

Chapter 9

NON-MUNICIPAL PUBLIC SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

County and local governments do not provide all of the important public services on the peninsula. Residents and visitors also rely on natural gas, telephone, cable and satellite, internet, electric, and medical services provided by private sector businesses. The availability of these services impacts the quality of life on the peninsula. The availability of utilities can greatly affect economic development potentials, communications, and available day to day conveniences. Availability of medical services can have a profound impact upon local quality of life conditions.

Because of the importance of these non-municipal services, the continuation and expansion of them must be incorporated into the planning process for the peninsula. These services operate hand-in-hand with many municipally provided services and with other services provided by the private sector. (See Working Paper #10 for more information.)



Consumer's Energy substation

ISSUES

Electric Service

Currently, electrical service is provided to the entire peninsula through Cherryland Rural Electric Cooperative and Consumers Energy. See Map 9-1. Wolverine Power Supply provides electricity to numerous substations on the peninsula. Cherryland Electric Cooperative distributes this electricity throughout Leelanau County. Consumers Energy is also responsible for transmitting electricity to numerous substations located on the peninsula. There is one Wind Energy Conversion System (WECS) in Elmwood Township which is operated by Traverse City Light and Power and provides electricity to a few hundred homes.

Gas Service

Currently, natural gas service is far more limited in the peninsula than is electrical service. Detroit Edison is the sole supplier of gas on the peninsula. The lack of gas service limits (especially on the west side of the peninsula) the options available for heating and other gas burning residential and nonresidential activities.

Telephone Service

Telephone service is provided throughout the entire peninsula by SBC Ameritech, MCI, and CenturyTel. Cellular telephone service is available throughout the county. A network of towers providing cell phone service, emergency services communication, TV, radio and other communication services has been erected. See Map 9-2.

Radio Service

There are numerous radio stations servicing the peninsula. Some have towers on the peninsula or rent tower space.

Medical Facilities

Residents and visitors to the peninsula also have access to several dental clinics and several private clinics and doctors offering psychiatric, optometric, chiropractic and general medicine. The Grand Traverse/Leelanau Community Mental Health Services facility is located in Traverse City. The Maple Valley Nursing Home in Maple City is a facility owned by the county and leased to a private company which provides care to senior citizens. In addition, there is a health clinic located in Peshawbestown. The County's only hospital, the Leelanau Memorial Health Center in the Village of Northport, announced its closing in 2004. Munson Medical Center in Traverse City is now the primary health care facility for the Peninsula.

The average age of the population on the Leelanau Peninsula is rising. In part, this parallels national trends dominated by aging baby boomers, and in part is due to a rise in the number of retirees moving into the county. This trend will be accompanied by an increase in demands placed upon area health care facilities. This increase will undoubtedly show itself in both a heightened need for additional health care facilities and greater accessibility, and herein lies the fundamental challenge. The high and continually rising costs of health care today generally necessitates the need for larger hospitals to assure long term economic viability. Thus, whereas the Peninsula is approaching a need for increased health care facilities and greater ease of access, it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide the necessary services—as evidenced by the closing of the Leelanau Memorial Hospital.

Improvements in health care and utility infrastructure inevitably improve local quality of life conditions. As quality of life conditions improve, the area becomes more attractive to both potential residents and businesses.

While the peninsula is experiencing these health care needs and, to a lesser extent, natural gas and other utility expansion needs, it must be recognized that improvements in these areas will act to attract development.

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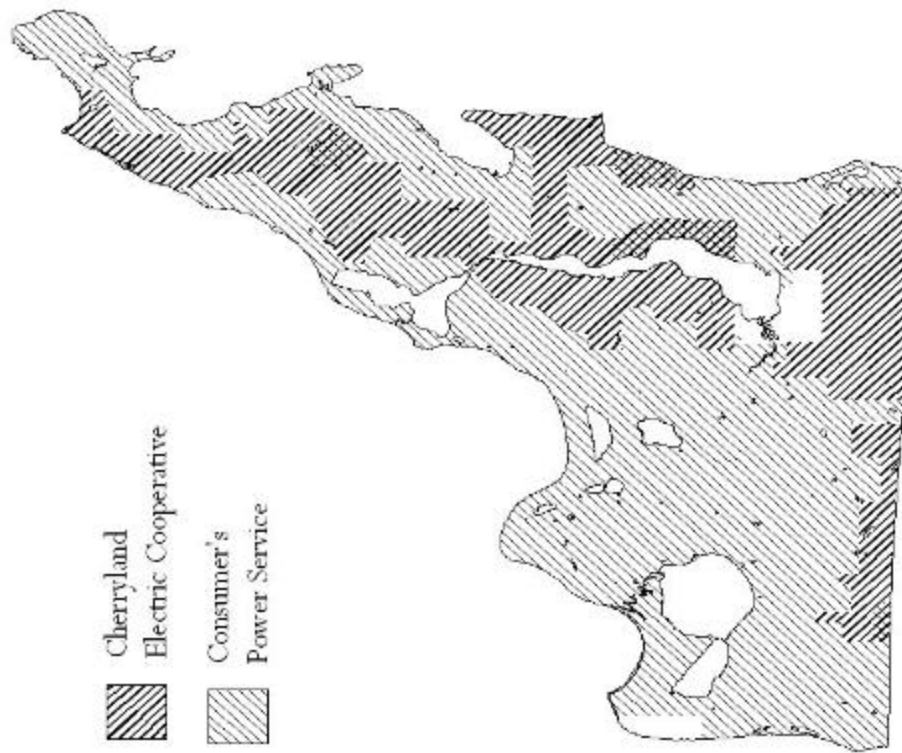
A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

The **Leelanau General Plan** recognizes the critical link between non-municipal public services and the future welfare of the peninsula's municipalities and its residents. In this regard, it becomes vital that the planning of future utility expansions occurs in a coordinated manner with the future growth and development programs of the individual local municipalities as well as the peninsula as a whole. This is particularly applicable for natural gas distribution and cable service, both of which are provided in limited fashion.

Similarly, attention must be directed toward alleviating the burden upon peninsula residents, businesses, and visitors of paying excess telephone charges due to the peninsula's multiple long distance charges. Future telephone service should serve the peninsula with a single long distance code number. Coordination among telephone service companies, local municipalities, and the county should be channeled to assure the transition results in minimal disturbance to the daily patterns of the peninsula and its residents, businesses, and visitors.

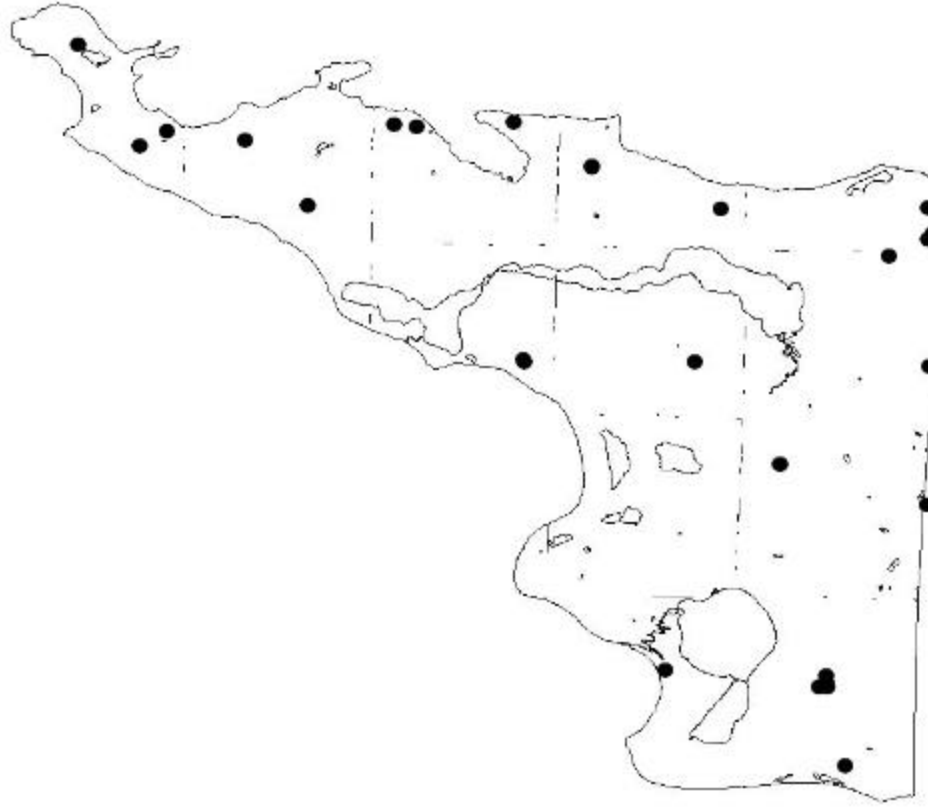
Joint initiatives by the public and private sectors could be established and aimed at improving health care services on the peninsula. Consideration should be given to an array of options to reach this end including opportunities for redevelopment of the former Leelanau Memorial Hospital in a manner which will meet some health care needs. Also, special health care transportation systems could be examined which might better improve access to public and private health care facilities. Other programs which might provide for a greater peninsula-wide distribution of health care facilities while still meeting the intent of local community plans, zoning ordinances, and this plan could also be pursued.

**Map 9-1
Electric Service Areas**



MAP FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY
 Data Provided by the Utility Companies
 Prepared by the Leelanau County Planning Department, Fall 1999

**Map 9-2
Communication Towers**



MAP FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY
 Data from Northwest Michigan Council of Governments
 Prepared by Leelanau County Planning, 2004

NON-MUNICIPAL PUBLIC SERVICES POLICIES AND ACTION STATEMENTS

The following policies and action statements are intended to establish the blueprint for implementing the **General Plan** recommendations for the future of the peninsula's non-municipal public services and facilities.

Issue: Telephone, electric, gas, and related utilities.

Policy:

County and local governments should work cooperatively and constructively with public and private utility companies.

Action Statement:

County and local government should coordinate, to the greatest degree practical, all planning of and construction of capital improvement projects with the planning and construction activities of public and private utilities.

Action Statement:

Local governments should develop policies regarding planned future land use patterns and the timing of development in coordination

with existing and projected utility service areas and the Village Service districts of the **Leelanau General Plan**.

Action Statement:

Local governments should communicate with public and private utility offices regarding the expansion of service areas to support the planned future land use pattern and timing of development.

Action Statement:

Local governments should adopt zoning and subdivision regulations which require the placement of utilities below ground in all cases where practically feasible.

Action Statement:

County and local government should coordinate regulations which deal with the placement, construction, modification and abandonment of personal wireless service facilities.

Action Statement:

County and local government should encourage collocation on existing towers within the county, whenever possible, instead of constructing new towers.



SBC Ameritech building in Northport