

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Purpose and Planning Process

The purpose of the Blue Lake Township Master Plan is to provide guidelines for future development, while protecting the natural resources and rural character of the Township. This plan presents extensive background information including socio-economic data on the Township; description and mapping of natural resources and existing land uses; and inventory of existing community facilities. The background information is analyzed to identify important characteristics, changes and trends occurring in Blue Lake Township. Community concerns were identified based on previous planning efforts, and public input throughout the master planning process. Goals and policies were developed to guide future development based on the background studies, key land use trends and community issues. These goals, along with a detailed map of existing land use, provided the basis for the Future Land Use Map which specifies where the various types of future development ideally will be located in the Township. This plan also provides suggestions for implementation of the identified goals and policies. The guidance provided by this Master Plan will be utilized in updating the Zoning Ordinance for Blue Lake Township, as appropriate.

Regional Setting

Blue Lake Township is located in the northeastern portion of Kalkaska County, which is situated in the north central part of northern Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Blue Lake Township is one standard geographic township in area, see Figure 1-1.

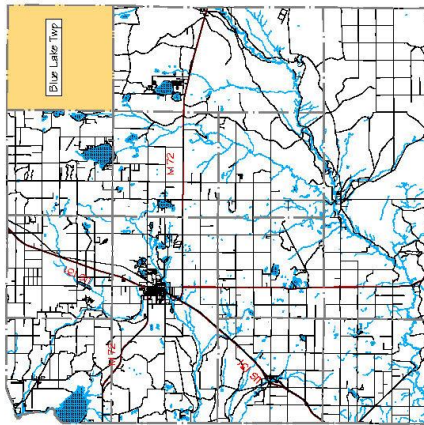
The Status of Planning and Zoning in Blue Lake Township

Blue Lake Township adopted their own zoning ordinance in 1967, being one of the early townships in northern lower Michigan to do so. The most recent Township Master plan previous to this update was adopted in 2009, which was an update of the original Master Plan adopted in 1975 and 1988.

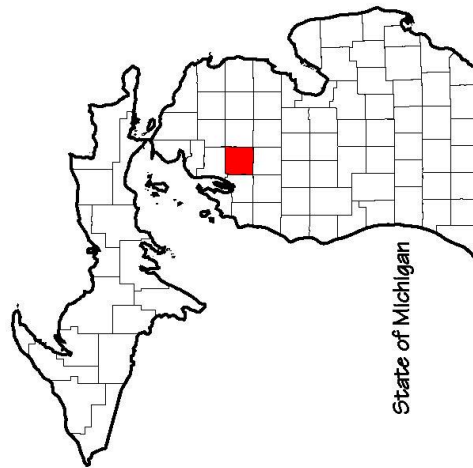
Updated zoning ordinances supported by up-to-date, comprehensive land use plans are considered the main tool Michigan communities have at their command to control land use patterns and development pressures. To provide a strong legal foundation, a zoning ordinance should correspond to an up-to-date adopted Master Plan. Since the Township administers a Township Zoning Ordinance, it is advisable that the Township adopt an updated Township-specific Master Plan to guide future development and provide a stronger legal foundation for the Township Zoning Ordinance.

Location Map, Blue Lake Township

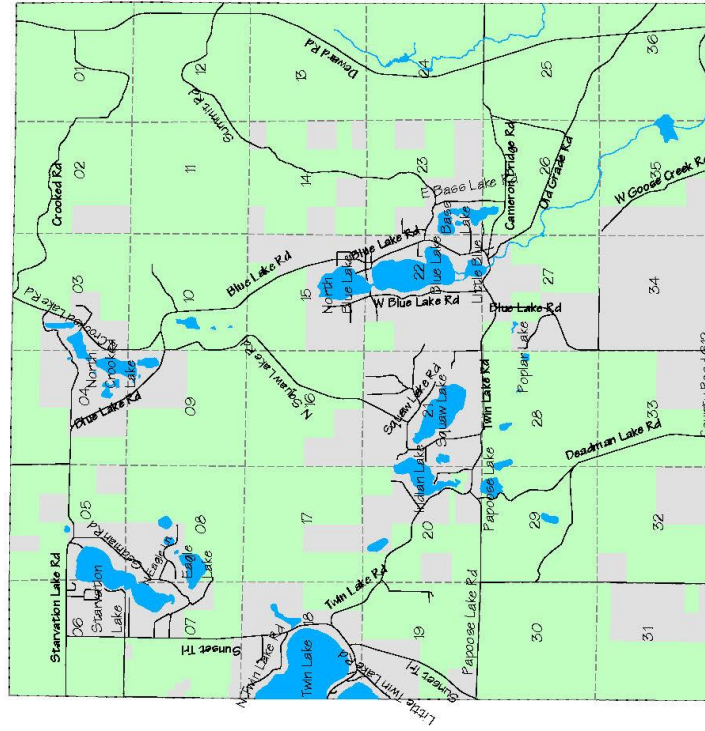
Figure 1-1



Kalkaska County



State of Michigan



Blue Lake Township