

Implementing Adaptation: Developing Land Use Regulations and Infrastructure Policies to Implement Great Lakes Shoreland Area Management Plans

Phase 1 Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project builds on previous work to incorporate information regarding Great Lakes shoreline dynamics into the community master plans of the City of Grand Haven and Grand Haven Charter Township. This step advances prior efforts by developing methods for implementing those newly adopted planning ideas into the Great Lakes coastal communities' zoning ordinances in the form of regulatory and infrastructure policy.

Given the unique challenges that Great Lakes coastal localities face in their planning efforts, this continued work with the City of Grand Haven and Grand Haven Charter Township confronts issues that arise at the water/land interface in Great Lakes shorelands settings at large. These issues include a range of environmental concerns, economic concerns, the desire to accommodate near-shore residential living, and the need to protect near-shore public and private property from coastal hazards.

There are a number of common regulatory and non-regulatory options that address managing Great Lakes coastal shorelands, but applying an abstract policy prescribed in a general plan to a particular place, and ensuring that it can yield the desired outcome, is difficult—especially considering potential political and legal implications.

The project team has been conferring with the community planners from the City of Grand Haven and Grand Haven Charter Township to better understand their perceived issues related to planning for community resiliency given fluctuating lake water levels. In doing so, we anticipate taking special note of the kinds of issues that are not clearly or strictly related to coastal area management, but that local citizens and officials believe should be addressed concurrently with coastal management concerns as part of a larger regulatory/policy reform effort (e.g., natural area protection, parking regulations, etc.).

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