

Weesaw Township Master Plan Update 2024 Berrien County, Michigan

Adopted by the Township Board September 16, 2015; Update Adopted: May 15, 2024



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**WEESAW TOWNSHIP
 MASTER PLAN UPDATE 2024**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Weesaw Township is primarily an agricultural community with residential homes in rural settings. To maintain the quality of life and the essential rural character of the Township, a guide is needed to determine how growth decisions will be made that reflect residents' desires regarding land use. As growth pressure continues resulting in the conversion of productive farmland into other uses, a plan for orderly development is necessary. The Master Plan serves as the land development policy guide reflecting community goals and philosophies in relation to the use of land.

A Township Master Plan was adopted in 2000. The planning process involved a Public Workshop held in April, 1999, and a Public Hearing in September, 1999 along with monthly Planning Commission meetings. The issues identified during the process are reflected in the goals, policies, and direction for future land use. In 2006, the Township began an update to the Master Plan and due to changes in the Planning Commission membership and other factors, the update was put on hold until 2009. The updated plan was reviewed and adopted according to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, which became effective in 2008. After



review of the Master Plan Update draft by the surrounding municipalities and the Berrien County Planning Commission as required by the Planning Act, the Township Planning Commission held a public hearing on December 28, 2009 and recommended approval of the Master Plan Update. The Township Board adopted the updated Master Plan on January 20, 2010.

In the fall of 2014, another update to the Master Plan was determined to be needed by the Township. The planning process included several meetings with the Township Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator and a Public Hearing on August 24, 2015. The updated plan was adopted on September 16, 2015 according to the required process in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, of 2008. This update was initiated in 2023 and a public meeting was held June 26, 2023 to gather input on the plan update. A public hearing on the plan was also held before adoption on April 22, 2024.

Overall, the Weesaw Township Master Plan looks forward to a twenty-year time horizon. Accordingly, the elements of the Master Plan are not meant to be accomplished overnight, but rather serve as the guide to growth, providing direction for the development decisions that will confront the Township. The Master Plan consists of several elements, including the Community Profile, Community Vision, Goals, Policies, Public Input, and Future Land Use.

- The Community Profile provides background material on the Township’s population, and demographic make-up as well as a summary of the *existing* use of land. This chapter was updated in 2022 to reflect newer demographic data and more information regarding natural features and agriculture was added.



A Community Vision provides focus and identifies the key concerns that will be addressed by the Master Plan. This chapter was updated to reflect any new issues and conditions.

- Goals and Policies define how the Township will deal with those concerns and protect its community character.
- The Future Land Use text describes what types of new development the Township believes would be most appropriate in the community, and suitable locations for such development. This text was updated to reflect current conditions.
- The Future Land Use Map is an illustration of the long-range land use pattern of the Township; and
- Public input is an essential component to the Master Plan process. A public input session was held on June 26, 2023 and a public hearing was held before adoption on April 22, 2024.

When combined, all of these pieces fit together to create a picture of Weesaw Township twenty years from now.

Rationale for the Plan

The basic rationale of the Master Plan is outlined in the *Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008)* and the related Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (Act 110 of 2006). Knowing the purpose of the Master Plan is important for a number of reasons:

- Provisions of the Plan must be based upon the Planning Act in order to pass careful scrutiny by a court of law;
- The purposes of the Act outline the basic intent of the Master Plan, including the subjects of planning efforts; and
- When formulating the Plan, it is important that the community understand the direction in which the Plan is heading, the purposes can provide the basis for future goals and objectives.

The Planning Act specifically identifies the purpose of the Master Plan: “*to guide and accomplish (development that) considers the character of the planning jurisdiction and its suitability for particular uses, judged in terms of such factors as trends in land an population development...(will) best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity*”

and general welfare...(and to encourage the) use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability.” These guidelines serve as the foundation for the intent and use of the Plan.

Zoning and the Master Plan

There are important distinctions between the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance. While the Master Plan is a *guide* for land use for the future; the Zoning Ordinance

regulates the use of land in the present. The Master Plan is not a binding, legal document; the Zoning Ordinance is a law that must be followed by the Township and its residents.

Implementation of the Master Plan is realized through the Zoning Ordinance. Local control of land use (with some exceptions, such as state and federal land uses) is an accepted legal principle. Land use regulation is controlled through the separation of land into various use areas, called zoning districts. The rules governing these districts are contained in the Zoning Ordinance. Overall, the policies regarding land use are expressed through the Master Plan. Therefore the plan should be reviewed to make certain that new development conforms to what was planned. But as events unfold these plans must be changed to take unanticipated events into account.

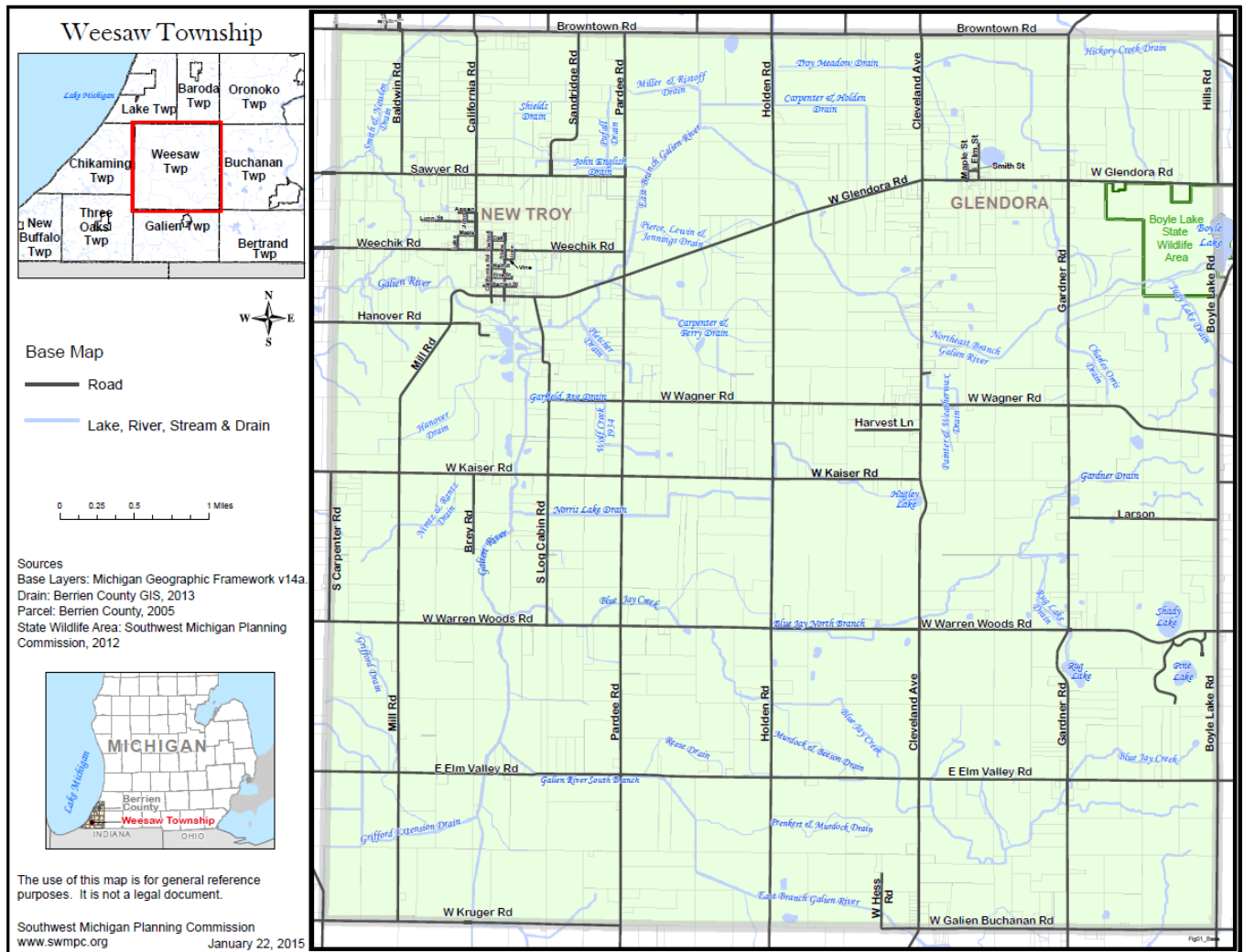
The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires the Master Plan to contain a *zoning plan* that describes how the land use designations on the Future Land Use Map correspond to the zoning districts shown on the Zoning Map. A zoning plan is included in this plan at the end. This zoning plan is a guide for updating the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to be consistent with the Future Land Use map and the recommendations of the updated Master Plan.

The Master Plan and The Zoning Ordinance	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Master Plan is a Guide• The Master Plan is adopted by the Planning Commission• The Master Plan shows how land is to be used in the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Zoning Ordinance is a Law• The Zoning Ordinance is adopted by the Legislative Body• The Zoning Ordinance shows how land is regulated today

II. COMMUNITY PROFILE

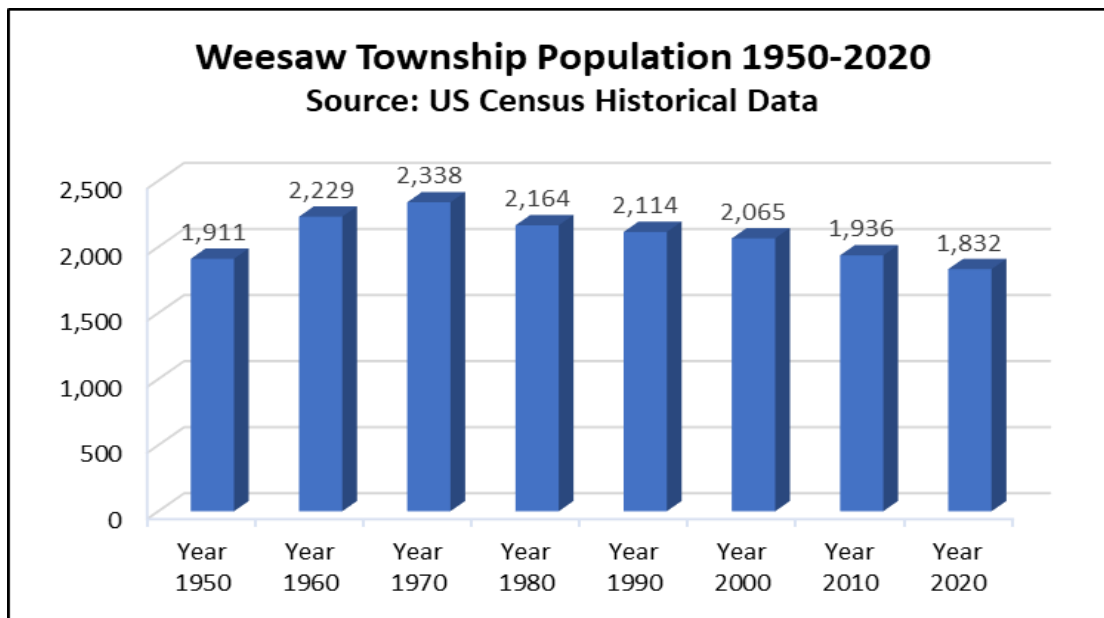
Location

Weesaw Township is located in southern Berrien County. The Township contains two settlement areas called New Troy and Glendora and the Boyle Lake State Wildlife Area is in the northeast corner of the Township. Outside of the settlement areas, the Township has large parcels. The Galien River runs through the Township and an extensive drainage network drains the Township lands.



Population

Most of Weesaw Township’s residents live in a rural sparsely populated setting except for two small unincorporated villages within it, New Troy and Glendora, are centers of small population concentrations. Weesaw Township reached its peak population around 1970 and experienced relatively steady growth until 1970. According to the US Census, the Township had 1,832 residents in 2020, which is a loss of 5% from 2010 to 2020 and a 22% loss from 1970 to 2020. Many of the surrounding townships experienced similar population losses over the same period. Baroda, Lake, New Buffalo, and Oronoko Township witnessed a population increases. Berrien County decreased population by 1.6% while the State of Michigan increased by 2% from 2010 to 2020.



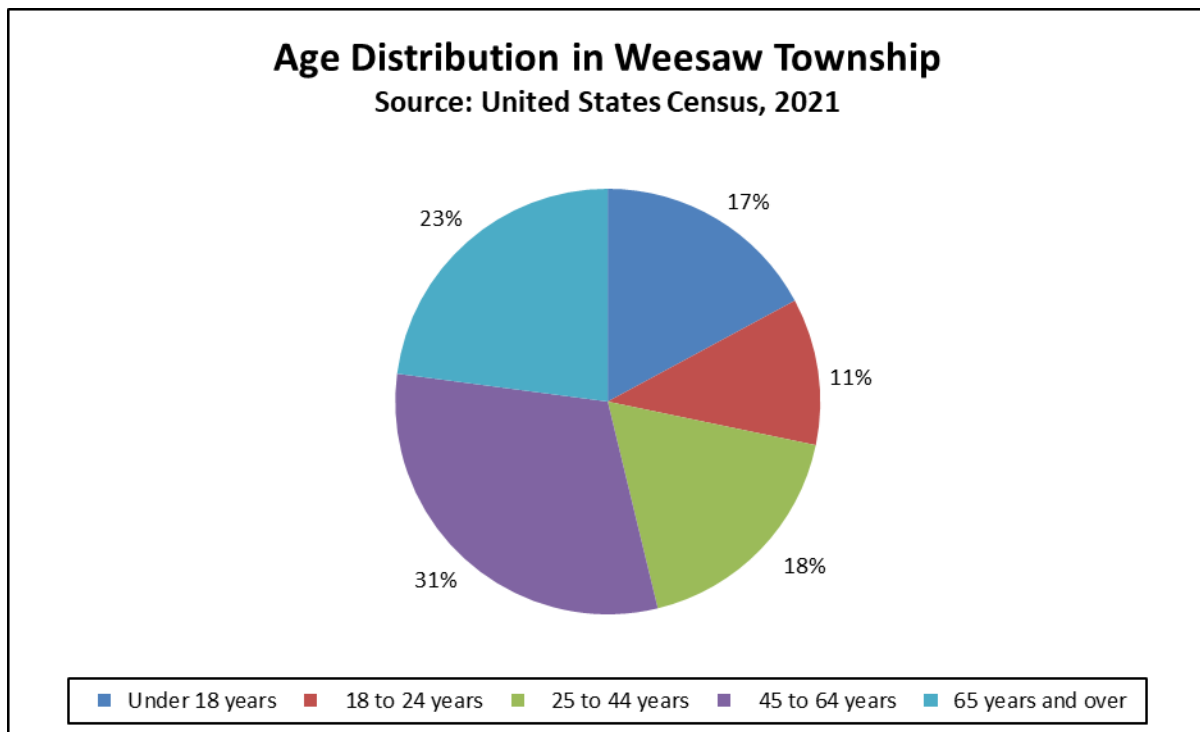
	Population, Surrounding Communities, 1950-2020								
Community	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	% change 2010-2020
Weesaw Twp.	1,911	2,229	2,338	2,164	2,114	2,065	1,936	1,832	-5.4 %
Baroda Twp.	1,558	1,877	2,102	2,666	2,731	2,880	2,801	2,835	1.2 %
Bertrand Twp.	1,342	1,969	2,256	2,369	2,228	2,380	2,657	2,611	-1.7 %
Buchanan Twp.	1,655	2,410	3,183	3,571	3,402	3,510	3,523	3,436	-2.5 %
Chikaming Twp.	1,041	1,473	1,814	1,833	1,679	3,678	3,100	2,778	-10.4 %
Galien Twp.	1,380	1,685	1,671	1,786	1,591	1,611	1,452	1,412	-2.8 %
Lake Twp.	1,432	2,016	2,146	2,212	2,487	3,148	2,972	3,316	11.6 %
New Buffalo Twp.	1,314	2,068	2,583	2,878	2,419	2,468	2,386	2,455	2.9 %
Oronoko Twp.	4,737	6,397	8,482	10,761	9,819	9,843	9,193	9,226	0.4 %
Three Oaks twp.	2,469	2,856	2,894	3,045	3,952	2,949	2,574	2,324	-9.71 %

Population projections for Weesaw Township from 2014-2019 prepared by the ESRI indicate that the population will increase at 0.10%. Population projections for Berrien County from 2014-2019 prepared by the ESRI indicate that the population will decrease by 0.18%. This compares to a 0.1% projected increase for the State of Michigan.

It is important to note, however, that there are reasons to believe that these projections may be inaccurate, and that even the Census population numbers, indicating a lack of growth over the last several years may present a misleading picture of the community. As it becomes clear from the housing statistics provided below, while a small population growth has been reported, the number of housing units in the Township may have slightly increased in recent years (see *Housing Units by Year Built* chart, page 11). The primary reason for this is that Weesaw Township, like other communities in the area, particularly those located on the shores of Lake Michigan, have been attracting people who permanently reside in the Chicago metropolitan area. The scenic natural beauty and the 50 miles of shoreline in Berrien County make it an excellent retreat from the big city. Thus, new homes are being built, but are primarily used seasonally, as second homes, and are not claimed as primary residences by their owners. Thus, growth in the area may be occurring without it being officially recorded.

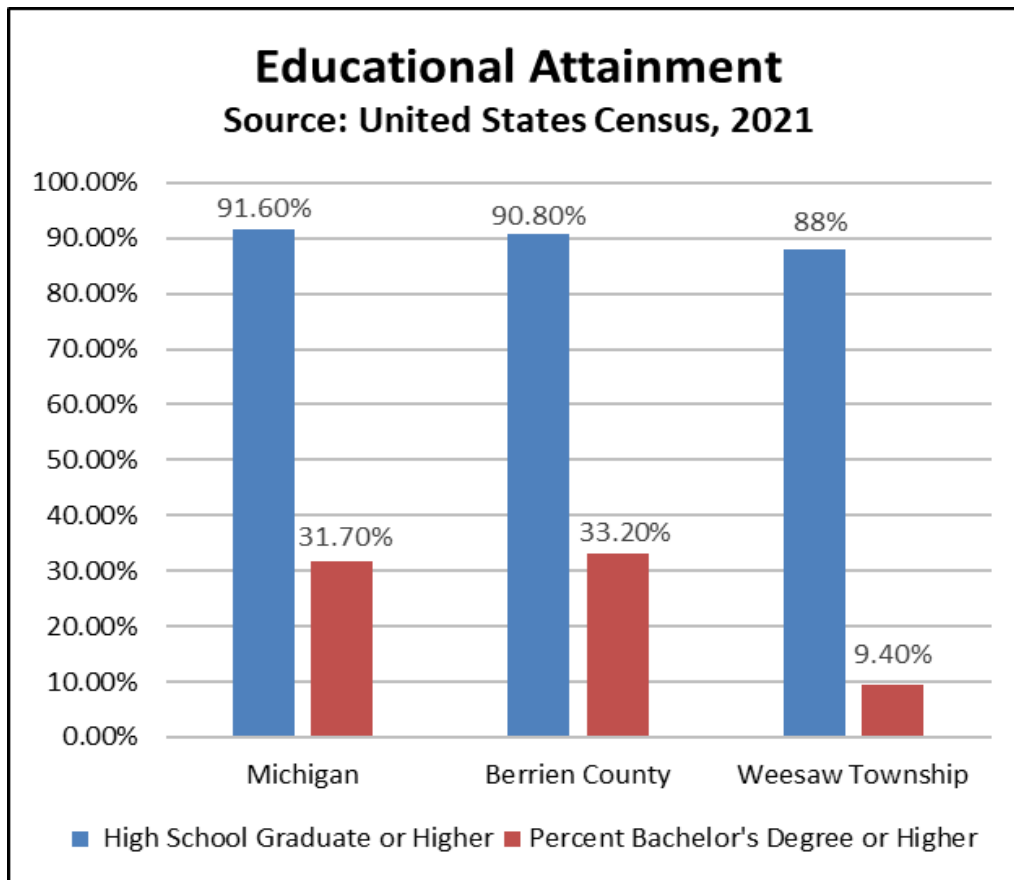
Age Distribution

In 2020, the median age of Weesaw Township residents was 48.7 years. This is high compared to Berrien County at 42.9 years and the State at 40.2 years. This is a significant increase from the median age in 2010 which was 45.7 years and 38.9 years in 2000 for the Township.



Education

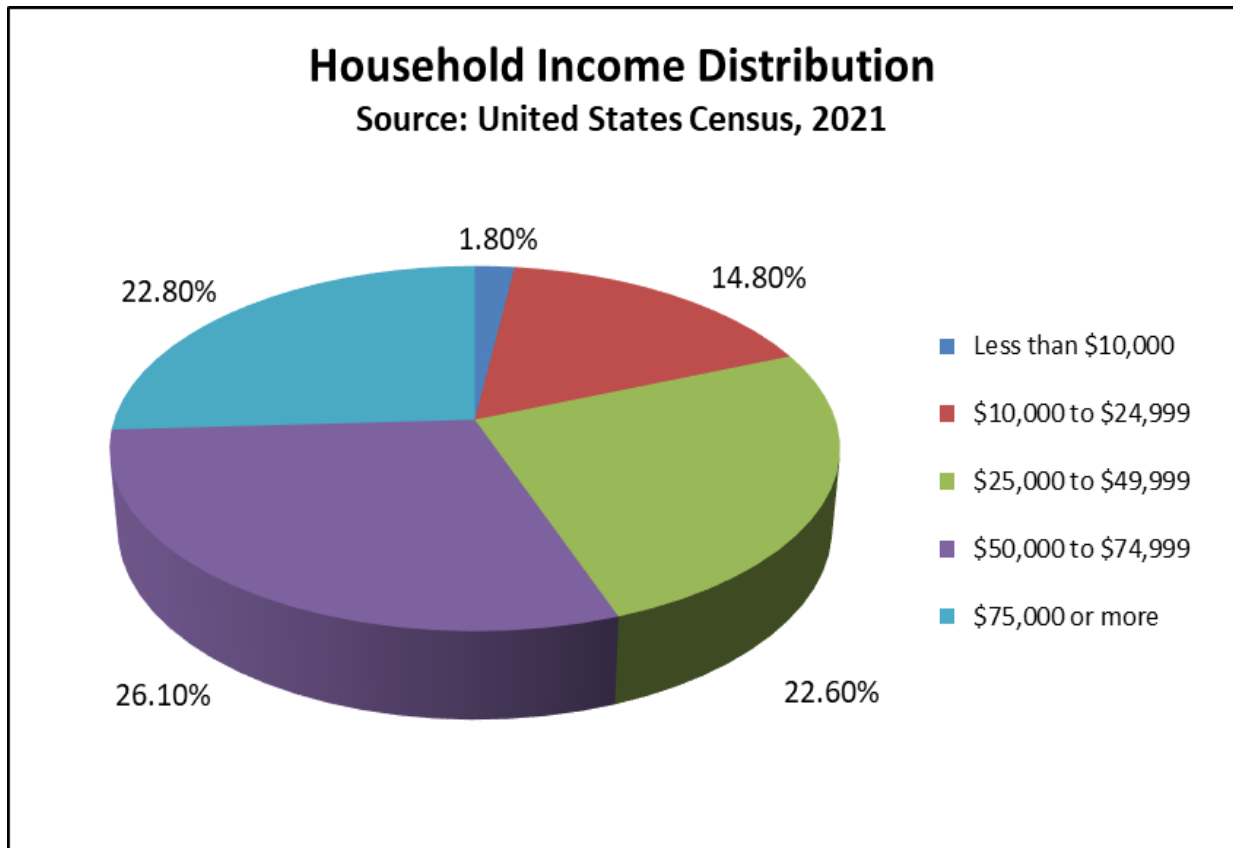
Educational attainment in Weesaw Township, as reported by the 2021 U.S. Census ACS, was not as high as in other parts of the County and the State. This was especially true for the number of persons having a Bachelor's degree or higher (only 9.4% in the Township as compared to 33.2% in Berrien County and 31.7% in the State of Michigan). All of the townships surrounding Weesaw had higher percentages of college graduates, with some having unusually high levels of educational attainment, such as Oronoko Township with 46.3% and Chikaming Township with 40% college graduates.



Income

The 2021 median household income in Weesaw Township was \$50,347, as compared to \$57,535 in Berrien County and \$63,498 in the State of Michigan (2012 ACS Census). Township's households had 49.2% of the incomes under \$50,000 a year and 1.8% earned less than \$10,000 annually.

The vast majority (83.4%) of households in the Township relied on wage and salary income. Self-employed workers constitute 11.2% of the workforce and government employees 5.4%. Thirteen percent of the Township's residents live under the poverty level and more than half of those are either children under 18 years of age or elderly people.



Unemployment

Unemployment trends in Weesaw Township and Berrien County have been similar to each other during recent years with the Township’s unemployment rates being just slightly lower than those in the County. The 2021 unemployment rate for Weesaw Township was 3.6% and for the County it was 3.4%. Both, however, are less than the 2021 unemployment rate for the State of Michigan, 4.2%.

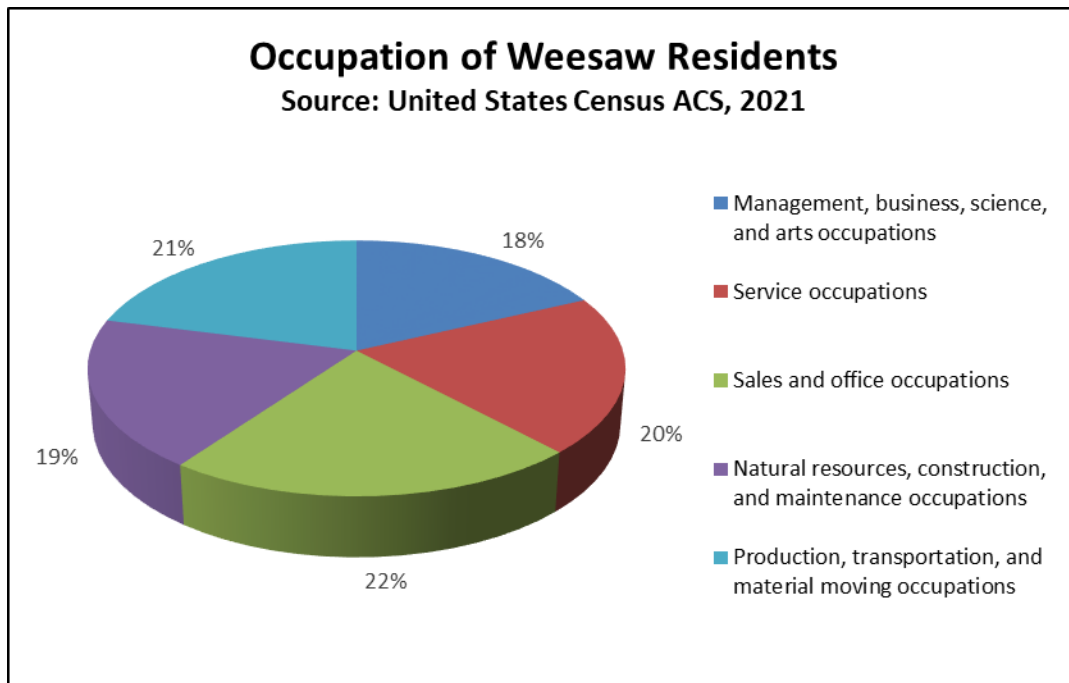
Unemployment Rate			
Year	Weesaw Township (Margin of Error +/-)*	Berrien County **	State of Michigan**
2021	3.60% (+/- 3.10)	3.40%	4.20%
2014	6.40% (+/- 2.60)	8.10%	7.10%
2012	7.40% (+/- 2.70)	9%	9.1%
2009	6.60% (+/- 3.10)	12.40%	14.1%

*U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5 year estimates

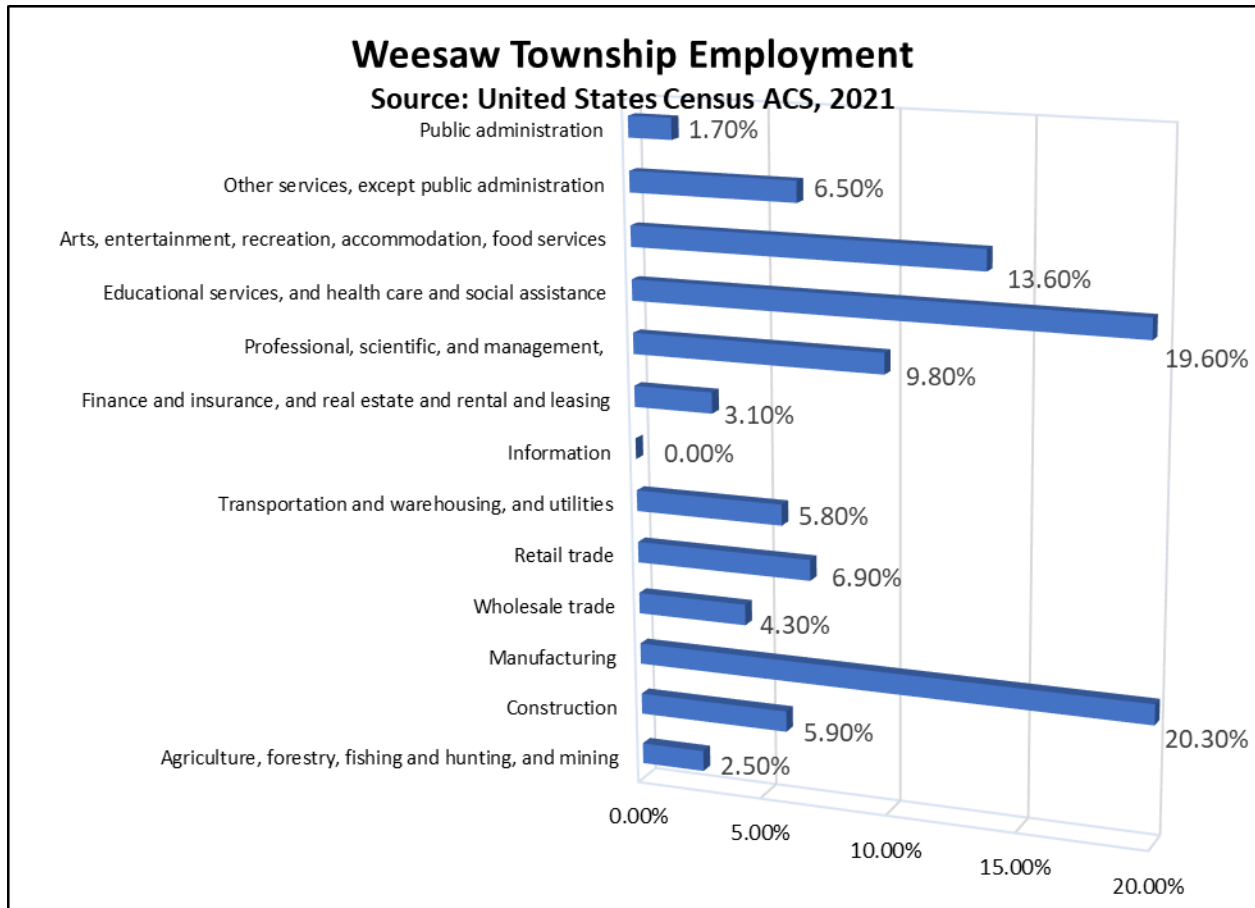
**Bureau of Labor Statistics

Employment and Industries

In 2021, the Township’s labor force included 815 persons. The largest occupation for Weesaw Township residents was sales and office occupations followed by production (22%), transportation and material moving occupations at 21%.



For employment in Weesaw Township, 20.3% are in manufacturing according to the US Census 2021 American Community Survey. At the time of the 2020 U.S. Census less than a third (26%) of the Township’s labor force was employed in the manufacturing sector compared to 38% in 1990. The second leading occupation in the township is educational services, health care, and social assistance at 19.6%.



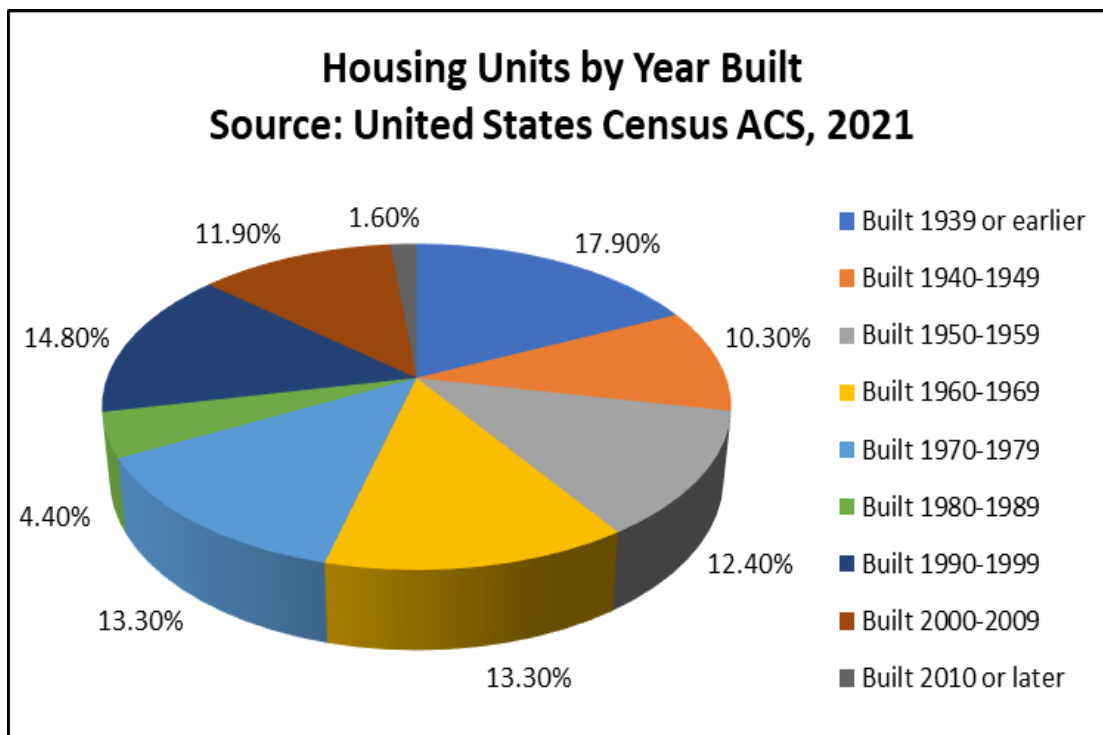
With the large proportion of Township residents employed in the manufacturing sector and the relatively high mean travel time to work (24.9 minutes), one may conclude that many of the Township’s residents are commuting outside the Township. Some of the largest employers in the Berrien County are located in the cities of St. Joseph, Benton Harbor and Niles. These include Whirlpool Corporation, Leco Corporation, Modineer Company, Lake Michigan College, Lakeland Regional Health Systems and Berrien County Government. Other area large employers include Four Winds Casino in New Buffalo and Indiana Michigan Power in Bridgman.

Housing

As of 2020, there were 930 housing units in Weesaw Township. This represented only 1.2% of the total housing stock in Berrien County and is consistent with population data (the population of the Township amounted to 1.2% of the County's population). A large majority, 85.2%, of the housing units in the Township were owner-occupied, as compared to 72.2% in the County. Rural areas generally tend to have higher owner-occupancy rates, while rental units are usually more prevalent in urban areas. In addition, the Township does not have the Lake Michigan shoreline which attracts more seasonal residents. According to the 2020 US Census, 17.4% of the housing units in Weesaw Township were vacant. The vacancy rate in Berrien County in 2020 was slightly lower at 16.7%. The State of Michigan vacancy rate in 2020 was 12%.

According to the County records on parcels, 112 (13%) are recorded as improved residential properties that do not have the homestead exemption (meaning second homes or rentals) and 722 have the homestead exemption (meaning primary residence).

Housing in Weesaw Township is older than in most of the surrounding communities. As of 2020, over half of the housing stock was built before 1970. Less than 25% of the housing stock was built after 1980, which is consistent with population trends.



Housing in Weesaw Township is more affordable than the State of Michigan. The median housing value for owner-occupied housing units in the Township, as of 2021 was \$177,800 and in 2012, was \$128,800. In 2021, this was \$12,800 more than the County's median of \$165,000 and is less than the State of Michigan median of \$199,100.

Existing Land Use/Land Cover

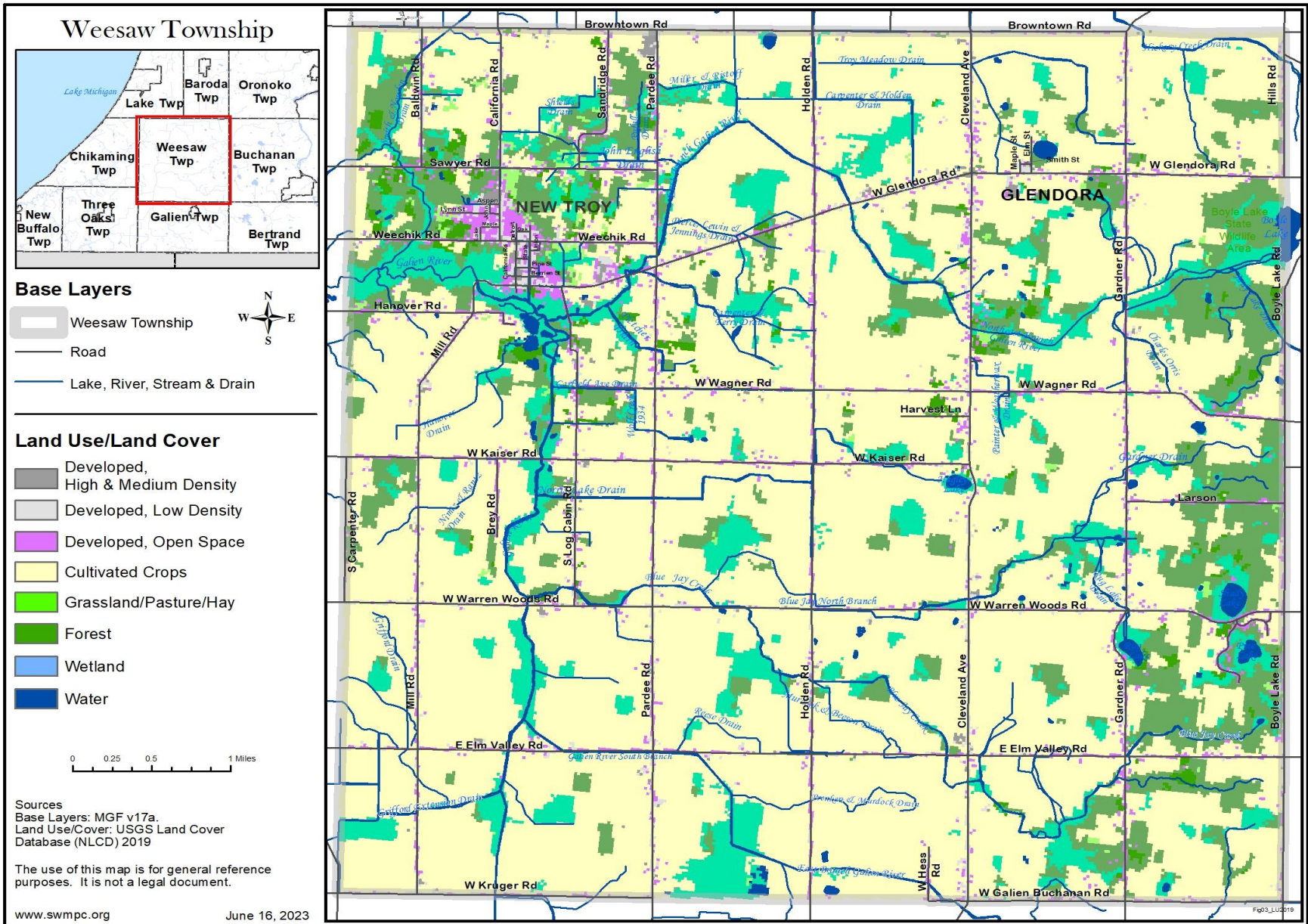
An updated 2019 land use/cover map and a 2022 cropland map provide a “snapshot” of existing land use conditions within the Township and are useful for identifying the issues that need to be addressed in the Plan. The two maps, Cropland and Land Use/Cover are made from satellite imagery. Satellite imagery exhibits inherent differences in classification due to variations in protocols and the time gaps between data acquisition instances. For this reason, acreage will be slightly different for similar land classifications.

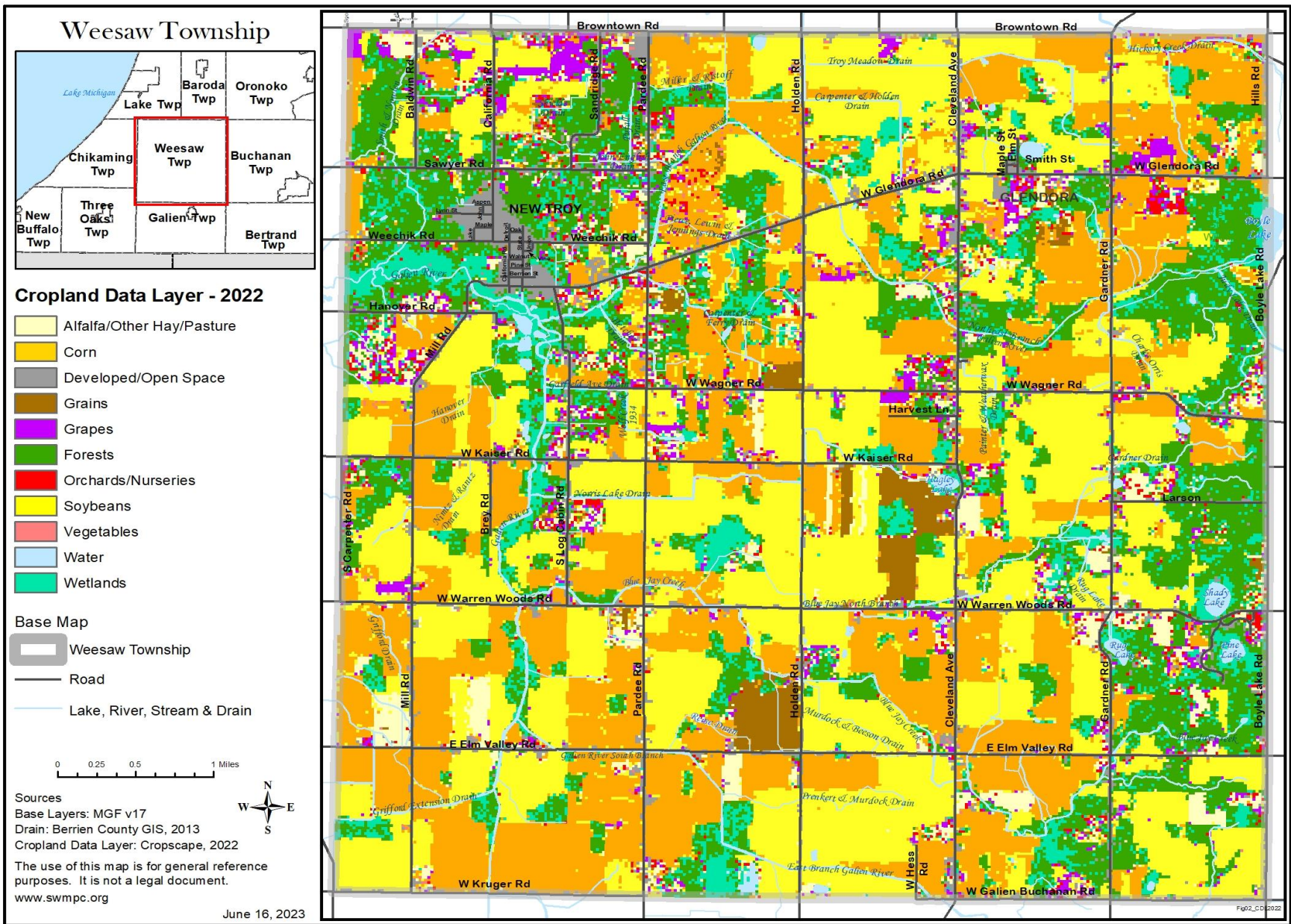
According to the 2019 NOAA CCAP map, Weesaw Township has only 3.2% of its land in low, medium or high-density development. The Township has slightly under 70% of the land in agricultural use and 25% in natural land cover (forest, shrub, grassland, wetland and water). As you can see from the map, most of the development is within New Troy and Glendora and also scattered along the rural roads.

Land Use/Land Cover	ACRES	PERCENT
Developed, High & Medium Density	98	0.4%
Developed , Low Density	648	2.8%
Developed Open Space	726	3.2%
Cultivated Crops	15,679	68.9%
Forest/Shrub/Grassland	3,773	16.6%
Wetland	1,750	7.7%
Water	75	0.4%
TOTAL	22,749	100%

According to the 2022 Cropland Map, over 15,000 acres of the Township is in agricultural production. Most of the agricultural land in the Township is in corn at 45%, followed by soybeans at 38% and pasture/hay at 7%. The Township’s agriculture is diverse with grapes, orchards/nurseries and some vegetables.












Agricultural Lands	ACRES	PERCENT
Corn	7,112	45.4%
Grains	436	2.8%
Grape	638	4.1%
Orchards/Nurseries	423	2.7%
Pasture/Hay	1,133	7.2%
Soybean	5,877	37.5%
Vegetables	59	0.4%
TOTAL	15,679	100%





Existing Land Use/Cover

Weesaw Township
Berrien County,
Michigan

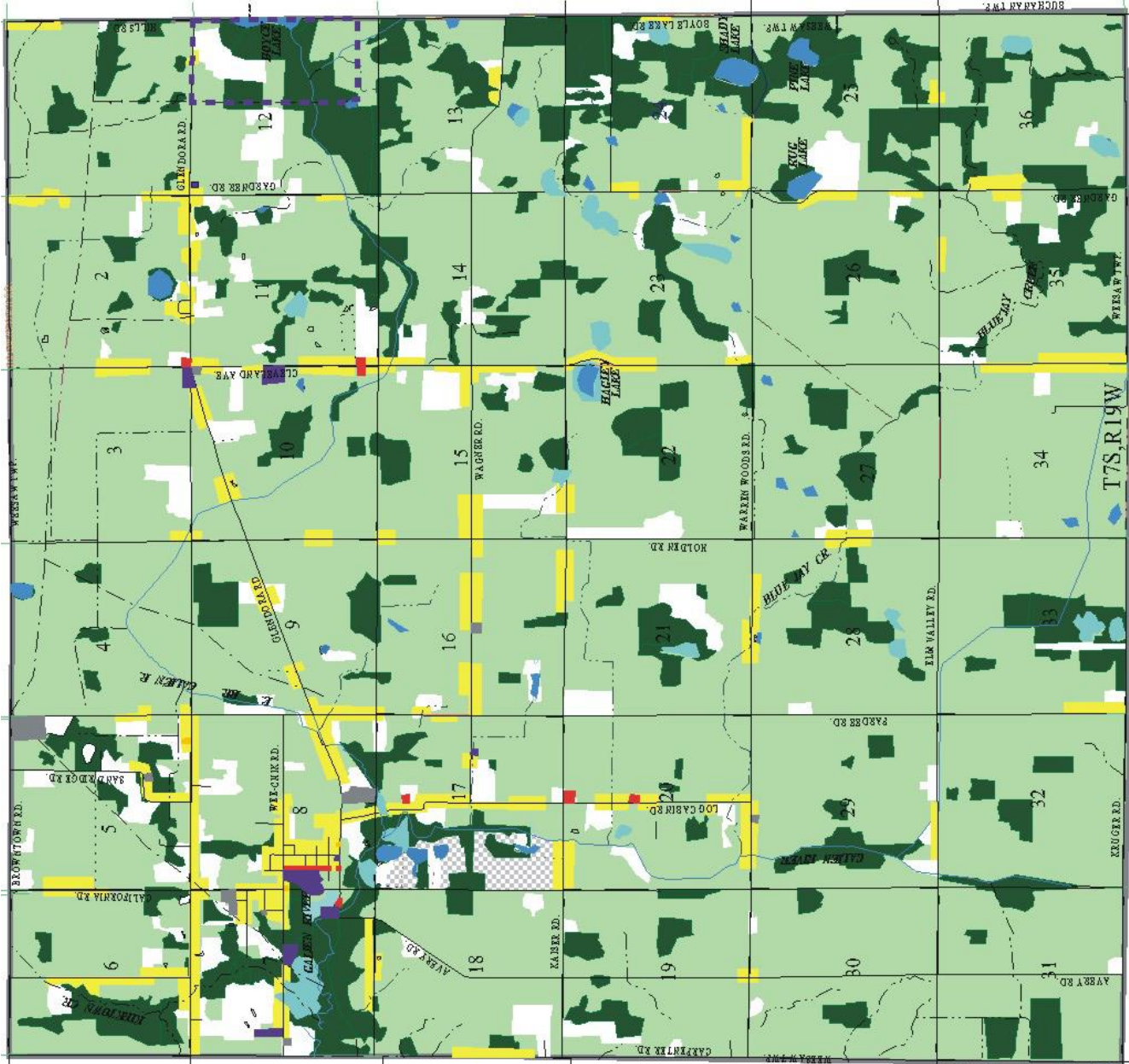
-  Single Family Residential *
-  Multi-Family Residential
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Public/Quasi-Public
-  Vacant/Undeveloped
-  Mining
-  Agriculture
-  Forest
-  Wetlands
-  Open Water

* Single Family Residential Areas Represent Areas Of 3 Or More Housing Units Within 1000' Feet Of Each Other

Data Sources: Land Use/Cover & Base Information - Michigan Resource Information System MDNR 1978, Residential Areas - Langworthy LeBlanc, Inc. Survey 1999



June 1998



Natural Features

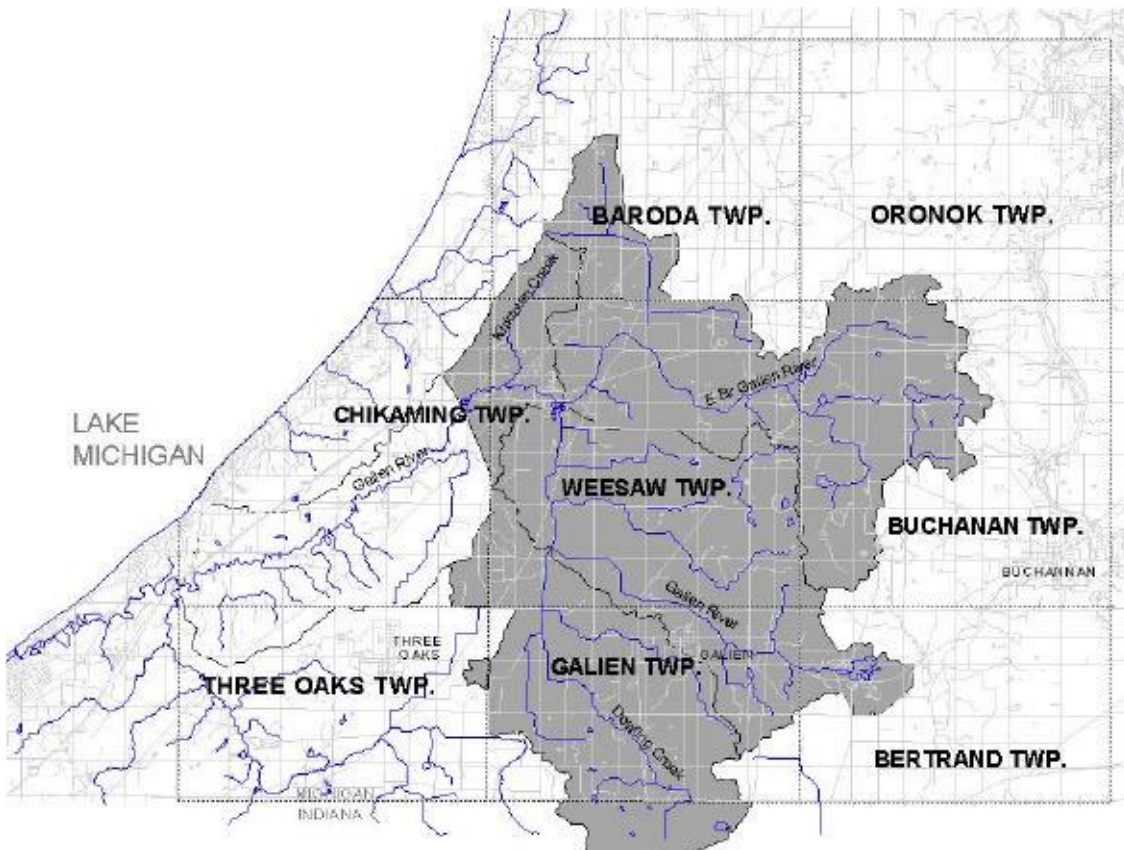
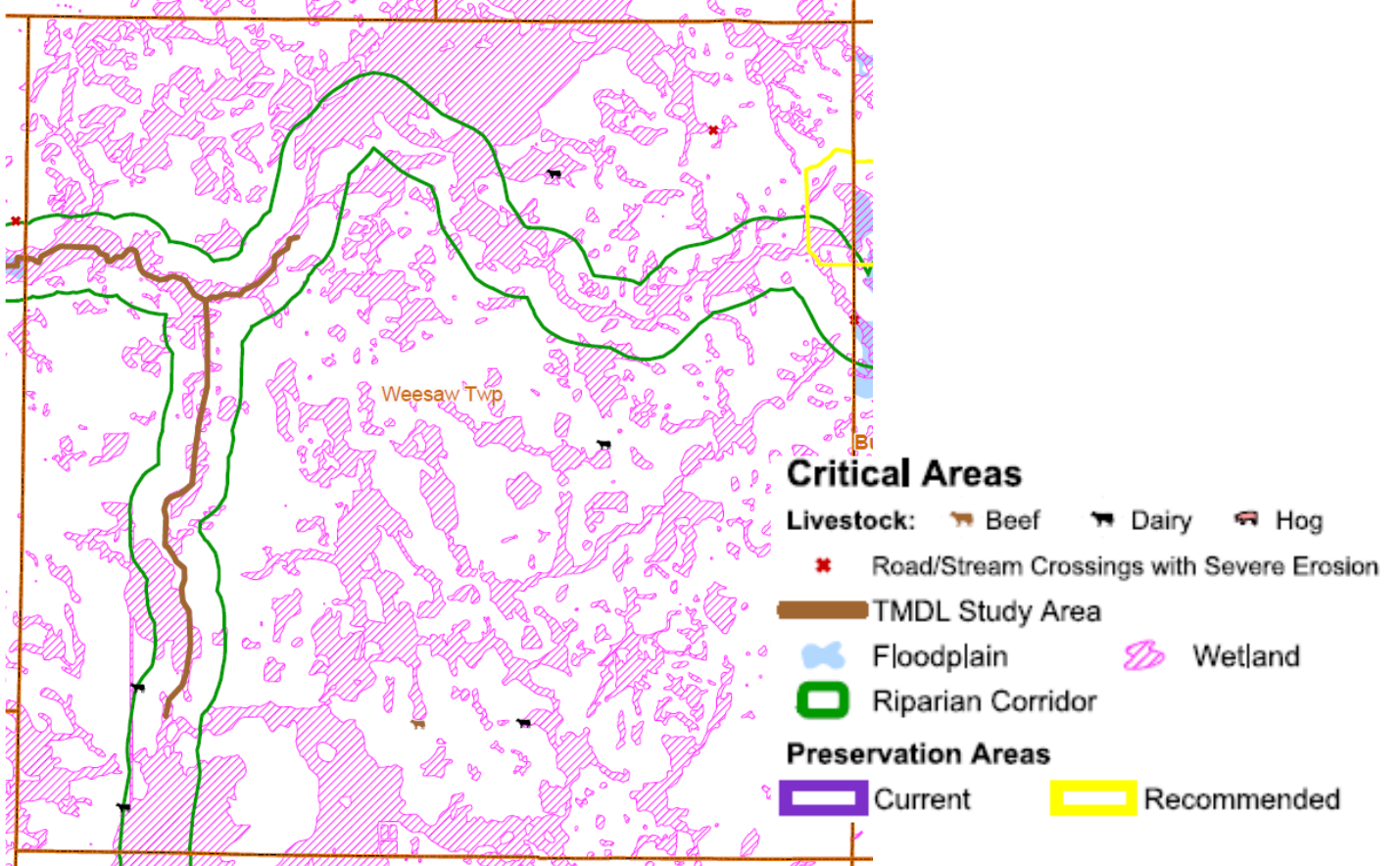
Forests

Large tracts of forests are located in Sections 7, 12, 24, & 25 of Weesaw Township. Most of these lands are in private ownership with the exception of Boyle Lake State Wildlife Area. However, forested lands contribute significantly to the rural character of the Township and provide a wealth of goods and services to the public. Forested lands help ensure clean water and forest products, mitigate flooding, regulate climate change and provide wildlife habitat, open space, and opportunity for recreation and hunting. Managed forests can provide ample benefits to the landowner, environment and economy. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service can help develop a forest management plan to help a landowner get the most economic benefit from their land in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Galien River Watershed and Water Resources

All of the land in Weesaw Township drains to the the Galien River. The entire Township is within the Galien River Watershed. Through the efforts of the Galien River Watershed Project, there is a recognition that watershed communities must work together to improve and protect water resources. The branches of the Galien River wind through southwest Michigan in Berrien County and northwest Indiana, in LaPorte, and St. Joseph Counties emptying into Lake Michigan at New Buffalo, Michigan. The outlet of Dayton Lake defines the headwaters of the Galien River. The East Branch of the Galien River begins at Boyle Lake and runs through Weesaw Township from east to west. Several lakes exist particularly in the eastern half of Weesaw Township. These include Boyle, Higley, Shady, Pine, and Rug lakes.

The Galien River is a beautiful asset to the community offering opportunities for fishing and other recreational activities. However, the Galien River has some serious pollution issues that are addressed in the Galien River Watershed Management Plan (<http://www.swmpc.org/grw.asp>). The Galien River within Weesaw Township is on Michigan's Section 303 (d) list for not meeting water quality standards for *E. coli* (bacteria/pathogens). The Galien River was placed on the Section 303(d) list due to impairment of recreational uses by the presence of elevated levels of *E. coli*. Overall, the highest *E. coli* data collected in the Galien River were at Avery/Mill Road and Minnich Road. According to the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study completed in 2002, the most common sources of *E. coli* are livestock operations, failing septic systems, illicit sewage connections, and combined sewer overflows and are coming from the entire area upstream of Flynn Road in Chikaming Township as shown in the map on the next page.



To protect water quality, septic systems need to be inspected regularly. Berrien County is considering creating a program that would require septic systems and wells to be inspected at the time of a property transfer. This could help to identify septic systems that are contributing to the elevated levels of pathogens in the Galien River.

Also, future growth should be planned carefully and use low impact development techniques to ensure as much water is infiltrated and filtered before entering surface waters. Increased

impervious surfaces and loss of wetlands can change the watershed's flow regime - creating flashy streams and rivers with high flows after storm events. The increased runoff will also increase stream bank erosion and result in more pollutants (sediment, nutrients, etc.) reaching surface waters. Water resources are part of a fragile system, which is potentially at risk. Water quality protection needs to happen at the site level, municipality level and watershed level to be effective. Water resources include both surface (lakes, streams, rivers, ponds) and ground water. The protection of water quality is important for plant and animal life, tourism and drinking water supplies. Properly managed rivers offer abutting property owners higher property values. There are several examples when contaminated groundwater leads to substantial decreases of property values.

Water quality protection is not just about public health and wildlife habitat, it's about money and the economy. Our high-quality river systems are a crucial component of maintaining Michigan's \$1.5 billion a year fishing industry. In SW Michigan, the local economy depends greatly on the water quality of Lake Michigan and the tourism it generates. Beach closings due to bacteria contamination will greatly hamper the local tourist dependent economy.

A combination of poor soils unsuitable for septic systems, a high-water table, and an increasing amount of rural development resulting in increased runoff may begin to threaten the quality of an area's water supplies. Specific local regulations, such as those pertaining to site plan review standards, encouraging open space developments and low impact development techniques, increasing water body setbacks, maintaining buffers around streams and wetlands, protecting floodplains, instituting proper impervious cover standards, using overlay districts to protect natural features and reducing density in areas with soil limitations for septic systems are among the techniques that can assist in protecting surface and ground water quality.

One of the most important things a community or property owner can do to protect water quality is to maintain a vegetated riparian buffer along streams, ditches, rivers, lakes and wetlands. Many river or stream edges are currently mowed on a periodic basis for a manicured-lawn look. Although this may be aesthetically pleasing to certain residents, this practice is detrimental to water quality and the streams ecosystem. It is proven that a vegetated buffer (an unmowed corridor) along rivers, streams, drains, lakes and wetlands protects water quality by filtering polluted runoff from lawns, impervious areas and agricultural fields before it reaches the water body, shading and cooling the water, providing channel stability, and storage for floodwaters. Riparian buffers also allow for the development of natural stream meanders and increase the diversity of aquatic life, provide areas for diverse recreational opportunities, filter air and noise pollution and enhance wildlife habitat.

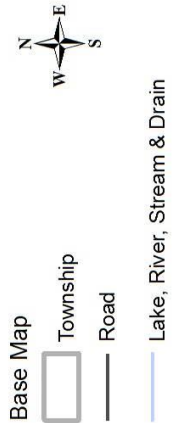
Wetlands

The Township has about 8% of land in wetlands. However, the Township has also lost over 5,500 acres of wetland that were either drained for agriculture or filled for development since pre-settlement times. Before this loss, wetlands covered over 24% of the Township.

	Acres	Percent
Existing Wetland	1,703.3	7.5%
Lost Wetland	5,504.6	24.2%

With the loss of these wetlands, there is also a loss of functions that wetlands serve. Beyond wildlife habitat, two critical functions that wetlands perform are floodwater storage and sediment retention. The following maps show where existing wetlands perform the floodwater and sediment retention functions at a high capacity and also where lost wetlands used to perform these functions at a high capacity. The loss of these critical functions results in flooding problems and sediment loading of the Galien River. Both flooding and sediment build up in the harbor of the Galien River result in substantial economic impacts to the community. It is important to protect the remaining wetlands and the critical functions that benefit the community.

Weesaw Township



Wetlands

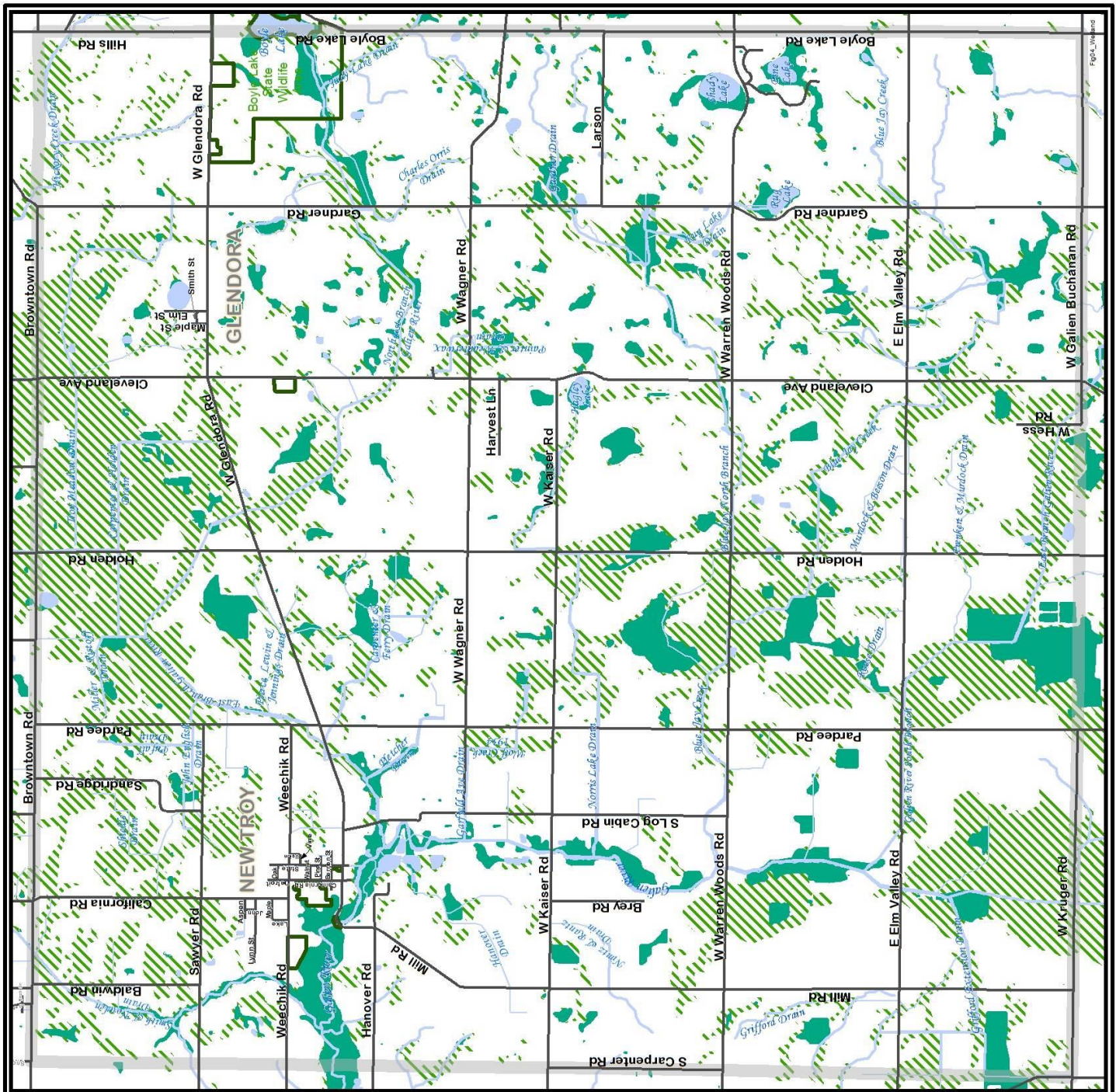
- Current Wetland
 - Wetland Potential Restoration Area*
- *Areas likely to have conditions suitable for wetland restoration efforts



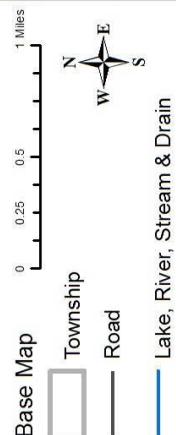
Sources
 Base Layers: Michigan Geographic Framework v14a
 Drain: Berrien County GIS, 2013
 State Wildlife Area: Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, 2012
 Wetlands: MDEQ, Land and Water Management Division, Wetlands, Lakes and Streams Unit, 2007

The use of this map is for general reference purposes. It is not a legal document.

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
 www.swmpc.org
 April 01, 2015



Weesaw Township



Township
Road
Lake, River, Stream & Drain

Wetland Functional Assessment

FLOOD WATER STORAGE

- Existing Wetland
- High Significance
- Medium Significance
- Lost Wetland
- High Significance
- Medium Significance

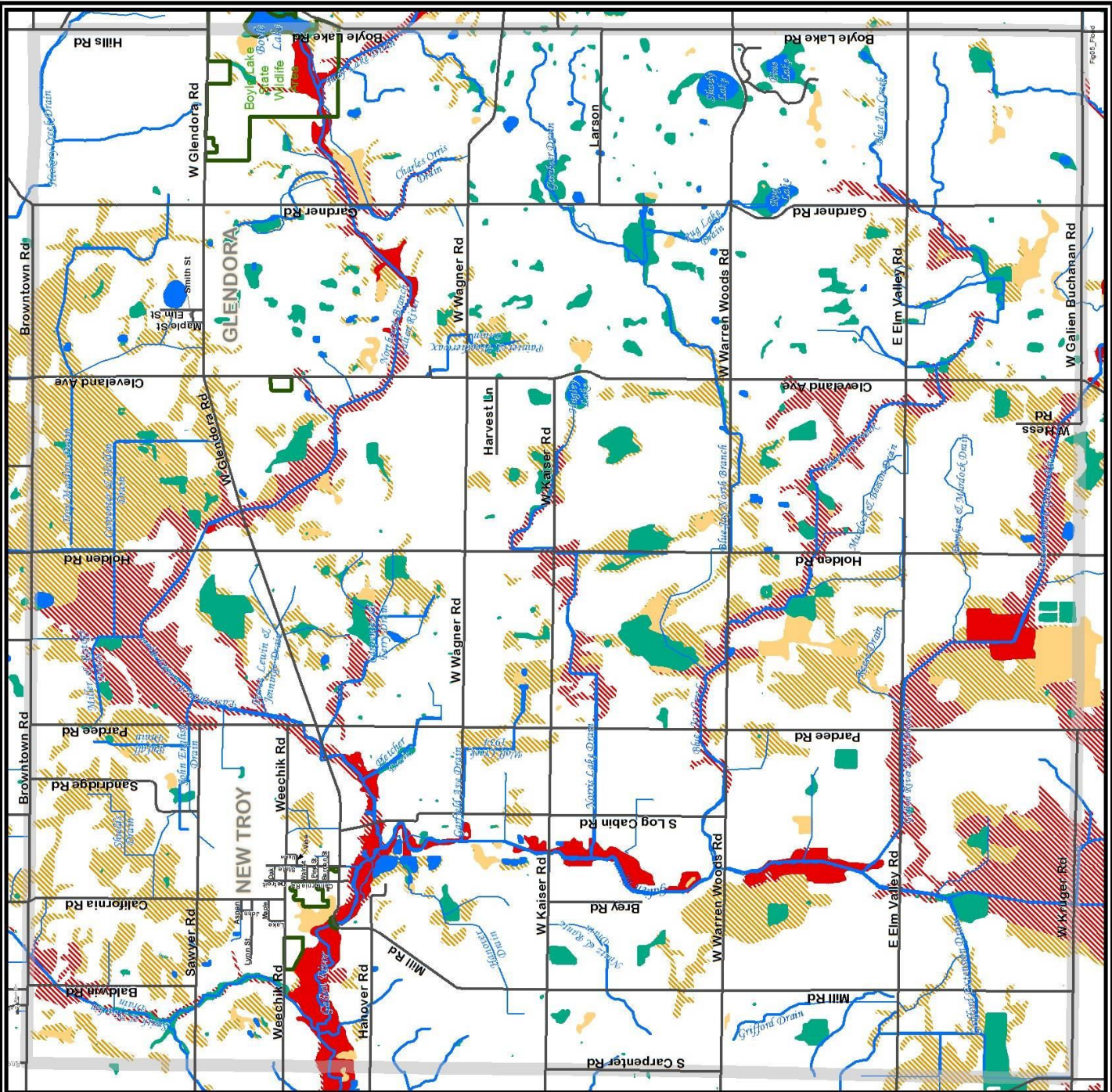
This map shows existing and lost wetlands and ranks them based on how well the wetland can store excess water during flood events.

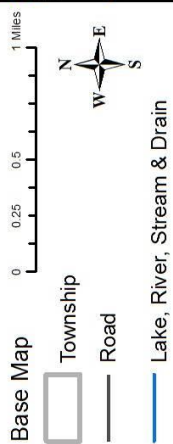
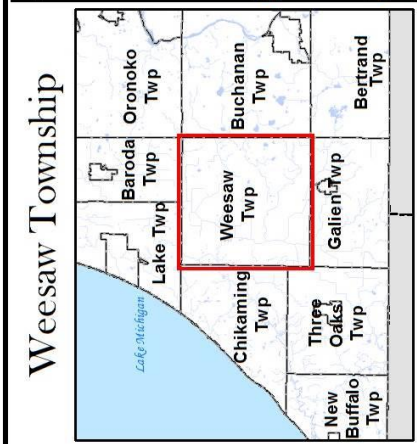
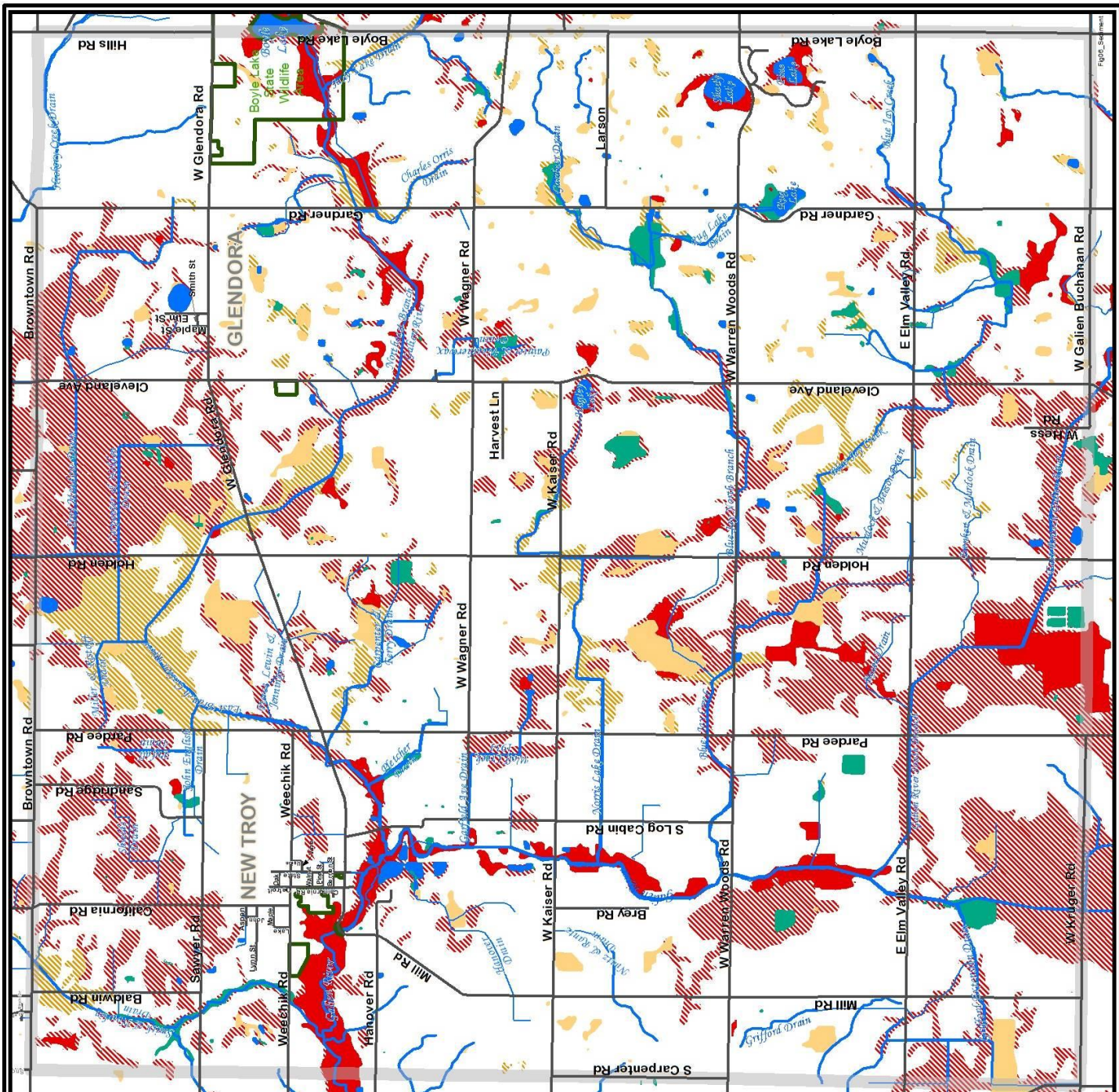
- Current Wetland*

*All other existing wetlands that are not shown in the Wetland Functional Assessment for Flood Water Storage.

Sources:
Base Layers: Michigan Geographic Framework v14a.
Drain: Berrien County GIS, 2013
State Wildlife Area: Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, 2012
Wetlands: MDEQ, Land and Water Management Division, Wetlands, Lakes and Streams Unit, 2012

The use of this map is for general reference purposes. It is not a legal document.
Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
www.swmpc.org
April 01, 2015





**Wetland Functional Assessment
SEDIMENT RETENTION**

Existing Wetland

- High Significance
- Medium Significance

Lost Wetland

- High Significance
- Medium Significance

This map shows existing and lost wetlands and ranks them based on how well the wetland can store sediment and other particulate matter.

Current Wetland*

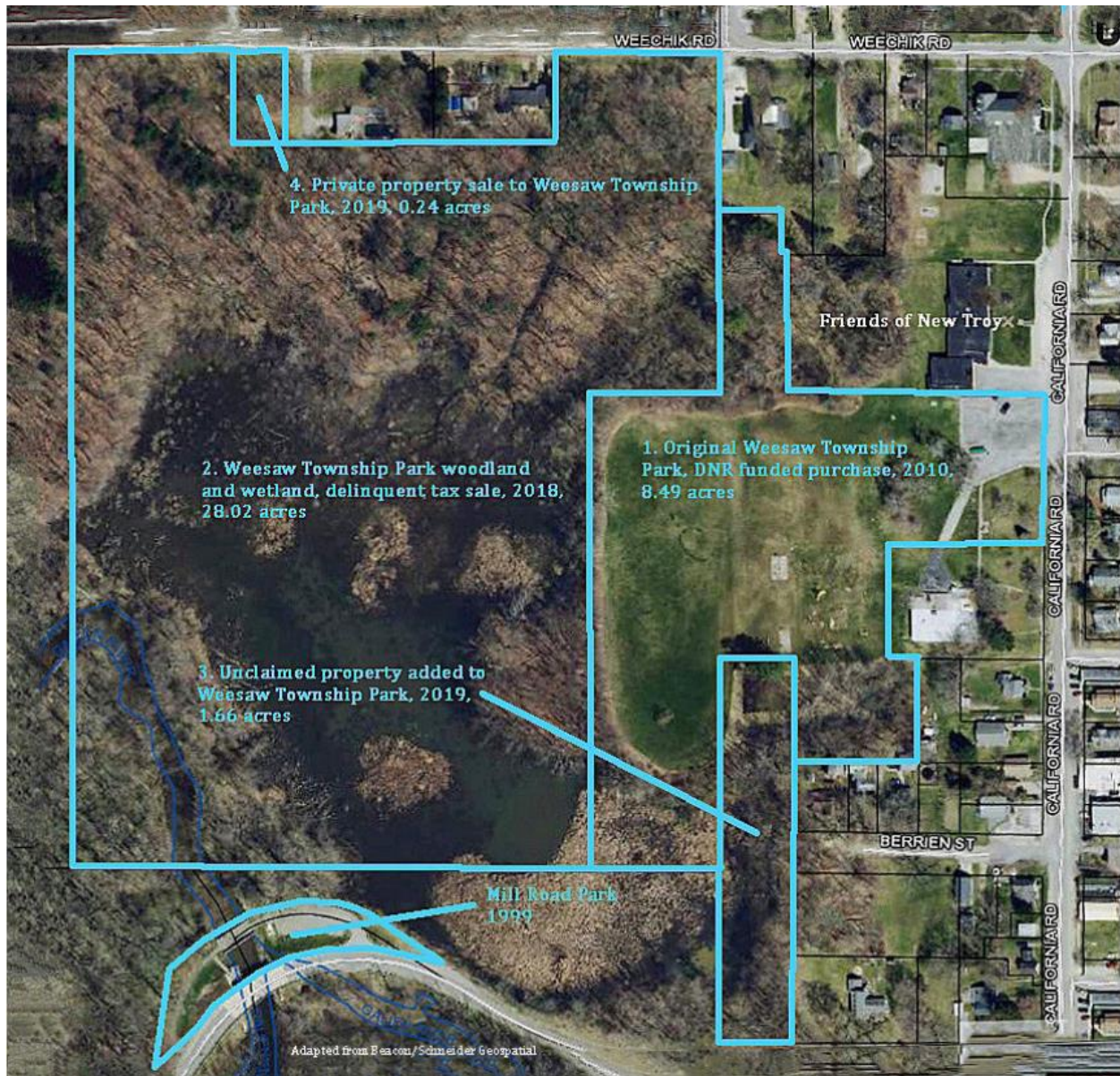
*All other existing wetlands that are not shown in the Wetland Functional Assessment for Flood Water Storage.

Sources
 Base Layers: Michigan Geographic Framework v14a
 Drain: Berrien County GIS, 2013
 State Wildlife Area: Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, 2012
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The use of this map is for general reference purposes. It is not a legal document.
 Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
 www.swmpc.org
 April 01, 2015

Township Parks

Weesaw Township has two public parks. For more information on Township Parks and to view the Township Recreation Plan visit <https://www.weesawtownship.net/weesaw-parks>. Weesaw Township Park is a township-owned 38.41-acre neighborhood park that has the capacity to serve a larger community, both Weesaw and surrounding townships.



Mill Road Park is a township-owned approximately 2-acre mini park at the edge of the village of New Troy. Given its attraction as a Galien River fishing spot (brown trout, northern pike, bass, catfish, or panfish), its service area is not only New Troy but the township and the south Berrien County region beyond.



III. GOALS & POLICIES

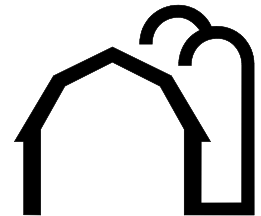
A fundamental component of the Master Plan is to establish policies concerning the future direction of land use. While Weesaw Township has not yet experienced the rapid growth taking place in other areas of the region, it is important to identify the elements that define the community character and establish policies to protect and enhance them for the future. As communities grow, they need a direction for future development. Key issues have been identified in the Community Profile Chapter. The goals and policies identified herewith provide the instrument for achieving the desired direction. The overall vision serves to further define the Township's development philosophy.

Community Vision

Weesaw Township will be a prosperous and family oriented rural/ agricultural community with a balanced mix between industrial and agricultural uses. Residential neighborhoods and commercial/industrial areas will be developed in a controlled fashion, served by adequate water and sewer service, quality educational facilities, excellent transportation options, and affordable housing opportunities. A cornerstone to the community character is the agricultural base with areas preserved for long-term agricultural use, clean, neat, safe, and friendly neighborhoods, and preserved natural areas.

Land Use and Township Character

Goal *The character of Weesaw Township will be primarily agricultural with residential homes in rural settings.*



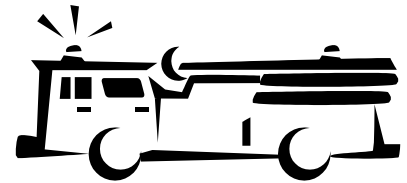
Rationale Above all, most residents strongly desire to keep the township as a rural, agricultural community, with limited commercial and industrial development. While most would readily acknowledge the need to have a balance of other uses, the preservation of agricultural lands and rural residential homes will generally be an essential element of their definition of quality of life. This character is often evidenced by the township's rural surroundings and natural features.

Policies

- *Encourage farmers to keep all productive agricultural lands in agricultural use.*
- *Encourage and support local participation in the county and state programs to purchase development rights within the designated Agricultural Preservation area.*
- *Adopt and implement Ordinance provisions whose purpose will be to minimize conflicts between agricultural and residential uses. The use of buffer zones, clustering, open space subdivisions, and other techniques will be used to achieve this objective.*

- *Encourage concentrations of new housing to be built adjacent to the New Troy area and areas where public utilities (i.e. water and sewer) exist or are planned.*
- *Review land use and zoning changes so that they include consideration of how the proposed development preserves the rural character and natural features of the Township.*
- *Limit non-agricultural based commercial and industrial development within the Township. New industrial/ commercial development should be directed to areas where proper services (i.e. water and sewer) and transportation systems can be provided, appropriate for a rural residential community.*
- *Explore the feasibility of developing a light industrial park that will be compatible with surrounding land uses, provide easy access to primary transportation routes, and served by proper utilities. A primary objective of the industrial park will be to centralize future light industrial development (i.e. free of major smoke, noise, and vibration).*
- *Develop code enforcement policies to maintain housing conditions and eliminate blighted conditions (e.g. trash, junk cars and materials).*
- *Identify appropriate area(s) for affordable and senior housing taking into consideration surrounding housing density and land use, availability of community services, traffic patterns, and public utilities.*
- *Encourage the development of homes that are of a compatible size and scale to housing in the surrounding area.*
- *Accommodate high density/manufactured housing development where public sewer and water is available.*

Public Services and Facilities



Goal *Land use in Weesaw Township will emphasize agricultural uses and homes in rural settings. Accordingly, the Township will provide public services and facilities that are appropriate for an agricultural, low-density community.*

Rationale The low-density development and spread-out nature of farms and homes in Weesaw make it difficult to provide extensive public services in a cost effective manner. Moreover, it is unlikely that public water or sanitary sewer will be available anytime soon to most of the Township. This emphasizes the concerns of the Township about groundwater protection and the impact of growth on water quality and other quality of life issues.

Policies

- *Require development to have adequate water and sanitary sewer service prior to receiving any required Township approvals.*
- *Require applicants seeking land development projects or the extension of utilities to pay for those improvements or upgrades (roads, fire, police, medical services, public transit stops and other services) before granting approvals.*
- *Expand public water and sewer infrastructure based on need or public desire. Specifically investigate providing public sewer in Glendora.*
- *Investigate the feasibility of developing additional park/recreation lands in cooperation with local land conservancies and County and State agencies.*
- *Maintain existing park/recreation lands to provide quality recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Ensure the 5-year Recreation Plan required by Michigan Department of Natural Resources is kept current.*
- *Add amenities to Weesaw Township Community Park and Mill Park to meet the recreational desires of the community. See Recreation Plan for specific park and recreation goals, objectives and actions.*

Protecting the Environment

Goal *Land development in Weesaw Township will be planned and designed to protect important natural features and sensitive environmental areas.*



Rationale The existing quality agricultural production, vast woodlots, streams and wetland areas are an important part of the rural character of Weesaw Township. It is a desire of the township to preserve and enhance important natural features which help define the rural character and that serve critical functions such as protecting water resources and providing wildlife habitat.

Policies

- *Ensure that the identification and protection of groundwater resources, surface waters, natural resources, and other environmental features will be a primary consideration when reviewing development proposals.*

- *Require applicants to provide information on the potential effects of a proposed development on area groundwater sources and surface water quality during the development review process.*
- *Develop review standards to minimize the negative impacts of industrial waste/heavy metals, and air/soil contamination.*
- *Implement an overlay zone to protect the Galien River and other natural features to improve and preserve water quality, recreational opportunities and aesthetic value.*
- *Enhance guidelines to protect floodplain areas from inappropriate development.*
- *Cooperate with neighboring communities to address land use and related issues potentially impacting the Galien River watershed. Specifically support Berrien County's efforts to implement a program to inspect septic systems when a property is transferred.*
- *Ensure that development avoids wetland areas because of their importance in mitigating flooding, cleansing water and providing wildlife habitat.*
- *Encourage residential, commercial and industrial developments to utilize low impact development techniques such as minimal grading of the site, preservation of wetlands and wooded areas and utilization of stormwater infiltration techniques (porous pavement, bio-swales, rain gardens, etc.).*
- *Ensure the Township Drain Committee works with the County Drain Commission's office for the maintenance and improvement of drains within the Township.*

Transportation

Goal *The Township will pursue land development policies that foster a safe and efficient transportation network appropriate for an agricultural/rural residential community.*

Rationale Over time, new residential development will likely affect residents' perception of traffic when they notice more cars and other vehicles along the major roadways. In addition, newer residents may start to ask that gravel roads be paved. The Township will have to balance the desires of residents for rural character (unpaved and private drives) with the need to provide a safe, efficient, high quality roadway system.

Policies

- *Develop a partnership with Berrien County, under the provisions of State laws, to develop and maintain a priority review system for improving roads, considering such factors as road condition, resident desires, traffic volumes, roadway function, land use, and other appropriate elements.*

- *Encourage land development along major roadways that reduces the number of access points for individual uses, particularly for non-residential uses.*
- *Encourage roadway improvements adjacent to planned industrial/commercial areas to enhance access, aesthetics, and safety.*
- *Consider complete streets when improving roads to better accommodate all users such as pedestrians, bicyclists and public transit. Work with partners to implement the Berrien County Trails Master Plan.*
- *Support the County's efforts to consolidate public transit service through a county-wide authority to provide more effective and efficient service to Township residents.*

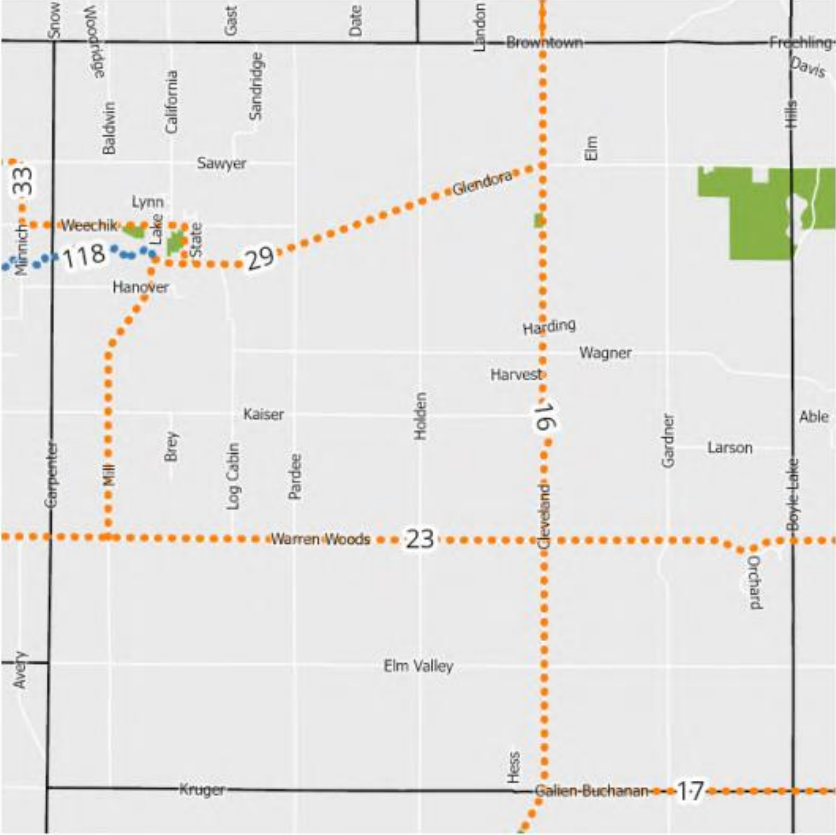
Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. There is no singular design prescription for Complete Streets; each one is unique and responds to its community context. A complete street may include: sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, accessible pedestrian signals, narrower travel lanes, roundabouts, and more. Complete Streets in a rural area or small town will look quite different from a Complete Street in an urban area, but both are designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the road.

The following are recommendations from the [Berrien County Trails Master Plan](#) which was supported by Weesaw Township by resolution.

Segment #	Name	Status	Type	Miles in Jurisdiction	Priority	Average PASER in Jurisdiction
16	Cleveland Wide Shoulder A	Planned	Wide Shoulder	6.03	Medium	5.67
17	Gallien to McCoys Creek Trail	Desired	Wide Shoulder	2.01	Medium	8.00
23	Warren Woods Wide Shoulder	Planned	Wide Shoulder	5.99	High	5.40
29	New Troy Wide Shoulder B	Desired	Wide Shoulder	5.58	Medium	N/A
33	New Troy Wide Shoulder A	Desired	Wide Shoulder	1.37	Medium	N/A
118	Gallien River Water Trail	Desired	Water Trail	1.58	Medium	N/A

INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

WEESAW TOWNSHIP



LEGEND

Proposed Routes

- Bike Lane
- Shared Use Path
- Water Trail
- Wide Shoulder
- Cycle Track

Existing Routes

- Bike Lane
- Shared Use Path
- Water Trail
- Wide Shoulder

- — Park
- — Water
- — City or Vill

IV. FUTURE LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS ---

The Future Land Use classifications are intended to reflect the goals and values of Weesaw Township. The proposed classifications focus on a goal which states: *The character of Weesaw Township will be primarily agricultural with residential homes in rural settings.*

The Township acknowledges that new development will occur, but strongly desires this growth to:

- emphasize orderly development of residential, commercial, and industrial uses;
- encourage new commercial and light industrial development uses to areas that are compatible with adjacent land uses;
- minimize conflicts between agricultural and residential uses;
- recognize that the availability of public utilities will be limited throughout the planning period and primarily confined to the New Troy area; and
- protect the groundwater resources from which its residents obtain water.

Agricultural Preservation

The preservation of agricultural lands was identified as an important issue at the workshop meeting held in April 1999, and is reflected in the goal and policy statements produced by the Planning Commission. The update process reflected that this philosophy remains. Most of the land in Weesaw Township is in agricultural production. Agricultural uses represent the backbone of the community, and it is the desire of Township residents' to remain an agricultural community. The Township encourages the use of purchase of development rights and other techniques to preserve the unique and economically important farmland in the Township.

The Agricultural Preservation classification would serve to protect prime farmland and limit non-agricultural uses. Non-farm homes would be limited, and non-agricultural uses would be discouraged. Along with large farm operations, small farms and niche agricultural uses should also be accommodated. Any residential development should be limited and have very low density. **Lots could be split according to the Michigan Land Division Act. Water and sewer lines should not be extended into the Agricultural Preservation area unless they are necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of the existing residents of the area.**

To accomplish this goal, **the Township will participate in the County's Open Space and Farmland Program to offer a voluntary option for landowners to preserve farmland.** As such, the Township designates the Agricultural Preservation lands on the Future Land Use Map as the areas intended for preservation. These areas were determined by the cropland map (areas currently being farmed), large parcel sizes, lack of public sewer and water services and input from the community during public meetings.

Some new housing construction has been taking place recently in areas that were once exclusively agriculture. Over time, non-agricultural development could create conflicts with the existing farming practices and diminish the importance of prime farmland. A related issue is the odor, noise, and intensity of agricultural practices adjacent to residential uses. Guidelines are necessary to minimize the conflicts that can occur between agricultural and nonagricultural uses.

Minimizing the number of non-farm dwellings in these areas is one way to reduce conflicts. Another technique is to **require vegetative buffers between uses**. Buffers are generally imposed on residential developments, rather than on farming operations, principally because the farm was probably the first use in place. Buffers should be sufficiently wide to protect the farming operation from lawn fertilizers, playing children, and other conflicts. At the same time, they cannot be so burdensome as to require excessive land commitments from residential property owners.

Rural-Agricultural Residential

Unlike the Agricultural Preservation classification, this category would allow non-farm housing development and other special land uses, within rural areas. This classification is intended to preserve the rural residential character of the Township while recognizing that much of this land could be converted to residential use. Farm uses would continue to be allowed. The Township should provide incentives to developers to use the open space development option to preserve the rural character and open spaces in the Township. The Township should encourage abutting developments to preserve open spaces that are continuous.

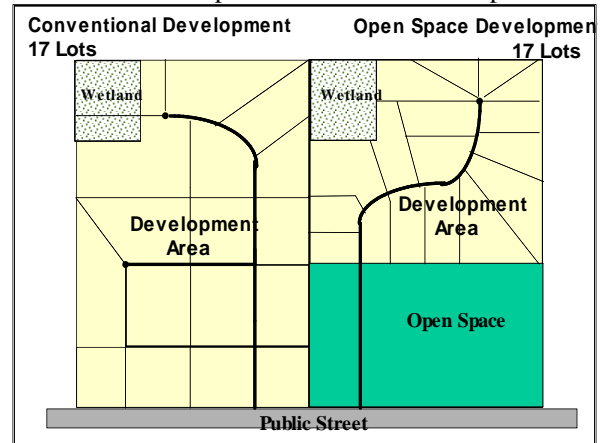
The Rural-Agricultural Residential classification would serve to minimize conflicts between agricultural and residential uses while maintaining the rural character of the Township. This classification would serve as a transition area between concentrated residential development and more restrictive agricultural areas. It is recommended that new parcels within this classification achieve a maximum density of one unit per 2 acres. Lot frontage and setback requirements would be established to maintain the rural character of the area. Such techniques as buffer zones, clustering, and open space subdivisions would also be used to achieve this objective.

By the use of the cluster development technique, portions of agricultural lands are also allowed to be protected and remain in production. Since farmers often lease fields in other portions of the community, open space lands provided as part of a cluster development could be incorporated in a long-term lease agreement with a local farmer. Farm operators may also take advantage of this option by developing only a portion of the property to gain additional financial resources, while

What is Cluster or Open Space Development?

Clustering concentrates development in a limited area, with the overall, or "gross density" of the site remaining the same. Although clustering may increase the net density within a smaller area, the gross density must still fall within the requirements of the Master Plan and subsequent zoning regulations.

Cluster development does not increase the number of homes, but does allow the preservation of valuable open space. Approving cluster development through a planned unit development (PUD) provides the opportunity to ensure that land will be kept free from future development.



Apart from being a requirement of the PUD, preserved open space may be deeded in equal parts to the property owners. Regardless of ownership, the remaining acreage would not be permitted to be developed with additional housing units.

retaining the remainder for agricultural purposes. This technique could also accommodate small farms that are less than 40 acres in size.

Agricultural buffers can also be used as a technique to reduce conflicts between active agricultural areas and other uses. Buffers are generally imposed on residential developments, rather than on farming operations, principally because the farm was probably the first use in place. Buffers should be sufficiently wide to protect the farming operation from lawn fertilizers, playing children, and other conflicts. At the same time, they cannot be so burdensome as to require excessive land commitments from residential property owners.

Buffers are most effective if a “no-disturb” zone is provided between residential properties and farmland. This requirement should be tied to subdivision, site condominium, planned unit development, or land division approval. It should also be required that the buffer be described in the property deed to alert potential buyers of the need to honor the no-disturb area.

Low/Medium Density Residential

This classification is intended to include some of the higher density development which has already occurred in the Township such as in New Troy and the Glendora area, as well as future concentrations of residential development. Farm uses would be restricted from this classification.

Lands within this classification will contain more intensive development, including residential lots of at least one acre that are not served by public water and sewer and up to 4 units per acre with public water and sewer (up to 4-6 units per acre for multiple family with public sewer and water available). Other residential related development requiring a higher level of service (schools, churches, and golf courses), is also included in this classification. In addition, this classification would include two-family and multiple family uses, provided appropriate public services can be provided.

These areas would be the first to be served, if utilities were to be extended (water and sewer). Furthermore, new residential development will be limited to a size and scale to ensure that Township services are adequate to serve the proposed development.

Within the unincorporated village of New Troy, there are several lots within the original plat of the village that do not meet the minimum lot area and minimum lot width requirements of the current zoning (R-2, Low/Medium Density Residential). This affects the ability of these homeowners to make minor improvements and additions to their homes. Because of the historic village character of this area, these properties should be given special consideration. Amendments to the zoning ordinance to create a separate zoning district or overlay district to allow for minor improvements are recommended.

High Density Residential

This classification is intended to provide the highest density of residential use in the Township. The Township wants to provide the opportunity for a mix of housing styles, types and densities

within the Township. The high-density residential district will accommodate manufactured homes in a state-licensed manufactured home park. The district will also allow other uses such as family day care homes, state-licensed residential family care facilities, accessory buildings and home occupations. State-licensed residential group home care facilities and group day care homes would be considered as special land uses. These areas would need to be served by sewer and water and be adjacent to commercial/retail services. Additionally, these developments should consider providing public transportation stops for its residents.

**FUTURE LAND USE
RESIDENTIAL CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY**

Classification	Maximum Density/Lot Size
Rural-Agricultural Residential	One unit per 2 acres/2 acre minimum lot size
Low/Medium Density Residential	One unit per acre without public water and sewer; up to 4 units per acre with water and sewer (up to 4-6 units per acre for multiple family units with water and sewer)
High Density Residential	Intended for accommodating state-licensed manufactured home parks to provide diverse housing options. Up to 6 units per acre with water and sewer (up to 10 units per acre for multiple family units with water and sewer)

Commercial

There is a desire to limit future commercial development within Weesaw Township to areas where proper services (i.e. water and sewer) and transportation systems can be provided, appropriate for a rural residential community. Commercial development will be primarily limited to the New Troy area along with limited commercial development in the Glendora area. The low density/agricultural nature of the Township coupled with the lack of utilities, paved roads, and public services limits the suitability for large, new areas to be converted to commercial uses. In addition, it is the desire of the Township to discourage scattered commercial development in isolated locations along major roadways within the Township.

This does not preclude certain agricultural and home-based businesses from locating within the agricultural areas of the Township. Agricultural businesses would be restricted to those directly related to farming and cultivation of plants (greenhouses, roadside stands, farm markets, etc.). Relationships to adjoining properties would be carefully reviewed. Home-based businesses would be allowed on properties that have a residential use already established. However, there will be strict limitations on the extent of the business activity permitted.

Industrial

Several existing industrial uses and vacant industrial zoned areas are located throughout the Township. Industrial uses in scattered locations can create problems related to incompatible adjacent land uses (e.g. industrial next to residential) and difficulty in providing public services and utilities such as fire/police protection and public water and sewer service. It is the desire of the Township to encourage light industrial development in areas that can be served by public water and sewer and proper transportation systems. To help achieve this objective, it is the desire of the Township to explore the feasibility of establishing a light industrial park within the New Troy area. This would serve to consolidate future industrial uses to areas with proper services and utilities. While it is recognized that the existing heavy industrial uses will continue, the Township will encourage new industrial uses to be light industrial in nature (i.e. free of smoke, vibration, or noise) and in areas compatible for such uses.

Public

Several public and quasi-public uses exist within the Township and are anticipated to remain as such during the planning period. These include the Township Hall complex, Township Cemeteries (Wee-Chik Road and Cleveland Ave.), Mill Road Park, New Troy Community Center and adjacent Township Park and the DNR-owned Boyle Lake Recreation Area. The open water in the Township (lakes, rivers and streams) can also be considered public space.

These public spaces:

- contribute to the rural character of the township
- provide wildlife habitat
- provide passive and active recreation opportunities (fishing, bird watching, hunting, hiking, etc.)
- help prevent and / or reduce the severity of floods
- help to protect water quality
- contribute to the sustainable economic growth of the area

Open space helps to protect water quality because undisturbed land generally does not contribute pollutants to our streams and lakes. In addition, open space usually contains natural grasses, wetlands, plants, shrubs and trees that serve as filters, removing pollutants before they get deposited into our water bodies. When polluted water flows through these areas the plants, trees and wetlands "scrub" and filter much of the pollution out of the water before it finds its way into a stream. Further, attractive areas are more desirable to developers, enticing high quality growth to the community. This in turn brings more jobs and attractive places to live and shop. Many studies demonstrate that the value of property is not only preserved but improved by its proximity to preserved public lands.

Natural Features Conservation Overlay

An "overlay" district is a resource-based zoning district. It is superimposed over underlying zoning districts to limit the impacts of development on resources that are found within more than one zoning district, or within only a portion of an underlying district. Since overlay districts

follow the resource, they may apply to only a portion of a parcel — allowing development on land outside of the overlay district, while protecting resources on land within the district.

Overlay districts are commonly used to regulate development in flood hazard, wetland and riparian areas, but are increasingly being used to protect other natural resources, such as significant natural communities, wildlife habitat areas and travel corridors. “Special considerations” usually include different standards of review – for example, further limits on allowed uses, conditional use review of uses that require only administrative review in the underlying district, and/or district standards that apply to all uses in the overlay district. These supplements are applied in addition to the underlying district’s standards.

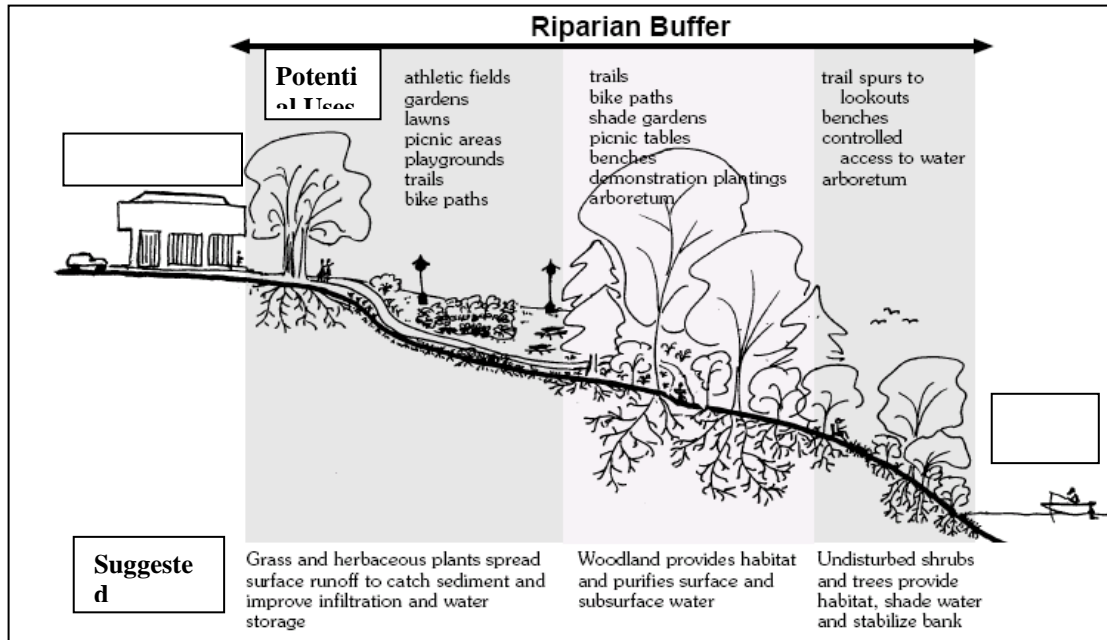
In Weesaw Township, a natural features overlay district is being implemented to protect existing wetlands and sensitive riparian areas. Protecting these features with setbacks and native vegetative buffers will help maintain clean water in streams, rivers and ultimately Lake Michigan. The lands in the overlay district include all existing wetland areas and waterbodies (rivers, streams, drains, lakes) plus the lands within a 100-foot buffer of these features.

Common components of overlay districts include:

- Further limits on uses that are otherwise allowed within the underlying zoning district.
- Different density and dimensional standards for development within the overlay district.
- District standards that guide the siting of development and help evaluate the impact of development on resources included in the overlay district, for example, development clustering with requirements for open space preservation and avoidance of critical habitat areas, setback and native vegetation buffering requirements for wetlands, streams, rivers and lakes.
- Consultation with natural resources specialists to understand and evaluate site-specific resources, for example, with the county conservation district, Chikaming Open Lands, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, a private consultant, or the Michigan Department of Natural Resources or Environmental Quality.

PURPOSES OF A RIPARIAN BUFFER:

- reduce erosion and stabilize stream banks.
- encourage infiltration of stormwater runoff.
- control sedimentation.
- reduce the effects of flood and drought.
- provide forest areas to shade streams and encourage desirable aquatic species.
- provide and protect wildlife habitat
- offer scenic value and recreational opportunities for trails and greenways.
- restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of water resources.
- minimize public investment in waterway restoration, stormwater management, and other public water resource endeavors.



Future Land Use Plan Designation	Current Corresponding Zoning Districts
Agricultural Preservation	A-1, Rural-Agricultural Residential: However, the 1-acre minimum lot area in this district does not implement the recommendations for agricultural preservation in this Plan. The Michigan Land Division Act will be used to determine how lots can be divided in this District. A new Agricultural Preservation district could be added to the Zoning Map to reflect the areas designated on the Future Land Use Map.
Rural - Agricultural Residential	A-1 Rural-Agricultural Residential and PUD Districts: Intended to provide a low intensity, rural environment which preserves natural features and agricultural lands. Open Space cluster developments are encouraged to protect natural features and farmland.
Low to medium density residential	R-2 Low/Medium Density and PUD Districts: Intended to provide low and medium density, single family residential living environment and to foster stable, high-quality neighborhoods
High Density Residential	R-3 Manufactured Home Park and PUD Districts; Intended for areas with public water and sewer that are immediately adjacent to commercial services. This district can accommodate smaller lot sizes.
Commercial	C-1 Community Commercial District and C-2 Village Commercial: Intended to provide concentrated pockets of limited commercial uses to accommodate the needs of township residents.
Industrial	I-1 Light Industrial District: Intended to provide limited light industrial, trucking and wholesale operations.
Natural Features Conservation Overlay	F-1 Floodplain District: However, important natural features such as wetlands may be located outside of floodplain areas. Wetlands are important to protect to ensure clean water in streams, rivers and lakes. The F-1 District is intended to protect residents from flooding hazards and also protects natural features found in floodplains including wetlands, forests, wildlife habitat, and riverbanks. This district should provide flexibility in design to work around natural features, not destroy them. A new overlay district should be added to the zoning map to reflect the areas identified in the Future Land Use Map in this plan.
Public/Quasi Public	Not currently identified on the Zoning Map as a category, but includes any district that permits Public/Quasi-Public land uses.

Plan Implementation Recommendations

1. Ensure zoning is consistent with Future Land Use categories for lot sizes.
2. Create zoning districts and standards to correspond to future land use categories for Agricultural Preservation; Natural Features Conservation Overlay and Public/Quai Public lands.
3. Participate in the County's Open Space and Farmland Preservation Program by passing a resolution indicating the Township's participation.
4. Strengthen site plan review standards to emphasize the importance of protecting natural features and encouraging low impact development techniques to manage stormwater.
5. Develop standards for the natural features conservation overlay district, such as riparian buffers, to protect these important areas and the functions they provide. Also more clearly define natural features in ordinance definitions.
6. Consider requiring site plan review for more than 2 land divisions to ensure access and lot layout is efficient.

VI. APPENDIX – PLANNING NOTIFICATION/ADOPTION PROCESS



Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

To: The Communities of Chikaming Township, Three Oaks Township, Galien Township, Bertrand Township, Buchanan Township, Oronoko Township, Baroda Township, Lake Township and the Berrien County Planning Commission

From: Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (for Weesaw Township)

Date: June 7, 2023

Re: Master Plan Update Notice

Weesaw Township is beginning the process to update its Master Plan. The master plan is a long range-planning tool used to define the township's vision, goals, and policies. An effective plan accurately communicates citizen needs and desires about their community and recommends specific strategies to achieve those values.

Weesaw Township will welcome your cooperation and comments. As required by law, you will receive a copy of the proposed plan for review and comment. The proposed plan will be provided in digital format, unless otherwise requested.

Sincerely,

Marcy Hamilton

Marcy Hamilton, Senior Planner
Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
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269-925-1137 x1525
hamiltonm@swmpc.org
www.swmpc.org

376 West Main Street, Suite 130 Benton Harbor, MI 49022-3651

[269.925.1137](tel:269.925.1137) • [269.925.0288](tel:269.925.0288) • www.swmpc.org • swmpc@swmpc.org

***Weesaw Township Master Plan Update
Public Meeting***

**Monday, June 26, 2023
7:00 p.m.**

**Weesaw Township Hall
13518 State St, New Troy, MI 49119**

Learn about Weesaw Township's Master Plan Update.

Public input is essential to determine the future direction of the Community.

Public input will be considered to update the main policy document of the Township – the Master Plan.

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission will facilitate the public meeting along with the Township's Planning Commission.

Review Notice to Surrounding Municipalities and County

From: Robert Warmbein <rwarmbein@triton.net>
Sent: Sunday, December 31, 2023 12:43 PM
Cc: TOWNSHIP, WEESAW TOWNSHIP <weesawtownship@comcast.net>
Subject: Weesaw Township Master Plan Draft update notice

Weesaw Township is in the process of updating our Master plan, please review.
Thank you, Robert Warmbein Weesaw Township Trustee.

The following was sent to these contacts:

Dan Fette <dfette@berriencounty.org>
Don Vite clerk@bertrandtownship.com
SUZANNE RENTON clerk@oronokotownship.org
Paula Dudiak PDudiak@chikamingtownship.org
Elizabeth Zabel lcummingsthreeoakstwp@yahoo.com
Richard Smith president@threeoaksvillage.org
Jennifer Richter jen.galientwp@gmail.com
Kalla Langston clerk@cityofbuchanan.com
Wendi Heyliger clerk@buchanantwpmi.gov
Miranda Companion clerk@lake-township.org
sreitz@bridgman.org sreitz@bridgman.org

AFFP
Notice of Public Hearing

Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF MI)
COUNTY OF BERRIEN) SS

Weesaw Township
New Troy, MI

Notice of Public Hearing

Heather Purk, being duly sworn, says:

Please take notice that the Weesaw Township Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, April 22, 2024, at 7:10 p.m. in the Weesaw Township Hall, 13518 State St., New Troy, Michigan 49119 to review with the public the updated Township Master Plan.

That she is Accounting Clerk of the Herald Palladium, a daily newspaper of general circulation, printed and published in St. Joseph, Berrien County, MI; that the publication, a copy of which is attached hereto, was published in the said newspaper on the following dates:

Weesaw Township is in the process of updating its Master Plan, which guides future land use and development in the Township. The purpose of this notice is to inform the public that the Planning Commission is holding a Public Hearing as required by Public Act 33 of 2008, of the Planning Enabling Act, as amended.

April 17, 2024
April 18, 2024

The draft Master Plan is available for review on the Township's website: www.weesawtownship.net.

Publication Fees: \$ 439.50

The Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services to those with disabilities planning to attend upon seven (7) days' prior notice to the Township Clerk. If you require such aids or services and plan to attend this meeting, please contact the Township (phone 269-426-3002, ext. 1#).

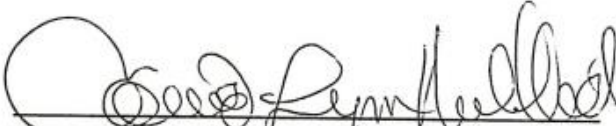
That said newspaper was regularly issued and circulated on those dates.

SIGNED:

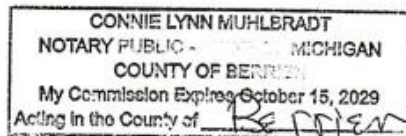
Written comments will be accepted through April 22, 2024, by 1:00 p.m., at the Weesaw Township Hall, 13518 State St., P.O. Box 38, New Troy, MI 49119 or via e-mail at weesawtownship.trusty@outlook.com. All interested parties will be heard during the meeting.

Subscribed to and sworn to me this 18th day of April 2024.

Weesaw Township Planning Commission
13518 State St.
P.O. Box 38
New Troy, MI 49119



Connie Lynn Muhleradt, Notary Public 10/15/2029



70067630 70936097

Weesaw Township
13518 State Street, PO Box 38
New Troy, MI 49119

AFFP
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF MI)
COUNTY OF BERRIEN) SS

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
WEESAW TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Heather Purk, being duly sworn, says:

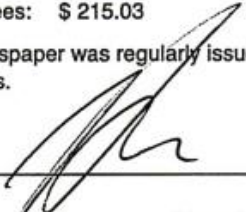
That she is Accounting Clerk of the Herald Palladium, a daily newspaper of general circulation, printed and published in St. Joseph, Berrien County, MI; that the publication, a copy of which is attached hereto, was published in the said newspaper on the following dates:

May 03, 2024

Publication Fees: \$ 215.03

That said newspaper was regularly issued and circulated on those dates.

SIGNED:



Subscribed to and sworn to me this 3rd day of May 2024.

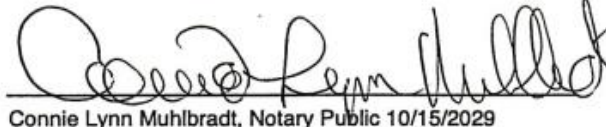
Please take notice that the Weesaw Township Planning Commission will conduct a Public Hearing on Monday, May 20, 2024, at 7:10 p.m. in the Township Hall located at 13518 State St., New Troy, MI 49119.

The Public Hearing will be held to enable the Weesaw Township Planning Commission to consider a resolution to recommend to the Township Board of Trustees a temporary moratorium on short-term rentals in the Township pending updates to the Weesaw Township Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance. A copy of the proposed moratorium to be considered is on file at the Township Hall and can be obtained subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

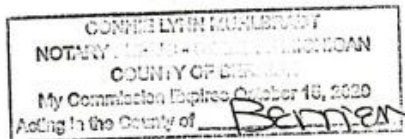
All interested persons may comment regarding the matters to be addressed by the Weesaw Township Planning Commission by attendance at the meeting or by letter, fax, or email before the meeting. Please submit any written comments by 1:00 p.m. on May 20, 2024, to the Township Hall 13518, P.O. Box 38, New Troy, MI 49119 or through email at weesawtownship@comcast.net. All interested persons will also be heard during the meeting.

The Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services to those with disabilities planning to attend upon seven (7) days' notice to the Township Clerk. If you require such aids or services and plan to attend this meeting, please contact the Township by phone at (269) 426-3002, by fax at (269) 426-7114, or by email at weesawtownship@comcast.net.

Weesaw Township Planning Commission
13518 State St.
P.O. Box 38
New Troy, MI 49119



Connie Lynn Muhlbradt, Notary Public 10/15/2029



70067630 70951197

Weesaw Township
13518 State Street, PO Box 38
New Troy, MI 49119

Resolution 2024-11

Weesaw Township Planning Commission

**Recommend Township Board Adopts
Weesaw Township Master Plan Update 2024**

WHEREAS, Act 33, Public Acts of Michigan 2008, as amended provides for a Township Planning Commission to prepare and recommend adoption of a master plan for the physical development of the Township; and,

WHEREAS, the Weesaw Township Planning Commission has prepared a Master Plan Update for Weesaw Township in compliance with Act 33; and,

WHEREAS, the Weesaw Township Board has passed a resolution asserting the Board's right to adopt the Master Plan and all elements and updates of that plan, as allowed by Act 33, Public Acts of Michigan 2008, as amended; and,

WHEREAS, Weesaw Township distributed the draft Master Plan Update to the county planning commission and the planning commissions of surrounding units of government, and all other relevant agencies for review and comment in compliance with Act 33; and,

WHEREAS, the Weesaw Township Planning Commission held a properly noticed public hearing on the draft Master Plan Update on April 22, 2024, in accordance with the requirements of Act 33 and other applicable statutes; and,

WHEREAS, at the public hearing held on April 22, 2024, the citizens of Weesaw Township were afforded the opportunity to provide oral and written comments on the draft Master Plan Update, and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Weesaw Township Planning Commission recommends that Weesaw Township Board adopts the Weesaw Township Master Plan Update 2024.

Offered By: Mike Metz

Supported By: Ken Hallen

Yeas: **Calvin Gnodtke, Roger Kugler, Mike Metz, Ken Hallen.**

Nays: none

Abstain: **Robert Warmbein**

Absent: none

**WEESAW TOWNSHIP BOARD
BERRIEN COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

Resolution of Adoption No. 2024-12

Resolution to Adopt Weesaw Township Master Plan Update 2024

WHEREAS, Act 33, Public Acts of Michigan 2008, as amended provides for a Township Planning Commission to prepare and recommend adoption of a Master Plan for the physical development of the Township; and,

WHEREAS, the Weesaw Township Planning Commission has prepared a Master Plan Update for Weesaw Township in compliance with Act 33; and,

WHEREAS, the Weesaw Township Board has passed a resolution asserting the Board's right to adopt the Master Plan and all elements and updates of that plan, as allowed by Act 33, Public Acts of Michigan 2008, as amended; and,

WHEREAS, Weesaw Township distributed the draft Master Plan Update to the Berrien County Planning Commission and the planning commissions of surrounding units of government, and all other relevant agencies for review and comment in compliance with Act 33; and,

WHEREAS, the Weesaw Township Planning Commission held a properly-noticed Public Hearing on the draft Master Plan Update on April 22, 2024, in accordance with the requirements of Act 33 and other applicable statutes; and,

WHEREAS, at the Public Hearing held on April 22, 2024, the citizens of Weesaw Township were afforded the opportunity to provide oral and written comments on the draft Master Plan Update, which comments the Planning Commission has taken into consideration; and,

WHEREAS, the Weesaw Township Planning Commission has adopted a resolution by majority vote of its membership recommending adoption of the Master Plan Update 2024 to the Township Board;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Weesaw Township Board does hereby adopt the Weesaw Township Master Plan Update 2024.

CERTIFICATION OF ADOPTION:

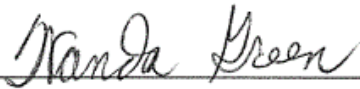
Motion by Warmbein, supported by King to adopt Weesaw Township Master Plan Update 2024

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Warmbein., Green, Tackitt, King, Sommers

Nays: None

Absent: None

I, Wanda Green, Clerk of Weesaw Township, Berrien County, Michigan, hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the resolution which was adopted by the Township Board at a Regular Board Meeting held on May 15, 2024.

Signed 
Wanda Green, Township Clerk

Dated: May 15, 2024