

## **“Shaping the Future” Survey Comments from Stanton 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 Stanton Township. All local governments and libraries received full survey results in 1998 (also available at <http://emml.mtu.edu/gem/community/planning/planning.html>).*

➤ Stanton Township surveys returned – 75. Total surveys returned, Houghton County – 1,936.

**2. Change brought by economic development should be balanced with actions to preserve community character.**

- It is impossible to preserve community character because of change. [1347]\*
- Secondary [1429]

**3. Public costs for new water, sewer, and other services should be considered when any development is proposed.**

- Primary [1429]
- These should be paid by the developer, not the public. [1718]

**5. The benefits of recent commercial development along M-26 and Sharon Avenue outweigh the disadvantages.**

- This area is a prime example of insider dealing leading to trashy glitz AND loss of critical, unique natural habitat! [1429]

**6. Similar commercial development along US 41 between Hancock and Calumet would benefit the area.**

- Make the same mistake again? [1429]

**8. Environmental impacts should be considered when creating new jobs.**

- Paramount considering any project. If we take care of this place, we won't have to worry about there being enough jobs. Prospective employers offering environmentally sound, worthy occupations will flock here just to be a part of an enlightened community. [1429]

**9. Tax incentives, such as tax abatements, should be used to attract new businesses.**

- A new business in competition with an established business should not have an unfair tax advantage. [ 1054]
- This is no better than welfare for business—not an appropriate use of tax incentives. [1718]

**10. Tax incentives associated with land trusts, conservation easements, and purchase of development rights should be encouraged to help landowners keep their land in its present use if they prefer not to sell to a developer.**

- This is an appropriate use of tax incentives—for the public good rather than supporting private gain. [1718]

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

*Summary (with number of responses indicated; verbatim responses on pp. 5-6):*

- ❖ increased public access/shoreline parks - 8
- ❖ non-motorized trails (cross-country ski trails - 3, bike trails - 3, hiking trails - 1) - 4
- ❖ roller rink (one specified skating rink, another suggested Dee Stadium and Calumet Armory in summer) - 4
- ❖ boat launch - 2
- ❖ more snowmobile trails - 2
- ❖ indoor swimming pool, year-round recreational facility, playground, ski hills and snow-making machines, miniature golf, non-motorized recreation of all kinds (less motorized), winter activities for youth – 1 each

**12. The natural environment, scenic beauty, and “getting away from it all” are important to our quality of life.**

- Critical [1429]

**13. The small-town feeling of the area is worth preserving.**

- Much of this area's small-town setting should be eliminated in favor of environmental restitution, not preserved nor even tidied as mining history. [1429]

**15. New development would be acceptable to more people if it blended better with the historic buildings in the area.**

- Get at the nature of the proposed development. [1429]
- I agree that the statement is correct even though I do not agree that more development is good or desirable. [1795]

**17. Some open space and undeveloped land should be protected from future development.**

- Within reason [1054]

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

*Summary (top ten responses; verbatim responses on pp. 6-7):*

- ❖ covered road in the Freda area - 24
- ❖ routes up to Copper Harbor (including M-26 &/or US-41, 3 include Houghton/Hancock to Calumet) - 20
- ❖ both Hancock & Houghton Canal Roads (or just Houghton) - 7
- ❖ M-203 -4
- ❖ Gay to Lac La Belle route - 4
- ❖ all of US-41 & other state highways, Beacon Hill-Toivola road, Cole’s Creek Road, Shelden Ave. & Montezuma Ave., same as already, all back roads - 1 each
- ❖ private property owners rights are first concern - 1

**19. Property owners should have absolute and final say about what happens on their property.**

- Does this make equal the person on a “40” and a corporation on 400,000 acres? [1429]

**20. Private property rights are more important than public interest when a development is proposed.**

- Again, way too much inclusion in such phrases as “private property rights,” “public interest,” “proposed development.” [1429]

**21. We need to balance private property rights and public interest.**

- Public interest takes precedence over so-called private property rights. [1290]
- Clarify: the small private family vs. the large private corporate [1429]

**22. Public access to waterfront areas is becoming too limited.**

- Especially larger Portage Lake from Houghton to Chassell [905]

**23. Property is becoming unaffordable for local residents.**

- I really have no idea. So far, I can pay my own taxes, and that’s all I know. [526]
- Certain properties ex. lake frontage [1054]

**24. I feel that I have a voice in shaping the future of my community/township/city.**

- Too much old boy network in local governments—not enough info on how to get involved [1718]

**25. Neighboring townships, cities, and counties should identify and work together toward shared goals.**

- Recycling! [1429]

**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**

- Our children need jobs that pay a wage you can support a family on and that has health care insurance. [1054], #29

**2. Business and economic development—general**

**3. Concerns about development**

- I sincerely hope that the area will develop slowly with much attention paid to its historical artifacts and its unique beauty. [258]
- One reason why I moved here was to escape big-city problems such as crime and crowds. I fear that all the development will bring these problems here. If people want big city amenities, they should go to a city, not bring the city here. [526]
- Development/growth/new business/more jobs: bring as many negatives as positives. Unplanned/unrestricted development is changing the character of this area. Development seems to be driven by locals whose only concern is personal profit. [1733], #13

#### **4. Chain retailers vs. locally owned shops**

- We no longer generate much “primary wealth” in our area. Instead, our food dollars, our energy (gasoline, heating fuel, etc.) dollars, our commercial profit dollars, to an enormous extent, are being exported, just like in the heyday of copper mining. Many area residents are oblivious to these factors. Many of these citizens unthinkingly, (or un-informedly) support expansion and increases of such exploitive development, without understanding the real ramifications. Meanwhile, other citizens sit (are forced to sit) idly by, bemoaning that wetlands have been and are still being bulldozed to make room for more malls and more asphalt parking lots; [1490], #7, #17, #32

#### **5. Shopping/entertainment/restaurants**

#### **6. Tourism**

#### **7. Logging, timber industry, and wood products**

- that the Keweenaw forests are being logged without a smither of social conscience for the long term future or for the current economic well-being of local citizenry (to wit, most logs are being exported out instead of having local “value-added” wood manufacturing industries provide local employment. I also hear some Japanese company is even “deep-sixing” some of the Keweenaw timber into the bottom of a Japanese bay so that they can be sold 50 or 100 years from now when such quality grade timber will be scarce and prices high (to the advantage of the Japanese company, not the people of the Keweenaw). [1490], #4, #17, #32

#### **8. Mining**

#### **9. Development location—downtown, renaissance zones, etc.**

#### **10. Development—Calumet/Laurium**

#### **11. Development—M-26/Sharon Avenue**

- I avoid doing business with the stores & restaurants along Sharon Ave. where the cedar swamp was filled in. Development should be in areas that were already defaced by the copper industry. [525]

#### **12. Future U.S. 41 development, Hancock to Calumet**

#### **13. Waterfront development and public access**

- Note my comments on larger Portage Lake. IT is hardly visible in the summer. The only public access is at Bootjack. Wind surfers, canoes, non-motor boats have no access from Onigaming to Chassell & they cannot sail from St. Urho’s landing. Sunshine Beach & boat landing are terribly missed. [905]
- By allowing private homes, condominiums, and businesses on their waterfront, Houghton and Hancock have sacrificed irreplaceable natural resources. [1733], #3
- We shouldn’t sacrifice our scenic shorelines for monetary gains. [1903]

#### **14. Property values and taxes**

- Tax non-residents (landowners) 10 times that of residents. [1473], #23

#### **15. Planning**

- We need to first take a step back and see where we are heading with development and our community. We need to examine what makes us love the Copper Country, the landscape, the sense of community, etc. With this we need to look toward the future and where we want to be and have community wide planning for future development considering the needs of all the counties in the Copper Country. We shouldn’t hamper what we love about the UP - we are unique! Let’s keep it that way! :) [1028]
- This planning aid should lead to a Regional Master Plan. This Master Plan must be based in principles of ecology, community health standards (fish advisories reinstated, toxic emissions eliminated), and environmental justice. All development should be halted until this Master Plan has been approved by community consensus. Once the Master Plan receives approval, then all prior and subsequent development schemes must meet the Plan’s measures. The “Renaissance Zones” being steamrolled into the region will continue to trivialize any attempt at critical and long overdue regional planning as an effort to implement a quality life based on environmental awareness, sensitivity and caring, and long-term sustainability. [1429]

#### **16. Cooperation among units of government**

#### **17. Lack of public input in development decisions, favoritism**

- My biggest concern about the survey is that it may mislead concerned citizens to thinking that their opinions really do matter; that area citizens really do have a role in shaping the direction of “development” and “change”

here in the area. I have yet to see the social or political mechanism by which citizen opinion can make a nickel's worth of difference regarding economic development in our area. Economic development here has been, and presumably for the long term future will be, dictated solely by economic interests, and by the individuals with economic and political power. On the other hand, we, as citizens, must no longer remain in denial, or ignorance, that we, too, are just civic peasants in another "banana republic"—with our destinies and quality of life being at the mercy of the whims of both domestic and foreign multinational corporations. And, as further insult, most of that economic and political power is from outside the area, totally unconcerned and inconsiderate of the long-term well being of local citizens. [1490], #4, #7, #32

#### **18. Zoning, ordinances, building permits**

- Strong binding land-use zoning is an absolute necessity. Stronger environmental regulations and better enforcement of existing laws. Aggressive public acquisition of biologically sensitive land and scenic areas, especially waterfront. Raise taxes to pay for it. [248]
- All townships should be zoned & zoning laws should be enforced. [1122]
- Any regulation of development should be done in a way that supports the development rather than making it financially risky or unfeasible. The new tax exempt zones are a great example of this, the zones keep development in specific areas while actually helping to make the new businesses profitable. [1534]

#### **19. Balancing environment and development**

#### **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**

- If land is to be preserved, then it should be bought by whatever group or government wants it preserved. [1473], #14
- Large areas of the Keweenaw need to be protected as wilderness. [1915], #32

#### **24. Drinking water, wastewater, and health concerns**

- More money should be spent to run sewer & water lines along the Portage waterway from Chassell north to Lake Superior & from Dollar Bay west & north to Lake Superior sewer more so. [1612], #30

#### **25. Property rights and regulations**

- A person's property should be his to do with as he pleases, not how the government wants. I'm sick and tired of "tree huggers" trying to shoot down anything with our land. [582]
- Private property owners should never be pushed out for public access [933]
- Private property rights are not a black & white issue. Property owners should have the right to use their property as they see fit—within reason—as long as those uses do not impinge on the rights of neighbors. [1668]

#### **26. Road maintenance, traffic control, and safety**

#### **27. Snow removal**

#### **28. Public and non-motorized transportation**

#### **29. Tax incentives**

- Tax incentives should be for businesses that produce a product or bring people into the area to spend money. Tax incentives should not be used for retail businesses that compete with existing local businesses. [1054], #1

#### **30. Government and public services**

- Take some power from that stupid DNR. [1612], #24

#### **31. Recreation**

#### **32. Survey**

- Thank you for allowing the residents of this area to fill out this questionnaire. [789]
- This survey is a good idea and a good start! [821]
- I think this survey is a neat idea. I feel like I am really a part of the community. [1322]
- You women [League of Women Voters?] are doing a good job! Thank you. [1345]

- First, I commend “you-all” for conducting this survey; for acknowledging and affirming the fact the citizen opinion is important and that it has a rightful role in the shaping of public policy. (I also appreciate the good format of the survey itself.)... The preceding diatribe serves well to illustrate that underlying every respondent’s checkmarks on the survey are underlying assumptions held by the respondent, knowingly or unknowingly. These assumptions are based on values acquired through acculturation in whichever niche of our diverse Copper Country we grew up in. Even the term ‘Copper Country’ is, unwittingly, a value-laden term. In subtle ways, the term communicates (and perpetuates) a non-critical acceptance and even an adulation of “development,” of the need and appropriateness of outside corporations to come and develop “our” area, in the fashion that mining companies did during the copper mining era. Much of the citizenry is still nostalgically proud of those copper mining days, to wit, the establishment of the National Historic Park. But it is this nostalgia, this pervasive pride, that influences area citizens to be sympathetic to continued industrial and commercial development—and which will be reflected in your survey results. Our acculturation is dependent upon numerous influences. One major influencing factor is the sub-culture we grew up, that is, whether we grew up in families or we had adult friends who were dominated by values from the mining industry, the logging industry, downtown business owners, miners, union supporters, labor organizers, conservationists, church congregations, political radicals, academics, to name but a few diverse influences. Our values, in addition to being influenced by people around us, are also heavily a function of the information we encounter, information provided in part by others, but also information kept before (or out of) the public eye by local newspapers and other media. Some may acquire their value-building information from broader sources: local history, economics history, labor history, sustainable economics, and such newer fields as bio-regionalism, deep ecology, and permaculture. My point here is that an interpretation and analysis of the results of this survey must take into account, must acknowledge, the variability in values and the varying degrees to which respondents are informed or educated on social, economic, and environmental issues. Simply arriving at a description of “what people think”—which would then tend to influence recommendations for, if not give license to, future development would be irresponsible. The interpretation of results should acknowledge respondents’ degree of awareness of, for instance, calamitous global issues: the impact that human population growth in other parts of the world will have on the quality of life here in the “Copper Country,” [sic] the impact of the predicted petroleum shortage; the impact that a petroleum shortage will have on some proposed options for the “Copper Country,” [sic] such as tourism; the destruction of the Earth’s forests and impacts on global warming; the effect, in turn, of global warming on activities in the “Copper Country” [sic]. Lastly, my other concern about the validity of the survey comes from the second paragraph of the survey form: “...this survey asks all [emphasis added] Houghton County residents... to express their views...” I have talked to numerous neighbors and friends, and they have not received a form in the fashion that I did, via the U.S. mails. Hence, the sampling appears to have been other than what was suggested in the introduction to the survey. [1490], #4, #7, #17
- I’m sorry this is late. We set it aside and “rediscovered” it. [1795]
- Sorry this is late. I failed to notice the due date earlier. Hope you can still use this in the survey. [1915], #23

### 33. Miscellaneous

- Zero tolerance is intolerable. Nothing is zero. Use scientific studies with common sense. [1784]

#### *# 11 (recreational needs) verbatim responses, grouped generally from most common topic to least:*

- Public access to Lake Superior and lodging and snowmobile trails [855]
- Public areas and parks [1751]
- North Canal Park (breakers) could be improved [1154]
- shoreline parks [1290]
- improved and more lake access sites [1668]
- camping/boat launch [1688]
- Lake access [1803]
- Develop bike paths through our county. Take a look at how Wisconsin developed theirs and also Boulder, CO. Bike paths—all the way to Chassell, Canal Road to North Entry Park, Hancock to McLain; summer roller skating at Dee Stadium & Calumet Armory; access to larger Portage Lake for wind surfers, canoes, etc. Buy a lot between Houghton and Chassell and put in a boat dock. [906]
- bicycle lanes & paths, cross country ski trails [1915]

- This township needs to take better care of the “recreational opportunities” it already offers. Throughout the region, we need more facilities for non-motorized recreation (hiking, biking, kayaking, canoeing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, dog-sledding) and less for motorized recreation. It’s extremely shortsighted to base so much of the economy around motorized recreation (snowmobiles, jet skis, motorboats, ORV’s) when it has such significant public costs (air pollution, water pollution, injury & death from accidents) and is based on use of a resource—petroleum—that is finite and expected to be in short supply within the next couple of decades. If the local economy is still based on motorized tourism by then, we will suffer. We’d benefit from a conversion to an economy based on local trade of local goods and Non-motorized activities: snowmobiles to ploughshares. [1718]
- Skating rink [1056]
- roller rink [1603]
- more recreational facilities for children such as roller rinks, etc. [296]
- snowmobile trails [1607]
- Public indoor swimming pool - City of Hancock or Houghton [1028]
- Year-round recreational facility [531]
- playground for small children [1322]
- things for kids in winter [525]
- more ski hills, snow-making machines, & cross country ski trails [1903]
- Miniature golf, more things to do in the summer, another beach & not in/at the canal [789]

**#18 (scenic roads) verbatim responses, grouped generally from most common topic to least:**

- covered road [248]
- covered drive toward Redridge [507]
- “covered road” and road to Freda, roads near Copper Harbor [526]
- covered road [531]
- Covered drive [821]
- Covered road, road to Freda [905]
- Covered road, Liminga to Freda [983]
- Covered drive, all back roads [984]
- Covered Drive [1054]
- covered road to Freda, Highway 41 north of Mohawk [1122]
- covered road [1154]
- Covered road near Freda [1345]
- Covered road to Freda [1612]
- Covered drive—Stanton Twp. [1751]
- Redridge covered drive [1784]
- The covered road in Liminga [1795]
- Covered road [1811]
- covered drive, US 41 Calumet to Copper Harbor, lakeshores [1896]
- All of Calumet to Copper Harbor [36]
- roads to Copper Harbor and other scenic areas [296]
- Copper Harbor-Gay, Canal roads [933]
- US 41 to Copper Harbor, covered road [991]
- The south rte. to Copper Harbor’; Covered Rd to Freda [1056]
- US 41 to Copper Harbor [1227]
- Like the Misery Bay road before it was destroyed, M-26 Eagle River & beyond to Copper Harbor [1429]
- M-26 to Copper Harbor [1692]
- Mandan, Copper & Eagle Harbor covered drive, Stanton Twp., Gay to Lac LaBelle road [1903]
- Keweenaw shoreline [422]
- Keweenaw Co. shoreline roads, covered drive [1290]
- between Hancock & Calumet, US 41 to Copper Harbor [258]
- US 41 & 26 from Hancock to Copper Harbor, M203; Houghton Canal Rd. [1028]

- Houghton to Copper Harbor—all 3 [1606]
- Houghton & Hancock Canal Roads [1322]
- Houghton Canal road, Hancock Canal road, north route M26 [1862]
- Houghton Canal Road [1100]
- M203 [1240]
- M-203, M-26 along the Keweenaw, US 41, covered road to Freda [1915]
- Gay-Lac LaBelle road, US 41 & M26 in Keweenaw County, road past end of US 41, covered drive, Beacon Hill-Toivola road, road to Freda, Houghton Canal road [1668]
- Cole's Creek Road, covered road, Freda road, M203, Houghton Canal Road [525]
- Sheldon Ave. & Montezuma Ave. [789]
- Same as already [929]
- Private property owners rights are the first concern [1534]
- All of US 41 through Baraga, Houghton, & Keweenaw Counties—then work to remove the eyesores that already exist on this route—same with M26 and all other state highways [1718]