



-Est. 1877-

SHERMAN TOWNSHIP

IOSCO COUNTY, MICHIGAN

MASTER PLAN

2026-2031



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IOSCO COUNTY, MICHIGAN

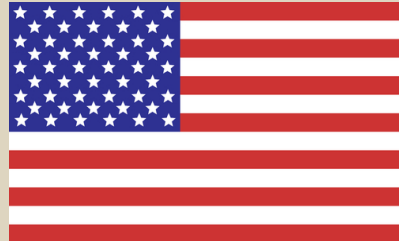
SHERMAN TOWNSHIP BOARD

Samantha Straure - Township Supervisor
Nancy Orvis - Township Clerk
Liam Straure - Township Treasurer
Tony Bamburgh - Trustee
Jeff Petri - Trustee

SHERMAN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

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Socio-Economic Data Sources:
2023 American Community Survey
US Census
Iosco County Equalization

Map Sources:
Agricultural Soils and Slopes & Hydric Soils: Natural Resource Conservation Service, USDA
Oil & Gas Wells: Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, & Energy
Land Cover: USGS National Land Cover Database
Wetlands: National Wetland Inventory, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Roads: State of Michigan

INTRODUCTION & HISTORY



CHAPTER 1

Introduction & History

Sherman Township is a general law township within the confines of Iosco County, Michigan. The history of Sherman Township was, and is, augmented by and parallels that history of the County of Iosco.

"Sherman Township was organized April 1, 1878. At a meeting of the Board of Supervisors, held October 15, 1877, application was made and granted that all the territory included in Town 21 North, of Range 6 East, detached from the township of Alabaster, and erected into a new township to be called by name of Township of Sherman. The first annual meeting was held at the schoolhouse in School District number two, April 1, 1878. Mathias Schneider, Reuben Barstow and Edward O'Brien were inspectors of the election. First officers: Supervisor, Mathias Schneider; Clerk, Edward O'Brien; Treasurer, James Norris; Justices of the Peace, John McNally, Charles Wood, Otto Harrold, Reuben Barstow; Commissioner of Highways, Willam Drager; School Inspector, Joseph Jordan; Drain Commissioner, Andrew Applin; Constables, S. Peherson, Owen Trumbul; Overseers of Highways, John McNally, John Bushau; School Superintendent, John McNally."

Sherman Township was described at the time of its organization, in 1878, as follows: "This new township, which will become fully organized at the coming election, embraces Town 21 north of Range 6 east, and is located directly west of Alabaster. The soil is of a rich, deep loam with clay subsoil, and is of the very best quality for grass, grain, and vegetables. Quite a settlement of thrifty farmers are already located, some of whom have been there several years: others are coming, and the prospects are favorable for a large increase in the population of the township during the next few years. The farmers market a large of their hay, grain and vegetable, at the lumber camps within and west of the township and realize good prices for all they must sell.

"Among those who have made the largest improvements are Mattias Schneider, Edward O'Brien, Reuben Barstow and several others, who have twenty to thirty acres under cultivation. Mr. Schnider has about fifty acres cleared and raised forty-five to fifty tons of excellent hay last year, also 400 bushels of potatoes, 1,000 bushels of turnips, 1,000 head of cabbage, and a large quantity of other products. He has seventeen head of stock and will milk seven cows the coming season. Mr. O'Brien has about eighty acres cleared, and raises large quantities of hay, grain, potatoes, etc., which he sells to lumbermen. Some of the crops were seriously injured by the heavy rains of last season, but a system of drainage is being contemplated which will add greatly to the value and productivity of the lowlands in that vicinity.

"A good schoolhouse has been built, and good teachers are being employed. Up to the present the roads leading to this settlement have not been such as to encourage immigration, but it is expected special efforts will be made soon to secure an excellent road from Alabaster through to the settlement of the AuGres River.

"The new township will have about a score of families, and will start out under such encouraging circumstance, that few years will, without doubt, place it among the foremost of our agricultural districts." ~*History of the Lake Huron Shore*. Copyright 1883, (1976 reprint)

Lumbering & Mills

Timber played a large part of the development and settling of Sherman Township. The large stands of white pine attracted lumber companies; several mills grew to prominence in Sherman Township as a result. James McIvor was the first to have a mill, near the current intersection of Sand Lake Road and Whittemore Road.

“James McIvor is a native of Saint Lawrence County, New York. His natural inclinations from boyhood led him to learn the machinist’s trade. In 1850 he went to Wisconsin and had charge of a large sawmill for about thirteen years. He returned to the State of New York, and in 1866 went to East Tawas to take charge of the mill of Smith, Van Valkenburg & Co., at the solicitation of Mr. Smith. He operated that mill very successfully for two years and then went to Oscoda, where he had charge of the Loud mill one season. He then operated in lumber for a time, and in 1878 built a saw mill and shingle mill on the line of the railroad in Sherman Township, where he had a large tract of pine lands. He is now operating his mill and has a farm in the vicinity. He is one of the solid men of Iosco County and is a successful and enterprising businessman. The sawmill cuts about 5,000,000 feet of lumber, and the shingle mill about 5,000,000 shingles a year.” ~*History of the Lake Huron Shore*. Copyright 1883, (1976 reprint)

“The Laidlaw shingle mill is located in Sherman Township and was built in 1881. The mill is now owned by Mr. E. Laidlaw, and is operated by N. and W. Ramage. The annual product of the mill is about 5,000,000 shingles.” ~*History of the Lake Huron Shore*. Copyright 1883, (1976 reprint)





Railroad's Role in the Township

The lumber enterprises could not have flourished without the railroad that was built through Sherman Township and Iosco County. The first railroad was the Detroit, Bay City and Alpena Railroad. The right of way is still in use today, by the Lake State Railway Company, from the corner of National City Road and Whittemore Road (formerly known as Emery Junction), running east into the Tawas and then to Alpena. Remnants of the old line that ran from Emery Junction can be seen paralleling a section of Whittemore Road, to Elm Creek.

Detroit, Bay City and Alpena Railroad "was projected by Mr. C.D. Hale, of Tawas City, as a logging road. In 1878 the Lake Huron and Southwestern Railway Company was organized with Mr. Hale as manager. Under his direction, the road was built in the summer of 1878, from the Hale mill, at Tawas City, to the Township 21 north, of Range 4 east, in Ogemaw County, twenty-one miles, at a cost of \$90,000.00. Mr. Hale continued as manager of the company until February 1879, when the pressure of private business made it necessary for him to resign.

"In the spring of 1879, the company made an assignment, and in October of that year, the road was purchased by Mr. C.H. Prescott, of Bay City, who had a short time previous purchased an extensive mill property at Tawas City. Mr. Prescott operated the road alone for several months, and then organized it under the name of The Tawas and Bay County Railroad." ~*History of the Lake Huron Shore*. Copyright 1883, (1976 reprint)

The Tawas and Bay County Railroad continued to grow with acquisitions of more trackage and new ownerships. "in 1880 large scale changes began when a nationally known timber and railroad entrepreneur, Gen. Russell A. Alger, took over and changed the name to the East Tawas and Bay City Railway Company. The road had some 28 miles of track, two locomotives, and 100 log cars." ~*The History of Iosco County, Michigan. Published by The Iosco County Historical Society, East Tawas, Michigan, 1981*)

The railroad opened a branch from Emory Junction, to Hale, and then on to Rose City, in 1886. The line had one car for passengers, while the remaining rolling stock was logging cars.

The railroad had major changes with reorganizations. In December of 1894, the railroad merged with the Alpena and Northern Railroad and changed its name to the Detroit and Mackinaw Railway. The railroad was at that time, connected from Bay City to Alpena, with branches running from Emory Junction to Rose City and Prescott.

Ownership of the railroad changed over the years. In 1901, it was acquired by H.K. McHarrge, and in 1941, it was purchased by the Pinkerton family of Tawas. The Detroit and Mackinac Railroad was purchased in 1992 by the Lake State Railway Company. It continues to operate through Sherman Township and Iosco County. The branch lines to Prescott and Rose City, having been abandoned decades prior, are mere memories.

Gypsum

The area around National City, located in Sherman Township, is rich in gypsum deposits. The first significant gypsum mining activities began in the early 20th century. In 1925, the National Gypsum Company established a quarry near National City, tapping into these valuable deposits. National Gypsum quickly became the dominant player in the region's gypsum mining industry. The company's quarry was an open-pit mine that extracted large quantities of gypsum from the rich deposits beneath the land. Gypsum was processed into various products, including drywall (gypsum board) and plaster, which were essential materials for the booming construction industry.

The Gold Bond Plant

As part of National Gypsum's operations, the Gold Bond Plant in National City became a key facility for producing high-quality gypsum products. The Gold Bond name, which has been synonymous with gypsum products for over a century, was established as a trademark of the National Gypsum Company. The plant processed raw gypsum extracted from the nearby quarry, producing drywall, plaster, and joint compounds, among other products.

Gold Bond products gained a reputation for quality and were widely used in both residential and commercial construction. This plant played a vital role in National City's economy, providing jobs for local residents and contributing to the town's growth during much of the 20th century.

Rail and Shipping Infrastructure

The National City Gypsum Plant was connected to a specialized rail system that transported gypsum to a loading facility on Tawas Bay. From there, the gypsum was shipped by boat across Lake Huron, supplying gypsum to various markets. This transportation network was crucial for the efficient movement of large quantities of gypsum from the quarry to processing facilities and beyond.

Decline and Legacy

Over time, the demand for gypsum and the need for local mining operations fluctuated. As newer mining technologies emerged and market demands shifted, the National City gypsum plant and the Gold Bond plant experienced financial troubles, however the legacy of these operations remains a significant part of National City's history.

The Gold Bond Company's plant continues to operate in the area, maintaining gypsum production. The region's historical connection to gypsum mining remains integral to the community's identity, as its natural resources have shaped both the local economy and the broader building materials industry. National Gypsum's legacy in National City remains a significant part of the town's heritage, with the gypsum mining industry continuing to influence the community's past and present.





Post Offices

The first US Post Office opened in Sherman Township September 11, 1882, at the railroad station on the Detroit, Bay City and Alpena Railroad. The station was named Arn, after the local grocer, John Arn. The Post Office was later named Mclvor, for its first Postmaster, James Mclvor. The Mclvor Post Office operated until April 15, 1955.

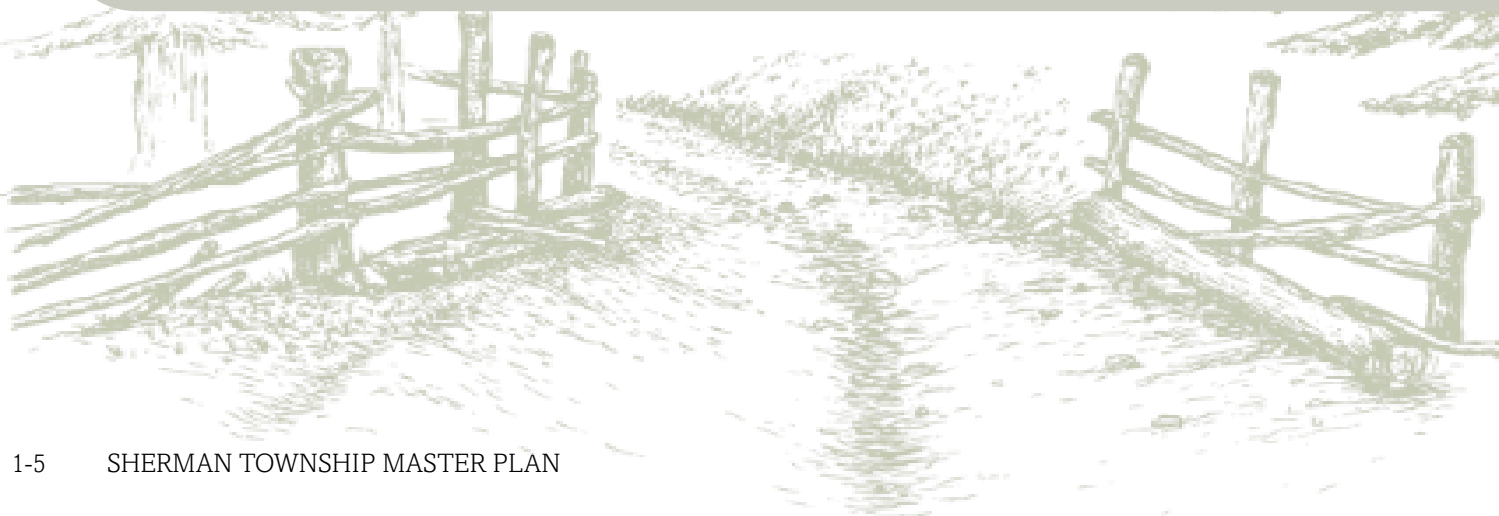
Another US Post Office was opened in 1904. "The city of National City began as a flag station on the Detroit, Bay City and Alpena Railroad in 1884. It was known as Emery Junction and was given a Post Office by that name on March 21, 1904, with Quincy Martin as the first Postmaster. When the National Gypsum Company opened a quarry here in 1925, the name of the village was changed to National City in 1926.

"Under George L. Jordan who received his appointment as Postmaster on August 31, 1968, this third-class office services approximately 446 residents of the area through postal boxes and a station under the main Office.

"Postmasters, and their appointment dates, have been: Quincy Martin (1904), Peter Shuster (1904), Walter A. Pringle (1912), Henry Thompson (1917), Sadie Crawford (1919), Helen Save (1922), Calvin Billings (1923), John C. Munroe (1925), Calvin Billings (1929), Lawrence A. Jordan (1943) and George L. Jordan (1968).

"Lawrence A. Jordan, postmaster from 1943 to 1968, gave a quarter century of service to the people of National City in the Postal Service" ~*The History of Iosco County, Michigan. Published by the Iosco County Historical Society, East Tawas, Michigan, 1981.*

The National City Post Office continues in operation today, serving a large part of Sherman Township. Mail service is also provided to sections of Sherman Township by Tawas City, Au Gres and Whittemore Post Offices.



The Purpose & Process of a Master Plan

The purpose of the Sherman Township Master Plan is to provide guidelines for future physical development of the community, while protecting water resources, other natural resources, and rural township character. This plan presents extensive background information for the Township and the surrounding area, including social and economic data, description and mapping of natural resources, and inventory of existing community facilities. The background information is analyzed to identify characteristics, changes, and trends occurring in Sherman Township. Community concerns are identified based on the Township Board and Planning Commission comments and input provided at public meetings, the community visioning session, and public survey. Community goals and policies are presented to guide future development based on these background studies, key land use trends, and community issues. These goals, along with a map of existing land uses, provide the basis for the Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use map recommends locations for various types of future development within the Township.

According to Michigan law, a zoning ordinance must align with an adopted Master Plan to be valid and enforceable. The authority to develop the master plan is provided through the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended. Public Act 33 of 2008 requires the Planning Commission to hold a public hearing before the final adoption of a master plan, as well as when the Planning Commission alters, amends, or expands the scope of its master plan after its original adoption.

A Master Plan can generally be described by the following key characteristics:

- **Future-Oriented:** The Plan concerns itself with long-range planning in guiding growth and land use needs. The plan is not only a picture of the community today, but a guide to how the community should evolve over the next five to ten years in response to growth.
- **General:** The plan establishes broad principles and policies to address future growth and land use needs.
- **Comprehensive:** The plan addresses all types of land uses and the practical geographic boundaries of each.
- **A Plan:** The land use plan is a tangible document, which consists of both text and maps, with maps typically illustrating the policies set forth within the text.





The Master Plan aims to preserve and develop a community that benefits both its residents and neighboring areas. To accomplish this, the Plan provides an analysis of the community's existing resources and serves as a guide for making informed land use decisions.

Master Plans serve to:

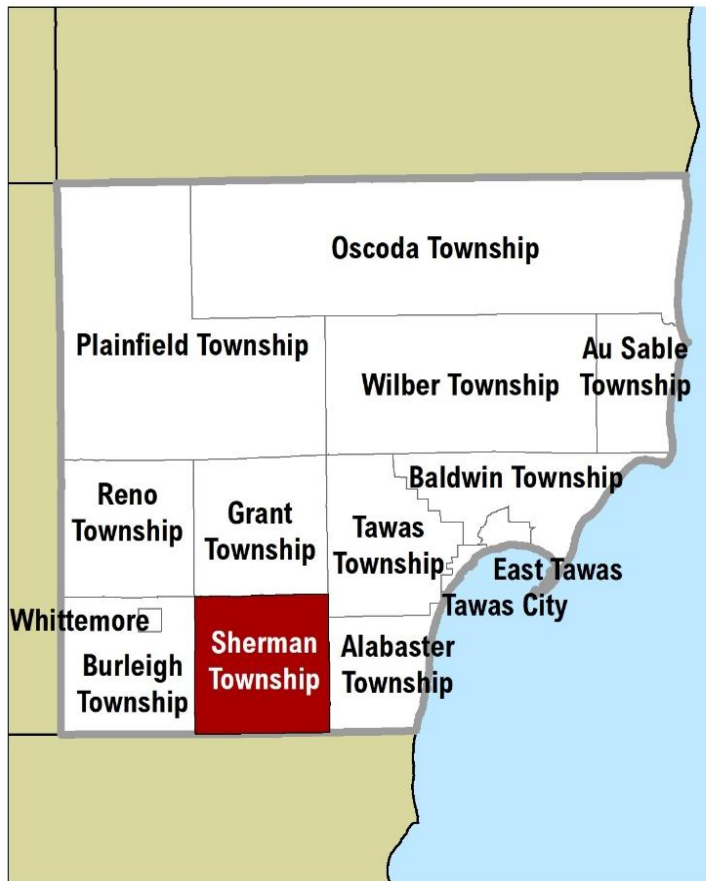
- Seek citizen input on needs and services.
- Provide an overall perspective of the land, how it is being used, and how it should be used in the future.
- Create a general statement of the goals and objectives of the community.
- Preserve the quality of life in the community.
- Promote public health, safety, and welfare for the region's citizens.
- Guide the use of limited resources and preservation in the most effective manner possible through clear and logical zoning decisions.

Master Plans do not carry the force of law; rather, they serve as guides meant to be regularly referenced and updated. The Future Land Use plan is a central element of the Master Plan, informing decisions related to zoning, capital improvements, utility expansions, land divisions, and interactions with neighboring communities. It is important to note that, as a guide rather than an engineering tool, the maps in this document should not be used to measure property lines, serve as a definitive source for tax purposes, or determine precise boundaries for floodplains or wetlands.



Location

Sherman Township is a general law township located on the southern border of Iosco County, Michigan. It is bordered to the east by Alabaster Township, to the west by Burleigh Township, to the north by Grant Township, and to the south by Arenac County. National City is an unincorporated community in the township.



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SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA



CHAPTER 2

Socio-Economic Data

Understanding the future needs of a community requires a thorough analysis of its population, housing, income, education, and employment characteristics. This chapter presents socio-economic data for the Sherman Township, sourced from the 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates published by the U.S. Census Bureau. Employment and unemployment data are provided by the Michigan Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, while State Equalized Tax values are obtained from the Michigan Department of Treasury.

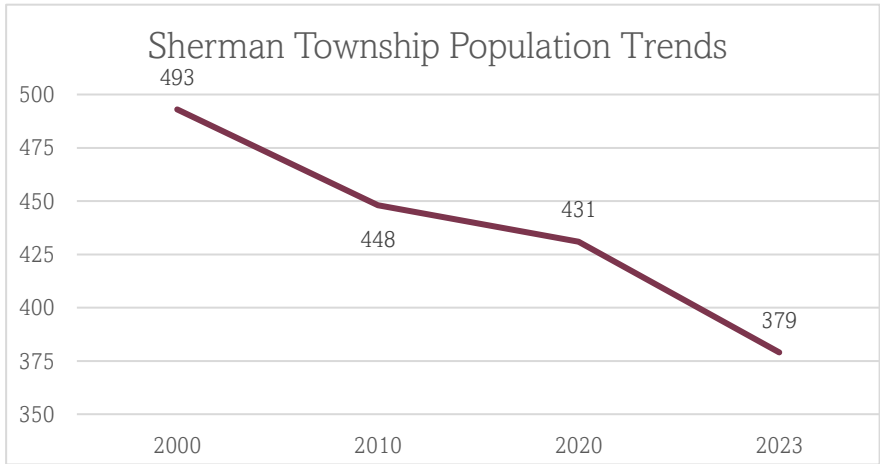


Population

The population trend for Sherman Township shows a decline in the number of residents over the past few decades. In 2000, the population was 493, but by 2010, it had decreased by 45 people, resulting in a population of 448, a drop of 9.1%. This downward trend continued in the following decade, with the population falling by 17 people to 431 in 2020, reflecting a 3.8% decrease. Most notably, from 2020 to 2023, the population saw a significant decline of 52 people, or 13.7%, reaching a population of 379. Overall, the data reveals a steady decrease in Sherman Township's population over the past 20+ years, with the most substantial drop occurring in the most recent three-year period.

Table 2-1 Population Trend Sherman Township

Year	Population	Numeric Change	Percent Change
2000	493	---	---
2010	448	-45	-9.1%
2020	431	-17	-3.8%
2023	379	-52	-13.7%



The population trends across various municipalities in Iosco County from 2013 to 2023 show a mix of increases and declines, with several areas experiencing significant reductions in population. Sherman Township, for instance, saw a 15.2% decrease in population over the 10-year period, dropping from 447 in 2013 to 379 in 2023, a loss of 68 people. Grant

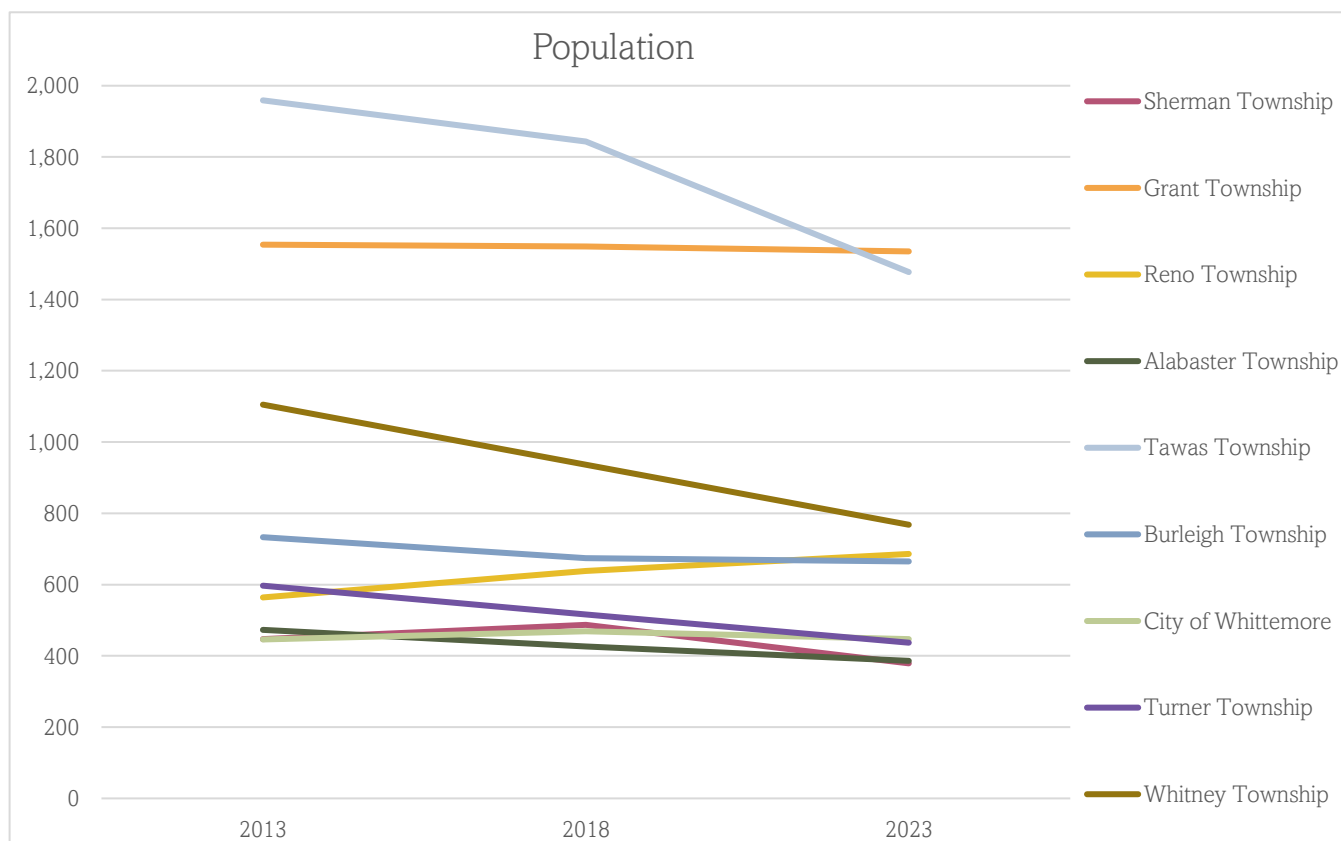
Township experienced a smaller decrease of just 19 people, or a 1.2% drop, going from 1,554 in 2013 to 1,535 in 2023. In contrast, Reno Township saw substantial growth, with its population rising by 122 people, or 21.6%, from 564 in 2013 to 686 in 2023.

Other municipalities also saw significant population declines. Alabaster Township's population decreased by 87 people, or 18.4%, from 473 in 2013 to 386 in 2023. Tawas Township faced a particularly sharp decline of 482 people, or 24.6%, dropping from 1,959 in 2013 to 1,477 in 2023.

Burleigh Township also experienced a decrease of 68 people, or 9.3%, from 733 in 2013 to 665 in 2023. Turner Township's population decreased by 160 people, or 26.8%, going from 597 in 2013 to 437 in 2023, and Whitney Township saw the largest decline in the county, losing 337 people, or 30.5%, from 1,105 in 2013 to 768 in 2023. On the other hand, the City of Whittemore saw a slight increase in population, rising by 1 person, or 0.2%, from 446 in 2013 to 447 in 2023.

Table 2-2 Population					
Municipality	2013	2018	2023	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Sherman Township	447	487	379	-68	-15.2%
Grant Township	1,554	1,549	1,535	-19	-1.2%
Reno Township	564	638	686	122	21.6%
Alabaster Township	473	426	386	-87	-18.4%
Tawas Township	1,959	1,843	1,477	-482	-24.6%
Burleigh Township	733	674	665	-68	-9.3%
City of Whittemore	446	469	447	1	0.2%
Turner Township	597	516	437	-160	-26.8%
Whitney Township	1,105	936	768	-337	-30.5%
Iosco County	25,662	25,247	25,333	-329	-1.3%
State of Michigan	9,886,095	9,957,488	10,051,595	165,500	1.7%

Overall, the county experienced a minor population decrease, from 25,662 in 2013 to 25,333 in 2023, a drop of 329 people, or 1.3%. The state of Michigan, in contrast, saw a growth of 165,500 people, or 1.7%, from 9,886,095 in 2013 to 10,051,595 in 2023. These trends suggest that while some municipalities in Iosco County, such as Reno Township, have seen growth, many others, particularly those in the southern part of the county, have experienced notable population losses. This could have implications for local economies, services, and infrastructure needs in the affected areas.



Age Distribution

The age distribution data for Sherman Township, Iosco County, and the State of Michigan highlights the varying demographic profiles across these areas. In Sherman Township, a notable proportion of the population is aged 65 and older, with 15.3% of residents in the 75 and up age group and another 12.4% in the 65 to 74 category. This reflects a relatively older population compared to both Iosco County and the state, where 12.3% and 7.2% of residents fall into these age groups, respectively.

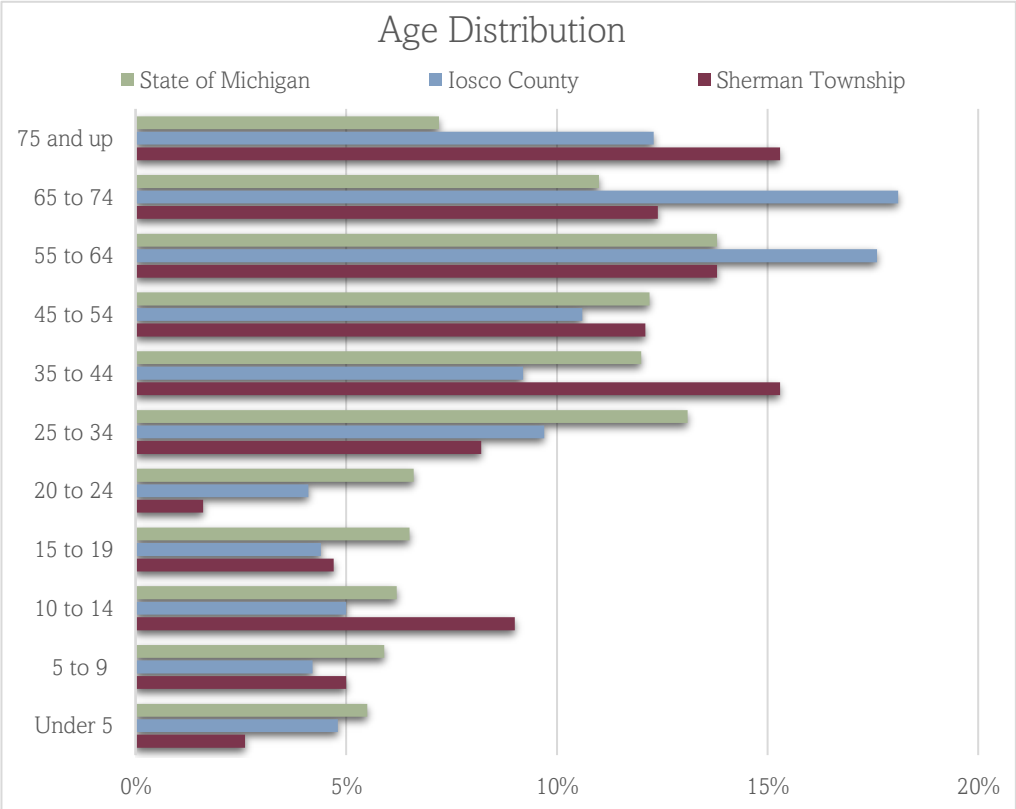
In contrast, Sherman Township has a lower percentage of younger residents compared to Iosco County and Michigan. For example, only 2.6% of Sherman Township's population is under 5, while Iosco County and Michigan both have higher proportions at 4.8% and 5.5%, respectively. Additionally, the percentage of individuals aged 20 to 24 in Sherman Township is 1.6%, much lower than the 4.1% in Iosco County and 6.6% in the state.

Other age groups, such as those between 25 to 34 and 35 to 44, are relatively well-represented in Sherman Township compared to the state. Specifically, 8.2% of Sherman Township's population is in the 25 to 34 age range, close to Iosco County's 9.7%, but lower than the state's 13.1%. Similarly, 15.3% of Sherman Township's population falls in the 35 to 44 age range, higher than both Iosco County (9.2%) and Michigan (12.0%).

Sherman Township has a relatively older population, with a larger percentage of residents in the senior age groups, while the younger age brackets make up a smaller share of the population compared to Iosco County and the State of Michigan. This age distribution could have implications for local services, such as healthcare, housing, and employment opportunities.

Table 2-3 Age Distribution

	Sherman Township	Iosco County	State of Michigan
Under 5	2.6%	4.8%	5.5%
5 to 9	5.0%	4.2%	5.9%
10 to 14	9.0%	5.0%	6.2%
15 to 19	4.7%	4.4%	6.5%
20 to 24	1.6%	4.1%	6.6%
25 to 34	8.2%	9.7%	13.1%
35 to 44	15.3%	9.2%	12.0%
45 to 54	12.1%	10.6%	12.2%
55 to 64	13.8%	17.6%	13.8%
65 to 74	12.4%	18.1%	11.0%
75 and up	15.3%	12.3%	7.2%



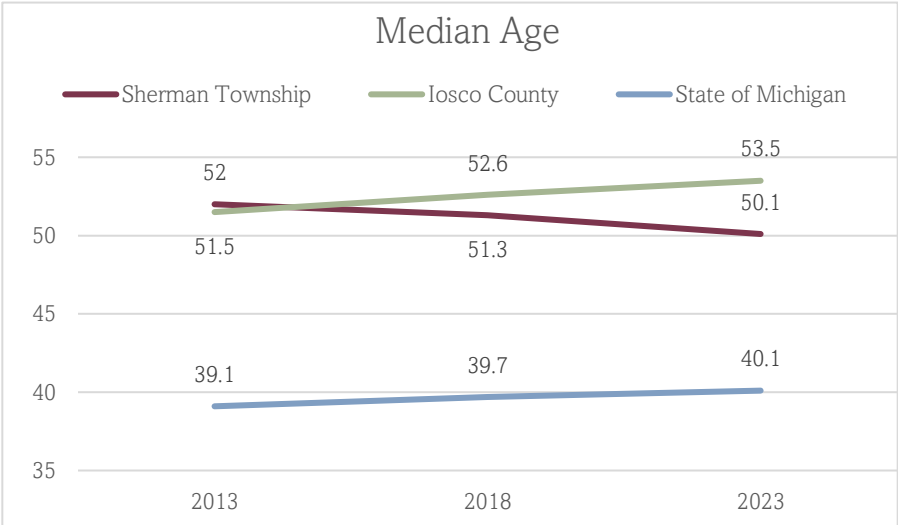
Median Age

The median age data for Sherman Township, Iosco County, and the State of Michigan from 2013 to 2023 reveals an aging trend, particularly in Sherman Township and Iosco County. In Sherman Township, the median age decreased slightly from 52.0 years in 2013 to 50.1 years in 2023. This indicates a small shift towards a slightly younger population, although the median age remains notably high. Similarly, Iosco County experienced an increase in median age over the same period, rising from 51.5 years in 2013 to 53.5 years in 2023, reflecting a trend of an aging population.

In contrast, the median age in the State of Michigan is consistently lower than in Sherman Township and Iosco County. In 2013, the state's median age was 39.1 years, and by 2023, it had risen to 40.1 years. While the state's median age has been increasing over the past decade, the growth has been more gradual compared to the significant increases seen in Sherman Township and Iosco County.

Overall, the data highlights that both Sherman Township and Iosco County have older populations compared to the state, with median ages significantly higher. The trends suggest that the population in these areas is aging at a faster rate than in Michigan as a whole, which may have implications for local services and infrastructure, particularly in healthcare and senior living.

Table 2-4 Median Age								
Sherman Township			Iosco County			State of Michigan		
2013	2018	2023	2013	2018	2023	2013	2018	2023
52.0	51.3	50.1	51.5	52.6	53.5	39.1	39.7	40.1



School Enrollment

Sherman Township residents rely on Tawas Community Schools for their educational needs, with the district serving a significant portion of the township's students. For the 2024-25 school year, the district reported a total enrollment of 1,124 students, and nearly half of these students, 48.6%, or approximately 548, are classified as Economically Disadvantaged. This indicates that a substantial portion of the student population faces financial challenges that can directly impact their academic experience and overall well-being.

The highest concentration of economically disadvantaged students is at the elementary level, where the financial burdens on families are most pronounced. In Sherman Township, many families struggle with high childcare costs, which can strain household budgets and reduce parents' ability to work full-time or take on additional employment. This financial strain limits the resources available to these families, impacting students' access to educational materials, extracurricular activities, and support services. These challenges can affect children's academic performance, emotional well-being, and their overall opportunities for success. Addressing these issues requires collaboration among the community, the

school district, and local organizations to provide the necessary support, ensuring that all students in Sherman Township, regardless of their economic background, have the opportunity to thrive academically.

Educational Attainment

In Sherman Township, the educational attainment of residents aged 25 and over reflects a significant portion of the population having completed high school, but fewer obtaining higher levels of education. Of the 292 residents in this age group, 88.7% have earned at least a high school diploma or its equivalent, which is close to the educational attainment level in Iosco County (89.0%) and slightly lower than the State of Michigan (91.9%). However, Sherman Township has a lower percentage of residents with bachelor's degrees or higher—only 15.8% compared to 17.5% in Iosco County and 31.8% in Michigan.

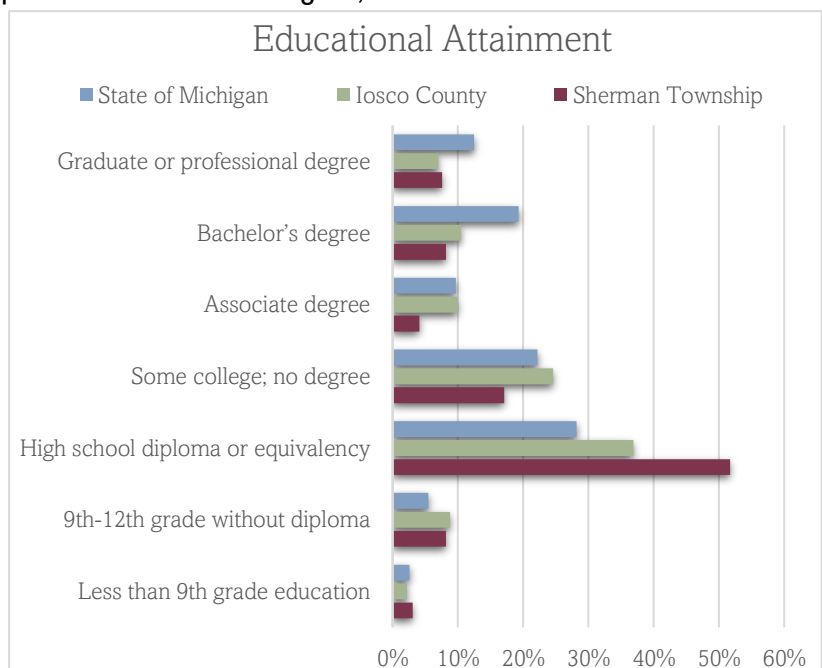
A notable 51.7% of residents in Sherman Township have earned a high school diploma or its equivalent, a much higher proportion than the 36.9% in Iosco County and 28.2% in the state. However, there is also a higher percentage of individuals in Sherman Township without a high school diploma. About 8.2% of residents have attended some high school but did not graduate, which is notably higher than the 5.5% in Michigan but in line with the 8.8% in Iosco County.

When it comes to higher education, Sherman Township has a smaller percentage of residents with an associate degree (4.1%) compared to 10.0% in Iosco County and 9.7% in Michigan. Additionally, only 8.2% of residents in Sherman Township hold a bachelor's degree, far lower than the state's 19.3%. Graduate or professional degrees are held by 7.6% of Sherman Township residents, which is comparable to Iosco County (7.0%) but much lower than the state's 12.5%.

Sherman Township has a relatively high percentage of residents with a high school education but lower rates of post-secondary education when compared to both Iosco County and the State of Michigan. This suggests that while a significant portion of the township's adult population has achieved basic education, fewer individuals have pursued higher education, which could impact the local workforce and economic opportunities.

Table 2-5 Educational Attainment

	Sherman Township	Iosco County	State of Michigan
Population 25 and over	292	19,626	6,967,452
Less than 9 th grade education	3.1%	2.2%	2.6%
9 th -12 th grade without diploma	8.2%	8.8%	5.5%
High school diploma or equivalency	51.7%	36.9%	28.2%
Some college; no degree	17.1%	24.6%	22.2%
Associate degree	4.1%	10.0%	9.7%
Bachelor's degree	8.2%	10.5%	19.3%
Graduate or professional degree	7.6%	7.0%	12.5%
High school graduate or higher	88.7%	89.0%	91.9%
Bachelor's degree or higher	15.8%	17.5%	31.8%



Financials

In Sherman Township, income levels reflect a mix of financial circumstances, with median household and family incomes higher than those of Iosco County but lower than the State of Michigan. The median household income in Sherman Township is \$58,750, which is notably higher than the median household income of \$47,777 in Iosco County but still lower than the state's median

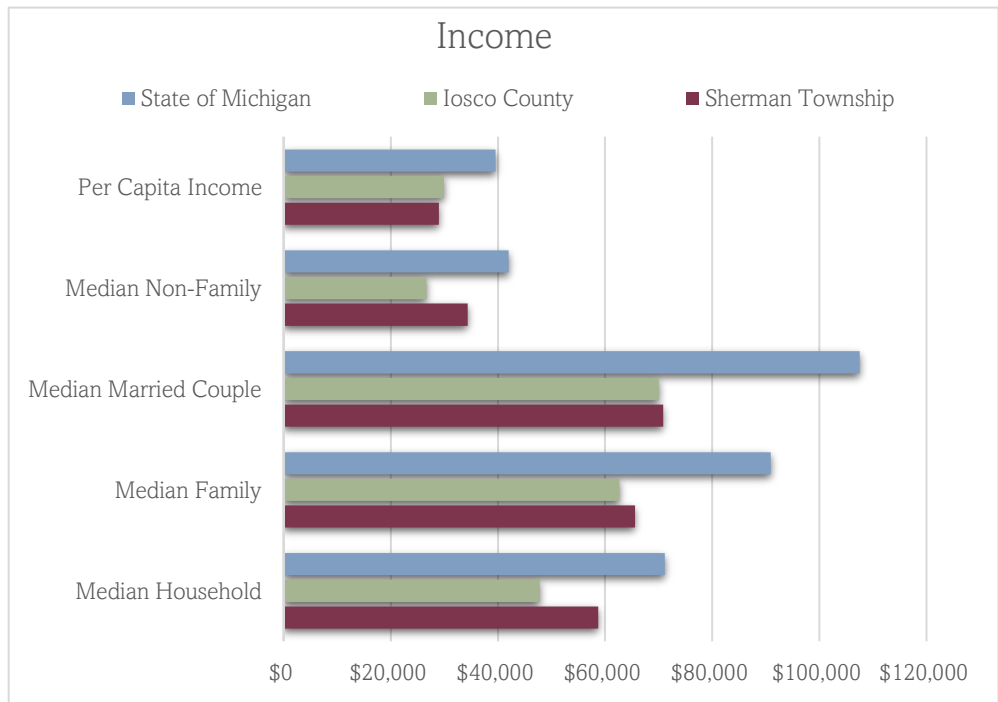
of \$71,149. Similarly, the median family income in Sherman Township is \$65,625, higher than the county's \$62,641 but again, lower than the state's \$90,947.

For married couples in Sherman Township, the median income is \$70,833, which is slightly higher than Iosco County's \$70,042 but considerably lower than Michigan's \$107,521. This suggests that while married couples in Sherman Township generally have a stable income, it remains less than the state average. Non-family households in Sherman Township, however, have a median income of \$34,375, significantly higher than the \$26,674 median for Iosco County but lower than Michigan's \$42,017.

In terms of per capita income, Sherman Township's \$28,992 is relatively close to the per capita income in Iosco County (\$29,934), but it lags behind the state's per capita income of \$39,538. This indicates that while Sherman Township residents may earn more on average than those in the surrounding county, they still earn less compared to the broader state average.

While Sherman Township has a higher median household and family income compared to Iosco County, it still lags behind the State of Michigan in terms of overall earnings, particularly for married couples and individuals. These income disparities may have implications for the economic well-being of the community and could influence access to services, employment opportunities, and overall quality of life.

	Sherman Township	Iosco County	State of Michigan
Median Household	\$58,750	\$47,777	\$71,149
Median Family	\$65,625	\$62,641	\$90,947
Median Married Couple	\$70,833	\$70,042	\$107,521
Median Non-Family	\$34,375	\$26,674	\$42,017
Per Capita Income	\$28,992	\$29,934	\$39,538



Income Sources

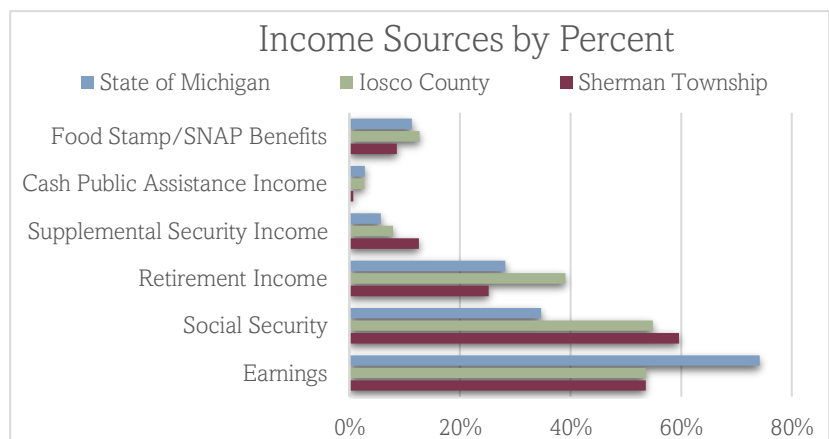
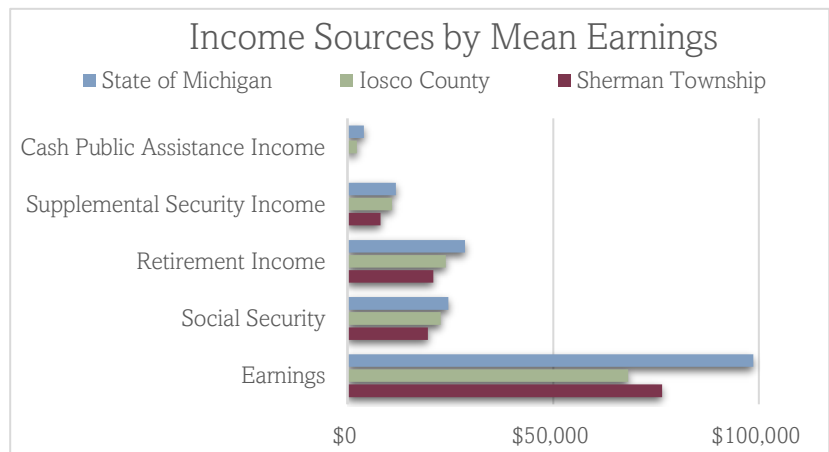
In Sherman Township, the income sources reflect a range of financial support, with a notable reliance on earnings and Social Security. Of the township's population, 53.6% (81 individuals) have earnings, with a mean income of \$76,454. This is in line with Iosco County, which also has 53.6% of its residents with earnings,

although the mean income for the county is lower at \$68,271. Both Sherman Township and Iosco County fall behind the State of Michigan, where 74.2% of residents have earnings, and the mean income is significantly higher at \$98,676.

Source	Sherman Township		Iosco County		State of Michigan	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
With earnings	81	53.6%	6,138	53.6%	2,997,809	74.2%
<i>Mean earnings</i>	<i>\$76,454</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>\$68,271</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>\$98,676</i>	<i>---</i>
With Social Security	90	59.6%	6,284	54.9%	1,402,046	34.7%
<i>Mean Social Security Income</i>	<i>\$19,569</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>\$22,645</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>\$24,503</i>	<i>---</i>
With retirement income	38	25.2%	4,480	39.1%	1,140,598	28.2%
<i>Mean retirement income</i>	<i>\$20,845</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>\$23,864</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>\$28,541</i>	<i>---</i>
With Supplemental Security Income	19	12.6%	899	7.9%	232,206	5.7%
<i>Mean Supplemental Security Income</i>	<i>\$8,058</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>\$10,840</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>\$11,736</i>	<i>---</i>
With cash public assistance income	1	0.7%	307	2.7%	114,859	2.8%
<i>Mean cash public assistance income</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>\$2,303</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>\$3,993</i>	<i>---</i>
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the past 12 months	13	8.6%	1,454	12.7%	455,939	11.3%

Social Security is another important source of income in Sherman Township, with 59.6% of residents receiving Social Security benefits. The mean Social Security income in the township is \$19,569, which is lower than both Iosco County (\$22,645) and the state (\$24,503). Similarly, 25.2% of residents in Sherman Township receive retirement income, with a mean of \$20,845, which is lower than the county's \$23,864 and the state's \$28,541.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) also plays a role in the financial support of Sherman Township residents, with 12.6% receiving SSI benefits and a mean income of \$8,058. This percentage is higher than the state average of 5.7%, though it is somewhat in line with Iosco County's 7.9%. Cash public assistance is less common, with only 0.7% of Sherman Township residents receiving such benefits.



Additionally, 8.6% of residents in Sherman Township receive Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the past 12 months, which is lower than Iosco County's 12.7% but comparable to the state's 11.3%.

While earnings remain the primary source of income for Sherman Township residents, Social Security and retirement income also contribute significantly to household financial stability. However, the township has a lower percentage of residents with earnings and retirement income compared to the state, and a higher reliance on Social Security and Supplemental Security Income. These income sources highlight the financial challenges some residents face, with the township's lower median income and higher dependence on social programs compared to the state.

Employment & Unemployment

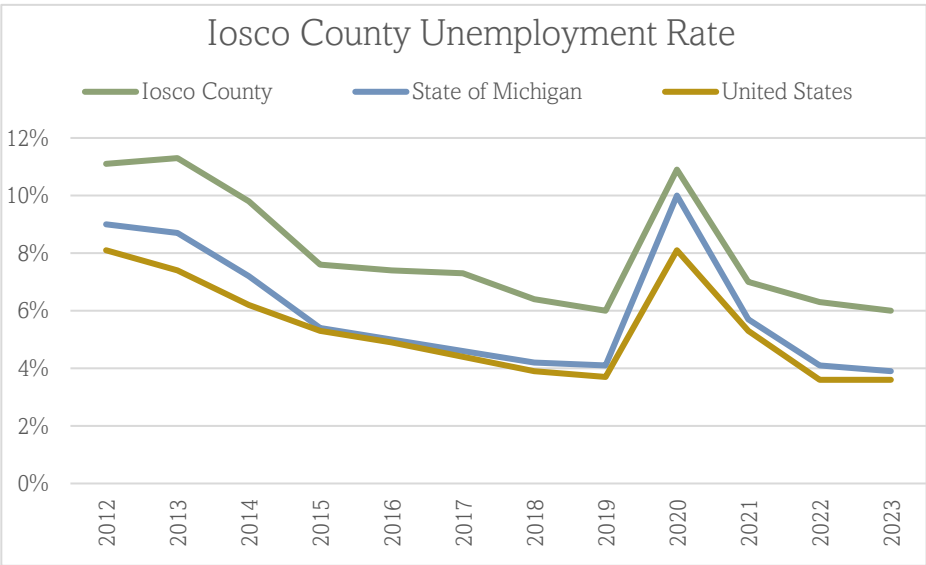
It is important to note that this data is not available at the township level, so specific information for Sherman Township cannot be detailed. The overall county trends, however, offer a general indication of the employment situation for residents across the area. The employment data for Iosco County over the past several years provides insight into local labor market trends,

2-8 Employment Information Iosco County				
Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employment	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
2023	10,485	9,860	625	6.0%
2022	10,261	9,619	642	6.3%
2021	9,836	9,147	689	7.0%
2020	10,153	9,048	1,105	10.9%
2019	10,222	9,606	616	6.0%
2018	10,088	9,446	642	6.4%

including fluctuations in the civilian labor force, employment, and unemployment rates. In 2023, the civilian labor force in Iosco County was 10,485, with 9,860 individuals employed and 625 unemployed, resulting in an unemployment rate of 6.0%. This is a slight improvement compared to 2022, when the county had an unemployment rate of 6.3%, with 9,619 employed out of a civilian labor force of 10,261.

Looking back further, the unemployment rate was higher in 2021 at 7.0%, when 9,147 people were employed and 689 were unemployed, despite the civilian labor force increasing to 9,836. The data also reflects the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as the unemployment rate spiked to 10.9% in 2020. During that year, Iosco County's civilian labor force remained fairly steady at 10,153, but only 9,048 were employed, while 1,105 individuals were unemployed.

In previous years, such as 2019 and 2018, the unemployment rate was lower—at 6.0% and 6.4%, respectively—indicating a more stable labor market prior to the pandemic. The data suggests that Iosco County's employment landscape is sensitive to broader economic trends, including recessions and other external shocks. While employment has generally increased, the unemployment rate has fluctuated, particularly in



response to economic disruptions. This trend highlights the importance of monitoring local labor market conditions for understanding economic health and planning for future workforce development in the county.

In Sherman Township, the distribution of employment across various sectors reveals a unique workforce composition compared to Iosco County as a whole. In Sherman Township, Transportation and Communications is the largest employment category, making up 32.5% (36 individuals) of the workforce, which is significantly higher than the county-wide percentage of 12.0%. This suggests that Sherman Township

may have a higher concentration of jobs related to transportation or communication services, potentially due to its rural location and local infrastructure needs.

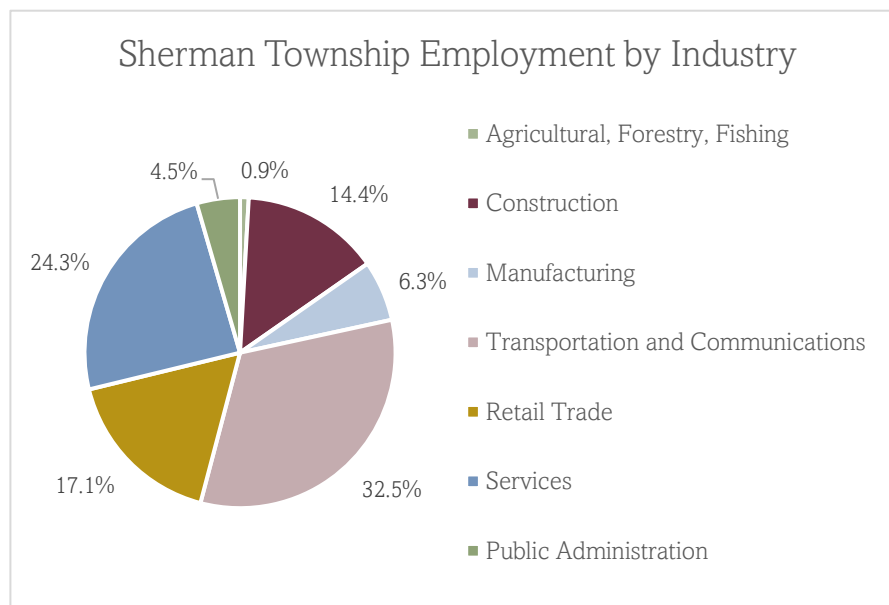
Construction is another key sector in Sherman Township, accounting for 14.4% (16 individuals) of the workforce, which is notably higher than Iosco County's 9.4%. This could reflect local construction projects or a workforce engaged in building and maintaining infrastructure within the township.

In terms of Retail Trade, 17.1% (19 individuals) of Sherman Township's workforce is employed in this sector, which is higher than the county's 14.1%.

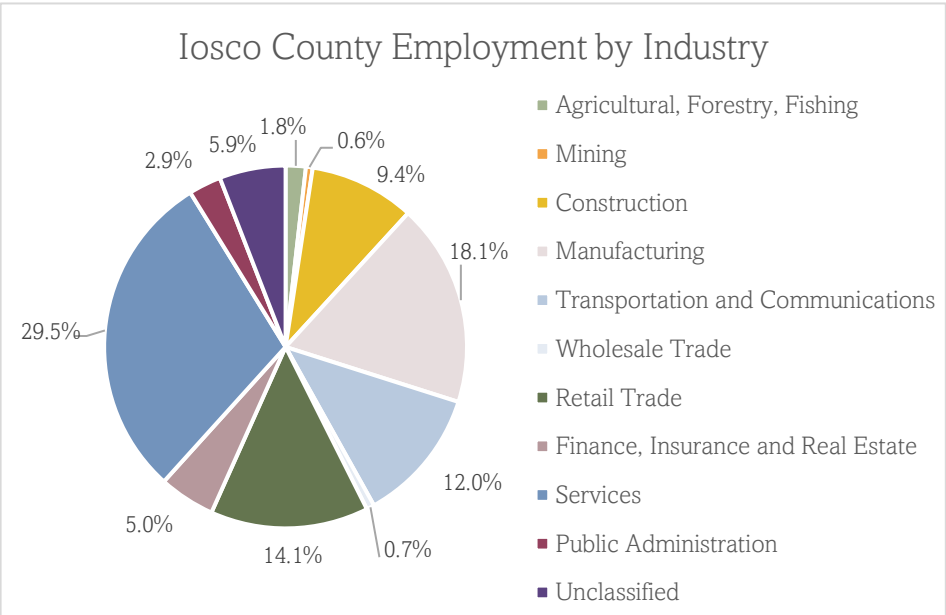
This could indicate a small but significant retail presence serving the township's residents.

Employment in other sectors such as Manufacturing (6.3% in Sherman Township vs. 18.1% in Iosco County), Services (24.3% in Sherman Township vs. 29.5% in Iosco County), and Public Administration (4.5% in Sherman Township vs. 2.9% in Iosco County) also reflect the township's economic structure, though it is clear that Sherman Township has a smaller proportion of workers in manufacturing and services compared to the county overall. Notably, there is no employment in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing, Wholesale Trade, or Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate in Sherman Township, while these sectors contribute to the county's employment figures.

2-9 Major Employment Type				
Category	Sherman Township		Iosco County	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing	1	0.9%	107	1.8%
Mining	0	0.0%	38	0.6%
Construction	16	14.4%	570	9.4%
Manufacturing	7	6.3%	1,098	18.1%
Transportation and Communications	36	32.5%	729	12.0%
Wholesale Trade	0	0.0%	39	0.7%
Retail Trade	19	17.1%	851	14.1%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	0	0.0%	305	5.0%
Services	27	24.3%	1,786	29.5%
Public Administration	5	4.5%	173	2.9%
Unclassified	0	0.0%	359	5.9%



Sherman Township's employment profile is distinct, with a higher reliance on transportation and communications, construction, and retail trade compared to the county. The data reflects the township's local economic conditions and workforce needs, with fewer residents employed in sectors like manufacturing or finance compared to the broader county economy.



State Equalized Value (SEV)

State Equalized Value (SEV) is an important measure of a community's taxable value, reflecting the total value of all properties within a given area. It is used to calculate property taxes, which directly impact local government revenue and funding for services such as education, infrastructure, and public safety. A higher SEV generally indicates an increase in the value of properties, which can result in higher property taxes, allowing communities to generate more revenue for local programs and services. Conversely, a decrease in SEV can indicate declining property values, which may lead to reduced funding for these essential services.

Table 2-10 Sherman Township SEV

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agricultural	\$5,192,700	\$5,284,700	\$5,006,000	\$4,485,200	\$4,200,000	\$5,369,500	\$5,871,300
Commercial	\$400,700	\$437,500	\$417,800	\$421,300	\$442,600	\$540,600	\$643,900
Industrial	\$1,412,400	\$1,542,900	\$1,702,000	\$2,565,000	\$6,698,100	\$8,251,100	\$8,383,100
Residential	\$19,804,700	\$19,554,500	\$20,896,000	\$20,533,200	\$22,906,800	\$29,470,900	\$29,324,400
Personal	\$6,670,300	\$6,389,900	\$6,256,400	\$5,971,100	\$7,024,500	\$6,917,900	\$7,720,300
Total	\$33,480,800	\$33,209,500	\$34,278,200	\$33,975,800	\$41,272,000	\$50,550,000	\$51,943,000

Looking at the data for Sherman Township, the SEV has experienced steady growth over the years. In 2019, the total SEV was \$33,480,800, and in 2025 it reached \$51,943,000. This increase reflects the rising value of properties across various sectors in the Township.

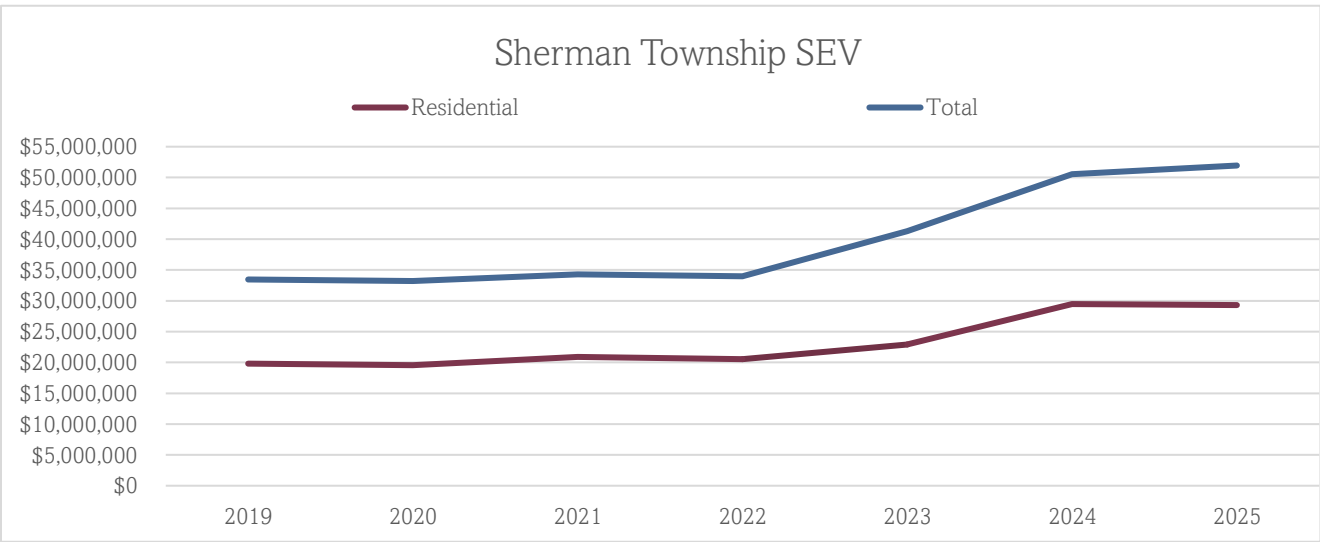
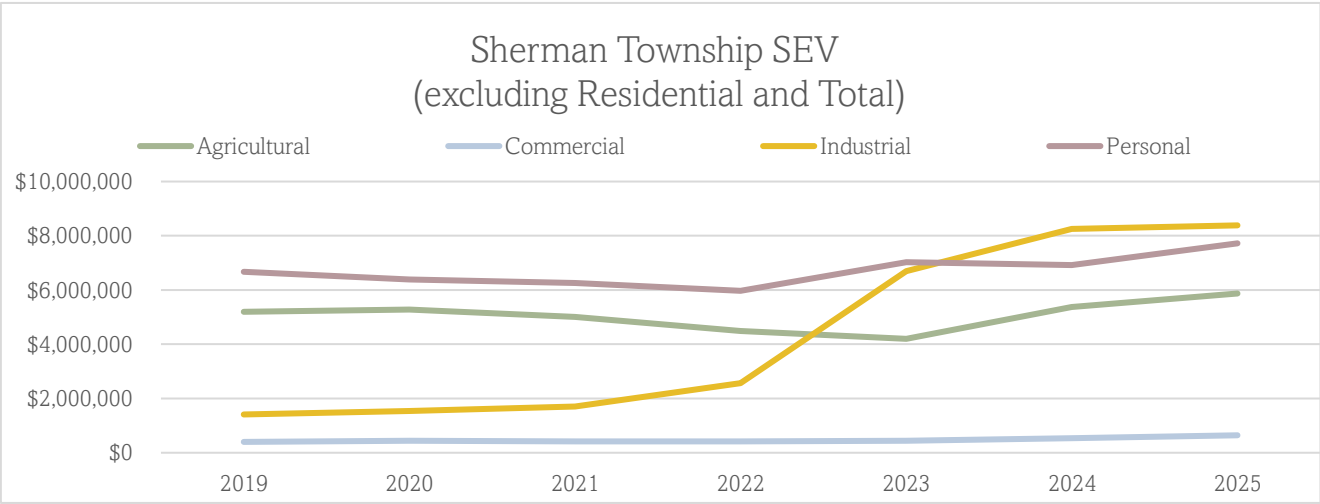
For agricultural properties, the SEV has fluctuated slightly, starting at \$5,192,700 in 2019 and reaching \$5,871,300 in 2025, indicating a modest increase in the value of agricultural land. Commercial properties have shown a steady increase, from \$400,700 in 2019 to \$643,900 in 2025, signaling growth in the Township's commercial sector.

The industrial sector, however, has seen the most dramatic growth, with its SEV increasing from \$1,412,400 in 2019 to \$8,383,100 in 2025. This significant rise suggests that Sherman Township may

be experiencing industrial development, which could contribute to local economic growth, job creation, and a more diversified economy.

Residential properties have also seen a steady increase in value, from \$19,804,700 in 2019 to \$29,324,400 in 2025, reflecting the growth of the Township’s housing market and increased property values. The value of personal property has fluctuated but remains relatively stable, with a slight decrease in 2020 and 2021, followed by an increase in 2023 and 2025.

The rise in SEV for Sherman Township signals a positive economic trend, with increases in industrial, residential, and commercial property values. This growth suggests a more robust local economy and higher potential for local tax revenue, which could support improvements in public services and infrastructure. The steady increases in SEV across multiple sectors indicate that Sherman Township is experiencing growth and development, enhancing its financial stability and ability to fund local services.



COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES



CHAPTER 3

Community Service & Facilities

Key factors that enhance the quality of life in a community include the range and type of services available to residents. Smaller rural townships, like Sherman Township, often lack the financial resources to offer the same array of services as larger communities. To address this, Sherman Township partners with neighboring towns and government agencies to share services, including fire protection, police, waste management, and other essential services.

Parks & Recreational Facilities

Sherman Township owns and maintains a small public green space known as Sherman Township Park, located at the intersection of Main Street (Township Road) and School Road. This community park features an open grassy area and a covered pavilion that is available for public use and rental. The space is used primarily for informal gatherings, picnics, and small community events. While the park does not currently include amenities such as playground equipment, sports courts, or designated athletic fields, it offers residents a quiet outdoor setting and a basic walking path for light recreation. For more developed recreational facilities or water-based activities, township residents typically rely on nearby county or state parks in areas such as Tawas and Oscoda. Sherman Township Park serves as a modest but valued resource within the community, offering opportunities for outdoor leisure and social interaction in a rural setting.

Waste Management

Waste management services in Sherman Township are provided primarily through GFL Environmental and Waste Management, both of which offer curbside trash collection each week. Neither company accepts hazardous materials, car parts, tires, yard waste, or other restricted items.



Public Safety

Law Enforcement

Law enforcement in Sherman Township is primarily provided by the Tawas City Police Department, which also handles code enforcement within the area. Additional support is available from the Iosco County Sheriff's Department, which manages the county jail, court services, marine patrol, snowmobile patrol, and animal control. The Michigan State Police from the West Branch post also provide backup and assist with state highway patrol and broader law enforcement needs. Emergency dispatch services are coordinated through Iosco County Central Dispatch (911).



EMS/Fire Services

In Sherman Township, emergency medical services (EMS) are provided by Iosco County Emergency Medical Services (EMS), which operates multiple stations across the county. The station is staffed with paramedics and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) who respond to emergency calls, including those from Sherman Township. In 2023, Iosco County EMS expanded its fleet from three to five ambulances, improving response times and coverage across the county.

Additionally, the Township contracts with the Tawas City Fire Department for fire protection, which is funded through a millage levy. The East Tawas Fire Department (ETFD), which serves East Tawas and surrounding areas, provides emergency medical first response services. The ETFD includes personnel certified as Medical First Responders (MFRs), emergency medical technicians (EMTs), and paramedics. These responders are often among the first on the scene, providing initial medical care until an ambulance arrives.

For non-emergency medical transportation, Iosco County EMS offers services such as Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Life Support (ALS) transport, ensuring residents have access to necessary medical care when needed.

Residents of Sherman Township can reach emergency medical services by calling 911, which will dispatch the appropriate EMS personnel from Iosco County EMS or the East Tawas Fire Department, depending on the nature and location of the emergency.

Township Hall

Located at the intersection of Alabaster and Rhodes Roads, the Sherman Township Hall houses both the Township office and public meeting space. Recent improvements include the installation of a new restroom and a backup generator, enhancing the facility's utility during emergencies. While the hall is not designed for long-term sheltering, it can serve as a temporary emergency shelter until roads are cleared and residents are able to relocate to more suitable accommodations.



Medical Services

Hospitals

The closest hospital to Sherman Township is MyMichigan Health Hospital in Tawas City, which is approximately 20-25 minutes away. MyMichigan Health Hospital, located in the City of Standish, is about 30 minutes from the Township. MyMichigan Health Regional Medical Center, situated in West Branch, MI, is approximately 45 minutes away. All of these hospitals provide general medical and surgical services. Additionally, three larger regional hospitals, MyMichigan Health General Hospital Alpena, Bay Medical Center in Bay City, and MyMichigan Health Medical Center in Saginaw, are within a one-and-a-half-hour drive and offer a wider range of facilities.

Additionally, there are three nursing homes: Iosco Medical Care Facility, Lakeview Manor Healthcare Center, and Medilodge of Tawas City, offering a total of 263 beds and employing over 350 residents, thus contributing to job stability and healthcare benefits in the community.

Education

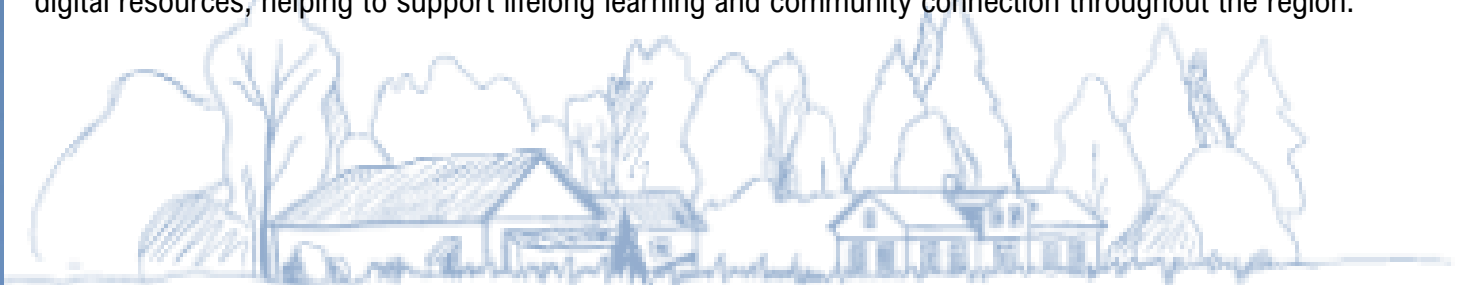
Schools

Sherman Township offers two school districts to students. The eastern portion is located in the Tawas Area School District, while the western portion is located in the Whittemore-Prescott School District. Bus service is provided for both school districts. For students seeking alternative education paths, Iosco Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA), located in Tawas City, offers additional programs and support services. In the northeastern part of the Township, students are served by Oscoda Area Schools, providing another public education option within the region.

For higher education, residents of Sherman Township have access to several nearby institutions. Alpena Community College operates its Huron Shores campus in Oscoda, offering associate degrees and workforce training. Baker College in West Branch and Kirtland Community College in Roscommon also provide a variety of programs, including technical training, healthcare, and business education. In addition, residents can choose from numerous public and private colleges and universities located throughout Michigan, expanding opportunities for advanced degrees and specialized studies.

Libraries

Residents of Sherman Township utilize library services through the Iosco-Arenac District Library, a regional system that manages five libraries across Iosco and Arenac Counties. While Sherman Township does not have its own library building, nearby branches in East Tawas, Oscoda, Hale, Tawas City, and Whittemore provide full access to the district's resources. The library system offers over 136,000 volumes and circulates more than 115,000 items annually, supporting a wide range of educational and recreational needs. Services include public computer access, free Wi-Fi, inter-branch lending, and programming for children, teens, and adults. With this system, Sherman Township residents have reliable access to both physical materials and digital resources, helping to support lifelong learning and community connection throughout the region.



Utility Services

Electrical services are provided by Consumers Energy Corporation. A small area of Sherman Township has natural gas provided by DTE Energy. Telephone service is provided by CenturyLink. Cable television is not available in Sherman Township; residents rely on satellite communications.

Water & Sewer

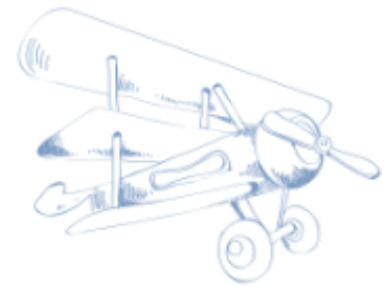
Sherman Township residents rely on individual wells and private septic systems for their water and sewer services. The township does not operate a municipal water or sewer utility; properties are not connected to public water mains or sanitary sewer systems. Instead, homeowners draw groundwater from their own wells and handle wastewater through on-site septic systems, as is common in rural areas.

For those needing professional support, several local businesses in Iosco County provide septic and sewer services, including tank pumping, system maintenance, and repairs. Meanwhile, water quality management falls under individual responsibility: well owners are expected to test their water, maintain proper equipment, and ensure safe drinking standards.

Transportation

Airport Service

Midland-Bay City Saginaw (MBS) International Airport is located about an hour from Sherman Township and is the nearest commercial airport capable of accommodating large aircraft. Closer to home, the Iosco County Airport, situated in Baldwin Township approximately 15 miles away, features a 4,802-foot runway that provides general aviation and freight air services for individuals and small businesses. Additionally, Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport, which was formerly Wurtsmith Air Force Base before its closure in 1993, is a public airport with longer runways (one measuring 11,800 feet) that supports jumbo jets, general aviation, and freight services.



Bus Service

Sherman Township residents benefit from access to regional and long-distance transportation options. The Iosco Transit Corporation (ITC) operates an inter-county public transit system that provides affordable and reliable bus services throughout Iosco County and into neighboring areas. This service is especially helpful for residents needing transportation to medical appointments, shopping centers, or employment hubs within the region. ITC offers curb-to-curb

service with reservations, making it a practical option for those without personal vehicles.

For longer-distance travel, Indian Trails Motorcoach provides intercity bus service with routes connecting Iosco County to major cities across Michigan and beyond. The nearest Indian Trails stop is typically located in Tawas City or Oscoda, offering connections to hubs such as Bay City, Flint, Detroit, and Mackinaw City. This service enables residents of Sherman Township to access broader transportation networks, including airports and Amtrak stations.

Rail Service

While Sherman Township itself does not host a freight rail station, it is located within Iosco County, which is served by freight rail through the Lake State Railway Company. This regional freight carrier operates along tracks that were once part of the historic Detroit & Mackinaw Railroad, providing vital transportation infrastructure for local industries.



The Lake State Railway primarily supports the movement of goods such as lumber, aggregates, and other industrial materials across northeastern Michigan. Though its main rail lines run through cities like Tawas City and Oscoda, its presence in the region indirectly benefits Sherman Township by supporting economic activity, manufacturing, and regional supply chains.

At present, there is no passenger rail service in Iosco County. However, residents seeking passenger rail travel can access Amtrak services via stations in Flint, Saginaw, or Bay City, typically requiring a combination of car travel or regional bus connections such as Indian Trails.

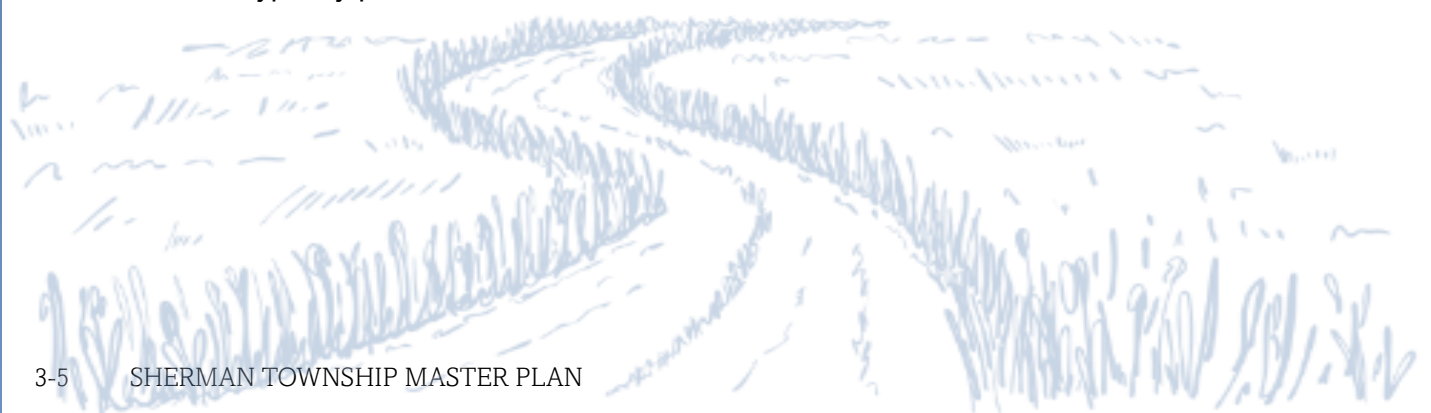
Roads

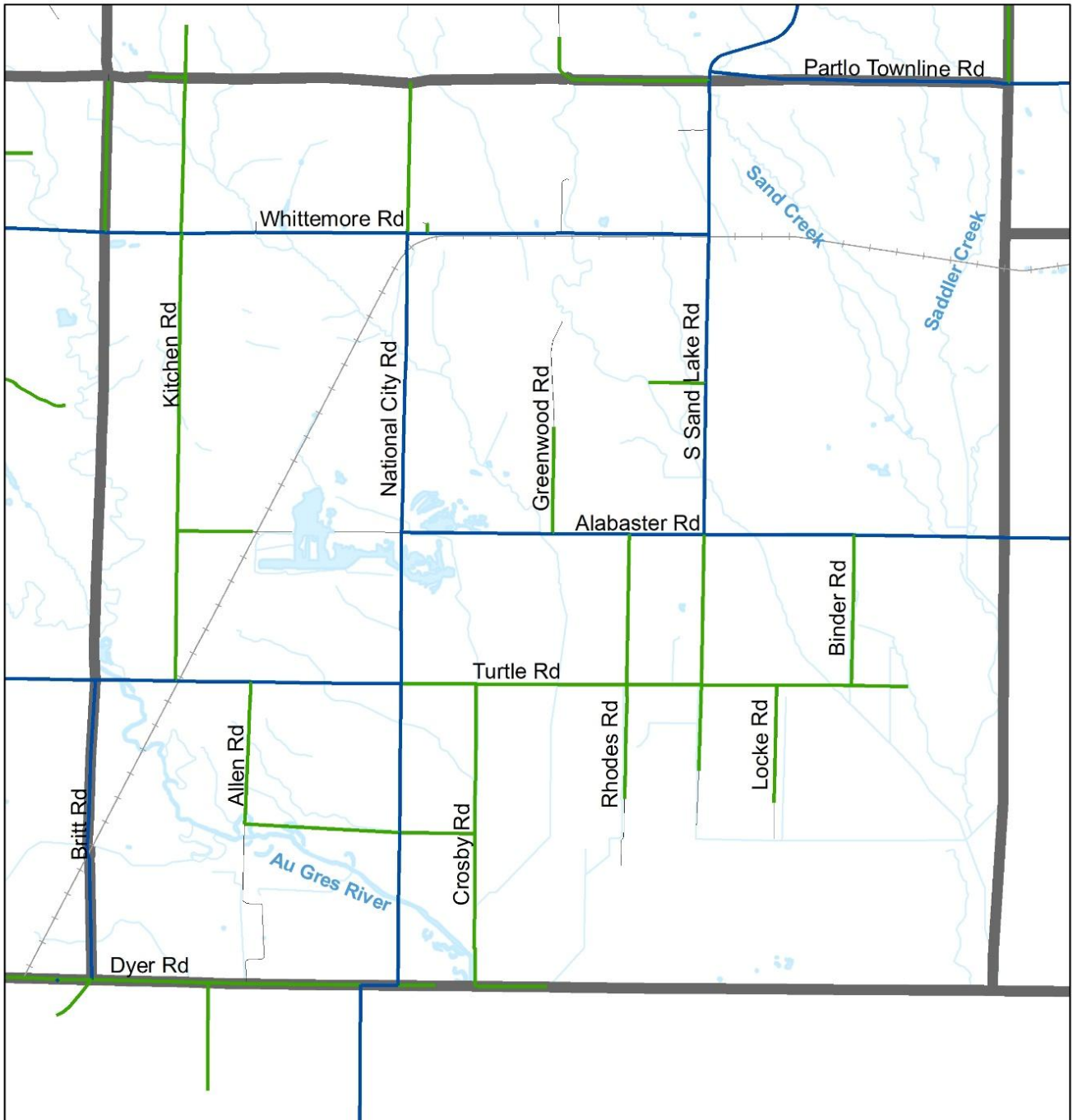


Sherman Township does not contain any major highways, but several primary paved roads provide connections to regional thoroughfares, including M-55 and M-65, which in turn lead to US-23. The Iosco County Road Commission (ICRC) is responsible for maintaining the county's primary and local roads within the Township. In addition to routine upkeep such as snow removal and general maintenance, the ICRC conducts annual improvement projects. These projects are aimed at resurfacing roads, enhancing drainage systems, and upgrading bridges and stream or creek crossings. The primary objective of the road network in Sherman Township is to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of vehicular traffic.

As shown on the Roads Map, Sherman Township's transportation network includes county primary roads, county local roads, and unclassified roads. County primary roads (depicted in blue) serve as the main transportation corridors, providing key east-west and north-south access throughout the Township. Important primary routes include Whittemore Road, which runs east-west through the northern portion of the Township, Partlo Townline Road along the northern boundary, Turtle Road and Alabaster Road, which also run east-west, and National City Road and S Sand Lake Road, which serve as major north-south routes.

County local roads (shown in green) support localized traffic and provide access to homes, farms, and natural areas. Examples include Kitchen Road, Allen Road, Greenwood Road, Binder Road, Rhodes Road, Crosby Road, and Locke Road. Unclassified roads (marked in gray) are not formally categorized by the state and are typically private or limited-use roads.



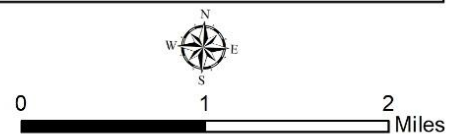


Transportation

Sherman Township MASTER PLAN

- County Primary
- County Local
- Unclassified
- +— Railroad

Data Source: State of Michigan



EAST OF EXPECTED
Northeast Michigan
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Map Created by Northeast Michigan
Council of Governments
www.discovernortheastmichigan.org
2025

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NATURAL RESOURCES



CHAPTER 4



Natural Resources

Land Cover

The land cover map of Sherman Township reveals a predominantly natural landscape made up of extensive forests and wetlands, interspersed with areas of agriculture and low-intensity development. Deciduous and mixed forests are especially common in the northern and eastern portions of the township, while evergreen forests are more concentrated in the southwest. Wetlands also play a major role in the township's land cover, with woody wetlands and emergent herbaceous wetlands heavily present in the central and southwestern areas. Agricultural uses, including pasture, hay fields, and cultivated crops, appear throughout the township but are particularly noticeable near Alabaster Road, National City Road, and Turtle Road. Developed land is limited and mainly consists of low to medium intensity development, typically located along key roads such as National City Road, Whittemore Road, and Alabaster Road. Other land cover features include shrub and scrubland, small areas of barren land, and open water bodies like lakes and streams, which are most visible in the northeast and southwest. The map reflects Sherman Township's largely rural character and the importance of balancing development with the protection of natural resources.

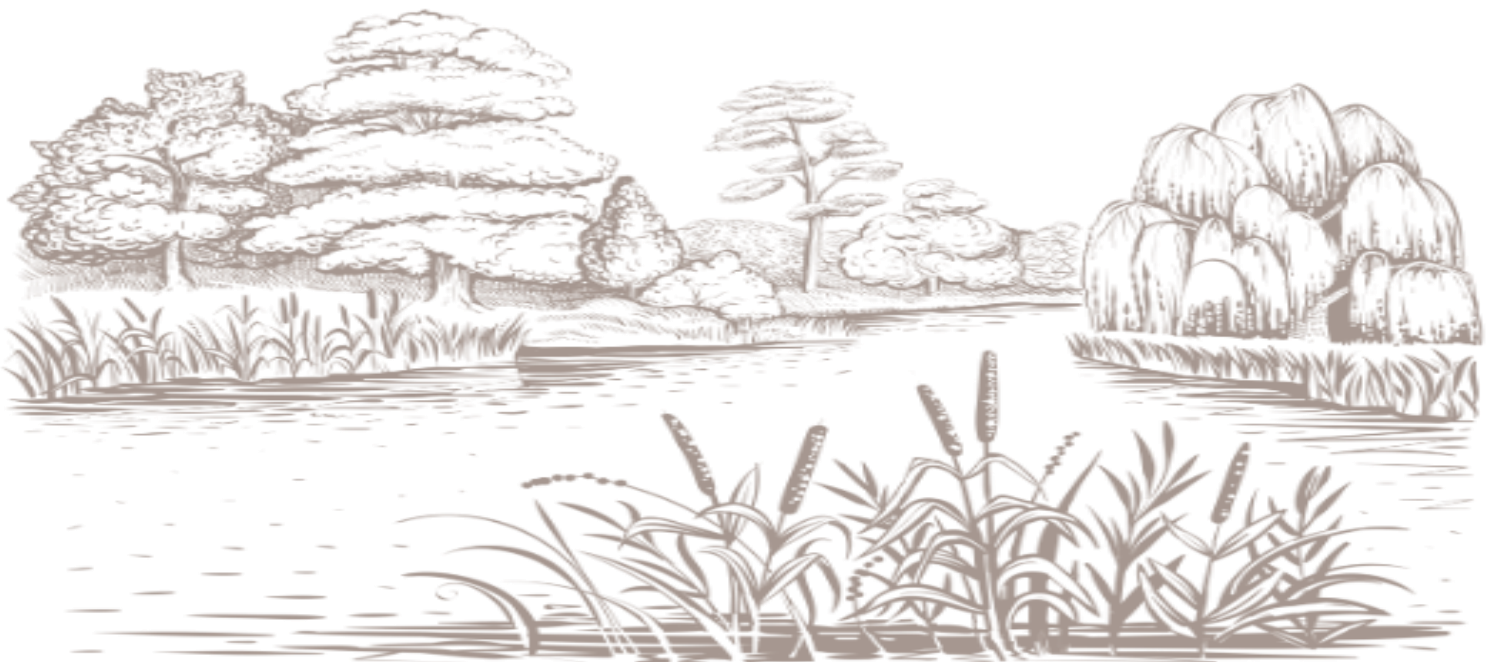
Forest Cover

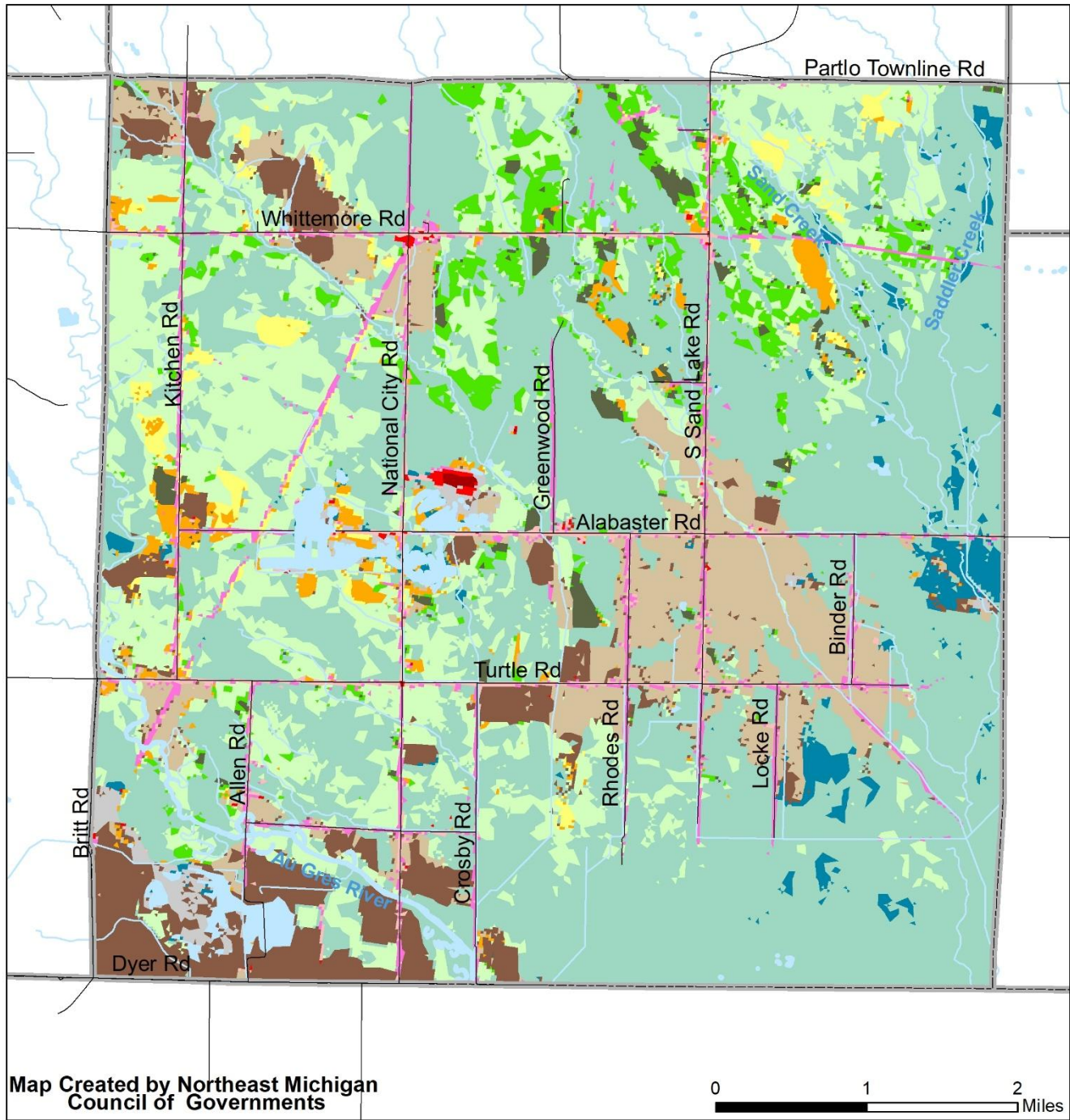
Forests make up the majority of land cover in Sherman Township, forming the backbone of the region's natural landscape. Several distinct forest types are represented, each with unique characteristics:

- **Evergreen Forests:** Dominated by coniferous trees such as pines, spruces, and firs, evergreen forests retain their foliage year-round. These forests provide year-round wildlife habitat, help regulate the water cycle, and play an important role in carbon sequestration.
- **Deciduous Forests:** Comprised mainly of broadleaf trees like oaks, maples, and birches that shed their leaves each fall, these forests are known for their vibrant seasonal changes. In the Township, deciduous forests are dispersed throughout, though less common in the southern section.
- **Mixed Forests:** These areas contain a combination of deciduous and evergreen tree species. Mixed forests enhance landscape diversity and serve as transitional zones between pure coniferous and broadleaf forests. They are found in smaller patches throughout the Township.

Other Natural Land Cover Types

- **Woody Wetlands:** These wetlands are forested areas where the soil remains saturated for long periods. Typically found along rivers, lakes, and flood-prone zones, they are rich in biodiversity and play a crucial ecological role by filtering water, absorbing floodwaters, and supporting amphibians, birds, and aquatic life. This land cover is very common in the Township and is found largely in the southeastern and eastern parts of the Township.
- **Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands:** These are non-forested wetlands dominated by herbaceous (non-woody) vegetation such as cattails, sedges, and rushes. They are seasonally or permanently flooded and support a wide variety of waterfowl and wetland species. These wetlands may occur in lower-lying areas in the Township where standing water persists.
- **Shrub/Scrub Lands:** Characterized by low, woody vegetation such as shrubs, young trees, and brush, these areas often occur in places recovering from disturbance (such as fire, logging, or agriculture).
- **Cultivated Crops:** These lands are used for growing row crops (e.g., corn, soybeans) and other agricultural products. Cultivated cropland in the Township is limited, but where present, it reflects local agricultural activity and private land management.
- **Pasture/Hay:** Areas in this category are used for livestock grazing or for growing grasses and legumes that are harvested for hay. These lands support local farming and are often interspersed with rural homesteads.
- **Grassland/Herbaceous:** These areas are dominated by non-woody vegetation and are not actively used for agriculture. They may be natural prairies, fallow fields, or old pastureland. These lands contribute to open-space character and provide habitat for ground-nesting birds and pollinators.
- **Barren Land (Rock/Sand/Clay):** These areas have little to no vegetation and consist of exposed rock, sand, or clay. Such areas are minimal in the Township but may include gravel pits or exposed soil in transitional zones.
- **Open Water:** Includes lakes, rivers, ponds, and reservoirs.





Land Cover

Sherman Township MASTER PLAN

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Developed, Low Intensity | Deciduous Forest |
| Developed, Medium Intensity | Mixed Forest |
| Developed, High Intensity | Shrub/Scrub |
| Developed, Open Space | Woody Wetlands |
| Cultivated Crops | Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands |
| Pasture/Hay | Barren Land (Rock/Sand/Clay) |
| Grassland/Herbaceous | Open Water |
| Evergreen Forest | |
- Data Source: National Wetland Inventory, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



Soil

The most prevalent soil association in Sherman Township is the AuGres-Crosswell-Rubicon association. AuGres soils make up about 50% of the Township, primarily found in the Northwest and Southwest quarters. These soils are typically found on outwash plains, deltas, moraines, and lake plains, with the parent material consisting of sandy glaciofluvial deposits. The natural drainage class is somewhat poorly drained, and water movement in the most restrictive layer is high. Available water to a depth of 60 inches is low, while shrink-well potential is minimal. The soil is not subject to flooding or ponding, though a seasonal zone of water saturation occurs at 6 inches during April and May. Organic matter in the surface horizon is approximately 3%, and the non-irrigated land capability classification is 4W. Additionally, this soil does not meet hydric criteria.

Deford Muck soils are most prevalent in the Southeast quarter section of the Township, typically found in depressions. The parent material consists of less than 7 inches of organic material over sandy glaciofluvial deposits. The natural drainage class is very poorly drained, with moderately high-water movement in the most restrictive layer. Available water to a depth of 60 inches is low, and the shrink-well potential is also minimal. This soil is not subject to flooding or ponding. A seasonal zone of water saturation occurs at zero inches from January through May, and again from October through December.

The Northeast quarter is dominated by the McIvor-Wakely complex. This component is on lake plains. The parent material consists of 52 to 60 inches of sandy material cemented with ortstein over clayey lacustrine deposits. The natural drainage class is somewhat poorly drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is low. Available water to a depth of 60 inches is very low. Shrink-well potential is low. This soil is not flooded or ponded. The seasonal zone of water saturation is 6 inches during the period January through May, and again October through December. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 6 percent. Non-irrigated capability classification is 4W. This soil does not meet hydric criteria.



The Agricultural Soils map identifies and classifies soils based on their suitability for farming, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). These maps help inform land use decisions by highlighting soils that are best suited for growing crops or supporting pasture and hay production.

Prime Farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical soil characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. These soils:

- Have adequate moisture and temperature
- Are not excessively eroded or prone to flooding
- Have favorable soil depth, structure, and permeability
- Can produce high yields of crops with minimal inputs and sustainable management

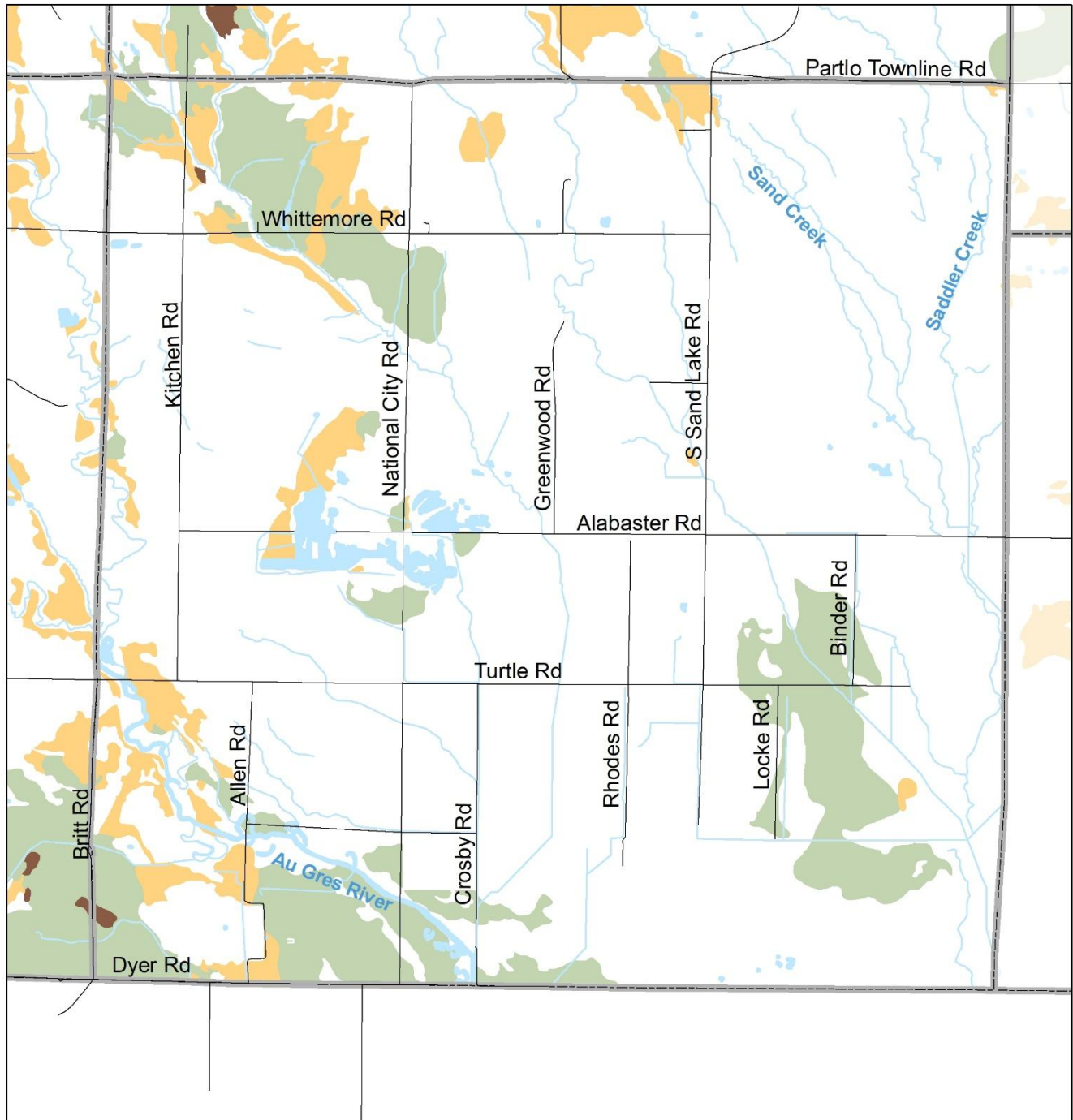
Prime Farmland (Dark Brown): These areas have the highest quality soil for agricultural production without needing extensive modifications. Very limited areas of prime farmland are found, mainly in the northwest quadrant near *Whittemore Road* and *Kitchen Road*.

Farmland of Local Importance (Tan/Yellow): These soils support productive agriculture but are not as versatile as prime soils. They are more widespread and scattered across the township, particularly in the north-central, northeastern, and south-central regions, including areas along *Alabaster*, *Rhodes*, and *Binder Roads*.

Prime Farmland if Drained (Green): These soils have potential for high productivity but require proper drainage systems. Extensive green areas are found:

- Northwest quadrant, extending across *Whittemore Road* and *National City Road*,
- Southwest quadrant, around *Allen* and *Dyer Roads*, near the Au Gres River, and
- Southeast quadrant, near *Binder*, *Locke*, and *Crosby Roads*.





Agricultural Soils

Sherman Township MASTER PLAN

Prime Agricultural Soils

- Prime farmland
- Farmland of local importance
- Prime farmland if drained

Data Source: NRCS, USDA, 2025



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Slopes & Hydric Soils

Slope and hydric soils significantly affect where development can occur. Steep slopes (over 25–30%) are prone to erosion and costly to build on, making them unsuitable for most large-scale projects. Gently sloped areas (under 15%), though not shown on the map, are preferred for residential, commercial, and agricultural uses.

Hydric soils indicate wetlands or seasonally saturated ground, often protected by law. Development in these areas usually requires permits and environmental mitigation. Due to their ecological importance, hydric soils are better suited for conservation, stormwater management, and wildlife habitat than for intensive development. They may include muck or peat soils, such as:

Carlisle Muck: A very poorly drained organic soil, formed from decomposed plant material in wetlands, bogs, and low-lying depressions. It typically consists of deep layers of dark, fibrous organic matter (peat and muck) and has a high-water table, often at or near the surface. Carlisle Muck supports wetland vegetation like sedges, cattails, tamarack, and black spruce. This soil is unsuitable for development or conventional agriculture but is critical for water storage, flood control, and wildlife habitat.

Lupton Muck: A very poorly drained organic soil, like Carlisle Muck, but it typically forms in shallower depressions or slightly more transitional wetland zones. It has a high content of decomposed plant material and often lies near streams, lakes, or the margins of bogs. Like Carlisle, Lupton Muck supports wetland ecosystems and is unsuitable for building or farming without major drainage interventions. It plays an essential role in wetland hydrology and ecological function.

Recognizing these features is essential for guiding responsible land use and protecting Sherman Township's natural resources. The Slope and Hydric Soils Map depicts:

Extreme Slopes (>45%)

Red areas indicate land with very steep slopes, typically unsuitable for development or agriculture due to erosion, runoff, and construction difficulty.

These are rare in Sherman Township but do occur in limited pockets, especially in the southwest and north-central portions near *Dyer Rd* and *Partlo Townline Rd*.

Steeply Sloping (30–45%)

Orange areas represent land with steep grades that pose moderate to high constraints for development.

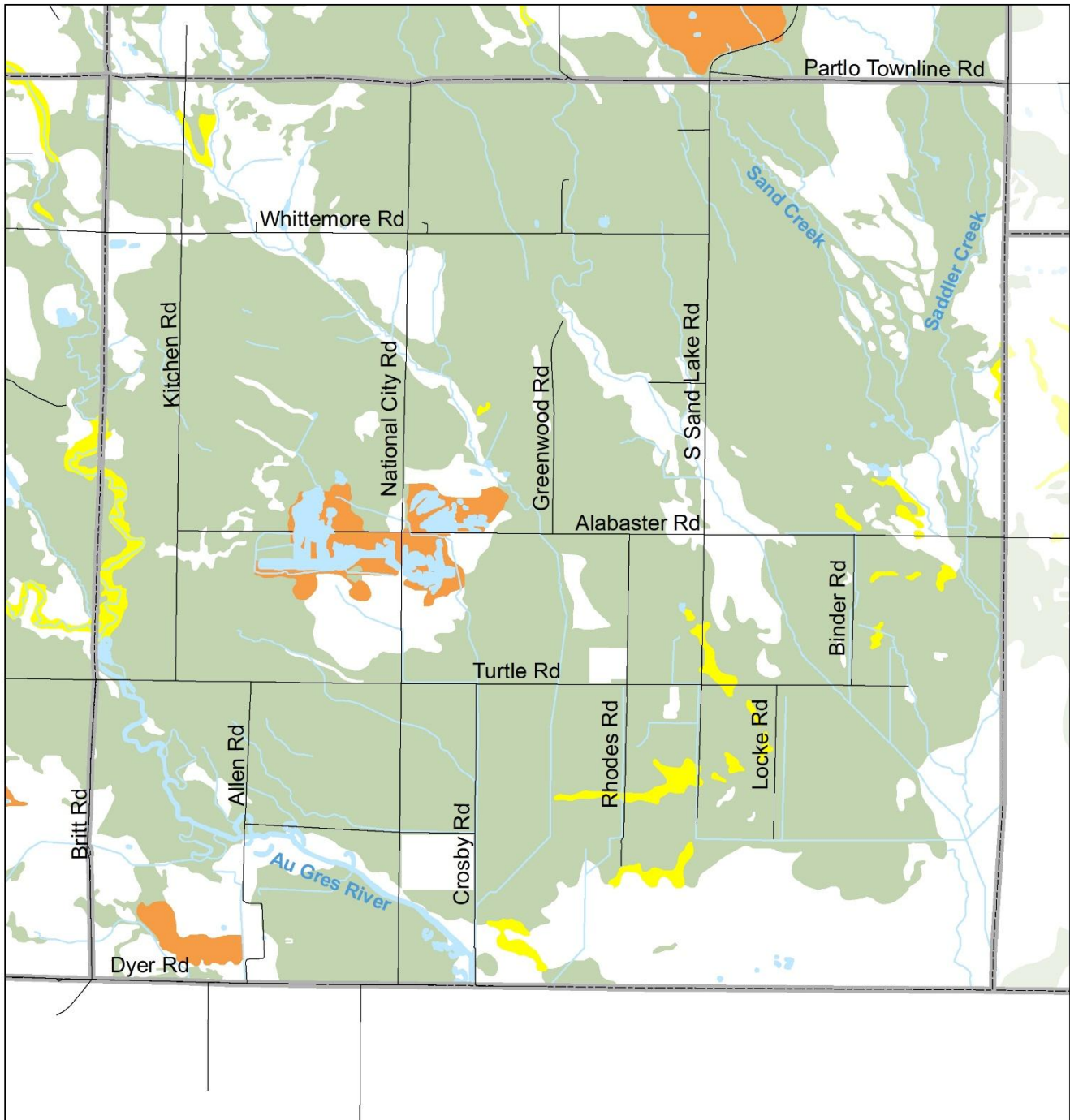
These are seen near lakes and hilly terrain, particularly southwest of National City Road, and around the Au Gres River valley.

Strongly Sloping (15–30%)

Yellow areas show moderately sloped land. While more developable than steeper categories, these areas require special consideration for stormwater management and soil stability, concentrated in the southeast quadrant, near *Rhodes*, *Binder*, and *Locke Roads*.

Hydric Soils

Green areas indicate hydric soil - soils that are saturated or flooded long enough during the growing season to support wetland vegetation. These areas are found throughout the township, especially along the Au Gres River and associated wetlands (southwest), north-central areas near *Whittemore Rd*, southeast corner near *Locke Rd*, and several tributaries and lowlands.

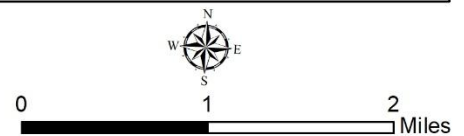


Slopes & Hydric Soils

Sherman Township MASTER PLAN



Data Source: NRCS, USDA, 2025



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Hydrology

Sherman Township is drained by the Au Gres River Watershed. The East Branch of the Au Gres River is formed in northern Iosco County where Guiley Creek and Smith Creek meet. Twelve miles of the East Branch are designated as blue-ribbon trout stream by the Michigan DNR, which includes all the section flowing through Sherman Township. This stretch of river is characterized by excellent insect hatches, wild resident trout stocks and high-water quality. Steelhead and salmon also run seasonally, making the East Branch Au Gres an exciting destination for anglers. Streams flowing into the East Branch include Sand Creek, Saddler Creek and Mongo Creek, as well as McMullen and Parent Drains. The lower East Branch Au Gres River historically joined the Au Gres River, but since the 1920's it has been diverted to Lake Huron's Saginaw Bay via the Whitney Drain. The East Branch Au Gres River watershed drains 147 square miles, mostly in Iosco County.

The West Branch of the Au Gres River originates in eastern Ogemaw County and flows 45 miles in a southeasterly direction before reaching the City of Au Gres and emptying into Saginaw Bay. The West Branch of the Au Gres River enters Sherman Township in the northwest quadrant, where the river drains into Saginaw Bay. Other creeks draining into the West Branch include Elm Creek and Sherritt, Kelchnea and Countyline Drains.

Wetlands

In Sherman Township, wetlands are areas where water is present at or near the surface of the soil for extended periods, particularly during the growing season. These areas support water-tolerant vegetation and develop hydric soils, making them ecologically distinct from surrounding uplands. Wetlands in the township may include marshes, wooded swamps, or low-lying floodplain areas, particularly near water bodies like the Au Gres River, Sand Creek, and Saddler Creek.

Wetlands play a vital role in Sherman Township's natural landscape. They help reduce flooding by storing stormwater, filter pollutants to protect water quality, and provide critical habitat for fish, birds, and other wildlife. Many of the township's hydric soils, identified in the Slopes & Hydric Soils Map, indicate the presence of wetland conditions and are often regulated under state and federal wetland laws.

Because of their environmental importance and regulatory protection, wetlands in Sherman Township require careful consideration during planning and development. Construction or land alteration in these areas typically requires permits and may involve conservation measures or mitigation. Protecting wetlands supports the township's goals for natural resource conservation, resilient infrastructure, and long-term environmental health. The Wetlands Map depicts:

Wetland Types (Color-Coded):

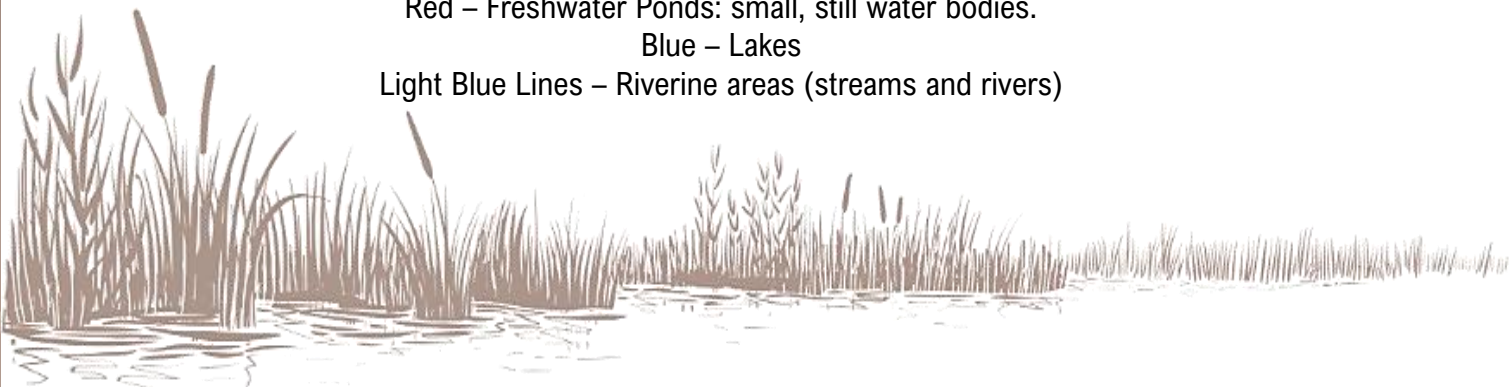
Light Green – Freshwater Emergent Wetlands: open, grassy wetlands often seasonally flooded.

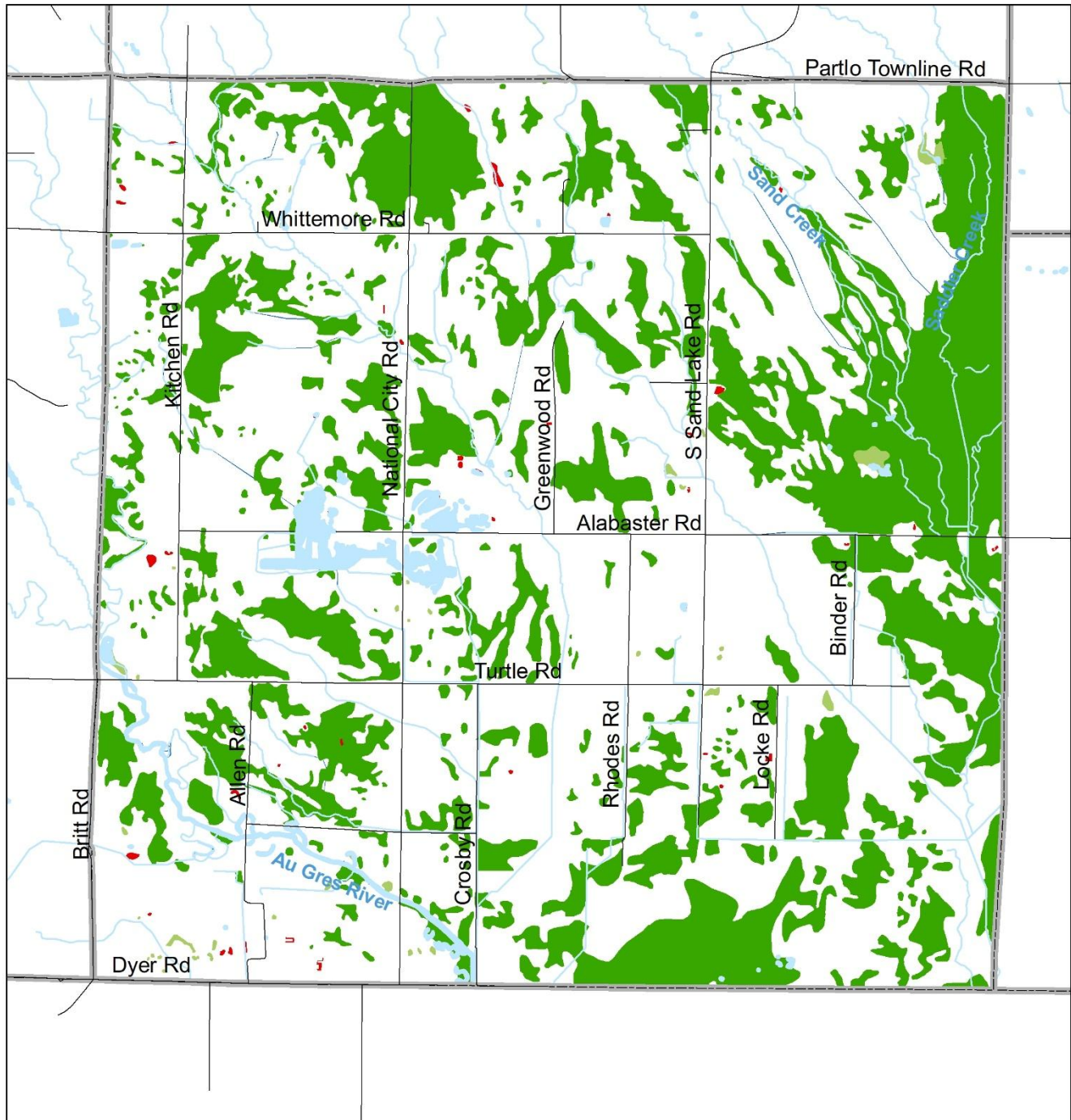
Dark Green – Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands: wooded swamps or shrub-dominated wetlands.

Red – Freshwater Ponds: small, still water bodies.

Blue – Lakes

Light Blue Lines – Riverine areas (streams and rivers)





Wetlands

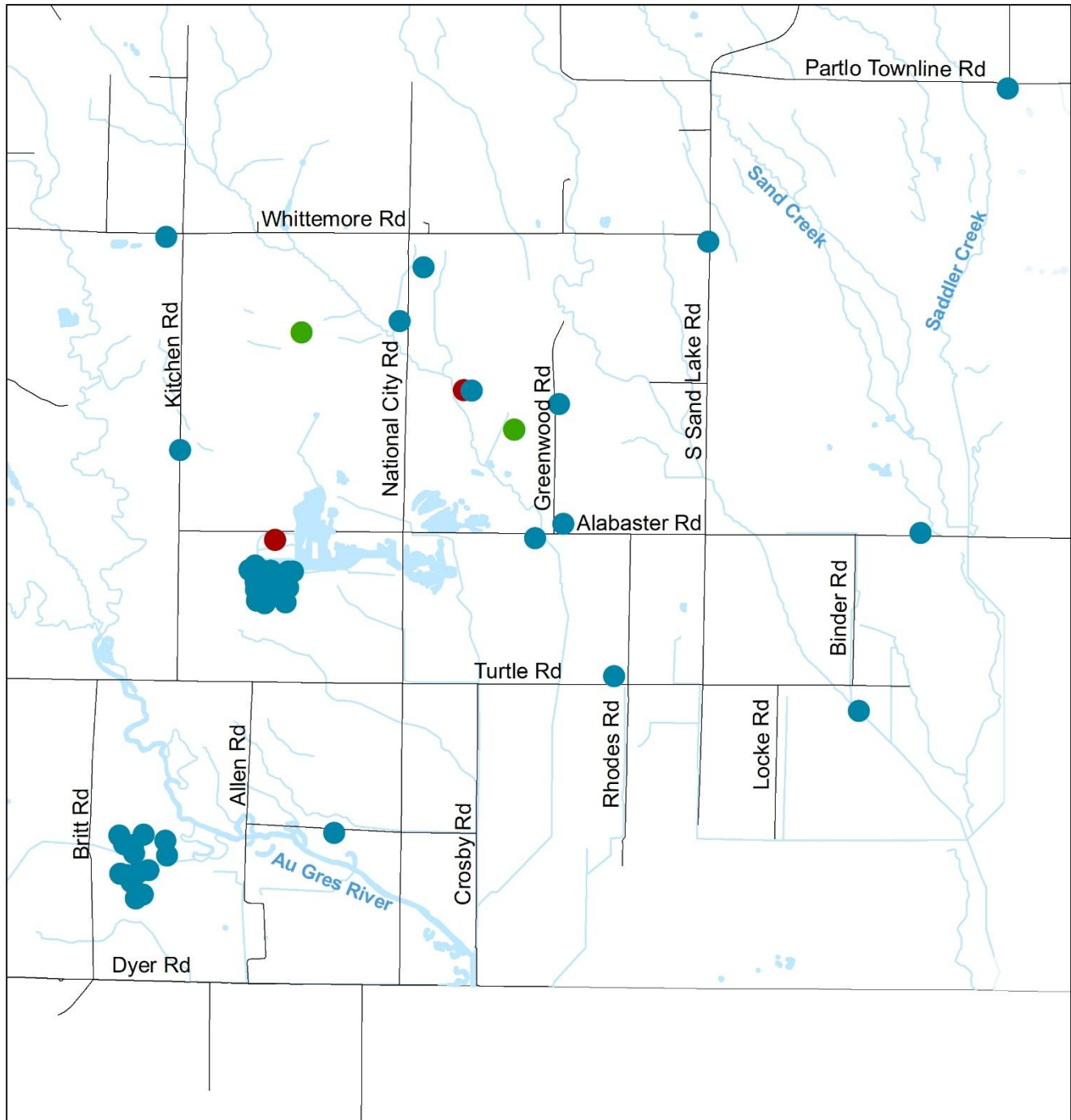
Sherman Township MASTER PLAN



Oil & Gas

Oil and gas exploration in Sherman Township is relatively limited and primarily focused on historical activity. Under a state lease known as “STATE SHERMAN 1-16,” Ward M. Haggard Oil & Gas Exploration, Inc. operated wells in Iosco County, drilling and producing oil between 1999 and 2024. However, the primary well within the Township, identified by API number 21-069-42424, is no longer active and has since been plugged, marking the end of its production life. Today, no active oil or gas wells are recorded in Sherman Township and mineral rights within the area appear to be largely inactive. While this suggests low current potential for exploration, the existence of past leases indicates that the subsurface geology was, at one time, of enough interest to warrant development. Other areas of possible contamination are oil and gas well sites. These areas are shown on the Oil & Gas wells map for Sherman Township.



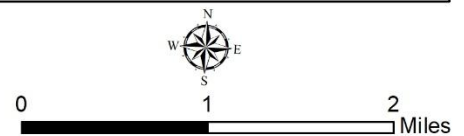


Oil & Gas Wells

Sherman Township MASTER PLAN

- Dry Hole
- Location
- Natural Gas Well
- Part 625 Test Well

Data Source: Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, & Energy, 2025



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HOUSING



CHAPTER 5

Overview

In numerous communities, both young adults and the elderly face significant housing challenges due to low-income levels and rising housing costs. This is affecting both urban and rural areas. In urban areas, the demand for affordable housing often exceeds supply, exacerbating the issue. For young adults, student loan debt and low wages intensify financial pressure, while older adults on fixed incomes struggle with limited flexibility as living costs rise. In rural areas, the situation is compounded by a lack of affordable housing options, fewer job opportunities, and economic instability. Additionally, the shortage of a skilled workforce to build new housing in these areas further limits the availability of affordable homes, making it even harder for both groups to secure stable living conditions.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends that households spend no more than 30% of their income on housing. However, in high-demand areas, many pay 40%, 50%, or even 60%, leaving little for essential expenses like food, healthcare, and transportation. This strain can lead to difficult choices, such as skipping meals or delaying necessary purchases, and may even result in eviction or foreclosure.

The shortage of affordable housing also leads to overcrowded conditions, homelessness, and a decline in quality of life. It restricts mobility, forcing people to stay in unsuitable environments. As housing prices climb and wages stagnate, the gap between income and housing costs widens, perpetuating housing insecurity and financial instability across generations.

Thriving communities provide a wide spectrum of housing options to support all residents. The availability of “attainable” housing helps accommodate everyone from young adults who are just beginning to live on their own to older residents looking to downsize while staying in the community.

While there is no universal definition of “attainable housing,” the term was recently defined by the Urban Land Institute as “non-subsidized, for-sale housing that is affordable for households with incomes between 80 and 120 percent of the Area Median Income.”



Household Characteristics

In Sherman Township, there are a total of 151 households, with an average household size of 2.48. The township exhibits a notable percentage of households where individuals live alone, with 25.2% of households being composed of a single person. Of these, 21.9% are individuals aged 65 or older, reflecting a significant proportion of older adults living independently. Additionally, 19.9% of households in Sherman Township have one or more children under the age of 18, indicating that families with children are a meaningful part of the community. Furthermore, a substantial 51.0% of households in the township have at least one resident who is 65 years of age or older, which is notably higher than the county and state averages.

Households						
Municipality	Total Households	Average Size	Living Alone	Living alone over 65	With 1 or + under 18	With 1 or + over 65
Sherman Township	151	2.48	25.2%	21.9%	19.9%	51.0%
Iosco County	11,449	2.19	39.0%	20.9%	17.6%	48.0%
State of Michigan	4,040,168	2.43	30.4%	12.9%	27.5%	32.3%

Compared to Iosco County, where 39.0% of households consist of individuals living alone, Sherman Township has a lower percentage of solo living households, though the percentage of senior citizens living alone is nearly the same (20.9%). On a broader scale, the state of Michigan reports that 30.4% of households consist of individuals living alone. Sherman Township's higher proportion of households with seniors reflects the township's aging population, potentially influenced by its rural nature and more affordable living options for older adults.

The percentage of households with children under 18 in Sherman Township (19.9%) is lower than that of Iosco County (17.6%), but it is still a significant portion of the population, showing that the township remains home to younger families. Furthermore, the high percentage of households with residents aged 65 or older in Sherman Township (51.0%) suggests that it is a community with a substantial senior population, which could influence local services and infrastructure needs, particularly in terms of healthcare, transportation, and accessibility.

In summary, Sherman Township has a distinctive demographic composition with a higher proportion of older residents and a notable share of households with children, providing insights into the township's housing needs, potential demand for senior services, and the community's overall makeup compared to Iosco County and the state of Michigan.

Household Income

In Sherman Township, the economic landscape shows that the median family income is \$65,625, which positions the township above the median family income for Iosco County, which stands at \$62,641. However, both figures are notably lower when compared to the state of Michigan's median family income of \$90,947. Similarly, the median household income in Sherman Township is \$58,750, which exceeds Iosco County's median household income of \$47,777, but is still considerably below the state's median household income of \$71,149.

These figures indicate that Sherman Township fares relatively well in terms of income compared to Iosco County, with higher median family and household incomes. However, when compared to the broader economic context of the state, the incomes in Sherman Township remain lower. The difference between Sherman Township and the state average may reflect the rural nature of the area, with fewer employment opportunities that provide the higher wages typically found in urban or metropolitan regions. Nevertheless, Sherman Township's income levels suggest a relatively stable economic environment within the county, although it still faces the challenges commonly associated with rural areas.

Income		
Municipality	Median Family Income	Median Household Income
Sherman Township	\$65,625	\$58,750
Iosco County	\$62,641	\$47,777
State of Michigan	\$90,947	\$71,149

Current Housing Inventory

In Sherman Township, there are a total of 250 housing units, among which 151 are currently occupied. Of these occupied units, 135 are owner-occupied, while 16 are rented. The average household size in the township is 2.48 people, which is higher than in Iosco County. Reflecting the local housing market, the median home value for these occupied units stands at \$172,100, indicating the general pricing trend within the township. For those who own their homes, the median mortgage payment is \$975, reflecting the financial commitments associated with homeownership in the township. Conversely, renters face a median monthly rent payment of \$1,281, highlighting the rental market dynamics and cost of living for tenants in the area. These figures offer valuable insights into the housing landscape of the township, shedding light on ownership patterns and housing affordability within the community.

The housing stock is largely comprised of structures built before 2000, with a significant portion dating back several decades. Of the 250 total housing units, 17 were built in 1939 or earlier, reflecting the township's long-established presence. The 1940s and 1950s saw a smaller number of homes constructed, with 12 and 24 units, respectively. There was a noticeable increase in construction during the 1960s and 1970s, with 31 and 43 units built during these decades, signaling growth in the township during the post-war era. The 1980s and 1990s also saw continued development, with 40 and 38 homes built, respectively.

Age of Structures	
1939 or before	17
1940 – 1949	12
1950 – 1959	24
1960 – 1969	31
1970 – 1979	43
1980 – 1989	40
1990 – 1999	38
2000 – 2009	39
2010 – 2019	6
2020 and after	0
Total Units	250

The 2000s brought a further wave of construction, with 39 units built in that decade. However, building activity slowed significantly in the 2010s, with only 6 homes constructed. No new housing units have been added since 2020, reflecting a trend of limited recent development in the township.

This age distribution suggests that while Sherman Township has an established housing stock, much of it is older, with many homes having been built in the mid-to-late 20th century. This could mean a need for ongoing maintenance and potential modernization in some areas, while also indicating that the township has experienced less new development in recent years, which may have implications for future housing demands and growth.

In Sherman Township, the housing stock is largely made up of single-family detached homes, with 189 units (75.6% of all housing units) in this category. These homes account for 133 of the occupied units. Mobile homes represent 58 units (23.2% of the total housing units), but only 18 of these are occupied. This shows that while mobile homes make up a considerable portion of the housing stock, they account for a smaller share of occupied housing in the township. With 250 total housing units and 151 of them occupied, the township is primarily composed of single-family residences, with mobile homes representing a more limited proportion of the occupied housing units.

In Sherman Township, owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage have a median value of \$165,900, which is higher than the median value for Iosco County (\$140,700) and the State of Michigan (\$236,200). This suggests that, for properties with mortgages, Sherman Township's housing market is somewhat more affordable than the state average but slightly higher compared to the county.

For owner-occupied housing units without a mortgage, Sherman Township has a median value of \$185,400, which is significantly higher than both Iosco County (\$115,800) and Michigan (\$186,800). This could indicate that homes without mortgages in Sherman Township are relatively higher in value, possibly reflecting long-term homeowners or properties that have appreciated over time.

	Housing Values		
	Sherman Township	Iosco County	State of Michigan
Owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage	68	4,429	1,716,339 (7,559 not computed)
Median value of housing units with a mortgage	\$165,900	\$140,700	\$236,200
Owner-occupied housing units without a mortgage	65 (2 not computed)	4,938 (102 not computed)	1,205,614 (16,645 not computed)
Median value of housing units without a mortgage	\$185,400	\$115,800	\$186,800

Occupied Units

Within Sherman Township, the 151 occupied housing units reflect a variety of utility preferences and dwelling configurations. In terms of bedroom distribution, the housing landscape is diverse, with 2 containing a single bedroom, 134 offering between 2 to 3 bedrooms, and 15 units provide 4 or more bedrooms, accommodating larger families or individuals seeking additional living space. This comprehensive data offers insight into the infrastructure and living arrangements within the Township, highlighting the array of utilities and dwelling configurations available to its residents.

Housing Occupancy						
	Total	Occupied	Vacant	Percent Vacant	Seasonal	Percent Seasonal of Vacant
Sherman Township	250	151	99	39.6%	83	83.8%
Iosco County	19,978	11,449	8,529	42.7%	7,543	88.4%
State of Michigan	4,599,683	4,040,168	559,515	12.2%	260,162	46.5%

There are a total of 250 housing units in Sherman Township, with 151 of them being occupied and 99 units vacant, which results in a vacancy rate of 39.6%. This is relatively high compared to Iosco County, which has a vacancy rate of 42.7%, and the State of Michigan, where the vacancy rate is much lower at 12.2%. The high vacancy rate in Sherman Township can be largely attributed to the presence of seasonal housing. Of the 99 vacant units in the township, 83 are seasonal, making up 83.8% of all vacant properties. This indicates that a large portion of the vacant homes are likely used for temporary or part-time living, such as vacation homes or seasonal retreats, rather than full-time residences.

This trend is not unique to Sherman Township, as Iosco County also has a large proportion of vacant properties used seasonally, with 88.4% of the vacant units categorized as seasonal. This suggests that both the township and the county attract seasonal residents, possibly due to natural attractions or a desire for second homes in rural or recreational areas. In contrast, the State of Michigan has a significantly lower percentage of seasonal vacancies at 46.5%, indicating that the seasonal housing trend is much more prevalent in rural areas like Sherman Township and Iosco County.

The high percentage of seasonal properties in Sherman Township also affects the township's housing market and may influence factors like population stability, local infrastructure use, and long-term housing development. While the seasonal homes contribute to a vibrant community during certain times of the year, they also create challenges in terms of maintaining a steady housing market and population throughout the entire year.

Demographics of Housing Units			
	Overall Units	Own	Rent
Married Couples	78	71	7
Male Householder-no spouse	1	1	0
Female Householder-no spouse	8	5	3
Householders alone under 65	5	5	0
Householder alone over 65	33	27	6

In Sherman Township, the breakdown of household types across owned and rented units reveals some interesting trends. There are 78 married couples in total, with 71 owning their homes and 7 renting. This reflects the general trend in Sherman Township, where

homeownership is more common than renting. For male householders without a spouse, there is just 1 unit, and it is owner-occupied. Similarly, for female householders without a spouse, 8 households are recorded, with 5 owning their homes and 3 renting.

In the case of householders living alone, 5 households are under the age of 65, all of which are owner-occupied, while 33 households are over the age of 65, with 27 owning their homes and 6 renting. These figures suggest a higher proportion of older residents in Sherman Township are homeowners, a trend often seen in rural areas where long-term residents own their homes outright. Additionally, the overall numbers show that homeownership remains dominant in the township, with a few renting households scattered among different household types.

Median Home Value - \$172,100
 Median Mortgage Payment - \$975
 Median Rent - \$1,281

In Sherman Township, the distribution of vehicular assets shows varying levels of vehicle ownership across households. Nine households do not own a vehicle, which may indicate reliance on other forms of transportation or shared vehicles. A significant number of households, 48, own one vehicle, while 57 households own two vehicles. Additionally, 37 households own three or more vehicles. This distribution suggests that many residents have access to personal transportation, with multiple vehicle ownership being relatively common in the area. This is typical of rural areas where vehicles are essential for accessing work, services, and other activities due to the absence of public transportation options.

Vehicular Assets	
Vehicles	Units
None	9
1	48
2	57

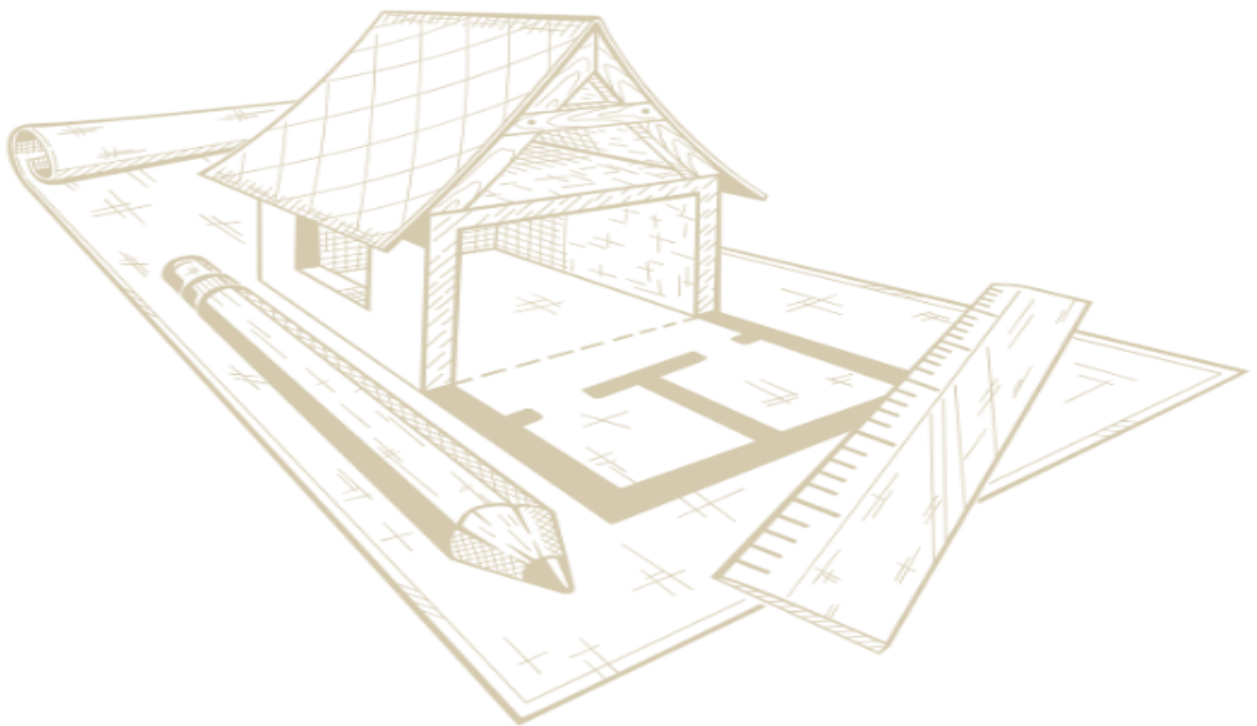
The primary heating sources used by households vary widely, with the most common heating source being propane or bottled fuel, used by 77 households. Wood is also a significant heating source, with 55 households relying on it, reflecting a preference for alternative and often more affordable heating options in rural areas. Natural gas is used by 9 households, while 4 households use fuel oil or kerosene. Additionally, 2 households use electric heating, and 4 households use other sources. This diversity in heating sources suggests that residents of Sherman Township have access to a variety of options, with many choosing alternatives to more conventional heating methods like natural gas, likely due to the lack of availability of natural gas.

Heating	
Source	Units
Natural Gas	9
Propane/Bottled Fuel	77
Electric	2
Fuel Oil/Kerosene	4

Available Housing

Currently, there are only two homes listed for sale in Sherman Township—one priced at \$225,000 and the other at \$265,000. Based on estimated monthly mortgage payments of approximately \$1,378 and \$1,623, these homes may appear to fall within the 30% AMI affordability range; however, it is important to note that these estimates do not include property taxes or insurance, which would substantially increase the total monthly housing cost.

These limited listings point to a broader challenge in the local housing market: the absence of affordable, move-in-ready homes suitable for permanent, year-round residents. The lack of available housing, particularly at price points that truly align with local incomes once full ownership costs are considered, highlights a growing gap between housing supply and community needs. Without targeted strategies to expand attainable housing options, Sherman Township may continue to face restricted opportunities for residents seeking stable, long-term housing within the community.



Construction Costs

The Great Recession initially dampened construction activity, with its economic fallout leading to fewer local job opportunities. Many residents were forced to seek employment elsewhere. (The “Great Recession,” which spanned from late 2007 to around 2009, was triggered by the U.S. housing bubble collapse and snowballed into a global financial crisis, affecting economies worldwide.) More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced housing trends, as the shift to remote work has made seasonal homes more appealing as permanent residences. The rising costs of construction materials, influenced in part by many recent natural disasters, are also a growing barrier to new building projects.

In Michigan, constructing a 1,500-square-foot home with builder-grade finishes (basic materials, excluding high-end touches like granite or hardwood) can be quite costly. On average, the construction of such a home would cost around \$315,000, not including the land. The average cost of land, statewide, is about \$13,000 per acre, however, this doesn’t account for additional expenses like installing a well or septic system or connecting to municipal water and sewer systems. A typical 4-inch well installation averages \$9,500 statewide, while a septic system can cost around \$11,000. Connecting to municipal sewers generally costs between \$1,300 and \$5,000, and connecting to municipal water lines ranges from \$1,000 to \$5,000. The cost to connect to the electric grid varies widely, from \$1,000 to \$30,000, while hooking up to a natural gas line typically costs between \$500 and \$2,000. Depending on whether a home requires a well and septic system, estimated at a total of approximately \$37,250, or can instead connect to municipal services, averaging around \$22,900, these infrastructure expenses can significantly affect the overall cost of building a house. The total estimated construction cost, excluding the price of land, ranges from \$337,900 to \$352,250.

There is currently one buildable parcel for sale in Sherman Township, listed at \$27,900 for 5 acres. However, because the Township lacks municipal services such as water and sewer, the average total cost to build a home in the area is estimated at \$380,150.

For this level of investment a construction loan is required, with a minimum downpayment of 20% (\$76,030) and remaining monthly mortgage payments of \$2,248. This would require a minimum annual income of approximately \$90,000. This represents a required increase of \$24,375 over the current median family income, and \$31,250 more than the current median household income. These figures highlight the significant gap between local income levels and the cost of building a home, presenting a major barrier to affordable homeownership in Sherman Township.



Final Costs

A frequently overlooked aspect of housing affordability is the cost of monthly utilities. While earlier estimates focused on mortgage payments, they did not account for basic utility services like electricity, gas, internet, and phone or homeowners' insurances and property taxes. Even when using a modest estimate of \$100 per month per service, these utilities add approximately \$600 to a household's monthly expenses. Once this ongoing cost is included, the picture of what's truly affordable changes significantly. For a family, the maximum affordable home price decreases roughly \$168,000. For the average household in Sherman Township, it drops even further, to about \$130,000. When it comes to new home construction, these additional costs push the required household income from an estimated amount of \$90,000 to \$110,000 per year. This underscores the need to evaluate housing affordability through a comprehensive lens that includes not only purchase prices but also the full cost of living. Without factoring in these recurring expenses, estimates can paint an overly optimistic view of what residents can realistically afford.

In Conclusion

The current housing conditions in Sherman Township paint a clear picture of a deeply limited and unaffordable market. New home construction, while theoretically an alternative, presents its own set of challenges. With construction costs averaging \$380,150 and no access to municipal services, building a modest home remains financially out of reach for most residents. When monthly utilities and living costs are added, the income needed to afford a new build rises to over \$110,000, more than double the township's median household income. Altogether, these factors underscore a pressing need for strategic housing solutions. Without targeted investment and planning to support the development of affordable, year-round housing, Sherman Township will continue to face barriers to sustainable growth and long-term community stability.



EXISTING LAND USE



CHAPTER 6

Existing Land Use

Sherman Township covers a total land area of approximately 35.9 square miles. The Township is primarily made up of agricultural land, with farming being a key part of the local economy, including crop production and livestock. There are also several small residential areas scattered throughout the township, offering a rural lifestyle. In addition to farming and homes, Sherman Township has a few natural areas that provide outdoor recreational opportunities for residents. This mix of farmland, homes, and recreational spaces contributes to the rural character of the Township.

The 2025 Master Plan's Existing Land Use was delineated by categorizing parcels into residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, state, county and township land. The map utilized Sherman Township's tax roll data as its foundation. By leveraging parcel identification numbers, NEMCOG accurately pinpointed locations and tax classifications to map the Township and establish the Existing Land Use Map. This approach ensures the highest level of accuracy in depicting current community land usage.

Table 5-1 Existing Land Use		
Land Use Category	Number of Acres	Percent of Township
Residential - Improved	8,024.17	34.88%
Residential - Vacant	4,182.43	18.18%
Agricultural - Improved	2,680.80	11.65%
Agricultural - Vacant	1,085.66	4.72%
Commercial - Improved	33.22	0.14%
Commercial - Vacant	11.56	0.05%
Industrial - Improved	559.23	2.43%
Industrial - Vacant	1,419.41	6.17%
State	5,005.37	21.76%
Township	1.00	0.004%
Totals:	23,003.14	100%

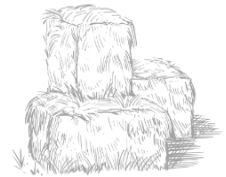
Residential Uses

As can be seen from Table 5-1, the amount of land being used for residential purposes is just over 53% of the Township, or 12,206 acres, the largest land use in the Township. Nearly 35% of the Township is improved residential, while another almost 20% is considered vacant residential land. Residential land uses are scattered throughout the Township, with higher density in the southern half.



Agricultural Uses

Agricultural uses make up about 17% of the Township, 3,766.5 acres, with almost 12% being improved agricultural. While this use is scattered around the Township, higher concentrations can be found in the southwest corner of the Township.



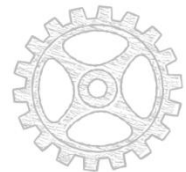
Commercial Uses

Commercial use is very small in the Township, only making up .19% of the Township, or just shy of 45 acres of land, with most being found along Whittemore and National City roads in the northern part of the Township.



Industrial Uses

Industrial use accounts for almost 9% of the Township, 1,978.6 acres, with only about a third being improved industrial land, 559 acres. National Gypsum owns a substantial portion of the industrial land in the Township, 618 acres, with a large concentration of this land in the center of the Township.



State Land Use

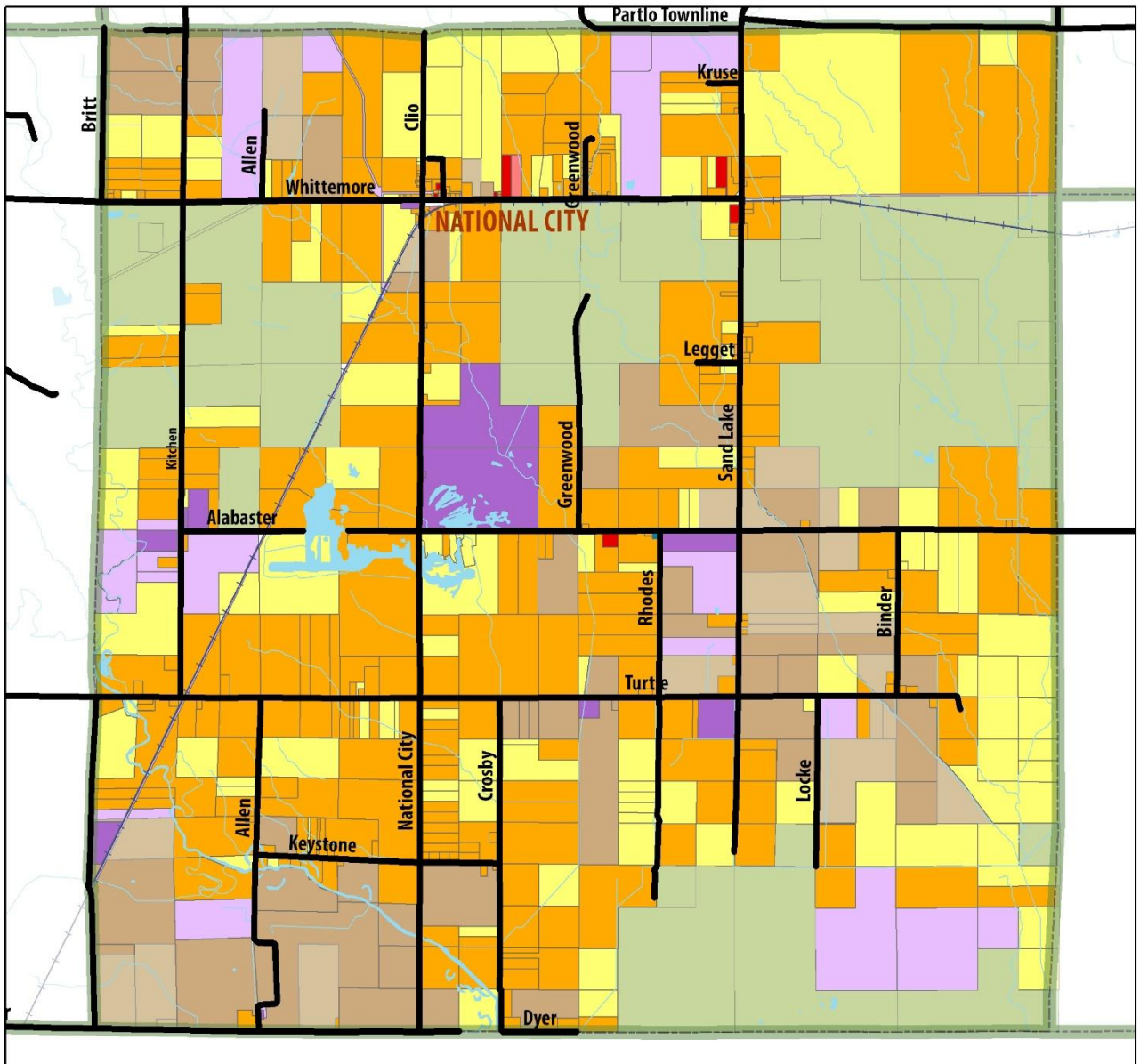
State Land use is the second largest land use in the Township, with just over 5,000 acres being designated to it, or almost 22% of the Township. The majority of this land is part of the Au Sable State Forest.



Township Land Use

Township Land Use accounts for just one acre of land which consists of the Township hall and the land surrounding it.





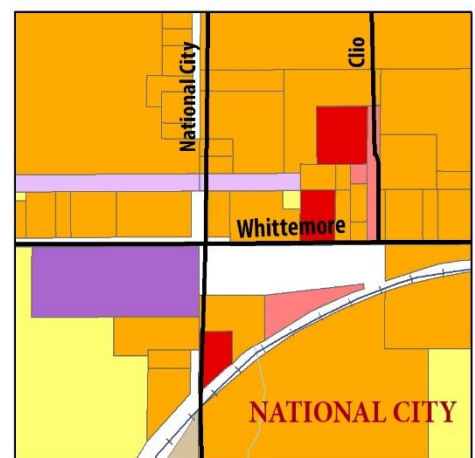
Sherman Township Existing Land Use

Iosco County, Michigan



0 0.5 1 1.5
Miles

Map prepared by Northeast Michigan
Council of Governments
July 2025



COMMUNITY INPUT, GOALS & OBJECTIVES



CHAPTER 7

Summary of Survey Results

The Sherman Township Planning Commission conducted an online survey and received 66 responses, representing 17% of the Township's total population, which includes all age groups. When adjusting for the estimated 80 residents under the age of 19, the response rate increases to approximately 22.1% of the adult population. This level of participation provides a solid basis for planning and indicates meaningful community engagement. A summary of those results follows below; full results are included in the Appendix of this plan.

- 48% of respondents were between the ages of 46-65 years of age, 27% were between the ages of 66-75 years of age and 17% were over the age of 76. Only 7% were between the ages of 26-45 years of age.
- 48% of respondents were full-time residents in their own home, and 20% owned a home but did not reside in it year-round.
- 56% of respondents have lived in Sherman Township over 20 years, 22% have lived here 11-20 years, and 15% have been in the Township for 5 years or less.
- When respondents were asked why they live in the Township, 34% responded that it was a great retirement destination, 34% said because of the recreational opportunities, and 28% said they prefer rural living.
- Almost 70% of respondents say they rely on family, friends, and neighbors to find out what is going on in the Township.
- 74% of respondents feel that the Township should do more to protect wildlife habitat, 68% said forest land, and 67% say farmland needs more protection.
- 66% feel that access to hunting and fishing is important for living or owning property here, 66% also felt it was clean air, and 61% feel that living near the woods, clean water, and being in a rural area are important.
- 66% **do not support** the development of solar energy facilities.
- 73% **do not support** the development of wind energy facilities.
- 72% of respondents are **concerned** about the noise of inverters used in solar energy.
- 77% of respondents are **concerned** about the loss of rural vistas.
- 81% of respondents are **concerned** about the loss of farmland.
- 47% of respondents **do not** feel that commercial trucks or truck routing is a problem in the Township.
- Almost 40% of respondents support a millage for only road improvements.
- 93% of respondents feel that maintaining existing roads is the most important transportation goal.
- 53% of respondents support Township incentives for broadband expansion.
- 62% of respondents **do not** feel that the municipality should expand commercially.
- Almost 40% of respondents would be interested in a tax-based garbage pick-up for residents.
- 40% of respondents would **not** be interested in opening a business here today.
- 40% of respondents feel that the most important economic development concept was to increase the number of jobs in Sherman Township.
- 53% of respondents prefer **no new developments** in the Township.

- 48% of respondents feel that short-term rentals should be limited to a certain number.
- 51% of respondents feel that there should be a business permit process for Airbnb or Vrbo rentals.
- 52% of respondents feel that there should be an annual inspection process for short-term rentals.
- 50% of respondents feel that there should be an annual inspection process for **all** rental units.
- 35% of respondents feel that single-family detached homes should be pursued when developing housing, and 17% feel that the minimum square footage of homes should be lowered to 500 sq ft.
- 39% of respondents feel that the municipality should find and promote opportunities to encourage and increase affordable housing.
- 37% of respondents support accessory dwellings.
- 40% of respondents do **not support** garage apartments.
- 28% of respondents said that they are looking to move from their current residence within the next five years.
- Almost 65% of respondents rate the current quality of life in Sherman Township about the same as 5 years ago.
- 68% of respondents feel that the quality of life in Sherman Township will remain about the same in the next 5 years.
- 95% of respondents are generally satisfied with the Township as a place to live, own property, own a business, or visit.
- 86% of respondents are satisfied with emergency medical service, 84% with police protection, 82% with fire protection, 76% with traffic flow and volume, 76% with state recreational land access, 70 % with Township clean-up/beautification, and 70% with medical facilities.
- 71% of respondents **have not** used the website for information.
- 38% of respondents feel that the Township needs to enforce the Zoning Ordinance better.
- 81% of those respondents who had an opinion feel that the Township is responsive to Zoning and Planning questions.
- 80% of those respondents who had an opinion feel that Zoning and Planning applications are processed in a timely manner.
- 98% of respondents feel safe in the community.
- Almost 52% of respondents did **not** know that you can text 911.
- 58% of respondents did **not** know that the local fire department may provide smoke alarms.
- 54% of respondents feel that the fire department could be improved, 51% feel law enforcement could, and 46% feel that emergency medical services are also lacking.
- Respondents felt that they were most prepared for tornadoes, snowstorms, extreme temperatures, severe winds, and ice & sleet storms. They felt the least prepared for droughts, wildfires, and flooding.

Sherman Township Goals & Objectives

Quality of Life

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

Objectives:

1. Implement stated objectives that will improve the overall quality of life for Township residents.
2. Strive to balance future growth and development in the Township while maintaining its rural character.
3. Promote the quality of life in the Township to recruit new families to the Township.
4. Ensure that the zoning ordinance contains regulations that are clear and help to implement the goals in this Master Plan.

Community Character

Goal: Maintain and enhance the appearance and character of Sherman Township

Objectives:

1. Preserve the integrity of existing rural residential and agricultural areas by protecting them from the intrusion of incompatible uses.
2. Strive to balance the future growth and development in the Township while maintaining its rural character.
3. Provide standards for the use and storage of recreational vehicles to provide for the enjoyment of property and to protect neighboring property values.
4. Allow property owners to erect fences which provide privacy, meet their needs, allow emergency service access, and are aesthetically pleasing.
5. Ensure that lighting does not negatively impact drivers, pedestrians, neighboring property, and the dark night sky.
6. Require landscaping for new developments in order to visually enhance the property.
7. Regulate signs in a content-neutral manner and adopt regulations which allow free speech and a variety of sign types and sizes while ensuring that signs are not a nuisance and do not result in a negative aesthetic effect on the area.
8. Include flexible regulations within the zoning ordinance to allow for creative development and to address unique situations.
9. Ensure parking standards are appropriate to the area and are flexible.
10. Maintain appropriate districts with allowable permitted and special uses which are appropriate to each district in order for property owners to fully utilize their property. Ensure the list of uses is updated with new uses.
11. For specific uses which are of a more intense nature, provide reasonable and effective standards to ensure these uses do not negatively impact neighboring property.

Residential Areas

Goal: Allow for suitable housing opportunities for all income levels and age groups.

Objectives:

1. Preserve open spaces and vital natural resources.
2. Encourage existing housing stock to be kept in good repair, appearance, usefulness, and safety.
3. Require buffers or transition areas between residential and non-residential uses and offer multiple screening options to give flexibility to the property owner.
4. Preserve the integrity of existing residential areas by protecting them from the intrusion of incompatible uses.
5. Enforce zoning ordinances and building codes.
6. Provide dwelling standards and setbacks which allow property owners to fully utilize their property while also ensuring protection of natural resources and protection of neighboring properties.
7. Encourage home occupations/home based businesses and provide standards which are easy to follow and which also protect neighboring properties.

Commercial Areas

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

Objectives:

1. Guide commercial development into commercial nodes within areas of greater density through the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.
2. Solicit commercial enterprises, which are desired and will be supported by residents, to the Township.
3. Promote development in the Township that is consistent with rural identity.

Community Facilities

Goal: Improve the Township's transportation systems and community facilities to accommodate the needs of the residents.

Objectives:

1. Work with the Iosco County Road Commission to plan for upgrading roads, maintaining existing roads, and addressing vehicular safety at intersections and roadways.
2. Maintain, and when necessary, upgrade the Township Hall. Investigate outside funding sources such as grants, donations, low-interest loans, and foundations.

Farm Lands

Goal: Recognize the importance of agricultural lands as an economic base, heritage, and way of life in Sherman Township.

Objectives:

1. Promote agricultural growth and recognize the importance of small family farms in Sherman Township.
2. Maintain and provide for the preservation of farmland.
3. Discourage the conversion of farmland into other, more intensive uses. Recognize farmland as a contribution to the scenic and rural character of Sherman Township.
4. Recognize farmland as part of Sherman Township's active economic base and potential sources for jobs.

Water Protection

Goals: Preserve and protect surface and ground water.

Objectives:

1. Protect local water bodies from pollution and runoff.
2. Encourage land stewardship through conservation practices and buffer zones.
3. Educate residents on water-friendly practices and pollution prevention.
4. Preserve natural wetlands and floodplains for water filtration.
5. Promote proper septic maintenance to prevent leaks and failures.
6. Support local water monitoring efforts through partnerships and volunteers.
7. Ensure that the development and operation of data centers protect local water resources and do not negatively impact the reliability or capacity of the electrical grid.

Emergency Services

Goals: Build stronger coordination and resource sharing with neighboring municipalities and emergency service providers.

Objectives:

1. Establish mutual aid agreements for fire, EMS, and disaster response.
2. Participate in joint training exercises and emergency planning sessions.
3. Share communication protocols and equipment resources to improve response times and efficiency.
4. Coordinate on regional hazard mitigation and water-related emergency planning.
5. Pursue hydrant expansion in the Township to ensure water is available during an emergency.
6. Maintain and pursue upgrade to hall for use as a temporary emergency shelter.

Infrastructure Development

Goals: Support and encourage natural gas and broadband expansion throughout the Township.

Objectives:

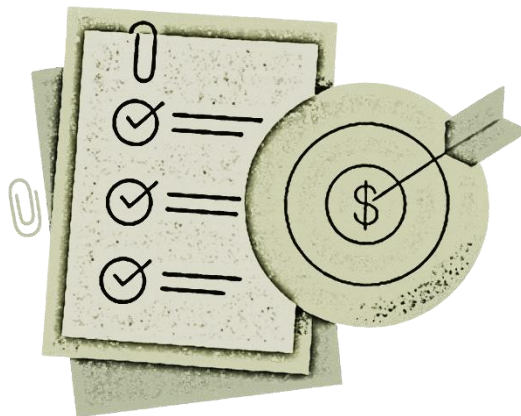
1. Establish relationships with utility companies to encourage expansion into the Township to help alleviate the financial strain on residents using propane or electricity for heating homes.
2. Establish relationships with broadband providers to bring services into the Township for those who work at home, school children, and overall communication upgrade in the Township.
3. Ensure wireless regulations are up to date and permit wireless coverage while protecting the surrounding area from negative impacts.

Renewable Energy

Goals: Maintain local control without prohibiting development.

Objectives:

1. If renewable energy developments are proposed in the township, encourage developers to work locally with the township to site needed utility-scale solar, utility-scale wind, and off-site battery energy storage systems.
2. Ensure that the zoning ordinance contains renewable energy standards that developers consider workable but which protect non-participating property owners through setbacks, screening, and noise standards, ensure protection of the natural environment including soil, surface water, groundwater, and wildlife, ensure adequate emergency services personnel, equipment, and training are available, ensure decommissioning is planned for, protect prime agricultural land, and protect the township residents in general.



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FUTURE LAND USE



CHAPTER 8

Sherman Township's future land use plan outlines a long-term strategy for guiding responsible development while safeguarding the area's natural features and rural identity. Rather than prescribing exact outcomes, the plan offers general direction to inform land use decisions, including rezoning considerations. It emphasizes thoughtful growth, encourages coordination with neighboring communities, and promotes land use patterns that align with the Township's values and priorities. Effective implementation relies on available infrastructure, road networks, environmental impacts, and alignment between land use needs and zoning availability. Township leaders are encouraged to review site-specific details, such as impact assessments and technical studies, when evaluating proposals to ensure decisions support both current and future community needs.

Future Land Use

Sherman Township's future land use plan includes both narrative descriptions of intended land use categories and a corresponding map to illustrate these concepts. The map is not meant to define exact parcel boundaries or dimensions, but rather to show general areas where certain types of land use are envisioned. It also includes areas beyond the Township's borders that may influence local services or affect Township residents, reflecting Sherman Township's commitment to collaborative planning with neighboring jurisdictions. The plan is intended to be flexible and may evolve in response to shifts in economic trends, population changes, development patterns, infrastructure availability, or zoning conditions. Any updates to the plan should remain consistent with the Township's broader long-term goals and the guiding principles outlined in its master plan.

The future land use plan identifies 3 future land use designations. The Township has chosen to use future land use designations that generally correlate to the Township's zoning districts. However, it should be noted that the names of the future land use designations do not match the names of the zoning districts, since the names of the future land use designations are intended to describe the type of recommended land use.

Future land use shows the Township's vision of how development should occur in the future.

It should be considered when evaluating rezoning requests.

Implementation of the future land use plan depends on many other factors such as infrastructure.



Zoning Plan

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) requires that the Master Plan contain a zoning plan that includes an explanation of how the land use categories on the Future Land Use Map relate to the zoning districts. Table 8-1 includes a listing of the future land use plan categories and the equivalent zoning districts. The zoning plan is found within the discussion of intended land use and specific objectives of the future land use categories.

8-1 Future Land Use Designations & Zoning Districts

Future Land Use	Zoning Districts
Rural Residential - Agriculture	Agricultural Residential District
Commercial	Commercial District
Industrial	Industrial District





Rural Residential – Agricultural



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The Rural Residential-Agricultural district intends to retain and support the continued presence of farms and single-family dwellings throughout the Township. It promotes the long-term protection of farmland resources while allowing for very low-density residential development that complements the existing rural character, supports agriculture, and preserves open space.



GENERAL LOCATION

This designation encompasses the entire Township, with certain areas specifically allocated for industrial and commercial use.



INTENDED LAND USES

Typical uses include single-family homes, in-home adult day care and foster care, child care homes, agricultural sales and services, farm markets and product sales, both commercial and domestic farming operations, firewood sales, forest product processing, game preserves, and grain elevators. Given the Township's steady growth in residential development, duplexes and accessory dwelling units may be allowed as a special use on larger lots to help preserve the Township's rural character.



COMPATIBLE ZONING DISTRICT

Agricultural Residential District (AR). This future land use designation recommends the same lot and structure standards, setbacks, and additional development standards as the Sherman Township Zoning Ordinance.



Commercial



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The Commercial District is intended to support and retain existing businesses and services within the Township, while also promoting the orderly development and concentration of commercial uses to meet the community's needs.



GENERAL LOCATION

Identified commercial areas are located near the intersections of Whittemore Road and National City Road, as well as along Alabaster Road from Greenwood Road to Sand Lake Road.



INTENDED LAND USES

This designation accommodates a broad spectrum of commercial and service-oriented uses aimed at meeting the diverse needs of residents, businesses, and visitors. Permitted uses include, but are not limited to, restaurants, food trucks, hotels and lodging facilities, automotive repair shops, recreational and entertainment businesses, personal service establishments, car washes, funeral homes and mortuaries, charitable institutions, child care centers and nursery schools, transit and transportation-related facilities, warehousing and storage operations, wholesale businesses, essential services, and public utility infrastructure. This wide range of allowable uses is intended to support economic diversity, encourage job creation, and provide convenient access to goods and services, while maintaining compatibility with surrounding land uses through appropriate site design, buffering, and infrastructure planning.



COMPATIBLE ZONING DISTRICT

Commercial District (C). This future land use designation recommends the same lot and structure standards, setbacks, and additional development standards as the Sherman Township Zoning Ordinance.



Industrial



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The Industrial District is intended to primarily accommodate industrial operations, warehouses, and wholesale activities in a manner that contains all external physical impacts within the district boundaries, ensuring they do not negatively affect surrounding areas or adjacent land uses.



GENERAL LOCATION

Those areas being identified as industrial are near the northwest corner of Whittemore Road and Sand Lake Road; the northeast corner of National City Road and Alabaster Road; Dyer Road and Lake State Railroad trackage; the southwest corner of Kitchen Road and Alabaster Road; and a small area north of Dyer Road.



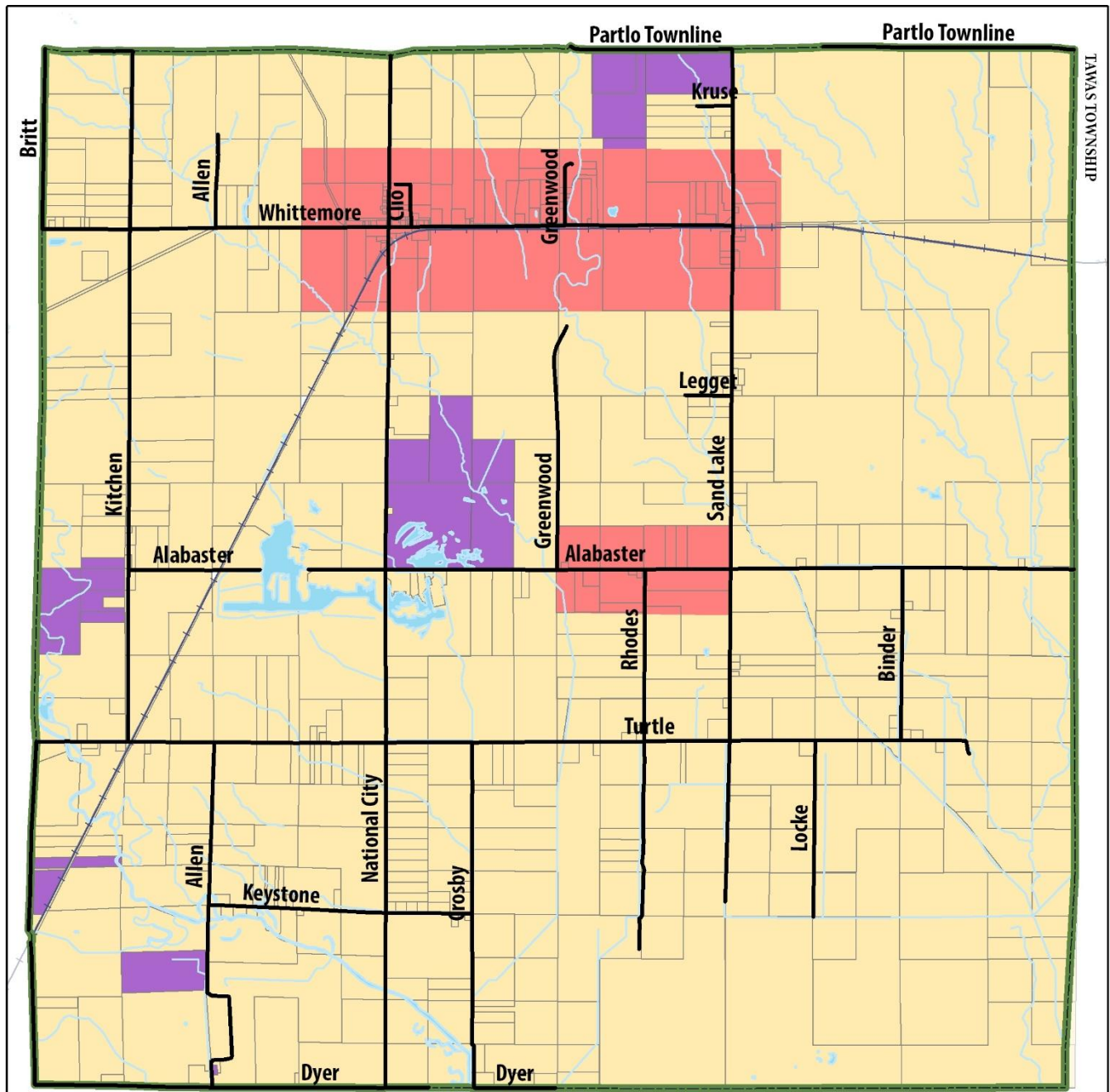
INTENDED LAND USES

Typical uses within this designation include agricultural processing, storage, sales, and service; light manufacturing; bulk material storage; commercial cleaning facilities; crematoriums; machine and metal shops; sign fabrication shops; tool and die operations; tin shops; medical marihuana primary caregiver operations; public works facilities; distribution and logistics centers; drone operation hubs; railyards; warehousing and storage; and wholesale businesses. These uses are intended to support a diverse industrial base while remaining compatible with the district's intended purpose and minimizing impacts on surrounding areas.



COMPATIBLE ZONING DISTRICT

Industrial District (I). This future land use designation recommends the same lot and structure standards, setbacks, and additional development standards as the Sherman Township Zoning Ordinance.



Sherman Township Future Land Use Map



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ADOPTION & IMPLEMENTATION



CHAPTER 9

Adoption & Implementation

As required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008), as amended, notification of intent to update the Sherman Township Master Plan was sent to all adjacent communities and other relevant entities. After the draft plan was completed by the Sherman Township Planning Commission, a draft was transmitted to the Township Board for approval to distribute the plan for review and comment. The draft plan was transmitted to the entities notified at the intuition of the plan update. After the required comment period, public hearing, and plan adoption, the final plan was transmitted to all required entities.

Public Hearing

A public hearing on the proposed Master Plan for Sherman Township, as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) as amended, was held on XXXXXXX. The purpose of the public hearing was to present the proposed Master Plan and to accept comments from the public.

Section 43 (1) of the Act requires 15-day notice prior to the public hearing to be given in a publication of general circulation in the municipality. A notice of the public hearing was published in the XXXXXXX (local newspaper). During the review period, the draft plan was available for review on the Township website, by contacting the Township, or available on the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) website.

Plan Adoption

The Sherman Township Planning Commission formally adopted the Master Plan on (Insert Date). The Township Board passed a resolution of adoption of the Master Plan on (Insert Date).

Documentation

Michigan Planning law requires that the adopted Master Plan be transmitted to communities and agencies that received the review draft. Copies of these transmittal letters appear in the Appendix.

Plan Implementation

The Master Plan was developed to provide a vision of the community's future. It will serve as a tool for decision-making on the future development proposals. The plan will also act as a guide for future public investments and service decisions, such as the local budget, grant applications, road maintenance and development, community group activities, tax incentive decisions and administration of utilities and services.

Zoning Ordinance

According to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, comprehensive planning is the legal basis for the development of a zoning ordinance. Section 203 of the Act states: *The zoning ordinance shall be based on 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, 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 of residence, recreation, industry, trade, service, and other uses of land, to ensure that uses of the plan 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; to facilitate adequate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, education, recreation, and other public requirements, and to conserve to expenditure of funds for public improvements and services to conform with the most advantageous use of land resources, and properties.*

The zoning ordinance is the primary tool for implementing the Master Plan. Sherman Township has developed its zoning ordinances to regulate land use activities within the Township. This plan requires each zoning ordinance be reviewed to ensure consistency with the Master Plan's goals and future land use plan as well as assuring it conforms to current State regulations.

Grants & Capital Improvement Plan

The Master Plan can 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, etc. A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is developed to establish a prioritized schedule for all anticipated capital improvement projects in the community. A CIP includes cost estimated and sources for financing for each project and can serve as a budgetary and policy document to aid in the implementation of the Master Plan.



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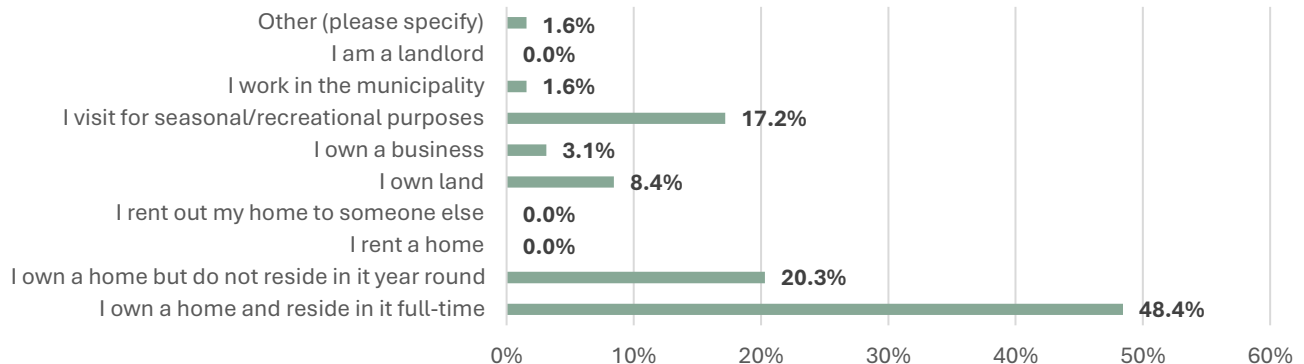
SURVEY RESULTS & DOCUMENTATION



APPENDIX A

Sherman Township Public Input Survey Results

Question 1: What is your property interest? Mark all that apply.

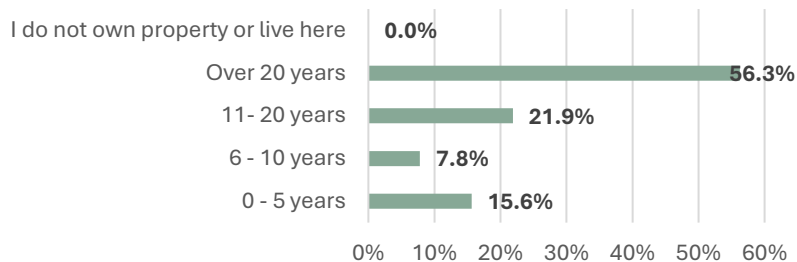


Most respondents are full-time residents or landowners (48.44% each), with a smaller share of seasonal homeowners (20.31%) and recreational visitors (17.19%). Very few have business or work ties to the area, and no renters or landlords responded, suggesting limited rental representation.

'Other' responses included:

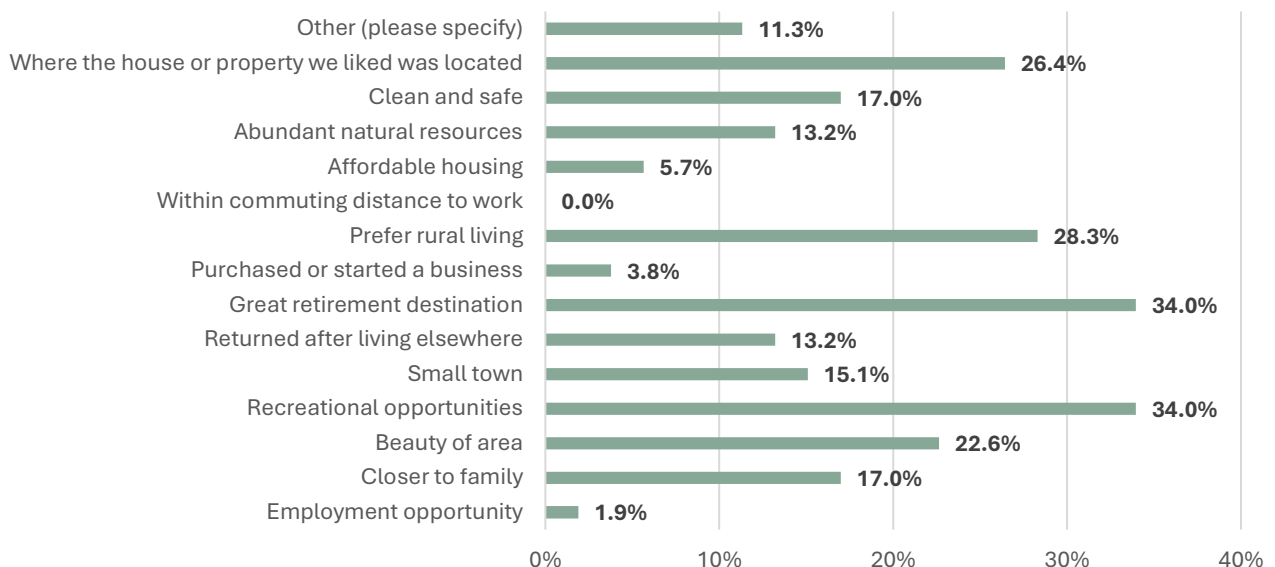
- Year-round use for recreation and hunting

Question 2: How long have you lived or owned property here?



The majority of respondents (56.25%) have lived in or owned property in the area for over 20 years, indicating a long-term, established population. An additional 21.88% have been present for 11–20 years. Only 23.44% have been in the area for 10 years or less.

Question 3: If you are not originally from here, what made you move or buy property here?

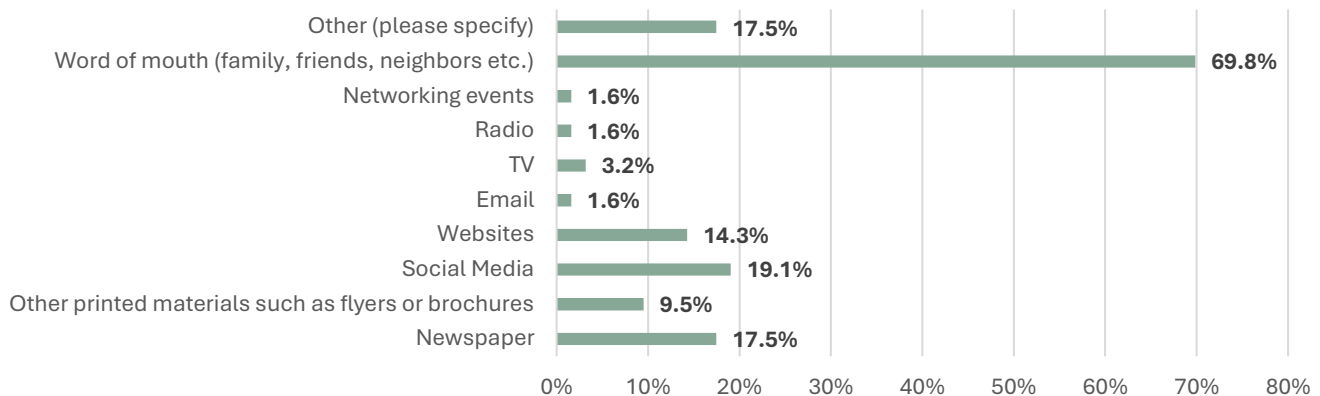


Respondents were most often drawn to the area for recreational opportunities and as a retirement destination (both at 33.96%), followed by a preference for rural living (28.30%) and finding a property they liked (26.42%). The area's beauty (22.64%), family ties (16.98%), and small-town appeal (15.09%) were also common factors.

Other' responses include:

- Hunting land
- Grandfather born there in 1880
- We purchased my grandmothers home that my grandfather built before I was born
- Good hunting land
- n/a1
- Husband wanted to move here, me not so much

Question 4: How do you find out what is going on in the Township?

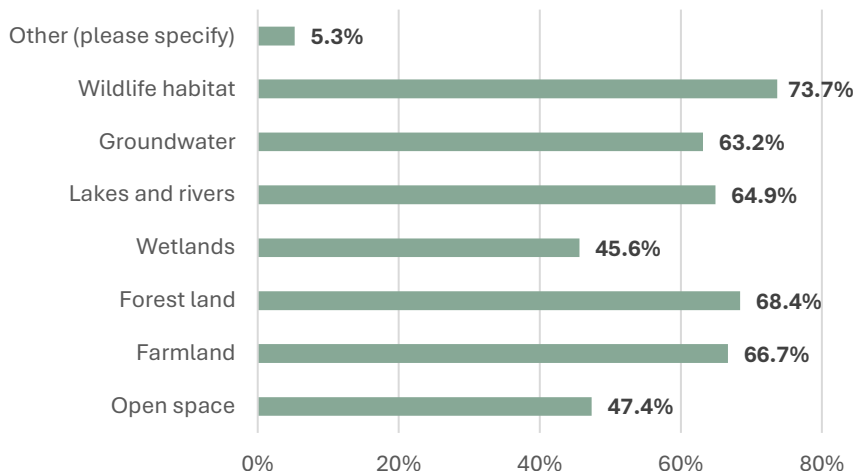


Most respondents (69.84%) rely on word of mouth to learn about township happenings, making it the dominant information source. Social media (19.05%), newspapers (17.46%), and websites (14.29%) are secondary sources. Traditional media like TV, radio, and email have minimal use.

'Other' responses include:

- Rainbow Gardens
- Rumors and gossip
- Tawas city website
- do know yet
- Web site
- Involved in township government
- Attending Township Meetings
- I don't find out
- No clue until we visit
- Sometimes go to meetings
- Board meetings only way

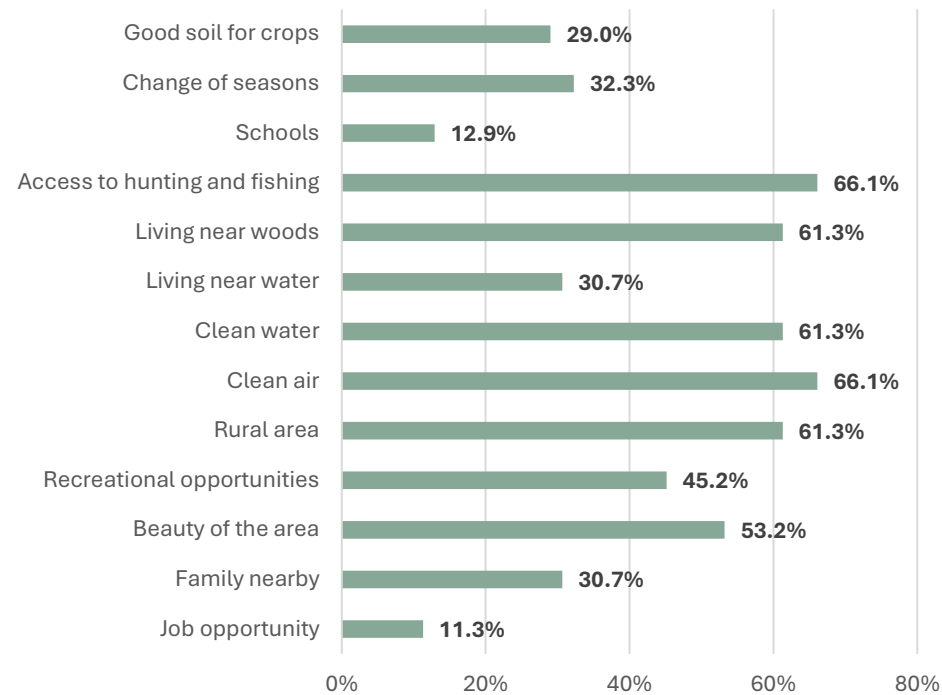
Question 5: Do you feel more should be done to preserve or protect any of the following natural resources?



'Other' responses include:

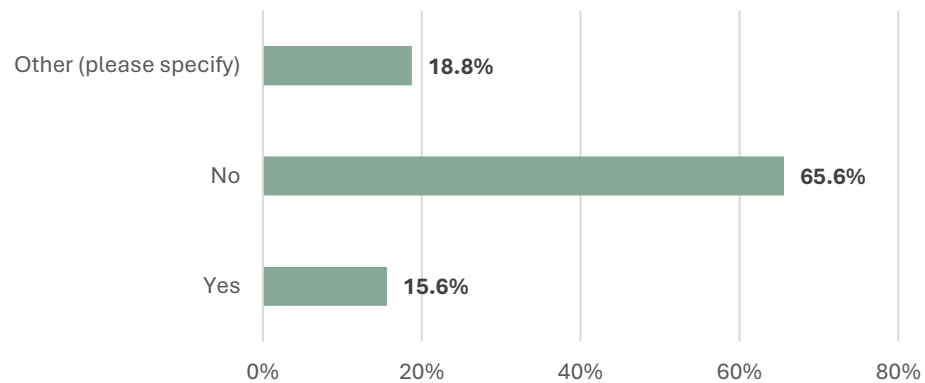
- All of the listings
- I believe there are plenty of protections without the township involvement
- Property owners rights

Question 6: Are the following important for living or owning property here?



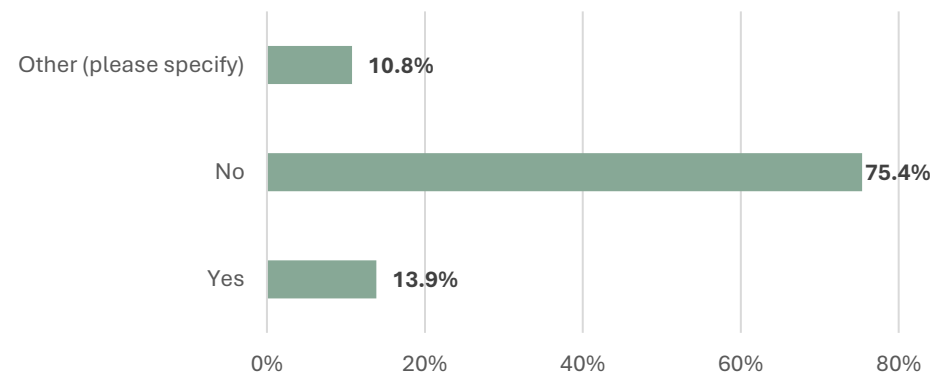
Respondents value environmental and lifestyle factors most when it comes to living or owning property in the area. Clean air and access to hunting and fishing top the list (66.13% each), followed closely by rural living, clean water, and proximity to woods (all at 61.29%). The beauty of the area (53.23%) and recreational opportunities (45.16%) are also significant.

Question 7: Do you support the development of Utility-Scale Solar Energy Facilities on agricultural land?



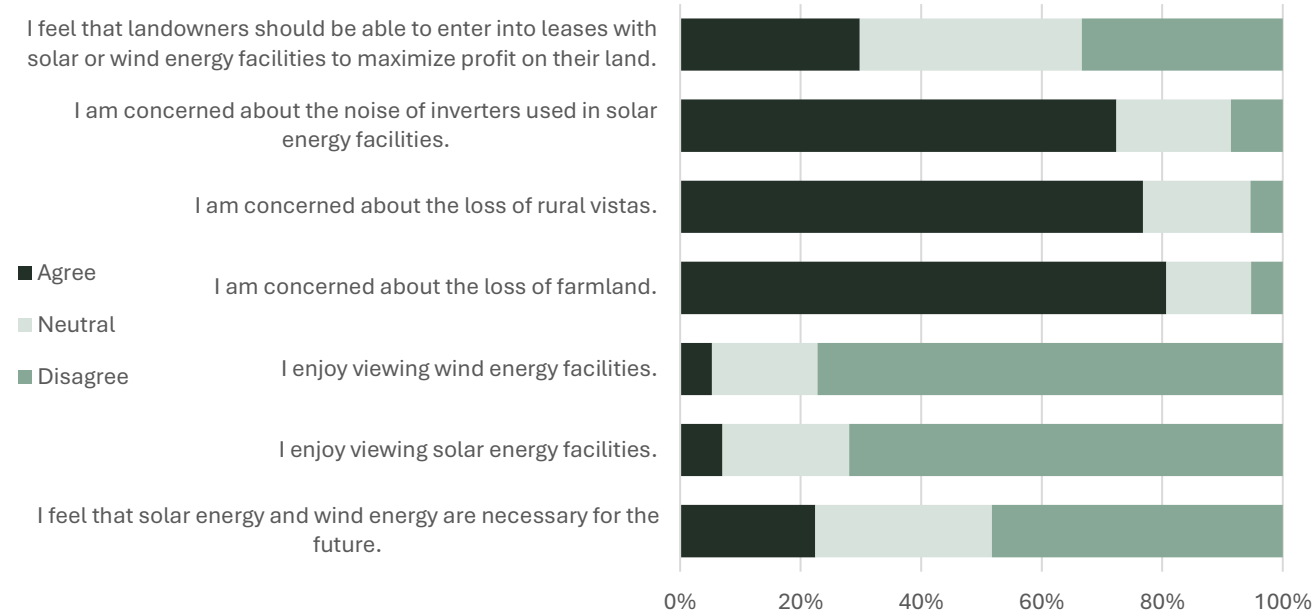
A majority of respondents (65.63%) do not support utility-scale solar development on agricultural land. Only 15.63% are in favor, while 18.75% remain unsure or have no opinion.

Question 8: Do you support the development of Utility-Scale Wind Energy Facilities on agricultural land?



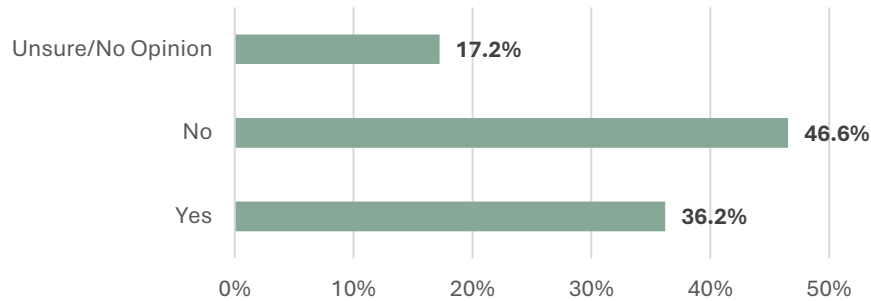
A strong majority of respondents (75.38%) oppose the development of utility-scale wind energy facilities on agricultural land. Only 13.85% support it.

Question 9: Solar & wind energy facilities are typically located on large flat areas. The average current acreage of a solar energy facility is between 800-1,300 acres & wind energy facilities require a larger area. Tell us how you feel about the following statements:



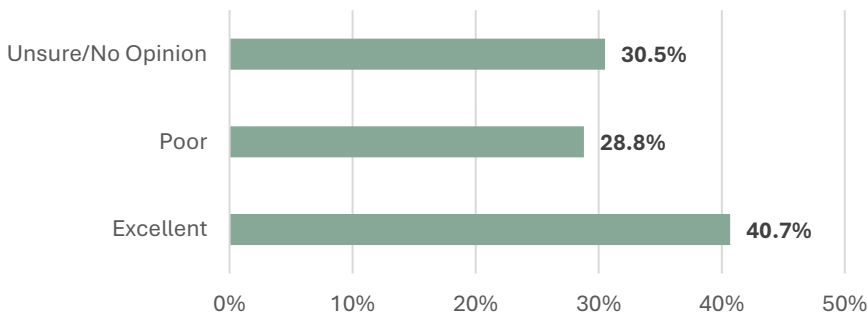
The majority of respondents oppose large-scale solar and wind development, citing strong concerns about farmland loss (80.70%), rural views (76.79%), and noise from solar inverters (72.41%). Most find these facilities unattractive, and nearly half (48.28%) disagree that they’re necessary for the future. While views on private land leases are mixed, only 29.82% support them outright.

Question 10: Are commercial trucks or is truck routing a problem in the Township?



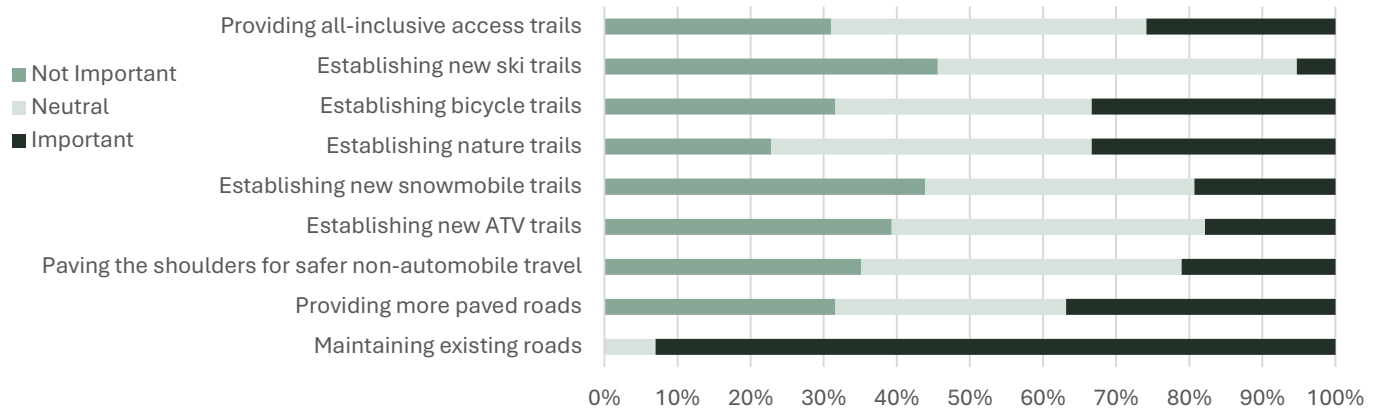
About 36% of respondents see commercial trucks or truck routing as a problem, while about 47% do not. Around 17% are unsure or have no opinion.

Question 11: Will you support a millage only for road improvements?



Around 41% of respondents support a millage for road improvements, while 29% oppose it. About 31% are unsure or have no opinion.

Question 12: Please rate the following transportation goals:

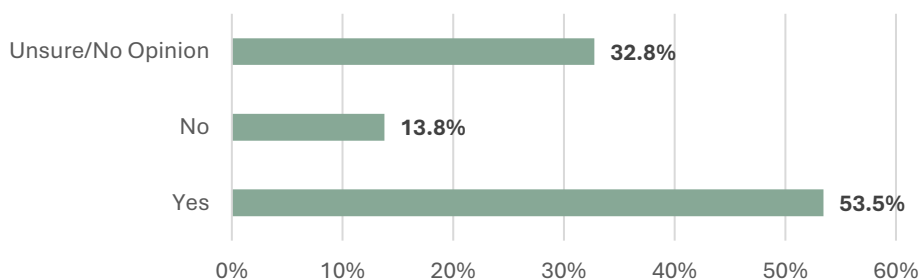


Maintaining existing roads is by far the highest priority, with 92.98% rating it as important. Providing more paved roads has mixed support, with about 37% considering it important and a similar share neutral or not important. Safer shoulders for non-automobile travel and new ATV or snowmobile trails have lower importance, with most respondents neutral or not prioritizing them. Nature and bicycle trails have moderate support, while new ski trails are the least important, with over 45% rating them not important. Overall, road maintenance clearly outweighs expansion or new trail development in priority.

Question 13: Are there any roads or intersections that you consider unsafe?

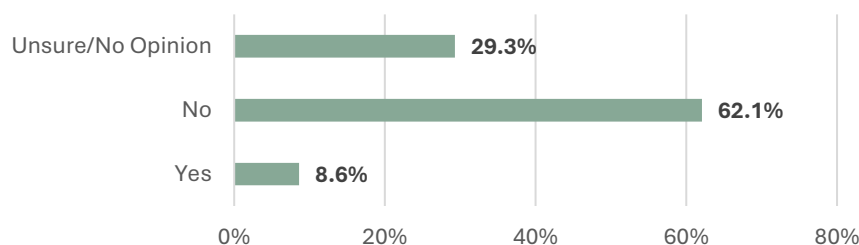
- No (x9)
- Binder Road is usually a giant pot hole and when it is wet, it gets snotty and can often times cause you to lose control of your vehicle (at low speeds).
- There should be some more street lamps. The intersection of National City road and Alabaster road needs one.
- Some railroad crossings
- Binder Rd & Alabaster sand Lake & Alabaster
- Alabaster & 23
- not been here long enough
- South end of National City Road
- Yes- Keystone and Crosby, to mush brush can't see around corner
- All truck routes intersection
- The intersection of Alabaster and Sand Lake roads is still dangerous. There should be a 4-way stop and a street light should be at the intersection.
- National city (Gypsum employees)
- Kitchen rd. turner mi.
- Train tracks over turtle. What are you supposed to do there? It has a yield, I slow down to check but other just blow through it...
- South end of national city rd
- Currently M65 and Sherman (Whittemore) road maybe a blinking light yellow on 65 and blinking red for Sherman Slow traffic on M65 coming into town.
- National city and Whittemore tree trim for clearer view

Question 14: Would you support Township incentives for broadband expansion?



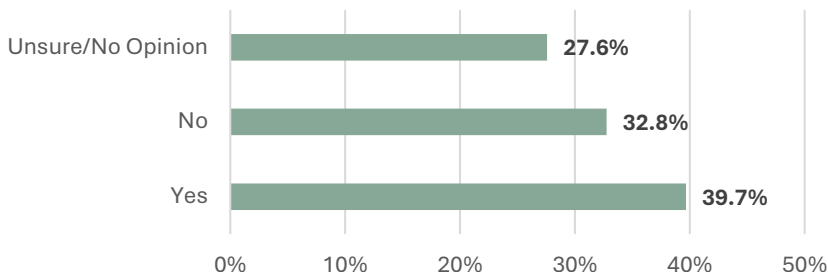
A majority of respondents (54%) support township incentives for broadband expansion, while 14% oppose it and 33% are unsure or have no opinion.

Question 15: Should the municipality expand commercially?



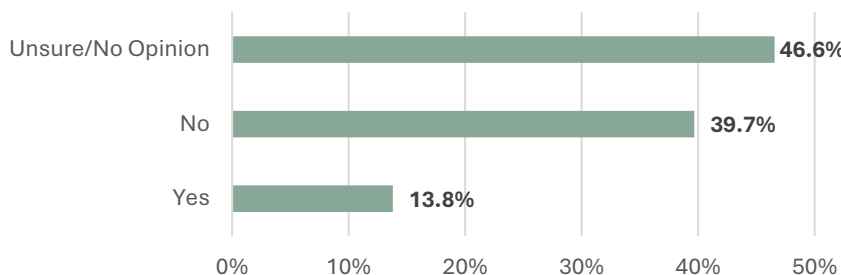
Most respondents (62%) do not support commercial expansion in the municipality. Only 8.6% are in favor, while about 30% are unsure or have no opinion.

Question 16: Would you be interested in tax-based garbage pick-up for residents?



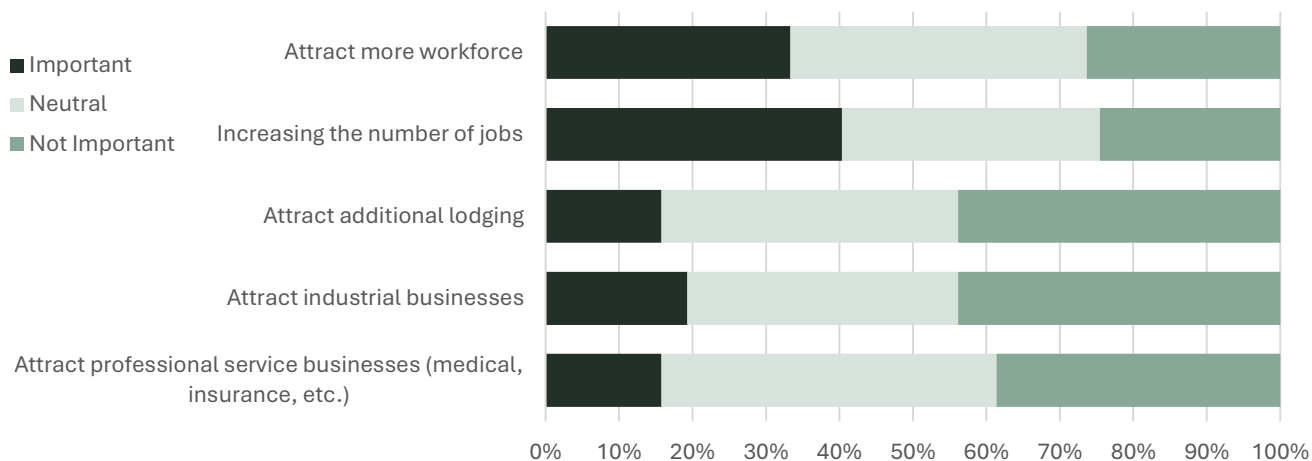
About 40% of respondents are interested in tax-based garbage pick-up, while roughly a third oppose it and another 28% are unsure. This indicates a divided opinion with a slight leaning toward support.

Question 17: If you were going to open a business today, would you do so here?



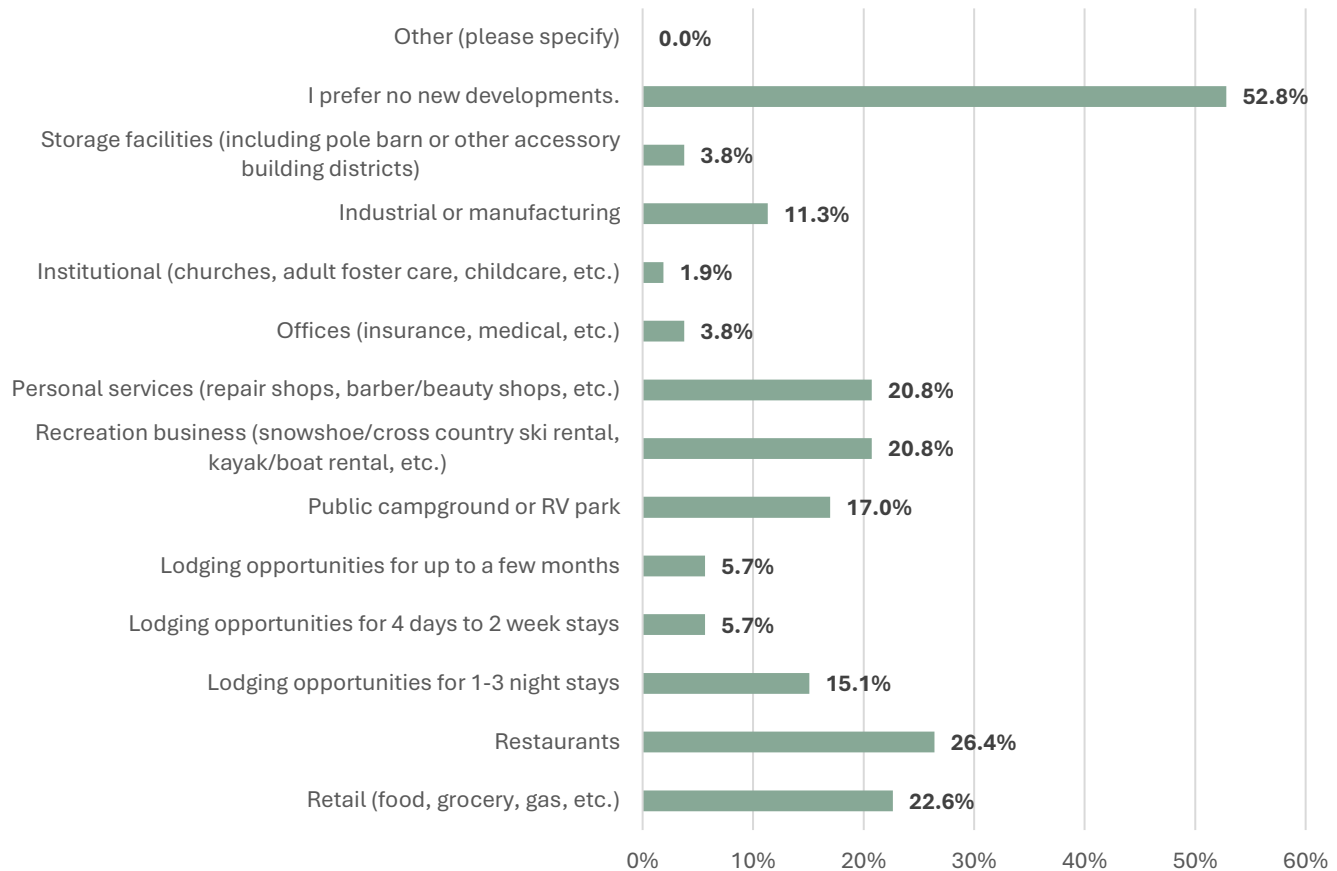
Most respondents are uncertain or hesitant about opening a business here, with 46.55% unsure and 39.66% saying no. Only a small portion (13.79%) would consider starting a business in the area.

Question 18: Are the following economic development concepts important?



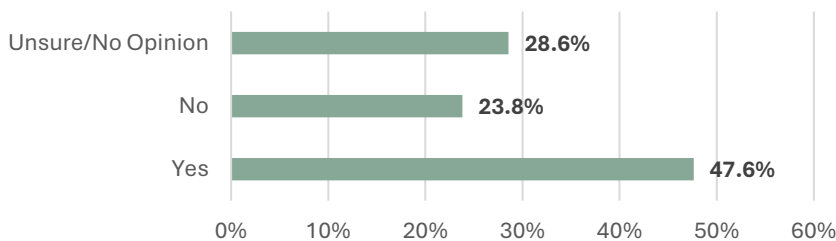
Increasing the number of jobs is the most supported economic development goal, with 40.35% considering it important. Attracting more workforce also has some support (33.33%). However, attracting professional services, industrial businesses, and additional lodging receives limited support, with many respondents neutral or viewing them as not important. Overall, job growth is prioritized over specific types of business attraction.

Question 19: What services do you feel are missing?



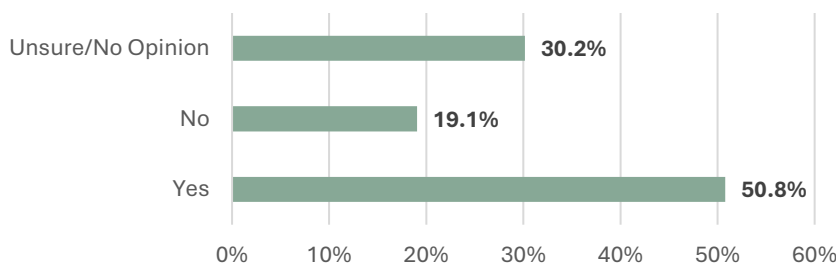
Over half of respondents (52.83%) prefer no new developments, showing a strong desire to maintain the status quo. Among those who identified missing services, restaurants (26.42%) and retail options like food and gas (22.64%) are the most cited. Recreation businesses and personal services each received about 20.75%, while lodging for short stays and public campgrounds were less frequently mentioned.

Question 20: Do you feel that short-term rentals such as Airbnb or Vrbo should be held to a certain number?



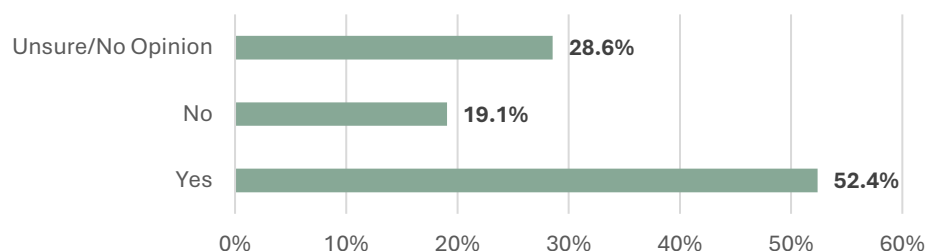
Nearly 48% of respondents believe short-term rentals like Airbnb or Vrbo should be limited in number. About 24% oppose setting limits, while 29% are unsure or have no opinion.

Question 21: Should there be a business permit process for Airbnb or Vrbo rentals?



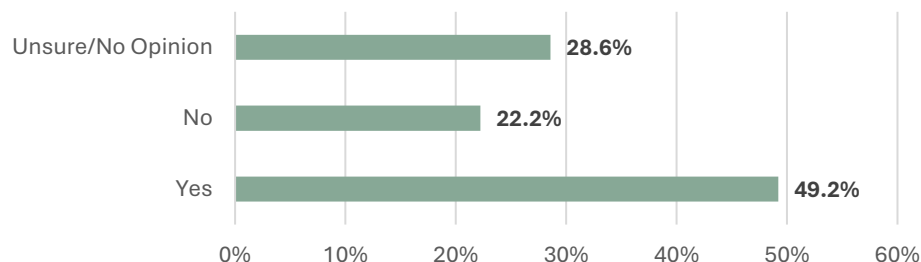
Just over half of respondents (50.79%) support having a business permit process for Airbnb or Vrbo rentals, while 19.05% oppose it.

Question 22: Should there be an annual inspection process for short-term rentals?



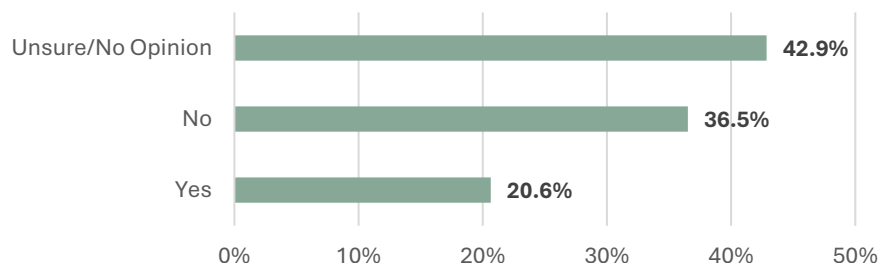
A slight majority (52.38%) support an annual inspection process for short-term rentals, with 19.05% opposed and 28.57% unsure or neutral.

Question 23: Should there be an annual inspection process for all rental units?



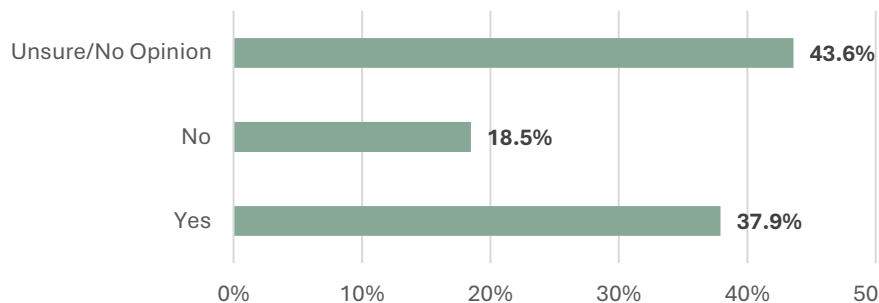
Nearly half of respondents (49.21%) support annual inspections for all rental units, while 22.22% oppose and 28.57% are unsure or have no opinion.

Question 24: Are vacation rentals a problem in residential areas?



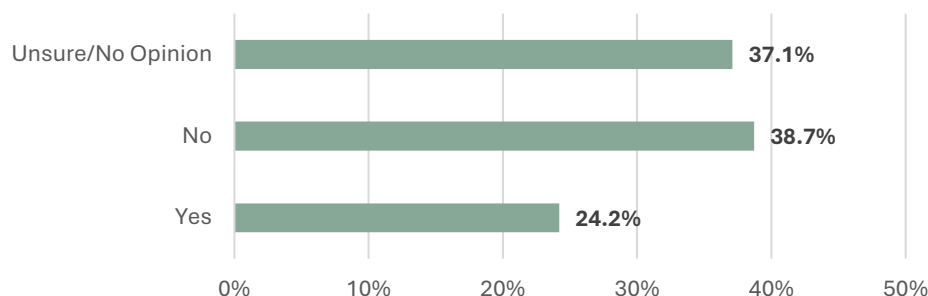
Most respondents are unsure or do not view vacation rentals as a problem in residential areas, with 42.86% unsure and 36.51% saying no. Only 20.63% believe vacation rentals are a problem, indicating limited concern overall.

Question 25: Do you feel any of the following should be pursued when developing housing in the area?



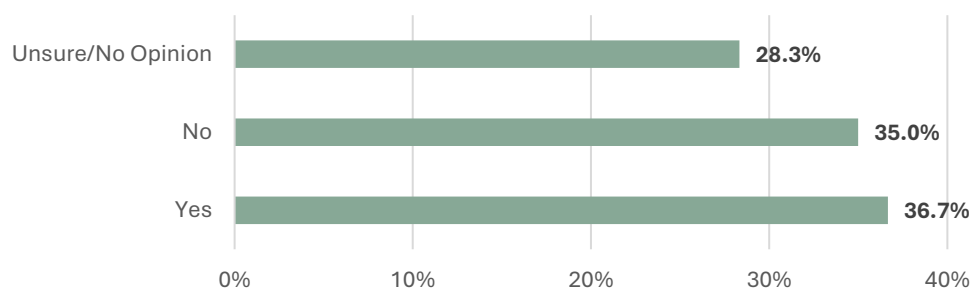
The most favored housing option is single-family detached homes, with 34.78% support. Smaller shares support minimum size requirements (17.39%), senior housing, and mixed-use housing (both 13.04%).

Question 26: Should the municipality find and promote opportunities to encourage an increase in affordable housing?



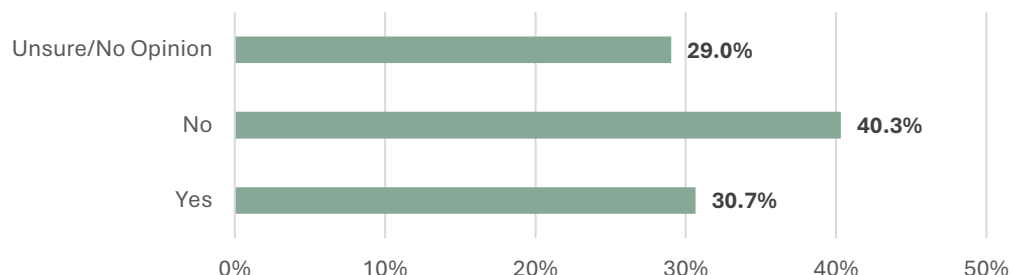
Most respondents are either opposed (38.71%) or unsure (37.10%) about the municipality promoting affordable housing, while only 24.19% support it.

Question 27: Do you support accessory dwellings (separate small living spaces on the same property)?



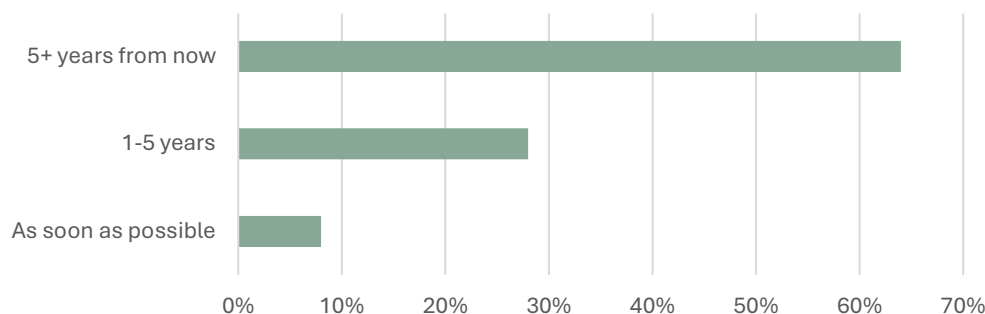
Respondents are fairly split on accessory dwellings, with 36.67% in support, 35% opposed, and 28.33% unsure or neutral. This indicates no clear consensus on the issue.

Question 28: Do you support garage apartments?



More respondents oppose garage apartments (40.32%) than support them (30.65%), with about 29% unsure or neutral.

Question 29: If you are looking to move from your current residence, how long until you do so?

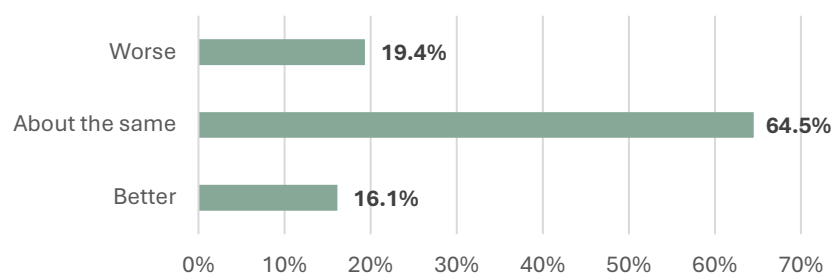


Most respondents (64%) are not planning to move for at least five years. Another 28% expect to move within 1–5 years, while only 8% plan to move as soon as possible.

Question 30: If you are moving in the future, why?

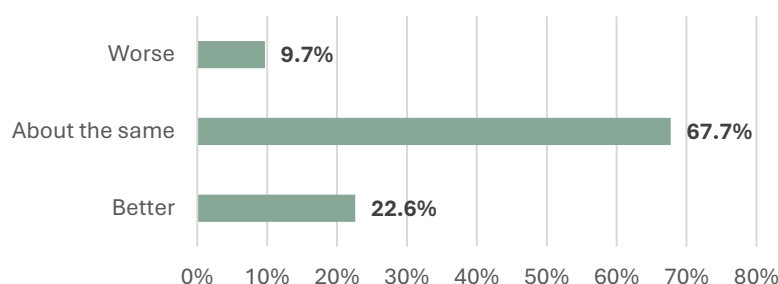
- Traffic
- Death is the only reason I would move from our house.
- Just moved here and built on property-not moving.
- For peace & quiet
- Up in age, all my relatives have died or moved out of Michigan
- No
- Not moving
- Retirement
- Not moving
- New adventures
- Change in health or family situation
- We now have a marijuana grow facility on our street plus gypsum owns property now and are blowing up the ground with all the extra traffic our road has become dangerous and is a mess in many ways
- If medical conditions demands if medical conditions require it
- Retirement
- Retirement
- Get cash and move to a smaller house
- Pot farms & destruction of farm lands for what lands. And further pot dispensaries, if allowed.

Question 31: How would you rate the current quality of life here compared to 5 years ago?



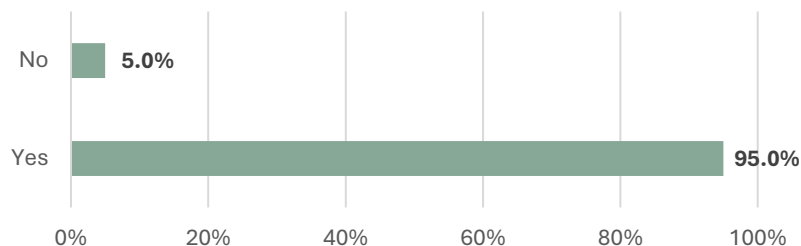
The majority of respondents (64.52%) feel the quality of life has remained about the same over the past five years. A smaller portion (19.35%) believe it has worsened, while only 16.13% feel it has improved.

Question 32: How would you rate the current quality of life here compared to 5 years ago?



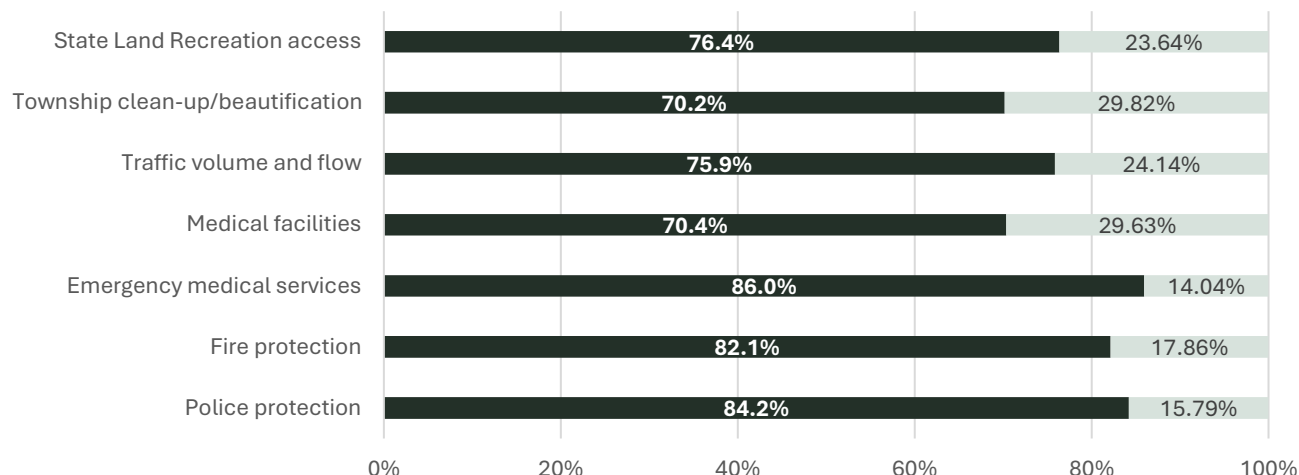
The majority of respondents (64.52%) feel the quality of life has remained about the same over the past five years. A smaller portion (19.35%) believe it has worsened, while only 16.13% feel it has improved.

Question 33: In general, are you satisfied here as a place to live, own property, own a business, or visit?



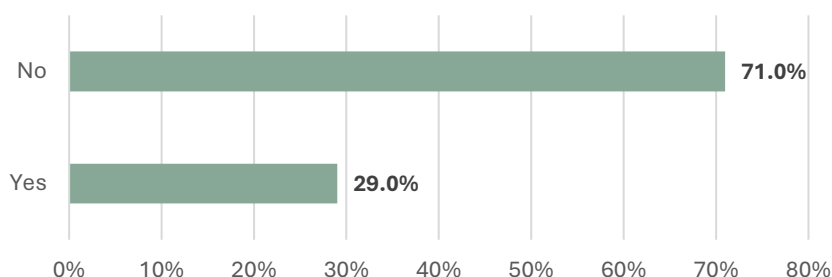
An overwhelming majority of respondents (95%) are satisfied with the area as a place to live, own property, own a business, or visit, indicating strong overall community approval and contentment.

Question 34: Are you satisfied with the following:



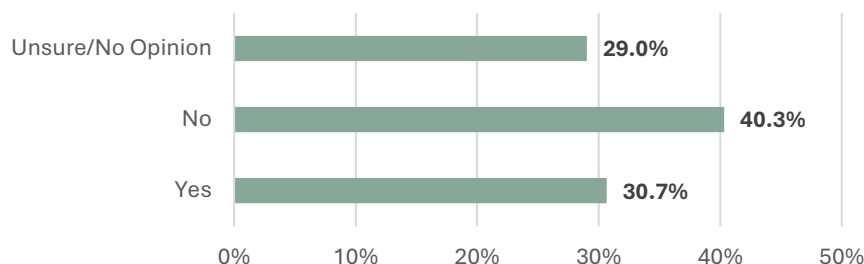
Satisfaction is high across most services, with emergency medical services (85.96%), police (84.21%), and fire protection (82.14%) receiving the strongest approval. Access to state land recreation (76.36%) and traffic flow (75.86%) also rate well. Satisfaction is somewhat lower for medical facilities (70.37%) and township beautification (70.18%), though still generally positive. Overall, public services are well-regarded by most respondents.

Question 35: Have you used the website for information?



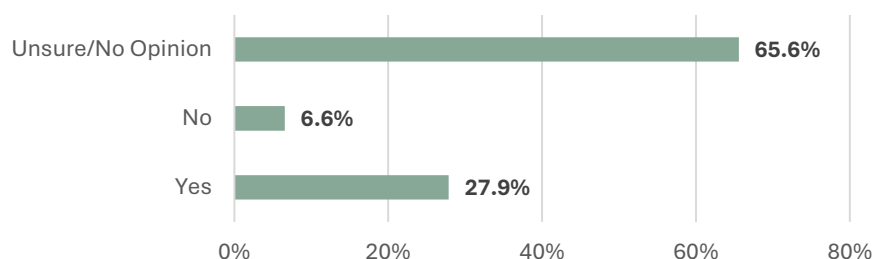
The majority of respondents (70.97%) have not used the website for information, while only 29.03% have. This suggests the website may be underutilized or not widely known as a resource.

Question 36: Do you feel that the Township needs to enforce the Zoning Ordinance better?



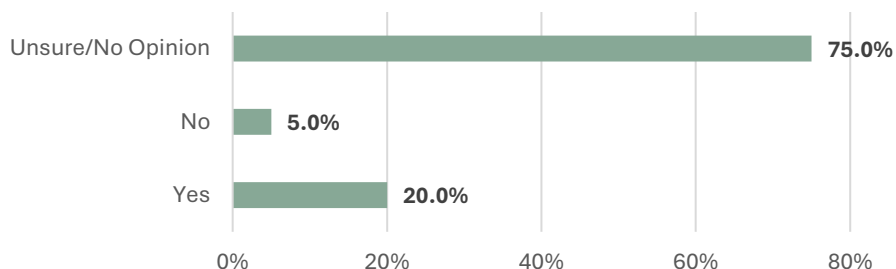
Opinions on zoning enforcement are mixed, with 37.70% believing enforcement should be improved, 22.95% seeing no need, and 39.34% unsure or having no opinion.

Question 37: Is the Township responsive to questions on Zoning and Planning?



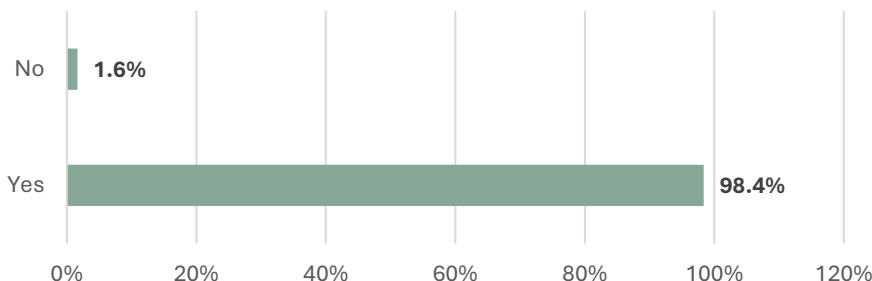
Most respondents (65.57%) are unsure about the Township's responsiveness to zoning and planning questions, while 27.87% say it is responsive and only 6.56% say it is not.

Question 38: Are Planning and Zoning applications processed in a timely manner?



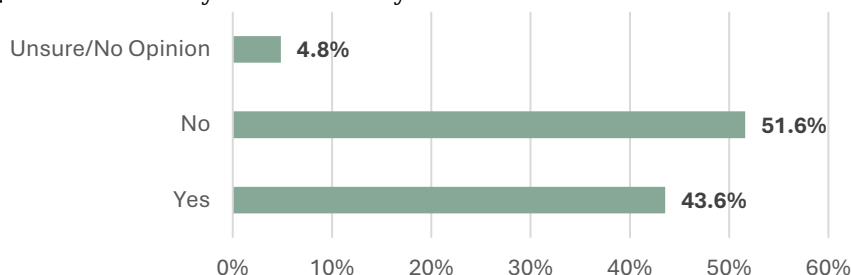
Most respondents (75%) are unsure whether planning and zoning applications are processed in a timely manner, while 20% say they are and only 5% say they are not.

Question 39: Do you feel safe in the community?



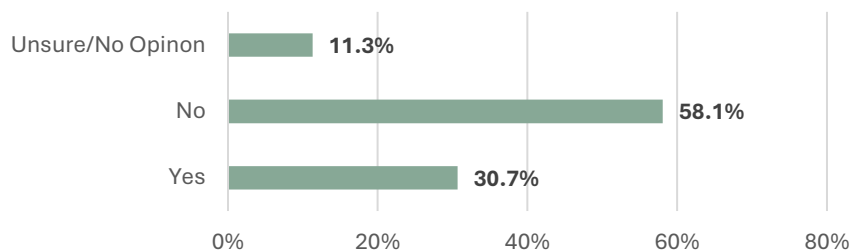
An overwhelming majority of respondents (98.36%) feel safe in the community, indicating a strong sense of security among residents. Only one respondent reported otherwise.

Question 40: Do you know that you can text 911?



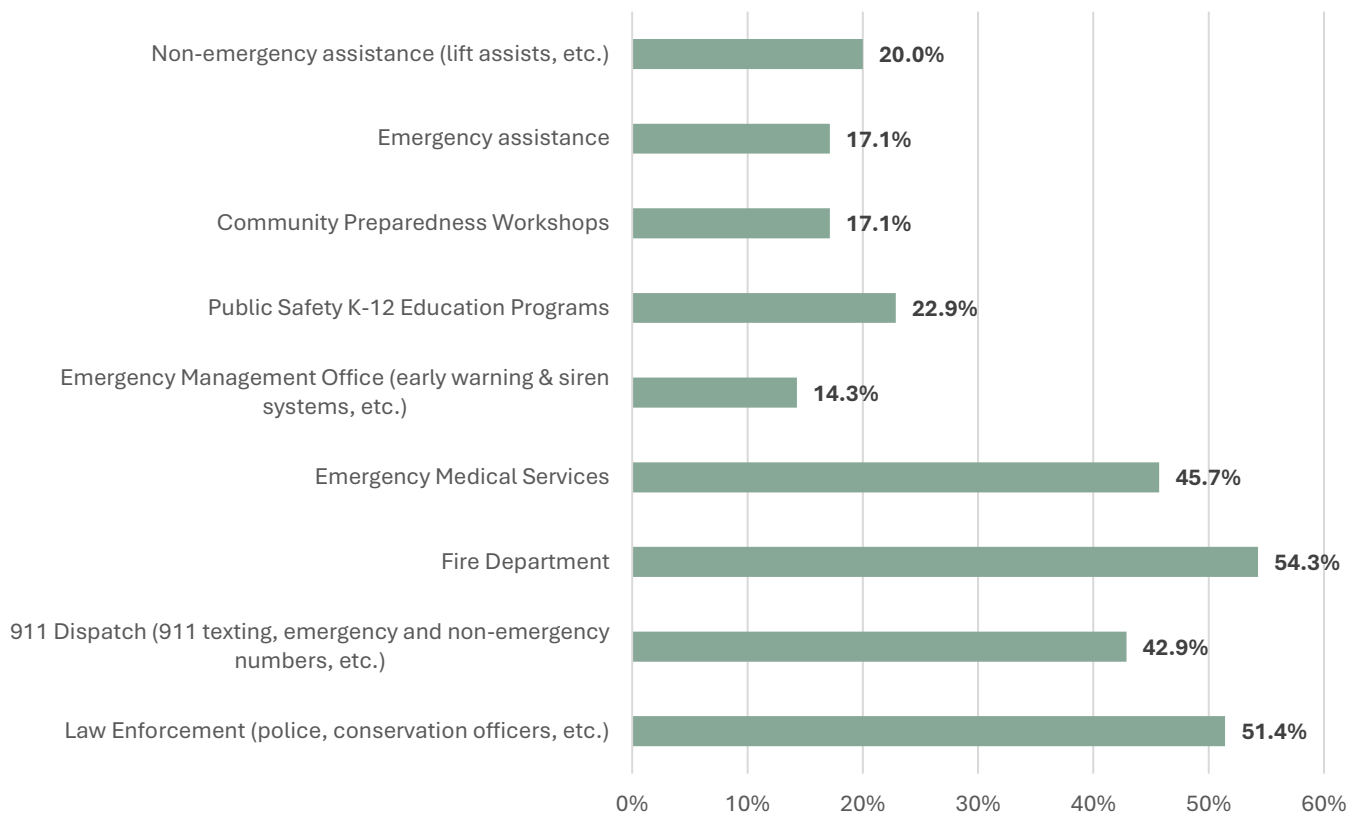
Over half of respondents (51.61%) were unaware that texting 911 is an option, while 43.55% knew about the service.

Question 41: Are you aware that your local fire department may provide smoke alarms to residents?



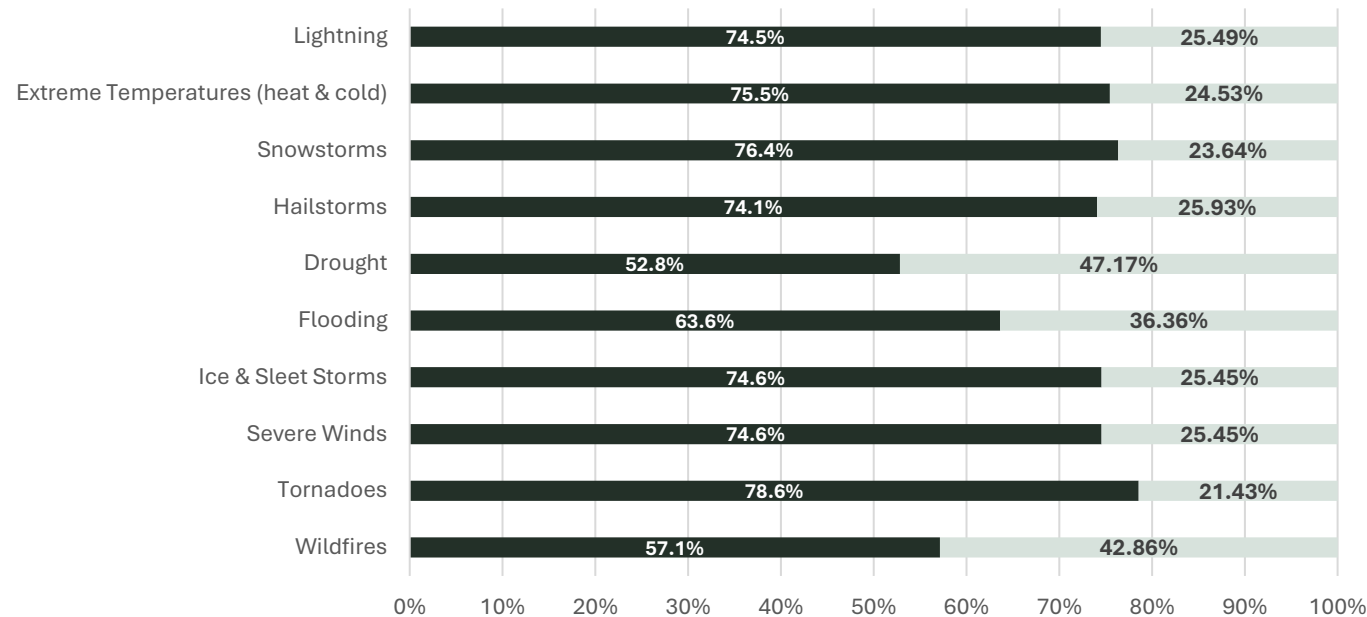
A majority of respondents (58.06%) were unaware that the local Fire Department may provide smoke alarms, while only 30.65% were aware.

Question 42: In your opinion, are there any public safety services that should be provided?



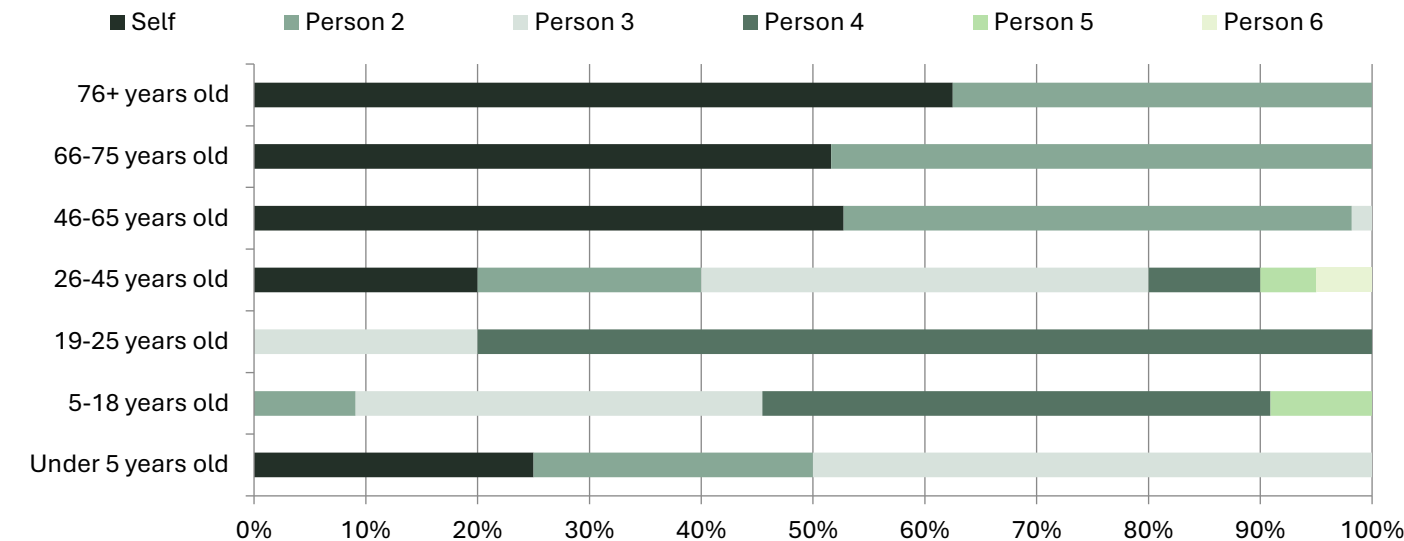
Respondents identified Fire Department services (54.29%) and Law Enforcement (51.43%) as the top public safety needs, followed by Emergency Medical Services (45.71%) and 911 Dispatch services (42.86%). Other services like public safety education, preparedness workshops, and emergency management were less commonly selected.

Question 43: Are you aware of the safety procedures for the following weather-related emergencies?



Awareness of weather-related emergency procedures is generally high, especially for tornadoes (78.57%), snowstorms (76.36%), and extreme temperatures (75.47%). However, fewer respondents are aware of procedures for wildfires (57.14%) and drought (52.83%), indicating potential gaps in preparedness for those events. Overall, most residents are informed about common severe weather risks, but outreach may be needed for less frequent or emerging threats.

Question 44: Enter the age of the members of your household, including yourself.



Most respondents are between 46–75 years old, with many listing only themselves or one other person. Younger age groups, especially children under 18 and young adults (19–25), are less represented and typically listed as additional household members (Person 3–5). Households with members aged 76+ tend to be small, often single or two-person homes. Overall, the data suggests an older population with relatively few large or multi-generational households.

Notice of Intent to Update the Master Plan



Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

80 Livingston Blvd Suite U-108 | PO Box 457 | Gaylord, MI 49734 | Voice: 989.705.3730 | Fax: 989.705.3729 | nemcog.org

Notice of Intent to Update Master Plan: Sherman Township

November 4, 2024

Sherman Township has begun working with the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) to update their Master Plan. The Township is coordinating with NEMCOG to update changes throughout the plan, including socio-economic data, housing assessment, goals and objectives and future land use.

As required by Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, notification is being sent to all geographically adjacent governmental entities, utilities, and transportation agencies to request cooperation and comments.

ADJACENT GOVERNMENTAL UNITS: Prior to and after adoption of the Master Plan, draft and final copies of the plan will be sent to all adjacent governmental units, as defined in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, for review and comment. The plan will be transmitted via email unless the governmental unit requests a printed copy (please fill out and return the enclosed sheet to notify us of the preferred email address or to request a printed copy).

UTILITIES, RAILROADS & PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES: Utilities, railroads, and public transportation agencies must request copies and may be charged for copies, and postage (please fill out and return the enclosed sheet to request a copy of the Master Plan update). Note: there will be no charge to utilities and public transportation agencies that choose to receive the plan via email.

Thank you for your cooperation and we look forward to your participation in this important project!

Sincerely,

Heather Runyan, Regional Planner
Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG)

Regional
Cooperation
Since
1968

Alcona * Alpena * Cheboygan * Crawford * Emmet * Montmorency * Oscoda * Otsego * Presque Isle

An
Equal Opportunity
Employer

Affidavit of Mailing – Notice of Intent

AFFIDAVIT OF MAILING

Notice of Intent to Update Master Plan

I, Theresa Huff, certify that the communities and agencies on the attached list were notified of Sherman Township's intent to Update the Master Plan. The notification was sent on November 4, 2024, by first class mail and in accordance with Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Iosco County
PO Box 778
Tawas City, MI 48764 | 8. Turner Township
211 Bright Angle Dr.
Prudenville, MI 48651 |
| 2. Arenac County
PO Box 747
Standish, MI 48658 | 9. Whitney Township
1515 North Huron Road
Tawas City, MI 48763 |
| 3. Alabaster Township Planning Commission
1716 South US 23
Tawas City, MI 48763 | 10. Lake State Railway
750 N. Washington Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48607 |
| 4. Grant Township Planning Commission
4049 Indian Lake Rd
National City, MI 48748 | 11. Iosco Co Road Commission
3939 West M-55
Tawas City, MI 48763 |
| 5. Tawas Township Planning Commission
27 McArdle Rd
Tawas City, MI 48763 | 12. Iosco Co Transit Corporation
1036 Aulerich Drive
East Tawas, MI 48730 |
| 6. Reno Township Planning Commission
6981 Miller Rd
Whittemore, MI 48770 | 13. DTE Energy
1 Energy Plaza
Detroit, MI 48226 |
| 7. Burleigh Township
2495 Putman Road
Whittemore, MI 48770 | 14. Consumers Energy
One Energy Plaza
Jackson, MI 49201-2276 |

Transmittal Letter for Draft Plan

Notice of Public Hearing

Resolutions of Adoption

