

# Bingham Township Comprehensive Plan 2024



**Adopted by the Bingham Township Planning Commission**

Place Resolution of Adoption Here.



## Credits & Acknowledgments

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**Networks  
Northwest**

Talent / Business / Community

## Executive Summary

Bingham Township initiated a process for a full re-write of their Comprehensive Plan in 2021, with the draft plan completed for Township review in early 2024. The planning process brought together relevant updated socio-economic data, geographic spatial data, review of existing on-ground conditions, plan review of documents developed for both within and adjacent to the Township, and set about a strategy of community engagement activities which included multiple public input sessions, a survey and the discussion of the Comprehensive Plan activities at each Planning Commission meeting during the process.

The original Comprehensive Plan of 1999 had not undergone a complete re-structuring and development in many years. The original plan was re-adopted following review by the Planning Commission in 2005 and again in 2010. Minutes from 2010 indicate that the Planning Commission had reviewed the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, *"....and although there are areas that could be updated, the Commission finds that the basic conclusions and goals in the plan are still valid."*

In fact, we would ascertain during the development of this Comprehensive Plan which supersedes the previous plan; that the public by and large still held the established strategies of the previous plan in high regard. These established strategies were largely carried over to this process and expanded upon. The strategies spoke to wise development practices which would protect valuable natural resources through standards to maintain water quality, concentrating what is deemed "standard" commercial development to a confined area, allowance for small home business and cottage industry operations, allowance of agri-business opportunities, protection of rural character, open space and farmland preservation through low density zoning and cluster development practices. Additional strategies to monitor and manage the influx of short-term rentals, support agricultural industrial sector businesses, promoting shoreline and wetland protection and participation in regional transportation planning efforts were a few of the additional strategies included in this plan development process.

Bingham Township had been on a slow trajectory of population growth from the mid 90's through 2015, with an increase in growth initiated around 2016 which has carried forward to the 2020's. Along with all of Northwest Lower Michigan, Bingham Township is experiencing the greatest growth in the State of Michigan as a percentage of the existing population. Predominant agricultural land uses, abundant open space and unique natural resources create a desirable place to live a short commute from Traverse City and it's adjacent more urbanized Townships. Growth in Bingham Township has not gone unnoticed, and is more evident now with the defining of the lake-shore portion of the Township along West Grand Traverse Bay as "urbanized" by the US Census Bureau following the 2020 decennial census.

Strategies which seek to concentrate growth and maintain open space and agriculture are established through significant community engagement efforts. The implementation of these strategies by the Township will set a baseline for monitoring the impacts to the land use patterns of the Township, which will allow for review and revision as necessary to ultimately meet community desire for how it is defined by look and feel of the residents and visitors. Implementation is the single biggest task set forth for the Township to undertake as this plan is approved and carried forward.

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# Chapter 1

- Introduction
- Why We Plan
- Methodology
- Past Planning Efforts

## Introduction

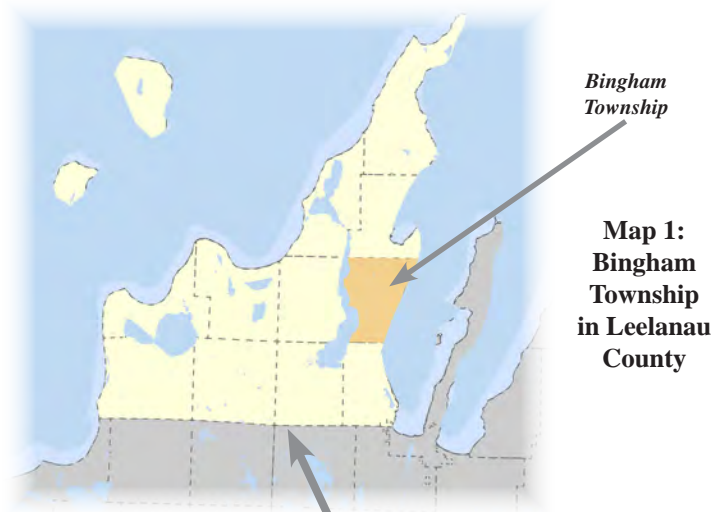
Bingham Township, is a predominantly agricultural and low density rural community located in Leelanau County, Michigan. (see map 1 & 2) The Township is situated between the shoreline of West Grand Traverse Bay on it's eastern boundary and Lake Leelanau along it's western boundary. Between both of these water bodies Bingham Township boasts over 14 miles of shoreline.

The rolling hills of the Township, with the backdrop of Lake Michigan and the micro-climate it affords, provide an ideal ecosystem for agricultural production of fruit. Similar to other locations along Lake Michigan, Bingham Township has abundant orchards which predominantly grow cherries, apples and grapes.

The proximity to Traverse City and the beauty of the area has led to development of housing along both shorelines within the community, with variable lower density housing found away from the lake-shore.

## Why We Plan

The above aforementioned characteristics of the Township and the desire to look ahead to the future to provide orderly and appropriate measures to protect agricultural assets and natural areas while guiding growth and density to desirable areas of the Township is one purpose of this planning document. Another purpose of this Master Plan is to meet the Statutory requirements of the State of Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended , M.C.L. 125.3801 et seq.). This requirement must be met in order for the Township to legally maintain policy for their regulatory zoning ordinance. The planning process is guided by the Planning Enabling Act, which outlines specific aspects of the community that must be captured within the Master Plan. These aspects are what shape the character of the community, and have lasting impacts on development patterns, transportation, population and natural resources.



*Bingham Township*

**Map 1:  
Bingham  
Township  
in Leelanau  
County**



**Map 2: Leelanau  
County in  
Michigan**



## Methodology of the Process

The process undertaken for the development of this Master Plan was reliant upon several key aspects that are bulleted below. Taking into account each of these aspects individually and in combination with the others, allows for the Planning Commission to properly establish policy through analysis of the information.

- Existing on-ground conditions of the Township which include:
  - \* Location of development and the type and density of that development.
  - \* Determination of active agricultural lands and established forested areas.
  - \* Wetland, water body, stream corridors, shoreline and steep slopes
  - \* Park and Recreation assets
  - \* Community services and infrastructure
  - \* Transportation Features
- Socio-Economic make-up of the community and it's residents through readily available data
- Review of available data including spatial data
- Public input obtained through the process, including a survey and in-person events
- Review of current zoning districts, location and provisions

In collaboratively with the Township Planning Commission, staff with Networks Northwest outlined a scope of work which included; a timeline for production of information, established deliverables and set a process for review, critique and discussion of information with appointed and elected officials, Township staff and the public at large. Obtaining public input, and analysis of that input coupled with on-ground information and trends both locally and regionally, provided avenues for critiquing established land use policy and regulatory zoning language. The finished product is a document that displays a direction for the Township that looks 15-20 years into the future, with review recommended to occur every 5 years and revision as deemed necessary.

## Past Planning Efforts

The following plans and planning processes were undertaken in previous years at the Township and County level, of which the relevant information was reviewed and incorporated in this plan update as necessary.

### Bingham Township Comprehensive Plan, 2010

This comprehensive plan was originally development in 1999 with the most recent “re-adoption” occurring in 2010. The plan outlines policy which is still supported today with reference to agriculture and open space preservation, controlled commercial growth, support of home based businesses, safe and effective transportation corridors, and appropriately planning for density,

Much of the information in the plan is kept as a forethought as the Township moved through development of this most recent Master Plan, although the availability of data and the methods of displaying and analyzing that data have evolved since the development of the 1999 plan.

### Bingham Township Recreation Plan, 2019-2024

The community 5-Year Park and Recreation Plan, which meets the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirements for Park & Recreation Plans, was developed under the guidance of the Bingham Township Recreation Committee. The plan identifies and inventory sites, determines support for expansion and inclusion of assets, meets eligibility requirements for grants, and ultimately sets an overall vision for recreation within the community. Recreational activities are synonymous with the draw of tourism and the economic activity and benefits that brings to an area, while also providing healthy activity options and benefits to residents.

### The Leelanau General Plan - Policy Guidelines for Managing Growth in Leelanau County, 2019

This comprehensive plan developed for Leelanau County provides a broad vision for the communities contained within. Policy of the plan is supportive of managing and focusing growth while protecting natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas and agriculture. Specific to Bingham Township is the recognition of the different characteristics of land use from coastline developed areas to interior agricultural lands. Information gleaned from the document with local support will be incorporated in this plan.

# Chapter 2

- Existing Conditions
- Natural Features
- Socio-Economic Profile

## Existing Conditions

### Agriculture

Bingham Township has a rich agricultural history. The presence of orchards are directly related to the benefit afforded by the micro-climate due to the proximity of Lake Michigan. This allows for an expanded growing season and protection for vulnerable orchard crops such as tart cherries, apples and grapes, from harsher temperatures which are experienced more readily in the interior of the region and State. Table 1 provides data pertaining to parcel classifications for agriculture.

**Table 1: Agricultural Lands**

# of Parcels		Acreage	Acreage Proportion
Total Parcels	2,065	14,549.40	100%
P.A. 116 Parcels	4	285.5	1.96%
Agriculturally Classified Parcels	163	5,856.90	40.26%
PRE & Agriculturally Classified Parcels	133	4,920.30	33.82%

Per the data, almost half of the parcel acreage (40.26%) of the Township meets the assessed definition of agriculture, with 1/3 of the parcel acreage (33.82%) meeting both agricultural classification and Principle Residential Exemption (PRE). These figures provide a snapshot of the vast amount of active agricultural lands which are operated and owned by permanent residents whom reside on the farm property. Of the active agricultural parcels only four, with a total of 285.5 acres are enrolled in the State's agricultural protection program (P.A. 116).

The strong representation of agricultural activity in the Township has been recognized for decades, with the Township moving towards greater support for agriculturally related activities and businesses that promote tourism and direct sales. Looking back to June of 2008, the Township Planning Commission made recommendations for incorporation of agritourism related regulatory provisions to the Township Zoning Ordinance, which sought to define, enhance and allow greater flexibility for these types of businesses. This support is crucial to the local farm economy as nationwide trends display decreasing gross profits, increasing labor costs, decreasing small family farms, increasing farm size and consolidation of individual farms (corporate farms), along with increasing land costs.<sup>1</sup> Currently there are approximately a dozen local agricultural industries operating in the Township with a range of agritourism uses including wineries, cideries, local food product manufacturing and sales along with ancillary activities including event spaces and value-added seasonal uses such as u-pick, corn mazes and other destination business activities.

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<sup>1</sup> 2021 Cultivating Local Farm Economies Webinar Series, MSU Extension

*Housing*

Bingham Township has a housing stock that is predominantly single-family residential situated on lots of varying size. With lakefront lots often having sizes in the 1/3 to 1/2 acre and residentially occupied interior parcel sizes ranging from 2 acres to 40 acres. According to recent American Community Survey data from the year 2021, there are 1,579 housing units in the Township. When reviewing parcel data for the Township, there are 1,471 parcels occupied with a residential structure. Of that number 1,252 parcels are categorized as having a Principle Residential Exemption (PRE).

Past studies of permanent and seasonal population have found that 19% of the population of Leelanau County is considered seasonal.<sup>1</sup> Although not an exact comparison with the data from the referenced seasonal population study, when weighing the PRE of occupied parcels against total occupied parcels the outcome for Bingham Township points towards 15% of the occupied parcels not having occupation by permanent residents of the Township.

Short-term rentals (STR) have become a topic of serious discussion in recent years. The conversion of housing stock from owner-occupied and renter-occupied to what is categorized as vacant, due to tenants renting less than the required 30 days to be considered renter-occupied; has impacted the availability of housing and has supported increases in home prices among other factors. At the time of this writing, nationally, there is shortage of available housing stock, and costs associated with homes had increased 19.2% between January 2021 and January 2022. As will be displayed in the socio-economic profile (see Appendix A) median home values are soaring locally. With little existing housing stock to meet the necessary demand, the Township has taken initial steps to manage STRs, through the placement of a cap on the total number which is set at 85. Currently there are a total of 61 residential homes registered as STRs.

Other measures will need to be explored if the Township wishes to combat the housing affordability issues. These measures can include provisions for greater density, allowances for varied unit types/uses and accessory dwelling units, while also supporting programs that establish public-private partnerships for home ownership.

1NW Michigan Seasonal Population Study, 2014

*Business and Industry*

Top Industries and CEDS

Extensive research into the region’s diverse economy was completed during the 2021 update to the Regional “[Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy](#)” referred to as the CEDS. This update incorporated information and data that identified aspects of the diverse economy, naming specific industries and sub-sectors that hold relevance to each county within the region. The top 5 sub-sector industries for Leelanau County are displayed in table 2.<sup>2</sup>

Table 2: Top 5 Industries

Leelanau County Top 5 Industries	
NAICS Code	Industry
312	Beverage/Tobacco Product Manufacturing
111	Crop Production
236	Construction of Buildings
999	Unclassified
453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers

The top 5 sub-sector industries for the County are wholly or partially linked to three primary industries; Agriculture, Recreation/Tourism and Construction. The top industry is directly linked to agritourism and the agricultural industry, as “Beverage Manufacturing”, from what is known of Leelanau County, is referencing the wine and cider production facilities. Crop production of primarily orchard products is visually evident within the County and Township. Construction of buildings holds a fair share of the employment numbers with Miscellaneous Store Retailers located throughout the small towns that occupy the Peninsula and are supported in part by the tourists that visit the County.

Agritourism, Conventional Commercial and Outdoor/Recreation

Specific to Bingham Township, agricultural production and agritourism sites are spread throughout the jurisdiction, with vineyards accompanying wineries, cideries and other farm market and local agricultural product sales occurring most often at the site of production or immediately adjacent. Locations of value-added and agritourism  
2Northwest Michigan Comprehensive Development Strategy

sites can be found on the Bingham Township Features Map. (See Map 5)

Much of what would be considered conventional commercial activity is concentrated to East Bingham Rd. both adjacent to and between South Center Highway and South Lake Leelanau Dr. The businesses in this area are a service type such as self-storage and auto-repair, with few to no retail and office type businesses.

Recreation and outdoor related activity has a direct relation to economic activity within our region and supports retail and accommodation style establishments within and adjacent to Bingham Township. In the not too distance community of Bellaire, in Antrim County, the [Glacial Hills Pathway and Natural Area Economic Impact Study](#) provides sound analysis of the economic impact of trails and recreational opportunities for communities. The study found that 26,000 daily visitors were drawn to the Glacial Hills site annually and that more than half of those visitors didn't live within Antrim County. That economic impact is estimated at 1.45 million annually.

The location of the Leelanau Trail which traverses Bingham Township, the Township mini parks and State of Michigan boating access sites located along West Grand Traverse Bay and Lake Leelanau, draw locals and visitors that provide economic support to local businesses. Including the two public golf courses, a full range of outdoor activities are available that garner support for that sector of the local economy.

### Home Occupation and Cottage Industry

Outside of conventional business establishments, there are smaller businesses that are operated out of individuals homes or accessory structures on their property. These types of businesses are referred as Home Occupations or Cottage Industries. They are often defined by the size of the business as it relates to both employees and customer base. The Township has done well to permit and allow these types of businesses to operate within the rural residential areas of the Township. Consideration of neighboring land uses through well intentioned regulatory measures, which allow flexibility for the business operator while offering protection to neighbors from nuisances, has allowed businesses and adjacent residential land uses to remain harmoniously.

## Transportation & Infrastructure

### Roads

The road system, curb & gutter, culverts and bridges within Bingham Township are primarily owned and maintained by the Leelanau County Road Commission. (Refer to Map 3) There is a single State trunkline, M-22, which is a designated scenic byway and runs from North to South in the Eastern 1/3 of the Township.

The Township roads are rated on a yearly basis through a collaborative process which includes the County Road Commission and Transportation Planners with Networks Northwest under the Asset Management Program. The road rating system or Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER), utilizes a scale of 1 to 10, for road pavement conditions, with 1 being poorest quality and 10 being highest quality. Information specific to road conditions can be found on the Network Northwest website under [Asset Management](#).

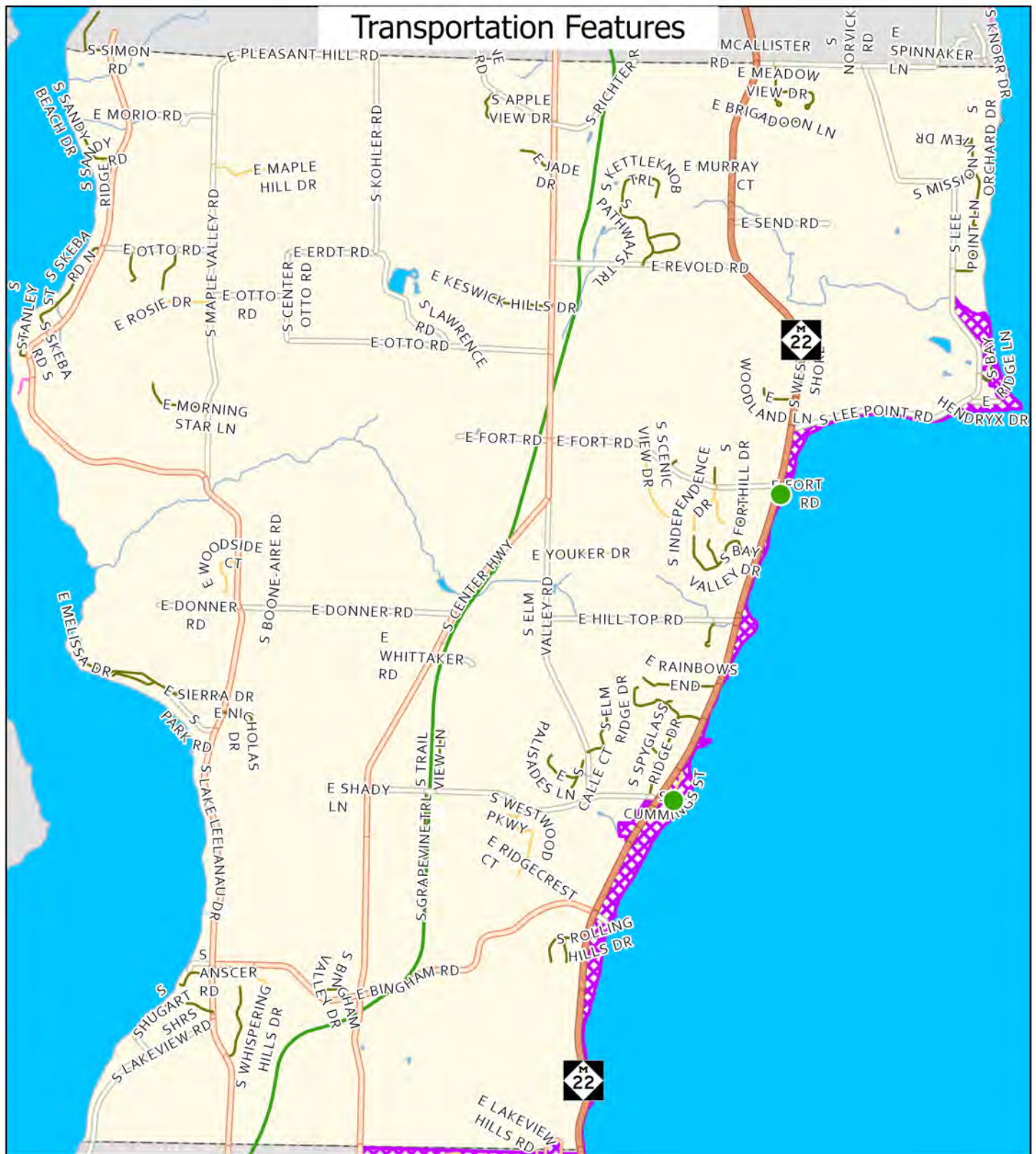
### Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the policy board of an organization created and designated to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process. MPOs are required to represent localities in all urbanized areas (UZAs) with populations over 50,000, as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau. MPOs are designated by agreement between the governor and local governments that together represent at least 75 percent of the affected population (including the largest incorporated city, based on population) or in accordance with procedures established by applicable state or local law.

In early 2023, notice was provided to Networks Northwest by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) of the determination of an urbanized area representing a population of over 50,000 residents in an area including Traverse City and surrounding communities. The urbanized area is denoted by qualifying census tracts, of which Bingham Township encompasses census tracts included in the urbanized area as displayed on Map 3. Bingham Township is eligible and invited for inclusion as a member unit of government within the MPO. Through 2023 and 2024, the Township will be included in all discussions of the establishment of the Tra-



Map 3: Transportation Features

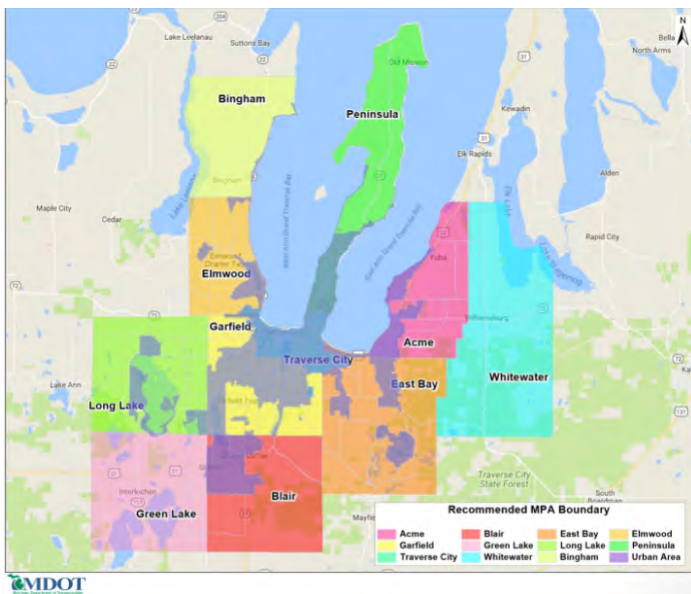


## Legend

- |                     |                 |                   |                           |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| BATA Transit Stop   | Unimproved Road | Leelanau Trail    | Neighboring Jurisdictions |
| County Primary Road | Private Road    | Hydrography Lines | Defined Urban Area        |
| County Local Road   | Highways        | Water Bodies      |                           |
| Improved Road       |                 |                   |                           |



verse Area MPO. Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) boundaries most often align with local jurisdictional boundaries, which extend beyond the actual defined urbanized area; therefore while a local unit may only have a portion of its land area denoted as urbanized, the MPA boundary would extend to the jurisdictional lines. MDOT has provided a recommended MPA boundary map which displays Bingham Township as being included as a member of the MPO. (See Map 4) More information pertaining to MPOs can be found on the [US Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration website](https://www.transportation.gov/federal-transit-administration).



**Map 4: MDOT recommended MPA Boundary**

## Transit

The Township is served by the Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA). With stops at Fort Rd. and Shady Lane Market. Information on routes and schedules can be found at the [BATA](https://www.bata.org/) website.

## Utilities

Energy companies within the Township vary dependent upon service and location. Cherryland Electric Cooperative and Consumers Energy both have portions of their district within the Township, and DTE Energy provides natural gas service to some areas.

Utilities such as Spectrum and Dish provide TV and Internet service to some areas with cellular companies augmenting Internet and providing telecommunications.

## Public Infrastructure

Public infrastructure within the Township is

largely non-existent. The County Drain Commission office hasn't established or operated any drainage districts within the Township. The Township and County don't operate any sanitary sewer or water systems. Therefore water is provided individually by well to homes and businesses and sanitation is confined to individual septic systems.

## Park and Recreation

The Bingham Township Recreation Plan (2019-2024), seeks to meet the requirements for the State of Michigan 5-year Parks and Recreation Plan. A State approved recreation plan determines eligibility for certain grant funding sources through the State of Michigan, and as such communities with approved recreation plans are able to leverage grant dollars through successful applications for funding of park improvements. The plan was approved in 2019 with an expiration date of 12/31/2023.

The Township recreation plan outlines the following publicly owned recreation sites. The sites are displayed on the Bingham Township Features Map. (See Map 5)

### Township Owned Sites

- **Boughy Park:** A 3 acre park located at the East end of Bingham Rd on West Grand Traverse Bay. It has a sandy beach, access for swimming, covered pavilion, picnic area with tables and grills, swings, horseshoe pit and facilities for volleyball/badminton.
- **Bingham Park:** A 1.5 acre park located on Lake Leelanau with swimming area, picnic area, grills, picnic tables, restroom facilities and trash receptacles.
- **Groesser Park (undeveloped):** A 0.5 acre park located along M-22, fronting on West Grand Traverse Bay immediately south of the DNR boat access site.
- **Hendryx Park:** A 0.2 acre park located on West Grand Traverse Bay, with swimming area, grills, picnic table, restrooms and garbage receptacles.
- **Mebert Creek Natural Area:** A 155 acre parcel of unimproved wetlands along the shore of Lake Leelanau at the end of Donner Rd. The area is largely undeveloped with some trails established during previous timbering activities.



Map 5: Sites and Features



### Legend

- |   |  |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| — Roads   | <span style="background-color: #00bfff; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Water Bodies | <b>Category</b>   | <span style="background-color: #90ee90; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Commercial  | <span style="background-color: #ff0000; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Lodging                 |
| <span style="background-color: #ffa500; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Highways          | <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Neighboring Jurisdictions               | <span style="background-color: #add8e6; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Agritourism | <span style="background-color: #008000; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Educational | <span style="background-color: #ffa500; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Recreation              |
| <span style="background-color: #008000; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Leelanau Trail    |  | <span style="background-color: #0000ff; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Civic       | <span style="background-color: #ff0000; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Historic    | <span style="background-color: #ffa500; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Value Added Agriculture |
| <span style="background-color: #0000ff; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Hydrography Lines |  |   |   |   |



### State and Other Public Recreation Sites

- Leelanau Trail: Owned by TART Trails, is a fee free publicly accessible trail that spans 17 miles from Traverse City to Suttons Bay Village, running the entire length of Bingham Township.
- Veronica Valley Park: Owned by Leelanau County, this former golf course is now a 92 acre County Park. The park is envisioned as a passive recreation park with trails, picnic and play areas along with proposed nature center.
- West Grand Traverse Bay DNR Boat Ramp: This boat access site is located immediately north of the undeveloped Groesser Park. This site provides access to West Bay for boaters.
- Lake Leelanau DNR Boat Ramp East: This DNR boat access site located along the East shoreline of Lake Leelanau provides boaters access to the lake in Bingham Township. Site amenities include boat launch, parking and restrooms.

### *Community Services*

#### Township Governance

Bingham Township is a General Law Township governing under the General Township Laws, the [Revised Statutes of 1846, R.S. of 1846 \(Chapter 41 of the Michigan Compiled Laws\)](#). The Townships is governed by a five member elected board which consists of a Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer and two Trustees. The Township Board is responsive to the electors of the Township and is the closest governing body to the people.

The Township Board is advised by a seven member Planning Commission (PC), established under the [Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008, as amended](#). The Township PC serves under appointment of the Township Board for a term directed by their bylaws. The PC is the first point of research, discussion and contact to the residents in processes and items of discussion pertaining to land use, although the Township Board may apply other duties to them as necessary.

Other committees are appointed/established as necessary such as the Park and Recreation Committee referenced in the Township Park and Recreation Plan.

The Township provides and administers

services which include management of budget and oversight of local elections, assessing and taxation, management and administration of land uses and zoning, oversight of park space, intergovernmental agreements for public services and private agreements for waste management services, Among other duties.

#### Public Safety and Fire Protection

Public safety is provided by both the Leelanau County Sheriff's Department and the Michigan State Police. Both of these agencies respond to dispatches made through 911 Central Dispatch.

Fire protection is provided through the Suttons Bay-Bingham Fire and Rescue Authority, which provides EMT and Fire Protection Services. The authority is comprised of a five member board providing oversight.

#### School District

Bingham Township is wholly enclosed within the [Suttons Bay Public Schools District](#), which provides busing to and from school through the "Red Bus". School of choice is an option in the Township as is true for all of Michigan. Parents within Bingham Township which elect a school outside of this district for their children, are responsible for providing transportation.



# Natural Features & Environment

The unique natural areas of Northwest Michigan are in full display in Bingham Township. With crystal clear cold water creeks born of the upwelling of natural springs, valued wetland areas among the glacial moraines rising in height throughout the Township, and forested areas of hardwoods and conifers that give way to coastal shoreline sand and stones. The Township offers an array of ecosystems that support diverse plant and animal life.

## Soils

The complexity of soils and how they vary across a landscape dictate the presence and support of land cover of both natural and man-made variety. Soils dictate what type of vegetation can grow and to what degree it will grow successfully. They influence channelization of waterways, dictate stormwater runoff volumes and direction, erode at varying levels to wind, water and animal traffic and ultimately dictate how and where we can build structures and necessary infrastructure such as septic areas and water wells.

### General Soil Data

The United States Department of Agriculture National Resource Conservation Service (USDA - NRCS) is the federal agency charged with development and maintaining soil data and soil maps. The agency hosts a digital platform that houses all available soils data. Through ease of navigation of the site one is able to obtain significant information from the [Web Soil Survey](#).

The most recently available data for Bingham Township displays that in excess of fifty soil types are present throughout Bingham Township. Appendix B displays the complete listing of soils with data pertaining to the Map Unit Symbol (Soil class), Map Unit Name and whether the soil has consideration for a Farm Class. Appendix B also contains a soil map of the soil class locations across the Township for reference along with identified hydric soils locations.

Soils of Bingham Township are primarily well drained sandy loam soils with areas of significant gravel content and low areas of hydric and muck soils that are prone to wetlands and areas of streams and shoreline of Lake Leelanau and to a lesser extent West Grand Traverse Bay.

## Farmland and Hydric Soils

NRCS provides information on the classification of soils for farmland or farming purposes. These classifications include the following characterizations and occupy the accompanying acreage noted in the table. (See Table 3)

Table 3: Agricultural Soils

Classification	Acreage
All Areas are Prime Farmland	1,134.7
Prime Farmland if Drained	880.5
Farmland of Unique Importance	3,194.2
Farmland of Local Importance	3,928.8
Hydric Soils	4,475.6

The map on page 16 provides the location of each of the previously noted classifications. (See Map 6) There are a total of 8,257.7 acres that are considered prime, unique or locally important farmland soils in the Township. There are 880.5 acres of soils that are considered prime if they were to be drained. The importance of agricultural areas in the Township shouldn't overshadow the importance of wetland areas, particularly with such a minimal amount of acreage that could be drained for use as farmland, thus draining wetland soils is not recommended or desired.

Hydric Soils, or what can be referred to as wetland soils occupy 4,475.6 acres of land area within the Township. It is important to note that the hydric soils do overlay portions of the farmland soils, and in those cases the classification of "Prime Farmland if Drained" is utilized. Outside of the farmland classes, hydric soils occupy a significant area of 3,595.1 acres, large areas of which are protected within publicly owned property or under conservation easement of the Leelanau Conservancy.

### Land Cover

Land cover references what is actually present on a location of the land, whether it is a specific type of vegetation, water/wetland area or urban at varying densities. Land cover is often utilized interchangeably with "land use", although from both a cartography and land use planning standpoint they are separate. Land use refers to the use of a specific location, whether that use is open space, agriculture, residential or commercial among other options.

Data pertaining to land cover was obtained from the United State Department of Agriculture



Map 6: Farmland and Hydric Soils

# Bingham Township Farmland/Hydric Soil Classification



## Legend

### Soils by Classification

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

- Hydric Soils
- Highways
- Roads

- Neighboring Jurisdictions
- Bingham Twp Boundary





(USDA). Land cover classes through USDA are assigned through several methods including field visits, aerial image review and remote sensing. Appendix C displays definitions of the land cover classes as assigned by USDA. Generalized, the definition of each specific land cover is that a type of land cover must occupy at least 20% of the defined space. The following table displays the acres and percentage of land area covered by each specified land cover. (See Table 4) This data from USDA was developed in 2016.

**Table 4: Land Cover Area**

Land Cover Type	Acres	Percentage
Developed High Intensity	0.74	0.00%
Developed Medium Intensity	35.32	0.23%
Developed Low Intensity	722.80	4.80%
Developed Open Space	761.38	5.05%
Barren Land	101.05	0.67%
Hay/Pasture	569.46	3.78%
Cultivated Crops	4,732.71	31.41%
Herbaceous	2207.91	14.65%
Shrub/Scrub	272.31	1.81%
Mixed Forest	242.75	1.61%
Deciduous Forest	3,100.75	20.58%
Evergreen Forest	368.27	2.44%
Emergent Herbaceous	119.21	0.79%
Woody Wetlands	177.82	1.18%
Open Water	1655.44	10.99%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>15067.92</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

As displayed within the table, cultivated crops, deciduous forest, and herbaceous occupy the largest percentages of land areas within the Township with combined areas of 66.64%. Developed spaces occupy minimal area at around 10%, with only 5% of that referencing developed space of any type of intensity. Water occupies approximately 10% of the land area, of which the vast majority is referenced to Lake Leelanau where the Township boundary extends out to the center of the lake. The land cover data aligns with what is witnessed within the Township. Lower density residential properties are intermixed amongst large

swaths of agricultural lands and to a lesser degree forested lands, with lake shore areas holding the higher density residential areas. Map 7 displays land cover data. It is important to note that some land cover categories were combined, as displayed within the legend for ease of interpretation at the set scale. (See Map 7)

### Watersheds, Wetlands and Hydrology

Wetlands and hydrological resources within the Township are a valued part of the ecosystem. The Township is in part supported by clean water and clean water is supported by healthy watersheds. The following information is detailed on Map 8.

#### Watersheds

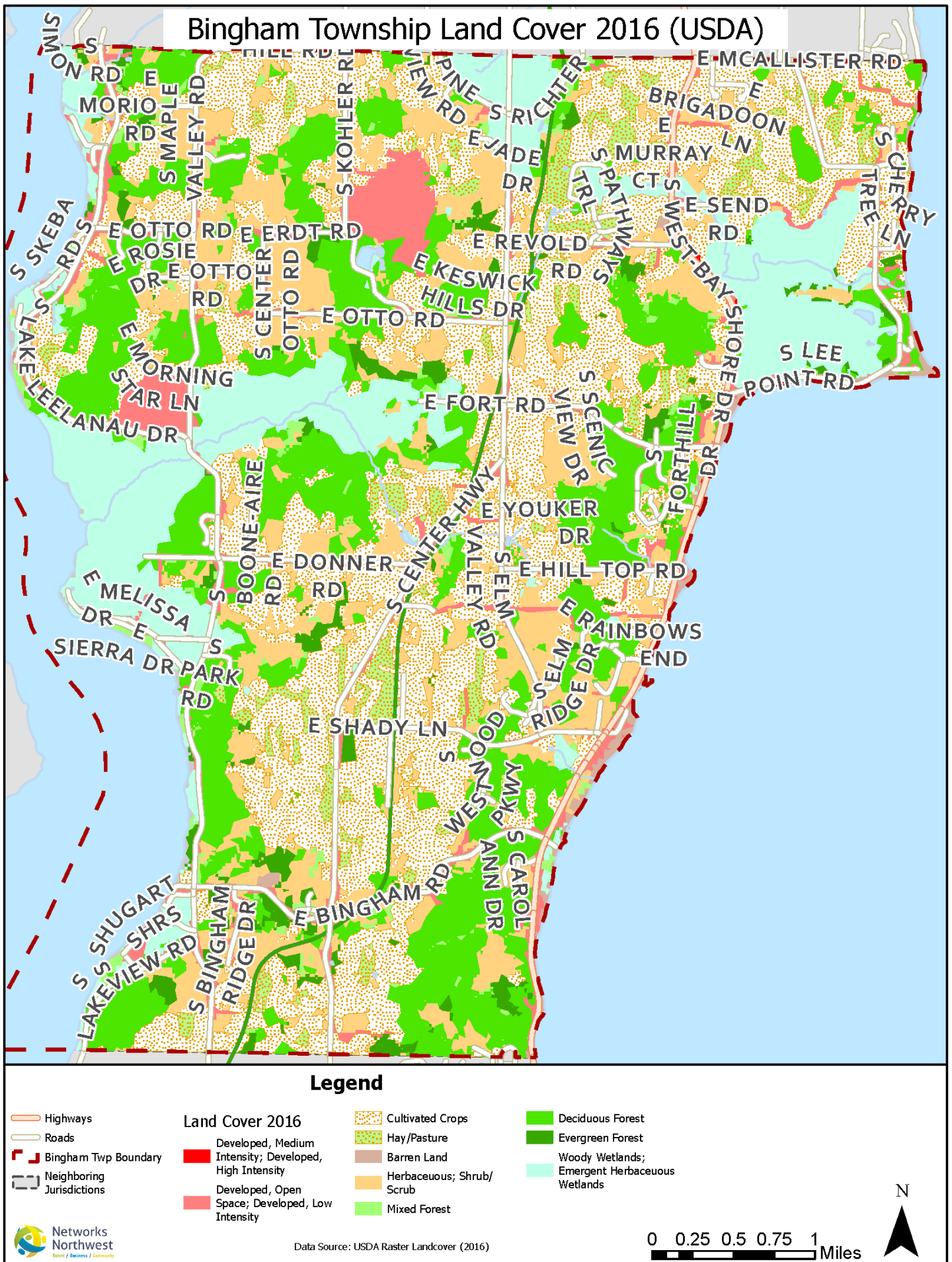
A watershed is the drainage area of which within all water converges at a single destination such as a wetland, river or water body typically located at the lowest point of the drainage. There are two watersheds in the Township which divide it North to South with Cedar Creek-Frontal West Arm draining to West Grand Traverse Bay and the Mehert Creek watershed draining to Lake Leelanau. Watersheds are vitally important for consideration in land use planning, as actions within one portion of the watershed may have damaging effects on locations downstream.

#### Wetlands

Wetlands are nature's filters and retention basins for storm-water runoff. Wetlands act as a sponge retaining water within their established hydric soils and accompanying vegetation. Through this process of retention and slow release they improve water quality by allowing sediments to settle, reducing storm-water concentrations and runoff volumes, while also storing contaminants separated from the water. Wetlands also serve as valuable wildlife habitat, with many plant and animal species specifically relying on these types of ecosystems for survival. Michigan historically has lost 50% of its wetlands with coastal wetlands having lost 75% of their original area.

The Township has many small pocket wetlands and those located adjacent to surface waters such as streams and lakes, along with two major wetland complexes. An area in the northeastern portion of the Township surrounding Lee Creek, which drains to West Bay, holds a substantial wetland complex. Much of this wetland area is under private ownership, and therefore should be monitored for activities that may jeopardize its existence. The second large wetland

## Map 7: Land Cover





# Bingham Township Hydrologic Features



## Legend

- Highways
- Roads
- Hydrography Lines
- Water Bodies
- Wetlands

- ### Watersheds
- Cedar Creek-Frontal West Arm GT Bay
  - Mebert Creek-Lake Leelanau

- EGLE High Risk Erosion
- Bingham Parcels (2021)
- Bingham Township
- Neighboring Jurisdictions

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

N

Networks Northwest  
Water / Business / Community

Data Source: State of Michigan

complex is located around Mehert Creek in the Western portion of the Township. Much of this wetland area is under ownership of Bingham Township and the Leelanau Conservancy and to a lesser extent Leelanau County. Conservation based approaches to this area along with passive recreation outlined in other planning documents is encouraging for long term preservation of this resource.

### Surface Waters

There are two primary streams within the Township, Cedar Creek and Mehert Creek. Both of these streams are cold water fed and defined as trout streams by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. There are other small unnamed creeks in the Township which occupy much smaller but nevertheless important sub-drainages of the watersheds.

Lake Leelanau and West Grand Traverse Bay are the largest water bodies connected to the Township, with several smaller water bodies that could be defined as ponds or very small lakes. These surface waters offer much to the recreational enthusiast, visitors and residents, with opportunities for kayaking, boating, fishing and swimming. Their value is evident by the concentration of homes along the shorelines.

### Floodplains

Floodplains are typically located along surface waters and wetlands. A floodplain is an area that becomes inundated with water when volumes exceed the capacity of what can be contained within the banks of a stream, lake or pond. Floodplains naturally allow these floodwaters to hold in areas and spread out reducing channel volumes and scouring that would occur more regularly without them. Floodplains are mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and should be given consideration when establishing land use policy. Floodplain maps can be found on [FEMA's map portal](#).

### Aquifers

The cold water seeps and springs that feed the streams and wetlands of the Township rise from aquifers below the surface of the earth. These aquifers are nature's storage of cold fresh water, that when accessed with water wells, provide potable water to the populous. Land use policy to protect underground water reserves should be taken seriously as a single site of contamination has the ability to impact vast numbers of users that access and utilize the aquifer.

## Coasts and Shoreline

The over 14 miles of coastline between Lake Leelanau and West Bay offer amazing views and variation of shoreline structure and vegetation.

### Lake Leelanau

Lake Leelanau shoreline is varied in composition with areas having natural vegetation that gives way to sandy shores, areas that display inundation of shoreline vegetation by surface waters in locations of creek mouths and connected wetlands and areas of piled rock and/or steel seawalls placed by humans through generations. Shorelines of natural vegetation support diversity and health for wildlife and promote greater water quality.

### West Grand Traverse Bay

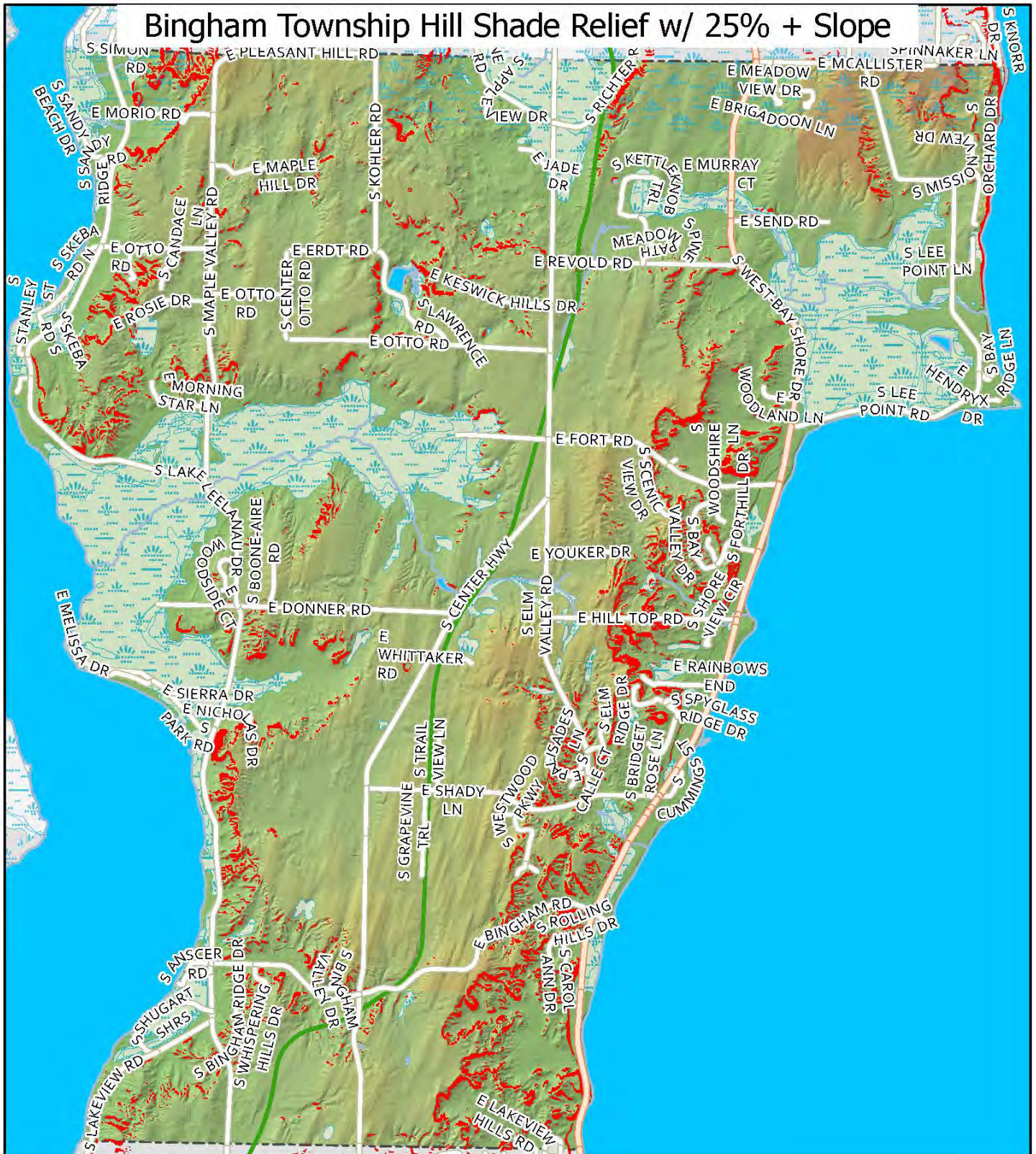
The coastal shoreline of West Bay offers three predominant shoreline types. Low elevation natural shoreline of sand and stone which is less prone to excessive erosion, higher elevation natural shoreline which consist of sand and stone with high bluffs of sand and/or clay, that rise high above the water level of the bay and are prone to high erosive forces, and unnatural piled stone, rock, steel or wood seawalls which is an attempt by humans to preserve the position of the shoreline. Naturally preserved shorelines should be expected to migrate through erosion, but maintaining a natural state with vegetation has proven to be most beneficial to plant and animal species while also preserving the areas of coastline beaches desired by humans.

### High Risk Erosion

The State of Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), has performed assessments of the Great Lakes Shoreline defining areas as being High Risk Erosion. In Bingham Township a portion of land area in the extreme northeastern shoreline along West Bay is assigned this designation. Special land use provisions by the State are present in these areas and consideration by Township staff of this review for projects and processes is necessary. See map 8 for the location of this designation.



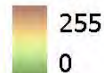
# Bingham Township Hill Shade Relief w/ 25% + Slope



## Legend

- Highways
- Roads
- Leelanau Trail
- Hydrography Lines
- Wetlands
- Water Bodies
- Neighboring Jurisdictions

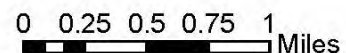
Hillshade (3 Meter Lidar)



Slope



Data Source: State of Michigan & USGS





## Topography and Steep Slopes

The glacial moraines present in the Township offer varied topography of the land. The hills provide unique rolling agricultural lands and orchards, with the steep slopes of those hills having impacts on erosion and building sites. Slopes which are devoid of vegetation are prone to erosion, and as the percentage of the slope increases the more prone the slope is to erosion. Steep slopes also complicate the siting of buildings. Topographic information is provided on Map 9.

The topographic data was obtained from the United States Geological Survey (USGS), in the form of 3 meter Lidar. Lidar data is obtained by aerial flights with precise laser measurement tools which determine elevation by shooting a laser beam to the ground and detecting the time it takes to reach the ground and return to the aircraft. This topographic layer was then analyzed in GIS to build a slope data file. For the purposes of this planning process the slope file was set to display slopes of 25% or greater. Those slopes are displayed in bright red on the map.

## Climate

Objective data has been gathered and analyzed in countless studies across the globe and the overwhelming consensus is a steady increase in average mean temperatures globally. Michigan's temperature has increased an average of 3.9 degrees in the past century. A visual gauge of less severe winters impacting the region is provided by the ice coverage of the Grand Traverse Bays. Prior to the year 1950, the bays iced completely over 8 of 10 winters, since 2000 they have iced over 3 of 10 winters.

It is predicted that by 2030, lower Michigan summers will resemble those of present-day Ohio. Precipitation is also projected to increase by 20 to 40 percent in the Midwest. However, the increase in summer and winter temperatures will outweigh the predicted increase in precipitation causing an overall drier climate in Michigan.<sup>1</sup>

These projections appear to be coming to fruition with more mid-winter thaws impacting the region, erratic weather and temperature changes during the shoulder seasons, warm dry spells with oppressing heat and storm events that bring heavy and steady rainfall with what would be considered 100-

year storm events occurring multiple times in the past 10 years.

Agricultural operations are threatened by the erratic temperature shifts which can wreak havoc on budding and flowering orchard crops, and extreme dry spells which threaten healthy fruit development during the summer months.

Fluctuations in water levels, which have a recorded history for the Great Lakes, and to a certain degree are expected, proved to be extremely volatile between the years 2013 and 2015. Lake Michigan went from a record low to increasing more than 3 feet in lake elevation in a two year period. High water continued reaching a near record level by 2019, with total rise in excess of 5 feet from the 2012 low. The elevated water levels inundated upland areas, beat upon shorelines causing significant erosion, threatening property, and caused significant concern amongst many communities. On the reverse side, during the record low water years of 2011 and 2012, many communities faced challenges of channels with insufficient depth to allow for commercial and recreational vessel traffic. River mouths were shut down to fishing in areas due to inability of fish species to navigate shallow waters and blockages caused by exposed sandbars.

The volatile changes in the water levels were attributed to changes in atmospheric conditions with warmer air temperatures holding more moisture allowing for more significant rain events, and those rain events occurring with frequency during that time period.

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1 "Michigan Assessing the Costs of Climate Change"

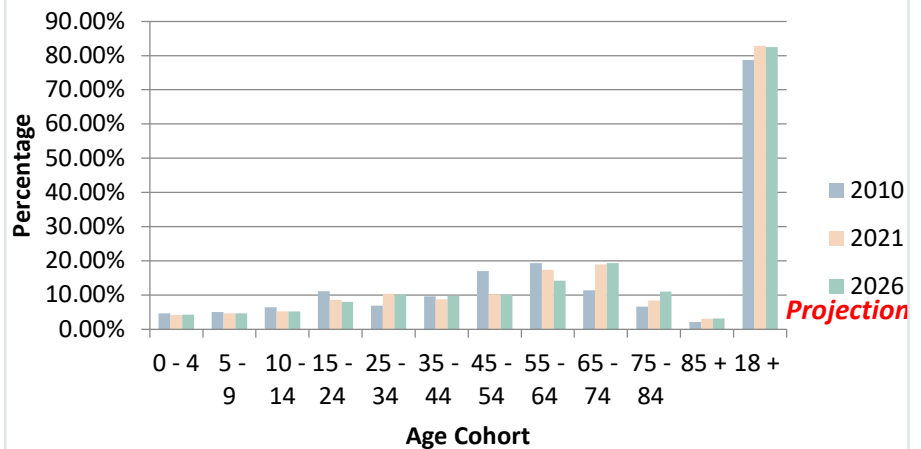


## Socio-Economic Profile

Please refer to Appendix A for an in-depth analysis of the social and economic conditions of Bingham Township. What follows is a summary of those conditions.

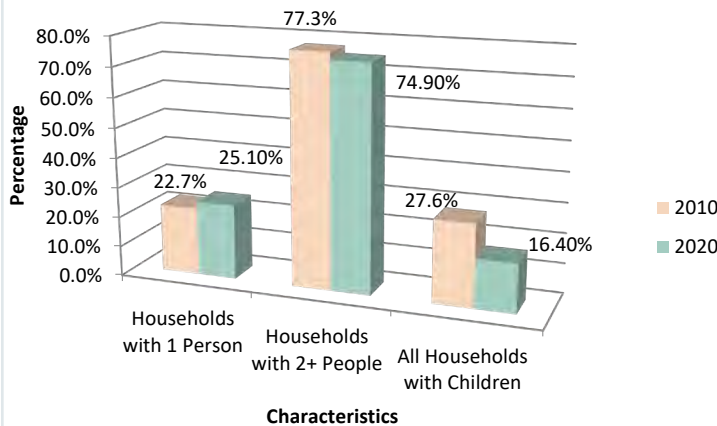
- The Township population has slowly and steadily been increasing.
- The population has steadily aged with an increasing median age.
- In-migration of residents accounts for much of the recent population increase rather than births.
- Many households are 2+ people, with a lower proportion of those households having children. This infers more of a retiree population.
- Median household income is \$68,152, which is greater than NW MI and the State as a whole.
- The number of families has slowly been increasing.
- Average Family size has remained relatively stable and is lower than NW MI and the State.

**Graph 1 Population by Age for Year**



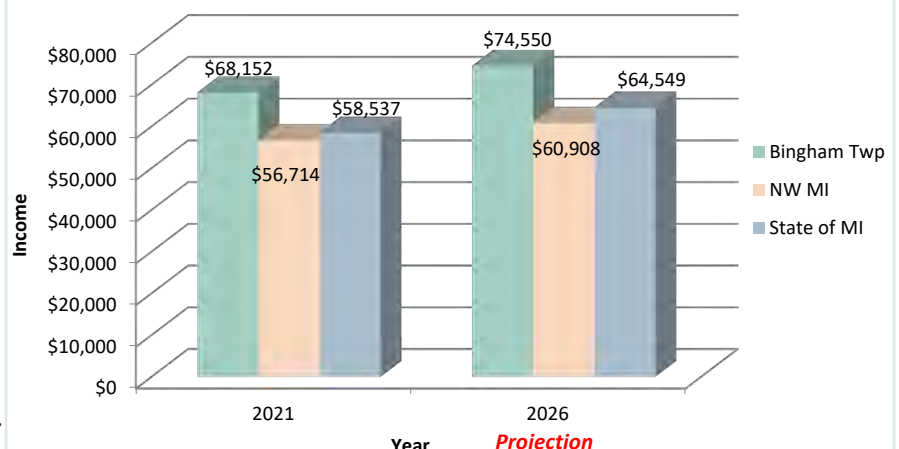
- Housing units have continually increased, but not at the rates seen prior to 2000.
- Median home value is much greater than NW MI and the State.
- Housing affordability is less than NW MI and the State, according to the Housing Affordability Index (HAI).
- Township residents devote a higher percentage of income towards mortgage than NW MI and State averages.
- Housing unit data:
  - \* Increasing percentages of “vacant units”.
  - \* Decreasing percentage of renter and owner occupied units.
  - \* These previous two points align with increases in short-term rentals which would fall under the “vacant units” category.

**Graph 2 Household Characteristics**



- The Township is more educated on average than both the region and State
- Unemployment, Poverty rates and the ALICE rating (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) point toward a significant portion of the population, at least 1/3, struggle to meet basic needs (food, childcare, housing and transportation).
- Employment is largely within the services sector and to a lesser degree, retail trade and construction.
- Workforce population is largely employed within Leelanau County at 58%.

**Graph 3 Median Household Income**



# Chapter 3

- Public Input
- Community Survey
- Community Engagement Sessions
- Agricultural Operator Outreach
- Input Summary

## Public Input

Opportunities for the public to provide information, data and preference for specific measures for land use policy is arguably one of the most important aspects of any planning process. Bingham Township officials recognized the importance of garnering this information, and took significant steps to ensure that the public had the opportunity to provide information during the planning process. This chapter of the document outlines the specific steps taken to obtain input and summarizes the information gathered from the public. Within the appendices of this plan one will find the entirety of the public input with the full listing of survey results, images of the maps and sheets utilized for voting at the community engagement sessions as well as the written comments received from the public. The following methods were utilized for the gathering of public input.

- ◊ **Notices of Intent to Plan, Press Releases & Articles:** The initiation of the planning process was well advertised and directed interested individuals to the project web-page where they could find more information concerning the process. The web-page allowed those interested in participating in the process an opportunity to provide their contact information for inclusion in email messages for dissemination of process information.
- ◊ **Community Survey:** A survey released in December of 2021, was kept open until May of 2022. The survey had a total of 241 respondents at the time of closure.
- ◊ **Community Engagement Session # 1:** The first of two open house style community engagement sessions was held on Thursday May 19th, 2022, from 5-7pm at the Bingham Township Hall.
- ◊ **Community Engagement Session # 2:** The second of two open house style community engagement sessions was held on Saturday May 21st, 2022, from 10am -1pm at the Bingham Township Hall.
- ◊ **Specific Outreach to Agricultural Operators:** A specific outreach opportunity was made available to agricultural producers and operators on Thursday January 19th, 2023 from 6:30-8:30pm at the Bingham Township Hall.

### 1999 Bingham Township Comprehensive Plan Input

During the development of the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, three methods of obtaining public input were pursued: 1) a survey of the general population, 2) a survey of large land owners, 3) citizen advisory committees tasked with providing information that would be utilized to shape goals for establishing land use policy. The outcomes of that public input contained policies that are still considered pertinent to today's Township residents, which include: sound transportation infrastructure, protection of open spaces and farmland, conservation of water and land resources, wise development policies which cluster activities and support for the Township population through services such as good schools, maintained parks and collaboration with neighboring entities.

# 2022 Community Survey

A total of 241 individuals responded to the survey, which is nearly a 10% response rate with the total population is estimated at 2,650. With a population of this size, and responses easily over the 200 mark, the survey responses are considered statistically valid for the community. Further supporting the validity of the survey is outlined in the responses to question # 2, where each respondent identified that they lived or owned property within the Township.

The summary of the survey findings that follow is of the total number of respondents. Please refer to Appendix D, which contains the full responses to the survey including all comments.

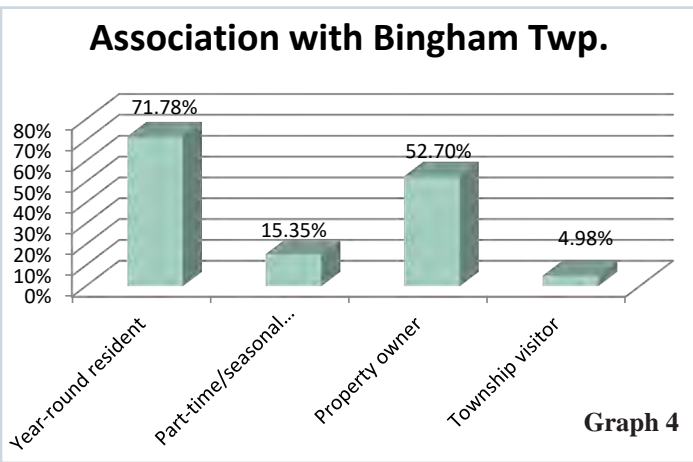
It is important to note that some survey questions allow for the respondent to select more than one answer. Those questions will be identified so that the reader understands the percentage totals are not a proportion of a whole “100%”.

## Respondent Characteristics

The first series of questions posed by the survey asked for information about the survey respondent.

### Association with Bingham Township

As displayed on graph 4 as percentages of the respondent total, the majority of the respondents stated they are a year round resident at 173 responses. 37 respondents stated they were seasonal with 127 responding they owned property within th Township.

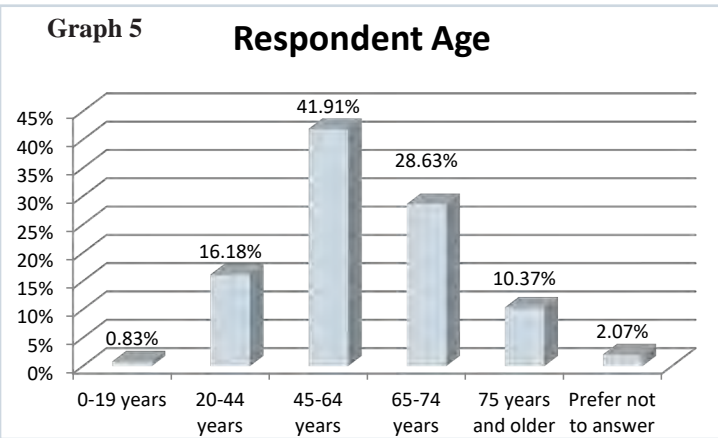


### Live, Work or Own Property in Bingham Township

The majority of the respondents outlined they have lived in the Township for more than 21 years, at 39%. The middle bracket of residing in the Township for 11-20 years garnered the lowest percentage of responses at 15.35%, and the lower ranges of living in the Township from 4-10 years and 0-3 years are 24% and 21% respectively. The larger respondent percentages of living in the Township for a less amount of time aligns with migration data from Chapter 2 which indicates the population increase is due largely to in-migration rather than births.

### Respondent Age

As expected the respondents were primarily of older age cohorts, although each age group was represented to a degree. See graph 5.

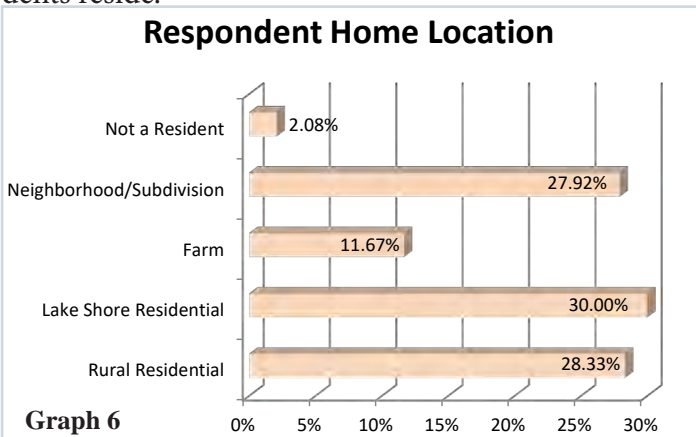


### Respondent Dwellings

The vast majority of respondents reside in single-family homes on their property at 84%. Over 50% of the respondents outright own the home in which they reside.

### Home Location District Designation

See graph 6 for information on where respondents reside.



## Community Influences

Survey respondents were asked to identify from a list of influences, those that impacted their decision to live in the Township. The list that follows is in numerical order from highest percentage of influence to least influence. (See table 5)

**Table 5: Influence for Residing in Township**

Community Influence	%
Environment/natural features	87.66
Northern Michigan location	87.55
Safety and security	81.74
Community appearance	71.98
Friendliness of community residents	69.53
Park and recreation facilities	66.67
Community reputation	60.87
Quality of housing	57.58
Traffic and circulation	53.68
Quality of roads	49.78
Taxes	45.65
Local government	43.10
Arts and culture	38.26
Housing costs	37.28
Quality of schools	34.63
Residential neighborhoods	32.61
Housing options	30.87
Religious and community institutions	25.54
Business environment	20.87
Born, raised and remaining resident	20.44
Job opportunities	17.90
Alternative transportation options	10.39

## Housing

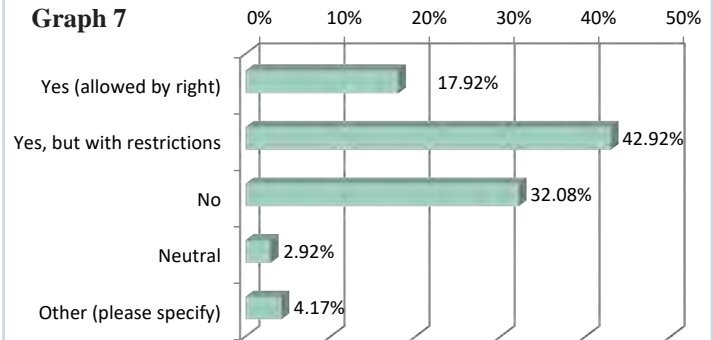
A series of questions within the survey sought opinions on the perception of policy geared towards housing options/types and short-term rentals. Overall input points towards recognition of a need for more housing options, affordability and oversight of the number of short-term rentals.

### Increasing Housing Density & Options

A question posed in the survey requested opinions of support for increasing density and allowance of options outside of strictly single-family residential homes on lots. Graph 7 displays the results, with 63.75% of respondents supporting or neutral and 32.08% opposed. Those supporting were more favor-

### Increase Housing Density & Options

**Graph 7**



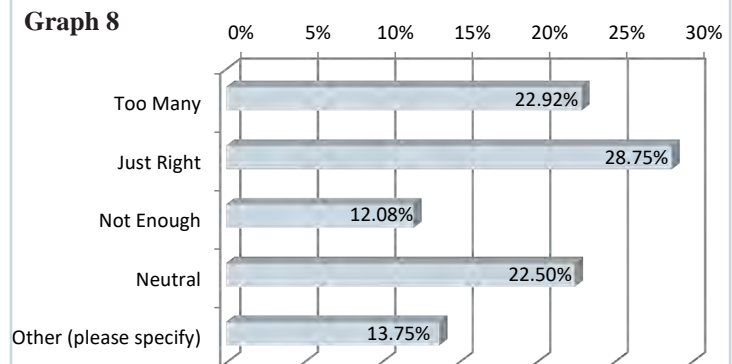
able to having restrictions in place if more options were allowed. Comments associated with the question ranged from having government stay out of housing policy to completely abolishing specific home option requirements.

### Current Allowance of Short-Term Rentals

When asked about the status of short-term rentals, the minority at 12.08% felt that there weren't enough, those that stated there were too many, the number was just right or were neutral on the subject all ranged from 22% to 28%. Respondents specifying other, at 13% and providing comment, were split on the subject. See Graph 8.

### Short-Term Rental Allowance

**Graph 8**



### Housing Type Support

Provided a selection of housing types, respondents were asked to select all types which they would support for allowance within the Township. Unsurprisingly, single-family homes garnered the most support at 64%, with duplexes/multiplexes at 27%, workforce housing at 25%, condominiums at 20%, and senior and mixed use housing each at 22%.

## Nuisance Controls

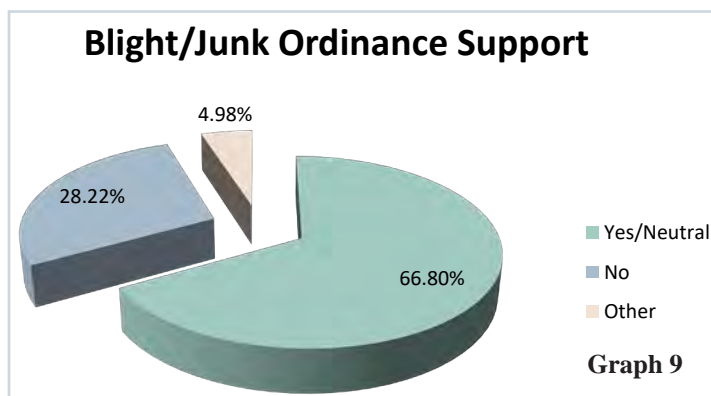
Nuisances such as blight and noise have been a



point of conversation over the years, with little information directing the Township as to whether any type of regulatory provisions should be enacted. Two questions within the survey sought to answer these questions.

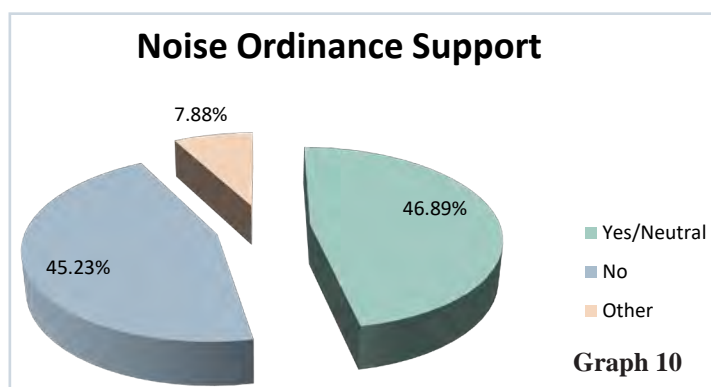
### Blight/Junk Ordinance Consideration

An ordinance to regulate blight and junk is supported by a large margin within the Township. (See Graph 9)



### Noise Ordinance Consideration

An ordinance to regulate noise is not widely supported within the Township. (See Graph 10)



## Commercial Development Policy

### Commercial District Locations

When asked if commercial development should be restricted to current areas, 56.67% of respondents agreed, 20.42% were neutral and 15.42% were in support of expansion to new areas. Written responses related to “other” were largely in favor of continued restriction with some respondents favoring restricting even further than what is currently allowed.

### Business Type/Use

Respondents were asked what type of businesses they would like to see within the Township. A

large portion of respondents selected “none of the above” at 37%. This aligns with many desires to maintain a rural character. The largest support for a business type was restaurants at 46%, and personal/business services at 32%. All other business types were supported at less than 30% by respondents. Many of the comments received in this category were related to maintaining a rural character, with a few asking that government completely stay out of land use regulation.

## Civic & Community Information

Fire/EMT, Parks, Township Hall, etc.

An open question concerning shared services and necessary improvements garnered many responses, with themes aligning amongst many of them. Below are key phrases that were shared by respondents.

“Maintain EMS & Fire”

“Shared services are good”

“Maintain township facilities and parks”

“Establish baseball diamond and dog park”

“Expand trails”

“Current Services are adequate”

“Establish Recycling Center”

All responses can be found in Appendix D.

### Disseminating Community Information

When asked how they would like to receive information, respondents selected mailings as their top choice at 71%, with the notification via the Internet at 64%, and the annual newsletter at 50%.

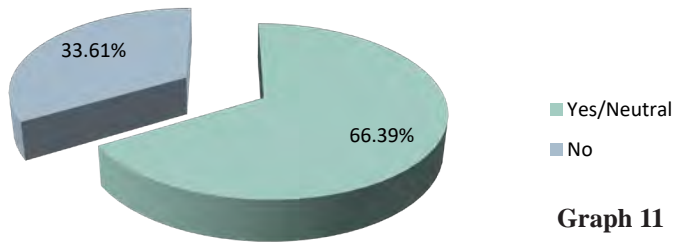
## Renewable Energy

Respondents were asked to weigh in on various types of renewable energy options and provide direct comment as it relates to renewable energy. Most comments were widely in favor of some type of renewable energy option, with some concern for sacrificing character in the name of energy facilities.

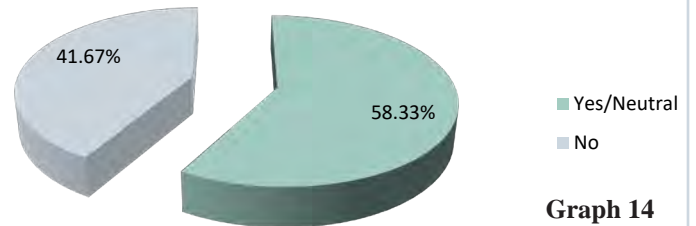
### Solar Energy Options

Questions were posed concerning solar energy at both commercial/industrial scales and residential scales. Respondents were in support of both options. 66.39% of respondents supported or were neutral concerning industrial/commercial scale solar. (See Graph 11) 84.23% of respondents supported or were neutral concerning residential scale solar. (See graph 12).

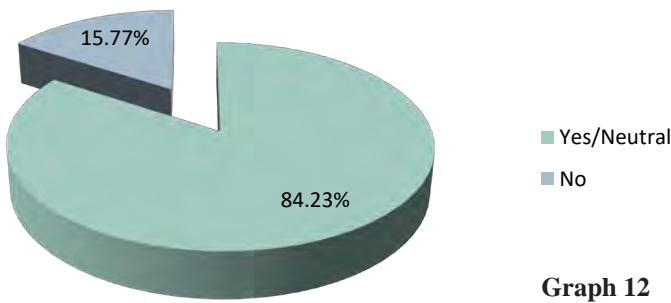
### Support Industrial/Commercial Scale Solar



### Support Residential Scale Wind Turbines



### Support Residential Scale Solar



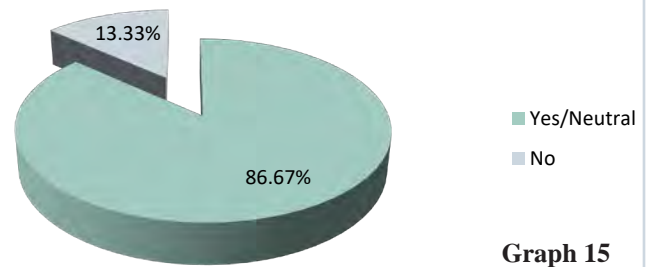
### Home Business/Cottage Industry

Home based business and cottage industries are currently established within the Township, and are supported. Policy that directs regulatory measures is also supported.

#### Home Based Business Support

86.67% of respondents support or are neutral to home based businesses. (See graph 15)

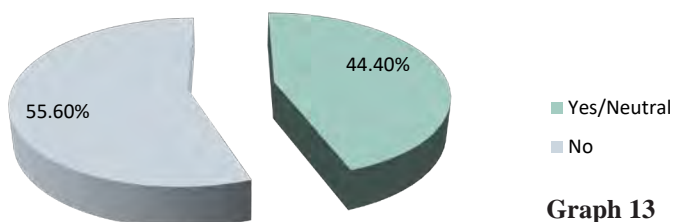
### Support Home Based Business & Cottage Industry



#### Wind Energy Options

Unlike solar, wind energy, and specifically the establishment of wind turbines at a commercial/ industrial scale is not supported widely across the Township with only 44.4% of respondents either outright supporting or remaining neutral. (See Graph 13) Support for residential scale wind turbines was evident with 58.33% answering in favor or neutral to these smaller more confined facilities. (See Graph 14)

### Support Industrial/Commercial Scale Wind Turbines



#### Home Based Business Staff Levels

Most respondents felt that a home based business should just be the owner and 2 employees at 30%. With less support for staff levels higher than that and more support for lower staff levels.

#### Home Based Business Location

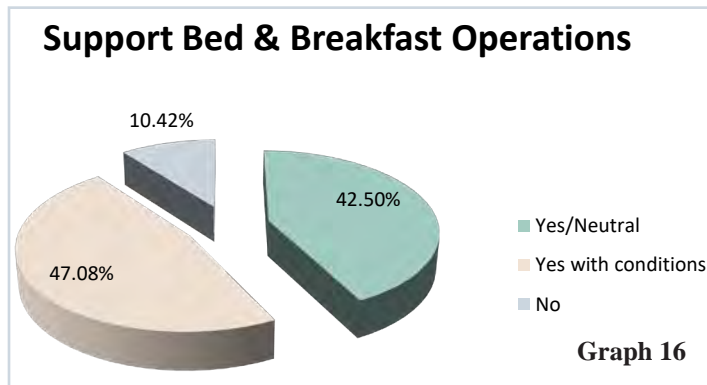
Respondents were split rather evenly between three categories, with 26% stating that the business should remain wholly within a structure, 26% stating work shall be contained within a structure and storage of materials is allowed outside so long as it's screened, and 27% stating the business may operate anywhere on a parcel so long as it is screened from view.

## Home Based Business Hours of Operation

67% of respondents favored limiting hours of operation, with four options being closely split. The Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm option garnered the highest percentage at 21% . Only 22% of respondents stated their should be no limit on hours of operation.

## Bed & Breakfast Operations

B&B operations are widely supported in the Township, with a majority of the respondents supporting conditions for this use. (See Graph 16)



## Township Priorities

The survey asked what respondents felt should be the top three priorities out of a list of 12 options. Of little surprise, the top responses were:

1. Parks and Open Spaces
2. Rural Character
3. Agricultural Presence

Table 6 provides all priorities in order of response percentage. It is important to note that the “other” option was selected by 13% of respondents and some of the shared themes follow:

- “Eliminate Short-Term Rentals”
- “Improve Internet service”
- “Maintain vegetation, plant trees”
- “Shrink role of government”
- “Watershed and land protection”

**Table 6: Support for Township Priorities**

Support for Township Priorities	%
Parks and Open Spaces	52.10
Rural Character	51.26
Agricultural Presence	41.60
Affordable Housing	35.29
Agri-tourism & Rural Economy	30.67
Community Beautification	23.53
Redevelopment of Vacant and/or Underutilized Properties	17.23
Neighborhoods	14.29
Walkability/Connectivity	13.87
Other (please specify)	13.03
Bingham Township’s Culture	10.92
Development and Growth Potential	8.82

All responses can be found in Appendix D.



## Community Engagement Sessions

Two open house style community engagement sessions were held in May of 2022. One was held on a Thursday evening from 5-7pm and the other was held the following Saturday from 10am-1pm. The format for the sessions was that of a “drop-in” session, where the public could arrive any time during the scheduled session and staff and/or Planning Commission members would guide the public through the input stations.

### Methodology

Methodology for the community engagement sessions consisted of a series of stations that presented maps, diagrams, images and questions that ask the individual to weigh-in and select their preference or garner their feedback.

A total of eight stations were devised for the input sessions, and fresh materials were utilized for each session so that existing votes would be less likely to sway forthcoming public input. The materials for the stations aligned with policy questions posed in the community survey and/or were structured from Planning Commission feedback on pressing questions that were in the forefront of current land use discussions.

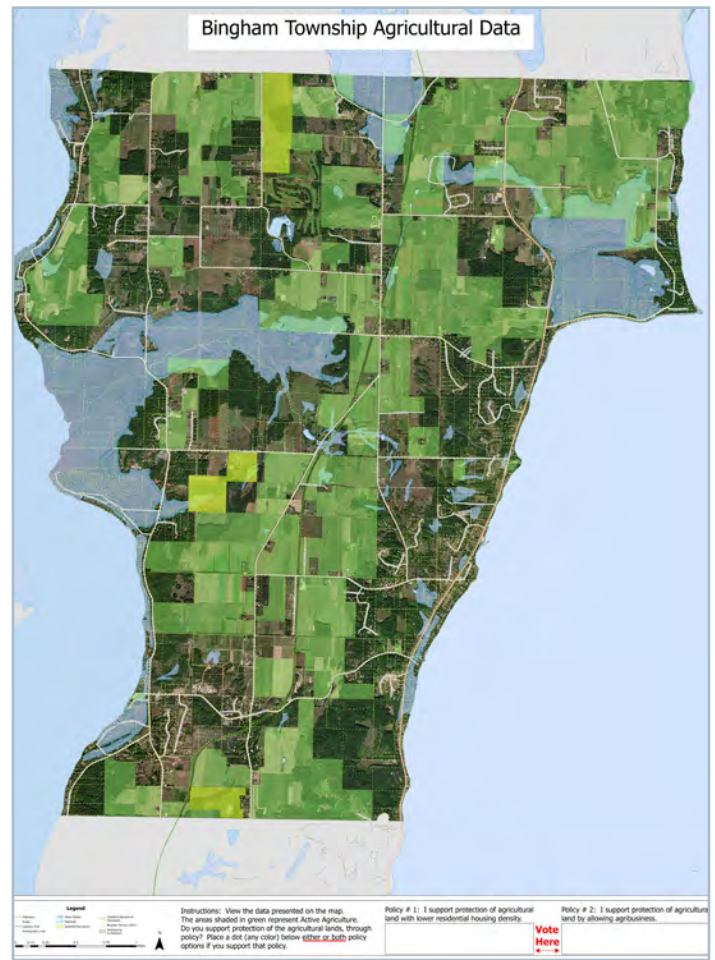
There was a total of 21 members of the public which attended either of the two sessions, along with several Township Board members and Planning Commission Members.

### Public Input Stations and Feedback

The following stations were provided at the community engagement sessions. Although two sessions were held, this summary condenses that information into a single source of feedback. Appendix E of this document displays images of the actual stations from each public input session so that the reader can view the raw information gleaned from each session.

#### Agricultural Data Map

A map of agricultural information was provided for public viewing. (See Image 1) Information on active agricultural parcels, along with parcels currently enrolled in the State farmland protection program (P.A. 116) was displayed on the map. Participants were asked whether they supported two different policies. 1) Low density development in agricultural areas, 2) Allowance for agri-tourism operations as a use.



**Image 1: Agricultural Data Display**

Responses at this station displayed approximately 50% of the participants supported low density in areas of agriculture, and 62% of responses supported agri-tourism operations.

#### Build-Out Analysis Aerial

A build-out analysis was completed of an actual agricultural property in the Township as an example of how current regulatory policy allows development. The analysis displayed two forms of density of structures. The first form of density, displayed structures that would be permitted under current zoning, 1 per 2 acres in the agricultural district, which is considered “traditional” development, over an aerial of the parcel. The other form of density displayed on the build-out was an example of conservation based cluster development. This form of development allows for fewer homes, and clusters those structures allowing for open space & agriculture to remain. (See Image 2)

The conservation based cluster development design approach garner support from approximately 75% of the participants, where as the traditional 2 acre parcel “sprawl” layout had the support of only 25% of the participants.

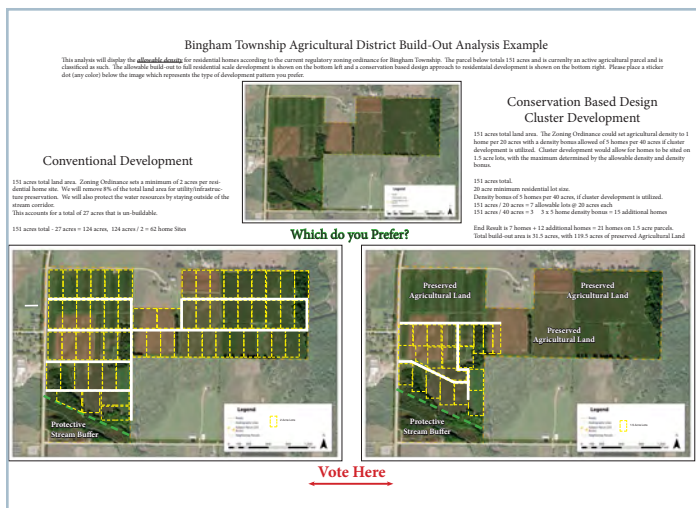


Image 2: Cluster Development Example

## Rural Roadway Cross-Sections

Roadway cross-sectionals are a fundamental approach to determining public perception for uses, setbacks and view-sheds/aesthetics. A roadway cross-sectional poster with two example options for proposed road sectionals was located at the third station. The two options consisted of: 1) a rural roadway sectional with two drive-lanes, an orchard and agricultural buildings, and 2) a rural roadway sectional with the same back-drop and also included a gas-station and another business style structure amongst the farm. (See Image 3)

The participants were clear on their preferred choice, 100% of those who voted selected the rural road cross-sectional that displayed the orchard and farm buildings without the inclusion of businesses and signage.

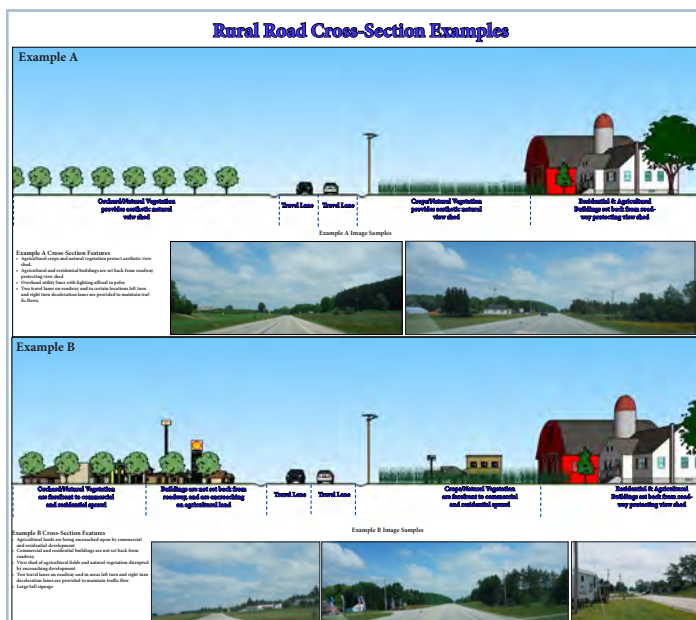


Image 3: Road Cross-Section Examples

## Natural Features Map

An aerial map with the location of steep slopes, wetlands, water bodies and streams was located at station four. The map had a statement which asked the viewer to vote as to whether they agreed that the natural areas presented on the map should be afforded policy which offered protective measures. (See Image 4)

The vote tally between the maps was 33% of those who attended either of the sessions supported the statement on this map.



Image 4: Natural Features Data Display





## Housing Options

Station five had a poster with multiple images of different types of housing units. Displayed on the poster were images of single-family, duplexes, triplexes, multiplexes, single-wide manufactured, double-wide manufactured and condominium style developments similar to what is found in many communities in the Southern US. Viewers were asked to select the images/options that they did not want to see within the community. (See Image 5)

The results from both sessions indicated that 70% supported condominiums, 52% support single-wide manufactured homes, and approximately 90% supported duplexes and triplexes.



### Housing Options and Types

			
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**Instructions:** Please review the housing options provided in the pictures above. If you feel one or more options should **NOT** be permitted within the Township, please take a sticky dot (any color) and place it in the appropriate box(s) below the image. If you feel all options should be allowed no action is necessary.


**Image 5: Housing Options/Types Selection Sheet**

### Signage Options

Located at station six was a poster with images of various types of signs. The purpose of the images was to allow the viewer to select the types of signs that they felt were displeasing to their eye or would not fit the character of the community. The images on the poster represented, pole, monument, wall, hanging, off-premise, temporary and objects represented as signs. (See Image 6)

The results displayed that the following types of signs were widely supported; monument signs, wall signs, hanging signs and temporary signs. Participants didn't support by large margins, off-premise signs, pole signs, and objects represented as signs (see Remax balloon in image).

### Signage Options and Types

			
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**Instructions:** Please review the signage options provided in the pictures above. If you feel one or more options should **NOT** be permitted within the Township, please take a sticky dot (any color) and place it in the appropriate box(s) below the image. If you feel all options should be allowed no action is necessary.









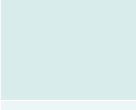







**Image 6: Signage Options/Types Selection Sheet**

### Solar Energy

Solar energy development options (i.e. scale) were offered at station seven. Participants were asked to view images of several different scales of solar energy options, and then determine if any of the options shouldn't be considered for allowance within the Township.

Voting displayed that the principle use 'large scale' option was selected by approximately 48% of participants as not desired within the Township. The only other scale that received votes was the principle use 'small' scale option, with 19% of participants opposed to this option. Participants were largely in support of solar energy in the Township.

### Solar Energy Options and Types

Accessory Roof Mounted				
Accessory Ground Mounted				
Principal Use (Small)				
Principal Use (Large)				

**Instructions:** Please review the solar energy options provided in the pictures above. If you feel one or more options should **NOT** be permitted within the Township, please take a sticky dot (any color) and place it in the appropriate box(s) of the four options provided. If you feel all options should be allowed no action is necessary.

**Image 7: Solar Energy Options/Types Selection Sheet**

### Wall Sheet Questions

A series of three questions/statements were asked at station eight. The questions/statements with a summary of the responses is below, with each statement recorded and displayed in Appendix E.

1. The 3 most important things that should be focused on by the Township are.

Participants specified many things, but the primary themes were: enforcement of ordinances including blight; allowing large solar with multiple uses; allow housing types; maintain business district in current locations; address speed limits in areas; maintain rural character and agriculture; conserve water resources, open space and trees; limit development; limit short-term rentals.



2. The 3 things I appreciate most about the Township are.

Participants identified the following items in summary: family-farm; rural character; generational farming; open space; scenic views; clean water; neighbors; vacation rentals needed; beauty.

3. How has agri-tourism impacted you?

The preceding question generated less responses, with those responses aware of multiple impacts both positively and negatively. Identification of the benefit to the economy, draw for tourism and spending locally, establishment of employment and ability to offset issues that plague sole agricultural producers, by establishing another form of value-added and retail sales were well noted. These benefits were balanced by a recognition that these establishments create nuisance issues with increases in traffic, parking and noise.

Ultimately comments outlined the desire to maintain these establishments with potential to cap the number and/or regulate potential nuisance issues.

## Agricultural Operator Outreach

Large agricultural lands occupy significant portions of the land area of the Township as has been noted in Chapter 2. Consideration of the stance of these landowners towards policies being considered by the Township was at the forethought of the Township Planning Commission. In order to effectively gain an understanding of this sector of the community, an outreach session was set up specifically to gain their input. This public input session was set for January 19th at a special planning commission meeting and was noticed directly to this sector of the community.

### Agricultural Operator Findings

This public input session was attended by 26 members of the public, with most tied directly to the Agricultural Community. Networks Northwest staff assisted with the session to elicit feedback from the meeting attendees. The statements and input points which follow were taken directly from the meeting recording.

- Agritourism is a way to keep farms viable, espe-

cially with commodity prices rising.

- Wineries have difficulty breaking-even without ancillary event business.
- Concern that wineries continue to grow beyond the production of wine.
- The Township has had a good relationship with agribusiness, but there is always a push-pull to balance with residential neighbors.
- Agritourism is going to be more and more important for land preservation.
- Suggestion of an events ordinance that is specific to each applying property (*\*note that this occurs through existing Special Use Permitting*).
- Wineries out west are facing issues (drought, fires, etc.) that we do not face here.
- Agribusiness can assist start up farms.
- Agribusiness should directly benefit the farm, agricultural operation, or winery.
- Support for conservation based cluster development if it is for 100 years time-frame for preservation of land placed in deed restriction.
- Some agribusiness, like farm markets, require a lot more acreage than is really available currently.
- If we want to protect land in Bingham Township, we need to have a proper density requirement (lower density in Agricultural District).
- When people are closer to the orchards, problems can arise.
- A 40 acre minimum does not mean land will be used for agricultural purposes.
- Lower density saves space and not farmland
- The Township should fully embrace agribusiness to help with farms and wineries.
- There is development pressure on the Township as shown by growing Census tracts and impending broadband growth.
- Make sure “maintaining the rural character” is included in the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.
- The Township wants to help farms be sustainable.
- Building housing for seasonal workers is expensive and therefore not likely to occur.
- Housing for all is needed for the labor force in general.
- Smaller lot sizes, duplexes, triplexes, etc. can help with housing affordability.
- At home business use allows the community to grow.
- Windmill fields are an eye sore from a distance, while solar fields are a more brief eyesore.
- Solar power on the roof makes sense as it is an

existing structure.

- Not all land is tillable, perhaps we can site alternative energy on these lands.

## Input Summary

The input acquired through the survey, the community engagement sessions and specific agricultural outreach has proven to align very well with one another. This summary bullets the main themes that were present and established by these opportunities. All data from the public input collection is located in Appendix D & E.

### Input Themes

- Agricultural land is desired to be protected and conserved with larger minimum lot sizes.
- Residential development on smaller lots should be confined to certain areas that cluster homes in order to maintain rural character and open space.
- Water bodies, streams, wetlands, steep slopes, open space and forests should be protected to maintain rural character, high quality and functional natural areas.
- Agritourism should continue to remain an allowable use, with provisions that proactively manage potential nuisances related to traffic and noise.
- Buffering of agr-tourism with vegetation and increased setbacks to protect rural character.
- Commercial development should be confined to areas of existing commercial allowance.
- Buffering of commercial areas from residential homes.
- Home occupations should be allowed and completely screened from public or neighbors view with limited employees, off-street parking, limited non-illuminate signage and hours of operation that allow for Mon-Fri or Mon-Sat 9am- 6pm.
- Bed & Breakfast operations should be allowed with regulations as to capacity and parking.
- Short-term rentals should be allowed, but should remain capped as to the allowable number.
- Sustainable energy allowance should include residential sized wind turbines, and solar for residential and commercial/industrial options that allow combined agricultural use.
- Parks and recreation sites should continue to be maintained with continued development of sites to include amenities such as a ball-field and trails.
- Township should continue model of sharing services and promoting efficiency with neighboring jurisdictions.
- Township properties including structures should be maintained in good working and aesthetically pleasing order.
- Uses in residential areas that are geared at promoting densities should allow for duplexes, triplexes, multiplexes and accessory dwelling units.
- Density should be placed near primary roads and within a close distance of the BATA bus route.
- Rural roadways should have a view-shed that is protected from allowance of commercial businesses, signage and higher density residential development.
- Signage in commercial areas should be of a type that includes, wall, hanging, monument or temporary with limited lighting and size.
- Off-premise signs should not be allowed.
- Nuisance controls for blight/junk are supported, but a noise ordinance is not supported.

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# Chapter 4

- Planning Analysis
- Issues of Greater Than Local Concern
- Neighboring Communities & Land Use
- Land Use Analysis
- Existing Zoning

## Planning Analysis

The preceding chapters of this document compiled and packaged the data that is utilized throughout the analysis contained within this chapter. This chapter weighs existing conditions, the input of the public, neighboring communities impacts and recognized best management practices; presenting a clear direction that is transitioned to the directives outlined within Chapters 5 and 6. These directives support policy for future land uses along with regulatory zoning provisions.

## Issues of Greater Than Local Concern

Impacts of land use policies and decisions are rarely confined to a jurisdiction's boundaries. It is essential that communities envision the larger picture when making local considerations which affect land use policy. Environmental features, transportation networks, commuting patterns for work, play and daily essentials are but just a few examples of cross jurisdictional impacts. Envisioning a communities position in a larger regional context, with considerations given to neighboring land use impacts on one's community, and how internal land uses impact neighboring communities sets about a conscientious approach for collaboration and consensus.

### Framework for our Future

The "Framework for our Future", was a product of the Regional Prosperity Initiative, and consists of a series of documents that encapsulate data, information and best management practices of a host of topics for our region. The data and information within the documents is closing in on a decade from initial development, and is still the most comprehensive resource for these regionally significant topics. Throughout this chapter, reference will be made to the Framework and more importantly to the resources page borne of the Framework.

[Framework For Our Future](#)



Map 10: Adjacent Local Units of Government

## *Economy and Placemaking*

Many resources are available that provide insight into our local and regional economy and can be found at the Networks Northwest [Growth and Investment Page](#).

### Local Economy

As identified in Chapter 2 the economy of Leelanau County is largely reliant upon the agricultural and tourism industries, with most employment opportunities stemming from these sectors, and also including the construction industry. Bingham Township with its strong agricultural presence, agritourism, agricultural value-added businesses, vacation and seasonal homes aligns with the agricultural and tourism sectors.

Local businesses outside of those related to agriculture are relatively sparse, with those that meet the typical character of a commercial business being clustered in the vicinity of E. Bingham Rd. Outside of this location there are other limited cottage industry and home based businesses which are confined while being a shared use to an individual's residence. The remainder of the businesses within the Township are related to agriculture and agritourism.

Input obtained through the planning process and existing conditions provide the following directives to community leaders as it pertains to local businesses.

#### **Local Business Economy Directives**

- Maintain what is considered “typical commercial” to existing areas, and to not expand commercial districts to new areas.
- Uses within the commercial district should allow for a full range of retail and service related businesses.
- Home based business and cottage industries should remain allowable, although the use should be contained within a structure and should not detract or be a nuisance to neighboring residences.
- Agricultural industry and agritourism should be supported and remain allowable.

### Regional Economy

Regionally, Northwest Michigan has established itself as a tourism hub going back over a century, with the earliest tourists arriving on newly constructed railroad lines. Tourism to the region has continued to grow since those early years with the

most recent growth of the past 10-15 years supported through the “Pure Michigan” campaign. A recent report out of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)<sup>1</sup>, which provides figures for 2020 sheds light on the impacts of Covid-19 and how the region fared in regard to tourism.

When comparing 2020 to 2019, the region as a whole was down 15.8% in visitor spending. On average from 2011 to 2019, visitor spending had steadily been increasing each year. For Leelanau County visitor spending had increased by a total of 26% in that time-frame.

According to commuter data, 40% of the workforce is employed outside of Leelanau County, with commuter data displaying that greater than 30% of the population commutes 25 minutes or greater to their place of employment. While there is certainly a thriving agricultural and agritourism economy successfully operating within the Township, there is a very large sector of the population that is traveling outside of the Township and County for their employment, which is likely located in the vicinity of Traverse City.

### Placemaking

Visitors to our region rarely spend the entirety of their trip within the confines of a single community. Tourists are traveling to see the sites across the region, visit retail and service establishments in various local communities, and providing economic impacts to a much larger area than just a single local unit of government's geography.

With this in mind, the idea of “Placemaking”, which is defined as establishing places of interest, intrigue and uniqueness which are inviting to people, should be forefront in efforts across communities within the region. The establishment and maintaining of placemaking sites in one community certainly has effects on neighboring communities, particularly when a myriad of sites are established across a region that creates a larger draw to visitors wishing to immerse themselves in these places of interest.

Public input obtained as a part of this Master Plan process supports the idea of placemaking in the Township. The following directives are a type of placemaking that will continue to grow the opportunities to draw visitors and residents to Bingham Township and the region, as the Township is maintaining and expanding its sense of place.

1 MEDC 2020 Tourism Impact- Region and County

### Placemaking Directives

- Maintaining of a rural setting with preservation of view-sheds from roadways that is aesthetically pleasing.
- Allowances for agricultural related businesses “agritourism” should continue to remain viable.
- Recreational site enhancements that allow for increased user bases, trail and other amenity improvements that offer greater recreational opportunity.
- Preservation of open space that is the heart of what the community represents in terms of historic and desired character.

### Environmental

Very rarely defined along jurisdictional boundaries, natural resources and impacts to those resources are often recognized over very large areas and many communities. Policies or lack thereof within a single community can have lasting impacts on other communities both near and far. Bingham Township should maintain and consider as necessary, policies which support natural resource protection. More information can be obtained from the [Natural Resources: Resource Page](#) at the Networks Northwest website.

### Water Resources & Wetlands

Water resources are shared amongst the inhabitants and visitors to each individual watershed, and beyond as watersheds join to water bodies. What occurs in the upper reaches of a watershed eventually meanders its way to lower locations of the watershed, whether pollutants, garbage, or increased water temperatures.

The State of Michigan and the Federal Government provide certain regulatory oversight of water resources dependent upon the type and/or size of the water body. Some waters are not protected by either Federal or State agencies and are prime candidates for local protections.

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy has oversight over waters of the State. This oversight includes surface waters such as ponds, lakes, streams and rivers as well as any wetland five acres or greater in size or any wetland that is connected to a water of the State (i.e. Great Lake, river or inland lake). Permits for activities within these areas must be obtained from the State prior to any type of disturbance or placement of a structure.

The Federal Government through the Army

Corp of Engineers has oversight over water bodies that are considered Federal such as the Great Lakes and connected estuary lakes. Activities of disturbance or placement of structures must obtain federal approval via permitting prior to taking place. Federal oversight along “Wild and Scenic Rivers” also occurs in areas of National Forest with rivers of that designation.

Bingham Township may consider enacting policies that protect unregulated wetlands (those under 5 acres) and vulnerable adjacent upland areas. The following policies are borne of analysis for protection of water.

### Water Protection Directives

- Wetland protection from fill for areas less than 5 acres in size.
- Riparian vegetated buffer strips of 50’ along streams/rivers, water bodies and wetlands for water quality, 150’-200’ buffers will benefit wildlife and establish corridors.
- Utilization of Low Impact Design (LID) for stormwater control (retention/cleansing), such as bio-swales, raingardens, level spreaders and porous asphalt/concrete.
- Setbacks for impervious surfaces from surface waters that limit the ability for concentrated runoff to reach surface waters.
- Properly designed and functioning septic systems which prevent leaching of sanitary waste to water resources.

### Erosion & Sedimentation

Erosion is the act of destabilized land areas (soil) and migrating from its source location. Sedimentation is the accumulation of eroded material (most often soil) at a single location. Erosion and sedimentation occur from both natural forces of nature and artificially most often through the impacts of man or at times animals.

Erosion occurs through natural forces such as wind and water, and is exacerbated by the removal or degradation of vegetation. Natural erosive forces of nature can be challenging to accept, as we lay witness to the collapse of bluff-lines along our coasts, inundation of beaches and threats to shoreline homes and infrastructure such as roadways and parkland. These obvious impacts from erosion are some of the most noticeable, but are often natural. The solution that is selected most often, is a move to stabilize the shoreline through “hardening”. Hardening is the placement



of large boulders, steel sheet piling retaining walls or other method of hardened revetment that temporarily halts erosion. We know these types of solutions are indeed temporary as the erosive forces carve at the flanks outside of the revetments, which leads to eventual failure of the practiced solution.

Erosion also occurs and is less noticed on individual smaller sites where vegetation is removed and/or earth is disturbed for construction activities or other purpose. These smaller sites are often given less consideration, but through numerous occurrences lead to significant impacts of soil loss and sedimentation occurring in areas located lower in the watershed.

The Leelanau County Conservation District has oversight over the Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Program ([SESC Regulations and Permitting](#)). The program regulates the following activities and sites:

- \* All commercial projects.
- \* Earthwork within 500 feet of a lake or stream (includes minor projects).
- \* Earthwork within 100 feet of a regulated wetland (includes minor projects).
- \* Construction of a driveway with a slope of 10% or greater.
- \* Every project that will disturb one or more acres of soil.
- \* Any work done in a subdivision and all projects in Leland and Solon townships need a permit, whether within 500' of water or not.

Outside of SESC regulations and permitting the Township can have lasting impacts on preventing erosion through additional policies that seek to perform the following:

#### Pollutants & Contamination

##### **Soil Erosion Prevention Directives**

- Limit allowances for building upon excessively steep slopes (>30%), and along ridge-lines.
- Maintain vegetation on slopes
- Limit impervious surfaces on steep slopes and immediately adjacent to surface waters.
- Maintain setbacks for areas with bluffs and coastal areas prone to erosion.

Abundance of surface waters throughout our region mask the underlying complexity of aquifers located below ground and often directly connecting to our surface waters through springs and seeps. Groundwater protection is as paramount as surface water protection and can be more so as residents of

rural communities most often rely upon wells for their drinking water source. Aquifers similar to surface waters don't follow delineated political geographies and have the ability to transport pollutants great distances from the source of contamination.

Groundwater protection through regulatory permitting of uses and facilities which store or utilize chemicals and/or produce hazardous waste, should meet groundwater and drinking water protection standards. The State by and large regulates the utilization of hazardous chemicals and waste by-products of businesses, although the Township has the ability to establish additional standards for groundwater protection.

Outside of the permitting and regulation of uses which may impair groundwater resources, an often overlooked contributor of pollutants is the unregulated storage of motor vehicles and boats, particularly those that are not in working order. Unlicensed junkyards may allow unregulated leaking of engine oils and hazardous fluids from dilapidated vehicles, which can compromise both surface and ground waters. These types of impacts can be limited and contained through Township policy and regulation. Groundwater protection should be common practice and can seek to regulate through policies such as:

#### *Cooperative Planning & Shared Services*

##### **Groundwater Protection Directives**

- Uses identified as being potentially hazardous to groundwater should be permitted according to the State and should follow groundwater protection standards.
- Township zoning should include groundwater protection standards for uses with hazardous liquids.
- Limiting junk vehicle storage outside of regulated junkyards.

The greatest opportunity for lasting long range impacts come through achieving consensus through collaborative efforts. Local unit of government collaboration or at a minimum coordination and understanding of adjacent land uses and land use policy can lead to a more harmonious fabric of land uses across jurisdictional boundaries.

Understanding the desires of a community's residents, the placement of that community within the confines of the localized region and developing policies that support appropriate land uses and collaboration will decrease conflicts and ease approvals.

## Cooperative Planning

Cooperative planning can range from the allowances of the Planning and Zoning Enabling Acts, which promote through statutory authority, the ability of units of government to establish jointly appointed planning commissions for oversight of land use policy for two or more units of government.

Cooperative planning can also be defined simply as having strong communication with jurisdictional neighbors, the County and region. Consideration toward land use policies along jurisdictional boundaries that align, support and enhance neighboring policies creates harmonious transitions. It is this level of cooperation that is to be achieved through this iteration of the Master Plan, and is expanded upon later in this chapter.

## Shared Services

The sharing of services promotes efficiency and cost effectiveness in government. The range of shared services includes but is not limited to utilities and agreements for cross-jurisdictional utility districts, fire and public safety enforcement, zoning and code enforcement as well as services towards parks and recreational features and shared staff positions.

Bingham Township currently hosts agreements for sharing of fire protection, participates in cross jurisdictional public education efforts and although regulatory zoning differs, shares a portion of full-time hours with neighboring communities for zoning administration and planning services.

### Cooperative/Shared Services Directive

- Bingham Township should continue to look towards policies that promote cooperation and sharing of services.

## Utilities

Utility infrastructure is a costly endeavor for local units of government to undertake whether speaking of water, sewer, energy or broadband. The rural nature of many communities, such as Bingham Township, often creates a cost-prohibitive environment for the placement of utilities due to the distance between many rural residences. The sharing of services as noted before is the optimum method for efficient and cost effective service district development.

## Water & Sewer

Water and Sanitary Sewer Services are currently not available within Bingham Township. Sanitary

sewer is of importance to areas which are promoted for density of residential units or for areas of significant commercial or industrial growth. Sanitary sewer is also important for the preservation of water quality which can be impacted by improper servicing or ill-designed septic systems. The Township is not positioned to provide sanitary sewer or water services, and cooperative cross-jurisdictional sanitary or water districts are currently not feasible with the lack of immediately adjacent systems in neighboring units of government.

## Broadband

Leelanau County has been leading efforts in the region for broadband expansion through the Leelanau Internet Futures Team (LIFT). The group established in 2018 recognized the lack of high-speed Internet availability in large areas of the County, and the often inaccurate data contained in the FCC broadband fiber coverage maps. Bingham Township has partial coverage of broadband internet through Spectrum, with ability for higher speed satellite internet through Starlink. There is non-broadband slower internet coverage through Hughs.net and land-line phone system companies. The desire is to provide high speed internet capability to every household within the Township.

LIFT continues to be the local voice of advocacy for broadband expansion. Monitoring their efforts and communication with the group can occur through their [Facebook Page](#).

The Michigan High Speed Internet Office is the State agency supporting high speed internet expansion efforts. [MIHI](#) is the best resource for information, data and the funding mechanisms available to assist in expansion of high speed internet.

### Broadband Expansion Directives

- Efforts for high-speed internet expansion should be supported for Township residents' educational, workforce and pleasure.
- Efforts for high-speed internet should support public-private partnerships.

## Energy

Energy providers to the Township through Consumers Energy and Cherryland Electric Cooperative are reliable and reach all areas of the community. The community is supportive of renewable energy options for commercial and personal scale solar and personal scale wind production.

## Transportation

### Roadways

Transportation infrastructure improvements are made by the Leelanau County Road Commission or the Michigan Department of Transportation dependent upon the roadway. Bingham Township has properly established regulatory language which guides the design of new roadways within the Township that may be included in a development proposal. The importance of proper design is for stability and safety of the roadway, and to ensure that the standards meet those of the County Road Commission, which may assume authority of a newly built public roadway.

### Public Transit

The Bay Area Transportation Authority's (BATA) route through Bingham Township is an important component to the community. The ability to utilize public transportation is extremely beneficial to residents and visitors, particularly with the level of costs associated with transportation and the burden it places on households and families.

#### **Transportation Directives**

- Bingham Township should continue to support and promote the BATA route within the Township and beyond.
- Participation in regional transportation planning efforts such as through TTCL.

## Housing

Housing and the associated costs and lack of supply is one of the most challenging facets to residents, employers and communities at this time throughout all of Northern Michigan. The lack of housing and in turn the increasing costs of housing is well known and emphasized by employers, individuals and families attempting to move to the region. The issue has arisen from a combination of reasons including, increased costs for land, increased material costs, lack of skilled labor, prohibitive regulations, conversion of housing stock to short-term-rentals and lack of necessary infrastructure for density.

Our regional housing advocacy organization, [Housing North](#), has successfully led discussions in Leelanau County centered around the serious issue of housing affordability and lack of housing stock. Housing North has many resources and toolkits available to help guide community officials in the decision making process. A stand-out resource, the [Housing Ready](#)

[Program](#) has a "Housing Ready Checklist", which is a comprehensive approach for community self-reflection which allows community leaders and staff to determine existing needs, outline strategies, and weigh financial and development opportunities.

In December of 2022, the governor signed into law four bills which increase opportunities for community leaders to expand affordable housing. The four bills (Senate Bills [362](#), [364](#), [422](#) & [432](#)) individually expand opportunities for assistance with rehabilitation, residential tax exemptions, establishing housing districts and ability to obtain State funds for support of housing development.

Bingham Township has the ability to support change through loosening prohibitive regulations, promoting cooperative planning/shared services, and implementation of recent legislative opportunities.. Public input, displays support for increased density, particularly if the design of the structures matched the existing design of housing stock, which is primarily single-family residential.

Township officials can have a lasting impact and play a supportive role through policies that ease limitations on specific types of housing and densities while directing new housing to locations of existing density and sound transportation infrastructure in the form of primary roads and public transit. They can also continue cooperative planning with neighboring units of government for the ability to develop and expand services such as water and/or sewer if the opportunity is made available and can reasonably be accommodated. Policies in support of housing should include:

#### **Housing Directives**

- Design criteria for multi-family housing that mimics established single-family homes with the use of peaked roofs, gables, covered porches, large windows and garages incorporated into the design.
- Allow smaller lot sizes to promote density in locations of existing density, and where transportation infrastructure such as primary roads and public transit routes exist.
- Allowance of duplexes, triplexes and multiplexes that meet the design criteria established above.
- Allowance of accessory dwelling units on parcels that meet principle residential exemption.
- Continue to monitor short-term-rentals and enforcement of the regulatory ordinance.



## Neighboring Communities & Land Use

It is important to consider neighboring communities and the land use regulations imposed by those communities, as decisions concerning policy should weigh neighboring policy structure and how it may vary along jurisdictional lines. Bingham Township is bordered to the North by Suttons Bay Township and to the South by Elmwood Township. To the East lies West Grand Traverse Bay and to the West lies Lake Leelanau. What follows is a detailing of the zoning districts and accompanying regulations found in the neighboring communities.

### Suttons Bay Township

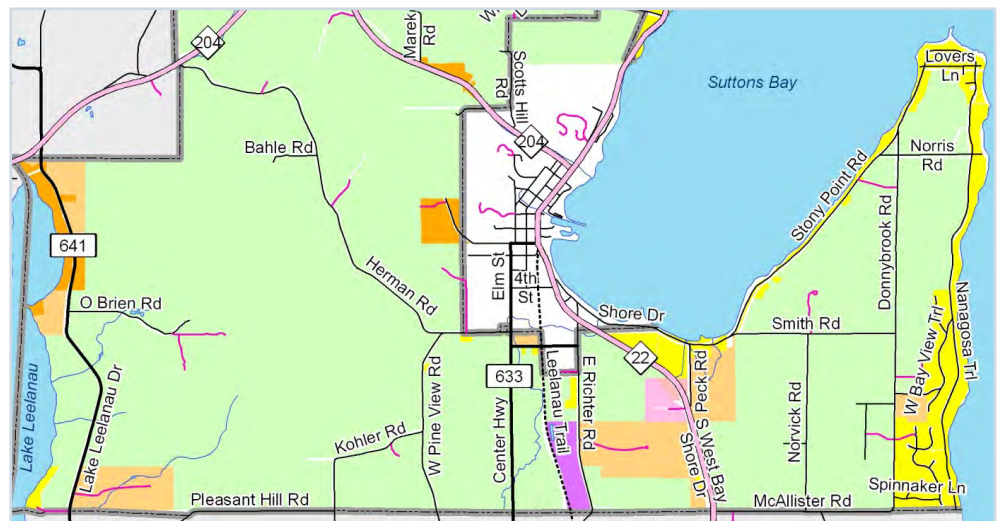
Located to the North of Bingham Township, Suttons Bay Township shares a similar land use profile in the vicinity of the shared Township boundary. The table below displays the bulk requirements for the districts located immediately adjacent to Bingham Township. (See Table 7) The location of zoning districts can be seen on Map 11, which displays the southern portion of Suttons Bay Township.

**Table 7: Suttons Bay Township Zoning District Bulk Requirements**

Suttons Bay Twp.		Zoning Districts		
Standards		Residential	Agriculture	Waste Management
Min Lot Area		1 acre	2 acres	Depends on use: 5,000 ft <sup>2</sup> to 10 acres
Min Lot Width		150'	200'	Depends on use: 150' to 500'
Max Height		30'	30'	30'
Min. Dwelling Area		700 ft <sup>2</sup>	700 ft <sup>2</sup>	N/A
Max Lot Coverage (%)		25%	25%	80%
Setbacks	Front	40'	40'	50'
	Side	35'	35'	25'
	Rear	35'	35'	25'
	Shoreline	50'	50'	Depends on use: 500' to 1,000'

**Map 11: Suttons Bay Township Zoning Map**

Current Zoning	
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:lightgreen; border:1px solid black;"></span>	A-1 - Agricultural
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:lightcoral; border:1px solid black;"></span>	C - Commercial
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:lightpink; border:1px solid black;"></span>	I - Industrial
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:orange; border:1px solid black;"></span>	OLA - Agricultural Overlay
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:yellow; border:1px solid black;"></span>	OLR - Residential Overlay
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:lightyellow; border:1px solid black;"></span>	R-1 - Residential
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:lightcyan; border:1px solid black;"></span>	TL - Federal Trust Lands
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:lightblue; border:1px solid black;"></span>	TP - Township Park
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:lightpurple; border:1px solid black;"></span>	W - Waste Management



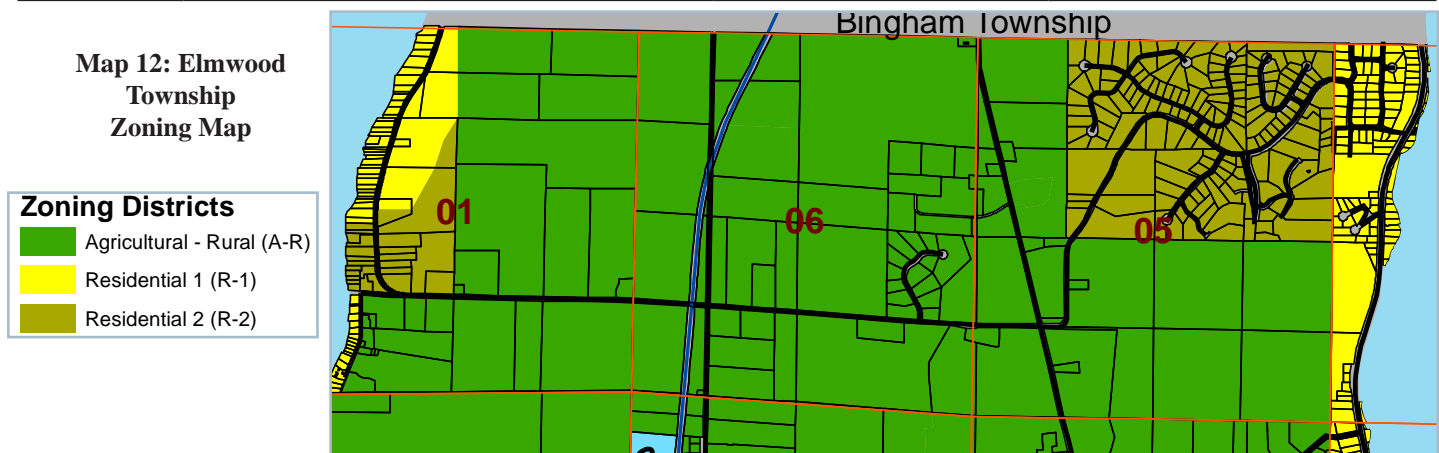
Suttons Bay Township has very similar land use bulk regulations with Bingham Township. The location of the Zoning Districts along the Southern boundary of the Township, also aligns similarly with Bingham Township. Residential districts (R-1) are confined to both the East and West lake-shores in the vicinity of the southern jurisdictional boundary with 1 acre minimums, and the agricultural district (A-1) spans the interior of the Township boundary with 2 acre minimums. The waste management district, which would consist of heavy industrial uses and is located along a short portion of the southern boundary, is the only district that doesn't mirror a similar district in Bingham Township. Of importance to note, is the call for protection of agricultural lands and open space in Suttons Bay Township, which is not supported through the "higher" density 2 acre minimums offered in the agricultural district.

## Elmwood Township

Located to the South of Bingham Township, Elmwood Township is a community which has historically had development occur in the southern and particularly southeastern portion of the Township where it borders Traverse City. Much of the Township within its interior and northern portions is largely rural in nature. Due to the immediately adjacent development pressures of Traverse City, the Township Master Plan outlines goals and strategies for locating more dense development in areas closer to the City. Table 8 below, displays the bulk requirements for the zoning districts which are found abutting the southern boundary of Bingham Township. The location of those districts can be seen on Map 12, which displays the northern portion of Elmwood Township.

**Table 8: Elmwood Township Zoning District Bulk Requirements**

Elwood Twp.		Zoning Districts		
Standards		Residential (R-1)	Residential (R-2)	Agricultural-Rural (A-R)
Min Lot Area		12,500 ft <sup>2</sup>	12,500 ft <sup>2</sup>	1 acre
Min Lot Width		100'	100'	125'
Max Height		35'	35'	35'
Min. Dwelling Area		720 ft <sup>2</sup>	720 ft <sup>2</sup>	720 ft <sup>2</sup>
Setbacks	Wetlands	30'	30'	30'
	Water's Edge	30'	30'	30'
	Front	30'	30'	50'
	Side	10'	10'	10'
	Rear	25'	25'	25'



Elmwood Township zoning districts and accompanying bulk requirements along the Township's northern boundary align closely with Bingham Township. Their is allowance by Elmwood Township for slightly larger areas of medium and medium-high density in the northeastern corner of the Township, as displayed on Map 12. These residential areas establish lot sizes that are almost 1/4 of the size of what is required in Bingham Township for similarly titled districts. This displays the discrepancy between what each community refers to as "high" or "medium" density, with Elmwood Township actually realizing higher density through their standards. The interior middle of the Township calls for "lower density" agricultural areas, but it is important to note that lower density still pertains to 1 acre lots which is not true low density by rural standards.

Elmwood Township has water and sewer districts and accompanying infrastructure in areas to promote higher density. Sewer lines that run almost the whole length of M-22 within Elmwood Township offer opportunity for potential future shared services, pending further study to determine true feasibility.

The Township, being located immediately adjacent to Traverse City receives pressure for development as a bedroom community. This pressure, planned for accordingly with density and infrastructure, will focus development to appropriate areas. A similar approach should be mirrored in Bingham Township which wishes to preserve much of its agricultural and open space lands.

## Land Use Analysis

This land use analysis will outline the pertinent geographic data such as locations of environmental and hydrological features, active agricultural lands, and parcel size analysis; this data coupled with the directives gained from the public and plan data, allow for strategic pin-pointing of areas for the placement of land use districts to meet the desires of the community.

### Conservation Priorities

Data contained on Map 13 displays an overlay of the environmental features outlined within the existing conditions of this document. These features should be given consideration through land use planning as they are highly susceptible to impacts of various land uses. Wise development patterns which enhance these features through conservation practices that limit encroachment, limit overland storm-water runoff, limit impervious surfaces and offer additional protection should be pursued. These features are comprised of wetland complexes, shoreline and coastal resources, steep slopes and ridge-lines and other hydrological features. The [Leelanau Conservancy](#) provided a dataset of priority conservation lands within Bingham Township which are included on Map 13. The priority polygons encapsulate many of the individual features listed. Options for consideration of these features include:

#### **Conservation Priorities Analysis Findings**

- Data contained within Map 13 may be utilized as a resource for the planning commission and staff when considering development applications.
- Data could be included in an overlay zone that is given consideration when applications are made for land uses in underlying zoning districts.
- The data should be displayed on a map in a visible location at the Township Hall to continue to keep the information at the forefront of thought for decision makers.

### Parcel Data

Isolation of specific data at the parcel level allows analysis of land use trends for specific areas of the Township. Information concerning agricultural use, existing commercial activity and lot sizes of existing residential property allows for community leaders to make informed decisions for land use dis-

trict boundaries and uses that appropriately meet the desires of the community while taking into account existing on-ground conditions.

### Active Agriculture

Active agricultural properties, which are those parcels that are currently assessed as agriculture due to at least 50% of the property meeting agricultural use, are displayed on Map 14. The importance of agricultural properties to the local economy, coupled with strong support from the public for protection of these lands, provides leaders with a clear direction to steer development away from these locations, maintaining low density, agriculture and agritourism opportunities. It is important to consider that protection of swaths of agricultural lands and open space preservation work to maintain a landscape devoid of impacts of the built environment. Once a land area has structures, placed densely or moderately-dense, that land area is removed from being able to be utilized as agriculture in the future without significant costs associated with the removal of structures and re-purposing of the land to active agriculture.

According to the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, 1.3 millions acres of agricultural land was lost nationally in 2021. The loss of agricultural land coupled with studies presenting national food insecurity rates at greater than 20% of households<sup>1</sup>, increasing concerns of climate change and it's impacts globally to agricultural production areas, and local and regional concerns gathered from public input of urban sprawl, and it's impact to our agricultural lands and open spaces; places emphasis on the need for protection of existing agriculture and open space.

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1 Urban Institute: Food Insecurity Trended Upward in Midst of High Inflation and Fewer Supports. [chrome-extension://efaidnbmninnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/HRMS%20Food%20Insecurity%20Brief\\_0.pdf](chrome-extension://efaidnbmninnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/HRMS%20Food%20Insecurity%20Brief_0.pdf)

#### **Agricultural Land Use Analysis Findings**












- Data contained on Map 14 may be utilized as a backdrop for the lands to be contained within the agricultural zoning district.
- Consideration of those lands adjacent to active agricultural which are not actively farmed, but are large areas of forested lands or open space should be given consideration for inclusion in the agricultural zoning district.

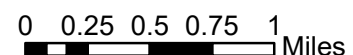


## Bingham Township Conservation Priorities



### Legend

-  Highways  
 Roads  
 Hydrography Lines  
 Water Bodies  
 Wetlands  
 25% + Slope  
 EGLE High Risk Erosion  
 Conservancy Natural Land Priority  
 Bingham Parcels (2021)  
 Bingham Township  
 Neighboring Jurisdictions



Data Source: State of Michigan,  
Leelanau Conservancy



## Commercially Active Parcels

The location of assessed active commercial properties is displayed on Map 15. Active commercial parcels are spaced across the Township, with a concentration of commercial uses along the East Bingham Rd. corridor. The commercial uses along E. Bingham Rd. are considered typical commercial uses, while the scattered sites across the Township are those of agribusinesses, greenhouses, landscape contractor yards, with a few non-conforming commercial operations.

Input received during this planning process overwhelmingly supported maintaining typical commercial businesses to the existing commercial district with no expansion of the district. This is further supported through sound planning principles of concentration of typical commercial uses for preservation of a rural setting, while also establishing feasibility of future shared infrastructure. Other scattered commercial uses should be of agribusiness or similar rural oriented business use, cottage industry or home occupation.

### Commercial Land Use Analysis Findings

- Commercial district boundaries may be drawn to include the commercial parcels along the E. Bingham Rd. corridor displayed on Map 15.
- Commercial district boundaries should remain confined to the E. Bingham Rd. commercial areas.
- Non-conforming commercial uses outside of the Bingham Rd. corridor should be allowed to continue.
- Commercial uses of a rural nature, agribusinesses, cottage industries and home occupations should be allowed throughout the Township outside of the commercial district.

## Residential Lot Size Analysis

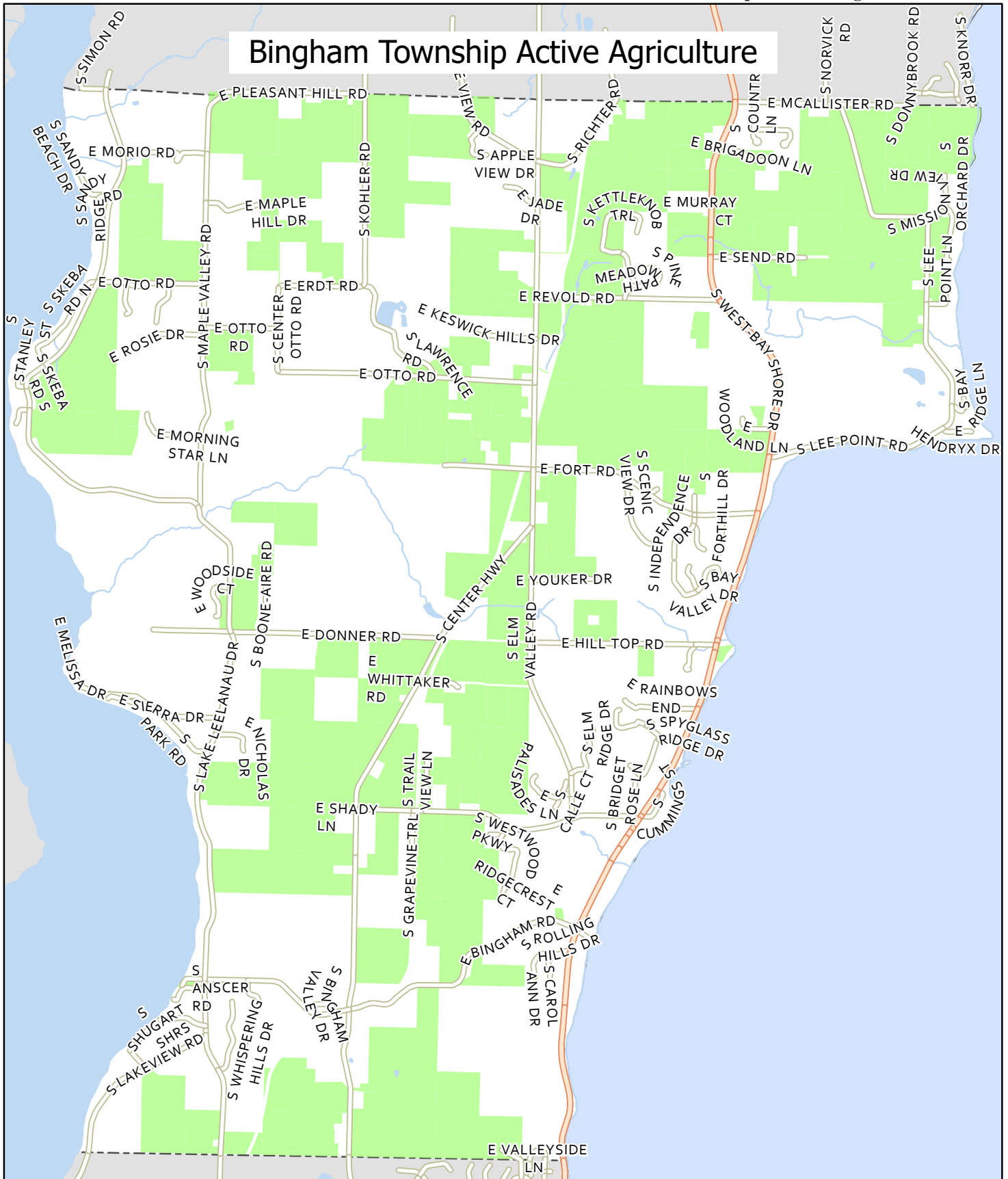
Map 16 provides a visual reference of high to medium density residential parcels in Bingham Township. In yellow are occupied and vacant residential parcels less than 5 acres in size. In olive drab are occupied residential parcels that are 5 acres to less than 20 acres in size. The importance of this data is to display the locations of existing “higher” density parcels and structures within the Township. Existing clustering of residential areas is prominently visible within the Township, whether the locations are along the lake-shores or arranged within the interior, outside of active agricultural areas.

Public input has been overwhelming in support of clustering residential homes, while decreasing densities in agricultural districts. Clustering of homes offers efficiency for infrastructure and prevents unbridled residential sprawl which leads to issues of land fragmentation, agricultural land conversion and increased expenses borne of “[Cost of Community Services](#)”. These referenced studies display that residential urban sprawl is much more costly than other uses such as agricultural operations.

### Residential Land Use Analysis Findings

- Data contained in Map 16 may be utilized to guide the boundaries of residential districts of high and medium density.
- Directing additional residential density to locations of existing housing unit density, where primary transportation corridors exist and where public transit and potential future infrastructure may be feasible, will limit land fragmentation and lead to future efficiency of costs associated with infrastructure expansion and community services.

## Bingham Township Active Agriculture



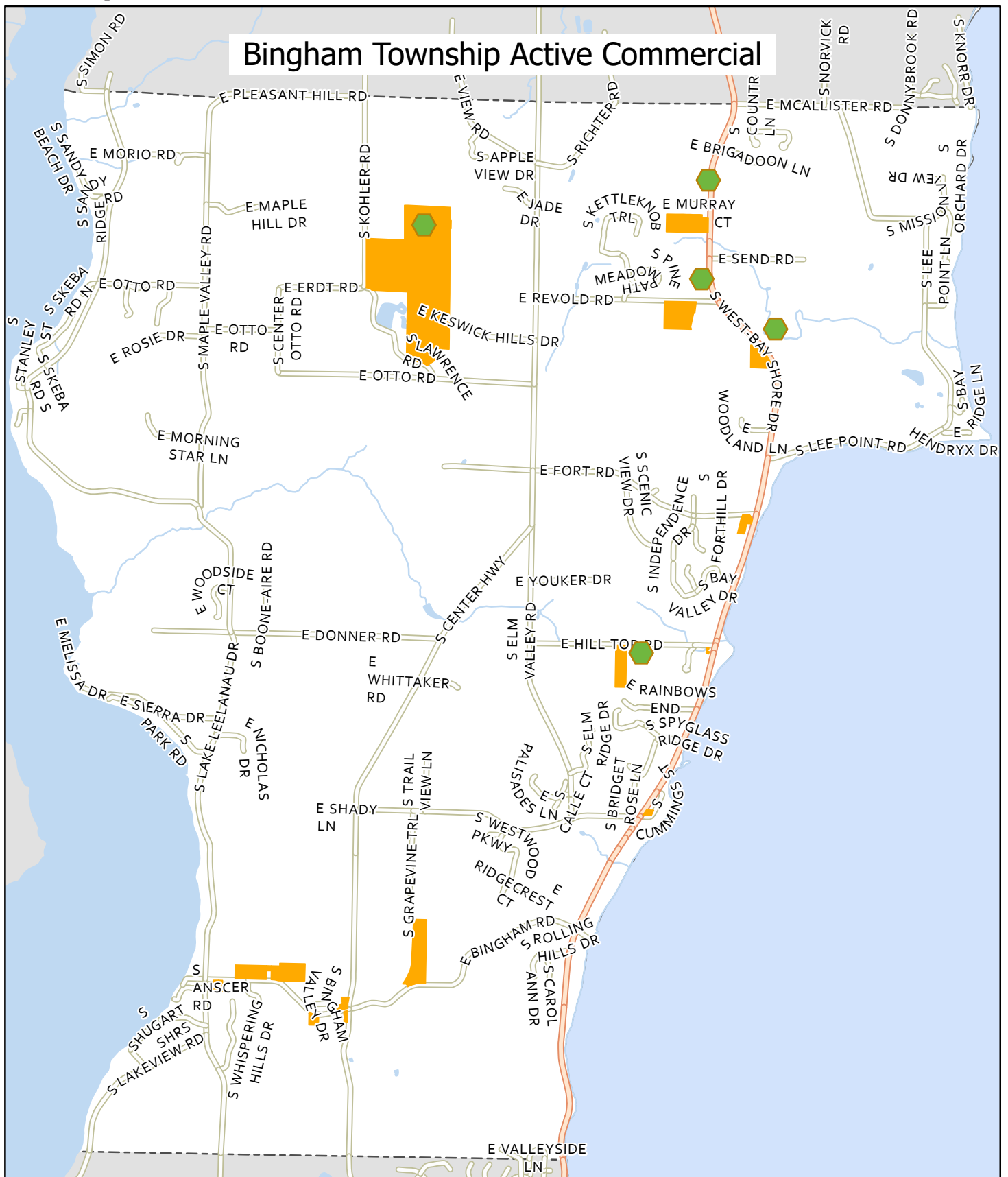
### Legend

- Map Source: Leelanau County,  
State of Michigan








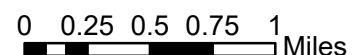


### Map 15: Active Commercial



### Legend

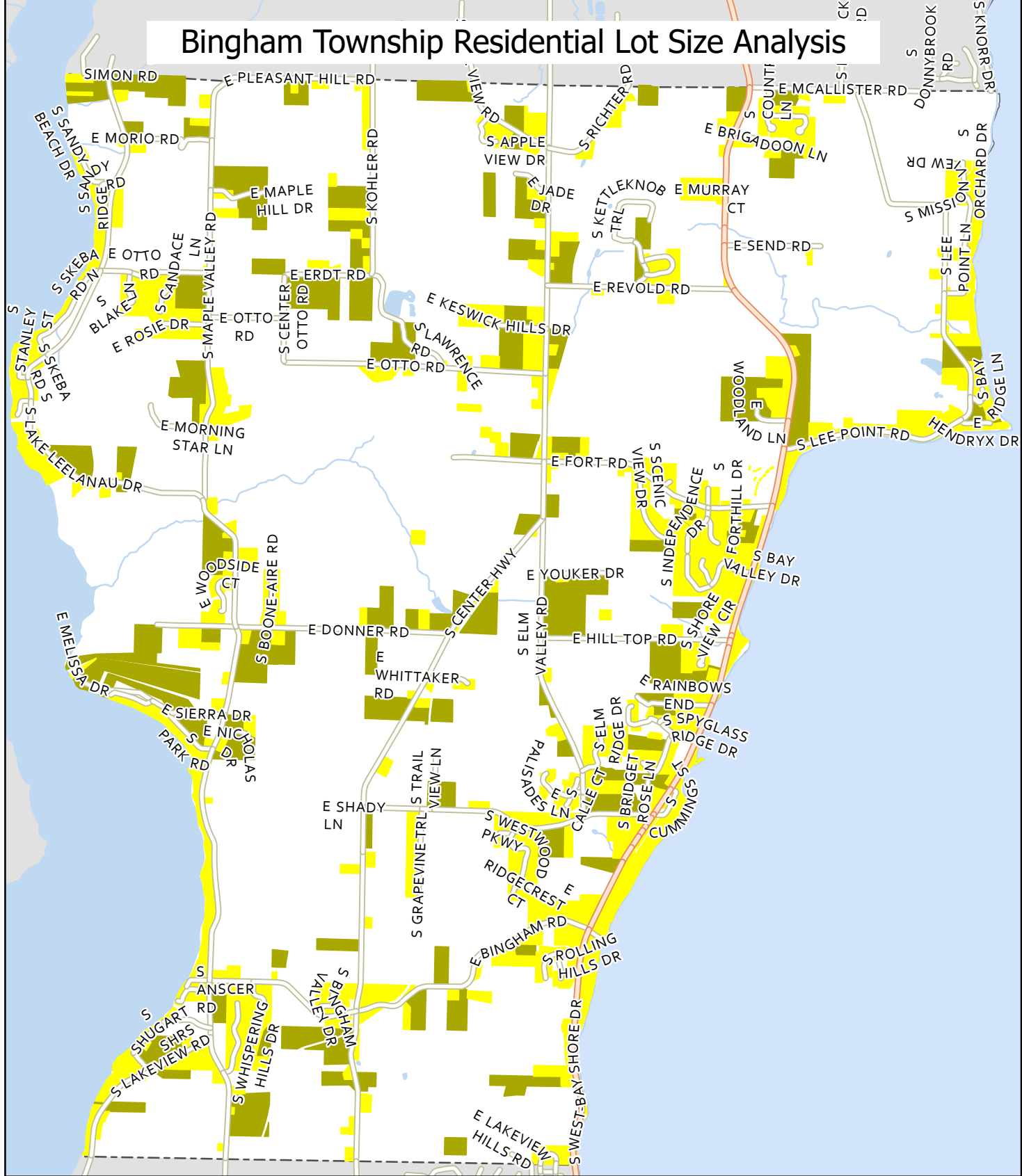
-  Highways
  Hydrography Lines
  Neighboring Jurisdictions
-  Roads
  Active Commercial (Assessed)
  Agri-Business/ Non-Typical Commercial
-  Water Bodies



Map Source: Leelanau County,  
State of Michigan



# Bingham Township Residential Lot Size Analysis



## Legend

- Highways
- Roads
- Water Bodies
- Hydrography Lines
- Residential <5 acres (assessed)
- Improved & Vacant
- Residential 5 to 19.9 acres (assessed)
- Improved

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles



Map Source: Leelanau County, State of Michigan

## Existing Zoning

Having an understanding of the existing zoning of Bingham Township allows for policy makers to understand the current district boundaries and the regulatory measures of those districts. This information can then be compared to land use data gathered throughout the planning process to provide direction to the future land use plan and the zoning plan.

### Existing Zoning Districts & Intent

Bingham Township has five zoning districts along with provisions for Planned Unit Developments. The Zoning Districts and their intent is provided below, and the locations of the districts are displayed on Map 17.

#### Agricultural District

“This district is intended to encourage and maintain agriculture as a viable part of the economy and to protect agriculture from encroachment of other uses. Agricultural related business uses and agri-tourism are acceptable uses within the district. The district is also intended to provide a low density rural atmosphere which will accommodate the growing demand for residential development.”

#### Rural Residential District

“The intent of the Rural Residential District is to serve as a buffer between the more dense residential areas of the Township and the productive agricultural lands of the Township.”

#### Residential District

“The Residential District is intended to accommodate residential properties of a low density, which will be compatible with natural resources and environmental characteristics, such as hillsides, scenic areas, wetlands, and shore lands; which will preserve open space and the rural atmosphere; and which will not require public sewerage.”

#### Commercial District

“This District is intended to accommodate those retail and business activities (*typical commercial uses*) that serve the whole community in a way that respects the natural environment and encourages the rural character of Bingham Township.”

#### Industrial District

“This district is intended to accommodate those industrial uses, storage, and related activities that generate a minimum of noise, glare, odors, dust, vibration, air and water pollution, fire and safety hazards, or any other potentially harmful or nuisance characteristics.”

#### Planned Unit Development

“The intent of a PUD is to allow for flexibility of design and uses within a comprehensively planned development. Current zoning allows PUD’s within the Commercial District only.”

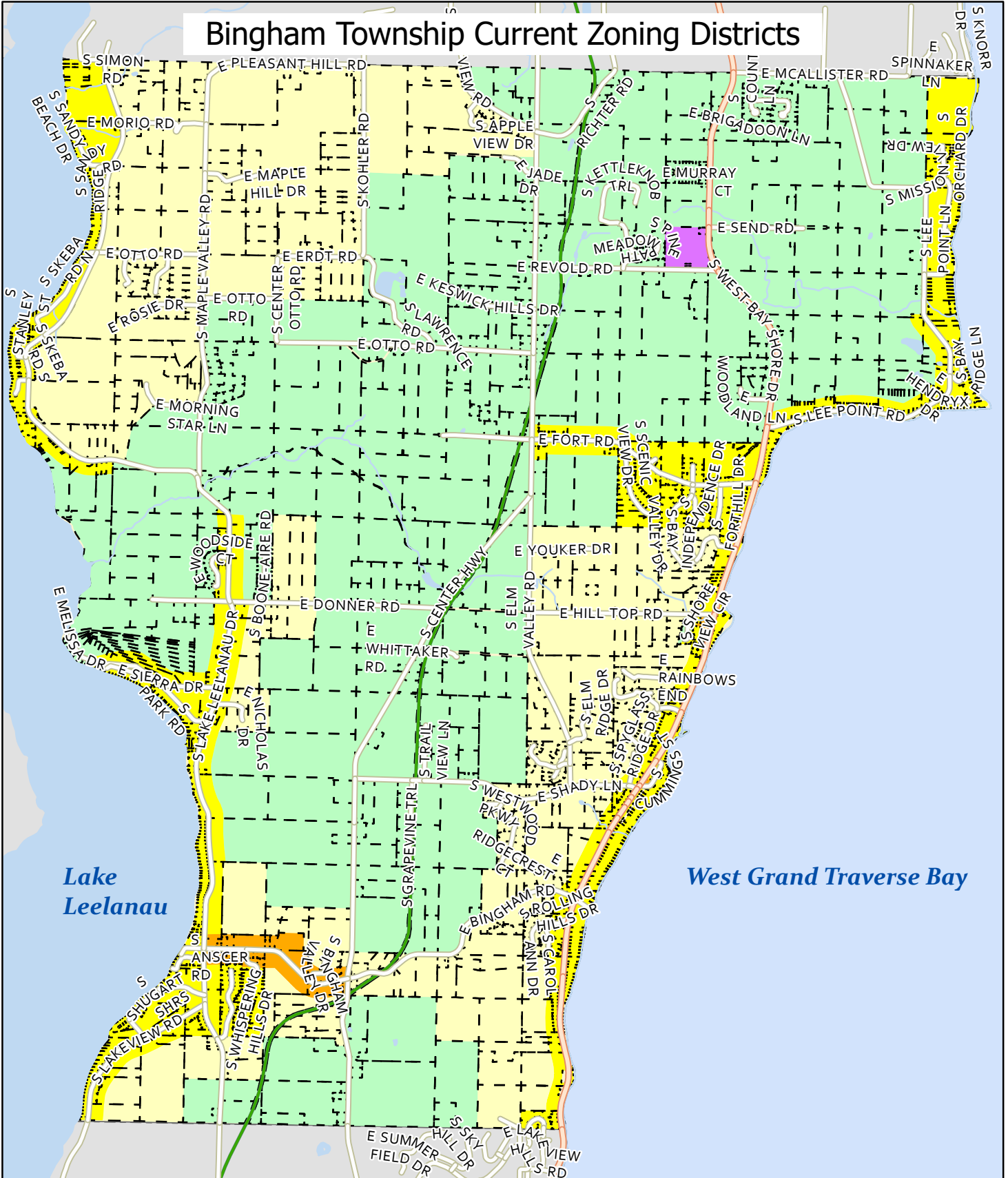
Table 9: Bingham Township Zoning District Bulk Requirements

Bingham Twp.		Zoning Districts				
Standards		Agricultural	Rural Residential	Residential	Commercial	Industrial
Min Lot Area (acres)		2	2	1	None	5
Min Lot Width		200'	150'	150'	None	350'
Max Height		35'	35'	35'	35'	35'
Max Building Footprint		N/A	N/A	N/A	10,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	N/A
Min. Dwelling Area		500 ft <sup>2</sup>	500 ft <sup>2</sup>	500 ft <sup>2</sup>	500 ft <sup>2</sup>	500 ft <sup>2</sup>
Max Lot Coverage (%)		25%	25%	25%	25%	25%
Setbacks	Front	40'	40'	40'	40'	100'
	Side	35'	35'	10'	10'	10'
	Rear	50'	35'	30'	30'	30'

*\*Special provisions exist, refer to pages 32 & 33 of the Township Zoning Ordinance.*



# Bingham Township Current Zoning Districts



## Legend

- Highways
- Roads
- Leelanau Trail
- Hydrography Lines
- Water Bodies

- Bingham Parcels (2021)
- Neighboring Jurisdictions

### Zoning Districts 2016

- Agricultural Zoning District
- Residential Zoning District

- Rural Residential Zoning District
- Commercial Zoning District
- Industrial Zoning District

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles



Data Source: State of Michigan, Bingham Township



## *Existing Zoning District Analysis & Summary*

The following analysis identifies inconsistencies and deficiencies in reference to existing district intent and bulk provisions.

### **Agricultural District**

The intent of this district is stated as encouraging agricultural uses with calls for protection from encroachment of other uses. Further, the intent outlines the district should accommodate low density residential housing. Bulk requirements of the district outline a density of one home per 2 acres.

When speaking of densities and thresholds for density, a 2 acre parcel in a rural agricultural environment would and should be considered high density. A 2 acre threshold in agricultural areas does and will lead to uncontrolled suburban sprawl with a pattern of homes with 2 acre yards carving up the landscape and displacing agricultural operations and open space. This is more aligned with what would be considered a Residential Agricultural District

An agricultural district that promotes low density typically has a density of 1 home per 20, 40 or 80 acres with provisions that allow additional residential homes as a “density bonus” if the homes are clustered on a portion of the parcel allowing for agricultural use or open space to remain for a significant portion of the parcel.

It is very important to consider that maintaining lower density provides opportunity for agricultural preservation. While maintaining low density may not directly support the success of an existing agricultural operation, conversion of agricultural lands to dense development removes the ability to farm that land. Once development occurs, the chances of re-conversion to suitable agricultural land is highly unlikely and would be very costly.

### **Rural Residential District**

The purpose of this district is said to be a buffer between more dense residential areas and areas of lower density and agricultural use. The bulk requirements for the density of the district are the same as the agricultural district at 2 acres.

A typical rural residential district that is a buffer between more dense areas and areas of agricultural use or open space typically display a density of 1 home per 5 or 10 acres. This type of density is truly rural residential and provides a pattern of density that allows for a scale as one moves from high density

residential to true low density agricultural areas.

### **Residential District**

Intent for the residential district outlines that it is a location for “low density” residential properties. The bulk requirements of the district outline a density of 1 acre.

The intent of the district is inaccurate in reference to low density. A density of 1 acre is typically referred to as medium or high density dependent upon the community in which it is located and is certainly not lower than the requirements of the agricultural and rural residential districts as they currently exist. Consideration of adjustment of the statement of intent is necessary.

### **Commercial District**

The intent of the commercial district is for “typical” commercial uses and the bulk requirements can accommodate a range of commercial uses dependent upon the category of use. The intent and standards of this district are appropriate for the direction provided through the analysis of this plan.

### **Industrial District**

The intent of the industrial district is for more intense uses that may be considered a nuisance to neighboring areas. The limited area of the district is appropriate as there is a lack of infrastructure to establish a true industrial area within the Township, and that need is also met in neighboring communities. The existing area and requirements are in good order.

### **Planned Unit Development**

The allowance of PUD's only in commercial areas should be reviewed to see if adjustment of provisions and allowance in residential areas could allow opportunities for creative residential development that offers flexibility for design and density.

## **Zoning District Analysis Summary**

Overall the bulk requirements of Bingham Township show little variation across the Zoning Districts, although the purpose statements and intent of those districts are strongly stated and support greater variation than what is established. Township Officials must give consideration of varying densities within the districts. A primary purpose of varying zoning districts is directly related to the allowance of uses within a specific area, with the other primary purpose being the density of structures for those uses. Variation in district titles which utilize adjectives such as "High", "Medium", "Low", or "Rural" pertain to densities which then often translate to what uses are allowed and the arrangement of regulations for how those uses interact with the environment, infrastructure and neighboring parcels and structures.

The path to uniformity of densities across a geographic area is laid through a lack of variation in bulk requirements for districts. This approach is taken in urban areas which necessitate large areas of high density throughout adjacent districts, and likewise can be utilized in very rural areas which seek to achieve uniform low density. Bingham Township is largely considered rural, but has been actively growing along the lake-shore areas and now contains census tracts along West Grand Traverse Bay which are defined as Urban by the US Census Bureau in 2020.

In Bingham Township's situation the community is and will continue receiving development pressure from adjacent more urbanized areas such as Elmwood Township and Traverse City. A strategy should be undertaken to vary bulk density requirements for zoning districts to promote greater density and growth in areas of existing higher population, structure density and locations of existing infrastructure. Simultaneously the Township should decrease density in environmentally sensitive areas and those areas which are predominantly agriculture to alleviate avenues towards future urban sprawl.



# Chapter 5

- Land use Directive
- Future Land Use Plan
- Future Land Use Map
- Zoning Plan

## Land Use Directives

Bingham Township is quintessential Northwest Michigan. The moraines and glacial deposits of gravel and sand create undulating topography which slopes to abundant freshwater shorelines which are densely populated with shoreline structures as the permanent population and visitors are drawn to the waterfront. Away from the shorelines, the hills are lined with deciduous and pine forests, with abundant active farmland which promotes agribusiness industry uniquely supported by the micro-climate afforded by Lake Michigan.

Public sentiment was uniform in their support for maintaining a sound balance between developed areas and the rural character of the community. The data and information gathered throughout this process point towards a local unit of government which:

- Directs a future which promotes density in areas where it currently exists or immediately adjacent to those areas. Allows greater flexibility of housing options and density in residential areas.
- Promotes protection of natural areas.
- Promotes protection of open space and agriculture in areas of active agriculture.
- Supports agribusiness operations with flexibility of opportunities based upon individual sites and land area. Promotes home business and cottage industries with protections for neighboring land owners in areas of higher density.
- Confines what would be considered typical commercial areas to locations of existing commercial activities and existing commercial zoning.

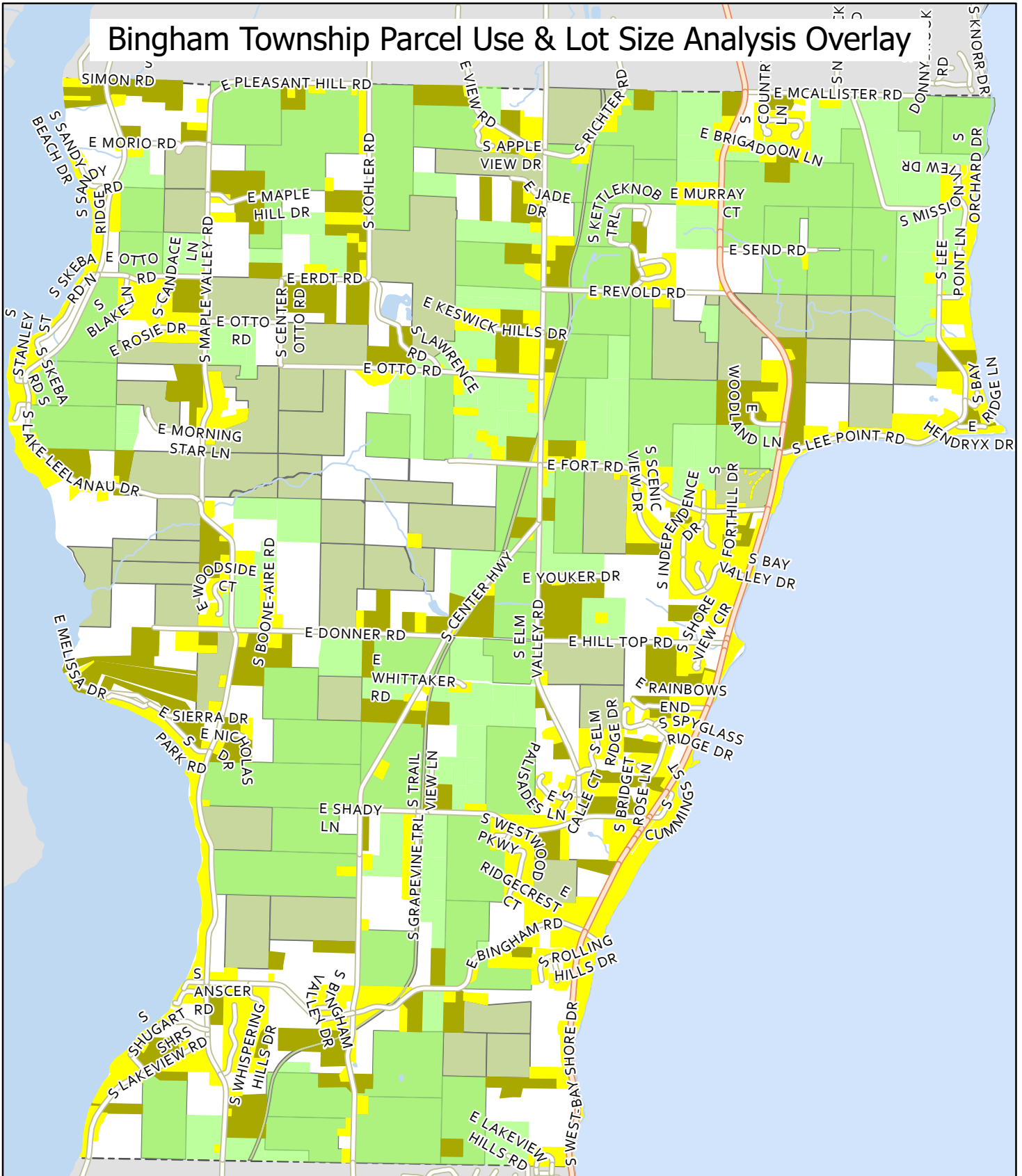
## Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan presents a vision for varying land use districts and their density, working from a data driven approach. Areas most suitable for high density, medium density and low density residential development are identified. Decreasing density in areas of active agriculture and supporting rural residential development as a buffer to these agricultural areas is also presented. Geo-spatial data is displayed which identifies parcel sizes and existing use, helping to isolate specific uses and densities. Combined this presents opportunity for the drafting of land use district boundaries which encapsulate similar features, and are arranged in a fashion of concentric rings with density variation as one moves from more urban to rural areas. (See Map 19)

### Parcel Use and Lot Size Analysis

Map 18 provides a visual of parcel and lot size for Bingham Township. Parcel size and use were isolated based upon the following thresholds. Parcels displayed in yellow on the map are residential in use and less than 5 acres in size. Olive drab parcels have a residential structure present and are 5 to less than 20 acres in size. Par-

# Bingham Township Parcel Use & Lot Size Analysis Overlay



## Legend

- Highways
- Roads
- Water Bodies
- Hydrography Lines
- Active Agricultural (Assessed)
- Residential <5 acres (assessed)
- Residential 5 to 19.9 acres (assessed)
- Improved & Vacant
- Improved
- Parcels > 40 acres

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles



Map Source: Leelanau County, State of Michigan



cels greater than 40 acres are displayed in the darker green and parcels of active agriculture are displayed as the lighter green. This base data of parcel use and size was then spatially analyzed to develop "Heat Maps". The use of heat maps provides an avenue for assisting with delineation of land use district boundaries.

### Land Use Analysis Heat Map

A heat map is a method of displaying complex data in a fashion that simplifies a visual for the represented data. For the purposes of development of a future land use plan, it is important to consider the existing development patterns of an area. Map 18 displayed on the previous page, shows parcel use and size. This map provides sound information on density and use, but viewers are encumbered by parcel lines and individual data outliers within homogeneous data patterns. A heat map analysis, such as is shown on Map 19, on the adjoining page, provides a smoothing of the data from Map 18 represented through concentric rings which hone in on areas of data uniformity.

The heat map (Map 19) displays the same data thresholds as was portrayed on Map 18, which are:

- \* Residential parcels less than 5 acres in size (yellow gradient)
- \* Residential parcels with structures and are 5 to 20 acres in size (olive gradient)
- \* Active agricultural parcels (bright green gradient)
- \* Parcels 40 acres or greater in size (light green gradient)

The data is isolated on separate maps throughout this section in reference to specific districts and to ease use.

### Future Land Use Districts

The development of future land use districts is a process assisted by the utilization of the heat maps and maps displayed elsewhere within this document. An incremental approach is used to develop the districts in a sequence that allows for boundaries to be established that builds off of each successive district. This methodology sequences the order of district boundary development as is outlined in this section.

**Lake Michigan Shoreline Residential District (SR-1): District Boundary Development:** The boundary of the SR-1 District should encompass bay front parcels

which border West Grand Traverse Bay. The purpose of the district is to include bay front parcels, which is easily interpreted and defined for establishment of the district. Therefore this district should be defined and located first. Map 20 can be utilized to guide district boundary development.

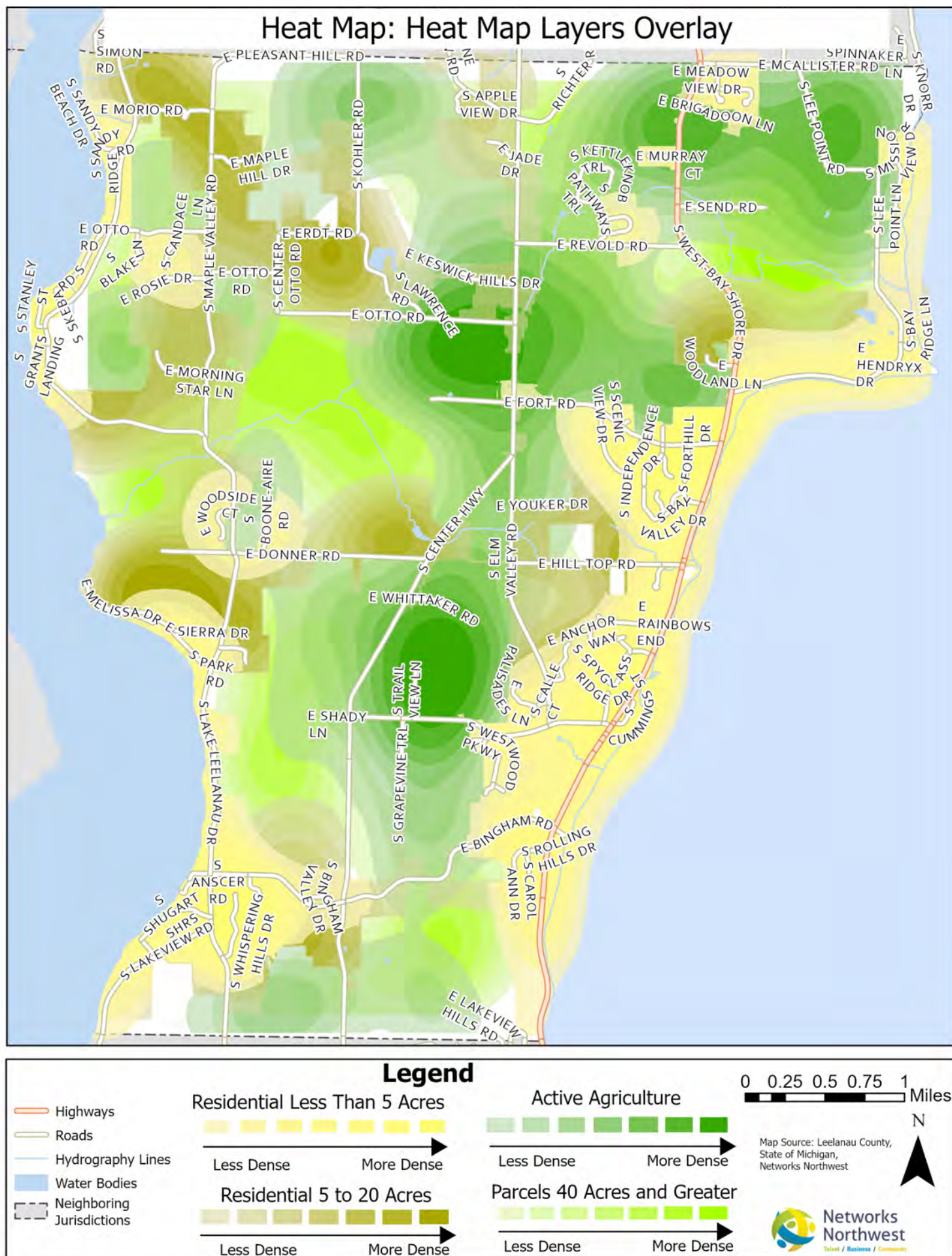
**Purpose Statement:** This district is encouraged to be established and encapsulate parcels planned for and or developed along the shoreline of West Grand Traverse Bay. This district may be considered higher density in terms of a rural community's parcel size. Consider allowance of duplexes and ADU's when part of a single structure or included as an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) in an allowable accessory structure. Already established lakefront lots which were created prior to the adoption of zoning, but don't meet minimum lot size would still be able to be developed so long as the other bulk requirements were met. Much of the lake-shore has already been divided into existing lots of record, which cannot be further subdivided. The true intent of the district is to support policy, whether recommended or regulatory, that does the following:

#### **SR-1 District Provisions**

- ◇ Consider Best Management Practices discussed with local organizations in regard to shoreline management.
- ◇ Consider establishing reasonable guidelines to maintain native shorelines, establish buffers and other stabilization techniques to limit shoreline erosion.
- ◇ Consider establishing reasonable guidelines to manage storm water runoff from impervious surfaces, directing concentrated volumes to rain gardens or similar approaches preserving water quality.
- ◇ Continue to monitor for allowance of short-term rentals and their impacts.
- ◇ Consider limitations on the amount, size and number of detached accessory structures.
- ◇ Consider protection of lake-views with limits on fencing.
- ◇ Duplexes and ADU's may be considered as an allowable use so long as they are not utilized as a short term rental.
- ◇ Perform a comprehensive review of existing home occupations and similar uses within the Township



### Map 19: Land Use Analysis Heat Map



### Lake Leelanau Shoreline Residential District (SR-2):

**District Boundary Development:** The boundary of the SR-2 District should encompass lakefront parcels which border Lake Leelanau. The purpose of the district is to include lakefront parcels, which is easily interpreted and defined for establishment of the district. Therefore this district defined and located second. Map 20 can be utilized to guide district boundary development.

**Purpose Statement:** This district is encouraged to be established and encapsulate parcels planned for and or developed along the shoreline of Lake Leelanau. This district may be considered higher density in terms of a rural communities parcel size and continue to maintain the 1 acre minimum lot size as is currently established. Consider allowance of duplexes and ADU's when part of a single structure or included as an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) in an allowable accessory structure. Already established lakefront lots which were created prior to the adoption of zoning, but don't meet minimum lot size would still be able to be developed so long as the other bulk requirements were met. Much of the lake-shore has already been divided into existing lots of record, which cannot be further subdivided. The true intent of the district is to support policy, whether recommended or regulatory, that does the following:

#### **SR-2 District Provisions**

- ◇ Consider Best Management Practices discussed with local organizations in regard to shoreline management.
- ◇ Consider establishing reasonable guidelines to maintain native shorelines, establish buffers and other stabilization techniques to limit shoreline erosion.
- ◇ Consider establishing reasonable guidelines to manage storm water runoff from impervious surfaces, directing concentrated volumes to rain gardens or similar approaches preserving water quality.
- ◇ Continue to monitor for allowance of short-term rentals and their impacts.
- ◇ Duplexes and ADU's may be considered as an allowable use so long as they are not utilized as a short term rental.
- ◇ Limits the amount, size and number of detached accessory structures.

- ◇ Consider protection of lake-views with limits on fencing.
- ◇ Perform a comprehensive review of existing home occupations and similar uses within the Township.

### Medium Density Residential District (R-2):

**District Boundary Development:** Map 21 provides visual guidance to where this medium density district could be located through viewing the areas of olive gradient. These areas of olive gradient denote locations of parcels with residential structures and having a parcel size of 5 to 20 acres. The Medium Density Residential District should be placed adjacent to the high density or shoreline districts and then share an opposite border with the Rural Residential and Agricultural Districts. Completing the development of this district fifth, following adjacent higher density district boundaries confines the district to areas near existing residential, supporting moderate density growth just outside higher density areas.

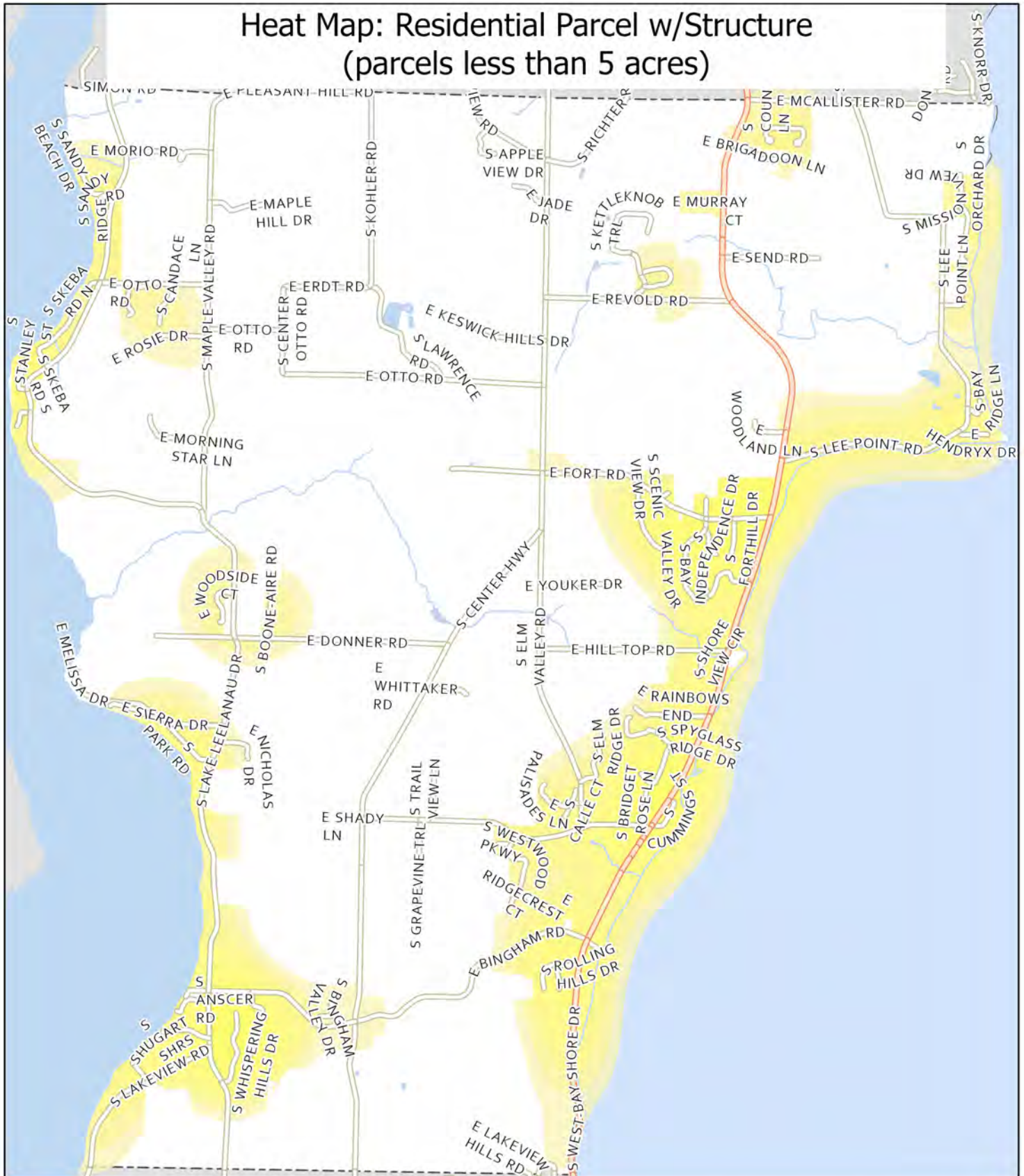
**Purpose Statement:** This district is encouraged to be established and act as an outer ring and/or buffer to the Higher Density Shoreline Residential Districts and between the Rural Residential District and Agricultural District. This district would capture lands and areas that border the established subdivision areas such as E. Fort Rd. in close proximity to West Grand Traverse Bay, as an example. The district should maintain a medium density approach for rural areas. Consider allowance of duplexes and ADU's when part of a single structure or included as an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) in an allowable accessory structure. The district may support policy which does the following:

#### **R-2 District Provisions**

- ◇ Continue to monitor for allowance of short-term rentals and their impacts.
- ◇ Duplexes and ADU's may be considered as an allowable use so long as they are not utilized as a short term rental.
- ◇ Consider allowance for a greater number and size of detached accessory structures than the higher density residential districts.
- ◇ Perform a comprehensive review of existing home occupations and similar uses within the Township.



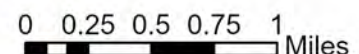
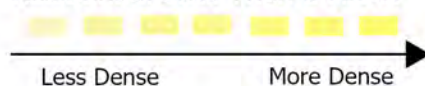
Heat Map: Residential Parcel w/Structure  
(parcels less than 5 acres)



### Legend

-  Highways
-  Roads
-  Hydrography Lines
-  Water Bodies
-  Neighboring Jurisdictions

Residential Less Than 5 Acres



Networks Northwest

Map Source: Leelanau County,  
State of Michigan,  
Networks Northwest



### Agricultural District (AG):

**District Boundary Development:** Map 22 displays a heat map of the active agricultural parcels in the Township. The outlining of the Agricultural District sixth in the process of development of the land use districts allows for focus on strictly agricultural areas. Utilizing the green gradient on the heat map, district boundaries should encapsulate the darker green areas with boundaries extending out towards the lighter shades of green.

**Purpose Statement Discussion:** This district is encouraged to encompass agricultural lands through inclusion of active agriculture and areas deemed as significantly important for the preservation of open space or for natural resource protection. The Township may consider a low density approach for residential structures within this district, among other provisions which support agricultural protection and will be outlined within the strategies of this document. Cluster development with density bonuses may be encouraged. The district may support policy which does the following

#### **AG District Provisions**

- ◇ This district may consider lower density, and may allow for residential density bonuses through cluster development.
- ◇ Doesn't limit the number or size of accessory structures for agricultural use.
- ◇ Allows for agribusiness and agritourism through a special use permit process.
- ◇ Consider allowance of labor housing on a limited basis with conditions, so long as they are not utilized as a short term rental.
- ◇ May consider allowance of accessory dwelling units.
- ◇ Study ways to develop smaller lots on larger agricultural properties.

### Commercial District (C):

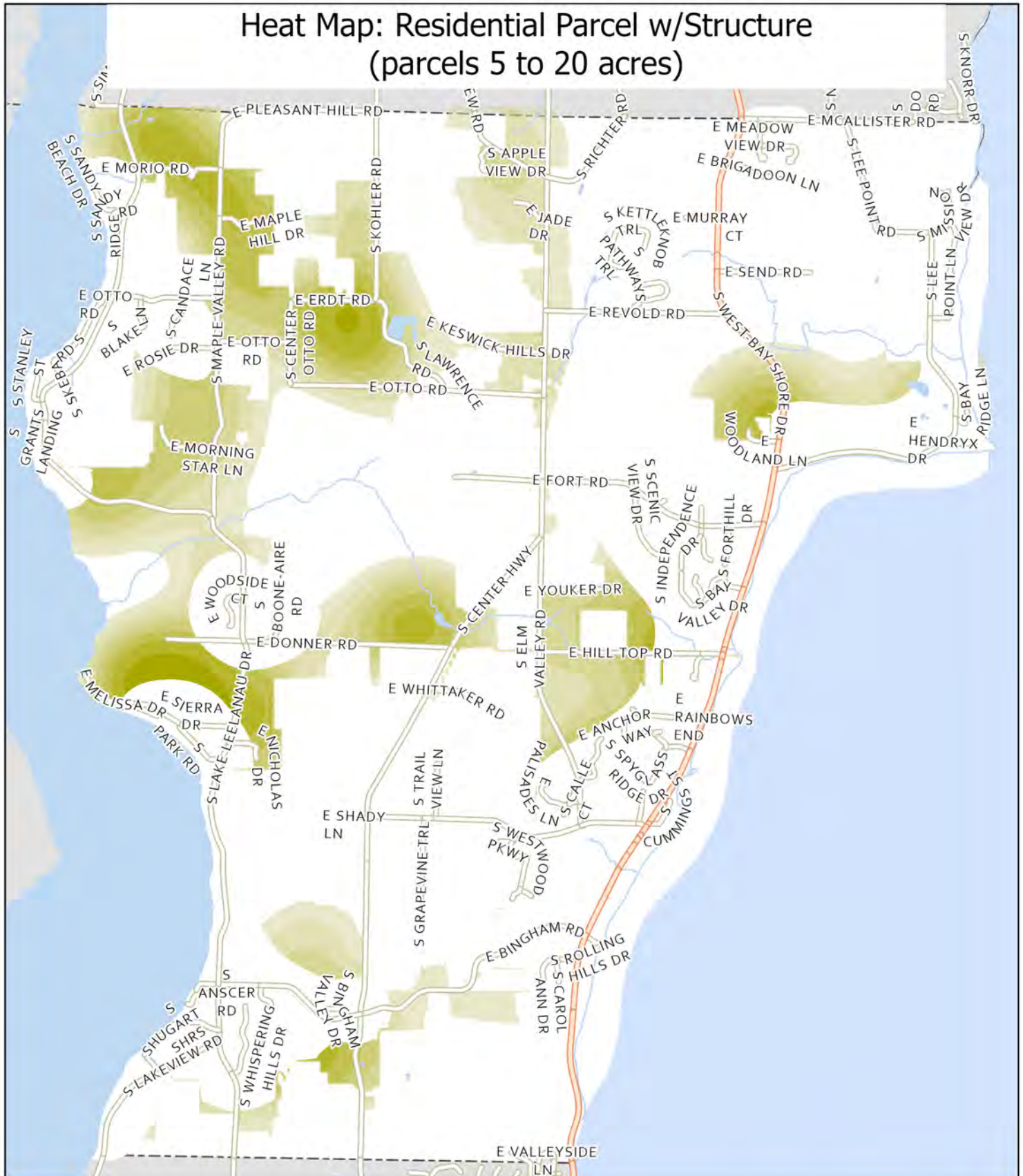
**District Boundary Development:** Map 15 on page 48 displays the location of existing active commercial property and provides sound guidance for determining the boundaries of this district. The orange areas on the map in the vicinity of E. Bingham Rd. and adjoining property should be included as feasible. Active commercial uses denoted as agribusiness and overlaid with a green star should not be included in the district. Confining typical commercial development to this location meets with the desires of the community. Development of this district boundary fourth defines the commercial district and completes the delineation of the more high density districts.

**Purpose Statement Discussion:** This district is for the promotion of what would be considered typical commercial type businesses, primarily of retail and services. Support amongst the residents exists for commercial uses, with input received outlining the maintenance of typical commercial uses along the E. Bingham Rd. Corridor. Parcel size shall accommodate appropriate spacing of septic, well, parking, structures and other required site improvements that would meet the intentions of the ordinance and approval of the Planning Commission. The district may support policy which does the following:

#### **C District Provisions**

- ◇ Promotes commercial uses that are supported by appropriate infrastructure.
- ◇ Provides separation and protection of neighboring residential uses through screening and buffering.
- ◇ Incorporates quality design for structure and site amenities.

### Heat Map: Residential Parcel w/Structure (parcels 5 to 20 acres)



-  Highways
-  Roads
-  Hydrography Lines
-  Water Bodies
-  Neighboring Jurisdictions

### Legend

## Residential 5 to 20 Acres



0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles



**Networks Northwest**  
Telnet / Business / C

Map Source: Leelanau County,  
State of Michigan,  
Networks Northwest

### Rural Residential District (RR):

**District Boundary Development:** The next to final district to be outlined is the Rural Residential District. The layout of this district simply confirms that the boundaries of the Higher Density Residential Districts, the Commercial District and the Agricultural District are accurately developed, as the remaining unclassified land would fall under the Rural Residential District classification. Map 23 displays a heat map of parcels that are 40 acres or greater in size. These areas would align with a portion of the Active Agriculture displayed on Map 22, but would also extend beyond active agriculture towards the heat map boundaries of Map 21 the Medium and Low Density Residential Areas.

**Purpose Statement:** This district is encouraged to be established and act as a buffer between the Agricultural District and the Higher Density Residential Districts. This district would capture lands and areas that border established agricultural operations, parcels under timber management plans, areas deemed as significantly important for the preservation of open space or for natural resource protection. The Township may consider a lower density approach for residential development in this district. The district may support policy which does the following:

#### **RR District Provisions**

- ◇ This district may be considered to maintain a lower density.
- ◇ May allow for a greater number and size of detached accessory structures than the higher density residential districts
- ◇ Consider allowance labor housing on a limited basis with conditions.
- ◇ Perform a comprehensive review of existing home occupations and similar uses within the Township.
- ◇ Housing Bullet Point to speak to consideration of housing options.

### Agricultural Industrial District (AI):

**District Boundary Development:** This final district encapsulates the parcel currently occupied by Leelanau Fruit Company and may be expanded as necessary by the Township to accommodate similar uses.

**Purpose Statement Discussion:** This district is established for the support of industrial uses within the Township, and in particular industrial uses which are in support of agricultural uses within the Township. Such uses include agricultural product processing, packaging and shipping. This district is defined to encompass existing fruit processing facilities and may be expanded to encompass other similar uses and other agricultural industrial uses outlined and supported by the Township Zoning Ordinance. The district may support policy which does the following:

#### **AI District Provisions**

- ◇ Support agricultural related industrial uses such as processing, freezing, storing, packing and shipping.
- ◇ Maintain the minimum parcel size as currently established.
- ◇ Outline that industrial uses shall have appropriate sanitary wastewater and refuse collection and storage.

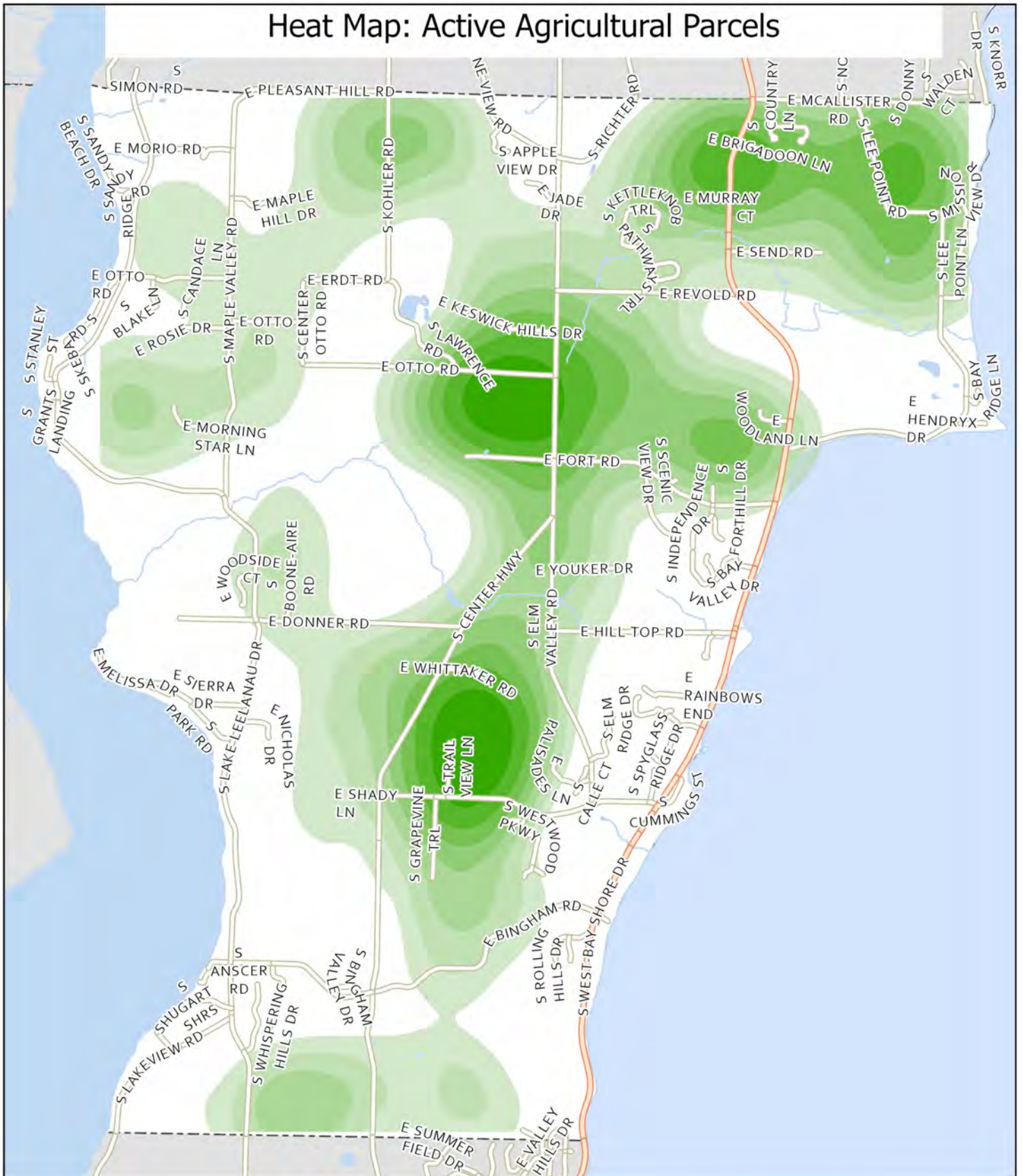
### **Future Land Use Map**

The Future Land Use Map, Map 24, displayed on page 65 contains the land use districts listed below at the locations identified on the map. Whenever possible, land use district boundaries follow roads, parcel lines, stream banks or lake shorelines.

- » Lake Michigan Shoreline Residential (SR-1)
- » Lake Leelanau Shoreline Residential (SR-2)
- » Medium Density Residential (R-2)
- » Rural Residential (RR)
- » Commercial District (C)
- » Agricultural District (AG)
- » Agricultural Industrial District (AI)



## Heat Map: Active Agricultural Parcels



-  Highways
-  Roads
-  Hydrography Lines
-  Water Bodies
-  Neighboring Jurisdictions

### Legend

## Active Agriculture



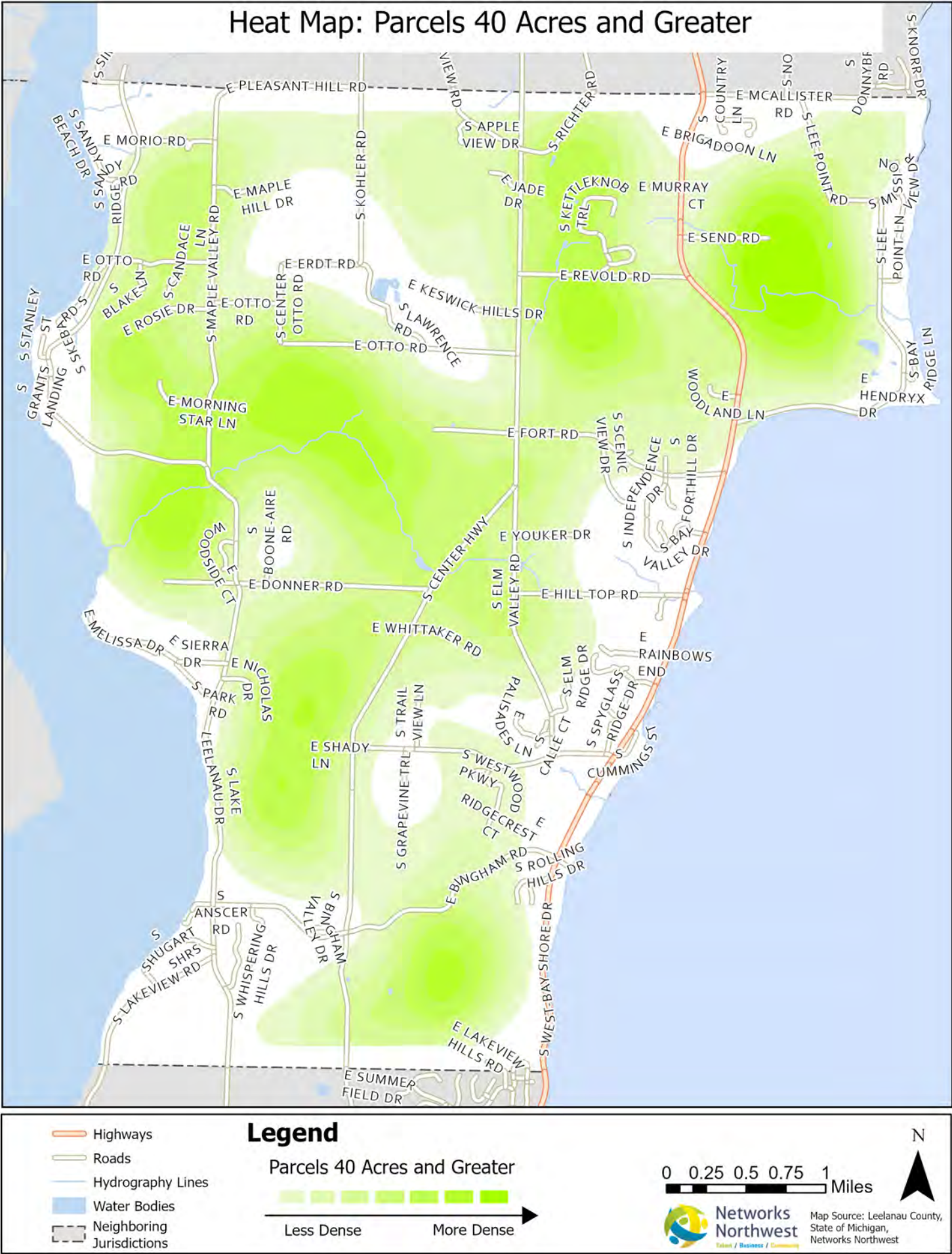
0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles



Map Source: Leelanau County,  
State of Michigan,  
Networks Northwest



Map 23: Low Density Parcels Heat Map





# Bingham Township DRAFT Future Land Use Map



- Highways
- Roads
- Leelanau Trail
- Bingham Parcels (2021)
- Neighboring Jurisdictions
- Water Bodies
- Lake Michigan

## Future Land Use Districts

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Lake Leelanau Shoreline
- Lake Michigan Shoreline
- Agricultural Industrial
- Medium Density Residential
- Rural Residential



0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles



## Zoning Plan

The Zoning Plan included in this Master Plan provides a connection between the Future Land Use discussion, the goals and strategies, and the existing conditions of the Township outlined within this planning document. Guidance for how the Township should carry forward with implementation of the policy of this document to form the regulatory provisions in the Bingham Township Zoning Ordinance as follows.

### New Zoning Districts Established

#### ◇ Shoreline Residential Districts:

Bingham Township has recognized the need to create new zoning districts that encompass the shorelines of Grand Traverse Bay and South Lake Leelanau. These districts will be developed considering the unique characteristics and significance of these shorelines. The Township will consider density, setbacks, lot building and impervious surface coverages, lot widths, and accessory uses and structures when developing standards for this district. The Township will also research and consider established Best Management Practices for shorelines while also considering the existing development patterns.

#### ◇ Medium Density Residential:

Land that is currently zoned Residential, but not located on the waterfront, will be considered for medium density residential zoning. The Township will study and consider an increase in density and housing types in this district.

#### ◇ Agricultural Industrial District:

Bingham Township will consider changing the existing industrial zoned area to an agricultural processing based industrial area considering that the area is currently used as an agricultural processing facility.

### Existing Zoning District Revisions

#### Agricultural District:

##### Density, Lot Size, and Clustering:

- Bingham Township will study and consider the overall allowable density and lot sizes for residential development in the Agricultural Zoning

District.

- Bingham Township will consider making the Open Space Residential Development, OSRD (clustering) provisions mandatory for certain development in the district.

#### Agritourism Activities:

- Bingham Township will continue to monitor the performance of existing agritourism uses in the township, such as wineries, cideries, and special event facilities, and consider changes to existing standards as may be necessary.

#### Commercial Zoning District:

- Bingham Township will continue to monitor uses in the Commercial Zoning District, and continue to review the zoning ordinance standards for commercial uses.
- The Township may consider adopting “form-based” standards in the future.
- At this time, the Township does not see any need to expand the Commercial Zoning District on M-22.

### Use & Regulatory Standard Revisions

#### Balanced Housing Types

- Bingham Township will be focused on studying ways to encourage workforce housing in the township, without increasing the number of short-term rentals. The Township will study and consider allowing more of the “Missing Middle” housing, including, but not limited to multi-family, duplexes, tri-plexes, town-homes, bunkhouses, dormitories, etc.
- The Township will study and consider incentives for the development of workforce housing.

#### Accessory Dwelling Units

- Bingham Township will study and consider allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) under certain conditions and without increasing the number of short-term rentals.

#### Home-Based Occupation and Business Uses

- In response to the increase in Home Occupations and Businesses since the previous Master Plan, the Township will perform a review of the existing known types of Home Occupations Home-Based

Businesses operating in the Township, and consider changes to zoning ordinance standards.

- The goal is to balance the trend of desire for home-based businesses with the potential adverse impacts of operating the business.

### Short-Term Rentals

- While the regulation and administration of short-term rentals in Bingham Township is through a Short-term Rental Ordinance, and not the zoning ordinance, this Master Plan recognizes the impact that the conversion of single-family homes into short-term rentals has had on the community. While the majority of current permitted short-term rental dwellings are conducted within homes that are on the waterfront and not considered workforce housing, there has been an increasing number of smaller, non-waterfront homes that are being converted to short-term rentals. The township has a limit on the issuance of 86 short-term rental permits in any calendar year. That number will probably be reached in 2024.
- The Township Board will continue to monitor the short-term rental program and the impact on workforce housing.

### Solar and Wind Renewable Energy Systems

#### Accessory Ground-Mounted and Rooftop Solar Systems:

- The Township currently allows ground-mounted and roof-top solar arrays as an accessory structure to a primary use, and many permits have been issued for residential, agricultural and commercial businesses. The system is considered accessory if the output is designed to provide energy for the maximum electrical use of the primary use, and not intended for commercial output.
- This accessory use should be continued with the appropriate Land Use Permit, although the Township may want to review the standards at some point.

#### Small Wind Energy Systems:

- The Township zoning ordinance has provisions for small wind energy systems. This accessory use should be continued with the appropriate Land Use Permit, although the township may want to review the standards at some point.

#### Large-Scale Solar, Wind, and Battery Storage Facilities:

- In 2023, the Michigan Legislature enacted new legislation that significantly affects local government regulation of solar facilities generating 50 or more Megawatts, wind generation facilities generating 100 or more Megawatts, and battery storage facilities with a nameplate capacity of 50 Megawatts. The Township should research and consider adopting a Compatible Renewable Energy Ordinance in 2024 to ensure that a developer must first go through a local approval process. This ordinance would be a separate police power ordinance adopted by the Township Board, and would not be part of the zoning ordinance.

#### Smaller Scale Solar, Wind, or Energy Storage Facilities:

- The Township should study and consider standards and procedures for allowing certain types of community or small utility-scale solar and/or wind energy projects that produce less energy.

#### Natural Resources and the Environment:

- The Township will review the overall density, setbacks, lot building and impervious surface coverages, lot widths, and accessory uses and structures when developing standards for the new shoreline residential districts. The township will research and consider established Best Management Practices when reviewing these standards, while considering the existing development patterns along the shoreline.
- The Township will consider the possibility of establishing setbacks to streams and wetlands, and establishing limits on impervious surface coverage.

# Chapter 6

- Strategy Development
- Implementation & Monitoring
- Strategies

## Strategy Development

The topics and accompanying strategies contained within this Chapter were developed through Planning Commission analysis of the conditions of the Township and desired direction and feedback of the public. Discussion and consensus of support for implementation was achieved by the Planning Commission. Several strategies were carried over, expanded upon or modified from the previous plan outlining long-term support for these actions. Each Strategy has an identified responsible party(ies) and time-frame for execution, as defined by the keys below.

### Table Keys

<u>Responsible Parties</u>	<u>Time-frame</u>
Planning Commission = <u>PC</u>	<u>Near</u> -Term = 1-2 years
Township Board = <u>TB</u>	<u>Mid</u> -Term = 2-5 years
Township Staff = <u>TS</u>	<u>Long</u> -Term = 5+ years
Supporting Organizations = <u>SO</u>	<u>Cont.</u> = Continuous

## Implementation & Monitoring

Implementation of the strategies within this document is paramount to meeting the desires of the community. The direction provided through the previous Master Plan, originally developed in 1999 was clearly supported due to the carry-over and expansion of common strategies within this revised Master Plan. The strategies are founded in the public support ascertained through the community engagement process of this plan. Support is a necessary step, but is only the initial task for instituting successful implementation. Responsible parties must establish a scope of tasks for each strategy, and then move through completing individual tasks until the strategy is met.

Placing the topics and strategies on Township meeting agendas maintains open communication and the ability to monitor progress. Tracking progress is further supported with the use of spreadsheets or other methods which allow a visual representation of viewing tasks and completion of those tasks for each strategy. Township staff should maintain narratives of the actions taken to meet strategies so that these successes can be placed within successive Master Plan updates to track overall long-term implementation efforts.



## Implementation Steps

1. Place "Master Plan Implementation" as on-going item on commission and board agenda under "Old Business"
2. Isolate and determine Strategies to be undertaken based upon assigned time-frame.
3. Prepare a spreadsheet which allows tracking of time as a metric of individual strategies and outline tasks to be undertaken to meet the strategy.
4. Undertake and complete tasks associated with the strategy, keeping notes on successes, hurdles and process to maintain a narrative to be considered upon update to the Master Plan.
5. As strategies are completed, monitor and compile notes on the impacts that are witnessed as a result of that action.
6. Update the Master Plan, making consideration of developing a narrative which speaks to the implementation process successes and failures. This narrative will help to guide the revision of strategies within the Master Plan.

## Strategies

Environmental/Scenic			
Topics	Strategies	Responsible Parties	Time-frame
Consider Best Management Practices (BMP) with local organizations in regard to shoreline management	Consider native shorelines.		
	Consider shoreline buffers.		
	Consider Storm-water Management Techniques.		
	Consider setbacks		
	Consider impervious surface limitations.		
Consideration of lake views	Consider limitations on fencing to protect lake views.		
Wetland	Consider wetland locations when reviewing development site plans.		
Steep Slopes	Consider steep slope impacts when reviewing development site plans.		
Land/Water Protection	Conservation of natural resources by discouraging development of conflicting land uses.		
	Preservation of unique natural areas which cannot be replaced if destroyed, misused or neglected.		
	Non-pollution of soil, water and air resources by any segment of the community be it governmental, industrial, agricultural, or private.		
	Guide development away from ecologically sensitive areas.		
	Encouragement of open space in all land use areas.		
	Participation in regional efforts to improve and protect water quality.		

Transportation			
Topics	Strategies	Responsible Parties	Time-frame
Local Roads	Maintaining wherever possible, the natural character of the roads and surrounding areas		
	Consideration of support for local county roads when necessary.		
TTCI Metropolitan Planning Organization	Consideration of participation with TTCI and the transportation planning processes.		
Transit	Consideration of continued support of BATA transit stops within the Township.		
Pedestrian & Non-motorized	Safe use of roads for pedestrian and non-motorized activities		

Infrastructure			
Topics	Strategies	Responsible Parties	Time-frame
Site appropriate infrastructure	Promote infrastructure at appropriate locations in the Township.		
Shared Use	Consider collaborative approaches to sharing infrastructure within neighboring local units of government.		

Civic/Public Services			
Topics	Strategies	Responsible Parties	Time-frame
Capital Improvements Planning	Maintain a capital improvement plan which outlines plans for upkeep and maintenance of Township structures and services with estimated expenditures for budgeting purposes.		

Accessory Structures			
Topics	Strategies	Responsible Parties	Time-frame
Manage accessory structures by zoning district	Consider limitations on number, size and location of detached accessory structures.		

Recreation			
Topics	Strategies	Responsible Parties	Time-frame
Recreation Planning	Maintain a current and approved 5-year park and recreation plan with the State of MI DNR		
	Where possible, multi-functional use of recreation areas for open space, forestry, floodplain or water resource conservation and historical preservation.		
	Orderly development of recreation opportunities in such a manner that there is optimum utilization of appropriate locations with minimum conflict with adjoining land uses.		
Recreation Site Upkeep and Expansion	Maintain a budget for maintaining of recreation sites and improvements		
	Consideration of seeking grants when warranted for recreation site improvements.		

Rural Character/Open Space			
Topics	Strategies	Responsible Parties	Time-frame
Open Space Preservation	Consideration of lower density in rural areas		
	Promotion of cluster style developments in rural areas.		
	Maintain rural atmosphere		
	Promotion of dual land uses (e.g. agricultural/open space) which encourage and enhance private ownership of non-developed lands.		
	Protection of unique natural areas, wetlands, forests and watercourses from Urban types of development		
	Encouragement of open space, appropriately located in all land use areas.		



Land Use: Residential & Housing			
Topics	Strategies	Responsible Parties	Time-frame
Management of short-term rentals	Continue to monitor for allowance of short-term rentals and their impacts.		
Density of Housing Units	Consider allowance of duplexes/ tri-plexes as allowable use so long as not utilized as a short-term rental.		
	Consider allowance of ADU's as allowable use so long as not utilized as a short-term rental.		
	Consider standards which promote work-force housing.		
	Higher density cluster development in selected areas		
Home Occupations Allowance and Monitor	Consideration of varied definitions for home occupation, cottage industry and similar terms utilized for home work place.		
	Perform a comprehensive review of existing home occupations and nuances of type.		
Housing Types	Encourage housing types and options		

Land Use: Commercial			
Topics	Strategies	Responsible Parties	Time-frame
Appropriate uses	Promote commercial uses which are supported by appropriate infrastructure		
	Development of any new commercial facilities in such a way as to minimize conflict with other land uses.		
	Creation of development and design standard that embrace and/or encourage the village concept or Planned Unit Developments		
	Improvement of existing commercial areas, both aesthetically and functionally, to serve their neighborhoods		
	Adequate access for fire and rescue services for all commercial locations		
	Consideration of varied definitions for home occupation, cottage industry and similar terms utilized for home work place.		
	Perform a comprehensive review of existing home occupations and nuances of type.		

Land Use: Agricultural			
Topics	Strategies	Responsible Parties	Time-frame
Support for Agriculture Activity	Continue to promote efficiency for permitting agritourism activities allowed within the Township.		
	Consider allowances for farm labor housing		
	Provide buffers between agricultural and residential uses		
Support for Agricultural Preservation	Encourage cluster development		
	Support preservation through Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), Low Density Residential (LDR), and other innovative preservation techniques		
	Develop incentives for agricultural protection.		
	Perform a comprehensive review of existing home occupations and nuances of type.		

Land Use: Agricultural Industrial			
Topics	Objectives	Responsible Parties	Time-frame
Agricultural Industry	Support agricultural related industrial uses such as processing, freezing, storing, packing and shipping.		
Appropriate uses	Outline appropriate infrastructure necessary for uses, only support uses which have necessary infrastructure and are supported within the Township.		



