New Buffalo Township Community Master Plan

ORDINANCE / RESOLUTION

NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BERRIEN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act ("MPEA," PA 33 of 2008) authorizes municipal planning commissions to prepare a "master plan" pertinent to the future development of the municipality; and

WHEREAS, the New Buffalo Township Planning Commission has prepared a draft master plan for the municipality, to update and replace its previous community master plan, meeting all statutory requirements set forth in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, the New Buffalo Township Board of Directors authorized the distribution of the draft New Buffalo Township Community Master Plan to the general public and the various entities listed in the MPEA, for review and comment purposes; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Community Master Plan was made available to the various entities and the general public as required by the MPEA, and a public hearing thereon was held by the Planning Commission on July 9, 2019 pursuant to notice as required by the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds the proposed Master Plan as submitted for the public hearing is desirable and proper, and furthers the land use and development goals and strategies of the Township, and has passed a resolution recommending adoption of the plan to the Board of Directors;

NOW, THEREFORE, the New Buffalo Township Board of Directors hereby resolves to adopt the updated New Buffalo Township Community Master Plan as submitted for the public hearing, including all the text, charts, tables, maps, and descriptive and other matter therein intended by the Planning Commission to form the complete Master Plan, including the Future Land Classification Map.

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify the foregoing resolution was approved by a majority of the members of the New Buffalo Township Board of Directors at a regular meeting held on August 19, 2019 in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

Motion by:		Heit			
Seconded by	y: _	Zabicki			
Roll Call:	Yes:	Rahm, Zabicki, Heit, Rogers.	NO: n/a	lazzetto Absent	

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Michelle Heit, Supervisor

Judy H. Zabicki, Clerk

Jack Rogers, Treasurer

Pete Rahm, Trustee

Patty lazzetto, Trustee and Planning Commissioner

Dee Batchelder, Planning Commission Chair

Dan Coffey, Planning Commissioner

Joyce Mims, Planning Commissioner

Traci Lauricella, Planning Commissioner

Art Lamport, Planning Commissioner

Dave Stumm, Planning Commissioner

Carol Schmidt, Secretary to the PC

Estelle Brinkman, Zoning administrator

Pat Donnelly, Parks director

В R (i) Beckett&Raeder

denotes service on the Master Plan Steering Committee

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INTRODUCTION

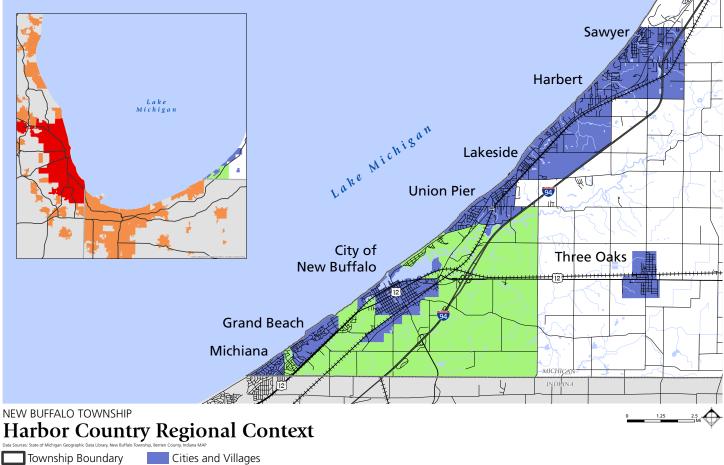
THE NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY

REGIONAL CONTEXT

New Buffalo Township is Michigan's gateway, located on the border of a tri-state area with Indiana and Illinois. Exit #1 from Interstate 94 will land a traveler directly in the Township, an easy landmark for travelers looking for amusement and diversion. In many ways the Township is well-positioned to be a recreational and resort area for the region. I-94 connects the Township to the major metropolises of Chicago and Detroit, while the beautiful Lake Michigan and Galien River coasts beckon. A long coastline and easy access by car, boat, and train have put the Township on the map as seasonal destination.

The Township is in Berrien County in the southwest corner of Michigan, part of a larger region that is known as Harbor Country. Harbor Country refers to the stretch of coastline that connects a string of small municipalities in west Michigan: New Buffalo City and Township; the Villages of Three Oaks, Michiana, and Grand Beach; and the unincorporated places of Union Pier, Lakeside, Harbert, and Sawyer. This trademarked region has become known as a getaway because it offers arts and culture, food and drink, and natural beauty. The Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce promotes the region as a

MAP 1: HARBOR COUNTRY REGIONAL CONTEXT



State Roads All Roads +++++ Railroads

Rivers / Streams

Lakes / Ponds

New Buffalo Township

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whole with an understanding that tourism industry is bolstered by the strength of its collective identity.

PLANNING CONTEXT

New Buffalo Township recognizes that it exists within a regional network of communities, none of which is an island unto itself. The City of New Buffalo, Village of Michiana, and Village of Grand Beach are all nestled within the geographic boundary of New Buffalo Township. The City of New Buffalo, geographically surrounded by the Township, operates autonomously but is connected to the Township culturally and by proximity. Grand Beach and Michiana are Villages within the Township's borders, so they are considered part of the Township for most purposes but do have some independent authority. Union Pier is a recognizable settlement with no formal governmental entity, and it straddles the border between New Buffalo and Chikaming Townships. By reviewing the master plan goals, objectives, and future land use strategies of neighboring communities, New Buffalo Township can better coordinate growth and economic development in a way that is mutually beneficial for all communities.

Each community articulates a unified desire to preserve and protect the Lake Michigan shoreline. A coordinated approach to managing this common resource will ensure the public has access to this gem while still safeguarding water quality and critical dunes areas.

From a future land use perspective, the Village of Michiana and the Village of Grand Beach are both predominantly residential. The areas of NBT that border these Villages are also largely residential, indicating compatible land uses along these borders. Both Villages articulate a desire to preserve single family residential land uses.

Because the City of New Buffalo serves as an economic engine for the region, there are more land use categories in the City and more opportunities for inconsistencies in land use. For example, there is industrial land in the City adjacent to New Buffalo Township's Mixed Use Town Center and Medium– High Density residential. Additionally, there is a core neighborhood zone in the City that is adjacent to land categorized in New Buffalo Township as Industrial, which could present a conflict. New Buffalo Township will likely benefit from open communication with surrounding communities to develop land use policies that are not in conflict with one another.

The Township also benefits from coordination at the regional level. It is part of the Southwest Michigan region, which developed a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan in 2011 that connects the northern portion of the Township with US-12. Many municipalities are part of the Marquette Greenway coalition to link New Buffalo with Calumet Park in Chicago, a journey of 58 miles that is almost halfway completed through the coordination efforts of the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission. Nonmotorized Another theme that emerges in the master plans of surrounding communities is the desire to develop a connected network of safe, reliable non-motorized trails for recreation and transportation. There is a trail system that extends beyond the borders of any one community, and by continuing to make connections in a coordinated way, these communities can facilitate economic development and foster placemaking.

WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) enables municipalities to write a Master Plan that broadly guides development to meet current and future needs and promotes the health, safety, and general welfare of its residents. The process of creating a Master Plan asks a community to pause from its busy daily operations of running a municipality, and look to the future. As a policy document that comprehensively inventories and analyzes the elements that makes a community tick, it is essential to include as many stakeholders into the process as possible. Through public engagement, the Master Plan identifies key challenges the residents face, and focuses on finding a shared vision and developing goals that could help achieve that vision in perpetuity. More specifically, the Master Plan collates a vision statement, an Action Plan with specific strategies, tools for making coordinated land-use decisions, and an assessment of current programs, services, structures, and infrastructure into one document to inform how the community will plan for its future.

HISTORY

The following is condensed and excerpted from the New Buffalo Township Master Plan (1998), authored by Quincy White, Secretary of the New Buffalo Township Planning Commission.

Once receding glaciers left the enormous gouges that filled to become the Great Lakes, glacial and fluvial deposition created the inland areas, while dunes along the shore were left by the retreating shoreline. The southeast corner of Lake Michigan contained alternating wetlands and forests of beech, oak and maple.

In 1675, Father Jacques Marquette came down the Saint Joseph river, which he called the River of the Miamis after the Indian tribe living along its banks. Four years later, another European party encountered the Potawatomis, who farmed in villages in the summer and migrated to winter hunting grounds in the fall, living in dome-shaped wigwams or large, bark-covered huts. They made maple sugar and enjoyed a bounty of fish and game. During the passenger pigeon migrations, the flocks of the large birds were so thick they could be felled "even with poles and club wielded by men standing on dunes."

The territorial legislature of Michigan created Berrien County on October 29, 1829. By the next year, the federal township and range system of land survey had outlined the section roads that defined inland borders today. In the Chicago Treaty of 1833, the Indians ceded all of Berrien County except a few reservations. Pokagon, second ranking Potawatomi chief who may have lived near the mouth of the Galien river and later established a tribal village in Bertram Township, sought and received permission to move his settlement to Cass County. His descendant, Simon Pokagon, educated at Oberlin, petitioned Lincoln and Grant for payment for lands.

The city of New Buffalo came into being 1834, when Captain Wessel D. Whittaker grounded his schooner Post Boy in the mouth of a small stream called State Creek near the present village of Grand Beach. The ship was destroyed, but Captain and crew survived and walked to Michigan City, where there were taverns that could provide food and shelter. On his way back up the coast to report the loss, he was struck by advantages and beauty of the spot where the Galien River passed through Lake Potawatomi into Lake Michigan. Lake Potowatomi, since drained by the sawmills, was, by varying accounts, two miles long, a half mile wide and up to ninety feet deep or four miles long by a mile wide and fourteen feet deep. It is now just "a lazy bend in the river."

At the land office in Kalamazoo, Captain Whittaker made arrangements to acquire a large tract of land around the harbor mouth and returned home to Buffalo, New York to sell half interest to his employers for \$13,000. They named their new city New Buffalo.

The first building was a 15 x 14 foot log cabin at the corner of Whittaker and Merchant Streets, where the first four settlers, Wessel Whittaker, Henry Bishop,

Freeman Clough and William Hammond slept on pine boughs laid across one side of the room. Soon there was Whittaker & Co.'s waterfront warehouse and store, a lodging house for travelers, and a sawmill. The first woman to arrive was Mrs. Eber Knight, whose descendants still live here.

Michigan created New Buffalo Township on March 12, 1836, just before it became a state. Five days later the Village of New Buffalo was incorporated. The township included what are now Three Oaks and Chikaming Townships until they were split off in 1856. More settlers, many of them Whittaker's relatives, followed him there, until development was stalled by the national Panic of 1837.

Harbor improvement was a priority. After a favorable Army survey in 1838, the government built a lighthouse in 1839. Unfortunately, it lasted only until 1857, when it became the first local victim to the lake's shifting shoreline.

Railroads had begun the stitch the country together with iron thread, and in 1849 New Buffalo was the end of the Michigan Central Railroad line. Over 100,000 passengers that year, plus freight, stopped to shift to other means to continue to Chicago or other points west. Many stopped at New Buffalo for a few hours, or if the weather was bad enough, a few days. New hotels, restaurants, and stores thrived. The railroad built piers and improved the harbor. Three new Ward Line steamers ran to Chicago and Milwaukee. Sidetracks appeared every mile or so along the railroad, opening up the lumber industry.

But just four years later, in 1853, the Michigan Central extended its line through Indiana to Chicago. Passengers didn't stop, and the town lost half its size. The boom was over. But land had been cleared; improvements made. Soon there was a new group of settlers, German mostly. Wilson Road was called Germany Road. A newspaper, several churches, and a medical association were formed by 1870.

The roads opened to the north as well as the south, with as many as sixteen coaches a day between New Buffalo and St. Joe. In 1870 this route was covered by a new railroad line, which was required to have a stop every five miles for the benefit of the farmers. The next to last stop was Townline, which quickly acquired a post office and became Union Pier. By 1880, the township's population was 1198, an increase of 376 people (46%) over the previous twenty years.

Isaac O. Smith farmed 165 acres on the lakefront between New Buffalo and Union Pier. In 1893 he built a resort hotel for travelers on their way to the famous Columbian Exposition in Chicago. It had ten rooms, a ballroom, and ten cottages. Part of the foundations of the hotel and one of the cottages (much modified) remain today.

Thus began the parade of visitors from the west. Camps and youth facilities were built, including Camp Sokol. Floyd R. Perkins bought 600 acres of dunes and

woodlands for a shooting preserve, then expanded it to form the Grand Beach Company with almost fifty cottages, a nine-hole golf, course and a train stop by 1911. The railroad became a significant local employer in 1921 when the Pere Marquette line put in new tracks, coaling stations, a roundhouse, and a 56 room hotel. Local industry - a pickle factory and a glass factory - and local farms continued and prospered, but the growth industry was the people from across the lake. In the 1920s, families rented small uninsulated cabins for a week or a month, arriving first by train and then by motorcar on US-12. Even in the Depression of the 30s, they came if they could afford it. A tourist Information Center was opened in 1934.

After the Second World War, many of the renters were moving to the suburbs, but the city dwellers who did come wanted more: they were repeat visitors and tended to buy as well as rent. The cabins gradually gave way to winterized second homes, which seem to become larger and more elaborate each year. Marina facilities started when Harold and William Guhl offered two boats for rent and live bait in 1947, growing into today's dredged harbor with moorings on both sides of the bridge. The village became a Home Rule City in 1965. While industry continues to grow slowly (plastic injection molds, steel castings, and wooden trusses) and farms continue to operate (from soy beans to llama ranching), the new businesses are restaurants, antique stores, bed-and-breakfasts and even hotels. Partly by plan and partly by geography, New Buffalo Township is still, as its 1928 arch proudly proclaimed, The Gateway of Michigan.

Sources listed:

The New Buffalo Story 1834-1976, The New Buffalo Area Bicentennial Committee Sketch Development Plan for New Buffalo Township (1978) New Buffalo Township Planning Commission Chikaming Township Master Land Use Plan 1992-2021 (1992) Chikaming Township Planning Commission Profile of New Buffalo Township (1998 draft) Berrien County Economic Development Department Nature Magazine vol. 15 no. 1 (1930) (Simon Pokagon) Primitive Man in Michigan (1925) Legends of the Old West (1875) New Buffalo Recollections (1985) Savage (Lake Potawatomi)

Early-Chicago Reminiscences (1882) Cleaver (LaPorte Road)

New Buffalo Township Overlook



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New Buffalo Township's community engagement strategy was designed to reach both full-time and part-time residents as well as the business community. To accommodate the geographic separation of second-home owners and the time constraints of business owners, the Township decided to develop customized online surveys to address each group. Many of the questions on each survey were tailored toward their intended subjects, and a few questions were asked in comparable form across all three groups.

Postcards were sent to each property and business owner in early 2018 which provided a link to a project web site that directed participants to the three surveys. Over the course of several weeks, responses were collected from 213 year-round residents, 343 second homeowners, and 17 business owners. Comparing these figures to data from the Township's assessing office, this represents about 20% of year-round residents, 13% of second homeowners, and 11% of businesses.

The results from these surveys are the basis for setting goals and policies that guide the Township's growth and development. More pointed questions in the survey help distill general sentiments into objectives and priorities and provide clarity for decision-makers when confronted with tough tradeoffs that have multi-faceted implications. This chapter contains a high-level summary of the



Figure 1: Postcard invitations to take the Master Plan surveys

participants and their responses. Responses to specific questions are shown where they inform the text throughout the report, and a detailed question-byquestion analysis is provided as an Appendix.

COMMUNITY RESIDENTS

Of the full-time residents who responded to the survey, the largest proportion (50%) have lived in the Township for longer than 15 years. Almost all respondents were retired homeowners earning higher than the median household income, in households comprised of two persons, with no children in the local school system. Generally, full-time residents felt that the Township has seen unfavorable changes over time. They remarked the Township has become more crowded and congested, specifically in the summer months. One resident commented that it can longer be considered a "sleepy town." Its growth, much of it perceived to be by tourists, is linked to the development of condominiums, commercialization, and the Township prioritizing money from out-of-state second homeowners. The addition of an Amtrak station has made New Buffalo Township more accessible, for better or for worse. There is angst that not enough is being done to preserve the shoreline, and fear that people will lose their homes to erosion. A call for action is implied in the comments, and a worry that

tourism as a main industry will accelerate the destruction of the shoreline. Similarly to other groups surveyed, "Lake Michigan" and "beaches" were recorded as "critical factors" in attracting residents to New Buffalo Township by most survey-takers (71% and 66%, respectively). Trailing the top two responses were its "small-town feel" (44%) and "outdoor recreation" (42%). When it comes to leisure, though, many of the residents choose to cross the state line. Even as residents tended to stay closer to home for dining, either in the City of New Buffalo or the St. Joseph/Benton Harbor area, 62% travel as far as Chicago to dine. Entertainment sees similar results, with people traveling to Indiana or Illinois. Residents also to leave for medical care: aside from St. Joseph, most of the options selected for medical care are located out of state, to "Chicago and the suburbs (56%)," "Michigan City (47%)," "LaPorte (19%)," and "South Bend/Mishawaka (16%)." Chicago, the most popular location to receive medical care, is over an hour away!

Year-round residents voted that their needs not being met were "cellular service (18%)" and "transportation choice (23%)." Most of them commute and run errands by personal vehicle but are looking for another convenient mode to get around. Many needs were categorized as "room for improvement:" "events and gatherings (52%)," "local food and drink scene (50%)," "nightlife (38%)," "grocery and convenience retail (37%)," among others. "Housing affordability," however, was split at 29% by respondents who think there is "room for improvement" and others whose needs are fully met. The split could be in the understanding that housing choice and housing affordability are correlated; a range of housing options typically translates to a range of price points.

SECOND HOMEOWNERS

Second home residents were sought out specifically for the Master Plan because their perspectives matter greatly, both as property investors and as parttime residents, but their characteristics and preferences are harder to capture through traditional methods, which often record data based on primary place of residence. The seasonal influx of residents and vacationers causes planning challenges, and these questions are aimed at understanding how the Township is perceived by people from this unique vantage point.

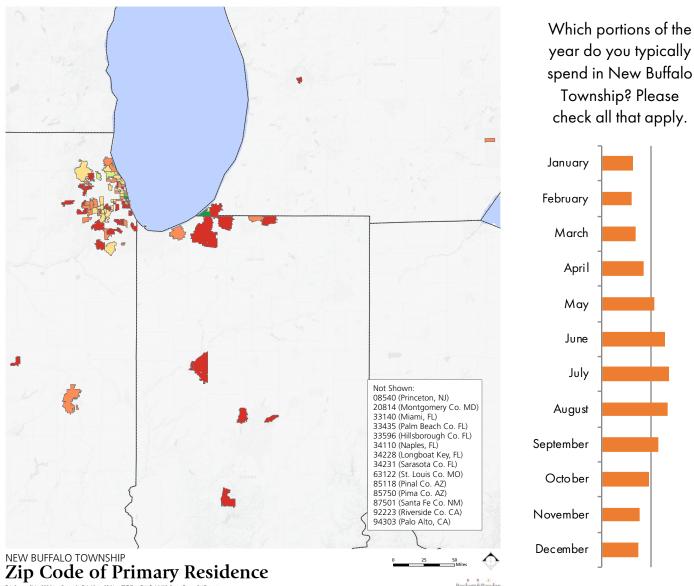
Almost half of the respondents purchased a home in the Township more than 15 years ago, and typically spend the summer months there—an average 10 days per month compared to 1-5 days per month in the off-seasons. Critical to their decision for buying property in the Township is Lake Michigan and its beaches, and also that it is "within commuting distance to my principal residence." Some comments also revealed that nostalgia and tradition are important factors for families that have been tied to this place for up to 100 years. Most of the second homeowners' primary residence is in Illinois, and their net annual household income of over \$200,000 are significantly higher than the median household income of full-time Township residents.

Two-thirds of survey-takers said that "access to the lake" is a critical factor in their decision to spend time in the Township, and are correspondingly seriously

TABLE 1: TRAVEL FOR SHOPPING, DINING, AND ENTERTAINMENT

SHOPPING		
#1	Michigan City (94%)	
#2	South Bend/ Mishawaka (83%)	
#3	Chicago and suburbs (67%)	
	DINING	
#1	City of New Buffalo (93%)	
#2	Chicago and suburbs (62%)	
#3	St. Joseph/Benton Harbor (52%)	
	ENTERTAINMENT	
#1	Chicago and suburbs (90%)	
#2	Michigan City (36%)	
#3	St. Joseph/Benton Harbor (32%)	

MAP 2: ZIP CODE OF PRIMARY RESIDENCE



— State Boundaries
 Great Lakes

11 to 22 Residents 8 to 11 Residents 4 to 8 Residents 2 to 4 Residents 2 Residents 1 Resident

> concerned about disappearing beaches. Many recall the pre-erosion coastline, having purchased lakefront properties under the assurance that the Army Corps of Engineers would protect the beaches, and are disappointed that little effort has been made. Second homeowners also said they would spend more time in the Township if there were reliable cell service (47%) and internet service (44%). As the economy becomes more virtual, and location matters less, this finding seems to imply that part-time residents would consider spending time working in New Buffalo Township, if the infrastructure could support connection to their offices back at home. This group was also asked if anything was missing that would make their time more enjoyable in the Township. The two most common responses were a "lack of a downtown" and "beach access," revealing pressures on the City of New Buffalo as well as on the shoreline.

At the time of the writing of this master plan, short-term property rental practices are becoming a mainstreamed disruption in the traditional lodging market, and New Buffalo Township's second homeowners were asked about their participation. The majority of second homeowners from this survey reported that no reservations are completed as a short-term rental on their property. Those that have participated in the short-term rental market do not appear to be commercial-style operations: they reported hosting between 3 and 20 reservations all year, which would mean at most two reservations per month, on average. Certainly, during the more popular months, the reservations would exceed the average, but in general, the number of reservations that are considered "too many" should be defined by the community. Overwhelmingly, respondents only have one property available for short-term rentals (90%). Correspondingly, survey-takers responded that the additional income generated from short-term rentals is not a financial necessity for keeping the home.

BUSINESS OWNERS

Insight from business owners help gauge how well the economy is functioning. Because it is a seasonal community, there are wealthy vacationers and lowerincome service workers. The questions seek to understand how a bifurcated population affects the labor supply and the longevity and health of local businesses. The majority of business owners who responded have operated a small business in the Township for 15 years or longer. The table below compares the industries reported by survey respondents to those captured in a summary of Township businesses provided by the proprietary data and GIS company Esri. Retail and Accommodation/Food Services establishments were well-represented both in the Township and in the survey, and the proportion of respondents in the Construction and Art/Entertainment/Recreation categories closely matched their occurrence in the Township. Real Estate and Transportation/Warehousing were both a bit overrepresented, whereas it would have been good to have heard from the Services, Professional, and Public Administration sectors. Overall, a good mix of responses was achieved from a variety of sectors with employees who can be expected to have diverse skill sets and educational backgrounds.

In general, the businesses stay open year-round, employing few or no seasonal workers – perhaps a surprise considering the top three sectors represented are dependent on either customer flow or weather. Over two-thirds of them "plan to continue [their] business at its current size" (11 of 17) and another three businesses "plan to expand." This is reassuring news and is indicative of a confidence that the business community is on a positive trajectory. Like the other groups surveyed, business owners said they were compelled to invest in the Township primarily because of Lake Michigan and its beaches.

The vast majority of survey-takers (14 of 17) reported an adequate labor supply, although almost half (6 of 14) say "not comfortably," and the remaining three respondents say they have "experienced at least one acute labor shortage that has affected their business." Low-skilled workers are "easiest to find and hire,"

TABLE 2: BUSINESS SURVEY RESPONDENT INDUSTRIES

INDUSTRY BY NAICS CODE	TOWNSHIP BUSINESSES		SURVEY RESPONDENTS	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Accommodation & Food Services	25	14.1%	2	14.3%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	19	10.7%		
Retail Trade	18	10.2%	4	28.6%
Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	18	10.2%		
Construction	17	9.6%	1	7.1%
Public Administration	16	9.0%		
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	14	7.9%	3	21.4%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	12	6.8%	1	7.1%
Health Care & Social Assistance	8	4.5%		
Manufacturing	7	4.0%		
Admin., Support, Waste Management, Remediation Services	5	2.8%		
Transportation & Warehousing	4	2.3%	2	14.3%
Educational Services	4	2.3%		
Finance & Insurance	3	1.7%		
Unclassified Establishments	3	1.7%		
Utilities	2	1.1%		
Wholesale Trade	2	1.1%		
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	0	0.0%		
Mining	0	0.0%		
Information	0	0.0%		
Management of Companies & Enterprises	0	0.0%	1	7.1%
TOTAL	177	100.0%	14 (3 skipped)	100.0%

but are just as difficult to retain as skilled trades, white collar, and executive-level positions. Middle-skilled workers, those with some training beyond high school, stand out as the most difficult to retain, according to the responses. This suggests that low- and mid-skilled workers have a high turnover rate.

When businesses were asked what the Township would need to offer or enhance in order to build and retain an adequate supply of labor, cellular and internet service were identified as critically important (14 of 17 and 13 of 17, respectively), both as a tool to get work done and as a quality of life amenity. The next most commonly selected responses exposes the important relationship between the local economy and the local housing market: 8 of 17 of business owners believe that "appropriate housing options" and "housing affordability," along with "access to Lake Michigan," are factors that can help improve the supply of labor in the Township. Business owners believe that affordable and appropriate housing is more important than a "livable wage," though of course these two figures are mathematically inseparable. Another important question to determine access to a labor supply is the distance workers must travel to access decent employment. According to businesses, almost two-thirds of their employees arrive by personal vehicle with an average commute of 11-30 minutes. The lack of multi-modal transit options may preclude lower-income workers who have to live farther out of cheaper land and therefore lose their convenient link to employment. It is encouraging to see that businesses owner and planners are on the same side of when it comes to providing a livable place to attract and retain labor.

OVERLAPPING THEMES

Several questions were asked across at least two of the three surveys. The purpose of asking different groups the same questions is two-fold: to see where responses differ and where they are the same to determine if there is consensus on an issue or a divide to reconcile.

What attracted you to New Buffalo Township?

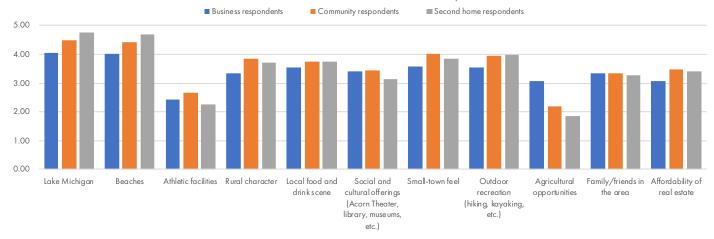
What attracts most survey-takers to the area is a combination of place and people. Beaches and Lake Michigan are highly regarded by all, and having "family and friends in the area" was most critical for full-time residents (less so for business owners and part-time residents). What consistently ranked as "not all at important" were "agricultural opportunities," "athletic facilities," and "employment/business opportunity." When taking a step back, these lowerranking attractors align with what has been shared elsewhere: agriculture is backdrop and not a widespread industry; athletics are water-related; and a bedroom community is not designed to be an employment center.

HARBOR COUNTRY IS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE BECAUSE ...

- » Lake Michigan has created as special magic that has drawn all of us to live here. We have literally miles of beaches for persons who live near and not so near to the water.
- » Our restaurants are upper end venues where you can eat interesting food.
- » Our shops along Red Arrow are loads of fun.
- » Our live theater is better than anything outside of Chicago.
- » Our cinema is better than anything inside OR outside of Chicago.
- » Our wineries have a following that has spawned small tour bus companies.
- » Our breweries are right behind the wineries.
- » Now we have distilleries attracting events as well as tours.
- » Our markets and stores sell home furnishings, produce, fine wines, special brews, and organic meats to people who are here from Chicago or come from Indiana and Illinois just to purchase these items.
- » Second home owners you meet in Harbor Country are intelligent, friendly, and on break or vacation. The addition of these great neighbors to our community supports more, and more interesting, restaurants, entertainment, and shops than the local economy could grow organically. Their taxes fund both services and schools.

- Steering Committee member

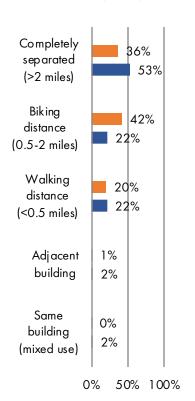
What Attracted You to New Buffalo Township?



How close to your residence would you be comfortable with commercial development?

Second home owners

Community survey

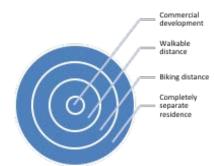


Do you plan to retire here?

Once combined, responses reflect, more than any definitive answer, that survey-takers are undecided on retiring in the Township. For business owners, the answers lean more heavily towards "yes" than the other groups, and second-homeowners were the most unsure. Nearly one-quarter of communitywide survey respondents already have retired in the Township (24%), which is markedly higher than the combined results of just over 10%. Even with so many uncertain responses, it can still be said that a significant proportion of participants plan to retire in the Township (28% to 17%).

How close to your residence would you be comfortable with commercial development such as stores, restaurants, and service providers?

The responses clearly demonstrate what side of the spectrum survey-participants sit in preferred proximity to commercial development. Very few, across any survey, would like to live in or directly adjacent to commerce, but a healthy number wishes to be within walking or biking distance. Combined, over 55% want to live within two miles to commercial development, outnumbering the 43% who want to remain "completely spatially separated." This finding has implications for deciding where and how to build commercial and residential uses together that meet some needs for proximity without encroaching on those who value that separation.



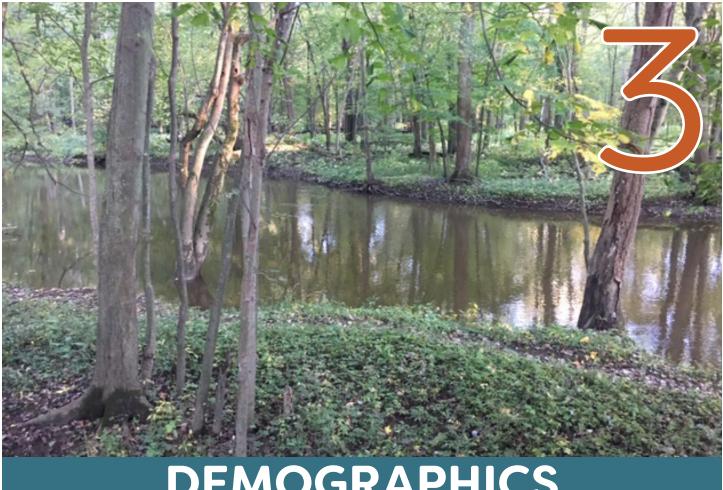
STUDENT SURVEY

Recognizing that the master plan's long time horizon coincides with the productive years of the community's current youth, the Township used the occasion of an Ideas Fair at New Buffalo High School to survey students about perceptions of the community, which provided insight into the Township's pressing issues and opportunities.

When asked generally about the biggest issues facing New Buffalo Township, a common theme emerged that the community doesn't engage socially as much as it could. Ten of the respondents reported several issues bearing similarity to one another and having to do with disconnection and lack of understanding amongst residents. In the words of one student, "There isn't that much association between people. We don't come together enough." Such responses indicate need for greater social spaces that promote interaction among neighbors and encourage social cohesion. When asked about the kind of community they see themselves living in, students offered replies such as "supportive," "social," and "open community."

When asked what issues adults were not paying enough attention to, bullying and conflict at school and among young residents emerged as a major theme—a mirror image of the desired connection. According to one student, "There is a lot of conflict that happens in school and in the community that gets swept under the rug and isn't paid attention to." Other students raised issues related to anxiety and mental illness, while some astutely connected boredom and bad decision making.

Boredom and lack of entertainment opportunities were common themes among teenagers here as elsewhere, with one respondent noting that "there is nothing to do in the winter" and another reporting that "there is no good place for kids to go hang out." These responses are perhaps a clearer expression of the same sentiment as above: a need for social interaction and, therefore, for an environment that supports it. When the youth were asked about what sorts of activities they do for fun, the beach was by far the most common response. Others pointed to New Buffalo Township's walking opportunities, hiking trails, and biking facilities as sources of enjoyment. Still others mentioned local eateries, the library, movie theaters, and the bowling alley. These responses indicate that the community's public facilities, diverse commercial establishments, and natural amenities are indeed serving this demographic's entertainment needs to at least some extent. THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.



DEMOGRAPHICS

The practice of comprehensive planning has historically had a stronger focus on land use than on demographic analysis, a somewhat puzzling strategy since population is the primary component of community. A solid understanding of the characteristics of a population is what allows for an appreciation of its issues and concerns, and for its leadership and governing bodies to address them in a timely, reasonable, and effective manner.

The datasets used in this analysis are as follows, in this preferred order:

- » Decennial US Census, 2010 and 2000. This is the gold standard for demographic data. It measures 100% of the population and offers comparable data points at regular intervals throughout most of the United States' developed history. However, available data is limited to population and housing information, and the ten-year interval between data points means it is rarely "fresh."
- » American Community Survey. The ACS program replaced the "long form" Census questions beginning in 2000, collecting the same types of detailed information about social, economic, and housing conditions on a rolling basis instead of once per decade. Statistical validity of the ACS depends on sampling. In larger communities (those with populations of 65,000 or more), it is possible to gain a valid sample within twelve months, which

the ACS calls a "one-year estimate." For mid-size communities (population 20,000-65,000), it takes 36 months of data collection to achieve a valid sample size, and for communities smaller than 20,000, it takes 60 months. This system exposes the statistical tradeoff between the reliability gained by increasing sample size and the currency that is sacrificed in the time it takes to do so. The dataset used for this project was the 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate.

» Esri Business Analyst. This proprietary software presents privatelygenerated market research data. In addition, it estimates Census and ACS data for geographic configurations other than Census-defined tracts, blocks, and places. It is used sparingly in this section because the Census products do a better job of describing demographics, but its integration with market conditions makes an irreplaceable contribution to economic assessments.

One other caveat regarding Census data at the Township level concerns the inclusion of villages. In Michigan, Cities are considered entirely separate jurisdictions whereas Villages retain a governing affiliation with their surrounding Townships. The Census reflects this structure in its data, producing fully separated datasets for Cities but including Village data within the Township in which it is located. There are various ways to address this as needed, such as performing manual calculations and using datasets like the ACS and Esri which attempt to approximate data on this "remainder." For the purposes of this chapter, "New Buffalo Township" data, including the Dashboard, should be read to include the Villages, and the text will specify where additional analysis has been done to discern differences between the Villages and the remainder of the Township.

While numbers alone may provide valuable descriptions, it's often more useful to understand how these descriptions relate and compare to those of neighboring communities or larger contexts. For this reason, this report, including the Prosperity Index, not only assesses the Township's statistics, but also includes comparisons to each neighboring jurisdiction as well as Berrien County and the State of Michigan.

AGE

Often an unremarkable statistic, age is a big story in New Buffalo Township. Its median age of 51.8 is over a decade older than the County (41.0) and the State (38.9), and almost 15 years older than the US median age (37.2). Median age in the Township has risen 4.4 years since the 2000 Census, which is twice the increase of the State median but less than the County's increase of 6 years, suggesting that New Buffalo Township is helping to drive the rising median age in southwest Michigan along with other communities.

New Buffalo Township Dashboard



Figure 2: New Buffalo Township Dashboard

RACE

New Buffalo Township is overwhelmingly white (94.7%) and, bucking nationwide trends, becoming whiter (it was 93.9% white in 2000). Overall, the population of New Buffalo Township decreased by 82 persons, or about 3.3%, between the 2000 and 2010 decennial censuses. This drop included approximately half of the black population of the Township, 44 persons. On the other hand, there was an increase of 26 Hispanic persons and 11 Asian persons, and a tripling of persons described as "some other race" to 21.

HOUSEHOLDS

Household composition is changing, with about 3.5% of households changing from family households to nonfamily households. Specifically, there has been a decrease in married-couple households and households with children, and an increase in householders living alone, especially those aged 65 and over. These changes are consistent with the rising median age. Evidence of these trends is even stronger in the data comparing the number of households with children and those with senior citizens. There are children in 1/3 fewer of the Township's households than in the County and the State, and about half again as many households with senior citizens. These numbers reflect a trend that was well-established during the 2000 census and has intensified since. This type of dramatic demographic swing has the potential to generate swift and undesirable impacts on the local school system. The trend is still more dramatic in the villages, where the situation of households with children is dire, and the extreme prevalence of households with a senior citizen is at a critical mass. It is good news that in about two-thirds of households with senior citizens, there are other household members, though this statistic does not tell us whether these households are primarily seniors living together.

HEALTH

Even though the Township and its Villages are considerably older than the County and State populations, they have comparable or lower rates of disability. This trend holds true across the age spectrum and becomes even more pronounced in the 65 and older group. A lifetime of wealth and good access to medical care likely contributes to this. The overall rate of health insurance in the Township is slightly lower than in the State as a whole. The striking thing about these conditions is that heath insurance within the villages is recorded at or near 100% for nearly all cohorts. This means that not only is the insured rate slightly lower in the remainder of the Township, but that nearly all of the uninsured persons in the Township reside outside the Villages.

EDUCATION

Educational attainment is uncharacteristically high in the Township and in the Villages as compared to national rate. This is often correlated with high property values, as is the case here. In Berrien County and the State of Michigan, just over a quarter of people (26.8% and 27.4% respectively) have received a bachelor's degree or higher, with about 2 in 5 of those earning a graduate or professional degree as well (10% of population). In New Buffalo Township, the 2012-2016 American Community Survey reports that almost half of the population (44%) has a bachelor's degree or higher, and half of those (22% of total population) also have a graduate or professional degree. This is an uptick of almost 10 percentage points since the 2005-2009 American Community Survey, when 34% of the population had a bachelor's degree or higher, and the increase is almost entirely concentrated in the pool of those with graduate or professional degrees (14% to 22% of total population).

In the regional context, the marked difference between educational attainment in the Township and the County has a mathematical implication: for the Township's percentages to be much higher than average, then educational attainment in places outside the Township must be much lower. This is true in the townships of Three Oaks (17% bachelor's degree or higher) in Michigan, as well as in and Springfield (18%) and Michigan (21%) Townships in Indiana. NBT's coastal neighbor to the north, Chikaming Township, has a comparably high rate of 42% of persons with a bachelor's degree or higher.

WORK

Labor force participation has declined by over 10 percentage points since the 2005-2009 survey period, likely tracking with the advancing median age, and is now lower than in the County or State. It is below 50% in the villages.

The majority of workers in the Villages are in management, business, science, and arts occupations, along with about 40% of the remainder of the Township. This, along with income and educational attainment data, completes the picture of New Buffalo Township and especially its Villages as "where the bosses live." By contrast, production, transportation, and material moving occupations are underrepresented in the Township and especially the villages.

INCOME

It is no surprise that incomes in the Township are stunning. Median household income is 128% that of the State, and average household income is 157% of the State average. A discrepancy between the median and the average signals a concentration of values on either end of the spectrum, in this case the top. Figures for the Villages are even more skewed, with the average household income in Michiana at 186% of the State average and in Grand Beach at a whopping 210% of the State average.

However, these dazzling figures at the top do not alter, and may obscure, the fact that a sizable portion of the Township is most certainly not wealthy. Scores of households, about 1/5 of the total outside the Villages, are living on less than half of the Statewide median income. Both food stamp/SNAP receipts and cash public assistance occur at about 2/3 the rate that they do in the State, with almost 10% of the Township's households receiving them--all but two of which are located outside the Villages.

Although fewer of the households have earnings in the Township than in the State, it is those earnings which are pushing up the overall income picture. It is also specifically earnings for male, full-time, year-round workers that are primarily responsible for the high incomes. Median earnings for female, full-time, year-round workers in New Buffalo Township are comparable or even slightly lower than those for the State, while male earnings outpace the State median by 167%. The Statewide wage gap, represented by showing women's earnings as a percentage of men's earnings, is 76% Statewide but a paltry 46% in New Buffalo Township. This is likely correlated with the high median age for several reasons, including changes in the division of labor in a household and advances in pay parity over more recent decades that may not coincide with the career spans of today's retirees.

The rate of persons in poverty in the Township is nearly identical to the rate of persons in poverty in the State as a whole, but poverty in the Villages is very, very low. Taken together, these two pieces of information mean that poverty is more highly concentrated in the remainder of the Township. A look into which persons in the Township are in poverty reveals that this burden is falling most heavily on children: the poverty rate of those younger than 18 years of age is 34%, three times the rate of those 18 and over. This commonly occurs because one household in poverty has fewer adults than children, and is then exacerbated by several related conditions. In the case of a single adult in the household, the cost of child care may require a significant portion of the scarce resources, a cost that is mitigated in the presence of two live-in caregivers. If that single adult is female, as is the case in about 80% of the single household heads in the Township, then the effects of pay inequality--present almost everywhere but particularly striking here--are distributed directly to the children.

COMMUTING

The percentage of workers who drive alone to work is slightly lower than the County and State rates. The biggest driver of this divergence is among those who work at home, which is two to four times higher than the State rate in the Villages and almost three times as high in the remainder of the Township. Average commute has increased from 20 to 28 minutes since the 2005-2009 survey period, and is now higher than the State average of 24.3. Commutes are even longer from the Villages at 26 and 38 minutes.

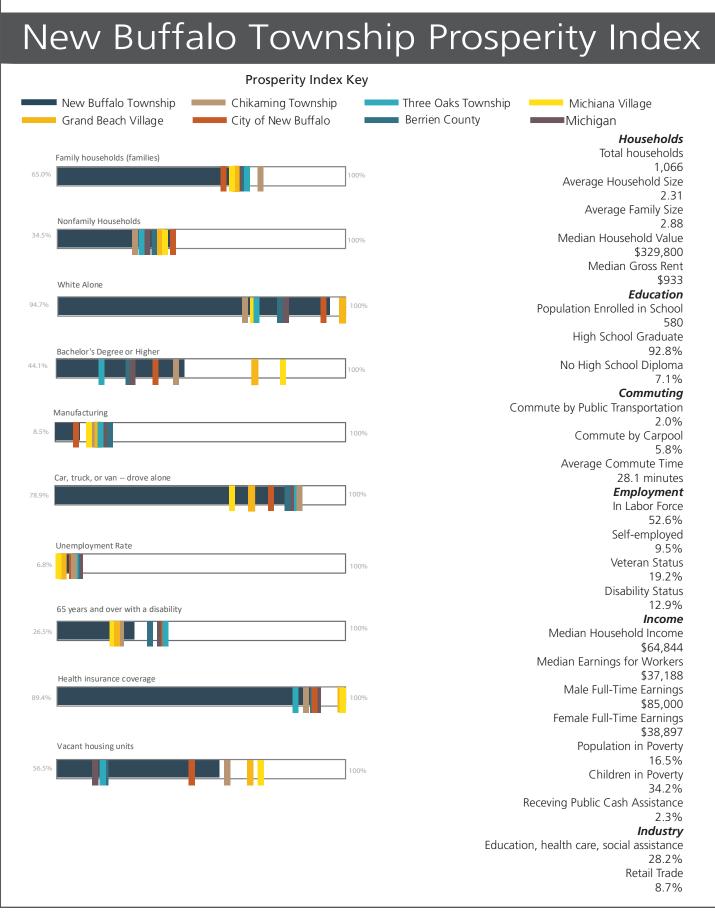
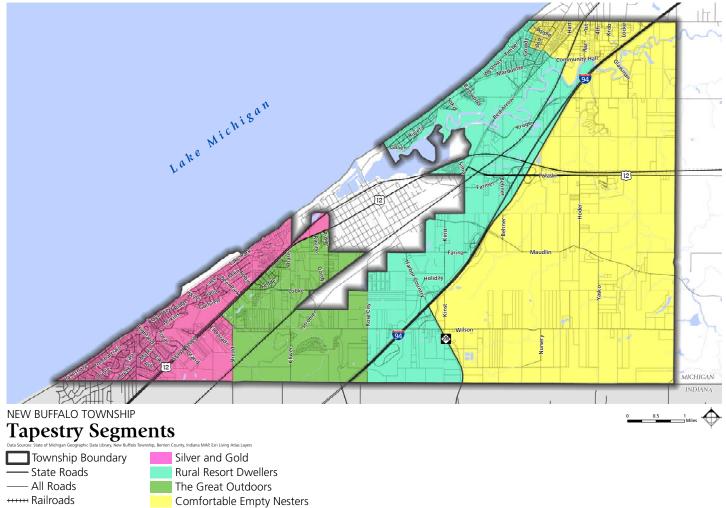


Figure 3: New Buffalo Township Prosperity Index

MAP 3: DOMINANT TAPESTRY



Rivers / Streams

Lakes / Ponds

Beckett&Raeder

THE HOUSEHOLD TYPES

Esri's Tapestry Segmentation is a data set developed to provide an accurate, detailed description of America's neighborhoods. The residential areas of the United States are divided into 67 distinctive segments based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition. The following summary excerpts are provided by Esri to describe the four dominant household types in New Buffalo, according to their analysis. In each description, special emphasis is placed on the type of housing each group desires.

Silver and Gold

This senior group, with a median age of 63.2, lives primarily along the Lake Michigan coastline and is the most affluent senior market, made up of predominantly single-family, homes, either owner-occupied or seasonal, that have a median value of \$385,700. They are retired but active in the labor force, charitable activities, health regiment, social lives, travel, and hobbies.

Rural Resort Dwellers

Rural Resort Dwellers are centered in resort areas and have a median household income of \$50,400, substantially lower than the Silver and Gold group, but nearing retirement (median age 54.1) with a comfortable net worth of \$163,000. In general, these individuals own their singlefamily homes, worth a median value of \$209,200. With an average household size of 2.21, 42% of households consist of married couples with no children at home, while another 28% are single persons.

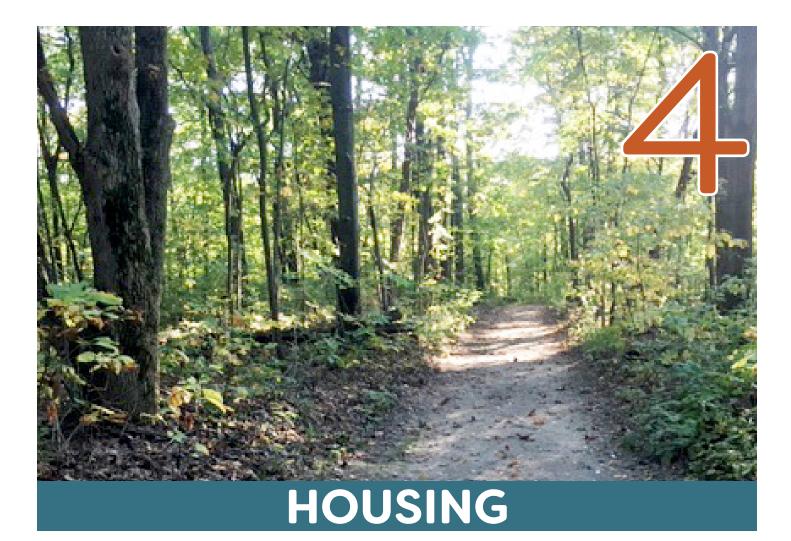
Comfortable Empty Nesters

This group has an average household size of 2.5 with a median income of \$75,000. Though more than half of all householders are aged 55 or older, some still have children at home (median age 48.0). Most residents own and live in single-family detached homes built between 1950 and 1990. Two other Tapestry groups which are related to this one, but differ in having a slightly lower median household income, have a smaller presence in the Township: Midlife Constants, who have a similar median age of about 46 years but lower net worth and median home value, and Rustbelt Traditions, whose median age is about ten years younger and who move considerably more frequently.

The Great Outdoors

The final segment group is the Great Outdoors. These adults in their late 40s have an income slightly above the national average at \$56,400. Their homes were constructed between 1970 and 2000. Most are single-family homes (76%) and some are mobile homes (16%). A significant number of these homes are seasonal in nature.

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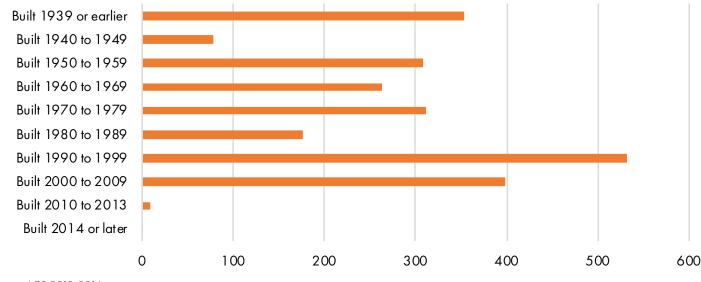


A thorough examination of the housing market in New Buffalo Township is a key feature of this master planning effort. It is central to two issues which are at the forefront of the Township's planning concerns at this time: a dramatic conversion of housing units from full-time to part-time occupancy, including the emergence of an entirely new short-term rental market; and a mismatch between housing values and the wages paid by the Township's employers.

INVENTORY

History

The history of when homes were constructed helps to paint a picture about the way and timing in which a community was developed. Looking at the data, it appears there were three housing booms in the township. The first was before 1940; the next was most likely during the post-World War II housing boom and continuing through 1970; and the last was throughout the 1990s until the beginning of the Great Recession in 2007. Looking at the age of housing stock can also help us better understand if and when homes will need to be renovated or upgraded. Because construction of new homes in New Buffalo has occurred fairly consistently over the years, it is not likely that there will be a huge push for remodeling all at one time. As of 2010, there were 2,478 housing units in the Township.



Housing Structures by Year Built

Source: ACS 2012-2016

Housing Formats

The decennial census provides the most accurate count of housing units available, as it does not rely on sampling methods. However, the information it provides is limited, and it does not tell us anything about the type of housing unit, such as the number of units in a structure or the features of an individual unit. That information is provided in the American Community Survey, which uses sampling methods in order to obtain greater detail. This is tremendously useful information that is not available in any other way besides a direct, labor-intensive inventory, but because errors are inherent in any sample, it must be used judiciously. In order to show the proportion of housing unit types in the Township, the table below presents the averaged results of three data sets since the publication of ACS data began in 2005.

It is notable that the vast majority of homes in the Township represent only one format: detached housing. Looking at the new building permits in New Buffalo Township for a similar time period, this trend continues with a total of 189 building permits issued for construction of detached homes in the Township from 2005 through October 31 of 2018. According to this data, the only other type of housing developed were two multi-family units of 3-4 units, which received building permits in 2005. Though this information does not tell us how many homes were torn down or no longer considered to be habitable housing units, it does show that the Township has a strong and uninterrupted residential development trend toward detached homes.



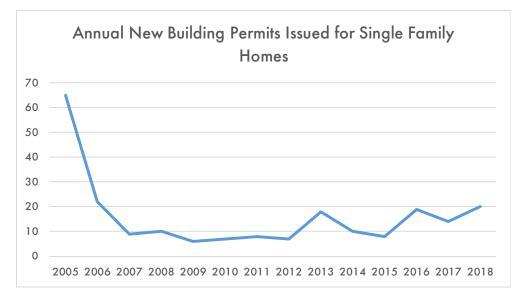


TABLE 3: HOUSING UNITS BUILT, BY FORMAT

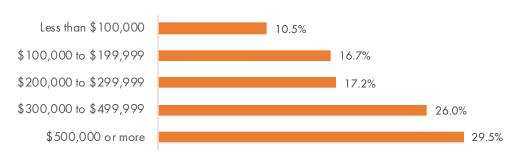
	2005-2009	2009-2013	2012-2016	Proportion of all structures
Total Housing Units	2,485	2,348	2,432	100.00%
1-unit, detached	2,372	2,259	2,281	95.14%
1-unit, attached	51	22	30	1.42%
2 units	0	0	0	0.00%
3 or 4 units	38	0	4	0.58%
5 to 9 units	13	15	38	0.91%
10 to 19 units	0	15	19	0.47%
20 or more units	0	7	9	0.22%
Mobile Home	11	30	51	1.27%

Source: ACS 2005-2009, 2009-2013, 2012-2016

Housing Cost

The median home value in New Buffalo Township was \$329,800 according to the 2012-2016 ACS, down from a height of \$391,200 recorded in the 2009-2013 ACS. This is about 2.5 times the State median value, and actually considerably less than the median value of the Villages (\$461,800 and \$698,300). The cost of housing in the Township is not aligned with its median wage of approximately \$65,000 per year, signaling that it is not a common practice to both live and work in the Township. Assuming a 20% down payment and that housing costs represent 30% of a household's income, the median wage affords a \$200,000 home. By this definition, only about 27% of the housing in the Township is attainable to a resident earning the median wage. The previous finding has relevance here, as detached housing is the most expensive format by far to maintain. This is true for both the homeowner, who bears the full cost of the interior, exterior, and grounds, but also for a municipality which provides services that cover a greater geographic area. A diversified portfolio of housing options is one way to address housing affordability.

Figure 6: Owner-Occupied Home Values



Owner-occupied home values

Berrien County Assessor; values represent two times the 2017 State Equalized Value

MARKET

Tenure and Occupancy

The decennial Census counted 2,139 housing units in 2000, and 2,478 housing units in 2010. During the housing boom of the early 2000s, the decennial census counted 339 housing units built in New Buffalo Township. Housing for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use increased by 395 units, which accounts for all of the increase as well as the conversion of about 15 homes from "occupied" status. The balance between occupied and seasonal residences shifted during this period, and the majority of the housing units in the Township are now occupied seasonally, at least when the Villages are included.

	2000 HOUSING UNITS			2010 HOUSING UNITS		
	Total	Seasonal	Percent Seasonal	Total	Seasonal	Percent Seasonal
New Buffalo Twp.	2,139	907	42%	2,478	1,302	53%
Grand Beach	340	208	61%	414	270	65%
Michiana	360	225	63%	373	266	71%
Remainder of Twp.	1,439	474	33%	1,691	766	45%

TABLE 4: HOUSING UNITS "FOR SEASONAL, RECREATIONAL, OR OCCASIONAL USE"

Source: 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census

Of the occupied housing units, most (84%) are owner-occupied. This is a higher rate than in the county or State, but it must be remembered that this number actually represents only 37% of the total housing units and is therefore a very different situation from one in which most of the homes in the entire Township are, in fact, owner occupied. Overall, about 6 in 10 of the homes in New Buffalo Township are host to residents who are transient on a daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly basis. This is quite a contrast to most communities, where detached residential land hosts very specific and predictable use patterns such as travel back and forth to work, school, and errands. Activation patterns may be different, such as increased long-distance travel on Fridays and Mondays but no noticeable change at 8 a.m. on a Tuesday.

Seasonal Use

The increase of seasonally occupied housing units noted above can be further broken down into the Villages of Michiana and Grand Beach and the area of New Buffalo Township excluding the villages. In Michiana, the total number of seasonally occupied housing units increased from 225 to 266, increasing from 63% to 71% of all housing units. Grand Beach also experienced an increase of seasonally occupied housing units from 208 units to 270 units, now constituting 65% of all housing units. While both the Villages in the township experienced growth in the number of seasonally occupied housing units, the area that experienced the largest increase was the area in New Buffalo Township outside both villages. Seasonally occupied housing units outside of the villages increased from 474 units to 766 units, an increase that brought the share of seasonal housing in the remainder of the Township to 45%.

Short-Term Rentals

A factor in the increase of seasonally occupied housing units is the popularity of online rental websites such as AirBnB and VRBO. These websites make it easier for owners to list their property and for perspective renters to find housing in the area for short periods of time. From December 2017 to July 2018, the number of rooms in New Buffalo Township ranged from 175 to 186. The price for a room where an owner lived on the premises averaged \$138, compared to average price of \$326 for a room where the property owner does not live on the premises.

While there is a stark difference between the two types of rooms, an even starker comparison is between the number of owner-occupied properties versus the number non-owner-occupied properties. Over the seven-month sampling period, the number of non-owner-occupied properties ranged from 136 to 147, compared to the constant number of 39 owner occupied properties. This gap between owner occupied properties and non-owner-occupied properties illustrates that many of the short-term rental properties are possible investment properties for persons who live outside of the township. Very few of the short-term rental properties are residents renting out space in their homes, most likely to supplement their income.

PLANNING AND ZONING

There are currently five zoning districts that permit residential homes: AG-R Agricultural-Residential, R-1 Low Density Residential, R-2 Medium-Density Residential, R-3 High Density Residential, and R-4 Manufactured Home Park. In the AG-R and R-1 zoning districts, single family detached dwellings and single-family condominiums are the only housing types permitted by right. Twofamily dwellings are permitted in the R-2 district, and multi-family dwellings are confined solely to R-3. The total area designated for multi-family is limited to a few small areas on the zoning map.

The minimum lot size requirements of homes in the R-1 district is quite large: a width of at least 100 feet. This size requirement would present a barrier for building housing developments considered part of the "missing middle" (see below for more information). The Township could also consider allowing accessory dwelling units in some zoning districts with qualifications.

New Buffalo Township has had success in developing site condominiums through the Planned Unit Development process. This flexible development review process allows developers to build higher density detached-housing developments while protecting sensitive natural features like wetlands. The planned unit development provision in the ordinance allows for a mix of uses.

The Future Land Use Map in the previous New Buffalo Township Master Plan shows considerably more area devoted to housing, and particularly high-density residential housing, than is available under the current zoning code. Generally, these areas are concentrated along the I-94 corridor and interchanges, on land that is currently zoned Agricultural. However, Esri Business Analyst predicts only a barely-perceptible increase of about 15 households over that time, and population gains only in those aged 65 and over. A revised Future Land Use Map should carefully balance the need for more housing variety with a realistic understanding of the future occupancy and the serious responsibility for stewardship of some of the world's most valuable agricultural conditions.

FUTURE NEEDS

Missing Middle Housing

Missing Middle is a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types compatible in scale with single-family homes that help meet the growing demand for walkable settings and a reduced maintenance burden. This type of housing is often void in Michigan, where the built environment is typically overbuilt with only two housing formats: single-family detached, and high-rise multifamily. In contrast, a wide variety of less-familiar housing formats may better suit the changing preferences of today's households. Townhomes and courtyard formats retain privacy while offering collective maintenance opportunities which are appealing to seniors as well as younger and single-adult families who have less interest in yard maintenance than previous generations may have. Duplexes and triplexes offer opportunities for owner-occupied rentals, both traditional and short-term, that may be more appealing to local government than a standard rental. Each of these development formats has a smaller footprint than detached dwellings, and is therefore easier to site with consideration to land needs for agriculture, rural character, and sensitive natural features. The increased density reduces the cost of providing services, and the smaller unit size can-but does not always-bring down the cost to the occupant.

The proportion of these types of units in the Township is very low at about 5%, ranging from single-family attached dwellings to residential structures with up to 9 units. A Target Market Analysis of Berrien County was conducted by LandUseUSA in 2016 to identify potential demand for these units among demographic groups who are likely to a) move, b) live in southwest Michigan, and c) prefer attached building formats. A Target Market Analysis is unique in that it does not depend solely on past performance to indicate future trends, but rather tries to illuminate formats that mobile citizens of southwest Michigan would choose if they were available.



Figure 7: Missing MIddle Housing

Source: http://missingmiddlehousing.com/

OPT

ing.com is powered by Opticos Des Illustration © 2015 Opticos Design,

MiddleHo

A rare example of a "six-plex" can be found in the City of New Buffalo





Source: LandUseUSA

TABLE 5: POTENTIAL MISSING MIDDLE NEW UNITS

	RENTERS		
	Not upscale	Upscale	TOTAL
2 Side-by-Side & Stacked	0	1	1
3 Side-by-Side & Stacked	2	3	5
4 Side-by-Side & Stacked	0	1	1
5-9 Townhouse, Live-Work	6	7	13
10+ Multiplex: Small	10	15	25
Totals - Change	40	35	111

Source: LandUseUSA

The table shows potential demand for missing-middle housing formats by lifestyle cluster (upscale and not upscale). These numbers show all potential movers within and to the Township over a seven-year period, whereas the estimate from Esri Business Analyst estimates changes in total population over a five-year period. The analysis found that these formats would be desired primarily by renters, and that prospective tenants would be fairly evenly split between the upscale and the less-upscale target markets. Over the sevenyear period, the analysis suggests that the Township could absorb two 10-unit multiplexes, two townhouse or rowhouse developments, and a small assortment of duplexes, triplexes, or fourplexes.

It is important to note that these are not all intended to be brand new construction; conversion of high-quality vacant buildings and the addition of accessory dwelling units are two recommended strategies. Realistically, however, the potential for conversion is typically much lower in townships, which frequently have a much higher proportion of existing detached dwellings, than in more urban settings.

A Growing Senior Population

The median age of New Buffalo Township residents is 51.8, which is over a decade older than the County and the State. A rapidly aging population will require universal access in new homes and that existing homes be retrofitted. The typical resident of New Buffalo Township is roughly 50 years old and white. Additionally, the typical resident is well educated, works in management, business, science, or the arts and earns 128% of the state average income, \$62,000 annually. In regards to households, the township is shifting away from family units and towards older resident in non-family households.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines aging in place as the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level. Often these are neighborhoods where goods and services and within walking distance, housing units are often smaller, and special emphasis is placed on ensuring accessibility. Missing middle housing will be an important component of helping New Buffalo residents age in place. Higher average wealth as compared with the State as a whole could indicate a need for higher end senior housing. It could also offer an opportunity to explore less traditional avenues to meet these needs, such a service-based model that offers assistance with transportation, property maintenance and repair, and other common concerns in an aging population.

Short-Term Rental Management

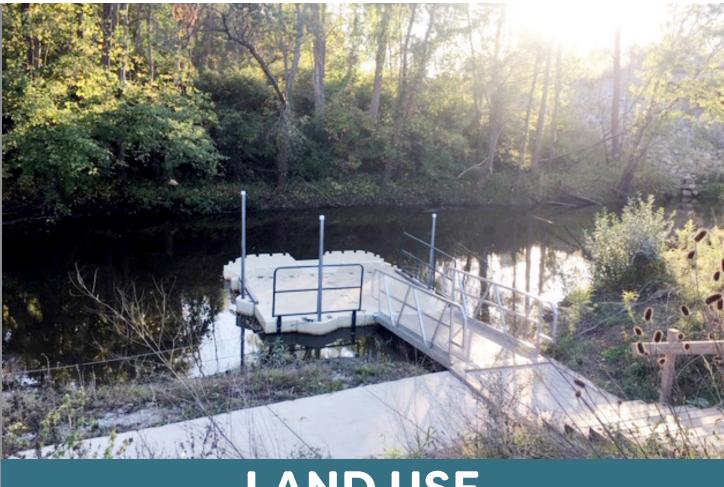
In response to an increase in short-term rental properties, many communities are adopting management strategies for such properties. From the municipal perspective, rental properties are primarily commercial enterprises, whereas residences are primarily personal property, and government has a much stronger mandate to protect public health, safety, and welfare in a commercial environment than in a private one. In addition, the most common complaints are within the realm of municipal responsibility: trash, noise, and traffic. For these reasons, a wholly laissez-faire approach to short-term rentals will likely not benefit the community as a whole. The New Buffalo Township Planning Commission acknowledges these planning considerations, and recommends that the public health, safety, and welfare is most appropriately protected in this case through a police power ordinance rather than through the zoning ordinance.

One strategy for short-term rental management is requiring registration, as Chikaming Township has done. With this approach, a local unit of government can monitor the location and extent of registrations and set terms to protect the public, such as mandating fire extinguishers and emergency egress for basement sleeping rooms. It can also require a local agent be available for the municipality to contact. The regional nature of Harbor Country means that there is a benefit to having coordinated regulations across the area's primary industry. Management solutions are also developing apace with the demand. Services offered by young companies include monitoring each community's short-term rental listings across several dozen websites, ordinance development, and registration and enforcement software.

Galien River County Park



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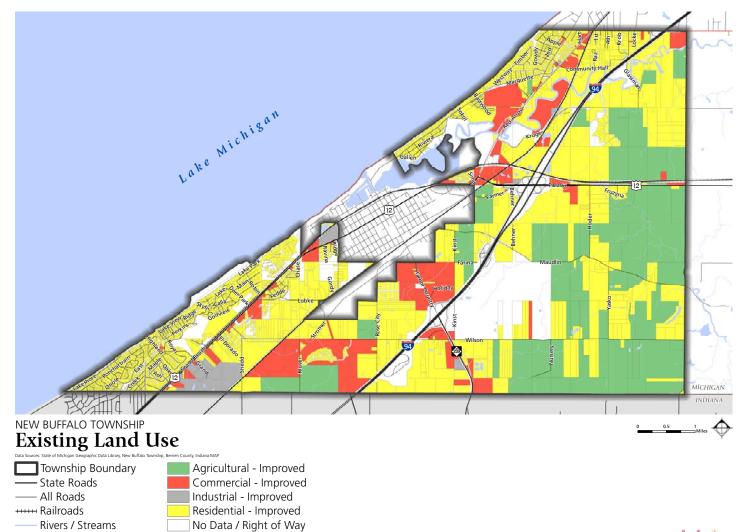
LAND USE

New Buffalo Township has distinctive physical and political boundaries. Bounded by Lake Michigan on the west and Illinois and Indiana on the south, the Township is a part of tri-state region where land use changes outside of the state could affect how the Township develops. New Buffalo Township serves as the "Gateway of Michigan," providing all who arrive with their first glimpse of our great State. Transportation routes crisscross the Township between Michigan and the nation's third largest metropolis: 1-94, US-12, passenger rail line Amtrak, and freight train CSX rail. Convenient access, combined with a lake view, are compelling factors for residents and businesses to locate here, and contribute to the diverse landscape.

AGRICULTURE

Given that the New Buffalo area is known as a lakeside destination, it may be surprising that over one-quarter (26.8%) of the land is used for agriculture. The eastern portion of the Township is predominantly dedicated to agricultural uses with a scattering of large-lot residences, likely associated with the production of the land. This land has rightfully been preserved to serve its "highest and best use." Except for the land immediately adjacent to the rivers that run through the south and southeastern portion of the Township, the land's characteristics make it highly suitable for agricultural production. Luckily for the Township, because residential pressure is concentrated along the shoreline, the agricultural land does not face an imminent threat of intense development coming its way.

MAP 4: EXISTING LAND USE



Beckett&Raeder

TABLE 6: EXISTING LAND USE

Lakes / Ponds

TYPE OF LAND USE	ACRES	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LAND	
Agriculture	3,209	26.8%	
Residential	5,983	50.0%	
Commercial	1,244	10.4%	
Industrial	217	1.8%	
No data	1,154	9.7%	
Total	11,964	100.0%	

Some encroachment is visible when comparing the land use map from 2005; the triangular swath of land between I-94, US-239, and the Indiana border was converted from agricultural uses to residential. If residential sprawl were to become a plausible reality in the future, the Township would have to reconcile the need and location for development and the significance of sacrificing the irreversible value of its rich soil. While agriculture does not employ a sizeable portion of residents (1.7%), its value lays in the efficiency in which it generates food, its contribution to a large statewide industry, and the beauty it bestows on the passers-by and residents.

The Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program (PA 116), passed in 1975 as an effort to protect farmland from sprawling development, offers tax relief to farmers who enter into farmland preservation programs with the state. The agreement stipulates that farmers receive tax benefits for maintaining the land for agricultural uses for a minimum of 10 years (and up to 90 years). Land is eligible for this program depending on its size or by the income generated by the farm. Even with over one-quarter of land dedicated to agriculture, only one 24-acre parcel is enrolled in this program. Without the guarantee of this agreement, the land currently used for agriculture could change hands, and uses, depending on the zoning requirements.

RESIDENTIAL

The Lake Michigan shore is one obvious residential hotspot, but housing development spreads considerably farther east, although in a different form. With half of the land used for residences, not all can be so fortunate as to fit along the thin strip adjacent to the lake. Along the shoreline, most homes are detached dwellings, higher in median value, and densely built. The neighborhoods here must not only contend with growing popularity but also with nature: the sandy shoreline falls under the state designated Coastal Management Zone and is also considered a critical dune area, which means that much of the local authority has been removed in regulating development in this zone. Permits must be obtained first by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality with a recommended 1,000 ft setback for properties in critical dune areas. Coupling regulations and the perils of climate change on waterfront property, residential development may begin to spill over more onto adjacent land.

Moving away from the lake, residential development transitions to smaller homes that are less dense, and of lower value sans a lake view. The zoning regulations as written allow for detached residential densities between 0.5 dwelling units per acre in the Agricultural-Residential zone up to 5 dwelling units per acre in the R-3 High-Density Residential district. Attached formats would likely be required to get to the Township's anticipated maximum density of 12 dwelling units per acre.

COMMERCIAL

Logically, commercial uses are situated along major transportation corridors. The commercial clusters sit on US-12, along the rail right-of-way, and near I-94

MINIMUM LOT SIZE	NG UNITS PER ACRE
87,120	0.5
15,000	2.9

DWELLIN

3		
R 1	15,000	2.9
R2	12,000	3.6
R3	8,712	5.0

ZONING DISTRICT

Aa-R

TABLE 7: RESIDENTIAL ZONING DIMENSIONS

interchanges. In highly visible locations, commercial uses tend to be memorable stops on a trip or a regular hang out for locals, but they only account for about 10% of all land uses. Because of the Township's position between several major hubs, many of the commercial uses have historically supported travelers, either passing motorists or truck drivers. The City of New Buffalo should serve as the Township's hub for more experience-based shopping or entertainment, supplemented by the unique collection of connected communities in Harbor Country and its environs.

Neighborhood-scale commercial developments that serve residents' daily needs, when they are available, are generally located along US-12 south of the City of New Buffalo, and on Red Arrow Highway north of the City. These two commercial corridors share some similarities, running parallel to the shoreline as they connect the City of New Buffalo to other portions of Harbor Country, but their development patterns have some contrasts as well. In general, there are more establishments along US-12 south of the City of New Buffalo, owing to the fact that this is a long-used interstate thoroughfare. The development that exists includes scattered detached residential development, alternating with pockets of commercial activity. Though this section provides access to both Villages, the Whittaker Woods Golf Course, and the Township neighborhood of Forest Beach, these amenities are not obvious in the public realm, which is dominated by the rail right-of-way to the west and one-story, fragmented development to the east. The Township envisions commercial development to increase and intensify along this stretch, supplemented by multifamily residential development. Conversely, detached residential development should be discouraged, while preserving the development rights and property values of the existing residents.

Heading north from the City of New Buffalo on Red Arrow Highway feels much more rural, in a large part because the route's scenery is more heavily influenced by the Galien River rather than the rail. A mix of commercial and residential development occurs here, too, but with greater distance between establishments and more vegetation flanking the roadway. Union Pier sits at the border with Chikaming Township, with Red Arrow Highway serving as the Main Street. Chikaming and New Buffalo Townships, along with the Berrien County Parks and Road Departments, have worked together to begin examining how the area can be improved. Nonmotorized facilities such as a hiking and biking path, trailhead, parking, lighting, and safety features will be part of the planning phase, underway at the time of this master plan.

INDUSTRY

Very few industrial uses exist in the Township, and like commercial uses, they are strategically clustered along major corridors. There are 17 parcels spread across two patches of land dedicated to this use. The larger area located along the Indiana border was formerly used for commercial purposes, and a smaller section is wedged between the two rail lines on the City of New Buffalo border. Aerial imagery shows the industrial properties take up a small portion of the land dedicated to them, with the remaining area serving as a buffer to other land uses. Industrial uses are often associated with negative external impacts to soil, air, and water, and therefore should be approached cautiously in a Township with sensitive natural features. On the other hand, they often generate well-paying jobs which support a much-needed income segment in the Township. The nature of industrial uses has also evolved swiftly in recent years to focus on cleaner processes requiring advanced knowledge, which fits the Township's talent pool. It is also the case that although Michigan's farmland produces an impressive quantity and variety of agricultural products, the Michigan Department of Agriculture has found that these products are most frequently shipped to other states for "value-added" processing, effectively exporting the prosperity generated by our natural bounty to other parts of the country. The confluence of these circumstances offers opportunities in New Buffalo Township.

CASINO

Aside from the City of New Buffalo, the white spots on the map do not contain sufficient data to be placed within a common land use classification code. The biggest of these, adjacent to I-94, is the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indian Casino. These federally recognized Tribal lands are considered a sovereign nation, and are not subject to local land controls. Completed in 2007, the casino was a controversial development, with 10 years of tumultuous lead up prior to construction. The land use implications are similar to any large development: residents universally worry about increased traffic congestion and an unsightly visual impact on the landscape. While those are potential negative consequences, the tribe and the Township have partnered to ensure that, despite no legal obligation, the revenue from the casino is felt by its surrounding neighbors. So far, this has taken place in the form of street improvements and scholarships funds for students.

Four Winds Casino

Source: Casino Archives

The casino is by far the largest employer in the Township, and the County, by a factor of 10. Many of these 1800 job are in the hospitality field, which offers wages on the lower end of the pay spectrum. Housing for these workers, and the transportation facilities which connect to it, are land use considerations for the Township.

RIGHTS OF WAY

The Township is already rethinking its rights-of-way. The Corridor Improvement Vision, drafted in 2016, is based on best planning practices and community input for re-imagining how land along corridors is used. As a result of the key visioning themes that came out of community engagement, the Township, in conjunction with Berrien County, delineated a planning area and hopes to transform corridors into more than a means of arriving at a destination. With changes to design on Harbor Country Road that encourage walkability, safety, and vibrancy the Township is making an investment in public spaces that can expedite private investment. Pedestrian-friendly corridors draw people to the streets and turn underperforming spaces into catalysts for positive land use changes.

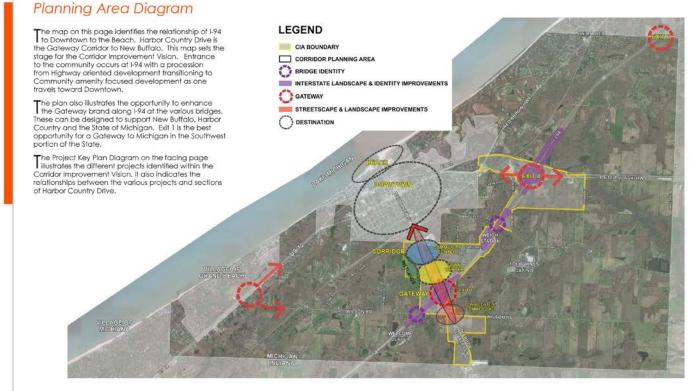
MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

The very title of this chapter suggests a commitment to use-based land regulation, which has been in use since the 1920s. However, mixed-use development has been common throughout history, particularly in development centers such as downtowns, and is enjoying a renewed appreciation of its utility. Commercial-residential mixed use, such as the "live above the store" model, is the most common form. The benefits of this arrangement are mutual: the commercial development adds a convenience amenity to the residence, while the residence provides a customer base to the commercial activity. Industrialcommercial mixed use is particularly well-suited to smaller-scale "craft" manufacturing. The ability to see and experience the process adds an amenity to the commercial enterprise, while on-site distribution created efficiency and savings in the production process. In both cases, the transportation burden that is created by a strict separation of land uses is eased.

The Township has previously considered mixed-use development in the vicinity of the Township's two highway interchanges. This is certainly still appropriate at Exit 1, and to some extent at Exit 4, especially west of the interchange. The CIA area should permit mixed use development throughout even if some areas are expected to ultimately become primarily residential. This allows for flexibility in placing the developments throughout the area, and for developments which are residentially-focused to include commercial amenities. There is no current pressure to change the provisions of the industrial area to include commercial uses, but the idea of craft manufacturing is one that fits the character of the community and should be retained in concept.

Figure 8: Planning Area Diagram, Corridor Improvement Authority

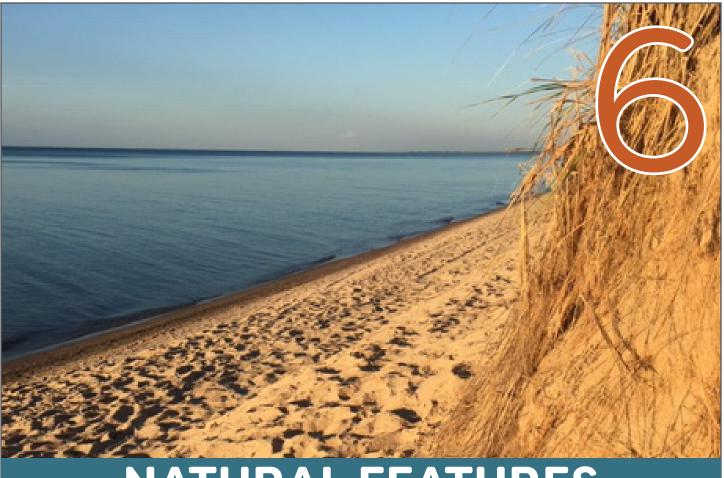
Planning Area Diagram



6 New Buffalo Township Corridor Improvement Vision

Wightman & Associates

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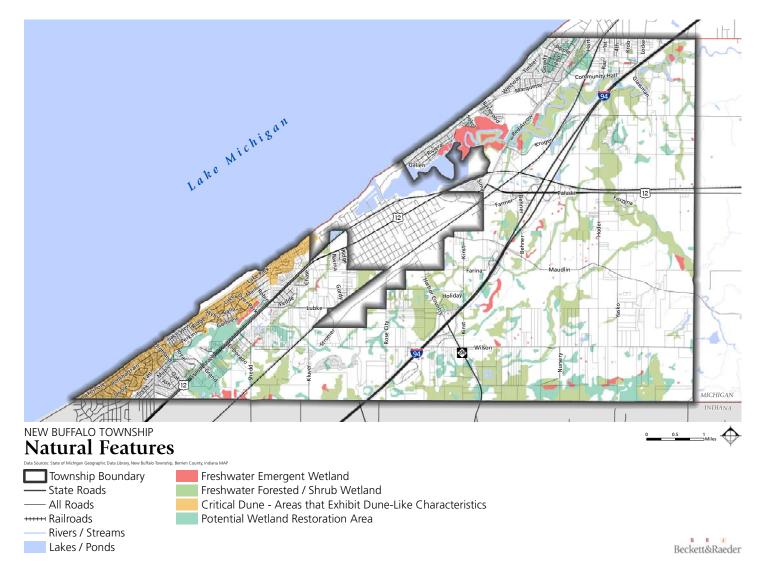
NATURAL FEATURES

Identification and inventory of natural and sensitive features within a community is key in properly planning for the future. New Buffalo Township is well endowed with natural resources, many of which have been well protected over the years. Maintaining and preserving these natural resources is essential to the riverine watershed and environmental ecosystems found in the Township. Fertile agricultural land and forested wetlands dominate this area. The pre-settlement vegetation in the Township was dominated by beech and sugar maple, with white oak and black oak common along the bluffs and broad ridges above the Galien River.

WATER

Like many of the Harbor Country communities in southwest Michigan, New Buffalo Township's identity is closely tied to its Lake Michigan shoreline. The Township encompasses the southwest portion of the Galien River Watershed. The coastal analysis section of this master plan provides a detailed summary of costal water resources and the relevant state and local policy framework that protects these critical resources.

MAP 5: NATURAL FEATURES



WETLANDS

Wetlands are found throughout the Township, with clusters in the riverine areas. The lowlands and high water table in the Township contribute to the relatively large number of total wetlands. As illustrated on the 'Natural Features' map, there are numerous existing wetlands as well as areas considered to have a 'high potential for wetland restoration.' These areas have hydric soils, indicating they were probably wetlands in the past, and are generally not conducive to development. In New Buffalo Township, much of this area is currently used for agricultural purposes.

There are almost 4,000 acres of wetlands; 13% of which are freshwater/emergent wetlands and the other 87% are forested/shrub wetlands. The emergent wetlands are concentrated near the Galien River mouth, while the forested wetlands are concentrated near the Galien River tributaries and upper reaches of the river. In total there are 2,053 acres of potential wetland restoration areas within the Township. Wetlands provide a wide variety of important ecosystem services including flood control, sediment retention, quality habitat, and protection of biodiversity.

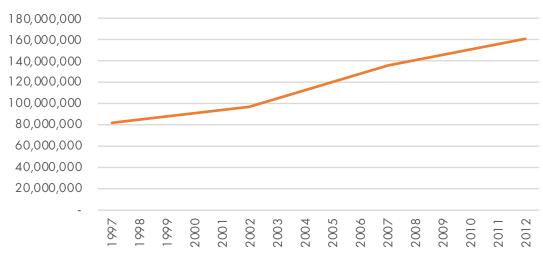
One notable wetland is the Great Lakes Marsh located at the mouth of the River. Although it has diminished in size, it provides valuable habitat for wildlife. A remnant of this coastal plain marsh, near Grand Beach in the Township, has been purchased by The Nature Conservancy to preserve this rare habitat.

AGRICULTURAL LAND

Agricultural land uses are large and rural, and therefore are best tracked at the County level. With its ideal growing conditions, Berrien County is ranked as the second most diverse county in the country from an agricultural variety perspective. At the date of the last agricultural census, in 2012, Berrien County ranked number one in the state in grape production, second in vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes; and fourth in fruits, tree nuts, and berries (2012 Census of Agriculture). The market value of crops grown in Berrien County was over \$161 billion, and has grown steadily even during the "ten year one-state recession" that Michigan experienced in the beginning of the new millennium.

In addition to its irreplaceable nature, this increased production value year over year is another factor to consider when making decisions about preserving farmland. Overall, the proportion of farmland has decreased steadily over time, and it has been concentrated on fewer and fewer farms. In 2012, there were 1,063 farms in Berrien County—less than half the number that existed in 1969, and less than a quarter of the number in 1950. Also in 2012, there was a total of 156,418 acres of land in farms. This represents a reduction of 7% of farmland just since 2007. It is 28% less than in 1969 and 45% less than in 1950.

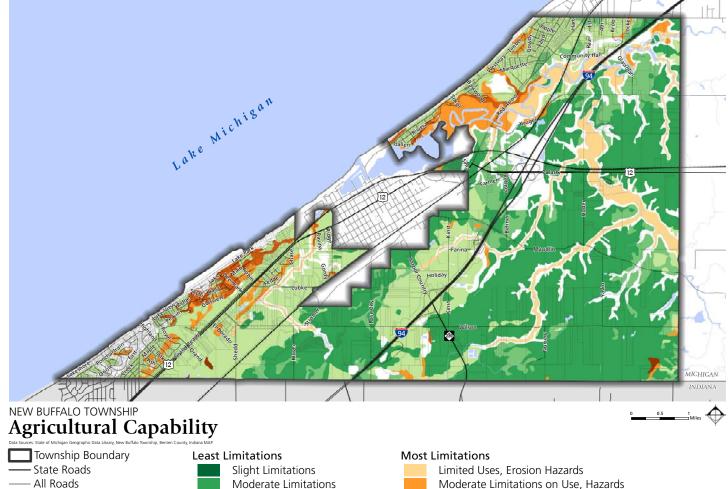
Figure 9: Market Value of Agricultural Products in Berrien County, 1997-2012



Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold in Berrien County

Source: US Census of Agriculture

MAP 6: AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITY



HIII Railroads **Rivers / Streams** Lakes / Ponds

Severe Limitations Very Severe Limitations No Data / Urbanized Lands



Severe Limitations, Grazing Only Only Recreational Use / Aesthetic Use

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As noted in the Land Use analysis, the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program (PA 116), passed in 1975 as an effort to protect farmland from sprawling development, offers tax relief to farmers who entered into farmland preservation programs with the state. Land is eligible for this program depending on its size or by the income generated by the farm. Even with over one-quarter of land dedicated to agriculture, only one 24-acre parcel is enrolled in this program. Without the guarantee of this agreement, the land currently used for agriculture could change hands, and uses, depending on the zoning requirements.

New Buffalo Township is endowed with fertile soil; and as a result, farming activities have served as a dominate land use in the Township for many years. As illustrated in the agricultural capability map, there are a range of soil uses found with the Township, and many are very conducive to farming. The dataset was developed using a variety of data layers that influence agricultural capability, including the location of the landscape, slope, soil type, and climate. On the spectrum of green to brown, the darkest shade of green indicates that the

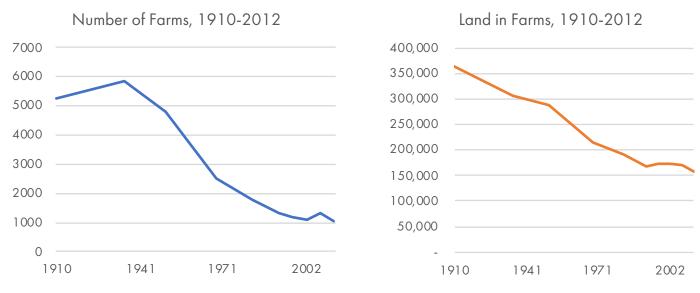


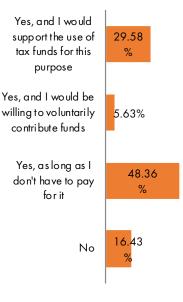
Figure 10: Number and Acreage of Farms in Berrien County, 1910-2012

Source: US Census of Agriculture

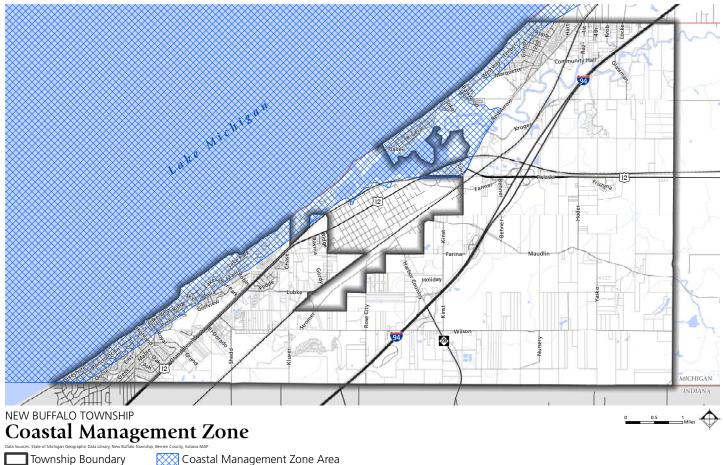
soil has the least restrictive properties and therefore can be used for a wider range of crop production. Lighter green colors indicate limitations that reduce the choice of plants or might require special conservation practices and/or careful management of agricultural use. However, overall, these soils can produce common field crops and pasture plants without harming the productivity of the soil. Light brown colors represent soils that have significant limitations and are more suitable for pasture, range, forestland, or wildlife, and the darker the shade of brown, the higher the likelihood that erosion and other factors are limiting use. Commercial plant production and cultivation are challenging for these soil types. Lastly, the darkest shade of brown is entirely precluded from all commercial plant production and uses are limited to recreation, wildlife, water supply, or aesthetic purposes only. This data was obtained from the Natural Resource Conservation Services, ArcGIS Online Soil Resources Center.

These numbers may come as a surprise despite the longstanding and important place in the community that agriculture holds. This is because food production is not well-integrated into either public or private planning processes. For example, food systems are not a traditional feature of master plans, despite their obvious importance to the community and land use implications. The State of Michigan has begun to examine ways to capitalize on the economic development possibilities that could arise from our diverse and productive agricultural base. In many cases, this is as simple as understanding the system itself in order to make connections between food producers, processors, distributors, and consumers. Once this is done, gaps and opportunities reveal themselves. The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), for example, has identified that a large proportion of agricultural products are shipped to other states for processing. Since this is the stage which generates the greatest return on investment, that can be quite a loss for the state. The agency has developed Where agricultural farmland exists in the Township, is it a priority to you to preserve it?





MAP 7: COASTAL MANAGEMENT ZONE



Township Boundary State Roads All Roads Hill Roads Rivers / Streams Lakes / Ponds

Beckett&Raeder

a series of "Value-Add and Regional Food Systems" grants which have been disbursed since 2014 to companies proposing agricultural processing ventures, developing regional food systems, or increasing access to healthy food. This is an industry that is emerging in a revitalized way and has the potential to be of particular interest to New Buffalo Township. The confluence of agricultural production, discerning "foodie" consumer, and bifurcated job market presents many of the requisite conditions for success. A "farm and food systems" assessment would need to be conducted by the Township to understand just how these pieces are currently functioning and to build upon them.

COASTAL REVIEW

Located along the southeastern shoreline of Lake Michigan, New Buffalo Township is home to 8.5 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. The shorelands of the Great Lakes are a dynamic and quickly changing environment. As the effects of climate variability become more widespread throughout the Midwest, coastal communities will have an important role to play in protecting the Great Lakes. Planning for coastal areas at the local level requires knowledge of both local conditions and state and federal regulations.

CLIMATE

The climate at the southeasterly corner of Lake Michigan is greatly influenced by the Lake Michigan water temperatures and prevailing winds that come from the west; alternating between the southwest and northwest throughout the year. According to the Berrien County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, the prevailing wind averages southwest at 3.5 to 7 miles per hour. Berrien County records an average annual snowfall of 69.9 inches. New Buffalo averages 51 inches of snow annually, according to the website bestplaces.net, which collects climate data from the National Climatic Data Center and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This snowfall average is less than neighboring communities, including Bridgman and South Bend, indicating New Buffalo could be sheltered to some degree by prevailing winds and storm systems. Climate scientists predict that changing climate trends will result in more energy in the Great Lakes, which could likely lead to more intense and more frequent Great Lakes storms.

COASTAL RESILIENCE

Wave action, storms, wind, ground water seepage, and surface water runoff are all contributing factors to changing and reshaping the shoreline. Cyclical changes in rainfall, evaporation, and riverine and groundwater inflows impact the constantly changing water levels along the Great Lakes shoreline. After hitting an all-time low in 2013, the Great Lakes are rising. Fast rising waters can erode shorelines, damage infrastructure, and cause extensive flooding in inland

Warren Dunes State Park



Source: harborcountry.org

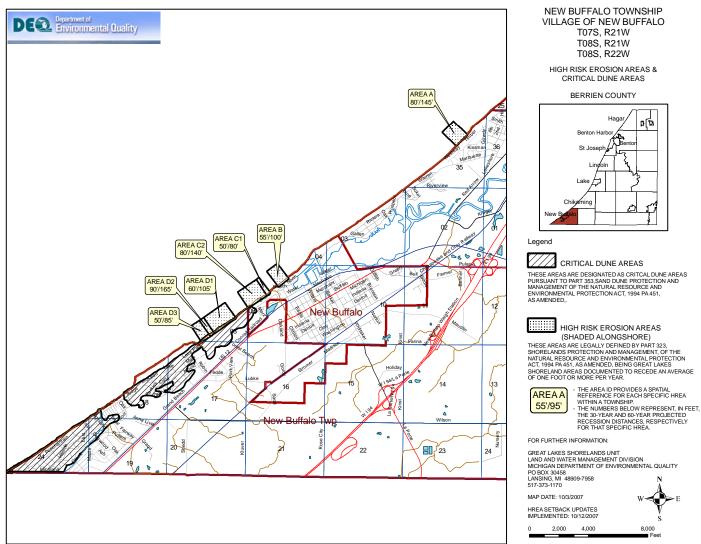
rivers. The Berrien County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan notes that erosion is the number one concern for the near-shore environment and adjacent property owners. As the climate continues to change, climatologists and coastal engineers predict increased variability in Great Lakes water levels. Additionally, more intense and frequent storm surges are expected to bring increased erosion and sedimentation. A warming climate in western Michigan is also expected to contribute to reductions in annual ice cover and increased rates of evaporation.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Federal, state, and local policies play an important role in shaping land use and development along the shoreline.

Critical Dunes

Sand dunes in the Township extend generally from the south New Buffalo city limit to the southern extent of the Township. The northern half of the Township consists of layers of clay and sand, but does not possess the characteristics of dunes. Critical Dune areas represent some of the most dynamic and continual-



MAP 8: HIGH-RISK EROSION AREAS

Source: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/lwm-highrisk-new-buffalo-twp_260424_7.pdf

ly changing ecosystems along Lake Michigan's shoreline. The legislature has characterized certain portions of the shoreline as "Critical Dune areas" of the state, and considers them to be unique, irreplaceable, and fragile resources that provide significant recreational, economic, and ecological benefits to the people of Michigan.

In 2012, Governor Snyder signed Public Act 297. This Act updates the Critical Dune regulations to remove some restrictions on acquiring permits to construct in critical dune areas. The areas designated on the map are critical dune areas as designated by MDEQ in New Buffalo Township.

High Risk Erosion Areas

According to the Berrien County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (2012), high water levels on Lake Michigan have caused significant damage and impact to coastal structures in nearly every decade. The State of Michigan regulates development in what it designates as High Risk Erosion Areas (HREAs). The purpose of this regulation is to prevent costs associated with cleaning up damaged structures and moving infrastructure and buildings away from eroding bluffs, while protecting the life and health of residents and keeping insurance costs down. Preventing buildings in HREAs also protects the Great Lakes from pollutants from structure debris and septic fields. There are only a few properties within the Township that are designated as HREAs, and subject to state regulations (see map).



New Buffalo Harbor

Source: harborcountry.org

The MDEQ compares new and historic imagery to designate areas of coastline that have eroded by more than 1 foot per year as HREAs, and then uses erosion rates to calculate 30- and 60-year setbacks from the "erosion hazard line." Usually, new structures must be built landward of the erosion hazard line by either 30 times or 60 times the erosion rate, as designated by the MDEQ. Local governments can adopt a local ordinance as long as it is approved by the state and is not less restrictive than the state.

FEMA

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is an optional program that allows communities and individual property owners to receive flood insurance for disaster relief by agreeing to regulate development in the floodplain. The NFIP was created in 1968 under the National Flood Insurance Act. Floodplains are mapped by FEMA using a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), generally identifying the area that could be inundated in a 50-year storm, 100-year storm, and 500-year storm.

Home damaged by the "Halloween storm" in 2014



Source: New Buffalo Shoreline Alliance

In 2010, FEMA and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) began the Great Lakes Coastal Flood Study. The goal of the project is to update existing FIRMs to account for revised lake levels, wave setup, and wave energy. The process to create the drafted maps differs significantly from the process to create existing FIRMs. The existing FIRMs are determined using event-based modeling, where the projected flooding impacts are derived from a selected historical storm. Although these new maps have not been formally adopted, preliminary draft maps are available for Berrien County and can be used to better understand coastal flooding risk in New Buffalo Township.

Public Access

Because the vast majority of shoreline in the Township is privately owned, the issue of public access to Lake Michigan has become an important topic for many. In Glass V. Goeckel, the Michigan Supreme Court determined that the public may walk between the edge of the water and the "ordinary high water mark," indicated by the limits of erosion or destruction of vegetation.

The Harbor

Structures along the shoreline greatly impact the natural movement, or littoral drift, of the sand. Of particular concern, especially given recent high water levels, is the breakwater jetty at the New Buffalo Harbor. Interestingly, this was the last harbor breakwater to be installed along the east shoreline of Lake Michigan. Because of this barrier, the 100,000 cubic yards of sand a year in the littoral drift can no longer drift naturally from north of the harbor to south of the harbor. This phenomenon has caused significant erosion and property damage to homes south of the harbor and has also put the municipal water intake infrastructure at risk. Since the south side of the breakwater no longer receives this sand, it is described as a sand starved area by the U.S. Army Corps. In 1969, the City of New Buffalo secured an easement for the Corps from 39 property owners south of harbor to locate a feeder beach to nourish the beach using sand from nearby sand quarries to compensate for the interruption of the littoral drift. In 1995, after twenty years of beach nourishment, funds dried up and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers discontinued this regular beach nourishment. Since then, the harbor has been dredged on an intermittent basis, and the sand has been used for beach nourishment. However, this is an insufficient amount of sand to stabilize the south shoreline.

There is a group of concerned citizens in the greater New Buffalo community working to address the erosion caused by the harbor jetty and now extending three and a half miles south of the jetty. By taking a proactive approach to restoring the natural sand movement of sand, the New Buffalo Shoreline Alliance hopes to reduce the negative impact of erosion to properties south of the harbor. The nonprofit group was created in response to shoreline property damage that resulted from the 2014 storm on Halloween night and currently has over 400 members. Galien River mouth



Galien River mouth



Grand Beach



North Township Boundary



Michiana Shoreline



Source: https://greatlakes.erdc.dren.mil/

There are a number of potential solutions to address this issue, but each one is costly and will require political support. One option is to make modifications to the harbor structures to reinstitute natural processes of sand movement. A second option is to reinstitute nourishment with sand from nearby quarries as was done for 20 years. A third option would be to install breakwater structures that run parallel to shoreline, which would reduce wave energy and require less frequent beach nourishment.

Shoreline Structures and Development

During periods of low water, property owners often forget about the longterm variability in water levels, resulting in development near the water's edge. However, erosion of the Great Lakes shoreline is a serious concern and many homes have fallen into the lake as their foundations have been compromised. According to the Berrien County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (2012), homes in the county have sustained damage and even been mostly washed away due to shoreline erosion.

In general, the existing zoning along the Lake Michigan Shoreline within the New Buffalo Township boundary is Low Density Residential, with some Planned Unit Development areas and a small segment of High Density Residential. This segment of shoreline is fairly built out, although a build out analysis using existing zoning standards would likely show there is space for additional homes if existing parcels are subdivided.

A cursory coastal land use assessment using aerial photography indicates that homes just north of the Galien River mouth are generally set back from the Natural Ordinary High Water Mark. Further north, the highway moves closer to the shoreline, resulting in shallower parcels and shorter building setbacks.

Moving south from the Galien River mouth, residential homes have shorter setbacks from the shoreline. Due to the prevailing nearshore currents, this shoreline appears to get eroded due to the jetty at the river mouth. Rocks and other rip rap have been placed along this section of shoreline to reduce the damage to personal property from erosion. Jetties have also been used to stabilize the shoreline. The most effective shoreline protections are larger in scale, treating the shoreline as a unified whole rather than on a by-parcel basis. The City of St. Joseph, located 30 miles north, adopted a 200-foot "no-build zone," or setback from the water, in 2012 based on a coastal engineering study of the St. Joseph shoreline. Since then, water levels have risen several feet, and a new study is underway to determine whether the no-build zone is functioning as intended. This case study could provide valuable information to New Buffalo Township.

Fishing and Invasive Species

In recent decades, invasive and introduced species have greatly altered Lake Michigan's ecosystem.

The Sport Fishing industry in New Buffalo has become quite substantial, especially after the Coho Salmon were introduced in the early 1980s. First introduced to prey on the invasive alewives, by 2010, the alewife population was greatly diminished, thus substantially reducing the Coho Salmon sport fishing industry.

Asian Carp are approaching Chicago and would radically change the habitat, and possibly the value, of land on Lake Michigan. The 2017 Asian Carp Action Plan developed by a committee of state and federal partners lays out an ambitious monitoring program as well as adaptive management and response strategies should the Asian Carp begin to establish itself in the Great Lakes.

Some invasive species, such as zebra and quagga mussels, have already established themselves in the Great Lakes region. While eradication is not possible at this point, efforts are underway to control the population. One effect of invasive mussels is that they filter the water and make it much clearer, which is often a welcome effect for water recreation tourists. THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

New Buffalo Township plays an important role in the management and provision of community facilities and services for residents. These facilities impact residents and their quality of life while also impacting land use and development in the Township. The level and quality of community facilities, services, and public infrastructure is closely tied to the quality and intensity of development options in the Township.

The Township maintains buildings that include the Township Hall, the Water and Sewer building and Fire Department, and two water booster stations. The Galien River Sanitary Wastewater Treatment Facility is also located within the Township and is cooperatively owned and maintained by the GRSD (Galien River Sanitary District) Sewer Authority. There are several public utility sites throughout the Township, New Buffalo Elementary School, Maudlin Cemetery on Lakeside Road, and a portion of Pine Grove Cemetery along US-12 in New Buffalo Township.

SERVICES

New Buffalo Township has a contract with the Berrien County Sheriff's Department for public safety. Fire protection services are provided by the New Buffalo Township Fire Department by paid on-call part-time fire fighters. The Township partners with 13 other communities to contract ambulance services from Medic One of Benton Harbor.

WATER

Drinking Water

Approximately 70% of residents in the Township are hooked up to municipal water service, while the other 30% rely on private wells for drinking water. Most private wells are in rural areas where hooking up to the municipal water supply would be cost-prohibitive. Municipal water service is supplied by Lake Michigan, one more way in which the Township's future relies on a clean and healthy Great Lake.

The Township has contracts with both the City of New Buffalo and Michigan City, Indiana to purchase water, with current usage at about 310,000 gallons per day on average. The Township is part of a Regional Water Advisory Committee, a water system that is connected from the State line in the south to Bridgman in the north. Along with the Township, the committee includes the Villages of Grand Beach, Michiana, and Three Oaks; the Cities of New Buffalo and Bridgman; and the Townships of Three Oaks, Chikaming, and Lake. Though the committee serves as a coordinating body, ownership is retained by the individual jurisdictional authorities. New Buffalo Township owns a water tower near the southern border, built in 2006, which is one of the tallest in the system. It also owns all watermains and infrastructure that transports water throughout the Township to residents and commercial users.

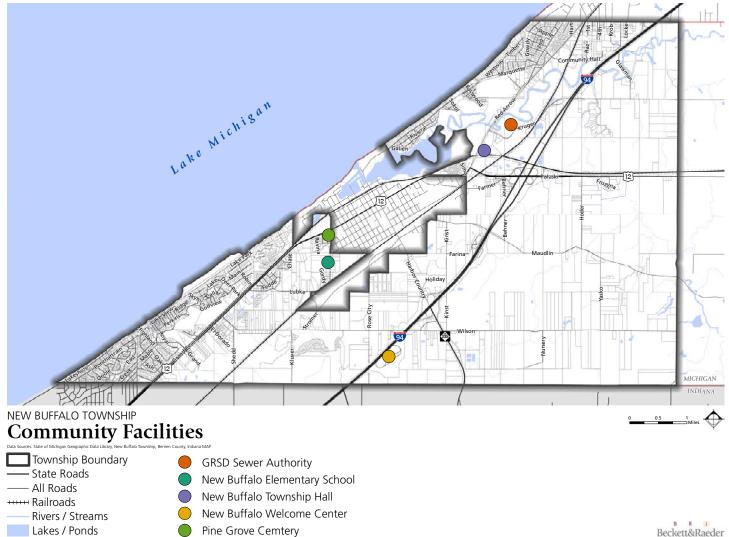
A major benefit of this connected system is the ability for each community's water supply to serve as an emergency supply for the other regional partners, at least within the limits of hydrology. New Buffalo Township can provide emergency water supply to the City of New Buffalo and Chikaming Township; Michigan City serves as the backup water supply for New Buffalo Township.



Pump house in the City of New Buffalo damaged by the "Halloween Storm" in 2014

Source: New Buffalo Shoreline Alliance

MAP 9: COMMUNITY FACILITIES



Pine Grove Cemtery

Beckett&Raeder

It also allows for maintenance and replacement decisions to be made on a regional basis, reflecting the interconnected nature of the systems. The Villages of Michiana and Grand Beach each have aging water infrastructure, and conversations around its replacement and improvement could also consider whether it makes sense for water service to continue to be provided individually or whether new partnerships make more sense. Although not located within the Township boundary, the municipal water intake facility for the City of New Buffalo is near the Harbor. This system was rebuilt about five years ago to reduce the risk of damage to the structure associated with shoreline erosion.

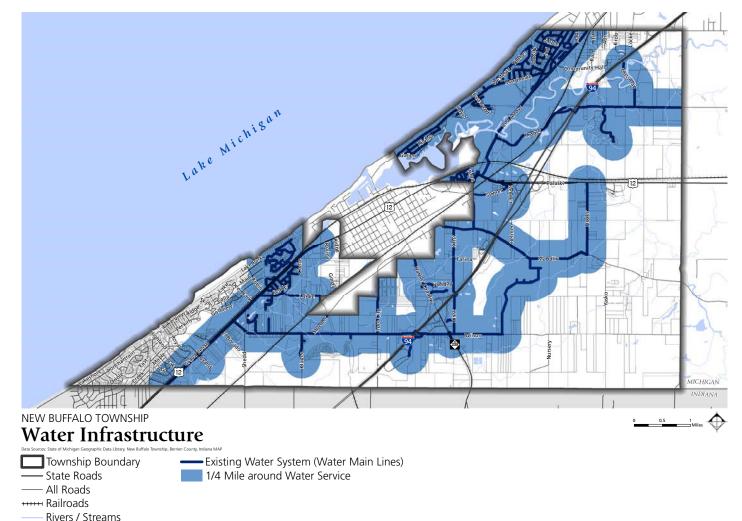
Potential new development in the Township has infrastructure implications. It is most immediately anticipated in the vicinity of Exit 1, supported and guided by the Corridor Improvement Authority.

Hydrants

Hydrants in the Township serve two major purposes. In addition to fire protection, they are also used for flushing the water distribution system. Every fall, the Township flushes the entire distribution system, which helps maintain a

MAP 10: WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Lakes / Ponds



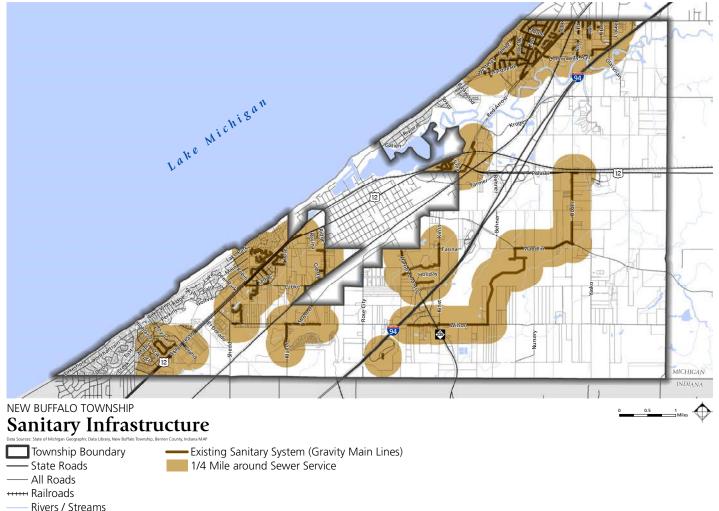
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fresh water supply and removes any particulates that may accumulate within the piping. The Township had completed the replacement of its entire hydrant stock, partly funded by the Pokagon Fund, in order to standardize the manufacturers, improve the quality, and take advantage of new features.

Wastewater Treatment

About half of all Township residents are on private septic systems, while the other half are served by the GRSD (Galien River Sanitary District) Sewer Authority. The GRSD Sewer Authority is an intergovernmental agency responsible for wastewater treatment in this area. It is controlled by a Board with representatives from the Cities of New Buffalo and Bridgman and the Townships of Lake and Chikaming. New Buffalo Township (referred to as "Township" herein) operates a wastewater collection system then transmits its wastewater to the GRSD Sewer Authority for treatment. The wastewater system includes over 137,000 feet of gravity sewer, over 37,000 feet of force main, over 480 manholes, 13 lift stations, one grinder station, and over 700 sewer leads.

MAP 11: SANITARY INFRASTRUCTURE



Lakes / Ponds

Beckett&Raeder

The Township obtains wastewater treatment services from the GRSD in accordance with an inter-governmental agreement between the Township and GRSD revised March 23, 2016. This agreement allows the Township to collect and transport its wastewater to the GRSD for treatment and requires the GRSD to treat the wastewater per all State and Federal requirements. The agreement entitles the Township to 16.6% of the 3 million gallon-per-day capacity at the treatment plant, or about 500,000 gallons per day. The Township also has an agreement with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians and commits 175,000 gallons of the Township's total capacity to the Band, of which approximately 100,000 is in use. The system currently collects and transports an average daily volume of roughly 280,000 gallons per day. There is considerable capacity remaining to both the Township and the Band, then, although upgrades to distribution infrastructure may be required to access it in places. New industries such as breweries and perhaps even commercial marihuana operations are placing new demands on the system, warranting investigation. The Asset Management Program recommends that the Township improve monitoring and data collection on the wastewater distribution and treatment assets in the Township. Long-range management issues include a proper rate structure and having a qualified workforce.

Stormwater

Stormwater management is under the purview of the Berrien County Drain Commissioner. There are a series of drains that run through the Township, draining to the Galien River and Lake Michigan. Flooding issues are generally limited to less populated areas subject to flooding, predominantly from groundwater.

ENERGY

The majority of homes in the Township (67%) are heated with utility gas, provided by SEMCO. Electricity heats a growing share of homes (15%), provided by Indiana Michigan Power, a division AEP. Bottled, tank, or liquefied petroleum gas heat 9% of homes, and 5.5% are served by fuel oil. Zero homes reported the use of solar energy, in either the 2005-2009 or the 2012-2016 study periods; the New Buffalo Township Zoning Ordinance does not directly support or permit the use of solar panels. Wind turbines are permitted as a special land use in the Zoning Ordinance, but their use is not captured by Census data.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Inadequate cellular and broadband or high-speed Internet availability was one of the top concerns raised by New Buffalo Township community survey respondents. Amongst business owners survey respondents, cellular and internet service were identified as the two top critically important factors to build and retain labor supply in the Township (82% and 77% respectively). Of the residential respondents, the most unmet need identified in the Township was cellular service.

A key issue for telecommunication services in New Buffalo Township is the railroad right-of-way which separates the most densely-populated coastal areas from the rural remainder of the Township. The ROW is a formidable physical and regulatory barrier to any service which is delivered via physical cable, and the population density has not justified this investment for Comcast, the primary telecommunications provider in the area. These areas have been served by a patchwork of wireless communications providers, with service improving by one tower installation at a time.

The available technology and the regulatory landscape are both changing rapidly, outpacing the deliberate speed of land use planning. Telecommunications infrastructure has evolved from pole-mounted wire (landline) to buried cable (broadband) to stand-alone structure(macrocellular towers) to distributed pole-mounted devices (5G "small cells"), each with attendant concerns about compatibility and environmental disturbance. As

New Buffalo Township Hall



of this writing, 5G systems are nascent in a few markets, requiring a dense network of compact equipment distributed throughout the desired coverage area. From the perspective of local government, it is important to have the equipment available without dominating the landscape or interfering with other infrastructure, and to ensure that permitting processes are enabling adoption of this technology efficiently and fairly.

Internet

Comcast provides high-speed Internet to the majority of Township residents who have Internet access. However, many areas, including the Township Hall, do not have access to high speed Internet. Between the barrier to the coast and the rural nature of the inland Township, more than half of the geographic areas of the Township does not have Internet. Currently, there is fiber optic near the Casino, but that infrastructure is lacking in other areas.

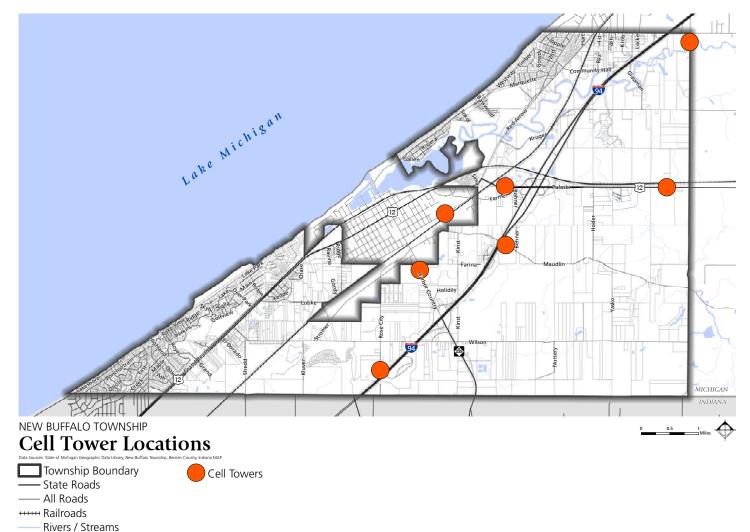
The benefits of fast and reliable internet service extended to individual residents benefit the community as a whole—both from a quality of life standpoint and in terms of economic development. With improved service, New Buffalo Township could attract new entrepreneurs as well as people looking to live in a beautiful place and telecommute. The proportion of workers who work at home in New Buffalo Township is over twice the national rate (11% vs. 4.5%), indicating that this is already happening despite the significant limitations, and suggesting a possibility for even greater popularity.

Cellular

Cellular service is also lacking in many areas of the Township. Although it is better than it was a few years ago, the service is spotty along lakefront,

MAP 12: CELL TOWER LOCATIONS

Lakes / Ponds



Beckett&Raeder

especially in the southern half of the Township. In addition to the nuisance for residents, there are also safety concerns associated with limited cellular service coverage, especially for tourists and visitors without landlines and who are not familiar with coverage areas.

Solutions for Expanded and Improved Services

Connect Michigan

Connect Michigan is a non-profit that provides technical assistance to local units of government. The organization is working to ensure that all residents of Michigan can experience the benefits of broadband. In partnership and at the direction of the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC), Connect Michigan conducts assessments of the broadband landscape in the state of Michigan. Connect Michigan can support the Township by providing data about services availability and also by coming and presenting information, case studies, and potential solutions to community members and local officials.

Public Infrastructure Investments

The Township could explore opportunities to publicly fund fiber optic throughout its entire boundary, or establish a funding model for a public-private partnership with stakeholders who would benefit from community-wide high speed internet access. Some communities in Michigan with a municipal owned and operated utility provider have decided to operate a community-wide network as a municipal utility, while others have opted to pay for the infrastructure and lease it to a commercial provider.

Some potential actions for the Township to consider to improve Internet include:

- » Offer educational forums on the importance of broadband for local officials and institutions.
- » Recruit a local grassroots group that is willing to work together to increase broadband accessibility.
- » Explore fiber optic installation through local millage requests or rural economic development grants.
- » Research opportunities to leverage franchise agreements and other funding mechanisms to increase the quality of services

Zoning Changes for Cellular Service

The Township could consider some amendments to its zoning ordinance to better support cellular service. In terms of cellular tower siting, the Township could evaluate the zoning ordinance provisions to streamline the permitting process. For example, the Township could allow certain types of towers by right as opposed through a special land use permit and allow these towers in all zoning districts. Currently, the Township ordinance only allows telecommunication towers in two districts, General Commercial and Industrial, and a special land use permit is required. Wireless communication towers are permitted by special land use permit in the Highway Commercial District.

CASE STUDY: LYNDON TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN

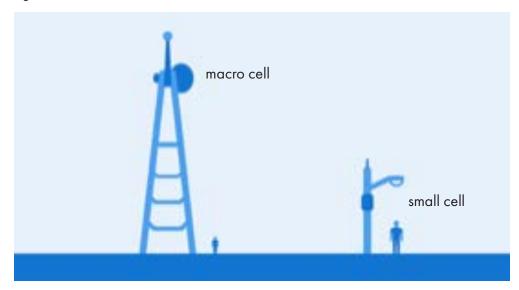
In August 2017, voters in in Lyndon Township approved a bond proposal to fund a publicly owned Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) network. The measure passed with two-thirds of voters choosing yes. Residents and business owners complain about slow service, data caps, and the fact that they must pay high rates for inadequate Internet service. The community will finance their \$7M project with a 2.9 millage over the next 20-years. Average cost per property owner will come to \$21.92 per month for the infrastructure. Basic Internet access will cost \$35 - 45 per month for 100 Mbps. They estimate the combined cost of infrastructure millage and monthly fee for basic service will be \$57 - 67 per month.

Source: https://muninetworks.org

Cell towers are most effective when placed on flat topography (including the built environment) that is easily accessible for maintenance, in close proximity to high population densities. Suitable places for macrocellular towers will be at least 1,000 square feet in area, within 100-500 ft. from a paved street, and located such that their height does not substantially block a resident's or business' access to light. In short, to improve service, cell towers should be installed where the service is poor, as that is a signal that residents are out of range of the closest tower's search ring. For example, the lakefront is not well serviced by a cell tower. Not only is the southern lakefront bordered by critical dunes and wetlands that could make installing large cell towers difficult, they would detract from the beautiful backdrop. Small cells that can fit on current infrastructure such as light fixtures and rooftops are available to meet space constraints, though it should be considered that their effectiveness is proportional to their size.

To improve cellular service in the Township, more wireless towers must be strategically located to create a faster and more reliable network for its users. The network's importance cannot be understated in modern society, but their height (for macrocellular towers), proliferation (for small cells), and unappealing appearance pose a challenge for municipalities when deciding where they can be installed. To reduce the visual impact of towers, the Township could encourage co-location of new facilities on existing structures. New technologies are trending towards small wireless facilities, including those that enable 5G. The future 4G and 5G services will require significant densification of small wireless facilities so that these facilities, which serve smaller geographic areas, can be located close to end users to provide higher quality connections. In particular, the Township may consider amending the zoning ordinance to facilitate a less burdensome administrative process for requests to add small cells to existing structures like poles or water towers.

Figure 11: Macrocellular and "small cell" infrastructure



Source: http://www.crowncastle.com/communities/small-cell-solutions.aspx

Townline Beach



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Parks, trails, and open spaces in which to recreate are an important asset in

any community. New Buffalo Township is lucky to have numerous places (both publicly and private owned) to commune with nature, recreate, and enjoy the water/riverfront.

WATER

Beaches

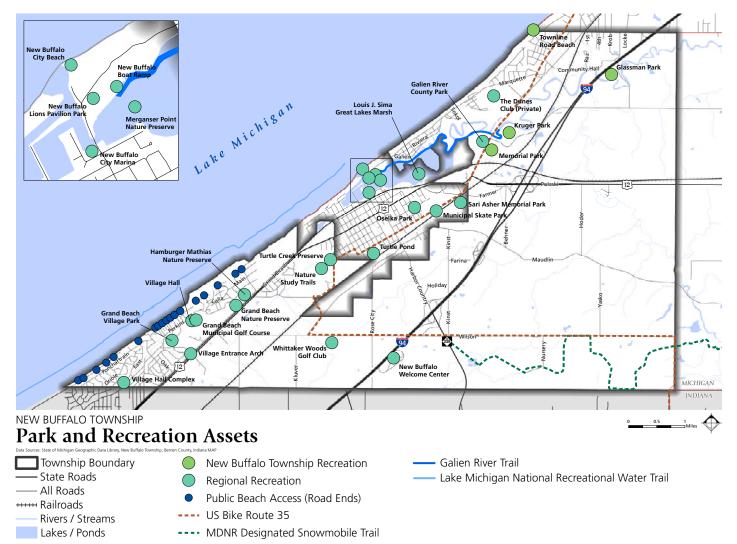
Townline Road Beach

Townline Road Beach is mini-park that features 33 feet of beach property on Lake Michigan that is accessed by stairs from the end of Townline Road. It is adjacent to 33 feet of beach property owned by Chikaming Township. This park is the only public Lake Michigan water access within the Township. In the future, New Buffalo Township could purchase Lake Michigan property for public access and enjoyment if and when these properties become available.

Grand Beach Public Beach Access

Grand Beach Public Beach Access points are located along Lake View Avenue, Ridge Road and Lake Park Drive in Grand Beach. There are currently 12 public access points along these roadways that are owned by the Village of Grand Beach. Parking is limited at these access points.

MAP 13: PARK AND RECREATION ASSETS



Michiana Public Beach Access

Michiana Public Beach Access points are located along Lakeshore Drive between Michiana Drive and Tahoma Trail. There are currently 6 public access points along this extent of roadway owned by the Village of Michiana. These access points feature small stretches of beachfront that are open to the public. All of Michiana's access points feature street parking and bicycle racks for visitors.

New Buffalo City Beach

New Buffalo City Beach is located on Lake Michigan just North of the opening of the Galien River and New Buffalo Harbor. The total beachfront extends along Lake Michigan for a total of 800 feet and encompasses a total of 18 acres. The public beach features a variety of recreation amenities including dunes, nature trails, a wooden boardwalk, play structures, benches, a boat launch, and kayak and paddleboard rental and instruction. The beach lies adjacent to private homes to its North and is features street parking for visitors.

River Access

Red Arrow Landing (MDNR 11-3)

Red Arrow Landing (MDNR 11-3) is located along Red Arrow Highway north of where the road crosses the Galien River. The land is owned by Michigan's Department of Natural Resources and features a small boat launch for kayakers and canoers. This point is also the beginning of the Galien River Water Trail, which continues downriver to the New Buffalo's City Boat Ramp.

Glassman Park





Water Trails

Lake Michigan Water Trail

Formal Water Trails are gaining popularity across the state as a way to promote paddle sports on designated waterways. The Lake Harbor Country segment of the Lake Michigan Water Trail is a 10.6-mile paddle from the City of New Buffalo to Warren Dunes State Park. This shoreline stretch has miles of sandy beaches and also offers dining, shopping, and lodging options. By continuing to promote and market its water trail, New Buffalo can leverage its natural resource and recreational assets for economic development.

Galien River Water Trail

The Galien River Water Trail is a three-mile section of the Galien River stretching from the DNR boat launch at Red Arrow Highway to the City of New Buffalo public boat launch. It winds through some of the Township's scenic marshes and park land, then terminates at the edge of the vibrant City to offer a "trail town" experience to users.

PARKS

Township Parks

Memorial Park

Memorial Park is a community park located on Red Arrow Highway behind the Township Hall. It is 6.5-acres with access to electricity, water, and restrooms. Key facilities include an amphitheater, ball courts, a pavilion, picnic tables, a splash pad, playground equipment, and the 9/11 Memorial Garden. The memorial garden is a 1,450-pound eight-foot beam from Ground Zero which was acquired from the New York Port Authority as part of a program to distribute items from Ground Zero for memorials. In the future, the Township hopes to develop a winter activity area with a warming lodge.

Memorial Park Playground



911 Memorial Garden



Source: Wightman Consulting

Glassman Park



Glassman Road Park

Glassman Road Park is a 47-acre community park located off Glassman Road, bordered on three sides by the Galien River. Key facilities at this park include a kayak launch, a fishing platform, nature trails, and a Zen labyrinth. New Buffalo Township plans to build a pavilion at the park and improve access to the river for paddlers and anglers. A brand new jetski ramp and an ADA accessible floating ramp connected to the kayak launch were installed in the last couple years. Meandering walking trails were cleared out again this year to maintain a tranquil nature experience. The trails along the Galien River connect to Lake Michigan now.

Kruger Park

Kruger Park is a 12-acre parcel with the Galien River running through it, located on Kruger Road. This park is currently vacant. In the long term, the Township plans to construct a trail network, water access amenities, and off-road parking, however much of its acreage is located in the floodplain which will create parking issues for anglers.

Grand Beach Village Park

Grand Beach Village Park is located at the intersection of Royal Avenue and Crescent Road in the center of Grand Beach's residential community. The small community park features a garden, benches, a playground, tennis courts, picnic tables, and some of the Village's most stately trees. It also lies adjacent to the Village's golf course. The park is within walking distance of much of the community and has street parking for visitors.

County Park

In addition to Township managed recreation land, the region's residents also have access to county-owned Galien River Park. In 2001, Berrien County acquired 86 acres of undeveloped land and in 2014 it was opened to the public with the financial held of the Pokagon Fund and the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. The property was comprised of what is known as the "New Buffalo Marsh," a marsh that has formed along the Galien River made of both upland and wetlands. The park features an accessible 300' canopy walkway leading to an overlook tower and a boardwalk for river viewing, kayaking, and fishing. Recently, the parking lot was enlarged and paved and a kiosk is also planned to better accommodate its visitors.

Golf

There are a number of private facilities that support tourism and offer recreational opportunities for residents. The Whittaker Woods Golf Club is a public golf course with a restaurant and event center. The Grand Beach Golf Course, considered a municipal golf course, is a 9-hole course that also has banquet facilities, a driving range, pro shop, and a snack bar. The Dunes Club is popular private 9-hole golf course in the Township.

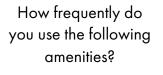
OPEN SPACE

Grand Beach Marsh Preserve

This 11-acre preserve is located along Grand Beach Road in the Village of Grand Beach. The preserve is a Central Coastal Plain Marsh, which is a globally-rare ecosystem found primarily along the southern shores of Lake Michigan. Several distinct vegetation zones exist within it. In addition to preserving the marsh's natural ecology, the preserve features a half-mile of hiking trail that forms a loop through the property's woodland. The preserve is open to the public and features roadside parking.

Louis J. Sima Great Lakes Marsh

This property is located along the Galien River just North of New Buffalo and encompasses roughly 150 acres of the larger Galien River Marsh. It is maintained by the Chikaming Land Conservancy. This type of coastal marsh is well-known for its diverse wildlife habitat and biological diversity. It provides habitat for a diverse range of birds, mammals, plant species, and reptiles. In addition to protecting this ecological value, the preserve is accessible to visitors





Community Survey Weighted Average

Galien River Park



by canoe and kayak. Many visitors enjoy the property's scenic beauty from the Galien River Water Trail.

Turtle Creek Preserve

Turtle Creek Preserve is a 12-acre woodland located along Lubke Road in New Buffalo Township and is located adjacent to New Buffalo Elementary School. The property is maintained by the Chikaming Land Conservancy and encompasses hardwood forests and seasonal wetlands. These environments provide important habitat for migratory songbirds. In addition to preserving these important habitats, the property is accessible to the public and features a trail network. Visitors use the property's trails for a range of activities including hiking, snowshoeing, and birdwatching. Visitors to the preserve typically park at New Buffalo Elementary School.

Merganser Point

Merganser Point is a 10-acre preserve located along the Galien River just to the northwest of New Buffalo's Harbor. The land is maintained by the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy. It encompasses part of the great lakes marsh that extends throughout much of New Buffalo. The preserve has limited public access, but kayakers and canoers can enjoy its scenic beauty from the Galien River Water Trail. The property was donated to Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy in 2000.

TRAILS AND GREENWAYS

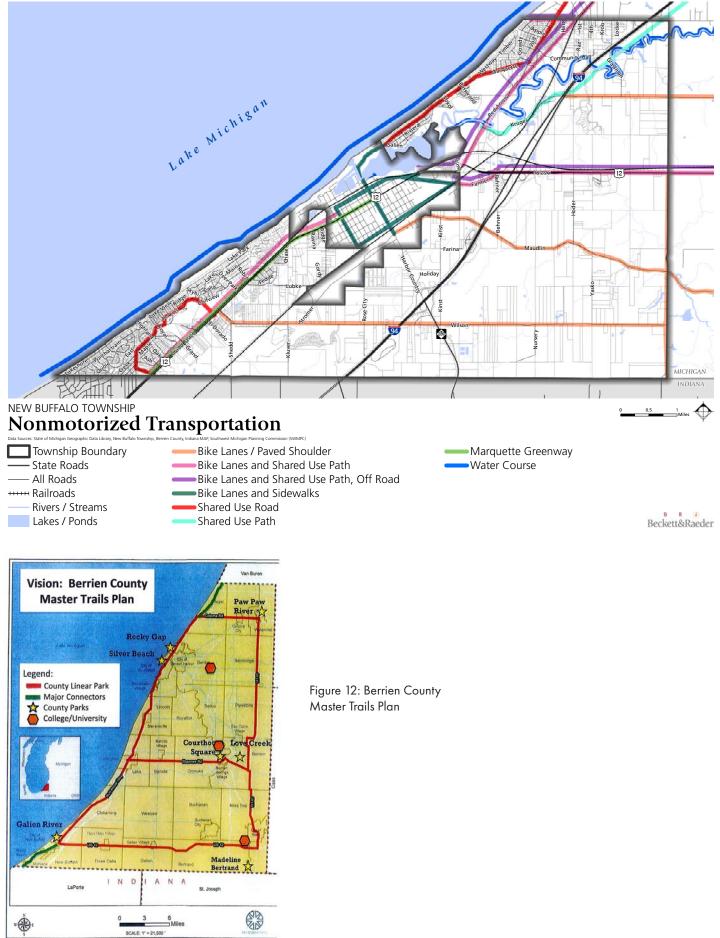
Nature Study Trails (NBAS)

The nature study trails are adjacent to New Buffalo Elementary School and is located directly to the school's West. A portion is also located directly to the school's East, across Lubke Road. This facility includes 1.2 miles of trail that pass through hardwood forests, pine groves, marshes, bogs, swamps, and creeks. The trails have varying degrees of difficulty and are accessible to the public.

Berrien County: A Trail in the Making

Berrien County Parks and Road Departments are collaborating on plans for a bicycle and walking trail along a 10 mile stretch of Red Arrow Highway starting in Bridgman and ending in New Buffalo Township. The Harbor Country Hike and Bike Plan, created by the Friends of Harbor Country Trails, identified Red Arrow Highway as a priority for nonmotorized paths due to its proximity to parks, businesses, and residential neighborhoods, although the initial work is funded by Berrien County's contingency fund. The project, still in its inventory and study phase, is envisioned to have 10-foot-wide paths, rest stops, parking, lighting, signage, guardrails, and highway crossings. The trail would also be designed to link to nearby existing paths. The construction of the pathways would begin just south of Bridgman as a two-mile section and in the future would continue to develop southward.

MAP 14: NONMOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION



US Bike Route 35

U.S. Bike Route 35 runs through New Buffalo Township and brings thousands of touring cyclists into the Township each year to shop, eat, and stay. First launched in 2012, U.S. Bike Route 35 is intended for long distance riders to ride along the Lake Michigan coast from New Buffalo to Sault Ste. Marie. The route is approximately 500 miles and is comprised of a network of state highways, county and local roads, and regionally significant multi-use trails. The route traverses dozens of small lakefront towns, past sandy beaches, scenic and historic destinations, and services and cultural attractions.

Marquette Greenway

The Marquette Greenway is an ambitious planned 58-mile route from Calumet Park in Chicago to New Buffalo. Just under half of the trail has been completed or at least secured funding, and the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission has sought a federal grant to fund the remaining portions.

NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP RECREATION PLAN

In 2018, New Buffalo Township updated its five-year community recreation plan. This plan is important because in order for the Township to remain eligible for State and Federal park and recreation grant programs, it must have a current five-year plan approved by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). A community recreation plan is a capital planning tool for recreational development, used to ensure that the recreational goals and objectives of the Township are effectively put into action in order to maintain a high level of quality. The planning effort was led by the eight-member New Buffalo Township Parks Committee. The plan emphasizes barrier free access improvements, expanding the non-motorized trail network, and improvements to active recreational facilities at the Township parks. Key park improvements identified in the recreation plan are included in this master plan to ensure consistency and that the plans are mutually supportive of one another.

Marquette Greenway brochure

YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED!

It will cost about \$3.6 million to engineer and build 3.8 miles of trail from the IN/MI state line to downtown New Buffalo. When completed, the Marquette Greenway will be a 58-mile continuous multi-use trail between Chicago and New Buffalo.

Your tax-deductible donation will be used to leverage state and federal grants to complete the Michigan portion of the Marquette Greenway.

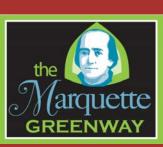
2 Easy Ways to Donate!

Donate securely online at www.harborcountrytrails.org

OR

You can send a check made out to Friends of Harbor Country Trails to the following address: PO Box 371 New Buffalo, MI 49117

THANK YOU!



A TRAIL CONNECTING NEW BUFFALO/ HARBOR COUNTRY and CHICAGO



FRIENDS OF THE HARBOR COUNTRY TRAILS, INC

www.harborcountrytrails.org

CONNECTING HARBOR COUNTRY TO CHICAGO

Off-road trails have grown exponentially throughout the United States. The reasons are plenty - from physical fitness, to increased property values, to transportation options - trails provide a large number of benefits wherever they are developed.

Today, Harbor Country in southwest Michigan is part of an exciting trail vision which will span three states. The Marquette Greenway is the long-awaited goal to link together communities and destinations along the south shore of Lake Michigan.

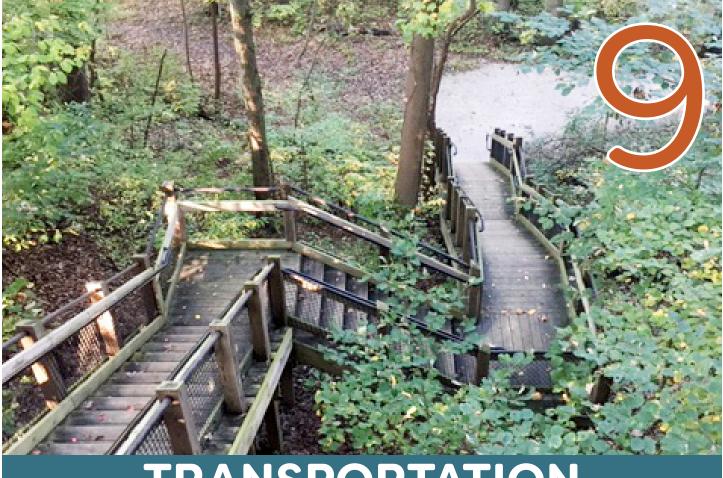
This goal is well within reach. The Friends of the Harbor Country Trails along with their partners are working to bring this trail to cooling *lain use*.



HELP US BUILD THE MARQUETTE GREENWAY

We need YOUR support to complete the Michigan portion of this tristate trail. Friends of the Harbor Country Trails is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit corporation which has championed bike and hiking routes in southwest Michigan.

We are working with federal, state, regional and local governments, and private entities, to complete the Michigan portion of the trail. Your tax-deductible donation will leverage grant funds and will be used for engineering, construction and maintenance. Community support is needed to make this trail vision a reality! *Please see the donation panel for more information on how to help.* THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.



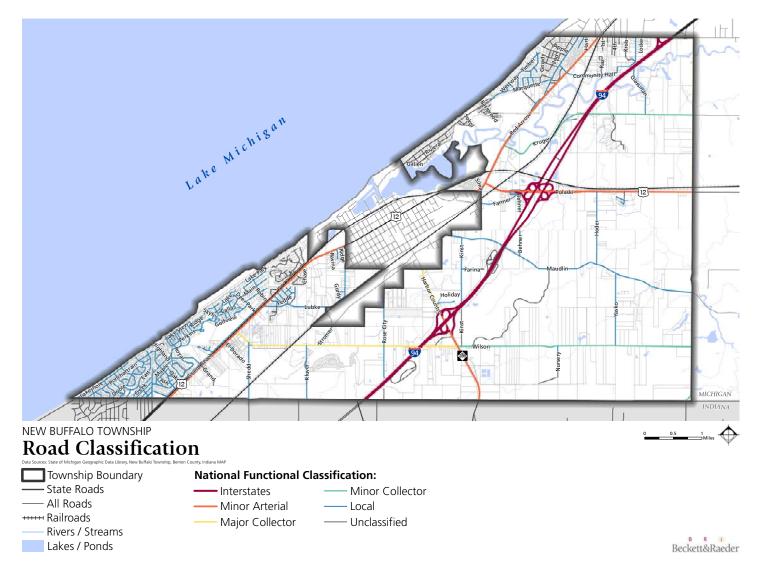
TRANSPORTATION

Transportation networks and connectivity are the cornerstones of a modern society. Our economy, and increasingly our social lives, depends on how well cities are linked to goods and services. Within New Buffalo Township, transportation corridors are designed to provide residents, employees, and visitors with easy and affordable access to businesses, recreational amenities, schools, and other key services. The biggest gap in the transportation network as articulated in the community survey as well as a field inventory of the Township's transportation infrastructure was non-motorized connections. However, there has been much interest and effort recently at improving biking and walking options in the Township. Trains play an important role in the Township's business climate, transporting workers into larger cities, and connecting population centers with the Township for recreation and tourism purposes.

ROADWAY NETWORK AND CLASSIFICATION

New Buffalo Township contains three freeway interchange areas from I-94 (LaPorte Road, US-12, and Union Pier Road), six County Primary Roads (LaPorte between I-94 and New Buffalo City, Red Arrow Highway, Wilson Road, Kruger Road, Union Pier Road, and portions of Lakeside Road), and two State Highways (M-239 and US-12).

MAP 15: NATIONAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS



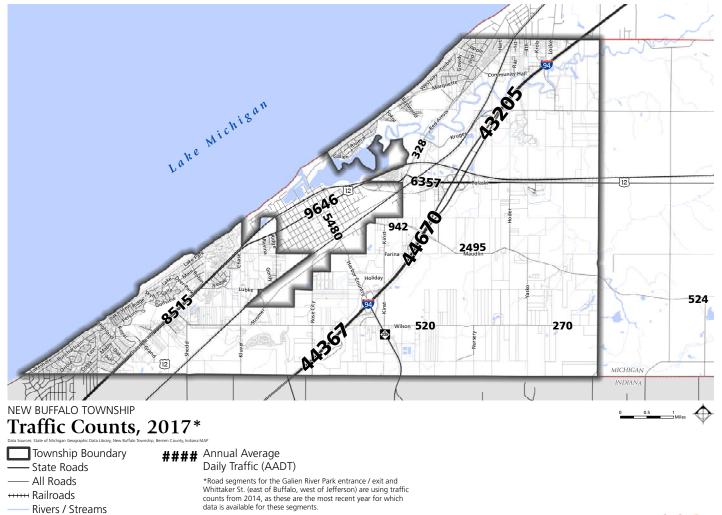
Roads within communities across the country are categorized by the National Functional Classification (NFC) System. The NFC is a system developed by the Federal Highway Administration to classify all streets, roads, and highways according to their function. The NFC system classifies roads into the following categories, from the most intensively used with highest speeds, to the least intensively used with lower speeds:

- » Principal Arterial
- » Minor Arterial
- » Collector
- » Local

The Road Classification Map shows where the roads that are classified are located within the Township.

Proximity to I-94 allows for easy access to Lake Michigan for tourists looking to visit the Township. In addition, I-94 and US-12 connect New Buffalo Township

MAP 16: TRAFFIC COUNTS



Beckett&Raeder

to major mid-western cities like Detroit and Chicago by highway, supporting easy access to jobs and economic opportunities for Township residents and businesses.

Traffic Counts

Lakes / Ponds

Recent traffic counts have been compiled by the Berrien County Road Commission, Michigan Department of Transportation, and Southwest Michigan Planning Commission. As would be expected, I-94 has by far the highest daily traffic numbers of about 43,000 vehicles per day depending on the highway segment. The second busiest roadway in the Township is US 12, with approximately 7,000 vehicles per day depending on the segment of highway.

TRANSPORTATION MODES

Michigan is a car-dependent state and New Buffalo Township is no different. Seventy-nine percent of workers commute alone to work by car. This compares with 75.4% of City of New Buffalo residents who commute by car, indicating that the built environment plays an important role in the transportation methods residents choose.

New Buffalo Township is also "car-heavy" on both ends of the ownership spectrum. A total of 5.7% of new Buffalo Township residents do not have access to a vehicle, which is lower than the state average. Sixty percent of households in New Buffalo Township have two or more vehicles, compared with a State average of 57%.

Complete Streets

There has been increasing public awareness, led by organizations like Smart Growth America, that streets should be designed for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transit users of all ages and abilities, in addition to freight and passenger motor vehicles. This movement is called Complete Streets. Simply put, Complete Streets are designed for everyone, not just vehicles.

Instead of measuring a successful road by vehicular mobility, Complete Streets look at design elements, safety, and convenience for all users. In 2010, Complete Streets legislation passed in Michigan that requires MDOT to consider multi-modal features with new road construction. Elements of Complete Street differ by community, but common characteristics are sidewalks, bike lanes and racks, frequent and safe crossings, median islands, curb extensions, and elements that enhance the experience of using a street to encourage multiple modes. The idea is to reduce reliance on automobiles to shift the bias from mobility to accessibility. New Buffalo Township has taken proactive measures to increase safety and accessibility on their street network with new projects that include sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes. The Township could also consider passing a local resolution or ordinance prioritizing or requiring a Complete Streets approach when reviewing new developments, major redevelopments, and public improvement projects.

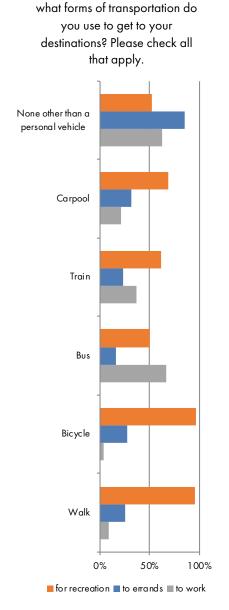
Non-Motorized Infrastructure

Non-motorized infrastructure serves both recreational and transportation needs for residents and visitors alike. These types of infrastructure investments can function to both improve access to safe and affordable transportation options, as well as foster economic development. Very few people in New Buffalo walk or bike for transportation; however, many reported using non-motorized infrastructure for recreation purposes.

Close to 100% of survey respondents reported walking or biking for recreation. As detailed in the Parks and Recreation chapter, a 500-mile national bicycle route called Bike Route 35 bisects the Township. This route is comprised of a network of state highways, country and local roads, and regionally significant multi-use trails.

Bicycle Facilities

There are a few low-traffic roads within the Township that would be appropriate



Other than a personal vehicle,

Separated facilities are safest for the youngest nonmotorized users



Source: Berrien County Trailblazers

for bicycle touring. Bike lanes provide an exclusive space for bicyclists within the existing roadway. Bike lanes are generally 4-6 feet wide and are most appropriate on roadways with speeds not exceeding 25 mph. The Township has installed a formalized bike lane in Union Pier. There is another bike lane between Red Arrow and the Lake in Chikaming Township. Wilson Road and Maudlin Road both see numerous bicyclists and could be candidates for wider shoulders or bike lanes along certain stretches. Both of these have wide shoulders in portions, particularly 239 (Harbor Country Drive) to US-12

Shared Lane Markings (SLMs), or "sharrows" are road markings used to indicate that the roadway is an appropriate environment for bicycles and automobiles to coexist. Although not considered a facility type, a sharrow is useful on low traffic roads to remind automobiles that the roadway is intended to be shared by all users. They can also assist bicycles with wayfinding.

Non-motorized trails or greenways provide an exclusive space for travel that is completely separated from the vehicular roadway. These facilities are especially well-suited for bicycle transportation when networks are complete and link useful destinations. At this time, however, they are most often used for recreational purposes and are included in the Open Space and Recreation chapter.

Sidewalks

Currently, there is conversation about constructing a sidewalk in the Township on Royal Avenue which serves nearby residents and extends out to Grand Beach Road. An existing sidewalk runs alongside Detroit Street / Lubke Road to connect New Buffalo Elementary School with the City of New Buffalo. The Township is prioritizing new sidewalks at Exit 1 along Harbor Country Drive, where businesses would benefit from easier access for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Public Transportation

Berrien Bus provides rural service in New Buffalo Township. The Berrien Bus is a non-urban system that provides transportation to all areas not served by dial-a-ride service areas. The service includes both semi-fixed route service and demand-response service.

Amtrak and the CSX Railroad line make important rail connections both in and out of the community. These lines connect workers in NBT with larger cities and to larger population hubs to NBT to support recreation and tourism. According to the community survey, the Township's connection to Chicago's metro area makes the train a popular choice for commuting to work (63.2%), and to access recreation (32.3%).

Proposed enhancements to the "South Shore Line," a historic rail route with roots as an electric interurban, may have an impact on the Township. The route runs from downtown Chicago to Michigan City, Indiana, about 20 minutes

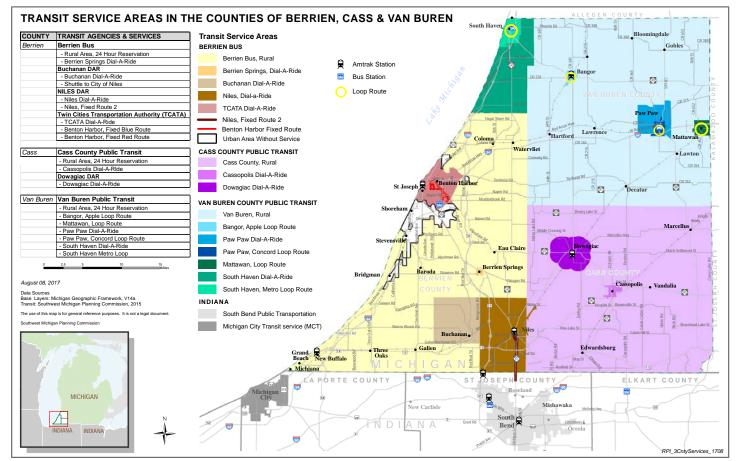


Figure 13: Transit Service Areas

from the Township border. A planned second track between Michigan City and Gary, Indiana is proposed to significantly reduce travel times, making the distance into "the City" considerably more commutable. This would make it conceivable for people who work in Chicago and have had a second home in the Township to convert it to their primary residence, and would open up the Township as a residential possibility for the remainder of Chicago's workers who would prefer to live in a more rural setting. The Township could encourage some of these workers to locate in its CIA-designated high-density residential areas by supplying public transportation options to shuttle them to the terminal, eliminating the need for them to maintain a personal vehicle for the sole purpose of sitting in a commuter lot. If Federal funds are secured to match the investment promised by State, County, and local Indiana governments—demonstrating the collaborative nature of substantial transportation efforts—the project could be complete by 2020.

NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY

New Buffalo Township Corridor Improvement Authority

The two gateways into New Buffalo Township, and more broadly, Harbor Country, are Exits 1 and 4 off of I-94. Both exits are underdeveloped highway exchanges that are considered prime development locations. To help fund and implement improvements to attract and retain businesses and residences, New Buffalo Township established a Corridor Improvement Authority in 2016. The boundary includes I-94 at Exit 1 and Exit 4, and US-12 at Exit 4. Under the 2005 Public Act 280, communities can create a CIA to use tax increment financing to make capital improvements within an established commercial district. Establishing a Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) enables the Township to capture tax revenue that would otherwise be paid to the county. In the strategic plan, the CIA Board is focused on improving I-94 and Harbor Country Drive to reflect the character of the community to reestablish New Buffalo as the Gateway of Michigan. Goals included in the CIA plan support multi-modal transportation options, including viable bicycle, trolley, shuttle, and high-speed rail opportunities. The plan details improved access and movement throughout the community with an interconnected network.

The CIA plan calls for pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use developments at both exits and along Red Arrow Highway using tax increment financing to fund public infrastructure improvements such as sidewalks, intersection improvements, street lighting, street trees, and landscaping. The idea is to create a sense of place in the public right-of-way as opposed to a through-way. Walkable connectivity in these areas would likely benefit Township residents, and the Township could explore complementary uses such as ones more focused on recreation related activities.

Using funds captured through the CIA, the Township could develop design standards that are codified in the zoning ordinance. Design standards could require ornamental trees, decorative lighting, sidewalks, and other public amenities with new development. Improvements in streetscaping improve safety and perceived safety, and can also spur economic investment by improving visual appeal. Other placemaking goals not directly related to transportation along the corridor include marketing and branding of the corridors, establishing an identity, and wayfinding signage. These, too, improve appeal and subsequent investment.

A conceptual plan has been developed for improvements at Exit 1 on I-94 which incorporates these principles. Landscaping that includes flowers, lighting, attractive signage, and even public art are suggested in order to offer a warm welcome to those arriving to the Township, and the State.

Figure 14: Corridor Improvement Authority Project Guide excerpt

Project Guide 3

Bridge Gateway

Key Description

- Wayfinding/ Identity/ Landscape Wayfinding signage with landscaping at the two exit ramps would connect visitors to the various opportunities within New Buffalo and be a first impression for visitors exiting 194.
- Bridge Identity/Signage Creating a brand at the Exit 1 interchange would differentiate this area from the other 194 exits in Indiana and Michigan. Simple modifications like changing the color of the bridge and New Buffalo signage on the bridge would reinforce the New Buffalo brand and establish the exit as the gateway of Michigan and New Buffalo. These items would require significant coordination with MDOT and would be most cost effective to complete at the same
- time MDOT is performing maintenance on the bridge. Interchange Identity/Landscape A change in landscaping at Exit 1 would also differentiate this area from other exits. The area would need to be significantly large to create a contrast and be noticed. Minor terracing of the embankments, planting of trees, lighting, regular mowing of areas and other improvements could accomplish this. The improvements should be low maintenance, natural materials that reflect the New Buffalo brand. The installation and maintenance would need to be coordinated with MDOT.
- Exit 4 Cleanup MDOT utilizes the excess right of way at Exit 4 as a staging area for their road crews, equipment and materials. Removing these items or screening the area would at least neutralize the negative image of this exit. This would need to be coordinated with MDOT.

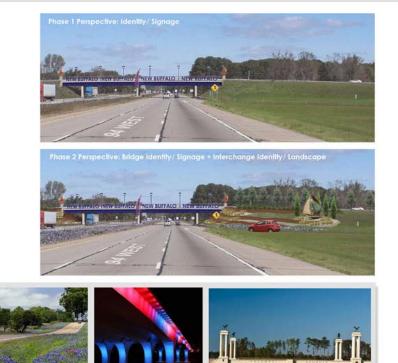
Design Fundamentals

- Consider day, night and seasonal identity Design inspiration should be public art/ architecture in lieu
- of engineering standards
- Minimize maintenance while maximizing design aesthetic

Implementation/ Next Steps

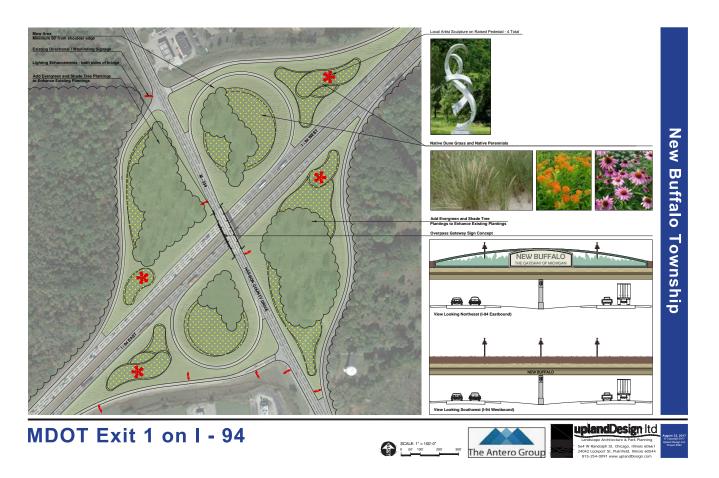
- Adopt into the Master Plan
- Update Recreation Plan Coordinate with MDOT, State tourism office, Harbor Country, and Governor's office Funding/ Grant Applications
- The visioning images are for illustrative purposes. They are intended to generate ideas and further conversation.

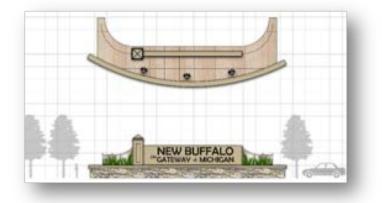
12 New Buffalo Township Corridor Improvement Vision



Wightman & Associates

Figure 15: Conceptual plans for gateway signage at Exit 1





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ECONOMICS

The economic system is the third leg of the stool that is a community, along with people and land—which also happen to be two of the most valuable economic resources. Understanding an economic system helps describe a place, telling us about the unique gifts of that geography as well as the conditions of the people who live there. Where well-being is quite dependent on at least moderate prosperity, economics are a matter of health, safety, and welfare.

A community's economic system is always larger than its borders, for the simple reason that it includes relationships with its neighbors. In the case of Harbor Country, that economic relationship is explicit: the tourism that drives each jurisdiction's financial engine is powered by the same resource, and a primary feature of tourism is the movement of people across local borders. Yet each community is accountable to its own citizens and investors while identifying its place in the whole.

The labor analysis and economic development review examines historic trends and existing conditions related to the Township's workers (defined as "people who live in New Buffalo Township and have a job, regardless of where that job is located") and job holders (defined as "people whose place of employment is in New Buffalo Township, regardless of where that person lives"). There is also a third economic driver in the Township, which is the second-home / short-term-rental market. The purpose of this analysis is to better understand the relationship among these drivers and the overall economic situation in the township to inform a plan for continued economic prosperity.

LABOR ANALYSIS AND REVIEW

Earnings

For the purposes of community planning, an analysis of the conditions of workers (persons who live in New Buffalo Township and are employed) is of primary importance—the role of local commerce and unique market conditions, while also important, is to support citizens' well-being. NBT is a well-educated community with above average median income. However, a closer look at the income breakdown indicates that income inequality exists in the community.

While 17% of 1,077 households in the Township (including the Villages) has an income of over \$150,000 per year, a greater proportion (20%) has an income of less than \$25,000 per year. As can be seen from the chart below, there are vastly more middle-income households in the Township than there are higher-income households. When the 249 households in the Villages are excluded, the income disparity becomes even stronger. This income bifurcation trend is occurring nationwide as wages stagnate and income concentrates in the higher income brackets.

"Missing Middle" Jobs

Middle-income workers are in the fields of manufacturing; health care and social assistance; arts, entertainment, and recreation; finance and insurance; administrative support; and transportation and warehousing. These account for almost exactly one-third of Township workers. The term "missing middle jobs" describes a gap in a community's pay spectrum, wherein there is an abundance of hourly, lower-paying service sector jobs as well as high-paying executive jobs, but a limited number of "middle" income jobs such as teachers, nurses, etc. These types of middle income jobs are representative of the middle class, and are important for supporting a strong, heathy economy as well as attracting new

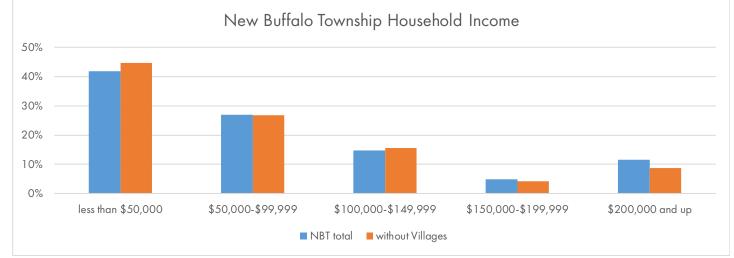


Figure 16: New Buffalo Township Household Income

Source: ACS 2012-2016, DP-03

families to the community. While this segment is not "missing" in New Buffalo Township, it is considerably smaller than it could be—a healthy community could easily expect a bell curve distribution in which this segment of workers makes up the majority, as opposed to a bare third. This circumstance is closely related to the lack of middle income housing in the Township (see the missing middle housing discussion in Chapter 3). It is difficult to determine whether one drives the other, but a lack of affordable housing options limits the ability of these workers to live in the Township, while a lack of living-wage jobs reduces the demand for these types of housing options.

The table below shows the industry trends of Township workers from 2000 through 2016. The total number of workers has dropped significantly, which is in line with a rising median age and a conversion of year-round homes to second homes. The decrease of Township workers exceeded attrition in 7 of the 14 industry sectors counted by the census, but this does not necessarily represent a collapse of the local economy. The reasons are not clear, even to the Labor Department, but some of these declines are from younger Americans going back to school, more people enrolling on disability, retirement, and the long-term unemployed who have stopped looking for work altogether.

The only industry group with robust growth is education, health care, and social assistance, though the small information sector also saw some growth. The growth of these two industries indicates that employment options for Township workers are expanding in the "new economy" direction, where employment is focused on knowledge-based, service jobs.

Of the other top three industries in which Township workers are employed, construction and the professional and management services each kept pace or exceeded overall attrition, while retail trade declined more sharply. Manufacturing, tracked because it has a locational advantage in Michigan and provides a living wage on average, has begun increasing workers after a precipitous decline noted in 2009. Because the startup and capital costs for this sector group are so high, it is worth mentioning that the previous larger share of workers indicates capacity, which can in turn be incentive toward continued increase.

Earnings by Industry

The graph below shows the number of Township residents which work in each industry (left label) as well as the median earnings for that industry among those workers (right label). About 40% of the Township's workers are employed in education, retail, or construction, and these industries share the characteristic of providing a median wage that is below the State and Township median. Educational services and construction may be considered to provide a living

TABLE 8: EMPLOYMENT CHANGE BY INDUSTRY

INDUSTRY	2000	2009	2016	CHANGE	% CHANGE
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1185	1,188	985	-200	- 17%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	128	123	278	150	117%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, waste management services	144	263	121	-23	-16%
Construction	119	136	115	-4	-3%
Retail trade	120	72	86	-34	-28%
Manufacturing	176	12	84	-92	-52%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	90	113	77	- 13	-14%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, food services	139	195	68	-71	-51%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	79	91	47	-32	-41%
Other services, except public administration	79	30	33	-46	-58%
Public administration	51	78	32	- 19	-37%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0	26	17	17	N/A
Information	13	13	17	4	31%
Wholesale trade	47	36	10	-37	-79%

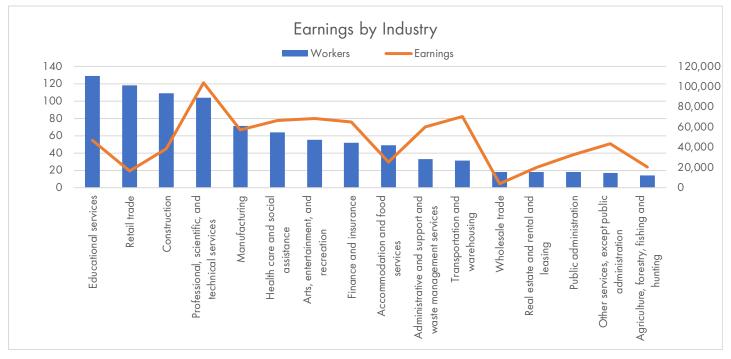
Source: ACS 2005-2009 DP03, ACS 2012-2016 DP03

wage (if on the low end) at \$47,406 and \$38,618 respectively, but retail trade does not, at \$16,563. The next most common profession, professional / scientific / technical services, is the highest-paid in the Township at \$103,750 median wage among 11% of workers. The Township residents who have the means and educational background to commute to economic opportunities outside of the jurisdiction have a greater chance at success than those who are "stuck" with the options within the Township boundaries. With an average commute of 28.1 minutes, many good-paying jobs may be out of reach for the lower-income wage earners.

LOCAL ECONOMIC REVIEW

This section will examine the conditions of jobholders: those who work in New Buffalo Township, regardless of where they live. There are considerably more people who fit this description than there are workers. In 2015, 3,551 people either lived or worked in New Buffalo Township. Over three-quarters of this number (78%) lived outside the Township and commuted in for work, while 18% left their homes in the Township to work elsewhere. Just 4% both lived and worked in the Township. The venn diagram of job counts shows that New

Figure 17: Earnings by Industry



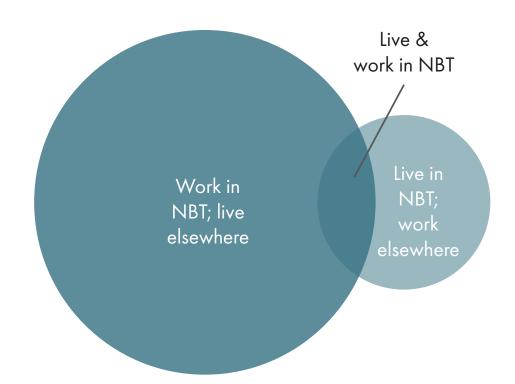
Source: ACS 2010-2014 B2403; some industries indicate insufficient data

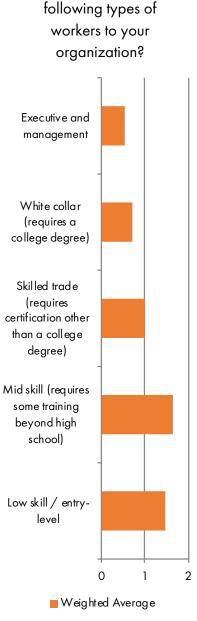
Buffalo Township is an employment hub. Being an employment hub is a neutral designation until further investigation examines the types of jobs that can be found within the boundaries.

Jobs

Taking a larger geographic view of existing businesses and economic opportunities will help NBT leverage regional resources and market potential to leverage economic development. To outline the boundaries of a regional economy, an Esri Business report was performed to look at existing employers within the seven ZIP codes encompassing coastal communities ranging from Michigan City, IN up to Benton Harbor, MI. The table "Businesses, Employees, and Population" shows the Township's economic weight in the region. The Township's population accounts for less than 15% of the seven zip codes in Harbor Country, but holds about 20% of all businesses and 35% of total employees within the region. The number of employees listed roughly translates to the number of jobs (although more are probably available but not filled). According to the 2015 LEHD data referenced above, 2,780 jobholders were commuting into the Township, but as of 2018, according to proprietary data from ESRI, over 4,000 jobholders are employed in the Township. That is to say that almost 1,200 jobs were added to the Township in a two-and-a-half year gap.







How accessible are the

TABLE 9: BUSINESS, EMPLOYEES, AND POPULATION

	HARBOR COUNTY	NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP	TOWNSHIP AS % OF REGION
Total businesses	878	177	20.2%
Total employees	11,249	4,007	35.6%
Total population	16,390	2,422	14.7%

Source: ESRI Business Summary 2018, 7 Zip Codes and New Buffalo Township

The Township's local economy is growing in terms of jobs. However, 12.6% of job opportunities in the Township are low-paying service jobs:

- » Accommodations and food services
- » Food services and drinking establishments

Arts, entertainment, and recreation is by far the largest employment pull into the Township, largely supported by the Four Winds Casino who employs about 1,800 people—more than half of jobholders in that sector.

As the table "Workers vs. Jobs By Area" shows, the largest job sectors within the region (arts, entertainment, and recreation and accommodation and food services) are low-paying or seasonal service sector jobs (41.3%). The composition of jobs within the Township is similar to many coastal communities which rely on importing a sizeable number of workers from outside its jurisdiction to serve a largely retiree and tourist population base.

The industry sector data above is affirmed by the Berrien County Community Development. The top five employers in Harbor Country in 2016 belong to the already-discussed larger regional business composition of arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services. Education and retail make the list as well.

The census data from Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamic interactive mapping shows that as of 2015, the majority of people who held jobs within the Township commuted greater distances for less money; 72% of jobholders travel greater than 10 miles (which is by definition outside of the Township) to work, primarily in jobs that pay significantly less than the median household income. The maps below indicate that housing for many Township workers is found in Michigan City, Three Rivers, the City of New Buffalo, and Bridgman.

On the other hand, only 42% of workers that live within the Township commute farther than 10 miles to their place of employment. New Buffalo Township workers are commuting shorter distances to higher paying jobs.

Does your business have an adequate labor supply?

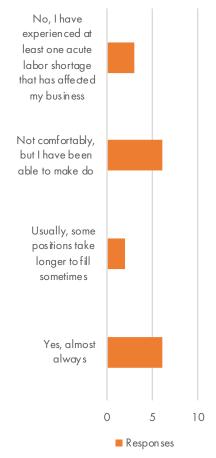


TABLE 10: WORKERS VS. JOBS BY AREA

EXPORTED WORKFORCE Workers Who Live in NBT But Commute Out	IMPORTED WORKFORCE Workers Who Live Outside of NBT But Hold Jobs Within the Township		
New Buffalo Township Workers	Jobs by Number of Jobholders (within 7 zip codes in Harbor Country)	Jobs by Number of Jobholders in New Buffalo Town- ship	
Education services and health care and social assistance (28.2%)	Arts, Entertainment, Recreation 3,249 (28.9%)	Arts, Entertainment, Recreation 3,050 (76.1%)	
Professional, scientific, and man- agement, and administrative and waste management services (12.3%)	Accommodation and food services 1,396 (12.4%)	Accommodation and food services 295 (7.4%)	
Construction (11.7%)	Utilities 1,218 (10.8%)	Food services and drinking places 207 (5.2%)	

Businesses

In a survey sent only to business owners within the Township, questions were asked about how difficult it is for businesses to find and hire employees across skill-levels, ranging from entry-level to executive positions. While low-skill workers were still the easiest to find, only 2 of 17 of business owners reported being able to find and hire them. The rest of the responses show that regardless of skill level, businesses have some to considerable difficulty recruiting and retaining employees, at least at the wages offered. Macroeconomic theory

TABLE 11: AREA EMPLOYERS

EMPLOYER	PRODUCT OR SERVICE	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	LOCATION
Four Winds Casino Resort	Gaming, Food, Accommodations	1,800	New Buffalo Township
Travel Centers of America	Truck stop, Food	120	Sawyer
New Buffalo Area Schools	K-12 Education	108	City of New Buffalo
River Valley School District	K-12 Education	102	Sawyer
Corvette Central	Specialty auto parts	80	Sawyer

would say that with an unemployment rate so low, 3.6% in the Township, that wages would increase. However, in a tourism- and vacation-based economy, much of the cash infusion for this wage increase would have to come from outside the Township.

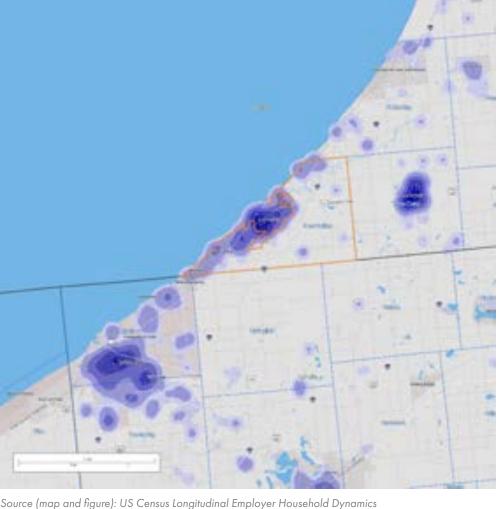
When business owners were asked what the Township can offer or enhance to build and retain an adequate supply of labor, the top two responses were the familiar refrain of improved internet and cellular service. Access to Lake Michigan followed, reflecting an appreciation of its attractive power and staking some claim to it. In the third tier were practical and planning-related concerns of access to convenience and grocery retail, and affordable and appropriate housing options. A "livable wage" ranked next.

Most business owners planned to continue (11 of 17) or expand (3 of 17) their businesses, indicating optimism. Over one quarter (4 of 17) of respondents said that cellular and internet service had hindered it, however. Most business owners found that the length, complexity, or fee schedule of the development

Figure 19: New Buffalo Township Employees by residence

How do New Buffalo Township's policies, practices, and conditions in the following areas affect your business?





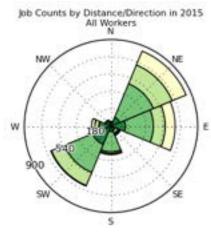


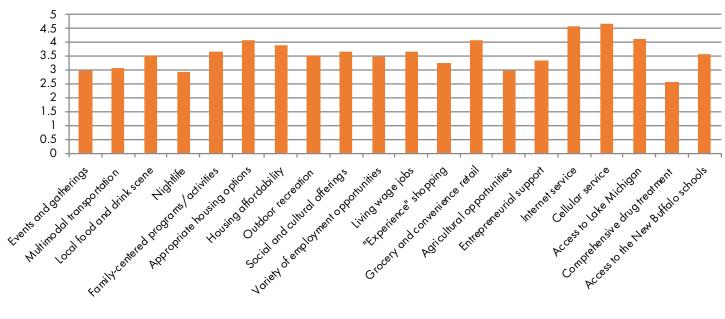
Figure 20: Distance and Direction of Commuters

review process; zoning, parking, or sign standards; and tax structure have "no noticeable effect on my business," or even "supports and enhanced my business."

Retail

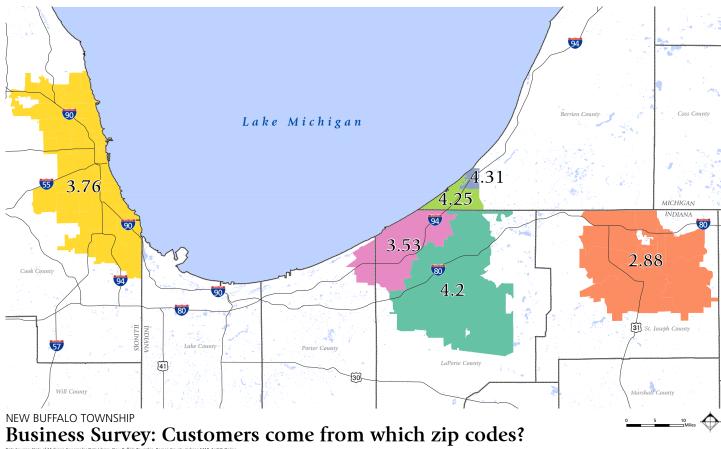
A Retail MarketPlace Profile was generated for this same 7 ZIP code geographic boundary. The report presents a snapshot of retail opportunity, looking at the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. According to the report, consumers, and therefore jobholders in the service sector, are coming into or commuting within this region for shopping, dining, and other recreationalrelated activities and/or jobs. Because there is already a cluster of these types of opportunities, there could be additional opportunity to cluster shopping and dining near existing businesses. However, there appears to be a shortage of electronic and general merchandise stores as well as non-store retailers specializing in shipping and direct selling that could present an opportunity for new retail enterprises.

Business owners reported in the survey that the majority of their customers came from Chicago and suburbs, while New Buffalo and Michigan City each provided a "regular portion" of customers.



In your experience, what would New Buffalo Township need to offer or enhance in order to build and retain an adequate supply of labor?

MAP 17: BUSINESS SURVEY: CUSTOMERS COME FROM WHICH ZIP CODES?





New Buffalo Area (49117)

Union Pier / Three Oaks / Lakeside Area (49129) Michigan City Area (46360) LaPorte Area (46350) South Bend / Mishawaka Area (466**, 465**) Chicago and Suburbs (60***) Survey respondents were asked, " To the extent that you know, what proportion of your customers come from the following ZIP codes? (Asterisks are placeholders representing all numbers.)" The weighted average is mapped above.

Beckett&Raeder

Seasonal Housing Impacts

New Buffalo Township assessing data shows that 2,609 of the 3,692 residences in the Township do not claim a 100% Principal Residency Exemption, indicating that they are second homes. That figure represents 72% of the housing units in the Township—a strong majority with implications that should be fully considered.

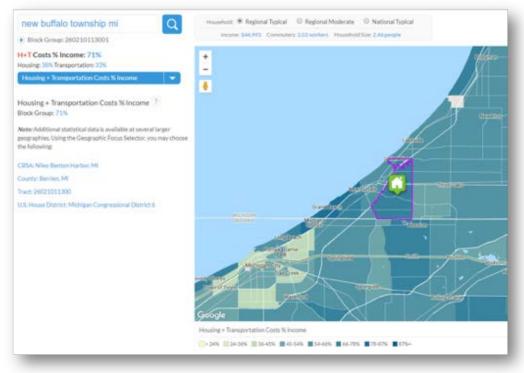
In standard planning, households are considered the basic building block, and there is a close correlation between the number of households and the number of housing structures. This figure is used by retailers to gauge commercial demand, and then invest in the infrastructure to supply it. Demand for government services are similarly computed, without distinction between services to people (parks, police) and services to property (sidewalks, fire) because they are assumed to be co-located. The conditions of industry may initially play a determining role in the formation of a community's housing stock, placement, and occupation. Once a population is established, however, household prosperity is the continuing benchmark of a community's success. A condition where most of the housing units are either unoccupied, or occupied by the commercial activity of lodging, represents a significant departure from standard planning. What are the effects on the residential, commercial, and industrial systems of New Buffalo Township?

The survey results from the second homeowners show that a majority of them are among the highest income bracket earning \$200,000 or more annually. Understandably, most of them do not have a financial need to offer their second home as a short-term rental to cover the mortgage. About 13% of survey-takers reported using their home as a short-term rental. A consistent weekly search over the span of four months on Airbnb and VRBO, the two most prominent online platforms for short-term rentals, show that there is a range of roughly 100-550 rentals listed between the two sites, representing 5-25% of all housing units in the Township. The range is likely to be narrower as some of the rentals are listed on both sites, but there is no precise way to state exactly how many rentals overlap.

The threat of short-term rentals is that is takes away housing units that could be rented or sold to residents, or those who wish to invest in the community, and instead prioritizes tourists. Tourists are of good economic value to the Township as well, and therein lies the tradeoff between housing accessibility for all tax payers or catering to an important economic sector. As discussed previously, an increase in seasonal housing will strengthen the existing bifurcation in the economy. Where low income workers are unable to live in the township because possible units are rented instead to visitors for up to \$400 per night instead of the going rental rate of \$933 per month, a burden results for both business and workers. For businesses, it impacts their ability to recruit and hire entry level workers who may be pushed out of the community. Currently, 30% of businesses reported that it is difficult to recruit and retain entry level workers, a number that would only increase in a housing market dominated by short-term rentals. For entry level and low income workers, who are forced to live further outside the economic centers due to the rising housing costs, commute times increase and access to jobs decrease.

This physical separation has a cost. The Center for Neighborhood Technology's H+T Affordability Index uses an array of variables to compute the combined cost of housing and transportation in a given place, in an effort to understand the economic returns of location efficiency. CNT posits that housing is affordable if a household's combined direct housing costs and transportation costs do not exceed 45% of household income. In New Buffalo Township, the algorithm suggests that H+T costs range from 66% to 83% of median household income, where housing costs exceed transportation costs by up to 20 percentage points along the lakeshore. In the areas where New Buffalo Township's jobholders live,

Figure 21: Housing and Transportation Costs as a Percentage of Income



Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology

the opposite is true: a large swath of the east side of Michigan City shows low housing costs that are doubled by transportation costs.

In addition, with second homeowners linked to seasonal residency, many businesses are compelled to only operate during the high season. A seasonal operation is difficult to staff and is less profitable than a year-round endeavor.

Another impact of seasonal housing is a decrease in school enrollment. As discussed in the missing middle jobs section, middle jobs are critical to attracting new families. A lack of housing opportunities for both middle and low income workers will result in a decrease in school enrollment because these workers are unable to find affordable housing in the district. From 2013-2018, school enrollment in New Buffalo Area Schools decreased by 7%. In 2016, 35% of the students in New Buffalo Area Schools were low income; the Township participates in the Berrien County McKinney-Vento Project which serves children experiencing housing insecurity.

REGIONAL ECONOMICS

A number of studies and efforts are currently underway to support economic development in NBT and the surrounding Harbor Country.

Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee

The Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee exists at a more regional level. This committee was formed in 1981 with the goal of promoting economic development in a coordinated way across eight Lake Michigan communities along the southern edge of Michigan's Lake Michigan shoreline. In 2016, the committee adopted a vision for economic development in Harbor Country. They identified goals and actions that would build on their image of retirement community, and leverage rail infrastructure to connect with larger surrounding cities. Two focus areas for improvement identified by the committee include increasing available housing and higher paying jobs.

Opportunities for Economic Growth

New Buffalo Township should continue its positive progress on implementing the CIA plan along US-12 and Exit 14 off I-1-94. Many of the redevelopment strategies such as clean-up and streetscaping will foster a unique identity for New Buffalo Township. Furthermore, implementation of future projects will help the Township solidify its reputation as a year-round thriving tourism economy. Both exits and the Red Arrow Drive corridor are important gateways into the Township as well as the region.

The southwest Michigan five-year prosperity plan identifies agriculture-related activities as a priority area for economic development in Berrien County. According to the report, "for every job generated in food processing of fruit and wine, more than 3 additional jobs are created." NBT can create a supportive environment for agricultural support and related businesses through zoning and partnerships with farmers and neighboring communities. Farm-oriented business activities can be permitted through zoning standards to allowances for limited agricultural product processing, farm stands, agritourism, and community shared agriculture.

Fostering appropriate economic development for NBT will require a multifaceted approach. Public private partnerships are necessary to foster region-wide access to communications such as broadband and cellular. Attracting young professionals to make NBT their home will ensure a continued strong tax base and a broad economic base. The zoning ordinance should be reviewed to ensure missing middle housing opportunities are sited in appropriate areas of the Township, and that commercial areas permit the type of growth desired along Red Arrow Highway US-12 and Exits 1 and 4 and 6. Townline Beach



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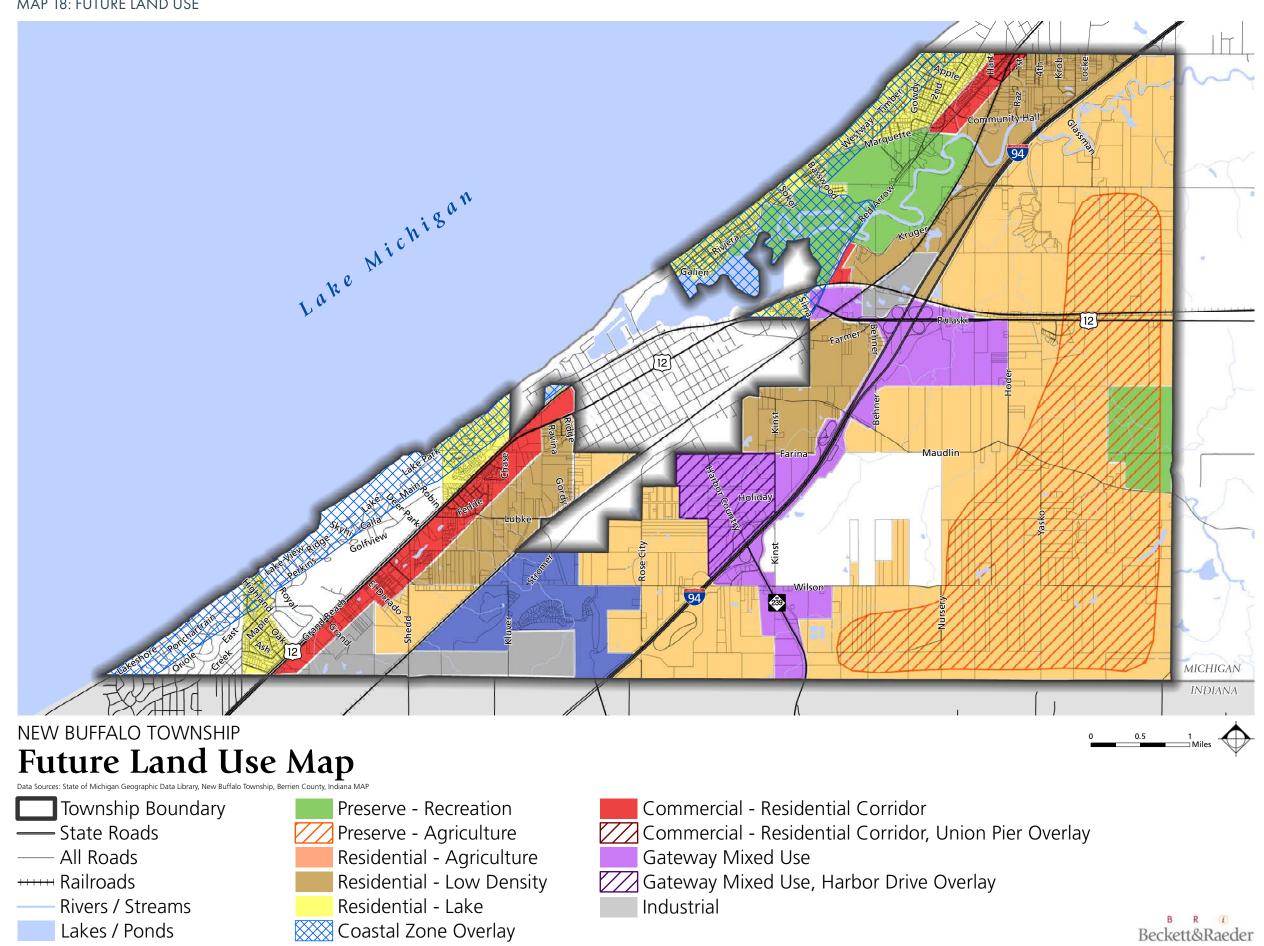
FUTURE: LAND, ZONING & ACTIÓN

FUTURE LAND USE

The future of land in New Buffalo Township has many concerns to navigate. Its topography and natural features present strong incentives to both develop and preserve, as does its proximity to a major national metropolis. The land use recommendations in this chapter are constructed to respond to each of these forces in the way that best benefits the Township.

A major departure of these recommendations from the Township's past regulatory system is the permitting of multifamily residential uses in all of the proposed commercial districts. The Medium- and High-Density Residential categories have been removed in favor of mixed use development, both along the Township's coastal corridors and within the areas surrounding the Township's two Interstate exchanges as defined by the Township's adopted Corridor Improvement Authority. These higher-density formats are encouraged in order to meet the Township's need for housing in a wider range of price points and to offer options which are accessible by means other than personal vehicle.

A second feature of these recommendations is the introduction of two potential categories of preserved land. The adoption of the Corridor Improvement Authority defines the Township's preferred location for economic development



activity, and so conversely it indicates that the areas outside its borders are less important to the Township for that purpose. With this knowledge in hand, it is appropriate for the Township to direct its attention to the unique capabilities and features of that land and to strengthen the regulations that enable and showcase them.

This section also contemplates three new overlay districts to address specific planning areas of the Township. The Coastal Zone overlay delineates the residential areas which are under the purview of the NOAA Coastal Zone Management Program, and which are appropriate for considering local protections to safeguard the coastline. The Union Pier and Harbor Country Drive overlays are focused on design standards in important commercial areas of the Township.

Preserve – Recreation

The most beautiful, attractive, and enjoyable landscapes are often also the most sensitive. This turns out to be a boon when preserving those lands for recreation both protects them and gives the public appropriate access. In the northern lakeward portion of the Township, through which the Galien River winds, Kruger Park, Memorial Park, Galien River County Park, and the Dunes Club all avail themselves of this scenic resource. On the eastern edge of the Township, the south branch of the Galien River and its wetlands abut Trillium Farms.

Preserve – Agricultural Focus Area

Farmland is not a renewable resource, and New Buffalo Township is in possession of some of the world's most versatile soil. The eastern portion of the Township, particularly the southeast corner, has a combination of high agricultural capability and low current infrastructure investment. The formalized economic development efforts within the Corridor Improvement Authority should remove some of the pressure for these lands, making it the logical next step to begin implementing support for these agricultural resources. No development restrictions are currently proposed with this delineation, but it is identified on the map so that it may be considered as the Planning Commission makes land use decisions not anticipated by this plan. This delineation would also form a starting point for any participation the Township wished to have with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program.

Residential – Agricultural

The residential-agricultural category comprises much of the Township land east of the railroad tracks. It comprises the "rural character" that is prized by all, and allows residents considerable privacy and range of use. This land use is preserved wherever possible, and it is preferred to direct development toward land designated for more intense land uses rather than rezone land out of this use.

Residential density: 0.5 dwelling units per acre / 90,000 sf minimum lot size

Figure 22: Union Pier Vignettes





Residential – Low-Density

Residential land use begins intensifying westward from I-94 to the lake, and the Low-Density Residential category forms the eastern edge, especially in the northern part of the Township. It accommodates existing neighborhoods and allows for some future site condominium and subdivision development. Cluster development, open space subdivisions, and managed access along Primary County Roads all improved design and safety.

Residential density: 3 dwelling units per acre / 15,000 sf minimum lot size

Residential – Lake

West of the railroad right of way is the Lake Residential category, with developed parcels that are generally smaller than those in the Residential — Low-Density category. This new category is proposed to increase the alignment between the governing documents and the existing conditions.

Residential density: 5 units per acre / 8000 sf minimum lot size

Residential – Lake, Coastal Zone

The Coastal Zone is delineated by the boundary of the NOAA Coastal Zone Management Program administered by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. It is considered sensitive land by these State and Federal authorities, and as such can be subject to additional regulation as well as eligible for grants and other resources. The Coastal Zone Management boundary is acknowledged in the Township's land use plans, though no local regulation is currently associated with it.

Residential density: 5 units per acre / 8000 sf minimum lot size

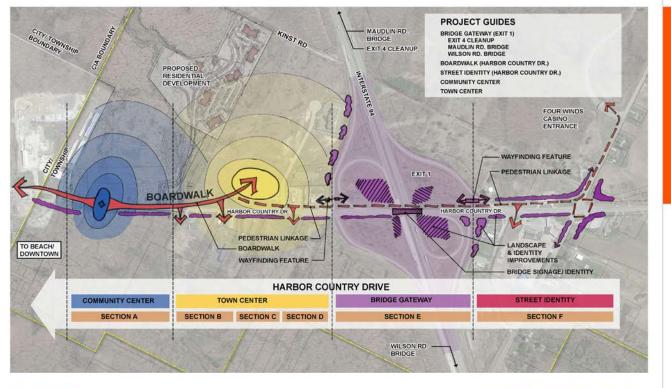
Commercial-Residential Corridor

The Commercial-Residential Corridor category is new, and it applies to the three main non-freeway vehicular routes into the Township: US-12 from the State line to the City of New Buffalo; Red Arrow Highway from Chikaming Township to the City of New Buffalo; and US-12 from Three Oaks Township to the Corridor Improvement Authority boundary at Hoder Road. The intent of this district is to preserve the commercial uses developed under the Township's C-1 commercial zoning designation, and to expand the permitted uses to include commercial residential (multifamily) uses. Existing detached residential uses will be preserved and supported, but new detached, single-unit residential development will not be approved.

Commercial-Residential Corridor, Union Pier Overlay

The Township's northernmost portion of Red Arrow Highway forms the main street of the unincorporated place of Union Pier, which straddles the boundary between New Buffalo and Chikaming Townships. The New Buffalo Township portion of this area will follow the lead taken by Chikaming Township in its 2014 Master Plan and newly-adopted Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance

Project Key Plan Diagram



Wightman & Associates

New Buffalo Township Corridor Improvement Vision

Project Guide 1

Community Center

Key Description

- Harbor Country Drive Modify Harbor Country Drive to reflect the character of the township, support future development between the City and 194 and maintain traffic capacity. Improvements could include the installation of a natural landscaped median to create a more rural tree lined corridor, a non-motorized boardwalk/path to connect the town center area and new public spaces to the To connect the town center area and new public spaces to the City. Lighting, signage and landscaping to create a clear, safe and natural environment for cars, pedestrians and cyclists. The corridor should be planned to create points of interest along the route and consolidate the entry points to adjacent development. This will improve the aesthetics and capacity as well as make it safer Will improve the desinence and capacity as well as make it soler for pedestrians. The road would be narrowed on the north side to increase the right of way available for the boardwalk path. The median will end at the City limit to match the streetscape proposed by the City. The median will also end near the I94 Interchange to accommodate the existing development and drives. Community Center - Recreational and Social amenities would
- provide an enhanced quality of life for visitors and amenities for visitors.

Design Fundamentals

- Buildings positioned to support walkability and People Places Parking located to side or behind buildings Architectural Design to reinforce Beach Town Identity (Like Twp Hall) Mixed uses are encouraged Pedestrian circulation and quality of experience are top priority

- Implementation/ Next Steps
- Adopt into the Master Plan and coordinate with Zoning Ordinance **Update Recreation Plan**
- Community Feedback on desired amentities Property Acquisition/ Easements
- Funding/ Grant Applications
- The visioning images are for illustrative purposes. They are intended to generate ideas and further conversation.



ONER

New Buffalo Township Corridor Improvement Vision 8

Wightman & Associates

prescribes architectural and landscaping standards that the Township may consider adopting into an overlay district.

Gateway Mixed Use

The formation of a Corridor Improvement Authority in 2016, covering the lands surrounding the two interchanges from I-94 and a narrow corridor connecting them, represents a significant organizing principle of the Township's land use strategy. This formalized district signals a strong intent to concentrate economic development within a defined area, an intent that is supported in the strongest terms by corresponding investments in water and sewer infrastructure, especially around Exit 1. Residential and commercial uses are appropriate throughout the CIA area, with additional form and design criteria as spelled out in the CIA Project Guides. The district should be attractive, compact, and pedestrian friendly; it should offer a range of housing formats and price points; and it should be convenient enough to the employment, shopping, and recreation opportunities of the Township and the rest of Harbor Country to offer independence to those who do not drive, especially the elderly and the young.

- » Commercial uses are most appropriately sited along the road corridors, subject to design standards that the Township should implement based on the CIA Project Guides.
- » Residential uses should be permitted throughout the district, with strong design standards and at considerably higher densities than are permitted elsewhere in the Township. A recommended base density of 6 to 8 units per acre could be increased based on achievement of stated objectives such as high quality neighborhood design and affordability.
- » Existing detatched residential uses will be preserved and supported, but new detached, single-unit residential development will not be approved.

Gateway Mixed Use, Harbor Country Drive Overlay

The stretch of Harbor Country Drive which connects Exit 1 of I-94 to the City of New Buffalo is significant on so many scales. It provides the welcoming face – the gateway – to not only the Township and the City, but to Harbor Country and the entire State of Michigan. This is precisely the circumstance in which careful, detailed design development can have considerable positive effects on function and economic performance of an area. The CIA Project Guides provide a description and design fundamentals for three focus areas along Harbor Country Drive which should guide regulation.

Industrial

Industrial land uses, which often function as the employment generators of a community, play a small role in New Buffalo Township and are not envisioned to expand. The existing industrial area near the southwest corner of the township is currently served by appropriate utility service and transportation access, and is the preferred location for further industrial development. The Township has also

Project Guide 2

Town Center

Key Description

- / Description
 Public Place Allowance Quality public space is essential for a healthy vibrant town center and community. An allowance for developers to create these spaces within future development will make the adjacent businesses more valuable. The spaces could be small pocket parks, open squares for events, preservation of natural features etc. The amount of the allowance would be negotiated based on the overall development plan and value of the public space. space.
- Public Place Connectivity Allowance Public places are much more valuable to the community and developers if they are well connected and accessible. The connectivity should include motorized and non-motorized access and could include public parking. The amount of the allowance would be negotiated based on the overall development plan and value of the public space.

Design Fundamentals

- Position buildings to reinforce public spaces Design public space to support social experience and gathering
- Parking located to side or behind buildings Architectural Design to reinforce Beach Town identity (Like Twp Hall)
- Mixed uses are encouraged
- Pedestrian circulation and quality of experience are top priority An interconnected grid of Streets is encouraged

Implementation/ Next Steps

- Adopt into the Master Plan and coordinate with Zoning Ord.
 Update Recreation Plan Work with property owners to foster development or attract
- development partnersFunding/ Grant Applications



The visionina images

10 New Buffalo Township Corridor Improvement Vision

Wightman & Associates

20

Project Guide 4

Street Identity

Key Description

 A Brandina/ Public Improvements Desian Guideline should be A bid larger route importants begin solution to be used developed to create the palette of design elements to be used along Harbor Country Drive. This includes signage and wayfinding elements, landscape materials, architectural features, special pavements, public art, lighting, bike amenities and pedestrian network elements.

Design Fundamentals

- Laid-Back Beach Town aesthetic
 Enough consistency to clearly identify the place while providing
- diversity for interest and a sense of discovery.
- Signage as public art.

Implementation/ Next Steps

- Develop Brandina/ Public improvements Design Guideline
- Adopt into the Master Plan Update Recreation Plan for Bike and Pedestrian elements
- Funding/Grant Applications



The visioning images are for illustrative purposes. They are intended to generate ideas and further conversation.

14 New Buffalo Township Corridor Improvement Vision

Wightman & Associates

entertained inquiry into the development of a manufactured home community in this area, and considers the location to be appropriate for this use subject to site plan considerations. A second industrial area would be appropriate in the vicinity of Exit 4, where the confluence of two rail lines and freeway access offer logistical opportunities.

PUD

The Township has one Planned Unit Development in place. PUDs in New Buffalo Township require 10 contiguous acres for a single use, and 15 contiguous acres for mixed use, so they are designed to facilitate large projects. A PUD offers flexibility from the specific constraints of the zoning ordinance in exchange for innovation, economy, and improved design as determined by negotiations between the developer and the Planning Commission.

ZONING PLAN

The Master Plan is not a binding agreement but rather a planning framework. The Zoning Ordinance, on the other hand, is local land use law. The Zoning Ordinance is a set of regulations that provide the details for how and where development can locate to exacting specifications. The Zoning Ordinance is how the Master Plan gets implemented; as outlined in MPEA, a direct relationship between the two documents is required. For example, if it emerges through community engagement and research that the housing types available do not adequately serve the population, then a vision statement in the Master Plan could read, "to plan for housing types that meet all the preferences of all age groups, income levels, and disabilities." To ensure that this vision is implemented, a municipality would revisit the zoning ordinance to determine if the land use code is preventing a particular type of development through height restrictions or lot size requirements. Only when the two documents are aligned can they be effective planning tools.

In this plan, the Township's adopted Corridor Improvement Authority plan and vision are also represented. These documents have two major land use implications: they consolidate and concentrate desired economically-driven land ues into the CIA boundaries, and they make specific recommendations about the form and intensity of the desired development. Mixed uses, building placement, architectural cohesion, nonmotorized circulation, lighting, signage, and landscaping details are all governed by the Zoning Ordinance and must be codified into the regulations in order to actually affect the built product.

For each proposed Future Land Use category, the Zoning Plan identifies the zoning classifications that currently regulate the use and intensity of the land within it. The Zoning Plan then describes the changes that must be made to the Zoning Ordiance in order to acheive the aims of the Future Land Use plan. These changes may be planned immediately, or they may be envisioned for a later time within the planning horizon.

MAP 19: FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING

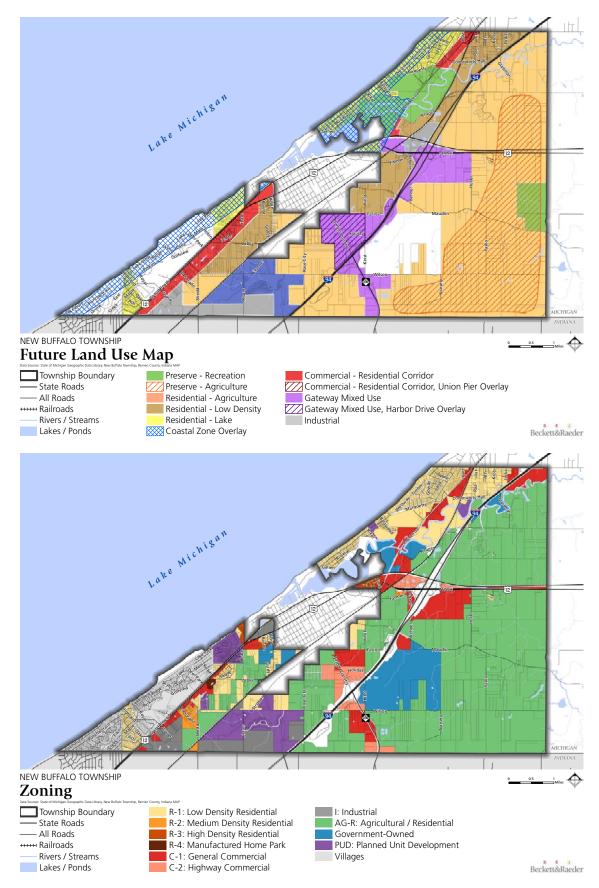


TABLE 13: ZONING PLAN

FLUM CATEGORY	CURRENT ZONING	DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED CHANGE
Preserve – Recreation	R-1, C-1	This land is generally within the Galien River floodplain and is not buildable. Designating it as "Preserve" makes this clear to potential landowners and is appropriate to the natural feature.
Residential – Agricultural	AG-R	This designation is functioning as intended and anticipated to be continued.
Residential – Agricultural, Agricultural Stewardship Area	AG-R	Land within this area has been identified in this Master Plan as particularly suitable for agriculture due its soil and water properties. This designation does not impose additional regulations, but the Planning Commission should consider these features when making specific decisions about land use in this area.
Residential – Low- Density ("R-1a")	R-1	This designation is functioning as intended and anticipated to be continued.
Residential – Lake ("R1-b"	R-1, PUD	This new designation reflects the smaller existing lot sizes along the lakeshore and is designed to reduce nonconformities.
Residential – Lake, Coastal Zone Management Area	R-1, PUD	The Coastal Zone Management Area is delineated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and managed by the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes. The Township does not impose additional regulations on this area, but the Planning Commission should be aware of the Zone and this confluence of regulatory jurisdictions when making land use decisions.
Commercial- Residential Corridor	C-1, R-1, R-2, R-4, Industrial, PUD	The purpose of this new designation is to encourage commercial and commercial- residential (multifamily) development along the main coastal corridor, and to discourage detached residential uses.
Commercial- Residential Corridor, Union Pier Overlay	C-1	This new overlay is intended to implement design standards which are complementary to the intent of supporting a "Green Corridor" along Red Arrow Highway and a Community Center in the Union Pier area shared with Chikaming Township, aligning regulations across the jurisdiction line.
Gateway Mixed Use	C-1, C-2, AG-R	The boundaries of this new district coincide with the newly-formed Corridor Improvement Authority District. Its purpose is to establish the area as an economic center of the Township; to permit, encourage, and concentrate commercial and commercial-residential development; and to implement mixed uses, nonmotorized circulation, and attractive, harmonious architectural design as described in the CIA Vision.
Gateway Mixed Use, Harbor Country Drive Overlay	C-1, C-2, AG-R	This new overlay is intended to fully implement the Corridor Improvement Authority "Gateway to Michigan" design guidelines along Harbor Country Drive from Exit 1 to the City of New Buffalo. It will establish strong, cohesive visual impact through the standardization of building placement, nonmotorized amenities, wayfinding and signage, lighting, and landscape design.
Industrial	I	This existing district is functioning as intended and anticipated to be continued. It is also where future manufactured or mobile home development should be sited.

ACTION PLAN



HOUSING

GOAL

A portfolio of housing options that meets the needs of all.

POLICIES

- 1. The housing stock accommodates people of all ages, income, and abilities
- 2. The community's housing needs are balanced with the economic benefits provided by the short-term rental tourism industry
- 3. Housing is strategically located to prevent sprawl onto agricultural land



ENVIRONMENT

GOAL

The Township's valuable natural features are enhanced and preserved

POLICIES

- 1. The Township's fertile soil is preserved through appropriate growth management
- 2. The Lake Michigan coastline is protected for all to enjoy
- 3. Zoning provisions maintain vegetation, natural landscapes, and rural character



COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

GOAL

Community facilities and infrastructure improve quality of life for all citizens and investors

POLICIES

- Critical services are maintained with up-to-date buildings and technology
- 2. Cellular and internet service is enhanced to meet expectation for quality of life and worker productivity

ACTION: Housing	LEAD AGENCY	PRIORITY LEVEL
Identify underutilized buildings that can be converted into housing units	Township Staff; Planning Commission	2
Share the results of the Berrien County TMA with the local development community to encourage the construction of "missing middle" formats	Township Staff	1
Collaborate with the municipalities of Harbor Country to manage the presence and effects of short-term rentals on the housing market	Township Board	1
Develop Gateway Mixed Use districts and adopt into the Zoning Ordinance	Planning Commission	1
Study options for attainable housing	Planning Commission	2

ACTION: Environment	LEAD AGENCY	PRIORITY LEVEL
Conduct a "Farm and Food System" assessment to understand the extent of the Township's agriculture industry	Township Board	1
Produce a booklet describing vegetation and forestation that is suitable in Harbor Country and distribute it to all applicants proposing to develop or improve property in the Township	Township Board and Planning Commission	2

ACTION: Community Facilities & Infrastructure	LEAD AGENCY	PRIORITY LEVEL
Demolish and rebuild the fire station #2 on the same site if possible	New Buffalo Township	1
Work with Connect MI and others to improve cellular service through the installation of more and varied tower types; update zoning to expand option for co-location or new siting	New Buffalo Township	2
Investigate the installation of a broadband network to improve internet speeds and reliability	New Buffalo Township	3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL

Provide more opportunities for a comforable standard of living for all residents

POLICIES

- 1. Home based businesses and remote work arrangements are supported by infrastructure, including cellular and internet services
- 2. New opportunities presented by Michigan's recent focus on agricultural processing and "value-add" enterprises are identified and supported
- 3. Attract living wage businesses to the Township

TRANSPORTATION

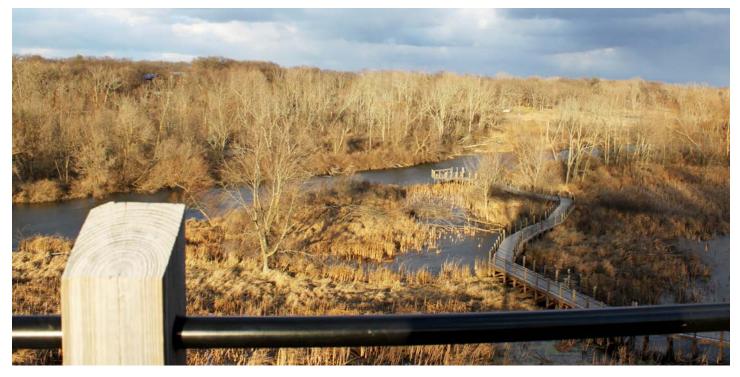
GOAL

A safe, reliable, and connected multi-modal transportation system

POLICIES

- 1. Nonmotorized linkages serve both transportation and recreation
- 2. Development within the Township's commercial areas is pedestrian friendly

County Park





ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	PRIORITY LEVEL
Work with Connect MI to improve cellular service through the installation of more and varied tower types; update zoning to expand option for co- location or new siting for all towers	Township Board;Planning Commission	2
Conduct a "Farm and Food System" assessment to understand the extent of the Township's agriculture industry	Township Board	1
Coordinate with the County and other municipalities to improve coverage and co-invest in facilities and infrastructure.	Township Board	1

ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	PRIORITY LEVEL
Connect existing bicycle lanes to form a network	Township Board	1
Develop standards for new development within the CIA boundary that require pedestrian circulation	Planning Commission	1
Encourage multimodal transportation accommodation in all new development	Planning Commission	2
Continue to support and participate in a vision for Red Arrow Highway that includes nonmotorized facilities	Township Board; Planning Commission; Chikaming	3

Galien River Park

