the area. In 1854, he recorded his plat of the area but this plat was never accepted.

Copper mining was the main economic resource until the late 1800's when the mining operations started slowing down. The last copper mine in Ontonagon County ceased operations with the closing of the Copper Range Company in nearby White Pine in 1997. This event created a substantial amount of job loss in the area, from which the community has not fully recovered.

FIGURE 1.2 - ONTONAGON, 1940'S



Photo Source: <http://genealogytrails.com/mich/ontonagon/cityontonagon.html>, provided by Paul Petosky.



The abundant pine forest within the area attracted large scale logging operations in the 1880's. Ontonagon Lumber Co. and Sisson-Lilly opened the first large sawmills in the area. In 1884 Diamond Match Co. had assumed full control of the White Pine logging industry until a disastrous fire in 1896 when the Village and the Diamond Match mills were destroyed. The pulp and paper industry which began in 1919 ended with the closure of the Smurfit Stone Corporation Mill in 2009. The corrugated paper mill structure was subsequently demolished.

Historically, the Ontonagon River has played an important role in the development of the community, providing a port for the transporting of lumber, copper and coal, as well as being important for the fishing industry.

Like many Upper Peninsula communities' dependent on mining and resource extraction, Ontonagon has struggled with the decline of its population, business and employment opportunities. The closing of two major industries; the White Pine mine in 1997, and the Smurfit-Stone Container Corp at the end of 2009, were major economic setbacks to the Village and western Upper Peninsula. However, there are positive signs that the Village is finding new opportunities for business and employment.



Photo Source: Michigan Tech Archives

**FIGURE 1.3 – ONTONAGON LIGHTHOUSE**

## The Planning Process

Outlined below is a summary of the planning process:

**Data Collection and Analysis:** The Plan contains a summary of important information about Village of Ontonagon, current conditions, trends, current issues and opportunities. This information was analyzed and summarized in order to obtain an overview and understanding of the community.

## Previous Planning Document

**Review:** The following documents were reviewed and relevant information incorporated into the Master Plan:

- 2007 Master Plan
- 2015 Sustainable Small Harbor Management Strategy
- Village Hybrid Zoning Ordinance

# 1. Introduction

## Community Demographics Summary

Important demographics for the Village of Ontonagon are summarized below.

- According to the 2020 Census of Population, there are 1,474 persons residing in the Village of Ontonagon.
- There are 744 households (1.9 persons per household) in the Village and 2,823 households in the County.
- 52% of the population is 18-64 years of age. 24% of the population is 60-69 years of age.
- Per capita and median income are reported at \$25,065 and \$39,032 respectively.
- Approximately 14% of the population is below the poverty line. This is consistent with what is reported for Michigan.
- 92% of the population has educational attainment of high school grad or higher; 16% have a Bachelor's degree or higher.

## Public Involvement

It is important for a Master Plan to provide opportunities for community engagement, so that the Plan responds to community needs and desires. The Village offered several opportunities for people to become involved and express their ideas and opinions.

## Goals & Strategies

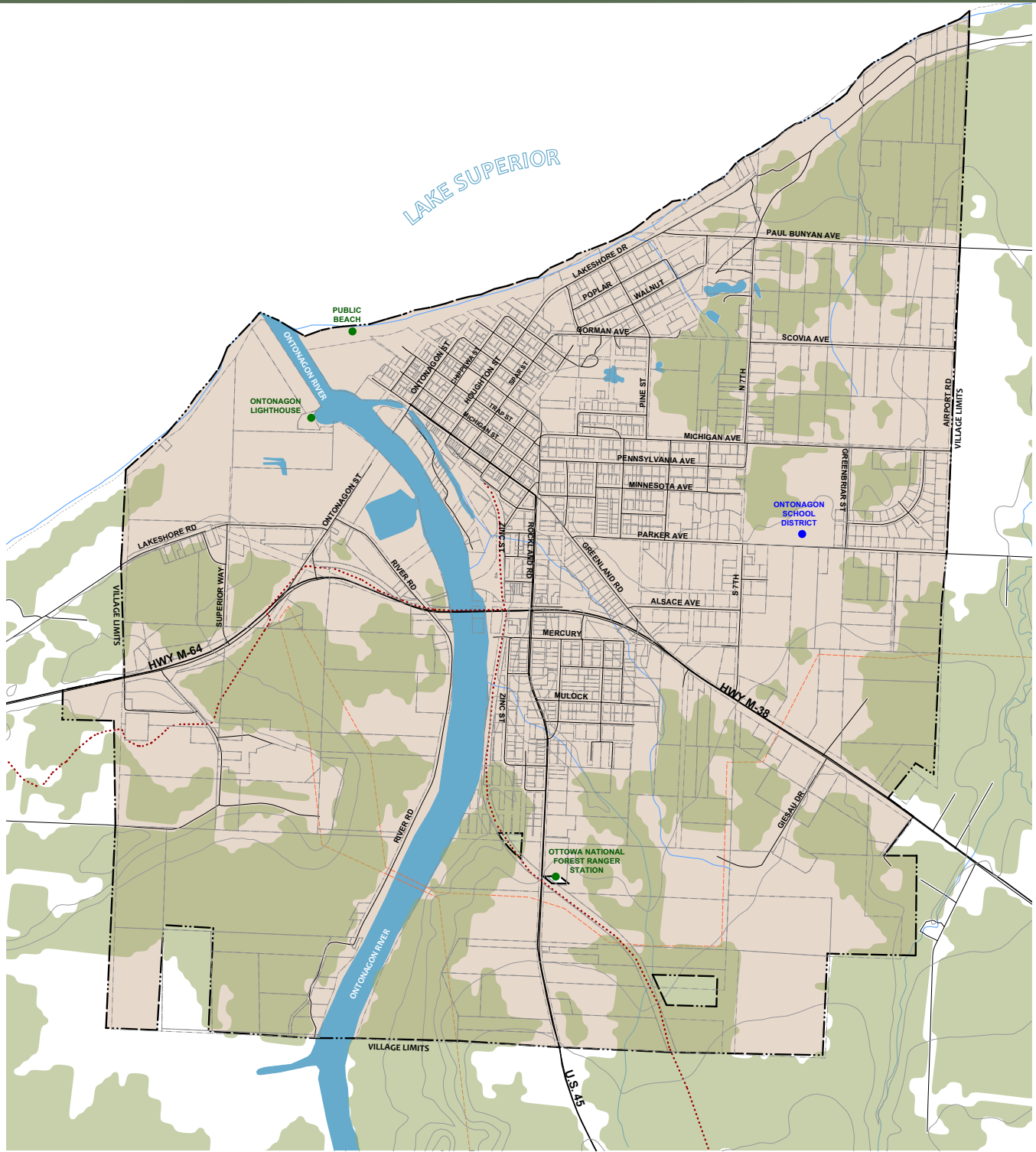
Goals and strategies that describe a course of action are a tool for future decision-making and help to define the character, values, and priorities of the Ontonagon community.

Goals are broad statements that describe a desired outcome, where we want to be. Goals are often long-term in scope.

Strategies are a program, action, or practice that supports one or more policy statements. Strategies address at a high level, the “who, what, when, where, and how” of reaching a goal. A strategy may include multiple sub-strategies.

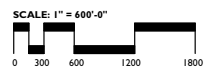
## Implementation

The Plan concludes with a Chapter that provides strategic activities and initiatives to implement the Master Plan.



**LEGEND**

- |  |                   |  |                                   |
|--|-------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
|  | VILLAGE BOUNDARY  |  | WATER BODIES                      |
|  | MAJOR STREETS     |  | UTILITY CORRIDOR<br>(MI GIS DATA) |
|  | TRAILS            |  | FOREST COVER<br>(USGS)            |
|  | PARCEL BOUNDARIES |  | CONTOUR LINES<br>(USGS)           |



mapping based on:  
<https://gis-michigan.opendata.arcgis.com/>, and U.S. Geological Survey, National Geospatial Technical Operations Center, 20200708, USGS Topo Map Vector Data (Vector) 33281 Ontonagon South, Michigan 20200708 for 7.5 x 7.5 minute Shapefile: U.S. Geological Survey.

**FIGURE 1.4 EXISTING CONDITIONS MAP**

# 2. Vision & Guiding Principles

The Village of Ontonagon values toward growth and development are reflected in their Vision and Mission Statements, Guiding Principles, Goals, and Strategies. Following is a summary of the Vision and Mission Statements and Guiding Principles.

## Vision Statement

*The Village of Ontonagon seeks sustainable growth that enhances our natural and historic resources while preserving our heritage, qualities, and culture.*

## Mission Statement

The Village of Ontonagon strives to improve quality of life, enhance a sense of community, and preserve the integrity of our small-town identity and heritage. We are committed to fostering respect, decorum, and hospitality. Village government supports initiatives that create a welcoming and affordable environment for residents, businesses and visitors alike. We strive to provide excellence through a responsible and accessible Village government. We encourage public participation and collaboration from our citizens and businesses. Ontonagon welcomes all to join in our renaissance.

## Guiding Principles

The following are key characteristics of our guiding principles:

- Listen to Village residents and work in their interest
- Creatively use funds to move the Village of Ontonagon forward
- Collaborate with neighboring communities to help all grow together
- Foster sustainable job growth that meets the needs of our constituents
- Create an achievable plan and implement it as opportunities and resources allow



**FIGURE 2.0 - ONTONAGON RIVER**

Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz

# 3. Housing

Housing in the Village of Ontonagon is dominated by older, single family homes, many constructed in the mining era prior to 1940. The Village was developed with a grid street pattern which provides an efficient layout for providing services. Sidewalks are present throughout most of the Village neighborhoods. Community pride is evidenced by the appearance of homes and neighborhoods.

Currently, there is a great need for apartments and rental housing in Ontonagon. There are only a few multi-family apartment buildings/complexes in the Village. The town also has some apartments above some of the downtown stores. Many of these have not been improved in many years, or have been converted to other uses, however, some are still utilized as apartments.

The Ontonagon Housing Commission owns and

manages the 60-unit Ontonagon Village Housing which provides low income housing for families, single individuals, and retired people living on fixed incomes. There is also Greenwood, a 24-unit low income housing complex which is privately owned.

Ontonagon has been known for its very affordable housing, however, the past year, the market has changed. Retirees stay or have moved here because of the low cost and find they can have a higher quality of life in Ontonagon than in many other parts of the country. This low cost for housing and good Internet connectivity also makes the Village ideal for individuals who perform work that can be done from anywhere. With such a low cost of living individuals can live here and experience a higher standard of living than living in most other parts of the country.

**FIGURE 3.0 – ONTONAGON NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS**



A downside of the lower housing values has been a dramatic increase in the number of short-term rentals (AirBnb, VRBO) in the community. The growth of this industry in the last few years has been well-documented, as have community efforts to slow or curtail the conversion of single-family home to short-term rentals. While short-term rentals do increase a community's bed base for tourism, it also results in fewer home for sale and long-term rentals available for people who live and work in the community. It has also increased sales prices and reduced the available inventory of homes for sale. In a small community like Ontonagon, long-term effects could include loss of population, fewer community volunteers for boards and commissions, fire departments, first responders and other community efforts that require manpower.

The Village of Ontonagon's existing housing stock also doesn't meet the needs of people who want to continue to live in Ontonagon while downsizing to smaller, low maintenance housing. Older residents may want to sell their larger home, especially in the current "hot" seller's market, but cannot find suitable housing that fits their needs.



Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz

**FIGURE 3.1 – PUBLIC BEACH**

## Housing Characteristics Summary

- **Total Housing Units: 967**
  - Single Family: 85%
  - Multi-family: 14%
  - Mobile homes: 1%
- **Occupied Housing Units: 77%**
- **Lived in same housing unit before 1990: 26%**
- **Lived in same house a year ago: 93%**
- **Median home value: \$64,000**
- **Value under \$100,000: 80%**

# 3. Housing

The Village owns the former Greenland Road School site. This centrally-located 12-acre site includes 3 connected school buildings, and a playground. The buildings have been vacant for some time which may or may not be suitable for rehabilitation for housing. The Village would like to see this site developed for a variety of housing types and densities.

## Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1

Preserve the “pride of place” ethic in Ontonagon.

#### Strategy 1.1

Adopt and enforce a Property Maintenance Code. A Property Maintenance Code is a great tool to get landowners to clean up their property and maintain it. Reducing the number of blighted and dilapidated structures will improve the aesthetics of the community and increase property values. Improving aesthetics makes the community more appealing to people looking to move to the area, tourists, and developers.

#### Strategy 1.2

Determine if a vacant property registry would be beneficial to the area. A Vacant Building Registry requires all owners of vacant buildings to register their buildings and pay an annual fee. The registration includes local emergency contacts and other general information to make contacting the owner easier if there is an issue. Many towns have found these programs to be useful to dis-incentivize retaining vacant buildings.

#### Strategy 1.3

Work with local citizens interested in keeping empty lots clean and maintained with the Adopt-a-lot

program. This is a grass roots program intended to utilize community volunteers to maintain empty lots. Keep a data base of all participating volunteers and publicly thank them for their contributions.

#### Strategy 1.4

Inform residents about the USDA-RD grant and low interest loan program designed to assist homeowners with repairs. This program can help homeowners get new roofs, siding, windows, etc. This is a very valuable program that the Village should share with residents especially while addressing blighted structures.

#### Strategy 1.5

Inform property owners and potential property owners of opportunities to address blight through MEDC’s Brownfields program. If a developer purchases a structure that is blighted or is in some way environmentally contaminated, the developer can potentially access low interest loans, to be paid back through a Brownfields TIF, thereby saving the developer significantly.

#### Strategy 1.6

Continue the Village-wide clean-up day to encourage citizens to dispose of junk materials in their yard.

### Goal 2

## Address Housing Demand

#### Strategy 2.1

Actively recruit a developer to develop the Greenland School site, for multi-family housing, single family homes. The Village should also encourage the renovation of existing apartments, and encourage infill development to provide more housing. Infill development helps maintain walkable neighborhoods and lessens the harmful effects of sprawl.





**FIGURE 3.2 - FORMER SCHOOL, HOUSING POTENTIAL**

Photo Credit: Mike Reholz

# 4. Natural Features, Parks & Recreation Facilities & Public Lands

Ontonagon residents are fortunate to have a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities available within the community and surrounding area. Boating and fishing on Lake Superior, fishing inland lakes and streams, hiking, kayaking, skiing, beaches, and camping are a few of the outdoor activities enjoyed by residents.

The Village and Ontonagon Township have a Joint Recreation Advisory Panel and have jointly adopted a Recreation Plan to qualify for Michigan DNR Recreation Grants.

The Village of Ontonagon owns and operates the recreation facilities described in the following text. Figure 4.1 indicates the locations of these recreation facilities.

## Village-Owned Recreation Facilities

**Village Marina:** The Village owns a full service 50 slip marina that is manned by a full time Harbor Master from May 15th to October 15th. The Marina offers full electrical and water service to the main slips, along with sewer pump out, fuel (gasoline) and an ADA chair lift. The harbor master office has showers and restroom facilities. Adjacent to the harbor master office is a fish cleaning station. To the south of the marina basin is a large parking lot for boat storage and 3 boat launches with trailer parking. The Marina has a 30-ton Travel Lift to move large vessels in and out of the water. The boat launch area also includes a pavilion, 2 fishing piers, and a pit toilet.

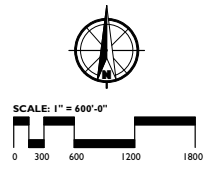


FIGURE 4.0 ONTONAGON VILLAGE MARINA

Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz



LEGEND			
	VILLAGE BOUNDARY		VILLAGE RECREATION FACILITY
	MAJOR STREETS		VILLAGE OWNED PARCEL
	TRAILS		REGIONAL RECREATION FACILITY
	PARCEL BOUNDARIES		VILLAGE TRAILS
	WATER BODIES		ORY TRAILS
	UTILITY CORRIDOR (MI GIS DATA)		WATER TRAILS
	FOREST COVER (USGS)		
	CONTOUR LINES (USGS)		



mapping based on:  
<https://gis-michigan.opendata.arcgis.com/>, and U.S. Geological Survey, National Geospatial Technical Operations Center, 20200708, USGS Topo Map Vector Data (Vector) 33281 Ontonagon South, Michigan 20200708 for 7.5 x 7.5 minute Shapefile: U.S. Geological Survey.

**FIGURE 4.1 PARK & RECREATION MAP**

# 4. Natural Features, Parks & Recreation Facilities & Public Lands

Future projects include improvements to the showers and restrooms, upgrades to the electrical system, replacement of the fuel pumps and sewer pump out equipment. A major long-term capital project would be to extend the south pier to the north to narrow the entrance channel, reducing the amount of sediments reaching the Marina and making dredging of the new channel easier. The Village Marina Commission reviews and recommends capital projects to the Village Council.

**Marina Park:** The Marina Park is located north of the Village Marina and features a large open space with access to the Ontonagon River, a fishing pier, beach volleyball courts and a playground. The Village is considering options for a lease/concession operation at the marina. The Village is currently exploring options to use this open space site as a campground that use this open space and generate revenues.

**Village Recreation Building:** This facility is located on Michigan Avenue and provides a 26,400-square foot indoor recreation facility. The building was constructed in 1977, and is in need of various updates and modernization. Winter time activities are focused around the artificial ice rink, for youth hockey and public skating. Summer time activities center on community events and private rentals of the building. Proposed updates include replacement of the ice making equipment, replacement of the boards and glass, renovations to restrooms and facilities for ADA compliance, replacement of doors and hardware, and other renovations to improve the potential uses of the facility, and to make the facility usable in summer for other events

**Lake Superior Beaches:** The Village owns two areas of Lake Superior shoreline. The

principal site is the Lake Superior Beach Park along Lakeshore Drive. This park is also known as the “pump-house” beach, is the most accessible and popular public area in the Village. The facilities on the site include a small parking lot, sidewalk, benches and lighting of the pathway along Lakeshore Drive. The shoreline is accessed at various unimproved sand paths over the low dunes. Future improvements to the park include replacement of the lighting along the sidewalk, installing new benches and bike racks, improving ADA accessibility, restroom / changing facilities, viewing decks and additional picnic facilities.

The second beach front recreation area in the Village is located between Epidote and Conglomerate Streets. The site consists of wooded areas, dunes and the beach. Access is provided by trails from the road ends of Epidote and Conglomerate Streets, and at the intersection of Ontonagon and Amygdaloid Streets. These semi improved trails are intended for pedestrian or non-motorized access, since parking is limited.

The Village has acquired a lease securing access to the Beach from the corner of Lake and Trap Streets. The lease also allows access to the beach/shoreline along the Lakeshore property to the channel piers. A picnic area, benches, boardwalk and a parking area are proposed for the Lakeshore Park. The acquisition of the property by the Village between Trap and Conglomerate Streets will provide room for parking and restroom/changing facilities.

**Rose Island:** The Village owns a majority of the property on the Island, located adjacent to the Downtown side of the Ontonagon River. The Rose Island channel separates the Island from the main stream of the river.

Webber Park is located at the south end of the island with a parking lot at the end of Island Road. There is a boardwalk along the river and nature trails through the woods. The trails cross the channel and can be accessed from Zinc Street. The boardwalk and trails extend north along the island to the historic fish houses.

The historic fish houses are located near the middle of the island. They consist of two buildings used for commercial fishing and the oldest dates back to the early 1900's. Murals on the sides of the building depict the early fishing industry along the river. The Ontonagon County Historical Museum plans to open one of the houses up for historical displays. Other improvements include stabilizing the buildings and other site improvements for accessibility.

Near the historic fish houses is the Rose Island Paddle Craft Landing. The landing was constructed in the summer of 2017 with a MNRTF grant. The facility includes an accessible pit toilet and an ADA accessible canoe/kayak launching dock, located on Rose Island Channel. A



Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz

**FIGURE 4.2 – ROSE ISLAND BOARDWALK**

# 4. Natural Features, Parks & Recreation Facilities & Public Lands

parking lot and storage lockers for canoes & kayak is also on the site. This site was designed for ADA accessibility to the launch.

Three privately owned parcels separate Tousignat Park from the fish house and landing sites. These parks are connected with a paved pathway along Island Road. Tousignat Park consists of a paved parking area, boardwalks and two floating fishing platforms that are placed on the river. The property north of the parking lot was acquired with an MNRTF grant in 2012. This parcel adjoined an existing Village owned parcel where an old water works building is located.

In 2014, the Village stabilized the bank along the river with rip-rap to stem erosion. The path along

the top of the rip-rap is planned to be a boardwalk that will eventually extend along the river to Ontonagon Street. Future plans for this area include renovating the old waterworks building into a pavilion complex with a large patio for picnics, gathering and events. The pavilion, patio and paths will be constructed to universal accessibility standards. The area surrounding the building would be improved to provide ample greenspace. In the event of sewer service being made available on the Island, fully accessible restrooms can be constructed as part of the pavilion renovations.

Other recreational facilities planned for this area are a non-motorized foot bridge over the channel connecting with Houghton Street. Sidewalks and paths along Houghton Street would provide a

non-motorized connection to Lake Superior and the Township Park. Along the Ontonagon River, future plans include the construction of a day use dock for boats. The river side dock would provide boaters access to the Island Park facilities and are within walking distance to the Downtown. One option being considered is to relocate the dock from the west side of the river to this vicinity on the east side of the river.

**FIGURE 4.4 – FISH CLEANING STATION**



## Michigan Avenue

**Little League Field:** The baseball field is located outside the Recreation Center and used for Little League and available for neighborhood use.

**James Paul Park:** This pocket park is located across from a veteran’s memorial in the downtown area. This small park has no facilities other than sitting benches.

### **Former Rail Yard:**

The Escanaba & Lake Superior Railroad yard, adjacent to the downtown, was acquired by the MDNR in 2014. The Village is interested in acquiring the property or a long-term lease to develop the site for recreational purposes. Currently the site is vacant. Proposed uses for the property include an ORV/Snowmobile Trailhead parking area, restrooms, greenspace, a pavilion, and walking paths.

**RICC Park:** This pocket park is located on River Street in the downtown commercial district.

## **Regional Recreation Facilities**

In addition to the Village facilities described above, residents have a variety of recreation and cultural opportunities available.

**Ontonagon Township – Theater & Library:** The theater and library are located in the Township Memorial Building on N. Steel Street. These facilities provide passive recreational opportunities through the performing arts and learning activities. Various programs, play and concerts are scheduled throughout the year.

Photo Credit: Mike Rebold



**FIGURE 4.5 – ONTONAGON LIGHTHOUSE**

**Ontonagon Senior Center:** Located on Lake Street just off River Street in the Village, this facility provides a gathering place for seniors in the community for various activities.

**Ontonagon Historical Museum & Lighthouse:** The Museum located on River Street in the Village provides historical information and artifacts about Ontonagon County. Tours of the Lighthouse are provided from the museum. The Village is considering options to improve public access to the lighthouse site.

**Ontonagon Township Park & Campground:** The Township Park located on Lake Superior within the Village Limits provides a full-service campground, shower facilities, pump-out station, hook ups and other services. There are two rental shelters on the property and a new pavilion constructed in 2017. The playground area has ADA compliant equipment and is accessible.

# 4. Natural Features, Parks & Recreation Facilities & Public Lands

**Ontonagon – Rockland Trail:** This is Full Multi-use DNR Designated trail originating within the Village. The route was opened in 2017. The trail is currently suitable for ORVs in the summer and snowmobiles in the winter. The Village proposes further enhancement of the trails to provide for a suitable walking /biking surface and separations to provide a true multi-use trail system. Future improvements include the establishment of a trail head parking area within the Village and construction of restrooms.

**Ontonagon River – Historic Water Trail:** This is a water trail on the Ontonagon River from the forks of the east and middle branches at Military Hill on U.S. 45 south of Rockland. The US Forest Service is developing a canoe/kayak landing at the forks on the west side of the River as a put in place for the water trail, with take out in Ontonagon. The Ontonagon County Historical

Society has developed a historic guide, with GPS locations, of sites and historical locations along the Ontonagon River.

**Lake Superior Water Trail – Union Bay to Misery Bay:** This water trail follows the shore line of Lake Superior from the Union Bay boat launch in the Porcupine Mountains State Park to the Misery Bay boat launch in northern Ontonagon County. The trail identifies locations along the shore where there is public property for access to the shore. The locations have GPS coordinates to mark the locations. The identified access points have been mapped with shore amenities identified for paddlers. Future improvements to the trail include signage as part of the Lake Superior water trail.

**Ontonagon County ORV & Snowmobile Trails:** There are various ORV and Snowmobile trails in Ontonagon County, many of these traverse portions of the Village and Township. The Village proposes further enhancement of the trails network to provide for a suitable walking/hiking/ biking surface and separations to provide a true multi-use trail system. Future improvements include trail extensions and connectivity, trail heads and facilities.

**Porcupine Mountains State Park:** Located about 13 miles from the Village is the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. With its 60,000 acres, it is Michigan’s largest state park and one of the few remaining large wilderness areas in the Midwest. It’s home to a 35,000-acre old-growth forest, roaring waterfalls, miles of rivers and streams, more than 90 miles of hiking trails, a modern and rustic campground, backcountry camping, the Lake Superior shoreline and unrivaled vistas.



Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz

**FIGURE 4.6 ONTONAGON WATERFRONT**



The park boasts many popular natural attractions, including Lake of the Clouds (with an accessible viewing area), the scenic Presque Isle River corridor. Other attractions include the Summit Peak observation tower, Porcupine Mountains Ski Area, an 18-hole disc golf course and much more.

The Porcupine Mountains State Park is a major attraction for Ontonagon, with about 500,000 visitors annually.

**Ottawa National Forest:** The Ottawa National Forest is a national forest that covers 993,010 acres in the western Upper Peninsula and includes much of Ontonagon and Gogebic counties, as well as slices of Iron, Houghton, Baraga, and Marquette counties. The forest is under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service. This National Forest offers a variety of recreational opportunities including hiking, snowmobile, snowshoe and ski trails, inland lake and stream fishing, hunting for a variety of species, canoeing, kayaking, and berry picking. The North Country National Scenic Trail is the longest in the National Trails System, stretching 4,800 miles across eight states from North Dakota to Vermont passes through the Ottawa National Forest and Ontonagon County.

## Goals and Strategies

Recreation Goals and Strategies have been developed for the Village of Ontonagon. These are based upon the following guiding principles:

- Take care of what we have before allocating resources on new projects.
- Enhance existing parks and facilities after we have taken care of what we have.
- Create new opportunities when we have made the enhancements that are needed to existing facilities

- Protect the environment.
- Provide health and wellness opportunities.
- Provide safe places for children and families to play.

### Goal 1

#### Maintain existing City park facilities

##### Strategy 1.1

Continue to evaluate the operations of the Ontonagon Marina and opportunities to generate additional revenue needed to support needed repairs and maintenance, including the development of a campground.

##### Strategy 1.2

Evaluate the operations and cost/benefit for the Village Recreational Building.

##### Strategy 1.3

Seek funding to repair the East Pier sidewalk.

### Goal 2

#### Consider opportunities to use existing park facilities in the winter

**Strategy 2.1.** Install lighting on Rose Island paths for use as a snowshoe trail.

**Strategy 2.2** Consider creating ski trails at the golf course.

##### Strategy 2.3

Collaborate with Ontonagon Township to establish ski trails at the Township Park or land suitable at the County Airport.

# 5. Village Infrastructure, Public Facilities, Safety & Emergency Services

## Village Facilities & Services

**Village Office:** The Village Office is located in the downtown area on Quartz St. The building also includes the Village Council Chambers, which serves as a meeting space for various Village Boards and Commissions.

Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz



FIGURE 5.0 – CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**Water System:** In 2000, the Village upgraded the Village potable water system by constructing a new Regional Water System, which included a new water treatment plant near the community of White Pine and 16 miles of transmission water main to deliver the treated water from the treatment plant to the Village. The Village owned regional water system distributes water to the community of White Pine, the White Pine Industrial Park (the former Copper Range Company Mine Site), the Community of Silver City and the 12 miles of Lake Superior shoreline between Silver City, the Porcupine Mountains State Park, and the Village of Ontonagon.

The water intake for the water treatment plant is in Lake Superior adjacent to Silver City. It was constructed by the Copper Range Mining Company in the 1950's as a tunnel under the lakebed. A water pumping station in Silver City pumps the water to the new water treatment plant through an existing water main. The treated water is returned to Silver City through an existing water main and then distributed to Silver City, along Highway M-64, to the Porcupine Mountains State Park, and the Village of Ontonagon through new water mains.

In the Village of Ontonagon, there were significant improvements made to the water distribution system to provide water main loops and fire protection. A new water pumping station was built at the west Village limits on M-64 along with an 850,000 gallon ground storage tank primarily for fire protection in the Village. Also, a new 150,000-gallon elevated water tank was constructed adjacent to the Village Industrial Park on the west side of M-38 to provide sufficient water pressure in the Village water distribution system.

The regional water project was financed by grants



Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz

**FIGURE 5.1 – ONTONAGON WATERFRONT**

and loans from USDA Rural Development and grants from U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration. Refinancing of the Rural Development loan dollars was provided by MDEQ.

Currently, the Village is moving forward on a project to replace the transmission main from White Pine to Silver City, as this water main dates back to the 1950’s.

The overall water system was designed to provide capacity for the users of the system that were in place in the 1990’s and also provided for growth in the service areas over the following 20 years. With the closing of the White Pine Mine in the late 1990’s, there has been limited growth in the service areas, therefore there is still ample capacity in the water

system for projected future growth over the next 20 years. Changes in State of Michigan regulations may require additional investment in the water system, such as replacing lead service lines and other pipe replacements.

**Wastewater Collection and Treatment**  
In 1996 the Village of Ontonagon upgraded its wastewater facilities by constructing a new wastewater treatment system consisting of four wastewater stabilization lagoons which discharge semi-annually to the Ontonagon River. As part of the same project there were improvements made to the wastewater collection system in many parts of the Village. A new sewage pumping station was constructed which collects all of the wastewater from the Village and pumps the wastewater to the lagoon system for treatment before discharge. The

# 5. Village Infrastructure, Public Facilities, Safety & Emergency Services

wastewater project was financed by USDA Rural Development grant and loan funds.

The wastewater collection system does experience significant infiltration of storm-water during the spring snowmelt runoff and heavy rainfall events, which then exceeds the lagoon treatment facility capacity. This is the result of deteriorating brick manholes and the discharge of home foundation footing drains and sump pumps into the wastewater system, especially in the older neighborhoods east of downtown along the lakeshore. As a result, there is limited capacity for growth and increased wastewater flows without resolving major infiltration issues. The Village is going through the process of identifying the problem areas and applying for funding to resolve these issues.

Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz

**Other Utilities:** The Village of Ontonagon has ample electric power and natural gas service available. Electric power is provided by the Upper Peninsula Power Company. Natural gas service is provided by SEMCO.

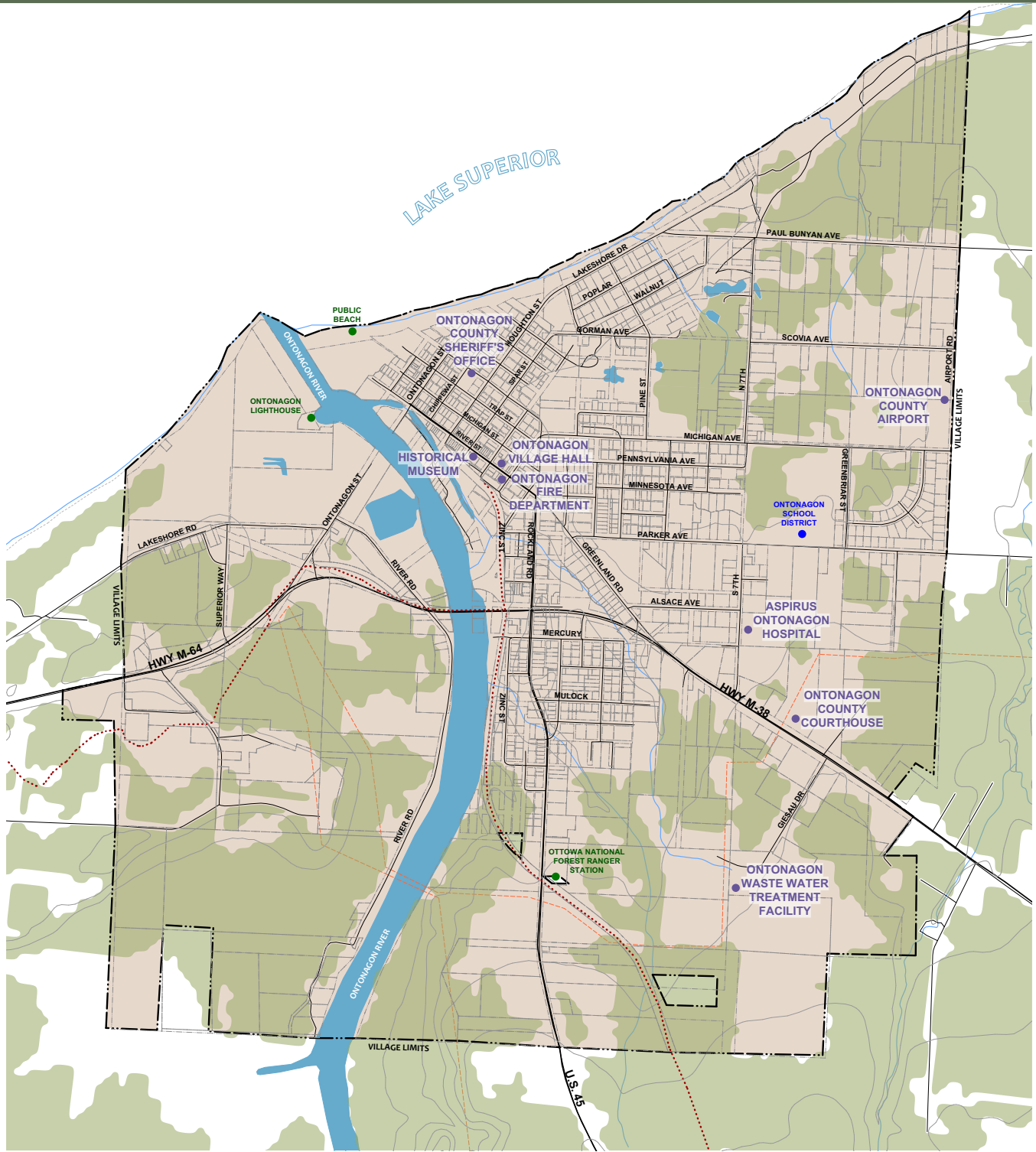
**Communications:** Telephone, cell phone, and high-speed fiber optic Internet services are available in the Village of Ontonagon.

## Educational Facilities

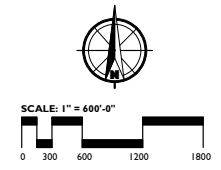
**Education:** The Ontonagon Area School District (OASD) is the oldest public school district in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and was first known as the Ontonagon Union School, being established in 1858-59 as a “free” or tax-supported school. OASD, through a series of annexations, is one of the largest public school districts in terms of



FIGURE 5.2 – ONTONAGON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



LEGEND			
	VILLAGE BOUNDARY		WATER BODIES
	MAJOR STREETS		UTILITY CORRIDOR (MI GIS DATA)
	TRAILS		FOREST COVER (USGS)
	PARCEL BOUNDARIES		CONTOUR LINES (USGS)
	PUBLIC FACILITY		RECREATION FACILITY (refer to the parks and recreation map for additional park facilities)



mapping based on:  
<https://gis-michigan.opendata.arcgis.com/>, and U.S. Geological Survey, National Geospatial Technical Operations Center, 20200708, USGS Topo Map Vector Data (Vector) 33281 Ontonagon South, Michigan 20200708 for 7.5 x 7.5 minute Shapefile: U.S. Geological Survey.

**FIGURE 5.3 PUBLIC FACILITIES MAP**

# 5. Village Infrastructure, Public Facilities, Safety & Emergency Services

geographic area in the state of Michigan, covering the townships of Carp Lake, Greenland, Ontonagon, Rockland, and the southern portion of Bohemia. Rockland and Greenland Township Schools joined with Ontonagon in 1965.

The student population of Ontonagon Area Schools is around 300. The district operated two campus locations from 1966 until 2010, when the Elementary School was moved into the Junior-Senior High School building.

The Ontonagon Area School has strong community support and has been involved in various community improvement activities.

The closest colleges/universities are Michigan Technological University, located 60 miles away in Houghton, and Gogebic Community College in Ironwood, also about 60 miles away.

## Safety & Emergency Facilities

**Fire Protection:** The Village Volunteer Fire Department currently has 21 members who provide fire and emergency services to the Village and Ontonagon Township. The Fire Department is funded by Village appropriations and a Township millage. The Fire hall is located at the corner of River and Copper Streets in the downtown.

**Police Services:** Police services are provided to the Village by the Ontonagon County Sheriff Department.

**Health Care:** Hospital and Clinic services in the Village are provided by Aspirus Ontonagon Hospital, a licensed 18-bed critical access hospital dedicated to serving the residents of Ontonagon County and

the surrounding area. The facility offers a wide range of services, some not typically provided in a small rural setting. Planning is underway to replace the current hospital with a larger outpatient clinic and 6 bed micro hospital.

Portage Health Systems, Upper Great Lakes Health System, Sunset Harbor and Horizon Home Health Care provide home health care services in Ontonagon.

## Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1

Maintain and improve Village water and sewer systems.

#### Strategy 1.1

Move forward with an improvement project to reduce/eliminate storm water infiltration.

#### Strategy 1.2

Move forward with an improvement project to replace the aging water transmission line from White Pine to Silver City.

### Strategy 1.3

Continue to investigate changes in State of Michigan requirements and how they impact the village.

### Goal 2

Continue to collaborate with regional jurisdictions for services, such as fire and police protection.



FIGURE 5.2 – ASPIRUS ONTONAGON HOSPITAL

Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz

# 6. Transportation, Including Vehicular, Pedestrian & Bicycle

Local roads and streets draw the most attention from residents and visitors. All residents use roads, either as drivers of vehicles, or as passengers, or depend on them for the transport of good needed for daily life. People also use roads, and sidewalks, for active transportation and recreational activities such as walking, bicycling, roller-blading, etc. Unlike underground infrastructure such as water and sewer lines, which are equally vital to a community, roads are highly visible, and deteriorated roads and bridges are readily observed by all who travel them.

Michigan Act 51 of 1951 requires that all counties, incorporated cities, and villages establish and maintain road systems under their jurisdiction, as distinct from state jurisdiction, as identified on the City's official Act 51 map.

Photo Credit: Mike Rebolz



FIGURE 6.0 – U.S.45 DOWNTOWN ONTONAGON

## State Trunkline Highways

The state trunkline system includes state and federal highways that connect communities to other areas within the same county, state and other states. These roadways provide the highest level of traffic mobility for the traveling public. State and federal highways are designed by the prefixes “M” and “U.S.” respectively.

There are three State and U.S Highways accessing the Village of Ontonagon, M-38, M-64 and U.S. 45. Highway M-38 runs east-west from Baraga into the Village. Highway M-64 runs east-west and connects the Village to the Porcupine Mountains. The route then proceeds south through the County into the State of Wisconsin. U.S. Highway 45 runs to the South into the State of Wisconsin to its terminus at the Gulf of Mexico, a distance of 1,297 miles.

A new M-64 bridge, constructed in 2006, crosses the Ontonagon River, and replaces an aging swing bridge near the mouth of the river at Lake Superior. The new bridge location is approximately 2,500 feet south of the former bridge and has changed the transportation patterns within the Village.

Act 51 requires that MDOT bear all maintenance costs consistent with department standards and specifications for all state highways including those within incorporated communities.

**Major Street System:** A system of major streets in each incorporated City or Village is approved by the state highway commission pursuant to P.A. 51. Major streets are selected by the Village on the basis of greatest general importance to the Village. Streets may be added or deleted from the system subject to approval of the state highway commissioner. The Village of Ontonagon has an inventory of 7.69 miles of Major



Streets within its boundaries. The Village contracts with MDOT to provide maintenance and snow management services on state trunklines in the Village.

**Local Street System:** Village or village roads, exclusive of state trunklines, county roads and those included in the major street system, make up the local street system. The process of approval, additions and deletions is the same as with other road system designations. The Village has an inventory of 14.64 miles of Local Streets within its boundaries.

**Traffic Volumes:** The Michigan Department of Transportation conducts annual vehicle counts on highways. The Average Daily Total (ADT) is used to identify traffic trends and needs for improvements. The 2020 ADT for highways and major streets running through the Village of Ontonagon are shown on the Streets and Traffic Map included within this Chapter (Refer to Figure 6.2).

## Transportation Planning

Planning for transportation improvements takes place at both the state and local level. The Michigan Department of Transportation maintains a statewide long-range transportation plan, and holds hearings around the state to gather input regarding residents' needs and desires. In addition to the long-range plan, MOOT prepares a five-year program for road improvements statewide. The various phases, such as right-of-way acquisition, design, and construction, are scheduled over a multi-year period so as to keep large projects on track.

Local planning efforts consist of the Village's annual prioritizing of street improvement projects, as well as small urban area task force meetings to plan projects for Category F funding. Some local planning efforts address specific issues, and may receive support from MOOT, as in the case of corridor

studies and access management plans.

Access management refers to long-term planning for access to highway corridors, in order to preserve the long-term capacity of the roadway, improve safety, and maintain accessibility. Access management examines the spacing and location of driveways, access roads and intersections, and access management plans can recommend such measures as driveway consolidations, front or rear access roads, turn lanes, intersection realignments, addition or removal of traffic control devices, and other measures. Implementation can involve use of zoning and subdivision control ordinances, private road ordinances, standards for subdivision design, and use of local review boards in granting driveway permits.

Access management plans are generally developed cooperatively by local units of government within a specific corridor area, with technical assistance from MDOT. Local committees enter into a Memorandum of Understanding to insure commitment to the planning process and implementation, and a consultant is usually retained to develop the actual plan by working closely with MDOT and the corridor group. At this time, these efforts are usually funded by MDOT.

## Snowmobile/ATV Trails

The abandoned railroad bridge over the Ontonagon River provides a logical connection from the Village and downtown to the marina and west side of the river. It is currently used by ORVs as it ties into the MITRAIL ORV trail system. The bridge is in need of side railings and decking.

## Non-motorized Transportation Facilities

In recent years, the construction of non-motorized facilities has increased in many areas in response to public interest. Walking and bicycling are among the

# 6. Transportation,

## Including Vehicular, Pedestrian & Bicycle

top five individual exercise activities according to a national survey (walking is number one). Alternate modes of transportation are encouraged and made safer by facilities such as sidewalks, bike lanes and walking paths.

Fortunately, most of the Village of Ontonagon has sidewalks that have connected residents to their neighborhoods, schools, stores and workplaces for many years. Sidewalks and bike paths help promote a sense of neighborhood and community, as well as potentially reduce traffic congestion. Where sidewalks are not present, the Village's residential

streets generally have light traffic that allows for safe walking and bicycling.

The Village of Ontonagon replaces deteriorated sidewalks when funds are available. Winter, with its snow and cold temperatures, creates challenges for walking. The Village provides limited winter maintenance/snow plowing on sidewalks in the downtown district and on primary pedestrian routes to the school. In the residential neighborhoods, sidewalk snow removal is sporadic, forcing walkers to use streets as needed.

### Complete Streets

The National Complete Streets Coalition has defined a Complete Street as a street designed and operated so they work for all users; pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Communities that adopt Complete Streets policies design and alter the right-of-way with all users in mind. Designing and building Complete Streets fosters livable communities and provides many benefits to the community such as:

- Providing children with opportunities to reach nearby destinations in a safe and efficient environment.
- Encouraging healthy and active lifestyles through wide, functional, and attractive sidewalks and well-defined bicycle routes consistent with the context of the community.
- Allowing everyone, especially people with disabilities and the elderly, to reach destinations and travel around the community.
- Reducing pedestrian risk by as much as 28 percent by implementing Complete Streets design elements such as raised medians, sidewalks, and other traffic-calming measures (according to the National Complete Streets Coalition).
- Promoting a cleaner environment. The Complete Streets approach encourages people to walk or bicycle to their destinations around the community, which may help reduce vehicle trips. Many Complete Street designs also include increased green space along the roadway which also helps the environment.

The Complete Streets approach to street design is recognized by the Michigan Department of Transportation. Communities are encouraged to adopt Complete Streets policies to guide the development or reconstruction of roadways.



**FIGURE 6.1 – ONTONAGON RIVER**

Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz

**East Pier:** The Village is seeking funding to repair and replace a pedestrian walkway along the east pier at the entrance to the harbor.

## Air Service

Ontonagon County Airport, also known as Schuster Field is a county-owned, public-use airport located 3 miles (5 km) west of the central business district of Ontonagon. It is included in the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems for 2021–2025, in which it is categorized as a basic general aviation facility. It is the westernmost U.S. airport in the Eastern Time Zone.

Ontonagon County Airport covers an area of 360 acres at an elevation of 665 feet above mean sea level. It has one runway: 3,503 by 75 feet with an asphalt surface, with one approved GPS-A approach.

For the 12-month period ending December 31, 2019,

the airport had 100 aircraft operations, an average of less than 1 per day: In November 2021, there were 6 aircraft based at this airport: all 6 single-engine.

The nearest airport providing commercial and charter passenger service is the Gogebic County Airport near Ironwood, a distance of about 60 miles, with connecting flights to Minneapolis and Chicago. The Houghton County Airport, approximately 65 miles from the Village, provides connecting flights to Chicago.

## Port Facilities

The Port of Ontonagon is an industrial, recreational, and harbor of refuge that includes several dock facilities that can accommodate the shipment of commodities into and out of the community.

On the west side of the river, the former Smurfit-Stone dock historically received about 100,000 tons of coal annually for the mill’s use, but has not been used since the mill closed.

## Non Motorized Transportation Funding

Funding for non-motorized transportation projects is available on a competitive basis through several grant programs. The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a competitive grant program that funds projects such as bike paths, streetscapes, and historic preservation of transportation facilities that enhance Michigan’s intermodal transportation system, promote walkability, and improve quality of life for Michigan citizens. The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grant program is a school-based international movement to make it safe, convenient and fun for children, including those with disabilities, to bicycle and walk to school.

# 6. Transportation, Including Vehicular, Pedestrian & Bicycle

The Ontonagon County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) also has a dock facility on the west side of the river which previously received about 100,000 tons of coal for the White Pine Electric Power LLC, which is now shut down. In the past, the EDC dock has also accepted shipments of limestone.

On the east side of the river, the Trident Maritime Systems site has a dock/port facility as well. This dock is currently in use.

## Rail Service

There is no longer rail service to the Village of Ontonagon. The E&LS Railroad formerly provided rail service, however, the rails have been pulled and the right-of-way is leased to MITRAIL organization for snowmobiles and ATVs.

## Public Transportation

ONTRAN, a county-operated bus system, provides on-demand public transportation in the Village. There is no taxi service available in Ontonagon.

## Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1

Maintain and upgrade existing streets.

#### Strategy 1.1

Inventory the condition of Village streets using the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (Paser) system and/or other objective program to identify the streets most in need of repaving and/or reconstruction. A Paser evaluation was completed 5 years ago and should be updated.

#### Strategy 1.2

With the Village's financial position improving, develop a Capital Improvements Plan to prioritize and project street improvements.

#### Strategy 1.3

Replace existing deteriorated street signs with new street signs.

### Goal 2

Improve non-motorized/pedestrian facilities.

#### Strategy 2.1

Inventory the condition of existing sidewalks and prioritize replacement.

#### Strategy 2.2

Consider a cost sharing formula with property owners for sidewalk replacement.

#### Strategy 2.3

When street corners are reconstructed, the corner curbing should be made ADA compliant.

#### Strategy 2.4

Work with MDOT to identify and implement appropriate crosswalk locations on US-45, M-38, and M-64 in downtown, and along other highways in the Village where needed.

#### Strategy 2.5

Continue to pursue and implement the East Pier Walkway Improvement project.

#### Strategy 2.6

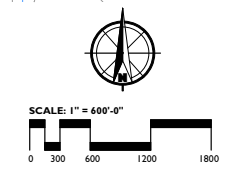
Work to improve the pedestrian walkway along Lakeshore Drive, including widening and making it ADA compliant.



**LEGEND**

- |                                |                              |                                   |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| VILLAGE BOUNDARY               | CONTOUR LINES (USGS)         | <b>ROADS - ACT 51 DESIGNATION</b> |
| MAJOR STREETS                  | VILLAGE RECREATION FACILITY  | — State Trunkline                 |
| TRAILS                         | REGIONAL RECREATION FACILITY | - - - County Primary              |
| PARCEL BOUNDARIES              | VILLAGE TRAILS               | - - - County Local                |
| WATER BODIES                   | ORV TRAILS                   | — City Local                      |
| UTILITY CORRIDOR (M. GIS DATA) | WATER TRAILS                 |                                   |

- MDOT - AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC - (2020 DATA)**
- 2500+ ADT
  - 2000-2500 ADT
  - 1500-2000 ADT
  - 1000-1500 ADT
  - 500-1000 ADT
  - Less Than 500 ADT
- ### ADT - AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC COUNT**  
(SOURCE: MDOT - 2020 DATA)



mapping based on:  
<https://gis-michigan.opendata.arcgis.com/>, and U.S. Geological Survey, National Geospatial Technical Operations Center, 20200708, USGS Topo Map Vector Data (Vector) 33281 Ontonagon South, Michigan 20200708 for 7.5 x 7.5 minute Shapefile: U.S. Geological Survey.

**FIGURE 6.2 STREETS AND TRAFFIC MAP**

# 7. Future Land Use & Zoning Plan

Natural resources, history and transportation have shaped the existing land use in the Village of Ontonagon. From its early beginnings related to lumbering and copper mining, the Village has evolved to its current function as a residential and recreational services community, as well as providing some industrial employment opportunities.

This chapter of the Master Plan provides a Future Land Use Plan, Land Use Goals and Strategies, as well as a Zoning Plan.

## Existing Land Use

The downtown district is located on River Street, east of the Ontonagon River, and contains the bulk of the commercial, service, and retail businesses of the Village.

The majority of the residential areas in the Village are located just to the east and south of the downtown district. Exceptions include the Ontonagon Memorial Hospital and related medical offices, and the Ontonagon Elementary and High Schools.

South of the Village core along M-38 are mixed residential and commercial land uses, including a grocery/pharmacy complex and the Ontonagon County courthouse. West of M-38 is the Village Renaissance Zone, an industrial park.

The land area located west of the Ontonagon River was the Village primary industrial area that included the former site of Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation. This site has been proposed for a bio-fuel manufacturing plant, however, this development has faced financing challenges.

On the east side of the Ontonagon River near

the river mouth is the Trident Maritime Systems property. Originally constructed as a shipyard, this major industrial complex is a major employer in the area.

The Ontonagon Township Park and campground borders the Village on the north and east, along the Lake Superior shoreline.

Located immediately west of the Ontonagon River near M-64 is the Ontonagon Village Marina and Waterfront Park, with docking, boat launches, a fish cleaning station, parking areas, a picnic area and boardwalk along the river.

The area known as Rose Island, located between the Ontonagon River and the downtown district, includes a few residential homes, commercial structures and some historical fishing sheds on the “island”. Also located on the island, across the river from the marina is a park area and nature walk. This recreational area contains floating docks for access for fishing the river, a kayak launching site, . There are also areas for seating and picnicking located on the island.


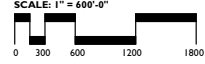
## Future Land Use

How the land base is developed in the community influences traffic flows and patterns, property values, the natural environment, and water, sewer, communications and power utilities.

For the most part, land use in the Village of Ontonagon is not likely to experience major change, with the exception of the former site of the Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation, and the vacant Greenland school site. The Village population is not growing and large land areas are not needed in the foreseeable future for residential and commercial development. Based upon the broad goals statements, the future land use plan



LEGEND			

  
 SCALE: 1" = 600'-0"  


mapping based on:  
<https://gis-michigan.opendata.arcgis.com/>, and U.S. Geological Survey, National Geospatial Technical Operations Center, 20200708, USGS Topo Map Vector Data (Vector) 33281 Ontonagon South, Michigan 20200708 for 7.5 x 7.5 minute Shapefile: U.S. Geological Survey.

FIGURE 7.0 EXISTING LAND USE MAP

# 7. Future Land Use & Zoning Plan

describes a few areas where land use change is desired. Future development should follow “Smart Growth” principles, as shown in the inset.

## Smart Growth Tenants

- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
- Build/enhance walkable neighborhoods
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration
- Foster a distinctive, attractive community with a strong sense of place
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective
- Mix land uses
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
- Provide a variety of transportation choices

The areas most likely to experience changes in land use are described below and shown on the Future Land Use map:

### The former Greenland Road

**School Site:** The Village owns the former Greenland Road School site. This centrally-located

12-acre site includes 3 connected school buildings, and a playground. The buildings have been vacant for some time which may or may not be suitable for rehabilitation for housing. The Village would like to see this site developed for a variety of housing types and densities.

### Lake Superior and Ontonagon

**River Waterfronts:** Much of the Village’s waterfronts were developed for industrial use. This is a common occurrence in waterfront communities, as the location was needed for transportation of raw materials and products, or for a supply of water for industrial purposes.

The Port of Ontonagon is a community asset and continues to play an important role for transportation of commodities.

The former site of the Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation has potential for a large industrial complex, or, a smaller scale industrial park. The site includes about 3800 lineal feet of Lake Superior shoreline that would provide an excellent location for a variety of housing types, including single-family homes, townhouses and apartments.

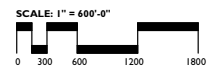
**Highway Commercial:** The commercial node on the M-38 corridor can accommodate highway oriented developments, however, the extent of commercial zoning for retail and service businesses should be limited to this node. As development of the commercial node is proposed, site plans should conform to best practice access management standards.





**LEGEND**

- |                   |                                |                              |                   |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| VILLAGE BOUNDARY  | WATER BODIES                   | VILLAGE RECREATION FACILITY  | RESIDENTIAL       |
| MAJOR STREETS     | UTILITY CORRIDOR (MI GIS DATA) | VILLAGE OWNED PARCEL         | MIXED-USE         |
| TRAILS            | FOREST COVER (USGS)            | REGIONAL RECREATION FACILITY | DOWNTOWN BUSINESS |
| PARCEL BOUNDARIES | CONTOUR LINES (USGS)           | VILLAGE TRAILS               | INDUSTRIAL        |
|                   |                                | ORV TRAILS                   | PARKS             |
|                   |                                | WATER TRAILS                 | VACANT            |



mapping based on:  
<https://gis-michigan.opendata.arcgis.com/>, and U.S. Geological Survey, National Geospatial Technical Operations Center, 20200708, USGS Topo Map Vector Data (Vector) 33281 Ontonagon South, Michigan 20200708 for 7.5 x 7.5 minute Shapefile: U.S. Geological Survey.

**FIGURE 7.1 FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

# 7. Future Land Use & Zoning Plan

## Zoning Plan

This plan satisfies the requirement of P.A. 33 of 2008 for a local unit of government that has adopted a zoning ordinance, to have a zoning plan within the master plan, including an explanation of how the land use categories on the future land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map.

## Comparison of Future Land Uses to Current Zoning Districts:

The table below contains a summary of how the future land use categories for the Village of Ontonagon relate to the current zoning ordinance categories.

## Zoning Ordinance Update Recommendations:

The Village of Ontonagon Hybrid Zoning Ordinance was recently updated in 2021. The Ordinance is comprehensive, fairly robust, and includes 3 form-based zoning districts. The Planning Commission should consider a future update to include the following:

1. Consider adding standards and regulations to address solar energy in all districts.
2. Changes in demographics, such as an aging population, and housing preferences, including a trend towards smaller homes, should be addressed in the Zoning Ordinance.
3. Consider reducing minimum residential unit size requirements and allowing for micro units less than 500 square feet (tiny houses) as a Special Use in Residential Districts
4. Consider allowing shared garages in residential districts with upstairs apartments that meet neighborhood characteristics.
5. Encourage non-motorized transportation by adding bicycle parking, pedestrian access and lighting to Site Plan Review standards
6. Create an online guide to zoning and the approval process.
7. Annually review and approve a Zoning Ordinance fee schedule that covers all staff, mailing and publishing costs.

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY	ZONING CATEGORY
Residential	R-1 - R4
Downtown Business	B-1
Commercial	B-2
Industrial	I -1 and I -2

TABLE 7.1 – COMPARISON OF FUTURE LAND USE TO ZONING



FIGURE 7.2 – ONTONAGON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

# 7. Future Land Use & Zoning Plan

## Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1

Encourage the development of new single and multi-family housing in the Village, and maintain/improve current residential areas.

#### Strategy 1.1

Identify Village-owned lots and properties suitable for residential development and explore opportunities for developing a variety of housing options.

#### Strategy 1.2

Review the Zoning Ordinance and other Village ordinances, and amend if necessary, to encourage maintenance of existing residential neighborhoods, eliminate blight, and the rehabilitation/removal of deteriorated structures.

#### Strategy 1.3

Utilize the Zoning Ordinance and other local

regulations to encourage consistency and connectivity between old and new neighborhoods, e.g. by discouraging lengthy cul-de-sac streets and encouraging the extension of the grid street system into new development.

#### Strategy 1.4

Adopt and enforce appropriate blight and rental-inspection ordinances and utilize Municipal Civil Infractions methodology for enforcement.

#### Strategy 1.5

Encourage maintenance/upkeep of properties with incentives and volunteer efforts.

#### Strategy 1.6

Improve maintenance and reconstruction of infrastructure/roads in the neighborhoods to encourage private investment.

#### Strategy 1.7

Add small neighborhood parks, gathering areas, trails/trail connections, and community gardens as needed or desired within neighborhoods.

#### Strategy 1.8

Continue to promote the Greenland School site for housing development.



FIGURE 7.3 – INTO THE HARBOR FROM LAKE SUPERIOR

### **Strategy 1.9**

Work with the property owner of the former mill site to develop a mix of housing types along the Lake Superior shoreline.

## **Goal 2**

Ensure that new development follows Smart Growth tenets, such as prioritizing compact development and channeling new development to make the best use of existing infrastructure. This will enhance efficiency in public service provision and infrastructure maintenance, and help preserve natural resource lands

### **Strategy 2.1**

Provide incentives for downtown ground-floor retail combined with upper-level residential uses, including the use of tax increment financing, low-income tax credits (affordable housing), and façade improvement funds, and reduced land cost.



Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz

### **Strategy 2.2**

Prioritize the rehabilitation or reuse of vacant and underutilized properties or the conversion of single-uses into mixed-use developments as a preferred strategy over new development.

## **Goal 3**

Foster a distinctive, attractive community with a strong sense of place.

### **Strategy 3.1**

Encourage new development or redevelopment that is compatible with the scale and architecture of existing properties (especially in the traditional, historic neighborhoods and Downtown) while preserving existing natural features as much as possible.

### **Strategy 3.2**

Require landscaping or public art or other such aesthetic treatment along long, blank walls to improve community aesthetics, and encourage pedestrian activity.

### **Strategy 3.3**

Pursue streetscaping and aesthetic enhancements for the highway corridors through the Village, including pedestrian scale lighting, street trees, bicycle amenities such as parking facilities, bicycle lanes, and wayfinding and gateway signage.

### **Strategy 3.4**

Implement access management principles to create a safer, more aesthetic highway corridor while preserving function and capacity of the highway system while supporting non-motorized transportation elements.

# S. Downtown Development/Economic Development/Redevelopment Priorities

Ontonagon County and the Village of Ontonagon economy was once based on copper mining and forest products. The region is now in transition to an economy based upon tourism, outdoor recreation, retirement homes, and remote workers.

The Village of Ontonagon has potential for sustainable growth and development. The Village offers a location on Lake Superior/Ontonagon River, with good highway access, in a region rich with outdoor recreation attractions, and natural resources. The Village itself is well positioned with good infrastructure, access to high speed broadband, walkable, well-maintained neighborhoods, lower housing costs, and a traditional downtown.

The COVID-19 global pandemic has stimulated the movement of people to rural communities that offer quality of life assets like those found in Ontonagon. The locational preferences of the “millennials” and recent college graduates has shown a trend that young people are choosing where to live based on lifestyle and quality of life considerations, rather than job opportunities or pay. Businesses, particularly those within the knowledge economy, have fewer requirements that dictate location within a particular region. Instead, they are looking for places that will provide a high quality of life for their employees and an appealing work environment. These trends have accelerated as the result of the pandemic.

Increasingly, research into economic trends and economic development strategy suggests that the traditional models of business attraction may not be suitable, successful, and sustainable for many communities, particularly those places in geographically isolated regions. Instead, investment in public infrastructure and broadband

improvements, placemaking, and amenities that will enhance the community’s image and attractiveness to prospective businesses, entrepreneurs, and employees, is recognized as a viable strategy.

This chapter of the Master Plan provides ideas and guidance for both downtown development and overall economic development.

## Downtown Development

The Ontonagon downtown area includes some attractive storefronts, a large hardware store, the Historical Museum, specialty and gift shops, several bars and restaurants, a small motel, and other service businesses. The overall appearance is good, attractive to both residents and visitors.

The Village has a form-based code in place for the downtown district within its hybrid zoning ordinance that will help future development in downtown contribute to its character and sense of place.

The River Street streetscape presents a positive appearance with street trees, theme lighting, and brick patterned sidewalks. Overall, sidewalks along the street are in decent condition. Some of the curbing on River Street and side streets is in poor condition, especially at the corner bump-outs, due to wear and tear from plowing snow. These sections of worn curbing should be replaced. The Village should work with MDOT on River Street (US Hwy 45)

The downtown has some vacant lots that offer potential for redevelopment. There are vacant or underutilized upper floors of existing buildings that have potential for development of office/shared workspaces or housing. Vacant lots should be

cleaned up, and the Village should consider allowing short term vendors and food trucks to set up on vacant sites. These kinds of activities attract people to downtown.

The buildings on the block on the east side of River Street between Copper and Quartz Streets are in various stages of deterioration and have been targeted for demolition, if a source of funds can be identified. This site would make an ideal location for a boutique lodging establishment or mixed-use development with retail on the street level and housing on upper levels. A 2017 Evaluation of Economic Strategies report identified potential for an 18 room boutique hotel to be constructed in the Village, as part of a Sustainable Harbors study conducted by the Michigan Sea Grant program.

Ontonagon has a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and tax increment financing plan, as permitted under Michigan Public Act 197 of 1975. The DDA/TIF Plan was updated in 2019 and was adopted by the Village Council. However, the DDA/TIF has not been implemented and no tax increments have been captured, leaving the DDA with no funds to achieve the goals and projects identified in the plan. It is unclear if the County and other taxing jurisdictions opted out of the plan at the time of adoption.

A DDA is allowed to levy up to 2 mils to fund operations. This tool could be explored to determine if it makes sense and if the levy can raise enough meaningful funding to make improvements,



**FIGURE 8.0 - DOWNTOWN BUSINESS**

to promote business activity, host special events, conduct marketing promotional activities, and beautification efforts such as planting flowers throughout the downtown.

The Planning Commission also serves as the Village Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. This redevelopment tool is described further in this chapter.

For travelers to and from the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park, Lake Superior, and other attractions, it is easy to drive by and miss the downtown area. A gateway sign at the Greenland Road directs people to turn at the US 45 intersection one block west. Better gateway signs and landscape treatments could encourage travelers to stop downtown. There are currently a variety of wayfinding signs downtown. A unified wayfinding sign system would be beneficial for downtown.

Electric vehicle (EV) charging stations are becoming an important downtown asset, as more of these vehicles are being sold and used. A location has

# S. Downtown Development/Economic Development/Redevelopment Priorities

been identified for installation of an EV charging station at the north end of River Street adjacent to downtown.

## Economic Development

The economy of the Village of Ontonagon and Ontonagon County are in transition from a resource-based economy to one based upon year-round tourism. Ontonagon County has an Economic Development Corporation (EDC) whose purpose is to carry out economic development activities. In the past, the EDC was funded by revenues by commodity shipments using their dock facility in the Ontonagon Harbor. Due to a lapse in harbor dredging, the EDC has lacked funding to carry out their mission. Recent dredging has re-opened the

opportunity to use the dock facility and generate revenues.

## Natural Resource Development

**Potential:** There is still potential for natural resource development in the region, with two separate copper mining projects being proposed by the Highland Copper Company, Inc.: The White Pine North project at the existing White Pine mine site west of Ontonagon, and the Copperwood project further west in Gogebic County. Both projects are in various stages of permitting and feasibility.

## Small Scale Economic Development Focused on Local Business:

As a small community with limited resources, the best thing the Village of Ontonagon can do to create economic development activity is to continue to improve the quality of life opportunities within the Village, making it a great place to live and do business. Strengthening neighborhoods, eliminating blight, improving recreation opportunities, fostering the development of new housing, and supporting downtown revitalization are all important elements to this strategy.

The Master Plan supports an “economic gardening” approach to growing jobs and businesses in the Village of Ontonagon. This proven approach grows the local economy from within by promoting local entrepreneurship and small and local business development. The primary idea of economic gardening is to work with what is already present in the community to build new opportunities.

The Village of Ontonagon should provide support

## Ontonagon County Data

**Labor force: 2,187**

**Largest Employer:**  
Aspirus Ontonagon Hospital

**Industry by number of workers 16 & over (2,033):**

- **Health care & social assistance: 17.2%**
- **Manufacturing: 5.8%**
- **Retail trade: 11.4%**
- **Accommodation & food services: 10.0%**
- **Educational services: 6.0%**
- **Public administration: 7.1%**

Source: 2019 American Community Survey



for existing businesses and particularly home-based businesses, persons who work from home as freelancers, consultants, or remote employees, and other individuals making or selling products from home. Removing any local zoning barriers to home-based business and redevelopment of downtown is one example of supporting economic development.

In general, economic gardening strategies should seek to connect existing businesses and entrepreneurs to resources that will help them grow and thrive, while removing the barriers to starting and operating a business. One such resource organization is the non-profit Northern Initiatives, based in Marquette, that serves northern Michigan and parts of northern Wisconsin with lending and business consulting. Northern Initiatives administers a revolving loan fund that was capitalized, in part, from a revolving loan fund that originated in Ontonagon County through CDBG and UDAG grant funds that were loaned out to a local business.

## Tourism

During the pandemic in 2020, the nearby Porcupine Mountains State Park experienced unprecedented growth in visitation, with 586,000+ visitors. Visitation declined somewhat in 2021 and was 434,688 persons in 2022. Park rangers report that more park visitors are participating in sea kayaking on Lake Superior, in addition to camping and backpacking, than previously experienced at the park. Ontonagon is only 10 miles away from the primary entrance to the Porcupine Mountains!

The increase in visitation parallels what is being experienced across the Upper Peninsula (UP). People are discovering the Upper Peninsula because of a stronger interest in travel and vacationing close to home, and increased interest in active lifestyles and outdoor activities.

In the past, tourism jobs were associated with restaurant, service, and motel staff, which typically have been minimum wage positions. Instead, tourism should be embraced for the opportunities it creates to own and manage small business. The Village can support growth of tourism in the community and the region by encouraging entrepreneurs to start tourism-related businesses, such as outdoor equipment rentals, guided tour

Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz



FIGURE 8.1 - DOWNTOWN BUSINESS

# S. Downtown Development/Economic Development/Redevelopment Priorities

companies, lodging, fishing charters, food trucks, gift shops, a brew pub, and other small business that can benefit from the 600,000 visitors nearby.

## The Housing Connection

Ontonagon has experienced an increase in short-term rental (STR) housing, available through sites such as VRBO and Airbnb. Investors have taken advantage of low-cost housing that has been available in the Village and converted homes to STRs.

The advantages of STRs in a community like Ontonagon is an increase in the lodging base that was previously unavailable in the community, which has benefitted tourism and extends stays in the community. Owners of STRs pay non-homestead property taxes, which are significantly higher than what residents pay.

The disadvantage of STRs in a community is that these properties are constraining the housing supply for people who want/need to rent or own a home and live in the Village. This directly impacts economic development potentials, and the recruitment of people to fill teaching, health care and other jobs. Long-term, STRs can reduce an already declining population. Rural, small communities rely on residents to fill important civic and volunteer roles, STRs may reduce the number of persons to fulfill this need.

This situation is not unique to Ontonagon, it is a national issue. The Village should focus attention on developing the former Greenland School site, which it owns. While the Village Council has tried to attract a developer to redevelop the empty school buildings, it might be easier to focus on the undeveloped property surrounding the school

buildings, especially along Greenland Road and Alsace Avenue, where infrastructure; water, sewer, and access, are available without adding cost to the project. A master development plan for the entire site should be prepared.

## Redevelopment Tools

### Brownfield Redevelopment

**Authority:** The Village Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, established under the Brownfield Redevelopment Act PA 381 of 1996, as amended, can provide a developer with access to both MDEQ and MEDC related Tax Increment Financing as well as MDEQ grant and loan funding for appropriate projects. Eligible work includes environmental assessment, due care, lead and asbestos assessment and abatement, and demolition, public infrastructure and site work.

### Michigan Economic Development Corporation Community

**Assistance Program :** The Village of Ontonagon, working with Michigan Economic Development Corporation's (MEDC) Community Assistance Team can access Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for qualified redevelopment projects.

### Redevelopment Ready

**Communities:** Redevelopment Ready Communities is an initiative through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to help communities promote their developable sites and buildings. It involves gathering and maintaining data on developable sites and buildings to advertise locally and with the state. The program



**LEGEND**

- |                   |                                |                              |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| VILLAGE BOUNDARY  | WATER BODIES                   | VILLAGE RECREATION FACILITY  |
| MAJOR STREETS     | UTILITY CORRIDOR (MI GIS DATA) | VILLAGE OWNED PARCEL         |
| TRAILS            | FOREST COVER (USGS)            | REGIONAL RECREATION FACILITY |
| PARCEL BOUNDARIES | CONTOUR LINES (USGS)           | VILLAGE TRAILS               |
|                   | ORV TRAILS                     | WATER TRAILS                 |

SCALE: 1" = 300'-0"

0 150 300 600 1200

mapping based on:  
<https://gis-michigan.opendata.arcgis.com/>, and U.S. Geological Survey, National Geospatial Technical Operations Center, 20200708, USGS Topo Map Vector Data (Vector) 33281 Ontonagon South, Michigan 20200708 for 7.5 x 7.5 minute Shapefile: U.S. Geological Survey.

**FIGURE 8.2 DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES**

# S. Downtown Development/Economic Development/Redevelopment Priorities

also requires cities to have available incentives, tools and programs to assist with redevelopment. The Village is currently working to become a certified participant in the Redevelopment Ready Communities program. Once certified, the Village can advertise the developable sites and land on a national basis with no cost to the Village. This does require the Village to put together the information about empty lots and buildings, and having this available will make it easier to work with developers and people interested in starting a business in Ontonagon.

## Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1

Market vacant Village owned and privately-owned land for developers.

#### Strategy 1.1

Prioritize sites for redevelopment efforts and determine which types of businesses are appropriate on these sites.

#### Strategy 1.2

Create property information packages.

#### Strategy 1.3

Create developers' packets and start actively recruiting businesses through directly mailing developers and by posting the information on the Village website and other websites such as costar and zoom prospector.

#### Strategy 1.4

Work with WUPPDR and various state agencies on these packets.

Photo Credit: Mike Rebolz



FIGURE 8.3 – VIEW TO THE EAST PIER

## Goal 2

Participate in and support area-wide economic development activities

### Strategy 2.1

Meet with officials in Ontonagon Township and Ontonagon County to discuss strategies for downtown, economic development and housing.

### Strategy 2.2

Continue to support and be involved with the Ontonagon County Economic Development Corporation.

### Strategy 2.3

Encourage Ontonagon County municipalities to support the EDC.

## Goal 3

Enhance quality of life opportunities within the Village Ontonagon

### Strategy 3.1

Continue work to strengthen neighborhoods, eliminate blight, improve recreation opportunities, foster the development of new housing, and support downtown revitalization.

### Strategy 3.2

Continue efforts to rebuild the East Pier Walkway.

## Goal 4

Support continued downtown revitalization efforts

### Strategy 4.1

Design and implement a downtown and Village-wide wayfinding system.

### Strategy 4.2

Design and implement “Welcome to Downtown” signs at key locations.

### Strategy 4.3

Locate an Electric Vehicle (EV) charging station downtown.

### Strategy 4.4

Initiate efforts to recruit volunteers to help clean up vacant sites in downtown and on Rose Island, and encourage short term vendors like food trucks to set up on a site downtown.

### Strategy 4.5

Work with the Ontonagon Historical Society to develop public access to the Ontonagon Lighthouse.

### Strategy 4.6

Continue to seek funding and a developer for redevelopment of the block between Copper and Quartz Street.

# 9. Environmental Sustainability

Sustainability can be broadly interpreted and delve into area such as the built development, the human and environmental world, business and technology disciplines, or even educational systems. This chapter will focus on environmental sustainability and specifically areas that are important to consider for the Village as it makes future planning decisions.

A stroll along the Rose Island boardwalk, skiing in the winter, or even parking your car and walking to the grocery in the hot sun reminds us everyday that the environment around us is a living moving system dependent on many pieces. When we look at environmental sustainability, a typical definition says that it means acting in a way that ensures

future generations will have the natural resources available to live in the same way or better than current generations.

A good way to introduce positive changes over time into everyday living is to incorporate sustainable improvements gradually. By making small incremental changes towards improved environmental sustainability, a small Village like Ontonagon can very well end up making a big impact for future generations. Some ways to do that are in regulatory improvements by the way of Ordinance or Policy changes.



FIGURE 9.0 – ONTONAGON RIVER

## Sustainability Guide

The following is a GENERAL guide for sustainable considerations. These best practices should be referenced and/or required where applicable in any future zoning ordinance revisions or in the creation of any future design standards or operating policies for the Village.

Regulations based on these general principles would seek to provide a strong foundation for future growth, conserve limited resources, and protect our natural environment for the long-term health of our planet and future generations.

### Protect and Enhance the Site

- protect ecologically sensitive sites
- minimize the development footprint (refer to low impact development section)
- integrate buildings with site topography
- site homes and developments in a way that celebrates natural habitats

### Improve Energy Efficiency

- Incorporate passive solar design strategies (proper orientation of structures, placement of windows, etc.)
- Use proper insulating techniques for the building envelope
- Design for efficient use of space (i.e. bigger isn't always better)
- Install high-performance windows and place to take advantage of natural light and cross ventilation
- Consider active solar or wind systems for energy or water heating

### Use Environmentally

### Responsible Building Materials

- Select materials that are appropriate and

durable for harsh winter climates

- Select products that support local manufactures and local economies
- Select materials with recycled content or that are recyclable
- Avoid materials that unduly deplete natural resources
- Avoid materials that generate excess pollution during manufacturing

### Create A Safe Indoor Environment

- Avoid materials with high VOC (volatile organic compounds) such as some carpets, adhesives, paints, etc.
- Provide for proper ventilation in all buildings
- Maximize the control of indoor environments with proper window placement, lighting, and temperature controls



FIGURE 9.1 – BUILDING INCORPORATES PASSIVE SOLAR DESIGN STRATEGIES

# 9. Environmental Sustainability

## Provide Water Efficient Water Usage

- Use low-flow plumbing fixtures
- Incorporate efficient hot-water delivery systems
- Consider gray water usage, provide for water storage for landscape use
- Incorporate water efficient landscaping

## Reduce Generation of Solid Waste

- Provide for both construction and home waste recycling
- Purchase building materials so as to minimize waste
- Utilize recycled materials in new construction

## Create a Healthy Living Environment

- Encourage home or community gardening
- Incorporate walking trails, especially nature trails with educational opportunities.
- Incorporate alternative forms of transportation (walking, biking, bus, etc.)

## Low Impact Development

In order to protect our vital and important natural water resources (including drinking water) in the region it should be required for all new developments to incorporate low impact development practices in the construction of any projects. These are also known as GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE or STORMWATER BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs). The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments created a “Low Impact Development Manual for Michigan” in 2008. This is a tremendous resource for Michigan communities.

The following are just some of the BMPs and techniques that would be suitable to incorporate into development projects in the Village, however creativity and ingenuity should be encouraged as the stormwater solutions can be incredibly varied across different sites.



**FIGURE 9.2 - STRUCTURAL BMP - EXISTING CURB YARD REVISED TO COLLECT STORMWATER FROM THE STREET**



## Some Nonstructural BMPs are:

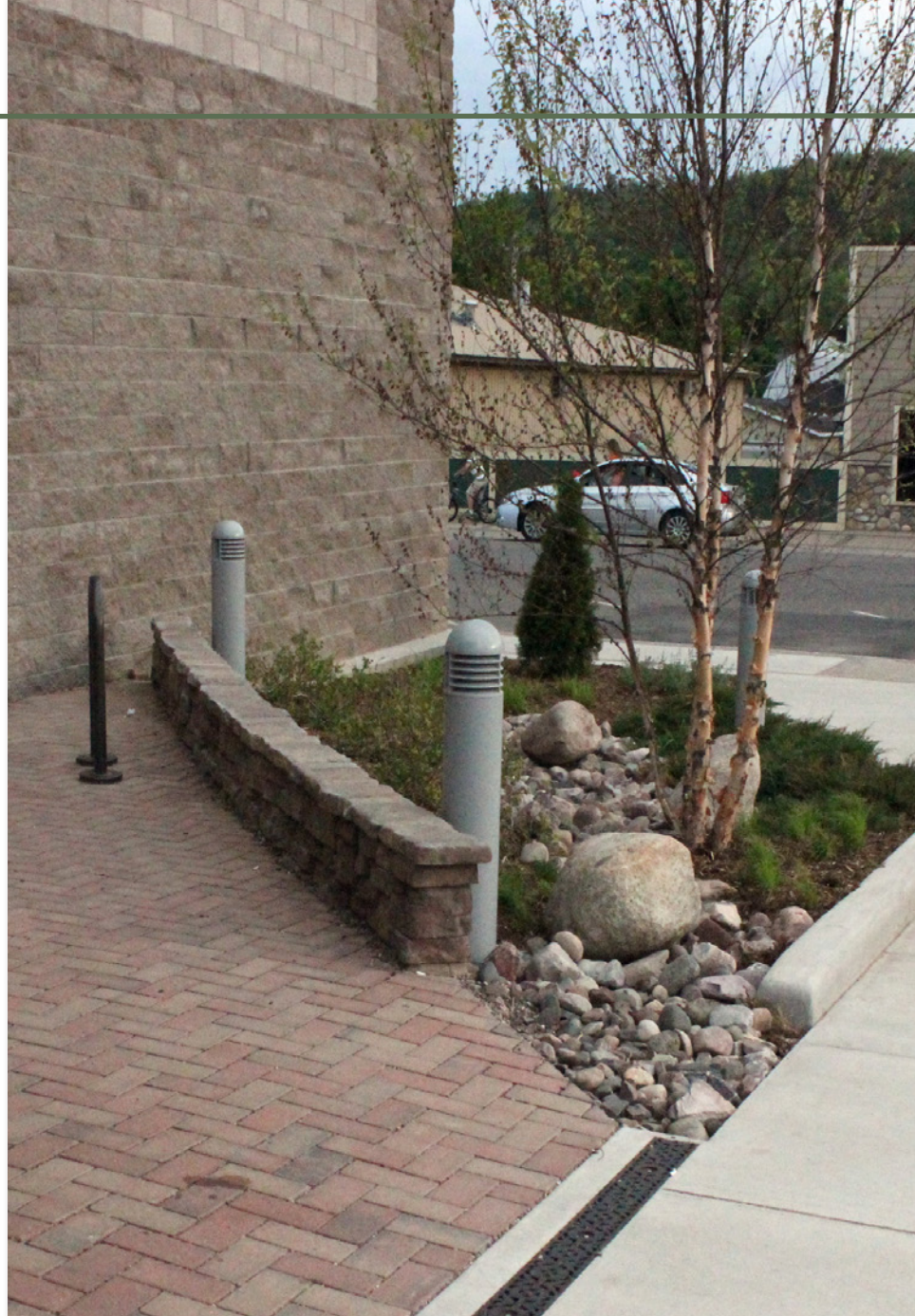
- Cluster development
- Minimize soil compaction
- Minimize total disturbed area
- Protect natural flow pathways
- Protect sensitive areas
- Reduce impervious surfaces
- Stormwater disconnection.

## Some Structural BMPs are:

- Bioretention (similar to rain gardens)
- Planter boxes or Tree Wells.
- Depressed Tree/Planter Islands in parking lots
- Vegetated Swales
- Infiltration Trenches
- Pervious Pavements
- Green Roofs
- Rainwater Collection/Reuse
- Native Vegetation Requirements

## Sustainable Design Rating Programs

There are several well known and accepted sustainable design rating programs for the development of building and site plans. Developers should be encouraged to utilize these programs (or at least follow their criteria even if they don't become fully certified) for all new projects. An incentive program or reduced permitting fees or time lines for projects that use one of these metrics and become certified projects could also be considered. Projects that use these rating systems bring an additional level of recognition and marketing power to the community.



**FIGURE 9.3 – BUS STOP IN MUNISING CONVERTED TO UTILIZE POROUS PAVEMENT WITH A RAIN GARDEN**

## LEED or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

This program is administered by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). It is the most widely used green building rating system in the world. Developers can use this rating system when designing and constructing virtually all building, community and home project types. LEED provides a framework to create

# 9. Environmental Sustainability

**Sustainable development is a key component in Placemaking!**

The Michigan Municipal League (MML) has identified the **EIGHT ASSETS** that Michigan's communities need to grow and strengthen. Research shows that these eight assets are essential to a community's livelihood. The following deals only with the "green initiatives" asset and is a good reference to help understand the basics of how sustainable design can better shape communities.

## **GREEN INITIATIVES**

- **Sustainable development can enhance the economic well-being of communities.**
- **Environmental health improves in neighborhoods that focus on green development.**
- **Green infrastructure can reduce energy costs and overall infrastructure costs.**

More information and case studies can be found on the Placemaking MML website.

<http://placemaking.mml.org/how-to/green-initiatives/>

healthy, highly efficient and cost-saving green buildings.

Refer to [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org) for more detail.

## **Sustainable SITES Initiative:**

This system is administered by Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI), SITES offers a comprehensive rating system designed to distinguish sustainable landscapes, measure their performance and elevate their value. SITES certification is available for a wide range of development projects, with or without buildings. Refer to [www.sustainablesites.org](http://www.sustainablesites.org) for more detail.

## **The National Green Building Standard™:**

The National Green Building Standard™ provides independent, third-party verification that a home, apartment building, or land development is designed and built to achieve high performance in six key areas: Site Design, Resource Efficiency, Water Efficiency, Energy Efficiency, Indoor Environmental Quality, and Building Operation & Maintenance. Refer to [www.nahb.org](http://www.nahb.org) for more detail.

**ENERGY STAR:** Energy Certified certified homes are designed and constructed to be significantly more energy efficient than those built to code while lowering homeowner utility bills and providing superior comfort, quality, and durability. Refer to [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov) for more detail.

## **The Living Building Challenge™:**

This is a building certification program, advocacy tool and philosophy that defines the most advanced measure of sustainability in the built environment possible today. This is just one program that is a part of the International Living Future Institute, there are also additional programs that may be of interest including The Living Community Challenge. Refer to <https://living-future.org/programs-overview/> for more detail.

## **Michigan Municipal League:**

The League will provide guidelines for creating

sustainable communities through the Michigan Green Communities Challenge, a program designed in collaboration with the state energy office, the Bureau of Energy Systems, to ensure that Michigan has the tools needed to implement short-term and long-lasting actions. The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program, through the stimulus recovery act, requires that all communities who wish to receive funds prepare a strategy for energy efficiency and conservation.

## Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1

Protect and enhance the existing natural resources.

#### Strategy 1.1

Improve the existing ordinance by adding a Tree Protection and other Landscape Requirements to require native vegetation and restrict invasive species.

#### STRATEGY 1.2

Improve the existing ordinance by improving the language for steep slope protection (consider restricting development on slopes over 18%) and removal of existing vegetation.

#### STRATEGY 1.3

Consider including a tree replacement requirement in the Zoning Ordinance.



**FIGURE 9.4 – INCREASING STREET TREES PROVIDES A WEALTH OF ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS**

#### STRATEGY 1.4

Create a policy for annual street tree plantings to start replacing street trees every year. Consider neighborhood outreach to help residents properly maintain existing street trees.

### Goal 2:

Promote sustainable design and management efforts.

#### STRATEGY 2.1

Include a requirement for sustainable design and low impact development (LID) practices in the zoning ordinance and/or design standards. Include but not limited to; innovate stormwater techniques, recyclable materials, green roofs, pervious pavements, energy efficient lighting, native landscaping and preservation of existing trees.

# 9. Environmental Sustainability

## **STRATEGY 2.2**

Seek and promote funding opportunities (grants) for sustainable development practices.

## **STRATEGY 2.3**

Encourage or consider tax incentives for development that follows various current industry benchmarks such as LEED or Sustainable Sites.

## **STRATEGY 2.4**

Consider being involved in the Michigan Green Communities program through the Michigan Municipal League

## **GOAL 3:**

Utilize public projects to implement and promote sustainable design and raise awareness within the community.

## **STRATEGY 3.1**

Create an RFQ process for qualified architects and contractors in sustainable design.

## **STRATEGY 3.2**

Create baseline standards for building upgrades and new construction.

## **STRATEGY 3.3**

Create baseline standards for incorporating green infrastructure into improvement projects of public right-of-ways, alleys, and parking facilities.

**STRATEGY 3.4** Be a model of sustainable design for the community with a visible public project.

**STRATEGY 3.5** Create promotional materials for residents and businesses describing the various sustainable practices that can be deployed in the Village.

## **GOAL 4:**

Increase recycling options.

## **STRATEGY 4.1**

Add recycling to public trash receptacles Downtown, at public facilities, at public events, and in parks.

## **STRATEGY 4.2**

Increase business recycling through code requirements and/or incentive programs.

## **STRATEGY 4.3**

Create a coalition of communities to work with regional authorities to increase access to recycling.

## **STRATEGY 4.4**

Create a drop-off program at the DPW Yard for less common recycling items.

## **GOAL 5:**

Conserve energy resources.

## **STRATEGY 5.1**

Assure all street and other public lighting is converted to LED, where possible.

## **STRATEGY 5.2**

Utilize stronger architectural standards for new construction and renovations to include building features that save energy.

## **STRATEGY 5.3**

Use savings from energy efficiency upgrades to create a revolving fund for future energy reduction upgrades.

## **GOAL 6:**

Expand the use of green stormwater infrastructure.

### **STRATEGY 6.1**

Develop zoning incentives for integrating green stormwater infrastructure into private development projects.

### **STRATEGY 6.2**

Integrate green stormwater infrastructure into parks or other public projects.

### **STRATEGY 6.3**

Promote the use of permeable pavement and other options for limiting the amount of stormwater runoff.

### **STRATEGY 6.4**

Consider implementing a “green alley” program to reduce paving and increase infiltration in alleys.



**FIGURE 9.5 – EXAMPLE OF A GREEN ALLEY CONVERSION SHOWING BOTH REDUCED PAVEMENT AREAS AND POROUS PAVEMENT**

# 10. Winter City Strategies

The Village of Ontonagon and Ontonagon County are noted for winter recreation opportunities. The County is a destination for snowmobilers and is home to the major destination downhill ski area at the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. The Village is accessible to the many snowmobile trails in the area, and there are groomed trails for cross country skiing at the Porcupine Mountains. Ice fishing is very popular on the many lakes in the area.

Despite these recreation opportunities, winter can be a difficult time for some Ontonagon residents. Winter problems include seasonal affective disorder, social isolation, and the challenges of dealing with snow and mobility.

A growing number of communities across the northern tier of the United States and in Canada are embracing the winter season and finding the opportunities it offers: economically, socially and culturally. Following “best practices” for “winter cities”, many communities are transforming themselves with things like year-round bicycling lanes, snow management innovations, winter festivals, skating plazas, all-season town squares, winter markets and other business opportunities. People want to walk, bike and socialize outside year-round, as long as they can do so with relative ease and comfort. It only makes sense to plan and design a community for winter as much as we do for summer.

This chapter of the Master Plan provides ideas to make the most of winter’s opportunities and to create a culture shift so that Ontonagon is considered one of best places to live, work and play in winter and year-round. The best “winter city” practices presented here, when implemented, will minimize winter’s negatives and create a more livable community.

## Winter in Ontonagon

**Average Annual Snowfall: 187”**

**Average January High Temperature:  
26 degrees Fahrenheit**

## Winter City Best Practices

### PROVIDE OR ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WINTER OUTDOOR ACTIVITY

- ❄ Consider ways to use existing city parks and open space for additional winter activities, such as a sledding hill, an ice skating rink or pathway, outdoor gathering area with a fire pit and creative warming hut.
- ❄ Create winter trails within the city on old rail grades. Where possible, connect existing trails and walkways.
  - Maintaining/grooming the snow for a multi-purpose skiing, running and walking path is possible where below freezing temperatures predominate.
  - Communities that experience extended above freezing temperatures may find it better to plow the trail for walking/running/ biking.

## IMPROVE WINTER TRANSPORTATION FOR PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND PUBLIC TRANSIT USERS

- ✳ Designate critical pedestrian areas that should receive priority when clearing sidewalks and walkways.
- ✳ Consider recruiting the assistance of local residents, such as business owners, neighborhood groups, or other organizations to maintain critical areas.
- ✳ Ensure that transition areas such as curb-cuts and bus stop platforms are properly plowed to ensure pedestrian safety, as these areas are often a collecting point for large mounds of icy snow due to street plowing.

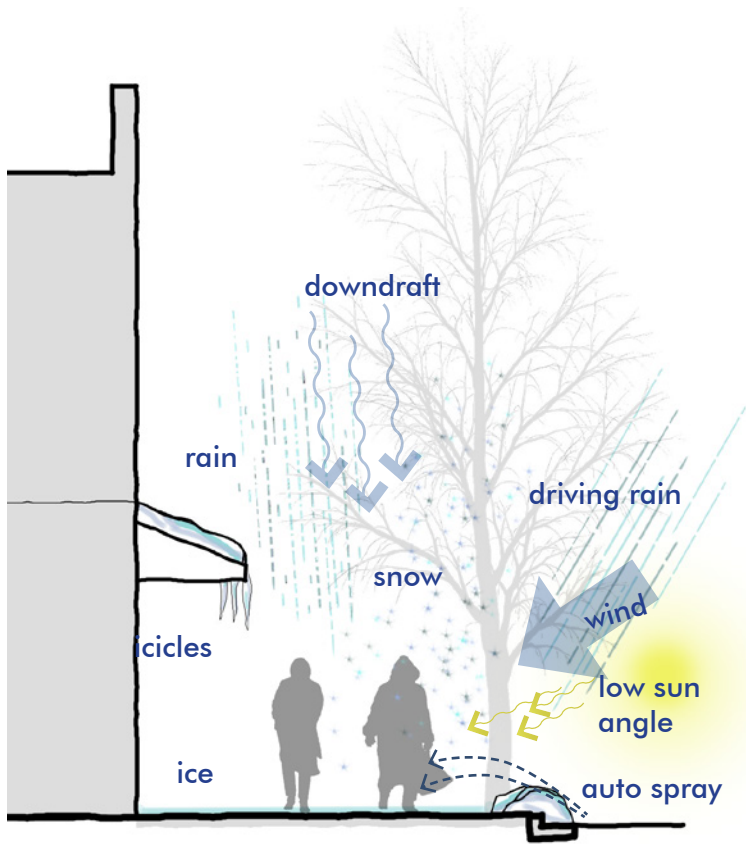


FIGURE 10.0 – PROVIDE FOR WINTER OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

## DESIGN FOR WINTER SAFETY AND COMFORT

- ✳ Take advantage of solar radiation in the orientation of buildings and outdoor spaces to provide a southern exposure to heat and sunlight.
- ✳ Use buildings and vegetation to protect outdoor spaces, such as vest pocket parks, from prevailing winter winds.
- ✳ Avoid building orientations which will create a wind tunneling effect.
- ✳ Avoid creating public spaces for winter use in areas that are shaded from the sun.
- ✳ Provide shelters or wind blocks in areas that serve as outdoor gathering spaces.
- ✳ Use technology and materials appropriate for a “winter city”. Outdoor furniture should be

# 10. Winter City Strategies



**FIGURE 10.1 – ELEMENTS OF PEDESTRIAN DISCOMFORTS IN WINTER CITIES**

constructed using appropriate materials such as wood, polyethylene, or vinyl-coated metal.

- ✧ Cover ramps or stairs to protect them from snow and ice.
- ✧ Provide handrails for all public and private walkways that exist on slopes. Particularly hazardous areas, such as steps and ramps, may need to be heated to prevent snow and ice from accumulating.
- ✧ Design roofs to account for snow and ice accumulation, and also prevent snow and ice from shedding onto parking areas or pedestrian walkways.

- ✧ Create transition areas at building entrances to provide patrons with an area to shed snow prior to entering the building.

## SNOW MANAGEMENT

- ✧ Consider snow plowing and removal in the design of road improvements such as curb extensions/bump outs, to allow for easy maneuverability of equipment around such areas.
- ✧ Design road cross-sections to provide an area for snow storage to prevent snow from being plowed onto the sidewalks when the street is cleared of snow.
- ✧ Bike lanes should not be used for snow storage, as more people are using bicycles for transportation year-round.
- ✧ Bike lanes should be maintained to the same standard as streets in order to encourage more people to commute by bicycle.
- ✧ Bike parking racks should not be put away for the winter season.
- ✧ Map out snow management problem areas and issues to evaluate the impacts of winter winds and drifting snow on city streets and walking paths.
- ✧ Redesign areas where wind is problematic to use earth forms and vegetation to reduce wind and drifting snow.
- ✧ Investigate the use of new equipment or innovative technology for snow removal.



- ✧ Locate snow storage areas where they will receive sufficient solar radiation to encourage melt-off and provide adequate drainage.
- ✧ Store snow in a number of smaller sites, rather than one large area in order to speed up the melting process.
- ✧ Balance the need for efficient snow removal with other considerations such as walkability, aesthetics, and parking.
- ✧ Explore and implement appropriate “best practices” for snow management that will improve service, reduce inconvenience and increase citizen satisfaction.

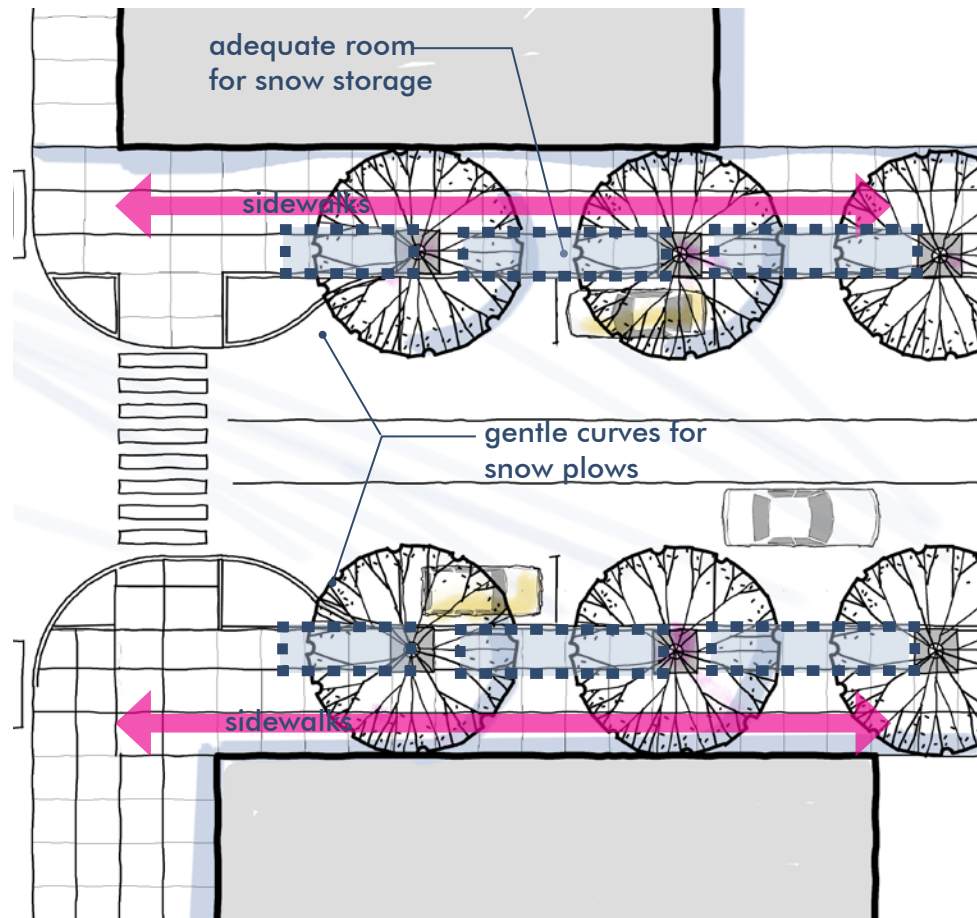


FIGURE 10.2 – SNOW PLOWING AND STORAGE

## VEGETATION AND LANDSCAPING

- ✧ Plant deciduous trees on the southern face of a building or outdoor area to provide cooling in the summer (when leaves are present), while still allowing sunlight to filter in during the winter (when leaves have fallen).
- ✧ Coniferous vegetation should be used on the north and west sides to protect the area from prevailing winter winds.
- ✧ Use berms and vegetation to direct snow drifts away from building entrances.
- ✧ Select appropriate landscaping for

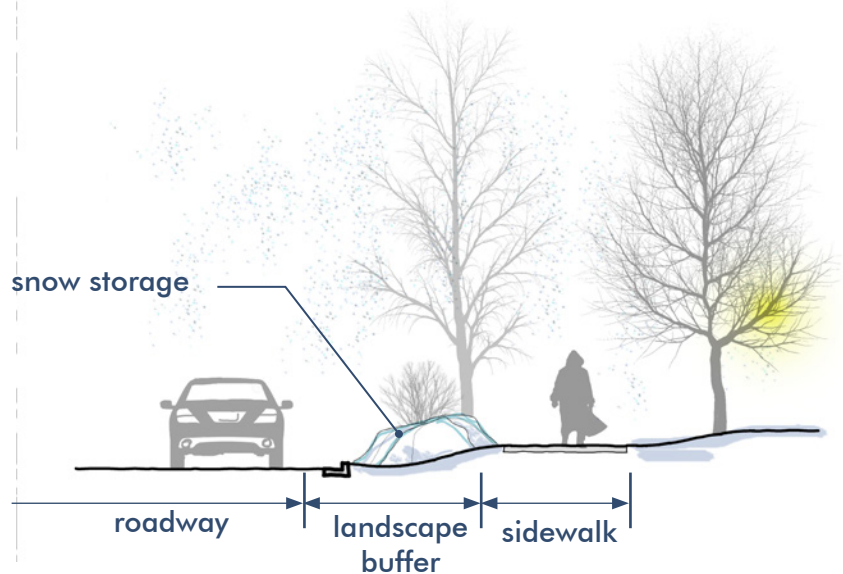


FIGURE 10.3 – LANDSCAPE BUFFERS & SETBACK

# 10. Winter City Strategies

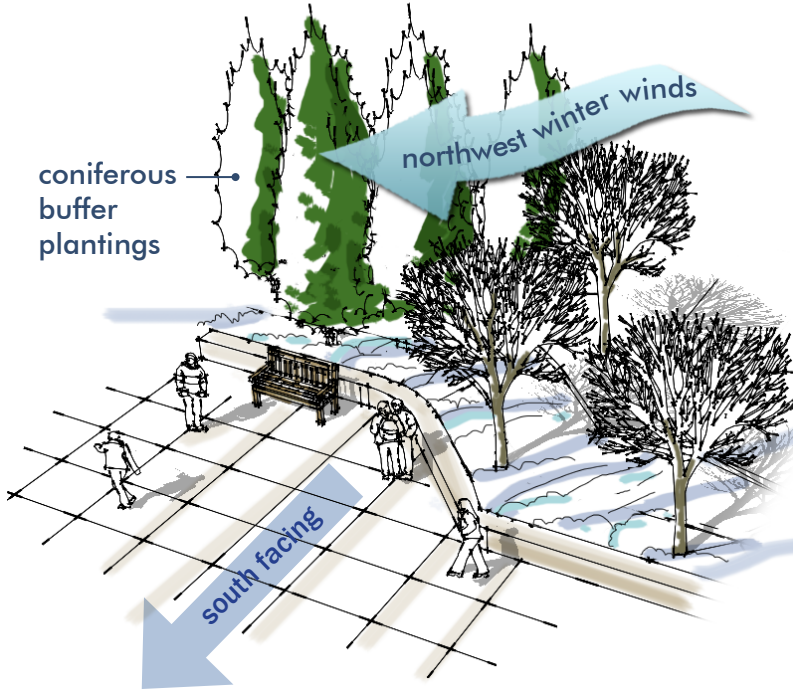


FIGURE 10.4 – OUTDOOR ROOMS

snow storage areas to minimize damage and poor growth due to compaction, pollutants, and poor drainage.

- ❖ Consider using vegetation as snow fences to protect open roadways and other areas from prevailing winter winds.
- ❖ Create “outdoor rooms” using trees and vegetation to shelter exposed areas from prevailing winds.
- ❖ Use landscaping plant species that offer attractive or useful winter characteristics such as twig color, fruit, and salt-tolerance.

## LIGHTING AND COLOR

- ❖ Consider color and lighting treatments for public spaces and buildings, in order to offset the darkness and monotony of the winter season.

## MAKE WINTER A POSITIVE ASSET TO ATTRACT BUSINESS, TOURISM AND NEW RESIDENTS

- ❖ Collaborate with other area organizations to create a sustainable annual winter festival featuring family outdoor activities, snow/ice sculptures, winter market, food and music.
- ❖ Consider implementing a “winter market” to capture a greater share of winter tourism.
- ❖ Dress up downtown with lighting, public art, and snow/ice sculptures for the entire winter season, not just the holidays.



FIGURE 10.5 – LIGHT UP THE DARK

## Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1

Provide or enhance opportunities for winter outdoor activity

#### STRATEGY 1.1

Support efforts to collaborate with the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park to improve the winter sports facilities.

#### STRATEGY 1.2

Consider ways to use existing Village parks and open space for additional winter activities, such as an outdoor gathering area with a fire pit and creative warming hut.

#### STRATEGY 1.3

Create winter trails within the Village connecting existing trails and walkways, and by maintaining the snow for a multi-purpose skiing and walking path.

### Goal 2

Provide the best possible snow management practices and service

#### STRATEGY 2.1

Map out snow management problem areas and issues, and evaluate the impacts of winter winds and drifting snow on Village streets and walking paths. Redesign areas where wind is problematic to use earth forms and vegetation to reduce wind and drifting snow.

#### STRATEGY 2.2

Investigate the use of new equipment or innovative technology for snow removal. This is particularly important when existing snow removal practices potentially interfere with walkability.

#### STRATEGY 2.3

Locate snow storage areas where they will receive sufficient solar radiation to encourage melt-off. Adequate drainage must also be provided. Store snow in a number of smaller sites, rather than one large area in order to speed up the melting process.



FIGURE 10.6 – WAYS TO USE EXISTING SPACES IN THE WINTER

# 10. Winter City Strategies

## **STRATEGY 2.4**

Balance the need for efficient snow removal with other considerations such as walkability, aesthetics, and parking.

## **STRATEGY 2.5**

Explore and implement appropriate “best practices” for snow management that will improve service, reduce inconvenience and increase citizen satisfaction.

## **Goal 3**

Make winter a positive asset to attract business, tourism and new residents

### **STRATEGY 3.1**

Collaborate with other area organizations to create a sustainable annual winter festival featuring family outdoor activities, snow/ice sculptures, winter market, food and music.

### **STRATEGY 3.2**

Consider implementing a “winter market” to capture a greater share of winter tourism.

### **STRATEGY 3.3**

Dress up downtown for the entire winter season to create a “ski town” image.

## How To Get Started

1. Establish a local Winter Strategies Task Force
2. Discuss snow removal, recreation, and other initiatives.
3. This task force should include a DPW representative, Planning Commission Chair, City Manager, and business owner.
4. Take an inventory of winter assets
  - Attractions
  - Partnerships
  - Opportunities



FIGURE 10.7 – MAKE WINTER A POSITIVE ASSET & ATTRACTION

# 11. Implementation

Photo Credit: Mike Rebholz

The Master Plan is a guide for the Village of Ontonagon elected and appointed officials to follow. The Plan presents many Goals and Strategies to implement for the improvement and revitalization of the Village. While some strategies require funding, others are policy-related and low cost. Implementation will require time, patience and perseverance. The Master Plan should be referred to for all decisions, and reviewed and updated as required every five (5) years by the Planning Commission. Annually, the Planning Commission should prepare a report outlining accomplishments with implementation of the Master Plan



**FIGURE 11.0 WELCOME SIGN**

The tables below summarize Master Plan strategies.

<b>HOUSING</b>		
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SUGGESTED TIME FRAME</b>
1.1 Adopt and enforce a Property Maintenance Code	Village Administration	On-going
1.2 Determine if a vacant property registry would be beneficial	Planning Commission	1-2 years
1.3 Work with local citizens interested in keeping empty lots clean and maintained with the Adopt-a-lot program	Planning Commission	On-going
1.4 Inform residents about the USDA-RD grant and low interest loan program designed to assist homeowners with repairs.	Village Administration	On-going
1.5 Inform property owners and potential property owners of opportunities to address blight through MEDC's Brownfields program.	Village Administration	On-going
1.6 Continue the Village-wide clean-up day to encourage citizens to dispose of junk materials in their yard.	Planning Commission	1-2 years
2.1 Actively recruit a developer to develop the Greenland School site, for multi-family housing, single family homes. The Village should also encourage the renovation of existign apartments and encourage infill development to provide more housing. Infill development helps maintain walkable neighborhoods and lessens the harmful effects of sprawl.	Village Administration, Planning Commission and Village Council	On-going

**TABLE 11.1 – HOUSING STRATEGIES**

<b>NATURAL FEATURES/PARKS &amp; RECREATION FACILITIES/PUBLIC LANDS</b>		
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SUGGESTED TIME FRAME</b>
1.1 Continue to evaluate the operations of the Ontonagon Marina and opportunities to generate additional revenue needed to support needed repairs and maintenance, including the development of a campground.	Marina Committee, Village Administration and Village Council	1-2 years
1.2 Evaluate the operations and cost/benefit for the Village Recreational Building.	Village Administration, Recreation Committee	1-2 years
1.3 Seek funding to repair the East Pier sidewalk.	Village Administration and Village Council	1-2 years
2.1 Install lighting on Rose Island paths for use as a snowshoe trail.	Village Council	1-5 years
2.2 Consider creating ski trails at the golf course.	Recreation Committee/Village Council	On-going
2.3 Collaborate with Ontonagon Township to establish ski trails at the Township Park or land suitable at the County Airport.	Recreation Committee/Village Council	1-5 years

**TABLE 11.2 – NATURAL FEATURES/PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES/PUBLIC LANDS**

<b>CITY INFRASTRUCTURE, PUBLIC FACILITIES, SAFETY &amp; EMERGENCY SERVICES</b>		
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SUGGESTED TIME FRAME</b>
1.1 Move forward with an improvement project to reduce/eliminate storm water infiltration.	Village Administration	1-5 years
1.2 Move forward with an improvement project to replace the aging water transmission line from White Pine to Silver City.	Village Administration	1-5 years
1.3 Continue to investigate changes in State of Michigan requirements and how they impact the Village.	Village Administration	On-going

**TABLE 11.3 – CITY INFRASTRUCTURE, PUBLIC FACILITIES, SAFETY & EMERGENCY SERVICES STRATEGIES**

# 11. Implementation

<b>TRANSPORTATION: VEHICULAR, PEDESTRIAN &amp; BICYCLE</b>		
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SUGGESTED TIME FRAME</b>
1.1 Inventory the condition of City streets using the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (Paser) system	Public Works	1-2 years
1.2 With the Village's financial position improving, develop a Capital Improvements Plan to prioritize and project street improvements.	Planning Commission and Village Administration	1 years
2.1 Inventory the condition of existing sidewalks and prioritize replacement	Public Works	On-going
2.2 Consider a cost sharing formula with property owners for sidewalk replacement.	Village Administration and Village Council	2-5 years
2.3 When street corners are reconstructed, the corner curbing should be made ADA compliant..	Public Works	On-going
2.4 Work with MDOT to identify and implement appropriate crosswalk locations on US45, M38, and M64, especially in downtown, and along other highways in the Village where needed.	Village Administration	1-2 years
2.5 Continue to pursue and implement the East Pier Walkway Improvement project.	Village Administration and Village Council	1-5 years
2.6 Work to improve the pedestrian walkway along Lakeshore Drive, including widening and making it ADA compliant.	Village Administration and Village Council	2-5 years

**TABLE 11.4 – TRANSPORTATION: VEHICULAR, PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE STRATEGIES**



<b>FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING PLAN</b>		
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SUGGESTED TIME FRAME</b>
1.1 Identify Village-owned properties suitable for residential development and explore opportunities for developing a variety of housing options	Planning Commission	1-5 years
1.2 Review the Zoning Ordinance and other Village ordinances, and amend if necessary to encourage maintenance of existing residential neighborhoods, eliminate blight, and rehabilitation/removal of deteriorated structures	Planning Commission	1 year
1.3 Utilize the Zoning Ordinance and other local regulations to encourage consistency and connectivity between old and new neighborhoods, e.g. by discouraging lengthy cul-de-sac streets and encouraging the extension of the grid street system into new development.	Planning Commission	On-going
1.4 Adopt and enforce appropriate blight and rental inspection ordinances and utilize Municipal Civil Infractions methodology for enforcement.	Village Administration and Village Council	On-going
1.5 Encourage maintenance/upkeep of properties with incentives and volunteer efforts	Village Council	On-going
1.6 Improve maintenance and reconstruction of infrastructure/roads in the neighborhoods to encourage private investment.	Village Council	On-going
1.7 Add small neighborhood parks, gathering areas, trails/trail connections, and community gardens as needed or desired within neighborhoods	Recreation Committee, Planning Commission, and Village Council	3-10 years
1.8 Continue to promote the Greenland School site for housing development.	Village Administration and Village Council	1-5 years
1.9 Work with the property owner of the former mill site to develop a mix of housing types along the Lake Superior shoreline.	Planning Commission, Village Administration, Village Council	On-going
1.9 Provide incentives for ground-floor retail combined with upper-level residential uses, including the use of tax increment financing, low-income tax credits (affordable housing), and façade improvement funds, and reduced land cost.	Planning Commission and Village Council	3-10 years

**TABLE 11.5 - FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING STRATEGIES**

# 11. Implementation

<b>FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING PLAN</b>		
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SUGGESTED TIME FRAME</b>
2.2 Prioritize the rehabilitation or reuse of vacant and underutilized properties or the conversion of single-uses into mixed-use developments as a preferred strategy over new development.	Planning Commission	On-going
3.1 Encourage new development or redevelopment that is compatible with the scale and architecture of existing properties (especially in the traditional, historic neighborhoods and Downtown) while preserving existing natural features as much as possible.	Planning Commission	On-going
3.2 Require landscaping or public art or other such aesthetic treatment along long, blank walls to improve community aesthetics, and encourage pedestrian activity.	Planning Commission	On-going
3.3 Pursue streetscaping and aesthetic enhancements for the highway corridors through the Village, including pedestrian scale lighting, street trees, bicycle amenities such as parking facilities, bicycle lanes, and wayfinding and gateway signage.	Planning Commission, Village Council, and Village Administration	1-5 years
3.4 Implement access management principles to create a safer, more aesthetic highway corridor while preserving function and capacity of the highway system while supporting non-motorized transportation elements.	Planning Commission	On-going

**TABLE 11.5 - FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING STRATEGIES (CONTINUED.)**

## DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SUGGESTED TIME FRAME</b>
1.1 Prioritize sites for redevelopment efforts and determine which types of businesses are appropriate on these sites.	Planning Commission	1 year
1.2 Create property information packages	Planning Commission and Village Administration	2 years
1.3 Create developers’ packets and start actively recruiting businesses through directly mailing developers and by posting the information on the Village website.	Village Administration	2 years
1.4 Work with WUPPDR and various state agencies on these packets.	Village Administration	2 years
2.1 Meet with officials in Ontonagon Township and Ontonagon County to discuss strategies for downtown, economic development and housing.	Planning Commission, DDA and Village Council	1-2 years
2.2 Continue to support and be involved with the Ontonagon County Economic Development Corporation.	Village Council	On-going
2.3 Encourage Ontonagon County municipalities to support the EDC.	Village Council	On-going
3.1 Continue work to strengthen neighborhoods, eliminate blight, improve recreation opportunities, foster the development of new housing, and support downtown revitalization	Planning Commission and Village Council	On-going
3.2 Continue efforts to rebuild the East Pier Walkway	Village Administration and Village Council	1-3 years
4.1 Design and implement a downtown and Village-wide wayfinding system	Planning Commission, DDA and Village Council	1-2 years
4.2 Design and implement “Welcome to Downtown” signs at key locations	Planning Commission, DDA and Village Council	1-2 years
4.3 Locate an Electric Vehicle (EV) charging station downtown	Planning Commission, DDA, and City Council	2 years
4.4 Initiate efforts to recruit volunteers to help clean up vacant sites in downtown and on Rose Island, and encourage short term vendors like food trucks to set up on a site downtown.	DDA, Village Council,	2 years

**TABLE 11.6 – DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT PRIORITY STRATEGIES**

# 11. Implementation

<b>DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES(continued.)</b>		
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SUGGESTED TIME FRAME</b>
4.5 Work with the Ontonagon Historical Society to develop public access to the Ontonagon Lighthouse.	Planning Commission, Village Council	2 years
4.6 Continue to seek funding and a developer for redevelopment of the block between Copper and Quartz Street.	DDA, Planning Commission, City Council	3-5 years

**TABLE 11.6 - DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT PRIORITY STRATEGIES (CONTINUED.)**



PHOTO SOURCE: PLUGSHARE via The Driven, JUNE 24, 2021, BRIDIE SCHMIDT (<https://thedriven.io/2021/06/24/victoria-to-add-100-destination-ev-chargers-with-5-million-state-funding/>)

**FIGURE 11.3 – SIMPLE EV CHARGING STATION**

<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY</b>		
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SUGGESTED TIME FRAME</b>
1.1 Improve the existing zoning ordinance by adding a Tree Protection and other Landscape Requirements to require native vegetation and restrict invasive species.	Planning Commission	2-4 years
1.2 Improve the existing ordinance by improving the language for steep slope protection (consider restricting development on slopes over 18%) and removal of existing vegetation.	Planning Commission	2-4 years
1.3 Include a tree replacement requirement in the Zoning Ordinance.	Planning Commission	2-4 years
1.4 Create a policy for annual street tree plantings to start replacing street trees every year. Consider neighborhood outreach to help residents properly maintain existing street trees.	Village Council and Public Works	1-2 years

**TABLE 11.7 – ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES**

# 11. Implementation

<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY (continued.)</b>		
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SUGGESTED TIME FRAME</b>
2.1 Include a requirement for sustainable design and low impact development (LID) practices in the zoning ordinance and/or design standards. Include but not limited to; innovate storm-water techniques, recyclable materials, green roofs, pervious pavements, energy efficient lighting, native landscaping and preservation of existing trees.	Planning Commission	2-4 years
2.2 Seek and promote funding opportunities (grants) for sustainable development practices.	Village Administration	On-going
2.3 Encourage or consider tax incentives for development that follows various current industry benchmarks such as LEED or Sustainable Sites.	Planning Commission and Village Council	On-going
2.4 Consider being involved in the Michigan Green Communities program through the Michigan Municipal League	Village Council	1-2 years
3.1 Create an RFQ process for qualified architects and contractors in sustainable design.	Village Administration	1-5 years
3.2 Create baseline standards for building upgrades and new construction	Village Administration	1-5 years
3.3 Create baseline standards for incorporating green infrastructure into improvement projects of public right-of-ways, alleys, and parking facilities.	Planning Commission	2-4 years
3.4 Be a model of sustainable design for the community with a visible public project	Planning Commission	2-4 years
3.5 Create promotional materials for residents and businesses describing the various sustainable practices that can be deployed in the city.	Planning Commission	2-4 years
4.1 Add recycling to public trash receptacles Downtown, at public facilities, at public events, and in parks.	Village Administration and Public Works	2 years
4.2 Increase business recycling through code requirements and/or incentive programs	Village Administration	2 years
4.3 Create a coalition of communities to work with regional authorities to increase access to recycling	Village Administration	2 years
4.4 Create a drop-off program at the DPW Yard for less common recycling items.	Public Works	2 years

**TABLE 11.7 - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES (CONTINUED.)**

<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY (continued.)</b>		
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SUGGESTED TIME FRAME</b>
5.1 Assure all street land other public lighting is converted to LED, where possible.	Village Administration and Public Works	5 years
5.2 Utilize stronger architectural standards for new construction and renovations to include building features that save energy.	Planning Commission	5 years
5.3 Use savings from energy efficiency upgrades to create a revolving fund for future energy reduction upgrades.	Village Council/Village Administration	5 years
6.1 Develop zoning incentives for integrating green storm-water infrastructure into private development projects.	Planning Commission	2 years
6.2 Integrate green storm-water infrastructure into parks or other public projects	Village Administration and Public Works	3-5 years
6.3 Promote the use of permeable pavement and other options for limiting the amount of storm-water runoff.	Planning Commission	On-going
6.4 Consider implementing a “green alley” program to reduce paving and increase infiltration in alleys	Planning Commission and Village Council	3-5 years

**TABLE 11.7 - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES (CONTINUED.)**



**FIGURE 11.4 - GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IN A PARKING LOT**

# 11. Implementation

WINTER CITY		
STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	SUGGESTED TIME FRAME
1.1 Support efforts to collaborate with the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park to improve the winter sports facilities.	Recreation Committee, Planning Commission and Village Council	On-going
1.2 Consider ways to use existing Village parks and open space for additional winter activities, such as an outdoor gathering area with a fire pit and creative warming hut.	Recreation Committee, Planning Commission	1-2 years
1.3 Create winter trails within the Village connecting existing trails and walkways, and by maintaining the snow for a multi-purpose skiing and walking path.	Planning Commission, Public Works	1-5 years
2.1 Map out snow management problem areas and issues, and evaluate the impacts of winter winds and drifting snow on city streets and walking paths. Redesign areas where wind is problematic to use earth forms and vegetation to reduce wind and drifting snow	Public Works	On-going
2.2 Investigate the use of new equipment or innovative technology for snow removal. This is particularly important when existing snow removal practices potentially interfere with walkability.	Village Administration and Public Works	On-going
2.3 Locate smaller snow storage areas where they will receive sufficient solar radiation to encourage melt-off. Adequate drainage must also be provided.	Public Works	On-going
2.4 Balance the need for efficient snow removal with other considerations such as walkability, aesthetics, and parking.	Public Works	On-going
2.5 Explore and implement appropriate “best practices” for snow management that will improve service, reduce inconvenience and increase citizen satisfaction.	Public Works	On-going
3.1 Collaborate with other area organizations to create a sustainable annual winter festival featuring family outdoor activities, snow/ice sculptures, winter market, food and music.	Village Administration and Village Council	1-2 years
3.2 Consider implementing a “winter market” to capture a greater share of winter tourism.	DDA and Planning Commission	3-5 years
3.4 Dress up downtown for the entire winter season to create a “ski town” image	DDA	On-going

TABLE 11.8 – WINTER CITY STRATEGIES





FIGURE 11.5 - EXAMPLE OF OUTDOOR GATHERING IN WINTER

## 1. Open House Public Comments

### Village of Ontonagon Master Plan Public Input Workshop Ideas July 27, 2022

#### Parks and Recreation Map

Bike rentals  
Tours of the river  
Ride the ducks (the otters)  
Non-motorized trails  
Bike paths  
Railroad station renewal  
Sunsets must be promoted...best in the US  
Lighthouse must be easily accessible  
East pier walkway, boardwalk repairs  
Food trucks on Lakeshore Drive once a week  
"End of the road" - promote that  
Bike paths, golf, skate park at Rose Island  
Sister City – Mobile, AL –US 45 starts  
Easy access to the beach  
Billboards promoting Ontonagon 100 miles away  
"On-demand" shuttle bus service  
Rose Island: Have Wildflowers and grasses planted with natural elements and sculpture art made by community contests. Natural park area  
Pavilion: place to eat ice cream and Slys to-go, with vines and plants, yoga mats for outdoor yoga  
Outside park/wedding venue somewhere (possibly Rose Island)  
Drive in theater

#### Transportation Map

Need gateways at all highways entering Ontonagon

#### Existing Land Use Map

Level 1 Electric Vehicle Charging  
Water Trail. It is 1 mile to circumnavigate Rose Island  
Solar power field on vacant mill site  
Hydroponic education facility  
MI-Trail Bridge status

## 2. Planning Commission Resolution of Adoption

### Village of Ontonagon Planning Commission

#### Resolution Approving the Village of Ontonagon Master Plan

WHEREAS, a new Village of Ontonagon Master Plan was needed to guide the future development of the Village, and

WHEREAS, the Village of Ontonagon Planning Commission followed the Master Plan process required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, and includes the text and maps required by the Act, and

WHEREAS, the preparation of the Master Plan provided opportunities for public input and followed all public notification requirements for a Master Plan, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on February 1, 2023 on the draft Master Plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village of Ontonagon Planning Commission hereby adopts the Master Plan.

This Resolution was approved upon a motion by Szymanski and supported by Seid, on February 1, 2023.

Koi Weisung  
Secretary

[Signature]  
Chair

Roll Call:

William Johnson      yes

Deb Seid      yes

Dorothy Sharkey      Yes

Dan Szymanski      Yes

### 3. Village Council Resolution of Adoption

**Ontonagon Village Council  
Resolution 2023-03**

**Resolution Approving the Village of Ontonagon Master Plan**

At the regular meeting of the Village Council of the Village of Ontonagon, held on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February, 2023, in the offices at 315 Quartz Street, Ontonagon, Michigan, the following resolution was offered by Trustee Rebholz and supported by Trustee Chastan:

WHEREAS, a new Village of Ontonagon Master Plan was needed to guide the future development of the Village, and

WHEREAS, the Village of Ontonagon Planning Commission followed the Master Plan update process required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, and includes the text and maps required by the Act, and

WHEREAS, the preparation of the Master Plan provided opportunities for public input and followed all public notification requirements for a Master Plan, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on February 1, 2023 by the Planning Commission on the draft Master Plan.


NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontonagon Village Council hereby adopts the Master Plan.

THIS RESOLUTION, is hereby approved by roll call vote:

Pamela Coey, President	<u>Yes</u>
Sarah Hopper, President Pro-Tem	<u>Yes</u>
Elmer Marks, Jr, Trustee	<u>Yes</u>
Don Chastan, Trustee	<u>Yes</u>
Michael Rebholz, Trustee	<u>Yes</u>
Brittany Penegor, Trustee	<u>Yes</u>
Debra Seid, Trustee	<u>Yes</u>

And, adopted by the Village Council of the Village of Ontonagon, this 13<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2023.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Village Council of the Village of Ontonagon, County of Ontonagon, State of Michigan, at a regular meeting held on Monday, February 13, 2023, that said meeting was conducted and public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in full compliance with the Open Meetings Act, being Act 267 of Public Acts of Michigan 1976, and that the minutes of said meeting were kept and will be or have been made available as required by said Act.

  
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Kori Weisinger, Village Clerk