

“Shaping the Future” Survey Comments from Elm River Township

The following comments (except summaries) are reproduced exactly as written by respondents to the 1997 Houghton County "Shaping Our Future" Land Use Survey who said they lived in Elm River Township. All local governments and libraries received full survey results in 1998 (also available at <http://emml.mtu.edu/gem/community/planning/planning.html>).

- Elm River Township surveys returned – 12. Total surveys returned, Houghton County – 1,936.

11. More recreational opportunities are needed in my township/city/village. If so what kind?

Summary (with number of responses indicated; verbatim responses below):

- ❖ learning activities - 2
- ❖ children, young people - 2

Verbatim responses (grouped generally from most common topic to least):

- Adult ed. class (foreign language, reading, aerobics, basket weaving) (children too), enhanced cross country ski support [1083]*
- for young people & learning activities [1684]
- hiking trails, golf driving range, fishing pier [1180]

18. Some roads should be designated as “scenic” and should retain their natural character. If so, which roads?

Summary (with number of responses indicated; verbatim responses below):

- ❖ Pike Lake Road (Winona to Nisula) - 2
- ❖ US 41 - 2 (to Copper Harbor - 1, unspecified stretches -1)
- ❖ M-26 - 2 (South Range to Twin Lakes -1, unspecified - 1)
- ❖ covered road (Liminga-Freda), covered road (Onela), Chassell-Painesdale Road, Misery Bay area, Ontonagon to Misery Bay Road (improve for lakeshore scenic), Houghton Canal Road - 1 each

Verbatim responses (grouped generally from most common topic to least):

- Pike Lake Road [468]
- 41 to Copper Harbor, Arboreal tunnel Rd - Liminga, Pike Lake Rd - Winona to Nisula [1011]
- Chassell/Painesdale Road, stretches of M-26 & US 41 [820]
- covered road in Onela, M-26 between S. Range & Twin Lakes [1180]
- Misery Bay area, Houghton Canal Road [1083]
- Ontonagon to Misery Bay road, improve for lakeshore scenic [1684]

C. Comments

General comments not identified with any survey statement were sorted into 33 categories during survey analysis (survey respondents were not aware of these categories). Some general comments that address more than one topic are divided into the appropriate categories, e.g., [251], #25 means that another part of survey 251's comment is found under category #25. Wording was not changed.

1. Jobs

2. Business and economic development—general

3. Concerns about development

4. Chain retailers vs. locally owned shops

5. Shopping/entertainment/restaurants

- Menard or Home Depot Lumber store should locate in Houghton Co. to aid people in home building and repair [1011], #16

6. Tourism

- 7. Logging, timber industry, and wood products**
- 8. Mining**
- 9. Development location—downtown, renaissance zones, etc.**
- 10. Development—Calumet/Laurium**
- 11. Development—M-26/Sharon Avenue**
 - Development should be encouraged between Sharon Avenue Hurontown to Dodgeville over to Mall—area already so broken up with diversity in housing types and business! [1083]
- 12. Future U.S. 41 development, Hancock to Calumet**
- 13. Waterfront development and public access**
- 14. Property values and taxes**
 - Out of area property purchasing has driven not only prices of property up, but has driven taxes up. Blanket reassessments should not be levied on all property owners because new people with big money are driving prices up. Current long term property owners should retain fixed assessments, such as in California and assessments be made only on NEW purchases. Twin Lakes according to a Gazette survey had a 15+% increase in population. Property taxes have been raised with NO visible increase in services. Where is the money going?? & why!!! [1180]
- 15. Planning**
- 16. Cooperation among units of government**
 - The county should lead in a land-use plan with final decisions based township by township. [1011], #5
- 17. Lack of public input in development decisions, favoritism**
- 18. Zoning, ordinances, building permits**
- 19. Balancing environment and development**
 - Yes, we want our young people to be able to stay, yes new businesses and growth is very important, but for decades, people have come to this area for its natural charm & beauty & uniqueness so we cannot lose sight of that! [466]
- 20. Cultural history/community character/appearance/signs**
- 21. Small-town feeling/quality of life**
- 22. Historic buildings/improving existing properties/blending old and new**
- 23. Open space, undeveloped land**
- 24. Drinking water, wastewater, and health concerns**
- 25. Property rights and regulations**
- 26. Road maintenance, traffic control, and safety**
- 27. Snow removal**
- 28. Public and non-motorized transportation**
- 29. Tax incentives**
- 30. Government and public services**
- 31. Recreation**
- 32. Survey**
- 33. Miscellaneous**