



Pentwater Community Assessment
Phase 1 of Pentwater Community Vision
Sponsored by the Pentwater Family Fund of the Community Foundation for Oceana County, Michigan
July 12, 2019

The Township and Village Planning Commissions and Board of Education have joined together in this visioning process to assure that the hopes and aspirations of “We the People of Pentwater” drive a single collaborative plan for the whole community. The goal of the resulting plan is not only to direct our local governmental services but to attract investors and inspire all of us and all our organizations to work collaboratively in achieving the future we all envision. This visioning process must include a broad representation of the Pentwater community. The Community Assessment described herein was the first phase of that visioning and planning effort. This report is the product of the community assessment where a cross-section of community leaders and residents shared their thoughts, concerns, and hopes for the Pentwater community. Julie Hales-Smith, a Principal with North Coast Community Consultants (NC3), produced this report after receiving, summarizing and analyzing community feedback. The report provides observations and suggestions and identifies recommended focus areas.

BACKGROUND

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Pentwater School District is a K – 12 campus, a phenomenon favorably described in one of the Town Halls as equivalent to the “one room county schools of old”. The school district is respected and even cherished by many of the participants of the assessment as an environment that is supportive of students, and a district that is a good partner to the broader community.

According to MI School Data (<https://www.mischooldata.org/Legislative2/LegislativeDashboard4.aspx>) in the 2017-18 school year the district had 259 students, 49.4% of which were economically disadvantaged and 15.8% of which with disabilities. Pupil/teacher ratio was 18:1 and full-time teacher equivalency was 15.68. Revenues per pupil were \$11,586. The high school graduation rate was 85.71% compared to the state average of 80.64%. Over 52% of the teachers were ranked as “highly effective.”

According to Trulia (<https://www.trulia.com/sold/Pentwater,MI/>) since April 1, 2019, eight properties have sold in Pentwater and the average selling price was \$218,710. This is substantially higher than the state average at \$151,700. Comparable data for Pentwater Township were not available.





Per the 2013 – 2017 American Community Survey, (https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml) in 2017 there were an estimated 847 people residing in the village of Pentwater and 1589 in the Township. Similar to many rural communities outside urban population centers in Michigan neither the Village nor the Township is very diverse with 89.4% of Village residents and 92% of Township residents identifying as “white” and only 9.6% and 7% identifying as Hispanic, respectively. Median age of Village and Township residents is approximately the same at 60.1 years and 60.7 years. Median household income for the Village at \$43,315 was somewhat lower than the Township, at \$52,898, and percent of persons living below poverty in the Village was 15% and the Township 11%. The Village has approximately 981 housing units, 58% of which are classified as vacant units due in large part to high rate of summer residents. The Township situation is even more striking with 1869 total housing units, 59.3% of which are classified as vacant. Both the Village and the Township lack diverse types of housing stock with 81% of the Village and 89% of the Township containing single family detached units. The median value of an owner occupied property in the Village was \$221,000, while in the Township it was \$229,200.

METHODOLOGY

The assessment conducted on June 19, 2019, consisted of four focus groups with select segments of the population in the Pentwater community which included downtown business owners, government officials and appointees, marine and lakes recreation parties, and a cross section of active residents. In each of the focus groups the same questions, following a modified Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis model ¹, were asked and answers were recorded. (See **Appendix 1** for feedback from the focus groups.) The broader community was reached through two Town Hall meetings, one held the evening of June 19, 2019 and the second, for the convenience of those not able to join the previous meeting, held on Saturday morning, June 22, 2019. The format of the Town Hall meetings was a true SWOT and preliminary visioning. (See **Appendix 2** for feedback from the Town Hall meetings.)

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COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Focus Group #1: Downtown Business Owners

When asked about the challenges and problems in the Pentwater community, this group of downtown business owners said their biggest problem is trying to do business in Pentwater. And these folks were not faint of heart - in fact; they appeared pretty hardy and passionate about their businesses AND their community. The short season means that even a week of bad weather or a slight change in the school calendars can make a huge impact on sales. During the long off-season, when summer residents and tourists leave, most businesses can't keep their doors

¹ Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) A SWOT analysis guides you to identify your community's strengths and weaknesses (S-W), as well as broader opportunities and threats (O-T). Developing a fuller awareness of the situation helps with both strategic planning and decision-making.





open through the winter. This is exacerbated by the lack of a dependable labor pool that can work the entire season or year round. In addition, parking can be an issue at times. When tourists are in town people have to walk several blocks to get to any destination downtown.

The group agreed that the major strength of the community was its people. They enthusiastically listed all the service groups and the wonderful things they do for Pentwater. They all chimed in with stories of how they, the businesses, support each other and look out for each other, even by referring a customer to another store if they don't have something in stock.

When the group was asked what they wanted to accomplish, predictably, the top thing was to extend the season. Suggestions of how to do this included better coordination in promotions, beautifying the downtown with public art, and suggesting that if there were appropriate housing for seniors, they would remain living in Pentwater and bring their families to visit and shop.

Group #2: Government Officials and Appointees

This group echoed the concerns of the business owners regarding the impact of the short season making it impossible to attract and maintain the core services that any community would want – a drug store, medical facilities, and a grocery store. But the main challenge they identified was housing. Due to the number of part-year residents and summer rentals, the housing for year round homeownership or rental is expensive, what little there is of it. They also described the internet service as slow, inconsistent, and expensive, making it not only inconvenient but impossible for folks to work from their homes or try to start an online business here. When coupled with lack of affordable housing, it pretty much excludes younger families and entrepreneurs that might want to live here.

When asked about the strengths/assets of the Pentwater community, this group sounded much like the previous group: the greatest asset is the people and their spirit of caring and generosity. They willingly share their time, their resources, and their expertise and knowledge. The group described the many successful events and community activities that happen in Pentwater which take volunteer power and community involvement - evidence of the community spirit.

Continued collaboration across local units, the school and the community was something this group wanted to accomplish. This definitely bodes well for the community visioning and planning process. In addition they discussed something that was also mentioned in the Town Hall meetings, the need for a destination hotel or some other appropriately sized conference/meeting venue. They felt this type of facility could benefit the downtown and even assist to extend the season, as Pentwater could be an attractive place to hold meetings and trainings in the fall and spring.





Group #3: Marine and Lakes Recreation Parties

Lack of housing and basic goods and services also emerged as two top challenges in the minds of these folks. Specifically, they talked about lack of housing for young people and its impact on age diversity. There is very little! The fear is that as more and more properties become short term rentals, the situation will just get worse; there will not be enough volume of year round population to support any of the businesses.

They also discussed the need to be proactive about tending to the cycles that Pentwater Lake experiences and the need for upgraded docks and boat slips. They dreamt of becoming a destination port for the big boats.

Predictably, the water was identified as the top asset/strength of the community. The quote of the day was, “I’ll trade a pharmacy for the lake any day!” They commented on the fabulous Junior Sailing School and the lake association youth fishing tournament, where 80 kids caught fish last year.

When asked what they wanted to accomplish, the group brainstormed a new kind of school or, rather, an “un-schooling” model. It would be a Sailing School where kids would learn every subject along with boat building and astronomy. They also imagined a state of the art senior living facility where seniors could age in place with individual apartments but common areas for dining and activities.

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Group #4: Active Residents

Again, this group echoed the groups before them. The biggest challenges are lack of affordable, diverse housing stock, and basic goods and services. More specifically, they pursued housing and services for seniors, bemoaning the many seniors who have had to leave Pentwater because the community couldn’t meet their needs as they aged. On the other end of the age spectrum, they would like to see more families with children living in Pentwater but understand that this is difficult due to lack of housing and jobs. They miss basic goods and services and don’t want to travel to get them but understand that without a substantial year-round population, the community just can’t support them.

When asked what they would like to accomplish, the residents had their own unique perspective. They want people to come together to be intentionally inclusive, collaborative, and thoughtful about addressing issues. They see the need for leadership development, to identify and nurture champions to really get things done. This is all under the assumption that different elements of the community – elected and appointed, service groups, churches, residents – are working together in a collaborative fashion and are willing to take risks and be creative. They also need to keep their collective “eye” on the future and not on the past or “how things have always been done.”





Town Halls

Approximately 135 people from the Pentwater community enthusiastically participated in the Town Hall meetings. The first portion of the agenda, the SWOT, generated responses that in many cases were consistent with the findings of the focus groups. The people of Pentwater see lack of adequate housing and the resulting short season and lack of goods and services as issues that affect their quality of life – they pose a threat to the community. They see providing more housing, especially affordable housing, as an opportunity to attract more families and younger folks. They also want more housing options for seniors such as independent and assisted living. They see the many assets of Pentwater, including opportunity for year-round recreation, as a huge opportunity to extend the season in Pentwater. They are happy that the Pentwater community has the integrity to maintain its small town charm. The group brainstormed new, creative business opportunities that would add to the charm but provide more year-round interest and commerce.

The second portion of the meeting the participants gathered in small groups. They were asked to discuss and report out on the following questions:

- What is unique about the Pentwater Community?
- What do you want to preserve in the community and what do you understand and believe must change?

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Working together in small groups is an important step toward ultimately gaining consensus around a vision for Pentwater. Community visioning is both a process and a product. The process gives community members the opportunity to express what they value about their community and to develop consensus on what they would like to preserve or change.

The small groups were animated and yet thoughtful in their deliberations. Many heartfelt comments surfaced when groups reported out on what is unique about Pentwater. Many were passionate about Pentwater and this might just be the essence – people **were** passionate about Pentwater. This passion seems to stem from “what is unique” about Pentwater - an almost magical convergence of superb natural beauty; a welcoming, safe, and warm ambience; and the legacy of Pentwater embraced in memories that they cherish.

They were likewise passionate about what they want to preserve, but visionary about what they realize needs to change. Visioning is a way to work with change. Change happens, and it can’t be stopped. Efforts to do so can lead to frustration and stalemate. The trick of community visioning and planning isn’t to try and stop change but to understand the forces of change and to work with them to achieve a better future.





Group members, not surprisingly, want to preserve the “hometown atmosphere”, historical charm, and the family connectedness – essentially the qualities of the community that make Pentwater unique. But they understand that in order to realistically preserve these qualities, they must accept the inevitability of change and be prepared to thoughtfully and creatively address tough, core issues such as lack of affordable housing and the painfully short season.

OBSERVATIONS

The Process

The process of developing a vision helps residents take a realistic look at their community, not to assign blame but to establish an honest appraisal of what their community is. The vision does not represent one group’s point of view. It must represent the consensus of as wide a range of community population as possible. This community assessment was a first step in that process. The Vision team was strategic and tenacious as they identified folks to invite to the focus groups and relentlessly advertised the Town Hall meetings. Their hard work paid off. Approximately 150 people took part in the focus groups and the two town hall meetings. It is an understatement to say that this number is impressive in a town whose year round population only numbers 847.

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The assessment process was an excellent first step of the Visioning process. The high turnout and the range of characteristics/roles of the participants – business owners; elected and appointed officials; people tied to the water recreation industry; folks who are active in service organizations; full-time, long-term residents; summer residents - substantiates the feedback as representative of many of the different segments of the population of the Pentwater community.

The Potential

The Pentwater community has many attributes that other communities covet – a tourist season; unparalleled beauty; a culture of integrity, trust and genuine caring; and capacity and enthusiasm for volunteerism and activism. These qualities create a solid foundation. In order to preserve and capitalize on these qualities and address the issues that threaten them; the hard work ahead is to focus the Vision and work the plan. There is every indication that Pentwater in its unique, sincere way will accomplish this.





Focus areas

The following focus areas reflect the perceptions held by many Pentwater community residents. They will require additional study and fact finding in order to strategically and effectively address over the long term, however they are reported here as a first step in that process.

A base or root issue is the lack of year-round residents. This exacerbates the **housing problems** and a **short season** for business. These top two issues are closely interdependent:

- The **housing problem**:
 - The perception is that housing prices are inflated, perhaps due to demand
 - There is not adequate housing stock to grow year round population
 - There are few housing types (mostly single family with a few condos), so no variety in size, price
 - Can't attract a more diverse population (such as young families) because prices are high and housing types are not available
 - Seniors who would like to downsize don't have any housing available that meets their particular needs
- **Short Season problems**:
 - Because the season is short and the community can't financially support them, basic goods and services are not available for those who choose to live here (both year-round and those who stay for several months in summer)
 - Seniors are especially in need of additional services in order to age in place in Pentwater
 - Businesses can't operate year round on a less than 3 month income; so at the end of summer, many close and leave a ghost town behind in the downtown
 - Tourists practically run the residents out of town at height of tourist season

The slightly lower priority, but still important issues are:

- Need/opportunity to **collaborate** (service groups, local units of government, residents) to improve and sustain quality of life in Pentwater.
- **Internet service** – this not only causes headaches for residents and tourists alike, but prohibits people from working remotely. As one participant noted: “When my daughter comes to town, they go to Ludington to work for faster internet service.” It could also impede entrepreneurs from locating in Pentwater to start their small businesses.





RECOMMENDATIONS

FOCUS AREA	ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR	RESOURCES
Housing Planning	<p>Create a housing committee. Create a step by step strategy to study and address housing issues in Pentwater: Include Shelby State Bank, Muskegon/Oceana Affordable Housing Initiatives, Oceana’s Home Partnership, Right Place, Oceana Community Foundation, West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, business leaders from Pentwater and other interested/active citizens</p>	Vision Team	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shelby State Bank contact Terri Lambrix, Branch Manager for Pentwater Branch at 231-869-2647 or tlambrix@shelbybank.com; or Deana Fox, Mortgage Loan Originator at the Shelby headquarters at 231-861-6062 or dfox@shelbybank.com 2. Musk/Oceana Affordable Housing Initiatives: https://mocap1.org/program/home-ownershome-buyers/ 3. Oceana’s Home Partnership www.oceanashome.org 4. Right Place, Jodi Nichols, NicholsJ@rightplace.org 5. West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (http://wmsrdc.org/).
Affordable Housing: Home-ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new single family homes • Assist young families purchase existing single family homes 	Housing Committee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. MSHDA offers MSHDA Mod a program to assist communities develop modular housing for affordable homeownership. https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,4641,7-141-7559_9637-490905--,00.html Contact Tiffany King at KingT12@michigan.gov 7. USDA RD – Aileen Waldron aileen.waldron@mi.usda.gov USDA Rural Development Single Family Home Repair Loans and Grants can help very low income applicants remove health and safety hazards, make essential repairs or make accessible for residents with disabilities. Learn about all the USDA RD programs here. http://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/agencies/rural-housing-service. 8. Federal Home Loan Bank of Indianapolis programs: In partnership with their members, FHLBI offers three grant programs designed to address affordable housing needs. Shelby State Bank is a member, contact Terri Lambrix, Branch Manager for Pentwater Branch at 231-869-2647 or tlambrix@shelbybank.com; or Deana Fox, Mortgage Loan Originator at the Shelby headquarters at 231-861-6062 or dfox@shelbybank.com . Products include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Homeownership Opportunities Program (HOP) to help first-time





FOCUS AREA	ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR	RESOURCES
			<p>homebuyers with down payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assistance; • the Neighborhood Impact Program (NIP) to assist low-income homeowners with home repairs; • and the Accessibility Modifications Program (AMP) to aid seniors and households with disabled family members with home improvements that will allow them to remain in their current homes. https://www.fhlbi.com/products-services/communities-and-housing <p>9. In 2018 REACH, Resources for Economical and Accessible Community Housing in northwest Michigan worked with a landowner to develop 4 units of affordable housing in Northport. When finished, the three-bedroom, two-bath homes will be sold for about \$159,000 each, targeting families with a median income of at least \$45,000 per year. https://www.record-eagle.com/news/local_news/affordable-homes-coming-to-northport/article_869b883d-de00-594f-a059-fdcbc593135f.html</p> <p>10. Charlevoix and Petoskey are experiencing similar issues to Pentwater. Networks Northwest, the regional planning entity in northwest Michigan (https://www.networksnorthwest.org/) is working with the city of Charlevoix to change zoning regulations to make it easier to develop workforce housing. The regional planning commission for Oceana County is West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (http://wmsrdc.org/). This potential resource should be explored.</p>
<p>Housing: affordable rentals</p>	<p>Regulate short term rentals: Pentwater has many single family homes devoted to short term rental and no ability to regulate.</p>	<p>Zoning Administrator</p>	<p>11. According to VRBO as of June 30, 2019 there were approximately 73 vacation rentals listed in Pentwater and Pentwater Township. According to Airbnb on that same date, approximately 63 short term rentals were listed.</p> <p>12. Charlevoix City Council approved an ordinance that would set requirements on the city’s short-term rental owners. Among the requirements would be registering the rental with the city. Registration is issued by calendar year. All short-term rental registrations expire at the end of the calendar year and must be renewed each year. http://www.cityofcharlevoix.org/167/Planning-Zoning</p>
	<p>Explore rental rehabilitation for upper story units in the downtown.</p>	<p>Village Manager with business/property owners in the downtown</p>	<p>13. MEDC offers Community Development Block Grant resources for Rental Rehabilitation, a program that partners with landlords to provide safe, decent affordable rental housing. Contact Sue Devries devriess1@michigan.org; http://www.michiganbusiness.org/cm/files/fact-sheets/cdbg.pdf</p>





FOCUS AREA	ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR	RESOURCES
	<p>Explore creative/less traditional ways to develop or redevelop additional homebuyer and rental opportunities such as Tiny Homes and accessory structures.</p>	<p>Zoning Administrator and Housing Committee</p>	<p>14. Tiny Homes: A residential structure under 400 sq. ft is generally considered a tiny home. The tiny-house movement promotes financial prudence, and economically safe, shared community experiences. A Tiny home can serve as a rental unit, a private place for returning college student. Or they could be a starter home for a young couple. https://newatlas.com/tiny-houses/ Tiny homes can also be age friendly https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/housing/info-2015/tiny-houses-are-becoming-a-big-deal.html</p> <p>15. Zoning can also be constructed to allow many different types of accessory dwelling unit – granny flat, garage apartment, basement flat.</p> <p>16. Many communities in Michigan would “kill” to be seen as a “tourist town”; however, through the assessment the practical realities of what it means to be a tourist town came out loud and clear. According to the Institute for Policy Studies, “In short, the Cape Cods and Vails of America are turning into hollow versions of their former selves. They’re losing the culture, vibrancy, and authenticity that come from real people living there — not just second home owners commuting in from the cities on weekends and holidays.” The article highlights several examples of how tourist towns address their housing issues through tools such as land trusts and public/private partnerships. https://ips-dc.org/housing-crisis-unfolding-within-americas-destination-towns/</p>
<p>Senior Housing</p>			
	<p>Pentwater needs to develop or redevelop alternative housing options for seniors such as an independent living facility and/or assisted living.</p>	<p>Housing Committee</p>	<p>17. There are many examples of senior housing development in small towns in Michigan in recent years. For example, Corunna, the county seat of Shiawassee County recently redeveloped an historic school building one block from downtown. The project was done by the Woda Group, Inc., a developer out of Ohio. The former school has been transformed into a well-appointed and energy efficient 40-unit apartment community. The primary source of funding for the adaptive reuse project is tax credit equity from the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. In Michigan, the LIHTC is administered by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA). https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,4641,7-141-5587_5601---,00.html. In 2018 the Community Action Alger/Marquette received LIHTC to construct a 36 unit senior housing project in Ishpeming that will include a community center. The project is located downtown next to the high school. https://communityactionam.org/. Yet another example closer to Pentwater is in Fremont Mi. The Gateway, an adaptive re-use of a historic high school near downtown Fremont, includes 38 units and was opened in 2016. It was</p>





FOCUS AREA	ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR	RESOURCES
			developed by HRS Communities, a Michigan based real estate development company.
Short Season			
	Convene an ad hoc group made up of DDA members, representative from the Chamber, Jodi Nichols from Right Place. Develop a strategy to address the expansion of the season for Pentwater.	PTW 2030	<p>18. The goals of this ad hoc group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct an inventory and evaluation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. What services/activities/initiatives does the Chamber do? What does the DDA do? ii. How successful are these services/activities/initiatives? iii. If not successful, why? If successful, why? b. Research tactics that other tourist towns use to extend their season (As an example, a very cursory web search showed that successful small, four season towns have many unique year round activities and very active social media presence.) c. Conduct a market analysis to determine what business/retail/services are most needed in Pentwater; and what businesses would most likely succeed in Pentwater. d. Create a realistic mid-range plan that tweaks current and establishes new approaches e. Determine who does what and if additional resources are needed (additional staff for Chamber?)
	Host a meeting with a Michigan Main Street Program staff person to learn more about the program; invite downtown business and property owners and elected/appointed officials. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is interest after learning more, create a steering committee to start working the steps required to apply to the program. 	TBD	<p>19. Becoming a Michigan Main Street community would likely garner much of the technical assistance and create the action plans for addressing the “short season” issues. There are additional benefits to becoming a Main Street community, but challenges as well. It seems prudent to learn more about the program and have enough information to truly weigh the pros and cons.</p> <p>20. Michigan Main Street Program, Laura Krizov at krizovl1@michigan.org https://www.miplace.org/communities/mms/</p>





FOCUS AREA	ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR	RESOURCES
	Invite the CATeam representative for this region to meet with municipal leaders to learn about MEDC resources.	Village Manager and/or President	21. CATeam rep is Sue Devries devriess1@michigan.org
Community Collaboration			
	Continue the excellent cross municipal work of the Vision Team.	Vision Team	
	Invite representatives from all service groups to meet and discuss their projects and goals.	Vision Team	22. Agenda for that meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introductions - describe projects currently underway; describe goals b. Talk about the community-wide process of developing the Vision - the plan that can lead the community forward together and their potential role in the plan c. Identify next steps; possibly set a regular date to meet (twice a year?)
Internet	Look to other, similar communities for models of how to address the issue around connectivity.	TBD	23. Pokagan Fund in southwest Michigan conducted a community assessment like the one in Pentwater. One of the focus areas that came out of the assessment was lack of access to dependable affordable internet. They developed a working committee to address the issue. For more information on their strategy and progress contact interim director John Krsul at jkrsuljr@pokagonfund.org





**APENDIX 1
Pentwater Community Focus Group Feedback**

GROUP	PROBLEMS/CHALLENGES	STRENGTHS/ASSETS	WHAT WOULD LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH?	IF YOU WERE GOING TO DO ONE THING, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
Downtown Businesses	<p>Hard to do Business in Pentwater</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 3-6 month town, even in winter with school is going, only 2-3 restaurants open. • Short season; Losing 30% of business by 3rd week of August, 50% 4th week of August • Not enough business year round • Season is so short, biggest challenge is the short season, need to find a way to expand the season • Lose employees before the end of the season (before 8/15), employees that are still working are burned out • With this year’s weather, season is starting later • It can get frustrating with a short year when you are trying new things • Hard to find staff for restaurants • Businesses don’t have the support of the retired community • Need store fronts filled, not empty • Chamber is weak, wrong dates on calendar, not staffed properly. • Director is working another job and Chamber’s position is more part-time now • Don’t pay enough money to keep Chamber staff, scarcity of resources • “Shop Pentwater Saturdays” was a slap in 	<p>The People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People volunteer their time to mentor kids • Even though a small town, lots of big thinkers • Diverse backgrounds with lots of expertise coming to town • Pentwater Service Club – has a food wagon, collects money for needs, community service • Women’s Club and Jr. Women’s Club – very involved and do lots of service & activities. • People in community not as aware of their organization • Things that have a lot of support, has the support of the retired people. support chamber and fireworks • Appreciate how well we get along, we look out for each other, we go to each other businesses, we trust each other so we refer others to each other’s businesses. • No one is coming for one store, we need to work together, we are positive about each other • Individually we can’t be all things to all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the season • More promotion, especially in the fall (Can still shop, go on the water, eat etc.) • Business that young people could work at year-round • Senior housing, transitional options. Want to stay but they can’t because there is nothing available. People visit family at senior housing and they visit restaurants, shops etc. • Fix Longbridge road, cross lake ferry • Like to see Village & Township be one municipality, Township owns 70% of lake • Master plan on all web sites, blasted out and shared with everyone • More public art – 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More year-round residents • More jobs – makes everything else work • Senior housing • Public art • More affordable housing • Parking • Broadband internet for all • Colleges & high schools coordinate schedules, so kids & families don’t leave so early • Transportation for everyone





GROUP	PROBLEMS/CHALLENGES	STRENGTHS/ASSETS	WHAT WOULD LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH?	IF YOU WERE GOING TO DO ONE THING, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
	<p>the face; don't we want people to shop all week?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened to Chalk it Up event? • Chamber web site is under construction on events page, old pictures on web site from 15 years ago, businesses have changed hands, not a good reflection of today's Pentwater • Someone needs to move the snow away from the sidewalks to make downtown more welcoming. • Village doesn't clear sidewalks even where stores are still open <p>Affordable Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing for young families • Not enough year-round housing • Can't find affordable housing in the village, if live outside of town, it is more affordable • Too many rentals <p>Services for Senior Citizens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older residents (widows) no options for extra assistance with maintenance/house-keeping, etc. • Aging in place is difficult • Need a community with transitional options (aging in place), no assistance available for transportation • Council on aging is available but scheduling is limited; need to work with the needs of all 	<p>people so we try to help shoppers find what they want at the other stores in town</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can help customers find lodging, restaurant options • Kept strollers, canes on hand to be helpful to visitors • Safe community, look out for each other • People coming for generations <p>Quaint/Small Town Feel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean and Quaint town • One visitor commented to a shop owner they were here when the sports team was being escorted through town with lots of fanfare; they were impressed and charmed by the small town atmosphere • Small town feel is a draw for many families <p>Events/Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movies on the Green is huge, Sunday night (6) • Most events sponsored by the Chamber, all the events: Craft Fairs, Easter on the Green, Homecoming parade, After-hours, advertise/promote • Historical society is a nice asset – museum is great • Pentwater Artisan Center – shared arts space, mentoring with lots of options 	<p>murals, trees, playgrounds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared work space • Fine dining restaurant 	





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	<p>Parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From business perspective – need parking • More condos have been built, but no additional parking, so using off-street parking • Customers coming to town, have to park 3-4 streets over, may limit people coming to stores • Employees using parking spaces • At my salon, whole street parking is filled up with those parking for main street • People will walk for an ice cream/restaurant, they are experiencing the downtown, but otherwise parking is bad for stopping in to do single store shopping • Never parking available in front of my store <p>Attracting Younger Folks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing to draw a family here, school has limited activities, son wants to play basketball • Expensive community to come into for younger families • Residents like this (older people), but not attractive for younger families • Not much to do for 16 – 25 year olds • Hard to get millennials here <p>Internet Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open WIFI needed, fiber has been laid, WIFI 	<p>(woodworking, weaving, pottery, painting etc.). Still relatively unknown. Affordable to join (\$10/mo.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pet Friendly town, LASSI nonprofit is good, Shake Wag & Roll event <p>DDA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDA is supported by millage, which is nice • I was on DDA board for 7 years, we did things – snow blowing, etc.; • Wish more people knew about the DDA and would bring ideas to the board. In the past it didn't happen often; see it happening more now <p>Open Minds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village team has become really strong and progressive, used to be a village of "no" • Used to be signs "no more condos" etc., now more open <p>Misc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake Michigan • Thinking about regional advertising to bring people here (billboard in GR) 		





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	<p>not meant for building service, for tourists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet service is not that good overall, service is not good in township When daughter comes to town, they go to Ludington to work for faster internet service Library has good service, people set on benches outside of library to capture the better service <p>Misc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to get the (4) sets of people to the area, what to have for them and when? Fish cleaning station is a benefit, but sometimes can be very smelly and is right at the entrance of town Maintenance of sidewalks (holes) etc., trip hazards. No year-round work for people here 82% of Pentwater is second homes, people just walk in the streets, don't need sidewalks in neighborhood because there is no traffic 			
<p>Government Officials and Appointees</p>	<p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expense of living here, hard to find housing that we can afford (most expensive in the village) Housing is in good condition, just expensive Housing is too expensive for families to afford to raise their children within the village of Pentwater High rental prices, too much housing is 	<p>Caring Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very caring community, there's elderly people who are doing well in their homes that are supported by the community. Things that happen at the school level, (a death of a student, for example), the community came around and paid for the funeral for that child If there is a need, a manageable, 	<p>Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting to have the township and the village and the school all work together with consistent projects whether it's a recreation plan, moving forward on things. There are definite opportunities to share. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I used to say we need to put a big tower on top of mount baldy and then a zip line to downtown. A real destination reason to be here. But... I think our schools are great, our





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	<p>rentals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families from 50's and 60's have moved on and the housing has been bought by out of towners, now summer rentals Lots of AIRBNBs More and more houses are purchased and becoming rentals Condos have all sold now, and sold at top dollar. Not really contributing to addressing a housing issue Finding investors. For housing, hotels, new business, any kind of development, really The council is working towards addressing the short term rental issue and at some point they need to cap how many are here. A rental ordinance has been approved and is on the cusp of where you're going to have to have an application. All our housing is going towards this short term rental Rental ordinance is just beginning, working on finding out who the contact persons would be for rental units. We can never grow and grow our downtown if we only have rentals. They close up. Many of them have a real estate agent who services the homes so they aren't really part of the community. <p>Goods and Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because there are so many weekly rentals that close down for the winter, no close by 	<p>reasonable need, the community really comes together and supports that need. It's an amazing thing, and very unique. Sometimes nice things are done anonymously and other times up front.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We feel proud to be connected to this very giving community. It's so warm. So many different, kind things that happen here. Been embraced by wonderful people that are from this community. A ton of nonprofits showed up, just from our community, in order to set up at the summer celebration. Everyone is very involved in the community. It's clear to tell right away, as soon as you come here. The retired population is willing to come out and help, everyone works as a team, using their expertise and knowledge. The retired population here seems to be involved in more than they were in their workplace Watching the town evolve over our lifetimes, the retirees we get here are unbelievable. <p>Event/Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The chamber has done a very nice job of trying to promote and initiate activities year round. As a resident, if you are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated space in school for a library and it's a little hit and miss. Is there an opportunity to work and partner and better utilize resources? Needs to start with a coming together as a group. We are coming together to work on the visioning process but it seems like we've done this before. We've come up with a real good plan and start a couple things and people begin to lose interest and it goes by the wayside. It feels like the first step is making that commitment and ensuring we have the energy to move things forward. <p>Safe Routes – Walking and Biking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete streets, more walkable sidewalks. It'd be nice to see more complete streets, our main road going down 	<p>retired people are great, but one thing probably is the housing situation.</p> <p>Affordable housing, senior housing, what I'm really hoping is when I've talked to people the last few weeks about this VISION thing I've been telling people this is their chance to come out of the woodwork and tell people this is their chance to say what they'd like their community to look like. Critics all the time but haven't gotten involved. So I hope for their involvement in this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would like to see the two governments become one government. It's very expensive to have government,





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	<p>services for groceries and things- have to travel further</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have to go to Ludington or down into Hart, Muskegon to do shopping • No drug store- can cause an interesting issue for an aging population • Downtown has evolved- back in the day there were your usual pharmacy, hardware, etc. downtown. Residents want to support local businesses downtown but the merchants downtown are very tourist driven. • We want to support the merchants downtown, the restaurants that stay open that extra month, the new yoga studio, etc. but we can't do our everyday shopping here. • There is space downtown that needs to be redeveloped. Finding the investors to use our empty spaces is a challenge. • Can there be a destination restaurant? There's been a lot of talk around this <p>Hard to do Business in Pentwater</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be a business person in Pentwater is not easy, it's only a 10 week season • A rainy weekend destroys your profits for that whole period • Finding businesses to come in that both tourists and residents want isn't easy. • Would like to see the downtown vibrant a little longer- 6 months rather than 3. The 	<p>bored in January or February it's only because you aren't willing to get out and do things. There are things to do whether it's the library or pub crawl, etc. There are activities going on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chamber website, Facebook, friends, email blasts, newspaper, village website- these places all do a good job of advertising the events that happen community wide. The word gets out. • When something is down, or not working properly, the patience level is lacking. For example, the chamber website being down. Chamber has limited funds; they couldn't afford to pay \$8,000 to fix their website. • From Labor Day to Memorial Day our churches house a community dinner on Wednesday nights. Not just for their congregation but for multiple denominations. • In 10 years over 50,000 meals have been served. To-go meals and also serving the COVE location in Ludington. In those ten years there has only been one Wednesday where the donations have not covered what it costs to do it. It's free, but many folks donate. • Joyous atmosphere at these dinners, the whole Community comes together- people from the Township, and from Weare. 	<p>to the beach is not a complete street. There's no bicycle lane, there's a sidewalk that's iffy. If we want to make this community more vibrant, more walkable, and more people using it, we need to improve transportation within the village.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicyclists don't have a chance. Parking is in the way. And there's a ton of bicyclists who come here and they haven't been considered at all! • Once there's a sidewalk within the village we can do what we want, but if you don't have a sidewalk then you can't have a bike lane because people are walking the street • We should utilize our alleys. <p>Hotel/Meeting Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is there decent overnight for two-night stay that has a meeting 	<p>and we have two very expensive governments. One does more for residents, they're both important but let's consider economy of scale. There's less than 2,000 people here- it's too much for our community, our area, a small township, small village.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think we need to become a travel bureau versus a chamber. The chamber runs a zero budget and sometimes has to beg from the firework budget to make it. If we got a boutique hotel or something like that and if we were able to become a travel bureau we would have more money coming in. A tax





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	<p>events try to help this, the DDA has put some money into Christmas decorations for this year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDA will be hosting a fire pit at the top of the green and serving hot chocolate. Trying to get the season to run until the end of December. • There were some places open in April (the pizza place). And we need to support them when they open early, it will catch on. <p>Internet Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't have good internet access, in terms of high speed internet. Especially the further out you gravitate. • Residents don't even have the choice to have internet because they are so isolated. You need more than two families on a road to run cable. Even someone who works for the internet provider doesn't have internet. • A cable for internet went in a couple years ago but the cost is astronomical to have it hooked up to an individual residence. • There was a big plan for cables to go through all the towns, but nobody can afford it. (fiber optic internet). • There is charter WIFI in the village, the library, and the campground- public WIFI downtown, but no possibility for faster, high-speed internet. 2 miles out is DSL. • Need to grow more family populations- with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinators of the dinner have been recognized as Citizens of the Year by the service club <p>School System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school system is definitely a positive of the community. It is a unique environment being a preschool-12 system. The staff is stellar, they are tracking outcomes, documenting student achievement, working with kids to assure that it's not just the kids who can make it, but working with those who struggle in certain areas. If a child is in Pentwater and doesn't graduate it's because the child or the parent are not willing to take that step to work with the staff who are trying to get them to that point of getting their graduation certificate. • For a small school district, there is a significant amount of funds that are donated for scholarships. Whether it's the women's club, the service club, the junior women's club, the school. • It's a school district with a strong history. It's small but it's known. We have a full time art teacher, band teacher. It's a school district that has supported the arts. Right now we have a group of students who's really excelling athletically, and academically. 	<p>space, etc. For out of town folks who'd like to come in for a meeting that the village would like to host. But there's nowhere to host it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We're missing out on people who are coming into town for trainings, conferences etc., everyone has to stay in Ludington. • It could help extend out winter if we had places for overnight stays. • There is beauty here in the winter, but everything is closed down. All the houses are closed. • Working with friendship center to create an audio/visual room set up so that companies could come in and rent that space for conferencing and webinars and such. • It's hard to host business events because you want everyone housed in the same location. 	<p>would support a travel bureau. It needs to be more than a chamber supported by small businesses. We need to learn more about it but I think it's a viable option.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High speed internet is needed on the outskirts. The people out there will still be part of the community. It comes into play in people's decision when they're looking for housing and considering moving here. Reliable, affordable internet throughout the community • Continued diversity of programs housed or coordinated in an asbestos free community hall that houses township, chamber, police dept, village. All





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	<p>high speed internet, people could work from home and that would bring families into the community. There are very few people that are in a position where they can do that.</p> <p>Services for Elderly People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back in the day there were big families and continuity of residents from generation to generation. Now it seems that people retire, move into the community, and are here for maybe 20 years and begin having health problems or whatever happens and they move closer to their kids or something. Seems to be an overturning of the population constantly. Ill health sometimes causes folks to move away. We don't have the services or housing to keep them here. • No independent living services, aging in place isn't as easy here. • We have a lot of very independent elderly people that do not want to go into care. But they would need services and other help to stay. • In the 90's we had 41% of the population that was 60 yrs. + and this percentage is only going up <p>Misc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homestead down to 40%, cost-sharing for the state is way down • Recently, the library has changed a lot just 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tremendous school staff <p>Library</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The library is a very positive addition to the community. In 2017 they were recognized by the library journal for being a star library. They are a class 1 library, the lowest you can be, as it goes by population. The amount of circulation, internet use, electronic books and programming has ranked it one of the highest one's in the nation. • The library does a lot with a very low budget. All part time staff other than the director but they are still able to do amazing things • Renovation in 2017 changed the whole inside of the library, new roof last summer, changing whole HVAC system this year (furnaces, air conditioner, and water heater) • Library not only providing services to the community but also building a sustainable, beautiful library. <p>Misc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location, by the lake • Professional people of every walk of life are in this community. It's impressive 	<p>Design Consistency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There's a group that did the work on developing the north and south entrance and the beautification of it but I think in terms of Pentwater I think we need consistent signage • We have a real mix of what our buildings look like, there's no theme or continuity. The friendship center and library are right next to each other but there is no consistency. • There are two sides to this; we don't want to restrict businesses in that they have to comply with something. We don't have any ordinances around this. We need to sort through what is better, to have some basic design requirements but we don't want to constrict people. • We need consistent signage, branding 	<p>community services in one facility. Downtown.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My dream is that we would have a new gym and auditorium in the school and that the auditorium would be a community shared facility that would support some opportunity for people to come around and use the facility. Our gymnasium was renovated back in 05 but it's not legal to host some of the district tournaments and that because the sidelines are relatively narrow in spots and it needs some renovating. I know the ideas of an auditorium are shared throughout the community. It's time for this- it would benefit the





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	<p>from having the bridge out, really quiet. People calling in saying they are going to go to the library in hart until the bridge reopens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More parking spaces, or parking off the streets so business employees can park down there • A two edged sword, we are a tourist community which is good and bad 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been some of this created, the village logo, the motto, the branding effort is underway. Discover Pentwater: come for a day, a week, a life. 	<p>school AND the community. There is currently no auditorium, just a stage in the gym and we have to bring out folding chairs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have to eventually go for a bond for township and community hall and housing. Right now is a good time because half of the folks in village do not have voting rights. We really want the community voice because they are the ones actually living here.
<p>Marine and Lakes Recreation</p>	<p>Goods and Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of facilities, no hardware, dentist, etc. We used to have a self-sustaining town. It would be nice to have a winter where we can walk down the street and see people. • Having the stores, pharmacies and gas stations. The more we move toward a rental community, the worse this problem will get. 	<p>Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake and lake access • Fishing here is the best around • We can't discount the lake. I'll trade a pharmacy for the lake any day. • Quality of the inland lake is being worked on too, which is really nice to see. • Pentwater junior sailing school- the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Pentwater sailing school: learn every subject but also astronomy, textiles, boat building plus community expertise, internships. Use the many resources that we have here to be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination restaurant on the water- build it and they will come. • Winter activities • Connected to the bike trail in Hart, and Lake, and





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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> About 5 to 10 years ago there was a focus group like this put together by MSU extension, met maybe 3-5 times over a couple of weeks. They came back after a couple of weeks and told people what they could do. We found our geographical location is not good- no transportation. They said we don't have a destination anything- not a destination restaurant, nothing. There's less of a town here than there was previously, less goods and services. The town is going in the opposite direction. Even outside of the everyday stores that we don't have, the isolation is bad in the winter. Women don't want to move here because they don't have a network, friends, family. When touring the school to see about moving our kids up here, we see that most of the students there, the families don't actually live in the village. However, while there isn't big city stuff, there are unique gifts, crafts, and food here. Not enough volume to sustain any business I wouldn't want to own a business downtown and pay the taxes required. We need to lower the taxes for them and then buy from them. We need to extend the season. But in October, even before the campgrounds close, people are leaving to winterize their 	<p>culture there is awesome. The kids who have already gone through it are leading it, perfect role models for our children who are young. Children gain so much independence. Although, it costs more than any kid who lives here year round can afford. There are lots of scholarship dollars for kids who can't afford it, though. Free sailing for kids who can't afford it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pier is part of the Pentwater atmosphere, it's free, beautiful and part of our community. Part of the total package. Pentwater lake association has established a youth fishing tournament. Last year we had about 80 youth participants who caught fish last year. Winter ice fishing contest as well. <p>The People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People here are grateful, they thank each other. And often for things that you'd think weren't that big of a deal. Getting a thank you note, for a thank you note, even. A diverse and knowledgeable group of people. If you need advice, help, anything like that it's here. It comes instantly and without a price tag. Nice and friendly people, a sense of community. Home town USA. 	<p>this unschooling model. We need a school like the John C Campbell school that teaches welding, knitting, cooking, etc. It is a large operation in the middle of nowhere in North Carolina.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State of the art facility where people could age in place, maybe condos, maybe apartments, you'd have meals in a central dining room, activities, a little bus to take you to Hart and Ludington. Need upgraded docks, more slips, do something with the office so it's more user friendly and approachable. Red lighthouse on the south end needs to be restored; looks a little shabby. 	<p>Mason counties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a fish cleaning station at the village launch site on Lake Street Housing for workers. Destination port for big boats. To make Pentwater a 12 month a year village A way to help the business people to survive. Some kind of subsidy or tax break on water and sewer bills. Affordable housing Marine technology institute Develop a strategy for business to operate online and then for 3 months out of the year to actually open their store front. Foster and develop a virtual community in order to embrace new residents.





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	<p>RV's.</p> <p>The Lake</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to be better prepared for the cycles that our lake undergoes whether it be high water or low, whether it be pollution, whether it be species that are not native. I wish we could be proactive rather than reactive but we understand that a lot of these things don't give us advance notice. <p>Longbridge Road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soaking Longbridge road is having a huge impact on the economic health of our village, tourism, etc. we used to get more of a response from the road commission than we are getting today. We don't know what the solution is going to be, or when, we don't have a time table laid out. Financing for the road is available, through USDA Rural Development. As a community we can put pressure on the road commission to have some sense of urgency where there is none right now. The USDA does both long term loans and grants. The USDA has 30 year long term 4% interest loans which anybody can anticipate future road revenues, no prepayment penalty. If the road commission is not going to take up the ball, we've been talking to both the township and county to see if they would be 	<p>Safe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe, not a high likelihood you'll ever get shot or that anything bad will happen. Great place to train police officers, you need people skills here more than how to "run and gun". The ability to be able to walk around town, any time (mostly). There are towns that aren't safe to walk around- that is not an issue here. Free! <p>Misc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The peace and quiet. It is a positive that it is small, you can get to places, you can walk. When you do need to get to things it's really even not that far away. You keep the smallness and can still get to the other stuff when you need it. The school! Roads are kept up around here, when there's a ton of snow and you wake up to go to work, the roads are already cleaned. There's no big trouble getting out of your driveway. The artisan center is fabulous. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a Nickerson Inn again, unique like it used to be





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	<p>the applicant on the loan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The problem on Longbridge will take care of itself, this seems to be a short-term problem. However the problem illustrates a good point- if we are so vulnerable to economics that one road is going to put us under, we have a much bigger problem. The closing of Longbridge shouldn't be upheaving the whole town. We need to be more robust. <p>Affordable and Senior Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a difficult place to live if you are low income, we don't have a very diverse population because it's expensive to live here. We don't have a real young population that continues to come in and stay. Affordable housing for young people. We simply don't have enough youth in the area. There's not enough staff because there is no place to live. Rents are crazy. We have nothing to offer anyone to even come into this area, work, and feed the infrastructure of this community. Workforce housing. Employing people to work here is very hard because people can't live here. It's hard for people to age in place here, they have to leave the community. <p>Culture Gap/Diversity</p>			





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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part of the issue that we see time and again is a sort of class conflict. It comes because three miles outside of Pentwater- there's poverty. Look at Crystal Valley. But when those folks come to Pentwater they run into people that have no idea, conceptually, why somebody can't spend 15 dollars for lunch. The age of the village is rising, we are at about 62 as an average age. Very low number of people that are here year round. We are talking about reinventing a community here. We are beginning to use social media now to keep everyone up to date on what is going on the community. We can reach more people as our community members are so spread out. Generational residents who come up every summer, and the 20% of the community that is here full time, are doing all the heavy lifting. <p>Misc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need a welcome wagon to introduce new families to what and who is available here. 			
<p>Cross Section of Active Residents</p>	<p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can't afford to buy a home in town, not affordable for families raising children. Is this insurmountable? 	<p>Amenities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lake State park – anchor for the town forever Natural resources Beautiful approach to town (red barn, 	<p>Ongoing Community Dialogue and Civic Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Platforms for people to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database of willing volunteers/skilled people to match up for people with unmet needs





GROUP	PROBLEMS/CHALLENGES	STRENGTHS/ASSETS	WHAT WOULD LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH?	IF YOU WERE GOING TO DO ONE THING, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could build affordable housing here, there is land • Having half of the housing geared to rental housing, not healthy for a community • What about towns like Saugatuck/Douglas, Frankfort, Leland – what are they doing different? Where did they start in addressing the high vacation rental vs homeowner problem? • Housing needs for all levels • Housing in Pentwater is more an American problem – homogenous housing stock. Need to move to a more diverse community (not just seniors and tourists) • Pentwater school is struggling with numbers, facing affordable housing issues in the community. Families with children can't afford to live in the village • Only 8 children that live in the village attend the school <p>Goods and Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services are a problem – missing goods & services; community can't support services that year round residents need. • Winter & summer populations – like two different towns. Retired folks leave and/or have certain needs. Summer is overwhelmed with tourists • Tourism is important to economy, but they don't contribute to the community. They 	<p>marsh, view of lake, marina)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perfect arrangement of parts (geomancy). <p>Downtown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walkable town • Lack of commercialism, • All can walk to the beach • Unified architecture of downtown • Need to support our downtown! <p>Civic Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 nonprofits/service organizations in town – think about the possibilities/passion • That kind of passion, leads people to action, so much potential when we align efforts & energy • Community dinners are unique on Wednesdays – was initially focused on lower income folks, others wanted to come. Now they are open to everyone, socialize • 20% of people who come need a meal, 30% are from the from the church/attend, rest are broader community • People have so many skills & experiences – lots of capacity. Challenge is how to tap into it. • The village is small enough that people 	<p>get together and talk/forum to talk about, do a gap analysis to find out what is missing?</p> <p>Community dialogue around issue areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maybe use community church dinners as a venue? • Grow more champions. People willing to invest time & passion to see projects through • We are coming out of a period of creative abuse – others/council squashing the passion of others. Now we are in a period of exploration. This will lead naturally to supporting people to see their vision through. Working the plan, unified community. Not easy to address, over a hump. • Each service group/organization – looking at the same thing; need to bring people together and coordinate better 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public rail line that goes from Chicago to Mackinac, stop in Pentwater • More diversity of all kinds (age, racial etc.), everyone would share together • Services that we need are here • Township & Village merge together, work together, more aligned • Reasonable expectations for short-term rentals, which are taking away from the community feel of the residents/neighborhoods • Rental ordinance. • Coordination/services for older folks • Less silos amongst the organizations/service clubs/public officials





GROUP	PROBLEMS/CHALLENGES	STRENGTHS/ASSETS	WHAT WOULD LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH?	IF YOU WERE GOING TO DO ONE THING, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
	<p>come & take, but don't leave anything in return, except their money</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a population to support certain services. Same goes for jobs, economic development – need population to fill the jobs • Tourist season is so short, extend the season, would allow for service growth • So many t-shirt shops, not enough variety of retail/services • Need more retail diversity <p>Services and Housing for Elderly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unmet needs include people that are alone (lonely), but need assistance to gather together (transportation) • No transitional housing for aging population, they move out of the area because no options • Medical offices, transportation – takes government action • Village council hasn't wanted to take any risk, tried before to set up senior housing but council said no. • People move here and as they age, they can't find a different more appropriate living situation in the community, so they have to leave • Free up some housing as aging adults; move to another option and free that house up for a young family 	<p>can make a difference here</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a unified vision of who we are, historic town, and we like who we are – positive & optimistic • The people here are our greatest asset • Have a unified vision of who we are – positive and optimistic <p>Misc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best library – mainstay for everyone, functions beautifully, helpful service always • Safe place • Great place to raise children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more leaders, lots of Indians, not enough chiefs – develop leaders, provide resources (e.g. work plans) to avoid burn out. Plus snow birds leave, so continuity suffers <p>Focus on Kids in our School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to get kids to work at local businesses, job fairs at school • We don't want people recruited from outside to work here • How can we be more connected to the school? Mentoring, after-school club (tutoring) • Could school connect kids that want to work with employers • Gateway 2 Success Academy – project-based learning school <p>Artisan Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artisan center, part of the overall village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More coordination and partnership amongst all the groups, lead to more informed citizens • More services so don't need to travel outside of the community • Town where viable, school healthy/growing, town is beautiful, kids on the street – everything to move up – how it was 50 years ago • Build a 35 room boutique hotel that serve as community center, help extend the season (replace what the Nickerson used to be), place to celebrate, trainings etc. • Funding for all these dreams, big pot of gold • Like to see what is like before





GROUP	PROBLEMS/CHALLENGES	STRENGTHS/ASSETS	WHAT WOULD LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH?	IF YOU WERE GOING TO DO ONE THING, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
	<p>Need to be Collaborative and Visionary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often hear the value of “we like it the way it is”. This is human nature, but also the death knell • Nod to the Pentwater vision • Must use our resources in a new way • History of isolation within all the community groups – connect all together with this visioning process <p>Misc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For years, no industry in this town. • You come to Pentwater for a reason, not just passing through • Limited activities/sports with the schools • Need new blood for historic activities, like the Civic band on Thursdays 		<p>growth, but missing the educational pieces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids do come to use the center, but not to the level that it was envisioned • Can’t find a handy man, but could train one • Excavating businesses/contractors/skilled tradesman are dying off <p>Misc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to figure out a way to stabilize and diversify our population • We all need to work together to grow our “season” for the health of our community 	<p>Pentwater was discovered, more families, year-round community, small town America</p>





**APPENDIX 2
Pentwater Community Town Hall Meetings**

Wednesday, June 19, 2019

SWOT ANALYSIS				VISIONING		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats	Unique About Pentwater Community	Want to Preserve	Needs to Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People • Location • Water • Down home nature • The school • Artisan center • Multi-generational attraction • Library • Churches • State park • Lots of community activities, from band concerts to ... • Unpretentious • No stop lights • Attachment to the town • Village green downtown • Clubs & organizations • Charm of the town without big box stores • Proximity to Grand Rapids, also can 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a hotel with nice restaurant, loss of the Nickerson Inn • Destination restaurant • Short season for businesses • For a good hospital, have to go elsewhere • Quality affordable housing • WIFI, diminishes when tourist season starts • Hard to work from home • Rentals – seasonal rentals, less homeownership within neighborhoods • Parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With more housing, can attract more families • Many work from home • Maintain village character and charm, not siphoned away by commercialism (have not let big box stores in) • Federal /state grants, incentive programs for development • People come here and fall in love, something magical happens and then stay • Incubator kitchen – aspiring culinary artists, maybe another type of incubator • Dedicated off-street parking, make downtown complete streets approach (bike/foot traffic only) • Promise scholarship program • Beautification following a design plan • Use our natural resources to increase 4-season 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change – climate of extremes (high water, temperatures) • Fishing industry – invasive carp issue • Human tendency to resist or fear change • Misinformation • Invasive species in Pentwater Lake • Municipal finances – can it support the vision • Losing the town charm (traffic, unpretentious) – strike a balance • Short term rentals • If it looks like Birmingham or Southfield, they aren't going to come from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business opportunities • No other/better place to retire • On/near water • Old houses • Walkable community • Family destination • Everyone knows each other/caring • Live where others vacation • Cutest harbor • Accessible/friendly • Camping • Peaceful/de-stress here • Natural beauty • Off the beaten path • Skill sets of people • Basic sense of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No stop lights (rural feel) • No more condo development downtown • Old houses • Hometown atmosphere • Rural setting • Arts • Beauty • Ambience and integrity • Preserve small lake and its “feel”; bigger trees • Schools • Expand harbor front • Boat launches • Shops, like Craze • Multi-generational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand city limits to add housing • Increase investment in school by the people • A bridge • Fix Wayne Rd. • Cross walks downtown • Housing for medium income • Short-term residents commitment to community while here; not just about taxes • Public Pentwater Lake access – with a beach, clubhouse, camping and





SWOT ANALYSIS				VISIONING		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats	Unique About Pentwater Community	Want to Preserve	Needs to Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> move or buy 2nd home here Charm of the community through the history sustained since end of lumber area Convenience of marinas Volunteers that tell the story of the community Financial wealth in the community Safe, low crime rate Recreation opportunities, Pentwater pathways Generous people US-31 handy but not too close Pentwater Lake Association/Improvement Board – planning for the future, thoughtful Hart Performing Arts Association nearby 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> problems everywhere No hardware stores Hard to find skilled trades help, contractors can't find help, jobs take longer Seasonal workers have no place to live Ability for seniors to age in place/housing or services issues No banquet facility – hotel would help Maintenance of public facilities are declining – shoppers dock, marina Insufficient infrastructure for high lake levels More of a rental community than a family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> destination Attract younger people – by focusing on recreation / outdoor opportunity / school system Assisted living development, free up existing housing for single family home ownership Oceana County Council on Aging – transportation, meal / social program in Hart Movies on the Green Harbor – put an icon in the Harbor (Schooner) Harbor is so close to downtown, easy for boats to get in/out Taxi might happen to bring folks on the south of lake to town Some land available in township – could be earmarked - or privately owned, to meet community housing needs Technical assistance available by coming a trail town Water trail around Michigan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birmingham or Southfield Will be areas of friction as municipalities work together Pricing out middle/lower income folks – goods & services School is small, could be vulnerable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> community The “heartbeat” of the area; magic Attachment – preserve the integrity Library Beach Safe/low crime Sunsets Richness of memories Churches/they show up/community outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moral fiber and police presence Village green Antler Historic charm Yellow brick 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> little shop with candy Central community offices Increase businesses Access – south side of lake Transient boat slips Add restaurants Assisted living Fine arts Schooner Better communication Economic model Year-round community Increase residents





SWOT ANALYSIS				VISIONING		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats	Unique About Pentwater Community	Want to Preserve	Needs to Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jr. Sailing program Future bike path Work-out gyms at high school, good use of resources Pentwater Homecoming Elected/Appointed officials part of the community and accountable to the community High quality governmental staff – paid staff is talented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> community Lack of year-round residents, mass exodus, everything closes Strong opinions in the community, less homogeneous is better Better sidewalks Lack of year-round employment opportunities Oceana County Road Commission – communication problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – can be part of that, resources available (technical assistance) Coordinated planning efforts between planning entities/community organizations Village Hall need of work, keep village/township offices together, maybe other services Charter township Walkway from public marina all the way to the pier People have many skills and talents here, capitalize on these, expand Pentwater Artisan Center Summer population/ generational residents – continue sense of community remotely when they leave. How to increase engagement Higher education classes/workshops here Boat building school/trade knowledge, maybe an IT company. Still need housing 				





Saturday, June 22, 2019

SWOT ANALYSIS				VISIONING		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats	Unique About Pentwater Community	Want to Preserve	Needs to Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Safe community for children being able to go out on own and enjoy the downtown Location – beautiful place along the lake State park – greatest thing about Pentwater Port town – access to big lake Downtown – historic buildings Involved town members – community Walkable area Quaint, neat downtown – brings people here just to look (farmer’s market) Artisan Center Bicycle path Volunteers in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More diverse main street, not just t-shirt shops Village has been oversold – too popular Keep promoting it, more & more people Parking Housing in village is rented Longbridge fixed Village area needs a signature restaurant Don’t have adequate housing Jobs – need more industry High cost of living in village vs township Complete streets Broadband internet to support working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turning visitors into residents Hope they didn’t come this month Winter is GREAT, tremendous opportunity for other seasons 4-season community. Chamber tries to extend seasons (fall fest, Octoberfest, shop Saturdays) Ski lodge Create more jobs, see more people living here year-round Attract more young families, millennials Signature resident (concerts at Gull on Wednesdays & Sundays) Pop up restaurant – good chef comes to town for a couple weeks, young culinary students an opportunity to create & experience (not just Cisco products) Change village ordinance, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who will bring these ideas in? Need to face realities of our place in Pentwater Not they, but we as a community take responsibility In the past, ideas have been generated and were shut down by community/ government Invasive & exotic species in natural resources – changes function & feel of area – threats to lake & ecology Finances – infrastructure, no industry base other than Pentwater Wire (need a tax base) Infrastructure is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small beach town Beaches Historical architecture Mature trees Faith based community Dreams that happen – Artisan Center Brains Money Windmills – (aren’t any) Ambience Beauty Safety – kids can walk around Small town feel School k – 12 in one building; like a modern day one room school house Divergent thinkers/ visionaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charm/quaint-ness Small town appeal/ atmosphere Village green Identity School Activity – summer, winter Sense of community Trees Giving nature of people Historic buildings Dean Gustafson Lake quality and lakes Values/ family connected-ness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many families with kids vs seniors – need a balance Village hall More than a 6 week town What we do best – focus on that Mixed feeling of downtown – changes needed Destination restaurant Facility – maybe culinary arts, event center Zoning Respect opinions of nonresident/ tax payers Strengthen the arts with public art and display work





SWOT ANALYSIS				VISIONING		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats	Unique About Pentwater Community	Want to Preserve	Needs to Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legacy of people with ties to the town, families that keep returning, strong ties to the Pentwater • Political people that give time/effort – put politics aside, pure-motivated for benefit of people • Very active chamber, other groups are supportive & generous to area • Proximity to natural resources & access • Local produce (asparagus, peaches, apples, cherries) • Library • Focus on children is strong on children, all year long • Ice cream – House of flavors & others • Attitude of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at home (or have it at all) • Craters in roads • Water is higher priced in township than village • Easier access to high quality health care • Village people have greater access to water, no public beachfront on Pentwater Lake • Senior housing, aging in place opportunities (that is affordable) • Performing arts center, auditorium, small center (can go to Hart for that) • No senior citizen transportation (Council on Aging is available) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pop up restaurant on tennis court at night? • Example: Arcadia has 1 restaurant, food truck comes in – to add choices • Combining the township & village staff to save money – one board, one tax base • Waterways – utilizing more, scuba diving (sink at old ship), boat slips - park their boats • Township – build other park (family park) besides state park (crowded), space on the river (like Summit Park, Cedar Point Park – although both on lake MI) • Summer theater like Saugatuck (dinner theater), • Swimming pool (year round) • Summer theater/restaurant at red barn – beautiful location (Weare Twp.) • Work with our neighbors, Weare Township – coordinate activities/help each other (process going on here is great modeling) • Young people are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aged • If live here, where do you work (need to commute), hard to attract young families • Mature trees – need to plant now for future (Michigan asset) • Downtown parking (lack of) in summer months • Old town Pentwater was a vibrant, full-serviced downtown. New Pentwater – has vacancy rate, lacks young families, less jobs • Need to focus on all families, not just a senior town, not going back to the old days • Myopic attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term residents/natives and transplants • Charm • Caring people • Collaborate with other townships especially for business development • People have a sense of gratitude • People want to help others in the community 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of local artists • Attitudes toward change; be willing to accept change





SWOT ANALYSIS				VISIONING		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats	Unique About Pentwater Community	Want to Preserve	Needs to Change
<p>entrepreneurism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Totally accessible Traditional activities – homecoming, band concert – people can depend on and come for Adequate facilities/lodging for those wanting to visit Social center is the post office Experience and knowledge – skilled community members (retired folks) 	<p>but not convenient)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability network – has transportation for people with disabilities Thriving business community, all-year town, extend the season 	<p>opportunity – how to attract them? Advertise our school</p>	<p>(many good-paying jobs in the rest of the county)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inability to attract families to live year round, can't find jobs here in Pentwater Jobs – many moving to work from home, don't have the internet Box stores, luckily none here – threat of online buying If want Pentwater to sustain like old Pentwater, stay here year round People need more than minimum wage, more than 3 months – no work for young people 			

