

# **LAKE SHORE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**A vision of Lake Shore now and for the future.  
April 2006**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The City of Lake Shore is located on the north shore of Gull Lake and the western edge of the core of the Brainerd Lakes Region, a fast-growing region in Minnesota. Growth in this region is driven by a history as a tourist and vacation destination and a growing year-round population. The total population in Crow Wing and Cass Counties is projected to increase by over 60 percent by the year 2030. The Brainerd Micropolitan Statistical Area (defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as including both Cass and Crow Wing Counties), was ranked as the fourth fastest growing micropolitan area in the Midwest, and ranked 28th in the nation. A micropolitan statistical area is a population cluster with at least 10,000 people that is located outside of metropolitan areas.

Capturing a segment of this projected growth, the City of Lake Shore is also projected to increase its population by over 60 percent by the year 2030, with an expected total population of more than 1,800 people. Absorbing this population growth in a manner that protects and preserves the characteristics and values important to the community requires forethought and planning.

### **What is a comprehensive plan?**

A comprehensive plan is a community-created document that identifies policies, objectives, and strategies to shape the future of development within the community. A community's comprehensive plan serves as a basis for making land use decisions and provides a set of goals for the community to work toward. To manage the expected growth and to protect the distinct characteristics of the City of Lake Shore, this Comprehensive Plan outlines a development path for the community over the next 20 years.

### **What are the reasons for a comprehensive plan?**

The City of Lake Shore and the surrounding area are undergoing a period of change and growth. The City, as stated previously, is located in one of the fastest growing regions in the State. Rapid growth will place significant pressures on the community's resources, which could ultimately lead to impacts on water quality, natural beauty, recreational demand, wildlife habitat and quality, and property values.

Without a plan for managing growth, many communities simply react to change and growth, meaning that the community develops policies on the go as development proposals are submitted. This method of growth management often leads to controversial, extended decision-making processes in which neither the developer nor the community comes out the winner.

An effective comprehensive plan identifies the community's priorities and values, directs growth to areas where it is best suited to promote those priorities, and provides the community with strategies for achieving their goals, implementing their policies, and protecting and enhancing their community. The comprehensive plan takes the guesswork out of land use decision making by laying out these items and providing a framework for decision-making, both for the public officials making the decisions and the people making the land use requests.

## HISTORY

The City of Lake Shore is located on the northwestern shore of Gull Lake in Cass County, Minnesota. Lake Shore was founded as a village in 1930; incorporated on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 1947; and adopted its first land use ordinance in 1969.

One of the areas earliest inhabitants in the area was a group called the Mound Builders who called this area home until about 1840, with some of their burial mounds found in Lake Shore. Other major tribes inhabited the region, including the Sioux, who were eventually driven west by the Ojibwa. Explorers and trappers made their way through the Lakes Region and early settlers engaged in farming and hunting.

In 1880, Charles A. Pillsbury formed the Gull River Lumber company and built a sawmill west of Brainerd. All timber, particularly the white pine, surrounding the lakes was soon cut and, in 1889, tracks were laid for an inland railroad to move logs to the lake for transportation. This narrow-gauge railroad extended some 12 miles northwest from the landing at Gilpatrick Lake (Margaret Lake). By 1894, the surrounding timber had been harvested and the tracks were removed, ending the brief railroad history and intensive logging in Lake Shore. The old railroad grade can still be seen in the western part of Lake Shore.

Early homesteaders along the lake quickly discovered that the area attracted others who wanted to enjoy the lakes and forests. Soon primitive log cabins were constructed to accommodate these first tourists and a new economic era began. The tourist business expanded and resorts of various size and function sprang up along the shores of Gull and Margaret Lakes, with Ozonite, Sandy Beach, and Rocky Point said to be the earliest of these resorts. Many of the resorts were simple "mom and pop" operations with two or three cabins and a small store that provided tourists with necessities such as bread, milk, and eggs. Others were large and grand such as Sherwood Forest and Inwood Lodge.

At this time, gambling was legal and slot machines could be found at some of the resorts and at Bar Harbor, one of Minnesota's most famous nightclubs. From the approximately 35 resorts existing in the 1930s and 1940s, the number has decreased to just six in 2006: Lykin's Pine Hurst, Point Narrows, Lost Lake Lodge, Sandy Beach, Agate Lake, and Samara Point. Increasing demand for residential and tourist-oriented lakeshore property has made it profitable to convert resorts to privately owned dwellings and town homes.

Today, the demand for property on the Gull Lake chain has resulted in development of nearly all available shoreline. Lots once considered undesirable now have homes on them and existing structures are being replaced. The demand for second-tier and other off-lake property has also grown. Escalating prices are tempting rural owners to divide land into smaller parcels for residential development. The availability of goods and services in nearby communities along with the proximity to recreation make Lake Shore a desirable community in which to live and to retire. Road improvements and highway expansions, particularly to State Highway 371, have made it easy for metropolitan residents to commute to and from the area.

## **POLICIES AND STRATEGIES**

This Plan is a guide to future decision-making on land use issues, community development, and the overall character of the City. Through a series of public meetings, residents developed goals and strategies for a variety of issues ranging from housing to economic development to transportation.

**POLICY:** A general statement of community desire and objectives that the community seeks to achieve.

**STRATEGY:** A course of action the community plans to pursue in order to achieve the agreed upon goals.

The policies are short-term and long-term objectives that residents, businesses, and the City government seek to achieve to make Lake Shore a stronger, attractive, and more stable community over the long-term. The strategies provide a means for accomplishing the policies. While some of the goals strategies can be accomplished within a year, others will take many years to fully accomplish. Over time, additional strategies can be added as new opportunities and resources arise.

It is important to note that not all of the strategies are intended to be implemented by the City government. Many of the goals and strategies can and should be organized by volunteer citizen groups. The Comprehensive Plan requires a community-wide effort to be implemented and to be successful.

## LAND USE & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

### *Policies:*

- **Promote compatible land use development to protect investments and to protect the high quality of life in Lake Shore.** Lake Shore is a beautiful place to live and, largely because of that, people have invested a lot of money in the community. For the health of the community and to attract additional quality investment, it is important to protect those investments that have been made by ensuring all new development is compatible with the community.
- **Support growth patterns that reinforce the lake-oriented and rural development that defines the character of Lake Shore.** The growth of the City has been driven by the scenic amenities and rural feel of the community. This is the community's brand. All new development should reinforce that brand by preserving or enhancing the rural-recreation character that distinguishes Lake Shore from other local communities.
- **Ensure that new residential development and redevelopment is efficient, orderly, environmentally sensitive, and fiscally responsible.** With the high demand to live in Lake Shore, there is no need for the taxpayers to directly, or even indirectly, subsidize the cost of development. New growth and development should pay for itself, not just through the development process but also the increased valuation must pay for the increased demand for services. Degradation of sensitive environmental features will have a negative economic impact on the City and must be avoided.
- **Promote the construction of a diversity of housing and redevelopment of housing to allow people of all ages to live and stay living within Lake Shore.** High demand to live in the City increased property values and threatens to price some residents out of the community. It is important that a variety of housing styles and densities be allowed, in a manner consistent with the other goals in this section, in order to provide opportunities for all residents to continue to live in the community.
- **Require all properties to maintain a basic level of appearance that is neat and non-offensive to help enhance property values and keep Lake Shore a desirable place to live.** A shift in culture that a growing population has created has resulted in a decreased tolerance for properties that are not maintained. This is a positive thing because garbage and debris in yards is unsafe and unhealthy. Poorly maintained properties deter investment in the community and diminish those investments that have been made. The community is not interested in onerous regulation, but it is important that a minimum standard of acceptability be enforced.
- **Provide for property currently zoned for low density development to be developed at higher densities where infrastructure is in place and environmental concerns can be addressed.** Much of the City is currently zoned for large-lot development, but these zoning designations are based on historic classifications more than they are the characteristics of the land. There are areas zoned for large tracts where infrastructure is available, or can be provided, and environmental impacts of a development would be

minimal. For these situations, allowances should be made for higher density development.

To implement these policies, the City of Lake Shore will seek to accomplish the following strategies:

***Short-Term Strategies:***

- Establish adequate transitions between different land uses and densities through appropriate standards that are compatible with the community.
- Develop screening and buffering standards to reduce conflicts between adjacent land uses.
- Prohibit large scale extractive uses.
- Adopt concise regulations establishing standards, requirements, and procedures for subdividing land.
- Establish standards for conservation design to provide for the development of large tracts using the principle of density instead of lot size.
- Modify the subdivision ordinances to make conservation subdivision design the preferred option for development.
- Develop a community resource plan that identifies unique environmental, cultural, and architectural sites within the community. Establish preservation guidelines for preserving such features while allowing development.
- Develop standards specific to resorts for continued use and expansion.
- Development specific standards for resort conversions to residential use.
- Require that areas within proposed developments that are unsuitable for development be protected as open space.
- Develop a cost benefit analysis to ensure that new developments pay for themselves in new property taxes.
- Support and maintain ongoing shoreland zoning and enforcement.
- Modify the ordinance to provide for higher densities in areas with the infrastructure and suitability to support them.
- Implement and enforce a nuisance ordinance to help clean up substandard properties.
- Implement and enforce a nuisance ordinance to address concerns over noise issues.
- Develop home occupation regulations to eliminate outside storage nuisances but allow the continuation of home-based businesses.
- Require a park dedication fee with all new subdivisions to upgrade existing recreational resources and expand recreational resources.
- Create a future land use map based off of development suitability and the physical characteristics of the land.
- Require that applications for metes and bounds subdivisions of larger tracts include a long-term development plan for the property.

***Long-Term Strategies***

- Review the standards for commercial development to make sure that future commercial development is compatible with adjoining properties.
- Re-examine where properties are zoned commercially to ensure those neighborhoods are the appropriate place for that type of development.

## COMMUNITY CHARACTER ACTION PLAN

### *Policies:*

- **Reinforce a sense of community and community pride by strengthening the bonds and connections of the people that live, visit, and work in the City of Lake Shore.** The City of Lake Shore has many features to be proud of and that draw people to the community, but with the rapid pace of development in the City and the surrounding region, it can sometimes be difficult for people to feel connected to the community. Visitors and new residents should be welcomed and introduced to the qualities that are valued in Lake Shore.
- **Maintain and enhance the appearance, integrity, identity, and character of the City of Lake Shore.** With the population of the City expected to nearly double by 2030 and the overall population growth in the Central Lakes Region, it is important for Lake Shore to maintain the characteristics that distinguish the City from other communities in the region. Lake Shore is just off of the beaten path, but still draws many residents and visitors with its abundance of lakes and other natural resource amenities.
- **Promote the safety, well-being, tranquility, and comfort of the residents of Lake Shore.** The City is located on the edge of the core development of the Central Lakes Region. Residents enjoy the convenience of living near the Brainerd-Baxter area, while also residing in an area that is quiet and home to an abundance of natural resource amenities. Convenient access to these amenities and maintaining the quality of these features is important in sustaining the community.
- **Protect the quality of the lakes and environmental resources within and around the City.** Lake Shore is home to parts or all of seven different lakes and a range of environmental resources including forested areas, wetlands, and upland communities. Preserving and enhancing the quality of these resources adds to the character of the community and the quality of life in Lake Shore.

To implement these policies, the City of Lake Shore will seek to accomplish the following strategies:

### *Short-Term Strategies:*

- Strengthen and enforce visual nuisance standards within the community through the adoption of Ordinance amendments that give the City clear direction on standards and enforcement.
- Implement shoreline vegetation management standards to protect and enhance the views from the lakes.
- Amend the Ordinance to limit high density or multi-family structures to those areas that are compatible with and have the infrastructure to support this type of development.

- Require screening and vegetative buffers for new developments to protect the wooded, quiet nature of the City, particularly in the less densely developed areas of the community.
- Develop stormwater management standards for all new and existing developments and implement these standards through requirements in the permitting process.
- Update and create ordinances that provide for orderly and quality development within the guidelines of the Comprehensive Plan.

***Mid-Term Strategies:***

- Encourage citizens to volunteer with the many city committees and inform residents of volunteer opportunities on the City website and in the official City newspaper.
- Invite residents to attend and participate in City Council meetings and other city committee meetings.
- Strengthen and enforce nuisance standards regarding light and noise. Develop lighting standards that protect the night sky and prevent glare.
- Strengthen and enforce animal control ordinances throughout the City.
- Encourage the development and use of walking trails throughout the city and plan for trail connections with adjacent communities.

***Long-Term Strategies:***

- Continue to sponsor community events, such as the Annual Easter Egg Hunt, and continue to explore options for other community events such as a sliding day, wiener roasts and hayrides.
- Actively encourage and utilize resident participation in the local decision making process.

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ACTION PLAN

### *Policies:*

- **Protect, enhance, and restore the City's natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas for the community's long-term environmental, social, and economic benefit.** Lake Shore has an abundance of natural resources and open spaces, but unmanaged growth and development has the potential to erode the quality of these resources. The City must actively protect and enhance the natural resources, including those under new development pressure as well as those that currently existing on already-developed land.
- **Maintain and improve the quality of surface and groundwater resources for the benefit of residents and wildlife as well as protect property values.** Residents take pride in the abundance of surface water features in the City, and it is important to protect the existing water quality of those features and improve the quality of those that may be ailing. Residents also wish to prevent the pollution of their drinking water resource by limiting the overuse of landscaping and by bringing failing individual septic systems into compliance. Also, development that poses potential risks to groundwater must be located on suitable soils.
- **Promote environmental stewardship among residents, visitors, and businesses to maintain a high quality of life in the City and to keep citizens involved in protecting the environment for current and future generations.** There is a saying that people only protect the things that they love, and they only love the things that they know. It is important for the City to educate both residents and visitors about the value and importance of preserving the natural environment and its role in supporting the local economy and quality of life.
- **Protect and enhance open space and manage it in an environmentally sound manner.** Open natural areas add to the character of Lake Shore, provide vital habitat for native plant and animal species, and offer scenic, recreational, environmental, and functional benefits. These spaces should be managed and connected with one another to ensure their continuing quality and vitality.

To implement these policies, the City of Lake Shore will seek to accomplish the following strategies:

### *Short-Term Strategies:*

- Require that wetlands and natural drainage systems are maintained and preserved, unless approved by federal authorities, when accommodating new growth or redevelopment.
- Limit development on unsuitable soils, including steep slopes, bluffs, wet soils, floodplain soils, and other environmentally-sensitive areas.
- Identify areas that would not be compatible with development, suitable for increased density, or areas that should be left as open space and zone these areas accordingly.

Direct development, through the use of appropriate zoning classifications, to areas that are more suitable.

- Discourage the use of wetland mitigation as an alternative to conservation design. Encourage developers and residents to preserve and work around wetlands in the design of new developments and redevelopment projects.
- Continue to work with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Department of Natural Resources, other governmental agencies, and lakeshore property owners to improve the water quality for impaired waters.
- Encourage, and in cases of degradation require, shoreline owners to establish natural vegetation along the shoreline and within the Shore Impact Zone (SIZ) to reduce erosion, filter stormwater runoff, and preserve scenic views and wildlife habitat.
- Establish setbacks and vegetation buffers around wetlands and incorporate these standards into the zoning ordinance.
- Cooperate with GLCA (Gull Lakes Chain Association) and other lake and environmental organizations as a means to promote good stewardship and to get residents involved in protecting the environment.
- Review and evaluate existing zoning districts and regulations with adjacent communities and within the City to provide logical transitions between zoning districts.
- Encourage cluster-style residential development incorporating open spaces as a method of protecting natural resources and open spaces.

***Mid-Term Strategies:***

- Discourage the use and storage of hazardous waste, fertilizers, and pesticides where risk of groundwater and surface water contamination are high. Identify these high risk areas and create an overlay district for promoting Best Management Practices to preserve watershed health.
- Encourage property owners to re-vegetate with native species when mature trees die out or become diseased.
- Evaluate public lands within the city that are suitable for development, should be left as open space, or should be sold or traded.
- Require that interconnecting wildlife corridors be set aside when subdivision or development of larger parcels occurs.
- Continue lake monitoring on other area lakes for patterns of degradation and possible exotic species; expand lake monitoring to include all of the lakes in the City.
- Expand the prohibition of phosphate fertilizers and other chemicals that impair surface and ground waters.
- Implement a groundwater monitoring program.
- Continue to utilize the biannual city newsletter to property owners to advise and describe good resource management practices and to inform residents on changes to zoning regulations.
- Use the city's website as an environmental educational tool and a tool to keep residents informed of zoning regulations.
- Inform residents of workshop opportunities regarding topics such as septic system maintenance, lakescaping, stormwater management, and water quality.

- Encourage resorts to educate their visitors and their lake users about appropriate surface water usage and natural resources protection, such as the preventing the spread of exotic species, such as Eurasian milfoil.
- Hold an annual City-wide cleanup day to pick up yard waste and other refuse and encourage residents to take pride in the appearance of their properties.

***Long-Term Strategies:***

- Encourage the use of conservation easements to protect open space and environmentally sensitive areas by educating residents and developers of land conservation options that are available. Work with land trust organizations to preserve and protect rural and scenic areas of the community.
- Work with the Department of Natural Resources to manage wildlife populations to assure health, adequate food supplies, and to reduce the impact on native vegetation.
- Encourage the use of natural vegetation or natural measures of shoreline protection as an alternative to rip-rap.
- Continue to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency efforts on stormwater management.
- Create measures to evaluate development proposals so that new development does not create a negative impact on natural resources.

## **PARK AND RECREATION ACTION PLAN**

### ***Policies:***

- **Provide active and passive park and recreational facilities to meet the needs of a growing population and the diverse groups of people within the community.** The recreational facilities in the City should serve residents and visitors of a wide range of activity levels and interests. Recreational opportunities should vary from active opportunities, such as biking or hiking, to more passive opportunities, such as bird watching or wildlife viewing. These facilities should be well-maintained and should be interconnected with trails and open spaces.
  
- **Create a trail system for the community to access regional trails, businesses, and for recreational purposes.** Residents of Lake Shore would like to be able to walk short distances to reach businesses in town, the many lakes, or to local parks. The lack of sidewalks and the abundance of narrow roads in many parts of the City mean that most residents either venture to walk on the roads or opt for driving to their destination. Walking and biking trails also have the added benefit of getting people outside to exercise.

To implement these policies, the City of Lake Shore will seek to accomplish the following strategies:

### ***Short-Term Strategies:***

- Develop a Parks and Recreation Plan for the future development of the City. Create and implement a Capital Improvement Plan that identifies possible expenditures related to Parks and Recreation.
- Establish and collect a park dedication fee or land dedication from new developments to fund capital expenditures related to parks and to ensure that the park system grows with the population.

### ***Mid-Term Strategies:***

- Where appropriate, enhance existing lake accesses to accommodate passive, low-impact uses by adding landscaping, signage, and park benches or picnic tables.
- In the review of development proposals, encourage and look for potential recreational opportunities and trail connections.
- On a year-round basis, promote outdoor activities in the City, such as hiking, snowshoeing, sledding, cross country skiing, canoeing, snowmobiling, fishing and other related activities.
- Retain all public lands adjacent to public waterways. Actively manage these lands to ensure their functionality and vitality and incorporate these lands into the City's recreation system.

### ***Long-Term Strategies:***

- Establish more handicapped accessible fishing platforms, in cooperation with the DNR.

- Establish a recreational trail system throughout the City including a trail along CSAH 77 and connecting with Fritz Loven Park.
- Develop a Trail Plan that identifies existing trails within the City including walking, cross-country skiing, and snowmobile trails along with identifying areas that could be linked with existing trails.
- Work cooperatively with adjacent communities to provide a regional network of trails.
- Review and, where appropriate, incorporate trail construction when improving existing roads within the City.
- Acquire permanent easements for trail corridors through private lands when feasible.

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE ACTION PLAN

### *Policies:*

- **Work to develop an efficient and high-quality transportation network that supports the land use development policies, is sensitive to environmental concerns, promotes safe and efficient transportation movements, supports multi-modal transportation uses, and is fiscally responsible.** Promoting interconnected roadways improves the overall safety of the transportation system, provides alternative routes for users, and ensures a more efficient transportation network. A well-developed transportation network also reduces maintenance costs and facilitates future growth and development in areas that are suitable and capable of handling this growth. In addition, providing for alternate modes of transportation, such as walking and biking, is becoming increasingly important for protecting air quality, providing affordable transportation options, and preserving the recreational character of the community.
- **Maintain and enhance the City's sewer system to ensure that adequate capacity is available for existing and future demand.** The abundance of lakes coupled with the concentration of development on the lakes puts the importance of the City's sewer system on the forefront to protect the water quality in the City. To accommodate the growing population and to ensure the continued quality of both the ground and surface water, the sewer system should be maintained and expanded to targeted growth areas.
- **Maintain local government spending policies that account for responsibly planned increases in expenditures.** Lake Shore has a history of maintaining reasonable government budget levels and responsibly managing that budget. The City should continue this history and carefully weigh major increases in the budget to ensure overall benefits to the community and to minimize unexpected tax increases.
- **To avoid unfunded road maintenance liability, encourage new residential growth at densities that can support maintenance costs or in the close proximity to existing roads.** Residential growth is occurring at a rapid pace in Lake Shore. Development in the remote areas of the City is more costly to maintain than development closer to the downtown or along existing, well-maintained roadways. The City does not want to subsidize new developments, especially when doing so increases City expenses more than an equally-sized development that is more efficiently and appropriately located.

To implement these policies, the City of Lake Shore will seek to accomplish the following strategies:

### *Short-Term Strategies:*

- Through the use of developer's agreements, require developers to construct all roads to be dedicated to the public within new plats and discourage the use of private roads, when possible.
- Require new roads be brought up to minimum City standards before the City accepts the road for maintenance.

- Require new developments to provide connections to adjacent properties wherever possible in order to promote road connectivity within the City.
- Review agreements with adjacent communities on sharing maintenance work and costs on shared roadways.
- Work to retain the rural character of local roadways by adopting alternative standards for road design, such as those suggested in the book *Residential Streets*, while still providing a safe roadway.
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***Mid-Term Strategies:***

- Work with Cass County to classify CSAH 77 as a scenic roadway and to maintain the unique character of the roadway while providing a safe mode of transportation.
- Review and upgrade the existing road inventory to include plans that would identify and delineate right-of-way for future road and trail expansion.
- Update the road maintenance plan for inspecting roadways, maintaining roadways, and for upgrading roadways.
- Coordinate road construction and infrastructure improvements to reduce costs and provide for more efficient construction.
- Evaluate the City's sewer system on a regular basis to ensure that development is not overextending the sewage treatment system.

***Long-Term Strategies:***

- Create and implement a Trail Plan to guide the development of a Lake Shore trail system.
- Coordinate trail planning efforts to link adjacent communities such as Nisswa and Fairview Township to a trail system in Lake Shore.
- Continue to review issues relating to speed and parking with engineering staff and the Cass County Engineer to ensure the safety of the City's roads.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN**

### ***Policies:***

- **Encourage development that supports Lake Shore as a year-round community for residents and an attractive destination for visitors.** Lake Shore is currently a destination because of its abundance of healthy lakes, natural beauty, recreational activities, and rural community charm. Protecting these features will attract people looking to vacation in the City, as well as people wishing to live in an area featuring natural resource amenities and a high quality of life.

Ensuring and supporting year-round businesses and facilities will be vital if Lake Shore is to be a year-round destination. Increasing winter recreational activities such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and winter festivals will help to attract visitors year-round.

- **Facilitate the coexistence of residential properties and recreational businesses as well as educate property owners on the value of recreational commerce to the community.** Recreational commerce plays an important role in the economic development of Lake Shore. This commerce serves the influx of visitors during the summer months as well as the year-round residential population. These businesses pay taxes, fund local improvements, provide employment opportunities, and also enhance the recreational opportunities available in the City.
- **Preserve and enhance the quality of the lakes, which is a defining feature of the character of the City.** Lake Shore has nearly 36 miles of shoreline, contained mostly in the eastern portion of the City, and approximately a third of the area within the City is surface water. Maintaining healthy lakes within the City not only benefits lake users and wildlife, but it also helps to support the recreational tourism industry in the City which is so reliant on the lakes as a foundation.

To implement these policies, the City of Lake Shore will seek to accomplish the following strategies:

### ***Short-Term Strategies:***

- Develop zoning ordinances that regulate home-occupations so that such businesses do not detract from the surrounding neighborhood, contribute to the character of the City, and are appropriately located. Clarify and enforce regulations for location, duration, and signage related to home occupations.
- Examine the Ordinance and current zoning classifications for areas that would be suitable for the expansion of commercial uses.
- Amend the Ordinances to increase the compatibility of businesses with the surrounding residential development and to maintain the lake-oriented and rural feel of the community.

### ***Mid-Term Strategies:***

- Keep residents informed of pending renovations and expansions of resorts and other businesses within the City.

- Develop flexible design guidelines for businesses in order to accentuate the aesthetics and distinct character of Lake Shore.

***Long-Term Strategies:***

- Encourage the development of service-oriented businesses to support the increasing number of full time residents.
- Work with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to maintain the quality of fishing on lakes in the City.
- Create expansion plans for sewer and telecommunications so that businesses can anticipate future availability and develop or invest accordingly.

## **GOVERNMENT SERVICES, PUBLIC SAFETY, AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES ACTION PLAN**

### ***Policies:***

- **Promote regional planning and cooperation to ensure compatible development across municipal boundaries and to increase government efficiency.** Lake Shore is one of several regulatory bodies bordering the Gull Lake Chain of Lakes. Many of the issues that the City faces, such as wastewater management and land use impacts, may be more properly and effectively addressed on a regional basis. The City of Lake Shore should seek opportunities to increase communication and strengthen relationships with neighboring jurisdictions so that these regional efficiencies can be achieved.
- **Zoning strategies need to ensure that Lake Shore remains a predominantly residential and recreational community.** Lake Shore is located just outside of the main shopping and business areas in the Brainerd Lakes Region. While the City is home to some recreationally oriented businesses, the City's land use is predominantly residential in character. The Zoning Ordinance should reflect this character by remaining predominantly residential and promoting recreational uses. Design standards, natural resource protection, and recreational resource development should be incorporated into the Ordinance.
- **Ensure the safety and welfare of all residents in the City of Lake Shore.** Residents enjoy the tranquility and safety that the City currently provides. Future growth will bring more residents and visitors to the City, and along with that, potentially more safety and welfare issues with which to contend. Growth in the City should occur in a manner that protects existing and future residents and in a manner that fits the policies set forth in this Plan.
- **Lake Shore City government needs to be transparent and inclusive and should encourage ongoing public participation in decision-making.** The City government should make all its decisions open and information regarding these decisions widely available. By encouraging and supporting civic engagement, the City will strengthen its community pride and build strong traditions. Decision-making processes will be less contentious and will be more focused on the issues and values important to the community.

To implement these policies, the City of Lake Shore will seek to accomplish the following strategies:

### ***Short-Term Strategies:***

- Participate in planning activities with Cass and Crow Wing County, surrounding cities and townships, and other government entities as they consider issues that affect the greater regional community.
- Update the Ordinance to ensure that new development and redevelopment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

- Develop a hazard mitigation plan for the City that would address natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other similar events.
- Ensure that the Lake Shore Police Department is adequately trained to respond efficiently to emergencies.
- Review the Comprehensive Plan annually to measure the progress made and conduct updates that involve the public as needed.

***Mid-Term Strategies:***

- Continue to work with Cass County by inviting the County Commissioner to meetings, and encouraging the County to hold County Board meetings in Lake Shore or in nearby communities.
- Educate elected and appointed officials, residents, business owners, and landowners to ensure that they are informed of the goals and strategies in the Comprehensive Plan and Ordinances and make decisions accordingly.
- Promote the protection and enhancement of recreational and natural resources in all decision-making and planning processes.
- Encourage neighborhood watch groups to assist in public safety and crime prevention.
- Continue to send newsletters and use the City website ([www.cityoflakeshore.com](http://www.cityoflakeshore.com)) to communicate with the citizens, businesses, and property owners in Lake Shore about happenings in the City, information regarding ordinances and permits, and other pertinent community information.
- Enhance communication with the citizens by installing an outdoor bulletin board at City Hall that is open to the public for posting.
- Maintain and update the City's website on a regular basis.
- Develop a comprehensive GIS database that tracks permits, sewage treatment status, and links digital photos of all properties to each respective parcel.
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***Long-Term Strategies:***

- Provide a welcome packet to all new property owners within the City that contains contact information, information on the City's zoning ordinances, and permit requirements specific to their property.
- Explore partnering with neighboring jurisdictions and area communities, through a joint powers board, to discuss regional planning issues, coordinate the planning and provision of services, and identify and work on projects of regional significance.