

Village of Mayville Master Plan

Chapter 1: Introduction

The first settlers in Mayville arrived in April 1855 in the form of James Wells and his family, although they settled in an area northwest of the current Village of Mayville, in Fremont Township. The township at that time was comprised of unbroken forest, occupied by the Chippewa Indian Tribe. Indian trails were the only routes available to get from one place to another. In 1855, Calvin Fox purchased 200 acres, which later became part of the Village of Mayville. The main vocation of the early settlers was lumbering and trapping, and later farming the cleared land. As trails became roads, travel from one place to another became easier, leading to more settlers moving into the area, as well as businesses to accommodate the needs of those families.

The first post office was opened on October 16, 1860 two miles southwest of the current Village and the original name of the settlement was May, with Ezra Tripp as its first postmaster. In 1865, Dexter Choat renamed the settlement Mayville, and the post office was moved to the current location of the Village in 1890. A fire in 1873 destroyed most of Mayville, which was predominantly constructed of wood buildings downtown, but residents rebuilt 3 blocks of brick buildings that comprised the downtown area, many of



which still stand today. In 1882, the Port Huron & Northwestern railroad completed the tracks through Mayville, thus the Village was able to engage in commerce, primarily producing lumber and agricultural crops. The Village of Mayville was officially incorporated by Local Act 326 of 1887, approved January 31, 1887. By 1900, this unbroken wilderness had become a thriving area. From about 1860 through the mid 1990's Mayville was home to lumber mills, grist mills, grocery stores, restaurants, hatcheries, manufacturing facilities, a busy train depot, hotels, taverns, furniture stores, a newspaper, automobile dealerships, hardware stores, mercantile stores, law offices, cobblers, tailors, seamstresses, drug stores, liveries, black smiths, a dairy, banks, barber shops, dental and medical offices, mortuaries, an opera house, a theater, and a host of other businesses throughout the years. While many of these businesses are part of a bygone era, the Village has retained that small town culture and history.

Since the mid 1990's, like so many other small rural villages, Mayville has evolved into a bedroom community offering residents a beautiful country setting, a low cost of living, and an easy commute to major cities. The quality of life, coupled with a wealth of outdoor activities and access to broad range of hunting and fishing pursuits that attract sportsman of all ages, has helped to reshape the vision of Mayville over the coming decade.

Change can be managed in cities, towns and villages, and this begins with the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive Master Plan that outlines future land uses and redevelopment opportunities, infrastructure, and service and cultural components that support



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and sustain the community. In acknowledging the history and desire of the residents of Mayville to manage the inevitable changes that every community of our size struggles with, this comprehensive Master Plan has been developed to take the next steps in creating a prosperous and sustainable future for this community.

This Master Plan is the first update for the Village of Mayville since the Comprehensive Plan that was completed in association with Fremont Township in 2007. The organization of this document takes a logical approach and addresses current conditions within the village, establishes a vision for the future, outlines goals and objectives, and provides recommendations to accomplish these future planning goals. This Master Plan document is updated to comply with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008.

