

MASTER PLAN for

Norman Township, Manistee County, Michigan



Norman Township Master Plan - 2025

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**TOWNSHIP OF NORMAN
COUNTY OF MANISTEE, MICHIGAN
Resolution No. 2025-12-05**

TOWNSHIP BOARD RESOLUTION TO ADOPT MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare a Master Plan for the use, development and preservation of all lands in the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission prepared a proposed new Master Plan and submitted the plan to the Township Board for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, on September 9, 2025, the Norman Township Board received and reviewed the proposed Master Plan prepared by the Planning Commission and authorized distribution of the Master Plan to the Notice Group entities identified in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, notice was provided to the Notice Group entities as provided in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on November 18, 2025 to consider public comment on the proposed new Master Plan, and to further review and comment on the proposed new Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Township Board finds that the proposed new Master Plan is desirable and proper and furthers the use, preservation, and development goals and strategies of the Township;

WHEREAS, the MPEA authorizes the Township Board to assert by resolution its right to approve or reject the proposed Master Plan;

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. Adoption of 2025 Master Plan. The Township Board hereby approves and adopts the proposed 2025 Master Plan, including all of the chapters, figures, maps and tables contained therein. Pursuant to MCL 125.3843 the Township Board has asserted by resolution its right to approve or reject the proposed Master Plan and therefore the approval granted herein is the final step for adoption of the plan as provided in MCL 125.3843 and therefore the plan is effective as of December 9, 2025.

2. Distribution to Notice Group. The Township Board approves distribution of the adopted plan to the Notice Group.

3. Findings of Fact. The Township Board has made the foregoing determination based on a review of existing land uses in the Township, a review of the existing Master Plan provisions and maps, input received from the Planning Commission and public hearing, and with the assistance of a professional planning group, and finds that the new Master Plan will accurately reflect and implement the Township's goals and strategies for the use, preservation, and development of lands in Norman Township.

4. Effective Date. The Master Plan shall be effective as of the date of adoption of this resolution.

The foregoing resolution offered by Board Member FRALEY.

Second offered by Board Member TIGHE.

Upon roll call vote the following voted:

"Aye": Jason, Starr, Rich, Merrill, Dan
(list names of members voting "aye")

"Nay": _____
(list names of members voting "nay")

The ~~Supervisor~~ declared the resolution adopted.



Starr Daniels, Clerk

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MASTER PLAN TEAM

Robert A. Hall

Planning & Zoning Director

Dr. Benjamin E. Townsend

Planning & Zoning Director

PLANNING COMMISSION

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Norman Township

Nick Schilling, Board Rep.

Norman Township

Andrew Anderson, Secretary

Norman Township

Mary BeckerWitt, Member

Norman Township

Michaelyn Crawford, Vice-Chair

Norman Township

NORMAN BOARD

Rich Mobley, Supervisor

Starr Daniels, Clerk

Merrill Tighe, Treasurer

Nick Schilling, Trustee

Jason Fraley, Trustee

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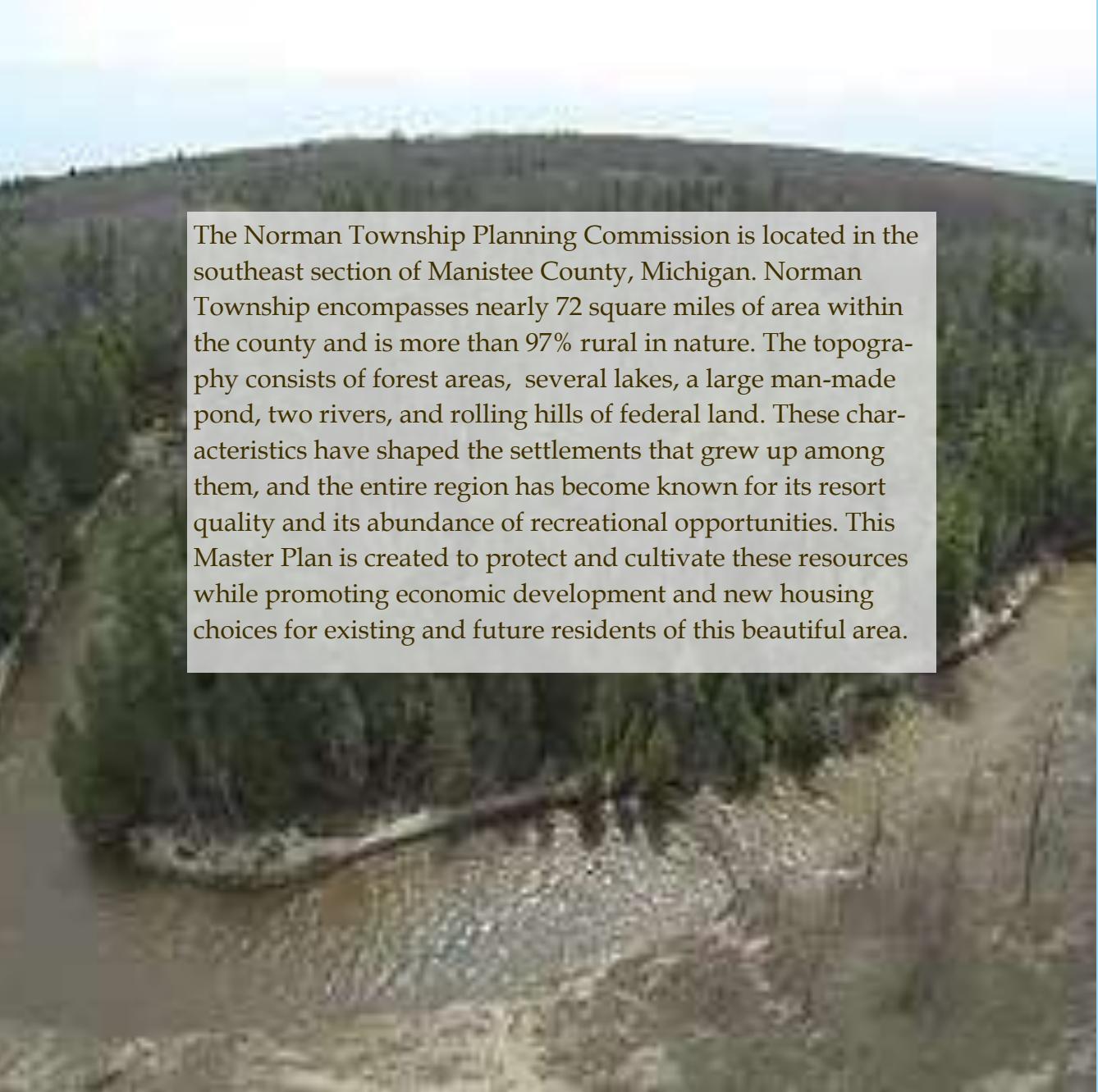
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INTRODUCTION



The Norman Township Planning Commission is located in the southeast section of Manistee County, Michigan. Norman Township encompasses nearly 72 square miles of area within the county and is more than 97% rural in nature. The topography consists of forest areas, several lakes, a large man-made pond, two rivers, and rolling hills of federal land. These characteristics have shaped the settlements that grew up among them, and the entire region has become known for its resort quality and its abundance of recreational opportunities. This Master Plan is created to protect and cultivate these resources while promoting economic development and new housing choices for existing and future residents of this beautiful area.

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PLANNING CONTEXT

The purpose of this Master Plan is to serve as a living document to guide the Norman Township Planning Commission's future development based on each of its communities' needs and desires. A Master Plan is comprehensive in scope but also provides specific actions and site locations for implementing the goals of Norman Township.

The Michigan Planning and Enabling Act (MPEA), Public Act 33 of 2008, requires that the planning commission create and approve a master plan as a guide for development and review the master plan at least once every five years after adoption.

History

The first Master Plan of Norman Township was created in 2008 and revised in 2015 to address newfound changes in the community mainly because of the increasingly rural atmosphere of the township. The national forestland, rivers adjoining at Tippy Dam, smaller streams and wetlands provide many recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to the area. The small-town character of the community, with the main town of Wellston and the smaller but vibrant Dublin, encourages growth in population and housing.

This Master Plan will serve as a guide for zoning the area properly as required by Michigan law. It identifies the goals for the future of Norman Township over the next 20 years. Like a roadmap, a Master Plan shows



the community vision and the direction the residents want the township to take in the future. It identifies options for how to get there. These goals should be flexible enough that public officials, landowners, business owners, residents, and others can work together in order to fulfill them.

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During past public sessions in preparation of this Master Plan, residents repeatedly told of their desire to retain the small-town, rural character, and the friendly, peaceful atmosphere. These sessions also emphasized protecting the natural resources of the area, like its forests, lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands.

Reviewed every five years, this Master Plan can be revisited to ensure Norman Township's desires are still being met by this plan. We share our plan with surrounding townships and counties. They share their plans with us. This helps each of us know what the others are doing so we can better work together in the entire region.

The questions that were asked of the residents in 2014 are the same questions the Planning Commission must answer every five years:

1. What do you like best about Norman Township?
2. What resources are most important to protect?
3. What are the main issues the Master Plan must address?
4. What projects would you support to address Master Plan issues?

Community input is always solicited because it is vital to the process of knowing what the community wants.

An example of the township adapting based on the input of these sessions was when several participants asked for an ORV system to come

Grand Vision-Guiding Principles

Transportation

A regional multimodal system that supports energy conservation

Energy

Sustainable energy uses in construction, transportation, and economic development

Natural Resources

Protected and preserved water, forests, and natural and scenic areas

Growth and Investment

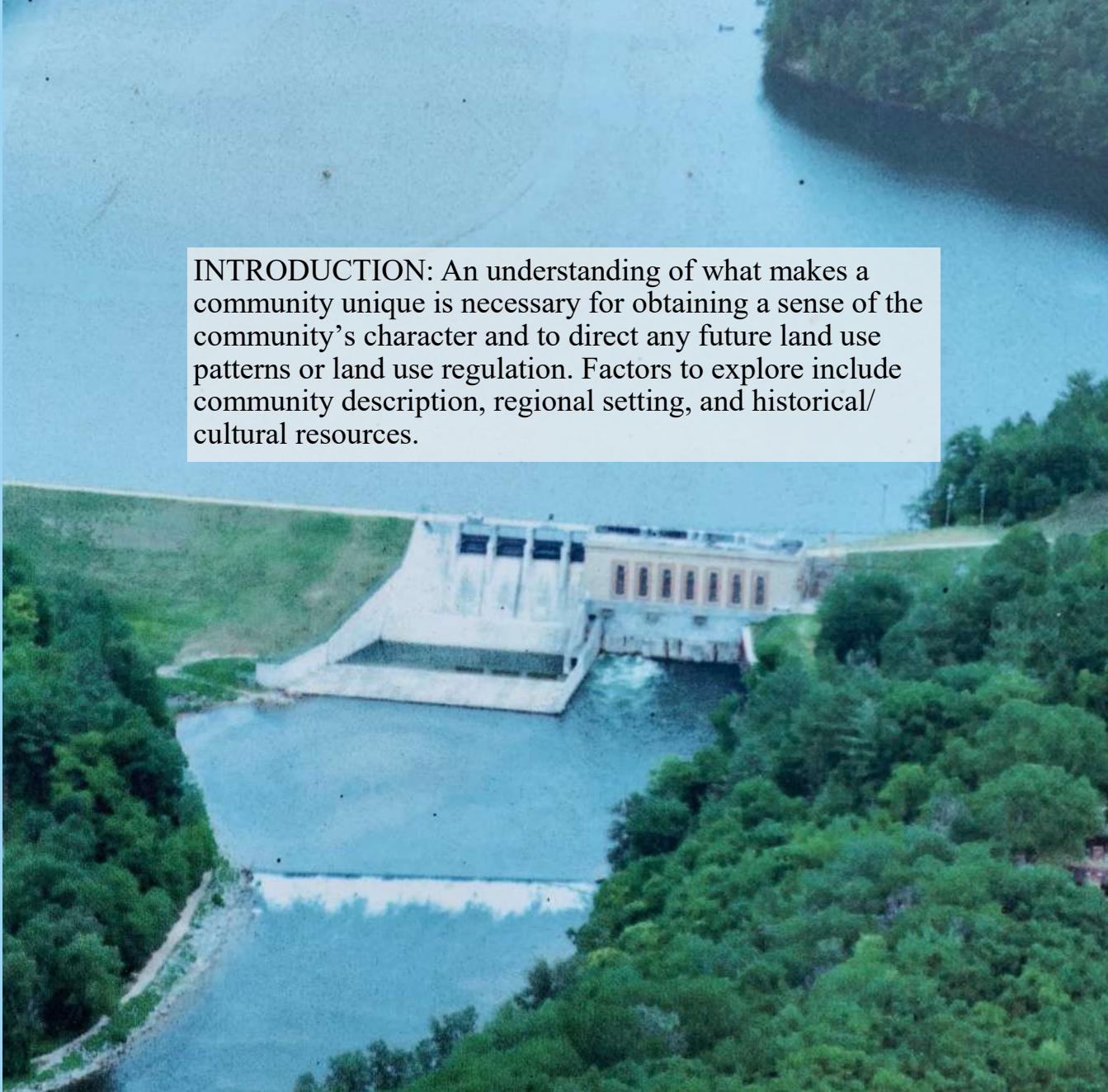
Unique and vibrant communities that strengthen the local economy

to Norman Township. Since this is a Master Plan not for just zoning but for every aspect of the township, the board adopted an ATV/ORV Ordinance shortly thereafter. ORVs were consistent with the plan of the rural environment and recreational environment of the township.

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CHAPTER 1

COMMUNITY CHARACTER



INTRODUCTION: An understanding of what makes a community unique is necessary for obtaining a sense of the community's character and to direct any future land use patterns or land use regulation. Factors to explore include community description, regional setting, and historical/cultural resources.

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Norman Township is rural and rich in natural beauty, with extensive natural resources including national forestlands; hundreds of miles of inland lakes, rivers and streams; diverse wildlife habitat; forested hills and open meadows; and numerous wetlands. These natural resources contribute to a beautiful, mostly rural setting for people to live, work, and recreate within Norman Township.

The township's population for the year 2020 was 1,567, as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau. Out of the twelve townships in Manistee County, Norman Township had the third highest population that year, after Manistee Township at 3,607 and Filer Charter Township at 2,318. Norman passed Bear Lake Township, previously number three, by almost 100 people at 1,489. U.S. Census data also show that Norman Township experienced a slight increase over the 2010 census, while most other Manistee townships saw a population decline over the past decade. Seasonal residents, visitors to private homes and rental cottages, and day tourists importantly add to the township's population and economic base during summer months. The unincorporated village of Wellston serves as Norman Township's population center. The intersection of Caberfae Highway and Seaman



The M-55 Market

Road is the busiest four corners within the township. Although an extension of the village to the north, this stretch of M-55 serves as its commercial district, which includes a bank, convenience/party store, auto repair shops, cabins and rental units, gas stations, an eating establishment, and a discount store. Close by to the south of M-55 on Seaman Road are the Norman township hall and Wellston branch of the Manistee County Library in one township building and the fire department and emergency rescue squad in the other township building.

Many other subdivisions in the township are in close proximity to the Dublin General Store on Hoxeyville Road. The store serves as a hub for meeting the needs of residents in the entire township, while Hoxeyville Road serves as an east—west connection through the township.

Geographic Setting

Norman Township is located in the southeast corner of Manistee County, bordered by Wexford County to the east and Lake County to the south. Townships surrounding Norman are Dickson Township to the north, Brown

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Township to the northwest, Stronach Township to the west, Lake County's Elk and Eden Townships to the south, and Wexford County's South Branch Township to the east. Norman Township is considered a double township since it is 12 miles wide and six miles high, whereas most townships stay within that six-mile-by-six mile square. The western boundary of Norman is approximately 12 miles east of the city of Manistee.

Concise History of Norman Township

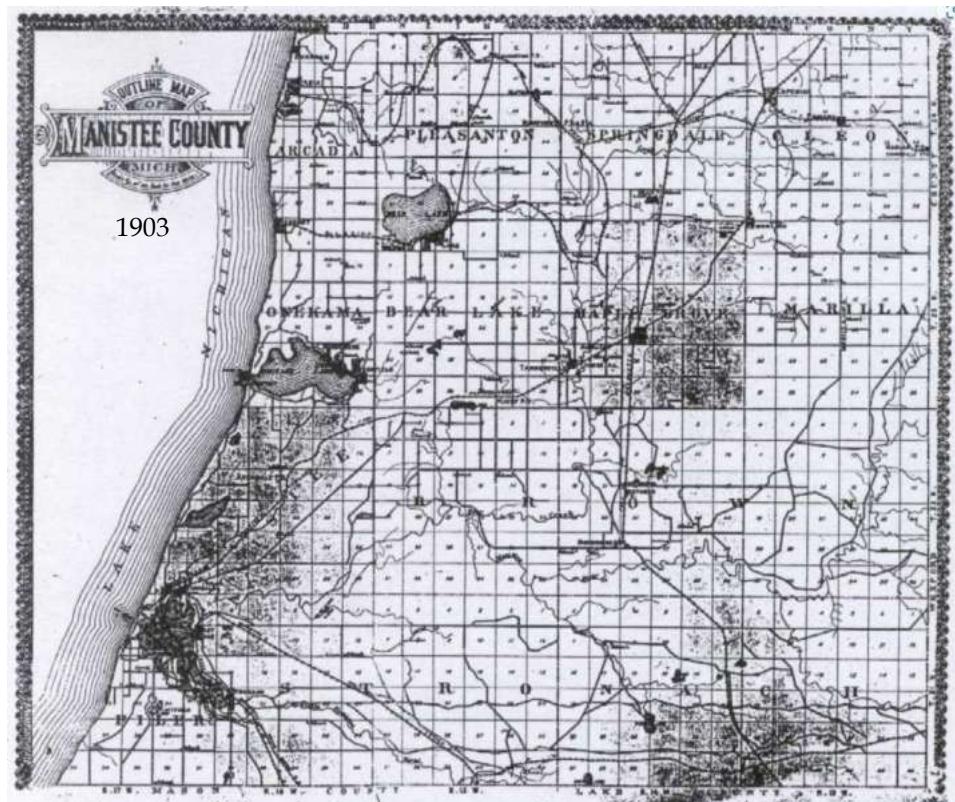
By 1856 all of Michigan had been surveyed by the federal General Land Office. Surveyors marked each sections lines and corners. They also noted the locations of rivers, lakes and wetlands, the agricultural potential of soils, and the quality of timber along each section line that was measured. Manistee County was established by the State of Michigan by the Public Acts of 1855.

Norman Township was heavily wooded, with half its land having good pine timber. Because of the lumber, about 85% of the township land was purchased by timber investors. The first timber investor was Roswell Canfield, who purchased 160 acres of timber at the northwest corner of the township in 1854. The State of Michigan followed by selecting over a thousand acres of pine timber lands at the eastern edge of the township in 1855. This land was used as partial

payment from the United States for the first locks at Sault Sainte Marie.

Timber companies continued to buy up the land for logging. These companies were manned by groups of loggers, 30 per group, who lived in camps throughout Norman, usually staying close to the rivers for transporting the logs to Manistee. Once these camps could no longer transport logs via sleds to the rivers, the railroads came along.

The first timber road ran in a due east—west line across the township about six miles south of the township's northern line, or where today's Cedar Creek Road is located. Early in 1878, the R. G. Peters Train Railway was built from the Manistee River south into the northwest corner of the township, approximately where Huff Road is located. During the next ten years these railroads extended spurs throughout the timber in Udell Hills. In 1888, the Chicago and West Michigan



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Railroad started construction, which entered the township in Section 32 of East Norman and ran north to Section 2 of West Norman. This railroad was recently known as the Pere Marquette Railroad which followed portions of the current Seaman Road. This railroad brought the first commercial activities in the township. More railroads followed until they



Wellston Railroad Depot

finally closed in the early 1900s.

Manistee lumbermen are thought to have started several farms in the Norman Township area, where hay was grown to feed the logging camp livestock pastured during the summers. Some of the lumbermen thought of a future in the area where they could buy cheap land for farms. The first individual attempts at agricultural farming may have been by Ed Norman who settled in west Norman Township about 1897.

The Swigart Land Company, which started in 1907, centered its business in the village it laid out as Wellston the following year. The Swigart Company sold land in the area, primarily to first-generation immigrants who lived in Chicago. Many of these purchasers moved to Norman Township, where they built small homes and attempted to establish farms. The majority did not last due to the severe winters, but a few stayed and started farming in the area.

As a result of a railroad station being placed southeast of Wellston, the area of Dublin became the first commercial center of the township. In a short time, the railroad station moved to the village of Wellston. These two areas are the commercial centers to this day, and the township now thrives with tourists, fishermen, hunters, and transient campers. Many of these people later moved to the area so they can retire near all the resources which made them visit in the first place.

The first school was built and donated by the Filers (for whom Filer Township was named) and located in Section 8 of the western part of Norman Township, basically at the intersection of Pine Creek and Caberfae Highway. A second school was located in the Dublin area, or Section 31. Additional schools were built as settlers moved into the area. In the early 1900s, a community church was built in Wellston and St. Raphael's Catholic Church



The Dublin General Store

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was built in Dublin.

After logging was finished, large swaths of land along the Manistee River were purchased by the forerunners of Consumers Energy Company for electric power purposes. The first hydroelectric station built in the area was Stronach Dam in Section 16 in east Norman on the Pine River. Built in 1912, it provided cheap electricity to the city of Manistee. Because of the constant buildup of sand in the reservoir behind Stronach Dam, it was decommissioned in 1953. Stronach Dam was followed in 1916—1918 by the Junction Dam (now Tippy Dam). These construction projects created both temporary and permanent jobs in the township.

Norman Township became a political government when it officially split off from Stronach Township in 1912. Stronach encompassed both present-day Stronach Township and Norman Township from the beginning of Manistee County in 1855. This is why the Stronach Dam was originally located in the Norman Township area.

The Manistee National Forest

In 1933 the Manistee National Forest was established to promote commercial timber growth, forest fire prevention, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. The

U.S. Forest Service obtained jurisdiction of unsold state and federal land and thousands of acres of cut-over timberland that had been abandoned after brief, unsuccessful attempts at agriculture. A regional service center and conifer nursery was developed at the Chittenden site, creating extensive employment opportunities. Today after 60 years, the old timber lands are finally recovering since forest fires are no longer a menace. The goal of promoting commercial forest management and extensive recreational opportunities has been met. Today the recovered forests draw more people to the area than ever known before, both as vacationers, sportsmen, and full-time residents.



Manistee National Forest in the Fall

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CHAPTER 2

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



INTRODUCTION: Economic Development is vital to community development. As assets flow into the township and surrounding businesses, so it is evident the residents living in the area are pleased with the township's resources.

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Introduction

Michigan and Norman Township's geographic area are facing challenging economic times. This is largely due to the economy's change to a global economy. Some call it the new economy. The new economy has these characteristics.

- **Global**—Within the existing climate of worldwide economic competition, regions rather than towns or municipalities must be strong economic players necessitating the pooling of resources.
- **Entrepreneurial**—Innovative small business start-ups must be encouraged with community support and assistance, such as educational programs, opportunities to network, a culture supportive of entrepreneurship, availability

of resources, access to business incubators, and access to business planning and economic advisors (such as SCORE).

- **Knowledge-based**—Skills, creativity, and talent are highly valued and abundant. Economic success is often rooted in quality of life, natural area protection/conservation, water quality, recreational opportunities, excellent health care and schools, dark night sky, opportunities for quiet/revitalization, etc. Success also relies upon an ability to incorporate knowledge, technology, creativity, innovation, cooperative public-private-nonprofit endeavors, cooperative regional relationships, regional branding, etc.

The following table presents a comparison of the old and new economies.

Old Economy	New Economy
Inexpensive place to do business was the key.	Being rich in talent and ideas is key.
A high-quality physical environment was key to attracting cost-conscious businesses.	Physical, natural and cultural amenities are key in attracting knowledge workers.
Success = fixed competitive advantage in some resource or skill.	Success = organizations and individuals with the ability to collaborate, learn and adapt.
Economic development was government-led.	Partnerships with business/private sector, government and nonprofit sector lead change.
Industrial/manufacturing) focus.	Economic diversity is desired, and clustering of related businesses is desirable.
Fossil fuel-dependent manufacturing.	Communications- dependent & providing services.
People followed jobs.	Talented, well-educated people choose location first, then look for a job.
Location matters.	Desirable places with a high quality of life matter more.
Dirty and hollowed-out communities, and a <u>poor quality</u> environment were common unintended outcomes.	Clean, green environment and proximity to open space, cultural and quality recreational opportunities are critical.

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Regionalism and regional strategies are fundamental to future economic development and economic development planning in the new economy. In the new economy, we are now competing with other regions globally. On a smaller scale, northwest Michigan may be competing with northeast Wisconsin, but on a larger scale, the Great Lakes Basin may well be competing with northern India, eastern China, and Brazil. This larger scale has a much greater impact on our future prosperity and the success of economic development for the Norman Township geographic area and for Manistee County.

As a result, it is important to leverage local assets and align local strategies with those in our region and subregion. It is also important to acquire resources and align strategies with the state's economic planning and within the Great Lakes Basin.

Each economic development region, often multiple counties in size, needs plans that build on unique regional assets, resources, amenities, and opportunities. In this way a region and its counties and municipalities may capitalize on regional comparative advantage in building regional and global competitiveness. Five Regional Strategic Growth principles have been developed:

- Regionalism
- Urban-rural interdependency
- Strategic assets assessment & strategic growth plan
- Targeting of resources
- Importance of regional plans

This Master Plan is prepared by Norman Township with the intent to complement and work within Manistee, Lake, Mason, Wexford, and Benzie Counties, which in turn coordinate such planning within the 10-county Northwest Michigan Prosperity Region.

Norman Township is not able to be everything to everybody, but it is part of a region that can strive to be. When coordinating with regional and subregional plans, the preparation of this plan determines which parts of those regional and subregional plans should link to specific criteria for this part of Manistee County. For example, an analysis was made of various planning maps, such as special and unique areas, to identify features whose spacial extent includes territory in the jurisdiction of Norman and beyond on whose spacial extent is completely within the territory of Norman but rises to a regional or subregional importance. This review involved these aspects of planning:

- Create sustainable economic development.
- Attract talent and sustain population.
- Diversify regional economy.
- Expand our markets.
- Embrace the new economy and its focus on regional public transportation and alternative energy.
- Promote and support entrepreneurship.
- Focus on talent retention and new talent attraction.
- Focus on population retention and attraction of family-aged new residents.
- Focus on effective place-making and place-based strategies. Maintain our physical and social infrastructures at the right size.

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- Continue workforce development and increase participation in lifelong education.
- Create regional asset-based economic development strategies.
- Work cooperatively to identify and target new resources to implement regional strategies.
- Reform financing of public services and investments in our future.
- Use Strategic Growth Planning to attract federal and other resources.
- Foster distinctive, attractive places with a strong sense of place.
- Create walkable neighborhoods within appropriate areas.
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
- Mix land uses.
- Provide a variety of transportation choices, including nonmotorized, pedestrian-based transportation (i.e., "Complete Streets").
- Preserve/conserve open space, productive farmland, and historic or environmentally significant areas.
- Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities and existing infrastructure.
- Take advantage of compact building design, low impact development (LID) and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for neighborhood development.
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration.
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.
- Adapt New Urbanism.
- Create livable, healthy, and sustainable communities (i.e., economic, environmental, and social sustainability).

Michigan Strategic Growth

The Michigan Strategic Growth Plan combines the following elements:

- New Economy Principles
- Pillars of Prosperity and Sustainability
- Principles of Strategic Growth
- Smart Growth

All of these elements must come together for a region of the state to capitalize on and succeed in job creation in the next few decades. Each element is covered in more detail below.

New Economy Principles

The New economy principles focus on the following:

- Communities with people who are rich in talent
- Communities that can attract such talent

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- Presence of physical and cultural amenities
- Communities that can learn and adapt
- Communities that create partnerships (i.e., business + government + nonprofits).

Pillars of Prosperity

The process of building a prosperous community is founded on a few basic pillars or building blocks:

- Vibrant and successful communities
- Thriving agriculture and productive, intact forestlands
- Inclusive and entrepreneurial culture
- Natural resource conservation/protection for recreation and jobs

Principles of Sustainability

Specific programs put in place by the WJPC should be sustainable. “Sustainability” is built upon the following three characteristics, which are adjusted from time to time to remain in balance over the long term:

- Economic
- Environmental
- Social equity/justice

Principles of Strategic Growth

The following are the basic principles of strategic growth. Each requires a county-wide or regional approach:

- **Regionalism:** The Michigan Strategic Growth Plan must be implemented on a regional basis, i.e., thinking in terms of regions rather than villages, cities, townships, or even counties. When thinking in terms of regions, one can identify areas where people move about to live, work, play, shop, etc.—an area which is always larger than one municipality.
- **Urban-rural interdependency:** A number of Michigan Strategic Growth strategies can be accomplished only in rural areas, and others are possible only in urban areas, but both must be done. A “region” includes both urban and rural municipalities, and as they are interdependent on each other, these entities must work together.
- **Strategic assets assessment and strategic growth planning:** Regional assets must be identified so planning can take place to (1) describe and map assets to initiate coordinated multijurisdiction planning and/or management; (2) market and capitalize on those assets as selling points to attract talented people to the region for future economic development; and (3) take steps to ensure those assets are protected/conserved as vital parts of the community’s character, natural environment, economy, etc.
- **Resource targeting:** Municipalities must coordinate to identify tools, actions, and budgets to implement a regional plan.

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Smart Growth

Following are 10 principles of “Smart Growth.” With this Master Plan update, Norman Township adopts these principles as the basis for planning and recognizes them as state land use goals:

- Mix land uses.
- Choose compact building design.
- Increase housing choices.
- Encourage walking.
- Offer transportation variety.
- Create a sense of place.
- Protect farms, unique natural features, open spaces.
- Direct new development to existing communities.
- Make development process fair, predictable, and efficient.
- Involve stakeholders.

These principles are intended to help achieve the long-term goal of sustainable development in the jurisdiction of Norman Township. These principles aim to ensure the needs of the present generation are met without compromising the quality of life for future generations. The goals, objectives, strategies, methods, and policies that contribute to this Master Plan update should supersede previous plans in the event of a conflict.

In short, smart growth is development that serves the economy, community, and the

environment. Smart growth provides a framework for communities to make informed decisions about how and where they grow.

Norman Township has adopted these principles for the following three reasons:

1. They are financially conservative

- Use public money responsibly.
- Reuse existing buildings.
- Use existing roads and highways.
- Use higher density to maximize the value of publicly-funded facilities and services.
- Keep taxes and public service costs low.

2. They are environmentally responsible

- Use or reuse developed areas.
- Keep impervious surfaces to a minimum through dense development.
- Build to fit existing land rather than changing the land to fit what is built.
- Avoid oversized lots and yards to reduce excessive mowing, fertilizing, etc.

3. They are socially beneficial

- Encourage people to live close enough to one another, where appropriate, to create opportunities for social interaction.
- Design residential areas for conversation from the sidewalk to the front porch.
- Encourage “eyes on the street” at all hours to reduce crime and fear of crime in area of dense development.

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Regional Planning

To support regional planning, Norman Township shall take these actions.

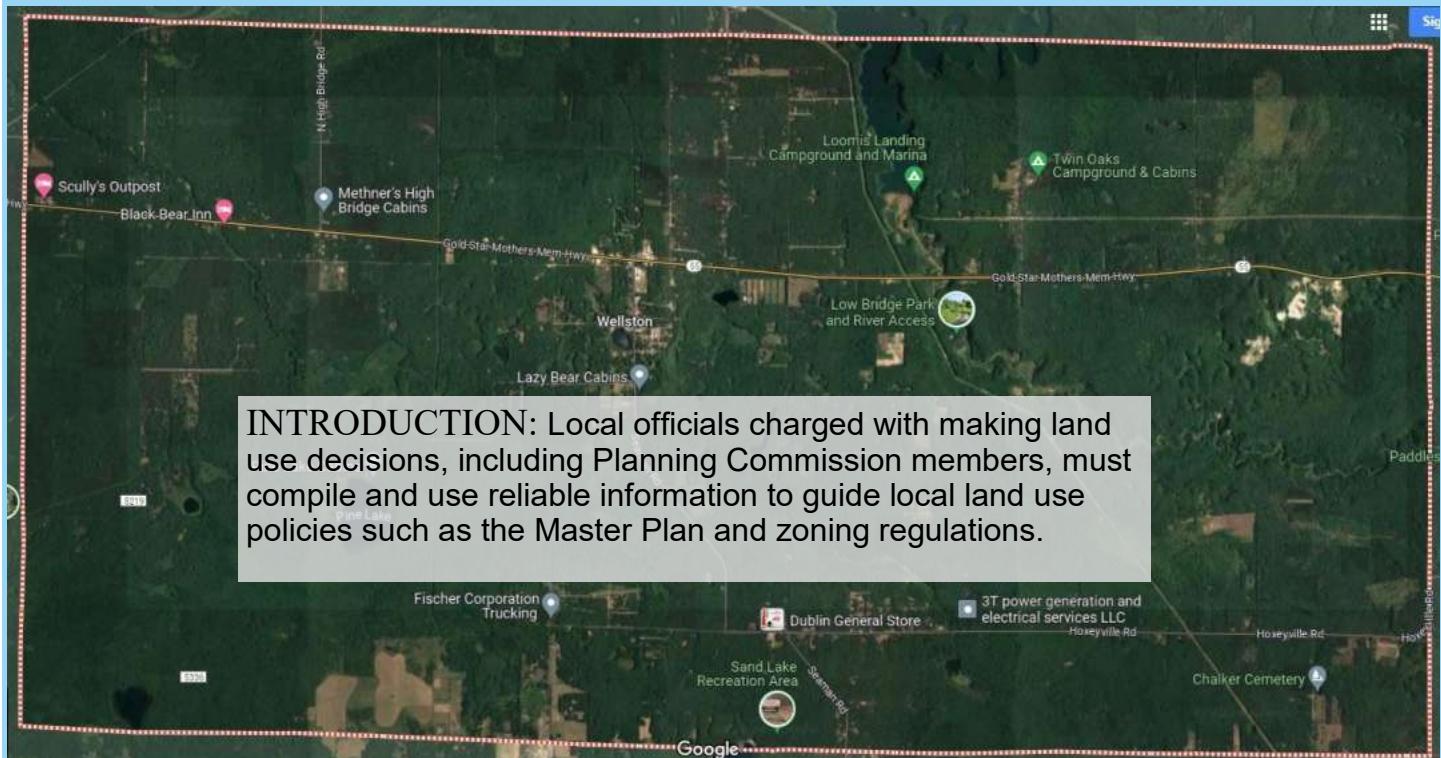
- Recognize that member townships natural resources and community are connected to and an important part of much larger systems that often cross other boundaries and can impact other natural and human communities.
- Recognize that decisions in one community may affect other nearby communities and encourage and promote cooperation among local governments on development decisions that affect more than one community.
- Enhance communication and cooperate with adjacent townships, Wexford County, and nearby counties on planning and other shared issues.
- Engage and fully utilize planning resources and assistance provided by the Networks Northwest regional planning agency.
- Support regional strategies to better protect and preserve forestlands, waterways, active farmland, open spaces, and other natural features along township boundaries.
- Support and promote consistency between this Master Plan update, the 2015 Norman Township Master Plan, and adjacent townships' master plans.
- Encourage county-wide and regional transportation and access management planning, and coordinate with adjacent counties as well as state and federal agencies on transportation planning and implementation.
- Encourage county-wide trails planning and coordinate with adjacent counties as well as state and federal agencies on recreational resource planning and implementation.
- Direct future appropriate commercial uses to established mixed residential and commercially zoned areas within member townships (i.e., compact, rural town centers such as Wellston).
- Cooperate with county, regional, state, and federal agencies to facilitate a range of housing choices.
- Enhance and support regional efforts to develop public and pedestrian-oriented transportation choices and facilities.

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CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY PROFILE:

DEMOGRAPHICS



Role of Master Plan Demographics

Demographics data offer one source of such information that provides valuable insights about a community's future infrastructure needs, resource allocation, and demand for municipal and other services. Community master plans should include a section dedicated to demographic trends that inform or relate to the community's vision.

Norman Township Demographics

It is important to know the demographic composition of Norman Township when planning for the future. This information is assessed over time, trends emerge and changes become evident that will most likely affect future land uses and community services. In the following sections, information regarding Norman's population is reviewed by age groups, population trends and projections,

race and ethnic groups, gender, measures of income, etc. In most cases, 2010—2020 data were used directly or from the U.S. Census and/or Networks Northwest (formerly the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments).

In 2020, Manistee County, Michigan, had a population of 25,032 people, with a median age of 50.0 years and a median household income of \$59,467. Between 2010 and 2020, the population of Manistee County grew from 24,733 to 25,032, a 1.2% increase, and its median household income grew from \$41,169 to \$59,467, a 49% increase. This is an astounding fact since the previous 10 year growth in households from 2010 was a mere 5.88% increase. The population of Manistee County is 87.2% White Alone (down from 90.6% in 2010), 3.3% Hispanic or Latino, 2.4% Black, 1.9% Native-American, and 4.5% Two or More Races.

The following section contains a series of tables and accompanying text describing the population of Manistee County in relationship with Norman Township. In general, each table uses data collected on a rolling basis from 2010 through 2020 by the American Community Survey (ACS, a product of the U. S. Census Bureau) to represent current conditions of the township. Census data from the 2010



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census is used as a point of comparison, and where appropriate, a change in both number and percentage (using a percent change formula) is also given. Data for Norman Township is compared to Manistee County and the State of Michigan overall.

Understanding Census Data

The U.S. Census collects information every 10 years (2010 and 2020 data are used here). The tables on the next few pages display a number, a percent (where relevant), and a percentage change from the first year (2010 data) to the current conditions (2010 to 2020 data). Current conditions are labeled as 2020 on the tables for readability.

Population Growth and Distribution

According to U.S. Census estimates, Manistee County had 25,032 permanent residents as of 2020. This number is slightly higher (1.2%) than the county's 2010 population of 24,733. Table 1 shows the population of Manistee County each

Census since 1940. Norman Township experienced the most growth from 1990 to 2000, increasing by 41.0%.

The adjacent townships of Dickson and Stronach are included in this chart for better understanding of the population, showing that over the years Norman Township has well outgrown both of those townships.

For general planning purposes, it may be assumed that some seasonal residents, though likely not all, are included in these population numbers. In 2010, the U.S. Census counted a seasonal resident in the total population if that resident considered Michigan his or her "usual residence." In 2020, a seasonal resident was counted if he or she spent at least two months of the year in Michigan.

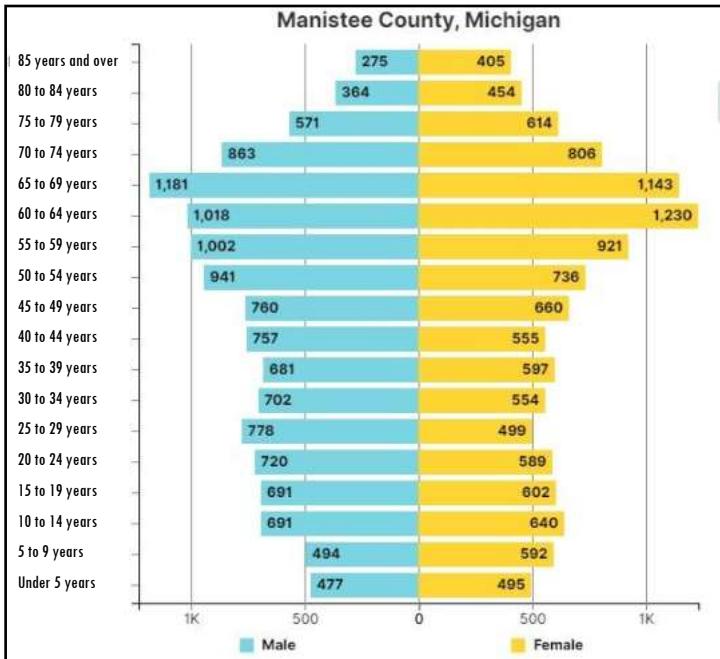
POPULATION									
	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Manistee County.	18,477	18,524	19,042	20,393	23,019	21,265	24,527	24,733	25,032
Norman	399	447	491	678	944	1189	1676	1561	1567
Dickson	571	505	483	627	777	735	929	993	980
Stronach	315	382	527	513	826	688	804	821	834
<hr/>									
% of county									
Norman	2.2	2.4	2.6	3.3	4.1	6.0	6.8	6.3	6.3
Dickson	3.0	2.7	2.5	3.1	3.4	3.5	3.8	4.0	3.9
Stronach	1.7	2.1	2.8	2.5	3.6	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.3
<hr/>									
% change									
	1940-1950	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2020	
Norman	12.0	9.8	38.1	39.2	26.0	41.0	-7.0	0.5	
Dickson	-11.6	-4.4	29.8	24.0	-5.4	26.4	6.5	-1.2	
Stronach	21.3	38.0	-2.7	61.0	-16.7	16.9	2.0	2.0	

Table 1, Population Data

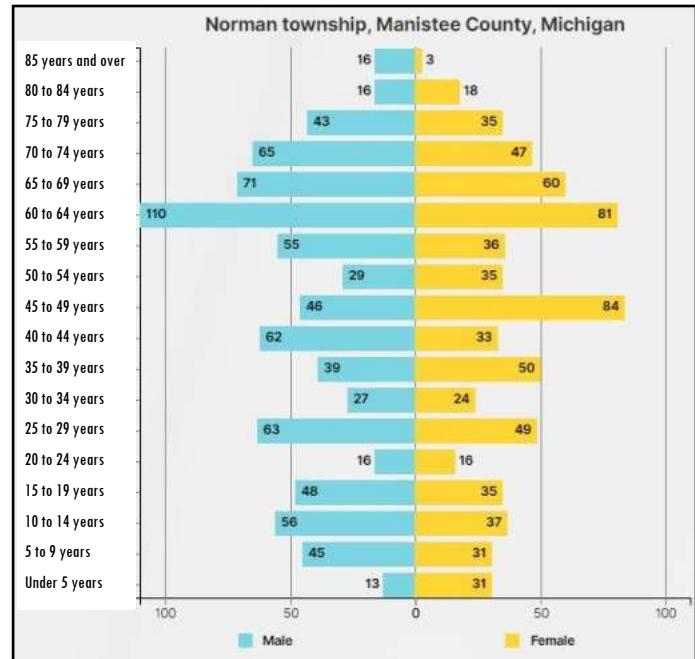
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Comparative Charts Between Norman Township and Manistee County

The following charts are self-explanatory between Norman Township and the County of Manistee. Most Manistee Charts also compare with the State of Michigan. These charts will show the relationship between the township and the county, at least percentagewise.

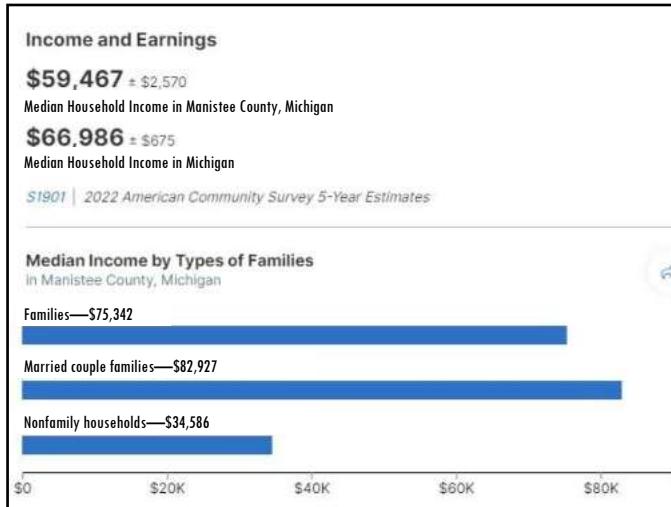


Manistee Chart 1—Male/Female Population

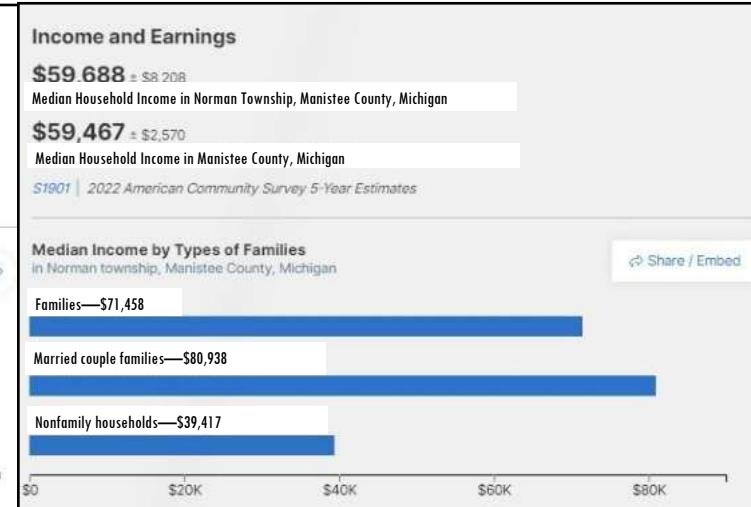


Norman Chart 1—Male/Female Population

The above two charts show the Male/Female populations of the county and Norman Township. Significant is the balance of Male versus Females, which is much closer in the county population. Also of notice are the glaring differences in 20-24 year old's and 50-54 year old's.



Manistee Chart 2—Income and Earnings



Norman Chart 2—Income and Earnings

Of note is that the income of median household in Norman Township is slightly higher than that of Manistee County. This would be due to more poverty in other parts of the county.

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Education and School Enrollment

The charts showing educational attainment and school enrollment go together to demonstrate how Manistee County and Norman Township have been able to attract and encourage professionals. Interestingly, Norman Township

has a higher percentage of graduate or professional degrees while staying the same or slightly lower in the other categories. Norman Township also has slightly higher school enrollment and doubles the graduate school enrollments from the county.

Educational Attainment

22.5% \pm 1.8%

Bachelor's Degree or Higher in Manistee County, Michigan

32.1% \pm 0.3%

Bachelor's Degree or Higher in Michigan

S1501 | 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Education Attainment (Population 25 Years and Older)

in Manistee County, Michigan



High School or equivalent degree—32.9%



Some college, no degree—25.1%



Associate's degree—9.8%



Bachelor's degree—15.8%



Graduate or professional degree—6.7%



0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35%

Manistee Chart 3—Educational Attainment

Norman Township Master Plan - 2025

Educational Attainment

22.2% $\pm 7.6\%$

Bachelor's degree or higher in Norman Township, Manistee County, Michigan

22.5% $\pm 1.8\%$

Bachelor's degree or higher in Manistee County, Michigan

S1501 | 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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Education Attainment (Population 25 Years and Older)

in Norman Township, Manistee County, Michigan

High school or equivalent degree—29.6%



Some college, no degree—25%



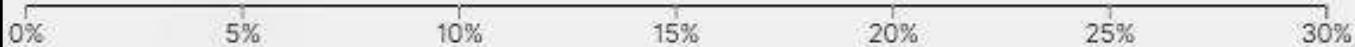
Associate's degree—8.9%



Bachelor's degree—14.8%



Graduate or professional degree—7.4%



Norman Chart 3—Educational Attainment

Norman Township Master Plan - 2025

School Enrollment

79.6% \pm 2.7%

School enrolled population enrolled in kindergarten to 12th grade in Manistee County, Michigan

67.7% \pm 0.4%

School enrolled population enrolled in Kindergarten to 12th grade in Michigan

S1401 | 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

School Enrollment (Population 3 Years and Over Enrolled in School)

in Manistee County, Michigan



Nursery school, preschool—4.1%



Kindergarten to 12th grade—79.6%



College, undergraduate—14.1%



Graduate, professional school—2.2%



0% 20% 40% 60% 80%

Manistee Chart 4—School Enrollment

Norman Township Master Plan - 2025

School Enrollment

81.7% \pm 9.1%

School enrolled population enrolled in kindergarten to 12th grade in Norman Township Manistee County, Michigan

79.6% \pm 2.7%

School enrolled population enrolled in kindergarten to 12th grade in Manistee County, Michigan

S1401 | 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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School Enrollment (Population 3 Years and Over Enrolled in School)

in Norman township, Manistee County, Michigan

Nursery School, preschool—1.9%



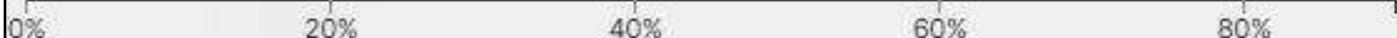
Kindergarten to 12th grade—81.7%



College, undergraduate—12.2%



Graduate, Professional school—4.2%



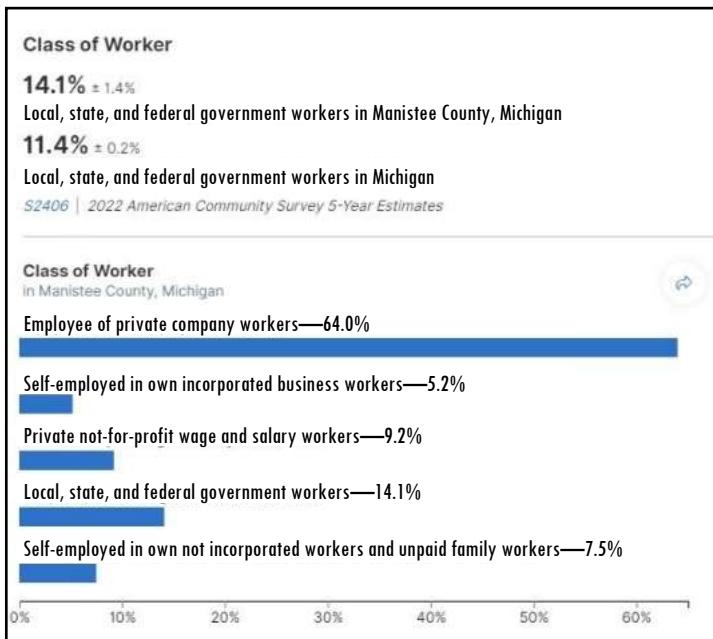
Norman Township Chart 4—School Enrollment

Norman Township Master Plan - 2025

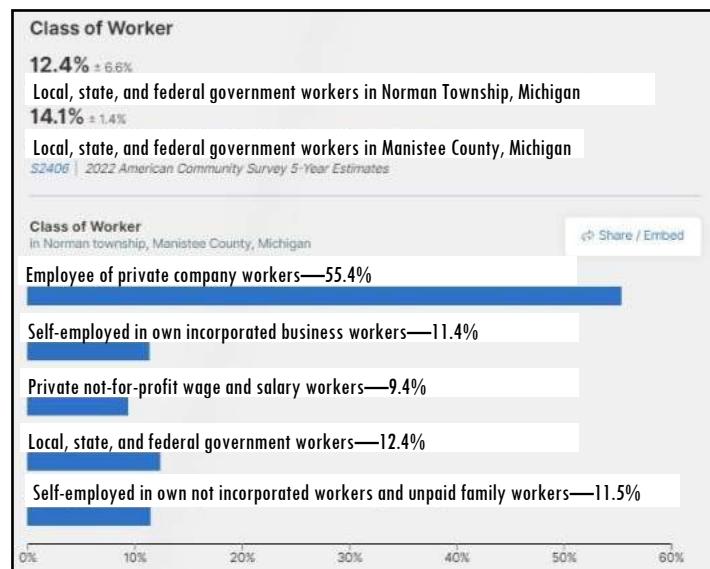
Employment and Commuting

Comparing in Manistee County overall workers with Norman Township workers also reveals important differences between the residents in the more rural areas and the 55% of the population of Manistee County that surrounds the city of Manistee.

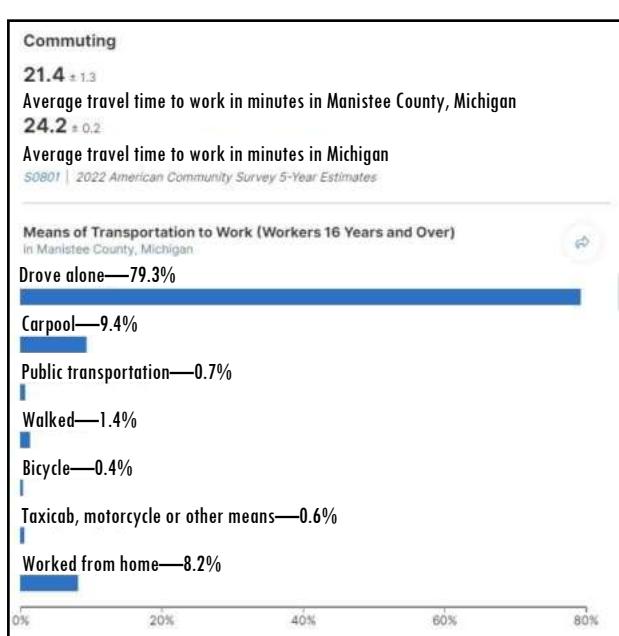
It takes about seven more minutes for a commuter from Norman to get to work than a commuter from the rest of the county. This displays the ease of working in not only the City of Manistee but also the city of Cadillac, almost equidistant cities.



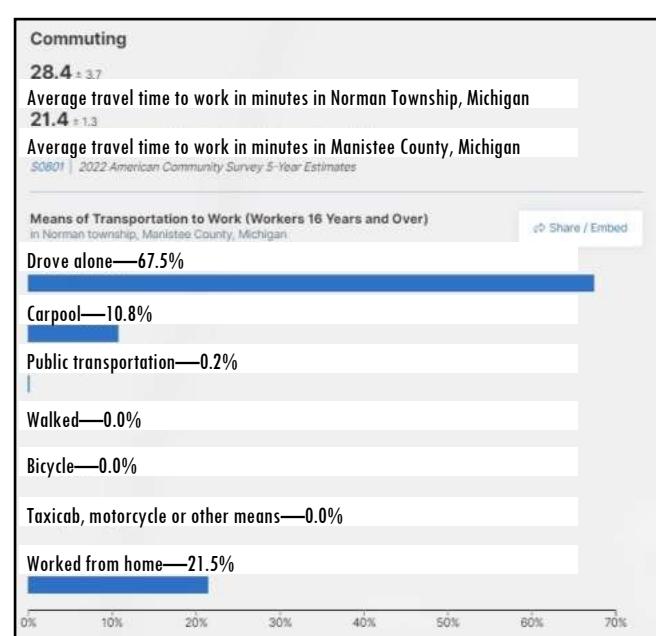
Manistee Chart 5—Class of Worker



Norman Chart 5—Class of Worker



Manistee Chart 6—Commuting Time to Work



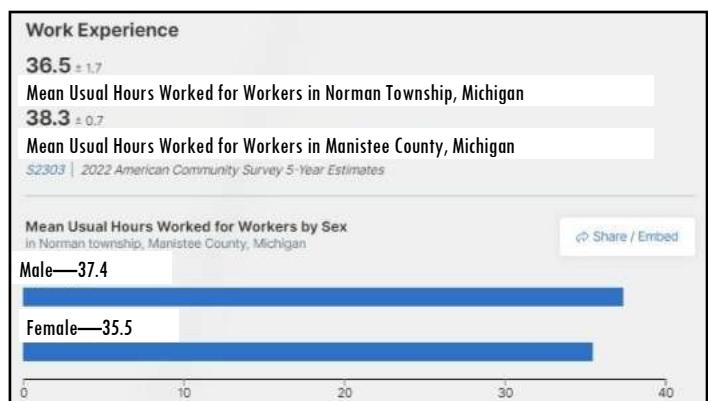
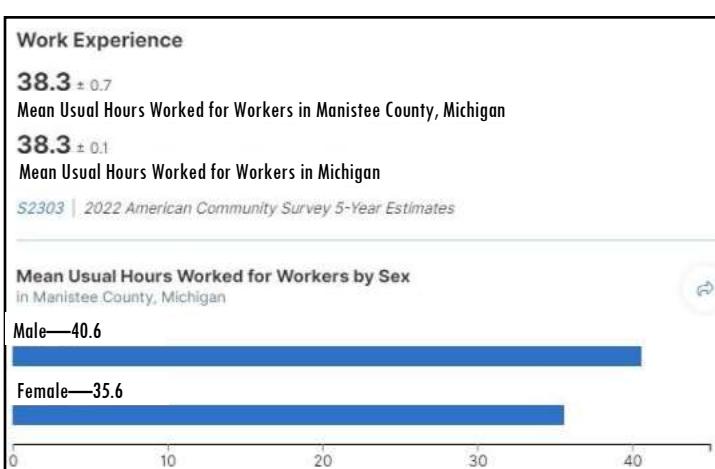
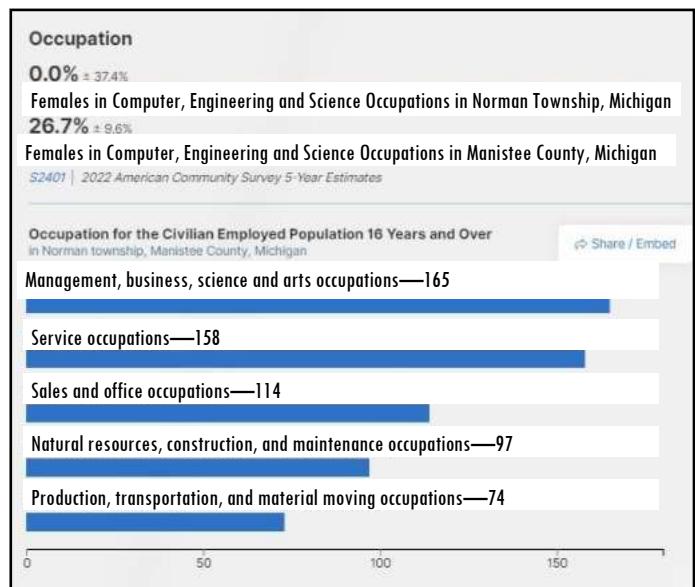
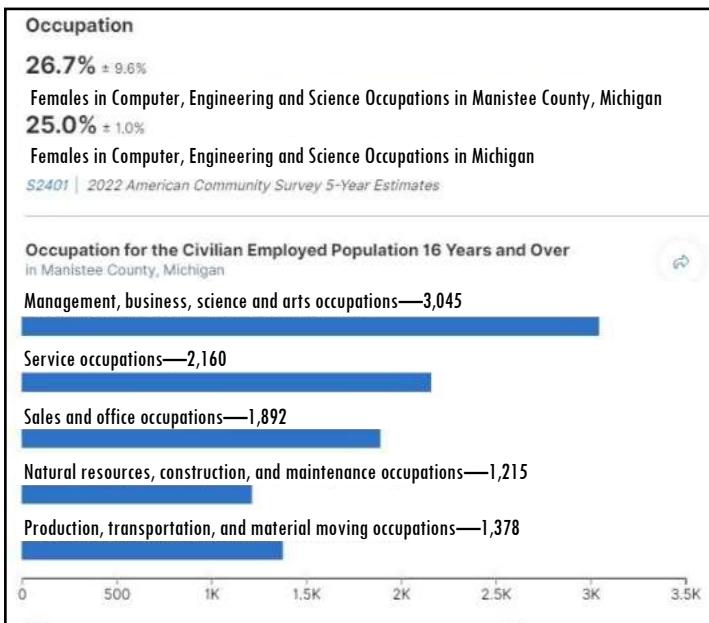
Norman Chart 6—Commuting Time to Work

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Occupation and Work Experience

There is a definite difference between workers in the county proper and the township. Fewer management and business positions than the

county, but a much higher percentage of outdoor workers, construction workers, and maintenance workers.

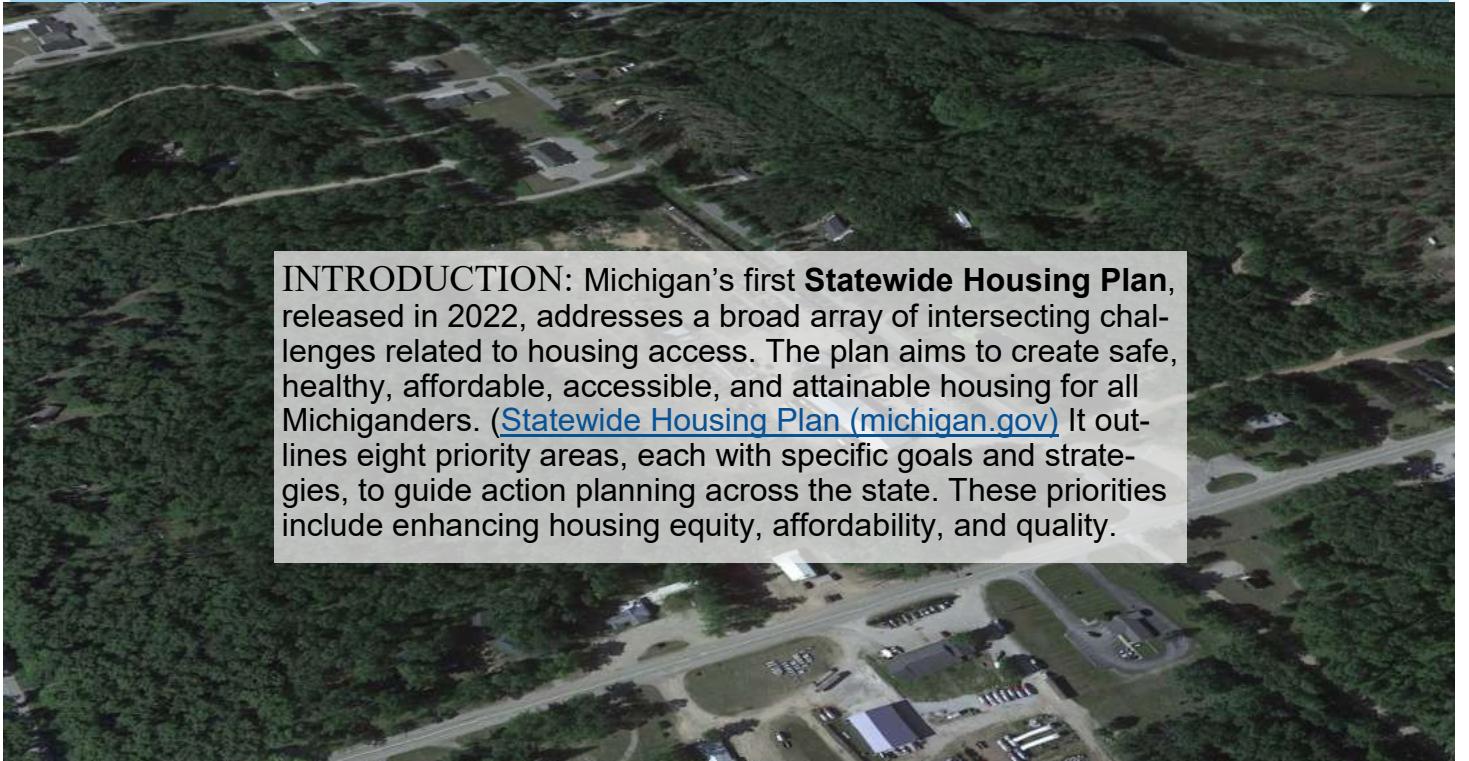


Norman Chart 8—Work Experience

CHAPTER 4

COMMUNITY PROFILE:

HOUSING



INTRODUCTION: Michigan's first **Statewide Housing Plan**, released in 2022, addresses a broad array of intersecting challenges related to housing access. The plan aims to create safe, healthy, affordable, accessible, and attainable housing for all Michiganders. ([Statewide Housing Plan \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.michigan.gov/statewide-housing-plan)) It outlines eight priority areas, each with specific goals and strategies, to guide action planning across the state. These priorities include enhancing housing equity, affordability, and quality.



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Housing in Michigan

The Statewide Housing Plan also establishes a connected and collaborative housing ecosystem through Regional Housing Partnerships. These partnerships work together to address housing goals and priorities in different regions of Michigan.

As a result, planning commissions should have a section in their Master Plans stating how they have done in housing and their plans to include additional housing in their local master plan. Manistee County and Norman Township are in Region D of the Housing Partnerships, which equals the 10 counties in northwest, Emmet, Charlevoix, Antrim, Kalkaska, Missaukee, Grand Traverse, Wexford, Leelanau, Benzie, and Manistee.

Region D Goals

The Northwest Michigan Regional Housing Partnership facilitated the Region D Housing Plan (Housing North). The process started in June of 2023 when the results of a 10-county Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) were released. These results helped inform the goals, strategies, and Key Performance Indicators in the plan, using the Statewide Housing Plan as a guide.

In July and August of 2023, two stakeholder meetings were held to create the working groups and steering committees for the Regional Housing Plan and develop the draft plan. One virtual community input session was held in August, and a community survey was created and open for 8 weeks. Housing North staff, steering committee members, and stakeholders also had one-on-one conversations with individuals, organizations, and partners who could not participate in the public events or the survey.

This group chose three priority areas for Region D: 1) Housing Ecosystem, 2) Ending and Preventing Homelessness, and 3) Housing Stock.

Along with the priority areas, four goals were also prioritized. These were:

1. Increase access to stable and affordable quality housing options for households with extremely low incomes.
2. Increase the supply of the full spectrum of housing, including workforce housing and missing middle class that is affordable and attainable to Michigan residents.
3. Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the housing ecosystem by enhancing collaboration on housing among state agencies, philanthropy, local governments, Tribal Nations, education and the wide variety of private-sector organizations that make up the housing ecosystem.
4. Expand the use of equitable and holistic local planning and zoning practices to increase housing supply.

Local zoning planning commissions should look to their township and county to see what could be changed in their ordinances which would allow for each Priority Area and each Goal to be more easily and readily attained.

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Financial Characteristics

\$801 ± \$38

Median gross rent in Manistee County, Michigan

\$1,052 ± \$11

Median gross rent in Michigan

DP04 | 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Occupied Units Paying Rent

in Manistee County, Michigan

Less than \$500 - 16.0%



\$500 to \$999 - 57.6%



\$1,000 to \$1,499 - 19.8%



\$1,500 to \$1,999 - 3.7%



\$2,000 to \$2,499 - 0.6%



\$2,500 to \$2,999 - 2.2%



\$3,000 or more - 0.0%

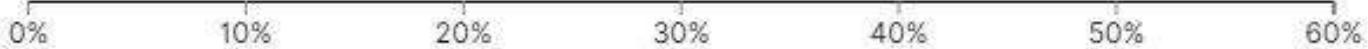


Chart 1, Manistee Financial Characteristics

Norman Township Master Plan - 2025

Financial Characteristics

\$700 ± \$146

Median gross rent in Norman Township, Michigan

\$801 ± \$38

Median gross rent in Manistee County, Michigan

DP04 | 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Occupied Units Paying Rent

in Norman Township, Manistee County, Michigan

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Less than \$500 - 0.0%

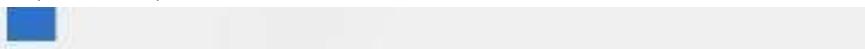
\$500 to \$999 - 94.4%



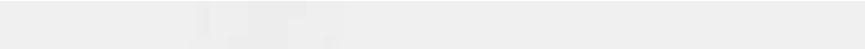
\$1,000 to \$1,499 - 1.9%



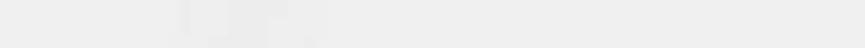
\$1,500 to \$1,999 - 3.7%



\$2,000 to \$2,499 - 0.0%



\$2,500 to \$2,999 - 0.0%



\$3,000 and up - 0.0%



Chart 2, Norman Financial Characteristics

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86.1% $\pm 1.6\%$

Homeownership rate in Manistee County, Michigan

73.2% $\pm 0.4\%$

Homeownership rate in Michigan

DP04 | 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing Value

in Manistee County, Michigan

Less than \$50,000 - 7.4%



\$50,000 to \$99,999 - 18.3%



\$100,000 to \$149,999 - 21.5%



\$150,000 to \$199,999 - 16.7%



\$200,000 to \$299,999 - 19.6%



\$300,000 to \$499,999 - 10.7%



\$500,000 to \$999,999 - 4.8%



\$1,000,000 or more - 1.0%



Chart 3, Manistee Housing Ownership Rate

Norman Township Master Plan - 2025

Homeownership Rate

91.2% $\pm 3.9\%$

Homeownership rate in Norman Township, Michigan

86.1% $\pm 1.6\%$

Homeownership rate in Manistee County, Michigan

DP04 | 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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Housing Value

in Norman Township, Manistee County, Michigan

Less than \$50,000 - 11.7%



\$50,000 to \$99,999 - 20.9%

\$100,000 to \$149,999 - 34.7%

\$150,000 to \$199,999 - 15.9%

\$200,000 to \$299,999 - 11.4%

\$300,000 to \$499,999 - 2.7%

\$500,000 to \$999,999 - 1.2%

\$1,000,000 or more - 1.7%

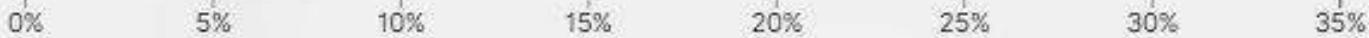


Chart 4, Norman Housing Ownership Rate

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Housing Units

15,472

Total housing units in Manistee County, Michigan

4,570,173

Total housing units in Michigan

H1 | 2020 Decennial Census

Housing Occupancy

in Manistee County, Michigan

Occupied housing units - 10,597



Vacant housing units - 4,875



Chart 5, Manistee Housing Units

Housing Units

1,526

Total Housing Units in Norman Township, Michigan

15,472

Total Housing Units in Manistee County, Michigan

H1 | 2020 Decennial Census

Housing Occupancy

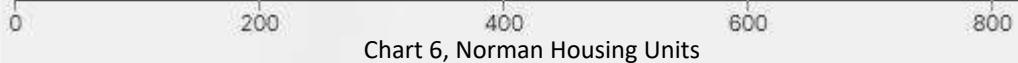
in Norman Township, Manistee County, Michigan

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Occupied housing units - 717



Vacant housing units - 809



Norman Township Master Plan - 2025

Occupancy Characteristics

10,597

Occupied housing units in Manistee County, Michigan

H1 | 2020 Decennial Census

Owner Occupied Housing Units by Types of Households

in Manistee County, Michigan



Married-couple family - 4,788



Male householder, no spouse present - 301



Female householder, no spouse present - 523



Chart 7, Manistee Occupied Housing Units



Occupancy Characteristics

717

Occupied housing units in Norman Township, Michigan

10,597

Occupied housing units in Manistee County, Michigan

H1 | 2020 Decennial Census

Owner Occupied Housing Units by Types of Households

in Norman Township, Manistee County, Michigan

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Married-couple family - 308



Male householder, no spouse present - 34



Female householder, no spouse present - 14



Chart 8, Norman Occupied Housing Units



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Owner/Renter (Householder) Characteristics

2.8% $\pm 0.9\%$

Moved 2021 or later into occupied housing unit in Manistee County, Michigan

15.2% $\pm 0.3\%$

Moved 2021 or later into occupied housing unit in Michigan

S2502 | 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Moved 2021 or Later Into Occupied Housing Unit by Type of Units in Manistee County, Michigan



Owner-occupied housing units—1.8%



Renter occupied housing units—8.7%



Chart 9, Manistee Owner-Renter Characteristics

Owner/Renter (Householder) Characteristics

2.7% $\pm 2.1\%$

Moved 2021 or later into occupied housing unit in Norman Township, Michigan

2.8% $\pm 0.9\%$

Moved 2021 or later into occupied housing in Manistee County, Michigan

S2502 | 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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Moved 2021 or Later Into Occupied Housing Unit by Type of Units in Norman Township, Manistee County, Michigan

Owner-occupied housing units - 2.5%



Renter-occupied housing units - 5.2%



Chart 10, Norman Owner-Renter Characteristics

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19.2% $\pm 1.9\%$

Occupied housing units with four or more bedrooms in Manistee County, Michigan

22.7% $\pm 0.3\%$

Occupied housing units with four or more bedrooms in Michigan

S2504 | 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Bedrooms in Occupied Housing Units

in Manistee County, Michigan

No bedroom - 0.4%



One bedroom - 6.0%



2-3 bedrooms—74.3%



4 or more bedrooms—19.2%



Chart 11, Manistee Bedrooms

14.8% $\pm 5.6\%$

Occupied housing units with four or more bedrooms in Norman Township, Michigan

19.2% $\pm 1.9\%$

Occupied housing units with four or more bedrooms in Manistee County, Michigan

S2504 | 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Bedrooms in Occupied Housing Units

in Norman Township, Manistee County, Michigan

 Share / Embed

No bedroom - 0.4%

One bedroom - 10.8%

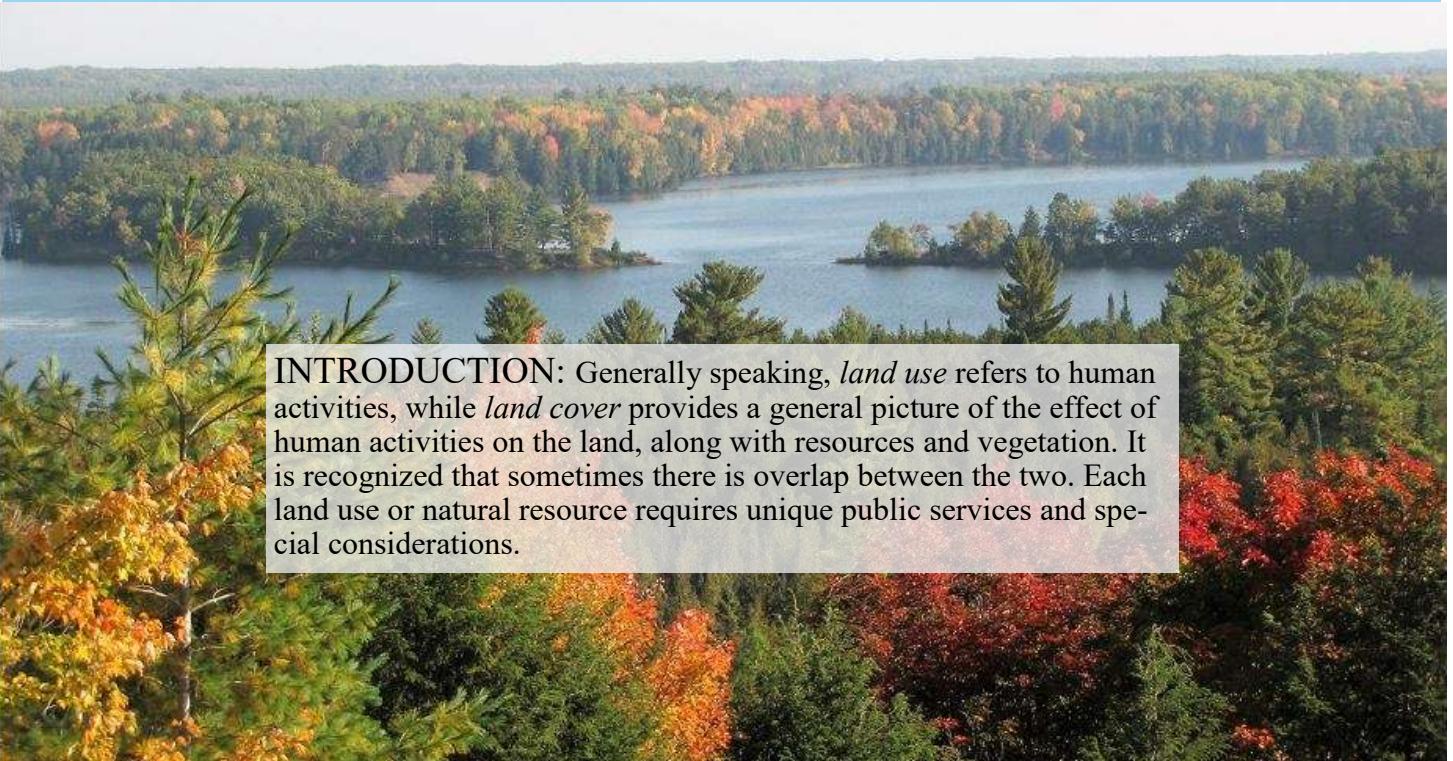
2—3 bedrooms—74.4%

4 or more bedrooms—14.8%

Chart 12, Norman Bedrooms

CHAPTER 5

LAND USE/LAND COVER



INTRODUCTION: Generally speaking, *land use* refers to human activities, while *land cover* provides a general picture of the effect of human activities on the land, along with resources and vegetation. It is recognized that sometimes there is overlap between the two. Each land use or natural resource requires unique public services and special considerations.

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Land Use/Land Cover

A *land use* is the type of human activity that takes place on a developed parcel, such as residential, multiple family, commercial, agricultural, industrial, or other. Ask yourself, "How is the land being used?" Is there a Farm (Agriculture)? Is it a business that has customers (Commercial)? Is there a house/family (Residential/Subdivisions, Residential/Larger Parcels)? *Land cover* refers mostly to the type of vegetation as documented from interpretation of aerial photographs. Some land cover categories include agriculture (active), upland forest, upland field (inactive agricultural land), open water, wetland, barren, and urban (typically residential, but also indicating a lack of other land cover categories).

Generally speaking, *land use* refers to human activities, while *land cover* provides a general picture of the effect of human activities on the land, along with resources and vegetation. Sometimes there is overlap between the two. Each land use or natural resource requires unique public services and special considerations. As an example, removal of trees and vegetation for a golf course or housing development will require stormwater protection techniques. The cumulative effect of land use/land cover changes can be tracked and analyzed to project future needs. This chapter is an inventory and analysis of the use, ownership, and division of the land in Norman Township in the following parts: (1) a review of the ownership of land, (2) a review of the division or fractionalization

of land, including subdivisions and small parcels, and (3) the various classifications of the land use.

Land Ownership

About half of the land in Norman Township is publicly owned, mostly by the U.S. Government. Most of the privately held land in the township is used as residences or vacant, with a small amount for commercial purposes. The publicly owned land is mainly the Manistee National Forest lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service. A second group is local government-owned land, with various holdings represented as township and village government facilities (parks, buildings, recreation, roads, etc.).

Map #1 Base Map with Property Lines is found on the Manistee County Property Search site (Manistee County Property Search, liaa.org) and illustrates the land ownership pattern within Norman Township, naming the larger parcel owners. This map also begins to illustrate the pattern of land fractionalization in the township.



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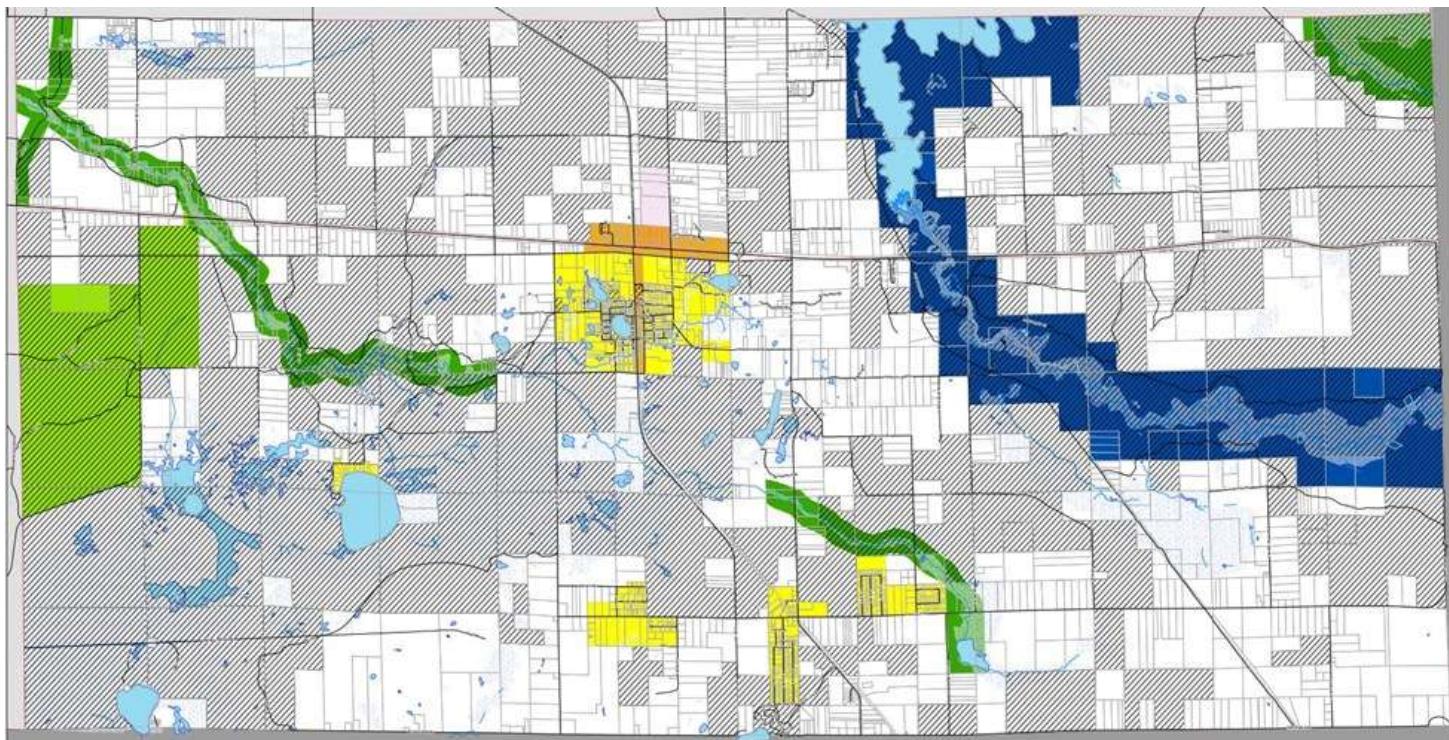
Land Fractionalization

Fractionalization of land is the manner in which a parent parcel is divided into smaller parcels. Housing subdivisions represents the densest land division. When a landowner chooses to divide his land into more than four parcels, each 10 acres or smaller in size within a 10-year period, a formal plat must be drawn and approved as a subdivision. Other land divisions are done by splitting property into smaller parcels.

A proposed land division is subject to a review by township, county, and state agencies before the land can actually be subdivided. The review and approvals provide government the opportunity to ensure compliance with zoning, and confirm that there is adequate drainage, septic facilities, road access, and open space.

The yellow areas on the map below are subdivisions in Norman Township. In general, subdivisions tend to be located in the center of Norman Township: the community of Wellston, the Dublin area, and north of Wellston, with the exception of Glenn Valance Subdivision on Warfield Road. The yellow areas on the map below are subdivisions in Norman Township.

The Norman Township base map also shows areas not within subdivisions where parcel sizes have been reduced over the years, usually to 10 or 20 acres or smaller. The areas are found throughout the township, especially along Peter's Farm Road, around Lake-of-the-Woods, in the Caberfae Highway-Huff Road area, east of Chalker Road, and east of Warfield Road. The base map and the equalized value tax map, show that much of



Norman Township Master Plan - 2025

the fractionalized land is in parcels of about 10 acres or smaller in size.

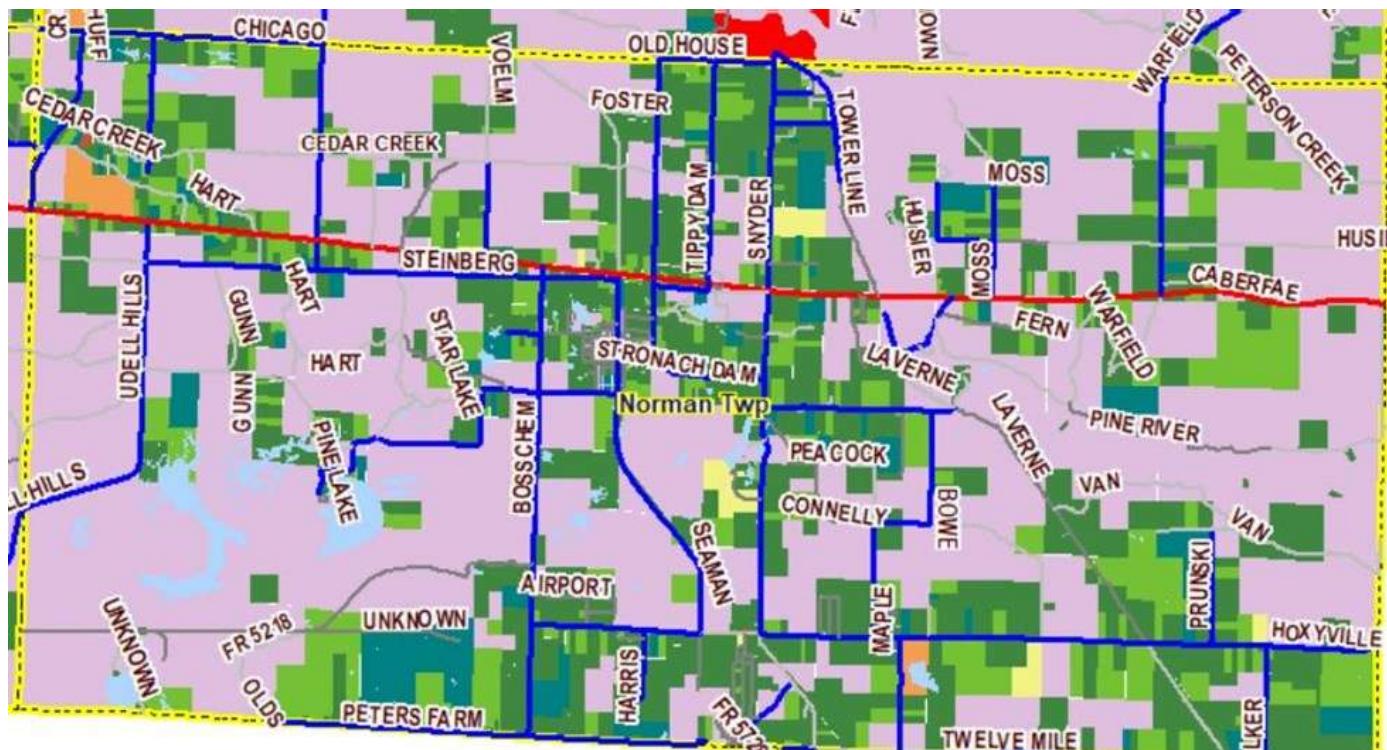
Below is the 2021 taxable value map for Norman Township, showing only the lands from which the township receives property taxes.

Fractionalization presents three main problems:

1. Such parcels tend to have one home near a public road with the remainder of the parcel vacant. This land use arrangement creates a situation in which land that is not near a road is split up into different ownerships without clear or easy access, resulting in vacant land that is generally not accessible. Homes tend to be built along roads, creating a residential land use pattern in strips along both sides of a road while property behind the

homes remains vacant. Thus a residential development emerges along road corridors rather than the development filling in behind existing homes.

2. Small parcels are often less economically feasible for developers to subdivide. This is particularly true with subdivisions requiring road, drainage, or other development infrastructure.
3. The 20-acre parcel or smaller also plays havoc with any potential public effort to preserve farm or forest lands. Division of land into smaller parcels drives up the price of land and property taxes, which also adversely affects farms or forest lands. Also, such small parcels are often not large enough for farming or commercial forestry.



Norman Township Master Plan - 2025

In summary, land use patterns in Norman Township indicate a scattered residential land use pattern, mainly located along roadways. Norman Township has an adequate land base to accommodate additional growth with little infrastructure development, assuming future residential development occurs through subdividing rather than development of 10-acre parcels. The township now has adequate subdivisions with vacant lots suitable for on-site septic systems.

The primary buyer of timber in the Manistee region is Packaging Corporation of America (PCA), which uses wood chipping operations generally requiring a minimum of 40 acres of forest in single ownership for harvesting. Forty acres in Norman Township is not large enough for many farm operations. A possible solution to land fractionalization is to require large minimum parcel sizes 30 to 40 acres in rural zoning districts. However, this approach is often politically unpopular and subject to legal challenge.¹

¹In *Marilla Township v. Dale Robinson et.al.*, (19th Michigan Circuit Court for the County of Manistee, file no. 86-4962-CZ, Judge Charles D. Corwin; Sept. 25, 1991), a 40-acre minimum parcel size in zoning was upheld for non-farm/forestry uses in an agriculture/forestry preservation area when the intent was to preserve large parcel sizes for possible future use for agriculture or timber harvesting. The court also ruled the 40-acre minimum could not be applied to forest and agriculture land uses because by their very existence the existing parcel (no matter what size) was large enough.

A regulation requiring all new parcels to have road frontage is common. Also, regulating a maximum width to depth (the

state requires a 4:1 ratio, for example) avoids long narrow parcels and may help to discourage unwanted land fractionalization. Norman Township may also choose to promote future residential development via subdivisions. Zoning regulations to accomplish agricultural and forest preservation, as discussed earlier in this plan, are also an effective tool. However, most of Norman Township is zoned Agricultural-Residential, and has a 2.5-acre minimum lot size. See Zoning Map on page 44.

Different Land Uses

Wetlands:

Wetlands in Norman Township are mainly south of M-55, along Seaman Road and in the vicinity of Pine Lake. Wetlands within 500 feet of surface water bodies (i.e., lakes, streams, creeks, etc.) are regulated by Michigan Wetland Protection Act, Part 303 of P.A. 451 of 1994, as amended. The map below is a wetland map from the Michigan DNR. These wetlands are mainly unbuildable, and building requires DNR.



DNR Wetlands Map 2022

Norman Township Master Plan - 2025

Forests:

As shown on the land use map, forestland is the dominant land use in Norman Township. Forested areas, along with the rangeland category, illustrate the areas of the township, that have not seen much residential, agricultural, commercial, or industrial development.

Rangeland:

Rangeland refers to open fields of grass and grassy fields with shrubs. Often these areas are former farms. Distribution of rangeland in Norman Township is sparse, as most land remains as forest.

Agriculture:

Land actually used for agricultural purposes in Norman Township tends to be along Peter's Farm Road in the southwest part of the township. However, agricultural or agricultural-like farms or animals can be kept on most properties.

Open and Other:

The land use category "open and other" in Norman Township includes two categories: cemeteries and outdoor recreation such as parks, golf course, and track. Three cemeteries are in Norman Township.

Industrial:

Industrial and extractive activity in Norman Township. Such as the former Buda Family Saw Mill, is found in Wellston. An Industrial Light area can be found allowed on the zoning map. Industries are not compatible with residential areas.

Commercial and Services:

Commercial activity in Norman Township is

almost entirely in Wellston and along Caberfae Highway (M-55) north of Wellston. Some commercial activity is in the southern part in Dublin.

Residential:

The Norman Township Zoning Map on page 44 illustrates the distribution of dense residential land uses in Norman Township. Dense residential uses tend to concentrate around Wellston, Dublin, north of Wellston, Pine Lake, and Pine Creek at Caberfae Highway (M-55). Less dense residential development exists in lineal patterns along many county roads. The distribution of residential land use illustrates the areas of the township that are subdivided versus those areas which are divided into parcels and result in homes along existing county roads.

Extractive:

Gravel pits are the main extractive activity in Norman Township.

Barren Lands:

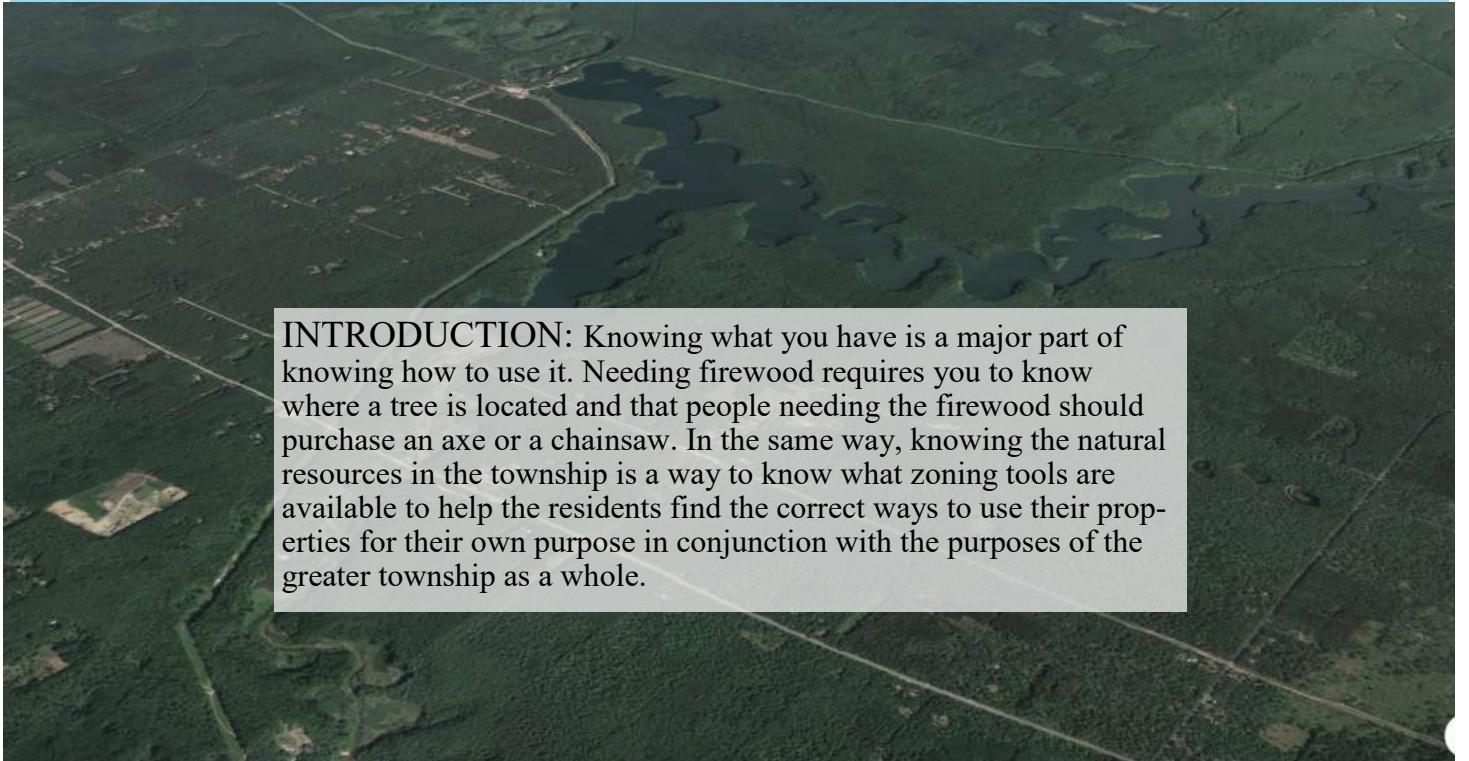
Barren lands include beaches and sandy bluffs along shorelines—not found in Norman Township except thin strips of open soil along rivers.

Conclusion:

Knowing the different kinds of land uses and land cover helps us know how Norman Township should be qualified into differing zoning districts. Keeping our rural areas, adjacent to United States forestland, makes the township consistent as a rural area for outdoor activities, which undergirds the shops and businesses in the area to support these activities.

CHAPTER 6

NATURAL RESOURCES



INTRODUCTION: Knowing what you have is a major part of knowing how to use it. Needing firewood requires you to know where a tree is located and that people needing the firewood should purchase an axe or a chainsaw. In the same way, knowing the natural resources in the township is a way to know what zoning tools are available to help the residents find the correct ways to use their properties for their own purpose in conjunction with the purposes of the greater township as a whole.

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Introduction

A normal Michigan township is six miles by six miles square. Norman Township is a double-township, measuring 12 miles wide by six miles high, or 72 square miles. Its natural resource base consists of beautiful hardwood forests and hillsides; plentiful wetlands, rivers, streams/springs, and seeps; numerous inland lakes; and some productive farmland. This natural resource base is central to the quality of life within Norman Township and the identity of its residents. Residents of Norman Township are attracted to these areas and believe the characteristics should be protected from any and all harm or change.

The population of Norman Township, as we have noted, has increased at a rate of 1% to 2% every year for the past 10 years or more. Retirees are moving to a more rural area for their health, for the slowness of life, and for outdoor entertainment. Young couples and families are moving into the township as a result of the lower cost of living, land, and housing, along with the convenience of having access to a city in 20 minutes. As the county of Manistee has decreased in population growth for a few years, Norman Township has naturally increased in growth. This is the result of the natural resources that the township maintains.

In surveys both online and in person in the last five years, the residents of Norman Township place a high degree of importance on the protection of its natural resources, including steep slopes, wetlands, streams, forests, and wildlife.

Surface Water Resources

Norman Township is blessed with numerous lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands. The township possesses over twenty inland lakes/impoundments and many miles of rivers and

streams, including the regionally significant Manistee/Pine River. Lakefront and riverfront property within Norman Township is highly valued for its scenic beauty, location for home sites, and recreational opportunities.

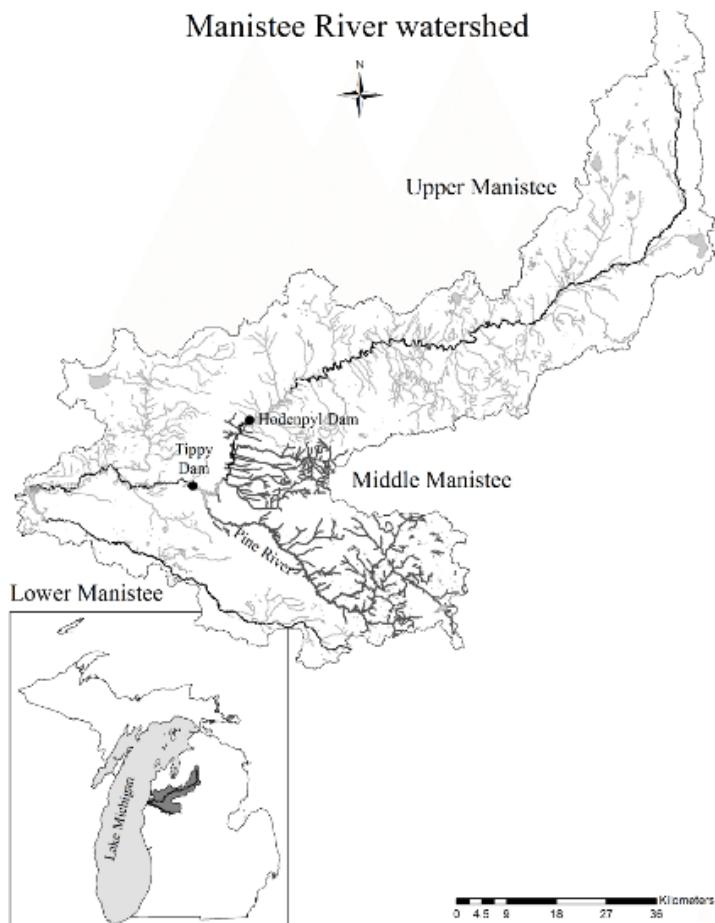
The Manistee River watershed (Map on the next page) is the major drainage pattern in Norman Township and extends into eleven other counties. This watershed can be further divided between Pine River, Pine Creek, Peterson/Sand Creek, direct drainage into the Manistee and the Little Manistee Rivers. The watershed of the Manistee River is not typical of Michigan Rivers as the lower Manistee, just north of Norman Township, follows a wide, one to two mile river valley. The valley floor is mostly wetland and/or flood plain. The river corridor (and also Pine River in Norman Township) is for the most part publicly owned. While this has caused concern for loss of tax base, it has also played a major role in the development of the area's economy. The river is a major attraction for the area's tourist industry. The Manistee River is annually a part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers in the state of Michigan. Only one percent of the state's river miles are included in this prestigious award.



Wellston Fisherman

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The banks of Pine Creek, the Pine River and the Manistee River have steep slopes. These waterways offer excellent fishing and outstanding scenery. The Little Manistee River's watershed encompasses parts of the southwest part of Norman Township. It includes the relatively flat swamp area (Hopper Swamp) that surrounds Lake-of-the-Woods. The river, drains into Manistee Lake, which drains into the Manistee River and finally into Lake Michigan. The Little Manistee is currently being studied as an addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system. Below is a list of lakes and streams within Norman Township.



LAKES:

Tippy Dam Pond; (part) Sections 5 & 8 E. Norman
Pine Lake; Sections 22 & 27 W. Norman
Lake-of-the-Woods; Sections 31 & 32 W. Norman
Timmerman Lake; Section 23 W. Norman
Sand Lake; (part) Section 31 E. Norman
Chittenden Lake; Section 13 W. Norman, Section 19
E. Norman (a.k.a. Round Lake or Government Lake)
Dorner Lake; Section 19 E. Norman
Crystal Lake; Section 13 W. Norman
Cranberry Lake; Section 13 W. Norman
unnamed lake; Section 13 W. Norman
Star Lake; Section 14 W. Norman
Lost Lake; Section 24 W. Norman
Mud Lake (intermittent); Section 36 W. Norman
Sylvan Pond; Section 6 W. Norman
unnamed pond (backwater); Section 33 E. Norman
unnamed pond; Section 25 W. Norman
unnamed pond; Section 24 W. Norman
unnamed pond; Section 15 W. Norman
unnamed pond; Section 29 W. Norman
unnamed pond; Section 33 W. Norman
unnamed lake; Section 21 W. Norman
unnamed pond; Section 27 E. Norman
three intermittent ponds, unnamed; Section 3 E. Norman

Rivers and Streams: (The Section number is where the river's mouth is found or where the river exits Norman Township)

Pine River; Section 8 E. Norman
Peterson Creek; Section 1 E. Norman
Cool Creek (to Little Manistee); Section 34 W. Norman
Pine Creek; Section 6 W. Norman
Sylvan Creek; Section 6 W. Norman
unnamed creek (goes though Wellston drains into Pine Creek); Section 23-14 W. Norman
Unnamed Creek (drain Pine Lake to Pine Creek);
Section 16 W. Norman
Unnamed Creek; Section 4 E. Norman
Unnamed Creek (drain within Wildcat Swamp); Section
22 E. Norman
Unnamed Creek (drain within Wildcat Swamp); Section
21 E. Norman
Mud Lake County Drain (manmade, intermediate);
Section 8 W. Norman

Wetland Resources:

Norman Township possesses other important water resources, including wetlands. Michigan's Part 303: Wetland Protection Act, P.A. 451 of 1994, as amended, [MCL 324.30301 et seq.] defines wetlands as "land characterized by the presence of water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and under normal

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conditions does support, wetland vegetation or aquatic life and is commonly referred to as a bog, swamp, or a marsh."

There are seven large wetland areas located in Norman Township, some of which have intermittent streams running through them and others within river corridors, often existing along creeks, streams, and rivers as "riparian" wetlands. These important resources provide wildlife habitat, protect groundwater/drinking water, filter pollutants from surface water runoff, provide recreational value, and help prevent flooding. Wetlands are biologically rich and diverse places to observe plants and animals in their natural habitat.

Below is a list of large wetland areas within Norman Township. Hopper's Swamp is of particular significance.

- *Hopper's Swamp (including Lake-of-the-Woods, Timmerman Lake and west/south Pine Lake areas)
- Wildcat Swamp
- Wellston/Pine Creek and feeders network of a wetlands, pot-hole like features; Sections 19, 18, E. Norman; 13, 24, 25, 23, 26, 27, 22 W. Norman Township
- Sylvan Creek Cedar Swamp
- Lower Pine River Valley
- three pothole lakes (Section 3 E. Norman Township)
- Pine Creek headwaters (Section 32 & 33 E. Norman Township)



DNR Wetlands Map 2022

Other small, but extremely important wetlands exist throughout Norman Township.

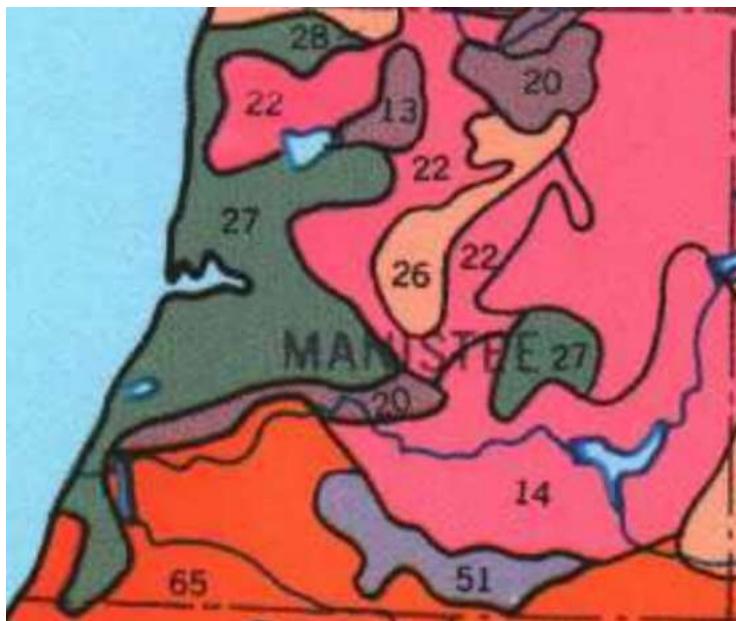
It is the desire of the Norman Township Master Plan to not allow any development in the wetlands. Wetlands are highly complex natural systems in the ecological balance of nature and must be protected at all costs. They provide the most productive area for breeding, nesting, and rearing of birds, mammals, fish, and reptiles. From that cycle of nature comes the wildlife for enjoyment, hunting, fishing, and trapping. These are the areas that make the tourist industry thrive in Norman Township. Wetlands play an important role in sediment control and waste water treatment. Particularly in and around Wellston, the wetlands act as a major sediment filter. Also, the wetlands play an important role in maintaining and even improving the water quality of a lake. The wetlands provide an "oxygen factory" that replaces oxygen in lakes used in the breakdown of material decaying on the lake bottom. Wetlands also provide a natural system that uses, and removes nutrients from the lake water.

All wetlands regardless of location in Norman Township provide the above benefits. Wetlands also provide storage, or a buffer, for floodwater and other water runoff. A wetland area is able to absorb large quantities of water, letting it drain slowly rather than all at once, which would result in floods or erosion from runoff. Many consider wetlands to be rich areas of natural beauty within otherwise rapidly changing landscapes within northern Michigan. Such wetland resources are sensitive habitats in which minor changes in water level or chemistry could dramatically alter plant communities and area hydrology.

Soil

According to the Michigan Soil Map of Manistee County, there are three basic types of soil in Norman Township: sandy, sandy, and sandy. The map of soils in Manistee County on page 54 shows that Norman Township contains only three kinds of soils, numbered

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Manistee Soil Map 2024

14, 51, and 65. The number 14 denotes a basic sandy soil; 51 denotes a sandy soil and a wet loamy soil underlain with a sandy gravel base, and 65 denotes an area dominated by sandy soils. These soils are excellent for forest areas with an assortment of trees and the animals that thrive in such vegetation.

A greater dive into the differing soils can be done in chart form with some of the major types of soils and what is mixed into these soils (or sand). The chart shows not only the major component of these sandy soils but also the fine details of each type of soil with which the sand is mixed. Sandy soils including Grayling (sub-irrigated) (A-1s), Graycalm (sub-irrigated) (A-2s), Rubicon (B-1), Rubicon with unique characteristics three to four feet below the surface (B-2), and Rubicon (sub-irrigated) (B-2s) are found throughout Norman Township. These soils are the most prevalent in the township, and are common in "poorer" soil glacial moraine areas, or kames, such as the southern extent of the Marilla Hills and the Udell Hills in the west part of the Township as well as other hill areas in Norman Township (B-1) and outwash

plains (A-2). These soils are characterized as infertile and not well suited for agricultural purposes. The sandy texture contributes to the draughty, well-drained nature of the area. Water seldom forms in puddles and instead soaks into the soil rapidly. This allows for excellent building sites, road beds, etc. that may not require as large a foundation or base as in other soil types. The rapid permeability of the soil also allows pollution, mainly in the form of septic nutrients, to move relatively rapidly through the soil. While a septic tank will "work" in that it does not plug up, concern comes with the rapid movement of effluent and poor

SUMMARY OF SOIL GROUPS – NORMAN TOWNSHIP				
Soil Description	Soil Type	Acres	Square miles	Percent of Norman Township
Excessively drained sandy soils	A1	490	0.761	1%
Excessively to somewhat excessively drained sandy soils	A2	22,129	34.5	48%
Somewhat excessively drained sandy soils	B1	11,272	17.6	24.4%
Somewhat excessively to well drained sandy soils	B-2	881.5	1.4	2%
Somewhat excessively to moderately well drained sandy soils	B-2s	47.5	0.074	0.1%
Well drained sandy soils	C-8	218.9	0.32	0.47%
Moderately well drained sandy soils	D-2	1,096.6	1.73	2.37%
Moderately well drained and somewhat excessively drained sandy soils	D-3	116	0.181	0.25%
Somewhat poorly drained sandy soils	E-4	1,429.2	2.23	3.0%
Somewhat poorly and moderately well drained sandy soils	E-6	1,271.3	1.9	2.75%
Somewhat poorly and poorly drained sandy soils	E-7	813.8	1.27	1.76%
Poorly drained mineral soils	F-2	491.8	0.77	1%
Poorly drained mineral and very poorly drained organic soils	F-4	3,749.7	5.85	8.1%
Very poorly drained organic soils	G-1	770.2	1.2	1.67%
Very poorly drained organic soils without trees	G-2	189.6	0.3	0.4%
Gravel pits	H-7	22.4	0.035	0.05%

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filtration ability of the soil. This can be countered by requiring larger drain fields, relatively large parcels, and encouraging drain fields instead of drywells.

Fish and Wildlife

Fish and wildlife are abundant within Norman Township. It is common to see whitetail deer, wild turkeys, fox, grouse, raccoons, striped skunk, beaver, partridge, woodcock, red fox, snowshoe hare, squirrels, opossum, cottontail, porcupines, mink, and weasels in the township. Residents also express interest in viewing and preserving habitat for elusive species such as badger, bobcat, pine marten, gray fox, and the black bear.

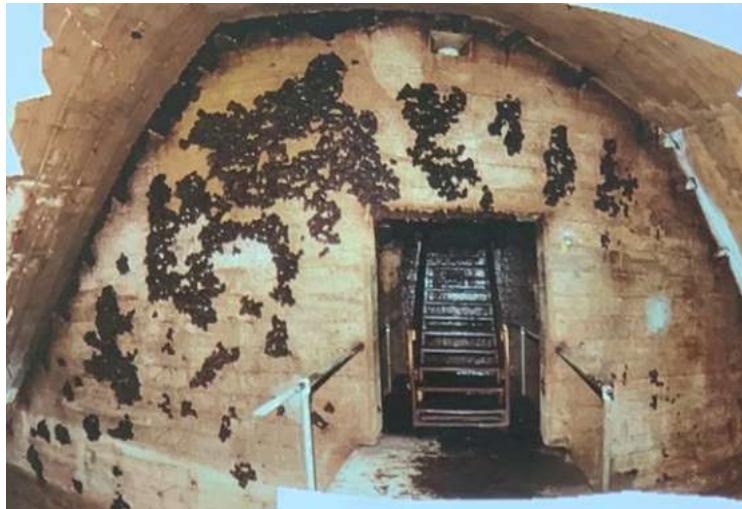
The lawful hunting, trapping, and the viewing of wildlife are important components of the quality of life in Norman Township. There are several protected species within Manistee County, and current federal and state status follows.

The Indiana bat is also on the Endangered Species list as of 2021. Interestingly enough, these Indiana Bats are preserved only in the Tippy Hydroelectric Plant

		Protected Species in Manistee County	
Common Name	State Status	Federal Status	
Plants			
Alleghany or sloe plum	Special Concern		
Pitcher's thistle	Endangered	Listed Endangered in 2024	
Broomrape	Threatened		
Michigan monkey flower	Endangered	Listed Endangered in 2024	
Hill's thistle	Special Concern		
Ginseng	Threatened		
Eastern pipistrelle	Special Concern		
Round pignote	Special Concern		
Brown walker	Special Concern		
Wild rice	Threatened		
Dwarf bulrush	Special Concern		
Animals/Fish			
Lake sturgeon	Threatened		
Spotted turtle	Threatened		
Lake herring or cisco	Threatened		
Shortjaw cisco	Endangered by invasive Alewife	Listed Endangered in 2021	
Blanding's turtle	Special Concern		
Wood turtle	Special Concern		
Woodland vole	Special Concern		
Indiana bat	Endangered, WNS	Listed Endangered in 2021	
Pugnose shiner	Endangered	Listed Endangered in 2021	
Eastern massasauga	Threatened	Threatened in 2024	
Eastern box turtle	Special Concern		
Kiwi (freshwater whitefish)	Special Concern		
Bigmouth shiner	Special Concern		
Birds			
Northern goshawk	Special Concern		
Grasshopper sparrow	Special Concern		
American bittern	Special Concern		
Red-shouldered hawk	Threatened		
Piping plover	Endangered	Listed Endangered in 2021	
Northern harrier	Special Concern		
Marsh wren	Special Concern		
Trumpeter swan	Threatened		
Cerulean warbler	Threatened		
Common loon	Threatened		
Bald eagle	Special Concern		
Least bittern	Threatened		
Migrant loggerhead shrike	Endangered	Listed Endangered in 2021	
Osprey	Threatened		
Insects			
Karner blue butterfly	Endangered	Listed Endangered in 2024	
Monarch butterfly	Endangered	Listed Endangered in 2024	
Lake Huron locust	Threatened		

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as of 2024. In the hydroelectric plant are 26,000 bats of four types, all of which are endangered. These include the little brown bats, the northern long-eared bats, and the tri-colored bats. All four species are on the



Endangered Bats in Tippy Dam room 8

federal endangered species list. As of 2024, the number of bats in the Tippy Plant make up the most of any bat population in the state of Michigan.

Forests

Intact forestlands provide the potential for sustainable timber development, soil erosion and flood control, groundwater recharge, surface water quality improvement and maintenance, wetland and wildlife habitat, scenic values and community character, year-round recreational opportunities, noise buffering, climate moderation, and the reduction of air pollution.

According to the 2023 Land Cover Analysis, more than 90% of Norman Township's land base is forested. It is also noted that more than 50% of the township's total land base is owned by the federal government and these forested lands are managed for multiple uses (e.g. timber, recreation, wildlife habitat, resource extraction, recreation, etc.) by the

U.S. Forest Service.

Farmland

Manistee County as a whole does not have any farmland. Soils and climate simply do not provide the combination of factors that create the conditions for farm areas. Norman Township does not have any federally designated Unique Farmland. Conditions for favorable fruit growing sites also do not exist in the township. Still, any agricultural activity taking place in the township is to be encouraged and helped. A true Michigan Master Plan always has a deep heart for any agricultural usages, even simply having a half dozen chickens, a few cows, horses, and any gardens or crops that can be grown in the sandy soil the township naturally offers.

For purposes of agriculture zoning Norman Township should use as broad a definition of "farm" or "agriculture" as possible. These properties should be allowed the fullest possible scope of activities while still being farms or agricultural operations. If farm preservation is desired the area should have only farm/agricultural and forestry uses in an Agriculture District, including our very plentiful Agricultural/Residential District. Things such as the farmer's home, farm labor's housing, barns, tool and repair shops, and storage, should be considered accessory uses to the principle farm use. Certain uses are acceptable, in terms of being compatible with and not detrimental to the agricultural economy (land values). Uses like a single-family home on a parcel, a small neighborhood retail enterprise, a sawmill, and some manufacturing enterprises should be acceptable. Those uses should be allowed only under certain conditions.

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Summary of Natural Resources

Norman Township is endowed with rich natural, scenic, and cultural resources. However, Norman Township residents are aware that, lacking voluntary protection, natural resources and historic structures within private ownership are vulnerable to significant alteration or destruction. Further, absent well-crafted, enforced, and fairly applied regulation, scenic resources are also at long-term risk.

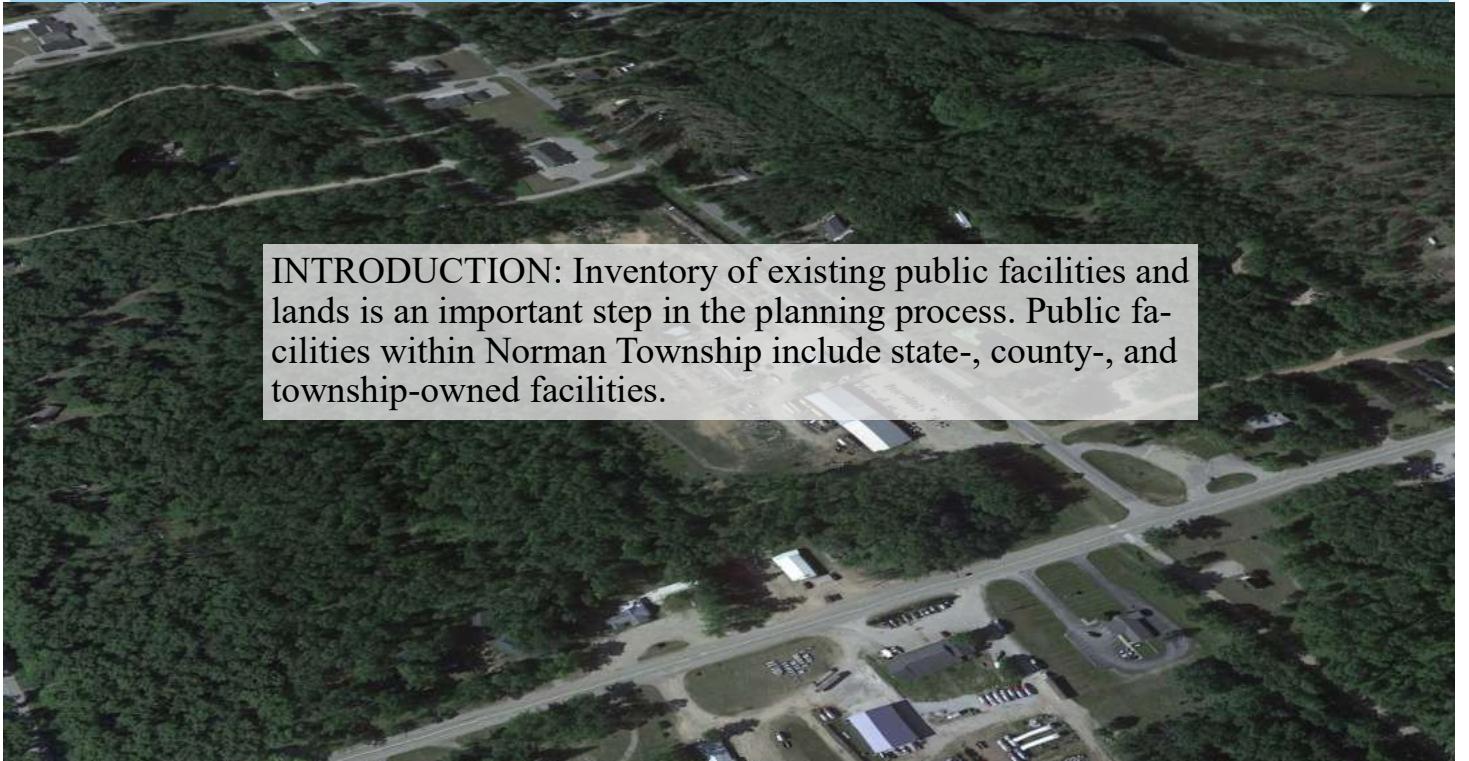
It is the position of Norman Township and its residents that the quality of life, economic welfare and environmental well-being of the township are tied to the identification, use, and maintenance of public and voluntary private conservation and preservation tools for these important resources.



Ranger Station, Norman Township

CHAPTER 7

PUBLIC FACILITIES/ INFRASTRUCTURE



INTRODUCTION: Inventory of existing public facilities and lands is an important step in the planning process. Public facilities within Norman Township include state-, county-, and township-owned facilities.

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Public Properties/Recreation Facilities

Norman Township presently 25 parcels. These public parcels include: the Norman Township Community Center and township offices (3.2 acres); the Fernwood Cemetery, better known as Dublin Cemetery (4 acres); the Restful Forest Cemetery, better known as Chalker Cemetery (1 acre); the Wellston Cemetery and 1964 addition (2.4 acres); Little Crystal Lake Park (22.7 acres); Norman Township Fire Station (approximately 0.5 acres); and the Norman Township Solid Waste Transfer Station (approximately 1 acre). Please refer to the table below for locations of public lands and recreational facilities within Norman Township.

NORMAN TOWNSHIP LANDS	
Norman Township Public Land/Facility	Public Land Acres
Township Community Center/Offices	3.2
Fernwood Cemetery	4.0
Restful Forest Cemetery	1.0
Wellston Cemetery	2.4
Little Crystal Lake Park	22.7
Fire Station	0.5
Transfer Station	1.0
Vacant Parcels	16.3
Total	51.1

The Norman Township Hall/Community Center is located on S. Seaman Road, just south of its intersection with M-55 Highway (i.e., Caberfae Highway). The Manistee County, Wellston Branch Library is also located within the

community center. The Norman Township Hall is a large modern structure with kitchen, office, restroom, and large meeting and elections facilities. The Norman Township Community Center was constructed in 1999. The township hall's parking lot is paved and designed to accommodate up to 96 cars. The fire station is located south of the Norman Township Community Center on Seaman Road in Wellston. The existing fire station was built in 1974 and added to several times. A new and modern fire station was built in the summer of 2014 and still adequately meets the needs of the community.

The Wellston Cemetery is located at the corner of Baker Road and Sixth Street in Wellston. Based on sales and not "occupancy," 90% of the plots within the Wellston Cemetery have been sold. Norman Township purchased an additional approximate 0.4 acres, located immediately west of the Township Cemetery in 1964. The Fernwood Cemetery is located on the north side of Hoxeyville Road west of the Dublin Store, approximately three miles south of M-55 Highway. Based on sales only, the Fernwood Cemetery at this time is 75% sold. The Restful Forest Cemetery is on Chalker Road in the southeastern portion of Norman Township. Based on sales only, the Chalker Cemetery at this time is 90% sold. Township residents are allowed to purchase cemetery plots at \$200 per plot, while nonresidents may purchase cemetery plots for \$400 per plot.

Recreational Facilities in Norman Township

The table on the next page summarizes existing recreational facilities within Norman Township.

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EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES		
NORMAN TOWNSHIP		
Facility	Description	Location
Little Crystal Lake Park	Inland lake with beach, picnic area with shelter, lighted swim area, 25 picnic tables, seven cooking facilities, 1/3 mile accessible for shoreline fishing/access, carry-in boat launching, men's and women's pit toilets, two water wells, playground, volleyball court, tennis court, basketball court/ice rink, fishing pier, and gazebo.	Little Crystal Lake, Section 13, T21N, R14W, Sixth, Main, Second, and Oak Streets.
Randell Tennis Courts	Two regulation public tennis courts.	Located on Spring Street in Wellston, between Elm Street and Stronach Dam Rd.
Robinson Back-water Public Access	Township-owned public access to the Tippy Dam pond/impoundment with picnic area, boat launch/parking, and pit toilets.	Tippy Dam Pond, Section 5, T21N, R13W, 19040 Robinson Road off S. Tower Line Road. 4 acres.
U.S. Forest Service Sand Lake Recreation Area	Open to public, federally owned, operated by private franchisee under supervision of U.S. Forest Service. Use fee for 45-site campground, swim beach, paved boat launch with 30 parking spaces, carry-in boat launch, shoreline fishing, picnic area, and sanitary facilities.	Sand Lake, Section 31, T21N, R13W, Sand Lake and 12 Mile Roads one mile south of Dublin. 62 acres.
U.S. Forest Service Pine Lake Campground	Open to public, federally owned. Use fee for 12-site rustic campground, gravel boat launch with six parking spaces, shoreline fishing, picnic area, and pit toilets.	Pine Lake, Sections 22, 27, and 28, T21N, R14W, Pine Lake and 9 Mile Bridge Roads three miles southwest of Wellston. 168 acres.
U.S. Forest Service Dorner Lake Campground	Open to public for day use only, federally owned. Use fee for gravel boat launch with 6 parking spaces, lake, shoreline fishing, picnic area, and pit toilets.	Dorner Lake, Section 19, T21N, R13W, Snyder Road one and one half miles southeast of Wellston. 20 acres.
MDOT Cooley Bridge Roadside Park	Open to public, federally owned, Manistee County Road Commission maintained. Trails/stairs to Pine River, picnic area, parking, and pit toilets	Pine River at M-55 Highway southeast of the crossing, Section 8, T21N, R13W, three miles east of Wellston. 13 acres.
U.S. Forest Service Aboretum	Forestland, open to public. Winter snowshoeing.	Section 23, T21N, R14W, Pine Lake and Bosschem Roads. One-half mile west, southwest of Wellston.
Kaleva Norman Dickson School District	Vacant/forest land.	Section 30, T21N, R13W, two miles southeast of Wellston. 25.7 acres.
Manistee National Forest	Forestland and associated features open year-round to the public for recreation, managed by U.S. Forest Service with multiple use goals.	11,426 acres in East and 13,470 acres in West Norman Township, i.e. T21N, R13W and T21N, R14W, respectively. 24,896 total acres.

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Recreational facilities located not in but near Norman Township, and used by township residents and visitors include Tunk-Hole Manistee River access; Udell Hills Cross-Country Ski and Mountain Bike Trails; Tippy Dam Pond/Manistee River access (owned by Consumers Power Company); Blacksmith Bayou (U.S. Forest Service—owned campground with access/boat launch to the Manistee River); High Bridge access to the Big Manistee River; and the Peterson Bridge Campground on M-37 Highway just south of M-55 Highway.

Educational Facilities

There are no public or private school facilities within the political boundaries of Norman Township. School-aged children within Norman Township are included within the Kaleva Norman Dickson (KND) School District. The Wellston Elementary School facility (grades K through 5) was closed during the fall of 2009 to consolidate KND elementary, middle and high schools within a central school campus in Brethren. School-aged children within Norman Township take KND District school buses to public schools located within the village of Brethren approximately five miles north of Norman Township's northern boundary.

KND Schools is a K-12 school district covering 350 square miles, serving 625 students located in the eastern half of Manistee County, and is approximately 25 miles east of the city of Manistee and 35 miles west of Cadillac. The Brethren High School received a bronze rating by the U.S. News in 2013 with a 20:1 student-to-teacher ratio.

The KND Elementary serves 289 students in K-5 grades and the Brethren Middle School and High School serve 82 and 159 students respectively in grades 6-12, all within one school campus at 4400 North High Bridge Road within the incorporated limits of the village of Brethren. The KND District's

Brethren campus possesses an auditorium, library, playgrounds, three ball fields, two gymnasiums, bus garage/transportation facility, and a nature trail.

Emergency Services

Norman Township is covered by Manistee County's 911 services, and its central dispatch unit contacts appropriate agencies to respond



Jerry Self Fireman's Parade, January 16, 2021

to emergency calls. Emergency medical services are provided by the Norman Township Volunteer Fire Department, Munson Healthcare Manistee Hospital, Mobile Medical Rescue (MMR) ambulance service, federal-county cooperative emergency services in case of natural disaster or war, and the surrounding township fire departments.

Norman Township receives police protection from three agencies, all headquartered outside Norman Township and about 15 miles (20 to 35 minutes) from the township's western

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border. The Manistee County Sheriff's Department provides police, jail, civil service, animal control, detective, marine patrol, canine and other court services. The Michigan State Police Post (Post #77) provides police, specialized investigation, and canine services, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Conservation Officers are dispatched from the state police post.

Norman Township operates a volunteer fire department. It is staffed by 20 members. The department currently has the following equipment:

- 1995 GMC Tanker
- 2017 Ford F-550 Ambulance
- 2008 Intl. 4400 Fire Truck (Tanker)
- 1986 Chevrolet DNR Brush Truck
- 2000 Argo Multipurpose Rescue Truck
- 2003 Intl. 4400 Fire Truck (Engine)
- 2007 Intl. 7000 Series Tank (Pumper)
- 2014 Ford F-55 Pickup (Rescue/Fire)
- 1967 Diamond REO DNR Truck

Norman Township also participates in a county-wide mutual aid agreement which provides backup and multiple alarm assistance to Norman Township in return for the township providing the same services to other municipalities.

Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling

Norman Township does not provide any door-to-door solid waste services. Residents that desire door-to-door pickup of garbage contract with a private hauler. Door-to-door service can be provided on a bill-back basis or by purchasing specially marked garbage bags with collection and disposal costs included in the price of the bag.

Norman Township provides a central solid waste collection point at a site south of the community building on Seaman Road in Wellston. Each Saturday a compactor garbage truck parks for a given number of hours, Saturday 8—noon and Wednesday 4—8, when residents can bring solid waste for disposal. Spring clean up is provided by the

township each year, at which time residents can dispose of out-of-the-ordinary refuse such as old appliances, etc. Every Saturday the township provides a mobile recycling collection station at the same time solid waste is collected. Any resident of Manistee County can bring pre-sorted recycled materials to the mobile recycling collection center.

Roads and Transportation

The main emphasis of transportation planning in Norman Township is road construction and maintenance. Manistee County Transportation, Inc. (dial-a-ride bus services) also provides transportation services within the Township. Road construction is one of the most powerful tools government has to influence the development, or lack thereof, in a given area. Planning and routing of roads has more social impact than most other planning activities. New homes, businesses, etc. tend to be built along existing roads. Land speculators tend to develop property in areas which already have roads, or have a short distance to existing roads.

Currently there are five types of roads in Norman Township. First is the state/federal highway maintained by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). Driveway, sign, and drainage regulation is handled by MDOTs Cadillac office. Caberfae Highway (M-55) is the only MDOT road in Norman Township and is the primary east—west artery through Norman Township and along the south edge of Manistee County. The highway supports commercial development in Norman Township in the Wellston area.

The second type of road in Norman Township is the county primary road. These county-owned roads are under the jurisdiction of the Manistee County Road Commission, and their construction/maintenance is funded entirely by state and federal gasoline taxes. Primary roads are main arteries or throughfares and, High Bridge Road, Bosschem Road (County Route 669), Udell Hills Road, Seaman Road

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(south of M-55), Tippy Dam Road (north of M-55), Warfield Road (north of M-55), and Hoxeyville Road are the Manistee County primary roads located within Norman Township.

The third type of road that exists in Norman Township is the county local road. County local roads (formerly known as township roads) are also under the jurisdiction of the Manistee County Road Commission, and their construction is financed by state gasoline tax and township general funds. Maintenance of county local roads is financed by state and federal gasoline tax revenues, and these roads are generally considered neighborhood service roads of varying degrees. Some have a seasonal status and do not receive year-round maintenance (i.e., no snow removal). Road surfaces vary from paved, gravel, graded sand, or two-track.

The fourth type of road is the recognized private road. Private roads generally are built and maintained by the responsibility of a land developer or the landowners. Private roads can be constructed in conjunction with a subdivision of land, an easement across private property to otherwise landlocked land, or private land roads. A major concern to Norman Township is that private roads have and will continue to become candidates to be made into public roads. This does not happen until the roads are constructed to county-public road standards. This reconstruction of a private road is expensive or impossible if inadequate right-of-way has been reserved.

Norman Township has adopted a land division ordinance that includes road access standards to avoid this issue in the future. However, many private roads are still in existence from past development practices. One approach the township can use is to adopt a policy that when landowners in a past development wish their road upgraded to a public road, it can be done with a special tax assessment to pay the cost of upgrading, if

upgrading is possible.

A map showing number of addresses per road segment can be useful to plan for and prioritize road maintenance and upgrading. This map should be used in conjunction with known average daily traffic data, remembering that while road segments with a high number of potential resident users (i.e. addresses) may need improvement/upgrading, connecting roads to equal-value roads or county primary roads are also important. Road improvements must accommodate traffic to and from the high resident segments.

The following is a ranking of roads prioritized by number of addresses along the road:

1. First priority:
 - A. Baker Road (Caberfae Highway to Cedar Creek Road)
 - B. Snyder Road
 - C. Airport Road east of Fawn Crest Road and Fawn Crest Road
 - D. Warfield Road (Caberfae Highway to one mile north)
 - E. Moss Road and east Moss Road
 - F. Hoxeyville Road (Seaman Road to Snyder Road)
 - G. Tippy Dam Road (north of Caberfae Highway)
2. Second priority:
 - A. Pine Lake Road (west of Bosschem Road)
 - B. Hoxeyville Road (Snyder Road to Chalker Road)
 - C. Seaman Road (Hoxeyville Road to Twelve Mile Road)
3. Third priority:
 - A. Michigan Avenue
 - B. Jacobson Road
 - C. Twelve Mile Road (Chalker Road to one mile west)
 - D. Snyder Road
 - E. Prunksi Road
4. Fourth priority:
 - A. Steinberg Road (Udell Rd. to High Bridge Rd.)
 - B. Baker Road (north of Cedar Creek Rd.)
 - C. Husier Road (west of Moss Road) and Oak Road
 - D. Husier Road (Warfield Road to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile west)
 - E. Twelve Mile Road (Bosschem Road east)
 - F. Stronach Dam Road (Baker Road to $\frac{1}{4}$ mile east of Snyder Road)

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Bus Transit

Manistee County Transportation is a federal/state-subsidized public transportation system that services all of Norman Township. Service includes handicapped and senior citizen transportation, dial-a-ride (i.e., door-to-door or demand response) service, bus route in and around Manistee City, and worker commuter service from Norman Township to employment locations in the Manistee Lake area and for students going to West Shore Community College. The bus transit system also provides door-to-door pickup during scheduled rural service times in Norman Township.

Transportational Trends

Many township roads are unpaved and seasonal. Development trends are currently increasing the demands for road improvements, potentially changing the character of rural areas of Norman Township and using up limited state and local highway dollars. At the same time, an increase in private roads, driveways, and other access points along Norman Township roads has the potential to increase hazardous stops and turning patterns. Unregulated private road development and road access can lead to dangerous conditions and increased stop-and-go traffic, which in turn leads to congestion and reduces public safety and the carrying capacity of roads.

Utilities

Electricity in Norman Township is provided by a private company and a public utility: Consumers Power Company of Jackson, Michigan, and a rural cooperative, Great Lakes Energy of Scottville, Michigan. Consumers Power provides multiple-phase service to most of its service area. The Wellston area of the township already has an electrical distribution system in place to accommodate large-demand users. Great Lakes Energy services an area about two miles wide along the south border of the

township.

Norman Township is serviced by Kaleva Telephone Company via the Wellston 848- and Dublin 859- exchanges, Michigan Bell Telephone Company via the Manistee 723-exchange, and Acentek, via the Hoxeyville 862 - exchange. Placing a call between each of these exchanges is subject to long distance tolls. Calls between Kaleva, Wellston, and Irons are local calls, while calls to Hoxeyville and Manistee are long distance calls.

The more densely populated areas near Wellston are serviced by Charter Communications Cable Television. A central CATV reception tower is located on Seaman Road just south of Pine Lake Road to service cable TV systems in the Wellston area.

There are two cell phone towers located in Norman Township, one on the north side of M-55 Highway 0.4 miles west of N. Warfield Road, and another on the north side of M-55 Highway just west of its intersection with Seaman Road.

Summary of Findings

It is anticipated that future residential and commercial development within Norman Township will necessarily translate into more vehicle trips on primary roads in Norman Township, resulting in requests to resurface, straighten curves, build deceleration and passing lanes, erect more signage or even traffic lights at some locations, etc. Norman Township is committed to working closely with Manistee County Road Commission and staff, MDOT personnel, and township residents to address future transportation needs.

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APPENDIX

INTRODUCTION: Census data is collected every 10 years by the federal government. Data between census years is also collected by the government in household detailed data every few years. This data for Norman Township was compiled by Networks Northwest's Community Development group, headed by Rob Carson, AICP. Three categories from the updated years to 2022 are profitable to review: Age, Households, and Graduation Rates. All three of these categories show noteworthy increases in Norman Township data.



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Overview of All Categories

Norman Township has seen an increase in several categories of statistics in the two years from the 2020 census to 2022, which is the latest data available.

Category	2020	2021	2022
Total Population	1,529	1,451	1,525
Overall Median Age	47.5	47.8	47.9
Total Households	610	586	657
Household Median Income	\$63,281	\$61,500	\$59,688
Per Capita Income	\$31,027	\$36,532	\$39,970
Total Housing Units	1,475	1,432	1,494
Median Housing Unit Value	\$113,900	\$120,500	\$125,400
Median Monthly Costs for Owners	\$713	\$817	\$810
Median Monthly Costs for Owners with Mortgage	\$1,094	\$1,084	\$1,213
Median Monthly Costs for Owners without Mortgage	\$397	\$420	\$446
Median Contract Rent	\$486	\$480	\$542
High School Graduate or Higher	997	986	1,025
Bachelor Degree or Higher	272	278	266
Mean Travel Time to Work	33.76	32.58	28.43

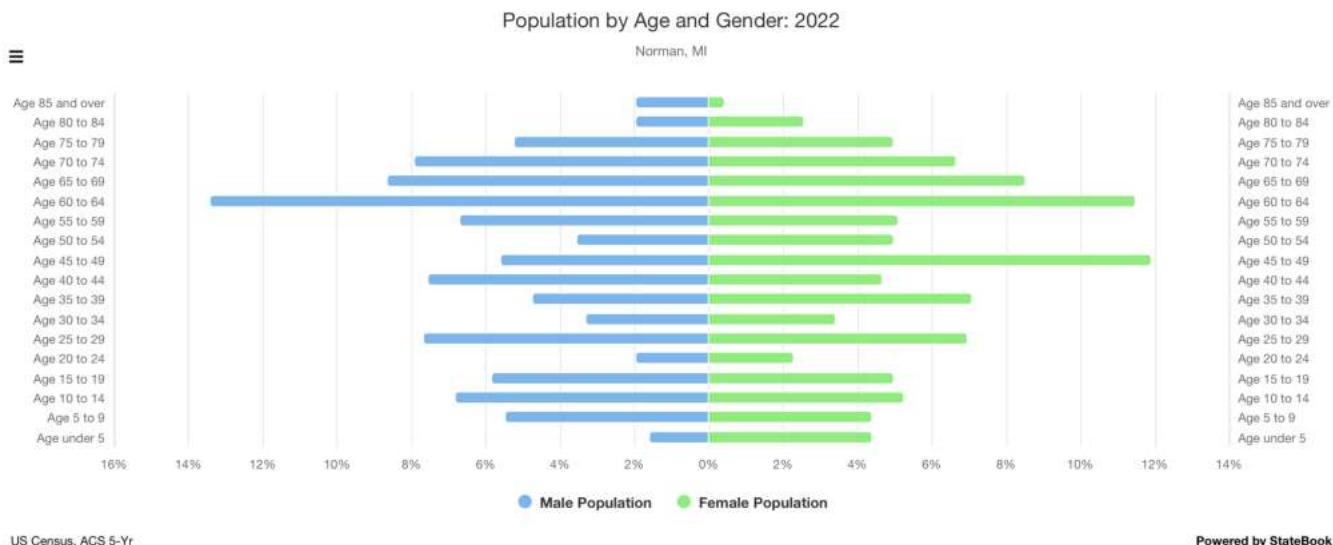
US Census, ACS 5-Yr

It is of note that though the population declined drastically in 2021, it rose back to 2020 levels in 2022 and is starting to grow again. Total households and housing units increased greatly and are still trending upwards. Housing and rent has not increased as much as the state's trend, and as a result of more people working from home, the mean travel time to work has decreased by more than five minutes. These are all positive trends that make this Master Plan even more vital to the township planning for its future in housing and zoning.

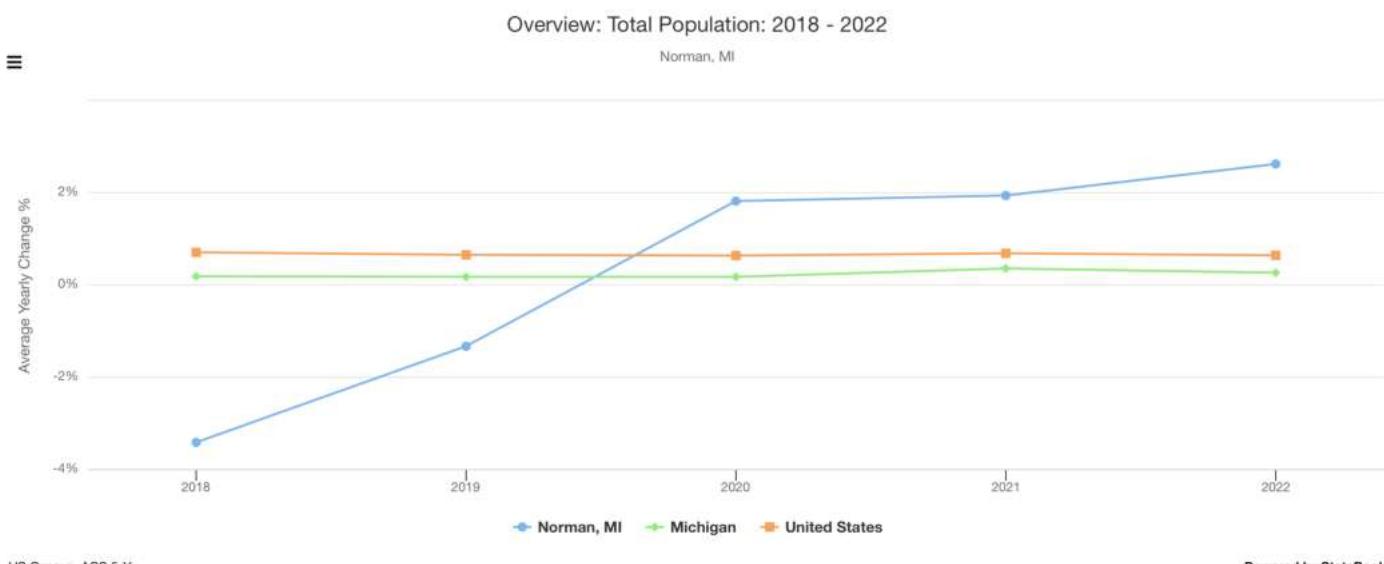
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Population and Population Trends

The following three charts can be contrasted with previous population charts in the Master Plan to again see how the population of Norman Township is changing. Perhaps it is not changing by much from our perspective, but compared with the state and nation, it is growing by more people each year.

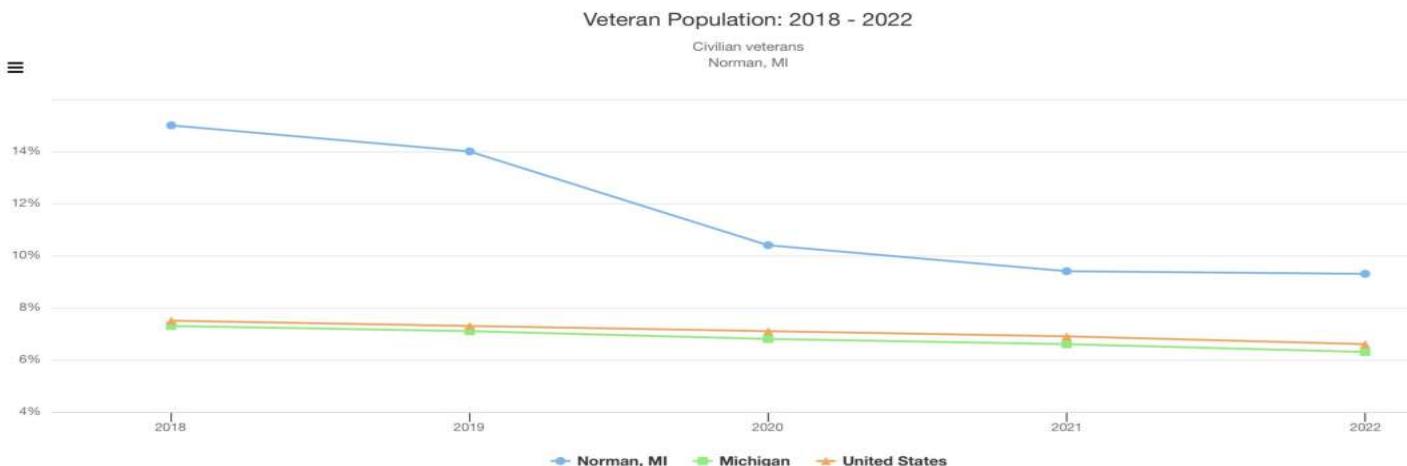


The chart below shows the population of Norman Township growing from a negative number in 2018 and 2019 to over 2% growth starting in “Covid year,” 2020 and continuing into 2022. This fact is attributed to more people retiring and finding a rural area in which to live.

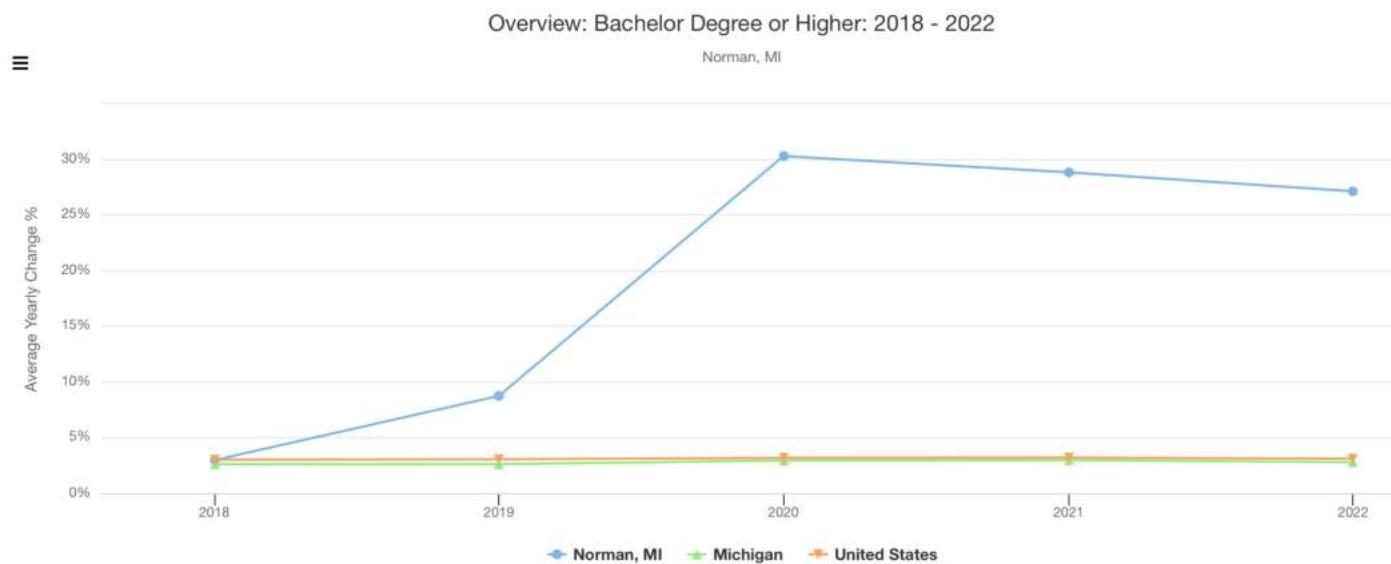


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The veteran population has also decreased in that same time period from 2018–2022. This may indicate the veterans in Norman Township are passing away. Note that the veteran population still far exceeds the veteran population of the United States and the state of Michigan.



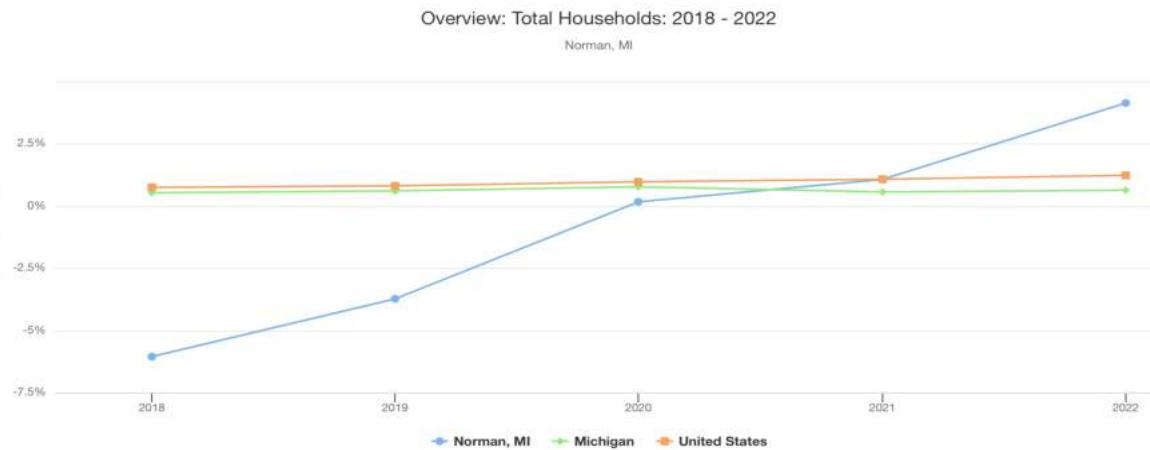
Graduation rates have also increased in the last few years since the census report in 2020. As the chart below shows, Norman Township has gone above the high school graduation rate of the United States and the state of Michigan. The chart shows the average yearly change in graduation rates. Since 2018, Norman Township has gone from negative 3% to a positive 2%, a 5% increase in high school graduates or higher education. These changes may be attributed to the Kaleva Norman Dickson school system, specifically the high school.



The need for a bachelor's degree or higher degrees has also changed in Norman Township. The jump came just before Covid and has continued in the township than before. Many more students have been seeking higher degrees in the township. Updating this statistic from the 2020 Census gives a greater understanding of the need in the township for more housing for the young married.

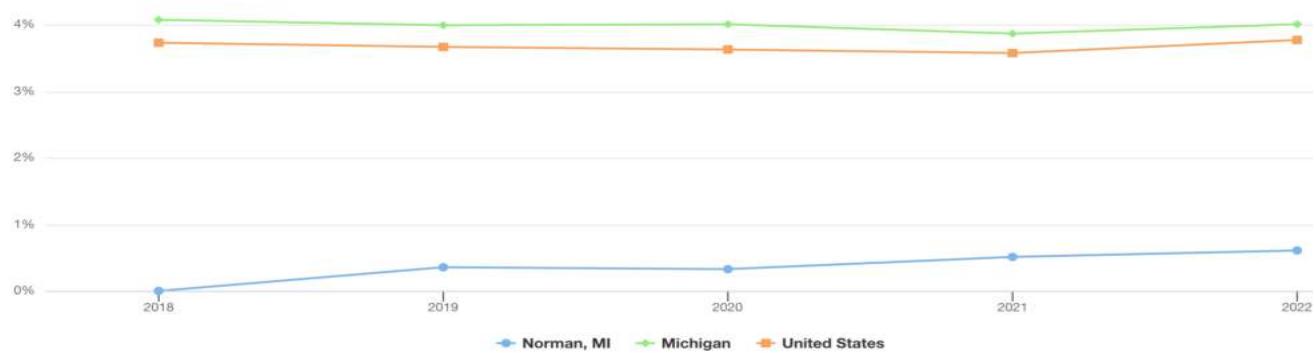
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The changes in population and graduation rates can be shown in the changes in the housing industry in Norman Township also. Note the charts below.



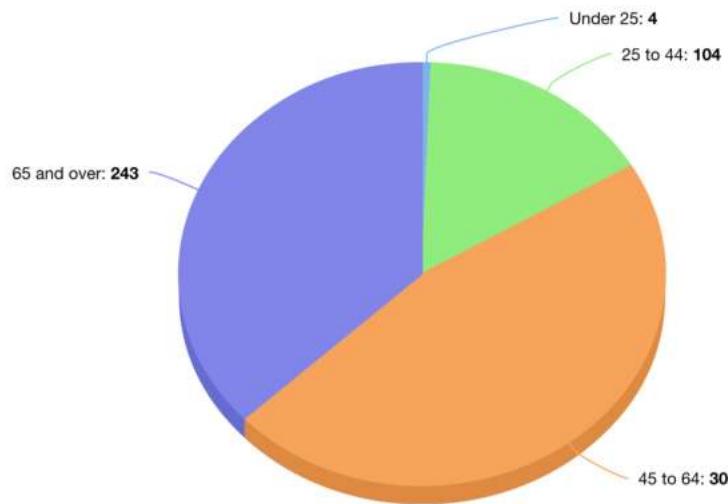
Households by Householder Age: 2018 - 2022

Under 25
Norman, MI



Households by Householder Age: 2022

Norman, MI



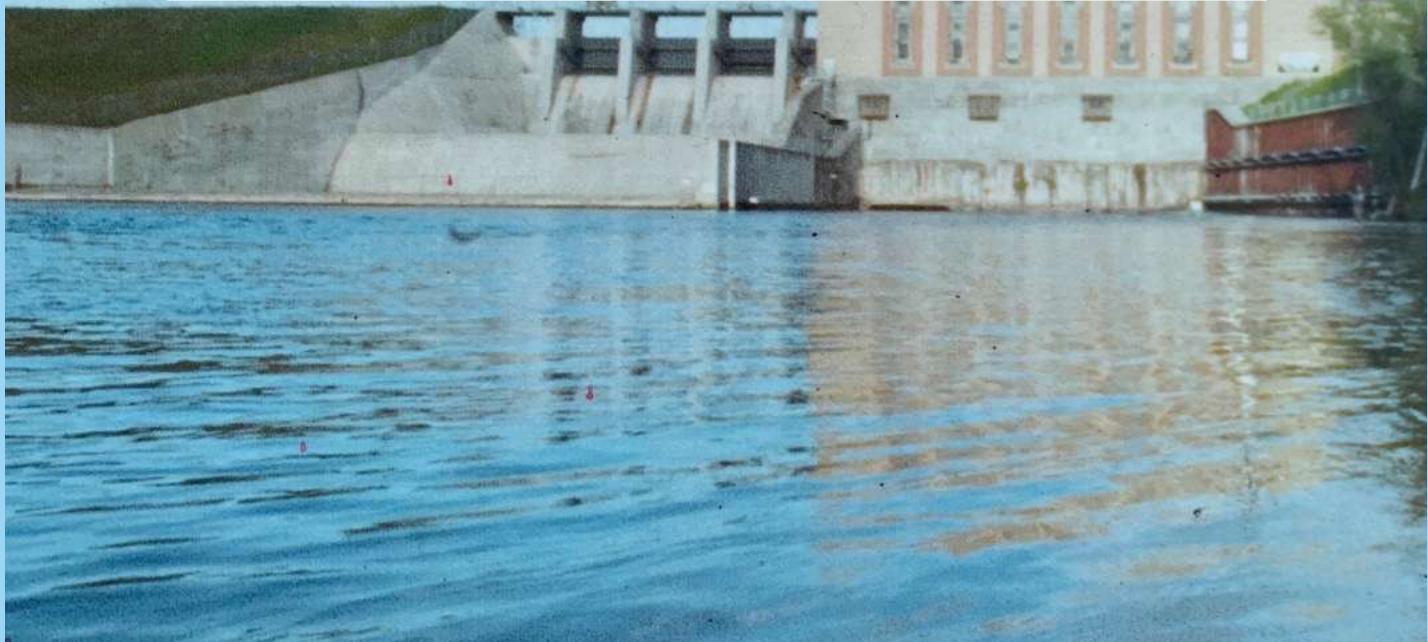
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CHAPTER 8

FUTURE LAND USE, POLICIES, GOAL AND ACTIONS

INTRODUCTION: For the purposes of this Master Plan, goals, recommended actions, and policies have been identified by the Norman Township Planning Commission and other participants in the Master Planning process concerning a number of interest areas within the township.

“Policies” are guidelines to assist local decision-makers in implementing recommendations. “Goals” are defined here as broad-based statements of community policy interest and intent. “Actions” are stated means by which Norman Township may reach its goals.



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Future Land Use Map/Plan

The fundamental purpose of this Master Plan (and the process that created it) is to gather wide-ranging data and observed trends related to community economics, employment, demographics, natural resources, physical setting, public and private infrastructure, history, character, land cover/land use, community challenges, etc. to assist in the envisioning what Norman Township could be in the year 2033, i.e. twenty years from the completion of this planning process. An important part of this process is the creation of a future land use map that embodies the vision to guide future land use decision-making within Norman Township. Based on this Master Plan and the policy recommendations and goals detailed below, a future land use map will be done.

General Policy Statements

Township planning is based upon and undertaken for the overall protection of the public health, safety, and welfare of residents of Norman Township.

The township will enforce the principles of this plan as codified within Norman Township zoning and other ordinances.

The township will seek to manage and guide growth to maintain and enhance the rural quality of life for Norman Township residents through the implementation of this Master Plan.

Within Norman Township, the long-term quality and conservation of natural resources and the sustainability of the environment shall be considered of significant importance when making land use decisions.

When considering land use decisions, township decision-makers shall balance the public interest in sound land planning, as expressed by and embodied within this Master Plan, with the rights and interests of private property owners.

The township will work with residents and others to promote and provide continuous opportunity to inform residents and landowners, gather public opinion, and foster meaningful public participation

in the community planning process.

General Goals

In order to achieve the above policies, Norman Township shall do the following:

- Retain rural character or “up-north feel” by promoting the preservation of small communities, intact forests, high quality water resources, and recreational



resources, as well as minimizing negative impacts from junk yards, improper waste management, and unguided growth.

- Plan for and guide future growth consistent with this community-created Master Plan.
- Maintain a current township master plan by reviewing this Master Plan every five years and updating when appropriate.
- Improve and maintain a website for the township to post final decisions, meeting times, and other community activities, and for the public to obtain copies of the Master Plan, zoning ordinance, and application forms.
- Streamline and simplify the zoning process through the creation of explanatory pamphlets and checklists.

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- Retain existing development densities, i.e., minimum lot sizes in Norman Township zoning districts.
- Explore the creation of a light industrial or manufacturing district in zoning regulations.
- Explore and consider the creation of a planned commercial town center with shared access from and parallel to M-55 Highway in the vicinity of Forester and Steinberg Roads in Wellston. Such a commercial center will be established in accordance with a community-derived plan promoting a unique community identity or “brand.”
- Support the continued commercial development of Dublin and Wellston on a small-town, compact community scale.
- Use public input from this Master Plan when making land use decisions and/or promulgating township regulations.
- Post and promote community events at the Norman Township Hall and other locations to encourage residents and others to engage in community activities and events. Post a map of Norman Township at such locations.
- Support the establishment of or efforts by government, land, or historic preservation conservancies to protect historic buildings and places and important natural areas and significant farms in Norman Township.
- Adopt and implement the concepts of community “placemaking” in future planning and development within Norman Township.
- Recognize the appropriate role of zoning in guiding the future development of Norman Township in compliance with the requirements of the federal Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Forest & Farm Environment

Waterfront Areas

- Promote the establishment and operation of farm stands, farmers markets, and small-scale farming operations and specialty farms in Norman Township.
- Provide wildlife habitat, erosion control, and groundwater recharge.
- Encourage hunting and recreational vehicle travel throughout Norman Township.
- Promote reforestation on steep, sandy, wet, and other fragile soils.
- Promote protection of environmental resources like wetlands, steep slopes, and shorelines.
- Encourage promotion of native plants, treatment and disposal of storm water, soil conservation, and restoration of damaged lands.

Ways to meet these actions:

1. Meet with DNR, EGLE, and the Forest Service to find ways to protect and promote the actions above.
2. Find a way for the Planning Commission to invite the above groups to our meetings at least once a year via Zoom to present actions the commission takes in the above areas.

COMMUNITY

Recreation

Mixed Use

Recognize that recreation relies heavily upon public lands, and plan for a variety of recreational needs.

- Promote the township's new and existing events and businesses in as many ways as possible. Work closely with existing organizations, like youth and seniors, and encourage intergenerational events.
- Explore ways to reach out and welcome new landowners, residents, and businesses in the township.
- Enhance Norman Township by branding it along M-55 with "welcome" signage that could identify local events throughout the year.
- Maintain and promote existing EMS and fire protection services in Norman Township.
- Encourage mixed land uses, like residential and commercial, that are connected by walkways with "slow" vehicle signage.
- Continue to develop Crystal Lake with more play equipment for children and advanced park maintenance.

Ways to meet these actions:

1. Find a place for pickleball courts, softball parks, and any other sports places for people of all ages.
2. Promote a farmers' market in the vicinity of the Wellston area.
3. Consider a Norman Recreation Association.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Recognize the rural character of the township and use these assets to create a desirable place to live.

- Balance residential, commercial and industrial development in order to protect our most important economic assets and protect the forests and active farmland.
- Encourage grower's diversification of products, including increasing value-added agriculture, farm stands, and agriculture-based tourism.
- Enhance Norman Township by branding it along M-55 with "welcome" signage that could identify local events throughout the year.
- Encourage improved local markets for agricultural products for growers to sell directly to customers.
- Support and guide home occupations and cottage industries as very important and viable economic activity within the township.
- Continue to support our campgrounds and future campgrounds by deregulation and working with the DNR to learn about campgrounds.

Ways to meet these actions:

1. Invite the DNR to speak to the Planning Commission about regulation of campgrounds.
2. Promote MSU-E (4-H) to hold meetings for gardeners and farmers on crops and farming practices.
3. Ask Forestry Service for information on camping in state/federal forests.

COUNTY AND REGIONAL PLANNING

Trails

Support Regional Planning with the county and surrounding townships.

- Enhance communication and cooperation with adjacent townships and counties on planning and other shared activities.
- Engage and utilize the planning resources provided by Manistee County and Networks Northwest.
- Support consistency between our Master Plan, Manistee's new master plan, and adjacent townships' master plans.
- Encourage planning of county-wide trails, and coordinate with adjacent counties as well as state and federal agencies on recreational resource plans.
- Continue planning for ORV trails through the township on roads that are safe to travel on.
- Continue developing snowmobile trails for use during the winter months, encouraging stopping at the market centers on M-55 and Dublin store.

Ways to meet these actions:

1. Invite an ORV group to a meeting to explain best practices for ORV safety in the township.
2. Do the same with a snowmobile group.
3. Read through adjacent master plans along with the county master plan to see what improvements ours could have.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Infrastructure & Utilities

Transportation

Recognize that recreation relies heavily upon public lands, and plan for a variety of recreational needs.

- Encourage the underground installation of all utilities at future housing developments and encourage underground utility placement in residential developments.
- Encourage clustering of utilities such as electrical substations, transmitter towers, cell phone towers, or other towers.
- The Township Hall should be continually upgraded with doors, painting, roofing, and other future work to keep the building up to date.
- The fire barn should also be given maintenance priority with a capital improvement plan (CIP) for the future roof or siding.
- Redo the township offices for protection for the township officers and workers in order to help them to do their jobs in a better way.
- Continue to work with the Manistee County Library for the library maintenance.

Ways to meet these actions:

1. Recommend CIPs for the township officers.
2. Find a grant writer to help facilitate grants for the fire department and EMS.
3. Find a grant writer to help the township with its improvements of its properties and buildings.
4. Do an ordinance for facilities access and privacy, including areas and times photos and videos cannot be taken.

HOUSING

Short Term Rentals

To promote the rural character of Norman Township while balancing the need for new residential development.

- Consider the needs of all income levels and ages, including first-time home buyers, elder housing, or assisted-care facilities.
- Encourage and provide incentives for the construction of single-family homes and cottages.
- Welcome but guide the placement of campers or temporary dwellings and manufactured homes or trailers.
- Guide the appropriate development of mobile home parks within the township. The township seeks to ensure adequate infrastructure of roads.
- Require the appropriate construction of private roads for any housing developments.
- Focus on inclusive community housing, mini-PUDs and cluster housing.

Ways to meet these actions:

1. Get ideas from senior residents as to how homes should be built for their needs.
2. Gather ideas from people who camp on their land temporarily as to their needs.
3. Come up with a plan for having developers come to the township to explain what they are looking for.

ZONING

Blight

To promote the community vision embodied in this Master Plan, the township shall:

- Continue to plan and zone at the township level in accordance with township residents' input.
- Encourage and support continual, consistent, and fairly applied zoning enforcement.
- Consider the use of housing land bank authority for future planned unit or site condominium housing projects with a low impact development approach.
- Retain rural roadside image by encouraging
 - ⇒ maintenance of building setbacks;
 - ⇒ increased natural buffers;
 - ⇒ increased shared access drives;
 - ⇒ placement of large loading doors and staging areas to the side or rear yards.
 - ⇒ placement of earthen berms with native vegetation and other visual screening.
 - ⇒ placement of scrap metal, junk cars, etc. in rear yards screened from public.

- Preserve the quiet and dark sky through land-use regulation of outside lighting.

Ways to meet these actions:

1. Have Zoning Administrator give reports to the Planning Commission.
2. Have Zoning Administrator give finished blight reports to the Planning Commission.

FUTURE LAND USE

Commercial Town Center

To promote the township's vision for future land uses and guide the future development of Norman Township, the township shall:

- Encourage landowners to recognize the rural character and natural resource base of Norman, and work with them to fit future development within its existing character.
- Support the continued commercial development of Dublin and Wellston from M-55 down Seaman Road.
- Foster the future Wellston and Dublin developments as attractive, diverse and compact communities.
- Study the feasibility of water and sewer for the Wellston and Dublin areas.
- Encourage residential dwellings of diverse price ranges, especially in existing community centers of Wellston and Dublin.

Ways to meet these actions:

1. All previously mentioned actions can be used to help the future land use and commercial town center development of Norman Township.

Future Land Use Map

The current Land Use Map was done not too many years ago by the Planner, the Zoning Administrator and the Planning Commission, which had an AICP Planner as a Planning Commissioner. The current map also was gone over by the public and the township board at the time.

As Norman Township land is more than 50% United States property, there were not a lot of growing spaces on the current map for expansion of zoning districts. Therefore, we are using the current map as the Future Land Use Map, as other municipalities of a very rural nature have done.

As a result, any expansion of a zoning district will be naturally done by process of extending a zoning district (Commercial or residential for example) beyond where it is naturally adjoined to the zoning district.

Good areas for expansion of zoning districts would be just south of Wellston for more residential parcels, or west of Wellston across Bosschem Road. Also, residential expansion could be continued west of Northwood Subdivision, which is across from the Dublin General Store.

And Industrial District overlay was placed on the map which extended across parts of the commercial properties between Seaman Road and Baker Road and extending northward to the United States forest. Suggestions have been made to expand the Industrial District, if needed, on the west side of Seaman Road. Since the Industrial District was added, there have been no industries that have inquired of the land for any companies. Perhaps we could advertise concerning the Industrial District to entice companies to build in the Wellston Area, which would help the area with jobs for workers and bring more families to Norman Township.

The Future Land Use Map is folded on the next page.

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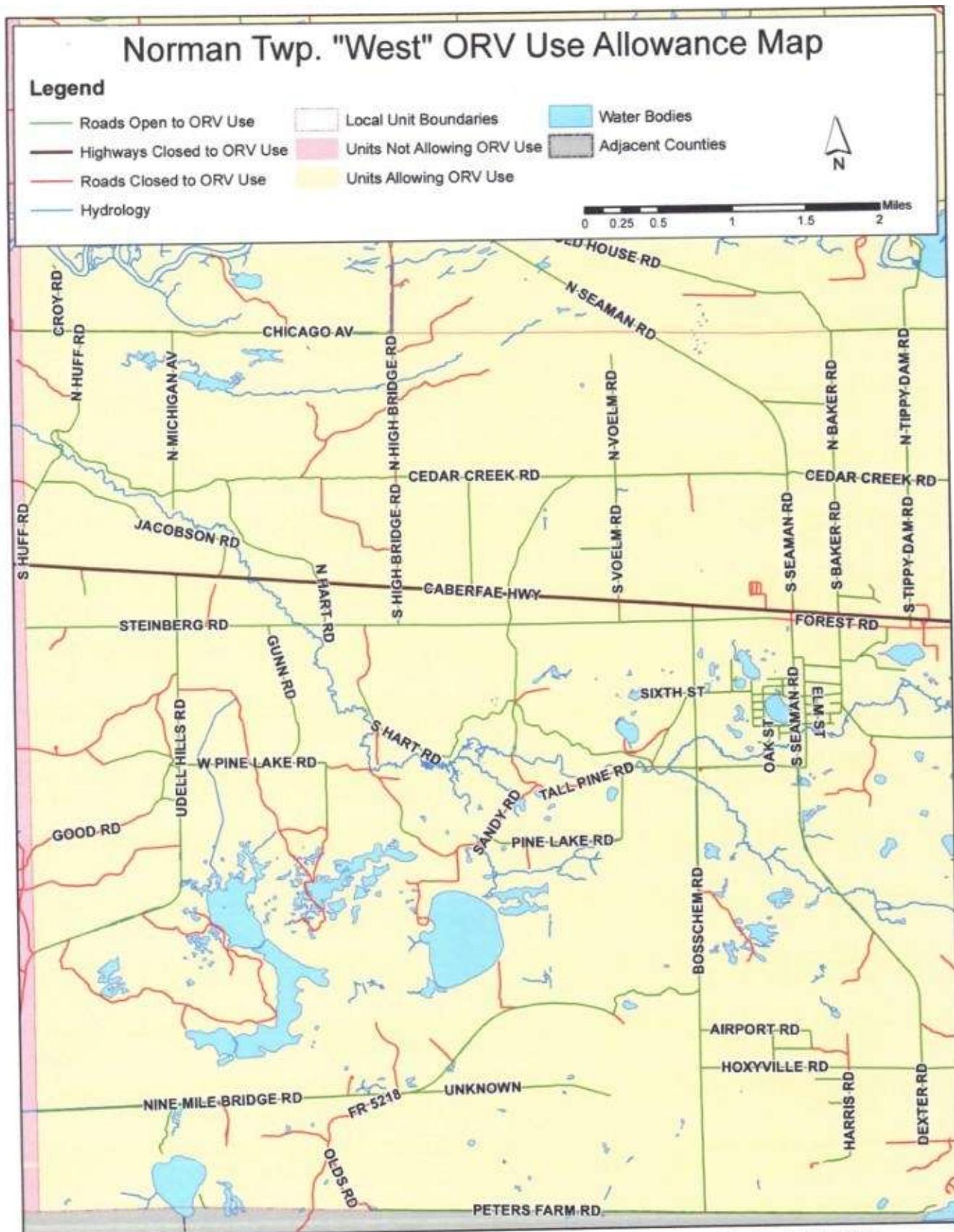
Reserve this page for folded Future Land Use Map.

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ORV Maps for Norman Township

As Norman Township includes the normal land area of two regular townships, this large township is six miles by twelve miles. Therefore, there is an abundance of township roads that lead to all the residences throughout the township. For any ORV owners who drive in the township, there are maps for the ORV's travel. Certain roads on which ORVs can drive and certain roads on which they cannot drive.

The next two pages of the Master Plan includes the roads with the Legends that explain the roads on which ORVs may be driven in Norman Township.



Norman Twp. "East" ORV Use Allowance Map

Legend

- Roads Open to ORV Use
- Roads Closed to ORV Use
- Highways Closed to ORV Use
- Hydrology
- Water Bodies
- Units Not Allowing ORV Use
- Units Allowing ORV Use
- Local Unit Boundaries
- Adjacent Counties



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles

