

# OSCODA TOWNSHIP

AMENDED AND RESTATED  
COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN  
2021



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## **OSCODA TOWNSHIP AMENDED AND RESTATED COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN 2021**

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Eric Szymanski, Planning & Zoning Director  
Todd Dickerson, Economic Improvement Director

### **2018 COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN**



### **2019 STRATEGIC PLAN**



### **2021 AMENDED AND RESTATED COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN**



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

The Oscoda Township Master Plan is a policy document which reviews the current conditions in Oscoda Township, and based on that review and public input, provides goals and objectives for the future of land use planning in a 5 to 20-year time frame. The plan, used in conjunction with the Township Zoning Ordinance, will assist in guiding future land use decisions. The legal basis and rationale for the Master Plan are outlined in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended.

This document is a culmination of the efforts by the Oscoda Township Planning Commission to create and adopt an official Master Plan. This process greatly valued the input from the community, and therefore the document is reflective of their wishes and concerns in regards to the community. It strives to retain and strengthen the quality of life in the Township, while planning ahead to anticipate and address changes. This document outlines the preferred future, or vision, of Oscoda Township.

## PLANNING PROCESS

The Master Plan is constructed from a number of various components, including a community profile, natural resources inventory, existing land use, community input, goals and objectives, and a future land use plan. The initial inventories, community profile, natural resources, and existing land use serve as an analytical tool to review the current



conditions in the Township. One of the most important sections of the plan is the public input, which is an important tool to guide future decision-making and developing goals. Finally, the goals in conjunction with the Future Land use section, strive to improve and strengthen areas of the community that the residents enjoy and work to change areas and issues that have been identified as a concern.

The main purpose of a Master Plan is to guide and enable a community to establish the direction of development. Specifically, the Planning Act gives communities the authority to adopt an official Master Plan, and to serve as a guide for local officials when considering land development matters. The Master Plan considers all of the information listed above and as such aims to:

- » Guide the use of limited resources in an efficient manner
- » Promote public health, safety, and welfare
- » Preserve the quality of the environment
- » Guide future zoning decisions

To ensure the Master Plan is current, and adheres to the flux of current social and economic trends, the plan must be periodically reviewed. The MPEA requires that a Master Plan be reviewed by the Township once every five years.

In March of 2016, Oscoda Township began creating their Master Plan. The Township contracted with Spicer Group Inc. to assist the Planning Commission with this process. The Planning Commission met with the Spicer Group five times between March 2016 and October 2017 to develop the plan. Community input was sought through an online survey. Feedback from the community as well as inventory data collected at the beginning of the process was the basis for the goals, objectives, and action items outlined in this plan.

**TABLE 1: MASTER PLAN AND ZONING ORDINANCE COMPARISON**

Master Plan	Zoning Ordinance
Provides general policies; a guide.	Provides specific regulations; the law.
Describes what should happen in the future. Recommended land use for the next 20 years, not necessarily the recommended use for today.	Describes what is and what is not allowed today, based on existing conditions.
Includes recommendations that involve other agencies and groups.	Deals only with development-related issues under Township control.
Flexible to respond to changing conditions.	Fairly rigid, requires formal amendments to change.

On December 11, 2017, the Board of Trustees submitted the draft plan to neighboring jurisdictions and to Iosco County as required by the Planning Enabling Act. On March 5, 2018, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the Master Plan, required by the Planning Enabling Act. This provided an additional opportunity for public input into the Master Plan. The final Master Plan was adopted on March 5, 2018 by the Oscoda Township Planning Commission.

## MASTER PLANS AND ZONING ORDINANCES

Often Master Plans and Zoning Ordinances are thought of as the same document. However, a more accurate description would be that they are two different set of tools, used in conjunction with one another, and work toward the same purpose and goals. Even though the documents are working toward the same goals, they are actually different.

The Zoning Ordinance is the law, and it regulates the use and development of land as it exists in the present. The Master Plan is policy and should therefore be used as a guide to the future use of land and overall development in the Township. While the Master Plan outlines a community's vision for the future, the Zoning

Ordinance contains the rules that govern the present.

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act requires that a Zoning Ordinance be based on an adopted Master Plan. Often, once a community has updated their Master Plan, it will also review the Zoning Ordinance to ensure it aligns with the goals of the Master Plan.

## USING THE MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan will be used primarily by the Board of Trustees, the Planning Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals as a guide in making land use decisions. Applicants seeking approval from any of these bodies will also find the Master Plan to be a valuable tool for understanding the long-term goals of the Township. Likewise, the Master Plan can be used by other citizen committees to assist them in their review of land-use related issues.

The Master Plan also acts as the starting point for all Zoning Ordinance updates and amendments. Michigan State Law requires that the Zoning Ordinance and zoning amendments be based upon a Master Plan. The Master Plan gives a legal basis for zoning and identifies how the community is protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the population. In the event that either the Zoning Ordinance or a decision of either the

Planning Commission is challenged in court, the Master Plan will help provide the planning rationale to support land use regulation.

The Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, and the public should continuously reference the Master plan in order to:

- » Review development proposals – to confirm any given proposal meets all goals and objectives of the Master Plan.
- » Review rezoning requests – to confirm that the request is consistent with the goals and policies of the Master Plan, and potential impacts on the Township.
- » Provide a basis for amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and zoning map – to help realize and enforce plan goals.
- » Understand expectations for the future land use patterns and desired land use types in the community – to inform potential residents and businesses about Oscoda Township and its future.
- » Identify and recommend physical improvements – to provide direction for provision of roadways, entryways, non-motorized paths, parks, and community facilities.
- » Provide specific design standards related to buildings, landscaping, and other site improvements – to guide development and redevelopment throughout the community.





## 2. COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

For a Master Plan to be successful, various community aspects must be analyzed. Background studies include evaluating the most current U.S. Census data, historical trends, community surveys and other resources. Important factors that make up a community include population, housing, the local economy, natural resources, public facilities and infrastructure, and existing land use. These factors, along with community input methods such as community surveys, help leaders determine the wants and needs of the citizens for the future of their Township.

## REGIONAL SETTING

Oscoda Township is located in the northeastern portion of Iosco County, in the upper lower peninsula of the State of Michigan (see Map 1). It is bordered by Lake Huron to the east, Plainfield Township to the west, Wilber Township and Au Sable Township to the south, and Alcona County to the north. It is a large rectangular-shaped Township, equating to three of Michigan's traditional 36-mile square townships.

## HISTORY

The Oscoda-Au Sable area attracted early French explorers because of the abundance of natural resources and game. Oscoda is a Native American Indian term meaning "a pebbly prairie". The Au Sable River running through Oscoda was named by the French, and means a river of sand. Louis Chevalier was the first to establish a claim in this area. He built a trading post at the mouth of the river, and soon a small community grew.

Before becoming a settler's community, Oscoda was home to the Chippewa Indians. One of the few physical remnants of the tribe is the Chippewa Indian Cemetery on Indian Road. It is an artifact and historic record of the original Native American settlements in the area. Currently, the cemetery is administered by the Oscoda United Methodist Church.

There is a second cemetery across from the church. At both sites, the majority of the graves are unmarked.

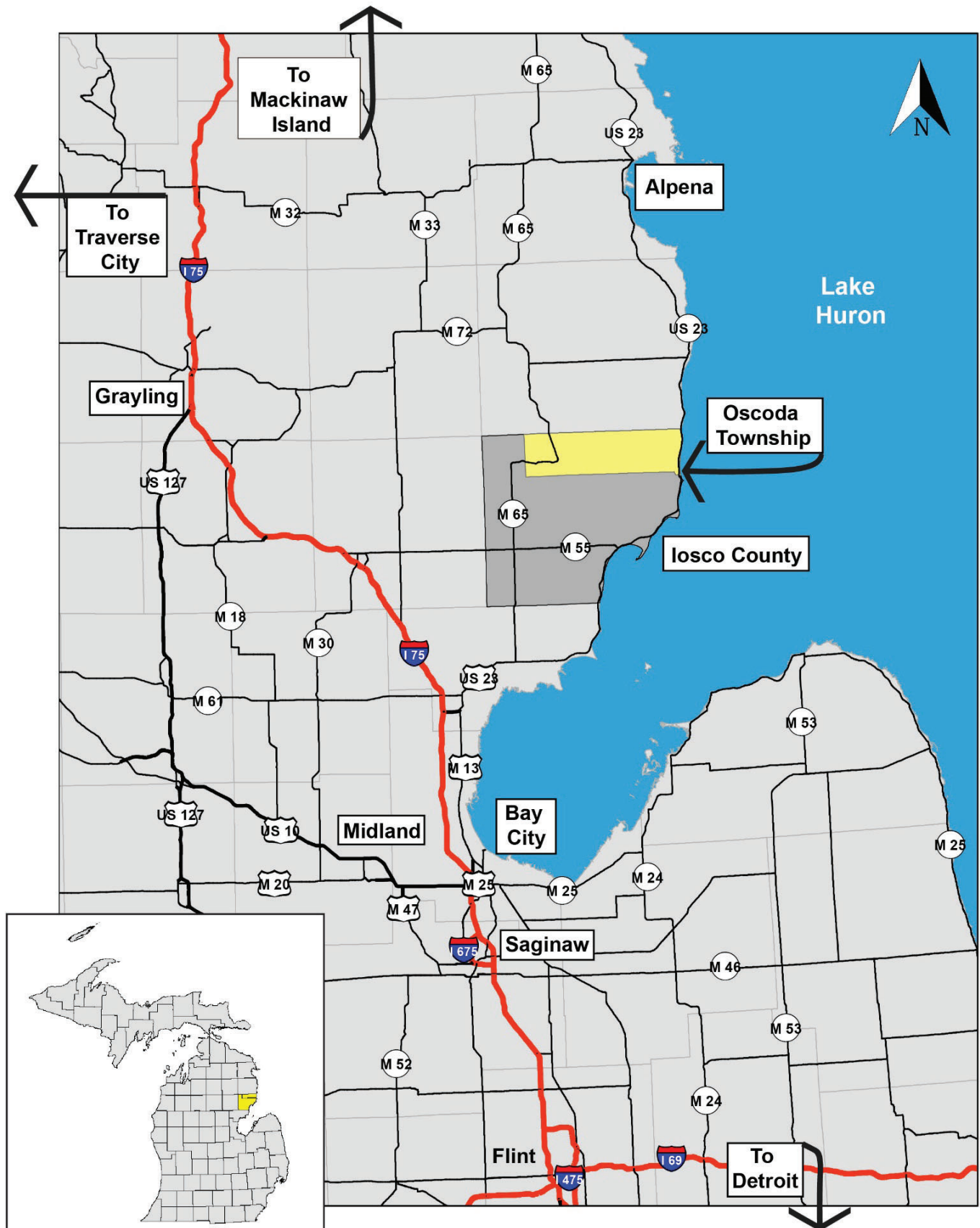
As the first settlements grew into a more permanent community, the logging industry also contributed to significant growth in this area. The river served as an excellent means to transport logs to the mouth of the river where eight lumber mills were operational. The timber was then transported by ships from the docks on Lake Huron to the markets in Detroit and Chicago. By the early 1900s the lumber era came to a close, and in a massive fire both the Oscoda and Au Sable communities were almost totally destroyed.

On July 11, 1911, a forest fire caused by sparks thrown from a train locomotive ignited outside of Oscoda and spread quickly into town. This fire joined with an already burning forest fire outside of Au Sable, and collectively burned down all of Au Sable and all but a handful of buildings in Oscoda. The fire is said by some to be one of the most devastating fires in the history of Michigan. This is due to the fact that Oscoda was a lumbering area, therefore all of the structures and even the sidewalks and roadways were made from wood. The townspeople were forced to abandon their homes and seek refuge in the cold waters of Lake Huron. Luckily, there was a lumber boat docked in town which carried many of the men, women, and children to safety in Bay City. However, the aftermath of the fire was devastating to the region. The two towns were destroyed, the lumber company, mills, and acres of lumber were burned to the ground, and the majority of the residents were forced to leave the region and begin their lives anew. While the fire was devastating, overall there were only five deaths, and over time parts of the communities were able to slowly rebuild.

In 1923, Major Carl Spatz came to Oscoda and proposed the construction of an airfield for army aircraft. Up until this point in history, this was the



MAP 1: REGIONAL SETTING





*Former Wurtsmith Air Force Base (Top); Wurtsmith Air Museum (Bottom)*

most significant event defining the development of the community. First known as Loud- Reames Aviation Field, in 1924 the base was renamed Camp Skeel and became Selfridge gunnery camp, until 1944 when it was renamed Oscoda Army Air Field. During World War II, the base was used to train French pilots. In 1953, that base was renamed Wurtsmith Air Force Base. In 1960, the Strategic Air Command (SAC) took over the base and brought in the 379th Bombardment Wing flying the KC-135A Stratotanker and the brand-new B-52H Stratofortress. At its peak, the base military population was approximately 3,135 personnel plus dependents. The base was permanently closed in 1993 by the Department of Defense.

Now the old Air Force base is called the Oscoda Wurtsmith Airport. As of 1993 it was opened as a public airport, and in 1994 the Township took over the area as the Redevelopment Authority. The Authority's purpose was to operate and maintain the airport. In

1997, the Michigan Legislature created the Wurtsmith Renaissance Zone, a designation exempting businesses and residents within the 5,000-acre zone from all state and most local taxes. Over the years, different parts of the air base have been occupied by various private and public organizations and the former base has been redeveloped and integrated into the community.

Currently, the old base area has a varied mixture of uses which include Kalitta Air, Phoenix Composite Solutions, Phoenix Flight Solutions, HAECO Americas Engine Services, and several other aviation- related businesses. There are several manufacturing facilities and a telecommunications company, and more than 40 other private businesses. In addition to the industry, there is also restored base housing, multiple family residential complexes, churches, a medical care facility, the public library, a community college, performing arts theater, and two museums including the Wurtsmith Air Museum and the



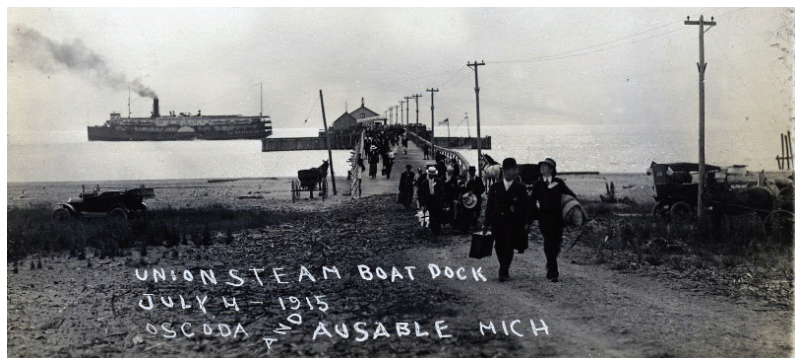
Veterans Memorial Park of Northeast Michigan. Overall, the entities at the former base provide over 1,300 jobs to the area and about 700 privately-owned residences.

In 2000, Oscoda Township needed to replace an aging wastewater treatment plant, and subsequently took ownership of the old base wastewater treatment system. The newly acquired system featured aerated lagoons. Around 2014, the aeration components in the lagoons began to fail. Upgrades were implemented which improved the wastewater treatment quality and lengthened the system's useful age. The upgrades included removing sludge, installing a new fine bubble aeration system, replacing the existing blowers, performing rapid infiltration basin distribution piping modifications, and adding a chemical feed mixing structure and effluent metering. Upgrades were finished in October of 2016. Throughout the upgrade, the entire system had to stay in operation so the Township's customers never lost service. With the completion of the upgrades, the Township now has three times its original capacity and a system in compliance with all regulations.

As previously mentioned, Oscoda's history is rooted deep in the logging industry. It was the original major industry and a driving force for the development of the Township, and still plays a significant role in the Township's identity today. In 2005, the Michigan House of Representatives named Oscoda Township as the official birthplace of Paul Bunyan. While little is known about the specifics of his life, he represents the bravery, strength, endurance, and larger-than-life persona of the men who worked in the logging industry in its heyday. The fact that Oscoda was named the official birthplace of Paul Bunyan resonates deep in the area, and is something very important to their heritage. The Township has a statue to commemorate him at Furtaw Field, and also hosts a Paul Bunyan Days Festival every year. He represents how strong, hard-working men in a small American lumber town helped fuel the prosperity

of the 19th and 20th Centuries, which is something this small town with deep roots in logging feels close to the heart.

Tourism and recreation are a vital part of the Oscoda community and economy. In 2008, Oscoda Township applied for a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant. The State awarded the Township \$460,000 to extend a boardwalk and build a pier off Oscoda Beach Park. While this pier is new, it comes from a long history of wooden piers that have shaped Oscoda's history beginning over 100 years ago. In the past, these piers were used for industry, commercial fishing, and transportation. The existing pier is representative of that past, but now serves the community as a destination point for recreation, fishing, a landmark in the community, and a way to promote the natural resources of the area. The pier was designed to be universally accessible, with benches and fishing opportunities, specialty lighting, and a connection to an existing park boardwalk. It is the centerpiece to an extensive recreation system in the Township.



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### 3. DEMOGRAPHICS

This section includes an analysis of the demographic data taken from the 2010 U.S. Census, and the American Community Survey (ACS), as well as other sources. Census data provides a current profile of the Township and its existing trends, both of which can affect Future Land Use.

## POPULATION TRENDS AND COMPARISONS

Population growth is the most important factor influencing land use decisions in any community. If a community is increasing in population, there will be an increased need for housing, commercial establishments, industry, parks and recreation, and roads.

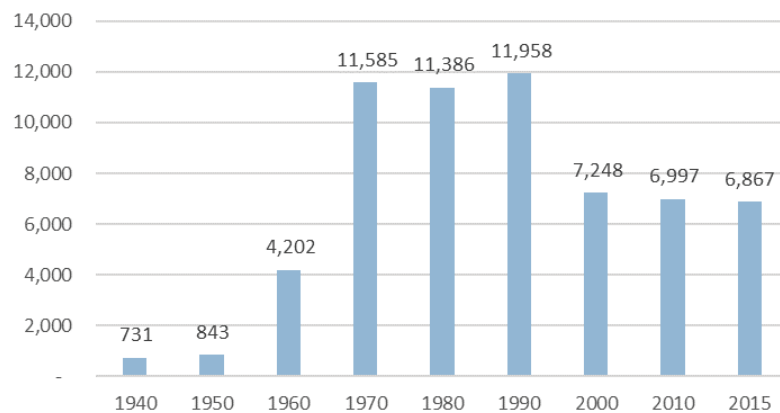
During the last 70 years, Oscoda Township has experienced rapid population increases and decreases. Before World War II, the Township was a large land area occupied by very few people. By 1950, the population had increased by 15.3%, and in 1960 there was an increase of 398.5% of people in the Township. This was due to the high concentration of population in the areas around Wurtsmith Air Force Base (WAFB) and the existing urban settlement along US-23. The exponential population growth continued in 1970, adding an additional 182% of people. At that time, the Township population had reached 11,585 people.

When WAFB closed in 1993, the event caused a dramatic change in the total population of the Township. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, 11,958 people lived in Oscoda Township. Using estimation methods developed by the Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency (NEMCSA), as described in the Township's Recreation Plan, about 6,521 people continued to reside in the Township after the closure of WAFB.

The 2000 Census Data suggests that the population loss was not as dramatic as was originally thought. As shown in Table 2, the consequences of the base closure were perhaps overstated, or the programs that were initiated to revitalize the Township were relatively effective. While there was a large loss in the local population, there were about 10% more residents present in the community in April of 2000 than had been predicted to be present. The 2010 U.S. Census reported 6,997 residents living in Oscoda Township.

Over the past decade, the decreasing population trend has continued. According to the 2010 Census, the Township has a population of 6,997 residents, which was a decrease of 3.46% since 2000. In the past 5 years, this trend has continued. ACS data from 2015 estimates that there are 6,867 residents in the Township, which is a decrease of 1.86%. These population trends, and that of the County, are similar to those of other Michigan

**FIGURE 1: POPULATION CHANGE IN OSCODA TOWNSHIP**



**TABLE 2: POPULATION CHANGE IN OSCODA TOWNSHIP**

	Population	# Change	% Change
1940	731	-	-
1950	843	112	15.3%
1960	4,202	3,359	398.5%
1970	11,585	7,383	175.7%
1980	11,386	-199	-1.7%
1990	11,958	572	5.0%
2000	7,248	-4,710	-39.4%
2010	6,997	-251	-3.5%
2015	6,867	-130	-1.86%



**TABLE 3: POPULATION CHANGE**

	1990	2000	2010	2015
Oscoda Township	11,958	7,248	6,997	6,867
Iosco County	30,209	27,339	25,887	25,401
Michigan	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	9,900,571

**TABLE 4: AGE DISTRIBUTION**

Age Range	Oscoda Township		Iosco County		Michigan	
	Residents	%	Residents	%	Residents	%
Ages 0-5	306	4.3%	1,020	4.0%	596,286	6.0%
Ages 5-19	1,063	15.1%	4,050	15.6%	2,052,599	20.7%
Ages 20-24	319	4.5%	1,038	4.0%	669,072	6.7%
Ages 25-44	1,252	17.8%	4,554	17.5%	2,442,123	24.7%
Ages 45-64	2,207	31.5%	8,465	32.7%	2,762,030	27.9%
Ages 65+	1,850	26.4%	6,755	26.0%	1,361,530	13.7%

townships, indicating that the loss of population from the base has stabilized and now the Township is following more statewide trends.

## AGE DISTRIBUTION

Information on age distribution within a population is useful in determining the public services and special needs a community requires. For example, younger populations tend to require more rental housing units and smaller homes, while the elderly population may have a need for nursing homes or assisted living facilities. Analysis of age distribution may also be used by policy makers to identify current gaps in services and to project future service needs for housing, education, recreation and medical care. It is of equal importance in planning to anticipate which age groups are likely to increase during the planning period. Examples of this are the aging “baby boomers” and their children; both forming waves of population which rise and fall as they move through their lifecycles.

For the purpose of this report, we have separated the population into six age groups to show different stages of life.

The first group, 0-5, represents pre-school children. Children in school are represented by the 5-19 age group. Young adults obtaining a higher education or entering the work force are represented with the 20-24 age group. The family formation age group is generally people in the 25-44 age group. The last two groups are the empty nesters between 45-64 years old, and the elderly at 65 years and over.

Figure 2 helps to illustrate the age groups that make up the population in Oscoda Township and how they have grown or declined in a decade. As the

**FIGURE 2: AGE DISTRIBUTION IN OSCODA TOWNSHIP**

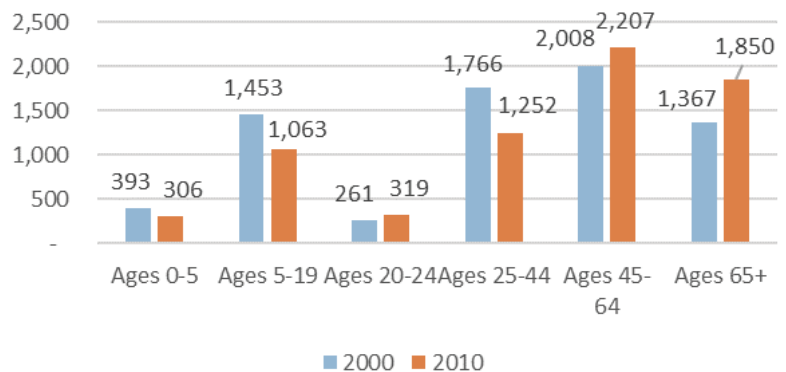


chart shows, the most significant drop in population was the 25-44 age group which lost 514 people or a total of 29% the second largest loss was in the school-age children which decreased by 26%. There was also a 22% decrease in the 0-5 population. In comparison, the 65 and older population experienced a 35% growth, or an additional 483 residents, and the age group of 45-64 also experienced growth with an additional 201 residents. As of 2010, almost 60% of the population is in the empty nester or retirement age group and are, or will be, in need of assisted living and nursing home facilities.

This indicates that Oscoda Township has an aging population. The median age of the Township is 50.9 years. Compared to the median age in 2000 which was 42.9, this is a significant increase. While this is only slightly lower than the Iosco County median age of 51, both of these are significantly higher than the median age of Michigan at 38.9 and the median age of the United States at 37.2. For planning purposes, an aging population has unique needs in terms of housing, access to medical care, recreational facilities, etc. and should be specially considered when making future planning decisions for the Township.

## HOUSEHOLDS

### Household Size

The number of persons per household constitutes the household size. Since the 1970s the nationwide trend in population has been in decline. There are many factors that have resulted in this trend including declining number of children per family, women entering the workforce, higher divorce rates, growing number of elderly living alone, and the growing number of non-traditional households.

Knowing whether the household size is increasing or decreasing is very important. If the household size of a community is increasing, new housing units might be necessary to accommodate citizens needing places to live. This can even be true if the overall population of a community is declining, and should involve incorporating diverse housing options into a community, such as apartments and duplexes.

Household size in Oscoda Township has been decreasing over time, just like the national trend. Within the Township, the household size has decreased from 2.28 in 2000 to 2.14 in 2010. Therefore, the average household size is 0.13 persons smaller than it was 10 years ago. This is similar to the County and the State, which have both decreased around 0.10 persons.

### Household Characteristics

This section analyzes households in terms of the relationships among the persons who live in a single housing unit. Families consist of people who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption and vary by the parental presence (single or couple). Non-families consist of a single person living alone, or a group of people that are not related by any of the factors listed above.

It is important to know the housing characteristics and how they are changing over time for the governing body to understand the types of

FIGURE 3: HOUSEHOLD SIZE

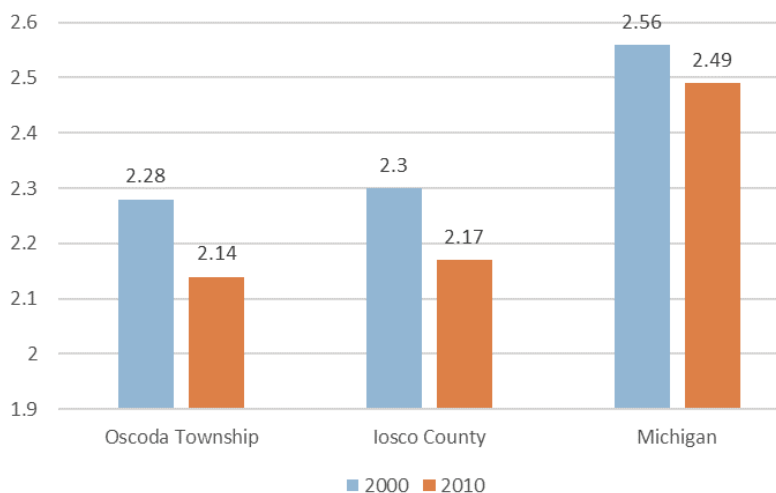




TABLE 5: HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Household Type	Oscoda Township 2000		Oscoda Township 2010		Iosco County 2000		Iosco County 2010		Michigan 2000		Michigan 2010	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Married Couple Families	1,664	52.5%	1,531	46.9%	6,471	55.2%	5,871	49.9%	1,947,710	51.4%	1,857,127	48.0%
Single Male Families	93	3.0%	148	4.5%	398	3.4%	514	4.4%	154,187	4.1%	185,363	4.8%
Single Female Families	309	9.7%	333	10.2%	986	8.4%	1,034	8.8%	473,802	12.5%	511,583	13.2%
Single Persons Living Alone	949	29.9%	1,070	32.8%	3,357	28.6%	3,735	31.8%	993,607	26.2%	1,079,678	27.9%
Other Non-Families	155	4.9%	184	5.6%	515	4.4%	603	5.1%	216,355	5.8%	238,757	6.1%
Total Households	3,170		3,266		11,727		11,757		3,785,661		3,872,508	

housing that is needed to support the community.

Table 5 shows how family characteristics have grown or declined in the 10-year period between 2000 and 2010. The largest type of family across all jurisdictions is Married Couple Families. In Oscoda Township, this group consists of 46.9% of the families. This is less than both Iosco County and Michigan, and is also a decrease from 2000 when 52.5% of the population was Married Couple Families. It should be noted that Married Couple Families is the only category that has decreased in the past decade in all jurisdictions.

A category to take special note of is the Single Persons Living Alone. Within the Township, it is the second largest category with 32.8% of the population, and had the largest increase in population for all groups within the Township. These trends are similar in both, to the County and State and indicate something for the Township to consider when planning future housing options. While the single-family homes are still very important to the majority

of the population, the second largest group may need something different. It will be important to determine what type of housing these individuals need and plan for their future growth as well, or risk losing a group of individuals because of limited housing options. These options could include apartments, condos, duplexes, or various senior living options.

## HOUSING

### Housing Stock

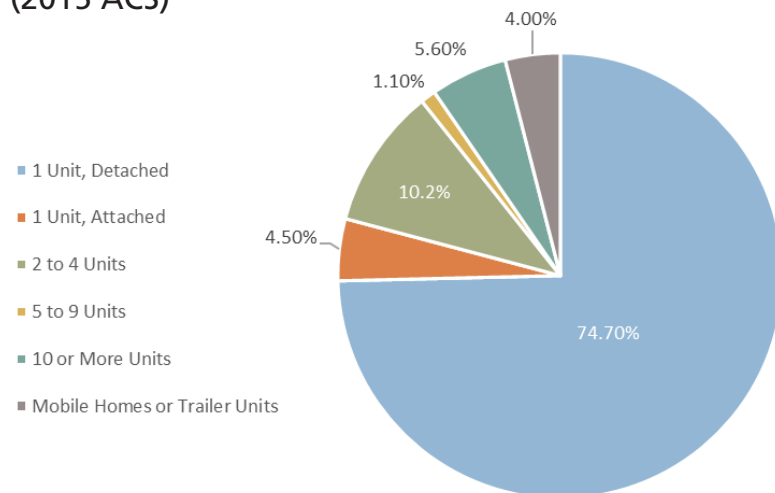
Housing stock is the most basic measure of housing, and refers to the type of housing units found in a community. The U.S. Census separates housing into five different categories: 1 Unit Detached (single-family homes), 1 Unit Attached (granny flats, single apartment unit connected to a single-family home), 2 to 4 Units (duplex units), 5 or More Units (apartment complex), and Mobile Homes or Trailer Units (Figure 4).

The majority of the housing stock in Oscoda Township is 1 Unit, Detached (74.7%). This is consistent with the large

TABLE 6: HOUSING STOCK (2015 ACS)

Unit Type	Oscoda Township		Iosco County		Michigan	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
1 Unit, Detached	4,221	74.7%	17,021	83.5%	3,272,125	72.1%
1 Unit, Attached	256	4.5%	388	1.9%	211,330	4.7%
2 to 4 Units	572	10.2%	756	3.7%	230,109	5.1%
5 to 9 Units	62	1.1%	330	1.6%	192,278	4.2%
10 or More Units	314	5.6%	645	3.2%	389,578	8.6%
Mobile Homes or Trailer Units	224	4.0%	1,234	6.1%	243,416	5.4%
Boat, Rv, Van, etc	-	0.0%	17	0.1%	1,002	0.0%
Total Units	5,649		20,391		4,539,838	

FIGURE 4: OSCODA TOWNSHIP HOUSING STOCK (2015 ACS)



number of families in the Township. The second largest group is 2 to 4 units (10.2%), and the third largest category is 10 or More Units (5.6%) (Table 6).

Compared to the County, Oscoda Township has fewer 1 Unit Attached structures and Mobile Homes or Trailer Units, but more multi-family housing structures such as 2 to 4 Units and 10 or More Units. While the County has almost 10% more 1-Unit, Detached structures than the Township, it's important to note the Township has more than the State (72.1%). It is important to consider the various types of housing options as the Township continues to see shifts in the previous household demographics.

## Housing Tenure

Housing tenure, also known as home ownership rates, is important to determine the type of residents in a community. It also helps determine where public services may need to be increased or decreased. A high home ownership rate may indicate that a community will have stable and well-kept neighborhoods. Vacancy rates indicate the amount of empty and seasonal housing. A vacant unit is defined by the United States Census Bureau as a housing unit with no one living in it at the time of the interview, unless its occupants are only temporarily absent. Units that do not meet the definition of a housing unit are those under construction, unfit for habitation, or to be demolished, and are excluded from the data. Seasonally vacant units are intended for occupancy only during certain seasons of the year.

Oscoda Township is comparable to the County when studying occupied housing. The Township has an occupancy rate of 57% and County's is similar at 55% (Table 7). Both jurisdictions are also comparable when considering vacancy rates. Both communities have a vacancy rate in the mid-40s. In comparison, both jurisdictions are dissimilar to the State of Michigan which has a total occupied housing rate of 84%.

TABLE 7: HOUSING TENURE (2015 ACS)

Category	Oscoda Township		Iosco County		Michigan	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Occupied Housing	3,224	57.1%	11,343	55.6%	3,841,148	84.6%
Owner-Occupied	2,373	73.6%	9,091	80.1%	2,728,815	71.0%
Renter-Occupied	851	26.4%	2,252	19.9%	1,112,333	29.0%

These differences are a product of the region and amenities that both the Township and the County have to offer. Both areas have a much more seasonal schedule than the whole of the State. Therefore, it makes sense that the home occupancy rates would exemplify this.

### Age of Structure

The age of the housing stock is a way to determine the quality of the existing structures and future need for new housing. Generally speaking, the economically useful age of residential structures is approximately 50 years. Beyond that age, repairs become expensive and the ability to modernize the structure to include amenities considered standard for today's lifestyle is diminished.

When a community's housing stock approaches that age, it is possible that the need for rehabilitation and new construction will increase. There are exceptions to this rule, however. Some of the older housing of a community might be very well built, as well as desirable because of historical or architectural value, while at the same time newer housing might not be of good quality.

It is important for a community to know if people are continuing to move into the existing housing stock or building new. If new residents are filling up the available housing stock, it is likely being repaired when necessary. However, if residents are always building new, the older housing may become blighted.

The data in Figure 5 is 2015 ACS data. The ACS is not 100% data like

FIGURE 5: AGE OF HOUSING STRUCTURE (2015 ACS)

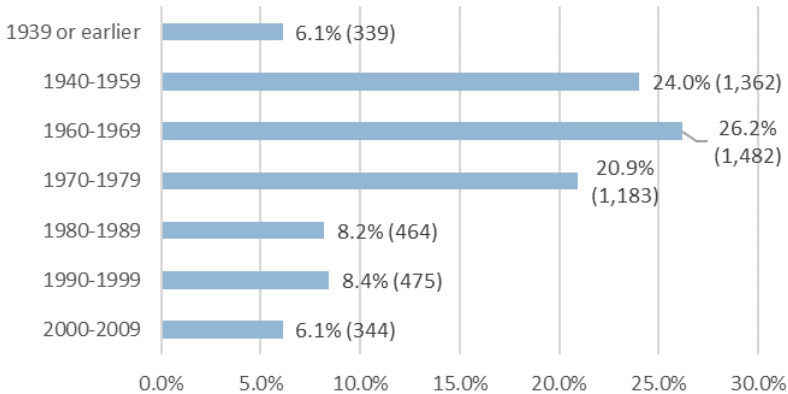


TABLE 8: AGE OF HOUSING STRUCTURE

Year	Number of Permits
2010	4
2011	5
2012	1
2013	2
2014	4
2015	6
2016	4
2017 (as of 6/17)	4
Total	30

the decennial Census. It estimates information and is therefore less accurate for the years 2010 to the present. In order to include the most recent data, the Iosco County Building Department has provided the number of residential building permits issued between 2010–2017. Figure 5 represents both the percentage of the total housing structures and the corresponding number of structures

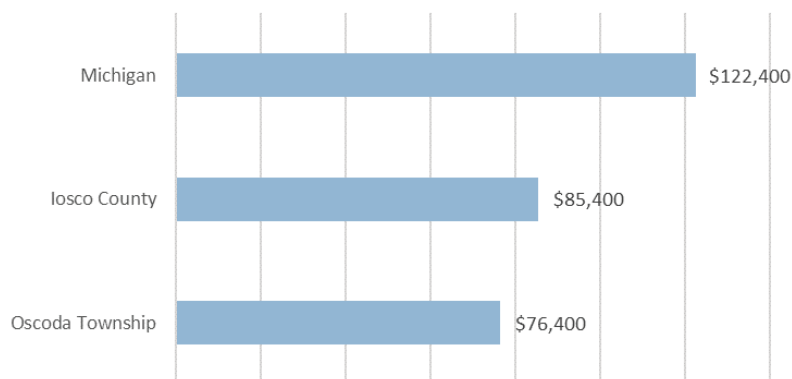
from the ACS data. Oscoda Township's older housing, built before 1959, accounts for about one-third of the Township's housing stock. Meaning, the majority of the housing stock is 50 years or newer. Approximately 77% of the housing stock was built prior to 1980, and since then there has been a sharp decline in the number of structures built. Table 8 on the preceding page represents the number of residential building permits issued since 2010. In the past 7 years, there have been a total of 30 homes built, which is a significant drop from 2000-2009.

## Median Housing Value

Analyzing housing values and rent could be the best way to determine both quality and affordability of housing. It is crucial that a community maintains both quality and affordable housing to support a diverse community, and continue to attract new residents for future growth.

Of the three regions, Oscoda Township has the smallest median housing value at \$76,400, which is lower than both the County and State. Iosco County at \$85,400 is also lower than median housing value in Michigan of \$122,400. See Figure 6.

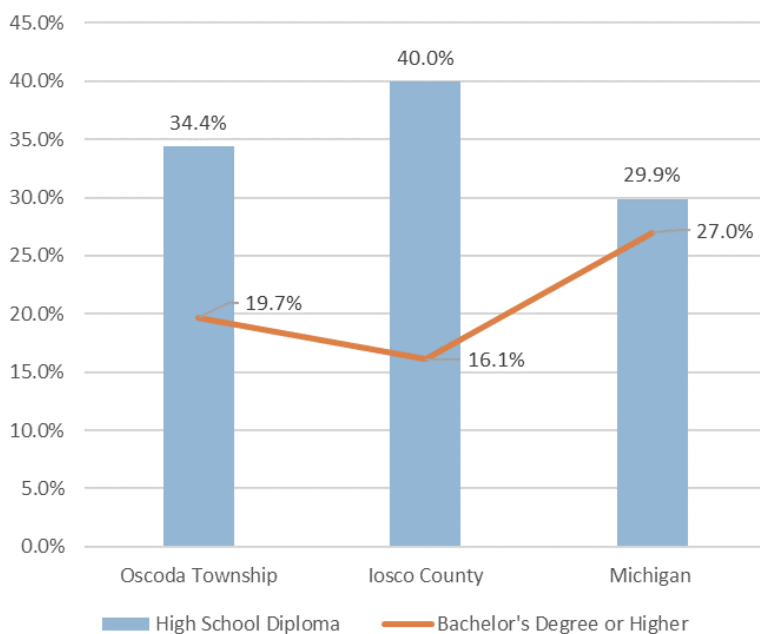
FIGURE 6: MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE (2015 ACS)



## ECONOMY

Economic characteristics comprise a significant portion of Census Data. Economic characteristics are important because they help determine a community's viability and ability to support future commercial, residential, and industrial growth. Economic data also helps a community see its economic strengths and weaknesses and alludes to new trends. This economic analysis will utilize both 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census data and 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

FIGURE 7: HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA AND BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER (2015 ACS)



## Educational Attainment

Educational attainment measures the education level of a community. It allows for analysis of the skills and capabilities of the labor force and the economic vitality of the community. The level of educational attainment achieved within a community illustrates the types of jobs that are suitable or necessary for citizens.

The U.S. Census Bureau reports those who did not complete high school, those who earned a high school diploma or an equivalent, those that attended some college, earned an associate degree, and those who earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

As illustrated in Figure 7, Oscoda Township has 34% of individuals who

**TABLE 9: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (2015 ACS)**

Place	2000			2015		
	High School Diploma	Some College or Associates	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	High School Diploma	Some College or Associates	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Oscoda Township	38.20%	31.2%	11.00%	34.4%	33.5%	19.7%
Iosco County	40.20%	26.5%	11.20%	40.0%	31.9%	16.1%
Michigan	31.30%	30.3%	21.80%	29.9%	32.7%	27.0%

have a high school diploma, and 19.7% of individuals who have a Bachelor's Degree or higher.

Table 9 illustrates how each community's educational attainment has changed since the year 2000. Oscoda Township experienced a decline in individuals with a diploma by 3.8%, an increase of 2.3% individuals who attended some college or received an associate degree, and an increase of 8.7% of individuals who earned a bachelor's Degree or higher. These trends are similar to those of the County and State as well.

This data shows that Oscoda Township residents are choosing to attend college and raise their education levels. The community must be prepared to attract the type of jobs these individuals are qualified for.

## Employment

The U.S. Census Bureau presents employment data in terms of employment by industry and unemployment rates via the 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Employment by industry is a good way to analyze what types of industries are the most prevalent employers of the Township. Employment data is also another good way to indicate the high proportion of retired individuals in the Township. The ACS indicates that of the entire Township population, 16 years and older, 43.9% is in the labor force, which is similar to the 46.1% in the County. However, both numbers

are significantly smaller than that of Michigan, which is 61.3% of individuals in the work force. As illustrated in Figure 8 on the following page, the largest industry in the Township is educational services, and health care and social assistance employing 18.5% of the population. This industry is also the largest employer in both, the County, and State. The second largest employer is manufacturing (17.2%), followed by arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food service (14.6%), retail trade (14%), and professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services (8.9%).

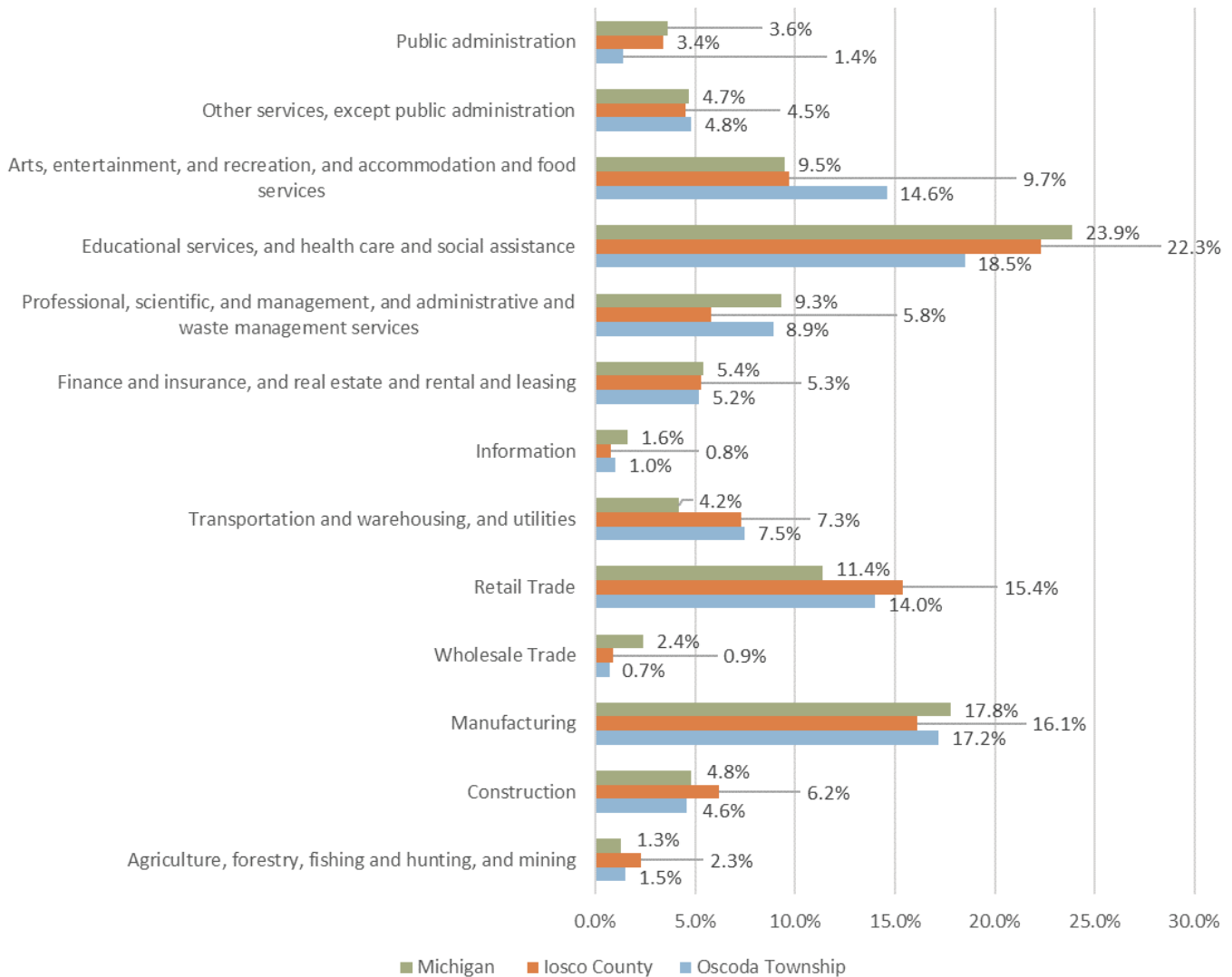
## Unemployment

According to the Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget, the unemployment rate in the County is down from 15.8% in 2010 to 9.5% in 2015. This trend continues in 2016, with an unemployment rate at 7.1%. Similar trends can be found at the State level with unemployment at 12.6% in 2010, dropping to 5.4% in 2015, and 4.9% in 2016.

## Income and Poverty

Income and poverty levels are a way to measure the relative economic health of a community. Increases in income can show economic success while increases in the percent of individuals below the poverty level can show economic failure. Income is measured at three levels: median household, median family, and per capita. Table 10 illustrates

FIGURE 8: EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY (2015 ACS)



these levels, including the percentage of citizens who rely on Social Security income and individuals below the poverty line.

ALICE, an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, is another measure of households struggling to afford basic needs. ALICE households are defined as those that earn more than the established poverty level, but less than the basic cost of living in the county - this is known as the "ALICE Threshold." According to an East Michigan Council of Governments (EMCOG) 2019 summary report of ALICE in Iosco County, 1 out of every

2.2 households in the County are below the ALICE threshold. This means that 46% of all Iosco County households do not have the financial resources to afford the basics, such as housing, child care, food, transportation, healthcare, and technology. While this represents a decrease since 2017 when 47% of Iosco County households were below the ALICE Threshold, it is higher than the statewide 43% of households with income below the ALICE Threshold. The percentage of Oscoda Township households with incomes below the ALICE threshold is also slightly higher than the State at 44%.



**TABLE 10: INCOME AND POVERTY (2015 ACS)**

	2000			2015		
	Oscoda Township	Iosco County	Michigan	Oscoda Township	Iosco County	Michigan
Median Household Income	\$41,994	\$31,321	\$44,667	\$34,295	\$37,317	\$49,576
Median Family Income	\$50,046	\$45,265	\$60,793	\$43,155	\$46,042	\$62,247
Per Capita Income	\$21,587	\$17,115	\$22,168	\$25,028	\$23,486	\$26,607
% Household with Social Security Income	25.70%	41.70%	26.20%	54.6%	52.5%	33.5%
% Below Poverty Level	12.4%	12.7%	10.5%	18.3%	17.7%	16.7%

Median household income is the measure of the total incomes of the persons living in a single household. According to the 2015 ACS data, the median household income in Oscoda Township was \$34,295, which is less than the median household income in Iosco County (\$37,317), and less than Michigan (\$49,576).

Family income is a measure of the total income of a family unit. Because families often have two incomes, and do not include single persons living alone, median family incomes are typically higher than median household income. The median family income in the township is \$43,155, this is less than the County (\$46,042) and the State at (\$62,247).

Per capita income is the measure of income all individuals within the jurisdiction would receive if all income received in the entire Township was equally divided among all residents, regardless of age or employment. This number is usually the lowest of the three incomes. Oscoda Township's

per capita income is \$25,028. This number is similar to that of the County (\$23,486), but lower than that of Michigan (\$26,607). As seen in Table 9, approximately 55% of households rely on Social Security Income. This is slightly higher than the 53% in the County, but significantly higher than the 33% of the State.

Finally, Table 10 also compares the percent of the population below the poverty line. Oscoda Township has the highest percentage of the three compared jurisdictions. This information is parallel to the lower median and family household incomes in the Township. Poverty is measured using 48 thresholds defined by the Census. To determine whether a person is poor, one compares the total income of that person's family with the threshold appropriate for that family size and characteristics.

These factors must be analyzed by a community in order to identify the special needs of the citizens and provide the appropriate public services.

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## 4. COMMUNITY FACILITIES



The Township and County are responsible for providing certain services to the community such as utilities, police, fire services, and recreational facilities. There is a standard of living that must be met in order to continue to attract residents to the community and to keep the current residents happy. Providing needed services to aid the community and help to continue growth, while protecting the natural environment, is the responsibility of the Township. This section of the Master Plan will outline those services.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The transportation network for Oscoda Township includes roads, paths, and an airport. It is important for a community to keep the roads safe to encourage residents to travel throughout and to surrounding communities. Because of the rural, wooded nature of Oscoda Township, and the presence of the Au Sable River and other lakes, roadways are not constructed in the traditional square-mile fashion of many Michigan townships.

Oscoda Township is served by two state highways, M-65 that travels east/west and then north/south through the western third of the Township, and US-23 which runs north and south along the lake shore. Traffic counts, or Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) reports, are provided by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) for the state highways. The numbers are used to determine if roads are meeting or exceeding their designed capacity, and to plan for future road improvements. MDOT records the information for their roads, therefore the counts that took place in 2016 for M-65 and for US-23 are 10,338 south of River Road and 17,064 north of River Road. These counts are located on the Transportation Map (Map 2).

The Township is also served by various local roads such as River Road, Bissonette Road, F41, Loud Drive, and Rea Road that are other important thoroughfares in the Township.

Finally, the Michigan Department of Transportation administers the Federal funds which are appropriated to the county road commission under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (December 4, 2015; Public Law No. 114-94) and through the State of Michigan Public Act 51 for MDOT, counties, cities, and villages.

## **AIRPORT**

In addition to the road transportation system, Oscoda Township also has access to a world-class air transportation facility. What used to be the Wurtsmith Airforce Base, is now the Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport Authority and as a benefit of the shutdown of the base, is now available for general aviation use. The facility is outside of the control of the Oscoda Township Planning Commission and this Master Plan does not intend to provide analysis, but this is a key fixture of the Township and deserves recognition.

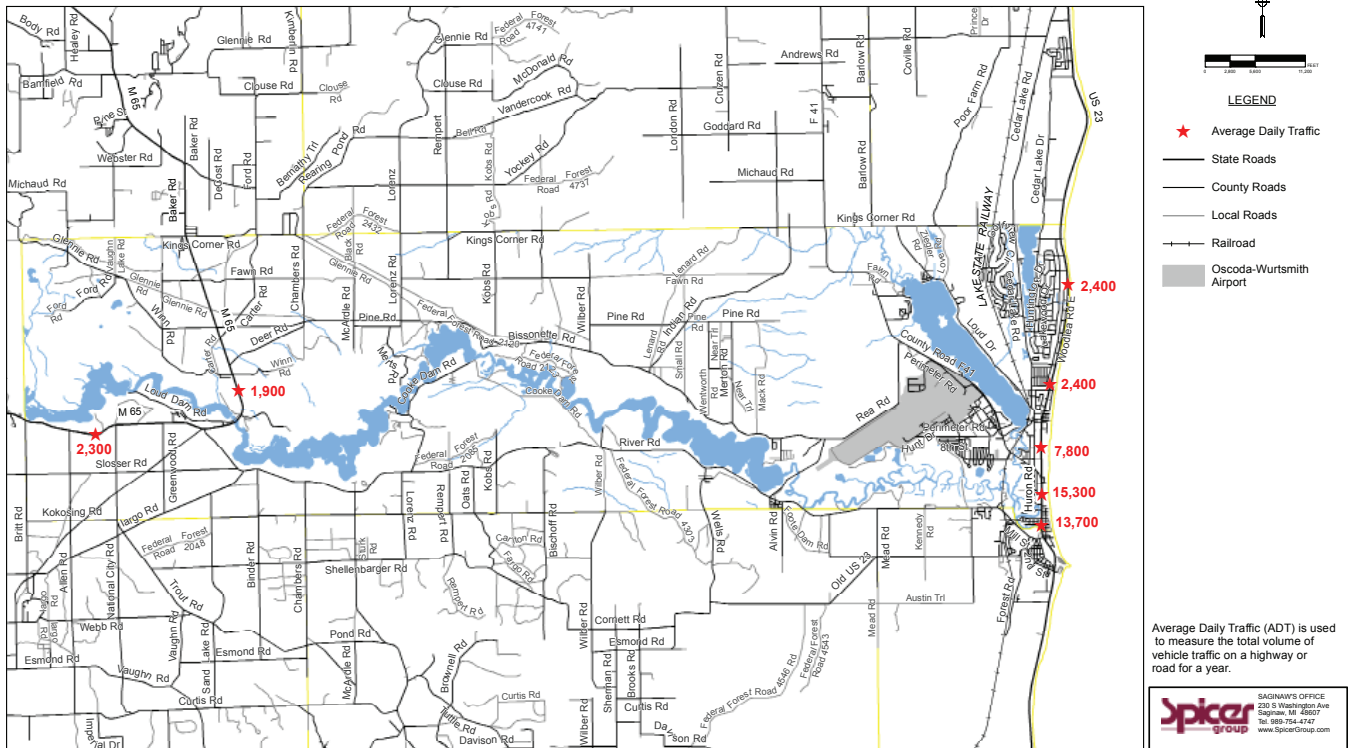
The base was closed in 1993, and since then this property has become a hub of economic growth in the Oscoda Township community. Within the property there are 1,300 jobs, over 40 private businesses, and 700 converted base homes. The Airport Authority took over one year after the base closed and it now operates as a public airport. Throughout the property there are various businesses related to aviation and airplane maintenance, manufacturing companies, businesses unrelated to aviation, and housing. There is also the public library, a community college and performing arts theater, several museums, churches, and medical facilities.

## **WATER SYSTEM**

The water and wastewater systems in Oscoda Township are currently operated and maintained by a third party consultant. Oscoda Township has an extensive public water supply system as part of the Huron Shore Regional Utility Authority. Huron Shore Regional Utility Authority (HSRUA) was established in



## MAP 2: TRANSPORTATION NETWORK



1992 as a joint venture between several area municipalities to acquire, own, improve, enlarge, extend and operate a regional water supply and distribution system. HSRUA is under the supervision and control of a Board consisting of one representative from each of the constituent municipalities, and currently provides treated water to the municipalities of the City of East Tawas, City of Tawas City, Charter Township of Oscoda, Charter Township of AuSable and Township of Baldwin. The source of the water is an intake structure located in Lake Huron near Tawas Point. This source provides customers with high quality raw water that is then processed in the HSRUA facility which reduces, removes or destroys contaminants in the source water.

## SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

In 2016, the Township upgraded their wastewater treatment facility. Upgrading the lagoon system, the Township improved the wastewater treatment quality, and lengthened the system's useful life. The upgrade

included sludge removal, installing a new fine bubble aeration system, replacing the existing blowers, performing rapid infiltration basin distribution piping modifications, and adding a chemical feed mixing structure and effluent metering. With the completion of the upgrades, the Township now has three times its original capacity and a system in compliance with all regulations.

The lagoon system is sized for 0.5 million gallons per day (MGD) with the ability to increase to 1.0 MGD capacity in the future. The Township also has 31 miles of gravity sewer, 10 miles of forcemain, and over 640 manholes. The Township also accepts and treats water from Au Sable Township.

## NATURAL GAS

Natural gas is provided throughout the Township by DTE. Due to the vast amounts of wilderness in the Township, it is dispersed throughout the more populated areas.

## POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES

The Township has its own police department which provides continuous service for both Oscoda and Au Sable Townships. The department patrols 163 square miles and the staff consists of 10 officers- two Sergeants, 7 patrol officers, and the Chief of Police.

The fire service in the Township is provided by the Oscoda Township Volunteer Fire Department, which consists of 30 volunteers from the Oscoda and Au Sable communities. The volunteer fire department provides complete fire and rescue services for Oscoda and Au Sable Townships, and contracts for part of Wilbur Township. The Township fire station is located in the downtown business district of Oscoda. On average, the department makes 125 calls per year. Additionally, the volunteer fire department, and all surrounding fire departments including Alcona County, have a reciprocal mutual aid agreement. The Township recently acquired a rescue sled and is now able to provide snowmobile rescue for the entirety of Iosco County.

## RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Oscoda Township contains ample natural amenities such as lakes, rivers, woodlands, and beaches. More than 80% of the land in Oscoda Township is public forest land, most of which is densely wooded and wild. There are

hundreds of miles of snowmobile and recreational vehicle trails located within the forests. There are 10 Township-owned recreation properties and 2 leased properties, but these are only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the recreation opportunities of Oscoda Township. Map 3 and 4, on page 35, shows the recreation resources Oscoda Township has to offer, and they are described herein.

### Oscoda Township Beach Park

Located on River Road on Lake Huron in Oscoda, this 9.6-acre park has approximately 1,000 feet of Lake Huron frontage. Because of its popularity as a public beach, it serves the entire region and beyond.

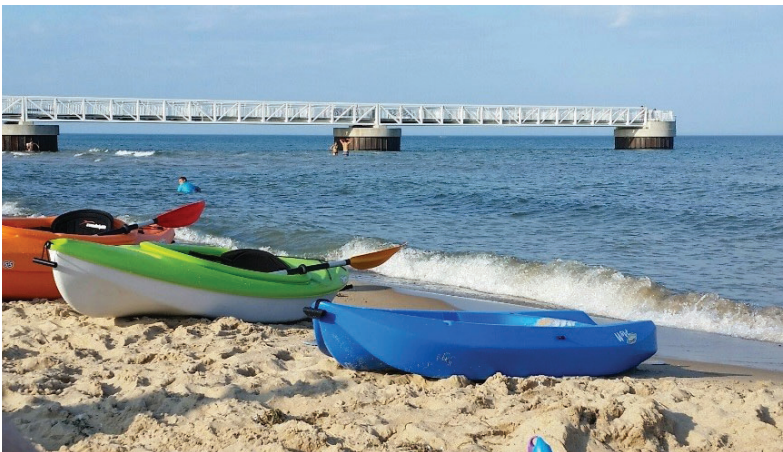
This park has a basketball court, skate ramps on a concrete pad, a wooden band shelter, a shuffleboard court, an ADA accessible pavilion, boardwalk, sunbathing deck, children's play equipment, splash pad, picnic tables, grills, benches, and ADA accessible restrooms. The site is served by an asphalt paved parking area. This park is home to the "Dock Reserve" (site of a dock prior to the Fire of 1911) that is now a historic area.

In 2008, the Township received a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant to construct a 475 foot combined boardwalk/fishing pier in this park.

This Park also serves as the site of the Oscoda Art-on-the-Beach Arts and Crafts Show every summer and the free Rotary Concert Series.

### Piety Hill

Located on 1.2 acres along Dwight Street where the water tower used to be, this site has approximately 225 feet of frontage on the Au Sable River. It has a stairway and a handicap access to a fishing pier, which was funded through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Inland Fisheries Grant. This is a small special use park. Its service area is the greater Oscoda region.



*Oscoda Township Beach Park*

## Oscoda Huron Sunrise Park

Located approximately three miles north of Oscoda, this 14-acre beach park offers gravel parking along the side of the US-23 highway and accessible trails for bicycling along the Lake Huron Shore. These trails directly feed into the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) US 23 Oscoda Roadside Park. This MDOT roadside park has rustic bathrooms, no available water, and has limited parking and limited beach access. This park's service area is region wide.

## Oscoda Riverbank Park

Located on the Au Sable River near the River Road Bridge near the downtown Oscoda area, this 5.2-acre park offers accessible paved trails for bicycling and walking, vault restrooms, picnic tables and direct river access for swimming, fishing, and canoe launching. These improvements were funded through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Waterfront Redevelopment Grant. The site has gravel parking and the service area is region-wide.

## Furtaw Field

Furtaw Field is a 3.3-acre park located in downtown Oscoda on US-23. This property was recently transferred to Oscoda Township by the Oscoda Area School District. It functions as a town gathering spot that boasts the famous Paul Bunyan statue, and is currently being utilized for community events. The service area is region-wide

## Sports Complex

This 49.4-acre sports complex park has existing sports facilities and the Township has recently completed a Development Plan for adding more features to the existing complex. The service area is the greater Oscoda region. This complex features:

- » 5 Little League fields- each with two small sets of portable bleachers
- » 1 Softball Diamond



*Oscoda Township Beach Park*

- » 5 Youth Soccer fields- each with two small sets of portable bleachers
- » BMX Track
- » Concession stand
- » Restrooms
- » Open air pavilion
- » Maintenance garage

## Ken Ratliff Memorial Park

Located on County Road F41 on Van Etten Lake, this park has approximately 3,000 feet of lake frontage and is comprised of approximately 11 acres of land. This park has an enclosed pavilion known as the Warrior Pavilion, two accessible open air pavilions, two accessible boat ramps, groomed swim beach, children's play equipment, picnic tables, grills, and benches. A snowmobile trailhead for accessing miles of trails is also located at this park. The site has an accessible restroom facility and there is also an asphalt paved parking area. The service area is region wide.

## Warrior Pavilion

The pavilion is located at the Ken Ratliff Memorial Park. With an outdoor deck on three sides, it sits close to the beach. This facility has been used for wedding receptions and other large parties. There is a full-service kitchen as well as restrooms. Although the beach in this





*Foote Site Park*

area appears to be shallower than it is, the safe swimming area is well-marked and buoyed. The service area is region wide.

### **Old Orchard Park**

Located on River Road in Oscoda Township, this campground/park facility is owned by Consumers Energy, and maintained by Oscoda Township. Located on 193 acres which follow the National River Road Scenic Byway for over two miles, the park offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities. This park contains 525 licensed camp sites-300 are primitive and 225 are modern. Part of this park is used as a rustic horse camp for riders using the Michigan Shore-to-Shore trail. Picnic tables are located, in generous supply, throughout the park. There are pavilions, trails, two hard surfaced boat launches, and boat docks. Water, showers, and restrooms, both flush and vault type, are available. There is also a children's playground, fully accessible fishing pier, designated beach and swimming area, boat rentals, and a grocery store. This park is in good condition and receives high usage.

A Winter Fun Park is being developed just west of this site. Presently, two sledding hills are in place. The annual Snowbox Derby (a unique winter event

in which businesses, organizations and individuals compete on sleds made from cardboard boxes) is held at this site. The service area is region wide.

### **Foote Site Park**

Located above the Foote Site Dam on the Au Sable River, along River Road National Scenic Byway, the three-acre site itself is owned by Consumers Energy. It is maintained and operated by the Township. This is adjacent to the area where the Au Sable River Queen (privately owned) boat docks. There is also a privately-owned concession/gift shop located adjacent to this site. This park has four privy toilets, paved parking, two boat launches and a children's play area. The service area is region wide.

### **Other Recreational Facilities**

In 2019, the Oscoda Township Board of Trustees sold the Community Center. The building was part of the former Wurtsmith Air Force Base and consisted of two full gymnasiums, three racquetball courts, an exercise/equipment room, a banquet/meeting room, and an activity room. In addition, the building had approximately 1,200 square feet of leasable space. Although sold, some members of the community desire a replacement facility that serves the indoor recreational needs of the Township. Such a facility would require community support and should be addressed in future community surveys and recreation plans to determine the level of need and degree of willingness to subsidize this type of recreational operation.

Oscoda Township is rich in recreational facilities that are open to the public, in addition to the vast existing park system previously described. Facilities throughout the Township are both publicly and privately owned, and a complete list of the other recreational opportunities is listed in the Oscoda Township Recreation Plan. The following list is a summary and does not represent all the opportunities available to the residents and surrounding region.



MAP 3: RECREATIONAL RESOURCES



MAP 4: RECREATIONAL RESOURCES







*AuSable River within the Huron-Manistee National Forest.*

### *U.S. Property*

The federal government owns a vast and variable amount of resources within Oscoda Township, which includes: The Huron-Manistee National Forest, River Road: National Forest Scenic Byway, Lumberman's Monument Visitors Center, Canoe Memorial Overlook, Iargo Springs Interpretative Site, and Foote Pond Overlook. There is also an extensive network of trails within the Township including non-motorized paths such as the Michigan's Shore-to-Shore Riding/Hiking Trail and the Eagle Run Cross Country Ski and Nature Trail, along with 25 miles of snowmobile trails and about 200 miles of ORV trails within the National Forest. Within Oscoda Township there are extensive opportunities for camping in almost all areas of the National Forest. There are also 80 designated camping sites around Foote Pond and Loud Pond, and The Lumberman's Monument Camping site with 20 designated developed sites. There are three boat launches owned by the federal government located within the Township.

### *State Property*

The State of Michigan is another entity that offers numerous recreation opportunities within the Township. These include the Au Sable State Forest, two fishing access sites, two boat launches, camping within the State Forest and a campground at Van Etten Lake that offers 62 primitive camping sites, Three Mile Park, the Old State House ORV Trail, and Seven Mile Hill snowmobile trail.

### *Other Entities*

The County offers various contributions in conjunction with the entities listed above, and also offers the Huron Snowmobile Trail, which is a 91-mile trail with sections located within the Township. Additionally, Consumers Energy owns various properties for its hydroelectric dams and offers recreational opportunities at these sites. There are also several private entities including the Goodwin Gersham Site, Lakewood Shores Golf Course, YMCA Camp Nissokone, Camp Cherith, and The Landing.



## **5. NATURAL FEATURES**



The natural environment plays a major role in land development. It is important for a community to analyze the land before beginning development. The natural environment can significantly impact development. On the other hand, land development can have a negative effect on the natural environment. For example, if a developer fills in a wetland, not only does it destroy protected wildlife habitat, but also the water that is usually standing in that area and recharging an underground aquifer suddenly has no place to drain. Therefore, the water spreads to a new area and can cause flooding. A Future Land Use Plan is discussed later in this document that will guide the community in determining areas that will be preserved and areas that will be developed in the future.

As mentioned previously, Oscoda Township contains ample natural amenities such as lakes, rivers, wetlands, and woodlands. The community wishes to preserve the natural features while utilizing them for recreation and relaxation. This section will analyze the natural features that are located throughout the Township.

## **TOPOGRAPHY AND SOILS**

### **Topography**

The overall topography of Oscoda Township is most commonly characterized by the water resources located in the Township. Map 5 depicts the topography in the Township. The lake shoreline is the lowest area, at around 570 feet above sea level, then the topography is fairly flat until the middle third of the Township, where the Au Sable State Forest begins, and the elevation begins to climb. The majority of the sharp increases or decreases of elevation can be found surrounding the Au Sable River and its surrounding wetlands. In some instances these steep topography changes can be 100 feet or more. The highest area of the Township is at about 920 feet above sea level and is found in the northernmost section of the westernmost third of the Township. There are several other

smaller elevations changes as shown on the map, most are surrounding water in the State Land.

### **Soils**

Map 6 depicts the different soil types within the Oscoda Township. Within each of these types there are several different soil associations. For the purposes of this plan, the map illustrates the types of the soil, rather than their specific names. In regard to development, it is important to understand soil characteristics such as permeability, runoff potential, and sand content.

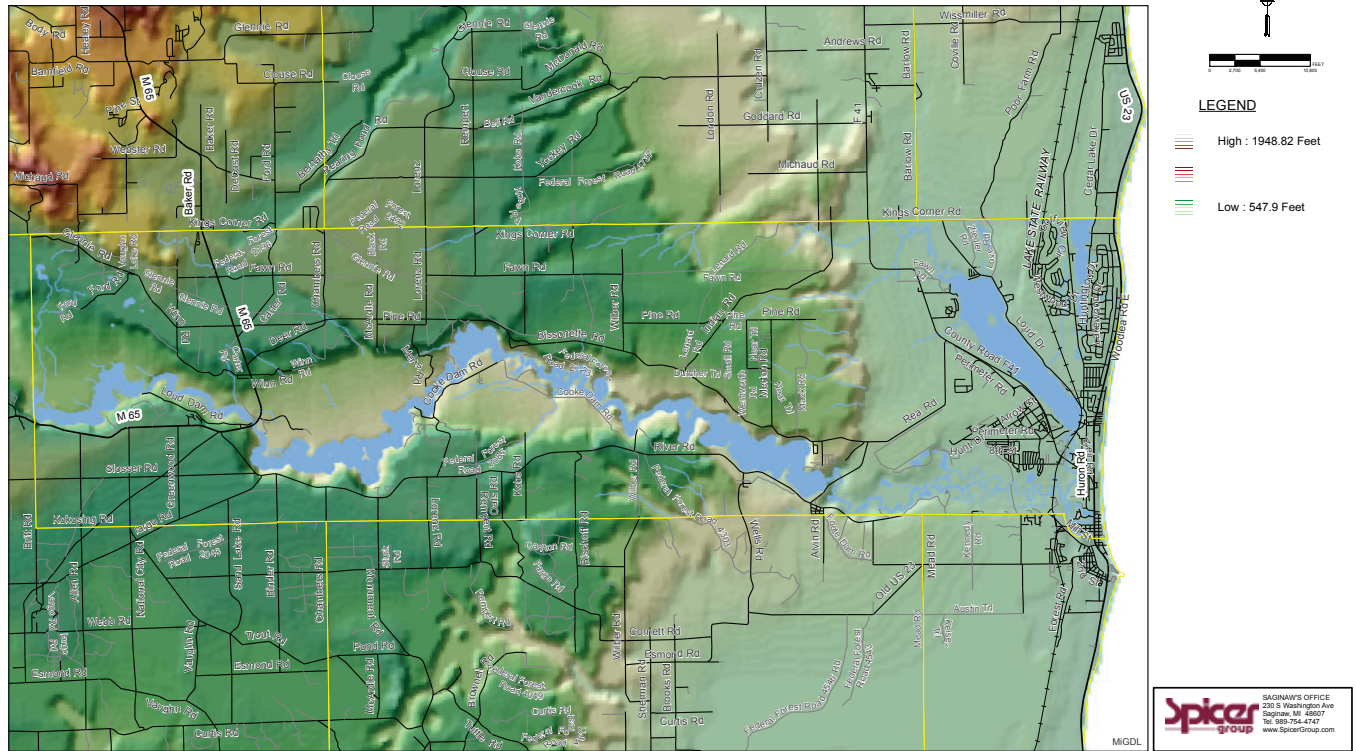
The soil composition of Oscoda Township is fairly uniform throughout the Township, with only a few areas of exception. The majority of the Township has sandy soil that is excessively to moderately well-drained, and has a rapid permeability. Sandy soils allow surface drainage to penetrate groundwater tables, therefore the Township should remain alert to the protection of groundwater. The next two most common soils in the Township can be found in the wetland areas. They are considered to be muck, or sandy muck (high concentrations of organic materials), and are very poorly draining wet areas. There are several other types of soil found in the Township, with the most variation occurring along the northern border near Van Etten Lake and M-65. There are some areas in the Township, like the Airport Authority property, that are not included in the soils survey completed by the County.

## **CLIMATE**

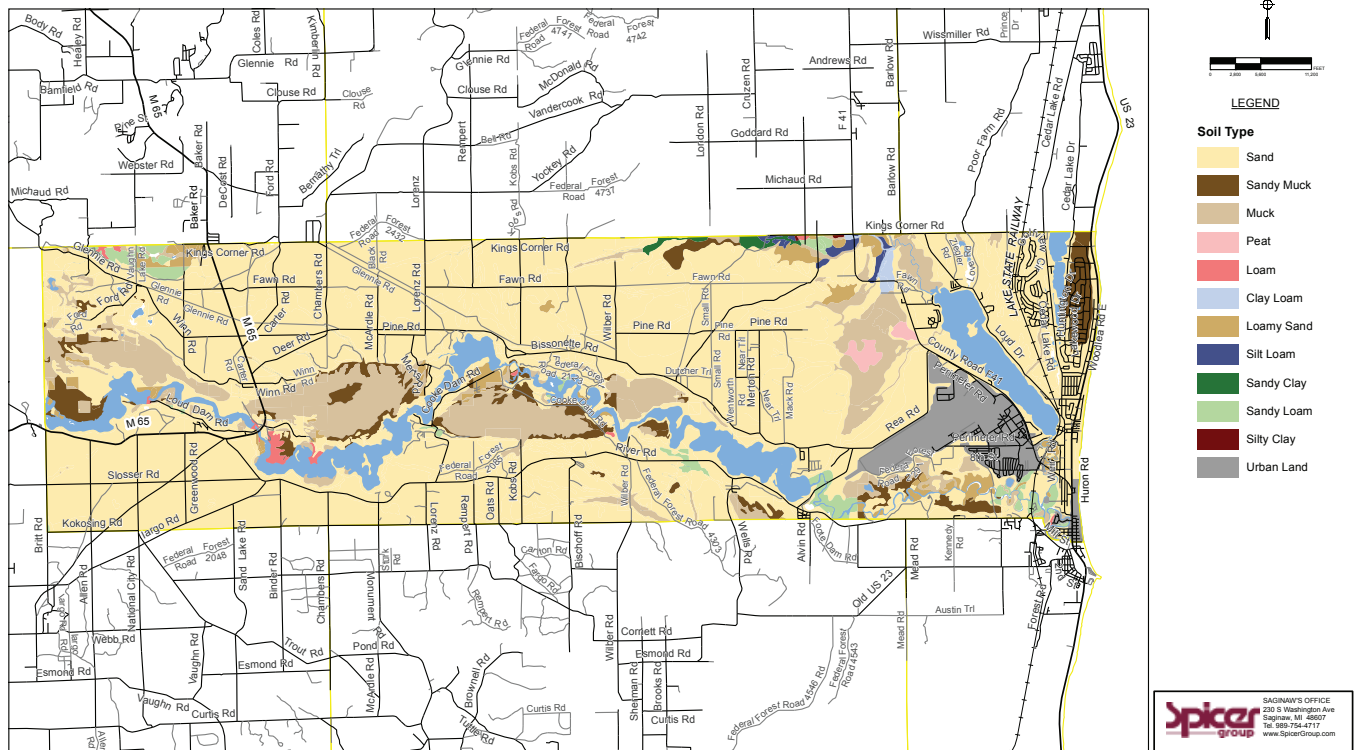
The climate of Iosco County is considered a Cold Middle Latitude climate where the coldest monthly mean temperature goes below 27°F with a long season of cold weather and significant winter snow cover developing. In this climate, the westerly winds dominate all year. As such, weather changes are more frequent.

The average rainfall is approximately 26-30 inches per year and average snowfall

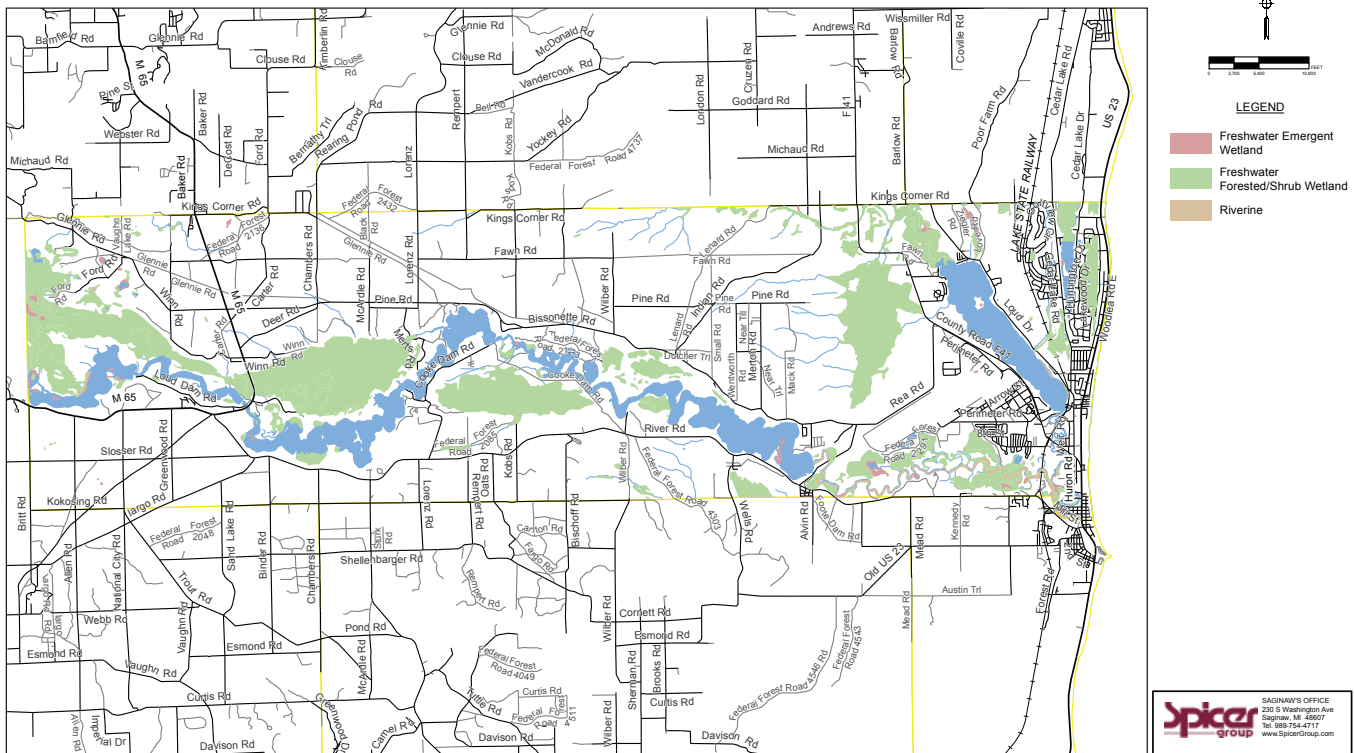
## MAP 5: TOPOGRAPHY



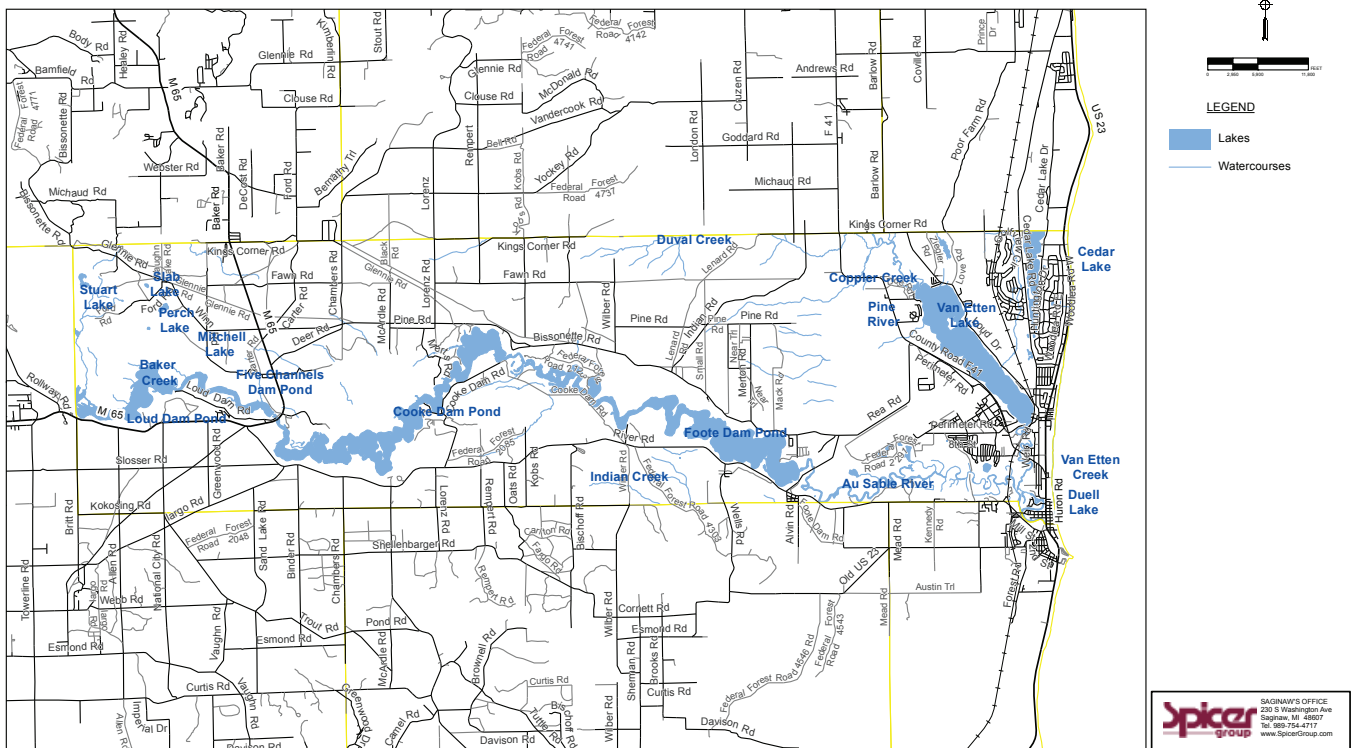
## MAP 6: SOILS



## MAP 7: WETLANDS



## MAP 8: WATERBODIES





is approximately 45-55 inches per year. Summer months have an average high temperature around 80°F and cool evenings in the 50s. Winter months see average highs in the 20s and 30s with lows in the teens and 20s.

## **WETLANDS AND WATERWAYS**

### **Wetlands**

According to the National Wetlands Inventory, Oscoda Township contains clusters of wetlands scattered throughout the Township. Wetlands can limit development in a specific area and each type and extent must be carefully examined before proceeding with any type of development. The wetlands and waterways of Oscoda Township are illustrated on Maps 7 and 8.

At the heart of Michigan's wetland regulatory program is Part 303, Wetland Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (Act 451 of 1994), formerly referred to as the Goemaere-Anderson Wetlands Protection Act, P.A. 203 of 1979. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Land and Water Management Division administers the permit program. Legislation was passed to protect wetlands by restricting their use to certain activities only after permit approval by the State of Michigan. Permits are approved only upon a review of an environmental assessment filed by the petitioner that shows the avoidance of wetland resources to the greatest extent possible and minimization of unavoidable wetland impacts.

Under the Act, the following wetlands are protected:

- » Wetlands contiguous to an inland land, pond, river, stream, or similar water course. Wetlands adjacent to the drains, creeks, and rivers in Oscoda Township would fall in this category.
- » Wetlands five acres in size, or larger, in counties that contain a population of at least 100,000 people. Since



*Boardwalk through wetlands.*

Iosco County has less than 100,000 people, this category does not apply to Oscoda Township.

A local unit of government has the authority to create wetland regulations that address wetlands not protected by the State. Oscoda Township may wish to investigate this option if it is concerned about loss of wetlands due to development.

There are four different types of wetlands located within the Township, and are considered to be lands defined by the existence of water, either on or near the surface, during a portion of the year. The wetlands within the Township mainly follow the Au Sable River, but they can also be found in small sections around other lakes and river, just west of Van Etten Lake, and along the northern portion of the shoreline within the Township.

### **Waterways**

There is an extensive network of waterways in Oscoda Township, and as a whole the Township is divided into two major drainage basins. The Lake Huron shoreline directly receives the drainage from much of the extreme eastern side of the Township. Small creeks and drains run directly to the lake



*AuSable River within the Huron-Manistee National Forest.*

without entering another riverway. The remainder of the Township is in the Au Sable Drainage Basin, and because the river runs through the entire Township, much of the water in the Oscoda area drains to it. Ultimately, the Au Sable then drains into Lake Huron.

The largest lake in the area is Lake Huron, forming six miles of shoreline along the easternmost Township border. Along the shoreline there is commercial and residential development. The Department of Natural Resources lists a total of 42 interior lakes within the Township. The two largest interior lakes are Van Etten Lake and Cedar Lake. Van Etten is a flowing lake that is fed from the Pine River, with lake levels controlled by a dam located at the southern end of the lake, flowing into Van Etten Creek. Cedar Lake is spring fed with outflows to Lake Huron. Development around these lakes is primarily single-family homes, many of which are seasonal in nature.

The Au Sable River and a branch of the Pine River pass through the Township. The Au Sable River traverses the entire Township west to east, and has been designated a Wild and Scenic River by the U.S. Forest Service. The river has a total of six hydroelectric dams, four of which can be found in Oscoda

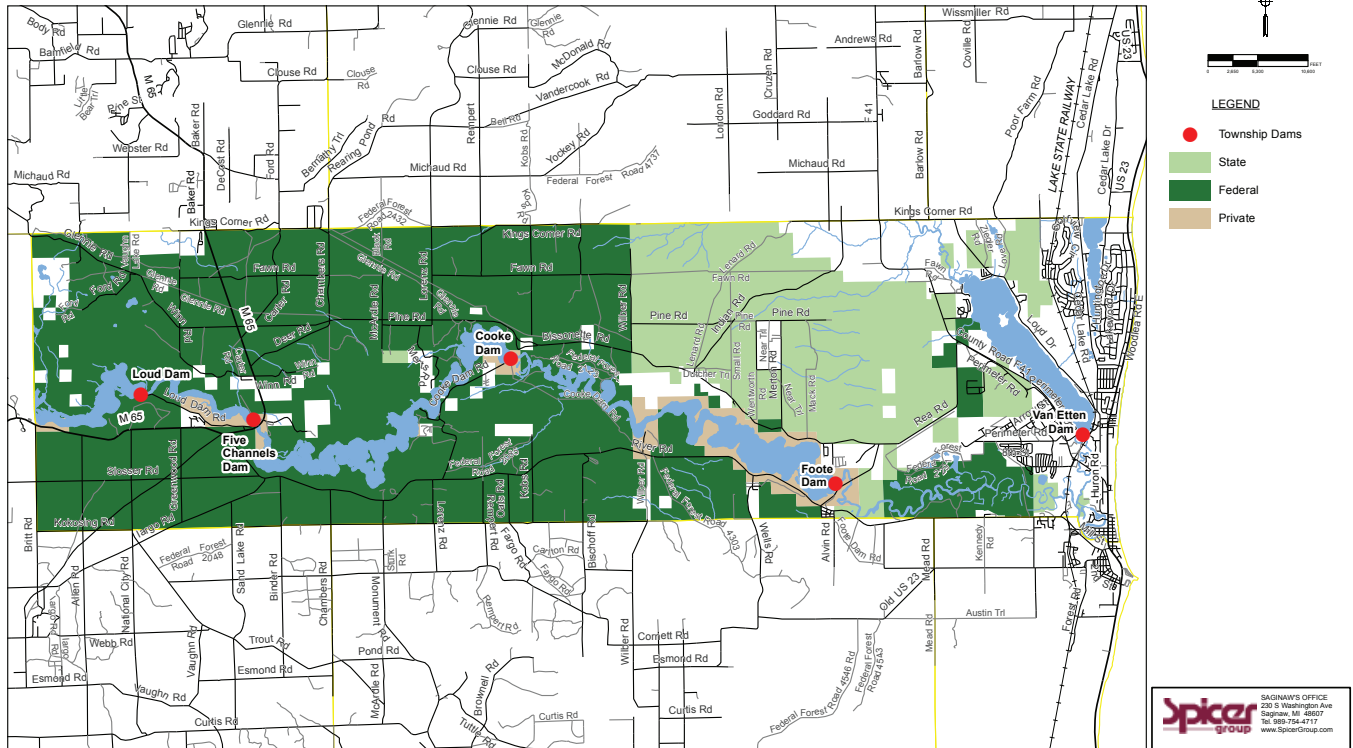
Township. The reservoirs created behind these dams provide scenic recreation areas named Loud Pond, Five Channels Pond, Cooke Pond, and Foote Pond. In the northeastern section of the Township, a branch of Pine Creek flows into Van Etten Lake. Aside from these features there are various other lakes and creeks within the Township.

## **NATIONAL AND STATE FORESTS**

The Huron National Forest and the Au Sable State Forest are both located within Oscoda Township. Over 80% of the land in the Township is designated as Public Forest Lands, totaling almost 60,000 acres in the National Forest and almost 4,000 acres in the State Forest. The forests are located in the western two-thirds of the Township and are a great recreation opportunity for residents and visitors, habitat for fish and wildlife, and resources for local industry. There are also several hundred miles of snowmobile/ORV trails found across both forests.

Another important land owner within the public state land is Consumers Energy, which owns about 3,500 acres of land around their hydroelectric dams. All this information is illustrated on Map 9.

## MAP 9: FEDERAL AND STATE LAND



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## 6. EXISTING LAND USE ANALYSIS

One of the most important outcomes of a community's Master Plan is creating a Future Land Use Plan. Before the Future Land Use Plan can be created, the existing conditions and relations between land uses must be examined and understood. This knowledge aids in the decision-making process concerning future residential, commercial, industrial, and public land use activities.

Existing land use is determined using several techniques. In Oscoda Township, given the large tracts of woodlands, the planning consultants used aerial photos and the National Land Cover Data Set to identify the inaccessible tracts of land, verify bodies of water and verify locations of roads. Also, there was also a driving land use survey conducted in critical sections of the Township which included the Downtown and surrounding area, US-23, and the area surrounding the Wurtsmith Airport Authority. The consultants also examined aspects that will influence the future land use and planning process. These aspects may include unusual land forms, nonconforming uses, nuisance features, road configuration, or other unique features in the Township. The Existing Land Use Map (Map 10 on page 41), uses the National Land Cover Data Set with slight modifications.

There are eleven classifications of land uses located in the Township. This section describes all land uses, and Table 11 shows acreage and percentage of land cover for all the uses.

## **SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL**

This category consists of areas of low intensity development. Single Family Residential homes, and their accessory buildings are most commonly found in this category. Within the Township this land use is located adjacent to the shoreline of Lake Huron, surrounding the Airport Authority property, and is found scattered throughout the rest of the Township along roadways.

## **MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL**

This category consists of areas of higher intensity residential development. Multiple family homes, apartment buildings, or condos are some examples. Within the Township this land use is located adjacent to the shoreline of Lake Huron, surrounding the Airport Authority property, and is found scattered throughout the rest of the Township along roadways. Single

**TABLE 11: EXISTING LAND USE CALCULATIONS**

<b>ELU</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Single/Multiple Family Residential	721	0.86%
Commercial/Industrial	1,000	1.19%
Public/Semi-Public	22	0.03%
Urban Land/Quarries/Mines	1,810	2.16%
Agriculture	674	0.80%
Urban Recreational Grasses	168	0.20%
Woodlands	48,596	57.90%
Grasslands	1,928	2.30%
Wetlands	18,903	22.52%
Transitional	3,499	4.17%
Open Water	6,605	7.87%
<b>Total</b>	<b>83,926</b>	



Family and Multiple Family Residential homes have been combined in the table previous because of data type and restrictions.

## COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL

The category consists of medium and high intensity development and therefore includes all sections of land used for commercial and industrial facilities, and dense housing units (apartments). Industrial land is used for processing, manufacturing, fabricating, or assembling materials, or for the outside storage of equipment and materials. In Oscoda Township, this land use is found south along US-23 near downtown Oscoda, the area surrounding the Airport Authority property to the northwest, and the area within the Airport Authority property. It can also be found in small concentrations along the more well-traveled roads in the Township.

## PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC

Public and Semi-Public land uses that are spaces open to public use or are governmental in nature. They include but are not limited to, government offices, churches, libraries, and schools. The bulk of this land use can be found in downtown Oscoda and in the Airport Authority property.

## URBAN LAND/QUARRIES/MINES

The Urban Land use category consists of areas with impervious surfaces that not necessarily covered by structures and could even have a small percentage of vegetation. This land use can be found along the surface transportation routes throughout the Township, airport runways, areas surrounding an airport, in mineral extraction areas, or in sandy areas. In the Township, this land is found along roadways, near the airport, and along the Lake Huron shoreline.

## AGRICULTURE

The Agriculture land areas are utilized for agricultural purposes such as crop



*Furtaw Field Paul Bunyon Memorial*

production or pasture, as well as all orchard facilities. This also includes accessory buildings such as barns and elevators. There is a small percentage of Agriculture land within Oscoda Township, with the vast majority located in the easternmost third surrounding County Road F-41, and a small area in the westernmost third, adjacent to M-65.

## URBAN RECREATIONAL GRASSES

The Urban Recreational Grasses land use category consists of open spaces made primarily of grasses in urban settings. Examples could include parks, golf courses, airport grasses, or industrial site grasses. This land use is found at the Township parks, and in the vacant land on the Airport Authority property.



*Oscoda Township Park along Lake Huron*

## WOODLANDS

The lands in this category are areas dominated by trees, including both deciduous and evergreen forests. In Oscoda Township, this land is primarily owned by the State of Michigan or the United States for conservation and research purposes. Both the Huron National Forest and the Au Sable State Forest are located within the Township. The land comprises more than 50% of the jurisdiction, making it the largest land use, and is a very important natural resource to Oscoda Township. The vast majority of this land is located west of County Road F-41.

## GRASSLAND

Grassland is an area that is dominated by herbaceous plants, that could also be used for grazing, but is subject to tilling. Within Oscoda Township there are various patches of grassland throughout the entire Township. The largest concentration is found to the south, along the Au Sable River, south of the airport. Oftentimes these areas coincide with the state-owned land.

## WETLANDS

Wetlands are areas where the soil or substrate is periodically saturated with, or covered with water. Wetlands can be classified as Scrub/Shrub, Forested, or Emergent. Wetlands are often important areas because they maintain the health of an environment. It is important to know where these are, and to protect them from development that is too intense. In Oscoda Township there are a high percentage of wetlands. The majority of them can be found surrounding the Au Sable River, and a large area northwest of the Airport Authority property, with various other wetlands scattered throughout the northern portion of the Township. Wetlands are the second largest land use in the Township.

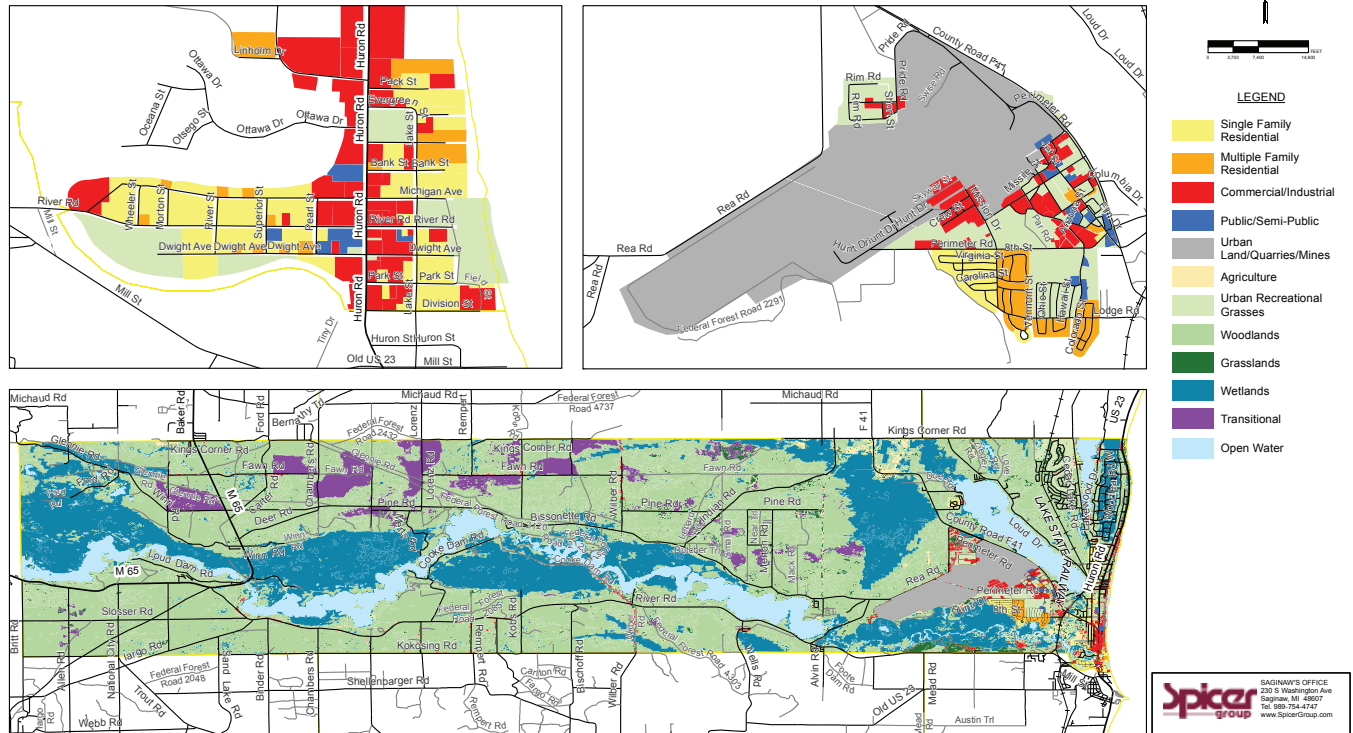
## TRANSITIONAL

Transitional Land use refers to areas of land with sparse vegetation that are dynamically changing from one land cover to another, often because of land use activities. Examples of this land use could include forest logging, or transitional phase between wooded land and agricultural land. In the Township, this land use is most common north of the Au Sable River west of County Road F41.

## OPEN WATER

This land use refers to areas where there is open or standing water, and is very important to the Township, both for recreation and energy. The Au Sable River flows through the entire Township, Van Etten Lake is located in the east of the Township, Cedar Lake is located on the eastern edge of the Township, and Lake Huron borders Oscoda Township. There are various other small lakes, river, creeks, and drains located throughout the rest of the Township. Water is the third largest land use in the Township.

## MAP 10: EXISTING LAND USE



Oscoda Township Beach Park and the Lake Huron Pier

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## 7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To be effective, a Master Plan should incorporate the input and ideas of the local population. By basing the Master Plan on the goals and objectives of its residents, land use management decisions become politically feasible and represent the intents and vision of the community. In Oscoda Township, citizens were given the opportunity to participate in an online community input survey, hosted on fluidsurveys.com, which produced results from 930 respondents.

## ONLINE SURVEY

The online survey was made available from June 2, 2016 through July 24, 2016, complete with 29 questions which can be found in Appendix A. The intent of the survey was to establish an easy means of communication where residents and stakeholders of the Township could provide input about the existing community condition, and the need for future improvements. The survey was taken through the web domain [www.oscodasurvey.com](http://www.oscodasurvey.com). On May 26, 2016, a press release was given announcing the launch of the Oscoda Master Plan survey. The press release announced the web domain of the survey, as well as information about the Master Plan update process. Additionally, leaflet flyers were distributed to further promote the survey. These flyers were printed on postcard paper in color, and included the web address and a QR code

which enabled respondents to scan the leaflets and take the survey using mobile devices.

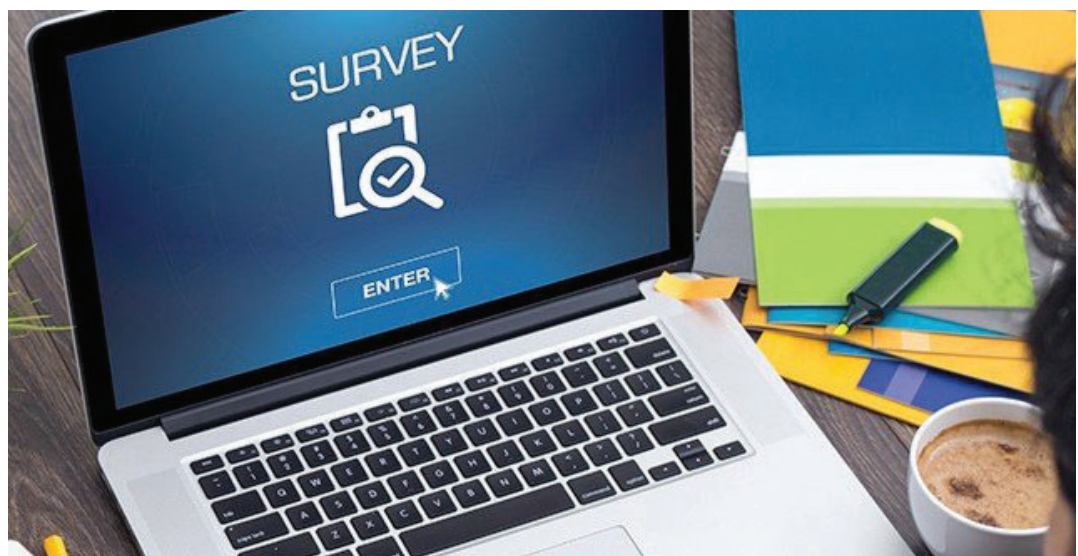
## SURVEY SUMMARY

During the public input period, the Township collected many insightful ideas and suggestions for land use, housing improvements, economic development, protection of natural features, and the overall quality of life. The following information is a summary of the major ideas the Township received from the online survey. Summaries of responses for each survey question are described in the following sections.

### The Respondents

At the beginning of the survey the respondents were asked several questions about themselves. The questions included demographic information pertaining to age, residency status, length of residency, and role in the community. The answers to these questions were used to have a strong understanding of the survey participants. Below are some key findings from the information about the 930 survey respondents.

- » Of the 930 respondents, 66% indicated that they were a permanent resident of Oscoda Township. The majority of the permanent residents (55%),





indicated that they have been in the community for more than 10 years, with 40% of those respondents having been in the community for more than 20 years.

- » The remaining 34% of respondents indicated they were not permanent residents, 38% were seasonal residents, and 23% were occasional visitors. The seasonal residents have been in the Township just as long as the permanent ones, with 60% indicating more than 10 years of seasonal ownership.
- » The following statistics represent the age ranges of respondents:
  - 38% were between the ages of 45- 64
  - 30% were between the ages of 25-44
  - 16% were between the ages of 65-74
  - 10% were between the ages of 18-24
  - The remaining were under 18 (2.5%) and over 75 (3.8%)

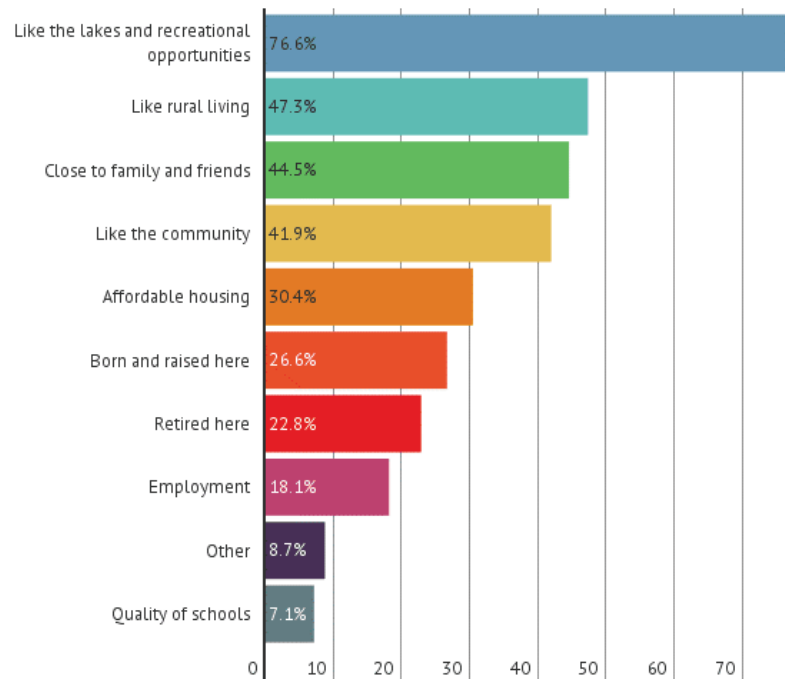
Overall, the majority of respondents were older residents or seasonal visitors who have lived in the community for more than 10 years.

### General Oscoda Questions

Respondents were asked all of the reasons they choose to live in Oscoda Township. Figure 9 illustrates graphically the responses. The top three responses included: liked the lakes and recreational opportunities (77%), like rural living (47%), and close to family and friends (45%). Respondents also had the opportunity to choose “other” and write in their own response. Nine percent of respondents chose this option. Some of the more popular responses included: having a family or seasonal home in the Township, the friendliness of the people, and the recreation opportunities.

Respondents were also asked how certain aspects of the community

**FIGURE 9: REASONS WHY RESPONDENTS LIVE IN OSCODA TOWNSHIP**

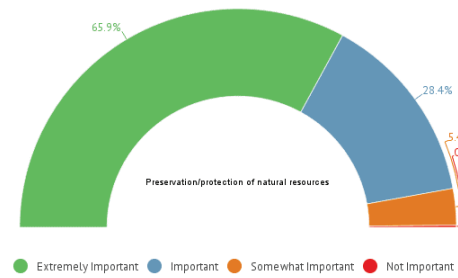


have changed in the past 5 years. The questions were specific to: road conditions, traffic, natural environment, blight, township services, recreational opportunities, and overall quality of life. Overall respondents think the road conditions are the same or better, traffic is the same or worse, the natural environment is the same, blight is the same or worse, Township services are the same, recreational opportunities are the same or better, and overall quality of life is the same or better.

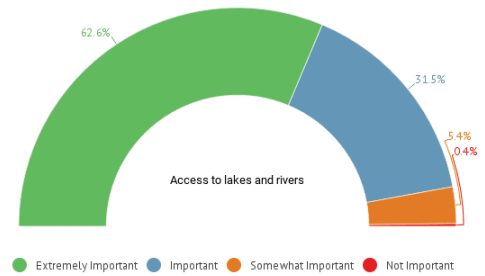
Overall, 59% of respondents believe that blight is an issue in the Township. Respondents were also asked to respond on how important several features of the Township were to them. Figure 10 on the following page depicts those answers. The questions pertained to preservation and protection of natural resources, preservation of scenic character, access to water, revival of the Oscoda downtown, economic development, housing choices, and transportation choices.

FIGURE 10: HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE FOLLOWING ISSUES TO YOU?

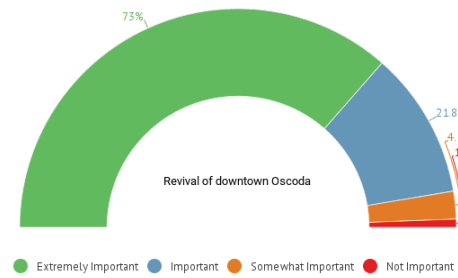
**Preservation/protection of natural resources**



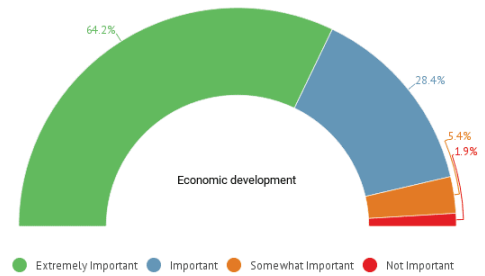
**Access to lakes and rivers**



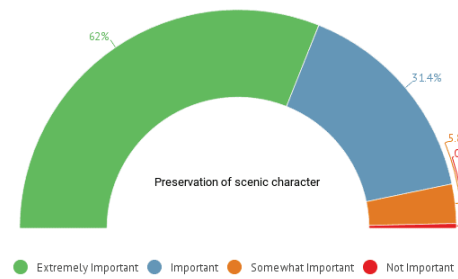
**Revival of downtown Oscoda**



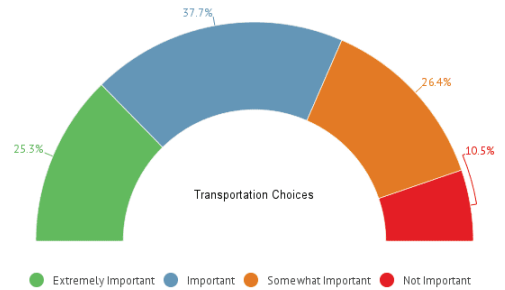
**Economic development**



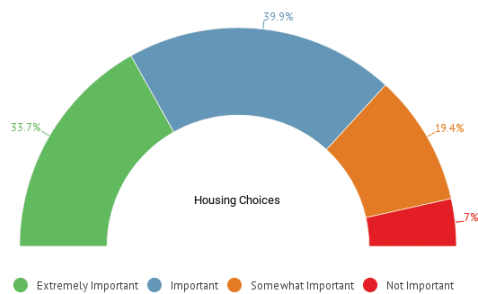
**Preservation of scenic character**



**Transportation Choices**



**Housing Choices**



## Population and Development

Respondents were asked if the population in Oscoda Township should grow in the coming years. Figure 11 illustrates the response to this question, with the majority opinion being that the Township population should grow.

In the same light, respondents were asked if the Township should have more development in the coming years. Overall, respondents agree with more development, as depicted in Figure 12.

The following questions pertain to additional residential, commercial, and industrial growth in the Township. Given that the majority of respondents agree with an increase in population and increasing development, the following questions also support these positions. Respondents overwhelmingly stated there were not enough commercial businesses in the Township (87%). Additionally, respondents believe commercial development should be focused on the reuse and redevelopment of existing buildings in the Oscoda downtown (82%), throughout the US-23 corridor (61%), and near the Oscoda-Wurtsmith airport area (50%). Fifty-three percent of respondents believe that the commercial development should focus on the seasonal and tourist industry, while 25% of the respondents don't think that type of development should be the focus. Overall, the top three most desired commercial businesses are a full-service restaurant (67%), specialty stores or boutiques (63%), and a large retail or discount store (56%). Figure 13 on the following page represents all the possible answers and responses pertaining to the types of desired commercial development. Respondents also had the opportunity to type in a specific answer to this question. The top three trends were: a large retail store, casino, and an indoor recreation and entertainment center.

FIGURE 11: OPINION ON IF THE POPULATION IN OSCODA TOWNSHIP SHOULD GROW IN THE COMING YEARS

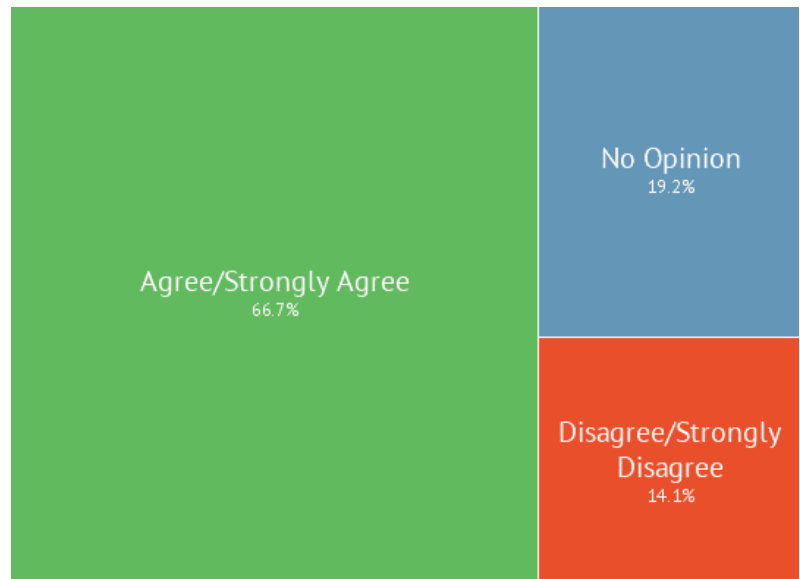
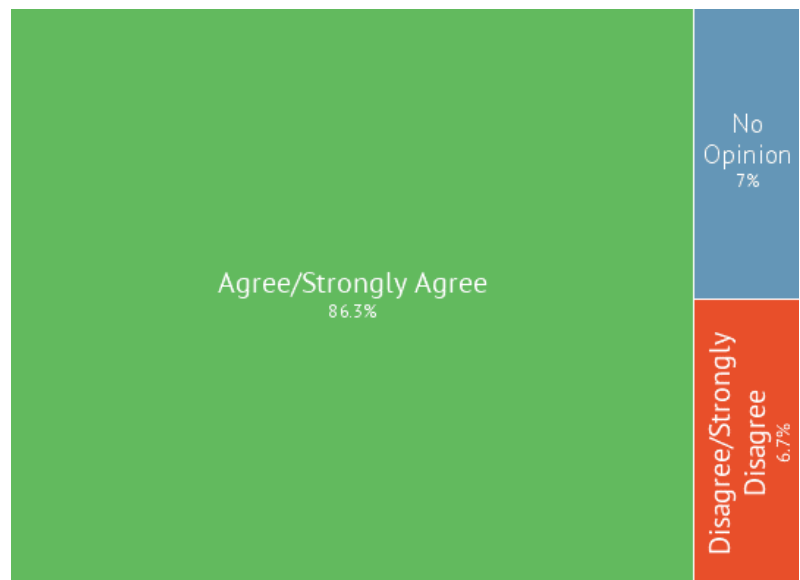
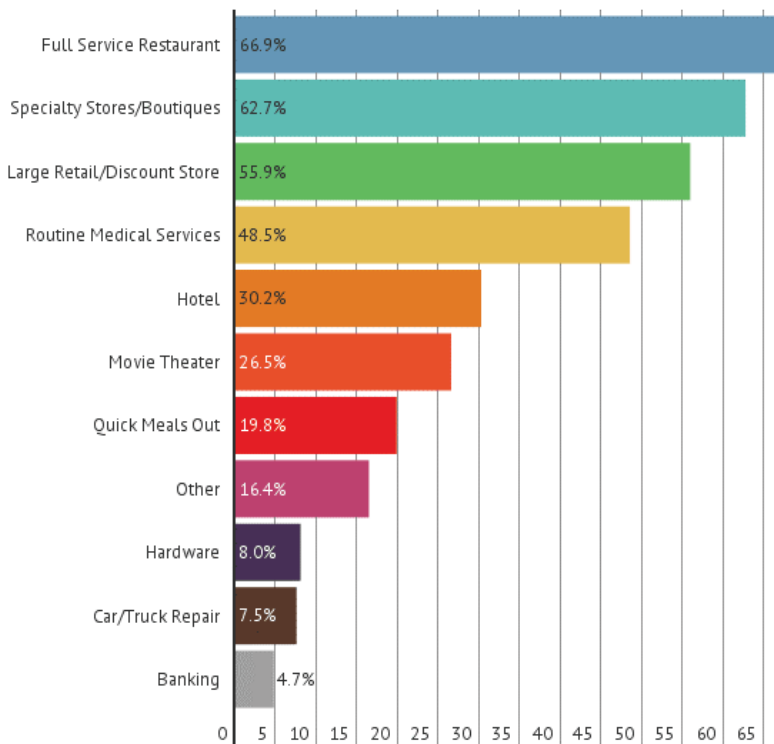


FIGURE 12: OPINION ON IF OSCODA TOWNSHIP SHOULD HAVE MORE DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMING YEARS



**FIGURE 13: COMMERCIAL SERVICES OSCODA TOWNSHIP NEEDS**

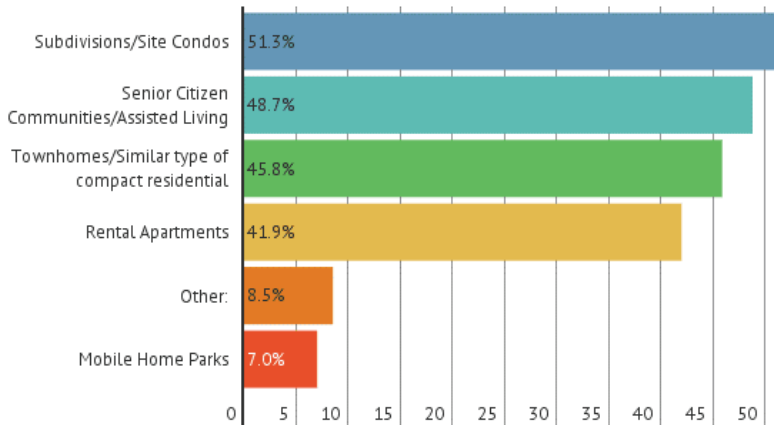


Further, 76% of respondents believe industrial development in the Township should be encouraged. In addition to believing in more commercial and industrial development, 61% of respondents also think the Township should plan for more single-family homes. Respondents also believe the Township should plan for other housing types. Figure 14, depicts the desired housing types in the Township. It is clear there is not a singular desired choice for housing, but rather several different types seem appropriate to the respondents, allowing the Township several options in planning.

### Recreation

Several questions in the community input survey were specific to recreation, so the Township could use this public input for their recreation plan as well. Respondents were asked which of the Oscoda Township properties they had visited recently, and were encouraged to choose more than one answer. Figure 16 represents all the responses to this question. The top three most visited parks were Oscoda Township Beach Park, Foote Site Park, and Ken Ratliff Memorial Park.

**FIGURE 14: HOUSING CHOICES THE TOWNSHIP SHOULD PLAN FOR**



Respondents were asked if they supported the development of the Iron Belle Trail from River Bank Park along River Road to M-65 and Hale. Sixty-eight percent of respondents agreed with the project, while 26% had no opinion, and 14% disagreed.

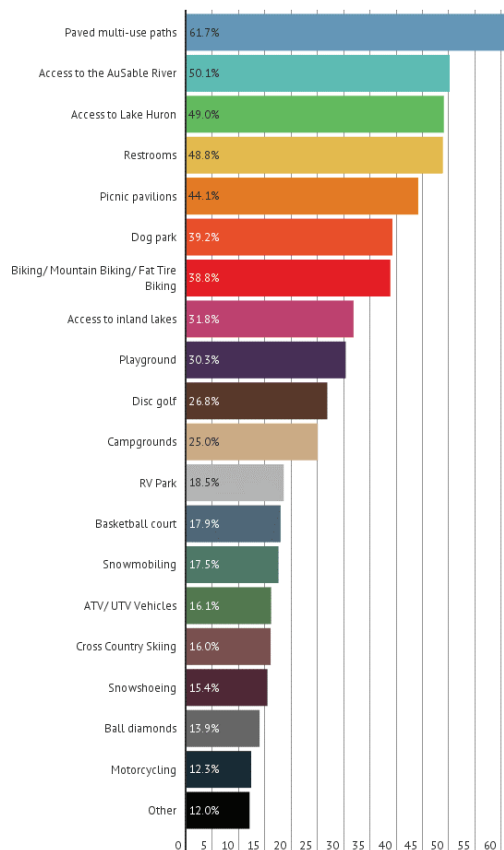
Respondents were also asked why they visited public parks and recreation facilities in the Township. The top three responses included: enjoying nature (81%), beach access and swimming (67%), and river access (59%). Figure 17 depicts all the responses for this question.

Next, respondents were asked what kind of additional recreation and support facilities are needed in Oscoda Township. The top ten answers for this question included:

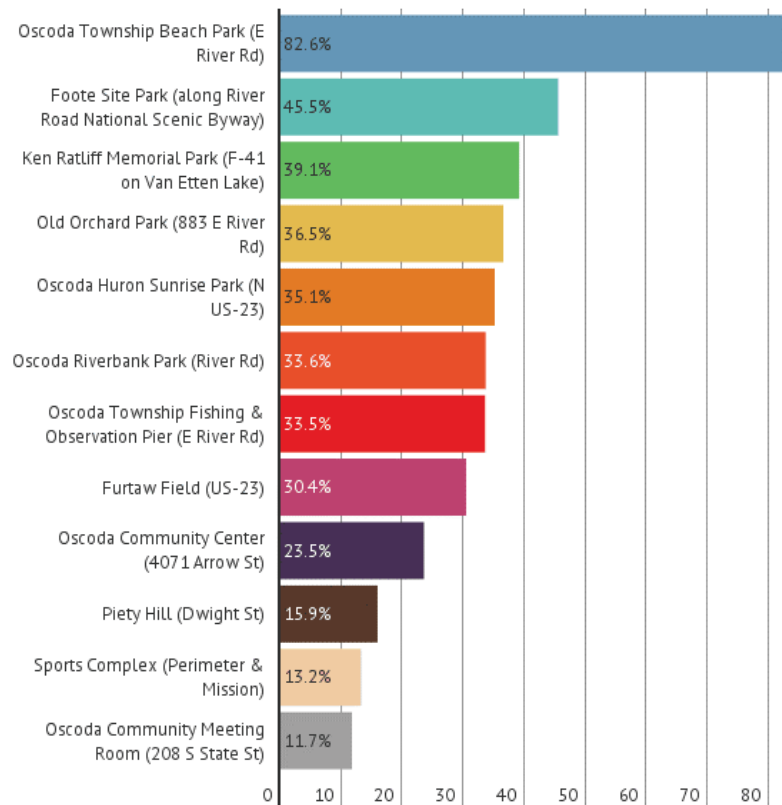
1. Paved multi-use paths
2. Access to Au Sable River
3. Access to Lake Huron
4. Restrooms
5. Picnic Pavilions
6. Dog Park
7. Biking (Biking/Mountain biking/Fat Tire biking)
8. Access to inland lakes
9. Playgrounds
10. Disc Golf

Figure 15 below illustrates the responses for additional facilities. Top responses included the desire for more paved multi-use trails, greater access to the AuSable River and Lake Huron, more picnic pavilions, and a dog park.

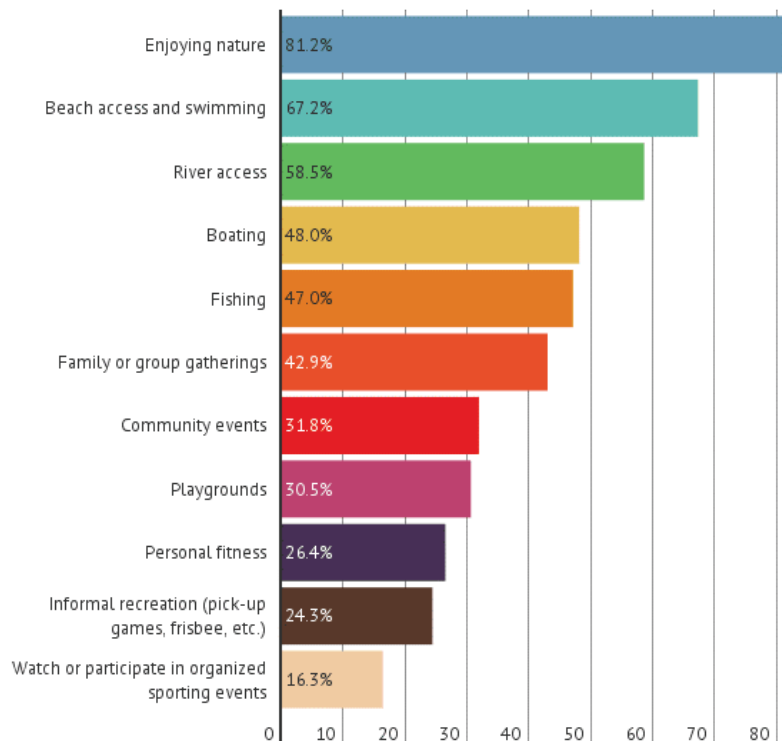
**FIGURE 15: NEEDED ADDITIONAL RECREATION AND SUPPORT FACILITIES IN THE TOWNSHIP**



**FIGURE 16: OSCODA TOWNSHIP PROPERTIES RECENTLY VISITED**



**FIGURE 17: REASONS WHY RESPONDENTS VISIT PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES**



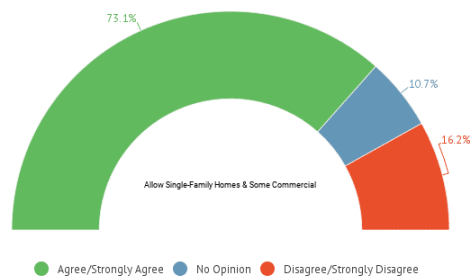


Respondents were also asked their opinion on future land use patterns along the Lake Huron shoreline. The series of charts in Figure 18 depicts the various opinions on the land use patterns. Overall, respondents want to continue to allow residential uses, continue to improve the recreational

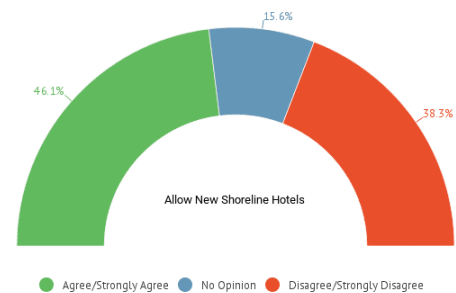
opportunities, promote the shoreline as a destination for pedestrian connections, and preserve the view of the shoreline and minimize development. Respondents were evenly split on allowing hotel and hospitality accommodations along the shoreline.

**FIGURE 18: RESPONDENT OPINION ON FUTURE LAND USE PATTERNS ALONG THE LAKE HURON SHORELINE**

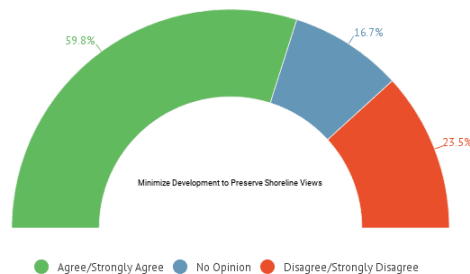
**Allow Single-Family Homes & Some Commercial**



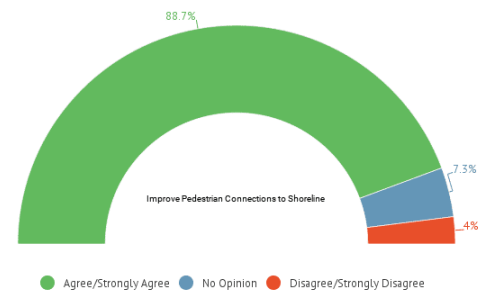
**Allow New Shoreline Hotels**



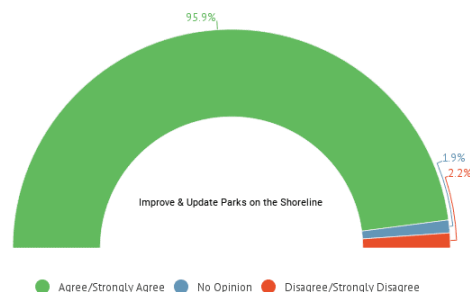
**Minimize Development to Preserve Shoreline Views**



**Improve Pedestrian Connections to Shoreline**



**Improve & Update Parks on the Shoreline**



## OSCODA TOWNSHIP 2019 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Board of Trustees for Oscoda Township contracted with Place + Main Advisors, LLC to perform strategic planning services for the community. As part of these services, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, six focus groups, and an online survey were undertaken.

### Public Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

On the evening of Monday, October 29, 2019 the township hosted a public SWOT Analysis at the Warrior Pavilion in Ken Ratliff Memorial Park in the township. Approximately 50 stakeholders attended, including board members, resident, business owners and leaders, and neighboring township representatives. The SWOT was facilitated by Place + Main Advisors Principal Joe Borgstrom. Each topic was given between five to seven minutes for the attendees to call out things they felt belonged in the respective categories. When input session was complete, attendees were asked to rank their top three in each category. The rankings were color coded and weighted based on importance. (Example - the most important strength was awarded a blue sticker and was worth three points. The second most important strength was given a yellow sticker and awarded two points, and the third was awarded a green sticker and awarded one point.) The point values were then tallied appear in parentheses in Table 12 on the following page.

FIGURE 19: TOP SWOT RESPONSES



Source: 2019 Strategic Plan; Place + Main



Public SWOT analysis.

**TABLE 12: SWOT ANALYSIS**

INTERNAL	
Strengths – Local Control	Weaknesses – Local Control
Environment/Natural Resources (93) Kalitta Air, LLC Facility (27) Airport (27) Recreation Opportunities (22) Tourism (19) Beaches (15) Affordable Housing (7) Schools (Facilities/People) (7) Hiking/Biking Trails (7) Libraries (6) Broadband on Major Roads (6) ORV/Snowmobile (5) Potential of Community Center (5) Reasonable Taxes (4) Community Colleges (4) Active Senior Community (3) Good Infrastructure (1) Public Safety (1) Room for Growth (0)	Empty Storefronts (56) Medical Facilities/Offerings (36) Lack of Affordable Long-Term & Short-Term Housing (24) Curb Appeal/Appearance (21) Lack of Doctors (17) Environmental Issues (15) Lack of Population Under 40 (15) Lack of Walkable Shopping (11) Lack of Business Diversity (10) Loss of Skilled Workers (10) Declining Enrollment (10) Lack of Quality Daycare (7) Public Perception (7) Lack of Downtown Cohesion (6) Parking (6) Roads (6) Marketing (3) Lack of Overnight Accommodations (2) Slow Rail (2) Seasonality (1) Lack of Ethnic Diversity (0)
EXTERNAL	
Opportunities – Leverage to Improve	Threats – Factors to Watch
Beachfront Business District (41) Redevelop Air Base (39) Marketing (28) Room to Grow (19) Arts/Artisans (16) Market Schools/Higher Ed (15) Grants (12) Invest in Community Center (11) Better Connect Businesses to Waterfront (11) Walkable Housing (11) Broadband to Underserved (10) Niche Retail (8) Create Identity (7) Further Develop Old Orchard (6) MicroBreweries/Distilleries (5) Passenger Rail (4) Robotics Team (3) Career Centers (3) Wi-Fi Throughout Community (3) More Restaurants (3) Industrial Parks (2) Water Trails (2) Volunteer/Partnership w Youth (1) Data Center (0)	Contamination (44) Drugs (39) Economy/Unemployment (37) Aging Community (26) Low Wages (21) Apathy (20) Public Perception (16) Online Shopping (15) Winter Unpredictability/Environmental Change (7) Department of Defense Decisions (4) Violence (4) Location (2) Brain Drain (1)

## Focus Groups

Five focus groups were convened representing government, education, major employers, Chamber of Commerce, Conference Visitors Bureau, DDA, and downtown business owners. Outcome from the focus groups reinforced information gleaned from the community SWOT session. Some of the issues that surfaced included:

- » The elimination by MDOT of on-street parking devastated businesses along South State (US-23).
- » Lack of a health care facilities.
- » Lack of a fixed route public transportation service.
- » Appearance and curb appeal lacking.
- » Need for a wayfinding system since the Township is so large with a variety of parks and public facilities.
- » Employers expressed a concern regarding the lack of housing as the

biggest issue. This includes short- and long-term housing.

- » Lack of restaurants and lack of downtown business hurts employment recruitment.
- » More diverse retail base; need for outdoor outfitters, butcher shop, bike shop, and dry-cleaner.
- » Need for trails and recreation venues.

## Online Survey

An online survey was available to the community and 152 people participated in this engagement venue. The results of the survey mirrored the community SWOT assessment and the focus groups. Respondents noted additional opportunities focused on redevelopment of the air base, more restaurants, the need to create a cohesive identity, microbreweries/distilleries, water trails, arts/artisans, walkable housing, and broadband.

FIGURE 20: SUMMARY OF ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS



Source: 2019 Strategic Plan; Place + Main



## VISION + MISSION STATEMENTS

### Vision

By 2028, Oscoda Township will be a more thriving, safe, and energetic community with an active inter-generational economy. It will fully use and modernize its infrastructure and maximize its resources, both financial and natural, to create a local economy that serves its residents. Oscoda Township will be a preferred place for residents, businesses, and tourists to invest and be a part of. In partnership with neighboring communities, it will work for the betterment of the region. Vision and Mission Statements provide direction for the Township going forward. The Vision defines the end goal for the community, while the Mission defines the Township's role in making the vision come to fruition.

### Mission

The Charter Township of Oscoda is the government entity responsible for creating the environment to improve the quality of life for its residents and opportunities for its businesses to thrive. It creates and maintains the organizational and physical infrastructure of the community to engage residents and help its businesses continually adjust to the everchanging economic climate. The Township is a steward of the public trust, administrator of responsive and efficient government, and a champion of transparency that works to serve and protect its citizens.

## Strategic Goals

Strategic Goals are the overarching goals that guide the specific objectives the Township will pursue. These goals may change over time, but largely define what the township's purpose will be for the next five to ten years. These goals reflect the input of the public, focus groups, steering committees, and Township Board of Trustees.

1. Create an environment where residents, development, and businesses can be successful.
2. Create more housing options for existing and prospective residents.
3. Preserve, integrate, and connect natural resources for residents and tourists.
4. Market the community to prospective businesses, residents, and tourists.
5. Further promote redevelopment of airport and surrounding property.
6. Grow the number of residents, businesses, tourists, and developers in the township.
7. Maintain and improve township owned infrastructure.



## 8. GROWTH & INVESTMENT AREAS

Oscoda Township's 83,926 acres (131 square miles) can be generally segmented into three zones; Federal Zone, State Zone, and Local Zone and described as follows:

- » **Federal Zone** – generally extending from the west Township limits east to Wilbur Road and comprising approximately 48,500 acres, or 57% of the Township. This area includes a series of man-made lakes and tributaries resulting from the Loud Dam, Five Channels Dam, and Cooke Dam. This zone contains vast acreage of forest land, sporadically dotted with campgrounds, trails, and public launch facilities.
- » **State Zone** – includes an area generally bounded by the AuSable River, Bissonette Road, and Rea Road to the south and county road F-41 on the east, and the northern Township limits, and include the Foote Dam site. The State Zone comprises approximately 16,200 acres, or 19% of the Township.

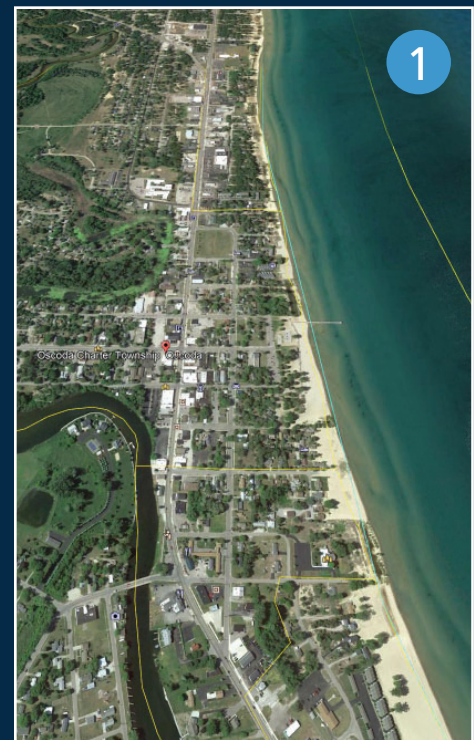
- » **Local Zone** – is generally the remaining eastern portion of the Township extending from County Road F-41 to Lake Huron. This zone comprises approximately 16,200 acres and includes Van Etten Lake and Wurtsmith Airport. The Developed Zone comprises 24% of the Township.

The geographic assessment of these three zones highlights the that Township's potential buildable and taxable valuation area is confined to 24% of the land area, and all of this is within 2 miles of Lake Huron. Further, the development potential is along the US-23 corridor and northeast of Loud Drive.

Within the Developed Zone there are five growth and investment areas. A growth and investment area are distinct geographic areas within a community that have similar land use characteristics and present a variety of development and redevelopment opportunities all served by public infrastructure. Understanding where growth and investment areas are helps guide planned growth and smart development, and these areas for Oscoda Township are described as follows:

## SOUTH STATE BUSINESS AND NEIGHBORHOOD

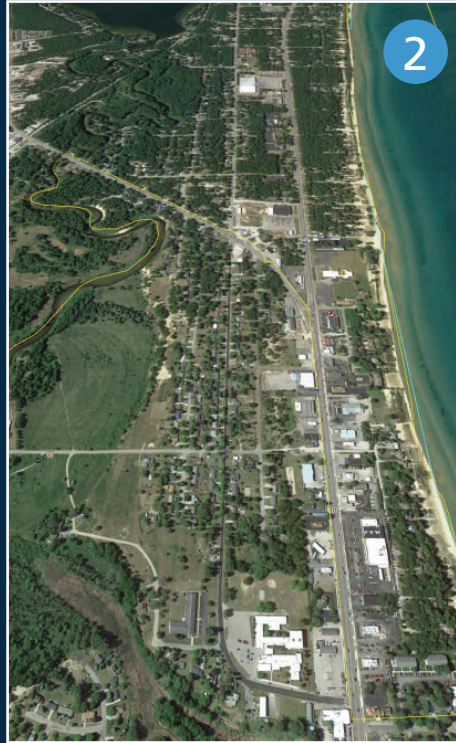
This area includes the historic downtown business district of the Charter Township of Oscoda and adjacent residential neighborhoods extending from Division Street to Evergreen Street. The neighborhood is walkable, contains small lots for commercial and residential development and is within easy walking distance to Lake Huron. Redevelopment opportunities include the rehabilitation of commercial structures, and the development of new commercial and mixed-use structures using the recently adopted SSBN form-based code.





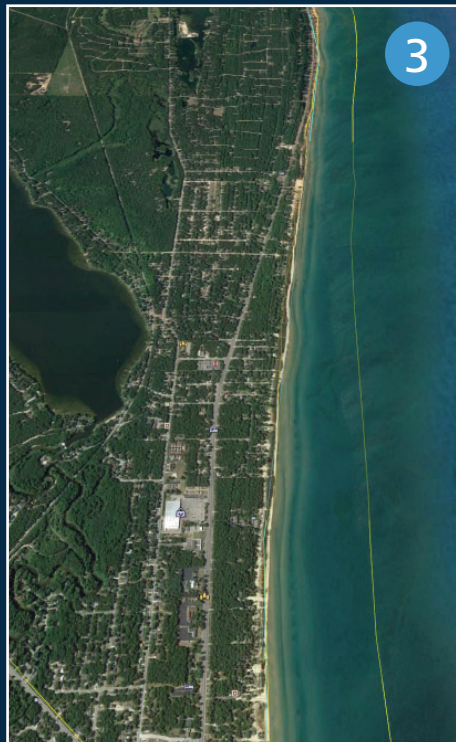
## 23-41 BUSINESS AND NEIGHBORHOOD

The highway network of US-23 and F-41 serve as the primary generators for growth in this area. One portion of the area extends from Evergreen Street north about a mile past the US-23 / F-41 intersection. Another portion extends from the US-23 / F-41 intersection along F-41 to the railroad tracks approximately 1 mile. Included in this area are the residential neighborhoods along Pine Street, Cedar Lake Street, and Hughes Street.



## NORTH NEIGHBORHOODS

This growth and investment area includes residential neighborhoods between Loud Drive and US-23 (Woodland Road East) and along Cedar Lake Road. Some of the residential areas are based on a grid pattern and others are based on a suburban road network. Within the area are buildable lots for additional residential development.





## WURTSMITH AIRPORT

This growth and investment area comprises the airport and facilities that support air-related ventures. The recent selection of this growth and investment area as the Michigan site for the MAMA horizontal space launch facility opens greater opportunities for economic development.

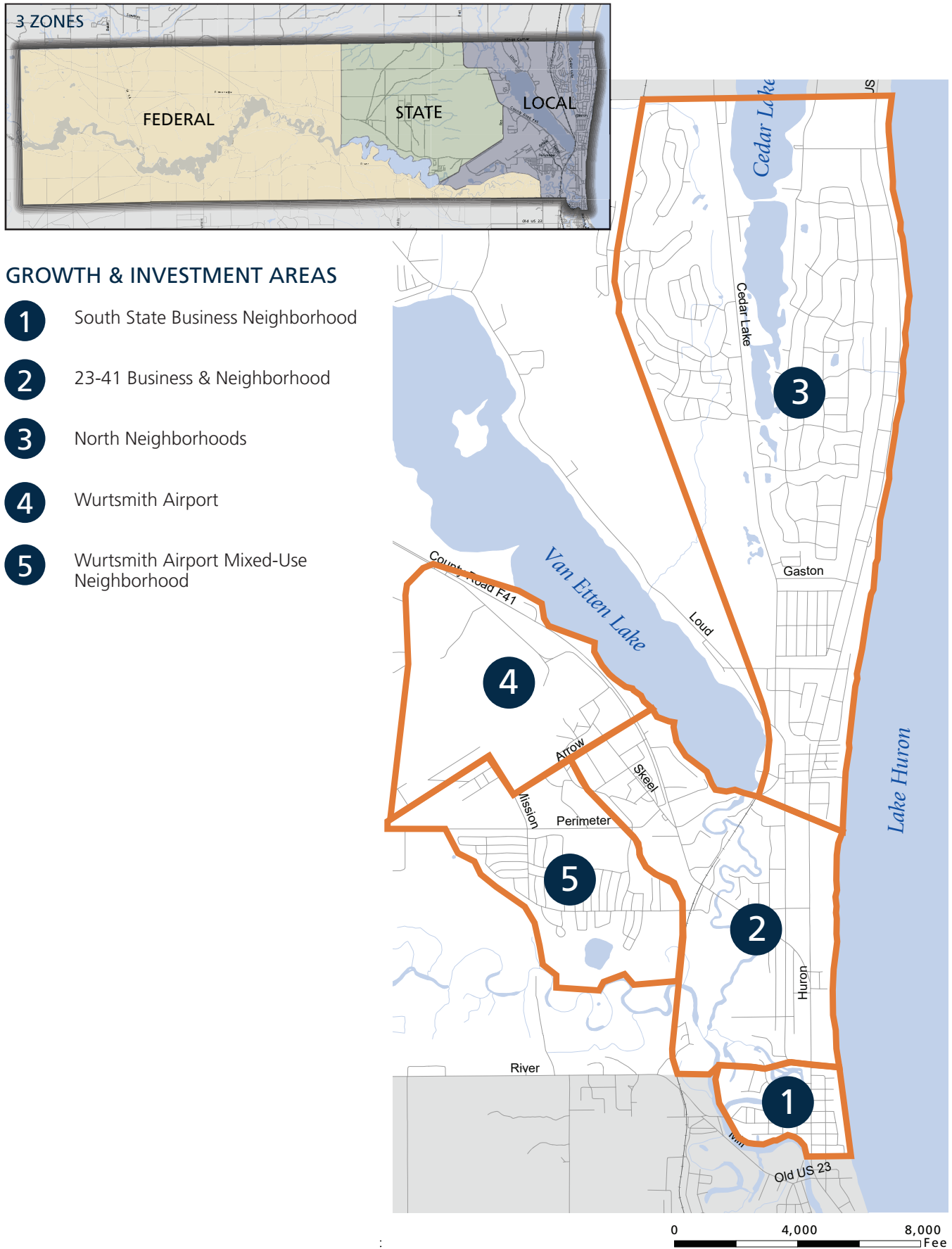


## WURTSMITH AIRPORT MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD

This area includes the former support facilities for the WAFB along Skeel, Arrow, Missile Street, and N. Huron Avenue, and the residential areas south of Perimeter Road. Within this area are undeveloped residential lots along Hawaii, Louisiana, Maine, Ohio, Utah and Vermont Streets, and commercial sites north of Perimeter and south of F-41. This undeveloped property, as described above, is owned by the Villages of Oscoda Home Owners Association (HOA).



## MAP 11: GROWTH & INVESTMENT AREAS



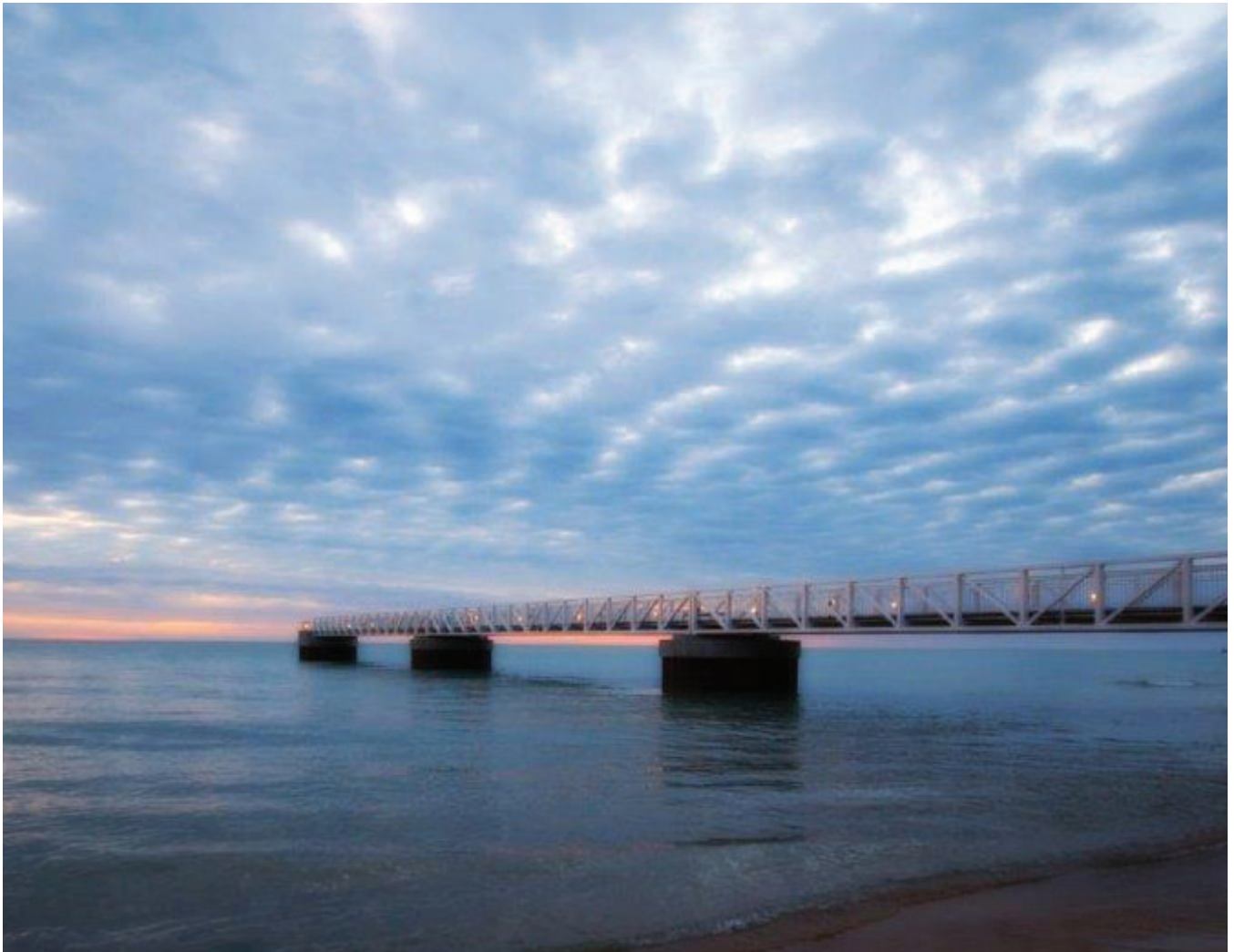
Growth and Investment strategies should focus on the following land use development and redevelopment within these areas as noted in Table 13 below.

Not all areas can, or should, accommodate the same type of land use. An appropriate mix of land uses helps generate a synergy between uses and helps establish a sense of place. For example, the South State Business Neighborhood has been

platted to include smaller lots which can accommodate “mom and pop” businesses within easy walking distance of adjacent single family neighborhoods. Conversely, Wurtsmith Airport Mix-Use Neighborhood will include single family residential, multi-family residential within walking and biking distance of commercial and small industrial-related businesses located on the former air base.

**TABLE 13: LAND USES FOR GROWTH & INVESTMENT AREAS**

	Single-Family Residential	Multiple-Family Residential	Mixed-Use	Commercial	Industrial / Research
South State Business Neighborhood	✓	✓	✓	✓	
23-41 Business Neighborhood	✓	✓	✓	✓	
North Neighborhood	✓				
Wurtsmith Airport				✓	✓
Wurtsmith Airport Mixed-Use Neighborhood	✓	✓		✓	✓



## 9. FUTURE LAND USE

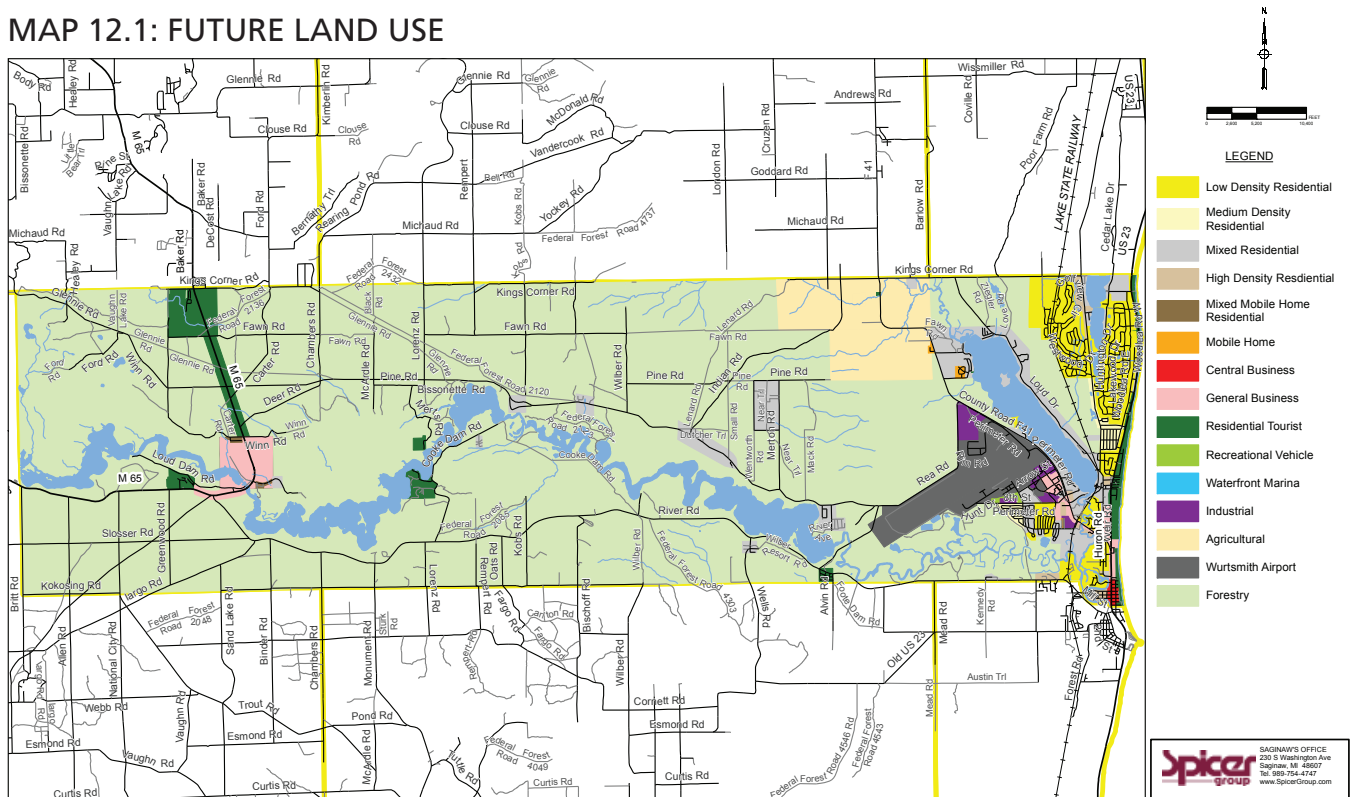


The Future Land Use map lays the foundation for the Action Program described in the next section of this Master Plan, and depicts the desired form and character for Oscoda Township to take on over the next five to twenty years. The proposed future land uses in Oscoda Township are divided into 15 categories, see Table 14 on page 72.

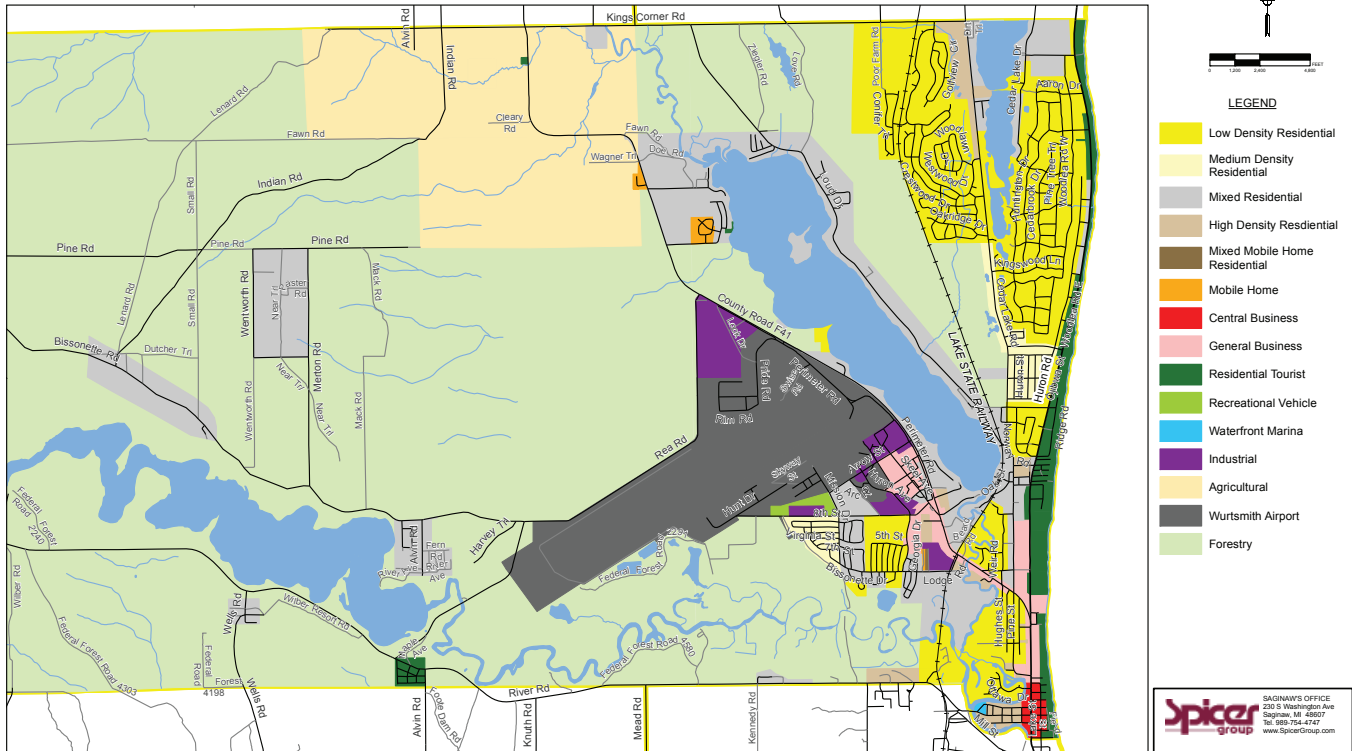
The Future Land Use map transforms the goals into a graphic guide for land development and management in Oscoda. The Future Land Use map serves as a guide to decision making, and does not specify how every lot, parcel, or site should be used or zoned. While the Future Land Use map attempts to translate Future Land Use categories to specific zoning districts, it is mostly intended to provide a framework for future site-specific land use or zoning decisions that are brought before the Planning Commission. For example, the Future Land Use map may indicate a low-density single-family residential area, and yet it may not be zoned for residential until a property owner requests that zoning change and the Township adopts the rezoning request.

On the Future Land Use map, it should be noted that Future Land Use categories are slightly different from the existing land use categories. This difference is attributed to the fact that Future Land Use is developed with an eye toward the zoning classification that will be needed to actually move toward the implementation of this Plan. For example, while the Existing Land Use map described wetlands or semi-public uses, these uses are not described on the Future Land Use map. These existing land uses are combined into various other Future Land Use categories because the Future Land Use categories reflect how these land uses should be used in the future, and hence should be zoned. Ultimately, the recommendations shown on the Future Land Use maps are intended to help Oscoda officials, property owners, and residents make zoning and development decisions that are in the best interest of the community. The Future Land Use map seeks to guide residential, commercial, and industrial development into appropriate locations while maintaining the overall character and appearance of Oscoda Township.

**MAP 12.1: FUTURE LAND USE**



MAP 12.2: FUTURE LAND USE



MAP 12.3: FUTURE LAND USE

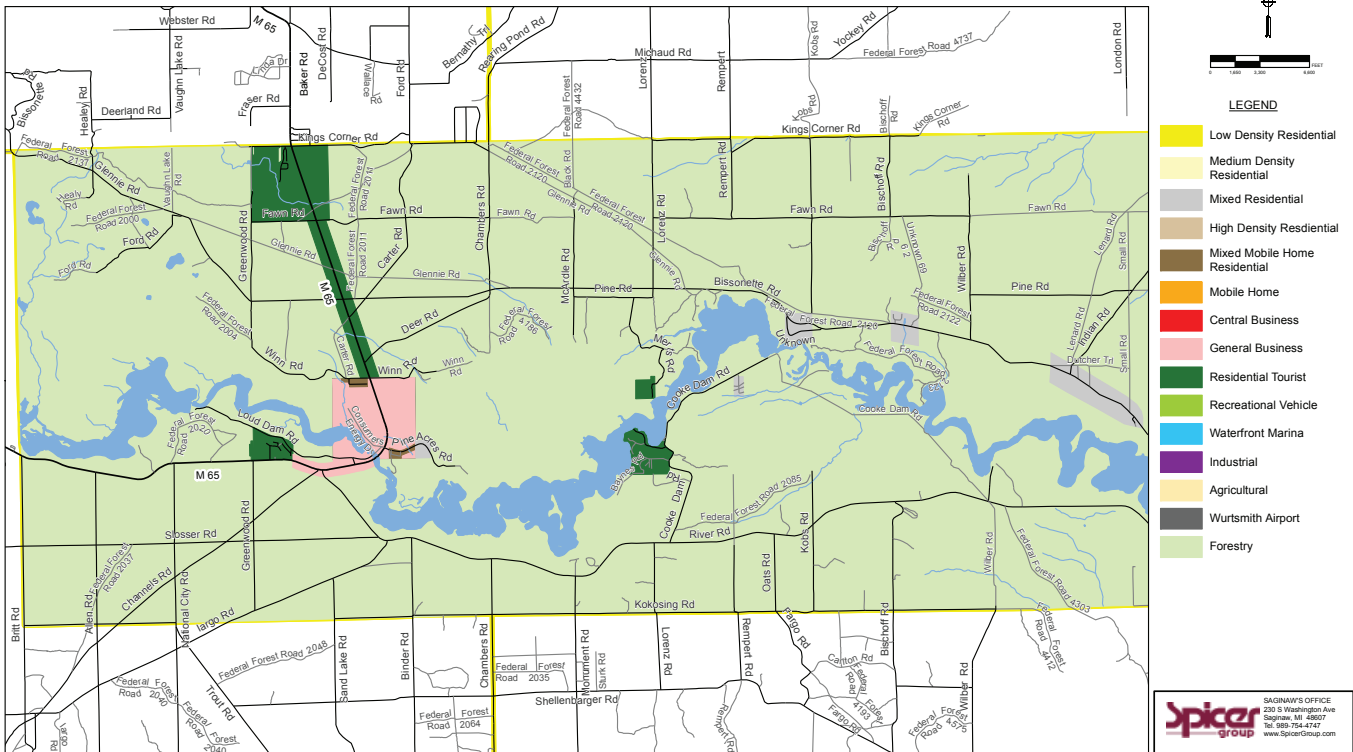


TABLE 14: FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

District	Acreage	Percent
Low Density Residential	3,020.86	3.59%
Medium Density Residential	311.25	0.37%
Mixed Residential	3,477.00	4.14%
High Density Residential	289.44	0.34%
Mixed Mobile Home Residential	37.42	0.04%
Mobile Home	50.19	0.06%
Central Business	59.71	0.07%
General Business	359.03	0.43%
Residential Tourist	2,430.22	2.90%
Recreational Vehicle	53.45	0.06%
Waterfront Marina	8.69	0.01%
Industrial	644.26	0.77%
Agricultural	274.75	0.33%
Wurtsmith Airport	2,121.83	2.53%
Forestry	70,787.87	84.35%
Total	83,926	

## LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

This category covers approximately 3,020 acres, or about 3.6%, of the Townships' total land area and encompasses the following zoning districts: low density residential district, and Wurtsmith low density residential district. This category includes single-family detached structures and accessory structures, with a minimum lot area of 9,600 square feet. In addition to these uses, family day care, adult foster home and state licensed residential facilities are also allowed. This is the third largest land use in the Township, and is important to residents, who believe there should be more single-family development. Single-family residential structures are intended to provide stability and protect and encourage the residential character in the Township, with a high-quality housing stock. In this Plan, the Township has indicated the importance of a strong housing stock and strong neighborhoods to improve the quality of life in Oscoda. This Future Land Use can be found in the following locations:

- » In the northeast corner, surrounding Cedar Lake
- » North of downtown Oscoda
- » At the currently empty, past base housing area south of the airport
- » Several other locations along the Lake Huron Shoreline and south of Van Etten Lake

## MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

This category covers approximately 311 acres, or about 0.3%, of the Townships' total land area and encompasses the following zoning districts: medium density residential, and Wurtsmith medium density residential. This category includes single-family detached structures and accessory structures, with a minimum lot area of 9,600 square feet, and a minimum structure size of 750 square feet. In addition to these uses, family day care, adult foster home and state licensed residential facilities are also allowed. This land use is important to residents who believe

there should be more single-family development. Single-family residential structures are intended to provide stability and protect and encourage the residential character in the Township, with a high-quality housing stock. In this Plan, the Township has indicated the importance of a strong housing stock and strong neighborhoods to improve the quality of life in Oscoda. This Future Land Use can be found south of the Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport, and northeast of southern end of Van Etten Lake.

## MIXED RESIDENTIAL

This category covers approximately 3,477 acres or 4.1% of the Township's land use, which is the second largest land use category in the Township. This land use comprises the mixed density residential district and the Wurtsmith mixed density residential district. These uses in these districts include one or two-family homes or multiple-family homes in the Wurtsmith district, and their accessory structures with a minimum 6,000 square foot lot. This land use provides opportunity for a variety of housing options in a variety of settings, and is fitting because the Township residents believe there should be an expansion of housing types in the Township. Therefore, the mixed residential district which allows several types of housing options is important to residents. In this Plan, the Township has also indicated the need to expand the housing options available to residents to provide more choices, and to also provide more options of affordable living and the mixed residential land use is one way to achieve those goals. The land use is in the following areas of the Township:

- » East of Cedar Lake
- » Surrounding Van Etten Lake
- » At the multi-family base housing
- » Southeast of the base housing
- » Several areas in the western two-thirds of the Township including along Bissonette Road, Wentworth Road, and River Road



*Oscoda Township along Lake Street*

## HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

This category covers approximately 289 acres, or 0.3% of land in the Township, and encompasses the high density residential zoning district. Some uses allowed by right in this district include: one and two family homes, nursing homes, day care homes, and state licensed residential facilities. This land use also allows for the necessary accessory structures. Multiple-family dwelling units are also permitted in this district. This is another example of a land use that is important as Township residents have indicated it is important to provide for a variety of different housing options. In this plan, the Township has also indicated the need to expand the housing options available to residents to provide more choices, and to also provide more options of affordable housing. The high density residential land use is one way to achieve those goals. This land use has a minimum lot size of 6,000 square feet, and can be found in the following areas in the Township:

- » In the residential area, directly west of the downtown
- » Along the western edge of Cedar Lake
- » Scattered throughout several other locations along County Road F41 and US-23



## MIXED MOBILE HOME RESIDENTIAL

The mixed mobile home use corresponds to the mixed mobile home zoning district, and equates to approximately 37 acres of Township land or 0.04%. This land use allows for one and two family dwelling units, and mobile homes, as well as any accessory uses. Future mixed mobile home residential should be appropriately sited in locations suitable to this type of development. The development should not adversely affect surrounding residential areas, and to ensure adequate connection to transportation and utilities. This land use can be found at Forest Drive off Bissonette Drive southeast of the airport, and two locations off M-65 in the western third of the Township off Winn Road and Carter Road.

## MOBILE HOME

The mobile home use corresponds to the mobile home zoning district, and equates to approximately 50 acres of Township land or 0.06%. This land use allows for mobile homes, as well as any accessory uses. Future mobile home residential should be appropriately sited in locations suitable to this type of development, to not adversely affect surrounding residential areas, and to ensure adequate connection to transportation and utilities. This land use can be found on Bissonette Road, and on the north end of Van Etten Lake off Colbath Road, adjacent to Alexander Road and F-41 near Jeanette Drive.



*Existing streetscape along US-23.*

## CENTRAL BUSINESS

The central business use corresponds to the central business zoning district, which is approximately 60 acres, or 0.06% of land in the Township. This land use is in downtown Oscoda, and is intended to encourage the redevelopment of downtown. The use aims to provide for a variety of retail stores and related activities, while promoting a convenient pedestrian environment which does not include automobile related services, that disrupt the continuous retail frontage essential in a downtown. As indicated by residents and Township officials, the majority of people would like to focus the development in the Township into this land use area. They would prefer to revitalize the existing infrastructure and bring life to the downtown as compared to encouraging new sprawl development, which would encroach on existing residential neighborhoods and the natural beauty of the Township. Commercial development in this district includes uses that promote walkability and do not center on the automobile, which breaks up the commercial corridor.

## GENERAL BUSINESS

The general business use corresponds to the general business zoning district and the Wurtsmith Business zoning district. It comprises approximately 359 acres or 0.4% of the Township.

This land use is much less restrictive than the central business district described above. It intends to provide convenient day-to-day shopping and services with minimum impact on community members. The allowed uses are much more flexible and there is a 5,000-minimum square foot lot size. Residents have indicated they would prefer to see this type of commercial development along the US-23 corridor, which is where the majority of this Future Land Use is located, and along County Road F41 south of the Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport.

The general business use located at the Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport is intended to provide space for the adaptive reuse of existing structures within the former Air Force Base area. It includes not only commercial uses, but also governmental, institutional, medical, educational, housing, and entertainment. This district allows for a much larger group of uses, to be more flexible for redevelopment in the area. The residents indicated they would also like to see commercial development here, so this use allows for not only commercial, but many other services as well. This is an example of a land use that is unique to Oscoda, and as such may provide opportunities to specialty businesses that may not be available in other communities. The Township has worked hard to reinvigorate this area and be open to many potential options in the future.

## RESIDENTIAL TOURIST

The residential tourist use corresponds with the residential tourist zoning district. This use comprises approximately 2,430 acres of land, or 2.9% of the Township. It is intended to meet the unique needs of an area ranging from tourist related commercial facilities to natural waterfront areas, and to family cottages or residential homes. The district allows a variety of uses, which includes restaurants, lodging establishments, convenience stores, one or two family dwelling units, antique shops, bait shops, and public outdoor recreation space. The Township residents have stated they would like to support the growth of the economy, more residential housing, and protection of natural resources. This zoning district assists the Township in achieving those three goals by creating spaces where commercial and residential uses can interact for convenience of residents and visitors alike. This land use can be found in the following locations:

- » Along the Township shoreline on both sides of US-23
- » Selected locations around Van Etten Lake



*An Oscoda Township Park*

- » Selected locations along the Au Sable River, including sites near Cooke Dam Pond and Foote Dam Pond
- » Areas along M-65 north of the Au Sable River

## RECREATIONAL VEHICLE

This land use corresponds to the recreational vehicle zoning district, it makes up approximately 53 acres, or 0.06% of the Township land, and is intended for parks which cater to the camping needs of the general public. It includes spaces for both tents and motorhomes. As the recreation industry and tourism are so important to the Township, this land use is as well. It provides visitors with a short or long term place to stay. This use is currently off Perimeter Road and Mission Drive south of the airport. Recently, part of the area was rezoned to Wurtsmith Industrial, meaning the future of this land use may be changing. While it is important to recreational visitors, there are other camping options available in the Township.

## WATERFRONT MARINA

This land use corresponds to the waterfront marina zoning district and makes up approximately 9 acres or 0.01% of the Township land. It is intended for bait shops or fish





*Private Recreation Business along the AuSable River*



*Local Oscoda Township Business*

cleaning, watercraft dockage or storage, watercraft rentals or excursions, and outdoor recreation facilities. The use requires a minimum of 12,000 square feet. The Township residents have expressed how much they value the recreation opportunities available to them in the Township, and have also expressed a desire to grow business and tourism in the Township. This land use creates a unique opportunity to allow businesses to take advantage of the wonderful recreational opportunities available and create activities and jobs. However, because of the nature of these businesses, they require land that is often along the water and at a high premium. It will be important in the future to balance all of the Township's needs while also protecting the natural environment. Currently, the only location of this land use is directly west of downtown Oscoda.

## INDUSTRIAL

This land use corresponds with the industrial zoning district and the Wurtsmith Industrial zoning district. It encompasses approximately 644 acres or 0.7% of the Township.

This district is intended to provide a location for wholesale, warehousing, and manufacturing operations in new locations and as adaptive reuses within the old Wurtsmith Airforce Base. The use requires a minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet. The Township residents have indicated they believe industry is important to the Township and the economy. They have also indicated they would like to see more industrial job opportunities in the Township. This is one of the districts which would assist with those goals. The siting of any industrial land in the future should ensure the development will have adequate transportation, utility access and will have a limited adverse impact on any surrounding residential uses, and will not be intrusive on other existing uses. This use is located in the northwest corner and southeast corner of the Airport Authority.

## AGRICULTURAL

This land use corresponds to the agricultural zoning district, it makes up approximately 275 acres or 0.3% of land in the Township. This land use is intended to promote and protect areas of agricultural lands and to preserve the natural features. Township residents have indicated they believe agriculture is an important feature in the Township and is important to the Township economy. Common farming practices are allowed uses in this district. Additionally, other related agricultural practices such as tree farms, horse farms, kennels, or fish hatcheries are also compatible. In the Township, the agricultural land is in the northeastern third of the Township between Loud Drive and Lenard Road.

## AIRPORT

This land use encompasses the Wurtsmith Airport Authority Overlay District and the four airport protection zones outlined in the zoning ordinance. These land uses apply to airport zoning regulations and the outlined prohibited uses for land surrounding the airport. Overall, the airport land use is approximately 2,122 acres, or 2.5% of the Township land, which makes this the fifth largest land use in the Township. In the past, the airport was a military base, and now it operates as a public airport and hangar for several specialty businesses involved in the airplane industry. The past military airport and associated uses presents the Township with many unique opportunities for specialty businesses. The Township has recognized this fact, and has taken advantage of their unique situation. This land use will continue to be important and a key feature to promote in the future.

## FORESTRY

The forest land use includes the forestry zoning district and the natural river district. It is the largest land use by far, consisting of 70,788 acres or 84% of land in the Township. These districts are intended to protect the natural features that the Township treasures, while still allowing some compatible development. Some uses allowed include outdoor recreation space, campgrounds, golf courses, greenhouses, single family homes, fish hatcheries, and forestry services and industries. These districts are used to protect the natural features of the Township which are so valued by resident and visitors alike. Please note that not all the land in the forestry district is open for development. In fact, the majority is owned by the State or Federal Government and is protected as open public land. The Township has no jurisdiction over this land and what happens to it in the future.



*Kalitta Air; a large Township employer*

## ZONING PLAN

The Township recently revised the B-1 (Central Business) and portions of the R-T (Residential-Tourist) districts into the South State Business Neighborhood district which utilizes the form based code as the foundation. Efforts are underway in 2020 to revise the B-2 (General Business) district into a form based code, as well.

The current ordinance has five different zoning classifications for the former Wurtsmith Air Base and these include:

- » WB-3 Wurtsmith Business
- » WR-1 Wurtsmith Low Density Residential
- » WR-2 Wurtsmith Medium Density Residential
- » WR-3 Wurtsmith Mixed Residential
- » WA Wurtsmith Airport

These five zoning districts could be incorporated into one overall district with five separate sub-zones which would help integrate the development together.

Other zoning revisions should be made to align the zoning ordinance with RRC best practices, and streamline review processes.



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## 10. ACTION PLAN

## ACTION PLAN

Under the direction of the planning commission, with citizen and stakeholder input, Oscoda Township has identified seven overarching goals, each with a series of actions. Although the recommendations embodied in the Future Land Use map may take twenty to thirty years to achieve, the Action Plan is focused on short-term attainable actions that Township can take to bring about noticeable change. The five-year timeframe is used to correspond to the planning commission's role to re-evaluate the Master Plan every five years under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008). The Action Plan table outlines a planned implementation schedule for each action and includes a general timeframe for implementation, the party responsible for implementing,

priority, and anticipated funding source.

In August 2020, the Planning Commission rated each of the Action Plan task items using a five-year timeframe (2021 - 2025) as a way to establish priorities. The year identified in the schedule should be referred to as the probable "kick-off" date when the work will begin. Several of the tasks are recurring and the term "Annual" is used to denote their timing.

The Action Plan schedule should be used by the Planning Commission to prepare their Annual Report (MCL 125.3819 (2)) to the Board of Trustees outlining their annual work effort and budget. This process also helps to establish a realistic measure of Planning Commission performance.





## GOAL 1: THE ECONOMICS OF PLACE

*HOW: Create an environment where residents, development, and businesses can be successful.*

**WHY:** Since the Great Recession, a variety of economic assessments have concluded that communities that have a strong sense of place fare well economically. This sense of place, referred to as the economics of place, is achieved through a variety of elements, including having a vibrant business district, a range of housing types, access to recreation and open space, walkable and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods and streets, and attractive public areas. When you create a community where people want to live and visit, invest; jobs follow.

Task	Actions	Responsible Party	Schedule
Revise Zoning Ordinance	Include an Administrative Review provision to accelerate site plan reviews for Uses Permitted by Right in Section 7.3.	Planning Commission with assistance from a consultant	2021
	Incorporate into the Zoning Ordinance provisions from the "Guide to Development."		2021
	Expand Section 7.3 to address what elements are needed in a site plan.		2021
Downtown Plan	Prepare a Physical Design Plan for the business district along US-23 between Division and Evergreen in alignment with RRC Best Practices.	Planning Commission, with assistance from the Economic Improvement Committee and MDOT	2022
	Incorporate into the Plan provisions from the "Guide to Development."		2022
	Use the SSBN Form Based Code as the foundation for the Plan.		2022
US-23 North Corridor	Prepare a Physical Design Plan for the US-23 Corridor north of Evergreen.	Planning Commission, with assistance from the Economic Improvement Committee and MDOT	2023
	Incorporate in the Physical Design Plan an intersection design for US-23 and F-41.		2024
	Incorporate pedestrian elements and crossings.		2023
	Evaluate feasibility for a Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA).		2021, and then annually
	Prepare a Form Based Code to replace the B-2 Zoning District.		2021
Growth & Investment Area	Define Growth & Investment Areas (GIA) based on availability of infrastructure, and proximity to US-23 and F-41.	Economic Improvement Committee with assistance from the Planning Commission	2024
	Evaluate and select sites within the GIA areas that are redevelopment ready.		2024



## GOAL 2: TELLING OUR STORY

*HOW: Market the community to prospective businesses, residents, and tourists.*

WHY: Oscoda Township is blessed with a variety of natural resources and open spaces; places where people like to visit and vacation. In addition, during the focus group with major employers they indicated jobs, but fall short on recruiting talented help. Oscoda Township needs to tell its story outside of Iosco County. In response to this information the Township engaged PlaceLeap, a team of consultants, to develop a brand and message for the Township and “Oscoda – Take Flight” emerged from this process.

Task	Actions	Responsible Party	Schedule
Marketing Campaign	Develop and implement an external market and advertising plan.	Economic Improvement Committee with assistance from the Chamber of Commerce and Convention Visitors Bureau	2021
	Revise website and social media to incorporate the same brand information and messaging.	Township, and Chamber of Commerce and Convention Visitors Bureau	2021
	Undertake an inventory of underutilized/ vacant sites that would be acceptable for redevelopment and business occupancy. This can be in conjunction with, or supplement to GIA site assessment.	Planning Commission with assistance from the Economic Improvement Committee	2024



## GOAL 3: PROTECTING WHO WE ARE

*HOW: Preserve, integrate, and connect natural resources for residents and tourists.*

WHY: Oscoda Township is synonymous with the outdoors. The federal government alone owns a vast and variable amount of resources within Oscoda Township, which includes: The Huron-Manistee National Forest, River Road: National Forest Scenic Byway, Lumberman's Monument Visitors Center, Canoe Memorial Overlook, Iargo Springs Interpretative Site, and Foote Pond Overlook. There is also an extensive network of trails within the Township including non-motorized paths such as the Michigan's Shore-to-Shore Riding/Hiking Trail and the Eagle Run Cross Country Ski and Nature Trail, along with 25 miles of snowmobile trails and about 200 miles of ORV trails within the National Forest. Within Oscoda Township there are extensive opportunities for camping in almost all areas of the National Forest. Similarly, the State of Michigan is another entity that offers numerous recreation opportunities within the Township. These include the Au Sable State Forest, two fishing access sites, two boat launches, camping within the State Forest and a campground at Van Etten Lake that offers 62 primitive camping sites, Three Mile Park, the Old State House ORV Trail, and Seven Mile Hill snowmobile trail. Additionally, the Old Orchard Campground on the Au Sable River offers 525 licensed campsites along the waterfront that are either modern or primitive.

Task	Actions	Responsible Party	Schedule
Non-Motorized Plan	Include non-motorized standards in the Zoning Ordinance	Planning Commission with assistance from a Consultant, and assistance from MDNR and MDOT	2021
	Compile on GIS all known non-motorized, snowmobile, and ORV trails throughout the Township.		2022
	Prepare a Township pathway, trail and sidewalk master plan that connects recreation resources with residential and commercial areas.		2022
	Revise zoning ordinance to require sidewalks in commercial and residential developments incorporating Complete Streets ideology.		2023



## GOAL 4: DIVERSITY FOR LIVING

*HOW: Create more housing options for existing and prospective residents.*

**WHY:** There is not much diversity in Oscoda Township's housing stock. In 2018, 88% of the Oscoda Township housing stock was comprised of single-family residential homes. The remaining 12% included a mix of apartments, townhomes, and mobile homes. According to several housing models and national trends, the mix of housing will shift more toward apartments, townhomes, and other non-owner-occupied housing types. In many markets, baby boomers and millennials are competing for the same housing type. Baby boomers want to discard the responsibilities for home maintenance and upkeep, and millennials do not want to get tied down with home ownership. In addition, as employment opportunities become more fluid and transient more demand is placed to find quality rental properties.

Task	Actions	Responsible Party	Schedule
Housing Strategy	Conduct a Housing Study that forecasts future housing demand and identifies housing typology.	Economic Improvement Committee	2021
	Based on the Housing Study align the Zoning Ordinance to accommodate the housing mix recommended.	Planning Commission	2022
	Encourage residential development in walkable proximity to business districts.		2023



## GOAL 5: INCREASING OUR NUMBERS

*HOW: Grow the number of residents, businesses, tourists, and developers in the township.*

**WHY:** William S. Burroughs is credited with the quote, “When you stop growing you start dying.” Lou Holtz said. “In this world you’re either growing or you’re dying, so get in motion and grow.” Planned growth is good for a community. Planned growth brings new residents, additional jobs, increased wealth, and more disposable income to support the local business community. The key word is “planned growth.” So, what is planned growth? Planned growth is a community strategy of knowing what you need, where to get it, and how to accommodate it. It’s achieved by having your ducks in order.

Task	Actions	Responsible Party	Schedule
Marketing	Coordinate with Chamber, Economic Development Commission an external market and advertising plan.	Economic Improvement Committee	2021
	Continue “stakeholders and major employers” meetings, like the annual Downtown Summit.	Township Administration	Annual Event
	Host a developer open house to introduce them to the Oscoda Township community and real estate opportunities.	Economic Improvement Committee with support from the Chamber of Commerce	2021 and then Annual
	Convene and implement a Calendar of Community Events focused on bringing people to the community.	Township and Chamber of Commerce	2021 and then Annual





## GOAL 6: LEVERAGE OUR OPPORTUNITY

*HOW: Further promote redevelopment of airport and surrounding property.*

**WHY:** The former Wurtsmith Air Force Base covers approximately 2,000 acres plus all the infrastructure needed to support an operational military base. In 1994, when the Wurtsmith Base Conversion Authority was terminated, Oscoda Township took over as redevelopment authority under PA 206 of 1957. The size of this facility would be hard, if not impossible, for a municipality to duplicate. On February 18, 2020, the Michigan Aerospace Manufacturers Association (MAMA) announced its findings from an initial site-selection process for a potential horizontal space launch site. At this meeting, the Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport was selected as Michigan's horizontal space launch facility. According to MAMA, "The Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport received the highest ranking because of its runway infrastructure, business capacity, operational strength, and safety track record."

Task	Actions	Responsible Party	Schedule
Align Zoning and Planning	Design a special zoning district that encourages mixed use development with appropriate design standards for the facility.	Planning Commission	2023
	Determine areas within the overall property that could accommodate a walkway mixed use neighborhood.		2024



## GOAL 7: REINVEST IN OURSELVES

*HOW: Maintain and improve township owned infrastructure.*

WHY: Remember the discussion on the Economics of Place. A key element of that strategy is having access to reliable, sustainable, and quality infrastructure. This includes water, sewer, streets, streetscape, municipal lighting, public facilities, and parks. Not only do these municipal assets support development and redevelopment, if done with an eye toward quality in design, they act to attract residents, businesses, developers, and tourists. As a result, it is incumbent on the municipality to actively evaluate and plan for these facilities and services.

Task	Actions	Responsible Party	Schedule
Municipal Asset Management	Prepare a Capital Improvements Program once the infrastructure assessment for the Wurtsmith Airport Mixed Use-Neighborhood properties is completed.	Planning Commission with assistance from Township Administration	2022 and then Annual
Iosco County Hazard Mitigation Plan	Identify projects from the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to mitigate damages from local hazards that negatively impact the Township.	Planning Commission and Emergency Management	2021
	Seek funds to implement projects from the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan.	Planning Commission with assistance from Township Administration	2022
Coastal Resilience	Ensure all shoreline development and infrastructure is appropriately designed and protected to be resilient in the face of changing climate.	Planning Commission	2021 and then Annual
Community Center	Gather community input for future vision of a replacement community center.	Township Board with assistance from the Planning Commission and a Consultant	2022
	Conduct a cost feasibility study.		
	Incorporate into the Township Park & Recreation Plan.		



## FIGURE 21: OSCODA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION

### CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OSCODA IOSCO COUNTY, MICHIGAN

#### CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OSCODA PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING THE ADOPTION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OSCODA AMENDNED and RESTATED MASTER PLAN OF 2021

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), 2008 PA 33, MCL125.3801 et seq. requires municipal planning commissions to prepare a "master plan" pertinent to the future development of the municipality; and

WHEREAS, the Charter Township of Oscoda Planning Commission has prepared a draft Master Plan for the Charter Township of Oscoda, to update and replace its previous Master Plan, dated March 2018; and

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

WHEREAS, the proposed Master Plan was made available to the various entities and the general public as required by the MPEA, and a public hearing thereon was held by the Planning Commission on March 1, 2021 pursuant to notice as required by MPEA; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds the proposed Master Plan as submitted for the public hearing is desirable and proper, and furthers the land use and development goals and strategies of the Township;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission for the Charter Township of Oscoda, hereby recommends to the Board of Trustees of the Charter Township of Oscoda the adoption of the Master Plan as submitted for the public hearing held on March 1, 2021, with edits, if any, subsequently identified by the Planning Commission, including all the text, charts, tables, maps, and descriptive and other matter therein intended by the Planning Commission to form the complete Master Plan, including the Future Land Use Map.

Motion by: Bill Palmer

Seconded by: John Minor

#### Roll Call Vote:

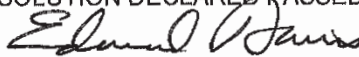
Ayes: Bill Palmer, Cathy Wusterbarth, John Minor, Ed Davis, Bernie Schenk, Greg Schulz

Nays:

Absent: Mimi McDonald

Abstain:

#### RESOLUTION DECLARED PASSED

  
Edward Davis, Vice Chairperson  
Charter Township of Oscoda Planning Commission

2 March 2021

Date

#### CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify the foregoing resolution is a true and correct copy of the resolution that was approved by a majority of the Charter Township of Oscoda Planning Commission by a roll call vote at a rescheduled regular meeting of the Commission held on March 1, 2021 in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

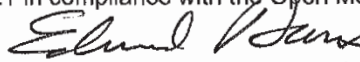
  
Edward Davis, Vice Chairperson

FIGURE 22: OSCODA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION