Chapter 5

GROWTH GUIDELINES AND DECISION MAPS

POLICY GUIDELINE:
MANAGED GROWTH

Local comprehensive plans and local development regulations (including for example, zoning and subdivision regulations) should be updated and thereafter maintained, to include goals, objectives, policies and strategies for managing future growth compatible with the **Leelanau General Plan**. Local plans should include more specific land use and density proposals at the parcel-specific level. Local regulations should focus on design and other issues of local significance. Public facilities should all be constructed according to local capital improvement programs that are coordinated at all governmental levels in the County.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT TOOLS

The preface presented the principal goal of the **General Plan.** Chapters 1 - 4 presented principal policy guidelines and explanatory text in support of this goal. This chapter explains a variety of existing and new tools that could be employed by the county and/or local governments in the county to increase significantly the chances for successful implementation of the **General Plan.** Part Two of the plan presents specific policies and action statements to give even clearer direction on steps that can be taken to implement this plan. Part Three focuses on the institutional structure necessary for successful implementation.

Following is a description of the key growth management tools and techniques proposed to be used. Many relate to elements included in the decision maps included in the last section of this chapter. Some of these tools can be used under existing statutes, others will require new enabling legislation. Some can be implemented by individual actions of the county or local governments while others require coordinated actions by multiple units of government.

Community Types:

Identification of community types enables citizens and officials to categorize areas of planned high, medium, and low density development as well as to identify those areas most likely to need improved public services in the future and/or around which new development could be clustered. The density classes referred to here are *"average densities"*

for development, a term not to be confused with *"minimum lot size".* Average density refers to the density that results by dividing a total number of future dwellings by the total acreage of a large land area. The number of dwellings on each parcel within the area in question may be a different size than the "average". In contrast, zoning ordinances typically establish minimum lot sizes below which no smaller parcel may be used.

The average density of an area is a better measure to use in the **General Plan** because many parcels of varying dimensions are already built upon and new dwellings could be clustered on a portion of a property to protect open space. Under clustering, the average density remains low while the density of the area with homes may by much higher. It is rather like the census-derived figure of 0.07 persons/acre in all of Leelanau County. This is an average density figure. However, within Suttons Bay or Northport, the average density is much higher.

The following community types have been identified and mapped in Leelanau County (See Map 5-1):

- **Urban Center**. The economic core of a region, characterized by a high concentration of activity that may be but is probably not coterminous with municipal boundaries. The urban center typically provides employment opportunities for a large number of people within the region. It also provides a significant portion of the region's economic and tax base. Urban centers are characterized by an average density of one unit per 10,000 square feet in platted areas, to one unit per one-half (1/2) acre in unplatted areas not serviced by a municipal sanitary sewer system.

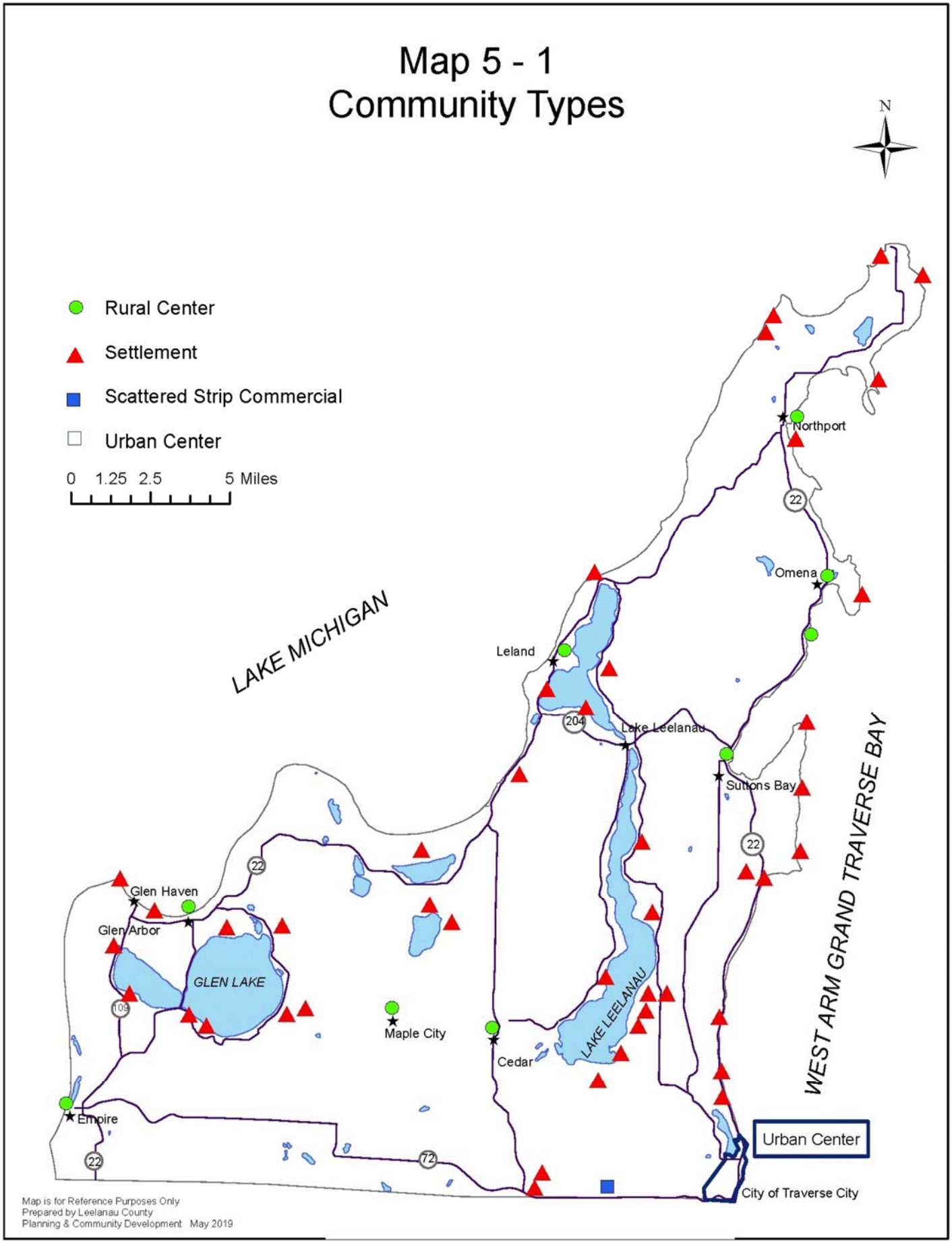
- **Rural Center**. A local activity hub consisting of residential neighborhoods, a surrounding rural area, and a core of small businesses. Modest in size, it may or may not be an incorporated municipality. Some employment opportunities exist within the rural center. Average parcel densities ranging from one dwelling unit per 10,000 to 15,000 square feet are common, mostly the result of platted subdivisions.

- **Scattered Strip Commercial.** An area of commercial development extending along a roadway at a shallow depth along that roadway. It is typically characterized by multiple curb cuts, unconnected vehicular use areas and many signs. Each establishment typically has road access and parking area access.

- **Settlement**. A small, relatively isolated community which may not have an associated commercial center, typified by clusters of single family residential parcels, that are each one-half (½) to five acres in size. Minimal employment opportunities exist, if any.

An apple orchard in Leelanau County

Map 5 - 1
Community Types



Name photo

Public Act (P.A.) 116:

The Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (P.A. 116) provides an opportunity for farmers to enroll land in the program for periods from 10 - 99 years in return for tax credit. For many active farmers, the tax credit equals or exceeds property taxes. Many farms in the county were enrolled. However, PA 116 is not as active as it used to be, primarily due to the aging of the farming community. Many farmers have opted out of the program and there are few new applications being processed. A concerted effort should be made to encourage carefully considered enrollment as another growth management tool in those areas with prime orchard or prime farmland soils. Similarly, an analysis will be made and periodically updated of parcels in which the P.A. 116 enrollment will soon terminate in order to identify parcels "at risk" of conversion to other uses. (Map 5-2.)

Concurrency:

This growth management technique requires that new development occur only when the public facilities and services necessary to meet its service needs are in place. Thus, if a paved road and/ or sewer line were necessary to mitigate impacts of a proposed new use, they will have to be constructed before, not after the new use was established. Currently, it is not easy to require new development concurrent with adequate public facilities. See Figure 5-2.

With good planning and consistent implementation, it is possible to require con-currency with some special land uses and planned unit developments. It is not possible to apply this requirement to a rezoning unless it is 'conditional rezoning'. In order for this technique to be effective

it needs to be used in conjunction with capital improvements programming. Consistent county/ local planning and coordinated capital improvement planning can give many of the same benefits as concurrency without new legislation.

Village and Rural Service Districts:
The creation of village and rural service districts allows communities to identify areas in which specified public services will be provided during a planning period, areas in which partial or limited services will be provided, and areas in which few if any public services over and above current levels will be provided (rural service district). An urban services district should be established in the southeast corner of Elmwood Township in recognition of the urban character and service level of that area. The specific services to be provided within the planning period for each services district must be identified. This approach helps direct growth into areas where necessary public services are adequate. It also permits the development of a long term public service strategy linked to a capital improvements program (CIP).

Capital Improvements Programs:
A CIP is an annual listing of proposed public facilities or major improvements to be constructed in the next six years along with their proposed location, method of financing, when they will be constructed, and who is responsible for them. When each community in the county (including the county itself) prepares a CIP and coordinates public facility improvements consistent with the established village and rural service districts, a strong tool for guiding growth is created.

Official Map:
This technique involves mapping the location of all new proposed public facilities to be constructed and all new public lands to be acquired within a planning period. Both private and public development decisions can be improved by common knowledge of public infrastructure and facility improvements. This is most beneficial when mapped on a county-wide basis. Each local government should prepare and periodically update an official map and send it to the office of County Planning and Community Development Department. A single official map could then be prepared depicting all county agency proposed public facilities with all the proposed local government facilities. It is best prepared and updated in conjunction with a coordinated CIP process. The inclusion of proposed state and federal public facilities would further strengthen the use of this tool.

Linked Open Space System:
As new development occurs in the County, the existing network of open spaces will become smaller and fragmented. By identifying the most important wildlife corridors and open spaces now, it is possible to create linkages that protect wildlife and permit wise recreational use. This should be a primary consideration in the development of new local plans and County-wide open space plans. Efforts may be made to acquire fee simple interests or conservation easements across such lands where they are not already in public ownership. Other efforts to promote biodiversity should be encouraged whenever feasible.

Impact Assessment:
Uniform procedures and checklists for evaluating projects in or near sensitive environmental areas or with significant public service impacts should be developed and widely distributed for use by all local units of government. This will permit equal treatment of projects while coordinating decisions on developments that may have impacts beyond the borders of a single jurisdiction.

Model Ordinances:
Similarly, model ordinances may be developed and made available for adoption and use throughout the county. These sample regulations address such items as land division and access control issues, natural resource protection issues, and community character issues.

Open Space Zoning:
Properties with non-prime agriculture or forest land soils that are not subject to more specific protection mechanisms could be developed without unnecessary loss of open space with a variety of open space protection techniques. Open space zoning is a set of techniques which permit residential development while maintaining a strong sense of rural community character and protection of environmental resources. Open space zoning establishes the protection of open space as the primary site development consideration of which the clustering of dwelling units and/or lots is a fundamental component. In this context, clustering means the positioning or grouping of dwelling units or lots upon a small portion of the site. The term clustering is applicable to both single family dwellings on individual lots in a small group surrounded by open space, as well as to a group of dwelling units with shared wall construction.

Open space zoning developments differ from traditional planned unit developments (PUD's) in that PUD's often place priority upon the clustering of dwellings around common areas to minimize infrastructure costs, and the provision of open space is often a secondary consideration. In particular, there is usually less open space in a traditional PUD than in open space development. In addition, traditional planned unit developments have been used more in urban and suburban locations as an alternative to a traditional subdivision rather than as alternative to strip-residential development (a primary reason for its use in a rural area). The maximum provision of open space consistent with the rural character of an area is the priority consideration in open space zoning provisions.

Open space zoning is characterized by three fundamental components. First, a significant portion of the site is protected as permanent open space. Second, residences are clustered to maximize the quantity and quality of open space on the site. Third, site development maintains a low visual impact, particularly along the public roadway. This is very important because the image a person has of the rural character of an area is typically formulated largely based on the experience of that area from the roadway corridor providing access to and through it. Consequently, if that corridor changes from a natural or indigenous rural character to one characterized more by intermittent large-lot single-family homes (often stripped adjacent to the county road), then the perception of the character of that area has been dramatically altered.

Benefits of Open Space Zoning
There are a variety of public and private benefits associated with open space zoning.
Public benefits include:

- Preservation of open space, preservation of rural character, preservation of environmentally sensitive areas, and preservation of significant vistas.
- Close-to-home recreation opportunities.
- Minimization of through traffic in residential areas.
- Minimize public service costs.

Private benefits include:

- Allowing owners of large parcels, such as farmers, another option to develop their land through methods other than the large lot split option.
- Often, farmers can still go on farming in protected open space areas, but the value of the land for residential purposes has been captured by the farmer—yet no houses are built.
- Existing rural residents are assured of maintenance of the long term rural character of the area. a greater assurance of minimized taxes for public services since higher service levels are not needed. ***Source: Planning and Zoning News, March 1992, Pgs 7 and 8.***

LEELANAU GENERAL PLAN
DECISION MAPS

Following is a description of three maps which graphically illustrate key planning concepts promoted by the **General Plan.** These maps are intended to help explain, and thereby improve understanding of these concepts. It is expected that these maps will be used by decision makers when carrying out their responsibilities for future local or county planning or development regulatory decisions.

Future Land Use Map
Preservation of the County's character is the central focus of the Future Land Use Map. As previously mentioned in this plan, the visual character of familiar landscapes are important image guideposts people use to find their way in daily activities.

The Future Land Use Map does not, nor should it, distinguish between existing and proposed uses, or different levels of road improvement or "overlay" concepts such as environmentally sensitive districts. The map blends them into the overall fabric of the plan. The Future Land Use Map is prepared in a way to more accurately identify land use areas and designations.

The various elements appearing on the Future Land Use Map are as follows:

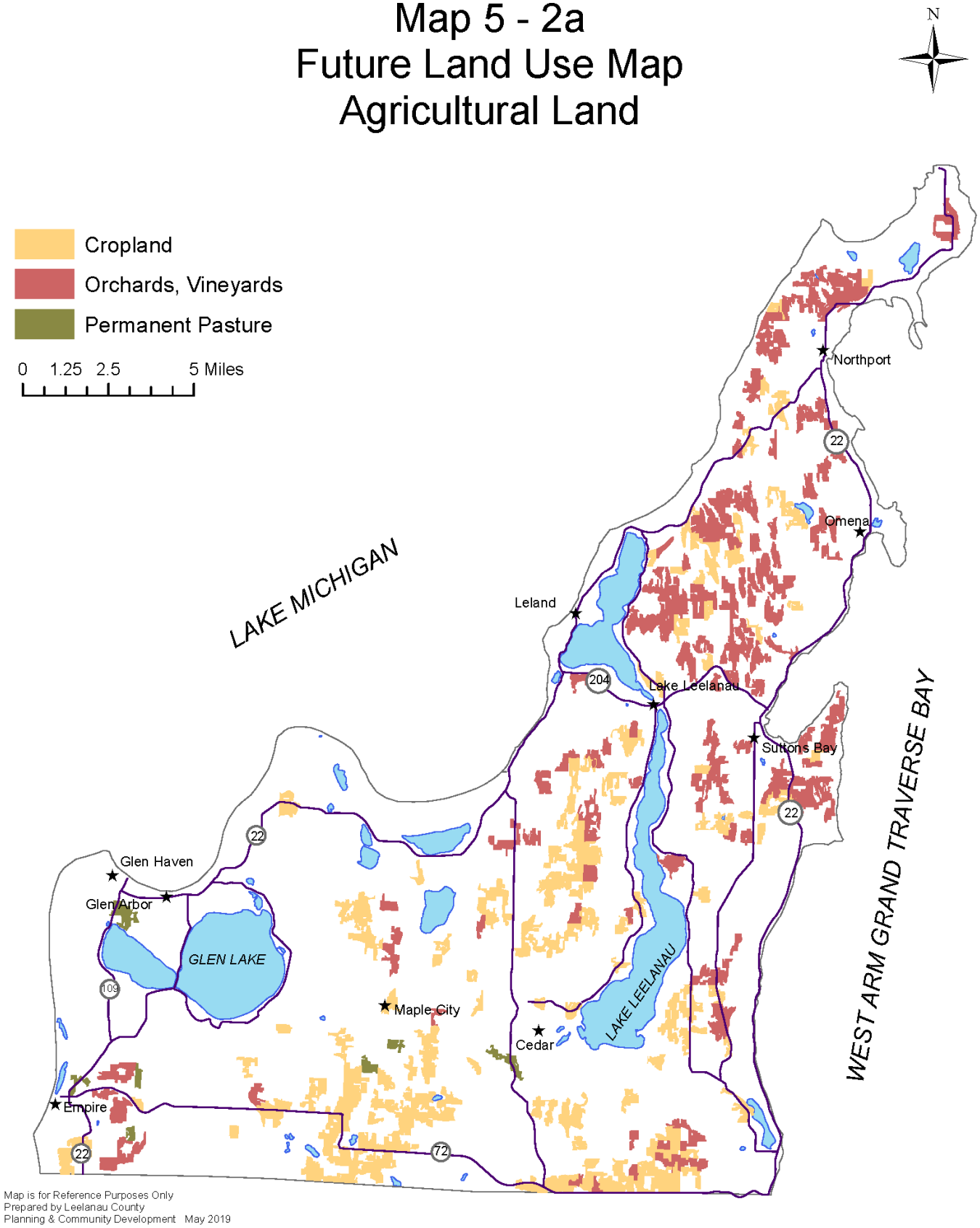
Agricultural Land (Map 5-2a)
Agricultural lands depicted on the map include the central County farms, ridge-top farms, and orchards.

Important Natural Features (Map 5-2b)
Major wooded areas including the southwest forests, and Northport woods are among the important natural features shown. Lakes and Dune lands, including those classified by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality as "critical dunes," are also shown.

Urban Areas Incorporated Villages & Areas of Residential Population (Map 5-2c)
Villages and residential areas are the primary classes delineated on the Map.

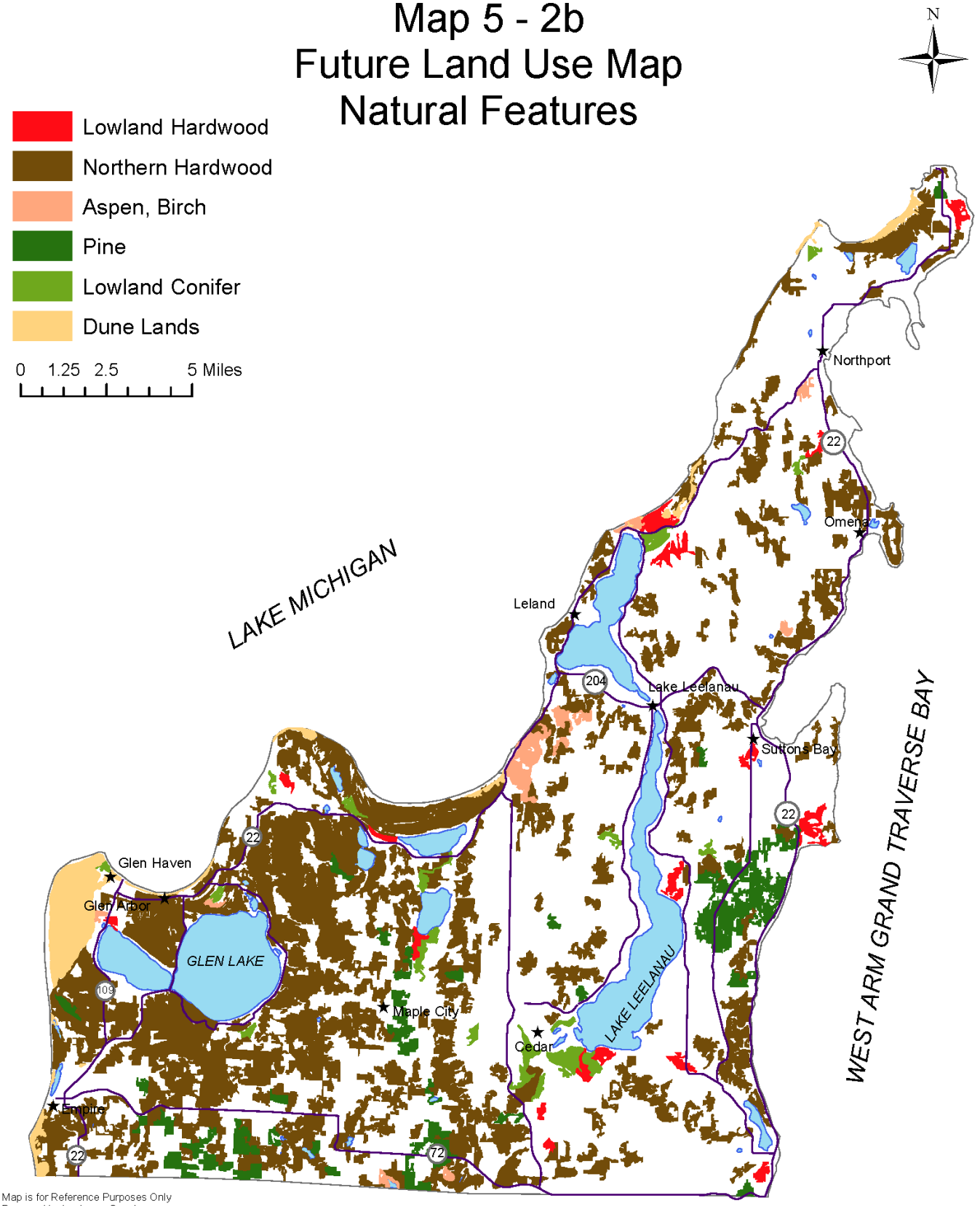
Terrain (Map 5-2d)
Three major topographic features of the County are displayed in map form. These include glacial ridges, valleys, and the Northport Flats.

Map 5 - 2a
Future Land Use Map
Agricultural Land



Map is for Reference Purposes Only
Prepared by Leelanau County
Planning & Community Development May 2019

Map 5 - 2b
Future Land Use Map
Natural Features



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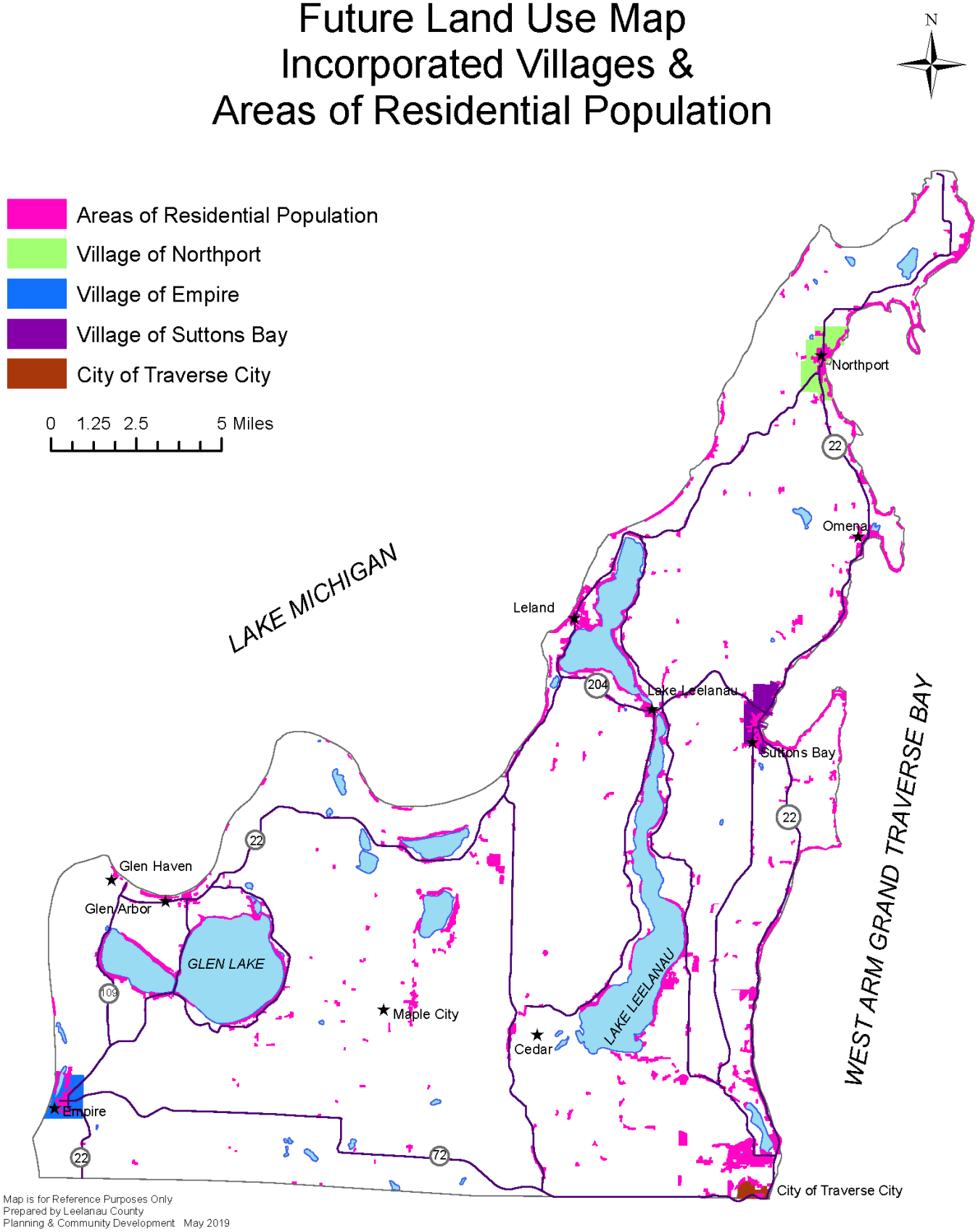
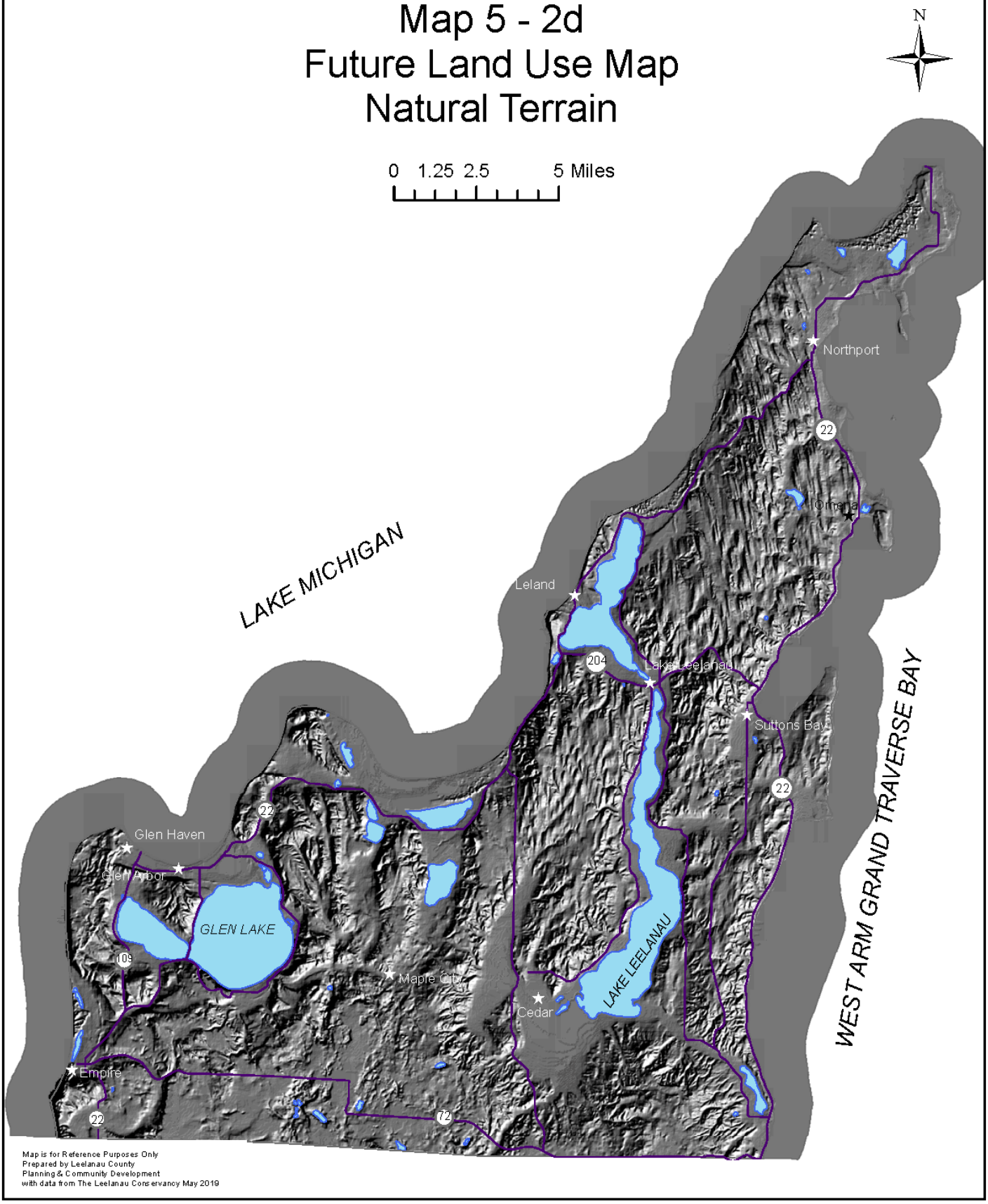
Prepared by Leelanau County
Planning & Community Development May 2019

Map 5 - 2c
Future Land Use Map
Incorporated Villages &
Areas of Residential Population



Map 5 - 2d
Future Land Use Map
Natural Terrain



Map is for Reference Purposes Only
Prepared by Leelanau County
Planning & Community Development
with data from The Leelanau Conservancy May 2019

Policy Maps and Chart

The Policy Maps are equally important elements of the **General Plan** and should be viewed together. The various elements appearing on the Maps are as follows:

Community types (Map 5-3a)

Community types shown in terms of "average density" are depicted on the Policies Map to allow citizens and officials to identify areas most likely to demand certain public services. The community types shown on the map are urban centers (within an urban service district or a rural service district), rural centers, settlements, and scattered strip commercial areas.

Sensitive Environments (Chart 5-3b)

Habitats of unique and endangered species, as identified by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, are shown on the Chart. Wetland areas, stream corridors, dune lands, and beaches are among the sensitive environments for endangered species.

Public/Quasi-public & Institutional Facilities (Map 5-3c)

Boating harbors, public water access points, and schools and government facilities are included in this category. Public water access points shown include designated Department of Natural Resources access sites and public road ends.

Recreation Facilities (Map 5-3d)

The Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Leelanau State Park, Pere Marquette State Forest, local parks and golf courses are among the recreational facilities included on the Policies map.

Transportation Map *(Map 5-4)*

The Transportation Map identifies state highways, major county roads, non-motorized trails, airplane landing fields and marina facilities.

Creek in Suttons Bay Township

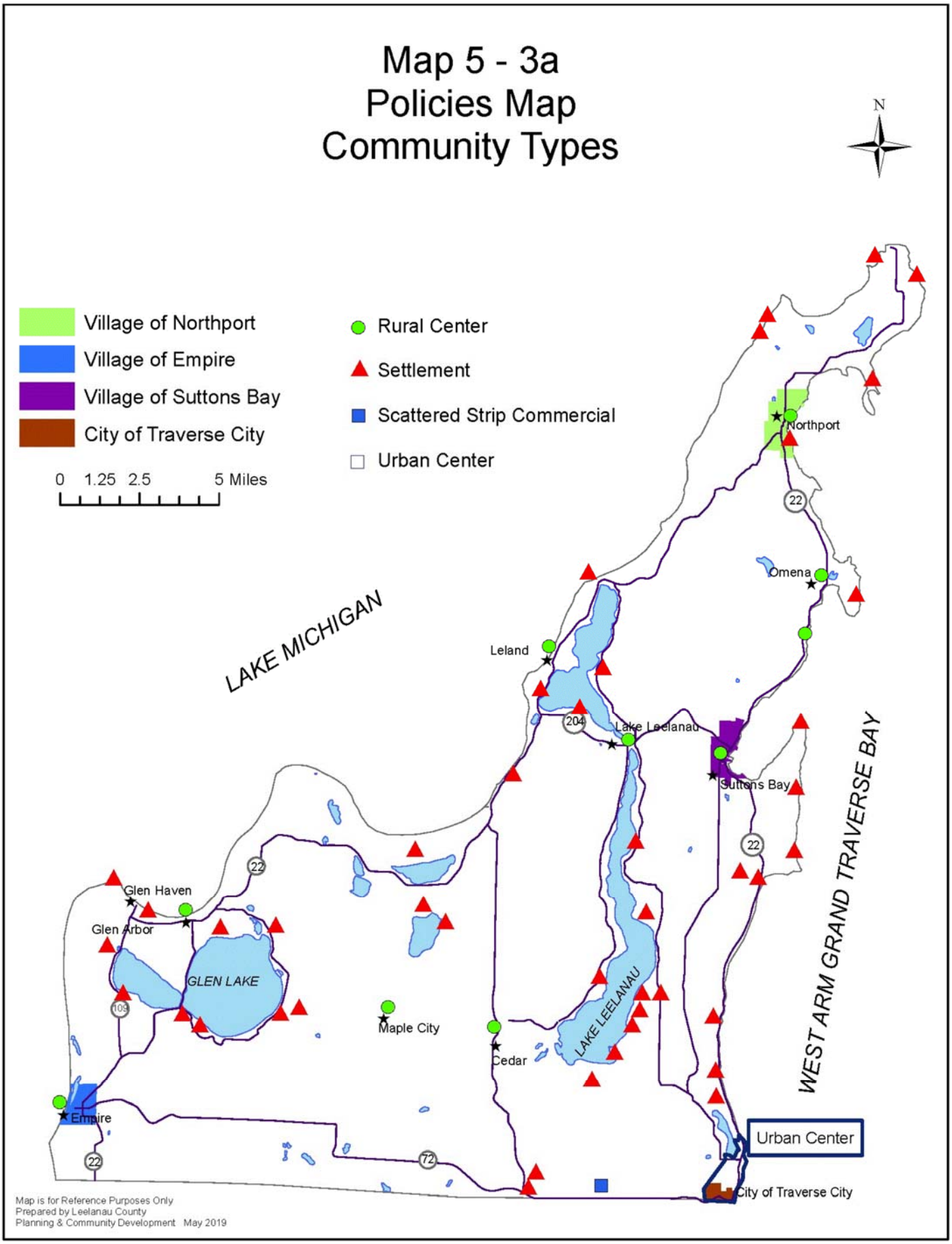

Map 5 - 3a
Policies Map
Community Types
N
Village of Northport
Village of Empire
Village of Suttons Bay
City of Traverse City
Rural Center
Settlement
Scattered Strip Commercial
Urban Center
0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles
LAKE MICHIGAN
WEST ARM GRAND TRAVERSE BAY
GLEN LAKE
LAKE LEELANAU
Northport
Omena
Leland
Lake Leelanau
Suttons Bay
Glen Haven
Glen Arbor
Maple City
Cedar
Empire
Urban Center
City of Traverse City
22
204
109
72
Map is for Reference Purposes Only
Prepared by Leelanau County
Planning & Community Development May 2019

Chart 5-3b
POLICIES CHART
Sensitive Environments

Endangered Plant & Animal Species in Leelanau County, MI – May 2019

Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*)	Endangered	Summer habitat includes small to medium river and stream corridors with well developed riparian woods; woodlots within 1 to 3 miles of small to medium rivers and streams; and upland forests. Caves and mines as hibernacula.
Piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*)	Endangered	Beaches along shorelines of the Great Lakes
Piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*)	Critical Habitat Designated	
Michigan monkey-flower (*Mimulus michiganensis*)	Endangered	Soils saturated with cold flowing spring water; found along seepages, streams and lakeshores
Pitcher's thistle (*Cirsium pitcheri*)	Threatened	Stabilized dunes and blowout areas

U. S Fish & Wildlife Service

Critical Habitat

When a species is listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act (Act), we must consider whether there are areas of habitat we believe are essential to the species' conservation. Those areas may be designated as "critical habitat." Some caves and mines have been designated as critical habitat for the Indiana bat because of their importance for hibernation. Below is information about a petition that we received to expand the critical habitat listing.

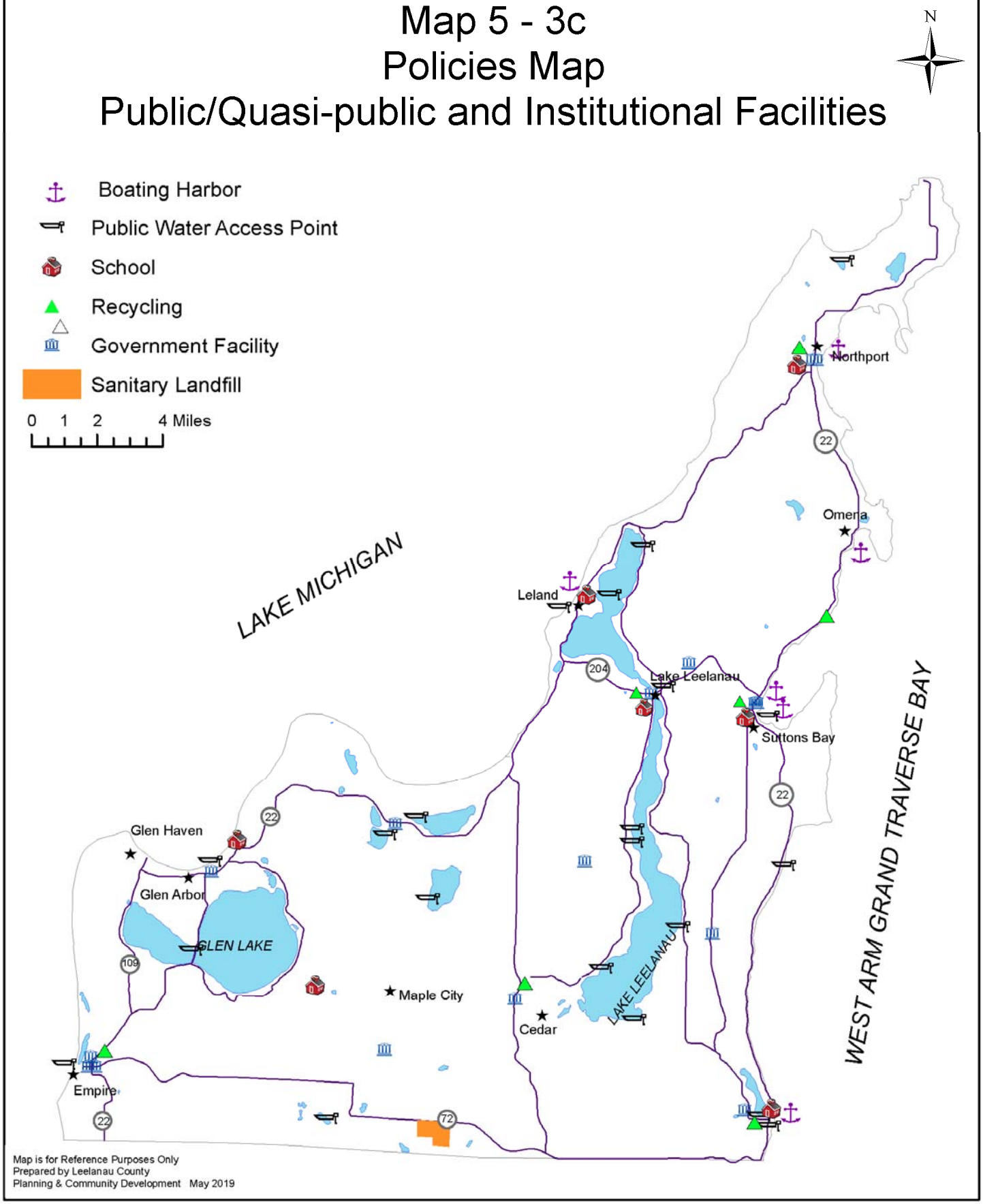
Bald Eagle

Bald eagles are no longer protected under the federal Endangered Species Act and Section 7 consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is no longer necessary. However, the bald eagle remains protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

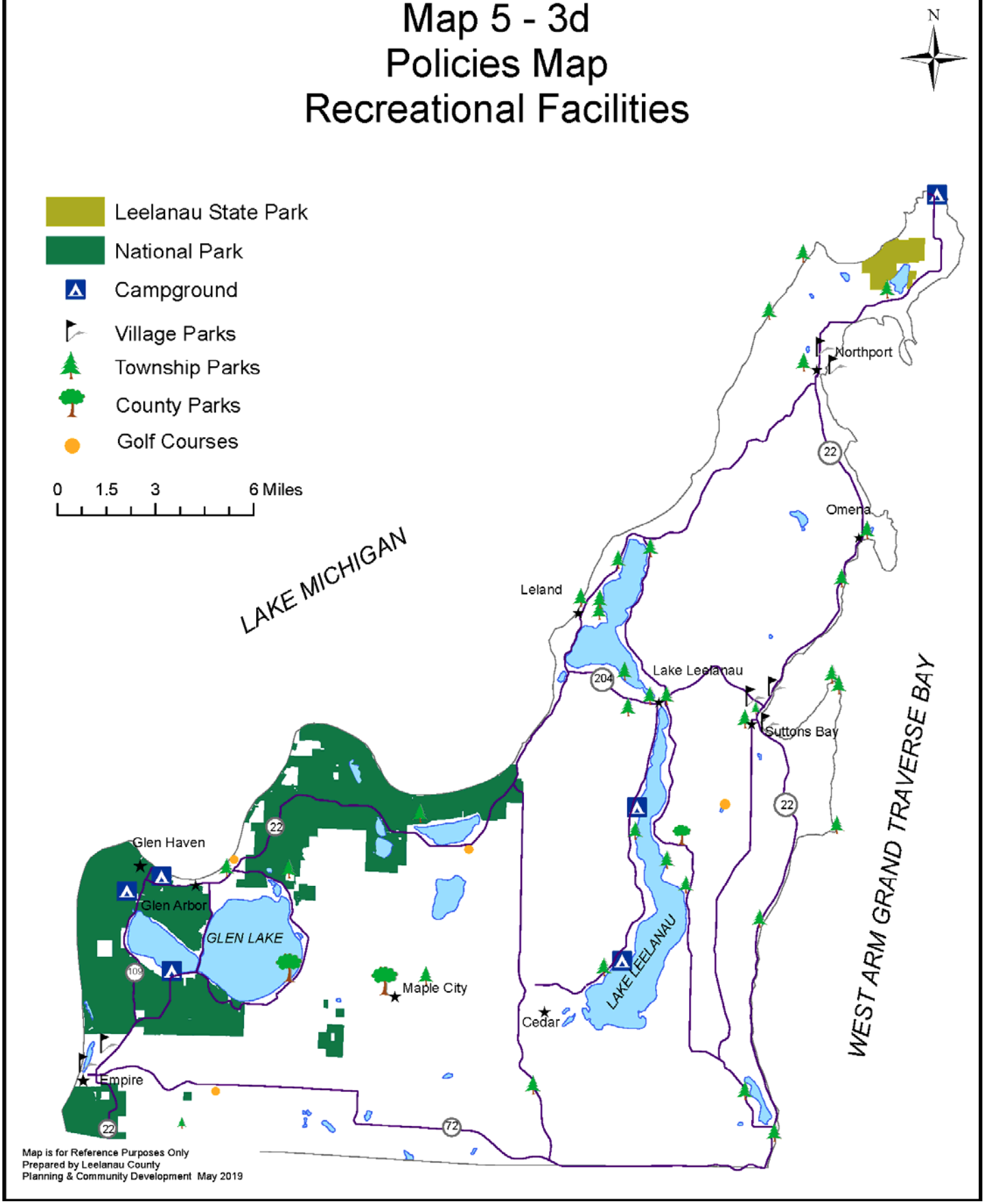
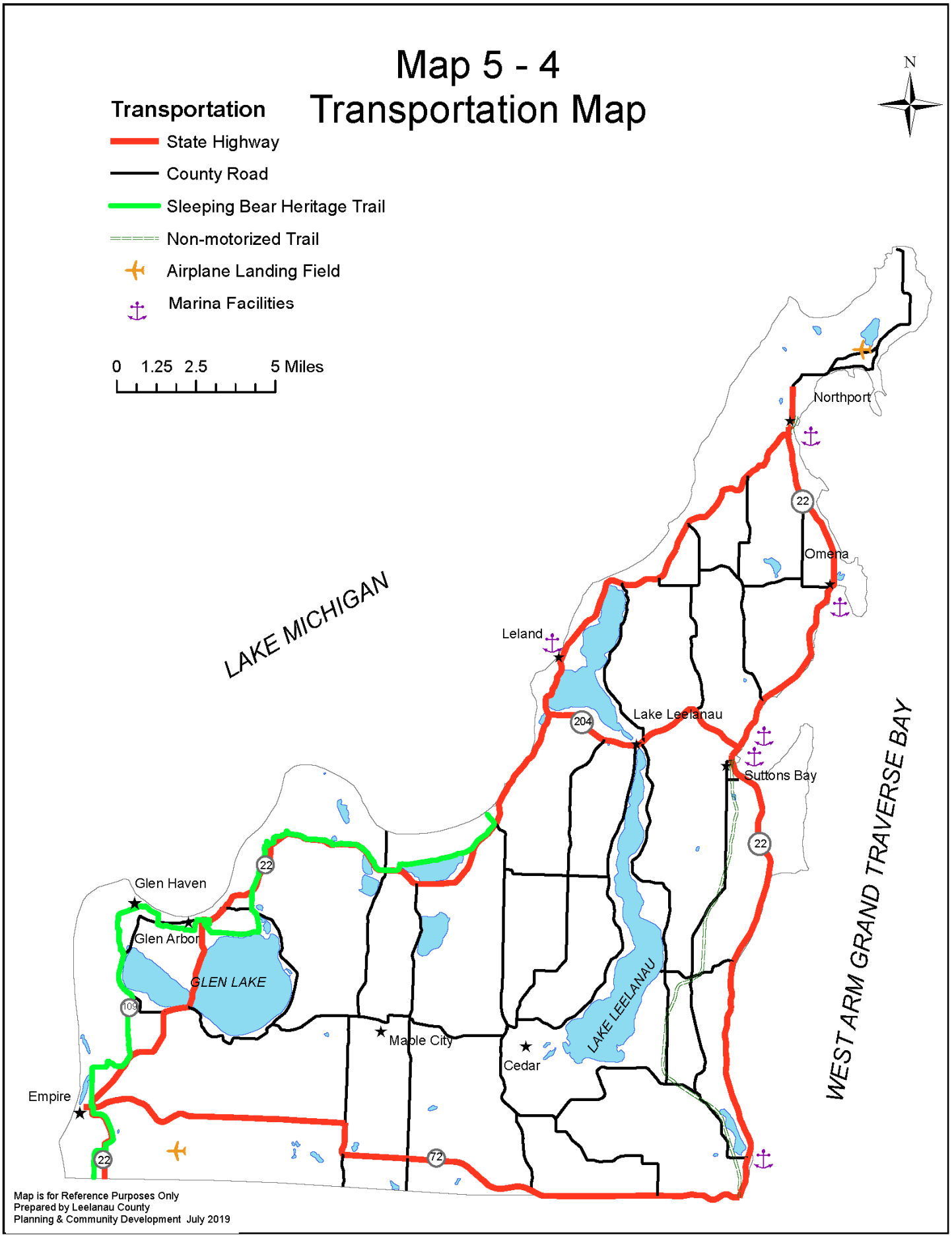
Gray Wolf

The Gray Wolf population that includes Michigan was removed from the list of threatened and endangered species and is no longer protected under the Endangered Species Act.

Map 5 - 3c
Policies Map
Public/Quasi-public and Institutional Facilities



Map 5 - 3d
Policies Map
Recreational Facilities



Map 5 - 4
Transportation Map