

Friday, August 9, 2024

City of Gladstone Planning Commission  
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Subject: City of Gladstone 2024 Master Plan Review

Dear Gladstone Planning Commission,

We, the Escanaba Planning Commission, are writing to report that we have conducted a review of the proposed amendment to the City of Gladstone's 2024 Master Plan.

First of all, we congratulate you on the excellent job done with the Future Land Use plans on pp. 20-32. The "Residential Areas" section is particularly good in picking out the different directions that your City must explore. It is also admirable that Gladstone is committing itself to working on Complete Streets initiatives. Escanaba may do well to follow that lead.

Generally speaking, we found that the 2024 Master Plan is consistent with the City of Escanaba's adopted plans. It also seemed very consistent with Delta County's 2019 Master Plan. But in reviewing the Master Plan, we discovered a few editorial and minor substantial errors. None of them are particularly critical. However, they could very well serve to confuse readers about Gladstone's status in terms of demographics, mid- or long-term growth, or commercial development priorities. These issues are as follows:

1. Organize all tables so that they read chronically forward from left to right; since that is the direction the English language reads in, starting with the newest data first can be a little confusing.
2. *Graph 1* on p. 7 may be misleading because it is a truncated graph, and it could be removed without taking away from the data in *Table 1*.
3. The analysis of Gladstone's age range shift on pp. 8-9 seems rather incomplete; why did so many 15- to 34-year-olds come to town? What are their education attainment levels? Are they employed? Is it remote work as theorized in the plan? The assumptions here are a bit too long, and they warrant further analysis of census data.
4. While the gentleman in the photo on p. 8 appears friendly and inviting, his photo's inclusion doesn't really spark optimism in a growing younger generation. Replacing that one with a photo of Gladstone young professionals might be a better fit.
5. The numbers of most bars in *Graph 2* on p. 9 are a bit too squeezed in, cutting off some of



**Mission Statement**

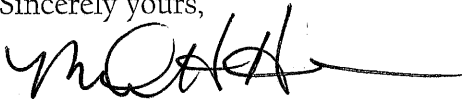
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the data. If possible, this figure might be better off being oriented horizontally, or – better yet – replaced by pie charts for each of the years shown.

6. Is the data in *Table 4* on p. 10 for the year 2020 correct? The numbers don't line up with *Table 3* or with the accompanying paragraph.
7. Including the data from 2000 in *Table 6* and *Table 7* would be valuable to illustrate longer-term changes. Speaking of *Table 6* – it appears that the data in the first row for the 2010 column might actually be that from the year 2000, judging from the 2015 plan.
8. In the “Remote Work” subsection on p. 15, Gladstone’s local crime statistics are referenced, but there is no such data included in the plan. It might be worth adding a brief comparison between Gladstone’s and surrounding areas’ crime statistics.
9. The *Woodlands Map* on p. 17 is ten years old; it might be worth checking to see if it’s still accurate and up to date.
10. There appears to be some conflict between *Goal 1* and *Goal 2* on p. 18 in terms of growing and attracting business. Maybe some differentiation between the intent for both areas could be included so that competition between existing and future areas is reduced. It’s also worth noting that Delta County advises that multi-family housing efforts should be focused in downtown areas (Delta County 2019 Master Plan, p. 56).
11. Under *Goal 7* on p. 19, an EGLE Administrative Consent Order and internal inefficiencies are referenced. However, there’s no mention of either issue in the “City Facilities and Services” section. It’s worth adding some explanation of those issues in that section – but if not, those two points could be dropped from *Goal 7* altogether.

Again, the Escanaba Planning Commission applauds you for a job well done. Regardless of the above list of issues, your plan is thoughtful, comprehensive, and optimistic. Escanaba is hopeful to see Gladstone continue to thrive as our partner city on Little Bay de Noc through the adoption of your amended master plan.

Sincerely yours,



Michael Harris, Secretary  
Escanaba Planning Commission