

MANTRAP TOWNSHIP

SURVEY RESULTS AND SUMMARY With Recommendations to the Town Board

March 2001

SURVEY RESULTS

From its inception in May 2000, the Mantrap Township Planning Commission (Commission) has had one clear goal: to establish a vision for the township that would reflect the values and needs of the residents and property owners in our area. The authority to begin the work came from the Mantrap Town Board (Town Board) in the nature of a mandate to begin the process of developing a comprehensive land use plan that would be responsive to the needs of the township. The stated hope was that the work could then become the foundation for a future land use or zoning document.

In order to determine what the needs of the community were a survey was mailed out in late December 2000. Although Hubbard County was currently (2000-2001) in the planning process for a countywide land use, the survey was intended for Mantrap Township use only.

The survey containing eight (8) questions and one (1) comment area, two (2) pages in length, was sent to 514 property owners in Mantrap Township, on record with Hubbard County as of December 2000. It was mailed out on December 27, 2000, with a January 15, 2001 return deadline. As of March 7, 2001, when results were tabulated, a total of 292 completed surveys had been returned.

The response rate, 56.6 percent, is considered exceptional for this type of survey and provided a clear vision to the Commission. The responses have provided not only the basis for the proposed Land Use Plan, but have continuously provided direction to the Commission.

SUMMARY

Overwhelming the majority of the respondents identified "maintaining a balance between present and future development" as the most important issue facing Mantrap Township's in land use planning. Further, respondents identified their township's three most valuable assets as the natural areas including lakes and forests (42.1 percent), rural lifestyle (18.3 percent), and recreational opportunities (12.5 percent).

Residential status (Question #1) of the respondents closely mirrors the actual property ownership and residential status according to information received from the township's assessor. Almost 40 percent identified themselves as homestead/year-round residents. The remaining 60 percent were seasonal/non-resident.

A majority of the respondents favor a combination of the county and township sharing control (Question #2) of the planning and zoning within the township. Additionally, nearly 30 percent favored exclusive control of planning and zoning by the township.

About 60 percent of the respondents favored the approval of county-issued variances by the township (Question #3). This is not the case at the present time.

Over three-quarters of the respondents (75 percent) would like to see the establishment of minimum lot sizes (Question #4).

Over two-thirds (66 percent) favored the township developing ordinances covering businesses that generate excessive noise or traffic, and regulation of certain types of businesses including adult entertainment, liquor stores, processing plants, and racetracks (Question #5). Also over 60 percent would like to see ordinances covering mass assemblies and festivals.

Adoption of state building codes (Question #6) was favored by about 56 percent of the respondents.

Greater than 70 percent of the respondents selected a combination of natural areas, rural lifestyle, and recreational opportunities as the three most valuable assets within the township (Question #7).

A majority, about 66 percent, of the respondents identified a balance between what we have already and future development as the most important issue for land use planning and zoning in the township (Question #8).

Addition comments were included in the report and were taken into consideration as the Commission and ultimately the Town Board address the above survey results.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After tabulation and review of the survey results the Commission did make the following recommendations to the Town Board in March 2001.

In an effort to balance the most valuable assets of the township with the projected growth, and to keep the rural aspect of the township as much as possible we recommend:

1. Continue a partnership approach with the county following the county guidelines as much as possible, unless they go against township interest.
2. Require township overview and approval of any conditional use or variance to the Hubbard County Shoreland Ordinance.
3. Review the township's existing zoning ordinance for effectiveness and language regarding plat and lot size.
4. Review the county's Mass Assembly Ordinance, recently adopted; to determine if it protects the township's interest and what, if any, potential liabilities there may be for the township.
5. Review the possible adoption of the Minnesota State Building Code within the township, and any possible adoption of the code by the county, which would be advantageous for the township.
6. Be proactive in developing ordinances that regulate certain types of businesses, i.e. adult entertainment, liquor stores, processing plants, racetracks, and businesses that generate excessive noise or traffic.

Mantrap Township Survey Results- Summary

	number	percentage
1. What is your residential status?		
a. Homestead/year round	110.5	37.8%
b. Seasonal	151.5	51.9%
c. Non-resident	27	9.3%
blank	3	1.0%
TOTAL	292	100.0%

2. Who do you want to see control the Planning and Zoning of Mantrap Township?		
a. Township	87	29.8%
b. County	32	11.0%
c. County and Township partnership	160	54.8%
blank	13	4.4%
TOTAL	292	100.0%

3. Should Mantrap Township require township approval of County issued shoreland variances?		
a. Yes	176	60.3%
b. No	100	34.2%
blank	16	5.5%
TOTAL	292	100.0%

4. Would you like to see minimum lot sizes established?		
a. Yes	223	76.4%
b. No	60	20.6%
a and b Yes and no	1	0.3%
blank	8	2.7%
TOTAL	292	100.0%

	number of case	% of cases
5. Do you think Mantrap needs ordinances covering: (check all that apply)		
a. Business that generate excessive noise or traffic	198	67.8%
b. Mass assembly/festivals	179	61.3%
c. Regulating types of business: i.e. adult entertainment, liquor stores, processing plants, racetracks	210	71.9%
d. Other	62	21.2%

62 "other" answers broken down into 75 choices

- 1. Ag-related (16 total)
- 2. Rec-related (11 total)
- 3. Noise-related (also safety-related) (6 total)
- 4. Industrial-related (5 total)
- 5. Appearance related (5 total)
- 6. Business-related (4 total)
- 7. Trailer parks (3 total)
- 8. Development density-related (3 total)

- 9. Shoreland use more restrictive (2 total)
- 10. Animal-related (2 total)
- 11. Anything not residential (1 total)
- 12. Gambling (1 total)
- 13. Improve road grading (1 total)
- 14. Improve snow plowing (1 total)
- 15. Extreme cases? (1 total)
- 16. "NO"-related (9 total)

blank	43	14.7%
TOTAL	292	100.0%

6. Should Mantrap Township establish standards for types of construction and adopt state building codes?		
a. Yes	164	56.2%
b. No	109	37.3%
a. and b.	1	0.3%
blank	18	6.2%
TOTAL	292	100.0%

7. What are the three most valuable assets in Mantrap?		
Ranking adjusted by points	adjusted points	% of total adjusted points
1. Natural Areas, including lakes and forests	722.25	42.1%
2. Rural lifestyle	313.77	18.3%
3. Rec opportunities	214.25	12.5%
4. Proximity to Nevis Fire Dept and First Responder Protection	118.99	6.9%
5. Proximity to Park Rapids and Walker	101.25	5.9%
6. Lower crime rate	86.75	5.1%
7. Proximity to good schools	63.25	3.7%
8. Proximity to good health care	41.74	2.4%
9. Proximity to hwy corridors	33.25	1.9%
10. Other:		
privacy	5	0.3%
freedom	3	0.2%
water and fishing quality	2	0.1%
hunting and fishing	2	0.1%
clean lakes	1	0.07%
preserve quality of lakes and streams	1	0.07%
good roads	1	0.07%
distance from pop. centers	1	0.07%
opportunity to observe wildlife	0.5	0.04%
TOTAL Adjusted Points	1714	100.0%

*Note: 9 surveys chose only two of the three choices; 3 chose only one of the choices; 5 chose none

8. What is the most urgent land use and planning issue in Mantrap?		
	#	%
permitting development generally	11	3.8%
Permitting development at expense of what we value today	10	3.4%
Maintaining what we have by curbing future development.	47	16.1%
Achieving a balance between what we already value and future development	187.5	64.2%
Other	10.5	3.6%
Future development not at expense of others already here		
No urgent land use issues		
Providing good stewardship of what remains of beautiful natural resources as a first priority		
Freedom		
Not controlling it all		
Outlawing trailer houses		
To treat others as we would like to be treated		
Respect for private ownership		
Single residential lot only		
Safety and nuisance issues		
Jet ski limitations		
blank- no answer	26	8.9%
TOTAL	292	100%

DETAILS for Question #5 "Other"

Ag-related= 18 total
feed lots- 6
confinement/containment farms-2
potato related- 6
 curb potato harvest (2)
 aerial spraying (2)
 irrigation wells/shallow (2)
corp. farming-1
chemical use- 1
farm size and type- 1
agricultural-1

Animal-related= 2 total
domestic/farm animals-1
horse ordinance-1

Rec-related= 11 total
jet ski and watercraft on lakes- 7
ATV use on twp roads- 1
snowmobiles-1
marinas-1
resortminiums-1

Business-related= 4 total
business by lake- 1
location of business-1
size of business-1
home business/small bus.- 1

Dev. density-related= 3 total
overdevelop small lakes- 1
high-density devel. -1
lakeshore lot size- 1

Noise-related (safety-related?)= 8 total
shooting range/fireworks- 4
freedom/gatherings-1
environment/quiet- 2
hunting/shooting preserves-1

Appearance/aesthetic related= 5 total
power co. clear cut trees- 1
unsightly residence w/ junk- 3
signs- 1

Trailer Parks= 3 total

Industrial-related= 5 total
junk yards- 3
gravel pits-1
metal processing-1

Anything not residential= 1 total

Shoreland use more restrictive= 2 total

Extreme cases?= 1 total
Gambling= 1 total
Improve road grading= 1 total
Improve snow plowing= 1 total

NO"-related= 9 total
no ordinances- 2
done by county-2
none of the above- 3
too much control by state/county-1
NO!"- 1

Summary: Additional Comments by Residential Status

	Homestead	Seasonal	Non-resident	Blank
Planning and Zoning-related (34 responses)				
*Proactive planning to keep area beautiful/ compatible uses side-by-side.	2			
*Favor Twp updating ordinances, having last sa handling at a local level.	2	4		
*Favor Cty developing comp plan and being mo proactive.	1	1		
* Encourage twp to work w/ professional planners.		1		
*Appreciates professional approach twp taking.		1		
*Need higher standards:buildings& zoning.		1		
*Encourage planned unit development (PUD)		1		
*Need minimum lot sizes.		7		
*Larger lots better, but creates higher taxes.		1		
*Need better/uniform application of codes/regs.				
*Don't interfere w/ improvements of existing cabins/homes		2		
*Don't need state bldg code.		1		
*Avoid pers/indiv. preferences on decisions.	1			
*Think about consequences of every thought.	1			
*I've seen "planning"- leave it alone.	1			
*Disband Twp Plan Commission=more govt. more money, more regs.		1		
*Use common sense (and keep it simple)	3			1
*Be selective in issuing variances	1			
Lake and/or lakeshore/lot-related (22 responses)				
*Strengthen/enforce shoreland ordinance/protect	2	2		
*Prohibit high-density/condos/multi family w/in 1,000 ft of shore and small lakes	2	3		
*Don't allow clear-cutting of trees on lake prop. for "view".		2	1	
*Jet ski/motor-size limitations	1	2		
*Lake level management	1	1		
*Keep manufacturing bus away from lakes	1			
*Troubled by Spider Web plans/large devel. on Spider Lake/W Crooked	1	2		
*Mantrap Lake falls into 4 twps; min. lot size problems between them.		1		
Areas/topics needing regulation (21 responses)				
*Regulate/ban signs	1		1	
*Regulate abandoned junk/eyesores	2		1	
*Dog/pet ordinances	1	1		
*Ord. prohibiting ATVs on twp roads		1		
*No housing developments		1		
*Too many trailer houses- also lack of perm. foundations	2			
*Need bldg code/min. housing standards	1	2		
*Septics and promote "high tech" systems		2		
*Agriculture, especially potato fields	2	2		
*Logging, ruins public roads	1			
Top Priority for township (15 responses)				
*Protecting wildlife, environment, water quality and pristine nature	4	5		

*Noise control	1		1	
*Eradicate/control "exotics" such as spotted knapweed/eurasian milfoil		2		
*Avoid overdeveloping lakes		1		
*Keep environment safe and clean but minimize rules and regs.		1		
Growth/development-related (13 responses)				
*Value rural atmosphere/quiet	3	2	1	
*Minimize commercial dev. impact on twp asset	1			
*Be responsible, can't stop growth	1			
*Stop growth	1			
*Stop developers from running up prices of properties.		1		
*Regs and standards need to help implement development.		1		
*Work w/ Nevis so city prospers.		1		
*Too much development in area targeted at tourist		1		
Views on rules, regs, taxes, and govt. (10 responses)				
*Enough regs already, don't trample prop. rights	2			
*Taxation w/o representation		1		Indicated Seasonal
*Favor less govt; education better		1		
*Favor lower taxes/less infringement on prop rights		1		
*Don't over regulate, less restrictions better		1		1
*Unjust to apply new rules/regs only to new residents		1		
*Tax structure should stay in tune w/ common folks' wages	1			
Information-related (4 responses)				
*Twp should run notices in PR Enterprise	2			
*Twp needs to inform residents about proposals (esp. if don't get paper)		2		
Road-related (5 responses)				
*Address road conditions/correct past mistakes	2			
*Pave (selected) roads	1	1		
*Plow snow sooner	1			
Recreation-related (3 responses)				
*Maintain road ditches for horses, walkers, etc	1			
*Regularly groom snowmobile trails		1		
*DNR should limit fishing shacks on lakes		1		
Reaction to Survey (5 responses)				
*Thanks	1	1	2	
*Questionnaire unacceptable				1
*Too new to area: don't know issues but commend effort and look forward to join comm.		1		1
Final Thought (1 Response)				
*Everyone's job to keep township, county, etc as a place to be proud of.	1			