

Zoning Plan

According to section 2(d) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, the master plan shall include a “Zoning Plan” - depicting the various zoning districts and their use, as well as standards for height, bulk, location and use of building and premises. The zoning plan serves as the basis for the zoning ordinance.

Relationship to the Master Plan

The Master Plan describes the vision, objectives, strategies and action policies for the development of the Greater Thompsonville area. The Zoning Plan is based upon the Master Plan - it is intended to identify areas where the existing zoning is inconsistent with the objectives and strategies of the Master Plan and guide the development of the zoning ordinance. However, as previously mentioned, Colfax was left without a zoning ordinance when Benzie County eliminated planning and zoning. In addition, both the Village and Weldon Township expressed interest in updating their zoning regulations.

Therefore, once the Master Plan is adopted the Joint Planning Commission is charged with developing a new *joint* zoning ordinance. Local officials have expressed interest in using existing zoning regulations as a starting point for new ordinance. Therefore, the following pages (and *Map 12*) describe the general purposes and characteristics of Weldon Township zoning ordinance. Please note, these descriptions are for reference only and will be more closely examined and discussed as the Joint Planning Commission develops the joint zoning ordinance.

Residential Districts

The following districts are considered “residential districts.”

- Section 6.1(a) R-1: One Family Residential
- Section 6.1(b) R-2: One Family Residential
- Section 6.1(c) R-3: Multi-Family Residential
- Section 6.1(d) RR: Rural Residential

The basic purpose of these districts is to provide for a wide range of housing options.

The R-1 District is intended to permit low-density one-family detached dwelling units on large lots that encourage a safe environment for family life, and preserve amenities. The purpose of the R-2 and R-3 Districts are to provide similar housing options, with higher density. The purpose of the Rural

What is the Zoning Plan? - The Zoning Plan depicts the various zoning district and is intended to guide in the development of the zoning ordinance.



Residential District is to serve as a transition between higher density R-1 and R-2 Districts and the very low density Forest Recreation District. This area also allows for mobile home parks.

Commercial District

The following district is considered the “commercial district.”

Section 6.1(e) C: Commercial

The basic purpose of the Commercial District is to accommodate the specific shopping and/or service needs of the surrounding residential districts and the motoring public. Use in this district shall take greater care to provide adequate parking for their customers while protecting adjacent uses from the effects of increased activity generated by their very nature.

Forest/Recreation District

The following district is considered the “forest/recreation district.”

Section 6.1(f) F/R: Forest/Recreation

The Forest/Recreation District is intended to retain the natural beauty of Weldon Township so that people may enjoy the land and maintain the district consistent with current accepted practices. Farming activities and very low density detached one-family dwelling units and mobile homes are intended.

Natural River District

The following district is considered the “natural river district.”

Section 6.1(g) NRD: Natural River District

The basic intent (see right) of this district is to apply strict regulations on all lands within 400 feet of the Betsie River. This district also was established to implement Part 305, Natural Rivers, of the Natural Resources and Environment Protection Act (MCL 324.30501 et seq.).

Airport District

The following district is considered the “airport district.”

Section 6.1(h) AP: Airport District

The Airport District is intended to provide for general aviation uses, storage of aircraft and other accessory uses customarily found in connection with a general aviation facility.

Natural River District - Intent:

1. Promote the public health, safety and general welfare; to prevent economic and ecological damage due to misuse, unwise development patterns, overcrowding, and overuse within the Natural River District; and to preserve the values of the Natural River District for the benefit of present and future generations.
2. Protect the free-flowing condition, fish, aquatic and wildlife resources, water quality, scenic and aesthetic qualities and historical and recreational values of the Betsie River and adjoining lands.
3. Prevent flood damage due to interference with the natural floodplain characteristics, by excluding developments which are vulnerable to flood damage and which may reduce the capacity of the floodway of the river to withstand flooding conditions.
4. Provide for uses which complement the natural characteristics of the Betsie River natural river system.
5. Protect individuals from investing funds in structures that are proposed for location on lands which are unsuited for such development because of high groundwater, erosion, or vulnerability to flood damage.
6. Achieve the goals and objectives of the Betsie River Natural River Plan.

Special Overlays

The following district is considered a “special overlay district.”

Section 6.1(i) Environmentally Sensitive Overlay District

The Environmentally Sensitive Overlay District is intended to identify, recognize and deal with specific natural characteristics such as wetlands, steep slopes and other environmentally sensitive features which may encompass more than one lot in any or all of the zoning districts. The intent is not to prevent use or development but to require that the principles of conservation and/or preservation be observed to reduce or eliminate the detrimental impacts on these areas.

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