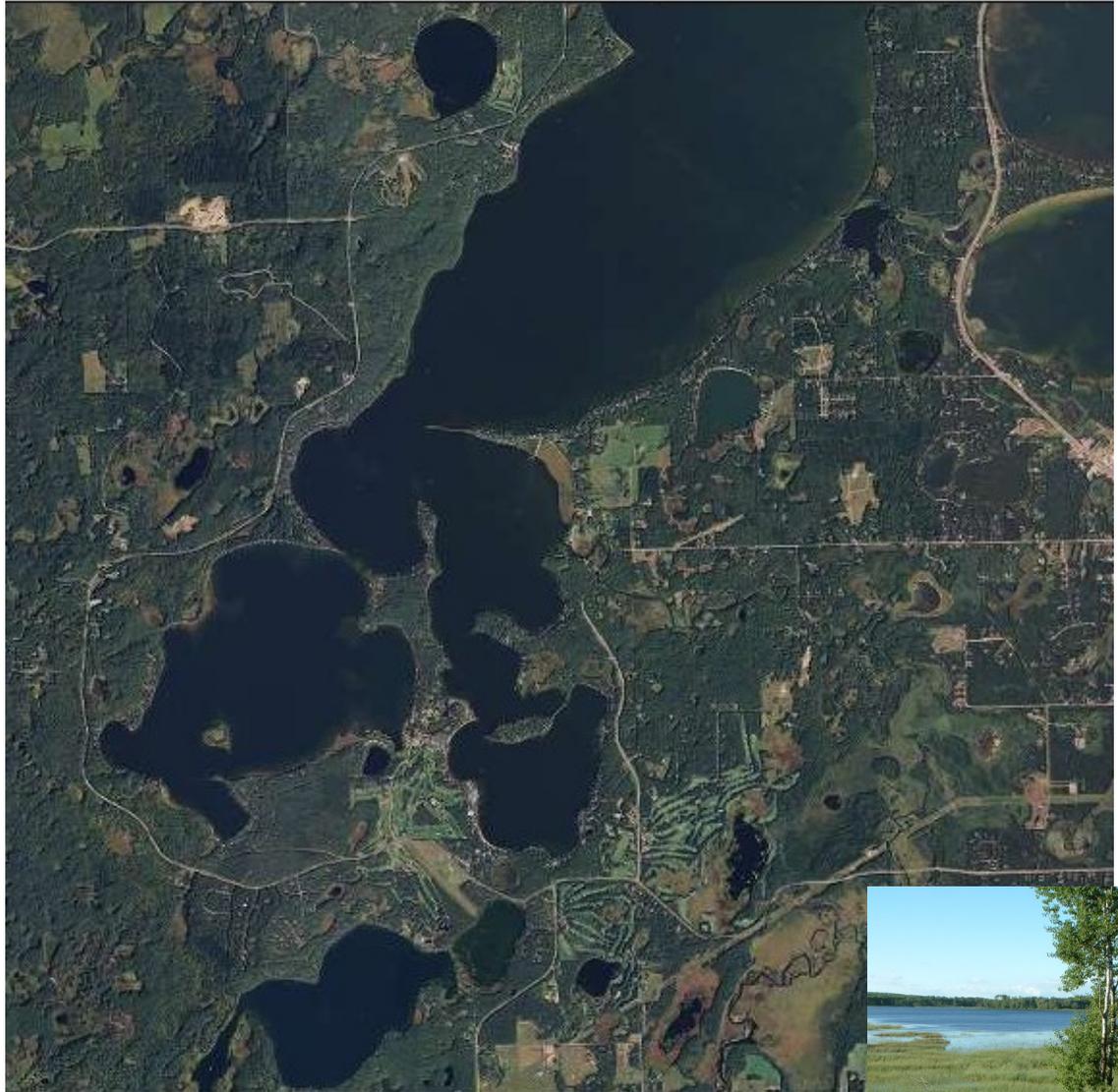


# CITY OF EAST GULL LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



**CITY OF EAST GULL LAKE**

10790 Squaw Point Rd  
East Gull Lake, MN 56401

# CITY OF EAST GULL LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## History

Originally established in 1924 as a township and located in the heart of the Brainerd Lakes region of Cass County in Central Minnesota, the City of East Gull Lake has a wealth of natural amenities. With numerous lakes, over 38 miles of shoreline, woods, and wetlands, the City has long been a favorite tourist destination and a wonderful place to raise our families. Its close proximity to the Twin Cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul makes it an ideal location for both year-round and seasonal residents, vacationers, and tourists.

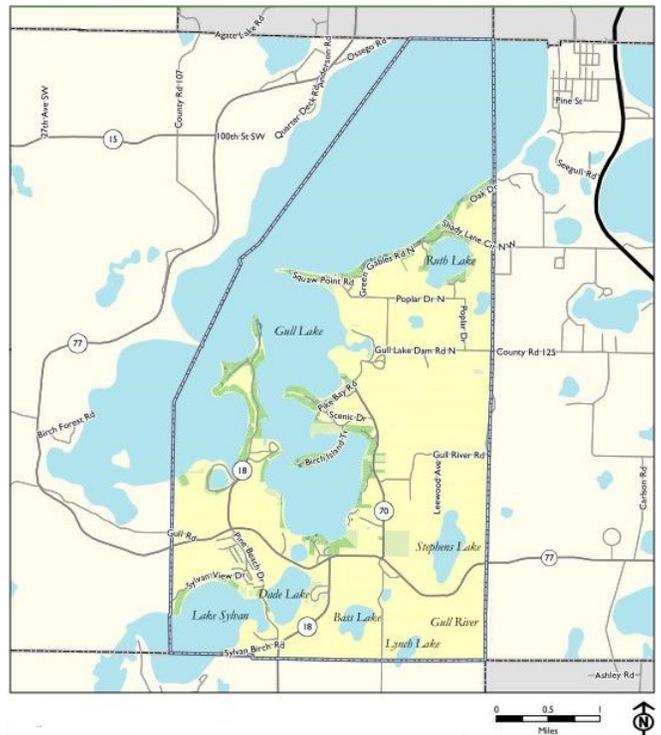


The City incorporates 14.82 square miles, of which 7.86 are land and 6.96 are water. It is bordered by Crow Wing County to the east, Fairview Township to the west, Sylvan Township to the south, and the City of Lake Shore to the north.

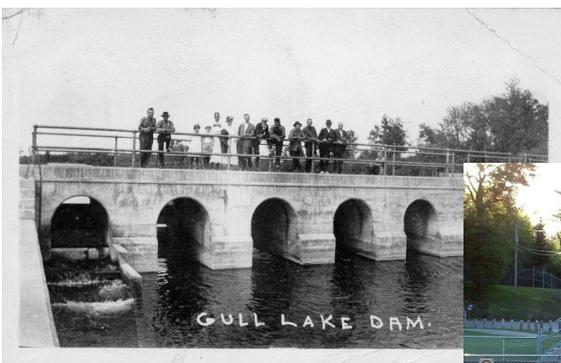


City Hall is located in a small stucco building on the corner of the Gull Dam Road and Squaw Point Road.

It resembles an early schoolhouse because it was, indeed, home for the East Gull Lake School until consolidation to the Brainerd School District occurred in the early 1960s.



Construction of the Gull Lake Dam for flood control and formation of the Gull Lake Chain of

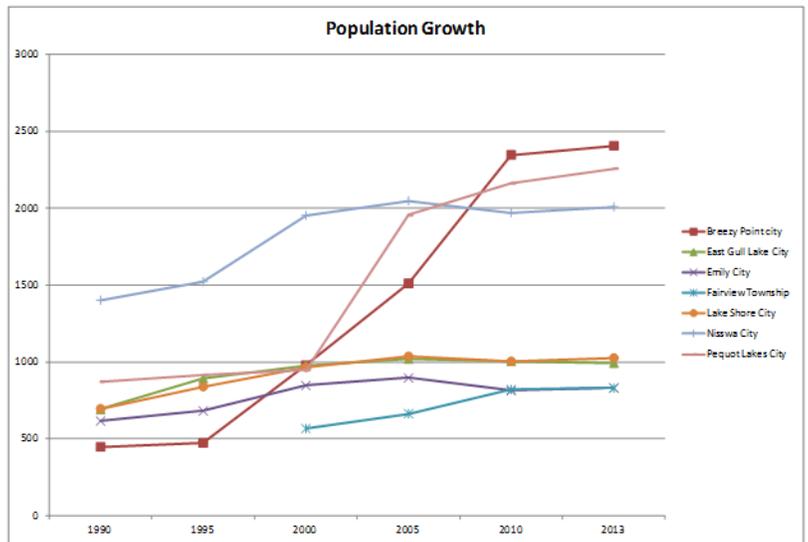


Lakes in 1912 by the United States Army Corps of Engineers gave notice to the area's natural amenities. Development of land and lakeshore began in earnest in the 1930s with construction of resorts and many seasonal cabins. The City's resorts have since grown into premier vacation destinations for golf and recreation, while the demand for private lakeshore has increased exponentially.

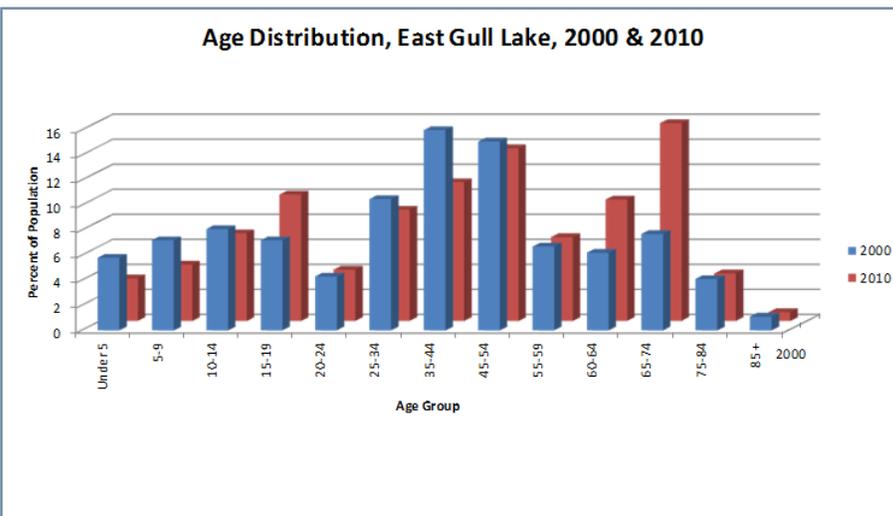


# CITY OF EAST GULL LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

In many cases, seasonal cabins have been converted into year-round residences for families and retirees. Construction of new homes has been relatively steady – particularly on tear down and rebuilds on lake lots. Population within the City grew 59% from 1990 to 2005. Over the last ten years, the rate of growth has slowed and leveled off to around 1,000 residents. Projections for the future will more than likely see a modest growth.



The median age of East Gull Lake residents increased from 34 years in 1990 to slightly over 39 years in 2000, and 45.9 in 2010. Census data shows the most significant portion of the City’s population growth is within the 65 to 74 age group, suggesting our area is considered desirable for retirement. By contrast, age groups below age 35 declined from 53% of the population to 43.1 percent by 2000, and 38.3 percent by 2010. This is a common trend in many rural areas and throughout the nation.



Since the 1970s (and particularly in the last 25 years), the entire country has experienced monumental changes in transportation, communication and technologies – reshaping how and where people live and work. East Gull Lake is no exception. People and businesses are more mobile than ever. While metropolitan employment centers still

dominate, our area provides competitive amenities such as good highways, a first class airport, increasingly good Internet access, and a growing “moveable” business atmosphere.



# CITY OF EAST GULL LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



With an abundance of wooded and lakeshore properties, recreation resources, good school systems and the like, communities in the central region of Minnesota such as East Gull Lake, Lake Shore, Fairview Township, Nisswa, and Pequot Lakes have been in the forefront of growth and business development. Between the years of 2000 and 2013, Cass and Crow Wing were among the fastest growing counties in the state, second only to those in the outer

ring of the metropolitan Twin City area.

## **Vision**

### ***Maintaining Natural Amenities and Community Character***

While development pressure is growing within the City, we retain significant tracts of wetlands and forests, scenic vistas, and natural lakeshore. Preserving the natural qualities of these areas will allow the continued enjoyment of clean air and water. It will naturally perpetuate the character that makes our community a special place to live, work, and recreate.

It is also important we protect the rural “northwoods” feel that attracts residents and vacationers to our area. We must ensure the City’s ordinances and policies not only cover issues such as the protection of our environment, but also the maintenance and enhancement of healthy amenities to be enjoyed on a daily basis as well. Our expanded and extensive system of trails, as an example, provide opportunities to appreciate the beautiful surroundings by hiking, biking, and even driving a golf cart.



### ***Lakeshore Redevelopment and Preservation of Water Quality***

With the rising property values on the City’s shore land properties, the redevelopment of existing seasonal cabins into year-round residences is expected to continue. Such changes could significantly alter the character of the City’s lakeshore, and have the potential to increase the impact of development on water quality as larger structures and landscaped yards are introduced.



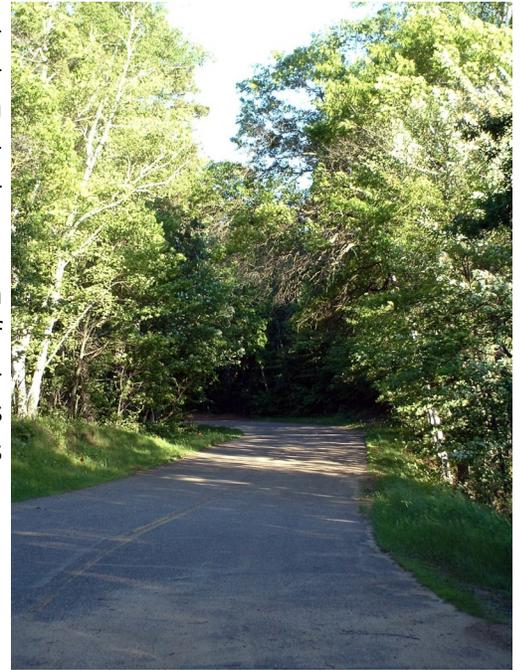
# CITY OF EAST GULL LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

With this challenge in mind, the City has adopted ordinances requiring any new home construction or redevelopment to limit impervious coverage to 20%; however, if a storm plan that retains runoff in accordance with the requirements is implemented, the impervious surface coverage can be increased to a maximum of 25%.

The Planning and Zoning Commission, in coordination with the City staff, is tasked with the important responsibility of monitoring new construction/remodeling projects. Property owners are encouraged to visit City Hall to discuss their projects and submit the necessary permit requests before actual construction begins.

## ***Public Sewer System***

The City of East Gull Lake has invested a great deal of time and money expanding the waste water system. 90% of residential homes located on Gull and Upper Sylvan Lakes, resorts, a restaurant, and the US Corps of Engineer's campground facility are currently connected to protect our lakes. We have a great deal of capacity available for expansion within the Pine Beach wastewater plant, while the Squaw Point plant is nearing its capacity. Future expansion will be considered, depending on location options and financial resources.



# CITY OF EAST GULL LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## II. Community Character

Identification and realization of components providing the foundation for the City of East Gull Lake's character is very significant. Since these qualities epitomize the very reasons we have been drawn to live and play within our community, they are critical to the preservation of everyday life we experience and appreciate as the City grows and prospers.



### Elements and components

#### *Natural Environment*

Lakes within the City limits include Stephens, Ruth, Dade, and Bass, as well as parts of Gull, Upper Sylvan, and Lynch – all with good water quality. In total, they encompass over 38 miles of shoreline. In addition to obviously enhancing the natural beauty of the area, our lakes also provide an abundance of water-related recreational activities.

Forests, consisting of broadleaf hardwoods and a variety of pines, cover more than a fourth of the area within the City limits. They continue to provide a significant, thriving habitat for many species of wildlife. Residents and visitors alike realize it is imperative we retain and respect our forested land, especially since our community history reflects a significant amount of timber harvesting within the Brainerd Lakes area.

#### *Quality of Life and Community*



Residents and visitors to our community not only appreciate the natural scenic landscapes of wooded areas, lakes, wetlands, and rolling hills, but also the solitude of a peaceful life. Away from the hustle and bustle, we are reminded every day to slow down, look around, and appreciate how fortunate we are to live and play in a vacation-like atmosphere within the City limits.



# CITY OF EAST GULL LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## ***Recreation/Resorts***

East Gull Lake provides a wide range of recreational opportunities to residents and visitors throughout the year. In addition to providing private and public access to our beautiful lakes, golf courses, an extensive trail system, and the US Corps of Engineer's campground facility, the City is home to some of the largest and most successful resort complexes in the nation.



Resorts cover approximately 23% of the total land within East Gull Lake. In addition to providing over 600 lodging units, many of which are along beautiful shoreline, they collectively maintain over 100 holes of golf.

**Cragun's Resort**



**Madden's Resort**



# CITY OF EAST GULL LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## **Policies**

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

### ***Natural Environment/Lakes and Forests***

Since these natural resources directly and indirectly affect our cultural, economic and healthy lives, attention should be given to protect and preserve our lakes and forests from damage and degradation. Managing water quality and storm water runoff is critical, as is attention to habitat destruction and tree clearing.



**Ernie's On Gull Lake**

### ***Quality of Life/Community Bond***

Cooperation between residents, visitors, and all entities of the City government is crucial to keeping East Gull Lake an optimum community in which to live, work, and play.

### ***Recreation/Resorts***

Because the City does not have the presence of a downtown, our resorts, individual businesses, and restaurants need and appreciate the ongoing support of our residential and visiting community.

## **Strategies**

Residents are encouraged to stay informed by attending and participating in City meetings and events. The City will communicate effectively with residents. It will also cooperate and communicate with other governmental agencies.



**Kavanaugh's Resort**

