

# Lakes to Land Regional Initiative

UNIQUE REGION. UNIQUE COMMUNITIES. SHARED VISION.



## Bear Lake Township Master Plan

ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 6, 2014



# BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2014

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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LAKES TO LAND REGIONAL INITIATIVE

## Introduction





# Why a collaborative master plan?

Residents of 16 communities along the State of Michigan's northwestern coast have decided to join forces in order to commandeer their future and set a course to navigate their growth and development together.

## The purpose

Michigan has never seen collaboration like this before.

A project that began as five townships striving for better coordination has expanded into the largest planning effort of its kind in the state. Ten townships, four villages, and two cities have come together to define themselves as belonging to one cohesive region with the potential to become more than the sum of its parts.

The unique formation represented in this report is designed to plan for the region while maintaining communities' individual identities. By undertaking the collaborative master planning process, residents have discovered ways to work together as a united front, sharing assets and collaborating

on ideas to achieve economic well-being and excellent quality of life. We can identify the role that our communities' unique assets play within both the region and the state, then use that understanding to shape the future we will all share.

## The strategies

- Develop individual master plans for each community that doesn't have one;
- Identify regional collaborative opportunities;
- Identify cross-community collaborative opportunities;
- Develop community-specific and regional implementation strategies;
- Develop the organizational capacity necessary to implement the plan.

## What is a master plan?

“Master plan” is a serious-sounding name, and indeed it’s a serious document. Intended to provide a clearly articulated vision of the community 15 to 20 years into the future, it either succinctly describes persistent concerns or defines the development of the “ideal” community. It also contains a guide to achieve that development based on careful study of many factors, and it can be legally referenced in land use decisions.

But before it’s all those things, a master plan is a dream.

The process of master planning begins with dreaming about how a community could be a better place to live. Citizens gather and share perspectives on their community’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. We talk about what the physical spaces in a community mean to us, how we would like to use them, and what we could do to make them better. We consider the challenges facing us and the organizations we could enlist to help overcome those challenges.

These are issues which must be considered for the success of any community, and the residents of the communities participating in this collaboration have decided to take it into our own hands. We know that unless we take control of our destiny, individually and as a region, our dreams may be left to debate.

## What is a collaborative master plan?

For the purposes of this planning process, a collaborative master plan is a document that contains an articulated vision, with defined goals and strategies, for the future development of a geographic area based upon input from members of more than one community.

Basically, it’s the same plan we just talked about—now with all our neighbors on board.

Planning at the local level is usually by definition limited to one community, but collaborative master plans have the luxury of erasing municipal boundaries to view the region as a whole. They are also synonymous with increasingly syllabic names like “regional strategic growth planning” or “regional asset-based land use development planning.”

This collaborative master plan contains a “statutorily compliant” (see next page for legalese) master plan for our unique community, along with a regional component that seeks to understand collaborative opportunities, goals, and strategies.

## But...why?

The benefits of having an updated master plan are that it will:

- provide a point of reference for all land use decisions.
- prevent arbitrary or capricious decision-making.
- ensure wise use of resources.
- assist in preserving community assets.
- provide a sound basis for funding opportunities.

The benefits of collaborative master planning include:

- facilitating partnership within a geographical region.
- providing consistency between communities.
- helping communities identify and shares resources.
- protecting land use types and natural resource assets that cross municipal boundaries.
- providing a well-documented and justified basis for funding requests.
- understanding possible opportunities to achieve economies of scale.
- capitalizing on existing assets.
- understanding how sustainability

plays a role in maintaining a high quality of life for current and future generations.



1.1 The Lakes to Land Regional Initiative Leadership Team

## History of the regional initiative: What came before...

In the beginning, there were five.

As 2011 drew to a close, informal discussions among leaders in several communities had coalesced into a decision to forge ahead with a bold new idea: five neighboring townships would join forces to produce a cohesive set of master plans and implementation strategies. Initial assistance came from The Alliance for Economic Success (AES), an economic development organization serving Manistee County and the surrounding area that provides neutral third-party convener and facilitation services to develop organizational capacities and relationships. AES secured funding from the Michigan Department of Treasury State Economic Incentive Program, revised in 2011 to place heavy emphasis on coordination among communities, and the C.S. Mott Foundation. The beginnings of the Leadership Team were formed next and charged with the competitive bidding, interviewing, and selection of a professional planning consultant to guide and facilitate the process.

The five original communities quickly found company. Neighboring townships which did not have master plans seized the opportunity to create one, and communities which did have master plans asked to participate in the implementation phase. Within eight months, the collaboration had tripled in size to encompass 16 communities, signaling a hunger for cooperation. The end result is a defined region with potential collaborative partners and the possibility for greater success.

## ...and what we did next

The process of developing the collaborative and individual master plans began with the formal development of a Leadership Team. Consisting of representatives from each participating community, this team constituted the linchpin of the Initiative: members provided guidance to the consultants, acted as liaisons with their respective communities, and worked with their elected officials. Their first two action items were the selection of a name for the project and the decision to reach out and invite neighboring communities to join.

Next, the new Lakes to Land Initiative, or L2L as it is affectionately called, launched a media campaign. The [lakestoland.org](http://lakestoland.org) website was developed, Facebook and Twitter accounts were set up, a centralized phone number was dedicated, and email addresses of interested citizens were collected to begin a distribution list. Press releases kept local news outlets updated, and postcards were sent to every taxpayer within the participating communities inviting them to the visioning sessions. Leadership Team members hung posters advertising the visioning sessions and met with citizens face to face—often the most effective communication method available.

The visioning sessions, described in detail in Tab 3, were held throughout the summer in an effort to attract as many seasonal and non-seasonal residents as possible. Each participating community held a session, and two “make-up” visioning sessions were held for members of all communities who were not able to

## Making it legal

According to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008, the general purpose of a master plan is to guide and accomplish, in the planning jurisdiction and its environs, development that satisfies all of the following criteria:

- is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical.
- considers the character of the planning jurisdiction and its suitability for particular uses, judged in terms of such factors as trends in land and population development.
- will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare.

It also has to talk about at least one of the following things:

- a system of transportation to lessen congestion on streets;
- safety from fire and other dangers;
- light and air;
- healthful and convenient distribution of population;
- good civic design and arrangement and wise and efficient expenditure of public funds;
- public utilities such as sewage disposal and water supply and other public improvements;
- recreation;
- the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability.

attend their own sessions. Visioning sessions were well attended, with some communities achieving over 100 individuals.

At the same time, presentations were given to individual planning commissions and regional conferences such as the Benzie County Water Festival, and Leadership Team members actively worked at inviting their neighboring communities to join the Initiative.

As the Initiative grew, it caught the attention of Michigan Governor Rick Snyder. Having recently begun a Placemaking Initiative connecting community development with economic development, Governor Snyder asked to audit the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative in hopes of developing strategies that could be replicated elsewhere in the State. Shortly thereafter, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources selected Lakes to Land Regional Initiative as a pilot project to assist with its own internal efforts in placemaking throughout the State. Meetings were held with representatives from Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, and Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, all charged with helping Governor Snyder further the State's Placemaking Initiative. Other pertinent organizations which attended the Leadership Team meetings included the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, Benzie and Manistee County planning services, Michigan State University Extension Services, Hart Leadership Development, and the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments.

Once all of the communities had master plan drafts, about 60 leadership team members, trustees, planning commissioners, and interested citizens attended a "Priority Sharing" meeting to discuss their communities' pertinent issues. The 69 submitted priorities were arranged into ten themes which could then serve as a basis for the formation of work committees. This process illustrated clearly the potential benefits of collaboration. A series of sessions was conducted during the master plans' public period that focused on capacity building and learning how to work with funders to maximize opportunities for implementation.

# Participating

Communities which are developing a master plan as part of the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative:

Arcadia Township

Bear Lake Township

Village of Bear Lake

Crystal Lake Township

Gilmore Township

Village of Honor

Joyfield Township

Manistee Township

Pleasanton Township

Communities which have recently developed a master plan and wish to collaborate with regional neighbors on implementation:

Village of Elberta

City of Frankfort

Lake Township

City of Manistee

Onekama Community  
(Village and Township)

# communities

The Lakes to Land communities are situated along the M-22 and US-31 corridors in Northwestern Michigan, stretching from the northern tip of Lake Township in Benzie County to the southern boundary of Manistee Township in Manistee County. It encompasses communities east of US-31 but adjacent to the highway, then continues west to the Lake Michigan shore.

In it are villages, cities, and townships displaying a range of character from rural agriculture to urbanized centers. Communities are adjacent to each other, have similar socio-economic statuses, and share geographic attributes such as natural resources.

All communities in the geographic area were informed of the Initiative and invited to join.

## Haven't I seen you before?

Some of the communities have previously collaborated together. Onekama Township and the Village of Onekama recently developed a joint master plan to facilitate the creation of one greater Onekama municipality. Pleasanton Township, Bear Lake Township, and the Village of Bear Lake attempted to create a joint planning commission and master plan in 2007. The communities in the northern section of the region have had an opportunity to collaborate by developing a regional trail system that spans a number of municipalities.

## Historical settlements

Lumber and railroads were defining influences on the communities in the Lakes to Land region—many towns grew up around sawmills or train stops, nourished by the economic lifeblood such enterprises provided. As the fortunes of those industries went, so too did the fate of a few of the settlements.

Descriptions of two such “ghost towns” in Benzie County date from the year 1877. Gilmore was “located in Blaine Township on the shore of Lake Michigan, 12 miles south of Benzonia. Settled in 1850. Wood and logs shipped. Tri-weekly stage to Frankfort and Pier Point. George B. Farley, Postmaster and general store.” A post office in Joyfield Township, 10 miles south of Benzonia, was described as “located on a fruit belt, mail by stage 4 times weekly. Amazia Joy, Postmaster and Pastor of the Baptist Church.”

In 1883 Lake Township, the town of Edgewater was established on the northwest shore of Platte Lake and Aral settled in near Otter Creek. A narrow gauge railroad was built to carry lumber from the Platte Lumber Company to Lake Michigan, with docks at the shore. The Otter Creek Lumber Company, founded in 1891, reportedly shipped extensive material for the rebuilding of Chicago after the great fire of 1871. Lumbering took most of the maple, ash, oak, elm,

basswood, hemlock, and beech trees in the township, and the towns were gone by 1910.

In Manistee County, the town of Pleasanton, also called Saile Station, had 350 people in 1870. Eight miles east of Pierport and 25 miles north of Manistee, it was home to bucket manufacturers D. and R. Lumley along with a furniture maker, a basket manufacturer, and a blacksmith. Timber, potatoes, butter, and sugar were shipped out. The little hamlet was complete with two churches, a general store, and a school superintendent. Stage travel went to Manistee, Benzonia, and Traverse City, and in 1917 modernity arrived: it had telephone service and was listed as a stop on the Arcadia & Betsie River Railway. Further up on the A&BRR was a little town called Butwell, at the corner of Butwell and Taylor Roads, and all we know about a settlement named Burnham is that it was just due north of Arcadia on the county line.

## Arcadia Township

The Arcadia & Betsie River Railroad, terminating in Arcadia, had extended over 17 miles to connect with the Chicago and West Michigan Railway by 1895. The line maintained an influx of goods to the area and allowed crop transportation from the fertile fields of the township to the markets of Chicago. There was also a good market for ice, which was cut from Bear Lake and hauled by wagon to A&BRR's Sorenson Station just east of Pleasanton Township from about 1890 until 1937. The Arcadia Furniture Factory on the north end of Bar Lake manufactured both furniture and fine veneers to be sold in Macy's in New York City. The Village of Arcadia, originally named Starkeville after lumberman Henry



1.2 Arcadia Furniture Factory

Constructed in 1906 after the Starke Sawmill burned down.  
Photo: Arcadia Historical Museum.

Starke, changed its moniker to match the township in 1870. Anne M. Dempster opened the post office in 1870. Just north of town was a notable “fancy house,” which soared in popularity when proprietors struck upon the novel idea of sending a wagon to Arcadia’s pier to greet incoming sailors.

## Bear Lake Township and the Village of Bear Lake

The earliest inhabitants of the area now encompassed by Bear Lake Township were the Odawa, marking their legacy by leaving behind an impressive number of artifacts. It is thought a burial ground exists near Pierport’s artesian well, and a great battle may have taken place near “Brown town,” where farmers reported clearing their fields and discovering large numbers of arrowheads and even tomahawks. A silver crucifix found in the area and dated 1664 indicates early contact with Jesuit missionaries, perhaps even explorer Father Jacques Marquette. The first non-Native settlers included Russell Smith, who built his homestead in 1863 on the south side of Bear Lake with the idea of a future village and offered up 12 acres to anyone who would come in and start one. John S. Carpenter and Eliphlate Harrington



1.3 Bear Lake School

## *Legend has it that Crystal Lake was formed by Paul Bunyan, a mighty lumberjack whose mighty big boot carved a footprint along the shore of Lake Michigan.*

took him up, building a small store, a boarding house, a steam saw, and grist mill before selling out a few years later to George W. and David H. Hopkins. The Village of Bear Lake was incorporated in 1893.

On June 1, 1876, the Bear Lake Tram Railway began using horse-drawn freight cars to connect the growing village with the docks at Pierport, throwing the gateway to the rich markets of Milwaukee and Chicago open to full throttle. The last of the lumber soon slipped out, followed at close quarters by some early settlers including George Hopkins. By the 1930s, the freshly-cleared land had been put to use producing admirable quantities of blueberries, apples, and cherries. Many local families found seasonal employment on the farms, and the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians has noted the Odawa summer camp located along the shores of Bear Lake during the 1930s through 1950s.

## Blaine Township

Blaine Township was founded in 1851 as the location of the Loyed & Thomas sawmill near Herring Lake. But its *raison d’être* didn’t last long: an unusually high water level in 1862 destroyed the dam across the creek, lowering Upper Herring Lake’s water level by three feet and rendering the mill unsalvageable. Despite this setback, the township continued to grow, and its official organization in

1867 included the area that is now Gilmore Township. A large commercial fishery founded by John Babinaw ½ mile south of lower Herring Lake shipped thousands of tons of whitefish, herring, and trout to Chicago and Milwaukee.

## Crystal Lake Township

Legend has it that Crystal Lake was formed by Paul Bunyan, a mighty lumberjack whose mighty big boot carved a footprint along the shore of Lake Michigan. The township that bears its name is not only the oldest in Benzie County, but predates the county itself by four years. Organized in 1859, Crystal Lake Township’s vast area included nearly the entire county. The township’s population expanded steadily, especially after the Homestead Act of 1862. One settler who stayed to raise a family was Hiram M. Spicer, a former school teacher who contracted typhus while serving in the Federal Army from 1863 to 1865 and may have moved to northern Michigan to avail himself of its renowned healthful air. Spicer became an accomplished horticulturist, and his 21-acre farm produced abundant quantities of peaches, apples, grapes, and cherries. He also served as Township Supervisor from 1874 until at least 1884. He helped construct a harbor, provided most of the harbor’s pilings, and was twice nominated for the state legislature.

## City of Frankfort

A Michigan Historical Marker on the north side of the channel connecting Betsie Lake with Lake Michigan proclaims a piece of Frankfort's earliest history: it may have been the site where the famed Father Marquette died in 1675. In 1852, Joseph Oliver bought 14 acres between Lake Aux Becs Scies—French for “of sawbill ducks”—and Lake Michigan to become the first settler of what would become Frankfort. Three years later, a schooner owned by investor George W. Tift from Cleveland blew into the little-known harbor seeking refuge from a storm; Tift promptly bought a thousand acres surrounding the lake and sold it to a development company from Detroit. The first township meeting of the original, massive Crystal Lake Township was held in Frankfort in 1859, and the town became Benzie's county seat ten years later. By 1867, the United States government had taken notice of the Aux Becs Scies harbor and commenced improvements. Former Congressman and Montana territorial governor Jim Ashley capped off the northwestern journey of his Ann Arbor Railroad with the 1892 purchase of a small local line that connected it to Lake Michigan at Frankfort, and then the company built the lavish 250-room Royal Frontenac Hotel to attract tourists by both rail and water.

## Village of Honor

About the first of April, 1885, Guelph Patent Cask Company foreman E.T. Henry arrived on the grounds with a crew of men and a small portable sawmill and began to clear a place for a set of camps, naming the settlement “Honor” in compliment to the baby



1.4 Frankfort harbor entrance



1.5 Downtown Frankfort, 1940



1.6 Platte River Trout Pond rearing grounds before the state hatchery

daughter of Guelph general manager J.A. Gifford. Hardly a quarter-century later, the 600-resident village was made the county seat by popular vote and later became the site of a well-known and heavily attended annual reunion of Civil War vets (probably due in part to the name of the town—what veteran’s group wouldn’t want to meet in Honor?). The Seymour and Peck Company, successor to the Guelph Patent Cask Company, shipped veneer to Chicago while the Desmond Chemical Company Plant at Carter Siding converting cordwood into charcoal, alcohol, acetate and other wood derivatives. In 1953, Honor saw the opening of the Cherry Bowl Drive-In Theater, now lovingly restored and one of the oldest continually operating drive-in theaters in America, and Coho salmon were introduced to the area in 1966 through the Platte River Fish Hatchery.

## Gilmore Township and the Village of Elberta

At just 7.25 square miles, Gilmore Township is the smallest in Michigan. The area was first settled in 1855 by Joseph Robar and John B. Dory, and the first improvements to Gilmore Township’s harbor on beautiful Betsie Bay occurred in 1859. The harbor was deepened and piers were constructed; these proved vital to the fledgling settlement’s future growth, which would depend heavily upon the shipping industry. In 1892, the Ann Arbor Railroad launched the world’s first car-ferry service from Betsie Bay. Rail cars carrying lumber, coal, and grain now had a rapid shortcut to the shores of Wisconsin.

Elberta, the only village in Gilmore Township, was first settled in 1855. Early luminaries include L.W. Crane, lumberman and founder of the

local sawmill, built in 1872, and James Gillmore, Benzie County’s first newspaper publisher and the gentleman for whom the township was named. The home of a sawmill, a broom handle factory, and Frankfort Furnace, it shipped out wood, lumber, handles, bark, and pig iron. In 1887, the United States Coast Guard installed a Life-Saving Station on Elberta’s Lake Michigan shore that operated for nearly 50 years until a larger new facility was built about a half mile away.

## Joyfield Township

Reverend Amariah Joy, a Baptist minister from Putney, Vermont, filed Benzie County’s first homestead claim on July 11, 1863 and quickly discovered the realities of life in the wilderness: few people and even fewer roads. But he and his wife Frances settled their homestead of 160 acres and Joy went on to become the first

1.7 A car ferry returns to Elberta, 1930s



1.8 Manistee Historic Salt and Logging Operations



Unless otherwise noted, historical photos are from the UpNorth Memories online collection by Don Harrison [stores.ebay.com/UpNorth-Memories-Collection](https://stores.ebay.com/UpNorth-Memories-Collection)

postmaster and then supervisor of the township that bears his name. He was succeeded first by his son and a year later by Charles H. Palmer, a New York teacher who had traveled to Ecuador and California before enlisting in the Civil War. After the war, Palmer made his Michigan homestead claim in November 1866 and resumed teaching while he cleared his land for planting. Eventually his farm boasted a respectable 30 cultivated acres, including 1,500 fruit trees and a unique specialty in nut cultivation.

## Lake Township

The Platte River Campground at M-22 on the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore has a loooooong history: artifacts dating from the period between 600 BC and 1640 AD suggest a little settlement, smaller than a village, in which Natives used the area on a seasonal basis “actually very much like what campers are doing today.” By 1873, the corner of Michigan made up of forests, the lower Platte River, Otter Creek, Bass Lake, Otter Lake, Long Lake, Platte Lake, Little Platte Lake, Loon Lake (originally Round Lake), and part of Crystal Lake became known quite fittingly as Lake Township. The lighthouse at Point Betsie was lit in 1858, and Alonzo J. Slyfield served for 22 years as its keeper. As the lumber boom wound down at the turn of the century, resorts became the other economic staple for fishing, hunting, and summer guests. Chimney Corners opened in 1910, and Crystal Downs—known as one of the best golf courses in the US—was established in 1927.



1.9 Lake view from the top of Prospect Ave., Onekama

## City of Manistee

The name “Manistee” is from an Ojibwa word first applied to the principal river of the county. The derivation is not certain, but it may be from *ministigweyaa*, “river with islands at its mouth.” Other sources claim that it was an Ojibwe term meaning “spirit of the woods.”

In 1841, the John Stronach family constructed a sawmill on Manistee Lake and later another on the Manistee River. By 1849, more settlers were arriving and the reservation was dismantled, with land given to settlers. The city was set back in 1871 when a fire swept through and destroyed over one-half of the city’s buildings. Much was rebuilt, this time of brick.

In 1881, salt was discovered beneath Manistee and another industry was born. By 1885, there were forty sawmills operating and by the end of the century the population reached 14,260. Manistee claimed to have more millionaires per capita than any other city in the United States. They also had city-provided fire protection, a parks department, water, sewer and street lighting.

After 150 years Manistee County has both changed and remained the same. The early boom years of lumbering and exhaustive agriculture have evolved into a stable, diversified industrial base and a top fruit-producing agricultural center. It is the beauty and natural wonder that abounds in the region’s forests, lakes and rivers that remain a constant factor and will always make Manistee County a special place to live and visit.

## Manistee Township

Although Manistee County was “set off” as early as 1840, giving it a name and a geographic region, it wasn’t officially “organized” until the state legislature divided it into three townships in 1855: Stronach, Brown, and Manistee. The tax rolls of that year showed over half the county’s valuation in Manistee Township, situated along the Lake Michigan shoreline and host to the Manistee River’s westward journey into Manistee Lake.

Two sawmills with surrounding dwellings lined the lake and eventually grew into the communities of Eastlake and Parkdale. The adjacent farms were among the most successful in the county, in part because of the ready market in the nearby city. The Manistee National Forest brushes the southeast corner of the township, blanketing the land south of the Manistee River and about two miles inland of Eastlake with trees regrown in the wake of the logging industry.

## Onekama Township

When Adam Stronach sought a place to build a sawmill in 1845, he knew

the wooded acres along Portage Lake would be ideal. The area was known to settlers as early as 1840 by its Odawa name, onekamenk, or “portage.” Although its inhabitants called it by its English name for a time, there was another Portage, Michigan and the townspeople voted for a reversion to its historic name of Onekama in 1871. Though the lumber industry was crucial to early development, sawmills and citizens didn’t always mix. Residents fed up with the unnaturally high water

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***By one account, a reveler at a celebration of the new post office took the occasion to hitch his ox to a log in the dam and pull it out, lowering the level of Portage Lake within a few hours and washing much of old Portage out to Lake Michigan.***

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levels in Portage Lake, raised to power the sawmill, took matters into their own hands. By one account, a reveler at a celebration of the new post office took the occasion to hitch his ox to a log in the dam and pull it out, lowering the level of Portage Lake within a few hours and washing much of old Portage out to Lake Michigan. Portage Creek dried out, previously submerged

areas were now open to settlement, and the town largely relocated.

## Pleasanton Township

Perhaps it was the verdant fields and forests that attracted George B. Pierce, a retired minister seeking a healthy atmosphere on a new frontier, to what was then Brown Township in 1863. When Pleasanton was established separately the following year, he became its first postmaster. By 1870,

Pleasanton Township was home to 65 families, the first shop and school were established, and the first sawmill would arrive in 1871. As settlement surrounding Bear Lake grew just a mile south of the township’s border, residents took advantage of new markets for local timber and forest products. Life became increasingly

civilized for Pleasanton’s inhabitants. By 1880, the community would boast two schools, a public library, a fenced cemetery, and two churches. A local resident was quoted in August 1877 as saying, “[W]hoever chronicles the history of Pleasanton ten years hence will no doubt inform the world that it is one of the most flourishing towns in the State of Michigan.”



LAKES TO LAND REGIONAL INITIATIVE

## Context





# Regional Setting

Located a little over one hour southwest of Traverse City and two hours north of Muskegon, the Lakes to Land region sits nestled along the shores of Lake Michigan. Accessible from the north or south by M-22 and US-31, and from the east or west by M-55 and M-115, smaller county roads traversing its interior pass through fruit farms, small towns, and scenic vistas.

Although the regional setting of this collaborative master plan is diverse, the communities within it share similar topography, land uses, and economic bases along with a fierce sense of place. Many know the area as unique, peaceful, and possessing a tranquility unparalleled in Michigan. Bluffs beckon from the shores of Lake Michigan with an invitation to stop and watch the amber sunsets over turquoise water. Inland lakes dot the area, some providing safe harbor from Lake Michigan for small craft use. An urban feel can be found in the more heavily populated villages and cities which make up the northern and southern portions of the region. Fine restaurants, nightlife, culture, and entertainment are plentiful. Seasonal and permanent residents alike find hospitality and fellowship.

The region's diverse economic base is comprised of small mom and pop stores, larger retail outlets, and light manufacturing. Between the urban areas to the north and south lies the agricultural stretch of the regional

economy. Fruit farms growing apples, cherries, raspberries, blueberries, and plums are plentiful; other products include maple sugar, honey, corn, and general produce. Agricultural enterprises come in all types and sizes, from non-operative acreage to organic farms to large-scale production. A growing number of farms participate in Farm To Table endeavors such as Farmer's Markets, roadside stands, U-Pick and Community Supported Agriculture arrangements.

Healthcare institutions are found in both the northern and southern portion of the geographical range, and smaller urgent care facilities dispersed throughout the core of the region. Tourism and eco-tourism are important parts of the economy as the region's assets invite visitors to play and relax. Technology has allowed an increasing number of individuals to select the region as home and then define or continue their method of employment, making home occupations important to many.



LAKES TO LAND

# Area of Influence

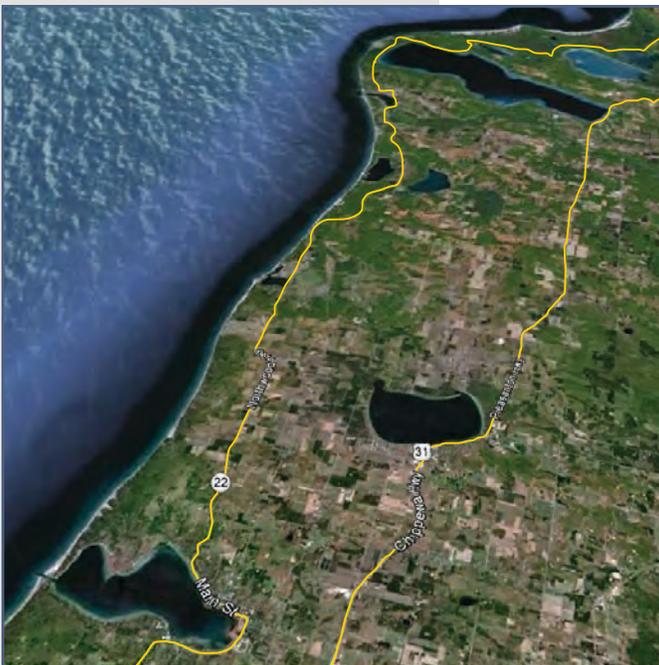
Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library

- Area of Influence
- Participating Communities
- Master Plan Complete
- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road



# Area of influence

At the inception of the collaboration, the initial communities agreed to focus on a general geographic area which possessed similar qualities and faced comparable issues regarding land use and policy.



2.2 The regional view from Google Earth Platte Lake and Crystal Lake to the north, US-31 running down the east, Portage Lake to the south, and Lake Michigan in the west.

As discussed in Tab 1, formation of the Lakes to Land collaboration did not happen all at once. Seeds of this capacity to work together were planted during the writing of the Onekama-based Portage Lake Forever Watershed Plan: the township and the village came together so well that they wrote an award-winning master plan covering the entire “Onekama Community.” On a roll, they then formed a Community Development Committee and began to investigate the possibility of Scenic Heritage Route designation for route M-22. This brought them outside the township’s borders and to the immediate discovery that the “M-22 communities” of Arcadia, Blaine, Gilmore, Crystal Lake, and Bear Lake were not only ready to collaborate but had plans of their own in mind.

Taking a “the more, the merrier” approach, the original communities knew that they would be inviting their neighbors to join them. How, then, to strike a balance between inclusivity and manageability? Taking a cue from collaborative successes already achieved, they decided to focus on the features that had already paved the way for working together: water and transportation. This meant concentrating on the Lake Michigan shoreline communities and those adjacent to them, through

which US-31 runs. Taken together, the leadership team referred to these as the collaboration’s “Area of Influence.”

As we have seen, that strategy was a success. All but four of the townships signed on, and one village (Honor) decided to come on board even without its surrounding township.

# Regional location

Most of the communities within Benzie and Manistee Counties situated along the Lake Michigan shoreline are participating in the Initiative, along with several inland communities.

The initiative includes ten townships, four villages, and two cities. One of those villages – Honor – joined without the participation of surrounding Homestead Township. Manistee Township is participating without one of the two incorporated municipalities within it, the village of Eastlake. With those exceptions, every township is participating along with the incorporated municipalities within them. Crystal Lake Township is participating along with the city of Frankfort, Gilmore Township along with the village of Elberta, Bear Lake Township along with the village of Bear Lake, and the “Onekama community” of Onekama Township and the village of Onekama. The other participants are townships with no incorporated cities or villages within them: Lake, Blaine, and Joyfield Townships in Benzie County, and Arcadia and Pleasanton Townships in Manistee County. The narrative of this report consistently refers to these sixteen communities:

2.3 Table of community types

Township	Benzie County	Blaine Crystal Lake Gilmore Joyfield Lake
	Manistee County	Arcadia Bear Lake Manistee Onekama Pleasanton
City	Benzie County	City of Frankfort
	Manistee County	City of Manistee
Village	Benzie County	Elberta (Gilmore Twp) Honor (Homestead Twp)
	Manistee County	Bear Lake (Bear Lake Twp) Onekama (Onekama Twp)

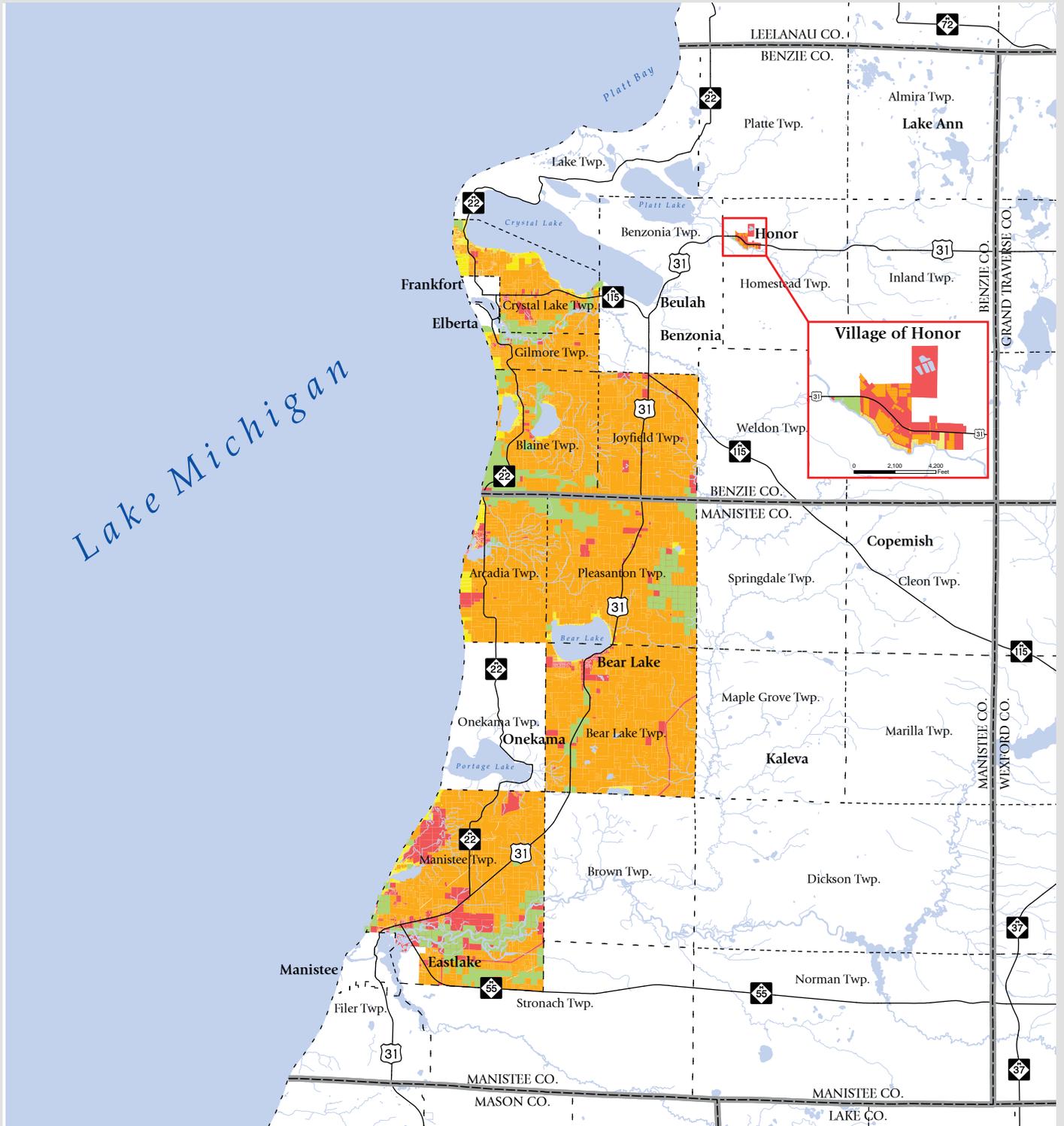


LAKES TO LAND  
**Regional Location**

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library

- Participating Communities
- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road





LAKES TO LAND

# Regional Transect

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, MDNR, Benzie and Manistee County Equilization

- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- T1 - Natural
- T2 - Rural / Farm
- T3 - Cottage and Country
- T4 - Settlement



# Regional Transect

Shortly after the preparation of the Lakes to Land master plans began, the State of Michigan added placemaking as a component of the State's economic development strategy. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well being.

The focus of the State's placemaking strategy is to create vibrant and economically viable places that will retain and attract talent and jobs. National trends note that younger professionals who are our up-and-coming entrepreneurs and business owners migrate to places which provide economic, social, cultural and recreational amenities. In order to consolidate limited resources, the State will likely leverage discretionary funds into communities which have the density to support a creative workforce and serve as generators for growth and investment.

To assess where these investments are likely to occur, a "transect" characterizes an area based on its natural and development elements. According to Wikipedia, "the urban-to-rural transect is an urban planning model that defines a series of zones from sparse rural farmhouses to the dense urban core. Each zone is fractal in that it contains a similar transition from the edge to the center of the neighborhood. The importance of transect planning is particularly seen as a contrast to modern Euclidean zoning and suburban development. In these patterns, large areas are dedicated to a single purpose, such as housing, offices, shopping, and they can only be accessed via major roads. The transect, by contrast, decreases the necessity for long-distance travel by any means."

The rural-urban transect includes six (6) zones from natural (T1) to urban core (T6). In the Lakes to Land region, only four (4) of the zones exist, ranging from Natural (T1) to Settlement (T4). The table on the next page describes in more detail the general characteristics found in each of the four character zones. Similarly, the map illustrates the locale of each zone based on a grouping of the future land use categories found in the nine community master plans. The result paints a picture of the Lakes to Land region as primarily Rural / Farm (T2) and Cottage and Country (T3). Only in several areas where densities range from 4 to 6 dwellings per acre are there Settlements (T4), such as the unincorporated village of Arcadia, the villages of Bear Lake, Elberta, and Onekama, and the City of Frankfort. These locales have the underpinnings to accommodate the level of economic and social activity that is envisioned in the State's placemaking initiative.

## 2.6 Lakes to Land transect typology

Type	General Description	Element	Local Land Use Classifications
T1 Natural	Area characterized by its unique natural resource and ecological assets and therefore considered for future special land stewardship.	Land	Recreation / Open Space Forest
		Living	
		Commerce	
T2 Rural / Farm	Farming is the dominant land use activity with some large lot residential homes	Land	Agriculture Agriculture / Rural Residential - Rural Forest
		Living	
		Commerce	
T3 Cottage and Country	This area consists of low density collections of year-round homes or seasonal cottages some of them clusters around inland lakes or along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Home occupations and outbuildings are permitted. Planting is naturalistic and setbacks are relatively deep. Blocks may be large and the roads irregular to accommodate natural conditions and topography.	Land	Residential - Resort
		Living	
		Commerce	
T4 Settlement	Traditional residential neighborhoods characterized by a grid street pattern, smaller lots with higher densities than found in other locations.	Land	Residential - Settlement Commercial Corridor Commercial Node Village Center
		Living	
		Commerce	

## Element Description

Properties under the ownership or management of Federal and State Agencies and Land Conservancies with a variety of natural and sensitive landscapes.

None

None

Agricultural includes parcels used partially or wholly for agricultural operations, with or without buildings, and include the following:

(i) Farming in all its branches, including cultivating soil.

(ii) Growing and harvesting any agricultural, horticultural, or floricultural commodity.

(iii) Dairying.

(iv) Raising livestock, bees, fish, fur-bearing animals, or poultry.

(v) Turf and tree farming. Performing any practices on a farm incident to, or in conjunction with, farming operations.

Farm and non-farm related residences are also found in this category and occupy sites on less than acre to large acreage parcels between 5 and 10 acres in size.

Sporadic stores or shops which serve local residents. These are located along County roads and are not concentrated in one location to be considered a commercial node or district.

A variety of northern Michigan landscapes including rolling hills, lakeshores, meadows, forests and sensitive areas such as critical dunes and wetlands.

Residential land use found along Lake Michigan, inland lakes such as Bear Lake, Lower and Upper Herring Lakes, Arcadia Lake and Platte River, and other streams characterized by small lots. This category will contain a combination of seasonal and year-round homes.

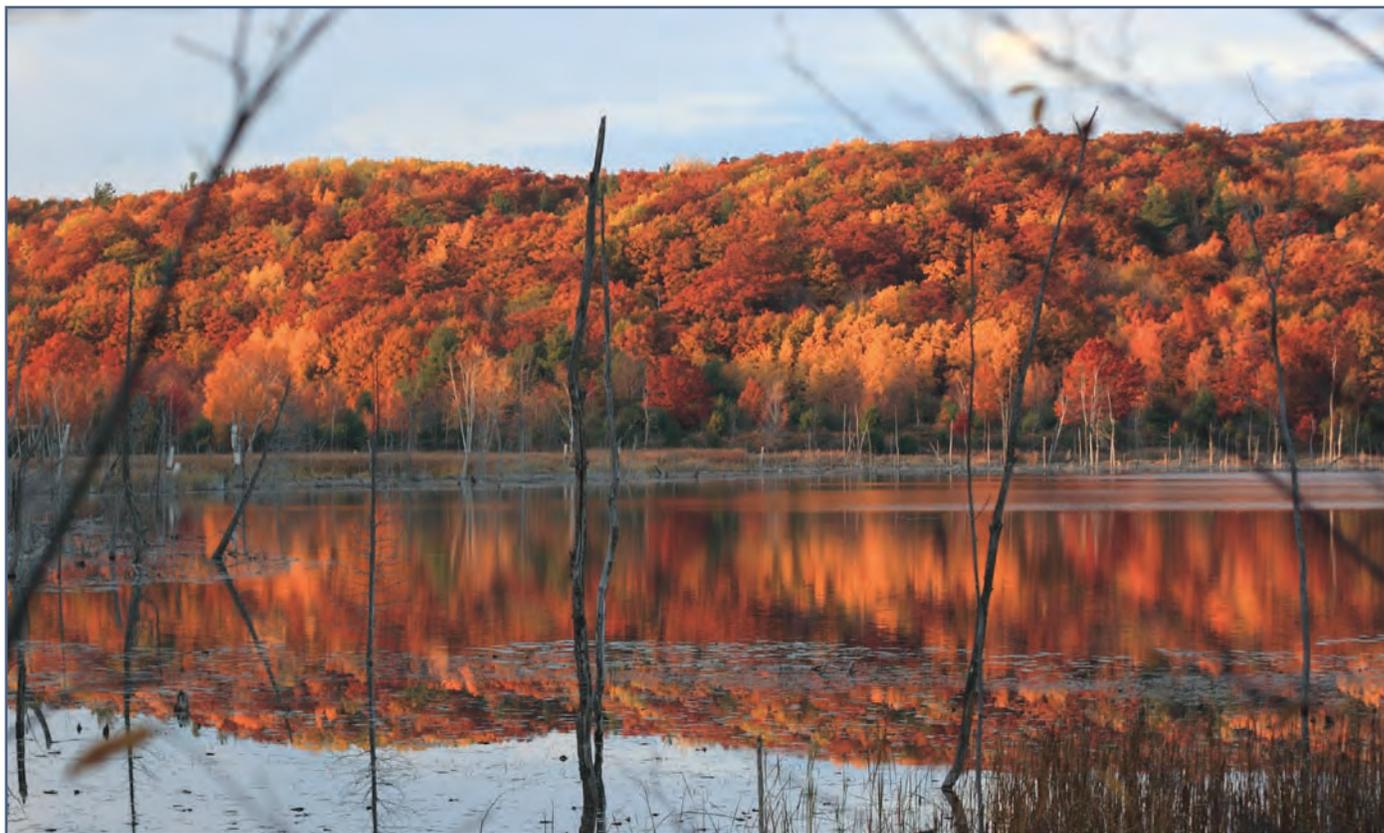
Stores and shops dotted along County Roads, US-31 and M-22. These establishments include canoe/kayak rentals, bait shops, small grocery outlets, gas stations, art galleries and boat sales and service outlets.

Primarily developed and settled as historic villages and centers of commerce.

This land use category describes the neighborhoods of Arcadia, Elberta, Frankfort, Onkama, and Bear Lake. These neighborhoods are made up of single family homes located on lots with an average density of 4 - 6 units per acre. Homes are arranged close to the street with rear garages accessed by an alley when available. Arranged in a grid configuration, the streets are wide enough for on street parking but close enough to maintain an intimate neighborhood character. Trees and sidewalks line the streets, alleys provide rear entry to garages located in the backyard, and front porches beckon neighbors to sit and talk. A church may be found in the middle of the neighborhood along with neighborhood parks. Within walking distance to the Business district, civic, and recreational amenities, the Settlement area is the premier place to live for individuals looking for a more urban environment within view of Lake Michigan, inland lakes, and other natural resource amenities.

A variety of small stores and shops, banks, restaurants, and professional services.





# Natural Assets

As the name suggests, many of the Lakes to Land region's very best assets come with the territory.

A coastal region abutting the sixth largest freshwater lake in the world could consider itself well-positioned in any reckoning of benefits, but the water resources in the L2L area extend far beyond that. Every township except Gilmore and Joyfield also hosts an inland lake, from the enormous Crystal Lake on the north end to little Bar Lake in the south. The rivers that criss-cross the area include the Big Manistee, one of the most important rivers of Michigan's lumber boom, the Betsie, and the Platte. This abundance has rightly earned the area the nickname "Water Wonderland," driving a robust tourism and recreation industry. But it also requires attendant maintenance and careful diplomacy from each of the diverse types of users on these public waters, from industrial shippers to trout anglers to stone skippers.

With water come wetlands. Once called "swampland," these hydric areas provide benefits like flood control, water cleansing, and prevention of erosion. They are so important that they are managed at the state level, meaning

that development affecting them is subject to a permit process. Historically, Michigan's original forests built a respectable proportion of the midwest and then gave way to agriculture on the soils that would support it. The soils that wouldn't frequently reverted to government control through delinquent taxes, leading directly to the assemblage of large parcels under federal and state control which then became conservation areas. These forests and preserves attract tourists and contribute to the rural scenery of the region, impacts which must be balanced against the untaxable and undevelopable nature of these vast swaths of land.

The region's most famous and unique natural asset are the sand dunes that line Lake Michigan's eastern shoreline, especially the Sleeping Bear Dunes to the north. Remnants of the glacial age that shaped most of the midwest's geology, these windswept mountains of sand play host to a diversity of biology, climate, and geology that is found nowhere else on Earth.



LAKES TO LAND  
**Land Cover**

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, NWMCOG

- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road

**Land Cover Type:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #e67e22; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Urban       | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #8e44ad; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Wetlands |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #f1c40f; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Agriculture | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #fff; border: 1px solid black;"></span> No Data     |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #27ae60; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Forest      |  |



2.7 Land cover map

# Land cover



“Land cover” refers to the physical material at the surface of the Earth: vegetation, water, pavement, ice, bare rock, wetlands, etc.

The vast majority of land within both Benzie and Manistee Counties is designated as Forest, with significant pockets designated Agriculture. Consistent with the Wetlands map in Figure 2.5, the Land Cover map shows wetlands mostly around the region’s lakes, rivers, and tributaries.

“Urban land cover” refers to the impermeable surfaces with which we line our developments, such as streets, sidewalks, buildings, and parking lots. Shown in pink on the map, the areas in and around incorporated cities and villages, as well as along major roads, are designated Urban. Additionally, nearly every lake in the region is accompanied by an area of urban development. The proximity of development to water bodies presents particular challenges to water quality. Precipitation runoff carries pollutants such as vehicle fluids and animal waste across impermeable surfaces and directly into the water, without any of the filtration that would be provided by a permeable surface such as soil. Improperly constructed or failing septic fields can leach human waste into the water. Chemical fertilizer, even when properly applied and at the residential scale, can have serious consequences for water quality due to its concentration of phosphorous. This essential element for plant life can reduce the dissolved oxygen in a water body and thus its ability to support animal habitats.



## 2.8 Agricultural land cover

Top: Vineyards north of Manistee.

Bottom: Onekama fields in fall

# Topography

The configuration of a surface, including its relief and the relative positions of its natural and constructed features, defines its topography.

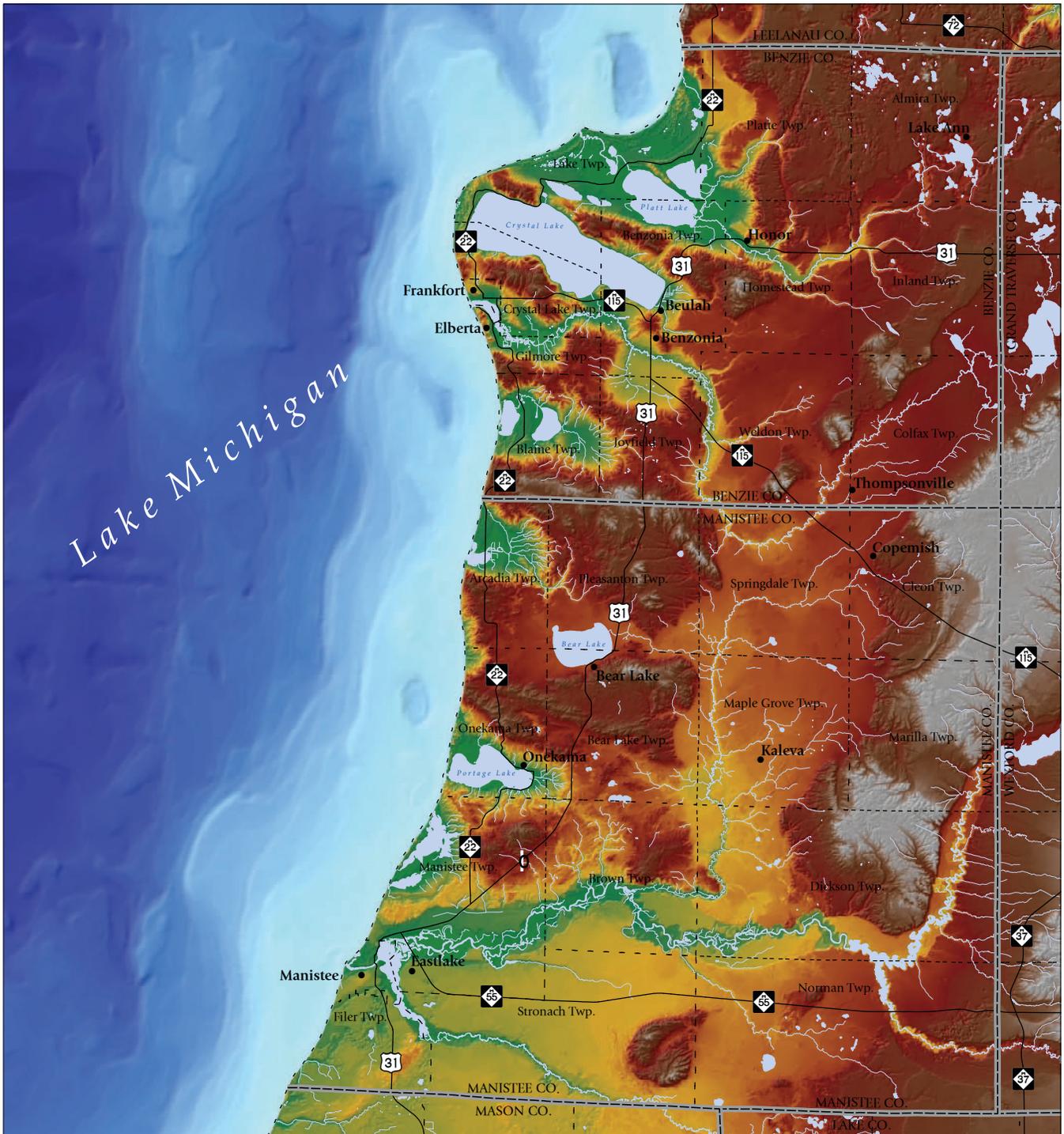
The map in Figure 2.8 demonstrates the highly varied terrain of the Lakes to Land region, which ranges from 450 feet above sea level in the river valleys to 1,350 feet at the ridge separating Benzie and Manistee Counties. Glaciers gouged the coast intermittently to form low-lying lakes, which have in turn been modified to suit human use over the past few hundred years. In many cases, the lakes remain surrounded by lands of higher elevation to form spectacular bluffs, as in the Arcadia and Frankfort areas. These topographic grooves also helped shape the valleys through which rivers such as the Platte, Betsie, and Manistee make their way to the Lake Michigan shore.

Topography plays an indispensable role in development. Engineering concerns presented by swift grade changes were a strong influence on the location of the region's railroad corridors. Construction in areas of low elevation can be subject to flooding, while a building on a severe slope risks an unstable foundation. Also pictured on this map is the configuration of the Lake Michigan floor—its bathymetry. This helps determine how a waterbody can be used. Shallower waters remain warmer and offer recreational opportunities like swimming and windsurfing, while only deeper waters can accommodate the larger vessels used by industry.



2.9 Topography and bathymetry of Frankfort

Note the surrounding bluffs and the dredged harbor. Photo: Google Earth



LAKES TO LAND

# Regional Topography and Bathymetry

2.10 Topography and bathymetry map

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library

- County Boundary
- - - Township Boundary
- Major Road





LAKES TO LAND

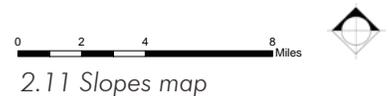
# Representative Slopes

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library

- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road

**Slope Degree:**

	0 - 1		9.1 - 16
	1.1 - 5		16.1 - 80
	5.1 - 9		



# Slopes



2.12 View from Inspiration Point,  
Blaine

Slope is a calculation of “rise over run,” or the change in elevation at two points divided by the distance between them.

When calculated this way, slope is expressed as a percentage or gradient. It can also be expressed in degrees, as the angle of the surface as compared to the horizontal. Figure 2.9 shows “strong” slopes, defined by an angle between 9.1 and 16 degrees (15-30% grade, or a 15- to 30-foot rise over 100 feet of distance), and “steep” slopes which have a rise of over 16 degrees (>30% grade). Awareness of the locations and extents of these slopes can impact decisions with respect to land use and transportation planning. The threat of erosion, sedimentation, and landslides all increase with the slope of a developed surface. Transportation requires more energy to cover the same distance, a situation that is drastically exacerbated as winter snow and ice reduce surface friction on the roads.

On the other hand, part of northwest Michigan’s magnetic appeal is provided by its beautiful vistas and the recreational opportunities offered by its varied terrain. Many areas of steep slopes and undulating grades are concentrated around the inland lakes near Lake Michigan. Crystal Lake in particular has some steep slopes along both its north and south banks, as do several portions of the Lake Michigan shoreline, and the unincorporated village of Arcadia is nestled in a valley surrounded by steep slope hills. M-22 owes its “Scenic Route” designation to the spectacular views offered by steep hills; the popular state lookout Inspiration Point, just north of Arcadia, is the highest elevation on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan.

# Watersheds

A watershed is a geographic area of land that drains surface water to a common point in the landscape.

Watersheds catch precipitation and snow melt and channel that water into streams. Those streams flow downhill to feed into bigger streams and rivers, collectively creating a network of waterways that eventually drains into a large water body—in Michigan, all watersheds eventually flow into one of the Great Lakes. The Lakes to Land region is served by three of the watersheds designated by the United States Geological Survey: Manistee, Betsie-Platte, and Pere Marquette-White.

Watersheds connect settlements to each other in a way that is particularly dissociated from jurisdictional boundaries. First, they are usually larger than any standard municipal unit—several to dozens of municipalities can sometimes fit inside a single watershed. Second, and more importantly, water moves under its own power from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. This means that the impact of land use decisions on water quality are felt far beyond the authoritative reach of the decision-makers. Regional planning is therefore an especially valuable tool in watershed protection, as in the case of the Portage Lake Watershed Forever plan that brought the Village of Onekama and Onekama Township together, or the Crystal Lake and Watershed Association that is the most recent incarnation of a citizen-led group focused on that waterbody stretching back over 40 years.

For this reason, federal and state monies for water quality management are often disbursed on the basis of an approved watershed plan. Section 319 of the national Clean Water Act provides grants to address nonpoint source pollution (pollution from diffuse sources such as fertilizer, oil, road salt, and animal waste in runoff). The Clean Michigan Initiative is a \$675 million bond dedicated to the state's water resources, including a \$90 million clean water fund and \$70 million in pollution and remediation monies. Nearly all of the Lakes to Land region is covered by a plan tailored to one of these two programs, with the exception of the areas adjacent to the Platte Bay and those surrounding Bar and Arcadia Lakes.

***In Michigan, all watersheds  
eventually flow into one of the Great  
Lakes.***



2.13 *Traveling water*

*The Platte River goes under the M-22 bridge to meet Lake Michigan at the Platte Bay. Photo: UpNorth Memories by Don Harrison.*



LAKES TO LAND

# Watershed Boundaries

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library

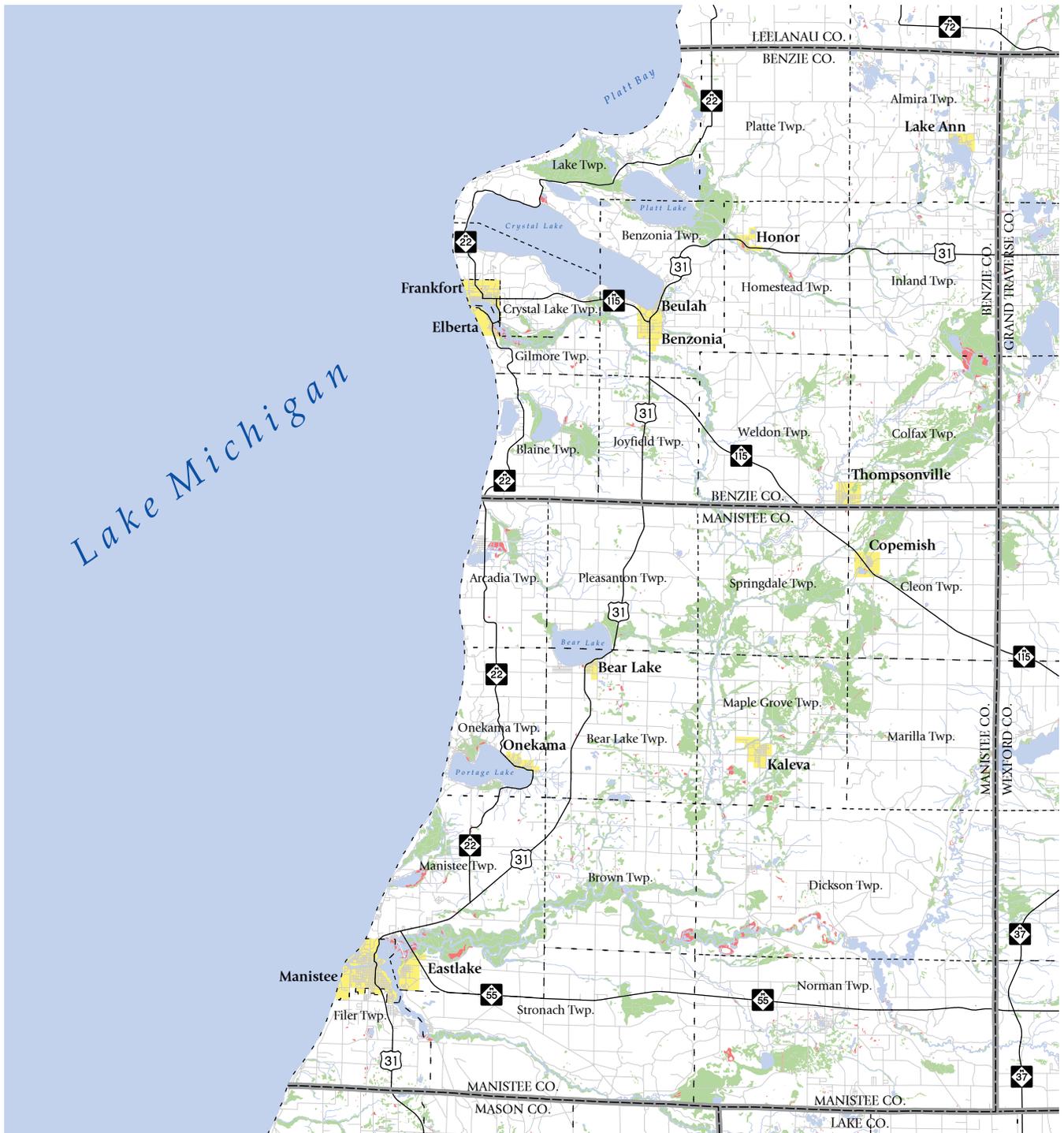
- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road

**Watershed Name:**

- Manistee
- Betsie-Platte
- Pere Marquette-White
- Subwatershed Boundary



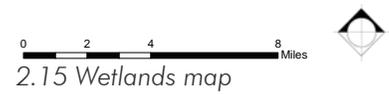
2.14 Watersheds map



LAKES TO LAND  
**Wetlands**

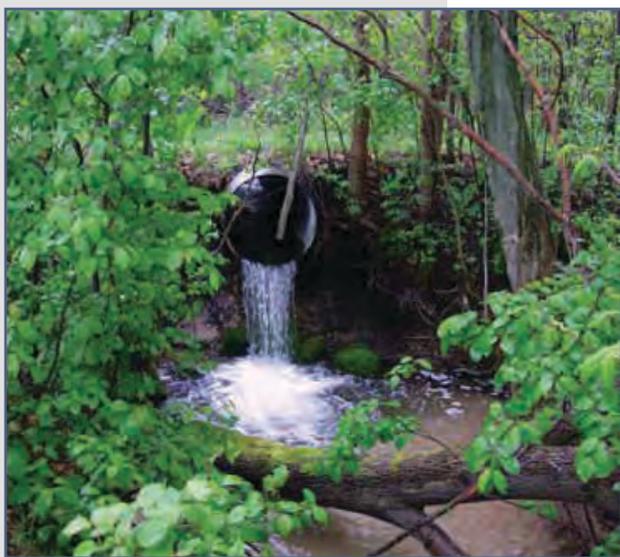
Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, National Wetlands Inventory

- City or Village
  - County Boundary
  - Township Boundary
  - Major Road
  - Minor Road
- Wetland Type:**
- Emergent
  - Lowland, Shrub, or Wooded



# Wetlands

Michigan statute defines a wetland as “land characterized by the presence of water at a frequency and duration to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, wetland vegetation or aquatic life...”



2.16 Arcadia Marsh restoration project

Photo: Ducks Unlimited

It goes on to note that these lands are commonly referred to as a bog, swamp, or marsh. By any name, wetlands are key to maintaining northwest Michigan’s natural amenities, and particularly its water bodies. They provide flood control, wildlife habitat, groundwater recharge and protection, pollution treatment, erosion mitigation, and replenishment of water nutrients.

They are so important that the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality delineates and regulates wetlands throughout the state, as shown in Figure 2.13. DEQ regulates wetlands that meet any of the following criteria:

- Connected to, or located within 1,000 feet of, one of the Great Lakes or Lake St. Clair
- Connected to, or located within 500 feet of, an inland lake, pond, river, or stream
- More than 5 acres in size
- Has been determined by the DEQ to be essential to the preservation of the state’s natural resources

Every one of the communities participating in the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative has some delineated wetlands, although the greatest concentration in the region runs northeasterly through the non-participating townships of Maple Grove, Springdale, Cleon, and Colfax. Regulated wetlands require a permit and possibly mitigation for any activity (construction, fill, dredging, etc.) that will impact them.

2.17 Table of wetlands acreage

	Benzie	Manistee	Total
<b>Emergent</b> (characterized by erect, rooted, herbaceous hydrophytes, excluding mosses and lichens)	1,079.27	2,324.67	3,403.95
<b>Lowland, Shrub, Wooded</b> (characterized by low elevation and woody vegetation)	22,762.91	40,787.43	63,550.33

Source: National Wetlands Inventory

# Protected lands

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, the lumber barons had just about clear-cut the entire state of Michigan. Though agriculture was expected to take the place of logging in the local economy as it had done elsewhere, soils better suited to the slow, woody growth of trees ensured that it did not.

Collapsing farm prices and tax delinquency following the end of World War I placed hundreds of thousands of acres of land under government control. Faced with a population hemorrhage out of northern Michigan, the state's Conservation Department embarked on a program of rehabilitating the land for recreational purposes.

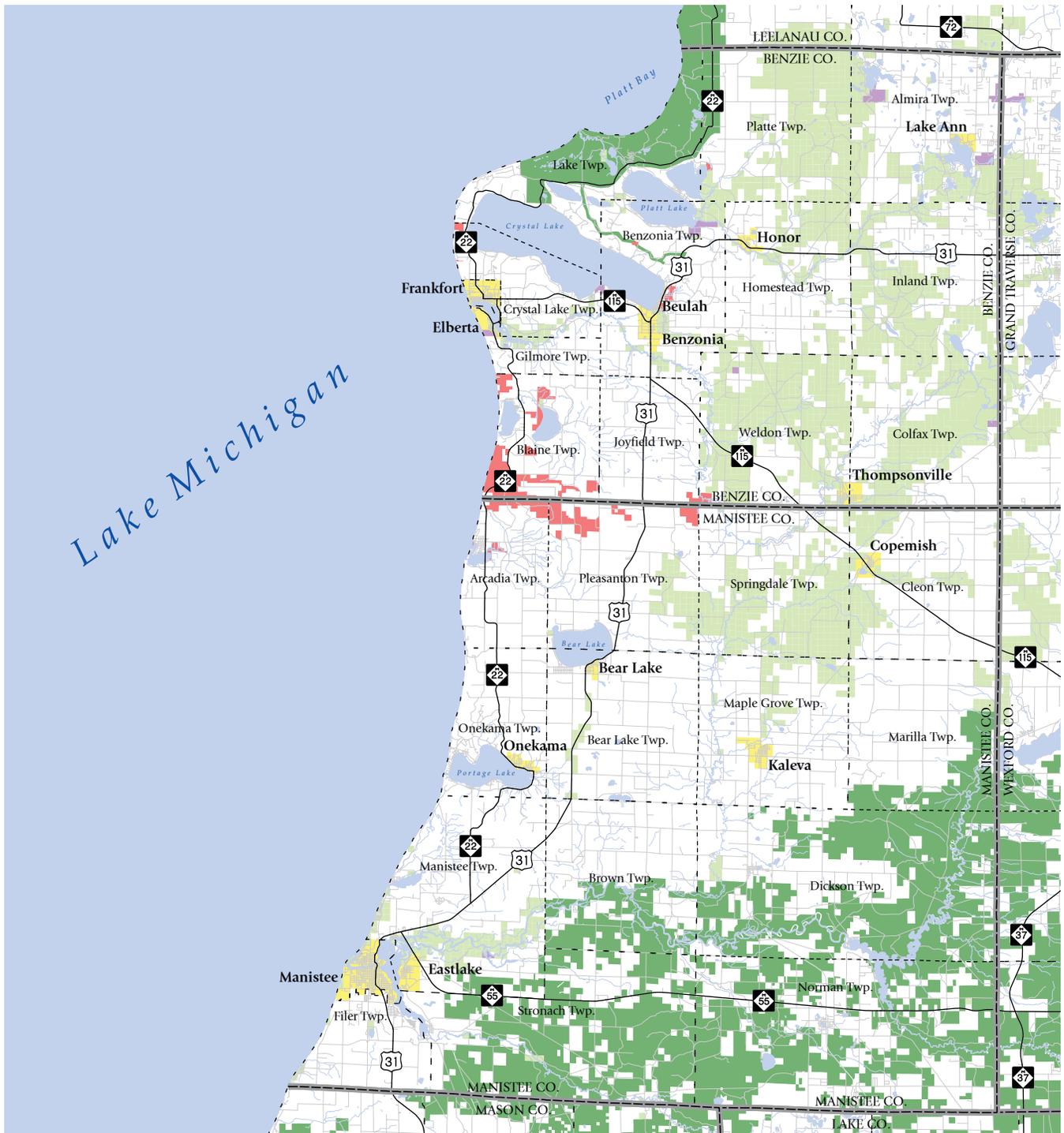
The Manistee National Forest was created in 1938. Administratively a portion of the Huron-Manistee National Forest, it comprises just over 148,000 acres of land within Manistee County, including 5,778 acres in Manistee Township. The Forest provides recreational opportunities, fish and wildlife habitat, and resources for local industry.

The Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore began as an unsuccessful 1941 recommendation to establish a state park on the Leelanau Peninsula. Finally authorized by the National Parks Service in 1970, it extends across approximately 35 miles of Lake Michigan Shoreline from Benzie to Leelanau Counties, and part of its 12,000 Benzie County acres comprise 45% of Lake Township. The Lakeshore is an international destination for outdoor and wildlife enthusiasts. In 2011, it was named by ABC's "Good Morning America" as the Most Beautiful Place in America.

In the 1990s, Rotary Charities commissioned a study showing a breakneck pace of development in northern Michigan and responded by incubating the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy. The Conservancy has since partnered with individuals, foundations, and all levels of government to protect over 34,000 acres of land and 100 miles of shoreline.



2.18 Lookout at Sleeping Bear Dunes  
Photo: National Parks Service



LAKES TO LAND

# Federal, State, and Protected Lands

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library

- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Federal Owned Land
- State Owned Land
- GTRLC Nature Preserve
- GTRLC Protected Land



2.19 Protected lands map



LAKES TO LAND

# Critical Dunes

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library

- Critical Dunes
- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road



2.20 Critical dunes map

***Arcadia Township is the only participating shoreline community in which critical dunes have not been inventoried by the MDEQ.***

# Critical dunes

Michigan hosts the largest collection of freshwater sand dunes in the world, a unique ecosystem sheltering five threatened and endangered species.

Protecting the dunes lining the Lake Michigan shoreline along significant portions of Manistee and Benzie Counties is an essential aspect of land use planning in northwest Michigan. Sand mining has been regulated by the State since 1976, and activities related to development, recreation, and forestry have been regulated since 1989. Earthmoving, vegetation removal, and construction activities within a critical dune area are subjected to a permit process. Local governments may assume that permitting authority by passing zoning restrictions that are at least as protective as state regulations, an option that has not been exercised by any Lakes to Land community.

There are approximately 7,025 acres of critical dunes along the shores of Benzie and Manistee Counties, nearly all (91%) of which is in Benzie County. Arcadia Township is the only shoreline community participating in the Lakes to Land initiative in which critical dunes have not been inventoried by the MDEQ.



2.21 Sleeping Bear Dunes





# Transportation

Of all the subjects addressed in a master plan, transportation is among those best suited to be considered on a regional scale. People travel for the purpose of getting somewhere—frequently, somewhere outside the municipal boundary in which they started.

Of course, the story is much fuller. The connection between transportation and land use is so deep that many communities owe their very existence to the routes along which they sprang up: the port city of Manistee, for example, or the fortuitous harbor shelter that led George Tiffit to arrange for the development of Frankfort. As the land use intensifies, so too do transportation routes: the Guelph Patent Cask Company's lumber operation in Honor brought the Pere Marquette Railroad to town, and the settlements at Manistee, Bear Lake, and Benzonia attracted an "auto trail" that would grow into the cross-country thoroughfare US-31.

For communities bordering a large body of water, limitations on growth are accompanied by challenges to land transportation. This describes the majority of Lakes to Land communities, where geography requires them to be the destination, not a waypoint, for westbound land travelers.

The inseparable nature of production and shipping means that industrial land uses are particularly entwined with transportation. Lumber encampments first sprang up along rivers so that harvested logs, too heavy to be pulled

efficiently by horses, could be floated to ships waiting at port. The emergence of the rail industry meant that operations were no longer confined to any water's edge—rather than bringing the industry to the transportation, the transportation could now be brought to the industry. The Ann Arbor Railroad illustrated the value of combining these approaches when it reached the end of its line in Elberta and began launching waterborne "car ferries" to transport cargo across Lake Michigan to Milwaukee and Chicago.

Sometimes, though, we travel just because we like it. As the 20th century got underway, the trains began to carry more tourists than cargo; some segments of the long-obsolete Ann Arbor Railroad bed have now been transformed into a pleasure trail for hikers and bikers. A group of gliding enthusiasts became so enamored of the offshore breeze at Frankfort that they made it into "the soaring capital of the world." The highway shield for M-22 dots the state, not as a route marker but as two kiteboarders' proclamation of "appreciation for natural wonders such as bays, beaches and bonfire, dunes and vineyards, cottages, friends and family everywhere."



LAKES TO LAND

# Road Classifications

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, USDOT National Functional Classification

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  City or Village   |  Arterial Road  |
|  County Boundary   |  Collector Road |
|  Township Boundary |  Local Road     |



# Road classification



## 2.23 Auto trail signs

Top and middle: Signs marking the Dixie Highway and West Michigan Pike

Bottom: M-22 sign that has become an unofficial symbol of northwest Michigan.

Modern roads have been part of the public domain almost since their inception, and for good reason: their usefulness depends heavily on the consistency of their condition and entirely on their continuity of existence across varied lands.

But the “almost” is an important part of that sentence. In the late ‘teens and early 1920s, Michigan was among many states that became criss-crossed with “auto trails,” routes named by private organizations and marked with colorful bands on electric and telephone poles. The two such trails that headed to Mackinaw City via the Lakes to Land region were the West Michigan Pike, which began in Michigan City, IN, and the Dixie Highway Northern Connector from Niles, IN. Both traveled through the city of Manistee and the villages of Bear Lake and Benzonia.

Following Wisconsin’s example, Michigan became the second state to replace this haphazard system with a numbered trunkline system in 1918-1919. (“Trunkline” now refers to all interstate, US, and Michigan highways.) The West Michigan Pike became M-11 until the United States Numbered Highway system was implemented nationally in 1926, when it was renamed again to US-31. It remains the main artery of Michigan’s west coast, and it was the first highway to cross the Straits via car ferry. In 1952, it was designated as Michigan’s only Blue Star Memorial Highway in a tribute to the Armed Forces.

Also among the Michigan’s first state highway designations was M-22. Just 116 miles long, it follows the Lake Michigan shoreline from Manistee through Onkama, Arcadia, Elberta, Frankfort, and the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore before it rounds the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula and returns south to Traverse City. Its sign has been adopted by a private recreation company as an informal brand of the region, and M-22 stickers and clothing are now seen all over the state. The Leelanau County portion of the route was designated part of the Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route in 2002, and it’s an honor with a planning component: Scenic Heritage Routes cannot be adjacent to land zoned for commercial or industrial uses.

Finally, the road from Frankfort to Benzonia along the south shore of Crystal Lake was designated as M-115 in 1929. Traveling through the Manistee National Forest and the Pere Marquette State Forest, it now terminates in Clare at the intersection of business US-127 and business US-10.

These roads provide several options for travel north and south, but travelers to the east and west rely on county roads under the jurisdiction of the Benzie and Manistee County Road Commissions.

# Vehicle traffic volume

Annual average daily traffic—the total volume of vehicle traffic on a given road in a year, divided by 365—is a simple measurement of how busy a road is.

One of the most common uses of AADT data, and in many cases the reason it is collected at all, is to determine the distribution of road funding for improvements and maintenance. The United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration requires each state to submit a Highway Performance Monitoring System report each June, and these reports form the basis for funding allocations. Three quarters of the 18.2 cent per gallon federal fuel tax is disbursed to the states, while the other 25% is distributed directly to county road commissions and city and village transportation authorities (all are required to provide matching funds). The Michigan Department of Transportation also collects a 19 cent per gallon gasoline tax in addition to vehicle registration fees and other transportation-related fees.

County roads make up 75% of the total Michigan road system, moving over \$800 billion of goods and services annually. While the most miles are driven on state roads, county roads are the site of the majority of intersections—and crashes. Only four of the 889 Michigan traffic fatalities in 2011 occurred in Benzie or Manistee County. The Benzie-Manistee area saw the greatest number of accidents in November (174), followed closely by October (173) and December (171); crashes with injuries to persons occurred most frequently in October (33), August (31), and July (30). In both counties, drivers aged 16-20 accounted for the greatest number of crashes: 1079 per 10,000 licensed drivers, as compared with 578 crashes per 10,000 licensed drivers among those aged 21-64 and 337 crashes per 10,000 licensed drivers for those aged 65 and up. These trends are consistent with statewide data indicating that crash rates decline as driver age increases.

Traffic volume data can also help prioritize snow removal. For the 2011-2012 year, the Michigan Department of Transportation categorized snow and ice control on US-31 as Priority Level I, meaning that the surface will be bare of ice and snow even if overtime must be paid to accomplish it, while the Priority Level II designation of lower-traffic M-22 means that overtime can be paid to clear a one-wheel track in each direction but the rest must wait for the next scheduled shift.



2.24 Historical snow plowing in Manistee

Photo: UpNorth Memories by Don Harrison



LAKES TO LAND

# Vehicle Traffic Volume

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, MDOT

**Vehicles per Day:**

- Low (Under 2,500)
- Medium (2,500 - 10,000)
- Heavy (Above 10,000)
- Minor Roads (No Data)



- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary





LAKES TO LAND

# Marine Harbors

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, MDNR

- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road

**Harbor Type:**

- Cargo, Commercial, and Recreational
- Commercial, and Recreational



2.26 Marine ports map



# Marine ports

The front door of many Michigan coastal communities is its port.

Great Lakes navigation brought the first European settlers to the Lakes to Land region, first to trap fur and then to harvest timber from this western frontier. Commercial use of the waterways has continued ever since, and today one quarter of the nation's top harbors by tonnage are on the Great Lakes. Maritime transport is considerably cheaper and more environmentally friendly than either rail or truck. Its average of 607 miles to one gallon of fuel per ton of cargo is three times the efficiency of a freight train and over ten times as efficient as trucking; it

produces 90% less carbon dioxide than a semi and 70% less than a train. And then there are the infrastructure costs. While rails and roads require continual maintenance, the vast majority of Great Lakes shipping lanes were created by glaciers without any help from us at all.

Sandy barriers prevent some rivers from emptying into Lake Michigan at the close of their journey toward sea level, pooling instead into lakes that dot the western edge of the state. It took no time at all for early settlers to begin dredging these barriers, transforming the lakes into roomy and land-locked harbors. Manistee, with its broad lake at the confluence of two rivers, is the largest in the region. This deep draft commercial harbor serves five major industrial facilities, including the Filer City Generating Station. Frankfort, also a deep draft commercial harbor, was once reknown

for the car ferries that launched rail shipments from the Ann Arbor Railroad onto the waterway system. Though those days are long gone, this Harbor of Refuge supports over 200 recreational boat slips. Citizens of Onkama have established infrastructure around their recreational harbor at Portage Lake that supports 230 recreational boat slips and generates tourist income; residents of Arcadia have done the same to support their 60 recreational boat slips and charter fishing enterprises. Both are also Harbors of Refuge, offering mooring to boaters stranded in inclement weather.

But harbors are not part of the maintenance-free portion of the Great Lakes navigational system. The US Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for them under the national River and Harbor Act of 1879, and the already-challenging task of reliably directing sand and water is complicated by persistent low water levels and deferred maintenance due to constrained budgets.



2.27 Freighter departure

# Rails

The sole railroad line now operating within the Lakes to Land region is the CSX line that loops around the north end of Manistee Lake and continues south to Grand Rapids—all that remains of a bustling network of railroads across and around the region, many of which were built to serve the timber industry.

The Manistee route was also the first rail foray into the Lakes to Land region in 1881. Three years later, the Arcadia and Betsey River Railroad began a short trip between Arcadia and its then-neighbor to the northeast, Saile Station, continuing on to the then-village of Springdale in 1887.

Over the next several years, railways exploded all over the region: a Manistee & Northeastern ran a line from Manistee to Nesson City in 1888, the company that would become the Ann Arbor Railroad connected Cadillac to Frankfort in 1889, and lines connecting Walhalla, Interlochen, Lake Ann and Traverse City all popped up in 1890. This completed the backbone of the regional system, and beginning in about 1895 much of the rail-building effort was devoted to spurs that connected established stations and reached ever-further into the Leelanau Peninsula.

The need for rail cars plummeted at the close of the lumber era, and those connecting spurs began to disappear beginning around 1917. The main lines through the region lasted mostly intact until the Depression. In 1934, a Pere Marquette loop that ran from Traverse City through Lake Ann, Interlochen, and Kaleva stopped running, and the Arcadia and Betsey River Railway followed in 1936. For the next 40 years, only the north-south Pere Marquette line and the Ann Arbor Railroad's Frankfort connection remained. The former was abandoned in 1982, and the latter is undergoing rebirth as the Betsie Valley Trail after landing under the control of the State of Michigan in 1980.



2.28 *The John D. Dewar Approaches an Arcadia Dock*

*Photo and text from Arcadia Area Historical Society: "This is a view south along Lake Arcadia's northeast shore. The steamer DeWar is on the left. Logs are stacked along the shoreline, in a barge, and in the water waiting transport to the Starke Sawmill. Source: Postcard Photo from the collection of Bob McCall"*



LAKES TO LAND

# Operable Railroad Tracks

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library

- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Railroad Track
- Major Road
- Minor Road



2.29 Operable railroad tracks map



LAKES TO LAND

# Aviation

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, MDNR

- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road

- Type:**
- + Helipad
  - ✈ Commercial
  - ✈ General Aviation



# Air travel

Long before Blacker Airport became the fastest way to get from the Lakes to Land region to the rest of the world, sailplanes brought the rest of the world to the region.

Manistee County - Blacker Airport is the largest airport in the region with 3,413 commercial enplanements ("civil aviation operations other than scheduled air services and non scheduled air transport operations for remuneration or hire") in 2010. It is publicly owned by the Manistee County Blacker Airport Authority, and its first commercial flight went aloft in 1961. Seven single-engine and one multi-

engine aircraft are based in the field. Of the 132 weekly flight operations it averaged in 2010, 72% were split evenly between transient and local general operations; 18% were commercial flights; 9% were air taxis; and less than 1% were military. By contrast, the public-use Thompsonville Airport is the smallest. Owned by the Village of Thompsonville, it hosts four single-engine aircraft. Half of its 15 flight operations per week in 2011 were transient general aviation while the other half were local general aviation.



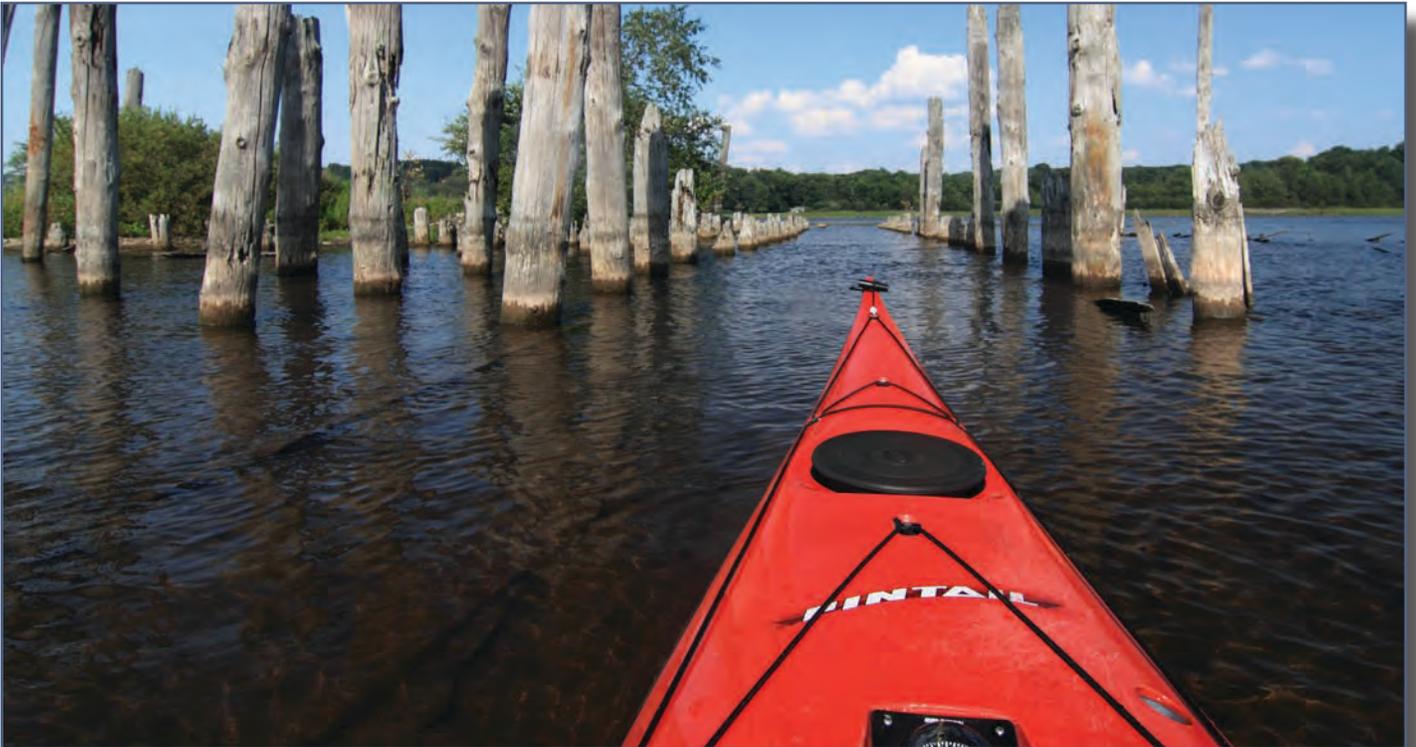
2.31 Frankfort Cinema TG 1-A

This sailplane was, used by the U.S. Army Air Corps as a training glider.

Frankfort Dow Memorial Field, a general aviation airport, saw three commercial enplanements in 2010. Publicly owned by Frankfort City-Co Airport Authority, its 77 weekly flight operations in 2011 were also split evenly between transient and local general aviation. Its aircraft base, however, was unique: the 13 engine-powered vehicles were accompanied by six gliders and one "ultralight," defined in the U.S. as a single-seat vehicle of less than five gallons fuel capacity with weight and speed restrictions of 254 pounds and 55 knots (64 mph) respectively. These are the crafts of the Northwest Soaring Club, which was based at the Frankfort Dow Memorial Field until summer of that year.

A 1939 article in *The Rotarian* credits six glider enthusiasts with transforming this city of "a few commercial fishermen, a few Summer visitors, and no fame at all" into "the soaring capital of America." It went on to cite the first-ever incorporated sailplane school in America, the Frankfort Sailplane Factory, and the startling statistic that a full 80% of Frankfort's population had taken to the skies. Although the factory moved to Illinois before it folded and the school has moved to Cadillac with the Northwest Soaring Club, the gliders' glory days had put Frankfort on the map for good.





# Regional Recreation

The tourism that has become one of the region's strongest economic bases is largely fueled by an abundance of recreational opportunities.

In the winter, residents are found playing on the slopes of nearby alpine ski resorts, racing down snow mobile routes, participating in snow shoe stampedes, enjoying a vigorous day of Nordic skiing, or relaxing in an ice hut on an inland lake trying to secure that perfect catch. Some more adventurous souls are racing their ice sail boats. When warm weather is upon the region, residents are found mountain biking or walking on the non-motorized transportation trails, walking the tree-lined neighborhood streets of the villages and towns, and living life by enjoying family and community.

During the summer months, winter's empty and lonely orchards burst forth with energy. Small fruit stands dot M-22, and nurseries along US-31 are available for drivers to smell the fresh air and listen to the sway of the trees while tasting the bounty of the area. Boating, whether sailing or under power, occupies many lazy afternoon days. Sailboats of all sizes cluster in weekly regattas on the

lakes vying for one more knot. When the wind gets too fierce for the sailors, the sailboarding crew unravels its gear and speeds over the whitecaps, catching air and impressing the bystanders. Lake Michigan may not get waves big enough for surfing on a regular basis, but its substantial wind kicks up some pretty large breakers for an inland lake.

***All types of fishing exist in plenty: enterprise or recreation, fly or bait and tackle.***

Fishing is a huge industry in the region, whether it is winter or summer. All types exist in plenty: enterprise or recreation, fly or bait and tackle. The region's rivers, streams, and lakes are heavily scrutinized for their freshwater inhabitants, and they are home to some of the finest fly fishing the country has to offer. Golf is also a major recreational must for many who live and visit the region; opportunities range from opulent courses known throughout Michigan and beyond to propitious courses that host all levels of player.

# Parks and recreation

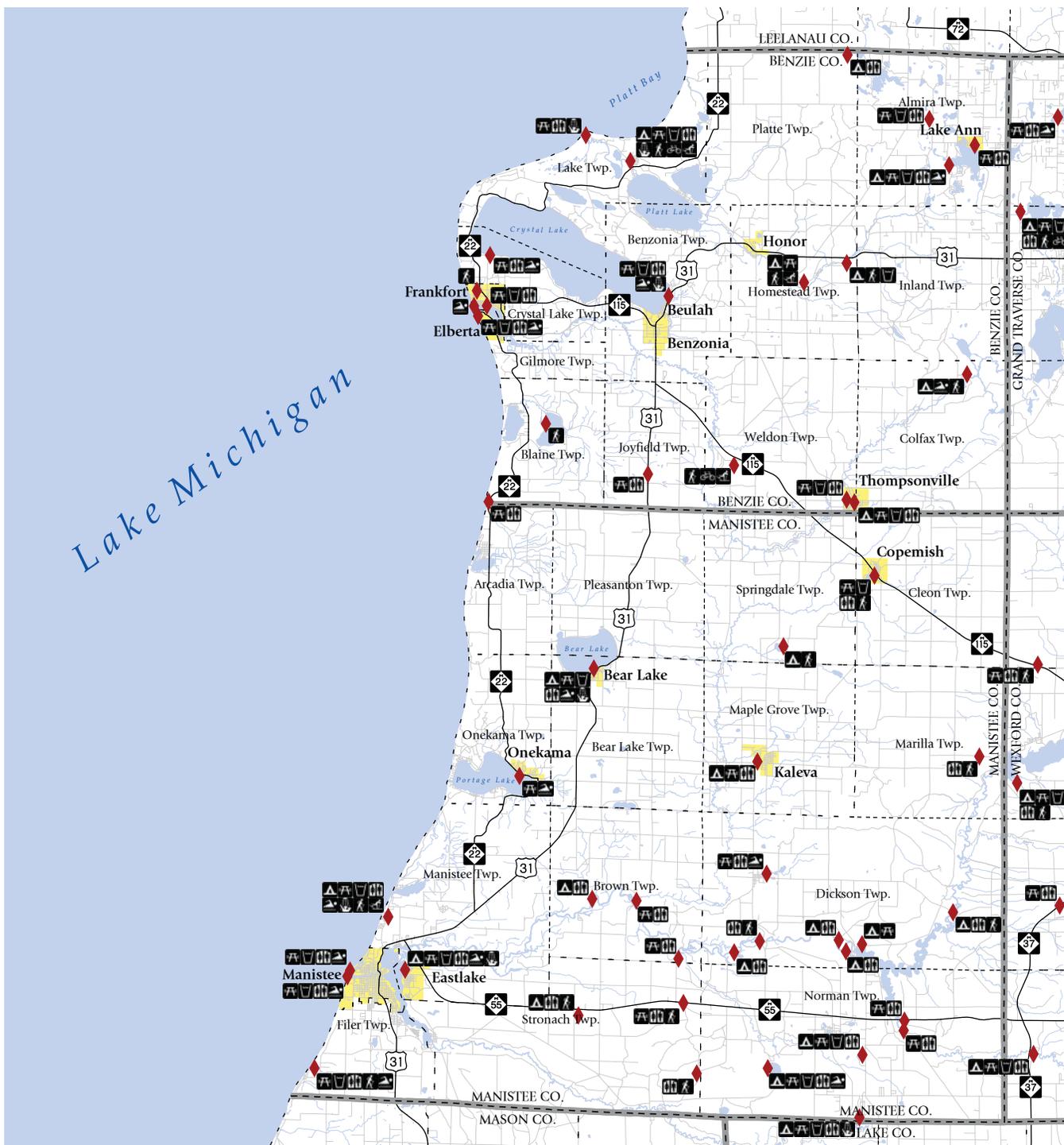
“Because to so many citizens, men and women alike, life is a grind, a round of labor and a season of care... Thus public recreation facilities are provided because of the demand for a free and popular antidote to task-driving conditions.”

Charles Mulford Robinson used these words in a 1910 article titled “Educational Value of Public Recreation Facilities” to assure his readers that his treatise was not going to sap all the fun out of public parks. “To furnish that antidote is their essential purpose,” he soothed. “Education is incidental to it.” Still, his next several pages do not waver from their purpose: “The song of a bird, the scent of a flower, the glory of a sunset sky are parts of our common heritage. ... If the park can cultivate these in large numbers of people, as an incident of its service as a public pleasure ground, it will bestow great benefit; it will vastly increase its usefulness to the community; it will not only heighten the enjoyment of its own attractions, but it will put into hearts and minds a faculty of enjoyment that will be of service in daily life. To such extent, the investment which has been made in the parks will be paying daily dividends on the common stock of human experience.”

That may sound a bit overblown, but it turns out that we needn't rely on the common stock of human experience to get dividends out of parks. Nearly a century after Mr. Robinson's article, a 2006 National Fish and Wildlife Foundation study found that “outdoor recreation sales (gear and trips combined) of \$289 billion per year are greater than annual returns from pharmaceutical and medicine manufacturing (\$162 billion), legal services (\$253 billion), and power generation and supply (\$283 billion).” Camping and hiking alone accounted for 55% of outdoor recreation's total impact on the US economy, surpassing fishing, hunting, water sports, trail- and snow-based activities, and wildlife viewing.



*Blaine Township Park*



LAKES TO LAND

# Recreational Facilities and Amenities



Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, MDT

- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Park / Public Recreation Area
- Camping
- Picnic Facilities
- Drinking Water
- Restrooms / Port-A-Johns
- Swimming
- Showers
- Hiking / Trailhead
- Biking
- Nordic Skiing



LAKES TO LAND

# Campgrounds

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, MDNR, NPS

- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- National Park Campgrounds
- National Forest Campgrounds
- State Forest Campgrounds
- State Park Campgrounds
- Local Municipality Campgrounds



2.33 Campgrounds map

# Camping

As leisure activities go, camping is about as democratic as it gets.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources boasts that “you are never more than half an hour from a Michigan State Park, State Forest Campground, State Recreation Area, or State trail system,” so just about anyone in need of a getaway can pack up a few subsistence items and start communing with the great outdoors in short order. It’s affordable, kid- and pet-friendly, and so therapeutic that entire intervention programs have been built around it.

Lake Michigan’s varied shoreline and the region’s abundance of inland lakes, rivers, streams, woodlands, bluffs, and trails make it a year-round destination for outdoor enthusiasts of all types. And at the end of the river rafting or the bicycle riding, those enthusiasts need a place to rest their heads—and a bite to eat, and maybe a few supplies or souvenirs, making an attractive campground into a community economic driver.



A City of Tents, Orchard Beach State Park, Manistee, Mich.

2.34 Orchard Beach State Park in  
Manistee Township

Photo: *UpNorth Memories* by Don  
Harrison

State campgrounds within Benzie and Manistee Counties are maintained and managed by the MDNR. The Platte River campground, federally managed as part of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, is at the junction of M-22 and the Platte River, where archaeological evidence suggests that humans may have been taking a summer holiday since 600 B.C. Numerous private and quasi-public campgrounds dot the area, but it is interesting to note that the region hosts no state campgrounds at all in the recreation-focused area west of US-31—a potentially overlooked income source.

# Boat launches

The eight Great Lakes states registered 4.3 million boats in 2003—one third of all US recreational vessels—and Michigan’s 1,000,000 boats led the region. Forty-two percent of them belonged to residents of coastal counties.

To preserve public access to our 3,000 miles of coastline, Michigan’s state legislature began earmarking fishing license funds to purchase water frontage in 1939. Since then, marine fuel taxes and boat registration fees paid by recreational boaters have funded the construction of over 1,200 boat launching facilities. In the Lakes to Land region, the launches offer access to Lake Michigan, rivers, and inland lakes for watercraft ranging from kayaks to yachts. In addition to these State-designated launches, there are many additional inland lake road-end boat launch areas maintained by the Benzie and Manistee County Road Commissions.

Such maintenance is money well spent. A Great Lakes Recreational Boating study conducted by the US Army Corps of Engineers in 2003-2008 found that an average Great Lakes boat owner spends about \$3600 per year, including equipment, insurance, fees, gas, food, and lodging. Applying that figure to the statistic above, it is reasonable to estimate that recreational boating is a \$72 million enterprise in the Lakes to Land region. The same study appraises its contribution to Michigan personal income at \$1.3 billion, to the overall economy at \$1.9 billion, and to statewide employment at 51,000 jobs.



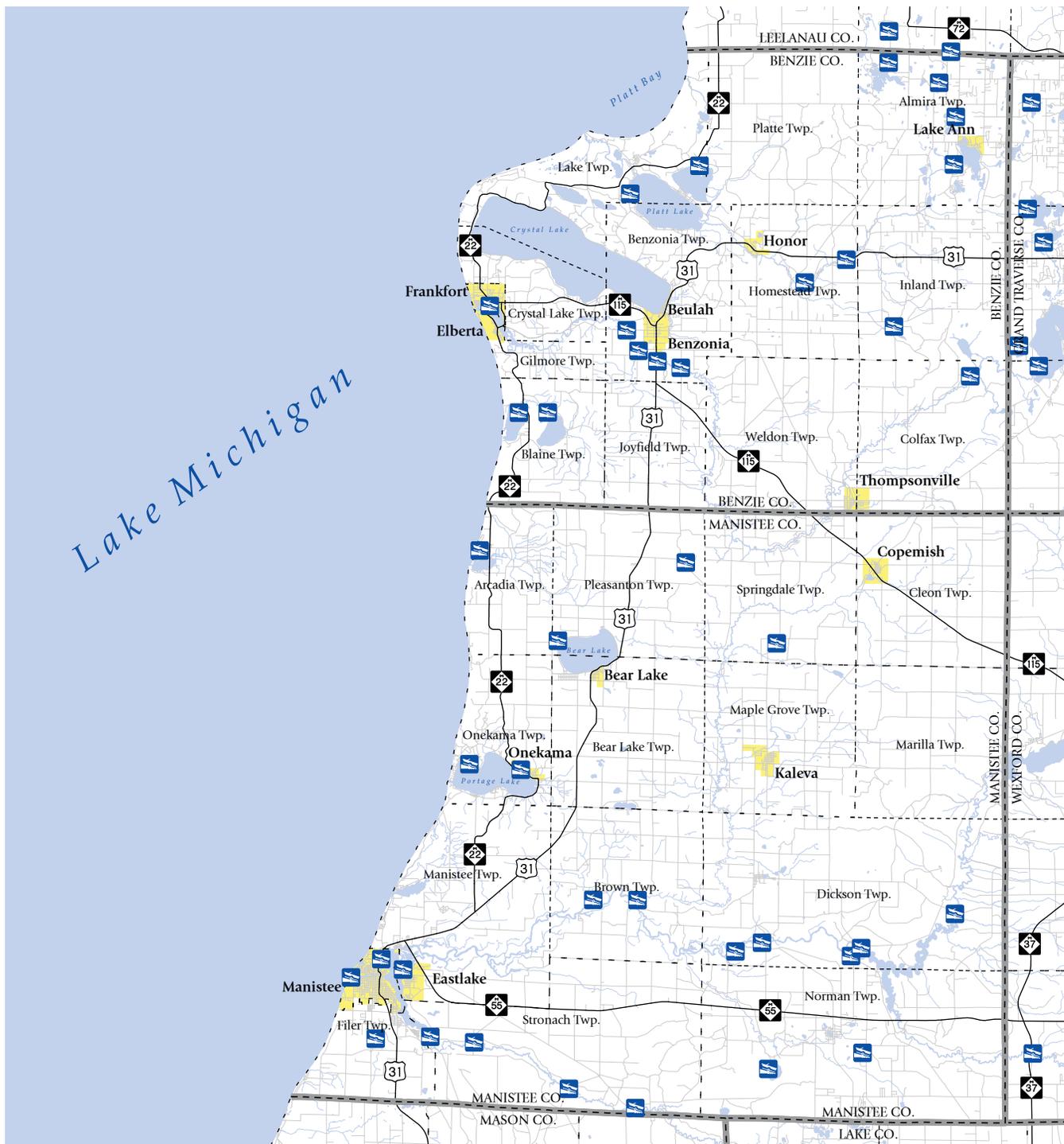
2.36 Bear Lake boat launch circa 1920s

Photo: UpNorth Memories

2.35 Table of boating economic impacts

	Lakes to Land Region*	State of Michigan	Great Lakes basin
Registered boats	19,071	953,554	4,282,507
Trip and craft sales	\$780 million	\$3.9 billion	\$19 billion
Personal income added	\$260 million	\$1.3 billion	\$6.5 billion
Economic value added	\$380 million	\$1.9 billion	\$9.2 billion
Jobs	1,027	51,329	246,117

\* calculated by taking 42% of state number and dividing by 21 (2 of 42 total coastal counties)



LAKES TO LAND

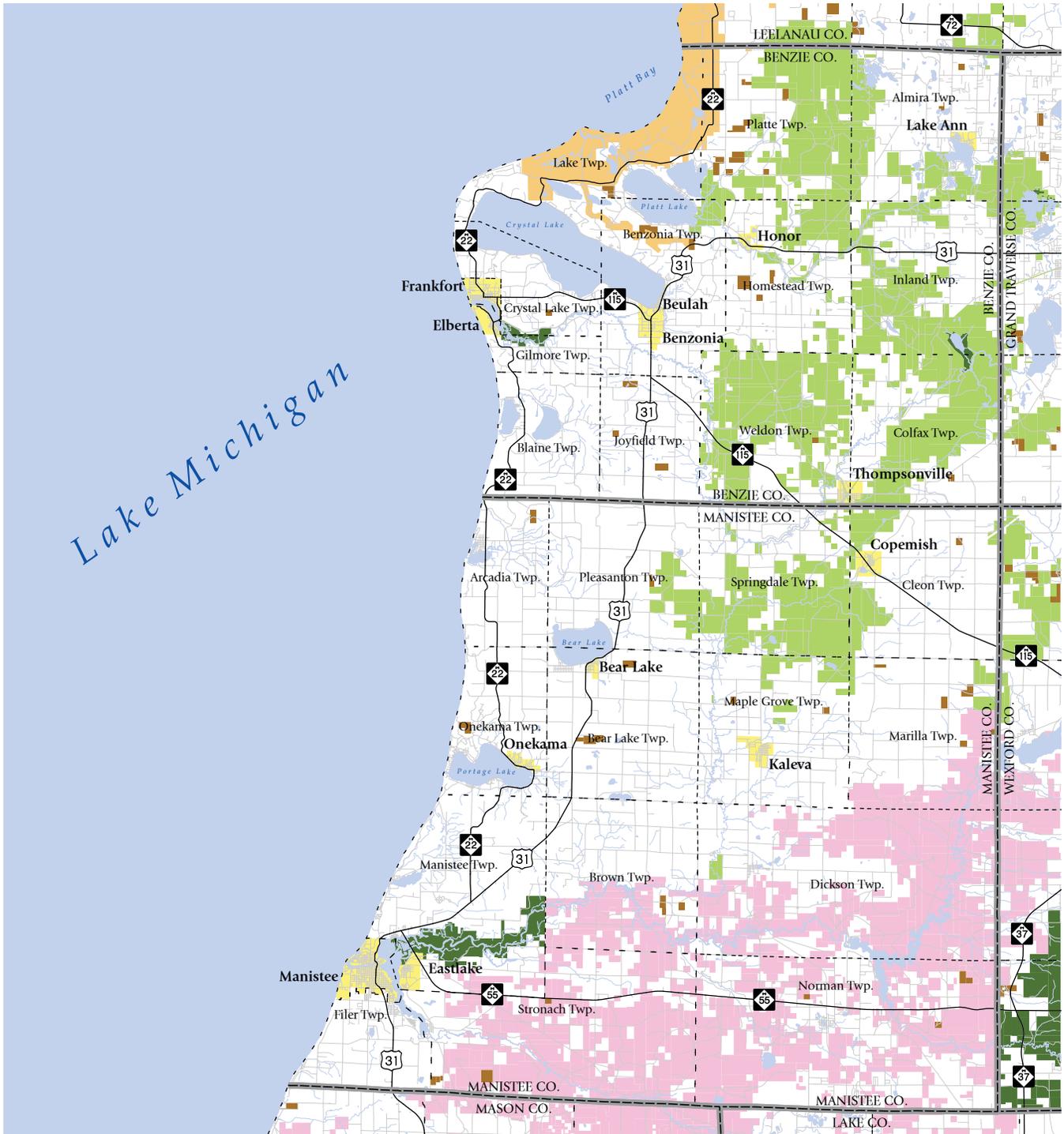
# Boat Launch Ramps

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, MDNR

-  State Designated Boat Access Site
-  City or Village
-  County Boundary
-  Township Boundary
-  Major Road
-  Minor Road



2.37 Boat launch ramps map



LAKES TO LAND

# Lands Open to Public Hunting

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, MDNR

- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road

- Open to Public Hunting:**
- US Forest Service
  - National Park Service
  - Commercial Forest Act Lands
  - State Forest Land
  - State Wildlife/Game Areas



2.38 Lands open to public hunting map

# Hunting

Want to hunt deer, elk, rabbit, hare, squirrel, pheasant, grouse, woodcock, quail, crow, coyote, opossum, porcupine, weasel, skunk, woodchuck, turkey, or waterfowl? There's a license for that.



2.39 Jake turkeys in Onekama

Photo: Al Taylor

The Department of Natural Resources, responsible for fish and wildlife management, regulations, and habitat protection, is primarily funded through two mechanisms: the direct sale of hunting and fishing licenses, and the leveraging of those proceeds for use in the federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) project. The WSFR program, which turned 75 in 2012, levies a tax of 10% to 11% on sporting arms, ammunition, bows, arrows, and crossbows and then returns that money to state conservation departments (in Michigan, the MDNR) through 3-to-1 matching grants. So, every \$1 spent on a hunting license yields \$4 in conservation funding.

It's a system that many like because it directly ties the cost of preserved land to its use. But it is also a system in which land conservation for all reasons is vulnerable to changes in hunting behavior. The chart below shows that sales for all licenses have declined steadily over the past five years, both numerically and as a share of the overall population. The magnified rate of return provided by the WSFR program also works in reverse: for every \$1 lost in hunting license sales, MDNR must make up a \$4 budget shortfall. This has led the department to urge all who are interested in conservation to buy a license—whether you plan to hunt or not.

2.40 Table of hunting licenses sold by year

		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Change 2006- 2011	% change 2006- 2011
Hunting license type <sup>a</sup>	Bear <sup>b</sup>	9,457	9,516	10,180	8,953	8,975	9,020	-437	-4.6%
	Deer	734,089	724,198	733,993	725,186	697,454	691,181	-42,908	-5.8%
	Elk <sup>b</sup>	204	166	355	366	227	154	-50	-24.5%
	Fur harvester	24,024	24,387	24,148	23,331	24,411	25,813	1,789	7.4%
	Small game	295,349	293,659	273,262	266,549	261,032	256,175	-39,174	-13.3%
	Turkey <sup>c</sup>	132,764	127,772	124,570	127,120	125,093	114,139	-18,625	-14.0%
	Spring turkey	125,933	121,487	118,021	120,769	115,101	106,880	-19,053	-15.1%
	Fall turkey	21,951	20,877	20,561	20,758	27,310	20,905	-1,046	-4.8%
	Waterfowl	60,403	58,866	58,040	58,214	56,688	55,724	-4,679	-7.7%
	All types	814,003	800,921	805,299	798,256	772,114	763,059	-50,944	-6.3%
	MI population	10,082,438	10,050,847	10,002,486	9,969,727	9,883,640	9,876,187	-206,251	-2.0%
Licenses per capita	0.0807	0.0797	0.0805	0.0801	0.0781	0.0773	-0.003	-4.3%	

Source: Brian J. Frawley, MDNR.

<sup>a</sup>Within each license type, a person is counted only once regardless of the number of licenses purchased.

<sup>b</sup>A restricted number of licenses were available, and these licenses were distributed using a random drawing.

<sup>c</sup>Some but not all of turkey hunting licenses were distributed using a random drawing.

<sup>d</sup>Total for all types does not equal sum of all license types because people can purchase multiple license types.

# Trout streams

One of the region's major recreational draws is the wealth of opportunities for fishing, both in Lake Michigan and in its inland lakes, rivers, and streams.

The map displayed in Figure 2.41 identifies the designated trout streams in Benzie and Manistee counties. Viable trout streams are generally defined by three characteristics: coarse soils, limited development (including limited pavement and other impervious surfaces), and an abundance of groundwater. State-designated Blue Ribbon Trout Streams meet even stricter criteria: they support excellent stock of wild resident trout, permit fly casting while remaining shallow enough to wade in, produce diverse insect life, and have excellent water quality.

Trout are good indicators of water quality in general because of their reliance on benthic macroinvertebrate diversity—the bugs, larvae, and other organisms that live on the bottom of a body of water. These creatures thrive in streams with high levels of dissolved oxygen, and this means clean, cold water for two reasons: water's ability to hold dissolved oxygen decreases as temperature increases, and the bacteria in organic waste can quickly consume all available dissolved oxygen. When present, aquatic macroinvertebrates help maintain the water quality by eating bacteria and decayed plants, then become a source of food themselves for the resident fish population.

The Platte River from Maple City Road to Honor and Bear Creek upstream of Nine Mile Road both have Blue Ribbon designations. The Platte River stretch hosts the state's fish hatchery, which raises chinook and coho salmon and produces coho eggs for the entire upper Great Lakes. Despite Bear Creek's modest name, its flows are similar to the Little Manistee and Pine Rivers, and the tributary provides the Manistee River system with its wild runs of steelhead trout and salmon.



2.41 Benthic macroinvertebrates



Mayfly



Dragonfly



Caddisfly

2.42 Steelhead trout

Photo: Cheri and Tony Barnhart



LAKES TO LAND

# Trout Locations

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library

- City or Village
- Trout Stream
- Blue Ribbon Trout Stream

- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road



2.43 Trout locations map



LAKES TO LAND

# Regional Recreational Trails

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, MDOT, NWMCOG, GTRLC

- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- GTRLC Trail
- Equestrian Trail
- Betsie Valley Trail
- Snowmobile Trail
- North Country Trail
- Non-Motorized Multi Use Trail (use restrictions vary)



2.44 Recreational trails map

# Recreational trails

*However many worthy benefits a trail might provide, its raison d’etre can often be boiled down to one word: fun.*

The Michigan Statewide Trails Initiative of 1992 defines a trailway as “a land corridor passing through the community or countryside...accommodating a variety of public recreation uses.”

Recent research casts trails in the role of community superhero, providing economic, environmental, recreational, health, and even safety benefits. They offer transportation alternatives to the car. They are exercise opportunities that lead directly to better medical outcomes. They’re sites of chance meetings with neighbors and wildlife. They can provide a buffer between natural areas and inhabited ones. They draw in visitors from other communities. Their activity can enliven an area that would otherwise look desolate enough to invite crime.

But however many worthy benefits a trail might provide, its *raison d’etre* can often be boiled down to one word: fun. Michigan’s citizenry comes together in myriad ways to identify, create, and maintain an extensive and varied trail network. For example, our 6,200-mile web of snowmobile trails, 181 miles of which run through Benzie and Manistee counties, is one of only three such systems in the country. Half of the system is on private lands while the other half is distributed among federal, state, and other public lands; all utilize grant program grooming tractors for maintenance. The 22-mile-long Betsie Valley Trail that follows the abandoned Ann Arbor Railroad bed is another collaborative example: owned by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, it is maintained by Benzie County and supported by the not-for-profit Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail corporation. The Shore to Shore Riding and Hiking Trail that cuts across the northeast corner of Benzie County was established in 1964 by the Michigan Trail Riders Association, and the only “riding” to be done on this journey between Oscoda on Lake Huron and Empire on Lake Michigan is on a horse—neither motors nor bicycles are welcome. The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy has made trails an integral part of its land stewardship mission. And the federally-managed North Country Trail is a footpath that traverses seven states between New York and North Dakota; the Huron-Manistee is one of the 10 national forests it touches on in its 4,600 mile journey.

2.45 Table of trail miles

	Benzie	Manistee	Total
Snowmobile	63.13	118.68	181.81
Equestrian	15.36	0	15.36
Nonmotorized	60.01	64.91	124.96
North Country Trail	0	33.21	33.21
GTRLC	14.71	2.07	16.79





# Cultural Resources

Though the land itself provides plenty of amusement for many, over the years the people of the region have built, preserved, and accrued a wealth of cultural endeavors with which to supplement their entertainment.

Those inclined toward the visual arts may like to visit the works at the Oliver Art Center and the Crystal Lake Art Center, or wait until the art fairs arrive in Frankfort and Bear Lake. For a little free anytime cultural pick-me-up, peek into the Frankfort post office at the car ferry mural funded by the Works Progress Administration in 1941.

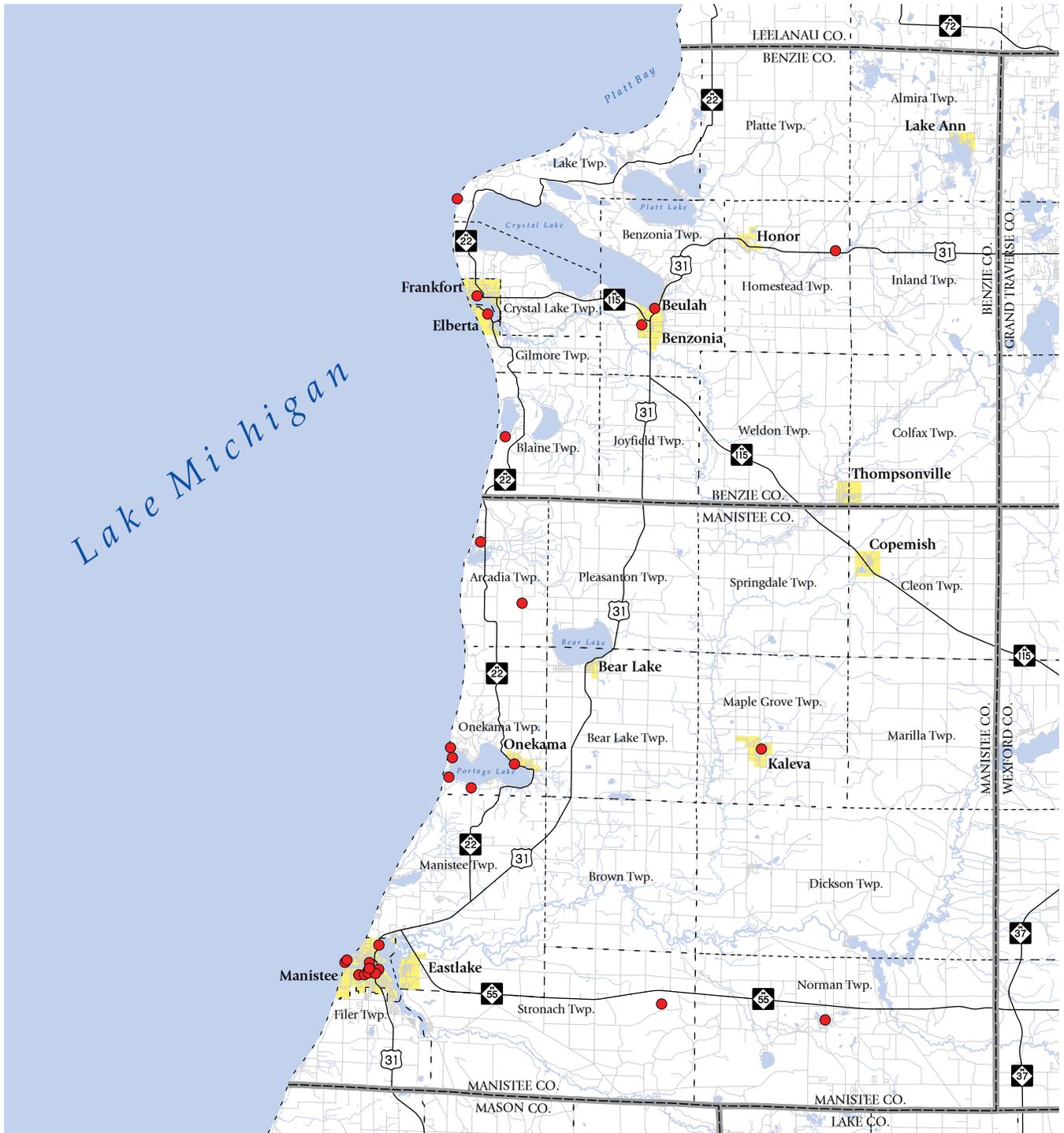
Those who prefer the auditory delights can be serenaded by the Benzie Community Chorus and make the summer rounds of Concert in the Park venues. In the theatrical hub of Frankfort, you can attend the Lakeside Shakespeare Theatre, Benzie County Players, and Frankfort Garden Theater.

Your culture can come packaged with a little education at the Arcadia Historical Society, or it can come packaged in the 60,000 bottles used to build the house that now hosts the Kaleva Historical Society in Manistee County. Both Benzie

*Even a little hotel stay  
can come with a side of  
history.*

and Manistee counties offer public libraries and branches. Even a little hotel stay can come with a side of history at the lumber-town-turned-resort called Watervale Inn—or it can make history the main attraction as in the old-west-themed Rockin' R Ranch in Bear Lake. There you'll find horseback riding, hayrides, sledding, carriage rentals, and of course a saloon.

For fun that's a little less formal, hometown festivals Arcadia Daze and Bear Lake Days are celebrated in July while Onekama hosts Onekama Days in August and the Manistee County Fair in September. You can get a head start on sampling the region's dining options at the Taste of Benzie festival in Elberta. Catch a movie in Honor at the Cherry Bowl Drive-In, open every summer since 1953, and if you're in the car anyway, defy a little gravity at the Putney Road Mystery Spot in Blaine.



LAKES TO LAND

# Historic Sites

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, MSHDA

- Registered Historic Site
- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road



# Historic sites

“[T]he task is to breathe the breath of life into American history for those to whom it has been a dull recital of facts—to recreate for the average citizen something of the color, the pageantry, and the dignity of our national past.”

So spoke Verne Chatelan, chief historian for the National Parks Service at the 1935 passage of the Historic Sites Act. Since then, the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act has broadened both the definition and the scope of historic designation, giving official recognition and benefits access at all levels of government and in the private sector. Historic sites connect a geographic location to itself across time. They offer those who behold them an opportunity to broaden our definition of “community,” beyond those souls who happen to be living in a particular place right now to the sum all those who have passed through—an act which, when conceived in reverse, lets our own souls become part of a community which will outlive us many hundreds of times over.

The Frankfort Land Company House imagined itself in just such a way in 1867: the two-story Italianate was the first stylish house in Frankfort, built for the company officials tasked with developing the town. “No building in Frankfort is more closely connected to the establishment of the city,” says the building’s National Register entry, adding that the lavish structure also “advertised the company’s confidence in the town’s economic potential.”

The Manistee County Courthouse Fountain in Onekama Village Park has twice been solemnly dedicated to the community. In 1887, the ornate public sculpture was purchased to decorate the lawn of the new Victorian Gothic courthouse. After a 1950 fire destroyed the building, the Portage Lake Garden Club obtained the fountain and moved it to the Village Park to memorialize the deceased servicemen of Onekama Township.

The William and Ursula Quimby Homestead is neither lavish nor ornate, called an “ordinary farmhouse” even by its Register entry. But it sheltered a truly extraordinary Arcadia Township neighbor: their daughter Harriet Quimby, who became the first licensed female pilot in 1911 and successfully completed the first female solo flight over the English channel in 1912.



## 2.47 Historic site photos

Top: The Frankfort Land Company House, Frankfort (Benzie County)

Middle: The Manistee County Courthouse Fountain, Onekama Village (Manistee County)

Bottom: The William and Ursula Quimby Homestead, Arcadia Township (Manistee County)

Photos: Michigan State Housing Development Authority “Historic Sites Online”

# Lighthouses

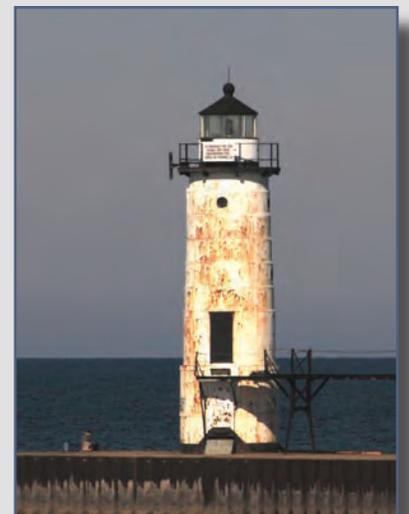
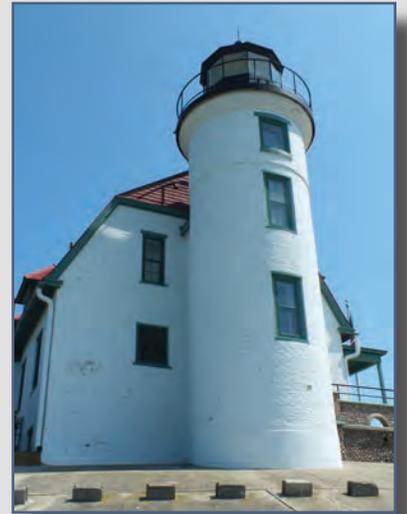
The outsize role of waterborne trade in the history of Michigan—and the Lakes to Land region in particular—afforded lighthouses the equally outsize role of trying to keep that trade from becoming deadly.

Colonial lighthouses came under federal control in 1789, when President George Washington created the U.S. Lighthouse Establishment. No lighthouses were constructed in Michigan until 1925, when the light at Fort Gratiot was lit. The first lights on Lake Michigan shone from Chicago Harbor and St. Joseph in 1832.

By 1838, the Manitou Passage had been established as the fastest and most protected route to the Straits from the south, but it was still so treacherous it furnished an entire underwater preserve with shipwrecks. The South Manitou Light was lit in 1838 to mark the west side of the passage's entry. By the time the Point Betsie Light Station joined it in 1858 to guide navigation into the passage from the east, the South Manitou Light was ready for reconstruction.

Just south of the passage was the Lake Betsie harbor at Frankfort, the most northern improved harbor on Michigan's west coast and an excellent refuge at which to wait for optimum passage conditions. Private funds had first improved the harbor, but by 1867 the traffic volume warranted the attentions of the Army Corps of Engineers. The next six years saw a new channel dug and dredged to accommodate the largest ships of the day, a pair of piers and revetments built, and the construction of the Frankfort Pierhead Light.

Meanwhile, lumberers on the south side of the Lakes to Land region had discovered the tremendous potential of the Manistee River for transporting their product out of the state's interior and began lobbying for improvements to the harbor. An Army Corps of Engineers study confirmed the need in 1861 and a lighthouse was built in 1870—and again in 1872, after the first one fell victim to Michigan's coast-to-coast Great Fire of the previous year.



2.48 Lighthouse photos

Top: Point Betsie lighthouse

Middle: Frankfort North Light

Bottom: Manistee North Pierhead Lighthouse



LAKES TO LAND  
**Lighthouses**

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library

- City or Village
- County Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road

- 1** Point Betsie Lighthouse
- 2** Frankfort North Light
- 3** Manistee North Pierhead Lighthouse



2.49 Lighthouses map





# Demographics

Demographics are the statistics of a population: gender, age, ethnicity, income, employment, housing, education, etc. Taken together, they try to paint a picture that gives a generalized answer the question, “Who lives here?”

The answer to that question is central to the planning process because it is impossible to create a plan that will serve a community well without knowing about the people who comprise that community. Planning strategies vary based upon a population’s current characteristics, and on the ways in which the population is projected to change. For example, a community experiencing an increase in new families

should be planned differently than one with an aging population. The former may place a priority on new single-family housing, new schools, extension of infrastructure, playgrounds and parks, etc., while the latter may be more concerned with issues of mobility and accessibility, emergency services, health care, and accommodating senior housing and assisted living.

***It is impossible to create a plan that will serve a community well without knowing about the people who comprise it.***

# Population and housing

In the “snapshot” of a community that demographic information presents, data about population and housing form the outline.

## Population

The most basic piece of demographic information is the population count. This static number gives us a sense of scale which is necessary to understand and address the population’s needs. Many of the inputs and outputs of a municipal system are based on inputs and outputs of individual bodies (clean water, food, human waste, trash), so the size of the services needed are tied directly to the size of the community.

Taken over time, population statistics become trends. These provide a basis for limited future forecasting and also offer a more robust comparison among communities. For example, we see that although the population growth rate of all 16 communities combined was 2.13%, the growth rate among individual communities ranged from a 36% loss of population from the Village of Onekama to an almost 20% gain in Lake Township. Moreover, comparing the participating communities to the larger populations within which they reside, we see that the growth rate did not keep pace with the national rate of 9.71% or the combined Benzie/Manistee county rate of 4.28%, but it did avoid Michigan’s fate of population loss. The Lakes to Land citizens, then, made up a greater percentage of Michiganders in 2010 than they did in 2000 (0.143% versus 0.139%), but a smaller percentage of the combined Benzie/Manistee County areas (33.4% versus 34.1%).

## Households

The second most basic piece of demographic data, the molecular

structure in which the atoms of population reside, is the household.

The US Census Bureau defines a “Household” as follows:

*A household consists of all the people who occupy a housing unit. A house, an apartment or other group of rooms, or a single room, is regarded as a housing unit when it is occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters; that is, when the occupants do not live with any other persons in the structure and there is direct access from the outside or through a common hall.*

*A household includes the related family members and all the unrelated people, if any, such as lodgers, foster children, wards, or employees who share the housing unit. A person living alone in a housing unit, or a group of unrelated people sharing a housing unit such as partners or roomers, is also counted as a household. The count of households excludes group quarters. There are two major categories of households, “family” and “nonfamily.”*

Households function as discrete economic units because their basic inputs and outputs are intertwined. American households have been in flux over the past half-century or so as people have reacted to increased wealth, relaxed social mores, and heightened mobility by changing the basic relationships that construct their lives: people stay single longer, have fewer children, and no longer assume that

they will live with those children in their own old age.

This situation is represented by consistent ratcheting downward of household size. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of households in the participating communities grew 5.7% while the population grew only 2.13%, yielding a 3% decrease in household size from 2.55 persons per housing unit to 2.47 persons per housing unit. This percentage was consistent throughout the Benzie/Manistee county area and in Michigan overall, which gained over 86,000 households even as its population declined. Households size decreased nationally, too, although less dramatically at just -0.85%—from 2.67 persons per housing unit to 2.65 persons per housing unit.

In some states, however, the 2010 census marked the first increase in household size in many years. Conventional wisdom attributes this in a large part to the doubled-edged Great Recession. First, high unemployment



*A seasonal resident of Pleasanton Township?*

2.50 Table of population, households, and housing units

		Population			Households			Housing Units		
		2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change
Benzie County	Lake Twp*	635	759	19.5%	318	387	21.7%	1,106	1,271	14.9%
	Crystal Lake Twp*	960	957	-0.3%	414	438	5.8%	1,051	1,240	18%
	Gilmore Twp*	850	821	-3.4%	341	360	5.6%	439	477	8.7%
	Village of Elberta**	457	372	-18.6%	190	173	-9%	237	229	-3.4%
	Blaine Twp*	491	551	12.2%	215	234	8.8%	431	504	16.9%
	Joyfield Twp*	777	799	2.8%	286	313	9.4%	338	404	19.5%
	Village of Honor	299	328	9.7%	129	135	4.7%	153	186	21.6%
	City of Frankfort	1,513	1,286	-15%	665	601	-9.6%	873	942	7.9%
Manistee County	Arcadia Twp*	621	639	2.9%	280	296	5.7%	545	574	5.3%
	Pleasanton Twp*	817	818	0.1%	344	365	6.1%	623	694	11.4%
	Bear Lake Twp*	1,587	1,751	10.3%	639	696	8.9%	916	1,031	12.6%
	Village of Bear Lake**	318	286	-10.1%	132	118	-10.6%	161	169	5%
	Manistee Twp*	3,764	4,084	8.5%	1,188	1,270	6.9%	1,391	1,598	14.9%
	Onkama Twp*	1,514	1,329	-12.2%	603	634	5.1%	1,117	1,289	15.4%
	Village of Onkama**	647	411	-36.5%	239	205	-14.2%	315	338	7.3%
All Participating Communities				2.13%			5.7%			13.7%
Benzie and Manistee Counties				4.28%			7.6%			13.5%
Michigan				-0.55%			2.3%			7.0%
United States				9.71%			10.7%			13.6%

\* Includes the totals of any villages (incorporated or unincorporated) within the township

\*\* Village totals not included in overall total because they are already included in their township's total  
Source: US Census Bureau, ESRI Business Analyst

rates which rest disproportionately on younger adults has given them less opportunity to leave "the nest." Second, the mass transfer of home ownership from individuals to lending institutions during the foreclosure crisis resulted in a smaller number of available housing units over which to spread the population, an effect which is particularly pronounced in some geographic areas.

## Housing Units

The total number of housing units in the participating communities grew 13.7% between 2000 and 2010, despite the fact that the total population grew only 2.13% and the number of total households grew 5.7%. While the number of total housing units typically exceeds the number of total households due to vacant housing units, we see in Figure 2.48 that many of the Lakes to Land communities have two or even three times as many housing units as households. This is because the "vacant" classification used by the census does not distinguish between

units which are for sale or rent and those which are used as seasonal, vacation, or second homes. In 2010, the total vacancy rate for housing units in the United States was 11.4%, and 14.6% in Michigan. Vacant housing units for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use made up 3.5% of the national total of housing units in 2010, and 5.8% of the state total. Among the participating communities, however, 43.1% of housing units are vacant and 34.8% of all housing units are for seasonal/recreational/occasional use. Growth in housing units among the participating communities, then, has been driven primarily by construction of seasonal, recreational, and second homes rather than primary residences.

A look at individual Lakes to Land communities can provide even more striking examples as communities which saw their populations decrease experienced seemingly paradoxical growth in housing units. A third of the Village of Onkama's population, representing just under 1/6 of its households, departed between 2000

and 2010, yet there were 7.3% more houses at the end of the decade than at the beginning. The City of Frankfort and the Village of Bear Lake both also lost households while gaining housing units; Crystal Lake Township, Blaine Township, Joyfield Township, Manistee Township, Onkama Township, and the Village of Honor all saw the number of housing units grow at least twice as fast as the number of households. Only in Lake Township and Arcadia Township did housing units grow more slowly than households, and it is worth noting that resident households already accounted for a fairly small proportion of housing units in both communities (30% and 51% respectively).

It is only in these numbers that we find a representation of a fundamental aspect of the Lakes to Land region: seasonal residents. Because the guiding principle of the census is to count people at their "usual residence," this group is not reflected in the population count, and yet their presence affects and often drives many parts of the Lakes to Land economy

# Age

There is a well-documented “aging” trend in the population of the United States that is more acute in Michigan and particularly in northern Michigan.

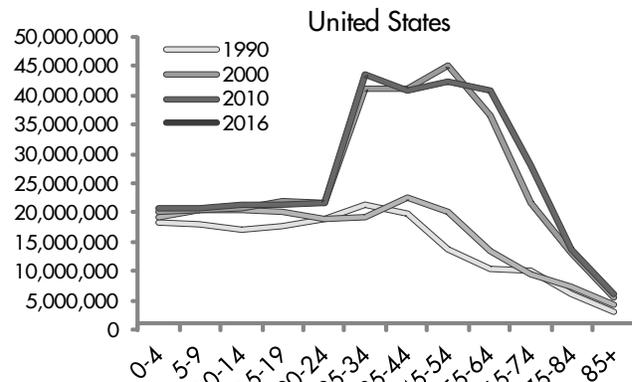
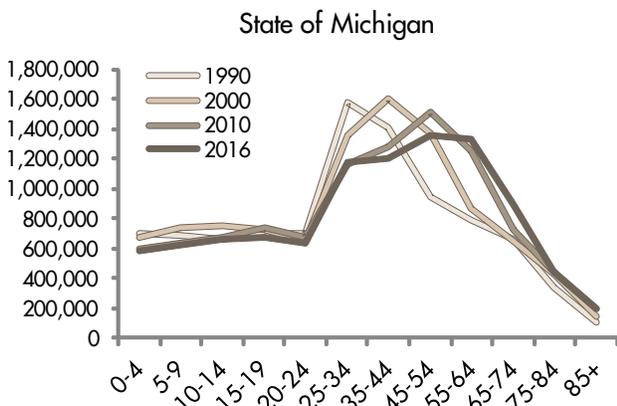
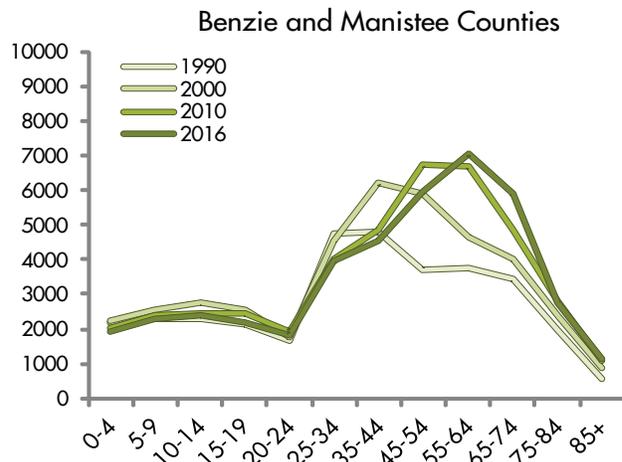
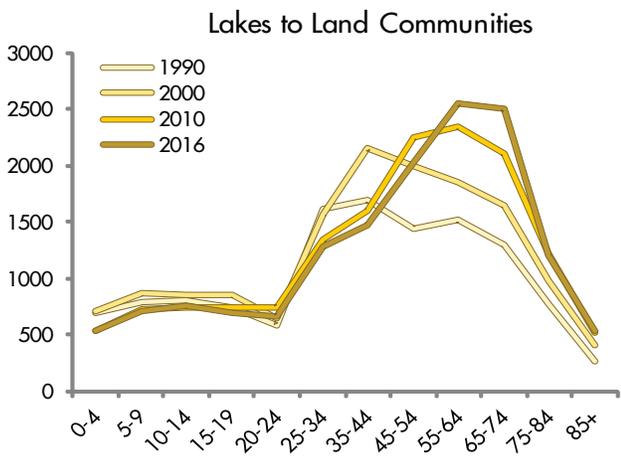
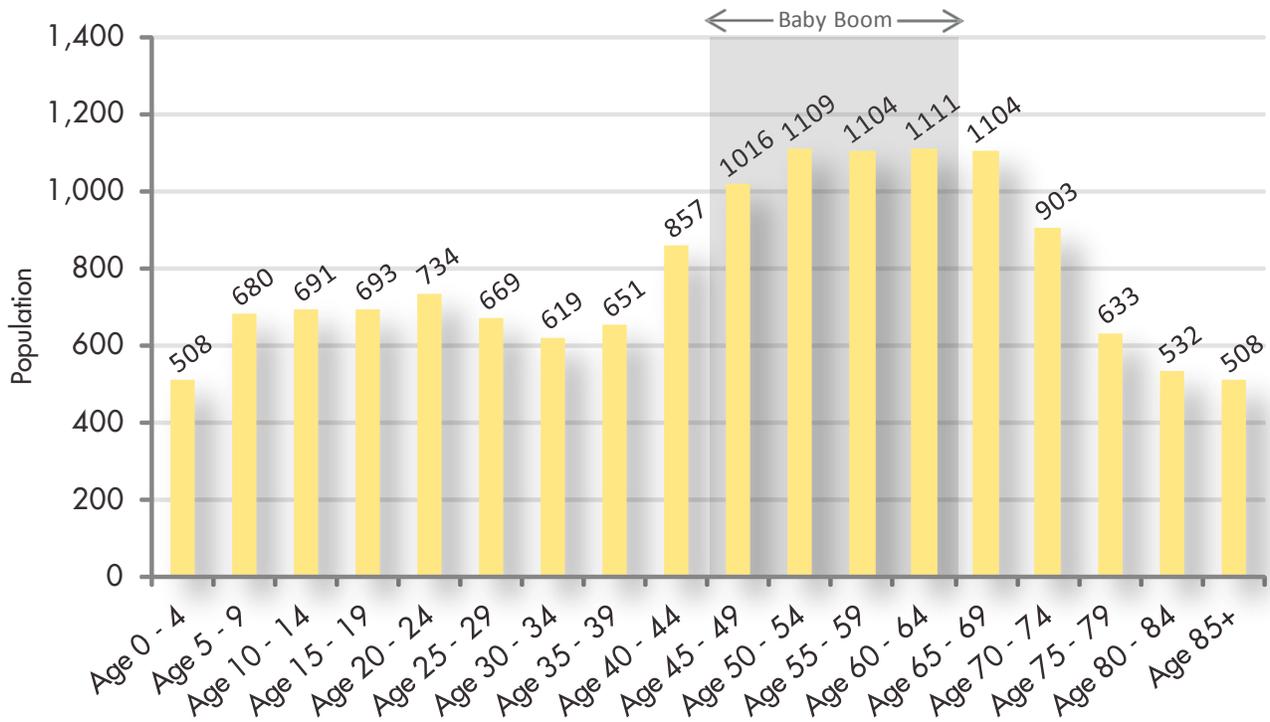
Those born during the Baby Boom of 1946 to 1964 have already entered or are approaching retirement age, raising the median age of the population. Nationally and statewide, the number hovers at just under 40 years of age, with Michigan’s median age about a year and a half older than America’s. When looking at Benzie and Manistee counties, however, that median jumps nearly a decade to 46.2 and 47.1 years respectively—and two-thirds of the Lakes to Land communities have median ages that are older still (Figure 2.49). Only in the Village of Honor is the median age younger than it is statewide and nationally.

In Figure 2.50, we see that the population “peak” is mostly contained within the Baby Boom age ranges of 45-64. Almost a third (30.7%) of the citizens of the Lakes to Land communities are within this age range, and another quarter (26.1%) are older. The bottom four graphs in Figure 2.50 reproduce the imaginary line that runs across the bar chart for the Lakes to Land communities, the Benzie/Manistee county area, the State of Michigan, and the United States, repeated at four different points in time. In each line, the “Baby Boom bump” is visible as it moves through the age ranges; we can see that this concentration becomes more pronounced as the population focus narrows from national to state, state to region, and region to participating communities.

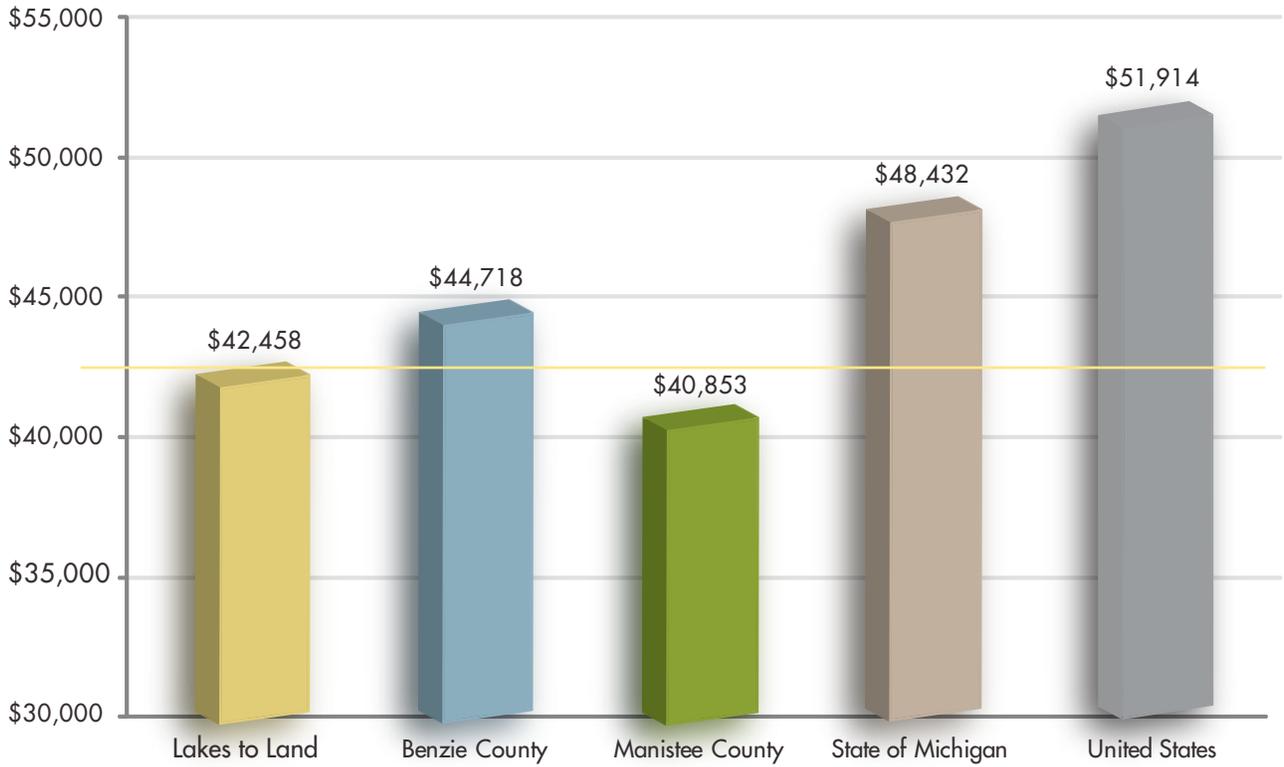
This is important to know in addressing the needs of each community. It signals a need for age-appropriate housing and greater attention to universal access in design. More advanced life support and paramedic services may be needed, while the demand for schools is likely to be low. Fewer jobs may be needed if a large percentage of the population subsists on retirement income.

2.51 Table of median ages and ages 65+

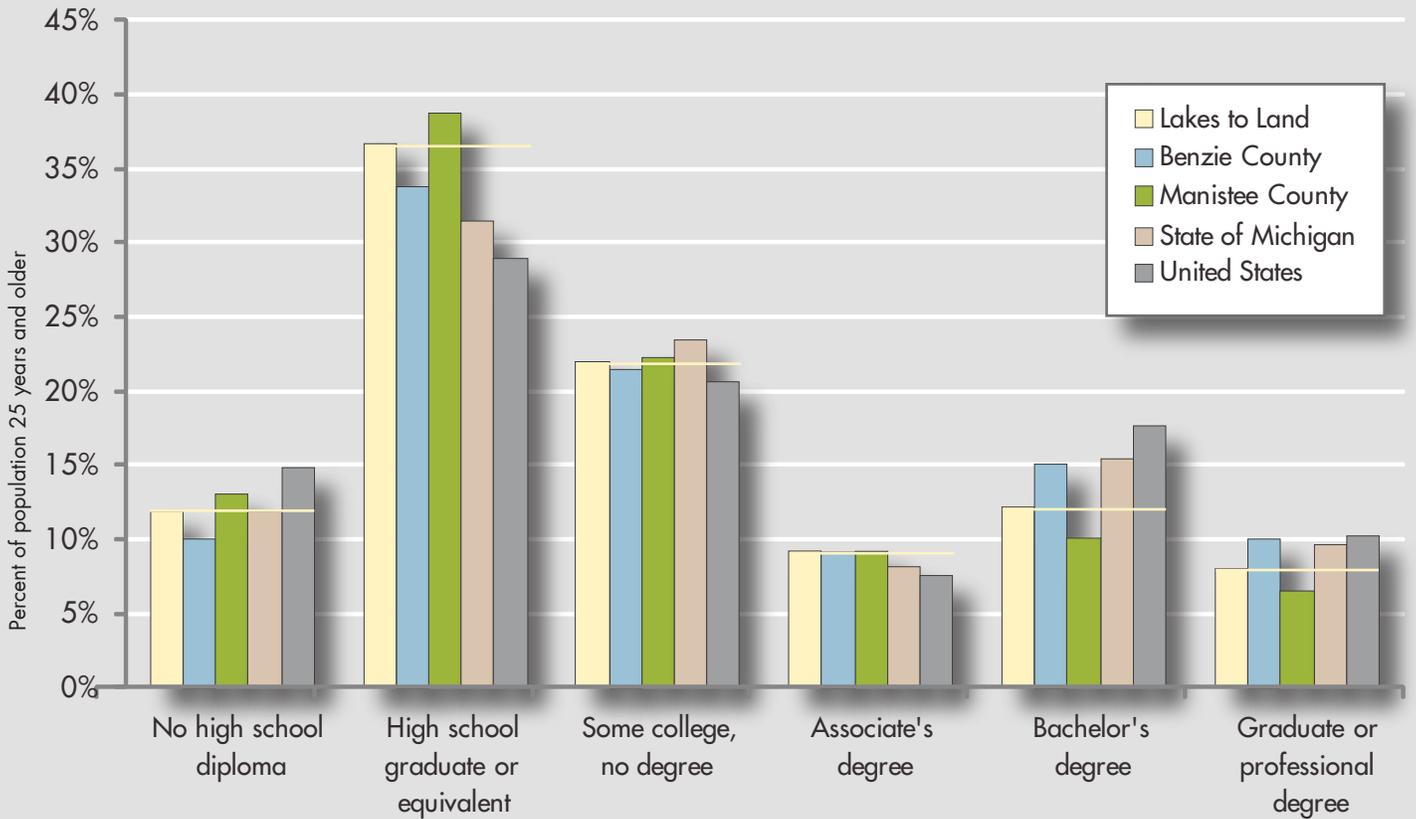
	Median Age	% Population Aged 65+
Lake Twp	64.4	48.5%
Arcadia Twp	56.1	31.9%
Crystal Lake Twp	55.4	31.2%
Onekama Twp	55.2	29.9%
City of Frankfort	54.6	36.1%
Village of Onekama	54.4	28.5%
Blaine Twp	53.3	31.4%
Pleasanton Twp	50.0	27.9%
Gilmore Twp	48.6	22.9%
Village of Elberta	47.8	21.5%
Manistee County	47.1	20.7%
Benzie County	46.2	20.6%
Joyfield Twp	45.0	18.4%
Bear Lake Twp	44.4	20.2%
Manistee Twp	44.0	19.4%
Village of Bear Lake	40.6	18.4%
Michigan	38.9	13.8%
United States	37.2	13.0%
Honor (village)	36.8	20.4%



2.53 Median income comparison



2.54 Educational attainment comparison



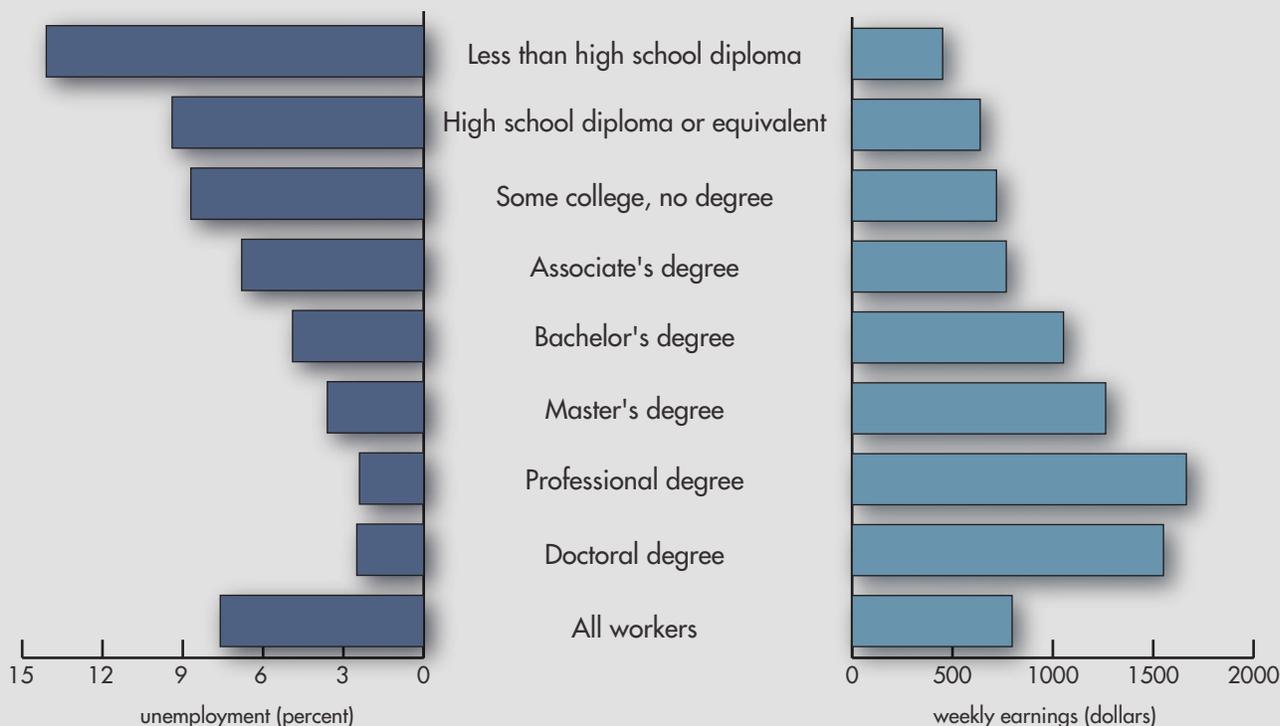
# Education and income

There is a direct correlation between educational attainment and income.

The chart in Figure 2.51 shows the median household income for the Lakes to Land region, Benzie County, Manistee County, the state of Michigan, and the United States, and the chart in Figure 2.52 displays the educational attainment for the population ages 25 and up for each of those groups. To see the relationship between education and income at each level, a line indicating the value of the Area of Influence relative to the other groups has been drawn. We can see that at the bachelor's degree level and above, the graphs for education and income are quite similar, indicating a positive correlation between earnings and income. On the other end of the scale, we see that the graphs depicting a high school education or less depict the converse: the groups with lower percentages of population educated at that level are the groups with higher median incomes.

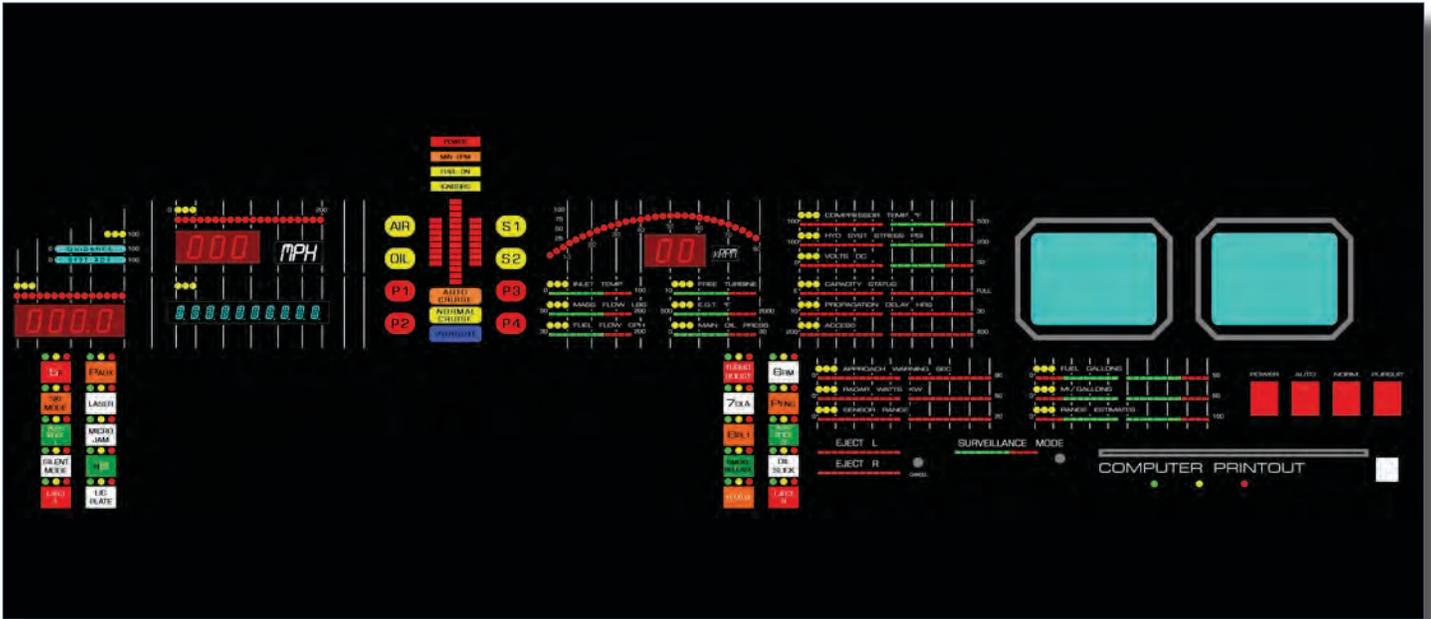
This rather unscientific comparison is borne out in Figure 2.53, which shows the 2011 unemployment rate and median weekly earnings for each of eight levels of education and the overall workforce. Here it is clearly illustrated that education is not only correlated with earnings but also with having a job at all. For those with less than a high school diploma, the unemployment rate is 14.1%, nearly twice the rate of all workers, and getting a job only yields \$451 per week—just above the federal poverty threshold for a family of four.

2.55 Educational attainment, income, and unemployment in the L2L communities



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey





Credit: Dave Metlesits

# Dashboards

Data dashboards are tools designed to convey assessment metrics in a visual, quick-to-understand format.

Statistics provide a good way to compare one population to another. By selecting a measurement and comparing its value in different places, we can draw conclusions about those places in relation to one another: where the educational attainment levels are lagging, for example, or where median income levels indicate the presence of well-paid jobs. When trying to compare the overall snapshot of one community to another, however, the sheer volume of numbers can almost immediately become overwhelming to anyone who is not a professional statistician.

Enter the data dashboard, a graphic representation of the community's vital statistics. The following pages show the population, population growth, housing ownership, education levels, household income, and types of work in Benzie County, Manistee County, the State of Michigan, and the United States, as well as a quick-reference list of additional statistics related to each of those categories.

***The Prosperity Index  
moves past description  
to assessment.***

The Prosperity Index moves past description to assessment. By combining individual measurements, we can ask and answer questions such as,

"Are market forces creating most of the jobs?"

"What kind of jobs are they?"

"How plentiful are jobs?"

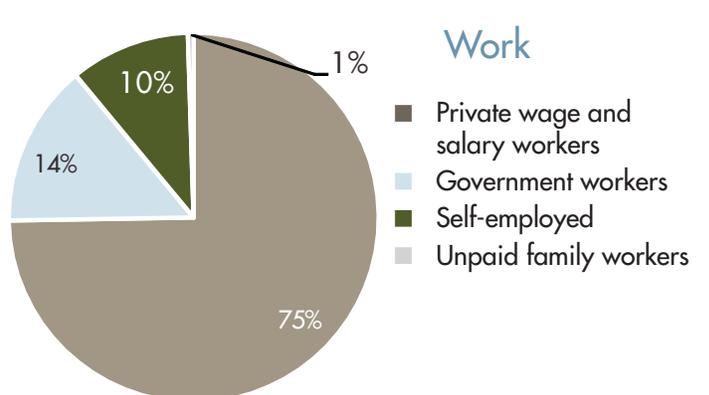
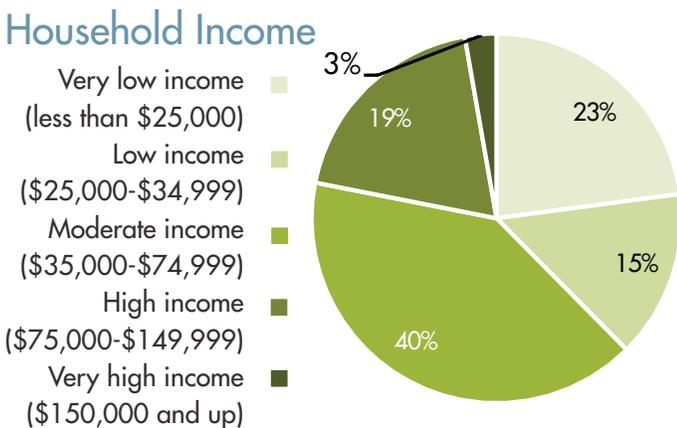
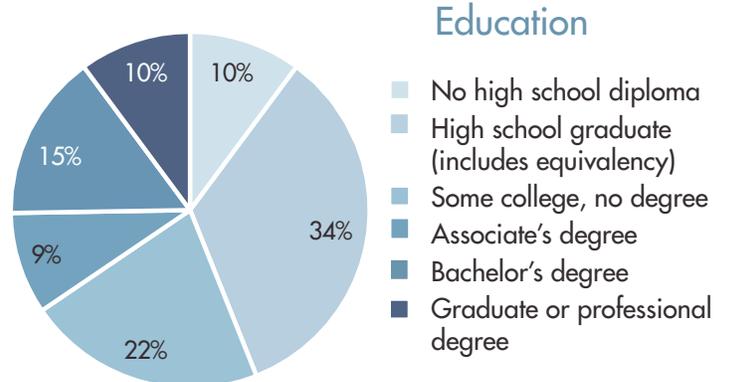
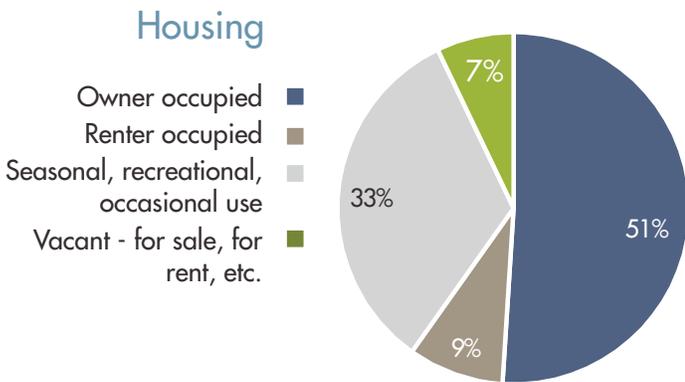
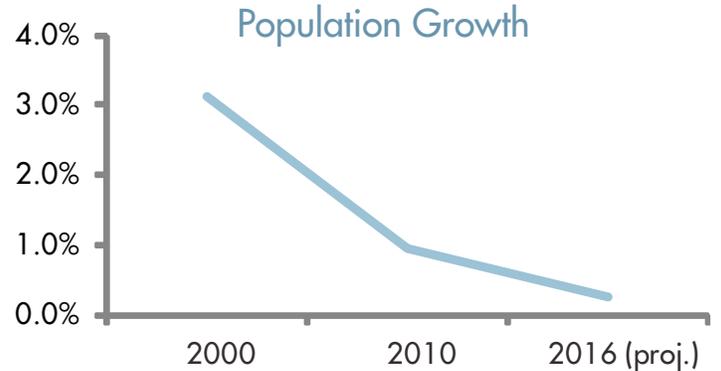
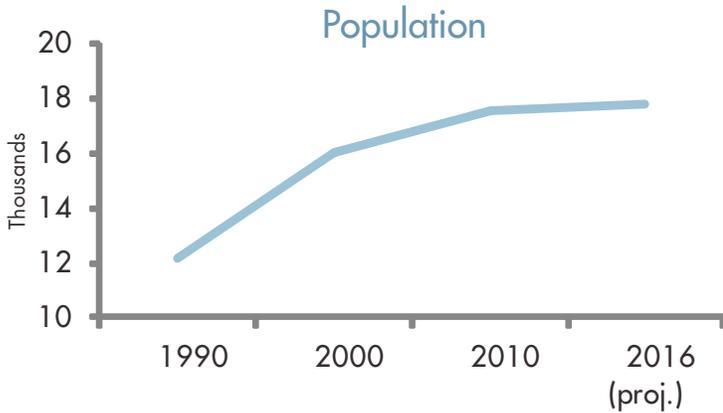
"What kind of jobs will the education level of our workforce support?"

"Are the jobs that we have keeping our residents out of poverty and providing for their children?"

"Is the government keeping our residents and children out of poverty?"

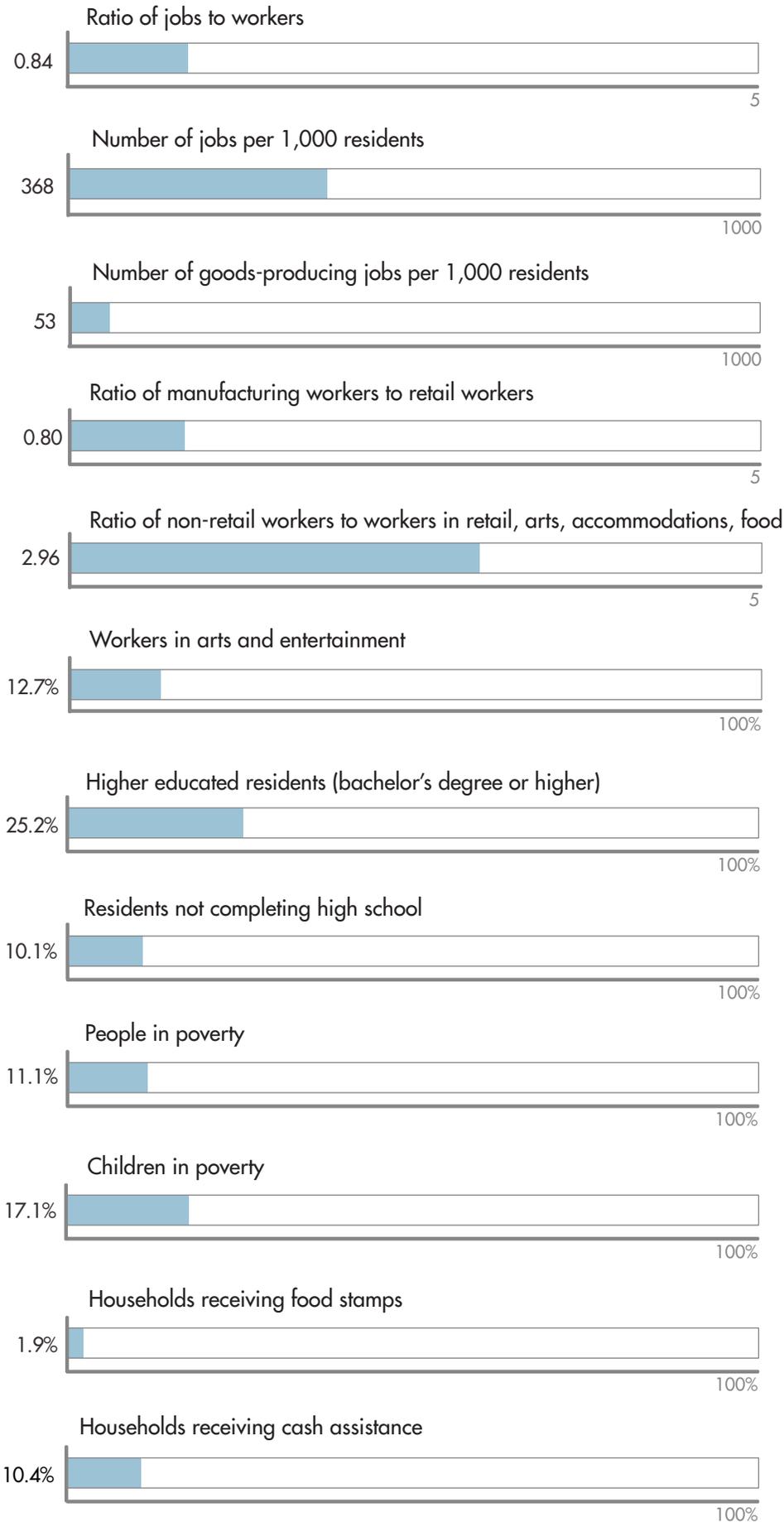
Of course, these answers arrive in the form of a single number. To contextualize that number, it is depicted on a bar graph and a colored band indicating its value is carried forward for comparison on the following bar graphs. (It's easier to look at than to explain, we promise.) The Community Dashboard presented in Tab 4 retains these contextual bands.

# Benzie County Dashboard



Classifications modified from HUD guidelines, using the state median income of \$48,432.

## Prosperity Index



## Households

2.35

person average household size

\$160,200

owner-occupied median home value

\$737

median gross rent

## Education

23%

population enrolled in school

90%

high school graduate or higher

25%

bachelor's degree or higher

## Commuting

94%

workers who commute

85%

commuters who drive alone

23.1

minute average commute

## Employment

6,452

jobs

7,722

workers

11.7%

unemployment rate

14.2%

civilian veterans

## Income

\$44,718

median household income

\$22,160

median earnings for workers

\$37,704

male full-time, year-round earnings

\$31,272

female full-time, year-round earnings

11%

population in poverty

17%

children in poverty

## Top Industrial Sectors

17%

accommodation and food services

14%

retail trade

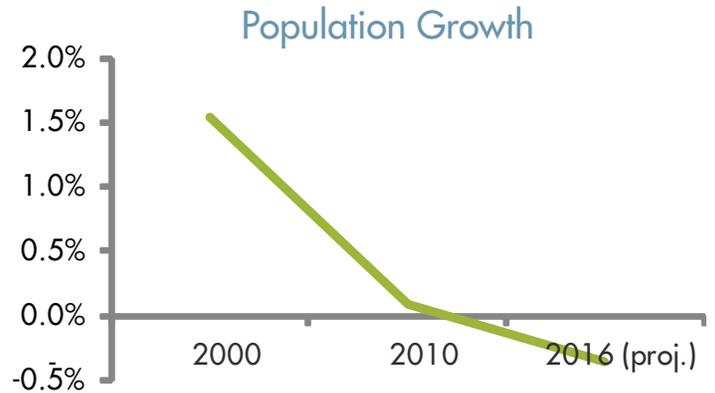
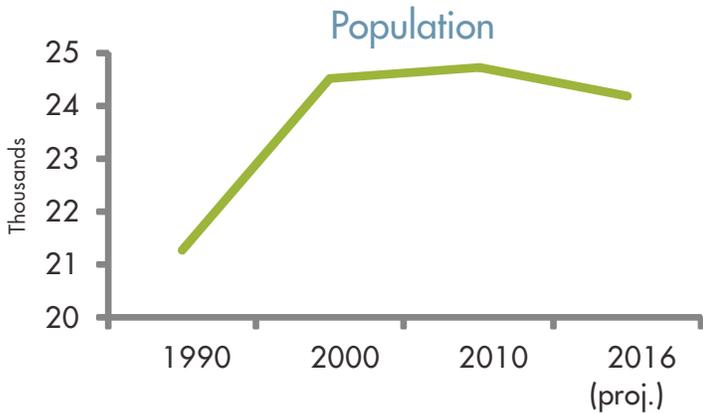
11%

health care and social assistance

# Manistee County Dashboard

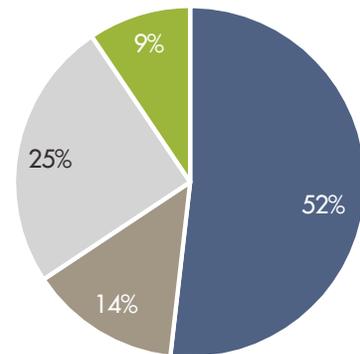
Key for prosperity index graphs:

Benzie County



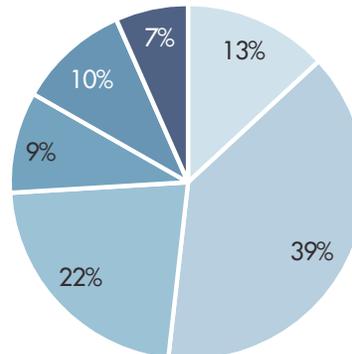
## Housing

- Owner occupied
- Renter occupied
- Seasonal, recreational, occasional use
- Vacant - for sale, for rent, etc.



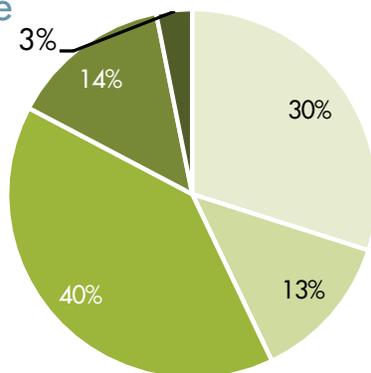
## Education

- No high school diploma
- High school graduate (includes equivalency)
- Some college, no degree
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate or professional degree



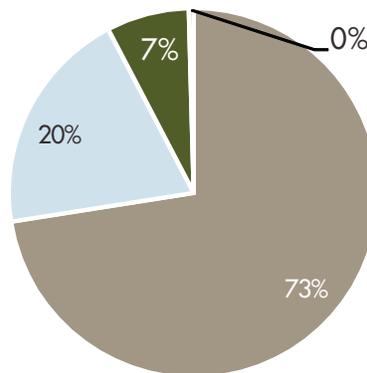
## Household Income

- Very low income (less than \$25,000)
- Low income (\$25,000-\$34,999)
- Moderate income (\$35,000-\$74,999)
- High income (\$75,000-\$149,999)
- Very high income (\$150,000 and up)



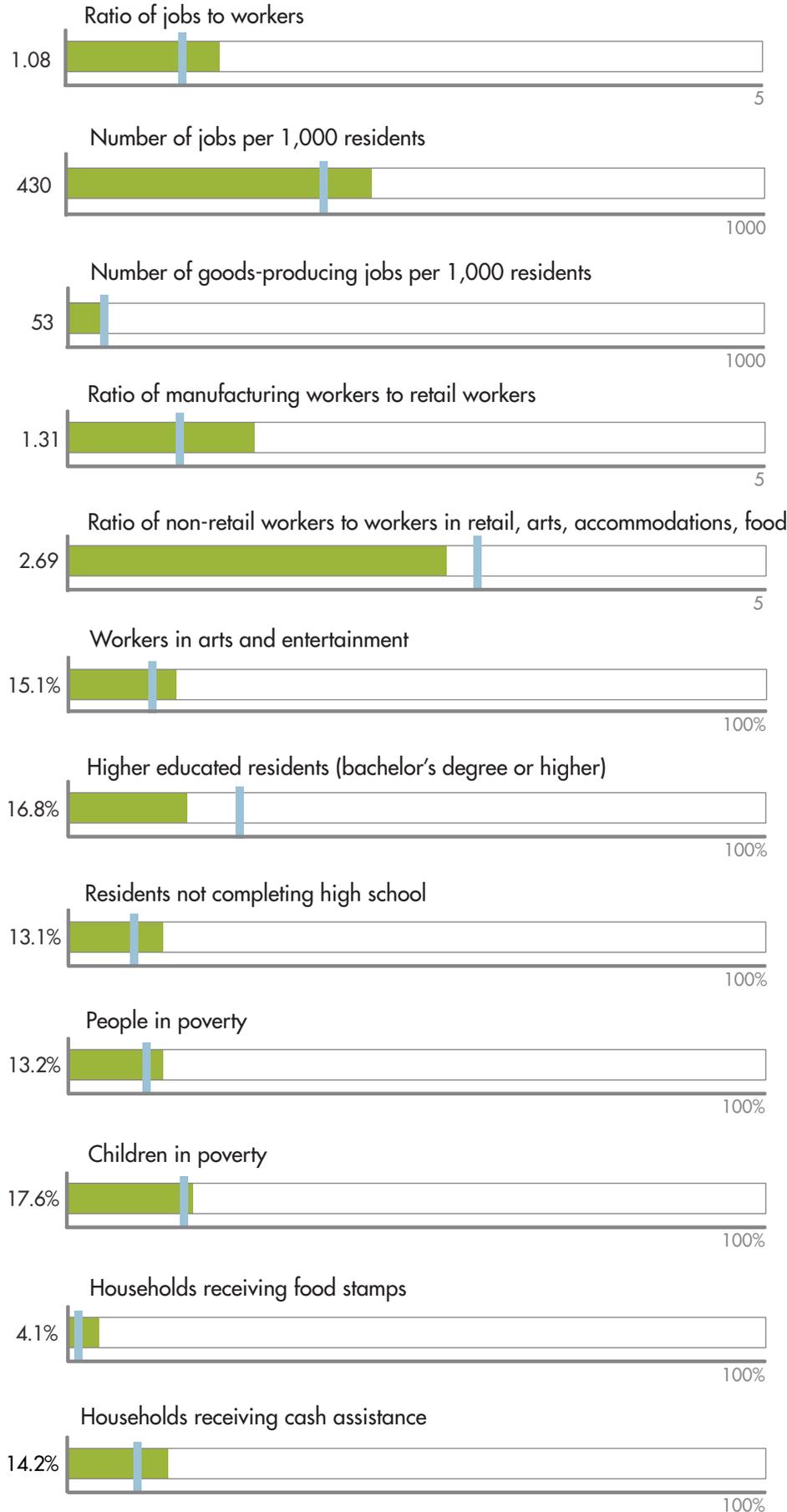
## Work

- Private wage and salary workers
- Government workers
- Self-employed
- Unpaid family workers



Classifications modified from HUD guidelines, using the state median income of \$48,432.

## Prosperity Index



## Households

2.2

person average household size

\$124,000

owner-occupied median home value

\$627

median gross rent

## Education

19%

population enrolled in school

87%

high school graduate or higher

17%

bachelor's degree or higher

## Commuting

95%

workers who commute

83%

commuters who drive alone

21

minute average commute

## Employment

10,646

jobs

9,846

workers

11.6%

unemployment rate

15%

civilian veterans

## Income

\$40,853

median household income

\$21,443

median earnings for workers

\$41,134

male full-time, year-round earnings

\$27,479

female full-time, year-round earnings

13.2%

population in poverty

17.6%

children in poverty

## Top Industrial Sectors

15%

retail trade

13%

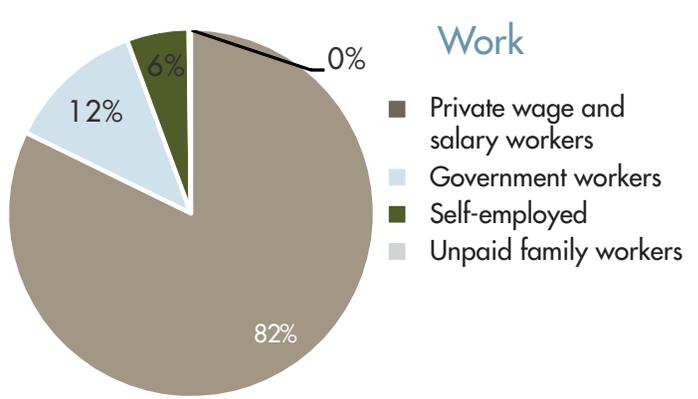
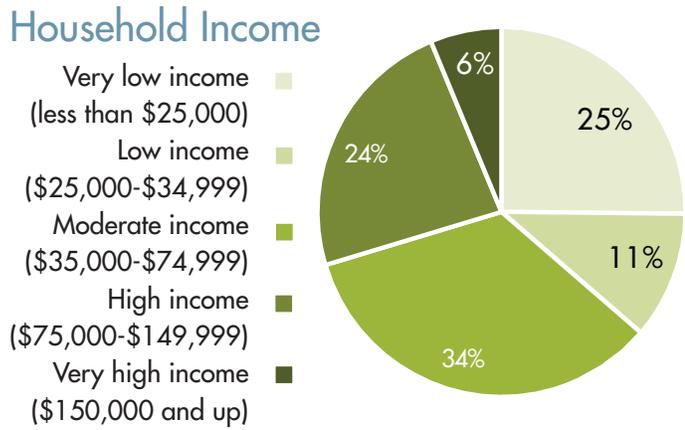
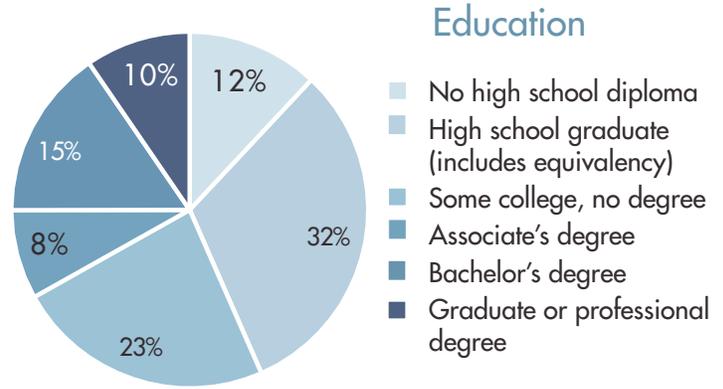
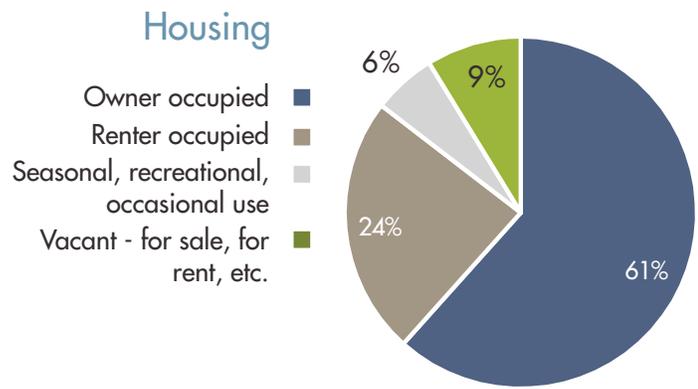
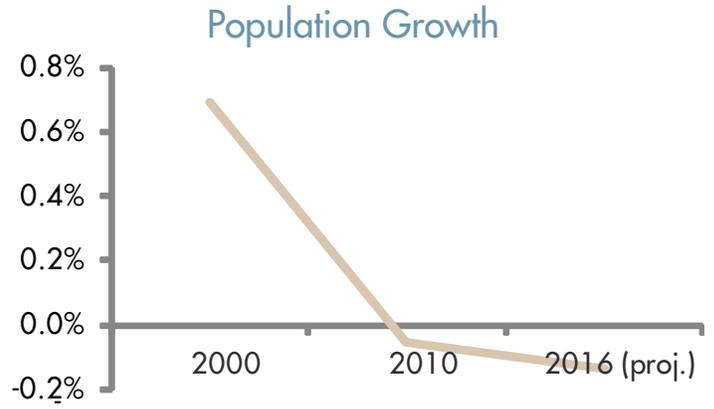
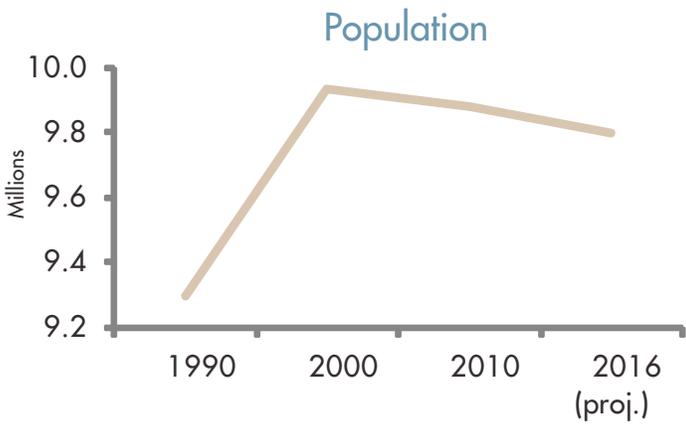
health care and social assistance

12%

public administration

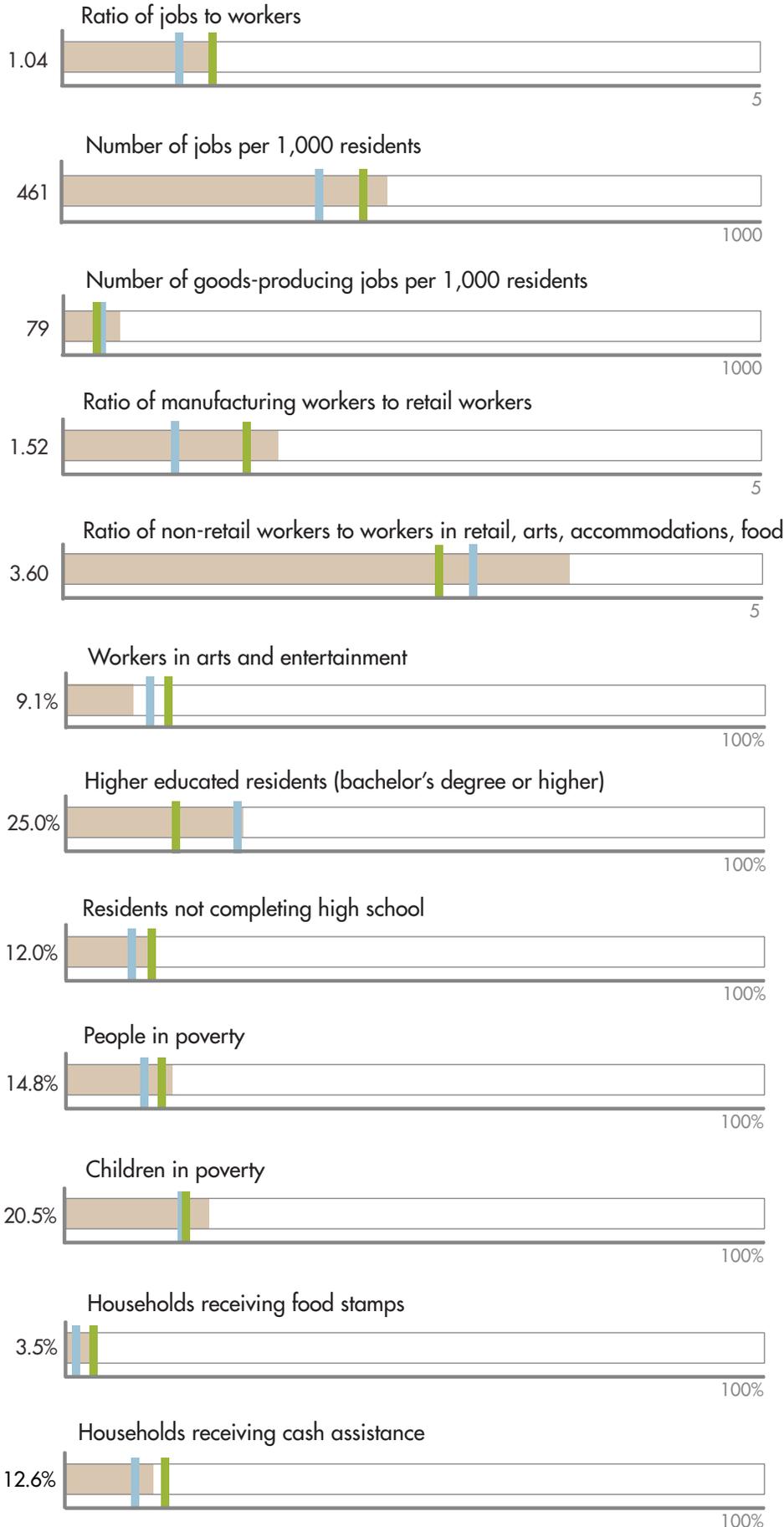
# State of Michigan Dashboard

Key for prosperity index graphs:  
■ Benzie County    ■ Manistee County



Classifications modified from HUD guidelines, using the state median income of \$48,432.

## Prosperity Index



## Households

2.53  
person average household size  
\$144,200  
owner-occupied median home value  
\$723  
median gross rent

## Education

28%  
population enrolled in school  
88%  
high school graduate or higher  
25%  
bachelor's degree or higher

## Commuting

97%  
workers who commute  
86%  
commuters who drive alone  
23.7  
minute average commute

## Employment

4,561,169  
jobs  
4,369,785  
workers  
1.5%  
unemployment rate  
9.7%  
civilian veterans

## Income

\$48,432  
median household income  
\$27,432  
median earnings for workers  
\$50,208  
male full-time, year-round earnings  
\$36,157  
female full-time, year-round earnings  
14.8%  
population in poverty  
20.5%  
children in poverty

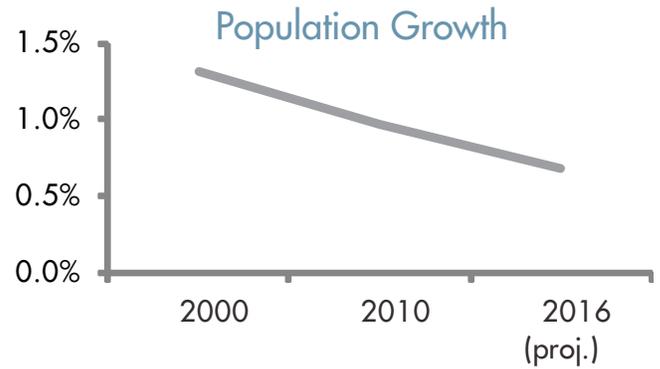
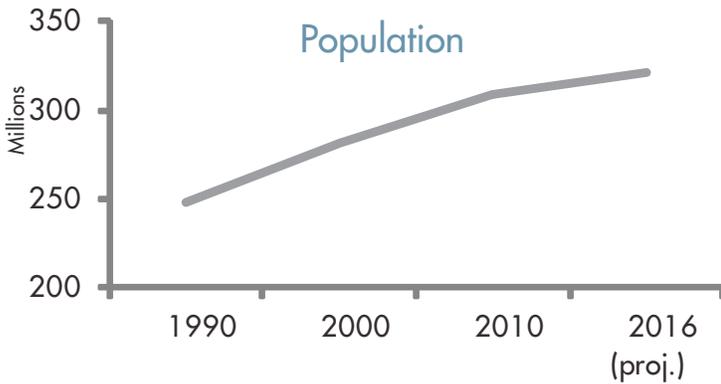
## Top Industrial Sectors

14%  
health care and social assistance  
13%  
retail trade  
12%  
manufacturing

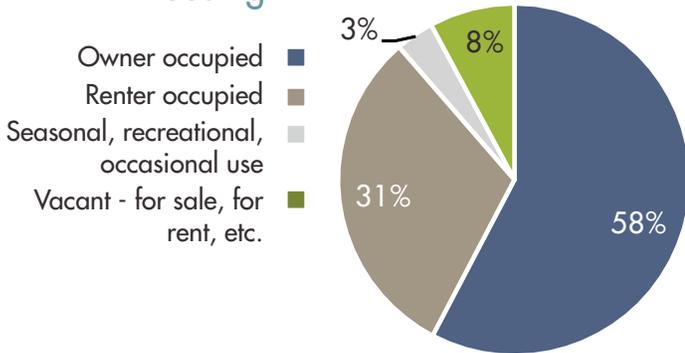
# United States Dashboard

Key for prosperity index graphs:

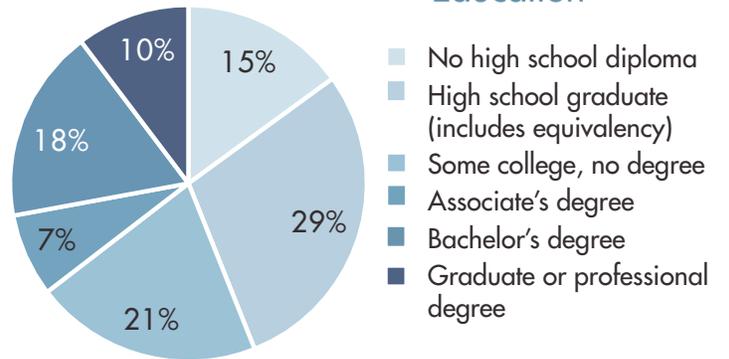
■ Benzie County 
 ■ Manistee County 
 ■ Michigan



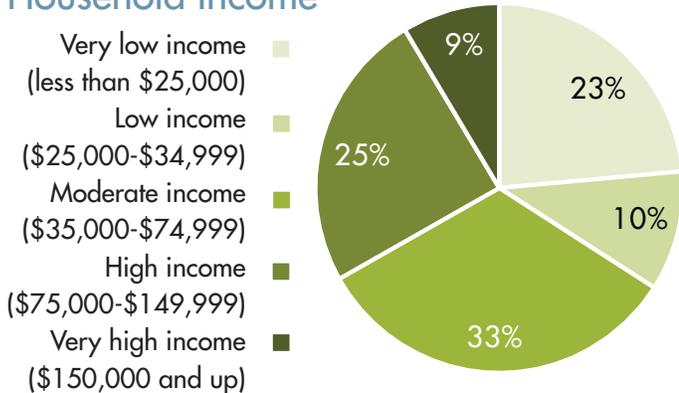
## Housing



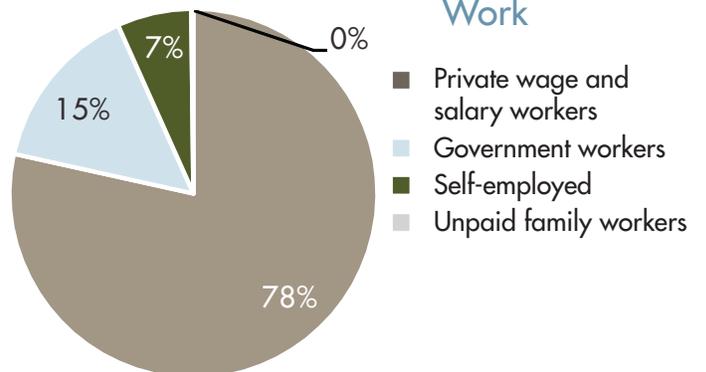
## Education



## Household Income

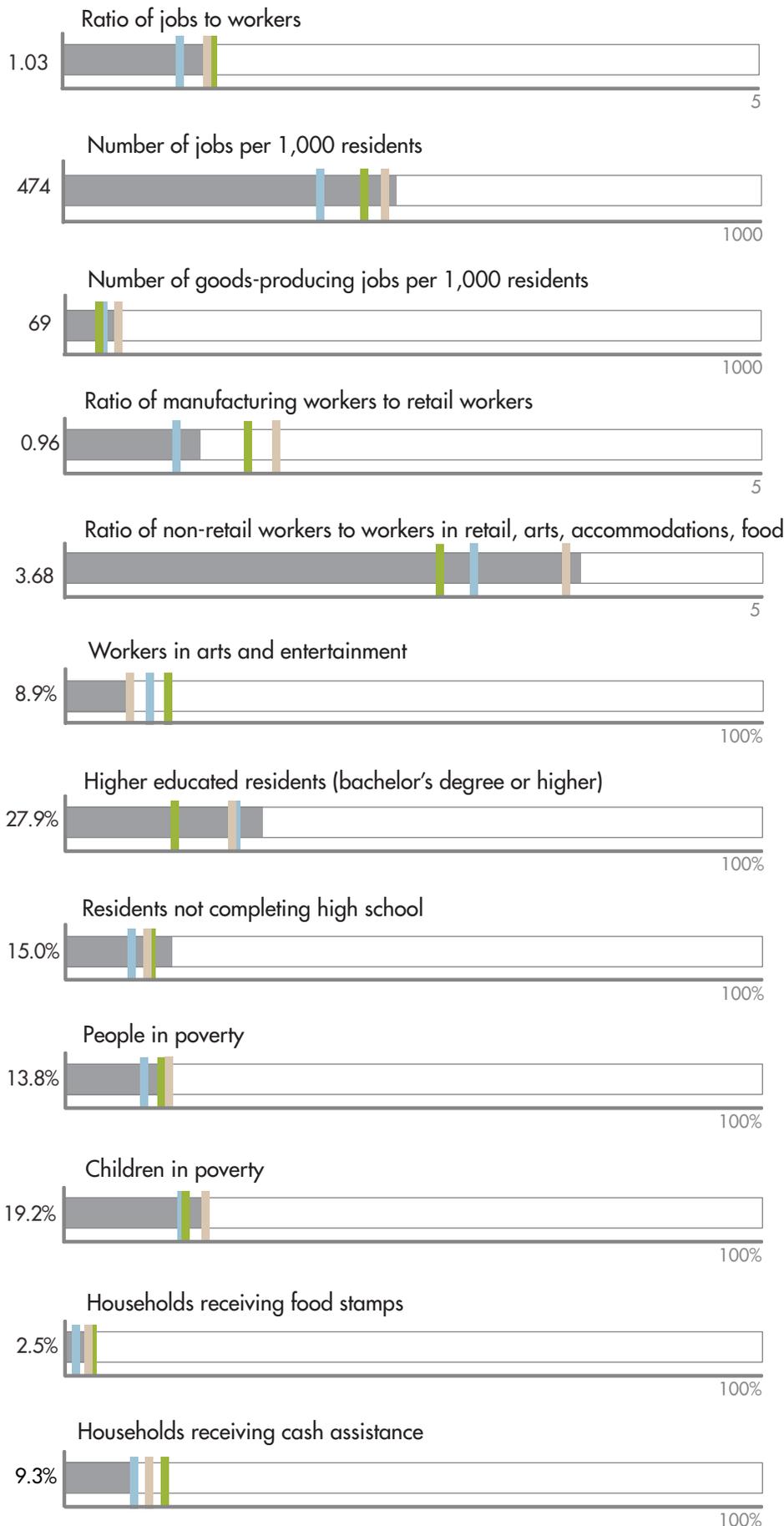


## Work



Classifications modified from HUD guidelines, using the national median income of \$51,914

## Prosperity Index



## Households

2.59  
 person average household size  
 \$188,400  
 owner-occupied median home value  
 \$841  
 median gross rent

## Education

26%  
 population enrolled in school  
 85%  
 high school graduate or higher  
 28%  
 bachelor's degree or higher

## Commuting

96%  
 workers who commute  
 79%  
 commuters who drive alone  
 25.2  
 minute average commute

## Employment

146,234,698  
 jobs  
 141,833,331  
 workers  
 7.9%  
 unemployment rate  
 9.9%  
 civilian veterans

## Income

\$51,914  
 median household income  
 \$29,701  
 median earnings for workers  
 \$46,478  
 male full-time, year-round earnings  
 \$36,040  
 female full-time, year-round earnings  
 13.8%  
 population in poverty  
 19.2%  
 children in poverty

## Top Industrial Sectors

13%  
 retail trade  
 13%  
 health care and social assistance  
 9%  
 accommodation and food services





# County Plans

Master plans are written at all levels of government—community-specific, regional, and statewide. A county master plan contains many of the same attributes found in a plan for a single community, and its preparation follows the same process.

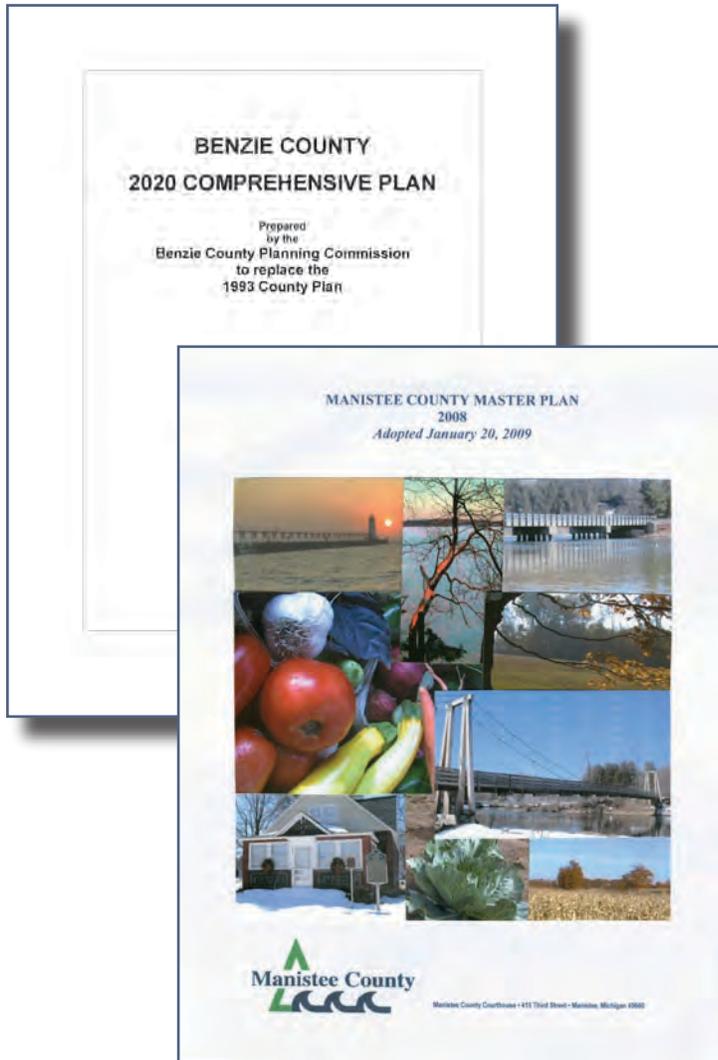
One difference is that the focus sweeps over municipal boundaries to consider factors that affect the county as a whole. Both Benzie and Manistee Counties have written county master plans that take a regional view within their respective boundaries.

Benzie County's Master Plan was prepared in 2000, and Manistee County's Master Plan was prepared in 2009. No matter what level of government the master plan is being prepared for, it is influenced by the conditions within the community at the time the plan is drafted, public interests of the day, and the issues that extend beyond the municipal boundaries but have a significant impact locally. Despite the fact that the plans were written nearly ten years apart and the vastly different economic and societal conditions that existed at the time of their preparation, there are commonalities in planning strategies.

The commonalities between the Manistee and Benzie County Master Plans speak to a commitment to rural scenic character, a land use strategy that guides development towards existing population centers, and a desire for coordination of planning with neighbors. Two themes strongly articulated in both plans are the preservation of views, wetlands, rivers, streams, and the Lake Michigan shoreline, and an emphasis on retaining rural scenic character by preserving lands for

forestry, agricultural, and low density residential use. Natural resources and environmental protection are also strong key components of both plans. In addition, both plans call for coordination of planning between municipalities and neighboring regions in order to obtain efficiencies in services.

The largest difference between the Manistee County and Benzie County Master Plans lies in the type of plan: the Manistee County Master Plan is service-oriented, while the Benzie County Master Plan is a growth management tool. They also differ in how they deal with local government sovereignty in that Benzie County is focused on regionalism rather than Manistee's emphasis on the sovereign right of local governments to plan individually. Another difference is in how their strategies are articulated. The Manistee County Master Plan has a series of goals and objectives that are categorized by topic. Benzie County Master Plan also has goals and objectives found in associated "Background Reports," but they are summarized in eight "fundamental principles." The fundamental principles and associated policies of the Benzie County Plan are what most of the communities in the county use as their guiding basis for decisions as the "Background Reports" have been unavailable. Both plans lay out an articulated path for the future development of their respective county.



***No matter what level of government the master plan is being prepared for, it is influenced by the conditions within the community at the time the plan is drafted, public interests of the day, and the issues that extend beyond the municipal boundaries but have a significant impact locally.***

## Benzie County Planning History

The history of the county plan involves active citizenry looking to plan for the county on a regional scale. Because regional planning and collaboration among communities are “best practices” in planning, the functions of planning and zoning were, until recently, housed at the county level. Rather than individual townships taking on those administrative duties, they were performed by a county planning commission, a county planner, and a county zoning administrator. This scale lends itself to a comprehensive approach: as planning and zoning issues are considered, their impact on the county as a whole was considered.

When the county decided to discontinue zoning on a regional scale, individual townships tried to take on that role by quickly adopting the county master plan and zoning ordinance. However, they soon found that the plan wasn’t suited to their individual needs and further realized that the data contained in it needed updating with the 2010 census data. Therefore, communities took the opportunity presented by the Lakes to Land collaboration to write updated, individual master plans tailored to their own unique needs.

Referencing the county plan is important in the sense that it provides the historical backbone to continued scenic rural preservation goals and other regional planning initiatives. Policies that the county established in the plan, such as concurrency in infrastructure development, open space and agricultural preservation, and economic development geared toward established urban cores, are still seen in individual master plans. The county plan provided the framework that is still being adhered to today; such consistency among planning efforts makes for good planning practice. It is hoped that as the individual communities offer more detailed visions of their preferred

futures, these visions will be reflected in subsequent county planning efforts.

## Manistee County Planning History

In Manistee County, professional planning services have been provided by a professionally staffed planning department for decades. The planning department works with communities in developing master plans, administering zoning, and facilitating solutions to a myriad of problems. Also of key importance is their use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), a specialized software program used to convey spatial data in map form, to aid communities and decision makers.

While planning in the County is decentralized, the use of the County Planning Commission and a professional planner provides local master plans and regulatory tools with review and coordination to help achieve some regional consistency. In fact, a number of Manistee County communities over the years have formed joint planning commissions and prepared joint master plans. As mentioned in Tab 1, these include Pleasanton Township, Bear Lake Township, and the Village of Bear Lake as well as Onekama Township and the Village of Onekama. Currently, a number of watershed planning efforts are also underway that cross municipal boundaries to focus on the single issue of ensuring the highest integrity of water quality possible within the County.

Manistee County understands that closely coordinated planning which seeks to ensure collaboration and coordination between municipal neighbors, while maintaining local autonomy, is essential to ensuring continued prosperity for County residents. In fact, the Lakes to Land Initiative was born from just a few Manistee County residents.

## KEY STRATEGIES

### Benzie County 2020 Comprehensive Plan

- The Benzie Co. Master Plan has a growth management focus. Policies are geared toward defining land use development patterns and practices guiding new development and services to specific areas of the County in order to manage development and maintain a rural scenic character.
- Benzie Co. Master Plan focuses on regional land use planning, emphasizing land use patterns and policy for the county as a whole while promoting integration of individual municipal boundary lines.
- Economic development, character, transportation, land use issues, natural resources, and environmental protection are topics that are encompassed within the scope of where and how to place development within the County, utilize the transportation system efficiently and install infrastructure improvements that builds on exiting systems. Efficiencies in land use patterns and services are key components to the success of the plan. Benzie County maintains a Recreation and Cultural Plan within the county.
- Urban Service Districts are mapped out to indicate where new public services may be extended to accommodate new development.
- Rural scenic character preservation is a key focus of the plan. Policies that call for the development of corridor plans, buffer screening, conservation easements, design guidelines, night sky policies, and additional design guidelines are aimed at aiding in this goal.
- Eight guiding fundamental principles are articulated followed by 4 strategies: balanced growth, environmental protection, protection of the visual character of the landscape, and protection of the visual character of small towns.

### Manistee County Master Plan, 2008

- The Manistee County Master Plan is geared toward building the capacity of public services and investment—the development and enhancement of programs, plans, and facilities in order to actualize their vision.
- Public services that would be created or enhanced include recreation, housing, economic development, natural resources, infrastructure, and transportation. These topics collectively work to actualize the desired end result of the Master Plan. For example, the Manistee County Plan calls for the creation of a recreation plan and recreation department, alternative energy program, economic development programming, and solid waste management program. Capacity building of this type would aid in creating recreational opportunities and management of those programs, achieve greater alternative energy production, protection of the environmental and natural resources, and expand and grow the economic base.
- In Manistee County, community-specific land use planning is preferred, honoring local planning efforts. It does point to a few general regional land use goals, such as compact development forms and coordination of planning efforts among municipalities.
- The Plan calls for nine categories of goals with associated objectives to achieve the goals.

## 2.60 County Plan summary table

Manistee County Goals	
ECONOMY / BALANCED GROWTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase opportunities for business in the county.</li> <li>• Encourage the Alliance for Economic Success and the Greater Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce to diversify the industrial base to create more job opportunities and to create specialty groups.</li> <li>• Increase the ability of Manistee County to attract and retain technology-based businesses.</li> <li>• Link economic development goals and objectives with those of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians to provide broader, unified economic development programs.</li> <li>• Coordinate a collaborative planning program among the county, local units of government within the county, and adjoining counties.</li> </ul>
HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the development of more assisted living facilities/senior housing options as the average age in the county rises, including development of support services to assist seniors to stay in their own homes.</li> <li>• Encourage housing options for a variety of income levels.</li> <li>• Discourage blight and nuisance housing areas.</li> </ul>
PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the remediation of environmentally contaminated lands which have a potential for damaging rivers, streams and groundwater.</li> <li>• Advocate for the creation and long term maintenance of a county-wide solid waste management program</li> <li>• Advocate for the maintenance of Manistee County's natural resources and the beauty of its landscape.</li> <li>• Encourage local governments to develop guidelines and criteria which protect natural features and sensitive areas.</li> <li>• Advocate for county-wide alternative energy programs and projects.</li> </ul>
RECREATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work on the development of the Manistee County Recreation Plan, including all areas of the county.</li> <li>• Encourage universal accessibility to all recreation sites.</li> <li>• Increase recreational opportunities for all ages.</li> <li>• Advocate for a Manistee County parks program including the preservation of open spaces for recreation purposes.</li> </ul>
AGRICULTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for agriculture and forest management activities which enhance Manistee County's economic base and quality of life.</li> <li>• Advocate that designated agricultural areas in the county remain primarily agricultural or low density residential.</li> </ul>
TRANSPORTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the development of a coordinate county transportation plan.</li> <li>• Advocate for the awareness of the importance of our local airport for all travelers in the county.</li> <li>• Monitor projects and proposals to assess the maintenance of safe and efficient routes in and through the county while respecting the rural character.</li> <li>• Advocate for expansion of deep water port facilities linking to air, rail, highway connections, and warehousing and distribution facilities.</li> <li>• Advocate for the continued study of the railroad relocation project.</li> </ul>
INFRASTRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the development of a county infrastructure plan.</li> <li>• Advocate for the effective and efficient location of public facilities and delivery of public services.</li> </ul>
LAND USE / VISUAL CHARACTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County master planning will respect the goals and land use plans of local government, including the Little River Band of Ottawa</li> <li>• Future growth will occur in existing and planned growth centers such as the City of Manistee and population centers as identified in each local government plan.</li> </ul>

## Benzie County Principles and Strategies

The principal land use issue in Benzie County is not whether to grow, it is where, when and in what manner can growth occur without undermining the integrity of the scenic natural character of the County and the economy built around it.

### FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

1. Scenic character should be preserved or enhanced wherever feasible in the County
2. Natural resources in the County should be protected from inappropriate use or conversion.
3. 3. The pristine natural environment of the County should be protected from degradation.
4. An economy built on renewable natural resources is sustainable and should continue to be the principal economic base for the future.
5. Future development should primarily take place in a compact development pattern.
6. Future land use, zoning, land division and public infrastructure decisions should be made consistent with this Plan.
7. A strong effort should be made to achieve improved intergovernmental cooperation within Benzie County
8. The vision in this Plan must be achieved without violating protected property rights.

#### Balanced Growth Strategy

Preservation of scenic character in Benzie County is both dependent on and supports most of the economic base in the County. The scenic character is comprised of the natural environment, farms, and the built environment. Thus, protecting scenic character, the natural environment, and economic development must proceed together—or one or the other (or both) will suffer. The solution lies in pursuit of a balanced growth policy. Balanced growth will require housing not only for seasonal residents, retirees, or two income commuter families, but also for the elderly, young families, and other persons on low fixed incomes. New businesses will be needed to meet the needs of the growing seasonal and permanent populations.

#### Environmental Protection Strategy

The other side of the balanced growth strategy is the environmental protection strategy. This term embraces protection of renewable natural resources like agricultural and forest land, as well as the air, water, and other sensitive natural features in the County (like wetlands, floodplains and sand dunes) The greatest threat to these resources is from poorly planned or sited new development. Residential development poses the greatest threat because there is so much more of it over a much wider area.

#### Strategy to Protect the Visual Character of the Landscape

County citizens have strongly indicated that they do not want growth to spoil the scenic character of the landscape. They do not want it to take on a suburban or urban character. They want the forested, lake, and riverine landscapes to be preserved for the benefit of present and future generations. Almost everyone feels a right to see, enjoy, and help protect these resources. As a result, protection of the unique rural character of the County must be a fundamental part of all future planning and development decisions.

#### Strategy to Protect Visual Character of Small Towns

The physical features of the city of Frankfort and the villages in Benzie County are a critical component of the rural scenic character of the County. New development that is encouraged to take place in and adjacent to these small towns must both complement and fit with the existing character, or it will damage the scenic character of the community and the County.

#### Strategy to Address Issues of Greater than Local Concern

The fundamental principles presented in this Chapter recognize that intergovernmental cooperation is critical to implementation of the strategies in this Plan.

### STRATEGIES

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Final Exercise  
Collective Priorities

RESPONSIBLE ZONING  
& PLANNING SPECIFIC TO  
TOWNSHIP.

KEEP LOW RESIDENTIAL  
DENSITY / LIMIT HOUSING  
DEVELOPMENT

ACCESS TO NATURAL  
GAS LINES

LAKES TO LAND REGIONAL INITIATIVE

Community Engagement





# Outreach

Once upon a time, master planning was believed to be the province of professionals and only minimally subject to public opinion. Toward the middle of the 20th century, however, “the public” made some changes to that system.

As a practice, city planning took off under the City Beautiful movement of the early 1900s. The theory was that an orderly, aesthetically pleasing public setting could induce citizens themselves to be more orderly and harmonious. Physical plans with ornate street layouts and elaborate civic centers were produced by these design professionals, often paid for by the business community. After the Depression radically shifted just about everyone’s priorities away from aesthetic concerns to financial ones, the City Efficient movement strove to root out graft and create smooth bureaucratic systems which could carry out the municipal functions of a nation urbanizing at a breakneck pace.

The seismic demographic and technological changes that occurred after World War II caused the now-well-established profession of planning to use every tool at its disposal to accommodate them. Combining physical and systems planning yielded some extremely bold innovations, with mixed results—the national Interstate highway system, for example, in contrast to urban renewal.

But no massive alteration to a densely populated area can avoid making a deep impact on the individual lives being lived in that space, and this is where the top-down model of planning met its match. As homes were razed and neighborhoods bisected to make room for the freeways, public meetings filled with citizens who not only did not care for the plan under consideration, but also did not care for the fact that such dramatic and irreversible consequences for their own lives were being dropped on them. Journalist Jane Jacobs combined her background on the urban beat with her fury over being displaced from her home to write the 1960 critical examination of planning that eventually ushered in a sea change to the profession, “The Death and Life of Great American Cities.”

Though it is generally true that planners’ professional training gives them a wider variety of municipal tools and information than the average citizen, it is now fundamentally understood that the direction of a community’s progress is *always* best guided by its members.

# The leadership team

The first community members to “get engaged” with the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative were the ones who would eventually make up the backbone of the collaboration.

At its very earliest stage, this sprawling collaboration began as a meeting of just four minds. Onekama Township supervisor David Meister and planning commission chair Dan Behring worked with Alliance for Economic Success director Tim Ervin on the Portage Lake Watershed Forever plan, which brought Onekama Township and the Village of Onekama together so successfully that they decided to work together further in the preparation and adoption of a joint master plan. Now thoroughly convinced of the merits of collaboration, the Onekama Community Master Plan advocated using the M-22 corridor as a focus for economic development, and that brought Meister, Behring, and Ervin to the doorstep of Arcadia Township planning commission chair Brad Hopwood. The three communities wrote an M-22 Economic Development Strategy together in 2010.

Realizing the potential of the regional assets identified in the report and knowing that Arcadia Township’s master plan needed updating, Hopwood and Ervin decided to reach out to adjacent communities to assess their willingness to participate in a broader initiative. After “many meetings over my kitchen table,” said Hopwood, the original M5 partnership of Arcadia, Bear Lake, Blaine, Crystal Lake, and Gilmore Townships solidified. The first members of what would become the Lakes to Land Leadership Team were identified either through their roles in the community (many are planning commission members, elected officials, or professionals in a field related to land use, such as real estate) or identified themselves as having an interest in serving the collaboration. Their first tasks were to name the initiative, define the potential Area of Influence, decide which team member would contact each adjacent community, and establish a timetable for other communities to opt-in.

As new communities joined the initiative, the requirements for admission were simple: their elected bodies were asked

to execute an “Agreement to Partner” resolution, and the community was asked to furnish two people to serve on the Leadership Team. Throughout the initiative, Leadership Team members met on a monthly basis to update each other on the collaborative process.

In addition to providing a forum for communication and connection, the meetings also served as an educational avenue as the team members began blazing the trail through uncharted cooperative territory. Topics for discussion included the purpose of master planning, engagement with neighboring communities, stakeholder analysis, and methods of public outreach. Guest presentations were made by agencies such as the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy and the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments.

The Leadership Team’s engagement extended to the best in-depth citizen planning training in the state. By giving these committed community members the most up-to-date tools and knowledge to effectively advocate for high-quality community planning decisions, the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative provides a benefit to participating communities that will long outlast the project duration. Links to the Michigan Association of Planning annual conference and the organization’s Planning and Zoning Essentials basic training program were made available on the Lakes to Land website, and an educational committee was formed to organize training opportunities such as participation in Michigan State University Extension’s Citizen Planner course on Fundamentals of Planning and Zoning. Each community sent multiple representatives to this seven-week course aimed at providing a basic skill set to land use decision makers, particularly elected and appointed officials. Leadership Team members’ participation was funded by the Lakes to Land grants.

## Naming the Initiative



**Lakes to Land**  
REGIONAL INITIATIVE

With its substantive elements fleshed out, the project remained in need of a name and a logo—the “face” it would present throughout the region. This exercise in brand messaging was designed to help cement the project and continue to strengthen ties among the Leadership team while fostering memorability, loyalty, and familiarity among the wider public.

Through multiple brainstorming sessions and the use of the online tool SurveyMonkey, many different names and tag lines were suggested and debated. In offering the “Lakes to Land” moniker, one team member noted that the region is comprised of rolling green topography and scenic views of forests, farms, and fields, edged on one side by the Lake Michigan shore and dotted throughout with the inland lakes which are at the heart of many of its communities. The rest of the Leadership Team coalesced around this suggestion with relative ease, bestowing the project with the official name of “Lakes to Land Regional Initiative” and the immediate nickname of “L2L.”

While the initial goal was to brand the initiative and as a consequence the region, Leadership Team members wisely understood that undertaking a proper regional branding would require participation from diverse groups such as local chambers of commerce, business associations, and elected officials. This was outside the scope of the project at hand, but groundwork has been laid with the effort to name the first regional collaborative effort of its kind in the State of Michigan.

*What makes this project unique? How will it benefit area stakeholders? Why should they get involved?*



3.2 Web screenshots  
The Lakes to Land pages on Facebook (top), Twitter (middle), and the world wide web (bottom)



# Communication strategies

The Leadership Team's primary communication goals were to facilitate stakeholder participation and garner broad support for the project. They also recognized the importance of elevating the project's visibility, reinforcing positive relationships with decision-makers, and creating a sustainable platform for ongoing coverage through positive media relationships.

Determining that the use of a consistent and positive message was essential to the success of these goals, the team distilled that message by identifying and answering the questions at its core: What makes this project unique? How will it benefit area stakeholders? Why should they get involved? Having clearly articulated answers to these questions was essential to persuading communities that it is in their best interest to work together, and that doing so reinforces their own identities. The process also helped create synergy and momentum, much-needed ingredients in the quest to elicit as much participation in the master planning process as possible.

## Face-to-face outreach

Even though it sometimes seems like a new form of communication is born every minute these days, and even though the Lakes to Land team tried to use just about all of them, the most effective method of communication in our outreach efforts was often good old one-on-one, face-to-face contact. The role of leadership team members as community ambassadors was critical in identifying and communicating with neighboring communities and key stakeholders throughout the region. An early decision to make the Initiative as inclusive as possible offered them the opportunity to reach out to neighboring communities directly, calling and meeting with individuals throughout the region to educate them about the benefits of the Initiative. In addition, the Beckett & Raeder team undertook other types of personal communication initiatives that

included speaking at the Benzie County Water Festival and individual planning commissions, holding informal meetings with residents, and a presentation at the professional planning conference hosted by the Michigan Association of Planning. The goal of the outreach effort was never to recruit but rather to inform and educate with the hopes that communities would see the benefit of joining the Initiative. It was largely through this face-to-face contact that the collaboration grew from five communities to 16 in just a few short months.

During the development of the individual master planning process, community leaders identified key stakeholders, then personally encouraged them to attend planning commission meetings and work sessions in order to hear their opinions and allow them to weigh in during the formation of the master plan. One community member expressed that they felt they had knocked on every door in the community, personally inviting the resident inside to attend the meetings.

Further, in an effort to create a collegial environment and begin to collaborate professionally, invitations to regular Leadership Team meetings were extended to professional planners and zoning administrators in both Benzie and Manistee Counties, representatives from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and a Michigan State University Extension Land Use expert. Other entities were invited to give educational presentations at the meetings, such as the Heartland Center for Leadership Development. Meetings also occurred with the Michigan Economic

Development Corporation Community Assistance Team Specialist to discuss economic development tools and applicability for the region. As a nod to the significance of the Initiative and in an effort to learn from this groundbreaking process, Governor Rick Snyder designated key government employees from various departments to study the Initiative and to collaborate with the region. These individuals were in contact with the Alliance for Economic Success, team members, and the consultants.

## Communication tools

To keep the momentum of the project going and continue to engage the public, the Lakes to Land team developed magnets and brochures listing all the ways to keep in touch with the project: a centralized phone number, a United States Postal Service address, a new website, and Facebook and Twitter accounts. Press releases to news outlets covering the geographic area from Manistee to Petoskey were issued by the Alliance for Economic Success at the beginning of the initiative and at strategic points throughout the process to keep the public updated.

The Lakes to Land website ([www.lakestoland.org](http://www.lakestoland.org)) was created to maintain open lines of communication among active members of the project team, residents of the region, and other interested folks. This was particularly critical in light of the wide spectrum of technological sophistication and infrastructure available throughout the region, making a centralized repository for project-related information necessary. The collaborative nature of the project meant that it was imperative to build a site robust enough to serve the dual

objectives of creating a cohesive whole and maintaining each community's unique identity.

It was decided early on that the site would feature a page for each individual community in addition to the blog, the "about" description of the project, a calendar of events, and an archive of news releases related to the project. Each community's page presented a short excerpt of its history from this report, updated information related to the scheduling or results of its vision session, and any available links to previous plans or municipal websites. To the initial regionally-focused content mentioned above, several more pages were added at the Leadership Team's request: a catalog of the entire library of work products and resources, a repository for documents specific to the Leadership Team, and an open comment forum for exchange of ideas.

Metrics show that as of this writing, 1,975 people have racked up 9,687 page views on the website. The highest pageview numbers were driven by subscribers, people who signed up for the mailing lists and received an email linking directly to each new post as it was published. The largest concentration of visits came from the Manistee area (881), followed by Traverse City (598) and Grand Rapids (266). While most were from Michigan, visits also came from across the country: 141 from Hialeah (FL), 84 from Honolulu, 73 from Chicago, and a dozen scattered cities along the California coastline. All entries from the website were also posted to the project's Facebook and Twitter accounts ([www.facebook.com/lakestoland](http://www.facebook.com/lakestoland) and [twitter.com/lakestoland](http://twitter.com/lakestoland)).

## Information meetings

The public kickoff of the project occurred at two informational meetings on May 24 and 25, 2012. Between the two sessions—one in Benzie County and one in Manistee County—approximately 100 attendees were introduced to the Initiative. The purpose of the informational meetings was to educate the citizens about the project, extend an invitation to neighboring communities to join, discuss funding sources, and give a detailed explanation of the expected process and benefits. It was also hoped that the meeting would explain the planning process, prepare the communities for their vision sessions, and generate excitement for the project. Brochures and magnets were distributed, and the dates for the vision sessions were announced.

## Farmers' meetings

As the process of writing the new master plans began in earnest, two townships chose to host a forum dedicated specifically to understanding the needs of their agricultural communities. Blaine and Joyfield Townships each invited the general public, with a particular emphasis on the farming citizenry, to answer the question, "What can the township do to ensure that our working farms remain viable over the next 20 years?"

Both groups expressed a strong desire for fewer and more flexible regulations. Regardless of whether the context was land division, crop contents, building and equipment construction, or the lease of land for purposes other than agriculture, participants made it clear that the township's decisions had a discernible effect on their bottom line.



**Lakes to Land**  
REGIONAL INITIATIVE  
*Unique Region. Unique Communities. Shared Vision.*

Arcadia Bear Lake Blaine Crystal Lake Gilmore Joyfield Pleasanton Onekama Frankfort

You are Invited!

**Information Meetings Scheduled**

**May 23 at 7 p.m.**

Onekama Consolidated Schools

**May 24 at 7 p.m.**

Frankfort-Elberta Elementary School Gym

The Lakes to Land Regional Initiative is a unique joint planning effort to bring voices from throughout the region into a collaborative vision for the future. The communities will work together to prepare a series of individual Master Plans and then use them to design collaborative strategies.

Come to an information meeting to meet the leadership team members, learn about the purpose, goals, opportunities for participation, and schedule for the

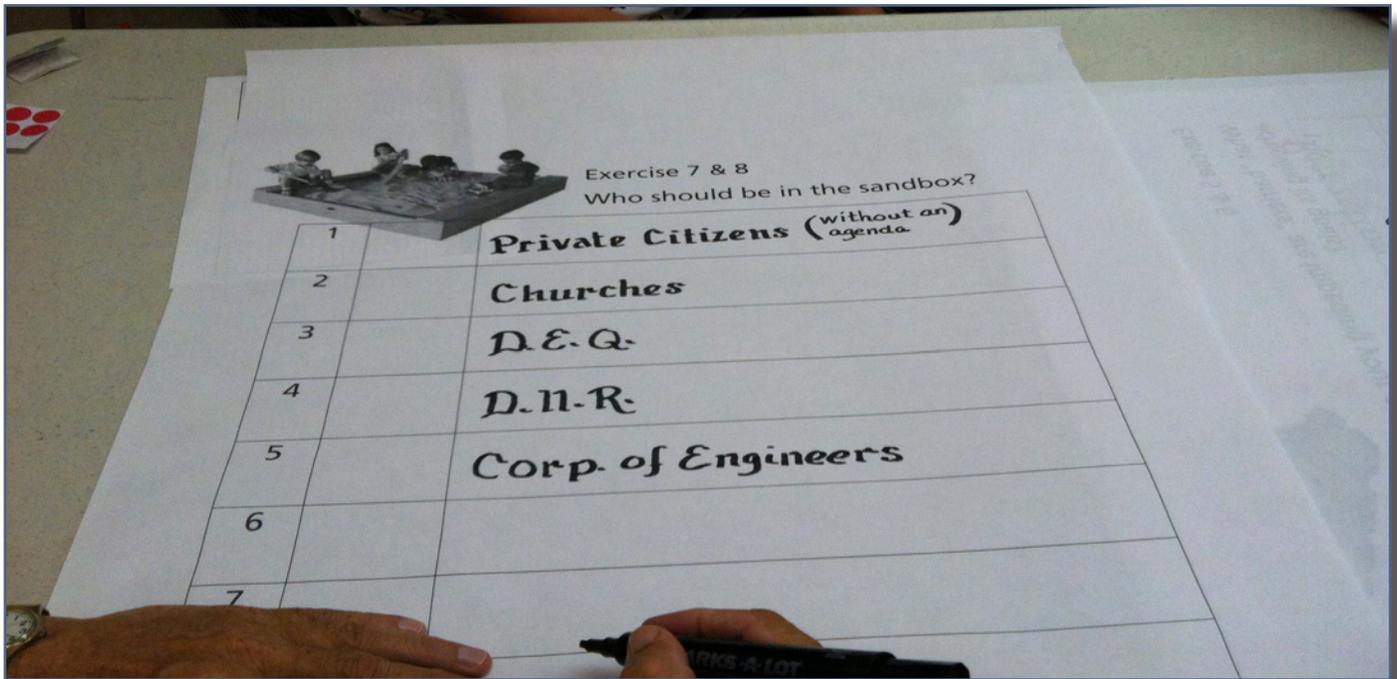
For More Information  
231.933.8400  
[www.lakestoland.com](http://www.lakestoland.com)

*3.3 Information meeting*

*Beckett & Raeder, Inc. gives a presentation introducing the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative to citizens.*







# Visioning

The heart of the collaborative initiative is the development of individual community master plans. In the preparation of a master plan, the voice of the community is heard and articulated, and getting residents of the region to the Visioning Sessions was one of the primary responsibilities of the Leadership Team.

The Leadership Team selected the days, venues, and times for the vision sessions and placed posters advertising them throughout their communities. In addition to the project's official website and social media accounts, they used word-of-mouth, personal contact lists, and their own social media outlets to publicize the meetings. Postcards were mailed to every tax payer in each participating community inviting residents to share their input at the meeting, a step that the team concluded was important to ensure contact with every person. To minimize scheduling barriers to participation, residents were advised to attend their own community's session if possible but also invited to attend other sessions. If attending another community's vision session, residents were asked to sit at a separate table to work on the exercises but invited to participate in the presentation of the results. In this manner, communities often got a first glance at issues occurring in neighboring communities. All results were kept separate.

The method for decision-making was designed to be ideal for large groups, take everyone's opinion into account, and assist in narrowing down the results to the top major issues through the use of tallying. Participants not only had the opportunity to voice their opinions to small groups but also to the larger assembly, explaining and clarifying issues. Issues were often repeated, and in many cases the participants were able to both hear and see through the tallying process the collective nature of their opinions.

Ten vision sessions were held to accommodate all communities developing master plans, including a makeup session designed to give residents from communities with less than ideal participation at the outset another opportunity to weigh in. All followed an identical format: Prior to the meeting, the facilitators placed a marker, a pen, nametags, a sign-in sheet, pre-counted voting dots, and a set of 24x36 exercise sheets on each table. Arriving

# The stuff

citizens were asked to sit 6-8 persons to a table, don a nametag, and sign in. (Email addresses from the sign-in sheets were added to the distribution list used for updates and new website post notices, with an opt-out available at each.) Shortly after the start time of 6:30 p.m., the session began with a presentation about the history, scope, and objective of the Lakes to Land project.

The bulk of the sessions were focused on the visioning exercises. A volunteer at each table took the role of Table Secretary, recording answers to each of the tasks assigned. In most cases, a voting exercise followed in which each participant placed a dot next to the two items s/he felt were the best responses. "Double-dotting," or voting twice for the same item, was not allowed.

At the conclusion of the exercises, each group selected a member to present its findings. Presentations to the group conveyed the top three preferred futures from exercise 9 and 10 and the strategies to achieve them identified in exercise 11. A member of the facilitation team recorded the preferred futures on 24x36 sheets as they were stated, consolidating duplicate items with some discussion about what constituted a "duplicate": is the item "more business along US-31" identical to "increased economic development," for example?

Once all responses had been recorded, the sheets were hung on a wall at eye level, usually in the vicinity of the exit. The attending citizens were thanked for their participation and then instructed to use their remaining three dots for a "collective prioritization" exercise in which they voted for the three images they preferred most out of all presented at the meeting. Again, double- or triple-dotting was prohibited. The meeting officially concluded after all participants voted.

### 3.4 The invitations

**Lakes to Land REGIONAL INITIATIVE**  
Unique Region. Unique Communities. Shared Vision.

**Community Vision Sessions**

The Lakes to Land Regional Initiative is a unique joint planning effort to involve voices from throughout the region in the creation of Community Master Plans. The communities will then work together to design strategies for collaboration.

**Bring your voice to the Vision Session in your community and help shape the future.**

If you are unable to attend the session, please join us at any of the following sessions:

ARCADIA TWP	June 12	6:30 P.M.
JOYFIELD TWP	June 13	6:30 P.M.
CRYSTAL LAKE TWP	June 14	6:30 P.M.
GILMORE TWP	June 14	6:30 P.M.
PLEASANTON TWP	June 18	6:30 P.M.
BLAINE TWP	June 19	6:30 P.M.
BEAR LAKE TWP	June 21	6:30 P.M.

**Lakes to Land REGIONAL INITIATIVE**  
Unique Region. Unique Communities. Shared Vision.

**COMMUNITY VISION MAKEUP SESSION**

Lakes to Land Regional Initiative is a 15-community joint planning effort that seeks to bring voices from throughout the region together to shape the future we will all share. Citizens from Arcadia, Blaine, Crystal Lake, Gilmore, and Pleasanton had come to the previous sessions, and now we are holding one more.

**It is critical to creating a plan that genuinely reflects our community. Your voice to the Vision Session.**

Participate in this process, and you know what they say... if you don't participate, you can't complain.  
(And who wants that?)

**2012 AT 6:30 P.M.**  
**ALLEY COMMUNITY CENTER**  
1000 Lakes Road, Arcadia

**Lakes to Land REGIONAL INITIATIVE**  
Unique Region. Unique Communities. Shared Vision.

**COMMUNITY VISIONING SESSION**

Lakes to Land is a 15-community joint planning effort seeking to bring voices from throughout Northwest Michigan together to shape the future we all share. We wish more of you in Pleasanton and Bear Lake Townships had come to the previous sessions. Luckily, the Village of Bear Lake's addition to our collaboration offers the opportunity to hold one more. Come talk with us about:

- Bear Lake Master Plan
- Water
- P & R E
- Public
- Road Imp
- Blight Er
- Wildlife and Fisheries

It's your last chance to participate in this session if you don't participate at this session.  
(And who wants that?)

**6:30 P.M. ON**  
**BEAR LAKE SCHOOL**  
(in the Village of Bear Lake)

Questions? Visit [www.lakestoland.org](http://www.lakestoland.org)

**Lakes to Land REGIONAL INITIATIVE**  
Unique Region. Unique Communities. Shared Vision.

Manistee Township has joined the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative, a unique collaboration in which 15 Northwest Michigan communities are using the master planning process to identify strategies for working together. Manistee Township will be updating its master plan, and you are invited to a

**COMMUNITY VISIONING SESSION**

to share your preferred vision for our future.

Citizen input is **critical** to creating a plan that genuinely reflects our community.

**Please join us.**

**AUGUST 22, 2012 AT 6:30 P.M.**  
**MANISTEE TOWNSHIP HALL**  
410 Holden Street

[www.lakestoland.org](http://www.lakestoland.org)

# visions are made of

## 3.5 The exercises

**Exercise 1 & 2**  
 That "one" word which best describes your COMMUNITY.



1		
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Participants were told that a short phrase was acceptable. This was a voting exercise.

**Exercise 3 & 4**

List those items that your COMMUNITY has accomplished well.	List those items that your COMMUNITY could have accomplished better.

Participants first answered the "accomplished well" question and voted on the answers, then answered the "could have accomplished better" question and voted on the answers.

**Exercise 5 & 6**  
 What "barriers" are impeding improvements in your community?



Facilitators explained that "barriers" could refer to organizations, situations, attitudes, physical attributes, power structures, etc. This was a voting exercise.

**Exercise 7 & 8**  
 Who should be in the sandbox?



1	
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Facilitators explained that responses to this question should name organizations of any size which could contribute expertise or resources to further the project's goals. This was not a voting exercise, but a tally was kept of the number of times each organization was mentioned within a session.

**Exercise 9 & 10**  
 Looking Forward – Envision you Community in 2021?



Participants were asked to offer a description of their community after ten years of work on their preferred investments. This was a voting exercise, and the secretary was asked to record the top three vote-getters on the next page.

**Exercise 11**  
 Actions to Accomplish our 2021 vision?  
(List the Actions needed to implement the top three (3) images from Exercise 8 & 9)

Priority 1	
------------	--

Participants contributed strategies to achieve each of the three most-preferred visions from the previous exercise.

**Final Exercise**  
 Collective Priorities

--	--

Participants distributed their remaining three dots among the top preferred visions from each group. This was THE voting exercise.

# Visioning Results

## Bear Lake Township

The first vision session scheduled for Bear Lake Township, to be held on June 21, 2012 at Bear Lake School, 7748 Cody Street, was cancelled due to the low turnout of three residents. Fortunately, the addition of the Village of Bear Lake provided an opportunity for a makeup session aimed at the "Bear Lake Community" made up of Bear Lake Township, Pleasanton Township, and the Village of Bear Lake, held on August 16 at Bear Lake School. Twenty-two of the 36 attendees represented Bear Lake Township, or 1.3% of the township's 1751 residents.

Citizens used the words "lake" (and "multiple lakes"), "beautiful," and "lake health" to describe Bear Lake Township. They named fire/EMS services, community activities, and lake improvement as their greatest accomplishments. The top three items that could have been more successful were all physical: buildings on Lake Street, lake access with facilities, and roads. Residents cited funding, participation, and lack of communication/miscommunication as the greatest barriers to progress. They felt that the sandbox should be made up of business owners, community organizations, and property owners. A vibrant, revitalized downtown and parks and lakes access topped the list of collective priorities; these items received two to four times more votes than the next two on the list, trails for biking and walking and the improvement of property values.



3.6 Bear Lake School



3.7 Bear Lake Township, Bear Lake Village, and Pleasanton Township makeup visioning

## Village of Bear Lake

The Village of Bear Lake joined the Lakes to Land collaborative after the initial round of visioning sessions, so its only session took place on August 16. The meeting was held at Bear Lake School in conjunction with the make-up session for Bear Lake and Pleasanton Townships. The six Village of Bear Lake residents in attendance comprised 2.1% of overall population.

Words used to describe the Village of Bear Lake by its residents were "stagnant," "development challenged," and "retired - mature." Residents were most proud of their school, water system, and community events such as Bear Lake Days and Sparkle. They felt that more attention could be paid to a blight ordinance, affordable sewer, and park facilities such as a restroom. Barriers to progress were money, knowledge, and participation. When asked which organizations could be potential allies to progress, the citizens named community groups, specifically the Bear Lake Promoters and the Lions, and state government. Collectively, they prioritized employment, an innovative sewer system, and being centered on recreation. The other items to receive votes were having a vital downtown, and being characterized as "multi-generational" and "beautiful."

## Pleasanton Township

Sixteen residents of Pleasanton Township gathered at Bear Lake School for their community's initial vision session on June 18, 2012, and eight more arrived at the same location for a makeup session on August 16. In all, 2.9% of the township's 818 residents participated in the session.

Citizens described Pleasanton as "rural," "agricultural," and "quiet." The water quality in Bear Lake was their signature accomplishment, including watershed planning and organization and the control of Eurasian water milfoil. Pleasanton residents mentioned division in the community with some frequency. When asked what the could have been done better, "lack of cooperation among municipalities and board" was first, followed by master planning, better communication, and an accepted sewer plan; the list of barriers was topped by "inter-community discord," "polarization and divisiveness on issues," and "divisive leadership." They felt support should come from service clubs and community groups, Bear Lake Township and Village, and Michigan's environmental departments (DNR and DEQ). In a particularly direct summation of the previous exercises, residents listed their top priorities as leadership that brings the community together, a zoning ordinance that reflects the master plan, and good communication and cooperation among all groups.



3.8 Pleasanton Township visioning



3.9 Joyfield Township visioning

## Joyfield Township

Joyfield Township hosted its visioning session at Blaine Christian Church, 7018 Putney Road, on June 13, 2012. There were 50 Joyfield residents in attendance, as well as two residents of Arcadia Township and two residents of Blaine Township. All participants completed the exercises with members of their own community, and the results were tallied by community. The rate of participation among Joyfield's 799 residents was 6.3%.

The most common one-word descriptions of Joyfield Township were "beautiful," "rural," and "divided." Residents felt that their community's strengths were neighborliness, land stewardship or balanced land use, and preserving scenic beauty. They said the community could have a better job of zoning and planning, planning for the future, and communication. Top barriers to improvement were miscommunication (specifically, communication prior to major issues and the complain that "government doesn't listen"), division within the community, and both personal and governmental financial struggles. Organizations which should be "in the sandbox" were the Farm Bureau, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and the Joyfield Township Board of Supervisors. The citizens' list of collective priorities was topped by retaining scenic character, growth in specialized agriculture, implementing zoning and planning, maintaining a rural character/environment, increasing job opportunities and supporting local business, and utilities.

## Arcadia Township



3.10 Arcadia visioning

3.11 Pleasant Valley Community Center



Arcadia Township's visioning session took place at the Pleasant Valley Community Center, 3586 Glovers Lake Road. Ninety-three citizens attended the session held on June 12, 2012. In addition to those citizens, ten Arcadia residents attended a makeup session on July 11, 2012 at the Pleasant Valley Community Center and two Arcadia residents attended the visioning session in Joyfield Township. In total, 103 of Arcadia's 639 citizens participated; its 16.1% was the best among municipalities which held visioning sessions.

The top three words residents used to describe Arcadia were "peaceful," "natural" (including "nature" and "natural beauty"), and "beautiful." They felt that their community had done a good job establishing the Pleasant Valley Community Center and the fire department. They also felt that their community was successful in the "wind issue" or the "Duke energy diversion," saying they had "defeated turbines" and "avoided bad economic development." They felt that the community could improve channel dredging, calling it a "yearly hassle" and saying a "better policy" was needed. Enforcement of zoning ordinances and speed control were two other areas which residents felt could be improved. The list of barriers to improvement was led by finances, resistance to change, and communication problems. The top three organizations that should be "in the sandbox" were Camp Arcadia, the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, and the Lions Club. The citizens' top six collective priorities were channel dredging, improving outdoor activities and developing eco-tourism, M-22 improvements and streetscape, connectivity of biking and hiking trails, a fully operational harbor, and sustainable businesses on Main Street.

## Blaine Township



3.12 Blaine visioning



On June 19, 2012, Blaine Township Hall at 4760 Herring Grove Road filled up with 72 citizens ready to share their vision for the township's future. Two more citizens attended the July 11 makeup session, totaling 13.4% of the municipality's 551 residents.

Blaine residents described their community as "peaceful" (adding "serene" and "tranquil"), "beautiful" (specifically "natural and seasonal beauty"), and "rural" (including "rural / agriculture"). They cited conservancy and preservation of their land and shore as their greatest accomplishment, followed by "eradicating turbine development" or "stopping the wind energy program," then zoning. Internet access, road repair, and planning and zoning topped the list of things that the community could have done better. The top two barriers to their goals were financial, both general and public, and each received three times as many votes as the item in third place, which was lack of viable, good-paying employment opportunities. The organizations which should be in the sandbox were township officials, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and the Benzie County Road Commission. Citizens listed maintaining the health and quality of lakes, streams, and forests, maintaining a rural community, high speed internet service, healthy and sustainable operating farms, and maintaining the scenic beauty of the township as their top collective priorities.

## Crystal Lake Township

Forty-two Crystal Lake Township citizens gathered at Frankfort-Elberta High School on June 14, 2012 for their community's vision session, and two more attended the July 11 makeup session at the Pleasant Valley Community Center. Taken together, 4.5% of Crystal Lake Township's 975 residents participated.

Residents described Crystal Lake Township as "beautiful," "vulnerable," and "pristine." They listed rails to trails, water quality, and the Benzie Bus as their top achievements; zoning, citizen participation, and the RV park topped the list of things they felt the township could have done better. Barriers to the community's goals were leadership (and specifically, "leadership reflecting all taxpayers"), lack of an agreed-upon, long-term vision, and lack of opportunities to share in a common goal. They felt that it was important for the Crystal Lake Watershed Association, farmers, and the Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital to be in the sandbox. The top priorities to emerge from the exercises were maintaining rural character (including preservation and open green space), quality development resulting from a function master plan and zoning ordinance, better leadership including cooperation and communication, and the regulation of blight and pollution (light, air, noise, and water).



3.13 Crystal Lake Township visioning

## Gilmore Township

Gilmore Township's restored, historic Old Life-Saving Station at 1120 Furnace Ave. was the site of its community visioning session on June 14, 2012. Thirty-one of Gilmore's 821 residents attended for a participation rate of 3.7%.

The most frequent descriptions of Gilmore were "scenic," "beautiful," and "sense of community." Attendees listed land preservation of land for biking and hiking, parks, and schools as its best achievements. It could have done a better job with broadband internet service, a boat launch, and communication between the village and township. Financial restraints led the list of barriers to progress, followed by communication and lack of year-round employment. Residents felt that local government of all levels should be in the sandbox, including elected and appointed officials of the township, village, county, and state. They singled out Gilmore's planning commission and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to round out the top three. The top collective priorities were zoning and planning enforcement, Betsie Bay improvements (clean, dredge, remove invasive species, increase docks and access), rural and natural community character preservation (specifically, maintaining the balance of uses between agricultural and single family residential), and public access to the lake with improvements in game management.



3.14 Old Life-Saving Station

3.15 Gilmore visioning





3.16 Manistee visioning (top and bottom)



3.17 Honor visioning



## Manistee Township

The last Lakes to Land visioning session was held in Manistee Township on August 22 at Manistee Township Hall. Forty-nine of the community's 4,084 residents attended for a turnout of 1.2%.

Those in attendance used the words "beautiful," "deteriorating" (specifically in reference to Bar Lake) and "water" or "water lovers" to describe their home. They were most proud of services, including fire, EMS, recycling, and road maintenance. Concerns centered around Bar Lake: the outlet, observation deck, park, tables, parking, marking, water level, and public access all made the list, as well as a simple plea to "Save Bar Lake." Residents cited disagreement in leadership, funding, and government regulations as the top barriers to achieving their goals. They put themselves first in the sandbox, followed by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the United States Army Corps of Engineers. Collectively, the citizens of Manistee Township prioritized the establishment of a watershed authority and cleanup of Bar Lake first, followed by commercial development along US-31 and a reduction in regulations.

## Village of Honor

Like the Village of Bear Lake, the Village of Honor joined the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative after the first round of visioning had concluded. Because the community had completed a visioning session the previous year in connection with the Honor Area Restoration Project (from which the collective priorities to the right were taken), the Planning Commission opted to use a survey instrument to gather information related to the Lakes to Land master planning process. Forty-nine surveys were returned.

Residents said they most liked that Honor is friendly and small, and its location. By a large margin (56%), they most disliked its blight, including run-down homes and junk piles; vacant stores (13%) and traffic speed (11%) lagged far behind. Citizens would most like to see new development in the form of retail commercial, specifically a deli, coffee shop, and resale or antique shop, followed by single-family homes and then office commercial. Offered a choice of recreation, their support was evenly split between facilities for active recreation and those which are multi-use. Sidewalks were the most-desired new service. Residents did not want to see commercial design requirements for their buildings, but slightly more residents approved of annexing property for future development than disapproved. Citizens also wanted to see growth of green energy and sustainable business policies, and support for a new blight ordinance was overwhelming (84%).

# Collective priorities

The ultimate goal of spending a whole intense summer conducting visioning sessions was to bring the individual voices of citizens together to hear what they said in unison.

Five hundred residents spoke clearly. This is what was on their minds:

Arcadia	Channel dredging	Improve outdoor activities; develop eco-tourism	M-22 improvements - streetscape
Bear Lake Township	Vibrant, revitalized downtown	Parks and lakes access	Bike and walk trails
Bear Lake Village	Employment	Innovative sewer system - destination	Recreation-centered
Blaine	Maintain health and quality of lakes, streams, forests; watershed planning	Maintain rural community ("stay the same")	High speed internet service, cable or tower, fast and affordable
Crystal Lake	Maintain rural character - preservation - open green space	Quality development: functioning master plan/ zoning	Build better leadership, cooperation, communication
Gilmore	Zoning and planning enforcement	Betsie Bay improvements: clean and dredge; remove invasives; increase docks and access	Rural, natural community character preservation; maintain balance of single family residential and agricultural
Honor	New downtown streetscape	New recreation facilities	Destination businesses for tourism
Joyfield	Retain scenic character - developed natural areas	Growth in agriculture - specialized	Implement zoning/planning
Manistee	Establish watershed authority / clean up Bar Lake / healthy Bar Lake ecosystem	Business on US-31 / commercial development	Reduce regulations
Pleasanton	Leadership that brings community together	Zoning ordinance that reflects the master plan	Master plan

3.18 Collective priorities table





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LAKES TO LAND REGIONAL INITIATIVE

## Bear Lake Township People and Land

**ADOPTED** SEPTEMBER 6, 2014



## ***The Bill of Rights***

*THE Conventions of a number of the States, having at the time of their adopting the Constitution, expressed a desire, in order to prevent misconstruction or abuse of its powers, that further declaratory and restrictive clauses should be added: And as extending the ground of public confidence in the Government, will best ensure the beneficent ends of its institution.*

*RESOLVED by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, two thirds of both Houses concurring, that the following Articles be proposed to the Legislatures of the several States, as amendments to the Constitution of the United States, all, or any of which Articles, when ratified by three fourths of the said Legislatures, to be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of the said Constitution; viz.*

*ARTICLES in addition to, and Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America, proposed by Congress, and ratified by the Legislatures of the several States, pursuant to the fifth Article of the original Constitution.*

*Amendment I: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*

*Amendment II: A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.*

*Amendment III: No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.*

*Amendment IV: The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.*

*Amendment V: No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.*

*Amendment VI: In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.*

*Amendment VII: In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.*

*Amendment VIII: Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.*

*Amendment IX: The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.*

*Amendment X: The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.*

**The Bear Lake Township Master Plan is intended to provide guidance with regard to future decisions related to land use. A Master Plan cannot, in itself, control land use and development.  
Only a zoning ordinance can do that.**





Photo: Up North Memories by Don Harrison

# History of Bear Lake

A century and a half ago, the Township was covered by one solid “mixed hardwood” forest.

The only exceptions to this were in the northwest corner of the southern borders of the Township where the pine timberland was picked up at an early date by lumbermen. The balance of the land remained vacant until Congress passed the Homestead Act in the early 1860s. This Act, which provided free land to bonafide settlers, went into effect on January 1, 1863, and resulted in an immediate influx of pioneers interested in agriculture.

The first settlers are believed to be the Russell F. Smith family, who arrived about the first of September 1863, and took up 172 acres of land on the south side of Bear Lake. The Smiths were followed within a short time by the families of Simeon Anderson, Francis Buckner, and John Edmonson. These people and most early settlers were interested in agriculture. Each started with 160 acres of hardwood forest and proceeded to clear land and plant crops. It was a very difficult task, and yet those who persevered (and the majority did) were rewarded with prosperity and good farms.

Bear Lake Township was organized as a legal entity early in 1865, but did not achieve its present boundaries until

1870. The first Township election was held in the Spring of 1865 at the home of Simeon Anderson. The honors of first supervisor went to Simeon Anderson; first clerk to H.M. Hannaford, and first Treasurer to D.E. Sibley.

The first school was in a small log building, erected for this purpose 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 assessment rolls for that year show the value of real estate at \$10,551 and the value of personal estate at \$16,863 for a total equalized valuation of \$27,414 on 11,279 acres. By 1881, the total equalized valuation had jumped to \$58,760 on 20,029 acres.

As the first settler, Russell F. Smith had chosen his land with the idea of a future village. To this end, he offered 12 acres of land to anyone who would come in and start a village. His offer was accepted by a firm which would become

known as Carpenter & Harrington, comprised of John S. Carpenter and Eliphate Harrington. These men built a small store, a boarding house, a steam saw, and a grist mill on the site of the present village. Their enterprise was apparently none too successful, for in the spring of 1873, they sold out to George W. and David H. Hopkins.

Starting with just three or four buildings from Carpenter & Harrington, the Hopkins Brothers soon developed the Village of Bear Lake into the major service center for rural population. Hopkins immediately built an improved saw and grist mill. The following year, 1874, the firm platted 88 acres for the Village.

On June 1, 1876, the Bear Lake Tram Railway, utilizing horse-drawn freight cars, commenced operation connecting the growing village with the docks at Pierport. In 1881, a new grist mill was built, reportedly the first roller mill in the State. Finally in 1882, the Hopkins Brothers built the Bear Lake & Eastern Railroad to replace the horse-drawn cars with a team of locomotives, steel rails, and suitable equipment. Throughout this period, new businesses opened almost monthly on Lake Street in the Village.

While George and David Hopkins may have founded the Village of Bear Lake with the idea of developing a private lumbering enterprise, the sawmill and railroad had a decided influence on the surrounding area. In clearing their farms, the homesteaders produced vast amounts of forest products. It was only practical to haul logs or cordwood distances of under five miles, which left most Township residents without a market for these products. Consequently, for the first decade of

settlement, these products were simply burned as the most efficient means of disposal. With the construction of the large sawmill in 1873, the Hopkinses immediately commenced buying logs from nearby farmers. Finally, with the construction of the Tram Railway in 1876, cordwood was shipped to Pierport for marketing in Chicago and Milwaukee. At the very minimum, this market for forest products would have doubled the income of homesteaders, while for the ambitious, income probably increased fivefold. Because of this, the farms of Bear Lake Township developed into extensive, productive units during the last part of the 19th century.



Shortly after the turn of the century, the Township enjoyed the peak of this early prosperity. Population reached 1,595 in 1904. There were 207 farms in the Township, with 12,114 productive acres. This land was worked by 583 horses and produced 97,441 bushels of grain, 74,098 bushels of potatoes, 46,000 bushels of apples, and many other products. The Village serving this area had a seemingly endless list of businesses: three general stores, a furniture store, dry goods store, meat market, drug store, bank, canning factory, flour mill, creamery, and a hotel. Individuals providing professional services included: three

doctors, a dentist, a watchmaker, a shoemaker, a photographer, and a barber. Communication with the outside world was via a daily stage line connecting with the railroad at Chief.

By this date, the majority of the forest products had been harvested from the farmland. Because of this, the large mills were dismantled and in 1903, the Bear Lake & Eastern Railroad was taken up and shipped to another state. The original pioneers were passing on and their children or grandchildren frequently chose an easier life in a far away city. 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. In 1920, the population had dropped to 1,217, but the annual Bear Lake picnic held the following year in a park near the city of Detroit had over a thousand attendants.

The 20th century has seen a steady continuation of the trends started early in the period. Agriculture has continued to decline with a gradual conversion by the remaining farmers to the fruit crops, which are ideally suited for the climate. Tourism has risen in importance as resorters and descendants of the early pioneers have returned to the area as a favorite vacation land. The Township has evolved as a pleasant community involved in a broad spectrum of business and industry.

— Excerpted from the 2002  
Bear Lake Township Master Plan







# Expectations

Vision session attendees provided an exceptionally clear picture of their preferred future in Bear Lake Township: a dynamic downtown that is bustling with activity, replete with services, and a true gathering place for all, nestled next to a clean, healthy Bear Lake.

Although just 16% of Bear Lake Township residents live within its only village, participants at the visioning session made their first priority a vibrant, revitalized downtown—by a margin of nearly 2 to 1 over the next item, and at least 4 to 1 over everything else. They believed that the things they had done together were the things they had done the best, putting fire/emergency services and community activities at the top of their list of things to be proud of. When asked who should be involved in shaping their future, they split top support evenly between the business community and service organizations, then distributed the rest among property owners, school officials, and the road commission.

Visioners also dreamed of good infrastructure. Access to parks and lakes, trails for biking and walking, and a community center comprised half of the priority list; discussions about strategies to achieve these things included addressing the condition of roads and sidewalks. The restaurant and grocery store they wished for hinges on good sewerage.

Communication is among the most important tools in the Bear Lake Township toolbox for making these dreams into reality. Downtown vibrancy must be achieved at the nexus

of business owners and community members. Planning a community center should seek input from both successful examples and potential users. The school could be a potential partner in building trails.

What could hold such a cohesive community back from reaching all its hopes and dreams? Participants overwhelmingly cited a usual culprit: lack of money. They acknowledged the need to secure funding for at least three of their top four priorities, suggesting avenues that ranged from grant applications to investors to fundraising. The number of votes received for the rest of the barriers were so small in comparison that items like encouraging participation, communicating more effectively, recruiting volunteers, and even avoiding political battles look perfectly doable.

The following pages present “Cornerstones,” or goals formulated by the Bear Lake Township Planning Commission to guide future development. Each includes a set of “Building blocks,” specific strategies to be implemented to achieve those goals. At the bottom is the “Foundation” that supports each Cornerstone: its linkage to the citizens’ stated priorities and to the Manistee County Master Plan.

# Cornerstone

Develop local bike and hiking trails with connections to regional non-motorized networks.

Currently Bear Lake Township lacks local and regional non-motorized trails. This is unfortunate because well-planned and maintained non-motorized trail networks provide a conduit for recreation activity and tourism. Communities that have trail networks benefit from an inflow of tourism dollars into the local economy. This economic impact and benefit is well documented in national and regional non-motorized trail studies, and economic models suggest that each dollar spent by a tourist/visitor using a trail has a multiplier of \$1.26 in the local economy. The Northwest Michigan Regional Non-Motorized Strategy (2008) does not include a regional trail through or near Bear Lake Township. Priority trails proposed for Manistee County include completing the route in the City of Manistee and connecting with the route around Manistee Lake, creating a trail from Manistee to Onekama, installing a trail from the High Bridge to Thompsonville through Kaleva, building a trail between Onekama and Arcadia, and creating a trail from Manistee Lake / Eastlake to High Bridge.

## Building blocks

1. Establish a township non-motorized trail network using the existing county road network.
2. Include in the Township Parks and Recreation Plan a formal trail network which utilizes the county road network but also proposes alternative non-road alignments.
3. Make sure local plans are incorporated into Lakes to Land collaborative initiatives and regional non-motorized plans.
4. Collaborate with Onekama Township, Arcadia Township, and Pleasanton Township on a sub-regional network to link Lake Michigan, Arcadia Lake, Portage Lake, and Bear Lake as regional assets.
5. Investigate the development of a regional trail utilizing Potter Road to connect US-31 (Bear Lake) with M-22 (Pierport and Arcadia).



## Foundation

Manistee County master plan goals	<i>Economy: increase job opportunities</i>	<i>Encourage a variety of housing types and choices</i>	<i>Eliminate land contamination and protect surface and groundwater quality</i>	<i>Protect agricultural areas by focusing growth in areas with infrastructure</i>
Bear Lake Township collective priorities	<i>Vibrant and revitalized downtown</i>	<i>Parks and lakes access</i>	<i>Biking, walking, and hiking trails</i>	<i>Improve property values</i>

# Cornerstone

Create a revitalized and vibrant downtown in the Village of Bear Lake.

The Village of Bear Lake downtown is nicely located on Bear Lake along US-31. Although the township has minimal jurisdictional influence on the course of downtown Bear Lake, it is nonetheless a major stakeholder in the downtown. The downtown defines the physical and economic condition of both the village and the township; as a result, it is important for the township to establish a public policy in its master plan which encourages and supports revitalization of downtown Bear Lake.

For example, if the Village of Bear Lake established a downtown development authority, the township would have the ability to decide if it wanted to participate in that revitalization through a contribution of its millage. Therefore, the township is a stakeholder in the revitalization of downtown. When a family decides in which community to locate, that decision often involves the quality of the school system, the availability of work, access to recreation, and the condition of the downtown. A vibrant and viable downtown is an important economic component to the Township.

## Building blocks

1. Identify in the community master plan a public policy which encourages the revitalization of downtown Bear Lake.
2. Encourage the Village of Bear Lake to establish a downtown business association or downtown development authority; if a downtown development authority is established by the village, the township would agree to participate.
3. Limit the amount of commercial development in the township along US-31, and encourage retail and service businesses to locate in the Village downtown.
4. Encourage appropriate development and conformance with current building and fire codes.
5. Redevelop underutilized and brownfield properties in the downtown area.



## Foundation

Manistee County master plan goals	<i>Economy: increase job opportunities</i>	<i>Encourage a variety of housing types and choices</i>	<i>Eliminate land contamination and protect surface and groundwater quality</i>	<i>Protect agricultural areas by focusing growth in areas with infrastructure</i>
Bear Lake Township collective priorities	<i>Vibrant and revitalized downtown</i>	<i>Parks and lakes access</i>	<i>Biking, walking, and hiking trails</i>	<i>Improve property values</i>

# Cornerstone

Establish a park system with a combination of outdoor and indoor recreation facilities and enhanced access to the Bear Lake and Chief Lake.

Bear Lake Township, the Village of Bear Lake and Pleasanton Township all share access to Bear Lake, which is a draw for many year-round and seasonal residents. Although residents and visitors have access to areawide lakes, local public schools, and state and national forests, many of the communities lack basic recreational assets like playgrounds, bike paths, and parks designed for outdoor events. The combined 2010 US Census population of the three communities was 2,855 residents. Based on the number of seasonal housing units, the summer population can easily increase by another 1,500 residents. Collectively, the three communities could support a small park system and program.

## Building blocks

1. Collaborate with the Village of Bear Lake and Pleasanton Township on the preparation of a joint 5-Year Michigan Department of Natural Resources Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Master Plan.
2. Investigate with the Village of Bear Lake and Pleasanton Township the feasibility of establishing a regional recreation authority.
3. Focus initial efforts on updating the waterfront park in the Village of Bear Lake.
4. Identify sites and establish land use plans and zoning that preserve scenic vistas and cultural and historic sites.
5. Identify sites to add additional recreational access to Bear Lake and Chief Lake and the watershed to support natural resource-based tourism.
6. Improve wayfinding to access areas through signage, maps within village and township, and the Explore the Shores web site.
7. Set up a boat cleaning station at one of the two public access sites to Bear Lake.



## Foundation

Manistee County master plan goals	<i>Economy: increase job opportunities</i>	<i>Encourage a variety of housing types and choices</i>	<i>Eliminate land contamination and protect surface and groundwater quality</i>	<i>Protect agricultural areas by focusing growth in areas with infrastructure</i>
Bear Lake Township collective priorities	<i>Vibrant and revitalized downtown</i>	<i>Parks and lakes access</i>	<i>Biking, walking, and hiking trails</i>	<i>Improve property values</i>

# Cornerstone

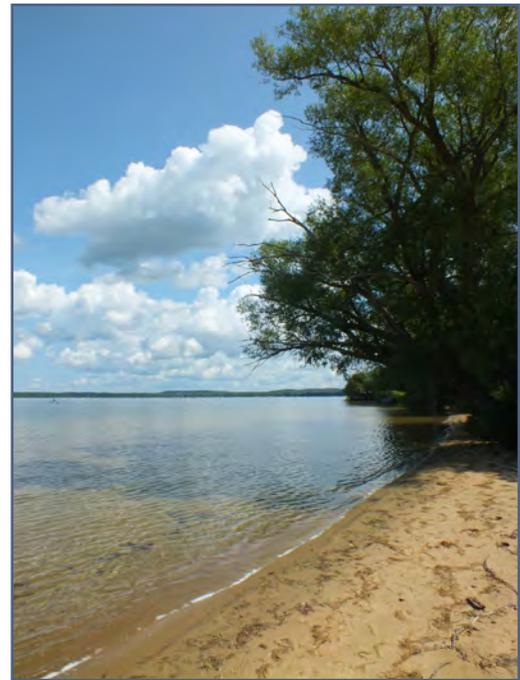
Improve the quality of our surface water and groundwater.

The Greater Bear Watershed extends into 13 townships, 3 villages, and the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians reservation, encompassing a total of 204 square miles or 130,800 acres. Approximately 83% of Bear Lake Township (18, 938 acres) is located within the Greater Bear Watershed. Land surrounding Bear Lake forms the Bear Lake Subwatershed which outlets to Little Bear Creek. The inland lakes, including Bear Lake, and the numerous tributaries are recreational, cultural, wildlife, and tourism assets for Manistee County. Bear Lake is the largest of the inland lakes within the watershed.

The quality of surface water is influenced by a variety of sources including septic fields, feed lots, gas and oil exploration, land use, and inappropriate storage and disposal of materials. In addition to surface water, groundwater is important because it is the primary source of potable drinking water for residents. Again, the quality of the groundwater can be influenced by the same sources. Because water, both surface and groundwater, is so important to the health of residents and the economy, its protection and improvement is vital.

## Building blocks

1. Support adoption of local ordinances that prohibit artificial feeding of waterfowl in or on the riparian properties adjacent to Bear Lake.
2. Conduct an assessment of agricultural management practices with the farming community to determine properties on which to implement best management practices (BMPs).
3. Develop a shoreline inventory of Bear Lake to identify priority locations for restoration projects.
4. Set up a boat cleaning station at one of the two public access sites to Bear Lake.
5. Support enforcement of wellhead protection ordinances.
6. Support development of a locally generated and state approved contingency plan and training for first respondents for road accidents involving fuel or other hazardous materials to minimize runoff to surface waters of Bear Lake and Bear Creek.



## Foundation

Manistee County master plan goals	<i>Economy: increase job opportunities</i>	<i>Encourage a variety of housing types and choices</i>	<i>Eliminate land contamination and protect surface and groundwater quality</i>	<i>Protect agricultural areas by focusing growth in areas with infrastructure</i>
Bear Lake Township collective priorities	<i>Vibrant and revitalized downtown</i>	<i>Parks and lakes access</i>	<i>Biking, walking, and hiking trails</i>	<i>Improve property values</i>

# Cornerstone

## Eliminate blight.

The State of Michigan Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Act (PA 381 of 1996) defines “blight” as property which 1) has been declared a public nuisance in accordance with state and local building, housing, plumbing, fire, or local ordinance, 2) is an attractive nuisance to children, 3) is a fire hazard, 4) has utilities serving the property or buildings in such disrepair that the property is unfit for its intended use, 5) is tax reverted, 6) is owned by a land bank, or 7) has sufficient demolition debris buried on the site that it is unfit for its intended use. So, blight comes in many forms—and in all of them, it is the responsibility of the local unit of government to monitor and manage its removal.

## Building blocks

1. Adopt and enforce a blight ordinance.
2. Adopt a local property maintenance ordinance.
3. If a parcel has contaminated property, work with the Manistee County Brownfield Authority on remediation efforts and strategy.
4. Encourage coordinated local township and village adoption and enforcement of clean-up requirements for blighted properties to preserve property values and quality of life.
5. Investigate collaboration with the Village of Bear Lake on combined code and zoning enforcement services.



## Foundation

Manistee County master plan goals	<i>Economy: increase job opportunities</i>	<i>Encourage a variety of housing types and choices</i>	<i>Eliminate land contamination and protect surface and groundwater quality</i>	<i>Protect agricultural areas by focusing growth in areas with infrastructure</i>
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*Photo: Janette May*

# People and Places

How many people? How long did they go to school? What do they do? What activities can be supported by the land itself? And where can we go shopping around here, anyway?

## Population

Population is both an indicator and a driver of economic growth. An increase in people creates a larger economic and customer base on which the business environment can draw, and an area of bustling economic activity attracts people looking to share in its benefits.

Bear Lake Township thundered through Michigan's millennium-opening population slide with hardly a break in its stride. Just over 200 people had arrived in the township between 1990 and 2000, and 163 more followed between 2000 and 2010 to bring the Census total to 1,751. (Under Michigan law, villages are considered to be part of the surrounding township, so these and other statistical totals include the Village of Bear Lake except where indicated.)

## Housing

Home is where the heart is, and where all your stuff is, and probably where the people you call family are too. On a

community level, it's much the same: housing data may talk about buildings, but it tells us much about the actual people we call neighbors.

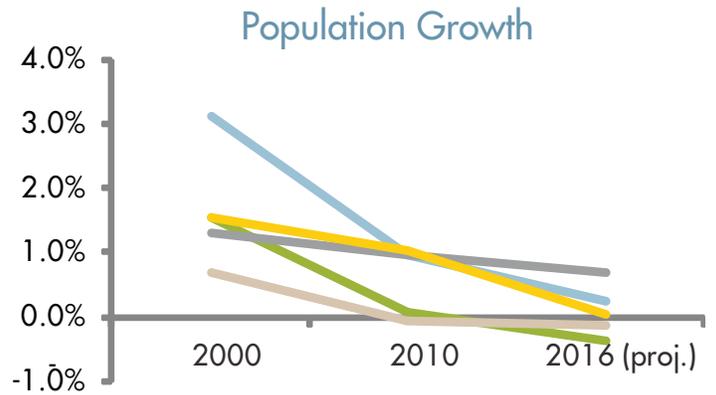
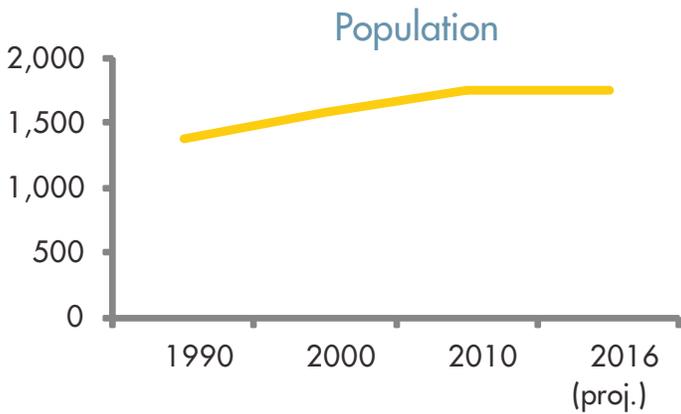
Bear Lake Township's 1,031 housing units provide the shelter for its 746 households. This represents about 1.38 housing units per household, a figure that accounts for housing units which do not have a household permanently attached to them but are instead for "seasonal or recreational use." A detailed discussion follows under "Seasonal Fluctuations." The average household size is 2.48 persons, the second largest in the region.

About one-fifth of the homes (198) were built before 1939, representing the largest proportion of the overall housing stock, and another 16% were built during a runner-up boom in the 1990s. Outside of these two decades, the township has experienced a remarkably steady residential development, increasing housing stock by about 10% every 10 years. The median home value is \$129,800, and about 57% of the owner-occupied homes have a mortgage. The

# Demographic Dashboard

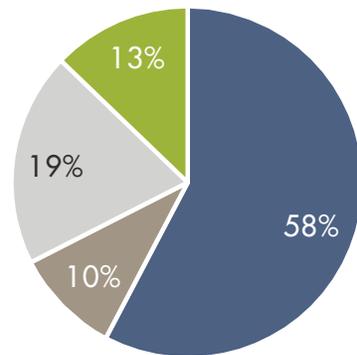
Key for population and prosperity index graphs:

■ Bear Lake Twp.  
 ■ Benzie County  
 ■ Manistee County  
 ■ Michigan  
 ■ United States



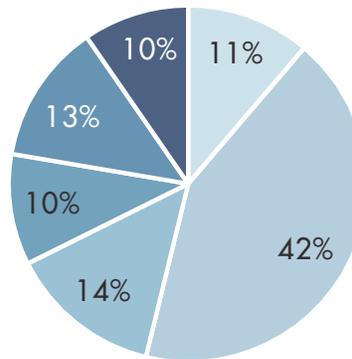
## Housing

- Owner occupied
- Renter occupied
- Seasonal, recreational, occasional use
- Vacant - for sale, for rent, etc.



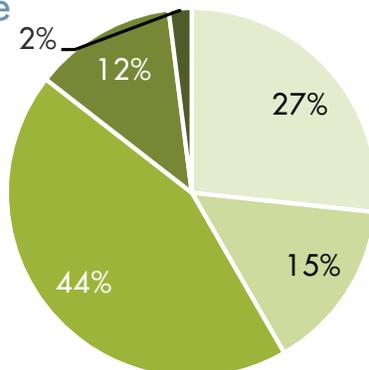
## Education

- No high school diploma
- High school graduate (includes equivalency)
- Some college, no degree
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate or professional degree



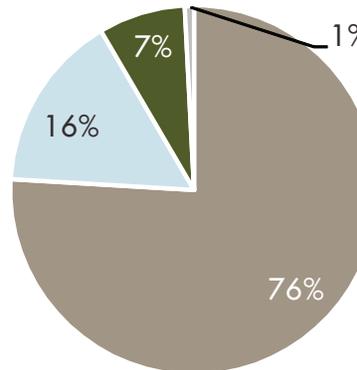
## Household Income

- Very low income (less than \$25,000)
- Low income (\$25,000-\$34,999)
- Moderate income (\$35,000-\$74,999)
- High income (\$75,000-\$149,999)
- Very high income (\$150,000 and up)



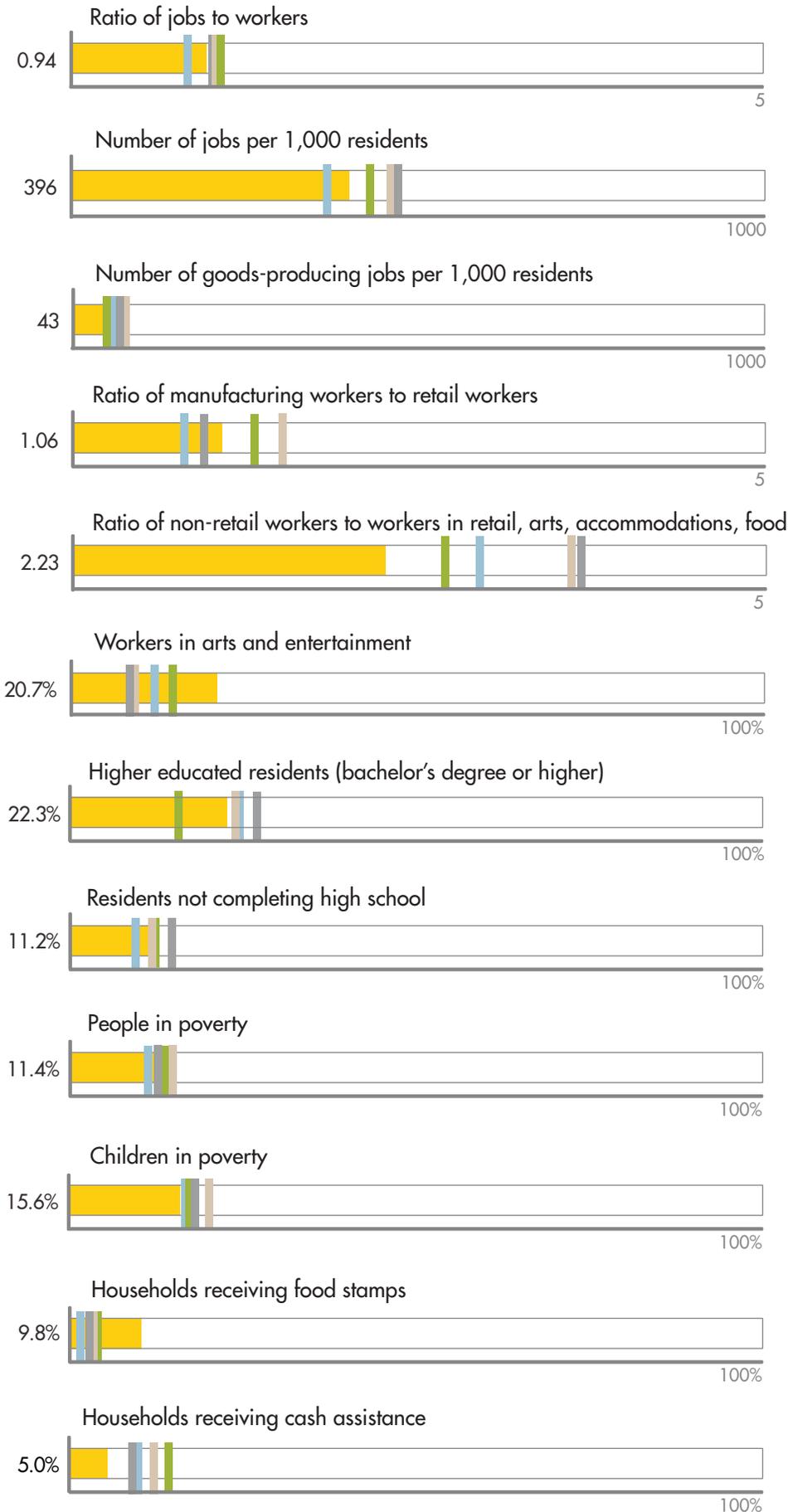
## Work

- Private wage and salary workers
- Government workers
- Self-employed
- Unpaid family workers



Classifications modified from HUD guidelines, using the state median income of \$48,432.

## Prosperity Index



## Households

2.48  
person average household size  
\$129,800  
owner-occupied median home value

\$725  
median gross rent

## Education

26%  
population enrolled in school  
89%  
high school graduate or higher  
22%  
bachelor's degree or higher

## Commuting

96%  
workers who commute  
81%  
commuters who drive alone  
22.4  
minute average commute

## Employment

694  
jobs  
736  
workers  
12.3%  
unemployment rate  
13%  
civilian veterans

## Income

\$39,309  
median household income  
\$20,806  
median earnings for workers  
\$40,139  
male full-time, year-round earnings  
\$26,063  
female full-time, year-round earnings  
11%  
population in poverty  
15%  
children in poverty

## Top Industrial Sectors

19%  
educational services  
12%  
arts, entertainment, and recreation  
11%  
retail trade

median gross rent is \$725.

Utility gas heats the most homes (47%), followed by bottled, tank, or liquid petroleum (propane) gas (28%). Wood and fuel oil / kerosene each heat about 11% of homes. In a few houses, electricity (3.5%) or other fuel (0.5%) stave off the northern Michigan winter.

## Education

Of the 35 or so core statistics collected on each of the Lakes to Land communities, Bear Lake Township represented the median value in almost a third of them, perhaps suggesting an embodiment of some quintessential characteristic of the region. Such is the case with citizens who have earned a bachelor's degree, which describes 23% of the township's residents.

With regard to primary and secondary education, however, the numbers stray from the middle way. The proportion of residents enrolled in school of any kind is 26%, ranking fourth among L2L communities. This is a consequence of the township's median age of 43.1, the fifth youngest in the region. The 89% high school graduation rate is higher than in Manistee County, Michigan, the United States, and nine of its regional neighbors.

## Income

Here, the medians really get going.

There were as many Lakes to Land communities with a higher median household income than Bear Lake Township's (\$39,309) as there are with a lower median household income—a median median household income—and such was also the case with median earnings for all workers (\$20,806).

Median earnings for full-time, year-round male workers (\$40,139)

also took the center ranking, but median earnings for full-time, year-round female workers (\$26,063) dropped to two positions below the regional median. The difference was less pronounced among all 736 workers than among the 412 full-time, year-round workers: there, median earnings for men (\$26,174) were just under \$5,000 more than for women (\$23,326). This may be partly attributable to male workers' dominance in the three North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) categories with the highest earnings: 67% of public administration workers (\$51,667) and 100% of workers in transportation / warehousing (\$50,417) and educational services / social assistance (\$49,063). The genders were much more evenly split in the top earning categories among all workers, with females constituting 61% of workers in finance / insurance (\$40,625), 26% of transportation / warehousing (\$38,438), and 70% of educational services / social assistance.

The poverty rate in Bear Lake Township is 11.4%, slightly higher than the median but solidly in the middle tier among Lakes to Land communities and below the state and

national rates (14.8% and 13.8% respectively). The rate of poverty among Bear Lake residents younger than 18, 15.6%, again represented the L2L median; it was lower than all of the aggregated benchmarks (range: 17.1%-20.5%).

A quick estimate of a community's "net worth" can be obtained by dividing its major assets (checking and savings accounts, stocks, bonds, mutual funds) by its major liabilities (home and car loans). The higher the ratio of assets to liabilities, the better insulated the community will be from quick changes in the economy. As shown in Table 4.3, the ratio in Bear Lake Township is 3.01. This is among the higher ratios in the region (nine communities have a ratio of 2.93; the highest is 3.23). It is also higher than that of Benzie County, Michigan, and the United States (2.58, 2.65, 2.41) but lower than Manistee County (3.02).

## Occupations

This section talks about the occupations and professions in which the residents of Bear Lake Township work, whether or not their places of employment are within the township limits.

4.3: Bear Lake Township net worth, including Village

Assets		
Checking Accounts		\$3,134,892
Savings Accounts		\$7,356,173
U.S. Savings Bonds		\$255,289
Stocks, Bonds & Mutual Funds		\$19,525,641
	Total	\$30,271,995
Liabilities		
Original Mortgage Amount		\$8,429,170
Vehicle Loan Amount		\$1,620,247
	Total	\$10,049,417
Net Worth		
	Assets / Liabilities	3.01

Source: Esri Business Analyst

## Single-headed households

The vulnerability of one type of household to poverty deserves particular mention: that of single-headed households with dependent children. Although the Census does provide a count of male householders with children and no wife present, it presents only female-headed households in its poverty statistics; most of the research literature follows the same form. This is attributable to two reasons: first, female-parent households make up 25.4% of all families while male-parent households make up just 7.3% (in Bear Lake Township, those figures are 14.7% and 3.5% respectively), and second, the 80% female-to-male earnings ratio (81% in Bear Lake Township) exacerbates the poverty-producing effect.

Children in single-headed households are by far the group most severely affected by poverty in Bear Lake. As Table 4.4 shows, one in six of the township's 253 households with children lives below the poverty level, but over half of the 43 female-headed households with children are poor. Stated another way, this means that 63% of the poorest families are headed by single females. Support to single-headed households provides an opportunity to have an appreciable, targeted impact on the well-being of Bear Lake Township's most vulnerable citizens. Flexible work and education schedules, support of home-based occupations, innovations in high-quality and affordable child care, and enforcement of pay equity are all tools that can be used to accomplish such support.

4.4: Bear Lake Township poverty by household type, including Village

Income in the Past 12 Months is Below Poverty Level	
All families	9.4%
With related children under 18 years	15.0%
With related children under 5 years only	16.7%
Married couple families	3.2%
With related children under 18 years	5.2%
With related children under 5 years only	0.0%
Families with female householder, no husband	36.4%
With related children under 18 years	55.6%
With related children under 5 years only	45.0%
All people	11.4%
Under 18 years	15.6%
Related children under 18 years	15.6%
Related children under 5 years	20.0%
Related children 5 to 17 years	13.9%
18 years and over	10.0%
18 to 64 years	11.1%
65 years and over	7.1%
People in families	9.6%
Unrelated individuals 15 years and over	23.5%

Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010

The most prevalent field among Bear Lake Township's 736 civilian workers is the one that encompasses art, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services. Twenty-one percent, or 152 workers, cite an occupation in these fields. The second most common industry group was educational services, health care, and social assistance, in which 120 workers (16%) serve. Construction and services (excluding public service) rounded out the majority of fields represented (10% and 11% respectively).

The occupational group comprised of educational services, health care, and social assistance is the fourth highest-paying category in Bear Lake Township, with a median income of \$37,500. The other three groups

mentioned above, however, represent three of the four lowest median incomes, ranging from \$13,333 to \$19,908 (agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining is the lowest-paid occupation in the township). Overall, 45% of the township's workers are employed in the four lowest-paying occupations.

## Retail and Business Summary

This section talks about the businesses and jobs within Bear Lake Township, whether or not the proprietors and employees are residents of the township itself.

The business summary generated by Esri counts 102 businesses employing a total of 694 people within the

township's borders. When compared with the residential population of Bear Lake Township, this equates to 396 jobs per 1,000 residents—again representing the median among Lakes to Land communities, as does its 43 goods-producing jobs per 1,000 residents.

The largest concentration of businesses was in retail trade; those 15 establishments comprise just under 15% of all businesses. That category was followed by "other services (except public administration)," which made up 13% of the business community, and then construction (11%) and accommodation / food services (10%).

The greatest number of employees (130, or 19%) work in educational

services. About 12% of employees are in arts / entertainment / recreation, and another 11% work in retail trade. This is significant because nationally, the median earnings of workers in retail, entertainment, and hospitality occupations are about half of the median earnings of all other occupations. Although it is not a direct comparison, we can get a sense of this disparity in wages between non-retail jobs and those in retail, arts, accommodations, and food service by multiplying the median earnings in each industry by the number of workers in that industry, then dividing the resulting aggregate income for each category (non-retail and retail, arts, etc.) by the number of workers in it. This average of weighted median earnings, shown in Table 4.5, estimates

that retail, arts, accommodation, and food service workers in Bear Lake Township earn about 75% as much as non-retail workers. The wage discrepancy is not quite as dramatic as it is at the national level, but still worth noting given that these categories represent two of three most prevalent employment opportunities in the township.

### Commuting

It's a real estate truism that the three most important factors considered by buyers are location, location, and location, yet the traditional measure of housing affordability—surely another consideration hovering near the top of the list—makes no allowance at all for location. The

Center for Neighborhood Technology set out to redefine “affordability” to more accurately reflect the proportion of a household’s income that is committed to housing costs, including those incurred while getting to and from that aforementioned location. CNT describes its Housing and Transportation Affordability Index this way:

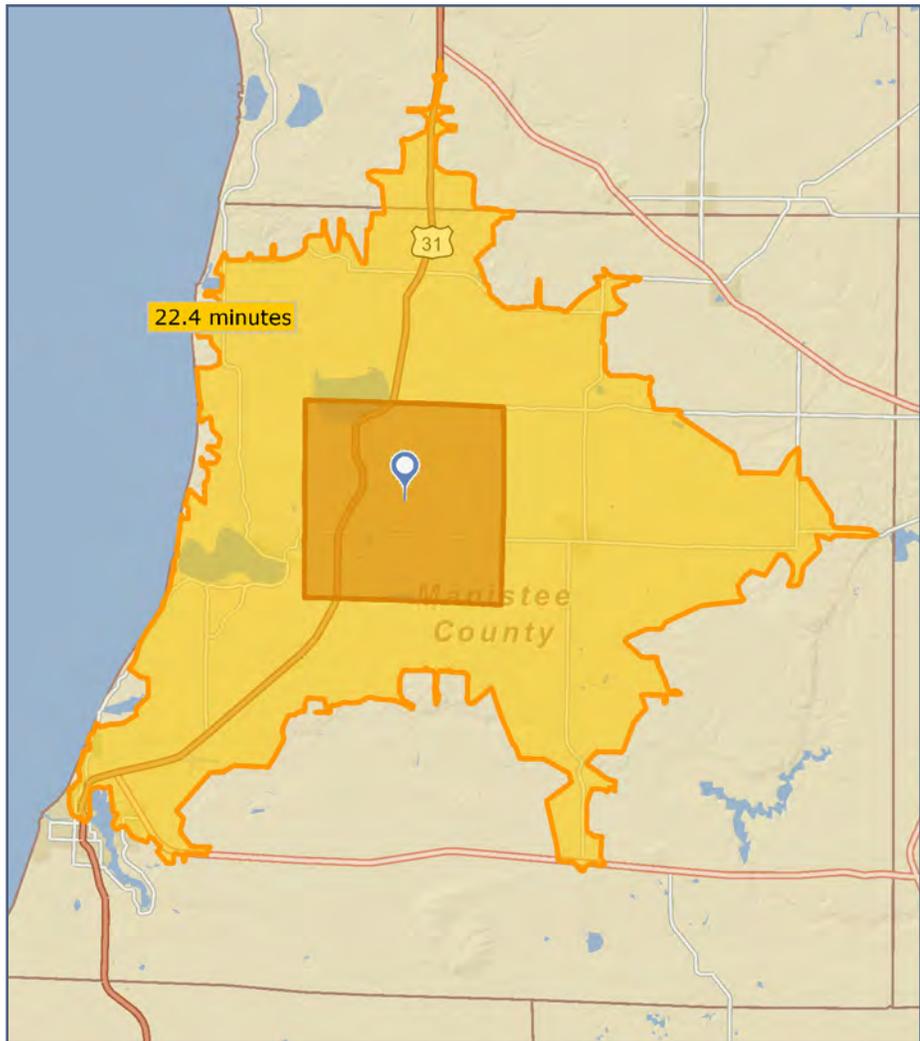
*“The traditional measure of affordability recommends that housing cost no more than 30 percent of income. Under this view, three out of four (76 percent) US neighborhoods are considered “affordable” to the typical household. However, that benchmark ignores transportation costs, which are typically a*

4.5: Non-retail to retail earnings in Bear Lake Township, including Village

Industry	Workers	Median earnings	Weighted median earnings
<b>Non-Retail</b>			
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	120	\$37,500	\$4,500,000
Other services, except public administration	78	\$13,333	\$1,039,974
Construction	72	\$22,000	\$1,584,000
Manufacturing	55	\$23,125	\$1,271,875
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	53	\$12,396	\$656,988
Public administration	48	\$36,250	\$1,740,000
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, waste management services	43	\$25,875	\$1,112,625
Wholesale trade	21	\$20,625	\$433,125
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	19	\$38,438	\$730,322
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	18	\$40,625	\$731,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>527</b>		<b>\$13,068,909</b>
<b>Average of weighted median earnings</b>		<b>\$24,799</b>	
<b>Retail, art, accommodation, food services</b>			
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	152	\$19,808	\$3,010,816
Retail trade	52	\$16,667	\$866,684
<b>Total</b>	<b>204</b>		<b>\$3,877,500</b>
<b>Average of weighted median earnings</b>		<b>\$19,007</b>	

*“Information” median fell in the lowest interval of an open-ended distribution. Source: American Community Survey 2006-2010*

4.6: Bear Lake Township average commute drive time area, including Village



county, the addition of transportation costs to the equation puts the share of household income spent on those two combined items over 45% for all places in the county.

Ninety-six percent of Bear Lake Township's workers have some sort of commute, with an average travel time to work of about 22.4 minutes. Both of these figures are in the upper half among Lakes to Land communities and roughly in line with county, state, and national averages. Figure 4.6 shows the Bear Lake Township "workshed," or the geographic area reachable by this average commute, and we can see that it covers a large proportion of Manistee County. A long commute is tough. Everyone who has ever had one knows it subjectively, and a growing body of empirical evidence is pointing to its detrimental effects on happiness, health, and wealth: its costs are rarely fully compensated by our salaries, the minutes spent behind the wheel come at the cost of minutes spent on exercise and meal preparation, and people with long commutes are frankly just less happy than those with shorter ones.

While the length of commute may have the greatest effect on the commuter, it's the method of commuting that has the greatest effect on the environment. Across the board, driving alone is overwhelmingly the most common method of commuting, and it is the one which maximizes the output of vehicle emissions per commuter. Here again, Bear Lake Township has its finger on the mainstream pulse: 81% of its commuters drive alone, matching the national figure and representing the Lakes to Land median. On the other end of the spectrum, Bear Lake has about twice the rate of organically

household's second largest expenditure. The H+T Index offers an expanded view of affordability, one that combines housing and transportation costs and sets the benchmark at no more than 45 percent of household income. Under this view, the number of affordable neighborhoods drops to 28 percent, resulting in a net loss of 86,000 neighborhoods that Americans can truly afford."

CNT's map has been steadily expanding its coverage since its inception in 2008 and now includes 337 metropolitan areas in the United States. Manistee County has not been analyzed, but Benzie County was considered part of the Traverse City metropolitan area and its neighborhoods are among those that disappear from the affordability map: while the H+T Index shows the average housing cost to be less than 30% of household income for the whole

powered commuters who walk to work (6.1%) as at county, state, and national levels.

### Agricultural Influence

Of the 21,871 acres of land that make up Bear Lake Township, 5,964 (27.3%) have an existing land use category of "Agriculture." This land represents 121 of the 1636 parcels (7.4%) in the Township. Another 554 acres (2.5%) comprising 19 parcels (1.2%) are "Natural Resource Related." Overall, then, about 30% of the land and 9% of the parcels in the township are devoted to "value-added" land practices.

Esri business analyst lists three businesses coded by NAICS as "agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting," employing a total of 14 persons. Fifty-three workers who live in the township used that classification to describe their occupations, making up about 7% of the workforce.

### Seasonal Fluctuations

The entire Lakes to Land region is affected to varying degrees by a seasonal economy. An abundance of parks and recreation activities combines with the temperate summer weather to create a magnetic pull felt by most inhabitants of the state from spring to fall, and then formidable weather joins a lack of critical mass in economic activity to produce an edge of desolation through the winter months. The result is a cyclical ebb and flow of people through the region, some to stay for a few hours and some for a few months, all driven by Michigan's intensely seasonal climate.

In many communities, the basic goal of every housing unit is to be

occupied. The optimum condition is one in which the number of housing units is only slightly larger than the number of households, with a small percentage of homes empty at any given time to provide choice and mobility to households wishing to change housing units. This percentage is the traditional vacancy rate.

Seasonal changes in population, such as seen in the Lakes to Land communities, create an entirely new category of housing units: those for "seasonal or recreational use." Technically considered "vacant" by the US Census because its rules dictate that a household can only attach itself to one primary housing unit, these homes provide a measure of investment by those seasonal populations that cannot be replicated elsewhere. A high percentage of seasonal/recreational use homes provides concrete evidence of the value of the area for those purposes. It also provides a measure of a portion of the community which will have a somewhat nontraditional relationship with the community at large: seasonal residents may not

have kids in the school system or have the ability to attend most government meetings, but they do pay taxes and take a vital interest in goings-on. In some ways, knowing the percentage of seasonal/recreational housing in a community is the most reliable measure of the accommodations the community must make to include its "part-time" population in its decision-making framework.

In Bear Lake Township, 19.7% of the homes are classified as seasonal or recreational, a figure lower than in each of the two Lakes to Land counties (25% and 33%) but several times the state and national rates (5.8% and 3.5% respectively). As shown in Table 4.7, this represents a drop of 52 units from its 2000 rate of 26.7%, whereas the "traditional" vacancy rate doubled in the same time from 6.9% to 12.8% (66 housing units). Taken together, these facts suggest that the impact of the housing crash and Great Recession on Bear Lake Township has been a decline in its seasonal resident population.

4.7: Bear Lake Township seasonal and vacant housing table, including Village

	2000	2010	Change
Total Housing Units	960	1,031	7.4%
Occupied Housing Units	639	696	8.9%
Owner Occupied Housing Units	569	595	4.6%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	70	101	44.3%
Vacant Housing Units	321	335	4.4%
Seasonal/Recreational/Occasional Use	255	203	-20.4%
Other Vacant	66	132	100.0%
Population	1,587	1,751	10.3%
Household size	2.56	2.48	-3.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010





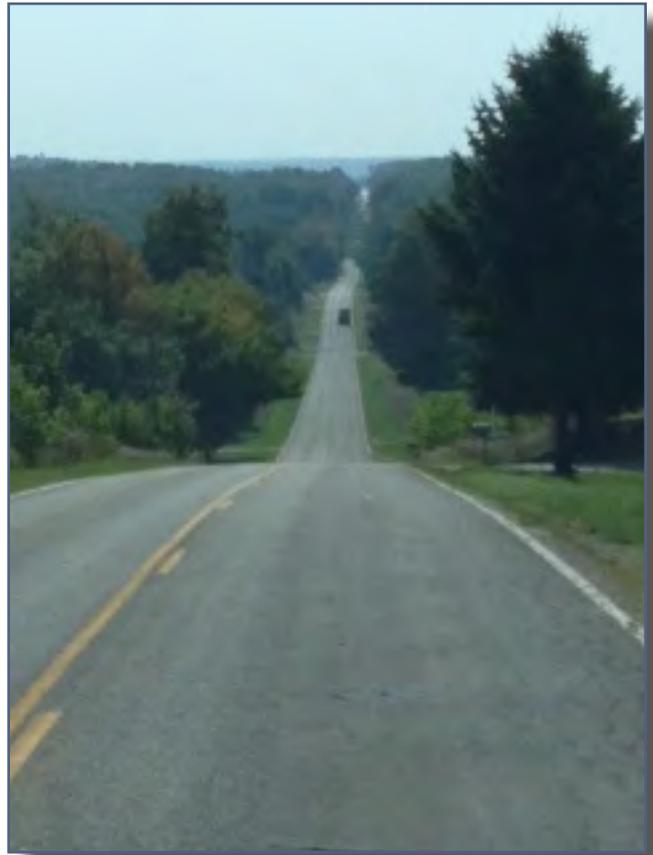
# Infrastructure

For planning purposes, infrastructure is comprised of “the physical components of interrelated systems providing commodities and services essential to enable, sustain, or enhance societal living conditions.”

These components, which come together to form the underlying framework that supports our buildings, movements, and activities, usually include our power supply, water supply, sewerage, transportation avenues, and telecommunications. Successful infrastructure is often “experientially invisible,” drawing as little attention in its optimum condition as a smooth road or a running faucet—until it’s not, and then it likely has the potential to halt life as we know it until the toilet flushes again or the lights come back on.

It seems we all know the feeling. The American Society of Civil Engineers’ 2013 “Report Card for America’s Infrastructure” gave us a D+ (takeaway headline: “Slightly better roads and railways, but don’t live near a dam”). The Michigan chapter of the ASCE surveyed our state’s aviation, dams, drinking water, energy, navigation, roads, bridges, stormwater, public transit, and wastewater and collection systems in 2009 and gave us a D. Clearly, there is room for improvement all over.

But it’s expensive. The ASCE report came with a national price tag of \$3.6 trillion in investment before



*Photo: Deanna Pattison*

2020. If this were evenly distributed among the 50 states, it would mean about \$72 billion per state—almost half again as much as Michigan’s entire annual budget. The combination of the essential nature of infrastructure with its steep price tag highlights a need for creative problem-solving in this area—precisely the aim of the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative.

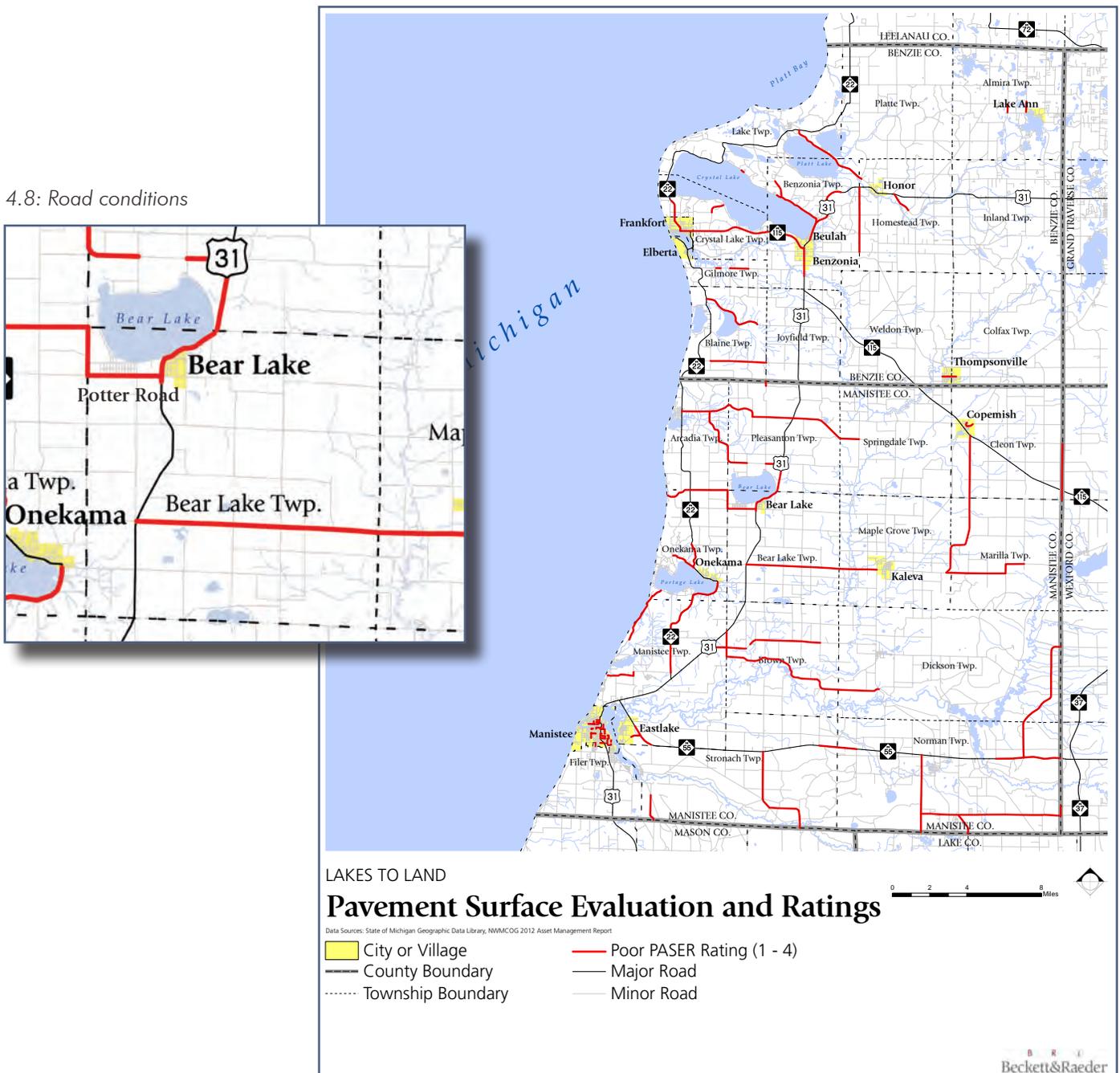
## Roads

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.”

Figure 4.8 depicts all of the roads with PASER ratings of “poor” (1-4) in Benzie and Manistee Counties. The close-up in the inset reveals poor conditions on 9 Mile Road east of US-31, on US-31 north of Potter Road, on Potter Road west of US-31, and on Milarch Road from Potter Road to the northern border of the township. Potter Road has been resurfaced since the collection of this data.

4.8: Road conditions



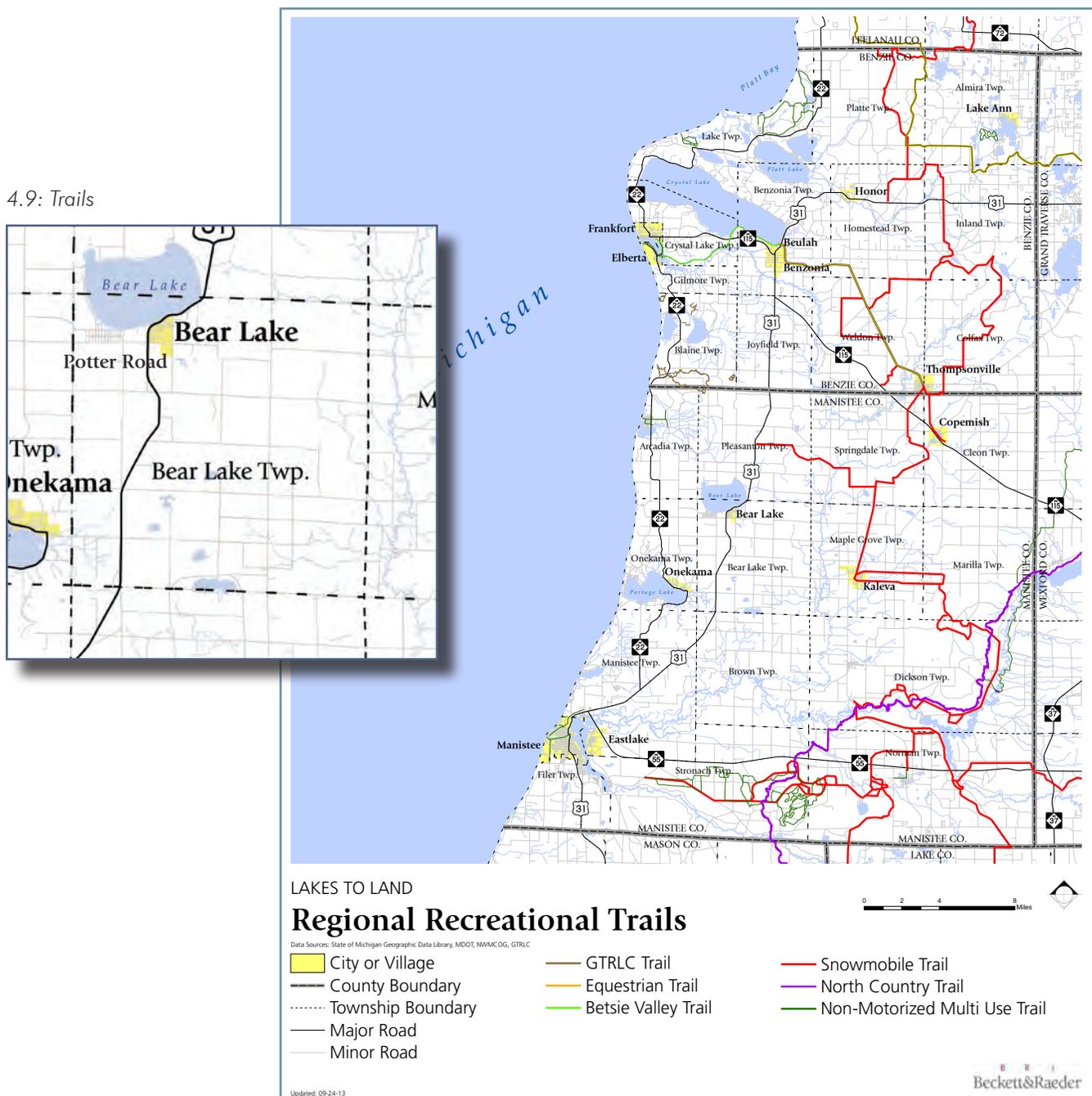
## Trails and regional connections

As noted in the Cornerstones and can be seen in Figure 4.9, there are not presently any local or regional non-motorized trails in Bear Lake Township. It's an absence noted by the citizens, who made the creation of biking, walking, and hiking trails their third highest priority at the visioning session. The preferred method articulated in the Building Blocks for accomplishing this is to use the existing county road network to establish a trail network. Potential

collaboration with Onekama Township, Arcadia Township, and Pleasanton Township, all also currently largely devoid of trails, could form the beginning of a sub-regional network. Finally, a regional trail could use Potter Road to connect US-31 to M-22.

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

4.9: Trails



## Power supply

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.

Public Act 295 of 2008 requires Michigan electric providers’ retail supply portfolio to include at least 10% renewable energy by 2015. The Michigan Public Service Commission’s 2012 report estimates renewables to make up 4.7% of the energy supply that year. Figure 4.10 shows the US Environmental Protection Agency’s analysis of renewable energy potential in the Lakes to Land region.

## Water and sewer

Bear Lake Township does not have a public water or sewer system. Residents rely on septic and well systems. The township is not known to have difficulty in installing wells and septic systems, but there are still a number of factors relevant to community development to consider. In order to avoid problems such as inadequate water yield, gas in water, salty water, bacteria contamination, or organic chemical contamination, the community must consider probable causes such as road salting, septic effluent from systems in older developed areas, drainage from slopes into improperly sited residential areas, and failure to protect groundwater recharge areas through a lack of buffer zones and development limitations.

Density and intensity of development need to be considered as they relate to septic and well systems, as increased development pressures lead to increasing need for understanding and oversight in well and septic system integrity. In Bear Lake Township, accommodation of an appropriate level of commercial development along US-31 and of new residential properties along the Bear Lake shore may require investigation into municipal water and sewer systems.

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. And 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 Environmental Quality, the Grand Traverse Land Conservancy, the Conservation Resource Alliance, and the Manistee Community Foundation to produce a Bear Lake Watershed Management Plan which was approved in July 2013.

The Township maintains four access points on Bear Lake and one on Chief Lake.

## Fire services

The Bear Lake Township Fire Department is a rural volunteer fire department with 17 members and three “cadets,” students who are at least 16 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 2000 class A pumper, 1999 medium-duty rescue vehicle, 1987 2000-gallon water tender, 1978 pumper, 1984 Wildland truck (on loan from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources), 2011 Kubota UTV rescue/wildland unit, and 2005 Seawolf rescue boat. A 0.75 millage approved by township voters in August 2013 will allow replacement for each of these items once by the year 2036 and three times by the year 2065.

A Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) was instituted in 2011. These volunteers are second responders to aid the fire department in emergencies with the potential to last longer than eight hours. In practice, they have also helped with crowd and traffic control at planned events throughout the county and have helped set up emergency shelters during power outages.

4.10: Renewable energy potential



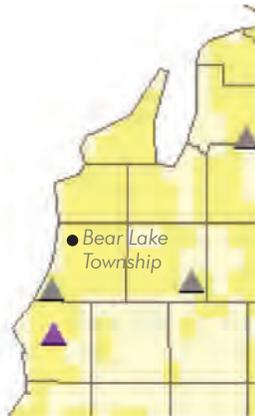
**Wind Resource**

Power Class	W/m <sup>2</sup>	Resource Potential
1	0-200	Poor
2	200-300	Marginal
3	300-400	Fair
4	400-500	Good
5	500-600	Excellent
6	600-800	Outstanding
7	>800	Superb



**Biomass Resource**

Metric Tons/Year	Resource Potential
< 50,000	Low
50,000 - 100,000	Marginal
100,000 - 150,000	Good
150,000 - 250,000	Very Good
250,000 - 500,000	Excellent
> 500,000	Outstanding



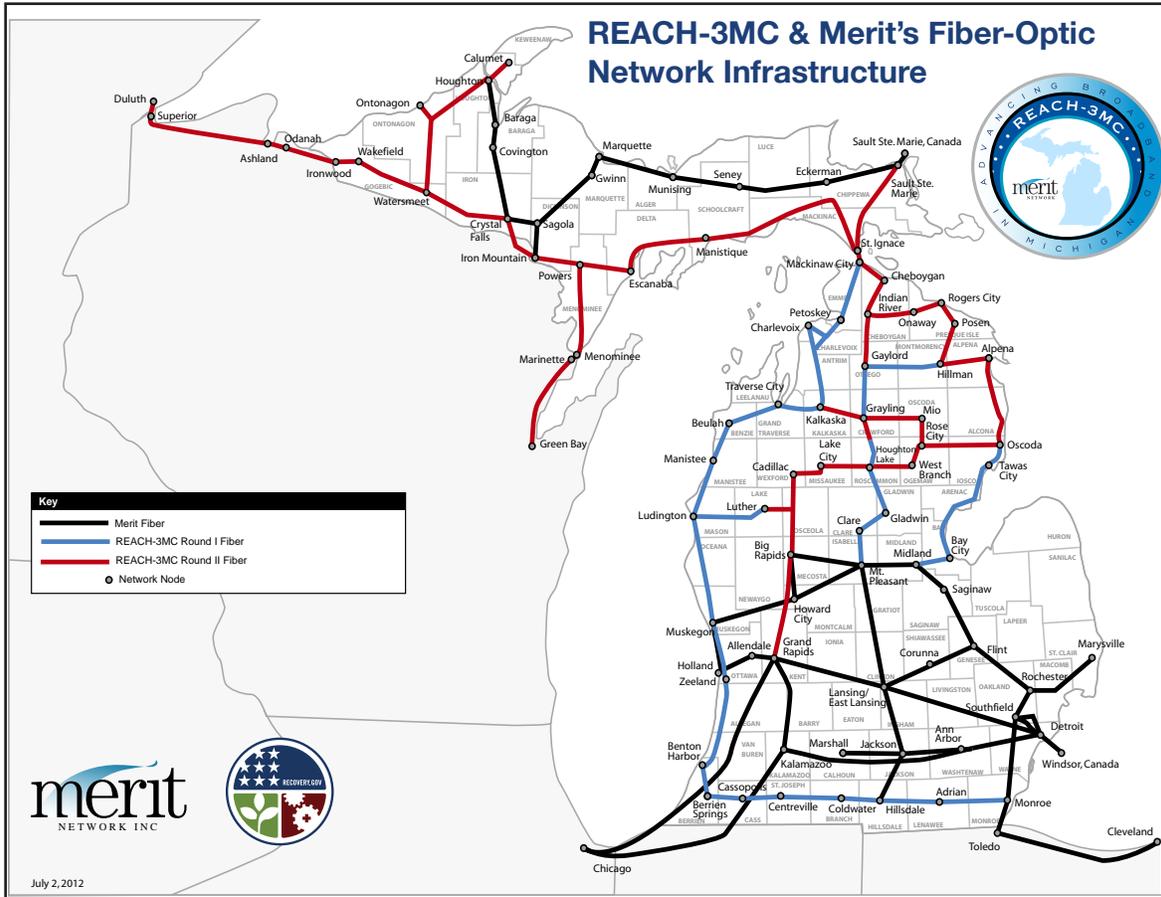
**Solar Resource**

kWh/m <sup>2</sup> /day	Resource Potential
< 3.5	Moderate
> 3.5 - 4	Good
> 4 - 5	Very Good
> 5 - 6	Excellent

**EPA Tracked Sites**

- Abandoned Mine Land
- Brownfield
- RCRA
- Federal Superfund
- Non-Federal Superfund

4.11: Proposed Merit fiber-optic network



## Telecommunications

Connect Michigan, our arm of the national agency dedicated to bringing broadband access to every citizen, calculates that such success has already been achieved in 97% of households in Benzie and Manistee Counties. Figure 4.12 further shows that the remaining unserved areas are mostly in the inland areas of the counties rather than in the Lakes to Land communities.

Still, improved broadband access came up in several of the visioning sessions. There is certainly room for improvement, particularly in terms of increased speed, provider choice, and types of platforms available. In January 2010, Merit Network was awarded American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds to launch REACH-3MC (Rural,

Education, Anchor, Community, and Healthcare—Michigan Middle Mile Collaborative), a statewide fiber-optic network for “community anchor institutions” such as schools and libraries. The completion of the line between Manistee and Beulah, serving the Lakes to Land region, was announced on December 28, 2012.

What does this mean? Besides extending leading-edge direct service to organizations that serve the public, the REACH-3MC network uses an open access model that welcomes existing and new internet service providers to join. By constructing the “middle mile” between providers and users, the REACH-3MC cable removes a significant barrier to rural broadband by absorbing up to 80% of an internet service provider’s startup costs.

4.12: Broadband service inventory in Benzie and Manistee Counties

**Broadband Service Inventory**  
 Advertised Speeds of at Least 768 Kbps Downstream and 200 Kbps Upstream  
**Benzie County Michigan**  
 Updated April 1, 2013  
 BETA Version  
 Submit questions or recommended changes to: [maps@connectmichigan.org](mailto:maps@connectmichigan.org)



\*This map is not a guarantee of coverage, contains areas with no service, and generally predicts where outdoor coverage is available. Equipment, topography and environment affect service.

As required by the US Department of Commerce's State Broadband Initiative, if broadband service is available to at least one household in a census block, then for mapping purposes, that census block is reported to have some level of broadband availability. As such, broadband availability at an exact address location cannot be guaranteed. Providers supplying more specific data than census block are displayed as such.

This map represents areas of broadband service availability determined by ongoing, in-depth technical analysis of provider networks and accommodations for the impact of external factors on service quality. Satellite broadband services may also be available.

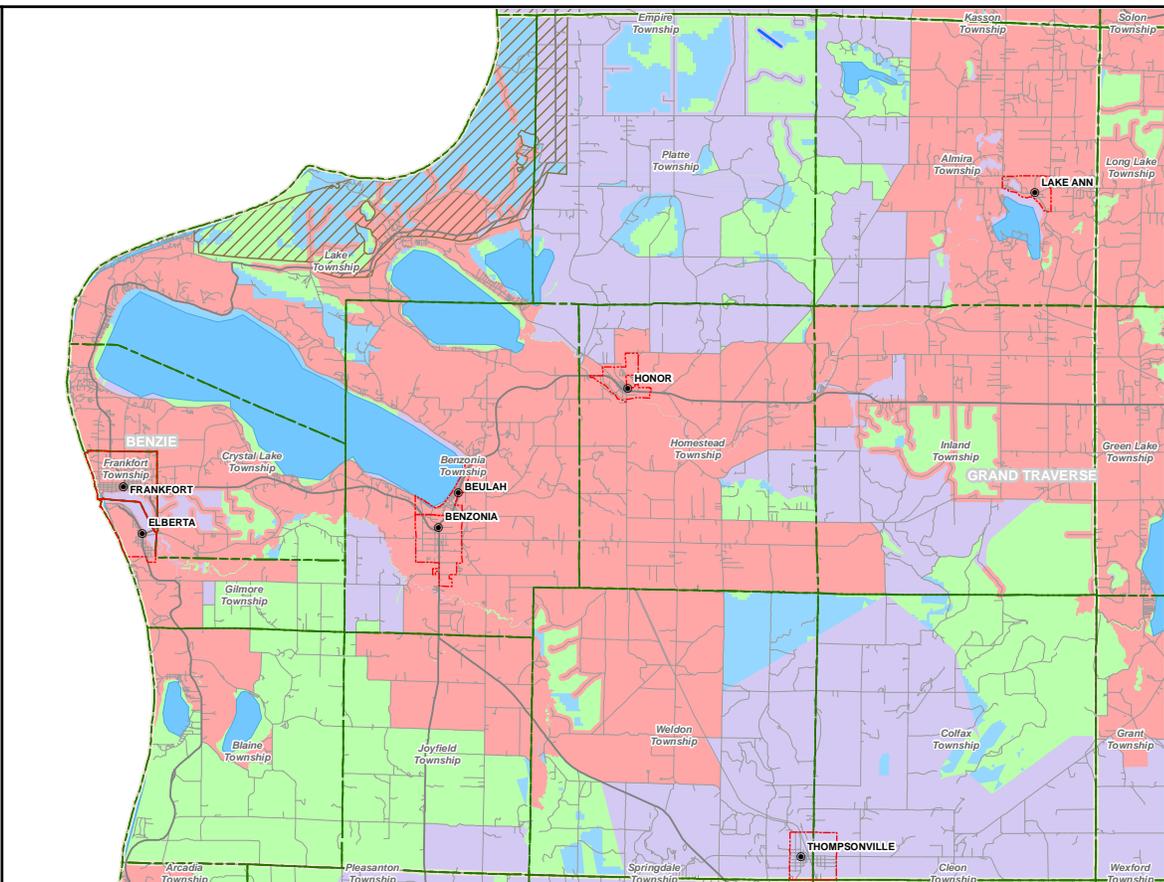
Map users are encouraged to participate in improving broadband data granularity through data validation and field testing efforts. Learn more about this and other broadband mapping facts at [www.connectmichigan.org](http://www.connectmichigan.org).




**Symbology**

- City
- Interstate
- US Road
- Local Road
- - - Municipal Boundary
- - - Township Boundary
- - - County Boundary
- ⊞ National and State Lands
- Water
- Orange Fiber Broadband Available
- Red Cable Broadband Available
- Blue DSL Broadband Available
- Green Fixed Wireless Broadband Available
- Light Blue Mobile Wireless Broadband Available\*
- Yellow Unserved Areas

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**Broadband Service Inventory**  
 Advertised Speeds of at Least 768 Kbps Downstream and 200 Kbps Upstream  
**Manistee County Michigan**  
 Updated April 1, 2013  
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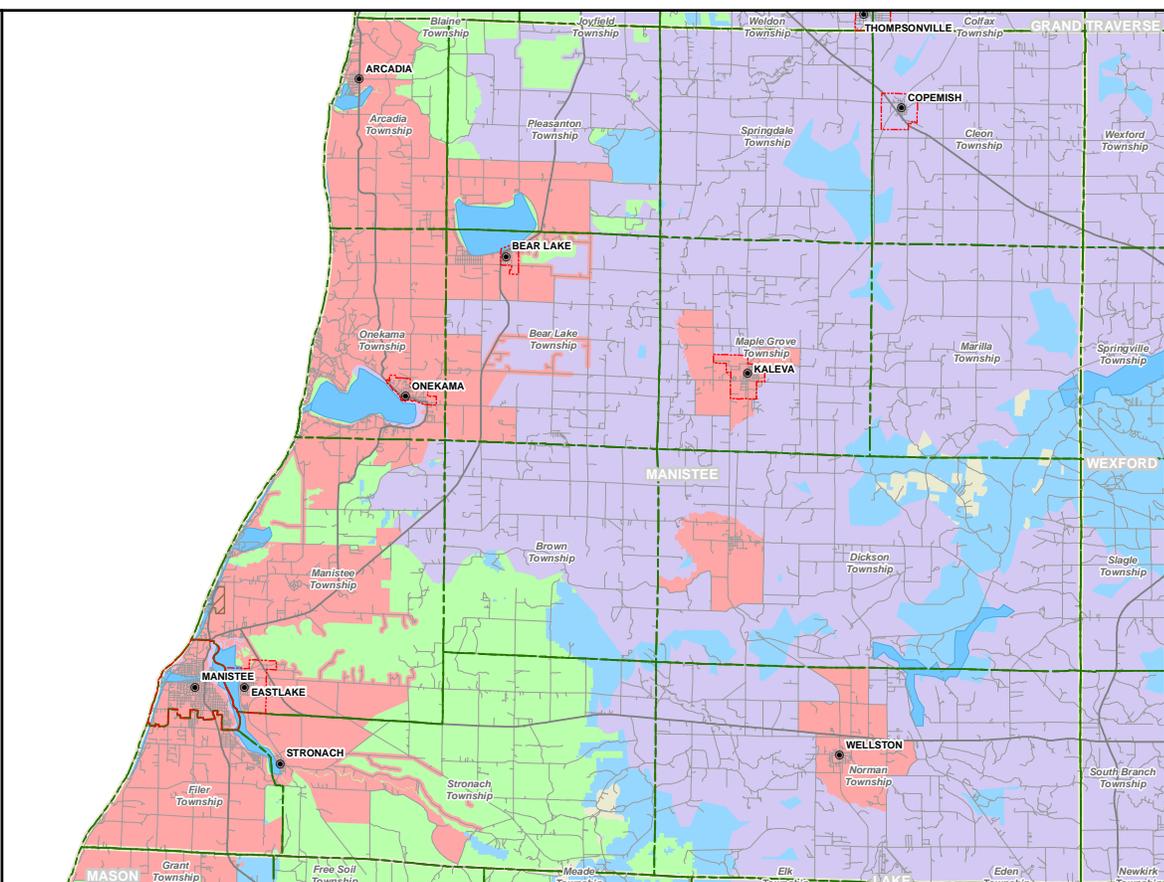
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**Symbology**

- City
- Interstate
- US Road
- Local Road
- - - Municipal Boundary
- - - Township Boundary
- - - County Boundary
- ⊞ National and State Lands
- Water
- Orange Fiber Broadband Available
- Red Cable Broadband Available
- Blue DSL Broadband Available
- Green Fixed Wireless Broadband Available
- Light Blue Mobile Wireless Broadband Available\*
- Yellow Unserved Areas

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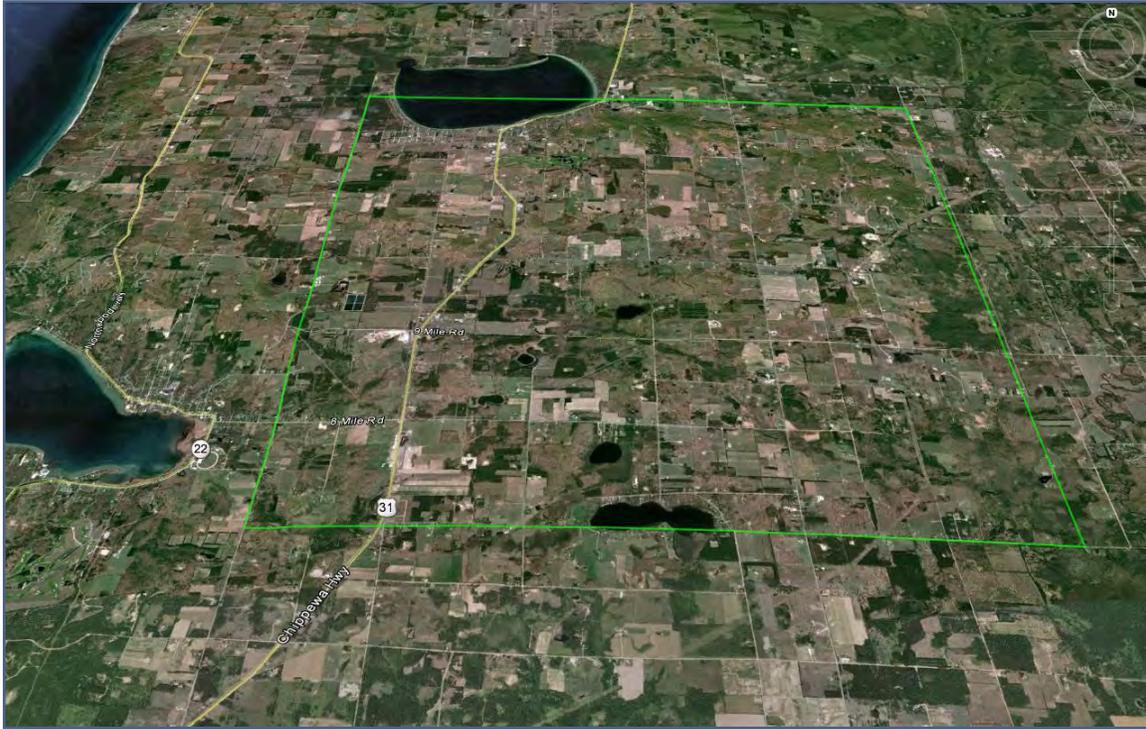


Photo: Google Earth

# Land

Naming a community after a natural feature truly underscores the connection between people and the land on which they live.

Obviously, then, the 1800-acre Bear Lake (of which approximately 590 acres are within the township's 36 square miles) represents perhaps the pivotal feature of the township. The first settlers put their stakes down at its shores, US-31 makes a pass around it, and it has been the basis for collaboration with neighboring Pleasanton Township. But it's not the only lake in the township. The smaller Chief Lake (160 acres) sits on the southern boundary with Brown Township. Other kettle lakes, formed by glacial ice which broke off and buried under the outwash, dot the landscape: Adamson Lake, James Lake, Lake Emma (all 40 acres), Watson Lake (20 acres), and Cooper Lake (10 acres). Little Beaver Creek runs through the southeast quadrant of the township, while Schimke Creek (also known as Jones Creek) in the southwest corner feeds Portage Lake. Horseshoe Creek sidles out of the township to join Bear Creek to the east. All are trout streams.

Much of the township is at a high elevation relative to the rest of the region; only a ridgeline at approximately the boundary between Benzie and Manistee Counties is higher. The steep slopes in Figure 4.14 (page 33) outline

this plateau. Water retreating from the plateau's ridges collects in the middle to form wetlands and a small area of surface water. Although it has the greatest elevation range in the region at a difference of 485 feet, this is nearly all attributable to the descent toward Portage Lake in the southwest corner.

Bear Lake Township's first fortunes came from the blanket of forest that covered it when the first non-Native settlers arrived. When those trees had mostly all been transformed into homes, businesses, fuel, and furniture by the beginning of the 20th century, agriculture arrived in the form of blueberries, apples, and cherries. As the search for energy has worn on, it has led to the discovery of oil and natural gas deposits throughout much of the township. The ground beneath Bear Lake Township, then, has housed us, fed us, and kept us warm.

Today, over two thirds of the township is dedicated to either agriculture or forest, while about a quarter is used for residential purposes. The remaining land is divided among commercial, institutional, and leisure purposes.

4.13: Land dashboard

# Land Dashboard

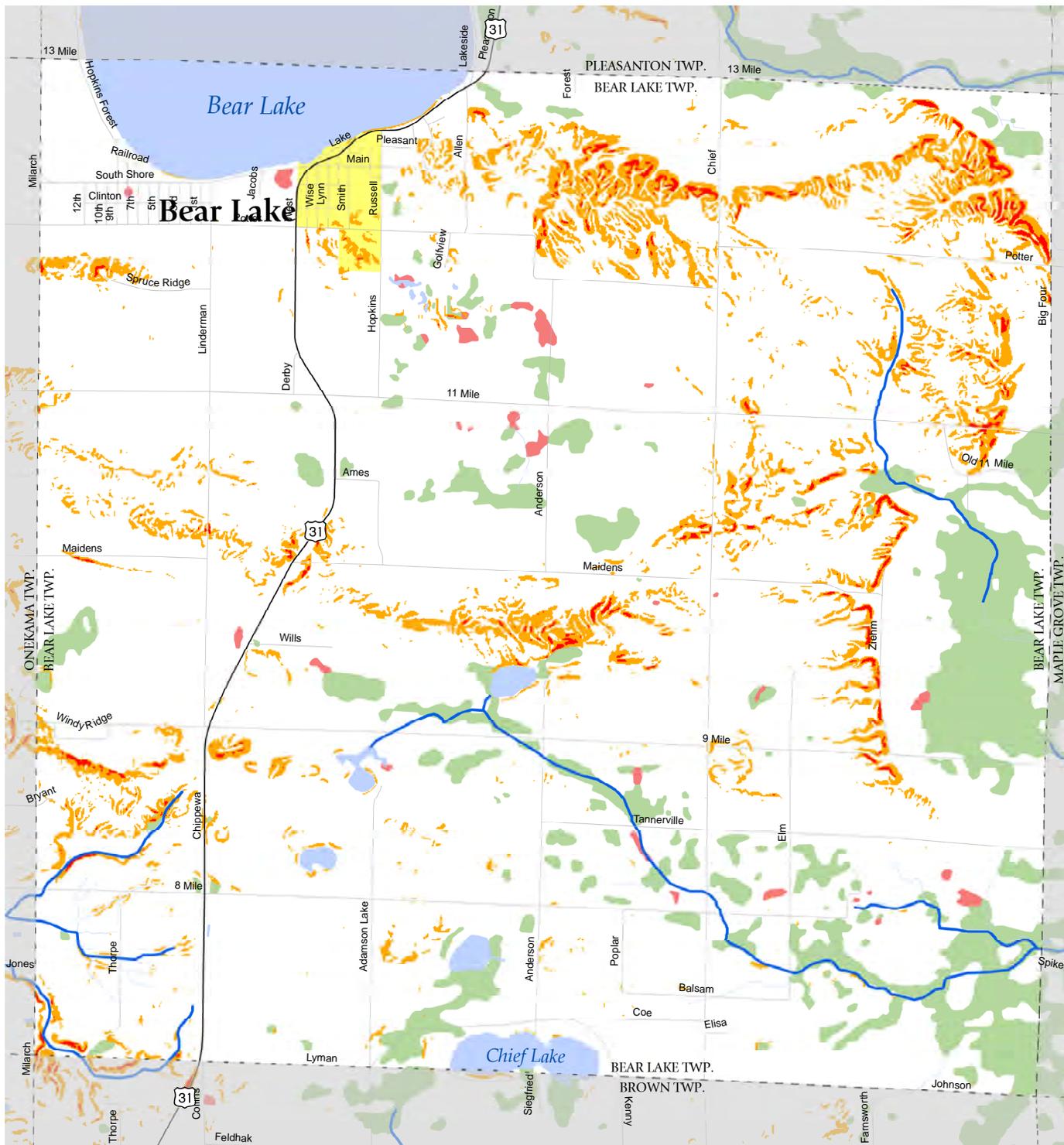
Percentages indicate proportion of total land area except where noted

TOPOGRAPHY			
Elevation	Slopes		Critical dunes
Low: 600 feet above sea level	0-1 degrees:	6,149 acres	28%
High: 1,085 feet above sea level	1.1-5 degrees:	10,243 acres	47%
Range: 485 feet	5.1-9 degrees:	3,417 acres	16%
	9.1-16 degrees:	1,386 acres	6%
	16.1-80 degrees:	124 acres	1%
			0 acres

WATER		
Lakes	Rivers	Wetlands
890.3 acres 4%	18 miles 0.1%	Emergent (characterized by erect, rooted, herbaceous hydrophytes, excluding mosses and lichens): 90 acres 0.4%
	Trout Streams: 11.9 miles 66% of river length	Lowlands, Shrub, Wooded (characterized by low elevation and woody vegetation): 1,908 acres 9%

PUBLIC LAND USE				
Roads	Regional Trails	Conserved Land	State Land	Federal Land
96.7 miles 0.4%	0 miles	0 acres	DNR: 685 acres 3%	0 acres
			Commercial Forest Act: 265 acres 1%	

4.14: Natural features map



LAKES TO LAND

# Bear Lake Township Natural Features

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, Benzie and Manistee County Equalization



- Village of Bear Lake
- Township Boundary
- Major Roads
- Minor Roads

- Wetland Type:**
- Lowland, Shrub, or Wooded
  - Emergent
  - Trout Stream

- Slope Degree:**
- 9.1 - 16
  - 16.1 - 30

## Land use

The land use section of this master plan provides an analysis of existing land use conditions and a proposed future land use development scenario. It contains two distinct maps: the existing land use map and future land use map.

The existing land use map depicts how the property within the jurisdiction is currently developed. It shows how the land is actually used, regardless of the current zoning, lack of zoning, or future land use map designation—it is what you see happening on the property.

The future land use map of a master plan is a visual representation of a community’s decisions about the type and intensity of development for every area of the municipality. These decisions, represented by the community’s land use categories, are based on a variety of factors and are

guided by the goals developed earlier in the master planning process—the Cornerstones and Building Blocks presented in this plan. Although the future land use map is a policy document rather than a regulatory document, meaning that it is not legally binding once adopted, it is used to guide the creation of the zoning ordinance and the zoning map, and it supports land use decisions about variances, new development, and sub-area planning. That makes it perhaps the most important part of your master plan, as it defines how community land uses should be organized into the future.

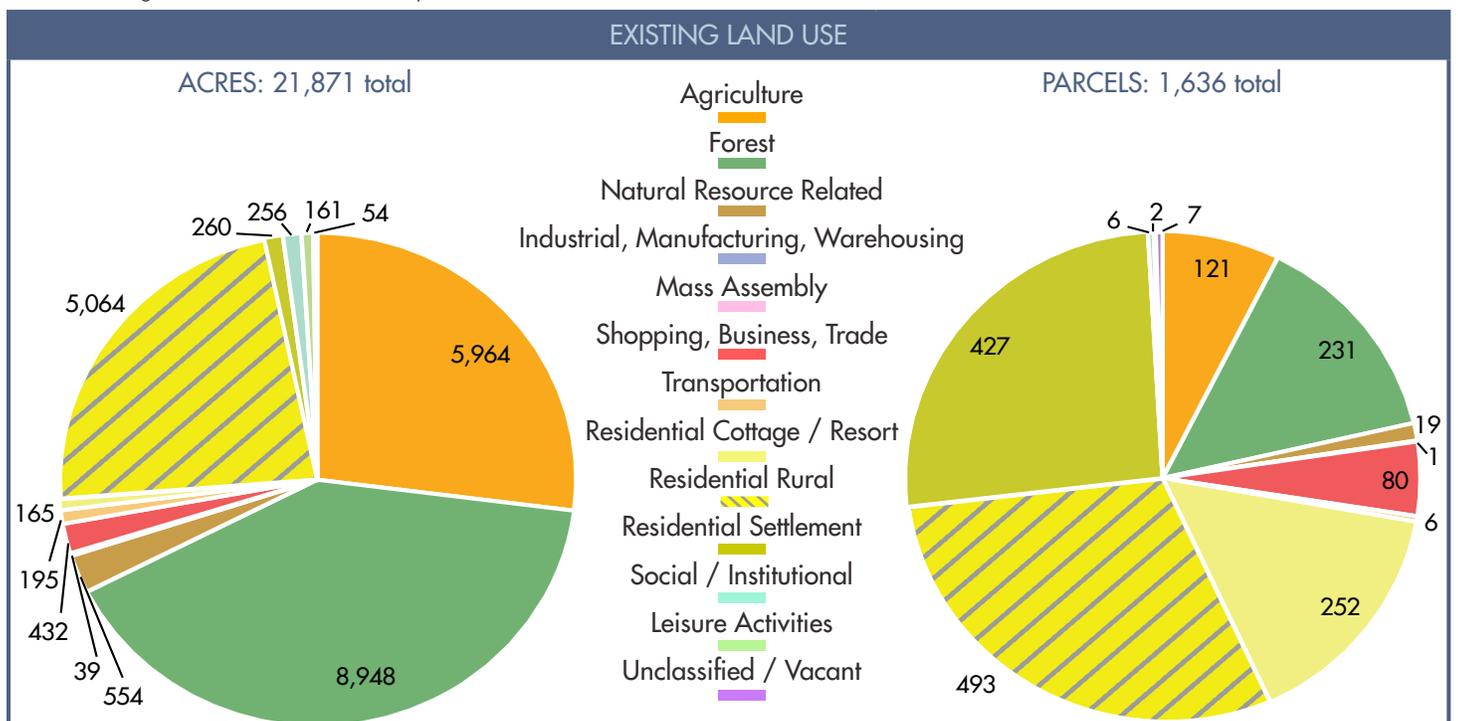
A part of the development of the future land use map is a discussion of the major land use issues facing the community, how they interrelate with the Cornerstones and Building Blocks, and strategies that may be undertaken

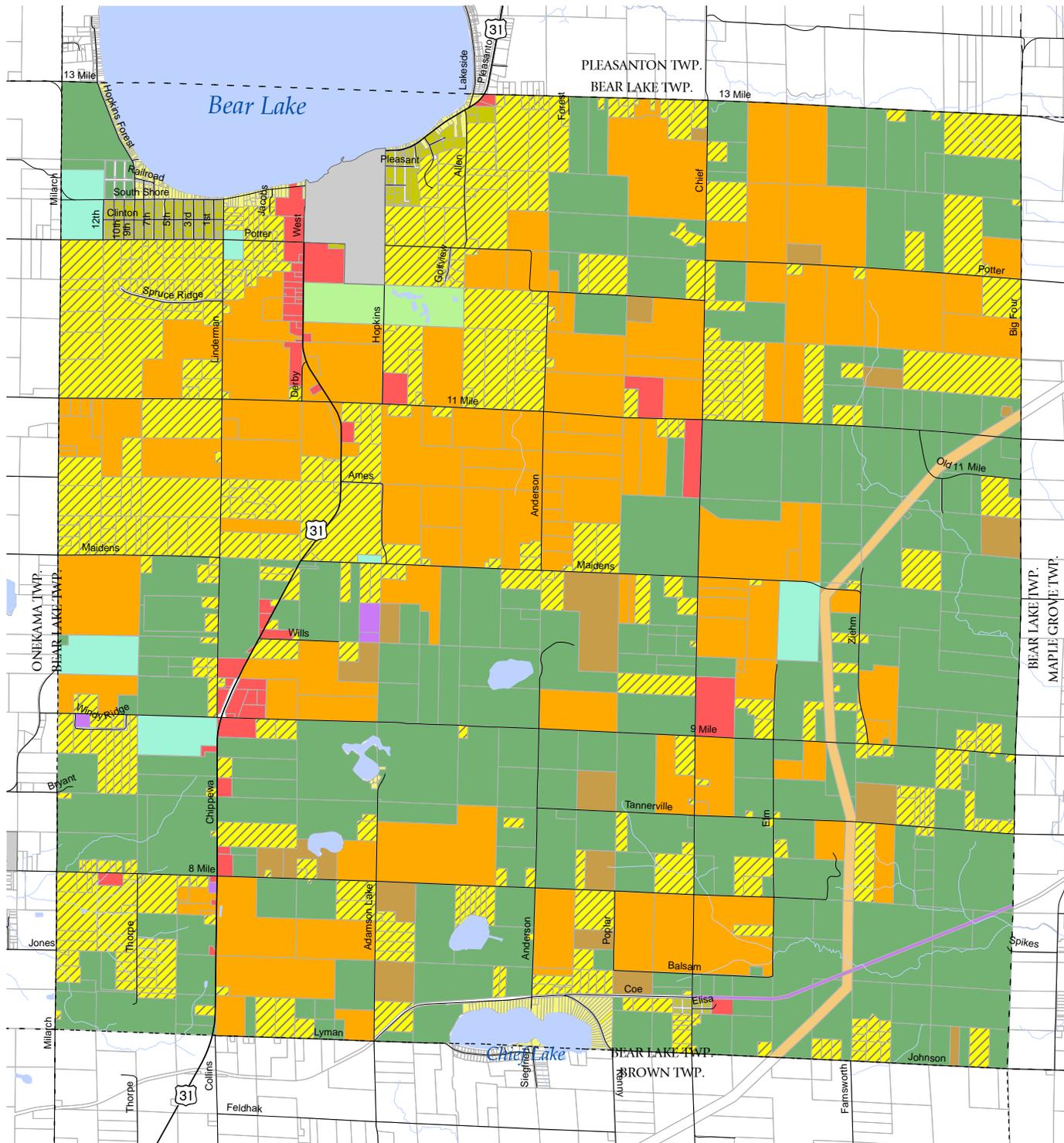
to achieve the desired future land use. But at the heart of planning for future land use is a picture of how the physical development of the community will take shape. Simply put, this section describes how, physically, the community will look in 15 to 20 years.

Factors considered when preparing the future land use map include:

1. Community Character. How will the land uses promote that character?
2. Adaptability of the Land. What physical characteristics (wetlands, ridges, lakes, etc.) need to be considered when planning for future development? How do the land uses for those areas reflect the uniqueness of the land?
3. Community Needs. What housing, economic development, infrastructure, or other needs should the community plan for?

4.15: Existing Land Use chart and map

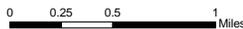




LAKES TO LAND

# Bear Lake Township Existing Land Use

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, Benzie and Manistee County Equalization



4. Services. How are we ensuring that existing infrastructure is used efficiently, and that new infrastructure is planned for areas where new development is anticipated?
5. Existing and New Development. How will new development in the community relate to existing development?

Existing and future land use maps are both different from a zoning map, which is the regulatory document depicting the legal constraints and requirements placed on each parcel of land. The parcels are classified into zoning districts, which are based on the future land use map. When owners want to develop or use their property in ways that do not conform to the zoning map, the planning commission uses the future land use map and the master plan to consider whether the proposed development conforms to existing regulations and policy.

The existing land use in Bear Lake Township is very rural, with the exception of properties surrounding Bear Lake in its northwest corner and Chief Lake along its southern border with Brown Township. Land development along Bear Lake is similar in style and density to that found in the Village of Bear Lake, which makes either jurisdiction indistinguishable to the visitor or passerby on US-31 and reinforces the need to encourage the development of the Village of Bear Lake downtown.

The configuration of land uses in the township is divided along Maidens Road. North of Maidens Road, existing land uses are primarily agricultural and large-lot rural residential development. South of Maidens Road, the land use is agricultural and forest.

Commercial development occurs on US-31 and 13 Mile Road and south of the Village of Bear Lake to 11 Mile Road with two small business districts located at the intersection of US-31 and 9 Mile, and at US-31 and 8 Mile Roads.

According to the United States Census Bureau, the township has a total area of 36.1 square miles (93.4 km<sup>2</sup>), of which, 34.7 square miles (90 km<sup>2</sup>) is land and 1.3 square miles (3.5 km<sup>2</sup>) of it 3.71% is water. Land use acreage was quantified at 21,871 acres and is depicted on the Existing Land Use map (Figure 4.15, page 35). Approximately 70% of the township consists of resource-related uses (agriculture, forests, etc.; Figure 4.17). Residential land uses account for 25% of township acreage, and the majority of this is on large lots. The average Residential Rural lot is 10.24 acres. Conversely, Residential Settlement properties account for 252 parcels with an average parcel size of 0.61 acres (Figure 4.16).

The typology of land use in Bear Lake Township can be grouped into two categories based on the SmartCode and referred to as transects: Rural / Farm (T2) and Lake / Country (T3).

4.17: Resources and development land use table

Land Use Related to Resources	
Agriculture	27%
Forest	40%
Natural Resources	3%
Subtotal	70%
Land Use Related to Development	
Residential	25%
Other Categories	5%
Subtotal	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Specifically, these typologies are:

*Rural / Farm*

Farming is the dominant land use activity with some large lot residences.

Land: Parcels are used partially or wholly for agricultural operations, with or without buildings, and include the following:

4.16: Average parcel size table

Residential Type	Acres	Parcels	Average Parcel Size
Residential Cottage/Resort	165	252	0.65
Residential Settlement	260	427	0.61
Residential Rural	5,064	493	10.27

- i. Farming in all its branches, including cultivating soil.
- ii. Growing and harvesting any agricultural, horticultural, or floricultural commodity.
- iii. Dairying.
- iv. Raising livestock, bees, fish, fur-bearing animals, or poultry.
- v. Turf and tree farming.
- vi. Performing any practices on a farm incident to, or in conjunction with, farming operations.

**Living:** Farm and non-farm related residences are also found in this category and occupy sites that range in size from less than one acre to 10 acres.

**Commerce:** Sporadic stores or shops which serve local residents. These are located along county roads and are not concentrated in one location to be considered a commercial node or district.

#### *Lake and Country Residential*

This area consists of low density collections of year-round homes or

seasonal cottages, some clustered around Bear Lake. Home occupations and outbuildings are permitted. Planting is naturalistic and setbacks are relatively deep. Blocks may be large and the roads irregular to accommodate natural conditions and topography.

**Land:** A variety of northern Michigan landscapes including rolling hills, lakeshores, meadows, forests and sensitive areas such as critical dunes and wetlands.

**Living:** Residential land use found along Bear Lake and Chief Lake characterized by small lots. This category will contain a combination of seasonal and year-round homes.

**Commerce:** Stores and shops dotted along County Roads and US-31. These establishments include small grocery outlets, gas stations, gift shops, and personal and financial services.

A close review of the existing land use map notes the existence of a ring of agricultural land uses surrounding

the Village of Bear Lake and that portion of the township emanating approximately a mile from the village. This configuration of land use should be preserved in the future and used as a natural delineation between the developed and agricultural portions of the township. The Future Land Use map encourages a higher degree of development around the Village of Bear Lake. Areas immediately adjacent to the village would be developed as Residential Settlement, a higher density development of 3 to 4 dwelling units per acre. This form of residential development would promote a grid-like street pattern similar to the village, which is walkable and provides for connectivity to other uses.

Commercial development would extend south along US-31 to 9 Mile Road. Additional commercial development would be encouraged at the 9 Mile Road and 8 Mile Road intersections with US-31.

- Encourage appropriate development and conform to current building and fire codes.
- Encourage the development of



underutilized and brownfield properties in the downtown area.

In order to meet the Michigan Fire Prevention Code, municipal water may be needed. Currently, the Village of Bear Lake provides a municipal water system which is served by two municipal wells and a 75,000 gallon water tank. In a limited exception, water is provided outside the corporate limits of the village to approximately 15 properties. In order to encourage commercial development along the US-31 corridor and in the village proper, an intergovernmental arrangement may be needed between the village and the township.

As illustrated on the Future Land Use map, land development south of 11 Mile Road and east of Anderson Road is designated Farm and Forest with the exception of land uses surrounding Chief Lake, which are envisioned to remain Residential Settlement.

In addition to the land typologies outlined, there is an additional one that focuses on land developed adjacent to the Village. This typology is described as Settlement (T4).

#### *Settlement*

Traditional residential neighborhoods characterized by a grid street pattern, smaller lots with higher densities than found in other locations.

Land: Primarily developed and settled as historic villages and centers of commerce or developed in the same context of their historic counterparts.

Living: This land use category describes the neighborhoods of within the Village of Bear Lake.

These neighborhoods are made up of single family homes located on lots with an average density of 4 - 6 units per acre. Homes are arranged close to the street with rear garages accessed by an alley when available. Arranged in a grid configuration, the streets are wide enough for on street parking but close enough to maintain an intimate neighborhood character. Trees and sidewalks line the streets, alleys provide rear entry to garages located in the backyard, and front porches beckon neighbors to sit and talk. A church may be found in the middle of the neighborhood along with neighborhood parks. Within walking distance to the business district, civic, and recreational amenities, the Settlement area is the premier place to live for individuals looking for a more urban environment within view of Bear Lake, and other natural resource amenities.

Commerce: A variety of small stores and shops, banks, restaurants, and professional services.

## Future Land Use Categories

The Future Land Use map reinforces the recommendations addressed in the Bear Lake Township Community Master Plan (2002) which placed heavy emphasis on maintaining and expanding agricultural operations (orchards, farms, animal husbandry, etc.). This strategy is as important today with a greater emphasis placed on local farm-to-table and local farm-to-restaurant movements.

The Future Land Use map has six land use categories: Business, Farm and Forest, Institutional, Recreation / Open Space, Residential Rural, and Residential Settlement.

#### *Farm 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 rural residences. The focus of this land use category is farming.

#### *Recreation / Open Space*

This category includes public parks and private recreation venues like the Hopkins Park on Bear Lake and the Bear Lake Highlands Golf Course located on US-31.

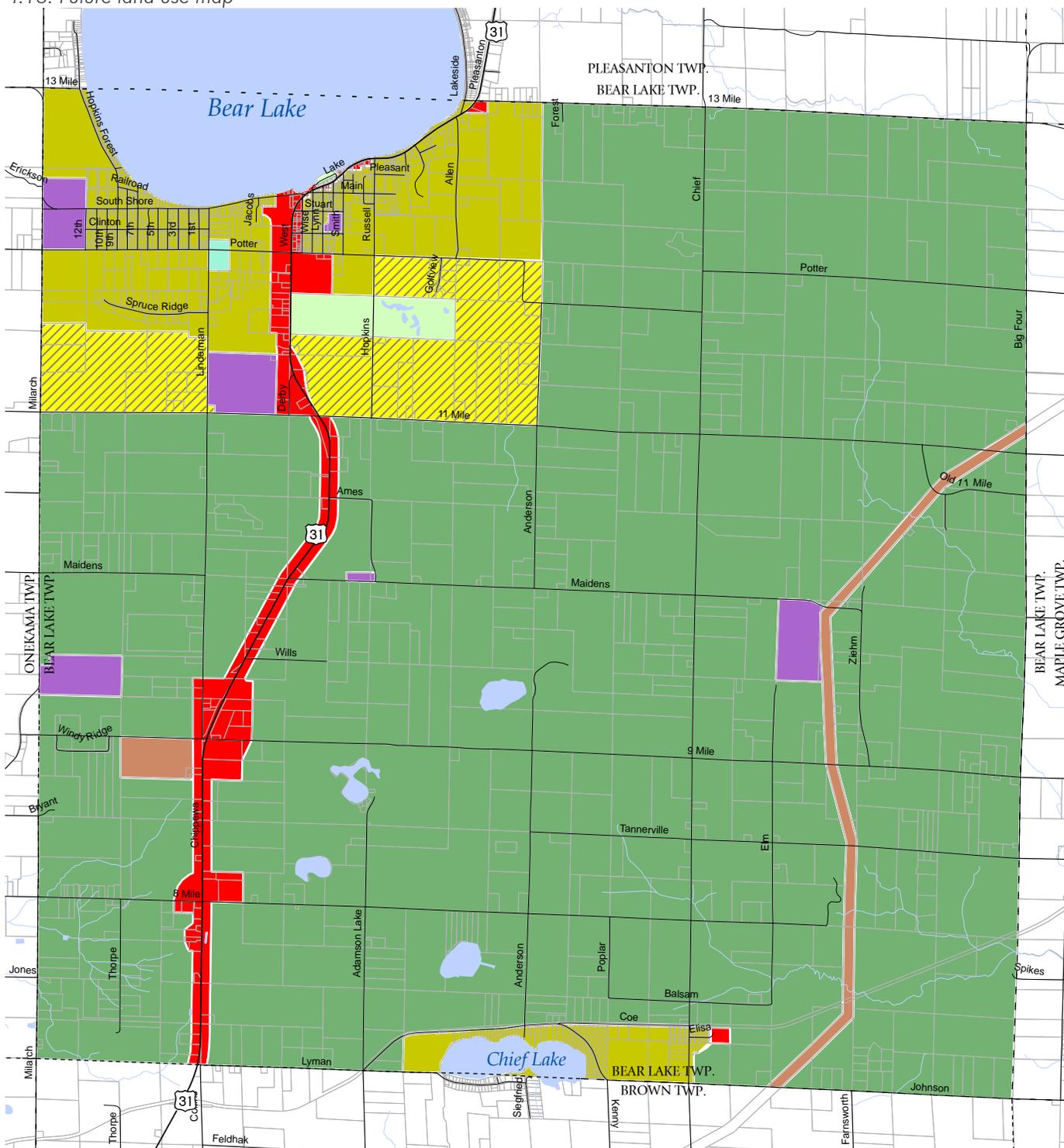
#### *Institutional*

Institutional 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.

#### *Residential Rural*

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

4.18: Future land use map



LAKES TO LAND

# Bear Lake Township Future Land Use

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, Benzie and Manistee County Equalization

- Parcel Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Road
- Business / Multiuse
- Farm and Forest
- Institutional
- Residential Rural
- Residential Settlement
- Recreation / Open Space
- Township Properties
- Transportation / Utilities

4.19: Land use patterns



standards to ensure emergency service access, and rural and scenic character preservation. Some agricultural commercial endeavors 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.

Some locations within the township will have limitations that prevent or reduce the level of development due to steep slopes and wetlands. As mentioned in the Regional Context section of the plan (Tab 2), much of the Lakes to Land region was impacted by glacier activity that resulted in land formations known as moraines. A moraine is any glacially formed accumulation of unconsolidated glacial debris, soil, and rock which can occur in currently glaciated and formerly glaciated regions, such as those areas acted upon by a past glacial maximum or ice age. These land features are prominent around Portage Lake, Arcadia Lake, and Betsie Lake. In Bear Lake Township, these features form hills with slopes ranging from 9-30 degrees, mostly along the northern portion of the township in sections 1, 3 and 12. Another system of moraines is located in the mid-section of the township just north of James Lake and south of Maidens Road (sections 21 and 22), and in sections 13 and 24 where Maidens Road terminates. On the east side of this moraine is a large lowland wetland complex which accounts for

*Top, agricultural land; middle, residential settlement; bottom, commercial land*

*Photos: Google Earth*

most of section 13 and 24. These natural features are highlighted on the Natural Features map (Figure 4.14, page 33).

*Residential Settlement*

As residential property is developed adjacent to the village, it should connect with the existing street-grid network in order to maintain efficient traffic distribution and walkability. Residential properties adjacent to Chief Lake are also Residential Settlement in their character and development patterns. This development type would be the most cost effective because it will spread the development and infrastructure costs over more lots. These areas are envisioned to be west of US-31 / south of Potter Road, and east of Russell Road / north of Potter Road.

*Business / Multiuse*

The business category includes a mixed commercial district which extends the length of the US-31 corridor. This district would include a variety of unplanned land uses including

commercial, residential, manufacturing, warehousing, and recreational in a mixed configuration depending on the timing and type of development. It is intended to allow business development to occur along US-31.

**Zoning Plan**

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008 requires the inclusion of a zoning plan in the master plan. The zoning plan calls attention to changes that need to be made to the current zoning ordinance in order to align the zoning ordinance with the new master plan. Specifically, the zoning plan looks to show the relationship between the future land use map and the zoning map, and to suggest ordinance revisions to strengthen that relationship. The changes suggested are necessary in order to help implement specific aspects of the master plan.

The zoning plan in Figure 4.20 denotes no major changes from the current zoning ordinance.

4.20: Zoning plan

EXISTING ZONING DISTRICTS	USES (General)	SETBACKS	LOT SIZE (Minimum)	PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS
AGRICULTURE AG-1	Agricultural Production – Crop Agricultural Production – Animal Forestry Lumber and Wood Products Riding Stables Single and Two Family Homes	FRONT 50’ REAR 20’ SIDE 20’	1 Acre	No change.
RESORT RESIDENTIAL RR-1	Single and Two Family Homes	FRONT 50’ REAR 20’ SIDE 10’	20,000 Sq.Ft.	No change.
RESIDENTIAL R-1	Single and Two Family Homes Home Occupations Churches	FRONT 50’ REAR 20’ SIDE 10’	20,000 Sq.Ft.	No change.
MULTIPLE USE M-1	Single and Two Family Homes Home Occupations Retail Trade Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate Educational Services	FRONT 100’ REAR 20’ SIDE 20’	40,000 Sq.Ft.	No change.
COMMERCIAL C-1	Retail Service Establishments Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate Public Administration Construction Services Wholesale Trade	FRONT 100’ REAR 20’ SIDE 20’	40,000 Sq.Ft.	No change.



# Action Plan

The overall success of the Bear Lake Township Master Plan will be determined by how many of the recommendations have been implemented.

This linkage between master plan acceptance and its eventual implementation is often the weakest link in the planning and community building process. All too often we hear that familiar phrase - "the plan was adopted and then sat on the shelf." The plan is cited as the failure, however, the real culprit was the failure to execute or implement the plan.

Implementation of the Bear Lake Township Master Plan is predicated on the completion of the tasks outlined in the Action Plan.

## 4.21: Action plan

RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY 2013 – 2018		
Action Item	Description	Responsible Party
Planning Commission Training	The Lakes to Land Regional Initiative is coordinating training through Michigan State University for Planning Commissions within the region. This is an opportune time to have Planning Commission members go through the MSU Extension Citizen Planner program.	Bear Lake Township Board of Trustees and Village of Bear Lake Trustees. (note: Local units should check with their respective municipal insurance carrier for PC member scholarships)
5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan	Prepare and adopt an MDNR approved 5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan. Approval and adoption of a plan will allow the township to apply for a variety of MDNR grant programs.	Bear Lake Township Board of Trustees
Zoning Ordinance Modifications	Revise the zoning ordinance consistent with the Zoning Plan.	Planning Commission and Board of Trustees
Prepare a Non-Motorized Trail Plan	Work through the L2L Regional Initiative to prepare a non-motorized trail plan which includes the township and village.	Planning Commission



# Appendix A

Bear Lake Township Businesses

## **ADULT & CHILD CARE**

### **Adult Foster Care:**

Wildwood, 12481 Milarch Rd - Bear Lake

### **Child Care Services:**

Great Beginnings at Bear Lake School, 7748 Cody St - Bear Lake Village

## **AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY**

### **Farms:**

Buckhorn Orchards L.L.C., - Kaleva  
Calvin Lutz Farms, 8576 Chief Rd - Kaleva  
Douglas Valley Farms, - Kaleva  
Fruit Haven Nursery, 8576 Chief Rd - Kaleva  
K & S Simmental & Angus Farms, 11272 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake  
Meister's Evergreens, 7643 Anderson Rd - Kaleva  
Smith Farms, 10821 Linderman Rd - Bear Lake

### **Farm Equipment:**

West Coast Farm Services and Tractor Repair, 7768 Chippewa Hwy - Kaleva

### **Forestry Services:**

Mackey Tree Farm, 9499 Ziehm Rd - Bear Lake  
Neil Nystrom Tree Planting, 10096 Maidens Rd - Bear Lake

### **Lawn Services:**

Bowling Enterprises/Hydroseeding, 9091 Chief Rd - Kaleva  
Jus-Green's Bug Squad, 7953 Main St - Bear Lake Village  
S & L Turfcare L.L.C., 12156 Linderman Rd - Bear Lake  
S & S Irrigation L.L.C., 6618 Spruce Ridge Rd - Bear Lake

### **Tree Service:**

Thompson's Tree & Stump Removal, 7872 Locust St - Bear Lake Village

## **CEMETERIES**

Bear Lake Township Cemetery, 7942 Maidens Rd - Bear Lake  
Fairview Cemetery, 7076 Potter Rd - Bear Lake  
Fairview South Annex Cemetery, 7115 Potter Rd - Bear Lake

## **CONSTRUCTION**

### **Commercial Iron Workers:**

LAMCO Inc., 7836 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

### **Commercial Pipefitting & Welding:**

Teachout Industrial Contacting Inc., 9572 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

### **Excavation & Foundation Work:**

Griz Sealing, Striping & Excavating, 10672 Chief Rd - Bear Lake  
McBride Septic Systems & Excavating, 6959 Clinton St - Bear Lake

**Heating, Cooling, Plumbing & Refrigeration:**

Lakeshore Mechanical L.L.C., P.O. Box 155 - Onekama

**Residential Builders:**

Brian Groenwald, 12859 Allen Rd - Bear Lake  
 Fairlamb Installation L.L.C., 10591 Potter Rd - Bear Lake  
 JR's Construction, 6518 South Shore Dr - Bear Lake  
 King Construction, 7206 Johnson Ct - Bear Lake  
 LeSarge Construction, 7269 Chippewa Hwy - Kaleva  
 Northern Construction L.L.C., 11455 Milarch Rd - Bear Lake  
 Northwest Garage, 11833 Linderman Rd - Bear Lake

**Residential Designer:**

Sierra Drafting & Design, 12545 Mallison Way - Bear Lake

**EDUCATIONAL SERVICES****Elementary, Secondary School:**

Bear Lake School, 7748 Cody St - Bear Lake Village

**Library:**

Keddie-Norconk Memorial Library, 12325 Virginia St - Bear Lake Village

**Museum:**

Bear Lake Village Museum, 7738 Main St - Bear Lake Village

**HEALTH SERVICES****Dentists:**

Dr. Craig Harless, DDS, 7659 Lake St - Bear Lake Village  
 Dr. Norman Olson, DDS, 12521 Russell St - Bear Lake

**Home Health Care Services:**

Munson Home Health, 11634 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Laboratories-Clinical, Medical, Diagnostic:**

Bear Lake Outpatient Services, 8225 Lake St - Bear Lake

**Physicians:**

Crystal Lake Clinic, 8225 Lake St - Bear Lake

**Social & Human Services:**

Northwest Michigan Health Services, 6433 8 Mile Rd - Bear Lake

**LAKE ACCESS****Boat Launch Sites:**

Chief Lake Boat Launch off of Lyman Rd - Kaleva  
 Marina Boat Launch - Bear Lake Village

**Public Accesses:**

Road End Access Division St. off of Hopkins Forest Dr - Bear Lake  
Road End Access off of Anderson Rd - Kaleva  
Road End Access 13 Mile Rd off of Hopkins Forest Dr - Bear Lake  
Second St Access - Bear Lake  
Seventh St. Rd end Access - Bear Lake

**Public Beaches:**

Public Beach by Blarney Castle - Bear Lake Village  
Village Park Beach - Bear Lake Village

**MANUFACTURING**

**Commercial Printing:**

Pioneer Press Printing, 12326 Virginia St - Bear Lake Village

**Fabrication:**

Correct Compression Inc., 11903 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake  
Bowling's Last Stand - Bear Lake

**Metal Fabrication:**

Bowling Enterprises Inc., 9091 Chief Rd - Kaleva

**Welding Equipment & Supply:**

Remanufactured Electrode Cap Inc., 8100 11 Mile Rd - Bear Lake

**Window & Door Fabrication:**

Northview Window & Door, 9178 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**MEMBERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONS**

**Civil & Social Associations:**

Bear Lake Athletic Boosters  
Bear Lake Boy Scouts  
Bear Lake Girls Scouts  
Bear Lake Lions Club  
Bear Lake/Onkama Girls Scouts  
Bear Lake Promoters  
Bear Lake Property Owners Association  
Bear Lake Schools Parent and Teachers for Students (PATS)  
Bear Lake Watershed Alliance  
Bear Lake Women's club  
Masonic Lodge  
Order of the Eastern Star  
Triginta Club

**MINING****Oil and Gas Exploration Services:**

Chevron  
 DTE Gas Company  
 Dynamic Development Inc.  
 Federal Oil  
 Federated Oil & Gas  
 Jaguar Energy L.L.C.  
 Jordan Development Company, L.L.C.  
 Markwest  
 Merit Energy  
 Michcon  
 Oil-Niagaran  
 Savoy Oil  
 Ward Lake Energy

**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION****County Road Commission:**

Manistee County Road Commission, 8946 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Local Fire Department/Volunteers:**

Bear Lake Township Fire Department, Located in the Village  
 Bear Lake Township Community Emergency Response Team

**Local Government:**

Bear Lake Township Board of Trustees, 7771 Lake St - Bear Lake  
 Bear Lake Village Council, 7727 Lake St - Bear Lake Village

**Municipal Waste Water Treatment Facility:**

Village of Onekama - Bear Lake

**USDA & The Natural Resources Conservation Service:**

Manistee Conservation District, 8840 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**U.S Post Office:**

Bear Lake Post Office, 7777 Main Street - Bear Lake Village

**RETAIL TRADE****Auto & Truck Repair and Auto Supplies:**

Auto Value Service Co., 7737 Lake St - Bear Lake Village  
 Absolute Auto Repair & Tire, 7530 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake  
 Northstar Automotive, 12130 7th St - Bear Lake

**Auto Body Repair:**

Coach Craft, 9242 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Car Wash:**

Bear Lake Touchless Carwash, 11638 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Chainsaw Specialty:**

Northern Chain Specialty, 7329 Chief Rd - Onekama

**Dining Entertainment Program:**

Two on the Town, 12326 Virginia St - Bear Lake Village

**Electric Contractor:**

Fink's Wiring Inc., 7726 Lyman Rd - Kaleva  
Galaxy Electric Inc., 7347 Potter Rd - Bear Lake  
Paradigm Electric, 6513 Potter Rd - Bear Lake

**Event Rental:**

Rip and Run Canopy Rental, 12326 Virginia St - Bear Lake Village

**Financial Institutions:**

Honor State Bank, 11926 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake  
Huntington Bank, 7685 Lake St - Bear Lake Village

**Florists:**

Apple Hill Creations, 9654 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Fuel Oil, L.P. and Natural Gas Dealers:**

Blarney Castle Oil Co., 12218 West St - Bear Lake  
Superior Energy  
Ziehm L.P. Gas Sales & Services, 10765 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Gasoline Stations:**

Blarney Castle #2, 12348 West St - Bear Lake  
Saddle Up Gas & Grocery, 12991 Pleasanton Hwy - Bear Lake

**Gift, Novelty & Souvenir Shops:**

Leckrone Village Variety Antiques & Collectables, Lake St - Bear Lake Village  
Niizh Makwa Traders, 7714 Lake St - Bear Lake Village  
Quality Crafts, 7836 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake  
Richmond Drug, 7717 Lake St - Bear Lake Village  
Serendipity, 7710 Lake St - Bear Lake Village  
Treasures On The Lake, 7660 Lake St - Bear Lake Village  
Two Sisters Quilting, 9178 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Greenhouse/Nurseries:**

Fox Farm Nurseries L.L.C., 7615 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake  
Our Field of Dreams, 9654 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Grocery Stores:**

Bear Lake Discount Grocery L.L.C., 11740 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake  
Blarney Castle #2, 12218 West St - Bear Lake  
Dollar General, 11802 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake  
Orchard Lane Country Store, 9217 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake  
Saddle Up Gas & Grocery, 12991 Pleasanton Hwy - Bear Lake

**Hardware Store & Design Center:**

Bear Lake Ace Hardware/Lumber & Supply, 11950 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Home Equipment Rental:**

Bear Lake Ace Rental, 11950 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Insurance Agents Service:**

Bear Lake Insurance Agency Inc., 12141 West St - Bear Lake Village

**Maple Syrup:**

John Sievert, 11483 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake  
Shreve's Maple Syrup, 11234 Linderman Rd - Bear Lake

**Marine Service:**

Bear Lake Marine, 7760 Lake St - Bear Lake Village

**Paving & Sealing:**

Griz Sealing, Striping & Excavating, 10672 Chief Rd - Bear Lake

**Pharmacy:**

Richmond Drug, 7717 Lake St - Bear Lake Village

**Real Estate:**

Ringel Real Estate and Auction, 11544 Linderman Rd - Bear Lake

**Restaurant:**

Hubbell's Lakeside Restaurant, 7833 Lake St - Bear Lake Village

**Small Engine Repair:**

Wheeler's Power Equipment Sales and Service, 11555 Milarch Rd - Bear Lake

**Small Wine Maker:**

Northern Naturals Organics L.L.C., 7220 Chief Rd - Kaleva

**Snow Removal:**

Wayne Meister, 8637 Johnson Rd - Kaleva

**Specialty Soap:**

Luzetta's Handmade Soaps, 8754 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Sporting Goods/Fishing:**

Bear Lake Ace Hardware/Lumber & Supply, 11950 U.S. 31 - Bear Lake  
Bear Lake Marine, 7760 Lake St - Bear Lake Village  
Osborn's Sport Shop, 8929 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Taverns & Restaurants:**

Grille 44, 12951 Pleasanton Hwy - Bear Lake  
Rosie's Place, 9567 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Truck Repair & Service:**

Blarney Castle, 6383 8 Mile Rd - Bear Lake

**Warehouse:**

Northstar Operating & Consultant, 9178 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**SERVICES**

**Appliance Service:**

Ware's Appliance Repair, 10534 Anderson Rd - Bear Lake

**Beauty & Barber Shops:**

Bear Lake Barber Shop, 7734 Lake St - Bear Lake Village

Hair By Joy, 8659 Johnson Rd - Onekama

Highland Hair, 11544 Linderman Rd - Bear Lake

Krista LeAnn's Salon, 7686 Lake St - Bear Lake Village

Powder Puff Beauty Shop, 12136 2nd St - Bear Lake

Sheli's Hair Salon 8812 Johnson Rd - Kaleva

Theresa's Hair Care, 8 Mile Rd - Bear Lake

Your Style II, 6981 Clinton St - Bear Lake

**Churches:**

First Baptist Church, Service Held At Bear Lake School - Bear Lake Village

United Methodist Church, 7681 Main Street - Bear Lake Village

**Funeral Service:**

Edwards Oak Grove Funeral Home, 12353 Lynn St - Bear Lake Village

**Golf Practice Center:**

Driving Range next to Bear Lake Highlands, 11969 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Horse Riding & Western Recreation:**

Rockin R Stables, 8805 13 Mile Rd - Bear Lake

**Metal Recycling:**

Larry Bowling Metal Recycling, 9347 13 Mile Rd - Bear Lake

**Motels and Resorts:**

Alpine Motor Lodge, 8127 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

Bella Vista Inn, 12273 Lake St - Bear Lake Village

Honey Bear Resort, 12475 Hopkins Forest Dr - Bear Lake

Windsunpines Resort, 12385 Hopkins Forest Dr - Bear Lake

**Parks & Campground:**

Hopkins Park & Campground, Hopkins Dr - Bear Lake Village

Harry Cosier Court - Bear Lake Village

Veterans Memorial Deck, 7727 Lake St - Bear Lake Village

**Public Golf Course:**

Bear Lake Highlands, 11685 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**Satellite Television:**

Country Roads T.V., 6831 Potter Rd - Bear Lake

**Septic Cleaning Service:**

McBride Septic Systems & Excavating, 6959 Clinton St - Bear Lake

**Sporting & Recreation Services:**

Bear Lake School Playground & Tennis Court, 7748 Cody St - Bear Lake Village

Bear Lake Athletic Complex, South Shore Dr - Bear Lake

**Storage:**

Cold Storage Investments, 11903 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

Orchard View Self Storage, 7194 9 Mile Road - Bear Lake

**Towing:**

Statewide Towing & Auto Recovery, 12907 Pleasanton Hwy - Bear Lake

**Vacation Rental:**

Crystal Vacation Rental, 8127 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake

**TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC UTILITIES****Bus Service Facility:**

Bear Lake School, 7748 Cody St - Bear Lake Village

**Cable Television:**

Charter Communication

Kaleva Telephone Co.

**Electrical Services:**

Cherryland Electric

Consumers Energy

**Telephone Communication:**

AT&T

CenturyLink Telephone Co.

Kaleva Telephone Co.

**Water Supply:**

Bear Lake Village - Bear Lake Village

**WHOLESALE TRADE****Petroleum Bulk Station and Terminals:**

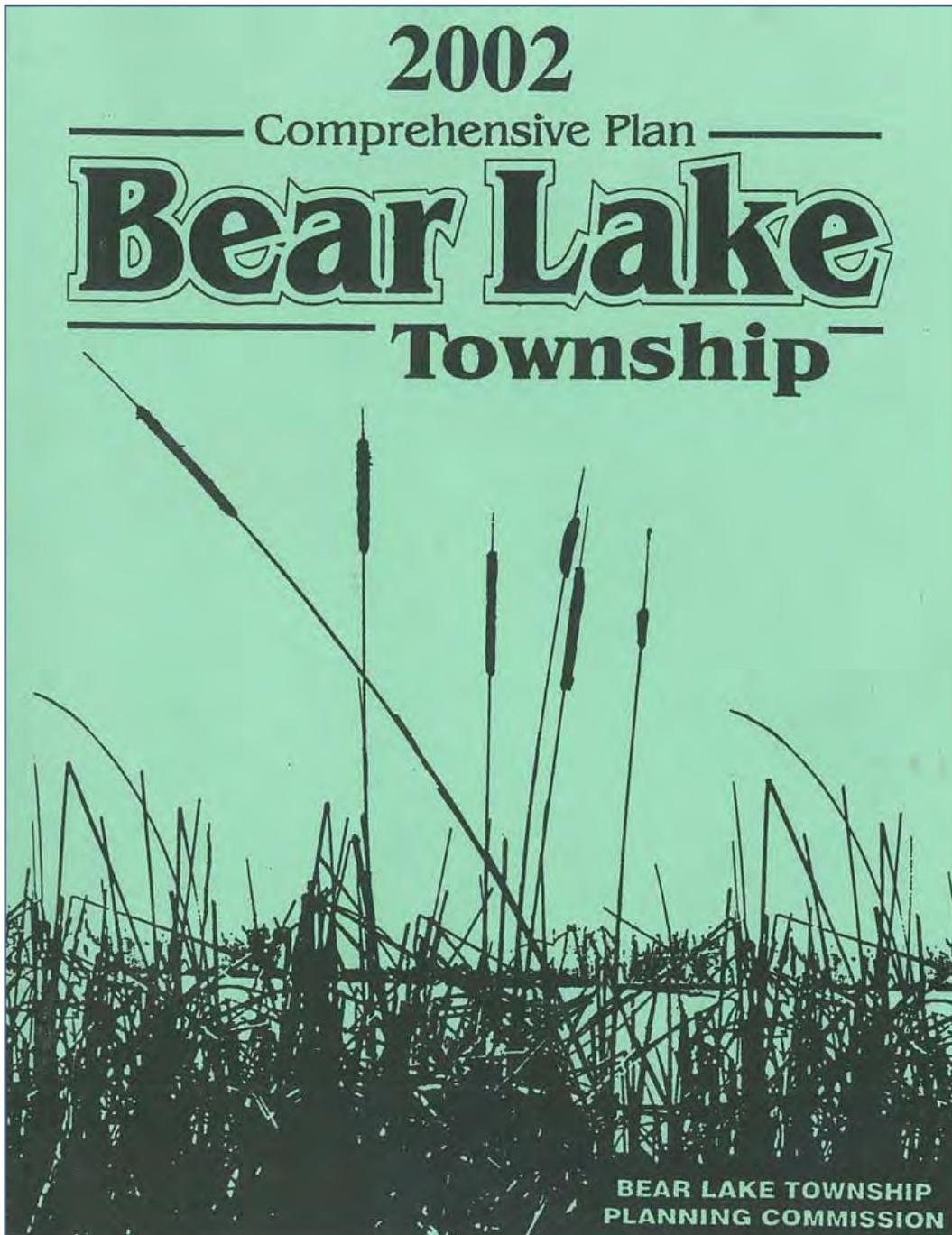
Ziehm's LP Gas, 10765 Chippewa Hwy - Bear Lake



# Appendix B

Excerpts from the 2002 Bear Lake Township Master Plan

The following pages present excerpts from the 2002 Bear Lake Township Comprehensive Master Plan, selected for retention by the Bear Lake Township Planning Commission.



## TOPOGRAPHY

The network of hills in Bear Lake Township are marginal moraines. The hills are deposits created by water running off the edge of a stationary glacier. The moraine, generally west of U.S. 31, has good farm soils. The good soils, combined with the irregular topography and moderate lake-effect climate lends the area to unique farming conditions. Those conditions favor fruit-growing, broccoli and cauliflower crops. However, the hills and lake in the hot summers make the area less favorable for corn and grains. Parts of the moraine, which extends east of U.S. 31 have flatter areas which lend themselves to irrigated cash crops. The moraine normally supports hardwood trees and have deposits of gravel and clay.

Bear Lake Township is also part of a glacial outwash plain. The outwash plain is where the water moving away from the glacier deposits sand and silt creating flat areas. The outwash plain in Bear Lake Township is part of a large plain that runs through the center of the county, extending from the north county line through Copemish, Kaleva, Brethren and Wellston. Two fingers running out of the larger Kaleva plain, includes Bear Lake and Chief Lake.

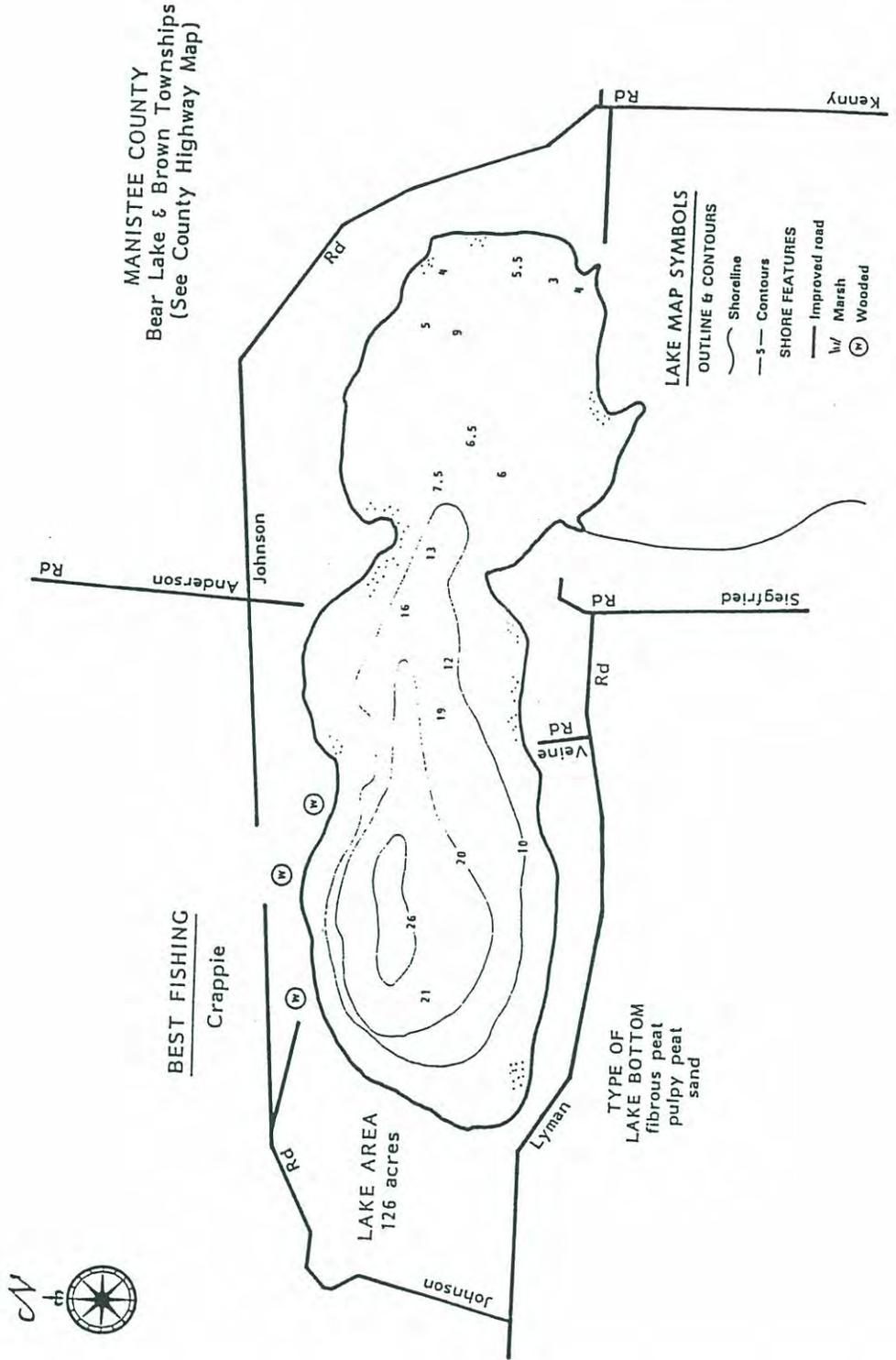
The major characteristics of an outwash plain is the presence of wetlands and poorly-drained soils. The entire area from Copemish south, drains into Big Bear Creek and then into the Big Manistee River. It is believed groundwater movement follows the same drainage pattern as the surface water. The plain has about 20-30 ft. of sand on top of a poor (for commercial use) clay. Groundwater sits on top of this 100 foot thick pan so the water table throughout the outwash plain is 10-20 feet below the surface.

This shallow water table has an advantage as an inexpensive source of irrigation water. However, the outwash plain soils are relatively infertile and poor for farming. The high water table and predominant horizontal movement of the water table close to the surface necessitates the need for caution as to the type of industry locating in the area.

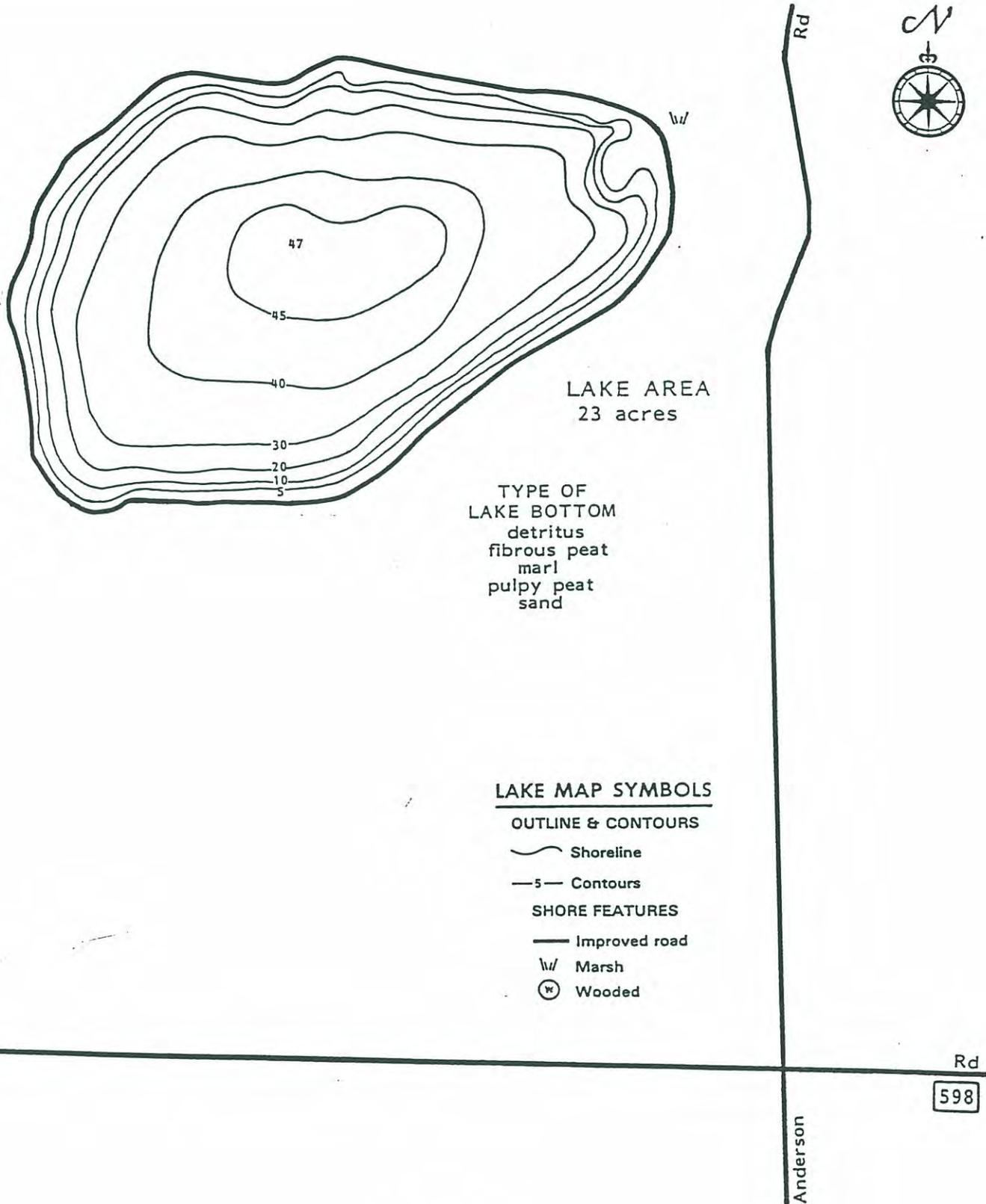
An industry with a large volume of waste should not locate in this areas or should design a program to dispose of the wastes by reuse or transporting them elsewhere. A high density of septic tanks might also present the need for special attention.



# 23: MAP OF CHIEF LAKE



# 24: MAP OF JAMES LAKE



# WATER

## ***Surface Water and Drainage Systems***

Bear Lake Township surface water consists of Bear Lake, Chief Lake, Emma Lake, James Lake, Watson Lake, Adamson Lake and Cooper Lake. The bulk of Bear Lake Township is part of the Big Manistee River drainage basin. Big Bear Creek drains most of the Township area. Bear Lake drains into Little Bear Creek which drains into Big Bear Creek which drains into the Big Manistee River.

Watson Lake and Cooper Lake are thought of as being kettle lakes. Generally, a kettle lake doesn't seem to be connected to a surface water drainage basin and is not connected to any of the Township or County's rivers.

## ***Wetlands***

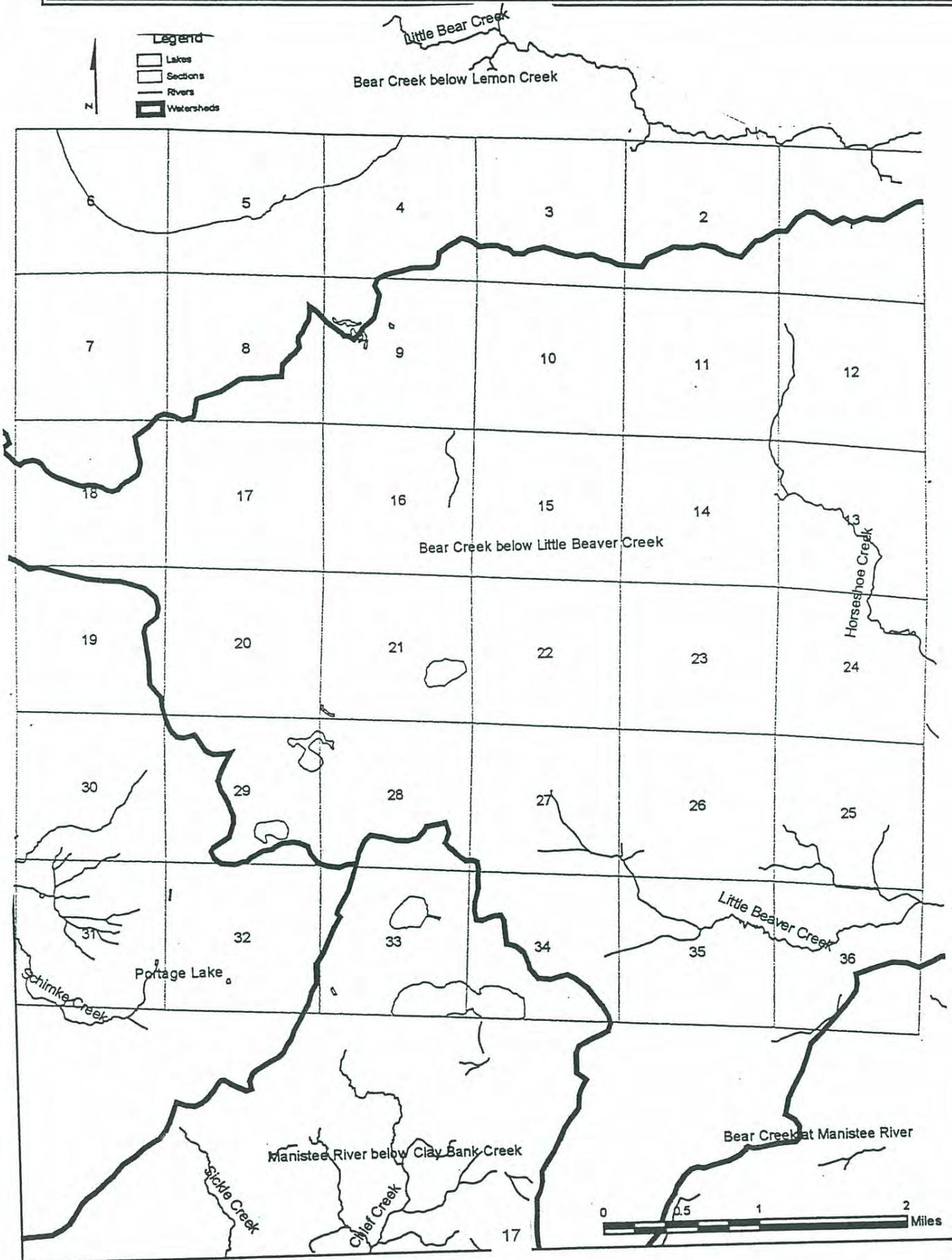
Soils with high moisture content are classified as somewhat poorly drained to very poorly drained, sandy loamy, clayey, marly or organic (muck or peat) soils or lowlands. These areas have a severe to very severe soil limitations for residential or urban-type development. High water tables, (year-round, intermittent or seasonal within 1-2 feet of the surface) is expected in these areas. Problems with septic tanks, pollution of ground and surface water and poor load-supporting ability are problems associated with wetlands. Wetlands in the Bear Lake Township area are located in the southeastern and southern part of the Township. There are some wetlands along County Rd. 600 and south of the golf course and a good-sized area in the southwestern part of the Township. (It's located between Maidens Road on the north and 9 mile on the south).

## ***Artificial Drains***

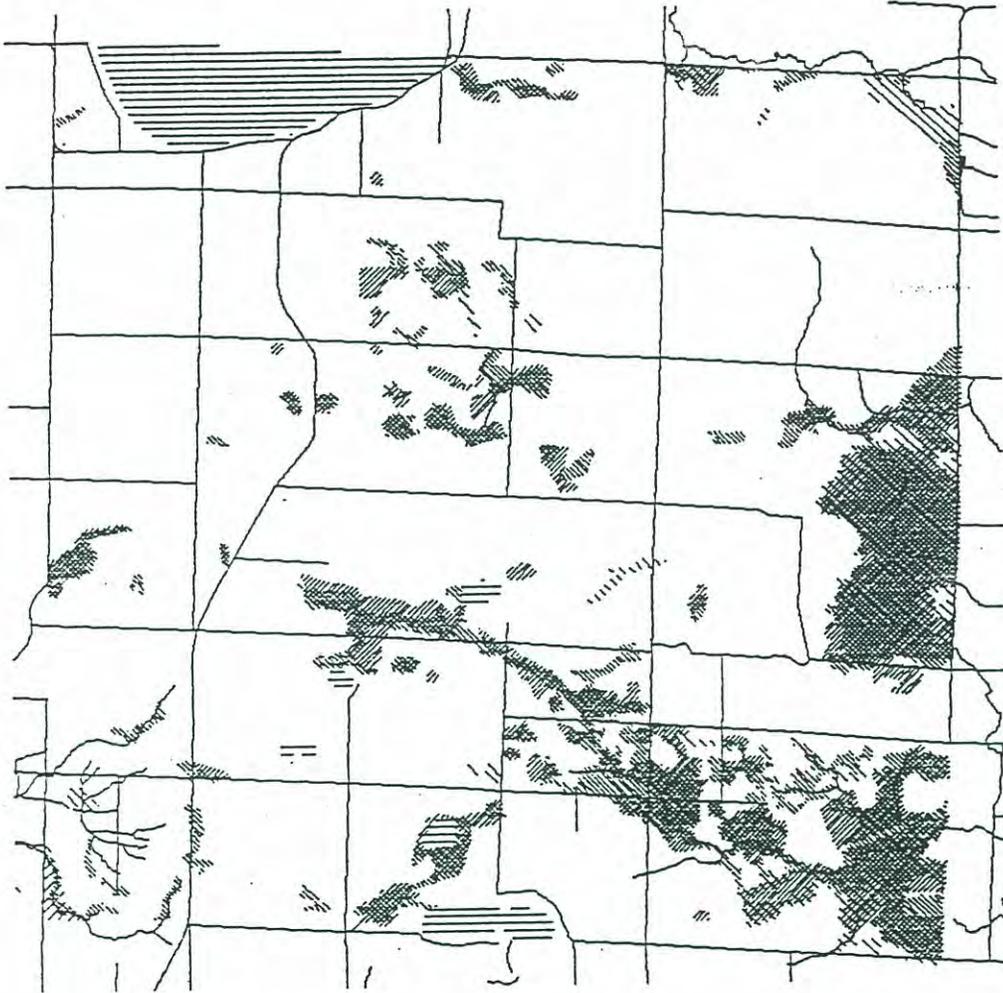
Manistee County Drains in the Bear Lake Township area as of November, 1979 are as follows:

1. *BIG KAISER DRAIN - many open creeks and ditches drain into Horseshoe Creek and Williamson Creek.*
2. *CHIEF LAKE DRAIN - open ditches and several gullies drain into Chief Lake and Chief Creek.*
3. *GUSTASON DRAIN - open tile (buried) drain, drains, into Little Beaver Creek.*
4. *BEAVER CREEK DRAIN - there is no explanation in the County Drain Report on what this drain is.*

# 25: BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP HYDROLOGY MAP



# 26: BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP WETLAND MAP



Legend

- Upland
- Wetland (hydric)
- Wetland (veg.)
- Maybe H. wetland
- Maybe H. wetland
- Maybe veg. wetland
- 

(Vegetation & Soil)  
Manistee Co. Planning

Dept. Sept. 28, 1995



This section has been updated in 2014 to reflect the Township's periodic testing to maintain quality control

Great Lakes Water Quality Laboratory, Inc.  
 P.O. Box 131  
 Lake Ann, Michigan 49650  
 231-275-7382

**RESULTS**

**Bear Lake**

LAB ID #	Site NO	G.P.S. reading	Elevation	Total Coliform	E coli (Bacteria)	pH (pH units)	Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L)	Ammonia mg/L	Nitrate mg/L	Nitrite mg/L	Phosphorus (T) mg/L
13082613	1	N 44' 25.356 W 86' 9.006	842'	>2419.6	37.9	8.2	7.9	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.104
13082614	2	N 44' 25.479 W 86' 8.775	801'	>2419.6	15.8	8.3	8.0	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.116
13082615	3	N 44' 25.469 W 86' 8.804	774'	>2419.6	5.1	8.2	7.8	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.073
13082616	4	N 44' 25.855 W 86' 7.793	767'	1413.6	0.0	8.1	7.8	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.177
13082617	5	N 44' 26.511 W 86' 7.963	780'	1299.7	0.0	8.4	7.8	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.041
13082618	6	N 44' 26.819 W 86' 8.433	796'	2419.6	1.0	8.2	7.9	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.039
13082619	7	N 44' 26.539 W 86' 9.672	768'	1119.9	0.0	8.2	7.7	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.112
13082620	8	N 44' 25.399 W 86' 10.226	795'	1299.7	3.0	8.3	7.6	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.124
13082621	9	N 44' 26.413 W 86' 10.638	798'	980.4	5.2	8.3	7.7	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.163
13082622	10	N 44' 25.518 W 86' 10.276	797'	>2419.6	12.0	8.2	7.6	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.078
13082623	11	N 44' 26.404 W 86' 7.544	765'	>2419.6	547.5	7.6	7.9	<0.05	0.5	<0.05	0.228
13082624	12	N 44' 26.395 W 86' 7.558	726'	>2419.6	579.4	7.5	7.7	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.333

**GENERAL COMMENTS:**

Collected By: BG/GLL  
 Date: 8/26/13  
 Time: 2:50-4:45 pm

Test Results Prepared By:  
 Great Lakes Water Quality Laboratory, Inc.

This section has been updated in 2014

Great Lakes Water Quality Laboratory, Inc.  
 P.O. Box 131  
 Lake Ann, Michigan 49650  
 231-275-7382

**Chief Lake**

**RESULTS**

LAB ID #	Site NO	G.P.S. reading	Elevation	Total Coliform	E coli (Bacteria)	pH (pH units)	Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L)	Ammonia mg/L	Nitrate mg/L	Nitrite mg/L	Phosphorus (T) mg/L
13082625	1	N 44'	20.663	>2419.6	8.4	7.8	7.8	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.079
		W 86'	7.957								
13082626	2	N 44'	20.854	>2419.6	1.0	7.9	7.8	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.07
		W 86'	7.847								
13082627	3	N 44'	20.856	>2419.6	307.6	7.8	7.6	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.067
		W 86'	7.332								
13082628	4	N 44'	20.657	>2419.6	4.1	7.5	7.6	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.045
		W 86'	6.834								
13082629	5	N 44'	20.641	>2419.6	23.3	7.6	7.6	<0.05	<0.5	<0.05	0.041
		W 86'	7.281								

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Collected By: BG/GLL  
 Date: 8/26/2013  
 Time: 12:45-2:05pm

## 28: HISTORIC FARMS

*This page has been updated in 2014*

### Sesquicentennial Farm

Joseph, Delbert, Kathryn, Ward Kelley  
7082 Chippewa Highway  
Kaleva, MI 49645

*First Owners: John & Amelia Patterson  
Date of Purchase: 6/18/1862*

### Centennial Farms

John and Lillian Porter  
7332 Chippewa Highway  
Kaleva, MI 49645  
NE 1/4 of SE 1/4 & N 1/2, SW 1/4 of NE 1/4, Sec31, T23N, R15W

*First Owner: John Baptise Porter (PaQuin)  
Date of Purchase: 7/1/1863*

Mabel Schimke  
Route 1  
Bear Lake, MI 49614  
Sec30, T23N, R15N

*First Owner: Gotlieb Schimke  
Date of Purchase: 10/18/1866*

Hazel Briske  
Route 1  
Bear Lake, MI 49614  
W 1/2 of E 3/5 of S 5/8 of SW 1/4, Sec 15, T23N, R15

*First Owner: James Griswold  
Date of Purchase: 11/23/1868*

Winston S. Churchill EST  
11058 11 Mile Road  
Bear Lake, MI 49614  
E 1/2 NE 1/4, Sec 14 & W 1/2 NW 1/4, Sec 13 & S 1/2 Sec 12, T23N, R15W

*First Owner: Andrew Arner  
Date of Purchase: 6/5/1869*

Donovan E. and Bernice Anderson  
Route 2  
Bear Lake, MI 49614  
S 1/2 of NE 1/4 of Sec 3, T23N, R15W

*First Owner: David Anderson  
Date of Purchase: 5/11/1872*

Harold and Joyce Johnson  
7174 Thorpe Road  
Bear Lake, MI 49614  
SE 1/4, SW 1/4 & SW 1/4 SE 1/4 Sec 31, T23N & Sec 6, T22N, R15W

*First Owner: Andrew Johnson  
Date of Purchase: 7/1/1880*

Earl F. and Dorothy Osborn  
Route 1  
Bear Lake, MI 49614  
W 1/4 of SE 1/4 of Sec 11, T23N, R15W

*First Owner: Andrew and Catherine Anner  
Date of Purchase: 4/27/1867*

Joel D. and Carol Meister  
7901 Anderson Road  
Kaleva, MI 49645  
NW 1/4 of NW 1/4, Sec 34, T23N, R15W

*First Owner: Daniel and Tillie Meister  
Date of Purchase: 4/8/1895*

Felix S. and Catherine M. Gauthier  
7616 Adamson Lake Road  
Kaleva, MI 49645  
SE 1/4 of NE 1/4, Sec 32, N23N, R15W

*First Owner: Frank L. Gauthier, Sr.  
Date of Purchase: 4/21/1898*

Douglas E. and Linda Alkire  
8390 11 Mile Road  
Bear Lake, MI 49614  
E 1/2, SW 1/4 Sec 9, T23N, R15W

*First Owner: Michael Fauble  
Date of Purchase: 7/7/1899*

## SOIL

There are 18 different soil groups in Bear Lake Township, two of which make up the greatest content of the Township. They are classified as C7 and C8. They are both well-drained soils. The classification code being used is one used by the Northwest Michigan Prime Forests Lands Project. C8 is classified as one step better than C7 (due to the fact that C7 soils were weakly developed or degraded because of man's activity). Most of C7 soils are located on the abandoned farmlands which were depleted of many nutrients and organic matter by wind erosion and leaching which followed tillage.

The best soils in the Township for forest potential are classified as C1, C2, C3, C5 and part of E1, E4, E5, E7, F1 and F2. The very best (C2), is well to moderately drained, loamy soils. There are medium to small areas of this soil throughout the Township. C2 soils are found in Sections 3, 4, 7, 9, 16, 30, 31, 32 and 34.

The best soil in the Township for agriculture yield are C1 and C5. C5 is the best for the highest yield rates in the Township or County. There are only two small areas of this soil in the Township and they are located in Sections 9 and 16.

The most unsuitable soils in the Township are G1, G2 and H7. G1 and G2 are very poorly drained organic soils without trees. The geologic feature is very acidic bogs and unforested swamps. H7 is gravel pits. These soils are located in Sections 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 33 and 35.

The information on soil comes from the Bear Lake Township Manistee County third Level Soil Association Reports and Tables, furnished by the Manistee County Planning Commission and dated March 1982.

This report is for general planning purposed and for preliminary work. It is well to keep this in mind when looking for a progressive soil survey, which this is not. This report should be considered and used often in making recommendations as to the goals and Zoning for the Township. This report was put together by information gathered by the County Planning Commission, Soil Conservation Service and the N.W. Michigan Prime Forests Lands Project. Even though this report and maps are for general planning, it should be noted that this is, so far, the best information that this Township and the County have available to date.

Information such as Forest potential, agriculture interpretations, building site limitations, sanitation limitations, construction material sources, recreational limitations and wildlife habitat information is important in all decision making from the Township. Some progressive soil survey work has been done around Bear Lake and along the Little and Big Bear Creeks south of 13 Mile Road. This material is not in published form. It is available for us at the County Planning Office and/or the the County Soil Conservation Service Office. Manistee County does not have a published Modern Progressive Soil Survey.

Because the soil survey and grouping is oriented towards timber production statements on other soil properties such as farming, sanitation and construction materials, the groupings used are not always consistent with the groupings used in this text.

## MINERAL RESOURCES OIL AND GAS

The principle minerals commercially sought in the Township are oil and gas. Well drilling has followed a pattern of the Silurian-Niagaran Reef. In the 70's and 80's, oil and gas activity boomed in Bear Lake Township. In the 90's the wells began to lose production with some wells being plugged.

In 1994, new technology was started with lateral drilling of some of the plugged wells, which brought them back to much higher production.

In 1995, Antrim Reef activity was begun with test wells.

The oil and gas industry is responsible for a large flow of money in the Township mainly through royalties and personal property taxes. Direct employment from oil and gas activity is not significant. Indirect employment from servicing oil and gas wells and the multiplier effect of the royalties has had a large impact on the local economy.

# WILDLIFE CHARACTERISTICS

*This section has been updated in 2014*

## ~ BIRDS ~

SANDHILL CRANES - *Found infrequently in the Township but generally increasing in number.*

RUFFED GROUSE - *Stable amount of habitat available for these birds.*

SHARP-TAILED GROUSE - *None.*

SPRUCE GROUSE - *None.*

MOURNING DOVE - *Low to Medium.*

RING-NECKED PHEASANT - *Wild birds low to non-existent, may be some pheasants the result of releases by private individuals. Hard winters usually fatal to these birds.*

BOBWHITE QUAIL - *Non-existent except when released by private individuals.*

WILD TURKEY - *High population.*

WOODCOCK - *Medium population but decreasing in numbers. Habitat is decreasing as hunting pressure increases.*

WATERFOWL - *Medium to high, the continental population of most species of waterfowl are generally low. Canadian Geese are the exception.*

BALD EAGLES - *Increasing; Manistee River eagles probably use Bear Lake Township as part of total range.*

# WILDLIFE CHARACTERISTICS

*This section has been updated in 2014*

## ~ MAMMALS ~

OPOSSUM - *Medium density.*

RACCOON - *High.*

COTTONTAIL RABBIT - *Medium to high density.*

MARTEN - *None.*

SNOWSHOE HARE - *Low density.*

FISHER - *None.*

GRAY AND BLACK SQUIRREL - *Low to medium density.*

LEAST WEASEL - *Part of range but no actual records of sights.*

FOX SQUIRREL - *Low to medium density.*

SHORT-TAILED WEASEL - *Same as the Least Weasel.*

RED SQUIRREL - *Abundant.*

LONG-TAILED WEASEL - *Occur throughout the State.*

NORTHERN FLYING SQUIRREL - *Common but rarely seen - nocturnal.*

MINK - *Low to medium.*

BEAVER - *Medium*

BADGER - *Part of range but rarely seen.*

MUSKRAT - *Low to medium.*

STRIPED SKUNK - *Medium to high density.*

PORCUPINE - *Low to medium.*

LYNX - *None.*

COYOTE - *Medium to high in number, populations subject to mortality due to mange.*

RIVER OTTER - *Low to medium.*

BOBCAT - *Low density, rarely seen.*

RED FOX - *Low to medium.*

DEER - *Medium density.*

BLACK BEAR - *increasing in number, We have resident bears in Township.*

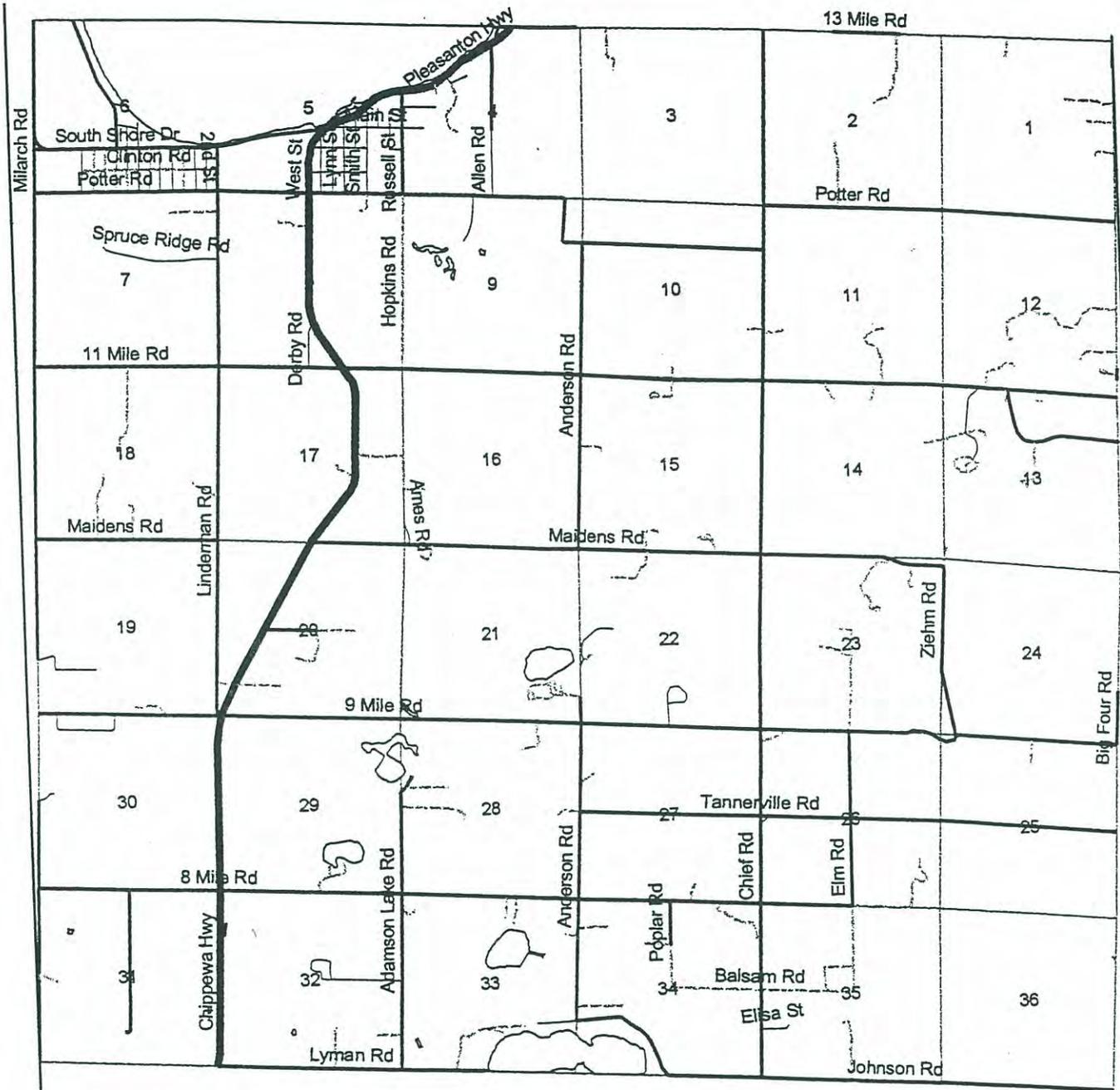
COUGAR - *Low density, rarely seen.*

## ~ BLACK BEAR ~

In the late 60's or 70's the DNR placed Black Bear here to consume large amounts of Salmon that were dying on Creek banks at the end of their spawning run. The smell of dying Salmon is very offensive so to alleviate the problem it is believed that the bears were introduced to help balance nature. In the late 70's Roy Kuenzer did kill a black bear here in the township in self defense.

There are many other species of birds and mammals that occur in Bear Lake Township. The previous lists include most of the obvious and economically important species. There are important wetland types that provide much needed winter deer habitat and stop over areas for migrating waterfowl. The upland types are utilized by many different birds and mammals, many of which are listed previously. There are no endangered or threatened mammals or birds residing in Bear Lake Township.

# 29: BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP ROAD MAP



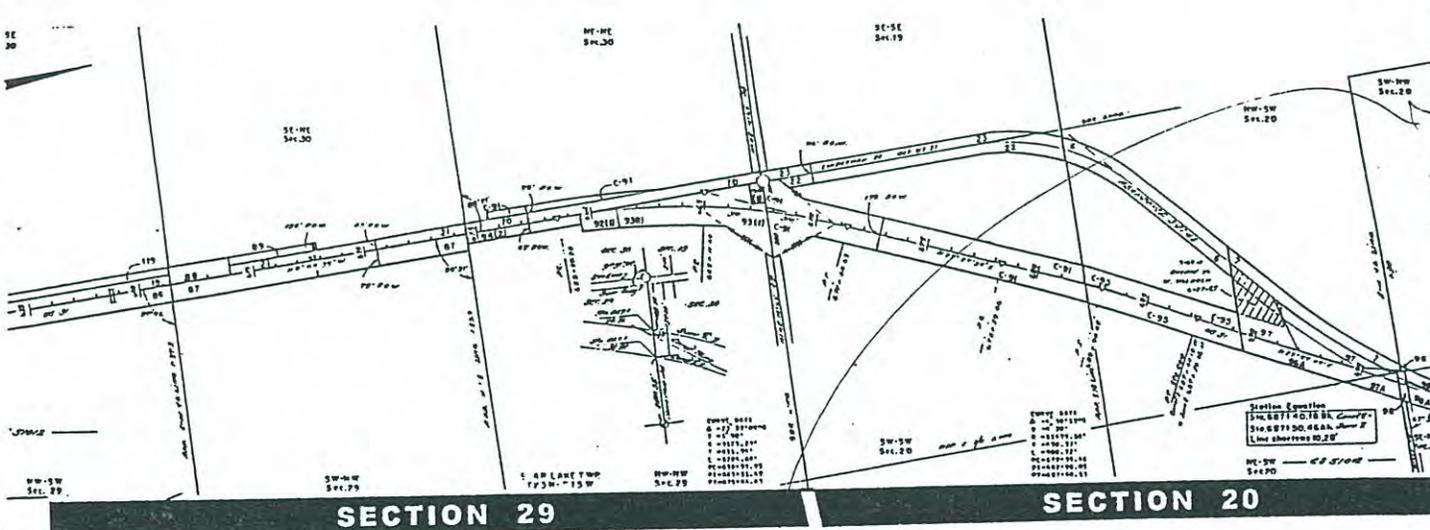
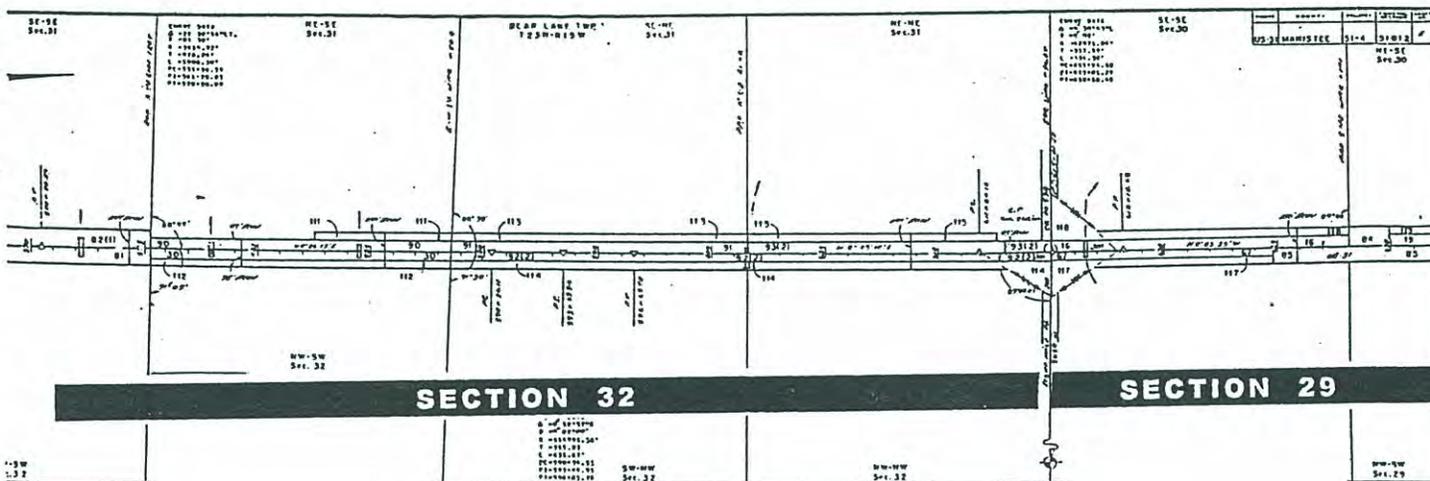
### Legend

- Roads**
- Two Tracks
- == Highways
- Minor Roads
- County Roads
- Lakes
- Sections



# 30: BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP MAP

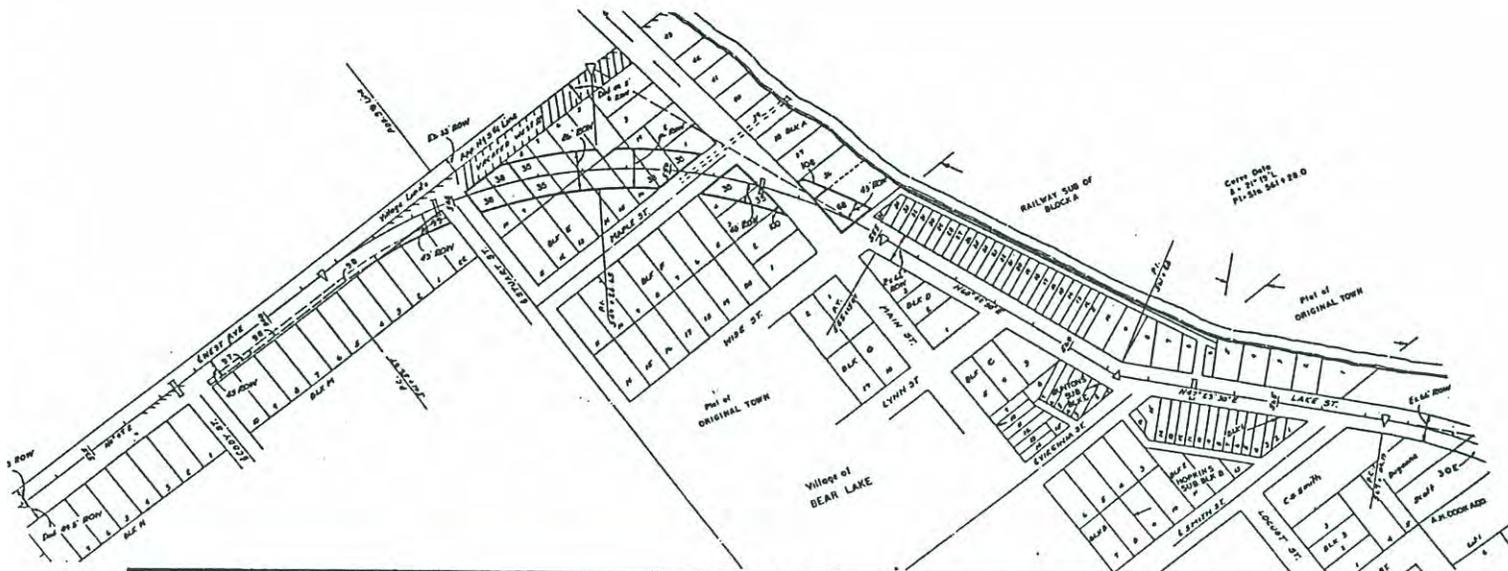
## Road Right Of Way



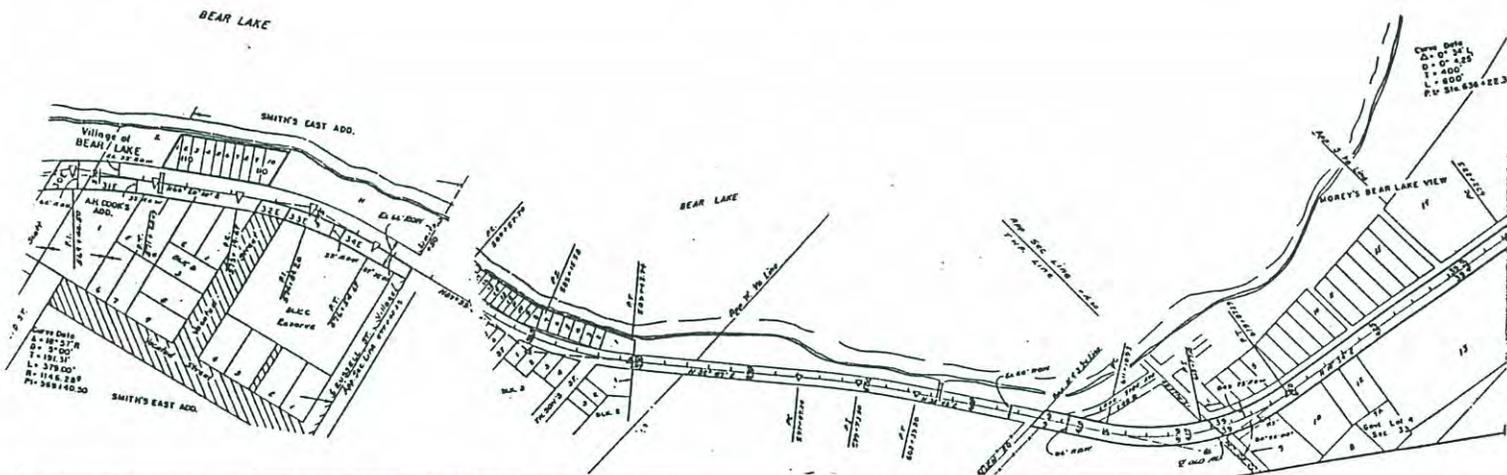


# BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP MAP

## Road Right Of Way



SECTION 5



SECTION 4

*This page has been updated in 2014.*

## MANISTEE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION

### COUNTYWIDE DIAL-A-RIDE

Morning and Afternoon - Monday - Friday

24 Hour Advance Reservation Requested

*General Manager: Dick Strevey*

**Call 231-723-6525 or 1-800-775-7433**

For Reservation or More Information

*Conference Room Available For Rent*

Free Transportation To Munson Hospital

Monday - Friday: Will Pick Up At Home

[www.manisteecountytransportation.com](http://www.manisteecountytransportation.com)

## PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM

Bear Lake Village has the only public water system. There are three wells with a capacity of 150 gallons per minute. Water storage is by elevated tank with a capacity of 75,000 gallons.

District Waterlines are 6" to 10" in size. Bear lake Township property owners each have their own water system.

All property owners in the township have their own septic systems.

There is one septic pumping company in the township, McBride Septic Systems and Excavating.

The Village of Onekama owns 78 acres it uses for sewage treatment ponds in Section 19 of Bear Lake Township.

---

Additional lines have been extended east of the Village limits (Russell Street) to accommodate two residences outside Village limit and extended west 200 feet along South Shore from the Village limits to accommodate an additional fire hydrant.

There is no projected plans by the Village of Bear Lake to extend water lines at this time.

Additional updates:

On May 1, 1999, the Village of Onekama purchased 72 acres in Section 17.

On May 12, 2005, the Village of Onekama purchased 98 acres in Section 8.

# PARKS AND RECREATION

*This section has been updated in 2014.*

## **HOPKINS PARK**

Located in Section 5, in the Village of Bear Lake on the south shore of Bear Lake. The site was originally the lumber yard for the Hopkins Saw Mill. After the lumber cut was finished, Mr. George W. Hopkins undertook the gigantic task of creating a park. Hundreds of loads of earth was hauled in, grass was sown and trees planted. After the work was completed, the two acre park was donated by the Hopkins family to the Village of Bear Lake to be used by the people of the area. The first campers arrived in 1925.

The facilities include 30 campsites each of which have a fire pit ring and electrical service. There are picnic tables, grills and a 30 ft x 20 ft. shelter. Restroom and coin operated showers are located in the basement of the Village building above the campgrounds. There is a drinking fountain, 3 water taps and a dump station for recreation vehicles, motor homes and trailers.

## **HARRY D. COSIER MEMORIAL PARK**

*Formally known as the "unnamed park"*

The Park at Wise and Stewart Streets was donated to the Village of Bear Lake on November 19, 1929 by Mr. and Mrs. H.M. Cosier to become a memorial to their departed son Harry D. Cosier. Facilities include a tennis court and 2 basketball boards.

## **TENNIS COURTS**

Tennis courts are located on school property on Smith Street. Built with monies from the Triginta Club of Bear Lake.

## **COUNTY HIGHLAND'S GOLF COURSE**

Established in 1966 by local businessmen and area citizens. The course originally started with 9 holes and has since expanded to 18 holes, club house, pro-shop, restrooms and drinking fountains on the course.

## **BOAT LAUNCHING SITES**

On Bear Lake there is one boat launching site located at Hopkins Park. There is a DNR launch in Pleasanton Township.

On Chief Lake there is one boat launching site located off Lyman Road.

## **LAKE ACCESS SITES**

Bear Lake Township wants to mark corners and maintain the four access sites on Bear Lake and the one access on Chief Lake.

## **OTHER ATTRACTIONS**

The Bear located on U.S. 31 in the Village of Bear Lake

Village Park located on U.S. 31 next to Richmond Drug

## SCHOOLS

*This section has been updated in 2014*

Bear Lake Schools is the public school system that serves both Bear Lake and Pleasanton Township residents. A small number of students in the area also attend other schools of choice within Manistee County.

Bear Lake Schools provide K-12 students with programs within the school facility as well as outside it. Most programming occurs at the school itself, but a number of high school students attend career and technical training at West Shore Community College. In addition, Bear Lake Schools also has students who participate in dual enrollment college courses through West Shore Community College technology programs during the day.

The main school building represents six different constructions since 1951. The most recent addition (2002) provided for six new elementary classrooms, five new high school classrooms, a new central office, a new regulation

size gymnasium, and some general refurbishing of the building.

Bear Lake Schools also take part in a number of cooperative efforts. The school system shares a superintendent with the Kaleva Norman Dickson School District. It also shares a business office with the KND, Onekama, Casman, and Manistee Intermediate school districts. Athletically, Bear Lake has cooperative programs with Onekama in cross country, football, track and baseball. It has cooperative programs with KND in girls soccer and boys golf. Bear Lake Schools offers boys and girls skiing in a cooperative program with both KND and Onekama. The remaining sports, boys and girls basketball and volleyball, are offered through Bear Lake Schools. Finally, Bear Lake Schools partners with both KND and Onekama to offer drama to their students.

## BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP CEMETERIES

*This section has been updated in 2014*

### **Bear Lake Township Cemetery**

The old part of the Cemetery was deeded October 2, 1869, by Jemima Cushing to the Board of Health of Bear Lake Township.

The Western part of the Cemetery was purchased from Edwin and Bernice Evens on October 30, 1936. Lots are available for purchase.

There are 7.1+ acres in the entire Cemetery which is located on Maidens Road in Section 16 and 17 in Bear Lake Township.

### **Fairview Cemetery**

By all available records Fairview Cemetery must have been privately owned by Arlie L. Hopkins.

The old Cemetery has five acres (no lots available in this section) and the new one has ten acres and is plotted out. It was purchased from Benjamin E. and Mary Matthews on August 24, 1951.

Lots are available for purchase.

These cemeteries are on the corners of Linderman and Potter Road in Bear Lake Township.

## LIBRARIES

*This section has been updated in 2014*

Beginning in the fall of 2000, John and Genevieve Martin generously donated \$150,000 for the construction of our library. They requested the new library to be named after longtime Bear Lake residents Luke Keddie and Dr. Norconk.

In January 2001, the Township of Bear Lake, the Village of Bear Lake, and the Township of Pleasanton created the legal entity, the Kiddie Norconk Memorial Library Board, to build and administer our new library with the Manistee County Library.

Ken and Diana Edwards donated the property on Virginia Street for the location of the building, and on September 26, 2001, the groundbreaking ceremony took place. A reception followed at the Pleasanton Township Hall honoring the Martins and Edwards.

Together with the donation from the Martins and Edwards, the volunteer labor, Library Angels, who helped purchase shelving, a \$5,000 grant from the Oleson Foundation, and many other community members, the library opened in early June 2002.

The Keddie Norconk Memorial Library was dedicated July 13, 2002 during Bear Lake Days. Calvin Murphy, John Martin, Dr. William Anderson, Jerry Mathieu, and Pastor Al Decatur gave speeches.

In August 2002, the Keddie Norconk Memorial Board approved an operating agreement with the Manistee County Library. Whereas, the local board is to maintain the branch building, including lawn care, snow removal, and casualty insurance. The county library system will provide operating staff, books, and materials.

During 2010, the Keddie Norconk Memorial Library Board purchased additional property from the Edwards for an expanded paved parking lot. In addition, a gazebo was added for outside library activities and a place to sit when using the wi-fi.

The Keddie Norconk Memorial Library Board is a joint cooperative of Bear Lake Township, Pleasanton Township, and the Village of Bear Lake; with an operating agreement with the Manistee County Library. This partnership will provide library services for decades into the future to the people of northern Manistee County

The current Keddie Norconk Memorial Library Board members are:

Chair: David Adams  
 Secretary: Sandy Ertel  
 Treasurer: Deanna Pattison, Bear Lake Township Clerk  
 Trustee: Glen Moore, Village of Bear Lake President  
 Trustee: Carol Merrill, Pleasanton Township Supervisor

## GENERAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**GOAL:**

To have the use of the land in Bear Lake Township well balanced providing for the complimentary and compatible arrangement of land uses and activities. Encourage the orderly consumption of it's surface and subsurface resources and provide the maximum flexibility for future citizens to adapt to conditions which cannot be foreseen.

**OBJECTIVE:**

To encourage an atmosphere of trust between citizens, their neighbors, their government and provide for the greatest degree of personal liberty possible.

**STRATEGY:**

Based upon the belief that most people hold dear their obligation as caretakers of the land and will respect their neighbors rights as they would expect the same in return. Provide protective guidelines where zoning is concerned, without trying to manage details that are better decided upon by the land owner themselves.

**OBJECTIVE:**

Recognize the need and desires of people for quality living conditions.

**STRATEGY:**

Organize and establish areas in the township to provide compatible uses and allow for various residential zones, commercial services and agricultural activities.

**OBJECTIVE:**

Provide our lakes with guidelines for year round and seasonal residential use offering protection for lake water quality and property values.

**STRATEGY:**

Establish minimum set backs, square footage and other parameters which, while safe guarding the neighbor will allow the most flexibility to the property owner, resulting in decisions based upon logical placement v/s arbitrary restrictions.

**OBJECTIVE:**

To promote strong neighborhood structure by providing residential areas that are close to necessary service zones.

**STRATEGY:**

Establish reasonable set backs, square footage and other parameters which encourage good quality construction and logical placement of structures on a lot.

**OBJECTIVE:**

Provide areas for commercial activities which will offer easy access for our residents and the traveler and give the entrepreneur the best chance for success.

# GENERAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**STRATEGY:**

Establish variable degrees of commercial use availability along US 31 and near the Chief residential area.

**OBJECTIVE:**

Provide large land tract owners choices and flexibility managing their property. Structure a protective strategy to surface and subsurface natural resources recognizing land owner rights and adjacent land owner interests.

**STRATEGY:**

Provide reasonable acreage requirements for building sites. Provide reasonable setback distances from property lines, streams, lakes and other water areas. Provide reasonable use provisions.

**OBJECTIVE:**

Have all township guidelines easily understandable, clear, and avoiding redundancy with other government agency regulations.

**STRATEGY:**

Do not try to over regulate or legislate beyond the townships realm of responsibility.

**OTHER OBJECTIVES:**

Locate and develop a parcel of land to provide a recreation area for our residents and tourists.  
Providing water and land activities.

Buy additional property for the Township Cemetery (as much as feasible wherever possible)  
on Maidens Road.

For more efficient maintenance, discourage monuments and huge statues and encourage  
flat grave markers in the future.

The care of the cemetery should continue to be the Township's responsibility. Guidelines will be  
set by the Board and the Board members will check the cemetery several times during the year.

No parcel of land should be allowed to be landlocked.

All lakes should be zoned with the greatest protection.

Township Board should keep lobbying to return lost revenue to the Township  
through the Michigan Township Association.

Resort trade should be encouraged in Bear Lake Township.

Support the importance of agriculture in Bear Lake Township.

# 31: PLAT MAP

## BEAR LAKE

Refer to page 51 for keyed parcels

## T.23N.-R.15W.



## SUMMARY

The Bear Lake Township Comprehensive Plan was put together to provide information from which to base planning and zoning decisions upon. The purpose of township planning is to provide a guideline for future growth and development. It must take into account the inherent right of the individual and balance it with their rights as neighbors.

The entire community of the township and its neighbors are affected by the way the land is used and maintained. As caretakers of the land we do have the obligation to protect it for our future generations.

In this era of excessive regulation, this Planning Board has chosen to believe in the personal intelligence and integrity of the individual. In zoning it has given as much freedom as possible to the individual property owner with respect to property rights. This freedom does place certain obligations upon each property owner to respect the rights of his neighbor with the expectation that they will do the same in return.

The zoning ordinance which was written concurrently with this comprehensive plan reflects this philosophy. The ordinance takes into account the various terrains, lakes, thoroughfares and the existing communities make-up and personality. It was written with the belief that when a regulation exists which supercedes the township authority, it should not be redundantly duplicated, making this ordinance thicker and harder to understand. It was written with a realistic view of the present and the future in mind.

Submitted for the Good of Bear Lake Township  
by the 2002 Bear Lake Township Planning Commission

*With due diligence, the 2014 Bear Lake Township Planning  
Commission has studied and affirmed these pages.*

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# Appendix C

Sources and Data

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### Tab 2 – by Page

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## Data

US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006-2010, Selected Social Characteristics (DP02), Selected Economic Characteristics (DP03), and Selected Housing Characteristics (DP04)

Subject	Bear Lake Twp	
	Estimate	Percent
<b>POPULATION</b>		
1990	1,374	NA
2000	1,587	1.55%
2010	1,751	1.03%
2016 (proj.)	1,754	0.03%
<b>HOUSING OCCUPANCY</b>		
Total Housing Units	1,031	1031
Owner-occupied	595	57.7%
Renter-occupied	101	9.8%
Seasonal/Recreational/Occasional use	203	19.7%
Vacant - For Sale, For Rent, etc.	132	12.8%
<b>EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT</b>		
Population 25 years and over	1,308	1,308
Less than high school	147	11.20%
High school graduate and equivalency	557	42.60%
Some college, no degree	181	13.80%
Associate's degree	131	10.00%
Bachelor's degree	166	12.70%
Graduate or professional degree	126	9.60%
Percent high school graduate or higher	(X)	88.80%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	(X)	22.30%
<b>SCHOOL ENROLLMENT</b>		
Population enrolled in school	450	25.70%
<b>CLASS OF WORKER</b>		
Civilian employed population 16 years +	736	736
Private wage and salary workers	559	76.00%
Government workers	115	15.60%
Self-employed	56	7.60%
Unpaid family workers	6	0.80%
Private sector jobs	83.6%	
<b>INCOME AND BENEFITS (IN 2010 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)</b>		
Total households	746	746
Less than \$10,000	33	4.40%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	33	4.40%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	133	17.80%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	112	15.00%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	165	22.10%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	162	21.70%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	55	7.40%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	38	5.10%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	5	0.70%
\$200,000 or more	10	1.30%
Median household income (dollars)	39,309	(X)
Very low income	199	26.7%
Low income	112	15.0%
Moderate income	327	43.8%
High income	93	12.5%
Very high income	15	2.0%

Per capita income	19,311	(X)
Median earnings for workers (dollars)	20,806	(X)
Median earnings for male full-time, year-round workers (dollars)	40,139	(X)
Median earnings for female full-time, year-round workers (dollars)	26,063	(X)
<b>POVERTY</b>		
All families	(X)	9.40%
All people	(X)	11.40%
Under 18 years	(X)	15.60%
Receiving food stamps	73	9.80%
Receiving cash assistance	37	5.00%
<b>INDUSTRY</b>		
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	736	736
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	53	7%
Construction	72	10%
Manufacturing	55	8%
Wholesale trade	21	3%
Retail trade	52	7%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	19	3%
Information	5	1%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	18	2%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	43	6%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	120	16%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	152	21%
Other services, except public administration	78	11%
Public administration	48	7%
Manufacturing to retail jobs	1.06	
Non-retail	454	
Retail, arts, accommodations, food	204	
Non-retail to retail, arts, acc., food	2.23	

EMPLOYMENT STATUS		
Population 16 years and over	1,431	1,431
In labor force	841	58.80%
Civilian labor force	839	58.60%
Employed	736	51.40%
Unemployed	103	7.20%
Armed Forces	2	0.10%
Not in labor force	590	41.20%
Civilian labor force	839	839
Percent Unemployed	(X)	12.30%
Jobs per 1,000 residents	420	
Non-service jobs per 1,000 residents	409	
COMMUTING TO WORK		
Workers 16 years and over	720	720
Drove alone	560	77.80%
Carpooled	79	11.00%
Public transit (except taxi)	0	0.00%
Walked	45	6.30%
Other means	4	0.60%
Worked at home	32	4.40%
Workers who commute	688	95.56%
Commuters who drive alone		81.40%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	22.4	(X)
HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE		
Total households	746	746
Average household size	2.48	(X)
Average family size	2.81	(X)
VETERAN STATUS		
Civilian population 18 years +	1,383	1,383
Civilian veterans	180	13.00%
ANCESTRY		
Total population	1,872	1,872
American	128	6.80%
Arab	3	0.20%
Czech	37	2.00%
Danish	29	1.50%
Dutch	46	2.50%
English	268	14.30%
French (except Basque)	103	5.50%
French Canadian	72	3.80%
German	545	29.10%
Greek	9	0.50%
Hungarian	0	0.00%
Irish	177	9.50%
Italian	80	4.30%
Lithuanian	0	0.00%
Norwegian	72	3.80%
Polish	150	8.00%
Portuguese	0	0.00%
Russian	9	0.50%
Scotch-Irish	21	1.10%
Scottish	24	1.30%
Slovak	35	1.90%
Subsaharan African	0	0.00%
Swedish	138	7.40%
Swiss	4	0.20%
Ukrainian	4	0.20%
Welsh	12	0.60%
West Indian (excluding Hispanic)	0	0.00%

OCCUPATION		
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	58	36.50%
Service occupations	20	12.60%
Sales and office occupations	25	15.70%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	32	20.10%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	24	15.10%
VALUE		
Owner-occupied units	659	659
Median home value (dollars)	129,800	(X)
MORTGAGE STATUS		
Owner-occupied units	659	659
Housing units with a mortgage	376	57.10%
Housing units without a mortgage	283	42.90%
GROSS RENT		
Occupied units paying rent	66	66
Median rent (dollars)	725	(X)
HOUSE HEATING FUEL		
Occupied housing units	746	746
Utility gas	350	46.90%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	206	27.60%
Electricity	26	3.50%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	81	10.90%
Coal or coke	0	0.00%
Wood	80	10.70%
Solar energy	0	0.00%
Other fuel	3	0.40%
No fuel used	0	0.00%
YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT		
Total housing units	980	980
Built 2005 or later	25	2.60%
Built 2000 to 2004	90	9.20%
Built 1990 to 1999	154	15.70%
Built 1980 to 1989	93	9.50%
Built 1970 to 1979	116	11.80%
Built 1960 to 1969	98	10.00%
Built 1950 to 1959	118	12.00%
Built 1940 to 1949	88	9.00%
Built 1939 or earlier	198	20.20%

US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006-2010, Selected Economic Characteristics (DP03)

HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE				
Total households	746	+/-62	746	(X)
Family households (families)	576	+/-59	77.20%	+/-4.8
With own children under 18 years	253	+/-44	33.90%	+/-5.4
Married-couple family	440	+/-55	59.00%	+/-6.1
With own children under 18 years	189	+/-39	25.30%	+/-5.0
Male householder, no wife present, family	26	+/-13	3.50%	+/-1.8
With own children under 18 years	21	+/-13	2.80%	+/-1.7
Female householder, no husband present, family	110	+/-31	14.70%	+/-3.8
With own children under 18 years	43	+/-23	5.80%	+/-3.0
Nonfamily households	170	+/-39	22.80%	+/-4.8
Householder living alone	131	+/-30	17.60%	+/-3.8
65 years and over	81	+/-21	10.90%	+/-2.7
Households with one or more people under 18 years	267	+/-41	35.80%	+/-4.9
Households with one or more people 65 years and over	272	+/-45	36.50%	+/-5.1
Average household size	2.48	+/-0.16	(X)	(X)
Average family size	2.81	+/-0.17	(X)	(X)

INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS IS BELOW POVERTY LEVEL		
All families	9.4%	+/-3.7
With related children under 18 years	15.0%	+/-6.9
With related children under 5 years only	16.7%	+/-20.6
Married couple families	3.2%	+/-2.2
With related children under 18 years	5.2%	+/-4.6
With related children under 5 years only	0.0%	+/-46.8
Families with female householder, no husband	36.4%	+/-15.8
With related children under 18 years	55.6%	+/-26.0
With related children under 5 years only	45.0%	+/-55.0
All people	11.4%	+/-4.0
Under 18 years	15.6%	+/-7.4
Related children under 18 years	15.6%	+/-7.4
Related children under 5 years	20.0%	+/-11.5
Related children 5 to 17 years	13.9%	+/-7.3
18 years and over	10.0%	+/-3.9
18 to 64 years	11.1%	+/-5.2
65 years and over	7.1%	+/-3.2
People in families	9.6%	+/-3.7
Unrelated individuals 15 years and over	23.5%	+/-12.1

Notes for US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006-2010, Tables S2403 and S2404 (following pages)

Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. The degree of uncertainty for an estimate arising from sampling variability is represented through the use of a margin of error. The value shown here is the 90 percent margin of error. The margin of error can be interpreted roughly as providing a 90 percent probability that the interval defined by the estimate minus the margin of error and the estimate plus the margin of error (the lower and upper confidence bounds) contains the true value. In addition to sampling variability, the ACS estimates are subject to nonsampling error (for a discussion of nonsampling variability, see Accuracy of the Data). The effect of nonsampling error is not represented in these tables.

The methodology for calculating median income and median earnings changed between 2008 and 2009. Medians over \$75,000 were most likely affected. The underlying income and earning distribution now uses \$2,500 increments up to \$250,000 for households, non-family households, families, and individuals and employs a linear interpolation method for median calculations. Before 2009 the highest income category was \$200,000 for households, families and non-family households (\$100,000 for individuals) and portions of the income and earnings distribution contained intervals wider than \$2,500. Those cases used a Pareto Interpolation Method.

Industry codes are 4-digit codes and are based on the North American Industry Classification System 2007. The Industry categories adhere to the guidelines issued in Clarification Memorandum No. 2, "NAICS Alternate Aggregation Structure for Use By U.S. Statistical Agencies," issued by the Office of Management and Budget.

While the 2006-2010 American Community Survey (ACS) data generally reflect the December 2009 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) definitions of metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas; in certain instances the names, codes, and boundaries of the principal cities shown in ACS tables may differ from the OMB definitions due to differences in the effective dates of the geographic entities.

Estimates of urban and rural population, housing units, and characteristics reflect boundaries of urban areas defined based on Census 2000 data. Boundaries for urban areas have not been updated since Census 2000. As a result, data for urban and rural areas from the ACS do not necessarily reflect the results of ongoing urbanization.

#### Explanation of Symbols:

1. An '\*\*\*' entry in the margin of error column indicates that either no sample observations or too few sample observations were available to compute a standard error and thus the margin of error. A statistical test is not appropriate.
2. An '-' entry in the estimate column indicates that either no sample observations or too few sample observations were available to compute an estimate, or a ratio of medians cannot be calculated because one or both of the median estimates falls in the lowest interval or upper interval of an open-ended distribution.
3. An '-' following a median estimate means the median falls in the lowest interval of an open-ended distribution.
4. An '+' following a median estimate means the median falls in the upper interval of an open-ended distribution.
5. An '\*\*\*\*' entry in the margin of error column indicates that the median falls in the lowest interval or upper interval of an open-ended distribution. A statistical test is not appropriate.
6. An '\*\*\*\*\*' entry in the margin of error column indicates that the estimate is controlled. A statistical test for sampling variability is not appropriate.
7. An 'N' entry in the estimate and margin of error columns indicates that data for this geographic area cannot be displayed because the number of sample cases is too small.
8. An '(X)' means that the estimate is not applicable or not available.





## Esri Business Analyst

Financial Expenditures			
Bear Lake Township			
Area: 36.08 Square Miles			
	Spending Potential Index	Average Amount Spent	Total
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Market Value</b>			
Checking Accounts	80	\$4,504.00	\$3,134,892
Savings Accounts	83	\$10,568.84	\$7,356,173
U.S. Savings Bonds	92	\$366.78	\$255,289
Stocks, Bonds & Mutual Funds	74	\$28,053.09	\$19,525,641
<b>Annual Changes</b>			
Checking Accounts	43	\$109.84	\$76,454
Savings Accounts	81	\$306.43	\$213,284
U.S. Savings Bonds	373	\$8.62	\$5,998
<b>Earnings</b>			
Dividends, Royalties, Estates, Trusts	81	\$770.35	\$536,181
Interest from Savings Accounts or Bonds	77	\$679.80	\$473,157
Retirement Plan Contributions	74	\$987.24	\$687,143
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Original Mortgage Amount	58	\$12,110.45	\$8,429,170
Vehicle Loan Amount 1	88	\$2,327.86	\$1,620,247
<b>Amount Paid: Interest</b>			
Home Mortgage	65	\$2,935.06	\$2,042,875
Lump Sum Home Equity Loan	74	\$93.68	\$65,205
New Car/Truck/Van Loan	77	\$157.02	\$109,292
Used Car/Truck/Van Loan	91	\$142.94	\$99,492
<b>Amount Paid: Principal</b>			
Home Mortgage	74	\$1,415.96	\$985,544
Lump Sum Home Equity Loan	78	\$125.77	\$87,539
New Car/Truck/Van Loan	79	\$853.53	\$594,076
Used Car/Truck/Van Loan	94	\$689.21	\$479,705
<b>Charges</b>			
Checking Account and Banking Service	72	\$19.30	\$13,434
Finance Charges, excluding Mortgage/Vehicle	73	\$173.39	\$120,686





# Appendix D

## Documentation

A complete packet has been assembled that includes

- “Intent to plan” notices
- Draft distribution notices
- Public hearing notices
- All received comments
- Meeting minutes related to consideration of comments
- Public hearing meeting minutes

A copy of this packet is on file at Bear Lake Township Hall.

The documents are also available at  
[www.lakestoland.org/bear-lake-2/master-plan/](http://www.lakestoland.org/bear-lake-2/master-plan/)

As required by Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the signed resolution adopting this master plan is on the inside cover.





LAKES TO LAND REGIONAL INITIATIVE

## Implementation





# Priority Sharing

The original scope of work for the collaboration, designed at the very beginning of the process, was focused on respecting and honoring the individuality and unique qualities of communities while developing opportunities for partnership and collaboration.

Given their potential utility to other communities, the appendix includes a generic copy of the resolutions that Lakes to Land governing bodies were asked to consider and pass to signify grassroots acceptance and understanding of Lakes to Land goals and principles. Just as Lakes to Land began within a collaborative framework, a culmination was envisioned in which all of the participating communities brought their completed master plans—whether written with Lakes to Land or independently—together to share their content and discuss the potential for implementation partnerships. The event was to be called a “Convention of Communities,” and would be both a working session and a celebration of the successful master planning process.

But it’s hard to accurately predict the conditions at the end of a pioneering undertaking. The Leadership Team’s monthly meetings over the course of the year and a half spent writing the master plans forged some deep and personal connections among the communities’ planning commissioners and leaders, and excitement to share in each others’ work built as the drafts neared completion. There is a long, quiet administrative stretch between when a planning commission completes its draft and when it is formally and finally adopted, and the Leadership Team wanted to capitalize on and spread some of the enthusiasm before it dissipated. Accordingly, they invited planning commissioners and appointed and elected officials from all of the participating communities as well

as the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians to a “Priority Sharing Meeting” on June 27, 2013. Fifty-nine people, including a couple of members of the public, attended. This unprecedented gathering of community planners and leaders was exciting and dynamic, occurring at the right time under the right circumstances—a situation that could hardly be planned even by the best planners.

The meeting opened with a locally-sourced, zero-waste feast of pizza and veggies organized by Crystal Lake Township leadership team member Sharron May. In preparation for the meeting, communities were asked to choose five priorities that could serve as an initial step to advance their goals and vision, and the consultant team presented the full list of 69 priorities before consolidating them into ten categories in order to indicate potential alliances. Demonstrating both the value and effect of momentum, Tim Ervin of Manistee Alliance for Success introduced a new grant awarded to the Initiative by the Michigan Department of Treasury for implementation and explained that the grant was written to target support for zoning and the development of an Agriculture Innovation District—both common themes that had emerged through the collaborative goal-setting process.

Ten posters, one for each theme and its associated priorities, were affixed to the wall. Participants were given





## 5.1 Shared Community Priorities table

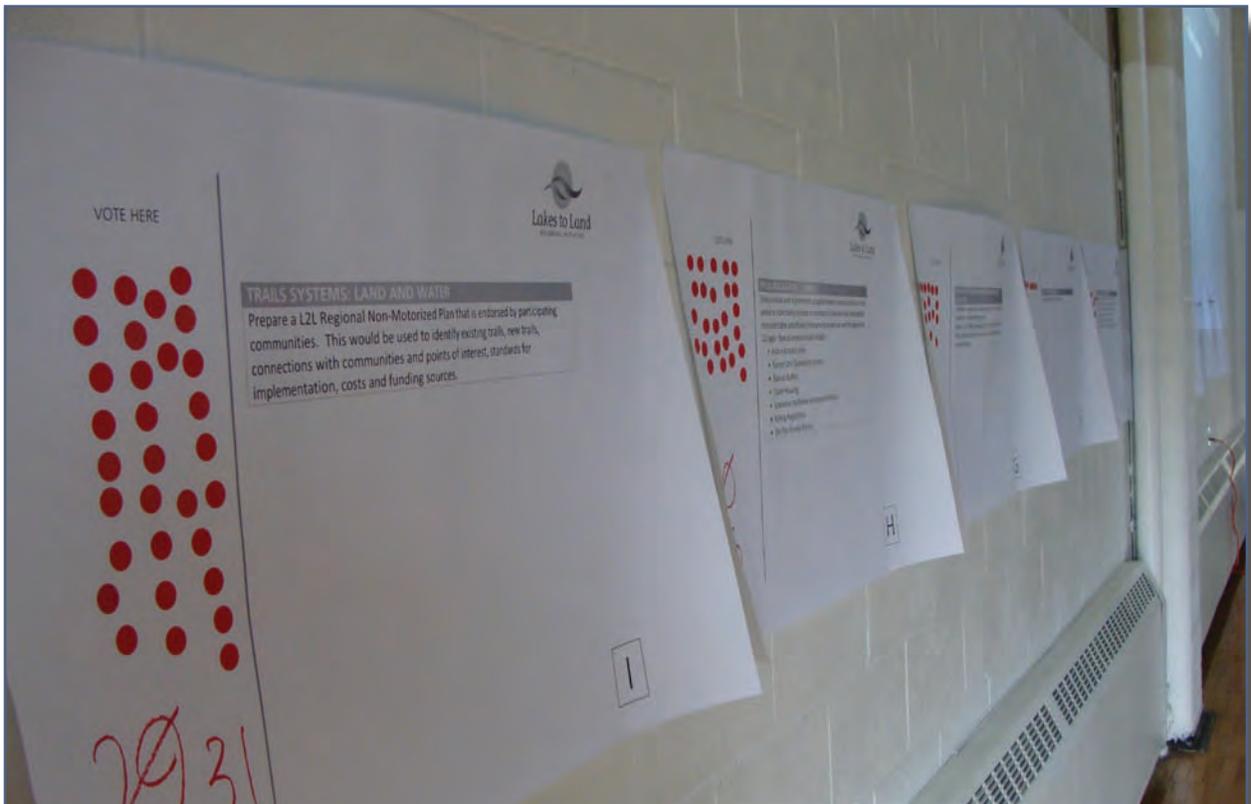
SHARED COMMUNITY PRIORITIES	
<b>AGRICULTURE</b>	
Blaine	Consider developing an agriculture vitality strategy
Pleasanton	Develop agriculture -based economic development.
<b>REDUCE BLIGHT AND NUISANCES</b>	
Crystal Lake	Ordinances should be adopted and enforced from nuisances such as blight, noise, air, smoke, light and water pollution
Joyfield	Multi-township household dump day
Gilmore	Blight
Honor	Development of a blight/junk ordinance.
Bear Lake Twp	Develop an enforceable blight and junk ordinance and take steps to implement it.
Bear Lake Village	Eliminate blight
<b>IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS</b>	
Crystal Lake	Improve communication and cooperation between Crystal Lake Township and its citizens and other local units of government.
Manistee	Reinstitute semi-annual meetings with neighboring townships
Manistee	Expand/Use Web Page and Facebook to promote Manistee and link to CVB, Chamber & AES
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Crystal Lake	Encouraged development in locations with public services and consistent with the density, character, and development in the area and our Cornerstones
Elberta	Historic Life Saving Station Preservation
Joyfield	Growth in light industry/small business (training, zoning issues)
Manistee	Work with Main Street/DDA to recruit more business options
Manistee	Promote Guidebook for Economic Development/Job Creation
Honor	Develop design guidelines that expresses the community's vision for achieving a desired Village character.
Arcadia	Implement commercial streetscape improvements.
Manistee Twp.	Continue to welcome construction of large retail stores in the township
Bear Lake Village	Revitalize downtown



INFRASTRUCTURE: EXPAND AND IMPROVE	
Elberta	Sewer/Water infrastructure
Joyfield	Infrastructure - wireless, natural gas
Joyfield	Township roads - assessment, upgrades, trails
Blaine	Develop a road improvement plan to cover maintenance, site plans (private roads) and good communication and coordination with MDOT and County Road Commission.
Gilmore	Technology
Arcadia	Project analysis and feasibility study of installing a sanitary sewer system.
Arcadia	Utilize and develop the facilities at the Pleasant Valley Community Center to be the local and regional trail hub.
Frankfort	Create and Improve Way-finding signage and Enhance the commercial corridor through traffic controls and improved pedestrian/non-motorized access and off-street parking.
Frankfort	Adopt Energy Independence Plans, including community energy generation and reduction in grid-based energy based on fossil fuels.
Bear Lake Village	Affordable sewer
Onokama	High-speed Internet infrastructure
M-22 SCENIC HIGHWAY	
Gilmore	M-22 Scenic Highway Designation
Onokama	M-22 corridor/ Scenic Heritage route
EXPAND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPROVE EXISTING FACILITIES	
Honor	Purchase the vacant properties along South Street for the purpose of developing a public access point to the Platte River.
Elberta	Penfold Park Marina (dredging, raised boardwalk/fishing deck, kayak/canoe launch, connect to Betsie Valley Trail)
Elberta	Elberta beach park development (parking, picnic tables, restrooms, changing area, play area/landscaping)
Elberta	Elberta Dunes South (trail signs, benches, lookout platforms, natural-history signage, promote year round activities, self-composting style permanent restrooms)
Frankfort	Create new standards for public facilities in recreational destinations and develop public private partnership(s) to build these facilities
Manistee Twp.	Provide more access to the Big Manistee River
Bear Lake Twp.	Develop a parks and recreation plan.
Bear Lake Village	Community Center
Bear Lake Village	Park Facility/Public Restrooms
Bear Lake Village	5 year Recreation Plan



SPECIAL REGULATIONS / ZONING	
Crystal Lake	Review and revise Rural Preservation Zoning District of the Zoning Ordinance
Blaine	Develop a scenic view protection plan
Blaine	Simplify PUD process
Elberta	Zoning Ordinance critique and revision
Gilmore	Funding to incorporate zoning revisions and provide for legal review of zoning ordinance.
Gilmore	Rural scenic charioteer preservation.
Honor	Revisions to the zoning ordinance.
Pleasanton	Update the Zoning Ordinance.
Frankfort	Update Parking regulations and standard
Frankfort	Develop Zoning Ordinance(s) for Alternative and Renewable Energy collection, storage and use along with conservation standards that will bring about the reduction in energy demand.
Manistee Twp.	Require buffers & connections between different land use districts
Manistee Twp.	Streamline permitting processes
Onekama	Zoning ordinance rewrite
Onekama	Protection of "Natural Resources" (watershed, agriculture, etc.)
TRAILS SYSTEMS: LAND AND WATER	
Gilmore	Trail Systems
Honor	Develop a non-motorized transportation route through the Village linking the Village to the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.
Pleasanton	Develop a multi-user trail system throughout the Township that also connects to regional trail systems.
Arcadia	Development of blue and green non-motorized transportation trails.
Bear Lake Twp.	Develop trail systems throughout the community and provide linkages to regional trail systems.
Onekama	Bike/ hiking pathway/ trail plan
Joyfield	Trails / bridge over Betsie River
WATER QUALITY	
Crystal Lake	Incorporate water quality and storm water MDEQ BMP's into land use planning and zoning processes.
Blaine	Develop a watershed plan, including management, committee and protection
Arcadia	Develop a Watershed Plan.
Manistee Twp.	Encourage buffers around lakes & streams



5.2 Volunteer card

**Lakes to Land**  
REGIONAL INITIATIVE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Shared Priorities**

- A. Agriculture
- B. Reduce Blight and Nuisances
- C. Improve Communications
- D. Economic Development
- E. Expand and Improve Infrastructure
- F. M-22 Scenic Highway
- G. Expand Recreation and Improve Facilities
- H. Special Regulations / Zoning
- I. Trails Systems (Land and Water)
- J. Water Quality

I am interested in working on one of these priorities:

First choice     Second choice     Third choice

**Thank you!**

four sticker “dots” and asked to vote for the four topics they considered to be of the highest priority. As indicated by the table below, the topics that received the greatest number of votes were trail systems, infrastructure, and economic development. Each participant was also given a card with all ten of the priorities listed and asked to provide their names, contact information, and their top three choices of topics on which

they would like to work. Based on that selection, they convened with other interested parties at the table marked with that topic’s letter for a discussion about that issue. In this way, the meeting both created a communication mechanism for future committee work and began to foster the relationships required to build it.

In many ways, the Priority Sharing Meeting accomplished much of

what was hoped would be done at the Convention of Communities by providing a forum to view and discuss the collaboration as a whole with fresh plans in hand, and by presenting the collaboration to a wider audience. Accordingly, later discussions among the Leadership began exploring the best format for the collaboration’s next steps with an eye toward turning the Convention of Communities into an event meant for a future purpose.

5.3 Regional Collective Priorities table

REGIONAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITIES	
Priority	Votes
Trail Systems: Land and Water	31
Infrastructure: Expand and Improve	29
Economic development	28
Special Regulations / Zoning	25
Reduce Blight and Nuisances	23
Recreation: Expand Opportunities and Improve Facilities	19
Water Quality	16
Agriculture	15
M-22 Scenic Highway	9
Improve Communications	7





# Collaboration

As the project's focus began to shift from planning to implementation, it became clear that the structure of the collaboration may also need to adapt.

Planning commissions are designated by Michigan law as the principal authors of a master plan, and so the candidates for members of a planning collaborative were relatively easy to identify. Implementation, on the other hand, is best practiced with all available hands. The preliminary work committees suggested at the Priority Sharing Meeting represented a possible pool of participants, but need a firmer formation and leadership.

Items that rose to the top of the collaboration's immediate needs included a new organizational structure to replace the one that had been guided by the project's initial documents, the capacity to assume responsibility for that structure without the constant oversight of consultants, and partnerships with state agencies, foundations, and other entities who could assist with the implementation. An important step toward capacity building came with the training of 23 of the planning commissioners serving

jurisdictions within the collaboration through the Michigan State University Extension Citizen Planner program. Those who took the class reported learning a great deal about planning in general and also had yet another opportunity to interact with other planning commissioners, sharing strategies and forming relationships.

Being armed with knowledge is important, but putting that knowledge to use is what L2L is all about. With the master plans written, communities are faced with the charge of implementing them. After several meetings and discussions, a core group of Lakes to Land leaders with the help of Manistee Alliance for Economic Success recommended creation of a 501(c)(3) as the appropriate structure under which to organize the collaboration's future efforts towards implementing the newly adopted master plans. Much of the work at developing this backbone entity is still being determined, but it is assured that the philosophy is based

on a community collective action model. The desire is to help communities collaborate and co-generate knowledge in order to achieve community change. This organization would be a framework for cross sector implementation and collaboration, providing a backbone of support services to L2L participants to help implement and achieve their priorities and goals. The entity would be a hub for a collective action model that would develop and “connect the dots” between public agency, private foundation, academic and other resources and master plan priorities, including those involving multiple jurisdictions. The application and supporting documentation has been prepared and the official filing with the Internal Revenue Service is anticipated in 2014.

The implementation arm of the L2L Initiative is also faced with a larger question centered on the involvement of partners. Many, such as the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, had very clearly-outlined procedures for any given community to request grant funds and other assistance, but no procedures at all to accommodate a request shared among many communities. This represented more of an opportunity than an insurmountable hurdle, especially given the gubernatorial administration’s overall emphasis on collaboration as evidenced by a complete restructuring of the state’s revenue sharing program to reward communities that could demonstrate wise use of resources through shared services. However, it is always challenging to make broad changes to business-as-usual in a large bureaucracy, and several methods of

communication were bandied about: Would it be better to have the agency present all its options and then try to fit one as closely as possible? Or should L2L representatives lay their case on the table and ask the agency to design a procedure around it? Would it be better to talk to a number of partners at once to garner a “big-picture” discussion, or would one-on-one meetings allow for more attention to detail? Meetings have been held with regional representatives from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and the Michigan Department

***“The master plan is not the most valuable thing that has come from this. Building relationships has been the biggest value. The network is being built from the citizens up.”***

of Agriculture and Rural Development, and both the “backbone entity” and the implementation partners are learning together how to collaborate to fulfill each others’ goals. This is a process that will no doubt continue into the future.

At the time of this writing, the above mentioned questions continue to be a topic of discussion and action among the Leadership Team members, a roster that has swelled over the last two years to include the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians as well as additional planning commissioners and other officials who have taken an interest in the project as it has grown. Even as attention to the master planning

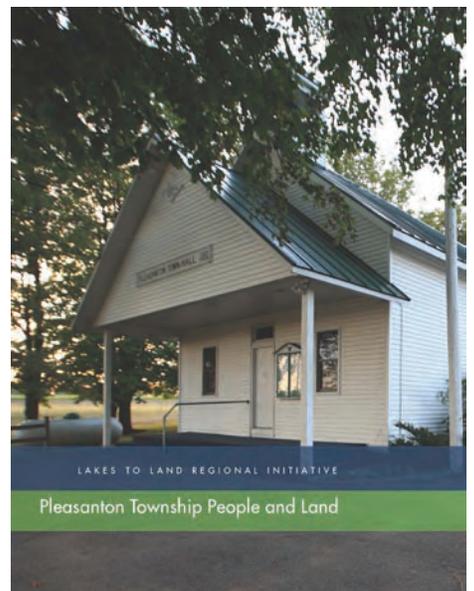
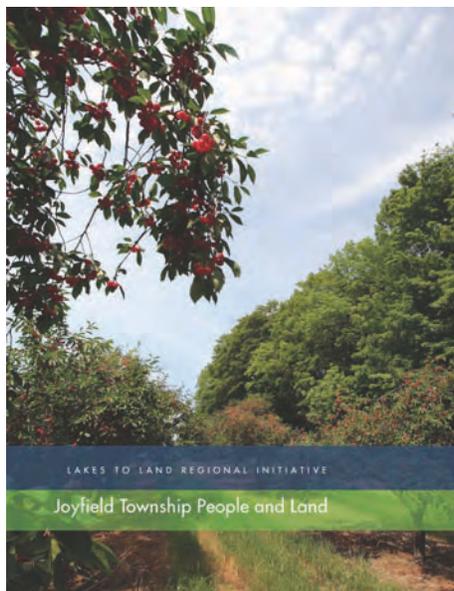
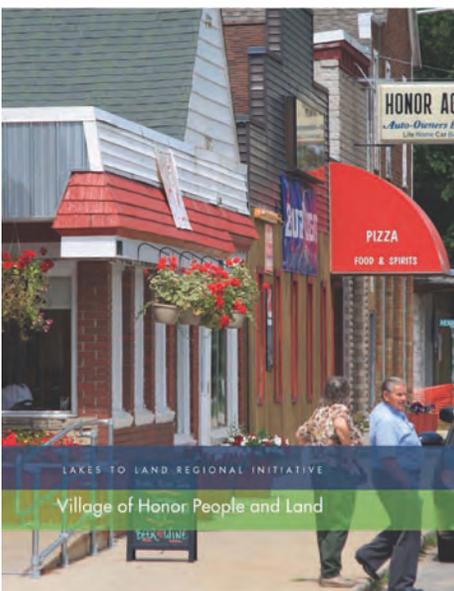
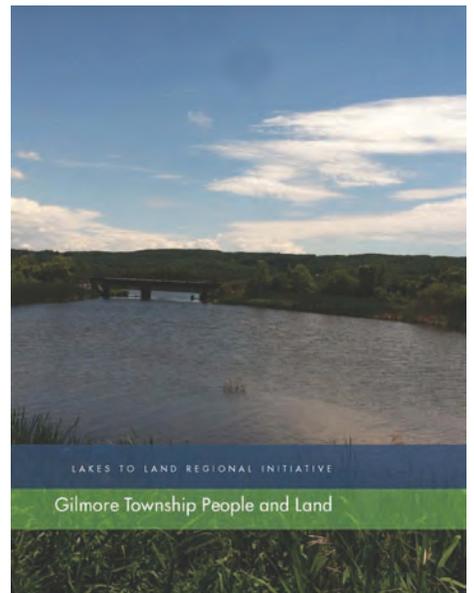
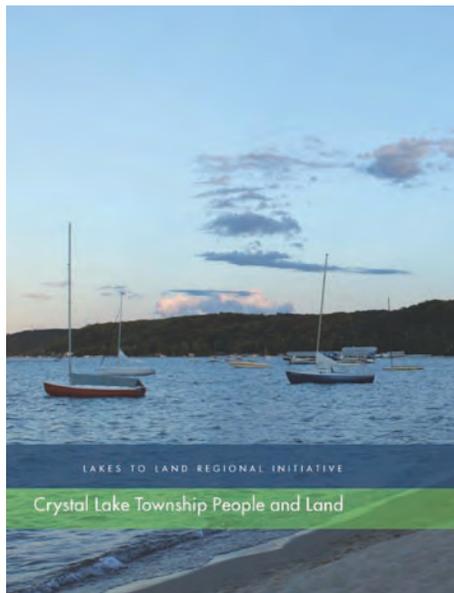
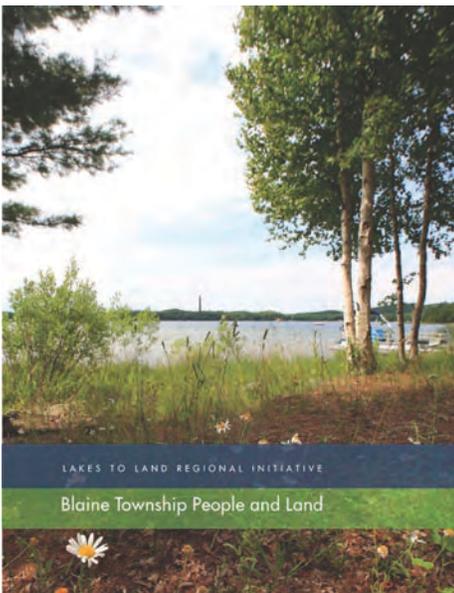
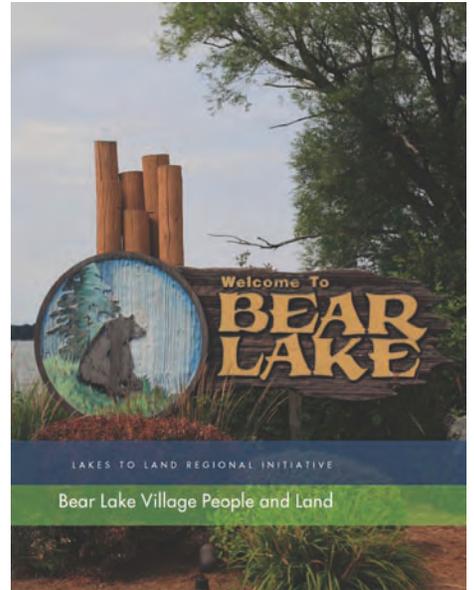
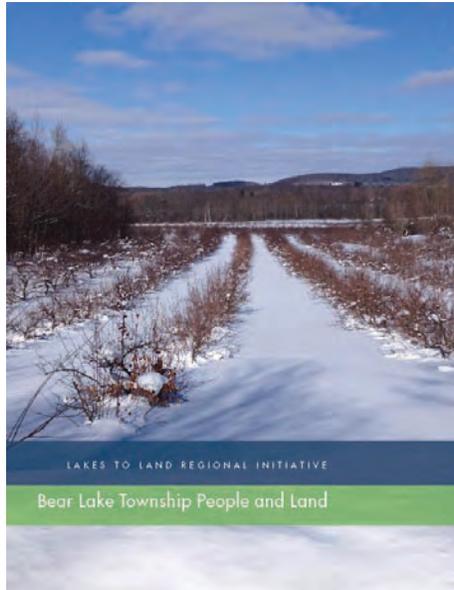
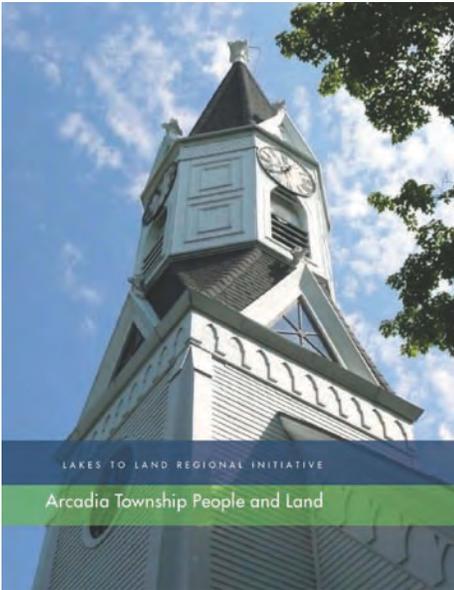
process is waning to a narrow focus on adoption procedures, the collaborative structure that produced an unprecedented nine coordinated plans, woven together with shared geography and concerns, continues to hum with anticipation. Work has begun on launching a food innovation district, designating an M-22 scenic byway, and new protections for the Arcadia Lake watershed. With the assistance of the Executive Office, a meeting has been held with State department leadership to review the process, results, and priorities of the L2L. In addition, L2L is also on the agenda for

the October Annual Meeting of the Council of Michigan Foundations. Foundations will learn about L2L and, more importantly, have an opportunity to become part of a collective action framework for implementation. Another

implementation grant opportunity is being developed that would design a water and land trail system within the region, connecting with trails outside of the region and look at ways that L2L participants can better manage and develop recreational assets.

Even as these steps toward tangible progress are underway, it is also appropriate to reflect on a passage from the April 2014 minutes of the L2L Leadership Team: “The master plan is not the most valuable thing that has come from this. Building relationships has been the biggest value. The network is being built from the citizens up.”

5.4 Lakes to Land Master Plan covers





**BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP**  
7771 LAKE STREET • BOX 187  
BEAR LAKE, MICHIGAN 49614-0187

July 8, 2014

Bear Lake Township Planning Commission  
Quarterly Meeting  
Public Hearing-Master Plan

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m. by Chair, Bill Ringel. Roll call was taken. PC members present: Bill Ringel, Cindy Zatarga, Floyd Bowling Jr., Janette May, and Kristie Harless. Also present, Corky Best, township supervisor. No others present.

The public hearing was opened at 6:55 p.m. The master plan was discussed. Janette had reviewed the final copy of the plan, and noted that the changes recommended by the planning commission had been done. We are going to ask that a photo of the township hall be added before the final printing if possible.

There being no other questions or discussion, the public hearing was closed at 7:10 p.m.

The minutes of the quarterly meeting on April 8, 2014 were reviewed. Motion by Janette May, second by Cindy Zatarga, to approve the minutes as printed. All voted in favor.

Motion by Janette May, second by Cindy Zatarga, to approve the master plan as printed with the addition of a picture of the township hall if possible, and accept the 2014 master plan from Beckett and Raeder and forward to the Bear Lake Township Board for approval. Roll call vote: yeas, Janette May, Floyd Bowling Jr., Cindy Zatarga, Bill Ringel, and Kristie Harless. Nays: none. Motion carried.

Next we will be working on the wind ordinance, and our next quarterly meeting will be on Tuesday, October 14, 2014.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m. by Chair, Bill Ringel.

Respectfully submitted,



Kristie Harless, Secretary  
Bear Lake Township Planning Commission

BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP  
COUNTY OF MANISTEE, MICHIGAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION # 7 of 2014

TOWNSHIP BOARD RESOLUTION TO ADOPT  
BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

BECKETT &

OCT 16 2014

RAEDER INC.

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare a Master Plan for the use, development, and preservation of all lands in the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission prepared a master Plan and submitted the Plan to the Township Board for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, the plan was distributed for review to entities identified in the MPEA, and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on July 8, 2014 to consider comment on the proposed Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that the proposed Master Plan is desirable and proper, and furthers the use, preservation, development goals, and strategies of the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Township Board also finds that the proposed Master Plan is desirable and proper, and furthers the use, preservation, development goals, and strategies of the Township;

THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

ADOPTION OF THE BEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN. The Township Board hereby approved and adopts the proposed Master Plan, including all of the chapters, figures, maps, and tables contained therein.

Motion by: BEST

Seconded by: MAY

I, the undersigned, the Clerk of the Township of Bear Lake, Manistee County, Michigan, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of certain proceedings taken by the Bear Lake Township Board at its regular meeting held on SEPTEMBER 16 2014 relative to adoption of the resolution therein set forth; that said meeting was conducted and public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, being Act 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, and that the minutes of said meeting were kept and will be made available as required by said Act.

Dated: SEPT 16, 2014

Deanna Pattison

Deanna Pattison, Bear Lake Township Clerk