

CITY OF EAST GULL LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

III. Housing & Residential Development Action Plan

According to the census bureau, the amount of housing in East Gull Lake has increased from 637 units in 1990, to 709 units in 2000, to 797 units in 2014.

Outside of the recent growth in the amount of homes in the city, East Gull Lake's housing stock is characterized by:

- High property values: In 2000, the median value was \$194,400 compared to \$399,170 in 2015.
- Percentage of seasonal homes: The proportion of seasonal homes to year-round homes has decreased from 48 percent in 2000 to 32 percent in 2015.



These distinguishing characteristics indicate that East Gull Lake serves a distinct market of home buyers that are relatively affluent and that are converting seasonal homes and cabins into year-round residences.

Given these and other trends, several issues related to housing in the city are expected to be of primary concern for East Gull Lake in the future including:

- Redevelopment of Existing Lakeshore Properties
- New Development on Non-Lakeshore Property
- Housing Type and Cost

Redevelopment of Existing Lakeshore Properties

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s as lakeshore properties in the state were relatively plentiful, the value of a lake lot often had more to do with the size and features of the cabin itself than on the particular land on which it was located. As the amount of lakeshore remaining for development has been consumed, demand for these lots has risen. It is now common for a potential buyer to be more concerned with the location of the lot than the structures that are built on them. As a result, there are many cases where the value of the land is now much greater than that of the small homes and cabins situated on them.

Due to the increase in reconstruction of the lakeshore properties, the City Planning Commission has implemented requirements concerning impervious surface coverage, stormwater run off and maintaining a natural vegetative shoreline.

- Impervious surface coverage is limited to 20%, however it can be expanded to 25% with a stormwater management plan. Our goal in the community is to preserve or increase the amount of green space around our lakes.
- Stormwater runoff is addressed with every situation due to the unique character of each lot. Stormwater plans accepted are designed to retain water run off within the boundaries of the lot being re-constructed or developed.
- Maintaining a natural vegetative shoreline is desired to prevent erosion due to ice heaves and is a preferred method over rip-rap. Rip-rap has been proven to warm the water's edge and promote weed growth and does not prevent erosion from the ice heaves.



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New Development on Off-Lake Property

The City should consider how its current zoning ordinance will steer development patterns and determine if regulations need to be revised. As with most communities in Minnesota, current zoning regulations in East Gull Lake are based primarily on a traditional model of zoning, which lists requirements for minimum lot sizes, lot widths, and setbacks. The City's ordinances permit Planned Unit Developments (PUD), which allow for creative subdivision designs that preserve open space and unique features.

Housing Type and Cost

The majority of homes within the City are single-family, detached homes. By using Planned Unit Developments (PUD), the City may encourage a broader mix of families at different life-stages.

Policies

The following policies should guide all future growth, development, and local government actions in the City of East Gull Lake:

Shoreline redevelopment must happen in a manner that preserves green space, forested areas, and shoreline vegetation; protects the overall quality of the lake resource; and stays in character with the existing neighborhood. Most of the lakeshore within the City has already been developed, but the City is facing a growing trend of redevelopment of lakeshore properties. Because many of these properties are especially small, the density of homes along the lakeshore is greater than what would be permitted under current regulations. The redevelopment of these properties can have significant cumulative impacts on water quality, storm water management, the natural resources, and surrounding neighborhood. Current regulations will insure the quality of the shoreland properties the City desires.

For East Gull Lake to remain a distinct and prosperous community, the City needs to require that the character of off-lake development be distinguishable from the standard development pattern seen in surrounding communities. Land is typically subdivided using a lot-block pattern, with property lines drawn without regard to the underlying land. The City hosts an abundance of natural resources that draw people to the community. Subdivision of land should be in done in a manner that considers the features of the property, fits with the surrounding neighborhood, and preserves the natural resources.

The City should encourage and support housing developments that provide for different housing options. The housing currently available in the City is largely composed of detached single family homes. The City should encourage Planned Unit Developments (PUD), which allow for creative subdivision designs that preserve open space and unique features that would appeal to a broader mix of families at different life-stages.



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Actions

To implement these policies, the City of East Gull Lake will seek to implement the following strategies:

Short-term Strategies:

- Update the land use and subdivision ordinances to address the present issues and needs of the City.
 - Encourage Planned Unit Development concepts that cluster homes and include amenities and connections to existing public trails.
 - Encourage property owners to use rain gardens as part of storm water management on individual properties.
 - Require that the shore impact zone is clearly staked on all lakeshore properties with a land use permit to ensure that land is not disturbed within that area.
 - Require that properties maintain as many existing trees as possible with selective tree removal.
- Ordinances should be written to provide for flexibility. Performance standards are preferred over more prescriptive standards.

