

Leelanau Township

Parks and Recreation Plan

2016-2021

Leelanau County, Michigan





**The Tip of the Leelanau Peninsula
Leelanau Township**



Leelanau Township Parks and Recreation Plan 2016-2021

Prepared for the:


Leelanau Township Board
Leelanau County, Michigan

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**added upon completion of final draft*





Introduction

To help guide future recreation improvements and enhancements, the Leelanau Township Board and Leelanau Township Recreation Committee initiated an update to the Leelanau Township Recreation Plan in 2015. The Plan is intended to identify the Township's highest recreation priorities and to offer an implementation road map for the recreation goals and objectives identified by the community throughout the various planning efforts.

The Plan is organized as follows:

Community Description

This section includes information about the Township's geography, history, planning and zoning, transportation, demographics, and natural features. The intent of this section is to provide a context for the plan that will assist in establishing goals.

Administrative Structure. This section explains the process through which decisions related to parks and recreation are made in the Township. Information is included on the structure and role of the Township Board and the Township Recreation Committee, and on recreation funding through the Township.

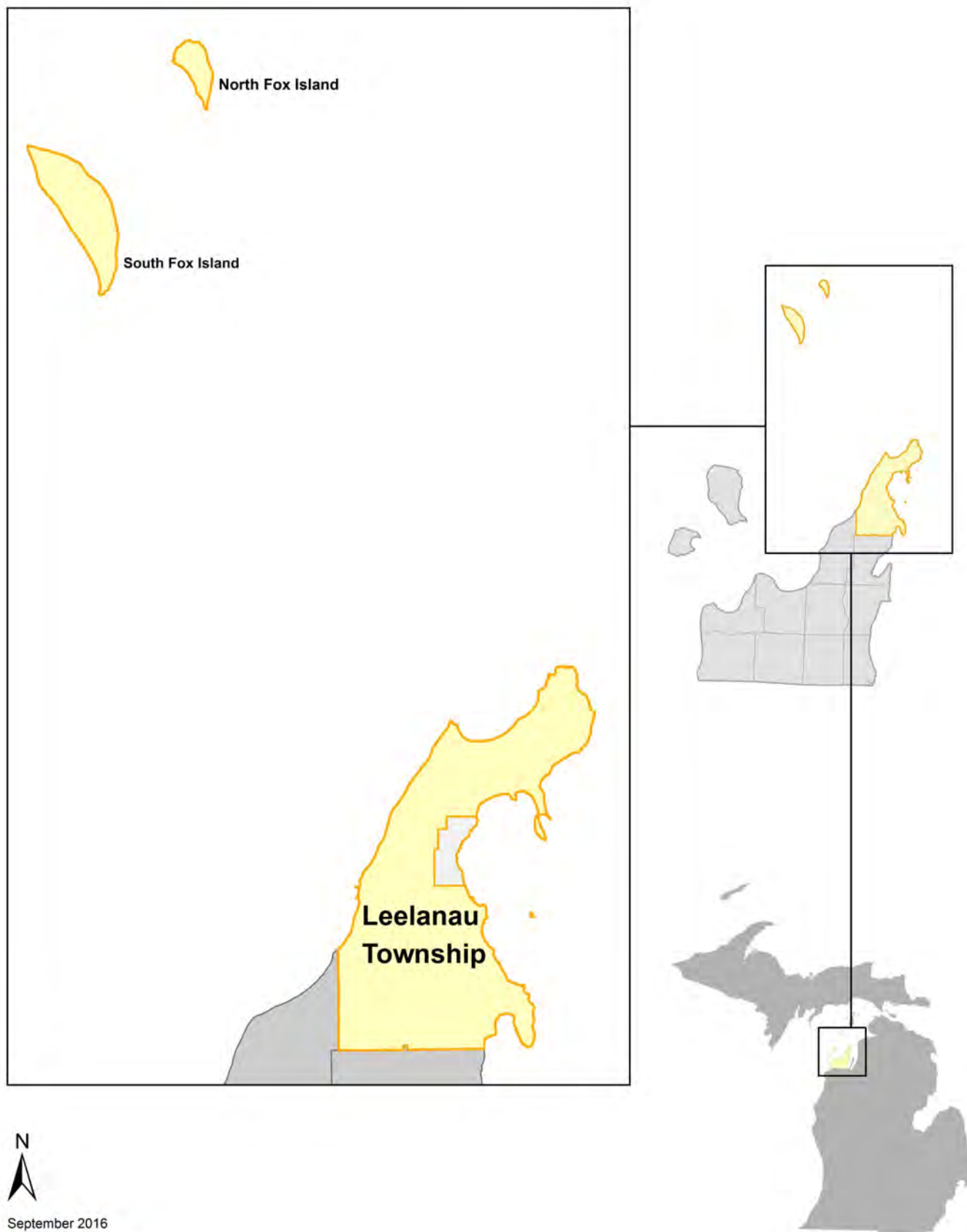
Recreation Inventory. Descriptions and inventories of existing recreational facilities in the Township, with a focus on Township-owned and managed properties.

Planning and Public Input. An explanation of how public input was gathered and used in developing and prioritizing recreation goals, objectives, and actions.

Parks and Recreation Goals and Objectives. This section describes the proposed recreation goals and improvements, and suggests specific implementation activities to achieve those goals.

This Plan was developed according to the *Michigan Department of Natural Resources Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans*.

Figure 1. Leelanau Township Location Map





Community Description

Leelanau Township is situated at the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula within Leelanau County and is surrounded by Lake Michigan with approximately 52 miles of shoreline. The Township also includes three offshore islands, South Fox Island and North Fox Island, which are located 15-20 miles northwest of the mainland in Lake Michigan, and Gull Island, which is located east of the mainland in Grand Traverse Bay.

In total, the Township encompasses 30,660 acres or 47.09 square miles of land, excluding the Village of Northport. The Village of Northport is located in the east-central portion of the Township. Omena, an unincorporated village, is located in the southeastern corner of the Township. Bordering local governments include the Village of Northport, Leland Township, Suttons Bay Township and the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. The City of Traverse City is located twenty (20) miles south of the Township's southern border.

The glaciers and erosion forces that shaped the peninsula's land mass left a variety of soil types and topographical features, including drumlins with high ridges and steep slopes, former lake bottoms and lake terraces, and sand dunes. The natural beauty of Leelanau Township is made up of a diverse landscape that supports agricultural production, many wooded areas, and miles of shoreline on Lake Michigan/Grand Traverse Bay with sandy beaches for activities and rocky beaches that are ideal for rock browsing. Farming, particularly horticulture, has been and continues to be a major economic factor in the Township. Agriculture also drives tourism, the other major economic driver in the Township. Visitors are attracted to the picturesque farmland and agriculturally based operations, such as vineyards with wineries and farm markets.

The draw to the Leelanau peninsula is first and foremost the Lake Michigan shoreline which has resulted in much of the residential development, both permanent and seasonal. However, large segments of the shoreline have remained relatively untouched as public parks and nature preserves have protected many types of habitats including sand dunes and wetlands.

Leelanau Township, including the Village of Northport, has a full complement of services and facilities available to residents and visitors: a public school, bank, shopping area, public library, many art galleries, a public airport, Leelanau Highlands Senior Complex, fire and rescue services and outdoor recreational opportunities. Natural gas is available to the residents of Northport and Omena. Private recreational opportunities are available at Northport Point, Cherry Home, and Omena Point.

The Northport Public School has Kindergarten through 12th grade and is located in the Village of Northport. Most of Leelanau Township is in the Northport Public School District, with the exception of the southwest portion in Sections 30, 31, and 32, which is in the Leland School District and Section 33 in the Suttons Bay School District. Police protection is provided by the Leelanau Sheriff's Department and the Michigan State Police with the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians Tribal Police providing additional protection when needed. The Township funds a Volunteer Fire Department for all Township and Village of Northport residents.

Figure 2. General Map

Leelanau Township



Planning and Zoning

Township Master Plan

The Leelanau Township 2010 Master Plan outlined the most appropriate uses of lands within the Township to enhance and protect the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens. The intention is to guide change in a manner that will conserve the economic resources and maintain the rural appearance and character of the area. *Please see Figure 3. Existing Land Use and Figure 4. Future Land Use.*

An evaluation of regional plans relevant to recreational land use and activities in Leelanau Township was completed as part of the recreation planning process, and is included as an appendix. The evaluation includes information on the Leelanau County General Plan, Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Plan 2014-2019, Northwest Michigan Regional Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and Investment Strategy 2008, and the Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route. *Please see Appendix A. Evaluation of Regional Plans.*

Township Zoning

In Leelanau County, each of the eleven townships and the three villages maintain and administer their own zoning authority. Leelanau Township has an established zoning ordinance from which the zoning administrator and the planning commission make their implementation and enforcement decisions. The Township provides certain areas in which public and private park and recreational facilities may be located. Any plans for new or expanded recreational facilities should be coordinated with the community to insure appropriate location for the proposed activity and consistency with the Township master plan and zoning ordinance. *Please see Figure 5. Zoning Districts.*

Transportation

The primary mode of transportation for residents within Leelanau Township is by automobile. The state highways include M-22 at the southern end of the Township and M-201 through the Village of Northport. The Township's M-22 corridor is part of the Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route, a state designated Pure Michigan Byway. Leelanau Township has an appointed representative on the Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Committee.

Public Transportation

The Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA), based in Traverse City, provides services to Leelanau County. On weekdays, a fixed bus route runs two times daily, from Northport to Suttons Bay, with connections available to Traverse City. This service provides rural communities with convenient, predictable and affordable transportation. Dial-a-ride, a demand response system, is also available.

Waterways Transportation

The Village of Northport has a public marina for boat travel to and from the Township. Private marinas are located in the Township.



Figure 3. Existing Land Use in Leelanau Township

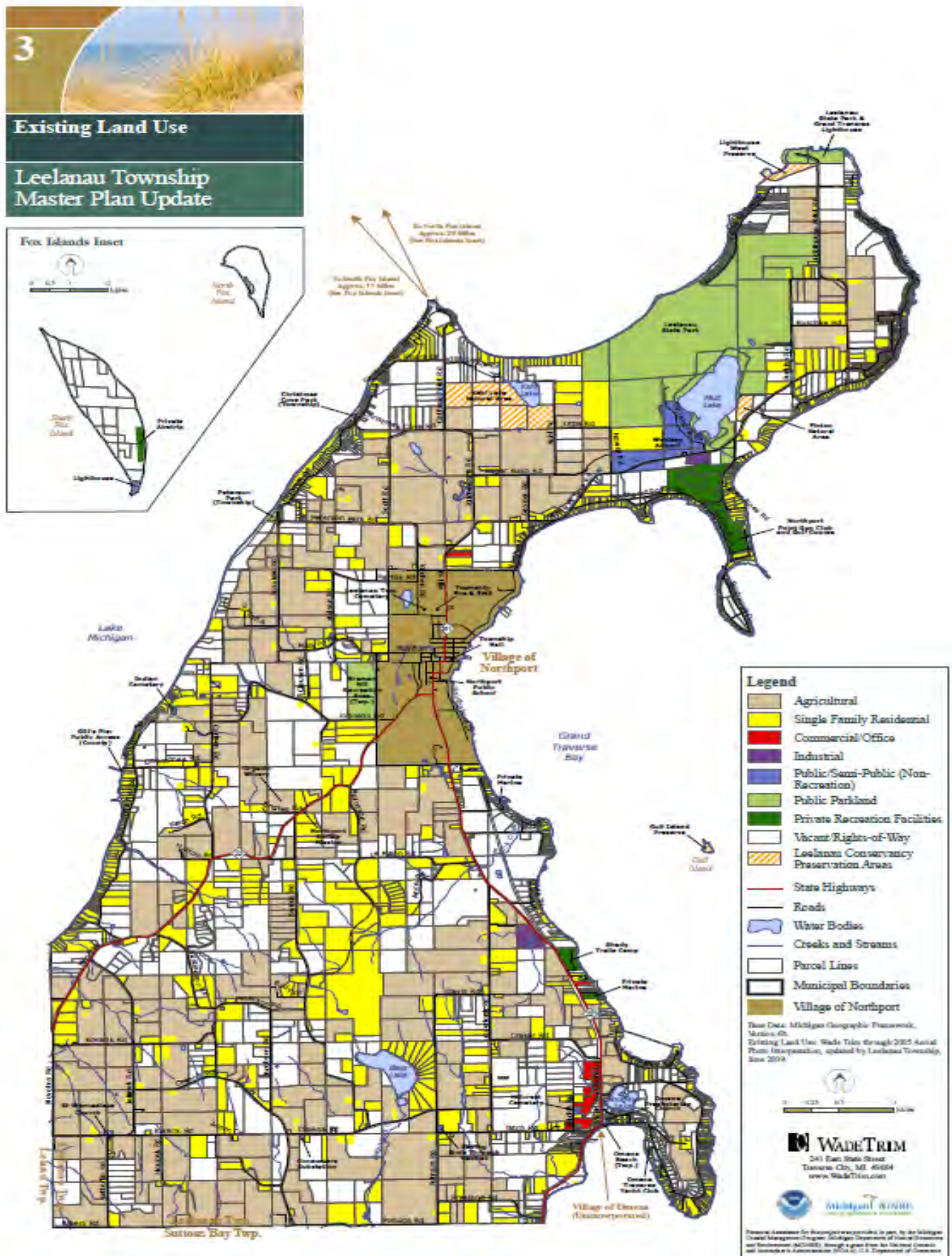


Figure 4. Future Land Use

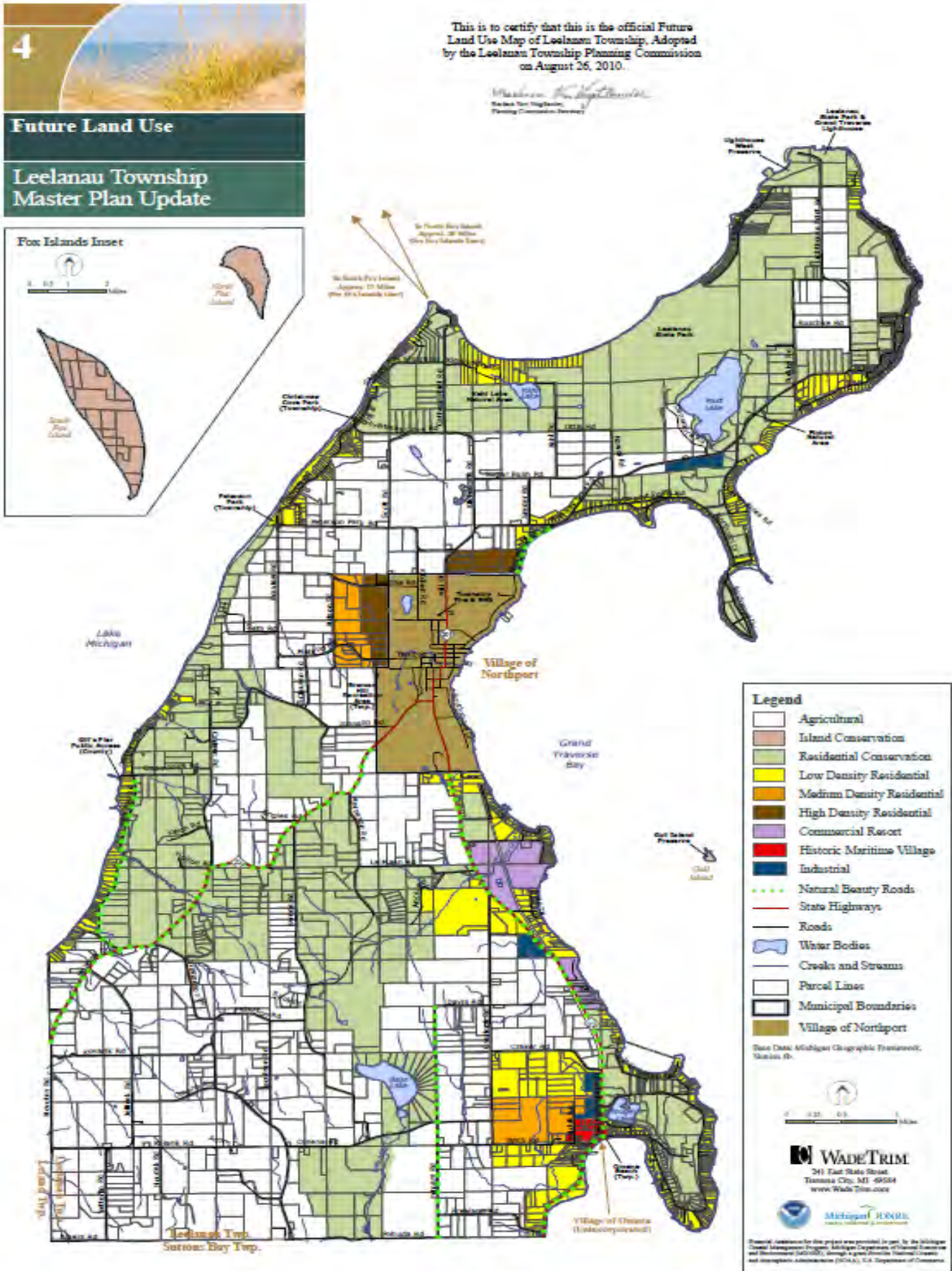
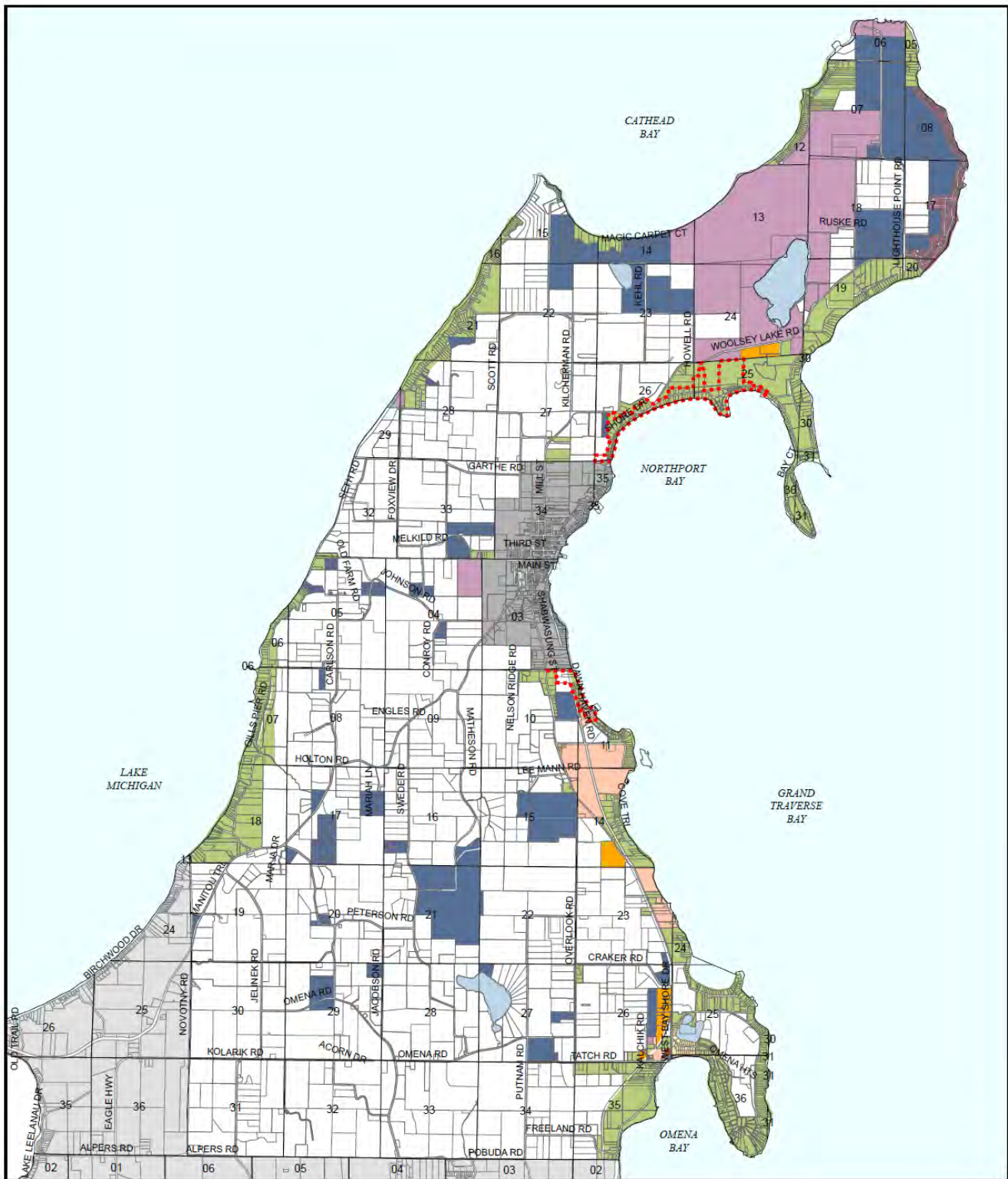


Figure 5. Zoning Districts



Zoning Districts

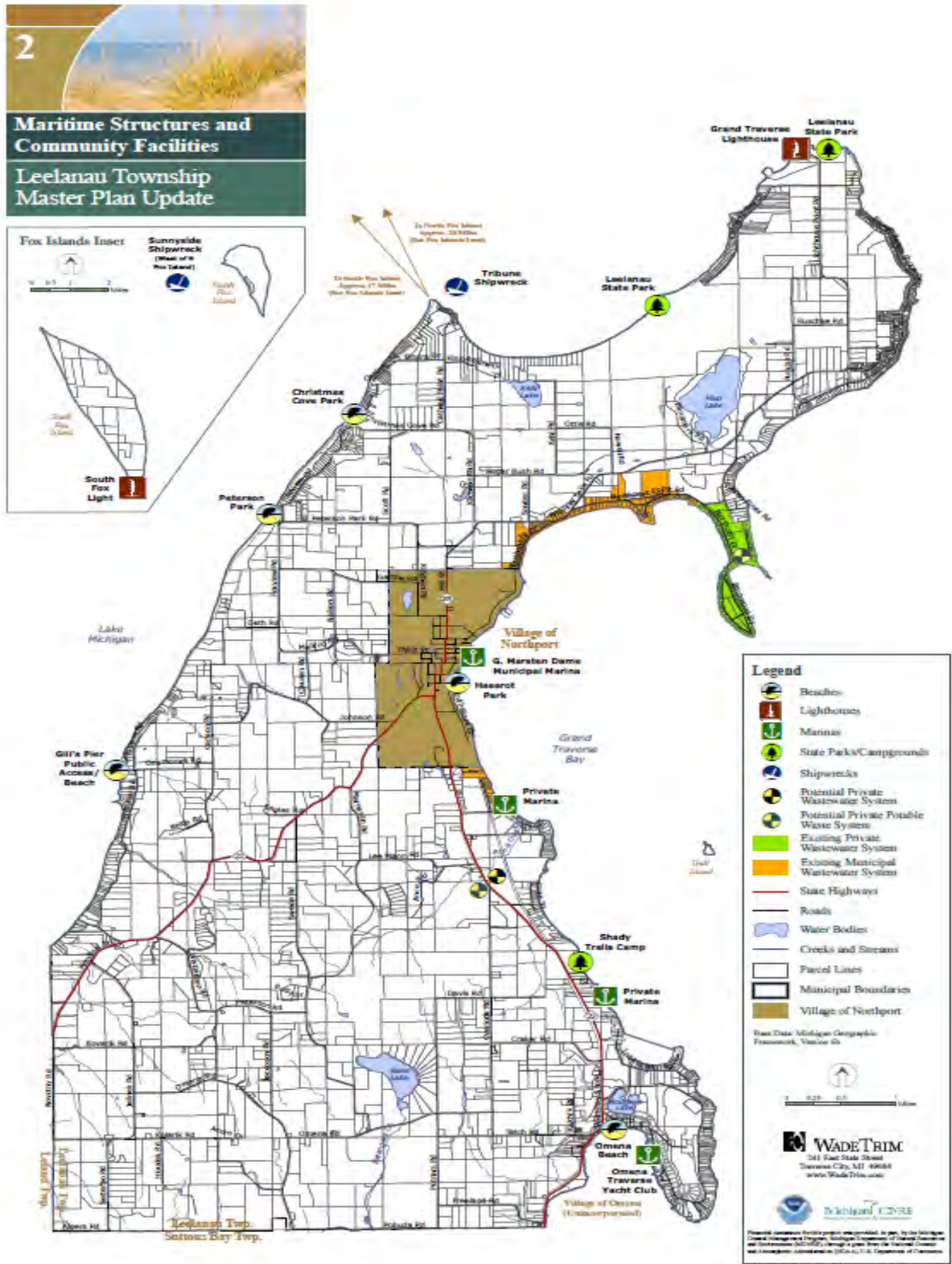
- | | | |
|---|---|--|
|  Agricultural |  Industrial |  Residential Conservation |
|  Commercial |  Residential 1 |  Township Sewer District |
|  Commercial Resort |  Residential 2 |  Village of Northport |
|  Governmental |  Residential 4 |  Lakes |



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

MAP FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY
 Data from Leelanau Township
 Prepared by Leelanau County Planning & Community Development
 Updated & Printed May 2010

Figure 6. Maritime Structures and Community Facilities



Air Services

Woolsey Airport is a Township-owned public facility that provides a seasonal air facility for small private aircraft.

Non-motorized Transportation Facilities

Leelanau County hosts two major paved, off-road, transportation facilities — the Leelanau Trail and the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail. Please see the *Recreation Inventory* for more information on non-motorized trails in the Township and County.

Maritime History

The Leelanau Peninsula is a thirty mile long mass of land jutting out into Lake Michigan and is sometimes called the “Little Finger” of Michigan. The Native people utilized this peninsula within a peninsula for camping during the summer months to fish, hunt, and harvest a variety of wild crops that flourished. For years, there were no roads to the area and almost all visitors arrived and departed the region on the Great Lakes waterway. Northport grew into the most populous town in northwest Michigan on the strength of its harbor, but by the 1880s, roads and trains cut into the lake trade and transportation. Northport was no longer a stop for the new trans-Great Lakes ships, but had sustained as a commercial fishing port, a lumber shipping center, and a regional transportation hub. At the beginning of the 20th century, Northport became home to a trans-lake ferry service that ran to the town of Manistique in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. This service route only lasted a few years.

Commercial fishing in Northport remained vital to the economy until the 1960s. An associated business, Raff’s Trolling Camp became the first charter fishing center on the Great Lakes, with dozens of vessels working from its docks north of Northport.

Another Leelanau Township port town is Omena which became a center of the fledging Great Lakes tourist trade. By the first decade of the 20th century, a number of prestigious hotels graced the shores of both Omena and Northport. At its height, Omena boasted seven hotels, had three train stops, and was serviced by a fleet of inter-bay boats.

In 1922, Leelanau Township became home to the only boat built specifically for the cherry trade. The vessel traveled to Old Mission, Suttons Bay and other area ports to pick up cherries and carry them back to the Cherry Home processing plant.

Maritime Attractions

1. South Fox Island Light: Built in 1867. The lighthouse property with its various structures is presently owned by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.
2. Grand Traverse Lighthouse: Originally built in 1851, but due to the risk of erosion a new one was completed in 1858. The complex also contains a fog signal building that was built in 1899. In 1984, the lighthouse was registered as a National Historic Site and the Grand Traverse Lighthouse Foundation has preserved the historic buildings for the public to enjoy. The lighthouse is located in Leelanau State Park,.
3. Shipwrecks: There are many shipwrecks along the passages between the Beaver Islands, Fox Islands, and Manitou Islands and the mainland shores.
4. Beaches, Marinas and Public Access: Numerous maritime facilities and Lake Michigan access points are found within Leelanau Township and the Village of Northport. Please see the Parks and Recreation Inventory section of the Plan.

Please see Figure 6. Maritime Attractions and Community Facilities.

Demographic Data

Population and Age

When planning for Leelanau Township's recreation needs it is important to consider the community's demographic. At the time of the 2010 U.S. Census, the Township's population was 2,027. Recent estimates indicate a 0.9% increase (2,046) in population since the decennial census. This number swells in the summer months with the influx of seasonal residents and tourists.

Leelanau Township, and the region surrounding it, are popular vacation destinations with many amenities that make it a high-quality place to live. Prior to 2000, the Township and the surrounding region experienced significant growth. Between 1970-2000, the Township's population grew by 68%. However, these growth rates were altered as the Township contended with the challenges of the recession.

Between 2000-2010, growth rates throughout Michigan slowed, and many communities in the state lost population. Northwest Michigan continued to grow, but at a much slower rate. While the population increased by 3% County-wide, Leelanau Township's population actually declined by 5%. Many residents and their families left the area to find employment opportunities elsewhere, reflected by a 45% decline in individuals aged 35-44 in the Township. Because this age group is most likely to be part of a household with children at home, the Township also experienced a decline in all age groups under 19 years. During this same period, 2000-2010, all age cohorts over 55 years experienced significant growth. Although some of this growth reflects natural age increases as the Baby Boomers begin to reach retirement age, this growth can also be accounted for by new residents that moved to the area following retirement.

Table 1. Leelanau Township Age Profile

AGE	NUMBER	% OF POPULATION
Under 5 years	56	2.8
5 to 9 years	67	3.3
10 to 14 years	79	3.9
15 to 19 years	96	4.7
20 to 24 years	69	3.4
25 to 34 years	110	5.4
35 to 44 years	140	6.9
45 to 54 years	250	12.3
55 to 64 years	478	23.5
65 to 74 years	379	18.7
75 years and older	303	15
Total Population	2,027	100%

Source: US Census, 2010

The median age in Leelanau Township is 58 (2010 U.S. Census), which is above the County average of 50.3 and almost twenty years over the state average (38.9). Between 2000-2010, the Township's median age increased by 20%, and more recent estimates indicate an increase to 60.7 years in 2014 (American Community Survey 2010-2014). These trends have significant impacts on recreation needs: seniors represent an important and growing segment of the Township's population, necessitating recreation facilities and features that can accommodate an aging population.

Seasonal Population

Leelanau Township's coastline, beautiful beaches, forests, rolling hills and orchards have made it a popular vacation destination. The Township has more seasonal homes than almost any other township in the ten-county region, second only to Glen Arbor. Almost half of all housing units in the Township (46.4%) are classified as units that are "for seasonal or recreational use."

Owners of these housing units typically reside in the Township temporarily, or rent them to vacationers, often during the summer months. The large influx of seasonal residents has a tremendous impact on the area's economy, and also on its recreation needs and opportunities. Activity at and demand for recreation facilities climbs dramatically, necessitating added maintenance by the Township for trash removal, landscaping, and other activities.

Income

In addition to age considerations, it is also important to ensure that activities and amenities in the Township are within the financial means of the majority of residents. Leelanau Township contains significant amounts of high-value property that is desirable for second-homes and retirement. These factors contribute to the overall financial characteristics of its residents. The American Community Survey 2010-2014 reports that per capita income in the Township is \$35,842, which is higher than the County (\$32,883), and state (\$26,143) per capita income. The Township's median household income, \$55,119, is slightly below the County's (\$56,521), but above the State (\$49,087) median household income. The percentage of people in poverty in Leelanau Township is 11%, nearly the same as the poverty rate in Leelanau County (11.1%).

Environmental Data

Leelanau Township enjoys a rich abundance of natural resources. These resources provide a number of functions that are vital to both the environment and the economy, and are an important and desired quality of life amenity. A natural resource inventory was conducted in 2010 for the Leelanau Township Master Plan Update, and highlighted the variety of natural features found in the Township, including sand dunes, woodlands, wetlands, and steep slopes.

Physical Features

Soil and Topography

The natural drainage, texture, and slope can affect the suitability of sighting recreational areas. The Township's glacial history is largely responsible for the variety soil types and topographical features, including drumlins with high ridges and steep slopes, former lake bottoms and lake terraces, and dunes. In general terms, the topography of Leelanau Township features gently rolling hills with scattered areas of steep slopes; the southern and central portions of the Township feature significant slopes. *Please see Figure 8. Topography.*

Sand Dunes

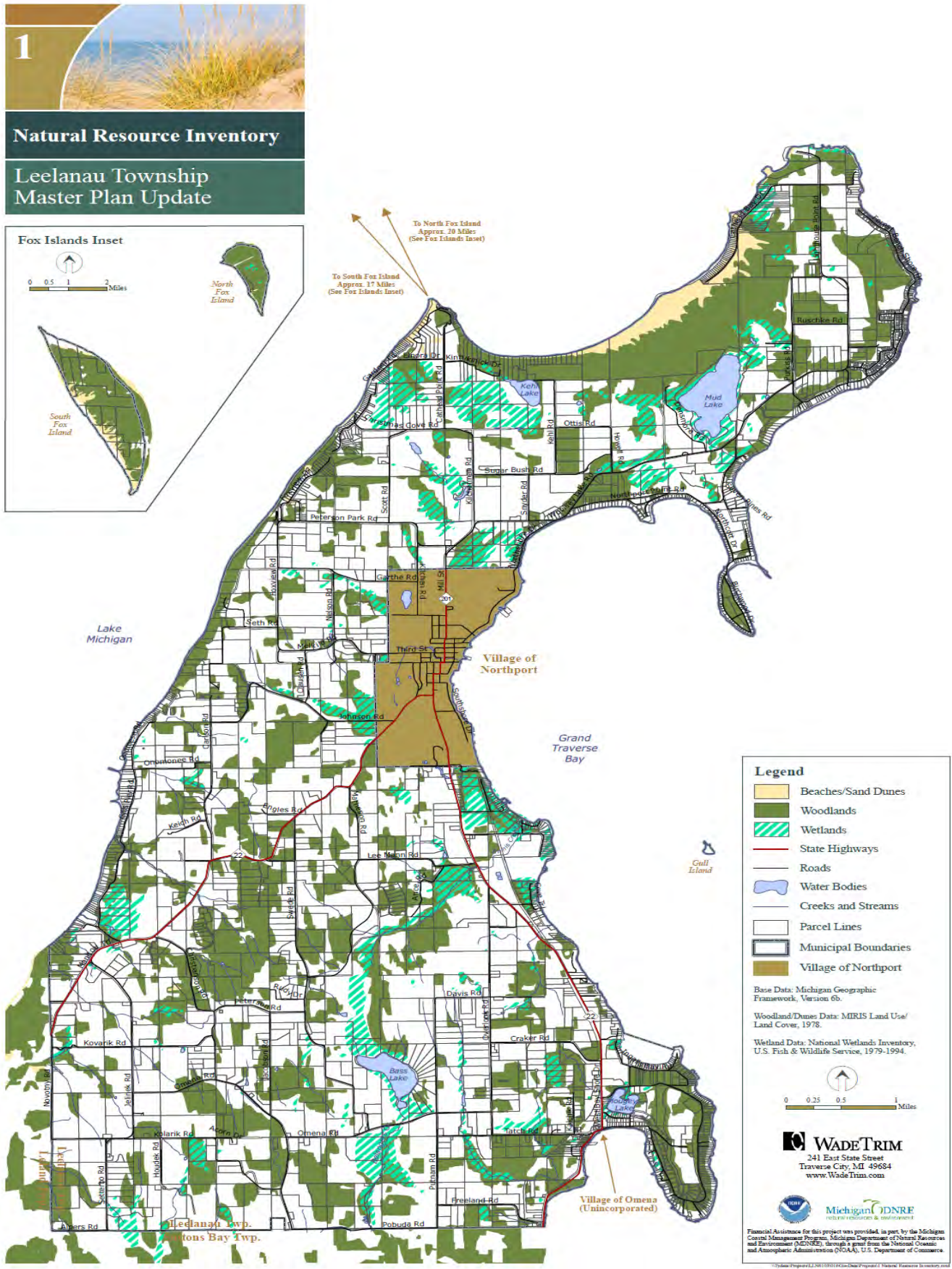
The two largest sand dune areas in Leelanau Township are found on South Fox Island and along Cathead Bay at the northern tip of the Township. Large portions of these sand dunes are owned by the State of Michigan. To protect the identified critical dune areas, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources has a sand dune permitting program where any earth moving, vegetation removal and construction activities within a critical dune area requires a permit.

Woodlands

Generally, woodlands are scattered throughout the Township with concentrations found at the tip of the peninsula and on both North and South Fox Islands. The forested areas offer scenic contrasts and provide recreational opportunities such as hiking, cross country skiing, hunting, and fall color touring. Forested areas improve environmental quality.

Please see Figure 7. Natural Resource Inventory.

Figure 7. Natural Resource Inventory



Water Resources

Wetlands

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conducted a wetland inventory of Leelanau Township using a stereoscopic analysis of high altitude aerial photographs which classifies the various wetland types. There are many large and small wetland areas scattered around the Township, particularly along the Township's inland lakes and streams. Wetlands help control flooding along waterways; serve as habitat for numerous plants and animals; and help filter contaminants out of surface water and serve as groundwater recharge areas.

Floodplains

The Township's identified floodplain areas are primarily concentrated along the Lake Michigan shoreline, surrounding some inland lakes such as Bass and Mud, and along the creeks of Ennis and Belanger. Because these flood zone areas have a higher risk of flooding, they should be considered for recreation or conservation use instead of residential or commercial. Flood Insurance Rate Maps are prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Groundwater

Nearly the entire County is dependent on groundwater for sources of potable water. Approximately 60% of the County rests upon aquifers classified as "sensitive", which means that the aquifers are overlain by highly permeable soils that easily transmit materials and are thus susceptible to contaminants entering the water supply.

Lakes

At the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula, Leelanau Township is surrounded by Lake Michigan on three sides. These water resources can be affected by shoreline construction, and surface water runoff of fertilizers, pesticides, possible on-site wastewater treatment systems, and stormwater. In addition to Lake Michigan, the Township is home to the following inland lakes:

- ◇ Mud Lake
- ◇ Kehl Lake
- ◇ Bass Lake
- ◇ Mogey Lake

Streams and Creeks

At the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula, Leelanau Township is surrounded by Lake Michigan. The water resources can be affected by shoreline construction, wastewater treatment systems, and runoff of fertilizers, pesticides, and stormwater. The streams and creeks that occur in the Township are generally high quality, with most capable of supporting trout populations. Common threats to the water quality of these streams and creeks include nutrients, sediment, and agricultural chemicals entering the water. The Township's inland lakes and waterways include:

- ◇ Northport Creek
- ◇ Ennis Creek
- ◇ Gill's Creek
- ◇ Roaring Brook
- ◇ Weaver Creek
- ◇ Freeland Creek
- ◇ Houdek Creek (headwaters)

Scenic Views

A visual resource becomes “scenic” when it is recognized and enjoyed by the public. Scenic resources include historic structures, agricultural fields, hills, woodlands, or water bodies. Within the rolling topography of Leelanau Township, there are varied agricultural landscapes and miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. In 2009, the Leelanau Township Planning Commission assessed the scenic views within the Township and noted the following particular visual characteristics/views:

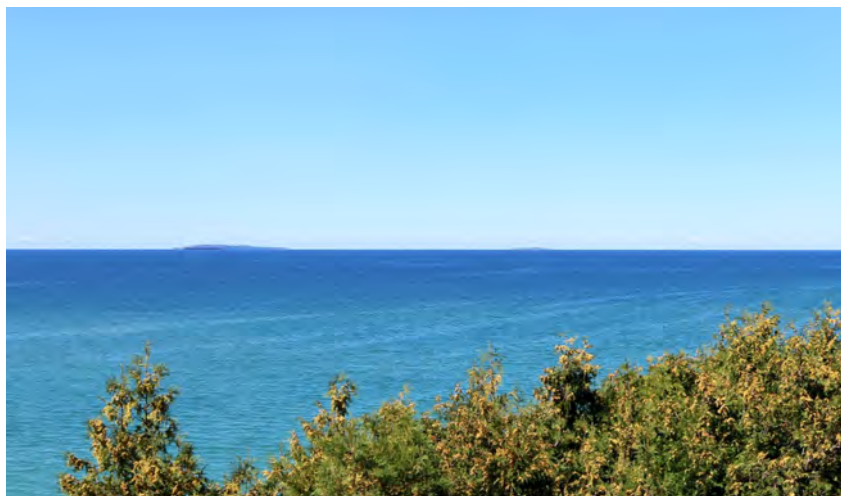
- ◇ Lake Michigan, Grand Traverse Bay and Omena Bay
- ◇ Offshore islands
- ◇ Inland water bodies
- ◇ Rural agricultural landscape
- ◇ Rolling topography and natural vegetation
- ◇ Historic structures such as farmsteads and lighthouses

Wildlife

The Township’s orchards and croplands provide habitat for wildlife such as red fox, coyote, and bird species such as meadowlark, turkey, sparrows, and hawks. The woodland areas provide cover for white tail deer, raccoon, porcupine, owls, woodpeckers, song birds, and woodcock. The inland lakes, streams, and coastal areas are home to many types of waterfowl, herons, shorebirds, ospreys, and eagles and the Township is on a major migratory bird flyway. In particular, the sandy shores of Lake Michigan provide critical habitat for the endangered Piping Plover.

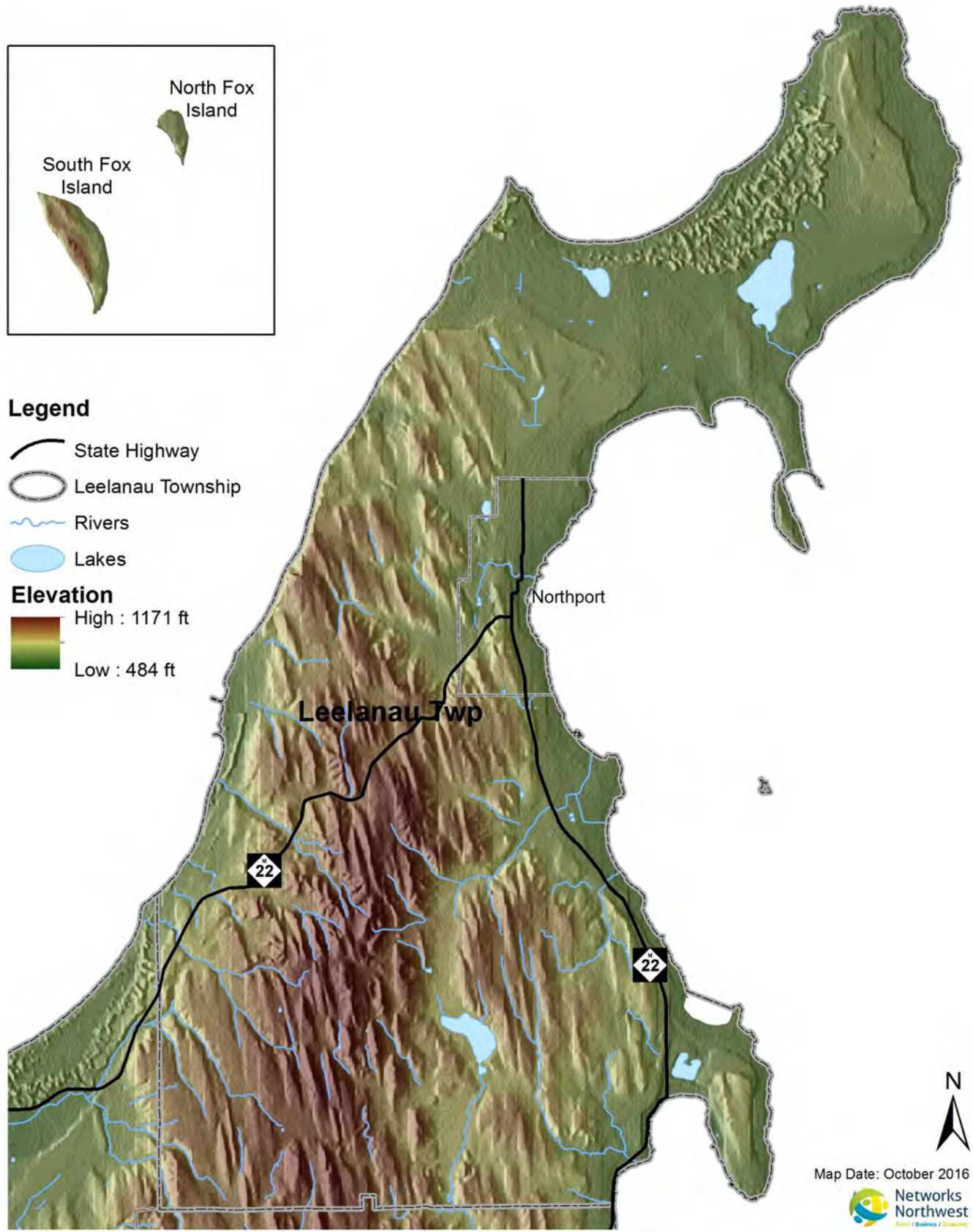
Green Infrastructure

This type of infrastructure consists of a large variety of natural and restored ecosystems and landscape features that include wetlands, sand dunes, woodlands, waterways, groundwater recharge areas, and wildlife habitat; public and private conservation lands such as parks, nature preserves, non-motorized trails, and wildlife corridors; and working lands that have conservation value like forests and farms are included. Utilizing Green Infrastructure principles is a systematic and strategic approach to land conservation that encourages land use planning and practices that are good for nature and people at the national, state, regional, and local levels. *Please see Figure 9. Green Infrastructure Map.*



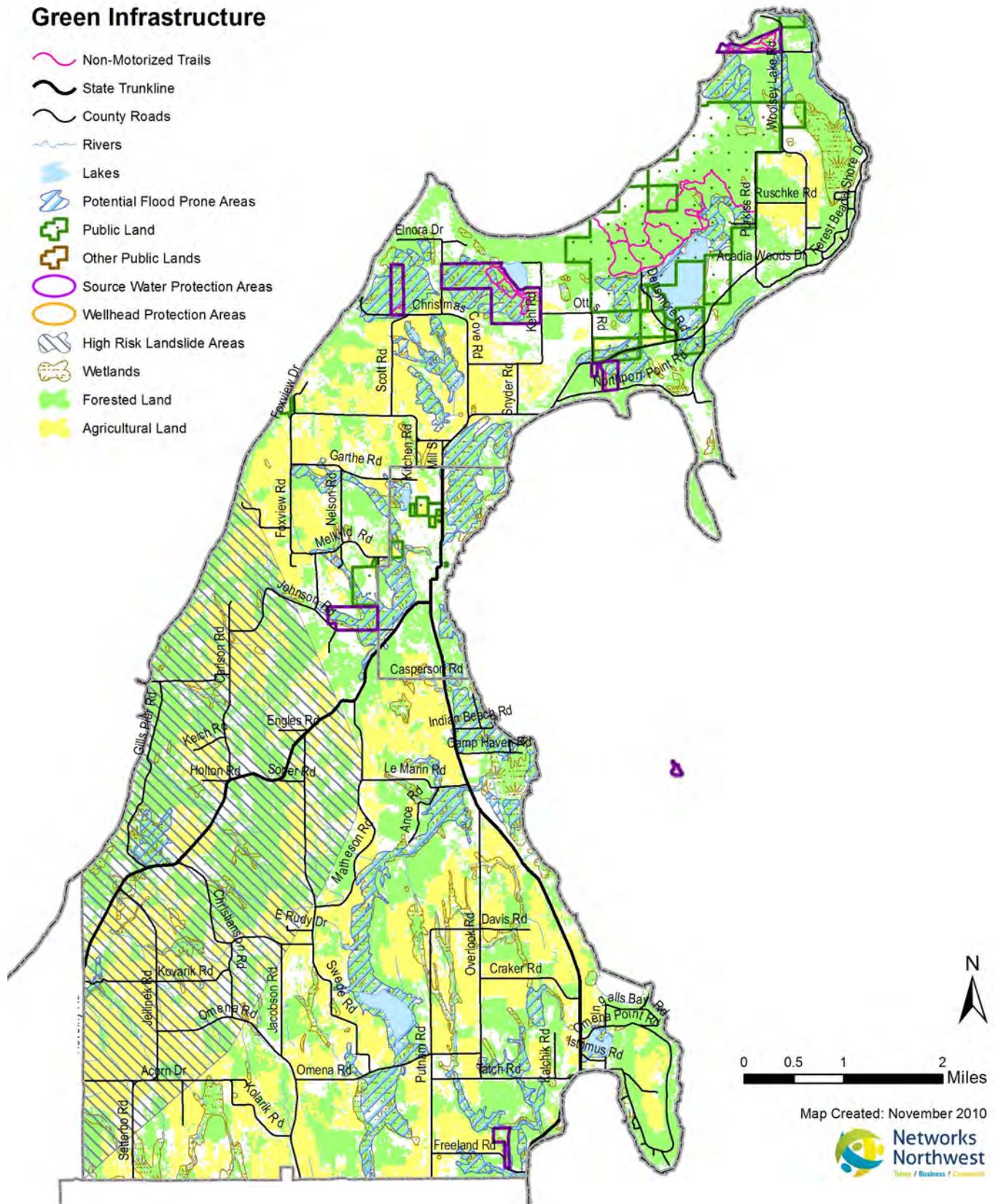
View of the Fox Islands from Peterson Park

Figure 8. Topography



Data Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Michigan Geographic Framework Version 7b

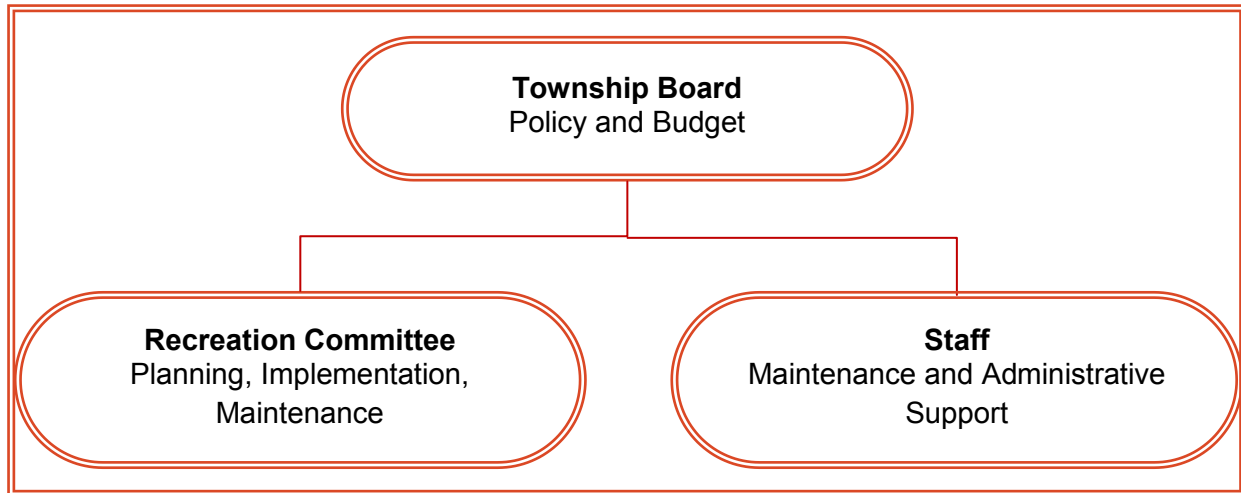
Figure 9. Green Infrastructure





Administrative Structure

The Township Board is made up of five elected officials that govern Leelanau Township. The Board includes the supervisor, clerk, treasurer and two trustees. The Township also has a seven member planning commission, a Zoning Board of Appeals with five members, a zoning administrator, and a tax assessor. The Township Board adopted a Master Plan update in 2010, and adopted a capital improvement plan in 2016. The Township Supervisor helped initiate the Recreation Planning process.



The Township Board works cooperatively with the Village of Northport, the Northport Public School District, Leelanau County, the Leelanau Conservancy, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to develop recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.

The parks and recreation functions are under the auspices of the Township Board. Staffing for the Township parks and recreation consists of seasonal grounds maintenance personnel for all Township facilities, including the parks. The Leelanau Township Recreation Committee is responsible for developing and updating the Township Recreation Plan. More information on the Committee and its members is provided below.

Recreation Funding and Budgeting

The 2016 budget for Parks & Recreation totaled \$75,113. This covers the Township's operating expenses for its parks and recreational facilities. The annual budget is typically around \$75,000-\$80,000, which comes from the General Fund. In some instances, special projects may be assigned to the Facilities Fund.

Steering Committee

The Leelanau Township Recreation Committee was established in late fall of 2015 to provide recommendations and guidance regarding policy issues associated with the parks and recreation facilities and programs in Leelanau Township. The Committee consists of nine volunteer

members appointed by the Township Board of Trustees from a diverse background of experience. There are member representatives from the Leelanau Township Board of Trustees, Township Planning Commission, Northport Public Schools, the Village of Northport, and Township residents. This interrelationship of membership provides a direct linkage between the public and the Township Board.

Members of the Recreation Committee

Dan Stowe, Northport Public Schools

Dave Korson, President of the Northport Sportsman's Club

Ernie Barry, Northport Planning Commission; Leelanau Township Arts Council

Galen Leighton, Township Trustee; Township Planning Commission Chairman

Gary Fredrickson, Township Trustee

Marsha Buehler, Township Resident

Paul Rebori, Township Resident

Robert Shirkey, Township Resident

Sharon Golm, Township Resident

Merilee Scripps, Recording Secretary



Beach at Peterson Park



Recreation Inventory

The natural beauty of Leelanau Township includes many wooded areas, rolling hills, bluffs, and miles of shoreline with sandy beaches on Lake Michigan and Grand Traverse Bay. These resources provide the basis for the Township parks and natural areas and most are heavily used by Township, County and regional year-round residents, seasonal residents, and tourists.

The following recreational opportunities are available in Leelanau Township:

- Swimming
- Boating
- Hiking
- Birdwatching
- Fishing
- Hunting
- Tennis
- Pickleball
- Volleyball
- Skate boarding
- Bicycling
- Cross country skiing
- Ice fishing
- Ice skating
- Sledding
- Snowmobiling
- Shooting practice
- Soccer
- Baseball
- Aviation

The following pages include an inventory of each of the Townships recreation facilities, along with boundary maps and photos of each. Information is also included relative to the accessibility of each facility to people with disabilities, based on criteria provided in the MDNR Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans (MDNR, 2015). The accessibility ranking system used in this document required that each entity be compared to the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. Additional resources that were consulted include the recreation facilities guidelines issued by the United States Access Board as supplements to the ADA Accessibility Guidelines; Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way: Shared Use Paths (Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board); Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards for outdoor developed areas; and the New England ADA Center's ADA Checklist.

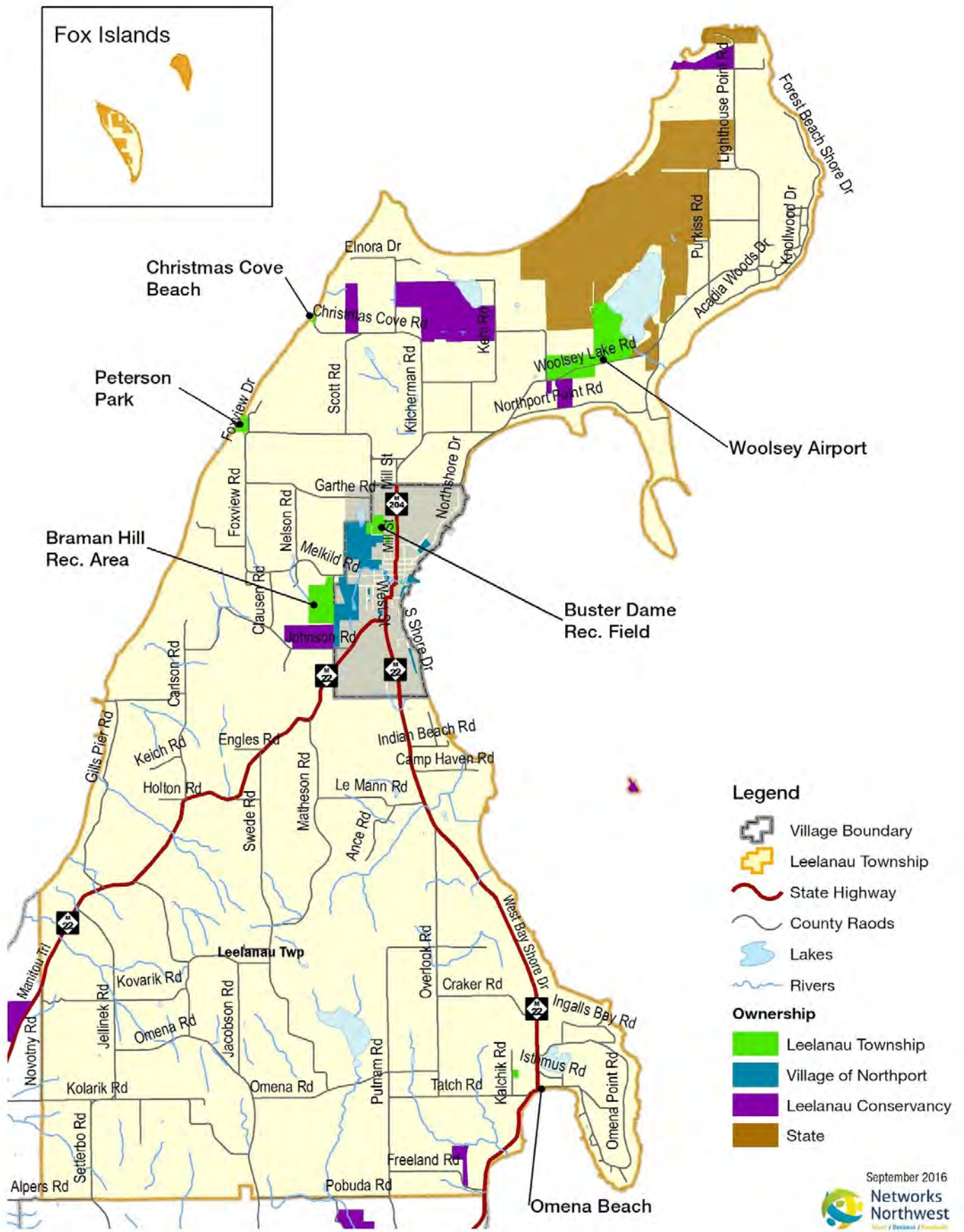
ADA Ranking System

- 1 - None of the site elements meet accessibility guidelines
- 2 - Some of the site elements meet accessibility guidelines
- 3 - Most of the site elements areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 4 - All of the site elements meet accessibility guidelines
- 5 - The facility meets the Principals of Universal Design

DNR Grant History

A complete listing of DNR grants that the Leelanau Township has received, and how the grant funds were used is included after the inventory of Township facilities. Following the grant history is an inventory of all other public land available in Leelanau Township, and a map identifying the facilities.

Figure 10. Public Recreation Facilities



Braman Hill Recreation Area

Size: 64.15 acres

Service Area: Village and Township

The Braman Hill Recreation Area is a year-round recreation facility located at 10001 E. Melkild Road just west of the Village of Northport. Outdoor community events, such as the winter carnival, are often held at the facility. The original sixty (60) acres was purchased from the North Leelanau Ski Association for \$24,000 in 1976; 50% of the funds were provided through an MDNR grant.. In 1993, the Township authorized the Village of Northport to construct a water tank on the property. In 1998, grant funds from the Leelanau Township Foundation helped complete the skate park. In 1999, Leelanau Township was awarded a \$102,000 grant through the MDNR to build a park recreation center/service facility with restrooms (1,400 square feet), tennis courts, basketball courts, and landscaping; that project was completed in 2002. An additional 2.125 acres of land was purchased for \$12,500 from Philip and Norma Fretheim in 2000; and in 2010, the adjacent Fretheim 2.02 acre parcel was purchased for \$12,500. Municipal water, electricity and wastewater treatment (on-site septic) are provided for the site.

The facility offers a diversity of recreational opportunities across the property. The tennis courts, basketball courts, skate park, and winter ice rink are located in the northeast corner, near the entrance. In the southwest corner, and up the drive is the shooting range (rifle, archery and muzzle loading), which is operated by the Northport Sportsmen's Club. The scenic viewing area overlooking Grand Traverse Bay/Lake Michigan is perched at the top of the hill. During the winter months the park transforms as the hill is used for sledding, the skate park is flooded for a skating rink, and the building is used as a warming hut.

The Village's Nagonaba walking trail currently connects to the property, and comments and discussion during the planning process strongly indicate an interest in working with the Village, as well as the Leelanau Conservancy, to build on the existing trails, through Braman Hill, and potentially beyond. Public comments also expressed an interest in a disc golf course, pickleball courts, and more benches; and suggested upgrades to the skatepark and basketball courts.

Recreational Amenities include:

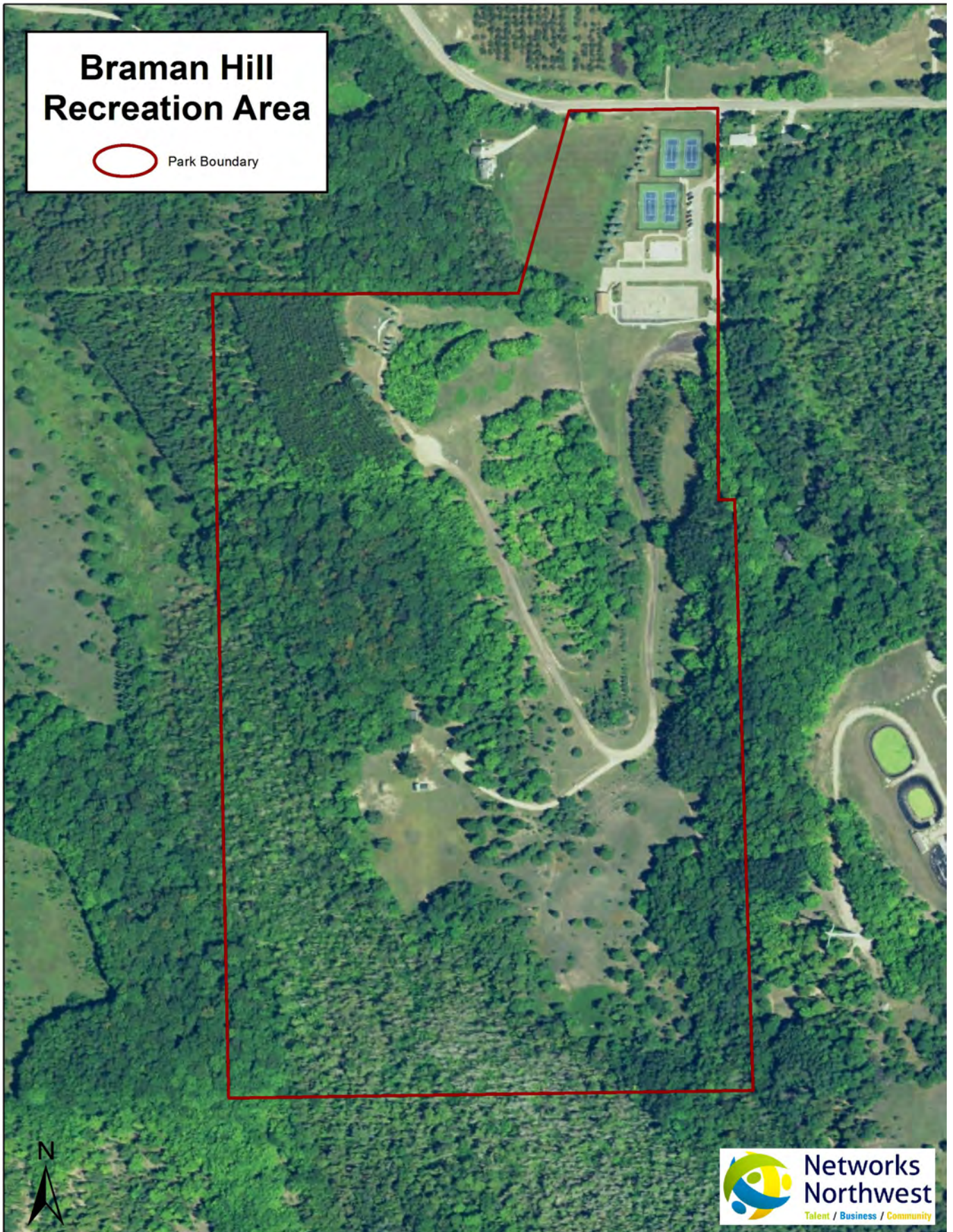
- Four (4) tennis courts
- Basketball court
- Skate board park
- Ice rink
- Sledding hills
- Hiking trails
- Tot lot
- Warming house with restrooms
- Hilltop scenic viewing area
- Fire ring
- Picnic tables and benches
- Shooting range
- Security cameras

Evaluation of Accessibility

2 - The lower level of the Park is accessible including the restrooms and tennis courts. Vehicles can drive to the parking lot at the top of the hill for the view of Grand Traverse Bay/Lake Michigan, but there is not an ADA compliant viewing area. Access to the shooting range and viewing area is not ADA compliant.

Braman Hill Recreation Area

 Park Boundary



Braman Hill Recreational Area



Basketball Courts



Tennis Courts



Skate Park and Hill



Entrance to Shooting Range



Picnic Facilities at the Top of the Hill



View of Northport Bay from Braman Hill

Peterson Park

Size: 11.96 acres

Service Area: Township, County, and Region



Peterson Park is located at 10001 E. Peterson Park Road on a high bluff overlooking Lake Michigan. This Park provides public access, by stairway to approximately 1,000 feet of beach on Lake Michigan. The original property was purchased in 1937 for \$1.00 and is restricted for use as a public park. In 1991, an additional parcel was purchased for \$45,000, with another parcel acquired for the price of \$68,500 in 2005. That brought the total acres to 11.96. The pavilion was constructed in 1994 and is 864 square feet. The playground was updated in 2015.

This pavilion is available for reserved use and gets booked during the peak season for public and private events, most commonly for weddings and family reunions. The Township does not currently require a deposit or charge a usage fee; this came up during the recreation planning process and there was some interest in exploring park reservation policies in other townships/municipalities.

Input from the public and the Committee indicated that the park is one of, if not the most, popular recreation area in Leelanau Township. Input also suggested that some of the park's infrastructure is in need of maintenance, the bathrooms in particular, as well as the stairway to the beach and the overlook deck. The entrance was also a point of discussion as it is difficult to see coming around the corner and there is concern over its safety.

Recreational Amenities:

- Viewing platform
- Stairway to the beach
- Swimming (unsupervised)
- Beachcombing
- Pavilion
- Playground area
- Volley ball area
- Picnic tables and grills
- Paved parking lot
- Vault toilets
- Hand Pump Well Water
- No electric service

Evaluation of Accessibility

1—The rustic toilet stalls are non-accessible; the observation deck/viewing platform for Lake Michigan has railings, but is not accessible; and the stairway access down to the beach is non-accessible.

Please see the following pages for a boundary map and additional photographs.

Peterson Park

 Park Boundary



Peterson Park



Pavilion Area



View of the Fox Islands and a Freighter



Restroom Facility



Stairs Down to the Lake



Park Sign at Entrance



Main Parking Area



Playground and Beach Volleyball Court

Omena Beach

Size: 0.46 acres

Service Area: Omena and the surrounding Townships



The Omena Beach park has approximately 100 feet of waterfront and is located on Omena Point Road off of M-22 in the unincorporated community of Omena. This beach provides public access to Omena Bay. In 1975, funds from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources provided \$7,152 and in 1977, \$20,500 was received from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Land and Water Conservation Fund to complete the purchase of this .046 acre park. The park falls within the Omena Historic District, which is part of the National Register of Historic Places.

A split rail fence indicates the property boundaries for the shoreline area. There is no water or electricity available at the site; a vault toilet is located at the parking lot across Omena Point Road from the beach area.

Discussion during the planning process indicate an interest in improving accessibility to the park, such as with a Mobi-Mat and ADA compliant picnic table. There has been some discussion over acquiring adjacent property; however, there is concern about the parks capacity and the safety of access—the park is located off of a sharp curve on M-22.

Recreational Amenities:

- Swimming (unsupervised)
- Sunbathing
- Benches
- Picnic tables and grills
- Playground area (swings)
- Vault toilet
- Parking lot (unpaved)

Evaluation of Accessibility

1—The vault toilet is accessible, but the approach needs improvement. The picnic and beach area are not accessible.

Please see the following pages for a boundary map and additional photographs.

Omena Beach



View From the Parking Lot Across the Road



The Beach Side of the Park



The Pilings in Winter



Parking Lot with Restroom Facility



Beach Project Acknowledgement Rock

Omena Beach



Park Boundary



Christmas Cove Beach

Size: 1.5 acres

Service Area: Township and County

Christmas Cove Beach is located off of Island View Drive at the end of Christmas Cove Road in the northwest portion of the Township. The beach has 400 feet of frontage along the shoreline of Lake Michigan. The 0.74 acre property was purchased by Leelanau Township in 1996 from the Leelanau County Road Commission for \$1.00. There is a deed restriction requiring the property to be used as a public park. In 2012, the Township received a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant for \$375,000 to purchase the adjacent property and expand the public lake frontage. At the time this plan being was updated, the Township was working on plans for redeveloping the property.



Christmas Cove experiences the highest use during the peak summer months of July and August. There is no water or electricity available at the site and a vault toilet serve the restroom needs. Public input and discussion throughout the planning process indicated a strong public interest in this Township facility, particularly related to site improvements that would mitigate erosion and improve beach access.

Recreational Amenities:

- Swimming (unsupervised)
- Picnic tables
- Parking lot
- Vault toilet
- Rock collecting and beach walking

Evaluation of Accessibility

2 - Vault toilet is accessible, but the approach needs improvement. The beach area is not handicapped accessible; however, redevelopment plans include several potential accessibility improvements.

Please see the following pages for boundary map and photographs.

Christmas Cove Beach

 Park Boundary



Christmas Cove Beach



Bluff and Beach in Late Spring



Beach Area in the Summer



Parking Lot



Vault Toilet off of the Parking Lot



Staircase to Beach



Township Sign on the Bluff



Path to New Parcel and Staircase

Buster Dame Recreation Field



Size: 0.74 acres

Service Area: Village, Township, and some County use

The Buster Dame Recreational Field (Ball Park) is located at 721 Ransom Street in the north central part of the Village of Northport. The property is 3.21 acres that was purchased by the Township from the State of Michigan auditor for the amount of \$44.43. In 1991, the Township received a grant for \$34,500.00 from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Protecting Michigan's Future Recreation Bond Program to fund the following

amenities: three (3) backstops; fencing and gates; players benches; landscaping and irrigation, and a building. The Township received monetary donations from the Leelanau Township Foundation and the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians to assist with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources grant funding. In 2012, the Township replaced one of the baseball diamonds with two pickleball courts for the amount of about \$42,000.

Public input and discussion throughout the planning process indicate that Buster Dame is used by fewer Township residents than the other Township facilities. However, the park's pickleball courts are well used by pickleball players during the summer months; and results from the questionnaire and community forum show an interest in building additional courts due to the popularity of the existing courts. Public input and discussion also indicate an interest in exploring ways to encourage use of the existing facilities, such as the baseball diamonds, as well as exploring alternative uses in order to increase overall use of the park.

Recreational Amenities:

- Two ball diamonds
- Concession stand
- Viewing Bleachers
- 2 Pickleball courts
- Accessible restrooms
- Chain linked fence
- Irrigation system
- Serviced by municipal water, sewer and electricity
- Maintenance Building

Evaluation of Accessibility

3—This facility and the restrooms are accessible.

Please see the following pages for boundary map and photographs.

Buster Dame Recreation Field

 Park Boundary



Buster Dame Recreational Field



Pickleball Courts



Picnic Area and View of Both Fields



Bleachers and Ball Field

Woolsey Memorial Airport

Size: 178.5 acres

Service Area: Township and Region



Woolsey Airport is located at 13591 E. Woolsey Lake Road north of the Village of Northport, and just south of Leelanau State Park. The airport provides an unstaffed airport terminal (1,209 square feet); two turf runways; three public hangers; and radio activated lights on one of the runways. The original property was purchased in 1934 for \$1.00 and is restricted for use as an airport. In 1940, an additional parcel was purchased for \$1.00; and in 1977, additional land was purchased for \$46,500 for a total of 178.5 acres on both sides of Woolsey Lake Road.

The terminal building and grounds are used for public events, such as the annual Fly-In and Breakfast event, which brings a crowd out to the airport for small planes, antique cars, and a pancake breakfast. There is a public viewing area on top of the historical terminal building and picnic tables are available. The property on the east side of the road is on Mud Lake and is adjacent to the Leelanau State Park Trails area. The property has been approved for radio controlled model airplane use.

Comments and discussion during the planning process indicate an interest in exploring additional uses of the airport property, including trail development, picnic areas, water access, and use of the historic building. Due to the proximity to Leelanau Conservancy and State Park lands, there is potential for the Township to partner with the Conservancy and State and connect to their trail systems.

Recreational Amenities:

- Picnic tables
- Restroom facilities - three vault toilets
- Well water
- Electricity
- Two sodded runways
- One radio activated lighted runway
- Historic building with viewing area
- Three hangers
- Parking
- Camping for people using the aviation facilities

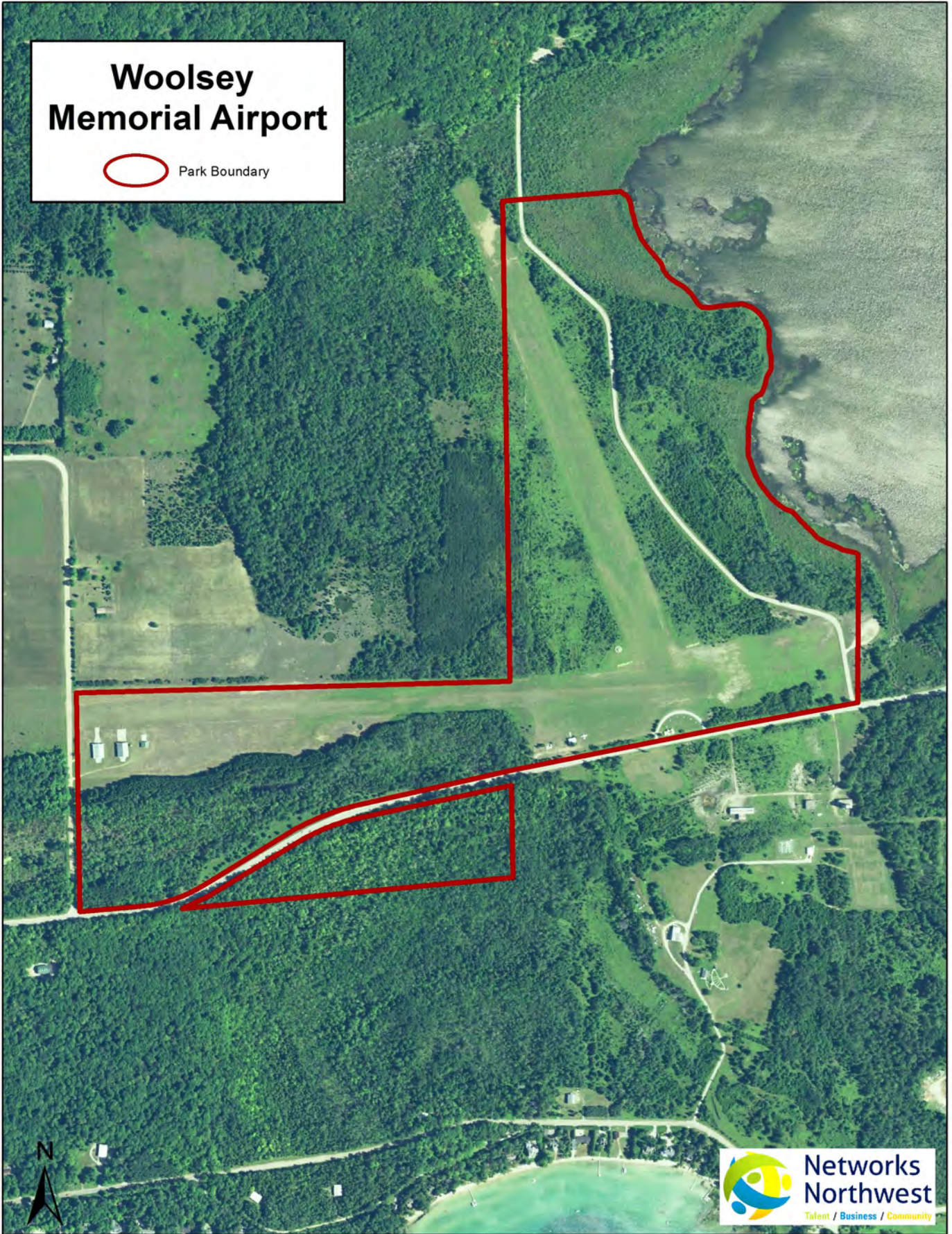
Evaluation of Accessibility

2—The restroom facilities are accessible, but the approach needs improvement to be accessible.

Please see the following pages for boundary map and photographs.

Woolsey Memorial Airport

 Park Boundary



Woolsey Memorial Airport



View of the Runways from Parking Area



Historic Terminal Building



Restroom Facilities



Looking Towards Mud Lake from Parking Area



Annual Fly-In & Breakfast



Recreation Grant History

Applicant

Leelanau Township

Project No. 26-00431

Project Year: 1973

Project Title: Leelanau Twp. Braman Hill

Project Status: Closed

Grant Amount: \$12,000.00

Project Description: Acquire 60 acres of land located in Leelanau County, for outdoor recreation

Project No. 26-00595

Project Year: 1975

Project Title: Omena Public Beach Acq.

Project Status: Closed

Grant Amount: \$7,152.00

Project Description: Acquire .46 acres of land to be used for public outdoor recreation, on Omena Bay

Project No. BF91-125

Project Year: 1991

Project Title: Township Recreation Field

Project Status: Closed

Grant Amount: \$34,500.00

Element

Element

3 Backstops

Volleyball Sand Court

Fencing and Gates

Building

Players Benches

Landscaping

Irrigation

Hockey Rink

Project Description: Excavating, seeding, irrigation and fencing existing fields, developing hockey rink, volleyball court and building for equipment storage, bathroom facilities and concession stand.



Recreation Grant History

Applicant

Leelanau Township

Project No. CM99-212

Project Year: 1999

Project Title: Braman Hill

Project Status: Closed

Grant Amount: \$102,000.00

Element

Element

Park Activity Center (Rustic)

landscaping

Tennis Courts (2)

Basketball Court

Observation Tower (Rustic)

tot lot

paved paking

Project Description: Construction of park improvements to include a park recreation center/service facility with restrooms, storage, and warming house, tennis courts, basketball court, and observation tower.

Project No. TF12-105

Project Year: 2012

Project Title: Christmas Cove Adjacent Property Acquisition

Project Status: Closed

Grant Amount: \$375,000.00

Project Description: Acquisition of .76 acres adjacent to Christmas Cove to expand the size of public lake frontage on Lake Michigan.

Other Parks and Natural Areas

Leelanau Township has within its borders additional year round, recreational opportunities that include hiking, hunting, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, ice fishing, swimming, boating, and more. *Please see Figure 11. Additional Parks and Natural Areas.*

Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Leelanau State Park

Located at the extreme northern edge of Leelanau Township, Leelanau State Park encompasses 1,300 acres and miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. The Park includes the Grand Traverse Lighthouse and Museum; rustic campground with over 50 campsites along Lake Michigan; mini cabins; a picnic pavilion with tables and outside grills; playground area; pit toilets; 8.5 miles of hiking trails, cross country skiing, snowshoeing; bird watching; designated areas of hunting; sand dunes; beach areas; woodlands; an inland lake; an overlook of Lake Michigan and the Fox Islands; and a pristine section of the Cathead Bay/Lake Michigan shoreline.

Leelanau Conservancy

The Leelanau Conservancy has preserved land throughout Leelanau County, including significant acreage in Leelanau Township. There are several Conservancy-owned natural areas open to the public for educational and passive recreation activities. Some of the protected areas are more environmentally sensitive and thus have more restricted access.

Lighthouse West Preserve

The undeveloped Lake Michigan shoreline and 45-acre natural area provides a place for songbirds and raptors to stop, feed and rest before crossing the big water; and a one-mile trail.

Jeff Lamont Preserve

The 40-acres features scenic stands of old maple, beech and hemlock, wetlands and meadows. The preserve includes a short footpath.

Kehl Lake Natural Area

The 180 acres ranges from towering mixed forest to important wetland habitat, and 1,700 feet of shoreline. The preserve has a trail.

Finton Natural Area

Majestic hardwoods and cedar swamp. The natural area offers hiking, snowshoeing, and skiing.

James C. Soper Preserve

Headwaters of Northport Creek with swamp and surrounding upland. The preserve is not open for public access.

Gull Island Preserve

Home to thousands of herring gulls; also blue-winged teal, cormorants, and red-breasted mergansers.

Frazier-Freeland Preserve

Protects the wetlands and water of Weaver Creek that flows into Grand Traverse Bay near Omena.

Village of Northport

G. Marsten Dame Municipal Marina Northport (Public)

- Boat launch ramp
- Bath house with showers and restrooms
- Picnic tables and grills
- Pavilion and gazebo
- Boat slips
- Parking

Haserot Waterfront Park (Public)

- Swimming
- Open space
- Picnic tables, benches, and grills
- Flush toilets
- Boat moorings
- Pier fishing
- Parking
- Visitor Center

Mill Pond in Northport (Public)

- Picnic tables and grills
- Landing/walkway over dam
- Fishing

Nagonaba Walking Trail (Public)

- Footpath between the end of Nagonaba Street and Braman Hill

Northport Municipal South Beach (Public)

- Swimming
- Playground equipment
- Beach volleyball court
- Picnic tables
- Parking
- Public restrooms
- Boardwalk
- Mobi-Mat
- Northport Youth Sailing School

Northport Public Schools (Public)

- Gymnasium with running track and cafeteria
- Playground
- Performing Arts Center
- Two soccer and softball fields
- Concession stand
- Public address system
- Vault toilets
- Parking

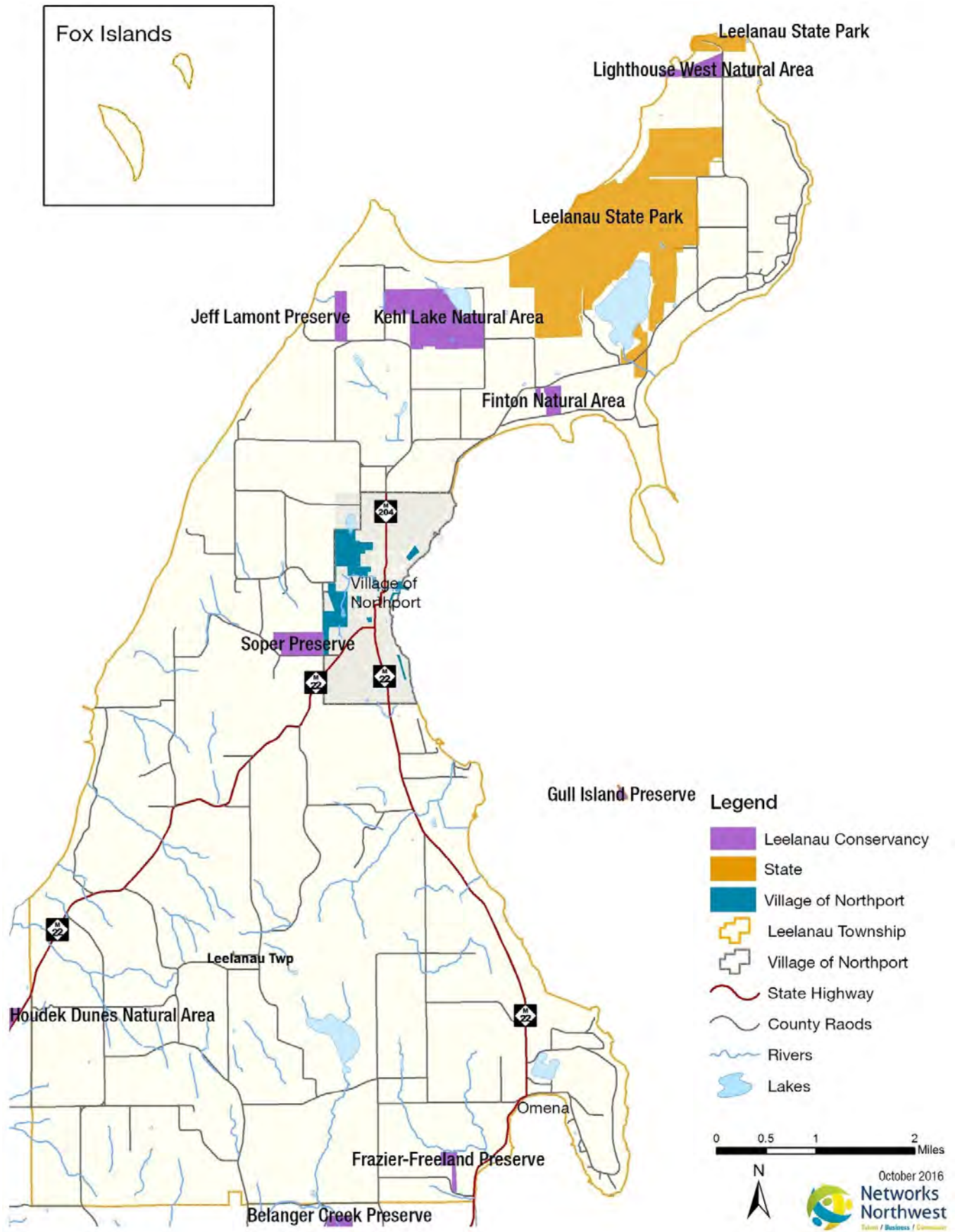
Northport Creek Golf Course (Public)

- 9-hole golf course
- Driving Range
- Clubhouse
- Cross-country skiing



Northport Municipal South Beach

Figure 11. Additional Parks and Natural Areas



Trails

Trails are pathways that are used recreationally or for transportation by a variety of users, including bicyclists, horseback riders, snowmobilers, or hikers. Trail facilities enhance recreation opportunities, and provide a unique opportunity to combine physical activity with transportation, linking destinations while providing alternatives to motorized transportation. Trail development and connections between existing trails are increasingly recognized as important economic strategies, generating tourism and visitor spending, and even drawing new residents.

Input received during the planning process indicated an overwhelming interest in trail development among residents. A significant number of trail suggestions were specific to biking, followed by cross-country skiing and hiking. Other suggested trail uses included dog walking and motorized use. Many of the trail comments also specifically expressed an interest in pursuing connections to the Leelanau Trail and Leelanau State Park.

With the Village's Nagonaba Walking Trail, the Leelanau Conservancy's properties (Lake Natural Area, Finton Natural Area, Lighthouse West Natural Area, and Jeff Lamont Preserve), and the Leelanau State Park, Leelanau Township has numerous trails located throughout its parks and recreation areas. An understanding of trail systems across the region is also important in identifying opportunities for trail linkages and enhancements. In addition to Leelanau State Park trail system, Leelanau County has two other significant trail systems, which include:

Leelanau Trail—TART*

This 17-mile trail provides a paved off-road connection between Traverse City and Suttons Bay. Running through the last of Leelanau County's former railroad corridors, the Leelanau Trail features forests, farms, vineyards, lakes and ponds.

Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail

A 27-mile trail through the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in Leelanau County. When complete, the trail will connect major park attractions and local communities- Empire, Pierce Stocking Drive, Dune Climb, Glen Haven Historic Village, D.H. Campground, Port Oneida and Good Harbor Beach. Several organizations have partnered to make this trail possible.



Leelanau Trail, Leelanau County

In addition to land trails, water trails are being developed across the region to provide opportunities for canoes and kayaks to navigate inland lakes and rivers as well as the Lake Michigan shoreline. Leelanau Township is now part of the Lake Michigan Water Trail, which cataloged nearly 200 public access sites along the entire Lake Michigan shoreline through funding from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Coastal Zone Management Program. Several comments received during the planning process expressed a desire for improved water and beach access in the Township.



Public Input Process

The nine member Leelanau Township Recreation Committee was the primary authority involved in the development of the Township Parks and Recreation Plan. Networks Northwest assisted with demographic data; the public input survey and input session; public notices; maps; photos; the compilation of ideas and comments from the Committee and the public; and preparing the plan update.

Public Input

There were two public input opportunities prior to drafting the plan update—a community recreation questionnaire and a public forum. The public input received through the survey and public forum were incorporated into the updated goals, objectives, and actions in this plan, and helped inform the Recreation Committee throughout the planning process.

The first public input opportunity was via a community recreation questionnaire. Leelanau Township mailed around 1,500 questionnaires to property owners with their winter tax bills. An online version of the questionnaire was also made available. 204 surveys were submitted to the Township and online by February 17, 2016. Around half of all participants identified themselves as full-time, year-round residents of the Township; this was slightly higher than the number of participants that identified as seasonal residents. Survey results and a summary are included in Appendix A.

Due to the seasonality of the Township's residents, the Recreation Committee chose to hold the public input event during the summer months, when the most people would be around. The community forum was held on June 27, 2016 with twenty-five participants. The forum started with a presentation on the recreation planning process that was underway in the Township, and on the results of the survey. The conversation was opened up and attendees were asked to review and comment on the Plan's *Goals, Objectives, and Actions*; and to share any additional ideas. The *Goals, Objectives, & Actions* were posted around the meeting room, and attendees were given markers to provide their comments and sticky dots to indicate their priorities. All of the Recreation Committee members were there listening and talking with the public.

Recreation Plan Comment Period

The draft Plan update was available for public review from October 13, 2016 to November 14, 2016. Notices were posted in the Leelanau Enterprise and on the Leelanau Township and Networks Northwest websites. An additional *Notice to the Public* was posted in the Leelanau Enterprise requesting public review of the Plan update and with the date of the public hearing. Hard copies of the Plan were made available at the Township Hall and upon request by Networks Northwest. In addition to comments submitted during the 30-day public review period, comments were taken at the public hearing on November 15, 2016.

Public Hearing & Adoption

The Leelanau Township Board of Trustees held the public hearing on November 15, 2016 at the Leelanau Township Hall. The Township Board approved/did not approve the plan for submission to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources at their December 8 meeting. *Please see Appendix D for the approval documents.*



Parks and Recreation Goals, Objectives, and Action Program

The following goals, objectives, and actions are not listed in any particular order.

GOAL: Maintain and improve existing Township parks and recreational facilities

Objective: Ensure a high level of maintenance and management at all parks and recreation facilities

Actions:

- Continue to provide funding for maintenance and improvements at Township parks and recreation facilities
- Provide resources and support to maintain, improve, and/or promote recreation facilities
- Pursue funding opportunities as appropriate to support development and/or improvement of parks and recreation infrastructure and amenities
- Request that the Township Parks and Recreation Committee continues to review and make recommendations to the Township Board regarding expenditures for improvements and maintenance activities
- Manage parks and recreation to protect and enhance natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas
- Develop maintenance plan for each park
- Acquire boundary and topographical surveys for each park as needed

Objective: Regularly maintain and improve existing resources as needed

Braman Hill Recreation Area

Actions:

- Maintain and improve existing facilities
- Consider restriping one of the tennis courts for dual use with pickle ball
- Consider installing lights at the skating rink that are in compliance with dark sky standards
- Install additional picnic tables and benches
- Study the feasibility of a picnic pavilion near the tennis courts or at the scenic viewing area
- Study areas of the park for universal accessibility upgrades, such as the addition of ADA accessible picnic tables
- Explore opportunities for trail development and trail partnerships with the Village of Northport and the Leelanau Conservancy
- Consider improving access to the parcel currently used for overflow parking egress
- Study the feasibility of developing a disc golf course
- Evaluate and address signage needs

Goals, Objectives, and Actions

- Maintain the basketball court, tennis courts, skate park, and playground area
- Improve and maintain the warming house
- Maintain the skate park
- Install a bike rack
- Maintain partnership with the Northport Sportsman's Club for use of the shooting range
- Study the feasibility of widening the drive to the shooting range to accommodate two passing vehicles
- Consider designating space as a dog park

Peterson Park

Actions:

- Maintain and improve existing facilities
- Work with Road Commission to improve the safety of the park's entrance/exit
- Plan, design, and construct ADA compliant restroom facilities
- Study areas of the park for universal accessibility upgrades
- Develop additional parking; and where to locate it
- Consider adding a second pavilion
- Improve and maintain picnic tables and benches
- Design and construct a new accessible observation deck
- Install interpretive signage at observation deck
- Upgrade/improve stairway to the beach
- Install bike racks
- Fence for erosion
- Landscaping in place of removed ash trees
- Seek professional services to develop a long-term site plan
- Place directional signs for wayfinding
- Consider charging a fee and deposit for use of the Peterson Park Pavilion

Omena Beach

Actions:

- Maintain and improve existing facilities
- Explore opportunities for the acquisition of additional property
- Maintain vault toilets
- Improve and maintain fencing around the property
- Evaluate the potential for universal accessibility upgrades, including the addition of an ADA accessible picnic tables and a Mobi-Mat
- Investigate and evaluate the fence and the play structures

Christmas Cove Beach

Actions:

- Maintain and improve existing facilities
- Plan and design a stairway and/or ramp from the parking lot to the beach
- Plan and design a walkway/trail through the new parcel to the beach
- Study areas of the park for universal accessibility upgrades
- Hire a consultant to evaluate the site to determine the optimum location and surface type for the parking lot, as well as how to address erosion problems
- Install benches on new parcel
- Evaluate and address signage needs
- Install bike racks

Buster Dame Ball Park

Actions:

- Maintain and improve existing facilities
- Explore potential partnerships to increase use of the park
- Explore additional amenities to increase park use
- Consider re-designating park space, such as for a dog park or additional pickleball courts
- Evaluate and address signage needs

Woolsey Memorial Airport

Actions:

- Maintain and improve existing facilities
- Study the feasibility of developing a walking area, picnic area and water access site.
- Work with the Leelanau Conservancy and Leelanau State Park, as well as the Village and County, to identify potential trail routes and opportunities to link with existing trails for hiking and cross country skiing
- Improve bathroom accessibility by installing a walkway
- Study the feasibility of improving and maintaining the existing building for public use
- Install a bike rack

GOAL: Develop and promote an interconnected system of non-motorized trails

Objective: Expand and enhance opportunities for non-motorized trail uses

Actions:

- Identify potential trail routes
- Coordinate trail planning efforts with neighboring communities and stakeholders to develop and link trail systems
- Identify potential trail connectors to parks, schools, and other community resources
- Identify opportunities for the acquisition of easements for future trail connections
- Explore opportunities and pursue funding to create linkages between trail systems
- Develop and/or maintain partnerships with the Village of Northport, Leelanau County, Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), Leelanau Conservancy, Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trails (TART), and others to expand opportunities for trail development, connections and enhancement
- Encourage expansion of the TART Leelanau Trail
- Develop ADA accessible pathways at Township facilities
- Install bike racks at all Township parks

GOAL: Provide a variety of recreation opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages, abilities, and economic means

Objective: Incorporate universal access at all parks to meet the needs and abilities of all park users

Actions:

- Provide or improve barrier-free facilities at all parks as needed
- Improve sidewalks and walkways for universal accessibility
- Seek out professional assistance to design ADA accessible facilities
- Work with community organizations and volunteers to provide a broad range of recreation activities for all population groups
- Regularly identify recreation needs and gaps

Objective: Explore opportunities to enhance recreation facilities and programming at existing parks

Actions:

- Explore potential for park activities and recreation programming, such as community events and adult and youth sports leagues
- Explore opportunities to partner with and support organizations to facilitate and further park use and recreation programming for all population groups
- Survey and develop a site plan for each park
- Consider adding dog waste stations at each park

Objective: Explore opportunities to enhance recreation in the Township

Actions:

- Identify potential opportunities for non-motorized trail connections and development
- Study/consider the acquisition of property on Grand Traverse Bay/Lake Michigan
- Study/consider the development of a public boat launch

Objective: Explore funding opportunities and partnerships that support and enhance recreational opportunities in the Township

Actions:

- Seek funding opportunities through grants and donations to supplement recreation funds budgeted by the Township Board
- Work with the Leelanau Township Community Foundation, Leelanau Conservancy, and other agencies to leverage funding for enhancing park facilities
- Review reservation history and policies; consider requiring a deposit or charging a fee for reserving park facilities

GOAL: Support and promote existing township facilities

Objective: Enhance Township parks and recreation facilities through branding

Actions:

- Explore branding opportunities and marketing strategies to promote Township facilities
- Design and install consistent and effective wayfinding and interpretive signage
- Consistently design landscaping at Township parks
- Work with the Village of Northport and Leelanau County to promote recreation
- Encourage local interest groups and other stakeholders to organize activities that utilize and showcase parks and recreation facilities
- Partner with schools, Visitors Center, and other organizations to promote use of existing facilities

Objective: Maintain a DNR-approved 5-year recreation plan

Actions:

- Implement Recreation Plan goals, objectives, and action items.
- Develop an annual recreation work plan, based on Recreation Plan goals, objectives, and action items, to prioritize and initiate activities and improvements based on available funding, grant opportunities, and need
- Identify and allocate an appropriate working budget for Parks and Recreation activities
- Have the Township Recreation Committee review and update the Township Recreation Plan every five years

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