



# Bear Lake Township

Manistee County, Michigan

## Master Plan

Adopted by the Bear Lake Township  
Planning Commission [insert date]



# acknowledgments

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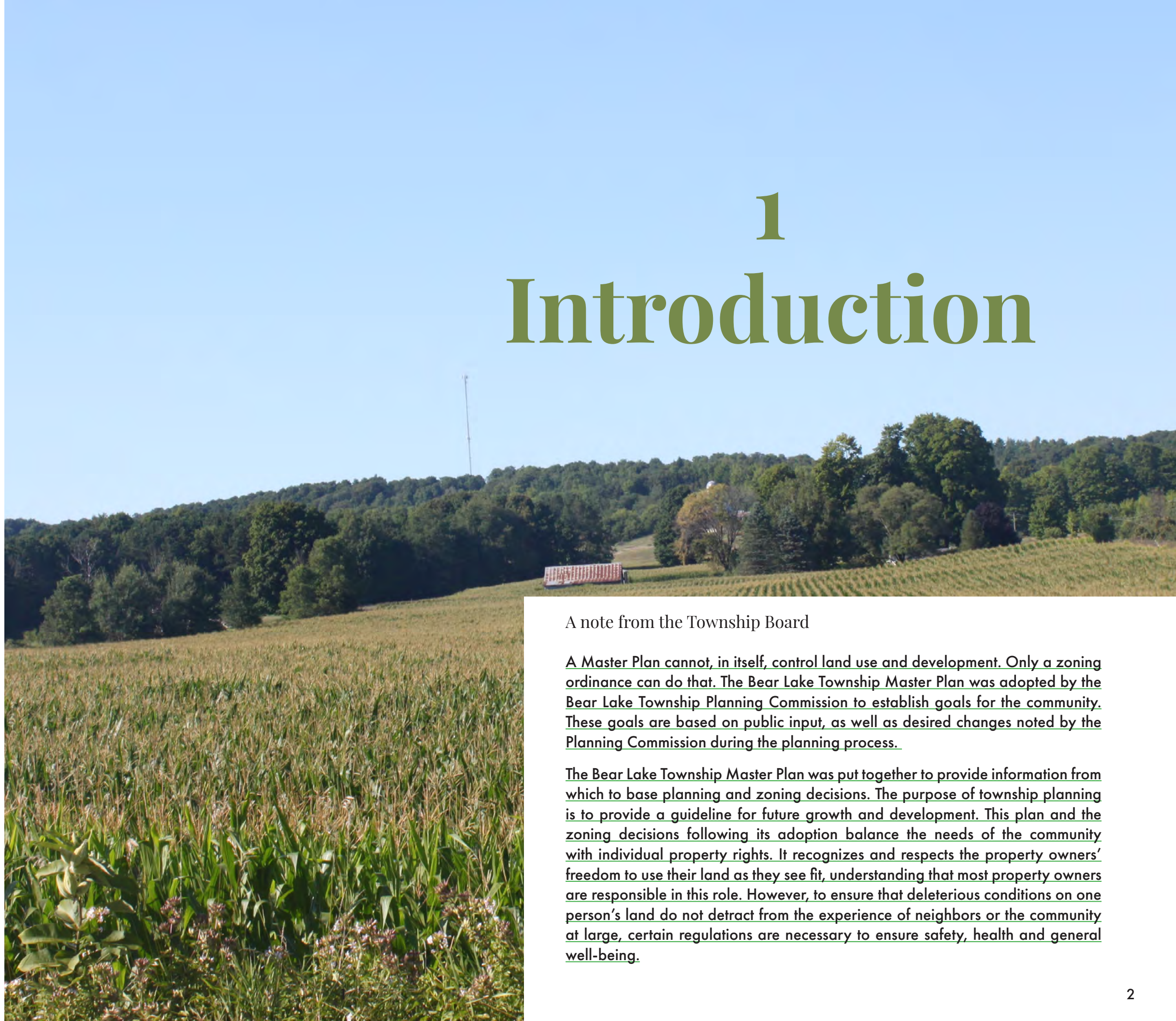


## the master plan

The Master Plan is a municipal document that describes the various intricacies of the community: its past, present and future. The Master Plan is a community input-driven guidebook that considers the many interests represented by those living in and visiting the community; the planning process attempts to reconcile these varying viewpoints into a single text. For Michigan communities utilizing zoning to regulate their land use, the Master Plan is required under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) (Act 33 of 2008). While there are certain requirements stipulated by the MPEA, communities are free to document as much of their local features as deemed necessary to plan for their future.

The Master Plan answers two broad questions: "Where are we?" and "Where do we want to go?" Unlike specific plans, such as Parks and Recreation Plans, Capital Improvement Plans and Hazard Mitigation Plans, to name a few, the Master Plan is all-encompassing. All features of the community are considered; first in the form of an inventory, then as goals, objectives and action items. Therefore, the main format of the master plan is: a community description, public input, goals and objectives and a zoning plan. This plan is organized as such, working from a history of Bear Lake Township to a step-by-step guide for its future endeavors.

The MPEA states that Master Plans must be reviewed for potential updates every 5 years. This ensures that the community is revisiting its adopted plan to identify successes and barriers to implementing its action items. This also encourages a relatively frequent reflection on the internal and external forces impacting local decision making. Although the plan is reviewed every 5 years, it is really a 20-30 year look into the community's future. Therefore, the plan's implementation strategy will feature a variety of project timelines. There are issues that need attention immediately, while others will take many years to accomplish. In a world of unpredictability and unexpected obstacles, the Master Plan is a first step in ensuring a sustainable future.



# 1

# Introduction

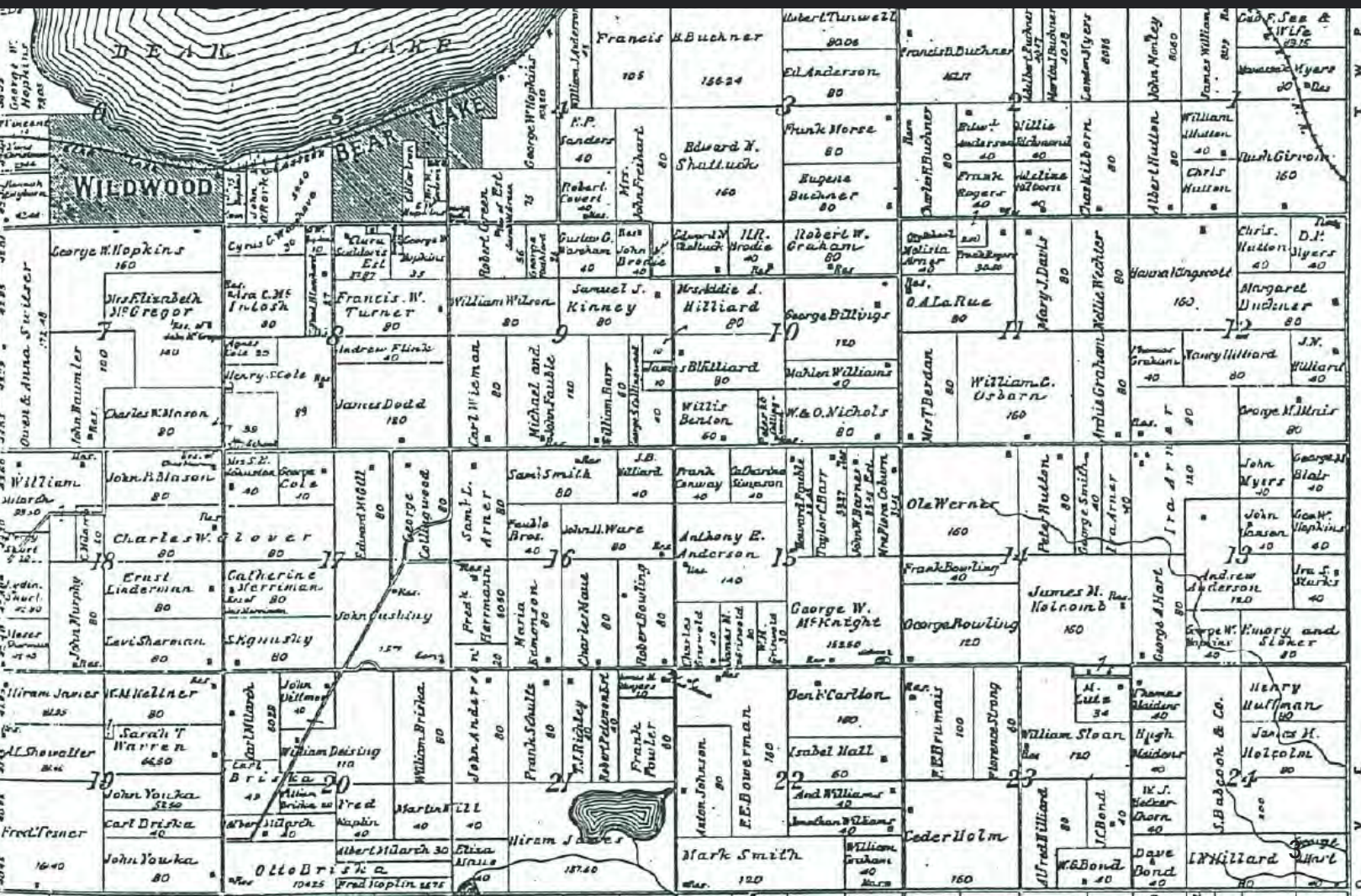
## A note from the Township Board

A Master Plan cannot, in itself, control land use and development. Only a zoning ordinance can do that. The Bear Lake Township Master Plan was adopted by the Bear Lake Township Planning Commission to establish goals for the community. These goals are based on public input, as well as desired changes noted by the Planning Commission during the planning process.

The Bear Lake Township Master Plan was put together to provide information from which to base planning and zoning decisions. The purpose of township planning is to provide a guideline for future growth and development. This plan and the zoning decisions following its adoption balance the needs of the community with individual property rights. It recognizes and respects the property owners' freedom to use their land as they see fit, understanding that most property owners are responsible in this role. However, to ensure that deleterious conditions on one person's land do not detract from the experience of neighbors or the community at large, certain regulations are necessary to ensure safety, health and general well-being.

# 2

# History & Regional Setting



# History of Bear Lake

## earliest inhabitants

A century and a half ago, Bear Lake Township was covered by mixed hardwood forest. The only exceptions to this were in the northwest and southern borders of the Township, where the pine timberland was forested by lumbermen. The area was mostly uninhabited until Congress passed the Homestead Act in the early 1860s. This Act, which provided free land to settlers, went into effect on January 1, 1863, and resulted in an immediate influx of pioneers wanting to farm the Michigan landscape.

Individuals providing professional services included three doctors, a dentist, a watchmaker, a shoemaker, a photographer and a barber.

Near the start of the 20th century, the majority of the forest products had been cleared to support agricultural activity. Because of this, the large mills were dismantled and in 1902, the Bear Lake & Eastern Railroad was abandoned. The natural fertility originally found in the soil under the hardwoods had been exhausted and farmers found it difficult to produce the record crops of the early years. All of these factors precipitated a general exodus from the Township, which probably peaked immediately after World War I.

Bear Lake Township was organized as a legal entity in 1865, but did not achieve its present boundaries until 1870. The first school was in a small log building on the farm of J.B. Mason, the first store appears to have been a small room in the Simeon Anderson home, and a well-stocked store was established by T.A. Tillson previous to 1870. The Bear Lake Post Office opened for business on April 27, 1865, in the home of the first postmaster, Jerome Hulbert. By 1870, the Township had attained a population of 417 living in 91 homes.

The 20th century has seen a steady continuation of these trends. Agriculture has continued to decline with a gradual conversion by the remaining farmers to fruit crops, which are ideally suited for the climate. The Township has evolved as a bedroom community led by its agriculture and tourism sectors.

On June 1, 1876, the Bear Lake Tram Railway, utilizing horse-drawn freight cars, commenced operation and connected the growing community with the shipping docks at Pierport. In 1882, the Hopkins Brothers built the Bear Lake & Eastern Railroad to replace the horse-drawn cars with a team of locomotives. Throughout this period, new businesses opened almost monthly on Lake Street in the Village of Bear Lake.

Shortly after the turn of the century, the Township enjoyed the peak of its early prosperity as an agricultural and lumbering economy. The population reached 1,595 in 1904 and there were 207 farms in the Township with 12,114 productive acres. The Village serving this area had a variety of businesses: three general stores, a furniture store, a dry goods store, a meat market, a drug store, a bank, a canning factory, a flour mill, a creamery and a hotel.

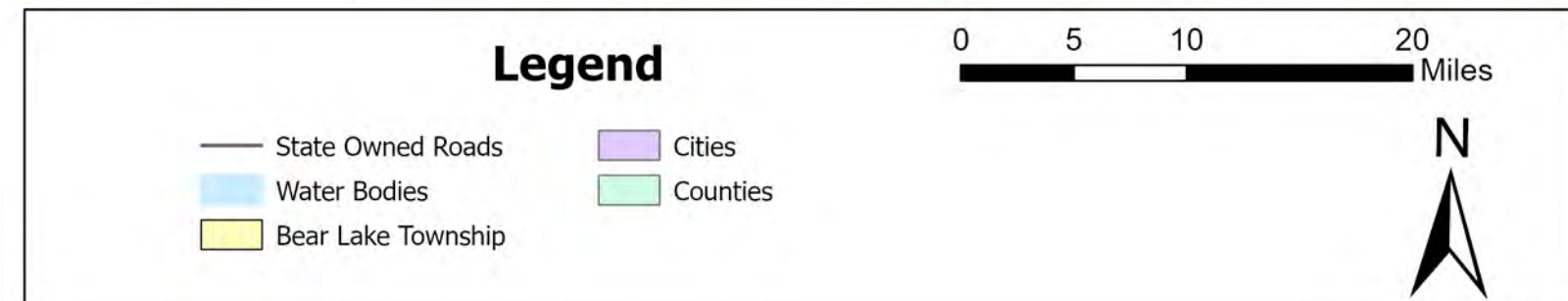
Bear Lake Township is located in Northwest Lower Michigan, 15 miles north of the City of Manistee, 43 miles west of the City of Cadillac and 46 miles south of Traverse City. The Township makes up the southern boundary of Bear Lake, which serves as the community’s economic, social and environmental centerpiece. Pleasanton Township makes up the northern boundary of the lake. Just a 10 minute drive from the Lake Michigan coastline, the Bear Lake community is in an ideal location for outdoor recreationists and for those seeking a quiet lifestyle in rural Michigan.

## Regional Setting

Most of the community’s development is within the northern part of the township closest to Bear Lake. US-31 intersects the township from north to south and serves to connect the community to population hubs such as Manistee and Traverse City. The vast majority of Bear Lake Township is undeveloped farmland. US-31 and Lyman Road mark the part of the community seeing most new development and added density.

Similar to much of the Northwest Lower Michigan region, Bear Lake features a seasonal population that grows with the arrival of tourists in the summer and fall months. However, as Traverse City and the region generally see high housing demand, it is possible that Bear Lake will experience population growth at a higher rate and an increase in demand for development. The goals & objectives found in Chapter 6 balance what should remain the same (i.e. be preserved) and what adaptations should be sought in the short and long-term future.

Map 1. Northwest Lower Michigan Region





The communities that plan the best are those that work in coordination with their neighbors. This section chronicles the past planning efforts undertaken by Bear Lake Township and various other entities with ties to the community. In this way, the Master Plan builds on, rather than replaces, what has already been completed. The summarized plans on page 8 are not presented in any particular order.

## Building on What’s Been Planned

Additionally, it is important to remember that many local features do not end at jurisdictional borders. These may include roads, waterways, trails and forest land, amongst others. Most visitors and even residents perceive communities in a much larger view than by an invisible township boundary. Therefore, Bear Lake Township, in updating its Master Plan, takes into consideration the land use patterns and planning of its neighbors (see page 11).



### manistee county master plan

Last updated in 2008, Manistee County’s Master Plan holds few goals and objectives that directly relate to Bear Lake Township and its planning initiatives. However, the Future Land Use (FLU) Map developed for the County (chapter 7) shows where development should be concentrated throughout Manistee County. The map shows medium and high-density development in the Bear Lake community concentrated along the south side of Bear Lake, south to Potter Road. At the time of this writing, the County anticipates an update to its Master Plan in 2023-2024. Therefore, the FLU map is subject to revision soon.

### manistee county park & recreation plan

The 2016 Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan, and its subsequent 2022 update, is one of the best examples of Manistee County’s multi-jurisdictional collaboration. All 21 municipalities, including the County itself, participated in the planning process. The plan highlights a variety of goals and objectives that would benefit the larger Manistee community. However, the main purpose for this collaborative effort was for trail planning and implementation. In 2022, Networks Northwest was awarded a \$1.4 million dollar grant from the Economic Development Administration to develop a trail continuation on the abandoned rail line from Thompsonville to Copemish. The Manistee County Community Foundation provided a grant match to support the trail’s development. Additionally, the County-Wide Recreation Plan displays a desire to connect the Bear Lake community to regional trail routes and to neighboring population centers.

### greater bear watershed management plan

The Greater Bear Watershed Management Plan (2013) was developed by stakeholders in the watershed to build consensus around its sustained ecological stability. The plan calls for various implementation strategies, including water sampling, soil erosion, public outreach and fundraising, to name a few.

### regional economic development strategy, networks northwest

The Northwest Lower Michigan Region #10 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was developed by a group of regional stakeholders, and was facilitated and written by Networks Northwest, the regional planning agency. The plan inventories the current and projected economic factors in the region and includes a set of actionable goals and objectives. Many of the economic trends in the region are relevant to Bear Lake Township. For example, as more urbanized areas like Traverse City and Ludington are built out, it is reasonable to assume an increased housing demand in rural areas such as Bear Lake Township. Demand will also likely come from Bear Lake’s appeal as a seasonal/vacation community. See Chapter 3 for economic data specific to the township.

### pleasanton township master plan

For Bear Lake Township, the importance of planning in coordination with Pleasanton Township lies in their shared interest in Bear Lake’s environmental, social and economic well-being.

Pleasanton’s 2015 Master Plan lists three action items in its recommended implementation strategy, two of which are relevant to Bear Lake Township:

- Develop a multi-user trail system throughout the township that also connects to regional trail systems, and
- Develop agriculture-based economic viability.

Pleasanton’s plan also lists various “building blocks”, some of which may open the door for various municipalities to collaborate. These include a unified trail system that connects to regional routes and population centers; an interest in improving Bear Lake’s access points; and hosting a farmers market. Importantly, Bear Lake Township and Pleasanton Township will continue to collaborate on the sustained ecological stability of Bear Lake.

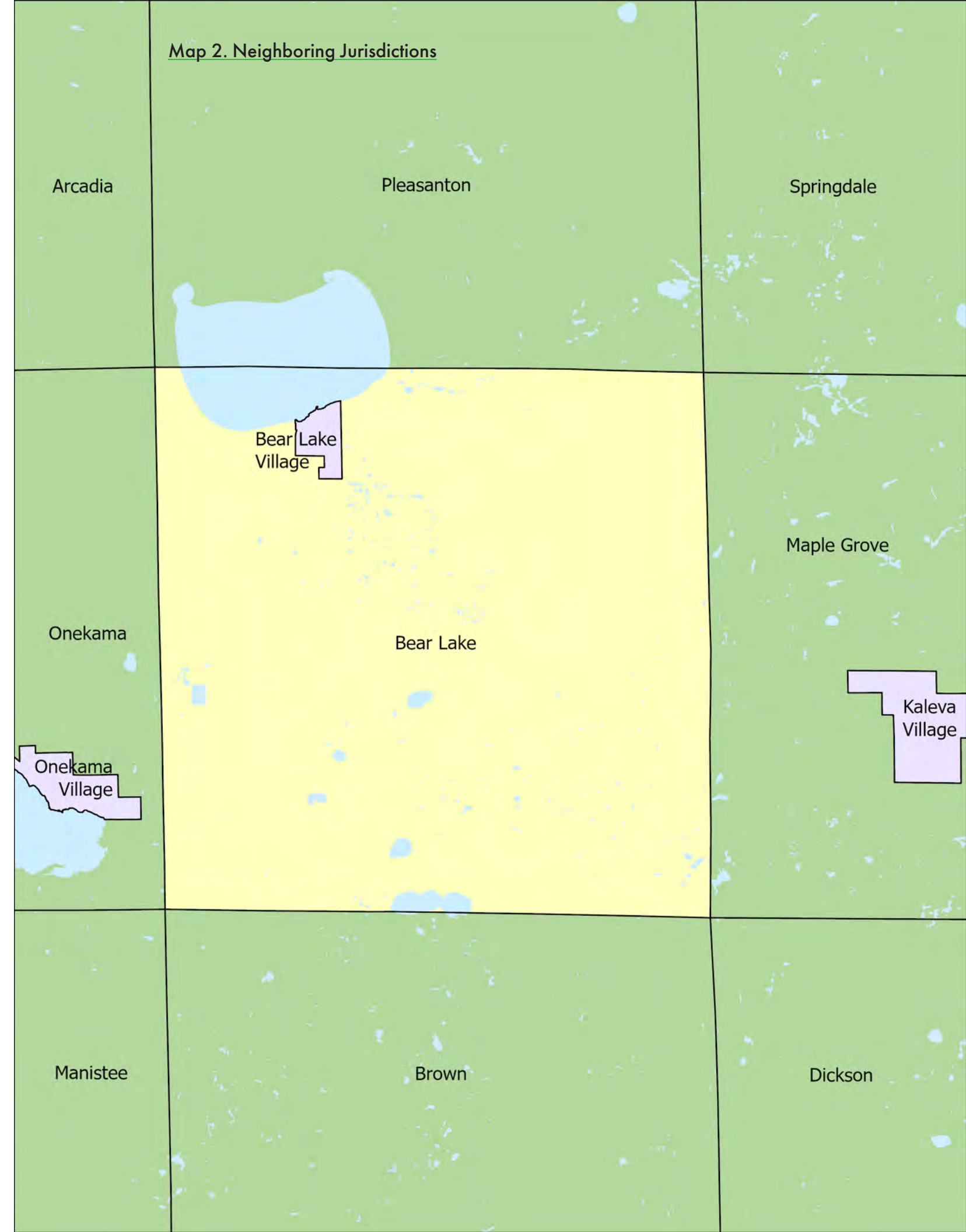


As a best practice, communities often take the Future Land Use Plans of their neighbors into consideration before creating their own. This is important for multiple reasons. First, it allows the community to identify opportunities for collaboration. If the development patterns of an adjacent municipality match one's own desired land uses, the two jurisdictions may decide to agree on certain design outcomes or appropriate densities.

## Neighboring Future Land Use Plans

Second, the community wants to ensure that its Future Land Uses are not disruptive to those of its neighbors. For example, if community A hopes to preserve agricultural land and scenic views in part of its boundary, it would be disruptive for community B to plan for dense industrial development right over the municipal borderline. Therefore, this section recognizes the Future Land Use Plans of Bear Lake Township's neighboring municipalities and uses this analysis in the formulation of its own Future Land Use Plan (Chapter 7). It is important to note that some of these plans are out of date (i.e. older than 5 years) and preferred development patterns may have changed since.

Neighboring communities not included in this analysis are those that do not have zoning (e.g. Springdale Township) and those for which a Future Land Use Plan was either unavailable or was adopted far enough in the past that its content may not be relevant (e.g. Maple Grove Township and Brown Township).



**Pleasanton Township (2015)**

Pleasanton Township abuts Bear Lake Township to the north. The two townships, in addition to the Village, make up the land surrounding Bear Lake. Similar to Bear Lake Township, Pleasanton’s FLU Map features residential development primarily situated along Bear Lake’s shores. All commercial development in Pleasanton’s FLU Map is situated along the US-31 corridor.

**Bear Lake Village (2014)**

The Village’s existing and Future Land Use Maps are largely identical. Commercial uses are placed along US-31 and this pattern continues into Bear Lake Township. The Township will continue to focus auto-oriented commercial land use patterns close to the Village and the north end of the Township’s boundary.

**Arcadia Township (2021) and Manistee Township (2021)**

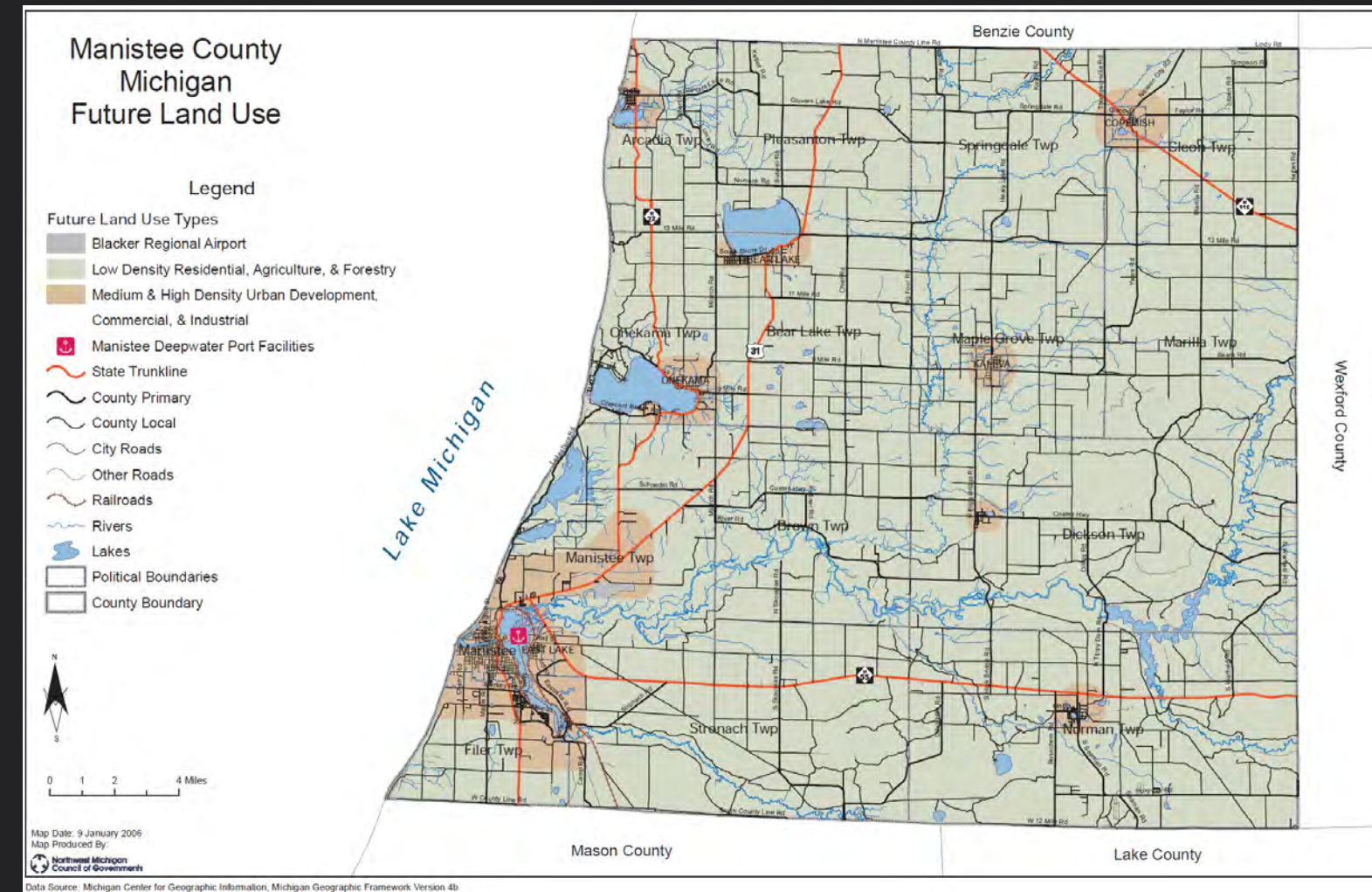
Arcadia and Manistee are kitty corner to Bear Lake Township (to the northwest and southwest, respectively). Both neighboring Townships’ FLU Maps call for natural and agricultural preservation in the areas closest to Bear Lake, the same as Bear Lake Township’s FLU Map in the same vicinity.

**Onekama Township & the Village of Onekama (2010)**

Onekama Township makes up Bear Lake Township’s western boundary. The FLU Map shows mostly Agricultural/Orchard on Bear Lake Township’s western edge, with some residential rural (low density) and residential mixed use on the southeast corner of Onekama. Nearly all commercial is currently located, and is intended to remain in the future, around the northeast edge of Portage Lake where the Village of Onekama lies.

The map on the next page is from 2006 and indicates that future growth in Manistee County should either consist of infill development or development emanating from more populated areas. The County’s Future Land Use Map shows future development in the Bear Lake community likely occurring south of Bear Lake, preserving undeveloped land emanating further from the lake.

Map 3. Manistee County Future Land Use



# 3 People & Place



Photo: Manistee News Advocate

Chapter 3 discusses the demographic, socioeconomic and economic trends in Bear Lake Township. These factors and their subsequent analyses are meant to capture changes and consistencies in the Township from the past, in the present and projections for the future. Similar to Chapter 2, which highlighted the history and setting of Bear Lake, this chapter's information serves as a precursor for decision makers to grasp before making important community decisions. This information helped guide the goals & objectives found in Chapter 6.

## Understanding Where We Are

This allows Bear Lake to stay true to the notion that we cannot plan for our future without understanding where we have been. This section discusses trends in population, education, the community's economic character and recreation.

Similar to many northern Michigan communities, Bear Lake Township's population is growing older, as reflected in its rising median age and lowering school enrollment rates. The majority of Bear Lake's housing stock was built between 1960 and 2000, with a relatively large proportion of these used for seasonal or recreational housing. The community has a strong concentration of employment in the following industries: Forestry and logging; Gasoline stations; Amusement, gambling, and recreation; Crop production; and Accommodation. Each of these speaks to the touristic, outdoor recreational and agricultural identity of Bear Lake. Maintaining these key identifiers is a stated goal of residents going forward.

### population trends

Bear Lake Township’s population overall has grown over the past 20 years. Shown in Table 1 the township’s population increased by an estimated 13.8% between 2000 and 2010. In the past decade, the township is estimated to have grown an additional 9.1%, reaching a population of 1,910 in 2021.

Looking more closely at population trends, one can see from Figure 1 that the proportionality of certain age groups has been, and is expected to continue, evolving over time. In short, youth cohorts are projected to make up a smaller percentage of Bear Lake’s population, while older generations continue to grow in scale. For example, Figure 1 shows that the population of people 18+ is expected to increase from 76.4% of the community in 2010 to 80.7% in 2026. In addition, those individuals 65+ are projected to rise from 20.2% of Bear Lake Township to 27.6% by 2026, according to projections from Business Analyst Online.

As a result, the median age in Bear Lake has risen to 49.9 in 2021 from 44.4 in 2010. At the same time, there has been a decrease of 12 families in the community. This demographic shift is also represented in Figure 2, which displays school enrollment in Bear Lake Schools from 2002-2022. During that time frame, the number of students has dropped from 359 to 298, a 17% decrease. All of this is fairly consistent with generational demographic shifts nationwide, and especially in northwest lower Michigan. Part of planning for the community over the next 5-20 years

will be discerning the needs of Bear Lake’s residents as demographic changes continue. For example, a new generation of homeowners may have different preferences for housing, or may be more reliant on broadband. Some of the answers to the questions discussed during the Master Planning process can be found in Chapter 6 as goals and objectives.

One final point on Bear Lake’s population, which is difficult to capture through data, is the growing Amish population in the township. As this population continues to grow, the local government will need to be aware of these people’s needs (signage warning about carriages at night, for example).

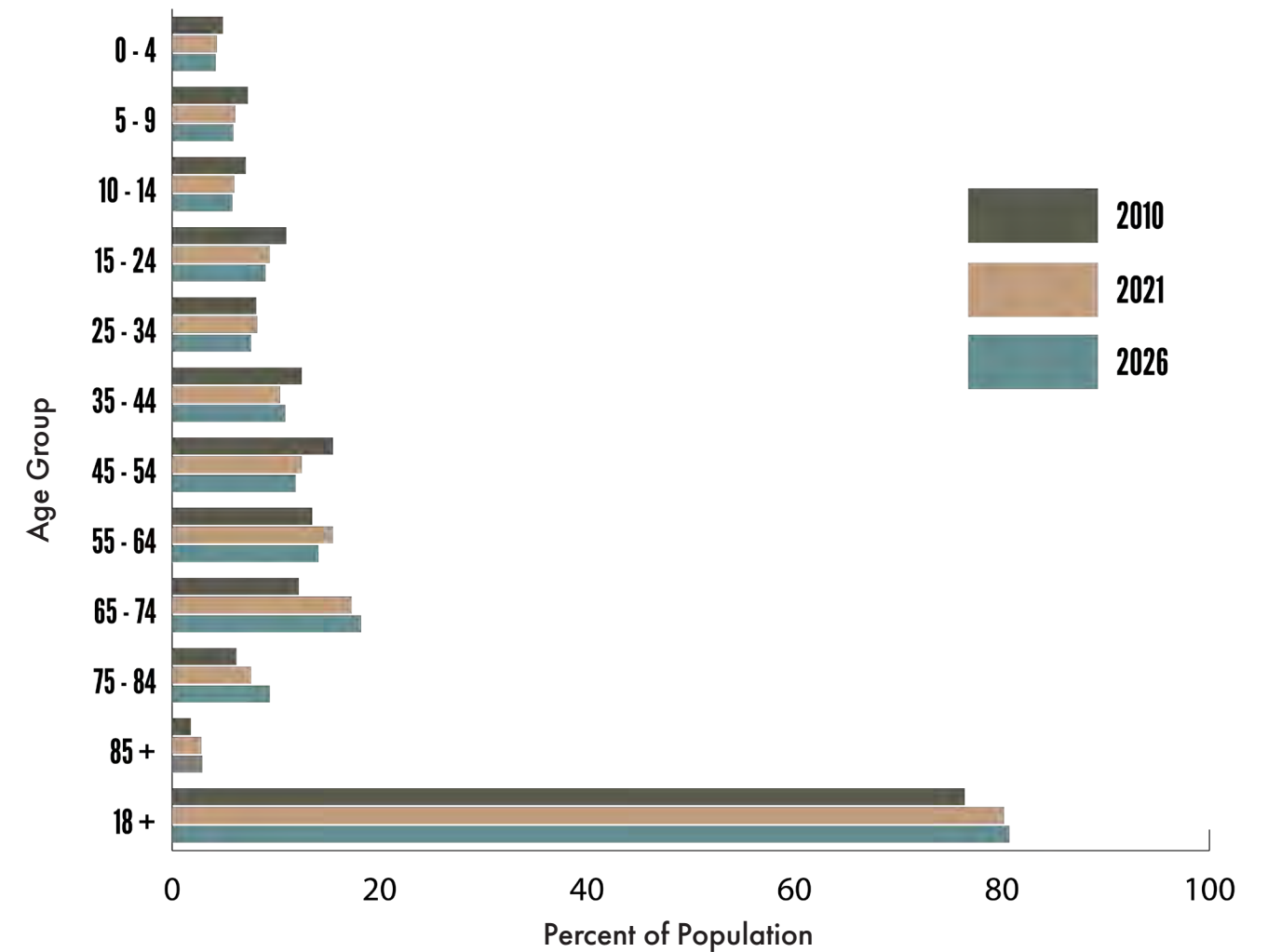


Table 1. Population by Year

| Population         | 2000      | 2010              | 2021               |
|--------------------|-----------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Bear Lake Township | 1,538     | 1,751 (+13.8%)    | 1,910 (+9.1%)      |
| Manistee County    | 24,527    | 24,733 (+0.8%)    | 24,939 (+0.8%)     |
| State of Michigan  | 9,938,444 | 9,883,640 (-0.5%) | 10,062,512 (+1.8%) |

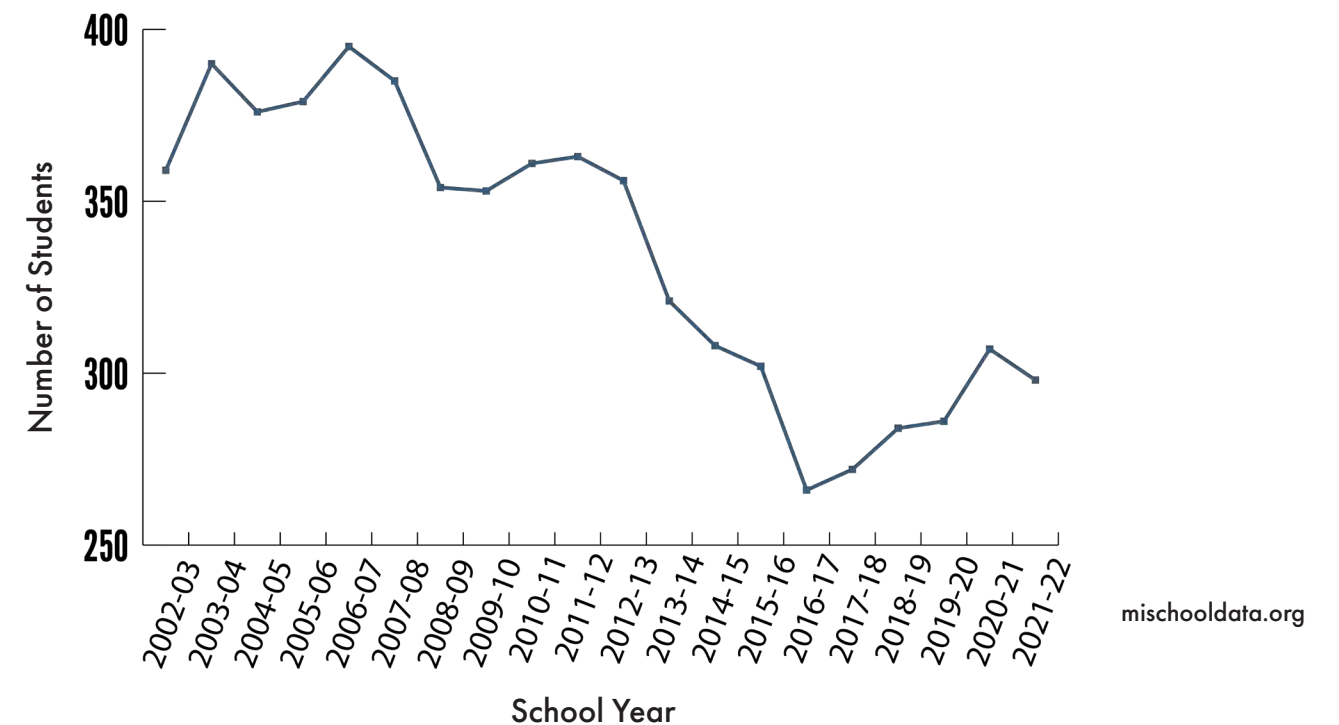
U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year Estimates - for 2021; Decennial Census for 2000 and 2010

Figure 1. Population Age Distribution



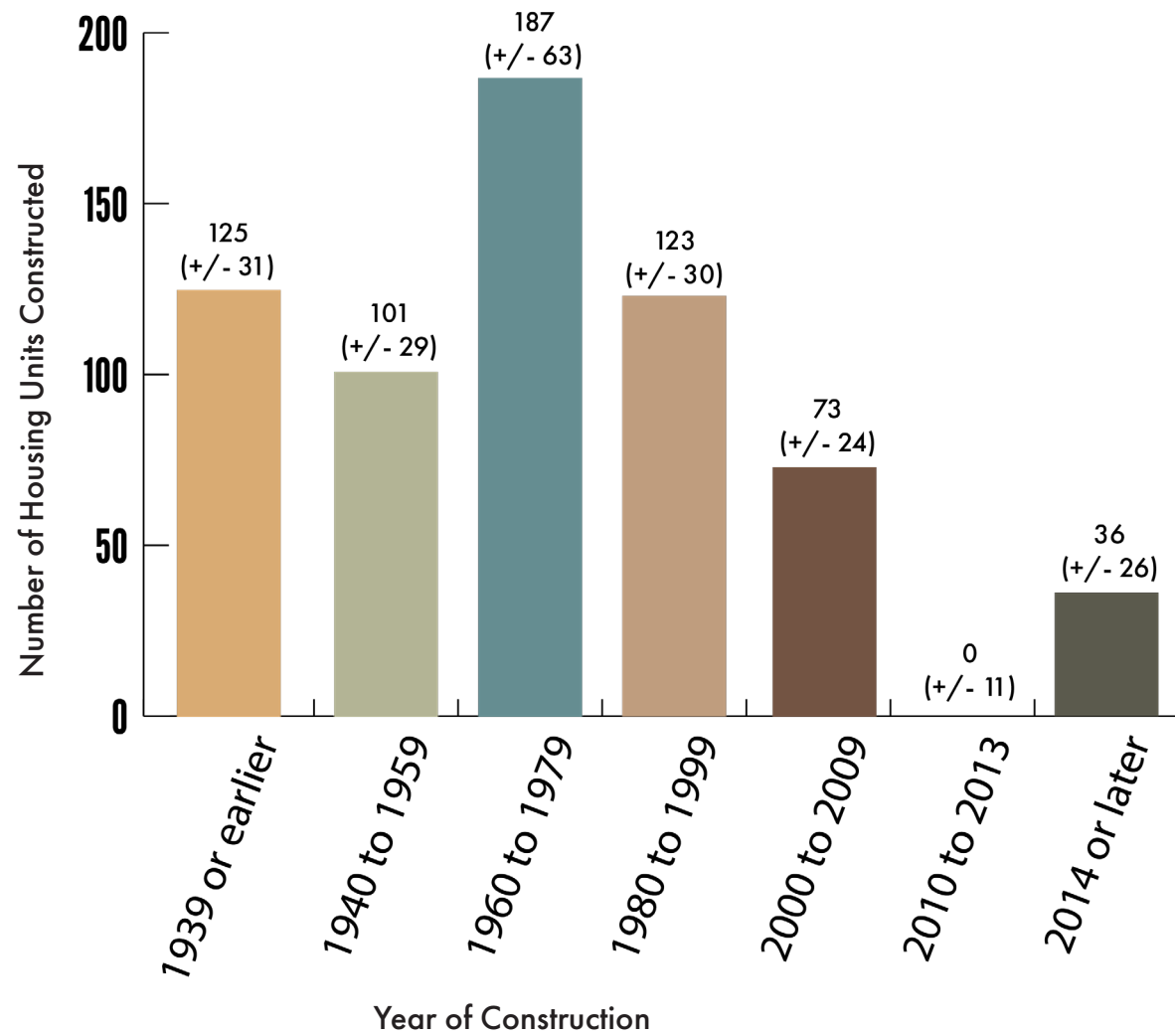
U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026 Esri converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography.

Figure 2. School Enrollment



mischooldata.org

Figure 3. Housing Units by Year of Construction



2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates

**housing and planning**

This section describes the current and projected makeup of Bear Lake Township’s housing stock, as well as the relationship between housing and the community’s demographic trends. Housing data can often be used to determine gaps in housing within the community. For example, as family sizes and the number of families decrease, in addition to rising housing costs, communities may be willing to consider smaller building sizes. Additionally, as is the case in Bear Lake (described in Chapter 5), members of the public may be supportive of housing types

other than single-family detached units, a shift from historical preferences. Finally, Bear Lake’s relatively high percentage of seasonal, recreational homes provides further implications.

Altogether, detailed housing information can help the Planning Commission, Board of Trustees and other community players make informed decisions on preferred zoning and development to meet housing needs in Bear Lake.

**housing type, construction year, value, household size**

Similar to communities of comparable rural character, Bear Lake Township’s occupied housing stock is made up of primarily single-family detached units (92.2%). Seventy percent of occupied housing units have two or three bedrooms with 28.5% having four or more. It is estimated that there are around 36 mobile or other type of housing in Bear Lake Township.

The vast majority of Bear Lake Township’s houses were built prior to the 21st century (2020 ACS 5-year Estimates). Shown in Figure 3, 536 of the township’s 645 occupied housing units, or 83.2% were constructed before the year 2000. The greatest proportion (187) were built between 1960 and 1979.

According to Esri’s Business Analyst Online, the median home value in Bear Lake Township was \$192,342 in 2021. This is projected to rise to \$216,595 by 2026.

Additionally, the average household size is estimated to have remained largely consistent over the past decades (2.48 in 2000 to 2.45 in 2021). The same can be said about the average family size in Bear Lake, which has decreased only slightly from 2.90 in 2010 to 2.89 in 2021 (Esri, BAO).

Definition of Occupied Housing Units, according to the US Census Bureau:

“A housing unit is occupied if a person or group of persons is living in it at the time of the interview or if the occupants are only temporarily absent, as for example, on vacation. The persons living in the unit must consider it their usual place of residence or have no usual place of residence elsewhere. The count of occupied housing units is the same as the count of households.”



Photo: Manistee News Advocate

### seasonal housing

Bear Lake Township’s housing stock is largely seasonal in use. Because of its seasonal population, Bear Lake Township has a relatively high number of “vacancies”, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. The Bureau, as shown in Table 2, breaks vacancies into seven categories. The category titled “For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use” is defined by the Bureau as, “Units that are classified as vacant for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use make up a class that is often referred to as ‘vacation’ homes. These may be large summer estates...time-sharing condos...or simple fishing cabins...Analysts often use this category to estimate the number of second homes in a given area.”

According to the 2020 ACS 5-Year estimates, 316 of Bear Lake’s 961 housing units are considered ‘vacant’. Of these, an estimated 290, or most of the vacancies, are classified as For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. This means that, according to the Census Bureau’s estimates, around 30% of Bear Lake Township’s housing is seasonal.

This has a couple of implications. First, it means that Bear Lake Township does not suffer from a lack of housing demand. Second, it indicates that the community is a haven for seasonal residents, second home owners and, to a smaller extent, the tourism industry.

Table 2. Vacancy by Type

| Vacancy Status                                | 2010 | 2020 (MOE) |
|---|------|------------|
| Total   | 335  | 316 (76)   |
| For rent                                      | 22   | 4 (7)      |
| Rented, not occupied                          | 4    | 0 (11)     |
| For sale only                                 | 26   | 0 (11)     |
| Sold, not occupied                            | 2    | 0 (11)     |
| For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use | 203  | 290 (75)   |
| For migrant workers                           | 7    | 0 (11)     |
| Other vacant                                  | 71   | 22 (14)    |

2010 Census

Data Note: Table 2 displays both 2010 Census counts, as well as 2020 estimates. Both have been included because of the large margins of error (MOE) for the 2020 estimates. Taken together, they provide a more thorough estimation of Bear Lake’s vacancy numbers.



Photo: Manistee News Advocate



# Economy & Workforce

This section, Economy & Workforce, describes what is commonly referred to as the human capital of a community. These are “the skills, knowledge, and qualifications of a person, group, or workforce considered as economic assets” (Merriam-Webster). The topics covered in this section include a breakdown of industry employment in Bear Lake Township, resident’s education and income, poverty thresholds, commuter data and the township’s economic base. A large part of understanding any community is understanding its workforce. This in turn yields various questions that are typically answered in the Master Plan’s goals & objectives section. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- What types of businesses should the community look to build around?

- What skills does the community’s workforce possess?
- What types of jobs match the community’s education levels?
- What industries should the community shift away from because of national or global changes?

To begin this section, it is helpful to know the industries in which Bear Lake Township residents are employed. Table 3 below breaks down employment by industry for Bear Lake. Please note that because the Census Bureau does not include identifying information, and because at the time of this writing the 5-year estimates were the only data available, each industry’s estimates have a relatively high margin of error. However, taken with other data points provided in this section, one can glean a good understanding of Bear Lake Township’s economy and workforce.

Table 3. Employment by Industry, Bear Lake Township

| Industry   | Estimate | Margin of Error |
|--|----------|-----------------|
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining                                     | 21       | +/-14           |
| Construction   | 73       | +/-28           |
| Manufacturing  | 132      | +/-42           |
| Wholesale trade  | 16       | +/-17           |
| Retail trade   | 82       | +/-34           |
| Transportation and warehousing, and utilities  | 23       | +/-13           |
| Information  | 0        | +/-11           |
| Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing                              | 39       | +/-33           |
| Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services | 65       | +/-34           |
| Educational services, and health care and social assistance                                | 142      | +/-35           |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services                   | 106      | +/-42           |
| Other services, except public administration   | 29       | +/-17           |
| Public administration  | 33       | +/-17           |

### education

One aspect of planning for a sustainable community is understanding the local workforce. It is important for decision makers, as well as potential businesses wanting to relocate or open in the area, to understand the current makeup of the people who live and work in Bear Lake. This section discusses the education, income levels and commutes of Bear Lake’s residents and workers.

Figure 5 shows the education level of Bear Lake’s population 25+, according to Esri’s Business Analyst Online. One can see that 36.9% of Bear Lake’s populace has acquired a college degree, which is consistent with local education levels statewide. In addition, just 6.1% have not attained a high school diploma or GED/alternative equivalent. This is slightly lower than the 8.4% rate for all Michigan residents who have not finished high school. In summary, Bear Lake’s community members have about the same level of education found in state averages.

### income

The median household income in Bear Lake Township is \$57,426. This is projected by Esri’s Business Analyst Online (BAO) to increase to \$62,229 by 2026. Some of this shift in increased median income can likely be attributed to the rising median age.

One of the key variables in predicting a community’s income levels is the age of its residents. Simply, older members of the community have had more time to save. Figure 4 highlights this trend for Bear Lake Township. All income groups earning more than \$50,000 per year are expected increase by 2026. At the same time, the share of households earning less than \$50,000 is projected to decrease slightly in all groupings shown in Figure 4. The community’s aging population is likely the greatest contributing factor to these shifts.

Another important factor in understanding local economic needs is the financial strains on individuals

and families. The ALICE report provided by United Way is a useful data point on this topic. According to United Way, “ALICE is an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, and represents the growing number of families who are unable to afford the basics of housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and technology. These workers often struggle to keep their own households from financial ruin, while keeping our local communities running” (uwmanistee.org/alice-data). In other words, these are households that are technically above the

poverty line, but are extremely vulnerable to local and national economic shifts, as well as unexpected financial burdens. At the time of this writing, 11% of Manistee County lives below the poverty line and an additional 31% live below the ALICE threshold (see Figure 6). This is an important cohort for local leaders to consider as rapid changes to the industry sectors that are defined by those in the ALICE income brackets are influenced by a variety of community factors: housing, technology, childcare, etc.

Figure 4. Median Income, Bear Lake Township

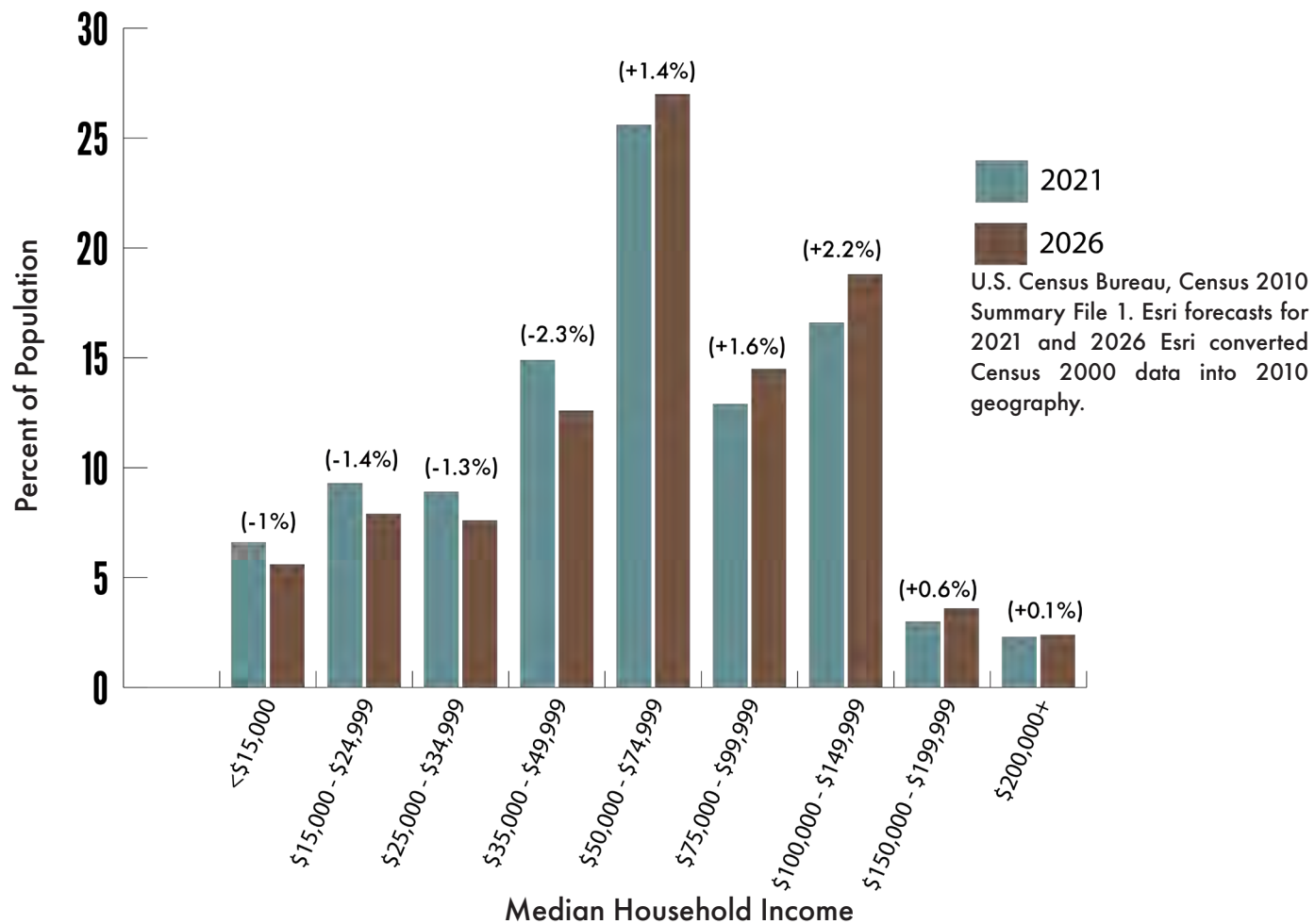
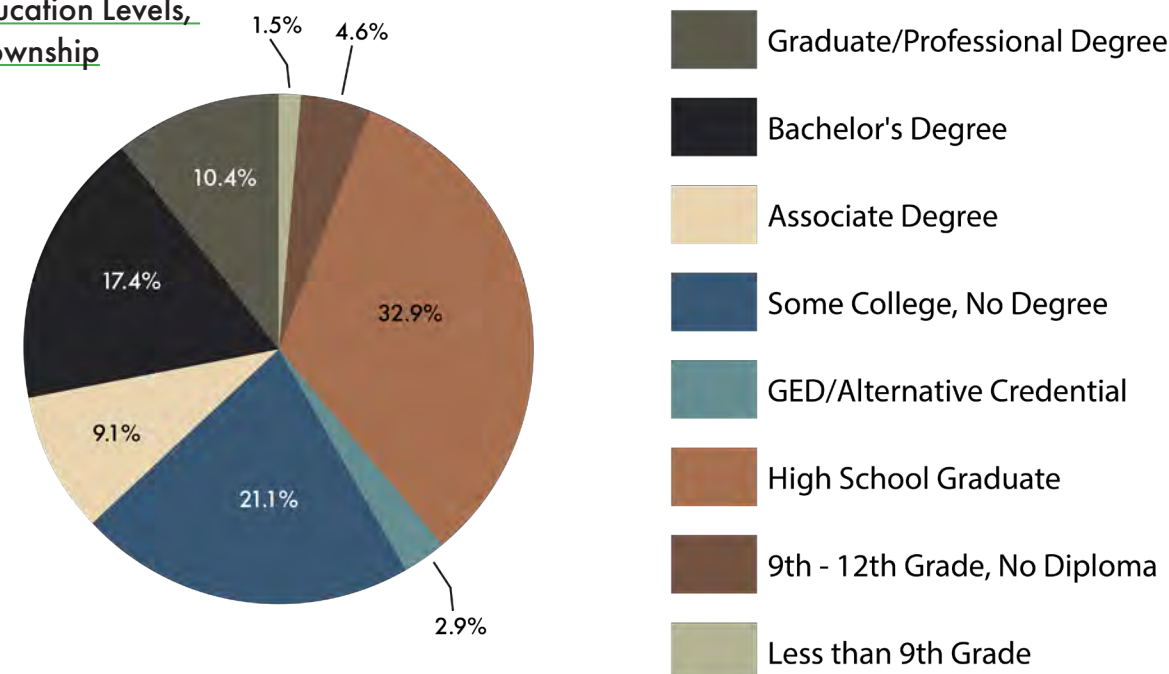
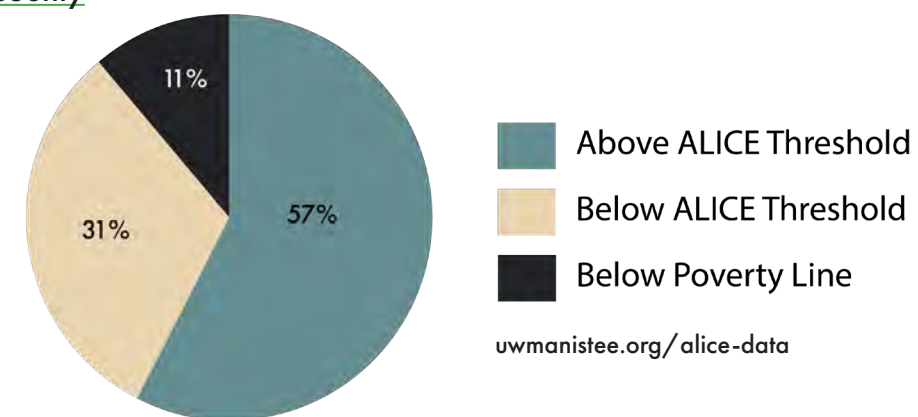


Figure 5. Education Levels, Bear Lake Township



U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026 Esri converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography.

Figure 6. ALICE Rate & Poverty, Manistee County





**commutes**

In addition to knowing who lives and works in the community, local decision makers benefit from knowing where people commute to work and how they get there. This section covers the following factors: travel time to work, means of transportation, workers who live in Manistee County and daytime population. Each of these has implications for traffic patterns and traffic planning.

According to 2021 Esri estimates for the community, Bear Lake Township has a daytime population of 1,609 people. This includes 514 workers and 1,095 residents. The 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates show that nearly all Bear Lake Township residents use a personal vehicle to get to work. Of these, 78.2% drove alone while another

13.1% carpooled. Displayed in Figure 7, below, the mean travel time to work for residents is 26.2 minutes with the largest travel cohort consisting of those who take 20 to 24 minutes to arrive at their place of work (19.7%).

Nearly 72% of Bear Lake residents work in Manistee County. The remaining 28% presumably work in a nearby northwest lower Michigan county. One trend to watch in the coming years will be the number of people working from home in Bear Lake Township. In 2020, it was estimated that 8.3% of residents worked from home. If this number grows as it has in many northwest Michigan communities, there will be various planning implications for Bear Lake (e.g. broadband or commercial real estate).

Figure 7. Commute Times

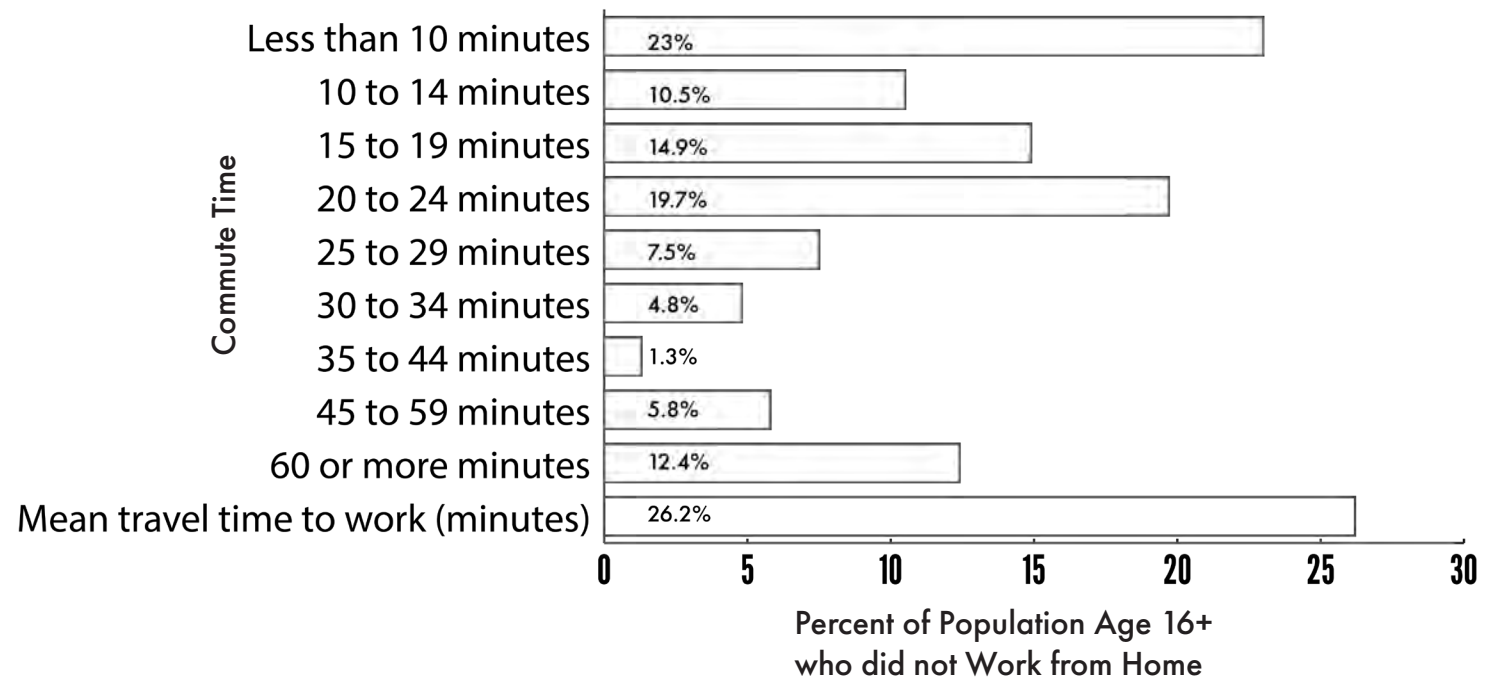


Figure 8. Location of Work

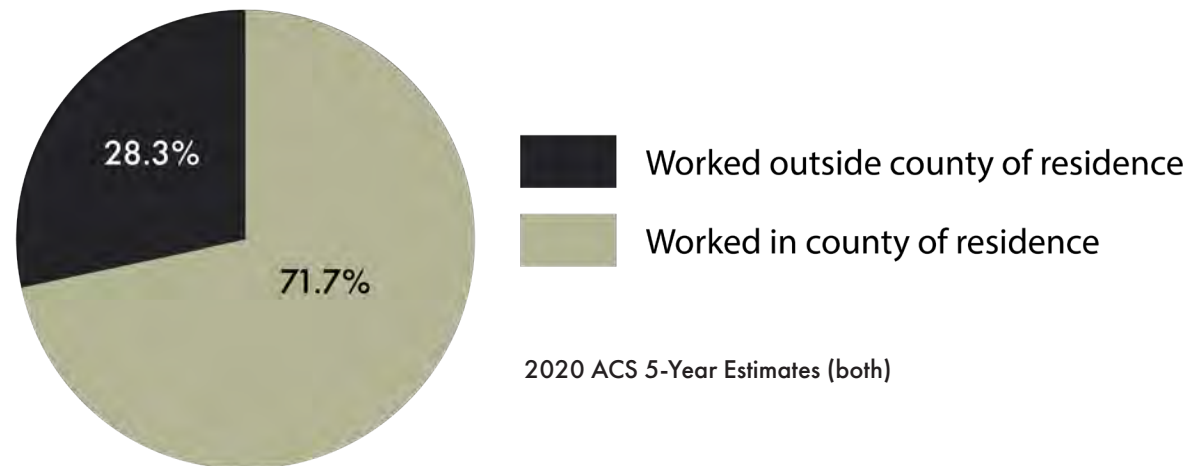


Table 4. Top NAICS Sub-Sectors by Location Quotient

| Top NAICS Sub-Sectors in Manistee by Location Quotient |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| NAICS Sub-Sector                                       | Location Quotient |
| NAICS 113 Forestry and logging                         | 8.89              |
| NAICS 447 Gasoline Stations                            | 4.05              |
| NAICS 713 Amusements, gambling, and recreation         | 2.92              |
| NAICS 111 Crop Production                              | 2.48              |
| NAICS 721 Accommodation                                | 1.70              |

Table 5. Top NAICS Sub-Sectors by Employment

| Top NAICS Sub-Sectors by Annual Average Employment |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| NAICS Sub-Sector                                   | Annual Average Employment |
| NAICS 722 Food services and drinking places        | 355                       |
| NAICS 452 General merchandise stores               | 296                       |
| NAICS 621 Ambulatory health care services          | 255                       |
| NAICS 713 Amusements, gambling, and recreation     | 194                       |
| NAICS 424 Merchant wholesalers, nondurable goods   | 185                       |

Bureau of Labor Statistics

**determining economic bases**

The location quotient (LQ) analysis is a measure of how concentrated an industry is in the local economy. Knowing the LQ score for various industries can help the municipality: 1) to determine which industries make the local economy unique, 2) to identify which industries the locality is exporting, 3) to identify emerging export industries that are starting to bring economic activity into the local market, and 4) to identify export industries that have the potential to threaten the region’s economic base.

Of importance, the tables provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics do not include rows with suppressed data. This is common for smaller study areas in order to avoid the inclusion of identifying information.

In summary, the LQ analysis for Manistee County confirms a couple of the well-known economic identifiers that define the area. For example, communities that are highly touristic typically have higher concentration of Gasoline

$$\text{Location Quotient} = \frac{(\text{Local Industry Employment} / \text{Total Local Employment})}{(\text{National Industry Employment} / \text{Total National Employment})}$$

A score of 1.0 means that the concentration of that industry in the county is equal to the concentration of that industry in the entire U.S. Industries with a score higher than 1.0 typically make up the local economy and can help determine what makes the local economy unique. However, it's also important to consider the LQ score in conjunction with the number of establishments and employees and wages to truly glean how important that industry is to the local economic base.

stations; Amusements, gambling, and recreation; Accommodations; and Food services and Drinking places. Manistee County has a high LQ score and employment for each of these. Additionally, as this plan has discussed, agriculture is a key component to Manistee County and Bear Lake’s economies. Crop production, as shown in Table 4 is 2.48 times more concentrated in Manistee County than in the country as a whole. To see a complete list of Manistee County’s Location Quotient score, see Appendix A.

Most localities strive to have many sectors with a LQ score greater than 1. This is an indicator that the economic base is diverse and not relying heavily on one or two industries (think Detroit and automobile manufacturing). LQ scores lower than 1 can help identify sectors to target for growth.

The tables to the left display two important factors. Table 4 shows the NAICS Sub-Sectors in Manistee County with the highest LQ scores. Table 5 displays the industries with the highest average annual employment. Taken together, the two tables provide a glimpse of Manistee County’s most important industries, or those that make up its economic base. .

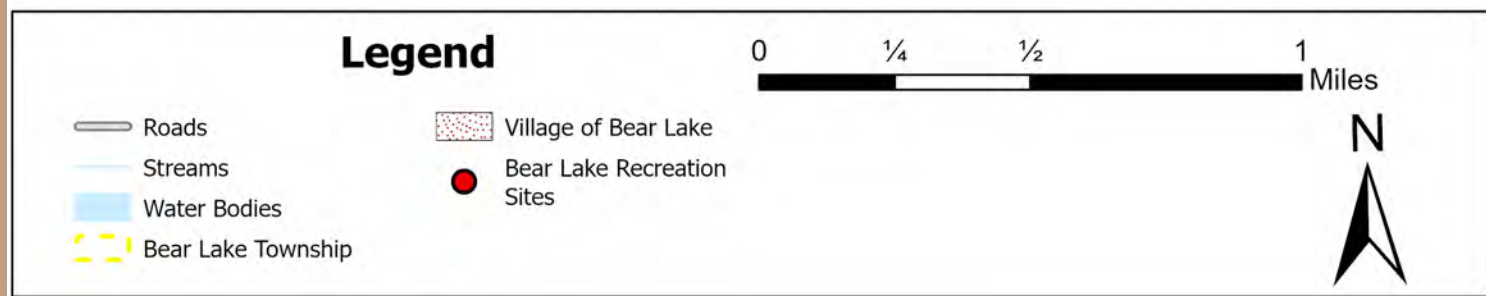
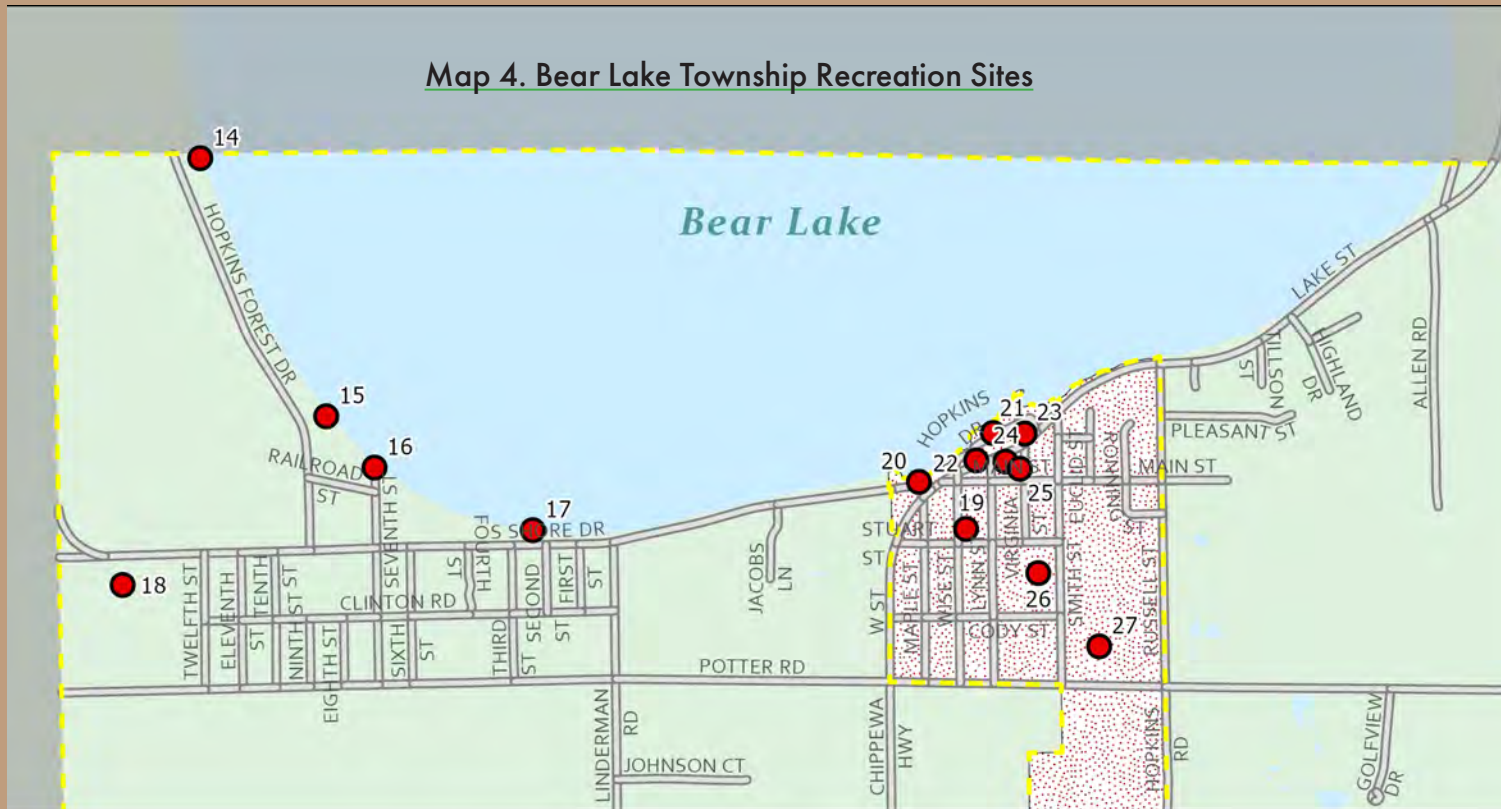
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The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is the standard used by Federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business economy. - For more information visit [census.gov/naics/](https://www.census.gov/naics/)

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Map 4. Bear Lake Township Recreation Sites



# Parks & Recreation

Much of the content in this section is summarized from the 2022-2026 Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan. Bear Lake Township’s recreation is largely centered around the 1800-acre Bear Lake, as well as the well-used Bear Lake School Forest.

The various road ends along Bear Lake provide water access for swimming and launching watercrafts. The School Forest features athletic fields and trails utilized by school teams for practice and sporting events. These trails also allow for public access for walking, hiking and team sports.

Chief Lake, which lies along the south boundary of the township provides further access to inland water resources. Chief Lake is accessed primarily by fishermen during both winter and summer months.

Trail systems through the township are currently lacking, but Bear Lake would like to see non-motorized connections to both Onekama and Arcadia Townships in the near future (see Chapter 6 for related goals and objectives). Regarding parks and recreation, there are two key priorities: 1) improve access to Bear Lake and other bodies of water, and 2) develop regional trail connections to neighboring communities.

Table 6. Recreation Site References for Map 4

| Site Name                 | Ownership                  | ID |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|----|
| Chief Lake Access         | BL Twp                     | 12 |
| Anderson Rd Access        | MC Road Comm               | 13 |
| 13 Mile Rd Access West    | MC Road Comm/<br>BL Twp    | 14 |
| Division St Access        | MC Road Comm               | 15 |
| 7th St Access             | MC Road Comm               | 16 |
| 2nd St Access             | BL Twp                     | 17 |
| School Athletic Fields    | School District            | 18 |
| Cosier Park               | BL Village                 | 19 |
| Blarney Beach             | BL Village                 | 20 |
| Hopkins Park Campground   | BL Village                 | 21 |
| Hopkins Park Stair Access | BL Village                 | 22 |
| Veterans Memorial Park    | BL Village                 | 23 |
| Pocket Park               | BL Village                 | 24 |
| Bear Lake Village Hall    | BL Village                 | 25 |
| School Athletic Fields    | School District            | 26 |
| DPW Village Property      | BL Village                 | 27 |
| Bear Lake Museum          | BL Area Historical Society |    |

Note: Sites are listed numerically as they appear in the 2022-2026 Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan.

Not included in the recreation plan is the 10th Street property, recently purchased by the Township. This site is planned to feature park infrastructure in the near-term future. The Bear Lake Museum is also not found in the recreation plan, but appears here.

## Goals for Bear Lake Township found in the 2022-2026 Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan

- Goal 1: Develop multi-use trails that are connected to a County wide trail system.
- Goal 2: Develop facilities and purchase land that will be used for increasing recreational opportunities while also serving other municipal purposes and goals.
- Goal 3: Plan for recreational development of vistas and dark sky initiatives.
- Goal 4: Improve recreational opportunities for youth.
- Goal 5: Improve access to Bear Lake and Little Beaver Creek.
- Goal 6: Develop an eco-tourism economy.
- Goal 7: Maintain good stewardship of the natural resources within the township while also developing recreational opportunities.

# Natural Features & Farmland

Bear Lake Township’s key natural feature is that for which the community is named. The Village and much of the Township’s development is anchored close to Bear Lake, making the water body a critical natural feature. Chief Lake is the other larger water body in Bear Lake Township and features primarily residential development around it. A significant goal for the community going forward will be improving and further protecting Bear Lake’s environmental quality.

Other lakes within the township include James Lake, Adamson Lake, Watson Lake and Lake Emma. Much of the community’s east and southeast edges consist of wetland areas, with higher elevations (>200 feet) found in the northern and central parts of Bear Lake.

Shown on the land cover map in Appendix B, just 7.52% of Bear Lake Township is developed (Developed, Low Intensity - 2.83%; Developed, Medium Intensity - 0.25%; Developed, High Intensity - 0.03%; Developed, Open Space - 4.41%). The vast majority of Bear Lake Township’s development can be found adjacent to or near Bear Lake, with some low-density residential located along the county’s sectional roads. The most prominent land cover is as follows:

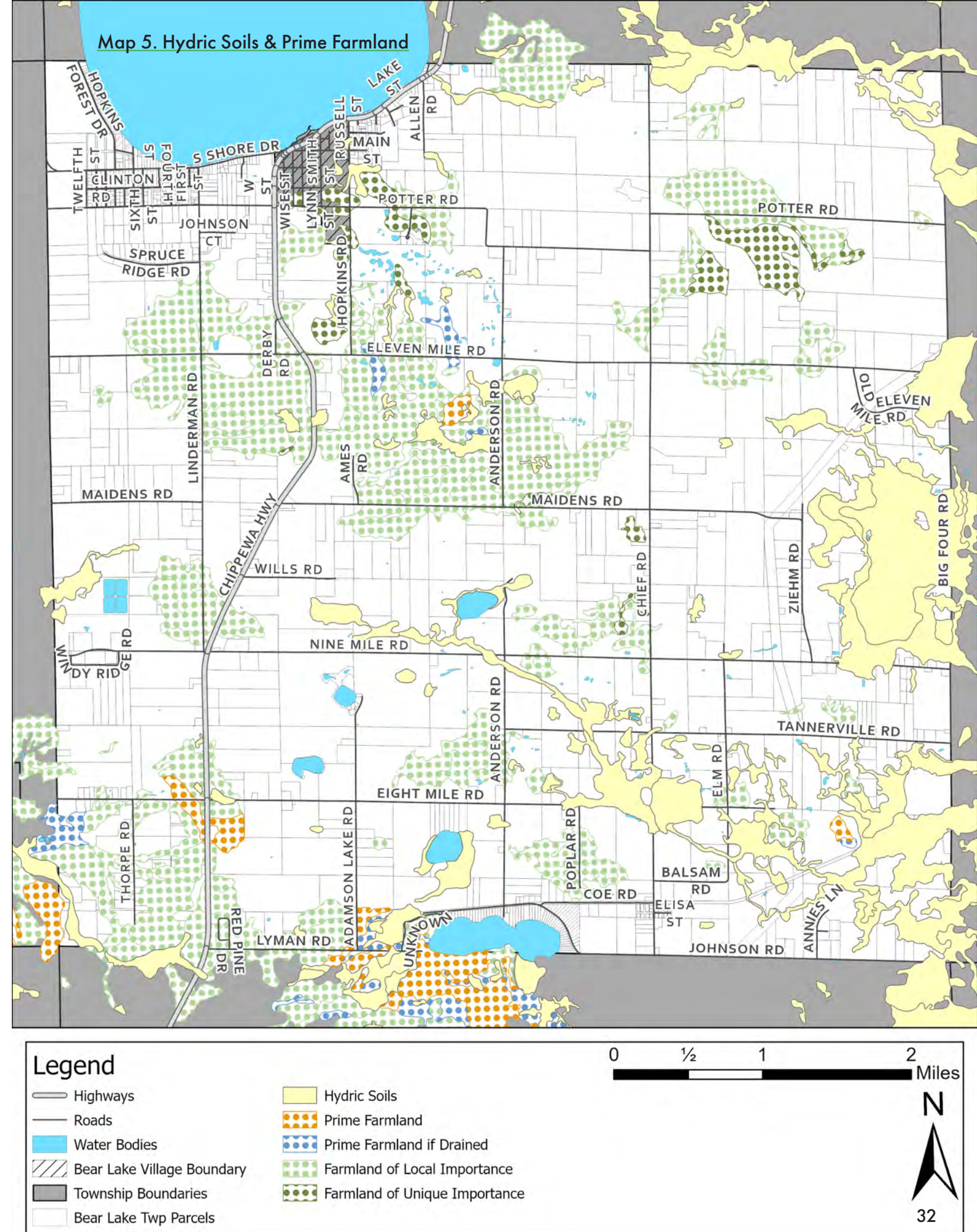
- Deciduous Forest - 23.89%
- Cultivated Crops - 20.85%
- Herbaceous - 16.86%
- Woody Wetlands - 8.08%

The map in Appendix C shows the topography of Bear Lake Township that would have an effect on land use and future development goals. Much of the

township’s southeast corner is made up of wetland. The northeast corner has steeper slopes than in other parts of the community. Both of these features, along with Bear Lake’s wide appeal, have pushed development to cluster along the lake and US-31.

Bear Lake Township’s economy and lifestyle are both greatly defined by its agricultural industry. Discussed throughout this plan, the community should strive to maintain its rural character while still encouraging growth. For this reason, it is important to understand the various soil types in Bear Lake for two reasons: first, many soils are hydric, making them unsuitable for development. Second, there are soils that serve as prime farmland. While some development is likely to occur in these areas (as depicted in Map 5 to the right), these are useful markers in planning the community’s future development. Map 5 shows all hydric soils in Bear Lake Township in yellow. Additionally, farmland with important qualities are categorized as follows: Prime Farmland, Prime Farmland if Drained, Farmland of Local Importance, and Farmland of Unique Importance. For full definitions of each category, please see Appendix D.

Bear Lake Township’s Future Land Use is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7 of this plan. However, by briefly analyzing the maps covered in this section, one can deduce that Bear Lake’s future development is best suited to occur in the northwest quadrant of the Township, along county roads and along US-31 (Chippewa Highway). In directing development to these three areas, Bear Lake Township can ensure that quality farmland is preserved, sprawl is avoided to the extent possible and the rolling hills and natural views that help define the local identity are kept intact.



# 4

# Infrastructure, Facilities & Services

Infrastructure, facilities and services are some of the most critical aspects of any community's health, safety and general well-being. They are the components of the built environment that are often forgotten until they are threatened or rendered useless, at which point they are difficult to ignore. Because of the critical role they play in the day-to-day operations of the community, they are necessary to include in any Master Plan. Bear Lake Township will continue to plan for its infrastructure, facilities and services so that they can adapt and effectively serve members of the public.

## **roads**

Bear Lake Township's economy and transportation are served primarily by US-31. The State of Michigan's Public Act 51, which governs distribution of fuel taxes, requires each local road agency and the Michigan Department of Transportation to report on the condition, mileage, and disbursements for the road and bridge system under its jurisdiction. The Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) system used to report on the condition is a visual survey conducted by transportation professionals that rates the road surface from 1 to 10; roads rated 5 and above are considered to be at least "Fair."

All of the US-31 segments in Bear Lake Township, as well as South Shore Drive, are considered to be in "Poor" condition. Regarding federal aid roads, 8 Mile Road is the only segment with a "Good" rating. Additionally, Bear Lake Township rates its non-federal aid roads every two years using Manistee County Road Commission funds.

## **trails & connectivity**

There are presently no local or regional non-motorized trails in Bear Lake Township. However, as noted in this plan, as well as the 2022-2026 county-wide recreation plan, this is a high priority for the community.

In recent years, two entities have been created that Bear Lake Township should utilize in planning for and implementing trail connections. The first of these in the Friends of SMARTrails, a 501c3 non-

profit. This group is tasked with advocacy for trail development, fundraising and maintenance. The other entity of importance is the Manistee County Recreation Commission, a formal advisory board to the Manistee Board of Commissioners. This entity is responsible for seeking and obtaining grant dollars for trail project implementation. Bear Lake Township, as noted in Chapter 6 of this plan, will collaborate with both entities to plan for and develop trail routes to neighboring jurisdictions.

In addition to county-wide actors, the Township will need to collaborate with Onekama Township, Arcadia Township, and Pleasanton Township, localities also presently lacking in trails.

The Township is interested in promoting safe walking and biking in the vicinity of its two baseball diamonds near the Bear Lake School Forest, located southwest of Bear Lake. Access to the fields is via South Shore Drive, one block north of Potter Road.

## **water & septic**

At the time of this writing, Bear Lake Township does not have a public water or sewer system. This is something that the Township has discussed in the past but a solution regarding this infrastructure has not been decided upon. Presently, residents rely on septic and well systems. The Village of Bear Lake recently adopted a water system and in doing so, has moved away from the use of wells. This system could be expanded in the future to support further development in the township.

In the previous Master Plan, it was noted that density and intensity of development need to be considered as they relate to septic and well systems, as increased development pressures require an additional factor in the ongoing oversight of well and septic system integrity. For example, without a system in which septic tanks are regularly inspected, the Township has less ability to know where potential pollutants may be coming from. One way to help meet this challenge would be for the Township to adopt a program where property owners must periodically show that their septic system is functioning properly.

These environmental issues have garnered some public attention. Citizens have demonstrated their commitment to protecting the health of Bear Lake by forming three separate entities devoted to that purpose. The Bear Lake Property Owners Association was organized in 1970 to collect scientific and legal information with which to educate the community at large as well as riparian property owners. The Lake Improvement Board, created in 2007, has had success in controlling invasive species such as milfoil.

The Bear Lake Watershed Alliance has brought together jurisdictions around the Lake and along Bear Creek, the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy, the Grand Traverse Land Conservancy, the Conservation Resource Alliance and the Manistee County Community Foundation to produce a Greater Bear Lake Watershed Management Plan. The plan was approved in July of 2013.

**power**

Electricity for Bear Lake Township homes and businesses is available from Consumers Energy Company (Jackson) and from the Cherryland Electric Cooperative (Grawn). Natural gas service is available through Superior Energy Company (Kaleva). Service from “alternative energy suppliers” is also available through Michigan’s Electric Customer Choice and Natural Gas Customer Choice programs.

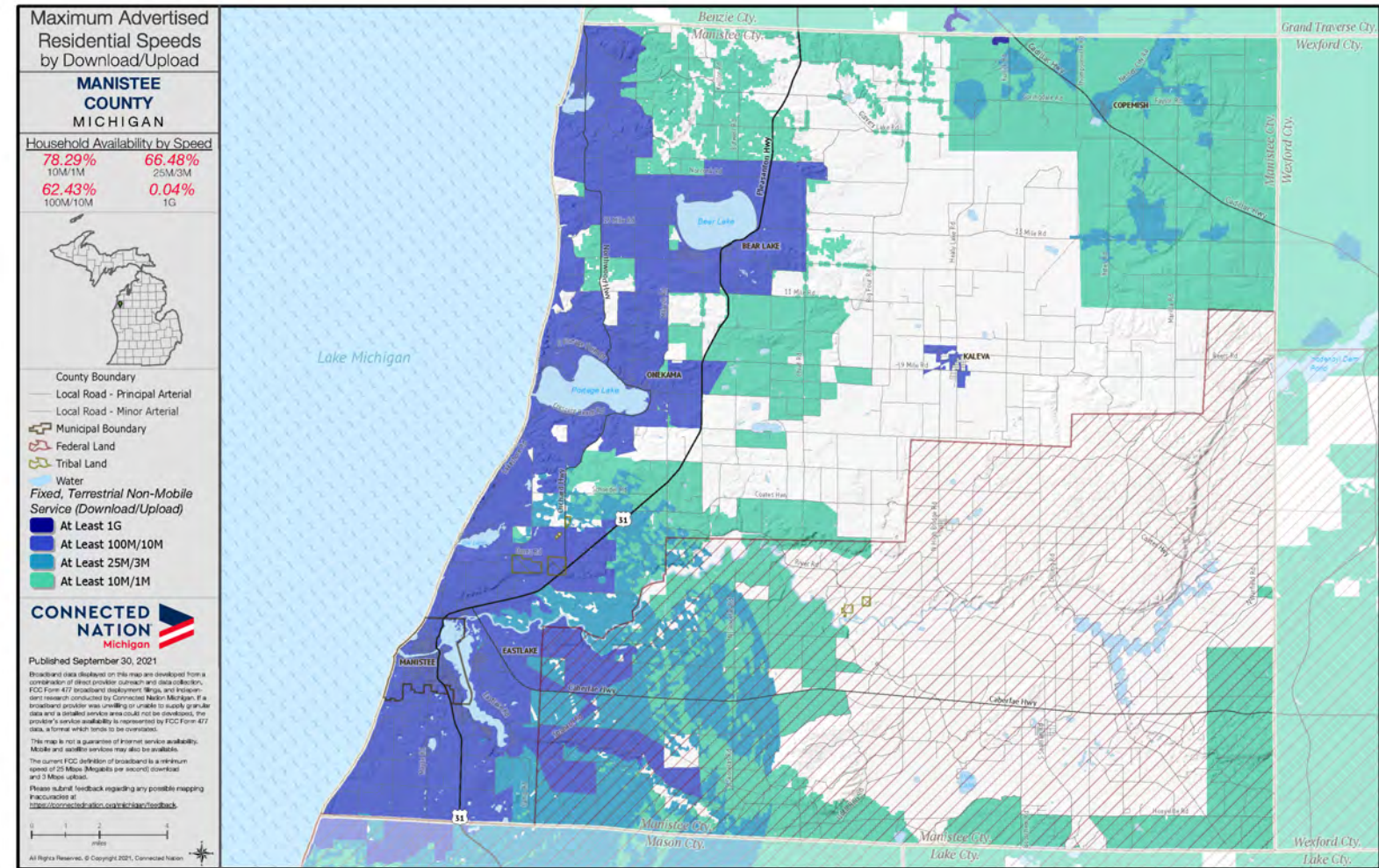
**broadband**

Broadband connectivity became more important in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic when much more of the U.S. population was working from home. This phenomenon showed many communities where they lacked internet connectivity, which has increased in importance for businesses, remote workers and those seeking an education, amongst many others.

Map 6 on the next page presents the maximum advertised residential download/upload speeds in Manistee County as of 2021. This provides some indication of which areas are well connected to internet services and those that are not. One can see that there are relatively strong (at least 100M/10M) speeds in the areas adjacent to Bear Lake. However, this decreases greatly in the southern half of Bear Lake Township.

It is probable that internet connectivity will become an increasingly important factor for people when they decide where to work and live. Bear Lake Township can make itself more attractive to businesses and residents alike if it strives to improve connectivity in the coming years.

**Map 6. Maximum Advertised Residential Speeds by Download/Upload**



connectednation.org

Data Note: Map 6 is accurate as of September 30, 2021. However, Bear Lake Township and Manistee County, at the time of this writing, are seeing expanded broadband connectivity. Therefore, this map provides an anecdotal look at Internet connectivity in the county, but should be reviewed periodically for accuracy.

## police & fire

The Bear Lake Township Fire Department is a rural volunteer fire department with 16 members. The department, from time to time, admits cadets. These are students who are at least 16 years of age and take part in house trainings, shadow fire personnel and help in emergency situations. The department contracts with Pleasanton Township to offer fire and first response rescue services.

Department apparatus includes a 2020 172 Kenworth, a 2019 Chevy Suburban, a 2015 Spartan 171, a 2011 open trailer hauler, a 2011 Kubota UTV rescue/wildland unit, a 2005 Seawolf rescue boat, a 2011 E170 International and a 1984 Wildland truck (on loan from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources).

A 0.75 millage approved by Township voters in August 2013, and renewed in 2022, will allow replacement for these items once by the year 2036 and three times by the year 2065.

## schools

The Bear Lake area is served by one school building, the Bear Lake Schools, located in the Village. Bear Lake Schools consists of an elementary, middle and high school, but since all are located in the same building, the school largely considers itself K-12.

Mentioned previously in Chapter 3, enrollment at Bear Lake Schools was 298 during the 2021-2022 school year. This is down from 359 in 2002, and reflects the community's aging population. Bear Lake Schools allows for open enrollment, but primarily serves residents of Bear Lake Township, the Village of Bear Lake and Pleasanton Township.



# 5 Public Input

## all voices heard

Tangible progress in any community, whether that be development or programming, is more easily implemented when decisions are based on broad consensus. All too often, local decisions are made under the assumption that what is being proposed is broadly supported, only to find out later that certain stakeholder groups and members of the public actually have different opinions. This cycle, wherein the community must go back to the drawing board, is often referred to as 'double-work'. Double-work is defined by inefficiency, meaning greater costs in the end. For this reason, all Master Planning processes seek wide public input.

Over the past several decades, local officials across the country have come to see the immense value in looking for a range of sentiments regarding the many aspects of the community considered during a Master Plan update. Bear Lake Township is no different.

With support from the Township Planning Commission, the planning team employed a variety of input methods to hear what community members think about Bear Lake. This section describes the process, which included a survey, an input session at the Bear Lake School, as well as an input gathering booth at the Bear Lake Days festival. In this way, Bear Lake Township's

decision makers have valuable information that they can use in the coming years to ensure that double-work is avoided and implementation is probable.

In summary, the survey found that the Bear Lake community would like to:

- Maintain scenic views of Bear Lake, farms and orchards
- Develop in a manner that sustains a rural character and protects agriculture
- Implement trails that connect to the region
- Work to reduce the presence of blight and junk
- Prioritize Bear Lake's water quality
- Create a public gathering place

Many of these surveyed topic areas are addressed in the Goals and Objectives chapter of this plan.

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Below - Bear Lake Township residents discuss the community's future at a public input session held at the Bear Lake School library.

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## open house at bear lake schools

Bear Lake Township residents were invited to an open house and Master Plan discussion on June 14, 2022 at the Bear Lake School. Around 15 people attended.

This open house consisted of two main activities. First, attendees participated in a "Gallery Walk" where they observed roughly 60 character images and could place a green dot on those images that they liked and red dot for those they did not want to see in Bear Lake. The character images were derived from a variety of sources and only a few were of Bear Lake itself. Respondents primarily voted for images depicting natural settings, agriculture, small-scale solar, traditional neighborhood design, trails and lake access. Many voted against cluttered and excessive signage, busy commercial corridors, large-scale solar and large housing developments.

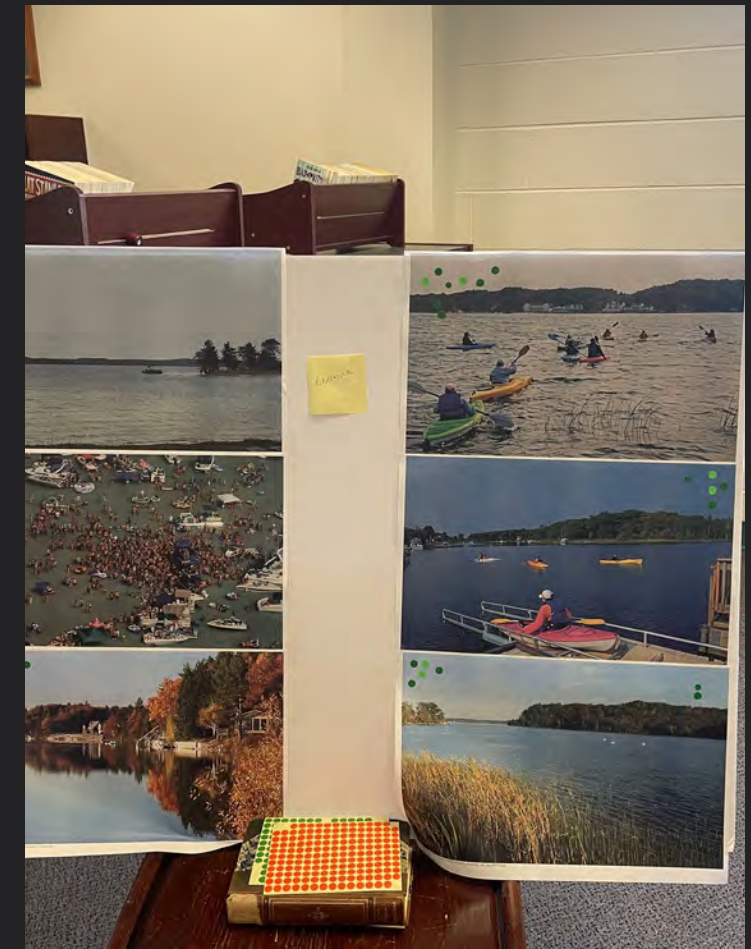
For a full set of character images and their responses, please see Appendix E. It is worth noting that this

activity was used at the open house as well as at Bear Lake Days and responses were been aggregated.

After the gallery walk, the attendees were divided into two groups of 7-8 people and were tasked with answering the following questions aimed at understanding the community's future:

- The year is 2040. What does Bear Lake Township look like if everything goes perfectly?
- The year is 2040. What does Bear Lake Township look like if everything goes wrong?

The groups were asked to focus on various planning topic areas, including: environment, local economy, the US-31 corridor, housing, transportation, agriculture and recreation. Results from this facilitated discussion can be found in Appendix F.



- Think about:
- Environment (especially Be
- Local economy
- US-31 corridor
- Housing
- Transportation
- Agriculture
- Recreation
- Public spaces

### bear lake days

Community planners from Networks Northwest attended the annual Bear Lake Days celebration. The community gathering, which takes place the first week of July, allowed the planning team to gather sentiments from dozens of residents. Those interested in providing input had three different opportunities to do so:

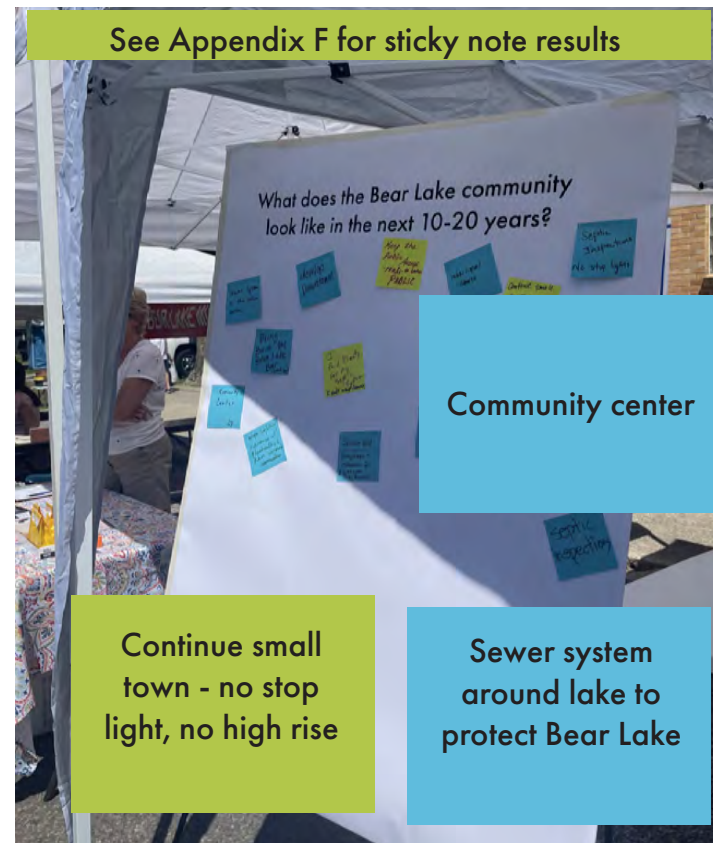
- Dot exercise using the same character images as those used during the open house,
- Sticky note response to the question, “What does Bear Lake Township look like in the next 10-20 years?”, and
- The online survey.

Noted previously, most respondents voted in favor of images depicting natural settings, agriculture, small-scale solar, traditional neighborhood design, trails and lake access. In contrast, most voted against excessive signage, corridors without design standards, large-scale solar and big apartment complexes. As Bear Lake looks to diversify its housing stock, it is also worth noting that people overwhelmingly voted for duplexes with certain design features (see images below). Appendix F lists all input results from Bear Lake Days.



images source: missingmiddlehousing.com

Bear Lake residents generally supported housing aimed at providing more affordable options and increased density, so long as they featured specific design qualities. Namely, as shown in the examples to the left, there was support for duplexes with Craftsman design features. Respondents were less supportive of larger homes on spacious lots, especially when the construction featured few design features.



**public input survey**

From April to July, 2022, those who live, work or recreate in Bear Lake Township were asked to complete an online survey. This survey featured questions regarding Bear Lake’s social fabric, built environment aesthetics, recreation, planning priorities and demographic information. The survey was announced through the Manistee News Advocate and flyers with a QR code were placed throughout the Township and at Bear Lake Days. Full survey results can be found in Appendix G.

Around 80 people completed the survey and the vast majority were Bear Lake Township residents who have lived in Bear Lake for at least 15 years. While the survey is not statistically significant and certainly did not reach certain stakeholder groups (e.g. school-age children), it does provide some insights on the community’s desired outcomes.

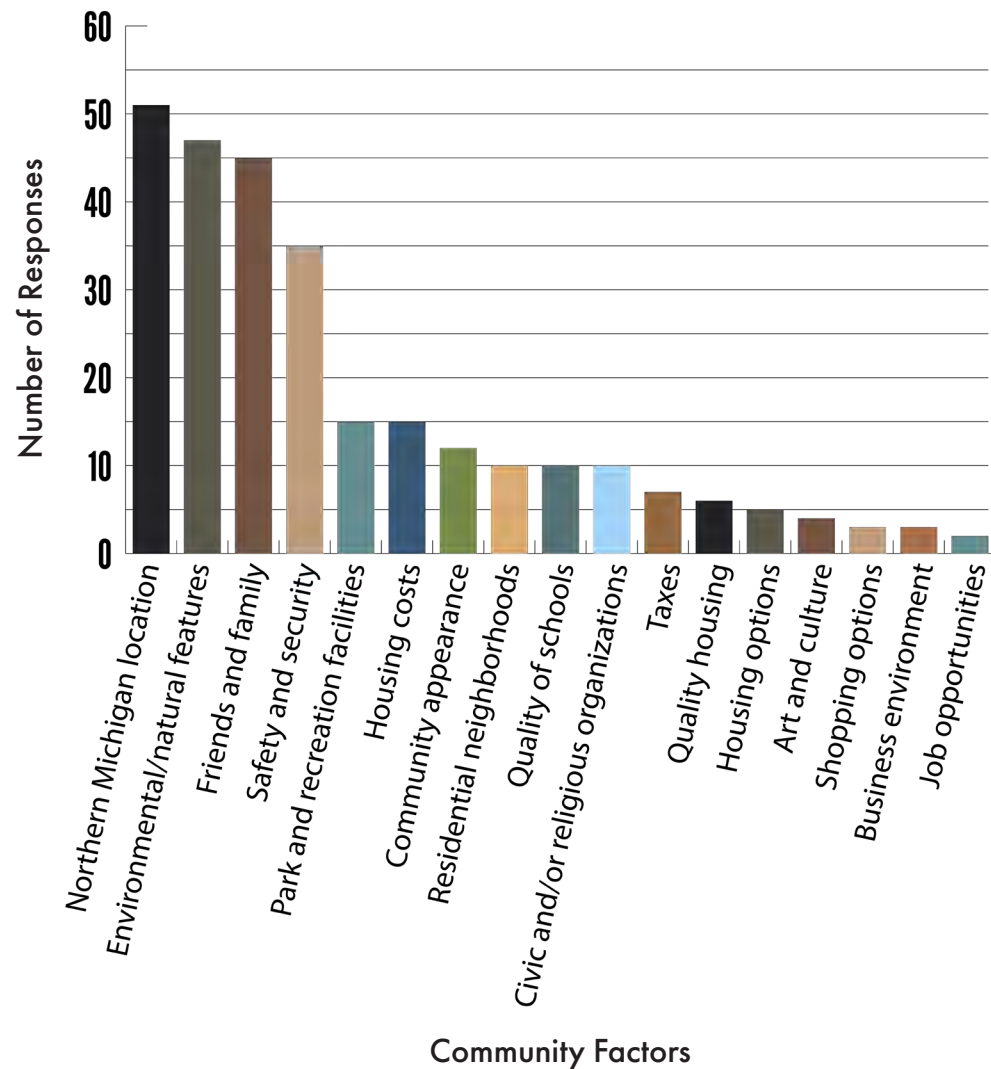
First, as presented in Figure 9, the top factors that affect whether or not respondents choose to remain in Bear Lake Township were as follows: 1) Northern Michigan location, 2) Environmental/natural features and 3) Friends and family. This was consistent with the priorities members of the public thought the master plan should focus on (see Figure 10), which included 1) Maintaining small-town character, 2) Environment/water quality and 3) Community beautification.

Table 7 lists some of the Agree/Disagree statements presented in the survey. These statements and their subsequent respondent answers were mostly consistent with input gathered during the Open House and at Bear Lake Days.

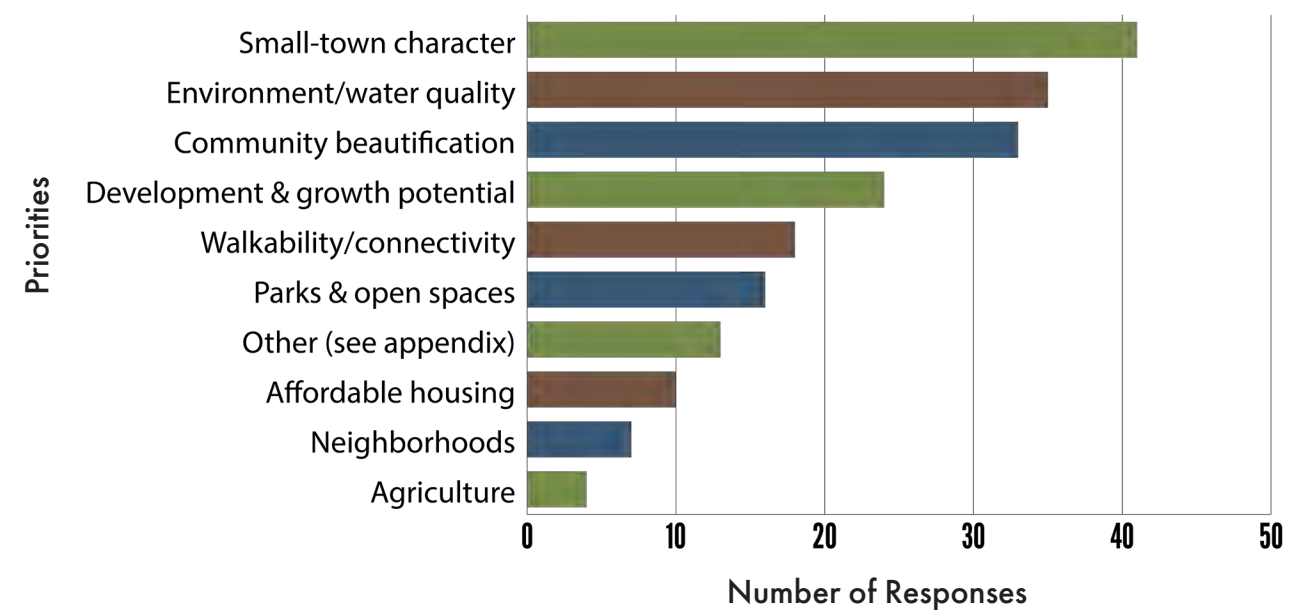
**Table 7. Agree/Disagree Statements**

| Statement  | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Total |
|--|-------|---------|----------|-------|
| It is important for me to remain in the Bear Lake community for as long as possible.   | 60    | 9       | 1        | 70    |
| The streets and sidewalks (if any) in my neighborhood are in good condition  | 25    | 17      | 23       | 68    |
| There should be more local policies in place to help eliminate blight and junk in the community.                             | 50    | 13      | 3        | 66    |
| Bear Lake Township should strive to maintain its rural character.  | 52    | 11      | 5        | 68    |
| It is important that the community maintain scenic views of Bear Lake.   | 67    | 1       | 0        | 68    |
| It is important that the community maintain scenic views of Chief Lake.  | 40    | 28      | 0        | 68    |
| It is important that the community maintain scenic views of its farms and orchards.  | 59    | 9       | 0        | 68    |
| I am able to access a wide range of recreational opportunities in, or in close proximity to, Bear Lake Township.             | 54    | 10      | 3        | 67    |
| Bear Lake Township would benefit from additional trail connections to neighboring communities (motorized and non-motorized). | 55    | 11      | 1        | 67    |
| Bear Lake Township would benefit from a community hall, or other public gathering space.                                     | 38    | 24      | 5        | 67    |

**Figure 9. What are the top 5 factors that inform your decision to continue residing in Bear Lake?**



**Figure 10. What are your top 3 priorities the Bear Lake Township Master Plan should focus on improving?**





The 2017 Manistee County US-31 Corridor Enhancement Plan is an in-depth analysis of the corridor's existing features, including building conditions, land use, sidewalk connections, zoning, curb cuts and more. The 2017 planning team used this initial inventory to inform intensive public input around the corridor's desired development features. The plan's recommendations combine the inventory of the corridor's features, best practices and the public's input. This comprehensive corridor plan is a useful guiding document in Bear Lake's Master Plan update, as well as its ensuing zoning ordinance update. The plan was reviewed as part of the updated Master Plan's development and supports many of the land use management practices desired by the public along US-31. For this reason, much of this section is quoted from the 2017 Manistee County US-31 Corridor Enhancement Plan. Map 7 is also found in said planning document.

## US-31 Corridor

The portion of US-31 that passes through Bear Lake Township is an economic and environmental driver for the community. It should continue to act as a widely used mode of transportation, and in turn, an attractive location for businesses. However, in acting as such, the corridor should also maintain those features that help it contribute to the community's rural character and aesthetic quality. Therefore, this section of the plan is almost entirely adapted from the 2017 corridor plan. Its purpose is to summarize the design recommendations from the 2017 plan in the context of Bear Lake Township and to help the Township to define the built environment features it desires at certain points along US-31. This, in addition to the goals and objectives, Future Land Use Plan and Zoning Plan will justify the necessary zoning changes meant to preserve the aesthetic quality of this important corridor.

**transect zones on the US-31 corridor**

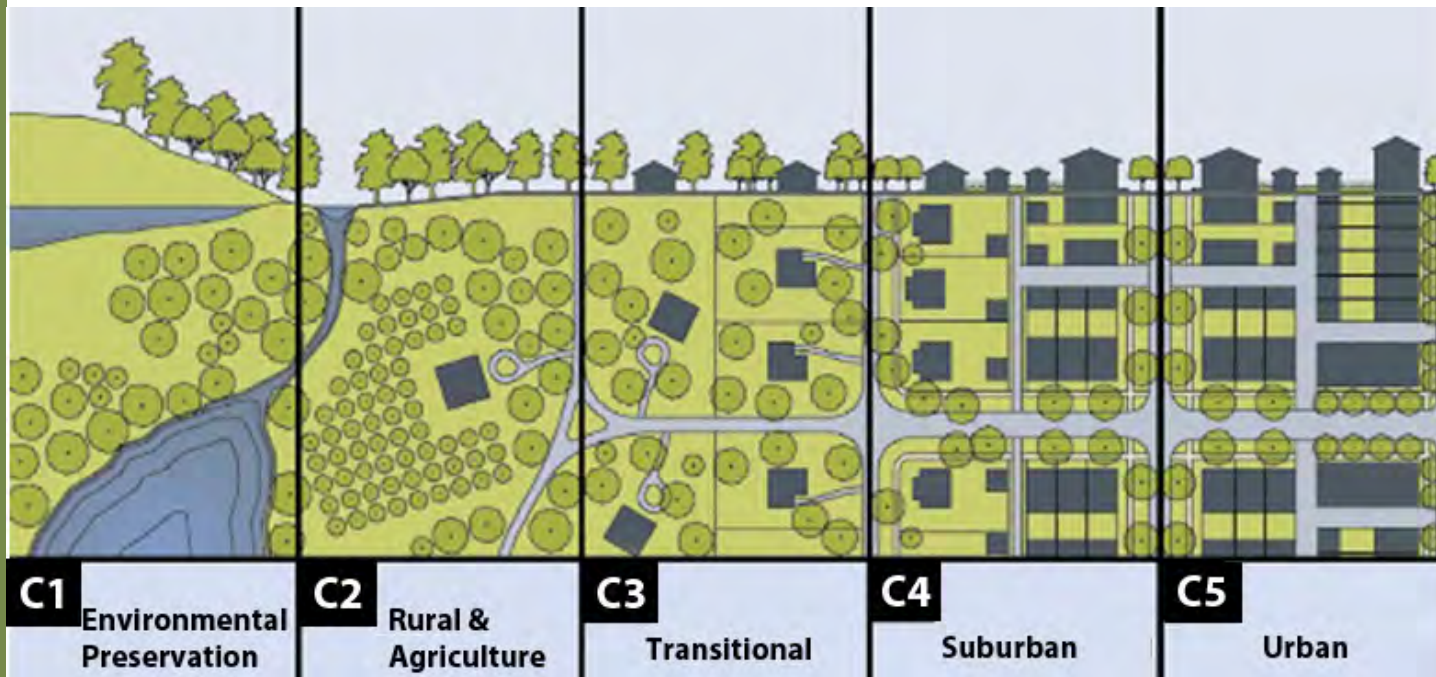
Much of the development features and planning in the 2017 corridor enhancement plan are based on Transect Zones, a planning concept that breaks landscapes into five categories, from rural to urban (see Figure 11).

The purpose of conceptualizing the built environment in this way is that it classifies what is already occurring in the built environment (in this case, the areas along US-31) in order to determine what aesthetic qualities are best suited in each category. For example, a billboard sign may be deemed appropriate in the C-3 Transitional Zone, but the community may only

want monument and wall-mounted signs in its C-4 Suburban Zone. In other words, Transect Zones help to ensure that the rural to urban transition flows cohesively and that the built environment features in each are complementary to one another.

Bear Lake Township, as presented in Map 7, consists of zones C-2 to C-4 (Rural & Agriculture to Suburban). Bear Lake Village would be considered C-5 Urban due to its relatively high density. The following pages describe the various design features considered and what Bear Lake residents do and do not want to see in each transect zone.

Figure 11. Transect Character Zones

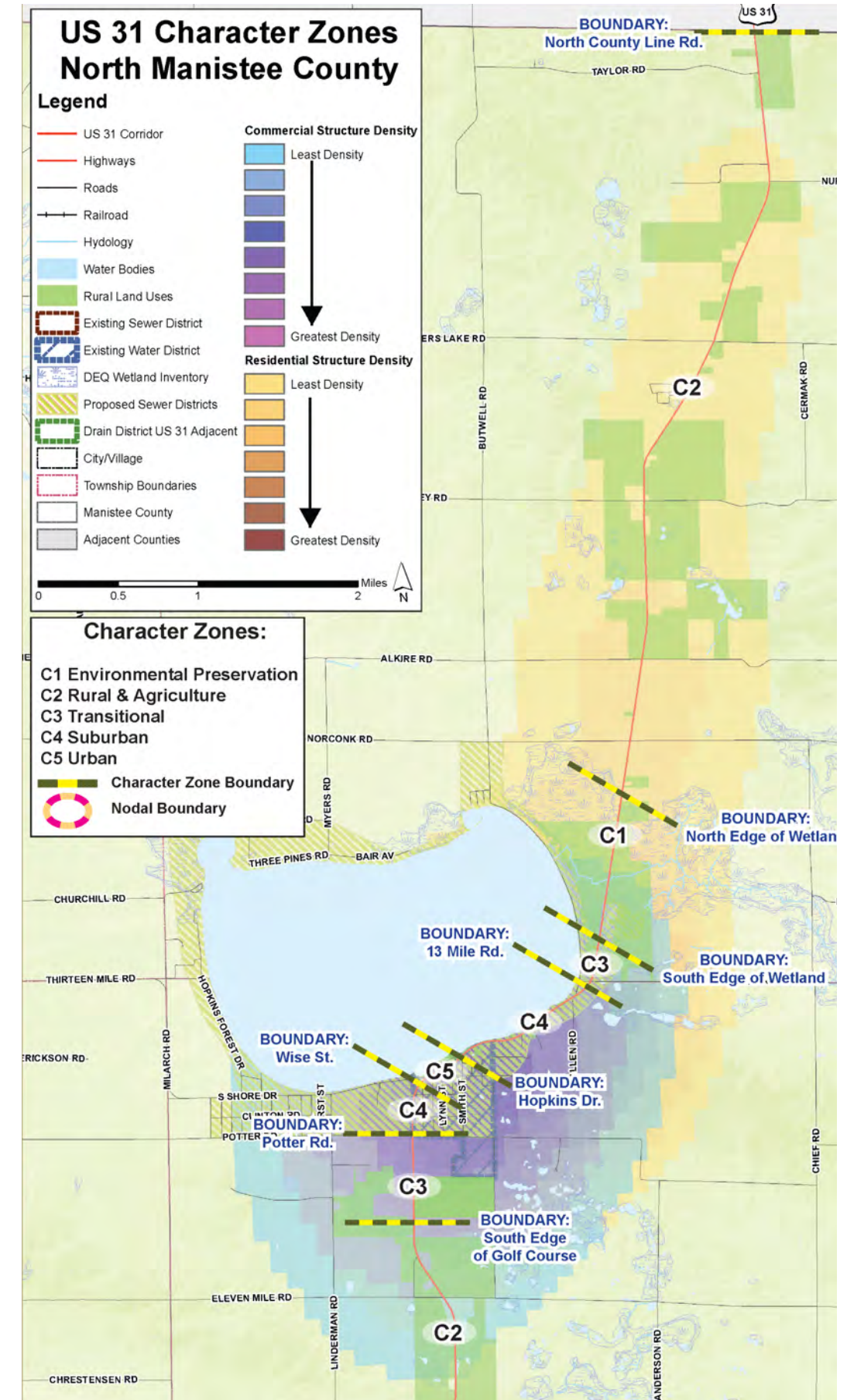


“The rural-to-urban Transect is a system that places all of the elements of the built environment in useful order, from most rural to most urban. For example, a street is more urban than a road, a curb more urban than a swale, a brick wall more urban than a wooden one, and greater density is more urban than less density. If all of the built elements are in sync, the place can be described as "immersive." The elements are symbiotic.

Naturalists use the transect concept to describe the characteristics of ecosystems and the transition from one ecosystem to another. Andres Duany and other urbanists applied this concept to human settlements, and since about 2000 this idea has permeated the thinking of new urbanists.”

Steuteville, R. (2017). Great idea: The rural-to-urban transect. Center for New Urbanism.

Map 7. Manistee County Character Zones



Aesthetic standards are integral to promoting development patterns that maintain the rural character that so many in the Bear Lake community want to see remain intact. Large strip development is ever-present in communities that do not take the time to ensure their zoning meets their desired built environment. In some instances, the locality may accept that visual aesthetics are not a priority. However, the portion of the US-31 corridor that passes through Bear Lake is replete with orchard views, rolling hills and ultimately, character worth preserving. All of these potential standards are meant to act in balance with the community’s desire to grow its economic base and attract businesses.

The following best practices for built environment aesthetics are taken directly from the 2017 Manistee County US-31 Corridor Management Plan. They are included as a prerequisite for any zoning updates Bear Lake Township may want to make as it strives to maintain the community’s aesthetic quality and rural character.

**landscaping**

“Landscaping trends along corridors take advantage of different styles that can drastically change the look and the way people use the land adjacent to the corridor. It is important to safeguard rural landscapes so that the intrinsic quality that is considered “Up North Michigan” is preserved while simultaneously safeguarding intact tracts of agricultural land.

Trees lining the road that are placed between the sidewalk and the road provide a buffer between a pedestrian and cars resulting in a much more pleasing and safer environment. Often low shrubs with plantings fill in space adding character. Rain gardens, and other green infrastructure methods, are becoming more common as a way to deal with storm water runoff. The use of interesting brick, or cement stamped pavers allow for the visual delineation of where pedestrians may be found within the road. In

keeping with the high percentage of properties that utilize the full complement of landscaping treatments (which accounts for 48% of the total number of properties found along the corridor), regulatory measures should be developed to ensure this positive trend in private property beautification continues and that it will be in keeping with current trends that help support existing efforts. Guidelines that call for the use of landscaping materials such as trees, shrubs, and flowers should be encouraged.”



**form versus use**

“What happens within the building, while important, does not supersede how the building functions, looks, and interacts with its surroundings and people. Consideration must be given to how the building looks (facade- use of windows, building materials), location of the building on the property (closer to the road with most of the parking in the rear), and scale (large buildings that make it unattractive for a pedestrian to walk by). Front stoops, windows, and other architectural design features on public property should be required to face US 31 in order to prevent a solid wall of building material which is visually unattractive, unwelcoming, and limits character development worth aspiring to.”

**signage**

“Signs are important aspects to business identification. The residents of Manistee County expressed in the public input session that they prefer monument and wall signs rather than pole and temporary signs. This is also in keeping with what type of signs newer development is choosing. Continue to promote the leading practice and market driven trend in using monument signage with or without a wall sign. Eliminate all allowances for pole, temporary, and/or window signage.”

**facades**

“The use of a specific material for a facade treatment for buildings is determined at the sole discretion of a property owner. Maintenance expenses, historic preservation goals, or simply preference play a role in selecting the material for a building’s facade. However, it is important that buildings are maintained and kept from becoming blighted. If enough building owners are in need of a facade “face lift” then collaborative opportunities may exist to find assistance to improve building appearances.”

**parking**

“Continue the trend as set by new development of side and rear yard parking for all development except in the urban areas where no front parking should be allowed, unless on-street.”

**low impact development**

“Low impact development is a design strategy that works to reduce the impact of development in areas considered unique, sensitive, or are earmarked for rural scenic preservation. Areas targeted for low impact development include watershed areas, significant environmental areas, and areas where rural and scenic character preservation is a goal. Consideration to ensuring development proposals contain low impact development measures means that they incorporate best management practices such as:

- Rain gardens
- Construction filters
- Detention/Retention basins
- Infiltration practices
- Native vegetation
- Pervious pavement with infiltration
- Planter boxes
- Riparian buffer restoration requirements
- Soil restoration measures
- Vegetated filter strips, greenroofs, and swales

The benefit of low impact development design strategies is that they provide a high level of water quality treatment controls, are aesthetically pleasing, and ensure water quality for our lakes and streams.”

### open space preservation

“The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, known as Act 451 of 1994 allows local communities the right to regulate land uses in sensitive areas. In consideration to protection of environmentally sensitive areas preservation and integration tools and methods may be deployed to honor environmentally sensitive areas while at the same time accommodating new development.

To preserve environmentally sensitive areas, whether state or federally regulation, communities may utilize any number of natural preservation tools such as:

- Conservation easements
- Incentive zoning
- Large-lot zoning
- Clustering and conservation subdivision

Integrating new development proposals into significant natural areas so that it coexists with

natural features allowing them to remain largely undisturbed is best done by utilizing the site plan review process (within zoning ordinances). Site plan review will ensure that the zoning ordinances setback requirements, which should be larger than typical for development in the district due to the desire to protect environmentally sensitive areas, are enforced.

The use of the zoning ordinance to protect environmentally sensitive and significant areas may lay out requirements for the use of cluster development and conservation design requirements, large lots, additional soil erosion requirements, percent lot coverage requirements, as well as other tools.

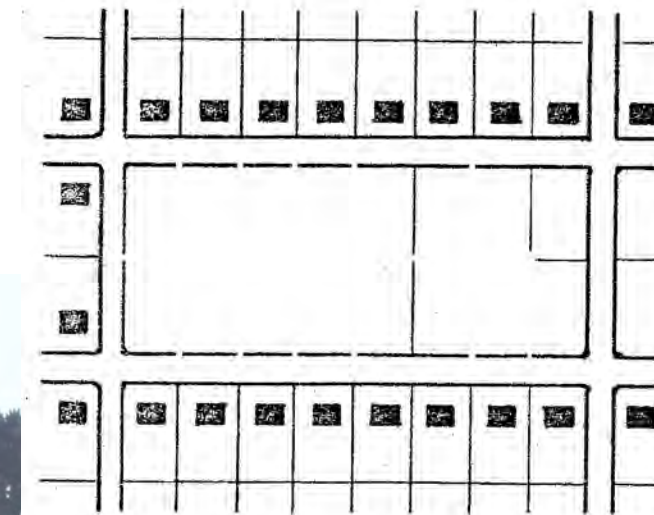
The use of development incentives to protect environmentally sensitive areas and the rural character is encouraged.”

### cluster development

Cluster development is a commonly used planning practice that functions to preserve natural features and agricultural lands. It works in a manner shown in Figure 12 below. Developers are incentivized to develop smaller lots in order to maintain certain areas as they are currently. For example, rather than having 40 one acre parcels developed on prime agricultural land, the developer could create 80 quarter-acre parcels and preserve the other 20 acres of prime farmland.

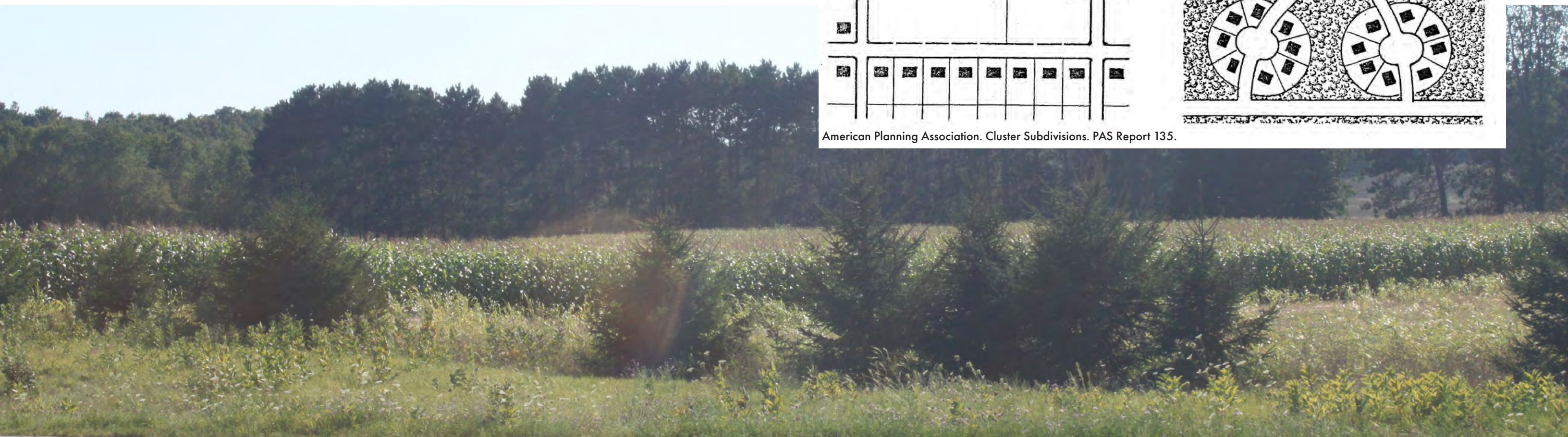
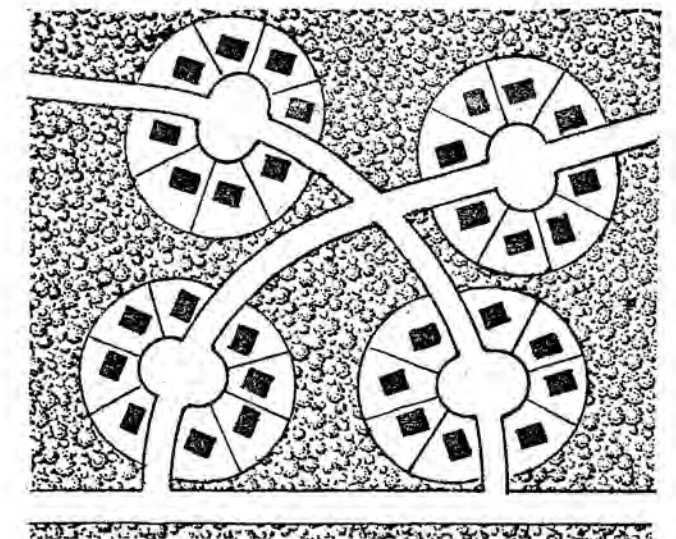
In that case, the farmer is still able to sell his or her land, the developer is able to create housing and the community maintains an important resource.

Figure 12. Cluster Development



American Planning Association. Cluster Subdivisions. PAS Report 135.

Cluster development is one tool that Bear Lake Township can use to ensure that if development pressure grows, especially along the US-31 corridor and near prime farmland, that it can be accommodated while still preserving the features of the community that residents value. While this planning tool was not discussed in the Corridor Plan, it is nonetheless a practice identified by the Township Planning Commission as one that can help preserve farmland while still supporting development.



The following Transect Zone descriptions are taken directly from the 2017 Manistee County US-31 Corridor Enhancement Plan. Figure 13 on the next page shows rendered before-and-after images of what the US-31 corridor would look like if it adopted the best practices described previously in this chapter.

**rural (C-2)**

“The Agriculture and Rural Character Zone is undoubtedly one of the most important features that defines “Northern Michigan”...and is home to a significant industrial sector that provides a substantial amount of financial returns for the region. Ensuring that the Agriculture and Rural Character Zone remains in tact is vital to our economy. What defines the Agricultural & Rural Character Zones are the sweeping vistas of the actively cultivated orchards and fields of crops as well as their associated farmhouses and barns. Other land uses may be found but are located in a commercial node that has businesses that service the agricultural and outdoor community. The agricultural and outdoor commercial node is small in area, compact, and located at the intersection of Nine Mile and US 31. Cultural assets, such as churches, township halls, and cemeteries are the other land uses that are found in the Agricultural and Rural Character Zone. There are no sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, or curbs.”

**transition (C-3)**

“This area may be found between the Suburban Character Zone and the rural areas of the corridor (or Rural Character Zone). It is where some residential houses and businesses may be found lining the road but the density is low and the lots are large. The type of commercial development found is related to agriculture or rural living (for example: outdoor retail) but also may be geared toward recreational uses. A large portion of the land is used for agriculture. There are few curb cuts, no lighting, or sidewalks. The area is not walkable. Buildings are set back from the road with one row of parking in the front and the rest of the parking located on the side or in the rear. This area is the interface between medium density and very little density.”

**suburban (C-4)**

“The Suburban Character Zone in Manistee County... is defined as areas that may lay adjacent to the Urban Character Zone, has a mix of uses (commercial and residential) that are more densely located together, and provides a wide range of services and goods to the region. Suburban Character Zones have the following attributes: sidewalk to encourage walkability, lighting is available for the road and pedestrian sidewalks and pathways, trees that are located between the sidewalk and the road, provide an uncluttered view of the corridor through burying overhead utility lines, have shared service drives and inter-connectivity within development, and utilize monument and wall signage. Buildings are located closer to the road, may contain one row of parking in the front but most parking is located on the side or rear of the building. Parking lots have landscaping. Curb cuts are kept at a minimum as internal connectivity and service drives lessen the number of access points to US 31 allowing for the continued flow of traffic. Waste water collection and treatment systems are reserved only for the areas that show the greatest need based on demand and availability of capacity.”

**urban (C-5)**

“The Urban Character C5 Zone hosts a mix of uses that creates vibrancy and energy. Businesses, residential and industrial uses are mixed with entertainment and recreation. Buildings are located closer to the road with parking in the rear. Trees line the road and are located between the sidewalk and the road. Lighting is provided and signs are on monuments or the building walls. The Urban C5 Zone is in areas that have the largest population, are the most walkable due to sidewalks, and is seen as an epicenter of the County.”

Figure 13. Character Zone Renderings

Rural (C-2)



Transition (C-3)



Suburban (C-4)



Urban (C-5)







# 6 Goals & Objectives



Priority 1 - Requires immediate attention  
 Priority 2 - Requires attention in the next 5-10 years  
 Priority 3 - Should be addressed if time and resources permit

**Goal 1: Bear Lake Township’s housing and neighborhoods will support a range of lifestyles and will match the community’s rural aesthetic.**

| <u>Objectives</u>   | <u>Priority</u> | <u>Time</u> | <u>Responsible Party(ies)</u>                             |
|---|-----------------|-------------|---|
| Reduce the minimum floor area requirement for residential buildings to 800 sq feet. For housing units 800 to 999 sq feet in size, mandate certain design standards. | 1               | 2023-2024   | Planning Commission, Township Board                       |
| Update Bear Lake Township’s junk and blight ordinance to meet local needs. Ensure enforcement is occurring.   | 1               | 2023-2024   | Planning Commission, Township Board, Zoning Administrator |
| Update setback requirements in residentially zoned districts to reduce the number of variance requests and non-conformities.  | 1               | 2023-2024   | Planning Commission, Township Board                       |
| Create and implement aesthetic standards along US-31  | 1               | 2023-2024   | Planning Commission, Township Board                       |

**Goal 2. Bear Lake Township will be an attractive place for businesses to locate, grow and remain. Businesses will complement the community’s character and workforce.**

| <u>Objectives</u>   | <u>Priority</u> | <u>Time</u>  | <u>Responsible Party(ies)</u>  |
|---|-----------------|--------------|--|
| Collaborate with the Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce to attract and retain small businesses (locally-owned)                                 | 1               | 2023-2026    | Planning Commission, Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce, Township Board |
| Limit drive-thru restaurants in the Township  | 1               | 2023-2024    | Planning Commission, Township Board                                    |
| Promote local agriculture through various means (farm markets, farm stands, farm to restaurant/schools) by working with the farming community | 3               | As available | Planning Commission  |
| Allow small-scale solar on active agriculture properties and personal solar on residential properties   | 1               | 2023-2024    | Planning Commission, Township Board                                    |

**Goal 3. The natural environment in Bear Lake Township will be as minimally affected by the built environment as possible. The natural environment will be a highly prioritized factor in determining the use and form of development.**

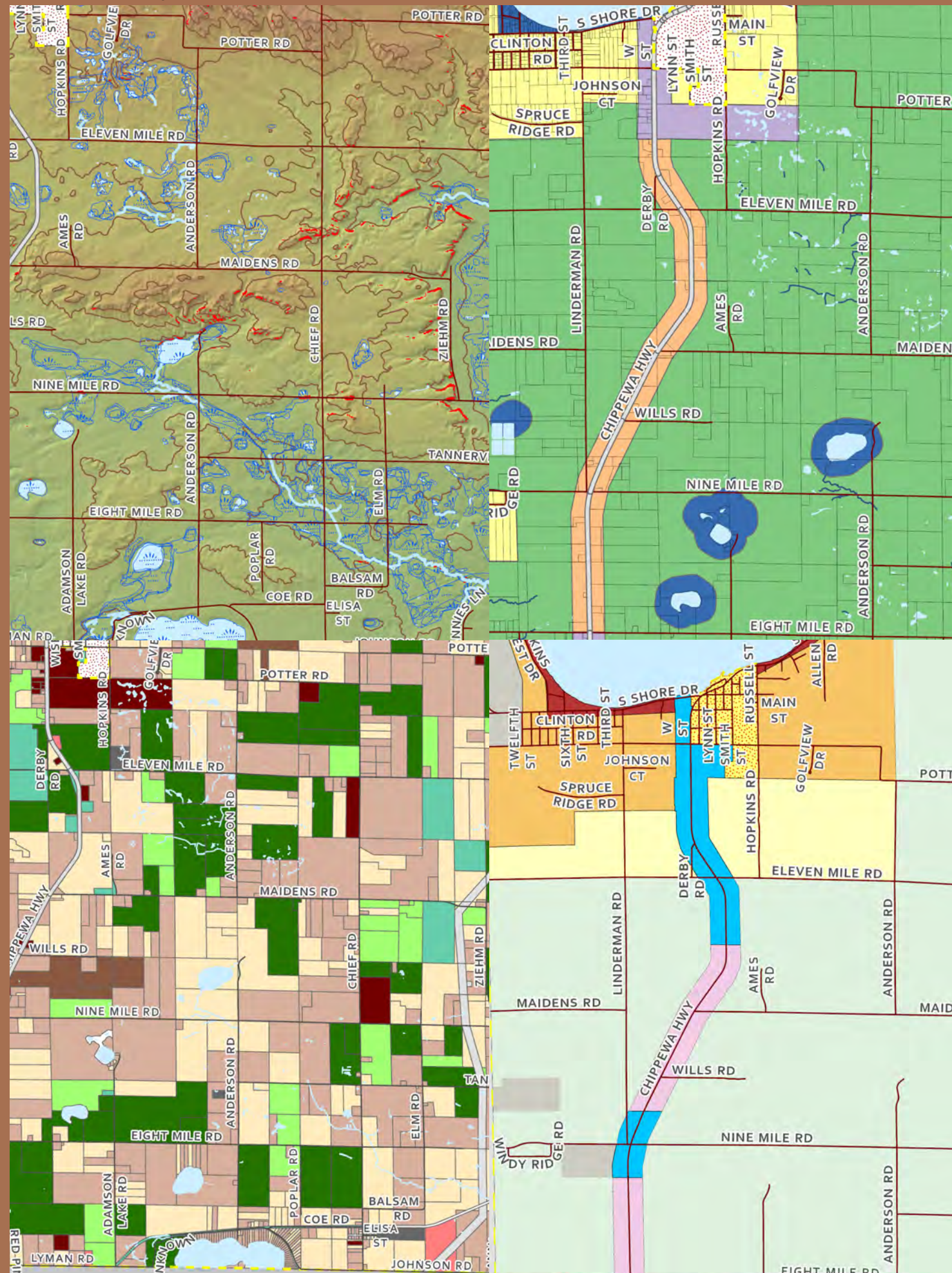
| Objectives   | Priority | Time    | Responsible Party(ies)  |
|--|----------|---------|---|
| Continue to coordinate with local stakeholder groups on water quality testing and other objectives set in the 2013 Greater Bear Watershed Management Plan. | 2        | Ongoing | Manistee County, Bear Lake Watershed Alliance, Bear Creek Watershed Council, Alliance For Economic Success, Manistee County Community Foundation, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, Bear Lake Property Owners, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Forest Service, Conservation Resource Alliance, Spirit of the Woods, Michigan DNR and EGLE, and local businesses |
| Continue to prohibit the use of phosphorous-containing fertilizers on lawns.   | 2        | Ongoing | Resident awareness, Bear Lake Watershed Alliance  |
| Continue to support the objectives of the Manistee Conservation District and Watershed Council   | 3        | Ongoing | Planning Commission, Township Board   |
| Continue to maintain the special assessment to manage invasive species on Bear Lake.   | 1        | Ongoing | Township Board, Bear Lake Improvement Board   |

**Goal 4. Transportation in Bear Lake will be safe, efficient and will feature various means of getting to the places people want to go.**

| Objectives   | Priority | Time      | Responsible Party(ies)  |
|--|----------|-----------|---|
| Maintain a representative with the Friends of SMARTtrails non-profit to support regional trail connections to and from Bear Lake | 1        | Ongoing   | Township Board  |
| Develop a motorized and non-motorized trail route from Bear Lake to Onekama  | 3        | 2026-2027 | Planning Commission, Township Board, Friend of SMARTTrails, Manistee County Recreation Commission |

**Goal 5. Bear Lake Township is a place for families and community and will, therefore, have a variety of quality public spaces.**

| Objectives   | Priority | Time      | Responsible Party(ies)              |
|--|----------|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| Develop a new fire station and Township hall on US-31  | 1        | 2023      | Township Board                      |
| Develop a park next to 11th Street on the property owned by Bear Lake Township                 | 2        | 2024-2025 | Township Board                      |
| Implement the objectives outlined in the 2022-2026 Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan | 3        | Ongoing   | Planning Commission, Township Board |
| Coordinate with Pleasanton Township and Bear Lake Village to assess water access gaps          | 3        | Ongoing   | Township Board                      |



# 7 Land Use

# land use, zoning & planning for the future

This chapter, the last in the Master Plan, lays out various ways of understanding land in Bear Lake Township. For clarity, each of the different conceptualizations is summarized below, and is described in greater detail throughout the chapter.

## existing land use

Bear Lake’s existing land use refers to the assessed uses on each parcel within the Township. The Township Assessor looks at each parcel and notes whether it is residential, commercial, industrial etc. This provides insight as to how different parts of the community are functioning presently.

## future land use

The Future Land Use Plan and its associated map are not legally binding on their own. They are conceptual and help planners and local officials to make zoning decisions in the future. For instance, the community may want to place most new commercial development in a single area or along specific corridors. Even though the local zoning may permit commercial development in other areas, this is where the community is most wanting to see development occur. In other words, the Future Land Use Plan is how the community would preferably develop, but is not necessarily how it will turn out given all of the real world factors that affect land use. However, zoning decisions should be based on, to a degree, the Future Land Use Plan and Map.

## current zoning

The zoning of a parcel refers to the local regulations in place that determine what activities can and cannot occur there. For example, there are different zoning classifications for residential parcels. One may allow greater density and setback requirements, even though both are considered residential in their assessed use.

## zoning plan

The Zoning Plan is an accumulation of the other three plans and states the desired zoning changes based on the others. It considers the way land is currently used, how it is currently zoned and how the community wants to develop in the future. Upon synthesizing each of these, the zoning plan lays out some of the changes the community will seek to make in order to meet its goals.

Map 8. Assessed Land Uses

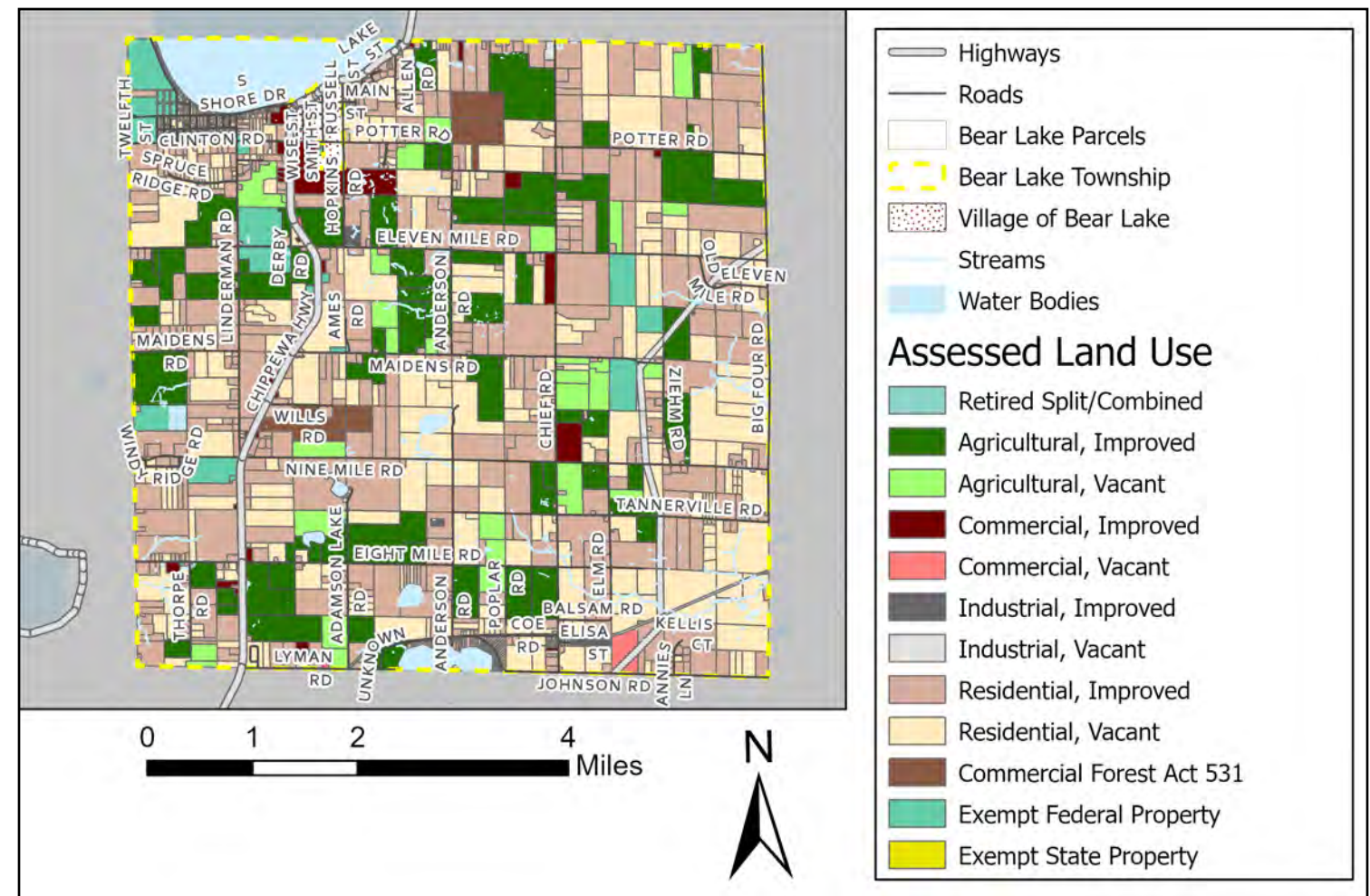


Table 8. Assessed Land Uses by Acres & Percent

| Assessed Use                              | Acres  | Percent |
|---|--------|---------|
| 001 (Retired Split/Combined)              | 163.8  | 0.7%    |
| 101 (Agricultural, Improved)              | 3826.1 | 16.9%   |
| 102 (Agricultural, Vacant)                | 1048.4 | 4.6%    |
| 201 (Commercial, Improved)                | 441.3  | 1.9%    |
| 202 (Commercial, Vacant)                  | 65.3   | 0.3%    |
| 210 (Commercial, Building on Leased Land) | 0.0    | 0.0%    |
| 301 (Industrial, Improved)                | 52.4   | 0.2%    |
| 302 (Industrial, Vacant)                  | 207.4  | 0.9%    |
| 401 (Residential, Improved)               | 9104.9 | 40.1%   |
| 402 (Residential, Vacant)                 | 6630.9 | 29.2%   |
| 502 (Commercial Forest Act 531)           | 339.2  | 1.5%    |
| 701 (Exempt Federal Property)             | 818.8  | 3.6%    |
| 702 (Exempt State Property)               | 2.3    | 0.0%    |

Manistee County Equalization Department (Table 8 and Map 8)

**future land use categories**

Lake Residential

The Lake Residential district refers to those residential areas adjacent to or near to Bear Lake and Chief Lake. These areas are largely intended to be single-family detached structures on small lots. Because of their close proximity to environmentally sensitive areas, these lots should have relatively little impervious surfaces and should, to the extent possible, not allow runoff into the lakes.

Neighborhood Residential

The Neighborhood Residential district should, in terms of density and aesthetics, be a continuation of the Township and Village’s existing neighborhoods. That is to mean that they should have small to medium lots that connect to the existing street-grid patterns. While some civic uses will match the neighborhood aesthetic, this Future Land Use category would mostly consist of single-family detached, single-family attached and multi-family households.

Rural Residential

This area of the Township contains single-family homes for year-round and seasonal use, located on large lots. Some lots are used for farming and/or timber management. It is the intent of this designation to continue these uses while encouraging slightly larger lots in order to maintain well and septic integrity, private road standards to ensure emergency service access, and rural and scenic character preservation. Some agricultural commercial uses are allowed, and it is the intent of this designation to continue to support and promote agricultural opportunities. Other uses customarily found within a rural area are allowed, in keeping with the scenic rural preservation of the Township. Single-family residential development will continue, attracting seasonal and permanent residents.

Public/Civic

Public/Civic land use includes properties that are owned by local units of government within the Township. In Bear Lake Township, they include Bear Lake Public Schools in the Village and along Milarch Road north of Potter Road, Township Hall and Fire Station, Township Cemetery on Maidens Road, Fairview Cemetery, Village of Bear Lake Village Hall, properties owned by the Village of Onekama that are used as part of their sanitary sewer and solid waste system, and the Manistee County Road Commission office and maintenance yard on Nine Mile Road.

Agriculture and Forest

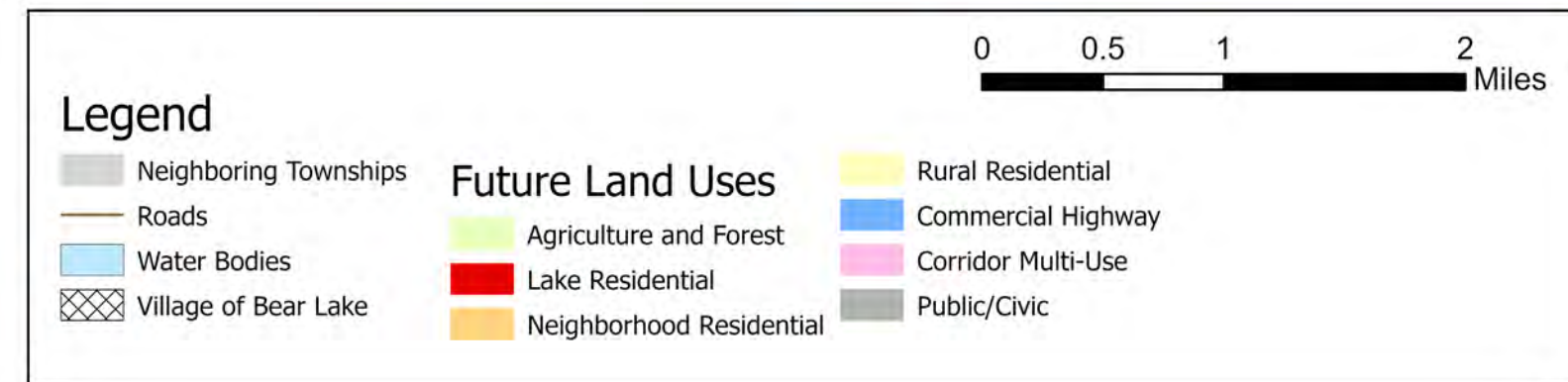
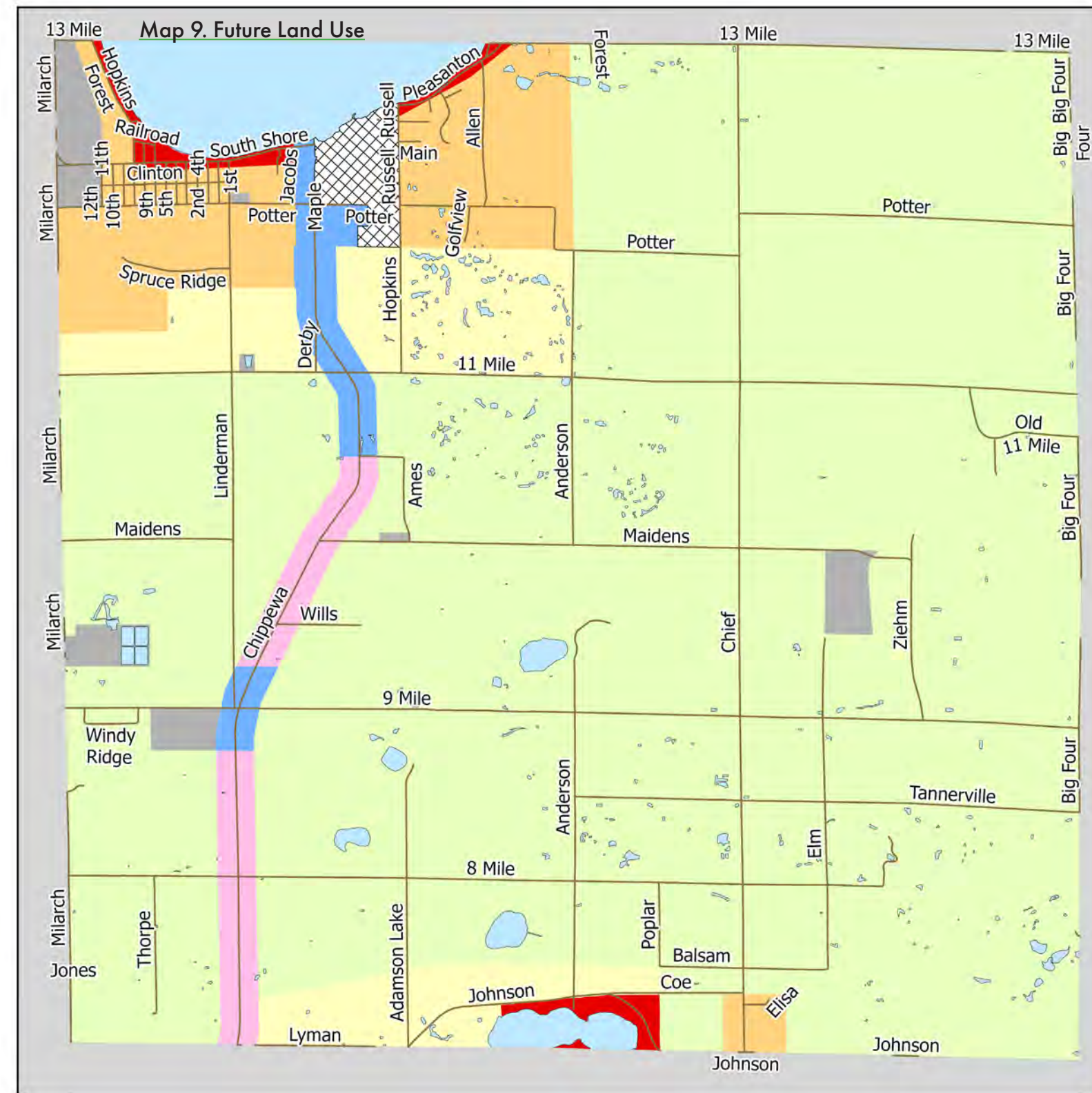
This land use category identifies agricultural and forest (lumber harvesting) as the primary land use. Residences that are associated with the farm operation are found in this category, along with sporadic large-lot (40 acre) rural residences. The focus of this land use category is farming. This land use category is also aimed at preserving farmland and scenic views, meaning that there should be large road setbacks and certain other design standards in place to ensure the Township’s agricultural character is maintained.

Commercial Highway

The Commercial Highway district includes land uses and businesses typically seen in an auto-oriented environment (auto repair, hardware, chain stores, car washes, motels, banks, etc.). This district is located towards the northern end of US-31 entering the Village of Bear Lake, as well as at nodes along US-31, including 8-Mile Road and 9-Mile Road.

Corridor Multi-Use

The purpose of this district is to allow for residential and commercial development while preserving scenic views along US-31. This may include, but is not limited to: signs managed for time, manner and place; larger lot sizes; large setbacks; required road frontage; screening requirements; and parking in the rear of businesses. Businesses in this district should primarily include those related to agriculture.

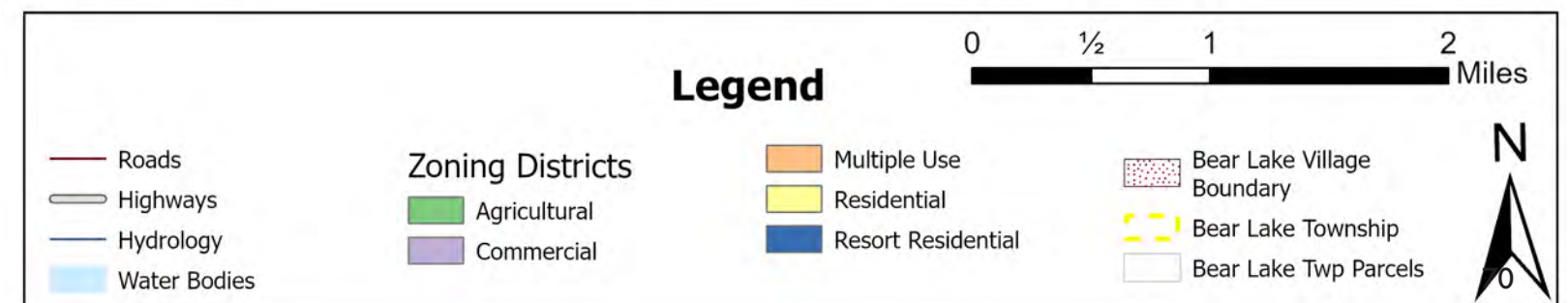
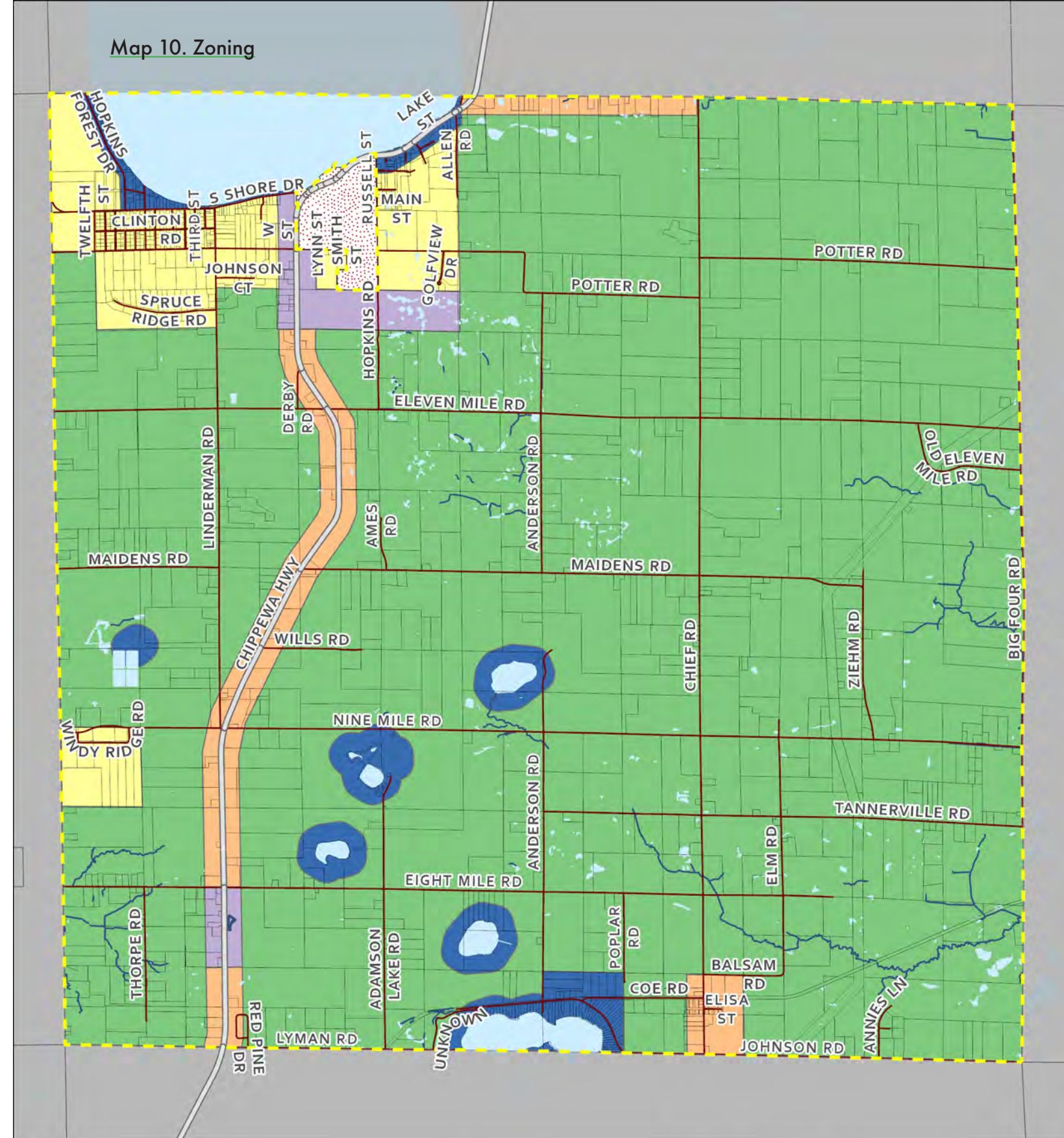


### zoning plan

According to Section 2(d) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008), a Master Plan must include a Zoning Plan that depicts the various zoning districts and their use, as well as standards for height, bulk, location, and use of buildings and premises. The Zoning Plan serves as the basis for the Zoning Ordinance and guides any changes made to the existing Zoning Ordinance as a result of the master planning process

| FLU District(s)          | Appropriate Zoning District | Setbacks as of 2022                   | Minimum Parcel Area | Minimum Road Frontage | Minimum Floor Area | Minimum Parcel Width | Proposed Updates   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--|
| Lake Residential         | Resort Residential RR-1     | Front: 50'<br>Rear: 20'<br>Side: 20'  | 20,000 sq ft        | 100 ft                | 1,000 sq ft        | 100 ft               | Update accessory dwelling unit standards   |
| Neighborhood Residential | Residential R-1             | Front: 50'<br>Rear: 20'<br>Side: 20'  | 20,000 sq ft        | 100 ft                | 1,000 sq ft        | 100 ft               | Update accessory dwelling unit standards; Reduce minimum floor area subject to design standards  |
| Rural Residential        |                             |                                       |                     |                       |                    |                      |  |
| Agriculture & Forest     | Agriculture AG-1            | Front: 50'<br>Rear: 20'<br>Side: 20'  | 1 acre              | 200 ft                | 850 ft             | 200 ft               | Increase minimum parcel area; Include cluster development standards for residential uses   |
| Rural Residential        |                             |                                       |                     |                       |                    |                      |  |
| Commercial Highway       | Commercial C-1              | Front: 100'<br>Rear: 20'<br>Side: 20' | 40,000 sq ft        | 150 ft                | 850 sq ft          | 150 ft (throughout)  | Reduce minimum lot size; Reduce front setback  |
| Corridor Multi-Use       | Multiple Use M-1            | Front: 100'<br>Rear: 20'<br>Side: 20' | 40,000 sq ft        | 150 ft                | 850 sq ft          | 150 ft               | Add landscaping requirements; Require parking in back of principal structure; Add sign standards; Increase minimum road frontage; Increase setbacks from US-31 |

Map 10. Zoning



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Appendices  
2023 Bear Lake Township  
Master Plan

Appendix A: NAICS Sub-Sectors & Location Quotients, Manistee County



Bureau of Labor Statistics > Data Tools > Charts and Applications

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

QCEW HOME PRINT:

Employment and Wages Data Viewer

Private, NAICS Sub-Sectors, Manistee County, Michigan  
2021 Annual Averages, All establishment sizes  
Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages - Bureau of Labor Statistics

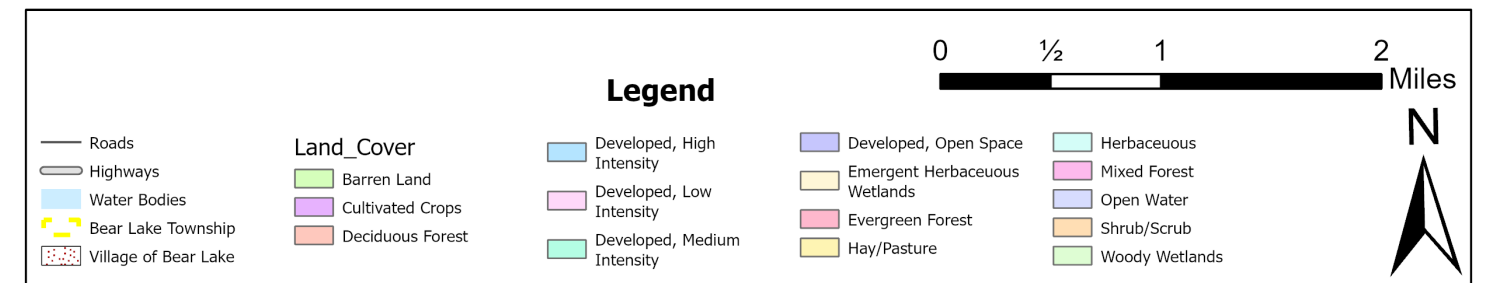
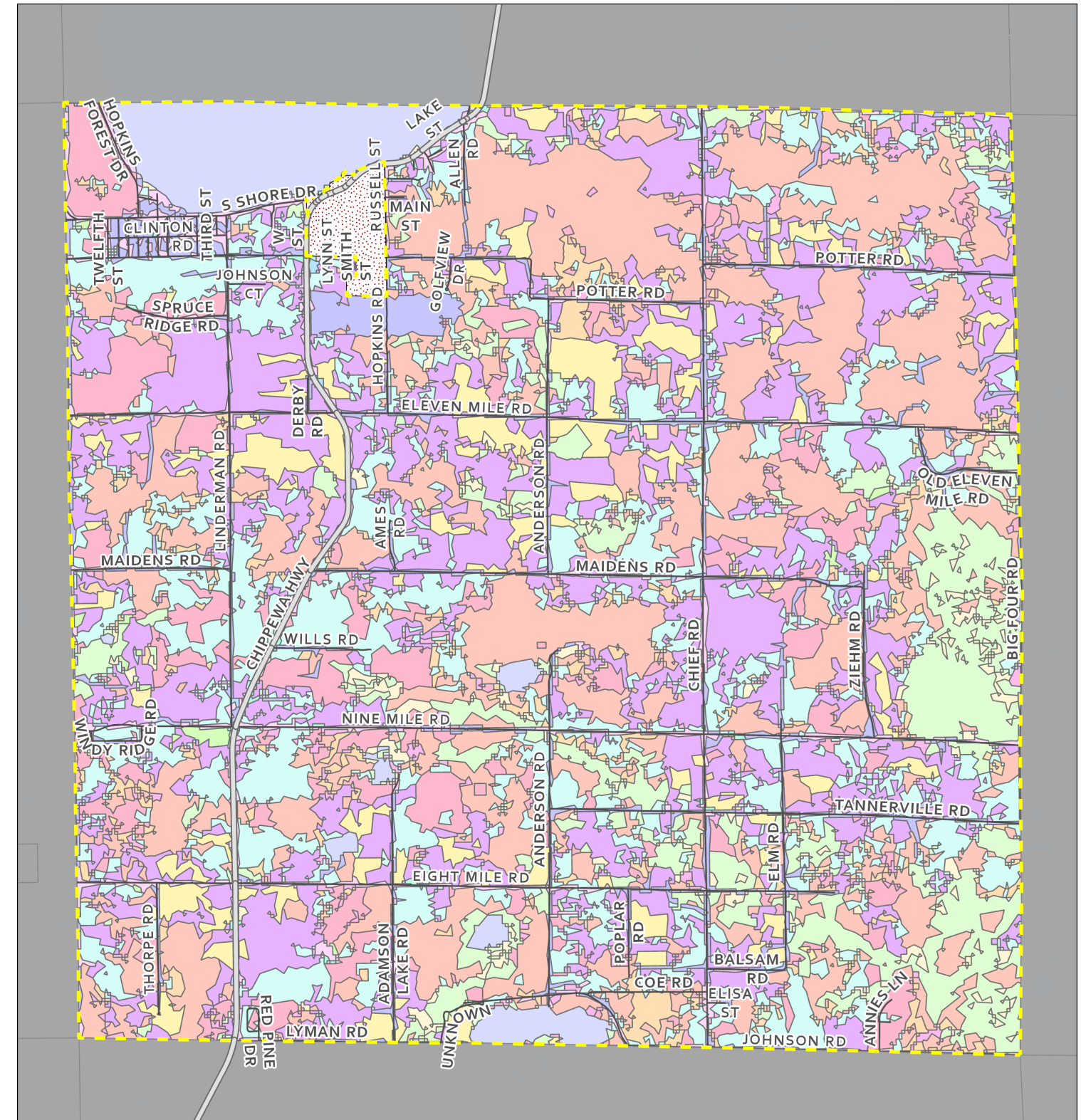
Table Filter: (Filter Value) Apply Clear Page 1 of 1 Display 75 rows per page

| NAICS Sub-Sector   | Annual Establishments | Annual Average Employment | Total Annual Wages | Annual Average Weekly Wage | Annual Wages per Employee | Annual Average Employment Location Quotient | Total Annual Wages Location Quotient |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| NAICS 113 Forestry and logging   | 3                     | 21                        | \$1,026,245        | \$940                      | \$48,869                  | 8.89  | 11.94                                |
| NAICS17 447 Gasoline stations  | 7                     | 173                       | 4,853,022          | 538                        | 27,985                    | 4.05  | 6.02                                 |
| NAICS 713 Amusement, gambling, and recreation industries                         | 10                    | 194                       | 6,691,410          | 664                        | 34,551                    | 2.91  | 5.25                                 |
| NAICS 111 Crop production  | 7                     | 62                        | 1,689,301          | 528                        | 27,468                    | 2.48  | 2.40                                 |
| NAICS 721 Accommodation  | 25                    | 159                       | 3,170,206          | 382                        | 19,886                    | 2.32  | 1.70                                 |
| NAICS17 452 General merchandise stores   | 10                    | 296                       | 8,450,145          | 549                        | 28,548                    | 2.12  | 2.96                                 |
| NAICS17 453 Miscellaneous store retailers  | 13                    | 79                        | 2,008,130          | 489                        | 25,419                    | 2.12  | 2.33                                 |
| NAICS 339 Miscellaneous manufacturing  | 5                     | 55                        | 1,908,291          | 665                        | 34,591                    | 2.00  | 1.36                                 |
| NAICS 424 Merchant wholesalers, nondurable goods                                 | 5                     | 185                       | 7,375,975          | 768                        | 39,924                    | 1.95  | 1.34                                 |
| NAICS 221 Utilities  | 3                     | 43                        | 4,324,915          | 1,930                      | 100,385                   | 1.73  | 2.07                                 |
| NAICS 814 Private households   | 9                     | 17                        | 313,835            | 366                        | 19,020                    | 1.70  | 1.26                                 |
| NAICS 813 Religious, grantmaking, civic, professional, and similar organizations | 19                    | 87                        | 1,734,145          | 382                        | 19,857                    | 1.53  | 0.78                                 |
| NAICS17 454 Nonstore retailers   | 5                     | 43                        | 2,067,934          | 936                        | 48,657                    | 1.50  | 1.15                                 |
| NAICS 441 Motor vehicle and parts dealers  | 11                    | 116                       | 6,225,513          | 1,028                      | 53,476                    | 1.30  | 1.47                                 |
| NAICS 811 Repair and maintenance   | 18                    | 76                        | 3,801,050          | 959                        | 49,850                    | 1.25  | 1.72                                 |
| NAICS 236 Construction of buildings  | 28                    | 94                        | 3,899,761          | 802                        | 41,709                    | 1.24  | 0.96                                 |
| NAICS 445 Food and beverage retailers  | 11                    | 144                       | 3,849,164          | 513                        | 26,699                    | 1.01  | 1.34                                 |
| NAICS17 446 Health and personal care stores                                      | 6                     | 40                        | 1,777,217          | 860                        | 44,710                    | 0.85  | 1.22                                 |
| NAICS17 442 Furniture and home furnishings stores                                | 6                     | 17                        | 1,002,466          | 1,134                      | 58,969                    | 0.84  | 1.48                                 |
| NAICS 444 Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers            | 9                     | 51                        | 2,079,558          | 780                        | 40,577                    | 0.79  | 1.17                                 |
| NAICS 238 Specialty trade contractors  | 43                    | 160                       | 6,947,653          | 833                        | 43,310                    | 0.74  | 0.71                                 |
| NAICS 722 Food services and drinking places                                      | 44                    | 355                       | 6,801,056          | 368                        | 19,153                    | 0.73  | 0.83                                 |
| NAICS17 451 Sports, hobby, music instrument, book stores                         | 6                     | 17                        | 303,093            | 350                        | 18,186                    | 0.71  | 0.66                                 |
| NAICS 621 Ambulatory health care services  | 29                    | 256                       | 15,494,707         | 1,162                      | 60,428                    | 0.71  | 0.87                                 |
| NAICS 522 Credit intermediation and related activities                           | 12                    | 81                        | 3,979,832          | 941                        | 48,932                    | 0.65  | 0.42                                 |
| NAICS 237 Heavy and civil engineering construction                               | 5                     | 29                        | 1,539,383          | 1,039                      | 54,013                    | 0.61  | 0.55                                 |
| NAICS17 448 Clothing and clothing accessories stores                             | 4                     | 26                        | 661,353            | 499                        | 25,935                    | 0.55  | 0.69                                 |
| NAICS 812 Personal and laundry services  | 10                    | 31                        | 896,813            | 558                        | 29,007                    | 0.50  | 0.61                                 |
| NAICS 517 Telecommunications   | 3                     | 15                        | 1,200,266          | 1,556                      | 80,917                    | 0.49  | 0.53                                 |
| NAICS 623 Nursing and residential care facilities                                | 4                     | 56                        | 1,398,150          | 477                        | 24,783                    | 0.41  | 0.37                                 |
| NAICS 488 Support activities for transportation                                  | 3                     | 11                        | 376,287            | 663                        | 34,469                    | 0.34  | 0.25                                 |
| NAICS 999 Unclassified   | 3                     | 3                         | 57,381             | 378                        | 19,673                    | 0.34  | 0.13                                 |
| NAICS 524 Insurance carriers and related activities                              | 5                     | 27                        | 1,526,604          | 1,071                      | 55,682                    | 0.24  | 0.20                                 |
| NAICS 624 Social assistance  | 27                    | 41                        | 1,130,408          | 531                        | 27,627                    | 0.23  | 0.31                                 |
| NAICS 541 Professional, scientific, and technical services                       | 33                    | 88                        | 3,906,883          | 850                        | 44,187                    | 0.19  | 0.11                                 |

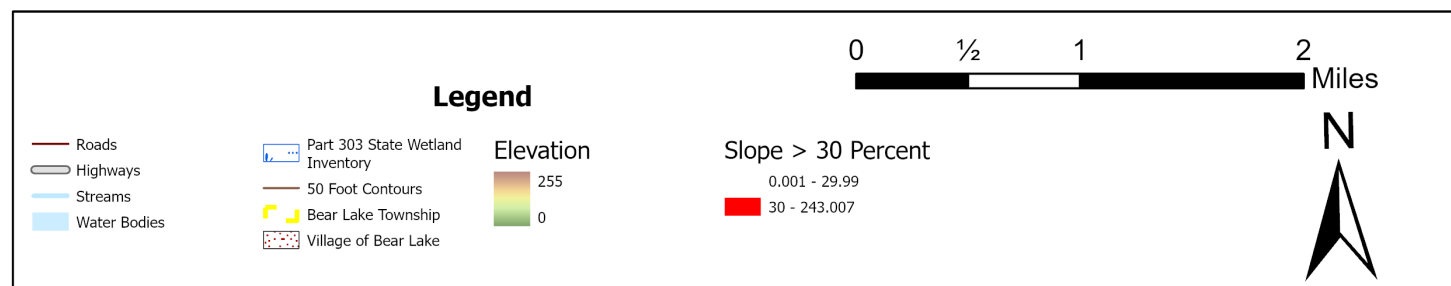
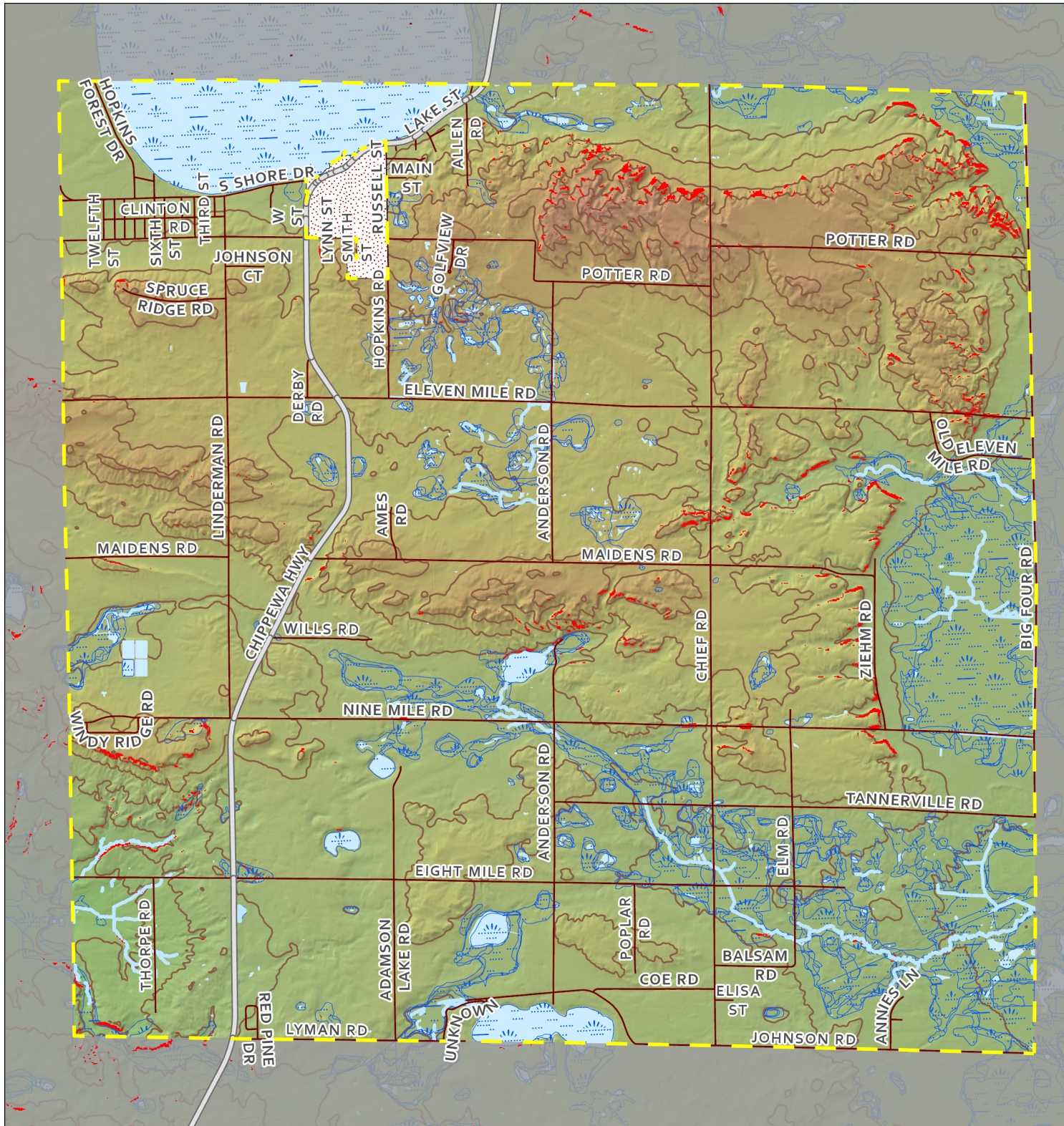
Footnotes:  
This table excludes rows with suppressed employment and wages

Page 1 of 1

Appendix B; Land Cover, Bear Lake Township



Appendix C: Topography, Bear Lake Township



Appendix D: NRCS Definitions of Farmland Soils

The text below is directly quoted from [nrcs.usda.gov](http://nrcs.usda.gov)

In an effort to identify the extent and location of important farmlands, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, in cooperation with other interested Federal, State, and local government organizations, has inventoried land that can be used for the production of the Nation's food supply.

Prime farmland is of major importance in meeting the Nation's short- and long-range needs for food and fiber. Because the supply of high-quality farmland is limited, the U.S. Department of Agriculture recognizes that responsible levels of government, as well as individuals, should encourage and facilitate the wise use of our Nation's prime farmland

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. It could be cultivated land, pastureland, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas. The soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply are those needed for the soil to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when proper management, including water management, and acceptable farming methods are applied. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. The water supply is dependable and of adequate quality. Prime farmland is permeable to water and air. It is not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods, and it either is not frequently flooded during the growing season or is protected from flooding. Slope ranges mainly from 0 to 6 percent. More detailed information about the criteria for prime farmland is available at the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

For some of the soils identified in the table as prime farmland, measures that overcome a hazard or limitation, such as flooding, wetness, and droughtiness, are needed. Onsite evaluation is needed to determine whether or not the hazard or limitation has been overcome by corrective measures.

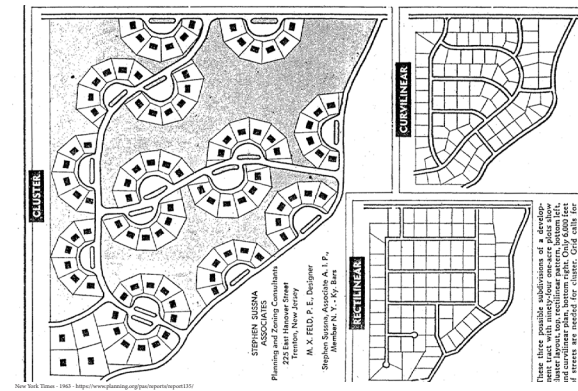
A recent trend in land use in some areas has been the loss of some prime farmland to industrial and urban uses. The loss of prime farmland to other uses puts pressure on marginal lands, which generally are more erodible, droughty, and less productive and cannot be easily cultivated.

Unique farmland is land other than prime farmland that is used for the production of specific high-value food and fiber crops, such as citrus, tree nuts, olives, cranberries, and other fruits and vegetables. It has the special combination of soil quality, growing season, moisture supply, temperature, humidity, air drainage, elevation, and aspect needed for the soil to economically produce sustainable high yields of these crops when properly managed. The water supply is dependable and of adequate quality. Nearness to markets is an additional consideration. Unique farmland is not based on national criteria. It commonly is in areas where there is a special microclimate, such as the wine country in California.

In some areas, land that does not meet the criteria for prime or unique farmland is considered to be farmland of statewide importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. The criteria for defining and delineating farmland of statewide importance are determined by the appropriate State agencies. Generally, this land includes areas of soils that nearly meet the requirements for prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Some areas may produce as high a yield as prime farmland if conditions are favorable. Farmland of statewide importance may include tracts of land that have been designated for agriculture by State law.

In some areas that are not identified as having national or statewide importance, land is considered to be farmland of local importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. This farmland is identified by the appropriate local agencies. Farmland of local importance may include tracts of land that have been designated for agriculture by local ordinance.

# Appendix E: Character Image Gallery Walk Results



4 for Cluster development, 4 for Curvilinear development

4 for Rectilinear development



6

1



6

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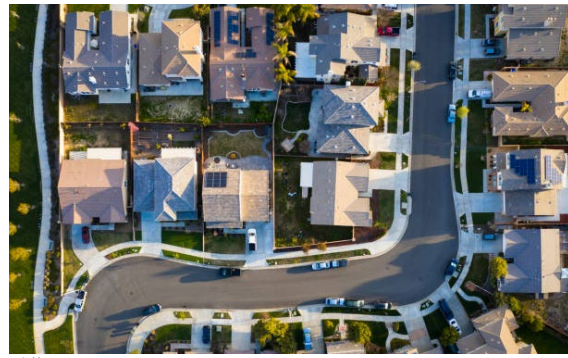
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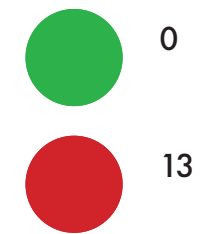
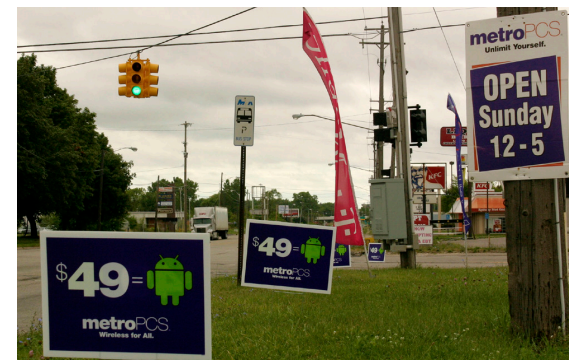
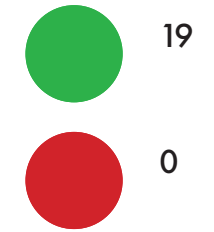
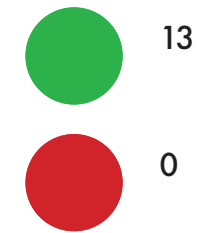
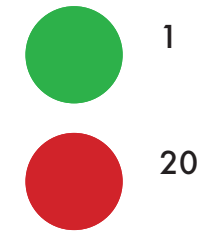
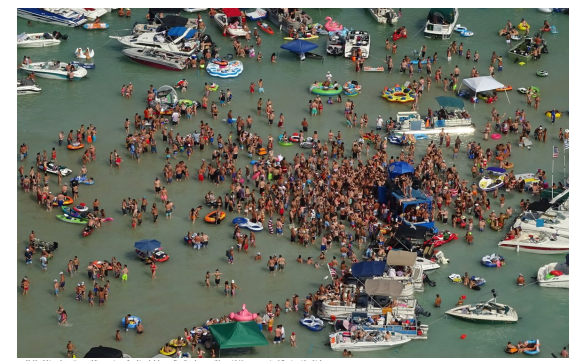
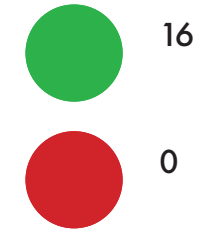
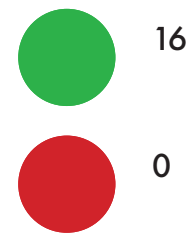
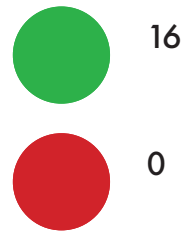
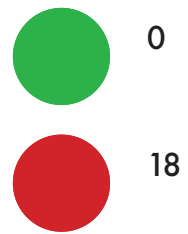
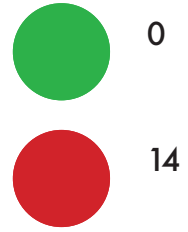
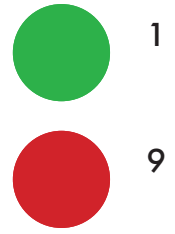
6



1

7







1  
14



3 on monument sign (right)  
16 on large sign (left), 2 on monument sign (right)



0  
12



4  
10



2  
11



4  
8



7  
1



4  
4



0  
17



Miligan Sign Guidelines, 2nd Edition (January 2011), Source: Michigan



0



13



Miligan Sign Guidelines, 2nd Edition (January 2011), Source: Michigan



5



5



Miligan Sign Guidelines, 2nd Edition (January 2011), Source: Michigan



3



9



Miligan Sign Guidelines, 2nd Edition (January 2011), Source: Michigan



0



15



Miligan Sign Guidelines, 2nd Edition (January 2011), Source: Michigan



1



14



Miligan Sign Guidelines, 2nd Edition (January 2011), Source: Michigan



0



10



Miligan Sign Guidelines, 2nd Edition (January 2011), Source: Michigan



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12



Miligan Sign Guidelines, 2nd Edition (January 2011), Source: Michigan



1



17



Planning & Zoning for Solar Energy Systems: A Guide for Michigan Local Governments. 2010. Commission on the Future: Sustainable Energy. University of Michigan.



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Planning & Zoning for Solar Energy Systems: A Guide for Michigan Local Governments. 2010. Commission on the Future: Sustainable Energy. University of Michigan.



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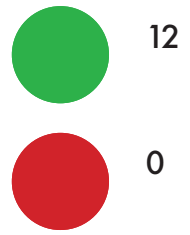


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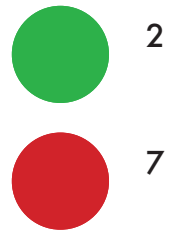




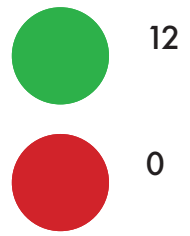
Planning & Zoning for Solar Energy Farms: A Guide for Michigan Local Governments.  
MSU Extension and the Graham Sustainability Institute, University of Michigan



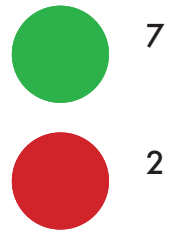
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MSU Extension and the Graham Sustainability Institute, University of Michigan



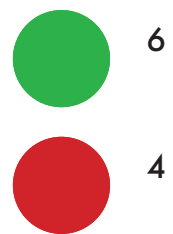
Planning & Zoning for Solar Energy Farms: A Guide for Michigan Local Governments.  
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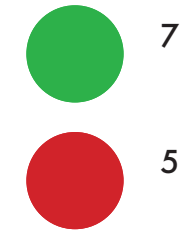


Photo: Muskegon County Planning Department

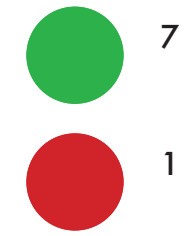


Photo: Lake Township

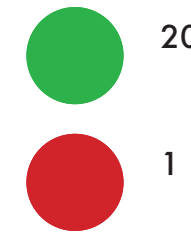


Photo: Lake Township

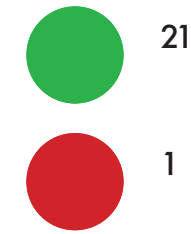


Photo: https://www.flickr.com/photos/robertm/10400000000/

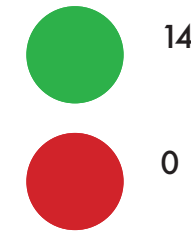




Photo - Madison County Planning Department



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Photo - Madison County Planning Department



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Photo - Madison County Planning Department



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Photo - Madison County Planning Department



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7



Photo - Madison County Planning Department



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Photo - Madison County Planning Department



4



1

# Appendix F: Public Open House Discussion Results, Bear Lake Days Results

## Open House Discussion Results

### The year is 2040. What does Bear Lake Township look like if everything goes perfectly?

#### Environment

- Boat wash for invasive species
- Clean lake
- Program to cut up branches for mulch and resell to the public
- Sewer system – especially around lakes
- Eliminate milfoil
- Place to get rid of refuse, more than twice a month
- Community clean up
- Lake – Quiet, safe, natural clean water/shorelines
- Natural/nighttime environment (dark skies)
- Accessibility to Bear Lake

#### Local economy

- Stay small with controlled growth (maintain rural character)
- Keep a family farming community
- Keep mom and pop businesses
- More services (dentist, doctor, vet services)
- More employment opportunities
- Internet
- No chain stores
- Small businesses
- Locally owned garden centers
- Affordable grocery store

#### US-31 Corridor

- Businesses but keep good views
- Eliminate blight
- Effective road maintenance
- Paved, large shoulders
- Electric lines buried underground
- Solar lights
- Divided highway

#### Housing

- Affordable housing
- Small houses (tiny houses) allowed
- No cookie cutter developments (every house in the subdivision looks the same)
- Fight blight
- Cluster development
- Affordable housing
- Senior living

#### Transportation

- Dial-a-ride (maintained)
- Bike/non-motorized paths
- Trails connected to a regional trail network
- Public transportation

#### Agriculture

- Support family farms
- Farmer market
- Seed co-op, exchange
- Solar on farms
- Weddings in barns
- Organic farms
- Upkeep the farms
- Reduce fertilizer runoff with conservation practices

#### Recreation

- Trails – hiking, biking, walking, snowmobile
- Signage for trails
- Community playground
- Community hall
- Upkeep the recreation sites that currently exist
- Dog park
- Kayak launch
- Improve boat launches
- Trail expansion into Bear Lake
- New park
- More grant funding

#### Public Spaces

- Picnic area
- Food trucks
- Keep well-maintained
- Farmers market
- Native green spaces
- Community garden
- Music, concerts
- Pavilion

### The year is 2040. What does Bear Lake Township look like if everything goes wrong?

- Polluted lake, unusable, weeds, overuse
- Run-down
- Trash, illegal dumping
- No kids, no school, no young people settling in town
- All businesses gone, no jobs
- No housing

- Declining population
- Large-lighted billboards (no sign regulations)
- Large corporate, factory farming
- Large wells, threats to aquifers
- Agricultural land that negatively affects the environment
- US-31 has 3-4 lanes
- US-31 not maintained
- Commercial strip development on US-31
- No water, sewer, gas, internet
- Bypass put in, no one visits Bear Lake
- Trails, recreation sites not maintained

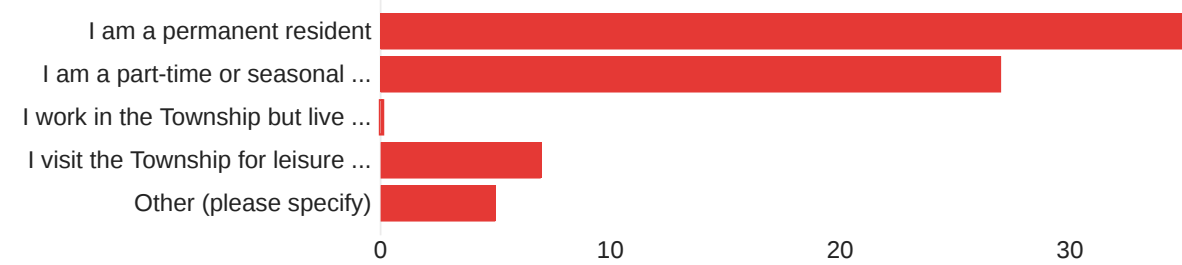
### Bear Lake Days Stick Note Results

#### **What does Bear Lake Township look like in the next 10-20 years?**

- Keep the public access roads to lake public
- Municipal sewer
- I paid plenty for my septic system - I don't want sewer
- Continue small town- no stop light, no high rise
- Septic inspections
- No stop light
- No solar or wind farms
- Sewer system around lake and town
- Keep it the same
- Develop downtown
- Sewer system in the entire area
- Bring back the Bear Lake Bar
- Community center
- Align lighting ordinance with Pleasanton and other surrounding communities
- Splash pad
- Playscape and restrooms at East Shore public access
- Municipal sewer
- More great stores for shopping like Maggie's
- More commercial near downtown
- Septic inspections
- Sewer system around lake to protect Bear Lake
- More stores
- Public beach
- Municipal sewer system

## Appendix G: Full Survey Results

### Q1 - Which of the following best describes your association with Bear Lake Township?



| Field   | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Variance | Responses |
|---|-----|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| Which of the following best describes your association with Bear Lake Township? - Selected Choice | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 74        |

| Field   | Choice Count |
|---|--------------|
| I am a permanent resident   | 35           |
| I am a part-time or seasonal resident                             | 27           |
| I work in the Township but live elsewhere                         | 0            |
| I visit the Township for leisure (such as shopping or recreation) | 7            |
| Other (please specify)  | 5            |
| Total   | 74           |

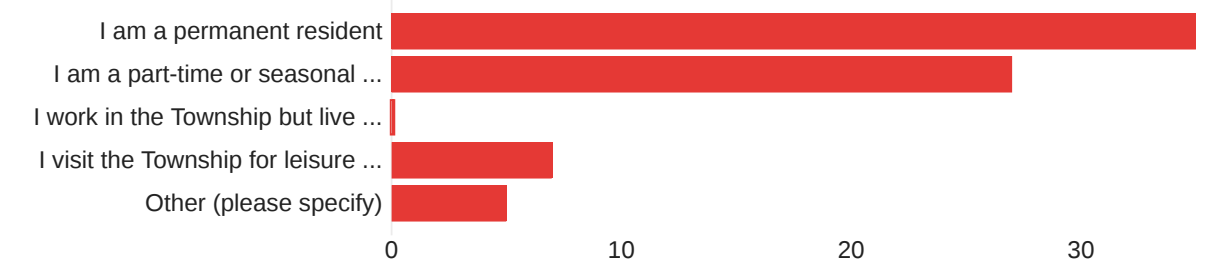
Other (please specify) - Text

Pleasanton township resident

I live in Pleasanton Township

Grew up here and dad lives here

### Q1 - Which of the following best describes your association with Bear Lake Township?



| Field   | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Variance | Responses |
|---|-----|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| Which of the following best describes your association with Bear Lake Township? - Selected Choice | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 74        |

| Field   | Choice Count |
|---|--------------|
| I am a permanent resident   | 35           |
| I am a part-time or seasonal resident                             | 27           |
| I work in the Township but live elsewhere                         | 0            |
| I visit the Township for leisure (such as shopping or recreation) | 7            |
| Other (please specify)  | 5            |
| Total   | 74           |

Other (please specify) - Text

Pleasanton township resident

I live in Pleasanton Township

Grew up here and dad lives here

Bear Lake is a township located in my organization's service area

Conservation District

### Q27 - Where are you a permanent resident?

Where are you a permanent resident?

Pleasanton Twp

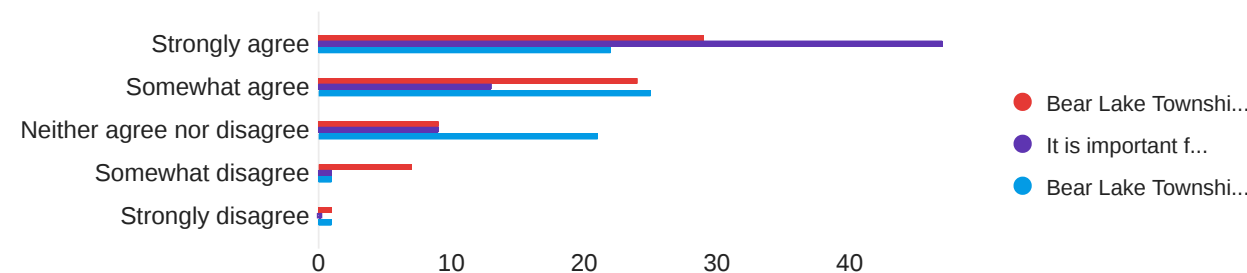
Cadillac, MI

Pleasanton Twp

Pleasanton Township

Brown township

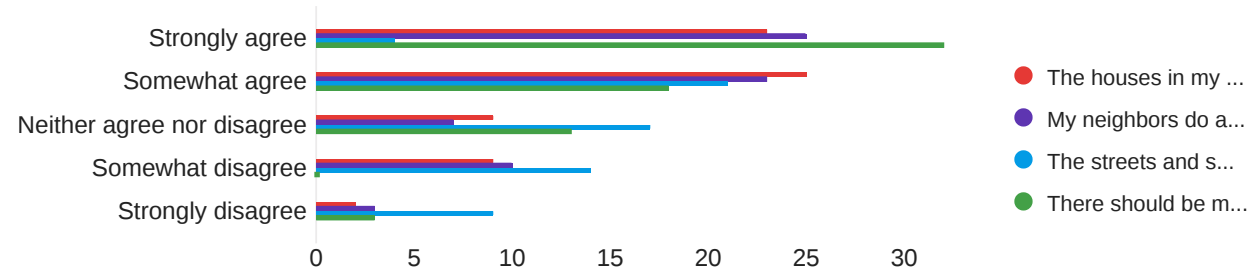
### Q4 - For each of the statements listed below, please select the response that best describes your point of view.



| Field   | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Variance | Responses |
|---|-----|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| Bear Lake Township is a community suitable for people of all ages                   | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 70        |
| It is important for me to remain in the Bear Lake community for as long as possible | 1   | 4   | 1    | 1                  | 1        | 70        |
| Bear Lake Township is a close-knit community  | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 70        |

| Field   | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Total |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Bear Lake Township is a community suitable for people of all ages                   | 29             | 24             | 9                          | 7                 | 1                 | 70    |
| It is important for me to remain in the Bear Lake community for as long as possible | 47             | 13             | 9                          | 1                 | 0                 | 70    |
| Bear Lake Township is a close-knit community  | 22             | 25             | 21                         | 1                 | 1                 | 70    |

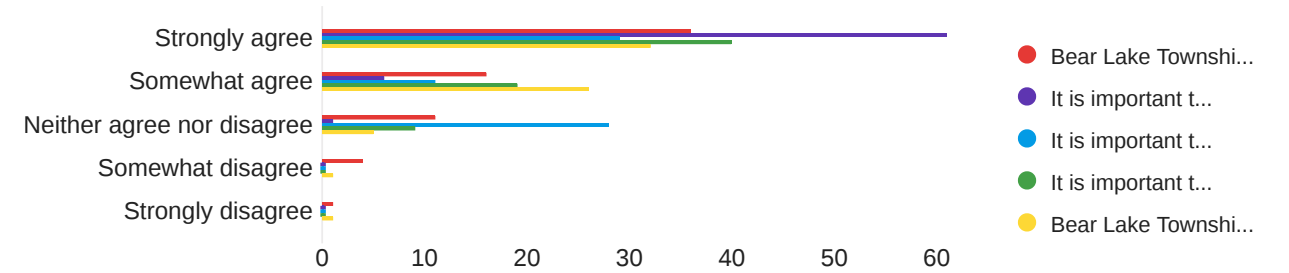
Q5 - For each of the statements listed below, please select the response that best describes your point of view.



| Field   | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Variance | Responses |
|---|-----|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| The houses in my neighborhood are well-maintained   | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 68        |
| My neighbors do a good job of maintaining their yards   | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 68        |
| The streets and sidewalks (if any) in my neighborhood are in good condition                     | 1   | 5   | 3    | 1                  | 1        | 65        |
| There should be more local policies in place to help eliminate blight and junk in the community | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 66        |

| Field   | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Total |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| The houses in my neighborhood are well-maintained   | 23             | 25             | 9                          | 9                 | 2                 | 68    |
| My neighbors do a good job of maintaining their yards   | 25             | 23             | 7                          | 10                | 3                 | 68    |
| The streets and sidewalks (if any) in my neighborhood are in good condition                     | 4              | 21             | 17                         | 14                | 9                 | 65    |
| There should be more local policies in place to help eliminate blight and junk in the community | 32             | 18             | 13                         | 0                 | 3                 | 66    |

Q6 - For each of the statements listed below, please select the response that best describes your point of view.



| Field  | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Variance | Responses |
|--|-----|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| Bear Lake Township should strive to maintain its rural character                   | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 68        |
| It is important that the community maintain scenic views of Bear Lake              | 1   | 3   | 1    | 0                  | 0        | 68        |
| It is important that the community maintain scenic views of Chief Lake             | 1   | 3   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 68        |
| It is important that the community maintain scenic views of its farms and orchards | 1   | 3   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 68        |
| Bear Lake Township is a safe community   | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 65        |

| Field   | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Total |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Bear Lake Township should strive to maintain its rural character      | 36             | 16             | 11                         | 4                 | 1                 | 68    |
| It is important that the community maintain scenic views of Bear Lake | 61             | 6              | 1                          | 0                 | 0                 | 68    |

|  |    |    |    |   |   |    |
|--|----|----|----|---|---|----|
| It is important that the community maintain scenic views of Chief Lake             | 29 | 11 | 28 | 0 | 0 | 68 |
| It is important that the community maintain scenic views of its farms and orchards | 40 | 19 | 9  | 0 | 0 | 68 |
| Bear Lake Township is a safe community   | 32 | 26 | 5  | 1 | 1 | 65 |

Q23 - What words or phrases would you use to describe the Bear Lake community?

What words or phrases would you use to describe the Bear Lake community?

depressed looking, not forward thinking in terms of infrastructure,

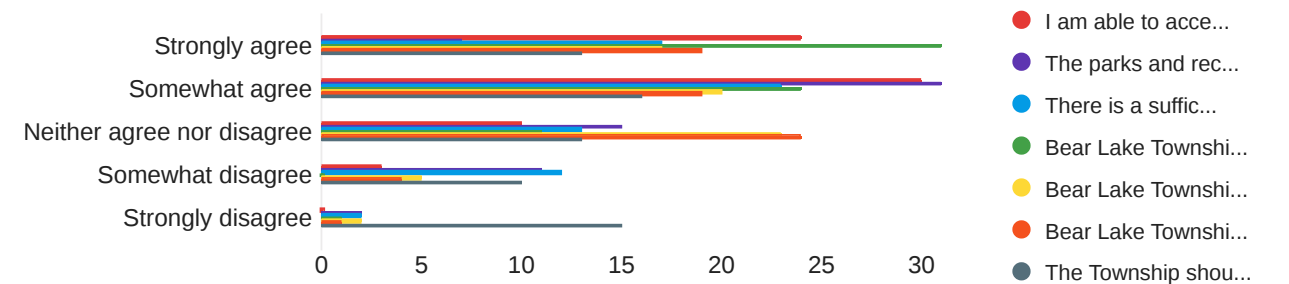
Sleepy,

Old time Americana

Scenic

Friendly, caring, loyal, peaceful, thoughtful, hard working, proud, patriotic, dedicated, active

Q7 - For each of the statements listed below, please select the response that best describes your point of view.

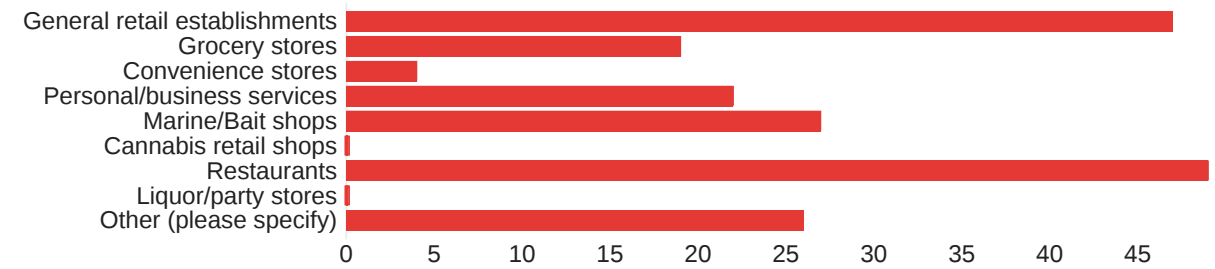


| Field   | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Variance | Responses |
|---|-----|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| I am able to access a wide range of recreational opportunities in, or in close proximity to, Bear Lake Township             | 1   | 4   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 67        |
| The parks and recreation sites in Bear Lake are in good condition   | 1   | 5   | 3    | 1                  | 1        | 66        |
| There is a sufficient number of public spaces in Bear Lake for me to spend leisure time                                     | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 67        |
| Bear Lake Township would benefit from additional trail connections to neighboring communities (motorized and non-motorized) | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 67        |
| Bear Lake Township would benefit from additional sidewalk connections   | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 67        |
| Bear Lake Township would benefit from a community hall, or other public gathering space                                     | 1   | 5   | 2    | 1                  | 1        | 67        |
| The Township should explore options for the allowed use of golf carts, other small motor vehicles on local roads            | 1   | 5   | 3    | 1                  | 2        | 67        |



| Field   | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Total |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| I am able to access a wide range of recreational opportunities in, or in close proximity to, Bear Lake Township             | 24             | 30             | 10                         | 3                 | 0                 | 67    |
| The parks and recreation sites in Bear Lake are in good condition   | 7              | 31             | 15                         | 11                | 2                 | 66    |
| There is a sufficient number of public spaces in Bear Lake for me to spend leisure time                                     | 17             | 23             | 13                         | 12                | 2                 | 67    |
| Bear Lake Township would benefit from additional trail connections to neighboring communities (motorized and non-motorized) | 31             | 24             | 11                         | 0                 | 1                 | 67    |
| Bear Lake Township would benefit from additional sidewalk connections   | 17             | 20             | 23                         | 5                 | 2                 | 67    |
| Bear Lake Township would benefit from a community hall, or other public gathering space                                     | 19             | 19             | 24                         | 4                 | 1                 | 67    |
| The Township should explore options for the allowed use of golf carts, other small motor vehicles on local roads            | 13             | 16             | 13                         | 10                | 15                | 67    |

Q9 - What type(s) of business or service would you like to see developed or expanded in Bear Lake? (choose all that apply)



| Field                         | Choice Count |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| General retail establishments | 47           |
| Grocery stores                | 19           |
| Convenience stores            | 4            |
| Personal/business services    | 22           |
| Marine/Bait shops             | 27           |
| Cannabis retail shops         | 0            |
| Restaurants                   | 49           |
| Liquor/party stores           | 0            |
| Other (please specify)        | 26           |
| Total                         | 194          |

Other (please specify) - Text

ice cream store, coffee shop

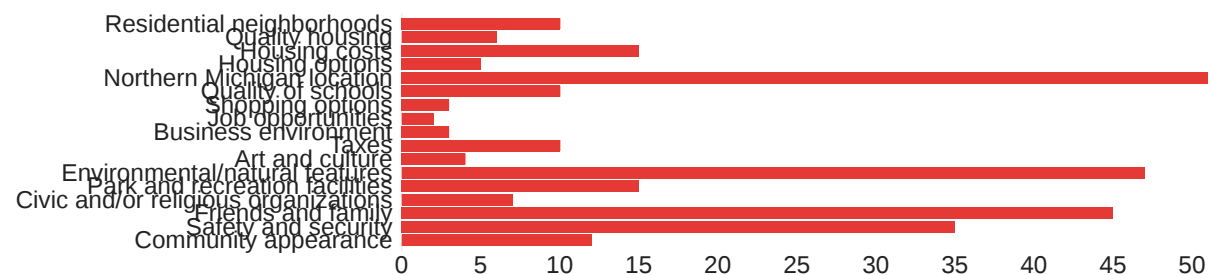
Brewery/Pub or Distillery Restaurant

Ice cream shop

Sporting goods

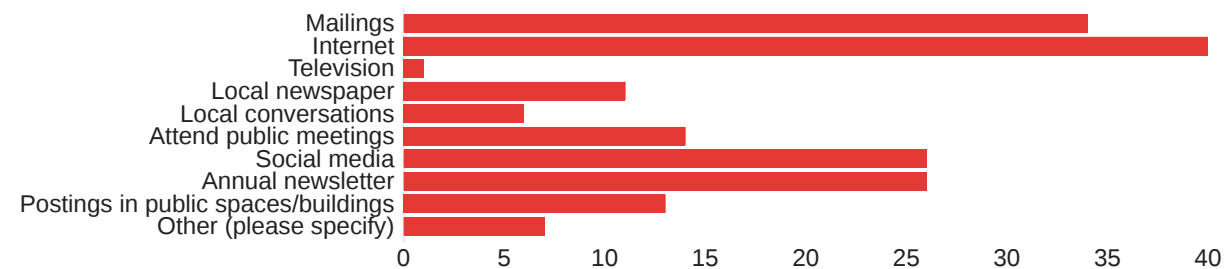
Ice cream shop, brewery or cider mill

Q11 - From the list below, what are the top 5 factors that inform your decision to continue residing in Bear Lake? (select 5)



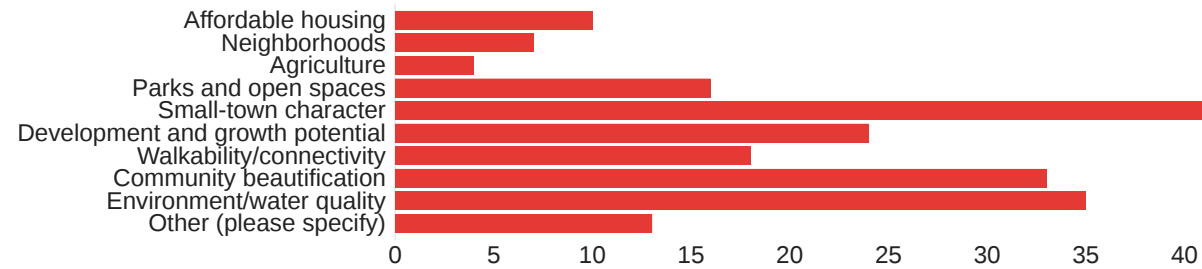
| Field                                | Choice Count |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Residential neighborhoods            | 10           |
| Quality housing                      | 6            |
| Housing costs                        | 15           |
| Housing options                      | 5            |
| Northern Michigan location           | 51           |
| Quality of schools                   | 10           |
| Shopping options                     | 3            |
| Job opportunities                    | 2            |
| Business environment                 | 3            |
| Taxes                                | 10           |
| Art and culture                      | 4            |
| Environmental/natural features       | 47           |
| Park and recreation facilities       | 15           |
| Civic and/or religious organizations | 7            |
| Friends and family                   | 45           |
| Safety and security                  | 35           |
| Community appearance                 | 12           |
| Total                                | 280          |

Q12 - Where would you like to get your information about Bear Lake Township affairs and programs?



| Field                               | Choice Count |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Mailings                            | 34           |
| Internet                            | 40           |
| Television                          | 1            |
| Local newspaper                     | 11           |
| Local conversations                 | 6            |
| Attend public meetings              | 14           |
| Social media                        | 26           |
| Annual newsletter                   | 26           |
| Postings in public spaces/buildings | 13           |
| Other (please specify)              | 7            |
| Total                               | 178          |
| Other (please specify) - Text       |              |
| email                               |              |
| e-mail                              |              |
| Bear Lake Bulletin                  |              |
| Email                               |              |
| Website                             |              |

Q13 - What are your top 3 priorities the Bear Lake Township Master Plan should focus on improving? (select 3)



| Field                            | Choice Count |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Affordable housing               | 10           |
| Neighborhoods                    | 7            |
| Agriculture                      | 4            |
| Parks and open spaces            | 16           |
| Small-town character             | 41           |
| Development and growth potential | 24           |
| Walkability/connectivity         | 18           |
| Community beautification         | 33           |
| Environment/water quality        | 35           |
| Other (please specify)           | 13           |
| Total                            | 201          |

Other (please specify) - Text

sewer issues that limit other things

Municipal Sewer System

Activities

improve boat launch

walking / biking lanes along roads

Q26 - Please provide any additional comments in the space provided below

Please provide any additional comments in the space provided below

Thank you for trying to love Bear Lake forward! We need more retail and restaurants plus a township sewer to ensure the water quality of the lake for future generations.

Much lower square footage requirements for homes and allow even tiny homes like Traverse City area

I feel Bear Lake leadership should evaluate "Music on Bear Lake" and what it represents about our community. A music barge (even if advertised as family friendly) brings crowds, noise, and known alcohol use to the lake. This overall event does not seem to fit the core values of our safe and serene safe lake. The Bear Lake businesses, by sponsoring the event on the water, send a clear message to the public that Bear Lake endorses this event. My major concern as a nurse is lake safety. We have seen an uptick in boats mooring with young people drinking on the north shoreline. In addition, I am concerned for the undeveloped shoreline where the event takes place. The shoreline is a unique and gorgeous part of the bear lake landscape, but it is privately owned. I believe, with the next generation of north shoreline owners, that there is a risk to this landscape. I know that when I grew up we played on the sandbar with other families all summer long. It is why 50 years later the shoreline remains intact, but the last several years with the event planners taking over the area and endorsing public use, it is changing the outlook. I really would like to see the township make lake safety (especially after our recent sad drowning) and preserving the environment a major priority.

Retail options need to improve to counteract the blight, not used books, candles and auto parts

I love Bear Lake and the small town community. Downtown needs development but keeping with the small community feel.

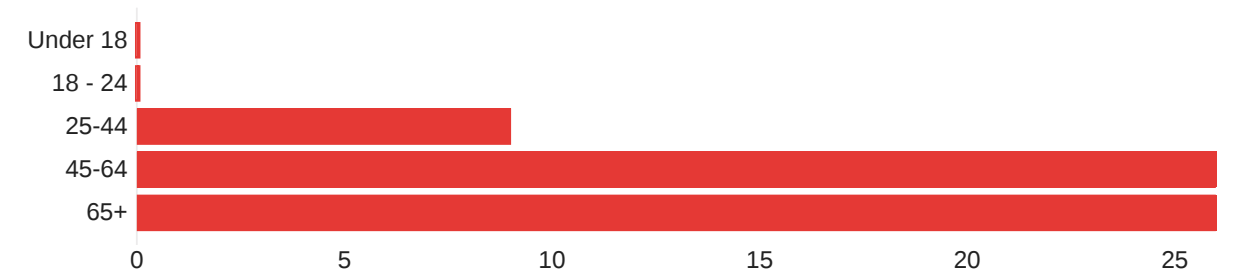
Q14 - Do you have access to a personal vehicle?



| Field                                     | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Variance | Responses |
|---|-----|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| Do you have access to a personal vehicle? | 1   | 1   | 1    | 0                  | 0        | 62        |

| Field | Choice Count |
|-------|--------------|
| Yes   | 62           |
| No    | 0            |
| Total | 62           |

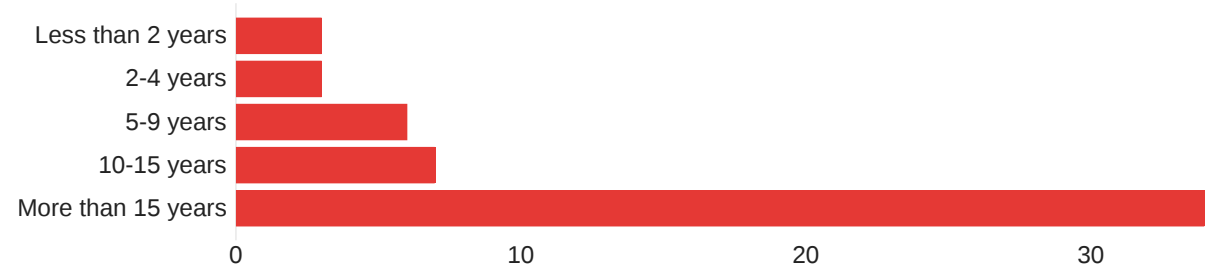
Q15 - What is your age?



| Field             | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Variance | Responses |
|-------------------|-----|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| What is your age? | 3   | 5   | 4    | 1                  | 0        | 61        |

| Field    | Choice Count |
|----------|--------------|
| Under 18 | 0            |
| 18 - 24  | 0            |
| 25-44    | 9            |
| 45-64    | 26           |
| 65+      | 26           |
| Total    | 61           |

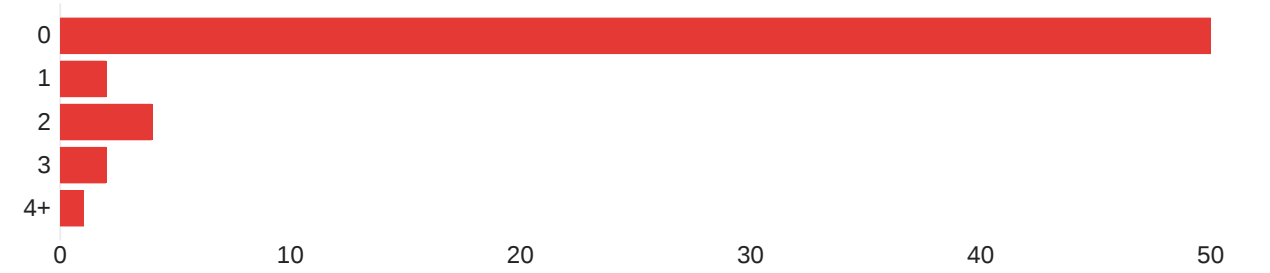
Q16 - How long have you lived in Bear Lake Township?



| Field  | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Variance | Responses |
|--|-----|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| How long have you lived in Bear Lake Township? | 1   | 5   | 4    | 1                  | 1        | 53        |

| Field              | Choice Count |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Less than 2 years  | 3            |
| 2-4 years          | 3            |
| 5-9 years          | 6            |
| 10-15 years        | 7            |
| More than 15 years | 34           |
| Total              | 53           |

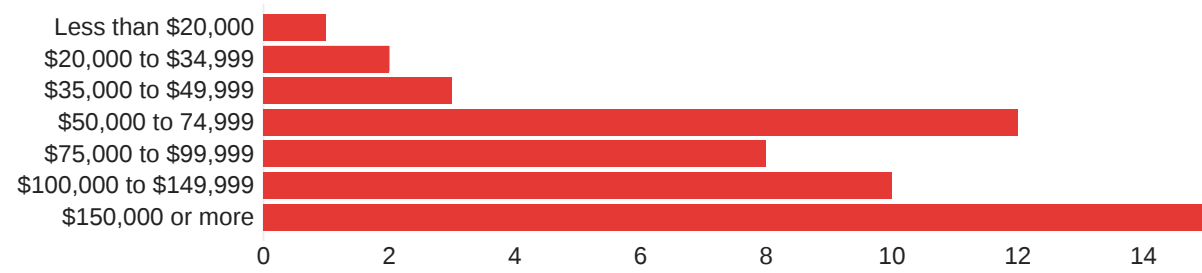
Q17 - How many children under the age of 18 live in your residence?



| Field   | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Variance | Responses |
|---|-----|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| How many children under the age of 18 live in your residence? | 1   | 5   | 1    | 1                  | 1        | 59        |

| Field | Choice Count |
|-------|--------------|
| 0     | 50           |
| 1     | 2            |
| 2     | 4            |
| 3     | 2            |
| 4+    | 1            |
| Total | 59           |

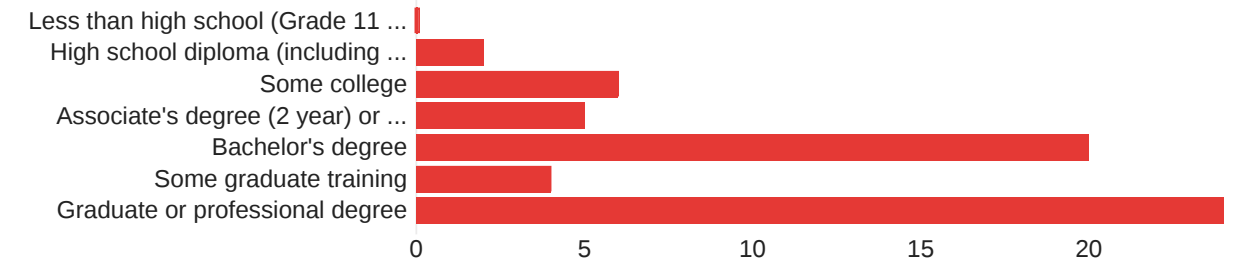
Q18 - What is your yearly household income?



| Field                                 | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Variance | Responses |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| What is your yearly household income? | 1   | 7   | 5    | 2                  | 2        | 51        |

| Field                  | Choice Count |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Less than \$20,000     | 1            |
| \$20,000 to \$34,999   | 2            |
| \$35,000 to \$49,999   | 3            |
| \$50,000 to 74,999     | 12           |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999   | 8            |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999 | 10           |
| \$150,000 or more      | 15           |
| Total                  | 51           |

Q19 - What is the highest grade of school or year of college you have completed?



| Field  | Min | Max | Mean | Standard Deviation | Variance | Responses |
|--|-----|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| What is the highest grade of school or year of college you have completed? | 2   | 7   | 5    | 1                  | 2        | 61        |

| Field   | Choice Count |
|---|--------------|
| Less than high school (Grade 11 or less)                      | 0            |
| High school diploma (including GED)                           | 2            |
| Some college  | 6            |
| Associate's degree (2 year) or specialized technical training | 5            |
| Bachelor's degree   | 20           |
| Some graduate training  | 4            |
| Graduate or professional degree                               | 24           |
| Total   | 61           |

# Appendix G: Documentation Required by Michigan Planning Enabling Act

## NOTICE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

### 0032 Public Notices

#### Bear Lake Township Plan Update

Bear Lake Township is updating its Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance and would like to hear residents' thoughts on the future of the community.

Details on the plan update can be found at [nwm.org/bearlakeplan](http://nwm.org/bearlakeplan).

Those who live, work and recreate in Bear Lake have three key opportunities to provide input: 1. They can attend Bear Lake Township Planning Commission meetings, 2. They can attend a Community Planning Open House on June 14th at 6pm at the Bear Lake School, and 3. They can complete an online survey at [tinyurl.com/bearlaketwp](http://tinyurl.com/bearlaketwp) (the survey can also be printed at [nwm.org/bearlakeplan](http://nwm.org/bearlakeplan). Questions or comments can be sent to Zach Vega, Community Planner at Networks Northwest- [zach.vega@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:zach.vega@networksnorthwest.org).

MANISTEE NEWS ADVOCATE | MANISTEENEWS.COM THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2022 B5

# MARKETPLACE

Manistee News Classifieds: (231) 398-3119 • [classmna@pioneergroup.com](mailto:classmna@pioneergroup.com) • 4/28/22

| Deadlines:             |                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Tuesday - Friday       | Noon 1 Business Day Prior  |
| Saturday, Monday       | Noon Friday                |
| Legal Advertising      | Noon 3 Business Days Prior |
| West Shore Shopper     | Noon Wednesday             |
| Classified Display Ads | Noon 2 Business Days Prior |

## FREE ADS!

Are you a current News Advocate print subscriber? Email us your "items for sale" ads and we'll publish them for FREE!

Email your name, address, phone number & ad text to: [classmna@pioneergroup.com](mailto:classmna@pioneergroup.com) \*Some Restrictions Apply

| Rates:                       |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Up to 15 Words, 1 Day        | \$12.70 (add words 25¢/ea.) |
| Up to 15 Words, West Shore   | \$13.35 (add words 35¢/ea.) |
| Super Deal, 15 Words         | \$31.30 (add words 35¢/ea.) |
| Garage Sale, 20 Words, 1 Day | \$21.25 (add words 25¢/ea.) |

Multiple insertion rates available upon request.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR AD FOR ERRORS  
Cancellations or corrections must be received by 12p.m. the day before publication. The News Advocate is responsible only for the first day's incorrect ad. Liability for errors shall not exceed the cost of space in which the error or omission occurred. PAYMENT: All ads must be pre-paid Visa, Mastercard, Discover, American Express, Check or Cash Prior to Deadline. STANDARDS: The Pioneer Group reserves the right to edit or reject any ad at any time and to determine ad classification. 75 Maple Street, Manistee, MI 49660 | [www.pioneergroup.com/classifieds](http://www.pioneergroup.com/classifieds)

|  |   |   |  |  |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <h4>0030 Special Notices</h4> <p><b>FISH FRY FRIDAY, April 29th 5:00-7:00 p.m.</b></p> <p>Baked or Fried Cod \$12.50<br/>Fan Tail Shrimp \$12.00<br/>Combo Shrimp/Cod \$12.00<br/>Chicken Strips \$11.00<br/>Take out available \$1.00 extra per order</p> <p>OPEN TO PUBLIC<br/>VFW Post 4499<br/>1211 28th St., Manistee<br/>(231)723-9220</p> | <h4>0050 Help Wanted</h4> <p><b>VACANCY</b><br/>County Clerk of Manistee County</p> <p>Resumes are being accepted for the position of the County Clerk for Manistee County (an elected office). The successful applicant will be appointed to fill the remainder of an unexpired four (4) year term effective June 1, 2022, and expiring December 31, 2024.</p> <p>Applicants must be 18 years of age, a resident of Manistee County and a registered voter.</p> <p>All applicants must submit a cover letter and resume to: Hon. David A. Thompson, 19th Circuit Court, 415 Third St., Manistee, MI 49660. Deadline is May 6, 2022, at 5:00 P.M.</p> | <h4>0050 Help Wanted</h4> <p><b>SEEKING PART TIME Customer Service Representative</b> for our fast-paced office. Experience preferred, but not required. Ideal candidate will have experience in insurance. Looking for an energetic, friendly individual with a willingness to learn - to join our staff in supplying outstanding service to our customers. Including but not limited to answering phones and redirecting calls.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+Family Owned</li> <li>+Warm Friendly Atmosphere</li> <li>+Believe in genuine work/life balance</li> <li>+Paid holidays</li> <li>+Paid vacations</li> <li>+Offer Health Insurance</li> </ul> <p>We are an equal opportunity employer. High School Diploma required and computer literacy essential. Send Resume and cover letter to: Employment Inquiries PO Box 267 Bear Lake, MI 49614</p> | <h4>0050 Help Wanted</h4> <p><b>Centra Wellness</b><br/>JOIN THE CWN team where everyone's life is valued, has meaning, and each person is treated with dignity and respect. If you are passionate about making a difference in individual's lives within your community, please come, and join us! We continue to grow to meet our community needs.</p> <p><b>New Open Positions:</b><br/>Community Care Coordinator - (RN, NP or PA) \$53,085 - \$70,372 - Manistee<br/>Community Health Worker - (High School Diploma) \$17.17 - \$22.21 - Manistee<br/>Health Home Medical Specialist (RN, NP, or PA) \$26,225-\$35.31 - Manistee</p> <p><b>Open Positions:</b><br/>Applied Behavior Analysis Specialist (BCABA) \$46,277 - \$62,752 - Manistee<br/>Children's Team Supervisor (Master's Level) \$69,111 - \$91,799 - Genoa<br/>Recipient Rights Specialist (Associates Degree) \$43,082-\$57,128 - Manistee<br/>Access Crisis Clinician (Master's Level) \$52,438 - \$70,628 - Manistee<br/>Behavioral Tech (High School Diploma) \$17.17 - \$22.21 - Manistee<br/>Community Skills Trainer (High School Diploma) \$17.17-\$22.21 - Manistee<br/>Recipient Rights Specialist (Associates Degree) \$43,082 - \$57,128 - Manistee<br/>Trauma Specialist (Bachelors Degree) \$46,277 - \$69,769 - Manistee</p> | <h4>0070 Happy Ads!</h4> <p><b>HAPPY BIRTHDAY MARY MARZINSKI APRIL 28TH</b><br/>MANISTEE COUNTY MEDICAL CARE</p> |
|--|---|---|--|--|

#### 0032 Public Notices

**Bear Lake Township Plan Update**

Bear Lake Township is updating its Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance and would like to hear residents' thoughts on the future of the community. Details on the plan update can be found at [nwm.org/bearlakeplan](http://nwm.org/bearlakeplan). Those who live, work and recreate in Bear Lake have three key opportunities to provide input: 1. They can attend Bear Lake Township Planning Commission meetings, 2. They can attend a Community Planning Open House on June 14th at 6pm at the Bear Lake School, and 3. They can complete an online survey at [tinyurl.com/bearlaketwp](http://tinyurl.com/bearlaketwp) (the survey can also be printed at [nwm.org/bearlakeplan](http://nwm.org/bearlakeplan). Questions or comments can be sent to Zach Vega, Community Planner at Networks Northwest- [zach.vega@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:zach.vega@networksnorthwest.org).

Find It,  
Buy It.

## AFFIDAVIT FOR THE NOTICE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

### AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
County of Manistee

BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP will hold its Public Hearing to finalize its Draft Master Plan on Tuesday June 20th at 8am, at the Township Offices: 7771 Lake Street, Bear Lake, MI 49614. Members of the community are encouraged to provide feedback to draft plans prior to or at the Public Hearing. Comments can be sent to Zach Vega, Community Planner at Networks Northwest, [zach.vega@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:zach.vega@networksnorthwest.org). The draft plan can be found online at [nwm.org/bearlakeplan](http://nwm.org/bearlakeplan)

Michelle Fedder, being duly sworn, deposes and says that he is one of the editors, publishers, representatives of the Manistee News Advocate, a newspaper published and circulated in said County of Manistee, and the annexed notice was duly printed and published in the said newspaper on the following dates:

June 01, 2023

*Michelle Fedder*

Michelle Fedder

Subscribed to and sworn to me this 1st day of June 2023.

*Christine Hren*

Notary Public: Christine Hren  
State of Michigan, County of Manistee  
My Commission Expires: January 09, 2029  
(Acting in the county of Manistee)

CHRISTINE HREN  
Notary Public - State of Michigan  
County of Manistee  
My Commission Expires Jan 9, 2029  
Acting in the County of Manistee

## PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP  
7771 Lake St., Bear Lake, Michigan  
Public Hearing Minutes  
June 20, 2023

The public hearing regarding Bear Lake Township Master Plan called to order by Clerk Pattison at 8:00 a.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was said.

Bear Lake Township Board members answering roll call, Trustee Ringel, Trustee May, Clerk Pattison, and Treasurer Wood-Smith. Absent Supervisor Harthun.

Others present, Zach Vega, Mark Coe, Sean Adams, and Don Raiff.

The Clerk stated the purpose of this public hearing is to accept public comment on the draft of the proposed Bear Lake Township Master Plan.

Heard public comments see attached sheet.

The Clerk declared the Public Hearing adjourned at 8:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Deanna Pattison, Bear Lake Township Clerk

Public Hearing Notes – Tuesday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Public Hearing Called to Order at 8:00am  
Page 10 – focus on Township not Village  
    Us-31 and Lyman – where development is occurring and will likely continue to occur  
Page 17 – change caddy to another word to denote geographic location  
Page 35 – specify that goals and objectives are for the Bear Lake Township  
Page 39 – not rectifying the sewer – take out anything on sewer being rectified  
    Nothing wrong with lake quality  
    Take out municipal sewer system mentions  
Page 40 – remove last paragraph “The Village of Bear Lake recently adopted...”  
Page 41 – renewed by voters in August 2022, paragraph 3  
Page 66 – Remove 2 objectives on Goal 3 dealing with municipal sewer system  
Page 66 – Responsible parties, goal 3, last objective – include Bear Lake Improvement Board  
    No special assessment on Chief Lake – “Continue to maintain the special assessment on Bear Lake”  
Page 67 – Develop a new fire station and township hall on US-31  
Page 67 change goal 5, objective 3 to a 3 priority  
Search community center in the rest of the document – remove, also remove sewer  
Page 71 – check federal property – give details to Deanna, township and make sure this 818 acres is correct  
Page 73 - Maidens Road/Ame, Lindeman, Potter intersection – 2 cemeteries  
    Both sides of 11 mile and Lindeman should be gray – wastewater treatment facility  
Add Kathy Schaffer’s historic description Bear Lake – received at a later time  
Public Hearing Closed at 8:28am

## CORRESPONDENCE FROM MANISTEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION



Planning Commission  
C/O Planning Department  
231.723.6041  
Fax 231.398.3526  
planning@manisteecountymi.gov

## Planning Commission

April 20, 2023

Manistee County Planning Commission  
415 3rd St  
Manistee, MI 49660

To: Bear Lake Township Planning Commission

Re: Bear Lake Township Community Master Plan Review

The Manistee County Planning Department received the draft Master Plan from Bear Lake Township on March 13, 2023, with the 63-day review period expiring on May 15, 2023. Staff and members have had time to review the Master Plan and outside of limited revisions to grammatical errors within the document, have concluded the plan contains the necessary information and data to meet the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. The plan is consistent with both the Manistee County Master Plan (2008) and the Manistee County Recreation Plan (2008) and is consistent with the master plans of adjacent municipalities. The plan contains a thorough description of current and desired future land use patterns, as well as comprehensive graphs, tables and maps showing the general location, character, and extent of the built and natural environment. After reviewing the content there are 47 comments based on grammatical errors and writing style. Please see the attached Master Plan Review with comments.

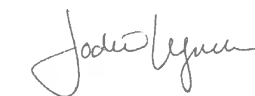
The Manistee County Planning Commission recommends approval of Bear Lake Township's proposed Master Plan with corrections, as the document was developed with community input, insight into the historical character of the community, proper data and information concerning existing conditions and a future land use policy which captures the information contained within the plan.

Regards,



Mary Becker-Witt Manistee County Planning Commission Chair

Prepared by: Jodie Lynch



Manistee County Planner 1/ Zoning



**MINUTES FROM THE MEETING TO ADOPT THE PLAN**

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