

Escanaba is renowned for water recreation opportunities found in the waters of Lake Michigan's Little Bay De Noc. Fisherman and recreational boaters are drawn to the rich resources and natural beauty found throughout the bay.

Introduction

CHAPTER 1

Residents of Escanaba enjoy the beautiful scenic resources and rich community character the region and the city offer. Acknowledging the value of these attributes has led to a strong commitment by the residents and city officials to concentrate efforts to maintain and enhance Escanaba as a premier waterfront city in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Residents understand the importance of planning for a livable and enjoyable community and have taken an active role in shaping the way in which the community grows and develops. Residents and city officials have worked jointly to gain an understanding and appreciation for those elements that pose challenges and the community is meeting those challenges head on.

This Master Plan is the result of extensive data collection and analysis providing a method to address each critical issue in the City of Escanaba. Community input has played a critical role in the formation of this plan. Community involvement ensures that the finalized plan represents the needs and demands of the people who are affected most, the residents. Through intensive collection of resident views and opinions, key issues have been identified and are addressed throughout the chapters of this plan. These key issues are the guiding principles in determining the themes and objectives. They uphold the decisions which will be supported by the plan throughout its implementation.

The initial sections of this Master Plan present an analysis of the current conditions of Escanaba including a brief history, demographic statistics, economic climate, and the existing land use. The remaining chapters of the plan are designed around the key issues highlighted by the residents and city officials. Recommendations for how Escanaba should address these key issues are outlined in detail through a summary of necessary steps and an implementation strategy. The Master Plan provides a strong guideline for achieving the community's goals by balancing current conditions with the desired vision.



MASTER PLAN GOALS

This Master Plan will serve as a guide to help manage the future growth of Escanaba and as a tool that will shape and maintain the community as growth occurs. To be successful, it is critical that the Master Plan reflect the views and opinions of those who will be most impacted, the residents. Intensive community input has given residents a sense of ownership in the plan, which will foster future support in the decisions that are made based on the content of the plan. The Master Plan goals are directly related to the community views. They support the resulting recommendations. The highlighted goals of the Escanaba Master Plan are as follows.

VISION

- Waterfront along the north shore area is a balance between public recreation and private development.
- Main Street is inviting, attractive and walkable.
- Economic activities are vibrant, diversified and flexible, with high tech and evolving business culture in partnership with a four-year university.
- Utilities provided by the city in the most cost effective manner to meet the current and future demands of the community and to accommodate regional development.
- Neighborhoods are preserved and improved, combined with expanded quality housing options.
- Transportation is conducive to residential living, business priorities, and non-motorized travel.
- Escanaba is envied for its natural beauty and progressive small town atmosphere.

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The City of Escanaba is located at the heart of Michigan's Upper Peninsula along the north side of Lake Michigan on the western shore of Little Bay De Noc. Bounded by the bay to the east, Wells Township to the north and west and Ford River Township to the south, Escanaba serves as both the county seat and largest community in Delta County.

Escanaba covers roughly twelve square miles of land area within the city limits. The City of Escanaba is a small northern town that prides itself in its community values and beauty. Escanaba hopes to maintain and improve these community values and small town character while expanding education and employment opportunities to further enhance the quality of life for the residents.

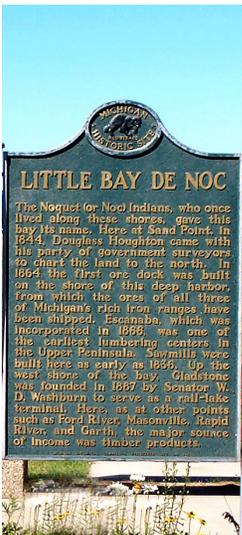




With a population of 13,140, Escanaba is one of the largest cities in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It is the regional service and shopping center for the south-central residents of the Upper Peninsula. Additionally, Bay College and St. Francis Hospital offer educational and health care services as well as employment opportunities. New Page Corporation is the primary employer in Delta County and has long benefited from the rich wood resources throughout the Upper Peninsula.

Escanaba is renowned for water recreation opportunities found in the waters of Lake Michigan's Little Bay De Noc. Fisherman and recreational boaters are drawn to the rich resources and natural beauty found throughout the bay. Escanaba's northern location along Lake Michigan also provides winter recreation opportunities that draw a multitude of snow sport enthusiasts. These recreational resources are a primary asset for the community and provide economic stability to the area.

Escanaba has historically relied heavily on the natural resource industries of wood and iron ore mining. These activities have diminished over the past decade, creating demand for new economic activities to support Escanaba. It hopes to attract new and innovative industries offering good paying jobs and sustainable employment opportunities.



The development of the railroad had the most significant impact on Escanaba by transforming the small lakeshore town into a booming hub of economic activity.

History of Escanaba

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION

Escanaba was built as a shipping port, supporting the iron ore, copper and lumber industries in the early to mid 1800's. During the Civil War, Escanaba shipped iron ore to be made into steel cannons and supplies to support the northern armies. It would continue to grow as a primary shipping port in the northern reaches of Lake Michigan. Incorporated as a city in 1883, Escanaba became the regional city of activity in the south central portion of the Upper Peninsula.

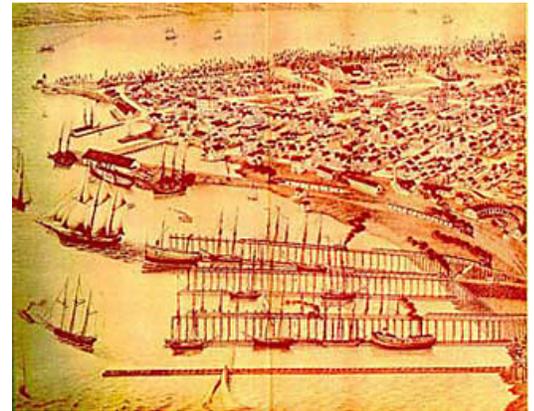
In the early days before Escanaba became established as the primary port city on the northern shore of Lake Michigan, activity in the area was growing. The town of Flat Rock was positioned along the Escanaba River and was the center for trade and commerce during the 1840's and 1850's, before Escanaba was built. Flat Rock was used as a staging area for travelers and traders heading north to Marquette for the trade of goods with Native American groups and set-



Photo of Eli P. Royce courtesy the City of Escanaba.

tlers. In 1844, Jon and Joseph Smith, built a steam-powered mill near the mouth of the Escanaba River. They later sold the mill to the N. Ludington Co. in 1851. The N. Ludington Co. owned the area known as Sand Point that would later become the site for the town of Escanaba. Native Americans would frequent Flat Rock to trade furs and pelts for modern day supplies and foodstuffs. Among these Native Americans were the Nokes of the Algonquin tribe. They traded beaver and otter pelts with the Flat Rock settlers for metal axes, beads, guns and brandy. The settlement of Flat Rock supported the development of Escanaba and served as the initial destination on the North Shore of Lake Michigan.

Eli P. Royce, a land surveyor, was hired by the N. Ludington Company to layout the city plan. He designed the first plat of Escanaba in 1862. Royce would go on to become one of Escanaba's founding citizens, involved in the first position in city office. Royce was asked to lay out the city with liberal provisions for the citizens and railroad, which is still evident today in the wide streets and network of neighborhoods. With the assistance of Royce, Escanaba quickly became one of the great northern boom towns benefiting from the rich copper and timber resources found to the north and west. Royce and the N. Ludington Co. were the primary founders during this boom and played a significant role in shaping Escanaba's future.



1881 Artist Drawing of Escanaba by J.J. Stoner of Madison, Wisconsin

With increasing demand for Iron Ore during the Civil War, new transportation networks were needed to provide a connection from the iron mines north of Escanaba to the steel mills in the southeast. William B. Ogden saw the opportunity to extend existing rail lines and open up the iron rich reserves of the Upper Peninsula to the nation. In 1859, Ogden and investors organized the Chicago & North Western Railway Company. The Peninsula Rail Road Company of Michigan, a subsidiary to the Chicago & North Western Railway Co., would connect Escanaba to the Jackson Mine of Negaunee by the end of 1863. Once in Escanaba, the iron ore was shipped by steamship to Fort Howard (Green Bay Wisconsin) where the North-western line was positioned to transport the ore to the final destinations. The development of the railroad had the most significant impact on Escanaba by transforming the small lakeshore town into a booming hub of economic activity.



House of Ludington (Ludington Hotel) - Recent

As Escanaba and the shipping industry grew, immigrants flocked to the prosperous community. This influx of people brought the emergence of businesses and industries that supported the mining and shipping operations, rapidly expanding the economic activities throughout the city. As more people came, more housing was built establishing Escanaba as a thriving and vibrant Northern Great Lakes City (The Century Book 1863-1963).

Additional Escanaba history is found in, "The Century Book 1863-1963", which can be found on the City's web site (www.escanaba.org). This publication provides a detailed history of Escanaba and how this northern community developed over the course of time. For more information, contact the Escanaba City Clerk's office, located at Escanaba City Hall.



Ludington Hotel - 1887
Photo courtesy City of Escanaba



Ludington Hotel - 1914
Photo courtesy City of Escanaba