

Almira Township Master Plan Update



Almira Township Planning Commission

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Shannon Jordan

Almira Township Board

Mark Roper - Supervisor

Tammy Clous - Clerk

Mandy Gray Rineer - Treasurer

Matt Therrien - Trustee

Lori Florip - Trustee

Almira Township Office

7276 Ole White Dr

Lake Ann MI 49650

(231) 275-5862

Prepared by:



**Networks
Northwest**

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WELCOME RANSOM LAKE NATURAL AREA

RAMONA
TOWNSHIP
LAND
GTRLC.org

PROPERTY DETAILS



Ransom Lake Natural Area is located in Ramona Township, Michigan. The area is owned by the Ramona Township Land Conservancy and is open to the public for recreational use. The area is located on the east side of the township, near the border with the State of Wisconsin. The area is a mix of forest, wetlands, and open fields. The area is a great place to enjoy nature and outdoor activities.

ABOUT GTRLC

GTRLC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and management of natural resources in Ramona Township. We work to protect the land, water, and wildlife of the area, and provide educational programs and opportunities for the public. We are committed to the conservation of the natural environment and the promotion of sustainable development. We are a member of the Michigan Land Conservancy and the National Land Conservancy.

CONTACT THE CONSERVANCY
GTRLC, 1000 N. Long Lake Road, Suite 100
253.525.1111 | gtrlc.org



RULES & REMINDERS

Please, when visiting this natural area:
- Keep animals under control.
- Stay on designated trails.
- Do not feed wildlife.
- Do not smoke or drink alcohol.
- Do not use firearms or weapons.
- Do not use off-road vehicles.
- Do not use drones or other aircraft.
- Do not use ATVs or other vehicles.
- Do not use chainsaws or other power tools.
- Do not use chainsaws or other power tools.

HUNTING RULES

Hunting is allowed in this area. Hunters must follow all state and federal hunting regulations. Hunters must obtain a hunting license and a permit to hunt in this area. Hunters must follow all rules and regulations regarding hunting in this area. Hunters must not hunt on private property without the owner's permission. Hunters must not hunt on the property of the Ramona Township Land Conservancy. Hunters must not hunt on the property of the Michigan Land Conservancy. Hunters must not hunt on the property of the National Land Conservancy.

PETS

ALL PETS MUST
BE ON LEASH



WHAT CAN I DO HERE?



NO HORSES
ALLOWED

Almira Township Master Plan

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Chapter 1: Introduction

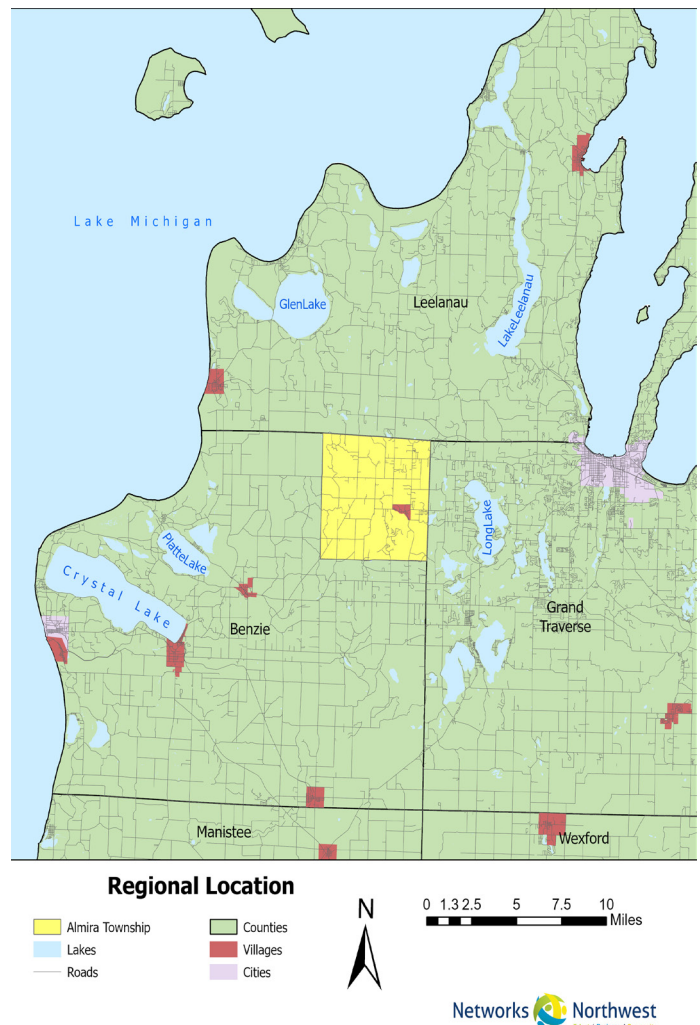
Almira Township lies in the northeastern part of Benzie County, which is situated in the northwest region of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Almira Township is comprised of one government-surveyed township, or 36 sections. The Township land area of 33.8 square miles is slightly less than the standard 36 square miles for a standard geographic township. A number of sections of the Township on the northern border (sections 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6) are less than the standard one square mile in size.

Almira Township borders on Grand Traverse County to the east and Leelanau County to the north. The Township is approximately 15 miles from Traverse City, which provides many of the employment, shopping and cultural amenities not available in the Township. To the West approximately fifteen (15) miles is Lake Michigan, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore and the bulk of Benzie County.

Purpose and Planning Process

The purpose of the Almira Township Master Plan is to provide guidance for future development while protecting the water resources, other natural resources, and rural character of the Township. This plan presents extensive background information for Almira Township and the surrounding area, including socio-economic data, description and mapping of natural resources, and inventory of existing community facilities. The background information is analyzed to identify important characteristics, changes, and trends occurring in Almira Township.

Community concerns are identified based on citizen participation in Master Plan meetings, New Designs for Growth Community workshops, Township citizen surveys, findings from visioning sessions, County planning studies and extensive efforts by the Planning Commission. Community developed goals and policies are presented to guide future development based on the background studies, key land use trends and community issues. These goals, along with a detailed map of existing land use, provided the basis for the Future Land Use Map that specifies the extent and location of where various types of future development can be accommodated within the Township. This plan also provides suggestions for implementation of the identified goals and policies. The guidance provided by this Master Plan will be utilized in updating the Township Zoning Ordinance and other measures the Township is authorized to take.



Map 1: Regional Location Map

Historical Context

Native Americans originally inhabited this area. There were many signs of Native Americans in this vicinity in our early days. Arrowheads were frequently found in this township, as well as other artifacts including a stone nursing bottle. Well-developed apple trees were found in Almira's forests and a burial ground was discovered on the Platte River. Regrettably, large and bright beads were taken from those graves.

The first pioneers of Almira Township came mostly from eastern New York State. These people were confronted in every public place in the East with advertisements telling of the great West. These ads all boasted of how a large family could live and thrive and just how much 40 acres could produce. People also drove to the West at the beginning of the Civil War in the hopes that their boys could remain home and care for their family.

Almira Township was first platted and surveyed by government surveyors about 1860 and it was in the next five years that people began moving here. Those who moved here had to live on the government-surveyed property for five years. If they "proved up" (as the attempt of living in this wilderness was called), they were given a government deed to their farm.

The first settlers in Almira were believed to be John and Alec Heather who came from Canada in 1862. The first family to make a house in Almira Township was the Burrell family. Andrew Burrell and his wife, Almira - the township's namesake - lived on the North side of Sancrainte Creek. The next family was the Addison "A. P." Wheelock family who settled on Ann Lake, the lake being named "Ann" after his estimable wife.

A. P. Wheelock was an influential man. He spoke five different languages. Because of this unique ability, and the coincidence that many foreign people were settling in Traverse at this time, he was given a position in Hannah Lay's old store. He left his family at the edge of Ann Lake to "prove up" on his homestead. Wheelock was also the first sheriff of Benzie County.

Other settlers arrived quickly and made an earnest effort to make themselves a home here. An unbroken and heavily timbered wilderness challenged the settlers, who were content to live in crudely constructed hovels, many of which were often covered with bark stripped from trees. It took many years of hard toil before the

land held out promise of any material returns.

The first couple who were married here was Susan Pettis and Judson Pratt who went to live on a farm near the corner of Pratt Road and County Road 669. The ceremony was performed by the first Justice of Peace, William Rosa. The first white child born here was William Rosa, Junior.

The Shirtliff brothers came from Chicago and built Almira's first road, which was called State Road. They were paid in government land, but much of it was swampland and worthless at that time. State Road ran from Manistee through Benzonia and this township to Traverse City. All other roads were mere trails through the wilderness that were beaten into paths and finally roads, paying little attention to section lines.

The residents recognized the importance of religion and education and took early measures to establish institutions reflecting their values. Mrs. Elihu Linkletter (nee Burnett) taught the first term of school, which was held in a primitive log house, about 12x16 feet inside. These were temporary quarters while the township built a schoolhouse in its first school district—School District No. 1—formed in 1862 and called the Black School. It was situated where the Lake Ann Cemetery is now located. Its first teacher was Mr. Duryea. The next schoolhouse was District No. 2, which was first taught by Alice Spafford in a barn near the corner of County Road 669 and Almira Road. During the lumber era later in the century, Almira Township boasted six school districts. Of the 356-resident population of 1880, 121 were school children.

The first church was established by the Rev. George Thompson in 1864; it was composed of Christians of several denominations and was practically Congregational in character, although it did not assume that name at its organization. It was simply called the First Church of Almira.

The Township, with more than 30 bodies of water, was formally established in 1864. The first township meeting was held at A. P. Wheelock's home at which Harrison Abbe was elected as supervisor, Andrew Rosa as clerk, and A. P. Wheelock as treasurer. One point of business at that first meeting was to dedicate the first schoolhouse.

Dr. Wilson was Almira Township's first physician, although when he first came to this country, he hid his identity. When it was discovered, he was kept galloping on horseback as needed from one homestead to another.

A Native American brought mail on the back of an Indian pony in summer and on snowshoes in winter once every week. The Post Office was in a building on Ransom Creek by Lake Ann Road. Later the Post Office was moved to Almira Corners, which is the corner of Fowler Road and Ole White Drive. The first grocery store was owned by Matt Burnett on the A. J. White farm at the corner of Ole White Drive and Fowler Road, also called Almira Corners.

In terms of social activities, there were barn-raising, sugaring-off parties, logging bees, and get-togethers to husk corn. Any help one neighbor could give another was freely and gladly given. Lake Ann grew into a thriving lumber town. R. J. Ransom owned a saw and gristmill at Ransom Creek. In 1892, the first railroad (the Manistee & Northeastern) threaded its way through the eastern part of the township and the village of Lake Ann sprang up. Lake Ann was organized and incorporated on October 10, 1892. In a few years it had more than 800 residents and 100 buildings. By 1897, Lake Ann consisted of a general store, restaurant, hotel, drug store, meat market, saloon, livery barn and a depot. Activities centered around the Habbeler sawmill on the lakeshore (which employed 125 men) and the MNE railroad. The Grand Traverse Illustrated described Lake Ann as "a bright little town. Many chances are yet open and money is waiting to roll into the pockets of some more who get there quick. The people of the little burg are wide awake and energetic."

Timbering and agriculture were the economic base of the Township for the first fifty years. After the collapse of the timber industry, many of the offspring of the early settlers were forced to leave the community to find employment and for the next fifty years or so very little recruitment occurred.

Lake Ann Village was virtually destroyed by fire, at least three times. The first fire occurred on July 4, 1897, when Lake Ann was in competition with Traverse City as the metropolis of this area of Michigan with 1,000 inhabitants. It is not known whether the fire began in the engine room of William Habbeler's sawmill or by a spark from a tug anchored near the shore. The local

firefighting equipment and water supply were inadequate and Traverse City was summoned by telegraph. Fifty-four minutes and two water stops later (they came by rail), and the Traverse City Fire Department was on the scene. Over a dozen businesses, freight and flatcar, the depot, endless homes and nearly a half-mile of track were all destroyed. Many of the businesses rebuilt only to be wiped out again by another fire in 1914. The third fire erupted in 1918; it was almost too much for the Village and Lake Ann was never rebuilt to its former status.

The history of the area is relatively sparse for more recent years. One of the locally noteworthy periods during was during prohibition when some prominent Chicago families operated whiskey distilleries in the Township. Some known "gangster" families had property at Harris Point and at what is now the Lake Ann Camp during this period.

Lake Ann is now a tiny, beautiful resort town with 292 residents. Almira Township, a resort and farming area with a population of approximately 4,240 persons (including the Village), continues to be the fastest growing township in Benzie County, due largely to its proximity to Traverse City.

Additional historical information on Almira Township and the Village of Lake Ann can be found at the Almira Historical Society.



Image 1: Almira Historical Society Museum

Government

Almira Township was formally organized in 1864. At that time the Township was in the “Grand Traverse District” for judicial purposes. When Benzie County was established in 1867 Almira Township became the northeastern corner of the County.

In the late 1960’s and early 1970’s the economic base of the region, which includes Benzie, Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties, began to change from primarily agriculture and seasonal tourism. Industrial development and retail sales became important additions to the economic base of Northwestern Michigan.

These changes created new jobs and provided a more stable income. These factors were the harbinger of change in the Township government. As more year-round work was available more of the community’s young people were able to stay in the area. This created a demand for housing and community services, such as fire protection, ambulance service, and more and larger schools.

This demand for increased services led to the need for increasing revenues to provide the services. The growth in housing both increased the tax base but also increased the cost of administering the assessing services. The work volume and complexity increased until Township officers were no longer able to adequately serve the public while working out of their homes and the current Township office building was constructed in 1989.

The increase in housing needs and an ever mobile and prosperous population also resulted in increased pressure on the resources of the Township both in terms of the geographic ability to house people and with increased interaction between people who were living increasingly close to each other. These pressures were focused on the Township government as the first level of administration available to hear complaints.

As a general law township Almira has specific duties and authorities stemming from the Michigan State constitution, by acts of the State legislature, and by case law in the court system. Among those duties is that of enacting zoning (authorized by the Township Rural Zoning Act), and through the Township Planning Act which allows creation of a Planning Commission whose duties include preparing a master plan to guide the development of the Township.

In the early 1970’s a few far-sighted people recognized the need for a Township zoning ordinance as the way to bring a semblance of order in this time of rapid change. The Township’s first zoning ordinance was adopted in 1972 and, with revisions and amendments, is still in effect.

The growth which created the need for a zoning board and zoning ordinance continued through the 1980’s and 1990’s until there was concern in the community that the characteristics which made this a desirable community were in danger of being lost.

The Almira Township Board created the Almira Planning Commission in 1995. Prior to the establishment of the Planning Commission, the Township zoning matters were addressed by the Zoning Board that was established in 1972 and was dissolved when the Planning Commission was established.

Currently, the Almira Township Planning Commission operates under, and complies with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Governor Jennifer Granholm signed it into law on March 13, 2008. The statute took effect September 1, 2008.

Chapter 2: Socio-Economic Profile

Population and household characteristics are essential components to consider in the development of any Master Plan. An analysis of a community's existing and future population and household characteristics provides a foundation upon which a major portion of a master plan is based. While an evaluation of a community's current characteristics provides insight to immediate needs and deficiencies, population projections provide a basis for determining future land use requirements, public facility needs, and essential services.

The following examples illustrate this point. A younger population may demand more school facilities and active recreation opportunities, while an older population may require medical support, property maintenance assistance and prefer higher density residential development. Also, persons characterized as low income typically generate a higher demand for publicly provided facilities than persons in higher income categories who have greater access to private facilities. [In addition, as retirees move North, they want, and are willing to pay for some of the services they had downstate.] As shown by these examples, analysis of a community's demographic base is essential to the preparation of a community master plan.

This section of the Plan examines several elements, which are central to understanding a community's population and housing characteristics. These items include population growth patterns, age/gender breakdowns, and household size.

Population

Because the 2020 Census data was not available during the primary development of the Master Plan, Almira Township examined socio-economic data compiled by ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute). ESRI utilizes Census data, building permits, mailing addresses, and more to generate data and projections that provide high confidence levels in their data projections.

According to the ESRI Almira Township Community Profile, the population of Almira Township was 4,240, which includes the 292 residents of the Village of Lake Ann. This also represents nearly a quarter of the 18,397 residents in Benzie County.

Table 1: Population Trends (1990 to Projected 2026)

	1990	2000	1990 to 2000 Change	2010	2000 to 2010 Change	2021 (ESRI)	2010 to 2021 Change	Projected 2026 (ESRI)	2021 to Projected 2026 Change
Almira Township	1,232	2,774	56%	3,645	24%	3,948	8%	4,083	3.3%
Village of Lake Ann	217	202	-7%	268	25%	292	8%	302	3.3%
Benzie County	12,200	15,998	24%	17,525	9%	18,397	5%	18,788	2.1%
10 County Region	230,962	281,468	18%	297,912	6%	315,339	6%	332,647	5.2%
State of Michigan	9,295,297	9,938,444	6%	9,883,640	-1%	10,105,078	2%	10,211,228	1.0%

Table 2: Age Distribution (2010 and 2021)

	Almira Township			Village of Lake Ann			Benzie County		
	2010	2021	Change	2010	2021	Change	2010	2021	Change
Total Population	3,645	3,948	303	268	292	24	17,525	18,397	872
0 to 4	7.9%	6.2%	-1.7%	5.2%	6.5%	1.3%	5.3%	4.5%	-0.8%
5 to 9	7.7%	6.5%	-1.2%	3.7%	6.5%	2.8%	6.0%	5.0%	-1.0%
10 to 14	6.7%	7.2%	0.5%	3.4%	7.2%	3.8%	6.0%	5.6%	-0.4%
15 to 24	9.8%	11.1%	1.3%	12.3%	11.3%	-1.0%	9.7%	9.1%	-0.6%
25 to 34	12.8%	10.6%	-2.2%	10.8%	10.6%	-0.2%	9.3%	9.7%	0.4%
35 to 44	15.1%	12.5%	-2.6%	7.8%	13.0%	5.2%	11.8%	10.5%	-1.3%
45 to 54	16.4%	13.6%	-2.8%	21.3%	13.7%	-7.6%	16.2%	12.3%	-3.9%
55 to 64	12.8%	15.8%	3.0%	16.8%	15.1%	-1.7%	15.0%	16.9%	1.9%
65 to 74	6.6%	11.3%	4.7%	11.2%	11.0%	-0.2%	11.7%	15.8%	4.1%
75 to 84	3.5%	4.1%	0.6%	6.3%	4.1%	-2.2%	6.4%	7.8%	1.4%
85 & Over	0.9%	1.1%	0.2%	1.1%	1.0%	-0.1%	2.5%	2.9%	0.4%
Male	1,817	1,934	117	129	143	14	8,701	9,163	462
Female	1,828	2,013	185	139	149	10	8,824	9,234	410
Median Ages	38.7	41.9	3.2	48	41.3	-6.7	46.2	49.9	3.7

As seen on Table 1: Population Trends (1990 to Projected 2026), the Township has seen positive growth over the past 30 years, which also aligned with positive growth that occurred in the 1970's and 1980s (130% and 34.4%, respectively).

In regards to the population, it is important to note that the total population figures do not account for residents who may be considered snow birds or vacation home owners. It can be reasonably expected that the summer months total population increases. An indicator of this is that 35% of homes are considered vacant, which we know to not be true.

Information on age distribution within a population can assist the community in matching public services to community characteristics, by determining the special needs of specific resident groups. Table 2: 2010 and 2021 Age Distributions illustrate the changes in age between the 2010 Census and 2021 ESRI data.

The 25 - 44 age brackets cover an age span of 19 years, when that population is considered to be in their working years and likely to have school-age children or considering family planning. This makes up 23.1 percent of the Township's population and 23.6 percent of the Village of Lake Ann's population.

For the sake of comparison, younger and older age categories are combined to consider two additional 19 year age spans for the Township population. An age bracket from 5-24 years of age incorporates the school age population and young working population, and makes up 24.8 percent of the Township population. The age bracket 45-64 years of age is considered to be the older working years and is typically considered to be the 'empty nester' cohort where the children have moved out of the household. This segment of the population has remained steady between 2010 and 2021, rising from 29.2 percent to 29.4 percent of the Township's population.

The 65 and over age group does not cover a specific number of years, but is typically considered the retirement stage of life. In 2010, 11 percent of Township residents fell under this group. This number has grown to 16.5 percent in 2021. In comparison, the Village of Lake Ann decreased from 18.6 percent to 16.1 percent.

Between 2010 and 2021, the median age in Almira Township rose from 38.7 to 41.9, which was similar to the change in Benzie County. However, the Village of Lake Ann decreased from a median age of 48 to 41.3.

Population Projections

ESRI projections, shown on Table 1, project the Township and Village both having a 3.3 percent increase from 2021 to 2026. Almira Township is projected to rise to 4,083 residents, while the Village of Lake Ann is projected to increase to 302 residents. In comparison, Benzie County is projected to increase by 2.1 percent or to 18,788 residents.

ESRI projections are made using various data such as mail carrier routes, new residential construction, and current events and past trends. ESRI notes that a stable rate of growth is easier to anticipate than rapid growth or decline. ESRI projections are also revised annually to draw on the most recent data available.

Housing

Figure: 1 through Figure: show data related to households in Almira Township, Village of Lake Ann, and Benzie County. In 2010, Almira Township's number of households rose from 1,385 to 1,524 in 2021. It is also projected that the Township will increase by 67 households to 1,581 in 2026.

In terms of housing units, the Township saw an increase to 2,031 housing units in 2021, which is projected to increase by 105 units by 2026. Like Almira Township, Benzie County and the Village of Lake Ann have increased household sizes, number of families, and housing units and are projected to continue growth into 2026. In contrast to this growth, the average family size in the Township, Village, and County have all seen a small decrease between 2010 and projected into 2026.

An evaluation of the property values can also be beneficial in determining community characteristics and housing needs. The median home value in Almira Township was \$190,848 in 2021 and is projected to increase to \$207,003 in 2026, and the Village of Lake Ann sits at \$190,625 and is projected to increase to \$205,556. Benzie County home values were \$207,035 and projected to increase to \$236,434 in 2026, while the State of Michigan was projected to increase from \$188,958 to \$223,569. The home values have all increased from the 2010 Census from the Township's home value of \$165,500 (includes Village of Lake Ann), \$153,600 in Village of Lake Ann, \$162,700 in Benzie County and \$147,500 for the State of Michigan.

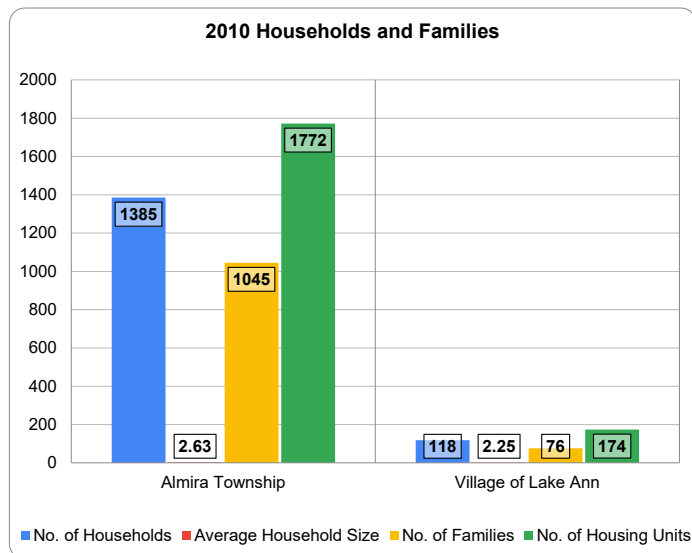


Figure 1: 2010 Households and Families

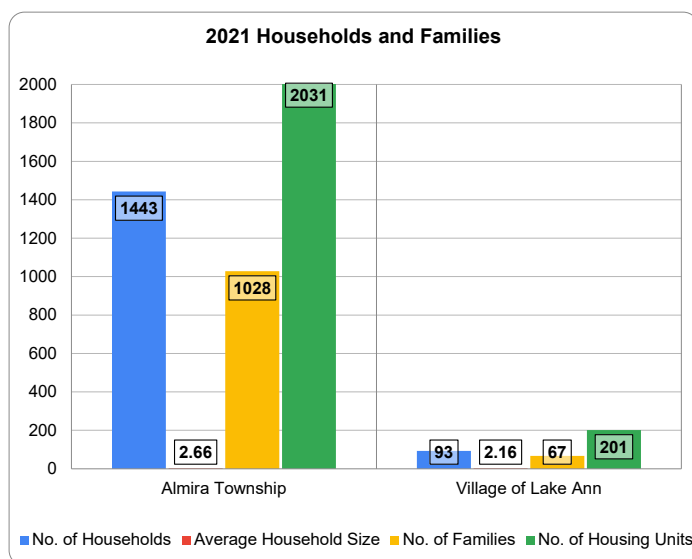


Figure 2: 2021 Households and Families

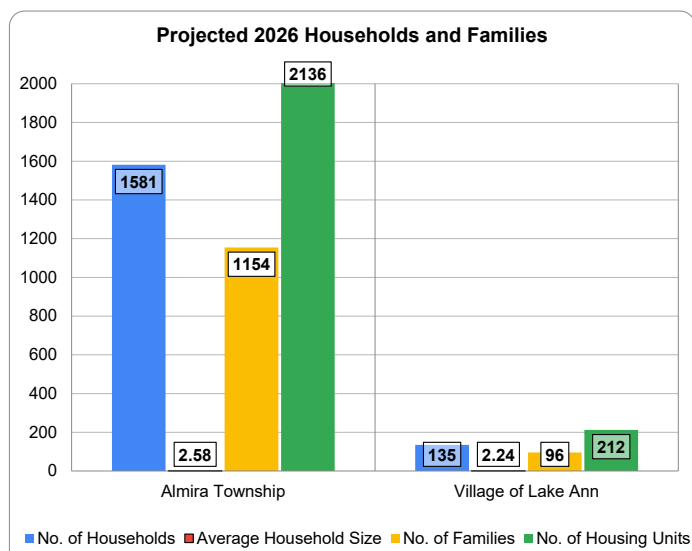


Figure 3: 2026 Projected Households and Families

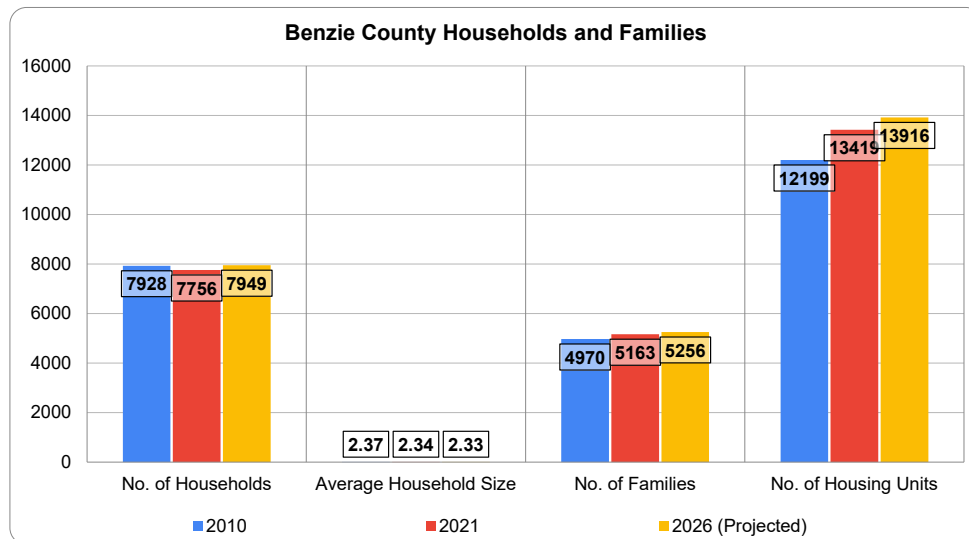


Figure 4: Benzie County Households and Families

Income, Education & Employment

Income, education and employment statistics were also derived from ESRI. The 2021 State of Michigan median household income is \$56,537 which is projected to increase to \$64,549. In comparison, Benzie County's median income is slightly less than the State whereas both Almira Township and Village of Lake Ann have significantly higher median household incomes, but similar per capita income numbers.

Education is one important factor in analyzing the capabilities of the local work force. The data from 2021 for ages 25 and up in Almira Township show 96.5 percent of residents have a high school education or higher. This compared to the Village of Lake Ann at 97 percent and Benzie County at 93.7 percent. The Township also saw an increase of residents with a bachelors degree or higher increased to 32.5 percent of residents.

Employment data for ages 16 and up are displayed by Industry and by Occupation on Figure 2-7 through 2-9 for Almira Township, Village of Lake Ann, and Benzie County. In line with the County and Village, the Township's most popular industry was services. White Collar jobs make up a large portion of the Occupations, which is further expounded upon in Figure 9.

State Equalized Values

Property values can also be analyzed by reviewing State Equalized Value (SEV) figures. By law, SEV, which constitutes a community's tax base, is equal to approximately one-half of the true market value of real property and certain taxable personal properties. Figure 2-10 shows SEV by property class for the Township (including the Village of Lake Ann) in 2010, 2015, and 2021. As indicated in the table, the majority of the Township's tax base is derived from residential property.

Seasonal Population

In 2022, Networks Northwest released the Seasonal Population in Northwest Michigan. The report examined the seasonal population in the 10 Northwest Michigan Counties, which is important to planning with the population increases seen throughout Northwest Michigan. Particularly for Almira Township, the information related to Benzie County is important.

Figure 11, below, shows the population increase estimates with overnight visitors broken into accommodations (campgrounds, motels, hotels, etc.) and short-term rentals. During the peak summer months, Benzie County becomes the 3rd most populous County in the Northwest Michigan region.

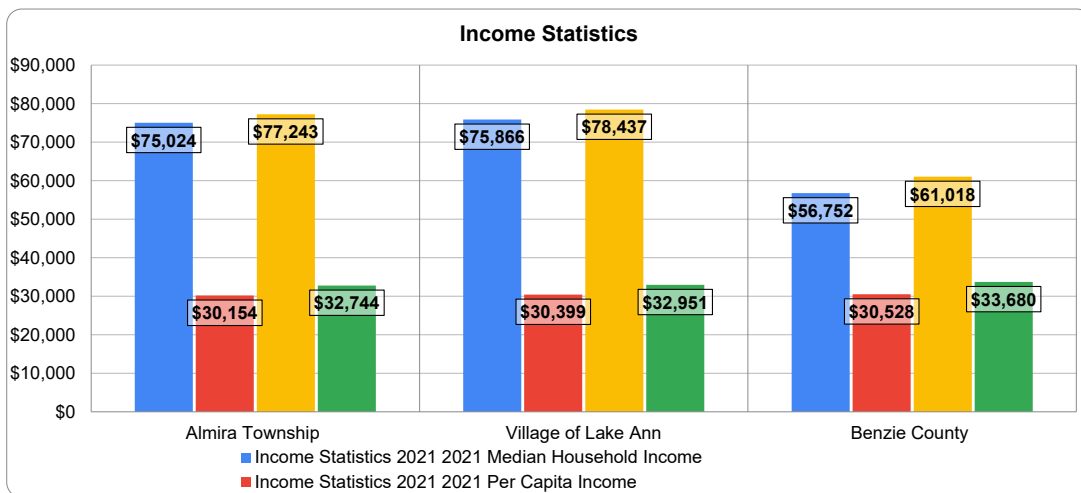


Figure 5: 2021 Income Statistics

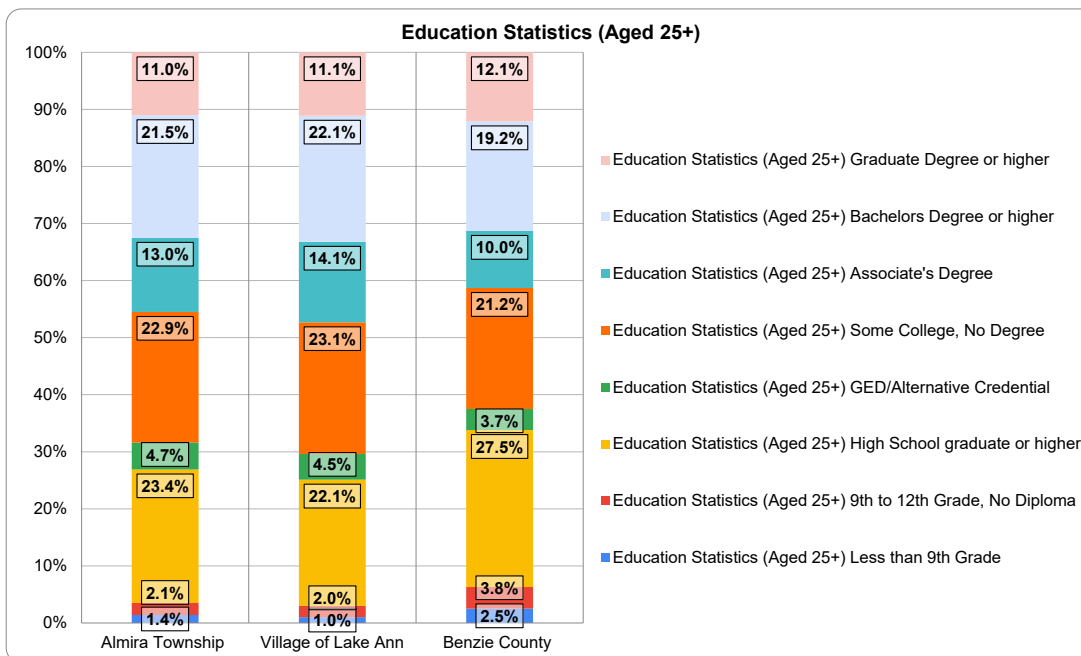


Figure 6: Educational Statistics of People Aged 25 years and over

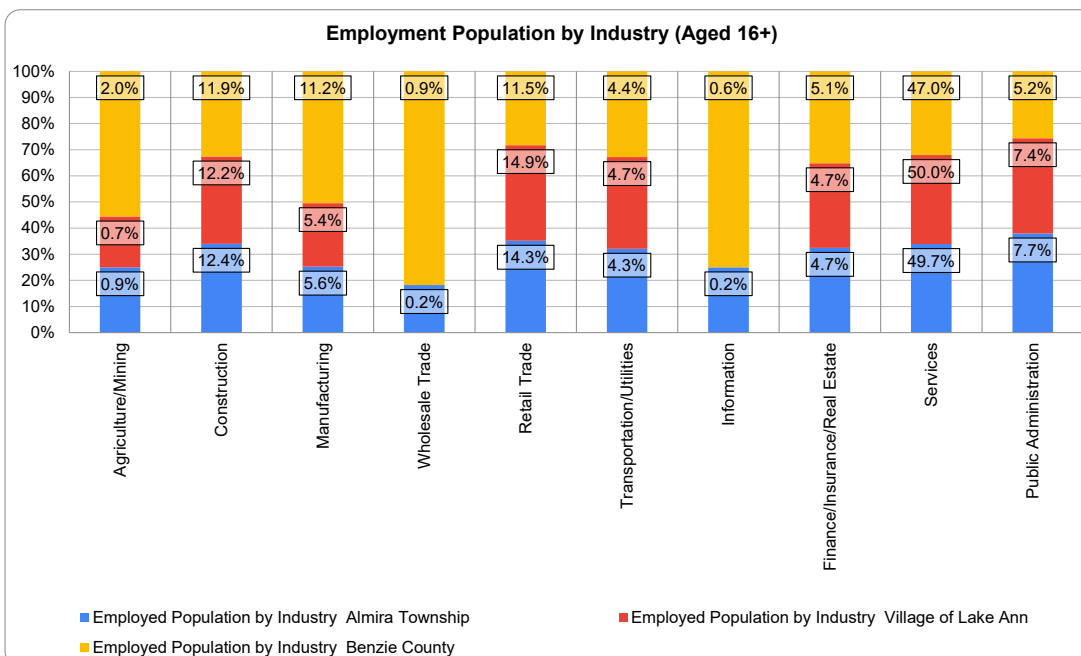


Figure 7: Employment: Population by Industry of People Aged 16 years and over

Employed Population by Occupation (Aged 16+)

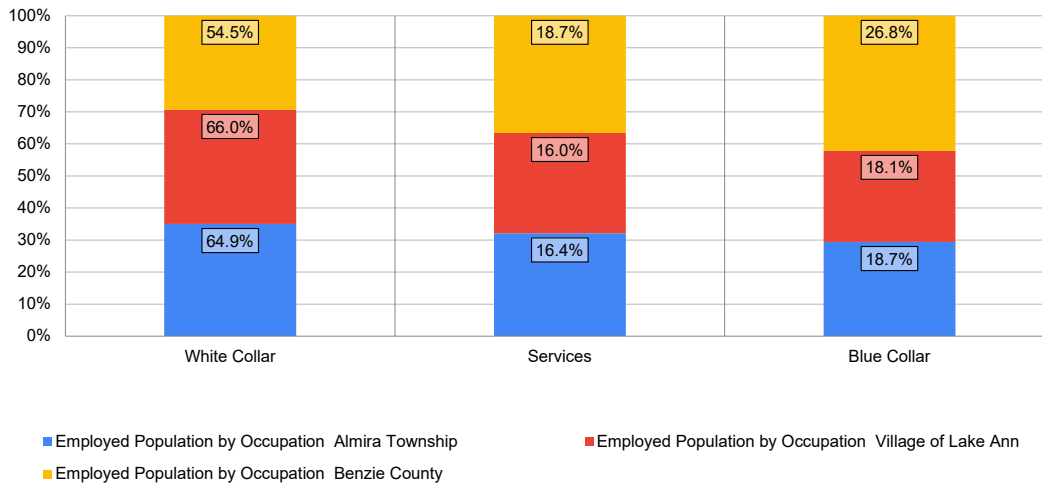


Figure 8: Employment: Population by Occupation of People Aged 16 years and over

Figure 9: Assessed State Equalized Values

	2010	2015	%	Projected 2022	%
Agriculture	3,864,400	2,997,400	-28.9%	4,605,900	34.9%
Commercial	3,081,900	2,456,200	-25.5%	3,211,700	23.5%
Industrial	45,000	37,500	-20.0%	166,900	77.5%
Residential	166,371,600	162,809,500	-2.2%	265,069,000	38.6%
Timber Cut Over	0	0	-%	0	-%
Development	0	0	-%	0	-%
Total Real Property	173,362,900	168,300,600	-3.0%	273,053,500	38.4%
Personal Property	3,021,800	2,964,300	-1.9%	3,562,700	16.8%
TOTAL SEV	176,384,700	171,264,900	-3.0%	276,616,200	38.1%

Figure 10: Seasonal Population Estimates - Benzie County

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
Permanent Population	17,970	17,970	17,970	17,970	17,970	17,970	17,970	17,970	17,970	17,970	17,970	17,970	17,970
Second-home Population	1,338	1,338	2,008	2,008	2,008	10,708	10,708	10,708	3,012	3,012	3,012	3,012	4,406
Overnight Visitors	8,804	8,226	8,755	8,845	29,251	30,600	32,227	32,136	29,513	29,713	8,409	8,717	19,600
Accommodations	7,227	6,530	7,204	7,196	25,994	26,340	27,687	27,487	25,836	26,270	7,066	7,244	16,840
Short-term rentals	1,577	1,696	1,551	1,649	3,256	4,259	4,539	4,648	3,677	3,443	1,344	1,473	2,759
Total	28,112	27,535	28,733	28,823	49,228	59,278	60,904	60,814	50,495	50,694	29,391	29,699	41,975

Chapter 3: Natural Resources

Natural Resources

One of the greatest attractions for residents and visitors to the Almira Township area is the natural environment, most notably the water resources. The natural environment that attracts people to the area also imposes constraints on the use of the land. Often the alteration of sensitive environments creates problems that cannot be corrected easily. For example, the combination of increasing impervious surfaces and the filling of wetlands will result in increased volumes of storm water runoff while reducing the natural storm water retention areas. It is essential that any future development consider the varied characteristics of the natural environment in order to preserve the character of Almira Township.

An analysis of Almira Township's physical environment can assist government officials in planning for future use. Natural resources addressed in this chapter include climate, geology, topography, soils, water, wetlands, woodlands, and fish and wildlife.

Climate

The Township's climatic conditions are similar to those across northern Lower Michigan: long, cold winters, and moderate, warm summers. However, the proximity to Lake Michigan serves to moderate temperature extremes as compared to more inland communities of northwestern Michigan. The average date when temperatures drop to freezing is in the fall and is typically several weeks later than the areas further inland, with the first frost in the township occurring as late as the middle or end of October. Lake Ann is in a 'snow-belt'. Snow accumulations of 1"/hour are common, with accumulations occasionally accumulating 24" a day. The data on Figure 14 illustrates average weather data for Benzie County, including Almira Township, averaged between 2015-2021.

Geology

According to geologists, the bedrock underlying Almira Township was laid down during the Devonian age of the Paleozoic Era. The bedrock in the Township consists of Antrim Shale in the northwest portion and Ellsworth Shale in the remainder of the Township.

The surface geology of the Township was formed 10,000 to 12,000 years ago by glacial activity. Numerous advances and retreats by the glaciers resulted in the locally complex pattern of erosion and deposition. The Township's surface geology consists primarily of glacial pale brown to pale reddish brown fine to coarse sand, alternating with layers of mixed small gravel/heavy cobbles, and is three to 65 feet in thickness. A narrow strip north of Lake Ann to the north-central Township boundary is made up of gray, grayish brown or reddish brown, non-sorted coarse textured glacial till, and is 30 to 90 feet in thickness.

In the northwestern portion of the Township, the outwash landform is pitted with ice-block depressions. These depressions are frost pockets. Some of the largest ice-block depressions in the outwash are seasonally or permanently flooded.

Topography

Almira Township is characterized by a diversity of topography from relatively flat expanses to gently rolling to steep slopes. A relatively flat area extends north-south in the western portion of the Township with much of the remainder of the township rolling. Steeply sloped areas are scattered across the Township, often in proximity to one of the lakes. The lowest point in the Township is in the southeast near Sanford Lake, at 803 feet above sea level. The highest points are Varney Hill and Warner Hill in the north-central portion of the Township at approximately 1,122 feet above sea level.

Figure 11: Weather Data

January Average Min. Temperature (Fahrenheit)	18.4
January Average Max. Temperature (Fahrenheit)	28.1
July Average Min. Temperature (Fahrenheit)	53.5
July Average Max. Temperature (Fahrenheit)	72.5
Average Annual Rainfall (2015-2021)	34
Average Annual Snowfall (2015-2021)	65.2

Soils

One important determinant of land use is the soil's suitability for development. The physical and engineering properties of a soil type should be considered before development occurs.

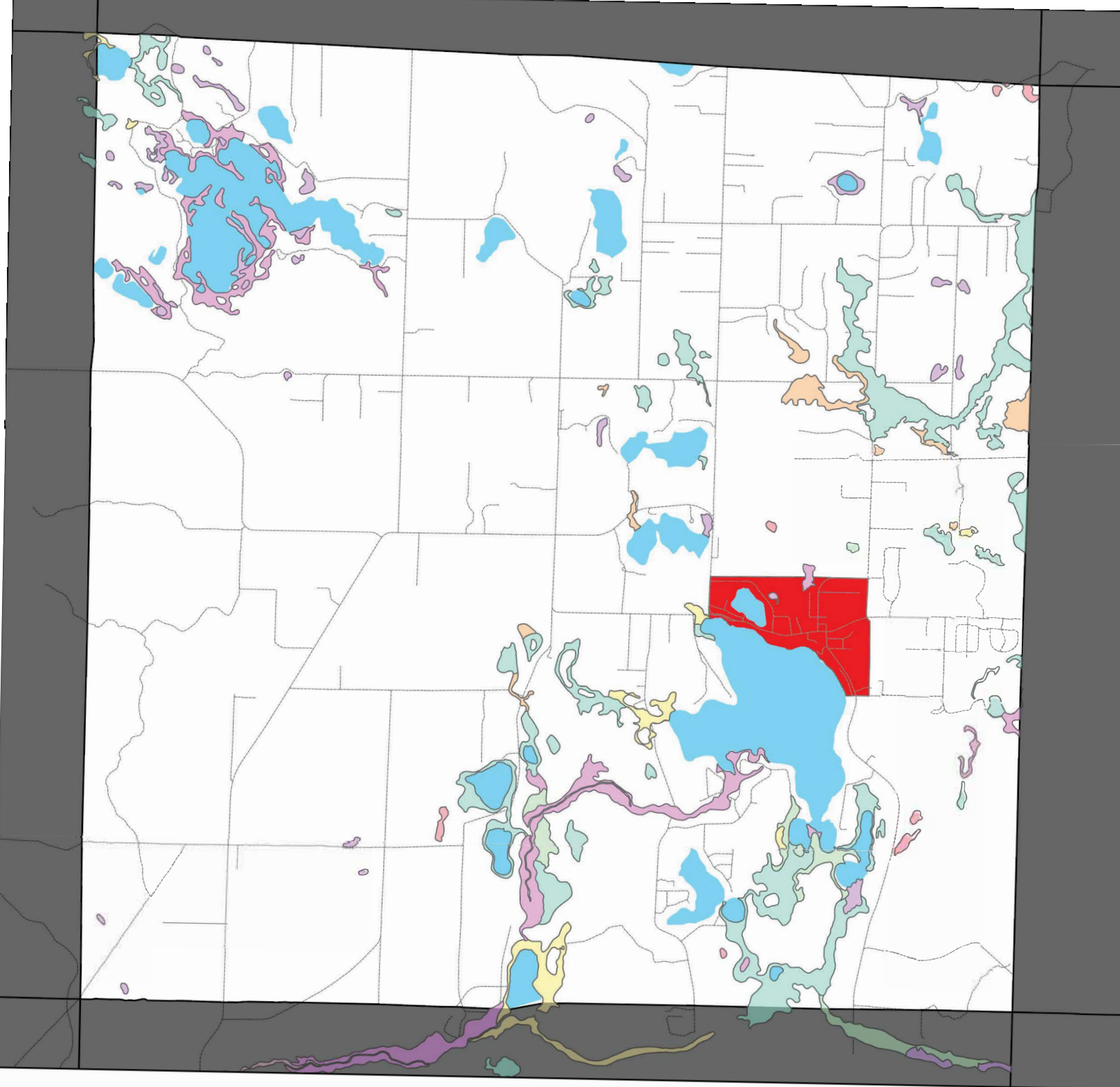
The Natural Resource Conservation Service has mapped the soils in Benzie County. The mapping of the soils provides significant information regarding various limitations posed by the particular soil types in a given area. The soil survey information identifies which soil types have limitations for locating septic systems, or have building construction limitations. Since water and sewer do not presently serve the Township, more detailed analysis of the soils by the District Health Department will determine suitability of the site for a septic system (state law requires District Health Department approval). Additionally the soils are grouped by slope, so areas with steep slopes can be identified. Hydric or wetland soil types are also identifiable from the soil survey. Soil type limitations do not preclude the development of specific sites. However, the Township and developers should realize that construction on some soils might be more costly. Soil mapping for the Township is pertinent information for consideration in the planning process.

The Soils and Farmland Map shows important details related to soil including calling out areas with hydric soils, farmland with local importance and farmland with unique importance. The NRCS defines farmland with unique importance as land other than prime farmland that is used for the production of specific high-value food and fiber crops. Farmland with local importance is defined as land for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops, that is not identified as national or state-wide importance.














Water Resources








One of the most valuable natural resources in Almira Township is water. The Township is located within the Leelanau and Platte watersheds, see the Watershed Basins map for more specific information. Both groundwater and surface water are vital for Almira Township. Because there is no central water distribution system, residents must rely on individual wells for household water. Surface waters in the lakes and creeks of the Township are an important resource for scenic, recreational, fish and wildlife habitat, and groundwater recharge. Therefore, it is important that water resources, both groundwater and surface water, be protected and managed in a manner which will ensure their quality.












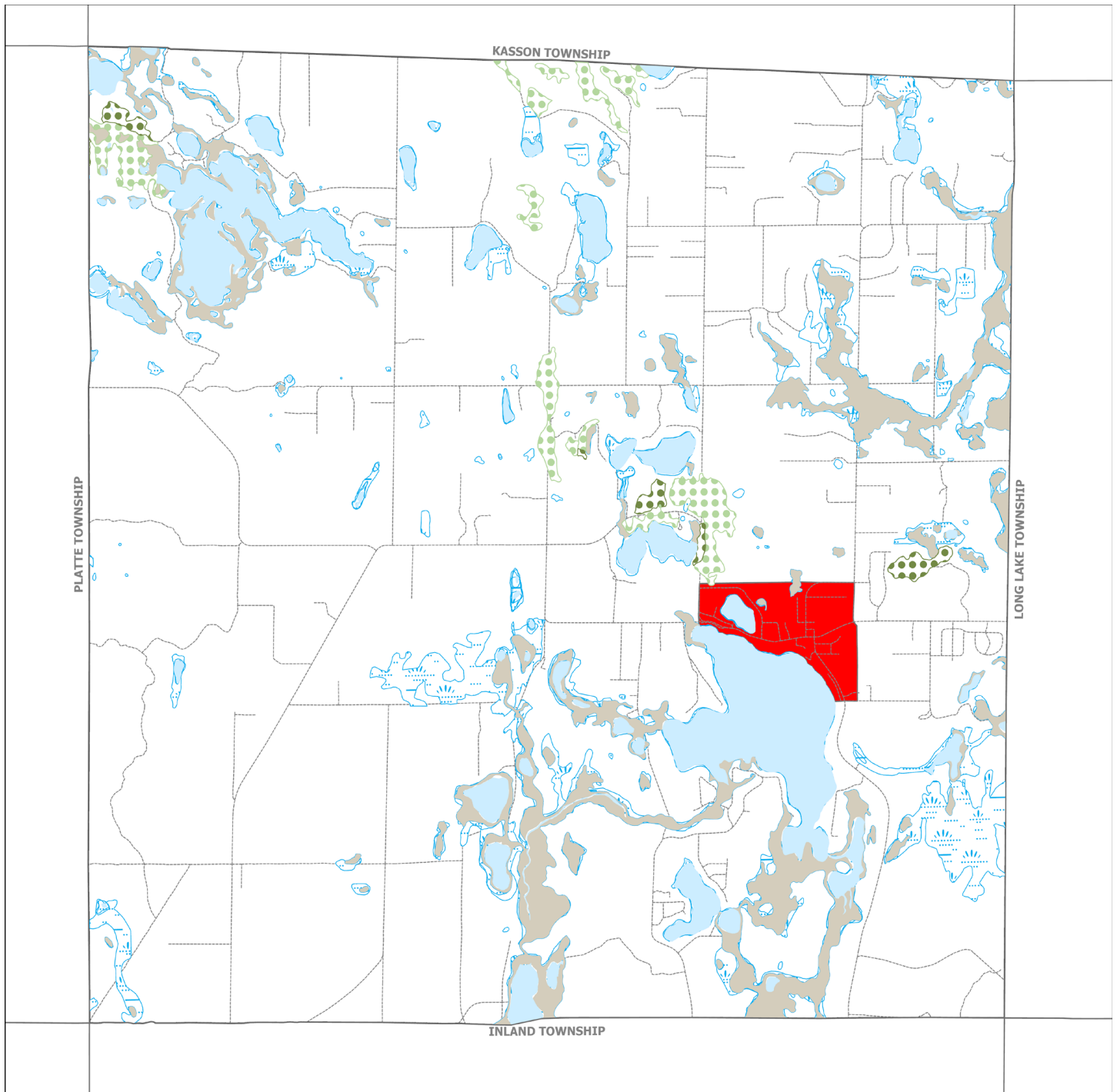
Soils Legend

	Township Boundaries
	Roads
	Water
	Lake Ann
Hyric Soils	
	100A
	
	114B
	119
	
	130A
	132A
	15
	25

	250
	252
	257
	272
	273
	274
	280

	
	
	53A
	
	
	81
	





Prime Farmland

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Township Boundaries | Farmland of Unique Importance |
| Roads | Prime Farmland if Drained |
| Lake Ann | Prime Farmland |
| Water | Township Boundaries |
| Hyric Soils | Almira Township |
| Farmland of Local Importance | |

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



Networks Northwest
Talent / Business / Community

Surface Water

The largest body of surface water, Pearl Lake, with approximately 543 acres in surface area is located in the northwest quarter of the Township. Ann Lake, the second largest lake in Almira Township at 527 acres, is located in the southeast quarter. Approximately 30 other smaller lakes can be found in the Township. These lakes and their associated streams and creeks offer scenic and recreational amenities to Township residents and visitors. It is extremely important that the quality of these surface waters be protected from the negative impacts of development, such as non-point source pollution and loss of scenic views to open water.

To protect the public's right to recreate and enjoy inland lakes, the State regulates construction activities adjacent to inland waters under the Inland Lakes and Streams Act,

Public Act of 1972. This statute applies to any natural or artificial lake or pond greater than five acres and any stream or creek with defined banks and continued flow or regular occurrence of flow. A permit is required for the following activities:

- Construction and/or operation of a marina.
- Creation or modification of an inland lake or stream.
- Interference with the natural flow of a stream or lake.
- Dredging or filling of a stream or lake.

Installation of seasonal, noncommercial docks and the reasonable sanding of beaches are allowed without a permit. The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Public Act 451 of 1994, as amended, protects lakes and streams from sedimentation. The Act requires a permit for any new construction within 500 feet of a lake or stream, or construction that will open up more than one acre of land. In Benzie County the Act is administered by outside sources as contracted with the County.

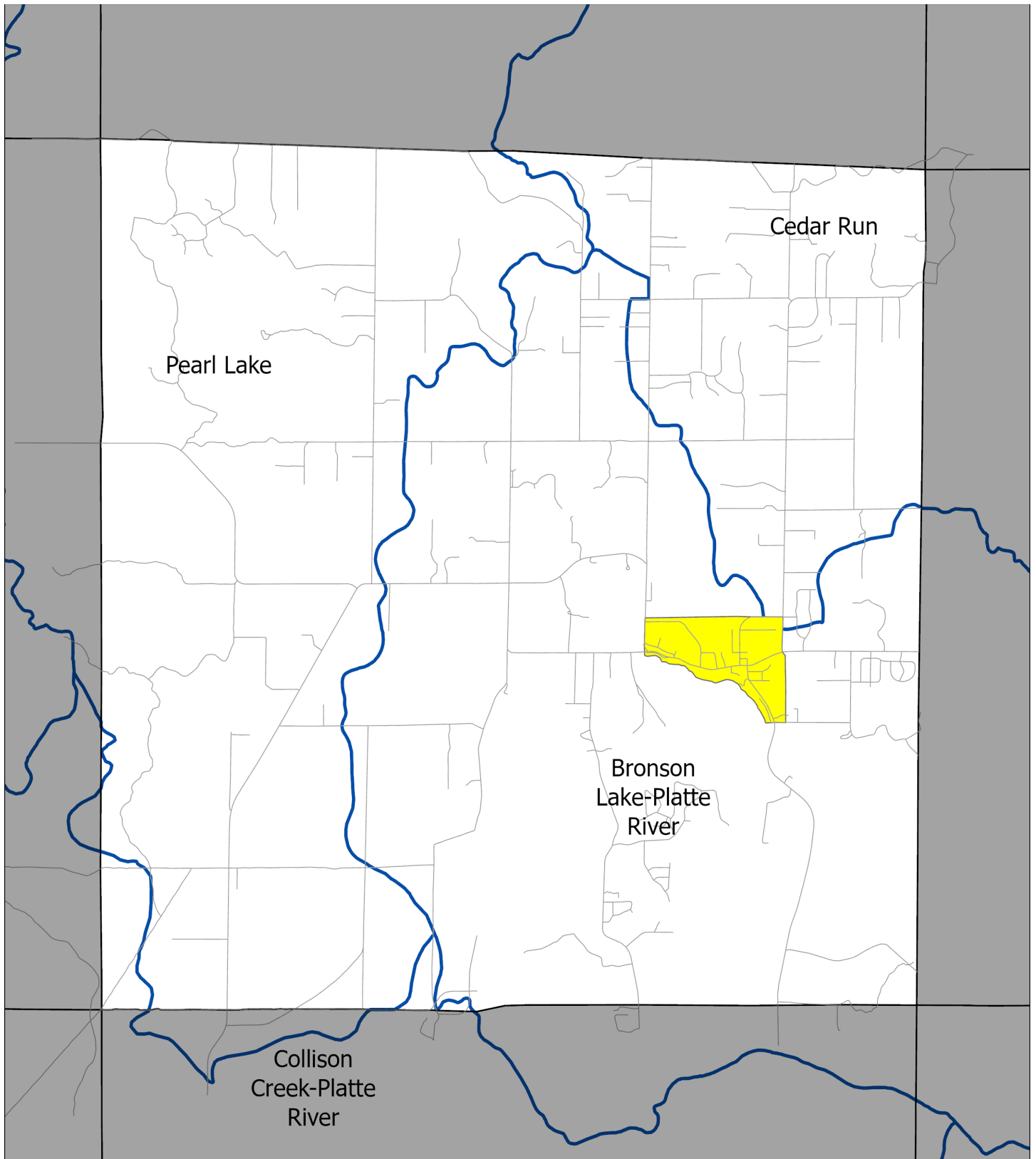
Groundwater

Since there is no municipal water system, the entire Township relies on groundwater from individual wells. Important factors in the evaluation of groundwater are the quantity and quality of water. The geologic and hydrologic features of the Township provide residents with sufficient water quantities. Water availability will not likely be a factor in limiting growth. However, the potential for water quality problems is more a limiting factor. While water hardness, iron content and salinity are of little or no concern, the potential for contamination of wells and other water bodies due to septic system failure is of concern. Substandard wells and septic systems constructed prior to current sanitary codes can still be found throughout the Township.

The 'Aquifer Vulnerability to Surface Contamination in Michigan' map, prepared by the Center for Remote Sensing and Department of Geography at Michigan State University, reveals the Township is located in an area where the vulnerability of drinking water aquifers to surface contamination is high, due to highly permeable soils over highly sensitive drift lithology.

Benzie County has taken steps to protect groundwater by adopting a septic system maintenance ordinance. This ordinance requires substandard septic systems be upgraded at the time of sale or transfer of property ownership. There is growing concern regarding the cumulative impact of septic systems especially those located in close proximity to lakes or wetlands.

The threat of water pollution from point sources is not a significant issue in the Township, but non-point sources can be a major concern. Proper land use management can help control water quality conditions in the Township. Some methods to curb pollution include runoff control measures, additional storm water management, and proper maintenance of septic systems. Lakes, creeks and wetlands are important for surface drainage, groundwater recharge and wildlife habitat. Alterations to the water features can contribute to flooding, poor water quality, and loss of valuable fish and wildlife habitat.



Watershed Basins

- Water
- Roads
- Lake Ann
- Township Boundaries
- Watershed Boundary



0 0.3 0.5 1
Miles

Wetlands

Wetlands are unique and diverse ecosystems where water is found, either on the surface or near the surface, at various times during the year. These areas often contain poorly drained soils which support water-loving vegetation. Wetlands are also referred to as marshes, swamps, or bogs.

Residents of Michigan are becoming increasingly more aware of the value of wetlands. Beyond their aesthetic value, wetlands protect the water quality of lakes and streams by filtering polluting nutrients, organic chemicals and toxic heavy metals. Wetlands are closely related to high groundwater tables and serve to discharge or recharge aquifers. They serve a critical role in storm water management, by providing temporary flood or storm water storage areas. Wetlands support wildlife, and wetland vegetation protects shorelines from erosion. Wetlands areas are found primarily where mucky soils and low elevation occur simultaneously in the Township. Wetland areas are mapped on the Existing Land Use Map, Figure 4-1.

Michigan's Wetland Protection Act defines wetlands as "land characterized by the presence of water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, wetland vegetation or aquatic life, and is commonly referred to as a bog, swamp or marsh." The Act further specifies State jurisdiction depends on proximity to lake, stream, pond, or Great Lake, and/or having a direct hydrological relationship with it. Wetlands that meet the statute criteria are considered regulated and require a permit before draining, filling, dredging or construction.

Woodlands

"The nicest forest I ever worked in was just south of Lake Ann." Lloyd Bates, early 20th century lumberjack

In addition to the scenic characteristics of woodlands, forested areas provide habitat for wildlife, protect soil from erosion, and buffer noise. The distribution of forested lands within the Township is shown on the Existing Land Use Map, (Figure 4-1). The forestland is divided into two categories, upland forestlands and the lowland forestlands.

The dominant forest associations in the upland forest category within Almira Township are northern hard-

woods (maple, beech and basswood). Pine and aspen are also included in the upland category and found within the Township. The lowland forest lands are typically forested wetlands, therefore these forested areas are distinguished from the upland forests. The common lowland hardwood species found in the Township include oak, ash, elm and red maple. The common lowland coniferous associations are cedar and tamarack.

Fish and Wildlife

Sport fishing is popular on several inland lakes in Almira Township. The Fisheries Department of Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) conducts periodic fish inventories at selected lakes.

The most recent inventory in the Township was conducted in 2004 on Ann Lake. Twenty-one species of fish were collected, with the most prevalent being Rock Bass, Bluegill, Sunfish, Common Shiner, Yellow Perch, both Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass, and Northern Pike. Snapping and painted turtles are also abundant in Ann Lake.

A fish inventory of Sanford Lake was conducted at eight Sanford Lake sites in 1989. Species collected included bluegill, largemouth bass, green sunfish, rock bass, white sucker, yellow bullhead and brown bullhead. Painted and snapping turtles and bullfrogs were observed along the shoreline. Based on the results of that survey, albeit dated, it appears that Sanford Lake contains one of the best bluegill populations in the area.

The most current fish inventory for Pearl Lake was conducted at 12 sites in 1983. Species collected were: northern pike, bluegill, rock bass, perch, largemouth bass, and assorted pan fish. Turtles and clams were also evident.

The wetlands, lakeshores and forests within the Township provide habitat for populations of songbirds, waterfowl, shorebirds, muskrat, mink and raccoon. Predominant mammal species found in the Township's forests and wetlands are squirrel, rabbit, fox, coyote, raccoon, bear, skunk, and deer.

Sites of Environmental Contamination

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451 of 1994, is an act that regulates facilities of environmental contamination in Michigan. This is done through many components, including Part 201: Sites of Environmental Contamination and Part 213: Leaking Underground Storage Tanks. The Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) maintains an Environmental Mapper which displays various layers of data relating to the environment and land.

A site of environmental contamination is “a location at which contamination of soil, ground water, surface water, air or other environmental resource is confirmed, or where there is potential for contamination of resources due to site conditions, site use or management practices.” The agency publishes an annual list of environmentally contaminated sites by county, showing the sites by name, Site Assessment Model score, pollutant(s) and site status.

The most recent data, accessed in March 2022, identified one Site of Environmental Contamination in Almira Township and two sites in the Village of Lake Ann. The Environmental Mapper also identified one site as a Leaking Underground Storage Tank (Closed Part 213) in Almira Township. There was one Leaking Underground Storage Tank (Open Part 213) in the Village of Lake Ann. This site is the B & M Party Store which has been working on completing corrective actions. As a note, in the late 1960's, oil and gas companies helped remote home owners by installing in-ground gasoline tanks, as heating with fuel oil was also common. Because of this, the number and location of these buried tanks is unknown.

Surface Water Discharge Permits

All point source discharges into surface waters are required to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit which the Michigan Water Resources Commission upon recommendation by EGLE, Surface Water Quality Division issues. Permit requirements generally address discharge limitations, effluent characteristics, monitoring and reporting requirements, along with facility management requirements.

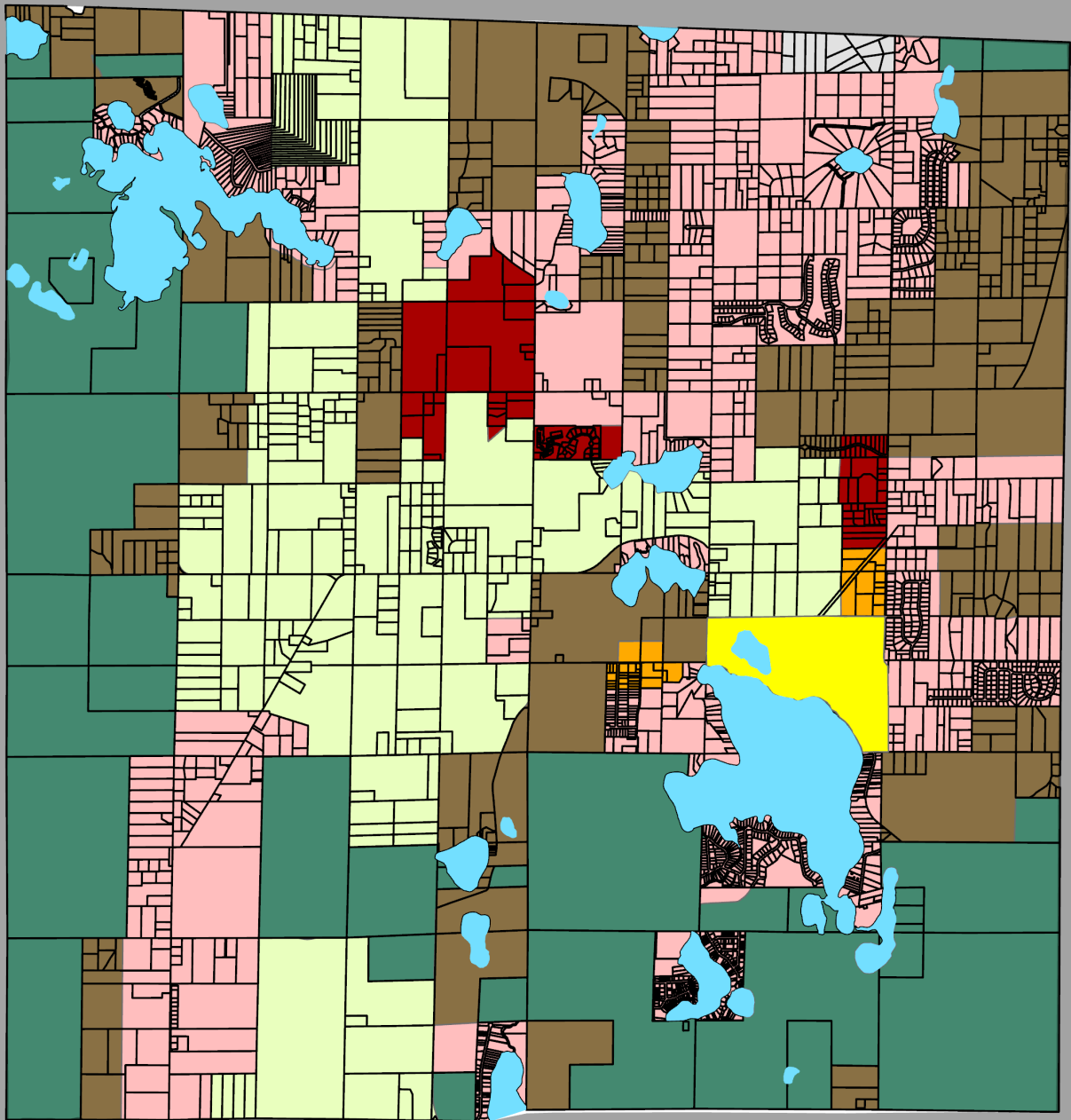
Currently there are seven sites with active permits in

Benzie County, none of which are within Almira Township or the Village of Lake Ann.

Air Quality

The Air Quality Division of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE, formerly known as Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)) monitors air quality. Standards have been established as acceptable levels of discharge for any of the following air pollutants: particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, ozone, lead, and trace metals. These pollutants are monitored on a continuing basis at selected locations around the state. Monitoring in recent years has shown the level of pollutants in the region to be within the established acceptable standards.

Air discharge permits are required for businesses discharging more than the acceptable level of any of the regulated air pollutants. There are currently no known permits issued to businesses located in Almira Township.



Chapter 4: Existing Land Use

Existing Land Use Background

The 2020 Census shows Almira Township's land area is 33.8 square miles. The Almira Township Existing Land Use map was developed using land use/use classification categories found from the 1998 Michigan Resource Inventory System. The original MIRIS mapping was developed in 1978, updated with aerial photographs in 1987, and underwent extensive field checks in 1998. That information was then digitized into the existing map.

Figure 15 Existing Land Use Statistics for Almira Township. Each of the land use categories are discussed further in this chapter.

Figure 12: Existing Land Use Statistics		
Land Use	No. of Acres	%
Upland Forest	12,393.4	54%
Non-forested/ Undeveloped/Open	4,511.4	20%
Wetlands/Lowland Forest	1,464.1	6%
Water	1,421.1	6%
Residential	1,324.2	6%
Agricultural	1,227.8	5%
Institutional/Recreation	327.0	1%
Village of Lake Ann	276.7	1%
Industrial/Extractive/ Utilities	52.9	0%
Commercial	37.9	0%
TOTAL	23,036.5	100%

Land Division Patterns

As development occurs, larger tracts of land are generally broken down into smaller parcels. Therefore, studying the existing pattern of land divisions is one way to analyze the status of land use and development.

Land division patterns for Almira Township are discussed below.

State owned, large undivided parcels are located in the forested lands of the Pere Marquette State Forest. These properties are found in the southern and western regions of the Township in Sections 6, 7, 18, 19, 25-31 and 33-36. Privately owned large tracts can be found in nearly every section of the Township and are typically non-forested open fields, upland forest, or wetlands. The category of non-forested land is simply open field, grassland or shrub land, not being used for agriculture or any other active use. Generally speaking, these were first forests, then cut over land, then homesteads with gardens, then orchards and potato farms. Sometimes, these became vineyards or hops farms.

Parcels of ten acres or less are found throughout the Township in nearly every section. Small tracts and small lot residential subdivisions have developed in many areas, primarily located on the east side of the Township. Hardwood Acres was one of the initial subdivisions in the Township, located in Section 24. Some of the other residential subdivision areas include areas adjacent to Pearl Lake in Sections 5 and 6, Lake View in Section 15, Sunnysdale in Section 22, Samara Woods in Section 12, Bronson Lake in Section 33, and Sanford Lake in Sections 34 and 35. In addition, several plats and small tracts are noted adjacent to Ann Lake and in the Village of Lake Ann.

Upland Forest

The forested lands are the most predominant land cover in the Township and account for 53.8 percent, or 12,393 acres. Of the forested lands, northern hardwoods comprise approximately three quarters of the upland forested lands, with pine as the second most common upland forest type, followed by aspen-birch associations. Large upland forested areas are noted along the southern and western regions where state forestland exists. Mapped woodlands include such tree types as beech, oak, maple, aspen, birch, white pine and red pine.

Non-forested/Undeveloped/Open

Non-forested land consists of herbaceous open and shrub land. As shown in Figure 15, more than 19 percent of the Township is non-forested. Non-forested areas are scattered throughout the Township and are found in nearly all sections of the Township, except Sections 26 and 27.

Wetlands/Lowland Forest

Wetlands include 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 identified wetlands include areas that support lowland hardwoods and conifers, such as northern white cedar, willow and aspen species, as well as lowland brush and grasses. Wetlands and lowland forests comprise 6.4 percent of the Township area. Due to past draining and development this amount is much reduced from what would have originally been classified as wetland. The majority of the wetland areas can be noted on the Existing Land Use Map in the southwest portion of the Township, in the vicinity of Ann Lake and many of the other smaller lakes and streams in that portion of the Township (Sections 21, 22, 24-28, 31 and 35 of the Township). A few additional wetland areas are clustered in the northeast portion of the Township (Section 1, 11-13).

Water

Open water comprises over six percent of Almira Township. Included in this category are Ann Lake, Pearl Lake and approximately 30 other smaller inland lakes. For a full discussion of the importance of surface water, see Chapter 3, Natural Resources.

Residential

As can be seen on the Existing Use Map and table, residential use ranks fifth in the amount of land currently in this use. Residential use occupies more than five percent (1,324 acres) of the land in the Township. Residential development on various size parcels is distributed throughout the Township and in the platted subdivisions mentioned earlier in the chapter. This category would also include multiple family housing, although none was identified during the field checking.

Agricultural

Agricultural lands currently comprise approximately 1,227 acres or 5.8 percent of the Township. The agricultural land is clustered in the central and north central portion of the Township with a few scattered parcels located in the southwest portion of the Township.

Institutional / Recreation

This category includes both institutional and recreation lands category, which cover 1.4 percent of the Township's land area. Included in this category are Township offices, parks, campgrounds, public access sites, cemeteries, the Lake Ann Camp and Retreat Center, Eastern Michigan University's The Parsons Center for Arts and Sciences, and the Mistwood Golf Course. These sites are shown on the Existing Land Use Map.

Industrial/Extractive/ Transportation

Land in this use category covers less than one percent of the Township and includes the landing strip in Section 32, just off Maple City Highway. Additionally, two other areas are mapped as this land use, a sand and gravel excavation operation off Almira Road, (east of Maple City Highway) and a sawmill south of Almira Road.

Commercial

A small commercial area is located on Maple Street, which includes an automotive shop, a restaurant, a self-storage facility and other businesses. Additionally, two resorts and the ultra light airstrip are mapped as commercial. Although not mapped, limited commercial activities are located in the Village of Lake Ann. For most shopping needs, residents travel to larger regional commercial areas, such as Traverse City. Lands used for commercial purposes comprise less than one percent of the Township's area.

Chapter 5: Community Profile

Water & Sewage Disposal System

Almira Township does not have a public water system. Instead, Township residents rely on on-site private wells for domestic water. All private water wells are regulated by the Benzie- Leelanau District Health Department. Likewise there is no public sewage disposal system operated by the Township. Local residents rely primarily on private on-site septic systems that are regulated by the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department. The District Health Department requires an inspection [and upgrades, if needed] of the septic system prior to any property transfer.

Two important determinants for siting a septic system are soil suitability and depth to bedrock. Chapter 3, Natural Resources, discusses the Township's geology and soils. A lack of Municipal sewer and water prevents the township from being eligible for FHA, HUD, etc. type loans.

Storm Water

Storm water management is an important issue throughout the region as development occurs and the amount of impervious surface increases. From the previous Master Plan, there were believed to be 2 or 4 drains in the Township/Village of Lake Ann. The Benzie County Drain Commissioner noted that there are no County designated drains in Almira Township and the number was unable to be confirmed. It was also noted that existing culverts or ditches would be the responsibility of the owner (municipality, County Road Commission, private owner/condominium associations).

The Benzie County Road Commission has been placing rip rap at many road/stream crossings as necessary. There may be others in various subdivisions, as many homeowners have built storm drains for their driveways, because of the hilly terrain of many lots.

Solid Waste

Residential and commercial rubbish pick-up is offered within the Township only by several private haulers. There are three different waste haulers that are contracted with by the homeowners. Oftentimes, all three companies drive through the same neighborhoods every week. In addition, the Lake Ann Grocery store accepts bagged trash for a fee.

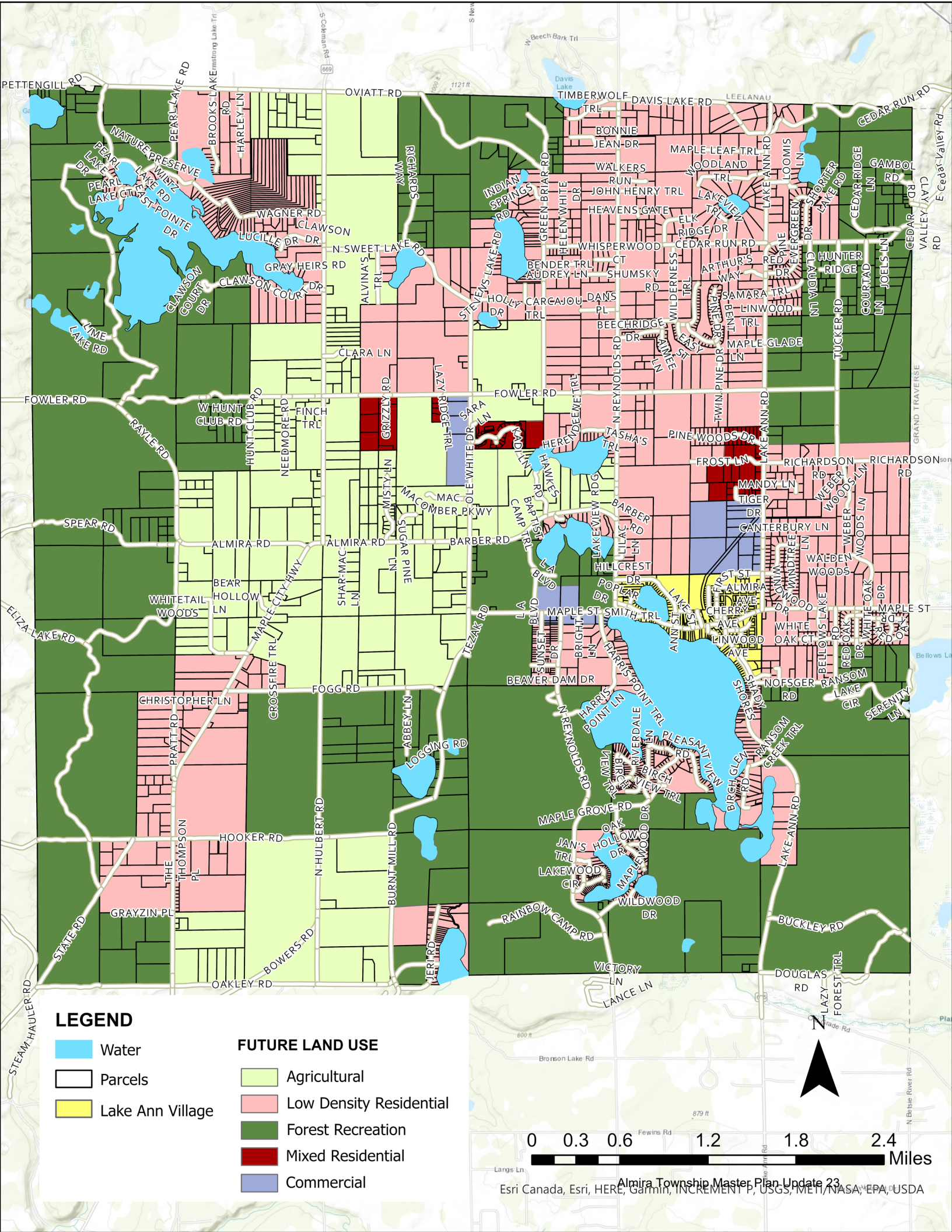
No waste transfer station is located within the Township. Since there are no landfills located in Benzie County, the solid waste collected in Almira Township is taken to Grand Traverse County, Wexford County or Manistee County, depending on the hauler.

A Benzie County drop-off recycling site is located within the Almira Township Park off Ole White Drive. The county recycling program is single stream and accepts glass, paper, cardboard, certain plastics, plastic bags, and tin in the same roll off container. The county also coordinates a household hazardous waste collection program, in which the Township may participate one day in the spring of the year.

Other Public Utilities

Cherryland Rural Electrical Cooperative and Consumers Power each have designated service areas for electric power within the Township. A substation owned by Wolverine Power is located off Ole White Drive at Barber Road. An additional substation was constructed by Wolverine Power and Cherryland Electric to create a wire "loop" that is easier to repair when outages occur.

Natural gas service, provided by DTE Energy Co., is limited to primarily the eastern portion of Almira. The remainder of the Township must rely on propane, provided by various vendors. Century Telephone (CenturyLink) provides local phone service in the Township, while a variety of long distance carriers are available.



LEGEND

- Water
- Parcels
- Lake Ann Village

FUTURE LAND USE

- Agricultural
- Low Density Residential
- Forest Recreation
- Mixed Residential
- Commercial

0 0.3 0.6 1.2 1.8 2.4 Miles

Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, VTI/NASA, EPA, USDA

Almira Township Master Plan Update 23

Emergency Services

Almira Township Fire & EMS Department is a combined department with 15-20 firefighters and 3 paid full time EMT/Firefighters. The department provides primary service to all of Almira Township and by mutual aid agreements to other neighboring departments and agencies. The department is equipped with a fire engine with 1,250 gallons per minute (gpm) capabilities, a 3,000 gallon capacity water tanker and a brush fire pumper, as well as equipment for vehicle extrication. The Township's ISO rating for hazard insurance risk is 9. The Department also owns and operates two ambulances that are licensed as basic life support. Benzie County EMS provides advanced life support.

Almira Township has enhanced 911 service that dispatches the Township fire and ambulance services, as well as law enforcement from the Benzie County Sheriff's Department in Beulah. Almira Township does not have a local police force. Law enforcement is provided by the County Sheriff's Department in Beulah and the State Police from both the substation in Honor and the Traverse City post.

Schools and Library

Almira Township is served by two different school districts: the Benzie County Central Schools (BCCS) and the Traverse City Area Public Schools (TCAPS). The majority of the Township is in the BCCS district. The BCCS district covers an area of 364 square miles, of which approximately 29 square miles are in Almira Township. Approximately five square miles of the Township are within the TCAPS district. BCCS elementary students attend Lake Ann Elementary on Bronson Lake Road in Inland Township. TCAPS elementary students attend Westwoods Elementary on Fisher Road in Long Lake Township. The middle schools and high schools are located in Benzonia and Traverse City areas.

A vital component of 16 different school districts, including the BCCS and TCAPS school districts, is the Northwest Education Services (NES). NES is available as a resource and provides a variety of services including general education programs, special education and alternative programs, a regional education media center, a math, science and technology center, and administrative services. The programs offered by

the NES are conducted either at the individual schools or at the NES offices centrally located in Traverse City.

The Almira Township Library is located in the Village of Lake Ann. While cozy and with limited hours, it offers residents and visitors access to a collection of books and periodicals for both children and adults, as well as two on-site computers and free WIFI within the vicinity.

Recreational Facilities

The Almira Township Recreational Resources Committee serves as an advisory committee to the Township Board. The Almira Township Recreational Development Plan was adopted and approved by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) through the year 2016. Consequently specific projects are eligible to apply for recreation grant funds from the state.

The Almira Township Park, located adjacent to the Township office, includes 3 ball/soccer fields, a full-size basketball court, a paved walking trail, 2 tennis courts, a sand volleyball court, playground equipment, covered pavilions, disc golf course, and restrooms. This Township property is approximately 58 acres in size, with space available for additional recreation facilities.

The Township also owns and operates the Almira Township Lakefront Park in the Village of Lake Ann on Ann Lake. The 1.65 acre park has two pavilions, a flush toilet, and a swimming area, open year round for the public. There is also an accessible path which leads down to the water from the parking lot.

Almira Township also owns the Ransom Lake Natural Area. This property is 220 acres, including 3,500 feet of frontage surrounding Ransom Lake. There is an entrance drive and parking area at the east end of Nofsger Road, and another along Lake Ann Road. The latter entrance affords barrier free parking and restrooms, and a handicap accessible trail along Ransom Creek to a deck overlooking the lake. Another hiking trail circles the lake. The property may be used for hiking, wildlife observation, fishing, hunting, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, or snowmobiling.

There is also a state-owned and operated rustic campground facility located on Ann Lake. The property includes the Lake Ann Pathway which has several miles of hiking/skiing trails, is open to hunting and

mushrooming, and a public boat launch upgraded by the DNR with a dock. The MDNR maintains boat launch access sites on many of the lakes in the Township, including Pearl Lake, Davis Lake, Stevens Lake and Herendeene Lake.

Eastern Michigan University also operates The Parsons Center for Arts and Sciences. The interdisciplinary, education center and natural area is located on 86 acres. Eastern Michigan University offers credit courses, primarily art courses, to students with lodging at the Parsons Center. Students also utilize and enjoy the use of the on-site studio/lab/dining hall.

The privately owned and operated Lake Ann Camp & Retreat Center covers approximately 300 acres. While primarily utilized for youth camp and church activities in the summer, the facility is available for conferences and retreats year around.

Township residents also have access to Burnett Park in the Village of Lake Ann that includes a public playground, a half-court basketball court, picnic facilities and a restroom (portajohn). This has also been enthusiastically supported by taxpayers, and used by many.

Municipal, State and Federal Facilities

All Almira Township administrative offices are located at 7276 Ole White Drive, along with the Fire & EMS facility. The various township committees and boards, including Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Commission and Township Board of Trustees are held at the Almira Townhall located at 19639 Maple Street in the Village of Lake Ann. There are no county, state or federal facilities located in the Township, with the exception of state forest land described above under Recreation Facilities.

Civic Organizations

Although private civic organizations are not affiliated with any governmental unit, they are listed in this chapter because of the important services they provide to the community residents.

Organizations presently active in Almira Township include:

- Lions Clubs
- Almira Historical Society
- Ann Lake Property Owners Association

- Pearl Lake Association
- Sanford Lake Association
- Platte River Watershed Group

Churches

- Lake Ann United Methodist Church
- Woodside Wesleyan Church
- Advent Lutheran Church

Transportation and Road Maintenance

There are approximately 40 miles of paved roads and 65 miles of gravel roads within the Township, of which approximately 30 miles are county roads. There is no state highway. The Benzie County Road Commission is responsible for maintenance of the public roads, although the Township does provide funding assistance for road improvements.

While there are no designated State or Federal Highways in Almira Township, M 72 and US 31 are major East/West two lane highways, just North and South, respectively of Almira Township. In Almira Township, County Road 669 and Reynolds Road are both heavily used by North / South traffic. The Benzie County Road Commission certifies 23.93 miles of Primary Road and 63.32 miles of Local Road in Almira Township and is responsible for maintenance of the public roads. The Township provides funding, in some cases.

In the past few years, the Benzie County Road Commission has completed some notable major and minor improvements. The Benzie County Road Commission and funding partners, Almira Township, The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NCRS), and the Conservation Resource Alliance (CRA) provided funds for stream crossing work, such as culvert replacement and has rip rapped a number of river crossings with stone. By controlling the storm water runoff, maintenance costs are reduced, soil erosion is better controlled, and stream and water quality improve, as does fish habitat.

Two very visible major projects that the Road Commission completed are the wooden bridges over the Platte River, and Burnt Mill Road. Replacing the undersized metal culverts with these bridges restores the natural riverbed, providing improved water quality and habitat for fish. Funding Partners with the Road Commission were; The CRA, NCRS, and the Grand Traverse Band

of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. Another noteworthy project was improving the crossing, and replacing the culvert at the unnamed tributary to Cedar Creek/ Tucker Road crossing. Funding Partners were the Benzie County Road Commission, Almira Township, and the Property owner.

Public transportation for Almira Township is provided by the 'Benzie Bus', operated by the Benzie Transportation Authority. Their on demand Dial a Ride service is available from 7:00AM until 7:30PM, and reservations can be made by phone or online.

The Benzie Bus Flex Line Route operates hourly between Lake Ann Village, Frankfort and Thompsonville with a dozen stops each way. The Flex routes will deviate up to a quarter mile off the route for scheduled pickups.

The TC Express (TCX) Route has had six regularly scheduled daily (reservations required) stops in the Village of Lake Ann since 2014. Three go to Frankfort in the western part of Benzie County. Three go to Traverse City in Grand Traverse County.

In 2016, The Benzie Transportation Authority built a bus shelter in Burnett Park, adjacent to the basketball courts in the Village of Lake Ann. The Benzie Bus has connecting transit service with Manistee, Leelanau, and Grand Traverse Counties. It offers free rides to Medicaid clients to medical appointments. In addition, it's centrally located Terminal, near Honor is a designated Emergency Warming Shelter, in times of severe weather.

In January, 2007, when Benzie Transit Authority took over operation of the Council on Aging's bus fleet, the ridership grew from 40,000 annually to 72,000 in 2015. Taxpayers support 1/3 of the Benzie Transit Authority's annual budget. Typically voters support millage requests by a 3 to 1 margin.

The only airport in the Township is located on County Road 669, between Hooker and Oakley Roads. The Michigan Department of Transportation classifies it as a Basic Utility Airport. It is open to the public. It has a 2600 ft. grass East/West runway that is suitable for single engine light aircraft. There is also a North/South runway that is used by ultralight aircraft and light sport aircraft. This is an Airport/Condo development in a 'taxi to your hanger at your house' type of development.

Commercial Air Transportation is available at Traverse City's Cherry Capitol Airport and Manistee's Blacker Airport.



Chapter 6: Community Goals and Action Plan

Community Goals

The purpose of this chapter is to set forth the Township's goals and policies to guide future development. Community participation and input is a critical component in the development of these goals. In analyzing the data compiled from census reports, it is clear that Almira Township is located in an environmentally sensitive area. Uncontrolled development could dramatically alter the character of the Township. By encouraging new development to conform to community based standards and guidelines, both the rural character and the natural resources of the Township can be preserved to the fullest extent possible.

Community Survey

The 2021 Almira Township Master Plan Survey was open for response from July 12, 2021 to September 20, 2021. Notice of the survey availability was done through notice in the Township Newsletter which was included in the summer tax bills. Additional notice was done through a press release sent to local news organizations, social media, and word of mouth. 66 responses provided an email address to receive a copy of the drafted Master Plan for review. Full survey results can be found in Appendix X.

181 responses were received, with nearly 75% being permanent residents, followed by seasonal/part-time residents, property owners, and Village of Lake Ann residents (8.9%, 7.2%, and 6.7%). In regards to responding Township resident ages, 37.8% fell into 20-44 years old, followed by 45-64 (32.8%) and 65-74 (25.6%). 5 responses came from over 75 years old, and 2 came from under 19 years old.

Residents were asked what type of housing would best serve the Township's future needs and single-family homes between 1 - 5 acres was most selected (58.4%). This was followed by single-family homes, less than an acre, affordable housing options, single family homes, more than 5 acres, and housing options for the elderly. When asked what the biggest threat to the viability of the township, there were three answers with the same

response rate; no threats, blighted properties, and short-term rentals.

The survey also asked what would help bring businesses to the Township. While there was a wide spread of answers, broadband growth (51.5%), home-based businesses (35%), and more stores and offices to serve residents (30.7%) were most selected. In terms of protecting the natural environment, the survey showed preserving lakes, streams, and wetlands (86%) was most selected. Responses also showed preserving natural areas, working with land conservancies and private groups to preserve significant areas, preserving farmland and woodlots, and preserving open, undeveloped spaces were selected 50% of the time or more.

Over half of respondents felt that the Township roads should include paved shoulders for bike use and be kept as two-lane roads (59.7%, 57.4%). There were many comments, in addition to 39.8% felt the roads should be upgraded and improved.

Most respondents felt there was no need to expand on play fields, playgrounds, or basketball courts. However, it was much closer split between ice skating rink and picnic areas. Many responses were in favor of bicycle paths, public beaches, and non-motorized trails. Most responses did not want or did not know about motorized trails. Survey responses felt the Township should offer or sponsor recreation activities such as youth programming (68.5%), senior programming (59.6%), and adult programming (51.4%). While under 50%, there was some support for baseball/softball leagues, tennis/pickleball leagues, and soccer leagues.

40% of respondents answered maybe to the Township purchasing more parkland, while 30.9% supported additional purchase and 26.3% said no. When asked about the Township and Village of Lake Ann consolidated similar functions, 59.5% supported, 26% said maybe, and 11% said no.

When asked what the top 3 priorities the Master Plan should focus on improving or preserving, 53.1% marked natural environment, 48.7% marked parks

and open space, and 28.8% marked downtown area. These were all followed by neighborhoods, community beautification, historic preservation, and redevelopment of vacant and/or underutilized properties.

Community Input Public Event

On June 23, 2022, the Almira Township Planning Commission held a public input event at the Township Hall in the Village of Lake Ann. At this event, the public was able to comment on the drafted goals and objectives and future land use map. These items are important to guiding the Township's land use policies. Full analysis of the public input event can be found in the appendix.

Goals and Policies

In developing community goals and policies, it is important to analyze existing community conditions, as described in the earlier plan sections including the Socioeconomic Profile, Natural Resources, Existing Land Use and Community Facilities sections. In addition to examining existing characteristics, another important tool in the development of community goals and policies is to identify community assets and problem areas. By combining the outcomes of the working session discussions, the citizen survey, and Master plan research efforts, the Planning Commission was able to develop the following set of goals and policies:

General Goals
<i>PRESERVE THE UNIQUE BEAUTY OF ALMIRA TOWNSHIP-- by protecting the waterfront setting, small town/ rural character, and maintaining an overall clean, healthy and well maintained living environment.</i>
<i>PROTECT THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE of Township residents by coordinating the land use so that efficient public services are provided.</i>
<i>Promote and maintain a centralized business area.</i>
<i>Protect and PRESERVE HISTORIC areas, sites, buildings, structures and features.</i>
<i>Recognize the importance of the tourist industry to the local economy.</i>

Planning and Development
Goal: Maintain a balance between human activities and the natural environment.
Policies:
1. Encourage site designs and plans that preserve and protect natural assets and the rural character of the township.
2. Require planning review of the following types of public projects, including:
a. The opening, closing, vacating, widening, or extension of roads.
b. The acquisition or enlargement of any park, playground or public open space.
c. The construction, acquisition, or authorization of public buildings or structures.
3. Encourage roadside and open space buffer strips of vegetation, both to enhance the visual image of the Township and to protect the land uses adjacent to the roadway from traffic noise, dirt and glare.
4. Encourage buffers (e.g., berms or vegetative screening) to shield residential properties from adjacent non-residential development.
5. Encourage general public, civic organizations and all commissions to provide input for Township decisions.
6. Encourage the preservation, maintenance and restoration of historic sites, structures and features.
7. Periodically review and revise both the Zoning Ordinance and this Master Plan to be easily understood and to conform to the character of the Township and the prevailing priorities of its residents.

Housing
Goal: Allow for suitable housing opportunities for all income levels and age groups.
Policies:
1. Consider the development of housing to meet the needs of all household types and income groups, including affordable single family housing and housing options for seniors.
2. Encourage the maintenance of the existing housing and residential neighborhoods in good repair, appearance, usefulness and safety.

3. Protect the residential neighborhoods from intrusion of incompatible uses.
4. Encourage the development option of clustered single-family housing in buildable portions of the Township, to protect open space.

3. Support legislative reform measures to assist in retaining farmland.
4. Discourage the conversion of farmland into other more intensive uses.
5. Recognize farmland as contributing to the scenic and rural character of the Township.

Natural Environment

Goal: Protect and preserve natural resources.

Policies:

1. Encourage a land use pattern that respects the natural features and water resources of the area. Promote the protection of sensitive features including wildlife habitat, wildlife corridors, wetlands, lakes, streams, steep slopes and wooded areas.
2. Evaluate the environmental impact of all new development.
3. Protect land resources and water quality related to our lakes, streams and wetlands, including shorelines.
4. Encourage the continued natural use of wetlands as groundwater recharge and stormwater holding areas.
5. Utilize Best Management Practices (BMP) to regulate and minimize direct stormwater discharge into lakes and rivers.
6. Identify and protect desirable open space areas, scenic vistas and environmentally sensitive lands.
7. Collaborate with conservation agencies and private groups to preserve natural areas.

Recreation and Public Lands

Goals: To preserve, protect and maintain environmentally sensitive areas, open space and public parks for the enjoyment of residents, visitors and future generations

Maintain and improve the current high level of recreational facilities.

Policies:

1. Preserve and maintain our state land, public parks, access sites and natural areas.
2. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands for open space and passive recreational purposes.
3. Encourage creative design and planning techniques for all new development so as to produce visual harmony, preserve special features and protect vital natural resources.
4. Evaluate, periodically, the need for public acquisition of environmentally sensitive and available properties located in the Township.
5. Preserve and maintain existing active recreation areas, especially the Township Park.
6. Continue efforts to provide seasonal outdoor recreational opportunities.
7. Support cooperative recreational planning and development with the Village of Lake Ann, the surrounding townships and the schools.
8. Expand, improve or develop recreational facilities, especially playgrounds, bike paths, picnic areas and a public beach.
9. Provide more recreational activities, such as youth programs, baseball/softball, soccer, swimming lessons and senior programs.
10. Pursue outside funding sources, such as grants for land acquisition and/or recreational development either passive or active.

Agricultural Lands

Goals: Recognize the importance of agricultural lands within Almira Township

Policies:

1. Maintain and provide for the preservation of agricultural farmland where feasible, including tree farming and specialty crop farms.
2. Allow for and encourage farmland protection through the "transfer of development rights" and "purchase of development rights". Encourage clustering of non-farm development to minimize agricultural land consumption.

Commercial Areas and Activities

Goal: Promote a varied business environment to serve the needs of residents and visitors while preserving the natural environment and small town appeal.

Policies:

1. Encourage development of stores and small businesses such as professional offices.
2. Provide areas for future commercial development adjacent to already existing commercial zones, i.e. Village of Lake Ann.
3. Encourage zoning techniques such as clustering and/or shared parking.
4. Promote safety by controlling the size, number, illumination and configuration of signs.
5. Encourage the re-use of existing facilities where appropriate and consistent with existing zoning.
6. Encourage home occupations compatible with existing residential areas.
7. Ensure developments occur in a sensitive manner and are harmonious with the existing community.
8. Encourage light industries that do not pollute the air, soil or water nor offend because of noise, odor or visual impact to locate in designated industrial park areas.
9. Promote greenbelt buffers and landscape regulations.
10. Foster cooperation with businesses in the Township.

Infrastructure and Public Facilities

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

Policies:

1. Encourage the efficient use and maintenance of existing roadways and infrastructure.
2. Maintain 2-lane roads where ever feasible for controlling speed and maintaining the rural character.
3. Plan for safe access and movement of vehicles as well as pedestrians.
4. Support the development of bicycle paths and pedestrian walkways.

5. Encourage the placement of utilities underground.

6. Plan utility improvements to coincide with development, where possible.

7. Encourage cooperative Township and Village planning for public utilities, such as water and sewer systems.

8. Require fire hydrants or necessary fire protection systems to be installed as development occurs with the costs borne by the developer.

Government

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

Policies:

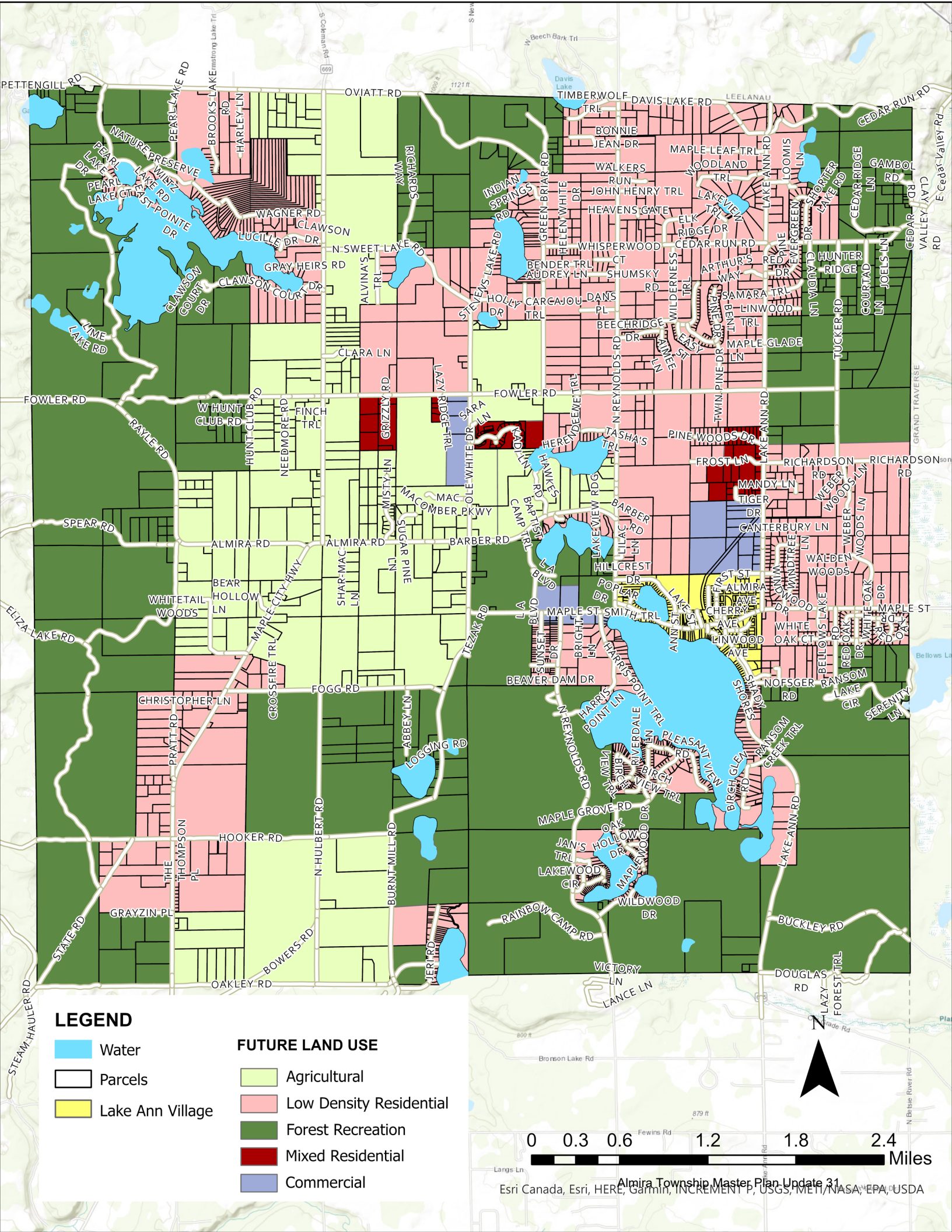
1. Promote intergovernmental and regional cooperation on issues of mutual concern.
2. Ensure a responsible fiscal policy and budget process to finance the Township government.
3. Promote the involvement of volunteers in the government process.
4. Utilize the proactive master planning process as a check and balance on decision- making.

Education and Training

Goal: Provide access to quality education, training and community facilities for all residents.

Policies:

1. Continue to work with the schools to present information programs about the community to school classes and other groups
2. Promote quality education and training opportunities for all residents.
3. Support and expand the public library.



LEGEND

- Water
- Parcels
- Lake Ann Village

FUTURE LAND USE

- Agricultural
- Low Density Residential
- Forest Recreation
- Mixed Residential
- Commercial

0 0.3 0.6 1.2 1.8 2.4 Miles

Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, VIET/NASA, EPA, USDA

Chapter 7: Future Land Use Plan

At present, Almira Township is primarily a rural residential and agricultural community. Lakeshore living is available along the shores of Ann Lake, Pearl Lake and the many additional lakes in the Township. While active agricultural uses have declined from historic levels, the 2021 Almira Township Master Plan Survey showed over half of respondents identify “Preserve farmlands and woodlands” as helpful to protect the natural environment.

Through land use planning and land use controls, Almira Township intends to ensure that existing rural residential, agricultural, and recreational uses can continue, and reasonable growth can be accommodated with minimal land use conflicts or negative environmental impacts. Based on the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the Township, six general categories of land use have been identified to serve existing and future development needs. These categories are listed below:

- Forest/Recreation
- Agricultural
- Low Density Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Commercial

Forest/ Recreation

Forest/Recreation areas are primarily intended to accommodate park and recreational lands and uses including all existing state forest lands, Township owned parks, and other forested or environmentally sensitive lands. These lands are not intended to undergo intense development pressures due to existing public ownership or easement status. Consequently, only environmental preservation and low intensity recreation are anticipated on these public properties. It is intended that these lands be designated for continued conservation and recreational use. Low density residential and agricultural uses are anticipated for privately owned properties though resort or camp type uses are also intended to be accommodated, owing to the attraction of Almira Township as a seasonal and recreational home community. The maximum density

is also intended to preserve large areas of permanent open space consisting of woodlands, wetlands, steep slopes, lakeshore, view sheds, and similar natural resources, by clustering and employing Planned Unit Developments (PUDs). The Township encourages the establishment and preservation of larger areas of contiguous and permanent open space including prime, unique and valuable farm lands; wetlands; woodlands; steep slopes; and ravine habitats, as scenic, recreation and wildlife corridors. The preservation tools intended to be employed include donations, acquisition, and cooperative efforts with other units of government and landowners, conservation easements, deed restrictions, and zoning ordinance provisions that support the use of sound open space conservation practices.

Agricultural

An Agricultural land use category has been designated consistent with the Township’s goal to continue agricultural production. Almira Township recognizes that the presence of agricultural activity contributes significantly to the scenic and rural character valued by Township residents. The Agricultural land use designation is primarily intended to encourage the continued agricultural use of areas on prime, unique or locally important agricultural soils. The designated area is primarily located in the north central portion of the Township, as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

Farm dwellings and customarily accessory uses and buildings are to be encouraged, including crop production and the raising of livestock normally associated with farming activities but excluding intensive farming or feedlot operations. Non-farm dwellings and home occupations are also intended to be permitted as a matter of right, along with, plant nurseries and greenhouses, churches, tourist home/bed & breakfast, riding stables and roadside stands selling farm products. Other uses such as golf courses and campgrounds may also be allowed with special conditions where they are found to be compatible with surrounding land uses.

The Township intends to encourage methods that accommodate the preservation of farmlands, farming

activity, open space, natural resources, and the rural character of the Township, and at the same time accommodate landowners who want to reduce or discontinue farming. The methods include innovative zoning provisions that allow for the preservation and conservation of essential natural resources, farmland, and open space by providing opportunities for the clustering of development. Some methods which other communities have employed to help protect and preserve agricultural land while protecting a landowner's desire for a larger economic gain include the purchase of development rights (PDR); transfer of development rights (TDR), which has not yet been enabled by state law; open space community zoning provisions for non-agricultural uses and density incentives to encourage clustering. These alternatives should be investigated for possible application to Almira Township, as a way to balance private property rights with agricultural and open space preservation goals.

The agricultural land use is primarily intended to provide for the continuation of farming activities while limiting encroachment by other uses. This land use category is intended to have a low base density of one unit per five acres. In an effort to recognize that some of this land will be developed with non-agricultural uses, the intent is to promote cluster residential development on relatively small lots that are sufficient in size to support on-site utilities, either along road corridors or in accessible areas that are not suitable for agricultural activities, as a means to minimize the overall loss of agricultural land and encourage the continuation of farming activities. This can be accomplished by the employment of Planned Unit Development (PUD). The most important criteria include the permanent preservation of agricultural land by means of irrevocable conveyance and the preservation of the rural character of the area as viewed from the road. The most serious challenge will be to preserve the rural appearance where homes are built with full visibility from the road.

Low Density Residential

The Low Density Residential category is designed to provide for very limited and low intensity residential development, while allowing for the protection of privately owned environmentally sensitive areas. This land use category allows for residential use at a low density of not more than one dwelling unit per two acres. Provisions in the Zoning Ordinance encourage

a cluster development pattern to be utilized to avoid or minimize development impacts on environmentally sensitive areas, forests, or farmland. The Low Density Residential land use category is consistent with the Township's resource policy to "promote the protection of sensitive features including wildlife habitat, wildlife corridors, wetlands, lakes, streams, steep slopes and wooded areas," as well as promote the preservation of productive agricultural lands. Development in this category is intended to be limited due to environmental conditions.

Several areas with unique or fragile environmental characteristics were identified during the planning process. Areas intended to be protected from potential high-density development have been proposed as Low Density Residential. These areas have already experienced some residential development, and are designated as low density residential to allow new development in a manner, which respects these resources. The Low Density Residential lands are dispersed throughout the Township, with the largest area located in the northeast portion of the township.

Mixed Residential

The Mixed Residential land use category is primarily intended to accommodate existing residential development, where land has already been subdivided into smaller lots, and to direct future residential growth of a more urban nature to areas of the Township that are more accessible by and in need of public services. In addition to areas identified for residential development on the future land use map, this plan recognizes that residential development has occurred and will continue to occur in locations near the Village of Lake Ann, as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

Mixed Residential development is intended to accommodate a variety of dwelling types on a range of lot sizes including attached and detached single-family, apartment, and condominium units at an average density of one unit per acre. It is also intended to accommodate such other residential, community, and institutional uses as parks, churches, schools, libraries, cemeteries, campgrounds, assisted living and convalescent facilities, golf courses, resorts, if designed to be compatible with the residential setting. Home-occupations are also encouraged in areas where mixed residential uses occur, provided the residential character of the area is preserved.

Due to the lack of public water and sewer services, the location of higher density residential uses, such as apartments, townhouses, condominiums, and manufactured home developments should be restricted to areas where soils are capable of supporting adequately engineered community wastewater disposal systems and areas where public utilities might be made available at a future date.

Commercial

While much of the commercial services for Almira Township are met by facilities located in Lake Ann and regionally in Traverse City, the Township wishes to designate certain areas for local convenience commercial uses, generally adjacent to and within close proximity to the Village of Lake Ann. This future land use plan recognizes that a few existing commercial businesses in outlying areas are operating in areas surrounded by non-commercial uses. This plan further recognizes that these businesses provide important services to nearby residents. The plan is not intended to infringe upon the continuation or expansion of such services or facilities.

Uses intended to be accommodated within commercial areas designated on the future land use map include: retail stores, business and personal services, professional offices, food service, lodging facilities and similar uses. The Future Land Use Map shows two general areas for commercial uses in the vicinity of the intersection of Ole White Drive and Fowler Road, and additionally an area adjacent to the Village of Lake Ann (near Lake Ann Road and First Street).

Light Industrial within Commercial Zoning

Consistent with the 2009 Survey findings, which support the establishment of light industrial uses in an industrial park and the Township goal to promote a varied business environment, light industrial uses are allowed in the areas zoned commercial.

Primarily, uses such as the following are intended for the proposed light industrial area: light industrial manufacturing or assembling establishment, wholesale commercial businesses, machine shops, sawmills or wood products industries, transportation facilities, storage facilities, utility facilities and similar uses.

Industrial operations are subject to performance standards to minimize impacts on the Township. This

district is compatible with a business district, but not compatible with residential districts without a buffer. Housing and commercial activities compatible with an industrial setting are also intended to be accommodated in light industrial development areas. As in commercial development areas, this plan does not advocate the interference with existing industrial activities that may be operating in outlying areas, which are surrounded by other predominant land uses.

Chapter 8: Plan Implementation

A comprehensive plan or master plan is developed to provide a vision of the community's future. It is designed to serve as a tool for decision-making on future development proposals. A master plan will also act as a guide for future public investment and service decisions, such as the local budget, grant applications and administration of utilities and services.

According to the Township Zoning Act, comprehensive or master planning is the legal basis for the development of a zoning ordinance. Section Three of the Act states: "The zoning ordinance shall be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety and general welfare; to encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability, and to limit the improper use of land; to conserve natural resources and energy; to meet the needs of the State's residents for food, fiber, and other natural resources, places to reside, recreation, industry, trade, service and other uses of land; to insure that uses of the land shall be situated in appropriate locations and relationships; to avoid the overcrowding of population; to provide adequate light and air; to lessen congestion of the public roads and streets; to reduce hazards to life and property; facilitate adequate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, education, recreation and other public requirements and services to conform with the most advantageous use of land resources, and properties."

With this legal basis in mind, Almira Township intends to revise and update the zoning ordinance based on this master plan. The zoning ordinance is the most important tool for implementing the comprehensive plan. Zoning is the authority to regulate private use of land by creating land use zones and applying development standards in various zoning districts.

The zoning ordinance defines zoning districts and specifies the boundaries of these districts on a zoning map. The zoning districts should be closely related to the land use categories identified in the Chapter 7, Future Land Use, of this master plan.

Each district should define what uses are generally permitted and what uses can be permitted under

certain circumstances. Zoning standards are established for each district, which set forth the rules governing each district. Some common standards include: rules governing the height, bulk and location of structures; off street parking and loading requirements; sign regulations; and regulations for accessory structures and uses. The standards in the zoning ordinance will be based in part on the goals and policies set forth in Chapter 6 of this Master Plan. The zoning ordinance also needs to address nonconforming uses. A nonconforming use is defined as a use that was in existence when the ordinance (or amendment) was enacted and which does not conform to zoning standards of the district in which it is located.

One of the most influential tools often included in the zoning ordinance is site plan review. Michigan law permits the zoning ordinance to require site plan review as part of the approval process for a project. The site plan review process provides the Planning Commission the opportunity to review a project to assure compliance with local, state and federal laws. The site plan review process and criteria for approval must be clearly defined in the zoning ordinance, including the conditions under which a plan may be reviewed; who must review the plan and approve or deny the proposed project; the procedures and standards for site plan review. Site plan review is not a type of "contract zoning" where the particular arrangements are negotiated. The zoning statute requires the ordinance specify what is required for site plan approval. If those conditions are met, the community government is obligated to approve the plan and if the project does not meet the standards, it must be denied.

Zoning ordinances are local laws. The adoption of the zoning ordinance (and any subsequent amendments) must follow specifically defined procedures in order to be an enforceable law. In Almira Township, the Planning Commission is responsible for the initial development of the zoning ordinance, but the Township Board of Trustees must adopt the ordinance before it is legally enforceable.

The administration of the ordinance must be carefully considered and specified in the ordinance to ensure

a successful implementation of Township zoning. Administration of the ordinance includes the specification of procedures and establishment of a fee schedule for various activities such as rezoning, special approval uses or site plan review. Township personnel need to be identified to handle the day to day operations including providing copies of the ordinance, answering zoning questions, providing rezoning applications and accepting site plan review requests.

Grants and Capital Improvements Investments

A 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 find it beneficial to prioritize and budget for capital improvement projects, (such as infrastructure improvements, park improvements, etc). A Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is one tool that is often used to establish a prioritized schedule for all anticipated capital improvement projects in the community. A CIP includes cost estimates and sources for financing for each project, therefore can serve as both a budgetary and policy document to aid in the implementation of a community's goals defined in the Master Plan.

Recreation Plan

A recreation plan is one way to implement important recreation related goals defined in the Master Plan. The Almira Township Recreation Development Plan 2011-2016 is consistent with the Master Plan but not considered an active plan by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). An updated and MDNR approved recreation plan should be maintained to ensure Almira Township recreation projects are grant eligible. When the recreation plan is updated it should be reviewed to ensure it remains consistent with the Township goals and the Master Plan. Grant funds should be pursued for recreation projects identified in the Recreation Development Plan, and consistent with the Township recreation goals.

Summary

The Almira Township Master Plan is designed to aid in the protection of the health, safety and general

welfare of the Township residents. The future land use plan establishes land use categories in consideration of the social and economic characteristics of the Township, the natural resources of the area, the compatibility of adjacent land uses and the Township goals. This plan should serve as the base in updating the Township zoning ordinance and be used to help guide future development in Almira Township.

Chapter 9: Zoning Plan and Matrix

Zone Plan

The Almira Township future land use districts directly line up with the current land use districts in the Almira Township Zoning Ordinance. As described in the Future Land Use chapter, Almira Township “...intends to ensure that existing rural residential, agricultural, and recreational uses can continue, and reasonable growth can be accommodated with minimal land use conflicts or negative environmental impacts.”

Through Planning Commission meetings, Master Plan subcommittee meetings, Almira Township Master Plan Survey and Public Input event referenced earlier, the Township Zoning continues to meet the current needs and the future desire of the residents. Therefore the following Zone Plan primarily maintains what is existing in the districts. As noted in the Future Land Use chapter, the Township does not intend to interfere with existing commercial or light industrial uses within the Township.

Agricultural District

The Agricultural District intends to conserve and promote the continuance of agriculture and rural character and uses. The Agricultural District permits uses such as single-family dwellings, agricultural uses, accessory buildings, amongst other uses. Special uses in the district include cluster residential development, planned unit developments, migrant worker facilities, and more.

The future land use Agricultural District seeks to maintain these uses and encourages agricultural uses such as crop production and animal farming, while also allowing for residential uses, both allowed by right or by permit. The survey also noted that residents see the preservation of farmlands and woodlands as a way to protect the natural environment.

Forest/ Recreation

The intent of the Forest/ Recreation District is to promote the proper use, enjoyment and conservation of natural resources, while allowing other uses in the district. Permitted uses include single-family dwell-

ings, Tourist Home/Bed and Breakfast, and public or noncommercial private parks.

The future land use Forest/ Recreation District contains all parkland and other forested or environmentally sensitive lands. This assists with keeping the lands in the district low impact, as well as low density residential and agricultural uses on private property. It is noted that this district should have a maximum density requirement of one (1) unit per five (5) acres.

Low Density Residential

Low Density Residential District seeks to provide low density residential structures on individual lots along with other residential facilities to serve residents in the district. Permitted uses include single-family dwellings, family day care homes, and home occupations.

The future land use Low Density Residential District provides for low intensity residential development, noted at one (1) unit per two (2) acres. This will assist with protecting environmentally sensitive or agricultural lands from high density development, while still allowing for some development.

Mixed Residential

The Mixed Residential District provides the Township with a mixture of densities and housing types, including alternatives to single family residential housing. The permitted uses include single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, and accessory dwelling units.

The Mixed Residential future land use district notes the district exists where smaller lots already exist, as well as areas where residential development occurs near the Village of Lake Ann. The noted density requirement is one (1) unit per one (1) acre, which may be development such as single family dwellings or condominiums/apartments. Additional high density uses are hampered by the lack of public water or sewer services, but if areas with soils can support community wastewater and have public utilities, higher density development, such as apartments, townhomes, or manufactured home developments should be considered.

Commercial

The Commercial District's intent is to provide compatible mixture of commercial and residential uses for families and small commercial business. Permitted uses include single-family dwellings, retail sales (within an enclosed building), and business and personal services, among others.

The future land use Commercial District takes note that many commercial services are met by facilities in the Village of Lake Ann and Traverse City. Therefore, the preferred placement of commercial uses should be within close proximity of the Village of Lake Ann. Continued commercial uses such as professional offices, food service, or lodging facilities should be allowed in the district.

Light Industrial uses intend to provide for manufacturing and light industrial uses in the Township with access to all-weather highways. Permitted uses include building materials sales, machine shops, and sand and gravel excavation.

The Commercial Future Land Use District notes possible uses such as light industrial manufacturing, wholesale commercial business, or sawmills or wood production industries. It also identifies that residential uses and industrial uses are not compatible without a buffer.

Zone Plan Elements

The following Zone Plan elements are:

Planned Unit Development (PUD): A lot or lots developed under a single development plan which permits upon review and approval flexibility of design and land use not available under normal zoning district requirements.

Dwelling, Single-Family: A detached building containing not more than one dwelling unit designed for residential use.

Dwelling, Multiple-Family: A building containing three or more dwelling units designed for residential use. Parking Space: An area of definite length and width exclusive of drives, aisles, or entrances, giving access thereto, and fully accessible for the storage or parking of permitted vehicles.

Home Occupation: Any activity which is clearly

secondary to residential use, carried out for economical gain. Home occupations are regulated by Section 4.11.A of the Almira Township Zoning Ordinance, as amended.

Family Day Care Home: A private home in which one (1) but fewer than seven (7) minor children are received for care and supervision for periods of less than twenty-four (24) hours a day, unattended by a parent or legal guardian, except children related to an adult member of the family by blood, marriage, or adoption. Family Day Care Home includes a home in which care is given to an unrelated minor child for more than four (4) weeks during a calendar year.

Accessory Dwelling: Means a secondary home on the same lot or parcel as a principal dwelling. Accessory dwellings are independently habitable and provide the basic requirements of shelter, heating, cooking, and sanitation. May be in an adjacent building such as a converted accessory structure, or may be a part of the principal dwelling.

Lighting: All outdoor lighting, whether for illuminating sites, parking areas, buildings, docks, signs and/or other structures shall be shielded, shaded, designed and/or directed away from all adjacent properties, and further shall not glare upon or interfere with persons and vehicles using public streets.

Buffer (Screening): Vegetated buffering should be maintained/required in districts where commercial/industrial abut residential uses, as found within the Almira Township Zoning Ordinance, as amended.

Sign: A structure, including its base, foundation and erection supports upon which is displayed any words, letters, figures, emblems, symbols, designs, or trademarks by which any message or image is afforded public visibility from out of doors on behalf of and for the benefit of any product, place, activity, individual, firm, corporation, institution, profession, association, business or organization.

Landscaping: Landscaping requirements should be maintained as found within the Almira Township Zoning Ordinance, as amended.

Height Requirements: Landscaping requirements should be maintained as found within the Almira Township Master Plan Update 38

Township Zoning Ordinance, as amended.

Density Limitations: Landscaping requirements should be maintained as found within the Almira Township Zoning Ordinance, as amended.

Solar/Alternative Energy: Solar and alternative energy should be maintained as found within the Almira Township Zoning Ordinance, as amended.

permitted or special, nor the specifications of the standards. This matrix is not meant to be all inclusive of every regulatory standard or use that should be placed within the zoning ordinance.

Zoning Matrix

The zoning matrix provides a concise method of displaying which regulatory measures and/or uses should be applied within a specific land use district. Check marks within the boxes of the matrix identify what districts and uses should be applied. Boxes which are empty are implied to not warrant those specific standards or uses.

This matrix does not identify whether uses should be

Figure 13: Zoning Matrix

Land Use District	Zoning Regulation													
	Planned Unit Development	Single-Family	Multi-Family	Parking Standards	Public Facilities (parks, etc.)	Home Occupation	Family Day Care Home	Accessory Dwelling Unit	Lighting (Dark Sky)	Buffer (Screening)	Signage	Landscaping	Height Requirements	Solar / Alternative Energy Density Limitations
Agricultural (A)	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Forest/Recreation (F/R)	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Low Density Residential (R-1)	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mixed Residential (R-2)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Commercial District (C)	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Light Industrial (I)	X			X		X			X	X	X	X	X	

Appendices

Appendix I- Survey Results - pg. 40

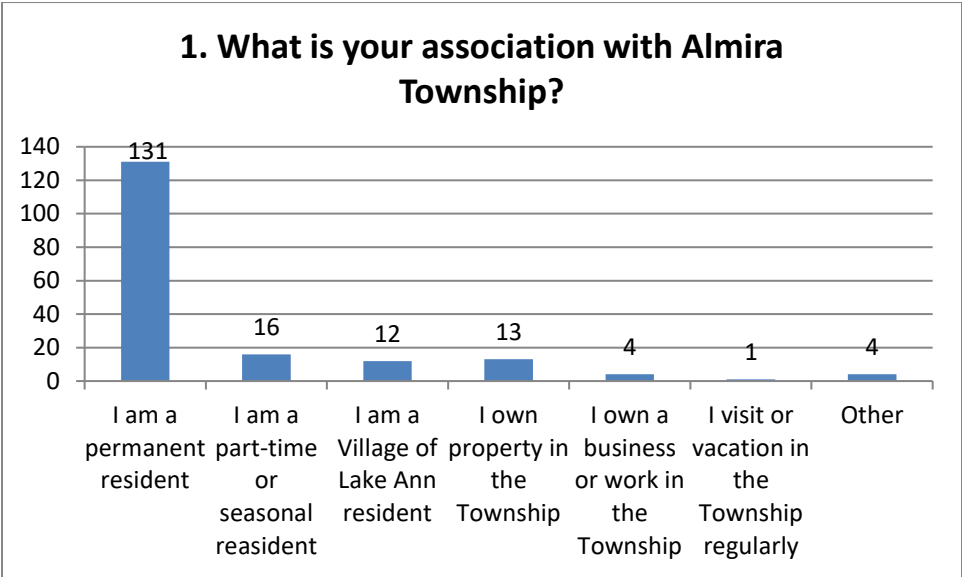
Appendix II- Public Input Event - pg. 53

Appendix III- Soil Survey legend - pg. 56

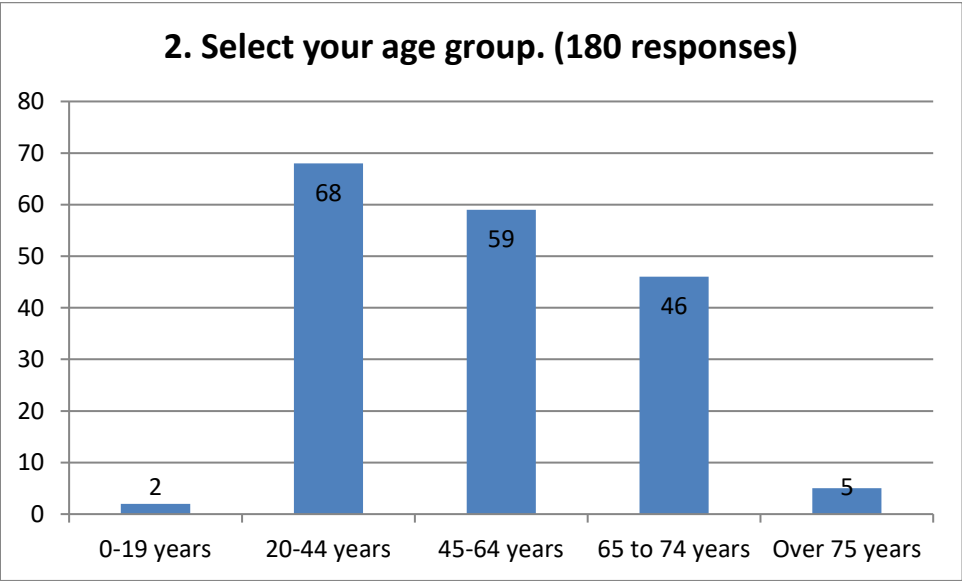
Appendix IV- Letter to public agencies - to be included after approval

Appendix V- Approval Documents (Resolution, Minutes) - to be included after approval

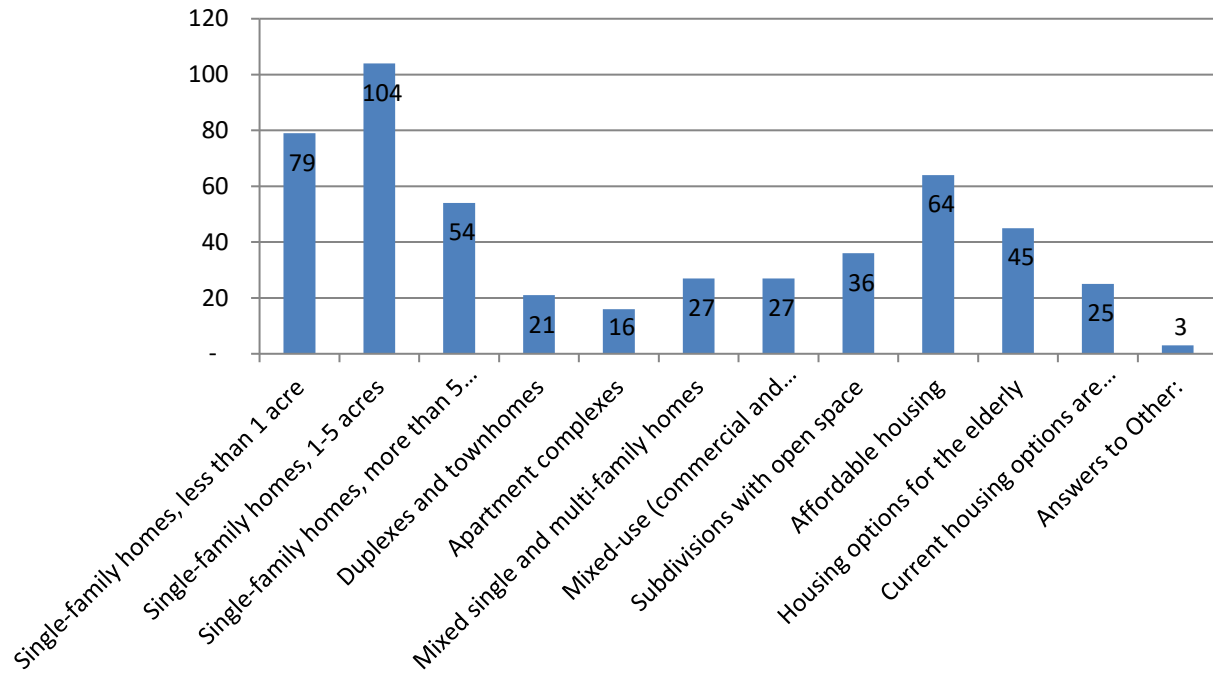
2021 Almira Township Master Plan Survey Results



Answers to Other:
Blank
Live on inland twp
Former Full-Time Resident
I own my home here and am a permanent resident



3. What type of housing would best serve the Township's future needs? Check all that apply. (178 responses)



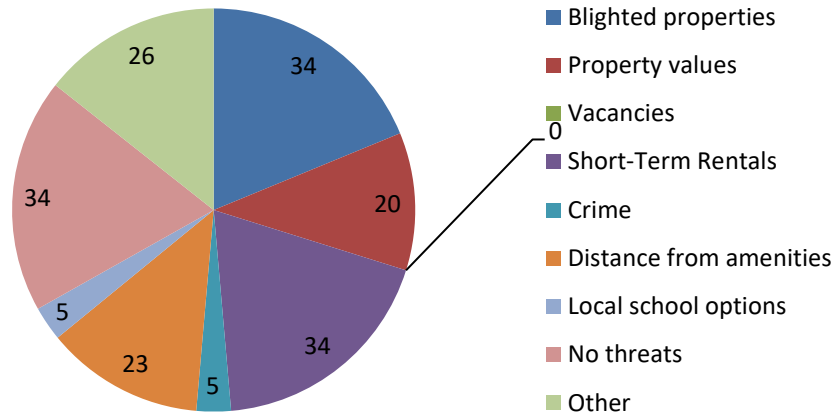
Answers to Other:

It's already getting built up with the new crowded houses.

Tiny house subdivision maybe

any housing

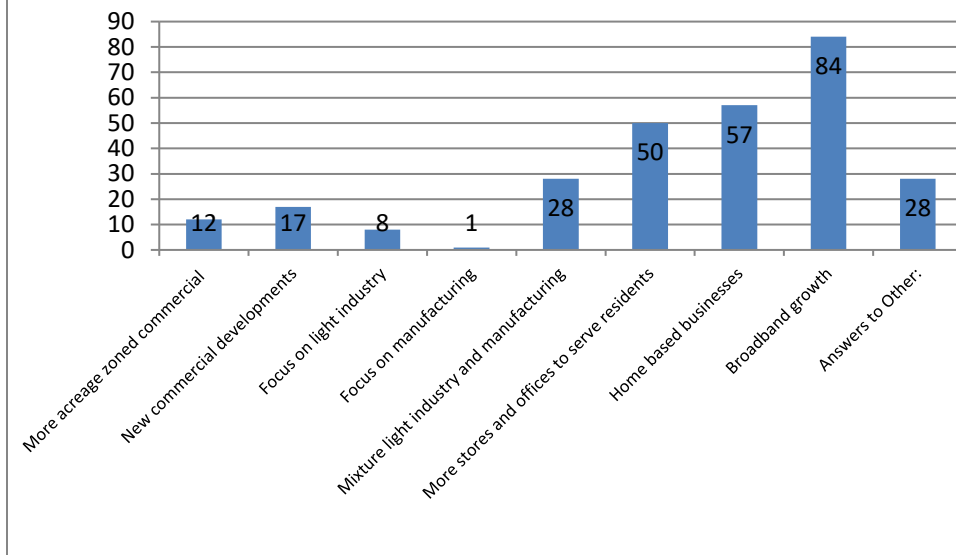
4. What is the biggest threat to the viability of your township? Select one. (176 responses)



Answers to Other:

Blank (5x)
 High property tax
 Unimproved roads
 development
 loud trucks and rumble strips
 influx of wanting to change our area after people move in
 Vehicle noise in summer
 TC Overflow
 Traffic concerns. Speeding.
 Lack of township development, creating lack of business
 Lock of shoulders in roads creating a driving town
 Sewer and water system
 Unwanted commercial business
 Availability of good high speed internet
 Internet access
 Building up, losing open spaces and threatening wild life habit
 Lack of affordable housing.
 Lack of and poor zoning controls
 The values will only go down with the rules of township on accumulating junk and vehicles on property. The property that was to be condemned on the corner of 669 kitty corner to the red school house has only gotten worse with no enforcement of the township rules.
 Growth options in real estate
 Over development
 Affordable internet access

5. What would help bring businesses you would like to see to the Township? Select all that apply. (163 responses)



Answers to Other:

Improve main feeder roads so that people can get to work safely in TC, they are horrible

None of the above

Population growth

Agriculture

No more businesses

Small family owned businesses

Keep Commerical to a small limit, We live here because of the residential aspic.

I like the village atmosphere with indpendently owned small businesses.

Lake Ann is a truly wonderful place to live. Perhaps some smaller, unique businesses established downtown would be desirable for the community. The general store/brewery/coffee shop are good draws - I was thinking of businesses that attract people to walk the town main streets - maybe a gift shop or gallery, another restaurant.....(I like the addition of the bakery even though it's not on the main street). How do people feel about increasing the size of downtown Lake Ann just a little?

Promote it"Downtown" development... not strip malls.

We don't need more businesses here.

Fine just the way it is

I like the small, quaint feel of Lake Ann and would rather not see a ton of business developments

Don't think we need more

Upgrade to roads (paving)

Adequate businesses already

What currently exists is just fine.

Keep it as is and enforce the ordinances in place to increase

Natural gas

No urban sprawl, No more businesses, it is better for our township and environment, if continue to grow our township will lose the reason we are all here, real north woods and pure Michigan, is headed

towards the past.

No need for additional businesses - we're close enough to a traverse city

None

Recreational access and opportunities in our state forests

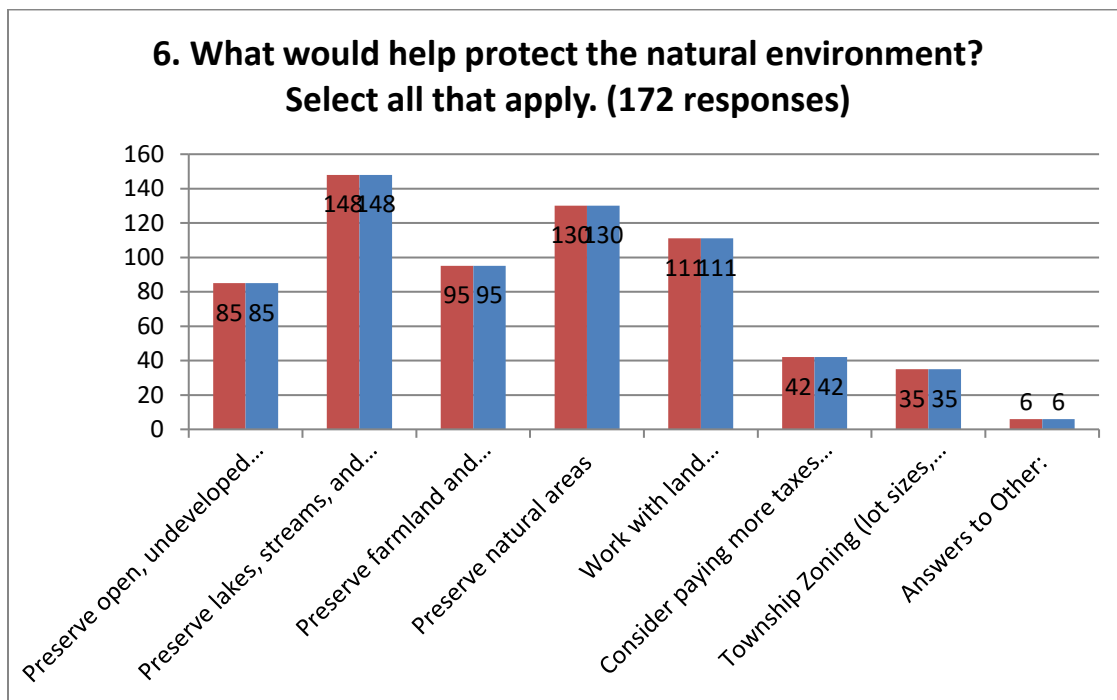
What more do we need that wouldn't change the character

Gas station

None of the above

Safety for pedestrians in village with better maintained sidewalks and safety for walkers and bike riding in village limits to lake park

less government regulations



Answers to Other:

Reward private property owners who USE the land to produce food and other products. Kill all predators (like Bears) who destroy and disrupt such efforts.

The township already has enough natural area. It's time to grow so we can have more amenities without having to go to Traverse City.

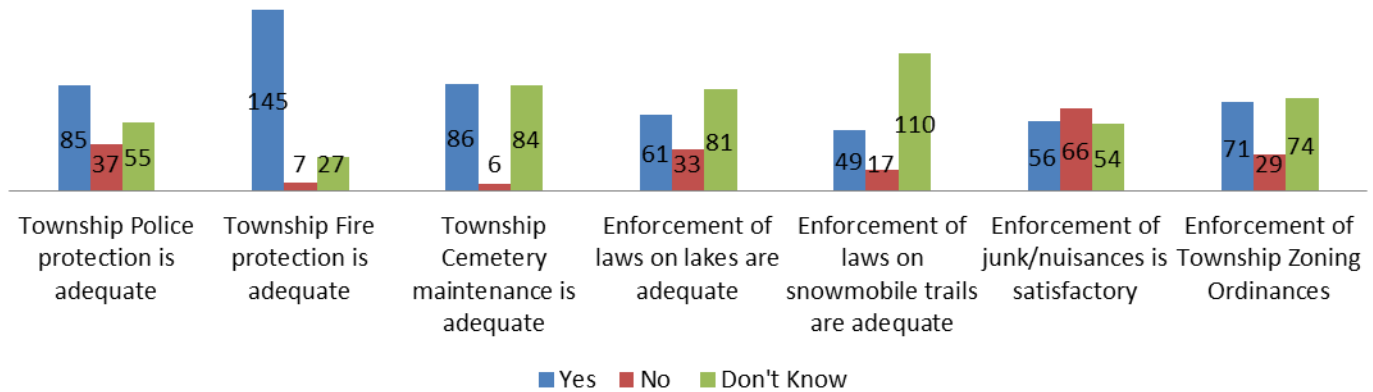
More DNR presence on lakes.

Take better care of Ransom Lake, improve trail tread via boardwalks in seasonally wet areas.

Why would my taxes increase if land is preserved?

enforce existing laws

7. Are the following Township Public Services adequate?



8. Any other remarks on Township Public Services not mentioned above? (27 responses)

N/A

I do not trust the Election Process in the township. You did not speak to this in your survey which is very disappointing. It makes me think you don't care about voting which is alarming.

Fire and EMS has grown almost to the point of overkill. Massive budget and 24/7 staff for a dozen or so calls a month. Well run department but maybe more than we need.

More sidewalks and bike lanes. Road diets to slow down fast moving traffic. Go out for bid for recycling/trash service like Long Lake Twp did. Saves money for residents, provides more services, and reduces number of trucks on the road.

There are several residences in the village limits that are unkempt, junk filled, and 2 on 1st street that are hoarder homes with significant fire hazard

Advanced Life Support EMS services in Almira Township

Na

Lack of curbside pickup recycling. Having to travel to recycle is inconvenient and often leads to less recycling. Lack of 24/7 fire, ambulance, police coverage. Lack of code enforcement. Lack of township office hours.

EMS is more than adequate, it is excellent!

EMS is excellent

Township Parks are wonderful

Fireworks enforcement is in adequate

It is past time to rid the are of abandoned vehicles, boats, snd junk

EMT services need more staffed Units

Excellent parks that are well maintained.

Lots of empty beer cans on Fowler, clearly there are folks drinking and driving/snowmobiling

Recycling is inadequate

Township communications is lacking, township website needs a distribution list

We need a noise ordinance stating specific decibal limits to ensure the peace and tranquility of Almira Township. Venues that are heard miles away are inappropriate.

Would like to see a designated ORV trail, more snowmobile trail

Animal control No mailboxes would take a message / Benzie animal control

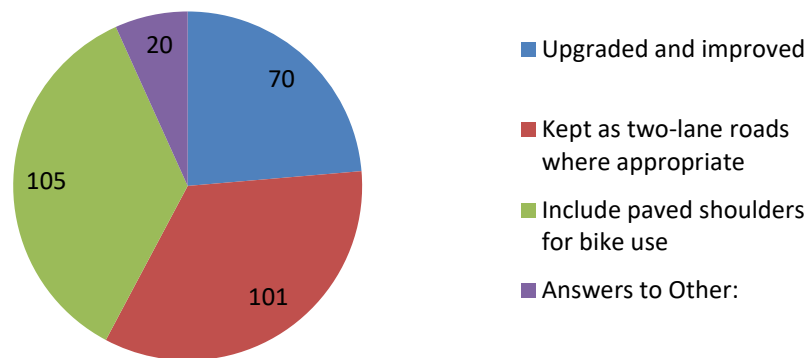
No

People with unruly dogs make biking or walking on roads dangerous. Animal control has been completely unhelpful.

None

containers at lakefront Beach park, Almira twp park by pavilions and the recycling center for 10c returnable bottles and cans. could benefit our local charities or parks and rec. money in cans are thrown out. volunteers from charity could do this. Burnett Park is village can there too just take care of what we have

9. Township roads should be... Select all that apply. (176 responses)



Answers to Other:

Bikes and 4 wheelers should NOT share the road with autos. Stupid and dangerous. However, I do support "Dedicated" use roads and trails for bikes, 4 wheelers and snowmobiles

Even with paved shoulders, the gravel and log trucks make bicycling a non-starter

Current road situation is fine generally. Could upgrade/pave some seasonal roads and cut shoulder grass more often.

Lake Ann really needs a couple rumble strips on either side of town, speeding is a terrible problem. Improve seasonal roads to allow quicker travel and commute through the township to get to where the work is in Traverse City. Example: Fowler Road

Lower "miles per hour" from n.lake Ann Rd to grand traverse county line. benzie

We live 1 mile from Almira businesses, yet I would never take our son on a bike ride to town due to the dangerous roads with no shoulder

be more pedestrian friendly

Slow speed limits on short runs. Maple street, Reynlod to burnt Mill

Gravel and dirt roads upgraded to chip and tar at a minimum

Extend pedestrian path on Lake Ann road to Ransom Lake.

Speed limits posted, esp on heavily used roads.

keep parks trails in hood condition

Would love to see dedicated paved shoulders on Lake Ann Road, Cedar Run and Reynolds where possible. Pedestrian travel and recreational use is dangerous.

Plowed better during winter

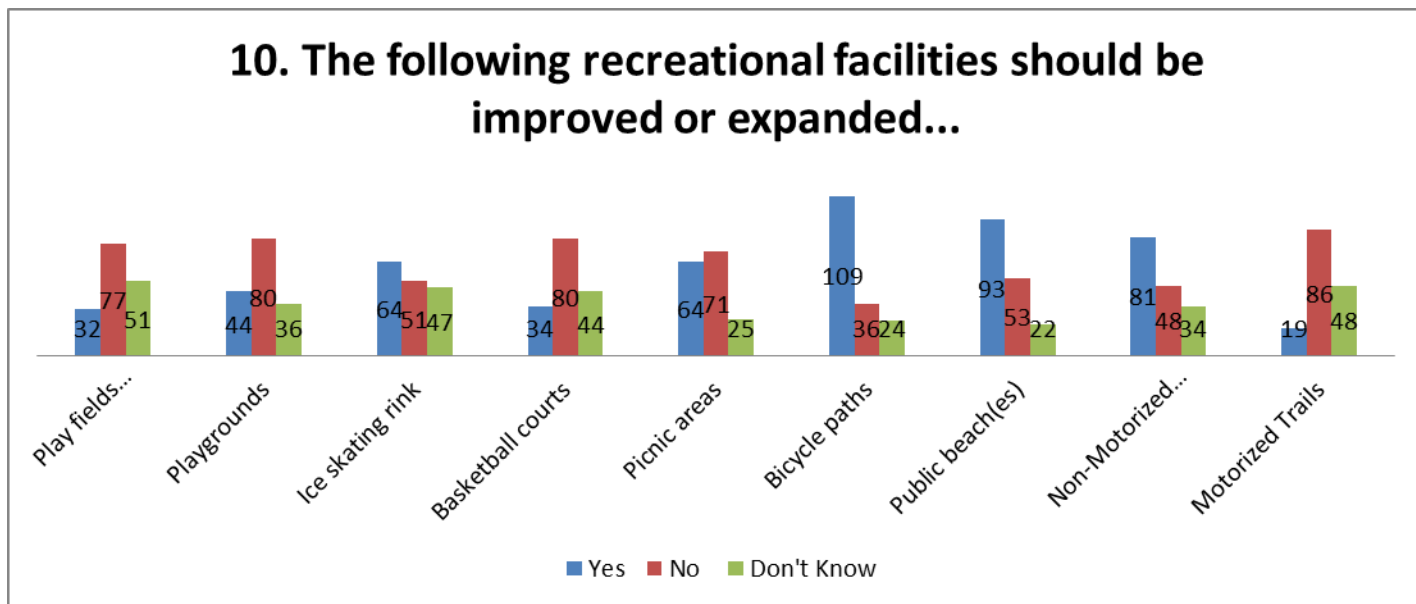
Dirt roads with houses on them should be paved.

Paved shoulders Cedar Run s curve to Lake Ann rd

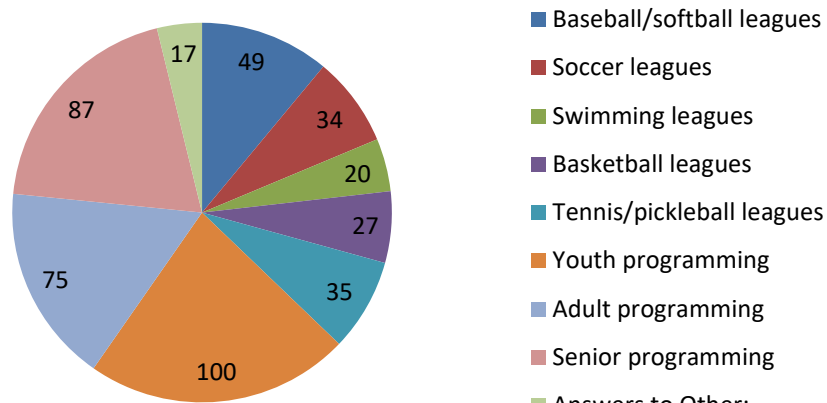
They are good enough right now

Arras of runoff on N Reynolds just past village limits

they need fixed but then maintained and not let go to disrepair



11. The Township should offer or sponsor... (146 responses)



Answers to Other:

Transportation the Lake Ann and T.C.

Dog Park

I would love to play pickleball!

Dog Run/Park Area. The parks have a lot of amenities already but are poorly maintained and could be much better.

Twp should not offer/sponsor any teams in any sport.

Don't know

none

No. That's alot to equally sponsor.

In regard to a skating rink, it would be so great to have one in downtown at the basketball court area in the winter.

Does the population density support these?

Disc Golf Leagues

None

There are so many places nearby to do all these things

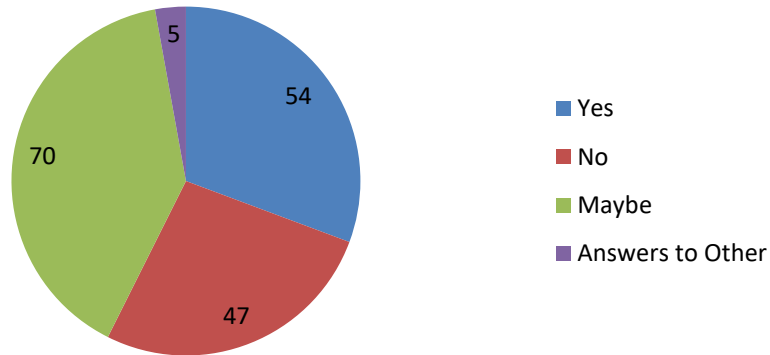
Tax dollars funding local government should not be allocated to sponsoring sports

Townships should not sponsor any activities

None of the above

that is no place for our tax dollars. let private businesses do this

12. Should the Township purchase more parkland? (175 responses)



Answers to Other:

It depends. More parkland is wonderful. Where? How much?! How would it be used?

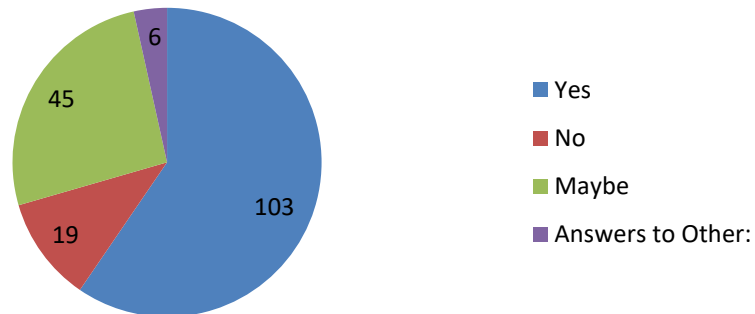
No unless it is to expand the fire dept building

Always

Take care of Ransom Lake--need boardwalks over wetlands, signage/kiosks are awfully neglected,

why are we selling property next to firebarn?

13. Should Almira Township and the Village of Lake Ann consider consolidating similar functions? (173 responses)



Answers to Other:

Leave to L.A.

Lake Ann Village is redundant to Almira Township and keeps the township village center with businesses all at the mercy of a hundred LA voters whose interests are not the same as the

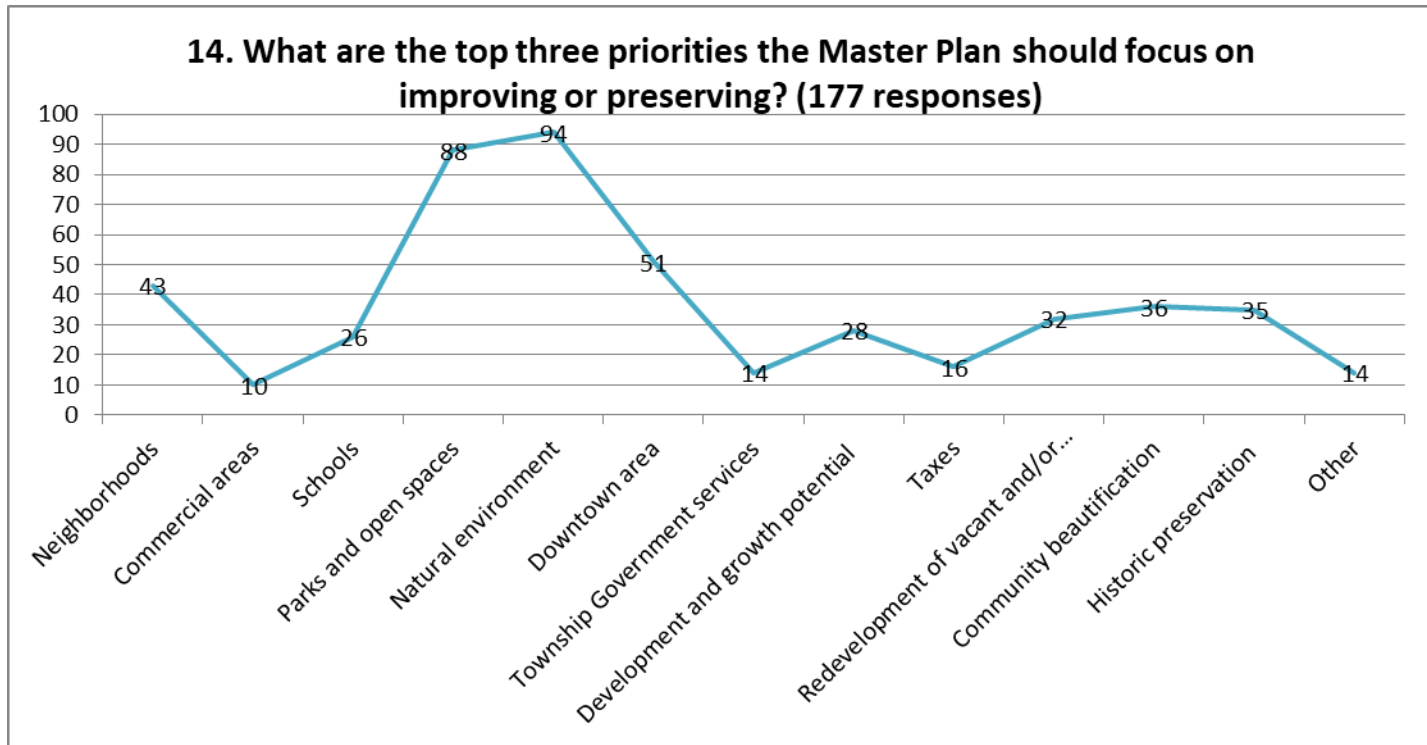
township's.

They share clerk and treasurer now and twp has put funds for village street work, guess it depend on what the issue would be. Not a Village resident so not sure I want my tax money going to a bunch of Village issues

Do not know enough about this subject

Only if there's no loss of function - and for lower tax dollars to consolidate functions.

be careful that they don't start overreach but streamlining may be more efficient



Answers to Other:

Reduce taxes

Roads

Spear head community-based model and actual sustainable framework that brings together more regular opportunities for residents to engage with eachother. This would include invested community organizations such as churches, businesses, schools, government, ect

properties that look like crap

farm land

Lifestyle preservation

Roads and affordable internet

Keep subdivisions to a minimum

Zoning

Recreational access and non motorized trails on our state forests lands.

Recycling (encouraging, I'm dumfounded how many in my neighborhood don't recycle, yet are only a few miles from the drop off. Need to plan for the growth that is coming, noise ordinance.

Ensure the lakes are healthy

Trail along lake Ann rd
dog park fenced would be a nice addition

**15.If you would like to review the
drafted Master Plan when available,
please provide an email address for the
electronic version or a home address for
paper copies**

66 responses

16. Please provide any additional comments in the space below.

Reduce taxes, promote land Responsible USE, Insure votes legitimacy, take zoning seriously
Overall our township does a great job and I am happy to live here. Lack of affordable housing is an issue in our township and any viable solutions should be included in the master plan, However, this is also a regional and state issue and unfortunately, there may not be any viable solutions to this problem right now. Thank you for making this survey available to our residents.

I would like to see a higher priority placed on broadband internet development outside of the village limits

Na

Encourage community gathering space. Attract young families, control growth and expansion. Keep the small community feel.

Our township sees a lot of growth because it is a lovely area to raise a family as well as affordable. I would be hesitant to add much more than neighborhoods and natural/park areas.

Would really like to see the township address short term rentals, especially people buying lots in neighborhoods to build Air BnBs-we want less.

Almira Township is more than just the village. Many residents of the township do not even go to the village. Let the village residents take care of the village. Our township taxes need to be spent on the township as a whole.

Encourage PUD for condominium development for seniors and workers at affordable prices.

Continue to provide and maintain walking trails (Pathways) throughout the township.

Clearly identify the purpose, goals, timeframe, and benchmarks (what does success look like) of the new master plan

Some of the options for answers is not specific for a response and don't apply to the Township. Could be confusing to individuals that are not active in Township business and government.

Thank you for the great interactive opportunity! This is part of what makes our township so cool!

Consider slowing traffic at county line on long lake and north bound on lake ann rd to make it safe for people walking, running, riding bikes and kids playing from all the neighborhoods.

A county wide trash disposal effort would certainly help clean up the township. Paving more roads would attract more residential property development thus increasing tax base.

We need to have some areas where people getting started can afford. Smaller lot sizes and small houses being allowed.

My biggest concern as a active, parent of 3 resident is the lack of paved surfaces for non-motorized travel. I cannot bike with my kids without the threat of being run over. I hope to one day be able to get to Ransom Lake, Almira Township Park, Lake Ann Pathway on Reynolds Road and other natural

areas safely by bike or foot.

Very well appreciate this survey.

We are getting built up fast. I believe the rules and enforcement of "junk" accumulation should be more specific. Fencing the junk in isn't acceptable.

Our township is doing a great job. As in any job, we should, " make-a-plan, work-a-plan, evaluate- the-plan,".

Our Ann Lake was so beautiful and peaceful here for years; one could see more trees than homes on the lake, absolutely beautiful. At night you could see all the stars, now more lights are staying on all night making the view difficult. In favor for making things better and like good changes, but have seen negative changes; algal blooms, weeds, many new houses with clear cutting, fertilized lawns and lighting pollution across the lake. Please view Devils lake in Irish Hills, Michigan shores and decide if this is what residents would like our lake shores to look like here on Ann Lake.

Fenced dog park at Almira Twp Park would be a nice addition.

I think that taxes need to stop going up so much they have increased va lot over the past couple years and I do not live on a lake.

We're close enough to Traverse City and all it has to offer - let's not become an extension of Traverse City. Preserve our semi rural and village character.

I believe that outdoor recreational access is what defines Lake Ann and almira township, we should invest in that through Oartnerships with the DNR to make our community more enjoyable for residents and a better bargain for companies that want to relocate.

I'm a part time (at best) resident, along with owning property in Almira township. Some of the reason for not being a full time resident is because of the lack of nearby local amenities and needed services at this point for our family, which means we have to do more preparation and improvement of our own land over a longer period of time before we can consider moving full time, though it is our plan to move out full time as soon as we can. More local amenities to meet the needs of residents, along with affordable housing, preservation of the natural environment, and services for kids (including schools), adults, and seniors, are things that I think are important to prioritize both for retaining current residents and having young folks return after college, but also for making it a place people want to move as well.

None

I would encourage more arts-related events - music, theatre, etc.

Please inspect and deal with the 2 dangerous hoarded homes in the village.

Tart trail

dog park fenced at our township park would be so nice.

pave gravel roads

after question 15 this is suddenly not confidential... lol

June 28, 2022

To: Almira Township Planning Commission

Fr: Mathew Cooke, Community Planner

Re: Almira Township Public Input Session Report

Please see the attached report from the Almira Township Public Input Session held on Thursday, June 23, 2022. At your August meeting, I would like to discuss some of the input we heard, primarily in relation to finalizing the Future Land Use Map and the Goals and Objectives of the Master Plan. As always, please let me know if you have any questions or comments!

Summary

The Almira Township Public Input Session was held on Thursday, June 23, 2022 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Almira Townhall in Lake Ann, Michigan. The session was advertised in the Record Patriot, Record Eagle, social media, fliers, and emails to those who provided one during the 2021 Almira Township Master Plan Survey. 18 members of the public attended the session to provide their input.

Goals and Policies Exercise

Attached you will find the drafted Almira Township Master Plan Goals and Policies that were presented for comment at the Public Input Session. Public members were asked to mark goals and policies that they did not support for Almira Township. These are signified with red circles to represent each sticker that was placed by the goals or policies that were not supported.

Future Land Use Map Exercise

Please see the attached maps that have been drawn on with comments. There were six (6) stickers placed on the map to object to the possibility of Light Industrial zoning being placed near CR 669 and the Airport. Below are additional comments beyond the map exercise relating to the Future Land Use Map.

- Part of Barber Farm Trust FLUM Zoning - Keep as is – Agriculture. As a family we would like to return the farm land to a natural sustainable operation! The divisions of this land was not for development, but to define family members financial responsibility for it! The family is and hope if allowed to expand agricultural operations in the near future.
- We as a family do not want to loose agricultural land to home development! Our goal is a farming operation that would result in being able to supply natural agricultural products in the local community.
- Leaving this as agricultural at this time benefits the community, our family and the social/cultural of Almira!

Housing, Signage and Solar Preference Exercises

Please see the attached Housing, Signage and Solar preference sheets. Please note that a red circle represents a vote that does not support the option in Almira Township.

What are three (3) things that can be improved in Almira Township?

- Long term solution to Village parking

- Lake Ann needs a graduated speed limit approaching village from east and south. It appears to jump from 55 to 25 and always unsure where to begin slowdown. Also downstate people are confused if a sudden 25mph = ticket.
- Graduated speed limit outside of Village proper. Maybe 35-45 mph between Reynolds and Ann St.
- Waterfront Park – The Lake is full of uncomfortable stones. My grandkids asked to leave and find somewhere else sandy without all those many, many stones that hurt feet.
- Area has grown so much the Post Office seems like it may need added onto. But I have never worked there, just know area is growing in population.
- Need more sidewalks and curbs in Village for rainwater management. Protect pedestrians and Lake Ann storm water entering.
- Commercial Goals consider: light pollution limit, rain water management of site
- Enforce clearing of greenbelt strip along lakefront property, limit short term rental properties.
- Zoning enforcement: Too many violations go unaddressed for years, eliminate short term rentals.
- Recreation access and opportunity (trails- trail access), thoughtful development without gate keeping, and finding the right balance for commercial activity.
- Downtown area needs speed bumps! Too many heavy feet!
- 1) Yearly short term rental fee is too expensive - \$50 rather than \$200 would be more appropriate, 2) I am not in favor of roaming chickens in residential neighborhoods, 3) have proper (blue lines and signage) handicapped parking spots and enforce fines on people using them without sign or license plate.
- Limit VRBO/short term rentals.
- No short term rentals.
- More input meetings like this. :)
- Please provide Township e-news on website to include information and updates, more community engagement opportunities, perhaps thru library.

What are the top three (3) things you like about Almira Township?

- Parks, Fire Department
- Low cost of living, Papa J's Pizza, seriously, and low density of people.
- State Land/Conservation areas, recreational opportunities: biking, skiing, and hiking, and slow pace of life.
- Rural, quiet, woods, lakes.
- Ice cream shop, park, people who live here are friendly.
- All the parks are fabulous! Connecting bike paths would be great, people are very friendly and helpful, and Lake Ann – the lake.
- Almira Park – Ransom Lake, small town feel, 25 mph speed limit.
- Open space and farmland, lake access, parks.
- Fire department/EMS, parks, and multiple lakes/hiking access points.

Please feel free to leave any comments or thoughts relating to the Master Plan here.

- What logic was used in the future plan to choose what agricultural land would be changed to residential?
- Traffic studies should be a prior requirement to inform locations in proposed site plan for commercial and mixed residential locations.

- Under signage; mobile signs should have a temporary status.
- No questions- very nice presentation, nice to be asked for input.
- I believe that municipal water-sewer is not a feasible fix unless grants are obtained. It is not reasonable for residents to assume financial burden. More aggressive enforcement/education on septic use and care is needed.
- Thanks for the session. I believe most issues are on point. We need to watch commercial development closely.
- Why are changes necessary? Long term effects?
- I believe the Township should not encourage light industrial growth due to environmental impact on our large quantities of water within the Township. Farmland development to housing use should be done with caution. The Township should consider adopting a policy of allocating an exact amount (acres) permissible (10% of current, etc.).
- Any proposed zoning changes to change from Ag to residential should be brought to the current owner to discuss with prior to making changes to Master Plan.
- Bike Paths are costly. I am not in favor of any unless they are similar to the TART trail.

Soil Survey Area - Soil Data Access (SDA) - Hydric Soils Rating by Map Unit

An SDA-populated select list is used to pick a state and SSA which enables creation of a "Hydric Soils Report" based upon those selections. The data is not static; it hits Soil Data Access Live. To reset the table change the state dropdown. Once a state is selected and table appears, if a new state is selected it will refresh the table. The report uses a count instead of component percent to determine the hydric rating by map unit. [For more information about the table,](#)

Michigan ▼

selected stateId = MI

Benzie and Manistee Counties, Michigan ▼

selected SSA areasympbol = MI614

areasympbol	musym	muname	mukey	hydric_rating
MI614	63D	Coloma sand, 12 to 18 percent slopes	193172	Nonhydric
MI614	1	Beaches	193236	Nonhydric
MI614	102A	Thompsonville-Milnichol fine sands, 0 to 3 percent slopes	193237	Nonhydric
MI614	11A	Ithaca loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	193239	Nonhydric
MI614	47D	Spinks-Coloma sands, 12 to 18 percent slopes	193257	Nonhydric
MI614	47E	Spinks-Coloma sands, 18 to 35 percent slopes	193258	Nonhydric
MI614	52C	Copemish sand, 3 to 12 percent slopes	193260	Nonhydric
MI614	53A	Saugatuck-Jebavy complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes	193261	Partially Hydric
MI614	57F	Grattan sand, 35 to 50 percent slopes	193269	Nonhydric
MI614	58B	Covert sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193270	Nonhydric
MI614	59B	Pipestone sand, 0 to 4 percent slopes	193271	Predominantly Nonydric
MI614	60	Dair muck	193272	Predominantly Hydric
MI614	64B	Benona sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193277	Nonhydric
MI614	64C	Benona sand, 6 to 12 percent slopes	193278	Nonhydric
MI614	64D	Benona sand, 12 to 18 percent slopes	193279	Nonhydric
MI614	67E	Plainfield sand, 12 to 35 percent slopes	193282	Nonhydric
MI614	5F	Udorthents-Udipsammments complex, very steep	193284	Nonhydric
MI614	81	Lumley-Makinen complex	193285	Predominantly

				Hydric
MI614	83	Histosols and Aquents, ponded	193286	Hydric
MI614	86F	Dune land-Quartzipsamments complex, hilly to very steep	193287	Nonhydric
MI614	88B	Udipsamments, nearly level and undulating	193288	Nonhydric
MI614	210B	Plainfield sand, nearly level and undulating	193290	Nonhydric
MI614	210C	Plainfield sand, rolling	193291	Nonhydric
MI614	210D	Plainfield sand, hilly	193292	Nonhydric
MI614	211B	Plainfield sand, banded substratum, nearly level and undulating	193293	Nonhydric
MI614	212B	Plainfield sand, very deep water table, nearly level and undulating	193295	Nonhydric
MI614	220B	Typic Udipsamments, nearly level and undulating	193297	Nonhydric
MI614	220C	Typic Udipsamments, rolling	193298	Nonhydric
MI614	220D	Typic Udipsamments, hilly	193299	Nonhydric
MI614	220E	Typic Udipsamments, steep	193300	Nonhydric
MI614	221B	Typic Udipsamments, banded substratum-Lamellic Udipsamments complex, nearly level and undulating	193301	Nonhydric
MI614	221C	Typic Udipsamments, banded substratum-Lamellic Udipsamments complex, rolling	193302	Nonhydric
MI614	221D	Typic Udipsamments, banded substratum-Lamellic Udipsamments complex, hilly	193303	Nonhydric
MI614	222B	Typic Udipsamments, very deep water table, nearly level and undulating	193304	Nonhydric
MI614	224B	Oxyaquic Udipsamments, nearly level and undulating	193305	Nonhydric
MI614	225B	Typic Udipsamments, loamy substratum, nearly level and undulating	193306	Nonhydric
MI614	225C	Typic Udipsamments, loamy substratum, rolling	193307	Nonhydric
MI614	231B	Entic Haplorthods, banded substratum-Lamellic Haplorthods complex, sandy, nearly level and undulating	193308	Nonhydric
MI614	231C	Entic Haplorthods, banded substratum-Lamellic Haplorthods complex, sandy, rolling	193309	Nonhydric
MI614	231D	Entic Haplorthods, banded substratum-Lamellic Haplorthods complex, sandy, hilly	193310	Nonhydric
MI614	231E	Entic Haplorthods, banded substratum-Lamellic Haplorthods complex, sandy, steep	193311	Nonhydric
MI614	233B	Lamellic Haplorthods-Entic Haplorthods, banded substratum, complex, sandy, nearly level and undulating	193312	Nonhydric
MI614	235B	Alfic Haplorthods-Lamellic Haplorthods complex, sandy, nearly level and undulating	193313	Nonhydric
MI614	235C	Alfic Haplorthods-Lamellic Haplorthods complex, sandy, rolling	193314	Nonhydric
MI614	235D	Alfic Haplorthods-Lamellic Haplorthods complex, sandy, hilly	193315	Nonhydric
MI614	232B	Entic Haplorthods-Lamellic Haplorthods complex, sandy, very deep water table, nearly level and undulating	193316	Nonhydric
MI614	237B	Glossudalfs, fine-loamy, nearly level and undulating	193317	Nonhydric
MI614	237C	Glossudalfs, fine-loamy, rolling	193318	Nonhydric

MI614	237D	Glossudalfs, fine-loamy, hilly	193319	Nonhydric
MI614	240B	Typic Haplorthods, sandy, nearly level and undulating	193320	Nonhydric
MI614	240C	Typic Haplorthods, sandy, rolling	193321	Nonhydric
MI614	240D	Typic Haplorthods, sandy, hilly	193322	Nonhydric
MI614	240E	Typic Haplorthods, sandy, steep	193323	Nonhydric
MI614	245C	Typic Haplorthods, loamy substratum-Alfic Haplorthods, dark subsoil, complex, sandy, rolling	193325	Nonhydric
MI614	245D	Typic Haplorthods, loamy substratum-Alfic Haplorthods, dark subsoil, complex, sandy, hilly	193326	Nonhydric
MI614	250	Typic Psammaquents-Aquic Udipsamments-Haplosaprists, euic complex, frequently flooded	193327	Partially Hydric
MI614	252	Typic Endoaquods, sandy, wet-Haplosaprists, dysic complex	193329	Hydric
MI614	253A	Typic Duraquods, sandy, ortstein-Aquic Udipsamments complex, nearly level	193330	Nonhydric
MI614	255B	Aquic Udipsamments-Oxyaquic Haplorthods, sandy complex, nearly level and undulating	193331	Nonhydric
MI614	262A	Typic Duraquods, sandy, ortstein, nearly level	193332	Nonhydric
MI614	263B	Aquic Udipsamments, nearly level and undulating	193333	Nonhydric
MI614	272	Typic Endoaquods, sandy, wet	193334	Hydric
MI614	273	Typic Psammaquents	193335	Hydric
MI614	274	Typic Epiaquolls, sandy over loamy	193336	Hydric
MI614	280	Aquents and Histosols, ponded	193337	Hydric
MI614	281	Haplosaprists, dysic	193338	Hydric
MI614	3A	Psamments, moderately wet-Beaches complex, nearly level	193339	Nonhydric
MI614	25	Gorvan-Houghton-Glendor complex, frequently flooded	193342	Predominantly Hydric
MI614	47F	Spinks-Coloma sands, 35 to 70 percent slopes	193349	Nonhydric
MI614	52E	Copemish sand, 12 to 35 percent slopes	193350	Nonhydric
MI614	64E	Benona sand, 18 to 35 percent slopes	193351	Nonhydric
MI614	86D	Dune land-Quartzipsamments complex, undulating to hilly	193354	Nonhydric
MI614	110B	Healylake sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193355	Nonhydric
MI614	109F	Shavenaugh sand, 35 to 50 percent slopes	193356	Nonhydric
MI614	109E	Shavenaugh sand, 18 to 35 percent slopes	193357	Nonhydric
MI614	109D	Shavenaugh sand, 12 to 18 percent slopes	193358	Nonhydric
MI614	109C	Shavenaugh sand, 6 to 12 percent slopes	193359	Nonhydric
MI614	109B	Shavenaugh sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193360	Nonhydric
MI614	108A	Saugatuck sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes	193361	Nonhydric
MI614	107E	Benzonia sand, 18 to 35 percent slopes	193362	Nonhydric
MI614	107D	Benzonia sand, 12 to 18 percent slopes	193363	Nonhydric
MI614	107C	Benzonia sand, 6 to 12 percent slopes	193364	Nonhydric

MI614	107B	Benzonia sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193365	Nonhydryc
MI614	100A	Dair-Pipestone complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes	193371	Partially Hydric
MI614	380	Access Denied	193372	Nonhydryc
MI614	W	Water	193373	Nonhydryc
MI614	215B	Plainfield sand, loamy substratum, nearly level and undulating	193377	Nonhydryc
MI614	221E	Typic Udipsamments, banded substratum-Lamellic Udipsamments complex, steep	193378	Nonhydryc
MI614	221F	Typic Udipsamments, banded substratum-Lamellic Udipsamments complex, very steep	193379	Nonhydryc
MI614	222C	Typic Udipsamments, very deep water table, rolling	193380	Nonhydryc
MI614	223B	Lamellic Udipsamments-Typic Udipsamments, banded substratum, complex, nearly level and undulating	193382	Nonhydryc
MI614	225D	Typic Udipsamments, loamy substratum, hilly	193383	Nonhydryc
MI614	230B	Entic Haplorthods, sandy, nearly level and undulating	193386	Nonhydryc
MI614	230F	Entic Haplorthods, sandy, very steep	193387	Nonhydryc
MI614	230E	Entic Haplorthods, sandy, steep	193388	Nonhydryc
MI614	230D	Entic Haplorthods, sandy, hilly	193389	Nonhydryc
MI614	230C	Entic Haplorthods, sandy, rolling	193390	Nonhydryc
MI614	233D	Lamellic Haplorthods-Entic Haplorthods, banded substratum, complex, sandy, hilly	193392	Nonhydryc
MI614	233C	Lamellic Haplorthods-Entic Haplorthods, banded substratum, complex, sandy, rolling	193393	Nonhydryc
MI614	233E	Lamellic Haplorthods-Entic Haplorthods, banded substratum, complex, sandy, steep	193394	Nonhydryc
MI614	234B	Oxyaquic Haplorthods, sandy, nearly level and undulating	193395	Nonhydryc
MI614	235E	Alfic Haplorthods-Lamellic Haplorthods complex, sandy, steep	193396	Nonhydryc
MI614	235F	Alfic Haplorthods-Lamellic Haplorthods complex, sandy, very steep	193397	Nonhydryc
MI614	240F	Typic Haplorthods, sandy, very steep	193398	Nonhydryc
MI614	241B	Typic Haplorthods, banded substratum-Lamellic Haplorthods, dark subsoil, complex, sandy, nearly level and undulating	193399	Nonhydryc
MI614	241C	Typic Haplorthods, banded substratum-Lamellic Haplorthods, dark subsoil, complex, sandy, rolling	193400	Nonhydryc
MI614	242B	Typic Haplorthods, sandy, very deep water table, nearly level and undulating	193406	Nonhydryc
MI614	243C	Lamellic Haplorthods, sandy, dark subsoil, fine-loamy banded substratum, rolling	193407	Nonhydryc
MI614	244B	Oxyaquic Haplorthods, sandy, dark subsoil, nearly level and undulating	193409	Nonhydryc
MI614	245E	Typic Haplorthods, loamy substratum-Alfic Haplorthods, dark subsoil, complex, sandy, steep	193410	Nonhydryc
MI614	264A	Typic Endoaquods, sandy, nearly level	193414	Nonhydryc
MI614	282	Haplosaprists, euic	193415	Hydryc
MI614	55B	Brethren sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193422	Nonhydryc
MI614	64F	Benona sand, 35 to 70 percent slopes	193423	Nonhydryc
MI614	67F	Plainfield sand, 35 to 70 percent slopes	193424	Nonhydryc

MI614	246B	Alfic Oxyaquic Haplorthods-Typic Haplorthods, loamy substratum, complex, sandy, nearly level and undulating	193438	Nonhydric
MI614	91	Pits, sand and gravel	193484	Nonhydric
MI614	220F	Typic Udipsamments, very steep	193485	Nonhydric
MI614	111D	Onkama loam, 12 to 18 percent slopes	193488	Nonhydric
MI614	111E	Onkama loam, 18 to 35 percent slopes	193489	Nonhydric
MI614	115F	Nordhouse sand, 18 to 70 percent slopes	193494	Nonhydric
MI614	115D	Nordhouse sand, 6 to 18 percent slopes	193496	Predominantly Nonydric
MI614	115B	Nordhouse sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193497	Predominantly Nonydric
MI614	114B	Nordhouse-Platterriver-Dair complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193498	Partially Hydric
MI614	118B	Spinks-Shavenaugh sands, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193503	Nonhydric
MI614	118C	Spinks-Shavenaugh sands, 6 to 12 percent slopes	193504	Nonhydric
MI614	118D	Spinks-Shavenaugh sands, 12 to 18 percent slopes	193505	Nonhydric
MI614	118E	Spinks-Shavenaugh sands, 18 to 35 percent slopes	193506	Nonhydric
MI614	118F	Spinks-Shavenaugh sands, 35 to 50 percent slopes	193507	Nonhydric
MI614	119	Madaus muck	193508	Hydric
MI614	120B	Boyer-Shavenaugh complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193509	Nonhydric
MI614	120C	Boyer-Shavenaugh complex, 6 to 12 percent slopes	193510	Nonhydric
MI614	120E	Boyer-Shavenaugh complex, 18 to 35 percent slopes	193511	Nonhydric
MI614	122	Dair-Adrian mucks	193513	Predominantly Hydric
MI614	123B	Platterriver-Pipestone sands, 0 to 4 percent slopes	193514	Predominantly Nonydric
MI614	127B	Kaleva sand, deep water table, 0 to 6 percent slopes	202012	Nonhydric
MI614	126D	Filer fine sandy loam, 12 to 18 percent slopes	202013	Nonhydric
MI614	125D	Spinks-Tekenink, sandy substratum, complex, 12 to 18 percent slopes	202014	Nonhydric
MI614	125C	Spinks-Tekenink, sandy substratum, complex, 6 to 12 percent slopes	202015	Nonhydric
MI614	125B	Spinks-Tekenink, sandy substratum, complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes	202016	Nonhydric
MI614	223C	Lamellic Udipsamments-Typic Udipsamments, banded substratum, complex, rolling	202018	Nonhydric
MI614	14A	Capac loam, Lake Michigan lobe, 0 to 4 percent slopes	631162	Predominantly Nonydric
MI614	63B	Coloma sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193275	Nonhydric
MI614	63C	Coloma sand, 6 to 12 percent slopes	193276	Nonhydric
MI614	63E	Coloma sand, 18 to 35 percent slopes	193171	Nonhydric

MI614	47B	Spinks-Coloma sands, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193255	Nonhydryc
MI614	47C	Spinks-Coloma sands, 6 to 12 percent slopes	193256	Nonhydryc
MI614	57B	Grattan sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193265	Predominantly Nonydryc
MI614	57C	Grattan sand, 6 to 12 percent slopes	193266	Nonhydryc
MI614	57D	Grattan sand, 12 to 18 percent slopes	193267	Nonhydryc
MI614	57E	Grattan sand, 18 to 35 percent slopes	193268	Nonhydryc
MI614	29F	Fogg-Benzonia sands, 35 to 50 percent slopes	631170	Nonhydryc
MI614	29E	Fogg-Benzonia sands, 18 to 35 percent slopes	631171	Nonhydryc
MI614	29D	Fogg-Benzonia sands, 12 to 18 percent slopes	631172	Nonhydryc
MI614	29C	Fogg-Benzonia sands, 6 to 12 percent slopes	631173	Nonhydryc
MI614	29B	Fogg-Benzonia sands, 0 to 6 percent slopes	631174	Nonhydryc
MI614	126E	Filer fine sandy loam, 18 to 35 percent slopes	631180	Nonhydryc
MI614	130A	Glendora-Algansee-Abscota complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes, frequently flooded	631193	Partially Hydric
MI614	257	Endoaquolls-Haplosaprists, euic-Typic Psammaquents complex, frequently flooded	631213	Hydryc
MI614	36B	Fern-Remus complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes	894065	Nonhydryc
MI614	38C	Remus-Spinks complex, 6 to 12 percent slopes	894066	Nonhydryc
MI614	38B	Remus-Spinks complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes	894067	Nonhydryc
MI614	120F	Boyer-Shavenaugh complex, 35 to 50 percent slopes	894102	Nonhydryc
MI614	139E	Mollineaux-Remus complex, 18 to 35 percent slopes	894104	Nonhydryc
MI614	139D	Mollineaux-Remus complex, 12 to 18 percent slopes	894105	Nonhydryc
MI614	138E	Mollineaux-Spinks complex, 18 to 35 percent slopes	894106	Nonhydryc
MI614	138D	Mollineaux-Spinks complex, 12 to 18 percent slopes	894107	Nonhydryc
MI614	125F	Spinks-Tekenink, sandy substratum, complex, 35 to 50 percent slopes	894165	Nonhydryc
MI614	54F	Kaleva sand, 35 to 50 percent slopes	899682	Nonhydryc
MI614	63F	Coloma sand, 35 to 70 percent slopes	899711	Nonhydryc
MI614	96C	Goodharbor sand, 1 to 12 percent slopes	899722	Nonhydryc
MI614	104B	Covert-Pipestone sands, 0 to 6 percent slopes	899731	Predominantly Nonydryc
MI614	106B	Covert-Dair complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes	899733	Partially Hydric
MI614	107F	Benzonia sand, 35 to 50 percent slopes	899734	Nonhydryc
MI614	111F	Onkama loam, 35 to 50 percent slopes	899744	Nonhydryc
MI614	131A	Milarch loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	901191	Nonhydryc
MI614	67B	Plainfield sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193280	Nonhydryc
MI614	125E	Spinks-Tekenink, sandy substratum, complex, 18 to 35 percent slopes	656547	Nonhydryc

MI614	18C	Fern-Spinks sands, 6 to 12 percent slopes	680939	Nonhydric
MI614	18B	Fern-Spinks sands, 0 to 6 percent slopes	680940	Nonhydric
MI614	21B	Coloma-Tatches complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes	680941	Nonhydric
MI614	44B	Milnichol fine sand, 0 to 4 percent slopes	680943	Nonhydric
MI614	43B	Thompsonville fine sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	680944	Nonhydric
MI614	32C	Fern sand, 6 to 12 percent slopes	680945	Nonhydric
MI614	32B	Fern sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	680946	Nonhydric
MI614	132A	Milnichol-Dair complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes	680964	Partially Hydric
MI614	136E	Nessen-Kaleva sands, 18 to 35 percent slopes	680971	Nonhydric
MI614	136D	Nessen-Kaleva sands, 12 to 18 percent slopes	680972	Nonhydric
MI614	136C	Nessen-Kaleva sands, 6 to 12 percent slopes	680973	Nonhydric
MI614	136B	Nessen-Kaleva sands, 0 to 6 percent slopes	680974	Nonhydric
MI614	135C	Nessen sand, 6 to 12 percent slopes	680976	Nonhydric
MI614	135B	Nessen sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	680977	Nonhydric
MI614	120D	Boyer-Shavenaugh complex, 12 to 18 percent slopes	893251	Nonhydric
MI614	38E	Remus-Spinks complex, 18 to 35 percent slopes	894062	Nonhydric
MI614	38D	Remus-Spinks complex, 12 to 18 percent slopes	894063	Nonhydric
MI614	36C	Fern-Remus complex, 6 to 12 percent slopes	894064	Nonhydric
MI614	73	Houghton-Adrian mucks, 0 to 1 percent slopes	202010	Hydric
MI614	13B	Marlette fine sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	193289	Predominantly Nonydric
MI614	13C	Marlette fine sandy loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	193428	Nonhydric
MI614	15	Parkhill loam, non dense till subsoil, 0 to 2 percent slopes	631167	Predominantly Hydric
MI614	54B	Kaleva sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	193262	Nonhydric
MI614	54C	Kaleva sand, 6 to 12 percent slopes	193263	Nonhydric
MI614	54D	Kaleva sand, 12 to 18 percent slopes	193264	Nonhydric
MI614	54E	Kaleva sand, 18 to 35 percent slopes	193352	Nonhydric
MI614	67C	Plainfield sand, 6 to 12 percent slopes, spodic minor component	193281	Nonhydric
MI614	10B	Perrinton loam, Lake Michigan Lobe, 2 to 6 percent slopes	631161	Predominantly Nonydric
MI614	10C	Perrinton loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	631160	Nonhydric

Report Metadata: [Back to top](#)

- **areasybol:** A symbol that uniquely identifies a single occurrence of a particular type of area (e.g. Dane Co., Wisconsin is WI025).
- **musym:** The symbol used to uniquely identify the soil mapunit in the soil survey.
- **Mapunit_Name:** Correlated name of the mapunit (recommended name or field name for surveys in progress).
- **mukey:** A non-connotative string of characters used to uniquely identify a record in the Mapunit table.
- **hydric_rating:** This Hydric Soil Category rating indicates the components of map units that meet the criteria for hydric soils.

Hydric Soil Categories :

This Hydric Soil Category rating indicates the components of map units that meet the criteria for hydric soils. Map units are composed of one or more major soil components or soil types that generally make up 20 percent or more of the map unit and are listed in the map unit name, and they may also have one or more minor contrasting soil components that generally make up less than 20 percent of the map unit. Each major and minor map unit component that meets the hydric criteria is rated hydric. The map unit class ratings based on the hydric components present are: Hydric, Predominantly Hydric, Partially Hydric, Predominantly Nonhydric, and Nonhydric. The report also shows the total representative percentage of each map unit that the hydric components comprise.

- **"Hydric"** means that all major and minor components listed for a given map unit are rated as being hydric.
- **"Predominantly Hydric"** means that all major components listed for a given map unit are rated as hydric, and at least one contrasting minor component is not rated hydric.
- **"Partially Hydric"** means that at least one major component listed for a given map unit is rated as hydric, and at least one other major component is not rated hydric.
- **"Predominantly Nonhydric"** means that no major component listed for a given map unit is rated as hydric, and at least one contrasting minor component is rated hydric.
- **"Nonhydric"** means no major or minor components for the map unit are rated hydric. The assumption is that the map unit is nonhydric even if none of the components within the map unit have been rated.

Hydric soils are defined by the National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils (NTCHS) as soils that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part (Federal Register, 1994). Under natural conditions, these soils are either saturated or inundated long enough during the growing season to support the growth and reproduction of hydrophytic vegetation.

If soils are wet enough for a long enough period of time to be considered hydric, they typically exhibit certain properties that can be easily observed in the field. These visible properties are indicators of hydric soils. The indicators used to make onsite determinations of hydric soils are specified in "Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States" (Vasilas, Hurt, and Noble, 2010).

The NTCHS has developed criteria to identify those soil properties unique to hydric soils (Federal Register, 2012). These criteria are used to identify map unit components that normally are associated with wetlands. The criteria use selected soil properties that are described in "Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States" (Vasilas, Hurt, and Noble, 2010), "Soil Taxonomy" (Soil Survey Staff, 1999), "Keys to Soil Taxonomy" (Soil Survey Staff, 2010), and the "Soil Survey Manual" (Soil Survey Division Staff, 1993).

The criteria for hydric soils are represented by codes, for example, 2 or 3. Definitions for the codes are as follows:

1. All Histels except for Folistels, and Histosols except for Folists.

2. Soils in Aquic suborders, great groups, or subgroups, Albolls suborder, Historthels great group, Histoturbels great group, Pachic subgroups, or Cumulic subgroups that:

1. Based on the range of characteristics for the soil series, will at least in part meet one or more Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States, or
 2. Show evidence that the soil meets the definition of a hydric soil;
3. Soils that are frequently ponded for long or very long duration during the growing season.
1. Based on the range of characteristics for the soil series, will at least in part meet one or more Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States, or
 2. Show evidence that the soil meets the definition of a hydric soil;
4. Map unit components that are frequently flooded for long duration or very long duration during the growing season that:
1. Based on the range of characteristics for the soil series, will at least in part meet one or more Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States, or
 2. Show evidence that the soil meets the definition of a hydric soil;

Hydric Condition: Food Security Act information regarding the ability to grow a commodity crop without removing woody vegetation or manipulating hydrology.

References:

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- Federal Register. February, 28, 2012. Hydric soils of the United States.
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- Soil Survey Staff. 1999. Soil taxonomy: A basic system of soil classification for making and interpreting soil surveys. 2nd edition. Natural Resources Conservation Service. U.S. Department of Agriculture Handbook 436.
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- Vasilas, L.M., G.W. Hurt, and C.V. Noble, editors. Version 7.0, 2010. Field indicators of hydric soils in the United States.