

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

(What is this document?)

A Master Plan is a statement of public policy based on a vision of the future as embodied in the statement of goals. Goals are a statement of how residents would like Beaver Island to look and function in the future. The future Land Use Plan consists of the guiding principles, policies, and character descriptions through which the vision will be attained. The guiding principles are especially important because they comprise the basic rules or standards against which all decisions will be measured and from which the townships do not intend to depart.

This master plan is intended to guide policy and decision making for future land uses, infrastructure, transportation, capital improvements, and public service decisions on Beaver Island. The Peaine Township and the St. James Township Planning Commissions worked jointly to develop this Beaver Island Master Plan. This plan identifies key planning issues, guiding principles, policies, and actions that are instrumental to its implementation. Background information, analyses and recommendations provide a context for informed decisions.

The future land use descriptions and policies presented in the plan were developed based on a combination of the natural capacity of the land to sustain certain types of development; the important natural functions of unique land and water resources on the island; the existing land use distribution patterns; the relationship of undeveloped lands to existing community character; and the desires of residents and public officials.

Peaine Township and St. James Township are authorized to prepare a master plan pursuant to Township Planning Act 168 of 1959, as amended. This statute enables townships to prepare a plan for the purpose of promoting the public health, safety, and general welfare; encouraging the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability; avoiding the overcrowding of land by people and buildings; lessening congestion on public roads and streets; facilitating systems of transportation, sewage disposal, water supply, recreation, and other public improvements; and considering the character and suitability of the townships for uses judged in terms of the trend in land and population development. This master plan supersedes the 1994 Beaver Island Master Plan.