

DRAFT

**2003
Community Attitude
Survey**

Analysis of Results



Charlevoix County

DRAFT

2003

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Charlevoix County Community Attitude Survey

Purpose of this Survey

The primary purpose of this survey is to provide guidance to the Charlevoix County Planning Commission in their efforts toward developing the new County Land Use Plan. This survey is also intended to provide direction to the townships and cities in the County when developing their future land use plans and zoning regulations.

This survey was developed with the intent to determine how historic development in Northern Michigan is viewed, to gauge the public's views on future potential development patterns that could occur within Charlevoix County, to determine the prevailing public attitude regarding property rights, to gain input on various policies and regulations, and to determine the potential level of support for public funding of land preservation.

Organization of the Survey

This survey differs from surveys employed by the Planning Commission in the past in that it relies primarily on photos and artistic renderings to convey images, as opposed to attempting to describe concepts using words. The old adage that “a picture is worth a thousand words” bears a considerable amount of truth based upon the comments and feedback received since the survey was mailed. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to convey in words the information we were able to portray using graphic images. We believe the use of this graphic preference survey is an effective method for gathering opinions on land development issues.

The survey was organized in a manner such that questions in each section would build upon questions in earlier parts of the survey. **Section One** provides a series of photos depicting various types of development that have occurred in northern Michigan. This same development either has occurred or could potentially take place in Charlevoix County as well. **Section Two** portrays landscape typical in the County and asks the respondent to select one of two potential development options. **Section Three** questions the respondent regarding his or her attitude toward personal property rights and regulation of property.

Section Four expands upon the artist's renderings in **Section Two** and offers different development concepts in order to determine the respondent's level of support for various policies and regulations. **Section Five** included questions to ascertain the respondent's willingness to support a property tax millage for the preservation of farm, forest and open lands within the County and, if so, to what extent (millage rate) he/she would support such a program.

Section Six is designed to determine the demographic makeup of the respondents to allow us to better understand the background of those who responded to the survey. This information can be valuable in analyzing the survey results.

This survey compares the responses of elected and appointed officials, registered voters and non-resident property owners. While non-resident property owners cannot vote on ballot issues, they can still influence land use decisions by attending public meetings and communicating with local elected and appointed officials.

Survey Results

On the following pages, the results for each survey question are shown as a set of three numbers, each having differing colors according to the color key below. Each color represents a different group of respondents.

COLOR KEY	
Blue	= Elected & Appointed Officials
Green	= Registered Voters
Orange	= Non-Resident Property Owners

Section One - Community Visual Preferences

In this section, respondents were asked to rate their feelings about specific images, on a scale from -5 to +5. A -5 indicated very negative feelings while +5 indicated very positive feelings. Respondents were instructed not to compare images grouped together. The images representing similar types of land uses, but with differences in the layout of the development, landscaping, setbacks, signage and access, were placed at different locations on the survey form to reduce the chances of the respondents directly comparing the images. The question or figure number that is referred to below reflects the order and numbering of the questions in the actual survey.

Regional Shopping Centers

Figures 1 and 6 below are contrasting examples of a shopping center, which contains one or more “big box” stores (i.e., large grocery store and a K-Mart, Wal-Mart, or Target Store) that serve as a magnet to attract shoppers, along with a number of small specialty stores. The development design illustrated in **Figure 1** reflects what most zoning ordinances in Charlevoix County currently allow. The development features a large building(s) set back from a parking lot, a sidewalk and curb, and a traffic lane. The parking lot consists of a large expanse of concrete or asphalt striped for parking, with light poles located at intervals throughout the lot. Little, if any, landscaping is located on the property, either between the buildings and the sidewalk, between the sidewalk and the parking lot or within the parking lot. While it is not evident in this picture, the property is surrounded by other commercially zoned properties. Minimal, if any, landscaping has been retained or planted between this property and adjoining parcels.

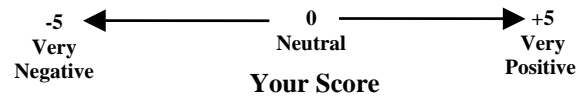
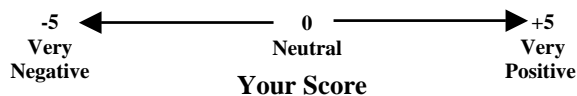
The development depicted in **Figure 6** features landscaped islands in the parking lot. These islands break up the view of the parking lot and buildings and lessen the

perceived size of the development. In addition to making the parking lot and retail building(s) seem smaller, the landscaping helps define the parking areas and provides a feeling of safety and separation between pedestrians and automobile traffic. The landscaped islands prevent vehicles from driving “cross country” through the parking lot at high speeds. The islands with trees also provide shade during the summer and fall months.

In **Figure 1**, a common architectural theme was used for the roofline, building materials and colors. In contrast, varying rooflines, materials and colors were incorporated into the development in **Figure 6**, which adds diversity and reduces monotony.

Both of the regional shopping center developments are similar in that the major structures are set back far from the road behind a large expansive parking lot. To some extent, these larger lots are necessary because “big box” stores draw the bulk of their business from a regional area as opposed to serving the needs of people living nearby. Therefore, few customers can walk to the place of business. Often these large parking lots result from either 1) zoning ordinances that require an overabundance of parking, or 2) the developer and merchants having overly optimistic views of their parking needs.

Currently, most zoning ordinances in the County allow either type of shopping center development to occur, but most ordinances lack the standards necessary to enable the community to require the landscaping present in **Figure 6**.



1.	Local Officials	-1.62
	Registered Voters	-1.38
	Non-Resident Prop. Owners	-1.68

6.	Local Officials	1.45
	Registered Voters	1.36
	Non-Resident Prop. Owners	0.79

None of the respondent groups rated either of the regional shopping centers in a very positive manner. All of the responses to image 1 were similar. Image 1 and image 6 received their lowest ratings from the non-resident property owners. The registered voters and the elected and appointed officials gave similar ratings to image 6, perhaps reflecting the close relationship and sharing of views between the two groups.

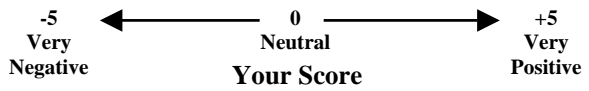
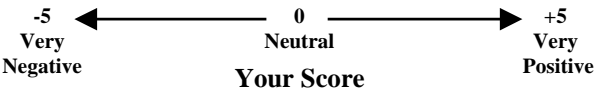
Neighborhood Commercial

Figures 5 and 11 feature commercial, service and professional offices that serve a local area or neighborhood, as opposed to providing for the needs of a large commercial area. **Figure 5** features landscaping both in front of the buildings as well as between the sidewalk and the street. Parking needs for the businesses in both figures are reduced due to the fact that many patrons living nearby can walk as opposed to driving to the businesses. **Figure 5** features pedestrian level signage as opposed **Figure 11**, where all signage is placed at the roofline of the buildings.

Much of the parking for businesses in image five is located behind the buildings, with limited parallel parking on the street in front of the businesses. The businesses in image 11 are set back from the street with a common parking lot in front.

In both figures below, the development consists of buildings that are different shapes, sizes and colors and constructed using different materials.

Image 5 features more landscaping in the form of trees and shrubs, and it portrays a more pedestrian oriented development.



5.	Local Officials	3.30
	Registered Voters	2.75
	Non-Resident Prop. Owners	3.02

11.	Local Officials	0.68
	Registered Voters	0.54
	Non-Resident Prop. Owners	0.43

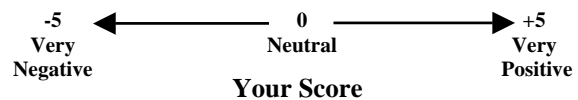
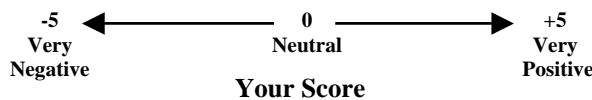
Although both images received positive scores, all three respondent groups rated image 5 more favorably than image 11. Both images received the highest rating from the elected and appointed officials. The registered voters rated image 5 lower than the non-resident property owners, and they rated image 11 higher than non-resident property owners.

Gas Station/Convenience Store

Figures 4 and 10 below represent combination gasoline station/convenience stores.

Figure 4 features peaked roofs on both the main building as well as on the shelter above the gas pumps. This figure includes landscaping in the form of trees in front of the station (planted when the business was constructed) as well as behind the business (older, more mature trees that existed prior to construction of the business).

Figure 10 depicts structures having flat roofs, which do not blend with buildings contained in the background. Nor does the business in image 10 feature any landscaping that breaks up the mass of buildings and paved surfaces. The signs on this business are much larger than those featured in **Figure 4**. The utility lines are very evident in **Figure 10**, whereas in **Figure 4** the power lines are either underground or along the back of the property, where they are less visible from the street. A street light is located on the utility pole in **Figure 10**, while in the case of **Figure 4**, either street lighting does not exist along the road or lighting from the business provides the illumination necessary for the area. The colors and types of materials used to build the business in **Figure 4** blends in with the surroundings, whereas the business in **Figure 10** does not.



4. **Local Officials** 2.25
Registered Voters 1.95
Non-Resident Prop. Owners 1.85

10. **Local Officials** -2.17
Registered Voters -1.94
Non-Resident Prop. Owners -2.53

All of the respondents rated **Figure 4** between neutral and very positive, with the elected and appointed officials group rating it most positively of the three groups. All groups gave **Figure 10** a negative score, with the non-resident property owners providing the lowest rating of the three groups. The non-resident property owners provided the least favorable ratings for both images.

Highway/Streetscape

Figure 8 provides a view of the type of streetscape that usually results from the need to move a high volume of traffic either into and out of a community or to regional shopping centers. The daily traffic volume determines the number of lanes needed. This results, in part, from our reliance on the automobile as the principal means of travel due to the

absence of front porches, with another being the location of the garages and driveways. In **Figure 7**, the parking areas and garages are located behind the homes and accessed by an alley, whereas, in the remaining four images, driveways directly access the street in front of the home. In **Figure 3**, the garage projects into the front yard of the home and is the focus of attention, rather than the home itself. **Figures 2, 7, 3** and **9** represent homes in areas with mature trees either in front of or behind the homes. In **Figure 12**, the only trees evident are those, which appear to have been planted within the past few years.

Absent from image 7 are driveways crossing the sidewalk in front of the homes. The street is not visible due to the size of the mature trees lining the street. In image 2, while the property is accessed via the driveway, which crosses the sidewalk, the garage is located well back from the street, making the home the focal point of the image. This differs from houses located in areas without urban services, in which case the garage is placed in front of or in line with the home. Image 2 also contains mature trees behind the home and garage with an abundant amount of shrubbery in front. In image 12, a car is parked in front of the home and is highly visible from the sidewalk. This image also features newly planted trees and shrubs and, as a result, is somewhat less aesthetically pleasing than images 2 and 7.

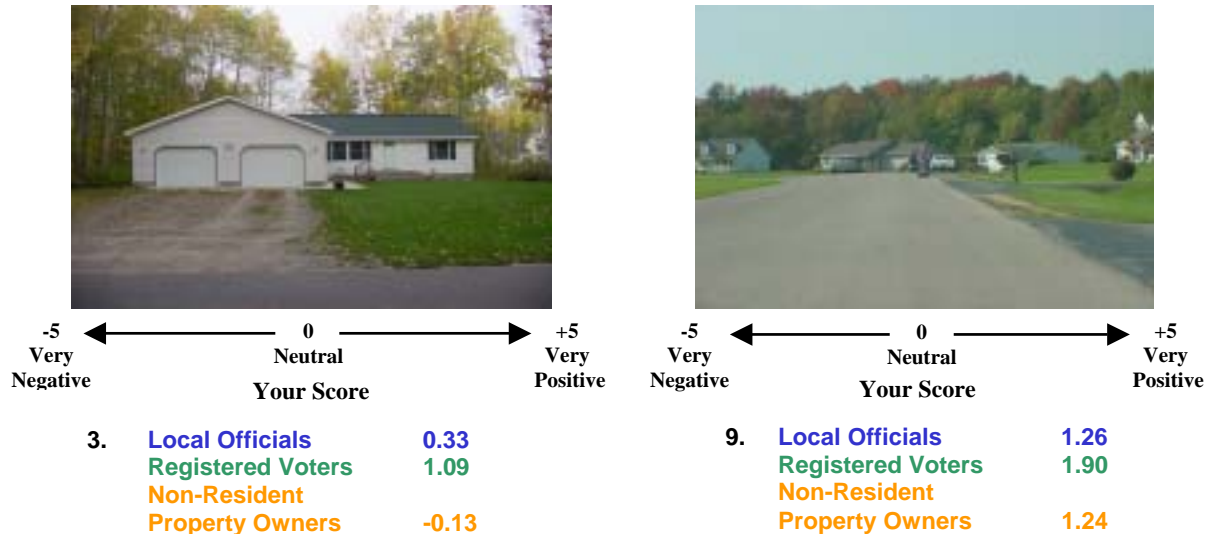
Urban Services Available



All three of the “urban” residential images were rated positive to very positive by all respondent groups. Image 7 garnered the highest ratings of the residential images. Image 2 gathered the second highest ratings. Image 12, while generating favorable responses, was rated the lowest of the three urban images.

For each of these images, the responses from the three groups are quite similar. There appears to be uniform agreement between the groups, especially the elected and appointed officials and the registered voters.

Urban Services Not Available



Images 3 and 9, while receiving positive ratings for the most part, do not compare favorably with the residences having urban services available (images 2, 7 & 12). Sidewalks have not been provided, resulting in pedestrians having to walk in the roadway. The residential developments not offering urban services do exhibit mature tree growth behind the dwellings as do the first two images. The homes are widely spaced and are overshadowed by garages (clearly depicted in image 3). This may be the reason why it was the lowest rated of the five residential images, including **Figure 9**.

Image 3 contains the widest disparity of scoring between the three respondent groups, with the registered voters rating it the highest and the non-resident property owners the lowest.

Section Two – Future Development Preferences

This section was designed to determine the respondent’s preferences about the pattern that new development should take in Charlevoix County by presenting six different development scenarios. Each scenario consists of three panels. The first panel, entitled **Current Land Use**, shows how a parcel of land currently appears. The second panel, entitled **Development Option A**, illustrates how the parcel would likely be

developed under the County's current land use regulations. The final panel, **Development Option B**, illustrates how the same level of development could be sited in an alternative manner that would have a greatly reduced visual impact. Respondents were asked to choose the development alternative which best represents their preferences for future development.

The Planning Department received input from some people who felt the **Current Land Use** illustration should have been offered as a third option in each scenario. It was explained that there are no means to limit property to prevent future development uniformly across the County, nor would it be desirable to attempt to do so. We acknowledged it would be possible to acquire some, but not all, developed property in the County either outright or via the acquisition of development rights.

Large Lot Rural Residential

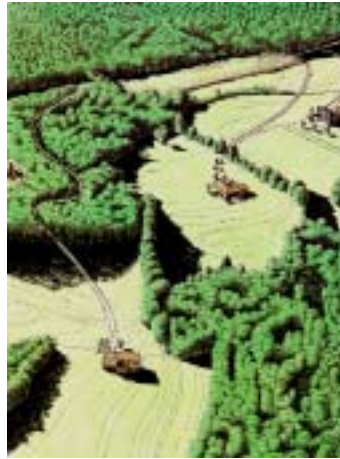
The first illustration shown below reflects an area, which currently consists of a mixture of woods and fields. The fields may currently be used for agricultural production (row crops, hay fields or pasture), or could be land that is no longer farmed. The **Current Land Use** illustration does not reflect any buildings on the property. Currently in the County, a number of the township zoning ordinances allow lands such as this to be split into a number of five or ten acre lots. **Development Option A** reflects the home sites located in the middle of the fields, which is very conspicuous. Given the location of the homes and their accompanying driveways, the potential to continue farming this property or to farm it again in the future is greatly restricted, due to changes that have been made to the property to accommodate the resulting development.

In **Development Option B**, the dwellings and driveways are less intrusive visually. The homes are located in or at the edge of the woods, and the driveways are along the edge of the woods where farm lanes once were for farmers to access their fields. Therefore, the property can continue to be farmed. An additional advantage to locating the homes along the boundary of the woods is energy savings. The woods provide shade in the summertime, which reduces cooling costs, and they give protection in the wintertime from the impact of high winds, which lowers heating costs. Locating the driveways in the middle of the fields provides assurance that they will drift over when snow is falling or is on the ground and the wind is blowing. Given the fact that Charlevoix County is susceptible to a considerable amount of snow and wind, snowplowing, heating and cooling costs could be reduced substantially by choosing **Development Option B**.

All three groups responded that they preferred **Development Option B**. Few of the zoning ordinances currently in effect in the County give their respective planning commissions or elected boards the ability to require development to be sited as depicted in **Option B**. In the few townships where the tools currently exist, the practice has been to rezone the property to a zone district that allows the land to be broken up into uniformly sized five or ten acre parcels, rather than requiring the property owner to divide the property in a manner that minimizes the appearance of the residential development (despite the fact that this results in the owner being allowed to create additional lots over and above what could be accomplished by simply rezoning and dividing the property into uniformly sized parcels).



Current Land Use
Used by permission of the Center for Rural Massachusetts



Development Option A
Used by permission of the Center for Rural Massachusetts



Development Option B
Used by permission of the Center for Rural Massachusetts

13.

Local Officials	8.3%	Local Officials	91.7%
Registered Voters	13.1%	Registered Voters	86.9%
Non-Resident Property Owners	12.4%	Non-Resident Property Owners	87.6%

Medium Density Rural Residential

The **Current Land Use** illustration shows the land being used as either farmland or as land that has been left in an open, unused condition with one home and associated outbuildings on the property. In **Development Option A**, the property is split up into a number of parcels ranging in size from 5 to 10 acres. The parcel is completely converted, eliminating any potential to continue or reinstitute agricultural uses on the cleared portion of the property. With the residential lots extending into the forested areas, the ability to harvest timber is effectively eliminated. A new road has been developed to service the additional residential development. In addition, a number of new driveways having direct frontage on the highway have been created, resulting in the potential for slower speed limits and/or more accidents resulting from a greater number of locations at which turning movements can take place. A loss of rural character has occurred, resulting from the number of dwellings located in a previously open field, and from the creation of the new road crossing the property. The inability to farm or harvest timber is due to the difficulty in entering into agreements with many different landowners, each owning a “relatively” small parcel.

In **Development Option B**, the residential lots are smaller than in **Option A**. In **Option B**, the development is clustered and is set back into the wooded areas, both of which supports maintaining agricultural use of the property and minimizing the visual impact of the resulting development. Also in **Option B**, all of the new residences have driveways that front on small, local access roads, which limits the number of curb cuts or driveways fronting on major county roads or state highways that bisect the property. This form of development allows for both agricultural and forestry activities to continue, though at a somewhat diminished scale.



Current Land Use

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Development Option A

Used by permission of the Center for Rural Massachusetts

Local Officials	12.0%
Registered Voters	13.8%
Non-Resident Property Owners	14.1%



Development Option B

Used by permission of the Center for Rural Massachusetts

Local Officials	88.0%
Registered Voters	86.2%
Non-Resident Property Owners	85.9%

Again, the respondents overwhelmingly preferred **Development Option B**. Historically, the division of land depicted in **Option A** has been a rarity in Charlevoix County due to the unwillingness of the property owner to develop a new road through the center of the property, allowing the creation of additional lots. Generally, the property has been divided into “bowling alley” shaped lots with a very small amount of frontage on the currently existing county road or state highway and a very distant rear lot line. This has allowed the property owner/developer to maximize the number of lots with minimal expense in the form of improvements. This can be seen in the residential development in **Section One**, images 3 and 9, which do not have sidewalks in front of their homes. If construction of a sidewalk is considered, where does the sidewalk lead to in these rural areas?

High Density Rural Residential

The **Current Land Use** illustration depicts an area that is or has recently been managed for agricultural purposes (also possible for timber production). In **Development Option A**, the property is developed into uniformly sized parcels with single family lots located on each parcel. Development of this nature consumes the entirety of the fields and requires the construction of many residential streets to serve the needs of the development. Extensive utilities and other infrastructure are necessary to support the development. Utility lines, pipes and wires must cover the entire field area.

In **Development Option B**, the homes are clustered on smaller lots. This type of development consists of many small lots as well as a few estate-sized parcels. Land of sufficient size is maintained as open space or farmland. This could be land that is owned in common by all of the property owners in the development or it could be land that was held by the original property owner in order to continue his/her agricultural

pursuits. The rural atmosphere is retained. The view from many of the parcels is open space or farmland. The cost of providing utilities and streets to serve the development is greatly reduced due to the smaller area that must be covered. The reduced cost of improving the property results in lower lot costs, which increase the availability of affordable homes for the public.



Current Land Use

15. **Development Option A**

Development Option B

Local Officials	14.4%	Local Officials	85.6%
Registered Voters	16.1%	Registered Voters	83.9%
Non-Resident Property Owners	19.2%	Non-Resident Property Owners	80.8%

Again, **Development Option B** was selected by the majority of respondents in all three groups. The number of persons supporting this option, while in the 80 – 90 percent range, was slightly lower than in the earlier residential options. This could be a result of the respondents not wanting to see a considerable amount of additional development occur in the County. The reverse side of the coin is that if additional development occurs, confining the development to limited areas of the County cuts down on the cost of providing public services to these areas and it preserves more farmland, forests and open space.

Village Expansion

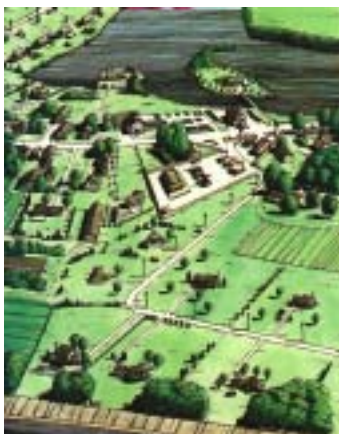
These illustrations depict a waterfront village characterized by residential and business expansion. The first panel (**Current Land Use**) depicts an area not unlike a number of communities in Charlevoix County, such as the “Village” of Walloon, Horton Bay, Advance, or Ironton, where a small amount of development exists. **Development Option A** shows how this expansion would occur if developed according to current land use regulations (current zoning ordinances) and given the absence of a centralized septic waste disposal system (*Many of the existing “Village” areas in the County have soils that are incapable of handling septic waste disposal systems. Thus, they are conducive to dense, compact development*). There is a strict separation of uses, large lot size requirements and excessive parking allowed. The result is a sprawling pattern of development. On the other hand, in **Option B**, the development is clustered in a compact pattern of mixed commercial and residential development. The residential

uses occur on small, compactly developed lots as well as on the second floor of the commercial buildings. This form of development allows residents of the Village to walk to work and to commercial businesses for their day to day needs. Businesses are not only allowed, but are encouraged to share parking areas.



Current Land Use

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16. **Development Option A**

Used by permission of the Center for Rural Massachusetts

Local Officials	12.6%
Registered Voters	12.9%
Non-Resident Property Owners	14.1%



Development Option B

Used by permission of the Center for Rural Massachusetts

Local Officials	87.4%
Registered Voters	87.1%
Non-Resident Property Owners	85.9%

The majority of respondents from each of the three groups preferred **Development Option B**, which clusters residential and commercial development and preserves farm and forest lands. As is the case with other survey questions, the response rate between the three groups is very similar, especially comparing the elected and appointed officials and the registered voters.

Commercial and Residential Development Along State Highways

These illustrations depict new development along a state highway. The **Current Land Use** shows an area characterized by farm and forest lands with a few scattered farm houses. **Development Option A** reflects the typical “strip commercial development” occurring throughout northern Michigan, including Charlevoix County, given the zoning regulations currently in effect. In **Option A**, businesses along the highway have a minimum frontage (front yard width) requirement. The buildings are set back far from the road behind a large parking lot. Minimal landscaping exists between the parking lot and the highway and no landscaping is used within the parking lot, which would have the effect of reducing the perceived massiveness of the paved area. To access the adjoining businesses, one must leave the parking area, exit onto the state highway, drive a few hundred feet and turn into another parking lot. The numerous curb cuts created by each business having its own parking lot increase the risk of traffic accidents due to the increased volume of slow moving vehicles on the highway.

With the creation of large residential parcels, land devoted to farm fields is consumed by

single family homes located a substantial distance from commercial areas, resulting in the need for even those living nearby to drive to places of business. These large lots demand new streets and the extension of utilities into rural areas where few customers are being served, which translates to higher costs for utility companies than would be the case with clustered development.

In **Development Option B**, the commercial/business uses are clustered. In many instances, they share common parking areas, enabling their patrons to visit a number of businesses on foot. The commercial buildings are located between the highway and the parking lots. Landscaping is used within and around the parking lots as well as between the buildings and the highway. The design of this commercial development reduces its visual impact and provides businesses shelter from the highway.

Houses are clustered and front on residential streets, maximizing the amount of land used for farming, while minimizing the number of curb cuts along the state highway. Reducing the number of curb cuts preserves the ability of the state highway to perform its intended function, which is to safely and efficiently move a high volume of traffic traveling at relatively high speeds. While the residential development is not directly adjacent to the commercial properties, houses are clustered, allowing for a mass transit system to efficiently service both the residential and commercial areas.



Current Land Use
Used by permission of the Center for Rural Massachusetts



17. **Development Option A**
Used by permission of the Center for Rural Massachusetts

Local Officials	11.9%
Registered Voters	14.2%
Non-Resident Property Owners	12.8%



Development Option B
Used by permission of the Center for Rural Massachusetts

Local Officials	88.1%
Registered Voters	85.8%
Non-Resident Property Owners	87.2%

Regional Shopping Center

The **Current Land Use** illustration shows farm and forest land with a few single family residences located on a county secondary road and no residential driveways fronting on the state highway. **Development Option A** depicts typical regional commercial development, which is intended to attract shoppers from a wide geographic area. The

stores are served by common parking lots, which reduce the need to get on and off the state highway. However, most of the farmland has been developed. Again, the parking lots are located next to the highway with little, if any, landscaping either around the perimeter or within the lot. The parking lots detract from the visual experience of persons traveling on the state highway, drawing the consumer’s attention away from the shopping center itself. The commercial development located on the opposite side of the state highway offers access to their parking lots at different locations, which creates traffic conflicts. It also hampers the use of stop lights or other devices for regulating traffic flow.

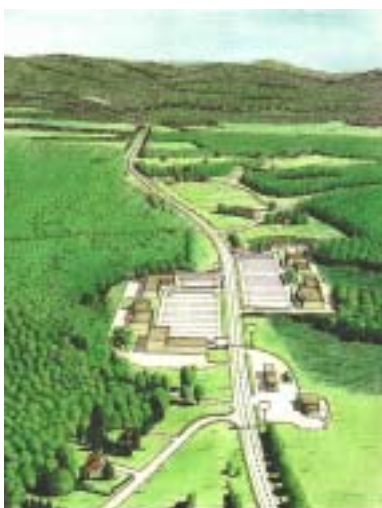
Development Option B illustrates the same amount of commercial development as **Development Option A**, but with a different layout. In **Option B**, the development that on the left side of the highway is tucked back in the woods, with a few rows of trees buffering the view from the highway. This development is serviced via an access road located on the far side of the development from the highway. The development on the right side of the highway is situated behind a row of trees, which helps buffer the view of the development from the road. In both instances, the parking areas are located behind the commercial structures and additional trees have been planted to shield the view of both the buildings and the parking lots.

While the development in both **Options A** and **B** consume forest and farmland , **Option B** minimizes the amount of farmland converted to a non-farm use. The visual perception of those traveling through the area is greatly enhanced by 1) the placement of parking lots in less visible areas, and 2) through the use of trees and other landscaping around the perimeter of and within the development.



Current Land Use

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18. **Development Option A**

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Local Officials	9.6%
Registered Voters	15.7%
Non-Resident Property Owners	10.9%



Development Option B

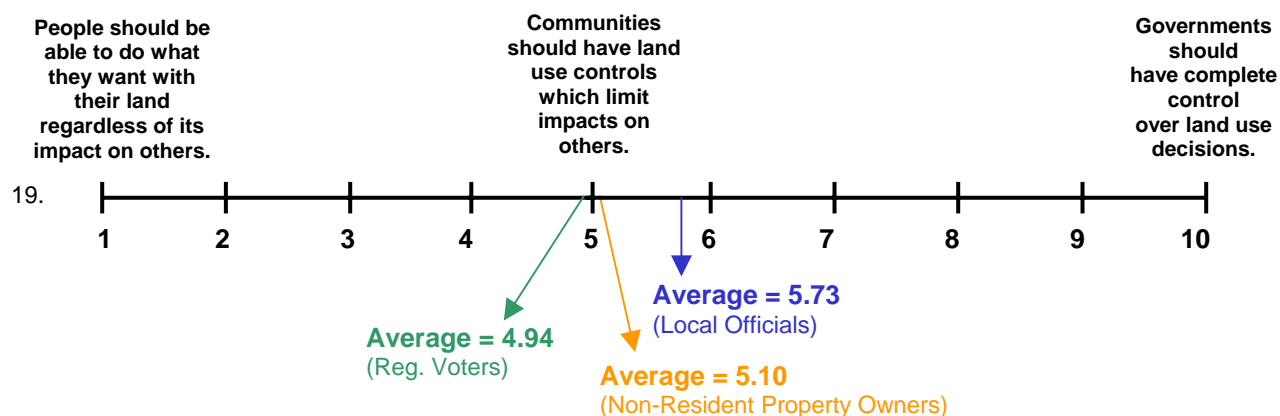
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Local Officials	90.4%
Registered Voters	84.3%
Non-Resident Property Owners	89.1%

Responses to this question demonstrated the greatest difference, more than six percentage points, between the Elected and Appointed Officials group and the Registered Voters group. The difference in the responses between these two groups on the other questions in Section Two generally ranged between less than one percent to four percent.

Section Three – Attitudes About Real Estate Property Rights

This section consisted of one question whose purpose was to determine the attitudes of respondents on a spectrum regarding property rights. The ownership of property comes with rights to use the property as well as the responsibility to use and treat land in a responsible fashion. To answer the question, respondents were asked to rate their opinions regarding property rights on a continuum ranging from “People should be able to do what they want with their land regardless of its impact on others” to “Governments should have complete control over land use decisions”. In the middle of the continuum was the following statement: “Communities should have land use controls which limit impacts on others”.



A limited number of responses from each group were located at the extremes of this continuum. The average of the responses for each group was in the middle of the spectrum, with the majority falling in the range of 4 to 6. This indicates that the majority of the survey respondents believed that property owners should have the right to make decisions regarding use of their own property. They also understand and support the concept of giving up some of their rights in order to protect themselves and their property from potential incompatible uses on neighboring properties, which could diminish the use and enjoyment of their own property.

Section Four – Attitudes About New Policies/Regulations

Section Four utilizes several of the same illustrations shown in Section Two. People were asked to respond to several statements regarding new policies and/or regulations on a continuum ranging from strongly support to undecided to strongly oppose. The purpose behind asking these questions is to gauge the level of public support for developing new or improving current land use regulations. These regulations would not

only address the type and location of land uses in their community, but also insure that development fits into and is considered an asset to the community. In Section One of this survey, we attempted to gauge the respondent's views of various land uses, which includes factors, such as layout and design. Depending on the regulations put into place, local planning commissions and elected boards could have the ability to require the construction of quality development based on what the local community views as aesthetically pleasing and compatible with the character of Charlevoix County.

Commercial Strip Development

Figure 1 illustrates a common pattern of commercial strip development where buildings are scattered in a linear fashion along roadways. There are numerous separate driveways and parking lots. Buildings are set back far from the road with most parking located in front. Large signs are scattered along the roadway. Traveling from one business to another requires getting back out on the road.

Figure 2 illustrates an alternative pattern of commercial development. Here, businesses are located in groups with shared parking, allowing people to walk from business to business. Buildings are located closer to the road with parking located to the side and rear. The number and size of signs is reduced.

To achieve the pattern of development in **Figure 2**, your city or township may have to adopt new land use policies and regulations. To what extent would you support the following:

Illustrations used with the permission of the Center for Rural Massachusetts

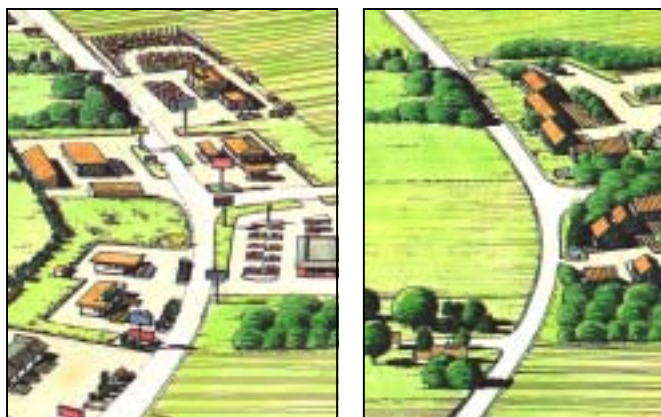


Figure 1

Figure 2

COLOR KEY	
Blue	= Local Officials
Green	= Registered Voters
Orange	= Non-Resident Property Owners

		<u>Strongly Support</u>	<u>Support</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>
Require new commercial buildings to be grouped together in specific locations. 20.		50.8%	35.9%	8.6%	3.9%	0.8%
		42.7%	43.9%	7.1%	4.6%	1.7%
		50.2%	37.6%	6.5%	3.8%	1.9%
Require new commercial buildings to share parking areas and access drives with other commercial buildings. 21.		60.8%	30.0%	2.3%	4.6%	2.3%
		48.0%	41.1%	5.7%	3.7%	1.5%
		55.0%	35.8%	4.4%	2.7%	2.1%
Require parking to be located to the side and rear of new commercial buildings. 22.		46.9%	29.7%	15.6%	4.0%	4.0%
		36.3%	37.5%	17.7%	6.6%	2.0%
		48.8%	31.8%	11.7%	5.6%	2.1%
Reduce the size of signs. 23.		51.5%	31.5%	7.7%	7.7%	1.5%
		50.5%	30.0%	10.5%	7.2%	1.8%
		61.6%	26.5%	6.7%	4.3%	0.9%

Looking at the responses of all three groups, over 73% of the elected and appointed officials, registered voters, and non-resident property owners either “support” or “strongly support” the four regulatory measures pertaining to **Figures 1 and 2**.

Interestingly, of all four land use regulations, the local officials and registered voters are least supportive of the requirement for parking to be located to the side and rear of new commercial buildings. However, over 80% of the non-resident property owners either “support” or “strongly support” side and rear parking for commercial buildings. Comparing all three respondent groups, the registered voters (73.8%) are the least supportive of this regulation. Eighty percent (80%) or more of each respondent group indicates they either “support” or “strongly support” the other three regulations, which include grouping commercial buildings together in specific locations, requiring commercial buildings to share parking lots and access drives, and reducing the size of signs.

For regulations where there are differences in the level of support from the three groups, the non-resident property owners voice the highest level of support, while the registered voters provide the least support. We cannot overemphasize the high level of support from all three groups for each design standard.

State and national companies ranging from fast food restaurants to discount department or “big box” stores have demonstrated that, while they prefer to use their standard designs, property layout patterns and landscaping plans, they are willing to consider altering those plans to provide a better fit with local communities if they are requested to do so.

Low to Medium Density Rural Residential Development

COLOR KEY	
Blue	= Local Officials
Green	= Registered Voters
Orange	= Non-Resident Property Owners

Figure 3 illustrates the typical pattern that new low density residential development is taking in rural areas. Here, new houses are uniformly scattered across the landscape. With this development pattern, important farm and forestlands as well as scenic vistas are lost. The alternative, illustrated in **Figure 4**, has the same number of houses. But, rather than scattering them uniformly on the parcel, they are sited in a manner which blends with the surrounding landscape. With this development pattern, important farm and forestlands as well as scenic vistas are preserved.

Illustrations used with the permission of the Center for Rural Massachusetts



Figure 3

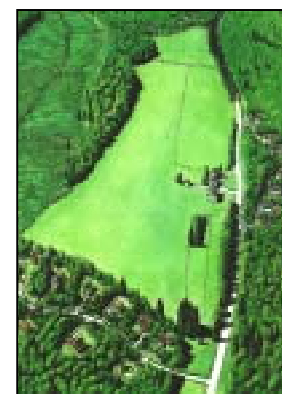


Figure 4

To achieve the pattern of development illustrated in **Figure 4**, communities in Charlevoix County may have to adopt new land use policies and regulations. To what extent would you support your community in doing the following:

Developing regulations which site new house lots in a manner that preserves important natural resources and scenic views.

24.

<u>Strongly Support</u>	<u>Support</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>
60.0%	30.8%	3.9%	3.9%	1.5%
56.3%	29.9%	5.7%	5.9%	2.2%
61.6%	29.4%	2.7%	3.9%	2.4%

Limiting the number of new driveways on public roads.

25.

51.5%	29.2%	10.8%	5.4%	3.1%
43.0%	31.9%	13.7%	8.6%	2.8%
51.0%	29.1%	12.1%	5.2%	2.6%

Developing regulations which preserve important farm and forestlands.

26.

60.8%	26.2%	5.4%	3.9%	3.9%
58.8%	26.3%	7.4%	5.2%	2.3%
61.0%	26.9%	6.2%	3.5%	2.4%

Regarding new residential development, the non-resident property owners were the most supportive of creating or improving all three design and regulatory tools. The elected and appointed officials were the second most supportive. Of all three regulatory policies, the proposal to limit the number of new driveways fronting on public roads receives the least amount of support, but it is still supported by at least 75% of the respondents in each group. The registered voters show the lowest level of support for this regulation. The siting of homes in a manner that preserves important natural resources and scenic views is supported by 86% - 91% of the respondents in each group.

High Density Residential Development



Figure 5



Figure 6

Figure 5 illustrates medium to high density residential development laid out in the typical subdivision pattern, where all of the land is consumed by house lots. The only open space in this development is the unbuildable wetlands. Figure 6 illustrates the same number of houses laid out in a more traditional neighborhood pattern. Here, lots are of varying sizes and are sited on streets laid out in an interconnected web. This pattern of development allows for numerous parks and other usable open spaces to be scattered throughout the neighborhood.

Please indicate your feelings about regulations that encourage new medium and high density subdivisions to be developed in a neighborhood pattern as illustrated in Figure 6.	27.	<u>Strongly Support</u>	<u>Support</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>
		57.6%	32.0%	3.2%	5.6%	1.6%
		45.0%	36.9%	9.2%	5.8%	3.1%
		48.0%	32.9%	9.7%	4.7%	4.7%

COLOR KEY	
Blue	= Local Officials
Green	= Registered Voters
Orange	= Non-Resident Property Owners

Figures 5 and 6 are enlarged versions of the images used in Section Two, question 15. As is the case with questions 20 through 26, all groups either support or strongly support regulations that encourage clustering of medium and high density development. The combined supportive responses range from a low of 81% by the non-resident property owners to a high of 90% by the elected and appointed officials.

Section Five – Public Funding for Land Preservation

The way land is developed can be influenced by many factors. Currently, the use of land throughout most of the County is regulated by the city and township zoning ordinances. Some of these zoning ordinances also include standards for the development of property. These development standards may address many of the issues raised in Section Four. In some instances, the only means available to ensure that land is used in a manner favored by the public is to purchase the development rights. In other cases, the outright public acquisition of the property may be the only means that is fair to the property owner and advances the public interest. Of these two questions, the second question (#29) is only to be answered by those persons who would support a property tax millage to be used in purchasing the development rights of property or acquiring public ownership of land.

Many individuals who responded negatively to question 28, proceeded to answer question 29. In the tabulation of the results, those persons who indicated in question 28 they would not be willing to support a millage were excluded from the results tabulated for question 29.

COLOR KEY		
Blue	=	Local Officials
Green	=	Registered Voters
Orange	=	Non-Resident Property Owners

Would you support a property tax millage increase to be used for the preservation of farm and forestlands and other important open spaces in Charlevoix County?

28. YES 57.5% 59.6% 64.5% NO 42.5% 40.4% 35.5%

If yes, please indicate the maximum size millage increase that you would be willing to support.

29. ¼ Mil (\$12.50 annually on a \$100,000 house)	1 Mil (\$50.00 annually on a \$100,000 house)
18.1% 26.7% 18.8%	36.1% 25.6% 32.6%
½ Mil (\$25.00 annually on a \$100,000 house)	1 ½ Mills (\$75.00 annually on a \$100,000 house)
25.0% 29.3% 25.1%	2.8% 2.7% 1.4%
¾ Mil (\$37.50 annually on a \$100,000 house)	2 Mills (\$100.00 annually on a \$100,000 house)
8.3% 6.6% 7.7%	9.7% 9.1% 14.4%

Two issues need to be addressed when considering placing a proposal on the ballot for a millage on property to be used for acquiring development rights and/or outright public ownership of land. The first issue is ensuring that elected officials will place a proposal on the ballot. The second consideration is whether or not the voters of the County will support a millage proposal issue.

In large part, the decision to place a millage proposal on the ballot rests in the hands of the elected officials in the community (city, township or village) where the proposed millage would be levied. If the goal is to raise funds for the purchase of development

rights or land countywide, it may be advantageous to address the issue at the county level. In this case, the County Board of Commissioners would be the appropriate body to place the issue on the ballot for a vote of the people.

The responses to questions 28 and 29 indicate there may be support for placing a millage proposal on the ballot in Charlevoix County. The question is: Should the millage proposal be addressed at the county level or by the individual cities and townships?

The level of the proposed millage on the ballot will have a major impact on how many of the current supporters of the concept will follow through and vote in favor of the millage. Additional survey and educational efforts should take place prior to even considering placing the issue on a ballot. It is safe to say that, given the responses to this survey, the registered voters of the County would support at least a ¼ mill levy on the tax roll, given no or minimal adverse campaign efforts by opponents of such a proposal.

Section Six – Demographic Information

Demographic information was collected to enable us to better understand the people who responded to survey. Questions in this section include residential status, length of occupancy in Charlevoix County, whether or not the respondents own businesses, and gender and age of the respondent.

Due to the fact that the survey was originally designed for the registered voters (and the elected and appointed officials as a separate group) in the County, the questions regarding ownership, occupancy, lifetime residency in the County, and how long the respondent has lived in the County are not applicable to the non-resident property owners. Later in the process of developing the survey, the County Planning Commission decided to include non-resident property owners as well.

Which of the following best describes your residential status?

30. Homeowner (<i>year-round</i>)	98.5%	91.5%	12.5%
Homeowner (<i>seasonal</i>)	0%	1.3%	66.0%
Renter	1.5%	4.4%	0.8%
Other _____	0%	2.8%	20.7%

How long have you lived in Charlevoix County?

31. 0-5 years	10.0%	13.8%	18.9%
5-10 years	10.7%	14.3%	13.3%
10-20 years	16.2%	18.6%	15.3%
Greater than 20 years	63.1%	53.2%	20.4%
Do not reside in this area	0%	0.1%	32.1%

Are you a lifetime resident of Charlevoix County?

32. Yes	33.9%	33.6%	4.7%	No	66.1%	66.4%	95.3%
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Are you a local business owner?

33. Yes	31.6%	21.3%	4.2%
No	68.4%	78.7%	95.8%

Male	57.3%	50.9%	67.8%
Female	36.0%	49.1%	32.2%
Blank	6.6%	0%	0%

What is your age?

56	54	56
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COLOR KEY		
Blue	=	Local Officials
Green	=	Registered Voters
Orange	=	Non-Resident Property Owners

The demographic questions in Section Six provide us with useful information regarding the background of those that responded to the survey. For most of these questions, the response rate of the non-resident property owners (shown in orange), while interesting, is of little value, except the questions pertaining to age and gender. As stated above, this is due to the fact that, this survey was originally intended for registered voters and the elected and appointed officials of the County. In order to be elected to a public office in Charlevoix County, one must be a resident of the County. Residents are eligible to vote and are included on the Michigan Secretary of State's Qualified Voter List.

Ninety eight and a half percent (98.5%) of the elected and appointed officials responding to the survey are year round homeowners, which is not surprising for two reasons. First, the majority of persons holding a public office tend to be either long time residents of the community or they are "new comers" that ran or volunteered for office because they have strong feelings regarding local political issues and/or an interest in public service. The longer a person lives in a community, the greater the probability the person is a homeowner. A high percentage of the registered voters (93%) responding to this survey own their home.

Over 53% of the registered voters and over 63% of the elected and appointed officials responding to the survey have lived in Charlevoix County for more than twenty years. While the majority of respondents indicate they have lived in the County for over 20 years, only one third (1/3) have lived here all of their lives. It follows that approximately two thirds (2/3) of the current residents have migrated to the County at some point in the past.

Fewer than one third (1/3) of either the elected and appointed officials, or the registered voters own a local business, which is a small, but significant, percentage of the total County population. Based on past experience conducting surveys, we find that as an individual's investment in a community increases, they are more likely to respond to surveys regarding community issues.

The average age of the respondents from all three groups surveyed ranged from 54 to 56 years. This exceeds the average (median) age of a resident of Charlevoix County or the State of Michigan, which is 39.1 years and 35.5 years, respectively (based on the 2000 Census of Population). Since surveys were not sent to anyone under 18 years of age, this skewed the age of the respondents somewhat, compared to Census data. Another finding from past surveying efforts is that as people age, they are more likely to vote, complete surveys and get more involved with issues they believe may impact them.

Interestingly, the sex of the respondents in the registered voter category was divided 50/50, while the split was two thirds (2/3) men and one third (1/3) women for the non-resident property owners and 57% men versus 36% women for the elected and appointed officials. Close to 7% of the elected and appointed officials responding to the survey did not answer this question, while 100% of respondents in the other two groups responded to this item. One possible reason for this response pattern may be that the elected and appointed officials wanted to lessen the chance of being identified as the

respondent to a particular survey. The fact that these groups were polled separately was not publicized, but no attempt was made to conceal this fact either.

The high percentage of male respondents among the non-resident property owners may be due to the fact that the survey was mailed to the name on the property tax bill (County Equalization Department), which corresponds with the name of the person who files a deed or land contract after acquiring a piece of property (County Register of Deeds). A review of records in the Register of Deeds Office and the Equalization Department shows the name of the husband is generally the first name listed on the documents. It follows that the person whose name appears first on the mailing label is the person who opens the mail.

General Comments and Conclusions

This survey was developed following a series of public Visioning Sessions held at five different locations throughout the mainland portion of Charlevoix County. Based on the public input received at the Visioning Sessions, the Charlevoix County Planning Commission directed staff to develop this survey with the assistance of the Charlevoix County Office of the Michigan State University Extension Service. While this effort was underway, planning consultants at the Planning and Zoning Center in Lansing developed a Future Vision Statement for the County based on public comments expressed at the Visioning Sessions.

A review and comparison of the results of the Visioning Sessions and the Community Survey suggests that the majority of survey respondents would be highly supportive of the Vision Statement. Even though the Draft Vision Statement and the survey were developed at the same time by different parties, they are both based on the results of the Visioning Sessions.

Appendix A

Survey Response Rates by Minor Civil Division

Survey Response Rates by Minor Civil Division

Unit of Government	Local Elected & Appointed Officials			Registered Voters			Non-Resident Property Owners		
	# Mailed	# Returned	Percent Returned	# Mailed	# Returned	Percent Returned	# Mailed	# Returned	Percent Returned
Bay Twp	18	14	78%	441	124	28%			
Boyne Valley Twp	10	3	30%	468	92	20%			
Chandler Twp	11	6	55%	80	22	28%			
Charlevoix Twp	12	6	50%	704	175	25%			
Evangeline Twp	12	10	83%	339	83	24%			
Eveline Twp	12	10	83%	648	162	25%			
Hayes Twp	17	8	47%	763	224	29%			
Hudson Twp	11	1	9%	237	52	22%			
Marion Twp	12	12	100%	613	156	25%			
Melrose Twp	12	5	42%	523	92	18%			
Norwood Twp	14	8	57%	283	103	36%			
Peaine Twp	11	3	27%	123	19	15%			
St. James Twp	11	5	45%	133	28	21%			
South Arm Twp	12	4	33%	680	117	17%			
Wilson Twp	16	10	63%	667	134	20%			
Boyne City	16	9	56%	1,412	250	18%			
Charlevoix	23	15	65%	1,193	281	24%			
East Jordan	24	11	46%	839	78	9%			
Subtotal	254	140	55%	10,146	2,192	22%	N/A	N/A	N/A
County Officials	24	9	38%	N/A	N/A	N/A			
Subtotal	278	149	54%	10,146	2,192	22%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Out of County	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,060	706	34%
TOTALS	278	149	54%	10,146	2,192	22%	2,060	706	34%

TOTAL MAILED 12,484

TOTAL RETURNED 3,047

PERCENT RETURNED 24.4%

Appendix B

Methodology

The Charlevoix County Planning Department Staff, in conjunction with staff of the Michigan State University Extension Service (both the Charlevoix County Office as well as University-based staff) devoted substantial time and effort in the development of this survey. In addition, the expertise of planning consultants at the Planning and Zoning Center in Lansing, Michigan was used in reviewing drafts of the survey as well as the final results.

Several different population groups were considered in the development of this survey. The population to be surveyed determines the type of survey that can be conducted, and what communication barriers we must overcome in order to contact the persons within the selected population group. The chosen group also has a major influence on the cost of the survey. Telephone surveys are effective means of gaining public input, but one can run the risk of not reaching those persons who do not have telephones, have unlisted numbers, or have cellular phones (mobile numbers are not published in phone books). Telephone surveys also tend to be expensive and there is a risk of the interviewer introducing bias into the survey.

For our purposes, a mailed survey was deemed to be the most effective method in that interviewer bias would not be a factor. Any bias from the mailed material would be uniform to all persons receiving the survey. Mailed surveys can be produced at an overall lower cost per person surveyed. This method also enabled us to contact a greater number of persons than we might otherwise have been able to include in the survey, while still remaining within our budget. In addition, the type of information we sought input on did not lend itself to being easily explained either in written text alone or verbally over the phone.

Early on, we identified the need to reach the people who make local land use decisions or those who are in a position to change decisions once they have been made. For this reason, we chose to survey elected and appointed officials who are responsible for making such decisions, either through zoning actions, or the development of future plans governing the growth and development of land in the County. For this group, we used a current mailing list, which is maintained by the Planning Department for the purpose of educational mailings.

Every elected and appointed official in Charlevoix County was mailed a survey due to the small number of persons in this group (278).

Another group of persons who are affected by land use decisions are the registered voters of the County. Utilizing the recently created Qualified Voter File, (maintained by the Michigan Secretary of State's Office), we felt confident that we had a current list of registered voters in Charlevoix County. Due to the number of registered voters, we could not survey 100% of this population group. We mailed a survey to every second name on the registered voter list for each local unit of government in the County, which enabled us to obtain statistically valid results at the minor civil division level as well as countywide.

Upon establishing the two groups to be surveyed as well as the issues on which we wanted public input, progress began on developing the specific questions. Initial efforts

focused on researching the types of surveys used in other areas around the State of Michigan in order to identify the type of questions asked, how they were asked, and how successful the communities were in obtaining responses. Following careful review, the Planning Department staff and the Michigan State University Extension staff decided to use images in the survey, as opposed to the typical practice of utilizing text alone. Several drafts of the survey were developed and reviewed by staff from MSU, consultants from the Planning and Zoning Center, and the County Planning Commission.

A test group of twenty-five persons were asked to respond to the survey and return it in person to the Planning Department. Brief interviews were conducted with each member of the test group to determine if any sections of the survey were confusing, misleading or presented other problems for the respondents. Once additional changes were made to resolve problems identified by the test group, the Planning Commission authorized the printing of the survey.

While the survey was being printed, the Planning Commission decided to poll two other population groups: non-resident property owners and high school government students. Even though these two groups are unable to vote, they can indirectly influence local land use decisions through their attendance and participation at public hearings and voicing concerns around the “kitchen table”. The decision to survey the non-resident property owners was made prior to mailing any of the surveys. Thus, this group received their surveys at the same time as the registered voters and local officials.

The Planning Commission needed to identify a representative sample of non-resident property owners for the survey. To obtain a representative sample, a complete mailing list of property owners, including their “mail to” addresses for property tax bills, was obtained from the Charlevoix County Equalization Department. All addresses containing a zip code for Bay Shore, Beaver Island, Boyne City, Boyne Falls, Charlevoix, East Jordan, Elmira, Gaylord, Petoskey, Vanderbilt, and Ellsworth were eliminated as these are mailing addresses for residents of Charlevoix County and could result in registered voters receiving surveys intended for non-resident property owners. This procedure may have inadvertently eliminated some non-resident property owners from the list (i.e., Antrim County residents having an Ellsworth mailing address and owning property in Charlevoix County). Duplicate addresses, addresses for tax-exempt parcels, and “mail to” addresses containing a business, institutional, and/or government agency name were also excluded from the list. From the resulting list of 6,180 addresses, every address was used for a mailing of 2,060 surveys to non-resident property owners. Thus, the Planning Commission accomplished their goal of mailing 2,000 surveys while maintaining randomness in the selection process.

Since the decision to survey the government students was made late in the spring of 2003, the survey could not be included in the spring curriculum for many schools in the County. However, the Planning Commission intends to survey the students during the 2003 – 2004 school year and analyze these results separately.

The Michigan State University Extension Service (MSU-E) supplied the outgoing envelopes, including an MSU return address. This enabled us to benefit from the

educational mailing discount privileges and provided consistency between the outgoing and incoming mail (mailed out and returned to the same address). One limitation of using the educational bulk rate system was that mail having incorrect or invalid addresses was not returned to sender, so we had no way of determining the number of undeliverable surveys. The return envelopes (inside the outer MSU-E envelopes) contained business reply postage and the MSU-E mailing address. On the advice of the Planning and Zoning Center, we chose not to have the completed surveys returned to the Planning Department. It has been the experience of consultants at the Planning and Zoning Center that the response rate is diminished if surveys have to be returned to an office perceived as having a special interest in the outcome of the survey. Requiring the surveys to be returned to an unbiased organization (i.e., educational institution) helps to ensure a much better response rate. In the opinion of the Planning and Zoning Center and the Charlevoix County Planning Commission, Michigan State University is perceived as an unbiased organization.

Of the 12,487 surveys mailed, a total of 3,050 surveys were returned during the allotted time period, which translates to a 24.4% response rate. The return rates for the three respondent groups were as follows: Elected and Appointed Officials, 53.6%; Registered Voters, 21.6 %; and Non-Resident Property Owners, 34.3%. As the survey was confidential, we had no way of knowing who responded to the survey. Therefore, it was impossible to directly contact and encourage the non-respondents to complete and return the survey. However, the survey return envelopes were coded in a manner that enabled us to identify the population group and community from which the survey originated. While we were unable to directly contact those that did not respond to the survey, we had articles printed in many of the newspapers serving the County, reminding the public to fill out and return the surveys.

The overall response rate of 24.4% was achieved with no follow-up and is considered adequate for a reliable analysis and a statistically high level of confidence that the responses received are representative of the overall views of the respective groups surveyed. The level of confidence for the results of each minor civil division is not as great due to a relatively low level of responses from some units of government.

Statistical modeling has shown that as the number of persons in a group being surveyed decreases, a higher response rate is required. These survey results are reported with a mathematical confidence level of 95% or higher. Put another way, there is a 95% probability that the data generated in this survey and reported here is representative of the groups surveyed and would be similar if the same survey had been sent to similar groups in the County during the same time period.

Appendix C

Press Releases

(Please contact the Charlevoix County Planning Department by phone at (231) 547-7234 or by email at planning@charlevoixcounty.org to obtain copies of the press releases.)

Appendix D

Survey

(Please contact the Charlevoix County Planning Department by phone at (231) 547-7234 or by email at planning@charlevoixcounty.org to obtain a copy of the survey form.)