

MASTER PLAN



ALBERT TOWNSHIP
MONTMORENCY COUNTY, MICHIGAN
2021

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Add PC Adoption Resolution

Albert Township Master Plan

Albert Township

Montmorency Township County, Michigan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Adoption Dates

Planning and Commission: (Insert Date)

Draft

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
TOWNSHIP BOARD.....	3
PLANNING COMMISSION.....	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS	5
LIST OF FIGURES	6
LIST OF MAPS	6
INTRODUCTION.....	8
A. WELCOME	8
B. PURPOSE AND INTENT	9
C. DOCUMENT CONTENTS	10
COMMUNITY PROFILE	11
A. HISTORY.....	11
B. DEMOGRAPHICS.....	13
C. PROJECTIONS.....	19
D. HOUSING	23
E. ECONOMICS.....	27
EXISTING CONDITIONS	29
D. EXISTING LAND USE	29
E. PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES	35
F. TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION.....	37
G. NATURAL FEATURES.....	41
H. Commercial Assets.....	62
I. CONCLUSIONS	65
PURE LEWISTON – THE ALBERT TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN.....	66
J. VISION.....	66
K. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.....	67
L. FUTURE LAND USE.....	74
M. ZONING PLAN	83
N. SUSTAINABILITY	87
O. DOWNTOWN LEWISTON.....	92
P. TRANSPORTATION.....	93
Q. TOWNSHIP CEMETERY.....	94
IMPLEMENTATION.....	95
R. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.....	95
S. RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE	95
V. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM.....	96
W. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS.....	99

LIST OF FIGURES

Table 2.1: Population.....	13
Table 2.2: Population Change, 1960-2019	14
Table 2.3: Average Household Size, 2010-2019	16
Table 2.4: Educational Attainment, 2019	18
Table 2.5: Age of Housing.....	24
Table 2.6: Housing Type, 2019.....	25
Table 2.7: Housing Ownership Status and Tenure, 2019	25
Table 2.8: Median Income, 2010-2019.....	27
Table 2.9: Occupational Sectors, 2019	28
Table 2.10: Commuting Destinations, 2019	28
Table 3.1: Land Use Summary	31
Table 3.2: Driving Distance to Major Destinations.....	38
Table 4.1: Albert Township Business Mix	64
Table 7.1: Future Land Use Categories	75

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Population Change, 2010 – 2019.....	14
Figure 2.2: Change in Number of Households, 2010-2019	16
Figure 2.3: Median Age, 2019	17
Figure 2.4: Age Structure, 2019.....	18
Figure 2.5: Albert Township Population Projection	19
Figure 2.6: Albert Township Age Distribution, 2020 Projection.....	20
Figure 2.7: Albert Township Age Distribution, 2030 Projection.....	20
Figure 2.8: Montmorency County Population Projection.....	21
Figure 2.9: Montmorency County Age Distribution, 2020 Projection	21
Figure 2.10: Montmorency County Age Cohorts, 2030 Projection.....	22
Figure 2.11: Change in Number of Housing Units, 2010-2019.....	23
Figure 2.12: Change in Population vs. Change in Households vs. Change in Housing Units, 2010-2019.....	24
Figure 2.14: Change in Median Home Value 2010-2019.....	26
Figure 2.15 Growth in Median Income Since 2010.....	27
Figure 3.1: NEMCOG Planned Trails in Greater Albert Township	40
Figure 3.2: Average High Temperature per Month, Montmorency County	59
Figure 3.3: Average Rainfall per Month, Montmorency County.....	60
Figure 3.4: Average Snowfall per Month, Montmorency County	60
Figure 4.1: 5, 10, and 20 Minute Drives from Lewiston.....	63
Figure 7.1: Beckett and Raeder Downtown Enhancement Plan - Kneeland Street Detail.....	92
Figure 7.2: NEMCOG Planned Trails in Greater Albert Township	94

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1: Regional Location.....	12
Map 2: Primary Address of Seasonal Residents	15
Map 3: Existing Land Use Cover.....	32
Map 4: Topography.....	42
Map 5: Farmland Classification.....	45

Map 6: Soils Associations.....	48
Map 7: Watersheds	51
Map 8: State Forest Land.....	54
Map 9: Wetlands.....	57
Map 10: Future Land Use	76

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INTRODUCTION

A. WELCOME

Welcome to *Positively Lewiston* - the Albert Township Master Plan. This Plan reflects a vision for the future of transportation, land use, the economy, environment, downtown, and cultural stewardship of Albert Township. This Plan is the result of countless hours and efforts of community leaders, staff, and volunteers over the past several months. It represents the hopes and desires of all those involved and a comprehensive analysis of relevant existing and future conditions in the Township and region.

Positively Lewiston builds upon the efforts presented in the previous Township Master Plans. The Planning Commission and Township Board, as well as the DDA, worked together throughout this planning process to create a comprehensive vision for the Township satisfying the requirements for each of these documents. It includes overall goals and strategies for the community as a whole along with specific goals addressing each of the specific elements included within the document.

The Master Plan was developed through an open, public process led by community stakeholders who are committed to making a difference in the Township and creating a community where they can live, work, and relax throughout the year and throughout their lifetime. It is based in the belief that citizens of Albert Township can make decisions today to create the Township of tomorrow. Tomorrow starts here. We understand that change happens, but we want to decide how that change will happen. The Master Plan helps us decide how to manage that future change.

The Master Plan not only complies with the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended; but it also presents a vision for Albert Township. The Albert Township story is unique in how it weaves the shared values of the community in and through its recommendations and policies. The story starts with an explanation of how the Township got to where it is today and how that journey has positioned the Township for what it can be tomorrow.

Albert Township is the size of two Public Land Survey System townships, meaning it is twice as large as the typical township. A primarily rural area, the Township consists of a combination of State land, broad forest areas, lakes, homes on large lots, lakefront residential development, and Lewiston, an unincorporated village that serves as the Townships' social and commercial heart. In addition to the many assets and amenities offered in Albert Township, the community is ideally situated to take advantage of the abundant natural, recreational, commercial, and institutional facilities located in the surrounding communities as well as the abundant natural features and resources.

B. PURPOSE AND INTENT

This document includes the Albert Township Master Plan. It is a crucial planning document for a community as it not only provides important information about the current conditions and trends in the community, but also presents a vision for the future of the Township with a plan for accomplishing that vision.

A Master Plan is used for a variety of purposes. At the most basic level, a Master Plan is the basis for a community's zoning ordinance. One of the legal tests of validity for a zoning ordinance is that the ordinance must be based on a Comprehensive Plan for the development of the jurisdiction. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (P.A. 110 of 2006, as amended) requires that zoning ordinances be based on a plan.

A Master Plan is a guide for desired projects and programs to improve the community. A fundamental part of the master planning process is the public involvement that identifies the community's desires for its future and its long-term vision for growth and development. The goals and objectives are the heart of the Master Plan and present the vision and the manner in which it will be achieved. This document presents the vision of a community over the next 20 years, but also includes a number of specific, short term implementation activities intended to realize the overall vision of the Master Plan. The Master Plan was adopted on (insert adoption date)

By presenting these documents as one, the Township not only saves money, but it demonstrates the interrelationship between the Plans and their implementation. By working together to achieve a shared vision, outcomes and action program, the Township will be more likely to succeed.



C. DOCUMENT CONTENTS

Positively Lewiston – The Albert Township Master Plan is organized into several chapters describing existing conditions, trends, projections, and their implications; the Township’s vision, goals and objectives; master planned future land use, transportation and community development; the Parks and Recreation Plan; and proposed actions for making the Plans into reality. In summary the contents are as follows:

Community Profile is an analysis of Albert Township with regards to its population and other demographic characteristics. Based on numerical data, this section gives an overview of the trends in the Township and projections for the future.

Existing Conditions presents the existing land uses, transportation, public facilities, and other physical characteristics of Albert Township, including maps, pictures, and text. Its purpose is to present the Township as it exists today.

Commercial Assets provides insights into the existing retail base in the greater Lewiston community and where the demand for that originates.

The Future Land Use Plan combines the information, analysis and input from the above chapters into a coherent Plan for Albert Township’s future. This chapter deals with goals and objectives, parks and downtown improvements, sustainability considerations, and future land use and transportation recommendations.

Implementation answers the “how” of the Master Plan. With specific programs, ideas, and regulations, it provides guidance for Township officials to shape the Albert Township of the future.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

A. HISTORY

The land that would eventually become Albert Township was first surveyed after Michigan achieved statehood in 1837, but the Township was not created or named until much later. In fact, when Michigan became a state, Montmorency County was part of Michilimackinac County, which at that time covered most of the northern Lower Peninsula.

In 1840, surveyor Henry Schoolcraft outlined a plan to divide northern Lower Michigan into counties. The county that would one day become Montmorency appeared – but was named Cheonoquet County. Three years later, the state legislature adopted the Plan to carve out new counties in the area, but decided to forgo formally creating some of them until additional population moved north. At this time, Cheonoquet County was renamed Montmorenci, but the county would have to wait nearly 40 more years to be officially chartered (and to have today's spelling of its name made official).

In 1881, Montmorency County was officially created with three townships – Briley, Rust, and Montmorency. At that time, what is now Albert Township was part of Briley.

The unincorporated village of Lewiston was platted in 1891 and later became a terminal of a branch of the Michigan Central Railroad. (The branch started in Grayling). During the Great Depression, the Civilian Conservation Corps' Camp Lunden was built in Albert Township as a way to put struggling residents back to work.

Today, with its lakes, forests, and small town charm, Albert Township is a desirable destination for tourists, seasonal and full time residents, alike.

Source: Montmorency County, Lewiston Historical Society

Map 1: Regional Location



Map 1 Regional Location

Albert Township,
Montmorency County, Michigan

- Lakes and Rivers
- Surrounding Municipalities
- Surrounding Counties
- Interstate Highway
- State Highway
- County Road

Data Source: Michigan Geographic Framework,
Michigan Center for Geographic Information.v5a.

0 3 6
Miles

October 8, 2012



McKenna
ASSOCIATES

B. DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic analysis, or study of the characteristics of the population, is a fundamental element of master planning. Planning for future growth and development requires consideration of “how much” – how many people will need Township services, how much housing is affordable, how many new houses will be built, and other vital signs. One must understand these existing conditions and past trends in order to appropriately anticipate and plan for the future needs of the community.

The intent of a demographic analysis is to paint a general picture of the community: the population’s age, gender, family size, marital status, residency, educational status, and similar features. The analysis compares Albert Township to nearby communities, Montmorency County, and the State of Michigan as a whole. Differences in demographic characteristics may indicate issues or areas in which land use planning and public policies are warranted; may identify strengths or assets that can be further developed or emphasized; or may identify weaknesses or issues that need to be addressed.

Most of the data presented comes from the US Census. Some more specialized data comes from ESRI, a private demographic and business information company. ESRI derives its data from several sources, including the Census Bureau’s sampling-based American Community Survey, US Post Office records, real estate analysis data, business data, and local sources. ESRI also uses projections based on older information. For most geographic levels, ESRI data is considered very reliable, and has consistently been within 2% of Census headcounts.

For purposes of analysis, where appropriate, comparisons have been made with neighboring communities, Montmorency County as a whole, and in some cases, the State of Michigan at large. The two communities used most frequently for comparison purposes are Briley Township, home of the Atlanta (the County seat), and Vienna Township, Albert’s neighbor to the north.

POPULATION

Changes in the number of people residing in a community are an important indicator for community planning. Growing communities have different needs than do communities with stable or declining populations. Table 2.1 shows the relative populations of Albert Township and the comparison communities, while Figure 2.1 compares the population trend in Albert to the comparison communities.

Table 2.1: Population

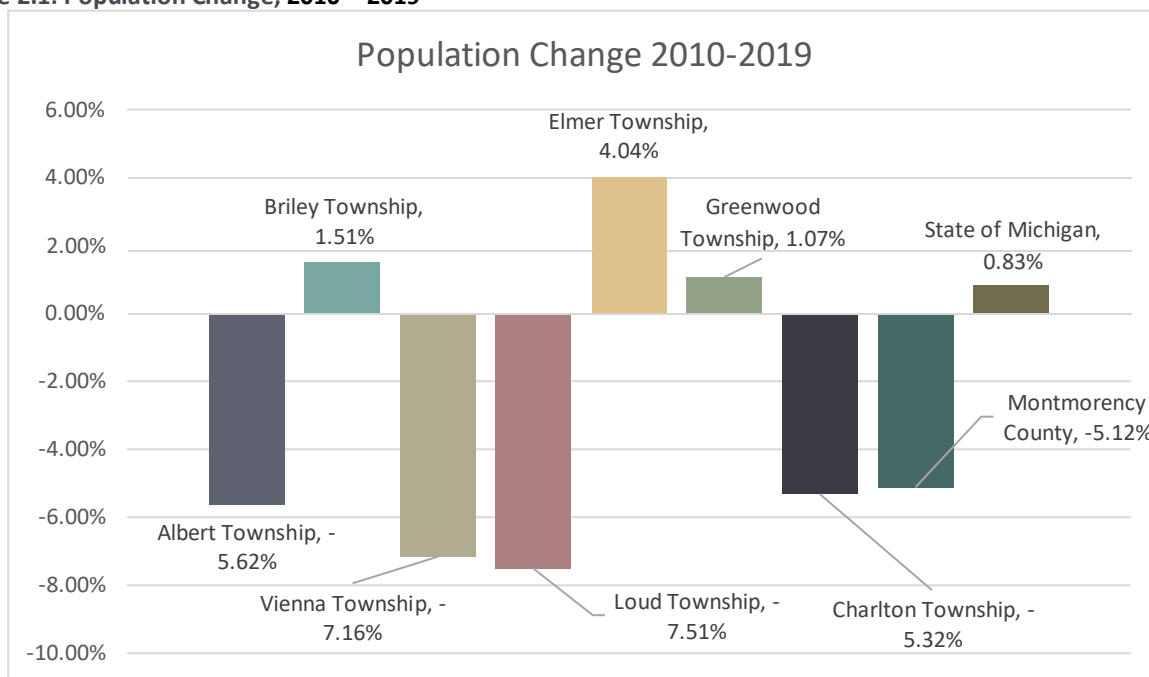
Population	Albert Township	Briley Township	Vienna Township	Loud Township	Elmer Township	Greenwood Township	Charlton Township	Montmorency County	State of Michigan
2019	2,384	1,888	545	271	1,184	1,133	1,282	9,265	9,986,857
2010	2,526	1,860	587	293	1,138	1,121	1,354	9,765	9,883,640
2000	2,695	2,029	572	284	1,095	1,195	1,330	10,315	9,938,444

Source: US Census Bureau

Albert Township has lost population since 2010, as have several neighboring townships and the County as a whole. Other adjacent townships have gained population, which while high as percentages, are in reality small in number of people, due to the small population from which the growth occurred. The population loss in the last 10 years represents the first decline in population for Albert Township in at least 40 years (See Table 2.2 below). While Albert Township’s population has certainly been impacted by the state and regional economy, along with the aging of the Baby-boom generation and national trend to have smaller families,

efforts should be taken, including through the development and implementation of this Plan, to encourage moderate population growth so that decline does not become a continued trend.

Figure 2.1: Population Change, 2010 – 2019



Source: US Census Bureau

Table 2.2: Population Change, 1960-2019

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019
Albert Township	699	1,013	1,620	2,097	2,695	2,526	2,384
Montmorency County	4,424	5,247	7,492	8,936	10,315	9,765	9,265

Source: US Census Bureau, Albert Township Comprehensive Plan

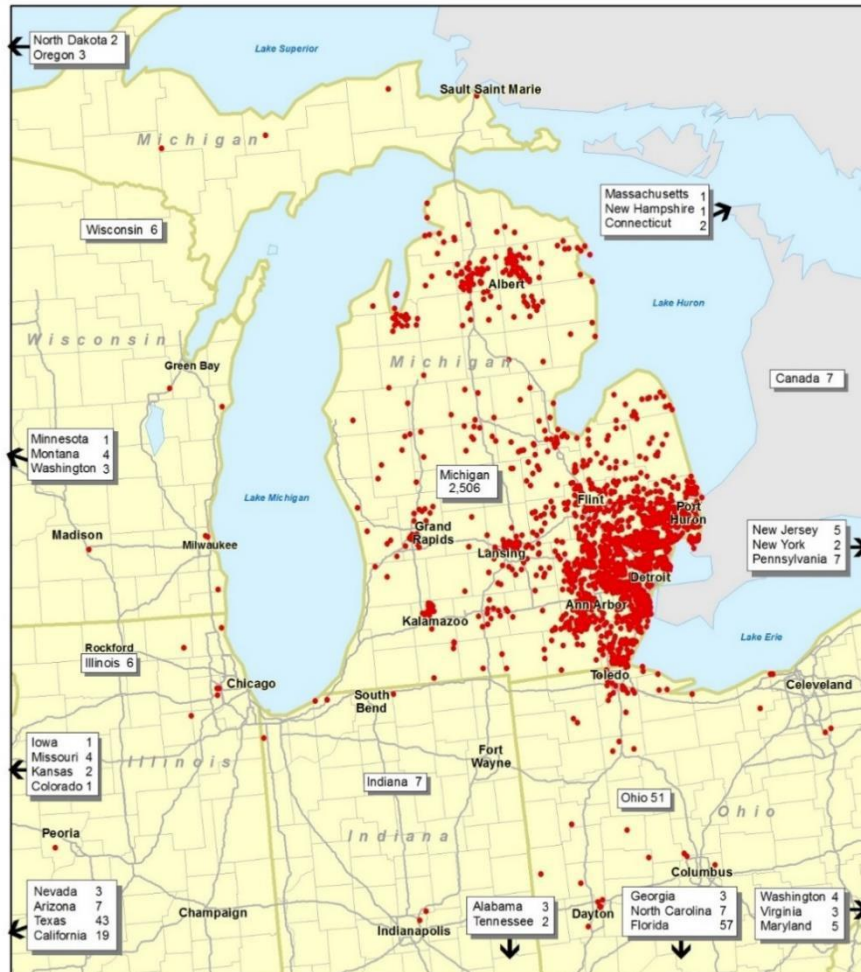
PART-TIME RESIDENTS

Census data suggests about 50% of the 2,714 housing units in Albert Township are occupied by second homeowners (See Section D – Housing Tenure below). According to the US Census, the average household size in the Township is 2.0 people. This suggests that based on population, average household size and housing units that there are approximately 2,700 seasonal residents in Albert Township. Seasonal residents were likely not counted in the Census population count because Census responses are based upon a person's primary place of residence, not seasonal or part year residences. If and when all the seasonal residents are in the Township, Albert's population is likely over 4,200 people.

An analysis of Township tax records show that 50% of occupied residential properties within the Township are owned by someone with a permanent address outside of Albert Township. Map 2 shows the various locations, and the relative distribution of the locations Albert Township homeowners list as their permanent addresses. Certainly in some cases properties are owned by trusts, family members, banks, or investors, or

are used as rentals, but the analysis provides further demonstration of the seasonal nature of the community and the locations from which these residents hail.

Map 2: Primary Address of Seasonal Residents



Map 2
Primary Address of
Seasonal Residents

Albert Township,
Montmorency County, Michigan

• One Seasonal Resident Owner
— State Boundaries
— County Boundaries
— Water Bodies

Base Map Source: ESRI, 2009
Data Source: Montmorency County Assessor, 2012

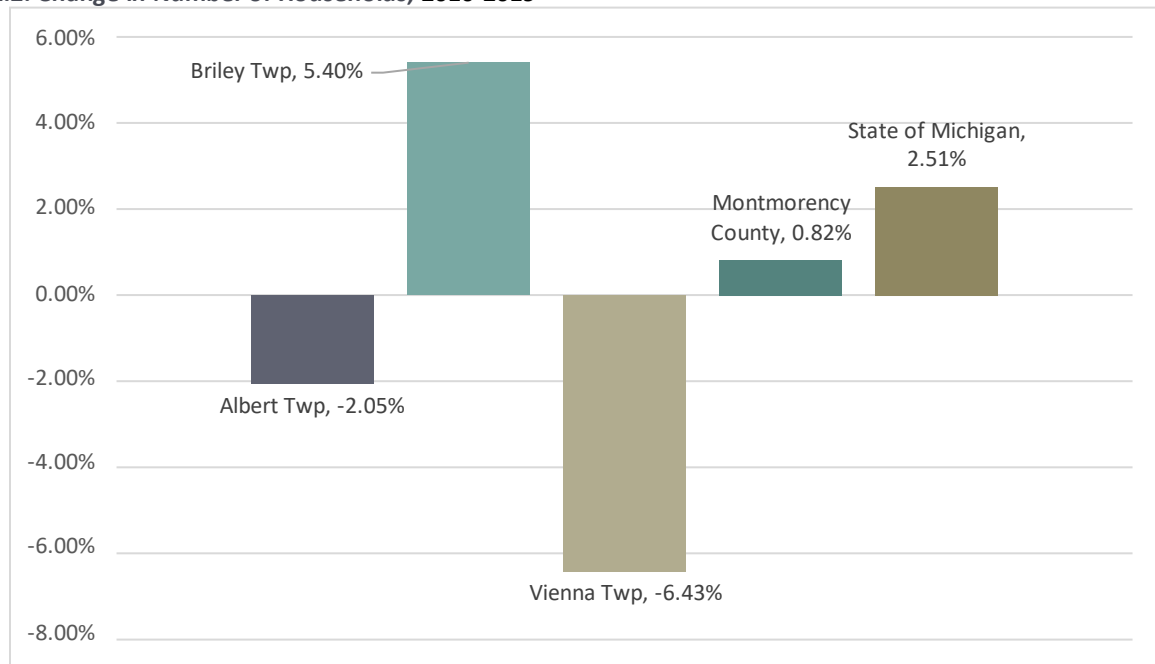
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January 8, 2013
MCKenna ASSOCIATES

HOUSEHOLDS

This section analyzes the composition and characteristics of households in Albert Township. Changes in the number of households in a community are an indication of changing demand for housing units, retail and office space, and community services. Tracking household changes ensures sufficient land is set aside in appropriate locations to accommodate future growth and demand for housing.

Figure 2.2 shows the change in the **Number of Households** in Albert Township and the comparison communities over the past 10 years. Albert Township lost 5.62% of its population between 2010 and 2019, but only 2.05% of its households. Briley Township gained 1.5% in population, and 5.40 % in households. The State of Michigan slightly gained population in that period, along with a 2.5% increase in households. These changes are consistent with the national pattern of households getting smaller, as shown in Table 2.3.

Figure 2.2: Change in Number of Households, 2010-2019



Source: US Census Bureau

Average Household Size is another indicator of community composition. Larger average household sizes generally mean more children and fewer single-parent families. Nationally, household sizes are shrinking as young singles wait longer to get married and life expectancy increases for the senior population. Table 2.3 compares the change in average household size since 2010 for Albert Township, the comparison communities, the County, and the State.

Households in Montmorency County are significantly smaller than the State average, and Albert Township's households are among the smallest in the county. The average age in the Township is much higher than the State, pointing to a correlation between an older population with grown children not living at home, and reduced household size. However, the size of households is declining in the region. The State of Michigan has seen a slight increase.

Table 2.3: Average Household Size, 2010-2019

Household Size	Albert Twp	Briley Twp	Vienna Twp	Montmorency County	State of Michigan
2019	2.00	2.11	2.34	2.00	2.61
2010	2.07	2.18	2.36	2.18	2.53

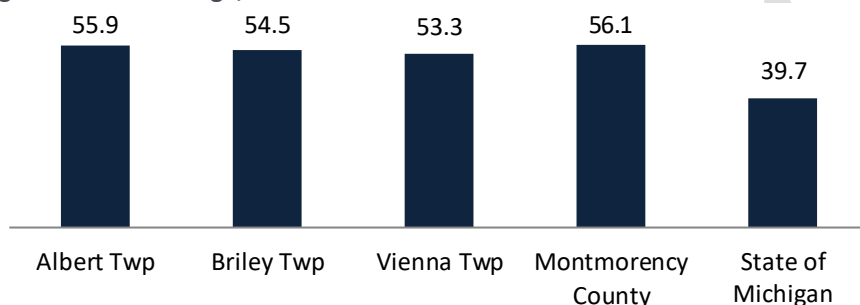
Source: US Census Bureau

AGE

The **Age** of a community's population has very real implications for planning and development, whether it is an increased or decreased need for schools to serve the population under 18, or a need for housing alternatives and services for empty nesters and older residents.

Figure 2.3 compares the median ages (the mid-point where half the population is younger and half is older) of Albert Township and the comparison communities. The median age of communities across northern Michigan is much higher than in more urbanized areas and the State in general, and Montmorency County is no exception. However, even compared to Briley and Vienna Townships, Albert Township has a high median age – 55.9 years.

Figure 2.3: Median Age, 2019



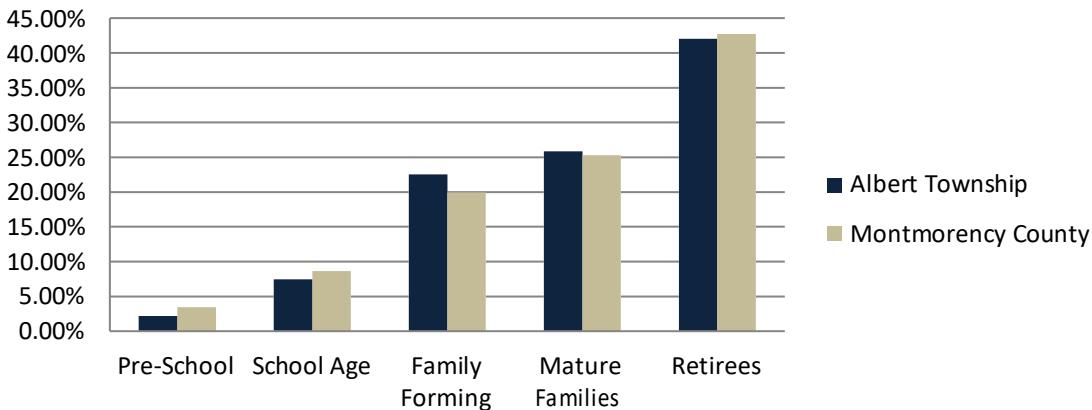
Source: US Census Bureau

Age structure (analyzing which proportions of a municipality's population are in which stages of life) gives a nuanced view of the makeup of a community. To compare age structure, the population is divided into the following groupings:

- Under 5 (Pre School)
- 5 to 19 (School Aged)
- 20 to 44 (Family Forming)
- 45 to 64 (Mature families)
- Over 65 (Retirement)

Figure 2.4 compares the age structure of Albert Township with that of Montmorency County overall. The Township and the County have very similar distributions, with large numbers of mature families and retirees, although the County trends slightly younger. With over half of Albert Township's population over 54 years old, it is unlikely there will be considerable growth in the younger age groups. Without incentives such as good jobs and access to services that individuals in the family-forming years need to stay in or move to the Township, it is likely that the population will continue to decrease due to the aging of the population. However, the high quality of the Johannesburg-Lewiston Area Schools district gives the Township an asset to build on as it works to retain young adults and families.

Figure 2.4: Age Structure, 2019



Source: US Census Bureau

EDUCATION

This section analyzes the level of **Educational Attainment** in Albert Township and the comparison communities for persons age 25 or older. Table 2.4 shows that Albert Township residents are significantly more educated than the surrounding communities – a higher percentage graduated from high school, a higher percentage attended college, and generally a higher percentage earned college degrees and advanced degrees. The higher rates of high school graduation and college attendance are a testament to the Johannesburg-Lewiston school district, which is very well-regarded.

The data shows that Albert Township has a well-educated potential labor force, but some of the high educational attainment may be retired professionals moving into the community either for year-round or seasonal residence. This well-educated, older population can be a valuable resource for a variety of community service, civic and cultural endeavors.

Table 2.4: Educational Attainment, 2019

	Albert Twp	Briley Twp	Vienna Twp	Montmorency County	State of Michigan
Less than High School	12.6%	15.7%	8%	13%	8.7%
High School Graduate	87.5%	84.2%	91.7%	86.9%	91.4%
Attended College	16.1%	24.4%	21.6%	20.7%	22.8%
Associate Degree	13.9%	6.9%	3.4%	9.7%	9.4%
Bachelor's Degree	8.9%	7.9%	10.4%	8.6%	18.2%
Advanced Degree	3.6%	2.4%	3.9%	5.1%	11.9%

Source: US Census Bureau

C. PROJECTIONS

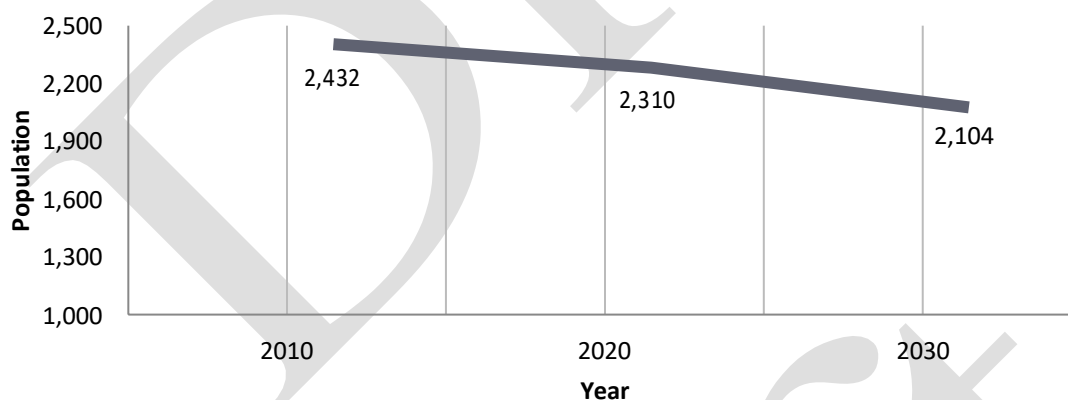
The following projections predict what the populations of Albert Township and Montmorency County will look like in 2020 and 2030. These projections estimate future needs of the community and services that should be planned particularly in regards to housing, jobs, retail, public services, recreation, and park space in the community over the next 20 years.

Methodology: To prepare these projections, McKenna used 2010 US Census population data broken down into ten-year age groups. Each population cohort was moved ten years forward to project to 2020 – for instance 21-30 year olds became 31-40 year olds. Mortalities were factored out using reasonable rates for each age group. 3% of each group was removed to account for net migration - this assumption does not account for new development that may occur and bring new residents to the community, but it is reasonable considering recent trends and the current economic and housing conditions in the region. To account for specific trends in the Township, 5% of 10-19 year olds, 5 were removed as they were moved into the 20-29 year olds to account for graduates finding jobs in other communities and an additional 5% of 40-49 year olds were added as they aged into the 50-59 year old category. Finally, using the statewide birth rate and the estimated number of females of childbearing age, a new 0-10 age group was calculated. The process was then repeated to obtain the population and age cohorts for 2030.

ALBERT TOWNSHIP

As shown in Figure 2.5, the Albert Township **Population** is expected to continue to decrease gradually over the next twenty years, mainly due to the older population.

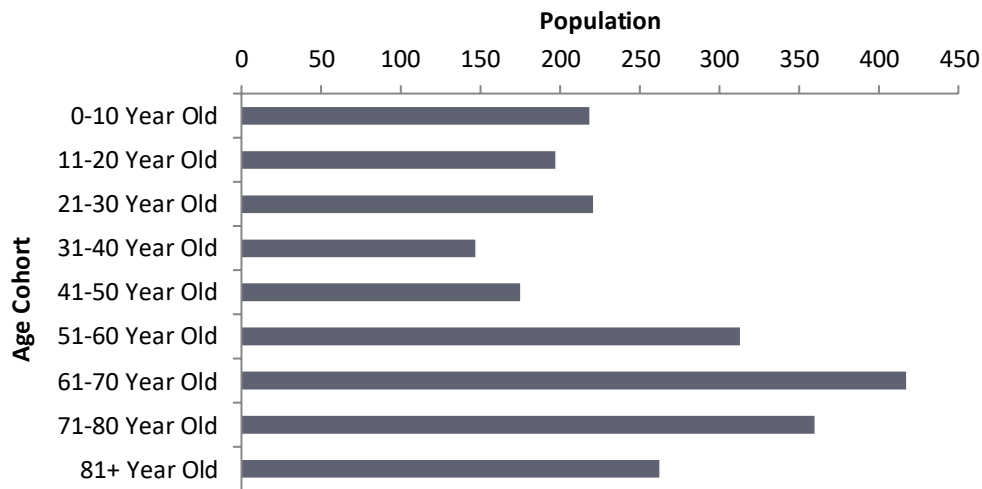
Figure 2.5: Albert Township Population Projection



Source: US Census Bureau and McKenna Associates projection

As shown in the figure below, Albert Township's **Age Distribution** is expected to include more retirees and senior citizens in 2020 than it does today. The Township should consider the needs of people in these age groups as they live longer and increase in proportion to the whole population. Currently, older retirees often need to move away for improved health care, housing/assisted living options and services. The overall aging trend could be modified slightly if the Township remains attractive to 40-60 year old residents who continue to move to the Township, along with efforts to keep younger residents in the community with access to good jobs.

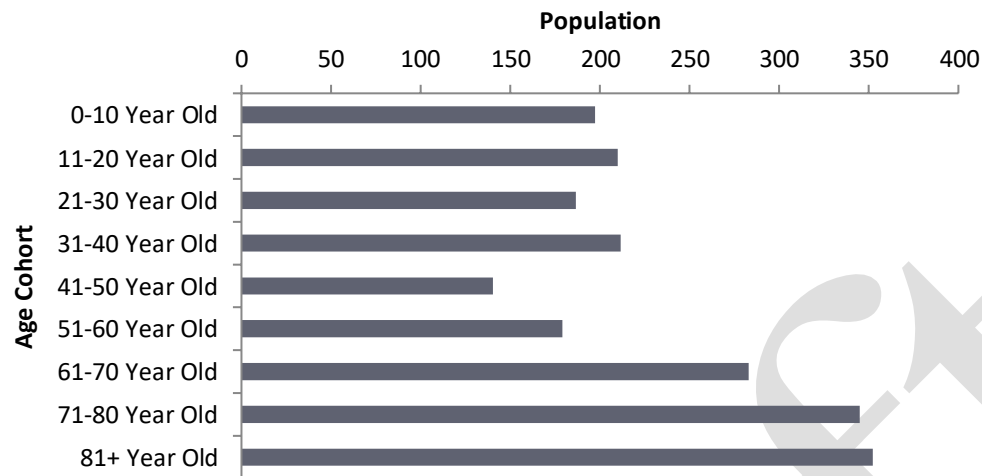
Figure 2.6: Albert Township Age Distribution, 2020 Projection



Source: US Census Bureau, McKenna Associates projection

Figure 2.7 shows an even larger proportion in the oldest age cohorts in the Albert Township community in 2030.

Figure 2.7: Albert Township Age Distribution, 2030 Projection

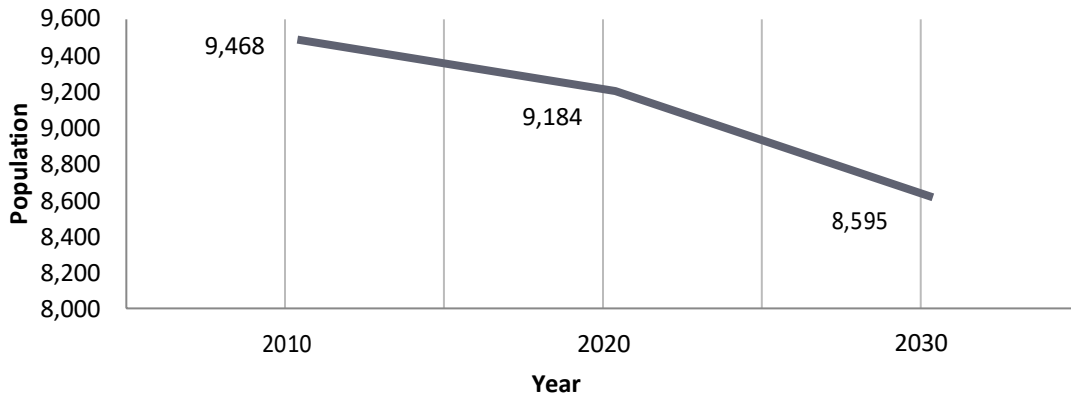


Source: US Census Bureau, McKenna Associates projection

MONTMORENCY COUNTY

As shown in the figure below, the Montmorency County **Population** is expected to decrease over the next twenty years. This population decrease could reflect a lack of job creation with corresponding impacts to the regional economy, as well as a decline in the amount and quality of services and infrastructure provided to the Township by the County.

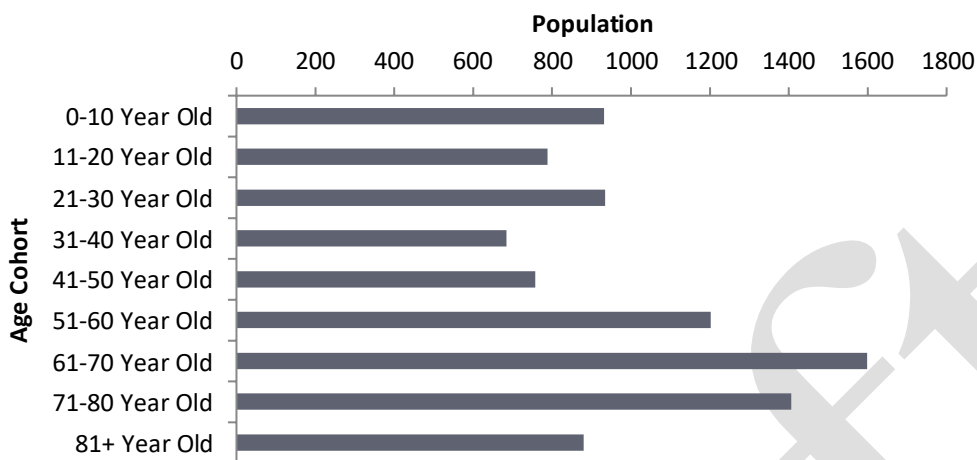
Figure 2.8: Montmorency County Population Projection



Source: US Census Bureau, McKenna Associates projection

As shown in the figure below, the Montmorency County **Age Distribution** is expected to include more young families in 2020 than it does today, as well as people just entering retirement. The increase in children will cause more demand for schools and recreation, while the seniors will have specific needs of their own.

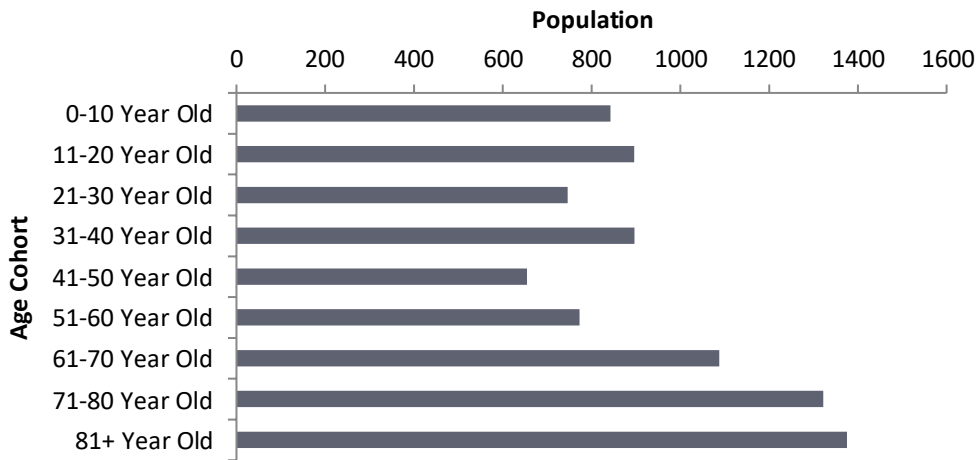
Figure 2.9: Montmorency County Age Distribution, 2020 Projection



Source: US Census Bureau, McKenna Associates projection

As shown in the figure below, in 2030 Montmorency County will have a decrease in school population as families mature and children get older. The number of older people will continue to increase, but there will be fewer young families as a small generation of 20-somethings will likely produce fewer children than their predecessors.

Figure 2.10: Montmorency County Age Cohorts, 2030 Projection



Source: US Census Bureau, McKenna Associates projection

D. HOUSING

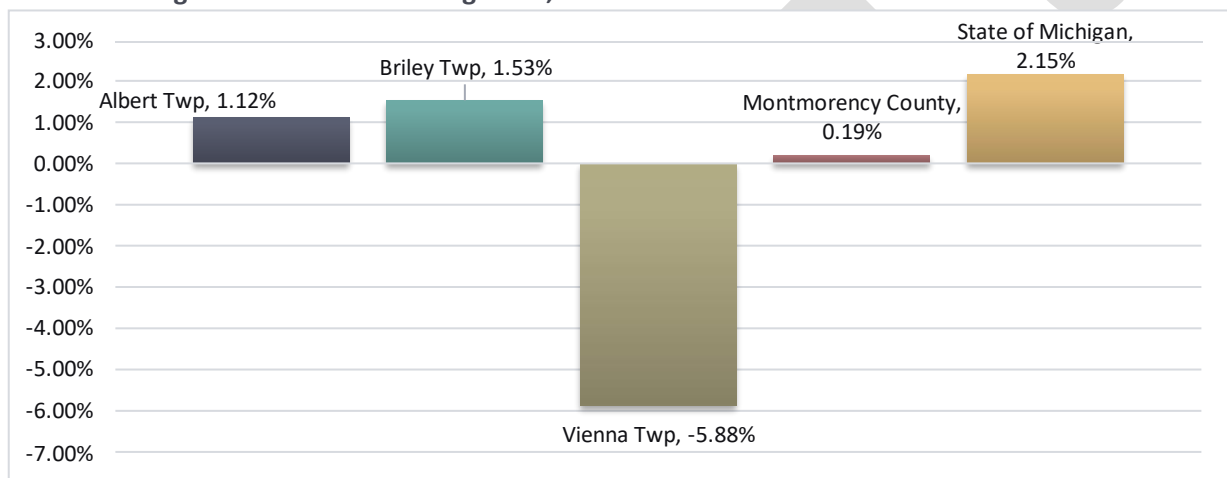
HOUSING UNITS

According to US Census data, there are 2,714 **Housing Units** in Albert Township. Each housing unit represents one single family dwelling unit – a house, apartment, condominium, etc.

Albert Township's rate of housing stock growth lags behind Vienna Township, the County, and the State as a whole, but has been greater than that of Briley Township (See Figure 2.11). In general, new housing units are being added at a steady pace in all the comparison communities.

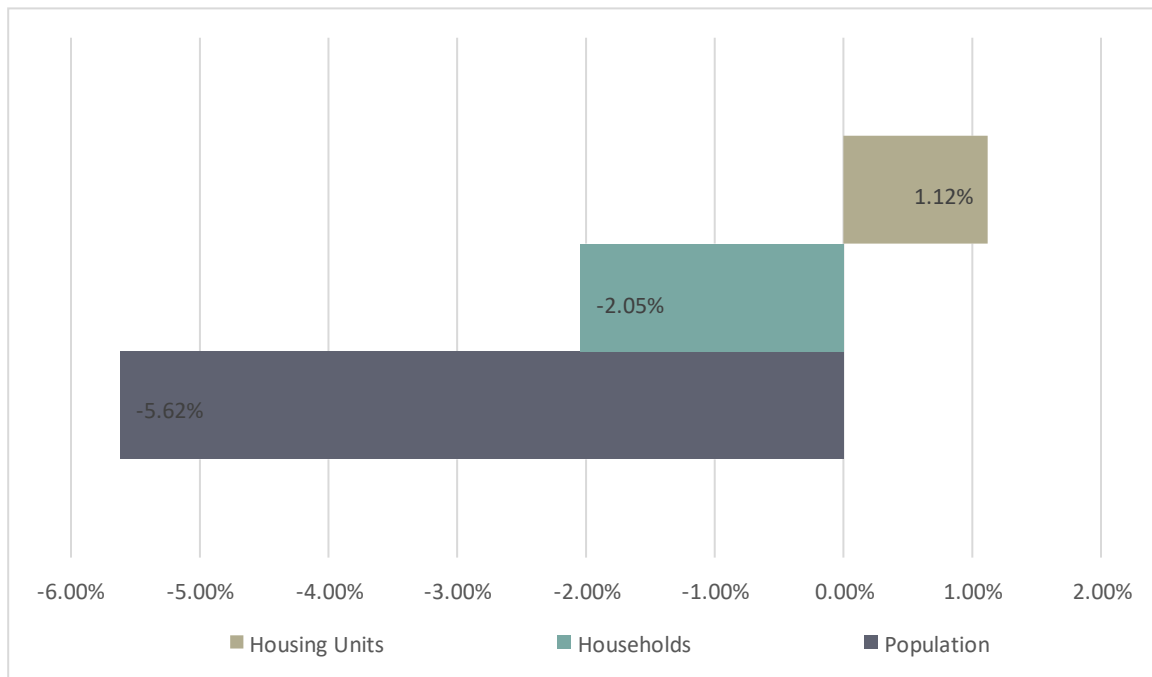
As shown in the figure below, the number of housing units in Albert has continued to increase even as the population and the number of households have decreased. This may be related to the number of second homes in the Township (see below) as well as the decrease in the number of persons per household. It may also be related to aging housing stock and the desire of residents to move into brand new homes. Increasing housing units with decreasing population creates the potential for increased vacancies in the community.

Figure 2.11: Change in Number of Housing Units, 2010-2019



Source: US Census Bureau

Figure 2.12: Change in Population vs. Change in Households vs. Change in Housing Units, 2010-2019



Source: US Census Bureau

Table 2.5 shows the age of housing units existing in the Township. With expected dips during the 1940's for World War II and in the 2000's because of the Great Recession in the latter half of that decade, housing units in the community were built at a relatively steady rate throughout the past century. The largest boom for new housing units was the 1970's, with the second highest proportion built in the 1980's. Slightly more than 60% of the Township's dwelling units are less than 40 years old.

As housing ages, it requires greater investment of time and money to keep it in good condition. Typically residences that are 30 years and older will require substantial maintenance to prevent blight and decline for the broader community. Also older homes tend to lack features that support handicapped access and may not be suitable without significant retrofitting for an aging population.

Table 2.5: Age of Housing

Year Structure Built	Number of Units	Percent
2000 or later	153	5.63%
1990-99	279	10.28%
1980-89	481	17.72%
1970-79	711	26.19%
1960-69	443	16.32%
1950-59	340	12.52%
1940-49	214	7.88%
1939 or earlier	93	3.42%

Source: US Census

HOUSING TYPE

This section analyzes the **Types of Housing** present in Albert Township and their proportions, as compared to the proportions in Montmorency County at large. As Table 2.6 shows, the Township has similar proportions to the County overall.

Table 2.6: Housing Type, 2019

Housing Type	Albert Township		Montmorency County	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Single Family Detached	2,543	93.69%	8,335	86.68%
Single Family Attached	8	0.29%	51	0.53%
Two-Family	13	0.47%	22	0.22%
Multiple Family	18	0.66%	118	1.23%
Mobile Home	132	7.4%	1,082	11.25%
Other	0	4.86%	7	> 0.0%
TOTAL	2,714	100%	9,615	100%

Source: US Census

HOUSING TENURE

Housing Tenure describes how housing is occupied – by the owner, by a renter, or whether it is vacant. Table 2.7 shows that the majority of dwellings in Albert Township are owned by seasonal residents. Of residents that live in the Township year-round, the majority own their homes. The Township has a low vacancy rate, which generally indicates a healthy housing market.

Table 2.7: Housing Ownership Status and Tenure, 2019

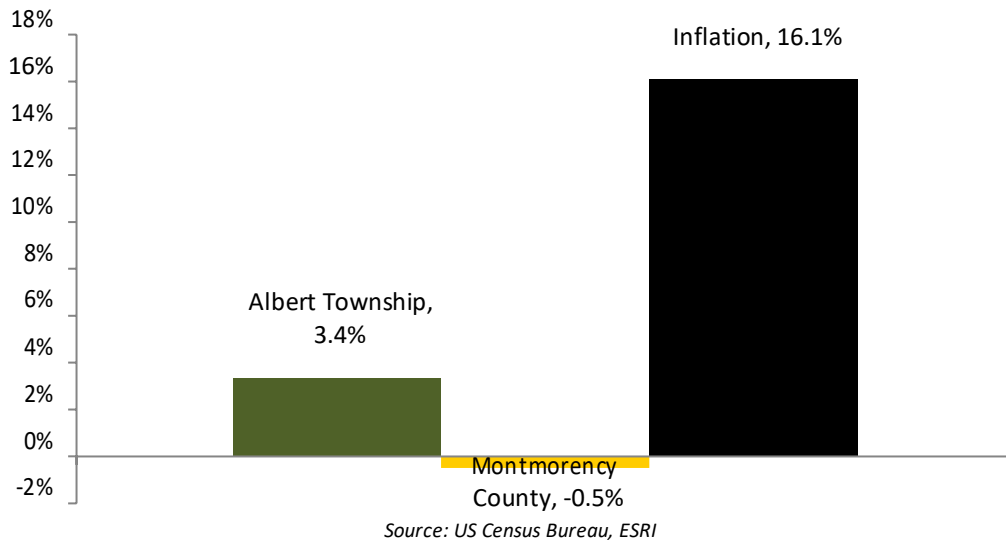
	Albert Township	
	Number of Dwelling Units	Percentage of Total
Year-Round Owner	957	35.26%
Seasonal Owner	1,439	53.02%
Renter	236	8.69%
Vacant	82	3.0%

Source: US Census

MEDIAN HOME VALUE

The value of the homes in Albert Township is one measure of the quality of life in the community and the health of the economy. Currently, the median home value in the Township is \$116,400, but the larger question is whether the value of homes in Albert Township is rising more quickly than inflation, thus giving homeowners real equity in their property. As shown in Figure 2.14.

Figure 2.14: Change in Median Home Value, 2010-2019



E. ECONOMICS

INCOME

Albert Township's **Median Household Income** is lower than Vienna Township's but is higher than Briley Township's and Montmorency County as a whole (See Table 2.8).

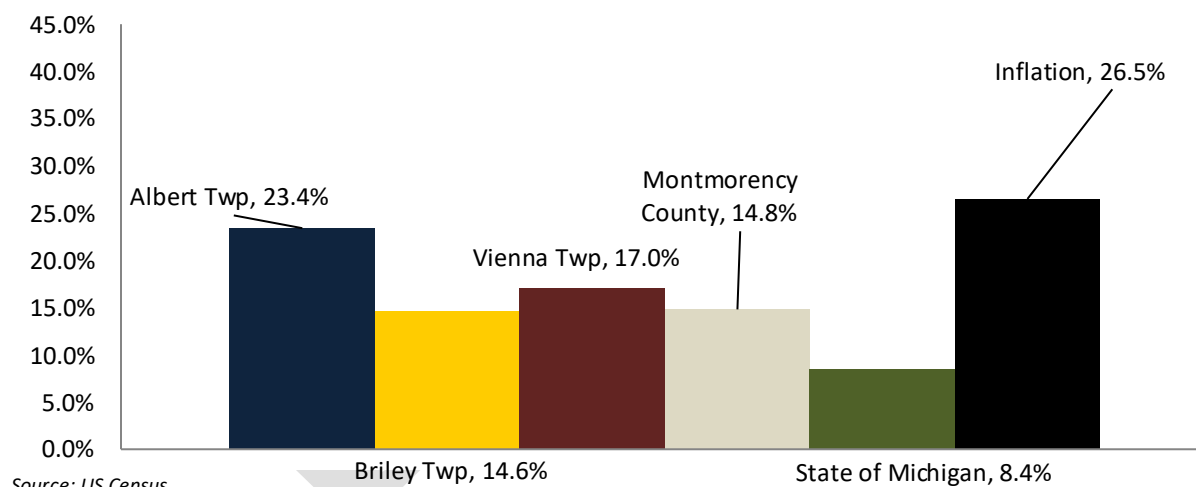
Table 2.8: Median Income, 2010-2019

	Albert Twp.	Briley Twp.	Vienna Twp.	Montmorency County	State of Michigan
2010	\$37,568	\$31,250	\$41,875	\$34,447	\$48,432
2019	\$43,542	\$39,868	\$49,977	\$41,772	\$57,144

Source: US Census

Figure 2.15 shows the growth in median household income over the past 10 years. The thick black bar indicates the rate of inflation. The rate of income increase in Albert Township has slightly lagged behind the growth rate of inflation for the past ten years, although not by as much as the comparison communities, the County, or the State. In general, when incomes do not grow as fast as inflation, it indicates that the purchasing power of community members is decreasing.

Figure 2.15: Growth in Median Income Since 2010



Source: US Census

OCCUPATION

This section addresses the **Employment** of Albert Township residents. This is not an analysis of what kind of jobs are available or what businesses are located within the community, but rather in what occupations members of the community are employed, regardless of where they work. Thus, commuters from Albert Township to other areas are included in this analysis, but commuters from other locations coming into the Township are not.

The greatest numbers of Albert Township residents are employed in Manufacturing, Retail, Tourism and Entertainment, and Education and Health Care (see Table 2.9). The four highest categories in the County are the same, but in a different order – Education and Health Care is the largest employment sector in Montmorency County as a whole.

Table 2.9: Occupational Sectors, 2019

	Albert Township		Montmorency County	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Agriculture and Mining	4	.47%	130	4.27%
Construction	67	8.01%	257	8.44%
Manufacturing	116	13.87%	431	14.15%
Transportation and Utilities	51	6.10%	185	6.07%
Information	6	.71%	15	0.49%
Wholesale Trade	0	0%	26	0.85%
Retail	143	17.10%	403	13.23%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	43	5.14%	140	4.60%
Tourism and Entertainment	123	14.71%	268	8.80%
Education and Health Care	173	20.69%	689	22.62%
Professional Services	34	4.06%	188	6.17%
Other Services	60	7.17%	168	5.52%
Government	16	1.91%	146	4.79%

Source: US Census Bureau

COMMUTING

Because of Albert Township's rural location, many residents commute relatively long distances to work. Table 2.10 shows the commute time of Albert residents, with an average commute time of 17.5 minutes.

Table 2.10: Commuting Destinations, 2019

Time of Commute	Places of Work Within this Radius	Percentage of Residents
Under 10 Minutes	In and around Greater Lewiston	47.0%
10-25 Minutes	Atlanta	19.3%
25-45 Minutes	Gaylord	22.85%
45+ Minutes	Alpena/Cheboygan	10.8%

Source: US Census Bureau

EXISTING CONDITIONS

D. EXISTING LAND USE

Albert Township covers approximately 72 square miles. Compared to most Townships in Michigan, it is “double size,” and from a legal and surveying perspective, it actually does cover two Townships – T29N-R1E and T29N-R2E. The unincorporated community of Lewiston is located in the southwest portion of the Township.

Almost 3,000 acres of the Township are covered in water. The largest lakes are West Twin Lake and East Twin Lake, in the southwest part of the Township near the unincorporated community of Lewiston. Just to their east are Big Wolf Lake and Little Wolf Lake (Little Wolf Lake is only partially in the Township). The northwest part of the Township has several small lakes, including the Spectacle Lakes, Crystal Lake, and McMullen Lake. The eastern portion of the Township has fewer lakes, although it does have Avery Lake, near the border with Briley Township, which is the third largest body of water in Albert Township.

The Township’s Existing Land Use map, which was first created in the 1970’s and has been updated regularly since then, was again updated as part of this planning process using aerial photography and public input, see **Map 10** on page 76.

NATURAL AREAS

Undeveloped land makes up over 85% of the Township. Much of this land is located within four state forest areas owned by the State of Michigan and is reserved for recreation or preservation. Additional information on soils and other natural features is presented in Section D of this chapter. The natural land in the Township can be categorized into four types:

Upland Forest

Upland Forest is by far the most common category of land cover in Albert Township, with almost 75% of the Township classified as such. Most of the forests are dense, old-growth mixtures of coniferous and deciduous trees. Although Upland Forests can be found all over the Township, the largest sections of them are in the eastern portion.

Wetlands

A little less than 4% of the Township is classified as wetland, although there are several categories of wetlands represented, including shrub wetlands, fresh-water marshes, wet meadows, open bogs, and emergent wetlands. Wetlands can be found all over the Township, especially near the various lakes and streams.

Non-Forest

Non-forest land is a category that covers non-agricultural land that is neither wooded nor wet. Non-forest land makes up approximately 6% of the Township. Clearings pock-mark the forests throughout the Township, but are most common in the area surrounding the core Lewiston area.

Agriculture

Agriculture is not a major land use in the Township, due to sandy soils, the need to preserve the forest land, and the short growing season. Less than 1% of the Township is agricultural land uses. The few farms are generally located along County Road 612 east of the Lewiston community.

DEVELOPED AREAS

Residential

About 8% of the Township is used for residential purposes. There are several kinds of residential development, although the vast majority of housing is single-family. In the more rural parts of the Township, homes and cabins sit on large lots, far back from the street amongst the woods. Closer to the Lewiston core, the housing density increases with homes clustered in smaller subdivisions on the outskirts of the community. Within the unincorporated village itself, the houses are close together and arranged on a general grid-pattern of streets. A fourth type of residential development exists along the Township's lakes, where homes and cottages are built to maximize their residents' enjoyment of the waterfront.

Commercial

Just 0.3% of the Township is used for commercial purposes. The vast majority of this land is located in the central business district within the Lewiston community and on the approaches to the community along County Roads 612 and 489. Although there is a variety of shopping in the Lewiston area, some products are not available, and many Albert Township residents travel to Atlanta, Gaylord, or Alpena to shop for products that are not available in the Township. For more detail, see the Downtown Market Analysis in Chapter 4.

Industrial

Less than 1% of the Township is used for industrial purposes. About half of that acreage is the former Lewiston Airport, so the actual amount of industrial land that is in use is even lower. Most of the actual industrial uses are located in the Industrial Park and along County Road 491.

Institutional/Public

This land use category includes public and semi-public uses such as schools, churches, Township Hall, and the Fire Department. It also includes Township-owned recreational properties, but not State-owned recreation, which is included in the appropriate Natural areas category. Less than 1% of the Township falls into this land use category.

Table 7.1: Land Use Summary shows the percent of total area in the Township for each of the Land Use categories described above, both Natural and Developed. The numbers shown are an estimate based on 2002 data, updated using aerial photography. The Land Use pattern of the Township has remained more or less steady since 2002, with slightly more residential uses built in formerly Upland Forest areas.

Table 7.1: Land Use Summary

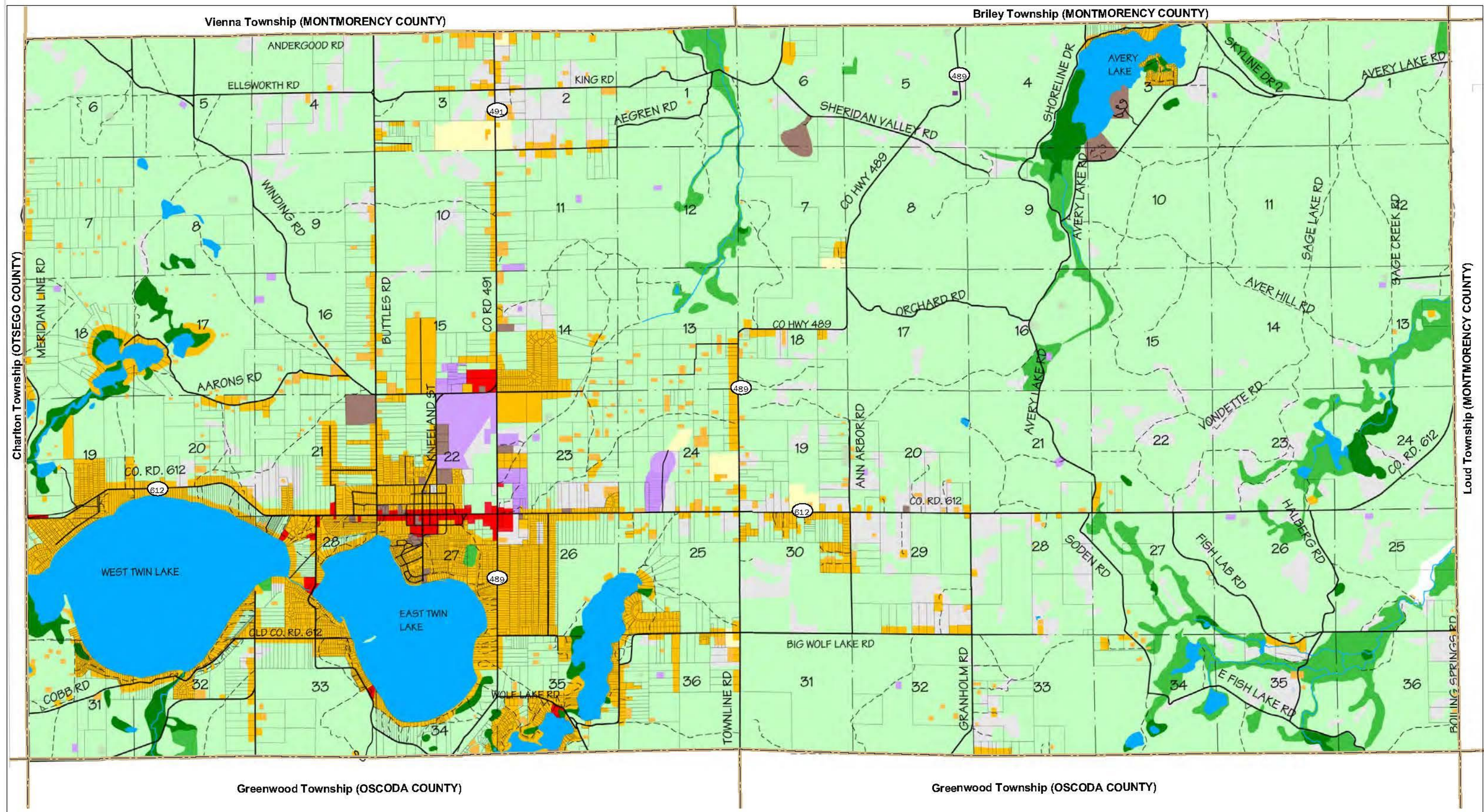
Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total Area
Natural Areas		
Upland Forest	33,500	74%
Wetland	1,798	4%
Non-Forest	2,652	6%
Agriculture	180	1%
Water	2,832	6%
Developed Areas		
Residential	3,277	8 %
Commercial	135	0.5%
Industrial/Extractive	270	1%
Institutional/Public	135	0.5%
Total Acreage in Township	44,960	100%

Source: Michigan Resource Information System, 2002; Aerial Survey 2012

Map 3: Existing Land Use Cover

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E. PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

The quality and extent of a community's public services contribute greatly to the quality of life for residents and visitors to the area. For communities like Albert Township with a high proportion of seasonal residents, provision of services for that variable population is an even greater challenge. Creative approaches to service provision, consolidation and sharing of services with other governmental entities, volunteer groups and community organizations, are ways to help optimize the use of limited financial resources in a small community.

POLICE

Albert Township does not have its own police department. Law enforcement within the Township is handled by the Montmorency County Sheriff and the Michigan State Police. The Sheriff's Department is headquartered in Atlanta, the county seat.

The State Police remote office is located in Albert Township Hall. Six state troopers are assigned to the region and split their time between the Albert Township post and similar posts in Atlanta and Mio.

FIRE AND MEDICAL SERVICES

The Township's fire department is a paid on-call force. The department is located on Salling Avenue (County Road 612) in the Lewiston core. The Township owns two ambulances, two pumper trucks, two tanker trucks, and a command vehicle. The Township also has access to two pumper trucks owned by the State of Michigan to be used for suppressing wildfires on state land.

The Emergency Medical Service (ambulance service and paramedics) is available twenty-four hours a day and 7 days a week. The staff is full time and paid, and all staff members are ALS (Advanced Life Support) certified.

The Montmorency Medical Clinic is located in the Lewiston area and provides local medical services. Notably for the community, its services recently expanded to include Urgent Care. With the expansion, residents needing immediate care for non-life threatening injuries or illness do not have to travel the 45 minutes previously required. The nearest full-service hospitals are Mercy Hospital in Grayling and Otsego Memorial Hospital in Gaylord.

The Fire/Ambulance staff consists of:

- 10 firefighters
- 2 full-time licensed paramedics
- 8 part-time licensed paramedics
- 1 full-time EMT
- 1 full-time EMT/Office Manager
- 1 fire cadet
- 7 part time EMTs (Basic Level)
- 1 specialist

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Residential trash collection is provided throughout the Township through a variety of private waste collection businesses. Solid waste disposal companies may provide limited curbside service for a fee. The Montmorency-Oscoda-Alpena landfill is also used by the Township residents and commercial businesses for disposal of waste.

A solid waste transfer facility is operated by Albert Township on County Road 491 near County Road 612. Albert Township currently has a contract with Thunder Bay Sanitation. For a nominal fee per bag (to help cover the costs of the facility), residents can drop off household wastes to be collected by Thunder Bay Sanitation. Yard waste drop-off and composting facilities are also included at the transfer facility at no charge for residents.

ELECTRICITY AND NATURAL GAS

Electricity in Albert Township is provided by Presque Isle Electric and Gas Cooperative. PIE&G also supplies natural gas to the northwest part of the Township. The rest of the Township receives natural gas service from DTE Energy - service is provided in the Lewiston area and around West Twin, East Twin, Big Wolf, and Little Wolf lakes.

COMMUNICATIONS

Local telephone service in Albert Township is provided by Frontier/Verizon, with several other companies available for long distance service.

Cable television is available in Lewiston Township through Astrea Communications. Frontier Communications. Internet 2000 and Barger Creek offers traditional DSL within Albert Township. Fiber cable runs north on County Road 489 to Fleming Road, north on Fleming Road to County Road 612, then east on County Road 612 to Bourn Street. The fiber cable also runs north on Kneeland Street from County Road 612, east on Montmorency Street and Airport roads. Several businesses have taken advantage of these offerings to expand their business services.

Presque Isle Electric & Gas has unveiled a project to expand broadband in Albert Township. This comes through an approximately \$11 million Federal Commission's Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF). As broadband begins to expand the Township needs to be aware of advancing technologies including providers that use low orbit satellites.

Shifting from dial up use and DSL connections for internet service the community identifies a lack of high-speed service as a problem. Access to quality internet service is critical for economic development in the 21st century, and should be a high priority for the community.

The AT&T communication tower offers wireless communication services. Verizon and Barger Creek also has a wireless telecommunication tower providing services within the Township, but some areas of the Township continue to have very poor wireless telecommunication service.

WATER, SEWAGE DISPOSAL AND STORMWATER

The only public water system in Albert Township is in the unincorporated village of Lewiston central business district. This system was installed in 1982, when the use of on-site septic systems and fuel storage containers threatened drinking water quality in the area. The public water system serves between 10 and 15 users, mainly businesses located on either side of Kneeland Street from Co. 612, south two blocks to the 50+ Club building.

The rest of the Township is served by private well systems. Water supply is not a problem in Albert Township – many wells in the community can produce over 500 gallons per minute. However, the Township’s generally highly permeable sandy soils are vulnerable to contamination. Water quality is a valuable resource for the Township to protect. The Township water system has minimal or no nitrate levels; however, arsenic levels have been a problem in several parts of the Township.

There is no public sewer or public wastewater treatment system in the Township. Residents rely on private septic systems. With increased development, particularly of vacant small lots divided years ago, conversion of seasonal dwellings to year-round residences, and construction of larger new and rebuilt dwellings, the potential for septic system failure with accompanying lake and groundwater contamination, has become more of a concern for the Township. In the 1980s, the Township authorized a water quality study and considered implementing a public sewer system, but the project was stopped by community opposition. Economic and environmental concerns have reinvigorated discussions about a sewer system in the community. The Township has authorized a public sewer system study to determine the feasibility of a public sewer system.

Stormwater runoff is not a major concern in the rural portions of the Township, due to sandy soils and minimal impermeable surfaces in most areas. According to the 2010 Comprehensive Plan update, some flooding has occurred in the Lions Club Park area and the Pine Beach subdivision. The Montmorency Road Commission has a limited stormwater system in the downtown Lewiston area with a reservoir located at Hanson Avenue and Torrey Street. Improvements to the stormwater system may become necessary as the impervious surfaces increase with development. Sustainable, low impact stormwater management measures such as bioswales, should be considered to protect the surface and groundwater quality.

EDUCATION

Almost all of Albert Township is within the Johannesburg-Lewiston school district. The district operates three schools – a high school in Johannesburg, the Johannesburg K-8 school, and the Lewiston K-5 school. The Lewiston school is the only school building located in Albert Township and is at the northeast corner of the unincorporated village of Lewiston. The school also serves as a community gathering place, and its playing fields are popular even when school is not in session.

The school district is regarded as high quality and is popular with students and parents who make use of the Schools of Choice system. The district is a major draw for families considering moving to the community and is a crucial asset as Albert Township strives to retain young adults and families with children.

F. TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

ROADS

The public roads in Albert Township are maintained by Montmorency County, except for a few two-track drives within the State Forests, which are maintained by the State of Michigan. There are also many private roads that connect public roads to houses and cottages deep in the wooded areas or along the lakes.

The road system of the Township generally follows the topography of the land, with winding roads skirting lakes and climbing steep slopes. In some areas, however, roads follow a grid pattern along section lines and

half-section lines. The grid is not fully connected, though, which means residents in some areas must take circuitous routes to get places.

The two most travelled routes are County Road 612 (Salling Avenue), which runs east-west, and County Road 489 (Red Oak Road) and 491 (Bear Lake Road), which run north-south.

Albert Township has 137.2 miles of roads, of which 29.42 miles are classified as primary roads. Of these, many are dirt and gravel. The paved roads are the three County primary roads - County Road 612, County Road 491, and County Road 489 - plus Buttles Road, Fleming Road, a portion of Airport Road, roads within the Lewiston community, and a few other scattered paved roads.

Congestion is not an issue in the Township, but the connectivity of the road system is not optimal. County Road 612 is the only continuous east-west route that traverses the length of the Township. Some areas on the edges of the community, such as the area near Avery Lake, are more easily accessible from neighboring townships than from the Lewiston area.



There are no State, Federal, or Interstate highways in Albert Township. M-32 runs just to the north of the Township and M-33 runs just to the east. M-32 is the main route for Albert Township residents to get to Alpena to the east or west to Gaylord. M-33 provides a connection to Onaway and Cheboygan to the north and Mio and Rose City to the south.

The nearest access to I-75 from the Township is in Grayling, approximately 30 minutes to the west via County Road 612 and M-93.

Table 3.2 shows the driving distance to major destinations from Albert Township.

Table 3.2: Driving Distance to Major Destinations

Destination	Drive Time
Gaylord	29 mins
Grayling	41 mins
Alpena	62 mins
Cheboygan	83 mins
Mackinac Bridge	85 mins
Clare	91 mins
Traverse City	94 mins
Midland	121 mins
Saginaw	123 mins
Flint	149 mins
Manistee	160 mins

Lansing	169 mins
Grand Rapids	180 mins
Detroit	204 mins

Source: Bing Maps

SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks are limited in Albert Township. Some streets in the unincorporated village of Lewiston, especially Kneeland Street, do have sidewalks along part of their lengths. But even within the central business district portion of Lewiston, sidewalks are not common. Residents have expressed a desire for additional sidewalks to provide improved pedestrian access to downtown businesses.

COMPLETE STREETS

“Complete Streets” is the concept that roads should be safe and available for all types of users, not merely automobiles. In rural communities, like Albert Township, this means creating roads that can be safely traversed by bicycles, ORVs, snowmobiles, and pedestrians. (Montmorency County, like several counties in Northeast Michigan, permits snowmobiles and other ORVs on county road shoulders.)

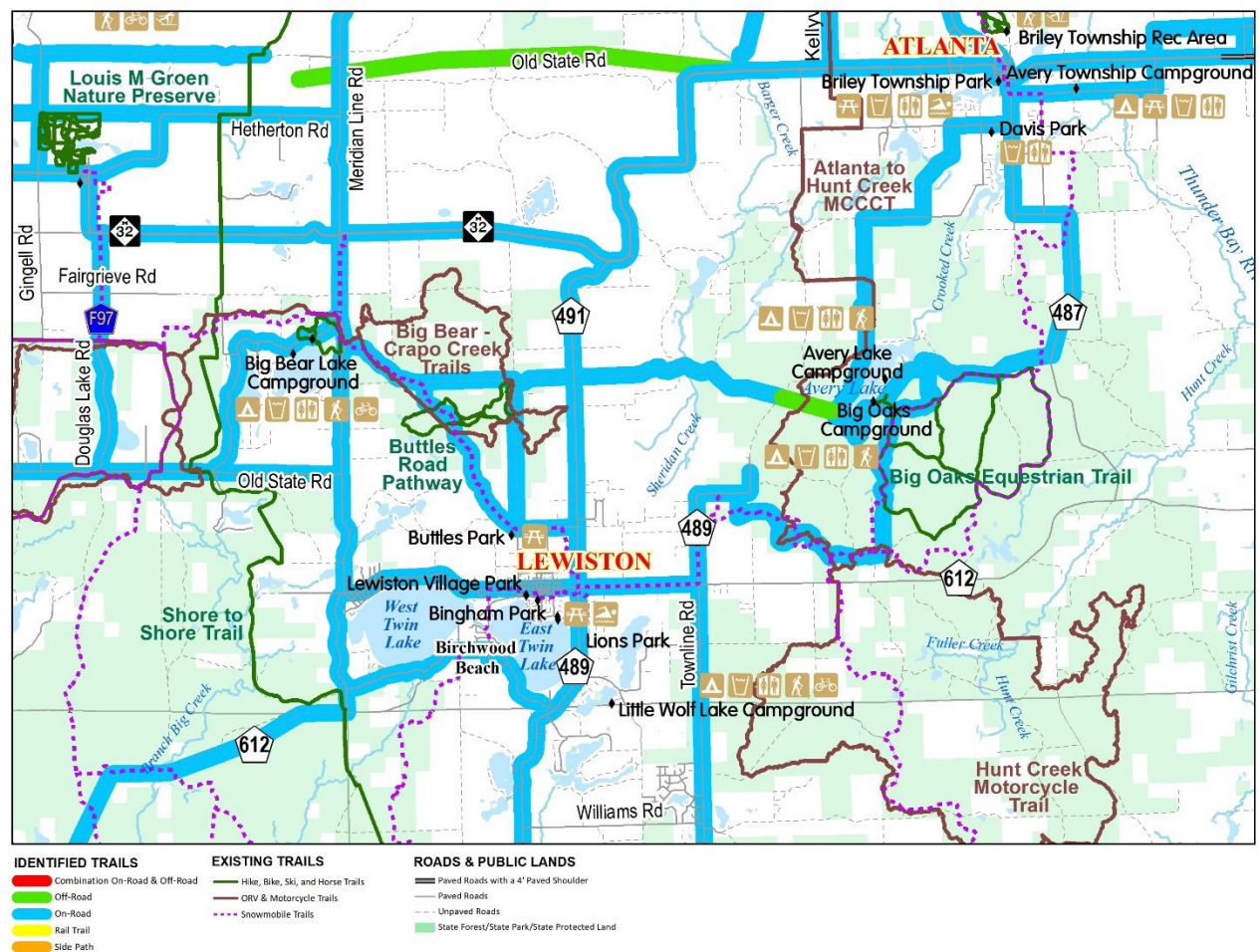
The DDA and the Township Board are implementing a program to increase the number of sidewalks. Chapter 7 of this Plan outlines additional targeted areas for sidewalk construction in the Lewiston community.

Outside of the Lewiston area, safe pathways for bikes, snowmobiles, and other non-automobile transportation are crucial. Chapter 7 includes a plan for an expansion of the facilities for these types of transportation. Because the use of many of these vehicles is seasonal, pathways and dedicated lanes may be used for multiple purposes. For instance, a bike path in the summer could become a snowmobile trail in the winter.

In a rural, wooded community like Albert Township, pedestrian travel along the roads is not common outside of the core village area. However, hiking trails are very popular.

The Township is working towards implementing the 2009 Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. This Plan was created with MDOT, Montmorency Road Commission and NEMCOG. Specifically, the Township aims to connect Lewiston K-5 School and the business district with Township parks and the Buttles Road Pathway. Trails around East and West Twin Lakes using Fleming and Cobb Road could connect with regional trails such as the High Country Pathway (for hiking and biking) or the Shore to Shore (hiking and equestrian.)

Figure 3.1: NEMCOG Planned Trails in Greater Albert Township



Source: NEMCOG Non-Motorized Transportation Plan 2012

AIRPORTS

The nearest public airstrip to Albert Township is Atlanta Municipal Airport in Avery Township, owned by Briley and Avery Townships. There is a private airstrip at Garland Golf Course in Greenwood Township. The nearest airport with commercial service is Alpena County Airport, which hosts Delta service to Detroit Metro Airport.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION

There is currently no public bus service in Albert Township. However, Thunder Bay Transportation is looking into providing dial-a-ride services for the Albert Township residents similar to the service the company provides in nearby communities.

There is also no passenger rail service.

G. NATURAL FEATURES

TOPOGRAPHY

The Township has some rolling hills, with the highest point being in the Comstock Hills, southwest of the unincorporated village of Lewiston, at 1,449 feet of elevation. The lowest point in the Township is Avery Lake, 891 feet above sea level. For reference, Lake Huron is 579 feet above sea level. Lewiston itself is 1,250 feet above sea level.

As shown in Map 4, the hilliest part of the Township is the northeastern portion, which features rolling hills interspersed with small lakes. The central part of the Township and the area around the Lewiston community are generally flatter, with more hills popping up on the northwestern fringe and in the Comstock Hills in the southwest. The slopes in various parts of the Township are an important consideration for development potential. Steep road grades, septic field failures, erosion, and excavation costs are all potential difficulties in hilly terrain. For this reason, most of the developed part of the Township is flat, while the areas with the steepest slopes are planned for natural preservation.

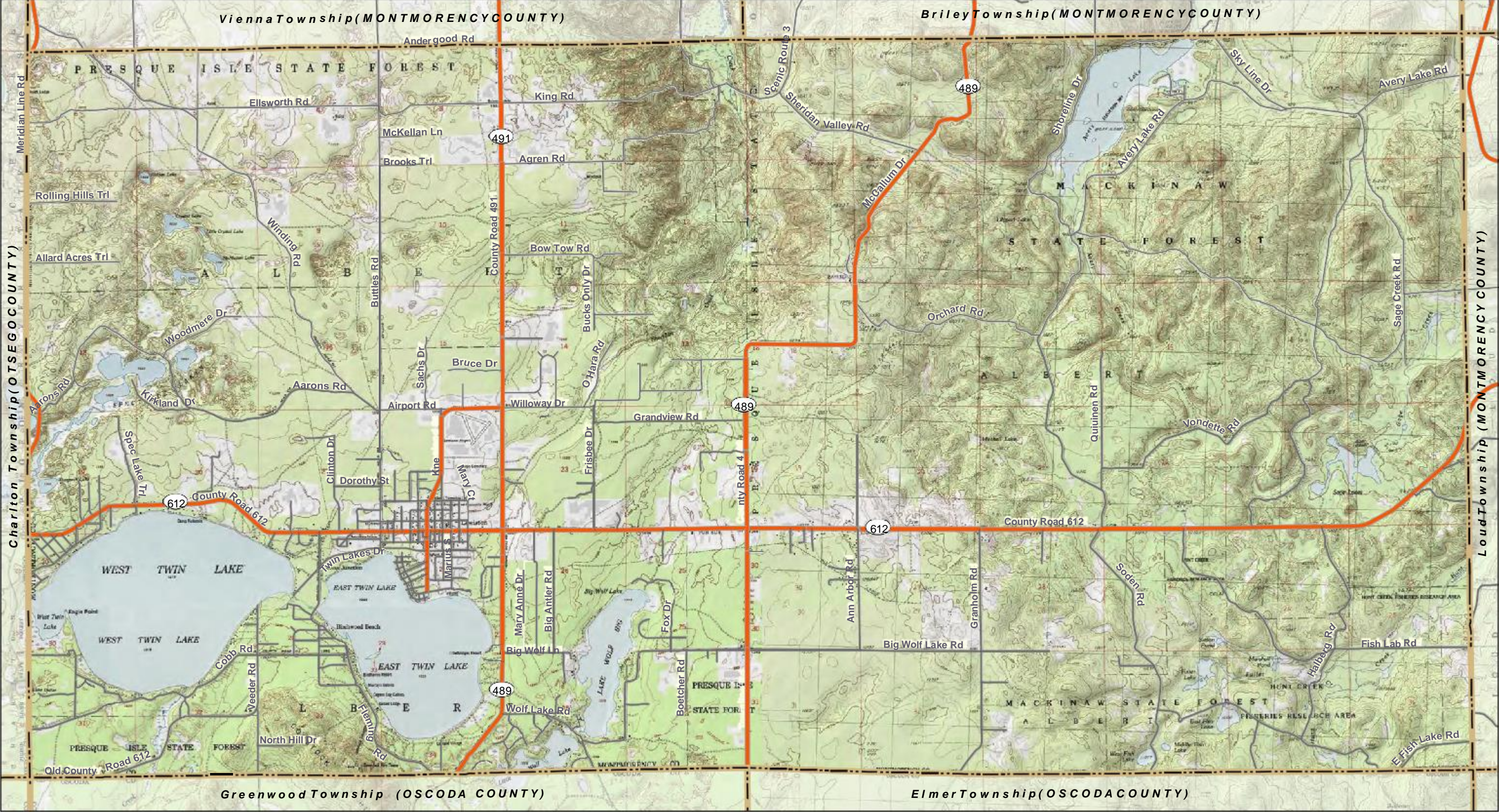
Gas and oil wells are very common throughout the Township. Fracking has not been an issue to date.



Map 2: Topography

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Map 4
Topography
Albert Township

Base Source: Michigan Geographic Framework,
Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 8a.
Data Source: USGS Maps, 2011

FARMLAND

Map 5 shows the quality of farmland in Albert Township, as classified by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Using the Soil Conservation Service's soil classification system, soils are rated for their use and adaptability. According to the USDA, "prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and that is available for these uses. It has the combination of soil properties, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields of crops in an economic manner if it is treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, an acceptable level of acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable content of salt or sodium, and few or no rocks. Its soils are permeable to water and air. Prime farmland is not excessively eroded or saturated with water for long periods of time, and it either does not flood frequently during the growing season or is protected from flooding."

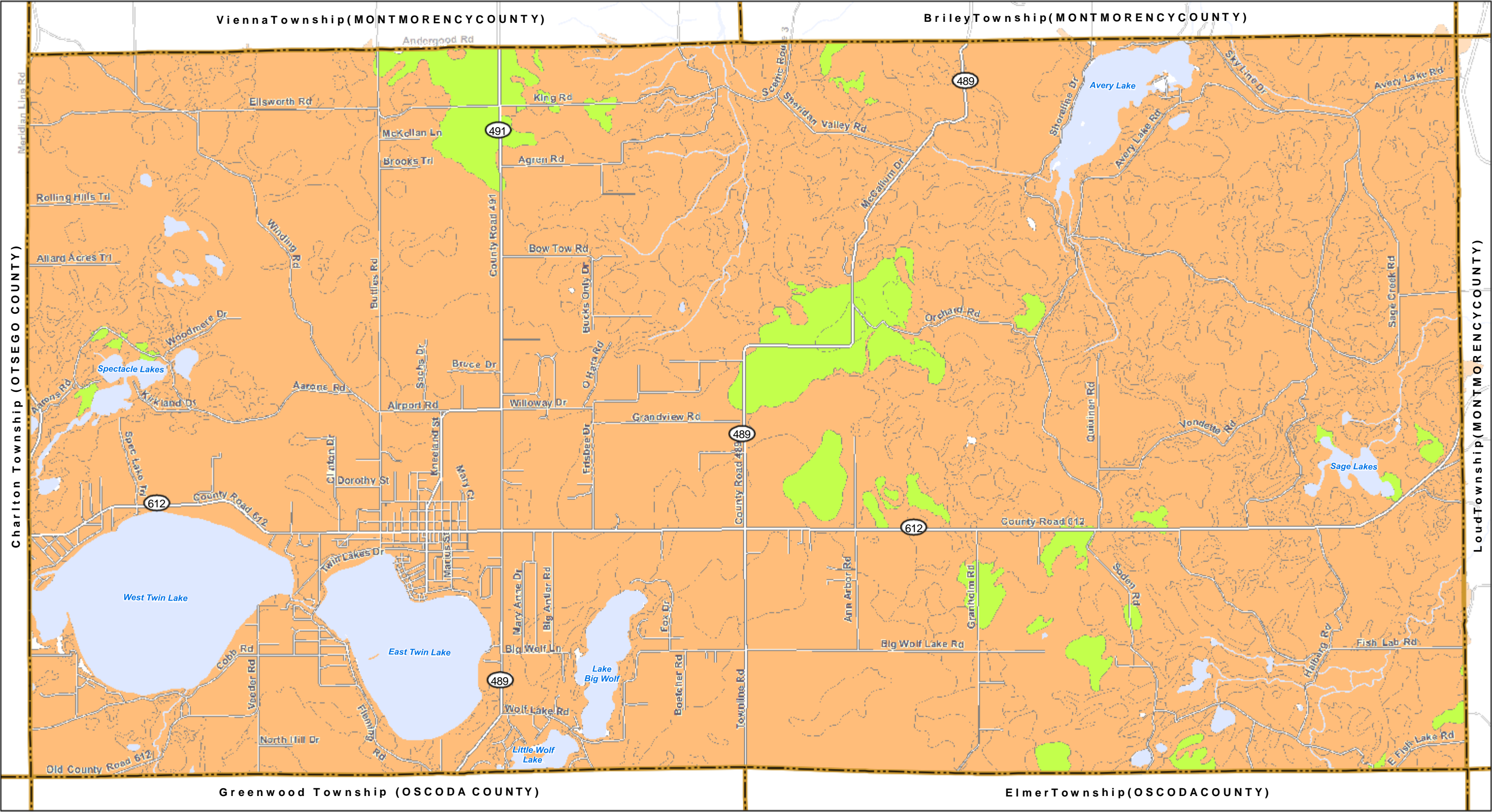
The land in the Township is not considered prime farmland; however some areas are classified as "farmland of local importance." Some smaller areas are classified as farmland of local importance in the eastern part of the Township, but many of these are located within the Mackinaw or Au Sable State Forests and therefore are not open to farming. Agriculture is not a major land use or employer in Albert Township.

Soils in the Township are generally sandy. Sandy soils warm up quickly in spring (allowing seedlings a good start) and they are much easier to dig than clay-based soils. Sandy soil is very good for growing root vegetables (such as potatoes, carrots and parsnips). Asparagus and strawberries are other crops that grow well in sandy soils.







The designations on 5 are not intended to be the sole determinant when making zoning decisions. Specifically, the designation "Not Prime Farmland" is based on USDA data and does not indicate that agriculture should be prohibited by zoning in those areas. Cultivation of appropriate crops within the Township is encouraged by this Plan.

Map 3: Farmland Classification

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Map 5
Farmland Classification
Albert Township

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|-------------------|
|  | Farmland of Local Importance |  | County Road |
|  | Not Prime Farmland |  | Local Road |
|  | Surface Water |  | Township Boundary |

Base Source: Michigan Geographic Framework,
Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 8a.
Data Source: USDA National Resources Conservation Service, 11/30/11

SOILS

The USDA National Resources Conservation Service and the National Cooperative Soil Survey report soils information for Montmorency County. The USDA groups soils into “associations,” which are areas with distinctive proportional patterns of soils.

Overall, forty-three different soil associations are located in Albert Township. The Menominee loamy sand (95D), Lindquist sand (147B), Klacking sand (307B) Millersburg loamy sand (362B &D), Morganlake loamy sand (393B & 399D) , Menominee Bamfield, sandy substratum Blue Lake (399D) and Morganlake-Ossineke, sandy substratum Blue Lake (424B & 424C) are considered suitable for agriculture, specifically crop land and pastures. The location of the six major soil associations is shown on , and each grouping is described as follows:

Millersburg-Klacking-Horsehead Association

Millersburg-Klacking-Horsehead soils are found in areas ranging from level to very hilly. It is sandy and drains well. It has some limitations for septic fields, especially at grades over 15% and can therefore create drinking water problems for sites in hilly areas. It is also inadvisable to build dwellings on this soil where grades are 15% or greater. Dwellings can be built on flatter land. The eastern portion of the Township is Millersburg-Klacking-Horsehead soil.

Grayling Association

Grayling soils are found mainly in flatter areas, and drains extremely well due to high sand content. They are not appropriate for septic fields because of limited filtering capacity. Dwellings can be built on this soil at slopes less than 15%. The southwestern portion of the Township, south of the Twin Lakes, is Grayling Association soil.

Graycalm-Horsehead Association

Graycalm-Horsehead soils are located in flatter areas. They are rarely appropriate for septic fields due to poor filtering. Dwellings should not be built on more than 15% grade on Graycalm-Horsehead soils. The western and central parts of the Township, including the Lewiston area, are Graycalm-Horsehead Association soils.

Bamfield-Menominee-Lupton Association

Bamfield-Menominee-Lupton soils are found with a variety of slope and drainage characteristics. They are unstable and can therefore be very poor for construction even on flat land and should not be used for septic fields. Bamfield-Menominee-Lupton soils can be found in the center of the Township along County Road 489.

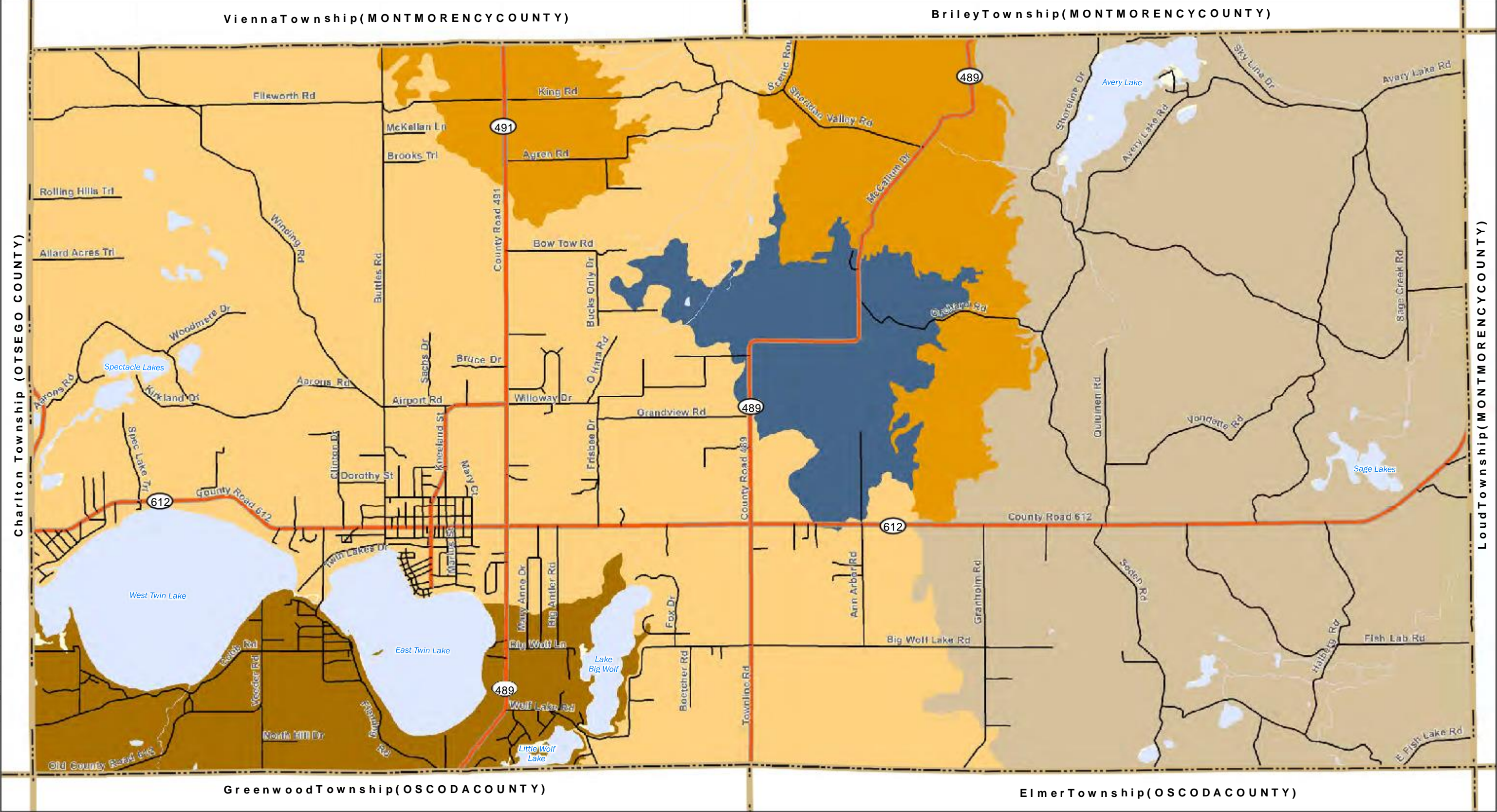
Mancelona-Millersburg-Blue Lake Association

Mancelona-Millersburg-Blue Lake soils can be found on any slope. They drain well and can be used for septic fields at grades under 15%. Dwellings can be safely built at grades less than 15%. Mancelona-Millersburg-Blue Lake soils can be found in the north-central part of the Township, along both County Road 489 and County Road 491.

Map 4: Soils Associations

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Map 6
Soils Associations

Albert Township
Montmorency County, Michigan

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| Millersburg-Klackung Horsehead Association | County Road |
| Grayling Association | Local Road |
| Graycalm-Horsehead Association | Township Boundary |
| Bamfield-Menominee-Lupton and Similar Associations | Surface Water |
| Mancelona-Millersburg-Blue Lake Association | |

Base Source: Michigan Geographic Framework,
Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 8a.
Data Source: USDA National Resources Conservation Service, 11/30/11

July 29, 2014

LAKES AND WATER RESOURCES

Albert Township is known for its inland lakes. There are over a dozen lakes completely or partially within the Township boundaries. The largest lakes are West Twin Lake (1330 acres) and East Twin Lake (974 acres), in the southwest part of the Township near the unincorporated village of Lewiston. Just east of the Twin Lakes are Big Wolf Lake and Little Wolf Lake. Little Wolf Lake is partially within Albert Township and partially within Oscoda County's Greenwood Township.

Sage Lake is on the far eastern edge of the Township, and Avery Lake is in the northeastern part near the Briley Township line. East, West and Middle Fish Lakes, Fuller Lake and Marshall Pond are in the southeast corner of the Township. The "Spectacle Lakes" are on the far western edge of the Township. And in the northwestern corner of the Township, Shoepack, Hidden, Crystal, Little Crystal, and McMullen Lake form a chain of attractive small lakes.

Albert Township is in the watersheds of two rivers. The western portion of the Township, including the Lewiston area, is in the Au Sable River watershed. Streams in this part of the Township flow south toward the source of the Au Sable, which is near Mio. The river then flows east/southeast to Lake Huron.

The eastern portion of the Township is in the Thunder Bay River watershed. Streams in this part of the Township flow toward Fletcher Pond in Alpena County's Green Township. Fletcher Pond is connected to the Thunder Bay River system, which flows into Lake Huron at Alpena. Because both the Au Sable and the Thunder Bay Rivers flow into Lake Huron, the entirety of Albert Township is within the Lake Huron watershed.



The lakes within the Township are currently healthy and are assets for the community. Recreational activities on the lakes may include fishing, boating, swimming, and water sports.

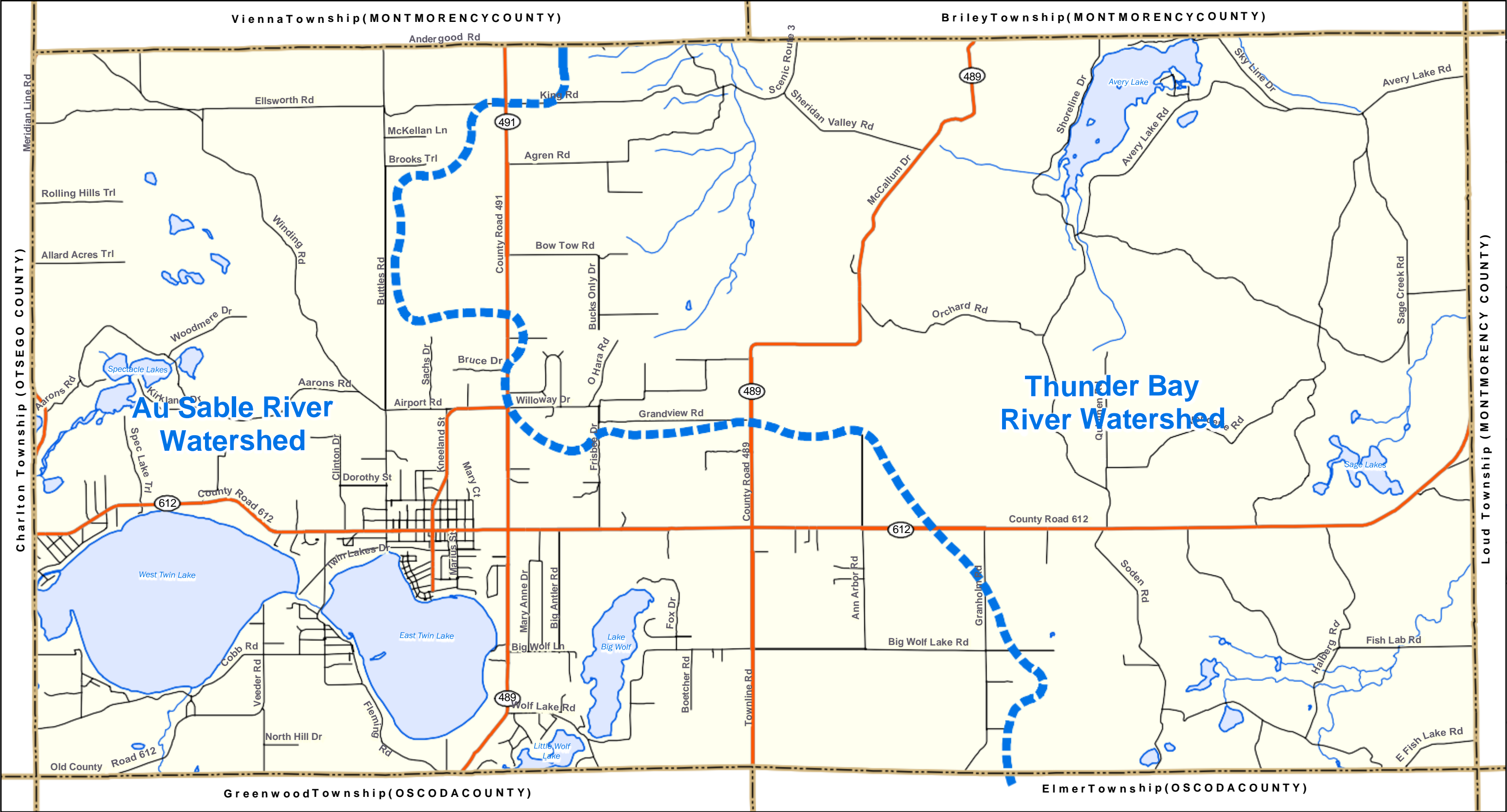
Septic leakage is a concern for all lakes. Albert Township residents volunteer to take water samples bi-annually (every spring and fall) at East and West Twin Lakes, and have done so since 1990. These samples are submitted to the State of Michigan's Department of Environmental Quality Lake Water Quality Assessment Monitoring Program. Reports are received back at the end of each year reporting on the quality of the water. All reports have been excellent since the 1990's.



Map 5: Watersheds

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Map 7
Watersheds

Albert Township
Montmorency County, Michigan

- County Road
- Local Road
- Township Boundary
- Surface Water

Base Source: Michigan Geographic Framework,
Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 8a.
Data Source: USDA National Resources Conservation Service, 11/30/11

October 8, 2012

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McKenna
ASSOCIATES

WOODLANDS/STATE FORESTS

Two large sections of Albert Township are within Michigan State Forests. The two forests are Mackinaw State Forest and Au Sable State Forest. Mackinaw State Forest includes swaths of land in northeastern Michigan, generally north of M-72 and east of I-75. Au Sable State Forest lands are generally south of Mackinaw lands.

Most of the eastern half of Albert Township is within one state forest or the other. The northeastern quarter of the community, including the area around Avery Lake, is in Mackinaw State Forest, while part of the southeastern region of the Township, near County Road 489, is in the Au Sable Forest. There is also a portion of Mackinaw land in the northwestern corner of the Township.

All in all, about 49% of the Township, or 23,000 acres, is State-protected forest land. The extent of the State Forest land within Albert Township is shown on Map 6.

The amount of State Forest land limits the development and tax base potential of some parts of the community, especially in the eastern half of the Township. Nevertheless, because the preservation goals of the State align with those of the community, the loss of potentially developable land is not a concern at this time.

The State of Michigan has indicated that it will be reducing its land inventory in the near future. Depending on the location of the land, the sale of State land could be an opportunity for additional development or a potential threat to natural preservation – or both. The Township will need to keep in close contact with the State regarding any land that will leave State control in order to ensure that both the preservation and development goals of the community are advanced.

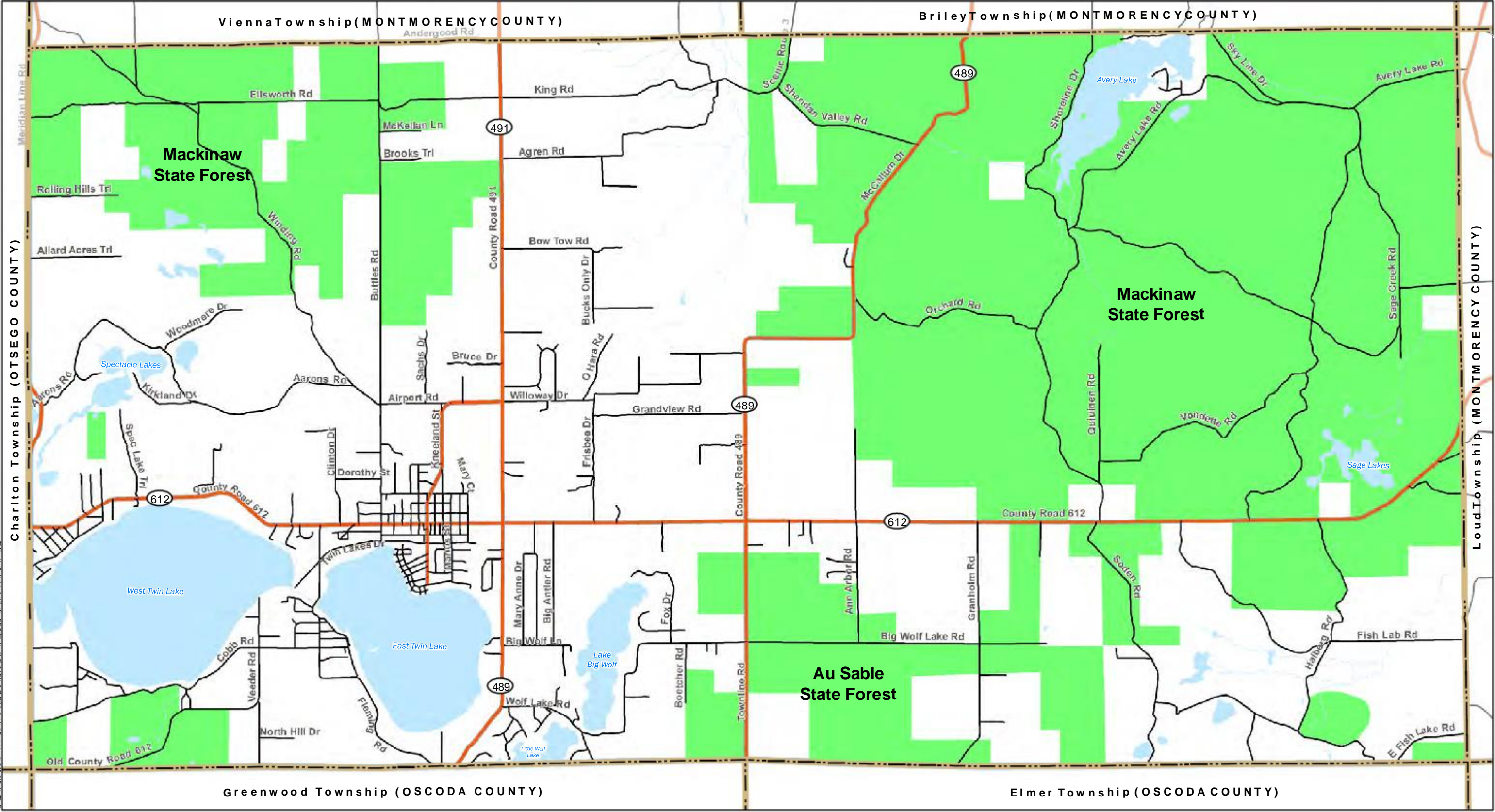
Even in areas not protected as State Forests, much of Albert Township is wooded. The most common species of trees within the forests are birch, pine, and oak. Sugar maples can also be found.

The natural beauty of the forests has drawn residents to the community (both permanent and seasonal) for decades. The pristine forests are an asset and Albert Township has and will continue to leverage them for economic development purposes.

Map 6: State Forest Land

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Map 8
State Forest Land

Albert Township
Montmorency County, Michigan

- County Road
- Local Road
- Township Boundary
- Surface Water

Base Source: Michigan Geographic Framework,
Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 8a.
Data Source: NEMCOG, 2006 and

July 29, 2014

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McKenna ASSOCIATES

WETLANDS

Wetland areas are home to unique ecosystems and are important in keeping Michigan's water system clean because they filter out waste and chemicals, both naturally occurring and man-made. Wetlands are regulated by the State and development within them is discouraged.

Albert Township is not heavily covered by wetlands, but there are some significant wet areas within the community. There are wetlands surrounding many of the lakes, including both Twin Lakes near the Lewiston community, although these particular wetlands are not large.

The largest wetlands in the Township are near Sage Lake and Avery Lake, and in the southeastern corner. There are very large wetlands immediately across the border in Loud Township, meaning that these areas adjacent to Albert are unlikely to experience development.

Map 7: Wetlands

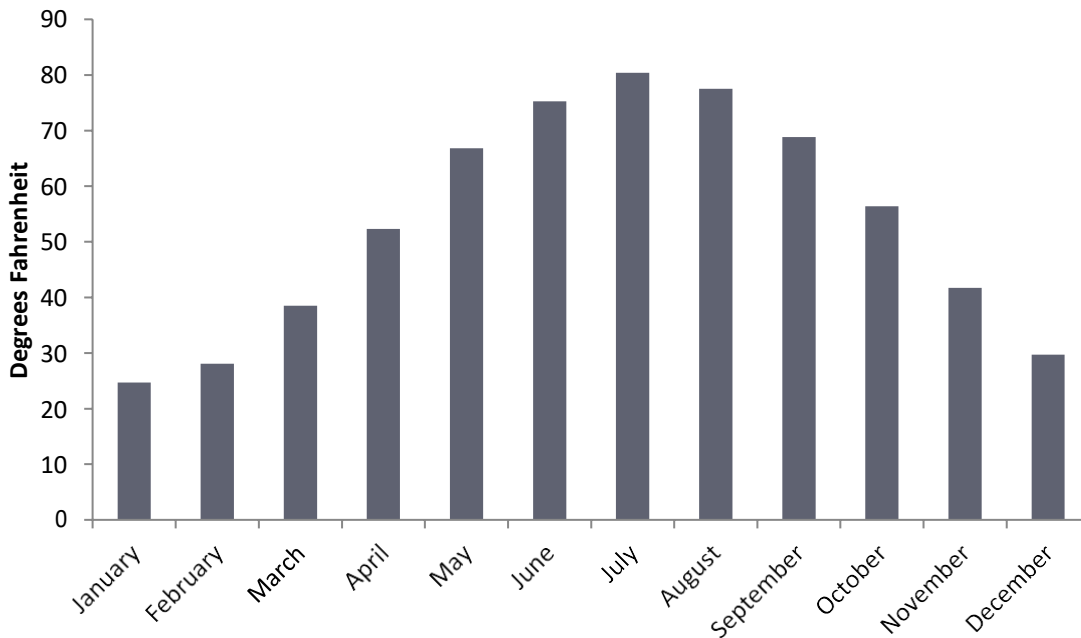
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CLIMATE

Albert Township's climate is similar to that of most of Northern Michigan. The winters are long and cold, but the summers are mild and pleasant. The average high temperature in January is 24.7 degrees Fahrenheit, while the average high temperature in July is 86.4 degrees Fahrenheit. The Township averages about 23 days per year with a temperature below 0 Fahrenheit.

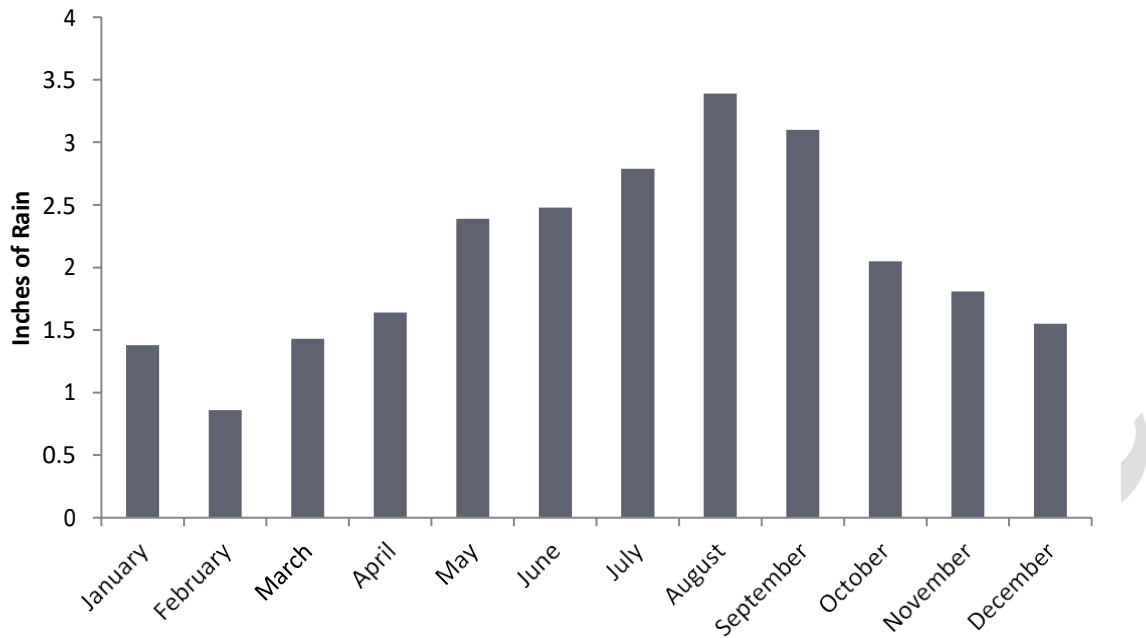
The Township is located about 60 miles inland from Lake Huron and 100 miles inland from Lake Michigan, so the moderating impact of the lakes is smaller than in some coastal communities.

Figure 3.2: Average High Temperature per Month, Montmorency County



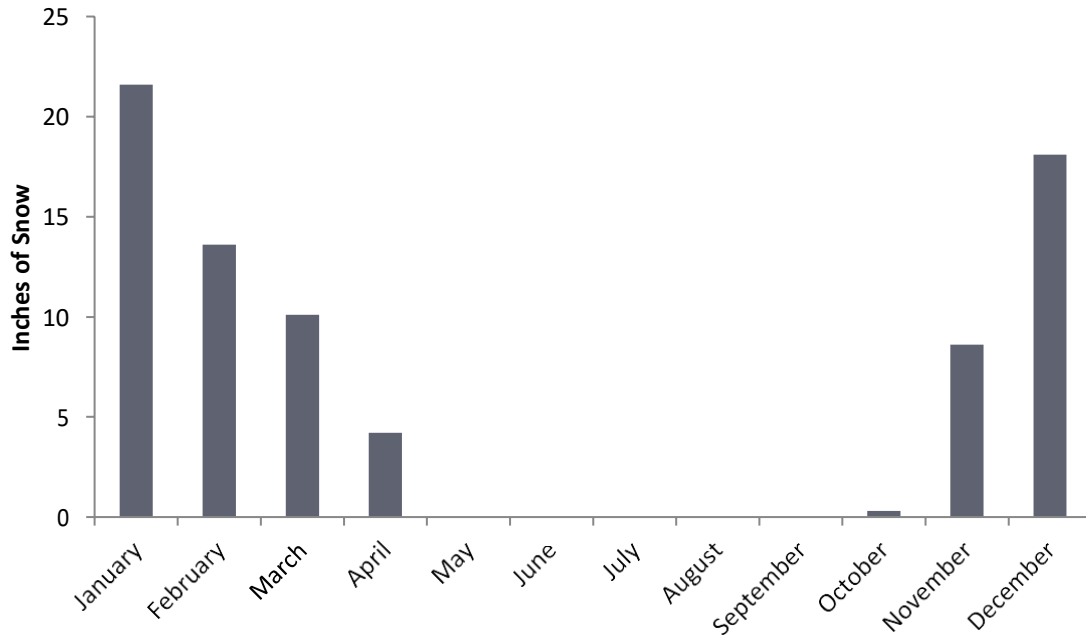
Source: Montmorency County

Figure 3.3: Average Rainfall per Month, Montmorency County



Source: Montmorency County

Figure 3.4: Average Snowfall per Month, Montmorency County



Source: Montmorency County

NATURAL FEATURES CONCLUSIONS

Albert Township is filled with beautiful natural landscapes. Its woodlands, lakes, and rolling hills attract tourists, seasonal residents, and year-round residents. Protection of these natural amenities should be the goal in most of the Township. There is little development pressure on the Township, and most of the community is not prime farmland.

However, as development occurs, protecting natural resources will be crucial. Therefore, development should be limited to areas surrounding the already developed portions of the community (around the Lewiston area and surrounding the lakes).

Natural features that are accessible to the public while retaining their character and ecosystems will contribute to a more sustainable community – both environmentally and economically. The beautiful countryside is one of Albert's biggest draws, and it can and should be preserved for future generations.



H. COMMERCIAL ASSETS

INTRODUCTION

One of Albert Township's strengths is Lewiston's status as a retail and jobs center for the surrounding region, including people from Albert Township, as well as surrounding communities such as Briley, Vienna, Charlton, Greenwood, and Elmer townships. Even residents of communities like Johannesburg and Atlanta drive to Lewiston's merchants for goods that they cannot find closer to home.

Even with such a broad base of customers Albert Township faces issues of vacancy and underdevelopment in its main retail areas, downtown Lewiston, and the County Road 612 Corridor. Less vacancy in a commercial area means more vibrancy, which in turn attracts more businesses. Albert Township strives to achieve this virtuous cycle, while maintaining the rural/small town character of the community.

This section will analyze the market in the unincorporated village of Lewiston and the Township at large. The goal of this section is to provide a baseline of the commercial assets available in Albert Township.

TRADE AREA AND EXISTING BUSINESSES

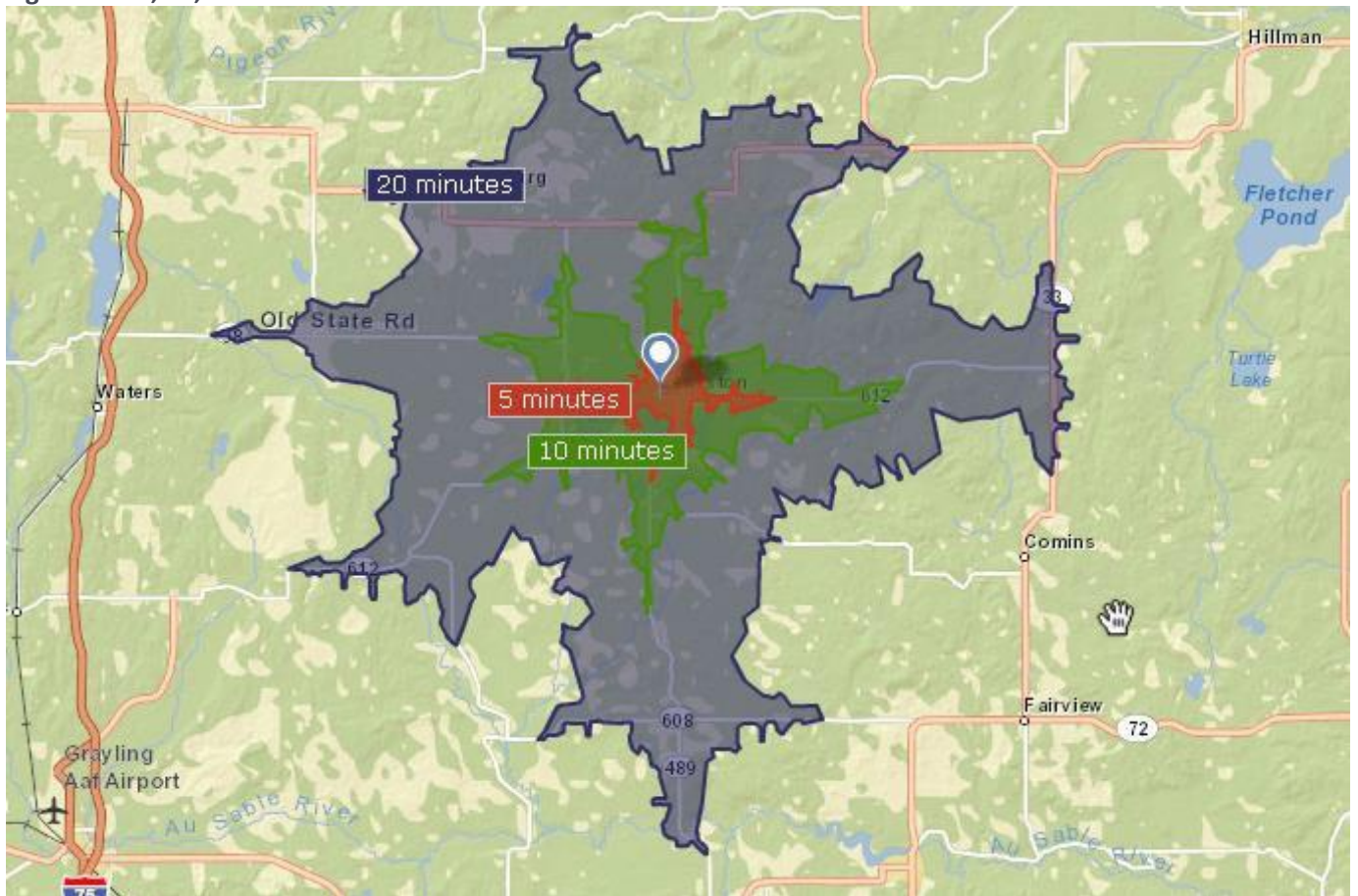
The Lewiston area is the commercial center for a broad area of Montmorency, Crawford, Otsego, and Oscoda Counties because it has a large retail presence – larger than the population of the community would suggest. There is little retail in the surrounding areas, so shopping, dining, and many services are concentrated in the Lewiston community.

Customers for Lewiston businesses come approximately from the three "rings" surrounding the community. The first ring, within a five minute drive, covers the core Lewiston area, but does not reach much of West Twin Lake or the south shore of East Twin Lake. The second ring, within a 10 minute drive, covers the entire greater Lewiston community, plus a significant distance down major roads such as County Road 612, County Road 489, and County Road 491. The third ring, within a 20 minute drive, covers all of Albert Township and stretches to Johannesburg, Lovells, Garland Golf Course, and M-33.

Each ring adds more customers for Lewiston businesses, but the farther away a customer is located from the center, the more likely he or she is to shop in other communities. Beyond a 20 minute drive, most people opt to shop in the larger centers of Gaylord, Grayling, or Alpena. Still, within the 20 minute boundary, the most convenient retail is in Lewiston and large majority of demand is satisfied there.

The areas covered by 5, 10, and 20-minute drives are shown in Figure 4.1 They will form the basis of the market study.

Figure 4.1: 5, 10, and 20 Minute Drives from Lewiston



Source: ESRI Business Analyst 2012

As Table 4.1 shows, the vast majority of retail businesses in Albert Township are concentrated along County Road 612.

Table 4.1: Albert Township Business Mix

Category	Downtown Lewiston	County Road 612 Corridor	Remainder of Township	Total
Building Services	5	6	7	19
Office/Service	5	7	1	13
Auto Repair	1	5	0	6
Gifts/Souvenirs	6	2	0	8
Hardware/Home Goods	1	1	0	2
Restaurant/Bar	6	4	1	11
Specialty Food/Ice Cream	2	1	0	3
Hair Salon	2	0	2	4
Entertainment/Sports	1	2	2	5
Music Store	0	0	0	0
Farmers Market	1	2	0	3
Fitness Center	1	0	0	1
Funeral Home	1	0	0	1
Medical Office	0	4	0	4
Auto Parts	0	1	0	1
Gas Station	0	3	0	3
Hotel/Motel/Cottage Rental	1	2	1	4
Bank	0	1	1	2
Laundromat	0	0	1	1
Recreational Equipment (Boats, ATVs, etc)	0	2	1	3
Pharmacy	0	0	1	1
Grocery	0	1	1	2
Lawn Care/Snow Removal	0	2	3	5
Insurance	0	1	0	1
Second-Hand Merchandise	1	2	1	4
Private Clubs	1	2	6	9
Pet Services	0	0	0	0
Total	35	51	29	115

J. CONCLUSIONS

DEMAND FOR NEW ESTABLISHMENTS

Based on **Table 4.1.**, although significant population growth could cause significant increases in demand, those increases may not be enough to create demand for additional businesses in most categories. New retail development will not come simply out of businesses recognizing unmet demand for their products. This means that an enterprising entrepreneur could find success in filling multiple niches in the retail market. Therefore, a business that sells books and other media, while also offering coffee and sandwiches, could be successful in capitalizing on the demand in many areas.

Additionally, the **demographics suggest there may be more demand for Health and Personal Care Stores.** An older population demands additional health and personal products. Table 4.1 show the availability of a new pharmacy, medical supplies store, or personal care store with possible expansion in services with an aging population.

On the other hand, the **demographic realities in Albert Township may suggest that demand for certain products is actually lower.** Because much of the community's population is retired or living in the Township seasonally, the demand for "big ticket items" such as automobiles, furniture, and electronics, may be reduced. Many Township residents have pre-existing relationships with retailers outside the community or even the region and still make their major purchases that way.

CREATING ADDITIONAL DEMAND

Additional demand can be created through aggressive marketing, community events, and recreational improvements that will draw more customers to the Lewiston community. The Township's natural beauty, quality of life and strong sense of community tend to attract entrepreneurial individuals unafraid to risk new ventures, and technical and demographic shifts increase their opportunities for success. Technological and demographic trends favor rural entrepreneurship and small business development. For example, the extension of high speed internet services throughout many rural areas is opening up opportunities for expansion of the knowledge workforce into small towns.

Further, **the Lewiston community is already considered the retail center of a large geographic area** - at least a 20 minute drive around downtown Lewiston. By capitalizing on its status, Lewiston can increase the number of residents, visitors, seasonal residents, and businesses. Once the additional residents and jobs are in place, then additional retail can be supported.

The public's growing preference to buy and produce "local" can be an important driver for the Township's economy. This includes the expanding local foods movement, as well as efforts to better facilitate neighborhood and local shopping. The emphasis on local foods is creating opportunities for agri-tourism and small-scale production, distribution and retail ventures.

Similarly, while Chambers of Commerce have long touted "shop local" campaigns, a catchy slogan and a window placard are not enough anymore. Innovative programs designed to increase the level of engagement between local shop owners and customers, such as printing their own local currency and adopting the Main Street Four Point Approach, are among the many ways to encourage buying local.

The Township and the DDA should consider adopting the above and similar strategies going forward.



PURE LEWISTON – THE ALBERT TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

K. VISION

The purpose of the Albert Township Master Plan is to inform and guide Township officials, residents, and land and businesses owners in making future decisions regarding land use, infrastructure, the natural environment, and all other choices that will impact the future of the community. These decisions should be consistent with the overall vision for the community. The results of the preceding profiles and analyses, along with the community visioning and survey input, have been utilized to create the following vision statements. Recognizing that the Township Planning Commission is responsible for determining land use policies, with the opportunity for public, special interest group and elected official participation during the planning processes and prior to the adoption of the Plan, the following statements encompass the Township's values and desires.

- To build upon the existing tight-knit community, its rich natural beauty and small town charm, and preserve and maintain Albert Township as a welcoming community to live, do business in and travel to.
- To maintain a cohesive community of individuals with a strong affection for the Township and desire to work together and promote the interests of the community at large rather than the interests of individuals or special groups within the community.
- To provide for the needs of all segments of the population – young and old, full time and part time resident and visitor, business people and others.
- To promote expanded economic investment in the Township, enhancing the Township's desirability as a place for business success and creating well-paying jobs for current and future residents.
- To preserve natural features necessary to sustain a quality environment.
- To bring professional and technical knowledge to bear when making decisions regarding extending necessary public infrastructure.

- To promote the general health, safety, and welfare of the community by making it more self-sustaining, functional, attractive, and supportive of the residential, business, recreational and civic activities that comprise Albert Township.
- To create a more vibrant, economically viable, attractive, and walkable Lewiston community.
- To recognize that Albert Township has a relationship with Montmorency County and the region, and to coordinate land use, infrastructure, transportation, and natural features policies with those other entities where the impacts extend beyond the Township's boundaries.

L. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The above vision statements describe the overall policy for land use decisions in the Township. Based on them, the following goals and objectives were defined.

Goals are broad descriptions based on community desires for the future. Goals are long-term ends toward which programs or actions are directed. Objectives are specific and measurable intermediate ends that are achievable and make progress toward achieving the goals. As a consequence, objectives contribute toward accomplishing the community's vision.

PROTECT WHO WE ARE

Goal 1 – NEIGHBORHOODS: Preserve the up-north character and charm of the Township's residential neighborhoods, particularly around the lakes and in the unincorporated village of Lewiston area, while enhancing the quality of life for residents throughout the community.

- 1.1 New residential development and redevelopment should respect and preserve the building patterns and neighborhood fabric of the Township.
- 1.2 Encourage the provision of amenities such as neighborhood parks, open space, and/or other community facilities with new development and in planned locations.
- 1.3 Infill and redevelopment of residential parcels within existing neighborhoods should be encouraged.
- 1.4 Encourage and incentivize retrofitting of older buildings-to improve quality of living for all township residents.
- 1.5 Create non-motorized trails to interconnect neighborhoods, the business district, community facilities and parks.
- 1.6 Apply standards for quality housing for all residents in the community and provide opportunities for well-planned, safe and attractive development in designated areas consistent with the planned and established character of the community.

Goal 2 – PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Ensure on-going community planning and the implementation of these Master Plan recommendations.

- 2.1 Encourage implementation of the Master Plan through all sectors of Township operations, including land use and development with particular consideration given to the input received from the public.
- 2.2 Continue to educate and reach out to the community on planning and development issues.
- 2.3 Cooperate with nearby communities through the exchange of information on development and redevelopment issues and other shared interests, such as community facilities and services, and development along shared boundaries.
- 2.4 Review and update the Master Plan at least every five years to address changing conditions, redevelopment opportunities, and the changing needs of the community.
- 2.5 Review and update the zoning ordinance and other development controls to be compatible with the recommendations of this Plan.
- 2.6 Prepare a Capital Improvements Plan as a master schedule for incremental improvements to Township facilities and services, and how to fund them.

Goal 3 – Environmental: A wealth of natural features exists within Albert Township and should be protected for the enjoyment and use of future generations. As future development occurs within Albert Township, this development should be done in a manner that enhances these sensitive natural features and promotes their enjoyment by residents and visitors alike long into the future. Protecting sensitive natural features of the community in recognition that those are some of the defining elements of Albert Township that make it a unique location where woodlands, lakes and beaches blend with quaint, small town character.

- 3.1 Enrich and expand natural habitats in parks and other dedicated areas throughout the community. Provide areas dedicated to both preservation as well as for use and enjoyment.
- 3.2 Provide standards and flexibility to guide the use of sustainable practices such as renewable energy resources, composting, rain barrels, low-impact development storm water management, and green design.
- 3.3 Buffer roadsides to protect scenic routes and provide views of corridors.
- 3.4 Improve the ecosystems of the lakes through the Twin Lakes Property Owners Association habitat program
- 3.5 Encourage methods to preserve existing farmland, such as the transfer or purchase of development rights, and promoting the growth of specialty crops and orchards.
- 3.6 Limit lake front commercial uses to areas currently in that category and locations where the result and traffic, noise and other off-site impacts will not harm the environment or predominant single family character of the vicinity.

ECONOMIC SENSE OF PLACE

To ensure the continued vitality of the community, Albert Township must maintain and enhance the quality of life in the community and enrich the social welfare of all residents.

Goal 4– COMMUNITY CHARACTER & INTERACTION: Create an environment and provide opportunities that encourage positive interaction and collaboration among residents and visitors to Albert Township Through improvements and new uses, set Albert Township apart from the other communities in Montmorency County and the region as a great place to live, do business and visit.

- 4.1 Create a brand (i.e., logo, font, theme, slogan – central message that people will immediately identify with the Lewiston community and with Albert Township) for the community to use in marketing itself to current and prospective residents, and for use with future development and community improvements. Revise website and social media to incorporate the same brand information and message.
- 4.2 Improve the wayfinding system in Albert Township, especially in the downtown area and industrial areas, and add identification markers to brand the community.
- 4.3 Work with businesses and services to make Albert Township less of a seasonal community and provide services and amenities to residents and visitors year-round.
- 4.4 Create community facilities that attract businesses and people and make them want to settle in Albert Township.
- 4.5 Promote and market cohesively the assets and events in Albert Township to attract visitors and new residents/businesses to the community. Identify and support a designated responsible entity with resources to do the promotion.
- 4.6 Utilize and maintain existing infrastructure, amenities, and facilities, as well as natural features and resources to maintain the character of the community.
- 4.7 Work with other communities in the region to market the Township to a broader audience, as well as to provide enhanced connections between the region and metropolitan areas in order to encourage longer visits, increase ease of commuting, and improve wireless and broadband communication and ability to telecommute.
- 4.8 Develop a feasible multi-use community facility or hall within the downtown core that would be suitable for receptions, banquets, and rental purposes, or used for the Farmers Market.
- 4.9 Continue to host and market community events in the downtown that bring people to town and build community spirit.
- 4.10 Create “entryway” or “archway” for motorized traffic and non-motorized traffic to showcase “Main Street”.

LEVERAGE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Goal 5 – RETAIL/SERVICE: Infill and redevelop existing retail areas and corridors and ensure that new development is done with appropriately sized and attractively designed retail, service, and entertainment establishments.

- 5.1 Encourage the redevelopment of the downtown area through infrastructure, redesign of “Main Street,” and planned streetscape improvements.
- 5.2 Improve the signage, and wayfinding to direct visitors to area businesses.
- 5.3 Concentrate new business development in the core downtown, while allowing the redevelopment of vacant commercial structures in order to maintain the rural character of parts of the Township outside the Downtown area.
- 5.4 Market retail space for both stores that provide local conveniences and to stores that appeal to visitors.
- 5.5 Identify and support the provision of adequate utilities to sustain business development in the Township, particularly the downtown area and industrial park.

Goal 6 – INDUSTRIAL: Promote well-located, planned, attractive and diverse industrial development, including improving the vitality of the existing industrial areas, to create necessary jobs and tax base for the Township.

- 6.1 Provide the infrastructure to support expansion and modernization of the industrial park and the businesses in it.
- 6.2 Promote and encourage a diversified industrial base by acknowledging the changing economy and permitting the conversion of existing heavy and land-extensive or extractive industrial areas to business, office, or related uses.
- 6.3 Promote appropriately planned and diverse industrial development, such as light industry, medical research, alternative energy, technical consulting, bio-technology and life-sciences, computer design, engineering, and homeland security and defense. Development should reflect the rural character of Albert Township through the use of landscaping and natural features preservation.

Goal 7 – DOWNTOWN: Future development in Albert Township, Lewiston shall respect the traditional character and fabric of the community, especially its downtown core, while expanding the vitality and range of services available.

- 7.1 Encourage businesses to provide services and amenities to residents year-round, and to identify niches that can be financially successful in Lewiston.
- 7.2 Create an economic identity for downtown and, through the DDA, continue its long-term economic and physical revitalization program.

- 7.3 Work with DDA to establish programs for beautification, streetscape, and branding projects along the “Main Street” corridor.
- 7.4 New development and redevelopment in the downtown area should fit with the regional and/or diverse historic character of the district and add continuity, including design standards, setbacks, and consistent landscaping.
- 7.5 The unincorporated village of Lewiston should be marketed to visitors and residents as an all-season destination for commerce and recreation.
- 7.6 Consider regulatory incentives and design guidelines that will promote aesthetically desirable improvements to existing structures.
- 7.7 Promote locally owned businesses and provide support to keep them in town and successful.
- 7.8 Coordinate the efforts of the DDA, local business owners, and other related organizations to market community businesses, inform residents of local businesses, recruit businesses to fill vacancies, and address upkeep and maintenance of the downtown.

Goal 8 - Economic Development: Future development in Albert Township shall provide increased economic and employment opportunities for the current and future generations. Provide opportunities for appropriately sited and attractively designed retail, service, and industrial development at appropriate locations within the community.

- 8.1 Create opportunities that will increase employment opportunities in the community and increase the tax base without negatively impacting the surroundings and residents.
- 8.2 Work with regional economic development agencies to attract new companies and businesses to Albert Township.
- 8.3 Encourage and facilitate coordination and division of labor as appropriate, between the Chamber of Commerce, the DDA, the Township, and other agencies for the most effective economic development program.
- 8.4 For future public street projects, encourage placement of broadband components for future expansion of broadband infrastructure.
- 8.5 Provide reasonable and flexible zoning mechanisms that allow and encourage property owners and tenants to upgrade existing commercial and industrial sites.
- 8.6 Concentrate industrial development near similar existing uses to protect established residential neighborhoods and utilize existing infrastructure and services.
- 8.7 Expand the industrial park along County Road 491 and encourage development of combined research and office parks in a campus-type setting, along with the small industrial operations most likely to locate in the Township.

- 8.8 Develop a community garden in the Township to provide a location for residents to participate in home-grown food opportunities.
- 8.9 Provide a permanent, established location that is enclosed for the Farmers Market and promote its continued growth and development.
- 8.10 Explore, and if practical, implement connections with regional specialty food sales opportunities in Northern Michigan. Work with MSU Cooperative Extension to identify potential crops and specialty foods as agricultural opportunities for Albert Township.
- 8.11 Promote local-owned businesses.
- 8.12 Incentivize and encourage young professionals and young families to stay in Albert Township.
- 8.13 Encourage private sector provision of greater recycling opportunities, trash pick-up, and proper disposal of hazardous waste.

REINVEST IN OURSELVES

Goal 9— TRANSPORTATION: Encourage a safe, efficient, and well-maintained transportation network in the Township that supports motorized and non-motorized transportation alternatives for a higher quality of life, provides for the safe and efficient movement of goods and persons throughout the community, and is appropriately sized and designed for the master planned land uses.

- 9.1 Coordinate with the County Road Commission to achieve the Township's priorities for needed road improvements within and connecting to the Township.
- 9.2 Work with the County Road Commission, State and possible consultant toward the adoption and implementation of the Northern Michigan Regional Non-Motorized Transportation Plan incorporating Albert Township.
- 9.3 Pursue strategies to require access management and traffic calming through the Zoning Ordinance and coordination with the Montmorency County Road Commission. Reduce curb cuts on heavily traveled roads.
- 9.4 Develop joint use of the road shoulders for bicycles and other non-motorized travel.
- 9.5 Support Complete Streets practices and policies, encouraging the roads in the Township to form a comprehensive and integrated transportation network, promoting safe, equitable and convenient mobility for all potential users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motor vehicle operators, and people of all ages and abilities, while preserving flexibility, recognizing the community context, and using appropriate guidelines and standards. Include non-motorized transportation facilities – such as sidewalks and bike lanes – as component in all future street projects.

- 9.6 Provide for the construction and on-going maintenance of sidewalks, pedestrian paths, bike lanes and trails in order to: provide safe routes for pedestrians, runners, cyclists, children and the elderly; link neighborhoods with amenities, services and public facilities; and promote recreation while creating enhanced access to the natural beauty of the community.
- 9.7 Ensure adequate parking is provided in efficient locations to support continued development in the downtown, with signage provided to direct vehicles to public parking spaces.
- 9.8 Prepare a Non-Motorized Pathways Plan for Albert Township, considering options for the joint use pathways on snowmobile trails, designation of pathways, and implementation of the Northeast Michigan Regional Non-Motorized Plan projects within Albert Township.

Goal 10 – INFRASTRUCTURE: Provide for adequate public services and amenities to enhance the quality of life of Township citizens. Promote a comprehensive public utility network that supports the current population and provide future improvements in locations best suited for development.

- 10.1 Work with utility companies to bury utility lines and require future utility lines to be underground.
- 10.2 Continue to evaluate whether and where sanitary sewer may be needed/desirable and consider alternatives for funding construction to encourage safe, orderly development and protect ground and freshwater quality.
- 10.3 Develop a plan for greater recycling opportunities and expand services to include trash pick-up.
- 10.4 Continue to evaluate whether and where expansions to the public water system may be feasible and consider funding alternatives to provide safe, clean water to the residents in the Lewiston community area and other relatively densely populated parts of the Township.
- 10.5 Evaluate existing coverage and work with cellular and internet providers to locate additional communication devices. Consider building a cell tower in the Township to attract providers of wireless service.

M. FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Plan (see Map 8) is the culmination of months of effort by the Planning Commission, Township Board, Township Administration, and the citizens of Albert Township. Based on a comprehensive planning process, the Plan serves as a guide for the community's vision of the next 10 to 15 years. It is based on an analysis of land use issues facing the Township, existing uses and conditions, demographic and housing statistics, physical constraints and resources, community infrastructure, circulation patterns, the community visioning session, and the goals and objectives set forth by the community. Through land use planning and land use controls, the Township intends to ensure that existing urban, forest, open space, and recreational land uses can continue; those irreplaceable natural resources such as water, wetlands, and forestlands will be protected; and that reasonable growth appropriate for the population can be accomplished with minimal land use conflicts or negative environmental impacts.

In order for the Plan to function most effectively, it has been crafted to be both flexible and general. A variety of possibilities for future development have been left open, and the land use proposals identified on the Plan map should be considered generalized areas for development which do not necessarily follow current property lines or assign specific sites. This Future Land Use Plan constitutes the development policy of the Township, and as the Township grows, the Plan should be updated to address how the growth has impacted the infrastructure and existing conditions.

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

The land use categories are graphically displayed on Map 8 and are described in this section of the Master Plan. The amount of land dedicated to each use on the Future Land Use Plan is summarized below in Table 7.1. The elected and appointed officials of Albert Township will be responsible for the interpretation of the intent of the Future Land Use Map and the land use categories.

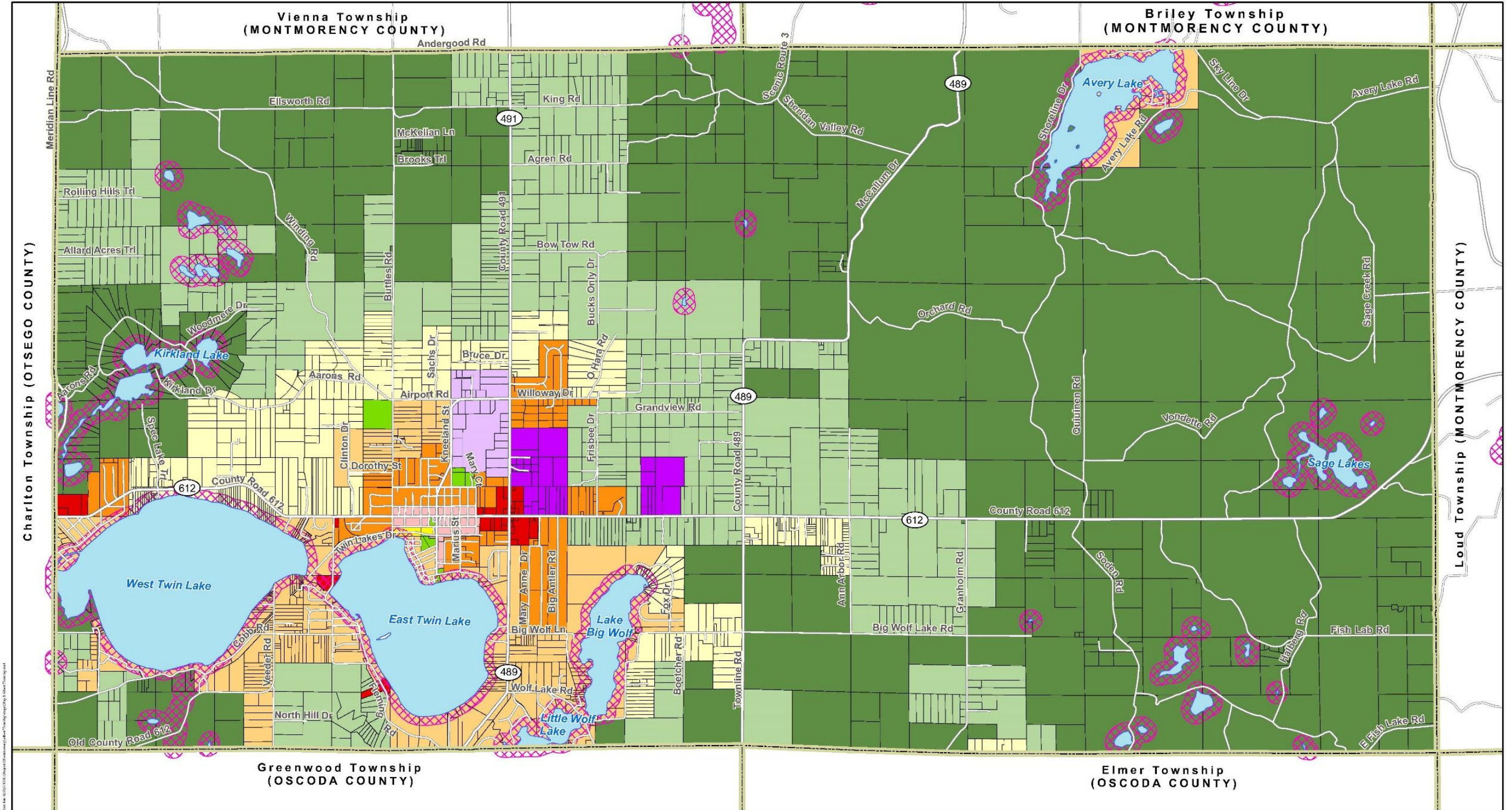
Table 7.1: Future Land Use Categories

Land Use Category	Area (Acres)	Area (%)
Recreation/Conservation (RC)	26,438.18	58.8%
Agriculture/Forest Residential (AF)	8,753.63	19.5%
Low Density Residential (R-1)	2,599.61	5.8%
Medium Density Residential (R-2)	2,292.21	5.1%
Mixed Residential (MR)	732.85	1.6%
Village Residential (VR)	321.17	0.7%
Village Center (VC)	134.04	0.3%
General Commercial (C-V)	120.17	0.3%
Light Industrial/Research (OR)	280.81	0.6%
General Industrial (I)	219.87	0.5%
Parks and Public Spaces (PP)	56.97	0.1%
Water	3,041.42	6.7%
TOTAL	44,990.93	

Source: McKenna Associates Computation

Map 8: Future Land Use

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Map 10 Future Land Use

Albert Township
Montmorency County, Michigan

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| Low Density Residential (R-1) | General Commercial (CV) | Park and Public Spaces (PP) |
| Medium Density Residential (R-2) | General Industrial (I) | Lake |
| Mixed Residential (MR) | Light Industrial/Research (OR) | Greenbelt Overlay |
| Village Residential (VR) | Agriculture/Forest Residential (AF) | |
| Village Center (VC) | Recreation/Conservation (RC) | |

Base Source: NEMCOG, 2006 and Michigan Geographic Framework,
Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 8a.
Parcel lines are most recent available from NEMCOG and do not
include all lots and subdivisions.
Data Source: McKenna Associates, 2014

August 2021 Draft

0 2,000 4,000 FEET



The intent of each of the Future Land Use categories displayed on Map 8 is described below. While these categories are related to those identified in previous Master Plans, they have been modified and updated to account for the evolution of the community.

This Plan recognizes that some existing parcels in each Future Land Use area may be less than recommended minimum lot size for that category. The Plan recommendations in no way intend to restrict the construction of new residences or continued residential use of those existing parcels.

Recreation/Conservation (RC)

Albert Township's water resources, natural assets, and state forest lands make it a desirable place to live and play. Preserving these resources is important to attracting and retaining residents. Private lands with extensive wetlands or steep slopes as identified on the previous Future Land Use Plan remain designated within the Recreation/Conservation category in this Plan. The Plan encourages the establishment and maintenance of contiguous natural reserve areas, river setbacks, wetlands, scenic areas, forestry, and wildlife habitat.

The Recreation/Conservation areas present severe limitations for development and are proposed for very limited future development in keeping with their fragility, for this reason, a very low housing density of one dwelling unit per 20 acres is anticipated. Under special circumstances, to protect sensitive areas and possibly subject to special approval, one dwelling unit per ten acres could be permitted. Also, to protect sensitive areas, clustering of housing at an overall density of one unit per 10 acres may be permitted.

The primary uses intended in the Recreation/Conservation category are outdoor recreation uses, such as hunting, fishing, hiking, skiing, camping, and similar uses. This Plan recognizes that the Township cannot regulate the location of gas and oil wells, however this Plan intends that those resource extraction facilities that are not exempt by State law will be regulated by the Township Zoning Ordinance to ensure that negative impacts on neighboring residential or environmental preservation areas are precluded.

Agriculture/Forest Residential (AF)

The Agriculture/Forest Residential category includes private forests and lands in a natural state, primarily used for hunting, open space recreation, and forestry. Lands in this category are encouraged to be retained and managed for their value as forest and open spaces, since such uses have economic value and contribute to the scenic and rural character valued by the Township's residents. The Agriculture/Forest Residential category is intended for larger lot developments that can accommodate agricultural pursuits and support the natural environment of the Township. Farm activities should respect wetlands and woodlands – extensive clearing is discouraged.

Agriculture/Forest Residential would permit development of a slightly higher intensity than is permitted in the planned Recreation/Conservation category. The minimum lot area for Agriculture/Forest Residential is anticipated to be ten acres, with a housing density of one unit per 10 acres. Under special circumstances, to protect and preserve privately held forestlands, subject to Special Approval, clustering of housing at an overall density of one dwelling unit per five acres may be considered.

Low Density Residential (R-1)

The Low Density Residential category is designed to accommodate single family dwellings at a maximum density of one unit per two acres. Land developed consistent with this Future Land Use category will not have public water or sanitary sewer available. Low Density Residential areas are primarily located on roads with light traffic. The large residential lots invite country-oriented subdivision developments. These uses should

be buffered from incompatible uses such as industrial operations, with landscaping, open space, transitions of use, or other physical separations. Open space and clustering of development should be encouraged to help protect environmentally sensitive areas and natural features.

Medium Density Residential (R-2)

The Medium Density Residential category is primarily designed to accommodate single family dwellings on small lots ranging from 20,000 square feet to roughly two acres. This category is intended to preserve existing residential development where land has already been subdivided into smaller lots and to expand specific areas for future residential growth adjacent to the unincorporated village of Lewiston. Other uses such as home occupations, bed and breakfast facilities, and churches may also be allowed if designed to be compatible with the residential setting and any non-residential off-site impacts mitigated.

Mixed Residential (MR)

The Mixed Residential category is designed to accommodate single family dwellings on small lots ranging from 12,000 square feet to 20,000 square feet. It is highly recommended that this area have public infrastructure developed, e.g. water and sewer systems, to accommodate for higher densities. Higher residential uses such as apartments, townhouses, condominiums, convalescent or nursing homes, mobile homes, and manufactured home developments would be permitted uses. Community uses such as parks, churches, schools, libraries, or cemeteries, in addition to home occupations and bed and breakfast facilities, may be allowed subject to special approval.

Village Residential (VR)

The Village Residential category reflects the generally higher density and grid system pattern of lots in the unincorporated village of Lewiston. This category is intended to foster single family residential neighborhoods in a traditional pattern, and to create a walkable network along the streets and blocks that surround the core of the unincorporated village. The Village Residential category anticipates the provision of public water and sanitary sewer in the future. Lot sizes are planned to range from approximately 8,500 to 12,000 square feet.

Village Residential is also designed to accommodate higher density residential uses, especially housing for retirees and seniors. Currently, there are limited opportunities for older Albert Township residents who wish to down-size and stay in the community, with access to services to support their continued independence and the amenities that they desire. One logical place for housing to serve that portion of the population would be in the Lewiston core, where services and amenities are nearby/in walking distance, and housing typologies such as attached single family units or townhouses would better fit in with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Through careful planning, new residential development and rehabilitation of older homes can occur in such a way as to enhance the Village Residential district instead of detracting from the overall character of the area. Lot sizes and permitted densities should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis based on the character of the development, the capacity of infrastructure, and the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

In some locations, especially on the north side of the Lewiston community, large rights-of-way have resulted in existing homes that are non-conforming with regard to required front setbacks, even though the distance between the front of the building and the pavement of the road is not undersized. It is the recommendation of this Plan that the Zoning Ordinance be amended to provide for these situations (See Section D of this chapter).

In the Pine Beach subdivision, many lots are less than the Zoning Ordinance's 8,500 square foot threshold. It is the intent of this Master Plan that non-conforming lots in the Pine Beach area should be combined over time into lots of conforming size.

Village Center (VC)

The Village Center category is intended to preserve the area defined as “downtown” Lewiston, and to expand that pattern of zero lot line development, pedestrian oriented amenities, and multi-use buildings to some adjacent areas to create a coherent “downtown” area.

The purpose of this district is to encourage traditional, pedestrian-friendly, local service character with an established “downtown.” Village Center is designed to encourage and promote local commercial uses, traditional “downtown” entertainment and social uses, and development of new buildings that ensure the desired character of the area. The Albert Township DDA district encompasses much of the Village Center area. Compatibility and context sensitive design are of the utmost importance in this district.

The use of standards that are unique to “downtown” regarding building facades, form and mass of buildings in relation to each other, scale, setbacks, and orientation, as well as for design, parking, accessory uses, signage, lighting, and screening, will encourage the “downtown” to develop a character that is complementary to, and compatible with, existing development. Emphasis on connectivity between this area and surrounding areas, especially those north of County Road 612, should be an important element.

In previous Master Plans, this category has been called “Village Commercial.” The Village Center is the downtown core, including the Township Hall, State Police substation, library, the park and other significant public and institutional facilities. It is the intent of this plan to also permit some residential uses in the downtown. Examples of permitted residential uses would be upper-floor apartments located above retail businesses, or townhouse-style buildings that are compatible with the existing character of the district. Commercial businesses intended for this category include service, professional, and retail businesses that encourage foot traffic and do not require large parking lots. Parking should be shared in public lots or on-street. The minimum lot size should be 8,500 to 12,000 square feet.

General Commercial (CV)

The General Commercial category includes existing commercial development and envisions a wider range of commercial activity that is oriented to serving the region or area-wide needs. The types of uses found within this district are traditionally dependent on major roads. Recommended uses include a wide variety of retail, auto-oriented, and service businesses located along those thoroughfares, especially those that generate heavy vehicular traffic or require large parking lots. The minimum lot size should be 12,000 square feet.

This Plan recognizes that a few existing commercial businesses operate in locations surrounded by non-commercial uses. The Future Land Use map identifies these, and the Plan in no way intends to infringe upon the continued operation of these isolated uses, but neither should these uses and locations be considered the basis for commercial expansion.

Light Industrial/Research (OR)

The Light Industrial/Research future land use category is designed for light industrial uses, those uses that are considered “clean” industry of a pleasant and nuisance-free character. The physical appearance of these facilities is usually characterized by landscaped front yards, ample side yards, attractive buildings, an overall neat, clean, and unobtrusive appearance with minimal to no open storage. These developments must comply with strict industrial performance standards to reduce noise, vibration, smoke, heat, glare, waste noxious odors, or other adverse environmental effects. The light industrial areas serve as a transition between non-

industrial and heavy industrial areas. The uses most appropriate in this district include warehousing, research and development, industrial flex space, associated office uses, and quasi-retail sales. Such uses often include higher percentages of office space, and have fewer negative impacts on neighboring properties than do traditional general industrial uses. This category also includes large scale office uses that do not fit within the Village Center or General Commercial categories. High-tech and research uses are encouraged. The planned minimum lot size is 2.5 acres, except within the industrial park, where it is 1.25 acres.

General Industrial (I)

The General Industrial category includes manufacturing facilities that process raw materials and similar heavier assembly and industrial operations. The uses most appropriate in this classification are facilities where raw and semi-finished materials are fabricated, manufactured, and warehoused. The primary location for these uses is where infrastructure is available and there is proximate access to highway transportation routes via paved roads. The minimum lot size is 2.5 acres. Industrial operations should be subject to performance standards to regulate and reduce their potential negative impacts on the surrounding community, especially residential areas.

Parks and Public Spaces (PP)

Albert Township has a variety of outdoor recreation spaces, municipal buildings, and civic properties. The Public Library has a mini-park used by patrons and library programs such as Children's Story Hour. There are four neighborhood parks providing areas for playgrounds, picnicking, tennis courts, and field games, in addition to the Lewiston K-6 School Park with a playground, soccer field, and basketball courts. There are regional parks operated by the State of Michigan, a linear park for cross country skiing, and the historic CCC Camp Lunden is a Special Use Facility. The parks are an integral part of the community. Township Administration offices, the Public Library, and municipal services such as the transfer site, cemeteries, fire department, and EMSI, and the maintenance area are existing facilities accommodating current government services.

This district is intended to protect public parks, municipal buildings, and civic properties and institutions from the encroachment of other uses, and to ensure compatibility with adjoining residential land uses. These areas are considered to be held in trust for the community.

Planned Residential Development (RD)

Single-family detached homes have historically been the most predominant type of residential development within the Township. The Planned Residential future land use category is designed to accommodate a wide variety of residential developments which would be unique in project design and consistent with the particular characteristics of a site as well as the surrounding community.

The Planned Residential district would allow for innovation and creativity in development of the special features of the site, which could include the location and types of structures, a mix of densities, allowances for housing serving a range of incomes, and conservation of energy. In addition, developments within this district are encouraged to embrace the environmental assets located on property to preserve open space, wetlands, woodlands, and topographies. Planned Residential lands may integrate attached units, townhouses, live/work units, or senior facilities. Non-residential uses such as parks, schools, and churches may also be integrated into planned residential projects.

Lot sizes and densities within the Planned Residential district would vary based on the constraints of the property and ability to develop a quality project that is compatible with the surrounding community. Each individual development would be unique and require review and approval by the Township.

The Planned Residential district is not shown on the Future Land Use map. It is the intent of this Master Plan that Planned Residential Developments be permitted (where appropriate) through an approval process to be described in an upcoming addition to the Zoning Ordinance.

Greenbelt Overlay (GB)

The quality of the lakes and streams in Albert Township create the most desirable residential areas. To preserve these important resources, it is the intent of the Greenbelt Overlay to establish reasonable standards and controls for the management of these environmental assets, while still allowing residential development to occur. Lot sizes, setbacks, and lot coverage restrictions will need to be developed in an effort to preserve these resources. In addition, criteria will need to be established to help landowners understand what natural assets are to be protected and the extent of preservation that is expected on the property.

The Greenbelt Overlay shall extend 400 feet from the water's edge or ordinary high water, where designated on the Future Land Use Map. The Greenbelt Overlay district is to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Avoidance of excessive structural encroachment on the waters and waterways.
2. Maintenance of high water quality by encouraging natural vegetation strips along waterfronts to filter out nutrients and sediment for surface run-off, keep pollutants from entering the waters, prevent erosion, and help maintain cool water temperatures through shading.
3. Protection of the natural environment of streams and lakes for wildlife habitat purposes and preservation, to the extent possible, of natural waterfront landscapes.
4. Promotion of the general welfare of the Township by protecting water quality, ground water resources, public health, property values, recreational values, riparian rights, and safeguarding against flooding.

MANUFACTURED HOUSING PARKS

Although manufactured housing is not specifically planned in any particular district, it is the policy of this Plan to permit manufactured housing using the following standards:

- Any new or expanded manufactured home park shall be located on or near a major thoroughfare for access to community services and facilities.
- Any new or expanded manufactured home park shall be located to minimize the negative impacts on single family residential development, a vital component of the Township's tax base.
- The Township encourages manufactured home parks to locate near existing manufactured home parks where adequate access, services, screening, and buffering are already provided.
- Adequate lands are planned for manufactured home parks to give choice in location.
- Any new or expanded manufactured home park shall be located to minimize the impact on environmentally sensitive areas.

- The Township will base its decision to accept manufactured home parks on a fair-share and balanced allocation of affordable housing for the community.

N. ZONING PLAN

A Zoning Plan is required by the Michigan Planning and Zoning Enabling Acts. Section 33(d) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended, requires that the Master Plan prepared under that act shall serve as the basis for the community's Zoning Plan. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006, as amended, requires a Zoning Plan to be prepared as the basis for the zoning ordinance. The Zoning Plan must be based on an inventory of conditions pertinent to zoning in the municipality and the purposes for which zoning may be adopted (as described in Section 201 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act). The Zoning Plan identifies the zoning districts and their purposes, as well as the basic standards proposed to control the height, area, bulk, location, and use of buildings and premises in the Township. These matters are regulated by the specific provisions in the Zoning Ordinance.

The Zoning Plan is a key implementation tool to achieve the vision of the Master Plan. In order to realize that vision, the Township must ensure that ordinances and regulations permit the type and style of development recommended by the Master Plan.

This section outlines the Zoning Plan for the Township. The zoning districts in the Township are described and their relationship to the Master Plan discussed along with recommended changes to the Zoning Ordinance to integrate new land use designations.

Districts and Dimensional Standards

There are 9 zoning districts in the Township, each of which is described in the current Zoning Ordinance, which describes uses permitted in each district. In addition, the Zoning Ordinance's schedule of lot, yard, and area requirements defines specific area, height, and bulk requirements for structures in each zoning district. The Zoning Map is also a part of the Zoning Ordinance and illustrates the distribution of the defined zoning districts throughout the Township.

Relationship to the Master Plan

This Master Plan establishes the vision, goals, objectives, and policies for growth and development in Albert Township for approximately the next twenty years. It includes a specific strategy for managing growth and change in land uses and infrastructure over this period, and, as required by statute, will be periodically reviewed, and updated at least once each five years. This section, along with the rest of the Master Plan, is intended to generally guide future changes to the Albert Township Zoning Ordinance.

The following is a list of proposed Master Plan land use designations and their corresponding zoning district. Not all of the Master Plan's future land use categories will match up with the current location or regulations of the zoning district that they most closely correspond to. Recommended revisions to the Zoning Ordinance are discussed below.

<u>Master Plan Future Land Use Designation</u>	<u>Zoning District</u>
Recreation/Conservation	RC*
Agriculture/Forest Residential	AF*
Low Density Residential	R-1
Medium Density Residential	R-2
Mixed Residential	<i>New Zoning District (MR)</i>
Village Residential	<i>New Zoning District (VR)</i>
Village Center	<i>CP (revised)</i>
General Commercial	CV
Light Industrial/Research	<i>New Zoning District (OR)</i>
General Industrial	I
Parks and Public Spaces	<i>New Zoning District (PP)</i>
Planned Residential Development	<i>New Approval Process (No Specific District)</i>
Greenbelt Overlay	<i>Greenbelt (revised)</i>
<i>No Category</i>	MHP, E

Recreation/Conservation – This land use category is designed to incorporate the protected natural areas of the Township. The existing RR zoning district also strives for this goal, although the boundaries of the existing district would have to be amended to be consistent with the Future Land Use map. Additionally, the RR district should be renamed RC (Recreation/Conservation) to better reflect the purpose of the district.

Agriculture/Forest Residential – This land use category is designed to incorporate areas of the Township where preservation is important, but low impact residential development and recreational use is appropriate. The existing FR zoning district also strives for this goal, although the boundaries of the existing district would have to be amended to be consistent with the Future Land Use map. Additionally, it should be renamed AF (Agriculture/Forest Residential) to better reflect its purpose.

Low Density Residential – This land use category envisions lower density and lower impact residential development on the outskirts of the Lewiston community. The existing R-1 zoning category also envisions this type of development and is appropriate, although some boundary adjustments may be necessary, as shown on the Future Land Use map.

Medium Density Residential – This land use category covers some residential areas near the Lewiston community, adjacent to the lakes, and in areas where additional residential development may occur adjacent to either the unincorporated village or along a major thoroughfare such as County Road 612. The existing R-2 zoning category is appropriate for this type of development, with some boundary adjustments suggested on the Future Land Use map.

Mixed Residential – This land use category covers areas on the edges of the Lewiston community, generally where residential development has already occurred. A new zoning category called MR (Mixed Residential) should be created to accommodate the vision of the Future Land Use Plan for this category.

Village Residential – This land use category is the vision for the residential portion of the unincorporated Village of Lewiston. A new zoning district (VR – Village Residential) would have to be created, although it would likely be similar to the existing R-2 zoning district, but with some key differences:

First, due to large rights-of-way within the Lewiston community, many homeowners find themselves technically non-conforming with regard to the front setback of their house, even though there is plenty of yard space between their front door and the pavement. The new district should permit smaller front setbacks within the Lewiston community in order to relieve this burden from residents.

Second, the district should allow townhouses and other walkable, dense housing typologies to permit retirees to live within the core without having to maintain a full-size yard. These typologies will also allow a smooth transition into the downtown area along Kneeland Street and other corridors.

Third, it is the intent of this Master Plan for the non-conforming lots in the Pine Beach area to be combined over time into lots of conforming size. Larger lots and lower density would prevent run-off and septic seepage problems that could threaten the lake quality in that area. However, the character of the neighborhood, with short blocks and a walkable connection to the lakefront for nearby residents, fits the vision for the Village Residential category.

Village Center – This land use category is the vision for what downtown Lewiston could one day become – a vibrant mixed use district with residential, cultural, and recreational uses to go along with retail. While the CP zoning classification is generally appropriate, it should be revised to incorporate a broader range of uses (including residential) and additional design-based standards to create an attractive and vibrant community center.

General Commercial – The General Commercial land use category provides for automobile-based and large-format retail, such as can now be found along County Road 612, especially near the intersection with County Roads 489/491. The existing CV zoning classification is appropriate for this type of development, but its geographical parameters should be reduced to an area immediately around the intersection, with the section of County Road 612 near downtown Lewiston zoned to be consistent with the downtown character.

Light Industrial/Research – The Light Industrial/Research category covers the existing industrial park and the former airport. Most of this land is currently zoned Industrial. A new zoning classification (OR – Office/Research) would have to be created to restrict the uses to certain low-impact or high-tech industrial operations as well as offices.

General Industrial – The General Industrial land use category covers the industrial uses east of County Road 491, with additional adjacent land for industrial expansion. The existing I zoning designation is appropriate for these uses. Changes in the regulations of these uses will likely be minimal, if needed at all, although boundary adjustments will be needed to accommodate the new OR district.

Parks and Public Spaces – This Plan envisions that the Township’s parks and public facilities will remain community assets for the life of this Plan. Therefore, a new zoning district should be created to ensure that the existing public facilities remain open to the public for the foreseeable future. This district would be known as PP (Parks and Public Spaces).

Planned Residential Development – Planned Residential Developments allow a community to have flexibility in approvals and greater control over the design of new neighborhoods. An approval process for Planned Residential Developments should be crafted and added to the Zoning Ordinance to allow for this type of development to occur in the Township in appropriate areas.

Greenbelt Overlay - The Greenbelt Overlay extends 400 feet from the water’s edge or ordinary high water mark of certain lakes and waterways in the Township. The intent of this district is to achieve the same goals as the current greenbelt zoning overlay. However, it is the intent of this Plan that the current greenbelt overlay be evaluated for effectiveness and revised as necessary.

O. SUSTAINABILITY

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION

Albert Township is a naturally beautiful area. The community's dense forests, rolling hills, and scenic lakes are treasures that should be preserved for future generations. For this reason, conservation of natural resources and the protection of natural areas are among the most important sustainability goals for the Township.

The current Township Zoning Map sets aside approximately one half of the Township for natural conservation. Many of these areas are already under the control of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, which assists in the conservation efforts, however control by the State is not an absolute assurance that the land will remain protected. Decreasing revenues and increased demands on State financial resources are causing the State to sell off some of its holdings or to otherwise put the land to use. The Township should consider the possible reuse/development of some State land and address it.



The Future Land Use Map (Map 10) designates additional land for natural resource protection. These new locations were added specifically because they are already sensitive ecosystems (such as wetlands), are far from existing infrastructure, and offer natural beauty. The uses permitted in these areas would be limited, requiring large lots and minimal impact on the natural environment. In some cases, these areas could be opened to recreation through the installation of trails, but no other infrastructure improvements would be made in these areas.

Natural conservation is also important outside of the designated protected areas. New zoning regulations and improved enforcement of existing ordinances could help slow deforestation, preserve the lake levels and water quality (and the ecosystem within the lakes), and maintain the enjoyment of the Township's natural features for all residents. Specifically, special care must be taken to preserve the shorelines of the lakes and to retain the wooded nature of many residential lots outside the Lewiston village area.

Also, the lakes themselves must be preserved and protected. Grant money can be procured to help protect the lakes, improve shorelines, and maintain the ecosystems.

WATER AND SEPTIC SYSTEMS

Sewers and septic systems are a significant public consideration in Lewiston. Currently, the only area of the Township that has public water service is downtown Lewiston, where a small system serves approximately 20 parcels. There is no public sewer in the Township.

The lack of public water and sewer systems has led to several problems. The redevelopment of the former Ames grocery site in downtown Lewiston has been stalled due in part to its deficient septic field, and residents of the Lewiston village area face large costs to maintain their private septic systems. Dense, village character development cannot occur without public sanitary sewer or a shared system.

But the biggest concerns with the septic systems in the Township are infiltration to the lakes, failing or inadequate systems and nonpoint source pollution. The lots surrounding the lakes frequently have aging septic systems, built under outdated standards, and seepage is a problem, causing high bacteria levels and excessive growth of plants and algae in the lakes. The surface and groundwater contamination ultimately can create health hazards, which in turn negatively impact the economic potential and desirability of the community.

The solutions to these problems are difficult. Additional public water or the introduction of a public sewer system could mitigate the issues, but those are expensive alternatives and, while many parts of the community would benefit from the system, financial constraints mean the system would have to be built incrementally.

A more practical short-term solution would be to step up enforcement of septic maintenance while pursuing grants to help homeowners update their systems. This incentive method could mitigate the issues without a large cost to taxpayers.



CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES

The United States Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program certifies new construction and renovations as environmentally sustainable. The organization uses checklists of building techniques to grade construction projects and assign "Silver," "Gold," or "Platinum" designations to them.

Due to bonuses given to urban projects, developments in rural communities like Albert Township are rarely LEED Certified, but a project does not have to have a LEED designation to have a positive impact on the environment. Even using just a few of the techniques prescribed by the Green Building Council can go a long way.

Below are a variety of construction materials, designs, and techniques that can reduce a community's environmental impact and improve its sustainability for the future. Some are expensive and technical, while others are simple, easy, and cost little-to-nothing. Picking just a few of the most feasible for a project can go

a long way in reducing the project’s environmental impact. Further, some techniques can be implemented inexpensively by homeowners if they are given the tools to execute them.

Recommended Sustainability Measures for Homes

Site Design

- Minimize Disturbed Area
- Maximize Permeable Surface
- Stormwater Management
- Density of Development

Landscaping

- Plant Trees
- Maximize Permeable Surface
- Green Roof

Water

- Rainwater Harvesting
- Stormwater Management
- “Graywater” Re-Use
- High-Efficiency Fixtures

Energy/HVAC

- Energy-Efficient Appliances
- Efficient Hot Water Distribution
- Pipe Insulation
- Combustion Venting
- Moisture Control
- Room-by-Room Controls
- Enhanced Insulation
- South-Facing Windows
- Solar Panels
- Geothermal Energy

Building Materials

- Recycled Materials
- Efficient Construction Management (reduce over-ordering)
- Environmentally-Safe Materials
- On-Site Waste Reduction

Source: U.S. Green Building Council

ENERGY CONSUMPTION

With energy costs rising, one of the most important contributors to community sustainability is conservation. There are many ways to do so, ranging from expensive and complex technology to simple, everyday solutions.

Home Energy Conservation

The simplest and easiest way to save energy at home is simply to use the heat and air conditioning less. This is easier said than done for many families, especially in Northeast Michigan winters. However, simple home remedies such as putting fans in the windows on hot days and dressing in layers on cold days can help reduce energy bills. Many families already practice these techniques as part of their everyday life.

Construction techniques can also help. Insulation and windows are important, especially for seasonal residents who leave their homes unoccupied for large portions of the year. But design elements can also be important, such as large windows, especially facing south, to allow sunlight to heat (and light) the home. Finished basements are also a useful feature, because they tend to stay cool on hot summer days.

There are also more technical and complex solutions. These are not feasible for many families, but they should not be discouraged. Green roofs not only manage storm water, they also serve to cool the home in the summer. Solar panels can dramatically reduce a family’s electricity bill and can even, in some cases, be a source of income.

Geothermal heating and cooling systems can be especially effective in rural communities, because large lots mean piping can be laid horizontally through the ground, reducing the cost as compared to the vertical systems necessary in more dense areas. Furthermore, systems have been developed that allow lake water to be used as a natural cooling agent.

Transportation

Most people use a large amount of energy in getting from place to place, and with fuel prices rising, this is increasingly becoming a budgetary strain on families, especially in communities where residents drive a long way to reach jobs, shopping, or school. For that reason, it is important for communities to be walkable and bikeable. The creation of additional walking/biking trails and non-motorized transportation options, as described elsewhere in this Plan, will allow residents of greater Lewiston to save on gas while still frequenting retail establishments and other amenities in the downtown area.

Another way that transportation resources can be saved is through improved communications technology. With better internet and wireless service, Township residents can use technology to commute, shop, and communicate, and will not have to drive as often. The installation of communications infrastructure has been a slow process in Albert Township, but the community is committed to improvements, including expanded broadband access and additional wireless telecommunication facilities (in selected areas).

HOME SUSTAINABILITY

Aside from energy conservation, there are several other ways for communities to be more sustainable. Residents can adopt these practices in their everyday lives.

One growing sustainable trend is locally-grown food. Residents can participate in this trend through gardens in their backyards, or through community gardens on vacant lots or in parks. Food grown in these gardens can help supply a family or even the community with fresh produce. Gardens are also educational, fun, and a way for community members to get to know each other. This is especially important in communities where grocery stores are far away. Even though Lewiston has a Family Fare Supermarket, (formerly Glen's Market), it is a long drive for many residents, and some residents drive to other communities for a wider selection of grocery items.

One possibility would be community gardens operated by community organizations such as the 50+ Club, the Twin Lakes Property Owners Association, or the DDA.

A large portion of garbage that goes into landfills is leftover food and other organic material. This garbage can be composted in a residential yard and used as fertilizer. Many families with gardens use this technique. Additionally, some community gardens have compost piles. However, compost piles can cause odors, so steps must be taken to avoid creating nuisances.

Another simple way for residents to make their homes more sustainable is rainwater collection. Currently, much of the Township's rain water runs off directly to the lakes. Sometimes, this water contains pollutants which could have been filtered out if the water had been absorbed by plants or soil. By collecting rain water and using it to water their gardens, residents can help protect the lakes while also reducing the usage of their wells and septic systems.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

The patterns of growth and development in a community are also a key element of sustainability. Albert Township has large areas of natural beauty and resources, while the population is relatively concentrated in the Lewiston community and surrounding the lakes. Additional development should only be encouraged within and adjacent to these existing population areas.

EDUCATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Many ways to improve community sustainability are simple, but not widely implemented because people are unaware or do not understand their benefits. Thus, education about sustainability is important. A marketing campaign explaining the impact of various practices, not only on the environment, but also on the family budget, could be effective. Setting up a community garden, with or without composting, would probably result in other people starting their own backyard gardens. The Farmers Market makes fresh, locally grown food more readily available to all income groups.



Federal grants are available for energy efficiency upgrades by homeowners and landlords. Other communities have found success with these programs. Many homeowners would like to improve the efficiency of their properties but are unable to afford the upfront costs. This is especially true of seasonal residents, who worry about the cost of heating a home that they do not live in in the winter. Grant programs can offset those costs.

Other, more complex, sustainability initiatives such as solar or wind power installations built by the Township are possible, but not economically practical in the short term. However, Albert Township can make a big difference with simple transportation improvements such as sidewalks, street lighting, and bike/walking paths.

P. DOWNTOWN LEWISTON

In 2012, the Downtown Development Authority hired Beckett & Raeder to complete a design plan (known as the “Downtown Enhancement Plan”) for downtown improvements such as streetscape, landscaping, and park improvements. The Plan also recommended locations for infill development. Figure 7.1 shows the overview of Kneeland Street and the surrounding area from that Plan.

Figure 7.1: Beckett and Raeder Downtown Enhancement Plan - Kneeland Street Detail



Positively Lewiston: The Albert Township Master Plan supports the general vision in the *Downtown Enhancement Plan*, but envisions some slight variations:

- A “boulevard” median strip along Kneeland Street could inhibit popular community festivals, such as Car Shows, the TimberFest and the Lewiston After Hours and Fall Festival, from using the road right-of-way in the fashion they have done in the past. Therefore, this plan supports bump-outs, wider sidewalks, and removable planting boxes at the edge of the roadway as methods to calm traffic and improve the pedestrian environment, rather than creating a permanent, landscaped median.
- A gateway design element is recommended for installation at the intersection of Kneeland Street and County Road 612, to further draw attention to Kneeland Street and announce that motorists have reached Downtown Lewiston.
- Decorative signage, including street signs and wayfinding signage are recommended to be installed at intersections to help “brand” the downtown area.

- Consideration should be given to locating the bicycle route along Hansen, south of County Road 612, for greater safety for users, many of whom will be children.

The DDA is making progress toward implementation of its plan, including the recent installation of street trees along County Road 612, and a community entrance sign.

Q. TRANSPORTATION

Because Montmorency County is responsible for road maintenance in Albert Township, the Township is not able to directly control road improvements. A priority of this Master Plan is to implement “traffic calming” in the core Lewiston area, specifically on County Road 612. Improvements such as curb bump outs, additional landscaping, sidewalks, and marked pedestrian crossings would improve safety along the corridor. Albert Township is committed to a rural vision of the concept of “Complete Streets.” This means creating roads that can be safely traversed by bicycles, ORVs, snowmobiles, and pedestrians, in addition to their traditional role of carrying motorized vehicles.

The DDA and the Township Board are implementing a program to expand the sidewalks. Additional locations that should be priorities for sidewalk development include the roads leading to Lewiston School, roads in the downtown Lewiston area, and continuous, safe pathways for pedestrians and bicycles around East Twin Lake and connecting Lewiston to Buttles Park. Other priority areas for sidewalks include the residential streets within the unincorporated village of Lewiston and a continuous pathway around West Twin Lake.

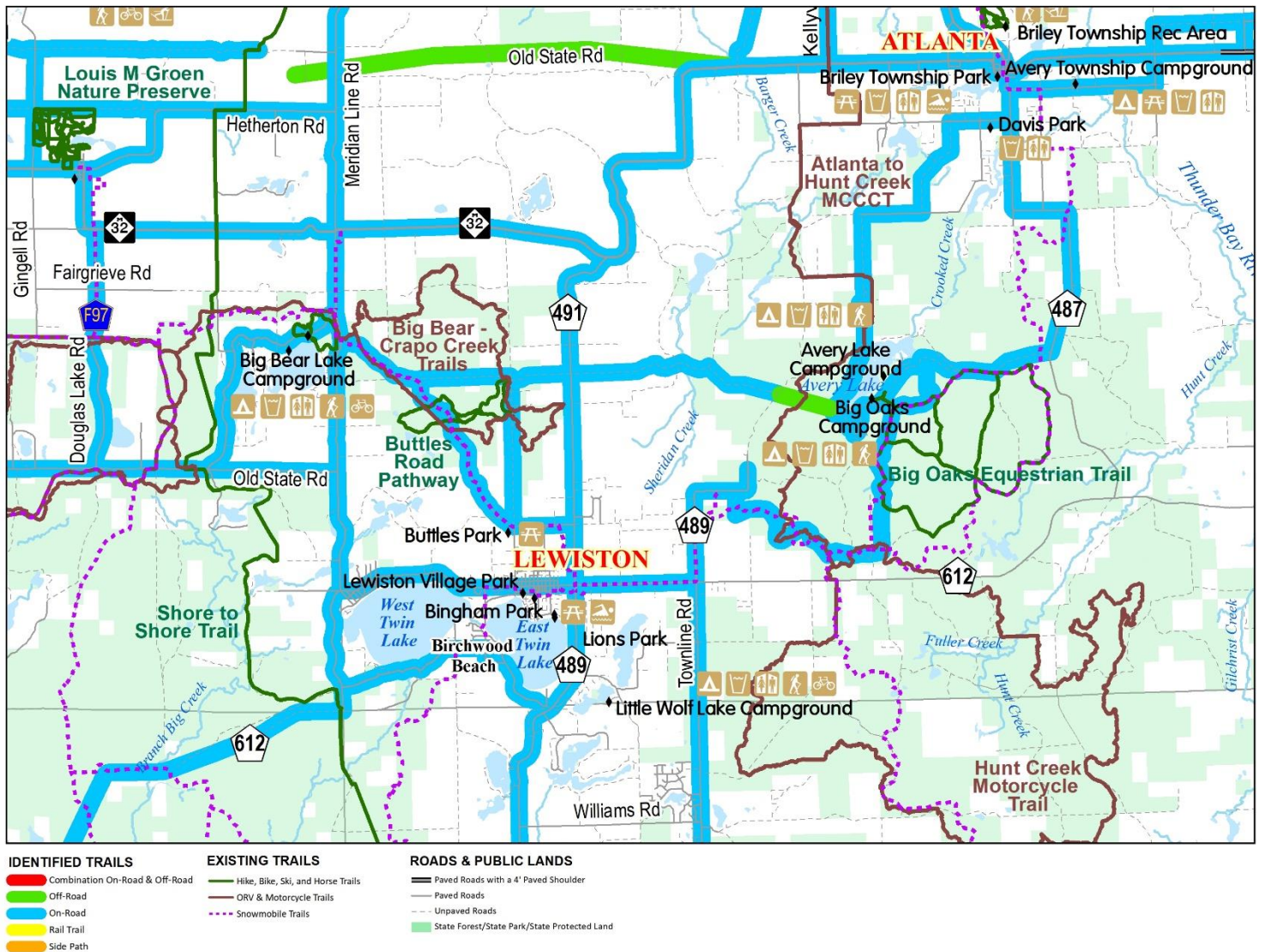
Perhaps the most important location for pedestrian improvements is the intersection of Kneeland Street and County Road 612, which is a major cross-over area for people who wish to walk between the downtown area from Lewiston School and other parts of the north side of the unincorporated village. Although this intersection has sidewalks, there are no other amenities to assist pedestrians in crossing the street. Bump-outs, painted cross walks, a pedestrian-activated traffic light/stop sign for traffic on County Road 612, or even an elevated walkway should be considered to improve the situation.

Safe pathways for bikes, snowmobiles, and other non-automobile transportation are also important. Because the use of many of these vehicles is seasonal, pathways and dedicated lanes may be used for multiple purposes. For instance, a bike path in the summer could become a snowmobile trail in the winter.

The Township is working towards implementing the 2009 Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. This Plan was created with MDOT, Montmorency Road Commission and NEMCOG. Specifically, the Township aims to connect Lewiston K-6 School and the business district with Township parks and the Buttles Road Pathway. Trails around East and West Twin Lakes using Fleming and Cobb Road could connect to regional trails such as the High Country Pathway (for hiking and biking) or the Shore-to-Shore (hiking and equestrian.) Such trails are not only valuable for recreation, alternate transportation, but are also a potential trigger for economic development and increased tourist attraction and expenditures.

Figure 7.2 shows the trails planned for Albert Township and its neighbors in the Non-Motorized Plan. The specific recommendations for trails are shown on Future Land Use Map (Map 8).

Figure 7.2: NEMCOG Planned Trails in Greater Albert Township



R. TOWNSHIP CEMETERY

The Albert Township Cemetery, located on Kneeland Street north of the unincorporated village of Lewiston, is an important community facility. This Plan supports the continued maintenance and high level of service at the cemetery. Located in Albert Township is also Lewiston East Cemetery, also known as Finnish Cemetery, located on the north side of 612 approximately 4 miles east of 491 and 612 crossing.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Albert Township Master Plan and its goals, objectives, and strategies recommend a future vision for the community. This vision is to build upon the Township's existing assets and make the most of opportunities that can attract new development and residents to the community while protecting the Township's natural beauty and resources. To put it simply, the Plan for Albert Township is to create an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable community where people want to live, work, visit and play.

The goals and objectives of this Plan should be reviewed often and be considered in decision making by the Township. Successful implementation of this Plan will be the result of actions taken by elected and appointed officials, Township staff, the Downtown Development Authority, the Planning Commission, public agencies, and private citizens and organizations.

S. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter identifies and describes actions and tools available to implement the vision created in this Plan. Broadly stated, the Plan will be implemented through:

Planning and Zoning: Evaluation of the Township's Zoning Ordinance, and if necessary, amendments to regulations that are necessary to implement the recommendations of this Plan. Continuous evaluation of the recommendations of this Plan must occur at regular intervals to ensure that the overall vision for the future development of the Township remains relevant.

Civic Improvements: Improvements such as parks, public spaces, and utility systems fall into this category. Civic improvements are generally funded through public funds and are tangible "bricks and mortar" projects.

Circulation Improvements: Improvements to the Township's motorized and non-motorized circulation system fall into this category.

Economic Development: This category includes the economic and physical development of the Township. These improvements include a wide range of activities from physical development activity to promotion and marketing, and may be completed by public or private entities, or some combination thereof.

T. RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE

Given that the Albert Township Master Plan incorporates new policies, land uses, and other measures related to further improving the quality of life in the community, there are recommended changes to the zoning ordinance that could be made to fully realize the community's vision and make the ordinance an effective implementation tool. These changes have been identified throughout the Plan as well as during discussions with the Planning Commission, Township, and residents. These changes should be pursued over time and as the need or opportunity presents itself. That being said, these are recommendations and are fluid in nature. As the community grows and conditions change, so will the necessary revisions to the zoning ordinance.

Based on the Zoning Plan in Chapter 7, the following changes are recommended:

- New zoning districts to accommodate the visions for the Mixed Residential, Village Residential, Light

Industrial/Research, Parks and Public Spaces, and Planned Residential Development Future Land Use Categories.

- Revisions to the CP District to accommodate the vision for the Village Center Future Land Use category, including permitting certain residential typologies and renaming the district VC (Village Center).
- Eliminating the MHP District and including provisions for manufactured housing in the R-1 and R-2 districts, provided that it meets the standards outlined in Chapter 7.
- Eliminating the E District and permitting the existing quarry as a legal non-conformity in the FR district until the end of its useful life.
- Revising the Zoning Map to match the Future Land Use Map as closely as possible.

V. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The tables on the following pages present a detailed summary of all of the recommended implementation activities, who is responsible for completing the activity, and available funding resources for each activity.

KEY

Priority		Timeframe		Responsibility (Color)	
A	Most Important	1	W/in one year		Project Lead
B	Very Important	2	1-3 years		Key Participant
C	Important	3	3+ years		Contributor
		4	As Available		
		5	Ongoing		

Responsibility (Abbreviation)

MC	Montmorency County	PC	Planning Commission
DDA	Downtown Development Authority	HO	Home Owners
BO	Business Owners	CM	Community Members
MDO T	Michigan Department of Transportation	TB	Township Board
SM	State of Michigan	NEM	NEMCOG
COC	Chamber of Commerce		

Public	Includes public funds from the Township operating budget, County, and State funding. May also include local government bonds and grants.
Private	Includes funds from private sources such as grant monies, corporate funding, or property owners.
DDA/TI F	Tax increment financing provided by an authorized body. Please refer to the summary of economic development tools.

PLANNING and ZONING

PROJECT	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY			FUNDING		
			Twp	Other Gov't	Private	Public	Private	TIF/DDA
Work towards decreased density in the Pine Beach subdivision while maintaining the character of the neighborhood	A	1	PC/TS			★		
Encourage infill development along Jensen between County Road 612 and Hansen	B	5	PC	DDA		★	★	★
Revise the Zoning Map to make it consistent with the Future Land Use Map	C	3	PC/TB		CM	★		
Market the Lewiston area to developers of attached condominiums and other housing types	C	5	PC/TB	DDA	COC	★		★
Seek to attract a large-scale retirement community development	C	5	TB/PC	DDA	BO/COC	★	★	★

CIVIC AND TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

PROJECT	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY			FUNDING		
			Twp	Other Gov't	Private	Public	Private	TIF/DDA
Prepare an annual Capital Improvements Plan to budget for planned improvements	A	1	TB/PC	DDA/MC		★		★
Expand and improve sidewalk connectivity in the unincorporated Village of Lewiston	B	2	TB/PC	DDA/MC	HO	★	★	★
Develop a community garden in the Township	B	3	TB/PC		CM	★	★	
Pursue non-motorized trails plan, working with involved agencies.	B	3	TB	MC/NEM/DDA		★	★	★
Improve pedestrian safety at the intersection of Country Road 612 and Kneeland Street	C	3	TB	DDA/MC		★	★	★
Coordinate with the County Road Commission to achieve the Township's road maintenance priorities	C	3	TB	MC		★		
Pursue additional traffic calming measures on County Road 612 and other roads as needed	C	5	TB	MC/NEM		★		
Create a "gateway" element at County Road 612 and Kneeland Street	C	5	TB	DDA/MC		★	★	★

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT	PRIORIT Y	TIMEFR AME	RESPONSIBILI TY			FUNDING		
			Twp	Other Gov't	Private	Public	Private	TIF/ DDA
Ensure adequate parking is provided for the downtown without hurting the character of the district	A	1	TB/PC	DDA	BO	★	★	★
Complete parks improvements as a community asset to continue to attract new residents and businesses	A	1	TB	SM	CM	★	★	
Streamline Township processes to simplify opening a new business.	A	1	TB/PC	DDA/ MC	BO/ COC	★	★	★
Improve and expand special events in the Township	B	2	TB	DDA	CM	★	★	★

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT	PRIORIT Y	TIMEFR AME	RESPONSIBILI TY			FUNDING		
			Twp	Other Gov't	Private	Public	Private	TIF/ DDA
Create a single brand/identity for the community to assist in marketing	A	2	TB	DDA	BO/ COC	★	★	★
Implement the downtown plan, with the modifications recommended in this Plan	B	2	TB	DDA	BO/ COC	★	★	★
Continue to improve the Township website	B	1-annually	TB		CM	★	★	
Encourage the expansion of telecommunications technology, including requiring placement of broadband components in all future road projects	B	3	TB/PC	MC	BO/ COC	★	★	★
Market vacant retail space to convenience retail and stores that appeal to visitors	B	3	TB	DDA	COC	★	★	★
Identify and support the provision of adequate utilities for commercial and industrial development	B	3	TB	MC/ SM	CM	★	★	
Install wayfinding signage to assist visitors and further the community brand	B	2	TB	DDA		★		★
Work with regional economic development agencies to attract new companies and businesses	C	5	TB	DDA/ MC/ NEM	BO/ COC	★	★	★
Develop a multi-use indoor community events facility in Buttles Park	C	5	TB	DDA	BO/ COC	★	★	★

W. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Albert Township already takes advantage of some of the economic development tools available to the community. However, to implement the recommendations of this Plan, other tools and techniques may be needed. Many of these tools use a tax increment financing component or TIF to generate funds for economic development activities.

The following is a summary of bodies that can use tax increment financing and related funding sources:

- **Downtown Development Authority** (Public Act 197 of 1975). A Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is a non-profit development corporation which exists for the purpose of promoting a desirable environment for businesses and residents and implementing economic development projects. A variety of financing techniques are available to DDAs, including bond issues, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), and public and private contributions.

The Township already has this tool in place. However, the DDA should continue to evaluate its TIF and Development Plans for consistency with the recommendations of this Plan.

- **Corridor Improvement Authority** (Public Act 280 of 2005). This legislation establishes a new method of improving older commercial corridors without establishing a DDA. The Corridor Improvement Authority Act allows local governments to create one or more Corridor Improvement Authorities (CIA) to address established, deteriorating commercial corridors located outside their downtown areas. The primary benefit of this tool is to provide local governments with the option of using TIF for improvements in the district(s), and to undertake a wide range of activities to promote economic development and redevelopment in commercial areas.

In order to be eligible to create a CIA, the development area must have a minimum size of 5 acres, consist of at least 50% commercial property, and be zoned to allow mixed-uses, including “high-density” residential use. A municipality must also expedite the local permitting and inspection processes in the development area and promote walkable non-motorized interconnections throughout the development area.

An advantage of this act is that it allows more than one CIA to be established in a community, in addition to the one DDA that a community is typically permitted to establish.

- **Brownfield Redevelopment Authority** (Public Acts 381, 382, and 383 of 1996). Communities are authorized to create one or more Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities (BRA) in the community. BRAs may be used to finance the cleanup and reuse of contaminated property. Costs that can be funded by a BRA include the demolition of buildings necessary to remove hazardous substances and new construction if needed to protect against exposure to hazardous substances that are to remain.

A BRA may use a TIF to pay back a developer for activities needed to facilitate the redevelopment of the site. Once the developer has been paid back for initial site remediation, the additional captured property taxes may go into a local site remediation fund to pay for cleanup and rehabilitation activities on other Brownfield sites in the community.

An important feature of a BRA is the ability to capture state and local school taxes, but only from the taxes

paid by the user of the redeveloped contaminated site. BRAs may also issue revenue and TIF bonds and notes or borrow from the MDEQ's Revitalization Loan Fund.

- **Principal Shopping District/Business Improvement District** (Public Act 120 of 1961). This Act provides for the establishment of principal shopping districts and for the undertaking of certain activities within these districts. Municipalities are permitted to complete street and pedestrian improvements, acquire property for and construct parking facilities (including parking garages), along with other facilities that "serve the public interest."

The municipality may also create a board for the management of certain ongoing activities, including various initiatives to promote economic development (i.e., market studies, public relations campaigns, and retail and institutional promotions). In addition, the maintenance, security, and operation of the principal shopping district may be carried out through this board. For ease of description, this board is often referred to as a Downtown Management Board (DMB) and the area it represents as the Principal Shopping District (PSD).

The DMB is composed of a number of members determined by the Township at the time of authorization with a majority of the members being nominees of individual businesses within the PSD. One member is a representative of the adjoining residential neighborhoods, and one member is a representative of Township government. All board members are appointed by the chief executive officer of the Township with the concurrence of the governing body.

The DMB may be funded through grants and contributions and may also use the proceeds of special assessments levied by the governing body on property within the PSD specifically for maintenance, security, and operation purposes. All assessments are levied in accordance with the Township's special assessment policies and procedures.

PSDs are a useful tool for addressing issues such as parking structure construction and operation by shifting responsibility and accountability to a single organization. The organization is business driven, yet closely linked to the Township through the appointment process and funding arrangements. It is therefore an organizational expression of the partnership between the Township and business interests. Its powers to conduct cooperative advertising and promotion, public relations, maintenance, and general operations are broad enough to address many of the previous strategies.

PSD's do not, however, possess the authority to conduct broad redevelopment or public infrastructure development activities that are permitted by DDAs, and therefore this tool may not be necessary in Albert Township

- **Commercial Rehabilitation Act** (Public Act 210 of 2005). The Commercial Rehabilitation Act enables local units of government to create one or more rehabilitation districts in which rehabilitated commercial property may receive property tax reductions for one to 10 years from the municipality (excluding personal property and the land upon which the rehabilitated facility is located).

These tax reductions or abatements could be used to encourage redevelopment in the Downtown area; however, they do reduce the amount of tax revenues collected by the Township.

- **Local Development Financing Authority** (Public Act 281 of 1986). A Local Development Financing Authority (LDFA) is intended to assist industrial development, to promote economic growth, and prevent unemployment. Eligible activities include the support of business investment in districts where

the primary activity is the manufacture of goods or materials, agricultural processing, or high-tech activities such as product development, engineering, product testing, or research and development. A LDFA may use TIF, and only one LDFA may be created in the community.

The scope and energy of the DDA in Albert Township/Lewiston likely eliminates the need for an LDFA in the near future.