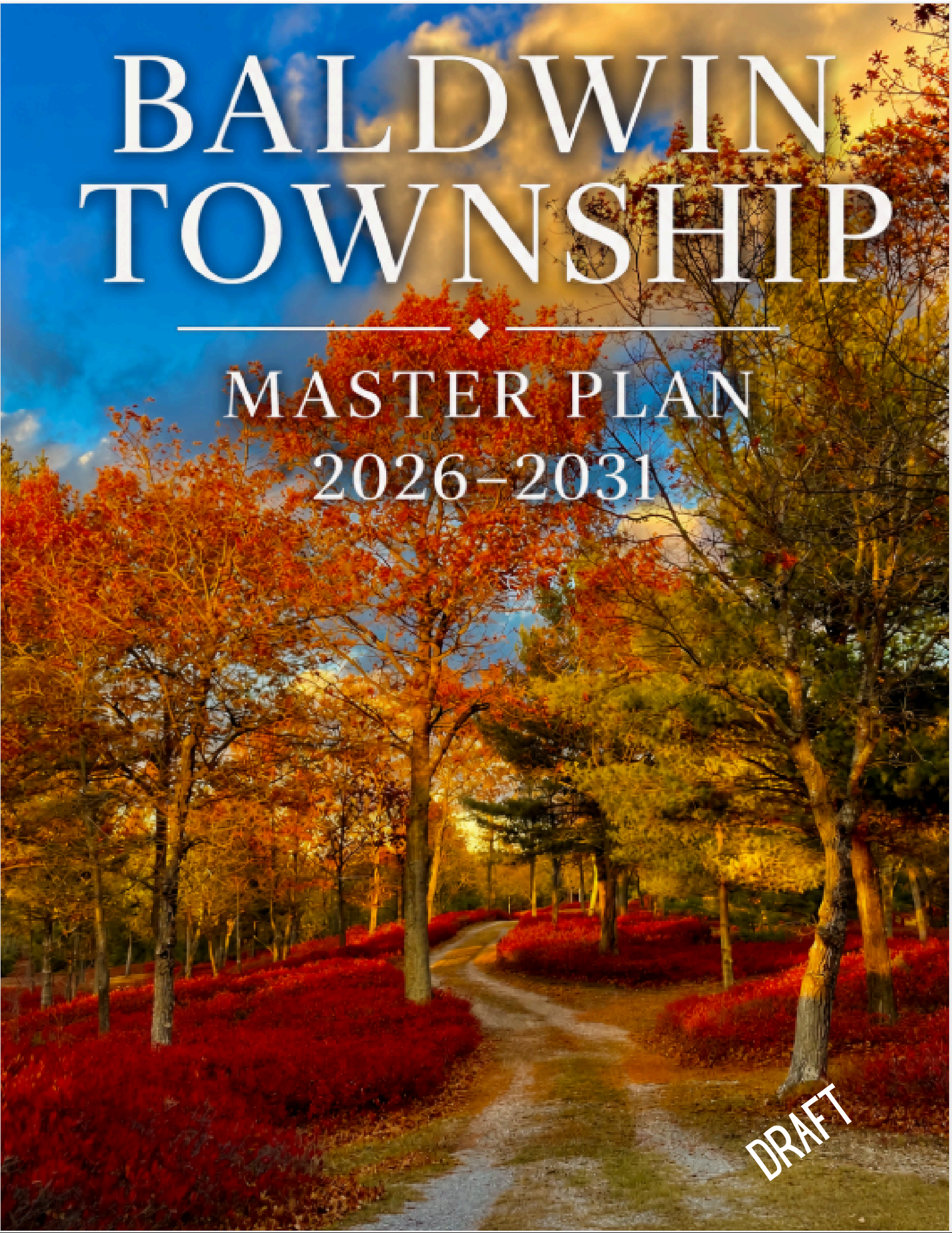


BALDWIN TOWNSHIP



MASTER PLAN
2026–2031

DRAFT

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Township Board

Christopher Martin - Supervisor
Cathy Pittsley - Clerk
Patricia Spriggs - Treasurer
David Hoin - Trustee
Aaron Wills - Trustee

Planning Commission

Tom Emery - Chairperson
Mark Ferguson
Dave Hoin
Jennifer Riggs
Patrick Jacques



Funding provided by Michigan State Housing Development Authority
Housing Readiness Incentive Grant

Master Plan Assistance Provided By:

Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG)
80 Livingston Blvd Suite U-108
PO Box 457
Gaylord, MI 49734
www.nemcog.org

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

Map Sources:

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

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"Tawas Point Overview" by Jay Smalls

Introduction

Chapter 1

The Purpose & Process of a Master Plan

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

According to Michigan law, a Zoning Ordinance must align with an adopted Master Plan to be valid and enforceable. In the late 1990's, wishing to pursue master planning for the community as an independent governmental unit and break from the County's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance, Baldwin Township engaged in a process to create its first Master Plan and to develop a local Zoning Ordinance based on that plan. Since that time, several changes have occurred in the community and the region, leading to the need for an update to that Plan.

The authority to develop the Master Plan is provided through the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended. Public Act 33 of 2008 requires the Planning Commission to hold a public hearing before the final adoption of a master plan, as well as when the Planning Commission alters, amends, or expands the scope of its Master Plan after its original adoption.

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

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

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

Master Plans serve to:

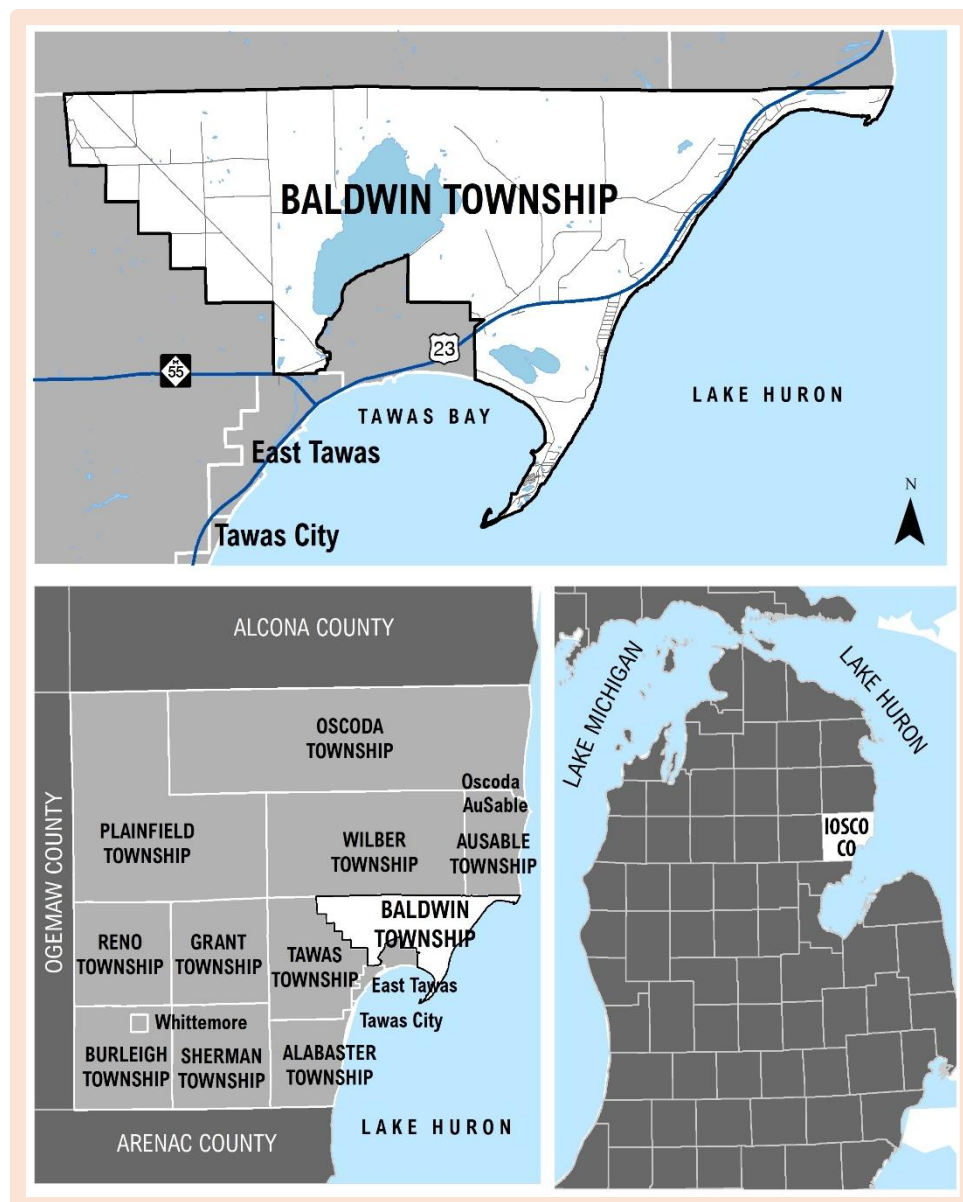
- Seek citizen input on needs and services.
- Provide an overall perspective of the land, how it is being used, and how it should be used in the future.
- Create a general statement of the goals and objectives of the community.
- Preserve the quality of life in the community.
- Promote public health,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

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

Location

Baldwin Township is one of eleven townships in Iosco County, Michigan, and is uniquely positioned along the Tawas Bay portion of Lake Huron. Its irregular shape stretches approximately twelve miles from its northernmost boundary to the southern tip at Tawas Point. A portion of the Township extends into the waters of Tawas Bay, contributing to its rich maritime heritage and scenic beauty.

The Township surrounds the City of East Tawas, the largest municipality in Iosco County, and includes a portion of Tawas City, the county seat. It is bordered by Tawas Township to the west and by Wilber and AuSable Townships to the north. The strategic location of Baldwin Township along key transportation routes makes it an important hub for tourism, commerce, and industry.



History

The Industrial Legacy of Iosco County

Michigan's rise as an industrial powerhouse was fueled by its rich natural resources, and Iosco County played a key role. During the Paleozoic Era, gypsum, salt, and other minerals were deposited in what is now Michigan and the Great Lakes. These resources—coal, petroleum, limestone, and more—have been vital to Michigan's industry. The region's waterways, including the Great Lakes and AuSable River, served as trade routes for Indigenous peoples, French fur traders, and later American settlers.

Early Settlements & Fur Trade

The French controlled the area from 1608 to 1760, trading furs with Indigenous tribes. After the British takeover in 1760, tribes remained loyal to them during the American Revolution. By 1807, treaties opened Michigan to American settlers, and by 1818, Native resistance had subsided. Fur trading dominated the economy until the 1830s, when silk replaced fur in fashion, and farming depleted animal populations.

Logging Boom & Industrial Growth

Iosco County's first permanent white settlement was founded in the 1840s in AuSable, centered around fishing. However, logging soon became the dominant industry. Judge Gideon O. Whittemore founded Tawas City in 1854, building the first steam-powered sawmill. Following the Civil War, Michigan became the top producer of white pine, with Iosco County playing a major role. The AuSable River and local creeks transported logs to mills. By the 1890s, as timber supplies dwindled, many mills closed, and railroads replaced river transport, expanding economic opportunities.

Railroads, Farming & Mining

Railroads, built in the 1870s, fueled economic expansion, bringing settlers and connecting Iosco County to markets. The discovery of salt in 1877 and gypsum mining in Alabaster and National City added to the economy. Farming expanded, though much of the land was sandy and swampy. By 1909, President Theodore Roosevelt designated part of Baldwin Township as Michigan National Forest, later expanded into Huron National Forest.

Tourism & Modern Development

By the mid-20th century, industrial jobs in southeastern Michigan drew younger generations away from farming. The paving of US-23 (1934-1942) boosted tourism, with visitors drawn to fishing, hunting, and outdoor recreation. Tawas Bay and Tawas Lake became prime fishing destinations, while thousands of acres of public land supported hunting. The Iosco Sportsman Club continues to provide facilities for shooting sports and law enforcement training.

A Rich Past, A Bright Future

From fur trading and logging to tourism and conservation, Iosco County has continually adapted while preserving its heritage. Today, it remains a destination for outdoor enthusiasts and a vital part of Michigan's history and economy.



Socio-Economic Data

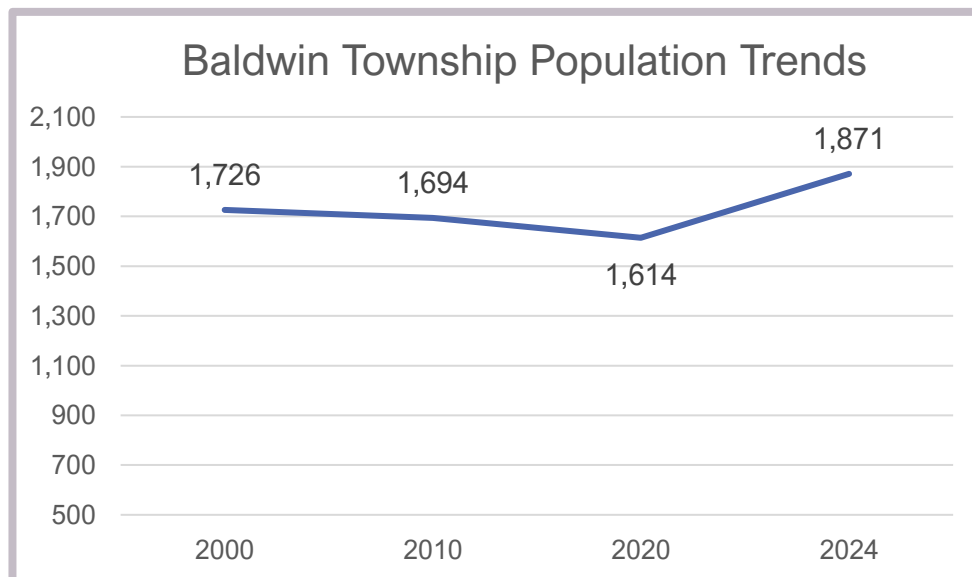
Chapter 2

Population

Baldwin Township experienced fluctuating population trends from 2000 to 2024. In 2000, the population stood at 1,726, but over the next two decades, it saw a gradual decline. By 2010, the population had decreased slightly to 1,694, reflecting a loss of 32 residents, or a 1.9% decline. This downward trend continued into 2020, with the population dropping further to 1,614, marking an 80-person decrease and a 4.7% decline from the previous decade. However, by 2024, the Township saw a significant rebound, with the population rising sharply to 1,871—an increase of 257 residents, representing a notable 15.9% growth. This recent surge suggests a renewed attraction to the Township, potentially driven by economic opportunities, housing developments, or other favorable local factors.

Table 2-1 Population Trend Baldwin Township

Year	Population	Number Change	Percent Change
2000	1,726	---	---
2010	1,694	-32	-1.9%
2020	1,614	-80	-4.7%
2024	1,871	257	15.9%

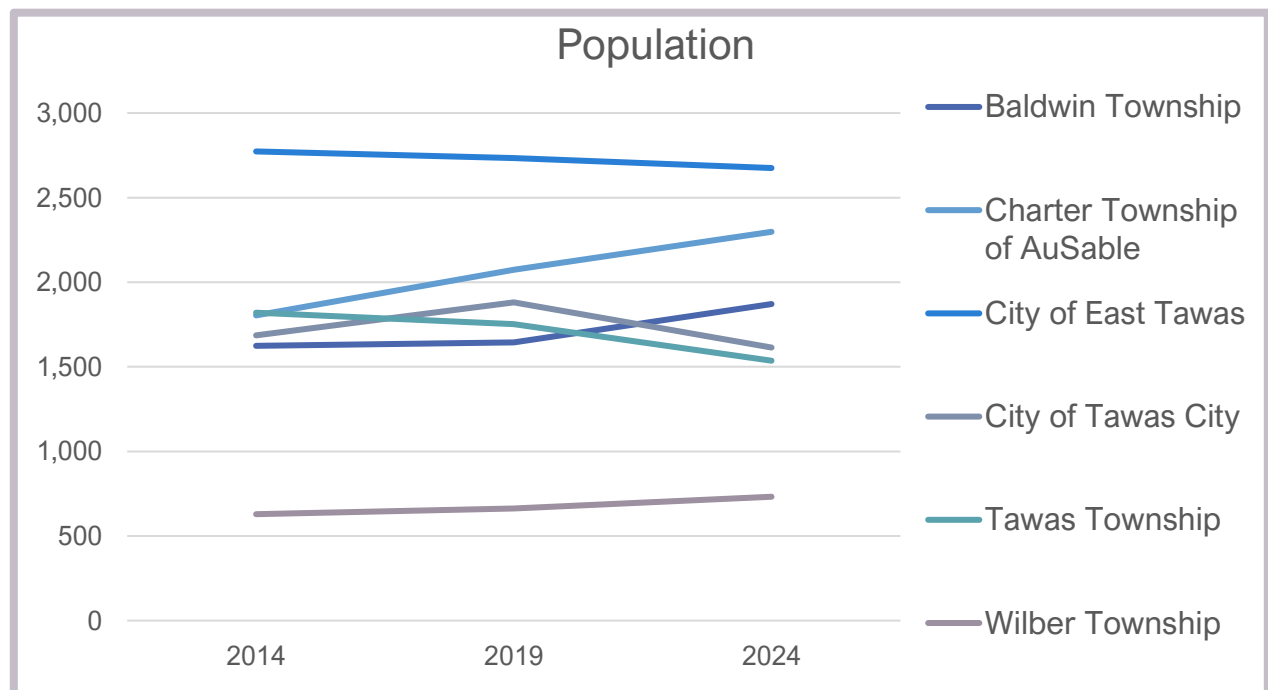


Between 2014 and 2024, Baldwin Township saw a steady increase in population, rising from 1,624 to 1,871, reflecting a numeric growth of 247 residents and a 16.9% increase. This growth stands out compared to many surrounding municipalities, some of which experienced population declines. The Charter Township of AuSable saw the most significant growth in the area, increasing by 494 residents (27.4%), while the City of East Tawas and Tawas City both saw

decreases of 3.5% and 4.3%, respectively. Tawas Township experienced the largest decline, losing 284 residents (15.6%), while Wilber Township saw a similar growth of 103 residents (16.4%). Iosco County, as a whole, experienced a modest decline of 0.6%, indicating that Baldwin Township's growth is contrary to the broader regional trend. In comparison, the state of Michigan saw a 1.9% increase, meaning Baldwin Township's population growth significantly outpaced the state's overall rate. This upward trend suggests a growing appeal for Baldwin Township, possibly due to economic, housing, or community-driven factors.

Table 2-2 Population

Municipality	2014	2019	2024	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Baldwin Township	1,624	1,644	1,871	247	16.9%
Charter Township of AuSable	1,804	2,074	2,298	494	27.4%
City of East Tawas	2,773	2,733	2,675	-98	-3.5%
City of Tawas City	1,686	1,881	1,614	-72	-4.3%
Tawas Township	1,820	1,752	1,536	-284	-15.6%
Wilber Township	629	663	732	103	16.4%
Iosco County	25,504	25,197	25,347	-157	-0.6%
State of Michigan	9,889,024	9,965,265	10,077,761	188,737	1.9%

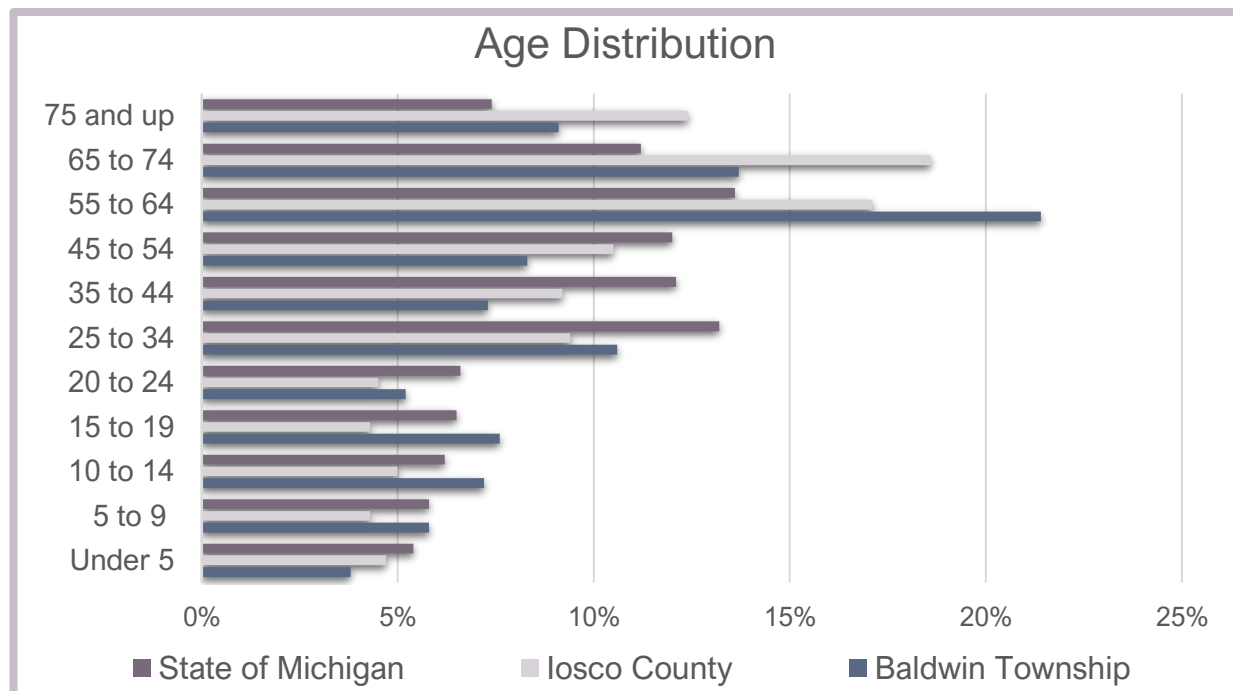


Age Distribution

The age distribution of Baldwin Township reveals a diverse population structure that differs in some respects from both Iosco County and the State of Michigan. The Township has a slightly higher percentage of young residents, with 5.8% of its population in the 5 to 9 age group compared to 4.3% in Iosco County and 5.8% statewide. Similarly, the 15 to 19 age group makes up 7.6% of Baldwin Township's population, a higher proportion than both Iosco County (4.3%) and Michigan (6.5%).

	Baldwin Township	Iosco County	State of Michigan
Under 5	3.8%	4.7%	5.4%
5 to 9	5.8%	4.3%	5.8%
10 to 14	7.2%	5.0%	6.2%
15 to 19	7.6%	4.3%	6.5%
20 to 24	5.2%	4.5%	6.6%
25 to 34	10.6%	9.4%	13.2%
35 to 44	7.3%	9.2%	12.1%
45 to 54	8.3%	10.5%	12.0%
55 to 64	21.4%	17.1%	13.6%
65 to 74	13.7%	18.6%	11.2%
75 and up	9.1%	12.4%	7.4%

(6.5%). The 25 to 34 age group, often associated with young professionals and families, is also well-represented at 10.6%, exceeding Iosco County's 9.4%, though not surpassing the state's 13.2%.



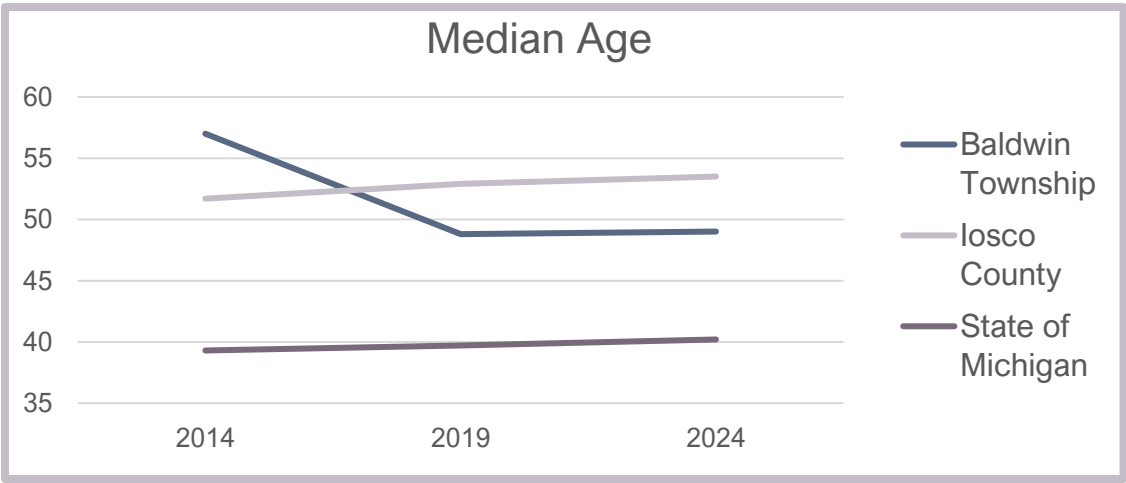
Conversely, Baldwin Township has a lower proportion of older residents compared to Iosco County. The 65 to 74 age group accounts for 13.7% of Baldwin Township’s population, compared to 18.6% in the county and 11.2% statewide. Similarly, those aged 75 and older make up 9.1% of the Township’s population, compared to 12.4% in Iosco County and 7.4% statewide. These figures suggest that Baldwin Township has a slightly younger demographic compared to the county, though it still retains a notable portion of older residents. This mix of age groups may reflect a balance of young families, working-age adults, and retirees, contributing to the Township’s recent population growth and community development.

Median Age

The median age in Baldwin Township has seen a notable decline over the past decade, dropping from 57.0 in 2014 to 49.0 in 2024. This shift

Table 2-4 Median Age								
Baldwin Township			Iosco County			State of Michigan		
2014	2019	2024	2014	2019	2024	2014	2019	2024
57.0	48.8	49.0	51.7	52.9	53.5	39.3	39.7	40.2

indicates a significant demographic change, likely driven by an influx of younger residents or families. In contrast, Iosco County's median age has steadily increased, rising from 51.7 in 2014 to 53.5 in 2024, reflecting an aging population. Similarly, the State of Michigan has experienced a slight increase in median age, from 39.3 in 2014 to 40.2 in 2024, suggesting gradual aging but at a much slower pace than Iosco County. Baldwin Township's decreasing median age stands out in the region, aligning with its recent population growth and younger age distribution compared to the county. This trend may indicate a shift in housing, employment opportunities, or community development that is attracting younger demographics to the Township.



School Enrollment

Baldwin Township residents are served by Tawas Community Schools for their educational needs. For the 2024-25 school year, the district reported a total enrollment of 1,124 students. Among these students, 48.6%—or approximately 548 students—are classified as Economically Disadvantaged. This designation indicates that nearly half of the district's student population faces financial challenges that may impact their academic experience.

The highest concentration of economically disadvantaged students is found at the elementary level, where financial burdens such as childcare expenses significantly affect household income. The high cost of childcare can limit parents' ability to work full-time or take on additional jobs, further straining family finances. These economic factors may influence students' access to resources, extracurricular activities, and overall educational opportunities. Addressing these challenges requires community support, school-based programs, and potential assistance initiatives to ensure that all students, regardless of economic background, have the opportunity to succeed in their education.

Educational Attainment

The educational attainment of Baldwin Township residents reflects a relatively high level of academic achievement compared to Iosco County and is largely in line with state averages. Among the Township's population aged 25 and over (1,316 individuals), 92.2% have completed high school or obtained a higher level of education, surpassing Iosco County's 90.2% and exceeding Michigan's 92.1%. Additionally, 31.5% of Baldwin Township residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher, which is significantly higher than Iosco County's 19.3% and only slightly below Michigan's 32.4%.

The Township has a lower percentage of residents without a high school diploma (7.8%) compared to Iosco County (9.8%) and is nearly on par with Michigan's 7.9%. A notable portion of the population, 28.0%, has completed some college coursework without earning a degree, slightly higher than both Iosco County (24.8%) and Michigan (21.9%). Baldwin Township also has a strong representation of individuals with graduate or professional degrees at 16.3%, which is more than double the rate in Iosco County (7.7%) and exceeds the state's 12.7%.

These figures indicate that Baldwin Township has a well-educated population, with a significant number of residents pursuing higher education. The higher percentage of individuals with advanced degrees suggests the presence of professionals or retirees with educational backgrounds, potentially contributing to the Township's recent growth and economic stability.

Table 2-5 Educational Attainment

	Baldwin Township	Iosco County	State of Michigan
Population 25 and over	1,316	19,566	7,008,507
Less than 9 th grade education	1.4%	1.8%	2.6%
9 th -12 th grade without diploma	6.3%	7.9%	5.3%
High school diploma or equivalency	25.9%	36.3%	28.0%
Some college; no degree	28.0%	24.8%	21.9%
Associate degree	6.8%	9.8%	9.8%
Bachelor's degree	15.3%	11.7%	19.7%
Graduate or professional degree	16.3%	7.7%	12.7%
High school graduate or higher	92.2%	90.2%	92.1%
Bachelor's degree or higher	31.5%	19.3%	32.4%

Financials

The income levels in Baldwin Township indicate a relatively strong economic standing compared to Iosco County and, in some cases, even the State of Michigan. The Township's median household income stands at \$69,792, which is significantly higher than Iosco County's \$50,066, though slightly below Michigan's statewide median of \$72,875. Similarly, the median family income in Baldwin Township is \$84,792, surpassing Iosco County's \$66,171 but remaining below the state average of \$93,357.

Married couples in Baldwin Township have a particularly high median income of \$98,333, well above Iosco County (\$74,029), though not Michigan (\$110,391), suggesting a strong economic foundation among families in the area. Additionally, median non-family income, which includes individuals living alone or with non-relatives, is \$50,085, nearly double Iosco County's \$27,024 and higher than Michigan's \$43,188.

Table 2-6 Income

	Baldwin Township	Iosco County	State of Michigan
Median Household	\$69,792	\$50,066	\$72,875
Median Family	\$84,792	\$66,171	\$93,357
Median Married Couple	\$98,333	\$74,029	\$110,391
Median Non-Family	\$50,085	\$27,024	\$43,188
Per Capita Income	\$41,643	\$32,108	\$40,735

The per capita income in Baldwin Township is \$41,643, which is considerably higher than Iosco County's \$32,108 and even higher than Michigan's \$40,735. These figures suggest that Baldwin Township residents, on average, have higher earnings than those in the surrounding county and maintain a level of financial stability comparable to the state average. The high median incomes,

particularly among married couples, indicate that Baldwin Township may attract middle- to upper-income households, contributing to its recent population growth and economic resilience.

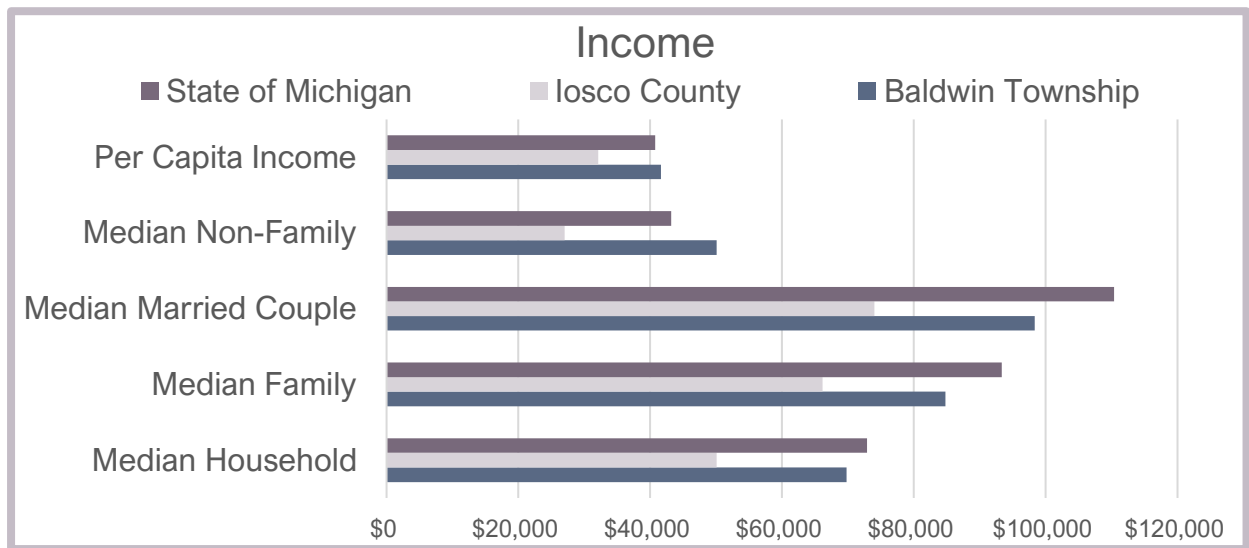


Table 2-7 Income Sources

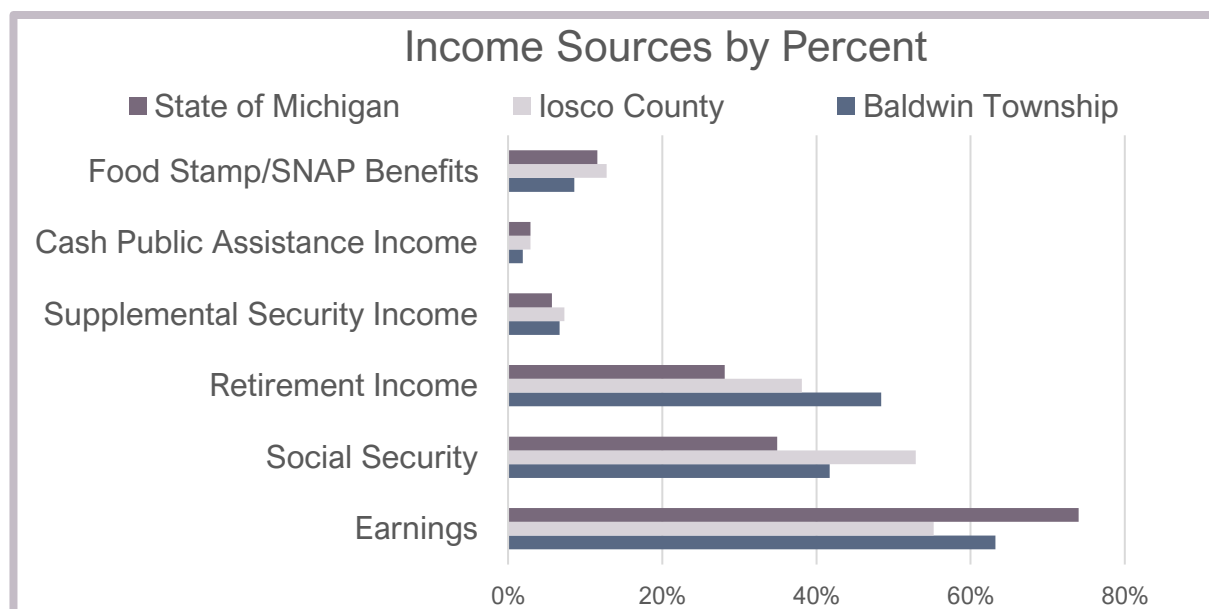
Source	Baldwin Township		Iosco County			State of Michigan	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent		Estimate	Percent
With earnings	490	63.2%	6,465	55.2%		3,017,942	74.0%
<i>Mean earnings</i>	\$97,898	---	\$72,521	---		\$101,365	---
With Social Security	323	41.7%	6,201	52.9%		1,421,376	34.9%
<i>Mean Social Security Income</i>	\$26,975	---	\$23,389	---		\$25,306	---
With retirement income	375	48.4%	4,467	38.1%		1,145,735	28.1%
<i>Mean retirement income</i>	\$37,158	---	\$26,423	---		\$28,787	---
With Supplemental Security Income	52	6.7%	856	7.3%		231,820	5.7%
<i>Mean Supplemental Security Income</i>	\$21,887	---	\$11,799	---		\$11,875	---
With cash public assistance income	15	1.9%	337	2.9%		119,122	2.9%
<i>Mean cash public assistance income</i>	\$5,653	---	\$2,623	---	\$4,032	---	
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the past 12 months	66	8.6%	1,504	12.8%	473,967	11.6%	

Households in Baldwin Township receive income from a variety of sources, and households may receive income from more than one source; therefore, the percentages shown below are not mutually exclusive and total more than 100%.

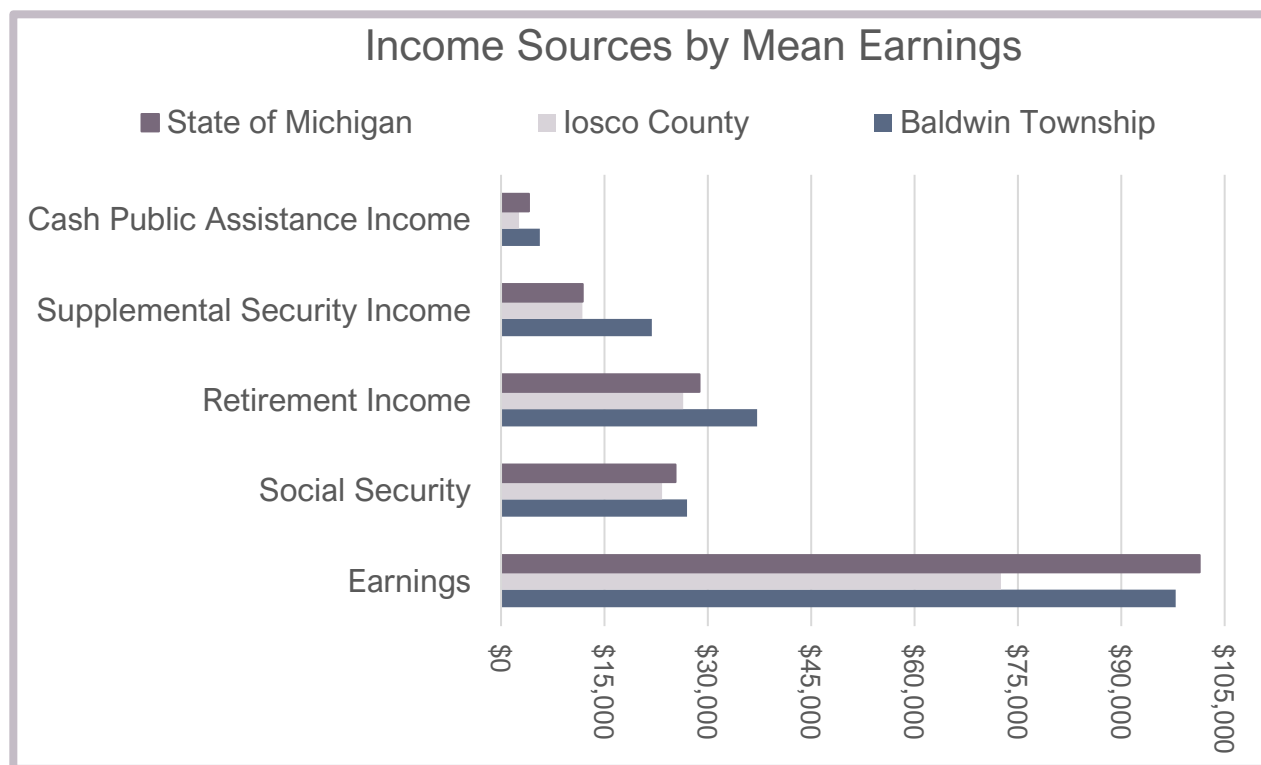
Approximately 63.2% of Baldwin Township households have earnings, higher than Iosco County (55.2%) but lower than Michigan (74.0%). The mean earnings of households with employment income are \$97,898, significantly higher than the county average of \$72,521 and nearly equal to the statewide average of \$101,365.

Retirement and Social Security income are also important sources of household income. Social Security is received by 41.7% of Township households, compared to 52.9% in Iosco County and 34.9% statewide, with a mean annual benefit of \$26,975, exceeding both the county (\$23,389) and state (\$25,306) averages. Retirement income is received by 48.4% of households, higher than both Iosco County (38.1%) and Michigan (28.1%), with an average annual income of \$37,158, also exceeding county (\$26,423) and state (\$28,787) averages.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is received by 6.7% of Township households, similar to Iosco County (7.3%) and slightly above the statewide rate (5.7%). The mean SSI income of \$21,887 is substantially higher than both the county (\$11,799) and state (\$11,875) averages. Cash public assistance is received by just 1.9% of households, below both the county and state rates of 2.9%, although the average amount received (\$5,653) exceeds both county (\$2,623) and state (\$4,032) averages.



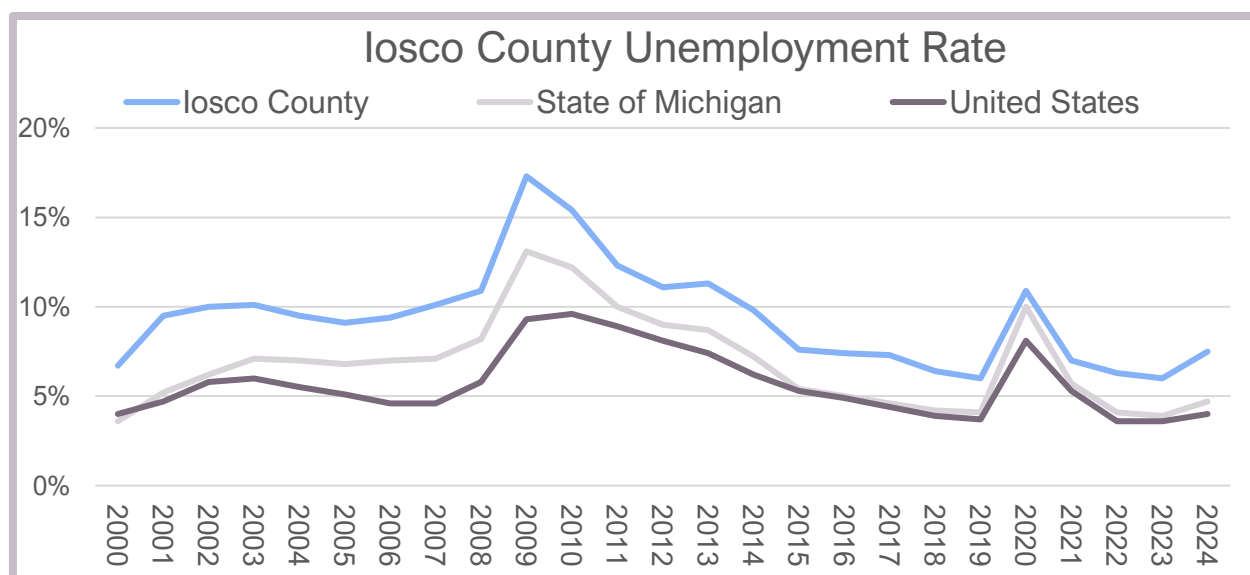
An estimated 8.6% of Baldwin Township households received Food Stamp/SNAP benefits during the past 12 months, compared to 12.8% in Iosco County and 11.6% statewide. Overall, the Township's income profile reflects a community supported by a combination of employment earnings, retirement income, and Social Security benefits, with a comparatively lower reliance on public assistance programs than the county and state.



Employment and Unemployment

Employment and unemployment data specific to Baldwin Township are not available, as such statistics are typically reported at larger geographic levels, such as the county, state, or national level. The available data for Iosco County provides a broader view of employment trends in the region. In 2024, the county's civilian labor force consisted of 10,013 individuals, with 9,259 employed and 754 unemployed, resulting in an unemployment rate of 7.5%. This rate has shown some fluctuation over the past few years, with a peak in 2020 at 10.9% due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to widespread economic disruptions. Since then, the unemployment rate has gradually decreased, except in 2024, indicating a recovery in the local labor market. In 2022, the unemployment rate was 6.3%, and in 2021, it was 7.0%. Prior to the pandemic, the unemployment rate hovered around 6.0% in both 2019 and 2018.

2-8 Employment Information Iosco County				
Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employment	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
2024	10,013	9,259	754	7.5%
2023	10,485	9,860	625	6.0%
2022	10,261	9,619	642	6.3%
2021	9,836	9,147	689	7.0%
2020	10,153	9,048	1,105	10.9%
2019	10,222	9,606	616	6.0%
2018	10,088	9,446	642	6.4%



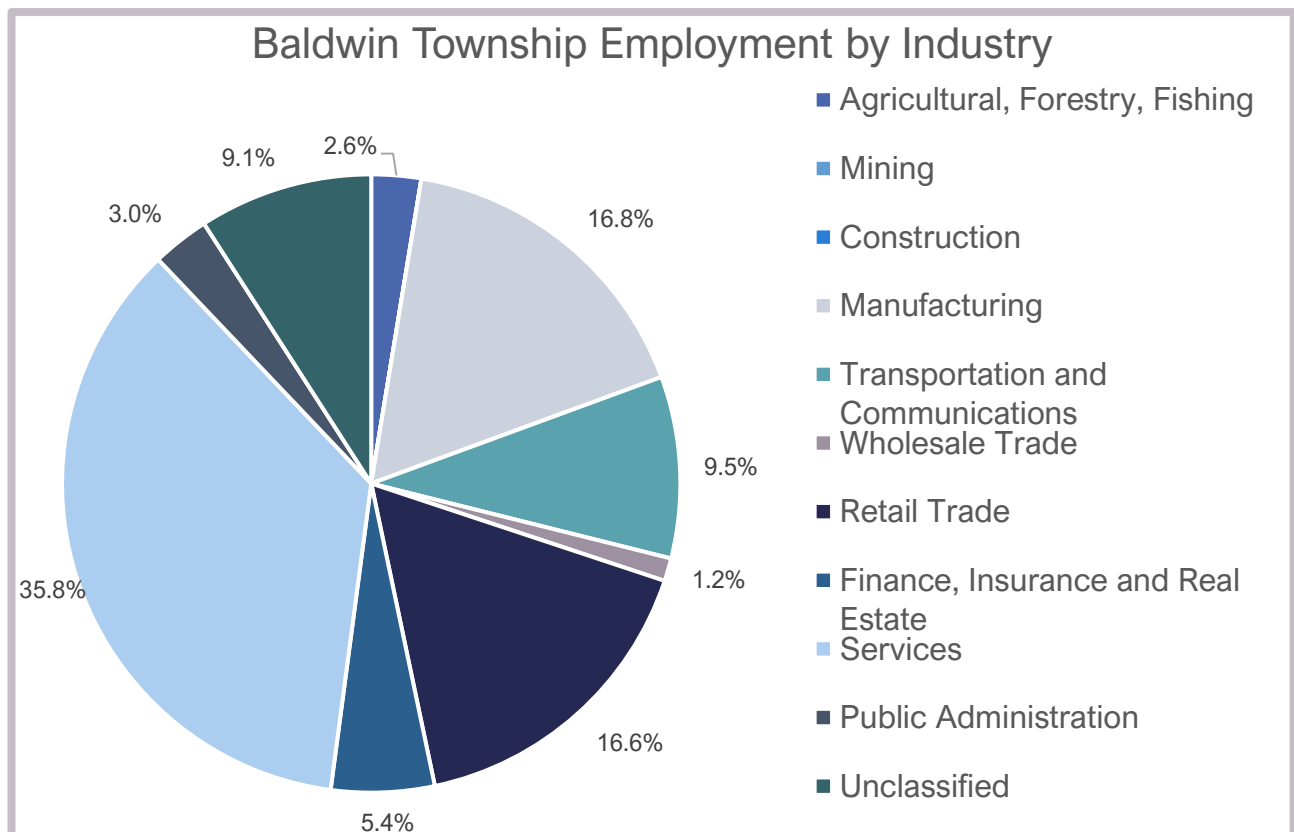
While Baldwin Township’s specific employment data is not directly available, this broader county data provides insight into the employment trends and economic health of the region. It also suggests that Baldwin Township likely follows similar patterns seen in Iosco County, with fluctuations in the unemployment rate reflecting broader economic conditions.

In Baldwin Township, the employment landscape is diverse, with notable representation in several sectors. The largest category is Services, which accounts for 35.8% of employment in the Township, reflecting a strong service-based economy. This is followed by Manufacturing, which employs 16.8% of the workforce, indicating that this is a significant sector in the Township. Retail also plays an important role, with 16.6% of the employed population working in this field. Transportation and Communications represent 9.5% of employment in Baldwin Township, showing a notable presence of jobs in these sectors.

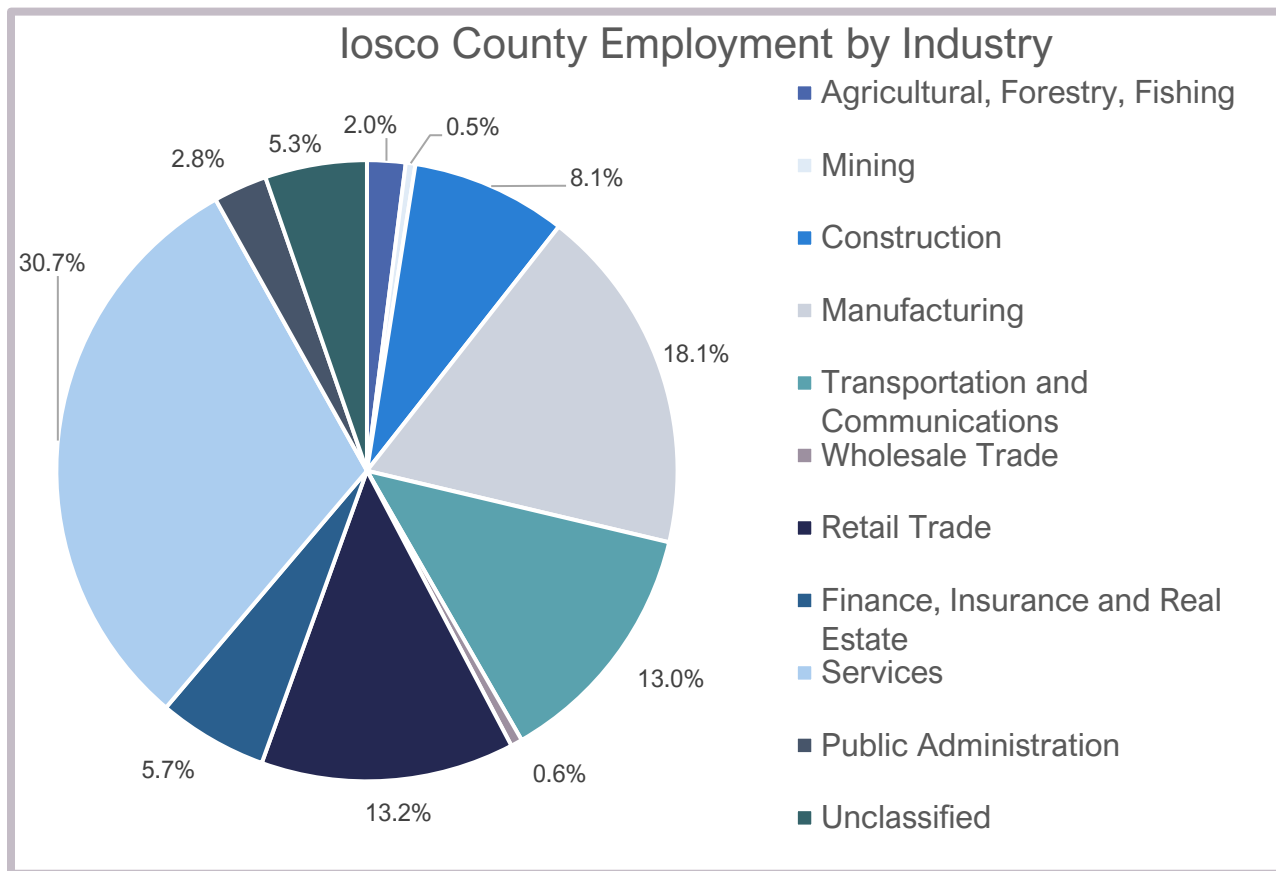
Other employment categories in Baldwin Township include Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate (5.4%) and Public Administration (3.0%). There is also a portion of the workforce in Agriculture,

2-9 Major Employment Type				
Category	Baldwin Township		Iosco County	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing	13	2.6%	127	2.0%
Mining	0	0.0%	29	0.5%
Construction	0	0.0%	507	8.1%
Manufacturing	83	16.8%	1,136	18.1%
Transportation and Communications	47	9.5%	814	13.0%
Wholesale Trade	6	1.2%	38	0.6%
Retail Trade	82	16.6%	827	13.2%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	27	5.4%	354	5.7%
Services	177	35.8%	1,923	30.7%
Public Administration	15	3.0%	175	2.8%
Unclassified	45	9.1%	334	5.3%

Forestry, and Fishing, although it is relatively small, with only 2.6% of workers in this category. Wholesale Trade (1.2%) has a smaller representation in Baldwin Township compared to the county at large, and Construction did not report any at all, though this may be due to underreporting.



In comparison, Iosco County's employment data shows that Services (30.7%) and Manufacturing (18.1%) are also prominent in the county's economy. Retail Trade and Transportation and Communications are both significant sectors in the county, accounting for 13.2% and 13.0% of employment, respectively. Construction (8.1%) and Unclassified sectors (5.3%) also represent notable employment segments in the county.



Overall, while Baldwin Township follows similar trends to Iosco County, it has a higher concentration of workers in Retail Trade and Services relative to the county, indicating a more service-oriented economy. Conversely, manufacturing and construction play a larger role in Iosco County's overall employment.

State Equalized Value (SEV)

The State Equalized Value (SEV) data for Baldwin Township over the past several years demonstrates a steady increase in property values, particularly in the residential sector, reflecting the Township's growth and development.

Table 2-10 Baldwin Township SEV

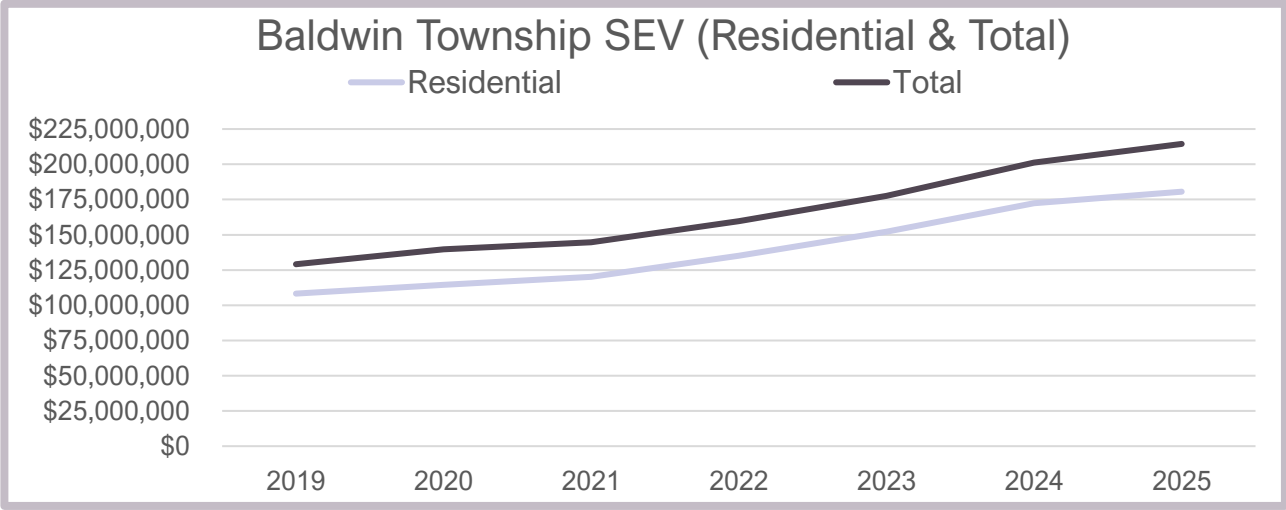
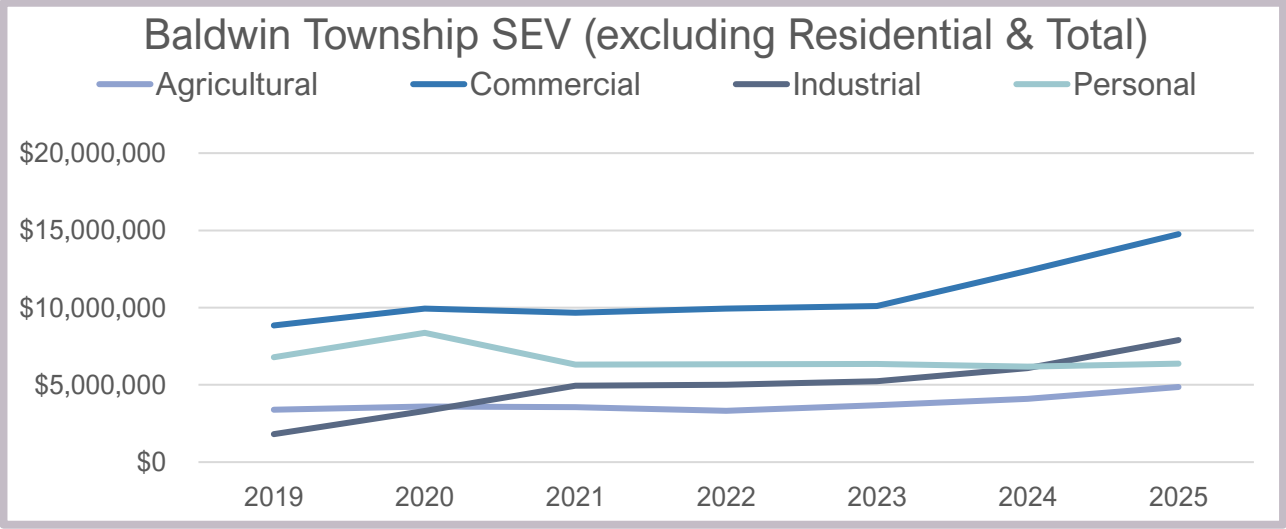
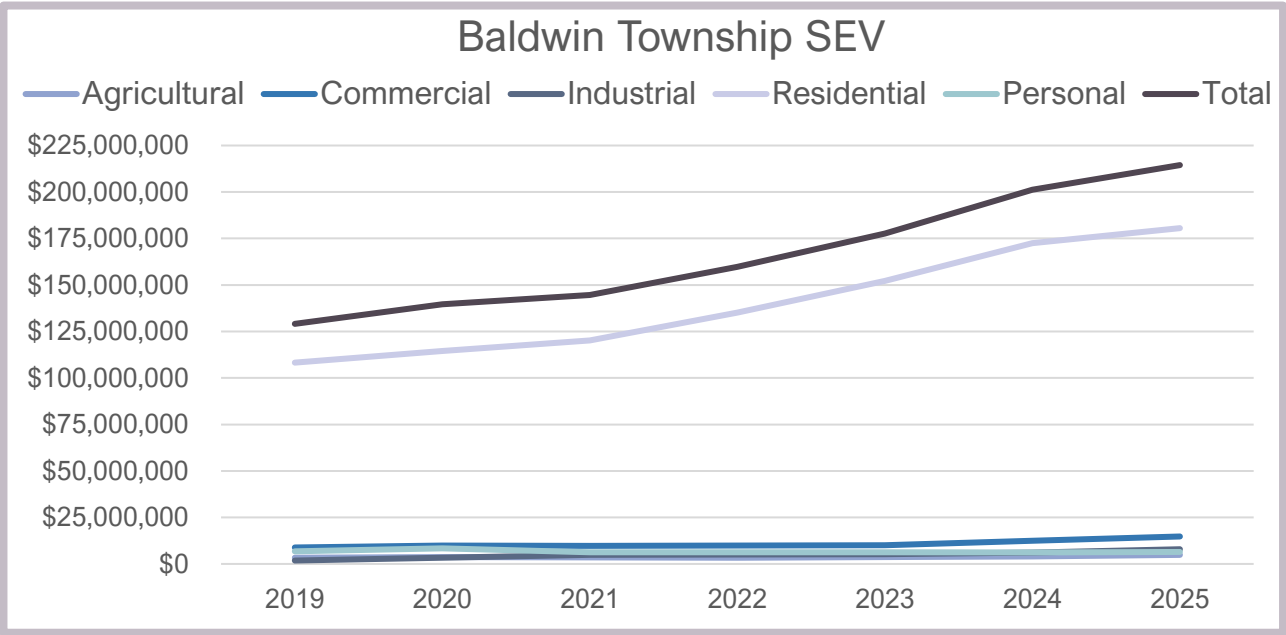
	Agricultural	Commercial	Industrial	Residential	Personal	Total
2019	\$3,394,800	\$8,846,200	\$1,812,000	\$108,250,900	\$6,782,200	\$129,086,100
2020	\$3,597,800	\$9,941,000	\$3,308,000	\$114,468,400	\$8,369,400	\$139,684,600
2021	\$3,558,900	\$9,673,900	\$4,946,900	\$120,131,400	\$6,314,100	\$144,625,200
2022	\$3,321,600	\$9,941,500	\$4,998,100	\$135,173,100	\$6,323,600	\$159,757,900
2023	\$3,690,500	\$10,108,800	\$5,228,200	\$152,253,700	\$6,345,800	\$177,627,000
2024	\$4,088,800	\$12,387,500	\$6,089,700	\$172,398,300	\$6,182,300	\$201,146,600
2025	\$4,863,100	\$14,755,100	\$7,899,600	\$180,562,000	\$6,376,600	\$214,456,400

From 2019 to 2025, the total SEV in Baldwin Township has grown from \$129,086,100 to \$214,456,400, an increase of approximately 66%. The residential sector has seen the most significant growth, rising from \$108,250,900 in 2019 to \$180,562,000 in 2025. This surge in residential value indicates an increase in housing demand and possibly new construction or higher property values.

The commercial sector has also experienced growth, increasing from \$8,846,200 in 2019 to \$14,755,100 in 2025, showing an ongoing expansion of local businesses and commercial properties. Similarly, the industrial sector has seen a rise, from \$1,812,000 in 2019 to \$7,899,600 in 2025, highlighting a growing industrial base in the Township.

Agricultural properties have experienced a moderate increase, from \$3,394,800 in 2019 to \$4,863,100 in 2025, which reflects stable agricultural activity in the area. The personal property sector has remained relatively stable, with small fluctuations, ending at \$6,376,600 in 2025.

Overall, Baldwin Township has seen substantial growth in total SEV, driven mainly by increases in residential, commercial, and industrial values. This growth could signal positive economic trends, such as a rising population, increased investment, and expanding infrastructure within the Township.



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Community Services

Chapter 3

Transportation

Roads and Highways

Vehicular transportation in and around Baldwin Township is facilitated by a network of major roads and highways. The Township contains approximately 57 miles of public roadways, which include 6.6 miles of State Highway, 18.8 miles of County primary roads, and 31.7 miles of local roads. US-23 is a part of the National Highway System and a primary north-south corridor on the eastern edge of the Township. It is also part of the Sunrise Coast Pure Michigan Byway, a 200-mile scenic, cultural, and recreational byway stretching from Standish to Mackinaw City. Complementing this north-south corridor is M-55, a major east-west corridor that runs from Lake Huron in Tawas City to Lake Michigan near Manistee. These two major highways offer crucial connectivity linking Baldwin Township to the larger urban areas of Michigan. Primary county roads include Wilber Road, a north-south corridor in the west half of the Township, and Monument Road, which runs northwest from the Tawas area and connects to the River Road National Scenic Byway.

Passenger Transportation

Iosco Transit Corporation services all citizens of Iosco County, providing on-demand response service in Oscoda and Tawas, as well as time-share flexible services to other areas of the county. Service hours are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Indian Trails provides statewide public transportation services. The bus system has a stop at the Bay Inn in Tawas City. The bus route from this location follows the US-23 corridor.

Taxi services are provided by North Woods Taxi, a private service operating out of Hale. They provide demand response service to all of Iosco County and will transport passengers to destinations outside of the county.

Rail Service

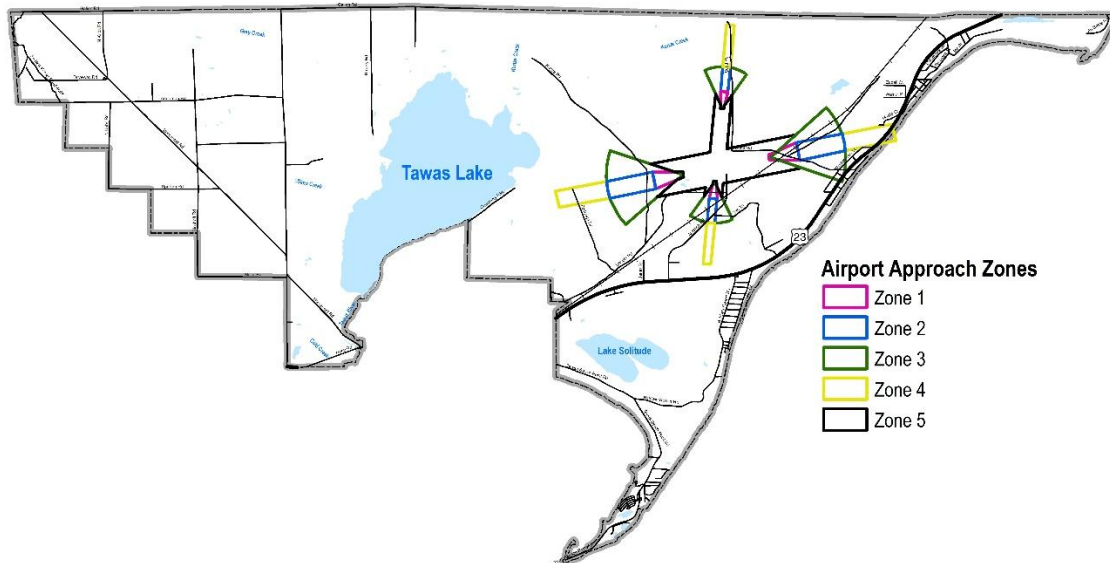
Freight rail service is provided by the Lake State Railroad Company. The railroad mostly parallels the US-23 corridor through Baldwin Township. The Lake State Rail service is used to deliver raw materials and products to and from the heavy industrial users throughout northern Michigan. Lake State Railway also services a number of customers via transloading (truck-to-rail and rail-to-truck reloading).

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

Air Transportation

The Iosco County Airport, owned and operated by Iosco County, is located in Baldwin Township approximately three miles west of East Tawas, adjacent to the Tawas Area Business and Industrial

Park. The airport features a 4,802-foot paved runway that serves general aviation, business aviation, and limited air freight operations. Airport Approach Zones, shown below, establish areas where development is restricted to protect public safety and maintain the safe operation of the airport.



Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport, located northwest of Oscoda, boasts a significantly longer runway, measuring 11,800 x 200 ft, a remnant of its past as a former Air Force base. This extensive runway allows Oscoda-Wurtsmith to accommodate much larger aircraft and offer specialized services, with Phoenix Aviation Services and Kalita Air offering aircraft and jet maintenance.

For residents of Baldwin Township requiring commercial air travel, access is available through regional airports located outside of Iosco County. These include Alpena County Regional Airport (APN) to the north, MBS International Airport (MBS) in the Saginaw area, and Bishop International Airport (FNT) in Flint to the south. These airports offer scheduled passenger flights to various destinations in Michigan and surrounding states.

Sidewalk – Trail Network

Baldwin Township currently does not have a formal sidewalk network. The primary non-motorized facility within the Township is the regional bike path along US-23, which extends south along Tawas Beach Road to the State Park and Tawas Point Lighthouse. This corridor provides opportunities for walking and bicycling within the area.

As roadway improvements and new development occur, the Township should encourage the application of Complete Streets principles where practical. Complete Streets are designed to safely accommodate all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit users, emergency responders, and individuals of all ages and abilities. Opportunities to improve non-motorized connectivity, safety, and accessibility should be considered in coordination with Iosco County, MDOT, and other transportation partners.



US-23 Sunrise Coast Pure Michigan Byway

US-23 along the eastern edge of Baldwin Township is part of the Sunrise Coast Pure Michigan Byway, a designated scenic route extending approximately 200 miles along Michigan's Lake Huron shoreline from Standish to Mackinaw City. The byway recognizes the region's exceptional scenic beauty, maritime heritage, outdoor recreation, and historic communities while promoting tourism and economic development throughout Northeast Michigan.

Within Baldwin Township, the byway provides access to several of the area's premier recreational destinations. The US-23 shared-use pathway offers opportunities for walking and bicycling while connecting residents and visitors to Tawas Point State Park, the historic Tawas Point Lighthouse, public beaches, and nearby communities. These facilities, together with Lake Huron access, birding opportunities, camping, fishing, paddling, and scenic shoreline views, create a recreation corridor that attracts visitors throughout the year and contributes significantly to the Township's tourism economy. Continued maintenance and enhancement of these facilities will help preserve the quality of the visitor experience while improving recreation opportunities for residents.

Goal

Support the US-23 Sunrise Coast Pure Michigan Byway as a regional recreation and tourism corridor that enhances community identity, outdoor recreation, and economic vitality.

Implementation Strategies

- Coordinate with MDOT, Iosco County, neighboring communities, and regional tourism organizations to support improvements along the byway.
- Support continued maintenance and expansion of the US-23 shared-use pathway and connections to parks, beaches, and surrounding communities.
- Encourage improvements to public access sites, including beaches, parking areas, trailheads, picnic facilities, restrooms, and directional signage where appropriate.
- Support maintenance and preservation efforts at Tawas Point State Park and the historic Tawas Point Lighthouse in coordination with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and other partners.
- Encourage additional interpretive signage highlighting the area's maritime history, natural resources, wildlife, and recreational opportunities.
- Promote coordinated wayfinding that directs visitors to local parks, public access sites, trails, businesses, and community amenities.
- Encourage public and private investments that enhance the visitor experience while preserving the scenic and natural character of the Sunrise Coast Pure Michigan Byway.

Utilities

Utility services in the Township are provided by a mix of regional providers. DTE Energy supplies natural gas service, while Consumers Energy provides electrical service. Landline telephone service is available in portions of the Township through AT&T, Spectrum, and Frontier Communications. Cellular service is available from several major carriers, providing broad wireless coverage. Internet service is primarily available through Spectrum.

Public water service is provided by the Huron Shores Regional Utility Authority, which serves Baldwin Township as well as Tawas City, East Tawas, Oscoda Township, and Au Sable Township. The system is supported by an intake and water treatment plant located on Lake Huron within Baldwin Township, providing a clean, reliable, and virtually unlimited water supply. The facility is capable of treating more than 2.6 million gallons of water per day. Future plans include extending water service north to Greenbush Township and south to Alabaster Township.

Township Government

Township Board

Baldwin Township provides general services to the citizens in their community, such as garbage pickup, assessing, zoning and planning, and elections. These services are funded through local property taxes and county millage. Municipal water and sewer are available on the east side of the Township through an assessment district. Library services are offered to the Township through the Iosco-Arenac District Library.

Township Staff

Baldwin Township employs its own zoning administrator. Building codes are enforced by the Iosco County Building Department.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission consists of five members and meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 6 pm.

Parks and Recreation Committee

The Parks and Recreation Committee consists of four members and is responsible for keeping the Baldwin Township Recreation Plan up to date.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Baldwin Township Zoning Board of Appeals has three members.

DDA

Tourism plays a vital role in Baldwin Township's economy, with visitors drawn to the natural beauty and recreational opportunities of the area. The Township's Industrial Park, though not officially certified, is included in a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) district. The DDA meets on the second Friday of the month at 8 am. The DDA works to support economic growth by assisting with improvement projects that enhance commercial and industrial activity within the Township.

Police, Fire, EMS

Police protection for the Township is provided by the Iosco County Sheriff's Department and the Michigan State Police. Fire emergencies in Baldwin Township are handled by the East Tawas Fire Department. The Iosco County EMS is responsible for medical emergencies within the Township. Enhanced 911 Authority provides services utilizing state-of-the-art systems to receive and dispatch emergency information.

Several Hospitals are in the vicinity of Baldwin Township. MyMichigan Medical Center in Tawas is within 10-20 minutes from anywhere in the Township. MyMichigan Medical Center in Tawas is one of the largest employers in the county. MyMichigan Medical Center in Standish and MyMichigan Medical Center in West Branch are both about an hour away. McLaren Bay Region, located in Bay City, is about an hour and a half to the south, and the MyMichigan Medical Center in Alpena is about an hour and a half to the north. All of these hospitals offer full medical services. There is a VA clinic located at the former Wurtsmith Air Force Base.

Schools

Primary and secondary education is provided by the Tawas Area Schools. Tawas Area Schools have received excellent reviews from the state and provide quality education. The athletics, band, and other extracurricular activities offered provide additional distinction. Alternative education is also provided through the Iosco RESA at two locations, one in Tawas City and another in Oscoda. IRESA also has a trades center for all area students.

There are private schools available to area residents: Holy Family Catholic School, Emanuel Lutheran School, and the Alternative Education Academy of Iosco County.

Higher education is available locally to Township residents through the Alpena Community College – Oscoda Campus, Baker College in West Branch, Kirtland Community College in Roscommon, Delta College in Bay City, Saginaw Valley State University in Saginaw, or by numerous other state and private colleges and universities located throughout the state.

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Natural Resources

Chapter 4

Climate & Weather Patterns

Baldwin Township's climate is strongly influenced by its proximity to Lake Huron, which moderates temperatures throughout the year. The warmest month is typically July, with an average temperature of 69°F, while February is the coldest, averaging 18°F.

Precipitation levels are moderate, with an average of 28 inches of rainfall annually and 41.3 inches of snowfall. Prevailing winds generally come from the northwest but shift to the southeast in early summer. The mean annual wind speed is 7 mph, with the strongest winds occurring in April and the calmest conditions in August.

Geography & Natural Features

Baldwin Township is situated within five primary watersheds, all of which ultimately drain into Lake Huron. The landscape gently slopes from northwest to southeast, directing water flow toward the lake. This natural drainage system plays a crucial role in maintaining local ecosystems and supporting the area's diverse wildlife.

Land Cover

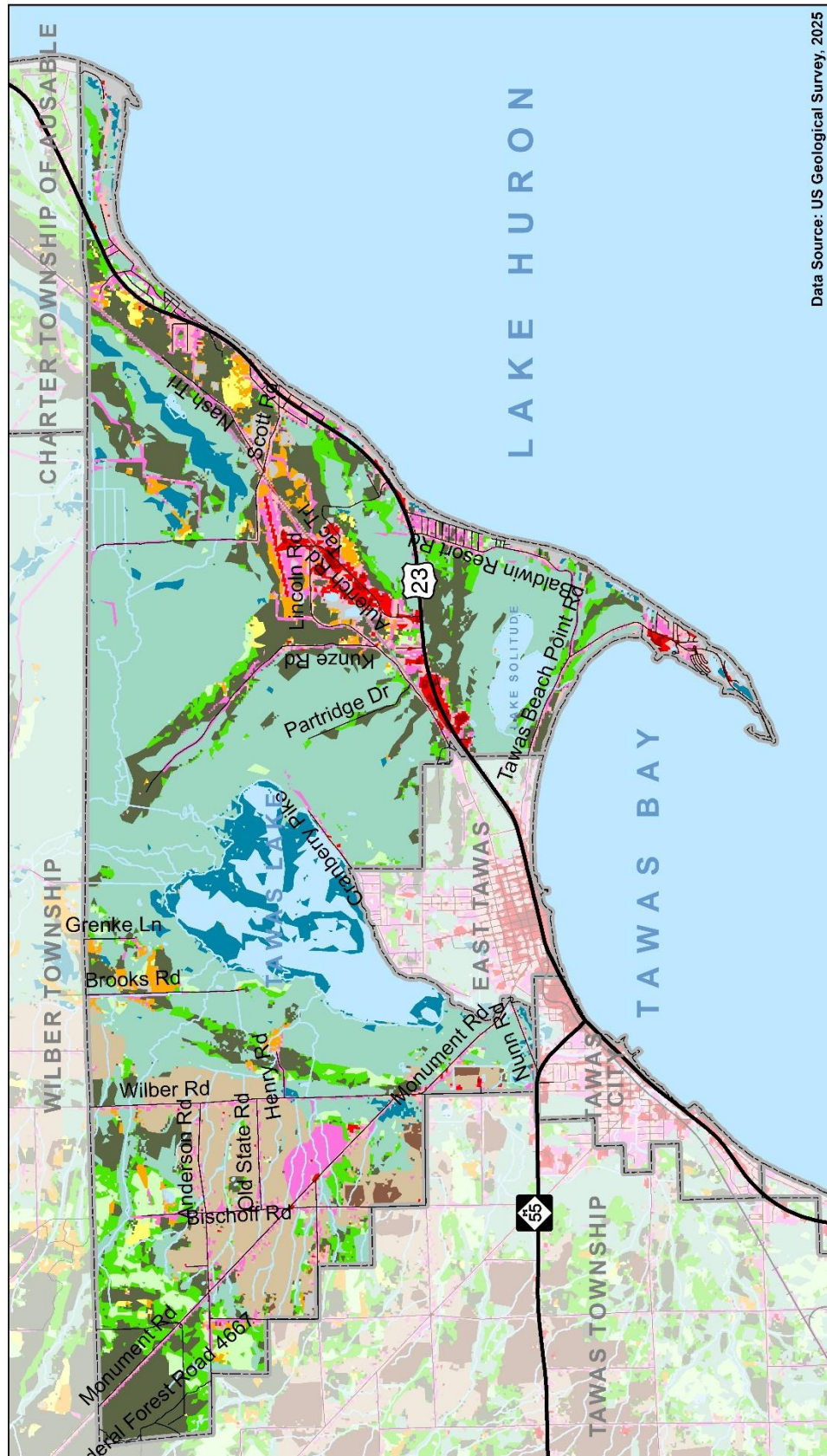
The Land Cover Map offers a detailed view of current land use and natural features across Baldwin Township. Created by NEMCOG using data from the 2025 USGS National Land Cover Database, the map illustrates a range of land cover types and provides valuable insight into how the land is both developed and preserved. Developed areas are classified by intensity, low, medium, and high, and are represented in shades of pink, red, and dark red, respectively.

Forest Cover

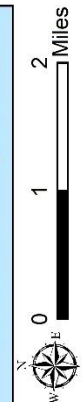
- **Evergreen Forests:** Dominated by coniferous trees such as pines, spruces, and firs, evergreen forests retain their foliage year-round. These forests provide year-round wildlife habitat, help regulate the water cycle, and play an important role in carbon sequestration.
- **Deciduous Forests:** Comprised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

Other Natural Land Cover Types

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



Data Source: US Geological Survey, 2025



Land Cover

Topography

Elevations in Baldwin Township range from 788 feet in the northwest corner to Lake Huron's high-water mark of 580 feet. This 208-foot difference gradually slopes over about five miles toward the Lake Huron shoreline, creating a relatively flat landscape with most of the elevation change occurring in the northwestern third of the Township. The Township is home to a network of rivers, streams, creeks, and tributaries, many of which offer excellent fishing. These watersheds flow southeast, eventually converging at Tawas Lake in the central part of the Township. Water from the lake drains into the Tawas River, which winds southwest for about five miles before emptying into Lake Huron south of Tawas City. Cold Creek, originating mainly in neighboring Tawas Township, crosses into the southwest corner of Baldwin Township, where it joins the Tawas River.

Geology

The processes that give rise to the land within the Township provided the elevations, shaped the contours, deposited the underground formations of various minerals, including deep oil and gas deposits, and much shallower limestone and gypsum, carved the river valleys, and laid down the parent materials for the soils.

Bedrock Geology

The bedrock geology of Baldwin Township is that of the Michigan Basin: sedimentary rock of limestone, dolomite, shale, and sandstone laid down in ancient seas of the Paleozoic age up to 500 million years ago. Above these sedimentary rock formations is a layer of glacial drift material in varying thicknesses deposited during the Pleistocene period. While one of the most important minerals found in the area is gypsum, mined in the county since around 1886, the deposits where extraction has taken place are outside of the boundaries of Baldwin Township. However, the nearby mining activities have been crucial to the prosperity of Baldwin Township and the surrounding communities.

Surface Geology

The surface geology of Baldwin Township is glacial in origin. As the last glacier receded, the melting ice flowed toward what is now Saginaw Bay. As the meltwaters ran downhill, valleys were cut, forming the present streams and their tributaries. The variability of the streams and tributaries in the lengths and direction of flow can contribute to the randomly located and irregularly piled glacial deposits. The deposited materials formed the delta area in the northwestern and central portions of the Township, which contains the fertile soils on which limited agriculture takes place. The lake plain in the central and southern portions of the Township, as well as the beach ridges, were formed as the Lake Huron waters receded.

Soil Overview

Baldwin Township's topography and soils were shaped over 10,000 years ago by glaciers, leaving behind moraines, deltas, and lake plains that dominate the western side of the Township. As the glaciers receded, they created low-lying areas with poorly drained soils, primarily in the delta regions, which have been used for agriculture, recreation, and residential development.

Muck soils surround Tawas Lake, while the sandy and sandy loam soils to the west are found in cleared agricultural areas. The eastern portion of the Township consists of beach ridges formed by wave action from Lake Huron as its waters receded. These ridge formations, along with dunes, create a diverse landscape. The predominant soil types in the Township are formed on wave-built terraces, beach ridges, and dunes, with seven general soil associations identified on the Soils Map.

The Deer Park-Meehan-Wurtsmith association is the most common in the eastern Township, extending from the northeastern boundary to Lake Huron's shoreline. These sandy soils are nearly level to rolling, typically found on wave-built terraces, beach ridges, and dunes, with slopes ranging from 0 to 18%. This area is mostly used for woodlands and building site development.

The Deford-Tawas-Lupton association, found in the central Township surrounding Tawas Lake, consists of poorly drained, nearly level soils with muck on the surface and sand beneath. These soils are primarily used for forest land, wildlife habitat, and some residential development on higher ground. Limited recreational use also occurs in the Huron National Forest.

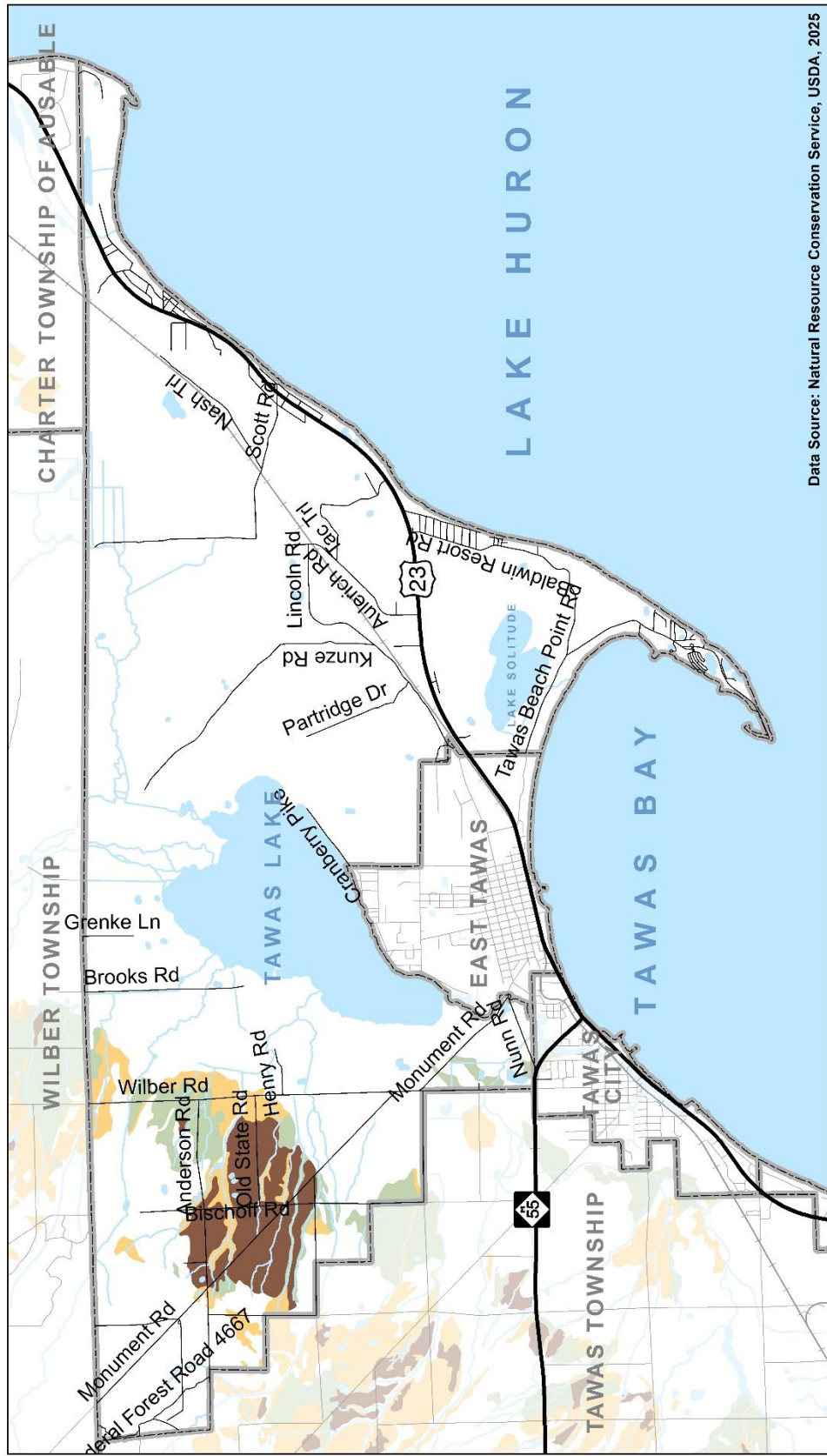
The Au Gres-Croswell-Rubicon association, located in the west-central Township, features rolling sandy soils found on outwash plains and deltas, with slopes ranging from 0 to 18%. This area is primarily used for woodlands, residential areas, and pasturelands.

The Kawakawlin-Ailendale-Nester association, found in the west-central portion, consists of loamy and sandy soils on till plains and moraines with slopes from 0 to 12%. These soils are typically used for woodlands, wildlife habitat, and cropland.

In the far northwestern part of the Township, the Grayling association features nearly level to rolling sandy soils, found on outwash plains and deltas. This area is used for timber production, wildlife habitat, and limited recreational activities.

The Finch-Deford-Proper association in the northeastern Township consists of mucky and sandy soils on wave-built terraces with slopes from 0 to 6%. These soils are typically used for woodlands and wildlife habitat, with some residential development on higher ground.

The Manary-Whitemore-largo association in the western central part of the Township is nearly level to gently rolling, with sandy and loamy soils found on lake plains. These soils are used primarily for cropland, pasture, and woodlands.



Agricultural Soils

Several soil types in Baldwin Township are designated as prime farmland, particularly in Sections 11 and 12 in the western portion. Though the areas are small, they are considered prime farmland due to artificial drainage, which supports agricultural productivity. However, due to the limited size and need for continued drainage, prime farmland does not represent a significant resource in the Township.

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

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

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

Prime Farmland if Drained: This designation applies to soils that meet all the criteria for prime farmland except for excessive wetness. These soils could be considered prime if properly drained through artificial means, such as tile drainage or ditching. These soils:

- Common in areas with hydric or seasonally saturated soils
- May require permits or environmental review if wetlands are involved

Farmland of Local Importance: This includes soils that are not classified as prime farmland or prime if drained, but are still considered valuable for agriculture at the local or regional level. May be moderately productive under certain crops or rotations. These soils:

- Often support pasture, hayfields, or limited row crops
- Are typically used for small-scale or diversified farming operations

Local conservation districts or planning commissions may define these areas based on historical land use, productivity, or economic importance to the community.

Hydric Soils & Steep Slopes

Some of Baldwin Township's soil types, especially in low-lying areas, pose challenges for constructing conventional septic systems. In areas with unstable soils and high-water tables, properly engineered systems are needed to ensure effective sanitation. While hills and steeply rolling terrain provide opportunities for spectacular views of the landscape, steeply sloped sites have identified building constraints and therefore are more difficult and costly to develop and maintain. Special design standards such as erosion control measures, limiting the size of disturbed areas, retaining natural vegetation, re-vegetation, slope stabilization, and on-site retention of water run-off from impervious surfaces would all serve to minimize resource impacts.

The Slopes and Hydric Soils Maps identify areas within Baldwin Township where natural conditions may limit or constrain development due to steep terrain or wet soil characteristics. Slope refers to the steepness or incline of the land, expressed as a percentage. Steeper slopes can increase construction costs, limit accessibility, and increase the risk of erosion or runoff-related issues. The Township's slopes are categorized as follows:

- Moderately Sloping (9–15%): Land with noticeable inclines that may require basic grading or erosion control during development.
- Strongly Sloping (15–30%): Areas with steep terrain that often pose significant challenges for construction, particularly for roads, buildings, and septic systems.
- Steeply Sloping (30–45%): Very steep landforms that typically restrict development due to high erosion potential, instability, and engineering difficulty.

Hydric soils are defined as soils that are saturated, flooded, or ponded long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic (low oxygen) conditions. These soils are typically associated with wetlands and play a critical role in supporting aquatic and semi-aquatic ecosystems. They may include muck or peat soils, such as:

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

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

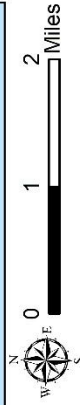
High Risk Erosion Areas are those shore lands of the Great Lakes and connecting waters where recession of the zone of active erosion has been occurring at a long-term average rate of 1 foot or more per year. The erosion is caused by several factors, including wave and wind action, surface water runoff, groundwater seepage, and frost. High-risk erosion area regulations, under provisions in Part 323, Shorelands Protection and Management of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act 451 of 1994, as amended, establish setback distances to protect new structures from erosion for a period of 30 to 60 years, depending on the size, number of living units, and type of construction. Local units of government may adopt a zoning ordinance for high-risk erosion areas which, if approved by the MDEQ, replaces the need for a state high-risk erosion permit. These high-risk areas are periodically reviewed by the MDEQ to assess increased or decreased erosion.



Hydric Soils & Steep Slopes

- Extreme Slopes (>45%)
- Steeply Sloping (30 - 45%)
- Strongly Sloping (15 - 30%)
- Hydric Slopes

Data Source: Natural Resource Conservation Service, USDA, 2025



Hydrology

Streams, creeks, and tributaries flowing into Baldwin Township from the north and northwest supply fresh water that helps recharge the underground aquifer. Notable streams originating or heavily fed within the Township include the Tawas River, Sims Creek, Cold Creek, Silver Creek, Kunze Creek, Fountain Creek, Gray Creek, and Loud Creek. The water table in the southern part of the Township is influenced by the rise and fall of Lake Huron, with Tawas Bay offering relatively clean water and opportunities for various water-based activities. The Township, along with other local municipalities, uses the Huron Shores Regional Utility Authority – Water Treatment to supply residents with water from Lake Huron. Outside of the Authority's boundaries, individual wells provide water to residents and businesses.

Tawas Lake, located in the central part of the Township, and Lake Solitude in the southeast, also contribute to the area's water resources. While Lake Solitude is primarily private, Tawas Lake is accessible to the public through the Tawas River and designated access points on the lake.

Wetlands are another important natural water source in the Township. The National Wetland Inventory Maps, created by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service using topographic data and aerial photographs, offer a general indication of wetland locations based on soils, topography, and other data. These maps serve as a planning tool for development, open space designations, and zoning, though they may not always accurately reflect the presence or absence of wetlands. Wetland protection is governed by Part 303, Wetlands Protection, of Michigan's Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (1994). The boundaries of regulated wetlands must be verified through on-site evaluations conducted by the MDEQ or a qualified consultant.

The Township contains a range of wetlands, from small, isolated pockets to expansive areas like Tuttle Marsh, a 5,000-acre wildlife preserve. Wetlands play important roles such as sediment and pollution control, surface water filtration, stormwater storage, flood control, and providing wildlife habitat. Vegetation in these wetlands varies from cattails and sedges to scrub shrubs and forests with species like cedar, silver maple, cottonwood, and a few remaining green ash. Most wetlands are concentrated in the northern and central areas of the Township, as well as along the Lake Huron shoreline.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) map indicates the areas of potential flooding.



Water & Wetlands

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Riverine



Special Flood Hazard Areas

Flood hazard areas identify locations that have a probability of flooding during major storm events. The 1% annual chance flood, commonly referred to as the 100-year flood, has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. Areas within this boundary are considered Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) and are subject to regulation due to flood risk.

As shown on the map, flood risk is categorized as follows:

Regulatory Floodway

The channel of a river or stream and the adjacent land area that must remain free of development to safely convey floodwaters during the 1% annual chance flood without increasing flood heights. These areas are subject to the most restrictive regulations.

1% Annual Chance of Flooding

Areas that have a 1% chance of flooding each year. Development within these areas is regulated and typically requires elevation or floodproofing measures based on the Base Flood Elevation (BFE).

0.2% Annual Chance of Flooding

Areas that have a lower risk of flooding (commonly referred to as the 500-year floodplain) have a 0.2% chance of occurring in any given year. While less restrictive, these areas still present a potential flood risk and should be considered in planning and development decisions.

These mapped flood zones are important for guiding land use decisions, protecting property, and minimizing risks to public safety.

Flora and Fauna

Baldwin Township offers a diverse range of natural habitats, including dry northern forests, dry-mesic northern forests, and pine-hardwood communities, typically found on glacial lake plains and inland dune ridges. The area also features remnants of Great Lakes Marsh, forested uplands, scrub shrub lands, wetlands, open agricultural fields (some in active production, others left fallow), woodlots, old ridge and swale dune complexes, and the Great Lakes shoreline. The Township is home to parts of the vast Huron National Forest and Tawas Point State Park, both of which significantly contribute to the local economy and community life.

These varied habitats support abundant wildlife, providing ample recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors. Popular activities include large and small game hunting for species like white-tailed deer, rabbits, squirrels, ruffed grouse, wild turkey, woodcock, and waterfowl. Fishing enthusiasts can enjoy year-round opportunities in the Tawas River, Lake Huron, and Tawas Lake, with docks and private boat launches in downtown East Tawas offering easy access to

Tawas Bay. Bird watching has also become a favored pastime, with the Tawas Point area serving as an important flyway for many bird species, including neotropical migrants, waterfowl, and birds of prey, during both spring and fall migrations.

Baldwin Township is rich in vegetation, with tall white and red pines lining the roadsides, and the vivid colors of fall hardwood leaves adding beauty to the landscape before winter sets in. The open fields, roadways, and forests are filled with vibrant wildflowers, grasses, and other flora throughout the spring, summer, and fall, making it a haven for botanists and nature lovers alike.

The Township's diverse ecosystem includes numerous species of wildflowers, grasses, ferns, trees, and shrubs, as well as a wide range of wildlife, such as mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, insects, and aquatic species. While many of these species are commonly observed, some are more elusive due to their rarity, preference for isolation, or need for undisturbed habitats.



"Barn on Monument Road" by Tom Emery

Housing

Chapter 5

Overview

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

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

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

Thriving communities provide a wide spectrum of housing options to support all residents. The availability of “attainable” housing helps accommodate everyone from young adults who are just beginning to live on their own, to older residents looking to downsize while staying in the community. While there is no universal definition of “attainable housing,” the term was recently defined by the Urban Land Institute as “non-subsidized, for sale housing that is affordable for households with incomes between 80 and 120 percent of the Area Median Income.”

Household Characteristics

Baldwin Township has a total of 775 households, with an average household size of 2.39 people, indicating a mix of both smaller and larger family units. Among these households, 36.8% consist of individuals living alone, and within this group, 15.1% are seniors aged 65 and older who live independently. This suggests that while a significant portion of the population experiences solitary living, there remains a notable presence of elderly individuals who may require community support and services tailored to their needs.

Table 5-1

Municipality	Total Households	Average Size	Living Alone	Living alone over 65	With 1 or + under 18	With 1 or + over 65
Baldwin Township	775	2.39	36.8%	15.1%	24.4%	41.4%
Iosco County	11,713	2.14	38.5%	21.3%	17.9%	47.4%
State of Michigan	4,076,369	2.42	30.7%	13.2%	27.1%	32.9%

Families with at least one member under the age of 18 account for 24.4% of households, highlighting a balanced presence of younger families and children within the community. Additionally, 41.4% of households include at least one individual aged 65 or older, emphasizing the Township's aging demographic and the potential need for healthcare, senior-friendly housing, and other resources for older residents.

When compared to Iosco County as a whole, Baldwin Township has a lower percentage of individuals living alone and seniors living alone, which may indicate a stronger presence of multi-person households, possibly consisting of extended families or couples. Furthermore, Baldwin Township surpasses the county in the proportion of households with children, suggesting that it may be a more family-oriented area with a larger share of young families compared to the broader county.

In contrast to the state of Michigan, Baldwin Township has a slightly larger average household size, which could imply a tendency toward larger families or multi-generational living arrangements. Additionally, the Township has a higher percentage of households with older adults, reflecting a demographic shift toward an aging population, which is an important factor in community planning and services. Meanwhile, the proportion of households with children in Baldwin Township closely aligns with the statewide average, suggesting that the presence of younger residents is consistent with broader trends in Michigan. These household characteristics provide insight into the community's composition and can help inform decisions regarding housing, infrastructure, and social services to best meet the needs of residents.

Household Income

Baldwin Township demonstrates a relatively strong economic standing within Iosco County, with a median family income of \$84,792 and a median household income of \$69,792. These income levels are significantly higher than those of Iosco County as a whole, where the median family income is \$66,171, and the median household income is \$50,066. This suggests that Baldwin Township residents, on average, experience greater financial stability and earning potential compared to other areas in the county. The higher income levels may indicate a stronger local job market, higher educational attainment, or a greater proportion of dual-income households.

Table 5-2		
Municipality	Median Family Income	Median Household Income
Baldwin Township	\$84,792	\$69,792
Iosco County	\$66,171	\$50,066
State of Michigan	\$93,357	\$72,875

When compared to the state of Michigan, Baldwin Township's median household and family incomes fall slightly below the state averages of \$72,875 and \$93,357, respectively. While the Township outperforms the county, its earnings still do not reach the overall state median, suggesting that wealth distribution in Michigan varies widely, with some regions earning significantly more. The slightly lower income levels compared to the state may be influenced by factors such as local industry, employment opportunities, or cost of living. However, Baldwin Township's income figures indicate a relatively stable and prosperous community within Iosco County, particularly when contrasted with the broader countywide economic landscape.

Current Housing Inventory

Within Baldwin Township, there are a total of 1,445 housing units, among which 775 are currently occupied. Of these occupied units, 673 are owner-occupied, while 102 are rented. The average household size in the Township is 2.39 people, which is higher than in Iosco County. Reflecting the local housing market, the median home value for these occupied units stands at \$181,000, indicating the general pricing trend within the Township. For those who own their homes, the median mortgage payment is \$1,283, reflecting the financial commitments associated with homeownership in the Township. Conversely, renters face a median monthly rent payment of \$992, highlighting the rental market dynamics and cost of living for tenants in the area. These figures offer valuable insights into the housing landscape of the Township, shedding light on ownership patterns and housing affordability within the community.

Table 5-3	
1939 or before	108
1940 – 1949	223
1950 – 1959	260
1960 – 1969	228
1970 – 1979	269
1980 – 1989	110
1990 – 1999	101
2000 – 2009	129
2010 – 2019	14
2020 and after	3
Total Units	1,445

Baldwin Township's housing stock is predominantly older, with a significant portion of homes built before 1980. The largest number of homes were constructed in the 1950s (260 units) and 1970s (269 units), followed by the 1960s (228 units) and 1940s (223 units). Additionally, 108 homes date back to 1939 or earlier, indicating a presence of historic or aging structures.

New housing development has slowed significantly in recent decades. The 1980s and 1990s saw a decline, with 110 and 101 homes built, respectively. Construction picked up slightly in the 2000s with 129 new homes, but dropped sharply after 2010, with only 14 homes built between 2010 and 2019. Since 2020, just three new housing units have been added.

This aging housing stock suggests a need for maintenance, renovations, or revitalization efforts. The limited new construction may reflect economic factors, population trends, or zoning restrictions. As older homes continue to age, investment in housing development and infrastructure could be crucial to sustaining the Township's residential appeal.

Baldwin Township's housing is predominantly single-family detached homes, comprising 1,412 of the 1,445 total units, with 752 occupied. Single-family attached homes are rare, with only four units, all occupied. Mobile homes make up 25 units, with 15 occupied, while four non-traditional housing units (boats, RVs, vans) are also occupied. With 775 occupied units overall, the Township has a high vacancy rate, likely due to seasonal or second homes. The limited alternative housing options indicate a strong reliance on single-family homes, with opportunities for revitalization or increased full-time residency.

Table 5-4		
	All Units	Occupied Units
Single, detached	1,412	752
Single, attached	4	4
Mobile Home	25	15
Boat, RV, Van, other	4	4
Total Units	1,445	775

In Baldwin Township, 292 owner-occupied housing units have a mortgage, with a median value of \$206,700. This is higher than in Iosco County, where the median value for such units is \$156,300, but not in the state of Michigan, where it is \$250,500. Additionally, Baldwin Township has 381 owner-occupied housing units without a mortgage, with a median value of \$169,700. This is notably higher than Iosco County's median of \$123,100, but lower than Michigan's median of \$200,000.

Table 5-5			
	Baldwin Township	Iosco County	State of Michigan
Owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage	292	4,325	1,724,865
Median value of housing units with a mortgage	\$206,700	\$156,300	\$250,500
Owner-occupied housing units without a mortgage	381	5,288	1,259,325
Median value of housing units without a mortgage	\$169,700	\$123,100	\$200,000

These figures suggest that Baldwin Township homeowners with a mortgage tend to have properties valued higher than the county average, though lower than the state median. For homes without a mortgage, Baldwin Township's median value is higher than the county's but still lower than the state's, indicating a slightly higher concentration of more affordable homes without mortgages in the Township compared to the state overall.



Occupied Units

Baldwin Township has a total of 1,445 housing units, with 775 occupied and 670 vacant, resulting in a vacancy rate of 46.4%. A significant portion of the vacant units, 618, are classified as seasonal, making up 92.2% of the vacant housing stock. This indicates that nearly all of the Township's vacant homes may be used part-time, likely as vacation homes or second residences.

In comparison, Iosco County has 20,061 housing units, with 11,713 occupied and 8,348 vacant, giving it a vacancy rate of 46.1%. Of these vacant units, 7,370 are seasonal, accounting for 88.3% of the county's vacant housing. The state of Michigan, with 4,622,236 total housing units, has a much lower vacancy rate of 11.8%, with 545,867 vacant units. Seasonal housing in Michigan represents 46.5% of the vacant housing units, significantly lower than in Baldwin Township and Iosco County.

These statistics highlight Baldwin Township's high proportion of seasonal housing, with a higher vacancy rate compared to both Iosco County and the state of Michigan, suggesting that Baldwin Township may rely more on seasonal residents and vacation homes than on full-time occupancy.

Table 5-6

	Total	Occupied	Vacant	Percent Vacant	Seasonal	Percent Seasonal	Percent Seasonal (Vacant)
Baldwin Township	1,445	775	670	46.4%	618	42.8%	92.2%
Iosco County	20,061	11,713	8,348	46.1%	7,370	36.7%	88.3%
State of Michigan	4,622,236	4,076,369	545,867	11.8%	253,668	5.5%	46.5%

Demographics of Occupied Units

In Baldwin Township, the housing distribution by ownership and rental status reflects a mix of married couples, single householders, and individuals living alone. Of the 354 married couples, 334 own their homes, while 20 rent. For male householders without a spouse, 17 own their homes, and 4 rent. Female householders without a spouse make up 86 units, with 41 owning and 45 renting their homes.

Table 5-7

	Over all Units	Own	Rent
Married Couples	354	334	20
Male Householder-no spouse	21	17	4
Female Householder-no spouse	86	41	45
Householder alone under 65	168	160	8
Householder alone over 65	117	105	12
Non-Family Household	29	16	13

Among those living alone, 160 householders under 65 years of age own their homes, while 8 rent; 105 householders aged 65 and older own their homes, with 12 renting. This distribution indicates that homeownership is more common among married couples and those aged 65 and older, while renting is more prevalent among female householders without spouses and younger individuals living alone.

Household Expenses

Table 8 shows the number of vehicles owned by households in Baldwin Township, which provides insight into the economic impact on local households. A significant portion of households (307) own just one vehicle, while 309 households own two vehicles. There are also 141 households with three or more vehicles, suggesting several families with higher mobility needs or larger households.

Table 5-8	
Vehicles	Units
None	18
1	307
2	309
3 or more	141

Interestingly, only 18 households report having no vehicles, which could reflect a reliance on personal transportation in Baldwin Township. The relatively high number of households with one or two vehicles points to a moderate level of vehicle ownership, suggesting that many residents may have at least one car for daily activities or commuting. However, households with three or more vehicles may indicate higher income levels, larger families, or households where multiple members need a vehicle for work or other activities.

Economically, vehicle ownership can be an indicator of financial stability or strain. Those with multiple vehicles likely have more disposable income to cover the associated costs (maintenance, insurance, fuel), while those without vehicles may face transportation challenges, potentially relying on public transportation, carpooling, or other options. This table highlights the importance of transportation in Baldwin Township's economy and daily life, with potential implications for local services and infrastructure, such as road maintenance and public transportation options.



"Whitford Small" by Tom Emery

Table 9 shows the primary sources of energy used for heating in Baldwin Township households. Many households (618 units) rely on natural gas, indicating that it is the dominant energy source for heating in the area. Propane or bottled fuel is used by 72 households, and 25 households use electricity for heating. A smaller number of households rely on fuel oil or kerosene (5 units), wood (16 units), and other sources (39 units).

Table 5-9	
Source	Units
Natural Gas	618
Propane/Bottled Fuel	72
Electric	25
Fuel Oil/Kerosene	5
Wood	16
Other Sources	39

The heavy reliance on natural gas suggests that the Township has access to a natural gas supply, which is likely the most cost-effective and convenient option for many residents. The use of propane and bottled fuel by a smaller portion of households may reflect homes that are more remote or not connected to the natural gas grid. The limited use of electricity and other fuels such as oil or wood indicates that alternative heating methods are less common but still present in some homes, particularly in areas where natural gas is unavailable or in households seeking more environmentally friendly or independent energy sources.

Economically, the reliance on natural gas aligns with a more affordable and stable energy source for most households. However, households using propane or alternative sources may experience higher heating costs, especially during colder months, impacting their overall economic well-being. The mix of energy sources also reflects the diversity of housing types and locations within Baldwin Township, with some areas relying on different energy infrastructure.

Median Home Value - \$181,000
 Median Mortgage Payment - \$1,283
 Median Rent - \$992

4
 Lack Complete
 Plumbing

20
 No Phone
 Service

Current Cost of Housing

Purchasing Housing

At the time this plan was written, there were 14 homes listed for sale in Baldwin Township, with an average asking price of approximately \$340,586. Assuming a conventional mortgage with a 5% down payment, this would translate to an estimated monthly mortgage payment of around \$2,228, excluding property taxes, insurance, and utilities. To afford this level of housing cost while staying within the widely accepted threshold of spending no more than 30% of gross income on housing, a household would need to earn roughly \$90,000 annually.

However, this income requirement significantly exceeds the current income levels in Baldwin Township. Depending on which income metric is used, this figure is \$6,000 to \$21,000 higher than the average household income in the area. This discrepancy highlights a substantial affordability gap for many residents.

To better align with existing income levels, the price of a home would need to fall within a more attainable range, between \$237,000 and \$297,000, for the typical Baldwin Township household. Within this price bracket, monthly payments would be more manageable and consistent with residents' financial realities. Without a shift in either income levels or housing prices, many families may find themselves priced out of homeownership, even when homes appear modest by regional or national standards. This underscores the importance of expanding access to affordable housing options, as well as exploring local or regional programs aimed at bridging the gap between wages and housing costs.

Construction Cost

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

At the time this plan was written, in Michigan, constructing a 1,500-square-foot home with builder-grade finishes (basic materials, excluding high-end touches like granite or hardwood) can be quite costly. On average, the construction of such a home would cost around \$315,000, not including the land. The average cost of land, statewide, is about \$13,000 per acre; however, this doesn't account for additional expenses like installing a well or septic system or connecting to municipal water and sewer systems. A typical 4-inch well installation averages \$9,500 statewide,

while a septic system can cost around \$11,000 statewide. To connect to municipal sewers (\$1,300–\$5,000) and water lines (\$1,000–\$5,000). To connect to the electric grid (\$1,000–\$30,000) and a natural gas line (\$500–\$2000). Depending on whether they have to dig a well and install septic, approximately \$37,250, or are able to hook up to municipal services, an average of \$22,900, either will have a significant impact on the overall cost of building a house, \$337,900–\$352,250, not including the land.

At the writing of this plan, there were 12 buildable parcels for sale in Baldwin Township, with prices ranging from \$5,500 to \$425,000 and an average price of \$108,000. However, this average is skewed by one large 69-acre parcel that is unlikely to appeal to the typical homebuyer. Excluding that outlier, the average land price drops to approximately \$79,500. Taking this adjusted land cost into account, along with the fact that not all parcels in the Township have access to municipal water and sewers, the total estimated cost to build a home in Baldwin Township ranges from \$417,400 to \$431,750.

Building a home generally requires a 20% down payment, which would amount to \$83,480 to \$86,350 based on these total costs. To afford such a home and have it classified as financially attainable, a household would need an annual income of \$93,000 to \$98,000. This represents an income gap of \$9,000 to \$29,000 above the current average household income in Baldwin Township, highlighting a significant affordability challenge for residents interested in new construction.

Final Costs

A frequently overlooked aspect of housing affordability is the cost of monthly utilities. While earlier estimates focused on core expenses, such as mortgage payments, property taxes, and homeowners' insurance, they did not account for basic utility services like electricity, gas, internet, and phone. Even when using a modest estimate of \$100 per month per service, these utilities add approximately \$400 to a household's monthly expenses. Once this ongoing cost is included, the picture of what's truly affordable changes significantly. For a family, the maximum affordable home price decreases from \$297,000 to roughly \$236,000. For the average household in Baldwin Township, it drops even further, from \$237,000 to about \$178,500. When it comes to new home construction, these additional costs push the required household income from an estimated range of \$93,000 to \$98,000 up to a range of \$115,000 to \$120,000 per year. This underscores the need to evaluate housing affordability through a comprehensive lens that includes not only purchase prices but also the full cost of living. Without factoring in these recurring expenses, estimates can paint an overly optimistic view of what residents can realistically afford.

In Conclusion

The current cost of homeownership in Baldwin Township reveals a widening gap between local incomes and the price of available housing. Whether purchasing an existing home or building new construction, most residents are facing financial hurdles that place homeownership just out of reach.

With an average home price of over \$340,000, even modest homes now require an annual household income of around \$90,000 to meet basic affordability guidelines. This is well above the current average income in the Township, which ranges between \$69,000 and \$84,000 depending on the data source. Similarly, the cost to build a new home, including infrastructure and land, now ranges from \$417,000 to over \$430,000. Financing that amount would require an income between \$93,000 and \$98,000, or as much as \$120,000 annually when monthly utility costs are considered.

Utilities, often excluded from affordability estimates, are a crucial factor in this equation. Adding \$400 per month in utility costs significantly reduces what households can afford to spend on a mortgage. For the average Baldwin Township resident, this adjustment brings the affordable home price down to approximately \$178,500, nearly half the cost of most homes currently for sale.

Taken together, these factors reflect a clear and growing affordability crisis. Most residents are being priced out of the market, not because homes are unusually expensive by national standards, but because prices have grown disproportionately to local incomes. Without targeted intervention, such as affordable housing development, utility cost-reduction programs, and down payment or construction assistance, many Baldwin Township residents will continue to find homeownership inaccessible.

Addressing these challenges will require a coordinated effort across public, private, and nonprofit sectors to ensure housing remains a viable and stable foundation for the community's long-term future.



Existing Land Use

Chapter 6

Land use plays a critical role in shaping the quality of life, defining community character, protecting natural resources, guiding transportation systems, and influencing how adjacent properties are developed and maintained. Understanding the current land use patterns in Baldwin Township is essential for making informed decisions about growth, preservation, and infrastructure needs. By examining existing land use activities, development trends, and site conditions, Township officials can better plan for future improvements that align with community goals. This analysis was conducted using parcel data from the Iosco County Equalization Department, tax classification information, and detailed aerial photo interpretation performed by the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG), providing a comprehensive view of how land is currently being used throughout the Township.

Baldwin Township Existing Land Use		
	Acres	Percent of Township
Agriculture – Improved	1,286.08	6.44%
Agriculture – Vacant	861.16	4.31%
City	45.72	0.23%
Commercial - Improved	256.99	1.29%
Commercial – Vacant	206.92	1.04%
County	415.66	2.08%
County Road Commission	0.42	0.00%
Federal	1,122.58	5.62%
Industrial – Improved	67.32	0.34%
Industrial – Vacant	31.16	0.16%
Multi-Family Residential	6.57	0.03%
Residential - Improved	5,592.32	28.00%
Residential - Vacant	7,967.54	39.89%
State	192.17	0.96%
Township	66.27	0.33%
Other	1,854.65	9.29%
Total	19,973.53	100%

Residential – Vacant

This category represents 7,967.54 acres of undeveloped residential land that presents significant opportunities for future housing development, whether for seasonal homes, rural estates, or subdivisions.

Residential – Improved

Improved land for residential development consists of 5,592.32 acres, currently used for housing and related infrastructure.

Multi-Family Residential

A small portion, 6.57 acres, is developed for higher-density housing such as apartments or duplexes, indicating limited availability of this housing type.

The overwhelming dominance of residential land, particularly vacant parcels, suggests a need for careful planning to balance growth, infrastructure capacity, and the preservation of rural character.

Residential
Uses, the
largest share
of the
Township,
consists of
13,566.43
acres or
67.92%. Over
half of the
residential land
is vacant!

Agricultural
Uses account
for 10.75% of
the Township.

Agriculture – Improved

This segment depicts 1,286.08 acres that are actively used for farming or agricultural production, indicating an established rural economy.

Agriculture – Vacant

Another 861.16 acres are classified as agricultural but not currently in use, which may represent fallow fields, inactive farmland, or potential sites for reactivation.

The various types of Government-owned lands account for 9.22% of the Township.

Federal

Over 1,122 acres are federally owned, which may include national forest land or other protected federal resources.

County

The Township consists of 415.66 acres under county ownership for public services, parks, or other county facilities.

State

192.17 acres are managed at the state level, which may include state game areas or forest lands.

Township

Approximately 66.27 acres are under direct Township control, including the Township hall, parks, and maintenance departments.

City

Classified under City are 45.72 acres, which may refer to land within a municipal boundary overlapping the Township, such as East Tawas Composting.

County Road Commission

A very small parcel, 0.42 acres, is assigned to the county road commission, likely for transportation infrastructure.

Commercial - Improved and Vacant

Together, these account for 463.91 acres, with just under half being vacant, suggesting moderate business activity with room for future commercial expansion.

Commercial & Industrial Uses make up only 2.33% of Township land.

Industrial - Improved and Vacant lands account for the second smallest overall land use, making up only 0.5% of the Township.

Industrial-Improved and Vacant

A combined 98.48 acres are designated for industrial use, indicating a smaller footprint for manufacturing or logistics, a third of which is vacant land.

Other Uses
account for
about 9.29%
of Township

Other

This broad category, comprising 1,854.65 acres, likely includes utility corridors, recreation lands, water bodies, or land with special designations.

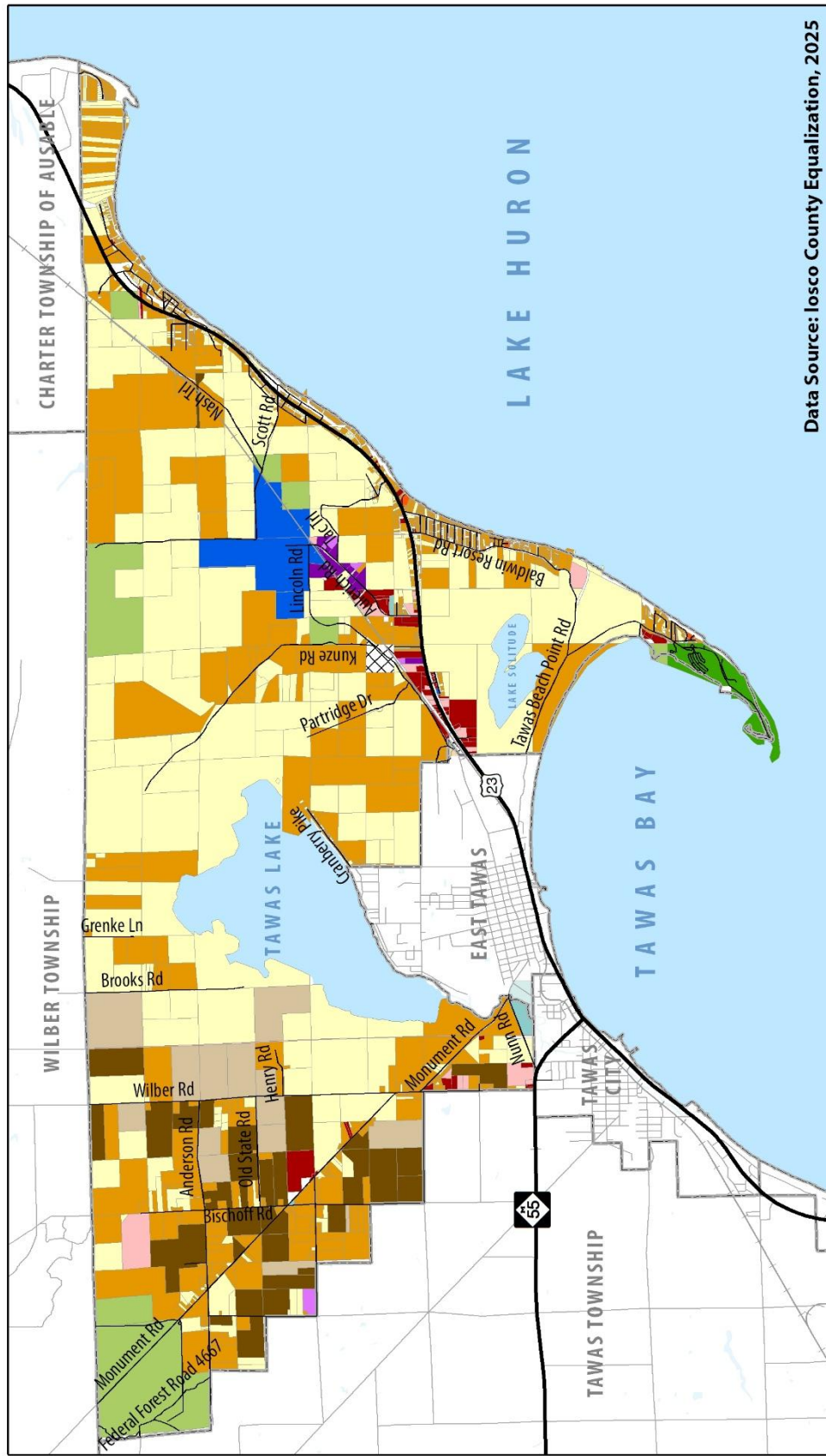
Conclusion

The large amount of vacant residential (39.89%) and agricultural land (4.31%) suggests substantial room for growth or conservation, depending on community goals.

The relatively small industrial and commercial footprints may limit employment opportunities locally, emphasizing a need to balance residential growth with economic development.

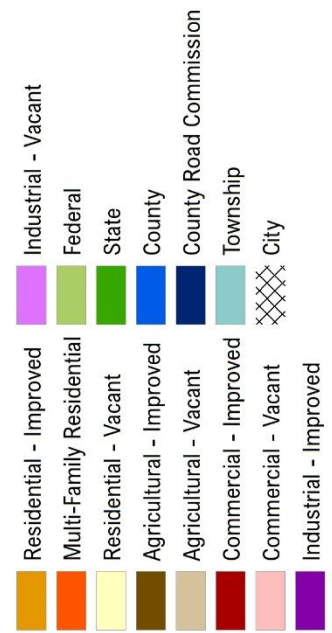
Government-owned land, especially federal, plays a significant role in the Township's landscape, potentially limiting development but offering recreational or conservation benefits.

The presence of a large Other category suggests the need for further clarification in future land use mapping and planning for better specificity.



Existing Land Use

Baldwin Township MASTER PLAN





"Tawas River Park" by Tom Emery

Public Input & Goals

Chapter 7

Public Input Synopsis

In the summer of 2025, Baldwin Township, in coordination with NEMCOG, conducted a public input survey using the SurveyMonkey platform. Paper copies were also made available at the Township Hall to encourage broader participation. A total of 115 responses were received. A summary of the findings is provided below, with complete results included in the Appendix of this Master Plan.

- Almost 72% of respondents were over 46 to 75 years of age, and an additional 17% were between 26 and 45 years of age.
- Just shy of 60% of respondents were full-time resident homeowners, and another 29% were homeowners but seasonal residents.
- Over 43% of respondents have lived in the Township for over 20 years, with another 22% here for 6-10 years, and a final almost 23% have been in the Township 5 years or less.
- The top reasons for coming to the area were the beauty of the area, recreational opportunities, and the small-town feeling.
- Social media, word of mouth, and the newspaper were how the respondents found out what is going on in the Township.
- Over 46% of respondents DO NOT support the development of Utility-Scale Solar Energy facilities on agricultural land.
- Over 47% of respondents DO NOT support the development of Utility-Scale Wind Energy facilities on agricultural land.
- Almost 74% of respondents felt that their transportation needs were being met.
- Maintaining existing roads was the top transportation goal, with the next closest being traffic safety at just under 66%, and providing pedestrian access to beach and lakefront areas at 60%.
- 65% of respondents support local financial incentives to attract and retain new jobs and businesses.
- Almost 42% of respondents feel that the Township should expand commercially.
- Almost 51% of respondents feel that there should be appointed social districts in an appointed downtown district.
- Just shy of 52% of respondents feel that municipal infrastructure should extend beyond the municipal limits to encourage economic development in adjacent municipalities.
- Over 56% of respondents feel that businesses or residents outside the limits should be charged more for water and sewer services than municipal residents pay.
- Over 74% of respondents feel that mobile or temporary businesses should be allowed on public property.

- 77% of respondents feel that increasing the number of jobs is an important economic development concept, 73% feel that attracting professional services and businesses was important, and just shy of 70% felt that attracting more workforce was.
- 64% of respondents feel that restaurants are the largest missing business in the Township; retail food, grocery, and gas were number 2 at 55%, and recreational business or rentals were third at 38%.
- Over 50% of respondents were either unsure or had no opinion on whether they would open a business in the Township; only 35% felt that they would.
- Just about 43% of respondents feel that vacation rentals were a problem in residential areas.
- Over 65% of respondents felt that Airbnb or Vrbo should be held to a certain number.
- 71% of respondents believe that there should be a business permit process for Airbnb or Vrbo rentals.
- 59% of respondents feel that there should be an inspection process for all rental units.
- Almost 29% of respondents feel that detached single-family homes should be pursued when developing housing in the area, and senior housing was the second highest at almost 29%.
- 69% of respondents feel landowners should be allowed to split their property into smaller lots.
- 76% feel that requiring a large lot size to preserve farmland is important.
- Over 78% feel that requiring a large lot size to preserve wetlands is important.
- 83% feel that requiring a large lot size to preserve forestland is important.
- 58% of respondents feel that the Township should find and promote opportunities to encourage affordable housing.
- Over 53% of respondents support accessory dwellings on property.
- Almost 56% of respondents support garage apartments.
- 73% of respondents are looking to move in more than 5 years.
- Almost 40% of respondents were unsure about the enforcement of the zoning ordinance, and an additional 39% felt it needed to be enforced better.
- Over 77% of respondents were unsure or had no opinion about how timely planning and zoning applications were processed.
- Over 35% of respondents were unsure or had no opinion about blight in the Township, and almost 34% felt blight was an issue.
- There was a tie with no opinion and yes on an assessment for blight enforcement; an additional 27% were against an assessment.

The following is a summary of additional comments on the survey:

Enforcement, Blight, and Ordinances

- Ordinance enforcement is seen as uneven or biased, with some residents singled out while others get leniency.
- Specific complaints include the snow fence ordinance being unrealistic for Michigan winters.
- Residents want clearer definitions (e.g., what qualifies as “blight”).

Law Enforcement and Public Safety

- Residents express serious concerns about lack of police coverage.
- The county sheriff’s office has limited hours, and Michigan State Police response times are too long.
- Some want East Tawas Police Department to serve Baldwin Township due to proximity and shared mailing address.
- Road safety issues mentioned: unsafe passing on US-23, opposition to a proposed berm, and need for paved or widened shoulders and bike/pedestrian paths for safety.

Short-Term Rentals (Airbnb / VRBO)

- Strong opposition to short-term rentals in residential areas.
- Concerns about noise, transient neighbors, overcrowding, parking, trash, and loss of community character.
- Calls to ban or strictly regulate them, with much higher fines and restrictions on management companies.
- A few residents note positive uses (e.g., temporary housing for workers).

Property, Assessment, and Taxes

- Widespread frustration with the assessment process, calling it inept, confusing, or unresponsive.
- Requests for a full-time local assessor instead of one based in another county.
- Residents want access to accurate, timely property assessment results.
- Strong sentiment against raising taxes; many feel property taxes are already too high.
- Some emphasize keeping taxes affordable while regulating growth responsibly.

Land Use, Property Rights, and Development

- Calls for reasonable property-split options to make small lakefront lots usable.
- Desire to balance personal property freedom with clean, well-kept properties.
- Concerns about duplicate or excessively similar businesses (e.g., restaurants, smoke shops).
- Interest in supporting existing small businesses, particularly restaurants, through grants and revitalization programs.
- Some want controlled growth to preserve the area's beauty and character.

Infrastructure, Roads, and Drainage

- Complaints about poor drainage, clogged ditches, and invasive weeds affecting Tawas Lake.
- Requests to clean streams, drains, and lakeshores.
- Calls for dust control, paving, or chip-sealing roads, especially on high-traffic routes.
- Some seniors say ditch maintenance is a burden they shouldn't have to handle.

Parks, Trails, and Environment

- Requests to improve Nunn Road Park.
- Support for completing the bike trail between East Tawas and Oscoda.
- Suggestions for widened/paved shoulders on Monument Road for walking/biking.
- Strong environmental concern: protecting forests, wetlands, water, and cleaning Tawas Lake.
- Opposition to more marijuana ("weed") facilities due to odor and instability.

Community Involvement and Communication

- Calls for more transparency, responsiveness, and communication from Township officials.
- Complaints about being passed between departments without clear answers.
- Requests for email updates and opportunities for residents (and part-time owners) to get involved.
- Desire to eliminate the “old boys’ network” and bring in new voices and ideas.

Housing and Affordability

- Multiple residents highlight the need for affordable housing for families and workers.
- Concern that short-term rentals and outside investors are driving up home prices and reducing local housing availability.
- Some support flexibility in zoning to allow new housing types and business opportunities.

Miscellaneous / General Sentiments

- Residents value the natural beauty and small-town character of Baldwin Township and want it preserved.
- Mixed views on growth — some support limited, responsible expansion; others want to maintain the existing character.
- Requests for better internet service, especially for residents along Lincoln.
- Comments include gratitude for the survey and desire to see the area thrive.

Township Character

Retain the Township's rural and small-town character by guiding growth and development in a manner that respects its historical character, scenic landscapes, and agricultural heritage.

Goal 1

Guide land use and development in a manner that preserves the Township's rural character, scenic resources, and agricultural heritage.

Objectives:

- Use the Future Land Use Map to guide rezoning requests and development decisions.
- Review and update the Zoning Ordinance as needed to ensure development standards protect the Township's rural character and scenic resources.
- Encourage redevelopment and infill development where appropriate before developing undeveloped rural areas.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & ZA

Goal 2

Preserve forested lands, farmland, open spaces, and other natural features that contribute to the Township's identity.

Objectives:

- Encourage conservation design techniques, including clustering and open space preservation, where appropriate.
- Support farmland, forestland, and open space preservation through land use planning, voluntary conservation efforts, and compatible zoning regulations.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & ZA

Goal 3

Direct higher-intensity residential, commercial, and industrial development to appropriate locations where infrastructure, transportation, and public services can adequately support growth.

Objectives:

- Focus higher-intensity development within designated Future Land Use areas where adequate infrastructure and transportation facilities exist or are planned.
- Evaluate proposed developments to ensure public services and infrastructure can adequately accommodate future growth.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & ZA

Natural Resource

Protect, conserve, and enhance the Township's natural resources and forest lands through responsible land use and environmental stewardship.

Goal 1

Protect and improve the quality of the Township's surface water, groundwater, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive resources.

Objectives:

- Encourage development practices that protect water quality and minimize impacts on wetlands, streams, lakes, and groundwater.
- Support shoreline protection, erosion control, and stormwater management practices that reduce nonpoint source pollution.
- Coordinate with local, regional, state, and federal agencies on watershed protection and natural resource management.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & ZA

Goal 2

Promote environmentally responsible development and integrate natural resource protection into land use planning and development decisions.

Objectives:

- Evaluate development proposals for impacts on natural resources and encourage site designs that minimize environmental disturbance.
- Encourage conservation design techniques, including clustering, open space preservation, and protection of significant natural features.
- Review and update zoning and development regulations as needed to support long-term environmental stewardship.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & ZA

Goal 3

Preserve forest lands, wildlife habitat, ecological corridors, open spaces, and biodiversity while supporting sustainable forestry and responsible land management.

Objectives:

- Encourage the preservation of forests, wildlife habitat, and ecological corridors during development.
- Support sustainable forestry practices and responsible management of public and private forest lands.
- Encourage voluntary conservation efforts that protect open space, habitat, and scenic resources.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & ZA

Goal 4

Increase public awareness and stewardship of the Township's natural resources.

Objectives:

- Provide educational information on water quality protection, invasive species, forestry stewardship, and habitat conservation.
- Partner with conservation organizations and public agencies to promote environmental education and stewardship opportunities.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsible Party:

PC, TB & ZA



Economic Development

Encourage commercial and industrial development that strengthens the Township's economy while preserving community character.

Goal 1

Promote commercial and industrial development within appropriate locations identified by the Future Land Use Plan.

Objectives:

- Direct commercial and industrial development to designated growth areas with adequate infrastructure and transportation access.
- Encourage infill development and redevelopment where appropriate before expanding into undeveloped areas.
- Evaluate rezoning requests and development proposals for consistency with the Future Land Use Plan.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & ZA

Goal 2

Support planning, investment, and revitalization efforts within the Downtown.

Objectives:

- Encourage redevelopment, reinvestment, and business expansion within the Downtown.
- Support streetscape, façade, and public infrastructure improvements that enhance the Downtown's appearance and functionality.
- Promote a mix of commercial, service, office, residential, and civic uses that strengthen Downtown vitality.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB, DDA & DI

Goal 3

Promote high-quality development through clear standards and compatible site design.

Objectives:

- Maintain and periodically update zoning and development standards to encourage attractive, functional, and compatible development.
- Encourage coordinated access, landscaping, buffering, signage, and building design that enhances the Township's character.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & ZA

Goal 4

Strengthen partnerships and secure resources to support long-term economic growth.

Objectives:

- Coordinate with local, regional, state, and federal economic development organizations to promote investment and job creation.
- Pursue grants and other funding opportunities for infrastructure improvements, Downtown revitalization, and economic development initiatives.
- Support expansion of broadband, utilities, and other infrastructure needed to accommodate future economic development.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsible Party:

PC, TB, DDA & DI



Services and Facilities

Provide and maintain high-quality services and facilities for residents and visitors.

Goal 1

Plan for future public service and facility needs based on anticipated growth, development, and community priorities.

Objectives:

- Periodically evaluate Township facilities, equipment, and service levels to identify future needs.
- Develop and maintain a Capital Improvements Plan to guide long-term public investments.
- Pursue grants and other funding opportunities to support facility and infrastructure improvements.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
TB & PC

Goal 2

Coordinate with local, regional, state, and county partners to efficiently provide public services and facilities.

Objectives:

- Continue to cooperate with neighboring communities, school districts, emergency service providers, and county agencies to improve service delivery.
- Evaluate opportunities for shared services, equipment, and intergovernmental agreements where appropriate.
- Coordinate with utility providers and transportation agencies on infrastructure planning and improvements.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
TB & EM

Goal 3

Ensure public services and facilities adapt to changing population, land use, infrastructure, and public safety needs.

Objectives:

- Monitor population, housing, and development trends to identify future service demands.
- Support improvements to emergency services, communications, utilities, parks, and community facilities as needs evolve.
- Review Township plans and policies periodically to ensure public services remain responsive, efficient, and financially sustainable.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
TB, PC & EM

Transportation

Develop and maintain a safe, efficient, and well-connected Township road system.

Goal 1

Maintain and improve Township roads based on safety, condition, and functionality.

Objectives:

- Prioritize road maintenance and improvements based on roadway condition, traffic volumes, and public safety needs.
- Support improvements to intersections, signage, drainage, and other roadway features that enhance safety and mobility.
- Encourage routine coordination with the County Road Commission and MDOT regarding maintenance priorities.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
TB, RC & MDOT

Goal 2

Coordinate transportation planning with regional partners and improve traffic flow along major corridors.

Objectives:

- Work with the County Road Commission, MDOT, and neighboring communities on transportation planning and improvement projects.
- Encourage access management techniques, including shared driveways and coordinated entrances, along major road corridors.
- Support transportation improvements that promote efficient movement of residents, visitors, emergency services, and commercial traffic.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
TB, DI, RC & MDOT

Goal 3

Incorporate safety, accessibility, and environmental considerations into future transportation improvements while securing funding opportunities.

Objectives:

- Incorporate Complete Streets principles, where appropriate, to improve safety and accessibility for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and individuals of all ages and abilities.
- Consider environmental impacts, stormwater management, and natural resource protection during roadway planning and design.
- Pursue federal, state, regional, and local funding opportunities for roadway, bridge, and transportation improvements.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB, RC, MDOT &
MDNR

Education

Support access to high-quality educational opportunities for residents of all ages.

Goal 1

Strengthen partnerships with local educational institutions and organizations.

Objectives:

- Encourage collaboration with local school districts, colleges, libraries, and educational organizations to support community educational needs.
- Coordinate with educational partners on initiatives that benefit Township residents and workforce development.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsible Party:

TB

Goal 2

Support educational programming and improvements to educational facilities.

Objectives:

- Encourage investment in educational facilities and programs that enhance learning opportunities.
- Support improvements to infrastructure and public services that benefit schools and educational institutions.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsible Party:

TB & DDA

Goal 3

Promote lifelong learning opportunities for residents of all ages.

Objectives:

- Encourage access to libraries, workforce training, adult education, and continuing education opportunities.
- Support community programs that promote lifelong learning, technology access, and educational enrichment.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsible Party:

TB

Utility

Expand and improve utility infrastructure to support planned growth while protecting natural resources and public health.

Goal 1

Expand sewer and water services to areas where they are needed and can be provided efficiently.

Objectives:

- Coordinate with utility providers to identify opportunities for expanding sewer and water infrastructure.
- Prioritize utility extensions where they address public health concerns or support planned development.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
TB

Goal 2

Prioritize utility infrastructure improvements within commercial, industrial, and higher-density residential areas.

Objectives:

- Direct utility investments to designated growth areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan.
- Encourage infrastructure improvements that support economic development and future housing needs.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC & TB

Goal 3

Coordinate utility planning with environmental protection and long-range land use goals.

Objectives:

- Evaluate utility improvements for consistency with the Future Land Use Plan and natural resource protection objectives.
- Encourage utility planning and design that protects groundwater, surface water, and other environmentally sensitive resources.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB, EGLE & MDNR

Recreation

Enhance recreational opportunities and facilities that improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.

Goal 1

Maintain and implement the Township Recreation Plan.

Objectives:

- Regularly review and update the Recreation Plan to reflect community needs and priorities.
- Incorporate Recreation Plan recommendations into the Township's capital improvement and budgeting process.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsible Party:

PC & TB

Goal 2

Expand greenways, trails, parks, and recreational connections throughout the Township.

Objectives:

- Encourage development of interconnected trails, non-motorized facilities, and greenway connections where feasible.
- Coordinate with local, regional, and state partners to improve access to parks, natural areas, and recreational amenities.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsible Party:

PC, TB, EGLE & MDNR

Goal 3

Provide recreational opportunities that serve both residents and visitors while preserving the Township's natural resources.

Objectives:

- Support recreational improvements that are compatible with the Township's rural character and environmental resources.
- Balance recreational investments to meet the needs of year-round residents and seasonal visitors.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsible Party:

PC, TB, EGLE & MDNR

Goal 4

Secure funding and partnerships to support recreational improvements.

Objectives:

- Pursue grants and other funding opportunities for parks, trails, and recreational facilities.
- Partner with community organizations, local governments, and state agencies to expand recreational opportunities and improve existing facilities.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsible Party:

PC, TB, DDA & MDNR

Healthcare

Promote access to high-quality healthcare services that support the health, well-being, and quality of life of Township residents.

Goal 1

Support the availability and expansion of healthcare services within the Township and surrounding region.

Objectives:

- Coordinate with healthcare providers and regional partners to support continued access to quality healthcare services.
- Encourage land use and infrastructure planning that accommodates future healthcare facilities and services.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
TB & EM

Goal 2

Recognize healthcare as an important community asset and contributor to the local economy.

Objectives:

- Support healthcare facilities and related services that provide employment opportunities and meet community needs.
- Encourage partnerships that strengthen the Township's healthcare system and regional economy.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
TB, DI & EM

Goal 3

Address the healthcare needs of an aging population while promoting overall community wellness.

Objectives:

- Encourage healthcare services, programs, and facilities that support aging in place, preventive care, and healthy lifestyles.
- Support initiatives that improve access to healthcare, wellness programs, and related community services for residents of all ages.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
TB, DDA, DI & EM

Agricultural

Support and preserve the Township's agricultural base, productive farmland, and rural landscape.

Goal 1

Encourage the continued use of prime farmland and active agricultural operations.

Objectives:

- Support farming as a long-term land use and encourage agricultural businesses that strengthen the local economy.
- Minimize land use conflicts between agricultural operations and adjacent development.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB, DDA & DI

Goal 2

Preserve farmland through planning, zoning, conservation tools, and available state and federal programs.

Objectives:

- Encourage the use of conservation easements, farmland preservation programs, and other voluntary preservation tools.
- Review and update land use regulations to reduce the fragmentation of productive farmland.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC & TB

Goal 3

Promote agricultural awareness and engage residents in farmland preservation efforts.

Objectives:

- Support educational programs that increase awareness of agriculture's economic, cultural, and environmental importance.
- Encourage collaboration with farmers, agricultural organizations, residents, and other stakeholders on agricultural issues.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
TB, DDA & DI

Goal 4

Provide flexible land use opportunities that support agriculture while maintaining the Township's rural character.

Objectives:

- Encourage agritourism, value-added agriculture, and compatible agricultural businesses where appropriate.
- Ensure land use and development decisions protect the long-term viability of farming while preserving the Township's rural character.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC & TB

Housing

Promote safe, diverse, and attainable housing opportunities that meet the needs of current and future residents.

Goal 1

Encourage a variety of housing types that serve residents of different ages, household sizes, and income levels.

Objectives:

- Support a mix of housing types, including single-family homes, duplexes, townhomes, multifamily housing, senior housing, workforce housing, and accessory dwelling units.
- Encourage housing development that responds to changing community needs and demographics.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & DI

Goal 2

Support well-designed, walkable neighborhoods with appropriate infrastructure and community amenities.

Objectives:

- Encourage neighborhood design that incorporates sidewalks, pedestrian connections, parks, and access to community services.
- Coordinate housing development with the availability of transportation, utilities, and public services.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB

Goal 3

Protect and enhance existing residential neighborhoods while reducing barriers to housing development.

Objectives:

- Maintain zoning and development standards that preserve neighborhood character while allowing compatible residential growth.
- Periodically review zoning regulations and permitting processes to remove unnecessary barriers to housing development.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC & TB

Goal 4

Promote housing affordability and homeownership opportunities.

Objectives:

- Support programs and partnerships that increase housing affordability and expand opportunities for first-time homebuyers.
- Encourage the rehabilitation and maintenance of existing housing to preserve the Township's housing stock.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & DI

Alternative Energy

Support the responsible development of renewable energy facilities in a manner that protects the Township's residents, natural resources, agricultural lands, and rural character.

Goal 1

Encourage collaboration between renewable energy developers, property owners, and the Township throughout the planning and review process.

Objectives:

- Encourage early communication between applicants, Township officials, and the public during project planning.
- Coordinate with local, regional, state, and federal agencies throughout the review process.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsible Party:

PC & TB

Goal 2

Ensure renewable energy development is compatible with surrounding land uses and community character.

Objectives:

- Require appropriate setbacks, buffering, landscaping, lighting, noise mitigation, and screening to minimize impacts on adjacent properties.
- Direct renewable energy facilities to appropriate locations consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsible Party:

PC & TB

Goal 3

Protect residents, natural resources, and agricultural land from adverse impacts.

Objectives:

- Minimize impacts on prime farmland, wetlands, wildlife habitat, groundwater, surface water, and other environmentally sensitive resources.
- Evaluate infrastructure, transportation, emergency services, and public safety impacts as part of the development review process.

Timeline:

Ongoing

Responsible Party:

PC & TB

Goal 4

Establish clear standards for the siting, design, operation, and long-term management of renewable energy facilities.

Objectives:

- Maintain zoning regulations that establish clear standards for the siting, design, operation, and maintenance of renewable energy facilities.
- Require decommissioning plans, site restoration, and appropriate financial assurances to ensure facilities are safely removed at the end of their operational life.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC & TB



Technology

Expand access to reliable, affordable, and high-speed broadband infrastructure throughout the Township.

Goal 1

Identify underserved and unserved areas within the Township.

Objectives:

- Work with internet service providers and regional partners to identify gaps in broadband availability and service quality.
- Periodically assess broadband coverage and community needs.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
TB, DDA & DI

Goal 2

Expand broadband infrastructure through partnerships with public and private providers.

Objectives:

- Support public-private partnerships that increase broadband access and reliability.
- Encourage broadband expansion in areas identified for residential, commercial, and industrial growth.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, Tb, DDA & DI

Goal 3

Reduce barriers to broadband infrastructure deployment while protecting community character.

Objectives:

- Review and update local regulations, where appropriate, to facilitate broadband infrastructure deployment.
- Coordinate broadband improvements with utility, transportation, and other infrastructure projects whenever feasible.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB, RC & MDOT

Goal 4

Improve broadband affordability and accessibility for all residents and businesses.

Objectives:

- Encourage participation in state and federal broadband funding and affordability programs.
- Support efforts that improve digital access for residents, businesses, schools, healthcare providers, and remote workers.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, Tb, DDA & DI

Zoning

Ensure land use regulations support community character, economic development, environmental stewardship, and quality of life while implementing the Township's Master Plan.

Goal 1

Maintain clear, consistent, and enforceable zoning regulations that are aligned with the Master Plan.

Objectives:

- Periodically review and update the Zoning Ordinance to maintain consistency with the Master Plan.
- Ensure zoning regulations are clearly written, enforceable, and easy to administer.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & ZA

Goal 2

Coordinate future growth through appropriate land use planning while providing flexibility for landowners and maintaining compatibility between uses.

Objectives:

- Evaluate rezoning requests and development proposals for consistency with the Future Land Use Plan.
- Maintain development standards that promote compatibility between residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, and natural resource areas.
- Encourage flexible development tools, such as planned unit developments and conservation design, where appropriate.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & ZA

Goal 3

Maintain current zoning districts, permitted uses, development standards, and efficient review procedures.

Objectives:

- Regularly review permitted uses, dimensional standards, and development requirements to ensure they reflect community needs and changes in state law.
- Streamline administrative procedures and development review processes while maintaining transparency and public participation.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB & ZA

Goal 4

Guide the appropriate siting and development of data centers while protecting agricultural land, natural resources, open space, and neighboring properties.

Objectives:

- Establish zoning standards addressing the location, design, buffering, screening, noise, lighting, water use, utility infrastructure, and traffic impacts of data center development.
- Require decommissioning and site restoration plans, along with appropriate financial assurances, for data centers and similar large-scale industrial developments.
- Ensure data center development is compatible with surrounding land uses and does not adversely impact the Township's natural resources, infrastructure, or rural character.

Timeline:
Ongoing

Responsible Party:
PC, TB, ZA, EGLE &
MDNR

Responsible Party & Timeline

Responsible Party abbreviations:

TB: Township Board

PC: Township Planning Commission

ZA: Zoning Administrator

DDA: Downtown Development Authority

DI: Develop Iosco

EGLE: Michigan Department of Environment,
Great Lakes, and Energy

EM: Iosco County Emergency Management

RC: Iosco County Road Commission

MDOT: Michigan Department of
Transportation

MDNR: Michigan Department of Natural
Resources

Timeline:

SHORT: Low cost, easy implementation, directly addressing top priorities, or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1-5 years.

MEDIUM: Important actions that have some level of significant cost and can be implemented within the next 5-10 years.

LONG: Actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation.

ONGOING: Actions that have no beginning or end period, but which are continuously ongoing in the Township.

Action Items:

- | | | |
|-----|--|--------|
| 1. | Review lot widths on lake lots and possibly amend the zoning ordinance to allow 50-foot lots. | Short |
| 2. | Amend the zoning ordinance to create supplemental regulations for data centers, bitcoin mining, and data mining. | Short |
| 3. | Ensure decommissioning plans and remediation plans are present for intense land uses throughout the community (i.e., renewable energy and data centers). | Short |
| 4. | Study short-term rentals and create an ordinance to address them. | Short |
| 5. | Become engaged with the RRC program and adopt RRC Best Practices. | Medium |
| 6. | Eliminate dual zoning on parcels so that no parcels are split between two zoning districts. | Short |
| 7. | In the Zoning Ordinance, re-address the Agricultural District with the goal of revitalizing that area. | Medium |
| 8. | Create communications documents to provide summaries to the public about the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance. | Medium |
| 9. | Ensure completion of the Iron Belle Trail through the Township. | Long |
| 10. | Plan for appropriate infrastructure improvements in areas of development. | Long |
| 11. | Stay informed about tribal lands in the Township and develop a position statement on development of those lands. | Short |

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"Tawas Beach Road" by: Tom Emery

Future Land Use

Chapter 8

The Future Land Use Plan for Baldwin Township is based on the goals and recommendations established throughout this Master Plan. It provides a framework for guiding future growth, development, and preservation in a manner that reflects the Township's desired character, supports quality of life, and protects important natural and agricultural resources.

To accomplish this, the lands within Baldwin Township are divided into six future land use designations. Each designation is intended to reflect the primary character and purpose of the area, as suggested by its name. These designations identify the types of land uses that are generally appropriate and the pattern of development desired over time.

This chapter also compares each future land use designation to the Township's existing zoning districts and describes the relationship between the two. While future land use designations establish the long-term vision and desired development pattern for an area, zoning districts are the regulatory tool used to implement that vision. In many cases, the standards and permitted uses of a future land use designation closely correspond to an existing zoning district. However, some differences may exist where future zoning amendments are recommended to better align with the Township's long-term goals.

A particular focus of this chapter is the Township's existing pattern of dually zoned parcels. In several locations, parcels are currently subject to more than one zoning classification, creating confusion regarding permitted uses, applicable standards, and long-term development expectations.

As part of the current update to the Township Zoning Ordinance, Baldwin Township intends to eliminate dually zoned parcels and move toward a system in which each parcel is assigned a single zoning district that is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan. Rezoning and map revisions should be based on the future land use designation, surrounding land uses, available infrastructure, parcel size, and the overall intent of this Master Plan. This will improve consistency, simplify administration, and provide clearer direction for property owners and future development.

Future Land Use Designation	Zoning District
Forest/Conservation	FC: Forest/Conservation
Agricultural/Rural Residential	AR: Agricultural/Rural Residential
Lakeshore Residential	LR: Lakeshore Residential
General Residential	GR: General Residential
Commercial	C: Commercial
Industrial	I: Industrial

Forest/ Conservation Designation

Purpose

The Forest/Conservation Designation is intended to preserve Baldwin Township's extensive forested lands, wetlands, marshes, and other environmentally sensitive areas that are unlikely to develop beyond natural resource-oriented uses. Located throughout much of the Township, particularly from the northwest portion of the Township through the areas surrounding Tawas Lake and Lake Solitude and eastward toward the Lake Huron shoreline, this designation protects open land, scenic character, wildlife habitat, and opportunities for forestry, recreation, and agriculture.

Structure

The designation is characterized by large areas of state and private forest land, wetlands, marshes, and other undeveloped terrain. Primary land uses include forestry, conservation, wildlife habitat, recreation, agriculture where feasible, and limited tourist-related uses. Residential development may occur, but should remain low-density and rural in character, with homes located on large parcels that preserve the surrounding natural landscape.

Intent

The Forest/Conservation Designation intends to maintain large areas of uninterrupted forest and open space while allowing only limited development that is compatible with the area's natural features. Future development should protect wetlands, water resources, and scenic views; support forestry, agriculture, and recreation-based economic activity; and avoid introducing densities or uses that would conflict with the Township's rural and forested character. Residential development is encouraged at a density of approximately one dwelling per ten acres or greater.

Standards

Development within the Forest/Conservation Designation should generally follow standards similar to the Township's Forested/Conservation zoning district. Minimum lot area should be three acres, with a minimum lot width of 200 feet. The maximum building height should not exceed 40 feet. Minimum dwelling sizes should be 720 square feet for single-family dwellings, 600 square feet per unit for two-family dwellings, and 420 square feet per unit for multiple-family dwellings, with all residential buildings having a minimum width of 12 feet. Required setbacks should include a 50-foot front yard, 10-foot side yards, and a 25-foot rear yard. Although the zoning district permits lots as small as three acres, larger parcels of ten acres or more are encouraged to maintain the intended low-density character.

Agriculture/Rural Residential Designation

Purpose

The Agriculture/Rural Residential Designation is intended to preserve and support Baldwin Township's agricultural lands while allowing limited rural residential development compatible with farming and the Township's rural character. This designation includes most of the Township's agricultural land and is located primarily in the western portion of the Township, east of the Forest/Conservation Designation, extending from the southern boundary to the northern boundary of the Township.

Structure

The designation is characterized by active farmland, open fields, scattered farmsteads, woodlots, and low-density residential development. The primary use of the area is agriculture, including crop production, livestock, and other farming activities. Other compatible uses may include agricultural service businesses, home occupations, rural businesses, and limited estate-style residential development. Residential development should occur on large lots, generally five acres or larger, in order to preserve agricultural operations, maintain open space, and avoid conflicts between farming and residential uses.

Intent

The Agriculture/Rural Residential Designation intends to protect viable farmland and maintain the Township's rural landscape while allowing compatible residential and business uses. Larger parcel sizes are encouraged because of the limited availability of public utilities, high water table conditions, failing septic systems in some areas, and the need to accommodate the keeping and raising of animals. Future development should be designed to minimize conflicts with farming operations, preserve open land and scenic views, and maintain the low-density, agricultural character of the area.

Standards

Development within the Agriculture/Rural Residential Designation should generally follow standards similar to the Township's Agricultural/Rural Residential zoning district. Minimum lot area should be three acres, although lot sizes of five acres or greater are encouraged to maintain the intended rural character. Minimum lot width should be 200 feet, and maximum building height should not exceed 40 feet. Minimum dwelling sizes should be 720 square feet for single-family dwellings, 600 square feet per unit for two-family dwellings, and 420 square feet per unit for multiple-family dwellings, with all residential structures having a minimum width of 12 feet. Required setbacks should include a 50-foot front yard, 10-foot side yards, and a 25-foot rear yard. Corner lots should be designed with two front yards and two rear yards in accordance with the zoning district standards.

Lakeshore Residential Designation

Purpose

The Lakeshore Residential Designation is intended primarily for single-family residential and recreational uses along the Township's shoreline areas, consistent with the historic development pattern along Saginaw Bay, Lake Huron, and Tawas Lake. The principal objective of this designation is to preserve the quality of the Township's lakes, shoreline, and beaches while maintaining the character of established waterfront neighborhoods.

Structure

This designation generally follows the shoreline of Baldwin Township, extending from the eastern boundary of East Tawas north and east along Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron to the Township's northeastern boundary near Au Sable Point. The designation excludes limited areas within the Tawas Beach Club area, the commercial designation, and lands adjacent to Baldwin Centre. A smaller area is also located along the south shore of Tawas Lake. Development within this designation consists primarily of existing and future lakeshore homes, cottages, and seasonal or year-round residences, with limited recreational uses that support the shoreline environment.

Intent

The Lakeshore Residential Designation intends to maintain the established pattern of low-density shoreline development while protecting water quality, shoreline vegetation, natural drainage patterns, and scenic views. Residential development should be carefully designed to minimize impacts on the lakeshore and avoid overcrowding or excessive impervious surfaces.

Standards

Development within the Lakeshore Residential designation should generally follow standards similar to the Township's Lakeshore Residential zoning district. Lots should be large enough to accommodate on-site wells and septic systems, generally with a minimum area of 12,000 square feet, though smaller lots may be considered buildable if setback requirements can be met. Minimum dwelling sizes should be 720 square feet for single-family dwellings and 600 square feet per unit for two-family dwellings, with a minimum building width of 12 feet. One accessory dwelling unit per lot may be permitted, with a minimum size of 320 square feet. Typical setbacks should include a 15-foot front and rear yard and 10-foot side yards. Lots along US-23 and corner lots may require additional front yard setbacks consistent with zoning standards.

General Residential Designation

Purpose

The purpose of the General Residential Designation is to accommodate a variety of housing types and residential densities in areas of Baldwin Township that are appropriate for future neighborhood growth. This designation provides opportunities for single-family, two-family, and, where appropriate, multiple-family housing, depending on the availability of public utilities and the character of the surrounding area. The designation also allows neighborhood-oriented uses such as parks, schools, and other community facilities that support residential areas.

Structure

The General Residential Designation is located primarily along Lincoln Road, extending from the western boundary of East Tawas eastward to the industrial area in the east-central portion of the Township, and includes all of Section 13 west of Tawas Lake. The area is characterized by existing residential neighborhoods, scattered undeveloped land, and locations where additional housing can be accommodated. Development within this designation may range from lower-density residential areas on larger lots where sewer service is not available to more compact development where public sewer service exists.

Intent

The General Residential Designation intends to provide for a range of housing choices while ensuring that residential development remains compatible with surrounding land uses and available infrastructure. Multiple-family housing of various types and densities may be appropriate in this designation when approved through the special use process and when supported by adequate utilities, road access, and buffering from adjacent uses. Parks, schools, and similar neighborhood-serving uses are also encouraged where they complement the surrounding residential area.

Standards

Development within the General Residential designation should generally follow standards similar to the Township's General Residential zoning district. Minimum lot area should be 12,000 square feet where public sewer service is available and one acre where sewer service is not available, with minimum lot widths of 100 feet and 120 feet, respectively. Building heights should not exceed 40 feet. Minimum dwelling sizes should be 720 square feet for single-family dwellings, 600 square feet per unit for two-family dwellings, and 420 square feet per unit for multiple-family dwellings, with a minimum building width of 12 feet for all residential structures. One accessory dwelling unit per lot may be permitted, with a minimum size of 320 square feet. Typical setbacks should include a 25-foot front and rear yard and 10-foot side yards.

Commercial Designation

Purpose

The Commercial Designation provides locations for the range of business activities needed to serve Baldwin Township residents and visitors. Intended uses include retail, office, service, restaurant, lodging, and similar commercial uses that support the Township's economy.

Structure

The Township contains two Commercial Designation areas. One is located along Wilber and Nunn Roads north of M-55 at the west end of the Township. The second and larger area extends along US-23 from the boundary of East Tawas through Section 13 along the Lake Huron shoreline and includes Baldwin Centre as part of the Township's downtown development area.

Intent

The Commercial Designation intends to encourage a variety of business uses while protecting nearby residential areas. Development should provide safe access, adequate parking, landscaping, and buffering. Where sewer is available, lot sizes may vary based on the proposed use. Without a sewer, lots of approximately one acre may be needed to accommodate septic systems and drainage. Site design should incorporate stormwater management practices that protect nearby water resources and minimize environmental impacts. Residential uses may be permitted by a special use permit if they meet the standards of the General Residential Designation.

Standards

Development within the Commercial Designation should generally follow standards similar to the Township's Commercial zoning district. Where appropriate, commercial development should support the Township's Complete Streets objectives by providing safe pedestrian and bicycle accommodations and connections to existing or planned sidewalks, pathways, adjacent properties, incorporate access management techniques, where appropriate, including shared driveways, coordinated entrances, and internal circulation to improve safety and traffic flow. Minimum lot area should be 12,000 square feet where sewer is available, and approximately one acre where sewer is not available. Minimum lot width should be 66 feet, and maximum building height should be 40 feet. Residential uses should meet minimum dwelling sizes of 720 square feet for single-family dwellings, 600 square feet per unit for two-family dwellings, and 420 square feet per unit for multiple-family dwellings, with all buildings at least 12 feet wide. Minimum setbacks should be 25 feet in the front yard, 10 feet on the sides, and 10 feet in the rear, or 50 feet where adjacent to a residential district.

Industrial Designation

Purpose

The Industrial Designation is intended to accommodate industrial, warehousing, airport-related, research and development, and other high-intensity uses that support the Township's economy and employment base.

Structure

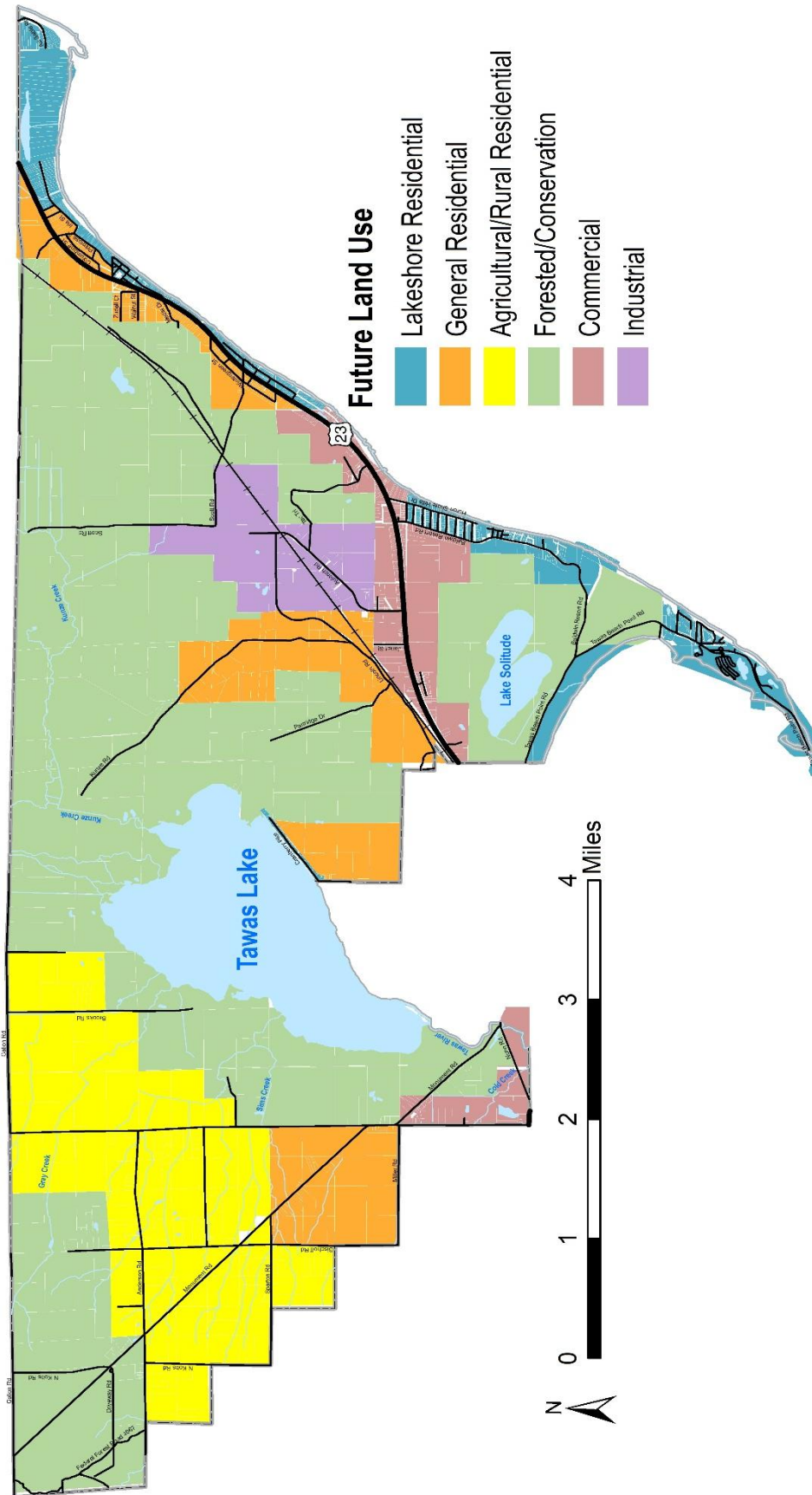
This designation is located east of the General Residential Designation and north of the Commercial Designation. It is also within the Township's Downtown Development Authority area and includes the airport and surrounding lands suited for industrial and employment-generating uses.

Intent

The Industrial Designation intends to provide an area for industrial and related uses while minimizing impacts on nearby residential and commercial areas. Development should include adequate access, screening, buffering, and site design to reduce noise, traffic, and other potential impacts. Lot sizes should vary based on the needs of the proposed use.

Standards

Development within the Industrial Designation should generally follow standards similar to the Township's Industrial zoning district. Minimum lot area should be 12,000 square feet with a minimum lot width of 75 feet. Maximum building height should not exceed 50 feet. Minimum setbacks should include a 25-foot front yard, 10-foot side yard, and 30-foot rear yard. Where an industrial property abuts another zoning district, side and rear setbacks should increase to 50 feet.



Airport Approach Zone Overlay

Purpose

The Airport Approach Zone Overlay is intended to protect the safe and efficient operation of the airport while minimizing potential hazards to aircraft and limiting development that may be incompatible with airport operations. The overlay applies additional standards to properties located within the Airport Approach Zones and is intended to reduce risks to public safety, protect airport infrastructure, and guide compatible land use patterns.

Structure

The Airport Approach Zone Overlay encompasses lands located within the designated Airport Approach Zones. Development intensity is limited based on proximity to airport operations, with lower densities required in areas closest to flight paths and greater flexibility in areas farther from the runway. Underlying zoning districts remain in effect, but development must also comply with the standards of the overlay.

Intent

The Airport Approach Zone Overlay intends to encourage land uses and development patterns that are compatible with airport operations and aircraft activity. Low-intensity uses, open space, agriculture, and similar uses are generally encouraged, while high-density development, noise-sensitive uses, large public gathering places, and uses that create aviation hazards are discouraged or prohibited. Development should be designed to minimize potential conflicts related to safety, noise, lighting, wildlife attraction, and airspace protection.

Standards

Development within the Airport Approach Zone Overlay should maintain low population densities consistent with airport safety objectives and the applicable Airport Overlay standards. Maximum permitted population densities are 5 people per acre in Zones 1, 2, and 5; 25 people per acre in Zone 3; and 40 people per acre inside buildings and 75 people per acre outside buildings in Zone 4. Clustered development may be permitted where the overall density is maintained and required open space remains undeveloped.

Development should avoid uses that create hazards to aircraft operations, including hazardous materials, smoke, steam, glare, standing water, or large concentrations of people. Structures shall comply with FAA height limitations, utilities should be placed underground where feasible, lighting should be shielded and directed downward, and landscaping should consist of low-growing vegetation compatible with airport operations.

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"Tawas Point State Park" by Tom Emery

Adoption

Chapter 9

Master Plan Adoption

Plan Coordination & Review

In accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended), Baldwin Township notified adjacent communities, regional agencies, and other relevant entities of its intent to prepare an updated Master Plan and requested their cooperation and comment. The draft Master Plan was subsequently transmitted to the Baldwin Township Board for authorization to release the document for the required review period on (insert date). Following approval, the plan was distributed to all required parties and made available for public review on the Baldwin Township and Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) websites, as well as at the Township offices.

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held by the Baldwin Township Planning Commission on (insert date) to receive additional input from residents, property owners, and stakeholders. Notice of the public hearing was published in accordance with statutory requirements in the (name) Newspaper on (date) and (Date). All comments received during the 63-day review period were reviewed during the public hearing.

Adoption

The Planning Commission adopted the Master Plan by resolution on (date). The Township Board formally adopted the Master Plan by resolution on (date). A notice of final adoption was transmitted to all required entities on (date).

Plan Implementation

Effective implementation of this Master Plan will require continued coordination among the Township Board, Planning Commission, administrative staff, residents, and public and private partners. The Plan serves as a policy framework to guide decision-making and manage growth and change within Baldwin Township. Implementation will occur through a combination of tools, including the Zoning Ordinance, supplemental regulations, capital improvements, funding programs, administrative procedures, and day-to-day land use decisions such as site plan review and rezoning.

Zoning Ordinance

Consistent with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, the Township's Zoning Ordinance is grounded in and guided by this Master Plan. The Act requires that zoning be based on a plan designed to

promote public health, safety, and general welfare; encourage the appropriate use of land; prevent incompatible land uses; conserve natural resources; and ensure that development occurs in a coordinated and efficient manner.

The Zoning Ordinance is the primary regulatory tool used to implement the Master Plan. It establishes permitted uses, development standards, and review procedures that shape how land is used and developed within the Township. To remain effective, the Zoning Ordinance should be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure consistency with the goals, objectives, and Future Land Use Map outlined in this Plan. Amendments to zoning regulations and decisions on rezonings and special land uses should be evaluated for alignment with the Master Plan to support orderly, balanced, and sustainable development.

Grants & Capital Improvement Plan

The Master Plan serves as a guide for future public investment and service decisions, including the preparation of the local budget, pursuit of grant funding, and administration of utilities and public services. To support implementation, the Township should prioritize and plan for capital improvement projects such as infrastructure upgrades, park improvements, and facility needs.

A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is an important tool for this process, providing a prioritized schedule of anticipated projects over a defined timeframe. The CIP identifies project costs, potential funding sources, and implementation timing, allowing the Township to coordinate investments in a fiscally responsible and strategic manner. As both a budgetary and policy document, the CIP helps ensure that public expenditures align with the goals, objectives, and Future Land Use recommendations of this Master Plan.

Legal Documentation

Notice of Intent to Update the Master Plan



Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

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

Notice of Intent to Update Master Plan: Baldwin Township

March 4, 2025

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

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

Regional
Cooperation
Since
1968

Please complete and return to NEMCOG.

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

An
Equal Opportunity
Employer

Affidavit of Mailing – Notice of Intent

AFFIDAVIT OF MAILING

Notice of Intent to Update Master Plan

I, Theresa Huff, certify that the communities and agencies on the attached list were notified of Baldwin Township's intent to update the Master Plan. The notification was sent on March 3, 2025, by first class mail and in accordance with Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended.

1. *Tawas City
Po Box 838
Tawas City, MI 48763*
2. *AuSable Township Planning Commission
4420 North US 23
Au Sable, MI 48750*
3. *East Tawas
760 Newman Street
East Tawas, MI 48730*
4. *Tawas Township Planning Commission
PO Box 147
Tawas City, MI 48764*
5. *Wilber Township Planning Commission
3120 Sherman Rd
East Tawas, MI 48730*
6. *Iosco Co Board
PO Box 778
Tawas City, MI 48764*
7. *Iosco County Road Commission
3939 West M-55
Tawas City, MI 48763*
8. *Iosco Co Transit Corporation
1036 Aulerich Drive
East Tawas, MI 48730*
9. *DTE Energy
1 Energy Plaza
Detroit, MI 48226*
10. *Consumers Energy
One Energy Plaza
Jackson, MI 49201-2276*

Transmittal Letter of Draft Plan

Public Hearing Notice

Resolution of Adoption Planning Commission

Resolution of Adoption Township Board

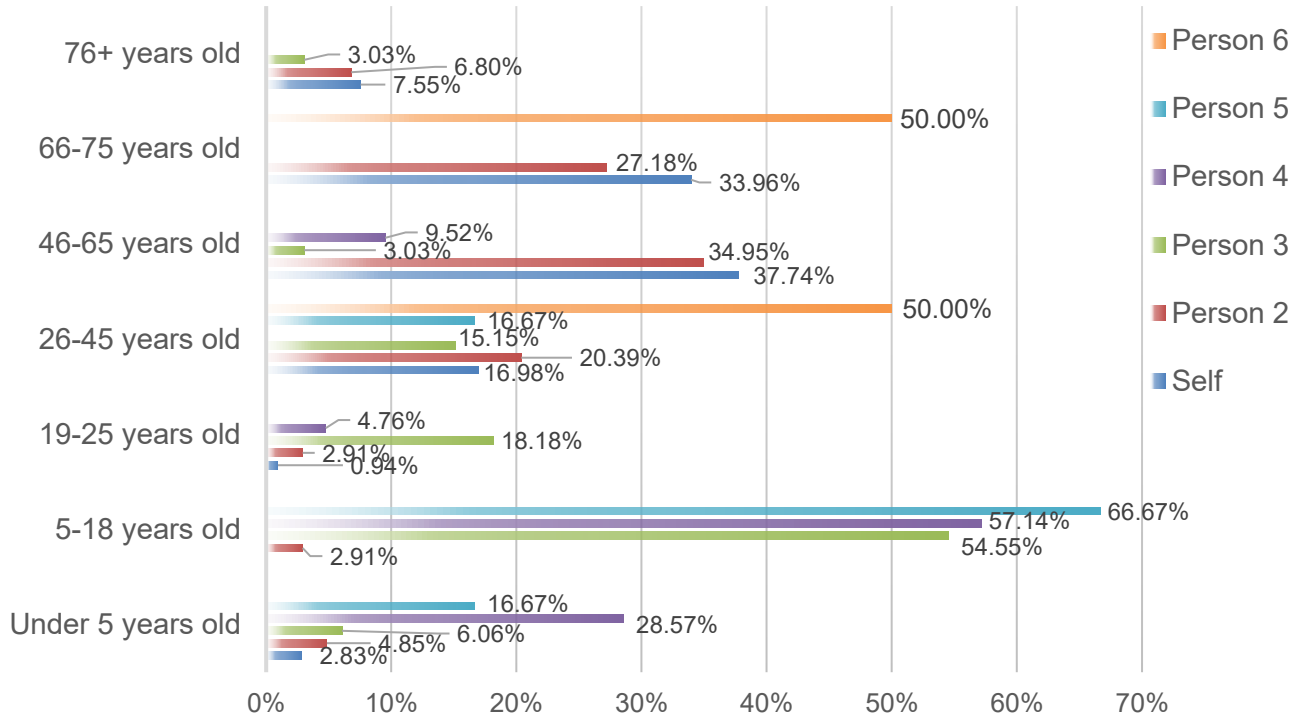
Affidavit of Mailing – Final Plan



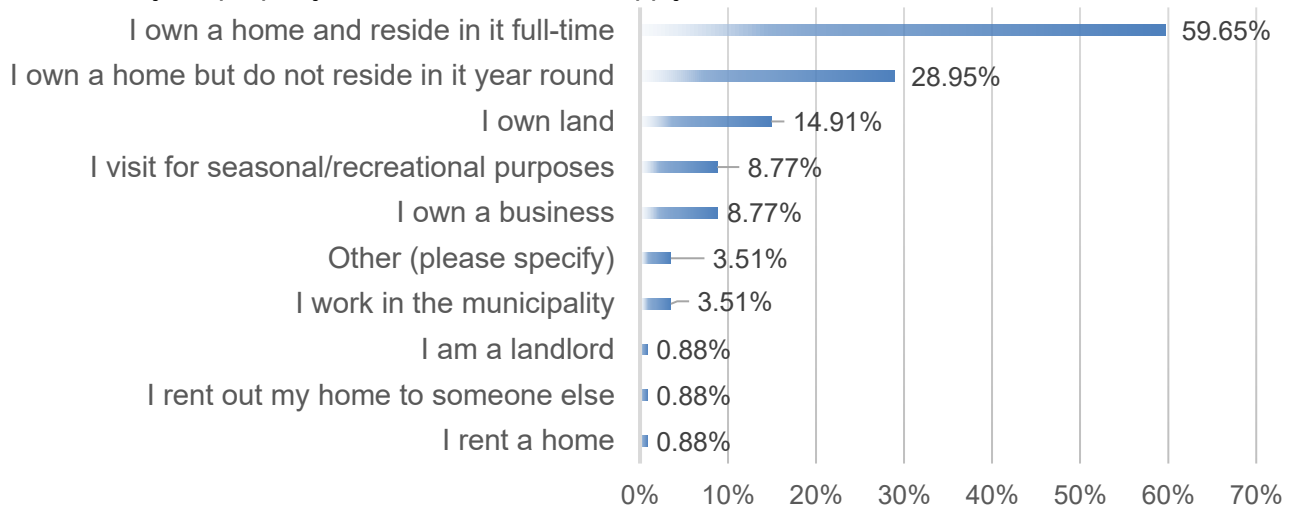
Complete Survey Results

Appendix

1. Enter the age of the members of your household, including yourself.



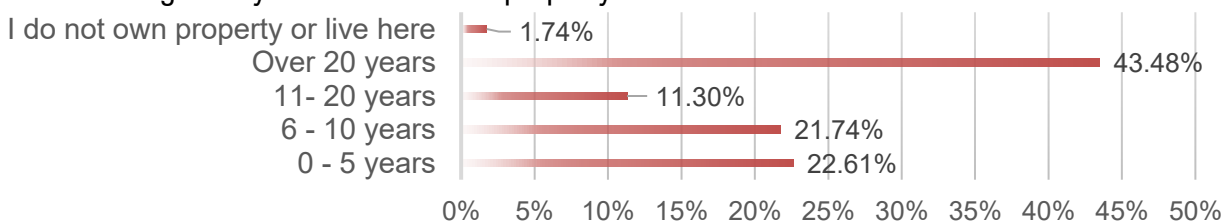
2. What is your property interest? Mark all that apply.



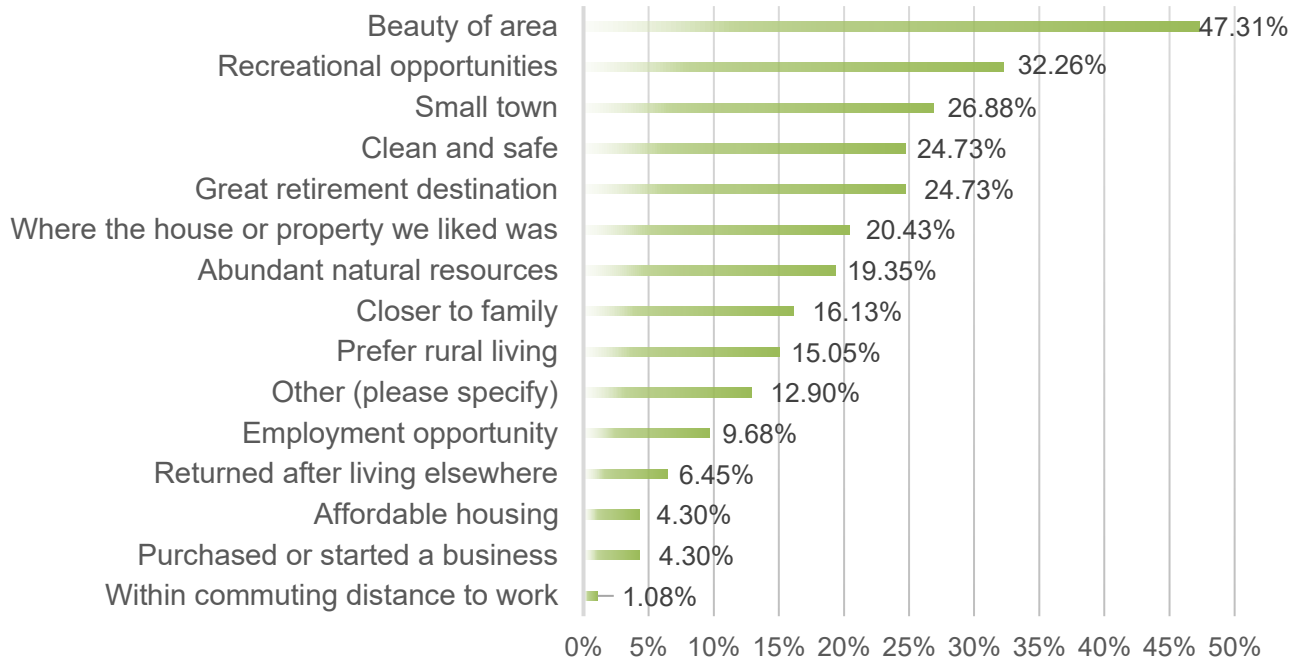
Other Responses:

- Live on sailboat in summer months
- I own a home/reside full time in East Tawas
- My mother owns the land and house I reside in. I do not pay rent.
- Also own a guest house

3. How long have you lived or owned property here?



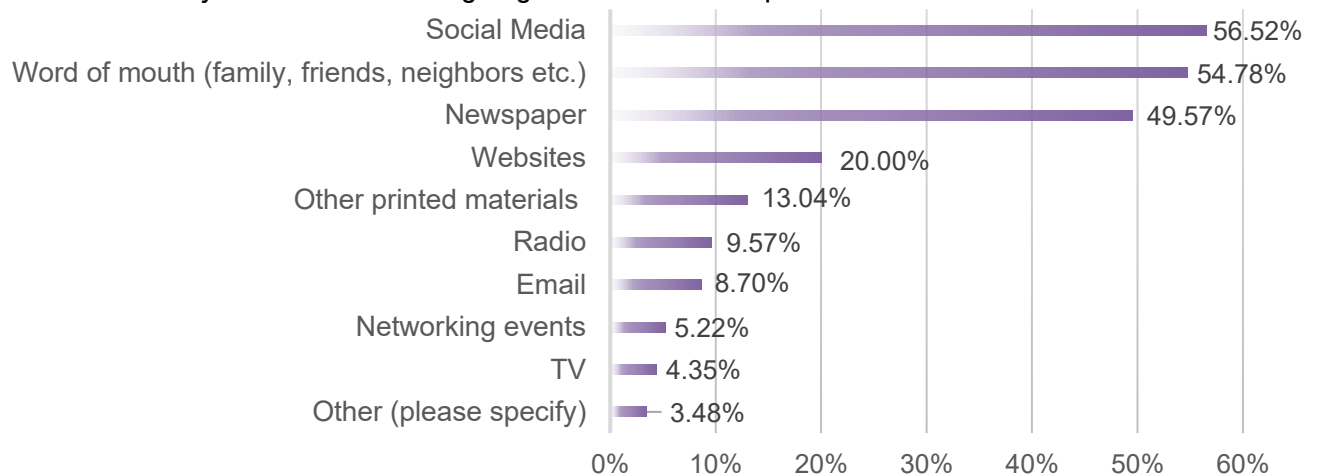
4. If you are not originally from here, what made you move or buy property here?



Other Responses:

- Mom from the area
- Family estate
- My parents moved here when I was a child
- Beach & Lake Huron
- Business transfer
- Tawas Bay
- Bought moms house from her estate
- Family used to live here.
- Been a summer resident, several years of year around, all my life.
- Lake Huron
- Originally purchased as a summer home on the lake
- NA-I own a home in East Tawas but not located in Baldwin Township

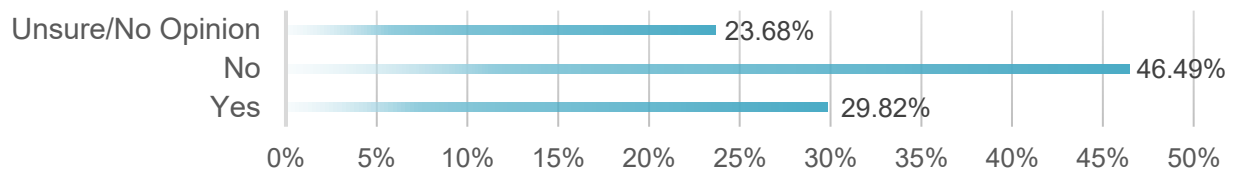
5. How do you find out what is going on in the Township?



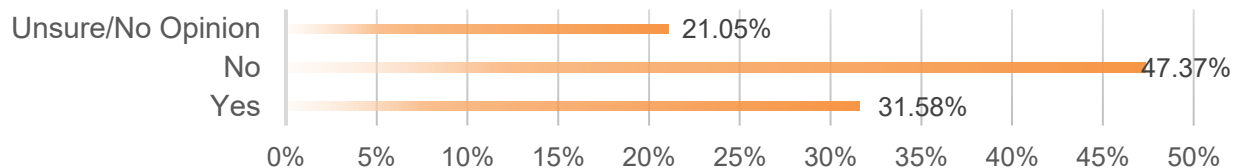
Other Responses:

- Look at Township meeting minutes
- See it happen, it's a small town.

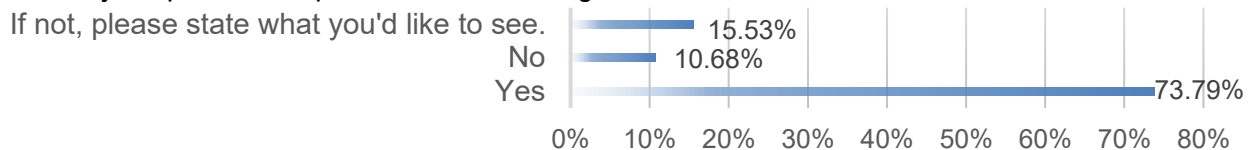
6. Do you support the development of Utility-Scale Solar Energy Facilities on Agricultural land?



7. Do you support the development of Utility-Scale Wind Energy Facilities on Agricultural land?



8. Are your public transportation needs being met?



Other Responses:

- Connecting and safe paths which do not require use of shoulder of 23 for kids
- Does not apply to us
- More delivery and transportation options. Right now my needs are met. In the future, I may need help with this.
- Commuter rail/bus along the US 23 corridor from Oscoda to Tawas city.
- More Uber type service
- Uber type
- More mass transit and "Lyft" options
- No bike path. Us 23 is dangerous path.
- more days, longer hours. Uber, cabs. Transport to airports.
- Taxi service
- We need uber/Lyft in the area
- I would like to see more access for transportation to medical appointments.
- Uber or similar encouraged/Taxi services
- Bike/Walking Paths - more info on Ride Share Programs

9. Are there any roads or intersections that you consider unsafe?

- 23 & Newmann
- 23 & Tawas Beach Road, 23 & Newman, 23 & Wally World
- 23 and Walmart
- 55 and Plank, although I don't think it's in Baldwin Township
- Aulerich and 23
- Aulerich Road-gas station exits/entrances - turning lane blocks ROW lane - certain times are extremely busy. Speeding
- down Tawas Beach Rd, especially the campers.
- Aulrich rd. and us23
- Ausable dune trail
- Baldwin resort and 23, many side road with blocked view at corners
- Baldwin resort rd.
- Corner of Wilber and monument

- East Tawas and Tawas City are very unsafe for cyclists. Sidewalks are NOT bike paths!
- In general roundabouts are unnecessary, unsafe and generally not signed sufficiently. There needs to be more opportunities for pedestrians to safely cross US 23.
- Intersection by the state dock - turning left into that parking lot is super unsafe. Need either a turn light or close that off.
- Lake st. In Tawas City. Right along the railroad track.
- Leaving the Walmart parking lot. US23 should remain as is. Do not reduce lanes
- M55 and Plank
- Miner's Grove Corner. Cars in their parking lot block vision down the road making it difficult to pull out.
- Miners Grove corner Miller/Wilber Rd
- Monument and Wilbur area. Monument Road is a speedway, not safe to walk or bike down - no shoulder at all!
- Newman St/23
- No X 13
- No. Just unsafe drivers
- On Tawas Beach Road near the State Park, additional signage would improve safety. After the long stretch of roadway through the forest, there should be clearer notices that drivers are entering a residential area and must slow down to the posted speed limit. In particular, striping the pavement with "SLOW" around the curve by Timberland Resorts and the public beach access road would help reduce speeding traffic entering the State Park area. Although vehicles typically slow down after Jerry's Marina, there is already significant foot traffic in

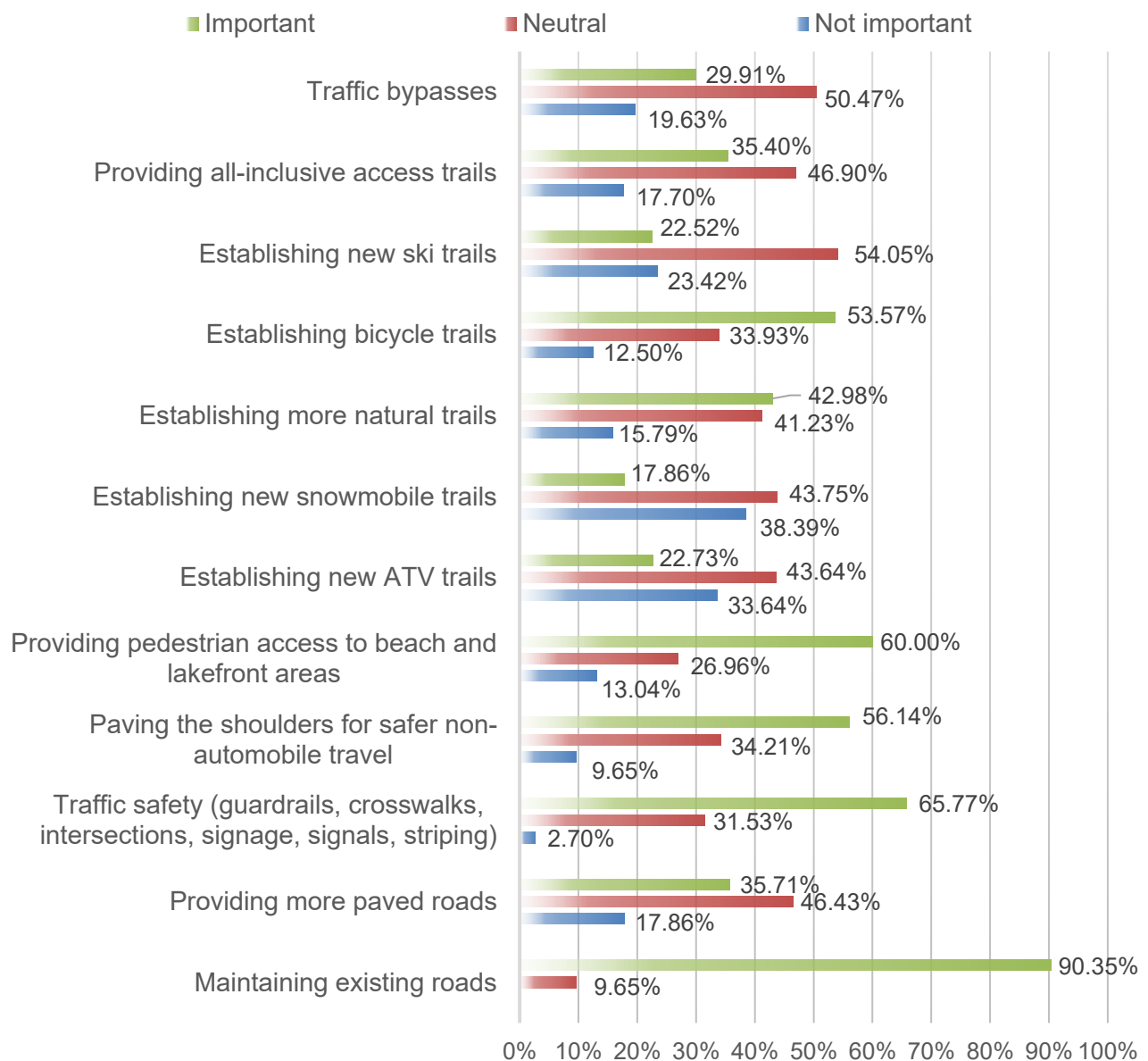
this stretch—especially near the bike path. Enhancing signage and roadway markings before that point would better alert drivers to the immediate slowdown zone and improve safety for both residents and pedestrians.

- US 23 from Baldwin Resort to Scott road high speed drivers passing in the area all the time
- People who speed and pass on Route 23
- Plank rd. and M55 needs a traffic light .
- Plank road and m 55 also in front on the high school when school lets out. They just pull out in front of you leaving the school.
- Sparton and Kobs intersection
- Us23 T Baldwin resort
- Tawas Beach Rd & US23. People driving on 23 run the red light all the time and almost hit me or my family turning onto 23 from Tawas Beach.
- Tawas Beach Road and 23
- yes, the curve splitting Wilber road and Monument road
- Tawas Beach Road and Baldwin Resort Road. When turning left onto Baldwin Resort, people go around on the right in the bike path, it's so dangerous.
- Tawas Beach road at the curve just before Timberline Cabins. Need a flashing slow down sign there.
- Tawas Beach Road -the speed limit is not enforced in the 25 mph zone.
- TAWAS points FS and Robert Elliot
- The intersection at Big Boy where right turn only lane is-and drivers decide to speed and cut people off

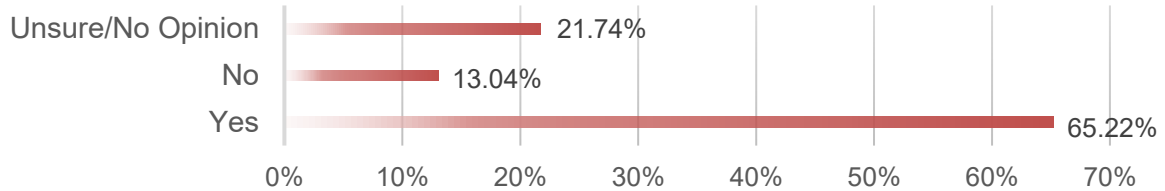
- The intersection of Sparton and Kobs Baldwin township only has the Northeast corner but it is nearly impossible to see what is coming down the hill if you are on Sparton pointing west due to the growth in the Northeast corner.
- US 23. A bike path along US23 in Baldwin Township would make biking a lot safer.
- Us23 and Aldrich rd. and the us23 stretch between big boy and Baldwin center

- US-23 and Newman streets intersections need to have a left turn lane for north and south bound traffic.
- US23 at the light where big boys is I've seen bicyclist almost hit there multiple times at the same location where someone was hit and killed
- Us23. Illegal passing on the right shoulder, everyday occurrence when waiting to pull in our driveway.

10. Please rate the following transportation goals:



11. Do you support local financial incentives to attract and retain new jobs and businesses?



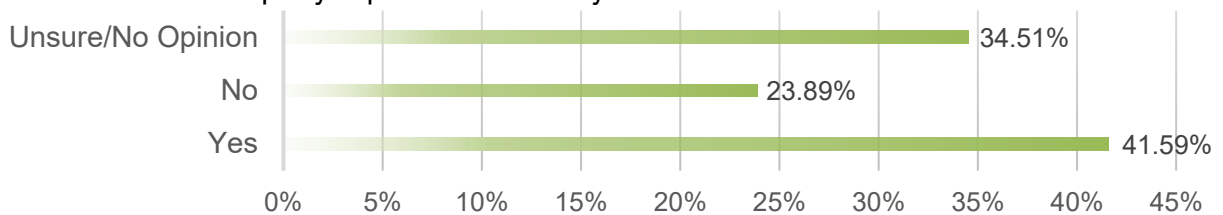
12. What physical improvements need to be made to the Downtown to enhance its appearance to residents and tourists?

- 4 way stops at all streets around the area. Wider sidewalks. Crossover to beach area. Turn arrow light at Newman street US 23.
- A city Police Department.
- Baldwin Tow ship Park needs more care and upgrades. Trash bins, easy kayak access to Tawas River, fishing clean up stations, paved parking lot and fencing.
- Baldwin Township doesn't have a downtown? More businesses
- Better walk/bike ability. Get the blighted building sold to new businesses and reused or demolished.
- Develop city areas to attract tourism
- Downtown Newman Street is great. Does Baldwin Township have a "downtown"?
- Eliminate the awful tasteless "I Pooped today" & "I Peed in the Lake" tshirts on display. VERY unattractive and insulting to such a nice town. Ewww....FIX THE SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF THE IOSCO COUNTY MUSEUM.
- Provide a portable raised stage for street concerts.
- Enforcing commercial property maintenance, including vacant land and property on us23.
- Figure out how to keep traffic moving on 23 at the Newman St intersection while ensuring pedestrian safety. Perhaps an overhead pedestrian bridge? Use stoplight arrows for turning left in either direction.
- For the downtown areas like East Tawas and Tawas City, I think the priority should be maintaining their small-town charm while thoughtfully enhancing the space. Efforts could focus on improvements that support walkability, local businesses, and community gathering, while preserving the character that makes the area unique. Modern enhancements should complement, not overshadow, the existing feel of the downtowns.
- I think the downtown area looks well maintained and clean.
- I think the downtown is great the way it is. That is a big part of the attraction to this area
- Improvement to some store fronts.
- In the downtown core setback requirements should be eliminated and commercial structures that encourage walking should be the focus.
- Is there a downtown?
- It is important to maintain the sidewalks, free from trip hazards.
- Less tee shirt shops. Less weird alternative health stores. New progressive owners for existing lodging, restaurant and tavern businesses.
- More and better eateries

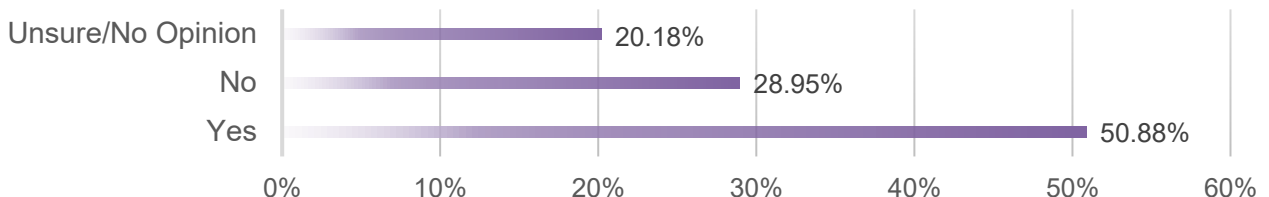
- More housing/homes/apartments, sledding hills, splash parks
- More parking. Close Newman Street during the summer to create a social district.
- More retail, restaurants and small businesses
- More shops and restaurants.
- New grocery store where sav a lot was
- no left turn on Neuman St. Get rid of campground on the Bay
- No more big boxes stores And let's keep our town small town vibe
- None that I can think of.
- None. It looks great.
- Remove signs from businesses that are no longer active. Put in some type of displays that show where the downtown district is.
- sidewalks and plantings as you head north on 23
- Stop sidewalk sales

- Stricter code enforcement of existing laws
- Sub restaurant (Jimmy John's, Jersey Mikes).
- Take down old signs, make sure empty buildings are maintained, plant trees along the roadway (keeping visibility open)
- Traffic light at Newman needs to have turn arrow very dangerous
- Try to get businesses in any vacant buildings. Work towards updating unsightly buildings/structures.
- Update, include fun things to do or go see in seasons
- Walmart could use a outdoor makeover. There is a lot of trash everywhere. Meijer would be better for us!
- What downtown.?
- Where is the downtown area of Baldwin Township? I am familiar with the business district, but I would not consider that a downtown area.

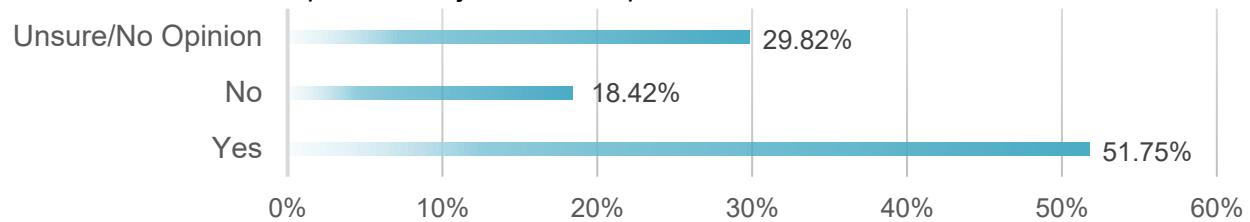
13. Should the municipality expand commercially?



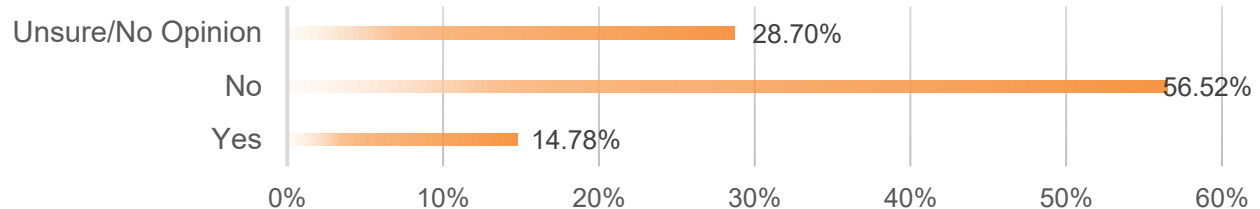
14. Social districts allow you to have open alcohol within district boundaries. Should this be allowed in an appointed downtown district?



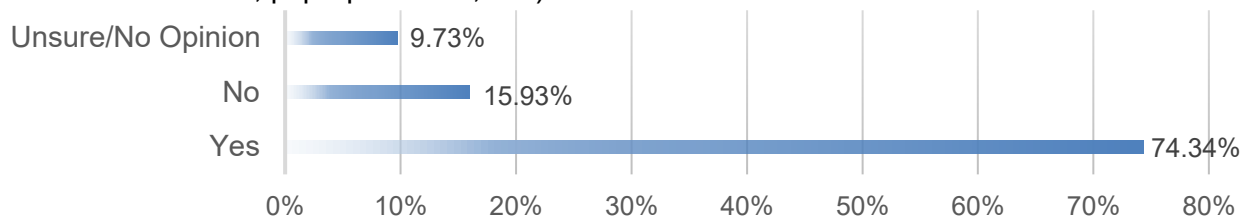
15. Should municipal infrastructure extend beyond the municipal limits to encourage economic development in adjacent municipalities?



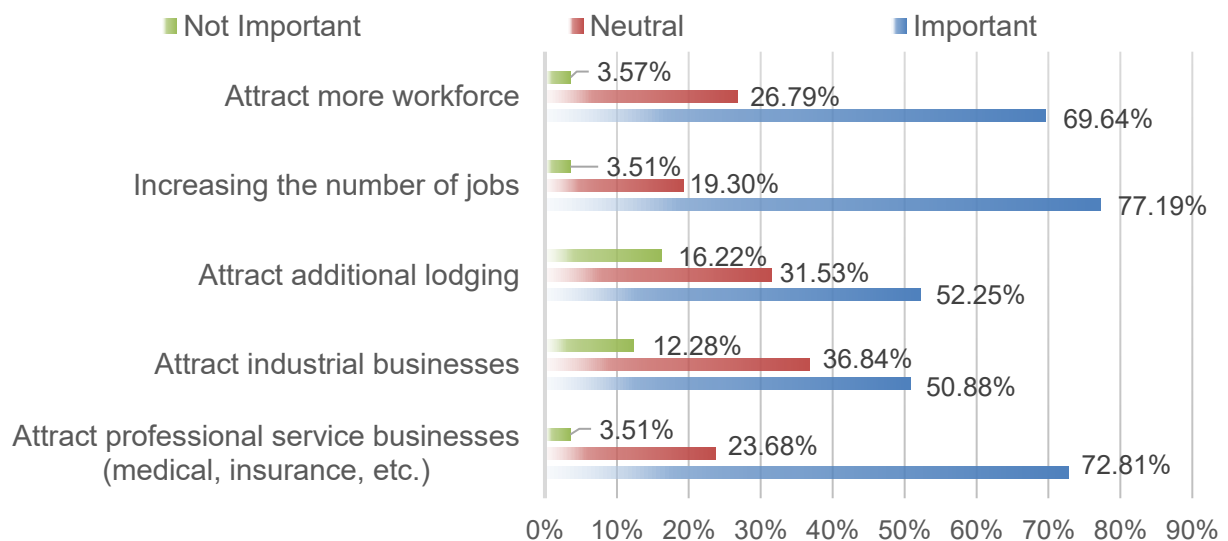
16. Should those businesses or residents outside the limits be charged more for water and sewer services than municipal residents pay?



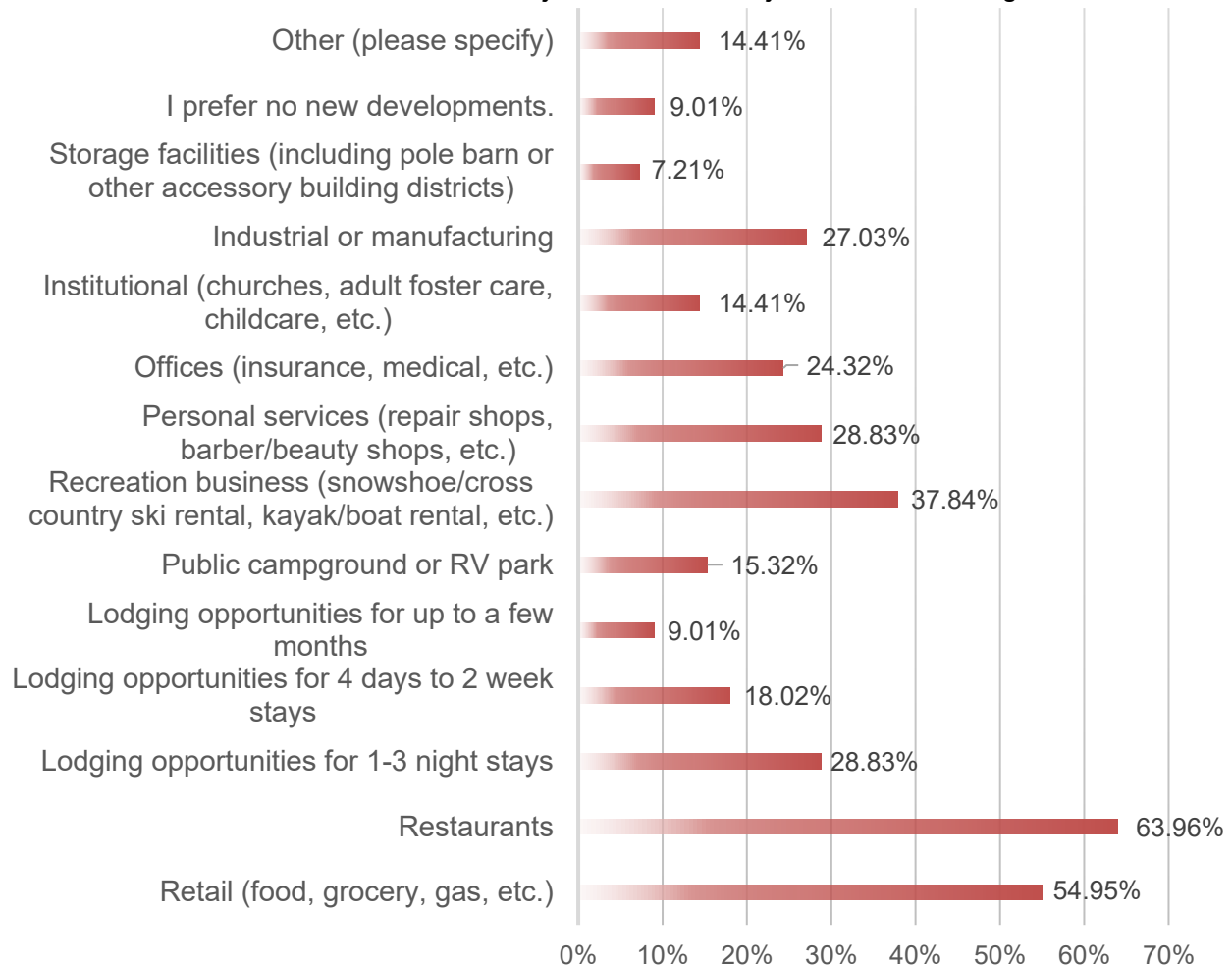
17. Should mobile or temporary businesses be allowed on public property? (Food trucks, transient sales, pop-up markets, etc.)



18. Are the following economic development concepts important?



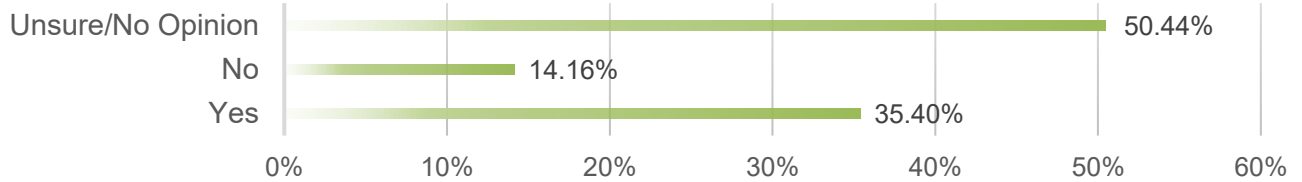
19. What services or businesses would you like to see or you feel are missing?



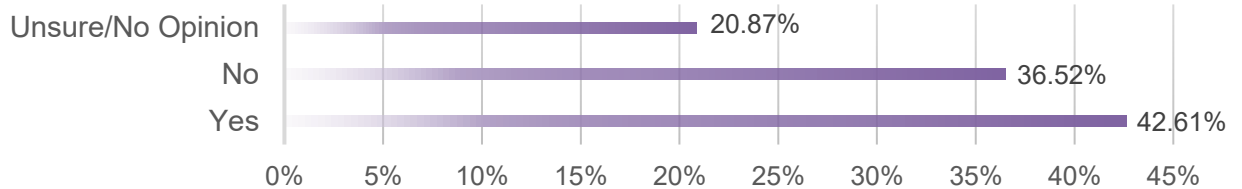
Other Responses:

- I would like to see some guidelines / restrictions on rental properties (VRBO, Air B&B)
- A decent hospital
- Family or teen business. Arcade/fun center.
- Home improvement stores with bigger selection
- Community indoor pool.
- Housing rental affordable
- Use vacant buildings
- Children's indoor activities
- I think there is room for ALL types of developments, but not an oversaturated market
- The park on Nunn Road needs serious improvement.
- Planet fitness with all the obesity
- A city Police Department
- Clean up the lodging properties that are setting empty.
- NO MORE DISPENSARIES OR SMOKE SHOPS!!
- Nice restaurants (Chains) Darden, Panara, Olive Garden, etc...
- Prefer to use existing business spaces - leave the natural beauty alone

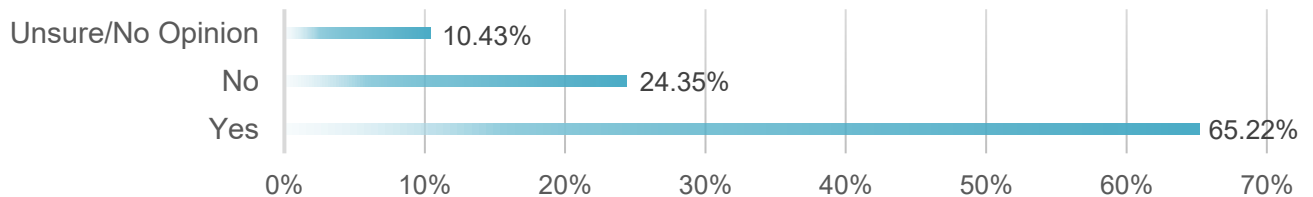
20. If you were going to open a business today, would you do so here?



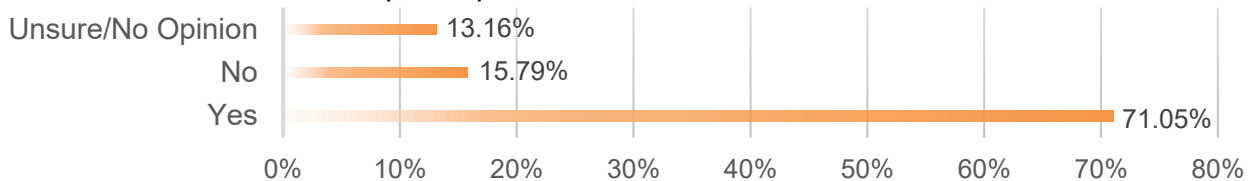
21. Are vacation rentals a problem in residential areas?



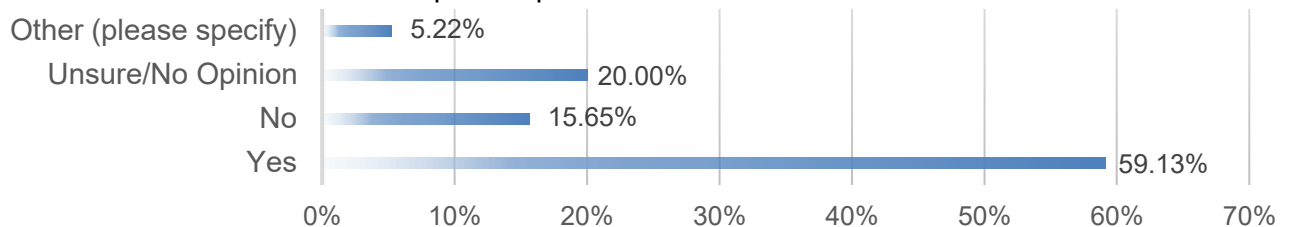
22. Do you feel that short-term rentals such as Airbnb or Vrbo should be held to a certain number?



23. Should there be a business permit process for Airbnb or Vrbo rentals?



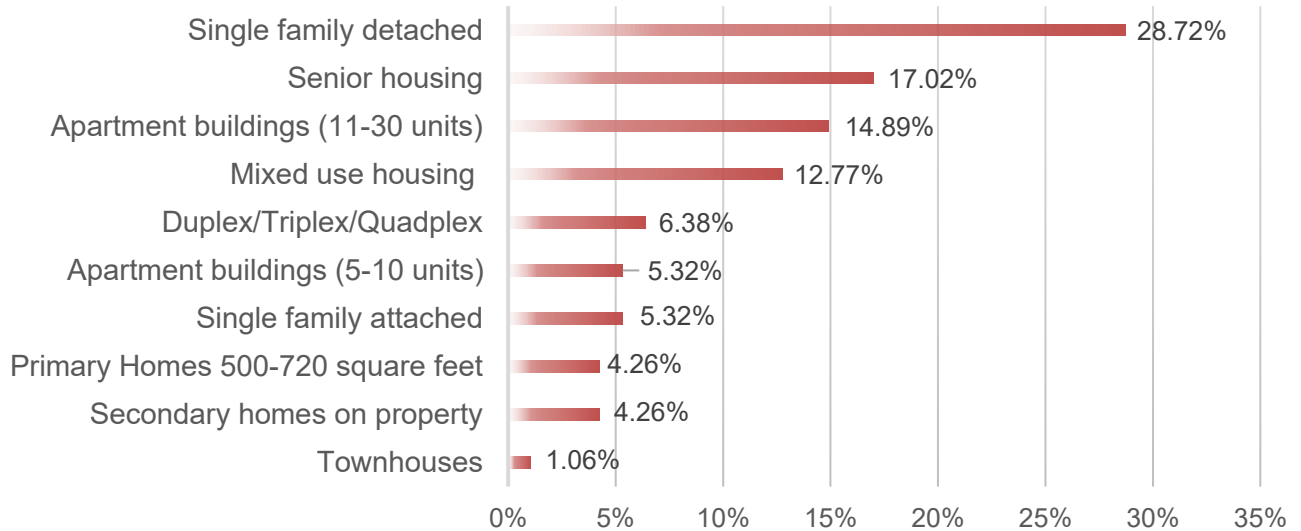
24. Should there be an annual inspection process for rental units?



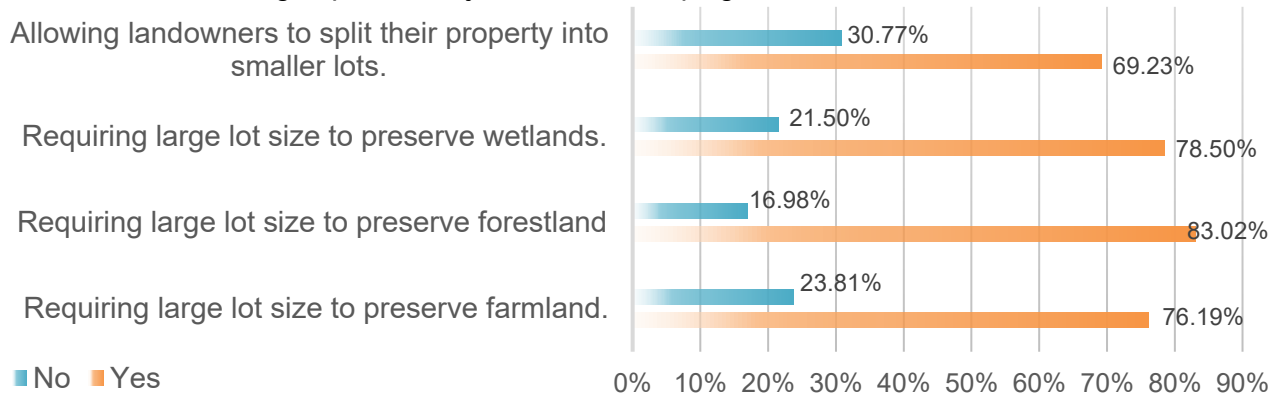
Other Responses:

- If we require an annual inspection for rental units it should include all motel hotel's to be fair
- Annual inspection for safety, Fire and Water and Sewer. There should also be limits on the number of rental occupants to 2 times the number of bedrooms. Fines too.
- short term rentals are an enormous problem.
- 1 year for cause, 3 to 5 year if no issues
- These people are hiding their assets
- Yes, safety areas need-up to be maintained, including fire prevention, garbage, etc

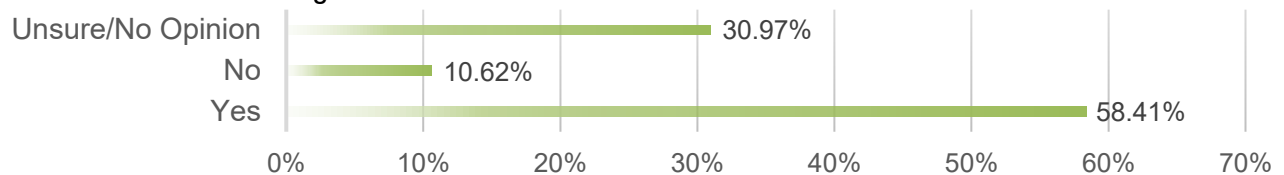
25. Do you feel any of the following should be pursued when developing housing in the area?



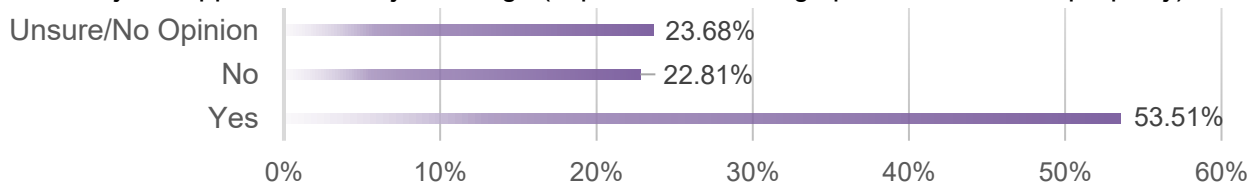
26. Are the following important to you when developing an area?



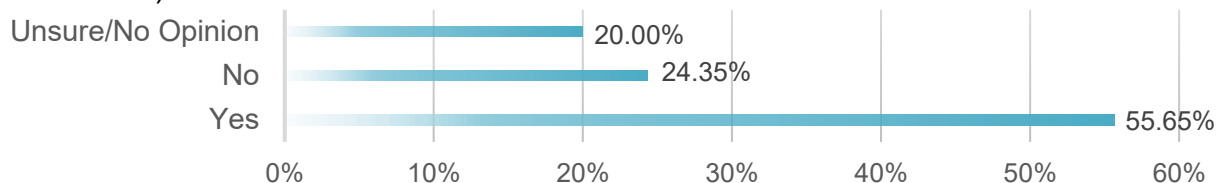
27. Should the municipality find and promote opportunities to encourage an increase in affordable housing?



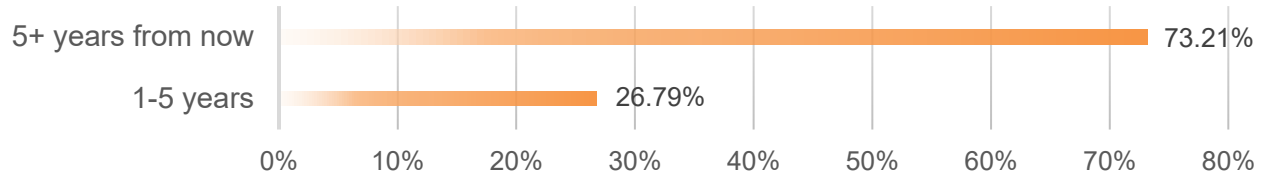
28. Do you support accessory dwellings (separate small living space on the same property)?



29. Do you support garage apartments? (living space above or inside current garage structure)



30. If you are looking to move from your current residence, how long until you do so?



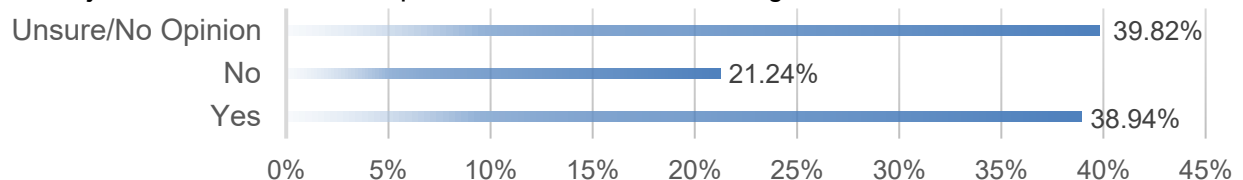
31. If you are moving in the future, why?

- Age
- Because of the Airbnb or Vrbo rentals. It should not be allowed, do you want it next to your home?
- Better health care
- Closer to work.
- Dead
- died
- Downsize due to cost of living
- Downsizing
- Get away from horrible neighbor who does not obey rules, brandishes a gun and law enforcement won't deal with them, confronts beach walkers, doesn't leash their dog, makes life hell for all the neighborhood.
- Having a Airbnb or Vrbo rentals next to my home. I live in a residential neighborhood, not a commercial area. That is what a Airbnb or Vrbo rentals are a business!! If the township thinks ok to have, put it next to your home!
- House is too big for one person and I'm a senior sis
- Investment opportunities
- Lack of a walkable business district.
- Looking for affordable independent living
- Michigan TAXS under democrats, warmer climate
- most likely due to medical issues
- Move into a larger home
- Moving to the area once kids are launched
- Need bigger space
- No good medical care in area now.
- No plans to move
- permanently to Tawas
- Plan on staying until I get too old to live here.
- Poor medical care
- Possible downsize
- Retirement X3
- To be closer to family. Live in ranch style, single story home.
- To get away from feeling like a city
- Upgrade
- Very small town and I am used to small town. But, need excellent bike paths, a public swimming pool that includes lap swimming, disc golf locations for hiking and playing. Need kayak launch locations. Need local retailers rather than just one Big Box store, need local bakery, need local soup and sandwich places, need a wine bar. So much is missing to make it a vibrant place to live and retire. Need bicycle parking downtown. Needs craft stores.
- We bought a vacation home on Tawas Point, and we plan to retire there in the future.

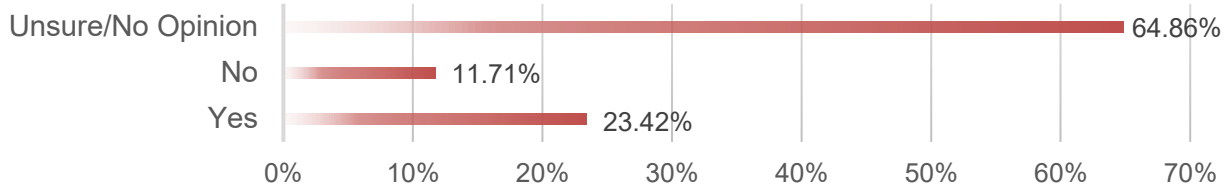
32. If you are moving, where are you moving to?

- A town near a lake and a golf course that promote the above areas I noted that are missing.
- Alpena ... a vibrant renaissance city.
- Away from Airbnb or Vrbo rentals!!
- Cemetery
- Farther up north
- Florida
- heaven hopefully
- I don't know. I love my home but can't live in fear.
- Iosco county
- Near family
- Not sure.
- Oakland county.
- Our home in east tawas
- permanently to Tawas
- Private inland lake
- Smaller residence
- Somewhere in Iosco County
- Southeast Michigan
- Stay in the same area in Baldwin township
- Staying local
- Wherever I can find affordable housing
- Within the county

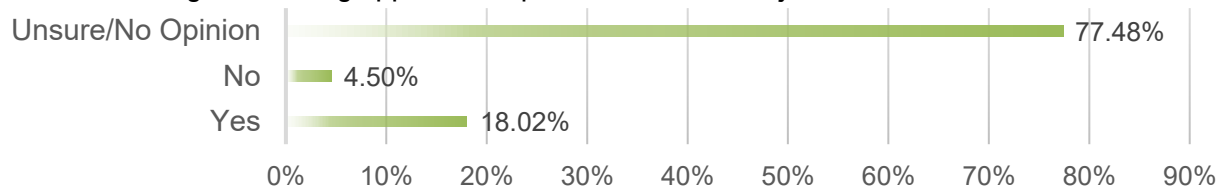
33. Do you feel that the township needs to enforce the Zoning Ordinance better?



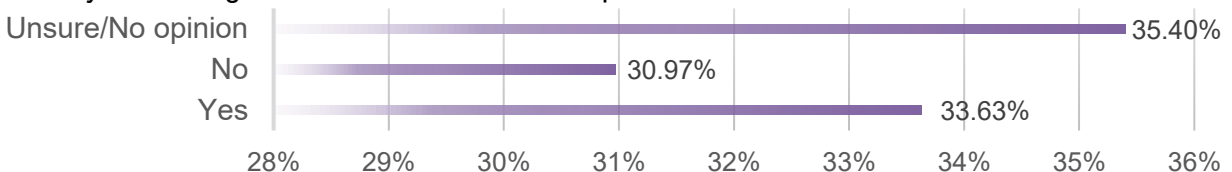
34. Is the Township responsive to questions on Zoning and Planning?



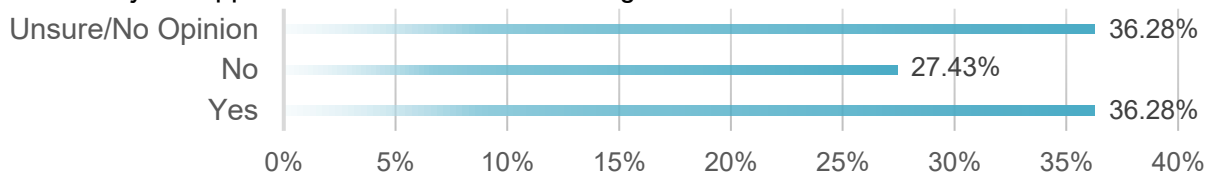
35. Are Planning and Zoning applications processed in a timely manner?



36. Do you feel blight is an issue in the Township?



37. Would you support an assessment to fund blight enforcement?



38. Is there anything additional you would like to share?

- As far as blight - our area seems to struggle with enforcing upkeep and I'd like to see that change. It's important for people to feel comfortable and motivated to invest in their spaces knowing it will pay to do so. When it comes to splitting property - there should be an ability to do this within reason. For example, many lots along our lakeshore are so small. To the extent that building on them is very difficult from even a regulations standpoint. The size of the lot needs to make sense and be able to accommodate a nice home (min. 3 bed 2 bath) with space on either side.
- Baldwin township needs the closest city Police Department to respond to calls. The local sheriff's office has 2 road deputies that work days only and no weekends. It takes MSP troopers 45+ minutes to respond. East Tawas Police should Police Baldwin Township. You do have an east Tawas mailing address.
- Baldwin Twp does not enforce ordinances uniformly. There is preferential treatment given and some individuals are singled out for minor infractions. The snow fence ordinance is absurd, Nov 1 is too late to erect and April 1 is too early to remove snow fences in Michigan! Why isn't blight being addressed?
- Clean up tawas lake! Clean out the drains! Get rid of invasive weeds! Clean out streams so they can flow into the lake, like supposed too.
- Continue to support businesses already open. Especially with older buildings and infrastructure. We need assistance. Especially restaurants. Grants for exterior, growth, and other needs. Like the downtown development gives.
- For full-time residents, I think we do not want more short-term rental units here.
- Full time supervisor for Baldwin Township only.
- I live here because of the beauty and the ability to use my land as I want without interference from the township/government. At the same time, I do not want to see trash on private property/commercial facilities.
- I live in an area where there are drainage ditches. They are mowed in the summer and that is it. The grass cuttings are left for me to clean up! I do not feel I should have to maintain the ditches, why doesn't the road commission service them? Currently we keep them clean but as a senior it is getting harder to maintain them! Thank you.
- I live in Baldwin Township, just outside of the city limits, and I feel the communities that are downtown. Should offer the same rates for having an East Tawas address. I do not think it's fair that I have to pay more.
- I think we should be able to have access to the Township accessor at the Twp Hall not someone 3 county's away.
- I wish people would be responsive to township needs on committees and eliminate some of the old boys network. We need new and fresh ideas to drive this community forward.
- I would also like to be included in any email updates from Baldwin Township. Please add srdunlop5@gmail.com to your distribution list. Although we currently live in Royal Oak—where I serve on city boards such as the Traffic Committee and the Historic District

Commission—we have a vacation home on Tawas Point with the intent to eventually retire there. We would love to become more involved with Baldwin Township, East Tawas, Tawas City and the surrounding communities. Thank you for putting this survey together. We chose this location very intentionally and look forward to seeing the area continue to grow and thrive in the years ahead. Sincerely, Sean Dunlop

- I would like to see short term rentals in residential areas eliminated. It's terrible getting new neighbors every 3-7 days especially with groups that are too large for the house. Fines should be 20 times the nightly rent instead of a slap on the wrist. Five hundred dollars for a fine is one night's rent and a good investment. Management companies should be banned from owning and operating rentals in neighborhoods or there will be no communities or neighborhoods left. I would also like to see more access to Lake Huron.
- I would not like to live next to an air B&B. You lose the friendly neighborhood feeling.
- It would be nice if one who owns property in Baldwin Township could get answers that makes sense. It seems that every time you ask a question you get bounced from one person to the next and never get a decent answer.. It would seem the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing.
- Keep property taxes affordable and carefully regulate growth
- Like business should not be able to locate within 1-2 miles away. I.e. sings Chinese restaurant and you let a china buffet locate 2 blocks away. Also tobacco shops located within blocks of each other. Pizza places too numerous. Not enough good restaurants.
- More dust control, or pave or chip and seal the roads
- My experience with the assessment department has been a disaster.
- My home is a vacation rental when we aren't there. We've housed forestry staff, Walmart workers, neighbors families, and vacationers when we aren't using it.
- Please do not raise taxes!
- Please help us stop these Airbnb or Vrbo rentals! Galdwin Mi stopped it so can we!!!
- Please improve the park off Nunn Road.
- Please stop the Airbnb or Vrbo rentals!!!! Families can't even purchase homes, because homes are being bought to turn into Airbnb or Vrbo rentals. This also takes away from our local motels in the area. People are hiding their income with these Airbnb or Vrbo rentals. It's a business next to our homes! Residential should be residential not commercial!
- Property taxes are absurdly too high!!
- Question 25 allows only one answer. We need much more affordable housing for families and individuals. I am open to most of these choices
- Short term rentals are out of control in my neighborhood. Landlords allow access to other's private beach. Chairs are used by these strangers, sometimes broken. Tables are moved, etc.
- So many cars go around you where the solid white lines on US23 where we live when we are turning into our driveway. So dangerous happens all the time.
- Stop thinking about putting a berm down the center of US23!

- support housing for low income locals and don't be small minded about expanding business opportunities of all kinds (w exception of endless smoke shops), be flexible on zoning etc for small businesses and tourist based industry and ideas. ALTERNATE energy and protect our forests, wetlands and water are top priority
- The Assessor for Baldwin Township needs to be a permanent position within the Township. The current assessor in Roger's City is inept and only places the burden back on the landowner. Something needs to be improved, even if it costs the Township the salary of a full time well qualified and motivated assessor. This is important for residents; the County offices concur...
- The bike trail needs to be completed through our twp to connect East Tawas & Oscoda. US 23's shoulder is not a safe alternative
- The garage sale that goes on all summer on Baldwin Resort Road should not be allowed. Their signs at Baldwin Resort/Tawas Beach Rd are distracting and make it difficult to turn. Also, on US23 and Baldwin Resort, and hanging from the electrical lines above their house. I can't imagine this follows any ordinances.
- The last thing we need are more weed facilities. They open, they close, they reopen, they close and the smell is disgusting.
- This is a beautiful area. Thank you for being caring & concerned about the development and safety.
- Tired of all the VRBO's on my street. Huron st Baldwin Township a least 5 right now. Too much traffic from them. Remove the personal gate from US 23 to gravel road at the Huron Breeze condo cottages that are mostly vrbo. And create more traffic and noise
- To be able to see results of the physical walk around of our property for assessment.
- Today everything is about growth. Population ebbs and flows. People move places because they like the way it is but then they want to change everything and we lose the original features. Once they're gone, it's changed forever.
- Trash service for part time residents is a unsightly problem
- We need better Internet services! There's a lot of traffic on Lincoln would like to see bike path or sidewalks for safety.
- What is Blight? Unclear in survey
- Widen and maybe pave shoulders of North Monument Rd for people to safely walk or ride bicycles.