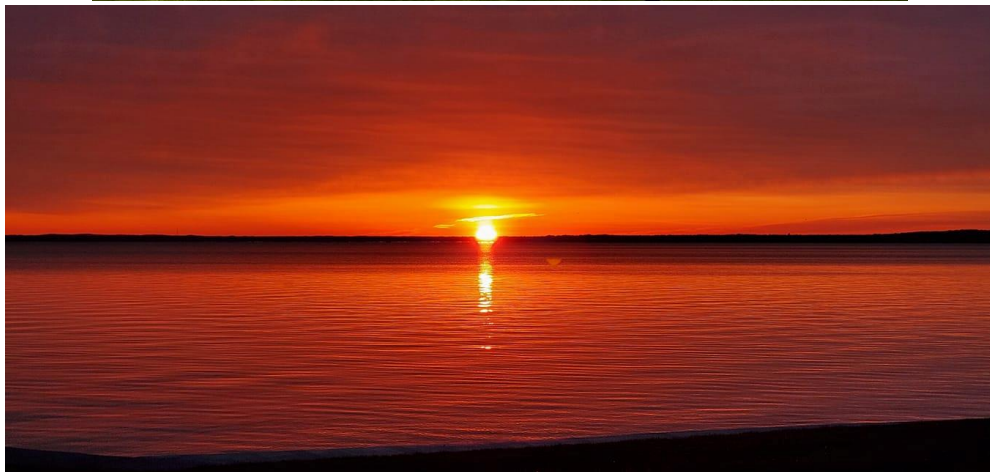


Lake Township 2023 Master Plan



**Lake Township
Roscommon County, Michigan**



Lake Township Roscommon County Michigan

5 Year Master Plan 2023 – 2028

Lake Township Board

Anthony Farhat, Supervisor

Andrea Grabowski, Clerk

Harry Trier, Treasurer

Tony Olson, Trustee

David Russo Jr., Trustee

Planning Commission Board

John Hibbard

Scott Hassler

Tony Olson

George Mika

Patricia Riss

Our Vision

To provide our citizens and visitors a safe, pleasant, and fun environment to live, work and enjoy. As stewards of the Western shore of Houghton Lake, we understand what it takes to keep our waterways clean, safe, and accessible to the general public.

INDEX

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Planning Process	Page 1
Location and setting	Page 2
Status of Planning and Zoning	Page 4
Zoning Districts	Page 6

CHAPTER TWO - SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

Population.....	Page 8
Seasonal Population.....	Page 8
Age Distribution	Page 9
Household Characteristics.....	Page 10
School Enrollment and Educational Attainment	Page 10
Housing Stock.....	Page 11
Income	Page 12
Poverty.....	Page 13
Labor Force	Page 14
Lake Township Finances	Page 16

CHAPTER 3 - COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Township Government	Page 19
Water Supply and Sewage Disposal	Page 20
Recycling and Solid Waste	Page 20
Utilities.....	Page 21
Transportation	Page 21
Schools and Libraries.....	Page 22
Cemeteries.....	Page 23
Public Safety.....	Page 24
Medical Facilities and Health Services.....	Page 24
Public Lands, Public Facilities and Recreation	Page 25

INDEX

CHAPTER 4 – NATURAL RESOURCES

Overview	Page 28
Climate	Page 28
Topography	Page 30
Geology	Page 32
Soils	Page 32
Water Resources.....	Page 36
Wetlands and Forests.....	Page 37
WildlifeHabitat.....	Page 39

CHAPTER 5 - EXISTING LAND COVER/USE

General Land Division Patterns.....	Page 42
Existing Land Cover/Use.....	Page 42
Residential.....	Page 44
Commercial	Page 45
Marijuana Overlay District	Page 45
Industrial.....	Page 45
Institutional/Recreational.....	Page 45
Agricultural.....	Page 46
Non-Forested Uplands.....	Page 46
Upland Forests.....	Page 46
Lowland Forests and Wetlands.....	Page 46
Surface Water	Page 47

CHAPTER 6 - COMMUNITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Public Input.....	Page 48
Goals and Objectives.....	Page 48
Quality of Life.....	Page 48
Community Character.....	Page 49

INDEX

Planning and Community Development.....	Page 50
Residential Land Uses.....	Page 51
Commercial Areas	Page 52
Industrial Land Uses.....	Page 52
Infrastructure and Community Facilities.....	Page 53
Recreation and Public Lands.....	Page 55
Government.....	Page 56
Economic Development.....	Page 58
Natural Environment	Page 59

CHAPTER 7 - FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Overview	Page 61
Future Land Use Planning Areas.....	Page 62
Forest/Conservation	Page 62
Rural Residential.....	Page 63
Non-Waterfront Residential	Page 63
Lakefront Residential	Page 64
Commercial	Page 64
Commercial Waterfront	Page 65
Light Industrial.....	Page 65
Agriculture	Page 65
Special Issue Areas.....	Page 65
Community Parks and Recreation	Page 65
Roads	Page 66
Community Facilities.....	Page 66

CHAPTER 8 - PLAN ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Plan Coordination and Review.....	Page 68
Public Hearing	Page 68

INDEX

Plan Adoption.....	Page 68
Plan Implementation	Page 68
Zoning Plan	Page 69
Grants and Capital Improvement Plan	Page 71
Recreation Plan	Page 71
Official Documentation	Page 72

List of Figures

Figure 1.1	Regional Location Map	Page 3
Figure 1.2	Lake Township Zoning Map	Page 5
Figure 2.1	Revenue Breakdown 2017 – 2022	Page 17
Figure 2.2	Expenditure Breakdown 2017 -2022	Page 17
Figure 3.1	Distances from Lake Township	Page 21
Figure 3.2	Public Lands Map	Page 27
Figure 4.1	Mean Annual Snowfall	Page 30
Figure 4.2	Quadrangle Map of Lake Township	Page 31
Figure 4.3	Quantenary Geological Map	Page 33
Figure 4.4	General Soils of Lake Township Map.....	Page 35
Figure 4.5	Wetlands Map	Page 38
Figure 4.6	Protected Species Location Map	Page 41
Figure 5.1	Existing Land Use Map	Page 43
Figure 7.1	Future Land Use Map	Page 67

INDEX

List of Tables

Table 2.1	Population Change	Page 8
Table 2.2	Occupancy Characteristics Lake Township	Page 9
Table 2.3	Age Distribution Percent Change	Page 9
Table 2.4	Male / Female Ratio	Page 10
Table 2.5	Household Characteristics	Page 10
Table 2.6	Educational Attainment	Page 11
Table 2.7	Housing Counts and Occupancy Status	Page 12
Table 2.8	Income	Page 12
Table 2.9	Income Sources	Page 13
Table 2.10	Poverty Rates	Page 14
Table 2.11	Roscommon County Employment Trends	Page 14
Table 2.12	Employment Status	Page 15
Table 2.13	Employees by Major Employment Type	Page 16
Table 2.14	Multi Year General Fund Data	Page 18
Table 4.1	Monthly Temperature and Precipitation Averages	Page 29
Table 5.1	Existing Land Use	Page 44

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Planning Process

The purpose of the Lake Township Master Plan is to provide guidelines for future development within the community while protecting the natural resources and rural township character. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008 states: A local unit of government may adopt, amend, and implement a Master Plan as provided in this act. The general purpose of a Master Plan is to guide and accomplish, in the planning jurisdiction and its environs, development that satisfies all the following criteria:

1. Is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical.
2. Considers the character of the planning jurisdiction and its suitability for uses, judged in terms of such factors as trends in land and population development.
3. Will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare.
4. Includes, among other things, promotion of or adequate provision for 1 or more of the following:
 - a. A system of transportation to lessen congestion on streets and provide for safe and efficient movement of people and goods by motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal users.
 - b. Safety from fire and other dangers.
 - c. Light and air.
 - d. Healthful and convenient distribution of population.
 - e. Good civic design and arrangement and wise and efficient expenditure of public funds.
 - f. Public utilities such as sewage disposal and other public improvements.
 - g. Recreation.
 - h. The use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This plan presents background information on demographics and economic data, natural resources, community services and facilities, and existing land uses. The background information is used to identify important characteristics, changes, and trends in Lake Township. A public input session was used to gather input from residents and landowners. Based on information gathered at this session, the background data, and input from board members, the Lake Township Planning Commission developed goals and objectives. These goals and objectives, along with a series of maps including soils, ownership, existing land use and zoning, provide the basis for the Future Land Use Plan. The **Future Land Use Map Figure 7.1** recommends locations for several types of future development within the Township. The Master Plan was developed by the Lake Township Planning Commission with the assistance from the Lake Township Board. This plan looks at a twenty-year planning horizon, with required revisits every five years.

Location and Setting

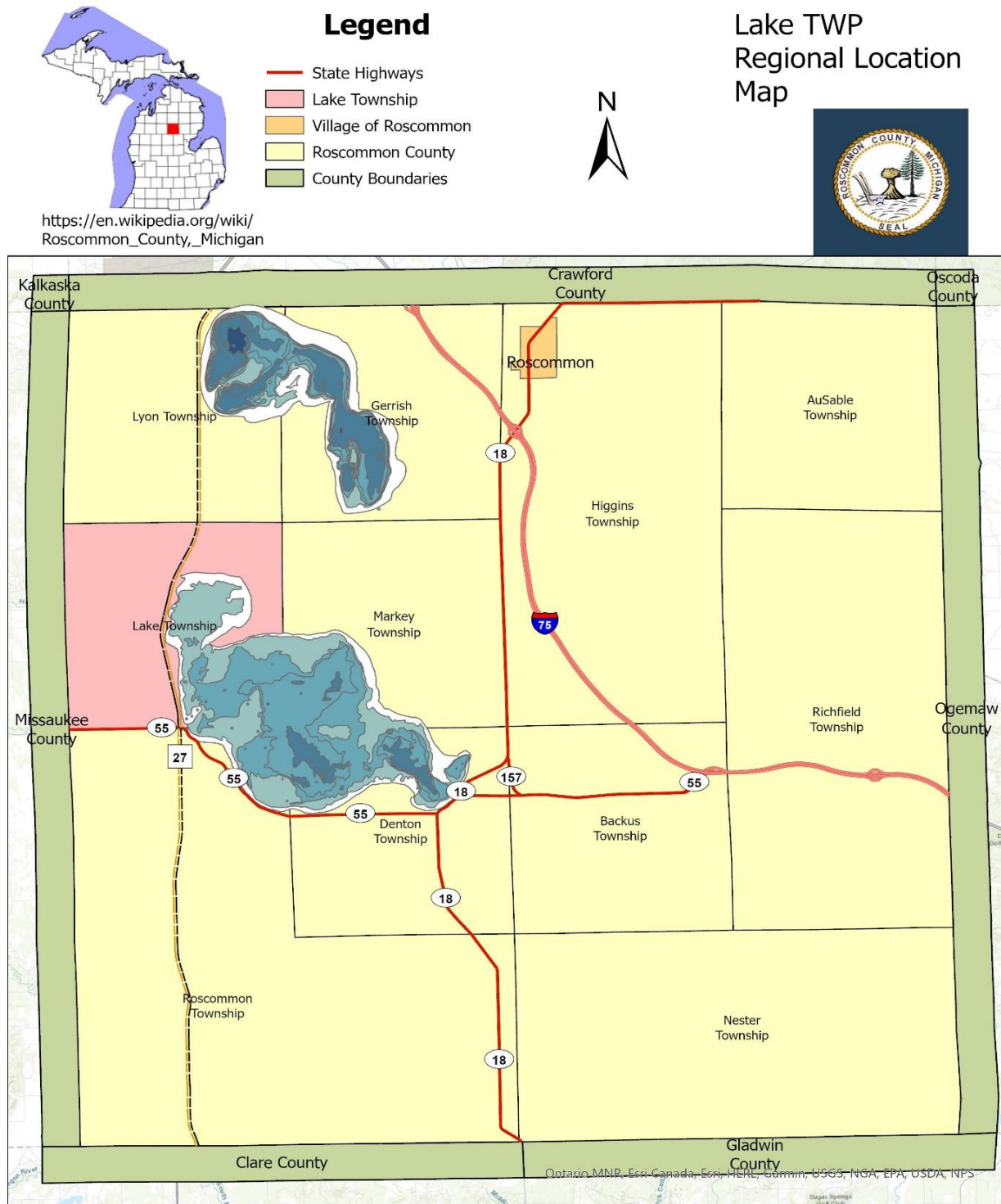
The Township of Lake is in the middle of Michigan's Lower Peninsula in Roscommon County. Lake Township is one of eleven townships located in Roscommon County. It is nestled between Lyon Township to the north, Markey Township to the east, Roscommon Township to the south, and Enterprise Township of Missaukee County to the west. The township comprises 35.6 square miles with approximately 23.8 square miles of land and 11.8 square miles of water. **Figure 1.1-Regional Location.**

Lake Township is also a part of the Greater Houghton Lake area which is comprised of four townships surrounding the lake. Lake Township is the smallest township on Houghton Lake and has several characteristics that define it as a rural resort and retirement community.

Lake Township is where the Muskegon River begins its journey west to Lake Michigan. About five miles of the river runs through the township and is used for fishing, kayaking, and canoeing. Another unique feature of the township is the many man-made canals that run through it giving residents access to the Lake.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Figure 1.1 - Regional Location Map



CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Lake Township is divided into eleven zoning districts. **Figure 1.2 – Zoning Map.**

Residential districts cover the developed area around Houghton Lake with commercial districts located along the M-55 and Old US-27 highway corridors. The most predominate land use in Lake Township is State Forest. The State of Michigan owns about 10,800 acres throughout the Township. The Houghton Lake Flats area includes 770 acres. This wildlife management area is controlled and maintained by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

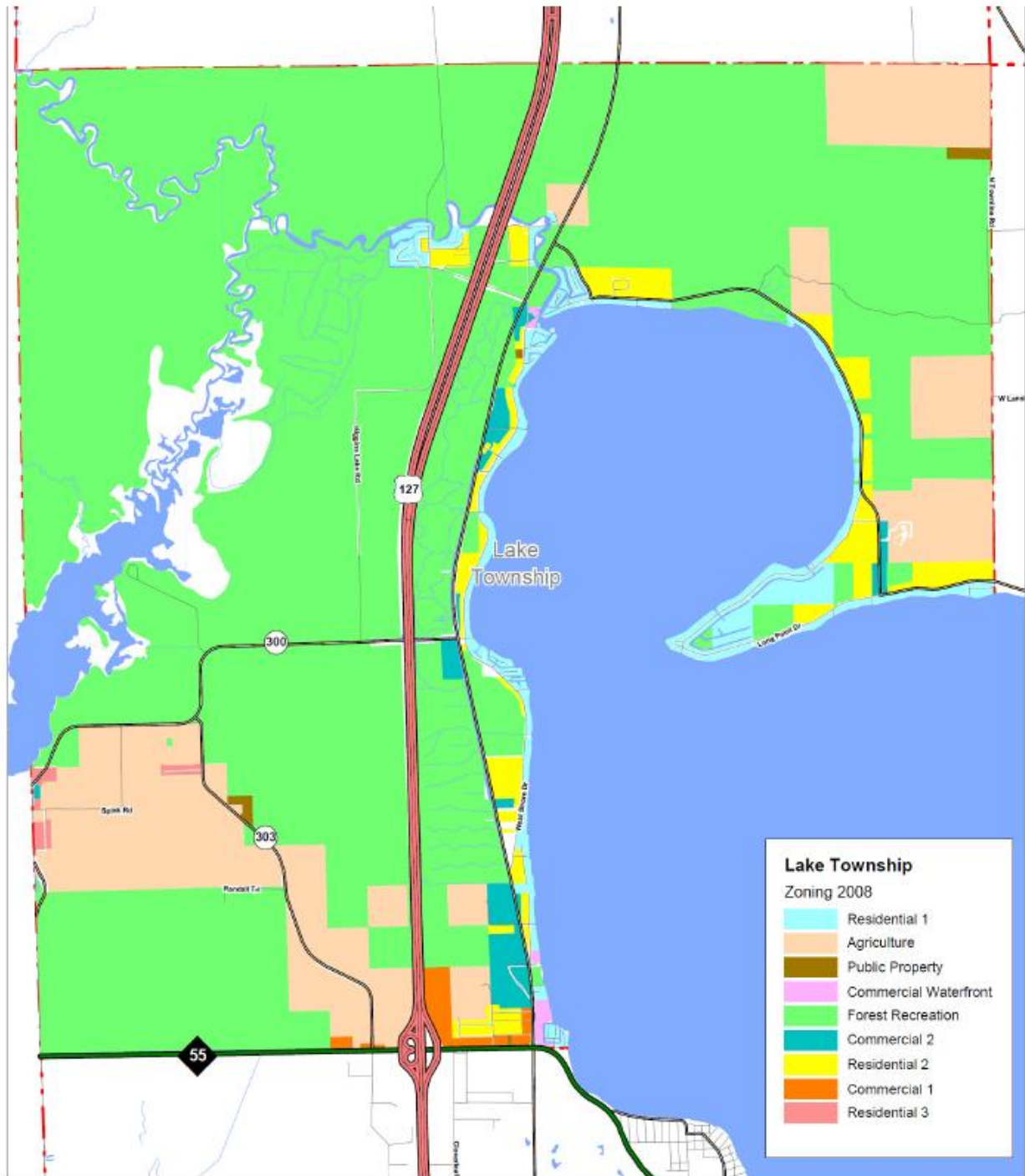
The presence of public lands clearly guides the land use patterns within Lake Township. As seen in **Figure 1.2** (Zoning) blocks of private lands are surrounded by public lands forming a patchwork of ownership. Residential development is predominantly located on the shores of Houghton Lake. Other areas of residential development are separated by large tracts of public lands and sometimes creates challenges for providing community services. Nearly 64 percent of the housing units are seasonal, which creates challenges dealing with the influx of seasonal residents and visitors.

The Status of Planning and Zoning

Lake Township established a planning commission in the 1960's. In 2019 the Board of Lake Township established Ordinance 57 which under the authority granted by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008 and the Michigan Enabling Act, Public Act 110 of 2006, to confirm the powers of the Lake Township Planning Commission formally established under the Township Planning Act of 1959. The ordinance reestablished the appointments, terms, and membership of the Planning Commission identifying the officers and the minimum number of meetings per year of the Planning Commission, and to prescribe the authority powers and duties of the Planning Commission under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. The Lake Township Planning Commission will have the powers, duties, and limitations provided by those acts subject to the terms and conditions of Ordinance 57 and any future amendments to that ordinance.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Figure 1.2 – Lake Township Zoning Map



CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Zoning Districts

AG (RA-3) It is the purpose of the **AG Agricultural / Forested District** to preserve and encourage farming, dairying, forestry operations and other such rural type activities in areas where such activities exist. Large vacant areas, fallow land and wooded areas may also be included in this district.

R-1 Residential District is designed to be the most restrictive of the residential districts to encourage an environment of predominantly low-density, single-family dwellings.

RR-1 Residential District is designed to be the most restrictive of the rural residential districts to encourage an environment of predominantly low-density, single-family dwellings.

R-2 Residential District is designed to permit a greater density of residential development than that provided in the R-1 Residential District classification.

R-3 Residential District is designed to permit a greater density of residential development than that provided in the R-1, RR-1, and R-2 Residential District classifications.

R-4 Residential District - Mobile Home Park is designed to permit for the growing trend toward mobile homes and mobile home parks and the need for well-located and properly developed areas to accommodate them by use under appropriate construction and development standards to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of such areas as well as the residents of adjoining premises. The area zoned for such purposes should be able to accommodate the increased traffic generated from such developments as well as the necessary utilities.

C-W Commercial Waterfront District is designed to allow commercial enterprises along the waterfront that support tourism and can co-exist with residential zones.

C-1 Commercial District is designed to provide retail sales and commercial service uses catering to the public as distinguished from industry or general business customers, but do not become a nuisance or cause other objectionable disturbances or excessive noise.

C-2 Commercial District is designed to permit commercial uses more extensive than the retail variety, occupying greater land areas for each such use, but does not cause a nuisance, objectionable disturbance, or excessive noise.

MO Marihuana Overlay District is intended to provide opportunities for the development of certain Commercial Marihuana Facilities.

FR Forest and Recreational District is composed of State-owned lands. It is so named for identification purposes only. For zoning purposes, it shall be zoned the same as the abutting privately owned property.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Following completion of the 2001 Master Plan, a Zoning Ordinance (9) regulating land use activities was enacted by the Lake Township Board on March 23, 2002. The ordinance has been amended several times since its initial adoption with the most recent being June 8, 2020. The ordinance has provided guidance in regulating the location, density, and standards for local development. Lake Township has recognized the need to complete a new Master Plan in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008. Two key issues of the plan are to provide a legal foundation for the Township Zoning Ordinance and to manage development within the Township. By documenting existing conditions such as environment, socio-economic, community services, transportation, recreation and land use within a Master Plan, the Township will be able to formulate appropriate land use goals and policies to guide development and serve as the basis for enforceable zoning. The Master Plan will be used as a basis for re-examining the Township's zoning districts and land use development controls.

CHAPTER 2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

Population

The Lake Township population increased by 6.5 percent from 2010 to 2020 from 1,215 to 1,295. This is the equivalent of 35.9 persons per square mile. Over this ten-year period, the county population has decreased 4.0 percent, the state has increased 2 percent and the United States population has increased 7.4 percent.

Table 2.1			
Population Change 2010 - 2020			
Township	2010	2020	% Change
Lake Township	1,215	1,295	6.5%
Lyon Township	1,370	1,252	-8.6%
Enterprise Twp	194	174	-10.3%
Denton Township	5,557	5,293	-4.75%
Roscommon Twp	4,411	4,397	-0.31%
Markey Township	2,360	2,401	+1.7%
Roscommon County	24,449	23,459	-4.0%
State of Michigan	9,883,640	10,077,331	+1.9%

Seasonal Population

Obtaining accurate numbers of seasonal residents and tourists is difficult. Because the U.S. Census is conducted each decade in April, the numbers only reflect those persons who live in the County on a year-round basis. Because of the high percentage of seasonal use homes coupled with tourism and annual events, the population can balloon during peak summer months. A rough estimate of the number of seasonal residents is calculated by multiplying the number of seasonal housing units by the average number of persons per household. The 2020 Census showed that there were 1060 seasonal housing units in the Township and an average household size of 2.12 persons. If those seasonal units are occupied the population would increase by roughly 2,247. Considering the additional influx of seasonal visitors and tourists staying in area motels, campgrounds, or family homes, one could expect even greater temporary population increases during certain times.

CHAPTER 2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

Table 2.2 Occupancy Characteristics Lake Township - 2010 – 2020				
Category	2010	2020	Change	% Change
Occupied	621	596	-25	-4%
Vacant /Seasonal	1054	1060	6	0.6%

Age Distribution

Lake Township residents, like most of the region, are almost all white (98.2%) and are equally divided between the sexes, (658 male, 637 female). Most Residents are homeowners (89.3%) where the average household size is 2.12 persons. The median age in the township is 61.5 years, with 43% of the population aged over 65 years of age.

Table 2.3 Age Distribution Percent Change from 2010 - 2020									
Area	Age	2020 0 - 24	Percent Change from 2010	2020 25 - 44	Percent Change from 2010	2020 45 - 64	Percent Change from 2010	2020 65 +	Percent Change from 2010
Lake Twp		227	-14.31%	151	4.05%	452	2.69%	465	14.28%
Roscommon County		4789	-15.77%	3883	-10.49%	7405	-12.32%	7786	16.00%
Michigan		3078916	-9.73%	2528928	-1.13%	2619683	-2.54%	1823284	32.48%

Lake Township, Roscommon County, and Michigan all gained population in the age group 65 and older. Lake Township also saw increases in the 25 to 64 age group, while the state and county lost population in those age groups. Losses in population in Lake Township were found in the age group of zero to 24 years.

In conclusion, the Township's population structure is changing. Long-term trends in the increase of median age continues at a faster rate than the State of Michigan and US. The rate has increased with the downturn in the economy as young families move to

CHAPTER 2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

other areas for employment. An aging population needs access to social and medical services. As the population grows and ages, the community's emergency response services will experience an increase in demand.

Table 2.4				
Male / Female Ratio Lake Township - 2010 - 2020				
Sex	2010	2020	Change	% Change
Male	593	658	65	10.9%
Female	622	637	15	2.4%

Household Characteristics

Household characteristics from the 2020 US Census are presented in the following table. According to the 2020 Census, of the 587 households in Lake Township, 71.2% are households of one or more persons over the age of 60. That is well over the states 42.9%. The average household size was 2.21 persons as compared to Michigan, where the average household size was 2.43.

Table 2.5						
Household Characteristics Lake Township / Roscommon County - 2020						
Area	Total Households	Average Household Size	Household w/Individuals under 18	Householder Living Alone	Householder Alone 65 +	Households with one or more over 60
Lake Township	587	2.21	12.3%	24.5%	17.5%	71.2%
Roscommon County	11,420	2.07	16.6%	35.6%	19.4%	61.4%
Michigan	4,051,798	2.43	27.3%	27.4%	12.4%	42.9%

School Enrollment and Educational Attainment

According to the US Census Bureau in 2020, of the 1,068 persons 25 years and older, 91 percent were high school graduates, while 8 percent attended school into the 9th-

CHAPTER 2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

12th grade with no diploma, and 1 percent had completed less than the 9th grade. 20 percent had received some college education with no degree, 10 percent had associate degrees, 8 percent had earned a bachelor's degree, and 7 percent had earned a graduate or professional degree. Compared to Roscommon County and the State of Michigan, Lake Township has a lower percentage of residents with bachelor's and graduate/professional degrees.

Table 2.6 Educational Attainment Lake Township, Roscommon County & Michigan 2020			
	Lake Township	Roscommon County	Michigan
Population 25 and over	1068	19,074	6,853,674
Less than 9th Grade Education	1%	2%	3%
9th to 12th Grade, no Diploma	8%	8%	6%
High School Graduate	46%	37%	28%
Some College, No Degree	20%	26%	23%
Associate Degree	10%	10%	10%
Bachelor's Degree	8%	9%	18%
Graduate or Professional Degree	7%	8%	12%
High School Graduate or Higher	91%	90%	91%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	15%	16%	30%

Housing Stock

Over past decades, Lake Township has experienced a steady increase in the number of housing units, with a high percentage used as seasonal housing. The Census in 2020 found 1,656 housing units with 596 units occupied and 1,060 units classified as seasonal/vacant. Like many townships in northern Michigan, Lake Township has a significant percentage (64%) of seasonal housing units. By comparison, 6 percent of the housing units statewide are classified as seasonal. According to the US Census Bureau, 73 percent of the housing in Lake Township was built between 1960 and 1999. New housing construction sharply dropped after "The Great Recession of 2008" with

CHAPTER 2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

only 8% of new houses being built from 2000 to 2019.” Lake Township has seen a steady increase in remodeling and new construction in the past 5 years.

Table 2.7				
Housing Counts and Occupancy Status in Roscommon County – 2020				
Municipality	Total Units	Occupied	Vacant Seasonal	% Vacant Seasonal
Lake Twp	1656	596	1060	64%
Denton Twp	4942	2635	2307	46%
Lyon Twp	2240	691	1549	69%
Roscommon Twp	2950	2002	948	32%
Markey Twp	2520	1203	1317	52%
Roscommon County	23,069	11,415	11,645	50%

Income

According to the U.S. Census 2020, American Community Survey, Lake Township’s median household income was \$40,089, which was lower than the County and the State. The median family income was also lower than the State and County, but the per capita income was higher for the Township in comparison to the County, but much lower than the State of Michigan.

Table 2.8			
Income: Lake Township, Roscommon County and Michigan - 2020			
Income Type	Lake Township	Roscommon County	Michigan
Median Household Income	\$40,089	\$41,828	\$59,234
Median Family Income	\$51,357	\$52,363	\$75,470
Per Capita Income	\$25,720	\$23,863	\$32,854

Table 2.9 shows a breakdown of income sources within Lake Township, Roscommon County, and the State of Michigan from the American Community Survey. The estimates show 49 percent received earnings from employment, 61 percent received

CHAPTER 2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

Social Security retirement, and 42 percent received retirement income from pensions. The high percentage of retirees receiving Social Security and retirement income as compared to the State relates to the population structure previously discussed.

Table 2.9						
Income Sources in Lake Township, Roscommon County and Michigan - 2020						
Income Sources	Lake Township		Roscommon County		Michigan	
<i>Subject with</i>	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Earnings	289	49%	6,068	53%	2,977,984	73%
<i>Mean Earnings</i>	\$45,636		\$56,075		\$86,093	
Social Security Income	363	61%	6,625	58%	1,399,365	34%
<i>Mean SS Income</i>	\$21,570		\$21,576		\$22,043	
Retirement Income	246	42%	4,404	39%	1,129,960	28%
<i>Mean Retirement Income</i>	\$28,781		\$21,733		\$25,612	
Supplemental Security Income	33	5%	948	8%	237,021	6%
<i>Mean Supplemental Security Income</i>	\$10,858		\$10,418		\$10,653	
Cash Public Assistance Income	81	13%	1,735	15%	620,197	15%
<i>Mean Cash Public Assistance Income</i>	\$650		\$2,853		\$5,240	

Poverty

Information from the American Community Survey showing poverty rates in Lake Township, Roscommon County, and Michigan based on income in the past 12 months is presented in **Table 2.10**. The percentage of families, and families with female head of household is higher in Lake Township than the other two entities. The percentage of individuals 65 years and over living in poverty is slightly higher in Lake Township than in Roscommon County but significantly lower than the State of Michigan.

CHAPTER 2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

Table 2.10			
Poverty Rates: Lake Township, Roscommon County and Michigan			
	Lake Township	Roscommon County	Michigan
Families	12.4%	10.3%	9.0%
Families with Female Head of Household	33.8%	24.5%	25.3%
Individuals 65 and over	6.2%	5.7%	10.6%

Labor Force

Employment and Unemployment

The civilian labor force is defined as all civilian individual 16 years of age and older who are employed or actively seeking employment. Labor force numbers can change rather quickly in response to economic conditions. During prolonged periods of unemployment, unsuccessful job seekers can drop out of the work force by going back to school, leaving the area in search of work elsewhere or by stopping the search for work. **Table 2.11** presents information on employment trends for Roscommon County from 2016 to 2020. Jobless rates spiked in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic and have now dropped to typical long-term rates.

Table 2.11			
Roscommon County Employment Trends			
Year	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment Rate
2016	12,746	62%	8.6%
2017	12,618	62%	8.7%
2018	12,426	61%	7.9%
2019	12,252	63%	7.6%
2020	12,222	62%	12.8%

Table 2.12 shows the American Community Survey estimates for employment status in Lake Township, Roscommon County, and Michigan. Thirty eight percent of the

CHAPTER 2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

population 16 years of age and older was identified as being in the labor force. This percent is slightly lower than Roscommon County but some twenty-two points lower than the State as a whole. The high percentage of people not in the labor force within the Township and County is attributed to the high percentage of retirees living in the Township and County.

Table 2.12						
Employment Status: Lake Township, Roscommon County & Michigan						
Employment Status	Lake Township		Roscommon County		Michigan	
Population 16 and over	1,137		20,767		4,967,254	
In Labor Force	436	38.4%	8,639	41.6%	4,967,254	60.9%
Unemployed	78	6.9%	1,744	8.4%	562,792	6.9%
Not in Labor Force	701	61%	12,128	58%	3,189,157	39%

Employment Types

According to the 2020 Census, 53% of Lake Township residents are employed in Management, business, science, and art occupations. This category includes education, legal, computer, community service, healthcare practitioners, and business and financial jobs. Another area of high employment in the township is sales and office related jobs. A substantial percentage of the work force in Lake Township go outside the township for employment. Neighboring towns such as Houghton Lake, West Branch, Roscommon, Cadillac, and Prudenville provide employment opportunities. The average commute time for Lake Township residents is 32 minutes.

CHAPTER 2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

Table 2.13
Total Employees by Major Employment Type

Occupation Category	Lake Township		Roscommon County	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Management, business, Science and Arts	212	53%	2383	30%
Service Occupations	54	13%	1660	21%
Sales and Office Related	74	18%	1882	24%
Natural Resources, Construction & Maintenance	29	7%	771	10%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	38	9%	1227	15%

Lake Township Finances

Information contained in this section was generated from F65 forms filed with the State of Michigan each year. This section is intended to give a summary of the financial health of Lake Township.

Revenues and Expenditures

Revenue is generated from tax dollars generated from the millage rate multiplied by taxable property valuations. Revenue is also generated from other sources such as state and federal grants, permits, fees, special assessments, and state share of sales tax. **Figure 2.1** shows the sources of revenue for Lake Township. The largest revenue source has historically been property taxes. In 2021, Lake Township approved two marijuana facilities that will be a source of new revenue for the township in the years to come. **Figure 2.2** shows Lake Township expenses by function from 2017 to 2021. The largest expenditures for the township are General Government and Public Works. Lake Township provides curb side trash pick-up through Republic Services and also provides streetlights to the residents of the township.

CHAPTER 2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

Figure 2.1
Lake Township Revenue Breakdown

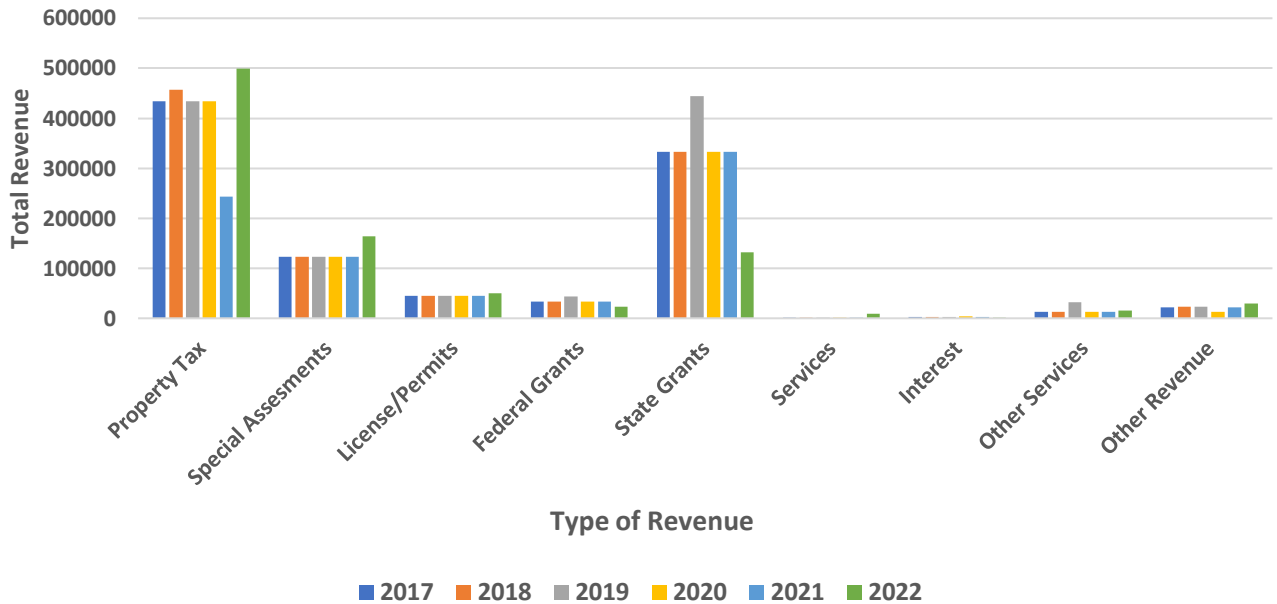
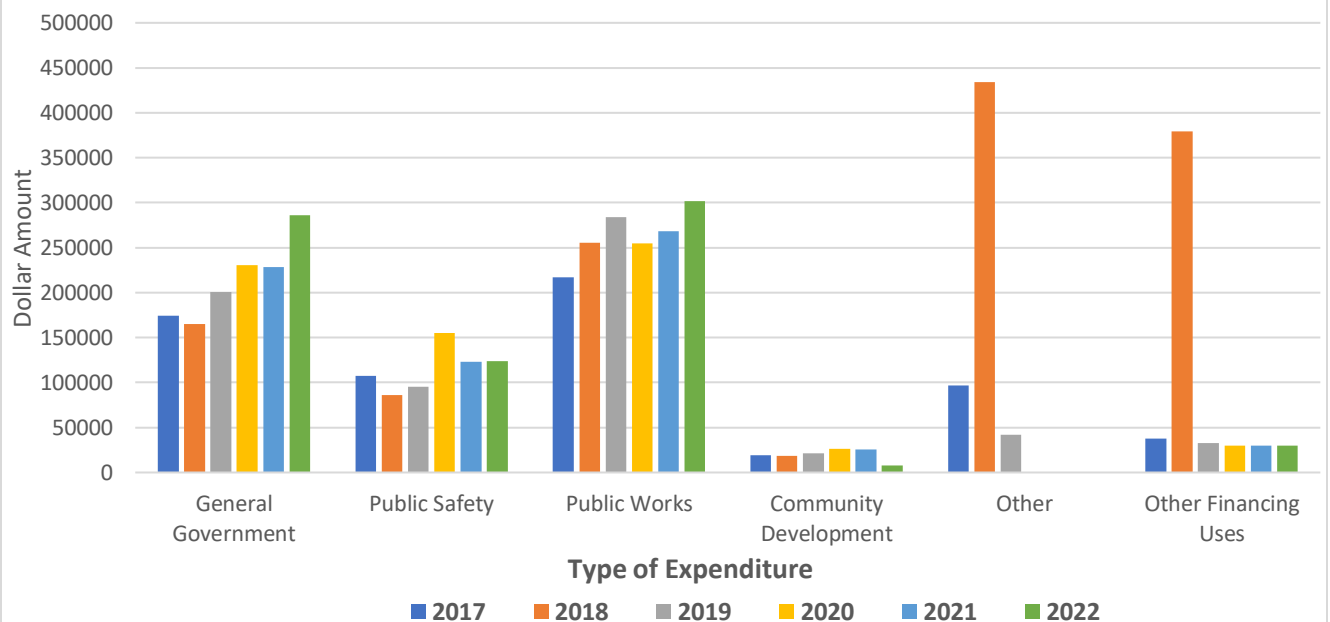


Figure 2.2
Lake Township Expenditure Breakdown



CHAPTER 2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

Financial Stress

Lake Township is currently in a positive financial position. The Township has no long-term debt and is anticipating future revenue to cover expenses in the coming years.

Table 2.14 shows the townships general fund data for the past 6 years.

Table 2.14						
Multi-Year General Fund Data						
Year	Population	Revenues	Expenditures	Fund Balance	Long Term Debt	Taxable Value
2017	1,183*	\$768,811	\$651,973	\$1,561,783	\$0.00	\$115,096
2018	1,189*	\$1,109,897	\$1,308,781	\$1,362,899	\$0.00	\$117,930
2019	1,169*	\$793,686	\$676,746	\$1,487,849	\$0.00	\$122,666
2020	1,119	\$821,666	\$696,557	\$1,612,958	\$0.00	\$126,280
2021	1,130*	\$892,483	\$686,613	\$1,982,524	\$0.00	\$130,391
2022	N/A	\$924,799	\$749,220	\$2,033,844	\$0.00	\$138,290

*Estimate

CHAPTER 3 Community Services and Facilities

Key factors that contribute to the quality of life in a community are the types and varieties of services available to residents and visitors. Smaller rural communities unlike more populated communities have limited financial resources to provide essential services. In the case of fire and ambulance response, many rural communities collaborate cooperatively with adjacent communities to provide essential services. This chapter of the Master Plan will identify the types and extent of services available to residents and businesses in Lake Township. Although these services may be sufficient for the needs of the current population, future development may increase the demand to upgrade or expand the services and facilities to maintain a satisfactory living environment.

Township Government

Lake Township is a Northern Michigan General Law Township. The Township Hall is located at 1380 Michelson Road, Houghton Lake, Michigan. The Lake Township Board consists of five members: the supervisor, clerk, treasurer, and two trustees. The board members run the Township government and produce the budget for the Township. The Township also has a five-member Planning Commission and a three-member Zoning Board of Appeals.



CHAPTER 3 Community Services and Facilities

Water Supply and Sewage Disposal

Public drinking water is not available in Lake Township. Residents rely on on-site private wells for domestic drinking water. Typical well yields of 10 to 100 GPM with a 6" diameter well is located in bedrock or glacial deposits. Private drinking water wells are regulated by the District Health Department under the Public Health Code. According to the Central Michigan Health Department, most drinking water wells in Lake Township are drilled to a depth of 30 to 200 feet in glacial materials. Wells for facilities such as restaurants or motels serving the public fall under regulations of the Federal and State Safe Drinking Water Acts, where isolation distance, minimum yield, and water quality testing requirements are more stringent than for a private residential well. In some areas of the Township, residents experience problems with iron and water hardness. Areas of concern would be shallow wells located in sandy soils, particularly in more compact developments and around lakes.

Public sanitary sewer services are available in Houghton Lake area through the Houghton Lake Sewer Authority (HLSA). The HLSA was created in 1973 by the townships of Denton, Lake, and Roscommon for the purpose of operating, maintaining, administering, and managing a sanitary sewage facility for the benefit of the townships and for the betterment of the health, safety, economy, and general welfare of the participating municipalities. Beginning in January 2007 the authority took over control and ownership of the sewer facilities as allowed under Act 233 of 1955. The authority includes the sewer systems of Denton, Lake, Roscommon, and Markey Townships.

Recycling and Solid Waste

Lake Township provides curbside trash service to the residents of Lake Township through Republic Services. Lake Township does not provide recycling services, but residents are encouraged to recycle with the purchase of a permit with neighboring townships. Roscommon County provides two hazardous waste collections each year in the spring and fall.

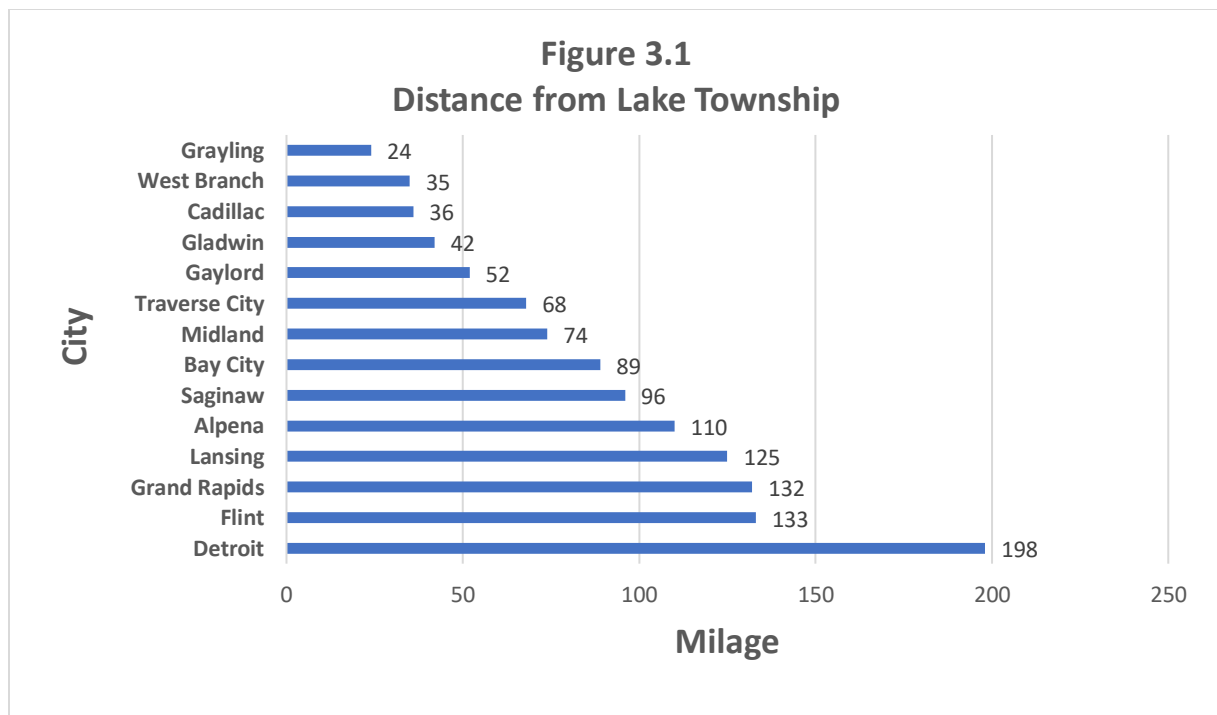
CHAPTER 3 Community Services and Facilities

Utilities

Utilities in the township are provided by Consumers Energy (electric service), DTE Energy (natural gas service), AT&T, Verizon, and Frontier (phone service), and cable television and high-speed internet are provided by Charter/Spectrum Communications.

Transportation

The transportation network consists of federal and state highways, primary and secondary county roads, along with seasonally maintained, unimproved public roads and private roads. US-127 is a limited access, divided highway. Primary and secondary public roads are under Roscommon County Road Commission authority. The primary road network is made up of M-55, US-127, Old 27, and East Houghton Lake Dr. (County Rd 300). Nearby access to I-75 and US-127 provides Lake Township residents with access to recreational and vacation opportunities throughout Northern Michigan and the United States.



CHAPTER 3 Community Services and Facilities

The Roscommon County Transportation Authority operates a county-wide Dial-A-Ride bus service that is headquartered in Houghton Lake. Funding for operation of the service is provided by a county millage, user fees, and state and federal grants. Regional air service is available at Saginaw MBS Airport, Flint Bishop Airport, Detroit Metro Airport, Lansing Airport, Grand Rapids Airport and Cherry Capital Airport in Traverse City. Gaylord, Houghton Lake, and Grayling have airport facilities for private planes. The Lake State Railway runs north-south through Roscommon County. Freight transportation is provided from Gaylord to Bay City and points beyond.

Schools and Libraries

Lake Township is served by the Houghton Lake School District which provides primary and secondary education. The district provides services to about 1700 pupils in a nearly 500 square mile area that comprises of the southern portion of Roscommon County and the eastern portion of Missaukee County. Houghton Lake Community School district includes Collins Elementary School and Houghton Lake Middle School which have been updated and Houghton Lake High School.

Our Lady of the Lake Regional Catholic School in Prudenville provides elementary education including a young fives/Montessori kindergarten program and continuing through 8th grade. The Crawford, Ogemaw, Oscoda, and Roscommon (COOR) Intermediate School District provide special education, career and technical education, information technology, and general education programs and services on request that single local districts find difficult or impossible to provide.

Higher education is available to the Townships' students through Kirtland Community College (KCC) in Grayling, with a satellite campus in Gaylord. KCC is a two-year institution serving the higher education needs of area residents. They offer programs in transfer degrees, health sciences, trades/occupational, public safety, art, business, technology, and community enrichment. MidMichigan Community College in Harrison, North Central Michigan College (NCMC) in Petoskey and Northwest Michigan College

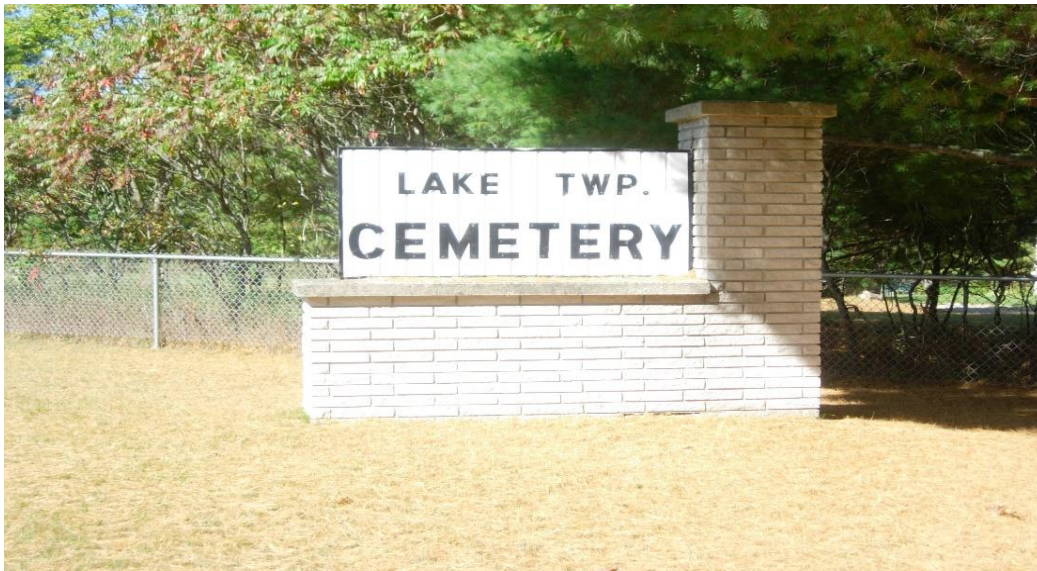
CHAPTER 3 Community Services and Facilities

in Traverse City, are two-year institutions with host sites for universities offering bachelor's and master's degree programs.

The Houghton Lake Public Library is in Denton Township. Established originally as a school district Public Library in 1964, the Library Board of Trustees chose to become a district library in 1995 and passed the successful millage in 1996 to provide a stable funding source for the library. Houghton Lake District library is the anchor of the county for fiber optic Internet and has in turn tripled Internet speeds. Most library services are free. Though small and rural the Houghton Lake Public Library strives to provide the same kinds of services and programming that larger libraries provide. The library remains patron centered with a board of trustees, staff, and volunteers working together to provide a quality library with excellent services.

Cemetery

Lake Township Cemetery is owned and operated by the Township. The Township Cemetery Ordinance adopted in June of 2016 and amended in May of 2021 establishes regulations relating to the operation, control, and management of the cemetery.



CHAPTER 3 Community Services and Facilities

Public Safety

The Roscommon County Sheriff Department and Michigan State Police provide police and public safety services to the Township residents. The Roscommon County Sheriff Department is in the Village of Roscommon.

Ambulance service is available in Lake Township for basic and advanced life support from Houghton Lake Ambulance Service, located in Roscommon Township.

Lake Township has its own fire department located in the Township at 13473 West Shore Dr (pictured below).



Medical Facilities and Health Services

Primary care providers, specialists, and urgent care are provided by Munson and the MidMichigan Health Park facility located in Houghton Lake. MidMichigan also provides a student-based health center located at the Houghton Lake High School which is staffed by a nurse practitioner and social services counselor with an adjusted cost to families. Area hospitals include the West Branch Regional Medical Center in West Branch and Munson Hospital located in the City of Grayling. Mid-Michigan Health operates Mid-Michigan Medical Centers in Clare and Gladwin, both of which are within a one-hour distance of the township. The Central Michigan District Health Department also helps to fill community health care needs not available or affordable elsewhere. The Health

CHAPTER 3 Community Services and Facilities

Department service area includes Roscommon, Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, and Osceola Counties. An office of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services is located in Roscommon County.

Public Lands, Public Facilities and Recreation

The location and amount of public land guides the land use patterns in Lake Township. Lake Township has over 15,000 acres of public land with 81% (12,378 acres) being owned by the State of Michigan. The abundance of state-owned land provides opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing, and camping.

See **Figure 3.2 Public Lands**.

Houghton Lake State Forest Campground is on the North Shore of Houghton Lake with fifty semi modern campsites and restroom facilities. The Houghton Lake West Shore Boat Launch is also in Lake Township on the West Shore and includes multiple hard service launch skids, restrooms, and parking area. The Houghton Lake Flats is 770 acres marshland that is a popular birdwatching destination along the AuSable Birding Trail. The Houghton Lake Flats Observation Deck (pictured below) was constructed in 1998 along Old U.S. Highway 27 just south of Yeager Road.



CHAPTER 3 Community Services and Facilities

Extending out into the marsh, the platform provides a panoramic viewing area of the flats looking toward US 127. The observation deck contains a small parking lot and boardwalk, as well as informational markers describing the wildlife management area and identifying several species of observable animals.

Lake Township has no recreation facilities located within the township borders. Lake Township completed its 2023 – 2028 Recreation Plan and is actively pursuing the addition of recreational facilities to the township.

Surrounding communities have parks, beaches, golf courses, and many other amenities that are easily accessed for township residents and visitors.

CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

Overview

The forested landscape and rural nature of this portion of the State are central to the community character and economic base. Recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, golfing, snowmobiling, boating and a multitude of other outdoor activities attract people to the area to visit and live. At the same time, the environment places constraints on human activities. Certain critical and sensitive parts of the natural landscape, if altered, can create problems not easily corrected. For example, the indiscriminate filling of wetlands and clearing land of vegetation can cause increased flooding and soil erosion. Therefore, it is essential that any future development respect the distinctive characteristics of the natural environment. Preserving the attractiveness of Lake Township will maximize the economic benefits of the tourist and recreation industries.

Climate

The climate in Lake Township is Warm Summer Continental Climate according to the Koppen Classification. It is not strongly influenced by the climate moderation of the areas closer to the Great Lakes. The most noticeable lake influence is the increased cloudiness and lake-effect snowfall in the fall and winter months.

The average temperature for the year in Houghton Lake is 43.5°F (6.4°C). The warmest month, on average, is July with an average temperature of 67.5°F (19.7°C). The coolest month on average is January, with an average temperature of 17.9°F (-7.8°C). The highest recorded temperature in Houghton Lake is 107.0°F (39.4°C), which was recorded in July 1936. The lowest recorded temperature in Houghton Lake was -34.0°F (-36.7°C), which was recorded in February 2015. The average amount of precipitation for the year in Houghton Lake is 28.4" (721.4 mm). The month with the most precipitation on average is June with 3.2" (81.3 mm) of precipitation. The month with the least precipitation on average is February with an average of 1.2" (30.5 mm). There is an average of 140.0 days of precipitation, with the most precipitation occurring in January with 14.0 days and the least precipitation occurring in July with 10.0 days.

Table 4.1 presents the monthly temperature and precipitation averages for the years 2010-2020.

CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

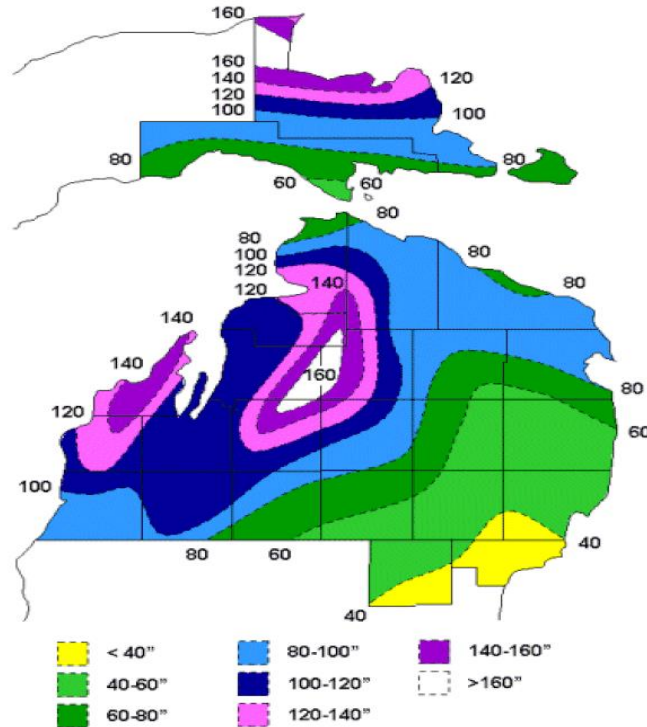
Table 4.1 Monthly Temperature and Precipitation Averages 2010-2020.					
	Temperature Averages			Precipitation Averages	
Month	Max	Min	Mean	Rainfall	Snowfall
January	27°	14°	20°	0.4"	6.2"
February	30°	14°	21°	0.5"	5.9"
March	40°	22°	30°	1.1"	4.8"
April	54°	34°	43°	2.2"	1.9"
May	67°	45°	55°	2.6"	0.0"
June	75°	53°	64°	2.8"	0.0"
July	79°	58°	69°	2.4"	0.0"
August	77°	56°	66°	2.7"	0.0"
September	68°	49°	59°	3.0"	0.0"
October	55°	39°	47°	2.5"	0.2"
November	42°	30°	36°	1.7"	2.3"
December	31°	20°	26°	0.8"	5.7"

Snowfall in northern Michigan is influenced by prevailing west/northwest winds and by proximity to Lake Michigan. **Figure 4.1** on the following page clearly shows the Northwestern Lower Peninsula Snow Belt. The figure shows Lake Township is just south of the heavy snow belt and has an average annual snowfall of about 74 inches. On the average, 104 days of the year have at least one inch of snow on the ground.

CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

Figure 4.1 Seasonal Snowfall

Mean Annual Snowfall **NWS Gaylord Forecast Area**

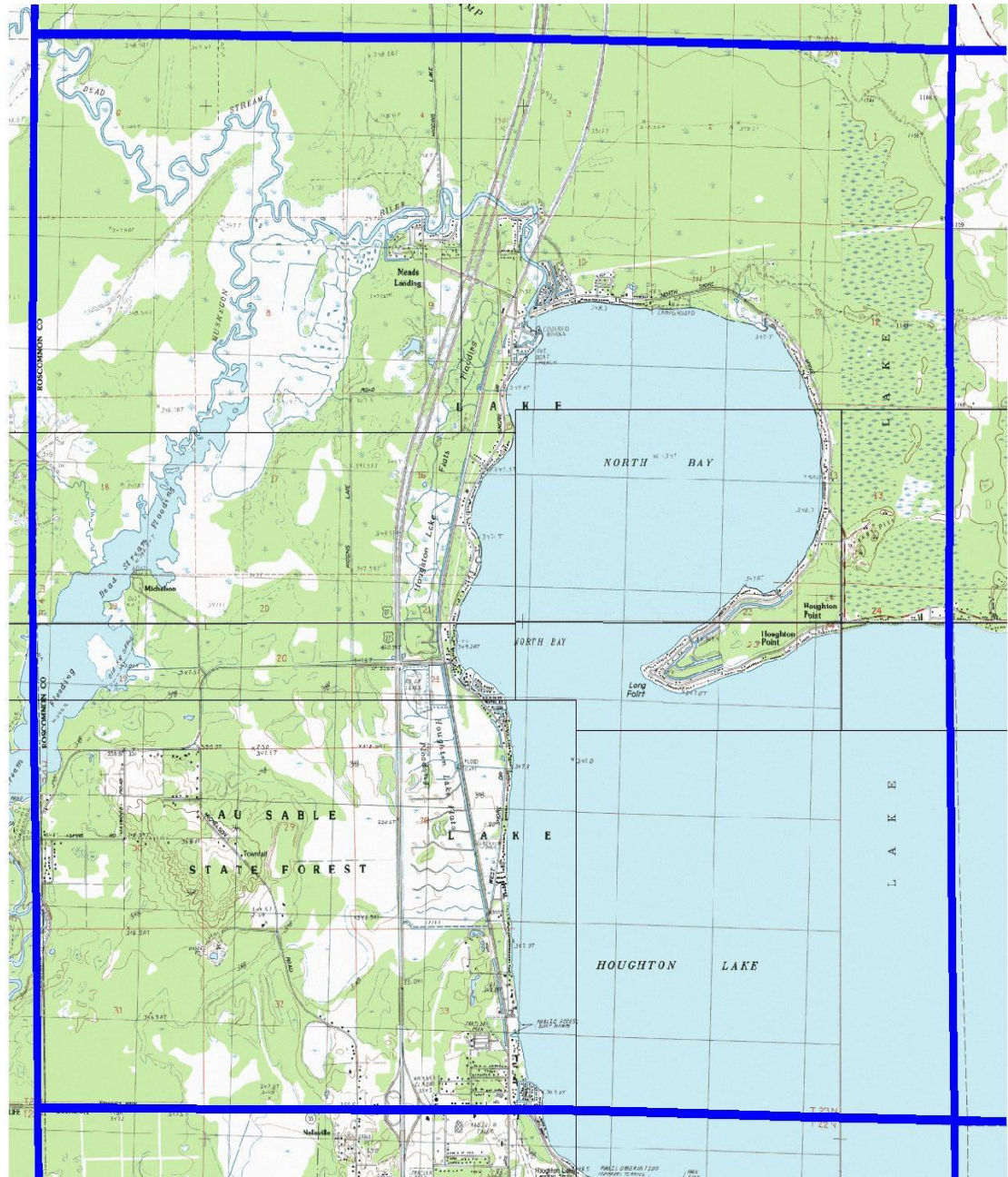


Topography

The terrain of Lake Township is fairly flat with many low-lying swamp lands around the small lakes and in the river basins. Lake Township elevation generally slopes towards Houghton Lake or the Muskegon River. The highest point of the Township is around 1220 elevation on the hilltops in the southwestern portion of the Township near the township hall in sections 29 and 30. The lowest point in the township is at an elevation of 1135 at the Dead Stream Flooding in section 17,18,19 and 30. Refer to **Figure 4.6** on page 40 for township sections.

CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

Figure 4.2 Quadrangle Map for Lake Township



CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

Geology

The process that gave rise to the land within the Township provided the elevations, shaped the contours, deposited the underground formation of various minerals, carved the river valleys, and lay down the parent materials for the soil.

The bedrock geology of Lake Township is that of the Michigan basin: sedimentary rock of limestone, dolomite, shale, and sandstone laid down in ancient seas of the Paleozoic age up to five hundred million years ago. Above these sedimented dietary rock formations is a layer of glacial drift material in varying thicknesses deposited during the Pleistocene Period. See **Figure 4.3**

The surface geology of Lake Township is glacial in origin. As the last glacier receded, the melting ice flowed toward what is now the Great Lakes. As the melt waters ran downhill, valleys were cut forming the now present streams and their tributaries. The variability of the streams and tributaries in the lengths and direction of flow can be contributed to the randomly located and irregularly piled glacial deposits. The deposited materials formed the moraines of fine texture till and outwash planes.

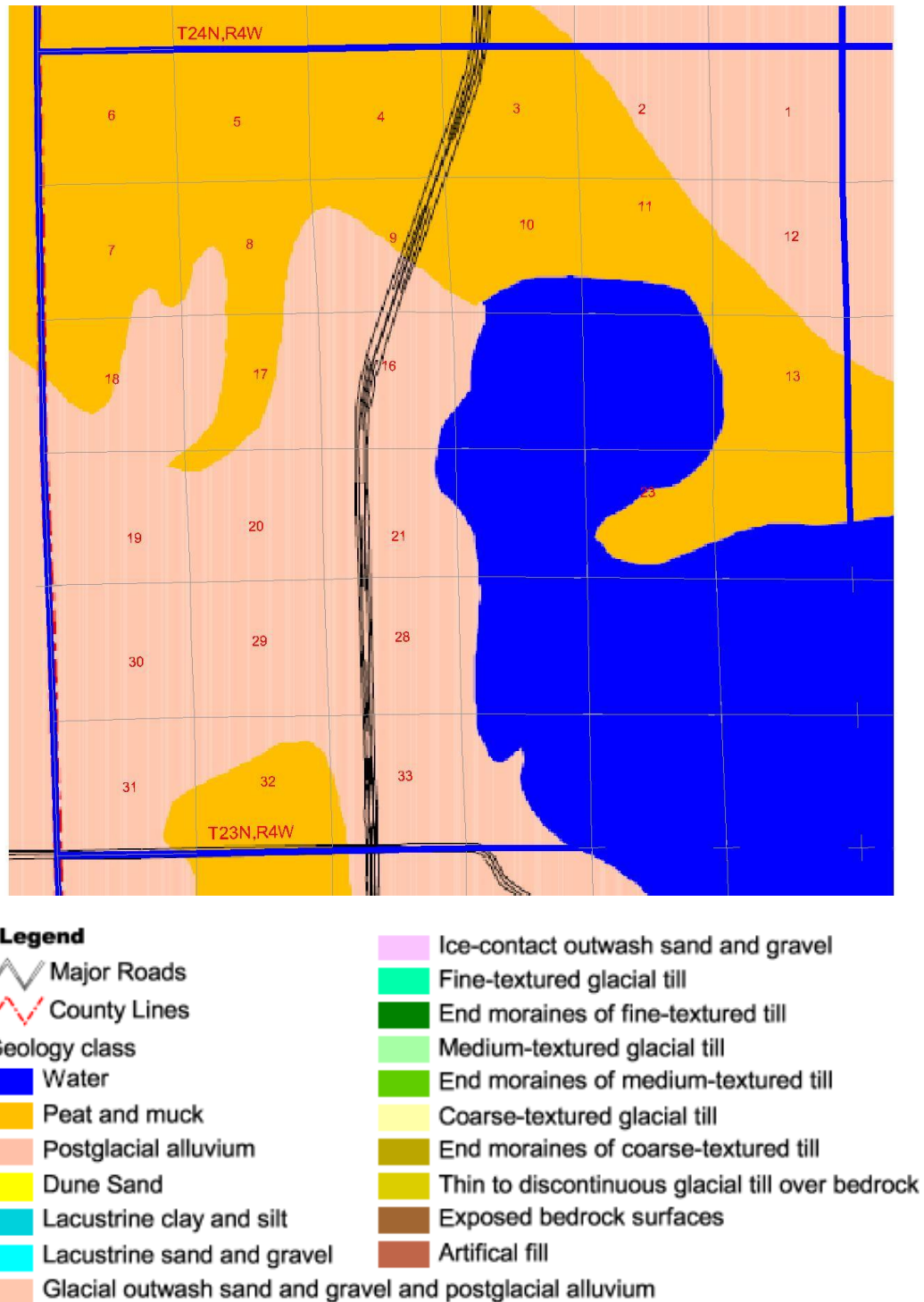
Soils

When planning for types and intensity of land uses, soil types and slopes are two important factors that determine the carry capacity of the land. Additionally, knowledge of the location of excessively drained soils will assist in identifying wildfire prone areas. Soil types influence the location of plant communities that grow in the country. Pine forest, particularly jack pine, has adapted to grow on sandy draughty soils, while northern hardwood forests thrive on sandy loam soils and cedar forest prefer mucky wet soils. Lake Township's topography and soils were formed by glacier deposits and erosion from over 10,000 years ago. **Figure 4.4**

The most prevalent soil association is the Croswell - Au Gres - Tawas association. This association consists of nearly level to undulating, moderately well drained, somewhat poorly drained, and very poorly drained, sandy and mucky soils on lake plains, outwash plains, and ground moraines

CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

Figure 4.3
Quantenary Geological map



CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

Areas of these soils' associations are found along the middle portion of the township extending from the southwest corner to the Houghton Lake shoreline and along the northeast side of the township. These soils are typically forested and with concerns of equipment limitations, seedling mortality, windthrow hazards and plant competition. The less steep areas are suitable for building development. The steeper areas are not suited for building development because of the slopes.

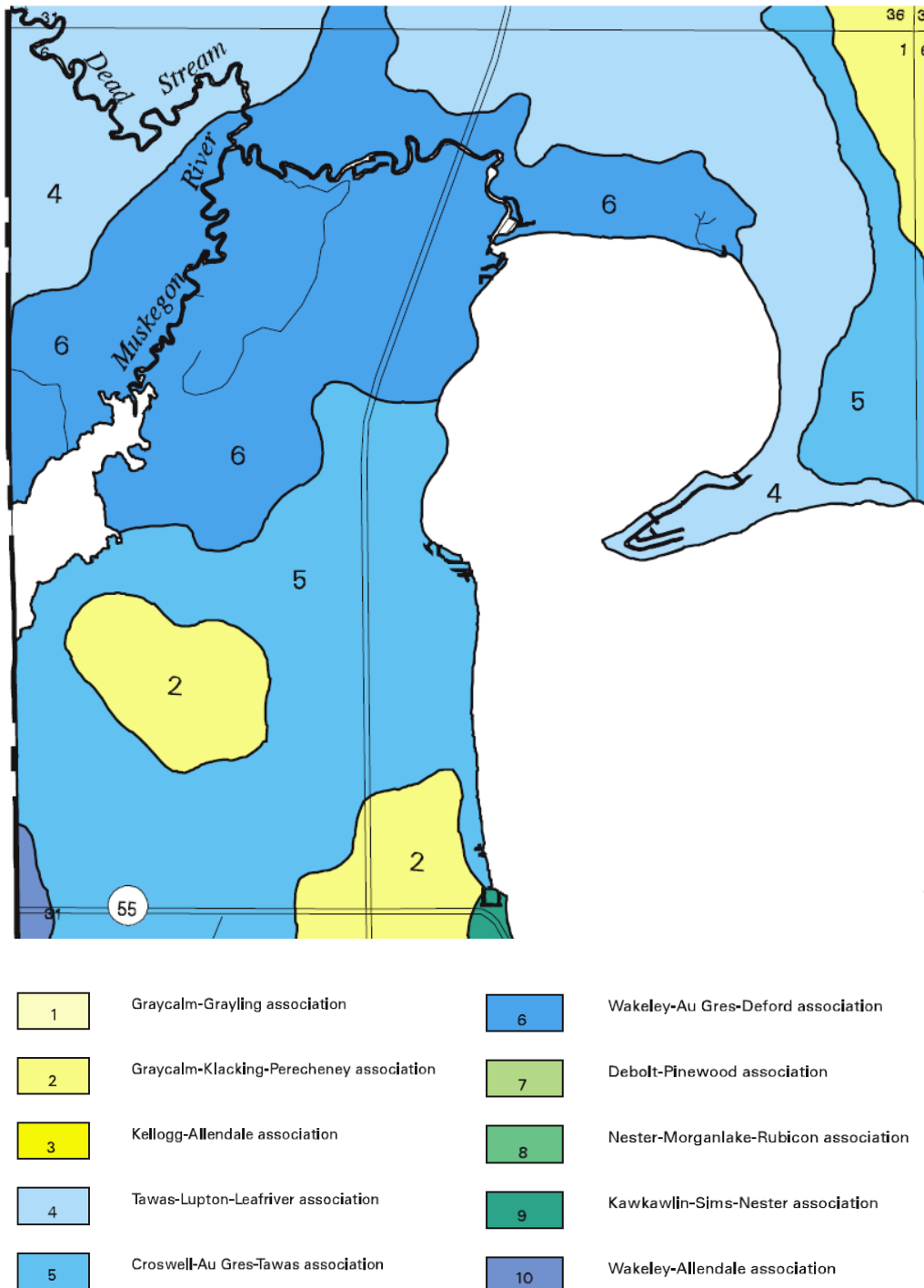
The next prevalent soil association is the Wakeley-AuGres-Deford association. Nearly level, very poorly drained and somewhat poorly drained, mucky and sandy soils on lake plains and outwash plains. This soil association is found in the central northern portion of the township. These soils are typically forested and with concerns of equipment limitations, seedling mortality, windthrow hazards and plant competition.

The next prevalent soil association is the Tawas - Lupton - Leafriver association. These soils are nearly level, very poorly drained, mucky soils on lake plains, outwash plains, and moraines. This soil association is found in the northern portion of the township. These soils are typically forested and with concerns of equipment limitations, seedling mortality, windthrow hazards and plant competition. The less steep areas are suitable for building development. The steeper areas are not suited for building development because of the slopes.

The least prevalent soil association is the Graycalm Klacking -Perecheney association. These soils are nearly level to steep, somewhat excessively drained, well drained, and moderately well drained, sandy soils on outwash plains, lake plains, and moraines. These soils are typically forested and with concerns of equipment limitations and seedling mortality. The less steep areas are suitable for building development. The steeper areas are not suited for building development because of the slopes.

CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

Figure 4.4 General Soils Associations of Lake Township



CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

Water Resources

Water is an extremely important, yet finite, resource in Lake Township. Maintaining high quality groundwater and surface water is vital to the long-term sustainability of the community. Residents of the Township must rely on individual wells for drinking water. Water features provide scenic values and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Water resources provide critical habitat components for a wide range of Fish and Wildlife species.

Groundwater

As runoff flows across land surfaces and travels through drainage courses, a portion of the runoff seeps into the ground and collects in great quantities in the underlying soils and deeper bedrock. This is particularly true in Lake Township where soils are of a high permeability. These reservoirs of water are referred to as aquifers and serve as the sources of drinking water for residents of the township. Where potable water can be drawn from bedrock, it is frequently the preferred option due to the added layer of protection from contamination. However, the Michigan Formation bedrock is deep for practical access and the shale does not allow water to move freely. Thus, wells in Lake Township draw water from the glacial drift above the bedrock. The water drawn from the drift is generally considered to be of good quality, although there have been reported random occurrences of high levels of nitrates. Aquifers can be “confined” or “unconfined” systems. Confined systems have an impermeable soil layer (typically clay) above them which acts to confine the aquifer and protect the aquifer from contaminants seeping into the subsurface above the confining soil layer, such as petroleum products and leaking underground fuel tanks, fertilizers, and improperly disposed household liquids. Unconfined systems do not have this protective layer of clay soil and are much more prone to contamination. Data from well logs suggest that while a confining clay layer is present in areas of the township, this protective cover does not extend uniformly across the township. Thus, while a well may be drilled in an area confining clay layer, contamination located elsewhere in

CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

the community can impact the well as the plume of contamination travels with ground water flows.

Surface Water Resources

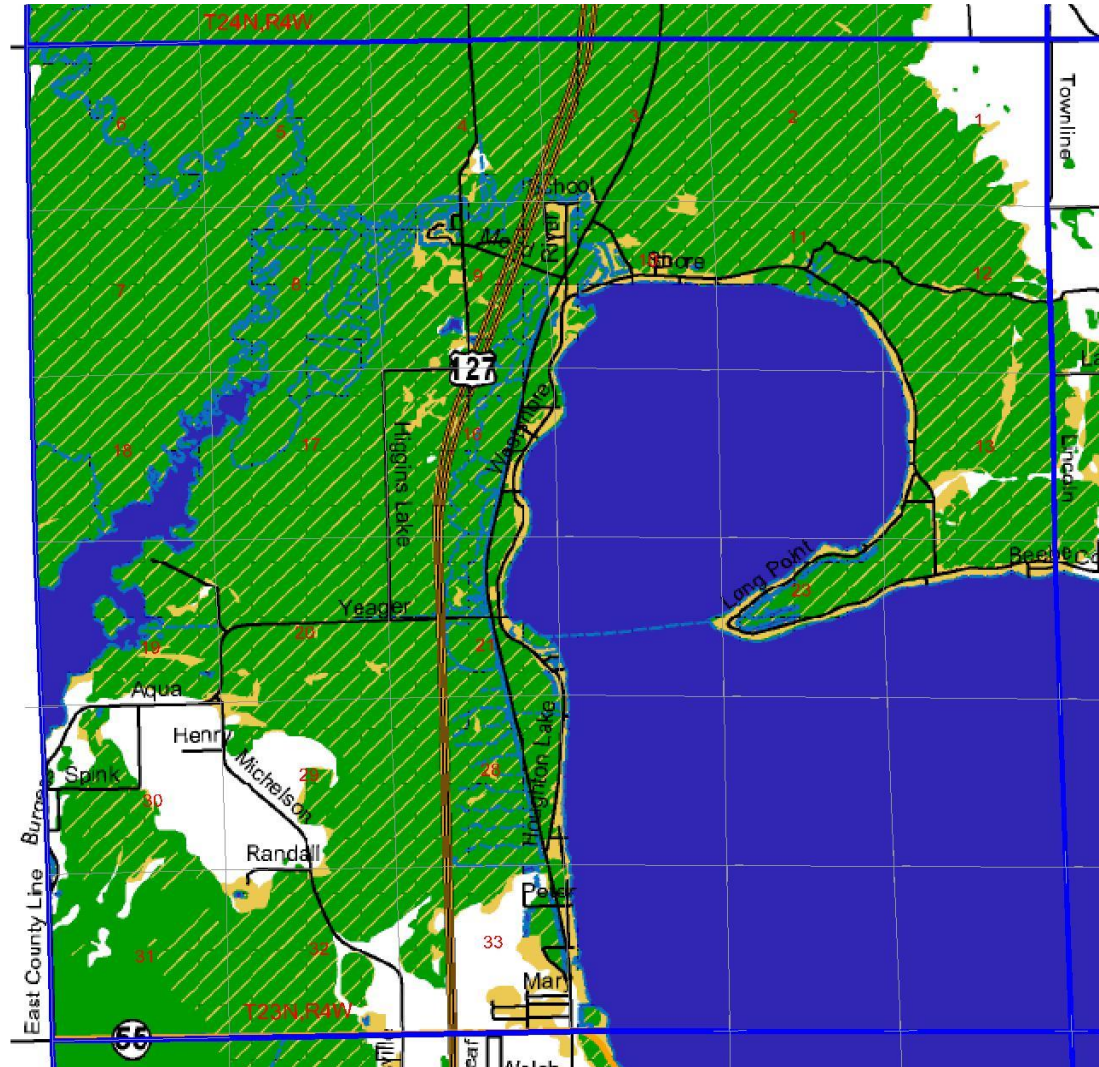
The streams, creeks, and tributaries flowing across the Township provide an abundant supply of freshwater to recharge the underground aquifer with clean water. The streams that originate or are substantially fed within the Township include the Cut River, Dead Stream River, and Backus Creek. Lake Township contains the headwaters for the Muskegon River which originates in the North Bay of Houghton Lake. The river flows westerly towards the Dead Stream Flooding and then courses southwesterly beyond the Township limits where it eventually connects with Muskegon Lake in the southwestern portion of Michigan's lower peninsula and empties into Lake Michigan. Houghton Lake is the major body of water that is included in the Township boundaries. North Bay, found in the northwestern portion of the lake provides access for the many residents and their guests to one of the most fabulous all sports lakes in the state as well as the Midwest.

Wetlands and Forest

A variety of wetland types are scattered throughout Lake Township. See **Figure 4.5**. Dead Stream swamp with portions located in the north and west central parts of the Township is an exceptionally large example of a northern white cedar swamp and one of the largest in the United States. This swamp also includes the Dead Stream Flooding encompassing well over 11,000 acres. Scrub-shrub wetlands are the next most prevalent wetland type in the Township and these features are scattered throughout. Wetlands can provide a variety of functions including sedimentation and pollution control, surface water filtration, storm water storage and flood control, wildlife habitat and esthetics. Wetlands protection in Michigan is regulated under part 303, Wetland Protection of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act of 1994.

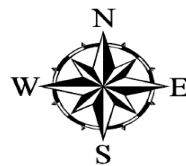
CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

Figure 4.5 Wetlands Map



Legend

-  Interstate Highways
-  US Highways
-  State Highways
-  Railways
-  Open Water
-  Rivers
-  Drains
-  Wetlands as identified on NWI and MIRIS maps
-  Soil areas which include wetland soils
-  Wetlands as identified on NWI and MIRIS maps and soil areas which include wetland soils



CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

Wildlife Habitat

The abundant wildlife which relies on the varied habitats described above provides recreational opportunities not only for the residents of the Township but also for the many visitors to the area. Large and small game hunting for species including white-tail deer, black bear, rabbits, squirrels, ruffed grouse, waterfowl, and wild turkey, is an activity enjoyed by many. Bird watching and wildlife observation have become another preferred recreational activity not only in Michigan but also in most other parts of the country. Lake Township affords the participants great viewing opportunities in the area due to the variety of available habitats and accessible lands. Wildlife, including deer, fox, coyote, muskrat, and occasionally beaver, utilize the varied habitats during their life cycles including breeding, nesting, and raising young. A variety of smaller animals, reptiles, amphibians, bird species, including neotropical migrants, waterfowl, and birds of prey, also live and thrive in the area. The many species of fish found in the lake, including walleye, northern pike, bluegill, crappie, perch, and many others provide hours of fishing enjoyment for the young and old during all seasons of the year.

In addition to the many forms of wildlife, including mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, insects, aquatic species, trees, and flowers normally observed, there are some species which are not as readily visible. This is due in part to the rarity of the species, the preference for isolation and solitude, or requirements for areas of undisturbed habitat. A few species of wildlife listed as threatened, endangered, or special concern under federal or state law have been identified as having occurred within portions of Lake Township. The federally enacted Endangered Species Act of 1973, or Part 365, Endangered Species Protection of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Public Act 451 of 1994, as amended, provides protection for these special resources. A preliminary review of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Endangered (MDNR) Species Assessment website indicates that occurrences of protected species have been recorded within the

CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

Township. A formal review by the MDNR Wildlife Division was requested and a response to that request was received on September 12, 2011. The species that are listed by the MDNR include:

State Threatened:

Least bittern - Sections 18 and 28

Common Moorhen – Section 18

Spotted Turtle – Section 29



State Special Concern:

Osprey – nesting in sections 16,18,19, and 28

Bald Eagle – nesting in sections 2,6, and 7

Black Tern – nesting in sections 18 and 21

Blanding's Turtle – section 10



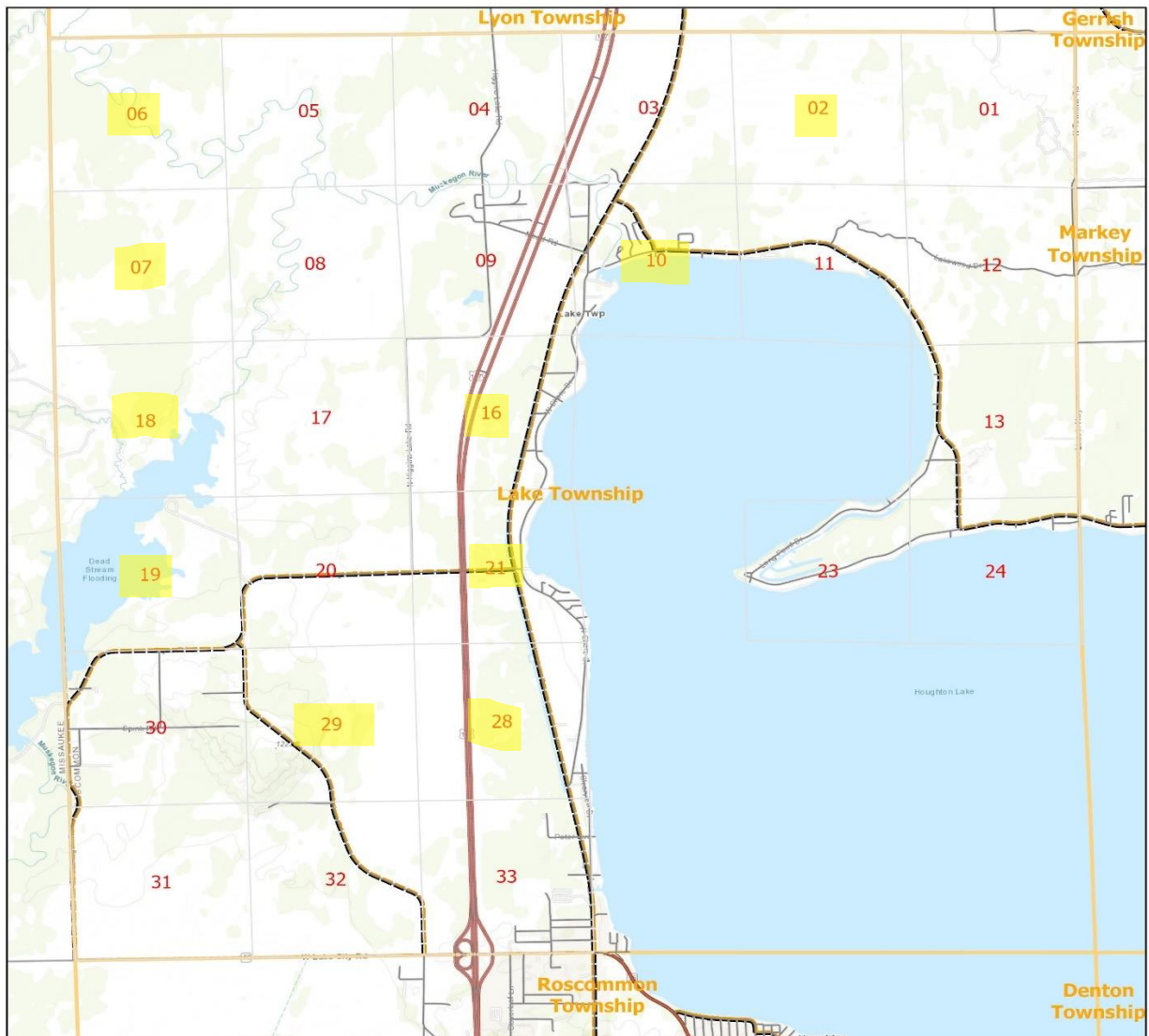
See Figure 4.6

The presence of threatened or endangered species does not preclude activities or development but may require alterations to project plans. Special Concern species are not protected under endangered species legislation, but recommendations regarding their protection may be provided.

Protection of special concern species will help prevent them from declining to the point of being listed as threatened or endangered in the future. Other federal and state statutes and regulations are in place to help protect and preserve the natural resources of local communities, a few of which include wetlands, inland lakes, and streams protection, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and the Regulations on the Take of Reptiles and Amphibians.

CHAPTER 4 Natural Resources

Figure 4.6
Protected Species Section Location



CHAPTER 5

Existing Land Use/Cover

Prior to establishing goals and determining future land uses, a community must have an accurate assessment of existing land cover and land uses. This chapter presents information on the types and location of land cover and land uses. The process identifies urban built-up land uses such as residential and commercial, along with natural land cover types like forests and wetlands.

General Land Division Patterns

As development occurs, larger tracts of land are subdivided into smaller parcels. Therefore, studying the existing pattern of land divisions is one way to analyze the status of land use and development. Only 18.7% of the Township's land base is under private ownership. Most development is clustered, with large areas of state land surrounding the development. Residential development is largely located on small tracts along the shores of Houghton Lake, canals, and the Muskegon River. These residential developments are located along county primary and paved local roads. The proximity to highways and water were/are significant factors in development.

Existing Land Use/Land Cover Characteristics

The existing cover/land use was mapped in 2022. The map of existing land use, shown in **Figure 5.1**, illustrates the distribution of land cover/use throughout the township. The information was taken from the current Lake Township tax rolls.









Table 5.1 on page 44 presents the land uses, showing the number of acres and percent of the Township in each of the land use categories. Each of the land use categories is discussed later in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5

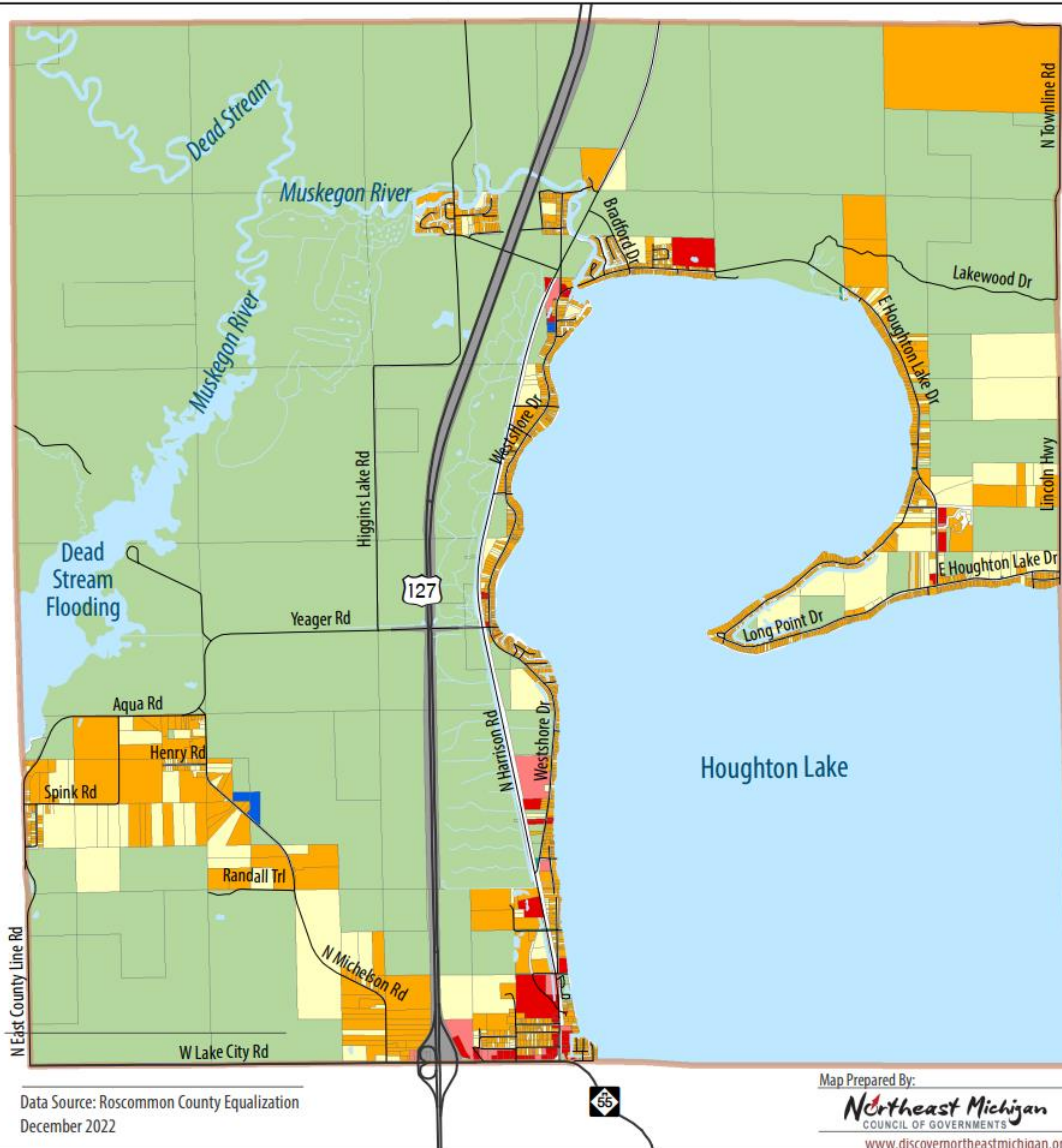
Existing Land Use/Cover

Figure 5.1 Existing Land Use Map

Lake Township Master Plan
Roscommon County, Michigan

	Residential (Improved)		Lake Township
	Residential (Vacant)		Roscommon County
	Commercial (Improved)		State of Michigan
	Commercial (Vacant)		State of Michigan Right-of-Way

Existing Land Use	Acres	% of Total Area	% of Land Area
Residential (Improved)	1,600	7.1%	10.5%
Residential (Vacant)	1,073	4.7%	7.0%
Commercial (Improved)	115	0.5%	0.8%
Commercial (Vacant)	60	0.3%	0.4%
State of Michigan	12,378	54.7%	81.2%
Roscommon County	4.3	0.02%	0.03%
Lake Township	11.6	0.05%	0.08%
Water	7,405	32.7%	N/A



CHAPTER 5

Existing Land Use/Cover

Residential

As can be seen in **Table 5.1**, residential use accounts for 17.5% of the land area in Lake Township. Single family residential accounts for all the residential development in the Township. In the past few years some resorts have turned into Condominium Associations, and these are included in this category. Residential development is largely concentrated on the shores of Houghton Lake, canals feeding into the lake, and the Muskegon River. Lake Township, according to Roscommon County Equalization records, has 68 subdivision plats. Most of these subdivisions have a relatively small number of lots.

Table 5.1 Existing Land Use

Existing Land Use	Acres	% Of Total Area	% Of Land Area
Residential	2,673	11.8%	17.5%
Commercial	175	.08%	1.2%
State Wetlands Emergent*	1,035	See Note*	
State Wetlands Forested*	5,668		
State Wetlands Scrub Shrub*	3,299		
State Forest Upland*	1,644		
State Forest Lowland*	8,466		
Non-Forested Upland*	855		
Water	7,405	32.7%	N/A

**There are 12,378 acres of State Land in Lake Township. Wetlands comprise 10,308 acres and Forests account for 12,150 acres. 10,145 acres of State Land are classified as both wetlands and forest therefore making it difficult to account for the percent of land or total area.*

CHAPTER 5

Existing Land Use/Cover

Commercial

The commercial category includes retail sales of goods and services, restaurants, marinas, storage, health care providers, and lodging. Lands used for commercial purposes account for 175 acres of Lake Township which is just over 1% of the existing land use. The primary business district is located on the north side of M-55 and along both sides of Old US-27 from M-55 to Mary St. Commercial development along the business district is automobile-oriented with each establishment having its own required parking lot.

Marijuana Overlay District.

The “MO District” was established in June 2021 as an overlay zoning district over those portions of the C-1 Commercial District: 1) Located west of Old 27 (North Harrison Road) and having frontage on the north side of West Lake City Road (M-55); or 2) Located north of West Lake City Road (M-55) and south of Mary Street and having frontage on the west side of Old 27 (North Harrison Road). Land located within the overlay district may be developed according to the provisions of the underlying zoning districts and according to the provisions contained in Ordinance 56A.

Industrial

Lake Township has no land zoned for industrial use as of 2022.

Institutional / Recreational

This classification includes land uses that are governmental, libraries, schools, churches, campgrounds, watercraft launch facilities, cemeteries, and parks. These uses make up about 2% of the Township. The Department of Natural Resources operates the West Shore Boat Launch and State Campground in Lake Township.

CHAPTER 5

Existing Land Use/Cover

Agricultural

Due to the poor soils located in the township, agricultural uses were historically extremely limited. In the late 1800's farming was mostly to supply lumber camps, especially with hay and feed for work animals. Much of the farmland was abandoned as lumber camps moved on and the land was reverted back to the State and designated State Forest. Today no land in Lake Township is used for agricultural purposes.

Non-Forested Uplands

The non-forested land category consists of herbaceous open and shrub land. **Table 5.1** shows 855 acres of the township is classified as non-forested.

Upland Forests

The Upland Forest category accounts for 1,644 acres of the township. Upland hardwood forest is defined by a well-developed, closed-canopy forest dominated by deciduous hardwood trees on mesic soils in areas sheltered from fire. It typically has a diverse assemblage of deciduous and evergreen tree species in the canopy and midstory, shade-tolerant shrubs, and a sparse groundcover. The tracts of pine-forested canopies can be seen from the roadways while traveling throughout the area. The blaze of yellow and red hardwood leaves in the fall, seen throughout the township adds a welcome splendor prior to the drab browns and grays of winter.

Lowland Forest and Wetlands

Wetlands are defined as land that has sufficient water at, or near, the surface to support wetland or aquatic vegetation. These areas are commonly referred to as swamps, marshes and bogs. The wetland category comprises non-forest types such as low land brush, emergent vegetation in lakes and beaver floodings, and wet meadows. The forested wetlands account for 5,668 acres of the Township.

CHAPTER 5

Existing Land Use/Cover

Wetlands can provide a variety of functions including sedimentation and pollution control, surface water filtration, storm-water storage and flood control, wildlife habitat, and aesthetics. The habitat within these wetlands varies from emergent vegetation such as cattail, sedges, and various wildflowers, to scrub shrub to forested wetlands containing species including, but not limited to, dogwood, tag alder, northern white cedar, silver maple, cottonwood, and green ash.

Wetlands protection in Michigan is regulated under Part 303, Wetland Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act of 1994, P.A. 451. Only with an on-site evaluation performed either by the Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) or a qualified private consultant and verified by EGLE, can the determination of the boundaries and regulatory status of wetlands be made.

Surface Water

Second only to State of Michigan land, surface water makes up 32.7% or 7405 acres in Lake Township. Houghton Lake is the largest inland lake in Michigan consisting of 20,075 acres. Lake Township contains the headwaters for the Muskegon River, which originates in the North Bay of Houghton Lake. The river flows westerly towards the Dead Stream Flooding and then courses southwesterly beyond the Township limits where it eventually connects with Muskegon Lake in the southwestern portion of Michigan's lower peninsula and finally empties into Lake Michigan.

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

The purpose of this chapter is to establish goals and objectives to guide future development within the Township. Citizen participation and input was a component in developing these goals and objectives. Community input, combined with the data compiled in the earlier chapters, has identified areas suited for preferred growth along with important resource areas. By encouraging new development to conform to community-based standards and guidelines, the rural character and the natural resources of the Township can be preserved to the fullest extent possible. In developing community goals and objectives, it is important to analyze existing community characteristics, such as social and economic features, environmental conditions, services, facilities and existing land use. In addition to examining existing characteristics, another important tool in the development of community goals and objectives is to identify community assets and problem areas.

Public Input

Lake Township conducted a survey in November/December of 2021 on recreation and received many comments on the state of the township. Those comments were considered as part of the public input process. The Township also held a public input session as part of its regularly scheduled meeting on November 10, 2022, to gather input for establishing long and short-term community goals and objectives. Twelve people attended the meeting. The township board started out the input session with comments from each individual board member on their goals for the township. Next, the attendees were encouraged to share their thoughts on what was important to them. With all the input gathered the following goals and objectives were established.

Goals and Objectives

QUALITY OF LIFE

Lake Township is a very desirable place to call home with abundant natural resources, open spaces and land. Water based recreational opportunities, easy access to

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

highways, and retail areas give this township the capacity to continue to grow but keep the overall rural character.

Goal: Maintain and enhance the overall quality of life in Lake Township.

Objectives:

1. Strive to balance future growth and development in the Township while maintaining its rural and “up north” character.
2. Encourage public feedback regarding ongoing efforts to improve the Township’s quality of life.
3. Promote the quality of life in Lake Township to attract new families to the Township.
4. Coordinate with Roscommon County Sheriff Department and Michigan State Police to provide adequate township-wide police protection.
5. Develop public services and facilities to create an attractive environment for active families and retirees.
6. Work with County officials and local residents to improve and expand programs and access to programs for senior citizens.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The character of Lake Township is visually defined by Houghton Lake, the Flats and surrounding state forest land. The large number of recreational activities and tourism that evolve around these resources provide a resort like atmosphere for many. It is a community of yearlong residents, and seasonal residents and tourists who make the community their home for only weeks or months at a time. The protection of the character of Lake Township is very important to its residents.

Goal: Maintain and enhance the appearance and character of Lake Township.

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

Objectives:

1. Preserve the integrity of existing neighborhoods and residential areas by protecting them from the intrusion of incompatible uses.
2. Enhance community gateways through the implementation of land use controls, landscaping, and wayfinding. Especially on the M-55/Old 27 corner.
3. Encourage the maintenance and upgrade of private businesses and residences.
4. Enforce the Township Blight Ordinance in a fair and consistent manner.

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

It is reasonable to expect that Lake Township's population will grow over the next 20 years. The character and quality of life will be impacted by the way the township manages future growth and development. Managed growth can minimize the loss of natural spaces and resources.

Goal: Guide future development in a manner that will protect existing development, preserve rural community character, and conserve natural resources and the environment, yet meet the long-term needs of the community.

Objectives:

1. Enforce all ordinances in a consistent and fair manner.
2. Control the location of new development by designating appropriate areas for new residential, commercial, and resort/recreational land uses.
3. Provide standards that regulate the placement and size of cellular towers, communication towers, transmission towers and wind turbine generators.
4. Provide waterfront regulations that have consistent special requirements and standards for development along waterfronts.
5. Periodically review blight ordinance and consistently enforce to work towards improving the quality of housing and protecting property values.

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

6. Enforce the blight and nuisance ordinances by issuing Civil Infractions.
7. Work to encourage commercial development along the north side of the M-55 corridor and north along Old US-27. Research tax incentives to encourage new development.
8. Promote a walkable community by developing trails, sidewalks, and safe pedestrian crosswalks in the township.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Residential growth is usually viewed as a more positive feature than commercial or industrial expansion. But that does not mean it should not be based on sound planning. Future residential growth will have the greatest long term impact on the townships natural resources, demand for public services, and overall community character.

Goal: Allow for suitable housing opportunities for all income levels and age groups, including year-round residents and seasonal residents.

Objectives:

1. New residential development should be constructed in a manner that protects the rural and “up north” character and scenic views by maintaining proper setbacks and providing landscaping screening as appropriate.
2. Require adequate buffers and transition areas between residential and non-residential uses to maintain property values and visual attractiveness.
3. Encourage existing housing stock and neighborhoods to be kept in good repair, appearance, usefulness, and safety.
4. Preserve the integrity of existing residential neighborhoods by protecting them from intrusion of incompatible uses.
5. To preserve open space and vital natural resources, provide the development option of clustered housing in buildable portions of the Township.

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

6. Encourage the construction of homes at a reasonable minimum square footage to contribute to the quality of the Township's housing stock, while promoting affordable housing.

COMMERCIAL AREAS

Commercial development in Lake Township covers approximately 175 acres and consists of predominantly retail and service-based uses. Commercial development is principally located on the north side of M-55 and along Old-27 south of Peter St. Lake Township must recognize that it has a strong tourism economy and with the many visitors comes consumer needs. The viability of future commercial development in Lake Township is linked in part to access, visibility, activity areas and improved levels of public services i.e. roads, sewer, and water infrastructure.

Goal: Promote a varied business environment and encourage the development and expansion of businesses to meet the needs of residents and tourists, while preserving the natural environment and rural character of the community.

Objectives:

1. Make parking (public and private) needs a consideration for all expansions and new development.
2. Enforce existing landscape buffer ordinances where commercial uses are adjacent to residential land uses.
3. Work with existing businesses and attract new commercial enterprises.
4. Regulate home occupations and home-based businesses to assure compatibility with existing residential areas.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USES

At present Lake Township has no industrial land. The lack of public water and sewer and the lack of a strong year-round population base are factors being able to support

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

industrial use. The township must note that not all industry requires heightened levels of public services and infrastructure. Light industry could improve the townships economic stability and provide additional local employment opportunities.

Goal: Encourage the establishment of new light industries to diversify the local economy and to create more stability and self-sufficiency for the community.

Objectives:

1. Ensure that industrial uses are developed in an environmentally sensitive manner, are harmonious with the existing community and are located near access to state trunk lines.
2. Encourage light industries and high-tech industries that do not pollute the air, soil, or water; nor offend because of noise, odor, or visual impact, in industrial zoned areas within the Township. Due to the lack of public water and sewer, these industries should not require high water usage or generate large amounts of septage.
3. Require landscape buffers where industrial uses are adjacent to other land uses.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities and infrastructure play a critical role in healthy community building and quality of life. This element presents a framework for the township to provide services, amenities, and infrastructure for today's residents as well as future generations.

Goal: Maintain and improve the Township's transportation systems, safety, community facilities and public utilities to accommodate the needs of residents and visitors.

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

Objectives:

1. Develop a plan to address the long term needs for road improvements, Township Hall maintenance, fire protection, emergency services, trails, and community recreation.
2. Continue to maintain and upgrade the Fire Station. Investigate outside funding sources such as grants, donations, low interest loans and foundations.
3. Develop plans to upgrade the Township Hall to meet the needs of the community. Investigate outside funding sources such as grants and low interest loans.
4. Orient public facilities to accommodate and serve retired residents.
5. Seek grants through federal, state, and other funding sources for infrastructure improvements and economic development projects.
6. Improve existing Township roads in a cost-effective manner and based upon the future land use plan, identify necessary future road system expansion and improvement needs.
7. Improve communication with the Roscommon County Road Commission to better work toward maintaining the crumbling primary and local road system.
8. Work with MDOT and the County Road Commission to address vehicular and pedestrian safety at major intersections and on roadways. Including the addition of sidewalks along the M-55 commercial corridor and north along old 27 to the DNR West Shore Boat Launch.
9. Promote, maintain, and expand recreational trails by working with Roscommon County Road Commission, MDNR, MDOT and user groups to connect community assets and connect with regional trail systems.
10. Continue to maintain and develop plans to upgrade the current cemetery roads including the addition of a road at the rear of the cemetery.
11. Seek a grant through a local foundation for grave mapping software to digitalize all records and ensure future growth can be easily managed.

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

RECREATION AND PUBLIC LANDS

Studies show that there is a link between the built environment and the physical, social, and economic health of a community. Well-planned parks and recreation systems can serve as a catalyst for economic development. Lake Township understands the relationship between community parks and recreation services, economic development, and quality of life. Lake Township will prioritize resource allocation decisions for new facilities and programs, in a manner that is fiscally responsible, environmentally sound, and publicly supported.

Goal: Preserve and improve access to public lands and water; expand recreational trails and develop public parks for the enjoyment of residents, visitors, and future generations.

Objectives:

1. Begin implementation of the Lake Township Recreation Plan.
2. Maintain an inventory and analysis of existing recreational areas in the Township.
3. Pursue grants and outside funding sources such as Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for community parks, land acquisition and recreational development.
4. Connect future parks and residential areas with non-motorized trails.
5. Work with the regional, state, and federal agencies to create and expand recreation trails.
6. Work with the Department of Natural Resources and other appropriate agencies to stock Houghton Lake with fish to ensure the health of the lake and the quality of fishing.
7. Work with Roscommon County Road Commission on the development of a realistic bike path in the township.

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

8. Maintain communication with the Department of Natural Resources to provide input into the usage and management of the public lands within the Township, including a connection between West Shore Drive and the Flats Gazebo and a kayak launch at the State Campground and West Shore Boat Launch.

GOVERNMENT

Lake Township is a civil township governed by a five-member township board. The Lake Township Board in joint effort with the Lake Township Planning Commission developed the Master Plan and is committed to following its guidance. The vision of Lake Township is “To provide our citizens and visitors a safe, pleasant and fun environment to live, work and enjoy. As stewards of the Western shore of Houghton Lake, we understand what it takes to keep our waterways clean, safe and accessible to the general public”.

Goal: Provide services in a cost effective, caring, efficient and environmentally responsible manner to meet the needs of the residents, property owners, business owners and visitors.

Objectives:

1. Ensure a responsible fiscal policy and budget process to finance the Township government.
2. Seek the involvement of volunteers in the government process.
3. Investigate ways to generate economies of scale and cost savings through collaboration and coordination with other local units of government.
4. Support intergovernmental and regional cooperation on issues of mutual concern.
5. Continue to work with Roscommon County to provide emergency services and police services to Township residents.

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

6. Continue to participate in local meetings of the Roscommon Townships Association.
7. The Planning Commission will work with the Township Board:
 - a. to deliver township planning and zoning services in a wise and efficient manner.
 - b. on planning for future issues impacting Lake Township.
 - c. to ensure continued funding and support for the Lake Township Planning Commission.
8. Focus on cross-jurisdictional issues when reviewing community master plans and zoning ordinances.
9. Continue to use and update the Township's website to provide access to township government activities. This includes posting plans, ordinances, required forms and permits and publishing Planning Commission and Township Board meeting agendas, notices and minutes electronically.
10. Begin an annual newsletter that will be mailed out with winter taxes informing residents of activities, programs and events that have occurred or are proposed to occur within the Township.
11. Encourage public feedback from a wider array of Township residents, including youth, young families, seniors, and seasonal residents.
12. Establish annual survey of residents to keep abreast of problems, concerns and suggestions associated with Township programs and management. Due to the high percentage of seasonal and non-residential landowners use mailed or web-based surveys to solicit community input.
13. Establish a recycling station in the township or work with neighboring townships on shared recycling station.

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Tax revenues play a role in the extent and quality of public services. Although development will increase the townships tax base, the same development will place additional demands on public services. Commercial and industrial development have been shown to typically have a more positive impact on the economic stability of a community. However, economic development interests should not be at the cost of a healthy natural environment.

Goal: Provide for economic growth that creates a diversified economic base and improves the competitiveness of the county's economy by enhancing employment opportunities for residents and the profitability of businesses while maintaining the community character and environment.

Objectives:

1. Strive to balance economic development with the rural and "up north" character of the Township.
2. Work toward an expanding employment base in the area to retain younger workers in the Township.
3. Encourage a diverse mix of new businesses.
4. Work with Roscommon County to develop incentives to attract new small businesses to Lake Township as well as to assist existing businesses in operating and expansion programs.
5. Work with county and regional organizations to develop strategies for marketing the area as a tourism destination with recreational, cultural, historic, and natural resource components.
6. Support the expansion of high-speed internet service in the Township.
7. Encourage the expansion of the infrastructure required to make the Township attractive to commercial and home-based business.

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

8. Use reasonable land use and development regulations and assist in the expansion of infrastructure necessary to support economic development in a planned and managed way.
9. Support and cooperate with regional economic development organizations to explore ways that help promote and develop all Northern Michigan.

Natural Environment

If you think of Lake Township, you think of the natural resources that impact the community's character. These resources include Houghton Lake, the largest inland lake in Michigan, the Houghton Lake Flats, managed by the DNR, the Muskegon River and the abundant forest land. These elements provide vital environmental roles including wildlife habitats, flood control, water purification, groundwater recharge and air quality enhancement. These same resources play a key role in the township's recreation. Environmental knowledge, awareness, and education can minimize the potential for environmental degradation.

Goal: Protect and preserve the natural environment by protecting groundwater, surface water, environmentally sensitive areas, highly erosive areas, woodlands, wetlands, open space, fish, and wildlife.

Objectives:

1. Encourage a land use pattern that is oriented to the natural features and water resources of the area by evaluating: type and density of proposed developments based on soil suitability, slope of land, potential for ground water and surface water degradation and contamination, compatibility with adjacent land uses, and impacts to sensitive natural areas like wetlands, greenways, and wildlife corridors.
2. Limit and control the density and type of residential and commercial development adjacent to lakes, ponds, streams, and wetlands.

CHAPTER 6

Community Goals and Objectives

3. Preserve topography such as slopes, valleys, and hills by limiting the amount of cut and fill during site development.
4. Encourage the use of native plant species and naturalized landscape designs, where appropriate, to enhance the community's existing character.
5. Encourage local organizations, businesses, government agencies, educators, and private citizens to become active participants in natural resource protection in the community through voluntary conservation programming.
6. Invite guest speakers (DNR, Cooperative Extension, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Roscommon Conservation District, Eastern Michigan Council of Governments, Audubon, Chamber of Commerce, etc.) to lecture or hold discussions on all aspects of the natural environment.
7. Review model ordinance language in the DEQ Filling the Gaps publication and consider sensitive areas protection, site plan review standards; shoreline protection provisions; recommended setback distances; groundwater protection standards and coordinated permit review and approval procedures.
8. Preserve the scenic and fragile nature of waterfront property from the negative impacts caused by intensive development and provide areas for public access and enjoyment.

CHAPTER 7

Future Land Use Plan

Overview

The final major element of the Master Plan update involves establishing a Future Land Use Plan. The plan identifies areas within the Township where types of compatible land uses should occur over the next twenty years. With the establishment of the Future Land Use Plan, Lake Township intends to ensure that existing land uses such as residential and commercial can continue and expand when necessary. Irreplaceable resources such as water, wetlands, forestlands and farmlands will be protected. Reasonable growth can be accommodated with minimal land use conflicts or negative environmental impacts.

The Planning Commission in conjunction with the Lake Township Board, developed the following future land use recommendations for the Township. Implementation of these policies rest with the regulatory tools of the Township, most importantly the Lake Township Zoning Ordinance. Zoning ordinances generally regulate the type, location, bulk, and intensity of land development. The Township may also adapt other supporting regulatory tools to further the implementation of the policies of this plan.

The foundation on which the Future Land Use Plan is rooted are the goals and objectives in Chapter 6, based in part on public input. These include the desire to guide future development in a manner that ensures land use patterns compatible with public facilities and services, the cost effective use of tax dollars, the preservation of natural resources and the rural resort character of the community. The Future Land Use Plan is based upon an analysis of the township's natural and cultural features such as community attitudes, existing roadway network, existing and nearby public infrastructure, and environmentally sensitive areas. Also considered are nearby conditions and neighboring municipalities. The opportunities and constraints presented by these characteristics were evaluated in the context of the goals and objectives in Chapter 6 to arrive at a planned future land use pattern.

CHAPTER 7

Future Land Use Plan

Future Land Use Planning Areas

The community has identified eight categories of land use needed to serve future development needs. These categories are listed below. The future land use map **Figure 7.1** on page 67, depicts the locations of land use planning areas. These areas collectively formulate the planned land use pattern.

- Forest/Conservation District
- Rural Residential District
- Non-Waterfront Residential District
- Lakefront Residential District
- Commercial
- Commercial Waterfront
- Light Industrial District
- Agriculture

Good land use planning is essential to the quality of life in Lake Township. The identification of future land use arrangements will serve as a guide to achieve desired results. It is not the intent of this plan to identify the specific land uses that should be permitted in each of these areas. This plan presents broad based policies regarding the dominant land uses to be accommodated in each. Specific permitted land uses will be determined by the zoning provisions of the Township, based upon considerations of compatibility. There may be certain existing land uses that do not “fit” with the planned future land use pattern. This should not be interpreted as a lack of Township support for the continuation of such uses. Lake Township’s Zoning regulations will clarify these matters.

Forest/Conservation District

Lake Township is characterized by large areas that require a strong conservation effort. These include forest lands, wetlands, Houghton Lake, the Muskegon River, and other tributaries that feed the lake. These resources can present severe limitations to the

CHAPTER 7

Future Land Use Plan

development and provide important environmental benefits including habitats for wildlife, flood control, groundwater recharge and discharge, and surface water purification. In addition, they provide special opportunities for recreation and contribute to Lake Township's overall rural resort character.

Considering the significance of these resources the plan strongly supports their protection. Preservation should take precedence over the unnecessary disturbance and or destruction of these resources by residential, commercial, or industrial development. The presence of such resources in these areas designated for development should be recognized in the deliberation of rezoning, site plan, and similar zoning requests. Land uses requiring state, and/or federal permits, especially for wetland or floodplain alterations should not receive final Township approval until satisfactory evidence has been submitted verifying the acquisition of all necessary permits.

Rural Residential District

The Rural Residential District is located along Muskegon Road and Michelson Road on the edges of agricultural lands in the Township. The intent is to encourage an environment of low density, single family dwellings. These are areas where the rural atmosphere can be maintained. Multi-family developments may be allowed as a special use to provide for possible congregate retirement housing.

Non-Waterfront Residential District

The Non-Waterfront or Low-Density Residential District is intended to preserve existing residential development where land has already been subdivided into smaller lots. Principle uses include single family dwellings and two-family dwellings. Residential lots in this district should be a minimum of 7,200 square feet. Much of this district is located opposite the Lakefront Residential District. All new residential projects will be encouraged to retain natural features which are characteristics of this area by setting aside open spaces for the common use and enjoyment of new residents.

CHAPTER 7

Future Land Use Plan

Lakefront Residential District

The Lakefront Residential District mainly contains the established residential areas along Houghton Lake and the Muskegon River. These areas generally have small lots and particular issues related to waterfront properties including resorts and other water-oriented enterprises. These areas also are serviced by municipal sewers allowing a density of approximately one-sixth acre lots (8,125 square feet). While the Lakefront Residential District is largely built out, the lake is still vulnerable to redevelopment efforts and continued disturbances to its environmental character and integrity.

Therefore, the primary use of land should generally be limited to seasonal and year-round single family residences. Secondary uses should be limited to recreation facilities such as parks and marinas.

All new development and redevelopment should incorporate measures that protect the environmental integrity of Houghton Lake including but not limited to lake setbacks, preservation of native shoreline vegetation, and proper yard waste disposal (leaves, grass cutting etc.).

Commercial District

The Commercial District is located along the north side of M-55 west of Old-27 and the west side of Old 27. Commercial centers typically require a heightened level of road infrastructure, access, public services, and visibility. These factors directly impact the identification of future commercial areas along with other concerns including minimizing conflicts between existing and proposed land uses and encouraging compact development. This district presents an opportunity for the township to encourage economic development.

There is also a small local services commercial district on County Road 300 near the east boundary of the township. The district caters primarily to the local full-time and part-time residents and visitors in close proximity.

CHAPTER 7

Future Land Use Plan

Commercial Waterfront District

Separate regulations are established for commercial waterfront development to ensure its compatibility with the surrounding residential settlement. This district is located on the east side of Old-27 and north side of M-55, east of Old-27. This is a small commercial area with little room for future growth. Some properties have the potential for redevelopment which must be balanced with protecting the environmental integrity of the lake and consideration for the adjoining residential area.

Light Industrial

Although the township does not anticipate industrial uses, light industrial or high-tech industries may be possible near the M-55 intersection with the U.S.127 expressway. With proper site layout and buffering these uses could be conditionally allowed. Other commercial activities may be allowed by special use permits in other districts as regulated by the zoning ordinance. Lot sizes will be determined by health and sanitary requirements, parking, and other specific requirements of an intended use.

Agriculture

Lake Township recognizes farmlands contribute to the rural character of area. The future land use designation is intended to encourage the existence of farmlands while allowing for residential building in a pastoral and forest setting. Special exception uses could provide senior housing or recreational facilities.

Special Issue Areas

Community Parks and Recreation:

The community supports development of nonmotorized trails. The proposed route of the Iron Belle Trail will travel through North Higgins Lake State Park and Grayling. This plan recommends Lake Township work with Roscommon Township, Lyon Townships, MDNR and MDOT on a long-term plan for connecting to the Iron Belle Trail.

CHAPTER 7

Future Land Use Plan

Demographic trends show the median age in Lake Township is 20 years “older” than Michigan and the United States. Thus, recreational facilities and activities designed to accommodate the elderly population will become increasingly important. Lake Township should collaborate with local, regional, and state organizations to address this growing need. Following through on the goals listed in the 5-Year Recreation Plan is also a priority and should be considered in future land use decisions.

Roads:

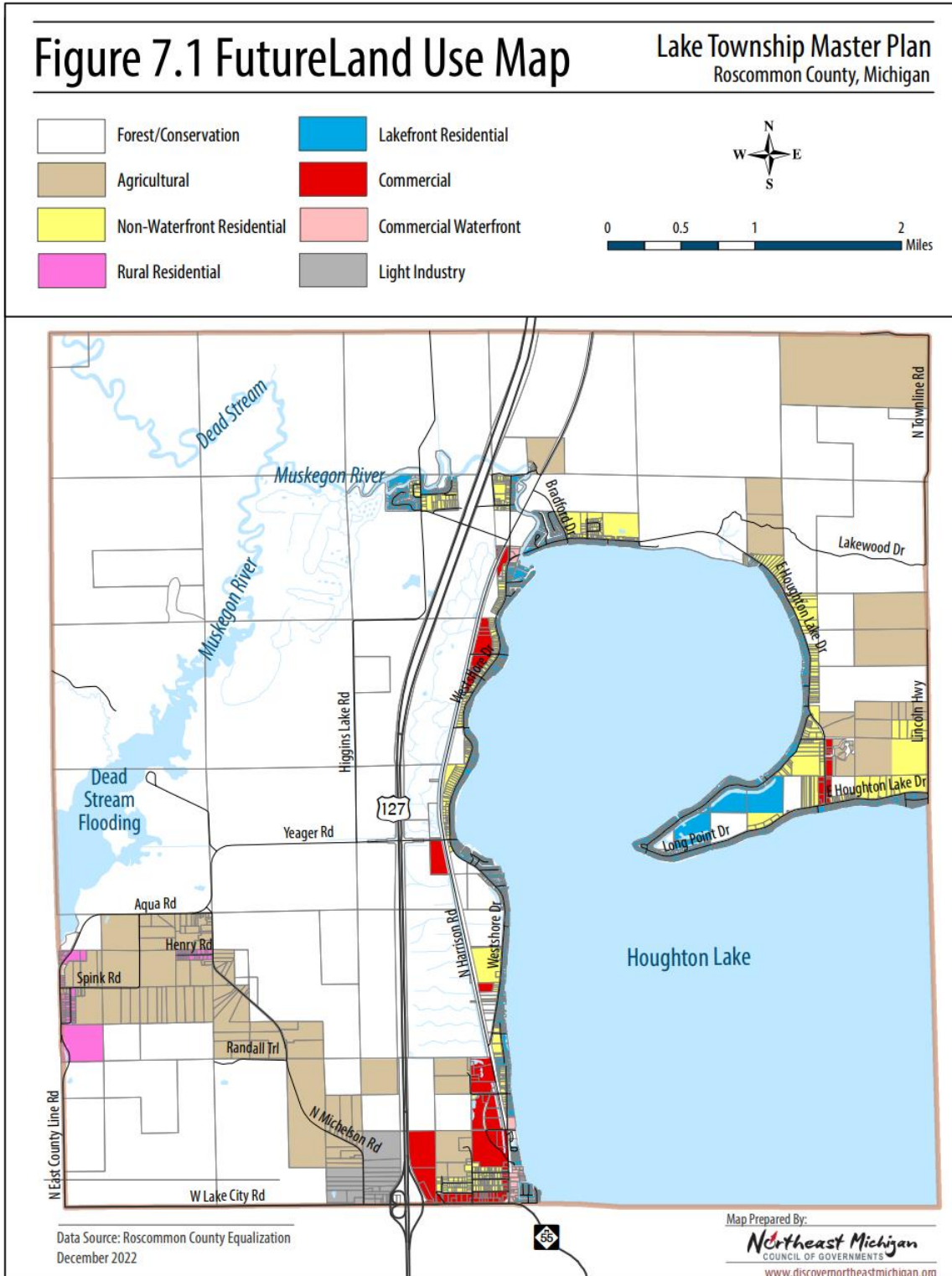
Money for maintaining county roads comes from state and local sources. There is a county wide road millage, but funds and revenues are limited, and conditions of roads continue to degrade. The Township intends to work cooperatively with the County Road Commission to address safety and maintenance of township roads. New development will put additional pressure on the existing roads and needs to be considered in future land use decisions.

Community Facilities:

The expansion of the cemetery roads for future use of the back section needs to be addressed in the near future. The building of a new township hall or a large-scale upgrade to the current hall has been on the Master Plan for several cycles and also needs to be addressed.

CHAPTER 7

Future Land Use Plan



CHAPTER 8

Plan Adoption and Implementation

Plan Coordination and Review

As required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008 (P.A. 33 of 2008 as amended), notification of intent to prepare a new Master Plan for Lake Township was sent on October 24, 2022, to all adjacent communities and other relevant entities to request cooperation and comment. A copy of the notice letter, affidavit of mailing and entities notified can be found at the end of this chapter. After the draft plan was completed by the Planning Commission, a draft was transmitted to the Township Board for approval to distribute the plan for review and comment. The draft plan was approved by the Board on December 13, 2022 and transmitted on December 14, 2022, to entities notified at the initiation of the plan development. After the required 63-day comment period, a public hearing notice and notice of plan adoption of the final plan was transmitted to all required entities. A copy of all relevant information can be found at the end of this chapter.

Public Hearing

A public hearing on the proposed Lake Township Master Plan, as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008 (P.A. 33 of 2008 as amended) was held on **February 21, 2023**, by the Township Planning Commission. The Act requires that a 15-day notice of the public hearing be given in a publication of general circulation in the community. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Houghton Lake Resorter on **February 2, 2023**.

Plan Adoption

The Lake Township Planning Commission formally adopted the Lake Township Master Plan on **February 21, 2023**. The Lake Township Board passed a resolution of concurrence on **March 14, 2023**.

Plan Implementation

The Lake Township Master Plan was developed to provide a vision of the Township's future. It will serve as a tool for decision making on future development proposals. The plan will also act as a guide for future public investment and service decisions, such as

CHAPTER 8

Plan Adoption and Implementation

the local budget, grant applications, road maintenance and development, community group activities, tax incentive decisions and administration of utilities and services. On an annual basis, the Township Planning Commission will review the goals and objectives of the master plan and identify objectives to be completed that year. The review will be shared with the Township Board. These identified priority items will be the focus of the Planning Commission's activity throughout that particular year. This will allow the Planning Commission to work on a proactive basis to better accomplish the goals identified in the master plan.

Zoning Plan

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended, requires a Master Plan to include a Zoning Plan – an explanation of how the land use categories on the future land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map. The zoning ordinance is the primary tool for implementing Lake Townships Master Plan. This plan recommends each Township's zoning ordinance be reviewed to ensure the ordinances are consistent with the goals and the future land use plan. At that same time the zoning ordinance should be reviewed to assure it conforms to current State of Michigan statutes and court rulings. The zoning ordinance will be periodically reviewed and evaluated to determine if changes are needed in order to facilitate orderly development, incorporate innovative approaches and maintain the desired community character.

In Chapter 7, the Future Land Use Plan depicts locations of future land use planning areas and provides explanations of each land use planning area. Future Land Use categories and their boundaries are somewhat different from the current zoning ordinance. It is important to note, the Future Land Use Map is a general guideline and conditions may change to warrant a zoning district other than what is shown on the map.

CHAPTER 8

Plan Adoption and Implementation

The Forest/Conservation Future Land Use District is consistent with the current Forest/Recreation District of the township. Most of this land is State owned and therefore will remain largely undeveloped.

The Residential Future Land Use Districts include the current zoned areas:

- R-1 – Waterfront Low Density
- R-2 – Non-Waterfront Medium Density
- R-3 – Non-Waterfront High Density
- R-4 – Mobile Home Park
- RR-1 – Rural Residential
- MDU – Mobile Home Park

The principal purpose of these districts is to provide a range of residential dwelling types at various densities with individual zones tailored to specific uses. Minimum lots sizes range from 6,000 square feet to two or more acres in RR-1.

The current zoning districts have served the township well and with limited vacant residential land for development, no major changes are anticipated in these areas.

The Commercial Future Land Use District includes the current zoned areas:

- C-1 – Smaller commercial use with minimum lot area of 12,000 square feet.
- C-2 – Larger use commercial with minimum lot area of 21,780 square feet.
- CW – Commercial Waterfront with minimum lot area of 12,000 square feet.

The planning commission will review the expansion of the commercial area where land permits. The Township should review and if needed amend general provisions and supplemental regulations to address groundwater protection, noise, lighting, landscaping, screening, signage, and access management; especially when development is located along major roadways, within neighborhoods and along community entryways.

CHAPTER 8

Plan Adoption and Implementation

Light Industry Future Land Use represents a new area for Lake Township. A possible light industrial development located along M-55 West of US-127 Freeway would bring possible employment opportunities to the area and expand the local tax base.

The purpose of the Agricultural Future Land Use District is to provide for and encourage agricultural uses of land, related uses, and limited residential uses in a rural environment. The minimum lot area for each single-family dwelling with its accessory buildings is 1 acre and the minimum road frontage is 100 feet. There is little farmland left in the Township, and most is located west of US 127 along the border of Enterprise Township. Once agricultural operations cease on those parcels the possibility exists of changing the zoning to reflect the very low-density residential character of the area.

Grants and Capital Improvement Plan

The Master Plan can also be used as a guide for future public investment and service decisions, such as the local budget, grant applications and administration of utilities and services. Many communities prioritize and budget for capital improvement projects (such as infrastructure improvements and, park improvements). Capital Improvements Plans (CIP) typically looks five years into the future to establish a schedule for all anticipated capital improvement projects in the community. A CIP includes cost estimates and sources for financing for each project. It can therefore serve as both a budgetary and policy document to aid in the implementation of a community's Master Plan.

Recreation Plan

The Township must have a current DNR approved 5-Year Recreation Plan to be eligible for recreation grant funding. Lake Township maintains a recreation plan. DNR approved recreation plans cover a five-year planning period. Grant funds may be pursued for recreation projects identified in the Master Plan and the 5-Year Recreation Plan. Projects may include outdoor recreation facilities, bike and hiking trails and improving public access to the lakes and streams through kayak/canoe launches.

CHAPTER 8

Plan Adoption and Implementation

Official Documentation

The following pages contain the official documentation of the Master Planning process.

Insert require notices and resolutions

CHAPTER 8

Plan Adoption and Implementation
