



A CASE STUDY

# THE CITY OF MUSKEGON



Michigan Coastal Community Working Waterfronts

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## Michigan Coastal Community Working Waterfronts

This case study was compiled as part of a set of 11 working waterfront case studies in coastal communities. For more information on the series, please see the Introduction, Value and Context, Waterfront Land Use, Best Practices, and Recommendations and Next Steps sections.

### OTHER CASE STUDIES IN THIS SERIES:

Alpena	Marquette	Saugatuck
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## INTRODUCTION

Many coastal communities have areas known as working waterfronts — waterfront lands, waterfront infrastructure and waterways that are used for water-dependent uses and activities. These uses may include ports, small recreational boat and fishing docks and other types of places or businesses where people use and access the water. Coastal communities' working waterfronts offer economic and cultural value, contribute to a community's identity and are intrinsically tied to a region's natural resources.

A number of factors — such as population change, competing land uses and development pressure, fluctuations in water levels, changes in

fish stocks and regulations, aging and inadequate infrastructure, decline in waterfront industry and economic recession — threaten the viability of water-dependent businesses and access to the public trust waters. Left unchecked, these threats can result in the slow loss of working waterfronts and permanent conversion of waterfront property to non-water-dependent uses.

Active waterfront planning and the sharing and implementation of tools, resources and strategies for maintaining and protecting working waterfronts can ensure access for water-dependent uses and activities, as well as preserve options for future waterfront uses.

### **This case study:**

- Characterizes one of many working waterfronts found throughout Michigan's diverse coastal communities.
- Identifies existing waterfront amenities, waterfront history, waterfront zoning and land area occupied by water-related uses.
- Highlights examples of waterfront challenges, threats and opportunities as well as tools and strategies for maintaining the working waterfront.

# SUMMARY

Muskegon, Michigan was founded in 1870 at the mouth of the Muskegon River into Lake Michigan. Muskegon is located in central, eastern Michigan and is the largest city on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan. Muskegon has approximately X miles of frontage on Lake Michigan, Muskegon Lake and the Muskegon River. The city is a developed, urban community with numerous industrial, educational, research and government facilities along its waterfront.

Muskegon has a rich history in shipping and has been called the 'Lumber Queen of the World', the 'Port City' and 'Riviera of the Midwest'. Exploitation of the region's abundant natural resources, including timber, brought the end of a booming lumber era at the end of the 1800s and significantly impacted the local economy. Manufacturing and industry revived the community's economy through the 1950s. Today Muskegon's tourism, recreation and manufacturing based economy is still very dependent on the city's waterfront resources.

Muskegon Harbor is a federally authorized deep draft commercial, recreational, cargo and ferry harbor.

Approximately 2.1 million tons of material, including sand, gravel, limestone, cement, concrete and coal pass through the harbor, which ranks 27th among Great Lakes Harbors, annually. Muskegon has five marinas with boat launches, three additional boat launches and a yacht club. The city is home to numerous charter fishing businesses, a commercial fishery, Lake Express Ferry Service, the Port City Princess cruise ship and many maritime attractions and landmarks. Waterfront parks and beaches, including award-winning Pere Marquette beach, provide public access to the waterfront.

Muskegon has waterfront marina and waterfront industrial planned unit development (PUD) zoning districts that specifically accommodate marine-related activity. Zoning adjacent to the waterfront is comprised of 46 percent open space, 18 percent industrial, 6 percent residential, 5 percent commercial and 25 percent other uses. Within a 1000 foot buffer of Lake Michigan, Lake Muskegon and the Muskegon River, land use is comprised of 41 percent open space, 18 percent industrial, 18 percent residential, 10 percent commercial

and 14 percent other uses. Parcels that contain water-dependent uses and provide public access account for 21 percent and 29 percent of the waterfront, respectively. Waterfront parcels with water-dependent utilities and industries account for approximately 13 percent and 11 percent, respectively, of the total frontage along the waterfront.

Muskegon has an extensive waterfront that provides numerous recreational opportunities. Muskegon Lake's natural deep draft harbor makes it a prime location for shipping and receiving commodities. The decline in industrial activity along the waterfront presents opportunities to redefine land use along the shore. The city has a downtown Lakeshore Plan that helps to guide redevelopment and reuse of former industrial waterfront property into new amenities such as Heritage Park. However, much of the Muskegon Lake shoreline, including public property, is not visibly or physically accessible. Additional challenges the community faces is a lack of connectivity between the downtown and Muskegon Lake as well as between waterfront amenities.

Best practices for maintaining access to the waterfront for the public and water-dependent uses include:

- Adaptive reuse of waterfront property amidst poor economic conditions and legacy contamination.
- Attracting new businesses utilizing a Smartzone.
- Increasing public access and recreational opportunities along the waterfront.
- Establishing recreational and commercial marine hubs through zoning.

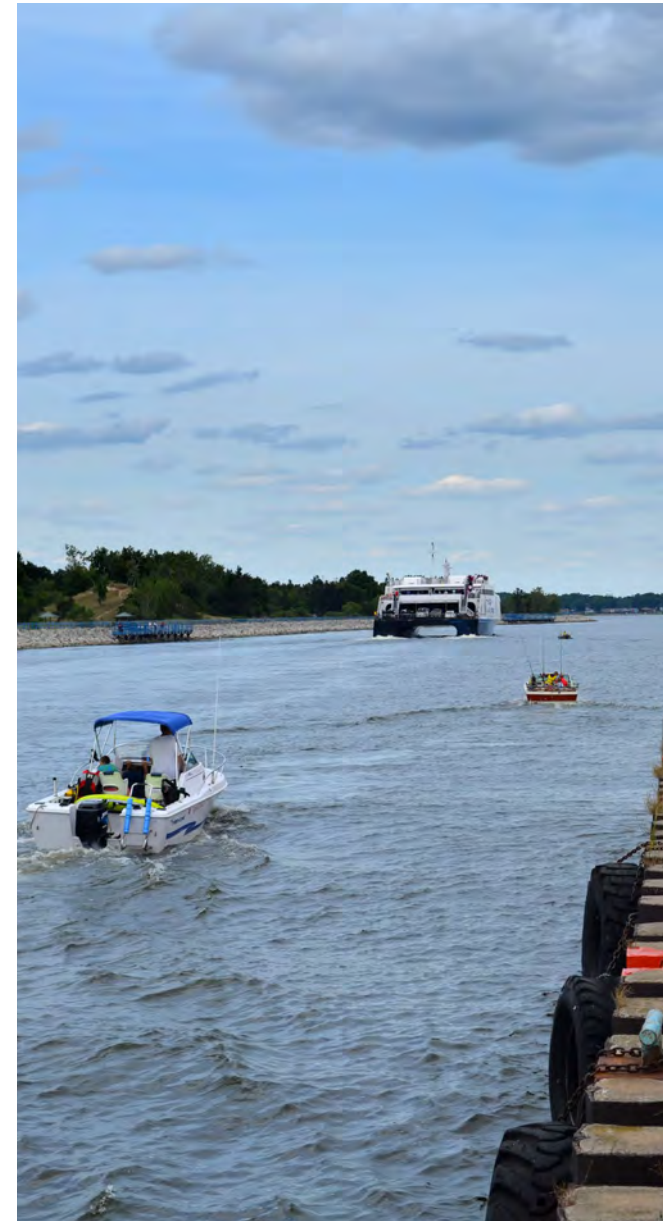
# MUSKEGON, MI



FIGURE 1. STATE OF MICHIGAN AND MUSKEGON COUNTY (LEFT) AND AERIAL IMAGE OF THE CITY OF MUSKEGON WITH LAKE MICHIGAN, MUSKEGON LAKE AND THE MUSKEGON RIVER.

# CONTEXT

Jurisdiction / Government	City
Region	Southwest
County	Muskegon
Metropolitan Statistical Area	Muskegon-Norton Shores Metropolitan Statistical Area, Grand Rapids-Muskegon-Holland Combined Statistical Area
Land Area	9088 acres / 14.2 miles
Watershed/Subwatershed	Lake Michigan Basin / Muskegon River Watershed
Dominant Land Use of Subwatershed	Forest, Agriculture
Adjacent Bodies of Water	Lake Michigan, Muskegon Lake, Muskegon River
Type of Water Body	Great Lake, Inland Lake, River
Percent of Land Area within the CZM	91%
Population (2010)	38,401
Percent of County's Population	22.3%
Percent of County's Land Area	2.8%
Urban / Suburban / Rural	Urban
Federally Authorized Harbors/Projects	Muskegon Harbor
Type of Port	Recreational, Commercial, Ferry, Cargo



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# COMMUNITY PROFILE

## POPULATION

- The population of Muskegon declined 4 percent from 2000 to 2010. In 2010, the city's population density was 2,704 persons/square mile.
- The population of Muskegon County decreased by 1 percent from 2000 to 2010.
- The median age in Muskegon decreased from 34 in 2000 to 32 in 2010.

## EDUCATION

- Of the city's population age 25 and older (70% of the city's total population), 82 percent have a high school degree or higher and 11 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Of the county's population age 25 and older (66% of the county's total population), 88 percent have a high school degree or higher and 17 percent have a bachelors degree or higher.

## INCOME

- The median household income between 2006 and 2010 in the City of Muskegon was \$26,686, compared to the median household income in Muskegon County of \$40,670.

## EMPLOYMENT

Of the city's population over age 16:

- 38 percent are in the labor force and employed and 26 percent are unemployed.
- 70 percent are employed in the top 4 (of 13 total) industries classified in the American Community Survey: manufacturing (24%); educational services and health care and social assistance (23%); retail trade (13%); arts, entertainment and recreation and accommodation and food services (10%).
- 24 percent are in service occupations, 24 percent in sales and office occupations, 24 in percent production, transportation and material moving occupations, 21 percent in management, business, service and art occupations, and 6 percent in natural resource, construction and maintenance occupations.



A local fishery's retail outlet. Michigan Sea Grant

## Muskegon County Great Lakes Jobs Snapshot (NOAA)

- In 2009, Great Lakes related jobs accounted for 4 percent of total jobs in Muskegon County
- Great Lakes related jobs provide employment for 2,426 people, provide \$35 million in wages and provide \$64 million in goods and services.

## HOUSING

- From 2000 to 2010, the total number of housing units in Muskegon increased by 1 percent and the percent occupancy of housing units decreased by 5 percent.
- Owner occupied housing units decreased by 12 percent and renter occupied housing units increased by 6 percent from 2000 to 2010.
- Residential construction in Muskegon County increased from 221 buildings in 1990 to 1,575 buildings in 2000 and then declined to 158 buildings in 2010.



# COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The city of Muskegon is located on the central west side of Lower Michigan along Lake Michigan. The city lies on the south side of Muskegon Lake and at the mouth of the Muskegon River, which drains a 2,566 square mile watershed. Muskegon is approximately 115 miles northeast of Chicago and 80 miles east of Milwaukee. The city is the county seat of Muskegon County and the largest city on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan.

Muskegon is a developed, urban community characterized by residential, industrial and commercial uses. The city has an extensive waterfront along Muskegon Lake as well as frontage along Lake Michigan. Muskegon is home to award winning Pere Marquette Beach and the Lake Express ferry that crosses Lake Michigan between Muskegon and Milwaukee. There are seven colleges and universities and numerous research facilities in the region.

Although a few major employers and long term industries such as Muskegon's Sappi Paper Mill have closed in recent years, many new and old industries survived the recession by developing new products and processes that allow them to reach new markets. The city has one of the only Smartzones, which is designed to encourage development of new technology or research industry. The Smartzone, a partnership between the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the City of Muskegon and Grand Valley State University, provides incentives including Brownfield Tax Credit, Site Assessment Funds, Muskegon Area First assistance and Michigan Pre-Seed Capital Fund startup assistance.

In addition to diversifying the city's industrial economy, the city and county has transformed former industrial property into new community assets. A former scrap yard located along the downtown waterfront, for example, is now a greenspace called Heritage Landing that provides public access to the waterfront and serves as a community meeting place for festivals, events and fireworks.

## CAPACITY

Muskegon has had a commission and manager form of government since 1919. The city manager is the chief administrator of most city departments and oversees Community & Economic Development, Public Works and Finance. The Marina Department, which is administered by the Public Works Department, is responsible for the operations and maintenance of Hartshorn Marina, four launch ramps, moorings and the summer dry storage areas at Pere Marquette Park and Harbour Towne Beach. Marina Department staff includes one part time Harbour Master and eight seasonal staff. Muskegon has a 2008 Downtown Lakeshore Plan, a 1999 Waterfront Redevelopment Plan, a 2009 Parks and Recreation Master Plan and a Historic Fill Muskegon Lake Shoreline Assessment.



Pere Marquette Beach. *Elizabeth Durfee*



Heritage Landing on Muskegon Lake. *Elizabeth Durfee*



Torrensen Marine. *Elizabeth Durfee*

# WATERFRONT HISTORY

The county of Muskegon was established in 1859 and city of Muskegon was founded in 1870. Muskegon has a rich history in shipping and has been called the ‘Lumber Queen of the World’, the ‘Port City’ and ‘Riviera of the Midwest’.

Among the earliest known European visitors to the Muskegon region were Father Jacques Marquette, who traveled northward through the area in 1675 on a trip to St. Ignace and a party of French soldiers who passed through in 1679. The earliest known resident, a fur trapper and trader, lived in the region in 1748. By the early 1800s several trading posts were established around Muskegon Lake and the Hudson Bay Company sought furs in the region’s forests.

The community was settled in 1837 during the start of the lumber industry. At its peak in the mid-1800s, the lumber industry had 27 sawmills surrounding Muskegon Lake. During the lumber era, the city had more millionaires than any other town in America. In 1856, Charles Hackley moved to Muskegon and opened a mill that operated through 1894. Following the mill closure, Hackley turned his attention to urban revitalization and became a significant philanthropist in the city. Muskegon’s lumber barons send timber to rebuild the city of Chicago after the fire of 1871. Exploitation of timber led to the end of the lumber era at the end of the 1800s. This left the local economy depressed and unorganized.

With its harbor and deep water ports the city was well positioned for manufacturing and the industrial era revived the community’s economy. The city was known for manufacturing piston rings and tank engines. During the height of Great Lakes shipping post WWII, Muskegon regularly received shipments from European ports. The development of the interstate highway system and the lack of infrastructure and shipping volume to support containerized shipping has impacted Muskegon’s port.

Manufacturing declined in the 1950s and 1960s. Since the 1970s the industrial community has been forced to continue to diversity to remain viable in the changing economy. Today, Muskegon’s tourism, recreation and manufacturing based economy is still very dependent on the city’s waterfront resources.



Muskegon Lighthouse. *Elizabeth Durfee*



USS LST 393 Veterans Museum. *Elizabeth Durfee*



Boats moored on Muskegon Lake. *Elizabeth Durfee*

# WATERFRONT SUMMARY

Muskegon's Lake Michigan shoreline is characterized by sandy beaches and public parks. Waterfront land use adjacent to the Muskegon Lake consists of a mix of industrial, water related and residential uses with undeveloped land and parks.

Muskegon Harbor is a federally authorized, deep draft harbor with project depths up to 29 feet. The harbor is a Harbor of Refuge and major receiving port on the Great Lakes. The harbor was ranked 27th among Great Lakes Harbors and was 111th leading U.S. port with 2.1 million tons of material shipped or received in 2008. The harbor requires dredging on a 2-3 year cycle and structures currently require maintenance. The harbor's major stakeholders include the U.S. Coast Guard, Lake Carriers' Association, Verplank, Lake Express Ferry Service and St. Mary's Cement. Bulk commodities that pass through the harbor generate over \$72 million annually in direct revenue, support over 400 jobs and generate \$19 million annually in personal income. Commodities that pass through the harbor include sand, gravel, limestone, cement, concrete and coal.

Muskegon has a number of marinas including the Hartshorn Municipal Marina, Great Lakes Marina, Torrensen Marina, Harbour Town Marina and Terrace Point Marina. Hartshorn Municipal Marina has over 170 slips, 102 moorings, two launch ramps and a tie-up for vessels up to 90 feet. Fisherman's Landing, Muskegon Jaycees Boat Launch Ramp and the Grand Trunk Boat Launch provide additional water access. Amenities at Fisherman's landing include campsites, a swimming beach, shelter and restrooms and a fish cleaning station.

The city has over 2.5 miles of Lake Michigan frontage including award winning Pere Marquette Beach, Lake Michigan Park Kruse Park. These parks have amenities including restaurants and restrooms, a guard station, volleyball courts, a 200 foot handicapped walkway on the beach, accessible dune walkways, a dog park, nature trails and natural features such as barrier dunes and heavily wooded back dunes. Harbour Towne Beach, Heritage Landing, Muskegon Lake Frontage and the Lakeshore Trail provide access to Muskegon Lake.

Muskegon is home to over a dozen charter boat businesses, a commercial fishery located at the Fish Dock, Lake Express Ferry Service, the Port City Princess cruise ship and attractions including the U.S.S Silverside, a highly decorated WWII submarine, the Milwaukee Clipper, a National Historic Landmark, the USS LST 393 and the USCGC McLane, a Prohibition era Coast Guard Cutter. A U.S. Coast Guard Station and the Lake Michigan Field Station and NOAA's base of operations for Great Lakes research are located near the mouth of the channel into Muskegon Lake.



Docks and ramp at Torrensen Marine. *Elizabeth Durfee*



View of the Mart Dock. *Elizabeth Durfee*



Ship at the Mart Dock. *Elizabeth Durfee*

# ZONING ORDINANCE

ZONING DISTRICT	INTENT OF DISTRICT	PERMITTED USES	SPECIAL USES
Open Space and Conservation District	Intended to provide for permanent open spaces in the community and the protection of sand dunes and other natural features, recreation and limit development in locations where police and fire protection, protection against flooding and dangers from excessive erosion are not possible without excessive costs to the city	Fishing docks/piers, trails, wildlife preserves, watershed or erosion protection facilities	Public/private utilities and services
Open Space and Recreation Districts	Intended to provide for permanent open space, designed to provide recreational opportunities limited to country clubs, marinas and the like, as well as to safeguard the natural features of the city such as protecting against flooding, high water table or storm water, dangers from excessive erosion	Fishing docks/piers, trails, wildlife preserves, watershed or erosion protection facilities, Parks	Marinas for the berthing and servicing of boats, public/private utilities and services, seasonal campers, amusement facilities
Lakefront Recreation Districts	Intended to provide for areas abutting Muskegon Lake including Muskegon River and Lake Michigan to be utilized for both public and private recreational and recreation oriented facilities, commercial facilities are limited to water related activities	Marinas for the berthing and servicing of boats	Seasonal campers
Waterfront Marine District	Designed to accommodate boating and water oriented land and building use along with those activities and services related to harbor and waterway improvements, thereby facilitating navigation and providing safe and economical waterfront developments	Marinas including the out of water seasonal storage of boats, commissary facilities to be stored aboard boats, municipal or private beaches, retail businesses that supply commodities such as the sale of boats, engines and accessories, fishing equipment	Engine and hull repair shops, marine contracting, commercial fishing and processing facilities, seasonal recreational camper
Waterfront Industrial PUD	Established for water-dependent, commercial shipping of bulk, general cargo or container goods by freighter, bulk carrier, tanker, tug barge, or similar commercial vessels and intended to promote consolidation of commercial port activities	Water transportation of freight, railroad and auto passenger ferries, marine cargo handling, loading, unloading and stevedore facilities, marine terminal uses including ancillary inter-modal transportation operations, any use with outside storage of bulk materials shipped by commercial watercraft vessels/barges, bulk/warehouse storage of good shipped by commercial maritime vessels, towing and tugboat services for commercial freight water vessels, barge fleet, mooring and services, lighterage, commercial engine and hull repair, marine dock, breakwater, harbor construction and repair contracting, marine dredging contractors, operations associated with maritime shipping and transport, commercial fishing facilities, docks, wharves, piers, lighthouse, fuel dock, seaplane	

TABLE 1. INTENT, PERMITTED USES AND SPECIAL USES OF ZONING DISTRICTS AND FORM-BASED CODE SUB-DISTRICTS THAT ACCOMMODATE WATER-DEPENDENT USES AND/OR PUBLIC ACCESS.

# ZONING

Muskegon has 19 zoning districts. Each of these districts falls within a 1000 foot buffer of Lake Michigan and/or Muskegon Lake. Figure 4 displays zoning within a 1000 foot buffer of these bodies of water. Eleven of the city's districts have frontage on either Lake Michigan or Muskegon Lake.

The city's waterfront marine and waterfront industrial planned unit development (PUD) zoning districts specifically accommodate marine-related activity. Additional zones including the open space and conservation, open space and recreation and lakefront recreation districts also permit marine-related uses such as marinas and piers (Table 1).

A majority of identified water-dependent uses are located in the waterfront marine, general industrial and open space and recreation zoning districts (Figure 4).

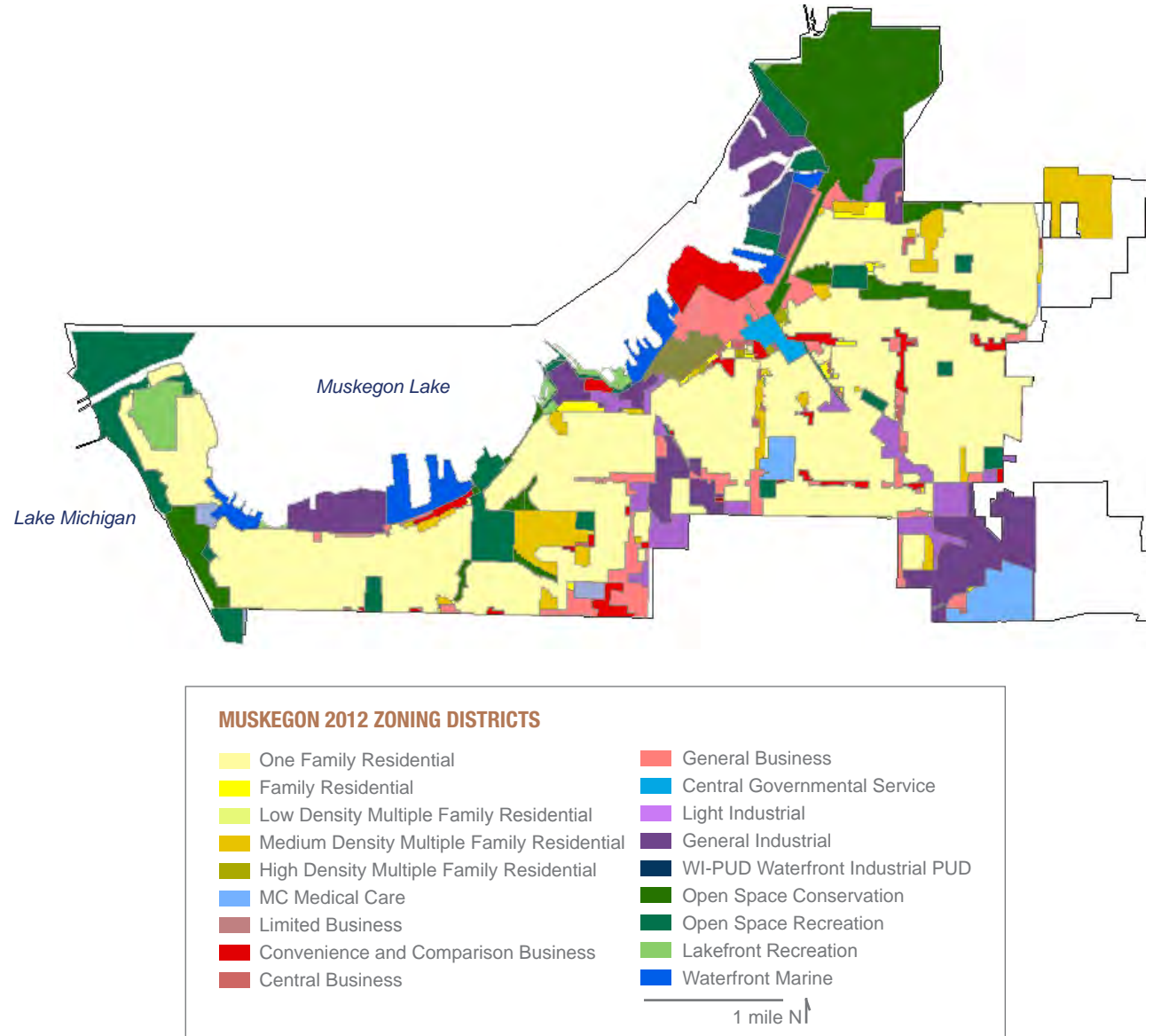


FIGURE 2. CITY OF MUSKEGON 2012 ZONING DISTRICTS.

# ZONING ADJACENT TO WATERFRONT

Open space accounts for 46 percent of the total frontage along Lake Michigan and Muskegon Lake in Muskegon. Remaining land use along Lake Michigan and Muskegon Lake includes 26 percent other uses including the waterfront marine district, 18 percent industrial, 6 percent residential and 5 percent commercial uses (Figure 3).

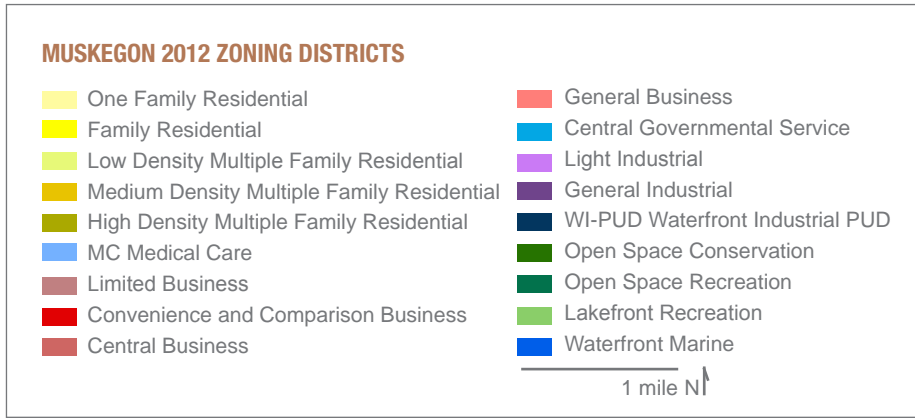
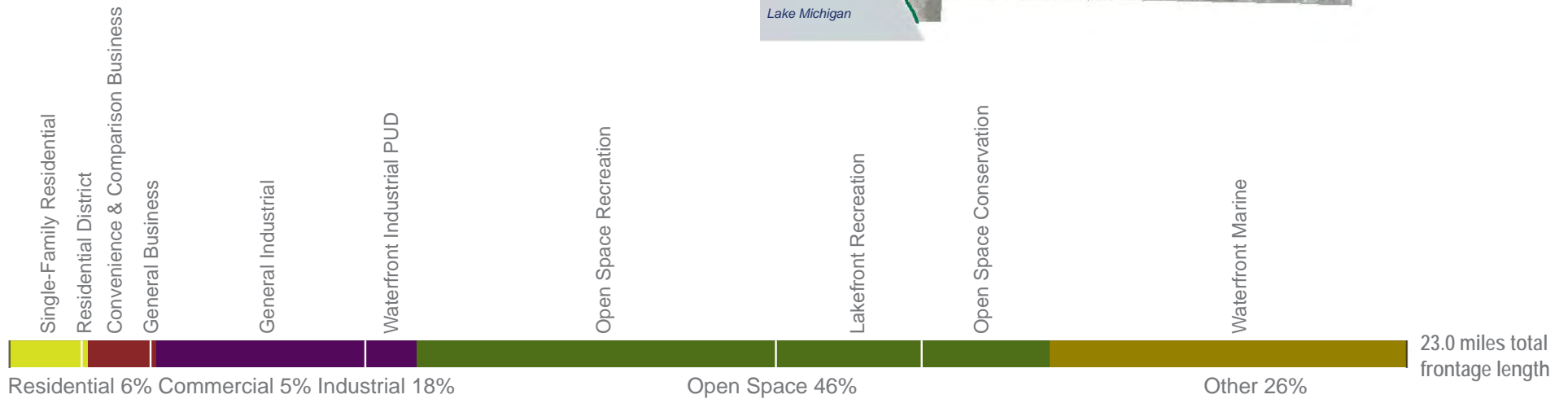


FIGURE 3. MAP OF ZONING ADJACENT TO WATERFRONT (RIGHT) AND FRONTAGE BY ZONING CATEGORY (BELOW).



# ZONING WITHIN 1000 FEET OF WATERFRONT

Land use within a 1000 foot buffer of Lake Michigan and Muskegon Lake consists of 41 percent open space, 18 percent industrial, 18 percent residential, 14 percent other uses (Figure 4).

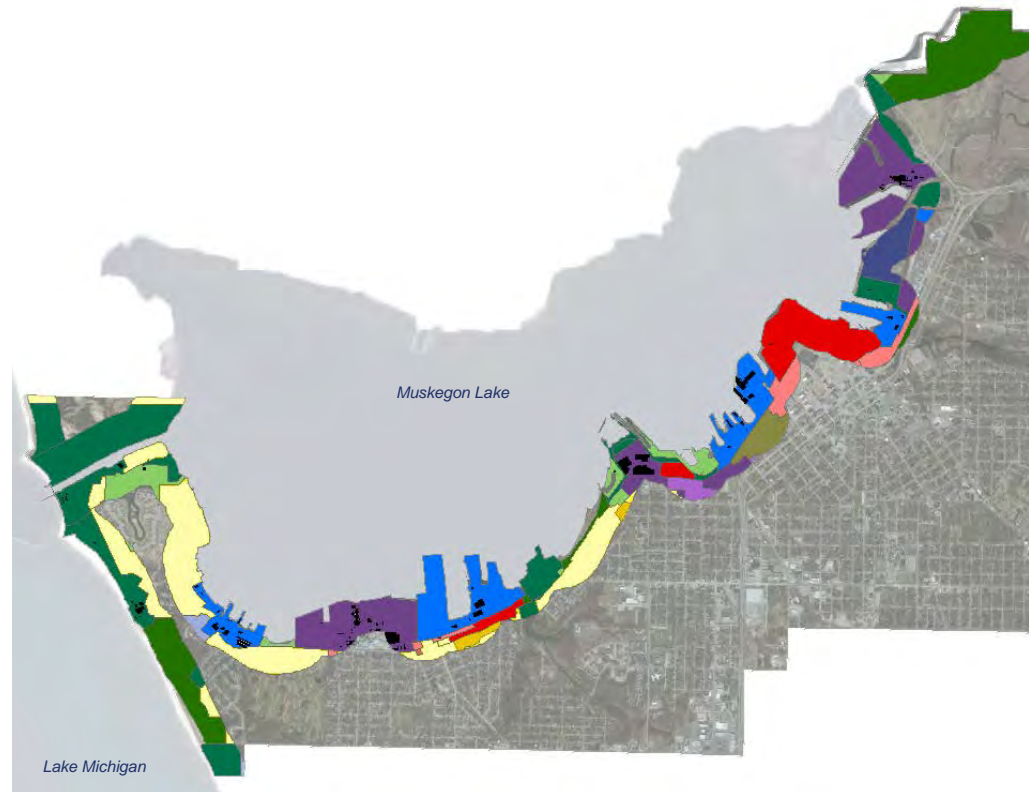
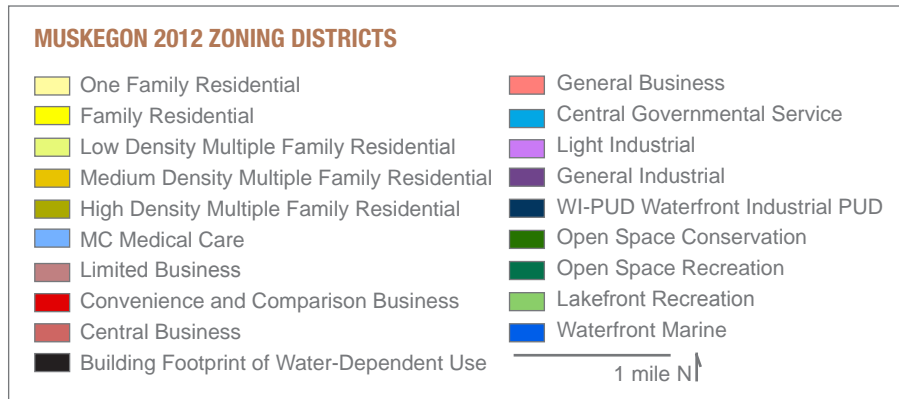
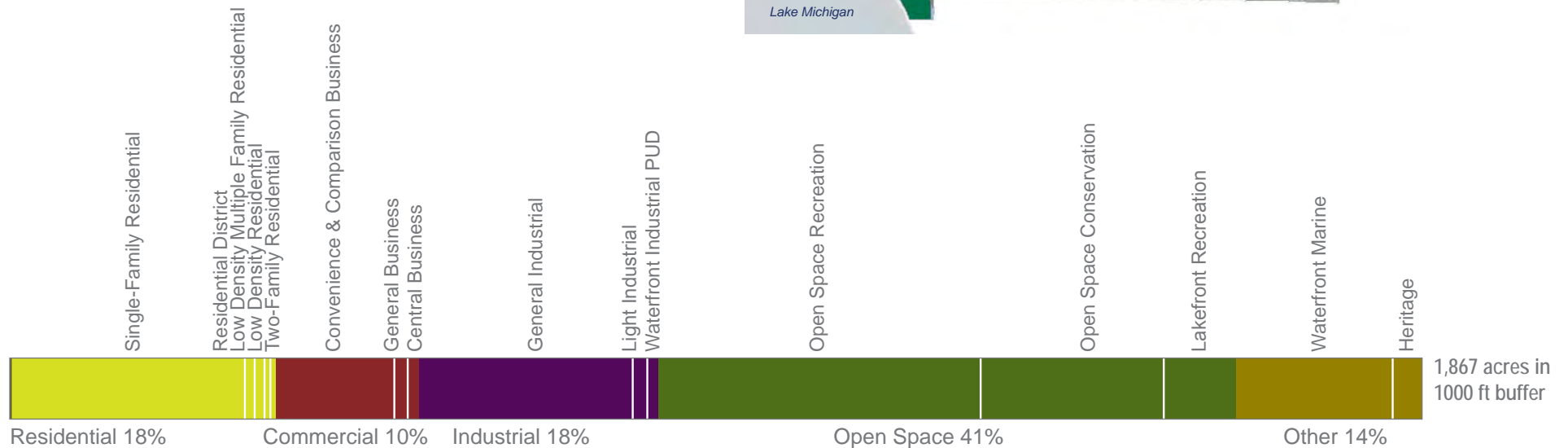


FIGURE 4. MAP OF ZONING AND LOCATION OF WATER-DEPENDENT USES WITHIN A 1000 FOOT BUFFER OF WATER BODIES (RIGHT) AND WATERFRONT LAND AREA BY ZONING CATEGORY (BELOW).



# PARCEL CLASSIFICATION AND INVENTORY

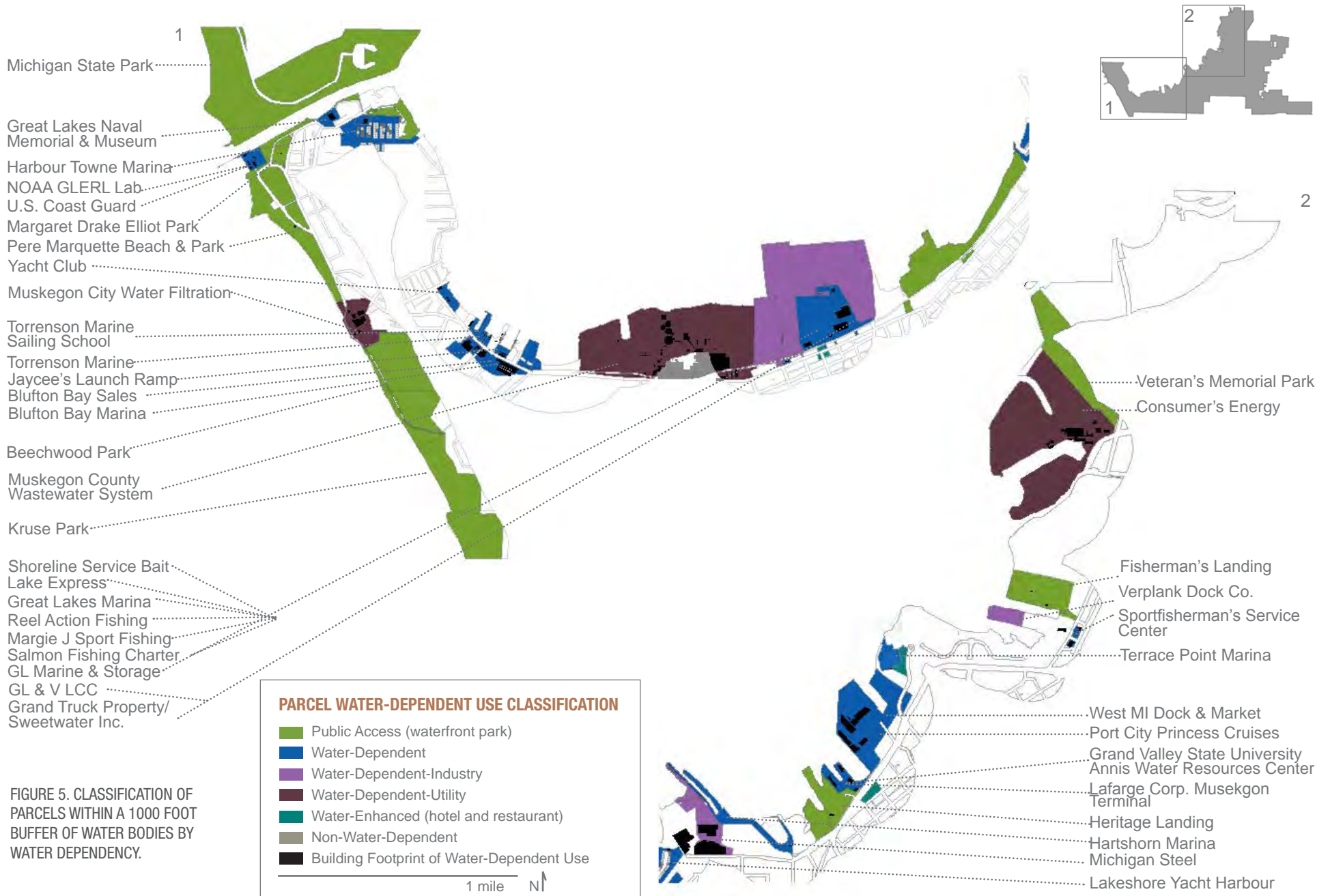


FIGURE 5. CLASSIFICATION OF PARCELS WITHIN A 1000 FOOT BUFFER OF WATER BODIES BY WATER DEPENDENCY.



# PARCEL CLASSIFICATION

Parcels that provide public access to the waterfront account for approximately 29 percent of the total frontage (approximately 21 miles) along Lake Michigan and Muskegon Lake and approximately 22 percent of the area (approximately 1,690 acres) within a 1000 foot buffer of these bodies of water. Parcels that have identified water-dependent uses account for 21 percent of frontage and 9 percent of the area within a 1000 foot buffer of Lake Michigan and Muskegon Lake. Industries and utilities along the waterfront account for 11 percent and 9 percent of frontage and 9 percent and 12 percent of the area within a 1000 foot buffer of bodies of water, respectively (Figure 6).

Figure 5 displays an inventory of identified water related uses and classification of parcels with water-dependent and water-enhanced uses and parcels that provide public access.

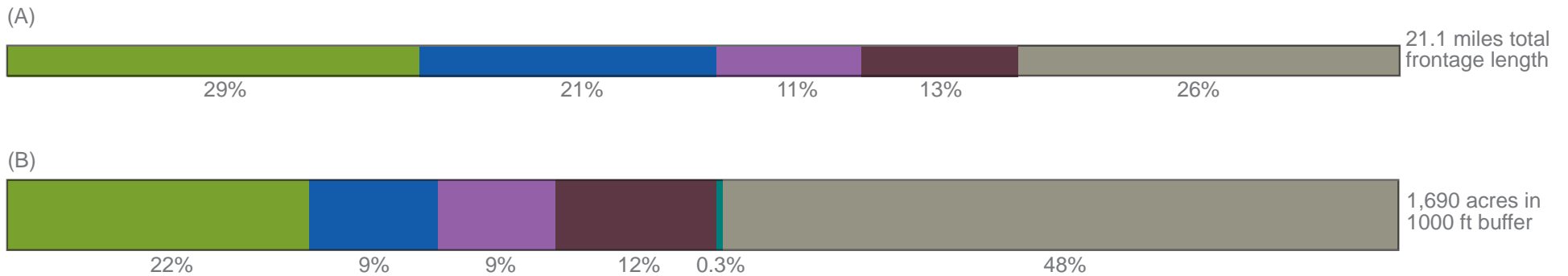


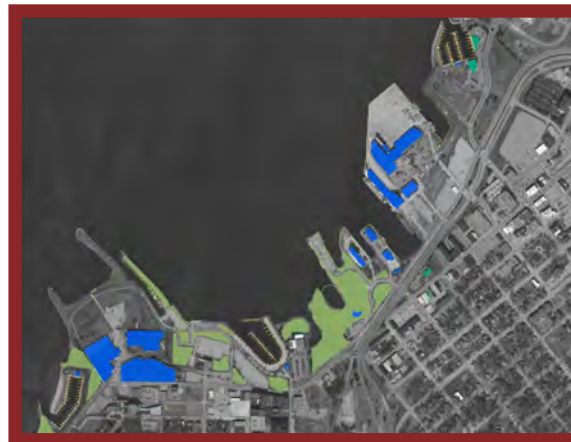
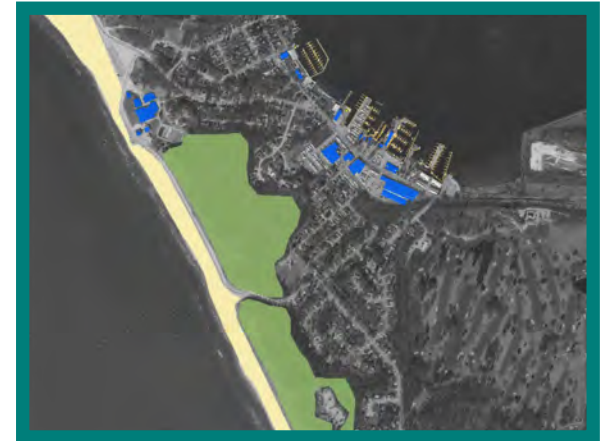
FIGURE 6. PARCEL FRONTAGE (A) AND AREA WITHIN 1000 FOOT BUFFER BY WATER DEPENDENCY CLASSIFICATION (B).

# INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCESS

Figure 7 displays aerial imagery with waterfront infrastructure within a 1000 foot boundary of Lake Michigan and Muskegon Lake that have identified water related uses and highlights parks and beaches that provide public access.



FIGURE 7. WATER-DEPENDENT AND ENHANCED USES, DOCKS, WATERFRONT PARKS ALONG THE WATERFRONT AND WITHIN 1000 FEET OF WATER BODIES.



# WORKING WATERFRONT SWOT ANALYSIS

There are a number of factors that influence a community’s ability to maintain a robust working waterfront. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis below (Table 2) provides examples of the challenges and opportunities associated with maintaining Muskegon’s waterfront as a place that provides public access and supports and is well integrated within the community from a planning and physical perspective. A SWAT analysis is a

strategic planning tool with four elements: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The analysis identifies the positive, negative, internal and external factors that influence an individual, business, organization or place’s ability to achieve an objective. For example, internal factors may include human, physical or financial resources and past activities or programs. External factors may include future trends, the economy, or the physical environment.

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Approximately 2.5 miles of beaches and parks along Lake Michigan</li> <li>■ Lakefront Trail</li> <li>■ Downtown and Lakeshore Redevelopment Plan and Parks and Recreation Plan</li> <li>■ Foreign Trade Zone</li> <li>■ Deep draft harbor</li> <li>■ Still has active industrial activity</li> <li>■ 5 Marinas, Yacht Club, Lake Michigan ferry, Fisherman’s Landing</li> <li>■ Maritime research centers including NOAA and Grand Valley State University Annis Water Resources Institute</li> <li>■ City recognizes that water depended uses are not inherently incompatible with other uses, Smartzone along waterfront,</li> <li>■ Zoning accommodates a mix of uses along the waterfront</li> <li>■ Tourism attractions - Pere Marquette Beach, museums, warship</li> <li>■ Commercial fishing (Pattersons)</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Decline in industrial use has left vacant, underutilized land</li> <li>■ Much of the Muskegon Lake shoreline is not visibly or physically accessible, even if it is public property</li> <li>■ Legacy of former industrial uses – environmental cleanup required before redevelopment</li> <li>■ Lack of connectivity between downtown and waterfront</li> <li>■ Residential, industrial and business districts spread out and dispersed, even in the downtown</li> <li>■ Few public access points</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Decline in industry along the Lake Muskegon shore presents opportunity to redefine land use along the shore</li> <li>■ Demand for/interest in more single family residential development along Lake Muskegon</li> <li>■ Centralize industrial activity</li> <li>■ Walkable bridge to waterfront from downtown would increase connectivity</li> <li>■ Former Sappi Paper Plant begin demolished, still zoned I-2</li> <li>■ Brownfield funding available for most of city</li> <li>■ Large enough to accommodate tourism and industry</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Consumer’s Energy leaving, loss of jobs</li> <li>■ Population has declined</li> <li>■ High unemployment rate</li> <li>■ Economy a significant barrier to redevelopment</li> <li>■ Area of Concern</li> <li>■ Contamination from former uses a barrier to redevelopment</li> </ul>

TABLE 2. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS RELATED TO MAINTAINING MUSKEGON’S WORKING WATERFRONT.

# TOOLS, STRATEGIES AND BEST PRACTICE FOR MAINTAINING WORKING WATERFRONTS

## ADAPTIVE REUSE OF WATERFRONT PROPERTY

Identify new uses for underutilized, former industrial waterfront property and structures. A mix of uses that includes traditional industrial uses that utilize existing port infrastructure, open space that provides visual and physical access to the waterfront and innovative new technologies ensures the community can continue to adapt and grow with a changing economy as well as provide local jobs.

## ATTRACT NEW BUSINESS

Revive former industrial waterfront and transition and transform the local waterfront economy by creating a Smartzone. Through a suite of incentives a Smartzone, which may be established through a partnership between educational institutions and state and local government, can attract a mix of new uses including research and technological facilities, office, retail, residential and recreational projects. Establishing a smart zone also aids in planning for desired uses along the waterfront.

## INCREASE PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ALONG WATERFRONT

Convert former industrial property to public parks and install amenities such as benches, fishing platforms and shelters to increase visual and physical access to the waterfront. Parks, conservation areas and waterfront trails increase the recreational and tourism value of a waterfront. A waterfront location for community events can promote community ties to the waterfront and contribute to a sense of place. Diverse amenities, such as a specifically designated dog-friendly beach can help to meet the needs of visitors and residents as well as reduce use conflicts.

## UTILIZE ZONING TO ESTABLISH RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL MARINE NODES

Zoning for water related uses protects marinas, commercial fishing businesses and marine service and repair centers, for example, by preventing the encroachment of non-water dependent uses. In addition, marine zones highlight the diversity of resources and variety of water-related amenities available in a community while also increasing convenience for users. These nodes of recreational and commercial marine activity also contribute to sense of place in the community.



Terrace Point Marina. Elizabeth Durfee



Fisherman's Landing. Elizabeth Durfee



Tug near Fisherman's Landing. Elizabeth Durfee

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## MANAGING WATERFRONTS AND WATER-DEPENDENT USES AS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF A SUSTAINABLE COASTAL COMMUNITY

### PROCESS-BASED

- Engage diverse stakeholders and local, regional and state partners in waterfront planning.
- Integrate waterfront planning with local and regional master and comprehensive planning.
- Incorporate adaptation planning into waterfront planning.
- Articulate the community's vision for future of the waterfront.

### OUTCOME-BASED

- Protect the natural resources that working waterfronts uses are intrinsically tied to and dependent upon.
- Maximize the public benefit of working waterfronts through visual and physical access and amenities.
- Permit compatible mixed uses along the waterfront.
- Emphasize the economic and cultural value of local water-dependent uses.
- Preserve visual and physical access to water resources.
- Balance waterfront land uses to meet the needs of residents, visitors, water-dependent uses and ecological communities.
- Increase resiliency by promoting diverse and flexible water-dependent uses.

#### CITY OF MUSKEGON

- ✓+ Integrate waterfront planning with local, regional and comprehensive planning.
- ✓+ Preserve visual and physical access to water resources.
- ✓+ Permit compatible mixed uses along the waterfront.

**How does your community stand up?**

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