

## D. Residential Development

### Existing Conditions

Despite the fact that some of the City's most remarkable neighborhoods are located on the bluffs overlooking Muskegon Lake (e.g. Bluffton, Nims and Lakeside), the immediate southern shore of Muskegon Lake contains very little in the way of residential development of any type. Small enclaves of "high end" housing can be found in Harbortown, Bluffton, and in a newer gated community near Cole's Bakery however large stretches of shoreline contain no housing whatsoever.

With the exception of Bluffton, the housing that presently exists directly along the shoreline is mostly of the large single family variety. Higher density residential development (apartments, condos etc.) is noticeably absent along the water's edge, as in most parts of the City as a whole.

Although separated from the lake by the chasm formed by U.S. 31, the Jackson Hill neighborhood north of downtown has the highest concentration of

vacant lots, and one of the lowest population densities of any neighborhood in the City. Large tracts of cleared land in this neighborhood, along with its proximity to the lake, makes it potentially ripe for redevelopment.

### Recommendations:

#### *Mixed-Density/ Clustered Housing*

Along with recreational, and commercial land uses, housing is a key ingredient in creating an active year-round waterfront. As such, a primary objective of lakefront redevelopment efforts should be to encourage more - and a greater variety of - residential development in select waterfront locations.

Such housing could take the form of large single-family detached dwellings to multi-unit attached apartments and condominiums (or combinations thereof) depending on location and physical site constraints. Whatever forms they take, it is important that a clustered (PUD) site planning approach is used in order to assure: (1) efficiency in the provision of infrastructure and utilities and, (2) maximum physical and visual access to the shoreline.

#### *Other Recommendations:*

- Continue to promote the adaptive reuse of older industrial buildings in the vicinity of the lake and Downtown for housing (Amazon, Shaw-Walker).
- Work to encourage new lakefront employers to adopt walk-to-work programs for their employees.
- Promote the construction of new housing units in Downtown and Jackson Hill.
- Promote mixed-use commercial-residential projects containing second floor housing.



*Muskegon Lake offers tremendous opportunities for various forms of residential development. Building such as Shaw-Walker and the Amazon (left), have excellent loft/ condo reuse potential. Lower density development such as Harbourtown and Coles (bottom) has only recently arrived on the shores of Muskegon Lake. Below: The “Actor’s Colony” at Bluffton.*

