



BAINBRIDGE TOWNSHIP 2024 MASTER PLAN

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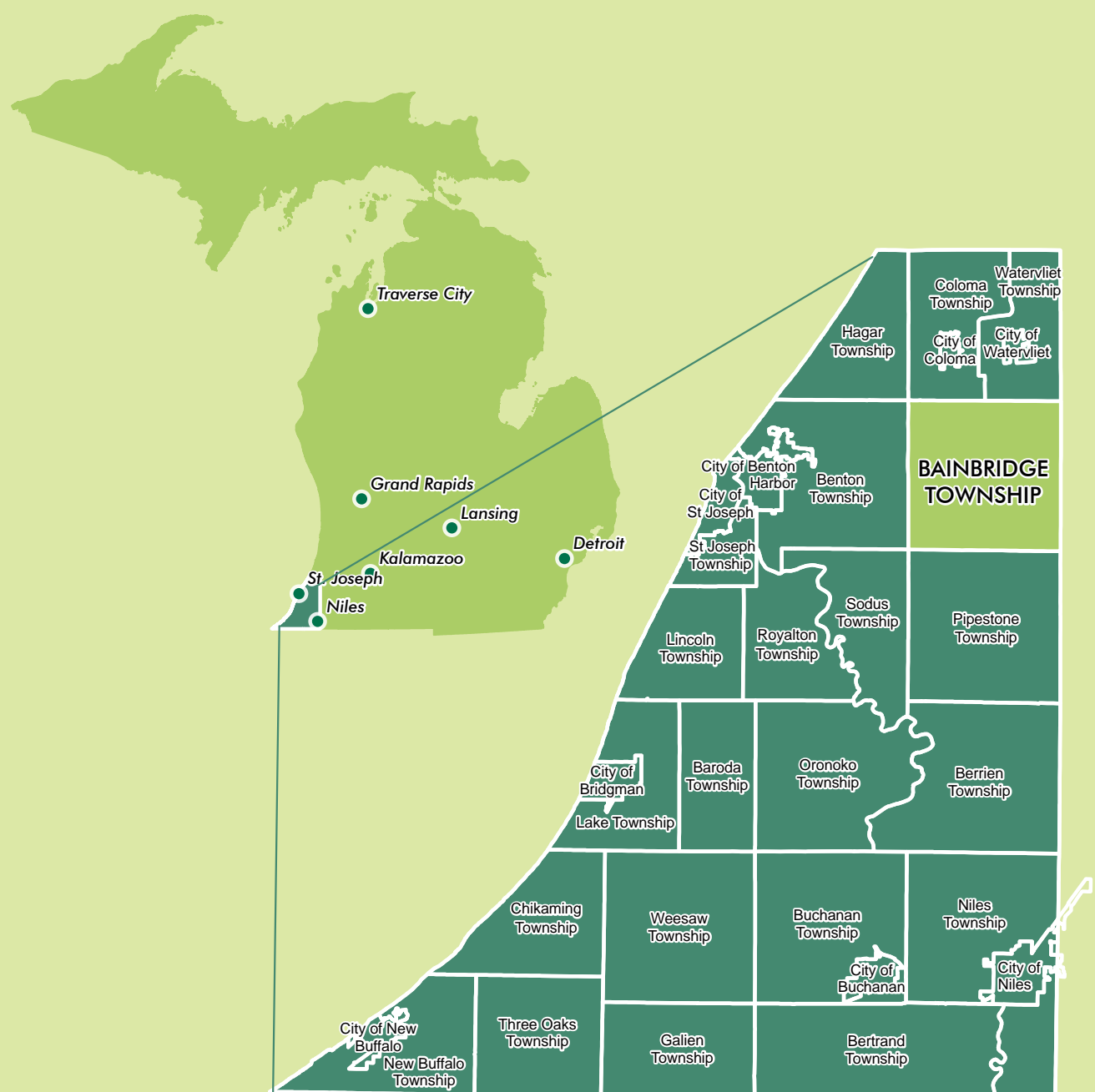
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 | Introduction

Bainbridge Township is located in northeast Berrien County, in the southwest corner of the State of Michigan. The Township is characterized by its rural nature, offering residents and visitors a peaceful and scenic environment. The Township features vast expanses of open land, agricultural areas, pockets of small commercial nodes and low residential densities compared to nearby urban and suburban areas. Residents enjoy the tranquility of rural living, with larger lots, farms, and natural landscapes contributing to the overall countryside atmosphere.



HISTORY

Bainbridge Township was established in the early 19th century, with settlers arriving as early as 1833. North Branch Road once served as a regular stagecoach route and travelers made stops for trade and replenishment of goods. The earliest trade in the Township occurred between settlers and Indigenous Peoples.

As primitive roads were established, key intersections and crossroads emerged as vital points for commerce, contributing to the growth of nearby settlements. Improved transportation networks, including stagecoach routes and roads, played a crucial role in facilitating trade and communication between Bainbridge Township and neighboring areas. During the early 19th century, Bainbridge Township, like many townships, experienced significant population growth as settlers moved westward in search of new opportunities. The establishment of taverns and trading posts in the Township played a pivotal role in attracting new residents to the area. The Township now covers 36 sections of Berrien County with an area of 36 square miles.

Presently, Bainbridge Township continues to be primarily a fruit farming community. Leadership in the Township remains dedicated to fostering a high quality of life for its residents.

WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

The fundamental purpose of a Master Plan is to enable a community to establish a direction for physical development, capital investment, and growth. Therefore, a Master Plan represents a foundational policy statement about what a community is, what its residents value, and what those residents and businesses hope the community will become. Therefore, this Master Plan is a community-based guide, or blueprint, for the long-term development and preservation of land in Bainbridge Township. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008) specifically enables Bainbridge Township to prepare and adopt a plan.

This Master Plan is based on data from both original research and from secondary resources. It is this data, along with community needs and desires, that forms the foundation of the Master Plan. Planning for the long term should be a process that is carried out at a somewhat general level that recognizes the potential for change and provides flexibility. This method results in a Master Plan that can be useful well into the future instead of becoming obsolete if or when demographic and economic trends change over time.

Chapters 2 through 4 of this plan provide a “snapshot” of current conditions in the Township with respect to five key aspects of land use planning:

- Population
- Property Values and Housing
- Land Use and Natural Features
- Public Services and Infrastructure

Chapter 5 summarizes the public input collected in support of the Master Planning process and the conclusions derived from that input. Chapters 6, 7, and 8 outline the policy recommendations, future land use plan, and strategies for implementation that, if followed, will allow the Township’s vision to come to fruition.

This Master Plan was approved by the Bainbridge Township Planning Commission on _____, 2024 and adopted by the Bainbridge Township Board of Trustees on _____, 2024.

CHAPTER 2

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Chapter 2 | Community Profile

The population is among one of the most important factors in determining the growth in a community. Land use and services provided by a jurisdiction are impacted when the population changes. This chapter provides an overview of the demographic information in Bainbridge Township.

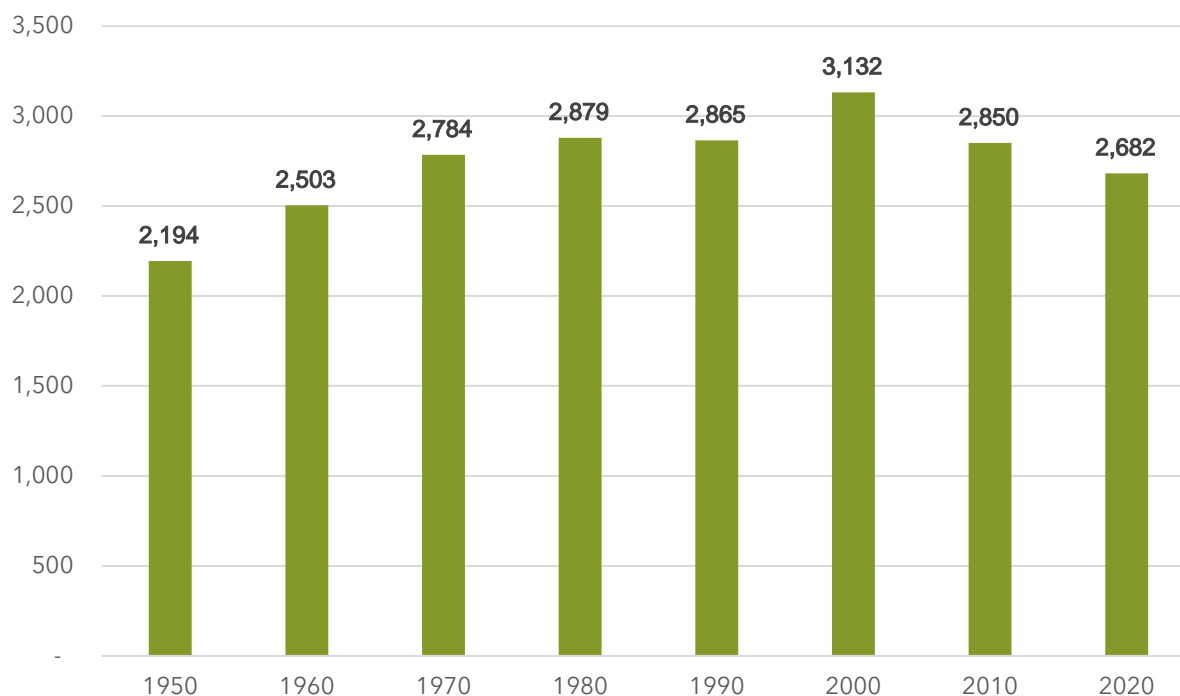
POPULATION

The 2023 review process included a socio-economic analysis based on the most current data available from the 2020 U.S. Census and 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimates. ACS estimates were used in sections specified due to the unavailability of Census data at the time of writing this report. The population is among the most important factors in determining the growth of a community. Land use and services provided by a jurisdiction are impacted when the population changes. This chapter provides an overview of the demographic information in Bainbridge Township.

Population Growth

According to the U.S. Census, the 2020 population of Bainbridge Township was reported to be 2,682. The population over time has changed, as it grew to a peak of 3,132 in 2000. Since then, it has declined by approximately 17% to its 2020 population of 2,682, as shown in Figure 2.1. Since 2010 the population declined slightly by 5.9%.

Figure 2.1. Population Trend (1950-2020)



Source: U.S. Census

Racial Mix

As shown in the table below, a majority of the population in the Township is white (86.5%) followed by people of two or more races (6.7%). Nearly 5% of the population reported being of some other race.

Table 2.1. Population by Race, 2020

Race	Number of Residents	Percent
White	2,320	86.5%
Black or African American	26	1.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	16	0.6%
Asian	11	0.4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1	0.0%
Some other race	129	4.8%
Two or more races	179	6.7%

Source: U.S. Census

Population Projections

Population projections estimate the Township's future population, providing context for future land use decisions and public service needs. Because there are many unpredictable factors affecting population change, the population projections are limited by the assumption that past trends will continue, however, projections do give some guidance on the potential for development. The projections have implications regarding future land use, the demand for various public services, and capital improvements. The following approaches are intended to provide a general sense of future population change to serve as a guideline. Current population estimates are from the 2020 U.S. Census. It should be noted that some methods show an increase in population while others show a decrease.

The Arithmetic Method for Population Projections

The Arithmetic Method projects the Township's population from annual population changes, assuming the Township will continue to change by the same number of people as it did between 1980 and 2020. During these years, the Township's population decreased by an average of 5 people per year. Based on this average decline, Table 2.2 estimates the future population by 2050.

Table 2.2. Arithmetic Method Population Projections

Current Population 2020	Population Projections		
	2030	2040	2050
2,682	2,632	2,582	2,532

The Growth Rate Method for Population Projections

The Growth Rate Method projects the Township's population from an annual rate of change, assuming the Township will continue to change as it did between 1980 and 2020. During these 40 years, the Township's population decreased by an average of 0.17%. Based on the average decrease, Table 2.3 estimates the future population by 2050. Compared to the Arithmetic Method, the Growth Rate Method projects a slightly smaller population decline by 2050.

Table 2.3. Growth Rate Method Population Projections

Current Population 2020	Population Projections		
	2030	2040	2050
2,682	2,636	2,592	2,548

The Building Permit Method for Population Projections

The Building Permit Method projects the Township's population from the average number of residential building permits issued annually, assuming the Township's population will continue to correspond to the number of building permits issued between 2010-2020 and that the average household size will be similar as it was during the 2020 U.S. Census. Because this method is based on the actual number of building permits issued in the Township, it may provide a more realistic projection compared to the Arithmetic and Growth Rate methods. The average number of persons per household in Bainbridge Township was reported to be 2.4 people according to the U.S. Census. Between 2010 and 2020 the Township received an average of 3 building permits for new residential dwellings annually. Based on this average value, Table 2.4 estimates the future population by 2050. In contrast to the methods above, the Building Permit Method projects an increase in population by 2050.

Table 2.4. Building Permit Method Population Projections

Annual Average Building Permits	Average Household Size	Current Population	Population Projections		
		2020	2030	2040	2050
3	2.4	2,682	2,678	2,675	2,671

Population Projection Summary

Averaging the three population projection methods above provide a more comprehensive view of the future population. Table 2.5 provides a summary of the preceding information. Based on the projections above the combined average, it can be assumed that Bainbridge Township's population will remain relatively steady, with only a modest decrease to 2,659 by 2050.

Table 2.5. Population Projections Average

Projection Method	Current Population	Population Projections		
	2020	2030	2040	2050
Arithmetic Method	2,682	2,632	2,582	2,532
Growth Rate Method	2,682	2,636	2,592	2,548
Building Permit Method	2,682	2,754	2,826	2,898
Average	2,682	2,674	2,667	2,659

The average number of persons per household has been on a slow decline as shown in the past few decades as shown in Table 2.5. The average number of persons per household in 2021 was estimated to be 2.40 as reported earlier in the building permit method population projections. These trends document the continued aging of the population within the Township and the growing tendency toward smaller-sized households.

Table 2.6. Population by Race, 2020

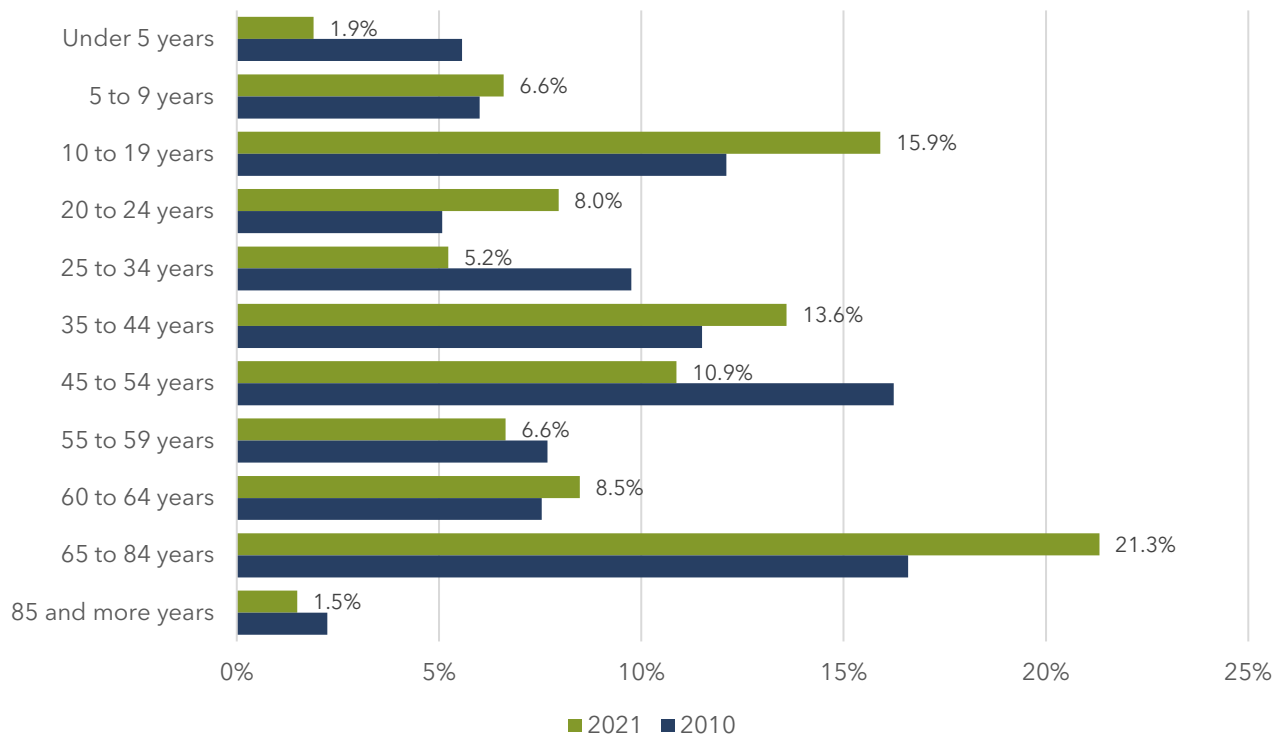
Year	Ratio
1970	3.19
1980	2.86
1990	2.65
2000	2.56
2010	2.52
2021	2.40

Source: U.S. Census, 2021 American Community Survey

Age Profile

The most recent statistics for population age are provided by the 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates in Figure 2.2. Children under the age of 19 make up about a quarter of the Township population while a little over 30% of the population is estimated to be over the age of 60. The Township's median age was reported to be 43.6 which is 9% higher than the state average (39.8). This suggests that the Township has a large proportion of families with children and seniors. By comparison, there are relatively few other age groups, such as college-aged students and young adults in their 20s and early 30s. The Township age profile estimates for 2021 have been similar to those from 2010 as shown in Figure 2.2, however, there has been an increase in the 10 to 19 and 65-to-84-year age cohorts. This trend indicates the need for services oriented toward both families and seniors.

Figure 2.2. Age Profile, Percent of Residents 2021



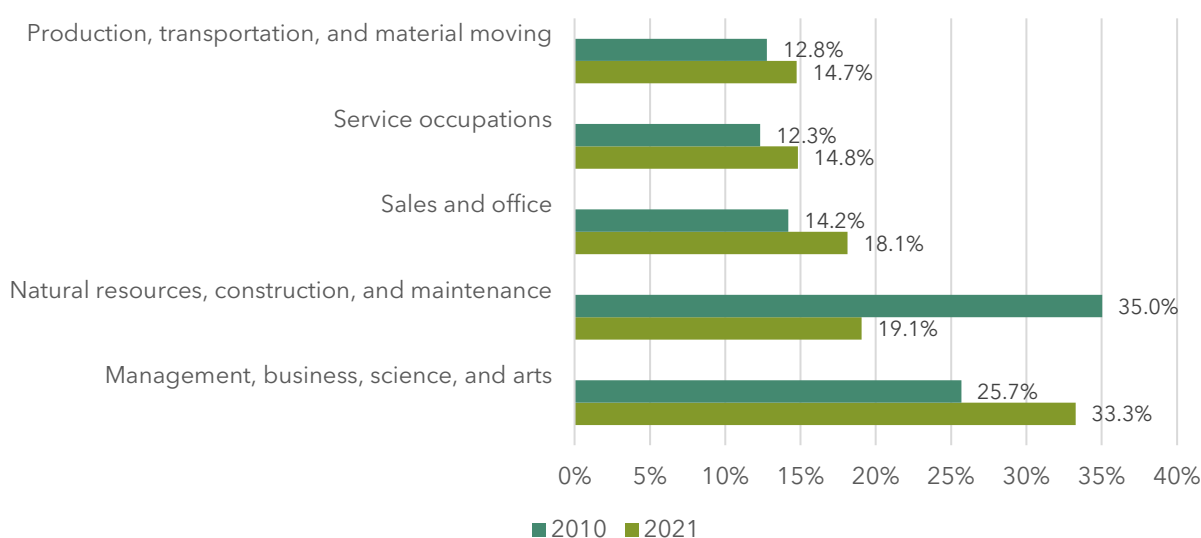
Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Employment

Information gathered in the 2021 American Community Survey estimates that the Township had a civilian labor force of 1,226 people. The employment rate in the Township was estimated to be 96.3% in 2021, with an unemployment rate of 3.7%, which is lower than that of the county (5.6%) and state (6.9%) averages.

This section explains the employment characteristics (occupation and industry) for Bainbridge Township. Employment occupation is defined as the kind of work a person does to earn a living (Figure 2.3), while employment industry is the type of activity at a person's place of work (Table 2.7). The occupations for people in the Township remain fairly similar to that recorded in the 2010 U.S. Census except for a major decline in the Natural Resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.

Figure 2.3. Employment Occupations for Population 16 years and Over, 2010-2021



Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

According to the American Community Survey, the most common occupations in Bainbridge Township were Management, business, science, and arts with about 33.3% of the Township's working population. Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations employed the second largest group of people in the Township.

As shown in Table 2.7, the largest industry in Bainbridge Township is education services, and health care and social assistance. This is likely due to the presence of hospitals and schools in surrounding communities like the Corewell Health. Manufacturing, retail, and arts entertainment, and recreation were other industries that employed numerous people from Bainbridge Township.

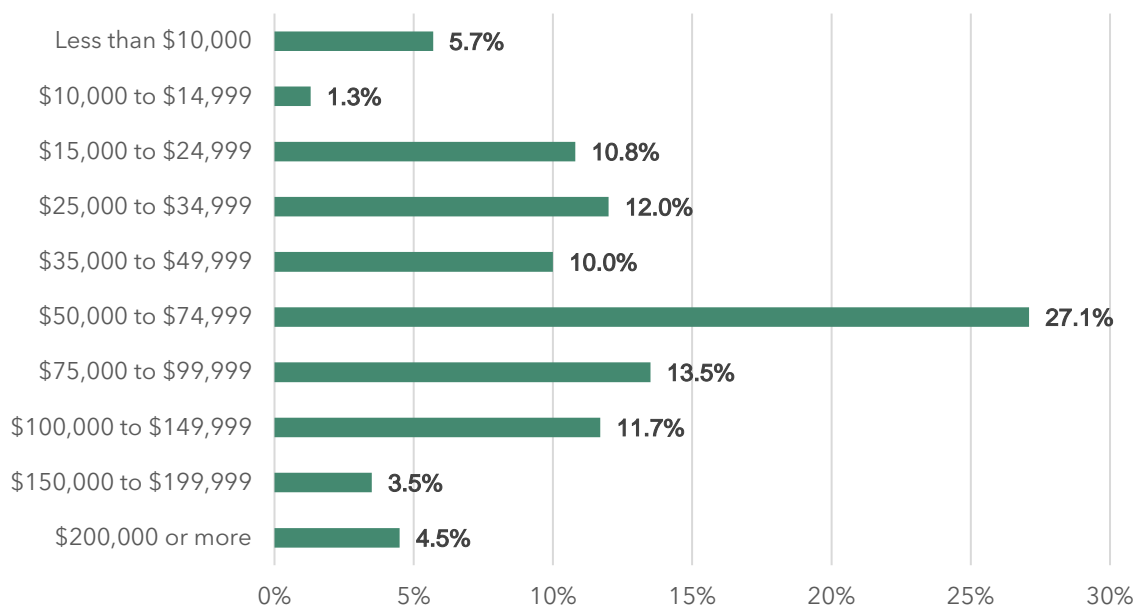
Table 2.7. Employment Industries for the Populations 16 Years and Over, 2021

Industry	% of people	# of people
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	20.8%	246
Manufacturing	13.3%	157
Retail trade	12.2%	144
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	9.2%	109
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	8.0%	94
Construction	7.7%	91
Other services, except public administration	6.9%	82
Public administration	6.8%	80
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	5.7%	67
Professional, scientific, & management, & administrative & waste management services	4.4%	52
Wholesale trade	3.5%	41
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	1.5%	18
Information	0.0%	0

Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Income

The median income in Bainbridge Township was reported to be \$62,813, similar to that of the State of Michigan (\$63,202), but greater than the median income of Berrien County (\$55,893). Nearly 9% of the total population in the Township was reported to be living below the poverty level which is less than the state (13.1%) and county average (16.6%). As shown in Figure 2.4, the largest income group for households in Bainbridge Township was \$50,000 to \$74,999 (27.1%). Nearly 40% of the households in the Township earned less than \$50,000 and about 5.7% earned less than \$10,000.

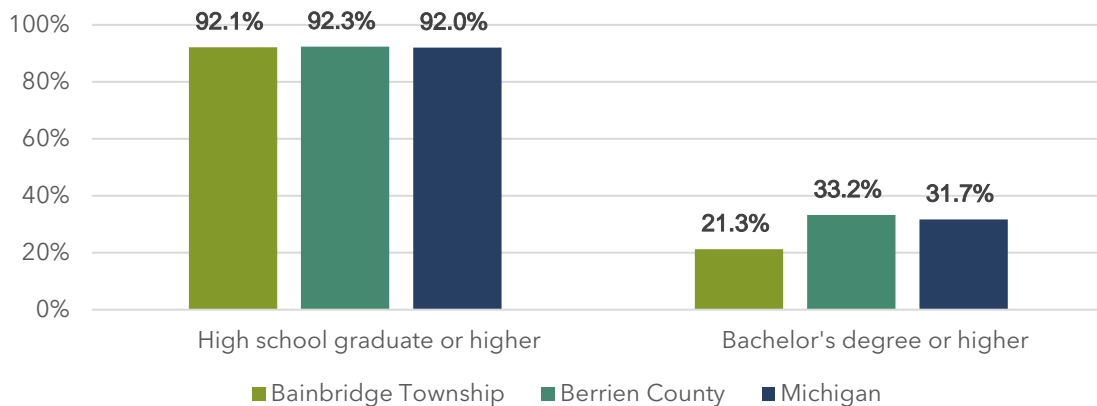
Figure 2.4. Household Income Ranges, 2021

Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Educational Attainment

According to the 2021 ACS 5-year estimates, approximately 92% of the Township's population over the age of 25 received an education equivalent to a high school diploma or higher and about 21.3% received a Bachelor's degree or higher which is slightly lower than the county and state averages, as shown in Figure 2.5. About 4% of the population received a graduate degree or a professional degree and nearly 8% of the population did obtain a high school diploma or equivalent.

Figure 2.5. Education Attainment, 2021



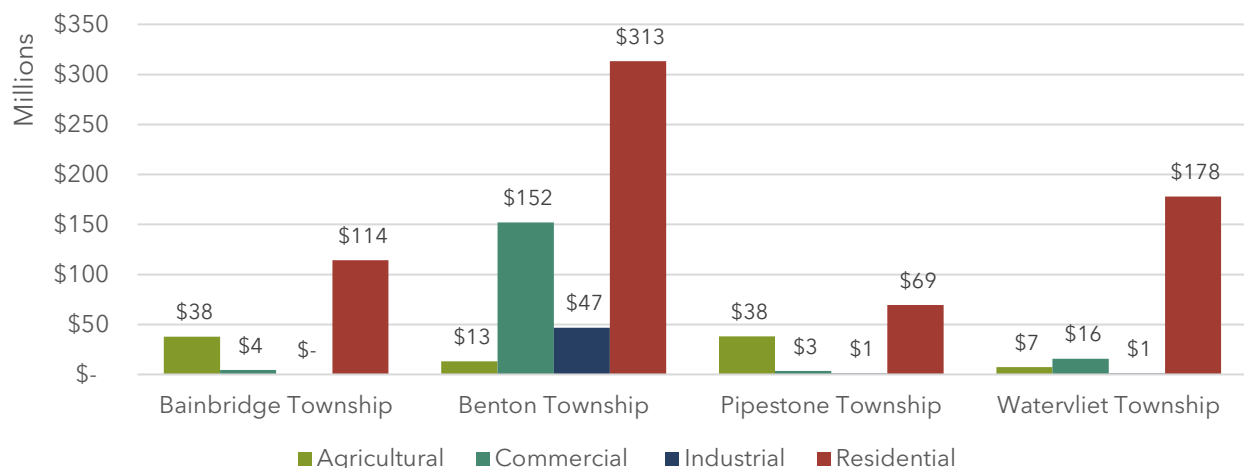
Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

PROPERTY VALUES AND HOUSING

Taxable Value Growth

This section analyzes the property value trends within Bainbridge Township. Property values are a key measure of economic growth and the financial strength of a community. Property values reflect investment in new development and the degree of growth in the value of the new developments.

Figure 2.6. Assessed Real Property Value by Class, 2022



Source: 2012-2022 Berrien County Equalization Reports

Figure 2.6 compares the real property values in Bainbridge Township to those of surrounding townships in Berrien County. The total real property value for Bainbridge Township in 2012 was \$120.6 million and it increased by approximately 30% to \$156.5 million in 2022. Bainbridge Township accounts for nearly 1.5% of the county's total assessed property value. Despite the slow decline in the population of Bainbridge Township, the real property value has continued to increase at a relatively steady rate as shown in Table 2.8. According to the Berrien County Equalization Report, between 2012 and 2022, agricultural property values in Bainbridge Township declined nearly 21% and there are currently two pieces of lands classified as industrial property in the Township.

The property value in Bainbridge Township grew the most in the residential class compared to the surrounding townships with a 66% increase in value. These fluctuations in valuations may be attributed to a variety of factors that also fluctuate, such as the housing market, the economic trends, market supply and demand, crop prices, and changes to regulatory controls.

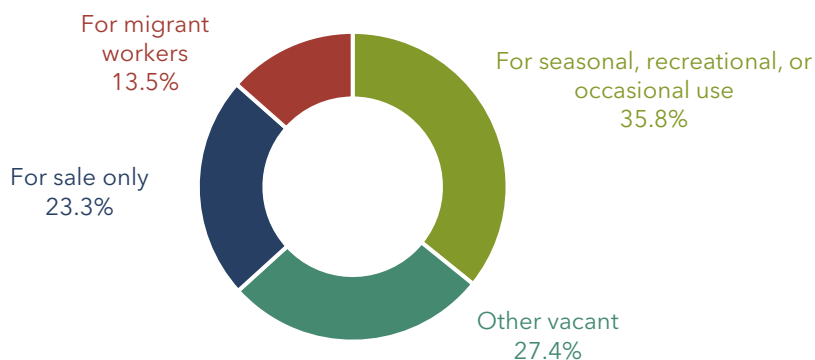
Table 2.8. Comparison of Real Equalized Valuations, 2012 vs. 2022

Property Classification	Bainbridge Township		Benton Township		Pipestone Township		Watervliet Township	
	2012	2022	2012	2022	2012	2022	2012	2022
Agricultural	\$47,973,650	\$37,683,600	\$10,975,000	\$13,244,900	\$39,001,300	\$38,003,200	\$6,046,300	\$7,285,700
Commercial	\$3,439,000	\$4,492,000	\$132,213,000	\$152,105,000	\$2,934,500	\$3,499,400	\$13,208,500	\$15,894,400
Industrial	\$244,300	-	\$37,109,600	\$46,735,700	\$967,600	\$904,400	\$509,900	\$1,089,900
Residential	\$69,012,600	\$114,372,400	\$218,022,100	\$313,472,600	\$53,169,100	\$69,364,100	\$146,068,800	\$177,822,400

Housing

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were a total of 1,312 housing units in Bainbridge Township, down from 1,331 in 2010. Of these units, 84.2% were reported to be occupied and about 15.8% were listed as vacant. Of the vacant units, nearly 36% were listed as vacant for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. It can be estimated that the population of the Township fluctuates due to the presence of seasonal residents, which is not reflected in the population totals. Although the U.S. Census does not report the seasonal population, information on seasonal home vacancies is provided, as shown in Figure 2.7. Seasonal vacant housing units include those that are used for summer or winter sport/recreation, such as cottages on Pipestone Lake and winter cabins for snowmobiling or hunting, and intended for occupancy in certain seasons of the year.

Figure 2.7. Vacant Housing Unit Breakdown, 2021



Source: 2012-2022 Berrien County Equalization Reports

Nearly 88.7% of the occupied housing units were estimated to be owner-occupied with an increase of 7% since 2010. The renter-occupied housing units decreased from 17% in 2010 to 11.3% in 2021. Most housing units in the Township are 1-unit detached buildings (86.6%). As shown in Table 2.9, about 9.1% of the housing stock is identified as mobile homes.

Table 2.9. Housing Units by Type, 2021

Type of Unit	Percent of Housing Units
1-unit, detached	86.6%
Mobile homes or other types of housing	9.1%
2 units	2.5%
1-unit, attached	1.3%
3 or 4 units	0.5%

Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Detached housing units are characterized as single-family homes, including stick built and manufactured homes such as condominium units, single-family housing units, and mobile home units. Attached housing units are two or more dwellings within the same building, such as a duplex, triplex, quadplex or apartment building. Attached units can also come in the form of a mixed-use building, where a portion of the building is used for commercial purposes and another portion is used for residential, such as a dwelling unit above a retail.

Table 2.10. Housing Units by Type, 2021

Home Value	Percent of Owner-Occupied Units
Less than \$50,000	11.0%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	20.1%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	22.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	16.4%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	19.6%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	9.5%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	1.0%

Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The median value of homes in the Township increased from \$135,000 in 2010 to \$141,100 in 2021 while median rent increased from \$585 in 2010 to \$794 in 2021. A large majority of homes were reported to be in the \$100,000 to \$149,999 range as shown in Table 2.10. The increase in housing values is comparable to that of Berrien County and the State of Michigan as they experienced an increase in housing and rent values over the past decade.

CHAPTER 3

LAND USE

Chapter 3 | Land Use

Land in Bainbridge Township remains largely undeveloped and is occupied primarily by agricultural uses or natural features, such as forests, wetlands, and grasslands. The majority of developed land is dedicated to low intensity land uses. The natural features and agricultural land uses are what gives Bainbridge Township its rural character. Thousands of acres of natural features are essential elements that both enhance aesthetics and protect the quality of life. In addition to the aesthetic and recreational value of the natural features, these resources also provide other benefits like clean water supply, support for wildlife habitats, and groundwater recharge and purification. This chapter is an overview of the major natural features and existing land uses that are found within the Township.

TOPOGRAPHY

Northern Berrien County is characterized by rolling hills and large expanses of flat agricultural land. The topography of the land plays an important role in land use and development. Higher elevation areas containing rolling hills are primarily located along the western boundary. Nearly level areas are associated with out-wash plains, floodplains, and till plains. The highest elevations in the Township are 1,050 to 1,100 feet above sea level, as shown in Map 3.1.

WATER RESOURCES

Watersheds

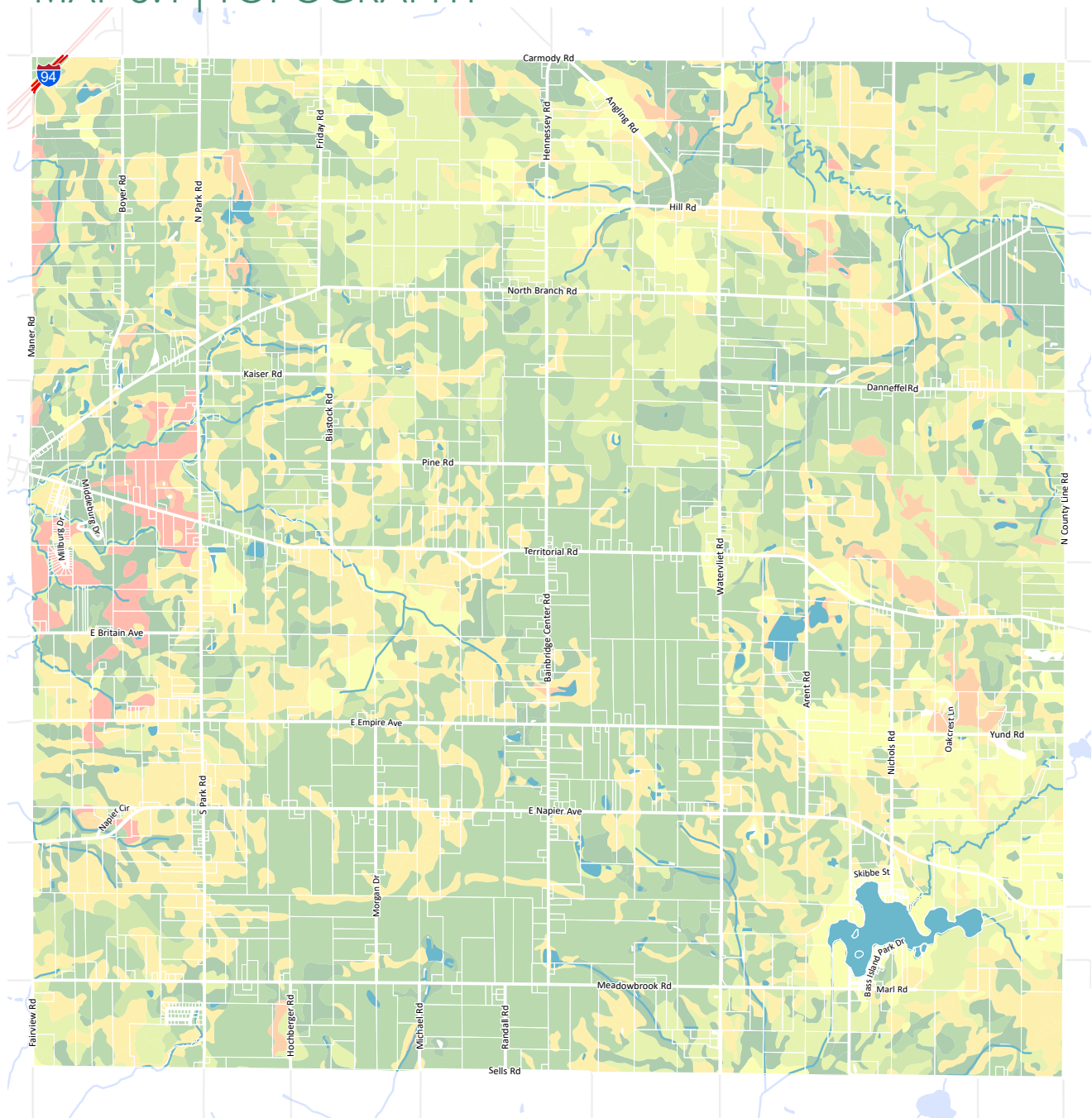
The Township's water bodies, such as Pipestone Lake and the numerous streams and creeks enhance property values, views, and recreational opportunities. These lakes, rivers, and streams are the end point for the surface water that drains from upland areas from snow melt and other precipitation. Groundwater and other surface water bodies, such as the numerous unnamed small lakes and ponds, are also part of the watershed.

As shown in Map 3.3, a majority of Bainbridge Township is in the Paw Paw River watershed that contains the Mill Creek and Paw Paw River watershed subbasins. The southeastern portion of the Township is in the Pipestone Creek watershed subbasin that is part of the larger St. Joseph River Watershed.

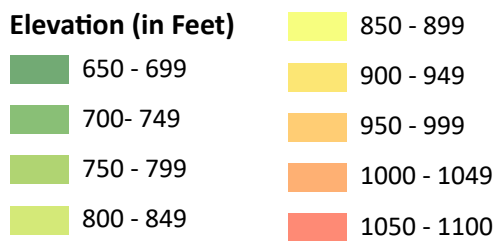
The Paw Paw River watershed is divided into 15 sub-watersheds that cover nearly 3 counties and 25 townships or 44 square miles of land. Nearly 80,000 people live in the Paw Paw River watershed. The St. Joseph River Watershed is the third largest river basin in Michigan and empties into Lake Michigan. According to the St. Joseph River Watershed Management Plan 2005, the Paw Paw River subbasin has been identified as one of the richest areas of biodiversity in southwest Michigan. The Paw Paw River watershed is a priority for protection and preservation in southwestern Michigan as a relatively high percentage of its natural land cover remains despite increasing development pressure through the region. The Paw Paw River eventually empties into the St. Joseph River, which flows into Lake Michigan in Benton Harbor.

Mill Creek Sub Watershed is a high-priority agricultural management area and is suspected to contain most of the agricultural-related pollutant sources impairing or threatening the water quality in the area, especially in the area around the City of Watervliet. The watershed area in Bainbridge Township remains at the high priority level for agricultural management efforts. However, the plan outlines tasks focused on high and medium-priority agricultural management areas that should be consulted while making major decisions. Map 3.2 depicts the location of the many bodies of water found within the Township and Map 3.3 provides the location of the watershed subbasins.

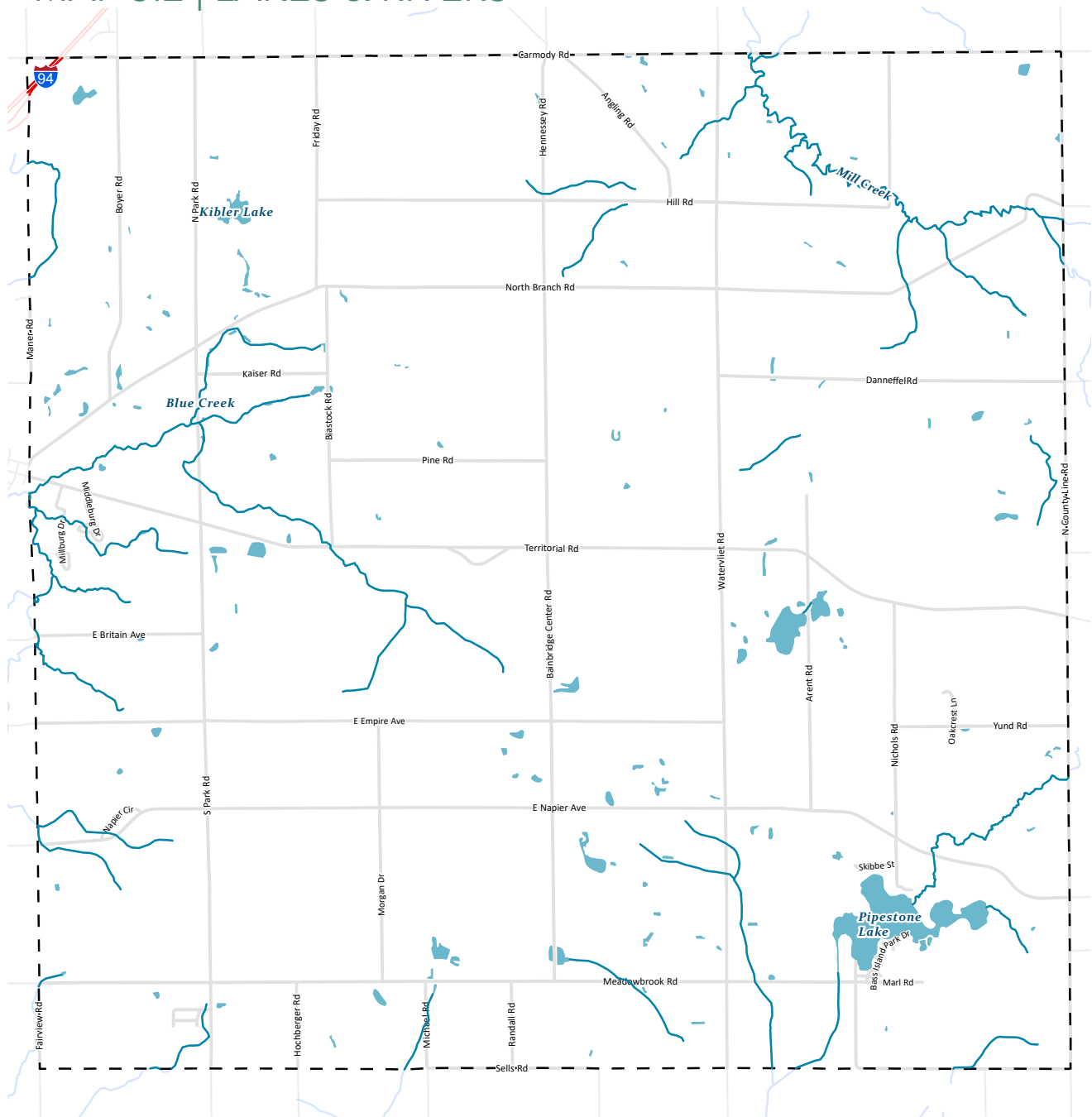
MAP 3.1 | TOPOGRAPHY



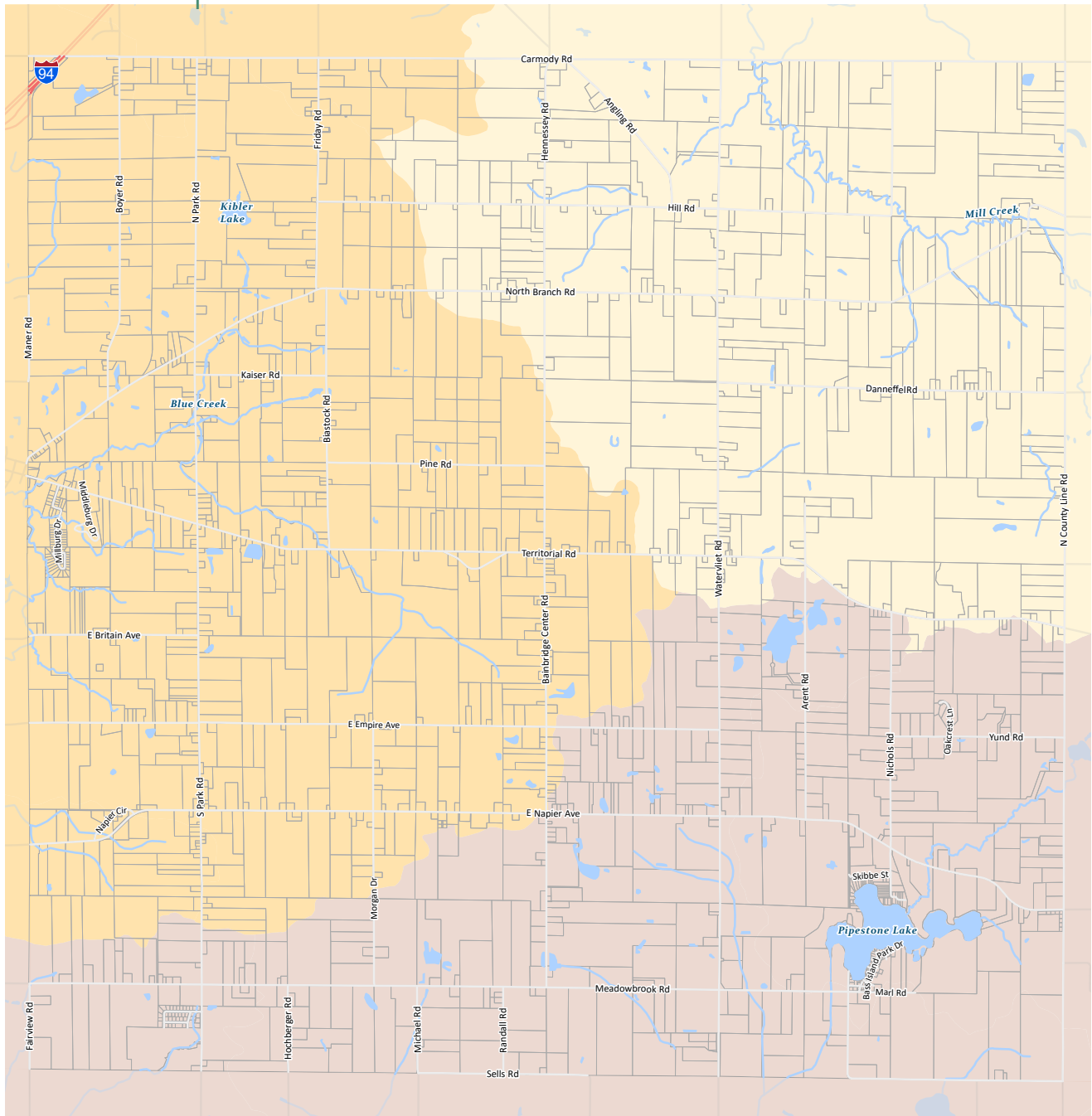
Elevation (in Feet)



MAP 3.2 | LAKES & RIVERS



MAP 3.3 | WATERSHED SUBBASINS



- Streams
- Lakes & Ponds
- Watershed Subbasin**
- Mill Creek
- Paw Paw River
- Pipestone Creek



Groundwater

Groundwater from private wells supplies all of the water for residential and commercial land uses within Bainbridge Township. Many of these wells draw from the confined glacial drift aquifer, which is separated from the ground surface by a “confining” layer of clay or rock. Some wells draw from the unconfined aquifer, which is more vulnerable to contamination from the ground surface.

Groundwater is an important but unseen resource. Because it is not easily observed, it is particularly vulnerable to mismanagement and contamination. The leading causes of groundwater contamination in Michigan are small businesses and agriculture. Contamination may come from small businesses that use organic solvents, heavy metals, etc. Groundwater problems in this regard usually stem from careless storage and handling of hazardous substances.

One specific area of concern is the Orchard Hill landfill to the north of the Township. The landfill began operations in 1976, and has an estimated 70 years of life remaining. It provides landfill services to the broader Southwest Michigan Area, and has gas-to-energy technology capable of providing energy to 2,000 homes and businesses in the area. In 2019, the landfill was identified by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) as a high priority solid waste site when groundwater sampling revealed levels of PFOS and PFOA above the criteria of 70 parts per trillion (PPT). The designation as a high priority solid waste site was due to the proximity of private water wells. EGLE continues to monitor the site.

SOILS

Soil type has ramifications for engineering and construction activities, natural hazards such as landslides, agricultural productivity, the distribution of native plant and animal life, and hydrologic and other physical processes. The soils in Bainbridge Township range from well-drained, sandy, or loamy materials to poorly drained soils formed in sandy, loamy, and organic materials. Because residents rely on septic fields for the disposal of wastewater, the location of various soil types is an important consideration in future development plans for the Township. Map 3.4 shows the location of the following soil orders in the Township.

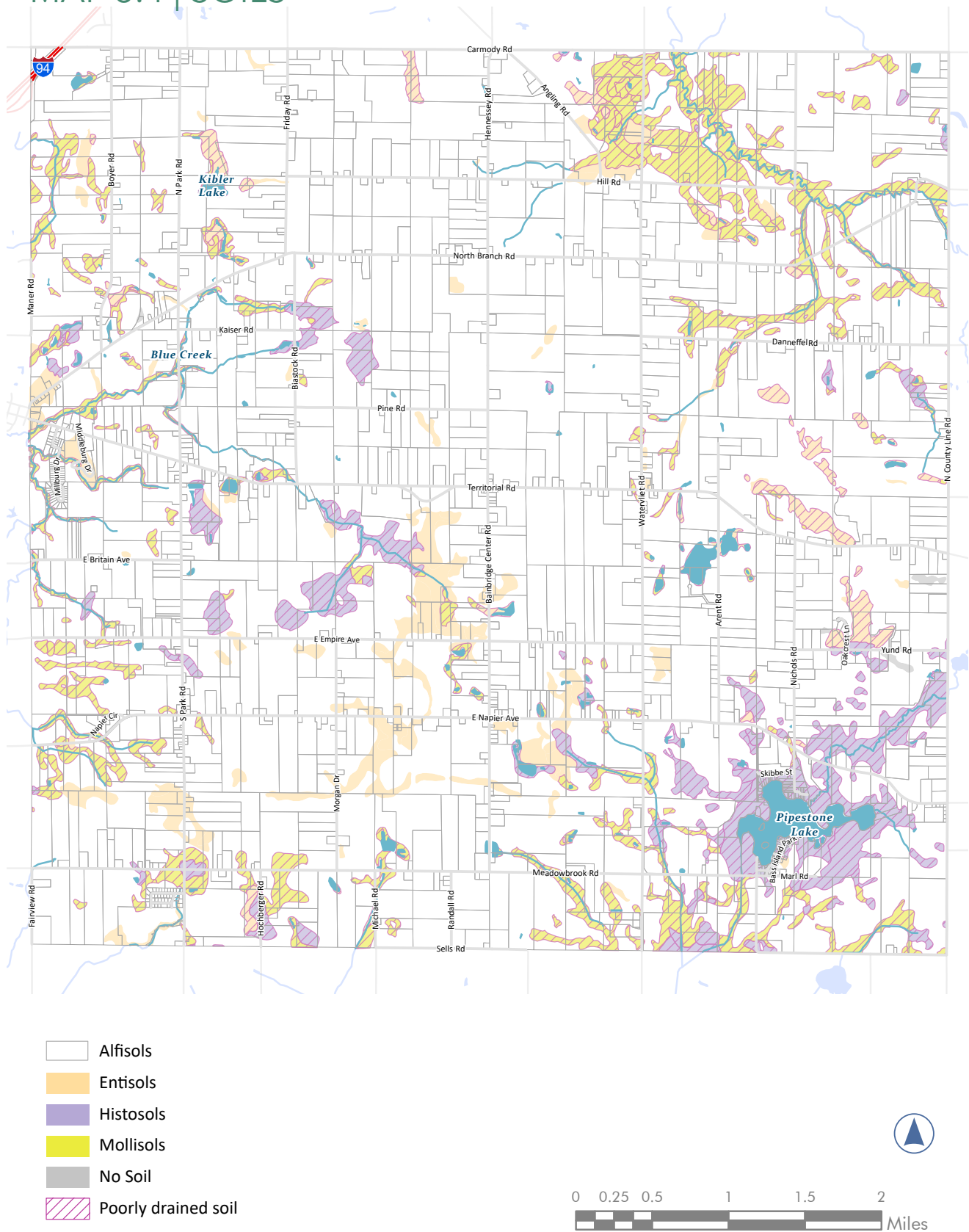
Soil Types

Alfisols are moderately leached soils that have a relatively high native fertility. Alfisols with a dominant suborder Udalf are most commonly found in Michigan. Udalfs form a belt extending through Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio. The combination of a generally favorable climate and high native fertility allows alfisols to be productive soils for agricultural uses. As shown in the map, a large majority of the Township soil can be classified as Alfisols.

Entisols are characterized by great diversity in environmental settings and land use. These types of soils include soils in unstable environments, such as floodplains, dunes, or those found on steep slopes. The productivity level of Entisols varies largely from high productivity in floodplains, and low productivity when found on steep slopes or sandy areas. Entisols clusters can be seen scattered along the central part of the township and smaller clusters can be seen throughout especially in the eastern half of the Township.

Histosols form in settings such as wetlands where restricted drainage inhibits the decomposition of plant and animal remains. They are often referred to as peats and mucks and have physical properties that restrict their use for engineering purposes and are composed mainly of organic materials. Histosols can be seen in large clusters along Pipestone Lake and along the branches of Blue Creek. As shown in Map 3.4, poorly drained soils can be seen overlapping areas where Histosols are present.

MAP 3.4 | SOILS



Mollisols are largely distributed in the northeastern part of the Township as shown in Map 3.4. They are characterized by a thick, fertile horizon. Some types of soils in this category have a water table at or near the surface for much of the year. This soil type is among the most important and productive agricultural soils in the world. Mollisols can be seen scattered throughout the Township, especially along creeks/rivers. As shown in the map, poorly drained soils can also be seen overlapping areas where Mollisols are present.

Soil Suitability

Construction costs and risks to the environment can be minimized by developing areas that have suitable soils. The central part of the Township generally has well-drained soils; however, some parts have somewhat poorly, poorly, and very poorly drained soils. The three major soil characteristics considered in the analysis of soil suitability conditions are drainage, foundation stability, and septic suitability.

Drainage: Development on poorly drained soils increases development and maintenance costs, and may lead to sanitary problems. Development costs are increased due to additional foundation, road, and septic preparation. Maintenance costs and problems will be associated with septic field failures, flooded basements, and impact on roads from frost action.

Foundation Stability: Soil types that do not provide stable foundations may experience shifting building foundations, cracked walls, and cracked pavement and roadways. These problems often result in increased development and maintenance costs or in extreme cases, structural failure.

Septic Suitability: Because Bainbridge Township relies on individual septic systems, the location of septic systems on proper soils is extremely important. Septic field failures are often the result of poor soil permeability, high water table, or excessive slope. Soils such as compacted clays and silts will not allow wastewater to percolate, a high-water table prohibits adequate filtering and excessive slope does not provide an opportunity for adequate percolation.

LAND COVER

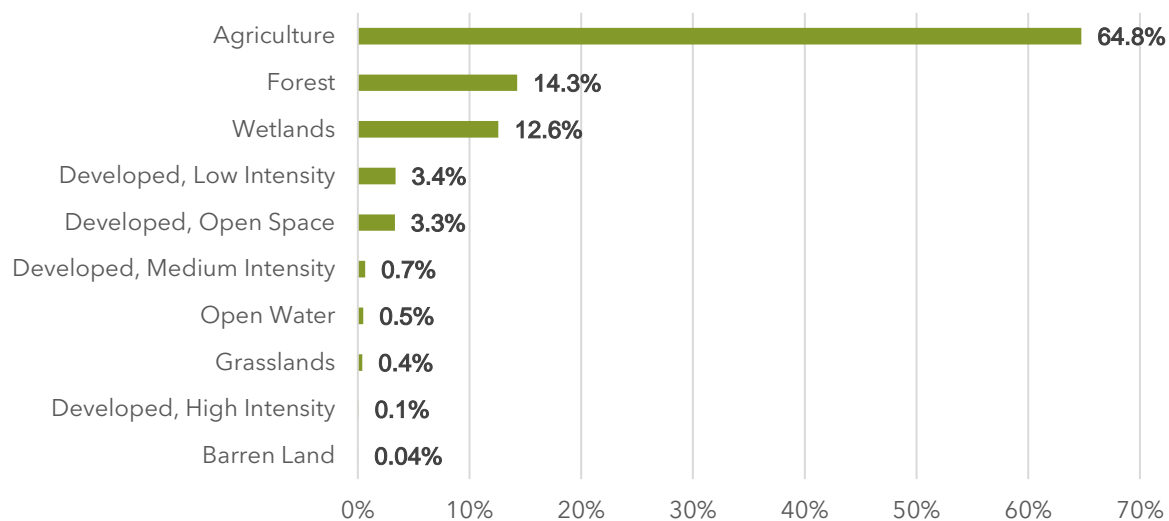
Land Cover describes the vegetation or land use that occupies the land in a given community. The land cover data that was analyzed includes data from the National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD) as prepared by the United States Geological Services (USGS) in 2019. The information was derived from Landsat TM (Thematic Mapper) satellite imagery and was interpreted using an automated computer-based process. This was followed by an accuracy assessment of the satellite data that involved the usage of aerial photographs to judge the quality of the computer-based interpretation.

The 2019 data was released in May 2021 to provide “explicit and reliable information on the Nation’s land cover and land cover change.” The information is useful in determining the distribution of vegetation and development patterns and their change over time throughout the Township. The 2019 NLCD includes 16 classes of land cover type based on a modified Anderson level II classification system.

As shown in Map 3.5, the predominant land cover type found in Bainbridge is agricultural (64.8%), which is a composite of two NLCD classes found in the Township: pasture/hay and crops (shown in Figure 3.1 above).

Forests are the second largest land cover type in Bainbridge Township representing nearly 14.3% of the Township land. Forest land classification is also an aggregate grouping of three forest cover types: deciduous, evergreen, and mixed forest. Wetlands are the third largest class that is an aggregate grouping of woody wetlands and emergent herbaceous wetlands and account for 15.5% of the land. Developed low-intensity, developed open space, and medium-intensity NLCD classes, which comprised about 7.4% of the Township. The smallest percentage of land cover is barren land (0.04%) as shown in Table 3.1.

Figure 3.1. Land Cover Classification, 2019



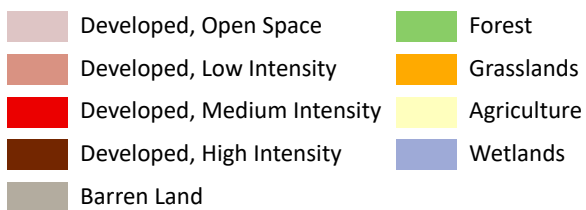
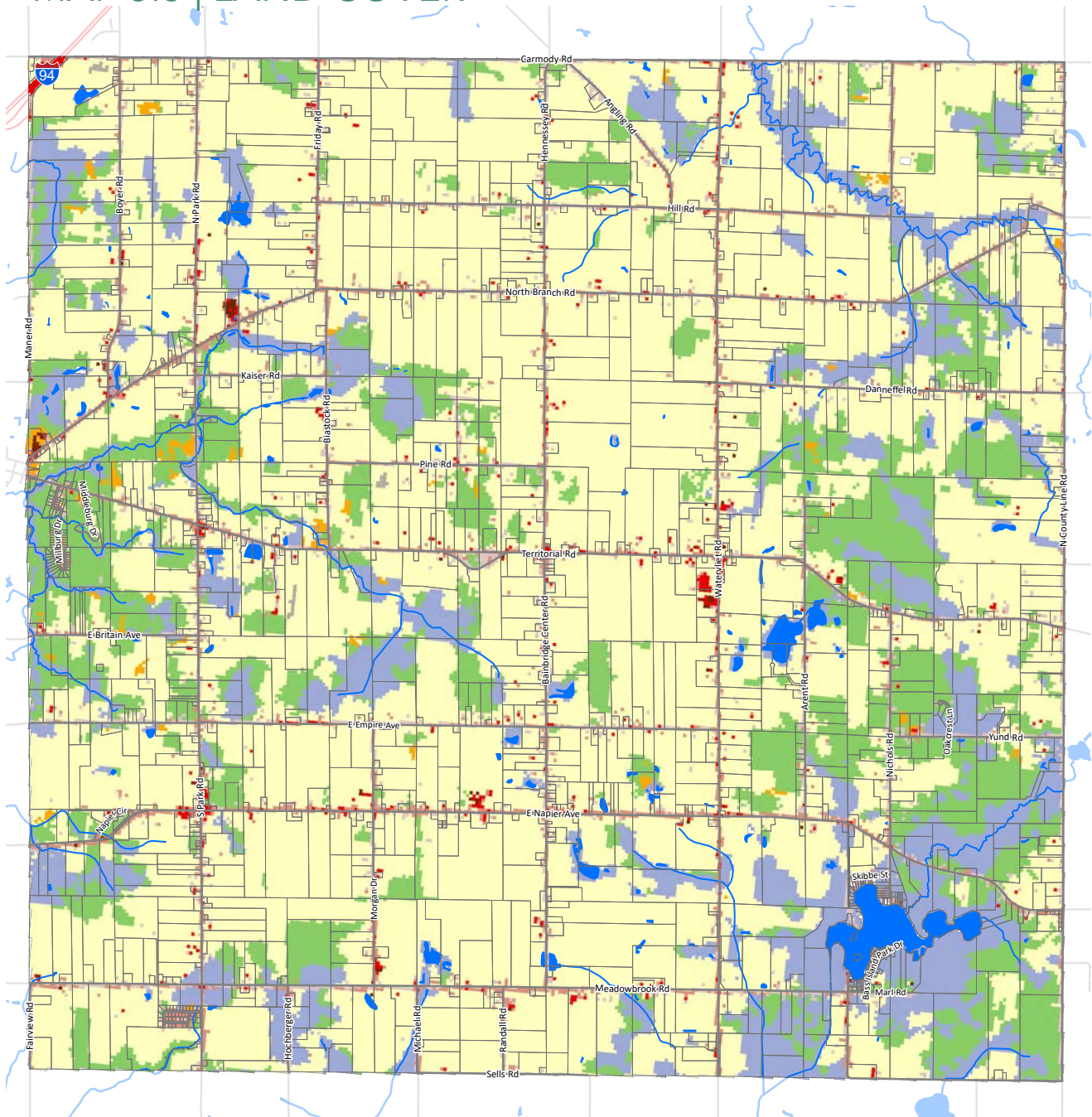
Source: USGS National Land Cover Dataset 2019

Table 3.1 Land Cover Classification, 2019

Land Cover Classification	Acres	Percent
Open Water	113.4	0.5%
Developed, Open Space	754.6	3.3%
Developed, Low Intensity	769.7	3.4%
Developed, Medium Intensity	150.1	0.7%
Developed, High Intensity	17.8	0.1%
Barren Land	8.9	0.04%
Forest	3,240.5	14.3%
Grasslands	92.7	0.4%
Agricultural	14,717.0	64.8%
Wetlands	2,860.4	12.6%
Total	22,725.2	

Source: USGS National Land Cover Dataset 2019

MAP 3.5 | LAND COVER



Farmland

The Township boasts a wide variety of crops among tens of thousands of acres. The following list provides the ten most produced crops in the Township according to the previous Bainbridge Township Master Plan:

1. Pasture/Hay – 4,053 acres
2. Corn – 2,722 acres
3. Soybeans – 2,555 acres
4. Apples – 1,660 acres
5. Cherries – 649 acres
6. Alfalfa Other Hay/Non-Alfalfa – 573 acres
7. Alfalfa – 437 acres
8. Grapes – 247 acres
9. Asparagus – 207 acres
10. Peaches – 119 acres

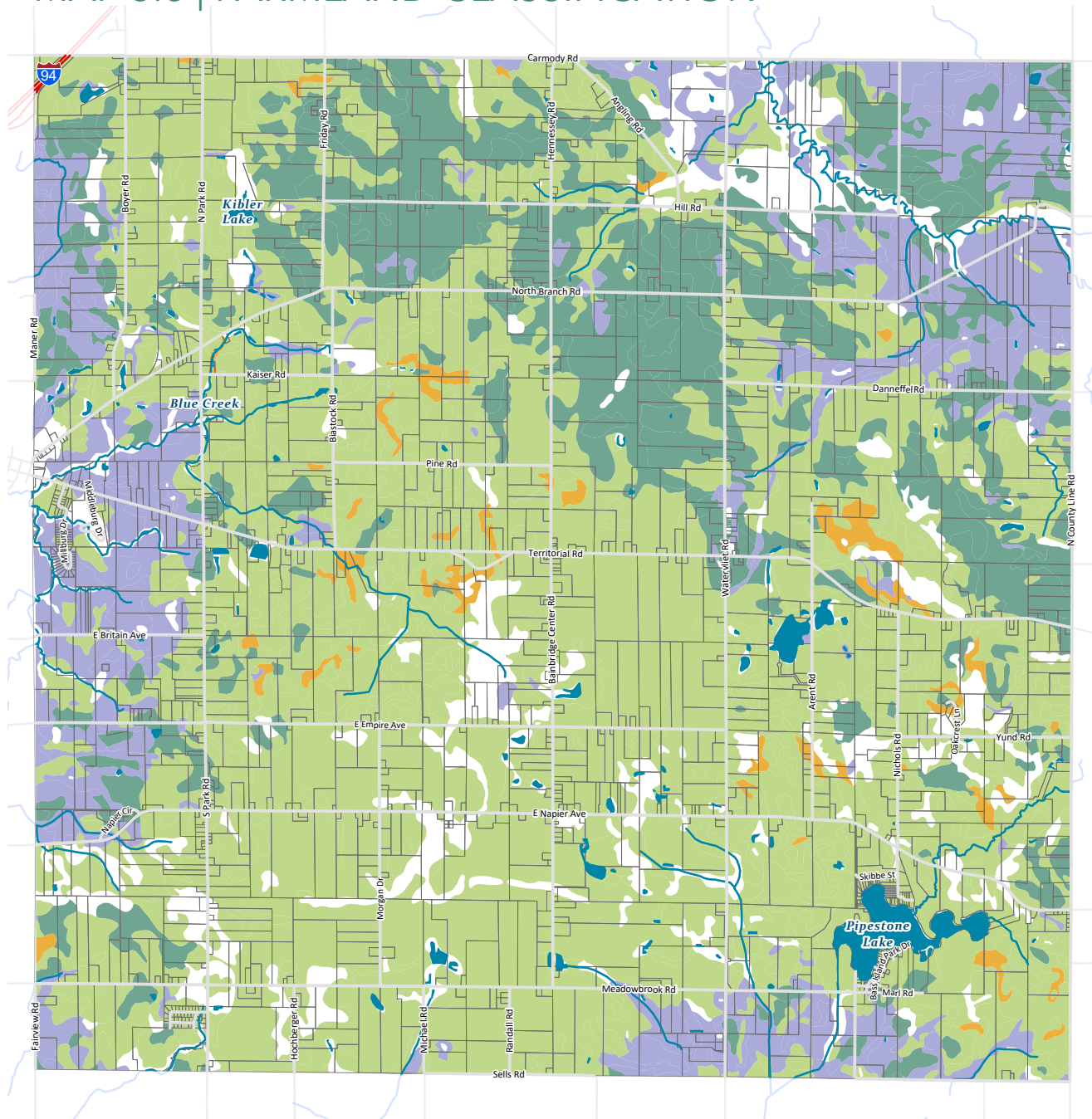
With 64.8% of land use being dedicated to agricultural uses, it is evident that farming is a cornerstone of Bainbridge Township, significantly impacting both its economic landscape and cultural identity. Rooted in the community's heritage, agriculture serves as a major economic driver by contributing to the local economy through income generation for farmers, and supporting ancillary businesses in the agricultural supply chain, and agritourism opportunities. The cultivation of diverse crops and the rearing of livestock not only provide employment opportunities but also contribute to the resilience of the local economy by fostering a variety of agricultural products.

Beyond its economic role, farming in Bainbridge Township plays a crucial cultural role, preserving traditions passed down through generations. The township's rural character is preserved through open spaces maintained by farming practices, creating an aesthetic appeal that reflects the agricultural heritage. Primary land uses centered around agriculture enhance community engagement and celebrate the rich cultural tapestry woven by farming traditions. Through sustainable and environmentally conscious practices, the agricultural sector can also contribute to environmental stewardship, promoting soil health, water conservation, and biodiversity. In essence, the symbiotic relationship between farming and Bainbridge Township reflects a holistic contribution to both its economic vitality and cultural vibrancy.

In an effort to prioritize agricultural land uses, many zoning regulations have been put in place over the years to preserve open spaces dedicated to farmland, such as minimum area requirements for parcels in the Agricultural Zoning District. The Township has also partnered with various agencies that support farmland preservation and offer opportunities to participate in programs that would further the goal of preserving farmland for future generations. The 1975 and later General Development Plans designated more than 22 sections of the Township's agricultural land based on soil types, elevation and climate. Another factor was the Public Act 116 Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act which enrolled 3,830 acres 1995.

Prime farmland is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is also available for these uses. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce economically sustained high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods, including water management. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. It is permeable to water and air and not excessively erodible or saturated with water for a long period of time, as it either does not flood frequently or it is protected from flooding. Other considerations for prime farmland include land use and the absence of urban land use components, low flooding frequency, presence of a developed irrigation supply, areas of drained high water table, and a wind erodibility factor of below 60.

MAP 3.6 | FARMLAND CLASSIFICATION



- All areas are prime farmland
- Farmland of local importance
- Farmland of unique importance
- Prime farmland if drained
- Not prime farmland



Map 3.6 depicts the presence of five different farmland classifications in Bainbridge Township.

The following descriptions coincide with the classifications delineated on the map:

1. All Areas are Prime Farmland:

This designation is of major importance in meeting the Nation's short- and long-range needs for food and fiber. Because the supply of high-quality farmland is limited, the U.S. Department of Agriculture recognizes that responsible levels of government, as well as individuals, should encourage and facilitate the wise use of our Nation's prime farmland

2. Farmland of Local Importance:

Areas that are not identified as having national or statewide importance are considered to be farmland of local importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, and oilseed crops. Farmland of local importance may include tracts of land that have been designated for agriculture by local ordinances.

3. Farmland of Unique Importance:

Land other than prime farmland that is used for the production of specific high-value food and fiber crops, a moisture supply that is adequate for the specific crop, derived from stored moisture, precipitation, or a developed irrigation system, and combines favorable factors of soil quality, growing season, temperature, humidity, air drainage, elevation, or other conditions, that favor the growth of a specific food or fiber crop. This designation is often found in areas where a special microclimate exists.

4. Prime Farmland If Drained:

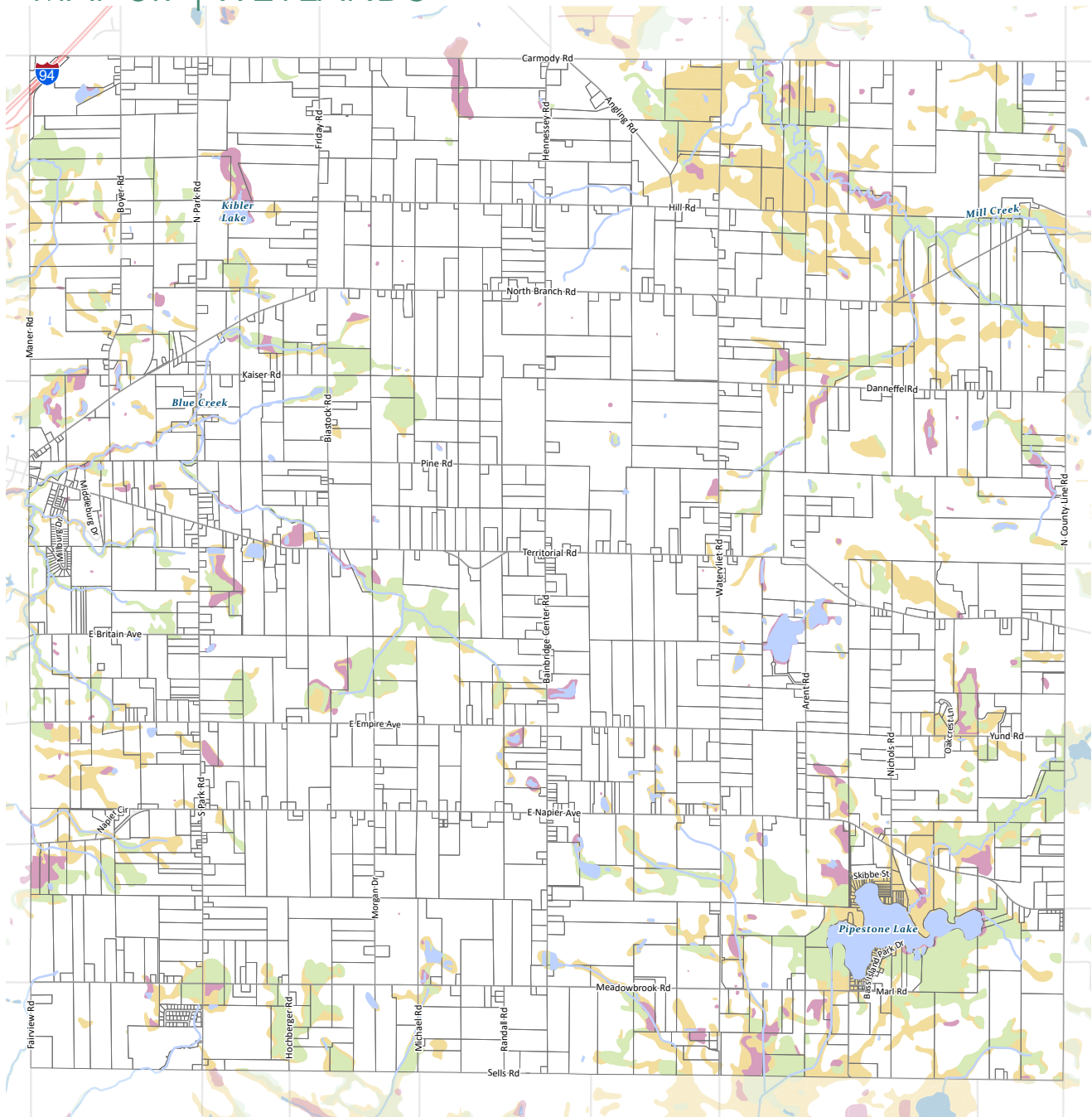
This designation can be described as land that meets all other criteria for prime farmland, (such as soil quality, temperature/duration of growing season, and moisture supply) except it is subject to a seasonally high water table.

5. Not Prime Farmland:

Lands not designated as any of the other classifications that contain a developed or urban land use component, or lands that have been modified or built-up with fill soils to raise the elevation.

Land in Bainbridge Township consists primarily of Farmland of Local Importance.

MAP 3.7 | WETLANDS



- Lakes & Ponds
- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Hydric Soils
- Bainbridge Township
- Streams



Wetlands

Wetlands play a vital role in recreation, tourism, and the economy apart from their environmental value. According to the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), wetlands are classified as “land characterized by the presence of water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, wetland vegetation or aquatic life, and is commonly referred to as a bog, swamp, or marsh.”

As illustrated in Map 3.7, wetlands are somewhat prevalent in Bainbridge Township, especially in the eastern portion of the Township. Several small wetlands clusters can be seen throughout the Township. Larger wetland areas can be seen around Pipestone Lake in the southeastern corner and along Mill Creek in the northeastern corner. Wetlands serve a variety of functions for a community, as summarized below.

Wetland Functions:

- Mitigate flooding by detaining surface runoff.
- Control soil erosion and sedimentation loading in rivers and lakes.
- Provide links with groundwater.
- Improve water quality which is degraded by nutrients and chemicals resulting from urban activities.
- Control erosion and sedimentation resulting from agricultural and construction activities.
- Function as highly productive ecosystems in terms of wildlife habitat and vegetation.
- Serve a variety of aesthetic and recreational functions.

Wetland areas are valuable as natural buffers between residential and other land uses. As such, they can make a significant contribution to the aesthetic character of the community. By incorporating wetlands as part of new development, they can help maintain open and green space as well as contribute to retaining a rural setting. In addition to wetlands, hydric soils should also be considered when planning for future land uses. Hydric Soil includes soils that are saturated by water, seasonally or year-round like those in wetland habitats.

Wetland Classes. There are a variety of wetland classes found within the estuarine intertidal wetland habitats of Bainbridge Township. Using the data from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, which cites data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the following is a list of wetland classes that are found in the Township:

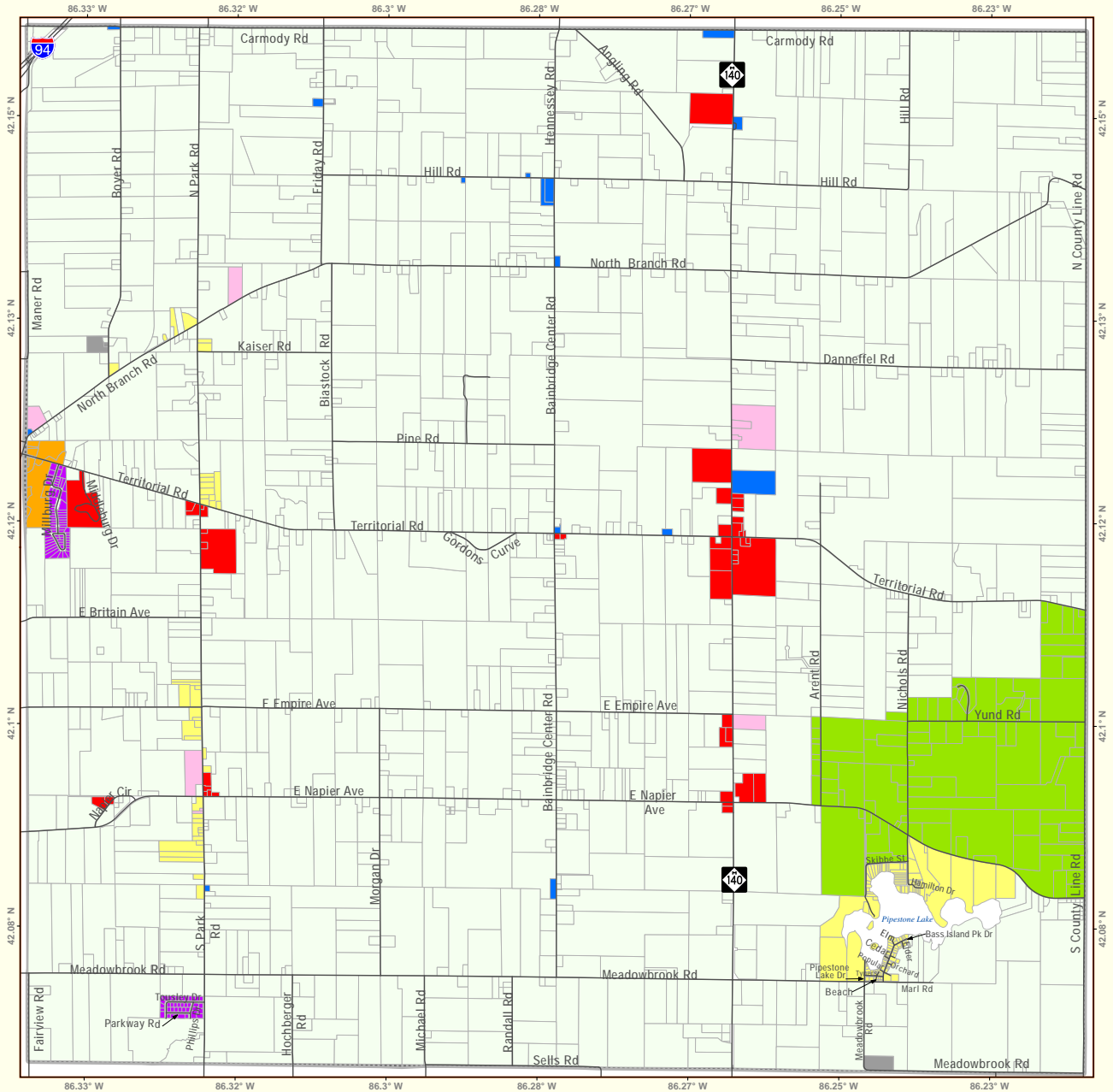
Emergent: Wetlands that contain emergent plants that are erect, rooted, herbaceous, and/or hydrophytes that are the tallest life forms, cover at least 30% of the area.

Forested/Shrub: Wetlands where trees are the dominant life form, cover at least 30% of the area.

Proposed development within wetland areas or suspected wetland areas will require a determination by a wetland professional. Before the Township approves zoning for any type of development in wetland areas, a permit from the Michigan Department of Energy, Great Lakes and Environment (EGLE) will be required if regulated wetlands are impacted.



MAP 3.8 | ZONING



BAINBRIDGE TOWNSHIP

This is to certify that this official Zoning Map referred to in Article I of the Bainbridge Township Zoning Ordinance 49V, amended to 49W, May 13, 2024, of the Township of Bainbridge, Berrien County, Michigan, adopted _____.

Supervisor _____ Clerk _____

Date _____ Signature _____

Date _____ Signature _____

Date _____ Signature _____

Date _____ Signature _____

ZONING

- AGRICULTURE (AG)
- RESIDENTIAL AGRICULTURE (R-AG)
- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-1)
- MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-2)
- RESIDENTIAL MOBILE HOME (RMH)
- COMMERCIAL (C)
- COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE (C-AG)
- INDUSTRIAL (IN)
- QUASI - PUBLIC (Q-P)

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Sources
Parcel & Zoning: Bainbridge Township, 2024
Road: Roadsoft 2023

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

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

May 13, 2024

EXISTING ZONING

Existing zoning data provides valuable insight into the present identity of Bainbridge Township and regulates existing and future development. Map 3.8 provides a comprehensive overview of the patterns of human activity on the land, capturing a “snapshot” of the current zoning regulations in the Township.

Each zoning district shown on Map 3.8 is described below:

1. **Agriculture and Residential/Agriculture:** This classification includes farms, orchards, vineyards, pastureland, and agricultural land used for crop cultivation or livestock grazing. It also include wetlands and natural areas where there are limited development opportunities.
2. **Single-Family, Multiple-Family, and Mobile Home Residential:** These districts include land used for single-family homes, duplexes, mobile homes, and other dwellings where people live.
3. **Commercial and Commercial Agriculture:** Commercial properties are used for business, commercial, or retail purposes. This district permits land to be used for office buildings, retail stores, restaurants, and other properties where commercial activities take place. Commercial Agriculture areas are intended to accomodate agriculture-oriented businesses.
4. **Industrial:** Industrial properties are used for manufacturing, processing, warehousing, distribution, or other industrial activities. This district allows factories, warehouses, distribution centers, manufacturing plants, and industrial parks, though there is little industrial development in the Township
5. **Quasi-Public:** Land in the quasi-public district includes government owned land, such as the parcel where the Township Hall is located. It also includes churches, schools, parks, and cemeteries.

Land use and development patterns can provide a useful narrative about the location of current land uses and help predict where new growth can be anticipated. The Township should regularly review its zoning ordinance and zoning map as needed to ensure that it adequately guides development within the Township.

Agriculture and Residential/Agriculture

Bainbridge Township is comprised primarily of agricultural land which gives the Township its rural identity. The majority of the Township contains areas of open farmland, among forested open space, and farmstead parcels. Existing agricultural areas are also interspersed with small-scale commercial-agricultural operations near small commercial nodes. The Township has participated in a number of farmland and open space preservation programs through the county, state, and federal governments to ensure the preservation of farmland. These areas are largely determined by soil conditions, which influence the land's agricultural viability.

A large number of nonconforming 1-acre lots occupied by single-family farmsteads or homes exist in these districts as a result of a past zoning provision that allowed for a one-acre split from the farmed agricultural land if the 1-acre parcel was contiguous with the farmland and under the same ownership. Unfarmed residential development is located throughout the Township.

Residential (R-1, R-2, MH)

The majority of these residential land uses exist as large-lot (single-family) farmsteads that front county primary roads and in higher density around Pipestone Lake, located in the southeast corner of the Township. Clusters of R-1 zoned parcels also are concentrated along Park Road.

The Township's shared border with Benton Township on the westernmost end of Territorial Road is another area where higher residential densities are concentrated as development becomes more suburbanized across the Benton Township border. Approximately 70 acres along Millburg Drive, south of Territorial Road, is zoned RMH, Residential Mobile Home, which allows single-wide mobile homes, though there are several stick-built single-family homes located within these 70 acres. The lots within this zoning district range from a quarter of an acre to 1.5 acres in area.

The majority of housing types in the Township appear to take the form of single-family homes, though approximately 90 acres of the Township in Millburg along the western border shared with Benton Township is zoned multi-family residential. This is the only area within the Township that would permit multi-family and duplex dwellings by right. This R-2 zoning district restricts multi-family buildings to no more than 4 units per structure.

Public/Quasi-Public:

Bainbridge Township's parcels in this land use category primarily include cemeteries and public uses,

Industrial/Commercial

Industrial and Commercial land uses within Bainbridge Township in Table 3.2 is included in the Commercial, Commercial Agricultural and Industrial districts.

The Township currently has only one industrial land use (Zirks Ag Services). Attracting new industrial businesses for jobs is not a high priority for the citizens of Bainbridge Township according to the community survey, however, any growth in this land use would also likely equate to new jobs and could have a positive impact on growing and diversifying the Township's local economy.

Several small commercial nodes are found throughout the Township, consisting of immediate needs for basic goods like small convenience stores, restaurants, farm markets, and numerous other small enterprises. A current lack of commercial businesses in the Township is generally not a concern to Township residents according to the community survey results. Commercial-agricultural uses also exist in the Township that support agricultural operations, distribution, and other farm-oriented businesses.

CHAPTER 4

PUBLIC SERVICES & INFRASTRUCTURE

Chapter 4 | Public Services & Infrastructure

UTILITIES

Bainbridge Township is not served by public municipal water or sanitary sewer. All residential, agricultural and non-residential development rely on wells and septic systems. The Berrien County Health Department administers the permitting for wells and septic systems.

One of the ways Bainbridge Township has sought to protect agriculture dates back to the 1975 Township Plan when the policy was enacted to prohibit utility installation. With the knowledge that public utility availability generally brings higher population densities to any given community, Township officials felt that the prohibition of utility installation would be a solution to development pressure that would likely be proposed on large tracts of farmland. Township officials have historically been amenable to future public utilities that extend from adjacent municipalities and into the Millburg area, as these areas have historically had poor soils and lacked suitability for septic systems. Larger residential densities may be appropriate here if utilities are ever planned to extend to this area. Another area considered for utilities was the high-density area around Pipestone Lake, which would need to be served by neighboring municipalities to the south and east.

The growth policies set forth in Plans from 1975 forward were established to preserve agricultural lands, encourage preservation of the Township's agricultural lands by requiring relatively large residential parcels. It was the policy to guide urban growth and development away from agricultural lands to the open and unused least productive areas identified within the agricultural lands. It has also been the policy to discourage scattered development and to uphold the inherent right of the agricultural community to perform generally recognized agricultural practices (GAAMPs) as provided in the Michigan Right to Farm Act.

The 1968 Bainbridge Township Zoning Ordinance allowed single-family development of any parcel that had frontage on a road with a depth of 330 feet. This practice resulted in many of the existing small residential lots being developed along road frontages in the Township. The effect of this is very evident along the main roads in the Township. Because of this, large lot zoning provisions were incorporated in the 1975 General Development Plan to eliminate the allowance of small lots in what is considered agricultural farmland. The implementation of this goal in 1975 resulted in the zoning amendment that established the Residential Agricultural District, which required a minimum lot size of 5 acres.

To protect agricultural lands in 1975 the Planning Commission established a policy requiring a 10-acre minimum lot size for individual single-family homes in the agricultural areas of the Township. This policy did allow for one lot to be "split" from the original parcel as long as there was a minimum of 150 feet width at the road from an existing lot of record as of December 1, 1975. The remaining lot of record must have a minimum of 300 feet road frontage and have a minimum of 10 acres of land remaining. All future lot splits would be required to contain a minimum of 10 acres.

The Planning Commission, by this action, felt the one small lot split would allow for family members interested in farming to build on a small lot if it was not practical to use 10 acres of land for such a single-family dwelling. It was also felt that, by allowing for the sale of 10-acre lot splits, the land owner could sell off land that could possibly not be farmed due to wet conditions or topographic challenges of wooded lots. This resulted in the scattered development of single-family residences throughout the agricultural areas on agricultural land that was not productive.

The official policy of Bainbridge Township has been to support agriculture business operations and to preserve certain farmlands for the future, thus there is a low desire to see public utilities serve areas categorized as farmland.

TRANSPORTATION

Road Classification

An approach to gaining a better understanding of transportation networks has been to categorize roads into “classifications” pursuant to the road’s function, character, or capacity.

Berrien County roads are divided into several categories. There are approximately 94.6 miles of roadway in Bainbridge Township, with the majority being classified as primary and local county roads. Map 4.1 provides the configuration and location of all Township roads.

Table 4.1 Bainbridge Township Road Classification

Road Classification	Miles
Total I-94	0.5
Total M-140	5.9
Total Primary/Local Road	88.2

Interstates are roadways designed to transport large volumes of traffic from one area to another. They provide the link into the overall interstate highway system, which is a limited-access system, and is designed to move large volumes of traffic between neighboring states. Bainbridge Township contains a small section of I-94 in the northwest corner of the Township.

Major Arterials serve major centers of metropolitan areas, provide a high degree of mobility and can also provide mobility through rural areas. Unlike their access-controlled counterparts, abutting land uses can be served directly. No roads qualify as “major arterial” in Bainbridge Township.

Minor Arterials provide service for trips of moderate length, serve geographic areas that are smaller than major arterials. These roads collect and distribute relatively high volumes of traffic between rural and residential, employment, and shopping destinations. The only road designated as “minor arterials” in Bainbridge Township is M-140.

Major and Minor Collectors serve a critical role in the roadway network by gathering traffic from local roads and funneling them to the arterial network. Generally, major collector routes are longer in length, have lower connecting driveway densities, higher speed limits, are spaced at greater intervals, have higher annual average traffic volumes, and may have more travel lanes than their minor collector counterparts.

Local Roads include other section-line roads and residential streets. These roads also collect and distribute traffic, but their primary function is to provide access to businesses, homes, and other destinations. These roads are not federal aid-eligible and are maintained through local funding.

Private Roads are considered local roads. There are few private roads in the Township, which provide access to residential developments. These roads are maintained by private parties that provide snow removal and year-round maintenance.

Traffic Counts

Tracking changes in traffic counts can be a useful metric for local units of government when it comes to infrastructure investments and land use. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) counts presented in Table 4.2 were collected from the Traffic Count Map developed by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC), the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) area, since Bainbridge Township is located within their boundaries. Due to the process of how traffic counts are collected, counts are varied by year. However, the most recent counts were collected in 2017-2022. Table 4.2 shows the traffic counts in detail for further clarification on when the data was collected.

Table 4.2 Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts, Bainbridge Township

M-140 S. of Napier		M-140 N. of Napier		Park Rd. N. of Meadowbrook	
Year	AADT	Year	AADT	Year	AADT
2022	3,232	2022	4,536	2017	3,703

Source: Traffic Count Map, Southwest Regional Planning Commission

Transit

Bainbridge Township is not served by a fixed-route transit provider; however, residents can utilize the Berrien County Public Transportation’s Berrien Bus, a service that provides transportation to all areas not served by dial-a-ride service areas. The Berrien Bus service includes a flex-fixed route and a demand-response service. Fares range from \$1.25-\$5.00, and rides are available to anyone of any age who is capable of traveling on their own. While private vehicles remain the primary mode of transportation, public transit services play a vital role in ensuring residents have diverse means of getting around, whether for daily commutes or regional travel.

OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES

Police, Fire, and EMS

Bainbridge Township relies on the Berrien County Sheriff’s Department which covers the area for police services. Fire services are provided by the Sister Lakes Fire Department on the east side of Bainbridge Center Road and Benton Charter Township Fire Department on the west side of Bainbridge Center Road. Bainbridge Township also has ambulance and EMS services through Medic 1, which replaced Pride Care in mid-2023.

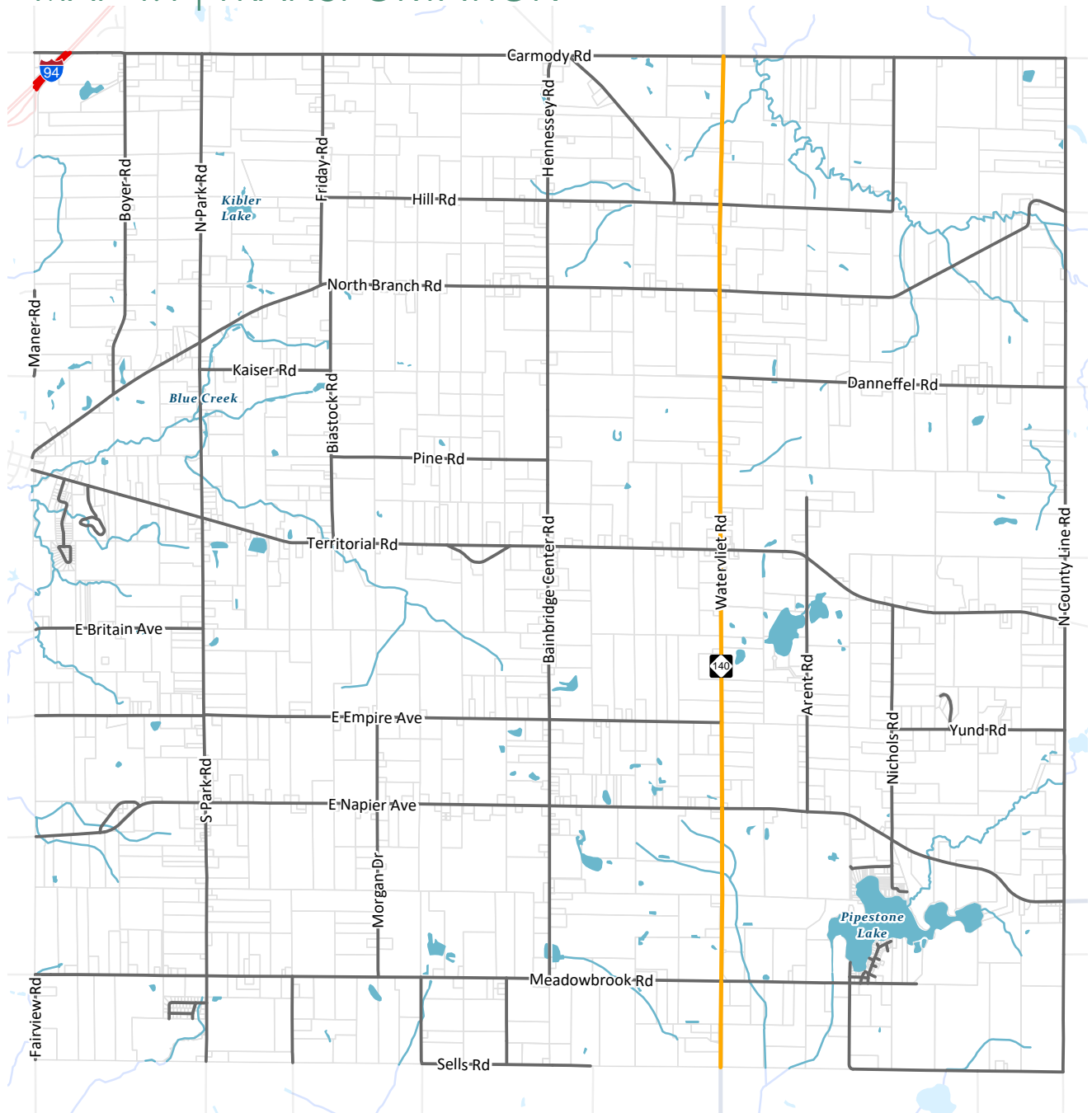
School Districts and Library Services

Bainbridge Township falls into five different school districts, which include Benton Harbor Area Schools, Coloma Community Schools, Dowagiac Public Schools, Eau Claire Public Schools, and Watervliet Public Schools. Township residents are served by the Coloma Library service area.

Recreational Amenities

There are currently no parks or recreation facilities within the Bainbridge Township boundaries. Residents generally travel to nearby adjacent communities to pursue recreation opportunities and engage in sporting events. The nearby City of Watervliet and Watervliet Township, which is located along M-140, and abuts the northern Bainbridge Township border, offers several facilities that are commonly used by Bainbridge Township residents. Hayes Park is a 13-acre park that includes baseball and softball diamonds, basketball courts, play areas, pavilions, skate park, batting cages and fishing docks. The Benton Harbor and St. Joseph areas offer a multitude of recreational amenities from parks and beaches along the lakeshore of Lake Michigan, to non-motorized pathways and nature trails.

MAP 4.1 | TRANSPORTATION



- Interstate (I-94)
- State Highway (M-140)
- Local Streets



CHAPTER 5

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Chapter 5 | Public Engagement

From July 28, 2023, to August 28, 2023, Bainbridge Township sought the community's opinions via a mail-in survey to gather public input on land use planning and related topics in the Township. The survey responses provided a considerable amount of quantifiable data to help inform the development of goals and objectives and future land use designations in the Master Plan. This chapter provides a summary of trends and planning implications made by the results of the survey. The complete results are provided in Appendix A.

METHODOLOGY AND GENERAL INFORMATION

The survey questions were developed by the Bainbridge Township Master Plan Steering Committee with the assistance of the consultant team from Williams & Works. The survey was organized to gather meaningful responses from the residents of the Township. The Steering Committee opted for a mail-in survey instrument, which they felt would garner the best results, given the demographics of the community, that contained 11 questions. The survey was mailed out to all the taxpayer addresses associated with property ownership in the Township. 1,274 total taxpayers were mailed a survey and additional surveys were available at the Township offices for additional household members to complete if they desired. We received a total of 295 responses by September 1, 2023, with a 23.2% completion rate.

The results of the survey provide valuable feedback from the community and provide a perspective of the community's opinion regarding relevant land use and planning issues. The survey was successful as it resulted in objective quantifiable information from a large number of people compared to typical participation in other forms of public input like community open houses, or visioning meetings. The survey enabled respondents to provide anonymous replies using a "check-the-box" format to expedite the completion of the form and maximize the rate of response. Some questions allowed the respondents to leave other comments that may not have been covered in the multiple-choice options. Spelling and grammar mistakes were corrected in the open-ended responses otherwise, all responses were kept as written by the respondent.

PLANNING IMPLICATIONS AND TRENDS

The following section contains a summary of trends and other findings that emerged from the community survey results.

About the Respondents

- The majority of the survey participants reported living in an owner-occupied, single-family home within the Township for more than 20 years.
- The majority of the respondents were over the age of 65, with the second largest age group being between the ages of 55 and 64.
- These results give us a view of the population as a whole in Bainbridge Township. From these results, we would infer that over 75% of the Township's long-time resident population is of retirement or soon-to-be retirement age. These numbers may provide some insight into the Township's potential need for future land uses related to aging in place and care for a large aging population.

Community Priorities

- 87.3% of respondents reported that the highest of important priorities was protecting groundwater quality, followed by 84.3% that felt that protecting property rights was very important in prioritizing. And third, 79.3% of the respondents report the importance of prioritizing the “rural character” of the Township.
- This question also allowed respondents to write in a response that wasn’t listed. From the list of write-in responses, there is a wide variety of priorities deemed very important to the respondents. The top three areas were reported among the respondents as “very important”:
 - ✕ Internet service
 - ✕ Restrictions on new housing developments and minimum lot size requirements
 - ✕ Utilities (natural gas, municipal water, and sanitary sewer)

Satisfaction with Life in Bainbridge Township

- The majority of respondents report being very satisfied with the Township as a place to live (76.1%) followed by very satisfied with the Township as a place to raise a family (74.1%) and the agricultural character (68.2%).
- Conversely, areas that the respondents report as being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, include non-motorized pathways/trails (21.5%), quality of roads (24.7%), and zoning and code enforcement (11.23%).
- This question also included a write-in response. The following were reported as the top three write-in comments related to being “dissatisfied”:
 - ✕ Non-motorized trails and pathways
 - ✕ Ambulance services
 - ✕ Internet access
 - ✕ Quality of Township roads;

Community Growth

68.1% of respondents reported that the Township is growing too quickly.

This seems to support the respondents’ overwhelming desire to keep the community rural and limit the growth of commercial land uses. This inference is further supported by the response from Question 9, which would indicate that the majority of respondents would disagree that more commercial zoning is needed in the Township.

Direction of Bainbridge Township

78.5% reported that the Township is headed in the right direction while 8.37% felt otherwise. While the interpretation of this question may differ among respondents, it is reasonable to conclude that many residents likely support existing growth and development policies. Attitudes among residents can also be gleaned from the write-in response associated with this question. We received 93 write-in responses from the 218 respondents to this question (77 people skipped this question).

A majority of the write-in responses reference the rural character of the Township and the desire to keep the agricultural aspect of the Township. However, some comments appear to imply that the rural feel is being lost and that the Township has changed a lot.

Commercial Zoning

75% of respondents report that they disagree that the Township needs more commercial zoning.

This number further supports the respondents' desire to preserve the Township's rural and agricultural character and land uses.

CHAPTER 6

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Chapter 6 | Goals & Objectives

INTRODUCTION

The goals and objectives outlined in this chapter are developed to form the foundation of the Plan and are based on the results of the Community Survey. The goals are intended to help the community aspire to accomplish its vision and are considered attainable through long-term, focused efforts. The objective and strategy statements are more specific and may be regarded as milestones to achieving the goal.

The goals and objectives are guiding statements written to address how the Township would like to grow and develop. Bainbridge Township has historically envisioned a future where agriculture and farming remain a dominant part of the landscape, and where the protection of natural areas and farmland are some of the top priorities when it comes to growth and development, and these ideas remain relevant to the future of the community. The community survey revealed the following:

- The majority of respondents view **the protection of property rights**, the **preservation of rural character**, and the **protection of groundwater quality** are among the top three “very important” priorities in the Township.
- About 68% of the survey respondents noted that the **Township is growing “about right”** in terms of the rate of residential and non-residential development.
- Respondents also reported being “very satisfied” with the Township as **a place to live, a place to raise a family, and with the agricultural character** of the Township.
- Approximately 75% of respondents indicate that they “disagree” with the Township needing **more commercial development**.

Township Officials should continue to frame the goals and objectives for the future of the Township around the top priorities that have historically been important to Township residents, as well as around the appropriate response to development pressures as it relates to growth in the Township while taking into account the current forces that drive the housing market, the economy, and the agricultural industry. Top priorities have historically included the preservation of farmland and large tracts of land for agricultural production. This landscape will contribute to the desired rural aesthetic, which is an important asset of the community, as evidenced in the results of the community survey.

POLICY STATEMENTS FROM PAST UPDATES

The Master Plan was last updated in 2019. In that Plan, and others before it, “policies” were established to convey the overarching goals of the Township along with objective statements within those policies that provide recommendations for striving to meet those goals.

Bainbridge Community Vision:

Preserve and encourage the historical agricultural character of the Township while allowing for open space opportunities for housing

Carefully evaluate potential expansion of commercial and base

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

In an effort to modernize the Master Plan in this update, policies have been reframed into some broad categories that convey goals as policy statements. The objectives and strategies are more specific and meant to outline the individual actions the Township will pursue to achieve the larger goal. Additionally, new goals and associated objectives and strategies have been incorporated to reflect the current needs of the Township, as well as areas needing attention as evidenced in the results of the community survey. These newly framed guiding statements align with the Bainbridge Township Community Vision.

AGRICULTURAL AND OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

GOAL 1

Maintain and preserve productive agricultural land

Bainbridge Township will preserve its agricultural heritage and character by limiting development in farmland areas.

Objectives & Strategies

1. Adjust the Zoning Ordinance to develop provisions that limit uses other than farming and other agricultural uses on parcels containing land designated as farmland, as depicted in Map 3.6, Farmland Class.
2. Guide growth and development toward lands that do not contain productive farmland or are otherwise not viable for agricultural activities.
3. Form partnerships with the Berrien County Conservation District and the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to connect farmers to environmentally sustainable farming practice resources and programs and farmland preservation tools.
4. Ensure the absence of zoning ordinance provisions that conflict with the provisions of the Michigan Right to Farm Act.
5. Adjust the Zoning Ordinance requirements to permit certain types of agritourism uses by right in the Agricultural Zoning District.

GOAL 2

Preserve and protect natural areas and groundwater

The Township will take a proactive approach to ensuring the protection of natural areas and groundwater by placing restrictions and limitations on land uses that may pose risks to these areas.

Objectives & Strategies

1. Incentivize the development of non-productive agricultural land through open-space preservation developments that cluster residential lots while preserving natural areas.
2. Utilize best management practices for the implementation of low-impact development tools to minimize stormwater impacts on natural areas.
3. Explore the use of an overlay district to direct development away from natural features, particularly wetlands and riparian areas. An overlay district would “overlay” additional restrictions, such as minimum setback from a body of water, onto the underlying zoning district regulations.
4. Adjust zoning provisions to include specific requirements for certain land uses that may have a negative impact on natural areas and groundwater.
5. Impose restrictions on land uses that have the potential to contaminate groundwater through the adjustment of special land use and site plan review standards.
6. Continue to partner with the Berrien County Drain Commission to ensure stormwater management designs are being reviewed and approved for all new developments and redevelopments, both residential and non-residential.
7. Consider the feasibility and timeline for the provision of public utilities in areas that have a future land use designation that aligns with higher densities.

Residential Development and Housing

GOAL 1

Maintain the rural character of Bainbridge Township

- Bainbridge Township will maintain its rural character in the agricultural zoning district by discouraging the fragmentation of farmland for residential subdivisions.

Objectives & Strategies

1. Form partnerships with the Berrien County Land Preservation Board and other organizations to provide resources to land owners for preserving large tracts of farmland.
2. The Township will use Map 3.7, Farmland Class, to guide revisions to the Zoning Ordinance as it relates to minimum lot sizes in the Agricultural Zoning District on lands classified as farmland.

GOAL 2

Provide opportunities for housing options for lease and ownership of all price points

- Bainbridge Township will take a proactive approach to remove barriers to affordable and attainable housing.

Objectives & Strategies

1. Adjust Zoning Ordinance requirements to remove or reduce minimum floor areas to reduce costs associated with building new single-family residential homes.
2. Adjust Special Land Use standards within the Zoning Ordinance as necessary to ensure nursing homes and other senior living facilities are not denied on the basis of public opinion.
3. Adjust the Zoning Ordinance to allow for state-licensed residential facilities in compliance with the Zoning Enabling Act (Public Act 110 of 2006).

GOAL 3

Establish appropriate residential densities

- The Township will limit densities and determine appropriate locations for residential development based on density and potential impact on farmland in order to preserve the Township's rural character.

Objectives & Strategies

1. Require higher-density residential development to be located close to Township boundaries where public water and sanitary sewer may become available in the future.
2. Establish maximum densities for all residential zoning districts.
3. Consider increasing the minimum lot size required for land divisions in the agricultural district.

Non-Residential Development

GOAL 1

New commercial development will be located in specific areas within the Township

- Bainbridge Township staff and officials will use the future land use plan and the future land use designation descriptions as a guide for decision-making to determine whether rezoning requests align with the vision of this plan.

Objectives & Strategies

1. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to include a comprehensive set of criteria that must be met in order for rezoning requests to be approved. Of the criteria developed, one should relate to the requirement for the proposed rezoning to align with the goals and policies of this Plan.
2. Discourage the granting of use variances to avoid land use incompatibility.
3. Carefully designate locations for industrial and commercial development to avoid unplanned growth in areas that are not able to accommodate it.

GOAL 1

Preserve Existing Infrastructure

Bainbridge Township will make the maintenance of existing wells and septic systems a priority until such time that public utilities are available.

Objectives & Strategies

1. Connect property owners to state and federal resource initiatives that provide financial assistance for septic repairs and upgrades through the Department of Energy, Great Lakes, and Environment (EGLE).
2. Form a strong partnership with the Berrien County Health Department (BCHD) and collaborate to educate Township residents on ways they can take action to protect the groundwater that feeds their well.

GOAL 2

Prepare for the possibility of utility extensions across the Township's borders

Bainbridge Township will maintain strong working relationships with neighboring communities to assist with the planning of future utility expansions.

Objectives & Strategies

1. Seek grant funding opportunities for the extension and construction of existing utilities through adjacent communities and across the Township border.
2. Consider collaboration opportunities with adjacent communities related to future utility expansion planning.

GOAL 3

Work proactively to maintain the existing public road network

Bainbridge Township will collaborate with the Berrien County Road department staff and officials to identify and prioritize road projects throughout the Township.

Objectives & Strategies

1. Utilize the Berrien County Road Department's fund matching program to ensure maximum fund allocation from the Township's general fund and other sources to ensure funding is available when needed for road projects and maintenance.
2. Update the County Road Department with private development proposals that will require work in the County's right of way for new drive approaches and anticipated permit requests.

GOAL 4

Consider the possibilities of non-motorized pathway connections

Bainbridge Township will explore the potential costs and benefits posed by a non-motorized pathway that connects to other existing non-motorized trail networks within the region, if proposed by the county or other regional agencies.

Objectives & Strategies

1. Engage Township residents to solicit input on proposed trails and determine whether the majority of residents would be in favor or not in favor of a trail, as well as concerns residents may have with the presence of a trail in the Township.

GOAL 5

Expand high-speed broadband coverage

Bainbridge Township will take a proactive approach to ensure the expansion of high-speed broadband so that all Township residents have equal access and coverage.

Objectives & Strategies

1. Partner with Berrien County to participate in federal and state programs that offer grant funding for the deployment of broadband services for communities that are unserved or under-served with broadband services.
2. Establish a maximum financial commitment for the deployment of broadband services throughout the Township to be used in match funding programs that the Township is eligible to participate in.
3. Assess the Township's potential barriers to the deployment of broadband services, as identified in the 2023 Broadband Equity And Deployment (BEAD) 5-Year Action Plan.

GOAL 6

Ensure efficient and effective access to and coverage of police, fire, and ambulance services

Bainbridge Township will partner with neighboring communities to share information, pursue joint planning opportunities, and explore cost-sharing programs for access and coverage of all areas within the Township for rapid response from fire, police, and ambulance services.

Objectives & Strategies

1. Participate in regular meetings with Planning Commissions and/or Township Boards from neighboring jurisdictions to explore opportunities to increase efficiencies in service and share information.
2. Maintain a communication program with regional organizations to discuss Township facility and service needs.

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CHAPTER 7

FUTURE LAND USE

Chapter 7 | Future Land Use

LAND USE PATTERNS

The Bainbridge Township Master Plan establishes general patterns of land use to guide growth and development for the next twenty to thirty years. The Plan constitutes a viable and integrated approach to accommodate the impacts of growth suggested by the existing growth patterns and developmental trends. The over-arching intent is to foster efficient patterns of development that preserve the community's important natural features and rural character while accommodating particular types of growth in certain desirable areas.

Feedback gathered via the community survey overwhelmingly indicated a desire to preserve the rural character and farmland in the community. Natural features such as lakes, rivers, streams, and farmland were all considered valuable. Survey respondents also indicated that their most important priorities are the protection of groundwater, the protection of private property rights, and the preservation of open spaces. Expansion of industrial development and increasing the options available for housing were considered the least important; however, limited development may be appropriate in specific areas.

To honor these values, taking into consideration the facts presented in Chapters 2-4, and the goals and objectives of Chapter 6, a land use framework has been developed that seeks to preserve farmland, open space, and water quality, and to provide economic and housing opportunities and services in appropriate locations, all with the goal of preserving the rural aesthetic.

This chapter describes the different future land use designations that are intended to guide new development in logical patterns with the goal of preserving as much of the Township's land for agricultural production as possible. Future land use recommendations are identified below, along with descriptions of each designation and the Future Land Use Map (Map 7.1).

FUTURE LAND USE

Existing Land Use: As detailed in Chapter 3, the existing land use data provides valuable insight into the present identity of Bainbridge Township. It also serves as a useful tool for influencing future development. Map 3.8, Existing Land Use, allows us to gain a comprehensive overview of the patterns of human activity on the land, capturing a "snapshot" of the current physical landscape conditions of the built and natural environment. The specific existing land use classifications are detailed below.

1. Agricultural
2. Residential
3. Commercial - Land that
4. Industrial - Land that contains industrial uses as reported to the Township Assessor.
5. Public/Quasi-Public - Public owned land, such as the property where the Township Hall is located, and churches, schools, cemeteries, and parks.

The existing land use map was developed by reviewing the tax classification information from Berrien County GIS data, reviewing satellite imagery, and through discussions with the Bainbridge Township Master Plan Steering Committee members.

Existing land use patterns can provide a useful narrative about the location of current land uses and help predict where new growth can be anticipated. The Township should regularly review and update the existing land use map to ensure that it accurately reflects the latest developments within the Township.

Future Land Use: The Master Plan outlines future land uses (FLU) for the Township, indicating the types of development that should be promoted. It is the intent of this Plan to provide recommendations to carry out the future land use plan over time. The Bainbridge Township Planning Commission will use the zoning ordinance and future amendments to regulate the specific permitted uses on individual parcels of land which are intended to align with the Master Plan's recommendations, future land use map, and development policies.

The Future Land Use Plan (Map 7.1) details recommended land use patterns. These classifications consider the Township's identified goals, objectives, and values derived from the planning process and community survey. While acknowledging the inevitability of new development, the Plan emphasizes the need for its orderly progression.

To guide growth and land use decisions, the Plan advocates for a logical extension of existing development patterns. The proposed land use designations in this chapter should be understood within the broader context of the Plan's identified goals and objectives, representing the Township's long-term policy recommendations.

The following future land use designations contain descriptions that are intended to supplement the Future Land Use map.

Zoning Plan: A zoning plan is also provided for each future land use designation. A zoning plan is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008), which explains how each future land use designation relates to zoning districts as described in the Township's Zoning Ordinance. The zoning plan is intended to assist with the implementation of the goals of this plan, as it serves as a guide to align future land use goals with compatible zoning districts when land is proposed for rezoning. Decision makers should also take the supporting narrative in this chapter, the future land use map, desired uses, and other applicable features of an application for rezoning into consideration when reviewing requests to rezone land in the Township.

AGRICULTURE

Future Land Use: Lands containing the Agricultural future land use designation should align with the areas designated as farmland, as demonstrated on Map 3.6. Along with farming and other uses commonly associated with farming, this area should also be characterized by low-density residential, with farmstead parcels containing at least 5 acres or more to encourage farming and farm-related uses, as well as the maintenance and upkeep of open spaces that are unfarmed.

The owners of land with an Agricultural FLU designation are encouraged to participate in the Berrien County Farmland Preservation and Open Space Preservation Programs. The implementation of the purchase of development rights in the Township is also encouraged. The past practice of property owners requesting that their land be designated as "open space preservation" or "farmland preservation" on the future land use map is encouraged to continue.

Lands in the Agricultural FLU designation should not be subdivided into parcels with less than 5 acres. The utilization of Planned Unit Developments, platting, and site condominium development tools should be discouraged to mitigate the potential for fragmentation and residential development of viable and farmland.

The Township should also avoid the rezoning of lands within this FLU designation to R-1, Single Family Residential unless the land is contiguous to existing parcels with the R-1 zoning designation or otherwise not considered farmland. The Township should avoid this type of “spot-zoning” to R-1, which would allow lot sizes of under ¾ of an acre. Pockets of R-1 zoned parcel clusters are found along Park Road in between Agriculture zoned parcels containing farmland. The Residential future land use designation as described below, is reserved for residential principal uses, including non-farmstead single-family homes, duplex homes, multi-family structures and mobile homes.

Agritourism uses should be encouraged to promote sustainable farming practices, educate the public about agriculture, and enhance the economic viability of farms in the Township. These aspects of agritourism contribute to the preservation of farmland and rural aesthetics in Bainbridge Township.

Commercial-agricultural uses should be carefully considered within this FLU designation. The Township should ensure that uses permitted in the Commercial-Agricultural zoning district are limited to those uses related to crop production, harvest, and the agriculture industry. The Township should avoid permitting non-agriculture commercial uses on viable farmland that could otherwise be utilized for crop production.

RESIDENTIAL

Future Land Use: Non-farmstead residential uses should continue to be located in areas where neighborhood services and amenities are nearby. The Township’s Residential future land use designation can be delineated into four different subareas where character, housing form, and residential density may differ:

Residential Subareas:

Millburg Subarea

Areas along the eastern border shared with Benton Township are within close proximity to commercial nodes within Bainbridge Township and commercial corridors within Benton Township. This subarea should continue to provide varied housing forms at higher residential densities. Single-family residential density in this area should not exceed four (4) units per acre. Open-space preservation subdivisions or Planned Unit Developments that allow for flexibility in lot size are encouraged here to locate structures in clustered areas that preserve the contours of the land and other natural features while clustering residential structures in carefully planned areas.

Future mobile home uses are reserved in this subarea in the Residential Mobile Home zoning district. Mobile home parks are under the jurisdiction of the Mobile Home Commission, administered by the State of Michigan. The Township should ensure zoning ordinance provisions align with the Mobile Home Commission Act (Act 97 of 1987). Mobile home dwellings provide an affordable and attainable housing form and should be permitted in accordance with the Act.

Future multifamily developments in this subarea should also be planned around existing natural features such as large stands of old-growth forests, wetlands, streams, and steep slopes. Multifamily residential densities should not exceed twelve (12) units per acre and allow for up to six (6) units per structure.

Park Road/Napier Avenue Subarea

This subarea is just south of Britian Avenue along Park Road, extending to the western Township boundary and extending south to the extent of the southern boundary of the existing mobile home park off Tousley Drive. Housing forms in this subarea consist of single-family stick-built and mobile home dwellings. Future development within this subarea should stay consistent with the current residential development patterns. It is unlikely that the Tousley Drive Mobile Home park will expand, as

surrounding areas appear to contain hydric soils and wetland areas to the north and the west, east, and south limits of the park abut land in the Agricultural FLU designation. There are two commercial nodes along Napier Avenue that provide small-scale convenience and service amenities to residents of this area and others. Residential densities in this subarea should not exceed two (2) units per acre.

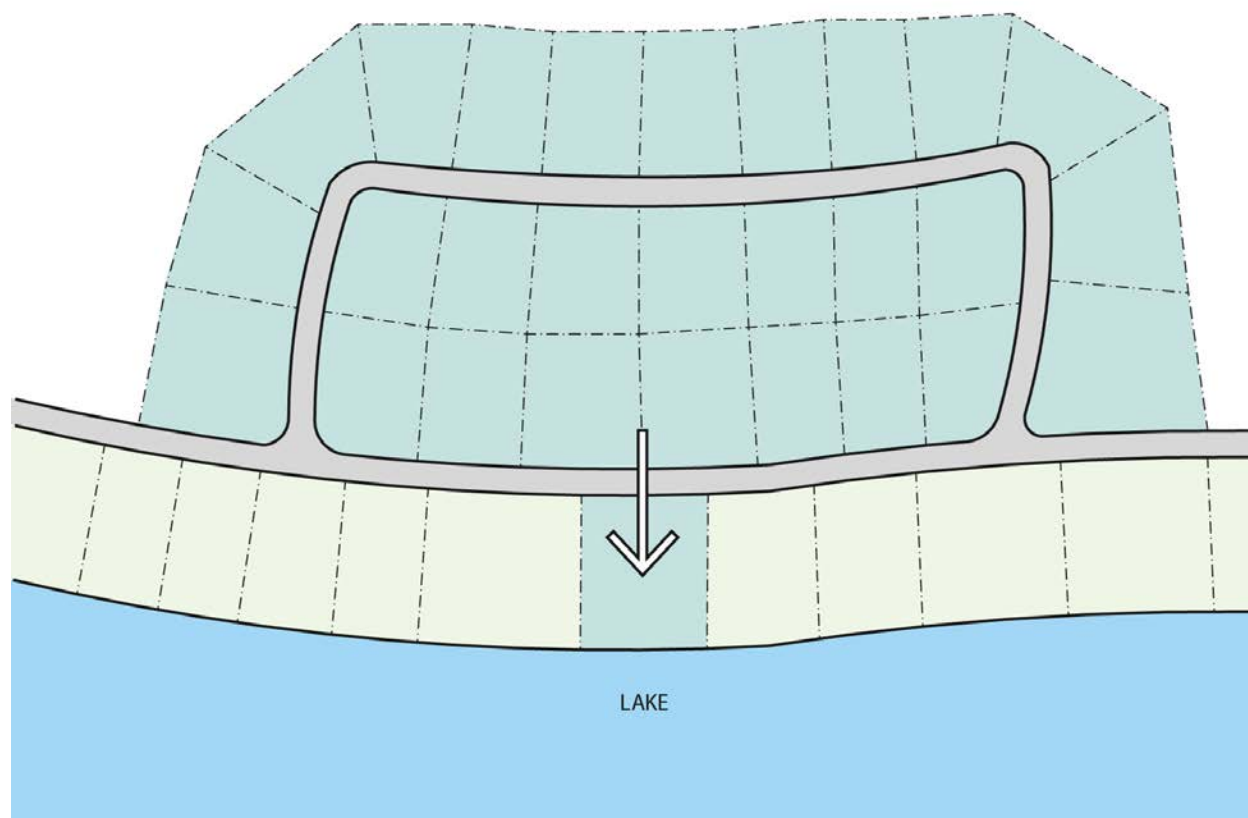
Nichols Road/Yund Road Subarea

This subarea is located just north of Pipestone Lake and abuts the eastern Township boundary and Berrien County line. Parcels within this subarea are located within the existing Agricultural-Residential zoning district. This area should not exceed a residential density of more than one (1) unit per five (5) acres.

Pipestone Lake Subarea

This subarea is located in the southeast corner of the Township. The majority of parcels in this moderate-density subarea have frontage and/or access to Pipestone Lake and are within close proximity to parks and recreation amenities located in Keeler, Silver Creek, and Pipestone Townships. The residential principal uses around Pipestone Lake should serve as a buffer between agricultural uses and the lake to help mitigate the potential for nutrient loading caused by stormwater runoff containing fertilizers, livestock manure, and other nutrient-rich wastes associated with farming activities. Keyholing (also known as “funneling”), which is the lawful access to a body of water by several non-waterfront parcels through a shared parcel with frontage on the body of water (see Figure 7.1), should be discouraged in this area to minimize the potential for negative impacts on the lake and surrounding sensitive lands from overuse. New residential densities should not exceed two (2) units per acre.

Figure 7.1

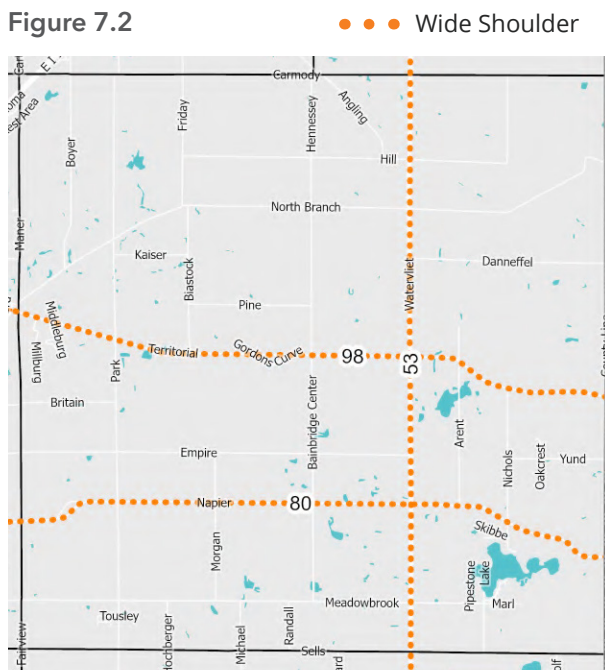


PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC

Future Land Use: Recreational opportunities presented by Berrien County should be considered as well. The map to the right shows Territorial Road, Napier Avenue, and M-140 as routes that would connect non-motorized pathways in Berrien County. The Township should weigh the costs and the benefits of these pathways being located within the Township.

The Township should continue to contract its police, fire, and ambulance services from adjacent communities, as growth is not planned to warrant the Township having its own emergency services. The Township does not anticipate acquiring additional land to add these services within the Township.

Figure 7.2



Source: Berrien County Trails Master Plan 2022

COMMERCIAL

Future Land Use: The Township acknowledges that the provision of major shopping needs of Township residents and most other commercial and industrial development needs of Township residents will be provided by new and existing businesses located within Benton Township, Coloma Township, Watervliet Township, and the communities of Benton Harbor, Coloma, Eau Claire, and Sister Lakes. The results of the community survey reveal the desire to keep the Township rural, however, some of the immediate needs for goods and services may appropriately be located within the Township.

The majority of daily convenience shopping and other related commercial service needs of Township residents should continue to be located along Napier Avenue, North Branch Road, Territorial Road, and M-140 in areas shown on the Future Land Use Map.

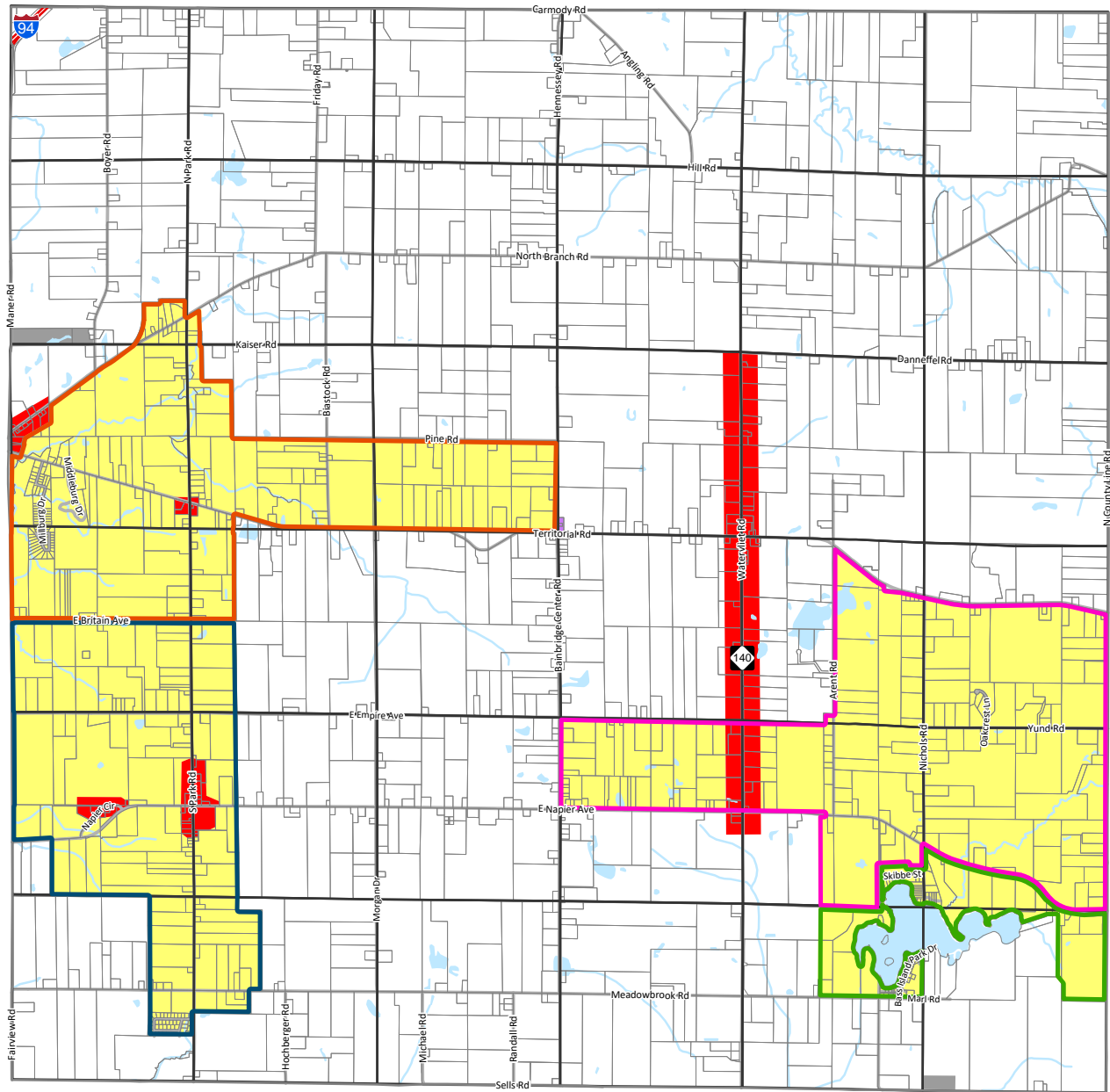
The Township should carefully consider minor expansions to areas proposed for new commercial zoning, and use the Future Land Use Map to guide such requests. The Future Land Use Map provides for additional opportunities for commercial zoning along M-140 (Watervliet Road), between Danneffel Road and Napier Avenue. New commercial zoning district boundaries should be limited to only lots having frontage on major streets or state highways, and should not extend further than 500' from the road.

INDUSTRIAL

Future Land Use: The Township does not desire additional industrial development beyond what presently exists in the community. Therefore any expansions or new industrial uses must be carefully considered. Minor industrial operations may be permitted near Millburg as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

Future Land Use Designation	Compatible Zoning Districts	
RESIDENTIAL Subarea 1: Millburg	Single-Family Residential Residential Mobile Home Multiple Family Residential	R-1 RMH R-2
Subarea 2: Napier Avenue / Park Road	Single-Family Residential Residential Mobile Home	R-1 RMH
Subarea 3: Nichols Road /Yund Road	Residential Agriculture Agriculture	R-AG AG
Subarea 4: Pipestone Lake	Single-Family Residential	R-1
AGRICULTURE	Agriculture Commercial-Agricultural	AG C-AG
COMMERCIAL	Commercial Commercial-Agriculture	C C-AG
INDUSTRIAL	Industrial	IN

MAP 7.1 | FUTURE LAND USE



2025 Future Land Use

Agriculture

Industrial

Commercial

Residential

Public/Quasi-Public

Millburg Subarea

Park Road/Napier Avenue Subarea

Nichols Road/Yund Road Subarea

Pipestone Lake Subarea



CHAPTER 8

IMPLEMENTATION

Chapter 8 | Implementation

The objectives associated with each goal statement outlined in Chapter 6 are recommended “action steps” that will guide the Township in turning the goals and vision into a reality. The Township can use this implementation chapter to inform policy decisions related to land use, public services, and other publicly funded improvements.

The following is a summary of the actions recommended in Chapter 6:

1. ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

The Zoning Ordinance is the primary tool that the Township utilizes to implement the Master Plan. The Township may opt to either (1) perform a comprehensive rewrite of the Zoning Ordinance or (2) it may embark on a series of targeted text amendments to implement the recommendations of this Plan. Either approach is acceptable depending on the availability of resources, priorities, and other factors. Due to the often complex nature of Zoning Ordinances, outside assistance and legal support will likely be needed.

The list below contains recommended amendments found in Chapter 6 of this Master Plan. They may be undertaken in any order in accordance with local priorities.

- A. Create land use restrictions for parcels that fall within the farmland classification as depicted on Map 3.6, Farmland Class.
- B. Adjust the requirements to permit certain types of agritourism uses by right in the Agricultural Zoning District, rather than by special land use.
- C. Create specific restrictions for higher intensity land uses that have the potential to contaminate groundwater.
- D. Impose greater restrictions on industrial land uses that have the potential to contaminate groundwater through the adjustment of special land use and site plan review standards.
- E. Ensure the absence of zoning ordinance provisions that conflict with the Right to Farm Act.
- F. Develop specific stormwater management standards and include a requirement that the Berrien County Drain Commission’s office shall review and approve stormwater management facility designs, prior to the issuance of zoning or building permits.
- G. Prohibit residential subdivisions on land classified as farmland.
- H. Remove or reduce minimum floor areas for residential land uses to reduce the costs to build single family or other types of housing.
- I. Adjust special land use standards to ensure state-licensed facilities, such as nursing homes and other senior living facilities are not denied on the basis of public opinion.
- J. Adjust the Zoning Ordinance to allow for state-licensed residential facilities in compliance with the Zoning Enabling Act (Public Act 110 of 2006).
- K. Establish maximum residential densities for each residential zoning district and require higher-density development to be located near Township Boundaries where public utilities may become available.

- L. Consider increasing the minimum lot size required for land divisions in the agricultural zoning district.
- M. Develop a comprehensive set of criteria that must be met as a requirement of any proposed rezoning request. Criteria should relate to the goals and policies of this Plan.
- N. Direct development away from natural features, particularly wetlands and riparian areas through the use of overlay districts which limit land uses and place further restrictions on dimensional minimums.
- O. Develop incentives for the development of non-productive agricultural land through open-space preservation developments that cluster residential lots while preserving natural areas.
- P. Develop zoning standards that require the utilization of best management practices for the implementation of low-impact development tools to minimize stormwater impacts on natural areas.
- Q. Develop strict criteria for the granting of use variances to avoid land use incompatibility.

2. POLICIES

Several recommendations of this Master Plan are policies and practices that should be implemented and followed by Township appointed and elected officials and other staff members. Some of the policy initiatives will be fairly simple to implement while others will require a more concerted long-term effort.

The following policies and practices are recommended in Chapter 6:

- A. Link decisions on development proposed for higher residential densities and higher intensity land uses (such as heavy industrial) with the timeline for future plans to construct public utilities across the Township border.
- B. Continue to utilize the Berrien County Road Department's fund matching program to ensure maximum fund allocation from the Township's general fund and other sources to ensure funding is available when needed for road projects and maintenance.
- C. Maintain a communication program with regional municipalities to discuss public facility and service needs, land use conditions and trends, preservation goals and objectives, contemporary planning issues, and other mutually beneficial strategies.

3. PARTNERSHIPS

One significant component of effective local governance and decision-making is forming partnerships with local, regional, and state organizations to achieve stated goals. While Townships have the authority to make local land use decisions, there are other factors and agencies involved at the county and state levels that can influence how new development will impact the community, how the Township can be an effective partner in larger regional goals, and ways that the Township can connect residents with resources and information to improve local quality of life.

The following partnerships are outlined in Chapter 6:

- A. Continue to partner with the Berrien County Conservation District and the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to connect farmers to environmentally sustainable farming practice resources and programs and farmland preservation tools.

- B. Continue to partner with the Berrien County Drain Commission to ensure stormwater management designs are being reviewed and approved for all new developments and redevelopments, both residential and nonresidential.
- C. Update the County Road Department with private development proposals that will require work in the County's right of way for new drive approaches and anticipated permit requests.
- D. Partner with Township residents to solicit input on proposed trails and determine whether the majority of residents would be in favor or not in favor of a trail, as well as concerns residents may have with the presence of a trail in the Township.
- E. Partner with Berrien County to participate in federal and state programs that offer grant funding for the deployment of broadband services for communities that are unserved or underserved with broadband services.
- F. Participate in meetings with Planning Commissions and/or Township Boards from neighboring jurisdictions to explore opportunities for increasing the efficiency of providing Police and Fire services.

4. EXPLORATION

Some of the policies in this Master Plan are larger projects that may only be feasible if other factors align. Some may not be feasible for several years or may be dependent on additional legislative or policy changes that need to occur at other levels of government but deserve to be explored so the Township can be educated and prepared for action if/when an opportunity arises to accomplish additional tasks outlined in this Plan.

The following tasks are outlined in Chapter 6:

- A. Explore the feasibility of farmland preservation through a local Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program.
- B. Explore the acquisition of and/or the conservation of natural areas within the Township through private property owners, conservancies, or state agencies.
- C. Consider the feasibility and timeline for the provision of public utilities in areas that have a future land use designation that aligns with higher densities.
- D. Seek grant funding opportunities for the extension and construction of existing utilities through adjacent communities and across the Township border.
- E. Collaborate with representatives from adjacent communities on the planning of future utility expansions.

5. CONNECT RESIDENTS WITH RESOURCES

In some cases, the Township does not have the local resources to assist residents, and in those cases, it can act as a facilitator and informational resource to ensure that residents are aware of additional resources outside the Township. In other cases, the Township should educate its residents about various programs and opportunities that can be of assistance.

The following collaborative efforts are outlined in Chapter 6:

- A. Connect landowners with the Berrien County Land Preservation Board and other organizations that provide resources related to preserving large tracts of farmland.
- B. Collaborate with the Berrien County Health Department (BCHD) to connect residents to resources related to the protection of groundwater that feeds their water well.
- C. Keep residents informed when grants and low-interest loan opportunities are available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture for assistance with installing or repairing clean and reliable drinking water systems and/or waste disposal systems.

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APPENDIX

COMMUNITY

SURVEY

Introduction

From July 28, 2023, to August 28, 2023, the Bainbridge Township Master Plan Update Steering Committee opened an opinion survey to gather public input on land use planning and related topics in the Township. The survey responses provided a considerable amount of quantifiable data to help set policy related to growth and development in the Master Plan. The results are listed below, followed by a summary of trends and planning implications.

Methodology and General Information

The survey questions were developed by the Bainbridge Township Master Plan Steering Committee with the assistance of the consultant team from Williams & Works. The survey was organized to gather meaningful responses from the residents of the Township. The Steering Committee opted for a mail-in survey instrument, which they felt would garner the best results, given the demographics of the community, that contained 11 questions. The survey was mailed out to all the taxpayer addresses associated with property ownership in the Township. 1,274 total taxpayers were mailed a survey and additional surveys were available at the Township offices for additional household members to complete if they desired. We received a total of 295 responses by September 1, 2023, with a 23.2% completion rate.

The results of the survey provide valuable feedback from the community and provide a perspective of the community's opinion regarding relevant land use and planning issues. The survey was successful as it resulted in objective quantifiable information from a large number of people compared to typical participation in other forms of public input like community open houses, or visioning meetings. The survey enabled respondents to provide anonymous replies using a "check-the-box" format to expedite the completion of the form and maximize the rate of response. Some questions allowed the respondents to leave other comments that may not have been covered in the multiple-choice options. Spelling and grammar mistakes were corrected in the open-ended responses otherwise, all responses were kept as written by the respondent.

Data Entry and Measurement

The mail-in survey responses were entered into the online survey tool, Survey Monkey. Once entered, the data could then be analyzed using a standardized method.

Three scoring scales were used to report the data received: Nominal, Ordinal, and Ratio scales. A nominal scale merely counts responses by particular classification (e.g., type of residence, yes, no, etc.). This scale is useful to separate responses into working groups or to evaluate the overall sample to determine whether it represents the larger population. Questions 1, 3, 4, and 8 were designed on a nominal scale.

An ordinal scale is more useful in gaining insight into respondent beliefs because it includes the characteristics of rank order. One item is greater or lesser than another item or it has more or less of a particular quality, based on a commonly understood standard. An ordinal scale enables some greater judgment about the relative strength or weakness of a particular

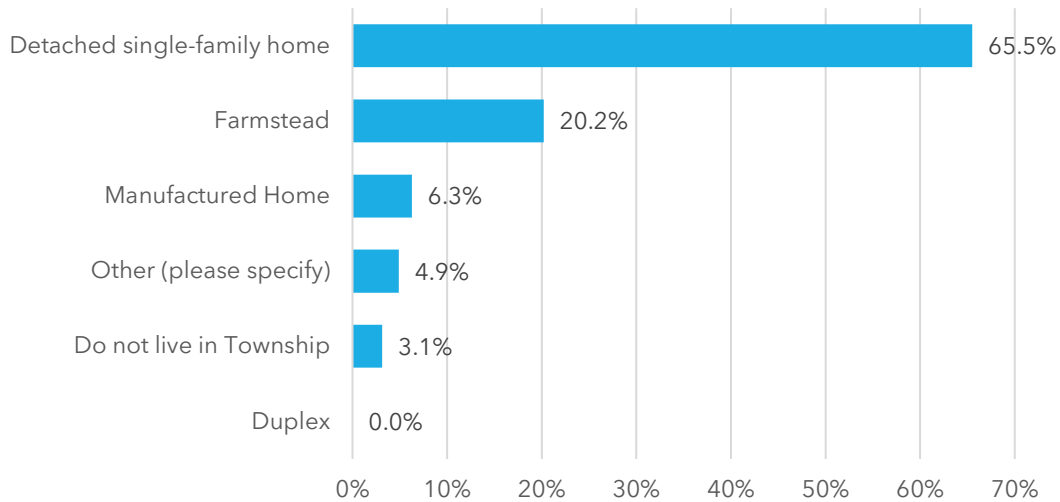
response (e.g., "very satisfied", "too slowly", etc). However, it does not include a quantifiable or consistent interval between the various points in the scale. Questions 5-6, 7, and 9 were designed with an ordinal scale.

A ratio scale was used for question 2, as respondents were asked to indicate a range of items that applied to them such as age. Question 10 featured an open-ended, write-in response for participants to list their answers and add any additional thoughts about planning and development not covered in the survey.

To report the results of the survey, the ordinal scales used were converted to interval scales. A numeric value was assigned to each response with an interval of "1" between each point on the scale. For example, in Question 6, "Very Dissatisfied" responses were assigned a value of 5, "Neutral" responses were assigned a value of 3, and so forth. This was done to enable the measurement of the central tendency of all responses, which is accomplished by determining the arithmetic mean or average response for the item. However, it must be recognized that the assignment of value to the intervals of the scale does not automatically result in a true interval scale because each respondent will have his or her own interpretation of the interval. Nevertheless, in aggregate, this procedure does enable a comparison of the items from one to the next via a weighted average.

Survey Results

Question 1: Which of the following best describes your Bainbridge Township residence?

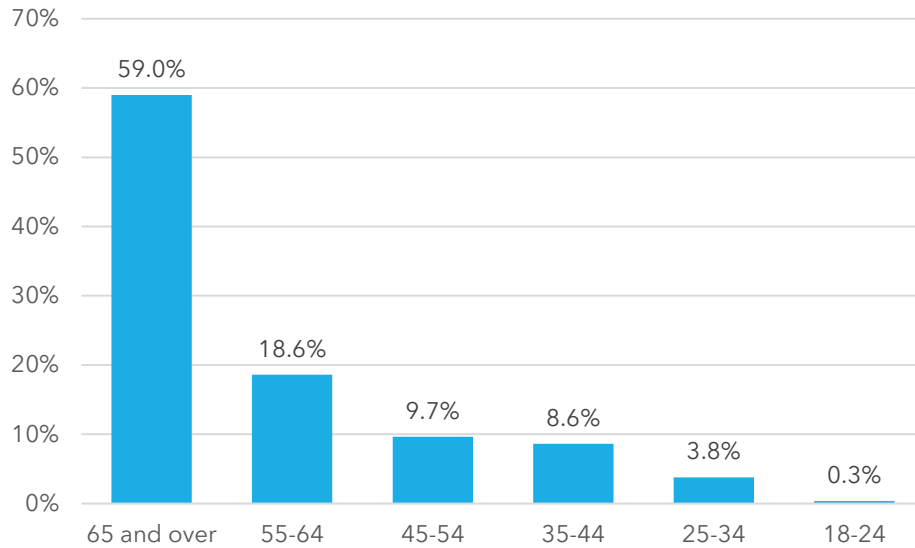


Answer Choices	Responses	
Detached single-family home	65.51%	188
Duplex	0.00%	0
Farmstead	20.21%	58
Manufactured Home	6.27%	18
Do not live in Township	3.14%	9
Other (please specify)	4.88%	14
	Answered	287
	Skipped	8

Other:

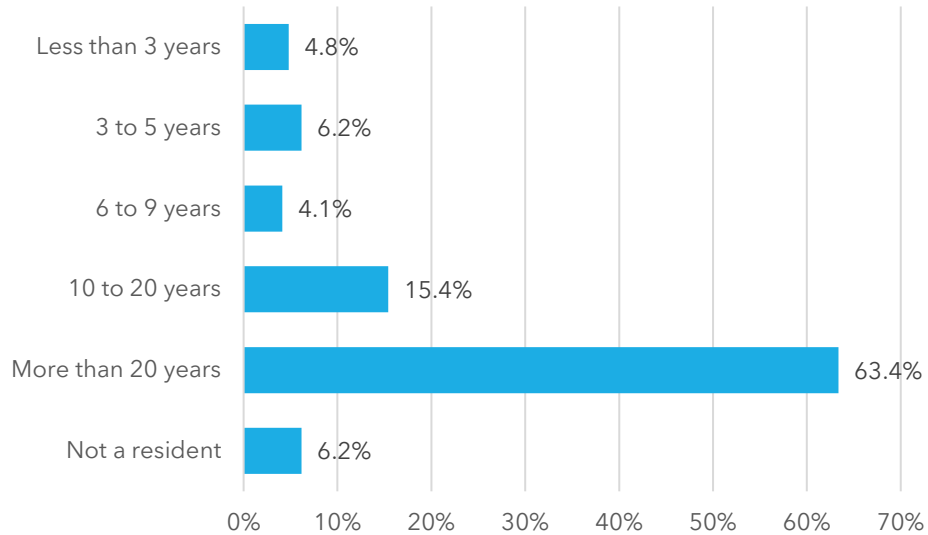
- Single family home
- Ranch
- Paradise
- (marked detached single-family home and manufactured home)
- Home is on a permanent foundation.
- (marked detached single-family home and other for prebuilt us steel home)
- (marked detached single-family home and farmstead)
- Vacant land
- Do not live in township. Farmland + barn.
- Brick
- Have business
- Mixed use. Commercial/residential
- Business

Question 2: What is your age?



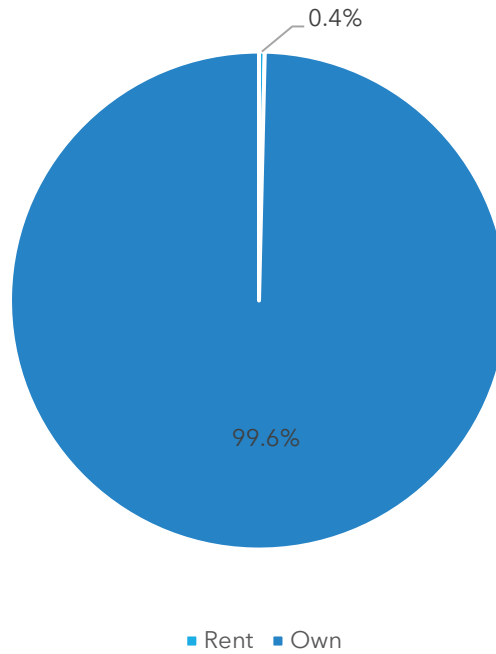
Answer Choices	Responses	
18-24	0.34%	1
25-34	3.79%	11
35-44	8.62%	25
45-54	9.66%	28
55-64	18.62%	54
65 and over	58.97%	171
	Answered	290
	Skipped	5

Question 3: How long have you lived in Bainbridge Township?



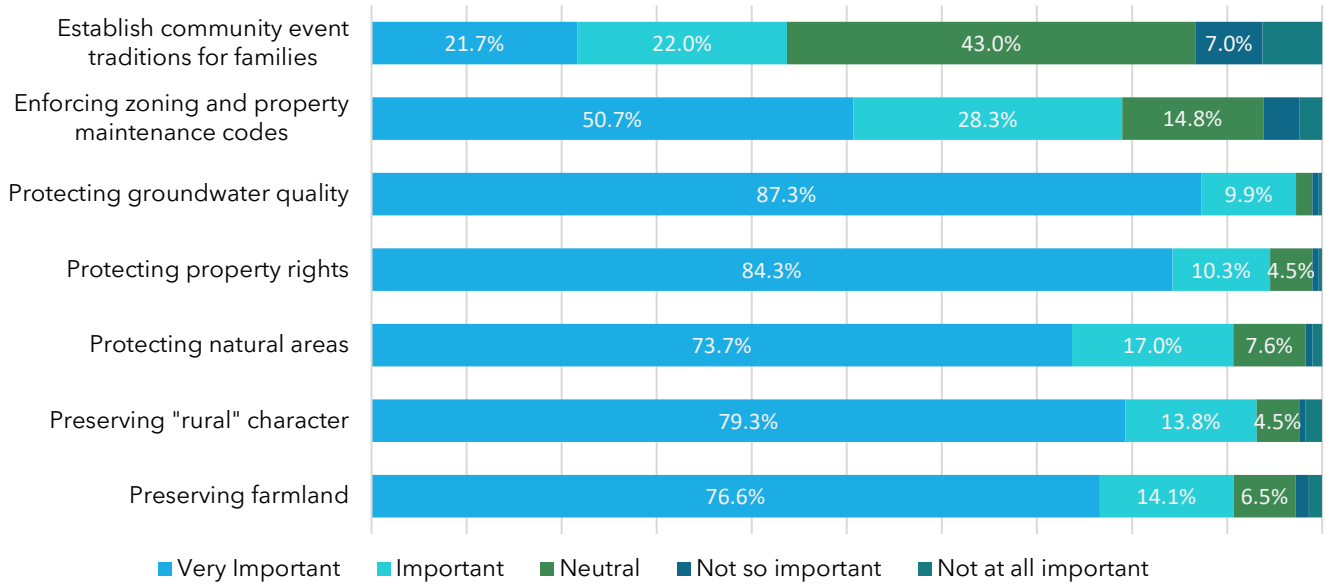
Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than 3 years	4.79%	14
3 to 5 years	6.16%	18
6 to 9 years	4.11%	12
10 to 20 years	15.41%	45
More than 20 years	63.36%	185
Not a resident	6.16%	18
	Answered	292
	Skipped	3

Question 4: Do you rent or own your Bainbridge Township residence?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Rent	0.37%	1
Own	99.63%	272
Answered		273
Skipped		22

Question 5: In terms of Township priorities, how important are the following?

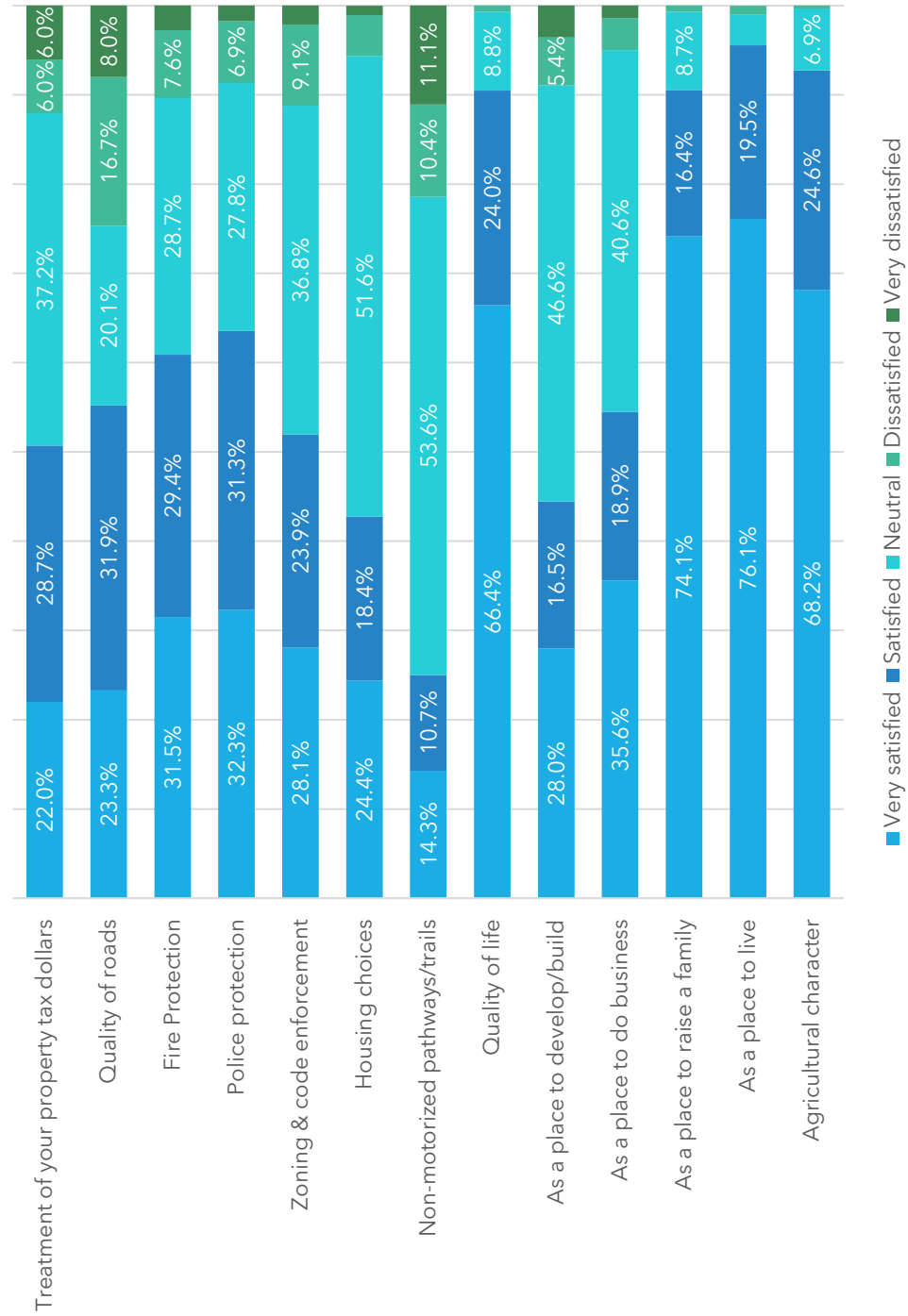


	Very Important		Important		Neutral		Not so important		Not at all important		Total	Weighted Average
Preserving farmland	76.63%	223	14.09%	41	6.53%	19	1.37%	4	1.37%	4	291	4.63
Preserving "rural" character	79.31%	230	13.79%	40	4.48%	13	0.69%	2	1.72%	5	290	4.68
Protecting natural areas	73.70%	213	16.96%	49	7.61%	22	0.69%	2	1.04%	3	289	4.62
Protecting property rights	84.25%	246	10.27%	30	4.45%	13	0.68%	2	0.34%	1	292	4.77
Protecting groundwater quality	87.33%	255	9.93%	29	1.71%	5	0.68%	2	0.34%	1	292	4.83
Enforcing zoning and property maintenance codes	50.69%	147	28.28%	82	14.83%	43	3.79%	11	2.41%	7	290	4.21
Establish community event traditions for families	21.68%	62	22.03%	63	43.01%	123	6.99%	20	6.29%	18	286	3.46
Other (please specify)	See below										23	N/A
											Answered	293
											Skipped	2

Other Responses:

1. Repair roads - very important
2. Lower property taxes - very important
3. Limited R-2 zoning - very important
4. No changes to the current agricultural setting/view - very important
5. No housing developments
6. Good old (stop) boy system
7. WIFI - very important
8. Green energy planning - very important
9. No equality BS in our community!
10. Internet - very important
11. Whatever it takes to care - very important
12. No new development - very important
13. Allow for smaller than 1,000 sq ft homes w/ correct building codes used "costs" are too high for + 1,000 sq ft.
14. Restoring native habitats - very important
15. Internet service - very important
16. Freedom - very important
17. Restricting new homes + businesses in our residential area. Drugs are a problem 2 houses down. - very important
18. Street light Millburg Drive corner
19. Forest - very important
20. Internet access - very important
21. Maintain minimum lot size/property split requirements.
22. Extend water, sewer & natural gas availability - very important.
23. Property assessments and neighbors that won't get land surveys but insist on encroaching on mine.

Question 6: How satisfied are you with the following aspects of Bainbridge Township?

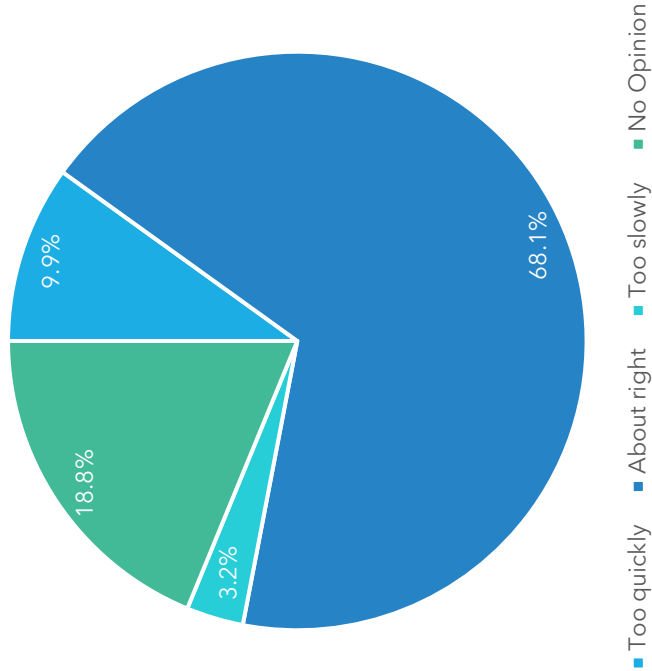


	Very satisfied		Satisfied		Neutral		Dissatisfied		Very dissatisfied		Total	Weighted Average
Agricultural character	68.17%	197	24.57%	71	6.92%	20	0.35%	1	0.00%	0	289	4.61
As a place to live	76.11%	223	19.45%	57	3.41%	10	1.02%	3	0.00%	0	293	4.71
As a place to raise a family	74.13%	212	16.43%	47	8.74%	25	0.70%	2	0.00%	0	286	4.64
As a place to do business	35.59%	100	18.86%	53	40.57%	114	3.56%	10	1.42%	4	281	3.84
As a place to develop/build	27.96%	78	16.49%	46	46.59%	130	5.38%	15	3.58%	10	279	3.6
Quality of life	66.43%	188	24.03%	68	8.83%	25	0.71%	2	0.00%	0	283	4.56
Non-motorized pathways/trails	14.29%	40	10.71%	30	53.57%	150	10.36%	29	11.07%	31	280	3.07
Housing choices	24.38%	69	18.37%	52	51.59%	146	4.59%	13	1.06%	3	283	3.6
Zoning & code enforcement	28.07%	80	23.86%	68	36.84%	105	9.12%	26	2.11%	6	285	3.67
Police protection	32.29%	93	31.25%	90	27.78%	80	6.94%	20	1.74%	5	288	3.85
Fire Protection	31.49%	91	29.41%	85	28.72%	83	7.61%	22	2.77%	8	289	3.79
Quality of roads	23.26%	67	31.94%	92	20.14%	58	16.67%	48	7.99%	23	288	3.46
Treatment of your property tax dollars	21.99%	62	28.72%	81	37.23%	105	6.03%	17	6.03%	17	282	3.55
Other (please specify)	See below											27
											Answered	295
											Skipped	0

Other Responses:

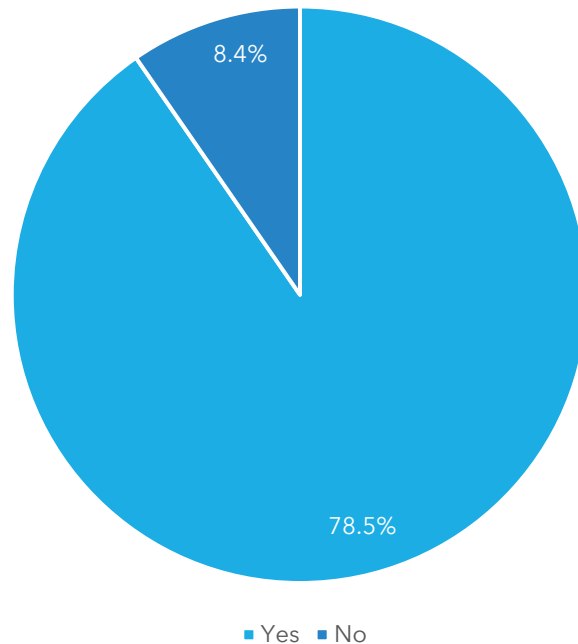
1. Ambulance - very dissatisfied
2. Voting integrity (as long as you keep the voter logs current and require ID) - satisfied
3. Where are the nonmotorized trails?
4. WTF - very dissatisfied
5. Opting out Medic 1 services - very dissatisfied
6. Neighbors know neighbors (each other)
7. Roadside mowing + winter plowing - very dissatisfied
8. Reduce lot sales to 1 acre - satisfied
9. Internet access - dissatisfied
10. Don't live in Township
11. Leaning toward commercialization - very dissatisfied
12. Education system - dissatisfied
13. Roads are s***. My house was taxed same as neighbor and would not listen!
14. Keep on helping - very satisfied
15. No paths
16. Landfill is growing - very dissatisfied
17. Not in favor of development
18. Allowing business in rural areas we don't want - very dissatisfied.
19. ATV/ORV - road right of way - dissatisfied
20. Internet access - very dissatisfied
21. Ambulances - very dissatisfied
22. Broadband - very dissatisfied
23. More residential needed - satisfied
24. Roads + grass bad need improvements
25. lease make ORV laws
26. We need Township board members that are not closed minded. Very dissatisfied.
27. Building inspector - very dissatisfied

Question 7: Regarding the growth of the Township, do you think Bainbridge Township is growing:



Too quickly		About right	Too slowly	No Opinion	Total	Weighted Average
9.93%	28	68.09%	3.19%	18.79%	282	2.08
					Answered	282
					Skipped	13

Question 8: Is Bainbridge Township heading in the right direction?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	78.49%	197
No	8.37%	21
Please explain		93
	Answered	218
	Skipped	77

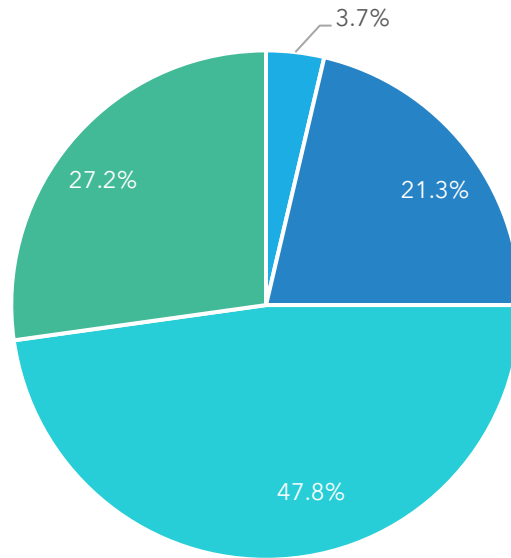
Responses:

1. Neutral
2. Not forward thinking
3. Not sure
4. By keeping the current standards
5. Compared to what! Depends on age of population.
6. Maintaining rural atmosphere
7. Focus should remain on keeping farms successful.
8. As long as we avoid subdividing
9. Don't know
10. Not sure
11. Not sure

12. The survey is a great start!
13. Neutral - happy with Township now do not want new development
14. Agricultural community
15. Development - stop! We don't need a dollar general. Roads are horrible.
16. Not a lot of change noticed other than Dollar General
17. Growing too quickly
18. Think so
19. Keep it farm land - rural - country
20. No comment
21. Maintain agricultural heritage
22. Too new to know
23. As long as it remains agricultural
24. I don't want to see any changes.
25. 10 min drive in any direction takes you to a larger town - keep our area peaceful.
26. We like living here as a place to raise a young family.
27. Don't live in Township
28. As it is now
29. The small-town feel
30. Unknown
31. I believe so....
32. Maintain road character
33. Need high speed broadband
34. No need for any more stores here.
35. We are losing our rural characteristic.
36. I don't know
37. Not sure - has changed a lot - rural character being lost.
38. It's just ok
39. No equality BS. What direction is needed?
40. Growing too quick
41. Agriculture
42. Keep it agricultural
43. Keep agriculture
44. Hope so
45. Someone needs to inspect for blight. Neighbor no permits for electrical-deck etc.
46. Landfill is growing
47. No need for commercial development
48. Don't know
49. No opinion
50. Keeping it a farming community
51. No need to change
52. No opinion
53. Loss of farmland
54. No opinion

55. Still maintaining rural character
56. Cost prohibits expansion for farmers - smaller residences needed.
57. Needs more walkable spaces
58. Keep agricultural if possible
59. Neutral
60. Please don't add more dollar generals. We love our farms!
61. I am satisfied living here.
62. Haven't heard anything ??????.
63. I think so
64. Boat ramp on Pipestone Lake is dangerous + disgraceful.
65. I enjoy the way it is now.
66. Good leadership
67. Conservative farmers
68. "Go Blue"
69. Allowing Dollar General on Territorial Road
70. Maybe. I don't like people working car repair business in their area. Home area - back yards.
71. Fiber internet
72. But people have junk yards behind houses + no one does anything.
73. What is the direction? Any more Dollar General type stores?
74. Do not know
75. Needs to be consistent enforcement of codes - many properties are eye sores + unsafe.
76. No opinion
77. Preserving farm land
78. Slow & steady
79. Seems traditional but proactive.
80. Family farms
81. Continue the path
82. Generally OK - More residential needed
83. Andy is great
84. Don't know
85. Taxes are steadily increasing for those who have not made any improvements & no one ever comes out to look @ inside or out.
86. keeping rural
87. Not sure what direction it is heading
88. Property taxes too high!
89. We seem to be keeping the "rural" ????
90. Agriculture friendly
91. Doesn't seem to be heading anywhere at all. Very stagnant.
92. Don't see all of township!
93. Satisfied with leadership

Question 9: Bainbridge Township needs more commercial zoning.



■ Strongly Agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total	Weighted Average
3.68%	10	21.32 %	58	47.79 %	130	27.21%	74	272	2.01
								Answered	272
								Skipped	23

Question 10: Please use the space below to write any additional thoughts about planning and development in Bainbridge Township:

1. We should invest more in our roads.
2. No factory farming in Bainbridge Township.
Please repair roads.
3. Farming is changing/The smaller ones are going broke/it's going to end up all big corporate-owned farms
4. #9. not sure
My wife and I downsized from 11 acres with house 2700 sq ft, 30x50 pole barn, 3 car garage to 7121 E Napier Ave with 1.5 acres, 1800 sq ft, 2 car attached garage, 25x30 pole barn and we are paying close to the same property taxes - within about 100.00 dollars. We thought we would retire here but are strongly planning on moving back to Cass Co. or possibly out of Michigan altogether. We feel the taxes are too high in this Township and that Michigan is not using our taxes wisely. (Thank you for your time & work) (269-***-****) Sincerely Jeff & Beverly Lawson.
5. How about cleaning up the junk yards.
1) on Meadowbrook Road
2) on Napier Ave
If you need to know more 269-***-****
6. This is a beautiful area with the farms, farmer markets and mom-and-pop shops. I feel chain stores are unnecessary because it is not too far in any direction to reach one.
7. If we have non-motorized trails, where are they? Who has a list?
8. Country is the county for a reason and those that choose to live in it should respect it not add bike paths, businesses, etc.
9. Additional commercial development. Small growth - to maintain rural character!
10. Township does not currently maintain a 5 year park plan or have any parks or community outreach opportunity, by choice of township board = unacceptable!!
11. I would love to see more leisure activities available, like a bike trail.
12. I would like to see the ORV ordinance passed.
13. What is the status of Bainbridge Township ambulance service contract?

14. It is a nice Agricultural community. Don't care to see developments or commercial/industrial.
15. Thank you for funding the Coloma Library. We love it. Thank you also, for the emphasis on agriculture here. It's beautiful to live and farm here.
16. Better fire protection for the north part of the Township! Don't waste farm land!
17. We would love more safe walking paths. I would love to see more local events in our Township! Also, maybe a newsletter w/ happenings in the Township? (Could be emailed) We have children and would love events to attend!
18. We do not want new development. Do not want less than 10-acre parcel.
19. We are grateful for the hard work of out township officials. The quality of life & care of the area are amazing. Thank you.
20. No subdivisions.
21. Would love to see Bainbridge continue to invest in our agricultural practices, as well as continuing to preserve + maintain agriculture within the Township.
22. Zoning and code enforcement is inconsistent. Road safety should be a priority. "Good old boys" run Bainbridge Township!
23. My family chose to live in Bainbridge Township for its open, rural landscape.
24. Curious where property taxes go in Township with very limited amenities.
25. Really need ambulance service through Medic 1 in the Township. Other townships are served first because of Bainbridge opting out.
26. No subdivisions/trailer parks. People live in Bainbridge Township because it is a quiet rural place with except tractors which is very nice. Need to keep it county with not much growth! Keep Bainbridge Township w/ not much growth. Everyone likes the elbow room of not having crowded houses.
27. Quality of life neutral cross off
28. Very frustrated that fire protection switched to Sister Lakes rather than N. Berrien - Coloma which is so much closer + well-worth extra \$!
29. Need better internet options.
30. Would like zoning + land use issues decided on case-by-case basis. I live on land that has been owned by my family for over 100 years.
31. Never really hear about what's going on in Township can't really answer 7,8,9

32. Drain that was supposed to be fix Not! Weeds + cattails growing in steam. Pea stones for drainage not good. What waste of money.
33. Property taxes are getting out of hand. Won't be long and all residents won't be able to afford to keep houses.
34. Although a lot of neighboring townships are building bike paths and parks, I don't want to see Bainbridge Township doing this. People who own acreage don't need these things and we can't compete with these parks on the lakes + rivers nearby. Don't reduce minimum lot size needed to build a house.
35. D-e-f-g-i - we are not happy that a 4-acre parcel was split to add a dollar store. We do not want farm land turned into commercial. That takes away our quality of life.
36. I only spend a few weeks a year in Bainbridge Township, not enough knowledge on most issues. I do think planning and land use questions are important.
37. We were disappointed when MEC dropped plans to provide internet service to our address. Hopefully another ISP offers service in the future.
38. Rural character must be retained. Selling road frontage for commercial or house is NOT desired. This is Bainbridge - NOT Benton! Thank you.
39. Hope there are not going to change the 10-acre/10-year plan. Really want to make sure no harmful pesticides for large farming.
40. Internet connectivity will be a necessary enhancement to the rural areas to ensure the community remains viable.
41. Keep status quo
42. We are not Benton Township. If you want more commercial businesses around you move to Benton Township.
43. No apartment complexes! Keep as is "Rural".
44. Preserving farmland is crucial! Also - implement solar/wind options to land owners so that it isn't intrusive to the rural feel!
45. Very dissatisfied w/ water commissioner installing unnecessary drains and assessing property owners on Pipestone Lake. Thus, increasing muck and algae growth. He is also very unresponsive. The job should be given to the secretary.
46. I feel we have very high property tax and no services! Also, why can't the Township make the property owners take care of their property.

47. This is county life and needs to stay country! Do not bring Equity Equality BS to this community! Your Scott Anderson does not do the taxes fairly and no checks or balances to stop him!
48. Our property is on Pipestone Lake. For years we have tried to get out boat launch repaired. Help has been non-existent.
49. We don't need any non-motor pathways on our roads.
50. Thanks for all you do for us always!
51. *We don't need bike lanes or walking trails
*Any job over \$500.00 should have 3 bids
52. I love the agricultural part of living here. Don't build so much. (Housing or businesses that are commercial)
53. We don't need bike paths
Too much traffic already
54. If I want to dig a pond on my property, I want the right to do so.
55. Need to address run off standing water by Mellburg Drive. Bugs and animal issue due to standing water.
56. Blight in yards not being addressed. Easements for shared driveways should not happen as new owners move in.
57. Carmody Road has turned into a highway due to Daisy Farm on corner of Carmody + Hartford/Keller Roads.
58. The rural undisturbed nature of the Township is what is so desirable to so many people who live here and visit our area.
59. 1. Taxes are getting out of hand. Should be decreased if no kids in school/retirement age.
2. Roads need to be resurfaced
3. Certain property owners should not have to pay when new drain tubes placed.
60. It would be nice to know what goes on at a Township board meeting.
61. Roads could be better, dirt roads could be paved or at least better maintained.
62. Agri-tourism should be a priority: farmstands, event venues, wineries/breweries.
63. Making it legal to ride side by side on secondary roads.
64. People move to the country for a reason! They want it to stay country!

65. Zoning and enforcement are not handled evenly. Preferential treatment for some. Health Dept rules are insane.
66. Keep subdivisions out.
67. Believe Township well run - amazed all the different crops raised. Love rural character.
68. Allow for sound building practices for variance requests. Not everyone wants a McMansion. Ease the variance request for empty nesters.
69. We need more sidewalks. Road with sidewalks so we can walk and bike easier and safer.
70. Please keep our quiet life out of the hands of another franchise retail store. More local businesses.
71. Was not happy with the addition of the Dollar General. Want to preserve rural feel in our community Family Business.
72. I think zoning should be at least 10 acres not 5.
73. No where to walk or bike
74. Someone is going to get hurt at the boat ramp on Pipestone Lake. You only have a few lakes in the Township + you can't maintain them.
75. We would very much like to see an ordinance put in allowing ORV's on Township roads not the state highways.
76. Depends where commercial zoning is done.
77. Need an ordinance to enforce BARKING DOGS - animals tied up outside which bark for hours. No county or state laws to take action. Loud music- police can take immediate action. Dogs barking all night, no action can be taken by police.
78. Nicest place to be/live in Berrian County. Orchards, Vineyards, Farm land, Conservative People.
79. N/A
80. Allowing Dollar General on Territorial was wrong. All Township positions should be voter decided instead of insider selections by a very few people.
81. There are a few homes, who need paint cleanup, trashy. For instance, Spiaks Corners, the house next to the store. East.
82. More parks
83. We feel it is good the way it is. Love it here!

84. When applying for a home business people need to be upfront and honest about all the rules + regulations. I was told a lot of false information.
85. We don't want businesses to come into our peaceful communities. We also don't want new home building bringing in a lot of people. We like our quiet peaceful area.
86. I like it there leave it alone, we like county living don't change that.
87. I like things just the way they are. Thank you
88. We like it just how it is currently. Appreciate the tax amount per year - it's fair.
89. Appreciate the move to bring high speed internet to the Township.
90. Internet access!!
We've invested a significant amount of time, money + effort to homestead our property only to have a dilapidated, unhealthy, rental property right across the street! Box spring propped on tree, Renters moved a camper on site + multiple families "living" there. I'm concerned about drug activity too.
91. Hate subdivisions, control them to very limited areas.
No solar or wind farms.
MEC is too costly.
92. Keep government and development at a minimum. All relevant questions for people living in the Township.
93. ARPA funds used to increase broadband, but not at our address yet - when? Would love natural gas option.
94. It has been a farming community of generations. It needs to stay that way. That is what makes it special, what makes it great!
95. Taxes are outrageous.
96. We seem to see more residents who don't mow at all or infrequently.
97. More bike paths/sidewalks and safe ways for families to travel and enjoy the outdoors without using a motorized vehicle.
98. Last I knew - five acres was minimum to build on - when I built it was 10 acres - hope the 5-acre ordinance does not change.
99. Please make ORV laws that aren't the same as golf carts. Huge difference!
100. In general zoning boards are overly restrictive and push their own agendas.
Property owners should be given more rights of how they use their property.

101. I have been to the Township's meeting in regard to taxes and they act like nothing can be done. Also, the fire department takes anyone's word for reporting fires/and then they come out to a well-maintained brush fire that is controlled and charge \$1500 not to even pull in my drive.
102. We don't need more Dollar Stores
103. Farmland + rural county drain's need improvement.
104. The Dollar Store is an abomination!!!!
I cannot answer question 7 (question 8 for the online survey). I do not know what "growth" is being asked. Growth of more farm land, that is good. Growth of government - funded housing is bad. Growth of non-family run business like the Dollar Store is bad. Maybe the Township shouldn't grow? Maintain and stay steady. Growth does not always lead to good outcomes.
105. I would like to see more code enforcement for some properties that are ran down and have a lot of junk and cans on the property.
106. A lot of residents own side-by-sides. Would like to officially allow on all side roads in BT.
107. I feel if someone needs to have a small business to help with quality of life for their family they should be allowed to.
108. Preserving farmland critical but difficult when # of farmers seems to be declining. How can we encourage more farmers to Township?
109. Good Job!
110. Dedicated bicycle path
Development for families
111. We love our Township & how it represents "rural" America. Keep up the street work! Thank you.

Planning Implications and Trends

The following section contains a summary of trends and other findings that emerged from the community survey results.

About the Respondents

- The majority of the survey participants reported living in an owner-occupied, single-family home within the Township for more than 20 years.
- The majority of the respondents were over the age of 65, with the second largest age group being between the ages of 55 and 64.
- These results give us a view of the population as a whole in Bainbridge Township. From these results, we would infer that over 75% of the Township's long-time resident population is of retirement or soon-to-be retirement age. These numbers may provide some insight into the Township's potential need for future land uses related to aging in place and care for a large aging population.

Community Priorities

- 87.3% of respondents reported that the highest of important priorities was protecting groundwater quality, followed by 84.3% that felt that protecting property rights was very important in prioritizing. And third, 79.3% of the respondents report the importance of prioritizing the "rural character" of the Township.
- This question also allowed respondents to write in a response that wasn't listed. From the list of write-in responses, there is a wide variety of priorities deemed very important to the respondents. The top three areas were reported among the respondents as "very important":
 - Internet service
 - Restrictions on new housing developments and minimum lot size requirements
 - Utilities (natural gas, municipal water, and sanitary sewer)

Satisfaction with Life in Bainbridge Township

- The majority of respondents report being very satisfied with the Township as a place to live (76.1%) followed by very satisfied with the Township as a place to raise a family (74.1%) and the agricultural character (68.2%).
- Conversely, areas that the respondents report as being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, include non-motorized pathways/trails (21.5%), quality of roads (24.7%), and zoning and code enforcement (11.23%).
- This question also included a write-in response. The following were reported as the top three write-in comments related to being "dissatisfied":
 - Non-motorized trails and pathways
 - Ambulance services
 - Internet access
 - Quality of Township roads;

Community Growth

- 68.1% of respondents reported that the Township is growing too quickly.

While the survey question was not specific to the type of growth (i.e., residential or non-residential/commercial), the results seem to support the respondents' overwhelming desire to keep the community rural and limit the growth of commercial land uses. This inference is further supported by the response from Question 9, which would indicate that the majority of respondents would disagree that more commercial zoning is needed in the Township.

Direction of Bainbridge Township

Since this question is relatively vague, it is difficult to discern from the yes or no results if respondents have the same view of "the right direction" (78.5% reported "yes", and 8.37% reported "no"). Because the interpretation of this question may differ greatly among respondents, we have been able to gather slightly more insight from the write-in response associated with this question. We received 93 write-in responses from the 218 respondents to this question (77 people skipped this question).

A majority of the write-in responses reference the rural character of the Township and the desire to keep the agricultural aspect of the Township. However, some comments appear to imply that the rural feel is being lost and that the Township has changed a lot.

While we cannot infer much information from these results, the words of the many respondents are valuable nonetheless and appear to give the perception that the respondents care deeply about the direction of their community.

Commercial Zoning

- 75% of respondents report that they disagree that the Township needs more commercial zoning.

This number further supports the respondents' desire to preserve the Township's rural and agricultural character and land uses.

BAINBRIDGE TOWNSHIP
2024 MASTER PLAN