State of Michigan

Mackinac County

Portage Township

MASTER PLAN

Portage Township Planning & Zoning Commission
Updated 2006
PORTAGE TOWNSHIP PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION 2006

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MASTER PLAN PLANNING ASSISTANCE WAS PROVIDED BY

THE EASTERN U.P. REGIONAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

The preparation of this report was a joint effort by the Portage Township Planning and Zoning Commission and the Eastern U.P. Regional Planning and Development Commission.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The people of Portage Township wish to express their sincere appreciation and thanks to the Eastern U.P. Regional Planning and Development Commission for the technical assistance which made this work complete.
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Michigan Public Act 168 of 1959, the Township Planning Act, authorizes townships to plan, create a Planning Commission, and regulate and subdivide land. The act permits and MANDATES the planning commission to make and adopt a “Master Plan.” The intent of the Master Plan is to express the Township’s vision of its future use and provide a guide to accomplish that vision, by ensuring that for each decision the cumulative and long term impacts on the entire community are considered.

The basic purposes of this plan are to:

1) Promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of the Township.

2) Encourage the use of the Townships’ natural resources according to their character and adaptability.

3) Avoid overcrowding land with buildings or people.

4) Minimize congestion on public roads and streets.

5) Facilitate systems to provide transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, recreation, and public improvement.

6) Consider the Townships character, and judge is suitability for particular uses based on factors such as land use trends and population levels.
Highlights

Manistique and South Manistique Lake are the focal point of nearly all development and activity in Portage Township.

Population growth and extensive development, primarily along the shoreline, have caused the lakes to become environmentally fragile areas.

Responses from a 2004 Citizen's survey indicate most property owners like the beauty and quietness of the area and are very concerned about many environmental issues. They wish for quiet, orderly, controlled growth.

The major part of the Portage Township Zoning Ordinance is 30 years old, and is in need of major revisions and updating.

The partially overdeveloped unincorporated Village of Curtis should be defined geographically and designated as a special district with specific zoning requirements.

Nonconforming uses (primarily undersized parcels) need to be well defined, and future "do's and don'ts" clearly spelled out.

A permanent Lakes Advisory Committee, reporting to the Township Board, needs to be formed, to monitor the water quality of the two Lakes (in all aspects). These lakes are the life blood of the community and the main reason for the existence and vitality of Curtis and surrounding area.

A Lakes Board has been formed to research concerns about water quality, weed control, and establishment of an official South Lake water level. Research, in partnership with the DNR, includes monitoring fish populations and understanding conditions favorable for propagation. This multi-disciplined board should be continued.

Investigation into the feasibility of a sewer/water system for the more densely populated area should be undertaken.

The Township has purchased land and will undertake studying the possibility of a new fire hall/ambulance/township office complex.

A generous purchase and donation of a large tract of land by a local family has enabled establishment of the Curtis Park, and formation of the Curtis Community Arts Council. Several plans for development and use of this park are underway, and its many activities have become a significant asset to the Township’s quality of life.

A recreation committee, reporting to the Township Board, has been reinstated, to address the issues spoken to in the Citizens’ Survey, concerning lack of organized activities for youth and young adults. It is also charged with developing an overall comprehensive recreation plan for the community, enabling the Township to be eligible for possible grant applications in the future.
The small population size of Portage Township and limited funds continue to necessitate substantial volunteer participation and monitoring by its citizens to successfully implement the goals and objectives of this Master Plan.
Introduction

In January, 1993 the Portage Township Board appointed a nine member Planning and Zoning Commission and charged it with the responsibility of updating the Township Land Use Plan (dated 1975) and revising the Township Zoning Ordinance (dated 1976).

The Township Board took this action because:

1) The area has been experiencing considerable growth during the previous 20 years.

2) A number of zoning issues have come before the Township Board which indicated a need for a revised zoning ordinance.

3) There is a growing concern that the two large inland lakes, which are the lifeblood of the community, were in danger of developing serious pollution problems, unless corrective actions were undertaken.

In 1996, the Land Use Plan was revised with the assistance of the Eastern U.P. Regional Planning and Development Commission. Further revisions followed in 2003 including a renaming of the document to “Master Plan.”

The 1996 Land Use Plan revision included the results of a citizen survey and a windshield survey, both conducted prior to the final writing. The citizen survey, with a response rate of 50.7 percent, presented a lengthy questionnaire to 1/3 of identified property owners, (both permanent and seasonal), to gauge their mood and wishes. The windshield survey located and identified all of the buildings, (residences, businesses, etc.) within the Township. A second similar citizen survey was conducted in 2004 with a response rate of about 44 percent. A new windshield survey was updated in 2006 with the assistance of the zoning administrator, using building permits, fire numbers, and his overall, in depth knowledge of the Township.

The survey responses, existing land use, land ownership, growth patterns, natural resource data, socio-economic information, and other information obtained from Township officials and employees, helped to serve as a basis for this Township Master Plan. Members of the Planning Commission have attended workshops and seminars offered by the Michigan Township Association and the Michigan State Extension Service, to update and further their planning skills. Publications available from the Michigan Association of Planning and the Michigan Township Association provided guidelines for this planning process.

The Zoning Ordinance has been modestly revised five times since the original 1976 issue, the first in 1981, and the last revision in 2000. As the Township continues to grow, these revisions again fall short of the zoning needs of the community. The need to revise the Zoning Ordinance mandated the need to revise the Master Plan to reflect the current status and wishes of the community.

The Planning Commission and the Township Board recognize this Master Plan as an ongoing document, and the basis upon which the Township Zoning Ordinance is established. As such, it should be updated as often as needed, (usually every five years); to meet the changing conditions such as technological advances, legal interpretations, property ownership, and citizen concerns.
Citizens’ Survey Highlights

The survey was conducted in July of 2004.

A total of 450 surveys were sent out, about 30 percent of Township property owners. Of those surveys, 200 responses were received, about a 44% return. This favorable response rate continues to show an extremely high level of interest in hopes for the future of the community, an encouraging sign.

This questionnaire closely paralleled one sent out in July, 1994, which also had a very high interest and response level.

These highlights show the patterns of similarity and difference between the two surveys.

Over 50% of responses came from year-round residents, an increase from the previous survey. The vast majority owns their own home and has lived in the Township for over 10 years. About 35% are retired, with the next largest group being managers and professional people. There was an overwhelmingly positive response about owning property in the Township and encouraging others to do the same.

Nearly all respondents were over 40 years of age with about 30% over 65. Household income was higher with about one half of the respondents having an income over $75,000.

Practically all respondents continue to express a great deal of concern for all environmental issues and feel the Township should play an active role in protecting the water and air quality, woodlands, wetlands and floodplains, and fish and wildlife.

Land use development should be strongly discouraged in areas of a suburban nature, such as apartments, condos, large hotels, industrial development, landfill use, and blight such as the storage of junk.

Land use development should be encouraged for small motels, B & B’s, and timber management/harvesting. Most in-home businesses are not considered a problem if they are not noisy or disruptive.

Reasons for living in Portage Township included living near water, woods, having access to hunting and fishing, and a clean rural uncrowded setting. This is a very similar response to the 1994 survey.

The school system was of mixed importance, probably reflecting the fact that for many older people, this is not of personal importance.

Community services received a very favorable response in the areas of fire protection, ambulance service, and the local library. They would support millage in all of these areas.

Recreational facilities, parks, and boat launch access seemed about right, but there was a big shortage of recreational and social activities for our youth and teenagers.
Other comments about community services included police protection, slightly positive; cable TV, largely negative; road maintenance, very mixed; and snow removal on public roads; largely positive.

A new question concerning the possibility of a sewer system in the downtown area received a mixed response and slightly negative feelings.

The most important recreational activities continue to be:

Fishing, boating, hunting, snowmobiling, cross county skiing, walking, biking, water sports, and numerous other outdoor activities.

Public Service improvements suggested were wide ranging and included:

Better roads/maintenance, garbage pickup, better ordinance enforcement, recycle facilities, a senior center, fish hatchery, and a full time office staff.

In the Economics and Local Business area, a large majority of respondents felt that job opportunities for township residents were inadequate, and employers should be encouraged to locate within the Township. (This second part is a change from the earlier survey when employers were discouraged from locating here.)

There were strong negative feelings about establishing an industrial zone, but strong positive feelings about promoting tourism to help the local economy, as well as promoting cultural and historical venues for the same purpose.

The following statements are consistent in the two surveys, completed 10 years apart:

The vast majority of respondents were satisfied with Portage Township as a place to live or own property.

A large majority feel the quality of life in the Township has remained the same, or improved, as long as they have lived in or visited this area.

A majority continues to feel that the Township does not have to grow to improve.

A considerable majority feel the people living in the Township share a sense of community.

The respondents to the questionnaire offered very mixed signals about the Township government being responsive to their needs.
Description of Portage Township

Portage Township, a General Law Township, is located in the western end of Mackinac County in Michigan’s Eastern portion of the Upper Peninsula. The township would be considered to be a rural area, due to its generally sparse population. Portage Township is accessed from US-2, going north on the Manistique Lakes Road (H-33). Coming from the north is H-33 south from the Luce County line. From the west, take H-42 east from M-77. The access from the east is going west on the Sandtown Road from M-117, gravel to the Old Gould City road, and paved into H-33. The area of this Township is primarily forested, with approximately 20.5 percent of the land being state owned within the Lake Superior State Forest.

The majority of the township’s population is located in and around the small, rural unincorporated village of Curtis, located on the northern shoreline of the South Manistique Lake, on a strip of land which also borders the Manistique Lake on the northern edge of this small unique waterfront community. Development in Curtis and throughout the Township consists of primary and secondary housing, recreational property, and commercial properties which are mainly concentrated along Main Street in Curtis. These commercial properties consist mainly of businesses that cater to the tourist industry, such as restaurants, taverns, convenience stores, and recreational vehicle dealerships. There is limited shopping and employment within the Township, with locally owned business catering primarily to the tourist industry.

Portage Township has one regional elementary school, part of the Tahquamenon Area School district, the main system being located in Newberry. The town of Newberry, 25 miles to the northeast, does offer further shopping and employment, and would be considered to be a regional center for the area.

The Manistique Lakes family Clinic, located in Curtis near the elementary school, is open four days a week and is staffed by physicians and nurses. A Wellness center, located in the Curtis Community Arts Center is also open to the public. Both are operated in conjunction with the Helen Newberry Joy Hospital and Healthcare Center, located in Newberry.

Two large inland lakes, Manistique Lake and South Manistique Lake, are partially located within the Township, the water area totaling approximately 23 percent of the Township’s acreage, and considered to be the focal point of the area. The large percentage of the population density is located on and around these two large lakes and in close proximity to Curtis. Curtis and the surrounding Township area is noted for its recreation activities, including fishing, boating, hunting, and RV recreation activities. Because of the fairly extensive development along the shoreline of both lakes over the last 40 years, the lakes have become environmentally fragile, and in need of carefully controlled development and maintenance.

Local concerns related to some potential lake pollution problems occurred as far back as 1978, when Township officials investigated the feasibility of installing a sewer/water system along the shoreline of the most densely populated areas. A preliminary study was conducted at that time, but the project did not progress beyond that stage because it was determined to be too expensive. Monitoring of the overall water quality of these two lakes should be an ongoing and continuous effort. An updated feasibility study, reviewing the need for a sewer/water system should be undertaken.
Land Ownership

Township lands are owned by five types of entities: 1) Private, 2) Local Government, 3) Public Schools, 4) State (forestland) and 5) Corporate. Private owners account for 45.8% (21,137 acres). State forests encompass 20.5% (9,449 acres). Corporations control 10.7% (4,936 acres). Inland lakes cover 22.8% (10,513 acres) of the Township. Township owned land covers 63 acres (0.1%) and school owned property totals 69 acres (.15%).

Corporate properties are primarily located in the southeast section of the township while the largest blocks of state land are in the northeast and southwest corners.

The prime property along, and in close proximity to, the Manistique Lakes shoreline is almost entirely in private ownership. (See Map #1 - Land Ownership.)
This map is for general planning purpose only. It does not contain sufficient detail for site specific planning.

Source: 1999 Mackinac County Plat Book

Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Comm.
Updated: August, 2003
Existing Development

These five maps (Maps 2A – 2E) were developed to show the results of a "windshield" or drive-by survey conducted by members of the Planning Commission and the Zoning Administrator (who is very familiar with the territory.)

The information is divided into the categories of residential, commercial, and public buildings. An attempt was also made to distinguish year round from seasonal residences, but it was soon abandoned because of the difficulty of making a clear determination.

These maps show that the vast majority of development is concentrated along the Manistique and South Manistique shorelines. Only a few small clusters of year round residences and cabins are located along the outlying county roads. The maps also clearly indicate that practically all of the township's economic activity is closely related to the waterfront of these two large inland lakes.
PORTAGE TOWNSHIP
EXISTING DEVELOPMENT
MAP #2B

LEGEND

- Residential
- Resort/Motel
- Grocery/Party Store
- Gift Shop
- Bar
- Laundromat
- School
- Sawmill

- Community Park Bldg
- Ice Cream/Gift Shop
- AFC Home
- Office
- Restaurant
- Warehouse
- Township Bldgs.
- Public Housing
- Medical Clinic
- Auto Sales
- Auto Service
- Boat Ramp
- Marina/Recreation Sales

Scale: 1" = .70 Miles
This map is for general planning purposes only. It does not contain sufficient detail for site specific planning.

Source: 2006 Windshield Survey, Portage Township
Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Commission
PORTAGE TOWNSHIP
EXISTING DEVELOPMENT
MAP #2C

This map is for general planning purposes only. It does not contain sufficient detail for site specific planning.

Source: 2006 Windshield Survey, Portage Township
Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Commission

Legend:
- Residential
- Resort/Motel
- Grocery/Party Store
- Gift Shop
- Bar
- Laundromat
- School
- Sawmill
- Community Park Bldg
- Ice Cream/Gift Shop
- AFC Home
- Office
- Shop
- Bank
- Private Campground
- Cemetery
- Bait Shop
- Church
- Restaurant
- Warehouse
- Township Pk.
- Vet
- Boat Ramp
- Medical Clinic
- Auto Sales
- Auto Service
- Township Bldgs.
- Public Housing
- Farm
- Marina/Recreation Sales

Scale: 1" = .70 Miles
This map is for general planning purposes only. It does not contain sufficient detail for site specific planning.

Source: 2006 Windshield Survey, Portage Township

Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Commission

Scale: 1" = 0.70 Miles
PORTAGE TOWNSHIP
EXISTING DEVELOPMENT
MAP #2E

This map is for general planning purposes only. It does not contain sufficient detail for site specific planning.

Source: 2006 Windshield Survey, Portage Township

Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Commission

LEGEND
- Residential
- Resort/Motel
- Grocery/Party Store
- Gift Shop
- Bar
- Laundromat
- School
- Sawmill
- Community Park Bldg
- Ice Cream/Gift Shop
- AFC Home
- Office
- Shop
- Bank
- Private Campground
- Cemetery
- Bait Shop
- Church
- Restaurant
- Warehouse
- Township Pk.
- Vet
- Boat Ramp
- Medical Clinic
- Auto Sales
- Auto Service
- Township Bldgs.
- Public Housing
- Farm
- Marina/Recreation Sales

Scale: 1" = .70 Miles
Transportation and Utilities

No commercial transportation (bus, air, rail, etc.) is available within the township. Residents travel 25 miles northeast to Newberry or 41 miles southwest to Manistique for limited transportation services. Commercial airline service is available at five locations, all about 100 miles away.

Three paved roads traverse portions of the Township. The Manistique Lakes Road (H-33), an all season road, runs North-South and connects with M-28 to the North and US-2 to the South. The Curtis Road (H-42) runs west from the Manistique Lakes Road to M-77. Sandtown Road runs west from M-117 to the Manistique Lakes Road (H-33), and is gravel to the Old Gould City Road, and is paved from there to H-33.

All other roads in the Township are gravel, sand, or dirt, and many are privately maintained. (See Map #3 - Transportation.) In the past five years, some roads (Sprang, Wolfe, and Long Point) have been upgraded from gravel to chip and seal hardtop with other roads in the planning stage to be done in the near future, as funding is provided.

"Citizens Survey" responses indicate a high concern level among residents about the unsatisfactory condition of most county roads in the Township. These roads are the ONLY form of transportation to, from, and within the Township, and the serious problem continues to require extensive oversight and action.

Two electrical companies service the Township. Edison Sault Electric serves the downtown area and the majority of the eastern portion of the Township. Cloverland Electric serves most of the western area including county road H-42.

Portage Township receives cable television from the Upper Peninsula Commercial Cable Company (35 channels including the major networks). Satellite television and high-speed internet is available.

Portage Township has a large recreational area, including three ball fields, tennis courts, a basketball court, and a playground. Snowmobiling is a major winter sport with many groomed trails. Cross country skiing, ice skating, and ice activities are also enjoyed.
This map is for general planning purpose only. It does not contain sufficient detail for site specific planning.

Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Commission

Source: 1978 MIRIS, MDNR
Population

The population of the township was 608 in 1960. It increased very slightly to 625 in 1970, and then experienced gains of over 19% in each of the next two decades to 747 residents in 1980 and 890 in 1990. In 2000 the population increased again by 18.5% to 1,055.

Population trends of Mackinac County and the State of Michigan during the same time frame are illustrated in the following graphs:

The segment of year round residents 65 years of age and over has increased far more than any other age group during the last 40 years, comprising over 22% of the total township population in 2000. This brings the median age of the township to 49.8 years, as compared with 42.8 for Mackinac County and 35.5 years for the State of Michigan.

An analysis of the population growth and the changing age distribution of year round township residents bring us to the obvious conclusion that the major factor in the growth is the influx of retired persons moving to the area.

Potential retirees represent another category of property owner which is on the increase. The responses to the survey indicate that the above trends will continue at the same rate or possibly escalate.
Land Cover

Portage Township consists primarily of forest land (40.8%), wetlands (28.8%) and inland lakes (22.8%). Only 1,011 (2.2%) of the township's 46,167 acres are developed extensively enough to be classified as urban areas. Agricultural land covers 1,362 acres (3%), and other open land areas make up 2.4% of the township. (See Map #4 - Land Cover)

Most of the woodland, or forest land, is owned by the State or timber corporations. The dominant types of woodlands include upland hardwoods, aspen and birch. (See Map #5 - Forest Land.)

Wetland areas are spread throughout the township, creating many obstacles to future development. In fact, it appears that some existing developments are located on wetlands, and still other developments border wetland areas. (See Map #6 - Wetland Areas.)
This map is for general planning only. It does not contain sufficient detail for site specific planning.

Source: 1978 MIRIS Land Cover
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Comm.
This map is for general planning only. It does not contain sufficient detail for site specific planning.

Source: 1978 MIRIS Land Cover
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Commission
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Source: 1978 MIRIS Land Cover
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Comm.
Geology

Geologic factors play a major role in terms of land use. The depth of bedrock from the land surface is critical for most land uses. The 1993 Soil Survey of Mackinac County shows that most of the bedrock lies within 10 feet of the surface. The depth is based on many soil borings and on observations during soil mapping. The rock is either soft or hard. If the rock is soft or fractured, excavations can be made with trenching machines, backhoes, or small rippers. If the rock is hard or massive, blasting or special equipment generally is needed for excavation.

Generally, it is considered that if bedrock is within 10 feet of the surface, that area is incapable for land uses like residential, commercial, and industrial, etc., particularly where public sewer and water facilities are not available. There is a small area, in Portage Township, which has hard bedrock within five feet located in the southeast corner. (See Map #7 - Depth to Bedrock.)

Glacial Moraine deposits constitute almost 75% of the township. They cut a wide swath through the center of Portage Township from north to south and are located around the Manistique’s Lakes.

In the glacial moraine areas, bedrock tends to be well below the surface and presents few limitations for most land uses.

All other segments of the township, not classified as glacial moraine, present serious geological restriction to most types of development.
This map is for general planning purposes only. It does not contain sufficient detail for site specific planning.

Source: 1993 Soil Survey, Mackinac County, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Commission
Soils

Sixty-nine soil types make up the total soil configuration of the township. For general planning purposes, on a township wide basis, the multitude of soils types have been grouped according to rate of permeability. Permeability is defined as the quality of soil that enables water to move downward. It is measured as the number of inches per hour that water moves downward through the saturated soil. The slope of the terrain has also been mapped as it is a major factor, along with soil characteristics, in determining the suitability of given areas for various kinds of development.

As shown in Map #8 - Permeability, the permeability of most soils throughout the township range from rapid to moderate in the western half of the township with more slow to very slow soils in the eastern half of the township. A number of soils are made up of different layers of soil types, giving them a combined classification. For our purposes, we chose to map the slowest classification when more than one was designated.

Map #9 - Slope also shows numerous long and narrow slivers of property with a slope greater than 10% - a very limiting factor for residential or commercial development in most cases.

The following page is a listing of all soil types and their respective characteristics in Portage Township.
Soil Types in Portage Township

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<th>Label</th>
<th>Soil Map Unit Name</th>
<th>Number of Units</th>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Pickford Silty Clay Loam</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>13B</td>
<td>Alcona Fine Sandy Loam, 0-6 percent slopes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16B</td>
<td>Shoepac Fine Sandy Loam, 0-6 percent slopes</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16D</td>
<td>Shoepac Fine Sandy Loam, 6-15 percent slopes</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19B</td>
<td>Kalkaska Sand, 0-6 percent slopes</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19D</td>
<td>Kalkaska Sand, 6-15 percent slopes</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>19E</td>
<td>Kalkaska Sand, 15-35 percent slopes</td>
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<td>19F</td>
<td>Kalkaska Sand, 35-60 percent slopes</td>
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<td>21A</td>
<td>Finch Sand, 0-3 percent slopes</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Spot Muck</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Leafriver Mucky Peat</td>
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<td>24B</td>
<td>Springlake Loamy Coarse Sand, 0-6 percent slopes</td>
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<td>Springlake Loamy Coarse Sand, 6-15 percent slopes</td>
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<td>25B</td>
<td>Guardlake Fine Sandy Loam, 0-6 percent slopes</td>
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<td>Guardlake Fine Sandy Loam, 1-6 percent slopes</td>
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<td>27B</td>
<td>Greylock Fine Sandy Loam, 1-6 percent slopes</td>
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<td>Greylock Fine Sandy Loam, 6-15 percent slopes</td>
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<td>28B</td>
<td>Longrie Sandy Loam, 1-6 percent slopes</td>
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<td>29A</td>
<td>Solona Loam, 0-3 percent slopes</td>
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<td>32A</td>
<td>Allendale Fine Sand, 0-3 percent slopes</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Pits, Sand and Gravel</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>Entisols, Frequently flooded</td>
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<td>Udipsamments and Udorthents, nearly level</td>
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<td>Wallace-Spot Complex, 0-15 percent slopes</td>
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<td>Millecoquins Very Fine Sandy Loam, 1-6 percent slopes</td>
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<td>Mattix Sandy Loam, 0-3 percent slopes</td>
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<td>Heinz Sandy Loam, 0-6 percent slopes</td>
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<td>183B</td>
<td>Cozy Cobbly Fine Sandy Loam, 0-6 percent slopes</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Water</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Rate of Permeability

- **Rapid**
- **Moderate**
- **Slow**
- **Very Slow**

A number of soils are made up of different layers of soil types, giving them a combined classification. For our purposes, we chose to map the slowest classification when more than one was designated.

Scale: 1" = 1.5 Miles

This map is for general planning only. It does not contain sufficient detail for site-specific planning.

Source: 1993 Soil Survey, Mackinac County
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Comm.
This map is for general planning only. It does not contain sufficient detail for site specific planning.

Source: 1993 Soil Survey, Mackinac County
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Comm.
Capability

The capability of an area, for specified land uses, depends upon the proper combination of the physical features of the area. For example, residential or small commercial development requires proper soil and geological conditions for septic systems -- (if a public sewer system is not available), adequate and pure ground water supplies -- (if no public water system is in place), and a fairly level contour.

All these factors must be considered before determining if a given area is capable of accommodating the intended development. If the proper conditions do not exist, the development may create pollution of groundwater and/or surface water, erosion, flooding, etc.

The natural resource information presented earlier should also be carefully considered in making determinations regarding the feasibility of a development.

In Portage Township it appears that efforts should focus on residential, small commercial and agricultural development capability. Reasons for this focus include:

The township is very rural and in a fairly remote location.

It has an economic base dependent primarily on tourist related activities, including outdoor recreation with some forestry and agriculture. It also has an increasing population of retirees (seasonal and year around.)

Survey respondents strongly indicated that they want limited future development and only in the areas of residential and small service-oriented businesses.

In summary, the main capability criteria should include:

1. Slope
2. Depth to Bedrock
3. Soils Characteristics
4. Groundwater Quality and Capacity
5. Wetlands
Suitability

Suitability of land for development simply looks at additional criteria such as: access to existing roads, access to electrical service, proximity to compatible or non-compatible development, existing density of population and/or development, etc.

If a proposed development meets capability standards and then fits into the community in a manner that is beneficial or, at the very least, not detrimental to the area, it is considered to be suitable.
Recommendations

The Portage Township Land Use Plan, now the Master Plan, has been developed and adopted by the Planning Commission and the Township Board. In past years a checklist and suitability criteria list were established which evolved into zoning maps. Over the years of using building permits, survey results, and expansion of existing development the Township has continued to expand “overly developed” areas, leading to possible future degradation of our most important resource, The Manistique Lakes.

For some years the Planning Commission has been concerned about overdevelopment becoming a threat to the overall health of the Lakes. Due to some lake shore development taking place on wetlands and other soils deemed unsuitable for residential or commercial use, and overcrowding occurring in some areas, the following recommendations are being made:

1) Expand the working relationship with the L.M.A.S. health department and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) on matters of soil erosion, community wells, and septic systems when issuing Building Permits for any future development in the lake shore area.

2) Establishing a Lakes Advisory Commission, consisting of Township property owners, to monitor the water quality and soil quality of both lakes. This Commission would also be charged with investigating the possibility of a sewer and/or water system along the most densely populated area of the Manistique Lakes.

3) Complete a thorough re-examination of the Portage Township Zoning Ordinance, with the objective of reissuing this ordinance to comply with present day development objectives, standards, and language.

4) Establish specific boundaries and zoning requirements for the unincorporated Village of Curtis. This would be incorporated in a revised Zoning Ordinance.

5) Pursue the feasibility of an additional east/west road (North Road) to ease congestion on the main road and provide an alternate route in case of emergency.
Master Plan Use

Portage Township property owners and residents have shown a great interest in their community, as evidenced by the Citizens Survey responses in 1994 and 2004. They are very supportive of, and take great pride in their community, with a desire to retain its present character while recognizing growth will occur – hopefully in an orderly and thoughtful manner.

This Portage Township Master Plan should be continuously used by the Planning Commission and the Township Board as they make decisions and formulate policy. The Plan should be reviewed on a regular basis and updated as needed.
Map #10 shows the current zoning districts in Portage Township.

The present Portage Township Zoning Ordinance, dated November 2000, describes in detail the various requirements for property use in each of these districts.

Questions or concerns regarding property development may be directed to the Portage Township Board, the Portage Township Planning Commission, or the Portage Township Building inspector and Zoning Administrator.

Copies of the Portage Township Zoning Ordinance are available for review or purchase at the Portage Township offices.
Scale: 1" = 1.5 Miles

LEGEND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lakeshore - no development</th>
<th>Lakeshore</th>
<th>Residential</th>
<th>Industrial</th>
<th>Agricultural</th>
<th>Forest/Recreation</th>
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</table>

This map is for general planning purpose only. It does not contain sufficient detail for site specific planning.

Source: 1976 Portage Township Zoning Ordinance

Created by: EUP Regional Planning & Development Commission
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION CERTIFICATION

We hereby certify that this is the official MASTER PLAN of the Township of Portage, Mackinac County, State of Michigan.

This document was approved by the Portage Township Planning and Zoning Commission at its regular meeting on September 11, 2007.

KARL KREPPS
CHAIRMAN

NANCY SELIGERT
Secretary

TOWNSHIP BOARD OF REVIEW

This Portage Township MASTER PLAN was reviewed and approved by the Portage Township Board On September 11, 2007.

DON FERRIS
SUPERVISOR

MARCIA MCDONALD
CLERK

THIS DOCUMENT IS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW OR PURCHASE, AND WILL BE USED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION AND TOWNSHIP BOARD IN THEIR POLICY-MAKING DELIBERATIONS. IT WILL BE CONTINUOUSLY REVIEWED BY ALL PARTIES, AND UPDATED AS REQUIRED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION.