LAND USE

The purpose of this section is to briefly describe current land use patterns and policies in Two Harbors, describe concerns, identify goals, and map out desired land use outcomes. The Comprehensive Plan is primarily a land use document and is intended to allocate land among industry, commerce, residences, public facilities, parks and recreation, open and natural spaces, and other public and private uses. Changes to the economy (local to global), housing patterns, transportation needs, and quality of life concerns require that the City review existing allocations and adjust accordingly. Many of the goals and action steps described in this section will be referenced or repeated elsewhere in the document.

Land Use Goals

1. Use land within the City of Two Harbors in a planned and managed way to bring about moderate population and economic growth while protecting key environmental and historical features such as the lakeshore, Skunk Creek, wetlands, scenic views, the lighthouse and other historic sites and preserve access and public views to the waterfront.
   a. Achieve a balanced allocation of land among the many public and private uses that reflects the current needs for population and economic growth.

2. Provide public accessibility and use of the Lake Superior waterfront by providing or supporting public facilities including parks, green space, trails, campgrounds, and a boat launch and marina.

3. Public access to the waterfront should be preserved as much as possible on private land and non-city owned public land through use of trail easements and other tools.

4. Have adequate land properly zoned, with infrastructure to allow an active development market in the city.

5. Provide enough commercially zoned land in several appropriate areas to permit continuous commercial expansion.

6. Provide adequate zoned residential land to permit 10 year growth to a population of 4,000.

7. Sustain our existing neighborhoods as viable, desirable living areas and protect them from disruptive land uses and activities.

8. Preserve the pedestrian and village aspects of the older town of Two Harbors, and provide pedestrian and bicycle connections between new developments and existing parts of town.
9. Work with Lake County and Silver Creek Township to manage development around the city in accordance with these goals.

10. Emphasize a conservation subdivision concept in new housing developments that designs around existing land use, and natural features, such as topography, wetlands, and vegetative cover on the future land use map.

11. Carefully evaluate development proposals to ensure compatibility with the approved Comprehensive Plan.

Land Use Action Steps

1. Adopt the recommended zoning map changes listed in this section under Zoning Map Recommendations.
   a. Update the City's key land use and planning ordinances - zoning code, subdivision regulations, sign ordinance, and off-street parking ordinance.

2. A limited analysis of needs for each ordinance is discussed in this section under Local Ordinances Regulating Planning and Zoning.

Zoning Map Recommendations

Developing zoning regulations is one of the most basic roles a city plays in the development of the community. The city's zoning map and ordinance are closely related to existing and desired land uses. The land use analysis and zoning recommendations described in the sections of this document are compiled here and are incorporated into a proposed zoning map for the City. The proposed changes will help the City meet the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Future Zoning Districts Map shows approximate boundaries of future zoning districts in the City of Two Harbors once the Comprehensive Plan is implemented. These recommendations are based on information currently available to the City.

The City will need to initiate the rezoning process for recommended changes separately from the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The City may choose to rezone each area separately or several all at once depending on need and conditions at the time. Exact boundaries of each district will be recorded when the rezoning process is completed.
Changes to Zoning Districts Boundaries (Zoning Map)

1. Rezone the R-1 (Single - Family Residence District) area north of 17th Avenue to I-1 (Light Industrial District).

2. Rezone the I-1 (Light Industrial District) area between CSAH 26 and CN Railroad tracks to B-1 (Highway Service Business District).

3. Rezone the B-1 (Highway Service Business District) and PR (Park and Recreation District) area south of 7th Avenue, east of 4th Street, north of Skunk Creek, and west of the campground expansion (West Burlington Bay Area) to MUW (Mixed Use Waterfront District).

4. Rezone the Skunk Creek Woods from PR (Park and Recreation District) to PP (Park Preserve District). Area is south of Skunk Creek, east of 4th Street plat, and north of private lots along 4th Avenue.

5. Rezone east node of Lakeview Park from PR (Park and Recreation District) to PP (Park Preserve District). Area is south of Burlington Bay Beach, east of Park Road, and north of the city water plant.

6. Rezone the DNR owned property on Agate Bay from I-W (Industrial District Water Related) and I-2 (Industrial District) to PR (Park and Recreation District).

7. Rezone the I-2 (Industrial District), PR (Park and Recreation District), and I-W (Industrial District Water Related) area south of the city water plant and South Avenue residences, north and east of the sewer plant, east of the Lighthouse Point Road, and north of the [proposed] Lighthouse Point Park Preserve, west of Lake Superior to MUW (Mixed Use Waterfront District).

8. Rezone the PR (Park and Recreation District) south of the [proposed] northern MUW District and the city sewer plant property, east of the [proposed] western MUW District, east of the [proposed] PR area owned by the MN DNR, not including the PR zoned property within the area that is currently fenced in around the lighthouse property to PP (Park Preserve).

9. Rezone the IW (Industrial District Water Related District) and PR (Park and Recreation District) south of the city sewer plant, west and north of the Lighthouse Point Park Preserve, and east of the Mn/DNR Boat Launch property to MUW (Mixed Use Waterfront). The existing road right of way should be included in the MUW zoning. This MUW zoning will be separated into two nodes with the smaller node being diagonally located southwest of the larger one.
10. Rezone the area zoned PR (Park and Recreation District) and I-2 (Industrial District) that includes the vacant lots immediately west and south-west of the Waterfront Business District and part of the city owned JJ Castings Site to MUW (Mixed Use Waterfront District).

11. Rezone the PR (Parks and Recreation) area south of the JJ Castings Property along Agate Bay from the west city limits to near the viewing platform at Van Hoeven Park to I-2 (Industrial District).

12. Rezone the tax forfeit property in north Segog from R-2 (One and Two-Family Dwelling District) to R-3 (Multiple Dwelling District).

Local Ordinances Regulating Planning and Zoning

The city code contains many regulations related to land use and development in Two Harbors. Zoning, subdivision, and sign regulations are the most central to planning.

It has been many years since the Two Harbors Land Use Ordinance (zoning code) has received a comprehensive review and update. Much of the zoning code was originally adopted in the 1970s and reflects land uses in the city in that decade and common definitions and regulations of the time. The City has adopted many subsequent updates to address changes in land uses and legal requirements. However, the zoning code inefficiently addresses some now common uses and is silent on several emerging land use trends.

The Comprehensive Plan recommends several changes to the land use patterns of the city and stresses efficient use of resources to improve development in the city. An updated zoning code should complement these goals by modernizing uses, process, and administration. ARDC recommends that updates of these regulations be among the first actions to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

City planning staff and the Planning Commission have also discussed the need to update the subdivision regulations (platting), sign ordinance, and parking requirements.

Each will be reviewed in depth as they are being updated. The following is a list of issues that have been identified as needing further discussion.
Zoning Code

- Home Occupations
  - Discuss modernizing regulation of home occupations to reflect current best practices.
- Accessory Wind and Solar
  - Need to address primary use versus accessory use on lots, location requirements, setbacks, height requirements and etc.
  - How do state regulations affect City’s ability to regulate?
  - How much does City encourage these uses?
  - Add bonus density awards in planned unit development (or conservation subdivision) for developments designed for wind and solar.
- Tarp garages and other temporary accessory uses
- Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Districts
  - Modernize uses, lot, height, and setback requirements
  - Consider buffers and landscaping requirements for industrial and commercial districts where they adjoin residential or parkland.
- Shoreland Overlay
  - Update to at least standards proposed by Planning Commission in 2006.
  - Can alternative standards accomplish the same or more?
  - Consider additional conditions for trails and public access in riparian areas.
- Park and Recreation
  - Specifically include marina and boat launch, golf course, campground, and public historical sites.
  - Fix language allowing private ventures. Should it be incidental to primary use such as restaurant, bar, and concessions; marina and campground services. Also, be sure to allow private ownership of allowed facilities.
- Temporary Vendors
  - Do we regulate location differently than permanent businesses in commercial districts?
  - Need to address outdoor business operations.
    - Farmer’s Market
      - Conditional Use in certain districts. Need to address outdoor business operations.
      - What state and county requirements exist?
• Outdoor Business Operations
  ◦ Discuss business in enclosed building requirements, especially how this affects outdoor dining, farmers markets, and outdoor displays and sales at commercial establishments such as Pamida or Super One for example.

• Off-Street Parking
  ◦ Discuss location and screening requirements for existing lots and new developments.

• Planned Unit Development
  ◦ Review existing PUD agreements and developments to see where improvements can be made to ordinance.
  ◦ Discuss incorporation of conservation subdivision elements.
  ◦ Add bonus density awards for solar and wind energy uses in PUDs.

• Zoning Applications
  ◦ Review permits and plans requirements, application process, and site plan requirements to improve efficiency.

• Online Access
  ◦ Ordinance and application materials should be online and easily understandable.

• Definition and Terms
  ◦ Modernize and add needed definitions and terms.

Subdivision Regulations

• Discuss inclusion of conservation subdivision standards for larger residential and mixed use developments on previously undeveloped land.
• Discuss better inclusion of current city street, trails, utility, storm water, and similar standards directly into the subdivision ordinance.
• Review subdivision regulations for consistency with Shoreland Overlay Ordinance. Lot size, setback, impervious surface, and storm water control are key issues.

Sign Ordinance

• The ordinance should meet both the planning and land use goals of the City, residents, and the property and business owners.
• Review standards for total and individual properties of signs including type, size, number, location, lighting, and other requirements for all districts.
The City should continue to work to improve signing options for businesses and destinations not located within the immediate Highway 61 corridor.

- The City should continue to work with county, state, and federal transportation authorities, neighboring communities, and scenic byway partners to implement local rules for off-premise signs.
- The City believes a well designed way-finding sign program that sets clear, attractive standards for design and location will help the community and its businesses. These signs will not be highway billboards. Off-premise signs should:
  - Support local businesses
  - Promote tourism
  - Emphasize Two Harbors as a destination
  - Highlight/market key attractions
  - Enhance urban design
  - Reinforce community identity
  - Enhance the visitor’s experience
  - Reduce driver and pedestrian frustration
  - Improve traffic flow
  - Improve roadway safety

Parking Ordinance

The City has a parking ordinance to regulate off-street parking. The ordinance sets minimum number of spaces, basic design, and lot location standards. The ordinance was adopted over 20 years ago. It should be reviewed to meet modern standards that have been developed. It should be discussed if the ordinance can be modified to reduce impervious surface; reduce space needed for parking, therefore increasing the amount of buildable lot space; and still meet basic parking needs.