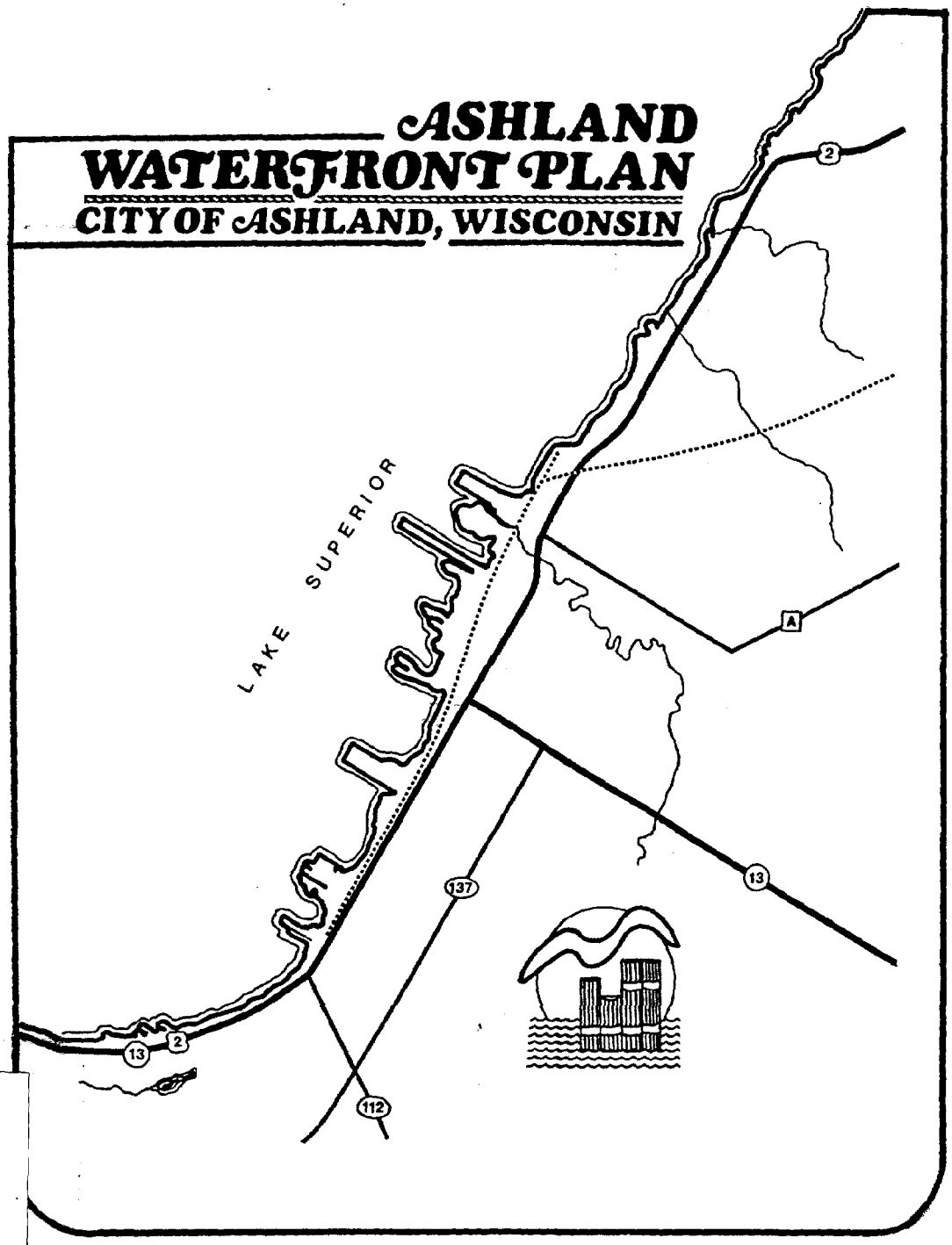
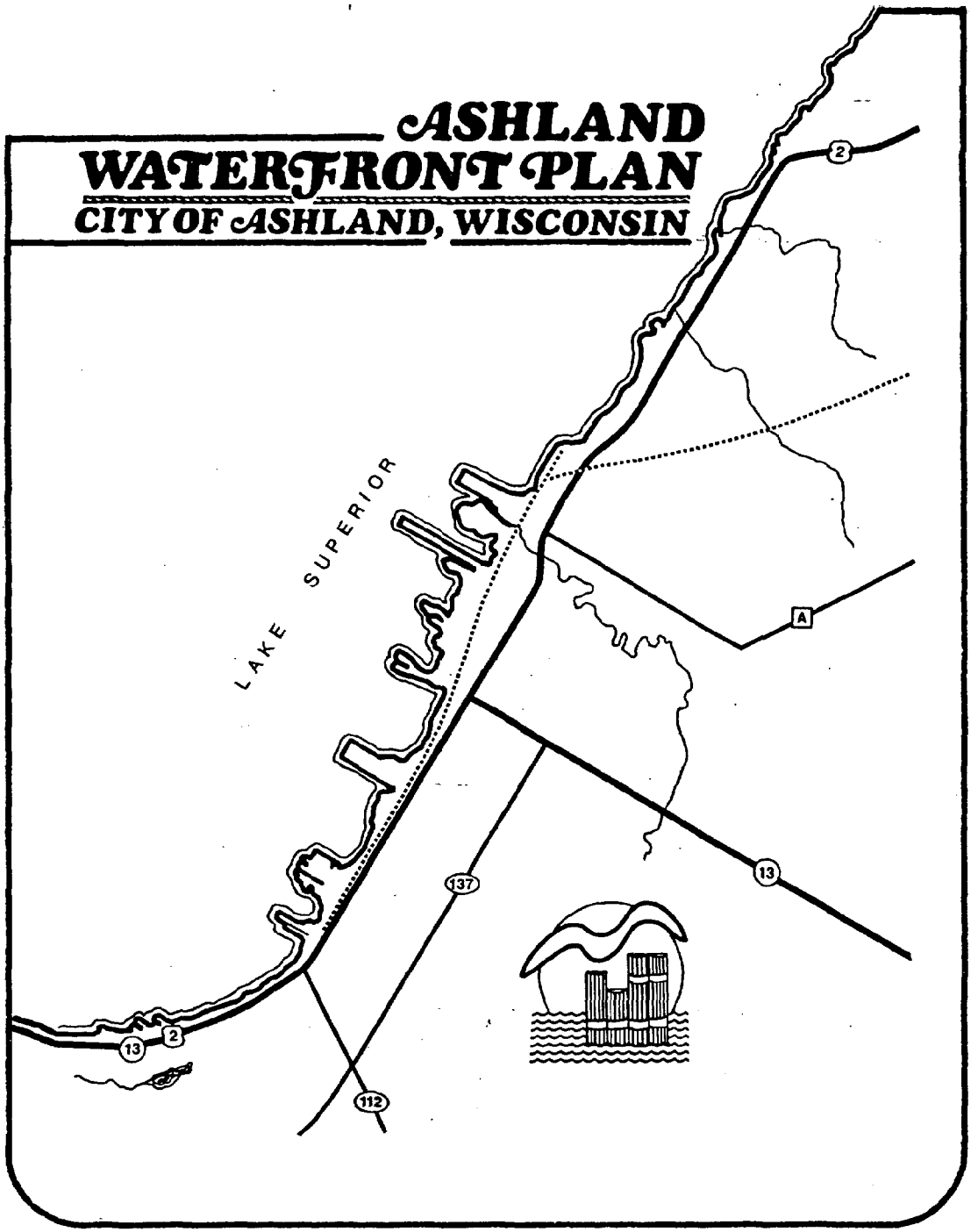
ASHLAND WATERFRONT PLAN

CITY OF ASHLAND, WISCONSIN

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WATERFRONT PLAN
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COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS AND GUIDELINES FOR REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION OF ASHLAND'S WATERFRONT

THIS REPORT WAS PREPARED FOR *City of Ashland Wisconsin*

THIS REPORT WAS PREPARED BY

Northwest Regional Planning Commission
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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE STATE OF WISCONSIN, BUREAU OF COASTAL MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION, AND THE COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1980, AS AMENDED, ADMINISTERED BY THE OFFICE OF COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT, NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION.

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INTRODUCTION

ASHLAND WATERFRONT PLAN
CITY OF ASHLAND, WISCONSIN

During the 17th and 18th centuries, Americans built their cities on the water's edge. Water was the primary mode of transportation. Changes as in technological and market conditions had a significant effect for many waterfront communities. Early emphasis on transportation, location and water supply changed to a later emphasis on energy, residential use and recreation. As we focused our attention on the highway and rail, waterfronts languished. Today, physical barriers, deteriorating conditions, inappropriate land uses and fragmented ownership patterns interfere with redevelopment. Therefore, planning for waterfront redevelopment requires careful analysis, discussion of future alternatives and consideration of barriers that still stand in the way.

The land and water interface has always been and continues to be an exciting area to live near. Planning and implementing its redevelopment can be as exciting. By the early 1970's almost ninety cities had waterfront renewal planning or development underway. Projects ranged in size and scope from seaport redevelopment at Gloucester and Salesbury Massachusetts to New York's Battery Park. Baltimore's Inner Harbor project, started in the mid 1960's, is being successfully implemented. The Inner Harbor, once a severely deteriorated and dilapated waterfront where no one ventured, is now the most popular area of the City. That project's success is based on planning, municipal commitment and effort as well as a public-private partnership. In Baltimore; the City, the private sector and the citizens organized and supported the redevelopment effort.

Swimming beaches, municipal parks, abandoned docks and pilings, Ashland's two largest employers, residential use, the waterworks, the sewerage treatment plant and a power plant--these uses characterize the present day form and shape of Ashland's waterfront. People's perceptions of Ashland's waterfront are as diverse as are the uses. All local residents drive by it; some recognize it and use it. Many use it as a playground, others live or work on it. When asked about it, some reflect on its history, its value; others discuss the future.

Individual land owners plan the use of parcels they own. They save land, treat land as an investment, build on it. Often they do not consider the neighboring use or the greater good of the community. The City must look at land in a different way. How can land enhance the community's growth and development? How can it be efficiently served by sewer, water, police and fire protection? The land and improvements the City serves are normally privately owned. This dimension creates an opportunity for and requires public-private cooperation. Under any circumstances people plan, manage, organize and invest. The municipality has a similar responsibiity. By looking at the waterfront as a whole the community has an opportunity to look at what it might be.

Plan Intent

The plan and analysis provides the first comprehensive look at the waterfront and the issues associated with it. The first section provides background discussion; location, climate, history and geology. The next section of the report provides a detailed land use description and analysis, a history of the port and its activities as well as documentation of the 1983 waterfront effort. The third major section suggests goals and policies, describes what can be done and recommends methods of implementation.

The intent of the plan is threefold:

- Provide for orderly, sound and reasonable redevelopment of Ashland's waterfront
- Forge a partnership between the public and private sector as well as the citizens
- Plan implementation will require a cooperative effort between local, state and federal organizations. These relationships must be established.

Cooperation between a state agency and the City has provided benefits to the City. The Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, which is based on a state-local partnership for waterfront development issues, has assisted Ashland with planning and implementation efforts. The Coastal Management Program has provided planning funds for a pile removal feasibility study, a walking trail study and a Prentice Park redesign study. The Prentice Park design study lead to park redevelopment and construction of the boardwalk. Funds were also provided for acquisition of easements for a citywide walking trail and, in 1983, for construction of the boardwalk in Memorial Park.

What will Ashland's waterfront be like in 1990? In 2000? Its condition and use will be determined by a number of actors, their vision and ability to cooperate in achieving the objectives.

PHYSICAL SETTING

The location of Ashland and its harbor is best described by its land and water relationships. The waterfront lies along the southwestern shore of Chequamegon Bay. The bay is approximately twelve miles long and five miles across at its widest point. Chequamegon Point and Long Island provide a protected harbor. Additional protection is provided by a breakwater, constructed during the late 1800's, on the east side of the City. An important environmental area, the Fish Creek Slough is located at the southwestern point of the bay, on the west side of Ashland.

Chequamegon Bay contains relatively shallow waters where depths rarely exceed 35 feet. The waters are warmer than the lake, but cold water does circulate through the bay. The large and shallow bay provides good fish habitat with warm water species such as walleye, northern and perch. The bay's cold water fishery includes salmon and trout.

City Location

The City is located approximately 65 miles east of Duluth-Superior and 40 miles west of Ironwood, Michigan, 220 miles north of Minneapolis-St. Paul, 300 miles north of Madison and 350 miles northwest of Milwaukee. Ashland is the largest community in Ashland County as well as the County Seat. Next to Superior it is the largest city in the 10 county Northwest Regional Planning Commission area.

Ashland is located within an hour's drive of significant recreational resources: the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, the Chequamegon National Forest and numerous northern Wisconsin inland lakes. Of course, it is located next to the cold, clear waters of Lake Superior.

Chequamegon Bay

TABLE ONE
REGIONAL POPULATION CENTERS

Location	Distance from Ashland	Population
Duluth-Superior	70 miles	135,000
Eau Claire	165 miles	45,000
Hayward	60 miles	2,000
Ironwood-Hurley	40 miles	12,000
Medford	150 miles	16,000
Spooner	90 miles	2,500

Regional Economy

The economy of the region is based on natural resources. The forest supports a good wood products and lumbering industry. Scenic and water resources support a growing tourist industry, but manufacturing, retail trade and services employ the majority of the region's workers.

Fishing, lumbering, mining and shipping of the products supported thriving communities in Ashland, Bayfield, Washburn and Hurley. The cutting of virgin timber ended in the 1920's. The processing of Canadian timber floated across Lake Superior to Ashland ended during the 1960's. The region still supports a strong forest and wood products industry, with the largest sawmill located in Ashland. Iron mining and shipment of iron ore from Ashland ended in the early 1960's.

Transportation Network

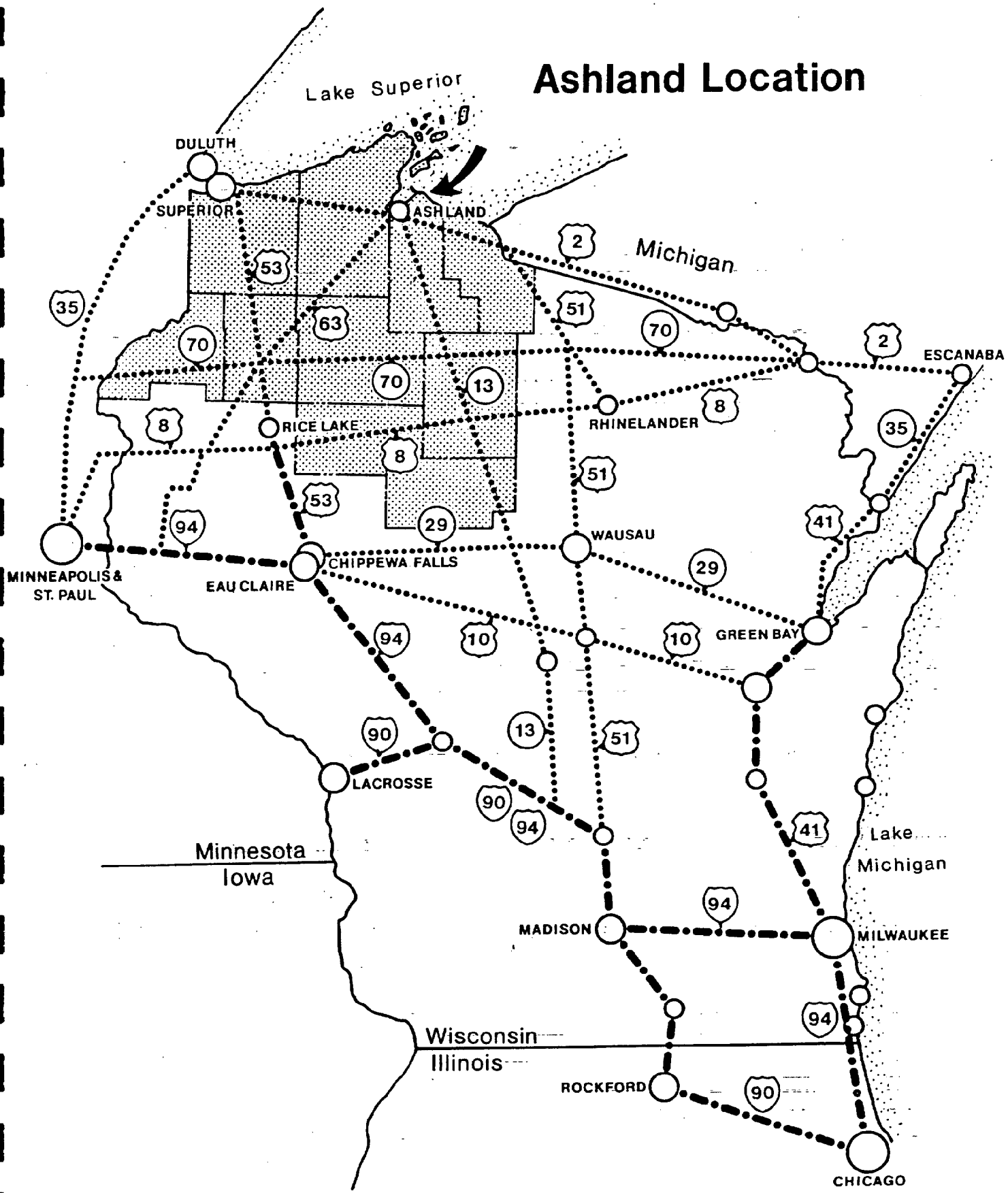
Ashland is served by three major highways. U. S. Highway 2 connects Ashland with Ironwood and Escanaba to the east and Duluth-Superior and northern Minnesota to the west; U. S. Highway 13 connects Ashland with Bayfield and Washburn to the north and Marshfield to the south. U. S. Highway 63 intersects with Highway 2 ten miles west of Ashland and connects with Hayward, Spooner, Eau Claire and Minneapolis. No interstate highways serve Ashland. The closest connection with an interstate is at Rice Lake, 110 miles south.

Two railroads serve Ashland: the Burlington Northern transports some western coal to Ashland, the Soo Line provides all the rail freight service to and from the City. The Burlington Northern (BN) has connections to the western coal fields. The tracks connecting Superior and Ashland are not capable of carrying unit trains nor are there facilities to handle significant amounts of coal, or other bulk cargo, in Ashland. The Burlington Northern tracks pass through the heart of the City, south of the business district and six blocks south of the waterfront. The Soos Line tracks connect Ashland with central and southern Wisconsin cities.

Ashland is served by a regional airport owned by the City and County. The paved bituminous strips, 5,200 feet and 3,500 feet long are in excellent condition. Instrument landings can be completed.

Climate

The climate of Ashland area is classified as modified continental. Prevailing winds are from the east during late spring and summer and from the west and northwest during the remainder of the year. Cool summer temperatures are the rule and daily temperatures exceeding 90°F rarely occur. The temperature exceeds 90°F only seven days of the year while the temperature slips below 0°F 40 times a year. The coldest days of the year occur between December and March.


Ashland Location
Lake Superior
DULUTH
SUPERIOR
ASHLAND
Michigan
ESCANABA
RICE LAKE
RHINELANDER
WAUSAU
MINNEAPOLIS &
ST. PAUL
EAU CLAIRE
CHIPPEWA FALLS
GREEN BAY
LACROSSE
Minnesota
Iowa
Lake
Michigan
MADISON
MILWAUKEE
Wisconsin
Illinois
ROCKFORD
CHICAGO
35
70
63
53
2
51
13
8
94
29
41
10
90

The average date of the last spring frost is May 13 and the average date of the first fall frost is October 3. The growing season averages 145 days. The average annual snowfall has been 53 inches per year; during the past ten year period the average has increased by 13 inches to 65 inches per year. Average annual precipitation is 30 inches per year.

Lake Superior and Chequamegon Bay modify the Ashland climate. Both winter and spring arrive a few weeks later in Ashland than they do seven or eight miles inland. Summers are comfortable in Ashland because of the moderating effects of breezes from Chequamegon Bay. Ice begins to form on Chequamegon Bay in late November and normally breaks up the third week in April.

Geology

The City of Ashland is located in a geological province known as the Lake Superior Lowland, one of the five major provinces in Wisconsin. The Lake Superior Lowland Province is part of a larger geological district, the basin of Lake Superior. This province occupies the northern portions of Douglas county, small segments of Bayfield County, and portions of Ashland County, including the City, the Bad River Indian Reservation and several towns south and west of Ashland. Ashland's segment of the Lake Superior Lowland is surrounded by highlands to the west, the Penokee range south of Ashland and the Gogebic Range located east-southeast of Ashland in Iron County. While most of the Lake Superior shoreline is composed of rugged shoreline, the Lake Superior Lowland areas do not have this characteristic. Hills that form the boundary between the Lake Superior Lowlands and the Northern Highland geological province can be seen from Sanborn, twelve miles south of Ashland. This low range of hills once was a shoreline for a glacial Lake Duluth, a predecessor of Lake Superior.

The Lake Superior lowland, once a high and mountainous area, was worn down to a plain by the elements. This area submerged under a predecessor of Lake Superior known as glacial Lake Duluth. Changes and modifications of modern day Lake Superior occurred continuously in geologic history resulting in continuous submergence and re-emergence of the Ashland area. The present land configuration and characteristics of the area were formed about 10,000 years ago with the retreat of the last of the four glaciers that covered the area. Red clay, which is a characteristic soil type in the area, is a result of deposition of materials during the last glacial retreat.

Topography

The Lake Superior lowlands in the Ashland area rise gently from the Lake (600 feet above sea level) about 400 feet (to 1000 feet above sea level) south and southeast of Ashland. The shoreline is sandy and fairly level, starting along the west side of Chequamegon Bay going east until the Red Clay bluffs on the extreme east side of the Bay. A bluff first appears along the shoreline in Ashland at Sanborn Avenue. This bluff, which is about 40-50 feet in height, is a short distance back from the waterline and is continuous between Sanborn Avenue and the eastern city limits. On top of this small bluff rests the developed segment of Ashland. The topography in this area is a worn down plain providing a good city location. Lands located east of the corporate limits are the Bad River-Kakaogan Sloughs, probably the most significant estuarial wetland in Wisconsin. The Fish Creek Slough, also an important wetland, borders Ashland on the west.

Fish Creek (slough) and Bay City Creek are two major streams that have influenced development of the City. Bay City Creek passes through the center of Ashland on a north-south axis and physically divides Ashland into two major segments. These two streams were not overcome during development of the City. Both have strongly influenced development, and will continue to do so in the future.

WATER CONNECTIONS

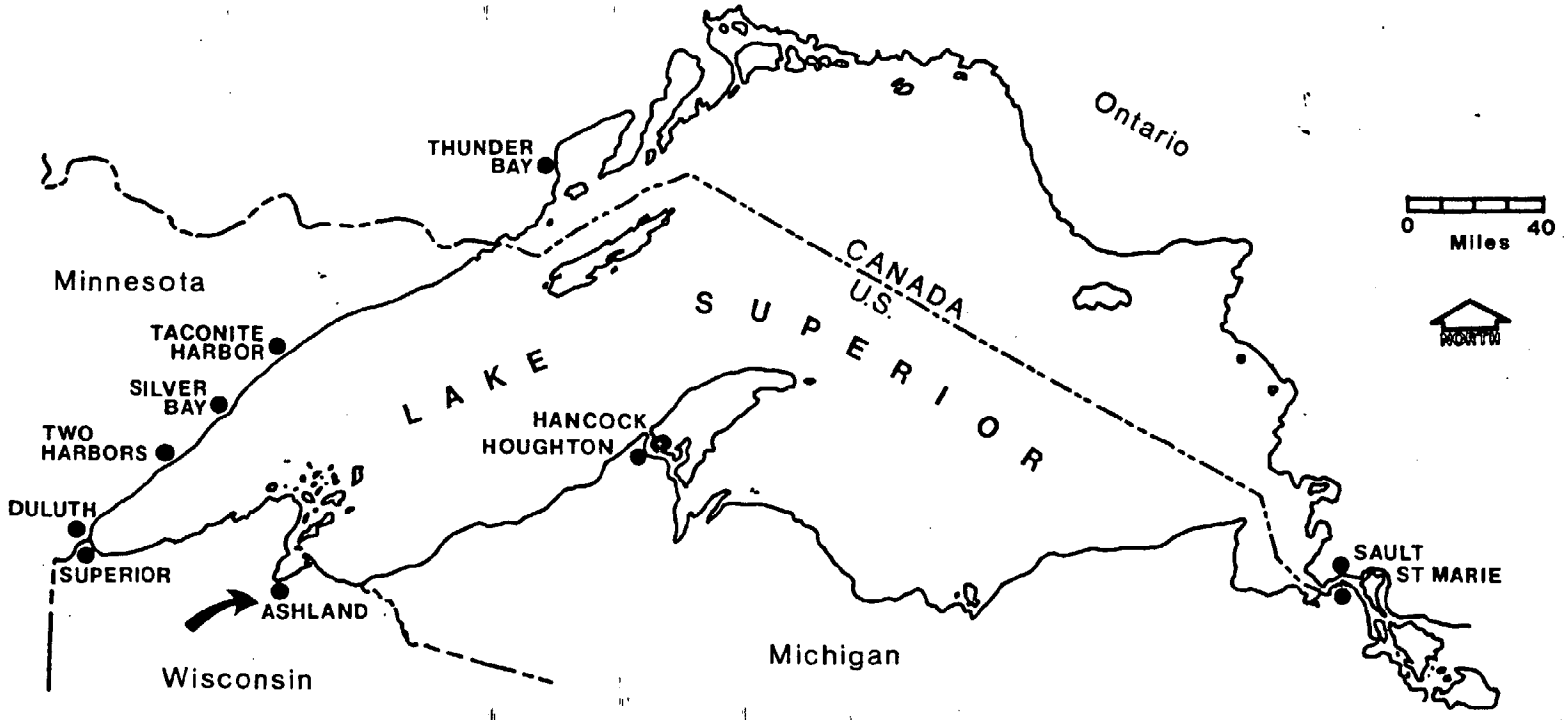
ASHLAND WATERFRONT PLAN
CITY OF ASHLAND, WISCONSIN

Lake Superior, 350 miles long and 160 miles wide, covers 31,700 square miles and contains 2,935 cubic miles of water, one-tenth of the world's flowing surface water. Lake Superior basin lands are drained by short and turbulent rivers or streams. The land basin is small for a lake of this magnitude, containing 81,000 square miles. In surface area Lake Superior is the largest body of fresh water in the world. In volume it is only exceeded by Lake Baikal in Russia. Lake Superior contains more than one-half of the total volume of water in the Great Lakes Basin. It is an extremely important fresh water resource, an important trade route, and a potentially significant recreational resource. Ashland's history and its future are strongly linked to the lake.

Lake Superior is one of five of the Great Lakes. These lakes form the eastern half of the 3,000 mile Canadian-United States border. By virtue of an on-lake location, Duluth Minnesota, located near the center of the continent, has direct shipping access to world ports. Lake Superior ports, like Duluth-Superior, Thunder Bay, Ashland and others have shipping opportunities unequaled by similar sized communities in other locations.

Early in the development of the North American Continent the Great Lakes were important for shipment of animal pelts from the upper-midwest and Canadian northwest to European markets. These furs entered the Great Lakes system via the Pidgeon River on western Lake Superior, were shipped by canoe and transhipped to Europe by ocean-going craft at Montreal.

Lake Superior



Later, agricultural products and iron ore were shipped on the Lakes from the Lake Superior region to processing areas in Chicago, Detroit, Toledo, Cleveland, Erie and Toronto. Some of the materials were transhipped to barges at eastern Lake Ontario going up the St. Lawrence River to Montreal. Agricultural products were again transhipped to ocean going vessels "salties" at Montreal for European shipment.

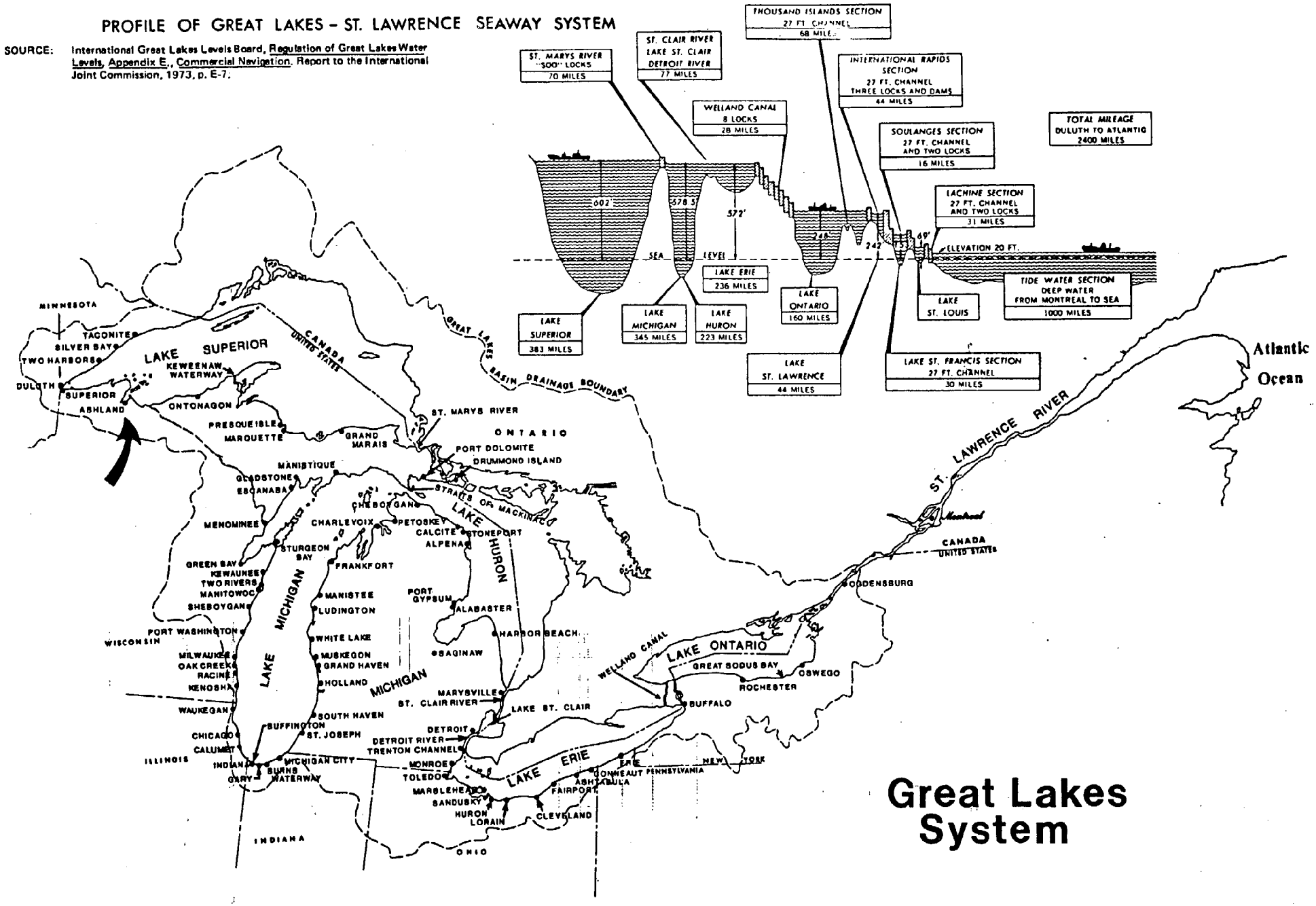
Completion of the St. Lawrence seaway in 1959 permitted direct access to Great Lakes Ports by ocean-going "salties." Shipment of grain, the most important commodity moving out of the Great Lakes system increased from about a million tons in 1958 to 8 million tons in 1965. During the 1980 shipping season over 28 million tons of grain moved through the Great Lakes system. Grain accounted for 29% of all shipments through the Welland Canal during 1959. By 1980, grain accounted for 43% of total shipments.

The Great Lakes has similar grain shipping movements as do the Atlantic and Pacific ports. These three port regions are eclipsed by the fourth, the Gulf. European grain trade is a relatively stable and a dependable market with the Great Lakes, Atlantic and Gulf systems orientated in that direction. (The less stable Asian grain market is dominated by Pacific ports.)

Weather conditions and shipping rates combine to give Gulf Ports an advantage over Great Lakes ports. When Great Lakes shipping closes in December grain moves by rail to Gulf ports for shipment to Europe. The late summer and fall harvest must move quickly to Lake Superior ports. Bottlenecks (and delays) result at major Lake Superior grain ports with grain trucks and trains converging late in the year at the same time.

PROFILE OF GREAT LAKES - ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY SYSTEM

SOURCE: International Great Lakes Levels Board, Regulation of Great Lakes Water Levels, Appendix E., Commercial Navigation. Report to the International Joint Commission, 1973, p. E-7.



Rail movements from grain producers areas are consistent giving shippers a certain market for their product. While rail is considerably more expensive the supplier knows he can get the product to market during the winter months. As soon as the barge-ship system opens in the spring shippers go back to lower-cost water transportation.

The Misaba and Vermilion Iron Ranges of northeastern Minnesota are the principal sources of a lower grade, surface mined product known as taconite. Taconite is shipped from Thunder Bay, Silver Bay, Taconite Harbor, Two Harbors and Duluth-Superior by lake bound vessels to the nation's steel mills in Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Taconite replaced underground shaft mined iron ore during the 1950's and early 60's as the most important raw material in the production of steel. Ashland's harbor transhipped over 200 million tons of high quality iron ore from mines forty miles east on the Gogebic Range. No iron ore was shipped from Ashland after 1965. The loss of this activity had a significant effect on the local economy.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

ASHLAND WATERFRONT PLAN
CITY OF ASHLAND, WISCONSIN

The first European explorers reached Chequamegon Bay during the early 1600's. Their accounts describe extensive Indian settlements on the Bay's shoreline and Madeline Island. The Chippewa Nation settled the area after forcing the Sioux out during Indian wars earlier. Madeline Island offered security that was not available on the mainland. The French established a fur trading post on the Island thirty years later for the same reason. Forts on Madeline Island served as fur company administrative centers for 200 years as a critical trade center in the Northwest-Voyager fur trade of that era.

The first white settlers built cabins along the Ashland shore about 1850. They settled along the shoreline, logging and clearing land for farms. By the 1880's a town center had been established and waterborne trade had started. The Ashland harbor received a significant boost with a discovery of iron ore on the Gogebic range, 40 miles away. A rail line was constructed during the 1880's providing a route from Hurley-Ironwood to Ashland for ore. This ore was placed on ships bound for down lake communities. Sawmills, for cutting timber into boards, were established, supplies were coming through. The harbor boom that would end in the 1950's and 60's was well underway during the 1890's. Two million tons of raw material; 1.4 million tons of ore and 100,000 tons of lumber departed from Ashland's fine harbor in 1885, the first year records were kept. The following table and bar graph describe harbor shipping activities between 1900 and 1980.

The early settlers were entrepreneurs seeking to take advantage of Ashland area resources; animal hides, timber and iron ore and brownstone. Prominent shoreline structures included docks for shipping, sawmills for cutting and planing timber. Chequamegon Bay offered a high quality protected location that minimized damage to ships and docks from turbulant waters.

TABLE

WATERBORNE SHIPMENTS TO AND FROM ASHLAND BY COMMODITY TYPE
(short tons)

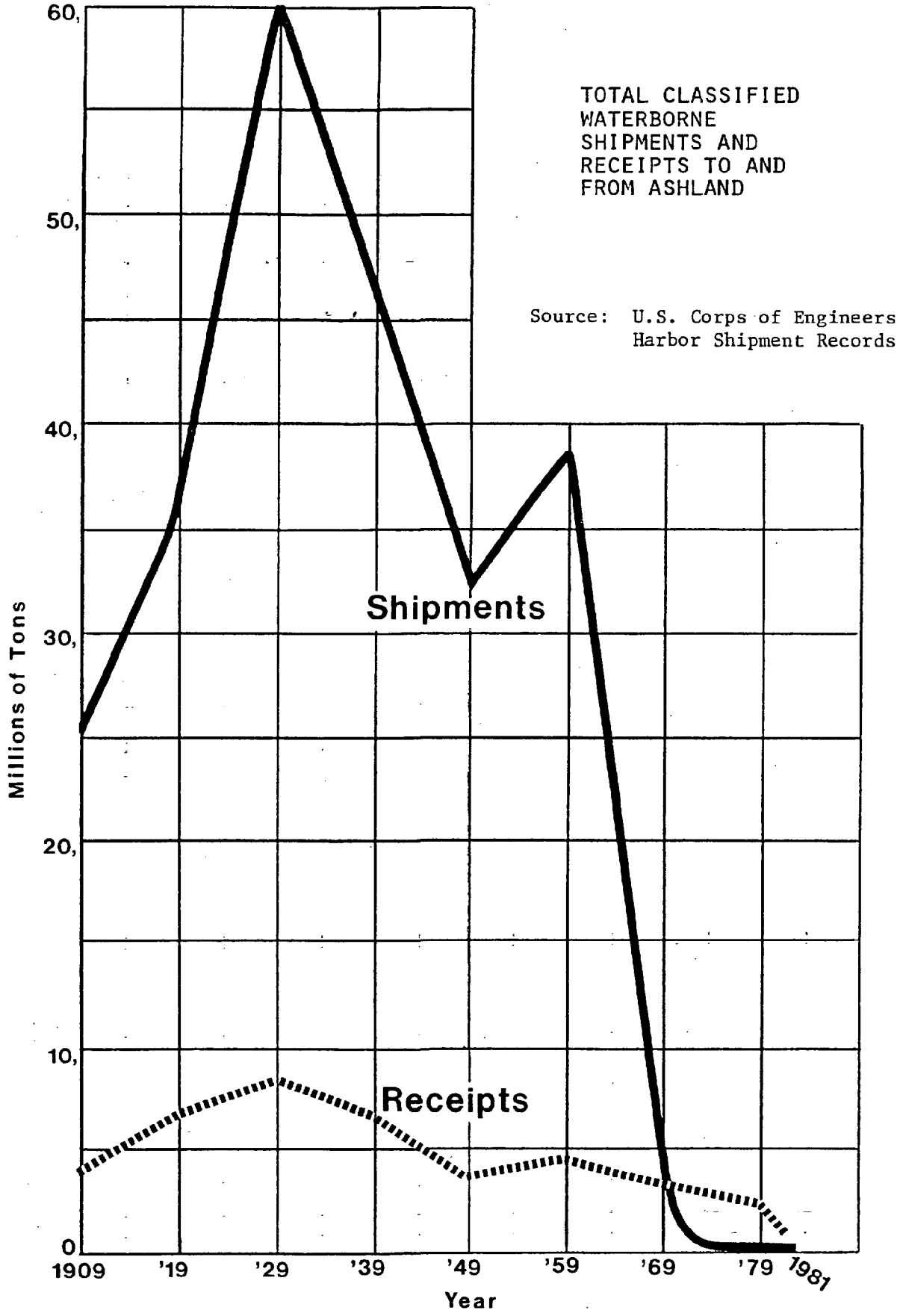
Year	Wood, Timber, Paper Receipts	Wood, Timber, Paper Shipments	Coal and Brownstone Receipts	Coal and Brownstone Shipments	Year
1899		3,727,000	3,861,000	2,755,000	1909
1909	1,606,000	2,406,000	5,120,000	28,000	1919
1919	704,000	206,000	7,686,000	2,000	1929
1929	260,000	11,000	6,311,000	1,000	1939
1939	88,000	1,000	3,472,000	400	1949
1949	1,093,000	0	3,667,000	0	1959
1959	810,000	0	2,625,000	0	1969
1969	200,000	0	2,386,000	0	1979
1979	0	0	840,000	0	1981

Year	Iron Ore Receipts	Iron Ore Shipments	Total* Receipts	Total* Shipments	Year
1899	12,000	19,183,000	3,963,000	25,665,000	1909
1909	10,000	34,455,000	6,736,000	36,889,000	1919
1919	1,000	59,814,000	8,391,000	60,022,000	1929
1929	0	46,610,000	6,571,000	46,622,000	1939
1939	0	32,397,000	3,560,000	32,398,000	1949
1949	0	38,234,000	4,760,000	38,234,000	1959
1959	14,000	6,017,000	3,449,000	6,017,000	1969
1969	0	0	2,586,000	0	1979
1979	0	0	840,000	0	1981

*Total includes only classified receipts and shipments.

NOTE: All shipments are reported by ten year increments.

SOURCE: U.S. Corps of Engineers, Harbor Shipment Records.


TOTAL CLASSIFIED
WATERBORNE
SHIPMENTS AND
RECEIPTS TO AND
FROM ASHLAND
Source: U.S. Corps of Engineers
Harbor Shipment Records
Shipments
Receipts
Millions of Tons
60,
50,
40,
30,
20,
10,
0
1909
'19
'29
'39
'49
'59
'69
'79
1981
Year

Decline of Shipping

Major industries in the area were shipping natural resources to national markets at the turn of the century. These materials included iron ore, lumber, brownstone and fresh-water fish. Raw material shipments increased each decade during the early part of the century, reaching a peak of just over 9 million tons shipped during 1916 and 1920. With the onset of the depression, shipments from Ashland declined significantly. Market areas and sources of raw materials changed during the 1930's. The harbor industry in Ashland did not significantly recover when the depression ended ten years later.

There were a number of reasons for the decline of shipping through the harbor. The value of Ashland and northern Wisconsin as a source of raw material was diminishing. Ashland's function in the economic system was a transfer point. The only investments were the docks. At the same time the shipping companies were making significant investments at the source of raw material, at the plant site and in new technology. Ashland is not located in a major market area making transportation to market areas expensive. Changing technologies and transport systems also took their toll. The depression required individuals to discover new and innovative ways to do things. In order to understand the decline of shipping it is necessary to understand the major products, their characteristics and movement.

Prior to 1960 the principal American source of iron ore was the Gogebic Range in northern Wisconsin and the western upper peninsula of Michigan. The ore was mined on the Range, shipped to Ashland by rail, loaded aboard ships and transported to lower lakes steel mills for processing.

Iron ore shipments increased slowly but consistently from 1889 until the mid 1930's when declines in ore shipments occurred because of the depression. Over 9 million tons were shipped through Ashland in 1916. Another height in iron ore shipment occurred in 1929 when 8 million tons were shipped. The importance of iron ore shipment continued to decline after national recovery because of technological changes in processing ore.

The taconite process, introduced during the early 1950's, permitted more efficient processing of ore from Minnesota's Iron Range, not the underground mined ores from the Gogebic Range. Ore was no longer shipped through Ashland with the closing of Hurley's Carey mine in 1964.

While processing of lumber was not as significant as iron ore it was certainly important. The first lumber processed and shipped along the waterfront was cut in Ashland. As timber cutting moved away from this area, short line rail, and rafting logs were utilized to get the lumber to Ashland. Several subsidiary industries started, manufacturing of wood products, such as furniture, and processing of pulp. As the source of lumber became more distant the value of the sawmills became less important. The wood industry did make investments in plants in Ashland. Louisiana-Pacific maintains a two by four plant in Ashland and the James River corporation converts pulp to paper products. These plants were developed by local entrepreneurs. Eventually they were sold to the larger lumber and pulp operators. Still, the lumber industry declined. The cutting and finishing operations were better located near the resources and the market.

The last saw mill in Ashland closed in 1924 when lumber shipments ended. As the local supply of virgin timber played out, local saw mills began to utilize Canadian resources, resulting in rafted logs arriving in Ashland. Lumber was used early for production of furniture; later pulpwood was utilized for paper production. Use of timber from the south, where better growth conditions occur, led to the reduction of markets for northern, slow growing, timber. Foreign receipts of pulpwood through the port began in 1920, remained fairly constant and ended with the last Canadian pulpwood shipment in 1972. Again, technology, market areas and economics caught up with Ashland.

Brownstone, essentially a very hard sandstone, was an excellent dimension stone that was quite popular in the late 1800's. Brownstone apartments in New York, Washington and Cleveland were created from this unique stone found only in the Chequamegon Bay region. At the time brownstone was an alternative to wood frame construction or stones such as marble or slate. The importance of brownstone diminished rapdily with the introduction of masonry block, a cheaper alternative.

Coal receipts through the harbor increased from a 1889 level of 360,000 tons to a 600,000 ton level in 1906. Coal shipment levels remained constant through the 1920's and declined to a 300,000 ton level by the mid 1930's. Coal was important early for home heating and in the industrial process; later it was replaced by cleaner burning fuel oil and natural gas. Coal remains an important energy source, primarily used by larger energy users.

Coal shipments through Ashland's harbor today amounts to about 300,000 tons per year and is the only significant shipping activity at present. The coal is transshipped to the local power plant, to paper producing companies in northern and central Wisconsin and to the White Pine Mine in upper Michigan.

Supplies of lumber and iron ore were located in the Ashland area while coal had to be shipped here for energy production. All these products were bulk cargo which was difficult to handle and expensive to transport. Transportation by water was the only means available at the turn of the century. Later, the rail and highway system were introduced but still could not compete with waterborne transportation. Rail and truck transportation were important in moving lumber as the wood resource became more distant. Because of its bulk and weight, the only economical means of moving iron ore, was by water transportation. Technological innovations resulted in the ores on Minnesota's iron range becoming more economical than the deep shaft ore of the Gogebic Range. The ports closer to the supply than Ashland became more important.

Suppliers will always try and locate their operations near the consumer markets or near the source of raw material. The cost of transportation, technological innovations, the type of raw material and availability of capital are the factors that lead to the decline of shipping from Ashland.

EXISTING LAND AND WATER USE

Historic and geologic influences, as discussed in previous sections, determined the present shape of the waterfront. The land use patterns that exist today resulted from the rise of the importance of shipping. Sawmills, shipping docks, coal and iron ore storage areas were spread along the narrow waterfront. Individuals who wanted to live near the place of work built homes wherever they could. Manufacturing firms with shipping and water supply needs also located there. Rafting logs directly to waterfront sawmills made sense. Rafting pulpwood to the shorefront American Can plant resulting in less handling and lower transport costs.

The narrow strip of land was filled with uses directly dependent on the waterfront. Secondary uses filled other available spaces. The decline of shipping lead to abandonment of docks, sawmills and storage areas. Docks disappeared, vacant land reappeared. While structures and storage areas disappeared the ownership patterns didn't change quite as easy. Land still had to be bought and sold. Agreements between willing buyers and sellers still had to be negotiated. The City and County had to pick up lands on tax deed sales, in some cases the land was sold, in other cases governmental units retained ownership.

Waterfront land use patterns were changing. Uses that were supported by shipping were in transition and decline while water supply needs were increasing in importance. Public utilities had to be formed to handle sewerage treatment and public water needs. The power plant was located on the waterfront. Ships could bring coal directly to the user and significant amounts of water were readily available for coal boilers.

The investments made in some uses were so significant that relocation was not a reasonable alternative. Transportation and power were moved to these industries rather than the industries moving to the services.

American Can, for example, became more dependent on rail and trucking for supply of pulpwood, rather than rafted logs. Some investments were made in physical facilities that could not be relocated or demolished. While there are other examples, the two best are the power plant and the Soo Line ore dock.

Future planning and development must consider existing land use and ownership patterns in order to be successfully implemented. Industrial, commercial, residential uses were intermingled with each other and with public utilities and recreational uses. The following table describes the amounts of gross acreage devoted to major land uses while the map identifies these uses and the locations and the relationships to each other.

ASHLAND WATERFRONT

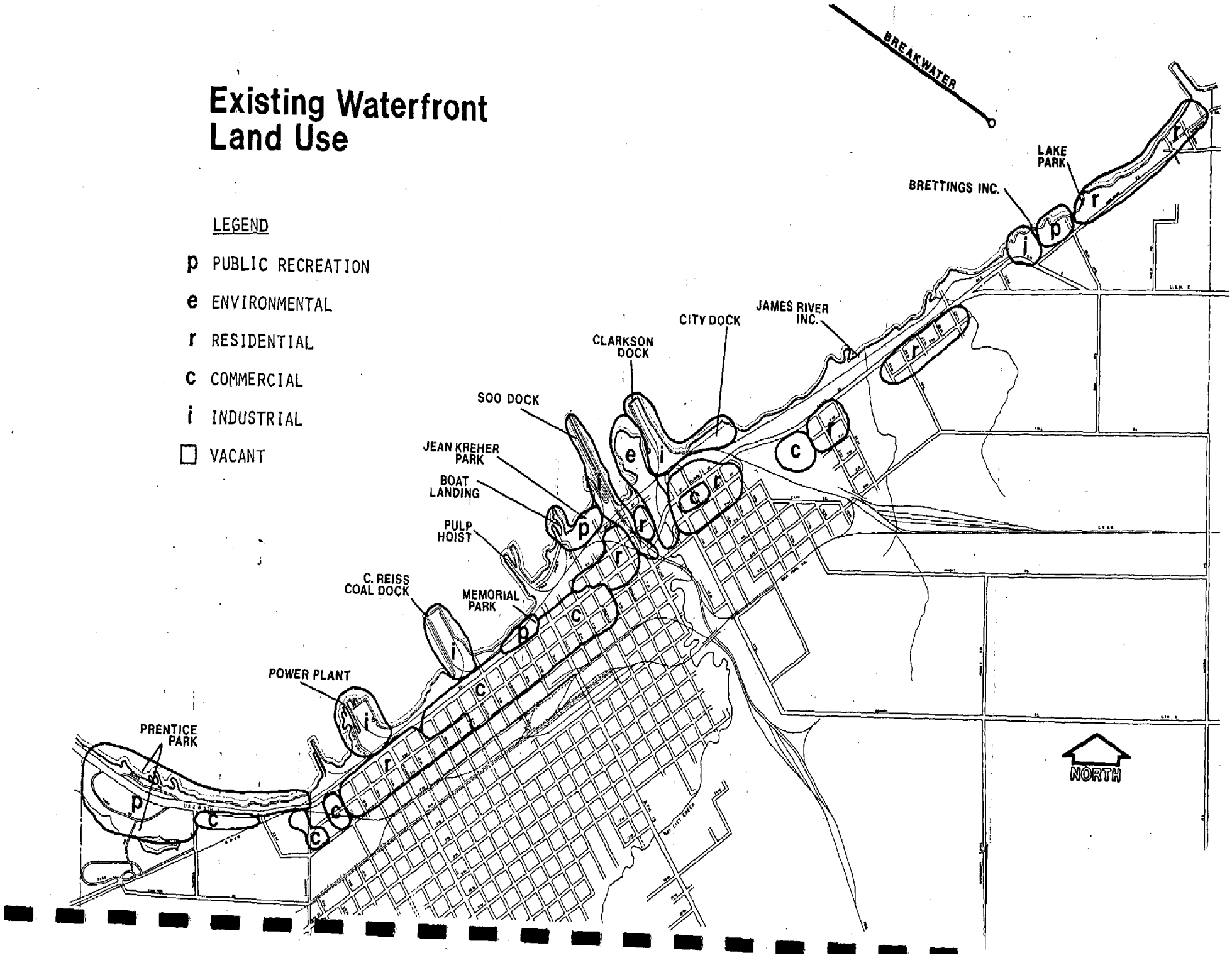
LAND USE (GENERALIZED)

Active Recreation	42	9.6
Passive Recreation (publicly owned)	113	26.2
Conservancy-Vacant	108	25
Industrial	125	29
Residential	44	10
Commercial	.4	---
Total		

Source: Northwest Regional Planning Commission - 1983

All lands in the passive recreation category are publicly held are lands in the Fish Creek Slough, north of Prentice Park. All lands within the industrial category are considered devoted to industrial use even if some or all the lands are vacant or unused at the present time. Two areas fit this statement, the Soo and Clarkson docks. Except for the area at the foot of Ellis Avenue (Highway 13) all the conservancy-vacant parcels are narrow and linear witha bluff passing through them. Plate ___ describes the land use.

Existing Waterfront Land Use



Before goals and policies can be established, or plans implemented, it is necessary to carefully describe the existing conditions and explore realistic future opportunities. The next section discusses waterfront lands in smaller segments. Each land section is discussed in some detail, and certain subareas having development or redevelopment potential are identified. The following map describes each of the areas. After each area is described limiting factors that affect the waterfront are discussed.

WATERFRONT LAND USE AREAS

Area One

This waterfront area is triangular in shape. The perimeter starts at the western City limits, travels east along the old Chicago and Northwestern Tracks until it intersects with Chequamegon Bay. At this point the boundary reverses direction traveling west along the shoreline until again reaching the western City limit. The area can be divided into four subareas. Maslowski Beach, located in the northwest quadrant, is an excellent sand beach with shallow water. Heavily used during warm weather, this area should be preserved as is.

Prentice Park, located south of the beach across Highway 2 contains diverse recreational uses and topography. A small bluff separates the Park's two major segments. The higher lands are forested and contain ball diamonds, children's recreational equipment, picnic areas, camping areas and a deer yard. The wetlands below the bluff are a part of the fish Creek Slough. Boardwalks and observation decks are available for use by the public. The bluff edge has walking trails artesian wells and springs.

A very narrow strip of land located east of Maslowski Beach and north of Highway 2 should remain untouched. This property is owned by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. It provides an excellent view of the bay and the municipal waterfront.

Land in the south east quadrant, south of Highway 2, is relatively rugged and narrow. Some development potential does exist here, particularly for tourist oriented businesses. Care must be taken to preserve views and to address ingress and egress for automobiles.

Area Two

This area is dominated by the Lake Superior District Power Company Power Plant and the C. Reiss Coal Dock. All coal coming to Ashland over water arrives and is stored on the C. Reiss Dock, the only active dock in the City. The LSDP plant is a dominating waterfront feature. The power plant is located at the bottom of the bluff at the water's edge. The power plant is a favorite location for local fishermen. Lands on the north side of Highway 2 above the C. Reiss dock are developed with commercial facilities on top of the bluff.

The bluff west of this area is too steep and too narrow for any type of development. The vacant land between the power plant and the coal dock remains undeveloped for the same reason.

Area Three

This is the most interesting area of the City Lands between the C. Reiss dock and the Soo dock were historically the most important to the Port of Ashland. Today diverse use occurs. First is Memorial Park, the location of the City's bandshell, then the pulp hoist dock. The basin next to this dock contained lumber floated in from other areas for over eighty years. If you sample the bottom sediments that contain large quantities of pulpy material. Next to this area is the City's sewerage treatment plant; then Jean Kreher Park where a popular swimming beach and the City's only public boat landing exists. The shoreline feature that dominates this area is the 1200 foot long, 60 foot high Soo Line Ore Dock. This dock, and its twin, destroyed by fire in 1941, were the docks utilized in moving over a 150 ton of iron ore out of Ashland.

The area behind the waterfront areas discussed above is dominated by single family housing. The housing area is separated from the waterfront developments by municipally owned and Soo Line utilized rail. This rail, which extends as far west as the Power Plant is used to bring western coal to the power plant. Soo Line moves C. Reiss eastern coal from the docks inland to northern Wisconsin paper mills and the White Pine Mine in upper Michigan. This municipally owned line connects with Soo Line and Burlington Northern tracks in the sixth street area. The Soo tracks go south while the burlington tracks go west.

The Pulp Hoist site has been selected by the location for the future marina. This site is the most acceptable environmentally. It is also located close to downtown. A downtown location will create secondary spending patterns that will assist merchants in the Central Business District. The motel that is to be constructed with it will create employment opportunities. This location provides good access and is likely to stimulate business and investment in the area. Documentation of the marina project is extensively discussed later.

A number of conflicting uses exist next to each other in this area. A sewerage treatment plant next to a public park with a swimming beach is a good example. LSDP has a repair building, office building and storage area located adjacent to residential units. Rail lines pass through residential areas in order to get access to the C. Reiss docks and the power plant. The rail also separates residential from the rest of the area.

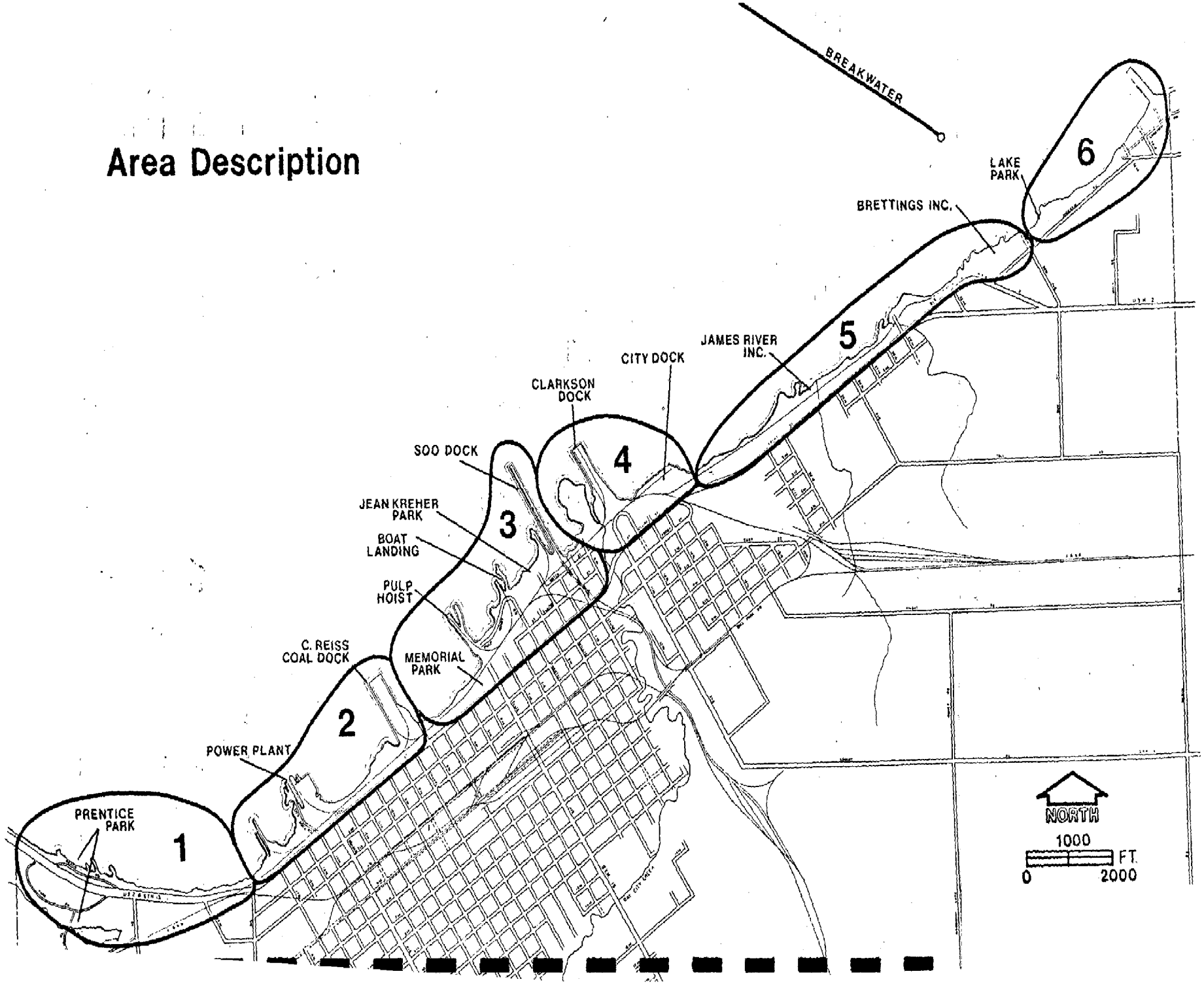
Area Four

A low volume river, Bay City Creek has formed a small delta on the west side of the Soo Line dock. The Bay City Creek valley divides Ashland into two parts and this area is undeveloped. The waterfront area is a low wet area where the creek meanders back and forth before dumping its sediments into Chequamegon Bay. Just east of the creek is the Clarkson dock and City dock. This area is now used to store municipal equipment and other supplies. Land to the east is vacant. Some apartment buildings exist along the highway. The rail line passes along the lake shore here until it reaches its ultimate destination the James River Plant which is next door to this vacant area. An interesting view of pilings for two large docks exists here. Apparently these docks burned to the waterline, leaving the pilings visible under water.

Area Five

Ashland's two largest industries, Brettings and James River, Inc., are located at the water's edge in this area. There is open space, providing an excellent view across Chequamegon Bay, between these two industries. James River draws water from Lake Superior for its pulping process and has waste treatment facilities for water returned to Lake Superior.

Area Description



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If structures are to be placed in water, permits must also be obtained. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources can issue a 30.12 structural permit after review of design and components. If work is to be completed on the shoreline that incorporates grading or removal of top soil in excess of 10,000 square feet the individual or firm must obtain a WDNR 30.19 permit. Each of the three permits discussed above would be required if an Ashland marina were constructed.

Limiting Factors - Land Development

There are a number of factors that serve as barriers to increases in shipping to and from Ashland. Ashland port activity is limited because of its relation to raw materials and major markets. Lumber resources are moved by truck or rail rather than by ship. Significant iron ore reserves are located in central Ashland and Iron Counties but it is unlikely these reserves will be tapped soon.

USH 2, an important transportaion route, provides a physical barrier separating the waterfront from the rest of the community. The highway also provides important access to the City and waterfront. Excellent scenic views are available for travelers. The Highway's location makes the waterfront narrow and linear. Development or redevelopment that may require large acreages must be organized in a linear form.

In some places only a few feet of land is available between the water's edge and the highway. Also, a bluff that becomes more pronounced as one moves from west to east interferes with development potential. On the west side the bluff is as much as two thousand feet south of the water's edge. The bluff crest is seventy feet above the water and right next to the shoreline throughout area two. In the next two areas as much as 500-750 feet of land is located below and north of the bluff; land in this area is intensely utilized. In areas five and six the bluff is again at the wter's edge.

Railroad tracks, which further limit or restrict potential development extend along the shoreline from the power plant to Brettings. While these tracks may interfere with tourism development and cquisition ofpbulic access they are critical to rail users located on the waterfront as well as future shippers.

Lumber and mining provided economid strenglth to the area. These basic industries always subject to eocnomic fluctuations and shifts have declined in importance. The virgin forests have been logged and metallic resources, while significant, are held in reserve. Earlier in this century, when these industries were booming, the most practical and efficient method to move ore and lumber from the area was by ship. The level of investment, the capitalization, establishment of manufacturing and population growth that occurred in other parts of the State did not occure here. The result is a northern Wisconsin economy that is traditionally weaker than the State as a whole.

Market potential for wood, from second and third growth timber particularly particle board and wood chip displayed potential in the late seventies. After the potential was identified a waferboard plant was constructed in Hayward; the Lake Superior District Power company began mixing coal and wood as an energy source for its power plant in Ashland and Forest Fuels, Inc. began producing wood briquets in nearby Ino. Wood as home heating fuel also grew in popularity.

Several changes have occurred since 1977 that affect Ashland's potential for wood processing and increased coal shipment. The excessive resources of timber, particularly aspen, that existed during the mid 1970's has been significantly reduced.

Two industry types now utilize aspen, one produces waferboard, the second produces wood pellets used for fuel. Both industry types have utilized wood resources efficiently resulting in a decreased supply of aspen. Northern hardwood, with a dense wood fiber, remains available for utilization. Shipment of chips or particle board has not occurred from Ashland although some wood shipment from Superior to overseas ports does occur. The Louisiana Pacific waferboard plant in Hayward moves its finished material by truck and rail.

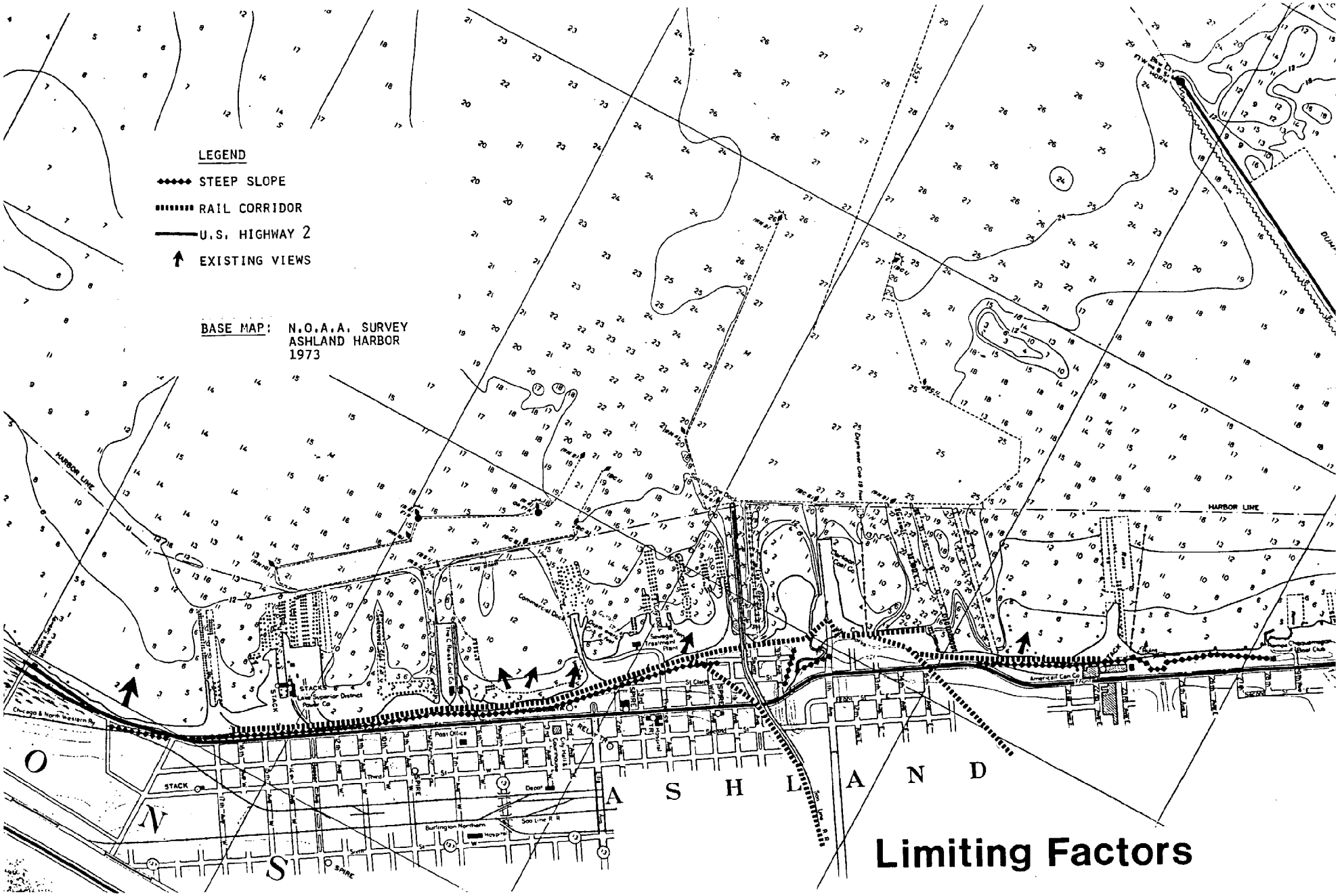
Activites in the lumbering industry which recently have been beneficial to northern Wisconsin have little or no impact on port activities. The shipment of wood to distant markets is economical by truck and rail. Tanspor costs across water is more expensive because assembly of large quantities in a dry storage area is necessary; handling and loading/unloading are difficult. A Michigan study reported that contact with shippers found no one who had familiarity with costs to transport lumber or chips.

Transshipment of western coal was identified as another bright sport for harbor related economic activity. Increases are of low sulphur western coal was anticipated when oil prices rose drastically in the early seventies as an alternate energy source.

Shipment and use of western coal never met the expectations established during the early and mid-1970's. The present recession and oil glut have affected utilization of additional coal stocks. Several other factors have affected coal shipment. The costs of plant production, improved rail lines, land assembly, and waterfront facilities are prohibitive when considering an Ashland site for additional coal transshipment in the short term. Facilities for handling coal already exist in Superior. Last year approximately 3.8 million tons of coal were shipped through the Superior Midwest Energy Terminal; the terminal has the capacity of move eight million tons of coal per year. Large boats can handle larger volumes of material more efficiently. The Superior Harbor channels in most areas are 27 feet while only the Soo Line (iron ore) dock has an authorized 27 foot channel depth serving it. The majority of channels in Ashland are 21 feet, resulting in less efficient ships serving Ashland. Transportation of western coal also requires rail service. The Burlington Northern (BN) tracks serving Ashland are in relatively poor condition, and already pass through Superior.

While coal has not met expectations, described earlier, there may still be significant shipment of coal in the future. Midwestern and Great Lakes power plants have been converting to coal and, with the end of a recession, the prices of coal, oil and gas may shift in favor of coal. A western company, the Powder River Pipeline, Inc., is in the second phase of an economic development project that could lead to investment of a 2.5 billion dollar pipeline transferring coal slurry from Montana to Lake Superior and Lake Michigan markets. This innovative technology has a significant number of difficult hurdles to overcome but that company is projecting an operational phase by 1989.

Iron ore reserves always lead to speculation that the harbor may again move this material to other ports. Lower cost taconite production in Minnesota will be able to meet the demands placed on it. Foreign steel production and shipment to the U.S. will simply increase the life span of the already significant Minnesota reserves. Iron ore will not again be shipped from Ashland in the forseeable future.


LEGEND
STEEP SLOPE
RAIL CORRIDOR
U.S. HIGHWAY 2
EXISTING VIEWS
BASE MAP: N.O.A.A. SURVEY
ASHLAND HARBOR
1973
HARBOR LINE
ASHLAND
Limiting Factors

REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Ashland's waterfront offers redevelopment opportunities for tourism/recreation and long-term potential for increases in shipping activities. The four municipal waterfront parks offer a variety of recreational activities and are used by residents and visitors alike. Prentice Park/Maslowski Beach offer nature walks and viewing of the Fish Creek Slough, camping and various youth activities; Jean Kreher Park has an excellent boat ramp; Memorial Park offers excellent views of Chequamegon Bay. Three of the four parks have excellent swimming beaches.

Tourism Development

Ashland is not a destination for tourists. Tourism is a popular and growing activity that has not been appropriately utilized here. All too often tourists, people who bring new dollars into a community, are driving through Ashland for other destinations. The view across Chequamegon Bay to the northwestern shore is very scenic, the water quality is excellent, the fishing is great. The City, in partnership with the private sector, must explore ways to contain these assets, market them, invest in them and bring the revenues associated with the water to this community.

The City of Ashland has made important investments in waterfront facilities. Prentice Park has been rehabilitated. With assistance from Ashland County, the Jean Kreher Boat launch and ramp have been established. The Wisconsin Coastal Management Program provided major assistance to the City for construction of boardwalks at Prentice Park and Memorial Park as well as planning for the waterfront and lakeshore trail. The Sand and Water Conservation Program (LAWCON) has supported park rehabilitation and upgrading park facilities.

While government investment and activity have been significant, private sector investment has been limited. No significant investments have been made north of Highway 2 by private sector interests that are related to tourism. The development theme and efforts in the 80's require public-private partnership. The combined efforts of these two entities are essential if the waterfront is to alchieve its full potential. During 1983-84 the City and private investors have been cooperating and discussing public-private partnership that may lead to assisting the waterfront achieve its full potential. While the marina-hotel effort is a step in the right direction there are obstacles which stand in the way. This effort is described in the following section.

The Marina

Marina projects are difficult to develop on the Great Lakes. Breakwaters are necessary to provide adequate protection and are not economically justifiable. Financing, other than local, in the form of grants are needed for breakwater construction in order to be feasible. Even when public funding is available the rate of return for direct spending is low. In order to attract boaters, the fees charged must be kept low in order to be competitive with marinas constructed earlier and in other areas.

The City of Ashland has explored marina development a number of times. The 1972 effort was iniated by the U.S. Corps of Engineers at the request of the City. The following material describes the procedures used by the Corps at that time.

Initial Reconnaissance - A determination if a project will be economically feasible, properly located and environmentally sound. At this stage the community where the project is located must express its support.

Preliminary Design - Preliminary design plans for the breakwall, channel entrance and turning basin are completed. The Corps again goes through a cost-benefit analysis.

Final Design - Final design plans are again prepared. The cost-benefit analysis is again reevaluated. The community where the project is to be located is expected to pass a resolution stating its continued interest as well as financial commitment to the project.

Construction Appreciation - Congress is requested to appropriate funds for 50 percent of the cost of constructing the channel entrance, the turning basin and the breakwall. The local community is expected to appropriate the balance, as well as providing ancillary, support facilities.

The Corps design has an estimated 100 year life span and, as a result is quite expensive. The time the Corps takes to design and appropriate funds is also extremely long. These two factors make it difficult for local communities. They maintain a concentrated effort over a long period of time. Also, because of the time frame, it is difficult for communities to appropriate large amounts when they will be needed.

Boater demand studies, completed as a result of the initial recon effort, identified a need for approximately 250 new slips in the Chequamegon Bay Area by 1980 and approximately 350 slips by 1985. The Apostle Islands National Lakeshore provided an important draw for boaters in the Chequamegon Bay region.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Corps of Engineers conducted an environmental analysis in 1977 as a part of the initial recon elffort. They were searching for a site offering the least environmental impact. The selected site was the pulp hoist site located at the foot of Ellis Avenue in the center of the city.

Several problems existed at this site:

- The bottom sediments are primarily composed of wood residue and the water is shallow, requiring extensive dredging.

- The land area is restricted creating some difficulty for establishing areas for parking service buildings and other ancillary services.

The site also had positive aspects:

- The shallow bottom would reduce the overall breakwater costs.

- The site is two blocks from Ashland's major intersection, thus reducing costs for land side access.

- The site is three blocks from Ashland's Central Business District.

The pulp hoist site would allow the City's commercial sector to capitalize on tourism and marina spending. While direct spending for marinas is low, indirect spending can be quite high. The Wisconsin Recreation Resources Center estimated that $60 would be spent per boat slip for each boating day. Assuming 45 boating days per season and a 100 slip marina, the estimated new dollars expended in Ashland's commercial corridor could amount to approximately $270,000 per year.

In 1979 the municipal Marina Committee was unable to accept the U. S. Corps of Engineers and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recommended site location. As a result in this lack of ability to select a site the Corps was unable to proceed into the next phase. The Corps of Engineers dropped the project when these function were transferred from the St. Paul office to the Detroit Office early in 1980.

The 1970's project had these positive results:

- preferred sites were identified
- environmental analysis of the sites were completed
- the community benefit was documented

During 1982 the City of Ashland, now under a different administration, again expressed an interest in the project. Initial discussions were held with a developer who expressed an interest in construction of a hotel directly above the marina site. He concluded, and a feasibility study later supported his conclusion, that if a hotel of this magnitude were constructed then a marina would be essential to support a hotel in a community the size of Ashland. He stated a strong commitment to developing the hotel if the City agreed to pursue development of a marina.

The City council authorized and the administration appointed a municipal Harbor Committee in 1982 to examine waterfront potential and look at short and long term improvements that would revitalize the waterfront. The Committee represents the interests of the City, the County, the business community and the citizens. They meet not only to discuss the marina project but to evaluate the waterfront and look at its redevelopment potential for shipping, recreation and tourism.

At the same time the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program provided financial support for preparation of a waterfront plan. This effort includes an analysis of the issues that affect waterfront development and analysis of port development, tourism development, policy development and implementation.

Staff assigned to the new Harbor Committee then assembled relevant data pertaining to earlier efforts; re-evalualted and updated boater demand studies, negotiated with the hotel developer, assisted in land assembly, submitted federal and state permit applications and prepared two major grant appliclations for federal assistance. The City purchased the option on the pulp hoist site,hired a consultant to estimate construction costs and obtained easements to cross railroad right-of-way. The County agreed to contribute $200,000 to the project.

Both grant applications, the first to the Economic Development Administration, the second to the Wisconsin Department of Development for Community Development Block Grant funds were rejected. The EDA rejection remains unexplained, while the Wisconsin Department of Development indicated they would only seriously consider an Ashland Harbor application if it were the "last dollars needed."

The year-long effort to develop a marina raised three concerns that must be addressed and resolved if the effort is to continue:

- This project is difficult to develop without federal or state financial assistance or without a public-private partnership.

- The apparent inability of potential project funders to coordinate or communicate with each other to meet their objectives cooperatively and help local government achieve their objectives.

- The local developer refused to firmly commit to the project until he was sure the marina would be established. The Federal and State agencies would not commit, much less evaluate, the project until the developer had firm and hard financial commitments. Because of the rules a degre of trust or mutual respect between the actors did not, and could not, materialize.

Commitments to the project still exist. The necessary federal commitments do not exist. Federal and State categorial grant programs, as well as their consistency with each other, will determine the final outcome of this effort. The City remains committed. The staff is prepared to carry the work further; as soon as and when it is permitted to do so.

A number of accomplishments also resulted from the work completed during 1983:

- The recognition that marina development must include a partnership between the public and private sector.
- A project of this nature is feasible in Ashland.
- The City is firmly committed to the pulp hoist site.
- The benefits and liabilities of that site are well known.
- Design plans and specifications have been completed. The project cost is known.
- The County has allocated funds as a portion of the project costs.

Existing Harbor Conditions

An 8,000 foot breakwall constructed in 1887 by the U.S. Corps of Engineers provides additional protection for ships in the harbor as well as providing some protection for harbor facilities from the elements. The U.s. Corps of Engineers maintains the breakwall.

Ashland's harbor contains two federal channels and a turning basin. The east channel entrance, located 4500 feet north of the Soo dock has a project depth of twenty-seven feet. The turning basin which is triangular in shape is located between the channel entrance and Soo dock also has a project depth of twenty-seven feet. The base of the triangle starts at the Soo dock and runs parallel to the shoreline for approximately 4000 feet. The project depth is sufficient to permit a 1000 foot ship, fully loaded, to approach and dock at the Soo Line Dock.

The Soo dock slip is deep enough to permit a ship of this size to off or on load. A 1000 footer is the largest on the Great Lakes.

The west channel is located 4000 feet north of the pulp hoist dock. The project depth in this channel is 21 feet, which permits smaller ships, 300 to 400 feet in length to pull up next to the C. Reiss Dock and deposit their cargoes of coal and limestone. The channel parallels the shoreline for approximately 4500 feet and permits access as far west as the LSDP plant. One privately maintained channel connects the C. Reiss Dock with the federal channel.

The U.S. Corps of Engineers is responsible for maintaining the designated federal channels. The USCOE does not maintain channels where there is not a need nor any traffic. Only the first 2500 feet of the west channel is dredged and maintained at its 21 foot project depth. The remaining 1500 feet of the west channel and all of the east channel and turning basin are not maintained. If ship traffic to increase, the USCOE would dredge to the authorized project depth. The federal channel and breakwall projects were authorized by Congress. Maintenance to project depth is required by Congress if need warrants it.

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Harbor Shipping Potential

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The Ashland Waterfront Plan is a response to changing times. Various government units have started to cooperate with each other and with the private sector in order that each is able to achieve its objectives. This plan is an acknowledgement of new interests and seeks to take advantage of new opportunities. The plan suggests, and to some extent requires, that the City, the County, quasi public organizations, the private sector and the public sector get together and look at the waterfront as a common, but unique, asset.

A conscious effort to re-establish the waterfront nature, as new development and redevelopment occurs must be established. The waterfornt is a distinct entity that reminds us all of its proud tradition, its history and its value. As these events occur this area can once again become dynamic and vibrant and can be an extrewmely important geographical and economic asset to the community. The effort will require numerous partners and will will take time. It will also require persistance, dedication and investment.

As redevelopment occurs it is essential that the rights of existing land owners/users be respected. Citizens, community leaders and city officials all should be involved in the decision making process. The earlier their involvement, the better.

To assist in achieving a desirable level of development and/or redevelopment, the following goal is set forth:

> ASHLAND'S COASTAL ENVIRONMENT SHOULD BE DEVELOPED IN A MANNER THAT PROVIDES FOR REASONABLE ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANNER AS WELL AS AN ADEQUATE MIX OF PORT ACTIVITIES, PUBLIC RECREATION AND TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES.

The Analysis section of this report provides extensive background material which allows the users to use relevant information to formulate a logical position as well as providing information that is important to the decision making process. The INTENT and POLICY development material, which follows, divides waterfront materials into five major subsections. Comprehensively addressing waterfront issues and concerns requires that decision makers integrate each of the subsections with each other and with the overall goal. The INTENT statements are discussions of the issues and concerns that fit into a relatively narrow scope under the title. The POLICY statements are guidelines that assist in achieving what is desired.

Ashland should consider this type of technology as possible and assess its impact on the community. At a minimum, Ashland should reserve lands in its comprehensive plan that will permit industrial access to the waterfront as well as reserving lands sufficient to handle similar types of innovative technical applications in movements of materials, goods and services.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

OVERALL DESIGN

The Ashland walterfront played an important and significant role in the development of Ashland and the surrounding area. The introduction of uniform design practices, standardization and mass production lead to the disappearance of the character and nature of the waterfront.

INTENT Ashland's waterfront, long, linear and diverse needs a unifying or linking theme. An Ashland waterfront logo that is marine related can be designed and placed in key locations in public right-of-ways. Owners of commercial or industrial buildings can be encouraged to adopt a marina design when they construct or remodel buildings. The historic nature of the shoreline, particularly some of the older structures which still exist, must be seriously considered when designing or redeveloping certain areas. The use of similar landscaping, lighting, signs and other design materials will provide visual continuity that will permit marine linkages between the commercial, residential and industrial occupants.

Creating a unified sense of place will assist in linking waterfront uses to each other as well as linking the community to the water's edge. Public and private partners should coordinate their efforts to achieve well designed, compatible development and a desirable sense of continuity. It is <u>not</u> the intent to make all development appear alike; rather, it is intended that, wherever possible, development should be compatible in design. The character of the waterfront should be in keeping with small town waterfront images.

POLICIES

1) Maintain architectural continuity and compatibility within major waterfront use segments.
2) As redevelopment occurs, use, materials, forms and details that reflect the marine and historic character of the waterfront.
3) Use street graphics, sign posts, lighting, landscaping and other unifying features to link the various segments to a consistent marine/historical waterfront theme.
4) Encourage placement of historical markers and commemorative plaques wherever appropriate.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Chequamegon Bay is an important water recreation resource. Chequamegon Bay provides access to Lake Superior and the Great Lakes system. Pleasure craft and fishing boats use the Bay for relaxation and recreational activity. Access to the water can be gained by boats at the Jean Kreher boat landing and the privately owned and managed Chequamegon Bay Boat Club. Several smaller and underdeveloped boat launches also exist.

INTENT

Boating is a major recreational activity which displays unlimited potential in the Chequamegon Bay area. The Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, located twenty miles away, is a major destination for power and sailcraft. The chain of harbors in the western Lake Superior area permits access by water to most other ports, marinas and recreation areas on Lake Superior. Chequamegon Bay provides an excellent cold and warm water fishery that is underutilized. The fishing is excellent. A great deal of effort has been expended recently with development of a marina in Ashland. This effort (discussed earlier) needs to be continued. It is important that provisions for public access to the water be included in development or redevelopment.

Public lands held by the city, such as street ends, can be developed as boat launches, or other waterfront recreational activities. The City also can acquire easements from the private sector. Another marine aspect that should be examined in shore fishing opportunities. Individuals who do not own boats will then have opportunities to participate in fishing for northerns, walleye and browns available from Lake Superior waters.

POLICY

1) Encourage the development of a full slervice marina at the pulp hoist site. Such an activity will help the City realize the marine transportation and recreation/tourism potential of its waterfront and Chequamegon Bay.

2) Use demands will continue to increase at Jean Kreher Park. Explore the feasibility of establishing additional small boat launches on public property, particularly at street ends.

3) Encourage the establishment of boat mooring areas where appropriate. Provide access to downtown Ashland from these areas.

4) Where appropriate, acquire easements from private sector individuals for shorelands.

5) Increase shore fishing opportunities by development of fishing piers, improving access to existing public shoreline and by obtaining easements for public use of private lands or docks.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

The City of Ashland maintains four excellent, and well utilized municipal parks at various locations along the waterfront. Less formalized access occurs at other areas where fishing and swimming are popular. Recently, with significant financial and design assistance from the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, two boardwalks were completed for public use. The first one is located at Prentice Park; the second is at Memorial Park. Both obardwalks are part of the lakeshore trail system and both consistute improved public access.

INTENT Improved public access by bicyclers and pedestrians will allow more participation by residents and tourists alike. An oreganized trail system has been planned to stretch the length of the waterfront and two of the seven segments have been developed. The pedestrian trail should be lsigned and a walking trail guide developed.

At present no designated bicycle path exists in the waterfront area or in any other part of the City. Cycling has been growing in popularity by leaps and bounds. Existing low volume, paved streets could be designated, striped and signed as bicycle routes. At a minimum, these routes could connect the City waterfront parkls.

The Chicago and North Western tracks, abandoned during 1981, offer an excellent opportunity for non-motorized access between Prentice Park and the Waterfront. Development of this segment of trail should be the next phase competed.

Street and Highway Access

U.S. Highway 2 serves as the waterfront's southern boundary in most areas. The highway is four traffic and two parking lanes wide and forms a barrier that separates the waterfront from the rest of the community. Several local streets are north of the highway in the central part of the City. Highway 2 is the major access route to all waterfront property.

INTENT U.S. Highway 2 is the most important transportation route for Ashland and the surrounding area. Maintaining the integrity of this route is critical. It is not the intent of this plan to interfere with this highway or any other vehicle mode. The intent is to look for easier ways to access the waterfront; pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles must cross U.S. Highway 2 in order to gain access from business in the Central Business District and the rest of the City. The waterfront and the Central Business District must be integrated with each other.

POLICIES 1) Continue implementation of Ashland's lakeshore trail plan. The trail can be divided into nine segments, two segments are complete. At a minimum one segment should be completed each year.

2) Designate bicycle trails that permit access to the waterfront and public parks.

3) Provide signage and appropriate marking for both trails. Prepare an interpretive brochure for the walking trail.

4) Highway 2 must continue to provide for safe, efficient and economical movement of people and goods.

5) The waterfront and the rest of the City must be integrated with each other. Explore reasonable methods to permit safer crossing of Highway 2. At a minimum pedestrian crossings should be painted and pedestrian warning signs should be installed. Separated pedestrian crossing should be considered.

Aesthetics, Views, Vistas, Landscaping

Excellent views of Chequamegon Bay's shorelifne, Washburn and LaPointe are available from various points along Highway 2 and the shoreline. These views are enjoyed by community residents, travelers and tourists. These views play an important role in the quality of life for residents and offer a quality experience for visitors.

INTENT Numerous views across the water must be maintained to the greatest extent possible. Existing views should be integrated into new developments wherever possible. Development should be located on relatively large parcels so vistas using side yards can be maintained. Side yards should be open to allow views of the Bay. Development or redevelopment should be compatible with the character of surrounding uses. Excessive height should be avoided. Building heights should be consistent with surrounding structures in order to maintain design consistency and small town flavor. Development should be encouraged on the south side of the Highway where waterfront parcels are narrow

POLICIES 1) Emphasize waterfront views from Highway 2, prks and shorelfine areas.

2) Maintain the aesthetic quality of municipal and vacant lands along thenorth side of the highway. Simple maintenance efforts such as gross cutting, weed removal and painting should be encouraged.

3) Encourage development on the south side of Highway 2 where such development is able to take advantage of Cheuamegon Bay vistas.

4) Locate buildings and other structures in a manner that permits existing views to be maintained to the maximum extent possible.

5) Encourage structural design that is consistent with surrounding uses and design that respects the marine and historic nature of the waterfront.

6) Development, redevelopment or redesign should consider public and residential views and vistas available to the motoring public.