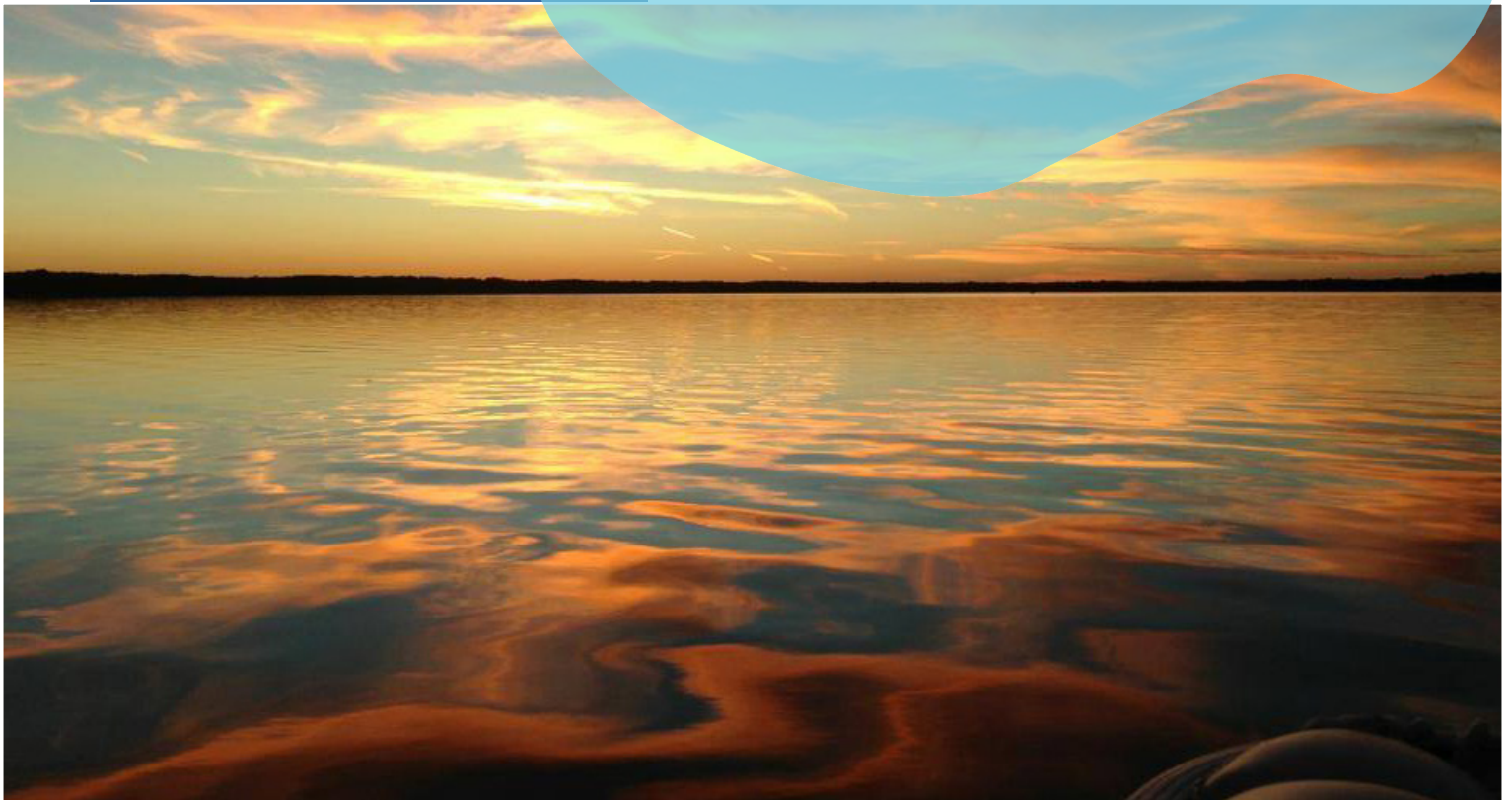




ADOPTED  
09.14.2020

# Lake City Area MASTER PLAN



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# Resolution

LAKE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE  
LAKE CITY AREA MASTER PLAN OF 2020

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), 2008 PA 33, MCL 125.3801, et seq. requires municipal planning commissions to prepare a "master plan" pertinent to the future development of the municipality; and

WHEREAS, the Lake City Planning Commission has prepared a draft Master Plan for the City, to update and replace its previous 1988 Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Lake City City Council adopted a resolution authorizing the distribution of the draft Master Plan to the general public and the various entities as required by the MPEA, for review and comment purposes; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Master Plan was made available to the various entities and the general public as required by the MPEA, and a public hearing thereon was held by the Planning Commission on August 7, 2020 pursuant to notice as required by MPEA; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has found the proposed Master Plan as submitted for the public hearing to be desirable and proper and furthers the land use and development goals and strategies of the City of Lake City, Forest Township and Lake Township.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Lake City Planning Commission hereby adopts the new Master Plan including all text, charts, tables, maps, and descriptive and other matter therein intended to form the complete Master Plan, including the Future Land Use Map. The new Master Plan may henceforth be referred to as the Master Plan of 2020.

Motion by: R. Pickford

Seconded by: E. Selmer

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Bartholomew - Elmquist - Ostrander - Pickford - Selmer

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

RESOLUTION DECLARED PASSED

Christy Loder Secretary

9/14/20  
Date

Lake City Planning Commission

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# Acknowledgements

## CITY OF LAKE CITY

Brad Seger, Mayor  
Arlo Bartholomew, Council  
Lewis Beaver, Council  
Brett Colecchio, Council  
Judith Iverson-Luter, Council  
Kathleen Ostrander, Council  
Robert Pickford, Council  
Carolyn Redman, Council  
Judy Houle, Clerk  
Robyn Niles, Treasurer  
Raymond Vasser, Public Works

## LAKE TOWNSHIP

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Carol Bradley, Trustee  
Ben Wolford, Trustee  
Korinda Windelmann, Clerk  
Kay Ouwinga, Treasurer

## FOREST TOWNSHIP

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Jeri McGee, Trustee  
Raymond Moore, Trustee  
Margie Phillips, Clerk  
Susie Jones, Treasurer

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Barbara Elliott	Patti Warner
Bob Pickford	Ray Moore
Bruce DeBor	Sara Crawford
Carol Bradley	Terry Corrigan
Cathy Molitor	Erine Wescoat
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ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY:

B R   
Beckett & Raeder

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*Lake Missaukee.*  
Source: Lake City Area Chamber of Commerce





# 1 Introduction

## REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Lake City area is located in the northwest portion of Michigan's Lower peninsula. As part of this region, the landscapes surrounding Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township are characterized by expansive deciduous and coniferous forests, productive farmland, wetlands, as well as numerous rivers, streams, and inland lakes. Although these communities are situated forty-six miles east of Lake Michigan, Lake City is positioned at the eastern edge of Lake Missaukee, while Lake Township surrounds the Lake to the west, and Forest Township is located nearby to the Lake's northeast. This gives these communities access to fresh water and many recreational resources despite their inland location relative to the Great Lakes. The Lake City area is also within proximity to Lake Sapphire and Crooked Lake, hence the name Lake City. Together, these characteristics have led the area to become known for scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, agricultural output, and appealing way of life. The area surrounding Lake City is also a major seasonal destination because of these characteristics.

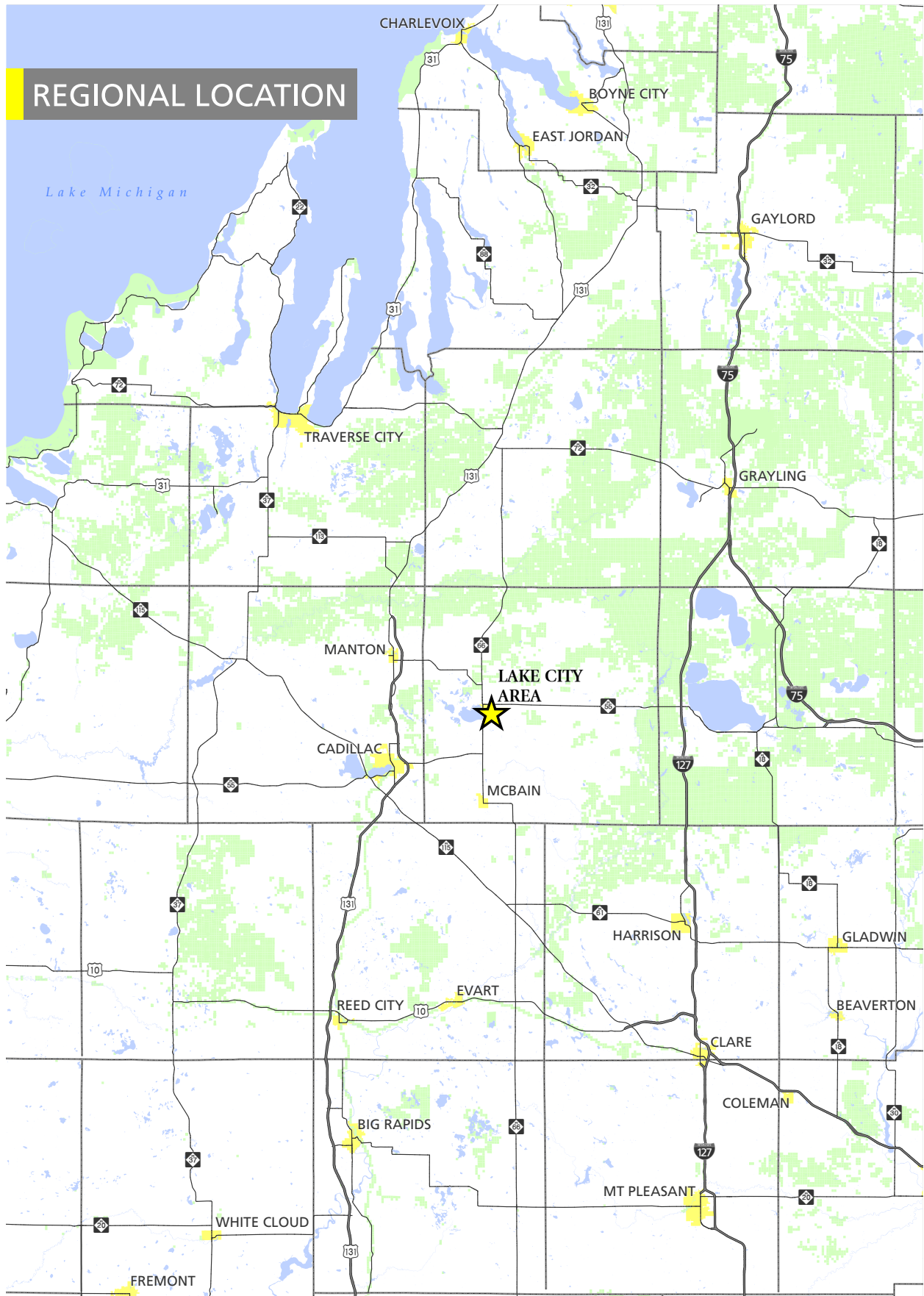
Notwithstanding the Lake City area's rural character, these communities play a varied role in the region's economy. Lake City is one of only two cities in Missaukee County, the other city being McBain, which is located 10 miles to Lake City's southeast. Perhaps because of this unique position, Lake City is the seat of Missaukee County, which gives the town a prominent role in government and decision making in the area. The City is located at the intersection of state highways M-55 and M-66, which provide important economic links throughout the region and support its agricultural and manufacturing

sectors. Forest Township, despite being the only landlocked community of the three, is bound to the south by State Highway 55 and to the west by State Highway, 66, giving it critical links to other places. These connections are also present in Lake Township, where substantial frontage on Lake Missaukee gives the community a major role in summer tourism. The location of Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township, near a variety of campgrounds, state parks and forests, ski resorts, and golf courses further their appeal for residents and visitors and strengthen their presence as an attraction in the area.

In acknowledging the region's unique assets, Missaukee County developed a strategic plan in 2018, which focused on growing the County's institutional capacity and its provision of services in the face of economic, fiscal, and demographic challenges. This far-reaching initiative calls for greater degrees of coordination between jurisdictions in capital planning, stronger partnership between the area's diverse agencies and organizations, and increased monitoring of the County's fiscal health and grant opportunities.

This strategic plan portrays the County's desire to facilitate, education, and partner with municipalities and stakeholders. Considering the initiative, as well as the State of Michigan's 'Redevelopment Ready Communities' program, Lake City, Forest Township, and Lake Township undertook this planning process, the communities' first master plan since 1988. This plan was designed to match Lake City's trajectory with the County's vision and role; its implementation will serve to increase coordination between Lake City's planning efforts with the County's.

# MAP 1: REGIONAL LOCATION





*Grand Central Hotel, built 1888*

Source: Missaukee County Historical Society

## HISTORY

Lake City incorporated as a village in 1889 and then a city in 1932, but Missaukee County's land had been surveyed as early as the 1840s, although it had no year-round residents until post-Civil War. The area at the time was heavily wooded and covered with swamps. In the late 1860s more settlers of European descent arrived on government land grants. Present day Lake City was the first settlement east of Lake Missaukee, while Forest Township was settled to the City's north and Lake Township was settled to its west. The geographic extent of both townships was the 1 square mile of land standard of Townships in Michigan surveyed in the 1840s. Much of the land was cleared to make way for dairy farms and logging camps throughout the County's forests. The Mitchell Brothers Lumber Co., the area's biggest employer at the time, exhausted the timber in the area by the turn of the 20th century and eventually had to move toward Cadillac, many of their employees following. The County's economy had to transition, as its main

extractive industry dried up. Missaukee County turned to a predominantly agricultural economy but also experienced the benefits of the auto boom in southeast Michigan. As the auto workers' wages accumulated into sufficient disposable income, they were heading north for vacation and recreation, and to buy summer cottages that would become retirement homes. In addition to the tourism industry, the Lake City area also became known as Michigan's "Christmas Tree Capital." The sandy soil was not as productive for crops as it was for Christmas trees, so since the 1960s the area has produced millions of trees every year.<sup>1</sup>

## PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

### 1988 Lake City Master Plan

Lake City's 1988 master plan described the community's desired development patterns and outlined the best locations for the town's variety of land use. The plan functioned as the city's primary policy document for many years.



*Lake City Main Street in 1910.*

Source: Missaukee County Historical Society

## Land Use Categories

### *Residential*

- » Location: High and medium-density residential should locate within existing residential areas of the central city. Low-density housing should be provided in previously undeveloped areas of the City to maintain rural character.
- » Development: A variety of low, medium and high-density housing should be added to the housing stock. Projected housing demand should be split evenly between senior citizens, apartments, and low and medium-density single family.

### *Commercial*

- » Location: Major groupings of commercial activity should concentrate in downtown. Existing buildings should be improved before commercial uses expand into residential areas. The commercial district south of the central city may expand if it does not generate harms.
- » Development: The commercial core uses should include retail, restaurants, offices, and senior housing. Maintain the relationship

between the core and the waterfront. The M-66/M-55 corridor south of downtown should support resort-oriented commercial uses.

### *Industrial*

- » Location: Groupings of industrial uses should cluster near each other along major arterials in the northeast corner of the City.
- » Development: The City's industrial district should support a variety of heavy and light industrial and warehousing uses in order to maintain year-round employment.

### *Recreation*

- » Location: Parks, natural areas, and open space should be provided in a variety of lands in the city. The community's shoreline is particularly important for park designation. Larger facilities should be centrally located while neighborhood parks should be dispersed.
- » Development: A wide range of recreational facilities should be provided for residents and visitors. Natural and scenic areas such as the waterfront and other environmentally sensitive areas are especially important to preserve.



*Lake City Main Street in 1940.*

Source: Missaukee County Historical Society

### *Environmental*

- » Location: Protecting stream corridors, waterbodies, and shorelines is critical in ensuring environmental, quality of life, and aesthetic qualities. Directing development away from these various areas, particularly in the City’s eastern portion is important.

## 2018 Missaukee County Strategic Plan

Missaukee County’s 2018 Strategic Plan was drafted to reassess the County’s role in response to challenges related to diminishing state revenue, an aging population, and economic shifts in the region. The plan outlined the steps County government should take in order provide efficient services and foster a shared vision for the area.

### Plan Goals and Objectives

#### *Services and Employees*

- » Continually evaluate departmental operations for opportunities for efficiency, partnerships and shared services
- » Continually evaluate fiscal health and cost of services to identify for opportunities

for increased revenue, cost savings, grant opportunities

#### *Facilities and infrastructure*

- » Continue to plan for, budget, and prioritize needed capital improvements
- » Support community infrastructure needs

#### *Community Support and Partnerships*

- » Facilitate partnerships with local governments and neighboring communities
- » Facilitate partnerships between agencies and organizations within the county

#### *Communication, Awareness, and Promotion*

- » Advocate for state policies that impact County needs and issues
- » Improve awareness of County roles and services

### SOURCES

- 1 Lake City Area Chamber of Commerce. “Lake City Area History.” <https://lakecitymich.com/lake-city-area-history/>



*Lake City clock.*



# 2

# Community Profile

Close examination of a community's existing characteristics is essential to understanding its unique challenges and opportunities. A cohesive approach to planning starts by examining a community's population, its social and economic characteristics, the surrounding built environment, and investigating how these factors relate to one another. This section examines the Lake City area's characteristics across these factors, explores how they have changed over time, and puts these figures in context by comparing them to surrounding communities.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### Growth Trends and Household Size

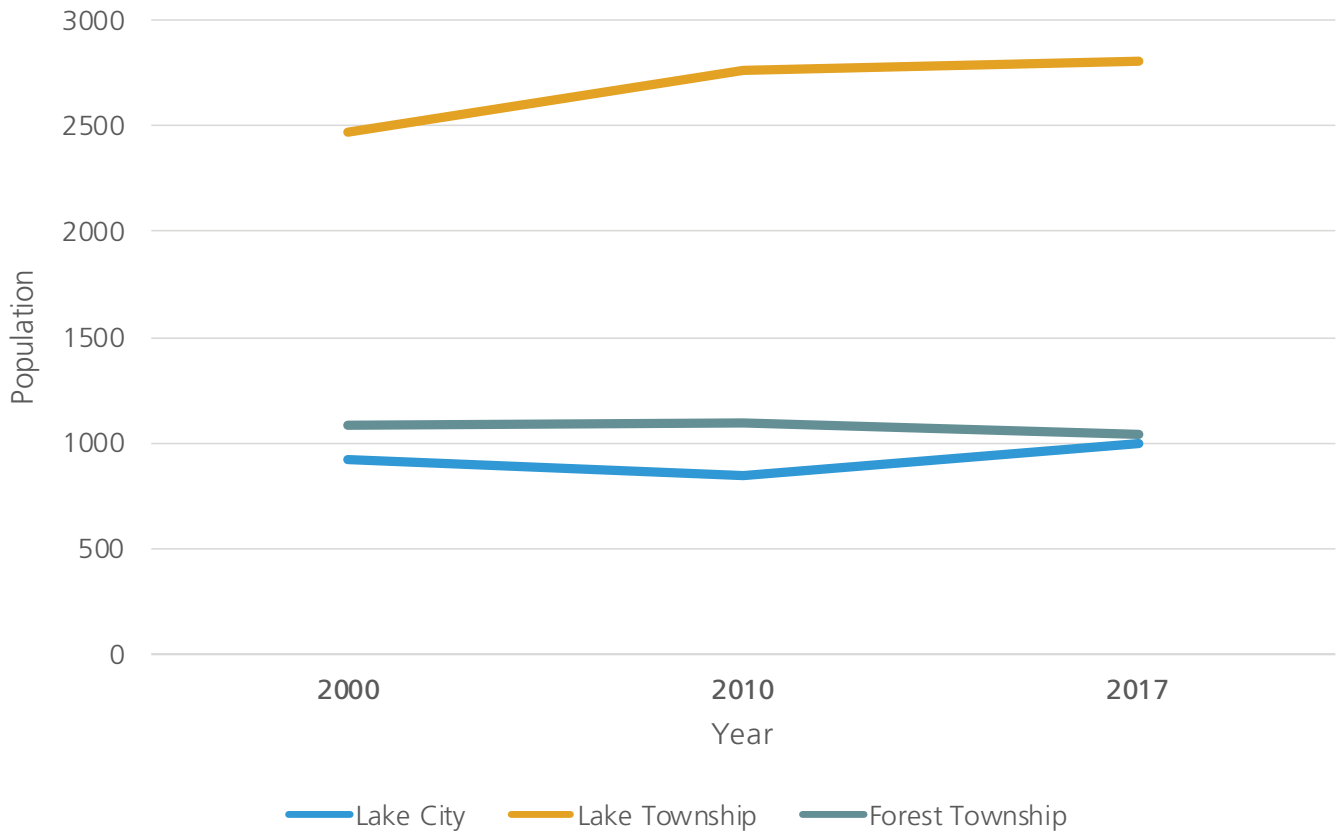
According to the 2017 American Community Survey estimates, Lake City had a population of 996 people while Lake Township had 2,809 residents and Forest Townships had 1,043 residents (S0101\_17). Notably, Lake City's 2017 population estimates indicate that the City likely experienced growth since 2010 although the margins of error are too large to report with any certainty. When compared to the 2010 population of 836, it is estimated that the City's population grew by 16%. On the other side, Lake and Forest Townships likely saw negligible growth or decline in population during these years. Lake Township's population grew by only 0.3% and Forest Township's shrunk by about 9% of residents during the same timeframe, although margins of error also make for some uncertainty. Lake Township's relatively modest rates of growth are more akin to larger geographies such as Missaukee County (-0.1%) and the State of Michigan (-0.2%) from 2010 to 2017, while

Forest Township's sharp population decline differs (DP1\_10). As of 2017, Lake City had about 354 households while Lake and Forest Townships had 1,159 and 466 households, correspondingly (DP02).

Demographic data suggest that Lake City also experienced a growth in residents per household in recent years while the number of people per household remained constant in Lake Township and declined in Forest Township. The average household size of 2.75 people in Lake City in 2017 is relatively high compared with the Townships (2.42 people and 2.24 people in Lake and Forest, respectively), and with the State of Michigan as a whole (2.49 people), and rose relatively rapidly since its 2010 level of 2.35 people (DP1\_10).

Figures on the share of family households reinforce similar notions in all three communities; Lake City and Lake Township have relatively high and rising shares of families compared to Forest Township, which has more residents living alone. Estimates of Lake City's proportion of family households in 2017 (68.4%) is high compared with neighboring Forest Township (61.4% of households) although Lake Township's share is even larger at 70.9% (DP1\_10). Further reflecting these themes, the portion of one-person households dropped markedly in Lake City and in Lake Township between 2010 and 2017. In Lake City, it dropped from 32.0% to 26.6% while it declined from 26.5% to 23.0% in Lake Township (DP1\_10). Conversely, the estimates of the share of households with one person rose steadily in Forest Township from 25.6% in 2010 to 31.3% in 2017 (DP1\_10).

**FIGURE 1: POPULATION OVER TIME, 2000-2017**



Sources: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2010 & 2000 U.S. Decennial Census (DP04\_17, DP04\_10, DEC\_00\_SF1\_DP1)

### Age Composition

Taken together, data suggest that Lake City's 2017 population is younger than in neighboring Lake and Forest Townships. The City's median age declined between 2010 and 2017, a relatively rare phenomenon, yet during the same timeframe, the median age remained relatively constant in both Townships. Lake City's 2017 median age of 37 years was much younger compared to neighboring Lake and Forest Townships (47.7 years and 42 years, respectively) and with the State of Michigan (39.6 years) (S0101\_17). Conversely, Lake Township and Forest Township had higher median ages compared with the State. Forest Township's higher median age in 2017 remained unchanged from 2010, at 41 years old while Lake Township's median age in 2017 increased only slightly (DP1\_10).

One possible reason for these trends was the relative growth in the share of residents under

19 years of age in Lake City and Lake Township between 2010 and 2017, which did not occur in Forest Township. In 2017, Lake City had a high proportion of young residents in this age category (31%) compared with much smaller composition in Lake Township (22%) and in Forest Township (24%). Meanwhile, the under 19 years age category increased only slightly in Forest Township from 20.7% in 2010. Overall, these figures suggest some degree of increasing need for services and facilities for youth in Lake City and in Lake Township and constant demand for these services in Forest Township.

American Community Survey data also suggests that Lake City and Forest Township have relatively robust segments of their population in early-career age ranges, whereas Lake Township lacks residents in this key economic age range. As of 2017, about one quarter (24.7 %) of Lake City's population was between the ages of 20 and 39 years, while Forest Township's share of residents between these



ages was slightly higher (25.5%) (S0101\_17). This is on par with the State of Michigan's share residents in that age range in 2017 (25.4%). These figures are encouraging, considering that populations between these ages often require fewer services and are likely to spur economic activity with disposable incomes throughout their working years. Conversely, Lake Township's share of residents between the ages of 20 and 39 years was much smaller (only 17.7 %) in 2017. This could indicate a need for this Township to attract younger working-age residents as they are key in determining economic health.

Other data reveal that although these communities experienced some recent growth in younger populations, residents 65 years of age or older comprise large shares of the population in all three communities in 2017. The share of Lake City's population 65 years of age and older was relatively high at 20.5%, compared with the share of residents in that age category in Michigan as a whole (15.8%) (S0101\_17). The same share of retirement-aged residents was even higher in Lake Township (24.9%) while it represented a smaller portion in Forest Township (17.9%) (S0101\_17). These figures suggest that retirement-age specific amenities will be priorities in all three communities. Data also reveal that relatively large percentages of the population in both Lake and Forest Township are nearing the end of their working-age ranges and will be moving into retirement within the next 10 to 15 years. The share of residents between the ages of 45 and 59 years was about one-fifth of the total population in both Townships (18.9% in Lake Township and 22.3% of the total population in Forest Township) as of 2017 (S0101\_17). This indicates a compounded need for senior amenities in both communities.

## SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS

### Education

Educational attainment serves as a key link to economic mobility and stability for many households. The percentage of residents in Lake and Forest Townships that have completed high school is on par with Michigan as a whole whereas the same share of residents in the City with a high school diploma exceeded the state. As of 2017, 92.6% of Lake City residents had graduated high school while that percentage of the population in Lake Township was 91.7% and in Forest Township it was 88.7% (DP02\_17). Meanwhile, the high school completion rate for the State of Michigan's population was 90.2% in 2017 (DP02\_17).

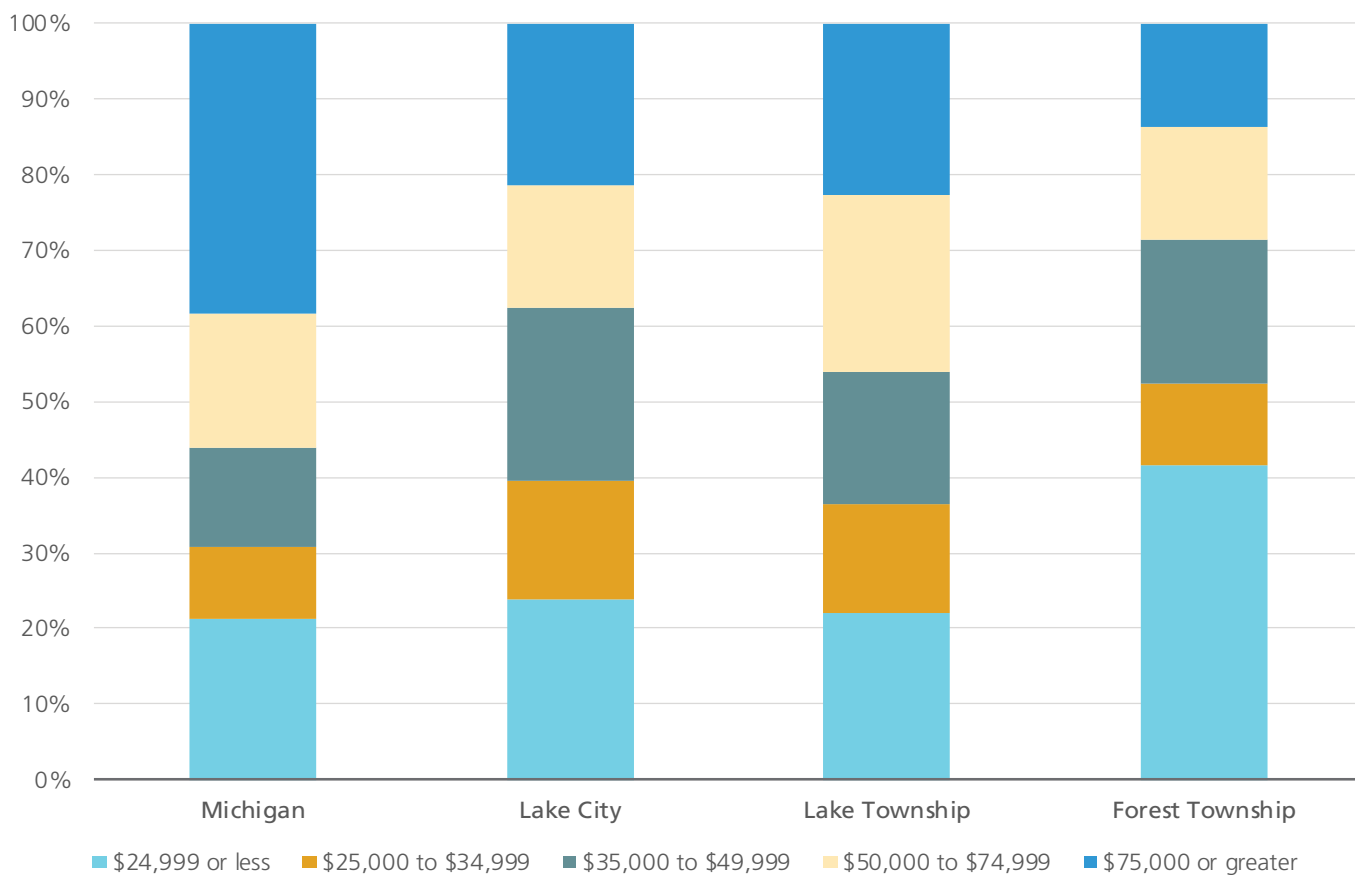
Despite high levels of this baseline education, attainment of higher education remains a concern in all three communities. As of 2017, only 16.5% of Lake City residents had completed at least a four-year college degree (DP02\_17). This figure was slightly higher in Lake Township, where almost one-fifth (19.8%) of residents had a degree, and slightly lower in Forest Township, where only 12% of the population had at least obtained a bachelor's degree (DP02\_17). Despite some variation between these three communities, the figures are well below the rates of college completion for the State of Michigan and the United States as a whole (28.1% and 30.9%, respectively) (DP02\_17). Moreover, a close examination of census data reveals that educational attainment rates have not risen in any of these three communities since their 2010 levels (DP02\_10). Attainment of higher education will continue to be a major challenge for these communities, particularly as Michigan's economy shifts increasingly to service industries that require a bachelor's degree.

**TABLE 1: AGE COMPOSITION COMPARISON**

Population Age Ranges	Michigan	Lake City	Lake Township	Forest Township
Less than 19 years	25.1%	31.0%	23.7%	21.9%
20 to 34 years	19.6%	16.9%	11.4%	23.1%
35 to 49 years	18.4%	19.7%	18.7%	15.6%
50 to 64 years	21.1%	11.5%	21.4%	21.5%
65 years and over	15.8%	20.5%	24.9%	17.9%

Source: 2017 ACS 5 Year Estimates

**FIGURE 2: ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY GEOGRAPHY (2017)**



Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

### Income

The strong link between education, employment, and income is evident in the Lake City area. Median annual household incomes were almost the same between Lake City (\$47,500) and Lake Township (\$47,404) as of 2017 but were more modest in Forest Township at \$34,052 (DP03). More broadly, the median household income in all three communities was also modest compared to the statewide level (\$52,668 per year) (DP03\_17). The 2017 community survey estimates demonstrate that a concerningly large portion of households in these three communities live on very low incomes. In fact, 39.5% of households in Lake City have annual incomes of \$34,999 dollars or less, which is far below the statewide median household income of \$52,668 per year. The share of households with incomes below \$34,999 dollars per year was similar but slightly lower in Lake Township (36.4% of households)

but much higher in Forest Township (52.4% of households) (DP03). Poverty status guidelines is defined by comparing income with number of household member; a household of two people with an annual income of \$35,000 would not be in poverty status, while a household of six people with the same income would be (U.S. Census, thresholds).<sup>1</sup> Considering this definition, all three communities had large shares of households below the poverty line, relative to the state. The percentage of Lake City households below this threshold was 18.6%, while the share of households in Lake and Forest Townships was 16.3% and 23.2% respectively, and the state's was 15.6% (S1701).

### Employment

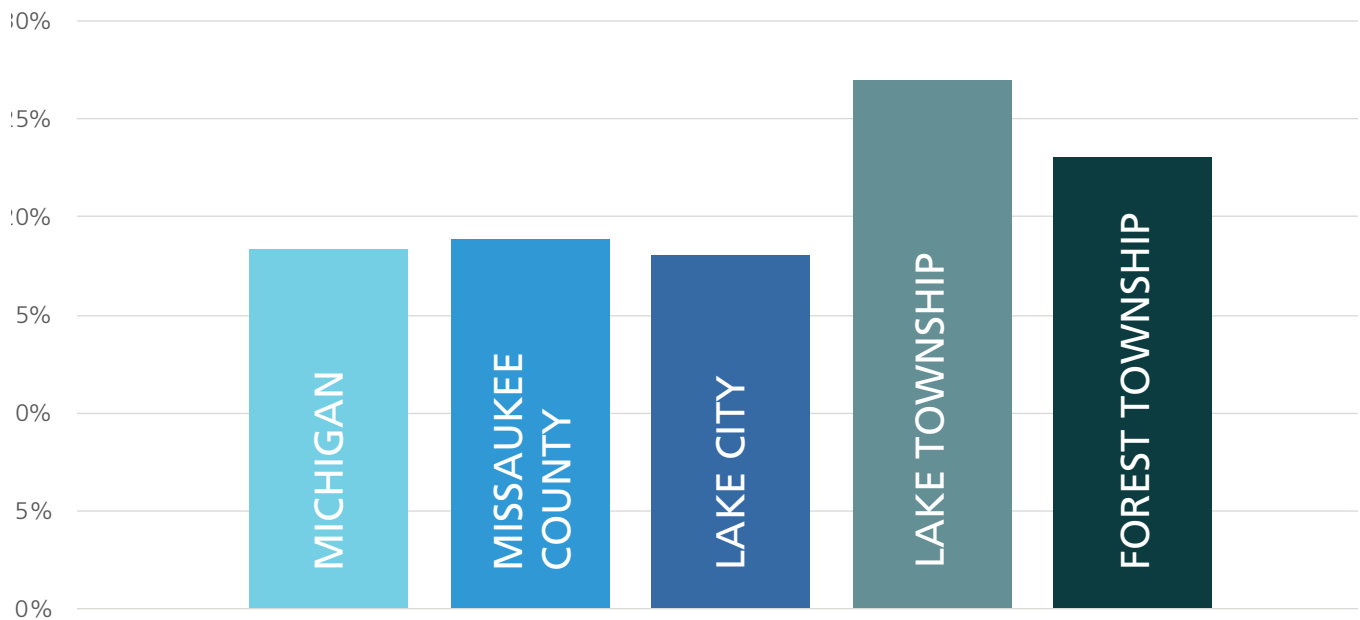
The reasons for these communities' trends toward modest incomes are rooted in the types of employment opportunities available regionally.

Employment in arts, accommodations, and food services professions comprises a large share of the total employment among Lake City residents (16.3 %), while relatively small shares of the population work in these occupations in Lake and Forest Townships (3.5% and 5.6%, respectively) (DP03\_17). Median annual earnings for Lake City workers in this sector are modest at \$20,750 per year, less than half of the City’s median household income (\$2414). Similarly, a relatively large share of Lake City workers (17.1%) was employed in the healthcare, education, and social assistance fields. The share of employment in this sector was similar in Forest Township (17.8%) but slightly higher in Lake Township (20.4%) as of 2017 (DP03\_17). These professions likewise yield modest pay; median annual earnings for Lake City workers in this field were \$24,896 per year (\$2414). Median incomes for Forest Township residents in these sectors was \$24,375 per year, while it was only somewhat higher for Lake Township residents (\$35,714 per year) (\$2414).

Two other major economic sectors; retail trade and manufacturing, comprise large shares of the total employment in these Missaukee County communities. Roughly 18% of Lake City residents

25 years of age or older were employed in manufacturing in 2017, which is like the Statewide composition of manufacturing employment (18.4%). Meanwhile, manufacturing comprised a greater share of employment for residents of Lake Township (27%) and for residents Forest Township (23%) than in Lake City (DP03\_17). Median incomes in these professions (\$41,875 per year average) were some of the highest in all three communities in 2017. This indicates that manufacturing employment will continue to be important as the communities, and particularly the townships, move forward. Jobs in retail trade made up another 18% of the total employment in Lake City but yielded modest median earnings less than \$30,000 per year. Although this sector comprises a large share of employment in the City, retail employment was a much smaller proportion of employment for Lake Township (8.5%) and for Forest Township (14.7%), where retail employment was more like the Statewide rate (11.1%) (DP03\_17). As of 2017, recently emerging and higher-paying industries including information, finance, insurance, and real estate were notably small in all three communities (DP03\_17).

**FIGURE 3: EMPLOYMENT IN MANUFACTURING BY GEOGRAPHY (2017)**



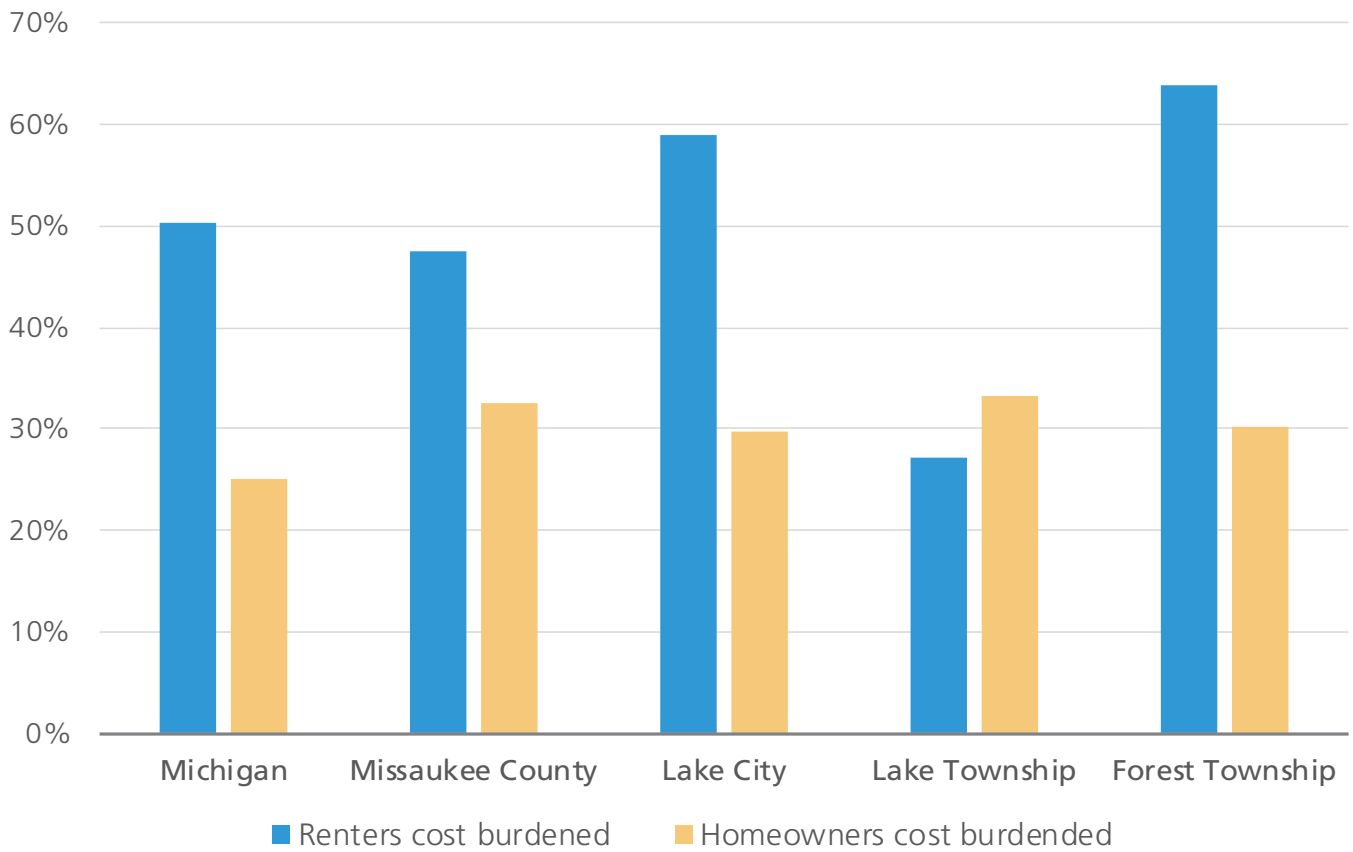
Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

**TABLE 2: MONTHLY HOUSING COST COMPARISON**

Municipality	Median Mortgage Payment	Median Rent Payment
Lake City	\$899	\$675
Lake Township	\$943	\$800
Forest Township	\$833	\$750

Source: 2017 ACS 5 Year Estimates

**FIGURE 4: COST-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS**



Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

## HOUSING

An examination of housing data for these three communities shows much higher rates of vacancy compared to statewide figures, most of which is accounted for by seasonal occupancy. As of 2017, 533 housing units existed in Lake City, while Forest Township had a larger total of 725 units and Lake Township had an even larger total of 1,927 housing units. This is commensurate with

higher populations in the townships. Meanwhile, 33.6% of Lake City’s housing units were vacant while the proportion of vacancies was even higher in Lake Township and Forest Township (39.9%, 35.7%, respectively) (DP04\_17). Thirty-one percent of houses in Lake City were occupied only seasonally while the proportion for Lake Township and Forest Township were higher: 35.6% and 51%, in that order (B25004).

The vast majority of occupied housing units were owner-occupied within all three communities. As of 2017, 76.6% of occupied housing units in Lake City were owner-occupied while that figure was slightly higher at 82.4% in Lake Township, and slightly lower at 70.8% in Forest Township. Meanwhile, homeownership shares were lower at 71% for the State of Michigan (DP04). These findings indicate that although incomes in these three communities are moderate relative to the State, homeownership in the Lake City area is on par or higher than the State.

Even though the cost of housing is relatively low in these communities compared with Michigan as a whole, it is high relative to household income. For Lake City homeowners in 2017, the median mortgage payment (\$889) was about 30% lower than the statewide median payment of \$1,251 (DP04), but households remain “cost-burdened.” Households that pay more than 30% of their monthly earnings on housing are considered “cost-burdened,” by the U.S. Census Bureau and a relatively large proportion of households in these communities fall within this category. Homeowners are less severely affected than renters by housing costs. Only 17.9% of Lake City households with a mortgage were cost-burdened by these payments in 2017, and that figure was similar in Forest Township (19%) and lower in Lake Township (11.6%). These figures are more similar compared with 14.8% of households statewide (DP04\_17).

Among Lake City households that rent, about 59% spend upwards of 30% of their monthly earnings on housing. The proportion was even higher in Forest Township (64% of households renting) while it was considerably lower (27% of rental households) in Lake Township (DP04\_17). Paying such high proportions of monthly income degrades the economic health of communities because households have less money to spend elsewhere.

## Housing Variety

Another potential problem in the housing market is housing type uniformity. As is common in many American municipalities, there is an overwhelming majority of one housing type: single-family detached homes. In Lake City, almost 93% of homes are this type, which is only slightly higher than Lake Township (86.5%) and significantly higher than Forest Township (68.6%). Limited



*Almost all homes in Lake City are single family.*

housing options can have dire implications. For example, some demographics such as the elderly living alone or young families may wish to have smaller units that are easier to maintain. If these units are not available, then they may choose to live elsewhere. Considering that large percentages of residents in Lake and Forest Townships will be moving into retirement age ranges within the next 10 to 15 years, the need for greater housing variety will likely present the greatest concern in these communities. Housing variety tends to provide a variety of price points as well which makes it easier for people to upgrade or downsize as they see fit.

## SOURCES

- 1 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2019 Poverty Guidelines. <https://aspe.hhs.gov/2019-poverty-guidelines>



*Fall colors on Lake Missaukee.*  
Source: Lake City Area Chamber of Commerce



# 3

## Natural Features & Land Use

The communities of Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township are fortunate to have an abundance of unique natural resources including freshwater inland lakes, and expansive wetlands and forests. These three communities recognize the critical importance of these features to quality of life for residents as well as to a thriving local economy. In acknowledging these interdependencies, this chapter examines key natural features and sets a broad path for continued stewardship of these features and for their integration with future land use and development decisions in each community.

### EXISTING LAND USE

The communities of Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township have land cover types ranging from high intensity use by humans to relative wilderness. Concentrations of human activities are generally highest near Lake Missaukee and rapidly taper off with distance away from the water body. The high-intensity development within the communities is in Lake City's downtown near to the shoreline, and this area includes contiguous commercial buildings as well as single family houses at relatively high densities. Residential housing continues to encompass most of the land along the lake's shoreline in the City and in Lake Township however the housing's density decreases with greater distance west of downtown. Aside from the areas surrounding the Lake Missaukee, concentrations of development are in Lake Township along the thoroughfares M-55, M-66, and La Chance Road, and in Forest Township along M-66.

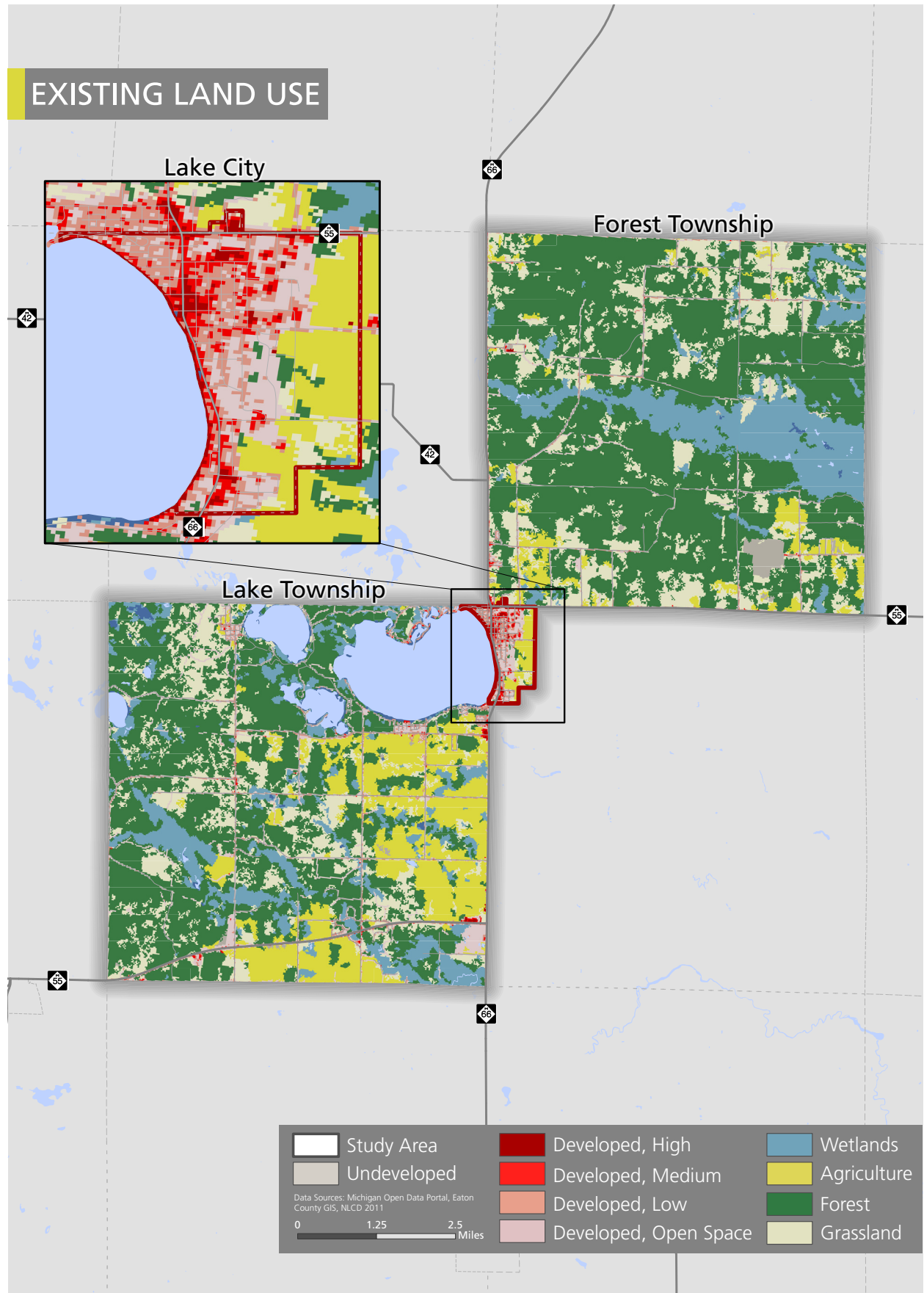
Most of the communities' diverse natural features are in Lake and Forest Township, however a few are also in Lake City. The eastern portion of the City remains relatively rural as residential housing gives way to open space, pasture, and croplands.

The northeastern part of Lake Township also has ample land dedicated to pasture and crops, as does the southern part of Forest Township. This lends itself to the peaceful and bucolic character that these communities are well known for. Moving away from the lakes and from the City, the western part of Lake Township is primary deciduous forest, although stands of evergreen are also mixed in. Similarly, the central portion of Forest Township is characterized by expansive deciduous and coniferous forests, although these give way to emergent and wooded wetlands near the west branch of the Muskegon River, which flows through the community's center. Moving north, open grassland, as well as deciduous forest, again occupy a large portion of Forest Township near its border.

### WATERSHEDS

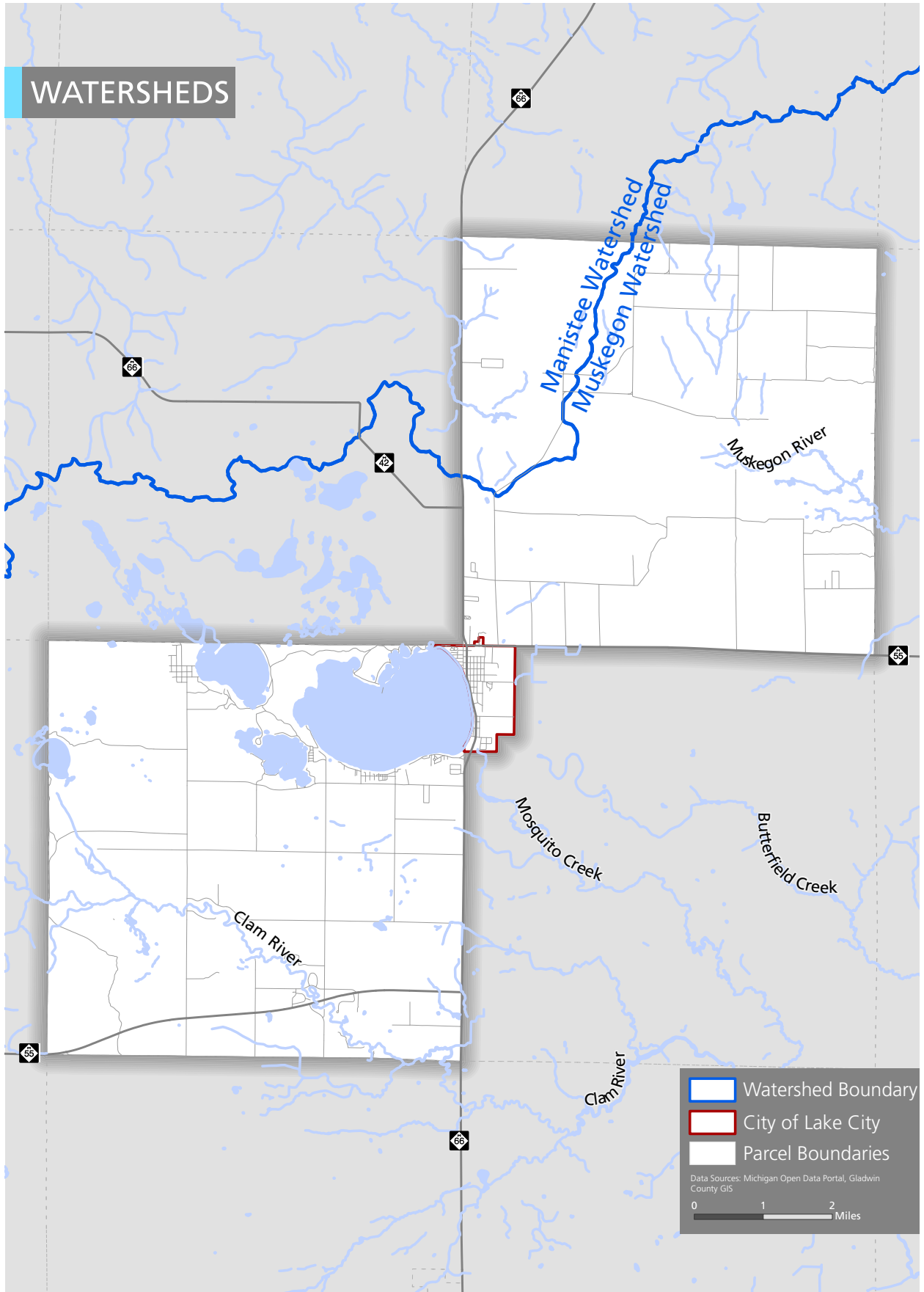
The three Missaukee County communities are located within two watersheds in Michigan's lower peninsula. Lake City and Lake Township are located completely within the Muskegon River Watershed, while Forest Township is split with the Big Manistee River Watershed.<sup>1</sup> A watershed refers to a geographic area wherein all precipitation eventually flows via gravity into a large body such as a lake, or in the case of these three communities, a river.<sup>2</sup> The Muskegon River Watershed encompasses over 2,700 square miles of land within nine counties, which makes it the second largest watershed in the State of Michigan.<sup>3</sup> Because Lake City, Lake Township, and part of Forest Township are located in the upper reaches of the watershed, their land use decisions affect water quality in much of the Muskegon River as it flows to Lake Michigan. The Big Manistee River Watershed encompasses 1,800 square miles of land within seven counties and is thus a similarly large watershed.<sup>4</sup>

# MAP 2: EXISTING LAND USE





# MAP 3: WATERSHEDS



**TABLE 3: SPECIES AND HABITAT SAMPLING AT LOCATIONS IN THE UPPER MUSKEGON RIVER WATERSHED (2011)**

Stream	Survey Location	Macroinvertebrate Community Rating & Score	Habitat Rating & Score	County	Recommended Modifications
Clam River	Haskell Lake Road	Acceptable	Good	Clare	None
Clam River	La Chance Road	Acceptable	Good	Missaukee	Bank Stabilization
West Branch Muskegon River	M-55	Acceptable	Good	Missaukee	None
Clam River	Stoney Corners Road	Excellent	Good	Missaukee	None
Bear Creek	Barney Lake Road	Acceptable	Good	Roscommon	None

Source: Biological assessment of the Muskegon River Watershed in Clare, Mecosta, Missaukee, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Osceola, and Roscommon

Fortunately, consistently clean and high-quality water has been recorded in the upper portion of the Muskegon River Watershed in recent sampling. A 2011 project by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality sampled macroinvertebrate communities, including flies and insects, as well as the quality of fish species’ physical habitat at several locations in the upper watershed. The score for macroinvertebrate community health are set by the State Department of Environmental Quality and are based on the number of species identified, as well as the number and percentage of important species including mayflies, stoneflies, snails, and leeches in comparison to these figures in undisturbed habitat areas.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the State-defined measures for habitat rating were based on the stability of stream banks, degree of protection provided by surrounding vegetation to the river, and levels of sediment in the river’s water.<sup>6</sup>

Two sample locations on the Clam River in Missaukee County, a tributary of the Muskegon River, met the State of Michigan’s defined “acceptable” and “excellent” levels of macroinvertebrate species health, while both locations also met defined “good” habitat ratings for these species, in accordance with the set criteria.<sup>7</sup> A sample location on the West Branch of the Muskegon River in Missaukee County met defined “acceptable” metrics of macroinvertebrate species health and also met “good” habitat standards. Although these results

suggest the upper watershed is in good health, and that surrounding communities effectively keep the rivers clean, the report suggests that their environmental quality could still be improved. The monitoring reported some sediment deposition and susceptibility to flash flooding in both the Clam and Muskegon Rivers.<sup>8</sup> Although not all these issues are caused in the three communities, the data suggests further action is needed to ensure continued watershed health.

### Watershed Management Practices

The Upper Manistee River Watershed Management Plan was created in 2007 and puts forward several best practices, tailored to the context of upper watersheds in Michigan, that can be implemented by local governments to reduce sedimentation, moderate flooding, and reduce nutrient loading from nonpoint source pollution sites. As the plan states, sites near sensitive waterbodies in the watershed, including headwater streams, should be higher priority locations for the implementation of these management techniques.<sup>9</sup> Considering that these techniques have the potential to maintain waterbodies such as the Clam River and Muskegon River, both of which flow near or in the three communities, and were recently identified as “Blue Ribbon Trout Streams” with some of the best fly-fishing opportunities in Michigan, the three jurisdictions should strategically implement the plan’s best management recommendations.<sup>10</sup>

**TABLE 4: SUGGESTED SEDIMENTATION BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

Streambank Erosion Sites	Road / Stream Crossing Sites
<u>Stormwater Basin Installation</u> - Create basins to temporarily contain runoff from properties and pavement.	<u>Culvert Replacement</u> – Replace culvert tunnels in locations with embankment erosion along streams.
<u>Tree Revetments</u> - Place trees directly along river banks where the river bends in order to moderate runoff and erosion.	<u>Revegetation</u> – Replace vegetation in locations with embankment erosion.
<u>Revegetation</u> - Plant vegetation in locations with river bends and human access.	<u>Stabilize Shoulders</u> - Solidify locations with shoulder and ditch runoff.
<u>Creating Terraced Steps</u> - Create a series of flat steps instead of slopes for locations with river bends.	<u>Harden Approaches to the River</u> - Solidify the approach to the river in locations with long banks and embankment erosion.
<u>Limiting Access</u> - Limit the number of locations with human use.	<u>Install Diversion Outlets</u> - In locations with long steep approaches with embankment erosion.

Source: Upper Manistee River Watershed Management Plan

These practices should be implemented on a case by case basis depending on property owner cooperation, funding availability, and project partnership.

Also, a variety of practices known as low impact development (LID) can be used to reduce the impacts of stormwater runoff, particularly in areas with more built density. Conventional land development, including roads, buildings, and parking facilities change the hydrological cycle from its natural process. These built facilities prevent the natural infiltration of stormwater into the soil and deters filtration of stormwater by vegetation before it reaches waterbodies. This has the effect of increasing the amount of stormwater that runs off the landscape as well as its levels of pollution.<sup>11</sup> LID is a method of stormwater management that manages precipitation where it falls, rather than where it has its negative impacts. The techniques are designed to mimic a site’s hydrological conditions before development, and LID features work by filtering nutrients, slowing the rate of runoff, and increasing percolation into groundwater. Considering the benefits that maintaining high water quality provides, the communities of Lake Township, Forest Township, and particularly Lake City, with its higher proportion of built land and higher densities, should consider programs and policies to encourage the following LID practices.

## Low Impact Development Techniques

- Reduce impervious surfaces:** This minimizes runoff volumes and peak rates.
- Install vegetated roofs and rainwater capture devices:** Vegetated roofs moderate stormwater runoff rates and provide heating and cooling benefits.
- Incorporate bioretention areas and rain gardens:** These control water volumes, filter pollution, and facilitate groundwater recharge.
- Create infiltration basins and trenches:** These features moderate runoff rates and volumes and promote stormwater infiltration.
- Restore native vegetation in riparian areas and build wetlands:** This improves water quality, filters nutrients, and reduces runoff volumes.

## LAKE MISSAUKEE

Lake Missaukee is a natural feature that defines both quality of life and shape of the local economy for the communities of Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township. Lake City stretches along the Lake Missaukee's eastern shore and Lake Township includes most of the Lake's frontage further to the west while Forest Township is located inland to the Lake's northeast. Lake Missaukee covers 1,880 acres and its depths range from 5 feet to 27 feet.<sup>12</sup> Missaukee County Park, which encompasses 33 acres of land on the Lake's northern shore, is the major point of public access to the Lake, and visitors enjoy the park's sandy beaches as well as its freshwater fishing opportunities throughout the summer months. There are also two other smaller public access points on the Lake, but most of its remaining shores are taken up by a mix of year-round and seasonal residences. A variety of water sampling undertaken throughout 2018 shows that conditions in Lake Missaukee remain suitable for recreational use and to support ecosystems, although some impacts from nutrients could pose a problem if action is not taken.

A water quality test conducted by Lake & Land Management Corporation in July 2018 showed for instance that E. coli bacteria remains absent from the Lake, even during peak water temperatures and use by residents.<sup>13</sup> The sample also found that pH levels were within limits set by state statute,

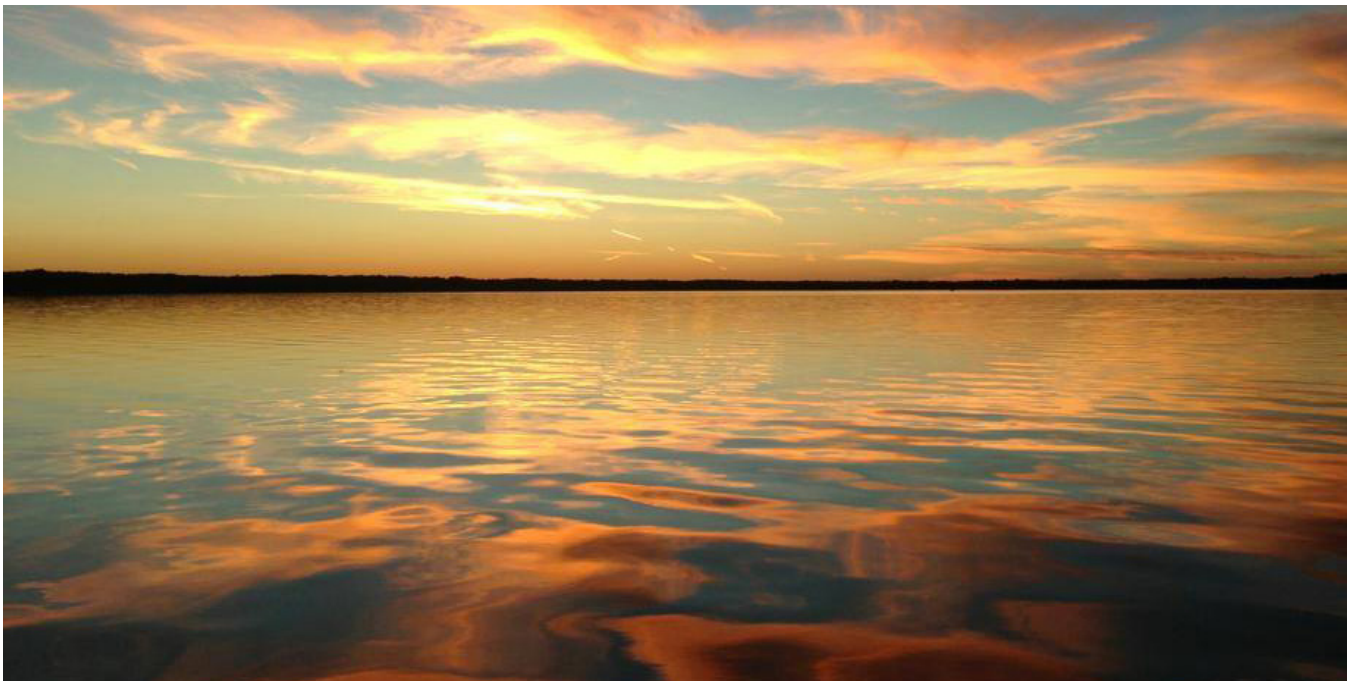
and that dissolved oxygen concentrations were in the range needed to support fish populations and their related ecosystems. However, the sample also found slightly elevated levels of phosphorus enrichment in July 2018, and even higher levels in September 2018, which suggests that runoff from surrounding residential and agricultural land may begin to pose a threat to water quality if measures are not taken to control it. This further shows the need for Lake City and Lake Township with the large extent of frontage on the lake, to explore LID programs to ensure water quality.

## WETLANDS

The following maps show the variety of wetlands in the Lake City area. Wetlands are an important natural resource that provide a wide variety of ecoservices to communities including:

- » Flooding and stormwater runoff control
- » Water quality improvement and filtration
- » Erosion and sedimentation control
- » Groundwater recharge
- » Provide wildlife and bird habitat
- » Offer recreational opportunities
- » Provide open space and aesthetic value<sup>14</sup>

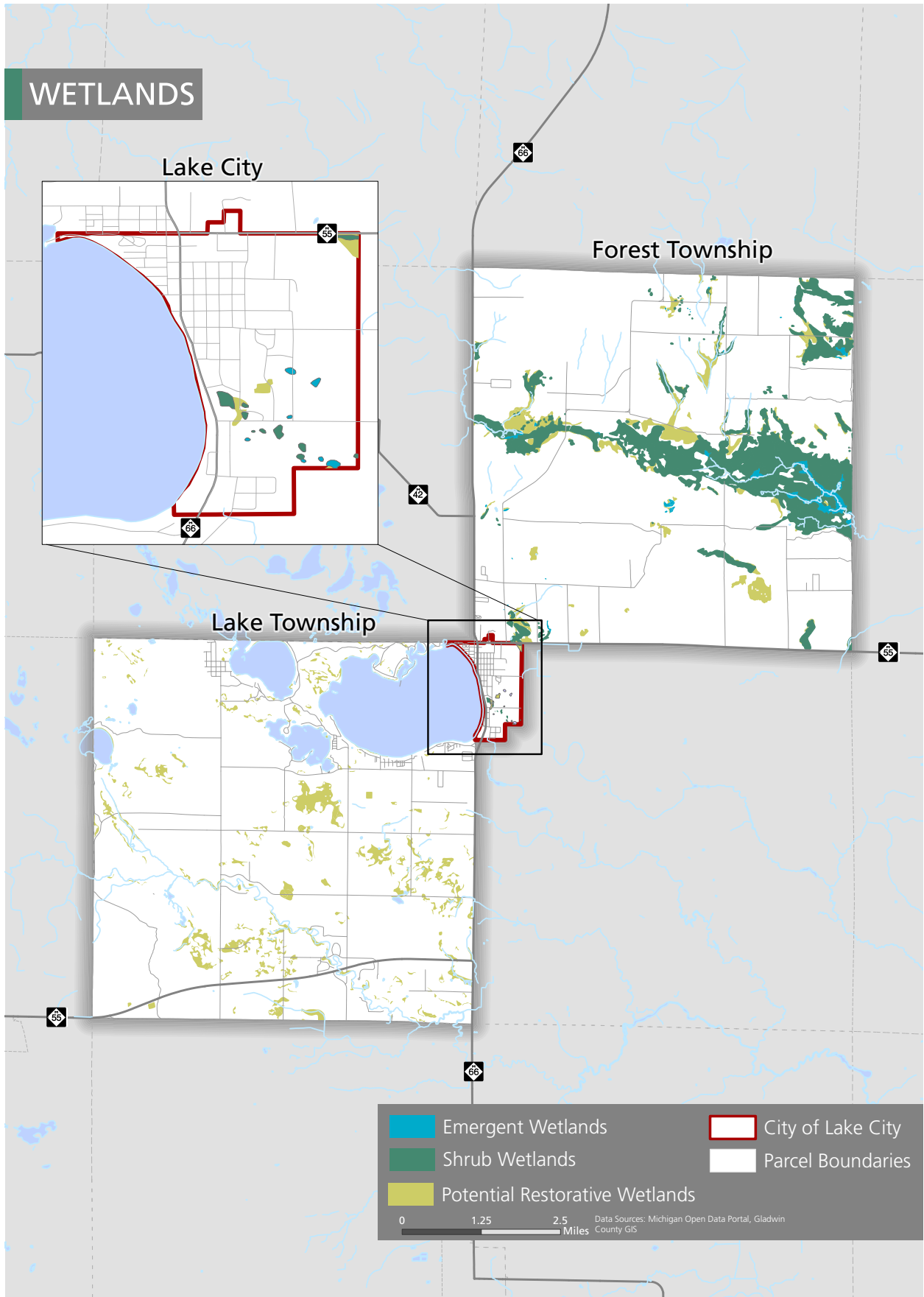
The maps show that Lake City, with its comparatively dense development, has a relatively



*Lake Missaukee*

Source: Lake City Area Chamber of Commerce

# MAP 4: WETLANDS



**TABLE 5: TYPES OF WETLANDS IN THE LAKE CITY AREA**

Wetland Type	Forest Township	Lake Township	Lake City
Emergent Wetlands (Acres)	206.2	1.7	8.7
Shrub Wetlands (Acres)	2,518.3	4.2	7.5
Potential Wetland Restoration (Acres)	782.1	1,036.1	9.2
<b>Total (Acres)</b>	<b>3,506.6</b>	<b>1,042.0</b>	<b>25.4</b>

small portion of wetlands compared with both townships. Wetlands in the City comprise a total of 25 acres of land and include both emergent wetlands, which are submerged under water for most of the year, and shrub wetlands, which are dry for at least part of the year.<sup>15</sup> Both of these types of wetlands provide natural habitat for a diversity of plant species including cedar, poplar, balsam, black ash, and red maple trees, and rushes and sedges, as well as a variety of insects, all of which are essential to local ecosystem functioning.<sup>16</sup> Also within the City’s 25 total acres of wetland are 9 acres of “potential restoration areas”, which according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, have been degraded by development but could be returned to functioning. Considering the benefits of wetlands and the close proximity to Lake Missaukee, the City should identify programs and policies to restore these degraded areas.

Moving to the City’s northeast, wetlands are abundant in Forest Township and comprise a total of 1,042 acres of land in the jurisdiction. Most of the Township’s wetlands are shrub wetlands. These seasonally dry wetlands comprise a total area of 2,518 acres and are also located primarily along the river’s headwaters as it flows from west to east across the Township. Although Forest Township faces less pressure for residential development, it is important that the community work to preserve these natural areas considering their large and contiguous extent, their value in terms of stormwater management and filtration, and the Muskegon River’s vital natural habitat and recreation opportunities. Also dispersed within Forest Township are 782 acres of potential restoration lands, mostly on more developed properties further to the north and south. The Township will need to work with property owners for their restoration.

In contrast to Forest Township, the map indicates that Lake Township has few emergent and shrub

wetland areas that haven’t been impacted by development. This is because larger portions of the Township are residential, particularly along Lake Missaukee and Crooked Lake, or are under productive agricultural use. On an optimistic note, the State of Michigan databases indicate that 1,036 acres of wetlands within the Township could potentially be reverted from their degraded state to again provide valuable ecosystem services. Most of these potential restoration areas are dispersed on residential properties throughout the Township and are not connected to one another. This being the case, Lake Township should work closely with property owners to explore incentive programs and other policy measures that could be implemented to rehabilitate the Township’s wetlands.

## WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREAS

Most of the drinking water in Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township comes from groundwater, either from the City’s water system or from private wells. Fortunately, no locations within Lake City’s zip code have reported water contamination above defined health guidelines between October 2015 and September 2018.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, all three communities should seek to track potential sources of pollution to groundwater, and one way to do this is to implement a wellhead protection program through the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, which sets guidelines to protect groundwater. Michigan communities that participate in the program must comply with a set of guidelines that greatly reduce the risk of contamination to local groundwater. The guidelines include determining the geographic areas that feed drinking water wells, identifying potential sources of contamination to these areas, and implementing measures that reduce the risk that these potential contamination sources will affect groundwater.<sup>18</sup> In return for taking these measures, the state provides a 50% matching grant to cover the costs of identifying protection

areas and implementing measures to prevent pollution.

## LEAKY UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS

In instances where commercial or industrial establishments relied on petroleum to operate their business, they often store it in an underground storage tank (UST). This refers to any tank or underground piping connected to the tank that has at least 10% of its combined volume underground. Before the 1980s, USTs were made of steel which in some instances corroded over time, causing the contents to leak into the soil. The consequences of this are most pressing where people grow food or drink water adjacent to these locations. Records on USTs held by the State of Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy show that five leaks from underground storage tanks occurred in Lake City and remain "open," while 17 leaks occurred and

### Terms Defined:

**Open Leaking Underground Storage:** A release has occurred, but no corrective action has been completed to meet the land use criteria.

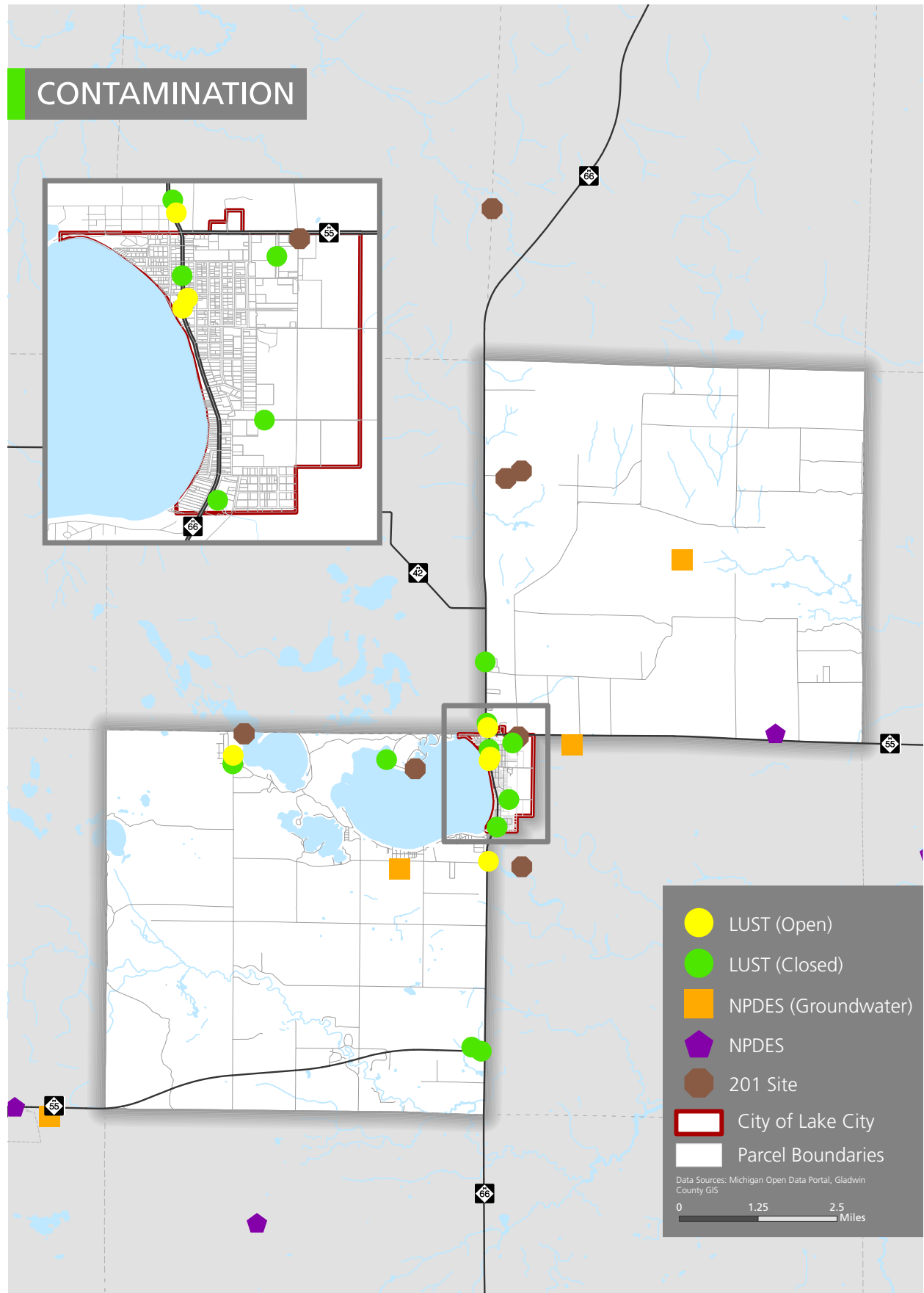
**Closed Leaking Underground Storage:** A release has occurred, and corrective action has been completed to meet the land use criteria.

**Environmental Contamination:** The release of a hazardous substance, or the potential release of a discarded hazardous substance, in a quantity which is or may become injurious to the environment, public health, safety, or welfare.



*Lake Missaukee near downtown Lake City.*

# MAP 5: CONTAMINATION







*Trees provide numerous benefits to communities.*

are now “closed,” in the past 25 years.<sup>19</sup> The maps of UST sites in the communities shows that most underground open tanks are located in Lake City’s major commercial corridor along Main Street or in the residential subdivision west of Crooked Lake in Lake Township.

The map also shows the location of several other various types of environmental contamination throughout the communities over recent decades. Two sites with National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits are located within the communities, one in Lake Township and the other in Forest Township. These permits are administered by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and allow for the discharge of a specified type and amount of a pollutant into waterbodies.<sup>20</sup> These sites therefore, could represent a potential threat to groundwater in the communities, and show potential concerns moving forward, especially in considering wellhead protection zones. Other contamination sites, including five 201 sites, where residential

properties were closed due to contamination are geographically dispersed in residential areas of Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township.<sup>21</sup>

## FORESTS

The following maps show the location of the forested lands in the region. Michigan’s deciduous and coniferous forests provide a variety of benefits to communities:

- » Increased property and home values
- » Enhanced air quality
- » Heating and cooling savings in buildings
- » Reduced erosion
- » Ecosystem services and increased biodiversity
- » Moderated stormwater quantity and improved water filtration<sup>22</sup>

The map shows that Lake City has relatively low tree canopy coverage compared to the

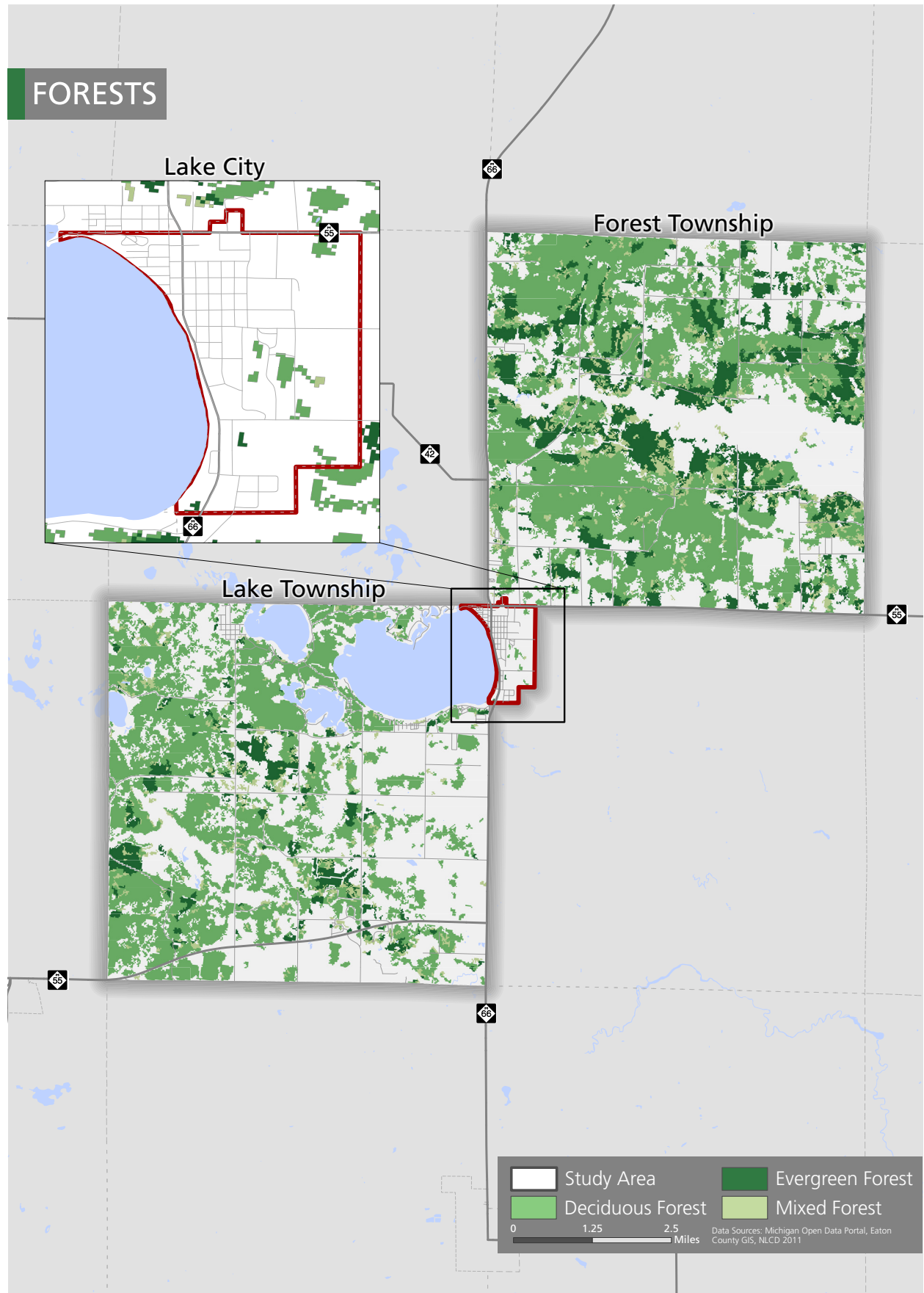
neighboring townships. Most of the City's trees are deciduous and are concentrated in the central and southern portion of the community in Maple Grove Park and in the undeveloped land to the park's south. In contrast, the aptly named Forest Township has ample deciduous forests, most of which are in undeveloped tracts of land. Forest Township's coniferous forests are centrally located and in lower-lying areas near to the west branch of the Muskegon River. Lake Township also has large expanses of forest located in its western

extent, although these wooded expanses are more frequently interrupted by housing and subdivisions than those in Forest Township. Considering that forests stands are less present in Lake Township and Lake City along the Lake Missaukee shoreline, both municipalities should consider zoning or incentive programs for tree planting on private property in order to increase tree canopy.

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# MAP 6: FORESTS





*M-66 runs through Lake City*



# 4

## Community Services & Transportation

Community services play an important role in defining the resident's quality of life and in making them desirable places to live now and in the future. Meanwhile, other services such as stormwater management, public water provision, and provision of transportation infrastructure, are key factors in creating a thriving local economy. Together with state and regional governments, the communities of Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township offer a diverse array of public services. This chapter defines existing services in the communities and sets a strategic path for their continued enhancement.

### MUNICIPAL SERVICES

#### Water and Sewer

Often it is the infrastructure that isn't seen that has a huge impact on a household's well-being, for example, water and sewer. Lake City's water supply is provided by the City and comes from groundwater, which is pumped from three water wells located within the community. The first of these is located behind the City's Department of Public Works Building on First Street in the community's southern extent and pumps water at a rate of 322 gallons per minute. The City also maintains 2 wells in the south of Maple Grove Campground, which produce 560 and 579 gallons of water per minute, respectively. The second of these wells was installed in the Campground in 2010, at which time the City replaced a number of its water mains. From these wells, the water is then pumped through a series of distribution mains to homes and businesses throughout the community, or to the community's storage tank which holds 200,000 gallons of water and is also located in Maple Grove Park. With the 2010 expansion of wells and water mains, the water

system supplies between 100,000 and 400,000 gallons per day, and the City anticipates that this will continue to meet the community's needs. As of 2019, the system serves 497 properties located within the City as well as one surrounding township. Treatment of the community's wastewater is then handled at aerated lagoons located east of the City in Reeder Township.<sup>1,2</sup>

Meanwhile, all of the properties in Lake Township use private wells that draw from groundwater as their drinking water source, and no parcels in the Township use Lake City's water system. Lake Township does provide its own sewer service to about 800 properties in the northern portion of the Township along Lake Missaukee.<sup>3</sup> For homes near Lake Missaukee in the Township, the sewer system transports wastewater from homes via gravity while it works via effluent pressure for homes located further west near Lake Sapphire and Crooked Lake. A total of six pumping stations, all of which are located adjacent to Lake Missaukee assist in pumping wastewater to one of two aerated lagoons located to the south of the system along Jennings Road, which have a combined capacity of 14.7 million gallons.<sup>4,5</sup> The Township's sanitary system is a key infrastructure element that protects Lake Missaukee from contamination, which could otherwise occur with private septic systems that are not consistently and properly managed. The township expects that the system will continue to meet demand for sanitary services past 2019 in the area surrounding three lakes.<sup>6</sup> Households in the southern portion of the Township use septic tanks for wastewater management.

Similarly, all households in Forest Township use private water wells to draw groundwater as their primary drinking water source. Four properties

in the southern portion of the Township do however use Lake City’s sewer system to manage wastewater, although the rest of the properties in the community are on private septic tanks.<sup>7</sup>

### Stormwater Management

Lake City and Lake Township sewer and stormwater management systems are separated from each other, which is unique in Michigan communities. The separation of these systems prevents wastewater from entering into waterbodies during times of heavy precipitation, as is common in communities with combined systems. Lake City manages stormwater with a series of catch basins and soakways located throughout the community.<sup>8</sup> From the catch basins, stormwater runoff is then discharged directly into Lake Missaukee through a series of eleven discharge points, nine of which are located between John Street in the City’s downtown and the southern extent of Miltner Park. The park itself has seven of these discharge points.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, Lake Township uses a series of culvers that capture stormwater and discharge it into one of the lakes, although the Township’s stormwater is filtered to some extent before this occurs.<sup>10</sup>

### Education

Lake City Area School District provides public education to Lake City, and Forest Township, while Lake Township is split between Lake City Area schools in its northern part and McBain Rural Agricultural school in its southwest corner. The Lake City Area School district encompasses 266 square miles of land.<sup>11</sup> As of 2019, the school district served 1,128 students across all of these facilities.<sup>12</sup> The High school includes grades 9-12 and had a student population of 351 in 2019. Recent scores on state standardized tests show high levels of academic performance by high school students; Lake City High School students obtained proficient test scores throughout all subject areas at a higher rate than the state



*The Lake City Community Center opened in 2018 and serves area adults and youth.*

Source: 9 & 10 News

of Michigan average in the 2017-2018 school year.<sup>13</sup> The school district also provides pre-kindergarten services to families within the district, an important service that isn’t commonly found.<sup>14</sup> Corresponding with Lake City’s growth in younger residents prior to 2017, each of the district’s facilities experienced growth in enrollment between 2014 and 2019. This is an unusual trend in Michigan, and further signifies that the integration between appropriate housing for families and the school district facilities could present a key issue for these communities.

### Community Center

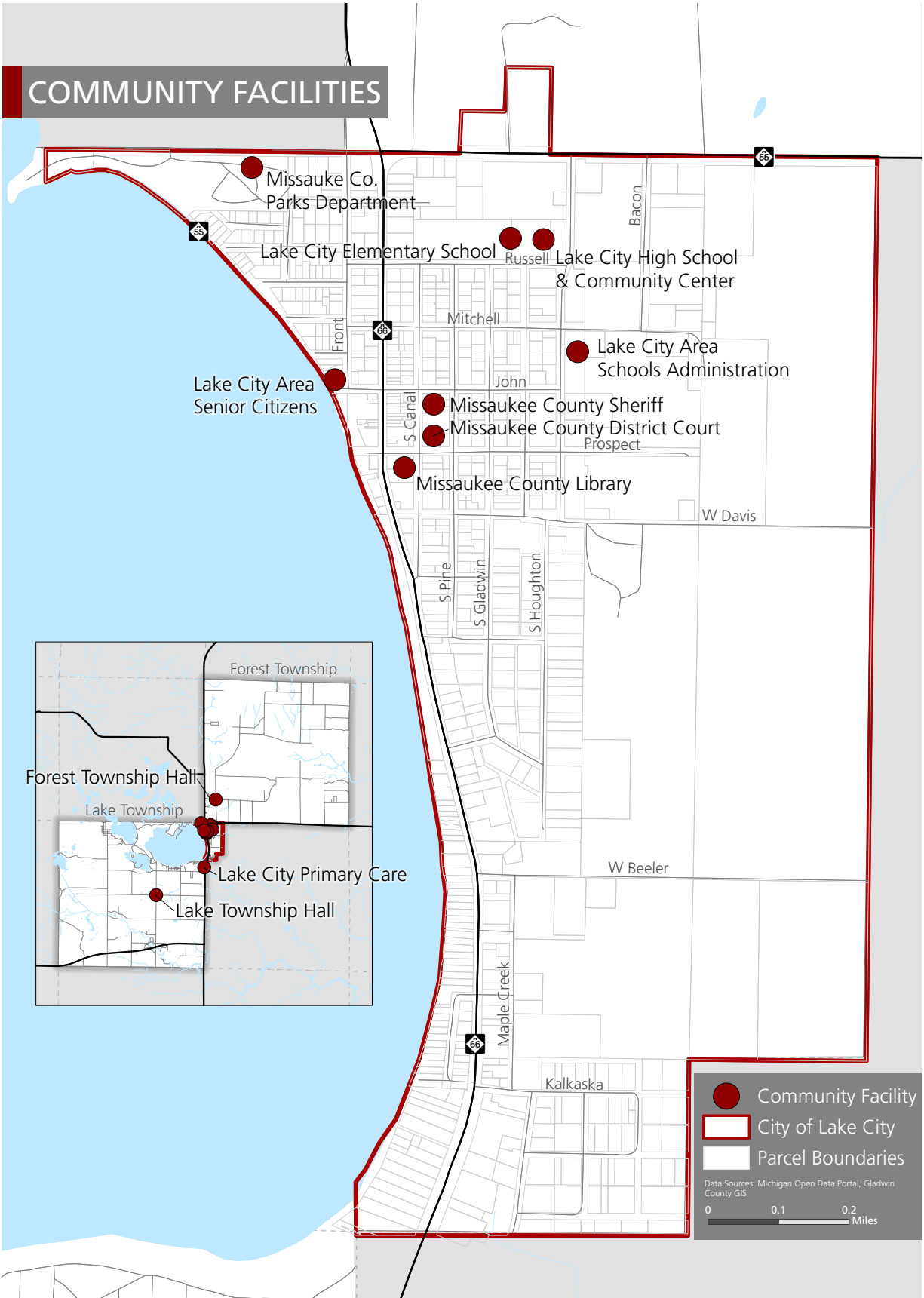
Another key community facility is the gymnasium and community center, which was constructed on the school property in 2018 and offers diverse programming. Aside from serving high school students in physical education classes, the facility is available for use by residents within the school district before and after school hours. The gym features an indoor weight room, basketball courts, and a three-lane track and hosts exercise classes throughout the week. It was constructed

**TABLE 6: LAKE CITY SCHOOL FACILITIES & ENROLLMENT**

School	2019 Student Enrollment	Change in Enrollment since 2014
Lake City High School	351	+7%
Lake City Middle School	251	-11%
Lake City Elementary School	526	+118%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,128</b>	

Source: Public School Review. Lake City Elementary School.

# MAP 7: COMMUNITY FACILITIES



to provide year-round exercise and recreational amenities to residents. Financing for the project came partly from municipal bonds issued in 2016 but also from a variety of legacy and federal grants.<sup>15</sup> The facility is located adjacent to the school district's buildings along Russell Road in Lake City, providing convenient access from adjoining residential areas.

## Solid Waste

A majority of the solid waste produced in Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township is collected by private waste service providers. These materials are collected from homes and businesses and is then transported to landfills outside of Missaukee County for disposal. In addition, the Missaukee County Recycling Center is operated by the Missaukee County Conservation District under direction of the County Board of Commissioners. The recycling drop-off center is in Reeder Township. Participation in the program has been strong since the facility's opening which has led to the expansion of its drop-off hours, the expansion of its programming such as recycling events for electronics and batteries, and the addition of paid staff members. Recycling center staff also provide educational resources to schools and community groups regarding the benefits of recycling and the facility's services, which broadens the organization's scope. It is important to encourage recycling as landfills are a large and noxious land use that are difficult to plan because they are incompatible with most other uses and because they garner opposition from residents.<sup>16</sup>

## Healthcare and Senior Services

A variety of healthcare services, including general care facilities and senior services, are available to residents in the Lake City area. Lake City Primary Care has been the major provider of primary healthcare services to the community for roughly four decades.<sup>17</sup> This facility is located in Lake Township along M-66 just to the south of the border with Lake City. Meanwhile, Lake City Area Senior Citizens is a privately-operated facility providing specialized and long-term care in the form of assisted living to seniors in the Lake City area.<sup>18</sup> It is in Lake City on John Street near the Lake Missaukee waterfront. The Missaukee County Commission on Aging is another valuable resource that provides in-home services to over 300 area seniors including personal care, homemaking, medication set up, and transportation to healthcare appointments.<sup>19</sup> The organization's goal in providing in-home care

is to maintain the independence of area seniors while providing the essential homemaking services needed. The foundation is funded by an ongoing millage at the County level and most services are available to residents for free or for a small fee.<sup>20</sup> The Commission on Aging employs a total of 17 service providers along with six volunteer drivers.<sup>21</sup>

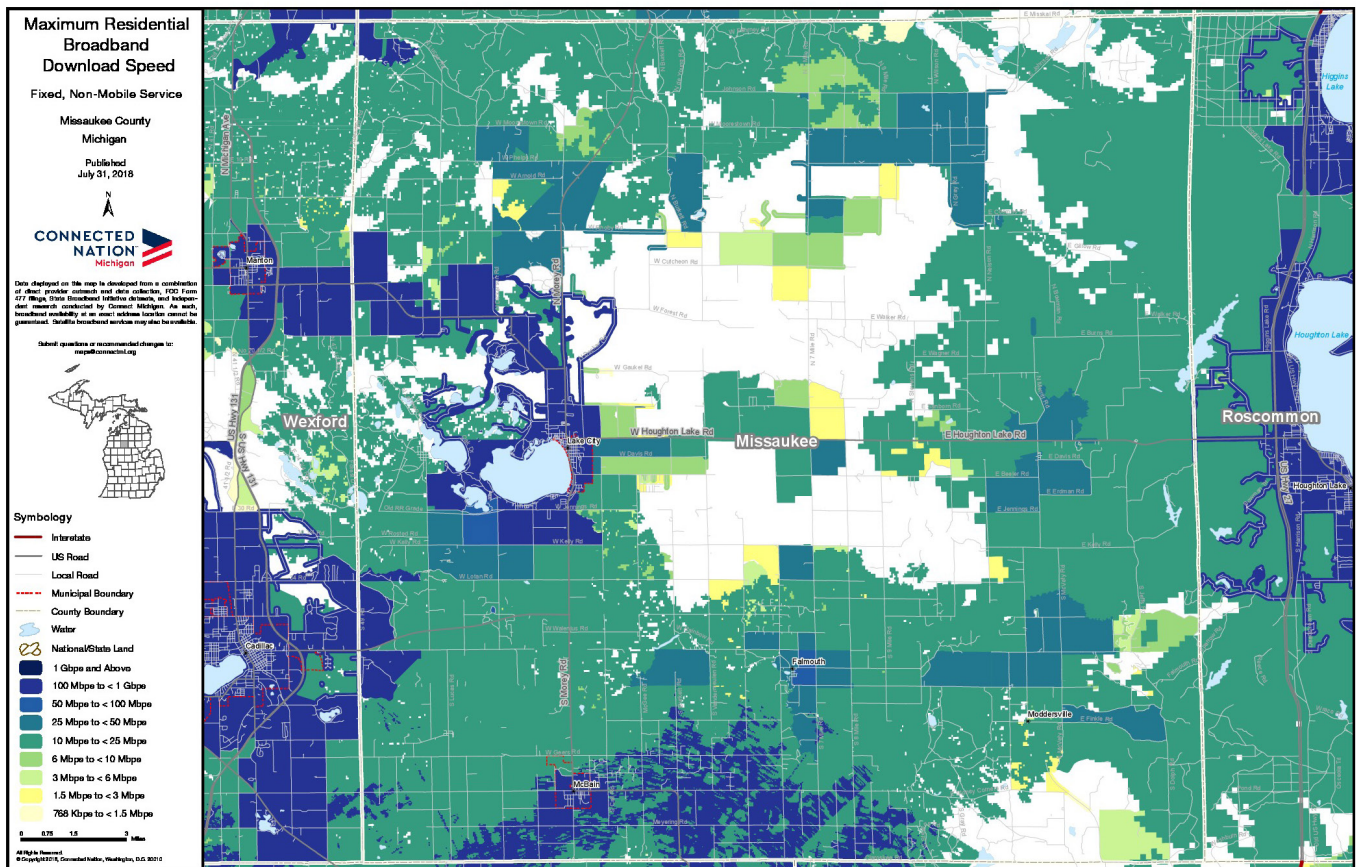
## Broadband Service

Access to broadband infrastructure and services is elemental in the development of a 21st century economy oriented toward services, workforce development, and the retention and attraction of businesses. Missaukee County recognizes the particular importance of this infrastructure to tourists and seasonal residents who seek to "stay connected" as well as to area students who need reliable internet service for assignments.<sup>22</sup> Accordingly, Missaukee County partnered with organizations at the state level in 2013 to understand current access to and knowledge of digital technologies among residents, and to identify areas for improvement. This information was organized in the County's Technology Action Plan.

The plan assessed these levels of technological access by scoring a series of specific criteria on a scale of 0 to 120, and Missaukee County scored 86. The County scored relatively low on measures of access including availability of broadband services, the speed of services available, and the number of competitive service providers available. As the plan states, this is because the County remains primarily rural and lacks key pieces of connecting infrastructure. The County scored marginally higher on measures of broadband adoption including participation in digital literacy programs and availability of public computer centers, which often provide needed access for low-income households. Missaukee County also scored higher on measures of broadband adoption by industries such as education, government, and healthcare. The findings from the technology action plan indicate that access to internet services will remain a key economic development issue in these communities.<sup>23</sup>

Although large portions of the County do not have access to baseline internet service, all of Lake City does, as do the densely developed portion of Lake Township near Lake Missaukee. Large portions of Forest Township remain without these levels of broadband service; land use planning is paramount because only in densely populated areas can these services be provided cost-effectively.





*Missaukee County internet download speeds.*

Source: Connected Nation, Michigan

The map displayed above shows residential broadband download speeds in Missaukee County as of 2018. It indicates that the entire City of Lake City, as well as the northern portion of Lake Township adjacent to Lake Missaukee, and the southern extent of Forest Township have maximum download speeds of 100 megabits per second and 1,000 megabits per second. These levels of service provision are enough to support most commercial activities and are therefore a crucial element of infrastructure for the local economy.<sup>24</sup>

## REGIONAL AND PRIVATE SERVICES

### Library and Cultural Services

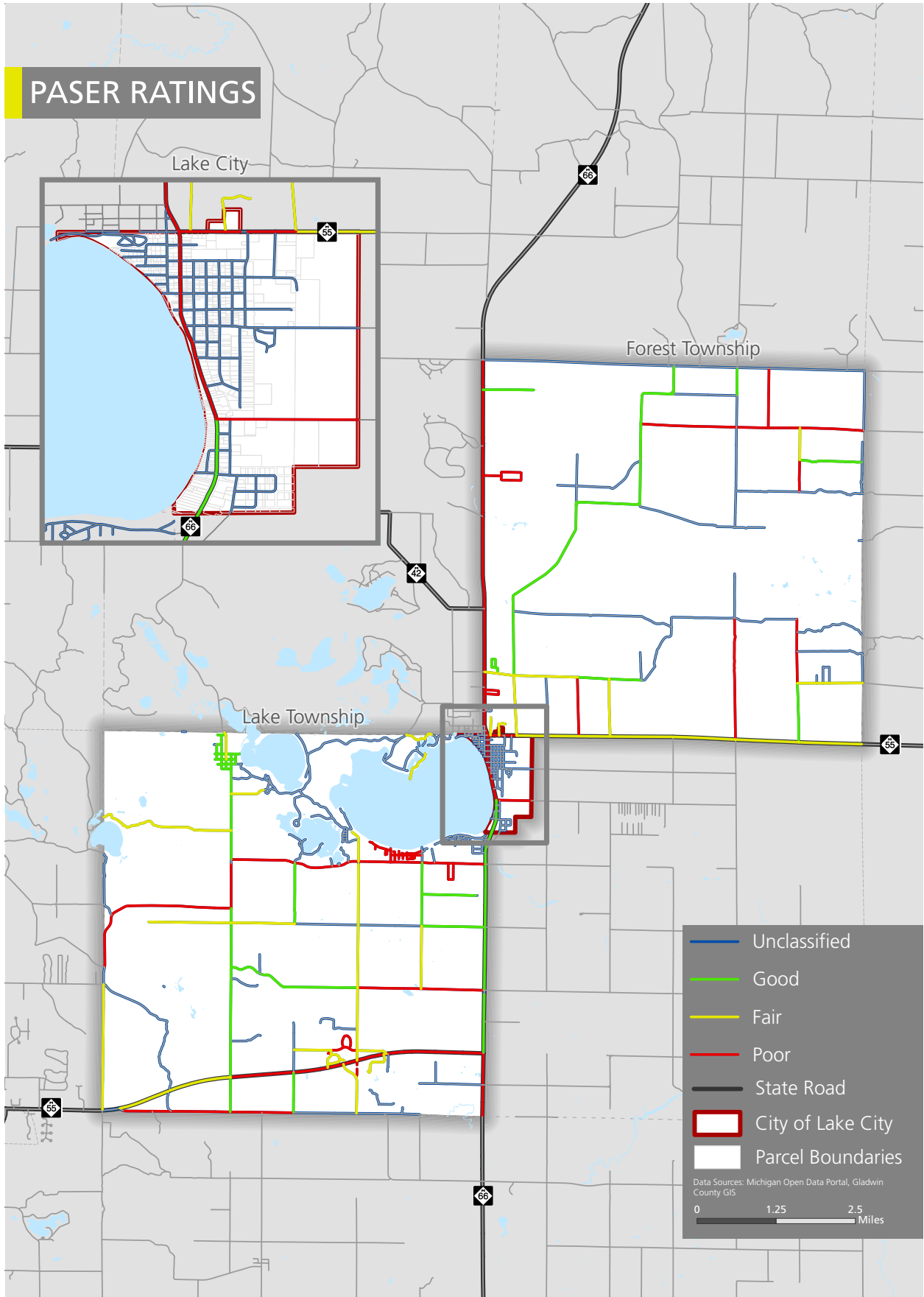
The Missaukee District Library provides additional educational, cultural, and entertainment services to residents of Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township. The library is located on Canal Street near Lake City's Downtown and is also close to the public schools and to the City's main residential area. The facility offers free



*Missaukee District Library*

Source: Missaukee District Library Facebook Page

# MAP 8: PASER RATINGS



wi-fi and computer use as well as specialized programming for youth and teenagers including a vocational studies primer, college admissions test preparation, assistance with homework and research, and career preparation. It also provides adult education classes including personal financial planning, cooking, as well as entertainment including musical performances.<sup>25</sup>

## Emergency Services

A variety of services are provided at the local level to keep residents of the three communities safe when needed and preserve the community's tranquil character. The Lake City Area Fire Department has a staff of 17 fully-trained firefighters and provides coverage to a geographic area of 38 square miles surrounding Lake City.<sup>26</sup> The department has made regular equipment upgrades over the decades preceding 2019 including new trucks and water suppression devices, and uses them to provide efficient service to the more densely-populated communities of Lake City and Lake Township from their facility in along John Street in the core of Lake City. The Missaukee County Sheriff's Department is located nearby in Lake City's downtown and provides the primary form of law enforcement to the three communities. Aside from the sheriff, the department maintains a staff of six corrections officers to help ensure the communities' safety.<sup>27</sup>

## TRANSPORTATION

### Road Ownership and Condition

The majority of roads in Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township are owned and maintained by the Missaukee County Road Commission, although a few are maintained by the local jurisdictions themselves. The Missaukee County Road Commission's map of road classifications shows that the only roads owned and maintained by the State Department of Transportation are the highways M-55, which stretches from east to west across the three communities, and M-66, which extends north to south.<sup>28,29</sup> Although these state roads have the highest capacity and accommodate the largest amount of daily traffic, local roads such as Jennings and La Chance roads are maintained by the County but still accommodate large amounts of vehicle traffic.

The Transportation Asset Management Council, which is an organization associated with MDOT, uses a standardized and widely accepted set

of measures to assess the condition of road pavement. According to these metrics, the quality of M-66 is in "good" condition in Lake Township and in the southern part of Lake City although it degrades to "poor" in Lake City's downtown. Meanwhile, M-55 was rated "poor" as it crosses the southern part of Lake Township, as well as in Lake City itself, while the road's quality was rated "fair" as it extends east of Lake City to form the southern border of Forest Township. Although local jurisdictions do not have the authority to maintain state roads, these roads handle the largest amounts of traffic in the communities and has concentrations of commercial uses.<sup>30</sup>

Similarly, many locally maintained roads in Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township are in "fair" or "poor" condition, which suggests that significant maintenance is needed. Many streets in Lake Township's residential area on Lake Missaukee are in degraded condition. Fortunately, Jennings Road, which crosses the Township from east to west and serves the jurisdiction's lakefront properties, was resurfaced in 2019. Segments of residential streets in the southern part of Forest Township are also rated in a degraded state. These locally maintained roads are also key to the economic health of the communities, particularly to developing a tourism-based economy. Most of the funding for Missaukee County's roads however, come from transportation-related revenue sources such as the fuel tax which is administered at the state level.<sup>31</sup> It is important that each of the three communities coordinate with these higher levels of government.

### Average Annual Daily Traffic

MDOT also provides figures on the average daily vehicle counts on state-owned streets, a figure known as average annual daily traffic (AADT). The organization's estimates show that M-66 in Lake City and in Lake Township north of Jennings Road has the highest AADT in the three communities, with daily traffic estimates ranging between 10,000 and 20,000 vehicles.<sup>32</sup> That these road segments are also in degraded condition further highlights their priority for maintenance. The next most heavily traveled streets in the communities are M-55 extending east of Lake City and along the southern extent of Forest Township, and M-66 in Lake Township south of Jennings Road. Both road segments have AADT estimates between 5,000 and 10,000 vehicles per day and serve a large portion of the businesses that would receive freight shipments.

## Public Transportation

Robust public transit services are often difficult to provide in low-density communities. The Cadillac-Wexford Transportation Authority provides a dial-a-ride service for residents of these three communities, with particular emphasis on rides for senior citizens with healthcare needs.<sup>33</sup> According to a report by Networks Northwest, the regional planning agency, this service provided transportation to 1,200 Missaukee County residents in 2013, all of whom were elderly or disabled.<sup>34</sup> The Missaukee County Commission on Aging also provides a similar on-demand service to seniors traveling to healthcare appointments.<sup>35</sup>

The Networks Northwest transportation framework describes the importance of public transportation to communities in northwest lower Michigan as well as several of the challenges and barriers to its use. As the report states, awareness and familiarity with transit services and routes are barrier to ridership, particularly the elderly and people with disabilities. Meanwhile, the call-ahead transit service, times of day without service, infrequent travel times, and long wait times makes transit services ineffective for commuters and those wishing to run errands. Currently, the Cadillac-Wexford Transportation Authority does not extend its regular bus service to Missaukee County.

Aside from housing, transportation is the single greatest expenditure for households throughout the United States, measured on an annual basis. According to the Center for Neighborhood Technology, a nonprofit, residents of Missaukee County spend \$14,681 annually in transportation costs, which equates to over 29% of the County's median annual household income.<sup>36</sup> Robust public transportation service also has the potential to moderate transportation expenses for the households in a community that choose to use the service instead of driving. While a transit millage in Missaukee County failed in 2016, the service would be key to ensure a baseline job accessibility and moderate the cost of living. Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township should, therefore, continue to work with Missaukee County to establish consistent transit service.

## Complete Streets

The complete streets movement is a relatively recent development in transportation planning centered around the design of city streets to serve bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users

## Complete Streets Design Elements

Curb Extensions

Roadway Medians

Safe Crosswalks

Wide Sidwalks

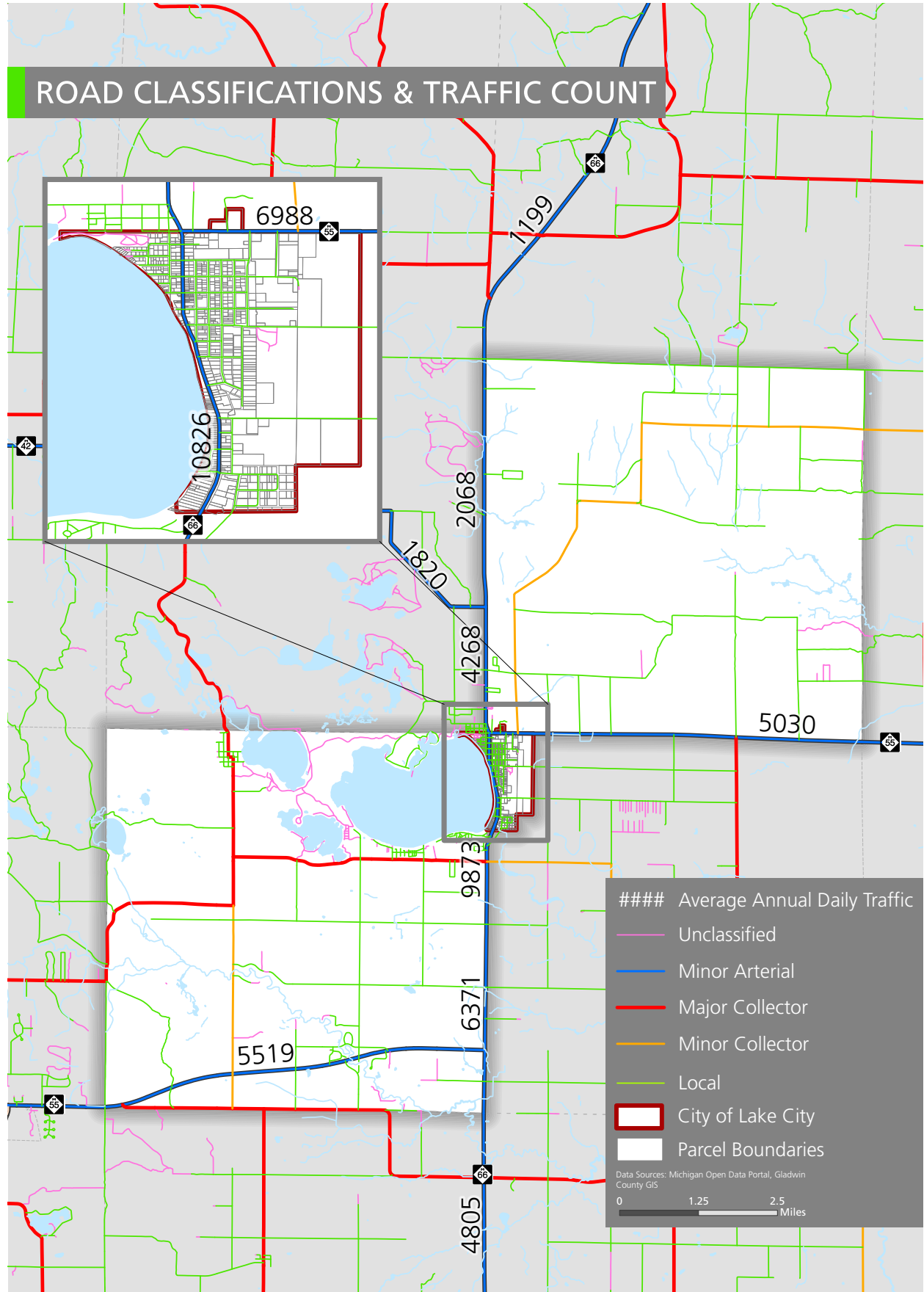
Bike Lanes and Racks

Bus Shelters

in addition to automobiles. The movement emerged in response to conventional streetscape design, which many advocates view as facilitating automobile travel at the expense of other transportation modes. In line with this thinking, the report "A Transportation Framework for Northwest Michigan," published by Networks Northwest in 2013, recommends that local communities enact complete streets policies and programs in order to accommodate the preferences of younger and older demographics, lessen the costs on households and public infrastructure associated with automobile dependency, and to encourage greater public health through active lifestyles.<sup>37</sup> Requiring new developments to include complete street design elements, or that they contribute funds to these types of public improvements are examples of complete streets policies.<sup>38</sup>

The existing presence of complete streets design features varies widely between the three communities, as does the share of transportation modes. Of the three communities, Lake City is perhaps the closest to complete street guidelines. The community's streets feature small blocks and traditional gridded street patterns with sidewalks and street trees. Considering this supportive environment, it is not surprising that a relatively high percentage (6%) of commuters in the community reported walking to work in 2017 (B08301). Meanwhile, streets in Forest Township

# MAP 9: ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS & TRAFFIC COUNT



have fewer sidewalk connections and its buildings are spread far apart; the Township therefore has few of these design features. Similarly, residential areas near Lake Missaukee in Lake Township lack sidewalks and amenities for pedestrians and cyclists. Considering the communities' stated desire to facilitate easier travel between the jurisdictions, especially among seasonal residents and visitors (recent meeting minutes), Lake City and the townships should work together to add nonmotorized amenities. Elements such as bicycle lanes and racks, and expanded sidewalks should be added between recreational facilities,

commercial areas, and recreational features.

## Home Acres Sky Ranch

A small, privately-run airfield is located along McGee Road to the east of Lake City in Reeder Township. Although the airfield is not paved and cannot receive major commercial flights, visitors can book small flights to Lake City on small propeller planes. In addition, the airport also hosts selected events such as the pancake fly in and holds air tours and scenic flights.



Existing sidewalk in Lake City.

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*Playground in Lake City.*





# 5 Parks & Recreation

With the area’s unique array of natural resources, recreation has emerged as a vital economic sector in northwest lower Michigan in recent decades. In a 2015 report, Networks Northwest estimated that over 200 businesses throughout the region provide recreation amenities directly, which supported over 2,100 jobs and contributed to total annual earnings of \$111,337,519 in that year. Aside from these economic impacts, parks and recreation planning is directly tied to stewardship of natural resources such as wetlands, forests, lakes, and rivers and to promoting health through active lifestyles. The provision of adequate amenities is also essential in attracting and retaining residents, and particularly those with education and job training that work in finance, insurance, technology, and other skilled professions. This chapter details the recreational amenities provided by the communities of Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township and sets broad recommendations for their continued improvement.<sup>1</sup>

## RECREATION FACILITIES INVENTORY

The provision of diverse amenities in these communities takes coordination among multiple levels of government. The following section takes stock of the existing park facilities maintained by the three communities.

### City and Township Facilities

The City of Lake City owns and maintains several park facilities within its boundary, most of which are located south of its downtown. One of the most prominent of these is Miltner Park, which encompasses 1/3 of a mile of picturesque beachfront on Lake Missaukee in the City’s southern portion.<sup>2</sup> The park is used by residents and visitors alike for swimming, beachgoing, and for access to the community from moored boats.<sup>3</sup> The presence of this publicly-owned park directly on the lakeshore presents an opportunity for the

**TABLE 7: HEALTHY COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT FOR MISSAUKEE COUNTY – DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT 10 (2016)**

Health Status Indicator	% Missaukee County Population
Obese	35%
Overweight	36.5%
No leisure time physical activity	27.9%
Inadequate Fruit and Vegetable Consumption (< 5 times per day)	76.9%

Source: District Health Department 10 Report



*Clam River Park*  
Source: Lake Township Recreation Plan



*Lake Township Pavillion*  
Source: Lake Township Recreation Plan

**TABLE 8: CITY AND TOWNSHIP PARKS**

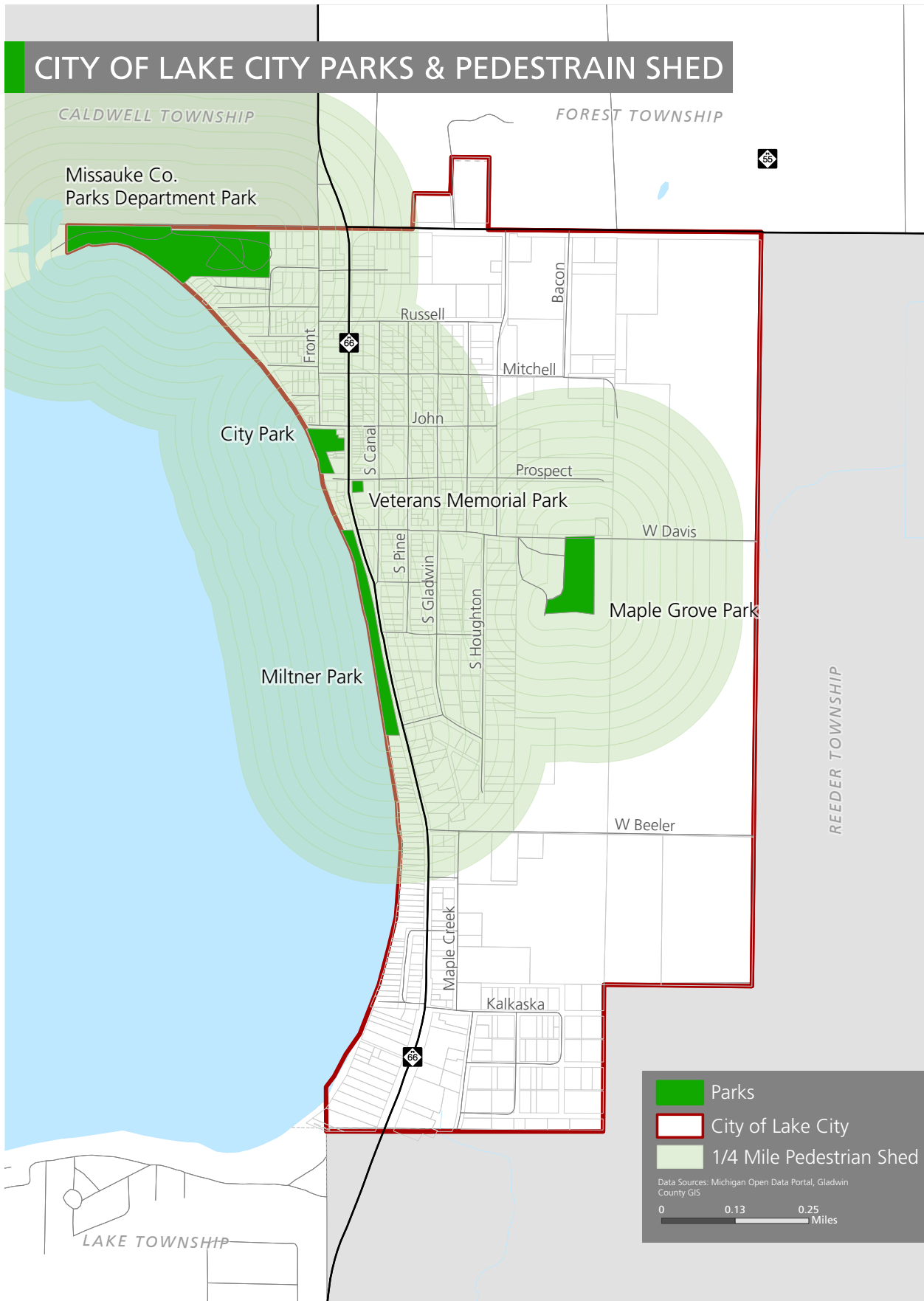
Facility	Size (acres)	Community	Type	Amenities
Miltner Park	1	Lake City	Community Park	Swimming, beachfront access, boat mooring, boardwalk, picnic tables
Maple Grove Park	10	Lake City	Community Park	33 campsites, picnic area, baseball, kitchen, restrooms
Veterans Memorial Park	.5	Lake City	Mini Park	Plaza, skate park, two tennis courts, two pickleball courts
City Park	2	Lake City	Special Use Area (Boat Launch/Docks)	Boat Docks
Clam River Park	12	Lake Township	Natural Resources Area	Nature / hiking trails / camp sites
Lake Township Hall	1.3	Lake Township	Community Park	Pavilions
Jennings Community Playground	.25	Lake Township	Mini Park	Playground equipment

Source: Missaukee County Community Recreation Plan

City to deploy stormwater management features in order to combine recreational amenities with the need to maintain the lake's quality. Immediately to the park's north and also along the lakeshore is City Park, which features boat docks.<sup>4</sup> Also under the City's purview is Maple Grove Park, which is located four blocks east of Lake Missaukee and includes 33 campsites, woodlands, and sports facilities.<sup>5</sup> While the County maintains Veterans Memorial Park, which has a small plaza, the City maintain's the skate park and tennis courts. In terms of wintertime recreation, the City also owns Missaukee Mountain, which is located four miles north of the City and provides trails for cross country skiers as well as downhill slopes.<sup>6</sup>

Although Forest Township lacks a robust array of recreational amenities, Lake Township maintains a relatively wide range of park spaces. Clam River Park is a large hiking nature preserve in the southern portion of Lake Township and preserves riverine ecosystem of the Clam River, which flows through it. Meanwhile, Lake Township hall is located in the central part of the Township and features a pavilion and grassy meadow, which makes it a popular gathering place for community and private events. The Township plans to expand this facility to include new ball fields, a volleyball area, and possibly a recycling center in order to diversify its uses. Lake Township also maintains three public boat launches, one each

# MAP 10: CITY OF LAKE CITY PARKS & PEDESTRIAN SHED



on Crooked, Sapphire, and Missaukee Lakes. Also under the supervision of the Township is Jennings Community Playground, which offers recreational opportunities and a variety of playground equipment to the youth of the surrounding community. Even though Lake Township offers a range of recreational amenities, it plans to expand the types of opportunities offered, particularly at the boat launch sites. These are needed projects considering area residents' expressed desire to expand tourism, and that the Township doesn't offer any other public lakefront access.<sup>7,8</sup>

### Missaukee County Facilities

Missaukee County also maintains two excellent recreational facilities within Lake Township and Lake City. Within Lake City, the County owns and operates Lake Missaukee Park, which is one of the most widely used and parks in the community, and for good reason - lakefront views abound. The park is situated on 33 acres of land on the beautiful northern shores of Lake Missaukee in Lake Township just north of the border with the City and includes a great variety of amenities including a campground, modern pavilions and restrooms, a boardwalk, and ample beachfront for swimming.<sup>9</sup> Recent expansions to the park prior to 2019 included new campsites, connection to sewer and water systems, and the addition of ADA-compliant restrooms, all of which improved the park's accessibility.<sup>10</sup> Located nearby in Lake Township, Missaukee County also maintains Crooked Lake Campground, which encompasses 60 acres on the southern shore of Crooked Lake and provides popular yet rustic space for camping and recreating.<sup>11</sup> This County park also encompasses large expanses of wetlands and forests and is therefore integral to the maintenance of natural systems in the Township.

### Public School Facilities and Private Facilities

In addition to local governmental facilities the Lake City Area School District and private organizations are involved in providing recreational amenities. The school district maintains a track, football field, and baseball and softball diamonds on its Prospect Street property in the City. The School District also owns and maintains an indoor community center and gymnasium that is available to residents before and after school hours. These facilities are essential features for youth recreation. In Lake Township, Missaukee Golf Club is an 18-hole private golf facility that is open to the public throughout the summer months and is located along M-66.<sup>12</sup> Also within Lake City is a privately-owned miniature golf course located along M-55 adjacent to the public-school facilities.<sup>13</sup>

## COUNTY AND LOCAL PARKS GOALS

In 2017, Missaukee County undertook a planning process to expand and improve the area's park system and several broad goals emerged from that process. The goals defined by the County include the preservation of natural resources through park planning, the expansion of facilities to be ADA-compliant, the connection of the Missaukee County Trail to more locations, and the addition of more landscaping and features to the trail.<sup>14</sup> Likewise, Lake Township also initiated a thorough parks and recreation planning effort in 2016 and codified similar goals, especially considering the Township's growing proportion of younger age ranges and their unique preferences, as well as the desire to increase physical activity among residents.<sup>15</sup> Together, these goals reflect the types of action that can be implemented in each of the three Missaukee County communities.

**TABLE 9: MISSAUKEE COUNTY FACILITIES**

Facility	Size (acres)	Community	Type	Amenities
Lake Missaukee Park	33 acres	Lake Township	Community Park	Swimming, beachfront access, boat launch, pavilions, restrooms, 60 + campsites, playscape
Crooked Lake Campground	60 acres	Lake Township	Community Park	Fishing, public access, camping, swimming, beachfront, hiking

Source: Missaukee County Community Recreation Plan

**TABLE 10: PARK AND RECREATION GOALS**

Missaukee County (2017)	Lake Township (2016)	Lake City	Forest Township
Expand Universal Access	Implement a bike route along Jennings Road	No parks and recreation plan as of 2019	No parks and recreation plan as of 2019
Foster Environmental Stewardship	Improve access at the Crooked Lake Boat Launch		
Create Missaukee County Trail Connections and Amenities	Encourage multiple and seasonal uses at Clam River Park by adding more amenities		
	Develop a nonmotorized connection between the River Woods and North Country subdivisions		
	Acquire land for and develop new amenities at Lake Township Hall		

Sources: Missaukee County Community Recreation Plan and Lake Township Recreation Plan

## PARKS AND RECREATION NEEDS

The goals from these parks and recreation highlight several reoccurring needs throughout the three communities when it comes to the number and type of parks and the amenities that they need to offer.

### Universal Access

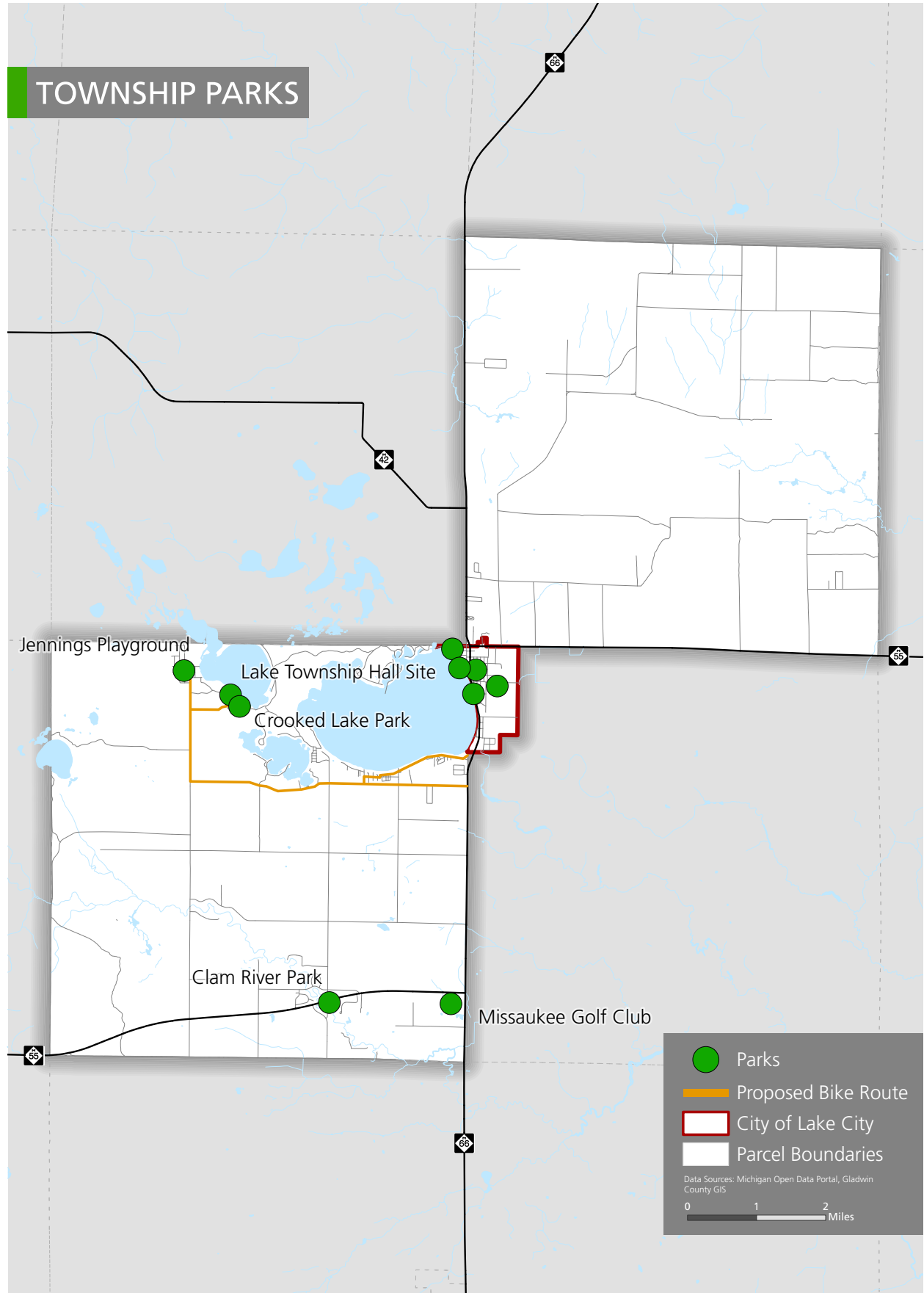
One major issue facing Michigan communities with aging parks and recreation infrastructure is whether these facilities are accessible for all potential users. Since the enactment of the Americans With Disabilities Act in 1991, governmental bodies must follow guidelines when undertaking parks and recreation improvements in order to make these facilities more accessible for disabled persons. Missaukee County has partnered with local governments to enact ADA-compliant facilities, especially in both County Parks. For instance, the boardwalk, restrooms, and showers at Missaukee Lake Park was designed to be accessible to users with mobility limitations in the years prior to 2017.<sup>16</sup>

The County and Lake Township surveyed their park facilities and scored their level of ADA compliance on a scale of 1 to 5, with a score of

one meaning that all facilities were compliant with ADA guidelines and a 5 meaning that no facilities were compliant. According to the 2017 Missaukee County Plan, two major facilities in Lake City scored a 4 including Lake Missaukee Park, despite the facility's recent accessibility improvements, and Maple Grove Park.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, Lake Township's plan suggests that several facilities, including Clam River Park, Jennings Playground, and two of its three boat launches scored relatively low on universal access and are in need of improvement.<sup>18</sup>

Improvements to ensure universal accessibility are important not just because they are required by law, but to ensure that all potential users can satisfy their recreational needs. When put to the communities' citizenry, accessibility for disabled users was the single greatest issue concerning parks and recreation planning in the communities.<sup>19</sup> Because of this, the communities should focus on universal access to existing recreational facilities before acquiring new land and building more facilities. For Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township, the first step would be to develop a schedule of these planned projects in the form of a capital improvements plan, and subsequently specify universal access design in their descriptions, and into their proposals for development.<sup>20</sup>

# MAP 11: TOWNSHIP PARKS



**TABLE 11: ADA COMPLIANCE RATINGS**

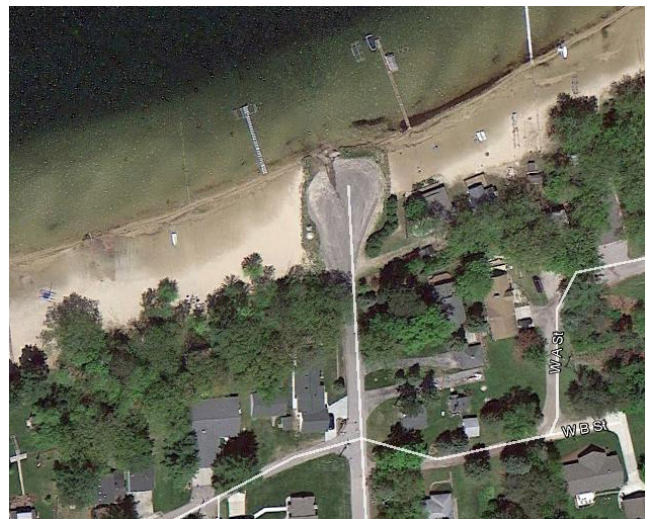
Facility	ADA Compliance Rating (1-5)
Lake Missaukee Park	4
Crooked Lake Campground	3
Sapphire Lake Access Site	4
Jennings Community Playground	5
Clam River Park	5

Source: Missaukee County Community Recreation Plan

### Expanded Facilities and Programming

With the continued growth of recreation and tourism industries in northwest lower Michigan, the expansion of recreational facilities in Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township is needed to capture some of this growth. Lake Township has specified expanded swimming facilities at Crooked Lake, the addition of amenities such as camping at Clam River Park, and the expansion of Lake Township Hall to include ball fields.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, Lake City could acquire additional parkland, in residential areas of the City to ensure that neighborhoods are within walking distance to recreation space. Further, considering the community’s vision for tourism-related industries, the City could seek to improve its provision of public spaces and plazas downtown.<sup>22</sup>

Increased programming is also needed for activity-seeking residents and visitors. During Missaukee County’s parks planning process, residents expressed that lack of youth and “older teen” recreation was a major weakness within the communities, which could be addressed with increased activities for these age ranges.<sup>23</sup> Respondents to the community survey also expressed that limited access to grocery stores were prominent concerns, which is an issue that could likewise be addressed with carefully programmed events and activities.<sup>24</sup> Lake City and Missaukee County could work with the Missaukee Conservation District to organize and promote a farmers market, considering that the conservation district plays a role in forming these



*Green Road Boat Launch*

Source: Lake Township Recreation Plan

types of partnerships and that community survey participants expressed support for a farmers market as a solution.<sup>25,26</sup>

Additionally, Forest Township could work to acquire land for recreation in order to expand its provision of facilities while preserving its important ecosystems. This would involve working with the state, which owns large tracts of undeveloped land in the central portion of the Township.<sup>27</sup> Further, these initiatives would need to be balanced with these lands as game area and for snowmobiling, which have historically contributed to the appeal of the area.<sup>28</sup> Because of this, Forest Township should solicit residents’ priorities for recreational amenities, particularly as hunting is on the decline as a recreational industry in the state.<sup>29</sup> All three jurisdictions could coordinate with nonprofits like the Missaukee County Conservation district, which organizes a steady group of volunteers.<sup>30</sup>

### Nonmotorized Connections

Bicycle and pedestrian trails have emerged as a key component of the recreation-based economy in northwest Michigan in recent years, and a few opportunities for the expansion exist in the three communities. Lake Township has planned the expansion of a nonmotorized trail extending along Jennings Road to Lake City’s southern border. This would provide a key connection between residential areas of the Township and recreational facilities such as Crooked Lake Campground and access to the White Pine Trail.<sup>31</sup> Recent public

input has shown the need to provide greater connection between parks in the City and the community's downtown. Residents observed at an April 2019 public meeting in Lake City, people who take advantage of the lake often don't visit downtown, which suggests that facilities that foster these types of connections are needed.<sup>32</sup>

The opportunity to expand nonmotorized infrastructure between residential areas and key natural features is particularly salient considering that residents indicated in the community survey that they are more "unsatisfied" than "satisfied"

with the provision of nonmotorized networks in the area. Further, they also indicated that outdoor recreation and access to Lake Missaukee were two of the top reasons for living in the area.<sup>33</sup> Lake City should therefore coordinate with Lake Township, and county and state governments to extend this nonmotorized link north from the City's border along M-55 north to its downtown and to popular recreational facilities such as Missaukee County Park and Miltner Park. Small incremental improvements such as expanded shoulder widths, bicycle racks, route maps, and improved signage could all serve to expand this network.



*Playground in Lake City.*



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*2019 Car Cruise and Show*

Source: Lake City Area Chamber of Commerce



# Economic Development

## ECONOMIC TRENDS IN NORTHWEST MICHIGAN

In 2015, Networks Northwest, the regional planning organization for Northwest Michigan's 10-County region, published a report titled "A Framework for Growth and Investment," which charted an economic roadmap for municipalities. The report found that although the population remained stagnant between 2010 and 2015, new forms of economic activity emerged throughout the region in the form of technology and tourism. The plan defined 31 "growth and investment areas" throughout the area, which are communities that already function as employment and population centers and operate municipal public utilities and are therefore best positioned to accommodate growth. Lake City, with its public water and sewer system, was included among these designated areas. The plan recommends a series of best practices for these communities to leverage growth in emerging industries, which include maintaining robust and affordable public services, promoting high-capacity and low-cost broadband, and creating high-quality places through zoning and incentives. This chapter inventories the Lake City area's economy and commercial districts and uses these guidelines to form economic strategies.<sup>1</sup>

## ECONOMY IN LAKE CITY, LAKE TOWNSHIP, AND FOREST TOWNSHIP

### Commuting

The balance between workers commuting in and residents commuting out of a community is a key economic indicator. The U.S. Census Bureau hosts an online application called "On

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

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

the Map" that aggregates payroll data collected from businesses to estimate levels of commuting between geographies. The analysis shows that with its robust public-school system and position as the Missaukee County seat, Lake City is a major job center within the County. Each day, 96% of people employed in the City, a total of 450 workers, commute into the City from surrounding areas while conversely, 93% of employed Lake City residents travel outside of the community's boundary to their jobs. Only 17 Lake City residents live and work in the community. Together, this information means two things; Lake City's daytime population increases by 226 people daily, and relatively few jobs in the community are also held by its residents. Other information from the Census Bureau shows that many Lake City residents employed outside the community travel to Forest, Caldwell, and Lake Townships while others commute further to Cadillac and McBain.

Meanwhile, the Census Bureau's mapping software shows that Lake and Forest Townships have a net outflow of commuters, in contrast

to the City. In Lake Township, 94.9% of the community's employed residents travel outside of its boundary for work while at the same time, most (88.7%) of the workers employed in Lake Township's few commercial areas come from outside the community. Similarly, Forest Township has a net outflow of working residents daily; 320 of the employed Township residents leave the community for work, while only 248 workers living outside the Township commute in. The "On the Map" tool indicates that many Lake Township residents work in Lake City, McBain, or Cadillac, while many Forest Township residents work in Caldwell or Lake Townships.

The Census Bureau's estimates of commuting may not correspond exactly with the American Community Survey's estimates of employed residents in the communities, which is because both information sources derive different data. The American Community Survey asks a sample of residents in each community what sector they work in while the "On the Map" application tracks commuting but not necessarily workers' employment sector. The Census Bureau's tool does give useful estimates of commuting by geography and shows that Lake City is the major employment center among the three communities.

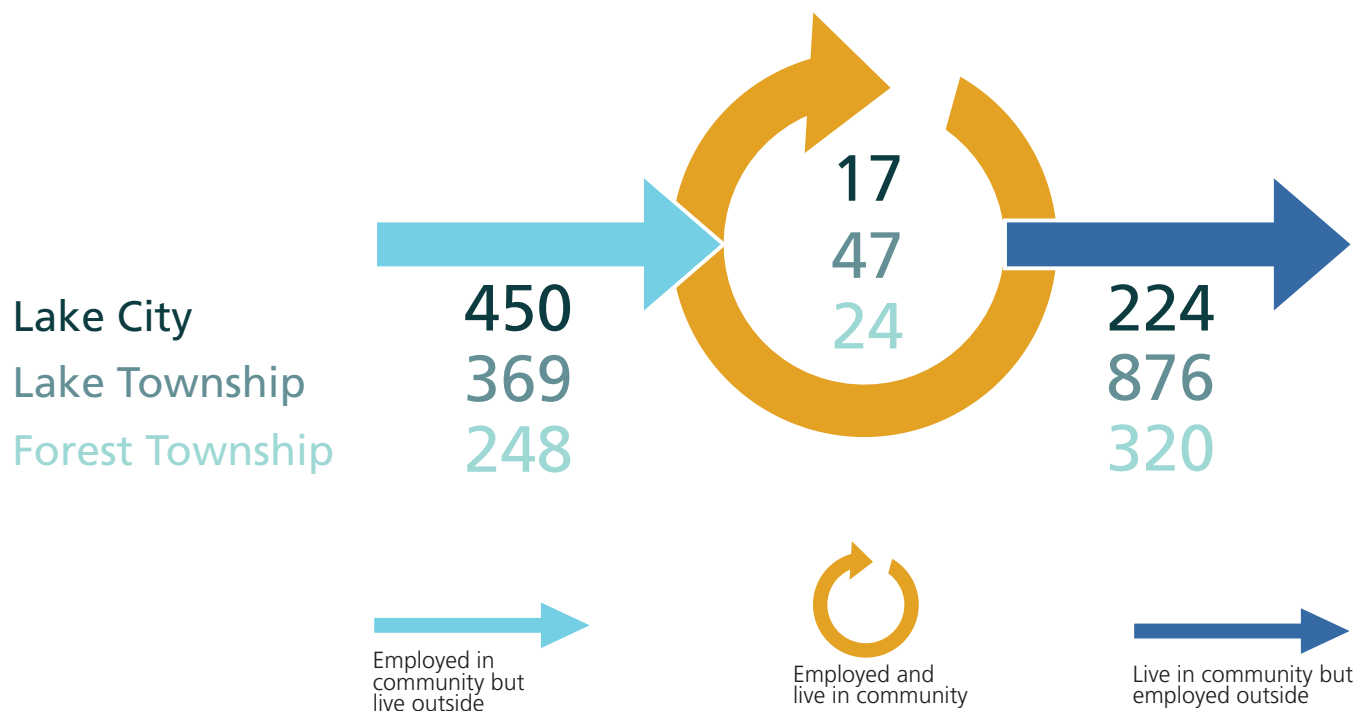
## Industries in Lake City, Lake Township and Forest Township

Three major variables describe the composition of a community's economy: The percentage of jobs within industries, the portion of residents employed in industries, and the size of businesses. The percentage of jobs by industry and the portion of residents employed in those industries describe the largest and smallest sectors of the economy. These industry categories correspond to the federal North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes, which categorize businesses based on their primary activity (highest revenue-generating activity). The size of businesses and the number of workers employed is another important factor that can help explain economic trends.

## Local Businesses

With the Lake City area's presence as a resort and recreation community, locally owned small businesses are at the core of the communities' economy; as of 2017, about 90% of the 297 establishments in Missaukee County had fewer than 19 employees. Simultaneously, over one quarter (26.2%) of the employees working within the three communities worked within the sectors

FIGURE 5: COMMUTING GRAPHIC



**TABLE 12: ESTABLISHMENTS IN MISSAUKEE COUNTY**

Number of Employees in Establishment	Number of Establishments in Missaukee County
1-4 employees	172
5-9 employees	59
10-19 employees	37
20-49 employees	22
50-99 employees	5
100-249 employees	2
250-499 employees	0
500-999 employees	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>297</b>

Source: American Fact Finder - County Business Patterns 2016

of arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services, or retail trade. Together, these two industries represent many of the businesses located in Lake City’s downtown along Main Street and the area’s commercial corridors.

Meanwhile, both industries yield some of the lowest incomes within the three communities; the median annual earnings for Missaukee County residents employed in retail trade was well below (63.5% of) the Missaukee County median earnings of \$27,473 across all industries, while the median annual earnings for residents employed in arts, entertainment, accommodation, and food services were only 40% of the Missaukee County median earnings across all industries. Low wages can make these jobs difficult to fill and can lead to lower spending power among households. Further, large portions of the jobs in these industries are part-time or seasonal; only 55% of the Missaukee County jobs in retail were full-time in 2017, while that proportion among jobs in arts, entertainment, accommodation, and food services, was less than one third (31.1%). The intermittent and seasonal work associated with tourism leads to other economic challenges including lack of employee benefits, seasonal declines in economic activity, and limited ability to obtain credit. Relatedly, employers in tourism-related industries report a shortage of workers with the training to fill jobs such as waitstaff, housekeeping, and retail sales.<sup>2</sup>

## Service Industries, Education, and Healthcare

Education and healthcare emerged as economic drivers throughout Northwest Michigan following the recession, buoyed by the region’s aging population and healthcare reform.<sup>3</sup> Following this pattern, more than one quarter (25.4%) of the 1,460 jobs within Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township were in this sector. At the same time, only a small proportion of the communities’ establishments were involved in this sector (8.1% of establishments), which together with employment numbers, suggests that these establishments are also some of the community’s larger employers, hiring 20 workers or greater. These employers include Lake City Community Schools, which maintains a staff of 59 teachers, as well as the senior living and general healthcare facilities throughout the community.<sup>4</sup>

In northwest Michigan, incomes in healthcare and social services jobs are well above the average, although data suggest that incomes these service jobs were lower in these three communities. The median annual earnings of \$26,377 in educational services, healthcare, and social assistance were only roughly on par with the Missaukee County median across all industries in 2017. Meanwhile, the proportion of full-time and year-round jobs among Missaukee County residents (58.6%) within this sector was still lower than the share of full-time and year-round jobs across all sectors (65.9%). Lake City’s position as the Missaukee County seat also leads to a large proportion of employment in public administration and other services not classified as public administration, which together comprises 17.9% of the City’s employment.

## High-skill and technology-based industries

One highly discussed topic is the emergence of the “new” economy rooted in knowledge, information, and communication and dependent on a skilled labor force, which contrasts with the “old” economy rooted in manufacturing. This transition toward knowledge-based sectors has been rapid throughout northwest Michigan; the number of establishments in the region classified as “information” businesses increased by 4.5% between 2009-2012, while the number of establishments across all industries declined by 1.5%. By 2015, jobs in this sector represented 8% of the total throughout the region. Data

suggest that employment in information, finance, insurance, and real estate, and professional, scientific, and management services made up a similar share (9%) of the jobs within Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township in 2017, although within that, information was a notably small share (1.3% of total jobs).<sup>5</sup>

Several strategies exist for communities to promote continued growth in information-related industries. Maintaining the infrastructure that high-tech businesses need is key. This includes

broadband at sufficient speeds and low cost to support their communication needs. The ability to attract an educated workforce with the skills and training to support these endeavors is also essential and dependent on creating a “high quality of life and place-defined by vibrant, desirable communities and environments.”<sup>6</sup> Technology-based businesses are highly geographically mobile, as are their workers, who seek out locations with recreational opportunities, entertainment, diverse housing, all encompassed within a “sense of place.”

**TABLE 13: INDUSTRIES IN LAKE CITY, LAKE TOWNSHIP, & FOREST TOWNSHIP**

Industry	Establishments in Lake City, Lake Township, & Forest Township		Establishments in Lake City, Lake Township, & Forest Township		Median annual income for employed Missaukee County resident (Dollars)
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0	0.0	0	6.3	26,818
Construction	17	8.1	58	3.8	35,511
Manufacturing	8	3.8	94	6.2	32,050
Wholesale trade	6	2.9	67	4.4	39,464
Retail trade	43	20.5	256	16.8	17,467
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	7	3.3	102	6.7	36,000
Information	3	1.4	20	1.3	51,500
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	13	6.2	60	3.9	31,442
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	17	8.1	63	4.2	22,344
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	17	8.1	326	25.4	26,377
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	20	9.5	142	9.4	10,878
Other services, except public administration	28	13.3	68	4.5	20,070
Public administration and industries not classified	38	13.3	204	13.4	40,208
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>		<b>1460</b>		<b>27,473 (Median across all industries)</b>

Source: ESRI – Business Summary and American Fact Finder – 2017 American Community Survey

**TABLE 14: JOB INVENTORY OF LAKE CITY AREA RESIDENTS**

	Lake City	Lake Township	Forest Township
<b>Workforce</b>			
Number of employed residents	387	1,062	443
<b>Percent of employed residents by industry</b>			
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.5	1.5	6.1
Construction	2.1	7.7	4.1
Manufacturing	18.1	27.0	23.0
Wholesale trade	3.9	0.1	2.7
Retail trade	18.1	8.5	14.7
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3.4	8.9	2.9
Information	0.0	0.8	0.7
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	4.9	3.0	2.3
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	5.4	9.4	9.9
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	17.1	20.4	17.8
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	16.3	3.5	5.6
Other services, except public administration	4.1	4.3	4.1
Public administration and industries not classified	6.2	4.9	6.1

Source: American Fact Finder - 2017 American Community Survey

### Employment Among Residents

This section inventories the jobs that residents of Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township hold. In places with high levels of commuting between geographies, the type of jobs in a community does not always match the employment that its residents hold. Data suggest however that employment among Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township residents generally follows the profile of jobs within the communities.

The American Community Survey’s estimates show that the highest proportion of residents employed in retail trade and arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services is within Lake City itself (34.4% of employed residents working across both industries) although significant shares of residents in both townships are also employed in these two sectors (20.3% in Forest and 12% in Lake). Meanwhile, manufacturing employment comprises around one-quarter of residents’ jobs in both townships (27% in Lake Township and 23% in Forest Township), although these jobs could be located anywhere, including outside of the three

communities. Because manufacturing concurrently makes up small shares of the establishments and employees in the three communities, this suggests that much of workers’ commuting to Cadillac and McBain could be done by those employed in manufacturing. It makes sense that workers would travel further for these manufacturing jobs, considering their higher earnings. Although manufacturing employment has rebounded in Northwest Michigan since 2009 and will likely remain a key economic sector, further outsourcing of these jobs may be the long-term trend.

### The “Gig” Economy and Missaukee County

The gig economy is made up of three main components: the independent workers paid by the gig (i.e., a task or a project) as opposed to those workers who receive a salary or hourly wage; the consumers who need a specific service, for example, a ride to their next destination, or a particular item delivered; and the companies that connect the worker to the consumer in a direct manner, including app-based technology platforms.<sup>7</sup>

According to data compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the non-employer establishments in Missaukee County declined by -5.0% between 2005-2015. During this same period, the national share of this workforce increased by 15.8%.

## Generation (Gen) Z and the Lake City Area

As younger generations enter young adulthood and are soon to be entering the workforce and housing market, understanding their preferences is essential to plan successfully for the future. Defined as the generation born between 1995 and 2015, they are the first group in mass to be native technology-users. Never has anyone grown up in an age of instant and international connectivity with such ease. As such, much of their emerging opinions have been formed in ways that are different than older generations. As a unique and important cohort, it is beneficial for cities to stay in touch with how to include and incorporate their values into the planning process if they have any hopes of retaining them or enticing them to return.

During May 2019, Lake Area Public School 100 high school students participated in a Gen Z survey which asked a variety of questions regarding opinions on national issues and after graduation plans. Results of the survey rendered the following:

- » 84% of high school students like living in the Lake City area.
- » 40% of students plan to leave the community after graduation.
- » 56% plan to attend college.
- » Health care and education were the top two career paths selected.
- » Less than 3% plan to pursue a vocational trade after graduating from high school.
- » Approximately 8% will seek local employment and remain in the greater Lake City area, and 5% plan to work in the region but live in the community.

## RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS

One major concern when it comes to the vitality of business districts is how well local demand for products and services are matched with businesses' supply of those goods and services. The "Retail Market Place Profile" created by ESRI's Business Analyst Software aggregates demographic, payroll, and other public data to estimate retail gaps. A "surplus" industry means that visitors from outside the community come to the community for the good or service, while conversely, "leakage" categories indicate where residents travel outside of the City limits to access the good or service. Together, these represent the segments of the local economy where a community is "overproducing" and local demand is already exceeded, and those where it is "losing money" and the community could likely support more of that product. The Retail Market Place Profile also estimates the value of surplus and leakage within a community and therefore enables comparison of supply and demand within a community's submarkets.

The retail markets wherein businesses of Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township attract customers from outside the communities are varied but include two automotive-related industries: gasoline stations and auto parts, accessories, and tire stores. These three small communities have several of these businesses already and likely attract business from surrounding rural areas. A relative abundance of garden equipment, building materials, and related supplies stores are located within the three communities and likewise, attract customer spending from outside of their boundaries. A variety of miscellaneous stores and use merchandise stores also generate this revenue surplus annually. As the marketplace profile suggests, however, the lost revenue from residents traveling outside the communities, termed "leakage" outpaces surplus at a rate of nearly two-to-one.

Over half of respondents to the Lake City area community survey reported that more "tourism-related" services were needed throughout the three communities; however, the community's surplus retail markets are not suited to attract patronage from tourism. As of 2019, gas stations are allowed as a special use in Lake City's "Resort Commercial" zone, and therefore require additional review and a permit to locate in that zone, while they are not an allowable use in the City's "Core Commercial" zoning designation.<sup>8</sup>



**TABLE 15: TOP 10 SURPLUS INDUSTRIES**

Industry	Surplus (\$)	# of Establishments in Communities
Gasoline Stations	13,711,290	5
Miscellaneous store retailers	4,437,713	11
Building materials, garden equipment, and supplies stores	2,702,837	5
Other miscellaneous store retailers	2,567,678	4
Auto parts, accessories, and tire stores	2,115,912	4
Lawn and garden equipment and supply stores	1,662,975	2
Used merchandise stores	1,103,582	4
Building material and supplies dealers	1,039,862	3
Office supplies, stationary, and gifts stores	861,815	3
Drinking places - alcoholic beverages	130,006	2

Source: ESRI – Retail Marketplace Profile

**TABLE 16: TOP 10 LEAKAGE INDUSTRIES**

Industry	Leakage (\$)	# of Establishments in Communities
Automobile dealers	9,384,485	2
Motor vehicle parts and dealers	8,482,378	7
General merchandise stores	6,070,613	4
Department stores, excluding leased departments	5,411,410	0
Food and beverage stores	3,631,202	4
Grocery stores	2,526,112	3
Food services and drinking places	1,644,885	12
Restaurant and other eating places	1,641,584	10
Clothing stores	1,295,821	1
Sporting goods, hobby, book, and music stores	1,181,596	1

Source: ESRI – Retail Marketplace Profile

In the City’s “Resort Commercial” zone, filling stations accompany other commercial uses such as motels, entertainment venues, and restaurants.<sup>9</sup> Although the special use designation is a significant limit on gas stations already, the City could work to further restrict automotive uses in locations where they would degrade an otherwise dense commercial environment by removing them as a special use in the zoning designation. The City could then create another zoning category with limited geographic extent wherein they would be grouped with other automobile-serving uses.

Forest and Lake Townships could also define a limited zone where automobile-related uses would be allowed.

Retail markets in which local retailers’ provision of goods and services do not meet the communities’ demand range from essential, everyday goods to more specialized ones. Interestingly, the top two leakage markets within the three communities in terms of monetary value are automobile dealers and motor vehicle parts and dealers. This is perhaps because of the relative expensiveness of

these purchases and that consumers are typically willing to travel greater distances for them. Critically, food and beverage and grocery stores are major leakage markets where residents travel outside the communities to meet their needs. Lost value totals over \$6,000,000 annually across these two food-related markets. In the Lake City area visioning session, which asked community members to define and rank the community's priorities, the fact that the Lake City area has no grocery store emerged. Lacking community services, including a grocery store, was the third-most common response selected as a barrier to success. Further, "grocery store" was the third most-selected response as a community priority. Lake City should work to reactivate the Foster's Supermarket site on M-55 and convert it to a new one.

Lake City, Lake Township, and Forest Township should consider the market findings and cooperatively assess the best way to facilitate the development of more of these businesses and determine their preferred location. In the three communities' public visioning session, residents reported on areas in which the communities had not performed well, which included keeping "existing businesses in town and supporting them" and relatedly, in "welcoming in attracting new businesses."<sup>10</sup>

The communities could work together to establish a full-time city manager position and a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) board, which would undertake public improvements to commercial districts in support of local businesses. DDA boards, once established, are conferred the power to use property tax revenue to finance public improvements through the State of Michigan's Public Act 197 of 1975 and can offer other support for businesses including tax incentives, grants, and access to capital.<sup>11,12</sup> A city manager could play a leadership role in grant applications and other initiatives. The communities could also distribute the market report's findings to local businesses through networking organizations such as the Lake City Area Chamber of Commerce. The findings could help business owners better match their supply of goods with local demand, coordinate with one another, and revitalize their businesses.<sup>13</sup> The City could also work to provide training to City, Township, and County officials to educate them about the role of the DDA, brownfield authority, and county land bank.

## COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

The commercial establishments within these three communities are located within three main business districts, each with its distinct character and geographic extent.

### Downtown Lake City

Lake City's vibrant downtown district extends north and south for approximately one-quarter mile along M-66 immediately east of the Lake Missaukee shoreline. The district's southern extent features public facilities including Missaukee District Library and the adjacent athletic courts as well as lodging, dining, and office uses. Buildings in the district's south are set back from the road, include parking to the front, and do not share common walls. All of this is consistent with the district's "Core Commercial" zoning which stipulates minimum front yards of 5 feet and requires parking based on the square footage of commercial space, or in the case of motels, guest bedrooms.<sup>14</sup>

Continuing north of Prospect Street, densities increase as the district's one- and two-story brick buildings are set directly on the sidewalk, lot widths decrease, and parking lots are positioned behind buildings, all of which enhance the built character. Although retail and dining businesses become most dense along the block of M-66 stretching between Prospect and John Streets, vacant storefronts and second floors, coupled with unimproved lots are also present in this important block. The district's commercial establishments continue along the block north of John Street although built densities begin to fall off as lot

**"Lack of shopping" was chosen by 77% of community survey respondents when asked the community's most pressing issue and residents cited "food and beverage stores" as severely lacking.**

**Over half of community survey respondents hoped to see more "tourism-related" services in Lake City.**

widths increase and parking lots again begin to separate buildings. Mitchell Street denotes the northern extent of Lake City's downtown as commercial uses turn to residential. Throughout downtown, features including wide sidewalks, street lighting, and on-street parallel parking promote a pedestrian environment, although other elements, including lack of crosswalks, detract from this character.

## Strategies for Downtown

The physical qualities of a district have bearing on its desirability as a location for business. While downtown Lake City's physical design is strong in many ways, improvements, including greater connectivity with Lake Missaukee and the creation of public spaces suited to host events and a farmers market could strengthen the environment. These improvements are particularly salient considering that Lake Missaukee was cited by over half of community survey respondents as the reason for their attraction to the community, and that "Business Development" was the single most chosen answer for 10-year priorities by community visioning session participants. A reinstated downtown development authority could take the lead with these projects by commissioning a physical design plan for the district. The plan could identify sites for inviting plazas and open spaces and could articulate their physical layout.

Small adjustments to the City's zoning ordinance could also serve to make downtown a more inviting business environment. As of 2019, second-floor residential uses are allowed only as special uses in the City's "Core Commercial" zoning district, which means that a permitting process from the City is required for second floors to be used as apartments and condominiums.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, several second-floor spaces in buildings with historic brick architecture are vacant in Lake City's downtown. Considering that educated and skilled workers associated with the "knowledge economy" seek high-density housing, and that Lake City area residents articulated "keeping our young people here" as an area of needed improvement, Lake City could work to make second-floor residential uses allowed by right in its downtown.<sup>16,17</sup> The City and townships could then partner with property owners to refurbish spaces and market the housing in conjunction with the area's other assets to potential residents. Second floor residential along Main Street would, in turn, increase the incentive for new businesses by positioning residents near commercial uses.

Over one quarter of visioning session participants selected either "Thriving Industry and business" or "Vibrant Downtown" as shared community-wide priorities for the next 10 years.



*Downtown Lake City*

Other incremental adjustments to the "Core Commercial" zoning district could help increase downtown's desirability as a location for investment. As of 2019, Lake City's zoning code stipulates developments to provide a front setback of 5 feet.<sup>18</sup>

The City's code also mandates inflexible parking requirements in the district based on the square footage of commercial space or size of the facility the parking serves.<sup>19</sup> Eliminating setbacks could provide dual benefits; it could incentivize new development by increasing lots' buildable area while also encouraging "window shopping" by allowing new storefronts to be positioned directly adjacent to sidewalks. Lake City could consider this change in conjunction with other zoning priorities such as visibility for automobile traffic. Meanwhile, making parking requirements more flexible would allow developers to choose the "correct" amount of parking for their tenants, thereby potentially increasing the square footage of commercial space and increasing properties' value.

Blight is also an issue in Lake City's downtown and inhibits the community's economy by degrading property values. The City could work to create

an enforceable blight ordinance that mandates standards for property maintenance downtown. The City would also need to designate standards and individuals responsible for enforcement of the ordinance.

The City could also work to create other spaces that would promote a reinvigorated commercial setting downtown. Co-ops and maker spaces are an emerging trend in business development which provide an office space for new businesses owners seeking to establish. These shared offices are typically available on a short-term rental basis and can lower the cost and risk associated with starting a new business and ensure flexibility in the process. A reestablished downtown development authority in Lake City could work with property owners to identify sites for a coworking space. Lake City area residents also expressed a desire for the area to become a “destination” for visitors. Considering this, the DDA could assess the feasibility of a new commercial lodging business downtown to promote this “destination” economy.

### M-66 North Corridor

Another major commercial corridor extends north to south along M-66 in Forest and Caldwell Townships to the City's north. This corridor's low-density character contrasts with the brick buildings and pedestrian scale of Lake City's downtown. It begins north of M-55 where wide driveways and grass-covered rights-of-way positioned between the road and sidewalk, coupled with parking lots facing M-66, separate the area's single-floor buildings from the street. The district's only sidewalk extends along the east side of M-66 for only the first 1/10th of a mile north of M-55. Although the district is situated adjacent to residential neighborhoods in the northern portion of Lake City, the lack of sidewalks beyond this point impedes pedestrian access from neighborhoods. The district's commercial uses are diverse, however, and include offices and national and locally owned dining establishments. Because the corridor is located within Forest Township, zoning regulations do not limit the district's uses or its physical form. The corridor's commercial uses are also split between two jurisdictions; a small number of parcels of land west of M-66 in the northern portion of the district are located within Caldwell Township.

Forest Township should consider adopting a zoning ordinance to build upon these existing

strengths. Although the corridor serves automobile uses and is one of the most highly trafficked roadways in the area, regulations to the physical construction of buildings could encourage pedestrian access in tandem with the automobile.<sup>20</sup> Limiting the number of driveways per commercial property could be a start at facilitating travel between Lake City's residential neighborhoods and the corridor's businesses. Likewise, mandating that parking be positioned in the rear of buildings could serve to make the corridor more inviting. Extending sidewalks north along M-66 north of M-55 would also be necessary infrastructure to invite the passerby.

### M-55 East Corridor

In Forest Township, another potential development area extends immediately north of M-55 between M-66 in the west and the Township's boundary in the east. In 2019, most of these properties are sparsely developed; only the areas in the southwest corner of the Township are built with single-family housing. Forest Township should designate the six square miles of land north of M-55 as an opportune growth and investment corridor, considering its access to the roadway, and that it is one of the only parts of the community not occupied with wetlands. The Township should seek to phase development from west to east along M-55 by working with Lake City to extend sewer and water service to the area over time.

### M-66 South Corridor

The third major concentration of commercial uses in the three communities is located along M-66 between the southern part of Lake City and the northern portion of Lake Township. Similar to the M-55 corridor, this area includes a variety of commercial establishments, but it's built character facilitates automobile rather than pedestrian access. The corridor's commercial uses begin in Lake City at the properties immediately north of Kalkaska Street and include a variety of automotive establishments, a national chain restaurant, and commercial office spaces, some of which were vacant in 2018. Commercial properties in this area feature wide driveways, large parking facilities, and expansive lawns between M-66 and adjoining buildings. All these features are consistent with the City's “Resort Commercial” zoning, which specifies larger minimum lot widths, and front and side yards, compared with its “Core Commercial” designation.<sup>21</sup> These built patterns extend south of the City's boundary with Lake Township and

continue to the M-66 intersection with Jennings Road. As of 2019, Lake Township does not enforce zoning regulations and so the district's commercial uses and physical characteristics are not regulated.

Lake Township should view this corridor as a major redevelopment opportunity, considering that it links Lake City with the residential portions of the township. The Township should prepare a corridor redevelopment plan that would focus on repurposing the area's former strip mall, and commercial properties for residential purposes. Lake City and Lake Township should explore a partnership to extend sewer and water service to these properties to ensure orderly redevelopment at higher densities. Both the City and Township could seek to implement zoning provisions to minimize the number of driveways to adjoining properties and reduce parking and setback requirements. These provisions could help promote redevelopment while making the corridor more appealing for nonmotorized travel.

## HOUSING

The availability and types of housing are key economic issues. Younger families and working age demographics often seek higher density housing than is traditionally available in Michigan communities, with their largely single-family housing stock. Considering that the communities' housing stock is overwhelmingly single-family, Lake City should consider targeting low-density areas in the eastern portion of the community as growth zones to accommodate multifamily housing construction. This could include the 80-acre area south of Davis Road and east of Prospect Street and the 64-acre area south of Beeler Road and east of Maple Crest Drive. These areas, with their proximity to the public schools and connections with water and sewer services are positioned to accommodate this development.

## SOURCES

- 1 Networks Northwest. A Framework for Growth and Investment in Northwest Michigan. Pg. 8-9
- 2 Ibid. Pg. 24-25
- 3 Ibid. Pg. 25-27
- 4 Public School Review. Lake City Area School District <https://www.publicschoolreview.com/michigan/lake-city-area/2620610-school-district>
- 5 Networks Northwest. A Framework for Growth and Investment in Northwest Michigan. Pg. 23
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 The Future of Work: The Rise of the Gig Economy; National Associations of Counties (NACo); <https://www.naco.org/featured-resources/future-work-rise-gig-economy>
- 8 City of Lake City. Zoning Ordinance. Pg. 67-69
- 9 Ibid. Pg. 20
- 10 Lake City Visioning Results
- 11 Michigan Economic Development Corporation. Downtown Development Authority <https://www.michiganbusiness.org/49fab3/globalassets/documents/reports/fact-sheets/downtowndevelopmentauthority.pdf>
- 12 Detroit Economic Growth Corporation. Public Authorities – DDA <http://www.degc.org/public-authorities/dda/>
- 13 Lake City Area Chamber of Commerce. <https://lakecitymich.com/>
- 14 City of Lake City. Zoning Ordinance. Pg. 67-69
- 15 Ibid. Pg. 19-20
- 16 Networks Northwest. A Framework for Growth and Investment in Northwest Michigan. Pg. 23
- 17 Lake City Visioning Results
- 18 City of Lake City. Zoning Ordinance. Pg. 63
- 19 Ibid. Pg. 67-69
- 20 Transportation Asset Management Council. Interactive Map <https://www.mcgi.state.mi.us/tamcMap/>
- 21 City of Lake City. Zoning Ordinance. Pg. 63



*July 18, 2019 Community Visioning Session*

# 7

# Community Engagement

## LAKE CITY AREA SURVEY RESULTS

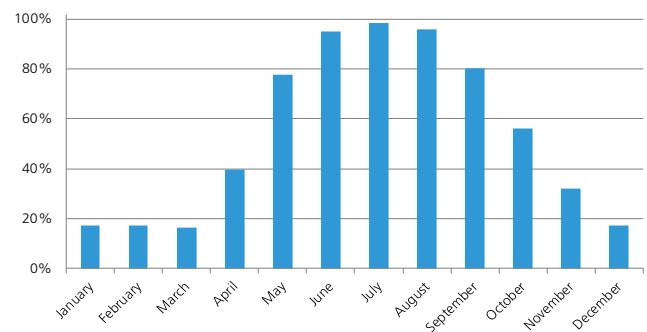
A survey is a critical piece of community engagement because it gives people the space and confidence to answer candidly. A survey link was distributed on a small flyer and sent to households through the water bill, posted on Facebook and the city website, and in the local newspaper. The digital distributions were the most successful outreach tools; Facebook and the website were the most common ways that people heard about the survey. Open for about two and half months between the beginning of November 2018 through the end of January 2019, a total of 481 responses were collected. The survey sample skews towards the elderly segment of the population, 49% of the respondents were aged over 55. The younger groups, age brackets 18-24 and 25-34 were underrepresented.

### Who Was Taking the Survey?

The survey was distributed online to residents of Lake City and the surrounding townships. The responses came back largely from Lake City residents (72.0%), followed by Lake Township (27.0%). No responses were received from Forest Township, and just three from Reeder Township. The majority of survey-takers were year-round residents, but a sizeable one-quarter of respondents live in the area seasonally. The bell curve is just as expected where the summer months are the most popular times to visit for seasonal residents. Most of the responses collected came from residents who have lived in the area "more than 15 years" (70.0%). The remaining replies were evenly spread across the other timeframes ranging from 1-15 years, but no responses were gathered for newcomers who

had moved into the area "this year." Survey-takers are also keen to stay in the area, year-round or seasonally; 81% replied that they plan to continue living here for the next 10 years.

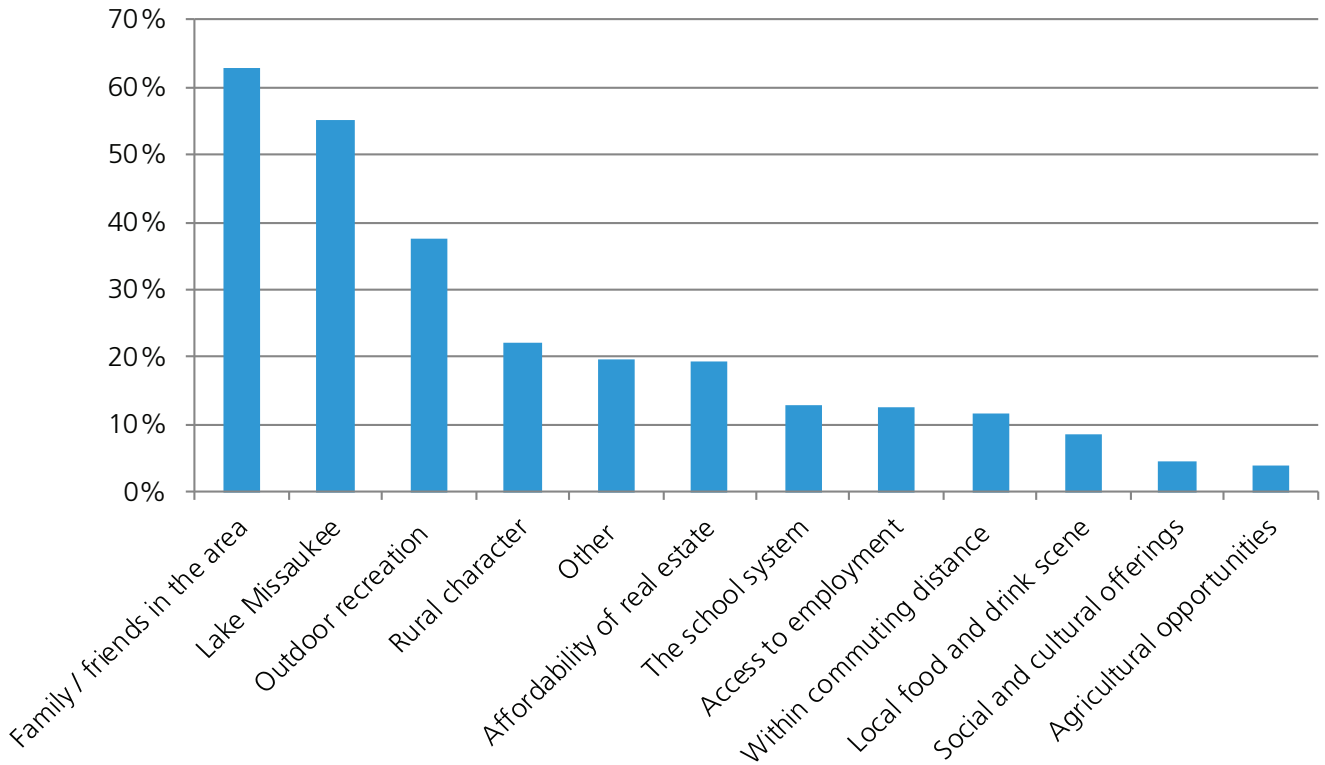
**FIGURE 6: WHAT MONTHS OF THE YEAR DO YOU TYPICALLY SPEND IN LAKE CITY?**



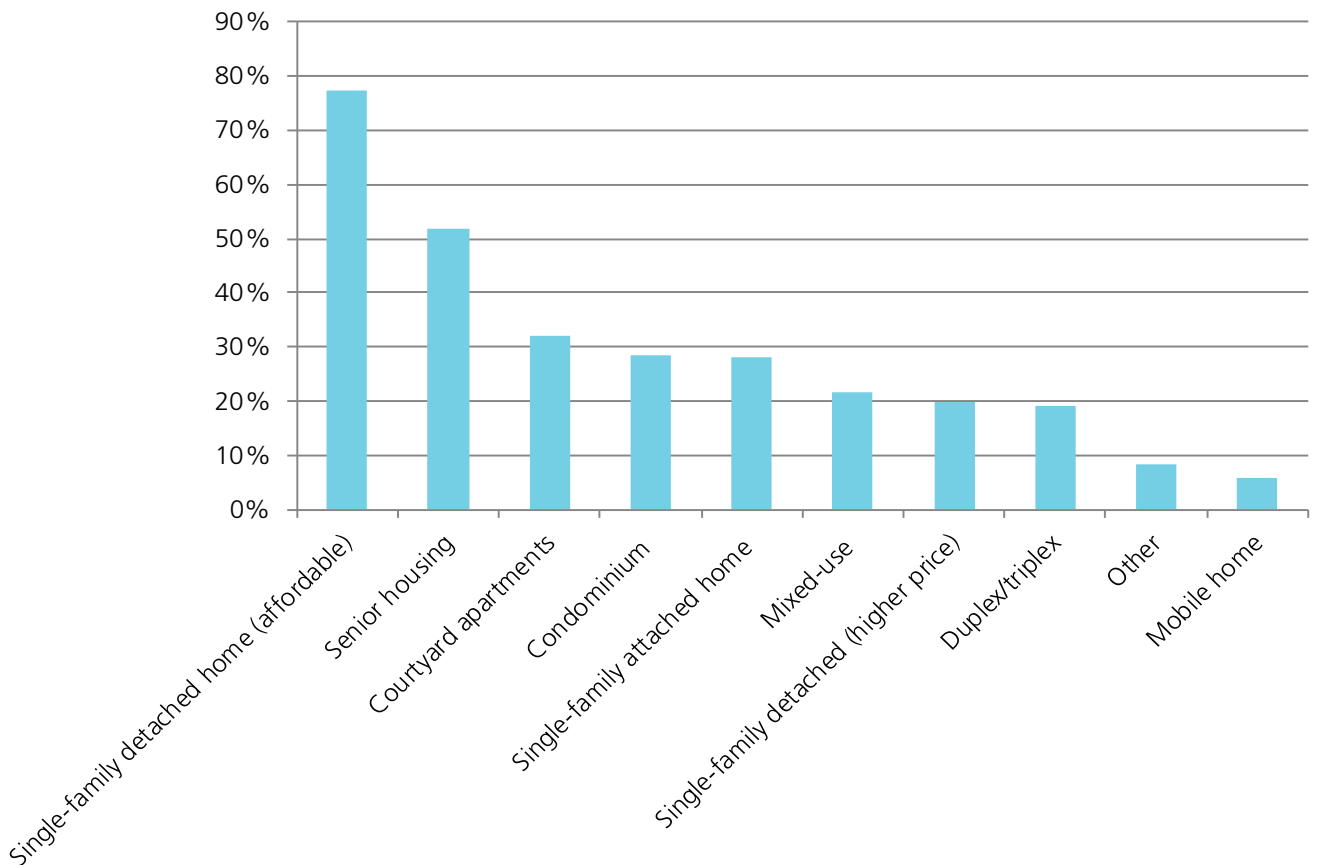
### Attraction to the Area

More than any other reason listed, residents were attracted to the Lake City area because their friends and/or family live here (63.0%). More than anything, residents feel the city offers a deep sense of community to the people in the area. Second in popularity was "Lake Missaukee" (55.0%) and closely tied to its abundant natural offerings, the third most common choice was "outdoor recreation" (37.0%). Interestingly, survey-takers are attracted to its "rural character" but much less so "agriculture opportunities." That is to say, while they appreciate being surrounded by farmland, they are less eager to work in the fields. The top three responses are somewhat striking because they do not touch on the building blocks of everyday life: housing, employment, and the school system.

**FIGURE 7: WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO THE LAKE CITY AREA?**



**FIGURE 8: WHAT TYPE OF HOME DO YOU THINK IS NEEDED?**





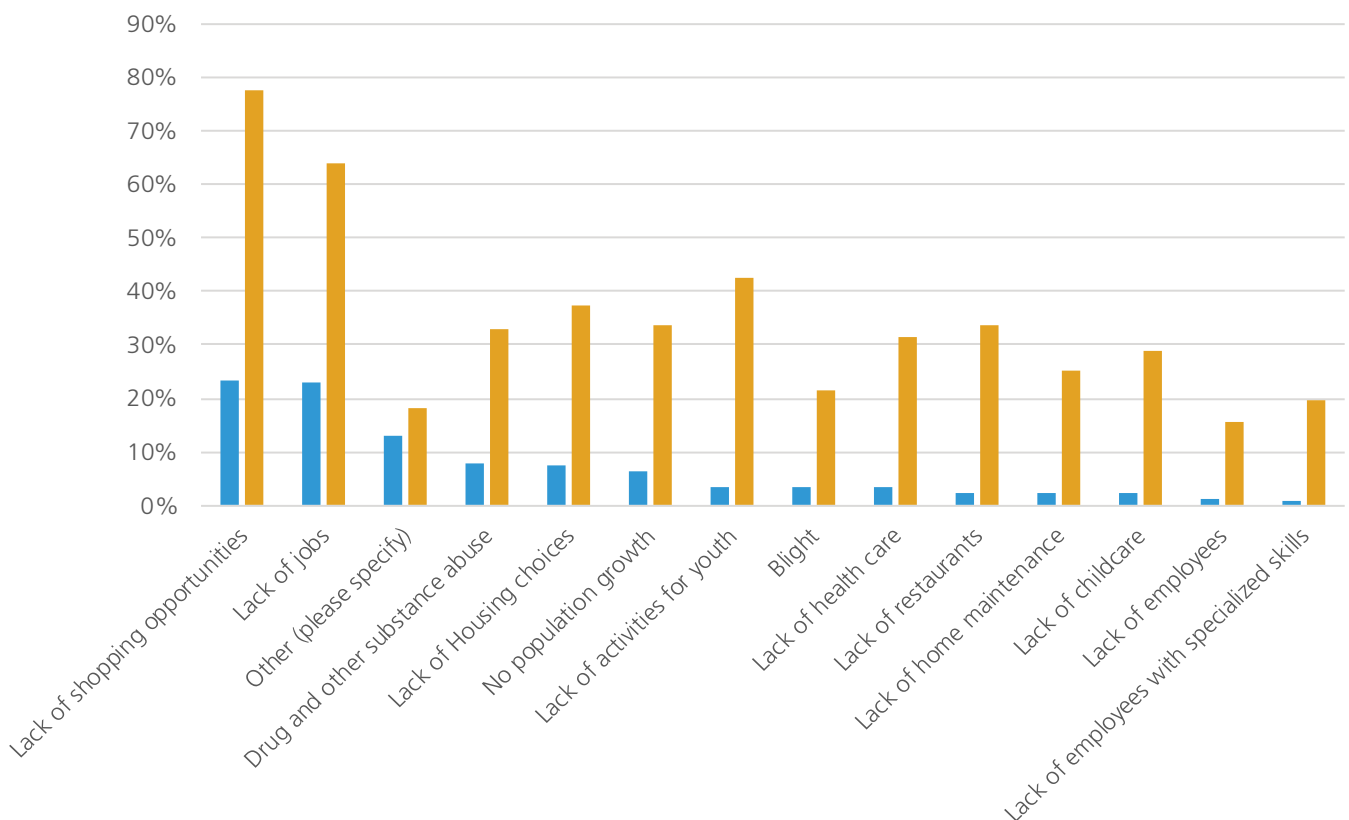
## Housing

The survey sample more often than not agreed with the statement “it was easy for me to find the type of residence I was looking for within my price range.” Forty-four percent “agreed” or “strongly agreed” compared to 25% who “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed.” The remaining responses, nearly one-third, “neither agreed nor disagreed.” Yet, resoundingly the participants felt that there is need for more housing in Lake City area. According to them, affordable single-family detached homes were in the greatest need as 77% of survey respondents selected that option. The residents were also open to other housing formats and expressed a need for “senior housing” (52.0%), “courtyard apartments” (32.2%), “condominiums” (28.5%), among other types of denser units, that could be for sale or for rent. The findings suggest that Lake City area locals desire a much wider array of housing types than are currently offered on the market.

## Quality of Life

Innumerable factors contribute to quality of life that are hard to pinpoint, and even harder to quantify. Fourteen options were presented to the survey-takers to assess what issues the Lake City area faces. Receiving the most votes, “lack of shopping” was recorded by 77% of survey-takers, followed by “lack of jobs” (64.0%), and “lack of youth activities” (42.5%). In the “other” option were several comments about not having a grocery store, and the presumed inconvenience this causes for households. When asked what the most pressing issues are, the ones that should be met with the most urgency, the numbers dispersed more evenly across the same 14 options. The top two stayed the same, lack of shopping and lack of jobs, but they no longer held a strong majority of the votes. Both of them were selected just 23% of the time, a large drop from their previous high responses. Coming in strong again in the “other” section, respondents reiterated the

**FIGURE 9: ISSUES VS. THE MOST PRESSING ISSUES**



urgency of a grocery store in town. “Drug and other substance abuse” problems jumped from 7th to 4th place on the list in term of percentage of votes received, going from just an issue to one of the more pressing issues.

## Business

Almost unanimously, the respondents thought it is at least somewhat important to attract new businesses to the area (98.4%), primarily selected by residents who do not own or operate a business in Missaukee County. When asked what types of services they wished to see, over half selected “tourism-related businesses,” followed by a “health clinic” (48.5%) and “industrial businesses” (35.6%). All of the other options fared well, none receiving fewer than one-quarter of the votes: broadband/internet, child day care, and “other” (which was primarily referring to a grocery store). More specifically, respondents were asked what type of retail they want to see in the downtown. “Food and beverage” stores rose to the top again to reflect the repeated request for a grocery store. Second to that, respondents wanted to see “general merchandise” (64.0%), “sporting goods, hobby, books, and music” (43.5%), and

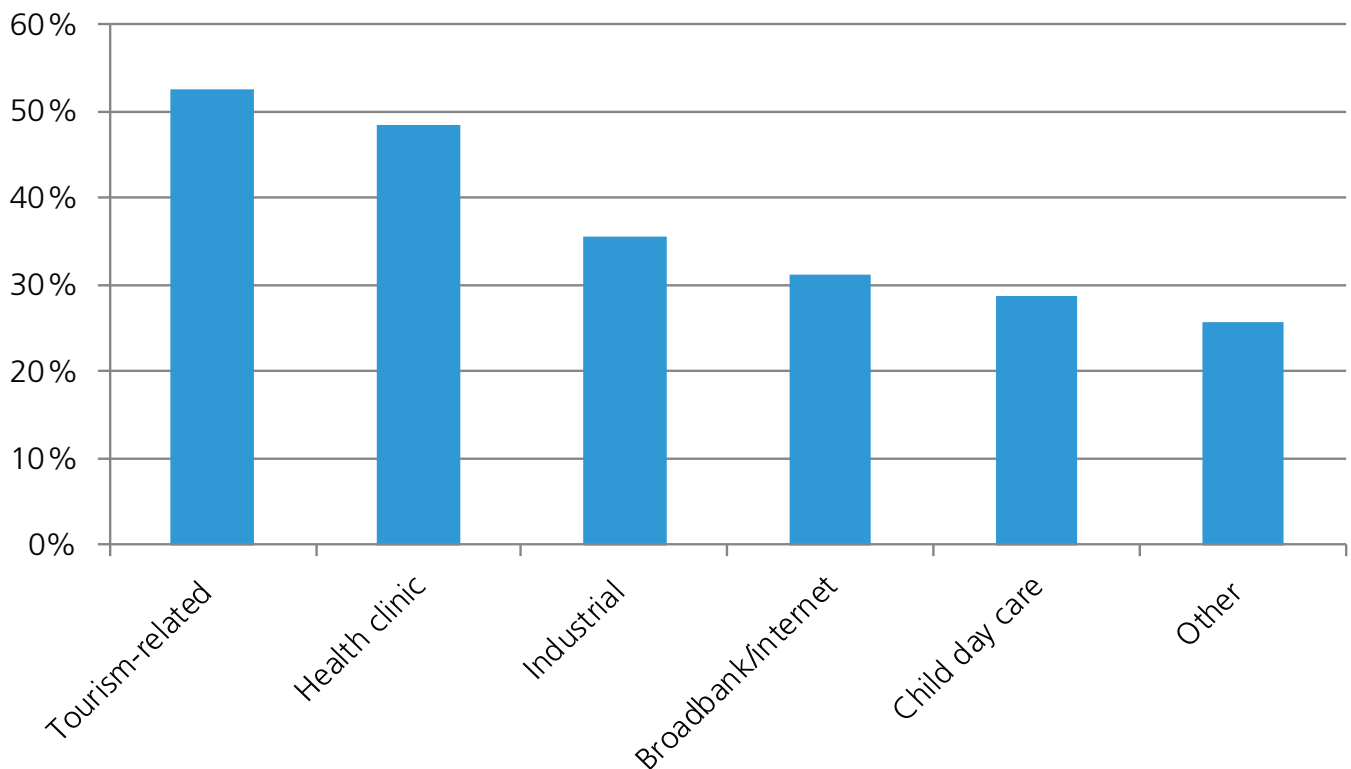
for entertainment, “restaurants and drinking establishments” (42.0%). Many of the comments remarked on the difficulty of sustaining business in the downtown. It is believed that competition with larger chains and e-commerce has taken an effect on city’s locally owned shops and restaurants.

Survey participants chose “family-friendly” restaurants as the type of eating and drinking establishment they were looking for. The comments expressed a tension between opening new restaurants and uplifting the already existing ones. The general expression was that they want a restaurant that is not fast food, but not too high end, serves alcohol, and has some healthy options such as a brewpubs, cafes, restaurant/bar.

## Recreation

Survey respondents were asked to rate six characteristics of the recreation system on a scale of “very satisfied” to “very dissatisfied,” equating to a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was “very satisfied” and 5 was “very dissatisfied.” Each option corresponded to a number and a weighted average was assigned to the characteristic. According to these findings, survey-takers were

**FIGURE 10: WHAT TYPES OF SERVICES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN LAKE CITY?**





## LAKE CITY AREA VISIONING RESULTS

Visioning is a crucial part of the master planning process because it gives residents the opportunity to imagine what could be, and to build consensus on what an ideal future looks like so that a municipality can confidently update its processes, practices, and policies towards the community's collective vision. On July 18, 2019, a community visioning session was conducted as part of the Community Master Plan process. Approximately 84 people participated that evening at Lake Elementary School, representing Lake City, Lake Township, Forest Township, and other communities within the County.

The visioning process is based on interactive group exercises that are designed to be discussion-based to learn from your neighbors and sharing your ideas with City officials. The goal is to determine broadly "what kind of place" the Lake City area wants to be. Attendees sat in groups and were asked to brainstorm responses to a set of five questions. After each question, each person in

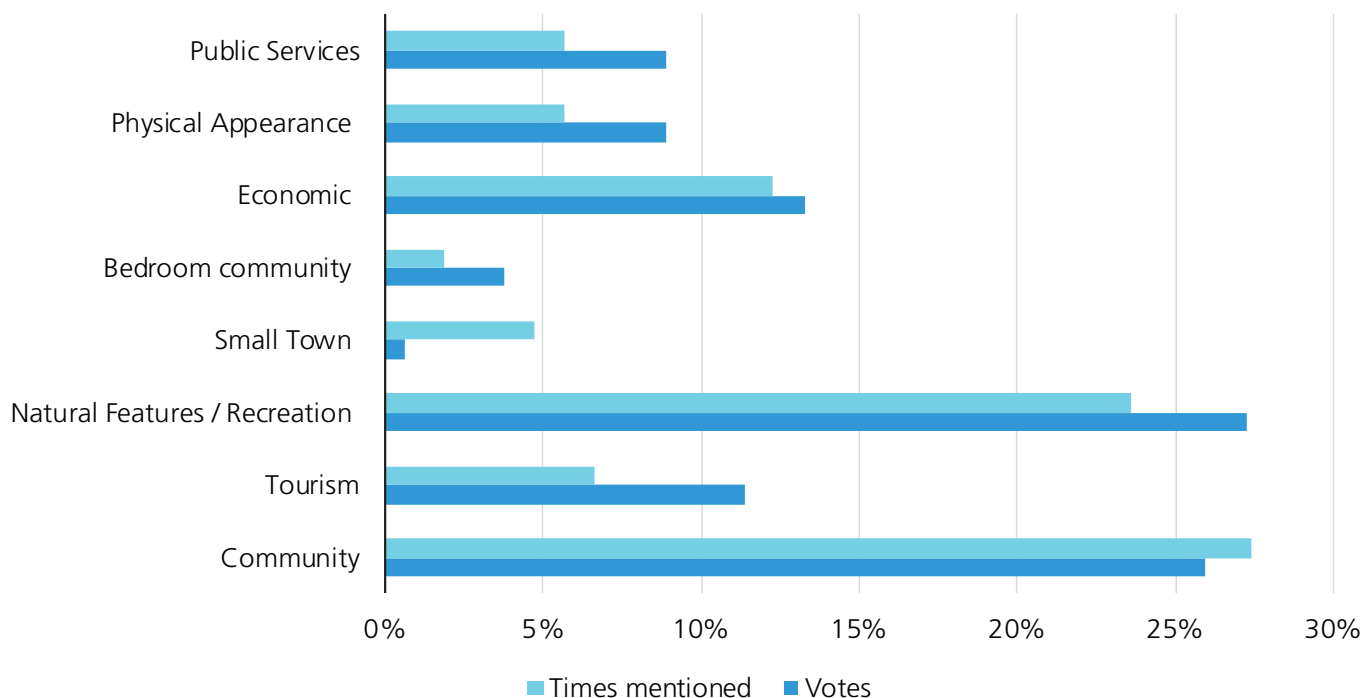
the group voted on their top choices from the responses they generated. After the visioning session concluded, responses were analyzed and grouped into categories (outliers excluded) to capture the major themes that emerged; the votes for each response were totaled as were the number of times something was mentioned across the different tables. The purpose of counting both is to determine responses that were commonly written – popular among the residents—and then which ones made it to the top through voting.

The final question "What does the Lake City area look like 10 years in the future?" was constructed for the community to conceptualize what would make this City a better place to live and visit. After each group brainstormed and voted, their top priority was shared with the group at large. Each group's top answer was recorded for everyone to see at the front of the room. Once the list was compiled, each visioning participant voted on their top three priorities, which became the "collective priorities." Specific responses and observations for the visioning session are detailed in this section.



*Approximately 84 people attended the Lake City Area visioning session.*

**FIGURE 12: WHAT ONE WORD OR PHRASE DESCRIBES LAKE CITY (NOW)?**



**Question 1: What one word or phrase describes Lake City (now)?**

The majority of responses fell into the following eight categories:

- » Community
- » Tourism
- » Natural Features / Recreation
- » Small Town
- » Bedroom Community
- » Economy
- » Physical Appearance
- » Public Services

Responses in the Community category reflect primarily positive attitudes about its people, ranging from “welcoming” to “family-oriented,” receiving near an equal percentage for “times mentioned” and “votes;” a productive start for describing the place you live and or visit. Participants were also proud of the area’s public services, namely the recent renovations to the schools and more generally well-maintained

infrastructure. The Natural Features / Recreation category included responses like “up north,” “scenic,” and “the lake,” which received 24% of the total responses and 27% of the votes cast, indicating that over one quarter of participants acknowledge that the surrounding natural area is an important and defining characteristic of the Lake City area. It is seen as one of the assets that adds to both its small-town charm and into a tourist economy. Tourism was also voted on more frequently than it was mentioned. It was talked about as a venue to boost the economy although the challenges of a seasonal community were also acknowledged. The desirable solution was to become a four-season resort community.

Attendees also felt strongly about the Lake City Area economy using primarily negative words like “dormant” and “struggling” but also a belief that the economy showed “promise” even with a “lack of employment” and “lack of amenities.” Similarly, the physical appearance of the area (likely in reference to Lake City) was described as lacking street appeal and widespread storefront vacancy. Receiving a greater proportion of votes shows that this is a concern to the community.

## Question 2: What has Lake City accomplished well in the last 5 years?

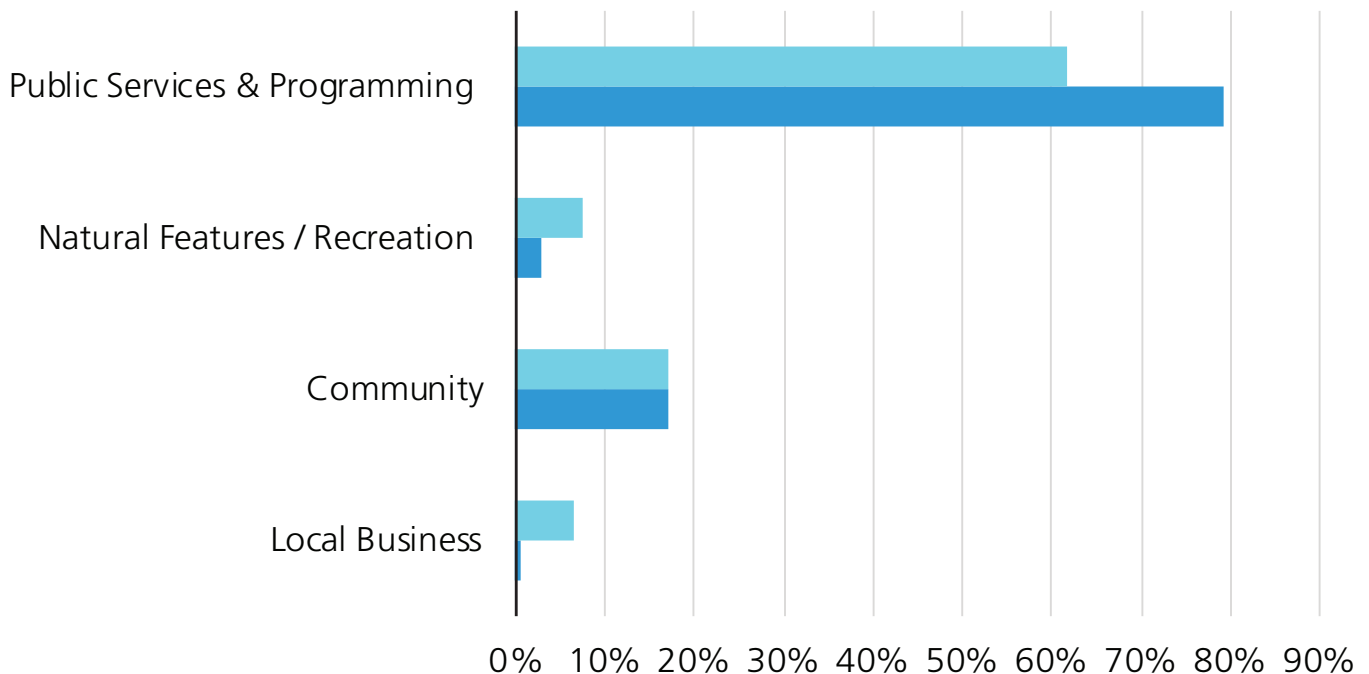
Many responses fell into the following four categories:

- » Local Business
- » Community
- » Natural Features / Recreation
- » Public Services & Programming

The category with the largest number of votes, by a wide margin, was Public Services & Programming with attendees referring to the “well maintained city properties,” “festivals,” and “high quality schools.” This category accounted for 61% of the total responses and 81% of the votes, showing a strong pride for the provision and quality of these services. The other category that received a notable percentage of responses and votes was “Community,” mainly mentioning the level of “community involvement” and cooperation among different groups to fund and support local initiatives. Given that these two categories accounted for the majority of the responses and votes, public amenities are highly regarded in the area.



FIGURE 13: WHAT HAS LAKE CITY ACCOMPLISHED WELL IN THE LAST 5 YEARS?



### Question 3: What could Lake City have done better?

The majority of responses fell into the following five categories:

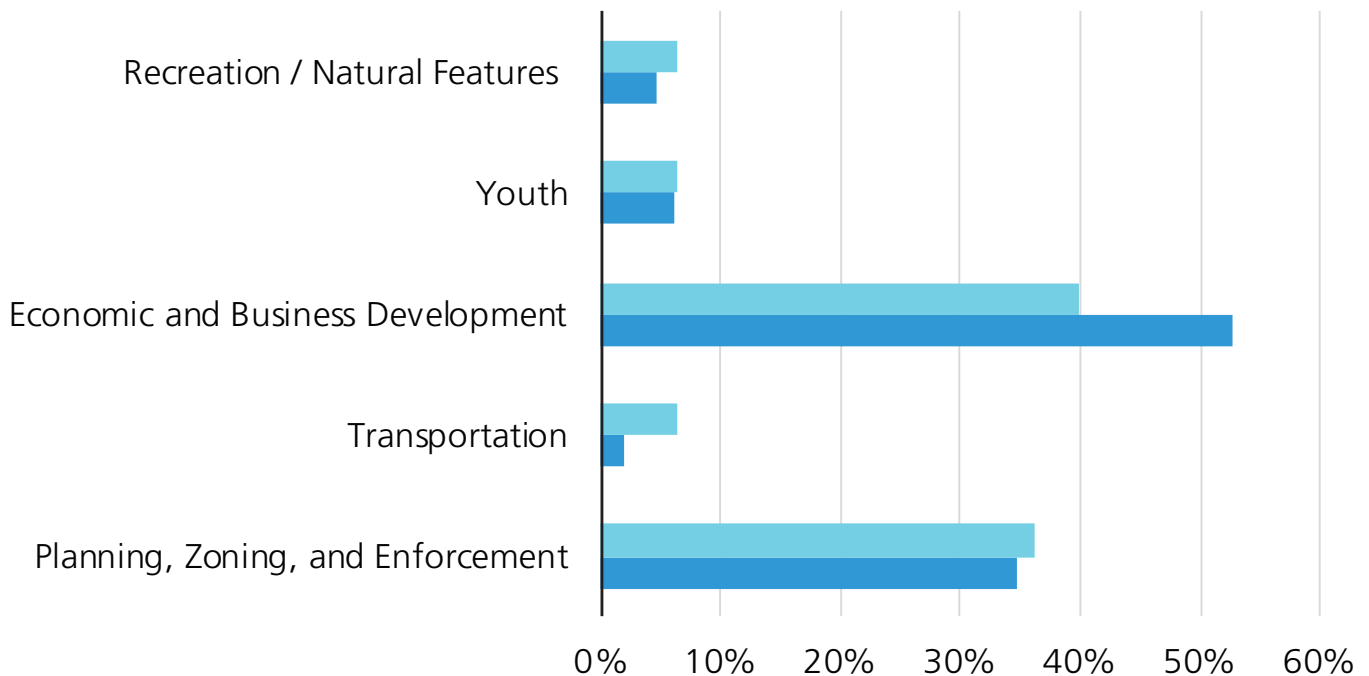
- » Planning-Zoning & Enforcement
- » Transportation
- » Economic & Business Development
- » Youth
- » Natural Resources /Recreation

Planning, Zoning and Enforcement along with Economic & Business Development were the two most popular types of responses, with 34% and 53% of the votes, respectively. In the former category, "long term planning" and "enforcing local ordinances" were two commonly supported responses.

The category Economic & Business Development received responses in this category including references to "Providing employment and career development" and "attracting new businesses." More specifically, some of the comments were tourist-related such as "establishing more lodging accommodations" and "scenic, lakefront dining opportunities." The remaining categories received less than 6% of total votes.



**FIGURE 14: WHAT COULD LAKE CITY HAVE DONE BETTER?**



## Question 4: What are the barriers to our success?

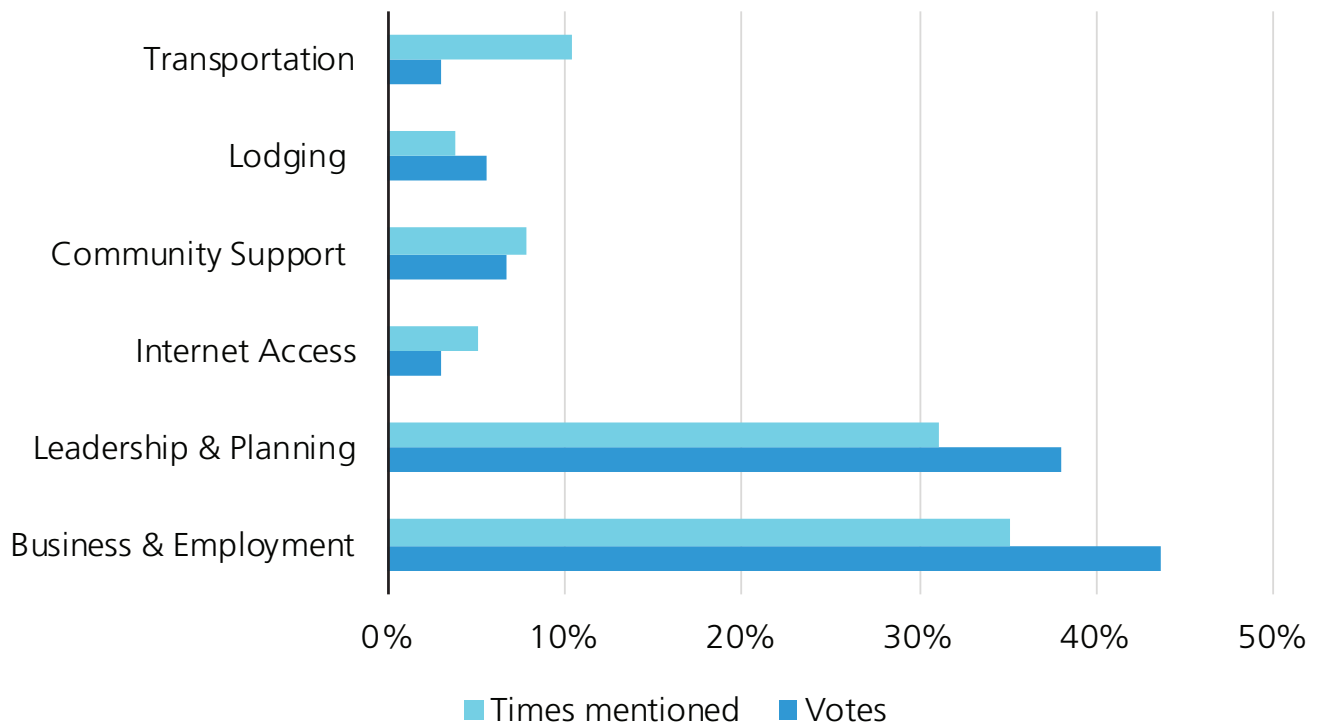
The majority of responses fell into the following five categories:

- » Business & Employment
- » Leadership & Planning
- » Internet Access
- » Community Support
- » Lodging

The categories Business & Employment and Leadership & Planning were the two major categories identified as barriers for the Lake City area's success. Both received a greater proportion of votes than mentions, signifying a greater interest in tackling these hurdles. Common responses for the Business & Employment category were "lack of reliable workers" and a lack of basic services for residents such as grocery stores, housing variety, and childcare. Responses in the Leadership & Planning category centered around a lack of "forward thinking" and leadership expressed as a desire for a City Manager or an Economic Development staff person. Without paid leadership, there is also limited collaboration among entities across the area and less coordinated planning for development and public access to the lake.



FIGURE 15: WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO OUR SUCCESS?





## Question 5: Ideally, what does the Lake City Area look like 10 years in the future?

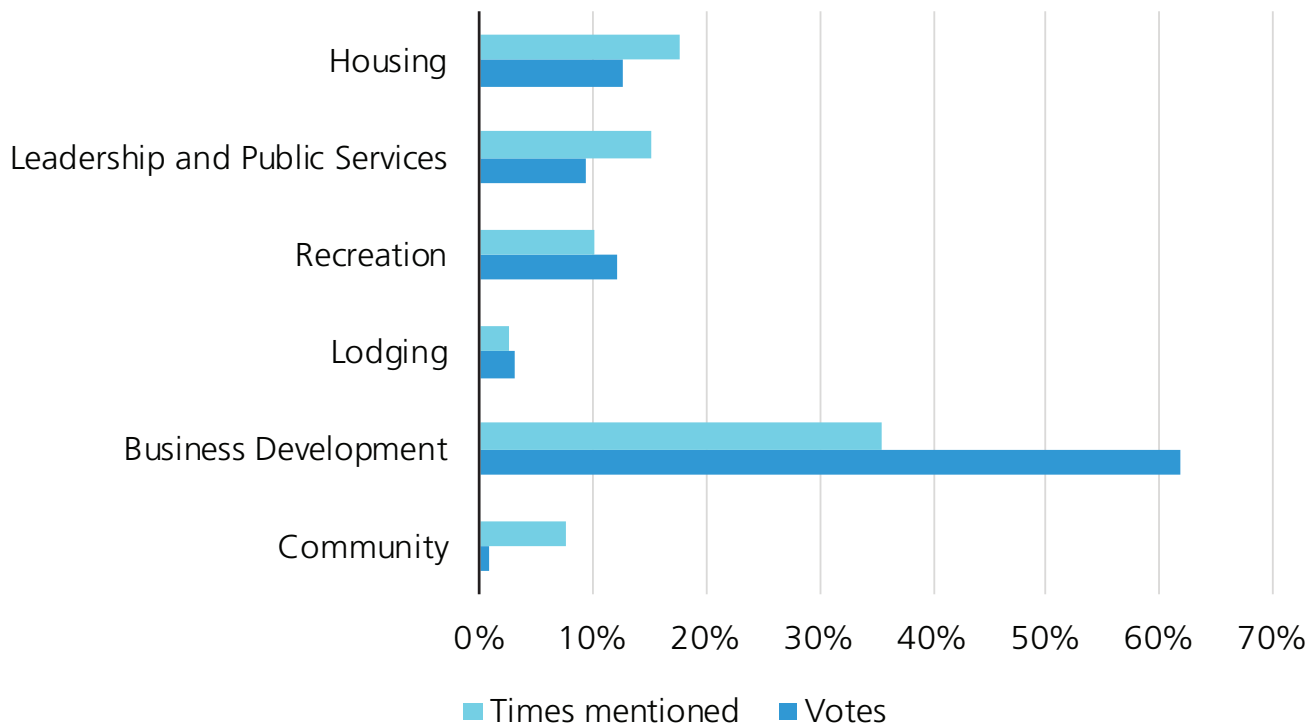
The majority of responses fell into the following six categories:

- » Community
- » Business Development
- » Lodging
- » Recreation
- » Leadership & Public Services
- » Housing

Business Development, by a large margin, was the largest thematic category with 35% of the total responses and 62% of the votes. Respondents want to see “industry expansion” and a “downtown [that] is welcoming [and] vibrant.” As a part of that growth, a “thriving resort town” that is self-sustaining is of high importance. In a close second and third place was Housing and Recreation. Participants recorded “homeownership has increased” to “diverse and attractive housing options” as priorities and for recreation – a clean and healthy Lake, outdoor parks and paths, and community center for seniors and youth.



**FIGURE 16: IDEALLY, WHAT DOES THE LAKE CITY AREA LOOK LIKE 10 YEARS IN THE FUTURE?**



## Collective Priorities

The responses from the previous question, ‘ideally what does Lake City look like in 10 years?’ were compiled by the facilitator in real time. If two answers were similar, the whole group determined if responses could be combined or if one could

be removed. The responses from this exercise are recorded below. Participants were each given three sticky dots to place on their personal top three priorities. The purpose of the prioritization exercise is to mimic what a city government with limited funds must go through when determining how money and resources should be spent.

**TABLE 18: COLLECTIVE PRIORITIES**

Collective Priorities	Votes
Thriving Industry and Business	39
Water Quality – Preserve	34
Lodging	31
City Manager	29
High Speed Internet	28
Public Transportation	19
Grocery Store	16
Medical Center	14
Four Season Economy	8
Downtown Parking	7
Clean, Up-North Atmosphere (casual, friendly, etc.)	5
Interjurisdictional Collaboration	5
Vibrant Downtown, no pass through	3







*Recreational land use in Lake City.*

# 8

# Future Land Use

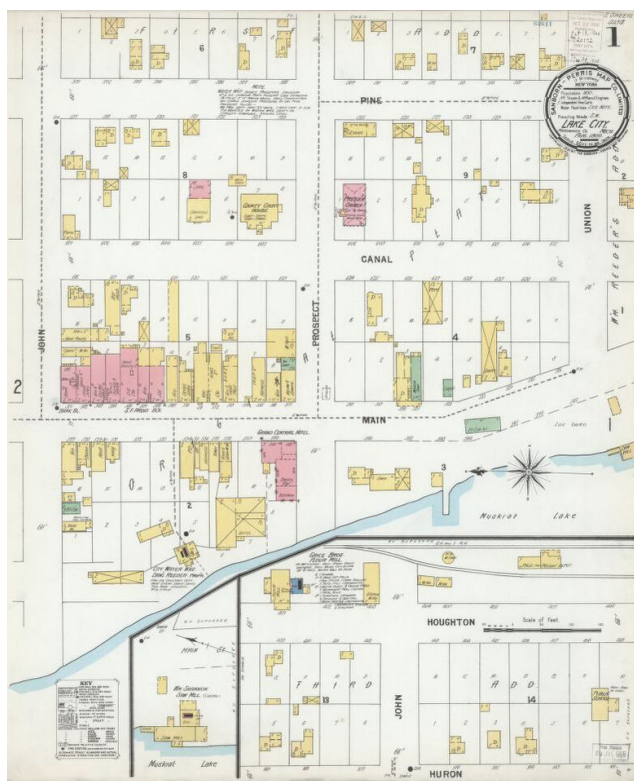
This section details future land use and a plan for zoning changes to be undertaken by the City of Lake City, Forest Township and Lake Township.

## FUTURE LAND USE

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

## FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map is not intended to be used to identify future land use on a parcel-by-parcel basis, but rather to identify districts that may evolve within the City and Townships. The Future Land Use Map shows the preferred locations for future development in each of the communities. In order to display the full context of future land use a set of standard land use categories was developed and used respectively in each municipality. Descriptions specific to a municipality are called out separately in the category description.



*Historic plat map of Lake City from 1900.*

Source: Sanborn Maps

## FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

### Residential – Neighborhood

This category reflects traditional development patterns where residential homes were built within a grid system and have a higher density per acre than suburban residential areas.

#### General Characteristics

In-town living. Houses built on smaller lots that were part of the original plats when the community was established. The neighborhoods are built on a grid pattern and the blocks are normally uniform in area. Houses typically have attached or detached garages.

#### Land Use

Single family residential homes, neighborhood parks, and institutional uses, such as churches and schools.

#### Streets and Connectivity

Streets vary in width from 60 to 66 feet. Some streets have curb and gutter and most, if not all, have sidewalks. These neighborhoods are very walkable.



### City of Lake City

In the City of Lake City residential block east of Main Street are relatively uniform in size, approximately 430 by 230 in size. The average housing density is 4 units per acre; or 1 unit per ¼ acre. The street right-of-way range between 60 feet to 66 feet in width and most of the neighborhood streets have sidewalks which range in width from 4 feet to 5 feet lending to their walkability and creating safe routes to schools.

### Lake Township

The unincorporated area known as Jennings, like Lake City, has a grid system that once accommodated many more homes than it now has. Originally called “Mitchell” this area lost most of its population with the decline of the logging and lumber industry. The fabric of the community is still intact, but the population and housing density is considerably less.



*Residential-Neighborhood land uses in the City of Lake City: single-family residential neighborhoods (top) and neighborhood park (bottom).*

## Residential-Waterfront

Residential development within this category is solely dependent on its location and adjacency to Lake Missaukee, Lake Sapphire, and Crooked Lake. The majority of this development is located in Lake Township along the south shore of Lake Missaukee and W. Birch Avenue on the north side of the lake. In the City of Lake City homes along the waterfront are located primarily west of M-66 and south of Miltner Park where the properties are for the most part fully built-out.



*Residential-Waterfront housing example.*

Source: Adobe Stock Images

### General Characteristics

Lake living. Homes are built to provide views of, and access to the lake. Lots tend to be narrow and the density can be the same as a typical in-town neighborhood.

### Land Use

Single family residential homes with private docks.

### Streets and Connectivity

Streets are paved with no curb and gutter. No sidewalks and pedestrian and vehicular access both use the street.



*Residential-Waterfront land uses along the south shore of Lake Missaukee.*

Source: Google Maps

## Residential – Suburban

Unlike the Residential – Neighborhood category where housing is built around a planned grid network of streets, the Residential – Category reflects a lower density per acre and a development pattern that is less planned and more flexible favoring vehicular access more than pedestrian. Streets tend to be curvilinear without curb and gutter, and no sidewalks. Future land development would encourage single family homes, while providing for other housing venues, such as, apartments, townhouses, and planned developments.

### General Characteristics

Suburban living. Residential homes are built on ¼ to ½ lots with larger setbacks than found in your typical neighborhood residential area. This residential land use can be located both in the City and the Townships. This land use type can also accommodate cluster development, planned unit development and duplexes.

### Land Use

Single family residential homes, townhomes, planned developments, parks, and institutional uses, such as churches and schools.

### Streets and Connectivity

In town developments should provide paved streets with curb and gutter and sidewalks. Similar developments in the Township should include these same amenities but often omit the curb and gutter and sidewalks to create a more rural atmosphere. Regardless of location these areas should provide shared non-motorized pathways for residents to connect with adjacent community facilities.

## City of Lake City

The Residential – Suburban category is envisioned for the east portion of the City with a focus on providing a variety of housing types. Unlike the Townships, it is recommended that housing developments within the category include pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks and a non-motorized trail network that would connect the residential areas with the public-school campus and connections downtown via Union Street and Mitchell Street.

## Forest Township

In Forest Township Residential-Suburban would occur in the extreme southwest corner of the Township along the M-55 and M-66 corridor. Several residential areas already exist in this area which are adjacent to commercial uses along the corridor. Future development in this area is encouraged to connect with City infrastructure, especially sanitary sewer.

## Lake Township

Residential-Suburban development is envisioned south of Jennings Road commencing west of the highway commercial along M-66 to Green Road. Within this area is already residential development that reflects this pattern along Amy and Sara Drives, and along both sides of Jennings Road between M-66 and Sara Drive.

Another pocket of this land use exists at the intersection of M-55 (Watergate Road) and Dickerson Road with residential development on either side of the Clam River along W. Blue Road, S. Riverside Drive, S. North Country Drive, and W. Whispering Pines Circle. Due to its proximity to the City of Cadillac this area could likely see further residential development. Several large tracts of land, especially west of the Clam River could easily facilitate this type of residential expansion.



*Residential-Suburban housing example.*

Source: Adobe Stock Images



## Residential-Multiple

This residential category encourages the development of higher density residential units between 12-18 dwelling units per acre. An area envisioned for this type of housing is suggested along the east side of Houghton Street between Mitchell and Davis Streets. This location is within walking distance of local schools and four blocks from the downtown commercial district.



*Residential-Multiple housing example (triplex).*

Source: Adobe Stock Images

### General Characteristics

Buildings which accommodate multiple residential dwellings. Density can range between 12 to 18 units per acre, and in some instances higher depending on the scope of the development. This land use type can also accommodate cluster development, planned unit development and duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes.

### Land Use

Multiple family residential dwellings in attached or detached buildings.

### Streets and Connectivity

Paved streets with curb and gutter and sidewalks.

## Forest & Farm

This is the largest land use category among three municipalities. To a large extent it reflects the natural characteristics of the land; operable farms, tree farms, forests, and forested wetlands. Residential development within this area tend to be associated with farms or on large acreage parcels. An example of this land use can be found in Forest Township where the wetland complex that divides the Township in half (east west) has affected the road patterns and focused most development in the southwest quadrant of the Township.



*Forest-Farm land use example (Jennings Road).*

Source: Google Maps

### General Characteristics

Open space, forest, and operable farms. Residential land uses are typically subordinate to the other land uses in this category, such as, operable farms, tree farms, forests, wetlands, and other open space uses. Properties tend to be large and structured around increments of a section.

### Land Use

Forest and farms. Residential structures tend to be located adjacent to county roads.

### Streets and Connectivity

Paved and gravel roads. Very vehicular in nature.

## Commercial-Downtown

This designation reflects the historical development pattern within the City of Lake City. The downtown district is reflectively compact located along Main Street (M-66/M-55) between Mitchell and Union Streets. The downtown is adjacent to Lake Missaukee, Missaukee County facilities with very accessible and walkable connections to residential neighborhoods. Properties within this category include stand-alone commercial properties, some with private parking lots, and traditional downtown commercial buildings built on zero lot lines. The bulk of these buildings are located between and John and Prospect Streets. Primary characteristics include multi-story historic commercial buildings, high pedestrian accessibility, and adjacency to the lake and residential neighborhoods.



*Commercial-Downtown land use in the City of Lake City.*

### General Characteristics

Compact, historic, quaint and walkable. This is the community's original mixed-use district with multi-story commercial buildings, sidewalks and on-street parking. On either side of the core downtown area there are single story commercial buildings with small private parking lots. The district is compact and extremely walkable from adjacent neighborhoods. Its principal asset is its location adjacent to and view of Lake Missaukee.

### Land Use

Commercial, professional offices, personal services and government facilities. Parks and public access sites to the Lake.

### Streets and Connectivity

Located on state highway (M-55 and M-66). Sidewalks throughout the district.



*Commercial-Downtown example (Ann Arbor, MI).*  
Source: Adobe Stock Images



*M-66 runs through downtown Lake City.*

## Commercial-Highway

Properties in this land use category are vehicular-oriented and include uses normally found in these linear commercial corridors such as, gas stations, fast-food restaurants, personal services, lending institutions and national franchise chain stores. Where possible, adjacent developments should have internal lot access to improve access management along M-55 and M-66. In addition, sidewalks should be installed to encourage pedestrian and non-motorized use.

### General Characteristics

Linear. This commercial category is highway-dependent and vehicular-oriented taking advantage of exposure on M-55 and M-66.

### Land Use

Commercial, fast-food restaurants, financial institutions, gas stations, professional offices, and personal services. Some sporadic residential uses.

### Streets and Connectivity

Located on state highway (M-55 and M-66). No uniform pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks or shared pathways.

## City of Lake City

Commercial-Highway is located on the north city limits along the M-55 corridor and on the east side of M-66 south of Kalkaska Street.

## Forest Township

Commercial development exists and is proposed in the future along the M-55 corridor between M-66 east to N. Decker Road and along M-66 from M-55 north to Southview Dr.

## Lake Township

Lake Township has several Commercial-Highway districts within the Township. There is a district that approximately a one mile south of Ridge Avenue along M-66. Within this district is a functionally obsolete shopping center on the northwest corner of the M-66 and Jennings Road intersection. This property is well positioned as a redevelopment site.

Another Commercial-Highway district is located along W. Blue Road/Watergate Road (M-55) at the S. Morey Road (M-66) intersection. In this district land uses include the Missaukee Golf Club, Wexford Community Credit Union, Classic Chevrolet of Lake City and Corvette Rubber Company.

The last Commercial-Highway district is also along Watergate Road (M-55) beginning at the intersection with La Chance Road and proceeding west to the Wexford County line. Wolverine Power Cooperative, Wexford Missaukee Human Services, Whippetree Farms, and Cadillac Sportsman's Club are located within the area.



Commercial-Highway land uses in the Lake City Area.



## Institutional

This category includes those uses that serve a community's social, educational, health, cultural and recreational needs, such as City Hall, Township Hall, County offices, schools, hospitals, and public auditoriums. The largest concentration of institutional land uses exists within the City of Lake City and include properties and buildings associated with Missaukee County operations, Lake City Area Schools, Maple Grove Park and Lake Missaukee Park.



*Missaukee District Library*

Source: Missaukee District Library Facebook Page

## Industrial/Extraction

This land use category is reserved for land uses that are involved in the extraction of mineral resources, and the manufacturing, production and assemblage of materials. Both types are in Forest Township and include Lake City Forge in the Forest Township Industrial Park located on Jenema Road and Ripatte Road, and the Lake City Materials surface mining operation located on W. Sanborn Road.



*Industrial land use in Lake City area.*

### General Characteristics

Special purpose sites that accommodate a specific government, religious, or not-for-profit operation.

### Land Use

Schools, government facilities, such as County, City and Township facilities and operations, churches, and not-for-profit organizations.

### Streets and Connectivity

Depending on size circulation is often internal within the property. Schools, however, should provide connections to the local sidewalk network.

### General Characteristics

Special purpose sites located with access to a state highway or paved all-season County road that accommodate commercial and passenger vehicular traffic. Typically, large properties.

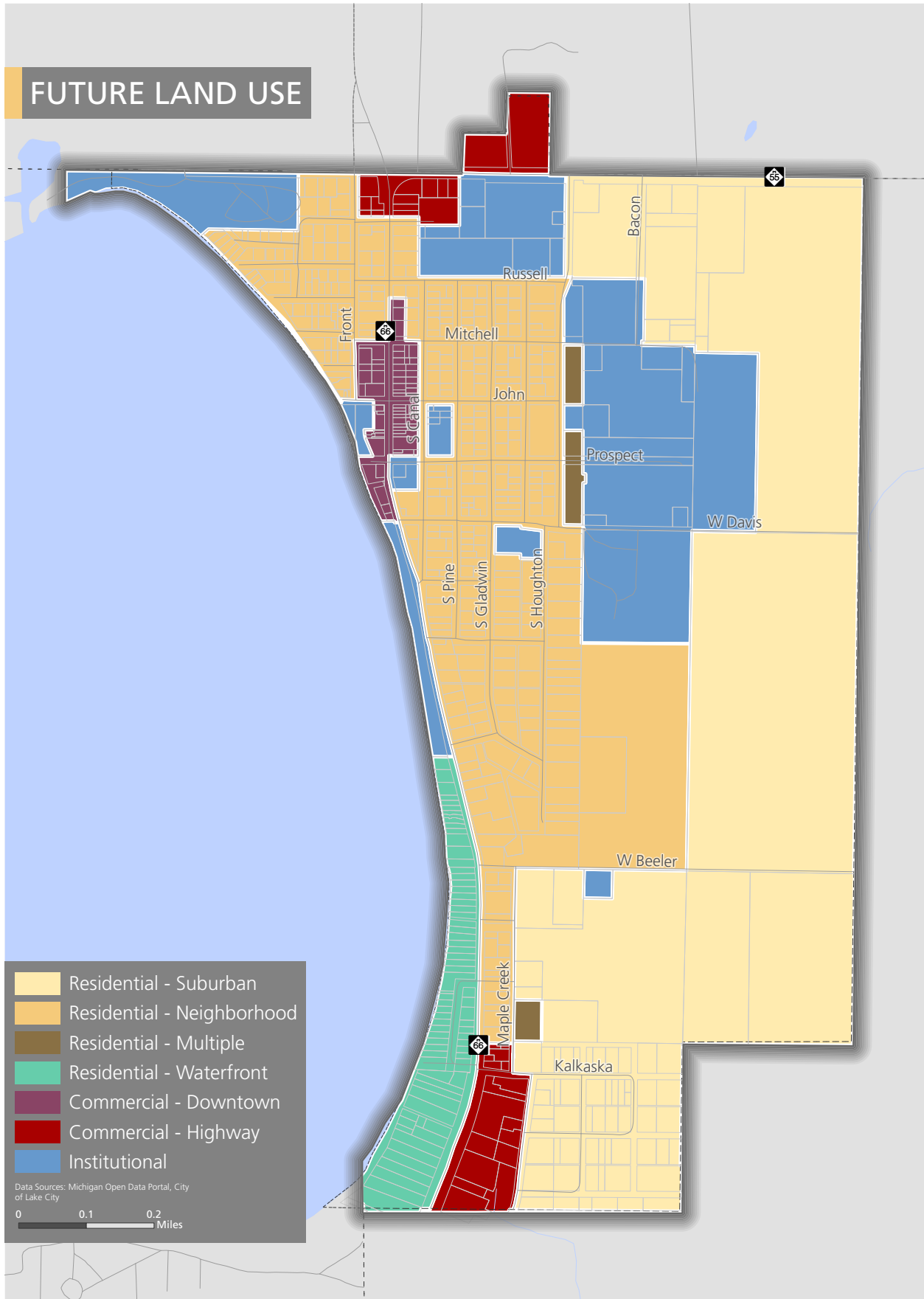
### Land Use

Manufacturing, assembling, and production uses, surface mineral mining and forestry-related operations.

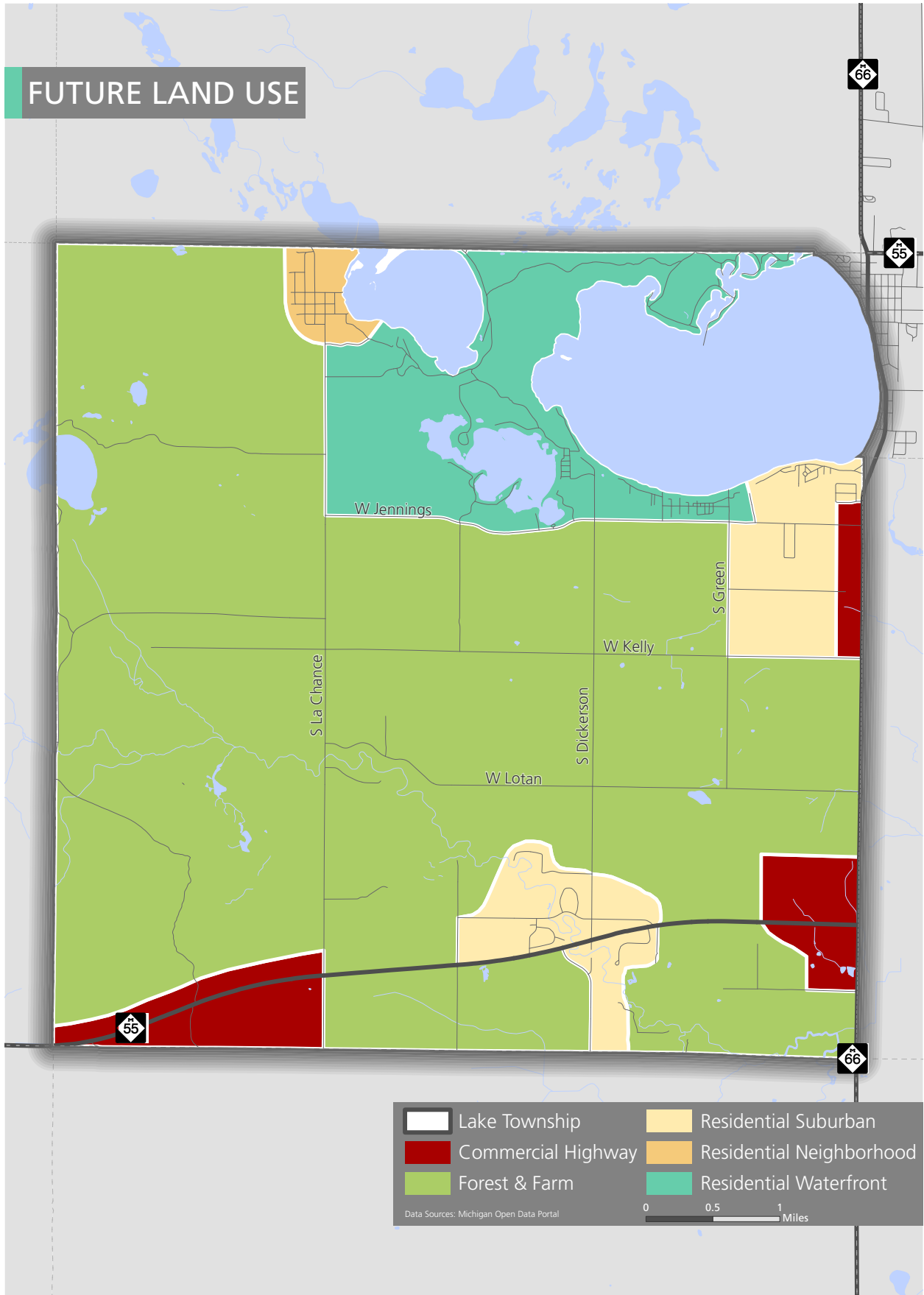
### Streets and Connectivity

Located adjacent to or near a state highway or County road. No pedestrian amenities.

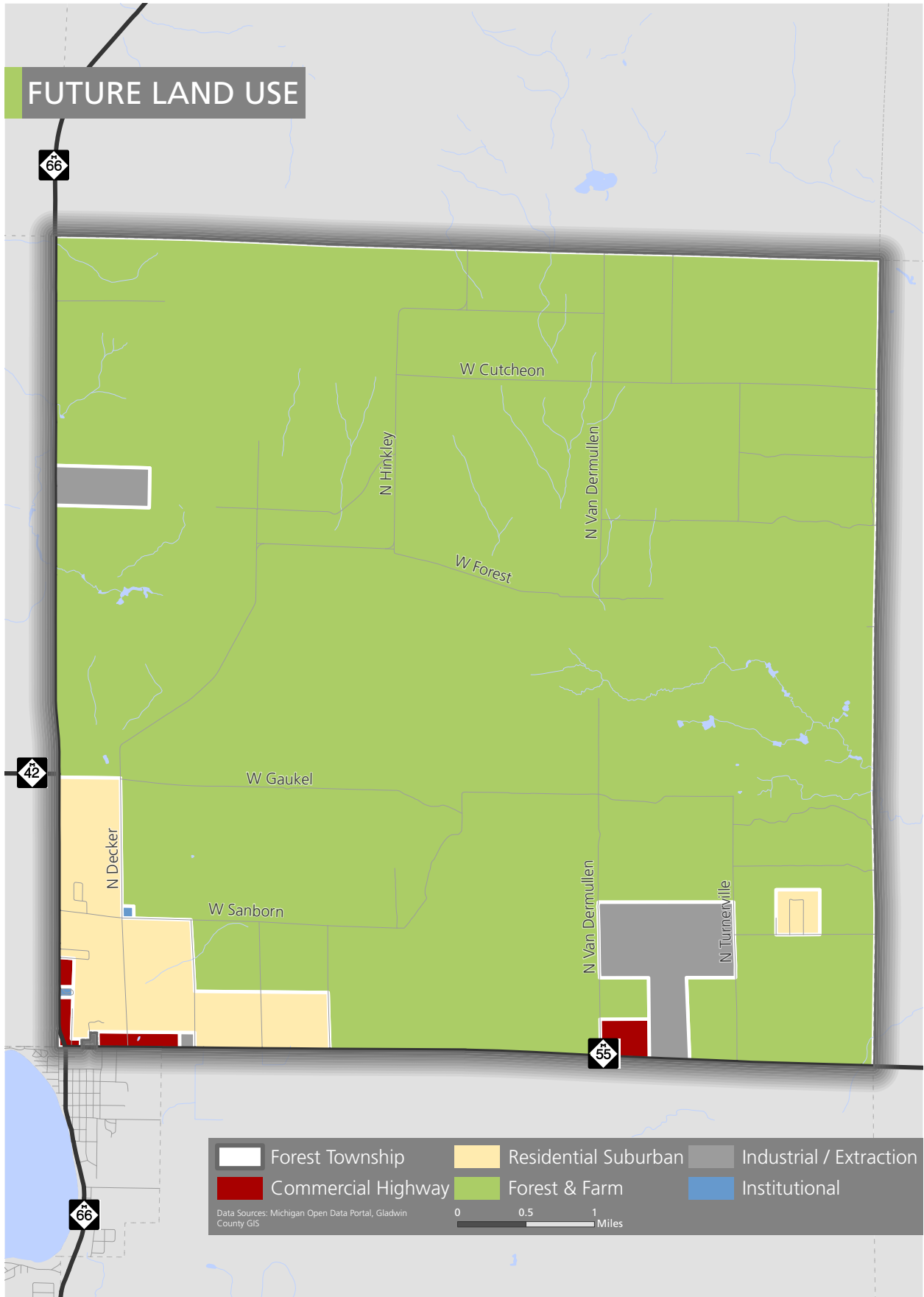
# MAP 12: CITY OF LAKE CITY FUTURE LAND USE MAP



MAP 13: LAKE TOWNSHIP FUTURE LAND USE MAP



MAP 14: FOREST TOWNSHIP FUTURE LAND USE MAP



## ZONING PLAN

According to Section 2(d) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008), the Master Plan shall include a Zoning Plan depicting the various zoning districts and their use, as well as standards for height, bulk, location, and use of buildings and premises. The Zoning Plan serves as the basis for the Zoning Ordinance.

## RELATIONSHIP TO THE MASTER PLAN

As a key component of the Master Plan, the Zoning Plan is based on the recommendations of the Master Plan and is intended to identify areas where existing zoning is inconsistent with the objectives and strategies of the Master Plan, and to guide the development of the Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation tool for the future development of Lake City, Forest Township, and Lake Township. The following sections detail existing zoning regulations in the City.

**TABLE 19: LAND USE TO CURRENT ZONING ORDINANCE**

Land Use Category	Current Zoning Category		
	City of Lake City	Forest Township	Lake Township
Residential-Neighborhood	R-2: Medium Density	None	None
Residential-Waterfront	R-2: Medium Density	None	None
Residential-Suburban	R-1: Low Density	None	None
Residential-Multiple	R-3: High Density	None	None
Farm & Forest	AG-1: Agricultural	None	None
Commercial-Downtown	C-1: Core Commercial	None	None
Commercial-Highway	C-2: Commercial/Resort	None	None
Institutional	PL-1: Public Lands	None	None
Industrial	I-1: Industrial	None	None



**TABLE 20: LAND USE TO FUTURE ZONING ORDINANCE ORGANIZATION**

Land Use Category	Zoning Class	Description	City of Lake City	Forest Township	Lake Township
Residential-Neighborhood	R1	Single Family; Small Lot. Based on the context of the historic development pattern. Density 4-6 units per acre.	X		
Residential-Waterfront	RW	Single Family. Located adjacent to or near an inland lake. Density 3-6 units per acre.	X		X
Residential-Suburban	R2	Single Family; Medium Lot. Density 2-4 units per acre.	X	X	X
Residential-Multiple	RM	Multiple Family. 12 -18 units per acre.	X		
Farm & Forest	FF	Agriculture and Single Family. Density; extremely low; less than 1 unit per acre.		X	X
Commercial-Downtown	C1	Commercial. Small lots, no off-street parking. Multi-story structures. Pedestrian oriented.	X		
Commercial-Highway	C2	Commercial. Located on M-55 and M-66. Single lot development with off-street parking. Vehicular-oriented.	X	X	X
Institutional	PL	Public and not-for-profit uses. Government facilities and operations. Schools.	X		
Industrial	I1	Manufacturing, fabrication and assembly. Surface extraction operations.		X	



*Flowers in downtown Lake City.*

# 9

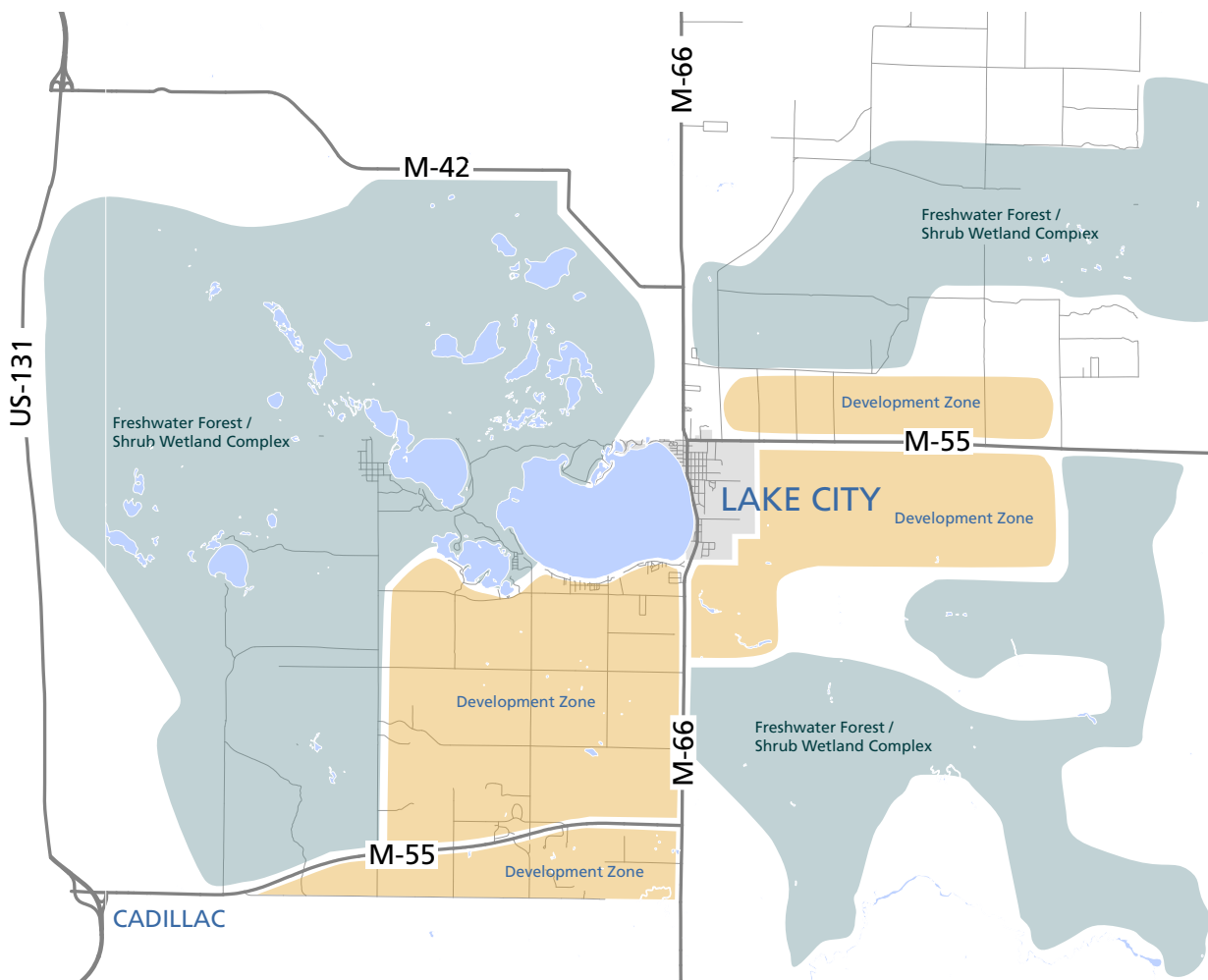
# Implementation

## LAKE CITY AREA FRAMEWORK

Land development is broadly influenced by the natural and man-made environment. This is true for the Lake City area. Aside from the development that occurs along state route M-55 and M-66, the development of the City of Lake

City, Forest Township, and Lake Township is framed by the expansive series of freshwater forested/shrub wetlands that exist north and west of Lake Missaukee. As a result, existing and future land development will be relegated to several primary zones.

FIGURE 17: LAKE CITY AREA FRAMEWORK

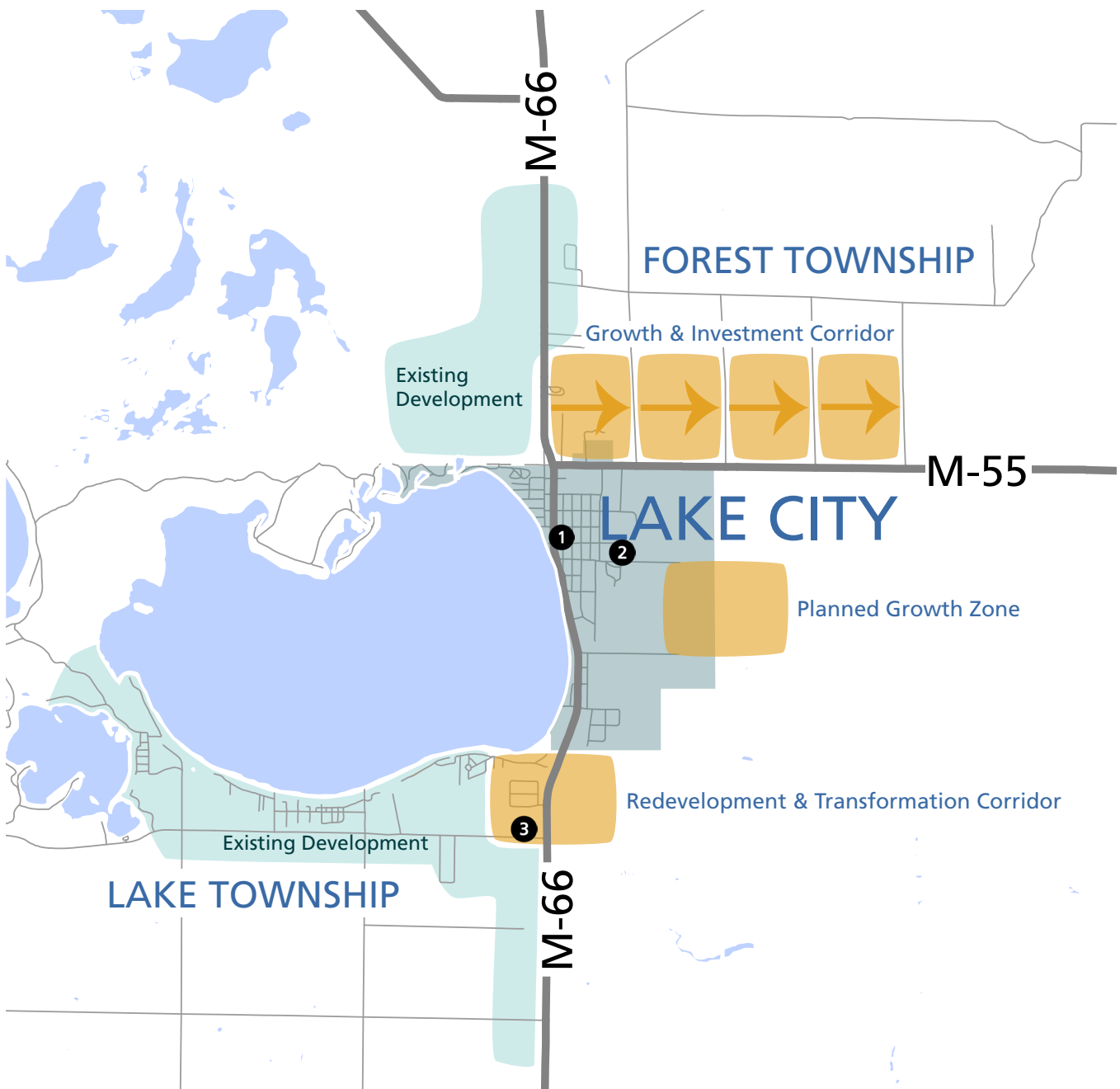


## Forest Township

Land development opportunities exist along M-66 from M-55 north to Sanborn Road. Along the M-55 corridor, which extends east from M-66 to the east township boundary, there are approximately 6 square miles for potential land development. Within this area there are pockets of freshwater forested/shrub wetlands, but overall there is enough property to accommodate development. An example is the small residential

development along Oakwood Drive behind the former Foster's Grocery Store. As development occurs within this zone, it is strongly suggested that road ends be connected to encourage a grid traffic network. In addition, the north-south roads that extend north of M-55; Decker, N. Call, Menzies, and McGee create ½ square mile areas that could be used to phase development (west-to-east) with the installation of water and sewer in conjunction with the City.

FIGURE 18: LAKE CITY GROWTH PATTERNS



## Lake Township

Most of the waterfront in Lake Township has been developed as residential. Unlike Caldwell Township, which is laced with freshwater forested/shrub wetlands and several small inland lakes, Lake Township has a significant area available for agricultural and rural residential development. This area is generally bounded by Jennings Road, M-55, M-66, and LaChance Road and roughly accounts for 12 square miles of land. Land west of LaChance Road to Haring Township in Wexford County is part of the freshwater forested/shrub wetlands complex that extends south from Caldwell Township in Missaukee County. The principal focus for the township is the redevelopment and transformation of the M-55/M-66 corridor south of the Lake City city limits to Jennings Road. ❸ Several former commercial properties should be evaluated for repurposing as residential. To ensure orderly redevelopment of the corridor, a partnership between the City and Township regarding the expansion of water and sewer infrastructure is encouraged.

## City of Lake City

Much of the City is built-out, but there several pockets of land available for development. These include an 80-acre area south of Davis Road and east of Prospect Street, a 64-acre area south of

Beeler Road and east of Maple Crest Drive and a portion of the Ardis Dairy Farm east of the Lake City Public School property south of M-55.

In addition, there are two redevelopment sites that have been identified. One site is located in the downtown and was a former hotel/motel on the lakeside of M-66. ❶ A second site is located along Houghton Street between Prospect and W. Union Streets. ❷ This site was identified a potential multi-family residential development due to its proximity to downtown the school campus.

## ACTION PLAN

Under the direction of the Lake City Area Leadership Team with citizen and stakeholder input, the group has identified four overarching goals, each with a series of actions. Because this Master Plan takes a 10-15-year approach to planning, it is anticipated that these goals and corresponding actions could take up to that amount of time to be realized. The action plan table outlines a planned implementation schedule for each action and includes a general timeframe for implementation, and the party responsible for implementing the priority.

The four overarching goals include Destination Economy, Basic Services, Transformational Redevelopment and, Governance and Collaboration.



❶ Lakefront property for sale in Downtown Lake City.

## Destination Economy

Community character, coupled with the abundance of recreational and natural resources, positions the greater Lake City area to leverage these assets to build a destination economy. Destination economies are built around the tourism and lodging industry but ultimately have a more significant impact on the overall economy because they are also “place-based” economies. A regional example is Traverse City.

According to Oxford Economics, hospitality and tourism as a traded cluster of services have outperformed the aggregate of all other trade clusters export sectors since 1998, with employment expanding nearly 10%.<sup>1</sup> The challenge facing smaller communities is the fragmentation of tourism-related businesses and their inability to collectively market. For example, a local motel/hotel markets to a different audience than the local family diner, although the family diner may benefit from patrons of the motel/hotel. As a result, the goal of creating a destination economy is to understand the concept and importance of “destination marketing;” in other words, the ability to market across multiple sectors and pooling resources.

There are four channels through which destination promotion drives economic growth.<sup>2</sup> These include the transport network, attracting strategic events, raising awareness of the destination, and increasing quality of life. An example of raising awareness of the destination is the Pure Michigan campaign.

As more people are attracted to the Lake City area, it fuels the opportunity for more business growth, such as dining and entertainment, specialty shops, and creative arts. In turn, these facilities attract seasonal and permanent residents.

## Basic Services

Each community needs a group of essential services for its resident population. These include housing, educational facilities, government services, access to food, and medical services. Currently, some of these services, access to food and medical services are very limited in the Lake City area. As a result, residents are required to travel to Cadillac, Houghton, Kalkaska, or Traverse City. The lack of these services has an impact on decisions on where to live, which in turn impacts the local school system and area businesses.

Needs identified by the community include the a grocery store, primary and urgent care medical facilities, and senior housing.

## Transformational Development

The City of Lake City and Lake Township both have vacant and/or underutilized properties that are positioned for redevelopment. Recent actions by Missaukee County to create a Land Bank Authority and Brownfield Redevelopment Authority are positive steps that can significantly assist in the redevelopment process. Redevelopment sites in the City include several former warehousing and light industrial facilities on Houghton Street and south of the downtown along the M-66/M-55 corridor. In Lake Township, the former shopping center at the intersection of M-66 and W. Jennings Road is also a prime candidate for redevelopment.

## Governance and Collaboration

The most significant outcome of the master plan process has been the realization that the greater Lake City area and Missaukee County lack an economic development agency. The absence of this organization reduces the potential for new economic growth, exercising redevelopment opportunities, and procuring state and federal funding resources. As a result, the concept of creating the Missaukee Area Partnership (MAP) as a 501(c)(3) entity that focuses on economic development and community capacity building is the cornerstone of this Action Plan strategy.

In addition, in order to further the revitalization of the Lake City downtown and County seat, the need to reactivate the Lake City Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is paramount. This would be accomplished through the preparation and adoption of a new development plan and tax increment financing plan and establishment of a new Board. Due to the population size of the City, the state statute allows the City to combine the Planning Commission and DDA as one group. This allows for greater efficiency and ensures alignment between the master plan and the DDA development plan.

GOAL	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<b>DESTINATION ECONOMY:</b> recognizing the abundance of natural assets and leveraging these to create a recreation-based four-season economy.	<b>Downtown.</b> Prepare a downtown physical design plan that connects the downtown with Lake Missaukee with a series of public spaces, Farmers Market and an outdoor event venue.	High	City, DDA, USDA RD and MDARD	1-5
	<b>Lodging.</b> Conduct a market feasibility study to determine the level of need for a hotel/lodging facility in the City; preferably in or adjacent to the downtown.	Medium	DDA, USDA RD	1-5
	<b>Maker and Co-Op Spaces:</b> Identify a building(s) that could be converted into maker and co-op spaces to encourage small business development and provide office space for “gig” economy workers that need access to broadband services.	Medium	DDA	5+
	<b>Branding:</b> Undertake a Lake City Area branding and marketing program. The outcome will assist with external marketing to increase seasonal visitors and tourists to the area.	Medium	City, County, School and Chamber	1-5
	<b>Trail Town:</b> Undertake a comprehensive inventory of all trail types in Missaukee County, especially in the vicinity of Lake City, Lake Township and Forest Township. Utilize this information for marketing and designation as a Pure MI Trail Town.	Low	City, Lake Township, County and Wolverine Power Company	5+
	<b>Community Festivals:</b> Develop a venue to coordinate the various festivals that occurring in the greater lake City area in order to increase attendance and exposure. These include the Greatest 4th in the North, Festival of the Pines, and local Jazz Festival.	Medium	Chamber	1-5

GOAL	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<b>BASIC SERVICES:</b> The need to provide Lake City area residents with access to essential local services and goods.	<b>Grocery Store.</b> Reactivate the former Fosters Grocery Store located at 5760 West Houghton Lake Road (M-55)	High	City	<1
	<b>Health Care.</b> Collaborate with Munson Health Care on the development of a Primary Care / Urgent Care Center.	High	City, County	<1
	<b>Blight.</b> Institute a comprehensive Blight Ordinance administered by a code enforcement officer within Lake City.	Medium	City	1-5
	<b>Senior &amp; Family Housing.</b> Identify a site and solicit a developer that specializes in family and/or senior citizen housing.	High	City, County, Brownfield Authority, MSHDA, USDA RD	1-5
	<b>Childcare.</b> Conduct a childcare survey among local businesses and organizations to determine the level of need for a childcare facility.	Medium	City, School, Chamber	1-5



GOAL	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<b>TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:</b> Focus attention on vacant and underutilized properties and assist with their transformation to become viable, tax producing properties.	<b>Economic Development Training.</b> Conduct training sessions for City, Township, and County officials on the role of the public sector in economic development focused on the role and use of a DDA, Brownfield Authority, and County Land Bank.	High	City, MEDC RRC Program, Missaukee County Brownfield and Land Bank	<1
	<b>South M-66 Corridor.</b> Prepare a corridor redevelopment plan for the south M-66 corridor from 1st Street (Beeler Rd) to Jennings Road. Focus on former motel, Lake Township strip mall and Family Dollar as redevelopment sites. Consider this corridor a “redevelopment corridor.”	Medium	City, Lake Township, County, MEDC	1-5
	<b>East M-55 Corridor:</b> Consider this corridor a “growth and investment corridor” and continue development along the M-55 Corridor (West Houghton Road) for commercial and residential neighborhoods.	High	Forest Township, City	5+
	<b>Gray Property:</b> Due to its proximity to the downtown and the Lake City Area Schools campus consider redevelopment of property on Houghton Street between St. John and Mitchell Streets for multiple family housing.	Medium	City, MSHDA, USDA RD	1-5
	<b>Downtown Residential:</b> Amend the Lake City zoning ordinance to allow upper story residential apartments and lofts in the downtown.	Medium	City	1- 5
	<b>Forest Township Industrial Park:</b> Market available industrial park sites through Networks Northwest, MEDC, and a real estate firm specializing in industrial properties.	High	Forest Township, and MEDC	1-5

GOAL	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<b>GOVERNANCE &amp; COLLABORATION:</b> affirming the importance of local government and its ability to solve problems, encourage development and provide opportunities for residents and businesses	<b>City of Lake City Zoning Ordinance.</b> Revise the entire City Zoning Ordinance.	High	City	1-5
	<b>Missaukee Area Partnership.</b> Establish a formal economic development leadership team composed of representatives from local municipalities, Missaukee County and the business community. This team will coordinate economic development activities along the M-55 and M-66 corridors, and throughout Missaukee County.	High	City, Townships, County, Chamber, Business Community, Wolverine Power Company	<1
	<b>City Manager.</b> Establish the position of City Manager to handle the daily operations of the City and coordinate efforts with Missaukee County, MEDC, and other agencies.	High	City	1-5
	<b>DDA.</b> Reinstitute the Downtown Development Authority.	High	City, County	<1
	<b>5-Year MDNR Parks Plan.</b> Either prepare a plan for the City of Lake City or coordinate with Missaukee County to include City park projects in this 5-year plan.	Medium	City, County	1-5

## KEY INITIATIVES

The results from the Community Engagement session and several Action Plan discussions with the Lake City Area Master Plan Committee concluded that the Lake Area community lacks an economic development champion, the City lacks a City Manager, and the Lake City DDA needs to be reconstituted.

### Missaukee Area Partnership

The idea of the Missaukee Area Partnership germinated from Action Plan conversations. This agency would oversee implementation of the identified redevelopment sites, focus attention on downtown revitalization, work with local units of government on economic development-related projects, and advance activities from the recently

established Missaukee County Land Bank and County Brownfield Authority.

The organization would be formed as an 501(c)(3) agency with a NTEE (National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities) Code S30 and NTEE Classification as; Community Improvement and Capacity Building. The organizational structure would include a Board consisting of representatives from local and county government, business community, health care, and energy. The Board would hire an executive director that would oversee day-to-day operations and focus attention on the implementation of the Action Plan and other economic development initiatives. Funding for the Missaukee Area Partnership would come from annual contributions from the county, city, supporting townships, and areawide businesses.

## City Manager

This position is critical to managing the daily operations of the City, advancing local capital projects, procuring grant assistance, and overseeing programs, such as, blight enforcement.

## Reconstitute the DDA

Reconstitute the DDA in order to advance revitalization and redevelopment in the downtown.

### SOURCES

- 1 Destination Promotion: An Engine of Economic Development, How Investments in the visitor economy drive broader economic growth. Oxford Economics. November 2014
- 2 Destination Promotion: An Engine of Economic Development, How Investments in the visitor economy drive broader economic growth. Oxford Economics. November 2014