

The waterfront and the parks were clearly seen as the top assets in the community. Participants specifically noted the “great recreation assets [in the city],” “natural resources,” “sport fishing,” and Lake Michigan.

Public Participation

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION

Public participation is a critical element of any planning process and is crucial to the development of the master plan for Escanaba. Far too often public participation is overlooked and under utilized in the creation of a master plan. This lack of public involvement results in a plan that does not accurately reflect the views and opinions of those who will be impacted the most, the residents. Therefore, a multitude of methods must be exercised to obtain a clear representation of the entire community. Taking public participation very seriously, Escanaba has provided numerous opportunities for residents to share their vision for the city's future through a variety of mediums. Escanaba residents have shown strong support for the master plan update through active participation in the visioning activity and survey responses.

The ideas and opinions of the participants in the visioning sessions and community survey, (discussed in more detail in the General Themes and Objectives), have been collected and analyzed in order to develop a sense of vision and future for the City of Escanaba. These goals and objectives, derived from the future vision, are used to help develop the shape and framework of the Master Plan. This chapter represents all of the information collected throughout the public participation process. The community visioning, student visioning, community survey, and administration survey have all been tabulated and summarized.

METHODS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Incorporating public participation into the development of the master plan has been one of the primary objectives of the City of Escanaba. This concern is represented through the number of different mediums that have been used to extend this participation to the largest population of residents. The mediums that have been employed to obtain this information are as follows:

- Community Visioning Sessions – Three community visioning sessions were conducted by the consulting team of Beckett and Raeder Inc. Residents were encouraged to participate and present their views and opinions. The sessions were patterned after a process developed by the University of Michigan Institute of Social Science Research.

Community Participation

- Visioning Sessions
- Questionnaire
- Student Questionnaire
- Stakeholder interviews
- Boards & Commission Questionnaire
- Web Site





- Community Questionnaire – 500 survey questionnaires were distributed to random households in each of the four voting precincts by the City of Escanaba. The community wide questionnaire was designed to further expand public participation opportunities for residents.
- Student Questionnaire – 125 student survey questionnaires were provided to Escanaba Senior High School students. The survey allowed the younger residents of Escanaba an opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns about the community without external pressures or influence.
- Board and Commission Questionnaire – 91 survey questionnaires were sent to city board and commission members.
- Community Web Site – A web site was developed (www.ourcommunityplan.com) to provide up-to-date progress reports on the project. Draft documents and maps were posted, allowing residents to review the information as well as view a schedule of upcoming meetings.

COMMUNITY VISIONING

The City of Escanaba sponsored a series of Community Visioning Workshops on October 20 and October 21, 2004, which were facilitated by Beckett & Raeder, Inc. These workshops were open to the public and the high school students were invited to participate. At the workshops, participants were seated in groups of five to six and engaged in a series of brainstorming exercises centered around four key questions:

- What are we proud / sorry about?
- What are the trends?
- Where do we want to be?
- How are we going to get there?

These exercises helped the participants pinpoint identifying characteristics of the city and to explore ideas about what type of a city they would like to become. Throughout the course of the workshop participants were asked to vote on the ideas that their group came up with, realizing the groups' priorities and preferences.

WHAT ARE WE PROUD / SORRY ABOUT?

Prouds

Participants were asked to reflect on aspects of Escanaba that they are both proud of and sorry about. They were then asked to vote on the two items they felt most proud of and the two items they were most sorry about. The proud comments can be summarized with three categories:

- Waterfront
- Parks
- City amenities

Prouds

- Waterfront
- Parks
- City Amenities
- Natural Resources
- Sport Fishing
- Public Safety
- Cleanliness
- Library
- Bay College
- Our Citizens

Sorries

The aspects of Escanaba that participants cited as being sorry about can also be summarized in three categories:

- Waterfront
- Employment opportunities
- Issues relating to development

The waterfront and the parks were clearly seen as the top assets in the community. Participants specifically noted the “great recreation assets [in the city],” “natural resources,” “sport fishing,” and Lake Michigan. Comments pertaining to City amenities covered a wide range of topics including: education (local and college), the library, cleanliness of the city, the citizens and neighborhoods, and public safety.

Most of the participants expressed that the waterfront is an under utilized asset. Most of the comments referred to the “North Shore” (the area of waterfront north of 1st Avenue North and south of the power plant) and ranged from the current misuse of the waterfront, the lack of access and that this area is an eyesore. Others mentioned that Ludington Park is also under utilized. Another weakness mentioned was the lack of employment opportunities, especially for younger residents who may be looking to stay in Escanaba. Participants raised several different issues that relate to development in Escanaba. Some spoke of the US-2 corridor as an eyesore that is congested, dangerous and not representative of the city despite the fact that this is the area that visitors see, while others referred to the constraints for future development resulting from limited property, the wetlands, the power plant’s limited capacity, and concerns associated with heavy industrial development.

WHAT ARE THE TRENDS?

Participants were then asked to think about what is currently happening in Escanaba and to comment on the trends that they see occurring. Again, some common themes emerged as the groups’ comments were compiled. These themes can be summarized under the following headings: Economic Development, Power, Downtown, Housing, Recreation and Transportation, and Communication.

In addition to the physical limitations for development already raised, participants general discussion was the need to diversify their economy, so that they are “not putting all of [their] eggs in one basket” and that there are opportunities for young people entering the work world. Engineered Machine Products was cited as a positive example of a successful local business that is “bringing a new level of skill to the area.”

Participants highlighted the need to address the power issue in Escanaba. The Power Plant is currently running at or near capacity and if there is to be growth in Escanaba, the power issue must be addressed. Most participants that discussed this



Trends

- Dynamic Waterfront
- Revitalized & Reinvented Downtown
- Wider Range of Housing Opportunities
- Better Community Communication

topic would like to see Escanaba continue as a power producer with a plant expansion or a new plant, some even mentioned Escanaba becoming a “U.P. power supplier.”

Participants discussed possible ideas for the development of the “North Shore” area. The ideas for this area were varied and at times conflicting. They included a Port Authority, mixed use development, public access and a marina. While people were not entirely opposed to a Port Authority, they expressed the need for additional information, an opportunity for input and the need to protect natural resources. With regards to mixed-use development, participants described the “North Shore” area as containing residential, commercial and recreational facilities as well as a better connection to downtown. Another frequently raised topic was the need to promote Escanaba as a tourist destination and that the “North Shore” could include a facility to hold medium to large size conferences.



Many participants noted that downtown Escanaba is no longer the destination it once was. The conversion of businesses from retail to service predominates. This change in orientation likely contributes to the perception that downtown has a high number of vacancies as the once lively storefronts have been replaced with offices. A Market Study for the Downtown Development Authority is currently underway and should address these concerns and perceptions.

Participants are seeing a need for additional housing in Escanaba, particularly apartment, condo and senior housing. Participants discussed that Escanaba is limited in the housing it offers that would be suitable for younger people starting out or seniors who are ready to give up the responsibilities of owning a home. Several groups also spoke of the increased desire for housing that is part of a mixed use or Traditional Neighborhood Design. Only one group mentioned a demand for larger homes on larger lots.

Trends in recreation and transportation overlapped as participants spoke primarily of the difficulties in getting around without a car. In particular, road crossings are dangerous, sidewalks need to be improved and in some cases added and the bike path is not complete. Other issues raised were strictly recreational, as participants recognize the need to protect and



conserve the natural resources of the area and to provide parks / facilities in all neighborhoods.

The final theme that emerged was the lack of communication and trust between city officials and it's residents. Some spoke openly about these issues, while it was inferred from others comments pertaining to the need for additional information with regards to City's ideas to construct a Port Authority along the North Shore and the creation of a wetland bank. While some groups' felt the city was not committed to the last Master Plan, others feel that they are working to improve zoning issues.

Expectations

- Vibrant Downtown
- Tourist Destination
- Diverse Economy
- Job Opportunities
- Continue to Enhance the Quality of Life in the City

WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

In this part of the workshop, participants were asked to envision Escanaba 10-15 years in the future and describe the community that they would like to see. These "preferred" scenarios were developed to show what Escanaba could



become if the citizens and government actively respond to current trends and community needs. The ideas generated that received the most votes can be summarized in the following statements:

A vibrant downtown that can serve as a regional shopping destination. Nearly every group mentioned that they would like to see the downtown as a lively, thriving retail center, including activities in Ludington Park.

Escanaba is a tourist destination. Not only would people travel to Escanaba for shopping opportunities, but the waterfront would be developed as a tourist destination and community asset, a convention center would enable larger groups to explore Escanaba and the airport would be a busy place.

Escanaba is supported by a strong and diverse economy. Not only has the power supply been expanded to satisfy current and future needs, the industrial park is full and service, tourism and manufacturing industries are balanced pieces of the economy and provide career opportunities for young adults.

Escanaba continues to have a strong reputation for providing its residents with a good quality of life. This includes being a safe, family oriented community, preservation of historic features, a strong school system, the expansion of Bay College to a four-year program, a well-planned city with effective mass



transit, and the conservation of natural resources.

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

Participants identified short-term strategies and actions that will move the community in the direction of its “preferred” scenarios. Some of the strategies discussed include:

- Involve community in planning and get regional support, work with the County
- Encourage and support homegrown businesses
- Recruit businesses that diversify the economic base utilize tax incentives and/or public-private partnerships
- Identify and work with investors to accomplish redevelopment and recruitment, take advantage of brownfield grants
- Ensure that adequate infrastructure is available, expand power plant in order to become a regional provider of power, issue bonds to fund expansion
- Increase tourism – historic, water based, unique features, wildlife, convention center, update the airport
- Market & promote Escanaba , capitalize on Escanaba being “the Gateway to the Upper Peninsula” (all highways go through Escanaba); Create attractive entry on US-2
- Clean up city
- Redevelop Escanaba as an important destination - encourage mixed use, walkability, façade improvements
- City should acquire and redevelop waterfront
- Create a green corridor between cities along shoreline, utilize grant money
- Encourage in-fill development
- Additional community and recreation activities & better use of Fair grounds
- Form an Historic district to preserve character and qualify for funding
- Work with State and Bay College to expand academics to a four-year program
- Strengthen local schools



COMMUNITY VISIONING SUMMARY

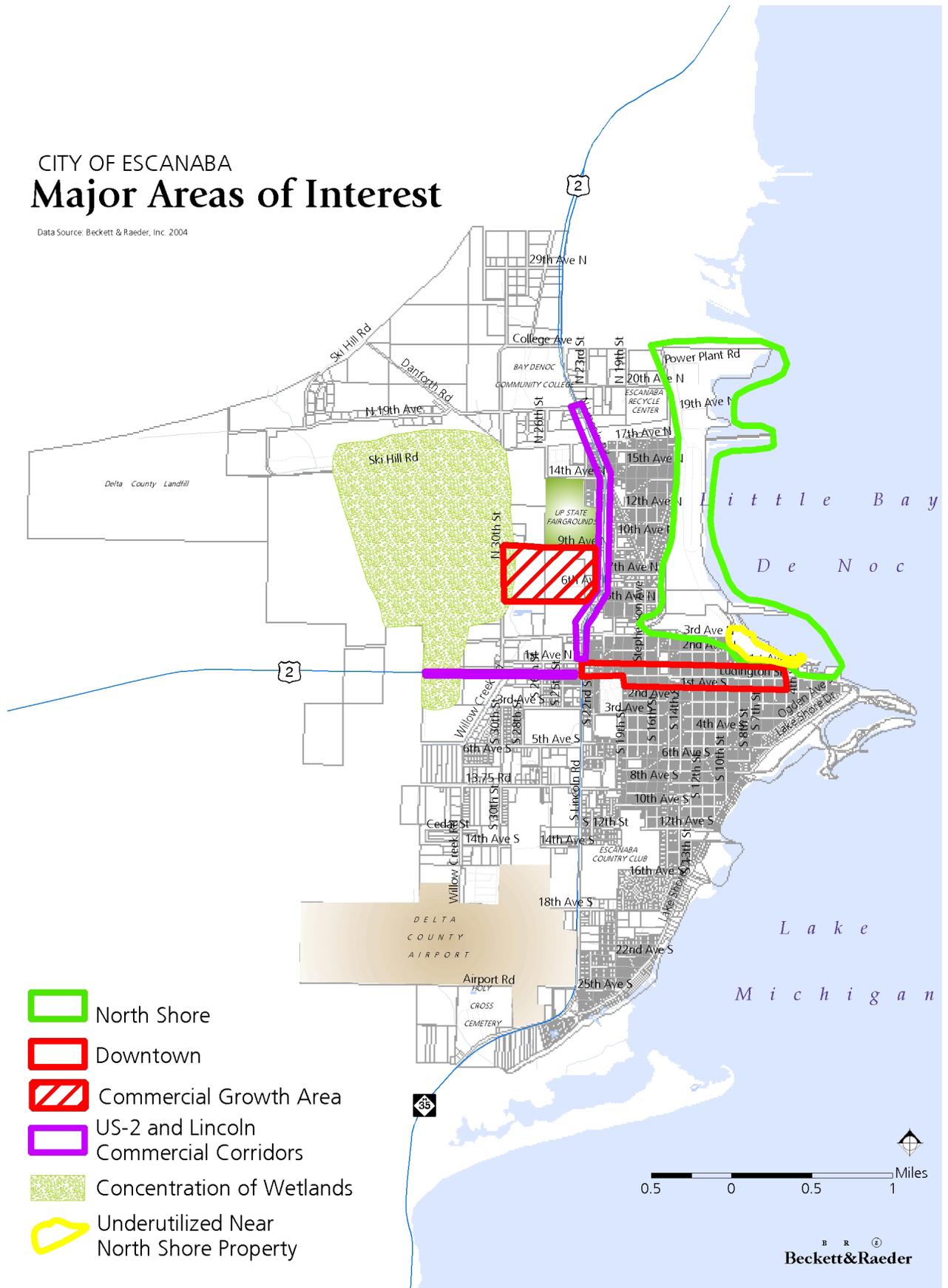
Participants covered a wide range of subjects during the Visioning Sessions however; several general topics repeatedly emerged as areas of focus. Those items include:

- Escanaba is a safe, clean, friendly community.
- Escanaba has great parks and recreational opportunities.
- The natural resources of the area are one of its greatest assets.
- The “North Shore” should be available for public use.
- The waterfront is an under utilized resource for events, recreation, and scenic value.
- Downtown needs to be revitalized as a tourist, shopping, and entertainment district with clear connections to the waterfront.
- Escanaba needs to fully utilize the attractive location for a regional retail hub by encouraging retail business to locate in Escanaba.

Map 7.1: Public Participation Results, Major Areas of Interest

CITY OF ESCANABA Major Areas of Interest

Data Source: Beckett & Raeder, Inc. 2004



- A plan is needed that will provide future sources of electric power at competitive costs to local power users and for future economic development. The current plant is operating near capacity during peak demand.
- Escanaba needs to diversify its economic base.
- Create a supportive environment for local businesses; Engineering Machine Products is a positive example for the community.
- Increase the housing types to include suitable options for seniors and young people (rental and condominium units).
- The community would like more information and input regarding the potential development of a Port Authority.
- Promote Escanaba as a tourist destination.
- Find ways to keep a young adult population in Escanaba.
- Encourage Bay College to expand its programs by offering a four-year degree.
- Promote Escanaba as a retirement community.
- The non-motorized transportation system needs improvement.
- Relations and communication between the residents and city officials need improvement.

The issues that emerged from the community visioning process formed the basis for the development of the themes for the community to focus their efforts on. These themes will serve as the guiding principles of the community master plan and will be translated into a series of policy statements that support the achievement of the community goals. A summary of the themes follows.



WATERFRONT

The waterfront is viewed as one of Escanaba's greatest, yet under utilized, assets. While Escanaba has a number of amenities on the waterfront, including Ludington Park, the City marina, and the boat launch, the community does not feel that they are as well used as they could be. Additionally, the community feels that there is a better use for the area known as the "North Shore" (the waterfront area north of 1st Avenue North and south of the power plant).

Recreation Assets

Escanaba has two primary boat launch facilities. The newly constructed north shore boat launch is heavily used by local fishermen and during fishing tournaments. However, the area offers few amenities for families and spectators, such as playground or picnic facilities. The newly reconstructed boat launch facility on Aronson Island at Ludington Park is heavily used during peak times of the fishing season in the spring and fall and during tournaments. This area offers amenities such as a public beach, rest room facilities, picnic areas, open space and close proximity to downtown Escanaba. In the winter, the Yacht Harbor Basin becomes a community of fishing shanties and an access to Little Bay De Noc for ice fishermen.

North Shore

Most participants were in agreement that there is a better use for the area known as the "North Shore," however the ideas were varied. Some would like to see public access to the waterfront along this property, others spoke of developing the area as a mixed-use development, some felt it should be residential and others suggested a conference center in this location. Additionally, the City is investigating the feasibility of its use as a deep-water port. While the community was not opposed to the development of a deep-water port here, they did express the desire for more information to be publicly disseminated and the need for additional public discussion in the planning of this area of Escanaba.



DOWNTOWN

Downtown Escanaba is an historic downtown with a long history of commerce. It consists of 22 blocks of commercial and civic uses. Over the years, as retail businesses have located on the US-2 corridor, the downtown has seen its character change from a retail hub to a predominately service orientation. Participants would like to see this trend reversed and offered several suggestions to accomplish this objective.

Upper Peninsula Retail Hub

The community would like to see Escanaba re-established as a shopping destination both for the local community, regionally, and for tourists. Participants envision more people heading to Escanaba to do their shopping, rather than heading to Marquette or Green Bay as currently occurs. By attracting more retail and service businesses Escanaba would become a regional retail hub for the Upper Peninsula.

Entertainment District

Downtowns are not just for shopping, they are also places of entertainment. Downtowns become lively places when there are things for people to do, such as dining and attending civic and cultural events. Encouraging the individual merchants to work together and with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and the City, they would be able to greatly expand marketing and promotional efforts and ultimately the variety of services offered. As previously mentioned, improved connections to the waterfront parks and facilities would also be mutually beneficial.

RECREATION

Escanaba is a city full of natural resources and waterfront property. The community values the natural resources and would like to see them protected. Additionally, residents would like to have more opportunities to use and access these natural features.

Facilities

The community is pleased with the facilities of the City but would like some improvements that would enhance the value and function of the parks, such as the installation of playground equipment, picnic facilities. They would also like to have connections to other destinations such as downtown or Bay College. Such enhancements are contained within the City's non-motorized master plan.

Additionally, participants spoke of the need for additional neighborhood parks. Neighborhood parks are seen as a valuable asset and should be provided in each neighborhood that does not have a park or school grounds in close proximity.

Events

Participants described the parks, Ludington Park in particular, as places that could benefit from additional community events. The parks are great places to bring people together for community gatherings and family or cultural events.

ECONOMICS

Community participants would like to see Escanaba diversify its economic base. Reliance on only a few industries to support the community has proven to be challenging. Two specific developments, a Port Authority and the power plant, and some general ideas were discussed during the course of the visioning sessions.

Port Authority

One idea is the creation of a Port Authority to oversee a deep-water port. As previously mentioned, the community is not opposed to a deep-water port, but would like additional information about the project and would like to be included in the planning process.

Power Plant

The other idea is the potential expansion of the power plant. While the community agrees that something needs to happen, there are conflicting viewpoints as to how or whether the power plant should expand.

Diversification through Support for Local Business and Tourism

The community would like to see a diversification of the City's economic base. Suggestions included support for "hometown businesses" (Engineering Machine Products was frequently cited as a positive example) and the development of the tourism industry in Escanaba. The citizens have discovered that fishing tournaments held in the community generate a significant amount of revenue but that without sufficient facilities to accommodate the participants (lodging in particular), they are not capturing their full potential of tourist spending.



NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhoods are the foundation of a community and Escanaba is proud of their residential neighborhoods. However a few deficiencies were acknowledged. These included inadequate housing options for seniors, singles, and young adults. Citizens of Escanaba enjoy benefits of a traditional neighborhood design, which includes front porches facing the streets, sidewalks, a grid street system, and allows for mixed neighborhood uses.

Housing for Seniors, Singles, and Young Adults

Seniors, singles, and young adults represent a group of citizens that desire condominium and apartment living, housing options that are limited in Escanaba. The "North Shore" and downtown were both mentioned as possible locations for this type of residential development.

TRAFFIC

The increased traffic and development along the US-2 Corridor and Ludington Street has resulted in unwanted congestion, unappealing aesthetics, unsafe pedestrian conditions, and difficulties when trying to turn off or onto the corridor. Actions should be taken to improve these conditions. The recommendations and design features of the June 2003 Lincoln Road and Ludington Street Corridor Management Plan should be consistently followed and implemented.

WALKABILITY

Creating a walkable community is important to quality of life issues as not every member of the community is able to drive, yet each member of the community needs to get around. Seniors, teens, and disabled (either permanently or temporarily) persons are the groups that are most impacted when a community is not walkable. These are the persons that must rely on others to get from place to place, which can be both financially and emotionally costly. Improvements to the walkability of Escanaba include well-marked crosswalks, safe sidewalks, and a network of bike paths that extend throughout the city.

Participants

Byan Brayak	Judi Schwalbach	Elizabeth Keller	Jim Larsen	Wayne Heikkila
Dennis Renken	Kaymary Rettie	Karin Flynn	Shirley Haiar	Warren Isaacson
Diana Charles	Ken Jusssila	Patrick Connor	Dennis Siversten	Walter Develski
Don French	Kirk Bruno	Barbara Denny	Karen Peterson	Tom Warstler
Doug Terry	Lynn Johnson	Paul Neumeier	Roger Good	Gilbert Cheves
Eli Collins	Lynn Pritchard	Linda Hirvonen	Tom Penegor	Pat Standish
Jack Manning	Mollie Larsen	Laura Kluka	Vickie Micheau	Mike Dewar
James Hellerman	Pete Baker	Bill Farrell	Lauralyn Kensey	Steven Master
Jason Neumeier	Scott Poupore	Keith VanPoperin	Stephen Lillie	Don Tryon
Jim O'Toole	Shannon Godfrey	Lynna LaFave	Kim Peterson	
John Kositzky	Todd Milkiewicz	Robert Headden	Rick Kell	

WRITTEN SURVEY RESULTS

The City of Escanaba organized a series of questions relating to issues that have been focal points throughout the community. Additional opportunities for comments were also provided within this community survey. The survey was broken into six categories consisting of Community, Neighborhood, Transportation, Economic Development, Housing, and Environment. Surveys were distributed to citizens, students, and board and commission members, and collected and tabulated in each of these groupings. Responses to the survey are included in Appendix 1 and Table 6.1 below.



COMMUNITY

Survey responses represent a strong sense of pride in the community and concern for maintaining and enhancing community features and establishing a strong sense of place. Respondents expressed the feeling that the character of the Escanaba community is rapidly changing and these changes need to be supported by effective land use planning, recreational enhancements, and diversification of housing resources.

Issues within the community that respondents were displeased with include the following:

- The boat and ship storage located behind city hall.
- The sprawled out commercial strip along Lincoln Road.
- Older run down homes and buildings in community neighborhoods.
- Decline in the appearance and maintenance of older Victorian homes.
- Lacking a sense of pride in the appearance of downtown buildings and neighborhood homes.

Recreational opportunities that respondents would like to see become available are:

- More recreational opportunities along the lakeshore and within the waterfront parks.
- A non-motorized bike and pedestrian walkway and or boardwalk along the waterfront that ties into existing parks and neighborhoods.
- Attract seasonal events to the parks and waterfront to encourage community interaction and draw visitors to the area.
- Fully utilize Little Bay De Noc for more public water sports activities such as canoe livery and non-motorized boat launch.
- Utilize the fairgrounds for year round events and activities that tie into the regional characteristics of Escanaba and the surrounding area.

NEIGHBORHOODS

When asked if they would relocate to another neighborhood in Escanaba, respondents presented a clear understanding that they are happy living in areas where they are established. Those who voiced an interest in relocating to other areas in the city showed a draw toward the parks and waterfront. Therefore, increased neighborhood parks and pedestrian connections to the waterfront would generate these desired elements in existing neighborhoods. Consistent with the desire to incorporate bike and pedestrian trails into the parks and waterfront, residents agree that neighborhoods need to have safe and accessible walkways and sidewalks.

TRANSPORTATION

Two issues concerning transportation were presented in the survey regarding transportation. The development of a high speed, four-lane limited access highway system with a local bypass. Additionally, the reoccurring theme of increased non-motorized transportation also received near majority support.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Responses to questions relating to economic development support the necessity for Escanaba to generate development potentials for job generating industries. Some of the commercial developments that were proposed by respondents were as follows:

- Mixed-use waterfront developments with restaurants, shops, and other tourism based businesses.
- Attract a large anchor store into the downtown.
- Initiate infill development strategies to utilize the expansive downtown commercial corridor.
- Market the recreational resources as an attraction drawing tourists and new residents alike.

HOUSING

When asked what type of housing Escanaba should focus development efforts on, respondents agreed on condominium and townhouse style developments. Additionally, a diversity of low, moderate, and high cost homes is presented as a concern of many residents. Respondents also present issues pertaining to housing appearance and maintenance in neighborhoods that are experiencing declining housing quality trends.

ENVIRONMENT

Respondents were, for the most part, happy with the environmental protection and consideration that the city has upheld to maintain the natural and built environment in Escanaba. A strong emphasis on continued protection and clean-up of Little Bay De Noc as the tributary river systems was of main concern to a number of respondents as was ore dust control on the north side of Escanaba.

General Themes

The City of Escanaba has used several methods to elicit community viewpoints to determine the direction the City needs to go in the future to achieve its fullest



potential as the Upper Peninsula's community of choice. Responses offered from the visioning sessions and the survey questionnaire aided in the establishment of general "Themes" for the community and corresponding "Objectives" which together form the framework for the community master plan. The following is an explanation of these themes and the related objectives.

THEME

A DIVERSE AND ECONOMICALLY ENRICHED WATERFRONT

The Escanaba waterfront is envisioned as a dynamic and diverse area accommodating a mixture of land



uses, including residential, commercial, lodging, recreation, waterborne commerce, and industrial. Future waterfront uses will be used to enhance and support downtown revitalization, create opportunities for employment, and add to the tax base of the community. The waterfront, which extends from the north city limits south to Ludington Park along Lake Michigan and Bay de Noc, will consist of three zones: downtown, transitional and active port. Each zone will accommodate a bundle of land uses arranged in such a manner to complement surrounding uses and promote a healthy investment climate. Segments of the overall waterfront have port related businesses with deep water slips already in existence.

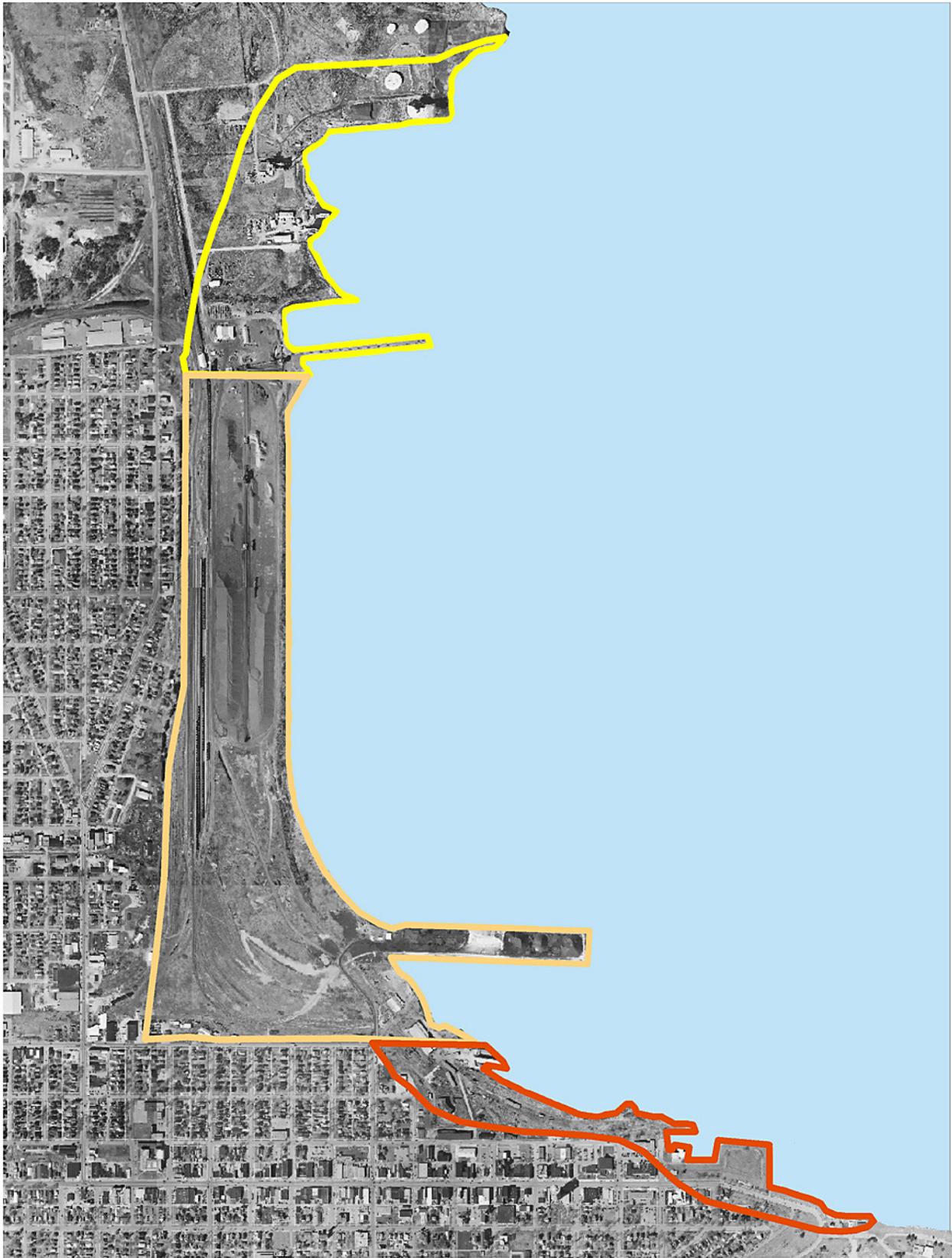
Overall Objectives

1. Ensure that Little Bay De Noc and Escanaba's waterfront remain as the primary focal point of the community.
2. Initiate development of waterfront property to encourage a mixed urban waterfront, which accommodates residential, commercial, industrial, and bulk commodities.
3. Transition from a primarily industrial waterfront to an attractive shopping and tourist destination, similar to Door County Wisconsin and Little Traverse and Grand Traverse Bays of Lower Michigan.
4. Work with lakefront property owners to beautify and enhance the waterfront to compliment the surrounding parks and natural areas.
5. Maintain and enhance public lake access to facilitate year round recreation opportunities.
6. Promote the use of existing parks, such as Ludington Park, for community events.
7. Maintain bike and pedestrian walkways while creating continuous boardwalks and greenways along the entire Escanaba waterfront.

Waterfront Organization

- Three Zones
- Extension of Downtown
- Active Port
- Introduction of Mixed Uses
- Introduction of Townhomes and Condominiums

Map 7.2: Waterfront Areas



ESCANABA MASTER PLAN

Escanaba Waterfront Areas

-  Port Waterfront
-  Transitional Waterfront
-  Downtown Waterfront



Beckett & Raeder

Objectives By Zone

Downtown Waterfront (Ludington Park to 6th Avenue North)

1. Promote public accessibility to Lake Michigan.
2. Strategically locate public and/or private development which draw the downtown to the waterfront area, creating additional critical mass for the downtown.
3. Take appropriate measures to remove the blighted and inoperable freighter.
4. Create additional water related recreation uses.
5. Promote greater use of the municipal dock.
6. Higher density residential development, including attached townhomes and condominiums.
7. Mixed-use developments with commercial, entertainment, and residential components.

Transitional Waterfront (6th Avenue to 16th Avenue North)

1. Ensure that public accessibility is maintained along the shoreline.
2. Uses south of 14th Avenue North would include higher density residential developments similar to the Downtown Waterfront area, and commercial uses.
3. Uses north of 14th Avenue North would include water related commercial uses, which serve as transition between residential and port activities.
4. As a secondary use, light industrial uses, which are compatible with higher density residential developments, can be accommodated within areas north of 14th Avenue North.

Port Waterfront (16th Avenue North to North City Limits)

1. Use of existing deep water slips for waterborne commerce.
2. Uses would include industrial and other port related business, functions, and activities.

THEME

DOWNTOWN: BUILDING ON A TRADITION

Downtown Escanaba is Ludington Street. Linear in form stretching 22 blocks from Lincoln Road to Drive, its prowess as the retail center for the central lower Upper Peninsula has been eroded economically by commercial and big box development along US-2 (Lincoln Road). Escanaba desires and wants to change the function of the downtown from a service center to a diverse mix of retail, restaurants, entertainment, and residential uses building on its tradition as an historic, convenient, and economically viable downtown area.

Objectives

1. Establish downtown Escanaba as a strong factor promoting Escanaba as a regional retail hub for the Central Upper Peninsula.
2. Reclaim abandoned office and service buildings for use as retail, residential, and commercial activities.
3. Develop nodes of activity along the Ludington Street corridor resulting in a greater critical mass of retail, restaurant, and office activities.
4. Initiate funding programs that facilitate improvements to façade, signage, and landscaping of downtown businesses.
5. Provide incentives to maintain and restore historic buildings for retail and commercial uses.
6. Encourage businesses to extend hours of operation to meet the needs of residents who work a typical eight to five workday.
7. Combine the rich history of downtown with the history of



- the waterfront through pedestrian connectors and shopping districts.
8. Market the downtown and waterfront as an attractive destination, drawing traffic off of Lincoln Road.
 9. Provide safe pedestrian crossings across Ludington Street and implement traffic calming along the entire downtown corridor.
 10. Encourage and recruit new entertainment opportunities downtown.
 11. Enhance streetscape to reflect the vibrant heritage of this Great Lakes city.
 12. Attract a large retail anchor store into downtown.
 13. Create a safe, friendly, and attractive shopping destination for the residents and visitors of Escanaba.



THEME

RECREATION: COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC ASSET

Residents value their parks and their relationship to Lake Michigan and other natural resources. Similarly, out of town visitors, boaters, hunters, and fisherman value this asset as well, and frequent Escanaba for its recreational opportunities.

Objectives

1. Continue to utilize Little Bay De Noc and Lake Michigan as a bountiful recreational resource.
2. Enhance and extend bicycle and pedestrian pathways along Escanaba's lakeshore and into neighborhoods.
3. Recruit more events in existing parks throughout the year.
4. Create a water sports rental facility providing public canoe, kayak, and boat rental from Ludington Park.
5. Embrace winter sports activities along the lakeshore and on the lake.
6. Restore the existing cross-country ski trail system along North 30th Street.
7. Create more opportunities for kids and teens to ride bikes, skateboards, and roller blades within safe-easy access to downtown and neighborhoods.
8. Expand the use of the UP State Fair grounds to accommodate more uses and activities throughout the year.
9. Provide non-motorized boat launch access for canoes, sailboats, and other non-motorized watercraft.
10. Develop community indoor pool, skate rink, and winter recreation center.
11. Expand community center to facilitate more indoor recreation during winter months.
12. Provide more handicapped accessible fishing piers and shoreline.
13. Relocate the existing skateboard park to a centrally located facility within the city limits.

THEME

A SPECTRUM OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Reliance on only a few industries to support the community has proven to be challenging and can lead to significant employment swings in the local economy. Likewise, reliance on lower paying service wage jobs can force residents out of the community to search for better employment opportunities. Both scenarios can affect the overall quality of life and as a result a fuller spectrum of economic opportunities need to be provided within the community.

Objectives

1. Implement incentives for starting hi-tech and professional industry businesses in Escanaba.
2. Ensure that the community is served by a high-speed internet infrastructure consisting of either DSL, cable, or wireless technologies, or combination of services.
3. Position the city as a desirable and affordable retirement community for multi-household retirees.
4. Develop a plan to fill the existing industrial park with proven, viable companies.
5. Attract more local business owners to set up shop in Escanaba rather than outlying areas.
6. Utilize the UP State Fairgrounds property for increased mixed-use developments that will enhance and promote the UP and Escanaba.
7. Develop a Wetland Management Plan, which will evaluate the existing conditions of the wetlands, determine the quality of the wetlands, and determine the steps needed to create best management practices for urban and urbanizing areas west of North 30th Street.
8. Develop a recruitment objective to seek out promising businesses in well paying technical industries.
9. Expand the existing services within Bay Community College to offer more four-year programs.
10. Promote partnerships between local industry, the City, County, and Bay Community College.
11. Promote an all-season eco and sport-tourism industry.
12. Develop a campaign that instills a sense of pride in patronizing local businesses and establishments.



THEME

NEIGHBORHOODS: THE FUNDAMENTAL COMMUNITY BUILDING BLOCK

Neighborhoods are the building blocks and foundation for the community. Healthy, well-maintained, and diverse neighborhoods enhance the overall quality of life, support local economic development initiatives, further downtown revitalization, and maximize the return in infrastructure made by the City of Escanaba.

Objectives

1. Support revitalization activities through owner and renter home improvement loans and grants for areas that have declined.
2. Focus new residential development along the waterfront with locally affordable condominiums and

- townhomes to diversify housing opportunities.
3. Encourage the designation and utilization of locally designated historic districts to promote appropriate exterior modifications.
 4. Emphasize vibrant neighborhoods through strong community ties to stimulate reinvestment in areas exhibiting signs of decline.
 5. Enforce blight regulations and zoning ordinances to maintain and promote reinvestment in declining rental and owner occupied properties.
 6. Reestablish sense of history in residential neighborhoods through streetscape enhancements such as lighting and street signage.
 7. Continue to use community groups and youth groups to beautify and restore neighborhood features.
 8. Build on the existing sense of pride and community through neighborhood organizations and planned activities.
 9. Coordinate efforts with neighborhoods to establish exterior appearance and maintenance standards.
 10. Encourage pedestrian scale neighborhoods with appropriate amenities such as pedestrian scale lighting, street trees, street widths applying traffic calming principles and the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) guidelines for safe pedestrian facilities.



THEME

TRAFFIC: CONNECTIVITY AND CONGESTION

A balanced and connected network of streets can assure the convenient flow and exchange of materials, services, and people from one location to another in the City and the region, and ensure the rational mixture of land uses. Factors that influence this balance can be increased traffic volumes, concentration of similar land uses, inappropriate design, or the absence of alternative routes. The unintended consequences resulting from this imbalance can lead to congestion, visual and property blight, declining property values, under served property, isolated and disconnected neighborhoods, increased vehicular trips, and non-motorized traffic.

Objectives

1. Incorporate traffic calming along Ludington Road and Lincoln Road to slow traffic through downtown and the main highway commercial corridor of Escanaba.
2. Continue to implement access management strategies along Lincoln Road through driveway consolidation and limiting curb cuts.
3. Implement recommendation of the Lincoln Road and Ludington Street Corridor traffic studies.
4. Provide safe pedestrian crossing with stoplights at main intersection along Ludington Street.
5. Incorporate non-motorized crossings along Lincoln Road and under the railroad bypass near Bay College.

THEME

A CONNECTED WALKABLE COMMUNITY

Escanaba is a traditional planned and historic community. The grid pattern of streets connects residential neighborhoods with the downtown, schools, parks, and employment areas. Being a walkable community is more than having adequate and convenient connections between land uses, it also means planning for a mixture of land uses and development with a density sufficient to minimize traffic and reduce the frequency of vehicular trips.

Objectives

1. Enhance the sidewalks along Ludington Street with streetscape furnishings, pedestrian lighting, and street trees.
2. Build on existing neighborhood sidewalks and pathways to create pedestrian connectivity between community parks, downtown, and the waterfront.
3. Encourage the preservation of existing boulevards to decrease traffic speeds and maintain an historic sense of the neighborhood street pattern.
4. Emphasize snow removal for areas with greater populations of pedestrian dependent age groups to ensure year round accessibility.
5. Revise zoning ordinances to encourage mixed use and higher density development.
6. Require connections, either vehicular or pedestrian, between land use groups.

