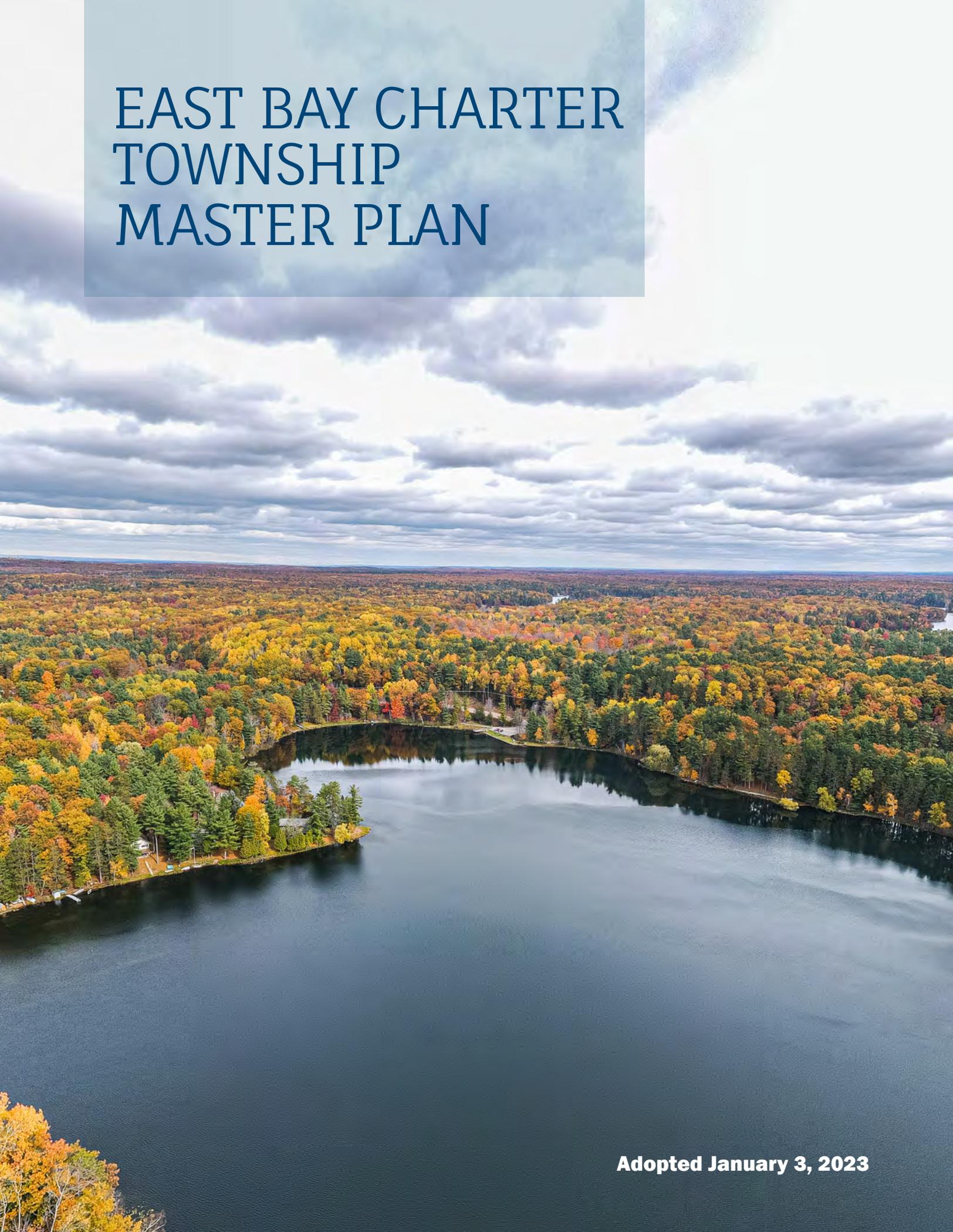


# EAST BAY CHARTER TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN



**Adopted January 3, 2023**





**East Bay Charter Township  
Planning Commission**

**Resolution PC-2023-01  
Adoption of the East Bay Charter Township 2022 Master Plan**

At a regular meeting of the Planning Commission for the Charter Township of East Bay, Grand Traverse County, Michigan, held in the Township Hall located at 1965 N. Three Mile Road, Traverse City, Michigan, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of January 2023.

PRESENT: Ferguson, Gonzalez, Richardson, Leonard, Edly, Wassom, and Walters

ABSENT: None

The following resolution was offered by Walters and supported by Gonzalez and passed 7-0.

Whereas in 2020, East Bay Charter Township authorized the preparation of a Comprehensive Master Plan to establish goals and guidelines to facilitate the direction, redevelopment and growth of the Township into the future; and;

Whereas the Planning Commission, in concert with Planning & Zoning staff, the Board of Trustees, and with input from a cross section of local agencies, and the resident public, has undertaken an extensive evaluation of demographic data, land use patterns, economic development trends, natural features, and municipal interests essential to the development of a comprehensive master plan; and;

Whereas the aforesaid information has been compiled into a Master Plan document that, in addition to other purposes, will serve to establish a pattern for land use to guide development and redevelopment, provide a legal basis for zoning and other regulations, and a basis for amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map, preserve or enhance natural resources, identify and recommend various infrastructure improvements and options, and address the desires and needs of the residents, businesses and property owners; and

Whereas on May 17, 2022, pursuant to the requirements of Section 43, Preparation and Adoption of Master Plan of Article 3, of Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the East Bay Township Planning Commission approved the Master Plan and forwarded it to the Board of Trustees for public release; and

Whereas on June 13, 2022, the Board of Trustees unanimously agreed to send the draft Master Plan out for Public Review; and

Whereas on September 20, 2022 pursuant to the requirements of Section 43 sub section (3), Preparation and Adoption of Master Plan of Article 3, of Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the Planning Commission conducted a final public hearing on the proposed Comprehensive Master Plan; and

Whereas, in fulfillment of the requirements of Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008 Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the East Bay Charter Township Planning Commission has on this date, January 3, 2023, made the determination that the Master Plan document will facilitate the overall future planning and redevelopment objectives of East Bay Charter Township; therefore, be it

*Resolved* by the Planning Commission of East Bay Charter Township that:

1. The proposed Comprehensive Master Plan for East Bay Charter Township is hereby adopted and that preparation of the final Comprehensive Master Plan document is hereby directed and scheduled for final distribution; and
2. That in accordance with Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, East Bay Charter Township shall, no later than five years from this date, review the Master Plan and determine whether to commence the procedure to amend the Plan or adopt a new Plan.

Upon roll call vote:

YES: Ferguson, Gonzalez, Richardson, Leonard, Edly, Wassom, and Walters

NO: None

ABSTAIN: None

**THIS EAST BAY CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION PC-2023-01, APPROVED ON THE 3<sup>rd</sup> DAY OF JANUARY 2023,  
IS DECLARED ADOPTED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIRMAN  
AND DECLARED CERTIFIED BY THE SECRETARY.**

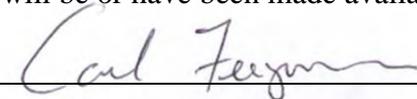


Dan Leonard, Chair

01.03.23

Date

I, the undersigned, the Secretary of the Planning Commission of Charter Township of East Bay, Grand Traverse County, Michigan, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of certain proceedings taken by said municipality of East Bay Charter Township at its Planning Commission meeting, relative to the adoption of the resolution therein set forth, that said meeting was conducted and public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in full compliance with the Open Meetings Act, being Act 267 of 1976, Public Acts of Michigan, and that the minutes of said meeting were kept and will be or have been made available as required by said Act.



Carl Ferguson, Secretary

01.03.23

Date



The 2023 Master Plan for East Bay Charter Township involved significant effort of Boards and Commissions, stakeholders, and citizens of the community. Without this support, completion of this plan would not have been possible.

## PLANNING COMMISSION

DAN LEONARD, *Chair*

PAUL GONZALEZ, *Vice Chair*

CARL FERGUSON, *Secretary*

MINDY WALTERS, *Township Board Liason*

RHONDA WASSOM, *Commissioner*

RENEE EDLY, *Commissioner*

STEVEN RICHARDSON, *Commissioner*

ROBERT TUBBS, *Past Chair*

JOHN SYCH, *Past Chair*

TED HENTSCHEL, *Past Commissioner*

JUDY NEMITZ, *Past Secretary*

TRACEY BARTLETT, *Past Township Board Liason*

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BETH FRIEND, *Supervisor and Chair*

SUSANNE COURTADE, *Clerk*

TRACEY BARTLETT, *Treasurer*

MINDY WALTERS, *Trustee*

GLEN LILE, *Trustee*

MATT COURTADE, *Trustee*

MATT COOK, *Trustee*

Special acknowledgement to technical assistance provided by Land Information Access Association (LIAA) and State Craft in the form of mapping, data analysis, and focus group facilitation.

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East Bay Township Water Tower  
Photo courtesy of Jacob Dean.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

The process of creating a Master Plan asks a community to pause from its busy daily operations of running the Township, and look to the future. As a policy document that comprehensively inventories and analyzes the elements that makes East Bay Township tick, it is essential to include as many stakeholders in the process as possible. While much of the content of the 2022 Master Plan remains unchanged, the planning process holistically engaged the residents and stakeholders of East Bay Township.

### WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, enables municipalities to write a Master Plan that broadly guides development to meet current and future needs and promotes the health, safety, and general welfare of its residents.

Through community engagement, the Master Plan identifies key challenges the residents face, but focuses on finding a shared vision and goals that could help achieve that vision in perpetuity. More specifically, the Master Plan collates a vision statement, an Action Plan with specific strategies, tools for making coordinated land-use decisions, assessment of current programs, services, structures, and infrastructure, into one document to inform its citizenry on how the Township will plan for its future.

### RELATIONSHIP TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE

The Master Plan is not a binding agreement but rather a planning framework. The Zoning Ordinance, on the other hand, is local land use law. The Zoning Ordinance is a set of regulations that provide the details for how and where development can locate to exacting specifications. The Zoning Ordinance is how the Master Plan gets implemented; as outlined in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008, a direct relationship between the two documents is required. For example, if it emerges through community engagement and research that the housing types available do not adequately serve the population, then a vision statement in the Master Plan could read “to plan for housing types that meet all the preferences of all age groups, income levels, and disabilities.” To ensure this vision is implemented, a municipality would revisit the zoning ordinance to determine if the land use code is preventing a particular type of development through height restrictions or lot size requirements. Only when the two documents are in sync can they be effective planning tools.



A sign at the Three Mile Trail Open House in 2021, showing attendees the walking and biking distances to various destinations throughout the Township. Photo courtesy of Gary Howe.

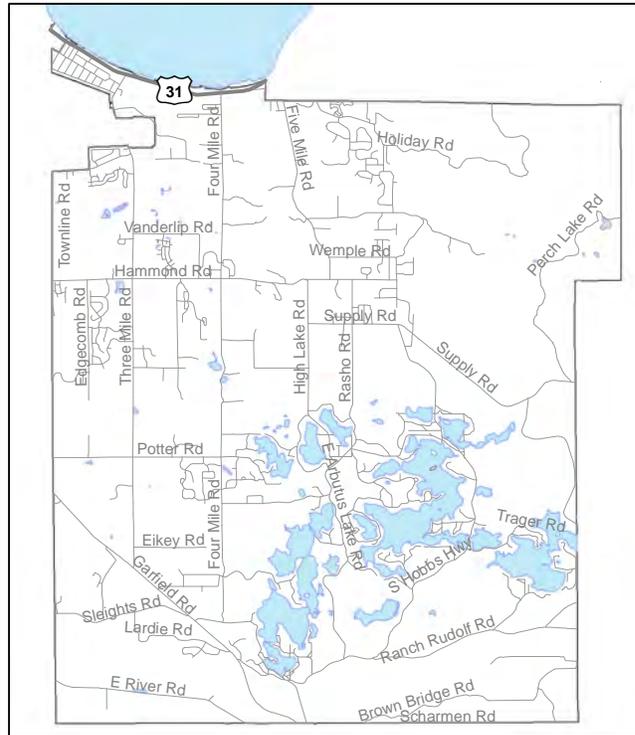
## REGIONAL CONTEXT

East Bay Charter Township is located in Grand Traverse County and lies in the northwest portion of Michigan’s lower peninsula. East Bay Charter Township is an important part of the greater Grand Traverse community. Located adjacent to the City of Traverse City and along the southern shoreline of Grand Traverse Bay, the Township includes a broad range of land forms and development. While the predominate form of development is residential in nature, the rolling topography, dense woodlands, inland lakes and, of course, Grand Traverse Bay, lend a resort and recreational character to the community.

### EAST BAY CHARTER TOWNSHIP, GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY

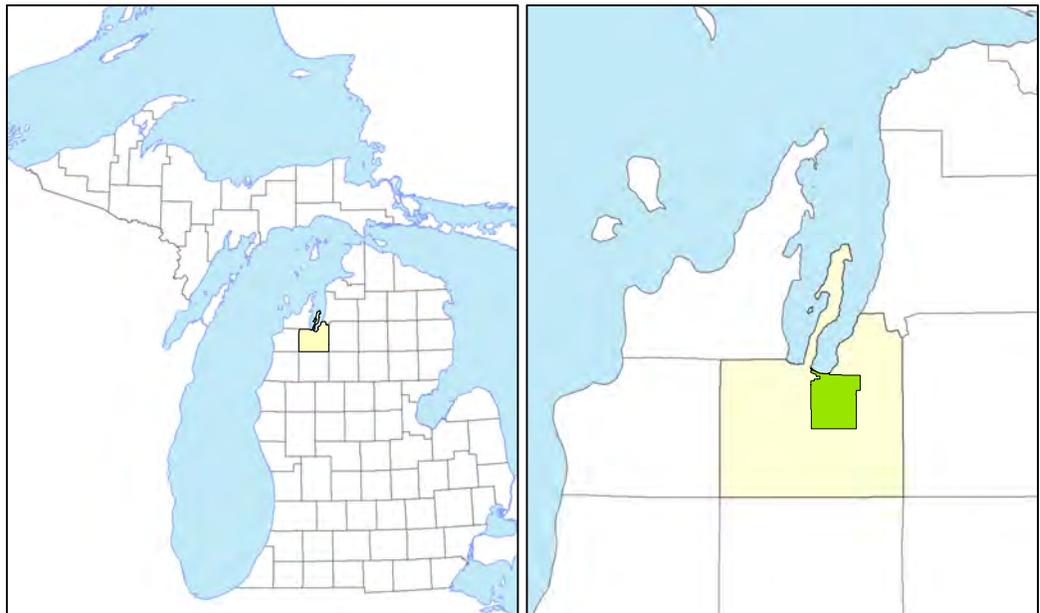
East Bay Township is located in the north central portion of Grand Traverse County, with frontage along East Grand Traverse Bay.

Location of East Bay Township within Michigan



Data Sources:  
 East Bay Township,  
 Grand Traverse County,  
 Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared September 2020  
 for East Bay Township



## RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING PLANS AND STUDIES

This Master Plan adds to East Bay Township's strong history of planning studies over the years. These efforts have analyzed the community's natural features, built characteristics, infrastructure, and economic potential, and made recommendations for improvement in these specific areas. This plan draws on recommendations from these strategic documents, codifies the information in them, and uses them as the basis for further action. The following plans and documents were used to frame this master plan update.

### EAST BAY TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN, 2015

The last update for the East Bay Township Master Plan occurred in 2015. This Master Plan sets a strong framework for targeted growth and development as well as natural resource preservation. It presents the vision, goals and strategies to guide the Township toward a desired and achievable future for the next ten to twenty years. Its focus is on natural resources protection, wise land use, attractive housing and neighborhoods, good jobs and economic development and public services that meet the needs of local residents. The updated Future Land Use (FLU) Map remains virtually unchanged compared with the 2015 FLU Map.

### EAST BAY TOWNSHIP PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN, 2019-2023

East Bay Township's Parks & Recreation Master Plan, commonly referred to as a "5-Year Recreation Plan," was adopted in 2019 and serves as a basis for priority projects and future land acquisition related to parks and recreation in East Bay Township. To be eligible to apply for Land and Water Conservation Fund, Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, and Waterways grants, a community must have an approved 5-Year Plan on file with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). East Bay Township's plan includes an inventory of existing



The 2015 Master Plan serves as a strong foundation for the updated master plan. Community input indicated many of the goals and objectives remain unchanged.

recreation resources, existing programming, gaps in facilities, and a prioritization of future projects related to parks and recreation.

### EAST BAY BEACH DISTRICT STRATEGY, 2018

The East Bay Beach District Strategy was developed in 2018 with input from local business owners and managers, Township officials, Grand Traverse County Planning Department, and other agency stakeholders. The Grand Traverse Bayshore Corridor is known by several names within East Bay Charter Township. It is generally referred to as Munson Avenue between the city limits of Traverse City at Avenue B eastward to Three Mile Road and known as US-31/M-72, east of Three Mile Road to Acme Township. The strategy includes an inventory of existing conditions, results of a visioning session

and visual preference survey, and goals and objectives as identified by stakeholders.

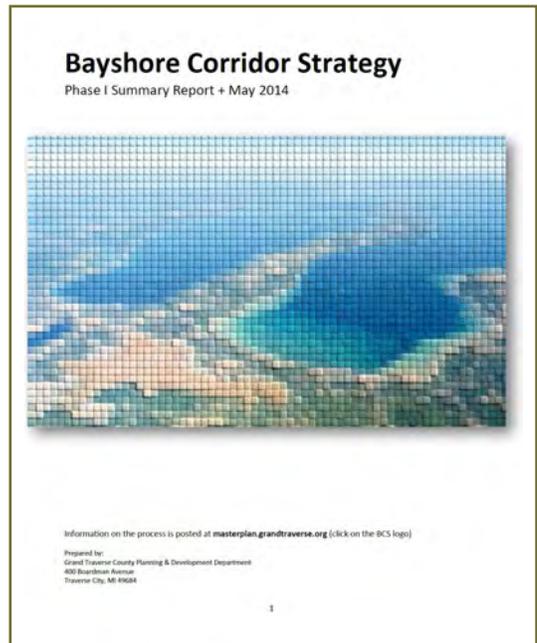
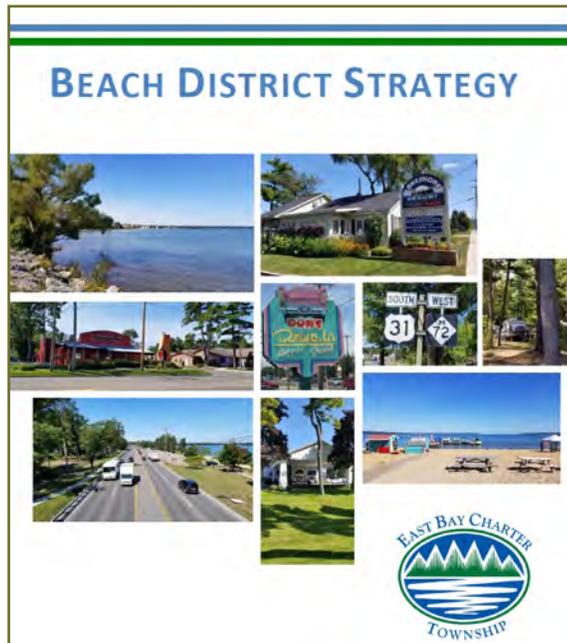
**BAYSHORE CORRIDOR STRATEGY, 2014**

The 2014 Bayshore Corridor Strategy was a collaborative planning effort for the ten-mile-long bayshore corridor linking Acme, East Bay, Traverse City, and Elmwood. Devised as a blueprint for developing a cohesive development approach for the entire corridor, the Bayshore Corridor Strategy identified values and goals, and strategies for implementing them. These strategies can be summarized as (1) identification of transportation improvements (i.e. crosswalks, bike lanes, etc.); (2) development of common zoning standards; and, (3) development of a branding and wayfinding (identity) strategy for the corridor.

**GRAND TRAVERSE BAY REGION DEVELOPMENT GUIDEBOOK, 2000**

The original guidebook was developed in 1992 with the stated goal of “maintaining and improving the quality of life of the people who live here and of those in future generations” through appropriate development practices, and has since been updated to keep with current trends in the County. The guidebook includes an inventory of existing land use and development patterns, an overview of preferred development principles, and examples of sustainable development techniques. The East Bay Township Zoning Ordinance references this document in relation to landscaping standards and other development practices.

Both the Beach District Strategy and the Bayshore Corridor Strategy were informed by significant stakeholder input and help form a foundation for placemaking and economic development goals in East Bay Township.







**PROPOSED TART TRAIL  
CORRIDOR**  
East Bay Township



COMMUNITY SERVICES

OPEN SPACE AND PRESERVES

SCHOOLS

North Arrow

Graphic Credits

Photo courtesy of Gary Howe, Three Mile Trail Public Open House.

# CHAPTER 2

## COMMUNITY VISION

Public input served as the foundation of the East Bay Township master planning effort. The goal of the public engagement process was to gather input from diverse stakeholders in a variety of ways. Township leaders worked to make the input opportunities as accessible and inviting as possible and offer a variety of different forums for collecting this input.

### EAST BAY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

The East Bay Township Planning Commission took a leadership role on facilitating an open and inclusive process for the master plan development. The planning commission met monthly over the course of the project to review existing planning documents and make recommendations for the master plan. Planning Commission meetings were open to the public and included informational presentations designed to build a better understanding of local land use and demographic trends as well as housing and economic opportunities. The Planning Commission also developed the future land use map, zoning plan, and action plan based on extensive public input and data gathering.

### COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUPS

East Bay Township hosted a series of focus groups in 2021 to inform the current update to the Township Master Plan. The Township hired a consultant to facilitate the focus groups. Five focus groups were held around the topics of families with children, business, transportation, natural resources, and senior citizens. The purpose of the focus groups was to understand the most pressing issues facing East Bay Township from the perspective of East Bay Township residents, business owners, visitors, and stakeholders.

The focus groups were held remotely via Zoom and attended as follows:

- Senior Citizens, February 9, 2021: 11 attendees
- Families with Children, May 25, 2021: 13 attendees
- Business, May 27, 2021: 5 attendees
- Transportation, June 2, 2021: 10 attendees
- Natural Resources, June 3, 2021: 21 attendees

### COMMUNITY INPUT METHODS

1. Planning Commission as Steering Committee
2. Public comment at Planning Commission Meetings
3. Community Survey
4. Community Focus Groups
5. Joint study sessions between Board of Trustees and Planning Commission



Three Mile Trail Open House in East Bay Township, photo courtesy of Gary Howe.

Several high-level themes emerged across all focus groups, including:

- The TART Trail system is widely appreciated and used. Additional non-motorized infrastructure is desired.
- Traffic speed and flow throughout the Township is a concern for many resident and business stakeholders.
- East Bay Township's mix of urban amenities and rural character make it a desirable place to live.
- Land use regulations should protect and enhance our dense woodlands, open spaces, and inland lakes.
- The Hammond and 3 Mile intersection's future land use and design generated a lot of interest, specifically including safe pedestrian crossings, community amenities, and active businesses are desired in the area.

“I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE TOWNSHIP ENCOURAGE PARKS DEVELOPMENT NEAR NEIGHBORHOODS.”

-Focus Group Participant



Volunteers serving breakfast at the annual pancake breakfast in East Bay Township.

### **FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK**

Focus group registrants were asked to provide their feedback to two questions via email prior to the focus group: what is working well and what is not working, related to raising a family with children in East Bay Township? What do you want the Township to do related to raising a family with children in East Bay Township? Next, focus group attendees were asked to consider what the Township and partners could do to support raising a family in East Bay Township. Focus group attendees were asked to share their personal experience. Oft-repeated feedback is summarized below.

1. Future pedestrian infrastructure improvements should be considered as new developments are proposed and should prioritize neighborhood connections and intersection safety.
2. Housing is needed for all income levels.
3. The process for reviewing new development requests should be thoughtful and transparent.
4. Groundwater contamination is a concern.
5. East Bay Township's character provides the right mix of urban convenience and rural space. New development should be thoughtfully targeted to maximize urban connections and minimize sprawl.
6. Increase community gathering amenities in parks.

“THE TOWNSHIP  
NEEDS MORE  
SAFE TRAILS AND  
SIDEWALKS.”

-Focus Group Participant

### **BUSINESS FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK**

Focus group registrants were asked to provide their feedback to two questions via email prior to the focus group: what is working well and what is not working, related to owning and/or operating a business in East Bay Township? Focus group attendees were asked to share ideas and priorities based on their their personal experience. Oft-repeated feedback is summarized below.

1. Develop a brand for the Township.
2. Be proactive in identifying what types of businesses are needed and how to attract them.
3. Implement buffering measures between commercial uses will improve community and corridor aesthetics.
4. Encourage the development of community center amenities at Hammond and 3 Mile intersection, including a coffee shop, farmer's market, and community gathering space at the Township offices.
5. Locate new development to protect dense woodlands, open spaces, and inland lakes.

“SENIORS ARE  
LOOKING FOR  
MORE RECREATION  
PROGRAMMING AND  
OPPORTUNITIES”

-Focus Group Participant

### **TRANSPORTATION FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK**

Focus group registrants were asked to provide their feedback to two questions via email prior to the focus group: what is working well and what is not working, related to transportation in East Bay Township? Focus group attendees were asked to share feedback based on their personal experience. Oft-repeated feedback is summarized below.

1. US-31 and Hammond ingress and egress should be thoughtfully designed to support traffic flow and safety along the corridors.
2. Need additional crosswalks on US-31 for pedestrians crossing between hotels and Lake Michigan.
3. Vehicle traffic on the US-31 corridor will slow as dense development continues along the corridor.
4. Reducing speeds on major roads and improving pedestrian crossings work together.
5. The Township should continue to partner with environmental and natural resource partners to ensure that natural resources are safeguarded and with transportation partners to minimize traffic speeds and maximize intersection efficiency.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK**

Focus group registrants were asked to provide their feedback to two questions via email prior to the focus group: what is working well and what is not working, related to natural resources in East Bay Township? Next, focus group attendees were asked to consider what the Township and partners could do related to natural resources in East Bay Township. Oft-repeated feedback is summarized:

1. The Master Plan and Zoning Ordinances are well intentioned. Enforce existing zoning rules and close loopholes.
2. Township residents are very engaged in natural resource issues.
3. Many property owners are well-meaning but don't understand what is allowed and not allowed on their property. Communicate with property owners, residents, realtors, and contractors around Township land use regulations.
4. Wetland and tributary protections are vital to ensure the Township remains rich in high-quality water resources.

## SENIOR CITIZENS FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK

Attendees began by introducing themselves and shared what interested them related to senior services. Attendees were then polled to identify when topic(s) to discuss in more detail, and in which order. These included environmental protection, recreation, transportation & economic development, and housing, as summarized below.

### DISCUSSION THEMES

1. Environmental Protection: Numerous sites on Munson Ave in need of beautification; Dark sky protection is important; Concern about lack of separation and green buffers between land uses; Education of real estate professionals regarding protection requirements; Desire to keep rural character; Consider preservation of agricultural lands, including Preservation of Development Rights program.
2. Recreation: Desire for further development and accessible access to biking, hiking, cross-country ski trails and pathways; Desire for safe biking lanes on rural roads of Township; Desire for more canoe and kayak points of access for East Bay and inland lakes; The Township is a mecca for retirees and retirees today are active and healthy; and Design recreation opportunities with elderly population in mind.
3. Transportation & Economic Development: Need more promotion of the Bayline bus service; Desire for frequency and hours of operation expanded within the Township; Traffic issues are increasing in summer and throughout year; Hammond and Three Mile has potential for better transportation and land use development, such as a roundabout and village center, respectively.
4. Housing: Acknowledgement that service workers in the Township have difficulty finding housing and more affordable options are needed; Concerns over traffic and number of new homes planned for Hammond; Desire for high quality homes while still preserving the landscape and existing trees; and tiny homes should be addressed in new Master Plan.

## COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

The East Bay Township Planning Commission developed a community survey to gather feedback for the Master Plan update. The survey was hosted online and distributed to residents, businesses, and property owners. A postcard with a link to the online survey was mailed to all residential and commercial addresses, as well as all permanent property owner addresses if they differed. Hard copies of the survey were mailed to residents upon request and made available at the Township Hall. The survey was open from November 1, 2020 through January 15, 2021. A total of 655 surveys were completed and returned.

Response rate is difficult to determine given the fact that the survey was open to residents, businesses, and property owners. The majority of respondents (84%) were year-round residents. Based on the 2015-2019 American Community Survey estimates, East Bay Township has 4,575 households.

These are groups of individuals living together who claim East Bay Township as their primary residency. A total of 546 permanent residents completed the survey. Based on this information, the response rate is estimated at 12% of all households in East Bay Township. It should be noted that this does not account for the fact that in some instances, multiple people from one household may have completed the survey. On the following pages is a detailed summary of the survey results.

### SURVEY BY THE NUMBERS

A total of 655 individuals completed the East Bay Township Community survey.

- 84% were year-round residents.
- 12% were seasonal residents.
- 4% lived elsewhere, and were likely completing the survey as a business owner or employee.

To the left is a postcard sent out to all property addresses and property owner addresses in East Bay Township in early November 2020.

## LET'S PLAN OUR FUTURE TOGETHER



Share your vision!

East Bay Charter Township is updating the Community Master Plan. The Master Plan is a blueprint for how a community aspires to grow and develop. Together, we will be making important decisions on land use, zoning, transportation, recreation, and resource conservation. Get involved today!

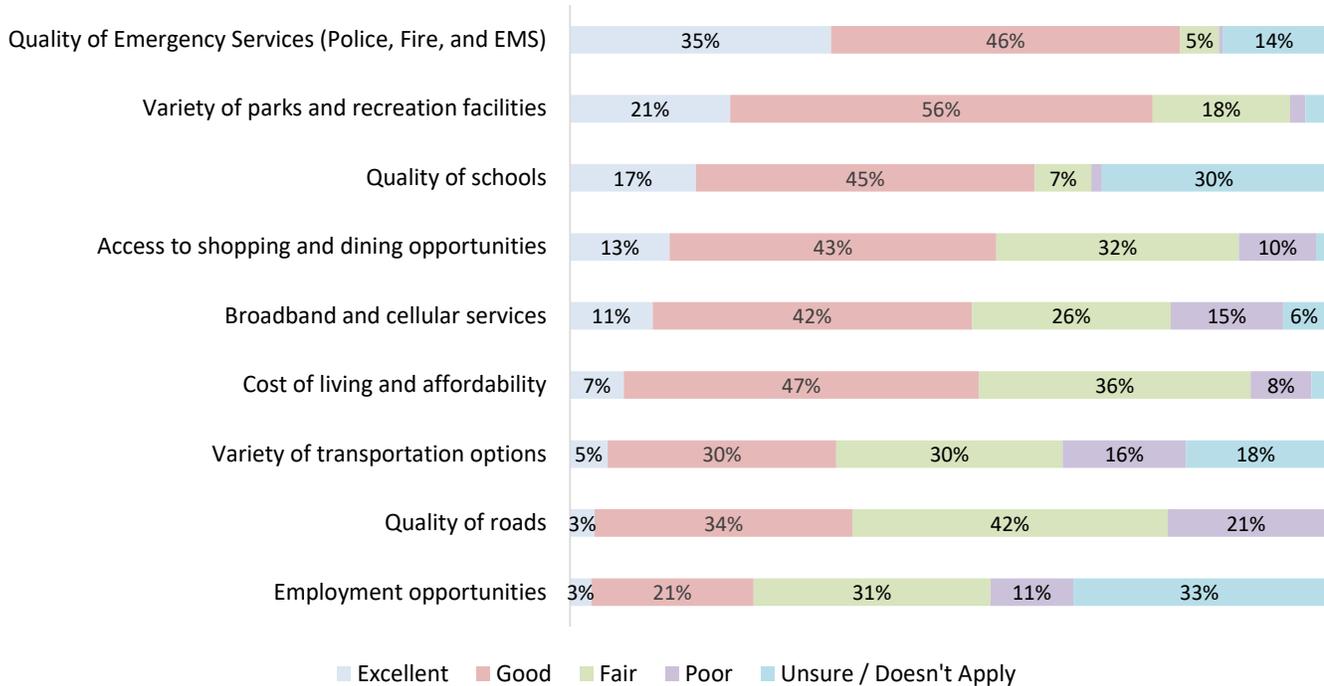
Complete the online survey by **December 18, 2020** at:

[www.surveymonkey.com/r/East-Bay-Survey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/East-Bay-Survey)

Paper versions of the survey will be available at the Township Hall. To receive a mailed copy, please call Director of Planning & Zoning Claire Karner at 231-947-8681 ext. 2.

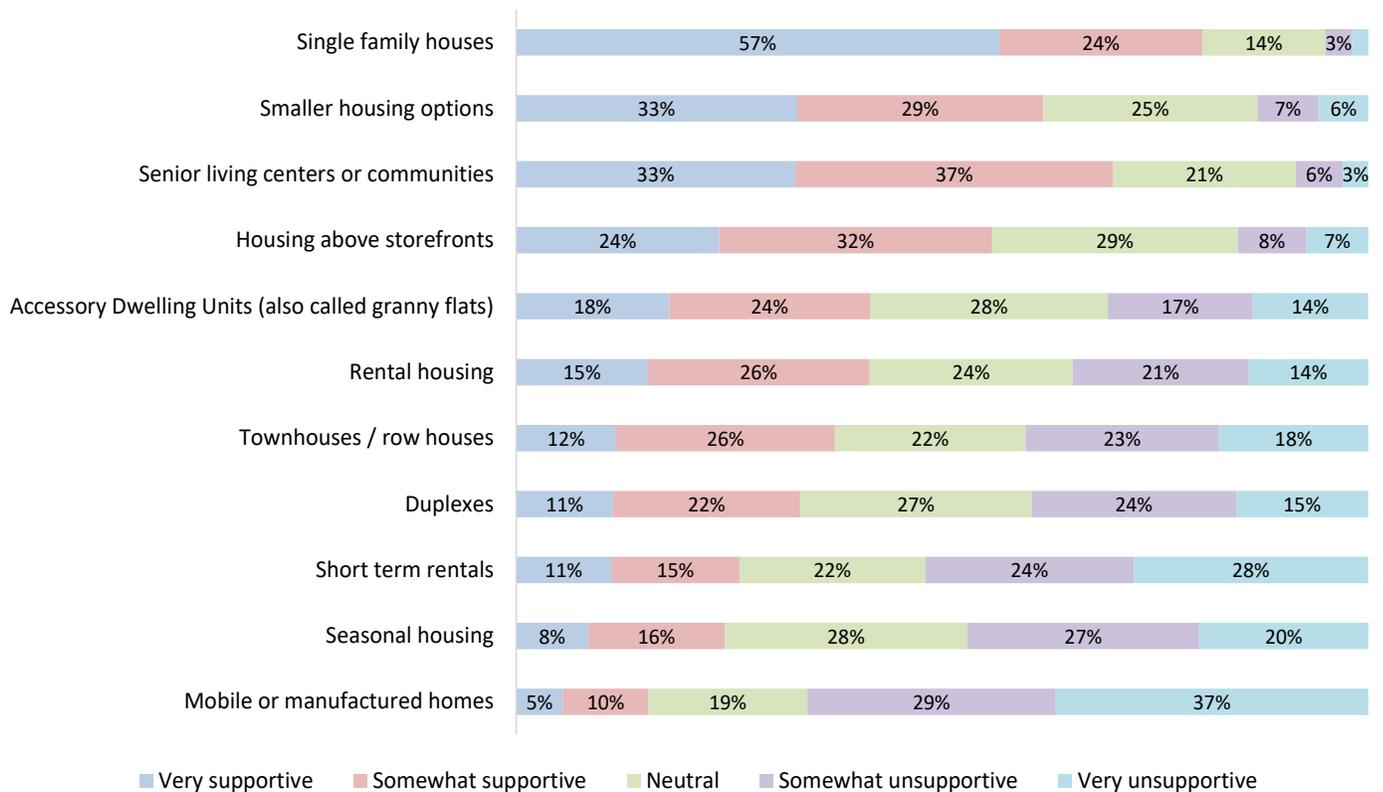
East Bay Charter Township • 1965 N Three Mile Road • Traverse City, MI 49696 • Main Office: (231) 947-8647

**Question 1: How would you rate the Township on the following quality of life issues? While many of these issues are regional in nature, we want to know how you feel the Township is performing in these areas.**



As shown in question 1, it is interesting to note that at least half of all respondents rated the Township as good or excellent in the quality of emergency services, variety of parks and recreational facilities, quality of schools, access to shopping and dining opportunities, broadband and cellular services, and cost of living. A total of 81% of respondents felt quality of emergency services were either good or excellent, and variety of parks and recreation facilities was a close second, with 77% of all respondents characterizing them as good or excellent. Quality of schools and employment opportunities both had 30% or more of respondents unsure of quality, indicating they are not personally impacted by these topics.

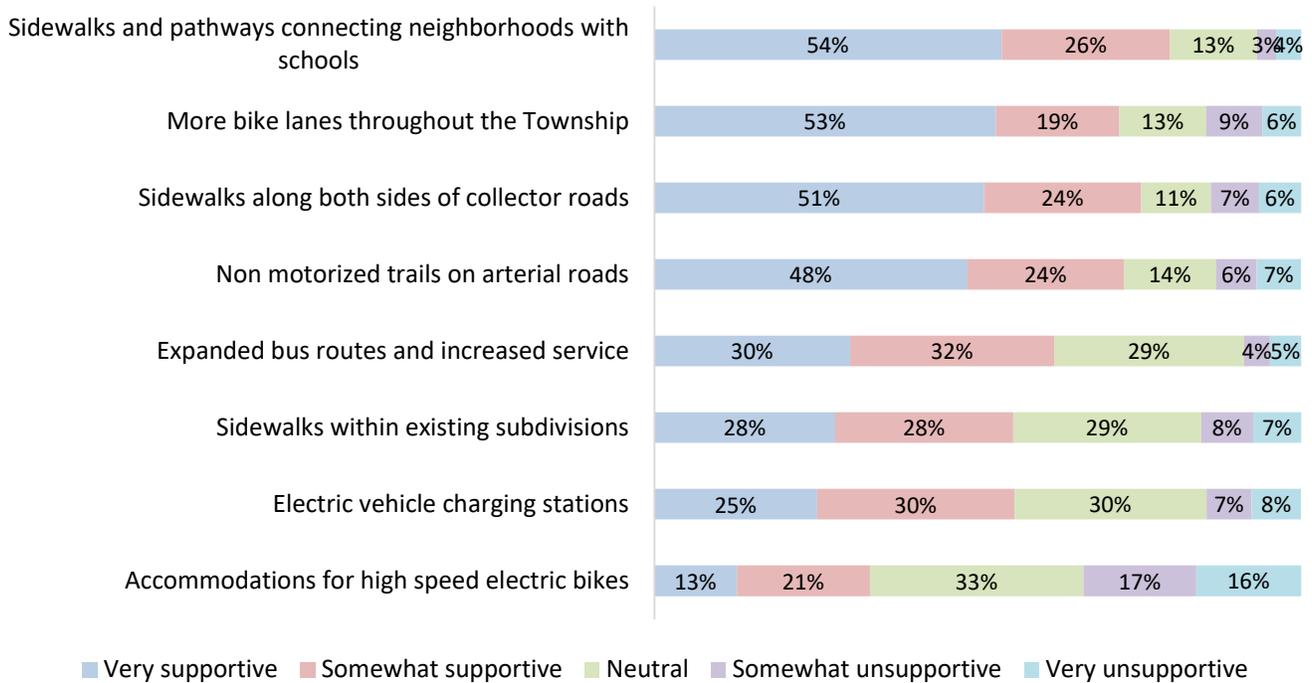
**Question 2: Which of the following housing options would you support adding in East Bay Township?**



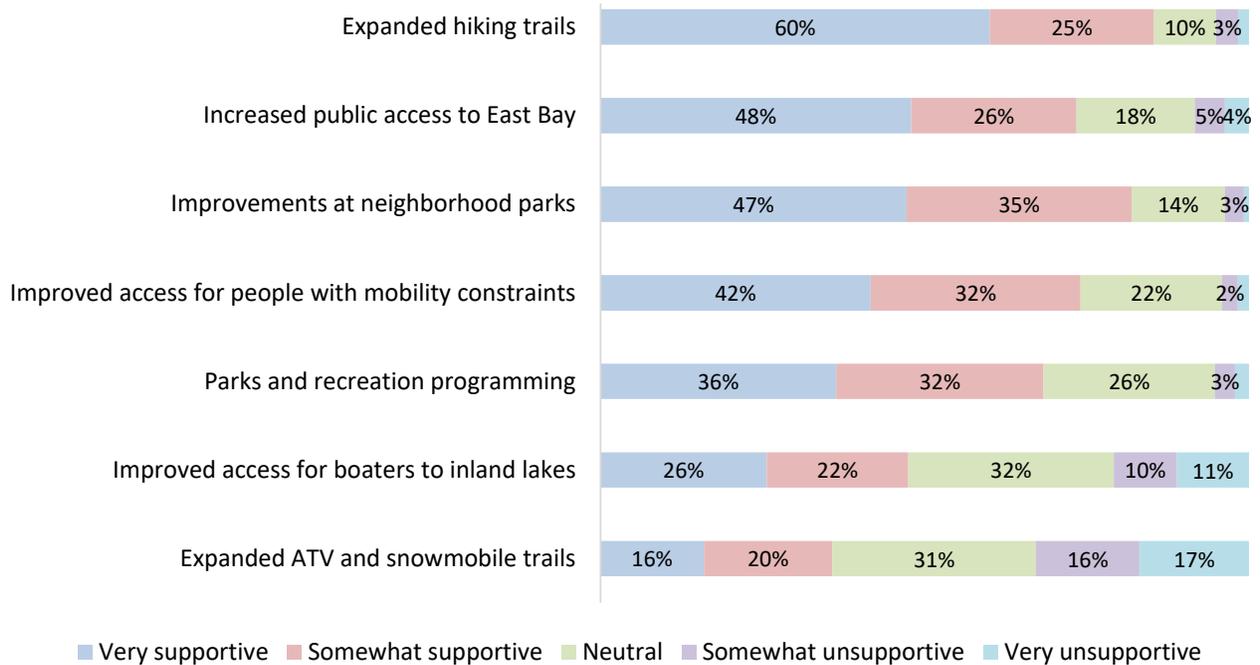
As shown in the **Question 2** graphic on housing options, single family homes were the type of housing with the greatest level of support amongst survey respondents. However, this is not surprising due to the fact that 86% of occupied homes in the Township are owner-occupied and 86% are single unit homes. There still appears to be some support for other housing options. Over half of survey respondents were supportive of senior living centers or communities and housing above storefronts. The only options that elicited an “unsupportive” response from over half of survey respondents were mobile or manufactured homes and short term rentals.

**Question 3: Which of the following transportation improvements would you be in support of in the Township?**

Expansion of non motorized options throughout the Township elicited strong support from survey respondents. Sidewalks and pathways connecting neighborhoods with schools was supported by three-quarters of all respondents. Similarly, 75% of respondents supported sidewalks along collector roads like Three Mile and 72% of respondents were in support of more bike lanes throughout the Township and non motorized trails along roads such as Hammond Road. Over half of respondents supported expanded bus routes and increased service, sidewalks in existing subdivisions, and electric vehicle charging stations. The only transportation amenity that received less support was accommodations for electric bikes. These survey results further support Safe Routes to School and other non motorized planning efforts underway in the Township.

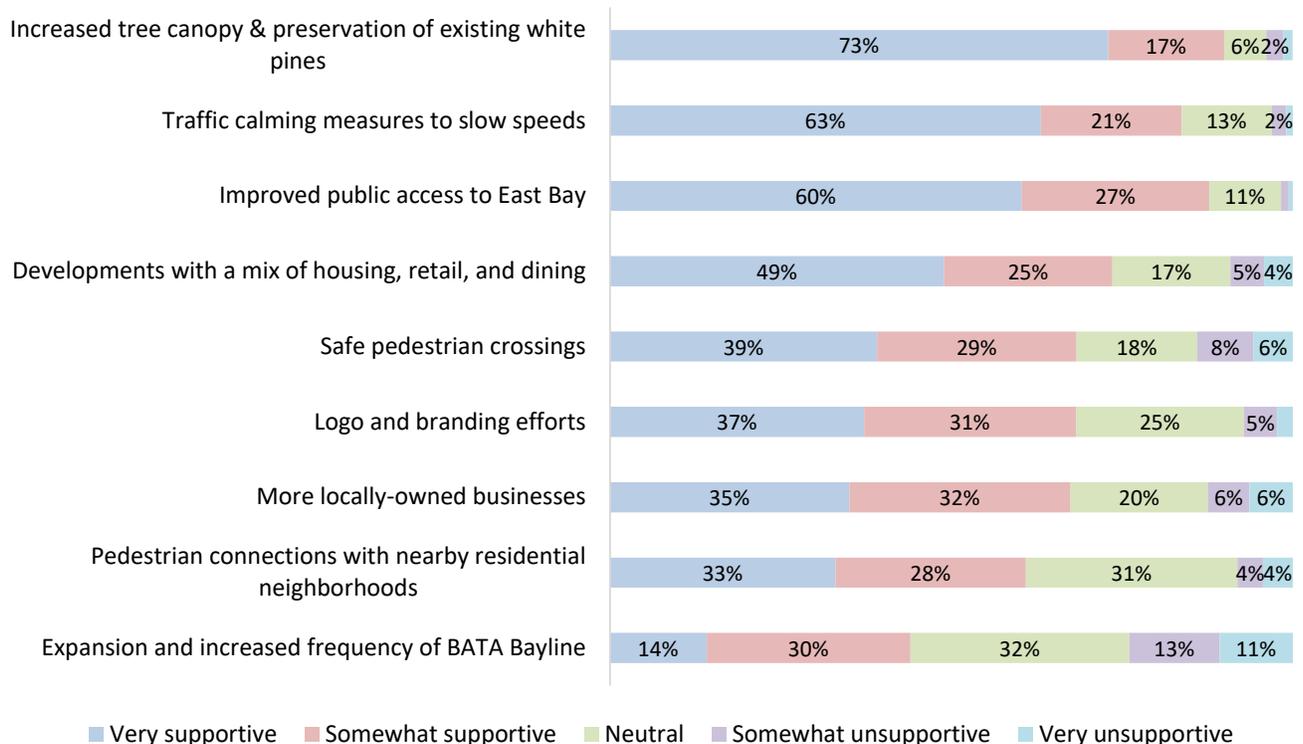


**Question 4:** Which of the following recreational improvements would you like to see in the Township?



As shown in the results on **Question 4**, expanded hiking trails garnered the most support from survey respondents at 85% either very supportive or somewhat supportive. Improvements to neighborhood parks, increased public access to East Bay, and improved recreation access for those with mobility constraints all gained support by three quarters or more of respondents. Expanded ATV and snowmobile trails and improved access for boaters to inland lakes both garnered support from slightly less than half of respondents.

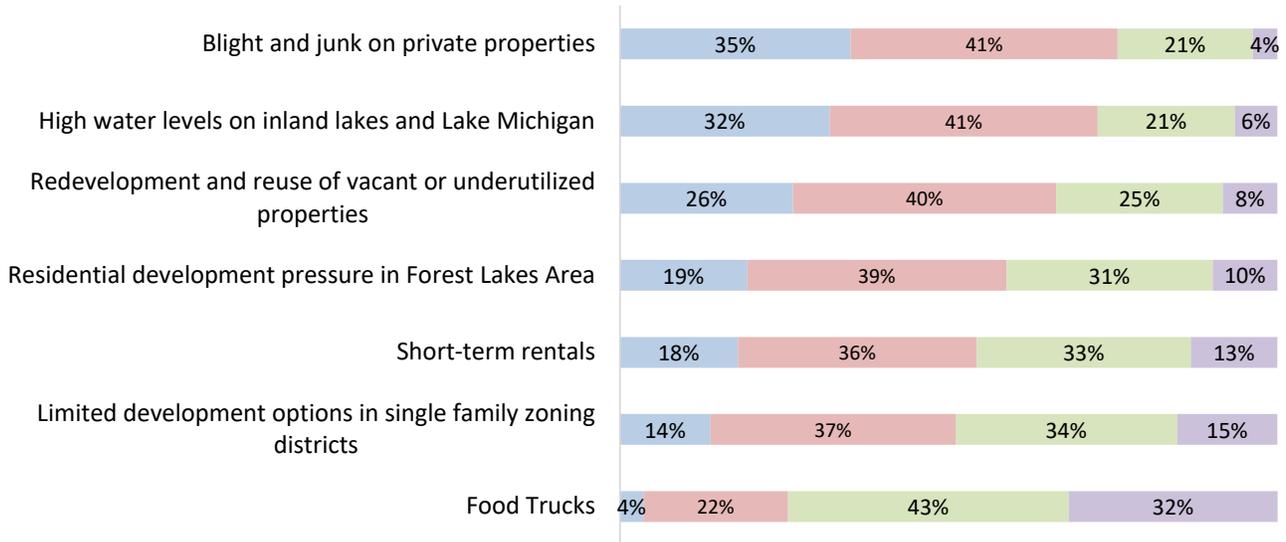
**Question 5:** *The Township is actively working to support placemaking and economic development along the U.S. 31 Beach District. Which of the following businesses/amenities would you like to see encouraged in this district? Please keep in mind that many of these actions would require partnerships with other agencies. Check all that apply.*



As illustrated by the responses to **Question 5**, there was strong support amongst survey respondents to placemaking improvements along the U.S. 31 corridor. A total of 90% of respondents were either very supportive or somewhat supportive of increasing tree canopy and preserving white pines on the corridor. This further supports the recent efforts undertaken by the tree preservation subcommittee focused on preserving iconic white pines along the U.S. 31 corridor. Similarly, 87% supported improved public access to East Bay and 84% supported traffic calming measures to slow speeds. Other notable improvements that garnered support from over half of survey respondents included mixed use developments, safe pedestrian crossings, logo and branding efforts for the Beach District corridor, support of more locally owned businesses, and better pedestrian connections with nearby neighborhoods.

Question 5 provided respondents with the opportunity to expand with additional ideas for placemaking on the U.S. 31 Beach District Corridor. Top priorities included adding more greenspace and investing in tree canopy, facilitating redevelopment on vacant and underutilized parcels, and a desire for more dining and entertainment options along the corridor. From a transportation standpoint, numerous respondents highlighted the need for better pedestrian crossings along U.S. 31. Traffic speeds were a top priority amongst respondents with the majority favoring traffic calming measures.

**Question 6: Which of the following do you feel are zoning and/or land use issues in the Township?**



■ The most significant issue ■ An issue but not the most pressing ■ Not a major issue ■ Not an issue at all

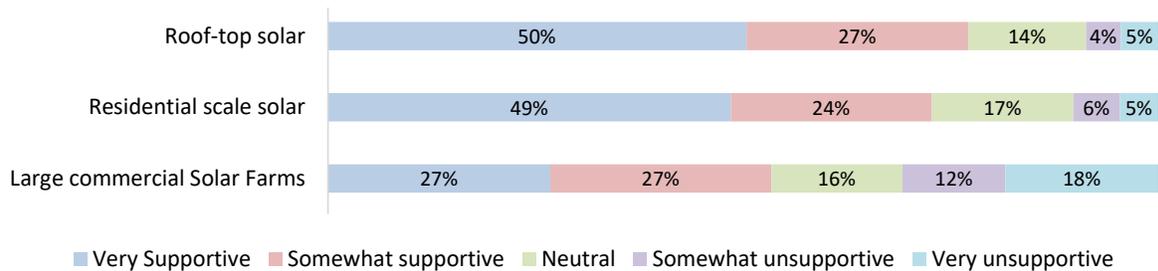
As noted in the results graphic for **Question 6**, a few land use and zoning issues rose to the top of the priority list for respondents. Blight and junk on private property was noted as the most significant issue by 35% of respondents while high water levels on inland lakes and Lake Michigan was a close second, with 32% of respondents identifying this as the most significant issue. Other items of significance included redevelopment and reuse of underutilized properties (rated as most pressing by 26% of respondents), residential redevelopment in the Forest Lakes Area (19% rated as most pressing), and short term rentals (18% rated as most pressing).

Question 6 invited respondents to expand on the multiple choice options or identify additional zoning and land use issues of importance. Environmental concerns were a recurring theme. Some respondents vocalized a desire for better ordinances and enforcement to protect water quality. There was also a desire for preservation of trees and native landscaping and monitoring of septic systems.

Traffic concerns came up in responses often, although many sentiments were related more to speeds and road condition as opposed to land use and zoning. A few respondents noted cut through traffic to neighborhoods adjacent to the U.S. 31 corridor. From an economic development standpoint, there were a number of respondents who supported expansion of water and sewer, along with promotion of mixed use and commercial development in targeted areas.

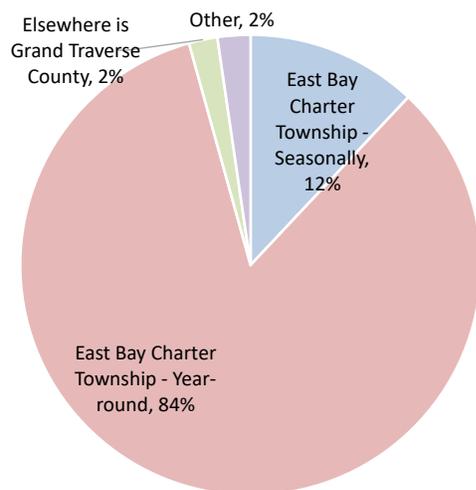
There were a variety of sentiments related to housing. Some respondents vocalized a strong desire for smaller housing options and workforce housing while others articulated a desire for less residential development.

**Question 7: Do you support the following solar energy projects in the Township?**

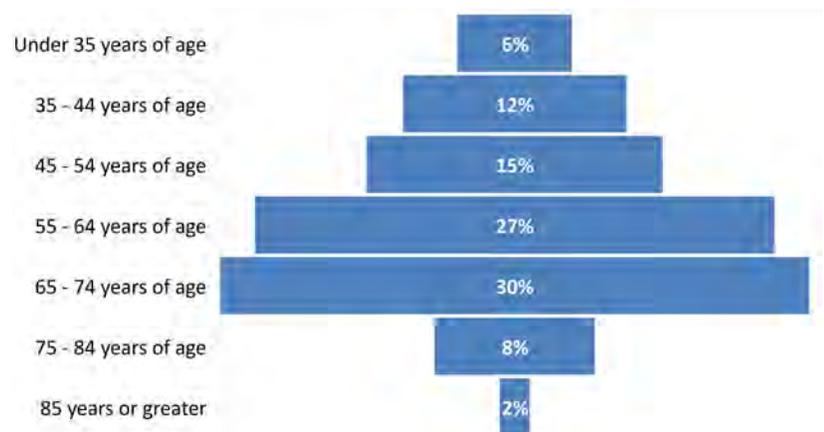


As shown in the graphic above, there was strong support for residential scale solar including rooftop solar and small scale residential ground-mounted solar panels amongst survey respondents. Large commercial solar farms had less overall support, but still were supported by over half of all survey respondents.

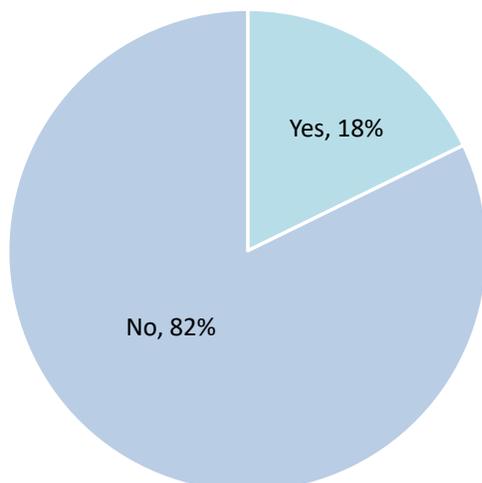
**Question 8: Where do you live?**



**Question 9: What is your age category?**



**Question 10: Do you have school-aged children? (18 years or younger)**



As shown in the survey demographic graphics, the vast majority of survey respondents were full time residents in the Township, while another 12% were seasonal residents. Sixty-seven percent of respondents were over 55 years of age. It is also interesting to note that 82% of respondents did not report having any children living in their home.



**Question 13:** *Please feel free to provide additional comments related to the questions above.*

Many of the same themes can be found in additional comments as those articulated throughout the survey. There was a strong desire for environmental protection, support for walking and biking infrastructure, and a family friendly community. A number of people made comments on the management of corridors in East Bay Township, including concerns over speeds, a desire for better landscaping, and a desire for a concentration of commercial and residential development in targeted areas. A few respondents also voiced concerns over planned roundabouts on Hammond Road.

From an economic development perspective, there were comments on the availability and cost of water and sewer utilities, and concern over size and scope of new developments and how they fit with existing character. Numerous residents also stated a desire for vacant lots to be cleaned up. From a residential perspective there was a stated desire for well planned, landscaped, but affordable residential neighborhoods. Respondents noted the importance of meeting the needs of residents with concerns over impacts from short term rentals. A number of people noted concerns associated with zoning enforcement, particularly in the Forest lakes area. There were also comments related to Township initiatives. There was support for a Farmer’s market at the Township Hall, an idea for a Township-wide clean-up day, appreciation of new park amenities, and appreciation of the Township newsletter. Taxes and preservation of property rights were also noted by a number of respondents.



Three Mile Trail Open House in East Bay Township, Photo courtesy of Gary Howe.

- NORTH POLE 3126<sub>mi</sub>
- CHERRY KNOLL 05<sub>mi</sub>
- CONCERVANCY 1<sub>mi</sub>
- EAST BAY LIBRARY 04<sub>mi</sub>
- LAKE MICHIGAN 3<sub>mi</sub>
- OPEN SPACE 6<sub>mi</sub>
- CENTRE ICE 0.9<sub>mi</sub>
- EAST MIDDLE SCHOOL 0.7<sub>mi</sub>
- S.E.A.S. 0.8<sub>mi</sub>
- 45<sup>TH</sup> PARALLEL 23<sub>mi</sub>

Photo courtesy of Gary Howe, Three Mile Trail Public Open House, October 2020

# CHAPTER 3

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

As the ultimate audience for the policies recommended in this plan, an understanding of who resides in East Bay Township is a necessary beginning. What follows is a summary of data gathered from several sources: the decennial U.S. Census and the Census Bureau’s 2019 American Community Survey (ACS 2019), a general survey of the population taken each year in between the decennial complete Census.

To follow general trends, East Bay Township will be occasionally compared with nearby jurisdictions: Garfield Township to the west, Acme Township to the north, and the City of Traverse City to the northwest. In addition, some trends from Grand Traverse County will be included, as will trends from the State of Michigan.

It should be noted that the last data set available for this analysis was from 2019. 2020 and 2021 are years that most likely caused unforeseen change for the region due to the pandemic. Future analyses will measure what impact, if any, those years have on the trends discussed here for East Bay Township. However, as rural northwest Michigan was arguably on the periphery of much of the impact of the pandemic, with all due respect to individuals whose lives were devastated by the pandemic, this analysis should still be relevant for planning purposes in East Bay Township.

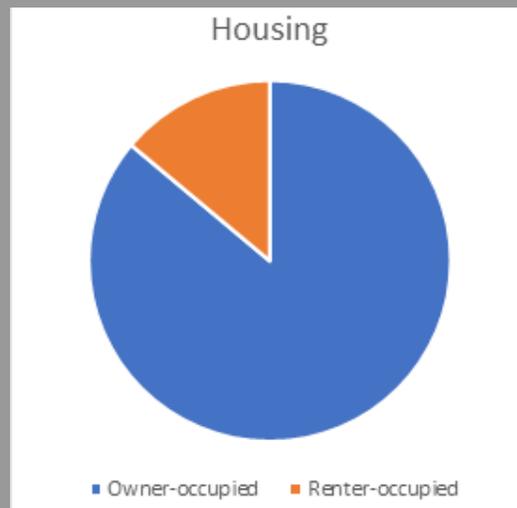
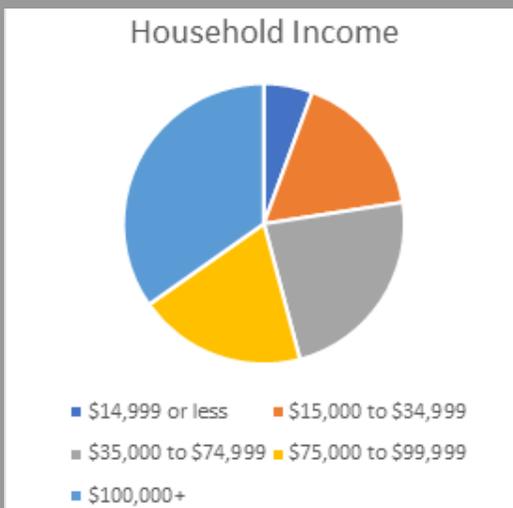
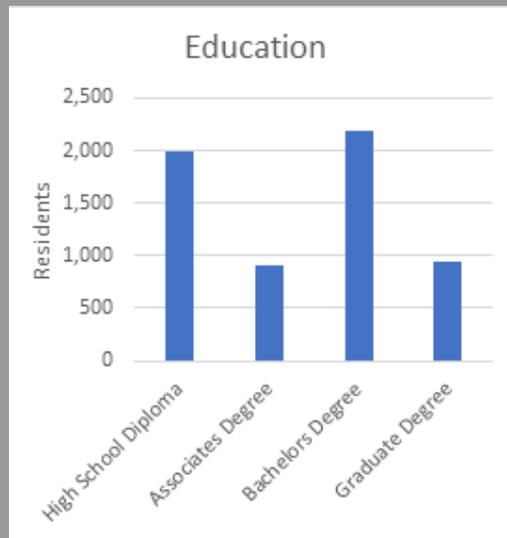
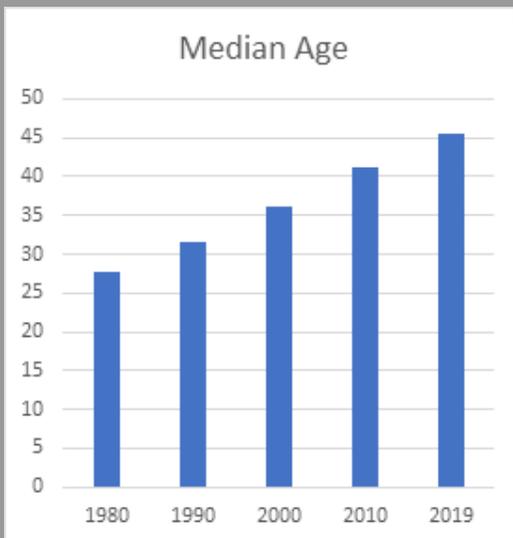
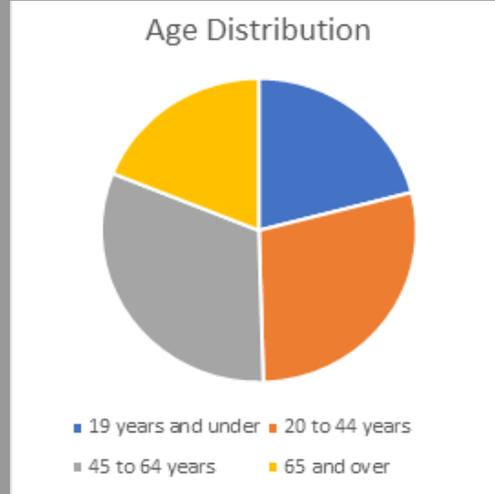
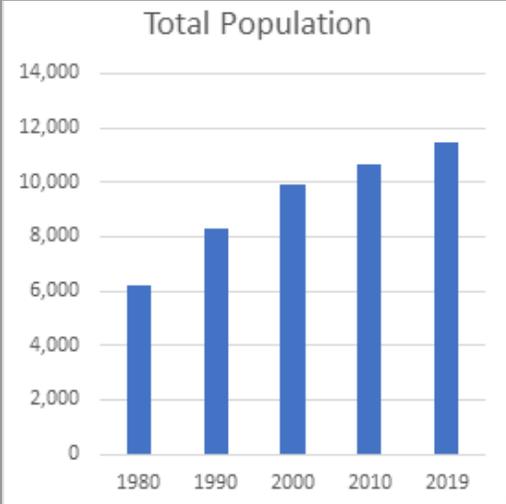
### POPULATION

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As illustration in **Table 1** and **2**, East Bay Township has had steady population growth for the last 40 years. The region around and including East Bay Township experienced a large expansion of population throughout the last decades of the 20th century (East Bay Township population increased 34% from 1980 to 1990 and 19% from 1990 to 2000), with a continued but slower expansion in more recent years (just under 8% each decade from 2000 to 2010 and 2010 to 2019 for East Bay Township). Nearby jurisdictions experienced different trends from one another. The City of Traverse City lost population from 1980 to 2000, and only recently has shown an increase (6% from 2010 to 2019). Grand Traverse County continues to grow steadily, with a 20% increase in population from 2000 to 2010 and a 5% increase from 2010 to 2019. Unlike regional trends around

# DEMOGRAPHIC DASHBOARD

Below are graphic representations of the data for East Bay Charter Township to provide a quick picture of the information covered in more detail later. Where dates are not shown, data is from the ACS 2019 in this section.



**Table 1. Total Population**

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019
United States	226,542,199	248,709,873	281,421,906	308,745,538	324,697,795
State of Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	9,965,265
Grand Traverse County	54,899	64,273	72,389	86,986	92,181
City of Traverse City	15,516	15,116	14,353	14,482	15,338
Garfield Township	8,747	10,516	13,840	16,256	17,319
Acme Township	2,909	3,447	4,332	4,375	4,694
East Bay Township	6,212	8,307	9,919	10,663	11,492

**Table 2. Total Population Change**

	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2019	1980-2019
United States	9.8%	13.2%	9.7%	5.2%	43.3%
State of Michigan	0.4%	6.9%	-0.6%	0.8%	7.6%
Grand Traverse County	17.1%	12.6%	20.2%	6.0%	67.9%
City of Traverse City	-2.6%	-5.0%	0.9%	5.9%	-1.1%
Garfield Township	20.2%	31.6%	17.5%	6.5%	98.0%
Acme Township	18.5%	25.7%	70.2%	-36.4%	61.4%
East Bay Township	33.7%	19.4%	7.5%	7.8%	85.0%

East Bay Township, the State of Michigan lost population from 2000 to 2010, though once again slightly gained population from 2010 to 2019 (less than 1%). Overall, throughout the period reviewed here (1980 to 2019), only Garfield Township exceeded East Bay Township in population growth (98% for Garfield Township and 85% for East Bay Township), while the City of Traverse City lost 1%, Grand Traverse County increased 68% and the State of Michigan increased just under 8%.

**Table 3. Households (2019 ACS)**

	Michigan	Grand Traverse County	Acme Township	East Bay Township	Garfield Township	Traverse City
Size	2.47	2.41	2.29	2.51	2.19	2.17
Total Number	3,935,041	37,319	2,039	4,575	7,666	6,697
Families	64.0%	65.1%	70.3%	69.6%	56.7%	53.6%
With People over 60	40.7%	42.9%	53.6%	44.2%	43.9%	55.3%
With Children under 18	28.7%	27.2%	15.6%	27.6%	27.1%	22.4%
Couple Families	47.1%	52.3%	67.3%	57.3%	39.9%	40.3%
One Householder Families	16.9%	12.8%	3.0%	12.3%	16.9%	13.3%
Nonfamily	36.0%	34.9%	29.7%	30.4%	43.3%	46.4%
Below Poverty Level	13.6%	9.1%	6.2%	6.6%	12.3%	12.8%

## HOUSEHOLDS

As shown in **Table 3**, East Bay Township has larger, younger households. The Census Bureau defines a household as “all the people who occupy a housing unit.” East Bay Township has an estimated 4,575 households. The average household size in East Bay Township of 2.51 persons is considerably larger than nearby jurisdictions (with Acme Township at 2.29, Garfield Township at 2.19 and the City of Traverse City at 2.17), though close to the average household size for the state of Michigan (2.47). East Bay Township also has a majority of households occupied by families (i.e., people related to one another) at 69.6%, comparable with Acme Township at 70.3%, but well above Garfield Township at 56.7% and the City of Traverse City at 53.6%. Notably, East Bay Township has a smaller share of households with persons over 60 years of age (44.2%) than Acme Township (53.6%) or the City of Traverse City (55.3%) while remaining comparable to Garfield Township (43.9%). Conversely, households with children under the age of 18 represent a larger share in both East Bay Township (27.6%) and Garfield Township (27.1%) than in Acme Township (15.6%) or the City of Traverse City (22.4%).

## AGE

As shown in **Table 4** and **Figure 1**, East Bay Township has a slightly older population than the State and nearby jurisdictions due to a larger population aged 45 to 64 years.

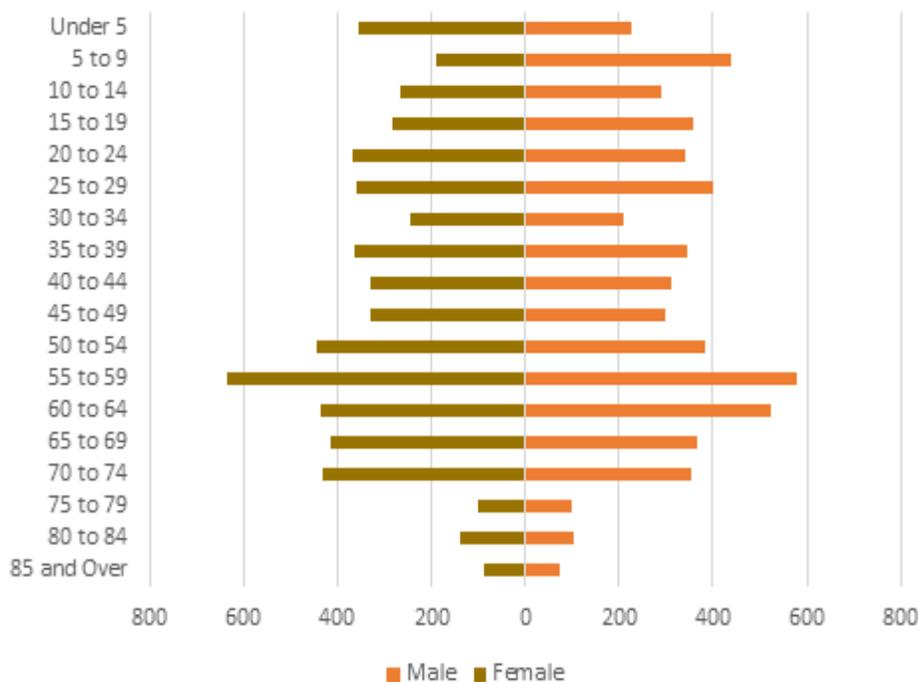
East Bay Township’s median age of 45.6 years is somewhat above most nearby jurisdictions (compared with 40.4 for Garfield Township and 41.2 for the City of Traverse City) and the State of Michigan (at 39.7). This is due to a larger percentage of the population of the Township being within the 45- to 64-year-old cohort (31.6%) when compared to the other jurisdictions (22.1% for Garfield Township, 25% for the City of Traverse City, and 27.2% for the State of Michigan). Nearby Acme Township has a much older median age due to a larger percentage of 65-year-old and above (25% as opposed to East Bay Township’s 18.9%).

Like much of the region, East Bay Township’s median age has advanced over time. In 1980 the Township’s median age was 27.6, and in 2019 it was 45.6. Only Garfield Township among the nearby jurisdictions has ever seen a decrease in median age, going from 44.8 in 2010 to 40.4 in 2019.

**Table 4. Age (2019 ACS)**

	Michigan	Grand Traverse County	Acme Township	East Bay Township	Garfield Township	Traverse City
Median age (years)	39.7	42.8	49.6	45.6	40.4	41.2
19 years and under	24.5%	22.4%	15.0%	21.0%	22.3%	21.6%
20 to 44 years	31.5%	29.8%	30.1%	28.6%	33.4%	31.9%
45 to 64 years	27.2%	28.6%	29.9%	31.6%	22.1%	25.0%
65 and over	16.8%	19.1%	25.0%	18.9%	22.2%	21.5%

**Figure 1. East Bay Township Age Distribution**



## RACE

As shown in **Table 5**, as with the rest of our region, East Bay Township's racial makeup is relatively homogeneous. In 2019, 97.6% of East Bay Township residents were white, followed by 2.3% black or African American and 1.4% American Indian. Although not a category in the ACS Racial Distribution estimate below, the Census Bureau estimates 3% of residents in East Bay Township identify as Hispanic or Latino.

## EDUCATION

The residents of East Bay Township have comparable education to nearby jurisdictions and above that of the State average. **Table 6** shows that about 96% of East Bay Township's residents hold a High School diploma or more advanced degree. This is comparable to Acme Township (98.1%), Garfield Township (96.4%), and the City of Traverse City (94.6%). The State of Michigan's High School education rate is 90.8%. About 37.3% of East Bay Township residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher. This is well above the State of Michigan's rate of 29.1%, above Garfield Township (32.8%), and below Acme Township (48.5%) and the City of Traverse City (45.6%).

**Table 5. East Bay Township Racial Distribution**

	Percent
White	97.6%
Black or African American	2.3%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.4%
Asian	0.4%
Other	0.6%

**Table 6. Educational Attainment**

	MI	GT County	Acme Twp	East Bay	Garfield Twp	Traverse City
Population 25 years and over	6,813,480	66,588	3,727	8,379	12,538	11,208
Less than 9th grade	2.9%	1.2%	0.9%	0.3%	1.5%	0.8%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	6.3%	3.6%	1.0%	3.7%	3.9%	2.9%
High school graduate	28.9%	24.0%	17.0%	23.7%	26.2%	20.4%
Some college, no degree	23.4%	25.1%	21.1%	24.2%	25.7%	21.2%
Associate's degree	9.4%	10.1%	11.5%	10.8%	9.9%	9.1%
Bachelor's degree	17.7%	22.6%	29.8%	26.1%	21.8%	29.5%
Graduate or professional degree	11.4%	13.5%	18.8%	11.2%	11.0%	16.2%
High school graduate or higher	90.8%	95.2%	98.1%	96.0%	94.6%	96.4%
Bachelor's degree or higher	29.1%	36.0%	48.5%	37.3%	32.8%	45.6%

## INCOME

Household income in East Bay Township is above that of most nearby jurisdictions and the State. **Table 7** shows detailed data on income. Educational attainment and income are closely correlated in the nearby jurisdictions and the State. Having a higher percentage of population with High School Diplomas or Advanced Degrees makes for higher median income in a jurisdiction. In 2019, East Bay Township's median household income was \$74,015, just below that of Acme Township (\$80,634) and above that of the City of Traverse City (\$56,948), Garfield Township (\$50,372), and the State of Michigan (\$57,144).

The income distribution in East Bay Township has changed dramatically over the last decade. From 2000 to 2010, the median household income increased 20% (from \$47,569 to \$56,936). From 2010 to 2019, the median household income increased another 30% (from \$56,936 to \$74,015). Accordingly, each decade the percentage of households in East Bay Township earning \$75,000 or more increased while those earning under \$35,000 decreased.

Individual median full-time earnings in East Bay Township have continued to grow each decade (see **Table 8**). As with much of the rest of the United States, females tend to earn less than males. In East Bay Township, this disparity has decreased each decade, with females earning 69% of the male wage in 2000, to 80% in 2010, to 97% in 2019. East Bay Township's earnings growth and decline of the disparity between male and female earnings were much larger than the State of Michigan's changes over the same period (2000 to 2019).

Access to health care also impacts the prosperity of the Township. About 95% of East

**Table 7. Income**

	MI	GT County	Acme Twp	East Bay	Garfield Twp	Traverse City
Median household income (dollars)	57,144	63,575	80,634	74,015	50,372	56,948
Median family income (dollars)	72,600	79,544	98,793	82,400	64,978	80,598
Median nonfamily income (dollars)	33,711	38,782	51,058	50,930	31,824	34,298
All people below poverty level	14.4%	9.6%	4.8%	6.6%	14.5%	11.8%
Under 18 years below poverty level	19.9%	13.2%	2.6%	7.2%	21.8%	11.6%
Households below poverty level	13.6%	9.1%	6.2%	6.6%	12.3%	12.8%

**Table 8. East Bay Township Median Earnings**

	2000	2010	2019
Male full-time, year-round workers	\$34,118	\$40,497	\$50,625
Female full-time, year-round workers	\$23,580	\$32,348	\$48,857
Male Increase	X	18.7%	25.0%
Female Increase	X	37.2%	51.0%
Difference	69%	80%	97%

Bay Township residents (the Census counts the “Civilian noninstitutionalized population” for this metric) had health insurance in 2019, comparable to the rate of the State of Michigan (94.5%) and Acme Township (95.8%), and somewhat above the rates of Grand Traverse County (93.5%), Garfield Township (93.4%) and the City of Traverse City (91.5%). Also, East Bay Township’s percentage of residents under 19 years of age without health insurance, 1.7%, is less than the typical percentage (5.1% in Grand Traverse County, for example).

The Census Bureau sets an Official Poverty Measure each year that compares money income to a threshold of need to set a baseline poverty level. In 2019, 5.6% of families and 6.6% of individuals in East Bay Township lived below this poverty level. As population has increased over time, the proportion of people living below the poverty level has increased in East Bay Township (for families, it was 1.9% in 2000 and 5.1% in 2010). These rates are below the State of Michigan’s average of 9.9% for families and 14.4% for individuals in 2019.

**Table 9. East Bay Township Employment by Industry Sector**

	2000	2010	2019
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	5,374	5,779	6,271
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	1.7%	2.1%	1.3%
Construction	10.4%	7.8%	7.4%
Manufacturing	11.1%	7.8%	11.3%
Wholesale trade	5.1%	3.6%	2.6%
Retail trade	15.4%	14.5%	9.8%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4.5%	4.4%	2.2%
Information	2.4%	2.9%	1.0%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	5.2%	6.5%	9.6%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	7.4%	7.6%	10.7%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	20.8%	18.8%	21.6%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	9.8%	12.5%	14.4%
Other services, except public administration	4.2%	6.2%	4.4%
Public administration	1.9%	5.2%	3.7%

## EMPLOYMENT

Like the rest of the region, most jobs in East Bay Township come from education and health care, with retail declining and hospitality increasing. **Table 9** further illustrate this point.

In 2019, 6,583 of the East Bay Township's 9,556 residents aged 16 years and over (68.9%) were in the labor force. Following East Bay Township's population trend, the Township's employed population 16 years of age or over has increased by 16.7% since 2000 (from 5,374 to 6,271). Education and health care provided the largest proportion of East Bay Township resident's jobs (21.6%) in 2019 with accommodations and food service providing the next largest proportion (14.4%). Agriculture generally provides the smallest proportion of jobs (1.3% in 2019). The sectors of the economy providing employment in the Township have changed little since 2000, except for a decrease in retail employment (15.4% in 2000 to 9.8% in 2019) and an increase in accommodation and food service (9.8% in 2000 to 14.4% in 2019). Somewhat increased percentages of the employed population in financial services (5.2% in 2000 to 9.6% in 2019) and professional services (7.4% in 2000 to 10.7% in 2019) also follows the population increase.

East Bay Township's distribution of employed population among the various occupation sectors does not vary widely from that of the nearby jurisdictions. Acme Township's management, business, science, and arts sector is somewhat larger (45.4%) than East Bay Township's (41.4%), while other sectors occupy similar proportions of the population. The region's sales and office sector does appear to occupy a larger percentage of the population (24.4% for East Bay Township, for example) than that of the State of Michigan overall (20.9%).



Arbutus Lake No. 5.  
Photo courtesy of Jacob Dean.

# CHAPTER 4

## NATURAL FEATURES

East Bay Township is blessed with some of the most beautiful and varied landscapes in Michigan. The sandy shores along the East Arm of Grand Traverse Bay give rise to forested hills, carved out by ancient glaciers. These natural features are an important part of East Bay Township’s identity and of residents’ way of life. Because of the importance the natural environment has for residents of East Bay Township, any effective land use planning should include an evaluation of the Township’s natural systems and features. This chapter profiles the watersheds, wetlands, soils, and topography of the Township and the implications these features have on future planning.

### WATER & WATERSHEDS

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#### GRAND TRAVERSE BAY

The east arm of Grand Traverse Bay, part of Lake Michigan, is one of East Bay Charter Township’s defining assets and from which the Township is named after. As one of the premier tourist and outdoor recreation attractions in the State of Michigan, Grand Traverse Bay has been integral for the community’s hospitality industry and will continue to be essential in the Township’s future. Grand Traverse Bay is the second largest bay in Lake Michigan, with a surface area of 277 square miles. Grand Traverse Bay branches into eastern and western arms in its southern half, separated for 16 miles by the Old Mission Peninsula. In total, there are 132 miles of shoreline along Grand Traverse Bay, of which three miles is located within East Bay Charter Township.

Grand Traverse Bay is primarily fed by the Elk and Boardman Rivers; other smaller tributaries feed less than 10 percent of Grand Traverse Bay. Grand Traverse Bay is surrounded by 15 jurisdictions, including 11 townships, 3 villages, and one city. Along the eastern arm of Grand Traverse Bay, there are seven jurisdictions, including five townships, the Village of Elk Rapids, and the City of Traverse City. **Map 1** Watersheds illustrates the size and extent of five sub watersheds that exist partially within the Township.

While much of the bay’s shoreline in the Township is highly developed, there are several naturalized areas with minimal shoreline development and/or modification. This includes the Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park Beach, the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indian’s parcel to the west of the mouth of Mitchell Creek, and township-owned Gens Park. There are several

tributaries that empty into the bay along this shoreline, including Mitchell Creek and smaller, unnamed tributaries that likely drain the extensive wetland network in the northern part of the township that are part of both the Mitchell and Baker Creek watersheds. Much of the shoreline in this area is dominated by wetland plants, including sedges and rushes, which have been historically removed due to the high development pressure along the shoreline. The Coastal Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Plan was approved in 2021 by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) and the Environmental Protection Agency. The top pollutants and stressors for the Grand Traverse Bay watershed listed in the plan include changes to hydrologic flow, loss of habitat, nutrients, and sediment.

Although the water quality of East Bay is high, there are several potential threats to that quality. Excessive nutrients and toxic contaminants from runoff are just two examples of potential threats to the bay, while invasive species including zebra mussels, sea lampreys, and gobies threaten natural ecosystems.

### **BOARDMAN RIVER**

Several miles of the Boardman River, a Michigan Department of Natural Resources designated “Natural River” and “Blue Ribbon” trout stream, run through the southern portion of the township. East Bay Township has adopted Natural River zoning and administers this overlay zone on behalf of MDNR. The Boardman River has immense cultural, spiritual, and recreational value. Further, the township’s Forest Lakes region is part of the Boardman River subwatershed. The Boardman River Prosperity Plan was adopted in 2016 to set forth a vision and a roadmap for the future management of the river and its watershed. Recent dam removal, regional development pressure, and a desire to improve the environmental, economic, and social prosperity of the watershed region provided an impetus for the planning effort. High priority actions related to land use policy include storm water management, enhancing and protecting wetlands, and protection of wildlife habitat.

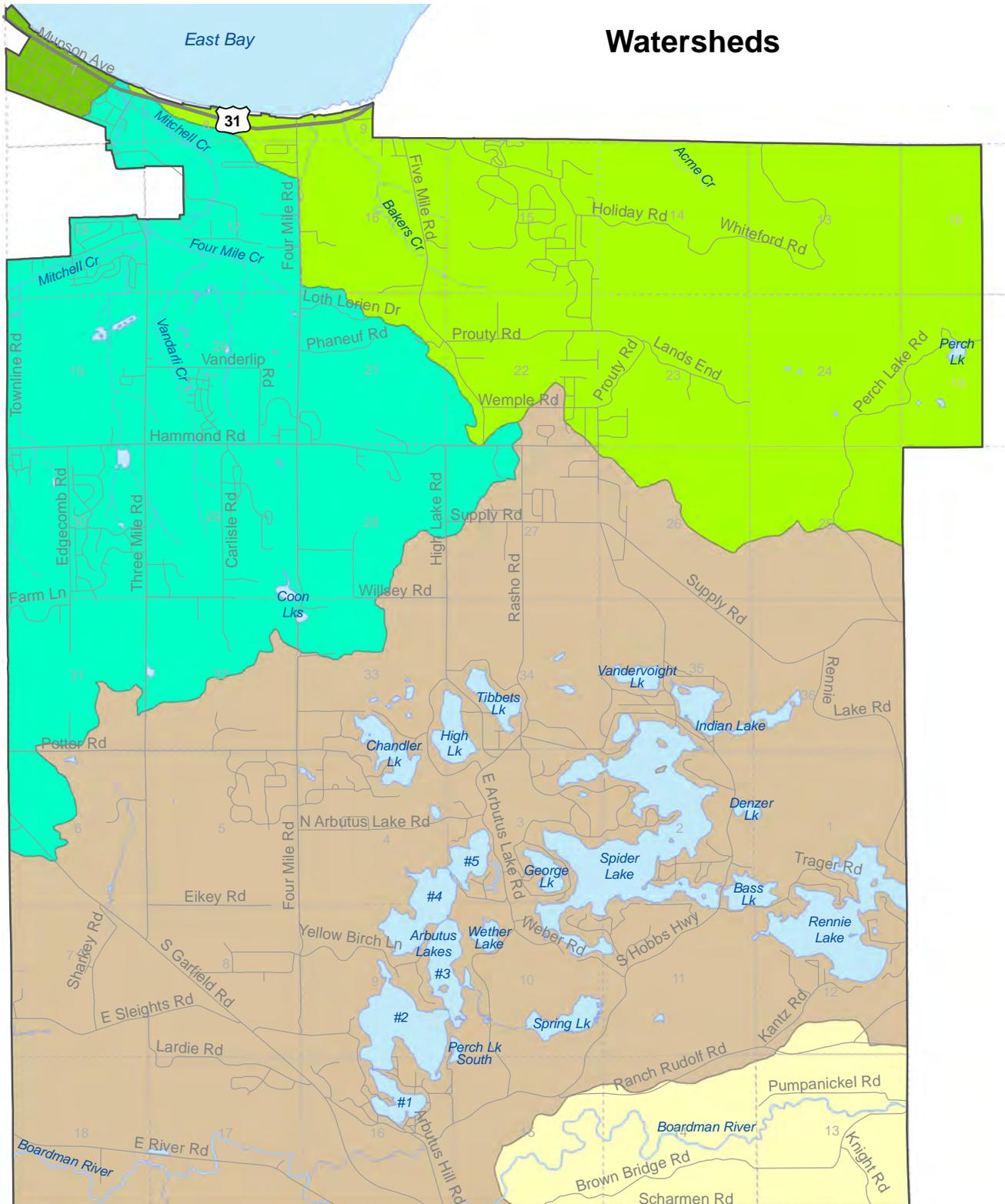
### **FOREST LAKES**

East Bay Charter Township has a significant area of water table lakes located in the eastern and southeastern portion of the Township, commonly known as the Forest Lakes. **Map 2**, Lakes, Streams, and Tributaries, shows the extent of these lakes, along with streams at lower elevations that drain into East Bay. The largest of the Forest Lakes are Spider and Arbutus Lakes, which have surface areas of 450 and 395 acres, respectively. Other lakes include but are not limited to Rennie Lake, High Lake, Chandler Lake, Vandervoight Lake, Indian Lake, Perch Lake, Spring Lake, George Lake, Tibbets Lake, Bass Lake, Denzer Lake, and Wether Lake. According to the State of Michigan database, East Bay Township has a total of 19 inland lakes, three of which are unnamed. These lakes have attracted significant residential development. The Forest Lakes are located within the Boardman River Watershed, with portions of the Forest Lakes less than a mile away from the river.

The Forest Lakes area inland lakes continue to be classified as oligotrophic, or oligo/mesotrophic, although the trophic condition of these lakes is vulnerable

Map 1. Watersheds

# Watersheds

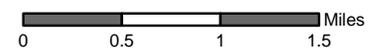


- Acme Creek-Frontal East Arm Grand Traverse Bay
- Twentytwo Creek-Boardman River
- East Branch Mitchell Creek
- Jaxon Creek-Boardman River
- Prescott Lake-Frontal Grand Traverse Bay

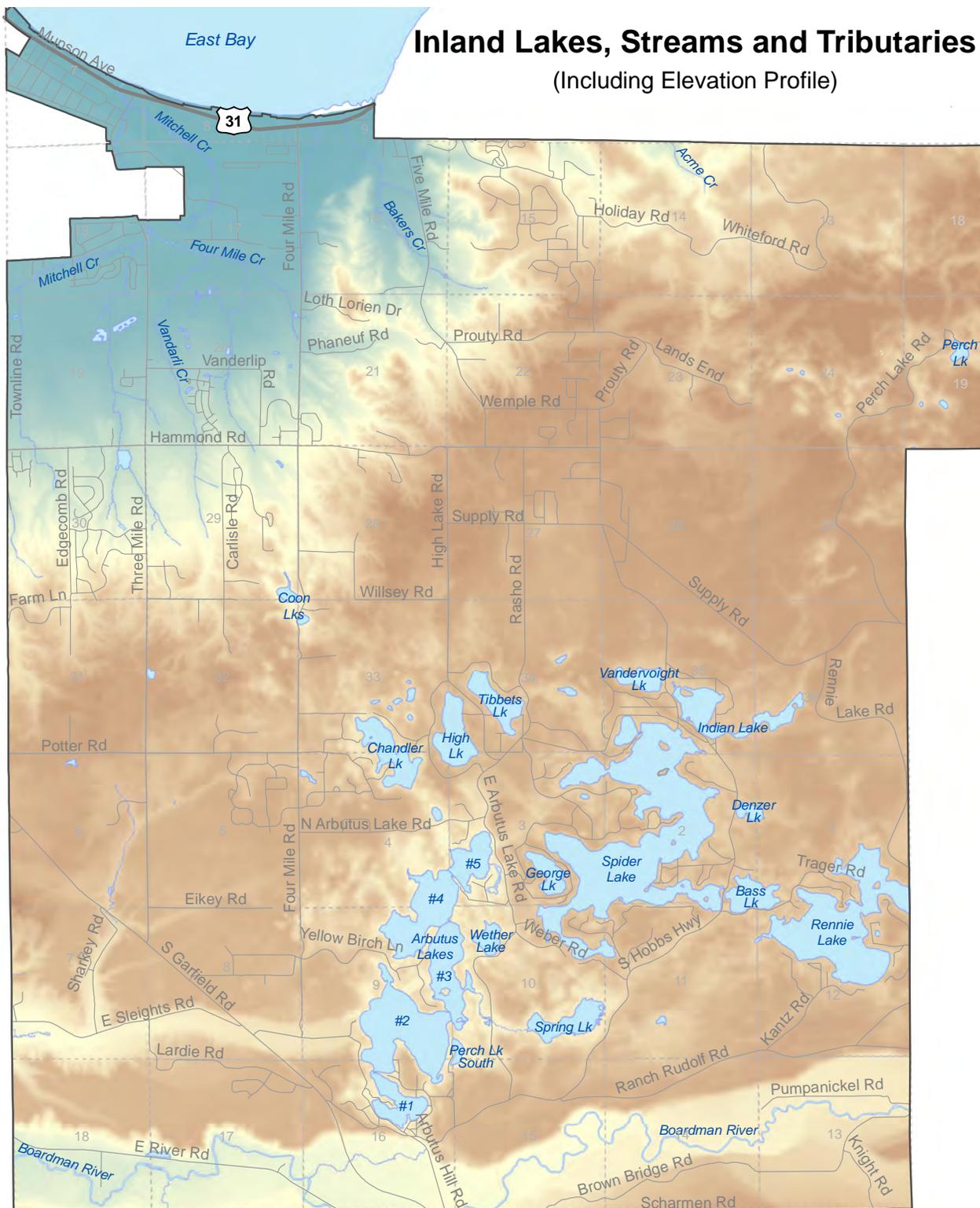


Data Sources:  
 East Bay Township, Grand Traverse County,  
 Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared September 2020 for East Bay Township

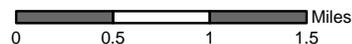


Map 2. Inland Lakes, Streams, and Tributaries



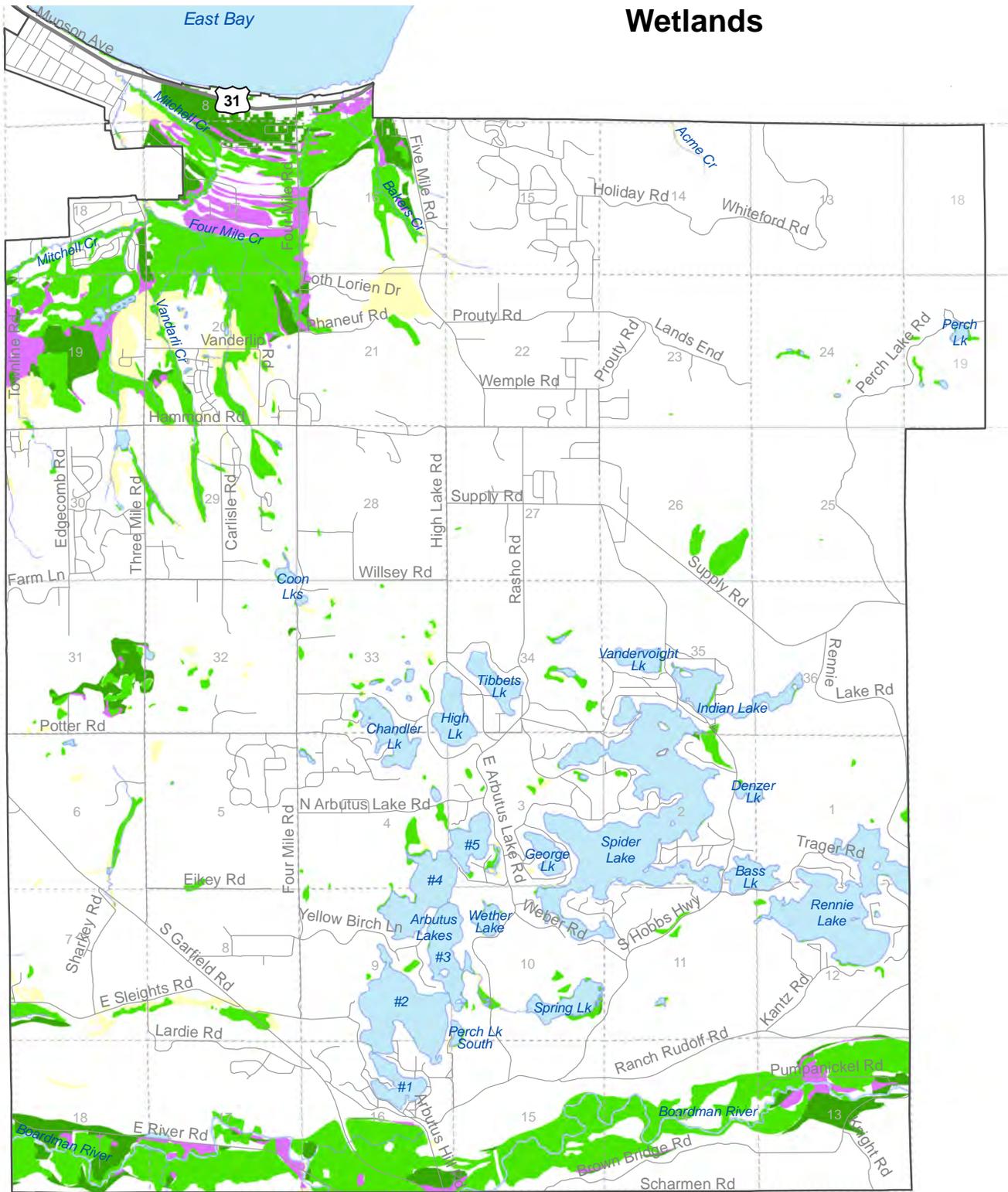
Data Sources:  
East Bay Township, Grand Traverse County,  
Michigan GIS Open Data.

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Map 3. Wetlands

# Wetlands



- Existing Wetlands (NWI)
- High Potential Wetland Restoration
- Moderate Potential Wetland Restoration
- Low Potential Wetland Restoration



Data Sources:  
 East Bay Township, Grand Traverse County,  
 Michigan GIS Open Data.

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**Table 10. Wetlands**

Wetland Type	TOTAL ACRES
Freshwater Emergent Wetland	195.4
Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland	1,839.7
Freshwater Pond	51.1
Lake	1,505.4

given their size and average depth. The substantial number of riparian zones bordering the Forest Lakes creates potential for conflict between developmental and environmental interests. To this end, East Bay Charter Township has created a Forest Lakes overlay zoning district which more carefully regulates development than other residential zoning districts. Continued enforcement of the zoning standards as well as proactive water quality and invasive species monitoring will be imperative in protecting and enhancing the water quality of the Forest Lakes.

### **MITCHELL CREEK**

Mitchell Creek is the third largest single tributary in the Grand Traverse Bay watershed. Draining approximately 16 square miles of land, it is also the fifth largest subwatershed of Grand Traverse Bay by area. The Mitchell Creek watershed is principally located within East Bay Charter Township, with a small amount located within adjacent Garfield Charter Township.

East Bay Township has long recognized its stewardship responsibility for these important natural features in our community. Through the Mitchell Creek and Baker Creek watershed protection strategies, the Township has taken seriously its obligation to preserve and protect these important features. The Township is cognizant of the fact that impending population growth may cause development to encroach into many of these important natural areas. Therefore, the Township has adopted site development strategies to balance the effects of growth and development on surface water quality. While the rate of growth experienced in the 1990's and early 2000's has recently abated, the Township should not lose sight of these important objectives. The lower Mitchell Creek and Baker Creek watersheds remain area of significant interest and potential for development. Yet both are vital natural resources in our community. Balancing these interests will continue to be a challenge for the Township.

East Bay Township has partnered with the Watershed Center of Grand Traverse Bay (TWC), along with Garfield Township and the City of Traverse City to better understand the source of E. coli in Mitchell Creek, which is listed as Impaired Waters under Clean Water Act Section 303(d). TWC secured grant funding for this effort and is also partnering with the Grand Traverse County Health Department and Michigan State University. As a part of the effort, TWC has been sampling sites on Mitchell Creek during wet and dry weather to determine the source of elevated levels in the creek, and have also installed five groundwater wells to determine the directional flow of groundwater and the potential impacts of septic systems. The results of this study will have policy implications, including inform locations for targeted septic upgrades, and provide support for the septic inspection ordinance.

## WETLANDS

Wetlands were once common throughout the Great Lakes region. Over the past century, wetlands were dredged, filled, and converted to other uses as Michigan developed into an industrial state. Rapidly, the seemingly limitless marshes and their connecting channels began to disappear, and today less than half of the state's wetlands remain. The value of services provided by wetlands has been well documented and widely recognized. In addition to critical fish and wildlife habitat, wetlands provide water quality protection and improvement, sediment and erosion control, and flood management — all extremely valuable ecosystem services.

East Bay Township is home to two important wetland features. As shown in **Map 3**, Wetlands, running east and west across the southern portion of the township is the Boardman River. This river is the drainage course for the 186,000 acre Boardman River watershed. The river flows essentially in an east to west direction through a pronounced river valley marked with significant wetland and thick forested areas. Wetland areas associated with the Boardman River essentially follow its course across the southern portion of the township. The second significant wetland area found within East Bay Township is in the lower portion of the Mitchell and Baker Creek watersheds.

**Map 3** illustrates the location of these significant areas of wetlands, or potential wetlands, within the Township. According to the National Wetlands Inventory, East Bay Township has 3,592 acres of existing wetlands. There are approximately 1,340 acres of potential wetland restoration areas. These lands generally have hydric, or wet, soils and were often wetlands pre-European settlement. This means that 37% of pre-European settlement wetlands have been developed in East Bay Township.

## CLIMATE

The climate in East Bay Township is heavily influenced by the community's proximity to Lake Michigan and the micro-climate around Grand Traverse Bay. The climate is especially attractive during the summer months when cooler breezes off the lake offset the frequently bright and direct summer sunshine. The agricultural growing season within the community begins in late April and terminates in late September. The moderating effect Lake Michigan has on the local climate has made northwest Michigan area ideal for the agricultural production of cherries.

The Great Lakes Integrated Sciences + Assessments Program (GLISA) is a consortium of scientists and educators from the University of Michigan and Michigan State University that is funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to provide climate information and resources, including downscaled models, for communities across the Great Lakes region. According to GLISA, the Great Lakes region has already experienced a 2.3° F increase in average temperatures since the 1900s.

An additional increase of 1.8 to 5.4° F in average temperatures is projected by 2050. Although these numbers are relatively small, they are driving dramatic

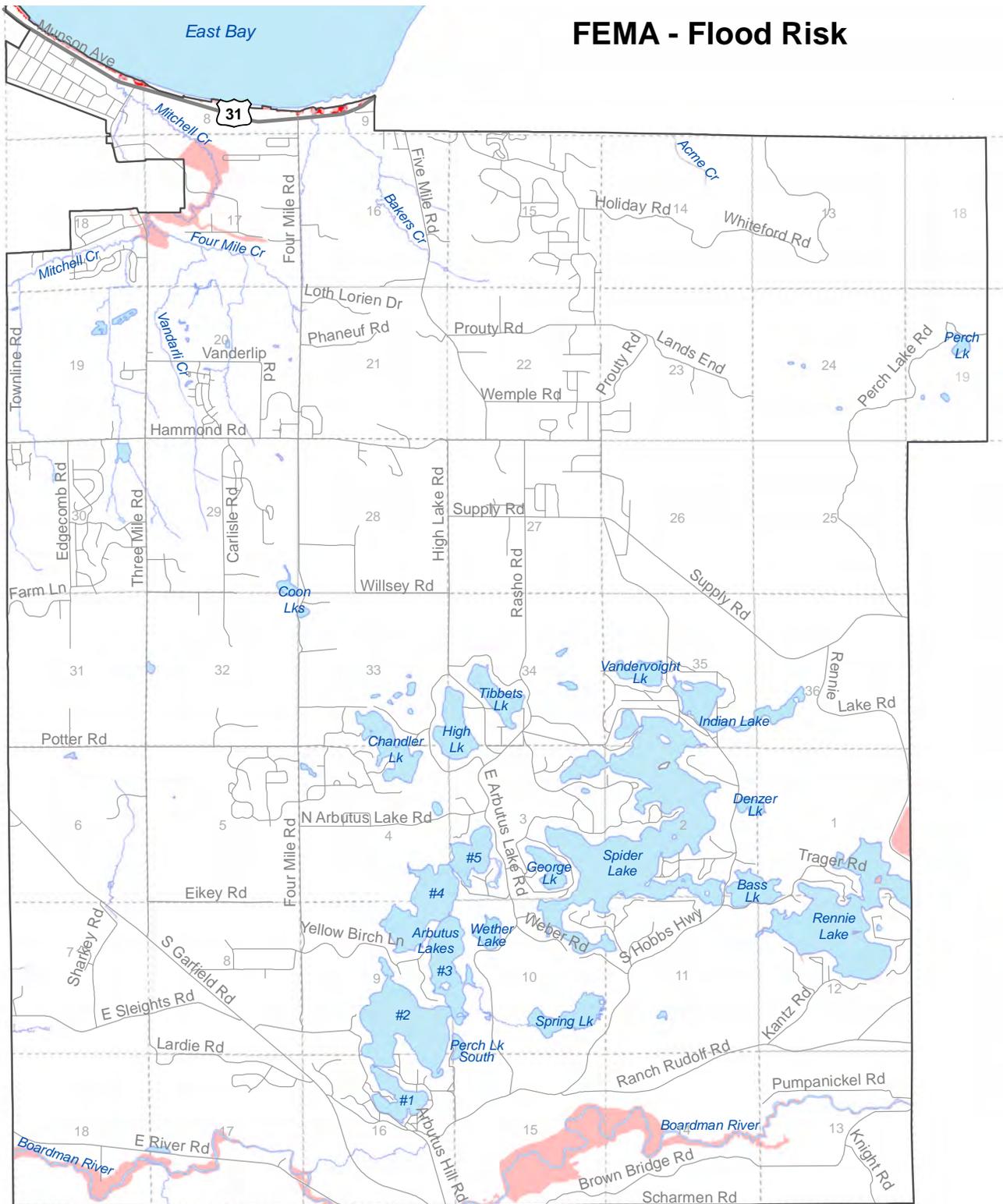
## PROJECTED TRENDS

Some of the potential impacts of climate change in East Bay Township are as follows:

- Storms are expected to become more frequent and more severe
- Increases in winter and spring precipitation
- Less precipitation as snow and more as rain
- Less winter ice on lakes
- Greater frequency and intensity of storms
- More flooding events with risks of erosion
- Increased frequency and length of severe heat events
- Increased risk of drought, particularly in summer

Map 4. FEMA Flood Risk

# FEMA - Flood Risk

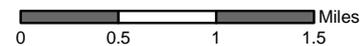


- 1% Annual Chance of Flood Hazard
- 0.2% Annual Chance of Flood Hazard



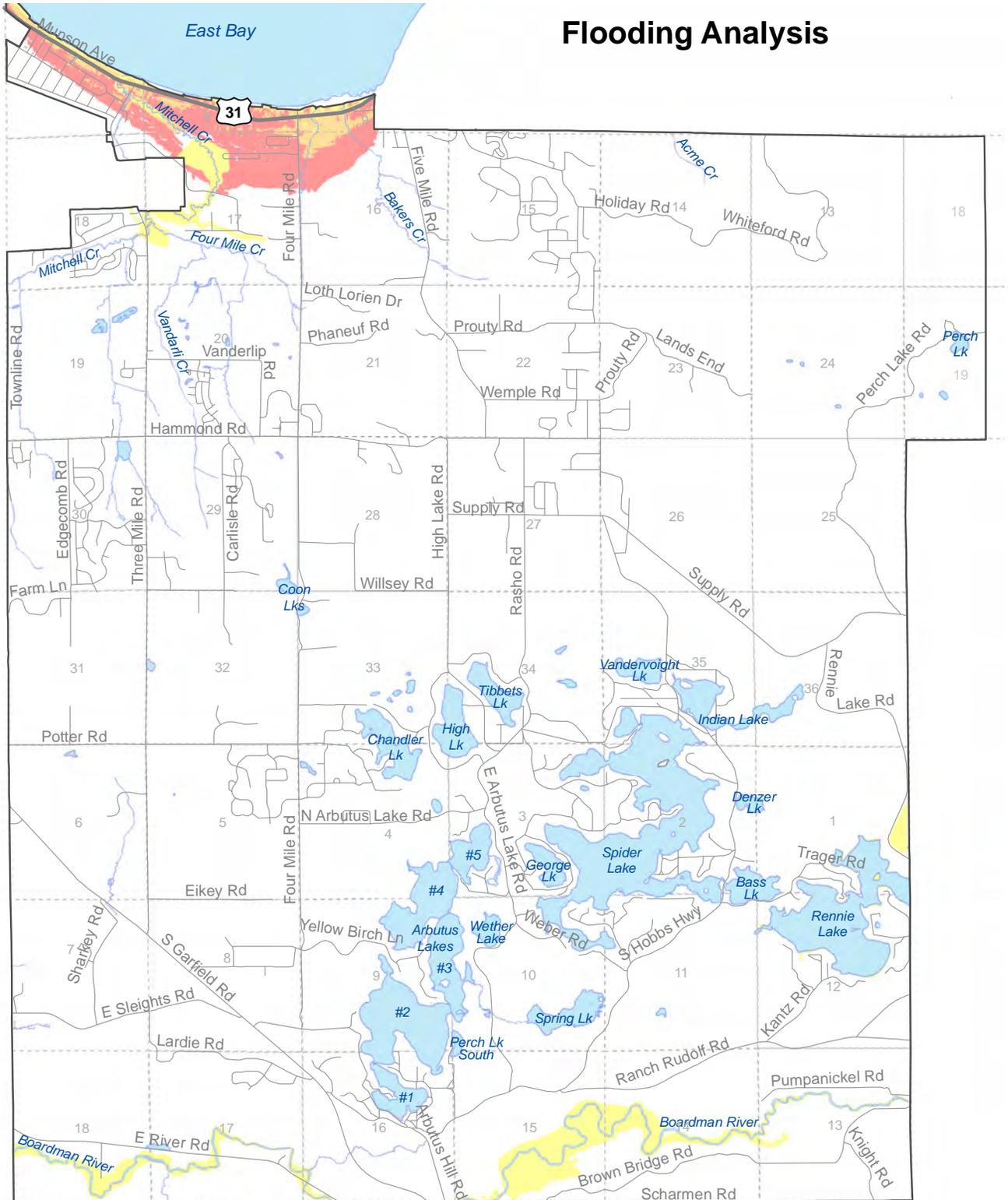
Data Sources:  
 East Bay Township, FEMA,  
 Grand Traverse County, Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared September 2020 for East Bay Township



Map 5. Flooding Analysis

# Flooding Analysis

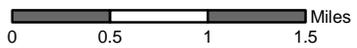


- Lucky Flooding Scenario
- Expected Flooding Scenario
- Perfect Storm Flooding Scenario



Data Sources:  
 East Bay Township, FEMA, UM Flood Analysis,  
 Grand Traverse County, Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared September 2020 for East Bay Township



## DEFINING STORM EVENTS

The term “100-year flood” is used in an attempt to simplify the definition of a flood that statistically has a 1-percent chance of occurring in any given year. But, just because a 100-year event happened last year doesn’t mean it can’t happen again the following year. Since the 100 year standard was adopted, it has become quite universally used to describe a reasonable flood protection level. It is now used throughout the U.S. and in many other countries as well. Similarly, a “500-year-flood” is a flood event that has a statistical 0.2% chance of occurring in any given year.

Climate change is altering the probability thresholds that were previously used to set the appropriate level of risk. The vast majority of the continental United States will experience the 100-year event with much more frequency throughout the 21st century.

changes in Michigan.

Based on the most recent models, the climate of Northwest Michigan and East Bay Township will continue to warm, with greater increases in temperature during the winter months and at night. There are a variety of weather impacts expected with this change in average temperatures. Extended growing season (earlier spring/late fall) can have a positive impact on crop yields, particularly in the short term. These trends are important to track and plan for, as they will have impacts on future land use and development decisions in East Bay Township.

## INLAND LAKES & STREAMS

Changing water levels, impacts of a hardened shoreline and development, and increased nutrient loading and runoff are all amplified by observed changes to the climate, specifically increased intense precipitation events and higher average temperatures. Moreover, increase and aquatic invasive species (AIS) and loss of coldwater fish species can be linked to changing climate conditions. There are a number of tools available to local units of government to support climate resiliency efforts. Some examples include moderating temperatures of water bodies by preserving natural vegetation along the stream or water body, reducing impervious surfaces by limiting development along the stream or inland lake, and reducing nutrient loading by ensuring functioning septic systems and enhancing the vegetative buffer.

## FUTURE FLOODING AND WATER LEVELS

One of the most significant changes communities in northern Michigan are experiencing is an increase in the frequency and severity of heavy rain and flooding events. More precipitation combined with high water levels will have implications on future land use and zoning along Lake Michigan as well as East Bay Townships inland lakes and riverine areas.

The Flooding Analysis (**Map 5**) illustrates an analysis performed by researchers at the University of Michigan to help communities predict future implications of flooding and storm events. Researchers used data from FEMA’s flood insurance rate maps, topographic surveys, elevation profiles, storm and wave runup projections, historical water level data, and soil surveys to develop three different scenarios. Rather than presenting a prediction of what the future will bring, each of the “climate futures” illustrated on the map plays out a possible future that might occur. These varying climate futures — all of which are reasonably anticipated possibilities — are arranged from a least impactful to a most impactful condition in terms of the potential for wave damage and flooding hazards they would bring. The following descriptions outline the key assumptions made in defining each of the climate futures as compared to the others.

1. “Lucky” Future: Under the Lucky Climate Future, Great Lakes water levels will stay relatively low. Although there will be wave and wind action, major storm events and wave impacts will not encroach on properties

landward of current beaches. A Lucky Future projection, indicating the land areas that would be affected by high-energy waves along the shorefront and/or adjacent riverine flooding under these conditions, is shown in yellow on Map 5.

2. “Expected” Future: Under the Expected Climate Future, Great Lakes water levels will continue to fluctuate according to long-term decadal patterns, including recent extreme storm events incorporated into the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) ongoing Great Lakes Coast Flood Study. Given those ongoing fluctuations, this Climate Future accounts for periods when Great Lakes still-water elevations are closer to the long-term average. In addition, this Climate Future anticipates the so-called “100-year storm event” (or 1% storm) becoming more like a 20- or 50-year storm event (i.e., an expected storm within the normal community planning time horizon) because of increased storminess. The Expected Future projection is shown in orange on Map 5.
3. “Perfect Storm” Future: Under the Perfect Storm Climate Future, Great Lakes water levels will continue to fluctuate according to decadal patterns, consistent with assumptions made for the Expected Future. However, for this Perfect Storm Climate Future, the estimated still-water elevation is set higher than the long-term average and closer to the long-term high (583 feet). In addition, this Climate Future anticipates the occurrence of a so-called “500-year storm event” (or 0.2% storm) occurring within the planning time horizon while lake levels are high. The Perfect Storm Future projection is shown in red on Map 5.

It is important to note that much of the area in East Bay Township identified as prone to possible flooding is already developed. While limiting development in these areas is not feasible, other solutions involving stormwater management, green infrastructure, and wetland setbacks may be appropriate.

## WOODLANDS

East Bay Township is home to approximately 15,000 acres of designated State Forest Land. These lands are part of the Pere Marquette State Forest which covers significant portions of eastern Grand Traverse County, Kalkaska County, Leelanau County, Benzie County, and Manistee County. The forest themselves consist of mixed conifers and hardwoods, including within the upland areas, oaks, maples, aspens, and various varieties of pine. The rolling topography of the Township has become a strong magnet for development, especially in those upland areas with its scenic views of Grand Traverse Bay, farm orchards, and woodland areas. The Township’s varied topography, illustrated in the Lakes, Rivers, and Streams Map, presents challenging development conditions in some cases, but also offers attractive views of these features.

## TREE CANOPY

The existing tree canopies throughout East Bay Township contribute to a variety of ecosystem benefits and to the Township’s unique character and up north feel. In 2020, the Township convened a Tree Preservation Subcommittee to explore

## TREE PRESERVATION SUBCOMMITTEE

**Vision:** Large white pines on U.S. 31 provide dramatic character and sense of place in East Bay Township. The healthy heritage trees on this corridor have been protected and preserved in perpetuity. Commercial roadways throughout the Township serve as diverse tree corridors, welcoming visitors up north.

**Mission:** To protect and preserve in perpetuity the white pines and healthy heritage trees along US 31, Hammond Road, and commercial roadways throughout East Bay Township.

**Values:**

1. Heritage trees are incorporated into the site plan and developers seek creative solutions to retain existing trees.
2. Acknowledge that large trees are irreplaceable and will take a lifetime to reestablish.
3. To observe the distinct ecosystem services trees provide, such as slowing stormwater runoff, improving water quality, shade, and cooling.
4. Foster a diversity of tree species with an emphasis on native species.
5. Appreciate the visual aesthetics trees provide in new developments.
6. Trees are continually replenished to develop a multigenerational tree canopy.
7. Township policies related to trees are enforceable and balance tree preservation with facilitating and encouraging new desirable development.

**Table 11. Trees in the Regional Business District**

Tree Height	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF TREES
50 feet or greater	3,908
60 feet or greater	7,654
70 feet or greater	11,562
80 feet or greater	23,124

opportunities for preserving and protecting trees in East Bay Township. The primary goal was to preserve the large white pine heritage trees along the U.S. 31 corridor that contribute to the corridor’s unique identity. The subcommittee also looked globally at tree landscaping requirements that would facilitate desired development character on key corridors. Trees provide a variety of unique benefits, including visual aesthetics, buffering, screening, shade, stormwater control, and cooling. Please see side panel for an overview of the vision, mission, and values related to tree preservation. **Map 6** provides an overview of the existing tree canopy along the U.S. 31 corridor and **Table 11** summarizes estimated heights of trees in the district. This data was developed using LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging), a remote sensing imagery method by LIAA.

## SOILS

The soils in East Bay Township have been categorized by the United States Department of Agriculture in its 1990 Soil Survey and by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Geological Survey Division in a report titled Hydrology and Land Use in Grand Traverse County.

The bedrock in the Township underlies glacial deposits. Generalized soils within the Township include Rubicon-Grayling Association which predominates in the eastern half of the Township. These are characterized as level to steeply sloped droughty sands. In the western half of the Township, three generalized soil types are found. The Lupton-Roscommon series are typically found in the low-lying areas along lower Mitchell Creek and following the Boardman River. These tend to be level, very poorly drained to imperfectly drained mucks, peats and sandy soils. Emmet-Leelanau Association soils are found in an area extending approximately from Hammond Road south to Potter Road and from Townline to Five Mile Road. These soils are characterized as gently sloping to steep, well drained, slightly acid or neutral sandy loams and loamy sands. Finally, south of this area to the River is found the Kalkaska-Mancelona Association, characterized as level to steep, well drained sands and loamy sands. The geology of the Township includes several oil- and gas-bearing deposits, especially in the southern and southeast portion of the Township. Several operating oil and gas wells remain in operation today.

Map 6. Tree Canopy along U.S. 31 Corridor Business District

Potential Tree Canopies within the Regional Business Zoning District

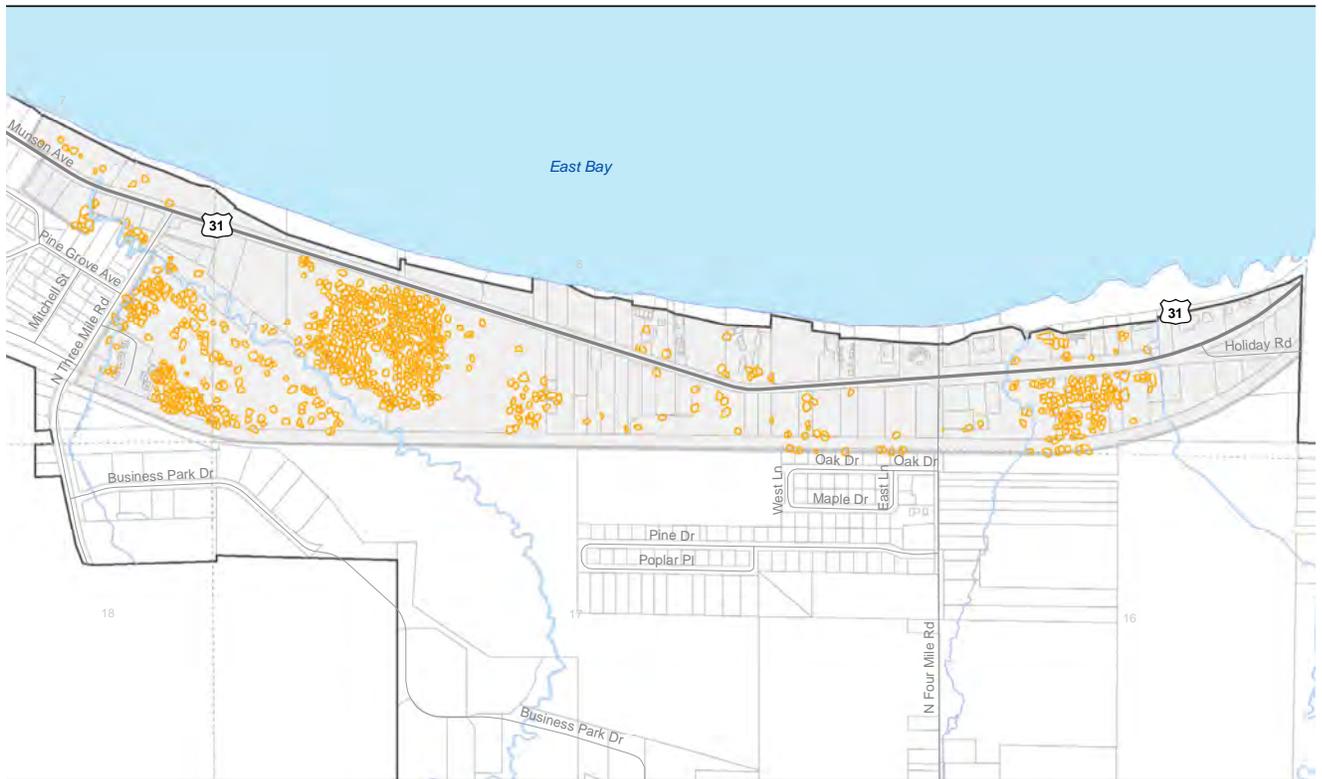
-  Probable Tree Canopies with heights of 70+ feet
-  Parcels
-  Zoning

N  
↑

Data Sources:  
East Bay Township, Grand Traverse County,  
Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared November 2020 for East Bay Township

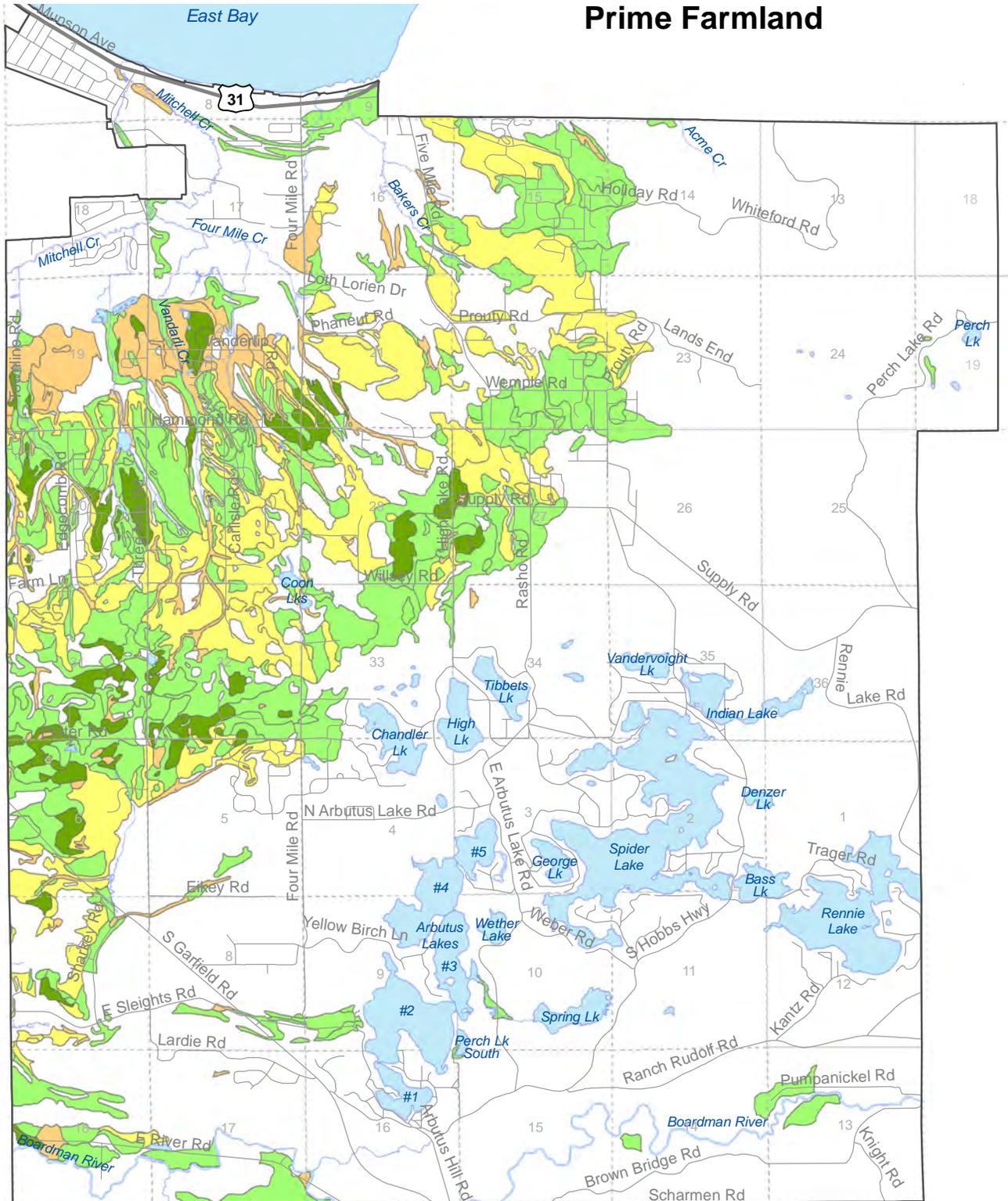
0 0.125 0.25 0.375 Miles



Above, white pines located on the U.S. 31 corridor at the Port Traverse development, across the street from Pirate's Cove.

Map 7. Prime Farmland in East Bay Township

# Prime Farmland

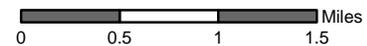


- All areas are prime farmland
- Farmland of local importance
- Farmland of unique importance
- Prime farmland if drained



Data Sources:  
 East Bay Township, Grand Traverse County,  
 USDA-NRCS, Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared September 2020 for East Bay Township



## FARMLAND

East Bay Township has a robust farming history. **Map 7**, Prime Farmland, shows the locations in the Township ideal for agricultural activities, either based on past agricultural use, soil type, or a combination. While some historical farms are now fallow farm fields that are reverting to wet meadows and emergent wetlands, there remain agricultural opportunities and farmland preservation should continue to be a priority.

## PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

East Bay Township has long recognized its stewardship responsibility for these important natural features in the community. Through the Mitchell Creek and Baker Creek watershed protection strategies, the Township has taken seriously its obligation to preserve and protect these important features. The Township is cognizant that impending population growth may cause development to encroach into many of these important natural areas. Therefore, the Township has adopted site development strategies to balance the effects of growth and development on surface water quality. The lower Mitchell Creek and Baker Creek watersheds remain areas of significant interest and potential for development, yet both are vital natural resources in East Bay. Balancing these interests will continue to be a challenge for the Township. In the following chapters, the growth trends in terms of demographics, housing and economic development will be described. Throughout this discussion the reader is reminded to pay careful attention to the Township's ongoing commitment to the preservation of the important natural features and the environment within the community.

## PRIME FARMLAND DEFINITIONS

- **Prime Farmland:** 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.
- **Farmland of Unique Importance:** Land other than prime farmland that is used for the production of specific high-value food and fiber crops, such as citrus, tree nuts, olives, cranberries, and other fruits and vegetables.
- **Farmland of Local Importance:** This farmland is identified by the appropriate local agencies. Farmland of local importance may include tracts of land that have been designated for agriculture by local ordinance.

EAST BAY  
1908  
TOWN HALL

LIBRARY



# CHAPTER 5

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community services, including drinking water and sanitary sewer, education, healthcare, public safety, and telecommunications play an important role in facilitating a high quality of life for residents and promoting economic development. The value they place on services depend upon their underlying needs. For example, families looking to purchase a home may prioritize quality education while business owners may be more interested in the location and quality of utilities. Improvements to the public infrastructure can catalyze redevelopment and new development, which can create new economic opportunities, but can also present new challenges in the management of new growth. Investments in public infrastructure should therefore be considered in the development of a master plan and done proactively and strategically. This chapter describes the current community services and facilities in East Bay Township and discusses these resources in relation to land use decisions.

### **WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES**

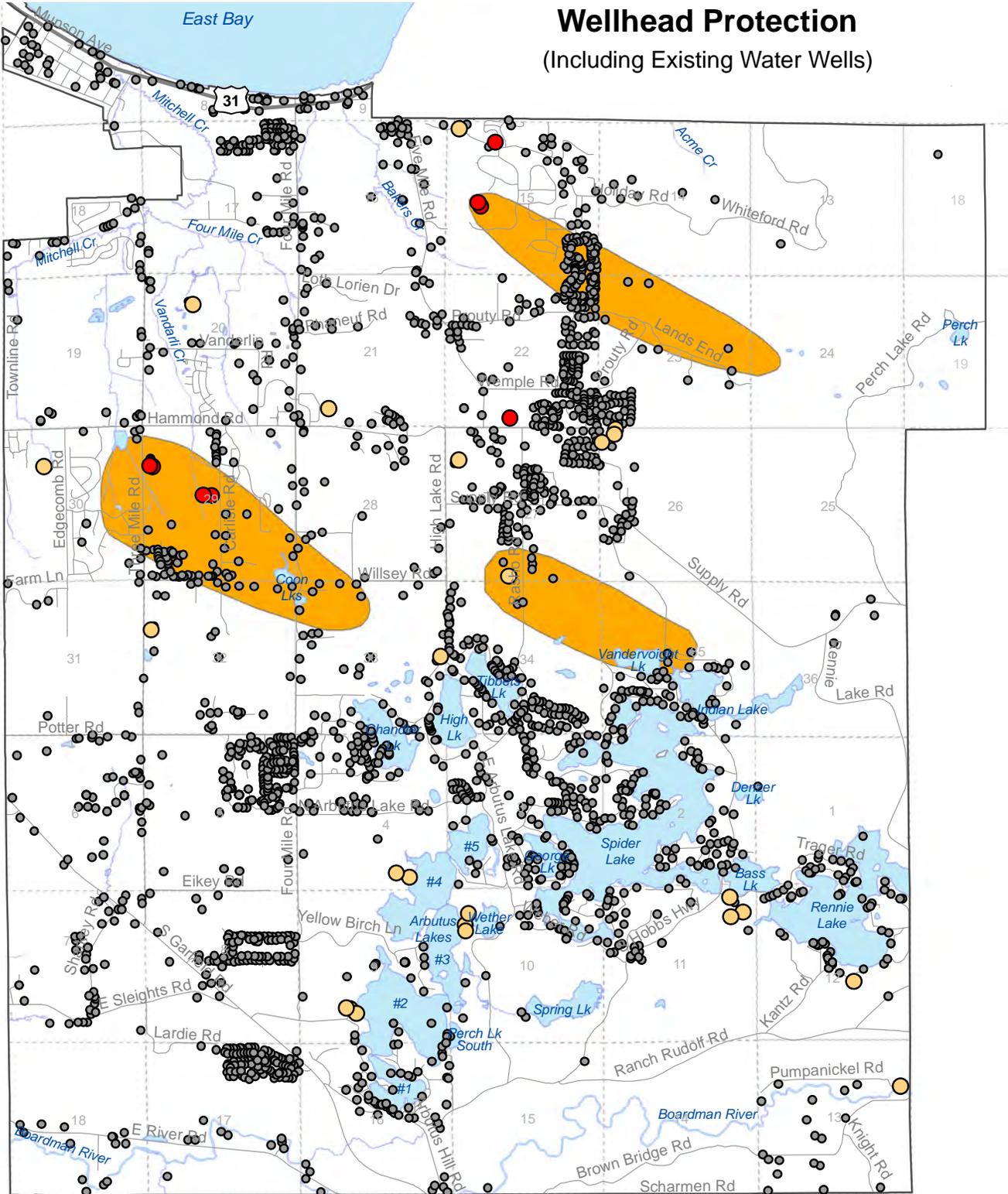
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#### **WATER DISTRIBUTION**

East Bay Township primarily relies on groundwater for its public water supply. The water system is operated by the Township, and services much of the Township's northern area within the urban growth boundary. The Township's water system consists of two centralized systems known as the Cherry Ridge Water System and the English Woods Water System. Both systems operate as a series of wells, elevated reservoirs, and distribution lines. The Township's water is pumped from the water table by eight wells located throughout the community. The water is then pumped to one of three elevated reservoirs for storage. The first of these reservoirs is located within the southern edge of the Cherry Ridge subdivision off Three Mile Road and has a storage capacity of 200,000 gallons. The second reservoir is located within the English Woods subdivision north of Prouty Road with a storage capacity of 300,000 gallons. The third reservoir is located nearby the intersection of Hammond Road and Five Mile Road with a capacity of 300,000 gallons, bringing the total water storage capacity of the Township's water system up to 800,000 gallons. From these reservoirs, the water flows through the Township's water distribution lines by way of gravity to properties throughout the

Map 8. Wellhead Protection

# Wellhead Protection (Including Existing Water Wells)

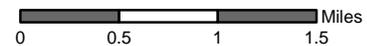


- Wellhead Protection Areas
- Type 1 Public Water Supply
- Type 2 Public Water Supply
- All other Water Wells



Data Sources:  
 East Bay Township, Grand Traverse County  
 Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared September 2020 for East Bay Township



**Table 12. Types of Wells in East Bay Township**

Well Type	Amount
Type 1 Public	8
Type 2 Public	25
Type 3 Public	19
Household	2,201
Irrigation	21
Test Well	13
Heat Pump	3
Unknown	18
Total	2,350

Township. Two water booster stations are located within the distribution network to ensure adequate water distribution through the Township, one off Five Mile Road and the other nearby the Cherry Ridge subdivision. See **Map 9** (East Bay Township Public Water Distribution System). Those not served by the municipal system rely on individual wells. There are currently an estimated 2,350 wells in East Bay Township (both public and private systems), which are broken down by category in **Table 12**.

The United States Census Bureau estimates there were 4,504 households in East Bay Township in 2018. Using this figure as well as the data from **Table 12**, the percentage of households using an individual well is approximately 48%. The Wellhead Protection Map (**Map 8**) helps visualize the geographic distribution of these individual household wells. A large amounts of these wells are located within the Lakes Area zoning district as well as in the subdivisions located between the subdivisions of Holiday Hills already connected to municipal water and Supply Road.

Because groundwater is the drinking water source for most of the Township's residents, maintaining high quality, unpolluted groundwater in and around East Bay Township is vitally important. The Wellhead Protection Map (**Map 8**) shows the location of public and private wells throughout the Township. Type 1 wells (in red) are the municipal wells, Type 2 wells (in yellow) represent institutional uses, and the grey dots indicate the locations of private wells. The protection area boundaries are delineated by EGLE and show the area where protection efforts should be concentrated, as these are the areas where soil contaminants would take less than ten years to find their way into the groundwater source. The State of Michigan has defined a period of ten as a reasonable length of time for responding to environmental problems within a Wellhead Protection Area that is of a size that can be reasonably managed. The Township may wish to consider adopting an ordinance to add protections to prevent contamination of the water supply. A wellhead protection overlay district can be added to the zoning ordinance to limit potentially harmful activities within the wellhead protection boundary. Currently, thirty-four communities in Michigan have a wellhead protection ordinance. Of these municipalities, fourteen are cities, seventeen are townships, and three are villages.

As the township continues to grow, there will be need for further improvement and expansion of the municipal water system. The *2019 Water Master Plan* identified potential areas for expansion and improved interconnectivity of the current water system.

According to this plan, most of the future water mains should be 12 inches in diameter and located along major roads. This is needed to provide adequate fire flows at the outer edges of the system, where dead ends are most common. Looping will enhance flows and provide redundancy in the event a portion of the main is shut down for repairs, to make a major connection, or for general maintenance operations.

The Township should continue to monitor the remaining capacity of the municipal water system. With growth anticipated in the service area and the anticipated increase in the number of connections to the existing water system, it is possible that capacity could soon be reached without future improvements.

### **SANITARY SEWER**

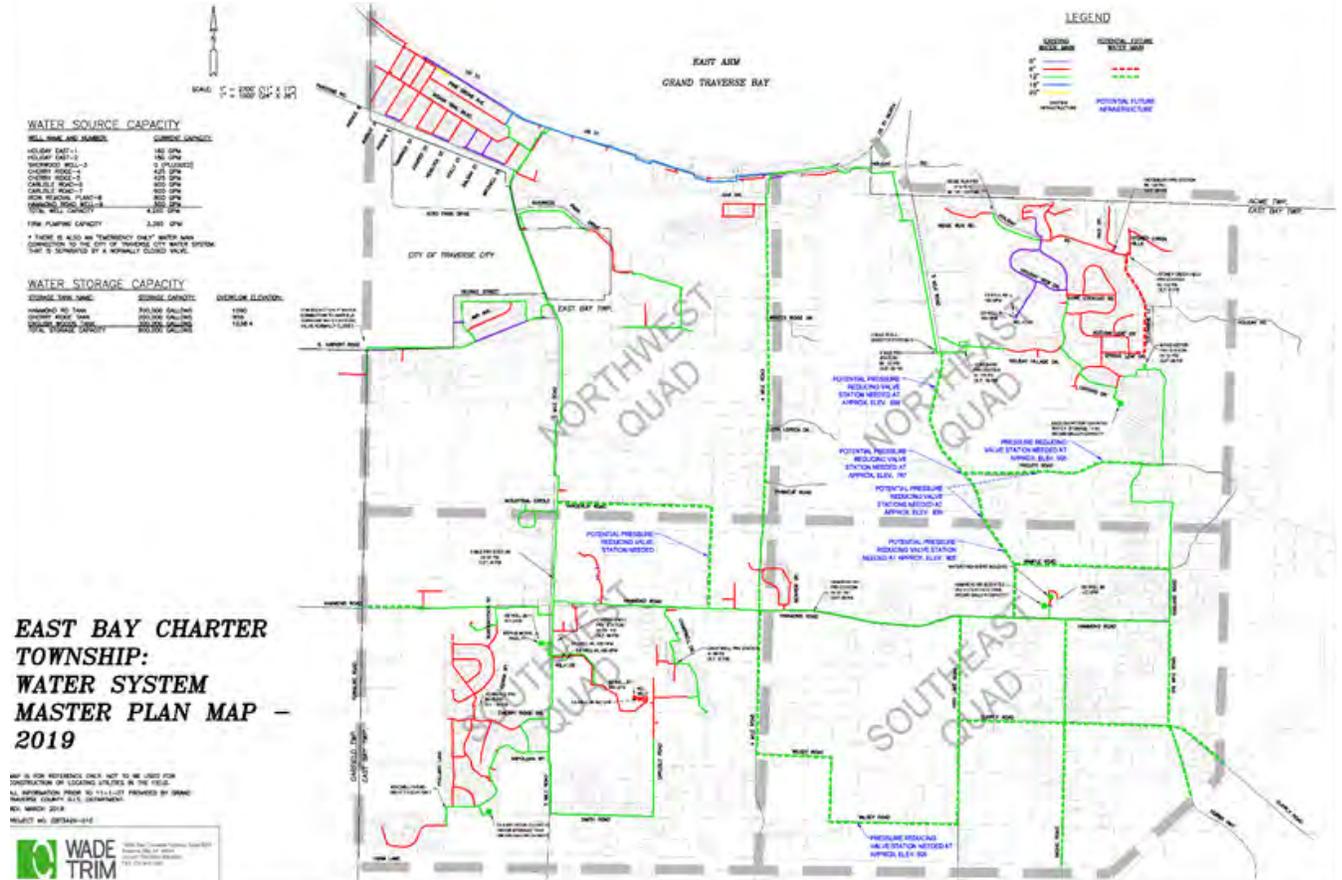
East Bay Township provides sanitary sewer services to properties located within the Growth Boundary. Wastewater connected to the municipal system is sent to the public wastewater treatment plant located in the City of Traverse City.

The wastewater plant is operated by the City of Traverse City and has serviced East Bay Township since 1987. In addition, the plant serves the residents of Acme, Elmwood, Garfield, Blair, and Peninsula Townships, and the Grand Traverse County Board of Public Works. The municipal sanitary sewer uses a combination of gravity and force main lines to collect wastewater from the properties connected to the system. Wastewater is pumped to the wastewater treatment plant through the force mains by a series of ten pump stations, as designated in **Map 10** 2019 Sanitary Sewer System Master Plan Map. The current sanitary system allocates plant capacity among the governmental units and the operation is funded by the five townships and the City in proportion to the amount of their sewage flow over time. Currently, the wastewater system capacity is allocated as demonstrated in **Table 13**.

**Table 13. Municipal Wastewater Capacity**

Municipality	Percent of Total Capacity
East Bay Township	8.17%
Acme Township	9.00%
Elmwood Township	4.72%
Garfield Township	25.09%
Peninsula Township	2.01%
Traverse City	50.00%

Map 9. East Bay Charter Township Water System Master Plan



Map 10. East Bay Charter Township Sanitary Sewer System Master Plan



## SEPTIC SYSTEMS

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The forest lakes area of the Township offers a very desirable location for residential use. However, despite the concentrated residential pattern in the area, no public water or sewer facilities serve the Forest Lakes. With fluctuating lake levels, aging septic systems, holding tanks, stormwater runoff, oil and gas wells, and the intensity of vacation short-term rentals, private drinking wells and surface water in this area is susceptible to contamination. Nevertheless, except in isolated areas, lake water quality has remained very good. Programs and partnerships for continual and increased water quality testing in the Forest Lakes area will help to ensure that septic systems are well maintained and that water quality remains high.

Nevertheless, Lake Associations' and riparian owners' concerns regarding water quality remain at the forefront. Many visitors, short-term rental owners, and recreational users of the lakes view the water quality as good with little understanding of our oligotrophic lakes and the efforts of many groups and volunteers working together to monitor and maintain a good water quality level in our township.

Some areas that the Township could work to address in the Forest Lakes area include surface water quality testing, septic systems and holding tank monitoring and maintenance, continued shoreline protection and enforcement, and working with property owners on the identification and mitigation of invasive species. Water quality is a result of ongoing monitoring and maintenance taken on by Lake Associations, EGLE, CLMP, Michigan Lakes and Streams, EBT, along with riparian property owners in order to ensure good water quality for everyone to enjoy and recreate on our bodies of water in East Bay Township.

## STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

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Stormwater management is a critical component of community infrastructure because it protects homes and businesses, water quality of lakes and rivers, and ensures the personal safety of residents in the event of heavy precipitation events. As severe precipitation events increase in frequency and intensity, effective stormwater management is a priority for East Bay Township.

A variety of low impact development (LID) strategies are employed by communities to reduce the negative impacts of stormwater runoff, particularly in places with impervious surfaces and existing buildings. Conventional land development, such as roads, buildings, and parking facilities, change hydrological patterns, slow the normal infiltration of stormwater into the soil, and remove the natural vegetation that normally filters stormwater before it reaches waterbodies. This has the effect of increasing the amount of stormwater that runs off the landscape, the rate at which runoff occurs, and the level of pollution it contains.

Low impact development includes a variety of techniques to manage precipitation where it falls, and not where it may otherwise negatively impact the environment. These techniques work by filtering nutrients in stormwater, slowing the rate of runoff, and increasing percolation into groundwater, thereby recreating a site's natural hydrologic characteristics. Low impact development

encompasses a wide variety of human-made features including basins that catch and temporarily store stormwater, constructed wetlands designed to filter nutrients, and rain barrels that capture precipitation.

There may be opportunities to integrate low impact development provisions within the existing stormwater ordinance in East Bay Township. LID can have the added benefit of reducing the total area of land dedicated to stormwater management, thus resulting in more buildable area or usable open space.

## GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Public facilities are important community assets and centers for civic engagement. The East Bay Township Hall and the East Bay Branch Library of the Traverse Area District Library are both located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Hammond and Three Mile Roads. This location is advantageous because its central place within the residential areas of the township; they are accessible to a larger number of residents. The Township Hall provides space for civic events and hosts meetings for local boards and commissions, while the Library provides residents access to the larger District Library collection and a place for community events.

## EMERGENCY SERVICES

Residents and visitors rely on emergency services in critical moments. East Bay Township provides fire, police, and ambulance services funded through an emergency services millage paid by all Township property owners. While the funding source is the same for each emergency service, the provision is through a variety of direct and contractual services. Regardless, Master Plan survey respondents rated the quality of emergency services as the top performing quality of life issue.

Like many rural townships, East Bay Township's emergency medical and fire services were originally provided by a Township volunteer department. However, as a municipality grows and society changes, paid staffing often becomes necessary. East Bay Ambulance (EBA) has responded and also changed to serve the needs of the residents and visitors by providing a fully staffed Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance service. EBA has two ambulance vehicles, a primary rig and a back-up rig, to provide ALS service 24/7, every day of the year. Both vehicles are equipped with identical equipment and have access to Advanced Life Support (ALS) services on-board. Providing services to this level requires a mix of full and part-time Paramedics and EMTs, led by a full-time Ambulance Director. East Bay Ambulance operates out of Grand Traverse Metro Fire Station #9, located at 110 High Lake Road.

Since 1980, fire services have been provided by Grand Traverse Metro Emergency Services Authority (GTMESSA). GTMESSA is a collaborative effort of three townships, solidified by contractual agreements, and serves East Bay Charter, Garfield Charter, and Acme Townships. GTMESSA has five fire

## EXPLORING A SEPTIC ORDINANCE

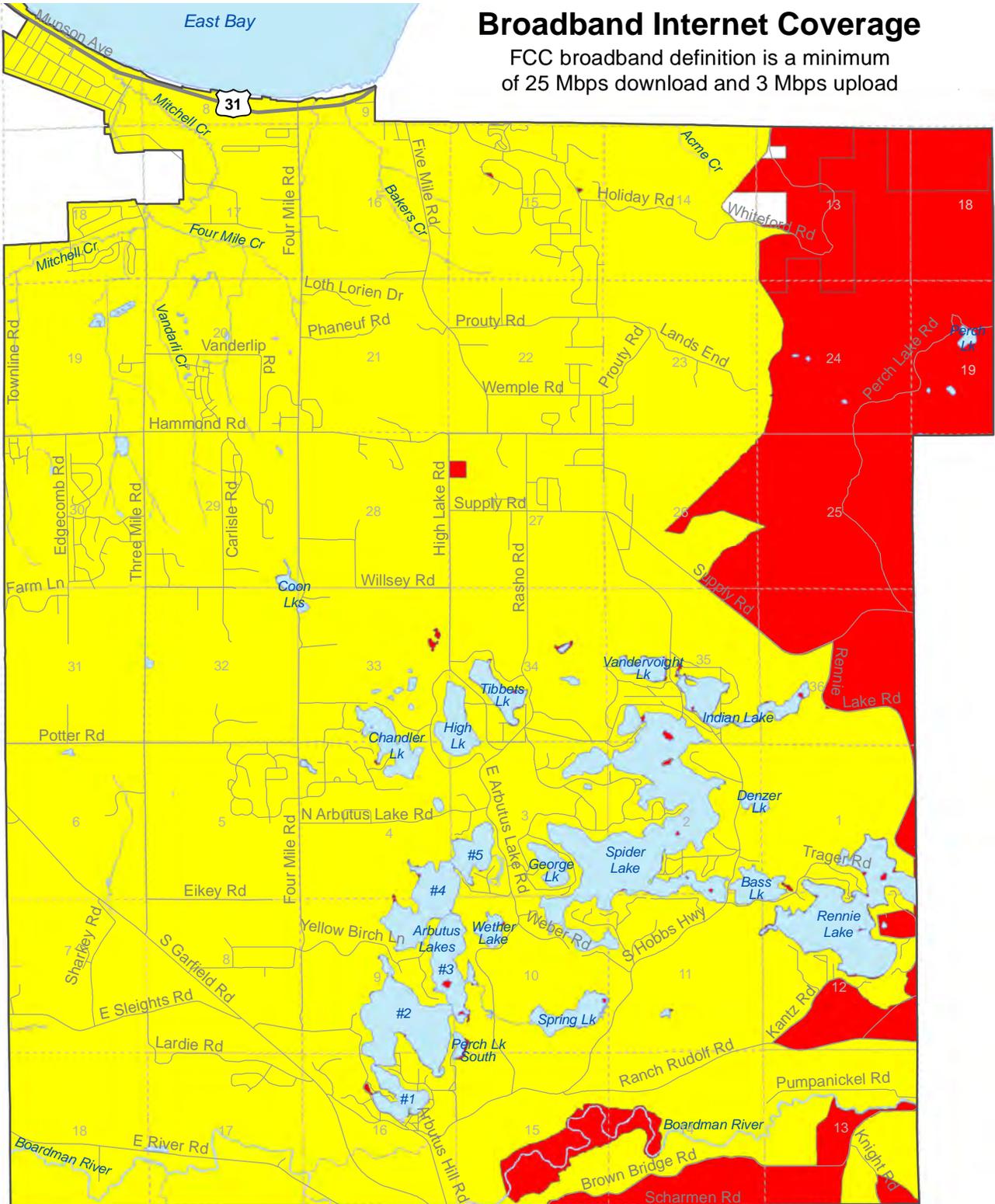
The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has articulated concern about the increasing burden that increased precipitation events will have on both surface water and groundwater drinking sources. As noted in the 2016-2021 Climate & Health Adaptation Strategic Plan, septic failure will lead to increased risk to groundwater, well, and surface water from contamination resulting from extreme precipitation events. Michigan is the only state in the country without a uniform septic code.

One policy option Townships can explore is an ordinance to require inspections of the existing septic systems at the time of property transfer. A total of 19 point of sale (POS) septic inspection ordinances are on the books in Michigan. There are currently ten counties with such an ordinance. POS ordinances at the county level are administered by the District Health Department but must be approved by the County Board of Commissioners for each county within the Health Department's jurisdiction. Local units of government can also adopt a POS septic inspection ordinance, which is usually done through a local police power ordinance. The enforcement for these ordinances is done by the local unit of government, while the Health Department is responsible for conducting the inspections. There are seven townships and two villages in Michigan with POS septic inspection ordinances, all of which are in northwest Michigan. There has been a significant push in recent years to address management of septic systems at the local level.

Map 11. Broadband Internet Coverage

# Broadband Internet Coverage

FCC broadband definition is a minimum of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload



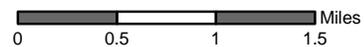
- 100Mbps x 10Mbps\*
- 25Mbps x 3Mbps\*
- 10Mbps x 1Mbps

\* The yellow & orange coverages are identical.



Data Sources:  
 East Bay Township, Grand Traverse County,  
 Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared October 2020 for East Bay Township



**Table 14. School Enrollment**

School	2020 Enrollment	Change 2015-2020	Grades
Grand Traverse Academy	874	-25%	K-12
Traverse City East Middle School	862	-2%	6-8
Cherry Knoll Elementary School	420	+10%	K-5
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Middle School	Est. 300	Not Available	6-8
Courtade Elementary School	267	-8%	K-5
Traverse City High School	168	-29%	9-12

stations and one administration office. Two of the five stations and the administrative office are located in East Bay Township. Again, this emergency service developed from an initial volunteer-driven agency to a staffed agency with full and part-time personnel.

East Bay Township has two Community Police Officers (CPOs) for police service. The CPOs are Grand Traverse County Sheriff's Deputies assigned to patrol the Township through a contract with Grand Traverse County. The Township pays an annual rate for each CPO which equals officer compensation, including fringes, while the County provides resources, such as vehicles, education, and training. While the CPOs are designated to and patrol the Township, the contractual relationship ensures that if the County needs emergency assistance when a CPO is on duty, they have the ability to utilize any resource a situation requires even if located in another jurisdiction. This agreement ensures additional officer coverage within the Township while limiting the cost of police service provision, providing benefits to the Township, the County, and, most significantly, residents.

## EDUCATION

A robust education system provides a key link to a flourishing economy for communities in the 21st Century. High quality public, private, and charter schools are readily available in East Bay Charter Township. Table 14 summarizes the largest schools in East Bay Township from both public and private school districts. Traverse City High School, East Middle School, Cherry Knoll Elementary School, and Courtade Elementary School are all part of Traverse City Area Public School (TCAPS) system. It should be noted that enrollment numbers reflect data from the 2021-2020 school year, which was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In many cases, enrollment numbers are down due to family decisions to homeschool or enroll in virtual schooling. Schools not listed include the Seventh Day Adventist School and preschool facilities.

## BROADBAND INTERNET SERVICE

Access to technology, and the ability to use it, is a key determinant of economic success in the 21st Century, and largely drives a community's ability to connect with distant locations. Information sources on broadband availability show that service is available in East Bay Township, although there are some issues with slower speeds and fewer providers. As the Broadband Internet Coverage indicates, cable broadband speeds sufficient to support most business activities (25 megabits per second) are available throughout most of East Bay Township. See Map 11 for the existing service area of broadband internet in East Bay Township.



# CHAPTER 6

## PARKS AND RECREATION

The abundant recreation opportunities, facilities, and amenities of northwest Michigan are critically important to the region’s economy. In a 2019 report, Networks Northwest found that the recreation and entertainment industry directly supports 225 business establishments which employ more than 2,200 people in northwest Michigan.

The impact recreation has on the region is even more substantial when considering the relevant associated industries such as accommodation, food service, and tourism. Taken as a combined category, these industries account for more than 18,000 jobs in northwest Michigan – more than any other industry. Within the ten-county region, Grand Traverse County accounts for a third of these jobs.

Aside from economic benefits, parks and recreation amenities play a key role in attracting and retaining businesses and residents. Parks and recreation facilities in East Bay Township also improve the quality of life for its residents and promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles. East Bay Charter Township has long recognized the value of parks and natural areas. This chapter identifies East Bay Township’s parks and recreational amenities, as well as the community’s plan and priorities for their continued improvement.

### RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

East Bay Township provides a wide variety of parks and recreational facilities for residents and visitors. The community’s access to three miles of Grand Traverse Bay shoreline, more than a dozen inland lakes, and extensive forests allows for diverse recreational opportunities. East Bay Township owns and maintains many of these facilities, though other entities including Traverse City Area Public Schools, Grand Traverse County, the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and other non-profit organizations, also own and manage recreational areas within the township. Often the maintenance and development of these amenities requires coordination from multiple overlapping entities and cooperation between the public and private spheres. The following Recreation Resources **Table 15** inventories these facilities, and their geographical location is shown in East Bay Township – Parks and Recreation **Map 12**.

### EAST BAY TOWNSHIP PARKS

East Bay Township currently owns and operates seven park and recreational facilities. This section will provide a brief overview of these facilities. For more comprehensive information, refer to the East Bay Charter Township 2019-2023 Parks & Recreation Plan.

### MOST POPULAR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY

- Walking
- Biking
- Swimming
- Hiking
- Cross-country Skiing
- Bird Watching
- Boating
- Mountain Biking
- Kayaking/Canoeing
- Snowshoeing
- Hunting
- Fishing

### MINI PARKS: A TINY TREND

Pinegrove Park and Gens Park are both considered “mini parks.” Mini parks, or pocket parks, are small public areas, less than an acre in size. These types of public green spaces have been increasing in popularity in recent years as they have been found to increase nearby property values.

Mini parks can be created both retroactively and proactively. Municipalities have been able to create mini parks from single vacant building lots, small irregular pieces of land, and sometimes even parking spots. Through proactive zoning measures, mini parks can also be created by the inclusion of public space requirements in new building projects, that serve both residents and the public.

Source: “Economic Benefits of Trails.” American Trails. Web.



Grace Macdonald Park tennis and pickleball courts.

**Table 15. Recreation Resources in East Bay Township**

Facility	Maintaining Organization
Grace Macdonald Park	East Bay Township
Arbutus Lake No. 5 Park	East Bay Township
Killingsworth Park	East Bay Township
Kelly Park	East Bay Township
Pinegrove Park	East Bay Township
Gens Park	East Bay Township
Pines Park	East Bay Township
Brown Bridge Quiet Area	City of Traverse City
Four Mile Road Boat Launch	Grand Traverse County
Traverse City State Park	State of Michigan
Arbutus Lake No. 4 Campground	State of Michigan
Spider Lake MDNR Boat Launch Site	State of Michigan
Boardman Valley Snowmobile Trail	State of Michigan
Michigan Shore to Shore Riding & Hiking Trail	State of Michigan
VASA Pathway	TART Trails
TART Trail & Three Mile Trail	TART Trails
North Country National Scenic Trail	GT Hiking Club Chapter
Holiday Woodlands Preserve	Holiday Woodlands Preserve
Edwards Nature Preserve	GTRLC
Reffitt Nature Preserve	GTRLC
Arbutus Lake No. 4 Boat Launch	State of Michigan

**Pinegrove Park** is a neighborhood park near the intersection of Hemlock Street and Parsons Road in the Pinegrove neighborhood. This third of an acre park was acquired in 1969 and was the first neighborhood park to be developed by East Bay Township. Despite its small size, Pinegrove Park provides many different types of amenities for residents, many of whom can access the park by foot.

**Gens Park** is a beachfront park located on the north side of US-31/ Munson Avenue along Grand Traverse Bay. Gens Park is nearly two-thirds of an acre and offers nearly 100 feet of shoreline access. Gens Park is both pedestrian and automobile accessible.

**Arbutus Lake No. 5 Park** is located on East Arbutus Lake Road on the northeasterly shore of Arbutus Lake, in the Forest Lakes area of the Township. Because of the fishing pier and boat launch, this park is a popular fishing, swimming, kayaking, and canoeing location. Large sections of the park are heavily wooded and undeveloped, providing an opportunity for future park development.

**Grace Macdonald Park** is located off the intersection of Rasha Road and High Lake Road, less than a mile north of Arbutus Lake No. 5 Park. Grace Macdonald Park is located on forty-two acres of conifer and hardwood forest, and due to its many amenities, it may be the Township's most well-known park. Amenities offered at the park include basketball courts, tennis and pickleball courts, a playground, soccer field, picnic area, and sledding hill in the winter.

**Killingsworth Park** is located off of the intersection of Chandler and Highview Roads, about a mile northwest of Grace Macdonald Park. Killingsworth Park is fifty-three acres in size, heavily wooded, and primarily undeveloped, but offers several hiking trails.

**Pines Park** is an eighty-acre site located off Eikey Road. This site is home to mature pines and is currently undeveloped. However, twenty acres of the park have been cleared for eventual recreational development as the township continues to become more populated in the park's vicinity.

**Kelly Park** is a two-acre site across the road from Killingsworth Park that provides boat access to Chandler Lake.

**Holiday Woodlands Natural Area** is a newly acquired park property in East Bay Township totaling 145 acres, comprised of the existing 80-acre Holiday Woodlands Preserve and an additional 65 acres of natural land to the north. The Holiday Woodlands Natural Area conserves a substantial amount of ecologically and recreationally important property in an area projected to receive some of the highest long-term growth pressures of anywhere across the state of Michigan. There are multiple ecological zones throughout the site, including creeks, wetlands, sand dunes, artesian springs, and evergreen and hardwood forests. In the coming months, East Bay Township will be engaging existing and future users of the property to develop a coordinated plan for trail access and development.

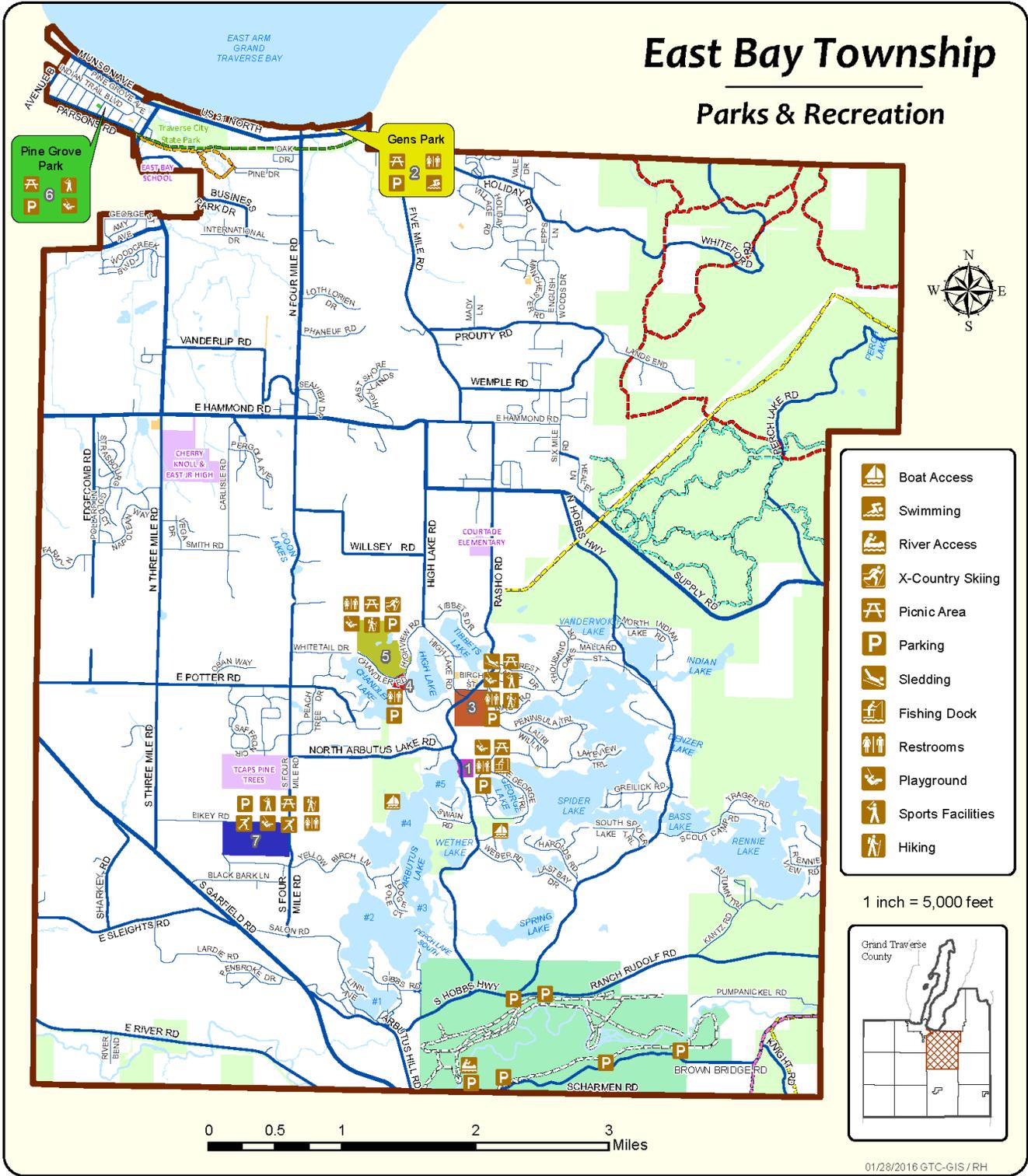


Trail sign at Killingsworth Park.



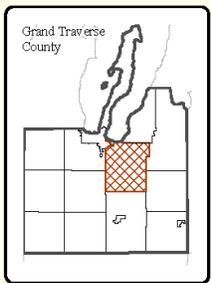
Mt. Holiday ski area, whose boundary line is adjacent to the soon to be acquired Holiday Woodlands Natural Area. .

Map 12. Parks & Recreation Assets



- Boat Access
- Swimming
- River Access
- X-Country Skiing
- Picnic Area
- Parking
- Sledding
- Fishing Dock
- Restrooms
- Playground
- Sports Facilities
- Hiking

1 inch = 5,000 feet



01/28/2016 GTC-GIS / RH


This map is based on digital databases prepared by Grand Traverse County. Grand Traverse County does not warrant, expressly or impliedly, or accept any responsibility for any errors, omissions, or that the information contained in the map or the digital databases is currently or positionally accurate.





# CHAPTER 7

## HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Residential housing is the single largest use of land and comprises the greatest number of structures for most communities in the United States. Most households within these communities find that housing costs are their single largest expense, while home ownership is typically their greatest financial asset. Therefore, housing significantly influences a community’s land use and the economic well-being for those who reside there.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a “housing unit” as an apartment, individual room, or group of rooms intended for separate living quarters. According to the American Community Survey there were an estimated 5,527 housing units in East Bay Township in 2019 — a slight increase from the 5,227 housing units documented in the 2010 Decennial census. This trend correlates to the Township’s increase in population during that period, with the number of residents increasing from 10,663 to an estimated 11,621.

### HOUSING

As shown in **Table 16** and **17**, East Bay Township has mostly owner-occupied single-unit detached homes. In 2019, East Bay Township had 4,575 occupied housing units with a median 5.8 rooms (the same number of rooms as the State of Michigan overall). The primary type of housing unit in the Township is the single-unit detached home (at 81.4%) followed by single-unit attached homes (4.3%), medium-sized apartment complexes of 5 to 9 units (3.7%) and mobile homes (3.7%). This means that East Bay Township has a less diverse set of housing options than nearby jurisdictions. For example, Garfield Township has 47.6% in single-unit detached homes, 7.2% single-unit attached homes, 14.5% large apartment complexes of 20 or more units, and 11.5% in medium-sized apartment complexes of 5 to 9 units.

Except for Traverse City, much of the region’s housing stock was built toward the end of the 20th century. 24% of East Bay Township’s housing units were built during the decade beginning in 1990, with 16.7% built in the decade beginning in 2000. Garfield Township, for example, is similar, with 21.4% of housing units built in the 1990s and 22.8% built in the 2000s. About 86.1% of East Bay Township’s housing units are occupied by the owner. This is a larger percentage than nearby jurisdictions, with Garfield Township having 59.6% and Traverse City having 61.5% owner-occupied housing units.

### HOUSING

Housing is the single largest land use in East Bay Township. There are eight different zoning districts in the Township in which the predominate land use is housing.

**Table 16. Housing Units**

Unit Type	Michigan	GT County	Acme Twp	East Bay Twp	Garfield Twp	Traverse City
Occupied housing units	3,935,041	37,319	2,039	4,575	7,666	6,697
Owner-occupied	71.2%	76.3%	77.9%	86.1%	59.6%	61.5%
Renter-occupied	28.8%	23.7%	22.1%	13.9%	40.4%	38.5%
With a computer	89.6%	92.4%	89.7%	96.0%	89.5%	88.5%
with a broadband internet subscription	81.5%	85.5%	83.1%	90.2%	80.3%	82.1%

**Table 17. Housing Types**

Housing Type	Michigan	GT County	Acme Twp	East Bay Twp	Garfield Twp	Traverse City
Total housing units	4,596,198	43,942	2,634	5,527	8,203	7,325
1-unit, detached	72.2%	72.5%	77.2%	81.4%	47.6%	60.7%
1-unit, attached	4.6%	4.8%	12.2%	4.3%	7.2%	5.8%
2 units	2.3%	1.8%	2.2%	1.1%	1.0%	4.8%
3 or 4 units	2.6%	2.3%	0.0%	2.4%	3.7%	5.9%
5 to 9 units	4.2%	4.3%	2.7%	3.7%	11.5%	6.8%
10 to 19 units	3.5%	2.7%	2.2%	1.4%	3.5%	9.6%
20 or more units	5.2%	4.3%	3.6%	1.9%	14.3%	6.3%
Mobile home	5.3%	7.4%	0.0%	3.7%	11.2%	0.2%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The median value of owner-occupied housing in East Bay Township was \$195,000, somewhat higher than Garfield Township (\$190,300) and below Acme Township (\$258,800) and Traverse City (\$263,800). The Census Bureau uses Selected Monthly Owner Costs (SMOC) to give a relative indication of housing costs. The majority of East Bay Township residents with a mortgage (38.8%) paid \$1,000 to \$1,499 per month for their home in 2019. 55.8% of mortgage holders paid less than 20% of their household income for housing. The majority without a mortgage (37.1%) paid \$400 to \$599 per month (53.6% without a mortgage paid less than 10% of their income for housing), and the majority of renters (70.4%) paid \$500 to \$999 per month (27.5% of renters paid 35% or more of their income for housing while 22.2% paid less than 15% of their income for housing).

As access to technology is often an indicator of potential economic activity, it is noteworthy that in 2019 96% of East Bay Township homes had a computer and 90.2% had a broadband internet connection. Again, this can be contrasted with Garfield Township, where 89.5% of homes have a computer and 80.3% of homes have broadband internet, and Traverse City, where 88.5% of homes have a computer and 82.1% of homes have broadband internet. Conversely, the Census Bureau notes that in 2019, 152 (or 3.3% of) housing units in East Bay Township had no telephone service available.

## HOUSING TYPES

Detached single-family homes are the most prevalent type of housing both in Michigan and the United States as a whole. Bolstered by increased automobile ownership, cheap building materials, and mortgage assurances from the federal government, the construction of detached single-family homes boomed in the post-war years alongside a wave of suburbanization. This dynamic is prolific in East Bay Township with its position southeast of Traverse City contributing to a suburban character in the north of the Township that transitions to semi-rural further south in the Township. These land characteristics contribute to a predominance of single-family detached homes in East Bay Township; 86% of the community's housing units were in single-family detached formats as of 2019. By contrast, this format made up only 62% of housing units in the City of Traverse City, and 72.3% of units in the State of Michigan overall. Only small amounts of dwelling units in other formats exist in East Bay Township. East Bay Township has a lack of housing diversity, a phenomenon often termed “missing middle” housing. In fact, single-family detached housing is the only housing type allowed throughout much of the Township's residential land. Multi-family dwellings, including duplexes and townhomes, in many cases require a special permit, while single-family housing can be built by-right in most residential zoning districts.

## MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

“Middle” housing refers to the range of multi-unit or clustered housing types that are complementary with single-family homes. See Figure 1 below for the types of housing associated with missing middle. This term was introduced in 2010 and has since become a popular strategy to meet the growing demand for denser and more walkable communities among millennials and baby boomers. The

**MIDDLE HOUSING REFERS TO A RANGE OF MULTI-UNIT HOUSING FORMATS THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH SINGLE FAMILY.**

predominance of single-family housing discourages the compact housing patterns that these demographics often prefer and can afford. Communities can foster middle housing through various means; amending zoning ordinances to either increase the permissible housing density or expand the amount of uses by right — where it is appropriate — can encourage the development of middle housing. However, these

**Figure 1. Missing Middle**





Holiday Village Condos, located on Holiday Road, is an example of multifamily development in East Bay Township, zoned high density residential.

zoning regulations need not dramatically change the character of existing neighborhoods. Rental and owned housing units with two to four dwelling units per structure can fit the scale and aesthetic of existing single-family residential areas while enhancing walking and biking commuters and accommodating a greater diversity of incomes.

## DEMAND FORECASTS

The types of housing demanded by potential new residents is of significant interest for community decision-makers. In 2019, Networks Northwest partnered with the consulting firm LandUse USA and the State of Michigan to forecast demand for housing types in Grand Traverse through 2025. Conservative growth estimates, which assume modest in-migration and an otherwise normal economic climate, forecast an annual demand for 1,143 housing units, with demand for rental units far outpacing that for owner-occupied units - Grand Traverse County

could support 817 rental units and 2326 owner units annually. Within these figures, the County's market potential leans towards detached housing types; slightly more than two-thirds (69%) of the County's market potential would prefer detached housing while the remaining third (31%) would prefer attached units. The analysis also forecast the demand for housing based on potential resident's lifestyles and incomes. Demand among for new buyers was focused on housing types such as duplex houses and traditional single-family homes, while demand among renters was for duplexes, cottages, accessory dwellings, townhouses, and lofts. Consistent among both demographics is the demand for housing types with smaller footprints and lots at lower costs than the County average rent and home price.

East Bay Township's ability to leverage this forecasted demand depends on its ability to allow the appropriate physical form of development. The annual demand for attached housing options, including triplexes, townhomes, and multiplexes, far exceeds the supply of housing types in the Township. The community's limited supply of multifamily options shows the need to allow for more of these types. The Township could encourage the development of these housing types through various mechanisms. Rezoning "Low Density Residential" zones to "Moderate Density Residential" or "High Density Residential" would expand the area where these types of housing types are allowed by right. Other measures could include reducing the square footage requirements and front and rear setbacks standards, and other zoning district regulations that constrict development.

Cherry Ridge subdivision is an example of single family development in East Bay Township and is zoned Low Density Residential.



## HOUSING VALUE

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American Community Survey data reveals that housing values in East Bay Township are slightly lower compared to the average of the surrounding communities within Grand Traverse County. The median home value of owner-occupied units in the Township was \$195,000 as of 2019, which was about 10% less than the median home value in Grand Traverse County (\$212,500), and about 25% less than the median home value in neighboring Traverse City (266,100).

High housing value can pose a problem by creating unaffordability relative to residents' incomes. The target market analysis also forecasts the price ranges in which new Grand Traverse County households will be interested in. Most new homeowners will seek homes between \$125,000 to \$175,000, while most new renters will seek rents at \$650 or less a month. However, slightly more than half of owner-occupied housing units in East Bay Township were valued at more than the \$175,000 that most new homeowners will seek. East Bay Township could consider measures to increase its supply of moderately priced ownership options within the desired price range to capture growth from new residents. Further, a lack of affordable options poses a problem for northwest Michigan's moderate-income households, and accordingly, these measures could help the area's residents step into ownership, accumulate savings, and increase their spending power. Reducing minimum square footage and setback requirements in single-family zoning districts could be good starting points.

## TENURE AND COST BURDEN

Housing data in East Bay Township suggests the predominance of owner-occupied housing units at rates (86% of units) greater than Traverse City (62%), Grand Traverse County as a whole (75%), and the State of Michigan (71%). These numbers suggest that East Bay Township does not contain proportions of rental housing similar to other communities in Grand Traverse County and that the available amount of rental housing does not meet future demand.

Housing costs are a pressing concern for communities everywhere, and particularly as Michigan’s economy shifts from manufacturing to service jobs – often at a lower pay. In 2019, the median monthly cost of housing ownership in East Bay Township was \$1,288 compared to \$1,314 per month in Grand Traverse County. At the same time, median gross rent among renter households in East Bay Township was \$899, compared to \$787 in the county, and \$824 for the State of Michigan.

Other figures show that housing expenses throughout the County are pressing concerns relative to household incomes. The relative burden of housing expenses for households is determined by comparing monthly housing expenses (ownership cost or rent). Households spending more than 30% of their monthly income on housing are considered “cost-burdened” by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

## **VACANCY**

Housing units have periods of vacancy when they are for sale or between leases. Communities should have at least some of this type of vacancy because it indicates that housing is available for new residents or for those who choose to move within the community. Of the estimated 5,527 housing units in East Bay Township in 2019, the American Community Survey estimates that around 939 units (17%) of the total, were vacant. According to data collected in the 2012 Grand Traverse County Housing Inventory, 70% (666) of the Township’s vacant units fell into the category of seasonal or occasional use. This contrasts with Traverse City and Grand Traverse County, where the overall vacancy rates were 9% and 15%, respectively. In Traverse City, only 35% of these vacant units were for seasonal use, while 57% of vacant units in the County were used for this purpose. The higher rate of vacant housing units used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use in East Bay Township in comparison to the City and surrounding County can be explained in part by the prevalence of vacation rentals in the Forest Lakes area.



# CHAPTER 8

# BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The economic characteristics of a given community are driven to a large extent by those of the region in which it is situated, and more broadly by national and international trends. East Bay Township is heavily influenced by the hospitality and tourism industries, as

This chapter begins by exploring economic trends in northwest Michigan and Grand Traverse County and then examines local attributes in East Bay Township. The final section of this chapter establishes a vision for economic development and placemaking in two key development districts - the U.S. 31 Beach District and East Bay Corners/Hammond Road corridor.

## **ECONOMIC TRENDS IN NORTHWEST MICHIGAN**

In 2015, Networks Northwest, the regional planning organization for Northwest Michigan's 10-county region, published a report titled "A Framework for Growth and Investment," which charted a road map for municipalities to enhance economic vitality. The report found that although the region's population remained stagnant between 2010 and 2015, new forms of economic activity still emerged since the Great Recession in the form of technology and information and tourism. The plan defined 31 "growth and investment areas" throughout the region, which are communities that already function as employment and population centers, operate municipal public utilities, and are therefore best positioned to accommodate future growth. The City of Traverse City and its surrounding townships, which includes East Bay Township, were included among these designated areas and East Bay Township, with its established and expanding water and sanitary systems, is positioned to leverage these regional growth patterns. The plan recommends a series of best practices for these communities to realize growth in emerging industries, including maintaining robust and affordable services, promoting high-capacity and low-cost broadband, and creating high-quality and memorable places through zoning and incentives. This chapter inventories East Bay Township's economic profile and commercial corridors and compares them to these regional trends and defined best practices.

## **NETWORKS NORTHWEST 2015 REGIONAL STUDY**

Tourism-related employment accounts for nearly 30% of the region's total jobs and growth is expected to remain steady through 2030.

Knowledge-based industries such as finance, information, and professional management were expected to grow by 11% between 2015 and 2023.

Employment in healthcare, which offers high average wages, was expected to grow 21% between 2015 and 2023.

Source: Networks Northwest - A Framework for Growth and Investment in Northwest Michigan

## GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY ECONOMY

While Grand Traverse County has historically had robust forestry, agriculture, and manufacturing industries, economic and employment trends have grown and changed throughout the years. According to employment data in the Networks Northwest report “2020 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy,” the three largest segments of the economy over the past decade were: (1) health care and social services (9,883 jobs); (2) retail trade (7,701 jobs); (3) accommodation and food service (5,986 jobs). Combined, these industries provided 23,570 jobs in 2018, a share of nearly half of all jobs (43%). The next three largest segments of the economy in 2018, manufacturing, construction, and finance and insurance comprised about a fifth (18%) of jobs, with 5,236, 2,603, and 2,159 jobs, respectively. Overall, total jobs in Grand Traverse County grew by 13.78% between 2009 and 2019, from 48,943 to 55,409, according to Networks Northwest.

Employment in Grand Traverse County’s largest employment sectors saw varying amounts of growth between 2013 and 2020. In that period, employment in health care and social services grew by 41%, employment in retail trade grew by 33%, and employment in accommodation and food service grew by 31%. The next three largest employment sectors had fewer similarities in their employment trends. Employment in manufacturing grew by 35% between 2013 and 2020, while employment in construction and finance/insurance had statistically insignificant change in employment numbers throughout that period. Notably, industries in Grand Traverse County with the fewest employment numbers saw continued declines throughout the 2013-2020 window. Employment in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting declined from 656 to 355 (-47%), in utilities from 353 to 220 (-38%), and in mining from 387 to 157 (-60%).

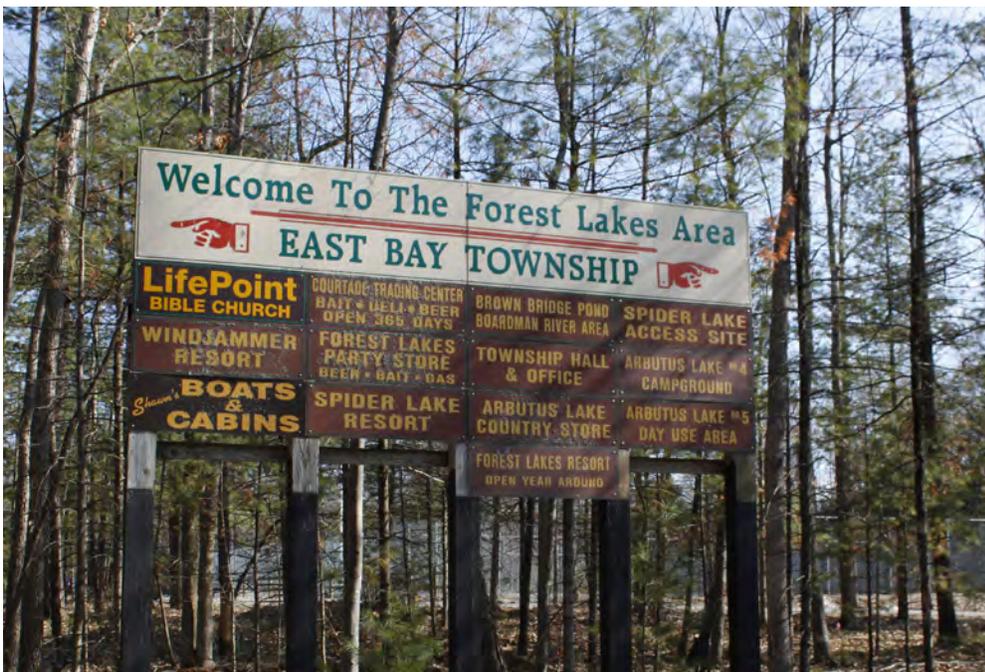
These figures suggest that communities throughout the County have already begun to capitalize on regional employment patterns, especially within the health care and social services, retail trade, and accommodation and food service. These trends are supported by strong anchor institutions such as Munson Medical Center and a diverse and vibrant retail and accommodation sector. However, stagnant employment numbers in emerging industries identified by Networks Northwest, industries such as finance, information, and professional management, suggest that communities throughout Grand Traverse County have not fully realized the potential in those industries.

## JOBS IN EAST BAY TOWNSHIP

Much like the rest of the region, most jobs in East Bay Township come from education and health, with retail declining and hospitality increasing. Education and health care provided 21.6% of East Bay Township resident’s jobs, with accommodations and food service providing the next largest proportion at 14.4%. Agriculture provides the smallest proportion of jobs at 1.3% in 2019. The sectors of the economy providing employment in the Township have changed little since 2000, except for a decrease in retail employment (15.4% in 2000 to 9.8% in 2019) and an increase in accommodation and food service (9.8% in 2000 to 14.4% in 2019) and professional services (7.4% in 2000 to 10.7 in 2019).

In 1990, the median family household income for East Bay Township was \$31,382. By the 2010 Census it had increased to \$47,569, and the 2015-2019 American Community Survey reports that the median household income had increased to \$74,015. This reflects an average rate of increase of 4.85% per year. By comparison, from 1990 to 2019, the average change in the Consumer Price Index from year to year was 3.5%. Essentially, households in the Township managed to stay slightly ahead of inflation during this period. The 2012 median household income in the Township per capita was \$26,826 in 2012, which had increased to \$36,694 per capita in 2019 per American Community Survey estimates. The 2019 per capita income is comparable to \$35,405 for Grand Traverse County residents.

East Bay Township's residents reported slightly lower levels of employment than Grand Traverse County. According to 2017 American Community Survey reports, the Township's unemployment rate was 5.1%, while Grand Traverse County reported an unemployment rate of 4.35%. Unemployment rates tend to be somewhat volatile and seasonal in nature, especially in industries related to the high volume of tourism in the region. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on unemployment and creates challenges in reporting an accurate portrayal of unemployment rates in East Bay Township. Exemplary of this is the unemployment rate in Grand Traverse County prior to and throughout the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic. In January 2020, the unemployment rate in the County was 3.6%, which eventually peaked at 25.4% in April 2020. Unemployment rates in the County decreased to 5.7% in March 2021, significantly lower than the peak of unemployment, yet still higher than before the Covid-19 pandemic.



Small residential and tourism-oriented businesses can be found in the Forest Lakes Area of East Bay Township. Many of these businesses were established when the residential areas around the lakes were predominantly seasonal.

**Table 18. Industry Trends in East Bay Township**

Industry	2000	2010	2019
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	1.7%	2.1%	1.3%
Construction	10.4%	7.8%	7.4%
Manufacturing	11.1%	7.8%	11.3%
Wholesale trade	5.1%	3.6%	2.6%
Retail trade	15.4%	14.5%	9.8%
Transportation and warehousing and utilities	4.5%	4.4%	2.2%
Information	2.4%	2.9%	1.0%
Finance and insurance, real estate and rental and leasing	5.2%	6.5%	9.6%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	7.4%	7.6%	10.7%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	20.8%	18.8%	21.6%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	9.8%	12.5%	14.4%
Other services, except public administration	4.2%	6.2%	4.4%
Public administration	1.9%	5.2%	3.7%

## RETAIL MARKETS

One major concern when it comes to the economic vitality of business districts is how well local demand for products and services matches businesses' supply of those goods and services. The "Retail Market Place Profile" created by ESRI's Business Analyst software aggregates demographic, payroll, and other public consumer data to estimate this. A "surplus" industry means that visitors from outside East Bay Township come to the community for the good or service, while conversely, "leakage" markets are where community residents travel outside of the Township limits to access the good or service. The Retail Market Place Profile also quantifies in dollar terms the value of surplus and leakage. Of course, East Bay Township is heavily reliant and connected to the business and commerce activities of the greater Grand Traverse region.

The retail markets in East Bay Township businesses attract patronage from outside the community are varied, but prominently include food and beverage related submarkets. Surplus to community businesses from outside the Township across the two markets of restaurants and eating places, and food services and drinking places totals an estimated almost two million dollars annually. This is a great trend, considering that all these businesses are components of a thriving tourism economy. Note hospitality trends were not factored into this analysis.

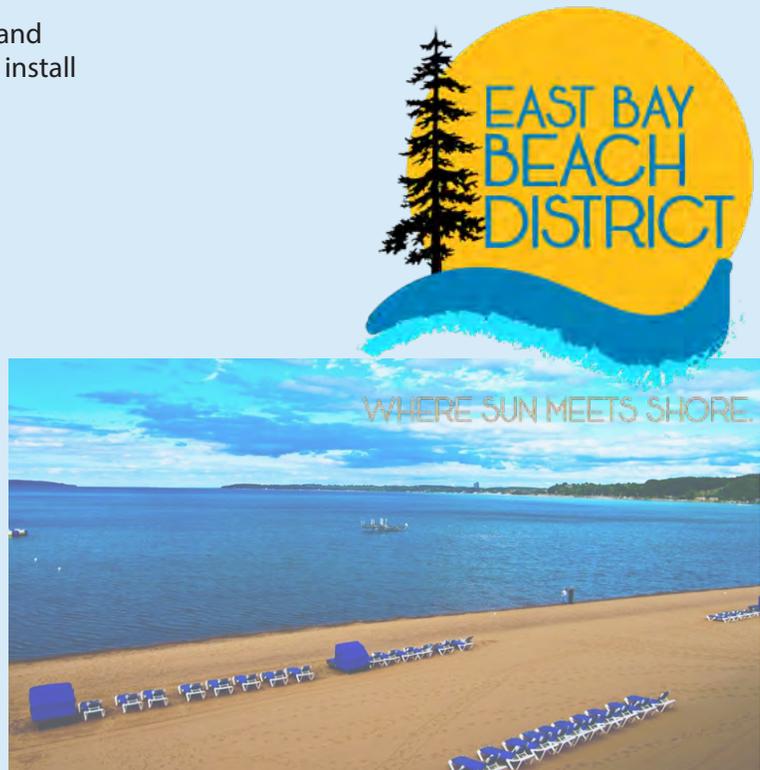
Retail markets in which local businesses' provision of goods and services do not meet community demand, and range from essential, everyday goods and services, often found at larger big box stores. Notably, motor vehicle parts and dealers, home goods, garden stores, clothing, and office supplies are markets wherein East Bay Township residents go elsewhere to procure goods. In contrast, when a retail marketplace profile is generated for Grand Traverse County, these items are at a surplus. This indicates East Bay Township residents can access these types of goods and services within a short driving distance.

**Figure 2:****EAST BAY BEACH DISTRICT LOGO & BRANDING**

Pictured is the logo for the Beach District developed by Traverse City Tourism in partnership with business and property owner representatives along the U.S. 31 corridor. The Township plans to work with partners to develop a branding and marketing campaign for the corridor, install

light pole banners, and distribute maps and brochures to patrons.

Also pictured is a sample of banners that could line the Beach District, helping to create a sense of place and identity.

**U.S. 31 CORRIDOR & BEACH DISTRICT VISION**

With over 36,000 vehicles per day, and peaking at 50,000-60,000 per day in the summer season, the U.S. 31 corridor in East Bay Township serves as a regional commercial corridor, transporting commuters and visitors alike. Existing land uses include a large number of hotels and motels, recreation, retail, offices, and a State Park beach and campground. Through a visioning and public input process, the Township seeks to take implementable actions that will transform the Beach District in East Bay Township into a more cohesive place to live, work, and play.

Challenges to placemaking and economic development goals include traffic speeds, traffic, limited crossings for pedestrians, vacant and underused sites, and residential neighborhoods bordering commercial activity. A successful process will enhance placemaking, create a cohesive public realm, help attract private investment, and maximize the waterfront while protecting water quality.

**Figure 3:**

**ENHANCING PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE WATER**

Pictured to the right is an example of a popup shop that could be incorporated into the vacant or underutilized properties along the waterfront. Also pictured is an example of simple water access improvements that could be explored at the 4 Mile public road end.



**Figure 4:**

**OUTDOOR DINING & FOOD TRUCKS**

Below (left) is the outside dining area at Hopscotch in East Bay Township and right is the Grand Traverse Pie Company Food Truck that was stationed on U.S. 31 the summer

of 2020. The Township desires to support outdoor dining and new food enterprises by allowing food trucks that require few start up dollars.



The U.S. 31 corridor in East Bay Township is zoned Regional Business and is home to a variety of hotels, restaurants, and retail outlets, serving visitors and the greater Grand Traverse region.



This corridor will be a friendly place for people to be active, shop, conduct business, eat, enjoy the outdoors, and relax. The Township seeks to calm the traffic and make the destinations within the district accessible by foot, bike, bus and automobile. The following actions will be explored to help achieve the U.S. 31 vision for economic development:

1. Beach District Signage - Welcome residents and visitors into East Bay Township from the east and west, brand the business district to help create an identity.
2. Access to the Water - Explore opportunities to enhance public access to the waterfront, including land acquisition, partnerships, and improvements at existing access points. Explore options for partnering with MDNR to improve beach access and amenities at the State Park. Also explore opportunities to improve property owned by the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. Possible uses for the Tribe's property could include collection of shops, with a walkable, mix of uses and serve as an attraction for State Park users.
3. Access Management - Work to consolidate driveways as properties redevelop and complete access drives behind businesses to support connectivity.
4. Protect Trees – The large white pines that line the corridor provide a unique identify and should be protected and enhanced as new developments are approved. Updates to the zoning ordinance should include provisions to incentivize preservation of large heritage trees on redevelopment properties.
5. Vacancies - Reduce commercial vacancies along U.S. 31 by obtaining Redevelopment Ready Community certification and working with Michigan Economic Development Corporation to market priority redevelopment sites.
6. Placemaking - Seek funding to facilitate a business engagement and community design process that will enhance placemaking on U.S. 31 by burying power lines, installing Beach District signage, pedestrian crosswalks, and decorative pedestrian scale lighting. Explore the merits of a Corridor Improvement Authority to help fund improvements along the U.S. 31 corridor.

Figure 6:

**TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS AND CONNECTIONS**

Active transportation facilities and connections are a key element of the U.S. 31 vision. Businesses on the south side of U.S. 31 have a tremendous asset in the TART Trail, and future safe crossings will facilitate safe connections for cyclists and pedestrians to the businesses on the north side of the street. Red Mesa (pictured below) has attracted cyclists through signage and bike

parking. The BATA Bayline is a tremendous asset along the corridor. Recent investment in bus stop amenities and frequency of service benefits employees as well as visitors. MDOT has expressed interest in identifying safe mid-block crossing locations along the corridor and has held preliminary meetings with Township officials and property owners to identify appropriate locations. Ideally, a safe crossing would be available every quarter mile along the corridor.



Figure 7:

**PRESERVING WHITE PINES**

Although some developments have reduced its size, the tree canopy and specifically the white pines offer a unique identify along the corridor and should be preserved and protected with new developments. A subcommittee was formed in 2021 to develop zoning recommendations to better protect and enhance the tree canopy.



## EAST BAY CORNERS & HAMMOND CORRIDOR VISION

Hammond Road serves as a primary east-west connection and thoroughfare in East Bay Township and the greater Grand Traverse County. Compared with U.S. 31 and South Airport Road, Hammond Road it is significantly less developed, thus presently opportunities for proactive planning for future investment. New roundabouts at 4 Mile and possibly 3 Mile Road further provide the opportunity for proactive planning for lighting, landscaping, and pedestrian crosswalks.

During a visioning session, planning commissioners expressed support for creating a campus-like feel along the corridor with deep setbacks, high-quality landscaping, consistent lighting, and other design elements. Commissioners expressed support for mixed housing as well as industrial along the corridor, with a mixed-use commercial node at Three Mile and Hammond Road. Due to available land and water and sewer services, the Township has recently experienced an uptick in the demand for higher density and multi-family residential investment along the corridor.

East Bay Corners is a planned mixed-use commercial node on Hammond Road, centered at the Three Mile Road intersection. This is the only area along the corridor in East Bay where commercial amenities are permitted under current zoning. There are four schools near the intersection of Three Mile and Hammond Road, with 2,400 students. Recent trail planning initiatives, including the extension the Three Mile Trail to Hammond Road and the Safe Routes to School infrastructure improvements could serve as a catalyst to incentivize private investment within East Bay Corners.



To the left is the intersection of Three Mile and Hammond Road, the center of the East Bay Corners zoning district.

Figure 8:

**STREETSCAPING**

Landscaping and streetscaping design for the 4 Mile and Hammond roundabout could be replicated elsewhere on the corridor to provide consistent design along the corridor.

The Township coordinated with the Road Commission on pedestrian crosswalks, landscaping, pedestrian scale lighting, stamped concrete construction materials, and utility installation.



There are some natural environmental constraints along the corridor that has impacted previous development and will continue to restrict future growth patterns. Significant portions of the Mitchell Creek headwaters and its tributaries traverse throughout the corridor, limiting development options near those protected waterways. The southern side of Hammond Road between Townline and Three Mile Roads also has considerable wetland coverage.

The following actions will be explored to help achieve the East Bay Corners and Hammond Corridor vision for economic development:

1. Community Gathering Space - East Bay Corner's offers a unique opportunity for a node of public and quasi-public gathering spaces. The existing Township Hall and East Branch Library attract locals and plans for a seasonal Farmer's Market and community garden at the Township Hall would further support a space for community gathering. Focus group participants noted a desire for amenities such as outdoor dining, a coffee shop, and places to sit and gather.

2. Streetscaping – The new roundabout at 4 Mile and Hammond features pedestrian scale lighting, landscaping and planter boxes, as well as pedestrian crosswalks. There is opportunity to coordinate with Garfield Township to install consistent lighting and landscaping in the road right-of-way and at future roundabouts through the entire corridor.
3. Signage – During a visioning session, planning commissioners noted the opportunity to install Welcome to East Bay signage, particularly around East Bay Corners, to have support an identify and let visitors and patrons know they have arrived at a destination.
4. Multimodal – The planned Three Mile Trail extension coupled with the planned infrastructure improvements surrounding the schools could be transformational in allowing residents, students, employees, and visitors to access East Bay Corners and the Hammond corridor by foot and bicycle. When considering public infrastructure investments in this area, the Township seeks to support the 20-minute neighborhood concept. This means that individuals can access services within 20 minutes of resident’s homes, schools, and businesses. Olson’s and Roy’s General Store are easily accessible by vehicle to many residents and offer daily needs without a special trip into town.
5. Access Control – The East Bay Township zoning ordinance requires that new developments connect with adjacent properties through an access drive. The Township will continue to limit driveways and provide cross access connections as possible

**Figure 9:**

#### **NON MOTORIZED CONNECTIONS**

Pictured below is a conceptual rendering of the future Three Mile Trail expansion, planned to traverse through the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy property (pictured below



right) and eventually connecting with Hammond Road. This project, along with planned Safe Routes to School improvements have the potential to transform East Bay Corners and help catalyze private investment.



**FIGURE 10:****DESIGN ELEMENTS AND COMMUNITY GATHERING**

Pictured below are examples of retail, restaurant, and office developments that would be appropriate in the East Bay Corners district. Outdoor dining provides opportunity for civic gathering and quasi-public spaces. The Township could consider adopting design standards that regulate building facade, parking

locations, and setbacks. Input from focus group participants indicated strong support for public spaces to compliment the library, including a coffee shop, farmer's market, and community garden. An outdoor farmer's market at the Township Hall would support local farmers in the Township and could provide a gathering space for Township residents.

**INDUSTRIAL PARKS**

East Bay Township has two Industrial Parks, Meadowlands and Peninsula Business Park East. Both parks are located near the airport. There has been steady new investment, particularly in the Meadowlands Industrial Park in recent years. The Meadowlands Industrial Park was approved in 1999 and has 14 units total. The Peninsula Business Park was approved in 1991 with 50 lots.





Photo courtesy of Jacob Dean

# CHAPTER 9

## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation infrastructure, including local roads, highways, trails, sidewalks, and railroads is essential in the formation of connections within a given community as well as in facilitating interactions with other communities separated by distance.

This infrastructure allows goods, services, and information to move between these locations, thereby facilitating a healthy economy. In most communities, the same infrastructure allows residents and households to access the day-to-day goods and services they need, while simultaneously, households' choice of transportation mode also affects the portion of their income they expend on transportation-related costs.

With East Bay Township's unique geographic location, a variety of transportation forms, including automotive, railroad, and maritime have shaped the community throughout its history. Maintaining today's transportation infrastructure, including roads, sidewalks, public lake access, and recreational trails, requires careful coordination between agencies and organizations. This chapter inventories East Bay Township's infrastructure, its conditions, and the organizations responsible for it.

### **ROADS**

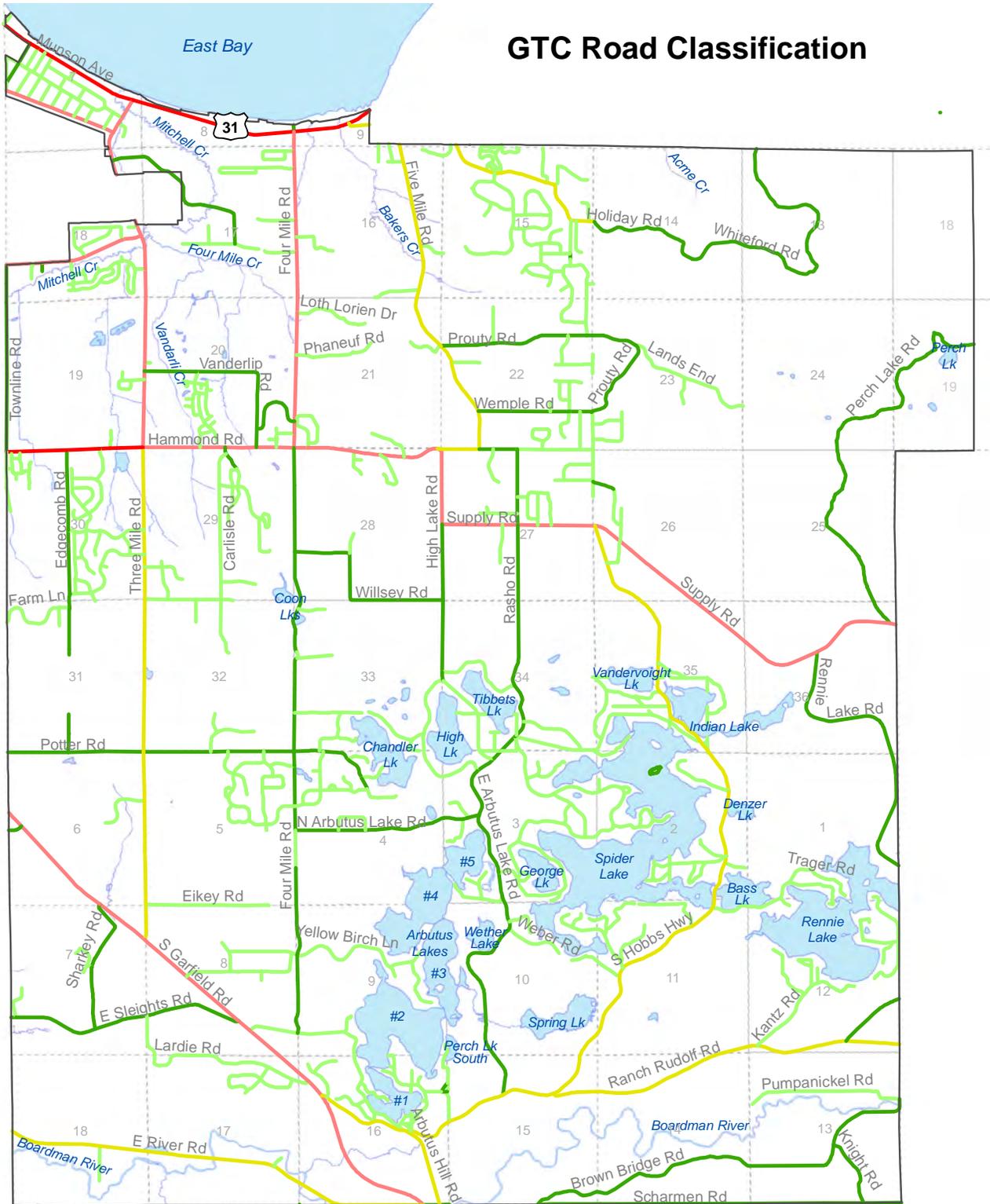
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The roadway system in East Bay Township consists of a state trunkline, county primary, arterial and collector streets. Hammond Road, between Townline and Three Mile Roads, and Munson Avenue are configured as multi-lane cross section roads. Almost all other roads in the Township are designed with a two lane configuration. Munson Avenue is a segment of US-31 and is the only state or federal highway located within the Township.

### **CLASSIFICATIONS AND TRAFFIC**

The Federal Highway Administration has a standardized classification for roadways called the "National Functional Classification System", which categorizes roads based on their traffic numbers and types, and is commonly used by federal, state, and local agencies to evaluate roads. These classifications are important because they determine whether a road is eligible for federal funding. Grand Traverse County Road Commission (GTCRC) uses a similar classification method, and according to the GTCRC, all of East Bay Township's roads fall into one of five categories:

Map 13. GTC Road Classification



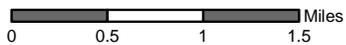
### GTC Road Classification

- Major Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Feeder Road
- Access Road
- Local



Data Sources:  
 East Bay Township, FEMA, UM Flood Analysis,  
 Grand Traverse County, Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared September 2020 for East Bay Township



1. Major Arterial
2. Minor Arterial
3. Feeder Road
4. Access Road
5. Local Road

See Map 13 GTC Road Classification for an overview of road locations.

The Michigan Department of Transportation also calculates the average number of vehicles that travel on roadways daily throughout the year, a figure termed “average annual daily traffic”. According to the most up to date data, the average annual daily traffic for the segment of U.S. 31 that traverses East Bay Charter Township is just shy of 36,000 vehicles per day.

42% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS FELT TOWNSHIP ROADS WERE IN FAIR CONDITION, WHILE ONLY 3% REPORTED THEM AS EXCELLENT.

## OWNERSHIP & CONDITION

The maintenance and condition of roadways is a major issue in northwest Michigan communities. A 2019 summit that convened transportation leaders throughout the state estimated that the funding gap on road maintenance was between 2 and 2 ½ billion dollars annually. Further, experts at the summit concluded that costs from this underfunded infrastructure are often transferred to businesses and residents through added vehicle maintenance costs and lost productivity. The issue was highlighted further by Networks Northwest, the regional planning agency for northwest Michigan. The organization evaluated pavement conditions throughout the region’s roads using a standardized analysis called PASER, which categorizes conditions into “good”, “fair”, and “poor” condition. According to the report, degraded pavement is a major issue. Regionally, 46% of roads were rated “good” or “fair”, while almost one third (31%) were rated “poor.”

Map 14 PASER Rating Data for 2019 shows the results of road condition assessments in East Bay Township. There were a few segments of roads in East Bay Township identified as poor condition. These road segments include Three Mile Road north of Hammond, South Airport Road, Hammond Road east of Three Mile, and Parsons. It should be noted that this data was collected in 2019, and the GTCRC has made significant improvements to Hammond Road and has scheduled improvements on Three Mile in the near future.

**FIGURE 11:**

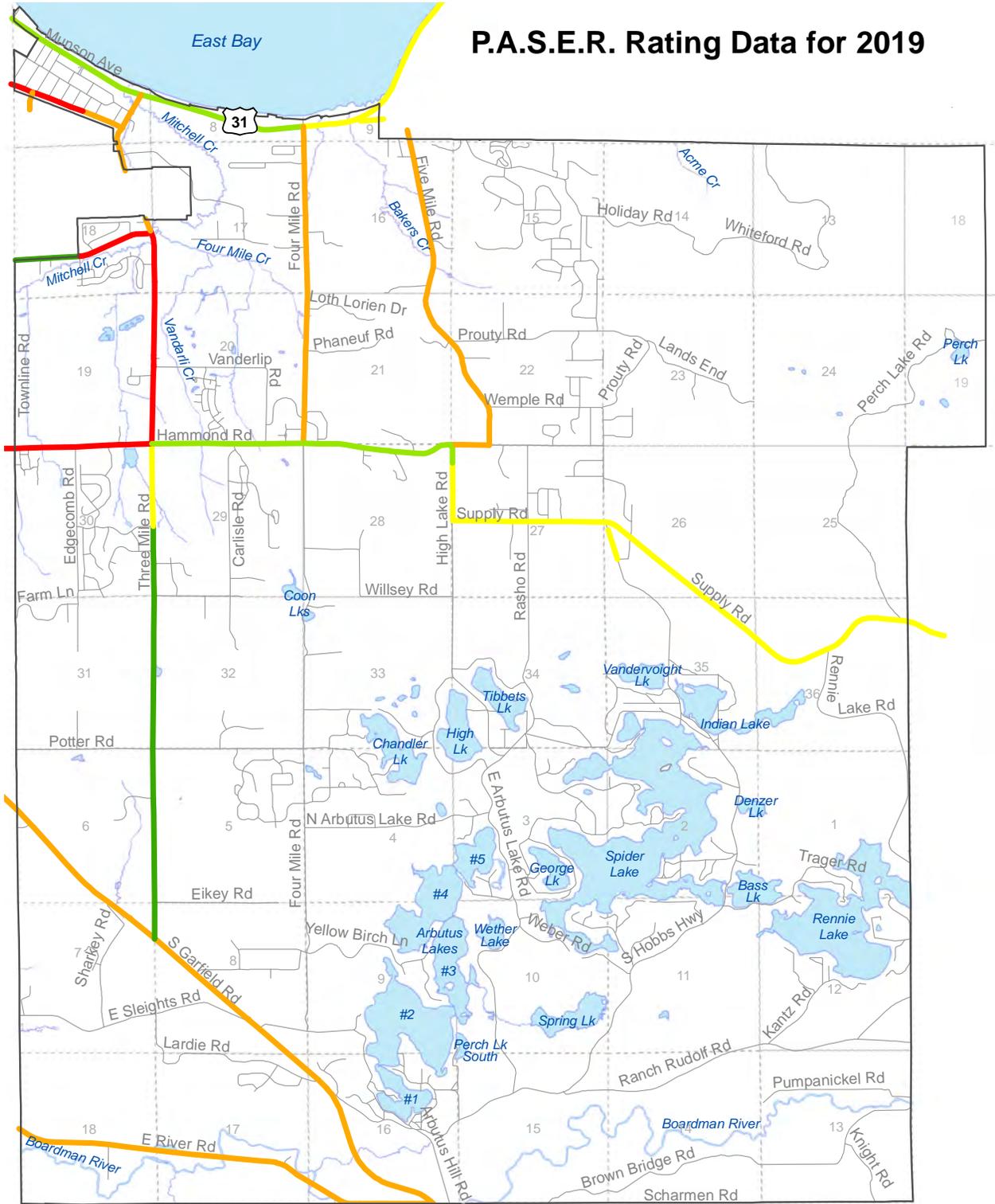
### SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT (SAD)

The special assessment process is one way a township can facilitate improvements made to county roads and private property, such as private roads or streetlights in a subdivision. Michigan Public Act 188 of 1954, as amended, establishes and authorizes townships to utilize special assessment procedures to fund the costs of certain types of public improvements. The proportional share of the cost of the improvement is assessed against the benefited property, which will be generally offset by the increase in the property’s value once the

improvement is in place. While statute allows for a township to initiate a SAD, in most Townships it is typically done by petition of the property owners in a designated area who wish to make an authorized improvement. The township then acts in an administrative capacity by establishing the district, gathering cost estimates and plans for the improvement, identifying financing or funding for the cost of the improvement, and levying and collecting the special assessment to pay off the associated debt.

Map 14. PASER Rating Data for 2019

# P.A.S.E.R. Rating Data for 2019

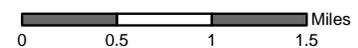


- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very Good
- Excellent



Data Sources:  
 East Bay Township, FEMA, UM Flood Analysis,  
 Grand Traverse County, Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared September 2020 for East Bay Township



East Bay Township’s public roads are owned and operated by Grand Traverse County and U.S. 31 by the State of Michigan. Although the roads are under the County Road Commission’s purview, East Bay Township residents and property owners have initiated a number of Special Assessment Districts (SAD) to cover the cost of road improvements where GTCRC funding would restrict the agency’s ability to reconstruct a road on a timely basis.

### **VISION 2035**

Long-Range Transportation Land Use Plan (Vision 2035) was prepared by TCTALUS12 pursuant to federal requirements to effectively plan for and implement surface transportation improvements needed to serve the community. As the planning organization responsible for managing federal support for transportation improvements, TC-TALUS developed Vision 2035 in September, 2014.

Vision 2035 includes results of traffic modeling studies for certain possible new roads and a rough project cost estimate for their completion. A possible eastward extension of South Airport Road from Three Mile Road to either Four Mile or Five Mile Roads was modeled. The intent was to determine if such an extension would significantly relieve traffic volumes on Munson Avenue. The modeling exercise suggests that the proposed extension would have minimal impact on traffic volumes on Munson Avenue and would likely cost upwards of \$25 million to complete. This cost-benefit analysis implies a lack of justification for further consideration of the proposed extension. In addition an eastward extension of South Airport Road would necessitate crossing areas impacted by the Mitchell and Baker Creek wetlands where the potential for environmental degradation would be high.

### **EAST-WEST CORRIDOR STUDY**

In 2018, the Grand Traverse County Road Commission initiated an independent analysis of the transportation corridors in the county. The goal of the study was to identify a range of possible transportation improvements that would alleviate congestion and improve pedestrian and non-motorized traveler safety in Traverse City and the surrounding area. A key component to achieving that goal was engaging local units of government and members of the public in the development of the priority projects and ultimate solutions. In the end, a number of projects—including roundabouts at strategic locations, roadway widening, traffic signal optimization—were identified to improve cross-county mobility.

In East Bay Township, a number of improvements to the Hammond Road corridor were identified. In the summer of 2021, a roundabout was constructed at the intersection of Four Mile and Hammond Road. As discussed in more detail in Chapter 8, the Township was heavily involved in the project to ensure placemaking elements were included. Future intersection improvements are planned at Three Mile and Hammond Roads in 2023/2024.

## COMPLETE STREETS AND NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

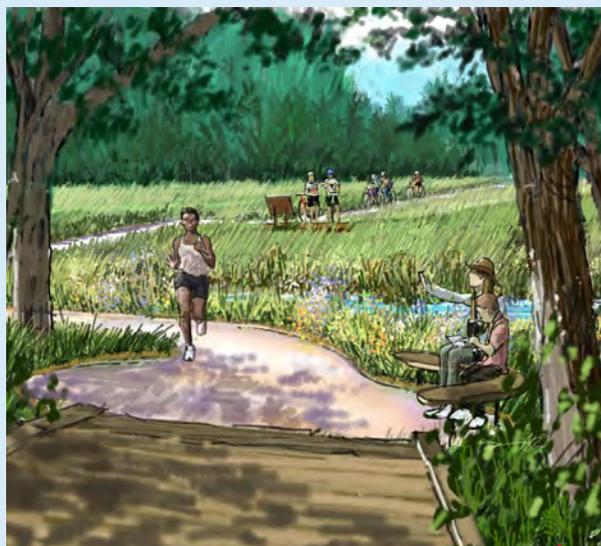
The complete streets movement is a relatively recent development and has been pushed by national organizations seeking to make community streets and roadways serve all users, regardless of their mode of travel. Complete Streets advocates for the design of streetscapes to facilitate travel by bicycle, walking, public transportation, among others. This contrasts with conventional street design in the United States, which facilitates the rapid movement of automobiles at the expense of these other modes. Elements of complete streets include the installation of specific features where they are appropriate, including wide sidewalks, bicycle lanes, bus shelters, crosswalks, vegetation. According to Networks Northwest, the potential benefits of complete streets are many; they can improve safety for non-motorists, lower transportation costs associated with the automobile, and can promote travel choices that millennial and baby boomer demographics need or prefer. The state of Michigan passed complete streets legislation in 2010 that requires MDOT and local transportation agencies to consider all roadway users when undertaking transportation projects.

As noted in Chapter 2, there is strong and growing public support for better non-motorized connections in East Bay Township. Three-quarters of survey respondents supported more sidewalks throughout the Township. Seventy-two percent of survey respondents supported trails along highways as well as bikes lanes throughout the Township. Opportunity exists to ensure new developments provide internal sidewalks within their development as well as non-motorized pathways along the public right-of-way of their development. Recent development approvals have included those conditions and the updated zoning ordinance shall seek to codify those requirements.

**Figure 12:**

### SHARED USE PATHS

Shared-use paths support a diverse array of transportation choices and often feel safer and thus accommodate more users because they are separated from vehicular traffic. These types of paths come in multiple forms depending on the right-of-way availability, the desired use, and the type of land adjacent to the pathway. In areas with significant green space, the pathway should have 10-12-foot wide cross sections. In areas with less green space available, shared-use paths are often narrower to accommodate existing infrastructure and rights-of-way constraints. These segments of this system are up to 10 feet wide as space permits but can be as narrow as 6 feet.



Pictured above is a shared use path rendering for the future Three Mile Trail in East Bay Township.

### SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL AND THREE MILE TRAIL PLANNING UNDERWAY

As part of the Safe Routes to School initiative, East Bay Township is seeking to improve pedestrian access to area schools in the vicinity of the Three Mile Road and Hammond intersection, while also furthering the enhancement of regional trail connectivity. The Master Plan community survey indicated that 80% of respondents supported investments in new sidewalks and trails to connect students homes with their schools. In 2020, the Township contracted with a consultant to assist the Township in applying for Safe Routes to School funding. Projects partners at four East Bay Township schools, TART Trails, the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, and Norte were instrumental in leading a public input process to identify infrastructure improvements. The final grant application was submitted by the GTCRC on behalf of the Township and included a trail on Hammond Road, safe crossing at the intersection of

Figure 13:

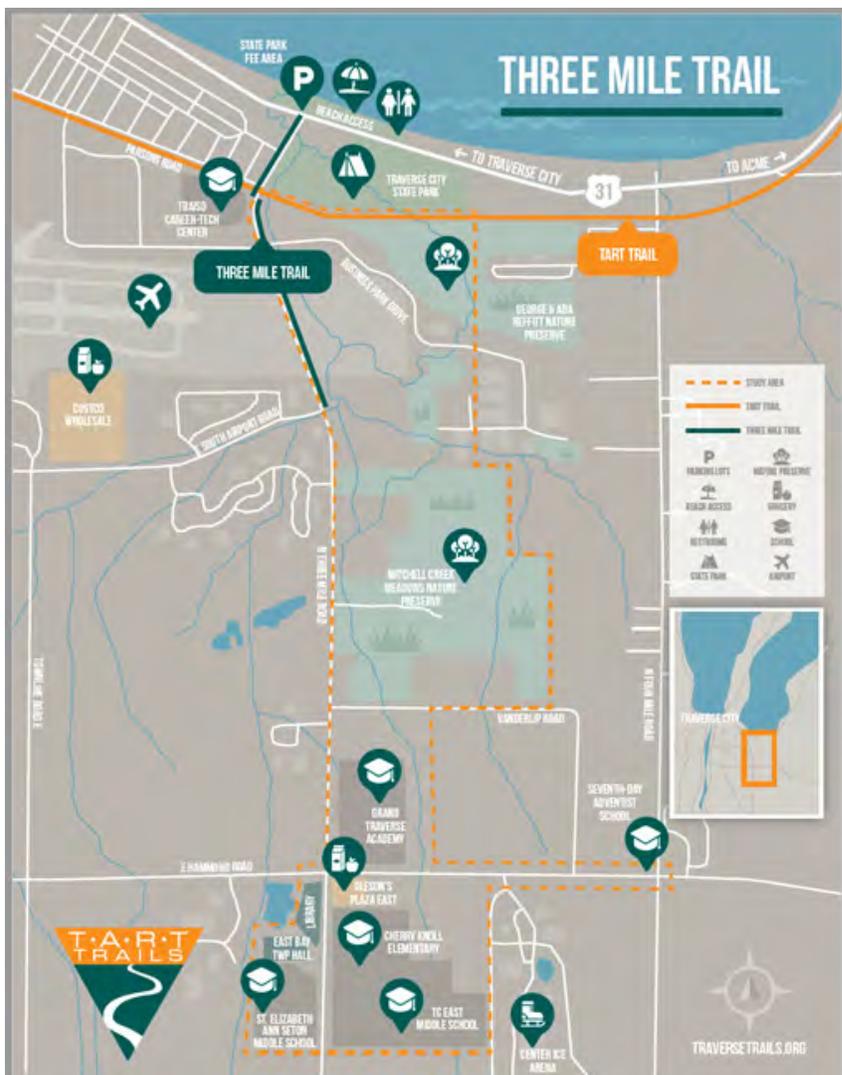
#### EAST BAY SRTS AT A GLANCE

##### Participating Schools:

- Cherry Knoll
- East Middle School
- St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
- Grand Traverse Academy

##### Input Opportunities:

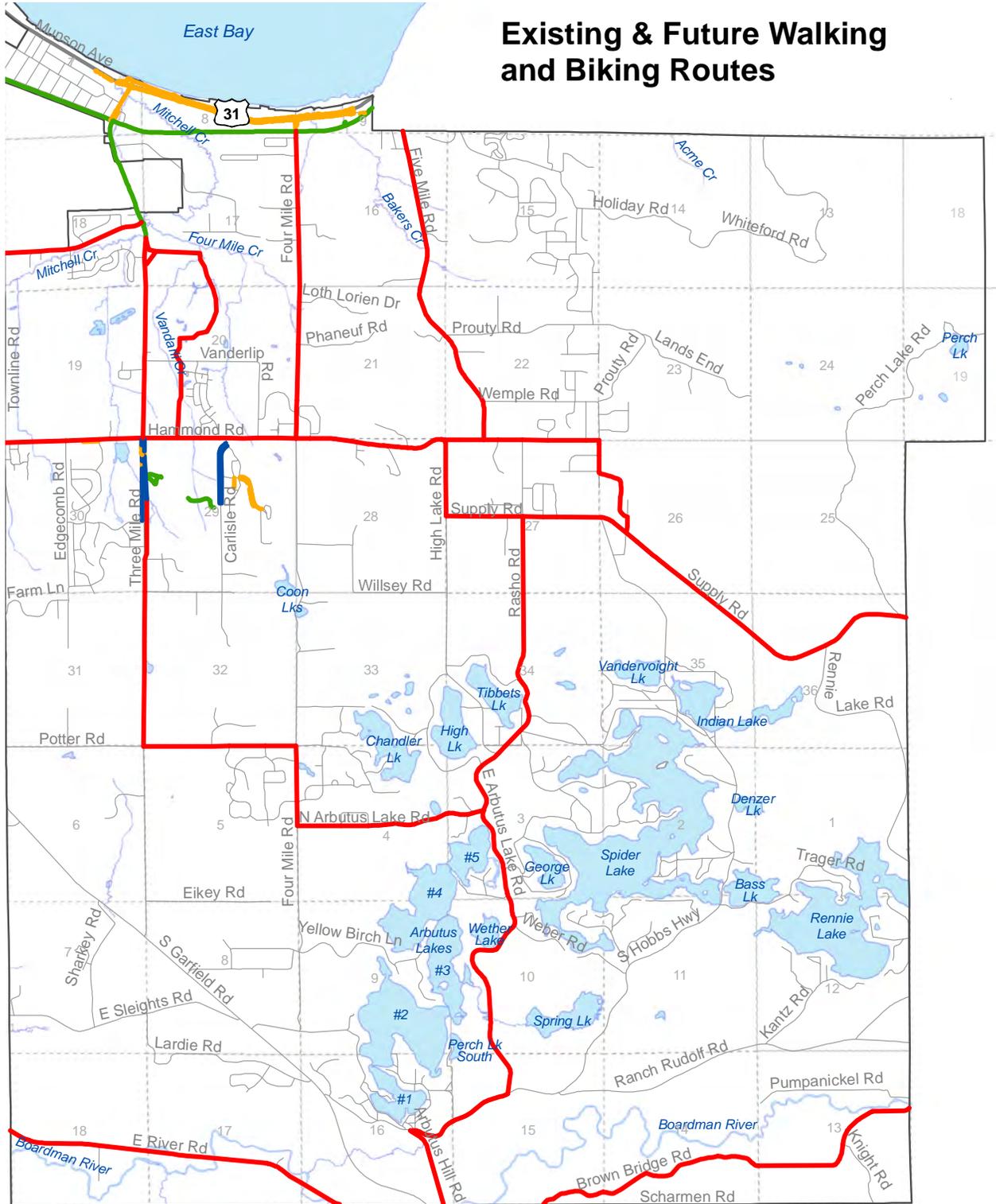
- Walking & Biking Audits - Over 60 completed, on 5 different potential routes
- Public Open House - Outdoors, attended by 50 people
- Action Plan Meeting - Virtual meeting to prioritize possible improvements



Pictured to the left is a map showing the Three Mile Trail and SRTS planning area. The two trail systems will be integrally connected. Also pictured are the locations of the 4 East Bay Township schools of interest.

Map 15. Existing & Future Non Motorized Plan & Map

## Existing & Future Walking and Biking Routes



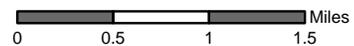
- Existing Paved Pathway
- Existing Sidewalk
- Future 10ft to 14ft Pathway
- Future 5ft Sidewalk

Note: future sidewalks and pathways within the urban growth boundary are intended to be constructed on both sides of the road, while future pathways outside of the growth boundary are intended to be on one side of the road. Exact placement will depend on site conditions and engineering design.



Data Sources:  
East Bay Township, Grand Traverse County,  
USDA-NRCS, Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared February 2022 for East Bay Township



Three Mile and Hammond Road, sidewalks on both sides of Three Mile, a mid-block cross on Three Mile, and pathway connections at the schools.

A closely related project, led by TART Trails is the Three Mile Trail Extension. Once complete, the Three Mile Trail and SRTS improvements will provide much needed connections for East Bay Township residents. A conceptual planning effort was launched in the summer of 2020. Additional project partners include East Bay Township, the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, and Norte Youth Cycling. In August 2021, the East Bay Township Board of Trustees approved a conceptual alignment for the future trail expansion. TART is actively seeking funding for final design engineering and construction.

## **NON MOTORIZED PLAN**

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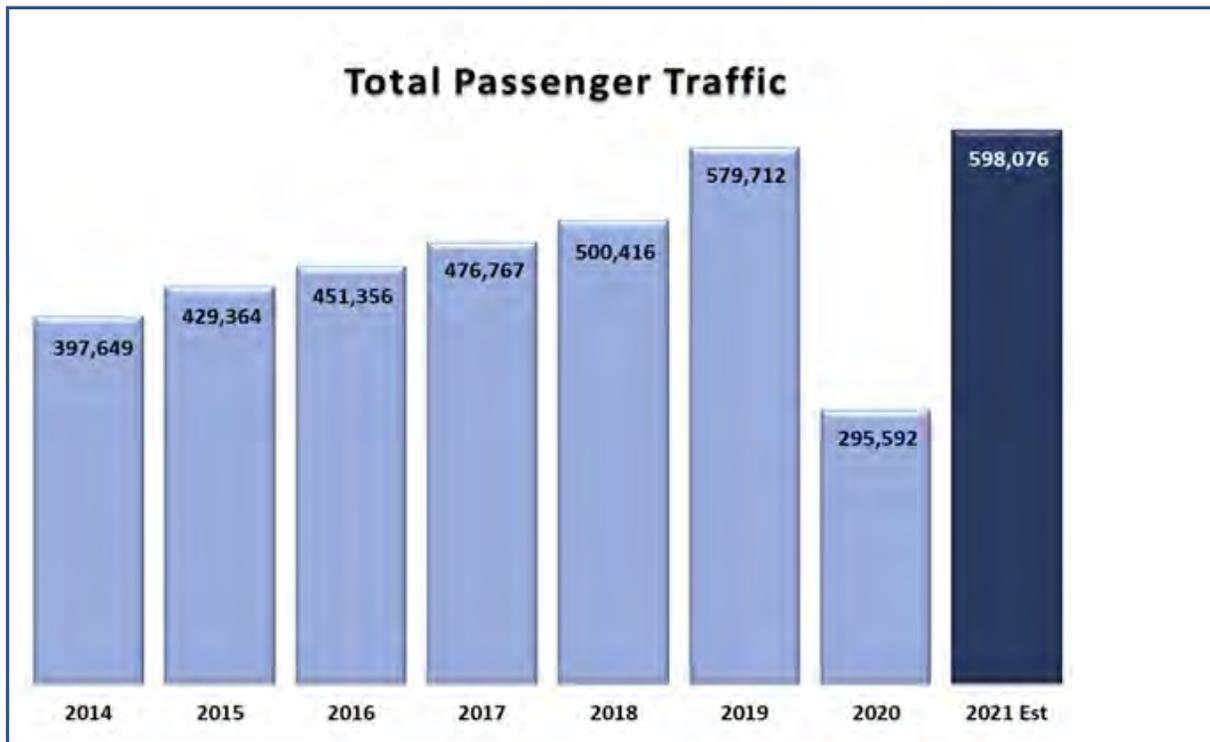
The Non Motorized Map (Map 15) depicts desired locations for future sidewalk and trail connections in East Bay Township. The future system network was developed through citizen input as a part of the Safe Routes to School Planning process, Three Mile Trail input sessions, and based on the maps developed in past master planning and recreation planning initiatives at the Township. This system will be built out piecemeal as future developments are reviewed and adopted. It is the intent of the Township to update the zoning ordinance so that new developments provide trails and/or pathways along the public right-of-way based on the desired infrastructure identified in Map 15. Grants like Safe Routes to School and MDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) can provide funding to fill the infrastructures gaps left by private investment.

## AIRPORT

The Cherry Capital Airport (TVC) is owned and operated by the Northwest Regional Airport Authority (NRAA). This newly formed authority represents a shift in governance with the goal of improving service and representation. The NRAA has formed a Zoning Board with representation from East Bay Township to help guide land use and development decisions on airport property.

The TVC plays a major role in transportation and commerce in East Bay Township and the greater Grand Traverse Area. A 2017 Michigan Department of Transportation study found that TVC contributes nearly \$1 billion annually to the state and local economy, supporting 1,377 on-site jobs and an additional 3,169 off-site jobs. The Airport also generates more than \$53 million in state sales tax and more than \$6 million in state income tax through its aviation-related activity.

After 8 years of continuous growth, 2020 reflected a significant decrease in travelers due to the impacts of COVID-19. Total passenger traffic declined 49% when compared to TVC’s record year in 2019. Even so, Cherry Capital Airport’s decrease in activity at was felt less than our peers across the state of Michigan, whose passenger traffic was down more than 60% from their reported passenger numbers in 2019.



Total passenger traffic at TVC over the years. Source: TVC Annual Report, September 2021

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

62% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS SUPPORT EXPANDED BATA BUS ROUTES THROUGHOUT THE TOWNSHIP. REPORTED THEM AS EXCELLENT.

Public transportation is an important option for residents and employees of East Bay Township without access to a private automobile and can also serve to reduce congestion on the roadways by serving as a viable option for “choice riders.” The Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) serves residents and visitors of Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties, and provides over half a million rides to residents and visitors of Leelanau and Grand Traverse counties. There are a variety of fixed routes that traverse East Bay Township, including the Village Loop, that connects Traverse City and Kingsley with a stop at the Oleson Plaza in East Bay Township. The most popular route, called the Bayline, goes through the Regional Business District of East Bay Township and is no cost to the passenger. BATA also offers the Link for the urbanized portion of East Bay Township, which is an on-demand ride service with real time tracking technology.



Above, a passenger boards the BATA Bayline. The Bayline runs through East Bay Township along U.S. 31 and is BATA's most popular route.



A view at the edge of the urban growth boundary, photo courtesy of Jacob Dean

# CHAPTER 10

## FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008 requires the inclusion of a future land use map and zoning plan in the Master Plan. The future land use map and districts identify a generalized, preferred organization of future land uses in the Township. It is a general framework intended to guide land use and policy decisions within the Township over the next 15-20 years. It guides the development of a Zoning Plan and ultimately influences changes that may be made to the **Zoning Ordinance**.

The Future Land Use Map is not intended to be used to identify future land use on a parcel by parcel basis, but rather to identify land uses that may evolve within the Township. The Future Land Use Map shows the preferred locations for future preservation and development in East Bay Township.

The Future Land Use map is often informed by what currently exists in the Township (see Existing Land Use Map) and the current policy framework in the Township (see Zoning Map). Both the Existing Land Use map and the Zoning Map are important influences of the Future Land Use map. This map shows the relative desired locations for residential, commercial, industrial development in the Township.

### **GROWTH BOUNDARY**

The growth boundary was initially established with the adoption of the Township's Comprehensive Plan in 1999 and it has proven to be a useful guide for land use decision making. Illustrated on the Future Land Use Map, it consists of an area of about 7,900 acres, or the northwestern one-third of the Township adjoining the City of Traverse City and Garfield Township. It is bounded on the south by the Consumers Energy right-of-way, the north face of the glacial ridge located in Sections 31, 32 and 33 (T27N/R10W) and the limits of gravity service in the existing wastewater collection district. This future land use plan will seek to promote efficient and aesthetic growth within this growth boundary, while seeking to promote conservation of natural features and the rural character outside the boundary.

Based on the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the Township, eight (8) general categories of land use have been identified to serve existing and future development needs. These categories are as follows:

### **MICHIGAN PLANNING ENABLING ACT OF 2008**

Provides the foundation for long range planning authority with Michigan municipalities and provides for the creation, organization, powers, and duties of local planning commissions.

THE GROWTH BOUNDARY IN EAST BAY TOWNSHIP WAS FIRST ESTABLISHED IN 1999.

### **NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION**

The overall purpose of the Natural Area Preservation designation is to foster the protection of these natural features with as little disturbance as possible. Much of the area designated is in public ownership and efforts should be directed to maintain and provide more public stewardship. Lands that are not in public ownership may see low intensity development that incorporates careful measures which limit the impact on the natural features. Techniques, such as conservation easements, should be encouraged. Extensions of public utilities and roads into these areas should be avoided. Development in the Natural Feature Preservation areas should be limited to forestry and farming operations with single family housing limited to very low density or conservation cluster design that preserves natural areas at an overall ratio of at least 20 acres preserved for each 1 acre developed.

### **MITCHELL CREEK PROTECTION AND TRANSITION DISTRICT**

The purpose of this district is to protect the delicate ecosystems and water quality in the Mitchell Creek system while permitting careful and low intensity development where feasible. This district also serves as a scenic and low intensity transition and buffer from the urbanization of the northern portion of the Township and the Township Center area. Land uses in this area may include a combination of low intensity development intended to work in harmony with the sensitive natural features of the watershed. These uses may include single-family residential, office park or clean industrial land uses. All patterns of development will be flexibly structured using the Planned Unit Development mechanism to fulfill the performance standards established for the watershed. To the extent single-family homes are proposed they will be developed in densities of 1 to 3 units per acre, arranged generally in conservation clusters that result in the preservation of wetlands and wildlife corridors.

### **AGRICULTURE**

The overall purpose of the Agriculture land use designation is to promote the continued use of quality farmland for agricultural purposes and to minimize the potential for conflict with more intense land uses. The primary use in this area should be farming and related activities. Field crops, orchards and livestock operations (exclusive of high intensity feed lot operations) may be permitted. In addition, residential development associated with farming operations is anticipated. Other single family housing that preserves quality farmland areas and/or natural features may be permitted either in very low densities or conservation cluster design.

### **RESIDENTIAL - VERY LOW DENSITY**

This land use designation is intended primarily to address the need for scattered single-family development in relatively rural and low density patterns. These areas are

not intended to be served with large-scale public utility systems that would promote greater densities. The primary land use within this area will be single family homes that are developed on lots of about 1 acre, or more, or in conservation clusters that result in the preservation of significant open lands and overall densities of less than 1 unit per acre.

#### **RESIDENTIAL - LOW TO MEDIUM DENSITY**

A significant portion of the Township lends itself to suburban style single family neighborhoods. The primary land use within this area will be homes developed on lots ranging from 1/5 acre to 1 acre or in conservation clusters which result in preservation of significant open lands, and overall densities of 5 units per acre, or more. Appropriate housing types include single family homes, duplexes, accessory dwelling units, townhomes, and cottage courts. Possible candidates for rezoning consideration to moderate density residential classification include parcels located adjacent to existing commercial, industrial, and multifamily uses, and along primary roads or near major intersections.

#### **RESIDENTIAL -- MEDIUM TO HIGH DENSITY**

The central purpose of this designation is to establish human scale, walkable neighborhoods that are in close proximity to commercial and recreational services and with a design that works with the area's natural features. The primary land use within this area will be single family and attached homes that are developed in clusters or in multi-unit buildings. Overall residential densities of up to 5 to 8 dwelling units per acre may be achieved.

#### **RESIDENTIAL – HIGH DENSITY**

The high density designation anticipates high quality and aesthetic forms of development that increase density while creating very attractive living environments for residents. These neighborhoods will be human scale with good access to commercial and recreational services. Overall residential densities of 8 to 12 units per acre will be achieved. On a limited basis, higher densities of greater than 12 units per acre may be considered where the effects of that density on natural features, infrastructure and surrounding properties are mitigated.

#### **NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL**

This land use designation is intended to provide goods and services primarily to meet the needs of the immediate neighborhood. Uses may consist of coffee shops, bakeries, delis, pharmacies, community banks, restaurants, art galleries, and offices planned and designed with pedestrian orientation and formed into a compact and walkable community. Nonresidential uses will be permitted on the first story of a building, with residential uses or offices permitted above.

### REGIONAL COMMERCIAL

This land use designation is intended to provide goods and services to meet the needs of the larger Grand Traverse Region and the traveling public, including jobs for residents and goods and services for residents and the tourist and business traveler markets. Facilities will be developed in harmony with the area's natural features and in a scale and form to promote smooth traffic access and to preserve views of the Bay and other important features.

### INDUSTRIAL

This land use designation is intended to provide employment for area residents and manufactured goods and services to meet the needs of the larger Grand Traverse Region and beyond.

## EXISTING LAND USE & ZONING

To help inform the development of the future land use map, it is important to look at historic development patterns in the Township as well as the existing land use regulations to better understand what type of development is currently permitted in the Township. The maps that help paint this picture are the Existing Land Use map (**Map 16**) and the Zoning map (**Map 17**). The Existing Land Use map illustrates how land is currently being used, what areas are vacant or underutilized, and what areas have higher intensity development. The Zoning Map shows what land uses are currently permitted in each district in the Township.

Figure 14:

### LAND USE ANALYSIS

#### Commercial

- Total Land Zoned for Commercial: 1,342 parcels totaling 591 acres
- Total Land Zoned for Commercial currently vacant: 218 parcels remaining totaling 117 acres

#### Industrial

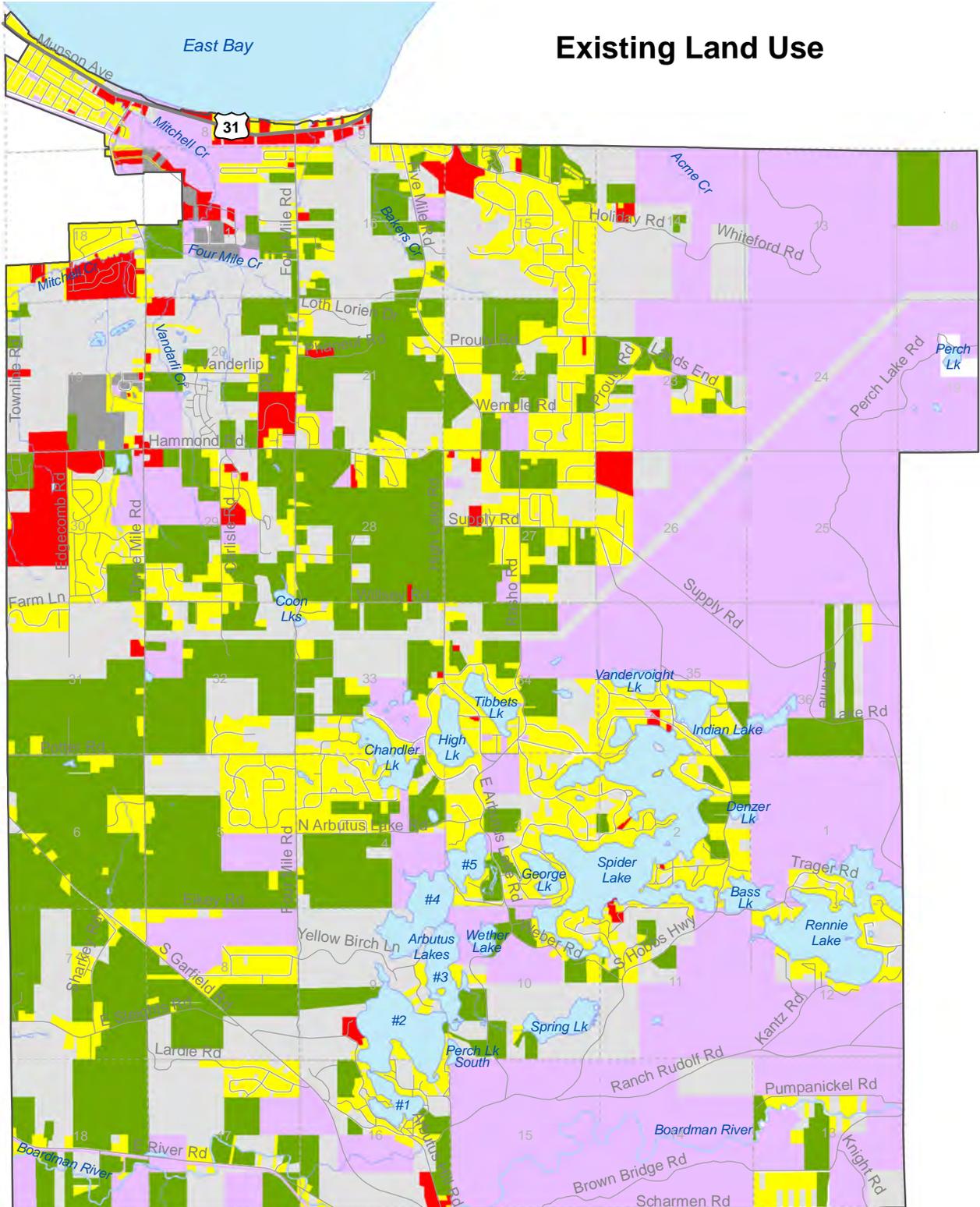
- Total Land Zoned for Industrial: 71 parcels totaling 513 acres
- Total Land Zoned for Industrial currently vacant: 23 parcels totaling 260 acres
- Of the remaining 23 parcels:
  - <2.0 acres = 5 parcels, totaling 6.457 acres
  - 2-5 acres = 14 parcels, totaling 42.127 acres
  - >5 acres = 4 parcels, totaling 471.818 acres

#### Residential

- High Density Residential: 379 parcels totaling 605 acres, Vacant HDR: 45 parcels totaling 314 acres
- Moderate Density Residential: 270 parcels totaling 799 acres, Vacant MDR: 44 parcels totaling 301 acres
- LDR: 2,617 parcels totaling 5,548 acres, Vacant LDR: 252 parcels totaling 1,772 acres

Map 16. Existing Land Use Map

# Existing Land Use



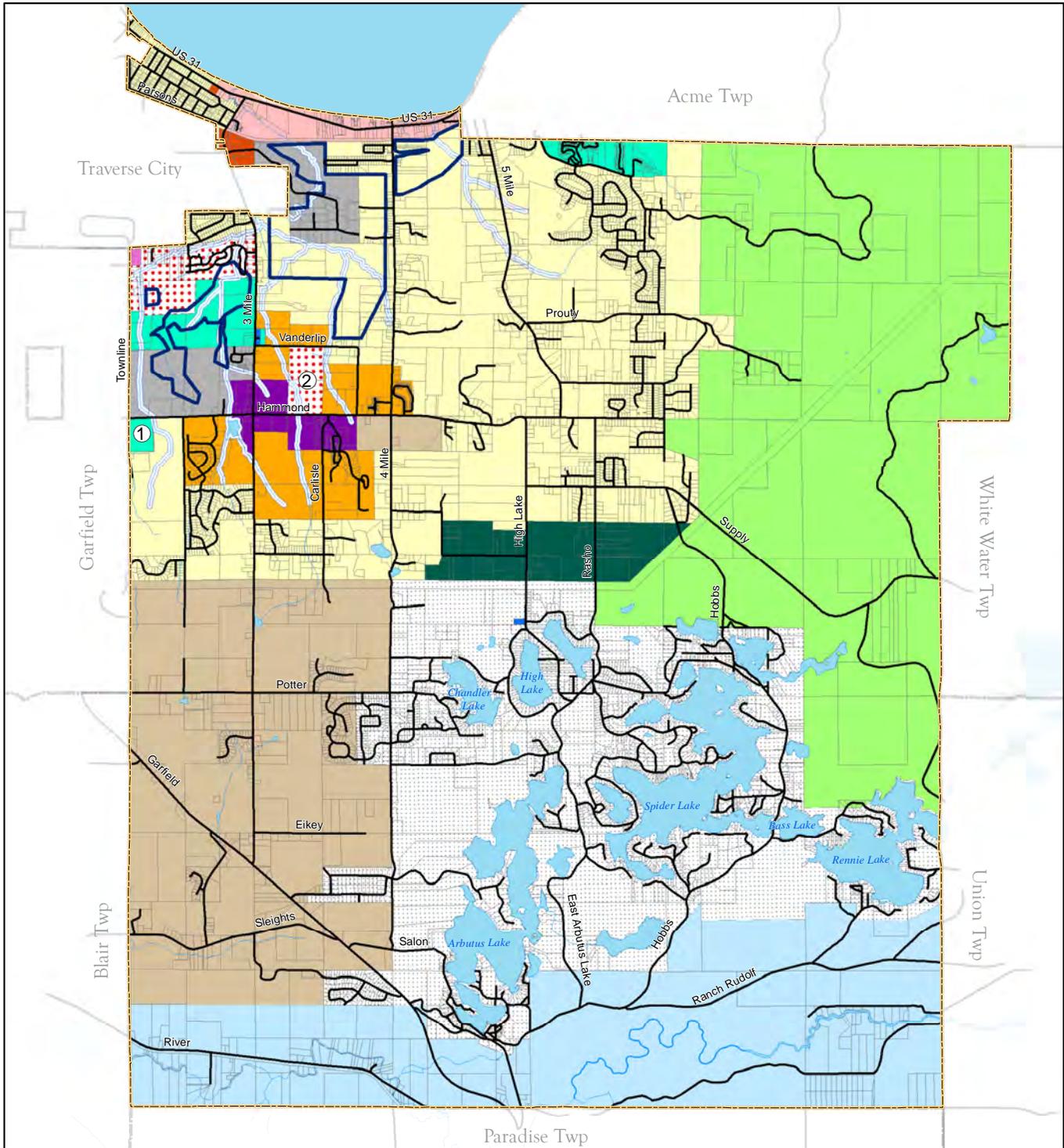
- Agriculture/Rural Residential
- Open Space/Recreation
- Commercial
- Residential
- Industrial
- Vacant Land

Data Sources:  
 East Bay Township, Grand Traverse County,  
 Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared October 2020 for East Bay Township



Map 17. Zoning Map



# East Bay Charter Township

Grand Traverse County, Michigan

## Zoning

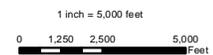
Effective: May 22, 2003  
as amended through December 31, 2019

### Legend

- Mitchell and Baker Creek Overlay District
- 100' Stream Buffer
- AG, Agricultural
- RR, Rural Residential
- LDR, Low Density Residential
- MDR, Moderate Density Residential
- HDR, High Density Residential
- MHC, High Density Residential & Manufactured Housing
- LA, Lakes Area
- NA, Natural Area
- BR, Boardman River
- EBC, East Bay Corners
- LB, Local Business
- PO, Professional Office
- RB, Regional Business
- AS, Airport Services
- IND, Industrial

### Conditional Rezoning:

1. Ord. #1-19, PPN 03-230-005-00 from IND to HDR
2. Ord. #3-18, PPN 03-220-039-00 & PPN 03-220-035-00 from MDR to MHC



**williams&works**  
engineers · surveyors · planners

Township staff worked with LIAA and Grand Traverse County Assessing to summarize the total acres in the Township dedicated to various land use categories, and the total acres of vacant land within each category. Taking stock of existing land use by zoning district will help the Planning Commission determine if there are areas where more land is needed as well as if there are areas where there may be a surplus of land available. Note that location is important and in some cases, land zoned for certain uses may be more or less desirable based on transportation access, access the public water and sewer, environmental factors, and proximity to other goods and services. Please see Figure 14 for a summary of the results of this land assessment.

## **ZONING PLAN**

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According to Section 2(d) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008), the Master Plan shall include a Zoning Plan depicting the various zoning districts and their use, as well as proposed changes to these standards. The Zoning Plan serves as the basis for the Zoning Ordinance. As a key component of the Master Plan, the Zoning Plan is based on the recommendations of the Master Plan and is intended to identify areas where existing zoning is inconsistent with the objectives and strategies of the Master Plan, and to guide the development of the Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation tool for the future development of East Bay Township. The following zoning districts can be found within the East Bay Township boundary. Table 17 summarizes existing district regulations.

## **PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES**

The following summarizes a list of proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance. After adoption of the master plan, the Township will engage a consultant to assist with a complete rewrite of the zoning ordinance, and the Planning Commission will likely convene a steering committee to oversee that process. While the zoning ordinance is being updated, high priority amendments will be prioritized and implemented by the Planning Commission as opportunities arise. The recommended changes to zoning districts will be evaluated upon rezoning requests and on a case-by-case basis.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

There are numerous opportunities to streamline the zoning ordinance to make it more user friendly for residents, developers, and Township officials. As part of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) certification program, staff has identified several opportunities for improving and streamlining the site plan review process. For example, East Bay Township currently requires a public hearing for all site plan reviews, including those permitted by right. The Township should consider administrative review and approval for most uses permitted by right. Phasing for site plan approval, including a process for issuing separate land use permits for each phase, should be codified in ordinance. There are also some special uses that would be better suited for administrative review accompanied by a set of

**Table 19. District Regulations and Future Land Use Categories**

Zoning District	Minimum Lot Size	Height	Setbacks (Front, Side, & Rear)	Future Land Use Category
<i>Residential Districts</i>				
Low Density Residential (LDR)	40,000 or 12,000 with S&W	2 ½ stories or 35 feet	30, 10, 35	Residential – Low to Medium Density
Moderate Density Residential (MDR)	40,000 or 8,000 with S&W	2 ½ stories or 35 feet	25, 8, 25	Residential – Medium to High Density
High Density Residential (HDR)	40,000 or 5,500 with S&W	3 stories or 40 feet	20, 6, 25	Residential – High Density
Manufactured Housing Community (MHC)	40,000 or 12,000 with S&W	3 stories or 40 feet	30, 10, 35	Residential – High Density
Rural Residential (RR)	40,000	2 ½ stories or 35 feet	30, 10, 35	Residential – Very Low Density
Pocket Neighborhood (PNR)	3,000	26 feet	25, 7, 20	Not Applicable
<i>Commercial Districts</i>				
Local Business (LB)	40,000 or 25,000 with S&W	2 ½ stories or 35 feet	30, 10, 20	Neighborhood Commercial
Regional Business (RB)	40,000	35 feet (N of U.S. 31) 50 feet (S of U.S. 31)	30, 10, 20	Regional Commercial
East Bay Corners (EBC)	20,000	2 ½ stories or 35 feet	30, 10, 20	Neighborhood Commercial
Professional Office (PO)	20,000	35 feet	20, 10, 20	Industrial & Regional Commercial
Industrial (IND)	40,000	50 feet	40, 20, 40	Industrial
Airport Service (AS)	Not applicable	3 stories and 40 feet	25, 0, 15	Regional Commercial
<i>Agriculture &amp; Preservation Districts</i>				
Agricultural (AG)	40,000	2 ½ stories or 35 feet	30, 10, 35	Agricultural
Lakes Area (LA)	40,000	2 ½ stories or 35 feet	30, 10, 35	Residential – Very Low Density
Boardman River (BR)	40,000 or 2.5 acres within 400' of River	2 ½ stories or 35 feet	30, 10, 50	Natural Area Preservation
Natural Area (NA)	5 acres	2 ½ stories or 35 feet	30, 10, 35	Natural Area Preservation

Please note that setbacks vary based on proximity to natural features as application in the zoning ordinance, please refer to the East Bay Township Zoning Ordinance for regulations pertaining to specific parcels.

non-discretionary standards. For example, accessory structures over a certain percentage of the principal building are currently a special land use. A process and conditions should also be added to the ordinance for rezoning and conditional rezoning. Changes like these would make the ordinance and Township approval process more predictable and efficient.

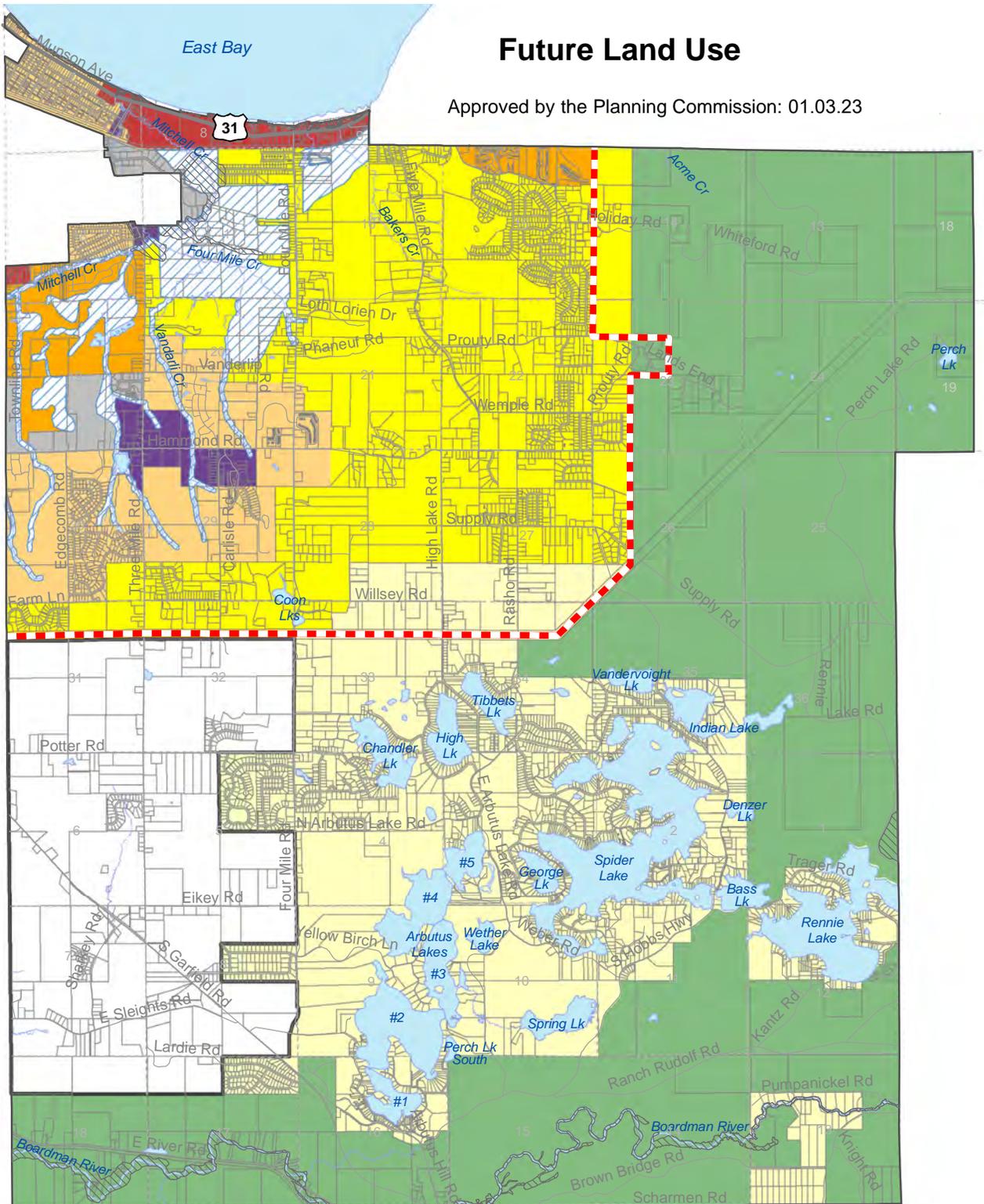
#### LANDSCAPE STANDARDS

In 2020, the Township convened a Tree Preservation Subcommittee to identify opportunities for preserving and protecting trees in East Bay Township. Specifically,

Map 18. Future Land Use Map

# Future Land Use

Approved by the Planning Commission: 01.03.23

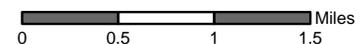


- |  |                           |  |                                      |
|--|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
|  | FEMA Flood Zone           |  | Neighborhood Commercial              |
|  | GrowthBoundary            |  | Regional Commercial                  |
|  | Lakes                     |  | Residential - Very Low Density       |
|  | Agricultural              |  | Residential - Low to Medium Density  |
|  | Industrial                |  | Residential - Medium to High Density |
|  | Mitchell Creek Protection |  | Residential - High Density           |
|  | Natural Area Preservation |  |                                      |



Data Sources:  
East Bay Township, FEMA,  
Grand Traverse County, Michigan GIS Open Data.

Prepared September 2021 for East Bay Township



the subcommittee was tasked with identifying strategies to preserve the large white pine heritage trees along the U.S. 31 corridor that contribute to the corridor's unique identity. The subcommittee also looked globally at tree landscaping requirements that would facilitate desired development character on key corridors. The subcommittee reviewed existing landscaping requirements in East Bay Township and identified opportunities to make the existing standards more specific. Generally, the opportunities identified in the ordinance related to landscaping requirements for trees were as follows:

1. Add specific requirements for types of tree species (e.g ensuring mature deciduous or conifers, shade trees in parking lots, large canopy at maturity, native species)
2. Add size requirements (e.g minimum caliper when planted)
3. Add spacing requirements for street trees
4. Add opportunity for credits (using trees preserved on site for reductions in landscape requirements)
5. Add requirements for buffers between single family residential and multifamily, commercial, etc.
6. Add specific requirement for percentage canopy cover of site (as trees reach maturity).

#### **FOREST LAKES OVERLAY DISTRICT**

As a part of ongoing development pressure in the Forest Lakes Area, the Township plans to reconvene a subcommittee of Lakes Area residents and stakeholders to review the Forest Lakes Overlay District standards, first developed in 2008. The subcommittee would identify opportunities to clarify and strengthen the protection standards. One example would be to formalize the process for documenting the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) elevation at the time of permitting, as well as ensure consistency in references to OHWM throughout the ordinance.

#### **REDEVELOPMENT FRIENDLY POLICIES**

As referenced earlier, East Bay Township is actively engaged in the MEDC RRC program. Many of the zoning ordinance recommendations for the certification revolve around removing barriers to development and redevelopment. Based on the Township's evaluation report, zoning ordinance recommendations include:

1. Amending parking standards to reduce minimums and add maximums,
2. Provide provisions for outdoor dining
3. Allow for mixed use buildings by right in certain districts

#### **SIGNS**

In line with *Reed v. Town of Gilbert*, 576 U.S. 155 (2015), the zoning ordinance will need to be amended to ensure all sign standards are content neutral. Additionally, the Township will want to reevaluate sign sizes. Currently very

large signs are permitted in commercial districts and may be inconsistent with desired aesthetics.

### **HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT REGULATIONS**

In older neighborhoods of the Township, the district regulations are in conflict with the historic development patterns of the Township. Where possible, these inconsistencies should be rectified in the Zoning Ordinance to reduce the number of non-conformities and support future development that is harmonious with historic patterns, housing and development goals, and preservation priorities. Township residential areas of note include the Pine Grove Neighborhood and the Lakes Area. Both districts have many parcels non-conforming parcels based on size and density.

### **DESIGN STANDARDS**

The Planning Commission has discussed the type of development the Township should foster in two key districts – East Bay Corners/Hammond corridor and the Regional Business District along U.S. 31. Future development should focus on high quality site design that contributes to an improved public realm. These desired goals can be facilitated through design standards. For example, the Township could stipulate preferred building materials, require parking in back of the development, reduce setbacks from the public right-of-way, and add enhanced landscape requirements.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL & OPEN SPACE PROTECTIONS**

Currently, East Bay Township regulates development located in proximity to Mitchell and Baker Creeks and their tributaries, inland lakes in the Forest Lakes area, and East Bay. Each of these bodies of water have development setbacks associated with them, as well as greenbelt provisions to protect water quality and reduce runoff. There are, however, opportunities to enhance environmental protections to better protect East Bay Township's natural areas. In the updated zoning ordinance, the Township should explore wetland protection provisions, natural features setbacks, enhanced tree protection and landscaping requirements, and a septic ordinance. Development standards for agricultural lands and open spaces should be added and focus on future utility scale solar development standards and provisions to codify the Right to Farm Act in the Zoning Ordinance. To protect private property, critical facilities, and natural features, the Township should consider adding an overlay district for flood protection using the most up to date FEMA FIRM to the zoning map, as illustrated in the Future Land Use map.

### **WORKFORCE HOUSING**

To better meet the changing needs of current and future residents, the Township should work to develop zoning standards in the residential areas surrounding the commercial district to provide for a mix of housing options. In established residential districts, work to update zoning standards to better facilitate infill and mixed housing developments in areas near commercial and employment centers with access to transportation options. Specifically, consider allowing mixed housing, housing permitted in commercial areas,

a mixture of dwelling densities permitted by right, and reduced parking requirements. The Township is also looking to reduce or remove the minimum dwelling size and allow the owner of an accessory dwelling unit to live in the accessory dwelling unit and rent the principle dwelling. Consider reducing the minimum parcel size and minimum lot width in all residential districts to better facilitate allowable densities in single family developments.

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

From a transportation standpoint, future amendments to the ordinance should seek to clarify access management and connectivity requirements between adjacent development properties to improve connectivity and access. To support the Township's non-motorized infrastructure plans, future amendments to the ordinance should focus on requirements that new developments and redevelopments provide sidewalks and trails along the public right-of-way per the Township's adopted non-motorized map.

#### **INDUSTRIAL**

There has been steady investment in both established industrial parks in the Township. The Township should continue to evaluate opportunities for appropriate industrial development locations as demand arises. The existing areas zoned for industrial land use may present development challenges due to existing wetlands and other natural features.

#### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

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Article IV of the new Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) requires that township Planning Commissions annually prepare a capital improvements program (CIP) of public structures and improvements when the municipality owns or operates a water supply or sewage disposal system. The Planning Commission may be exempted by charter from this duty if it is assigned to the legislative body and the legislative body may assign the duty to the chief elected official or a non-elected administrative official. The CIP must prioritize the projects which are deemed to be needed or desirable within the next six (6) years. Upon adoption of the 2022 Township Master Plan, the Planning Commission should work with staff to draft a CIP that reflects the reflect projects and priorities set forth in the Master Plan.





Farmland at the intersection of Three Mile and Potter, photo courtesy of Jacob Dean

# CHAPTER 11

## ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

This Master Plan’s primary function is to guide future development and growth in East Bay Township. The Master Plan identifies a future vision for the Township and a series of goals and objectives to guide decision making. It is important that the vision and goals of the Master Plan reflect the needs and desires of the people of East Bay Township, and the planning process provided the public input that served as the basis for the vision, policies, and actions found in this chapter.

Specifically, the actions were developed using public input from the community survey, master plan focus groups input sessions, Planning Commission works sessions and joint works sessions with the Township Board, priorities from the 2015 Master Plan update, and demographic and social data trends. At the end of this chapter, a 5-year action plan is presented with identification of partners, priority level, and funding opportunities.

### OUR VISION

East Bay Township will continue to be a vital part of the greater Grand Traverse community. The Township will retain significant areas of attractive natural features that are protected, yet enjoyed in a sustainable manner by residents and visitors.

Inland lakes, the East Bay shoreline, streams and tributaries, and sensitive wetlands will be protected and enhanced through low impact development practices and natural features preservation. The neighborhoods of the Township

will include a diverse range of attractive housing options to serve the needs of the entire spectrum of current and future Township residents. They will offer high quality public utilities and services and will be connected through a range of transportation options. Commercial and industrial development will support a growing workforce in the Township as well as support tourism in the region. The land uses in the community will be arranged in keeping with this vision, encouraging more intense and diverse land uses in the northern portions of the Township with less intense or intrusive uses and activities in the southern two-thirds of the Township.

NATURAL  
FEATURES FORM  
A FOUNDATIONAL  
IDENTITY FOR EAST  
BAY TOWNSHIP  
RESIDENTS.

### ACTION PLAN COMPONENTS

**Vision:** Forward looking, describes an ideal state for the community, inspirational and aspirational.

**Policies:** Set of guidelines that determine a course of action

**Action:** Accomplishment of something that occurs over a period of time

## **NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY:**

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The natural features that define the character of the Township are of vital importance; and protection of these features is central to decision-making. Land use policies and development decisions will be driven by the commitment to preserving and enhancing sensitive natural areas and open space.

### **Actions:**

- Conduct a tree inventory to track what exists and develop benchmarks for preserving and enhancing the tree canopy, particularly along the U.S. 31 corridor, Hammond corridor, and Lakes Area.
- Update the landscaping standards in the zoning ordinance to protect and enhance the tree canopy, protect large heritage trees, and ensure vegetative buffers separate land uses.
- Update and amend the Forest Lakes Overlay District ordinance clarify standards, definitions, and enhance desired protections in the 50-foot setback area.
- Preserve clean drinking water by adopting a wellhead protection overlay district to protect the Township's drinking water supply.
- Conduct regular mailings to groups including lake associations, new property owners, realtors, contractors, and landscapers about the Forest Lakes Overlay District rules and regulations.
- Explore adoption of a wetland ordinance to protect wetlands that are not otherwise protected by the State; provisions could include site plan requirements, setbacks, buffers, and protection of wetlands less than five acres in size
- Enhance consistency and predictability of enforcement of existing ordinances to protect natural resources, particularly in the Lakes Area.
- Work with partners and lakes associations to explore tools to combat invasive species in the Lakes Area and throughout the Township.
- Enact an ordinance for septic inspections at certain frequency or at time of sale to protect water quality.

## **HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS POLICY:**

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Housing options are increasingly at the forefront of community conversations about issues ranging from social equity to economic development, employee retention, and school enrollment. East Bay Township is a community that is welcoming to all households and will seek to support a range of housing solutions.

### **Action:**

- Increase supply of affordable high quality rentals through zoning and other development incentives.

- Update zoning to allow smaller housing units and more flexibility of housing styles to meet the changing market demand for housing.
- Continue to invest in neighborhood parks and amenities through grants and other funding mechanisms and require pocket parks as a part of new developments.
- Support zoning and other policies that facilitate childcare facilities in the Township.
- Evaluate enacting a cap for short-term rental licenses as a way to balance the long-term housing supply and support workforce housing.
- Update Township zoning standards to encourage infill and mixed housing developments in areas near commercial and employment centers with access to transportation options.
- Explore opportunities for senior housing to meet the needs of aging residents and allow for aging in place.

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES POLICY #1:**

The Township will seek to support and expand efficient, reliable and economical public infrastructure, recognizing that sound transportation and

Pine Grove Park in the Pine Grove Neighborhood of East Bay Township.



utility policies and investments support economic development and other Township priorities.

**Actions**

- Update the capital improvements program for the Township to include detailed cost estimates and time-frames for water, sanitary sewer, stormwater, and road improvements.
- Work to offer broadband, wifi and fiber optics throughout the Township to support remote workers and economic development.
- Review Township water and sewer ordinances and make adjustments to support private investment in priority growth areas of the Township.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES POLICY #2:**

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Seek non-motorized connections and support multimodal transportation investments

**Actions**

- Actively work to implement the Safe Routes to School routes and the Three Mile Trail expansion preferred alignment.
- Evaluate models for long-term maintenance of non-motorized facilities.
- Update zoning standards to require sidewalks with new development.
- Work closely with MDOT to identify locations for mid-block crossing on U.S. 31.
- Explore funding opportunities to support electric car charging stations and identify appropriate locations.
- Work with BATA to support transit route and service expansion with new residential developments.
- Implement the non-motorized plan map found in Chapter 9 of this plan.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY #1:**

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Support existing businesses and create a climate for future business investment and expansion in East Bay Township. Evaluate areas for future commercial and industrial expansion.

**Actions:**

- Work to develop East Bay Corners as a mixed use, multimodal center through public investment and private partnerships.
- Evaluate locations for a new industrial park or other light industrial sites with readily available utilities and infrastructure.
- Partner with Traverse Connect, Venture North, or other local economic development groups to support proactive business recruitment.
- Communicate with business owners about technical assistance and grant funding opportunities to support business development.

- Given the shift to remote work, track commercial demand for office uses and evaluate if other zoning would be more appropriate for future commercial expansion in the Township.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY #2:**

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Support economic development on the U.S. 31 Corridor

### **Actions**

- Reduce commercial vacancies along U.S. 31 by obtaining RRC certification and working with MEDC to market priority redevelopment sites.
- Seek funding to facilitate a business engagement and community design process that will enhance placemaking on U.S. 31 by burying power lines, installing Beach District signage, pedestrian crosswalks, building design standards, and decorative pedestrian scale lighting.
- Explore opportunities to enhance public access to the waterfront, including land acquisition, partnerships, and improvements at existing access points.
- Explore creation of a Corridor Improvement Authority to help fund improvements along the U.S. 31 corridor.

## **FARMLAND & AGRICULTURE PRESERVATION POLICY:**

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Shifts in demographics and the agricultural marketplace have resulted in a decline in farming in the Township. East Bay will seek to support new and innovative agricultural enterprises to support the local agricultural economy, farmers, and to help preserve rural character.

### **Actions**

- Work with landowners to identify local measures that may be implemented to encourage and support economically viable agriculture, including timber, in the Township.
- Update the zoning ordinance to support value added agricultural enterprises and operations.

## **GOVERNANCE & REGIONAL COOPERATION POLICY:**

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East Bay Charter Township will continue to play an important role in the careful governance of the broader Grand Traverse region, in cooperation with other neighboring communities while seeking to be open, communicative, and transparent with residents.

### **Actions**

- Foster a culture of civic ownership and encourage a diversity of residents to join boards and commissions.
- Improve and expand proactive communication with residents, businesses, and other stakeholders through social media, direct email messaging, and other means.

**Table 21. Natural Resources Action Plan**

Policy	Actions	Priority	Time	Responsibility
The natural features that define the character of the Township are of vital importance; and protection of these features is central to decision-making. Land use policies and development decisions will be driven by the commitment to preserving and enhancing sensitive natural areas and open space.	Conduct a tree inventory to track what we have and develop benchmarks for preserving and enhancing the tree canopy, particularly along the U.S. 31 corridor, Hammond corridor, and Lakes Area.	2	1-3 years	Staff, grant
	Update the landscaping standards in the zoning ordinance to protect and enhance the tree canopy, protect large heritage trees, and ensure vegetative buffers separate land uses.	1	<1 year	Staff, PC, grant
	Update and amend the Forest Lakes Overlay District ordinance clarify standards, definitions, and enhance desired protections in the 50-foot setback area.	1	<1 year	Township – general fund, Lake Associations
	Preserve clean drinking water by adopting a wellhead protection overlay district to protect the Township’s drinking water supply.	2	1-3 years	Township Engineer/P&Z department
	Conduct regular mailings to groups including lake associations, new property owners, realtors, contractors, and landscapers about the Forest Lakes Overlay District rules and regulations.	3	1-3 years	Township – general fund
	Explore adoption of a wetland ordinance to protect wetlands that are not otherwise protected by the State; provisions could include site plan requirements, setbacks, buffers, and protection of wetlands less than five acres in size.	2	4-6 years	Partnership with watershed center
	Enhance consistency and predictability of enforcement of existing ordinances to protect natural resources, particularly in the Lakes Area.	1	1-3 years	Township general fund
	Work with partners and lakes associations to explore tools to combat invasive species in the Lakes Area and throughout the Township.	2	4-6 years	HOA – special assessment districts, staff, invasive species network
	Enact an ordinance for septic inspections at certain frequency or at time of sale to protect water quality.	1	1-3 years	Health Department, staff, lake associations

**Table 22. Housing & Neighborhoods Action Plan**

Policy	Actions	Priority	Time	Responsibility
Housing options are increasingly at the forefront of community conversations about issues ranging from social equity to economic development, employee retention, and school enrollment. East Bay Township is a community that is welcoming to all households and will seek to support a range of housing solutions.	Increase supply of affordable high quality rentals through zoning and other development incentives.	2	1-3 years	Township General Fund
	Update zoning to allow smaller housing units and more flexibility of housing styles to meet the changing market demand for housing.	2	<1 year	Township General Fund
	Continue to invest in neighborhood parks and amenities through grants and other funding mechanisms and require pocket parks as a part of new developments.	2	4-6 years	Pks & Zoning grant
	Support zoning and other policies that facilitate childcare facilities in the Township.	2	1-3 years	Township General Fund
	Evaluate enacting a cap for short term rental licenses as a way to balance the long-term housing supply and support workforce housing	1	<1 year	Township – ensure STR program pays for itself
	Update Township zoning standards to encourage infill and mixed housing developments in areas near commercial and employment centers with access to transportation options.	2	1-3 years	Planning grant
	Explore opportunities for senior housing to meet the needs of aging residents and allow for aging in place.	3	1-3 years	Developers

**Table 23. Community Facilities Action Plan**

Policy	Actions	Priority	Time	Responsibility
The Township will seek to support and expand efficient, reliable and economical public infrastructure, recognizing that sound transportation and utility policies and investments support economic development and other Township priorities.	Update the capital improvements program for the Township to include detailed cost estimates and time-frames for water, sanitary sewer, stormwater, and road improvements.	1	1-3 years	Township staff, planning commission, Board of Trustees
	Work to offer broadband, wifi and fiber optics throughout the Township to support remote workers and economic development.	2	1-3 years	Private market will provide
	Review Township water and sewer ordinances and make adjustments to support private investment in priority growth areas of the Township.	2	1-3 years	Currently underway
	Explore options for reducing pressure on the U.S. 31 corridor by extending South Airport through to Five Mile Road and/or looking at a limited access roadway along the exiting TART/rail corridor.	2	4-6 years	GTCRC responsibility
Seek non-motorized connections and support multimodal transportation investments	Evaluate models for long-term maintenance of non-motorized facilities.	2	1-3 years	Partnership – Rotary, County, TART
	Update zoning standards to require sidewalks with new development.	1	<1 year	Township
	Work closely with MDOT to identify locations for mid-block crossing on U.S. 31.	1	<1 year	MDOT responsibility, currently underway
	Explore funding opportunities to support electric car charging stations and identify appropriate locations.	4	4-6 years	MDOT/GTCRC grants
	Work with BATA to support transit route and service expansion with new residential developments.	2	1-3 years	BATA, staff, Developer incorporates into developments
	Implement the non-motorized plan map found in Chapter 9 of this plan.	1	4-6 years	Township, Private Developers

**Table 24. Economic Development Action Plan**

Policy	Actions	Priority	Time	Responsibility
Support existing businesses and create a climate for future business investment and expansion in East Bay Township. Evaluate areas for future commercial and industrial expansion.	Work to develop East Bay Corners as a mixed use, multimodal center through public investment and private partnerships.	2	1-3 years	Township and developers
	Evaluate locations for a new industrial park or other light industrial sites with readily available utilities and infrastructure.	3	1-3 years	Economic development partner
	Partner with Traverse Connect, Venture North, or other local economic development groups to support proactive business recruitment.	2	<1 year	County/Township
	Communicate with business owners about technical assistance and grant funding opportunities to support business development.	2	1-3 years	Economic development partner
	Given the shift to remote work, track commercial demand for office uses and evaluate if other zoning would be more appropriate for future commercial expansion in the Township.	3	1-3 years	Economic development partner
Support economic development on the U.S. 31 Corridor	Reduce commercial vacancies along U.S. 31 by obtaining RRC certification and working with MEDC to market priority redevelopment sites.	2	<1 year	Township, MEDC
	Seek funding to facilitate a business engagement and community design process that will enhance placemaking on U.S. 31 by burying power lines, installing Beach District signage, pedestrian crosswalks, building design standards, and decorative pedestrian scale lighting.	1	4-6 years	Township and local businesses, MDOT, utility companies, grant funding (MDARD)
	Explore opportunities to enhance public access to the waterfront, including land acquisition, partnerships, and improvements at existing access points.	2	1-3 years	GTCRC
	Explore creation of a Corridor Improvement Authority to help fund improvements along the U.S. 31 corridor.	3	4-6 years	Rotary/Tourism grant

**Table 25. Farmland & Agriculture Preservation Action Plan**

Policy	Actions	Priority	Time	Responsibility
Shifts in demographics and the agricultural marketplace have resulted in a decline in farming in the Township. East Bay will seek to support new and innovative agricultural enterprises to support the local agricultural economy, farmers, and to help preserve rural character.	Work with landowners to identify local measures that may be implemented to encourage and support economically viable agriculture, including timber, in the Township.	2	4-6 years	P&Z staff
	Update the zoning ordinance to support value added agricultural enterprises and operations.	2	1-3 years	P&Z staff, MSUE Cultivating Local Farm Economies Training

**Table 26. Governance & Regional Cooperation Action Plan**

Policy	Actions	Priority	Time	Responsibility
East Bay Charter Township will continue to play an important role in the careful governance of the broader Grand Traverse region, in cooperation with other neighboring communities while seeking to be open, communicative, and transparent with residents.	Foster a culture of civic ownership and encourage a diversity of residents to join boards and commissions.	1	<1 year	Township staff
	Improve and expand proactive communication with residents, businesses, and other stakeholders through social media, direct email messaging, and other means.	1	<1 year	Township staff
	Meet on a regular basis with neighboring communities and the County to identify challenges that are common to multiple jurisdictions and evaluate and adopt joint responses where appropriate.	2	<1 year	Begin Planner and ZA luncheons

